



Welcome to Old Forge Books, the online home of PJ Curtis. Born in the village of Kilnaboy, Co. Clare, in the midst of the wonderful Burren hills, Mullaghmore, author, musicologist and lecturer PJ Curtis has been professionally involved in the music industry as a radio broadcaster, a record producer, author and lecturer.....and all of this since the mid-seventies!

WRITING

PJ is a published author with four books to his credit:

'Notes From The Heart - A Celebration of Irish Traditional Music' (Poolbeg 1994)

'One Night In The Life of RV Mulrooney'. A Novel (Poolbeg 1995)

'The Music Of Ghosts' (Old Forge Books November 2003)

'The Lightning Tree' published on Brandon Books in March 2006.

MUSIC PRODUCTION

Having returned to Ireland in 1974 after many years exploring the world, PJ joined Mulligan Records as an A & R Manager and subsequently as a record producer.

54 album productions later and having worked in Nashville, Memphis, San Diego, San Francisco and Phoenix Arizona, PJ still works as a freelance record producer. His credits include working with some of the worlds finest artists including Altan, Pumpkinhead, Dolores Keane, Maura O'Connell, Freddie White, Scullion, Stockton's Wing, Charlie McGettigan, Mary Black, Frances Black, Arcady, Liam Clancy & Tommy Makem, Sean Keane (of The Chieftains), Davy Spillane, Bela Fleck & Jerry Douglas, Albert Lee, Rory Gallagher, Sean Tyrrell, Jerry Lynch, Mick Hanly, The Barry McCabe Band, Matt Manning, The Josephine Marsh Band, Sean Garvey, Mary McPartland and Ronan Leonard.

PJ won two N.A.I.R.D (National American Independent Record Distributors) Awards for Altan's albums 'The Red Crow' (1990) and 'Harvest Storm' (1992).

BROADCASTING

His professional broadcasting career began in the 1980's with the 'Roots of Rock' and 'The House of R&B' on RTE Radio 2. The ground-breaking radio programme, 'The House of R&B', was to be the first programme ever on Irish radio to regularly feature authentic Blues, Black Gospel, Tex-Mex, Cajun and Zydeco, African and World Music et al.

A number of 'specialist' radio programmes and documentaries followed, among them, 'Personal Best', a programme devoted to Ethnic, Roots and 'World Music' (before the term was used), for which he won the 1986 Jacob's National Radio Award.

Between 1988 and 2004, PJ has broadcast a wide variety of Roots/World/ 'Specialist' radio programmes and Documentaries on BBC. (N.I.), Century Radio (where he won a 1989 Smithwicks/Hot Press National Radio Award for his eclectic 'Rhythm & Roots' programme), Clare FM, and, more recently, 'Reels To Ragas' on Lyric FM, for which he won a 'Fairplay For Airplay National Radio Award' in Jan of 2002.

WORKSHOPS & LECTURES

As well as his broadcasting and record producing work, PJ has delivered many lectures /talks and workshops on Irish traditional, Rock 'n Roll, R&B, Roots, Gospel etc. both at home, in the U.K. (Univ. of Bristol) and the USA.(Univ. of S. Francisco and Univ. of Nth Carolina, Charlotte N.C.).

Lecture Titles:

- ♪ The Crooked Road - A History of Irish Traditional Music and Song
- ♪ The Development of Rock From African and European Roots'
- ♪ The History of the Slide Guitar 1900-2000
- ♪ A History of the Uilleann Piping on Record since 1900
- ♪ A History of Black Gospel from 1900-2000
- ♪ Record Production: The Role of the Record Producer in Popular Music'
- ♪ Voices of The World - Unplugged (a short history of Acappella Singing)
- ♪ The Life and Legend of Robert Johnson - King Of the Delta Bluesmen
- ♪ The Influence of Irish Traditional Music & Song on American Bluegrass and Country Music
- ♪ From O'Riada To Riverdance: The development of Irish Music 1960-2000's

AWARDS:

For Radio

2003 - New Adventures in Broadcasting for Best Radio Music Documentary (BCI) . Series producer for 5 music Docos commissioned by Connemara Community Radio.

2001 - 'Fairplay For Airplay' National Radio Award for 'Reels to Ragas' World Music programme on Lyric FM.

1989 - Smithwicks/Hot Press National Radio Award for Century Radio Programme, 'Rhythm & Root's'.

1986 - Jacobs National Radio Award for RTE Radio 1 programme, 'Personal Best'.

For Record Production

1992 - National American Independent Record Distributors (N.A.I.R.D) Award for Altan's 'Harvest Storm'.

1990 - National American Independent Record Distributors (N.A.I.R.D) Award for Altan's 'The Red Crow'

For Writing

2004 - Winner of The Bram Stoker Dracula Gothic Short Story Competition with 'The Stone Goddess'.

2000 - Winner of the IRMA (Int. Regional Mag. Ass) International Award of Merit for Written Essay (Toronto).

RECENT PROJECTS

2007 - Consultant contributor to 'The Encyclopaedia of Irish Music

2006 - 2008 Lecturer in Irish Music Studies- 2 year Diploma Course, University College Galway

2006 - His 4th book, and his 2nd novel, 'The Lightning Tree' published on Brandon Books

2006 - 'The Lightning Tree' serialized over 5 nights on RTE Radio 1's 'Book on One'. Reader Martina Carroll.

2005 - Awarded Honorary Master Of Arts Degree by National University of Ireland, citation read: "For outstanding work and achievements since the 1970's as Broadcaster, Record Producer, Author and Music Historian."

2005 - Narrator (and Subject) of Radio Documentary 'Anvils In The Blood' broadcast on RTE Radio 1. (Produced by award winning Radio Producer Tim Lehane)

2004 - Narrated story 'The Music of Ghosts' (with original music by Josephine Marsh) on Lyric FM.