



LOOK BEHIND YOU!

A FATHER AND SON'S IMPRESSIONS
OF 'THE TROUBLES' IN NORTHERN IRELAND
THROUGH PHOTOGRAPH AND SONG



In 2012 Northern Irish singer-songwriter Steafán Hanvey completed *Nuclear Family* – an album that meditates on the constructive and destructive forces inherent in most (normal) families and relationships. As he sifted through his memories and experiences, he realised that the public and political face of Northern Ireland was pressed hard against the window of his private and personal world; in short, his ‘family’ couldn’t be “explained” in isolation – context, though not *everything*, was a significant *something*. As an artist, that *something* had always troubled Steafán, and making the album made him realise that despite the fact that he had never written explicitly about Northern Ireland, *Northern Ireland had written him*.

And so, album in the can, Steafán turned his gaze towards the face at the window. Mute at first, it finally exclaimed: *Look Behind You!* And so he did. Struggling to make sense of what he saw, Steafán realised that not only would he have to open up to new modes of expression, he’d also have to participate in that most nerve-wracking of things -- an unexpected collaboration.

Look Behind You! is a multi-media performance that details how a father and son (both artists) have negotiated the personal and political landscapes of Northern Ireland. Using image and voice, anecdote and memory, it showcases Bobbie Hanvey’s prize-winning photojournalism along with radio-edits of his interviews with some of Northern Ireland’s best-known figures. These are complemented and contextualised by Steafán Hanvey’s story-telling, which comes in the form of critically-acclaimed song-writing, and a trained academic’s gift for presenting complex issues in an engaging manner.

Together, Bobbie and Steafán document the (extra)ordinary – mums and dads, police and priests, the loved and the loveless, soldiers and paramilitaries, politicians and voters, poets, singers, painters, Travellers gathered around a fire on a cold winter’s morning, the living and the dead.

Look Behind You! mashes up the public and the private, and dares to promote the artistic maxim that “the end of art is peace.”

“Look Behind You! A multi-media performance lecture by Irish singer-songwriter Steafán Hanvey, brilliantly blends his father Bobbie’s iconic photographs of the Troubles with his own beautifully crafted words, music and lyrics to offer audiences a moving and memorable experience.”

(Robert O’Neill/John J. Burns Library, Boston College)

www.steafanhavney.com



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