



Danu Young Women's Choir
Presents:

Her Song

Conwal Parish Church
20 + 21 May, 7:30pm
Letterkenny, Donegal

Hello and thank you for joining us for *Her Song*, a concert that we dedicate to all of the women in our lives past, present and future.

My name is Douglas Carnes and I am the founder, Artistic and Executive Director of Danu Young Women's Choir. Before each concert, I sit to write a message to our patrons, families, and friends. Sometimes this message is harder to write than others. Not tonight, however. Tonight I say thank you. Thank you to all of the powerful, strong, resilient, selfless, caring, intense, and passionate women in my life. All of whom I would not be here without.



Credit where credit is due...

Grandma Sandy - at 93 years old she will be coming to Ireland next month for the third time since we relocated. But don't forget about Paris - we will take a 4-day holiday there too! Grandma Sandy contributed to raising me and taught me about patience, occasional indulgence, and the whimsical nature of art. "It is whatever you think it is" she would often say to me as I stared at her paintings. ***This a lesson that I use in the hardest of times.***

Ila Carnes - No matter how many pages I have in this program, a proper thank you would never fit. She taught me about unconditional love, about joy, about endless devotion to your passions. My mother can claim a vast majority of my musical career trajectory. She picks up the phone for us no matter what she's doing, no matter the time of day, and no matter her own personal circumstances. She has always made it crystal clear that we are important and to never forget it. ***A lesson I hope to impart to the young women of this choir.***

Taryn Brina Sandkuhl (now Carnes) - When I met Taryn she was the epitome of cool, down-to-earth, and the prettiest human I had ever laid my eyes on. Those three things were PLENTY for me to fall in love with. Little did I know that as our lives molded into two individuals that share one story, she would be able to maintain those things as we grew together and teach me so much about how the world works. I have come to learn about her vast intelligence as a scientist in her early years and it is my privilege to watch her be the best mother in the world to our wee Cillian. There is no way to express my love for her through writing but she is hands down the most important female powerhouse in my life.

Finally, the young women of Danu Young Women's Choir who in this short span of two choral seasons have shown me their dedication to the craft and their openness to make friends, forgive, and love. This is a special group of young women and as we grow together over the next few years we want to continuously say thank you for your patronage and support. It means the world to us to have you here and to be able to share our love of music with you today.

I started this choir to give young women a place to not just grow but flourish, to not just live but to shine! The world needs more places where we welcome in love and truly listen to one another. As this choir grows with thanks to you it will always be the women in our lives who push us the most and teach us how to be the people we are today. The messages and songs on tonight's program help us all look forward to what we will strive to become tomorrow: the best versions of ourselves.

To you with love, from Danu Young Women's Choir

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Carnes'.

Douglas Carnes
Artistic and Executive Director

About Danu Young Women's Choir

Change the world through music! After two years of conversation and planning, Danu Young Women's Choir was started in the summer of 2022 with the purpose of providing a safe and open environment for young women to be themselves while experiencing personal growth, and deepening bonds with like-minded individuals through the medium of excellent choral singing and community outreach. We strive to create an ensemble that provides entertainment and support for our local, national, and international communities. Currently comprised of girls aged thirteen through Leaving Cert, Danu Young Women's Choir has started our journey with the senior choir. Within the next year, our organization will develop a middle choir aged ten to thirteen and our youngest choir aged nine and under. Make sure to follow us on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok @Danuyoungwomenschoir and check out our new website launching this summer www.danuyoungwomenschoir.com.

About our Logo

Designed by a world-renowned New York City-based artist, the Danu Young Women's Choir logo leverages three intertwining symbols of femininity and forms the shape of a heart with a Celtic "flowing swirls" motif at its core. It is a representation of the female union and strength in numbers. The heart represents love, the three cross shapes found at the bottom of the heart represent our three choirs and the circles represent wholeness.



DANU YOUNG WOMEN'S CHOIR

Douglas Carnes - Executive and Artistic Director

Douglas Carnes has been in the music scene his entire life. His love of music and passion for working with the youth in his community gave him a strong incentive to start the Danu Young Women's Choir here in Letterkenny, County Donegal.

Starting at a young age, Douglas's mother (the first of many strong female influences in his life) flew him to Kingston, Jamaica to learn how to play Latin and African percussion. This skyrocketed his trajectory for a lifetime of musical experiences.

Douglas graduated from Five Towns College (FTC) in Long Island, New York with his Bachelor's degree in Music Education and his Master's degree in Choral Conducting. While there, he played percussion on Disney's "The Lion King" on Broadway. Upon graduation, he was employed in Harlem, New York where he developed a choral curriculum for middle school-aged (11-15) students focused on healthy singing and building relationships through the barbershop choral art form.

This led Carnes to relocate to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2015 as the Artistic and Executive Director of the award-winning Great Northern Union Chorus. Then in 2019, he transitioned back to working with young adults as the Artistic and Musical Director of Sing Out Loud young women's choirs in Rochester, Minnesota. All the while, Carnes taught at St. Louis Park Middle School where he helped grow the choral department by over 300% and took those choirs to two international youth singing competitions.

From the U.S. to Asia, and now Europe, Carnes has worked as a choral clinician, educator, coach, and performer, but his heart and soul will always live in his work with young people singing. Now living with his wife Taryn and son Cillian in Co. Donegal Ireland, Carnes is pursuing his Doctor of Music Performance at The Royal Irish Academy of Music (Trinity College Dublin.) He is thrilled to be embarking on this journey as the founder of Danu Young Women's Choir. For more information please visit douglascarnes.com

Dr Helen Haughey - Accompanist

Helen Haughey is originally from Muff in Inishowen, and now lives in Redcastle. She began her piano studies at the age of 7 with Helen Keaveney, and studied with James MacCafferty, and Sr Eveleen in Loreto Milford, before winning a scholarship to the RIAM, where she studied for many years with Professor Brian Beckett. She holds licentiates in piano performance and teaching from the RIAM, and from Trinity and Guildhall schools of music in London. She studied music and composition in Trinity College, Dublin, where she was awarded a PhD in Musicology in 2001.

One of Helen's main interests is accompanying: she has worked at feiseanna, auditions and concerts, has broadcast for RTE, and performed at the NCH. She works with many primary schools in Inishowen, where she is also director of music in Carndonagh Parish, and the musical director of Carndonagh Musical Society.

Danu Young Women's Choir Singers

**indicates section leaders*

^indicates leaving cert students

Soprano 1

Lilykate Ní Chnámhsí

Aoife O'Keeffe

Ella Homer

Mia Kelly

*Caoimhe Parke

Grace Gavigan

Ava Munnely

*Tara Burke

Siun Farrelly

Keyasha Uragoda

Ríona Bonner

Aimee McNamee

Amy Doherty

Soprano 2

Sadbh Breathnach

Hannah McGrory

Sophie Fitzsimons

Karolina Marek

Ava Kearney

Alice O'Connor

*Sophia Basilio

Gráinne Friel

Grainne Gallagher

Carla Bousonville

Annie Gallagher

Clíodhna Mulkearns

Sorcha Ní Aragáin

Sam King

Dekota Teye

Amyleigh Robb

*Tiegan Robb

Alto

Katie Coyle

Eimear Mc Teague

Alisha Gallagher

*^Aobha Ní Aragáin

Holly Tinney

Róisín Ní Bhrolacháin

*Síne Cuevas Ní hAodha

Ally Kane

Orla Fabisiak

Hannah Lynch

Yagmur Ekici

Dana Manlagnit

Her Song

Douglas Carnes – Founder and Artistic/Executive Director

Helen Haughey– Accompanist

Love is Love is Love

Abbie Betinis - 2017

Justice choir songbook

Controlled Burn

Dessa and Jocelyn Hagen

Grace McGowan - Violin I, Una Ni Bhriain - Violin II, Paul Gillespie - Cello, Robert Peoples - Viola

This piece was a collaboration between hip-hop artist Dessa and composer Jocelyn Hagen and was written for a festival of over six-hundred high school singers and players.

*We're born with a fuse
timed to ignite.*

*It burns through our youth
then sets us alight for a while.*

*And when we're older
we'll laugh and say that we
were only kids but no one gets
closer to the burn of love and than
this.*

When the fires pass over

all you'll recall is the

ash on your shoulders

some lines on your palms

the worlds made in motion

we're carried along;

the current won't hold for long.

If you could stand your

younger selves behind you then

turn and walk the line;

how many strangers might

surprise you,

too changed by time to

recognize.

*When the fires pass over all you'll
recall is the ash on your shoulders
some lines on your palm.*

*Memory relents like rain melts the
limestone the years that you spent
in flames*

seem so strange now,

In Meeting We are Blessed

Troy Robertson b.1978

"We are met together and in meeting, we are blessed. Peace in coming and in going, peace in labor and in rest..."

- In Flight by local poet Denise Blake -

Recited by Caoimhe Parke

She Tore a Map

Timothy Takach b.1978

composed for the 2015-16 Women's Choir Commissioning Consortium

Once by mistake, she tore a map in half.

She taped it back, but crookedly.

Now all the roads ended in water.

There were mountains right next to her hometown.

Wouldn't that be nice if it were true?

I'd tear a map and be right next to you.

A Million Dreams (from The Greatest Showman)

Arranged by Rowena Harper

Grow Little Tree

Andrea Ramsey b.1977

Grow little tree, stretch your arms, and spread your leaves. What will you be?

Grow Little tree, wave your branches wild and free for all to see.

I'll grow too, just like you I'll grow tall. Nurture me, I look to you for what to do...

Teach me how to dance in the wind. Stand and soak up the sun.

When the storm brings a shower, let the earth catch my tears and sprout a new flower.

O Perfect Love - World Premier

Selina (Ina) Boyle b.1889 d.1967

- NOT by Erin Hanson -

Recited by Amelie McFadden

Im Not That Girl (from Wicked)

Stephen Schwartz b.1948

Soprano 1 - Alice O'Connor, Soprano 2 - Teigan Robb, Alto - Orla F

Gary Raymond - Drums

Never One Thing

May Erlewine b.1983

Arranged by Corie Brown

I'm the underbelly, I am the claw

I am the lion, I am the swan

Never one thing no, not one thing at all

I am the bull, I am the fawn

I'm a street fighter, I'm a prayer for peace

I am a woman, I am the ring

I'm a holy roller, I'm a honey bee

I am my own, never one thing

They're Red Hot

Robert Johnson

Arranged by Moira Smiley b.1976

- Rise Up from excerpts and writings of Susan B. Anthony -

Recited by Anna Mulhern

Rise up!

There shall never be another season of silence.

Deepen your sympathy then convert it to action.

Pray every single second of your life, not on your knees but with your work.

Think your best thoughts,

 speak your best words,

 do your best work.

There is so much yet to be done.

Rise up!

Rise Up

Arranged by Jake Runestad b.1986

You Do Not Walk Alone

Elaine Hagenberg b. 1979

- Leaving Cert Presentation -

Recited by Jiya Jino

They say everything happens for a reason and I've always been a strong believer in the universe having a plan. So when one random Tuesday, an American guy in a 3 piece suit walked into my music class to give our school band help with our competition piece, I knew the universe was planning something big. Doug told me I had "swagger" that day, which is a word I had never heard used unironically before but I could tell that he meant it. I felt seen when I auditioned for Danu and I trusted that every other person I was going to meet through this choir was going to have that 'swagger' too because Doug doesn't do anything without it.

I'm a reader and I always love to discover amazing worlds with mythical beasts and adventure because this world can be a little boring sometimes. One of my favourite things to look for in a book is found family. When a group of strangers - people whom you'd think would never even cross paths in their own worlds, people with different interests and opposing personalities - come together for a united cause. Doug likes to tell us stories. We laugh, we cry, we get frustrated, but we do it all together. That's what is so special about Danu. Everything - no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential - we do together as a family. A found family. My found family. Something I really never thought I'd find. And suddenly this world felt a lot less boring.

Danu has allowed me to learn so much about myself and to grow into a person who is ready to take on the world, all without judgment. Thank you, every single one of you, for allowing me that space to learn a little bit more about the person I am and the person I want to be. And thank you Doug, for giving me the opportunity to meet these incredible girls and unite through music. You allowed all of our voices that would usually go unnoticed to be heard. You all mean more than you'll ever know to me. Danu you truly were bigger than the whole sky and yes Doug, that was a Taylor Swift reference. But it's true. Words can't fully describe how much this experience has meant to me. Every Sunday night after rehearsal, my mum would always notice how happy my younger sister and I were. We wouldn't be able to stop singing for hours and the sense of accomplishment was like no other. It felt good to sing and to know what I was singing and to really feel what I was singing - things that all of you have helped me learn.

I want to finish with a message for the girls: Thank you for letting me be your big sister. It feels weird being the first one to be leaving but I find comfort in knowing my journey with Danu isn't fully over. I'm excited for those of you whose journeys are just beginning. I'll always be here for you to help and guide you if you need it, but I know the incredible people you are surrounded by will always support you too. The rest of your journey through Danu definitely won't always be easy, nothing ever is. Life throws everything at you but Doug, you really have brought together such a beautiful group of people and a support system that will always catch you when you fall. All I ask is for you to promise me one thing: never forget your big sister.

Desert Song

Säje

featuring Aobha Ní Aragáin, Alice O'Connor, Katie Coyle, Síne Cuevas Ní hAodha

Ray Ochaimshi - Bass, Aobha Ní Aragáin - Guitar

The Call (Leaving Cert Song)

Arranged by Douglas Carnes as a gift for Aobha Ní Aragáin and Danu Young Women's Choir

Aobha Ní Aragáin - Guitar

Still I Rise

Rosephanye Powell b.1962

Ray Ocnaimhsi - Bass, Gary Raymond - Drums

<i>Though I have been wounded, aching heart full of pain. Still I rise. Jus' like a budding rose, my bloom is nourished by rain. Still I rise. Haven't time to wonder why, though fearful I strive. Still I rise. My pray'r and faith uphold me 'til my courage arrives. Still I rise.</i>	<i>Gentle as a woman; tender sweet are my sighs. Still I rise. Strength is in my tears and healing rains in my cries. Still I rise. Plunging depths of anguish, I determine to strive. Still I rise. My pray'r and faith uphold me 'til my courage arrives. Still I rise.</i>	<i>Still I rise as an eagle, soaring above ev'ry fear. With each day I succeed, I grow strong an' believe. That it's all within my reach; I'm reaching for the skies, Bolstered by courage, yes, still I rise. Yes, it's all within my reach; I'm reaching for the skies, Yes, still I rise.</i>	<i>Though you see me slump with heartache; Heart so heavy that it breaks. Be not deceived I fly on bird's wings, rising sun, its healing rays. Look at me, you see a woman; Gentle as a butterfly. But don't you think, not for one moment, that I'm not strong because I cry.</i>
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Under the age of 14?
INTRODUCING...

DANÍN

Age 10-13 (as of Nov '23)
Auditions this summer
Rehearsal start in September

FAÍTHÍN

Age 9 and under
No audition required
Rehearsals start March 2024
Sign-ups start now!

»—————«
INTERESTED IN JOINING DANU?
»—————«

Low pressure
auditions
June/July/August

Open to girls
aged 14 - 18

Sunday evenings
6 - 8:30pm
Letterkenny

Spring season starts 25 August

For more information or to schedule an audition

Email - DYWCdirector@gmail.com

Call/text - 087.409.1655

Follow us @danuyoungwomenschoir

THANK YOU

- Singers, musicians, parents, families, and friends of the Danu Young Women's Choir
- Board of Directors and Volunteers for Danu Young Women's Choir
- Breda Bows and family
- Conwal Parish Church for the use of their beautiful church to sing and worship
- Taryn, Cillian, and Douglas Carnes
- Colaiste Ailigh students, staff, and faculty
- Loreto Milford for the use of their choral risers
- Una Ní Bhriain and Maurice Kelly
- ***Karen Murphy School of Speech and Drama**
- ***John Soffe Photography**
- ***Fiona Herbst Jewellery**
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Good luck to all performers this evening! We are thrilled to collaborate with such amazing young women. #girlpower!

For more information please visit <https://karenmurphyspeechanddrama.ie/>