

celestial harmonies

fair play
patrick ball
celestial harmonies 13178-2
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world music (celtic)



the artist

Patrick Ball is one of the premier celtic harp players in the world and a captivating storyteller in the Celtic tradition. He has recorded nine instrumental and three spoken word albums which have sold well over one-half million copies internationally and won national awards in both the music and spoken word categories.

His critically acclaimed solo musical theater piece, *O'Carolan's Farewell to Music*, brings to the stage the legendary life, the turbulent times and the glorious music of Ireland's most celebrated and beloved musician, Turlough O'Carolan.

Patrick Ball is "a rare artist," for in playing the ancient, legendary brass-strung harp of Ireland with its crystalline, bell-like voice, and in telling the marvelous old tales of wit and enchantment, he not only carries on two of the richest traditions of Celtic culture, but blends them in concert to create "a richly theatrical and hauntingly beautiful" performance.

the project

Over the span of ten years, Patrick Ball recorded six enormously popular Celtic Harp albums on the Celestial Harmonies and Fortuna Records labels and established himself as one of the premier celtic harpers in the world. Over the following eight years he pursued his other passion, traditional storytelling, recorded two spoken words recordings with Celestial Harmonies, and found a performing niche in the world of solo theater with his acclaimed musical theater piece, *O'Carolan's Farewell to Music*.

FAIR PLAY represents Patrick's return to his first love, the rare, legendary brass-strung harp of ancient Ireland. It features 14 haunting and lyrical tunes which he slowly and lovingly gathered during his time away from the recording studio. Among them are four of the most captivating and beloved airs drawn from the rich tradition of Gaelic song (*Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair, Mountain of the Women, Ned of the Hill, The Top of the White Rock*), a pair of Ireland's most lively and celebrated dance tunes (*Bobby Casey's Hornpipe, Roscommon Reel*), and seven of the most elegant and endearing melodies by Ireland's greatest composer, Turlough O'Carolan. FAIR PLAY closes with the comforting and quietly uplifting Norwegian lullaby, *The Little Child*.

Of his previous releases, *CD Review* enthused, "Patrick Ball plays the ancient, wire-strung Celtic harp with a sense of magic and refinement that takes you back to a time when music was more direct and powerful in its simplicity." *The Washington Post* similarly described Patrick's playing as casting "a haunting spell...a graceful and often bittersweet evocation of the past." *The Boston Globe* painted a more lyrical picture of Patrick's music by saying that "these extremely delicate and gracefully measured melodies shine like constellations over a moonless heath." FAIR PLAY continues this tradition of enchantment.

