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Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland: Royal Hospital Kilmainham

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Royal Hospital Kilmainham. Dublin concert venue. Founded by James Butler, Duke of Ormonde and Viceroy to King Charles II. It was designed by the architect William Robinson as a retirement home for veteran soldiers and was modelled on the then recently completed Les Invalides in Paris¹. Work began in 1680 and the hospital was completed in 1684. Music was a prominent feature of the pensioner's social lives and recitals and balls took place in the Great Hall. In 1922 the hospital was handed over to the Free State and remained home to a dwindling number of soldiers until its closure in 1929. Restoration on the building began in 1980 and was completed in 1984. It opened in 1985 as the National Centre for Culture and the Arts. In 1990 it became home to the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) which opened in May 1991. The hospital today is a venue for concerts of classical music which are held in the splendid Baroque Chapel, which has a capacity of c.150, and the Great Hall which has a capacity for up to 450. More recently, open air popular music concerts have taken place in the hospital grounds.

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Butler, James, Duke of Ormonde
Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA)
King Charles II
Les Invalides in Paris
National Centre for Culture and the Arts
Robinson, William

¹ Costello Murrey and Beaumont: *The Royal Hospital Kilmainham-its Architecture, History and Restoration* p. 4

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Baroque Chapel

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