

# celestial harmonies

in winter light: music for guitar  
and flute by john buckley  
john feeley, guitar  
william dowdall, flute  
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irish



## the composer/artists

Born in Templeglantine, County Limerick, Ireland, in 1951, John Buckley studied flute and composition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. His subsequent studies were in Cardiff with the Welsh composer Alun Hoddinott and with John Cage. He has written a diverse range of work, from solo instruments to full orchestra. His music has been performed and broadcast in more than forty countries worldwide. He is also active as a lecturer on composition, music appreciation and music in education and is on the staff of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin.

Internationally acclaimed guitar virtuoso John Feeley was born in Ballinasloe, County Galway, and graduated in music from Trinity College, Dublin. He went to the United States to continue his education, studying with a number of guitarists including Oscar Ghiglia, Angel Romero and David Russel. After completing a masters degree at Queens College of the City University, New York, he taught at Memphis State University for a number of years. He returned to Ireland to take the post of Professor in Guitar at the Conservatory of Music, Dublin Institute of Technology.

Dublin-born William Dowdall combines a busy career as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher with his duties as Principal Flute with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. In the United States, following flute studies at the Cleveland Music School Settlement, he was awarded a Federal Fellowship for advanced flute study with Maurice Sharp at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Upon his return to Ireland at the age of 21 he was appointed Principal Flute of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and in 1979 was appointed Principal Flute of the National Symphony Orchestra. In 1994 he was also appointed to the Wind Faculty of the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

## the project

**IN WINTER LIGHT** is a collaboration of talents from Eire (The Republic of Ireland)—contemporary composer John Buckley, guitarist John Feeley and flautist William Dowdall.

Writes John Buckley:

The recording comprises a selection of works for flute, alto flute and guitar dating from 1973 to 2004. The title is taken from an image in the epic poem *Omeros* by Derek Walcott, 1992 Nobel Prize of Literature recipient, and reflects the character of the music, much of which was written in the winter months over the past twenty years.

My interest in writing for the flute goes back to student days and I have always been attracted to its possibilities of both extreme lyricism and extreme agility and virtuosity. These are qualities, which feature, in about equal measure, throughout my entire compositional output.

The compositions for guitar have been more recent, starting with *Guitar Sonata No. 1* written in 1989, followed by *Guitar Sonata No. 2* in 1998. In these works and in the title piece *In Winter Light* I have attempted to capture something of the instrument's unique, evocative and magical sound world.

The title piece *In Winter Light*, brings flute—this time alto flute—and guitar together and in a way is a culmination of these two separate compositional journeys. The two instruments, with their dark sonorities but otherwise contrasting character, provide a wonderful compliment to each other.

