



**International Conference  
June 27<sup>th</sup>-July 1st, 2012**

University of Ulster, Magee Campus, City of Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland

**Ó Cos go Cluas**

*(Trans. 'from foot to ear')*

Traditional music has moved from a primary purpose of servicing dance, to expressing artistic preference. This is particularly so for the fiddle, one of the most versatile, accessible and universal of acoustic instruments. The conference will explore its current popularity in North Atlantic musics in terms of the shift of folk cultures' interest from social process to aesthetic product.

Recording played a large part in this redirection, offering musicians opportunity and stimulus for deeper appreciation and analysis. It led to expanded access, to scale and diversity in repertoires, to striving for excellence and a virtually boundless potential for expansion. Recording liberated music from the occasion-specific time-slots formerly defined by social dance. Dance responded differently, more deeply directed by social and economic factors and era-specific fashion shifts, yet vibrant dance practices are still part of most North Atlantic traditional musics. But at its outer fringes traditional melody-making now shades into other forms – jazz, contemporary classical, rock and pop – and indeed the antithesis of genre, so-called 'world' music. Is Alan Lomax's 'cultural grey-out' to become reality? Will traditional fiddling decompose into a cloud of intermeshed idioms and clichés expounded with fabulous but empty virtuosity?

*Ó Cos go Cluas* will address the process, product and the potential of this progression. We call for papers on all aspects of the dancing-listening continuum with the emphasis being on transformation rather than the static, and on both the consequences and potential of music's independence from dance for participants and audiences. Papers may engage with:

- **composition and performance** – themes, direction and personality; cliché, quotation, standard riff, originality; superficiality, dumbing down, cheap tricks; sophistication, challenge, complexity; arrangement and orchestration; the Scottish mixed-tempo set
- **the avant garde** – 'world' music: 'a sinister globalisation? Eurovision values; the Pop fiddle; tone and tempo; gender and sexism in PR.
- **revived fiddle cultures** - social practice, cultural relevance; revision and rethinking; imagined and borrowed repertoires; stylistic analysis; philosophising 'the folk'; collection and collections; the fiddle as icon.
- **pushing to the limits** – the fiddle family in Traditional musics; old and new forms: three, four - or five strings? The bow, the bridge, the fingerboard, the peg box, chin rest; traditions, innovations: Stroh and electric fiddles.
- **the historic fiddle** – images in stone, in print, in painting and text; O'Curry's Irish bow; from plucking to bowing; fiddle bands, town fiddlers; the hurdy gurdy and fretted viols.

- **recording** – setting standards or undermining traditions? The birth of analysis; single-tunes versus the '78' selection; the 'standard' tunes set.
- **fashion** - the Pop aesthetic; from chest to chin; resonating strings; rapid versus relaxed, decorated versus plain; studio aesthetics; acoustic versus mediated; superstar fiddlers
- **accompaniment** – in lieu of the dancer? Transformational? Killing or kindling? Dumbing down or enhancing? Plucked or struck? Guitar versus bouzouki; the piano: vamp or vampire? Fiddle and flute, fiddle and pipes, fiddle and accordion, fiddle ensembles
- **fiddle and dance** - no dance - no rhythm? The rise of beat; dance detail and music decoration; the music phrase and dance movement; the integral melody-dance (set dance). The dancing fiddler.
- **fiddle and song** – the singing fiddler; the fiddle accompanist; harmony, parts and counter melody with song.

***NAFCO's conference convenors now call for submissions in the form of a 200-word abstract with additional 100-word biography from researchers in all relevant academic fields. Papers are to be of max. 20-minute duration.***

Further details regarding NAFCo 2012 are available on [www.nafco2012.com](http://www.nafco2012.com)

The closing date for ALL submissions is November 1st 2011

Submissions and general queries should be sent to: [conference@nafco2012.com](mailto:conference@nafco2012.com)

NAFCo 2012 will take place in Derry-Donegal from June 27<sup>th</sup>-July 1<sup>st</sup> with the conference happening at the University of Ulster, Magee campus, City of Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Dr. Liz Doherty is the 2012 NAFCo Convenor and Dr. Fintan Vallely the NAFCo Conference Co-ordinator.