

Listen to this interview with two pipers at a festival.

Optional exercise

You are going to hear some players talking about the bagpipes. Which of the subjects below do you think they will mention? Then listen and see if you were right. (Answers below)

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|----|-------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| a. | the history of the instrument | e. | playing in public |
| b. | how they learned to play | f. | how they keep the instrument clean |
| c. | some playing tips | g. | their own compositions |
| d. | famous performers | h. | unusual facts about the bagpipes |
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Interviewer – We're here at the Interceltique Festival in Brittany, France and I'm talking to two as yet little known pipers- Iria Salgado (IS), from Galicia, and from Ireland, Ronan Doherty (RD). So how did you get started?

RD There's been music in my family for as long as I can remember. I learnt the tin whistle when I was six and then after a year my father bought me my first set of pipes. But it was an uncle who gave me lessons.

IS I was five when I started. I learnt by ear from my father, imitating him like it's always been done. When I was ten he started putting me in for competitions.

Interviewer- Who have been your musical influences?

IS Well, Milladoiro, who started it all, and Carlos Nuñez who really put Galician music on the map. But my greatest inspiration has got to be players like Susana Seivane and Cristina Pato for showing that women can be out there just as much as the men.

Interviewer- Ronan?

RD erm, all the obvious names really, Paddy Keenan from the Bothy Band, Liam O'Flynn, Davy Spillane, who I met recently, though I didn't get to play with him.

Interviewer- What sort of places do you play?

RD Well in Dublin you're spoilt for choice these days, and I have family out in Westport, County Mayo. I'm always there in the holidays so I often go along and sit in on sessions at Molloy's.

Interviewer- Iria, I know you've started writing you own stuff - how would you categorise your music?

IS It's always based on the traditional repertoire, but I try to incorporate other Celtic influences as well, and the people I play with are no longer just from my corner of Europe. We have Irish, Cuban and Brazilian guys that come into the group, and so that gets reflected in the music I write.

Interviewer- Ronan, what has been your best gig so far?

RD Performing at the International Bagpipe Festival in Strakonice last year, the crack was amazing¹ and the chance to get together with guys from other traditions- Czechs, Breton pipers, Bulgarians - some incredible sounds really.

Interviewer – Iria, what advice would you give to other women wanting to take up the pipes?

IS Now is definitely the time - there's a whole new generation coming through. Even though women pipers are still a minority, there's much more acceptance than there was. Nearly half the bagpipe students in Galicia now are girls.

Interviewer – Where can we hear you playing next? Have you got many gigs lined up?

RD I'm doing a series of dates with the band in the west of Ireland, and then going over to Holland and Germany next March.

IS I've got a few concerts in Galicia next month and then I'll be in Zamora in Spain for a week.

Interviewer – Great. Thanks very much. And to play us out you're going to do a traditional muineira followed by a reel.
¹'the crack was amazing' is an Irish/Scottish expression meaning 'we had a very good time'

Answers: b, d, e, g