

'A Vast Speculation': The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

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The presentation of a Grand Musical Meeting in Cork in 1826 was an ambitious and innovative undertaking by Cork-born musician William Forde.¹ On a scale unprecedented in Ireland, it pre-dated the First Dublin Grand Musical Festival of 1831 by five years.² Though it may have been inspired by a new wave of 'festival mania' which gripped English cities during the 1820s,³ it was a model without precedent, tailored to prevailing circumstances and opportunities in Cork. An examination of contemporary newspaper accounts throws light on Cork's cultural position as a provincial city of the then British Isles and Forde's central role in this regard.

Background

Concert and theatre life in Cork from the mid-eighteenth century to the 1790s derived impetus from the musical infrastructures of Dublin's flourishing cultural life. From the 1730s Dublin's Theatre Royal was the centre of a provincial circuit which encompassed

¹ b. Cork, 1796; d. London, 1850. See James D. Brown and Stephen S. Stratton, *British Musical Biography: A Dictionary of Musical Artists, Authors and Composers born in Britain and its Colonies* (Birmingham: Stratton, 1897), 149. A brief biographical note is given in John Windele, *Windele's Cork: Historical and Descriptive Notices of the City of Cork from Its Foundation to the Middle of the 19th Century*, revised, abridged and annotated by James Coleman (Cork: Guy, 1910), 80.

² See Brian Boydell, 'Music 1700–1850', in T. W. Moody and W. E. Vaughan (eds), *A New History of Ireland IV: Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 568–627: 612–13. Programme details for the concerts of the Dublin festival were published in the booklet *The First Dublin Grand Musical Festival 1831* (Dublin: Underwood, 1831).

³ Brian W. Pritchard, *The Musical Festival and the Choral Society in England in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Social History*, 2 vols (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 1968), i, 334–9. A recent study is Catherine Dale, 'A Provincial Musical Festival in Nineteenth-century England: A Case Study of Bridlington', in Rachel Cowgill and Peter Holman (eds), *Music in the British Provinces 1690–1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007) 325–47: 327.

the principal Irish cities and towns.⁴ On conclusion of its annual season in Dublin, the company commenced provincial touring, joined by principals from London's Covent Garden and Drury Lane theatres.⁵ Since 1760, when the manager of Dublin's Crow Street Theatre built Cork's Theatre Royal in George's Street (now Oliver Plunkett Street), the first purpose-built Irish theatre outside of Dublin, successive companies from Dublin's Theatre Royal occupied the venue in late summer for a number of weeks, commencing with the assize week.⁶ The twice-annual sittings of the county courts, known as the spring and summer assizes, were important social occasions, bringing the county nobility and gentry to the city. The summer assize week, in particular, constituted the social highlight of the year. Touring concert performers also favoured this time of year to visit Cork. Professional musicians from Britain and the Continent engaged for Dublin's prestigious Rotunda concerts frequently undertook provincial tours of Ireland at the end of the Dublin season, and typically arrived in Cork in late summer.⁷ By the late 1790s, however, musical events in Cork declined in frequency: no concerts took place in 1795 and 1798, and only one concert was advertised in each of the years 1797 and 1799. William Smith Clark has noted a general fall-off in theatre attendance in Ireland in 1798–99.⁸ This may be attributed to a gradual erosion of the provincial circuit system, which continued to decline during the first four decades of the nineteenth century.⁹ For the Grand Musical Meeting in 1826 Forde collaborated with John McDonnell, manager of Cork's Theatre Royal,¹⁰ most likely as

⁴ This topic is examined in detail in William Smith Clark, *The Irish Stage in the County Towns 1720–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965). An important account of eighteenth-century musical productions at Dublin's Theatre Royal is T. J. Walsh, *Opera in Dublin 1705–1797: The Social Scene* (Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1973).

⁵ For an outline of the eighteenth-century provincial theatre circuits see Michael R. Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 16. Accounts of the Dublin Theatre Royal company's early visits to Cork are given in Robert Hitchcock, *An Historical View of the Irish Stage*, 2 vols (Dublin: Marchbank, 1788–94), ii, 39–40.

⁶ Clark, 69–145.

⁷ Brian Boydell, *Rotunda Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1988). Madame Louisa Gautherot, John Mahon, Joseph Reinagle, Andrew Ashe, Frantisek Kotzwar are some of the performers who appeared in Cork following engagements at the Rotunda concerts.

⁸ Clark, 143.

⁹ See Christopher Morash, *A History of Irish Theatre, 1601–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 81–2. Poor houses at Cork theatres were referred to in *Boyle's Freeholder*, 30 November 1821 and again on 5 July 1828.

¹⁰ *Boyle's Freeholder*, 12 August 1823. McDonnell was a local auctioneer with an address at 39 Patrick Street; see *Pigot's City of Dublin and Hibernian Provincial Directory* (London and Manchester: J. Pigot, 1824).

an attempt to boost theatre audiences by presenting an event of novelty and magnitude for the assize week when the city's population was augmented by an influx of the county gentry. In fact, the assigning of the Theatre Royal to this event may be seen as a radical move, considering its long tradition of tenure by the Dublin theatre companies.

Since 1823 William Forde's links with London's musical environment had been an animating force in Cork's concert life. A flautist, pianist and composer, he had left Cork in 1818 and was professionally active in London, notably as principal flautist at the English Opera House.¹¹ On his return to Cork in 1823 he presented two concerts that effectively coordinated local and visiting performers and introduced new orchestral and instrumental repertoire, hailed in the press as 'the sublime selections from Mozart, Beethoven and Cherubini—the brilliant beauties of Drouet, Tulou, and Kalkbrenner'.¹² His preference for the Theatre Royal as a concert venue over the Assembly Room for the second of these concerts was indicative of his commitment to an expanded model of concert presentation and the performances drew high acclaim in the local newspapers.¹³ Forde was drawn to the rich musical life of London, returning there in 1825 for further professional engagements. Arriving back in Cork from London in July 1826 with a company of singers and instrumentalists described as 'a galaxy of musical capability',¹⁴ Forde was about to present a Grand Musical Meeting which, in terms of scale, superseded even the English festivals and was unsparing in its engagement of performers from the most prominent English professional musical circles. In the press advertising and previews Forde emerges as a channel for London's cultural leadership. The publicity notices place emphasis on a connection with London's Royal Academy of Music, the promotion of which may have been a subsidiary aim. For the performers, the journey to Cork for this engagement was also exploratory. Performers seeking work in an expanding musical environment would have welcomed the prospect of new opportunities in provincial Ireland, a compelling motivation to travel to Cork on this occasion.

¹¹ *The Constitution*, 26 September 1829.

¹² *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 3 January 1823, 29 January 1823.

¹³ Susan O'Regan, *Public Concerts in the Musical Life of Cork 1754–1840*, 2 vols (PhD diss., Cork Institute of Technology, 2008), i, 219–22; see *Boyle's Freeholder*, 23 January 1823.

¹⁴ *The Constitution*, 27 July 1826.

Organization

Designated variously as the 'Grand Musical Meeting', the 'Grand Cork Concerts', and the 'Grand Cork Concerts and Oratorios',¹⁵ the event was first announced in the Cork newspapers in July, clearly aimed at a local audience as no advertisements appeared in the Dublin newspapers. The level of newspaper coverage was unprecedented in the city, with reports in each of the city's three newspapers, *Southern Reporter*, *The Constitution* and *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, and in *Boyle's Freeholder*, a magazine of social interest. From the outset, each of these publications offered their unqualified support, such as the following piece from *The Constitution*:

We lately advertised to the intention of Mr McDonnell, to get up six concerts at the Theatre Royal, on a scale of magnificence and splendour never equalled in this Kingdom. Arrangements were for some time in considerable progress for this arduous and enterprising undertaking, and we have now the satisfaction to announce, that all the preliminaries have been arranged for the approaching Assizes; when the citizens of Cork will be grateful with an array of musical talent of the first celebrity. Upwards of forty individuals—some of them of the greatest eminence in their profession at foreign Courts, have already been engaged—and also several of our local professors, who have already most deservedly received the stamp of their fellow Citizens' approbation—among them we may name Messrs Bowden, Keays, Brettridge, etc. With such inducements, we have no doubt that the enlightened and liberal portion of our city, proverbial for musical and scientific taste, will come forward and support the public spirited individual who has so manfully stood up, in the absence of all other entertainments, to cater on such an expensive and extensive scale for their Amusement.¹⁶

The writer in *Boyle's Freeholder* was no less enthusiastic:

McDonnell certainly is a fellow of great enterprise. The combination of musical talent which he is preparing for the Assizes, surpasses any attempt of the kind ever made in this country. 'Tis a vast speculation. He is eminently entitled to public support.¹⁷

William Abbott, manager of Dublin's Hawkins Street Theatre company, was obliged to arrange an alternative venue in the George's Street Assembly Room, which was refurbished for the season, reopening on 22 July as the 'New Theatre Royal'. The pieces to be performed by the company that year included English musical comedies such as Arne's *Love in a Village* and Burgoyne's *The Lord of the Manor*, Bishop's adaptation of *The Marriage of Figaro* and Weber's *Der Freischütz*, which had been premiered in London in 1824. Madame Lucia Vestris, who had featured on the London

¹⁵ *Southern Reporter*, 13 August 1826.

¹⁶ *The Constitution*, 8 July 1826.

¹⁷ *Boyle's Freeholder*, 29 June 1826.

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

boards for over a decade,¹⁸ headed the theatre cast in her first Cork appearance, and *The Constitution* welcomed the prospect of rival events:

A fair and honourable competition will always meet with our warmest support, and we are gratified from the character of the party engaged in this undertaking, no other feeling will be manifested. We have a population fully equal to the support of both establishments, and without detracting in the slightest degree from the attraction of either party, we must say that the name of Madame Vestris is a tower of strength...¹⁹

Additional competition for audiences was generated by the arrival of the 13-year-old prodigy pianist Master George Aspull in Cork as part of a tour. He gave a concert on 21 July and announced a morning concert to be performed on 3 August at the Imperial Hotel.²⁰

'Musical Meetings' had a long tradition in provincial cities in England, and were being organized with renewed vigour after the end of the French wars.²¹ When the London opera and concert season concluded in July, many professional performers took up engagements at the provincial festivals, held in August, September and October. These consisted of three or four days of alternating morning and evening concerts, divided between secular and sacred concerts or 'oratorios', the latter usually performed in a church.²² Such a model was adopted for a touring festival of operatic and sacred concerts headed by Madame Angelica Catalani in 1814, which included Cork, Dublin and Limerick in its itinerary.²³ A festival of similar structure had been organized in Belfast in September 1813 by Edward Bunting.²⁴ In contrast to these and the English Festivals, however, the Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826 was to be two weeks long, commencing with six Grand Concerts, all secular, to be held on consecutive evenings beginning on the 31 July.

¹⁸ Theodore Fenner, *Opera in London: Views of the Press 1785–1830* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994), 216–19, 551–3.

¹⁹ *The Constitution*, 25 July 1826.

²⁰ *The Constitution*, 3 August 1826.

²¹ Brian W. Pritchard, 'Some Festival Programmes of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. 3. Liverpool and Manchester', *RMA Research Chronicle*, 7 (1969), 1–25: 1.

²² Pritchard, *The Musical Festival*, i, 352–60, presents details of major English festivals held in the 1820s and 1830s.

²³ See T. J. Walsh, *Opera in Dublin 1798–1820: Frederick Jones and the Crow Street Theatre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 134–44.

²⁴ Roy Johnston, *Bunting's Messiah* (Belfast: The Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, 2003), 74–88.

The upsurge in Festival organization which occurred in the larger English provincial centres during the 1820s was a phenomenon which, building on a long history, reflected increasingly powerful middle-class communities in regions marked by the industrial revolution.²⁵ A new lead was shown by the Birmingham festival, which from 1820 had extended its duration to four days and greatly increased the instrumental and vocal forces. Organized as occasional events or as part of a series, these festivals were by the 1820s firmly established in provincial cultural life, where enthusiastic middle-class involvement generated large audiences and ensured consistent management. Two vital elements in the organizational mechanism were the networking between provincial centres and the existence of a local choral society. Complex and efficient networks operated between neighbouring towns and cities, and a number of professional promoters emerged such as John White, and conductors Thomas Greatorex and Sir George Smart.²⁶ By the 1820s the importance of choral societies to the success of English festivals had increased to the point where 'the chorus had become the cornerstone of any important meeting'.²⁷ The support of local charities in the majority of cases added to the local importance of the festival.

Traditions and resources in Cork were of a different order. A local choral society had never been established: although choirs from the cathedrals of Cloyne and Cashel had combined with those of Cork's St Fin Barre's cathedral and Christ Church for oratorio performances in 1788, 1789, 1801, 1802 and 1818, their involvement was linked to the charitable aim of these performances, and no permanent structures had resulted.²⁸ The design of the Cork Grand Musical Meeting deviated from the English festival model in presenting concerts on six consecutive evenings, to be followed during the second week with an oratorio, an opera and additional concerts. It was organized on a purely commercial basis with admission prices for single tickets originally advertised as 'Boxes 6s, Pit 3s 6d, Gallery 2s 6d'.²⁹ By 29 July, however, these had been adjusted to match the regular theatre admission prices of 5s, 3s and 2s. Subscription tickets were not offered, a measure that would have reduced the level of financial risk. The provision of gas lighting at the theatre inevitably added to the expense. The planned schedule of the first week's events, as advertised and reported, may be reconstructed as shown in Table 1:

²⁵ Pritchard, *The Musical Festival*, i, 338–9.

²⁶ Pritchard, *The Musical Festival*, i, 260–2, 369–71.

²⁷ Pritchard, *The Musical Festival*, i, 413.

²⁸ O'Regan, i, 212–14.

²⁹ *The Constitution*, 25 July 1826.

Table 1		The schedule for the first week of concerts
Wednesday	26 July	Performers arrive on the <i>Superb</i>
Saturday	29 July	Evening rehearsal
Monday	31 July	First Grand Concert
Tuesday	1 August	Second Grand Concert
Wednesday	2 August	Third Grand Concert
		Signor Giovanola arrived from England on the <i>Superb</i>
Thursday	3 August	Fourth Grand Concert
Friday	4 August	[Fifth Grand Concert]
Saturday	5 August	Sixth Grand Concert [cancelled] ³⁰

The concert programmes were to be printed in book form, which have not come to light, but programmes for five of the concerts were published in the local newspapers: transcriptions are included in the Appendix at the end of this article. The planned series of six ‘miscellaneous’ concerts on successive nights at the Theatre Royal was calculated to optimize audiences at the theatre for the duration of assize week, a fair commercial proposition on the part of John McDonnell. The lack of advance publicity for events in the second week, which was to include an oratorio performance, may have been a deliberate strategy, focusing attention on the crucial first week. It was reported that ‘some of the most respectable parties usual at our Assizes have been postponed, which at once evinces not only great taste, but a proper feeling for those embarked in such a heavy undertaking’.³¹

The performers

The performers, mainly from London, represented the largest non-theatrical group to visit the city up to that date. They travelled to Cork on the newly-operating steam packet, the *Superb*, which carried passengers to and from London on a voyage which

³⁰ *Southern Reporter*, 1 August 1826, 5 August 1826.

³¹ *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 31 July 1826.

now lasted only sixty-five hours.³² The report in *The Constitution* on 25 July indicated optimism and heightened anticipation:

The *Superb* arrived in our River yesterday, after a short and agreeable passage, bringing with her the staff of the musical talent of London, accompanied by Mr Forde, preparatory to our splendid Concerts. Many of those persons are now in Ireland for the first time, and speak rapturously of the urbanity and attention they have already experienced. We are perfectly satisfied that such a galaxy of musical capability never before graced the city of Cork—the sensation created by their arrival, is the highest compliment that can be paid to their extraordinary talents, and to the judicious and well regulated arrangements of Mr Forde, who, while in London...was fully aware...that...more musical taste and patronage, could not be found than in his native city, on which he sheds lustre as a Professor.³³

Forde engaged a large and distinguished company, numbering forty-five, although one advertisement stated that 'the number of persons engaged amounts to nearly one hundred',³⁴ suggesting that singers from the local churches were to augment the chorus, but the advertisements or press previews did not disclose this. The engagement of a significant number of professional choral singers, 'selected from the celebrated Lancashire Choirs, and from the Ancient Concerts and Oratorios, London',³⁵ however, indicates that oratorio was part of the plan. The following chorus members were listed:

Mr Keays of Cork	Mr Patten	Miss Appleton
Mr J. Taylor	Mr Lillicrop	Mrs Fenwick
Mr Newton	Miss Piccini	Mr Charles
Mr Cozens	Miss Gray	Mr Tyrell

The initial advertisements listed the following principal performers:

Mr Keiswetter [*sic*], the celebrated performer of the violin
 Mr Schunk [*sic*], Principal pianist to the King of Wirtemberg
 Madame Cornega, of the Italian Opera
 Madame de Kolli, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden,

³² *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 24 March 1826.

³³ *The Constitution*, 27 July 1826.

³⁴ *The Constitution*, 25 July 1826.

³⁵ *Southern Reporter*, 29 July 1826.

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

Mr A. Sapio, Principal Bass Singer, Royal Academy of Music, London
Mr Lucas, Principal Violincello [*sic*], Royal Academy of Music, London
Mr Forde, Professor of the Flute, Royal Academy of Music, London³⁶

An extended list, published a week later, added nine names:

Miss Cubitt, of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden
Seignor [*sic*] Giovanola, of the Italian Opera
Mr Byng, of the Theatre Royal, Bath, Bristol, etc
Mr Christian Schunk [*sic*], of the Italian Opera, Berlin and the Philharmonic Society, London, French Horn
Mr Taylor, Double Bass
Mr Harper, the celebrated trumpet
Mr Godwin, tenor, 'arranger of the music'
Mr Keays, of Cork [singer and cellist]
Mr Bowden, of Cork, leader of the Band³⁷

Forde was unsparing in his engagement of distinguished soloists, some of whom were at the forefront of London's concert and theatre life in the 1826 season. Madame Cornega was an ambitious choice. Newly arrived in London at the end of the previous season, she had performed at the King's Theatre in January 1826³⁸ and at Vauxhall Gardens on 20 July 1826.³⁹ However, she does not appear to have arrived in Cork and was not subsequently listed on any of the programmes. Signor Giovanola was engaged at the King's Theatre in December 1826.⁴⁰ Although his arrival was announced in the press, he was not listed on the programmes; he was to feature in the second week's events. Miss Cubitt had been active on the Drury Lane stage since 1817, and was in 1824 described by Thomas Dibdin as 'a very useful auxillary'.⁴¹ Madame de Kolli's

³⁶ *Southern Reporter*, 22 June 1826.

³⁷ *Southern Reporter*, 29 July 1826.

³⁸ 'Sketch of the State of Music in London August 1826', *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, 8 (1826), 131–84: 135.

³⁹ See David Coke, 'Vauxhall Gardens 1661–1859', http://www.vauxhallgardens.com/vauxhall_gardens_occasionalsingers_page.html, accessed 16 May 2009.

⁴⁰ William Thomas Parke, *Musical Memoirs*, 2 vols (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830), ii, 234.

⁴¹ Thomas Dibdin, *The Biography of the British Stage* (London: Sherwood Jones, 1824), 43.

name does not appear in London programmes or provincial festival programmes for 1826—except in the Cork programmes. Godwin and J. Taylor were listed as singers at several English provincial festivals during the 1820s.⁴²

The engagement of violinist Christoph Gottfried Kiesewetter (b. Anspach 1777; d. London, 1827) is indicative of the high aspirations of the director.⁴³ Since his arrival in London in 1821 he had performed at Philharmonic Society concerts, Royal Academy of Music concerts, and at several provincial festivals.⁴⁴ Carl Schunke (b. Magdeburg, 1801; d. 1839), commonly referred to as Charles in English and Irish sources, was a relative newcomer to the London musical scene, having performed at a Philharmonic Society concert in April 1826.⁴⁵ His potential was recognized by Forde and acknowledged by the reviewer of the *Southern Reporter*:

Mr Schunke is a very young man, and is but a very short time known to a British audience. The good judgement and taste which pointed to his excellence is creditable to our friend and townsman, Mr Forde, to whom we are almost wholly indebted for these Concerts.⁴⁶

Thomas Harper was Britain's most celebrated trumpeter at this time. An entry in Sainsbury's *Dictionary* describes him as 'first trumpet at the King's Theatre, Ancient and Philharmonic Concerts, and has been engaged within the last sixteen years at most of the other principal concerts and music meetings both in town and country'.⁴⁷ A notice in the *Southern Reporter* of 13 July added that 'the orchestra will be full and

⁴² Douglas J. Reid, 'Some Festival Programmes of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. I: Salisbury and Winchester', *RMA Research Chronicle*, 5 (1965), 51–79: 66.

⁴³ George Dubourg, *The Violin: Some Account of that Leading Instrument, and its Most Eminent Professors, from its Earliest Date to the Present Time* (London: Cocks, 1852), 240–1; and John S. Sainsbury (ed.), *A Dictionary of Musicians from the Earliest Times* (London 1825), 2 vols (New York: Da Capo Press, 1966, reprint of the 1825 edition), ii, 11.

⁴⁴ He performed at a Philharmonic Concert in London in February 1826: see *The Harmonicon*, 4 (1826), 83. He had performed at the Yorkshire Musical Festival, 1825: see <www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/5463>, accessed 18 May 2009. Following the Cork Musical Meeting he performed at the Birmingham Musical Festival in 1826; see 'Birmingham Musical Festival', *The Harmonicon*, 4 (1826), 217–21.

⁴⁵ 'Sketch of the State of Music in London August 1826', 161, 164. In the same month, April 1826, an advertisement appeared in *The Harmonicon* for '6 National and Hungarian Waltzes for Piano-Forte by Charles Schunke, pianist to the King of Wirtemberg, Op 4. (Boosey and Hawkes)': *The Harmonicon*, 4 (1826), 76. See also Eduard Hanslick, *Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien* (Vienna: Braunmüller, 1869), 225, note 2.

⁴⁶ *Southern Reporter*, 1 August 1826.

⁴⁷ Sainsbury, ii, 332.

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

effective, and composed of some of the first Professors of the Day', listing its members and their roles as follows:

	Director	Mr Forde	
	Conductor	Mr [Charles] Schunk [<i>sic</i>]	
	Arranger of the Music	Mr Godwin	
	Leader of the Band	Mr Bowden	
Violins	Mr Stanisbury Mr Knight Mr Lillicrop Mr Smith Mr Sturge Mr Prutlin Mr Frayer	Double Drums French Horns Trumpets Flutes	Mr Daly Mr Christian Schunk [<i>sic</i>] Mr Morris Mr Harpur [<i>sic</i>] Mr Sullivan Mr Forde Mr Berginhoff
Tenors	Mr Godwin Mr Knight	Clarionets [<i>sic</i>]	Mr Kelly Mr Evans
Violincellos [<i>sic</i>]	Mr Lucas Mr Sapio Mr Keays	Oboys [<i>sic</i>]	Mr Morris Mr Reed
Double Bass	Mr Taylor Mr Wicket	Sackbutts, bassoons, &c, &c ⁴⁸	

Mr Stanisbury, whose name heads the list of violinists, may have been the Mr Stansbury who was listed as violinist at the Chippenham Musical Festival in August 1822.⁴⁹ Christian Schunke (horn), Harper (trumpet) and Lucas (cello) were listed for the 1826 Birmingham Musical Festival.⁵⁰ For many of these artists, this Cork engagement was an opportunity to extend their professional ambit to Ireland. Of the local musicians, Richard Keays, a tenor and member of the choir of St Fin Barre's Anglican cathedral, was the city's most prominent singer during the 1820s, having studied in London with Manuel Garcia for a time in 1823,⁵¹ and featured at concerts in Bath

⁴⁸ *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 31 July 1826. The table above preserves the original list's spellings but not its precise layout.

⁴⁹ Christopher Kent, 'Music of Rural Byway and Rotten Borough', in Cowgill and Holman, 163–81: 173.

⁵⁰ 'Birmingham Musical Festival, October 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1826', *The Harmonicon*, 4 (1826), 217–21: 217.

⁵¹ *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 27 August 1823.

during the same year.⁵² He was also listed as a cellist in the orchestra. Smith, Kelly, and Sullivan may also have been local.⁵³ The leader, Robert Bowden, had been a violinist in Dublin's Crow Street Theatre band until 1806, after which he settled in Cork. In the course of his career he had led virtually every local concert and theatre band and was also a composer. A seven-octave piano manufactured by Érard and valued at two hundred guineas was imported for the occasion.⁵⁴ Its arrival on the *Superb*, along with 'Double Drums and other instruments' was reported in the *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*.⁵⁵

Forde's billing in the advertising notices as 'Professor of the Flute, Royal Academy of Music, London' raises some questions as to the nature of his association with that institution, which had been established in 1822/23.⁵⁶ The claim of professorship cannot be substantiated by reference to the Academy's records. He may, however, have been engaged as a performer at the Academy's concerts, or as a 'sub-professor'.⁵⁷ An interesting connection is that all of the principal instrumental soloists, and the singer Antonio Sapio too, had associations with the Academy in the previous months and may have been recruited there by Forde. Sapio was billed in the press advertisement as 'first bass singer at the Royal Academy',⁵⁸ where he was listed as an Associate for the years 1825-6.⁵⁹ The minute book of the Academy records an 'agreement with Mr Forde for Sapio,

⁵² *Boyle's Freeholder*, 12 July 1823.

⁵³ Smith and Kelly were listed as violinist and flageolet players in Cork concerts in 1824 and 1814 respectively. Sullivan is a local name: it is likely that some local military bandsmen may have been engaged. As rank-and-file musicians at concerts were seldom listed at this time, identification of local professional musicians remains problematic. See O'Regan, ii, for details of concerts.

⁵⁴ *The Constitution*, 29 July 1826. Érard's 'double escapement' action had been patented in 1821, enabling rapid repetition of notes. See Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A Social History* (London: Dent, 1976), 22.

⁵⁵ *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 24 July 1826.

⁵⁶ A notice in *The Constitution* of 26 September 1829 referred to Forde as 'late of the RAM'.

⁵⁷ Described by Ehrlich as 'barely trained pupil-teachers who received no payment'. See Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 81.

⁵⁸ Described as 'a younger brother of Mr Sapio, the justly esteemed tenor.... He has a splendid voice, and his manner is of the best school; when more advanced, he is likely to take a high place amongst bass singers. He is a pupil of the Royal Academy...'. 'Sketch of the State of Music in London, August 1826', 148.

⁵⁹ *A List of Pupils Received into the Academy since its Foundation in 1822-3* (London: Royal Academy of Music, 1838), 25; Brown and Stratton, 363. I wish to thank Bridget Palmer, Librarian at the Royal Academy of Music, London (hereafter RAM), for facilitating access to this and other RAM documents.

signed by the chairman in the name of the committee', dated 20 July 1826.⁶⁰ Charles Lucas (b. Salisbury, 1808; d. London, 1869), the cellist, was listed as 'sub-professor and student' of the Royal Academy of Music in 1826,⁶¹ where he studied with Robert Lindley.⁶² Mr Godwin, 'arranger of the music', may have been Mr Goodwin, librarian at the Academy in 1826.⁶³ Though not members of the Academy's staff, Kiesewetter and a Mr Schunke, presumably Charles who was in London at the time, had both participated in Academy concerts earlier in 1826.⁶⁴

The recruiting of such a group may have been simply opportunistic, but may also have been intended as representative of the Academy's finest instrumentalists. Was Forde seeking to advance his status in the Academy? It is plausible that he sought to forge new links between Cork and the London institution. From the Academy's inception in 1822, its promotion in the provinces had been a key aspiration. The committee minutes of January 1823 record that 'the committee have it in contemplation to propose to the cathedrals of England and Ireland to admit as students a certain number of the singing boys from each after their voice cracks'.⁶⁵ A publicity campaign on behalf of the Academy was aided by the publication in 1825 of Sainsbury's *Dictionary*, for which subscription books were to be established in the provincial music shops.⁶⁶ Cork's new steamship connections with England would have facilitated a flow of young musicians towards London.⁶⁷ The presentation of a series of secular concerts, vocal and instrumental, would have been a showcase for the Academy's professors, students and associates. A reviewer of the first concert in the *Southern Reporter* concluded with a comment that alluded to this:

In general reference to the orchestra, we can say that the overtures and accompaniments were admirably and efficiently executed, and afford the most satisfactory evidence of the advance of

⁶⁰ RAM, Minute Book, 20 July 1826.

⁶¹ RAM, Concert Book, 10 April 1826.

⁶² Christina Bashford, 'Charles Lucas', in Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (eds), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition, 29 vols (Oxford: Grove, 2001), xv, 266.

⁶³ RAM, Concert Book, 10 April 1826 lists Goodwin as Librarian.

⁶⁴ RAM, Committee Minutes 1822-1828, 1 June 1826; RAM, Concert Book, 10 April 1826.

⁶⁵ RAM Committee Minutes, 7 January 1823.

⁶⁶ Leanne Langley, 'Sainsbury's *Dictionary*, the Royal Academy, and the Rhetoric of Patriotism', in Christine Bashford and Leanne Langley (eds), *Music in British Culture 1785-1914: Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 65-97: 74-5.

⁶⁷ The following year Cork woman Miss O'Hea enrolled as a student of the Academy, and by 1831 two more students from Cork had enrolled there. *A List of Pupils Received into the Academy*, 11.

Musical Science, under the fostering care of the Royal Musical Academy, of which several of the performers are members and students.⁶⁸

Here was a new channel of communication: an avenue for the training of aspiring young Cork musicians and, conversely, a new employment opportunity for musicians who performed at the English Musical Festivals and at prestigious London concerts.

Repertoire

A comparison of the Cork programmes (some of which are transcribed in the Appendix, below) with a selection of secular concerts from some of the English festivals highlights some distinctive features of the Cork concerts. For comparison, three secular concerts of the 1826 Birmingham Festival,⁶⁹ three evening concerts of the 1826 Three Choirs Festival at Gloucester,⁷⁰ and one evening concert of the 1828 Manchester Festival have been selected.⁷¹ The placing of operatic overtures at the beginning of each of the two acts was standard by this time. The opening of the Manchester concert and of the final Birmingham concert with a Beethoven symphony was progressive, however, in comparison to Cork, where Beethoven symphonies had as yet not appeared on concert programmes.⁷² In the English festival concerts, each act featured a substantial instrumental work: concerto, fantasia or *concertante*. Each of the Cork programmes featured at least two such works in each half—fantasia, variations, concerto, *divertimento* or 'solo' based on an existing air—evidence of the focus on instrumental music in the Cork concerts.

Distinctive to the Cork programmes was the incorporation of Irish melodies in instrumental solos: Christian Schunke featured 'The Last Rose of Summer' in a French horn solo; Harper featured 'Molly Astore' in a trumpet concerto; Kiesewetter performed an 'adagio and Irish melody with variations' on the violin; and cellist Charles Lucas was billed to play 'Divertimento with the Irish melody "My lodging is in the cold ground"' in the Sixth Grand Concert and at Kiesewetter's benefit. These pieces are examples of a significant element in Irish concert programmes since the eighteenth

⁶⁸ *Southern Reporter*, 1 August 1826.

⁶⁹ See 'Birmingham Musical Festival, October 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1826' (as note 51).

⁷⁰ 'Grand Musical Festivals', *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, 8 (1826), 263–72: 263–6.

⁷¹ Pritchard, 'Some Festival Programmes of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries 3. Liverpool and Manchester', 19.

⁷² The second volume in O'Regan, *Public Concerts in the Musical Life of Cork*, is a compilation of concert programmes and press writing reproduced from newspapers advertisements, reports and concert bills.

century,⁷³ and one which was to be further elaborated in the 1830s with performances such as Paganini's variations on 'St Patrick's Day' and instrumental variations and fantasias on Irish airs by visiting artists such as Nicholas Bochsa, Giulio Regondi and Henri Herz.⁷⁴

Examination of the sample of programmes reveals that Irish melodies were in current fashion and were featured at least once in each of the programmes from the English festivals, with a prevalence of songs from Moore's *Irish Melodies*.⁷⁵ Madame Caradori sang 'The Last Rose of Summer' at a concert at Gloucester on 13 September 1826, and Miss Travis sang 'The Harp that Once through Tara's Halls' at the same festival on 15 September 1826. At the first evening concert of the 1826 Birmingham Festival, Travis again sang this air, newly arranged with piano accompaniment by Mr Knyvett. The Manchester programme featured a performance of 'Savourneen Deelish' by Miss Paton. Not surprisingly, the Cork programmes featured a greater number of Irish melodies: solo performances were Byng's 'Believe Me if all those Endearing Young Charms' and 'The Minstrel Boy', and Keays's 'Savourneen Deelish' and 'Had I a Heart', also listed as an Irish air.⁷⁶ Although there were no Irish songs listed on the programme for the second Cork concert, a review stated that Keays performed 'Had I a Heart' 'without previous notice'.⁷⁷ The first Cork concert featured a glee 'from the Irish melodies'. Again this was not unique: a glee performance of 'The Last Glimpse of Erin', harmonized by Sir John Stevenson, was performed at the third of the Birmingham concerts.

Glees and operatic vocal ensembles were featured on all of the programmes. Whereas a substantial portion of the solo and ensemble vocal pieces on the Birmingham, Gloucester and Manchester programmes consisted of Italian operatic repertoire, the Cork programmes featured predominantly English vocal music. An exception was the chorus 'Viva Enrico' from Pucitta's *Henry IV*, which appeared as an act finale on three of the Cork programmes. The piece was evidently a local favourite, having been performed as a finale at Cork concerts in 1813, 1821, 1822 and 1824.⁷⁸

⁷³ See Boydell, *Rotunda Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin*, 131, 157–8.

⁷⁴ See O'Regan, i, 315.

⁷⁵ Published in ten volumes from 1808 to 1834.

⁷⁶ Song from *The Duenna* (1775), a setting of a poem by Dublin-born Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816).

⁷⁷ *The Constitution*, 3 August 1826.

⁷⁸ See *Cork Advertiser*, 2 October 1813; *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 1 December 1821; *The Constitution*, 23 August 1822; *Southern Reporter*, 11 November 1824.

Of the vocal solos performed at the Cork concerts, two, three or four works by Bishop appeared on every programme. The frequency was somewhat less in the English programmes: two Bishop songs were performed at the second of the Birmingham concerts, and one, 'She Never Blamed Him, Never,' on the Manchester 1828 programme. The secular concerts of the Gloucester 1826 festival did not feature any of Bishop's songs. This composer's popularity in Cork may also be linked to his association with Moore's *Irish Melodies*, the popularity of which was noted above: he had apparently provided the accompaniments for the London edition of volume 8 in 1821 and would do so for all subsequent volumes.⁷⁹

Reception

The Birmingham Festival's featuring of five 'concerto players', which included Kiesewetter, was matched in Cork with Harper, Lucas, Kiesewetter and Charles Schunke. The highlights of the Cork concerts were unquestionably the virtuoso instrumental performances of Kiesewetter and Schunke, seized upon by the press reviewers. Kiesewetter drew the highest praise:

Mr Kiesewetter [*sic*] combines every excellence that [is] conceived in a great performer—richness of tone, rapidity of execution, elegance of taste, and profound knowledge of music, the latter qualification he evinced in two cadences which he introduced, the modulations of which were no less distinguished for their learning than for their taste and execution.⁸⁰

The reviews described the audience's reaction:

We never heard—we never conceived any thing like Kiesewetter's [*sic*] power on the violin. Taste, science [*sic*] skill, execution, succeeded each other with surprising rapidity; and the audience seemed worthy of that power that enchanted them, by their well-timed applause and judicious commendations. We had the good fortune to sit near Captain Sullivan, whose 'bravo' is decisive, on these occasions, and never did we witness delight so visibly—and sometimes, so audibly expressed.⁸¹

An unnamed member of the audience is quoted in another report:

It would have saved a world of thought, in endeavouring to condense our commentary on this great violinist, did we adopt at once the expressive remark of an excellent private performer who was amongst the audience, that his performance was beyond comment, and that his execution

⁷⁹ See note 75.

⁸⁰ *The Constitution*, 1 August 1826.

⁸¹ *Boyle's Freeholder*, 31 July 1826.

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

led to the doing of that on the instrument, with which as yet the profession was unacquainted. We believe we may give this criticism without offence to our City...⁸²

Charles Schunke's performances were well received, and a review of his first performance connects his performance of a fantasia with the inspiration of an amateur:

...where the taste exists it ought to be cultivated; and how can that be better effected than by bringing amongst us, occasionally, those who have acquired a mastery in science, and who are so gifted by nature that one cannot listen to them without being in some degree influenced by that emulative spirit to excel, which the dull routine of tuition seldom produces. We dare to say, that many a fair singer was employed this morning in endeavouring to produce a concord of sounds from the Piano Forte, resembling those which M. Schunke called forth last night, and though it is not likely that the effort was successful in many cases, yet it is probable the attempt conduced to improvement in some. But apart from practical improvement, we look for something else,—for recreation and enjoyment.⁸³

The concert provided a foretaste of the virtuoso performances by the great composer-performers who were to visit Cork during the 1830s: Paganini, Herz, Thalberg and Liszt, when the fantasia and variations reached a peak of popularity.

Press reports of the vocal performances were comparatively brief. *The Constitution* reported that Madame de Kolli's songs in the first concert 'were rapturously encored', but that Miss Cubitt laboured under the indisposition of a severe cold.⁸⁴ At the second concert de Kolli 'sung without any preparation and with her usual eclat, some of those appropriated to Miss Cubitt. Of these the charming duett [*sic*] of "Together let us range the fields" sung by Madame de Kolli and Mr Keays, was particularly well received.'⁸⁵ The general view communicated, however, was that the quality of the vocal performances did not match that of the instrumental:

On Tuesday, the performances were on the whole superior to those of the preceding night, for while the display of instrumental excellence was undiminished, a considerable improvement took place in the vocal department, as the songs, glees, and choruses, were evidently given with more effect.

The *Southern Reporter* proffered a similar viewpoint:

⁸² *Southern Reporter*, 1 August 1826.

⁸³ As note 82.

⁸⁴ *The Constitution*, 1 August 1826.

⁸⁵ *The Constitution*, 3 August 1826.

The Vocal Corps has been augmented by some very efficient performers, and the accession is felt, not only in individual exertions, but in the general effect. But it is in the instrumental department that we find faultless excellence.⁸⁶

Denouement

The level of audience attendance was a point of concern in the newspaper reports. An early review reported the presence of 'a great assemblage of all the fashion and beauty of our city and county', but added that 'we confidently anticipate a still more numerous attendance at those which are to follow'.⁸⁷ On 3 August it was noted in *The Constitution* that although 'The Boxes were as usual well filled with the fashionable, ...the pit and gallery were not so well attended as they ought to be',⁸⁸ thus identifying the social status of the non-attenders. Two days later, concern for the organizers was unambiguously expressed:

...though the encouragement which the spirited projectors have met with, is, under existing circumstances, very flattering, yet we greatly fear that hitherto it has not been commensurate with the enormous expense they must have incurred. This should not be, and it is the interest, no less than the duty, of the public to support these enterprising individuals. If they are not remunerated as they deserve to be, if, at least, they are not exempted from serious loss, in consequence of their exertions to provide a source of refined and elegant enjoyment for the public, no one will hereafter be found so besotted—so totally regardless of his own interest, as to undertake, on a similar scale, to minister to the entertainment of a Cork audience.

The writer continues in an impassioned plea to the public:

Will they tamely look on, and see the most spirited undertaking ever entered upon in this city, or even in Ireland, fail of success for want of due encouragement, and thereby subjecting to heavy loss the spirited individuals who have embarked in it? We say no—they cannot, they will not. Policy, justice, and good feeling will prevent it. On the next week's performances every dependence is placed for the success of the undertaking. The gentry of the city and county should rally round it, and no exertion should be spared to promote its success.⁸⁹

Referring to the proposed oratorio performance, the writer continues:

We perceive the Sacred Oratorio will take place on Thursday.... We should suggest that a committee be formed of those who take a lead amongst us, to watch over the undertaking, and

⁸⁶ *Southern Reporter*, 3 August 1826.

⁸⁷ *The Constitution*, 1 August 1826.

⁸⁸ *The Constitution*, 3 August 1826.

⁸⁹ *The Constitution*, 5 August 1826.

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

make an exertion to ensure its final success; this should be done without delay, as the next week will finally conclude these performances.

This comment exposes one of the weaknesses of Forde's endeavour. The lack of an organizing committee was apparent: the loosely-organized Musical Meeting still had a second week to run, with the challenge of an oratorio production to be negotiated. Furthermore, Forde and McDonnell had failed to realize that purely commercial concerts were of limited interest in this provincial setting. That the event did not embrace a charitable aim also had implications: there was no list of patrons, whose donations would offset some of the expenses. They failed to draw upon the strong sense of community engendered at previous Cork oratorio performances. Having spent a number of years in London professional musical circles, Forde had only a tentative and undoubtedly idealized vision of the local context of Cork. From a commercial perspective, it had been a miscalculation to expect audiences to attend six concerts as they would six nights of theatre productions.

By 5 August it was clear that events had begun to founder with the cancellation of the sixth concert, due to be held that evening, 'in consequence of the arrangements and rehearsals necessary to the getting up of next week's performances',⁹⁰ for which Madame Cornega, Miss Sampson and Signor Giovanola were shortly to arrive.⁹¹ Further to this was the announcement that Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* was in preparation for production.⁹² The reconstructed schedule for the second week is shown in Table 2. Of the benefit concerts announced for Kiesewetter and Charles Schunke no details subsequently appeared in the newspapers, but a programme for Kiesewetter's concert has survived.⁹³ The programme for this concert was largely a repeat of music performed during the first week: eleven of the items had appeared on the cancelled programme for the Sixth Grand Concert (see Appendix). There is no evidence to verify that this and Charles Schunke's benefit concert actually took place.

⁹⁰ *Southern Reporter*, 5 August 1826.

⁹¹ *Southern Reporter*, 3 August 1826.

⁹² As note 91.

⁹³ A concert bill for 'Mr Kiesewetter's Benefit, Theatre Royal, George's-Street' is included in a collection of provincial items (Concert Bills-Provincial) in the Portraits and Performance History Collection of the Centre for Performance History, Royal College of Music, London. At the foot of this single page is 'J. Connor, Printer', indicating that it was printed in Cork. This programme is among those surveyed in *Concert Programmes 1790–1914: Case studies by William Weber*, <http://www.cph.rcm.ac.uk/Programmes1/Pages/BtoR5.htm>, accessed 16 May 2009.

Table 2		Reconstructed schedule for the second week ⁹⁴
Monday	7 August	Mr Kiesewetter's benefit
Tuesday	8 August	Mr [Charles] Schunke's benefit
Wednesday	9 August	Mr Forde's benefit
Thursday	10 August	Grand Oratorio, 'selected from the Creation, the Messiah, the Masses of Haydn and Mozart, etc.'
Friday	11 August	A Grand Performance
Saturday	12 August	A Second Grand Oratorio
?	?	<i>Il barbiere de [sic] Seviglia [sic]</i>

No further press notices or reviews appeared until a week later, 10 August, when a preview announced a benefit performance for William Forde at the Theatre Royal with the information that 'Mr Abbott has most liberally given permission to the whole strength of his Company to be produced on this occasion'.⁹⁵ An editorial stated that:

It appears that the Concerts terminate this evening with Mr Forde's Benefit, the arrangements for which are highly attractive. First, we have an opera, with the entire strength of Mr Arbot's [sic] Company, in which Mr T. Cooke, will make his first appearance these fourteen years in this City. Then the accomplished and fascinating Madame Vestris will give her powerful aid, and Mr Horn will sing several of his most popular songs. Add to these Mr Russel, Miss Noel, Mr Sapio, Mr Keays, Mr Taylor, etc., etc., and there is nothing wanting to complete the attraction.⁹⁶

Although not stated directly, the indications were that Forde was by this time at a considerable financial loss, and was now to be supported by a benefit that combined the resources of both houses. The main piece for the evening was to be *The Beggar's Opera*, featuring Thomas Cooke as Macheath. Madame Vestris delayed her departure by a day in order to participate and was billed to sing her popular piece 'I've been roaming'. The bands of both theatres were to be combined, led by Robert Bowden, and

⁹⁴ Information drawn from *The Constitution* of 5 August 1826 and the *Southern Reporter* of 3 and 5 August. In the press notices of 5 August, the date Wednesday 8 August was erroneously given for Forde's benefit, corrected here in Table 2 to Wednesday 9 August.

⁹⁵ *The Constitution*, 10 August 1826.

⁹⁶ As note 95.

the overture to *Der Freischütz* was to be performed before the opera.⁹⁷ The goodwill that existed in the city towards Forde was evident in the level of support he received, as two days later *The Constitution* reported that

Our anticipations respecting the success of Mr Forde's benefit were fully realised. He had indeed a bumper—every part of the House was crowded, and members, who were not so fortunate as to avail of an early entrance into the Theatre, were obliged to retire in disappointment.⁹⁸

Sapio and Taylor participated in Forde's benefit. Miss Cubitt was engaged by the theatre company for a few nights.⁹⁹ Mr Byng also appears to have joined this company: both he and Miss Cubitt performed in a benefit concert as part of the theatre production of 24 August.¹⁰⁰ A favourable outcome for Abbott's company was reported in *The Constitution*:

...the arrangements now made to place our Theatre on the most respectable footing in conjunction with an English Company of the first eminence, cannot fail to give satisfaction to the public, and to remunerate the spirited proprietors as they deserve.¹⁰¹

The other musicians engaged for the concerts appear to have left Cork by this time. There is no evidence that Signor Giovanola performed at any event, or that Madame Cornega and Miss Sampson ever arrived at all.

Conclusions

In terms of organization and structure, the Cork Grand Musical Meeting was an unique, speculative venture, an affirmation of London's cultural leadership in Cork during the early nineteenth century, and a testament to Forde's optimism and idealism. An examination of the details of the event constitutes a case study that contributes significantly to our understanding of the position of public musical events in provincial Ireland at this time. The high expectations generated by the press publicity indicate an optimism and confidence in the event. However, the over-ambitious scale of Forde's project proved disproportionate to its context. The commercial failure of this Musical Meeting highlights significant differences between Cork and the English provincial cities where music festivals thrived. The isolated provincial envi-

⁹⁷ *The Constitution*, 10 August 1826.

⁹⁸ *The Constitution*, 12 August 1826.

⁹⁹ As note 98.

¹⁰⁰ *The Constitution*, 24 August 1826.

¹⁰¹ *The Constitution*, 10 August 1826.

ronment in which the Cork Musical Meeting was situated and the lack of cooperative structures and links with other urban centres were factors which hampered the success of this endeavour. In addition, Cork's existing concert life lacked sustained leadership and organizational infrastructures.

For the performers, this journey to the south of Ireland had also been speculative, but the promise of new professional networks in Cork was not to be realized. Of the sizeable company of musicians who arrived for the festival, only two maintained links with Ireland: Sapio went on to live and work in Dublin,¹⁰² and Charles Schunke visited Dublin in 1827, returning to Cork to give concerts in September and December of that year.¹⁰³ Notwithstanding the commercial failure, the inherent aspirations of this endeavour were a creative response to a decline in the theatre world on the one hand, and an interest in the enrichment of the city's concert life on the other. Although this 'vast speculation' did not achieve its commercial or cultural potential, William Forde resumed visits to his native city from 1828, continuing to contribute significantly to its musical life for the next two decades, albeit in less extravagant ways.

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¹⁰² *A list of Pupils Received into the Academy*, 25.

¹⁰³ See O'Regan, i, 174–7.

Appendix

Programme of the First Grand Concert on Monday 31 July 1826

(Source: *Southern Reporter*, 29 July 1826)

[First Act]

God save the King, by the principal vocal performers, and Grand Chorus	
The celebrated Overture to <i>Der Freischütz</i>	Weber
Song, "Bid me discourse." with Flute accompaniment, by Miss Cubitt, Mr Forde	Bishop
Concerto, as performed at the York Festival, to conclude with the Grand Rondo Le Petit Tambour, Mr Kiesewetter	Kiesewetter
Song, "The Battle of Hohenlinden." Mr Sapio	Smith
Solo, on the French Horn, in which will be introduced the favourite air "Last Rose of Summer." Mr C[hristian] Schunke	C[hristian] Schunke
Song, "Bonny brave Scotland," as sung with universal applause, Madame de Kolli	Scotch air
Song, Mr Keays	
Grand Finale, "Cielo! il mio labbro." [<i>Bianca e Falliero</i>] Quartett & Chorus, Madame de Kolli, Miss Cubitt, Mr Sapio, Mr Keays and Chorus	Rossini

Second Act

Overture, <i>Tancredi</i>	Rossini
Glee, From the Irish melodies	
Grand Fantasia, Piano Forte, composed expressly for the Concerts, Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Song, "The Soldier tir'd." [<i>Artaxerxes</i>] accompanied on the Trumpet, Madame de Kolli, Mr Harper	Arne
Fantasia, Violin, Mr Kiesewetter	Mayseder
Song, "Non piu andrai." [<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>] Mr Sapio	Mozart
Song, "Cherry Ripe." Miss Cubitt	Horn
Grand Finale, Glee and Chorus "The Chough and Crow," Miss Cubitt, Madame de Kolli, Mr Sapio and full Chorus	Bishop

Programme of the Second Grand Concert on Tuesday 1 August 1826

(Sources: *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 31 July 1826; *The Constitution*, 1 August 1826)

[First Act]

Military Symphony	Haydn
Glee, "The Foresters." with French Horn Accompaniment by Mr C[hristian] Schunke. Mr J. Taylor, Mr Byng, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Spofforth
Song, "Forget me not." Mr Byng	Horn
Fantasia on the Violincello [<i>sic</i>], in which will be introduced the favourite Air "Robin Adair." Mr Lucas	Lucas
Duett, "Albion." Mr Byng, Mr Sapio	[Braham]
Song, "Tell me my heart." Madame de Kolli	
Concerto on the Trumpet, in which will be introduced the favourite Airs "Molly Astore," and "We're a' Noddin." Mr Harper	
Song and Variations, "My lodging is on the cold ground" with flute accompaniment, Miss Cubitt, Mr Forde	
Song, "Fill the Wine High." Mr Sapio	Percival
Adagio and Polonaise on the Violin, Mr Kiesewetter	
GRAND FINALE, Trio & Chorus, Cruda Sorte [<i>L'Italiana in Algeri</i>], Miss Cubitt, Madame de Kolli, Mr Keays and Chorus	Rossini

Second Act

Overture, <i>Figaro</i>	Mozart
Quartett, "Mild as [the] Moon Beams." Madame de Kolli, Miss Cubitt, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Braham
Song, "The Warrior's Tomb," with Trumpet Accompaniment, Madame de Kolli, Mr Harper	Klose
Fantasia, Piano Forte, Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Song, "'Tis when to sleep." Mr Sapio	Bishop
Duett, "Together let us range the Fields." Miss Cubitt, Mr Keays	Boyce
Song, "March to the Battle Field." Mr Byng	Scots Air
Celebrated Variations for Violin and Piano Forte, Mr Kiesewetter & Mr [Charles] Schunke	Mayseder
Song, "Sweet Home." [<i>Clari</i>], Miss Cubitt	Bishop
["Primroses." (Horn) in <i>Cork Mercantile Chronicle</i> only]	
GRAND FINALE "Viva Enrico." [<i>Henry IV</i>]	Pucitta

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

Programme of the Fourth Grand Concert on Thursday 3 August 1826

(Sources: *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 2 August 1826; *Southern Reporter*, 3 August 1826; *The Constitution*, 3 August 1826)

First Act

Grand Overture, <i>Der Freischütz</i>	Weber
Glee, With Hawk and Hound. Mr Taylor, Mr Byng, Mr Keays, Mr Newton	Bishop
Song, "Sweet Home." Madame de Kolli	Bishop
Fantasia, on the Trumpet, in which will be introduced the Air "When pensive I thought on my Love." Mr Harper	Harper
Song, "Believe me if all those endearing young charms." Mr Byng	Irish air
Grand Fantasia on the Piano Forte, Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Duett, "I love thee." Madame de Kolli, Mr Byng	Bishop
Song, "Savourneen Deelish." Mr Keays	Irish melody
Adagio & Irish Melody with variations, Mr Kiesewetter	Kiesewetter
God save the King. Madame de Kolli, Mr Byng, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio, Chorus	

Second Act

Celebrated Overture, <i>Anacreon</i>	Cherubini
Round, "Hark! 'tis the Indian Drum." Madame de Kolli, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio ¹⁰⁴	[Bishop]
Solo on the French Horn, Mr C[hristian] Schunke	C[hristian] Schunke
Song, "Flow thou regal purple stream." Mr Sapio	Arnold
Song, "Cherry Ripe." Madame de Kolli	Horn
Variations for Violin and Pianoforte, <i>Di tanti palpiti</i> . Mr Kiesewetter, Mr Schunke	Mayseder
Song, "The Minstrel Boy." Mr Byng	Irish air
Finale, <i>Viva Enrico</i> . Chorus	Pucitta

¹⁰⁴ In the original the names of the three singers mistakenly appear in the entry for the previous item, the overture (*Anacreon*).

Programme of the (cancelled) Sixth Grand Concert on Saturday 5 August 1826

(Source: *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 4 August 1826)

First Act

Celebrated Overture <i>Anacreon</i>	Cherubini
Glee, "The Curfew." Madame de Kolli, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Attwood
Fantasia on the Trumpet, with the favourite air "When pensive I thought on my love." (by desire.) Mr Harper	Harper
Song, "Sweetly on [<i>sic</i>] my Senses Stealing." Madame de Kolli	Bishop
Fantasia, "Hope told a flattering tale", with variations, Piano Forte, (by desire), Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Duett, "Albion." Mr Byng, Mr Sapio	Braham
Fantasia, on the French Horn, with favourite Air, "The Last Rose of Summer." Mr [Christian] Schunke	[Christian] Schunke
Recitation & Air, "The Pilgrim of Love." Mr Byng	Bishop
Celebrated variations on the violin (by desire) Mr Kiesewetter	Roor
Finale, <i>Viva Enrico</i> . [<i>Henry IV</i>] Chorus	Pucitta

Second Act

Overture to <i>Figaro</i>	Mozart
Glee and Chorus "The Chough and Crow." Madame de Kolli, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Bishop
Song, "It was Dunois." Mr Byng	French Romance
Divertimento, with the Irish Melody "My Lodging is on the cold ground." Violincello [<i>sic</i>], Mr Lucas	Dotzmer
Song, "Home! sweet Home!" [<i>Clari</i>] (by desire), Madame de Kolli	Bishop
Fantasia with favourite Airs, Piano Forte, Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Song, "Had I a heart." [<i>The Duenna</i>] Mr Keays	Irish melody
Scena & Chorus, "Sorgetto," from the Opera <i>Maometto</i> . Mr Sapio and Chorus	Rossini
Grand Fantasia on the Violin, Mr Kiesewetter	Romberg
Duett, "All's Well." [<i>The English Fleet</i>] Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Braham
Finale, "God save the King"	

The Cork Grand Musical Meeting of 1826

Programme of Kiesewetter's benefit concert on 7 August 1826

(Source: see note 93)

First Act

Celebrated Overture to <i>Der Freischütz</i>	Weber
Glee, "The Curfew," Madame de Kolli, Mr Keays, Mr Sapio	Attwood
Fantasia on the Trumpet, with the favourite Air "When pensive I thought on my love," which was received on its first performance with universal applause	Harper
Song, "Sweetly o'er my senses stealing," Madame de Kolli	Bishop
Glee, "The Wind Whistles Cold," Mr J. Taylor, Mr Keays, Mr A. Sapio	Bishop
Fantasia, on the Piano Forte, "Hope told a flatt'ring Tale," with Variations, (<i>by desire</i>) Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Duett, "Albion," Mr Byng, Mr Sapio	Braham
Song, "Had I a Heart," [<i>The Duenna</i>] Mr Keays	Irish Melody
Grand Concerto on the Violin, Mr Kiesewetter	Mayseder
Finale, "Viva Enrico" [<i>Henry IV</i>] Chorus	Pucitta

Second Act

Grand Overture, <i>Anacreon</i>	Cherubini
Chorus, "Sound the Loud Timbrel" (<i>by desire</i>)	Handel [<i>recte</i> Avison]
Fantasia with favourite airs, Piano Forte, Mr [Charles] Schunke	[Charles] Schunke
Song, "Home! Sweet Home!" Madame de Kolli	Bishop
Duett, "All's Well," Mr A. Sapio, Mr Keays	Braham
Celebrated Variations on the Violin, Mr Kiesewetter	
Scena & Chorus, "Sorgete," from the Opera <i>Maometto</i> , Mr Sapio	Rossini
Divertimento on the French Horn with the favourite Air "The last Rose of Summer," Mr C[hristian] Schunke	C[hristian] Schunke
Finale, "The Chough and Crow"	Bishop