

JOHN BUCKLEY AND JOHN O'FLYNN (EDS), *CEOL PHÁDRAIG: MUSIC AT ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE DRUMCONDRA 1875–2016* (Dublin: Carysfort Press, & Oxford, UK: Peter Lang, 2019). ISBN 978-1-78997-579-6, xviii + 336pp, €25.

The preparation of teachers for the nation's schools is one of the primary responsibilities of third-level educational institutions in Ireland. Historical narratives that chronicle the development of teacher education deepen our understanding of the changing role of schooling in society. The collection of essays in *Ceol Phádraig: Music at St Patrick's College Drumcondra 1875–2016* represents an important contribution to the history of teacher education in Ireland, tracing as it does the development of music in the curriculum and cultural life of St Patrick's College Drumcondra from its foundation in 1875 until its incorporation into Dublin City University in 2016. The essays document the College's rich and varied musical traditions and in the process account for its considerable influence on musical and cultural life in Ireland. Given their roles as music educators in St Patrick's College, the editors John O'Flynn and John Buckley (since retired) bring a deep knowledge of its heritage and traditions to the project.

St Patrick's College (hereafter College) was the first of a number of teacher-training colleges to be established as part of the state's national school system in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.¹ It was followed by Our Lady of Mercy College, Carysfort, 1877; St Mary's College, Marino, 1881; Church of Ireland Training College, Dublin, 1884; De La Salle College, Waterford, 1894; Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 1898; and St Mary's Training College, Belfast, 1900. While histories of individual teacher-training colleges have been written,² and accounts of music in some colleges are available,³ *Ceol Phádraig* is the first book-length publication to address specifically musical development in a teacher-training college in Ireland.

¹ Prior to the establishment of the national school system in 1831, as early as 1811 teacher training was offered by the Kildare Place Training Institution, taken over by the Church Education Society and later the Church of Ireland. See Susan M. Parkes, *Kildare Place: A History of the Church of Ireland Training College 1811–1969* (Dublin: CICE, 1984).

² James Kelly, *St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, 1875–2000: A History* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006); Séamus Mac Gabhann (ed.), *Carysfort College Remembered* (Dublin: Carysfort College Commemoration Committee, 2018); Sr. Loreto O'Connor, *Passing on the Torch: A History of Mary Immaculate College, 1898–1998* (Limerick, 1998); Parkes, *Kildare Place*.

³ The role of music in the development of other colleges of education is included in the following sources: Gareth Cox, 'Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Limerick', in Harry White & Barra Boydell (eds.),

The book is organized into eleven chapters, preceded by an introduction by the editors and concluding with an afterword by Niall Doyle, Head of Music and Opera at the Arts Council of Ireland and a graduate of the College. Some chapters survey musical development more generally at the College across the decades, others focus on an aspect of the music curriculum and how it developed over time (e.g., composition), while some focus on specific traditions and projects at the College (e.g., the Fidelio Trio residency). In the closing chapter, six graduates offer perspectives as they look back on their time at the College. The various contributions align well with the goal of the book set out by the editors in the introduction, which aims to ‘examine and interpret key developments, appraise the work of major contributors to the progress of music at the College and capture the activities of students and staff over the years’ (p. 1).

In chapter one, Daithí Ó Corráin provides a historical overview of the development of the College, highlighting the challenges presented in the early years and illustrating how the ‘story of the College and the history of Irish education are intertwined’ (p. 7). The chapter is key to understanding the educational and musical landscapes described in subsequent chapters. John O’Flynn and Patricia Flynn’s chapter on ‘Music in Education and Humanities’ similarly provides vital perspectives to inform music development at the College. The authors show how the music curriculum evolved and expanded from ‘a small single-mission college of teacher training ... to a college of education and humanities providing university degree programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels’ (p. 63). To trace its evolution, the music curriculum is presented in four chronological phases: 1. prior to the introduction of the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree in 1975; 2. curriculum music and degree-level music in the BEd degree program; 3. the expansion of undergraduate and postgraduate music courses between 1994 and 2008; and 4. further programmatic changes between 2008 and 2016.

Major areas of music curriculum development are documented in considerable detail in chapters on performance, composition, Irish traditional music, vocal and choral music, and engagement and research. John Buckley’s chapter two on performance combines descriptions of music staff and other key individuals, concerts and musical productions, facilities, curricular and student-led performances, and

The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2013), 632; Patricia Flynn, ‘St Patrick’s College Drumcondra’, in *The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland*, 954; Gabrielle McCann, ‘“Gone with the Solfa and the Singing Classes”: Music in Carysfort College’, in *Carysfort College Remembered*, 178–88.

sustained collaborations with external organizations. Buckley's conclusion that 'music has resonated across St Patrick's College for almost a century and a half' is illustrated with abundant evidence. In chapter four, Rhona Clarke presents a thorough account of the ways in which the music composition curriculum was created, how a culture for composition was nurtured from the 1960s forward, and how the College established itself as a centre for composition studies. Similar to other areas of music education at the College, it was relationships with external groups (e.g., commissions and visiting composers) that, as Clarke puts it, encouraged and made real '[t]he discipline of musical composition' and presented it as a career option, 'not just a theoretic practice' (p. 102).

An account of Irish traditional music at the College in chapter five reflects its changing status in Irish society at large. Author Teresa O'Donnell approaches the topic from three perspectives: 1. the song collections compiled by music staff member and cultural activist Peter Goodman; 2. contributions of graduates (Stan Ó Briain, Seán Ó Síocháin, Liam Devally, Seán Ó Sé, Fachtna Ó hAnnracháin); and 3. the College as a growing centre of influence for traditional music. Beginning in 1970 with the hosting of the final of the first All-Ireland Slógadh, O'Donnell documents the increased attention given to integrating traditional music into the curriculum, evident in the hiring of Caitlín Bean Uí Éigearthaigh in 1972 and later other practitioners and teachers of the tradition such as Fintan Vallely and Eithne Vallely, and more recently Mary Louise O'Donnell and Mary Nugent. The founding of a College branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in 1978 reflected the interest in traditional music, which was maintained over the decades, and recently evident in the founding of a DCU Tradsoc in 2016.

John O'Flynn explores aspects of vocal and choral music in the College's history in chapter six. The narrative is documented meticulously, with several time periods linked 'with various stages in the evolution of school music curricula, as well as with broader socio-cultural developments in Ireland' (p. 128). Given the prominence of choral music education at the College and in Irish society more generally during the time period, the chapter is of particular significance. The reader gains knowledge of the 'long line of choral directors', from Peter Goodman and Joseph Seymour in the early decades to Colum Ó Cléirigh, Seán Mac Liam, Marion Doherty, and John O'Flynn, who expanded the scope and advanced the standards of choral music education since the 1970s. O'Flynn also authored the chapter on engagement and research 'carried out by music staff at the College for the last half-century or so of its history' (p. 201). Topics include in-service education, curriculum development and instructional resources, arts-in-education projects, and professional service. Postgraduate research studies completed between 2000 and 2016 are listed in Appendix D, a valuable addition to the book. The number of music and music

education conferences held at the College in the same period speaks to the critical role music staff played in the advancement of scholarly culture at the national level.

Further confirming the vibrant choral culture in the College, Yvonne Higgins traces the development of 'the Kodály connection' and St Patrick's College that began with Colum Ó Cléirigh's chance meeting with Hungarian musician Péter Erdei at the Cork Choral Festival in 1982. From that chance meeting grew a long-standing institutional connection with the Zoltán Kodály Institute of Music Pedagogy in Kecskemét, Hungary (p. 174). Higgins provides much evidence to show how Kodály's approach became integral to music pedagogy at the College and beyond—evident in the hosting of international Kodály seminars, the large number of Irish teachers who pursued specialist training in Kecskemét, the founding of the Kodály Society of Ireland, the method's impact on the primary school curriculum, and the provision of in-service Kodály summer courses.

As the mission of the music department expanded beyond the preparation of primary teachers, the scope of music genres expanded accordingly, as reflected in projects such as the Mapping Popular Music in Dublin project (2015), the integrated music studies project in the Fidelio Trio residency (2012–2015), and the relocation of the Newpark Jazz degree programme to the College. In chapter nine Áine Mangaoang tracks the various stages of the popular music mapping project—its roots in music tourism, the methodology used to create the map, the impact of the project locally and across the city, and a description of the network involved in and arising out of the project. John O'Flynn documents the Fidelio Trio residency in chapter ten, developed around the strands of Music in Education and in the Community, Performance and Musicology, Composition and Orchestration, and Promoting Chamber Music (p. 223). Beyond a chronicling of the events and festivals that occurred during the years of the Residency (Appendix E), the chapter attests to the comprehensive scope of the College's music curriculum toward the end of the time period documented in the book.

Several authors remind the reader that generations of teachers have passed through the College and have gone on to influence music education around the nation. It is fitting, then to hear from some of the graduates. In the closing chapter, John Buckley introduces six graduates who completed BA, BEd, or PhD degrees in the period between 1979 and 2013. A comment by one graduate, Conall Ó Breacháin, seems to capture the unique spirit of the College: 'It was heavily coloured with the rich history of the past, the vibrant buzz of the present and the hum of possibility that waited in the future' (p. 251). While these testimonials are insightful, the inclusion of perspectives of graduates who were students at the College earlier than the late 1970s

would have added to the diversity of graduate experiences and further enriched the chapter.

As a historical work, the variety of primary sources drawn on is impressive—first-hand experience, archival documents (from local, national and international locations), newspapers and periodicals, interviews and personal correspondence, photographs and images, concert programmes and discographies. The five appendices compiled by the editors represent a valuable addition to the book. A majority of chapters are focused on the history of music at the College during the last fifty years of the time period, from the mid 1960s to 2016. A different organizational structure focusing on developmental patterns within chronological periods may have led to a more unified institutional history. To offset that effect, the introduction and over half of the chapters are authored or co-authored by the editors, lending a coherence to the overall narrative. As a reader with a deep interest in the history of music education in Ireland, the book provided valuable insights into the place of music in the curriculum and culture of one institution whose function from the outset was to prepare teachers for a career in primary education. Furthermore, it illustrates how musical experiences can exert a lifelong influence on pre-service teachers during a critical time in their career development.

From the introduction to the afterword, the significance of the College's contribution to and synergistic relationship with the broad landscape of music and music education in Ireland is revealed. Buckley and O'Flynn define that landscape in the introduction: 'The development of music at St Patrick's College in many ways reflects the evolution of music in the country as a whole' (p. 1). Ó Corráin reiterates and expands on the point, stating that the impact of the College 'on the educational landscape of Ireland, as well as the wider social, cultural and political life of the country has been immense' (p. 7). In the afterword, Niall Doyle notes the College's contributions to 'the wider professional musical life in Ireland' (p. 259) and views the College as 'a highly active national music environment in microcosm' (p. 263). A listing of abbreviations at the beginning of the book indicates the scope of the College's network in relation to musical groups and institutions in Ireland. Evaluating the impact of choral music education, O'Flynn concludes that 'student participation in college-based choral activities for more than one hundred and thirty years has led to the establishment of innumerable choirs in schools and communities across the country' (p. 148). The fine choral reputation of the College earned regular invitations to broadcast on the new national broadcasting service, 2RN, beginning as early as 1927. In the area of composition, Clarke outlines clearly the rich network of connections and collaborations with composers and in particular with the Contemporary Music Centre (CMC).

Contributions to the nation's musical life were enabled by certain commitments and conditions. Given the evidence in several chapters, the College administration valued music. Buckley notes the leadership of President Fr Donal Cregan between 1957 and 1975, specifically his interest in the arts and his 'strong personal and professional rapport' with then conductor of the Radio Éireann Symphony Orchestra, Tibor Paul, which led to a flourishing collaboration between the College and the Orchestra. Buckley also traces 'an unbroken lineage of music lecturers in the college' (Appendix A), and similar to Fr Cregan, a group that left a deep mark on advancing the mission of music at the College. The presence of appropriate music facilities and concert venues also indicates how it is valued. Buckley notes how the presence of an auditorium made a difference as an outstanding venue for student performances within the College and for external music organizations—musical societies, symphony orchestras, folk and popular music artists—to stage their concerts and productions (p. 40).

How did the development of music at the College reflect changes in music, in higher education, and in society at large? As a Catholic educational institution, the curriculum at St Patrick's College reinforced the ideals of cultural nationalism in relation to church music and the production of songs in the Irish language. These influences are well documented in several chapters. From a related perspective, choral traditions dominated Irish music education for the greater part of the twentieth century; as instrumental music education gained a greater presence in public education and traditional music found a strong foothold and respectability in Irish education, instrumental music at the College became more evident in the last third of the time period.

Beginning in the 1970s with the introduction of study in Irish traditional music, the increasing diversity of music studied and performed at the College reflected a movement away from an exclusive focus on classical music toward the inclusion of folk, traditional, jazz and various popular styles (p. 2). With curricular diversity comes choice and challenge. As multiple genres are introduced, and with the same time-to-degree schedule, modifications are necessary and priorities shift. For example, in the context of Irish traditional music, in 2009, the course devoted to it was incorporated into a module which included ethnomusicology and popular music, and further incorporated into a mainstream module 'topics in musicology' in 2014 (p. 119). External recommendations and changing musical and sociocultural values as well as internal resources and new directions influence the enactment of curricular reform.

Teacher training colleges changed from single-gender to co-educational institutions in the mid to late twentieth century, with the first female students admitted to St Patrick's College in 1971. Of note too is that the first female full-time lecturer, Caitlín

Bean Uí Éigeartaigh, was hired in 1972. Clarke observes that for composition, 'role models are at hand, both male and female, as exemplars of the discipline' (p. 102). A chapter documenting the role of gender in student and staff contexts across the College's history would have added an interesting perspective to the book, given the feminized nature of primary-level teaching and the value of additional research-based perspectives on gender in Irish educational contexts.

The changing role of music in the teacher education curriculum is evident in the focus of attention broadening from music in the core curriculum of all teacher candidates to music as an academic subject for a specialist population of students who study it to degree level in BEd and BA programmes. In the afterword Niall Doyle identifies the outcomes of this change as a point of tension and calls for 'a move toward national delivery of the music curriculum by specialist primary teachers with the necessary skill levels to deliver it' (p. 269). Advocacy for music specialist primary teachers has been a recurring theme in the history of Irish primary education, and in other national education systems. Doyle revisits the question and reiterates the interdependent relationship among the 'levels of general musical understanding' and mastery among incoming teacher candidates (p. 269), the impact of curriculum music on their musical development, the quality of music education afforded children in primary schools, and ultimately (as Doyle puts it) 'the possibility of transforming Irish life through teaching' (p. 261). The author poses challenging questions in the afterword and his contribution serves to balance the celebratory and laudatory account of past achievements with a reminder of the need to continue 'the mission that drove St Patrick's College over generations' (p. 270). The values that define educational institutions are constantly changing in response to society (and in the case of St Patrick's College, its incorporation into DCU), demanding ongoing reflection on curriculum and reform. *Ceol Phádraig* provides a forum for such reflection, accentuating its importance in linking the heritage of music in primary teaching and teacher education with the promise of a future in which music flourishes in the education of children and youth and by extension in their lifelong engagement with music.

Marie McCarthy

University of Michigan