



Dear Choral Friends,

It's with great pleasure that I invite you and your choir to sing with me in the awe-inspiring region of **Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland** for the **2023 American Songbook Choral Festival**. Organized by the excellent team at Perform International, this festival will take place from **June 19th-24th, 2023** and will be directed by my good friend and colleague, Dr. Gene Peterson.

Hosted in the deeply historic town of Derry, our festival will offer a joyful sampling of my folk-inspired music in Ireland, the land of traditional music. The festival's theme piece is "**I Will Arise and Go**," based on Irish poet **William Butler Yeats's** "The Lake Isle of Innisfree." In fact, Yeats' "lake" is beautiful Lough Gill, only a two-hour scenic drive from Derry, and his poetry still permeates Irish life and inspires artistic expression.

The festival will culminate in a gala concert in one of the city's most recognizable and stunning landmarks, **the Guildhall**, and will feature repertoire for both treble and mixed voices. I'm excited to accompany the rehearsals and this concert myself, along with some incredible local traditional players. Derry – a delight to explore by strolling on its famed "city walls" – is a true staple for a traveler to Northern Ireland, and a remarkable setting for this unique opportunity, which I hope you won't want to miss!

As we begin to surface from what has been a tough few years, I am sure that you share with me an eagerness to travel and create music once again. I hope you will consider this exceptional opportunity to experience the magic of Ireland and to make incredible music alongside choral friends from across the U.S. For more information on the details of this trip, please contact Zoe Franciscus: **zfranciscus@perform-international.com**.

Warmest regards,

Shawn Kirchner
Composer-In-Residence