

Irish Music and the Otherworld



Music of the Otherworld

Music features as a prominent aspect of the Irish Otherworld. The songs of *sidhe* and other supernatural beings such as merfolk have been described as pleasing but also powerful. One small *sidhe* musician named Senbecc once played three tunes on the harp for Cúchulainn. The first was melancholy and caused Cúchulainn to weep. The next was merry and caused Cuchulainn to laugh uncontrollably. The last was soothing and put Cúchulainn into a deep slumber.

Early Irish Instruments

There was a range of different types of instruments present in early Ireland. The *timpan* was a small stringed instrument that slightly resembles a modern day banjo or guitar. *Bagpipes*, and simple end-blown *pipes* were also in general use. *Trumpets* and *horns* were present as well and were typically used as signals during hunts, battles, and in the courts of kings. *Harp*s were perhaps the most celebrated instruments in early Ireland and can be found in some of Ireland's oldest legends.

