Here's to Song

Allister MacGillivray arr. Diane Loomer and Larry Nickel



*consider directing in 2/2 for the sake of phrasing

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dlivray: (b. 1948) renowned songwriter, guitarist, record producer, folklorist and author from the Island of in the province of Nova Scotia, in eastern Canada.

Jorn and raised in the coal-mining/fishing town of Glace Bay. His grandparents on the MacGillivray side were speaking, and various cousins played violin, guitar or accordion at weekly family-music-sessions — before the sion of television. A child performer from the age of seven, he met many of the stars of Cape Breton's musical nmunity while touring variety shows. In addition to this exposure to traditional and popular music, he was recruited y boy choirs, and studied and sang Gregorian chant. Allister became enthralled with British and American folk-music at the age of thirteen, and from then on performed only with folk-oriented bands.

During his university years, he worked and recorded in Kansas City, Missouri, with a group from The Dutch East Indies. Following graduation from St. F.X U. in Antigonish, he toured two years with a trio headed by Cape Breton folksinger John Allan Cameron. Besides its own dedicated following, the group opened for Anne Murray and The Irish Rovers, bringing the house down in a 1970 appearance at "The Grand Ole Opry" in Nashville, Tennessee. On "Ceilidh", Cameron's Canadian national television program, Allister served as guitarist and musical director.

During the mid seventies, Allister performed as a full-time guitarist with the Irish/Newfoundland group Ryan's Fancy, which toured Canada and Ireland. He recorded and co-produced several albums with this trio, and again was musical director on both regional and national television programs. At this point his songwriting career began to blossom. Ryan's Fancy recorded Allister's "Sea People", "Tie Me Down" and "Coal Town Road", and the group featured "Song For The Mira" during many of their live performances. A particular highlight of Allister's performing career was accompanying Irish superstars Tommy Makem & Liam Clancy, in television series and several extended tours of the eastern United States and Canada. Allister left "the road" around 1980, choosing to settle in rural Cape Breton to concentrate on an eclectic career of songwriting, compositing, compositing the Cape Breton experience. During the last several years, Allister has worked as researcher and artistic director on a series of short films on the Cape Breton style of traditional Scottish fiddling (see the Highland Legacy DVD), and continued his intuitive songwriting.

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