

SONGS OF FREEDOM

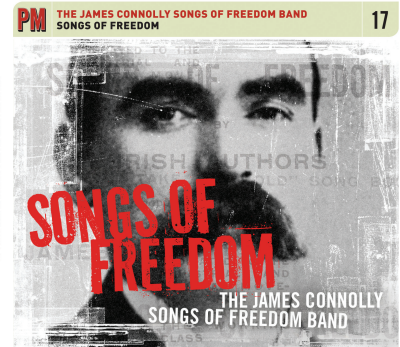
The James Connolly Songs of Freedom Band

"My grand aunt Nora Connolly, in her book *We Shall Rise Again*, said of rebel songs: 'For more may be remembered of a country's history and treasured deep in the heart of a people through a song or a poem than through the pages of a history book'—how true. It was Nora who taught singers her father's songs. 'After 1916,' she said, 'I never did any more singing'—how sad. Now with this project and through the great talent and commitment of all involved we can hear Nora sing again." —James Connolly Heron, great-grandson of James Connolly and author of *The Words of James Connolly*

From the rollicking welcome of "A Festive Song" to the defiant battle cry of "Watchword of Labor," *Songs of Freedom* accomplishes the difficult task of making contemporary music out of old revolutionary songs. Far from the archival preservation of embalmed corpses, the inspired performance of a rocking band turns the timeless lyrics of James Connolly into timely manifestos for today's young rebels. As Connolly himself repeatedly urged, nothing can replace the power of music to raise the fighting spirit of the oppressed.

Giving expression to Connolly's internationalism, musical influences ranging from traditional Irish airs to American rhythm and blues are combined here in refreshing creativity. As for the songs themselves, nine have lyrics by Connolly, three were written about Connolly and one, "The Red Flag," was chosen by Connolly to be in the original *Songs of Freedom* songbook of 1907, subsequently becoming a classic song of Labor. The instrumentation is acoustic: guitars, uilleann pipes, whistles, fiddle, accordion, and Irish harp, as well as drums and bass.

1. A Festive Song
2. James Connolly, The Irish Rebel
3. Slaves of Toil
4. Of Human Freedom
5. Shake Out Your Banners
6. Connolly Was There
7. Be Moderate
8. The Red Flag
9. Saoirse Ruin
10. Where Is James Connolly?
11. The Rebel Song
12. When Labor Calls
13. Watchword of Labor



SUBJECT CATEGORY
Music-Irish, Acoustic

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