CHAPTER 9
1978–1993
THE DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY – A NEW IMAGE

In writing a fitting epilogue to the history of the first hundred years of music education provided in Dublin by the College of Music as it metamorphosed through a century, it might be interesting to speculate on those events which history may eventually prove to have been the most significant in forging its destiny into the third millennium. Undoubtedly its interpenetration with the mammoth Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and the buffeting in the maelstrom of its troubled bid for recognition within the national education network, in the light of its outstanding contribution to the area of education in applied skills, must form the main backdrop; the College, in the course of its development, would surely be seen to have trodden the same path of practical specialism. The DIT Legislation of July 1992 has unequivocally consolidated the College within the DIT ostensibly with no strings attached, or so it would seem; on the other hand, the spirit of the legislation demands a professionalism whereby the College must appraise its function within a largely third-level Institute and produce, from the enormous resource within that ambience, a convincing rationale for a secure future for music education in the State, at all levels. Therein lies a great and noble challenge, for the College would cast itself in the rôle of influencing music education development in a national context, in ideological, philosophical and pragmatic terms. Therefore it is not a question of the College insisting on an irrational and stultifying status quo for its current system of multi-level music education, even if that were possible; nor is it one of the DIT forcing a conformity which, uncharacteristic of its reputation for flexibility, might damage, by premature sanctions, that stake in artistic education and the humanities which it would discard at its peril.

The College of Music as a Symbol of Continuum in Irish Music Education

Let us examine the somewhat arbitrary progression by which the College of Music was subsumed into the DIT. In 1962-63 the Municipal School of Music, still proudly redolent of the old “tech” criterion of economy education (which was often too easily, but erroneously, misinterpreted as of compromised quality), was elevated to the status of (Dublin) College of Music. It has never been quite clear as to why this change was made. Notionally it had something to do with the growing calibre of the best of its emerging performers. But presumably it also sounded the first pre-echoes of improved conditions and promotional opportunities for aspiring staff (a precondition and indeed a guaranteed formula for progress); this was to come to pass and to develop dramatically over succeeding decades. Nevertheless the College, with its comprehensive multi-level spectrum of music education provision, straddling primary, intermediate and third-level, amateur and professional alike, remained somewhat of an enigma to its overlords, the CDVEC; it was allocated two seats, which it held rather uncomfortably, on the Board of Studies for second-level schools, in a too facile classification. Meanwhile its output of professional performers (particularly at that time into the Radio Eireann orchestras) was clear evidence of an aspiration and potential quite beyond the capability of such a simple norm of
educational segregation to accommodate; the College was clearly exerting a significant third-level thrust while it simultaneously took pride in its provision in basic music education. This multifaceted aspect of College work has persisted as a characteristic reality to the present day, and is so critically highlighted in the historical context of the plight of music education in Ireland that the greatest sensitivity is still called for in finding an equitable solution which will promote and safeguard education in the arts into the next century. The College, of course, sees itself as being a major contributor to and the prototype of the rapid evolution which is long overdue in this area.

**Staff Establishment 1973–1993**

As early as 1973 the staff structure, mirrored in a Department of Education sanction for the College, began to reveal a tendency towards the recognition of its third-level work, aligning it more convincingly with its sister colleges (viz. those providing for technological, catering, commercial, marketing and design skills) than with the second-level sector; it was a token but a very revealing one. A young multi-disciplinary Principal was appointed (1 March 1973) from outside, at SLI level, by open competition. The sanction also provided for two appointees as heads of department at LII and LI level; these were generally perceived as rewards for distinguished rôles played by the incumbent Vice-Principal, Elizabeth Costello, and the principal teacher of strings (violin), the legendary Jaroslav Vaneček. In the event neither of them succeeded to a post; Miss Costello retired, and Mr Vaneček left, in September 1973, to take up a senior teaching position at the Royal College of Music in London, which he graced right up to the nineties. These posts were subsequently filled by Noreen O’Neill and by Brian McNamara, son of the former and colourful Principal, Michael McNamara (Mac!). He was a welcome addition, coming as he did from youthful studies with Vaneček, supplemented with postgraduate training at Köln Hochschule with Igor Ozim; later in his teaching career he acknowledged a great pedagogical debt to the late Semyon Snitkowsky, the Russian virtuoso, with whom he took masterclasses. Of the remaining 15 posts 10 were to be filled at Assistant Lecturer level, with an ambiguously stated commitment to a proportion of these being filled by open competition; this led to a long period of internal unrest and tension, including a three month closure of the College from March 1976. In the event, the settlement brought only two new appointees from outside. One of them was in the area of Guitar; this, with its logical extension into lute studies, has developed into a distinguished area of achievement in the College under the appointee, John Feeley.

1973 also saw the opening of the College on Saturday afternoons, a valuable and forward-looking resource which benefited the community, the student population, and the teaching staff (in terms of employment opportunities). The student population of the College exceeded 2000 for the first time by virtue of this extension of teaching, establishing the College unequivocally as by far the largest institution in the State catering for music education. However, side by side with this encouraging growth in music education potential within the capital city there remained the vexed question of the relatively small proportion of teaching carried out by wholetime employees. There was a policy of treating all teaching staff as of equal capability, coupled with a corresponding policy of demanding documented professional qualifications from all newly-appointed staff, including part-timers; this was vulnerable in the light of a teaching force which was two thirds part-time, and understandably led to immediate representations to the Department of Education to reappraise the situation. The overall result of much astute negotiation led to various improvements: The first of these came in 1979/80 with a sanction which increased the wholetime establishment from 18 to 39. There was also a very significant abandonment of the Class III teacher grade; the new College Teacher (CT) grade, with 21 appointees, replaced it. There were 15 Lecturer I posts, and the three former structured positions were reconfirmed. In subsequent catching-up with DIT norms and agreements, between 1982/83 and 1992, the complement was raised to 43, of which 6 posts are at Senior Lecturer I or above, 4 are at LII, 21 are at LI and the remaining 12 at CT; the establishment is still fluid in the light of current (1993) negotiations which are almost certainly going to see the re-establishment of a career grade of Assistant Lecturer to replace the College Teacher grade. From 1982 onwards, when promotional posts became available, the College was streamlined, by discipline; the four schools – Keyboard, Musicianship, Orchestral and Vocal/Dramatic – emerged, each with a structured post-holder as manager.
It is an interesting commentary on the upward trend in status of the College that the grading of the Principal, partly due to the increase in student numbers and staff equivalent wholetime complement, began as a part-time appointment early in the century and reached the level of a Directorship of DIT in the 1980s. But all these ameliorations must be viewed against a new statistic (whatever the underlying causes), which shows that more than half of the teaching effort in the College is still, in 1993, contributed by part-time teachers, either contractually employed on an annual basis or simply paid by the hour; the wholetime equivalent staff complement, calculated on a somewhat outmoded criterion, and therefore understated, exceeds 90 as this article is being written.

The CDVEC (DIT) - University of Dublin (Trinity College) Liaison

The disappointment, in VEC circles, following the collapse, in the early 1970s, of the Ballymun Project (which was aspirationally to gather together the excellences which the CDVEC colleges had amassed over very nearly a century) was made more bitter by the establishment of the National Institute for Higher Education (NIHE) on the very site where VEC hopes were to be realised; this bitterness was to be compounded still more by the elevation, in the late 1980s, of NIHE to become Dublin City University, the fourth university in the Dublin environs. In 1975, however, it arguably spawned an agreement, which nonetheless suited both partners, between CDVEC and the University of Dublin (Trinity College), to have the most advanced diplomas of the former validated by the University as degrees. This not only consolidated the position of the colleges of CDVEC, by additional approbation of the quality of its awards, and guaranteed the uninhibited flow of aspiring young professionals towards the VEC by virtue of this double endorsement; an expectation that the liaison would prosper and evolve naturally came about. When in 1978 the CDVEC took the bold step of subsuming its six colleges into the DIT, the mammoth educational institution it created was made virtually impregnable as to its ability to survive and prevail, virtually on its own terms, as a provider of sought-after educational programmes. The College of Music was caught up in this euphoria and received a fortuitous boost to its third-level aspirations, with the security to lay its plans accordingly. The idea of professional qualifications, particularly at degree level and aimed at applied skills, was and still is dear to the heart of DIT; for musicians, and for the College of Music, it was a sine qua non if Music Education was to prosper and to establish itself as a seriously-considered option in Irish schools.

The Liaison Agreement with the University had scarcely been signed before the CDVEC and the College of Music formulated plans to promote professional courses for musicians, for eventual submission to the University. This was, and proved later to be, an ambitious undertaking, fraught with seemingly insurmountable difficulties, born of a formidable, albeit respectable, mosaic of vested interest; this was in turn a perfect image of the historical fabric of the development of music education in the State, a fascinating and unique labyrinth which it is the author’s intention to explore and analyse at a later date. For how could the audacity of the College of Music be tolerated when measured against the equally legitimate claims of its older neighbour, the Royal Irish Academy of Music, or the truly venerable status of the University, approaching its quatercentenary and with two centuries of involvement in music as an academic pursuit? But passion and a belief in the righteousness of an objective can breed boldness! A formula would have to be found, as subtle as it should be pragmatic. Democratic overtures were made to the RIAM, in the consciousness that there was a commonality ofendeavour that could be built upon; a potentially productive period of idealogical collaboration ensued. This eventually foundered on the niceties of the production of an agreed document for submission to the University. The Council of the College of Music, acting as the policy-implementing agent of the CDVEC in relation to music, demanded a fully-developed independent document before modifications in the light of differences in RIAM outlook could be entertained. The inevitable delays caused by this well-intentioned and intrinsically wise counsel eventually bred suspicion, and resulted in separate documents reaching the Provost of the University within a week of one another in early 1981. The Provost, Dr W. Watts, whose personal interest in the progress of music education in Ireland evinced a desire to bring as many interests as possible into a grand collaboration, eventually set up a tripartite committee to consider the feasibility of a conjoint course to which the three institutions could make an appropriate contribution.
Development of the College of Music
Third-level Strategy

The College of Music proposal, a weighty multi-stranded document, had sought to identify and isolate those areas of music education which did not seem to have been adequately served at that period. The focus was on aspects neither in conflict with, nor already catered for within the traditional Irish university system; this latter was seen as reflecting classically-based British models of music education, and ill-at-ease, as indeed also an underprovision, when measured against the uniqueness of the Irish context. Two possible options were immediately ruled out – first, that of the purely academic, and second, primary school music education; the latter would have been regarded as an attempt at duplication of a state-established child-centred methodology, and incompatible with the aspiration towards a genuine recognition of a music specialism and professionalism. This isolated the possibility (reflecting a concern about the characteristic veritable neglect of even the fundamentals of provision in most Irish schools) of addressing the problem of access through the unlikely channel of second-level institutions. The accuracy of this informed appraisal of the real situation in Irish music education was to be endorsed almost a decade later in the report *Deaf Ears*, commissioned by the Arts Council to coincide with the 1985 European Year of Music, which stated that “the young Irish person has the worst of all European “musical worlds”.¹ This bleak summary was an indictment, on the one hand throwing down the gauntlet to educational providers in political terms, on the other finding the College of Music already equipping itself to meet that challenge. Perhaps no more succinct or potentially incriminating statement of this prime issue in Irish music education could be found than that of Dr Ciarán Benson in the introduction to the *Deaf Ears* Report.

By any standards the state of music education is not a happy one in Ireland. If there is a defence of the present situation to be made on educational grounds, it should be heard. We need to distinguish between explanations that have to do with an inability to finance a comprehensive national programme of music education from explanations that have to do with an inability to establish the educational importance of music education. Inactivity and failure of commitment which are rooted in the latter are most damaging in the long term.

Bachelor in Music Education

The College of Music had anticipated an answer to these pungent statements by accepting the response and the invitation from the Provost of Trinity College to join forces with the University and the Royal Irish Academy of Music to put its (the College’s) plans, *inter alia*, into operation through a tripartite course which would bring together for the first time the combined musical expertise of the three institutions concerned. The second-level music education strand, chosen for the first development of degree programmes in applied techniques, called for a comprehensive range of teaching and taught skills (in the areas of practical and academic music, and education theory and methodology) which presupposed ideally, and could therefore virtually guarantee, the involvement and collaboration of staff from all three institutions. It nevertheless took up to seven years of often delicate negotiation to reach agreement on the working distribution of subject material and staff deployment before the Bachelor in Music Education (BMusEd) was launched in 1986; it still retains the unusual characteristic of limited recruitment (a maximum of ten students per annum) in alternate years to the DIT and RIAM respectively; the first enrolment, to the Academy, was decided on the toss of a coin!

The BMusEd was only the beginning of the development of a suite of third-level educational possibilities by the College of Music; this trend in turn, was authentically prompted as much by a relevance in responding to the demands for an expanding spectrum of professional options for emerging musicians, as by a healthy search for independence of activity by the College. The cumulative excellences which had fed on the College’s traditional immersion in areas of executant skills craved recognition and the opportunity to produce a new generation of practitioners, with manifold skills which would strike a new and fertile balance in the inculcation of performing and academic capabilities. This aspiration was expected to come to fruition as the expression of a new-found self-esteem; it also exposed a determination to stake the claim of music education, in the area of applied skills, for professional recognition. The professional demands built into the content of these new structured courses were designed to produce

¹ Donald Herron. *Deaf Ears*? (Dublin: The Arts Council, 1985) p 41
highly accomplished instrumental and vocal teachers and performers. It should be stressed that all this stirring of professional pride was as much attributable to the expanding pool of expertise which appointments to College staff over the previous two decades had produced, as it was an expression of an enthusiasm to serve the rapidly clarifying needs of an overwhelmingly important amateur population (defined largely in terms of an ideal primary and second-level educational provision). The identified need was to provide programmes which would help young people to engage meaningfully in the activities of musical creativity, in performing and, above all, in listening. The College mission was to respond to this challenge in an evolving situation, and in relation to its own destiny, which was, and still is, as sensitive to national issues in the long term as it is caring in domestic matters at all times.

The mainspring of College self-worth is undoubtedly the suite of professional courses which sets off its raison d'être – its ministry to the whole spectrum of music education. Within that suite the most potentially spectacular activity, because the most totally comfortable and natural in terms of the affirmed perception of staff as to the College's most characteristic contribution to music education in Ireland, is performance. It reflects the commitment of all, including the students concerned, to the training of teaching performers. This broad classification does no violence to the aspirations of any of the current participants in an ambitious scheme which challenges a varied mix of professional skills, both developing and developed, academic and practical.

**Graduate Diploma in Music**

The evolution of the full range of College wholetime courses, which has recently (1990) expanded yet again into drama and specialised instrumental/vocal teaching (1992), is a significant piece of College history in the making. A resume of the development and eventual success of the Graduate Diploma in Music must, however, surely place in perspective this seminal centrepiece: it has almost fortuitously become the fixed star which, in the writer's view, has given theCollege's bid for eminence (in the battle for the recognition of the value of music education as a national aspiration) a stability and an urgency which is irresistible. The fact that this star mounted the firmament, arguably by timely planning but more probably by happy coincidence, during the Centenary Year of the College, may yet prove to have been a fated accumulation of achievement; the time of its reward was nevertheless ripening.

The temporary putting aside of the performance strand of the College's submission to the University in 1981 had the psychological effect of increasing its urgency as an aspiration, even allowing for the seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the way of its ever becoming a qualification at degree level. Quite apart from the questionable value of mere documented proof of performing ability in a profession which rightly can respect only the ultimate proof of on-the-spot evidence, there were other reasons why the bid for degree status for performers should assume such overriding importance. Parity with other professions could be achieved only by this route, for the social and traditional perception in Ireland places much store on a primary degree as a convenient levelling agent in the employment stakes; parents involved in influencing children in the ultimate choice of profession had to be favourably wooed, and the subtle hidden agenda by which young performers could be enlisted in the ranks of the teaching profession, as a desirable bonus to all concerned, could not be plied until minimum criteria for social acceptability of the qualification offered had been met. There was also the need for an established professional goal in the form of an indigenous course which would keep young performers from palpably unnecessary emigration at a premature stage, which had become a fashionable norm; and postponement of study abroad, recognised nevertheless as a valuable educational experience per se, would be beneficial in ensuring that those eventually availing of it would have the maturity and the proved status to earn the most coveted opportunities.

In 1983 the College, dissatisfied with progress on the education degree, placed the University officially on notice that it intended to proceed unilaterally, as was its right, with the development of a performing option; at the time it did not appear to cause any concern, but this was not to remain so. As time passed it became apparent that the RIAM had similar plans, and the Music Department in the University was aspiring to some hybrid of Euro-American practices to make performance available to its students as an option. The College had from the earliest days supported the idea of collaboration but it now became more difficult to find common ground, for each of the institutions had a different rationale for course
development, particularly as to the academic emphasis; there seemed, however, to be a better understanding between the College and the University than in any other possible partnership.

Plans went ahead, from 1983, to draft the schemes of instruction which would define a degree-equivalent course for performers, serviced exclusively within DIT. A number of problems emerged, however. The eventual destination of such a course as a validation exercise was not at all clear. Yet there was an urgency in the race for provision; this had to seek, if not force, the abandonment of DIT expectations that any new course should establish itself, over a probationary period, before seeking recognition at the level of a degree with ‘honor’ classification. There was the need for a nomenclature (graduate diploma) which would define degree equivalence; this was a sine qua non as far as the College of Music was concerned but it was at variance with DIT norms and begged the question as to which was the appropriate validation agency, for the DIT did not have its own degree-awarding powers. The options were problematic, because DIT did not generally favour the submission of its degree-equivalent diplomas to the National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA) and the University of Dublin might not be expected to give unqualified support to an independent course, outside the University, which could be seen as in serious competition with its own provisions in music education; a major challenge to diplomacy was being defined and it was initially rooted internally. It was therefore decided that the embryo course specification should first be made to conform to DIT standards, but this was seen as in itself a daunting task, for the course was not running and staff were therefore, by definition, inexperienced; in DIT terms these were major stumbling blocks.

The eventual clearance, in 1985, for the BMus Ed course to go ahead as a tripartite collaboration, with the implication that other (performing) options could now be processed by the players in the field, lent a new urgency to College plans. Pragmatism prevailed. The first submission of the performing option to DIT in the Summer of 1986 met with a large measure of genuine encouragement from the Assessment Board. The start-up of the course was, however, postponed (without loss of time, it should be added) until 1987, pending a re-submission of documentation with a far greater involvement of staff in the preparation; this motivation strategy proved to be a welcome, and indeed critical, stimulus which launched the College on its independent path as a provider of third-level music courses at degree level. The course was adopted by DIT (exceptionally, let it be stated in praise of DIT flexibility) as a 4-year whole-time graduate diploma with ‘honor’ classification. It is worthy of special note that two essential features of the course content emerged which established both its credibility and its adaptability to the perceived needs of the Irish music education scene; these were the carefully weighted balance (50%/50%) between academic and practical elements, and the inclusion of mandatory instrumental (including vocal) teaching methodology for all participants.

The Progress to Final Accreditation of Third-level Music Courses

The final phase in the move towards full recognition of the degree courses in the College of Music took another four years to be resolved satisfactorily in the context of guaranteeing to the graduates the double endorsement and qualification, from DIT and TCD, which had become the norm of the liaison agreement. It is outside the scope of this article to detail the progress of RIAM and TCD independent schemes to annex performance studies to their educational programmes. In 1989 the College made its submission in the normal way, invoking the liaison agreement, for validation by the University. By the time the Provost made a further intervention to encourage a jointly taught course, it proved to be too late. The College course was already in its third successful year of approved operation, with little scope of modification; furthermore the course structures and syllabi had already stood up to rigorous official internal scrutiny within the University in preparation for external assessment. It was learned that the Academy meanwhile had submitted its proposals to Dublin City University (DCU). The College was willing to negotiate in the interests of preserving the format of an existing collaboration, but separate inertias could not be dissipated to bring this about.

It should be recorded for the history books that the University behaved handsomely in embracing the Graduate Diploma of the College and in assisting its final passage to eventual endorsement as a classified ‘honor’ degree now known within its walls as the BMus (Performance). In similar spirit the DIT grasped the nettle of setting up its first assessment board
to examine a course (BMusEd) in which it was involved only as a partner in a tripartite agreement. This potentially difficult step was again assisted by co-operation from the University in the matter of representation at the assessment itself, and by skilful and sensitive handling within DIT; the endorsement of the Diploma in Music Education of DIT was the result. As the College of Music brought its Centenary Year to an official close on 20th June 1991, that very day had witnessed the final agreement, between the University of Dublin and DIT, which sealed into Irish history the beginnings of a new phase in the development of professionalism in music education; this took the form of an acknowledgement, for the first time, of the performer as of equal status with the musicologist.

General Fertilisation through Third-level Developments

It might seem from the foregoing that the issues of wholetime courses and a new dispensation for professionalism in music had occupied the College inordinately in the two decades preceding its centenary - that its traditional activities in ministering also to the more rudimentary levels of music education were being overlooked or neglected. This has not been so. It is true that the College was pursuing with integrity its ideal of providing for the performer at all levels of attainment from the lowliest to the most spectacular; the inclusion of teaching modules in all its third-level courses was, however, simultaneously aimed at the establishment of a criterion which put a premium on the teaching function, which ideologically could fertilise the whole field of music education, and at all levels. No wonder, then, that the details of third-level development should have taken pride of place because of its significance for the whole. However, a backward glance at other activities and their significance during the corresponding period is called for.

From 1975 onwards the academic underpinning of the essentially practical nature of the typical College product began to be asserted with renewed and inexorable vigour. By 1982, assisted by the availability of better and more sophisticated equipment and 'software', listening programmes and aural training generally were making greater demands on time and concentration, outside the traditional one-to-one practical lesson. Syllabus was revised, and the typical training package for all graded students began to resemble an idealised school programme; the intention here was twofold in seeking to point the way in national terms, when it should be needed, while ensuring that College students should become the prototypes of this ideal. The syllabus of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, which had been followed generally, was drastically modified, and an elaborate system of in-house examinations, which is even still in an ongoing process of revision, was imposed.

A codetta is merited here to place on record another example of the development of the genuine interpenetration of practical and academic studies which characterises the College's thorough approach to the training of the whole musician. It was decided from 1988 onwards to re-introduce the virtually forgotten VEC Diploma; it had been overtaken by the fashionable provisions of the British colleges for the purposes of teaching. The College, dissatisfied with the lack of professional and institutional control in the training programmes of candidates for these latter, developed comprehensive and demanding structures to ensure that practical skills were sufficiently informed by academic and, specifically, by pedagogic principles in depth. The course, now successfully in demand and in operation, is expected shortly (1993) to become the first accreditation of the new DIT.

Physical Resources

Amelioration of the physical resources of the College, both in space and equipment, proceeded apace from the 1970s onwards. Beginning with the acquisition of its first concert grand piano - a fine Czech instrument by Petrof - the College has progressed to a situation where all keyboard rooms now boast an upright and a grand piano of fine quality, ranging from Steinway and Petrof to Weinbach and Yamaha; a new pipe organ by Kenneth Jones was commissioned in the late seventies and harpsichord/virginals by David Rubio, Malcolm Greenhalgh and Morley were added. An allocation of some £200,000 for a bank of orchestral instruments was allocated by the Department of Education in the mid-eighties; this greatly encouraged the development of band and orchestral activities over a wide spectrum. A small building of some 1,000 sq. ft. floor area was annexed around 1978 and an access bridge built at first floor level. The tiny McCann Hall was
refurbished in the early eighties and a recording studio added and fitted in preparation for the arrival of wholetime courses and audio-intensive modules. Most significant of all was the ill-fated fragmentation of the College, beginning in 1986, which also related to the need to provide for wholetime courses. This project started as an investigation of the potential for development of the disused Central Hotel in Exchequer St, and generated much enthusiasm, for it held the promise of a centre-city single campus, which is still a College aspiration. The collapse of this scheme resulted in the panic rehousing of Keyboard and Vocal departments of the College in a converted office block in Adelaide Rd which resisted all attempts at adequate soundproofing to enable the teaching function to proceed at any decent level of professional acceptability; this is still a serious bone of contention in the 1990s, but it did facilitate the conversion of the ground floor of the Chatham Row building into an expanded library in 1986/87.

A campaign to have the College re-integrated on a single site was promoted from 1987 onwards by the Parents' Association, an autonomous group working closely with College management in a number of philanthropic ways. Through their representation on the Council of the College they succeeded in bringing this perceived crisis in College affairs to a head. The preparation of a fact-finding position paper was entrusted to the Principal. This document, known as the Single Campus Report, was presented to Council at its June 1992 meeting; it subsequently received the approval of staff and was adopted by the Governing Body of DIT, in November 1992, literally as it was about to hand over its affairs to the incoming powers. The full story of the progress of this campaign has still to be written; the indications, in August 1993, are that the bitter harvest of resentment and uncertainty, partly tied into the instability in the Institute's own affairs as it strives to organise its management structures, will prove difficult to write off in the short term.

Ensemble Performance in the College – A New Initiative

A peremptory demand by the CDVEC in 1979/80 to consolidate the orchestral situation in the College had cumulative effects. The imposition of mandatory attendance at large ensemble rehearsals resulted in the formation of a spectrum of performing groups, which in addition to the conventional provision of junior, intermediate and senior orchestras saw the birth and development of an 80-strong Concert Wind Band under its live-wire conductor, William Halpin; this group went from strength to strength in terms of sound quality and repertoire, even commissioning new works from Irish composers Eibhlis Farrell and Raymond Deane in 1992. It established an impressive presence in the city when it was invited to open the celebration of Dublin's Millenium in the National Concert Hall in 1991 and staged an equally impressive broadcast concert, also at the NCH, during the College's Centenary Year when more than two hundred musicians were on stage in a specially commissioned vocal/wind ensemble arrangement from Les Misérables, the fashionable 'hit' of the moment. A Junior Wind Band, a Clarinet Choir (using many of the specialised instruments provided under the Dept. scheme) and a Swing Band (Glenn Miller style!) all add lustre and health to the College provision of the 90s, inviting comparison with the humble beginnings of the College's history as a gesture to bandsmanship in Dublin more than a century ago.

The Centenary Year of the College was a celebratory triumph in many ways. Once it passed into 1991 it coincided with one of the great musical events of the century – that of the bicentenary of the death of Mozart, one of the world's greatest musical geniuses. Performances of Mozart's music featured largely in the College's programmes. Perhaps the most noteworthy was a fine collaboration between the Orchestral and Vocal Schools in a Mozart concert in the National Concert Hall on 29th January 1991. The evening featured the fifteenth piano concerto (K. 450), with soloist Deborah Kelleher and conductor Ronald Masin. The Senior Orchestra was joined by the College Choral Society to perform the 'Coronation' Mass. This was conducted by the distinguished musician, Bryden Thomson; he, who had always given great encouragement to young musicians, was himself to be taken, sadly, within the year just as a fruitful collaboration with the College was beginning.

The last two decades also witnessed impressive growth in the activities of the School of Vocal, Operatic and Dramatic Studies. Beginning, in the mid-seventies, with concert performances of operas by Mozart and Rossini in the tiny McCann Hall, more ambitious schemes soon evolved. The availability of the Gleeson Hall in Kevin St led to a long succession of staged productions from 1983 onwards. These included super-classics, such as Mozart's Die Zauberflöte and Le Nozze di Figaro, and musicals such as The King and I and Show
Boat to twentieth century offerings of comedy (A. J. Potter's The Wedding) and tragedy (Vaughan Williams's setting of Synge's Riders to the Sea). Performances in other venues included Rossini's Orfeo in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham; Alcina, Bastien und Bastienne, Suor Angelica and La Clemenza di Tito in the National Concert Hall; Britten's Albert Herring in the Gaiety Theatre. This activity reached a predictable climax in the centenary year of the College (1990–91) when no less than five different productions were staged. All of the above presentations, culminating in Jerome Kern's Show Boat, the inaugural show of the new era, staged in 1993 entirely from the musical resources of the DIT, added a cultural patina to the image of the Institute.

The period from 1981 onwards was also distinguished by the development of a drama sub-section. This notably devoted its energies to the development of full-time training courses for actors and teachers, with a measure of success that requires only the internal DIT validation of its fine 2-4 year diploma course to be complete. Not to be outdone in theatrical impact the group also gave numerous public performances of works by Euripides, Lorca and Beckett, to name but a few, in addition to the hybrid musical – Kurt Weill's The Threepenny Opera.

From the early 1970s onwards vocal studies in the College passed under the professional eye of a succession of well-known teacher-managers such as Nancy Calthorpe, Veronica Dunne and Anne-Marie O'Sullivan; much was achieved in building up an enviable standard of singing in the College, punctuated by the international successes of Ann Murray, Suzanne Murphy, Alison Browner, Patricia Bardon, Ethna Robinson, Regina Nathan and others. Pride in their eminence was always tinged with perplexity that the general presence of so much vocal expertise in the College could not support a choir of equal distinction. This was obviously a management issue and a management challenge which had to wait until the late 1980s for a solution. The persistent efforts of the present Head of School, in implementing a predictably unpopular mandatory attendance order, eventually succeeded, but with consistency only in 1992-93, in producing a stable choir presence large enough to tackle the major works of the repertoire. There followed a triumph when, on the occasion of a visit to the College of an a capella choir from the Academic College of the Moscow Tchaikowsky State Conservatory, the 100-strong College Choral Society sang to an overflowing and enthralled audience in the National Concert Hall. That was on 28th April 1993, and the work performed was Carl Orff's colourful and exciting Carmina Burana, with pianists Céline Kelly and Edward Holly, and a percussion ensemble directed by Monica Bonnie.

The College choral and instrumental forces on the occasion were conducted by Ite O'Donovan, whose dedication had made a major contribution to the development and success of numerous choral ensembles within the College.

Another feature of College life, so natural that it seems almost as if it has always been there, is the over-subscribed and continuous series of lunchtime recitals; (revived in 1988 from a similar series in the seventies) guided with a firm but truly professional hand by Dr Ita Beausang. Under her tutorship the Graduate Diploma in Music has gone from strength to strength; the recitals form part of the provision of performance opportunity for the course participants, though it has a wider context. All kinds of student performance are catered for, from the presentation and recording of student compositions, to music for instrumental and choral chamber groups, and solo recitals. An arrangement with the newly-formed College Music Society, an offshoot of the wholetime Students' Union, was entered into in 1993; provision was made to hand over the management of these lunchtime recitals to the student body from October 1993.

International Image of the College

Apart from the obvious connections established through the successes of former students of the College in the international scene (to the vocal roll of honour listed above, names such as John O'Connor, Colman Pearce, Robert Houlihan, Miceal O'Rourke, Peter Sweeney, Geraldine O'Grady and many others mentioned elsewhere in this history of the College might be added) the College has been strengthening its international reputation in recent years. The success of John O'Connor (erstwhile student of the late Principal of the College, Dr J. J. O'Reilly) in the International Beethoven Competition in Vienna in 1973 led to a spectacular career both at home and abroad. This was complemented by a number of other successes in the U.K., U.S., Austria, Germany, Italy, Belgium and France over the years featuring singers Patricia Bardon, Anna Caleb and Regina Nathan, keyboard players Peter Mack, Aisling Heneghan, Louise Thomas, Adrian Daly, Neil Cooney, and violinist Maighréad McCrann (who has recently been appointed
leader of the Austrian State Radio Orchestra (ORF) in Vienna). The ready acceptance of former College graduates into post-graduate work in the world’s most prestigious centres of musical learning adds further lustre to the College and to the quality of its work.

Perhaps the most significant event indicative of an international connection of artistic substance and worth is the agreement on a twinning arrangement between the College and the Academic College of the Moscow Tchaikowsky State Conservatory. This came about through another event of international significance in 1991, when Ireland assumed the presidency of the European Pianoforte Teachers’ Association; the new President was none other than the Principal of the College, Frank Heneghan, who was the founder member of the Association in Ireland. The venue for the event was Moscow in the eventful weeks, in early September 1991, following the coup and the subsequent political disintegration in the Soviet Union. The time was overripe for opening doors to exciting artistic collaborations; the Principal was quick to snatch the opportunity, enhanced by Ireland’s timely presidency, to open negotiations which led to the artistic exchanges, some of which are alluded to above. Amongst the other events resulting from this agreement were three exchange visits of students and professors; such happenings as Irish students playing Rachmaninov in the prestigious and legendary Rachmaninov Hall of the Tchaikowsky Conservatory, and of masterclasses, for Russian students, in the Moscow Central School and Academic College, conducted by an Irish teacher (Frank Heneghan), would have seemed unattainable ambitions but a matter of months earlier. This trend – of artistic exchange between Ireland and Russia – seems to be set on a course of fertile growth.

The Crisis of the Nineties

It is in many ways fortunate that this chronicle of the College of Music, originally planned as a contribution and celebratory pendant to the College’s Centenary in 1990/91, should not have been completed until 1993. That short period of two or three years has witnessed changes of an epochal nature in the fortunes of the College – changes that open up a whole field of speculation and conjecture, tinged with pride, and with fear; it will prove, too, to have been a time for courage, and a determination to prevail once again in confirming the College’s eminence of its central rôle in the campaign for a better quality of music education for the children of the nation. And there is a conviction too, asserted by the staff, that this must evolve as a carefully planned strategy, and with a generous rationale which does no violence to the integrity of the College as an indivisible educational entity. This latter concept will be the last to be developed in this account, for it involved the College in a painful but rewarding campaign for survival in recent times; it united all its supporters in a magnificent display of solidarity which culminated in the centenary year and drew its strength from the symbolic significance of a century of unstinting service to the community. It has been commented on that the College and the CDVEC derived collective satisfaction from the birth to DIT of Music in 1978; this was an epochal decision which bore the seeds of progress in third-level music education, which has been exhaustively treated here. In the late 1980s a timely re-organisation of the third-level technological sector was insinuated into political thinking as meriting special legislation. In the lobbying that ensued, DIT, by virtue of the sheer resplendence of its spectrum of courses, spanning a century of development, and exploiting the varied excellences and complex interplay of the activities of its six colleges, won the accolade of a separate Act of the Oireachtas. Imagine the consternation which greeted the Minister’s stated intention of removing the College of Music from the DIT for the purposes of the Act, because of a concern about the relevance of much of the College’s activity in a third-level context. It was a valid issue nonetheless, the answer to which, once raised, was destined to become a manifesto in relation to music education as a national aspiration; it naturally plunged the College into a forced reappraisal of its rôle as a symbol of current provision at its best. The imminence, within a matter of months, of the College’s hundredth birthday lent a note of irony to Mrs Mary O’Rourke’s plan as much as it signed its death-warrant; in retrospect it should be conceded however, that, in exercising her right and her duty, the Minister served the College well, for it concentrated the search for an effective statement of its mission. The lobbying which resulted was probably one of the most singular displays of unanimity on an issue of importance in recent political history; the staff, students and, significantly, the College of Music Parents’ Association, joined forces to address this issue in political terms. The Minister graciously, in her
within DIT or that this noble Institute does not have the will or the flexibility to accommodate it. This is not true to the spirit which secured the relevant amendments to the Act, any more than it is worthy either of the genealogy of DIT. It may very well be, and it is stated with pride, that DIT’s involvement in third-level music education is the largest and most versatile in the State; it nevertheless has a characteristically applied and practical base. There is no current intention to replicate university provision by establishing a purely academic core in DIT, divorcing itself from its lifeline to the performing arts, nor is there any justifiable plan to offer new options with such exclusive specialisms in the undergraduate area; this would be contrary also to the tribute paid, in the recent Green Paper – Education for a Changing World – to the unique rôle of the so-called technological sector in continuing to develop the areas of applied skills. A small but absorbingly interesting development of multi-discipline primary degrees and postgraduate studies, including collaboration with new cognate interests within DIT, can and should proceed, but it can draw, *inter alia*, on the performance-based expertise of the College without doing its multi-level roots any violence. A music pseudo-academia within DIT would have to subsume performance studies to survive as a feasible unit; but they are currently inextricably bound in to the mainstream of College activity, both as to the intimate sharing of common services and the overspill of staff expertise into all areas of the College curriculum. It could be said that there is an interpenetration in the College’s programmes which offers an enviable example to DIT itself in its search for cohesion. To unravel and effectively re-deploy this unified resource should not necessarily be taboo, but it can follow only from careful consideration of the problems involved; these are essentially the need to build up the ability of each section of any proposed division to survive in an alien ambience, for currently the parts are mutually supportive, each being both giver and receiver. In the wider context this calls for a serious appraisal of the music education system in the State (this study is currently under way, and in a College context as to its authorship); it looks also to the establishment of a credible continuum in the teaching of music in schools (to superannuate a provision which the College sees itself as championing at present); the evolution of an economically-based and artistically self-supporting student population, to justify a separate exclusively third-level niche within DIT.
should follow from these measures. It is the author's hope and conviction that these things will come to pass. 

*Festina lente!* for the stakes are very high where a future for music education in Ireland is concerned. For those who are of the College of Music, its evolution is seen as the symbol of a continuing campaign for a new and enlightened dispensation.

*Frank Heneghan*

*August 1993*