

FEB26-ROSAS-S1-EP3-IRPP



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**INTERVIEW SCRIPT: DONAL RYAN**

**PRODUCTION: RAISED ON SONGS & STORIES**

**RECORDING SCHEDULE: TBA**

**AUTHORISED RECIPIENTS: KK – DR -SK - DK**

**OUTLINE SCRIPT:** Raised on Song & Story EP2S1 - Running Time: TBA

**Advert / Sponsor time space:** 2 minutes 30 Seconds, (*approximately*)

**Music:** Rare Old Times - Solo piano version – plays underneath KK intro and fades at DR´s reply:

**KK:** He lives in the Treaty County, was born in the Premier County, has published seven novels and a collection of short stories while being crowned: ‘*King of the New Wave of Irish writers*’ by none other than that august organ; The Manchester Guardian.

**KK:** Every one of his books to date are best-sellers, his works have been translated into 20 languages and, to cap all that, he walked away with the prestigious Orwell prize for political fiction in 2025 –though, it should be said that is just one of a number of gongs;

**KK:** Being the first Irish writer to be awarded the Jean-Monnet Prize for European Literature is another and then his debut novel; *The Spinning Heart* – which, to be accurate, wasn´t actually his first novel - was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2013, and also voted; Irish Book of the Decade in 2016 while his fourth novel, *From a Low And Quiet Sea*, was also Booker longlisted in 2018.

**KK:** I´ve yet to mention he holds a degree in law from the University of Limerick and when he´s not penning best-sellers and winning awards he lectures at UL on creative writing.

**KK:** OK, let´s take a moment to digest that lengthy introduction before we elicit some tunes and chat books, writing and the meaning of success with this Irish essayist, novelist, dramatist - the all-round creative talent:

**Music:** Rare Old Times - Solo piano version – 1 full round of the tune

**KK:** Donal Ryan - You´re very welcome to: Raised on Song and Story

**DR Replies**

**KK:** I´m going to kick off this friendly interrogation by testing your local knowledge.

**KK:** In my introduction I said you lived in the Treaty County and were born in the Premier County – what counties are they and how did they get those nicknames?

**DR replies:**

**KK:** just another quick one before I dive in – what exactly does ‘*long listed for the booker*’ mean?

**DR Replies:**

**KK:** Great – so tell me a bit about growing up in 80 ´s Ireland – were you a well-off family, where did you go to school – what sort of a kid were you- a wild child, a sporty sort or the quiet introverted type – glued to the tele or with your nose permanently stuck in a book?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Can you remember how old you were when you started reading and what sort of stuff held your attention at the time and did you have someone in your life that played an influential part in you ending up doing what you do?

**DR answers**

**KK:** Before we move on to the halcyon years of long summers, secondary school and university – let ´s have your first song choice – the tune that always takes you back to early 90 ´s Limerick and a developing Donal Ryan dealing with the angst of adolescence?

**DR picks song and explains his choice**

**Music:** Play [song] ´

Sponsor Advert 30 Seconds

**KK:** That was [*song title & artist*] selected by novelist Donal Ryan as one of the tunes that still resonates from the teenage years.

**KK:** So, secondary school, where was it, what subjects found you, what teachers remain with you, looking back now, did it shape, did it prepare you?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** As you have a law degree from UL or university of Limerick for those not from around here, I take it that was your next adventure in education?

**DR Answer:**

**SKK:** Okay before we get on to your writing career – there you are; a young student of right and wrong - in a judicial sense anyway - did you then and do you now develop a considered opinion on the justice system and its consequential system of justice as it applies in practice or better still – real life?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Suddenly you´re a young man on the cusp of responsible adulthood making his way in a new millennium - what song reminds you of back then; - of freedom - of college - of the next chapter still a mystery, waiting to be solved and written What piece of music or song would conjure up that time and those places in your mind?

**DR selects song and explains his choice**

**Music:** Play [song]

Sponsor Advert 30 seconds

**KK:** I´m here with bestselling Irish novelist Donal Ryan and we´ve just listened to (*song title and artist*) - a tune he remembers from when the boy opened the evolving doors of life for the man to find his way

**KK:** You´re equipped with a law degree and the world awaits Donal Ryan– a young man with ambition tempered by new responsibilities and a developing maturity - by the time you´d graduated, had you written anything of substance that might make you believe it could lead to a road less travelled?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** I know you worked for for the National Employment Rights Authority for a spell – paint me a portrait of the artist as a civil servant.

**DR Answer**

**KK:** Let´ s place ourselves in 2012, The Spinning Heart is on the bookshelves and awards are on their way – how did it all feel - was its success a surprise or something you kind of expected?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Before we get on to the technical and professional aspects of being a multiple best-selling author - can we talk about you being a married man Donal with two children – tell us a bit about the family man as opposed to the successful best-selling writer- and then we´ll have you pick your next song - which will be from your days of what us married men euphemistically refer to as; settled-down maturity – personally I think this tune should probably be the one you danced your first dance as a married man myself but hey – your funeral.

**DR selects song and talks about it**

**Music:** Play [song]

Sponsor Advert 30 Seconds

**KK:** That was [Song title] by [artist name] – Irish novelist Donal Ryan’s evocation of a time in his life when responsibility was more than a looming consideration.

**KK:** Let’s talk your debut published novel: ‘*The Spinning Heart*’ - for listeners who haven’t read it I would introduce the work as a series of monologues told from different perspectives - and in the vernacular dialogue of people from a small village in rural Ireland whose lives change dramatically when boom suddenly became bust with the economic collapse of 2008 - savage, violent and funny - in a very dark way at times - extremely salient - in so far as it’s pretty close to a disturbing reality of both then and, possibly, now – is that the story you set out to write?

**DR Replies:**

**KK:** Personally, I enjoyed the book and particularly your technique of creating a bit of a whodunnit with the differing levels of veracity stemming from characters opinions and observations, - makes for an entertaining and somewhat compulsive read. The book has been described as a post-modern approach to detailing a parochial view of global emotional despair with a grudging reliance on second hand hope – would you agree with that?

**DR Replies:**

**KK** For those of us who have read the book, I feel obliged to ask how much of Pokey Burke or, indeed, Bobby Mahon or any of the twenty odd characters - throughout the narrative - are based on real people and is the village drawn from anywhere in particular – or should I not ask?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** How long did it take to write?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Okay so you laboured and edited until you’re happy with your effort - then you face the universal problem of every new writer - how does one get a publishing deal for their first book?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** After *The Spinning Heart* you hit the ground running with a string of successful novels – which appeared in the following order: Heart at Peace

The Queen of Dirt Island

Strange Flowers

From a Low and Quiet Sea

Slanting of the Sun

All We Shall Know

Where are the Kings

**KK:** So, there you go 7 best-sellers in the space of 14 years – basically a hit every two years – hugely impressive Donal – what’s off-shore banking like? No, but seriously - success can bring many things – so when *The Spinning Heart* became a best-seller and the first big royalty cheque hit the doormat – did you treat yourself?

**DR Answers**

**KK:** Time for your next song – where are you musically - at this seminal point in your life?

**DR selects song and talks about be it**

**Music:** Play [song]

Sponsor Advert 30 Seconds

**KK:** I’m here with Donal Ryan talking about his life and times and the bestselling books he’s written – that was; (*song & artist*) which Donal chose as a track he relates to a time when his work started working.

**KK:** While researching you and your work for this show, I read your style described as being intimate polyphonic portrayals of Irish rural life – first of all why did you chose a polyphonic style?

**KK:** Secondly; do you think our overseas listeners would find your books a true reflection of rural Irish society if they visited villages in the mid-west of Ireland next week?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Just looking at my notes Donal I’ve a bunch of prompts scribbled out -would you mind if I just throw them at you one at a time and we see where it takes us?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** A Short Story you really rate?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Foscadh?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Gaiety Theatre?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Editing and editors?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Meeting your readers and book signings?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Waiting for the muse of inspiration?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Your writing process: how to start, continue and finish?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Publisher pressure and deadlines

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** I'm talking to Irish novelist Donal Ryan, who has been filling me in on who he is, what he does and how he does it – all the while giving us an insight into his psyche through selecting songs from various different stages of his life –

**KK:** Donal, I know you've just finished your latest novel *Where are the Kings* – are you working on anything at the moment and if so, can you tell us about it?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** When will it be available?

**KK:** There are lots of aspiring writers out there who have submitted a novel to a hundred publishers, literary agents or whatnot and now have a drawer full of rejection slips from those who bothered to answer – you've been that soldier – any advice for dealing with rejection?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Where are you on Audio books and AI authors?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Before we sign off let me put you through a quick-fire wringer – the radio Rorschach test if you like – so, no thinking just answering, first thing that comes to mind?

**DR Replies:**

**KK:** American Writer?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** British Writer?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** French Writer?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** World Writer?

**DR Answer:**

**KK:** Existentialism or Nihilism or absurdism?

**DR answer:**

**KK:** Great stuff – I´m going to finish with your last music choice – and that good sir, is the song or piece of music you really wish you´d written?

**DR selects song and talks about it**

**Music:** Play [song]

Sponsor Advert 30 Seconds

**KK:** That was [*Song title*] by [*Artist*] – bestselling Irish novelist Donal Ryan´s final song choice and the one he wished he´d written.

**KK:** You´ve been listening to Irish novelist Donal Ryan being thoroughly entertaining in Raised on song and story. If you want to buy any or all of Donal´s books just go to the Penguin Random House website and if you want to find out more about Donal, log on to the University of Limerick website and type in Donal Ryan - for our old school listeners who like to browse - all of Donal´s books can be ordered from any good bookshop.

**KK:** Thanks a million Donal.

**DR final salute and observations:**

**Music:** Rare Old Times piano plays underneath vox to fade out after credits

**KK:** Thanks to you lot out there for keeping us company - maybe you´ll all join me next time we delve into the life of someone who writes and tells stories along with

having a song or several in their back pocket. Goodnight and may your God go with you

**VO:** Raised on Song & Story was written by DJ Kelly & presented by Kenneth Kelly

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**END**