



## **The arts past and present**

*Ireland: Cashel Castle, Tipperary*

### **Narrator**

At Cashel the cathedral had been taken over by the Protestant Church of Ireland in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and abandoned in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the round tower remained intact. The commanding site and the distinctive shape of the tower represented a brand of Irish Christianity that pre-dated the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Vincent Comerford**

The preservation of Cashel and such places was, I think, always seen as an obligation on the Irish state. These places too very often had a large popular appeal, for example, sometimes they had religious significance, but also Cashel that is just such a wonderful place that it couldn't but command interest. It's a kind of palimpsest if you like of so much of Irish history.

### **Narrator**

The important Romanesque chapel owed a good deal to an architecture brought to Ireland in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, whose roots were continental rather than English.

### **Vincent Comerford**

Cormac's chapel is one of the few examples really of building that can be seen as distinctively Irish architecture. It has for a long time been seen as this symbolic Irish building and several churches of various denominations are modelled on Cormac's Chapel, so that's another reason why Cashel has this particular importance.