

Live Music Now at Home, with Louis Bingham



guitar, cittern, voice & percussion
www.louisbingham.com

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1. *Si Bheag Si Mhor*

Written by Turlough O'Carolan, an Irish composer who lived from 1670-1738. Hundreds of his compositions for the harp have passed down the generations, and this is one of the best known.

2. *The Smuggler*

A song set on the South Coast of Devon, telling of the smugglers who used to travel back and forth across the English channel. Evading the king's excise men in small fishing boats, they brought luxury goods like Hollands Gin, Mallins Lace and Brandy over into England from France and the Channel Islands where they could be bought much cheaper. The recurring line "we run the tubs at Slapton" refers to barrels of contraband (the tubs) and a long shingle beach (Slapton Sands) somewhat to the south of Dartmouth.

Louis introduces the Cittern

This is a modern instrument, but with ancient roots. The name comes from a similar looking medieval instrument, pictures of which can be seen in illustrations from as far back as C13. It also shares design characteristics with the lute, oud, bouzouki and mandolin family of instruments. It is used to play music from across Europe and the Mediterranean, including traditional dance music from Scotland and Ireland.

3. O'Carolan's Draught

Another piece by Turlough O'Carolan. Apparently he was quite fond of a drink, and named a few pieces to that end. Another composition of his is called O'Carolan's Receipt for Drinking, a great way of paying your bar tab.

4. Clare Slides: Micho Russel's & The Scatterry Island Slide

These up-tempo dance tunes are particularly associated with County Clare in the West of Ireland. Micho Russel was a famous whistle player from the town of Doolin, and Scatterry Island (originally called Inis Cathaig in the Gaelic) is a small island on the mouth of the Shannon Estuary. Clap along, tap your feet, or maybe even have a bit of a dance, that's what these tunes are for!

5. The Mingulay Boat Song

An atmospheric song about fishermen in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, turning their small boat around and heading back to their home harbour of Mingulay where their families await them. The Minch, mentioned in the first verse, is a strait which separates the outer Hebridean Islands of Lewis and Harris from the mainland and the Inner Hebrides.

Watch out for the ocean drum which Louis plays in this song, and join in with adding your own sound effects if you like. Find a quiet shaker, or something else to make soft, sandy, sea-shore sounds, and join in with the soundscape to transport yourself to a wave lapped beach. You could use your voice to copy Louis' wave sound effects, or maybe add some sea bird noises to top it all off.

Here are the words to the chorus if you would like to join in and sing along:

***Heel ya ho boys, let her go boys,
Heave her head round, now all together,
Heel ya ho boys, let her go boys,
Wearing home, to Mingulay.***