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MESSAGE FROM THE ICTM IRELAND CHAIR

Chair: Lonán Ó Briain, Assistant Professor, Department of Music, University of Nottingham

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this bumper issue of our annual bulletin, Spéis. Jack and Éamonn have worked tirelessly to produce this first bilingual edition in both online and print format. In the following pages, you’ll find contributions by some of Ireland’s most established ethnomusicologists alongside essays by the next generation of scholars. We also include details on our forthcoming conferences, a review of the most recent ICTM Ireland Annual Conference and information on recent publications and research projects by ICTM Ireland members.

Keeping our members connected and informed is an important part of maintaining the ICTM Ireland community. In addition to our regular social media updates via Twitter and Facebook, the committee has established an email listserv and is currently investing in an upgrade of our website. The listserv is open to members and non-members alike. This resource will be moderated and can be used for announcements of calls for papers, employment opportunities, scholarly publications and other information that might be of interest to ethnomusicologists in Ireland and elsewhere. Free registration is necessary and can be completed accessing the following link: https://listserv.heanet.ie/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=ICTM-IRELAND&A=1

Many of you will already be aware that the World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (http://www.ictmusic.org/event/44th-ictm-world-conference) will be held in Ireland next month. ICTM Ireland will have several featured events at this conference including a panel showcasing our research, a display table where you can sign up for membership and for the listserv, and performances and other contributions by current and former committee members. From this year onwards, we will be printing high-quality copies of Spéis for circulation among members. You can pick up a free copy at our display table. The latest issue of our peer-reviewed journal, Ethnomusicology Ireland, should also be published online and
available to read at the conference.

In 2013, ICTM Ireland released a CD compilation of field recordings by its members. The release was titled *Fieldwork Vol. 1* in anticipation of further volumes. In the few short years since then, the Internet has increasingly become the primary medium for listening to and viewing recorded music. To utilise the opportunity that this presents, the ICTM Ireland committee has created our own Fieldnotes YouTube Channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6zPLJQQrfizJoVevvUZIdQ). This channel is intended to be an adjunct to the CD compilation, and we are calling on our members to submit field recordings to be uploaded to the channel. This new resource has the potential to showcase the diversity of work undertaken by our membership to the widest possible audience. Please contact Éamonn Costello at secretary@ictm.ie for further details.

We look forward to meeting many of you at the World Conference in Limerick next month!
Anaïs Verhulst (Treasurer)

Anaïs Verhulst is in the final year of her PhD in Ethnomusicology at University College Dublin. Her research focuses on the violin and the ways in which it is used across the world. For her doctoral thesis, she is investigating the violin in Karnatak music, Norwegian folk music, and heavy metal. She has worked as a tutor and occasional lecturer in UCD, teaching about music theory, music in Ireland, and musics of the world. Anaïs moved to Ireland in 2012 to begin an MMus in Ethnomusicology in UCD. Before this she studied in her Belgian hometown at the University of Leuven where she gained a BA and MA in Musicology. As a musician, she is a classical pianist, fiddler, and plays with the National Concert Hall Gamelan Orchestra.

Jack Talty (Education Officer)

Jack Talty is a traditional musician, composer, record producer, academic, and educator from county Clare. As a performer Jack has travelled extensively and has contributed to over 50 albums to date as a musician, producer, composer, arranger, and engineer. Jack founded the traditional music label Raelach Records in 2011. He has released three albums with the award-winning Ensemble Ériu and performs as a section leader with the Irish Memory Orchestra. A music graduate of University College Cork, Jack has been awarded the Mary V. Hart Memorial Award, The Seán Ó Riada Memorial Award, and a University College Cork Bene Merenti award. Jack’s doctoral research at the Irish World Academy, University of Limerick, supported by the Irish Research Council’s Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Award, explores the Institutionalisation of Irish
traditional music pedagogy in Irish higher education. Jack’s most recent publication is a chapter contribution to *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, edited by Robin D. Moore and published by Oxford University Press.

John Millar (Communications Officer)

John received his BA degree from University College Dublin in 2013, followed by a Master’s degree in Musicology the following year, specialising in ethnomusicology. He has lectured in musicology at University College Dublin and St. Patrick’s College, teaching modules on the analysis of popular music, world music, and on the discipline of ethnomusicology. As a musician, John is a member of the National Concert Hall Gamelan, as well as being active in the country music scene in Dublin. Currently pursuing a PhD in Ethnomusicology, his research interests include the practice of country music in Ireland, cultural appropriation and adaptation, and the philosophy and phenomenology of music.
Professor Ó Súilleabháin about the significance of the ICTM World Conference coming to the Irish World Academy, his keynote address, and his reflections on traditional arts scholarship today.

First, Ó Súilleabháin reflects on the significance of the ICTM World Conference coming to the Irish World Academy in July.

“Jack, I think it’s absolutely amazing for me, as you can imagine, to look at the primary international traditional music academic organisation coming to Ireland in the first place, but actually then coming to the Academy, at this particular time especially. If we had tried to do it ten years ago, I don’t think we would have been ready. As you know more than most, it has coincided beautifully with the emergence of the new building, and of course, the University of Limerick itself is very well set up for conferences; it’s a bit like an academic hotel when you get into the summer months, and the regular students are gone. The facilities are second to none. For the Ethnomusicology, the Traditional Music and Dance, and Ethnochoreology programmes, in particular, an event like this focuses, in a very significant way, international attention on Limerick as a potential site. And I hope that what the Academy can give in terms of

The Irish World Academy at the University of Limerick will host the 44th ICTM World Conference from July 13th to 19th. Coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the founding of the ICTM organisation, this international conference visits Ireland for the first time this year. To open the conference, Professor Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Professor Emeritus and Founding Director of the Irish World Academy will present a keynote address entitled: ‘The Redress of Music: Music, Mediation, and Parity of Esteem’. To discuss the upcoming conference, I spoke to

Conference Keynote Speaker
Professor Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin in conversation with Jack Talty.
the quality of its hosting to the conference itself will bring them back in future years”.

Throughout his career, Ó Súilleabháin has battled fervently to carve out a pedagogical space for the traditional arts in Irish higher education. I asked him to describe how it feels to see such a major international traditional music organisation celebrate its 70th year, in Ireland.

“When I started to study ethnomusicology with John Blacking and John Baily in Belfast, I was already doing the best I could to construct these initial curricula in Irish traditional music within the degree programme in Cork. The amalgamation, interaction, and dialogue between the local knowledge of Irish traditional music studies and the international discipline of ethnomusicology was really ripe for development. Now looking back, it has developed wonderfully, but there was no way of knowing whether that would happen or not. This conference in a way validates that whole journey because what we have are specialists in Irish traditional music operating very often through an ethnomusicological perspective. Every time that happens our understanding of Irish traditional music in its local, and its global contexts, is enhanced. I think that’s the significance of it for me”.

The title of Ó Súilleabháin’s keynote address at the 2017 ICTM World Conference is “The Redress of Music: Music, Mediation, and Parity of Esteem”. Drawing on analogous negotiations of the relationship between the local and the global in poetry, Ó Súilleabháin provides some insight into what he will discuss.

“The redress of music is an interesting one, and I borrowed it, as I’ll be pointing out of course, from a book of essays by Seamus Heaney, called The Redress of Poetry. Heaney talks about the importance of local accent, you know, and his local accent of Mossbawn, of Anahorish, and all of that area near to Lough Neagh, and his realisation that the more global and the more famous he became, the more important that return to his roots were. And he talks a lot in some of his essays about Patrick Kavanagh, and about the excitement of encountering Kavanagh’s poetry for the first time and realising that this local man from Monaghan could actually be true to the agriculture of his culture, or the culture of his agriculture, the ground in a way, and yet at the same time say something that was releasing something into a more global context. There wasn’t a contradiction. So in that sense people like Kavanagh were ahead of their time, I suppose. They were, in a strange kind
of a way, both ‘localisationalists’ and ‘globalisationalists’. The accent we use; you know, have you a Tipperary accent, a Clare accent, a Cork accent? Does that have to be left behind to be erudite, and artistic or does it have to be glorified and not allow anything else in? The true redress of balance doesn’t mean solving one unjust bundle by the creation of another, but by listening to different voices and by looking for some kind of truth or integrity so that what comes out begins to resonate in a particular way. The oral tradition manifestation of Irish culture in music has completely overcome [other musics], which have suddenly gone way back in the situation. All of that has got to be redressed as well in many ways, and it behoves us to remember that just because traditional music was outside the Pale for so long when so-called classical music was holding the high ground, that now in some ways, it’s the other way around. There’s more than one kind of imbalance. In redressing a balance, it’s very hard to get the scales right. How do we actually get the scales right so the door is a revolving door, which is not closed to anybody? As you know, the redress of balance around traditional music and dance in higher education offers a very rich case study of what can happen when you create access for an expression, which up to a particular point has not either been welcome within the confines of higher education, or not understood. There is a sense of something in the Academy, a lot of it coming from that particular redress of a music that is so near to our hearts, and indeed our bodies, that we just know at a level beyond articulation, that the inclusion of that expression is so, so important, not just for the music itself, probably much more so for the systems in which it is being integrated. So that’s where I’ll be coming from”.

Among the diverse range of papers to be presented at the ICTM World Conference are a number of significant studies on the traditional arts in Ireland. To conclude our discussion, I was particularly interested to discuss and understand how Ó Súilleabháin views the contextualisation of Irish traditional music, song, and dance within wider ethnomusicological conversations? Are the traditional arts in Ireland currently connected to global scholarship in unprecedented ways?

“When I was getting into ethnomusicology in my late ’20s and early ’30s, it wasn’t in any Irish university at the time, with the single exception of Queen’s University, Belfast, and that was Blacking in the Department of Social Anthropology, interestingly enough, not the Department of Music. I remember a series of articles beginning to appear in
various journals, including the Society for Ethnomusicology journal, *Ethnomusicology*, and the term that was becoming fashionable was ‘Ethnomusicology at Home’. Because Blacking’s special area had been South African music, the Venda tribe in the northern Transvaal, he had attracted a number of African musicians who were doing their PhDs with him. And of course what were they doing their PhDs on? African music. So here was I, an Irish person in an ethnomusicological context studying Irish traditional music, as you know, Tommy Potts. And I thought, look, we’re all the same. I’m part of this international movement now, and a voice was starting to emerge which was very powerful. We understand this as traditional musicians, of course, in Ireland. This brought a hands-on somatic knowledge of the music that we were talking about, which in many ways placed us far ahead of colleagues who were almost sticking a pin in a map to see what they would do their PhDs in. What I see now is a continuation of the ethnomusicologists at home, with a very well stamped passport. And there’s a confidence now. I don’t see young ethnomusicologists like you and others of your generation assailed by doubts. It seems so natural”.

Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin is an Irish musician, composer, academic, and pedagogue. In 1975 he was appointed as lecturer in music at the Music Department of University College Cork, and in 1994, he became inaugural Chair of Music at the Irish World Academy, at the University of Limerick. A prolific composer and recording artist, his work in Irish higher education has contributed significantly to making third-level music education accessible to traditional arts performers.
Tríona Ní Shíocháin, newly appointed Lecturer in Irish Traditional Music in UCC, talks about her background and shares her thoughts on teaching traditional music at third level, and the challenge that oral tradition poses for academia: on one hand fostering an oral tradition within an academic environment can be in itself inherently challenging, and on the other, the sophisticated and creative thought processes of the oral tradition challenge the status quo and offer alternative ways of doing and thinking for scholars. She also discusses some of her plans for the traditional music curriculum in UCC, including new Irish medium music modules, the importance of singing in lectures, bringing the dance back into dance music, song and the history of ideas, and the richness of studying Irish traditional music in a multidisciplinary department. She also discusses some of her current research projects and current and future performance plans.

Scoláire idirdhisciplíneach ceoil agus Gaelainne is ea Tríona Ní Shíocháin, newly appointed Lecturer in Irish Traditional Music in UCC, as she reflects on her background and shares her thoughts on teaching traditional music at third level, and the challenge that oral tradition poses for academia: on one hand fostering an oral tradition within an academic environment can be inherently challenging, and on the other, the sophisticated and creative thought processes of the oral tradition challenge the status quo and offer alternative ways of doing and thinking for scholars. She also discusses some of her plans for the traditional music curriculum in UCC, including new Irish medium music modules, the importance of singing in lectures, bringing the dance back into dance music, song and the history of ideas, and the richness of studying Irish traditional music in a multidisciplinary department. She also discusses some of her current research projects and current and future performance plans.
le fáil ann – ón bportaireacht go dtí an sitar, ó rince seite go ceol clasaiceach, ó ghrúpaí snagcheoil go hamhránaíocht i gcór; gan trách ar speisialtóireachtaí léinn na Roinne ar a n-áirítear an chumadóireacht, ceol na scannán, an ceol digiteach, an ceol clasaiceach, an luachcheol, an snagcheol, an popcheol, an eitnecheoleoláocht, agus an ceol traidisiúnta, ar ndóin. Is í an éagsúlacht agus an saibhreas san a mheall go UCC mé, agus mar léachtóir le ceol Gaelach, tá sé i gceist agam go mbeidh ionad lárnach ag éalaíona d'éispéireachtaí na hÉireann i gcuir i gcultúr na Roinne, mar a bhí riamh anall, á shuíomh laistigh de chomhthéacs ilchultúrtha spreagúil.

D’fhoghlaimíos féinig mo chuid ceoil ó Bhobby Gardiner sa Bhaile Dubh (Uachtarach) i gCo. Phort Láirge, agus cé gurb í an fheadóg stáin m’uirlis féinig seochas an bosca ceoil, tá Bobby ar dhuine des na ceoltóirí is mó a chuighe agus a théann fós) i bhfeidhm orm im shaoil. Bhíodh rang againn le Bobby gach oíche Dád na gPíosa, a chrióchnaíodh de ghnáth mar sheisiiú san tigh tábhairne. Do fhuaireamh an-oiliúint ó Bhobby ar na hoícheanta san. Fuaireamh rince chomh maith ón máistir aithníú, Thomas Hyland, go raibh steipeanna agus seana-rincí an cheantair fachta aige ón seana-dhream, agus polcaí go tiubh inár dtímeall dá réir. Is ansan agus mé 9 mbliana d’aois nó mar sin a chuala mintir na Rinne agus an tSeana-phobail i mbun amhránaíochta, rud a chuaigh go móir i bhfeidhm orm, agus niorbh fhada go raibh dúil ana-mhór agam sna hamhráin Ghaelainne, mar atá go dtí an lár inniu féinig.

Is nuair a thugas fé gcéim sa cheol in UCC ina dhiaidh sin is ea a fuair as oiliúint ó Eilís Ní Shúilleabháin, an t-amhránaí clúiteach ó Chúil Aodha, agus ó Mary Mitchell, máistreáis feedóige agus píbe, ar an bhfeadóig. Ar deireadh do thugas fé dhochtúireacht ar an gcumadóir amhrán, Máire Bhuí Ní Laeire, agus thríallaí ar dhúthaigh mo mháthair crionna féin, ceantar Mhuscraí, inar chuir amhránaíthe den scoth oiliúint orm fé Mháire Bhuí agus fé amhránaíocht, mar shampla, Muintir Lionáird, Máire Nóis Cheocháin, Áine Uí Chuíll, Eibhlís Uí Thuama, agus Eilís Nóis Shúilleabhaín mar chrann taca i gcónaí agam. D’fhág mná Mhuscraí rian láidir ar mo mhachnamh agus ar mo thuiscint ar an amhránaíocht ó shin.

Seo a leanas cuid des na smaointe a ritheann liom agus mé ag tabhairt fém ról nua mar léachtóir le ceol Gaelach in UCC, agus mé i mbun machnainmh ar thraidisiún an cheoil ar an dtríú leibhéal sna laethanta atá le teacht.
AR BHRUACH NA LAOI: CEOL AGUS LÉANN I GCOLÁISTE NA hOLLSCOILE, CORCAIGH

**Béalaireacht agus Ollscoilíocht.**

Creidim ná fuil aon teora leis an oiliúint a chuireann an traidisiún béil ar dhhaoinibh, agus tá suim ar leithligh agam i gcleachtaitais agus i nósanna na béalaireachta a mhúlnaigh ceoltóirithe móra an traidisiúint. Cuimhním ar leithéidí Julia Clifford ón Shliabh Luachra, nó ar Bhobby Gardiner agus Micho Russell ó gClár, nó ar John Doherty, fear siúil ó Dhún na nGall, ceoltóirithe a fuair a gcuid ceoil ón gcluais, agus splanc na cruitheaitheachta ar lasadh ina gcuid seiminte, próiseas cruitheaitheachta oithe soaisticíuíil á chleachtadh acu a fásceadh as an dtraidisiún béil.

Creidim ná an rithim ar leithligh a thug an seanad-dhream leo, go mba rí-dheocair a mhúineadh go forneáltha agus go gcaithfeadh duine é féin a thumadh ann go hiomlán len é a fháil. Cuimhním ar amhránaithe dúchais na Gaelaí nne a thóg amhráin ón gcluais gan dua, go mbódh na hamhráin áthmhúnlaí ã cruithheitheach acu: Nioclás Tóbín ós na Déise, Cáit Ní Mhuimhneachán ó Bhéal Átha’n Ghaorthaidh, Seán de hÓra ó Chorca Dhuibhne, Joe Éinniú ó Charna, Nóra Ghriallais ó Mhuiceanach órdhá Dhá Sháile, Áine Uí Laoi ó Dhún na nGall. Cuimhním ar rinceoirí traidisiúnta ar nós Dan Connell ó Shliabh Luachra nó Aidan Vaughan ón gClár a léiríonn gur gné bheo bhunaidh den traidisiún é splanc na cruitheaitheachta féin, nó na castaíochta a spreagann racht áthais sa tslua agus a bhaineann prab as an lucht éisteachta/féachana. Cuimhním ar rinceoirí an Bhaile Dhuiabh agus iad ag baint tine chreasa as an urlár go déanach san oíche i lár an tSamhradh, agus ar na fearaibh óga go mba nós leo ‘Lose the head!’ a liú i lár poirt.

Nuair a thugaimid fé staidéar a dhéanamh ar an dtraidisiún béil, áfach, agus sinn ag feidhmiú laistigh d’institiúid oifigiúil ar d liteartach, is ró-thuiirist éagóir an dhéanamh ar phróisis ealaíontaithe na béalaireachta, nó iad a mhúchadh fé nóisanna acadúla. Buncheist is ea conas cleachtaitais na béalaireachta a fhí ar chleachtaitais léannta go héifeachtach, conas traidisiún béil a thabhairt isteach in institiúid gan an traidisiún a chur a riocht. Buncheist eile is ea conas oiliúint an traidisiúin bhéil a chur ar mhic léinn laistigh de chomhchéacs Ollscoile go sásúil.

Creidim gur sa gníomh a gheibhtear oiliúint sa chultúr béil, agus nil cúis fán spéir ná féadfaí a leithéid de chu chuige a thabhairt isteach sa tsomhra léachta. Sin é an fáth go mbeidh mic léinn UCC i mbun amhránaíochta fiú amháin mar chuid de mhodúil acadúla ar léann na hamhránaíochta, cuir i gcás. Cuid lárnach dá gcuid oideachais is ea an gníomh cruthaitheach féin: chomh maith le haistí agus trialacha éisteachta, beidh rogha ag an
mac léinn amhráin a rá mar chuid den scrúdú. B’fhéidir ná féachadh gach mac léinn air féin mar amhránai, b’fhéidir gur leis an gceol uirlise, nó leis an rince a bheidh a bhua; ach mar sin féin is fiú go mór amhráin a bheith ar a dtóil acu go léir: is as san a eascróidh tuiscint dhoimhin ar struchtúir an cheoil agus na rithime araon, agus doimhin-mhachnamh ar bhri an amhráin. Seo hé an taobh go bhrefh curaclam practiciúil an cheoil chomh tábhachtaí i gcuraclam an cheoil theaidisiúnta trí chéile in Ollscoil Chorcaí: córas coimthiúcháin mí-éifeachtach go pointe áirithe is ea nodaireacht léannta larthar na hEorpa don troidisiúin beil; maireann an saineolas foirme, struchtúir agus rithime sa chleachtas, sa tseimint, san amhránaíocht agus sa rince féin; maireann an saineolas sa chluais. Agus níl aon teora leis an gcluais oílte.

Forbairtí sa Churaclam: Modúil Cheoil trí mheán na Gaelainne

Gné lárnach de mháisteacht a fháil ar thraidisiúin ceoil is ea máisteacht a fháil ar an dteangain a chleachtann pobal an cheoil. Ba dheocair, cuir i gcás, tabhairt fé aon staidéar fónta ar cheol na Gaeltachta gan an teanga a bheith a d'fhág agat, agus tuiscint mhaith agat ar nósanna cultúrtha na gceantar Gaeltachta. Tá sé i gceist amach dá réir sin dha mhodúl ceoil a chur ar fáil trí mheán na Gaelainne i Roinn an Cheoil ón mbliain acadúil seo chugainn: ceann amháin a dhíríonn ar an amhránaíocht ar an seana-nós, ceann eile gur togra féinstiúrtha é ina roghnaionn an mac léinn an t-abhar ach stiúraithe agus cuirtear i gcrích trí mheán na Gaelainne é. Creidim go dtabharfadh na modúil seo breis deiseanna don mac léinn a t(h)uisce an gceol Gaelach a fhorbairt agus a leathnú agus dul i ngileic dá réir is slí níos iomláine le cleachtais agus le brí an cheoil. Tá súil agam leis go dtéfíor ar an nasc idir Roinn an Cheoil, UCC, agus thraidisiúin cheoil na Gaeltachta sna blianta atá romhainn agus go gcruthófar timpeallacht a churfadh chumas na mac léinn páirt gníomhach a thabhairt agus a thabhairt trí mheán na Gaelainne agus Gaeltachta.

Amhránaíocht agus Smaointeoireacht

Anuas ar mhodúil nua ar thraidisiúin amhránaíocha na hÉireann, ina gcíorfar idir amhráin Bhéarla agus amhráin Ghaelainne, a bheith á chur ar fáil agam do mhic léinn ón tarna bliain ar aghaidh, beidh modúil nua a mhúineadh agam do bhliain na céime ina ndéanfar suntas na hamhránaíochta mar thraidisiúin machnaimh a phlé agus a chioradh, agus ina bpléifear cumhacht láithriú na n-amhrán maidir le múnlú an mhachnaimh agus múnlú na suibiacha.
araon. Bainfidh dánaíocht ar leithligh leis an gcúr chuige, ar an abhar go dtabharfar fogha fén dtuiscint choitianta ar fhór lámhas an mhachnaimh liteartha i stair na smaointeoireachta. Táim ag tnúth go mór le machnamh na mac léinn ar na ceisteanna móra so a spreagadh agus a gcuid smaointe féinig a chlos agus a phlé.

**Ceol Rince**

Táim ag tnúth go mór leis an modúl lárnach nua ar an gceol Ghaelach agus an eitnecheoileáiocht do lucht na chéad bhliain a mhúineadh i bpáirt le Mary Mitchell Ingoldsby, léachtóir ceoil agus stiúrthóir ar Charlann an Cheoil Thraidisiúnta, UCC, an bhliain atá chugainn. Ó mo thaobh féin de, tá ana-shuim agam sna naisc idir an rince agus ceol uirlise, agus sa phróiseas cruthaitheach sa cheol uirlise agus sa rince arao; d’fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil sé i gceist agam an rince a nascadh an athuair leis an gceol rince i gcuraclam na chéad bhliana dá rór!

**Mic Léinn Iarchéime: Ceol Traidisiúnta i gComhéacs Idirnáisiúnta an Léinn.**

Don té a thabharfadh féit staidéar a dhéanamh ar an gceol Ghaelach in Ollscoil Chorcaí is i gcomhthéacs ilchultúrtha eitnecheoileáioch d’fhéadfaidh sé/sí é. Is áthas liom go bhfuil lion suntasach speisialtóirí sa cheol traidisiúnta Éireannach cláraithe ar an MA san eitnecheoloáiocht i mbliana. Táim féinigig ag gabháilt do mhodúl idirdhisciúineach ceoleolaiochta agus eitnecheoloáiochta leo. Seo modúl ina bhfaisgheann an mac léinn deis foghlaim fé smaointe agus fé pheirpeictióchtaí lasmuigh dá g(h)ort féin, rud a shaibhrionn go mór an dul chun cinn a dhéanfadh sé/sí i ngort an cheoil traidisiúnta. Tá suim agam i réimse fhairising abhar laistigh de léann an cheoil Ghaelaigh, agus faíltím roim mhic léinn dhochtúireachta sa ghort san, agus roim mhic léinn go bhfuil suim acu sa taighde idirhisciúineach a nascann an ceol Ghaelach le traidisiúin bhéil eile. Agus, ar ndóin, táim ar fáil don mac léinn iarchéime gur mian leis/léi a thráchtas a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeltaine.

**Pleananna taighde agus seiminte**

**Taighde**

Tá leabhar nua ar na bioráin agam fé láthair dar teideal do Singing Ideas: Performance, Politics and Oral Poetry (Berghahn) ina bpléim tábhacht na hamhránaíochta i stair na smaointeoireachta, agus a bheidh amuigh fa dheireadh na bhliana so féin, le cúnamh Dé. Áitím sa leabhar go bhfuil ionad lárnach ag láithriú na n-ámhrán i bhforbairt na smaointeoireachta go stairiúil: seochas a
bheith ag féachaint i dtreo smainteoirí liteartha na fealsúnachta amháin, mar sin, ba chóir díríú ar smainteoirí móra an chultúir bhéil a chleacht traidisiúin bríomhar iogair smainteoireachta, a bhall leas as cumhacht an eispéiris agus an láithrithe féin ina saothar. Má dhírímid ar mhachnaimh na bhfealsamh liteartha amháin, caillimid saibhreas an mhachnaimh a chuaign i bhfeidhm orthu san gan léamh ná scriobh, machnaimh a mhair sa láithriú féinig agus in eispéireas na hamhránaíochta féin. Má dhírímid ar an ‘dteacs’ amháin, caillimid brí, cumhacht agus suntas an amhráin sa tsocháin.

Tá alt eile á ullmhú agam fé láthair ar mhúnlú na suibiachtúlachta san amhránaíocht leis, ag díríú ar anailís chomparáideach idir dioscúrsaí an leabhair *Rotha Mór an tSaoil* agus amhráin na bhfeair oibre nó na ‘Navvies’ a thuig priacail agus cruatan na hoibre agus iad ar imirce. Tá sé i gceist agam amach anso tabhaint fé thogra ar chumadóirí ban i gcomhpháirtíocht na mhachnaimh agus chruithaireachta a cheileann an stair oifigiúil ortu go minic.

Tá ana-shuim agam i gcoitinne sa chumadóireacht bhéil, sa teoiric bhéil agus i dtéoiric an láithrithe. Féachaim ar an amhránaí, ar an gceoltóir, nó ar an rinceoir traidisiúnta mar *athchumadóir*, mar ealaíontóir cruthaitheach a chuireann leis an dtraidisiúin, a athchruthaíonn an traidisiúin, rud a choimeádann an traidisiúin bríomhar agus éifeachtaíocht. Fé láthair tá roint tráchttaí fém stiúir a dhíriúonn go sonrach ar an bpróiseas beo cruthaitheach sa cheol traidisiúnta, agus tá súil agam go mbeidh deis agam tuilleadh oibre a dhéanamh ar an bpróiseas cruthaitheach sa cheol, sa rince agus san amhránaíocht amach anso, leis.

**Seimint agus Amhránaíocht**

Bím ag seimint fé láthair le mo sheanachomádra scoile agus ollscoil, an veidhleadóir agus boscadóir, Yvonne Ní Laocha, mo dheartháir, Brian, a sheimeann an bodhrán agus an giotár, agus seana-chara eile linn, Christopher O’Brien, veidhleadóir agus amhránaí ó Bhaile Chaisleáin i gCo. Chorcaí. Bhímim ag seimint lena cheile agus sinn an-óg, agus féach anois go bhfuilimid fós ag gabháilte do! Is maith linn tigh tábhairne *Grindles* i mBéal Átha hÚlla, nó an *Elbow Lane* i Mainistir Fhear Maí, nó, ar ndóin, an *Log Cabin* sa Bhaile Dubh. Tá dúil ar leithligh againn i sleamhnáin agus i bpólcaí, gan trácht ar amhráin as Géileann agus as Béarla, agus táim ag tnúth le níos mó fós a dhéanamh leis na ceoltóirithe sin amach anso. Bím páirteach leis, i gcultúr bríomhar ceoil agus rince an
AR BHRUACH NA LAOI: CEOL AGUS LÉANN I GCOLÁISTE NA hOLLSCOILE, CORCAIGH

Bhaile Dhuibh i gcónaí, agus do chuireamair fáilte roim ghrúpa ceoltóirí agus rinceoirí traidisiúnta ón mBriotáin ansan le déanaí, agus do bhí ana-sheachtain chuileachtan agus cheoil againn i bhfochair a chéile. Tá curtha romham agam togra eile a chuir i gcrích cho mháth sna blianta atá romhainn má ritheann liom – albam feadóige a thaifeadhadh. Táim ag tnúth le fáilte a chur roim ceoltóirithe traidisiúnta ó gach cúinne den tír agus den domhan, agus timpeallacht a chruthú dóibh ina dtiocfaidh forás, forbairt agus bláthú orthu mar cheoltóirithe, amhránaithe, rinceoirí agus, ar ndóin, mar smaointeoirí, a fhágfaidh a rian féin ar chultúr agus ar shochaí na hÉireann amach anso.

Bruach na Laoi

Tá ardáthas orm a bheith tar éis filleadh ar Bhruach na Laoi go Roinn an Cheoil: samhlaím saoirse chruthaitheach agus smaointeoireachta ar leithligh leis an áit, cho mháth le hardmheas ar an dtraitisiún beo agus orthu san gur oileadh sa traidisiún beo béil iad. Táim ag tnúth go mór le fáilte a chur roim ceoltóirí traidisiúnta ó gach cúinne den tír agus den domhan, agus timpeallacht a chruthú dóibh ina dtiocfaidh forás, forbairt agus bláthú orthu mar cheoltóirí, amhránaithe, rinceoirí agus, ar ndóin, mar smaointeoirí, a fhágfaidh a rian féin ar chultúr agus ar shochaí na hÉireann amach anso.
As graduate students of ethnomusicology at University College Cork, we came to the ICTM conference to learn about some of the current research being undertaken in the field of ethnomusicology. We attended both days of the event, which were full of thought-provoking research on music and sustainability. Owing to the high number of papers featured, parallel presentations took place in two rooms simultaneously.

Sessions 1A and 1B began at 9:45 am, after a short welcoming address introducing the conference. Session 1A focused on music revival and included presentations on bluegrass and old-time American music in Dublin given by John Millar; viking and folk metal given by George Nuelin; and Scottish music revival given by Daithí Kearney and Adéle Commins. Session 1B focused on Collections from 19th Century Ireland, with presentations by Sylvia Crawford, Christopher Mac Auliffe, and Connor Caldwell on collections from Armagh, the Déise region, and Belfast, respectively.

From 11:30am, a second set of sessions was presented on “Cultural Sustainability and Music and Memory”. Papers focusing on cultural sustainability included a presentation by Jamie Corbett on cultural and environmental sustainability, while Sabrina Maria Salis explored the resilience-based approach of UNESCO in Jordan. The “Music and Memory” session included presentations on the influences of modernity and tradition on music in wedding rituals in Cyprus by Michalis Poupazis, and the experience of Woodstock by Cormac Sheehan. Before lunch all conference attendees convened to view a film by Jyosna La Trobe, on singing in an Indian village. The film successfully provided a tangible and relatable perspective on this particular study of singing in India. Perhaps the immediacy of
the visual format of the film presented the research in a manner that was easier to connect to, providing an emotional response and a more comprehensive context to the study than may have been achieved by a written paper.

The conference recommenced after lunch with a roundtable session on Irish traditional music featuring Aibhlín McCrann, Grace Toland, Antaine Ó Faracháin, Terry Moylan, and Fintan Vallely. The final contributor, Vallely was given the task of responding to each of the four contributions before him, which helped to consolidate and connect themes emerging from the previous papers, as well as identify issues to be explored in future research on music revival in Ireland. Each contributor shared their perspectives on Irish traditional music, and revival, through the lens of experiencing their respective musical instrument, as well as through the perspective of the organisations in which they work. It included perspectives on song, uilleann piping traditions, sessions, the harp, and the successes of the Irish Traditional Music Archive. Despite the diverse ways in which each contributor engages with Irish traditional music, Vallely noted a shared common goal to document Irish traditional music, the challenges facing the tradition, and the ways that various stakeholders are negotiating the survival of Irish traditional music in the modern world.

The themes of “Technologies of Mediation” and “Tradition and Authenticity” were discussed in Sessions 3A and 3B, and addressed a range of ways in which new perspectives on authenticity, contemporary music collaborations, and technology are affecting a variety of music traditions. Lonán Ó Briain spoke on the promotion of radio in Vietnam in the 1950s and Thérèse Smith spoke on how to sustain engaged, meaningful research in the age of technology. In the parallel session “Tradition and Authenticity”, Éamonn Costello gave an insightful perspective on how authenticity can be reappraised and reimagined in the twenty-first century, and how this may benefit research approaches and perspectives. Stephanie Ford followed, outlining her research into musical collaborations between sean-nós song and contemporary music. Both sessions focused on how authenticity, collaborations, and the technology available to us in the twenty-first century may affect and influence research. Presentations concluded with a keynote address on sustainability and revival, delivered by Prof. Jeff Todd Titon via Skype.

Titon’s keynote, entitled “Eco-Trope, Eco-Tripe, Sound Cultures,
Sustainability and Revival” provided stimulating insights into concepts of Sustainability and Revival, highlighting an effective comparison of sound cultures to complex whole eco-systems, along with taking associated economic development into consideration. Referring to the ‘science of complex systems’ to consider how cultural sustainability has drawn on ecology, Titon accentuated the effectiveness of a complex systems analysis of sound cultures, which acknowledges the limits of predictability and knowledge. Renewal, revitalisation and restoration were key points in an adaptive management methodology outlined by Titon. Applied to sound cultures, sustainability, and revival, Titon’s insights promised not only greater understanding of music, but also a revaluation of sound manifest in ‘sound communities’, ‘sound economies’, and a ‘sound ecology’. The use of adaptive management in retaining traditions of various musics also arose. The keynote address truly shaped and added dimension to the themes of the conference in enlightening attendees on a range of topics relating to sound cultures and eco-systems, and the effectiveness of applied ethnomusicological methodologies in contributing to revival and sustainability.

Two further parallel sessions began on Sunday at 10am, in addition to a film on recording technology. Sessions 7A and 7B explored cultural sustainability and included presentations on the sustainability of Sufi music in Morocco and the UK, by Tony Langlois, and on traditional Irish pub sessions outside of Ireland, by Rina Schiller. Session 7B discussed cultural resilience and included a paper by Noelle Mann on cultural resilience and Irish traveller music. Leah O’Brien Bernini discussed the success of cultural industries in the context of neoliberal rhetoric and resilience. Once again, all conference attendees reconvened for the conference’s second film and final three papers. The film, created by Michael Lydon, focused on antiquated recording techniques and their use in contemporary popular music. Following a brief break, three final papers were presented in a session titled “Reviving, Performing, Imagining”.

Elizabeth K. Neale, Garry Tregidga, and Lea Hagmann each presented papers on different aspects of Cornish traditional vocal and instrumental music performance. Focusing on the challenges inherent in negotiating between past and present contextualisations of Cornish music and music practices, each presenter offered a unique perspective on music and cultural revival specific to their own experiences within Cornish music traditions.
Saturday night’s organised music session became a worthwhile opportunity for conference attendees to engage in music and discussion in a relaxed, supportive, and comfortable environment. It provided an invaluable opportunity to learn new tunes, play familiar tunes, and to become more acquainted with fellow researchers and their research on a more personal and intimate level.

Despite the diversity of research presented at the ICTM annual conference, each paper contributed significantly towards a share general theme of musical sustainability, culminating in Jeff Todd Titon’s keynote address. Several noteworthy common subjects covered included cultural preservation and endurance, the influences of modernity and innovation on traditional music practices, and the impacts of music revivals. Each paper addressed this overarching framework through discussing individualised case study perspectives, which provided a well-rounded and connected insight into the discourses surrounding music sustainability. One of the many benefits of attending the conference was the way in which it facilitated direct interaction between researchers, peers and students, connecting scholarly conversations in a social environment that is sometimes absent when undertaking desk research.
Is there a particularly Irish culture of performance? I suggest that there is – the defining feature of which is the role played by alterity – the living presence of an “other” in performance. This “other” is usually a person or persons, the being of whom is felt to be immanent in the material performed. Performance thus has a strong element of animation. Following the lead of Gary Gossen, for whom Chamula oral tradition constituted an “ethical statement”, I argue that Irish tradition also carries an implicit ethics, as can often be seen from performers’ statements about what they do. Scholars such as Silvio, Manning, and Gershon have been re-examining the term “performance” itself, showing its cultural and historical boundedness. I suggest that Irish tradition be likewise re-examined in the light of these theoretical developments.
“Chamula oral tradition constitutes an ethical statement whose categories (genres) are organized according to attributes which also organize other aspects of Chamula expressive behavior and values. In this way, the structure of the whole of Chamula oral tradition may be seen to be isomorphic with the structures of other aspects of Chamula life such as religion and worldview.” (Gossen 1971:145)
cainte atá níos éifeachtúla agus níos fileata. Cuireann sé craiceann ar an gcaint:

“Greann agus géire intinne agus sárú is nádúr don chaic anais, le linn do se a bheith faoi lánseol, áiríonn an mhuintir fén go dtarlaíonn casadh san ócáid urlabhra mar léiriú ar dheáine bhreise eile bheith tagtha sa chumarsáid a thógann go leibhéal eile fós é.” (Ó Crualaoich 1992:96-97)


Le chabháir ó mhuintir Ráth Chairn thig mé gur aon traidisiún amháin, ‘cúltúr léiritheach’ i leith, atá i gceist, sa Ghaeltacht ar a laghad – idir cineálacha cainte agus scéalaíochta, ceol, filíocht, damhsa agus amhránaíochta – go bhfuil na buntuisintí céanna cultúrtha taobh thiar díobh. Thosaigh mé ag smaointeach ar an traidisiún mar chóras aithrise – pé saghais ealaíne a bheadh á láithriú, bheadh áit lárnach inti d’aithris ar thaibheoír eile, nó bheadh an léiriú ar fad ceaptha ina shaghas aithrise:

Mar shampla, tá an tuiscint a dhoibh traidisiún amhránaíochta gur taifead stáiríúla iad focal an amhráin ar fhocal an fhíli iad féin, ní fiú ar chaint na pbearsana atá san amhrán, díreach mar a tháinig sí as a mbéil, agus iad i mbun chomhthraic nó chomhrá, in eacra a tharla fadó. Baineann seo le traidisiún na filíochta agus an tuiscint forleathan go mbíonn filíocht amháin eile ar phort céilí, agus gur rud “crua” agus buan i an fhilíocht. Is minic go mbíonn ainm nó lorg cheoltóira eile ar phrot cheoil, agus fiú plé déanta ag ceoltóirí faoi agus iad i mbun cheoil. Bhí an t-athfhriotal mar chuid thábhachtach de dhamhsa freisin – dúirt Máirtín Choil Neáin Nóide Neáin liom gur thosaigh sé ag déanamh “steip” le aithris a dhéanamh ar dhamhsóirí a thaitin leis, agus anois déanann sé tagairt dóibh go minic mar chuid dá ealaion.
Feictear dom anois gurb í an eileacht an rud is tábhachtaí sa traidisiún seo, i.e. an chaoi an mbíonn pearsana eile ceangailte suas san ábhar – cuma cén t-ábhar atá i gceist: an chaint, an ceol, an damhsa, agus mar sin de. An té a chumann scéilín grinn nó “carúl cainte”, píosa ceol nó filíochta, amhrán, “steip” ar leith sa damhsa aonair, agus fiú an té a fhaigheann stíl nó beo atá in ann léiriú cóisc íomhánna beo. D’fhaisinn na foirmeacha nó na stíleanna seo i gceist, is dóichoí go gcuirfear gcuímsc a dhéanann go háirithe ó chuidí a bhíonn leis. Is ceol leis na seantrí a bhíonn leat a thabhairt ná gur eile an eileacht seo, ceol na ndaoine nó na daoine is mó a bhíonnáltanaidh, mar shampla, báis is mó. Is é an traidisiúin, an t- eileacht seo, eileachtaí iomhánna déanta de chuidí traidisiúintí, le chéile, a díonnas na ndaoine éisteachta/féachana a tháinig dó a díonnas. Agus is i bhfad ceart, tá an eileacht le eile a dea-chuidh, nuair a bhfuil an eileacht, eileachtaí beo i gceist. Is féidir, feictear dom anois, go bhfuil an eileacht, eileachtaí beo i gceist. Is féidir gur fhaisin linn do cheist a dhéanamh leis an eileacht, eileachtaí beo i gceist.
AN BHEOCHAN AGUS AN ‘PERFORMANCE’ I DTRAIDISIÚIN NA HÉIREANN

agus Gershon (2013), éilítear go mbíodh an iomarca béime ar ghné na féiniúlacha agus ar phearsa an taibheora féin. Cur i gcás saimhniúí Richard Bauman:
“Fundamentally, performance as a mode of ... communication consists in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence” (Bauman 1977:293). An aisteoir féin agus a ról sóisialta (a dhualgas do lucht féachana) atá á phlé sa teoiric seo, seachas an rud atá léirithe - an t-ábhar, an charachtar, an traidisiún féin mar rud atá á bheochan, ní hamháin ag an oirfideach féin, ach ag an dream an fad atá bailithe lè chéile – agus is minic i dtraidisiún an airneáin in Éirinn nach bhfuil móran idirdhealú ann i ddir ò “oirfideach” agus “lucht éisteachta/féachana.” Dar le Manning and Gershon, idirdhealú aisteoir agus ról is mó atá i gceist le “performance theory,” ach báineann an bheochan le “many-to-one relationship” iomhadh lucht cruthaithe agus carachtar crutha. Is minic nach bhfuil “lucht éisteachta/féachana” ná “stáitse” ann sa traidisiún féin. Agus nach minice go mbeadh aird na ndaoine ar an rud atá beoite seachas ar an t-é atá á bheochan? Silim gurb ‘é an cás le amhránaíocht “ar an sean-nós,” taobh amuigh de chomhórtais agus i gcomhthéacsanna eile a bainean le stáitíú an traidisiún – agus fiú sna cáisanna sin, ní annamh go ndéanann an dream ar an stáitse iarracht an t-ábhar a “chomhthéacsú” don lucht éisteachta– iad a threoshuimh (mar a déarfadh Erving Goffman) sa gcaoi go mbeidh in ann páirt a ghlacadh san imeacht ar bhealach níos “traidisiúnta.”


Réimse áirthe staire atá i gceist leis an gcoincheap “performance” sa saol acadúla chomh maith. Dár le Silvio, bainean réim an “performance theory” le ré áirthe an chaipitleachais: idir Fordachas (ré na monarchana agus ‘disciplín’ Foucault) agus an Nua-Liobrálachas (ré na “feidhmíocht” san ionad oibre; ré “oibre an bóna
bándeirge”). Anois tá muid ag dul isteach i ré nua: ré na glúine Milaoisi, ré na meáin dhigiteacha agus na meáin shóisialta, agus sa gcuíltúr coitinn, ré na beochana (anime, emotions, cosplay agus mar sin de). Tá na hidirdhealuithe ag imeacht: an obair vs. an saol pearsanta, “an fíorshaoil” vs. an saol “ar line”, an pearsantacht vs. an próifíl. Agus féagráionn Silvio agus a comhghleacaithe casadh teoirciúil sa na heolaíochtaí sóisialta agus sna daonnachtaí: ó bhéim ar an bhféiniúlacht go dtí béim ar an eileacht.


Éamonn Costello

My 2015 PhD dissertation explores the meaning and aesthetics of sean-nós1 song from the perspective of the Oireachtas2 sean-nós singing community. Much of the current literature dealing with sean-nós and the Oireachtas, tends to frame the Oireachtas membership and the sean-nós singing community as being somewhat separate and distinct communities. This view tacitly implies that the aesthetic ideas of the Oireachtas membership —with regards to sean-nós song— are somehow contrary to those of the sean-nós singing community. Rather than using this dualistic model, I argue that the various Oireachtas sean-nós singing events should be viewed as a nexus where individuals from various backgrounds come together to create a unique musical culture, with its own performance ethic and aesthetic.

In order to identify such ethics and aesthetics, I undertook a multifaceted form of ethnographic research, which involved participant-observation at the Oireachtas festival as an audience member, in-depth interviews with members of this musical community, and analysis of archive material such as programme and secretary notes.

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1 It is worth noting that the term sean-nós as a genre label is somewhat contentious. The Oireachtas membership organised a symposium in 1943 where delegates from all the Gaeltacht regions agreed the term was unsuitable (OnaG Papers). Also, numerous commentators have pointed out that in the past the term sean-nós was not used at all that much in the Gaeltacht, and that singers preferred terms such as fonnadóireacht, or amhránaiocht (lit. singing) (see Coleman 1996; Mac Con Iomaire 2007, pp. 51-53; Nic Dhonnch 2004, P.80).

2 The Oireachtas na Gaeilge, or Oireachtas for short, is currently a five day festival held annually in different parts of the country in a rotating venue system.
PHD VIGNETTE: SEAN-NÓS SINGING AND OIREACHTAS NA GAEILGE: IDENTITY, ROMANTIC NATIONALISM, AND THE AGENCY OF THE GAELTACHT COMMUNITY NEXUS

(dating from the 1890s to the present day), as well as sean-nós adjudicator report sheets (dating from 1940-2011). My findings suggest that what is considered to be appropriate and inappropriate in sean-nós singing within this musical community has been arrived at through a process of negotiation between the various actors who participate at the various Oireachtas sean-nós singing events. Much of the literature that deals with folk revival movements tends to frame the folk-revivalist as the primary determiner of aesthetics within the revival movement. Here I draw attention to the agency of the so-called “folk” in the folk revival process; in other words, I frame the folk as revivalist.

First established in 1897, the Oireachtas is primarily concerned with promoting and extending the use of the Irish language as a spoken vernacular. From the very beginning, its membership was aware of the potential of Irish-language song to promote the Irish language more generally. As such, various forms of Irish language song have featured in the festival programme from the outset. Singing competitions have been (and remain to be) the primary format for song performance within the Oireachtas programme, and the various senior sean-nós singing competitions organised by the Oireachtas members are widely considered to be the highlight of the sean-nós singing calendar.

Admittedly, a focus on competitions as the main performance context for sean-nós song at the Oireachtas implies the existence of a hegemonic structure, owing to the fact that competitions appear to be under the control of a select group within the organisation — the Oireachtas adjudicators and the Oireachtas staff who select them. However, it is vital to Oireachtas organisers that the best and most highly regarded singers compete in its competitions, in order to maintain the sense of prestige that the festival has developed over the years. If singers avoid the festival, due to reservations about the competition format, organisers change the format of the competition to satisfy any concerns sean-nós singers may have.

For example, competition rules have in some cases been modified in response to reactions from singers and the wider Oireachtas community. In 1968, senior sean-nós competition adjudicator, Seán Óg Ó Tuama, withheld the award of first prize, opting instead to offer a joint second-place award. During this period, the competition rules stipulated that first prize could be withheld if the adjudicator felt that the standard of the competitors was not
sufficiently high to merit the awarding of a first prize. In 1960, the first prize was also withheld at the men’s senior sean-nós competition when Darach Ó Catháin, widely regarded as one of the most celebrated sean-nós singers of his time, was awarded second prize instead. According to the current director of the festival, Liam Ó Maolaodha, the practice of withholding the first prize caused some controversy amongst competitors and Oireachtas audience members. This eventually led to a change in the sean-nós competition rules. Now adjudicators are required to select an overall winner (or joint winners), as well as second place or joint second place winners for all the sean-nós competitions (2014 [personal interview]).

Further evidence of the agency of sean-nós singers within the Oireachtas’ competition structure is evidenced by the dominance of the Conamara style within the senior sean-nós competitions. According to leading sean-nós scholar, Lillis Ó Laoire, the dominance of the Conamara style of sean-nós is largely due to the emergence of a Romantic nationalist nativist bias within the Oireachtas membership, particularly from 1939 onwards. Ó Laoire argues that, nativist Romantic nationalists imagine Irishness as being the binary opposite of Englishness, and sean-nós is therefore imagined as being the binary opposite of Western art song — which is, according to Ó Laoire, seen by nativists as an index of Englishness. It is perceived that the sean-nós singer uses ornamentation to tell the story of a song, while those trained in the Western art tradition are more concerned with following the melodic contours of the musical line.

Ó Laoire proposes that the identification of melodic ornamentation with traditionality meant that the Conamara style, which is widely regarded as being the most ornamented style of sean-nós singing, was reified above all other regional styles at the Oireachtas after 1939 (2000, p.166). To illustrate this point Ó Laoire draws attention to the fact that from 1960-1998 the first prize at the senior Oireachtas sean-nós competition was won a total of 28 times by Traditional/vernacular singers did not feature to any real extent in the early Oireachtas. Instead singers trained in the Western art style performed traditional and contemporary material either in choral or solo (accompanied and unaccompanied) singing competitions. The festival was re-established in 1939, and shortly afterwards specific traditional/vernacular (sean-nós) singing competitions were established by festival members.

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3 The Oireachtas ran initially from 1897 to 1932, when it was abandoned for various reasons.
singers singing in a Conamara style, and that from 1971-1989 the competition was won every year by Conamara singers (Ó Laoire 2000, pp. 166-167). However, closer inspection of competition results reveals that up until the mid-1960s Conamara singers were in fact the least successful of all the Gaeltacht singers. From 1950-63 the first prize at the senior sean-nós competition was won by Conamara singers a total of three times, whereas it was won five times by singers from the various Munster Gaeltachts, and four times by singers from Donegal, during the same period. Between 1964 and 1969, Conamara singers took first place at the Oireachtas every year, except in 1968, when the first prize was withheld, and instead, second prize was awarded to two singers, one from Cork and the other from Conamara. However, it is from 1971 that the Conamara style came to dominate at the festival, simply because more singers from Conamara competed during this period, than from any other area.

I argue that the reason for this dominance is due to the fact that from the early 1970s onwards, the Oireachtas festival as a whole was effectively co-opted by members of the Conamara community through the agency of the Conamara based Gaeltacht civil rights movement. Inspired by the example of civil rights movements in Northern Ireland and North America, Cearta Shibhialta na Gaeltachta (The Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement) -a socio-political movement- was established in the late 1960s by a group of mostly young radicals from the Conamara Gaeltacht district to draw political attention to the Gaeltacht (Quinn 2000). Lack of employment and the emigration of young people in the area were the two main concerns of the movement (Mac Giolla Chríost 2012, p.404).

The Gaeltacht civil rights movement also challenged the position and role of the Oireachtas in Gaeltacht affairs. Between 1970 and 1972 its members organised three alternative Oireachtas' known as Oireachtas na nGael (the assembly of the Gaels [my translation]), in various Gaeltacht locales. These events pressurised Oireachtas na Gaeilge to engage more with the Gaeltacht population (Ó Maolaodha [personal interview]). They also led to Oireachtas na Gaeilge being held outside of the capital, Dublin, for the first time since it was re-established in 1939 (Quinn 2000; Bradshaw 2010, p.13). I argue that the Gaeltacht civil rights movement inspired the Conamara community to lay claim to ‘Gaelicness’, and to participate in events centred on the Irish language, particularly sean-nós singing.
My analysis of adjudicating reports from 1940-2011 revealed that, notwithstanding the fact that the Conamara style is in many ways the dominant style of the Oireachtas, no single standardised style of sean-nós is promoted. I found that sean-nós adjudicators equate authenticity to complexity, but that individual adjudicators find complexity in different facets of song, for example, in melodic range, melodic contour, ornamentation, language, voice, musicality, and poetic content. The reports also indicate that the Oireachtas reinforces regional distinctiveness, as opposed to a homogenised national sound; singers at the festival, irrespective of where they are from are expected to sing in one or other of the Gaeltacht styles, and to not stray outside the aesthetic boundaries and repertory associated with that particularly regional style. From at least 1939 onwards singers from the various Gaeltacht districts have been adjudicating at various Oireachtas sean-nós competitions, alongside sean-nós scholars from outside the Gaeltacht, and this has arguably contributed to a blending of views on what is authentic and appropriate in sean-nós song.

As such I suggest that, the Oireachtas sean-nós singing competition is a nexus point were various ideological views and disparate voices come together to ‘author’ this particular category of song. It would be erroneous, in my opinion, to view sean-nós within the Oireachtas as being a representation of “authentic” vernacular Irish-language song. Over the years the festival, and those who regularly perform and adjudicate at it, have authored their own interpretation of what they consider to be traditional Irish-language song, and in many ways the term sean-nós might be best understood as the “Oireachtas Irish-language song style”. It is important to highlight that I am not suggesting that the term sean-nós is somehow spurious. One of the main arguments of my thesis is that traditional singers –cultural holders- have been a part of this authoring process. I propose that the Oireachtas singing cohort should be viewed as its own discrete sub-genre of Irish traditional song, one that is no more or no less “authentic” than any other form of Irish traditional song.

References


Cuar album launch – Black Gate Cultural Centre, Galway, April 2017

Deirdre Ní Chonghaile

Chuala mise Cuar den chéad uair ag seinnt ag Féile Shnag-Cheol na Gaillimhe 2016 tráth dar thacaigh siad le banna Christian Wallumrod as an Iorua. Ceolchoirm do-chreidte maith a bhí inti, an ceann is suntasaí ar fhreastalaíos uirthi i 2016, mar gheall ar an gceol agus go háirithe mar gheall ar an gcaighdeán ceoltóireachta. B’é Matthew Berrill, ball de Chuar, a stiúraigh an fhéile úd, agus léirigh clár laídir na féile an fhís shoiléir agus an uailmhian a theastaíonn ón nGaillimheach óg a chur os comhair lucht éisteachta ar mian leo glacadh agus tacú lena leithéid. Mealladh mise chun na coirme úd mar go raibh muinín agam as na ceoltóiri a bhí ag seinnt agus bhíos sásta éisteach le pé ceol a sheinnfidh, fiú más ceol neamhghnách a bhí i gceist. Admhaim nach mar sin i gcónaí a thugann daoine aghaidh ar choirm cheoil ach, murar thriáill tú cheana é, molaim anois duit bualadh faoi. Turas taiscéalaíochta atá amach romhat. Bhí blas ar an mbeagán a chuala a oíche úd agus bhíos ar bíis go gcloisfinn a thuilleadh ó Chuar.

Tá eolas agam ar an triúr ceoltóir seo le fada agus tá siad ar fad cloiste agam cheana i gcomhthéacsanna éagsúla. Chualas Neil Ó Lochlainn agus Matthew Berrill ag seinnt le hEnsemble Ériu, sa Taibhdhearc, i Siopa Charlie Byrne’s, in Amharclann an Cube in OÉ Gaillimh, agus sa Chrane. Chualas Aoife Ní Bhriain ag seinnt ceol an phíobaire Séamus Goodman i gcuideachta a hathar Mick O’Brien agus Emer Mayock in Eaglais San Niocláis ar chamchuairt de chuid Music Network, agus d’eísteadas léi in Ard-Eaglais na Gaillimhe ag seinnt concerto de chuid Jan Sibelius i gcuideachta an Esker Festival Orchestra, ceolchoirm a bhí urraithe ag sluafhoiniú. Luaim na hócáidí éagsúla seo ar fad, ní hamháin chun ildánacht agus cumas na gceoltóirí a léiriú agus chun
éagsúlacht an mhaoinithe a nochtadh, ach freisin chun ceist a ardú faoin lucht éisteachta a d’fhéadfadh a bheit ag an cheoltóir amháin in Éirinn sa lá atá inniu ann. Bionn lóin éagsúil daoine os comhair na gceoltóirí seo ag brath ar an rogha ceoil atá á sheinnt acu beo agus is muineach cróga iad na ceoltóirí a thugann faoina rogha féin ceoil a sheinnt beag beann ar lion na ndaoine a d’éisteachtaí: lena rogha, lena cheol. Ní haon ionadh, mar sin, go roghnóidh ceoltóirí mar an tríúr seo ceol suimiúil dá gcuid a híoltóireachtaí. Bíonn líon éagsúil daoine os comhair na geoltóirí seo ag brath ar an rogha ceoil atá á sheinnt acu beo agus is muineach cróga iad na ceoltóirí a thugann faoina rogha féin ceoil a sheinnt beag beann ar lion na ndaoine a d’éisteachtaí: lena rogha, lena cheol. Ní haon ionadh, mar sin, go roghnóidh ceoltóirí mar an tríúr seo ceol suimiúil dá gcuid a híoltóireachtaí.

Cur chuige úr atá i gceist anseo agus a shliocht sin ar an gceol, a bheireann ar an gluais. Cloistear torann nach samhlaítear go coitianta le ceol, fuaimnanna nach mbaineann le fonn ná le harmóin. Tá éileamh sa mhéid sin ar an éisteoir: níómh dóibh éisteacht go cuirteann mar tá an t-imreas seo le dhul chun tairbhe do dhóibh. Is minicí cuiseáil ná bual le fonn, cuir i gcás, agus uaireanta leantar cruthanna in ionad foinn socruithe. Déanann na huírlí uile malartú ar ná roíonna éagsúla, más atá an cruth is suntasaí nó ról tacaíochta, ag tabhairt cúlra fuaimde do na smaointe éagsúla ceoil, nó más comhrá ar chomhchéim atá i gceist.

Feictear dom gur fhás Cuar as na hathruithe móra atá tagtha ar theagasc an cheoil in Éirinn le blianta anuas. Seinféinann an triúr ceoltóir óg cruthanta seo ceol clasaiceach, snag-cheol agus ceol traídísintiúnta, ní airim seánraí eile. Ní i gcónaí a d’éireodh le ceoltóirí óga na ceolta éagsúla seo a bhlaisteadh ina n-ógige, ag brath ar an áit inar tógadh iad, ach d’éirigh leo seo i gcontaetha na Gaillimhe agus an Chlár agus i gcaithair Átha Cliath. Is céimeiteach ceoil iad an triúr agus bhí siad ar fad thar lear ag staídéar an cheoil, san Ísiltir, sa Ghearmáin agus san Ind. Is í an t-áit úd is faide uainn díobh croí an Scéil seol mar gur inti a chaith cumadóir an cheoil, Neil Ó Lochlainn, tréimhsí éagsúla, an ceann is deireanaí dóibh ó dheas in Chennai, tréimhsí a chuidigh leis an ceol nua-chumtha seo a fhórsaí anuas.

Ceadaíonn an rogha éagsúil uirlísí – fheidh mhór, fidil, clairinéad, dordchlairinéad agus olldord – don Chuar saoíse ar a thabhairt do na smaointe ceolmhara, saoíse a shaol le ceol nua-chumtha ceoil, nó más chomhrá ar chomhchéim atá i gceist.
REVIEW: CUAR ALBUM LAUNCH – BLACK GATE CULTURAL CENTRE

GALWAY, APRIL 2017

na hÍnde m.sh. an tanpura, nil aithris i gceist anseo ach béim ar chomhthuisceint i leith an cheoil agus i leith na cruthaíochta trí chéile, comhthuisceint chéadfachta. Dar le Ó Lochlainn, baineann an ceol leis an am agus nil sé agaíneach ach ar aisacht seal. Imreas atá ar bun sa cheoltóireacht, rud a mholfadh nach mbeadh cosc ar bith ar cheolta éagsúla a thabhairt le chéile in aon am agus in aon áit amhain. Níl uait ach ceoltóirí sciliúla chun tabhacht faoi agus tá siad cruinnithe ag Cuar.

Is in Eanáir 2017 a thaifead Cuar an chéad albam uathu agus, go luath i mí Aibreán, d’fhreastalaíos ar sheoladh an albaim in Ionad Cultúrtha an Gheata Dhuibh i gCathair na dTreabh. In íoslach an tí a chruinnigh na daoine, slua beag a thug éisteacht bhréach oscailte aireach i seomra ina bhfuil soilsiú bog i gcoinne dromchlaí dorcha agus daoine suite ag boird ar chuma cabaret, rud a thug éascaíocht don chruinniú. Oíche thaitneamhach lán de cheol machnamhach atá lom lán le smaointe áille ceolmhar agus croí. Don gceol seo atá dúshlánach don seinnteoir, ceadaíonn smacht iomlán na gceoltóirí ar a gcuid uirlisí fuinneamh tréan chomh maith le brí, go háirithe nuair atá ceol bog réidh á sheinnt. Is léir gur spreagúil iad na buíonta Cuar agus Ensemble Ériu a cheadaigh don gcumadóir óg seo a chiste saibhir smaointe a scaoileadh. Is fada uaim an lá go mbeidh deiseanna eile ag Ó Lochlainn, leis na buíonta seo agus freisin le buíonta eile, canbháis níos mó seans, ceol do scannán b’fhéidir. Ceol chun machnaimh, ceol chun taitnimh.
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As part of the collaboration between the Society for Musicology in Ireland and the Irish National Committee of the International Council for Traditional Music, we are pleased to announce that a second joint postgraduate conference will take place in Maynooth University on Friday the 19th, and Saturday the 20th of January 2018.

The conference committee would like to invite postgraduates working in all areas of musical research to submit proposals for conference papers. Papers must not exceed 20 minutes, and a further 10 minutes will be allocated for discussion. Areas of research include but are not limited to historical and cultural musicology, ethnomusicology, music theory and analysis, music technology, music pedagogy, popular music studies, performance studies and practice-based research, and the psychology of music. The conference committee also welcomes proposals from postgraduate scholars working on music-related topics or themes in other areas of the humanities. Aside from the traditional paper sessions, there will also be a Careers Forum - a panel discussion offering advice and guidance to postgraduate students on career-related matters - scheduled as part of the conference.
CALLS FOR PAPERS

To submit a proposal, please send an email attachment (.doc, .docx, pdf.) to the conference committee at ictm.smi.pg2017@gmail.com with the following information:

- Title of paper
- Abstract (maximum 250 words)
- Full name, contact details, and institutional affiliations
- Short biography (maximum 150 words)
- Audio-visual and other requirements (data projection, CD/DVD player, piano, etc.)

Additional queries can also be directed to the conference committee at the above email address. Applicants will be notified by September 30th 2017.
ICTM Ireland’s membership comprises a diverse body of musicians and scholars who study a variety of musical genres and contexts throughout the world. Currently, we are working to expand our membership so that the organisation can reflect the breadth and depth of scholarship on music in Ireland. We have increased ICTM Ireland’s activities over the past years, in particular through the institution of an annual postgraduate workshop designed to strengthen research skills and the recent launch of our online, peer-reviewed journal.

If you are interested in becoming a member, renewing your membership, or recommending ICTM Ireland to a student or colleague, contact us at membership@ictm.ie. Full details on joining ICTM Ireland can also be found at www.ictm.ie.
Ethnomusicology Ireland is a fully peer-reviewed online journal for research on music in its social and cultural context. Published annually, it is produced by an editorial team working under the Irish national committee of the ICTM.

Submissions and inquiries should be addressed to the editors at ethnomusicologyireland@operamail.com

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