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Enya



## Enya's Heavenly Comeback

The Celtic chanteuse returns with her first album in six years on Nov. 20. Now the 54-year-old opens up about making *Dark Sky Island*, why she leads a private life, and what she really thinks about the term "New Age." **By Gillian Telling**

**It's been a while since you've released new music. Was there any reason for the break?** With [1988's] *Watermark* going into *Shepherd Moons*, and that going into *The Memory of Trees*...while there was a three-year gap in between them, I was actually in the studio for each of those three years. So after [2008's] *And Winter Came*, I thought, I'm not actually ready to get back into it.

**What did you do with your time off?** I bought a place in the south of France, which was a good excuse for a real break. I cut myself off completely. And then in the

spring of 2012, I got that wonderful feeling of "Oh, I need to get in front of a piano again." I had songs in my head. This kind of felt like a first album for me, because there was so much to write about.

**How does your music achieve such an angelic sound—do you have real-life cherubs in the studio with you?** In the '80s I worked with producer Nicky Ryan, who first had this idea of using the voice like an instrument.... So I sing a part of the song all the way through and he records it, and then I do the second part. We'll do it six to eight times—16, even—

and add the harmonies. There's something that happens naturally when you're singing live, so you capture that, and you layer it. It's quite a unique sound he's created.

**How would you classify your music? You probably don't love the term "New Age."**

It did bother me, because New Age isn't really about what I do. That's more electronic recorded music, and we're more real-time. And the emotional content is really important.

**You've chosen to lead a pretty private life and tend to shun the media. Why?**

I've had my share of stalkers. And I just feel my success has been, from the beginning, about the music. The success of [the 1988 hit] "Orinoco Flow" caught everyone by surprise. When people heard it, they had no idea if I was a band or a female singer. They didn't know the face behind the song. So I had a choice. I didn't have to front the music on the stage—I was just able to stay with the music. It wasn't important to me to do any interviews that would make me more famous. I just wanted to be in the studio. It wasn't like I had a plan of keeping myself shrouded in mystery.

**You've sold over 80 million records worldwide. What about your music connects with fans around the world?**

It fascinates me. But I think people who listen to my music sense the emotions that I'm feeling in my own performances—and then interpret their own emotions with the music. It becomes very personal for some people.

The singer in 1995

