

# Sound Post



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## IMRO MANIFESTO FOR GENERAL ELECTION 2024

IMRO, the Irish Music Rights Organization, issued the following press release in November.

Music enriches our lives and our culture, enabling us to express our identities and connect with others. It generates employment, supports and strengthens communities and plays a vital role in societal development.

IMRO wants music to be prioritised in policy making, planning and development believing it can improve and enhance our country and make it a more appealing place to live, work and visit. IMRO has pinpointed some key opportunities to maximise the benefits of music and realise its full potential.

- Strengthen AI regulations to protect copyright, ensure transparency and fully respect creators rights thus guaranteeing fair compensation with robust enforcement under the EU AI Act.
- IMRO proposes amending Section 481 to include music creation within the cultural test and offer additional tax incentives for using Irish music in film and TV productions.
- The Sound and Vision Funding Scheme supported by 7% of the Television License Fee funds the production of radio and television programmes. In 2022, funding rounds focusing specifically on Irish music produced high

### IN THIS ISSUE:

IMRO Election Manifesto

Editor's Comment

Respect at Work: Union-busting Report

Dr. Michael Lee on Rachel Baptiste

Aileen Cahill, Hanah Millington and Garrett Sholdice on Contemporary Music Centre Library and Archive

Simeon Smith on 30 years of Masamba Samba School

Sunniva Grant Remembers

Francis Harte on Gustav Holst

Reviews

Report on Sinn Féin Dáil Ealaíon Arts. Assembly

Times Past

Obituaries

MUI Committees

Interval Quiz

Continued from page 1

quality content and boosted opportunities for Irish music creators. IMRO seeks the inclusion of consistent dedicated funding rounds for Irish music programmes as an integral part of the Sound and Vision Scheme.

- Expanding cultural spaces in Ireland is essential for nurturing arts and culture. More performance venues, temporary use of vacant properties, and integrating cultural spaces into development plans can revitalise communities, support artists and boost local economies.
- Create a National Music Strategy to unite stakeholders in promoting and supporting the Irish music industry. This comprehensive, practical and costed plan should drive the industry's growth and success.
- The Basic Income for the Arts pilot scheme has successfully provided financial support to artists, fostering creativity without financial strain. Making the Scheme permanent and expanding it would further benefit both artists and the cultural landscape in Ireland.
- Irish cities should leverage music tourism to boost revenue, as demonstrated by Taylor Swift's €150 million impact in Dublin and the €60 million boost for Wexford from the 2024 All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil. Prioritising music in urban planning and development can enhance cultural vibrancy and economic prosperity and growth.



David Agnew. Photo Mark Stedman/RTÉ

## Editor's Comment

*Sound Post* note the proposed IMRO priorities above and will discuss them at Executive level.

We will add our own proposals in the next edition, taking the general election results into consideration.

The right of employees to engage in collective bargaining has long been recognised under European law. However, changes in the workforce globally has caused the line between employees and self-employed to become blurred.

Self-employed service providers are, in principle, "undertakings" and are therefore subject to EU competition law. There are certain categories that require clarification, such as 'false self-employed workers' and fully-dependent self-employed workers'. This is currently still being investigated at different levels of officialdom.

Exemptions have been applied for in the case of voice-over actors, session musicians and freelance journalists, as noted in the 2019 submission prepared by the Irish Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) to the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Freelance musicians, employed by RTÉ in the RTÉCO and the NCH in the NSO, have rates bench-marked against those of permanent contract players.

Most other freelance musicians in the folk, traditional, popular and jazz environments, unless contracted, are subject to EU competition law. The MUI will continue to pursue a clear position.

All positive comments, suggestions and observations for improvement are welcome. Anonymous communications are not answered. Union members are entitled to raise any related issues, and membership is open to musicians fulfilling at least one of the criteria below:

1. Be working as full time professional on paid professional contracts.
2. Have the ability to provide evidence of a body of paid work or an offer of paid work on a professionally paid basis.
3. Have the ability to provide evidence of a professional commission.
4. Have the intention to work as full time professional and provide documentation evidence of either a body of paid work previously undertaken or a relevant qualification from a recognised full-time professional training course of at least two years duration.
5. Be a student graduate of a recognised full-time professional training course of at least two years duration.
6. Be a current student on a recognised full-time professional training course of at least two years duration (for Student Membership).



## Union busting leads to "climate of fear" in Irish workplaces, new report finds

**A damning new report launched by the Respect at Work campaign exposes the scale and human cost of union busting activity across Ireland.**

"Union-busting: An Inconvenient Truth" finds that 69% of workplace representatives have observed at least one form of anti-union behaviour by employers, with the most common being victimisation of union activists (42%) and discouraging workers from joining a union (40%). Its findings also reveal the harmful impact of employer hostility to unions, with 43% of respondents saying it had negatively affected their mental and physical health.

The research, carried out with the support of academics from Queen's University, Belfast, interviewed 159 workplace representatives from four unions: SIPTU, the Financial Services Union, the Communications Workers' Union and Mandate.

Sharon Gill, a 999 call centre worker who was subject to victimisation when she attempted to unionise her workplace, said the report showed

that union busting is "rampant" across the country.

"As a 999 call centre worker, I tried to organise for the terms and conditions my colleagues deserved. It's a disgrace that we had to speak in hushed tones in dark corridors about unions, but that's the reality in Ireland today.

"We were told that unionising was an act of self-harm, that monkeys could take the calls. I was demeaned left with crippling anxiety and low self-esteem because I tried to stand up for better for myself and my co-workers.

"Eventually, my family had to intervene, sit me down and ask me to leave the job. No one should have to go through that. Every worker should have a meaningful right to organise for decent pay and liveable conditions at work. And that right needs to be protected in law."

Dr. Gareth Murphy, lead author of the report, highlighted the groundbreaking nature of the research.

"This research is unique in giving voice to local workplace reps and their experiences of how employers respond to unionising and organising activity. Sadly, for too many, it is not a good experience.

"The report's findings dispel the myth that union busting doesn't happen in Ireland. It happens and it happens a lot. Workers should feel safe and empowered to assist and support their colleagues at work. They should feel safe to join and be active in their trade union.

"Politicians need to listen to this damning report and address workers' concerns."

SIPTU Deputy General Secretary, Ethel Buckley, speaking on behalf of the campaign, said it was time for new legislation to ensure that every worker can stand up for better terms and conditions without fear of

victimisation or reprisals.

"It has been clear for years that Ireland has some of the weakest workers' rights in Western Europe. Now, with this report, we can see the consequences.

"It is time for politicians to step up and commit to including protections for workplace representatives as part of a robust National Action Plan on Collective Bargaining.

"Injustice is rampant in Irish workplaces and, too often, when workers try to stand up for better, they are punished. That climate of fear must end.

"We'll be speaking to workers across the country during this General Election campaign and making clear that we're fighting for a new law to protect their rights."

A press conference to launch the report took place on Wednesday, 23rd October, at 10.00am in Buswells Hotel, Molesworth St, Dublin and featured testimony from victimised workers.



**Show your support, visit:  
[respectatwork.ie](https://respectatwork.ie)**

# Rachel Baptiste: The 'Celebrated Black Syren' of 18th-century Ireland

By Dr. Michael Lee

On 25 July 1752, a notice appeared in *The Dublin Journal* advertising a 'Grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick' for 'the Benefit of Miss Baptist'. Set to take place the following month at the fashionable pleasure garden of Marlborough Green (near the present-day site of the Abbey Theatre), audience members were promised 'several new songs', a solo and concerto led by violinist Samuel Lee, and concertos for French horn, with the concert to conclude - as usual - with an exhibition of 'Grand Fire-Works'. Tickets were available for purchase from the venue itself, from a print-shop on Cork Hill, and from 'Miss Baptist's Lodgings in Grangegorman-lane'.

Pleasure gardens at this time were popular locations for social display and entertainment, best-known from London's Vauxhall Gardens, attracting

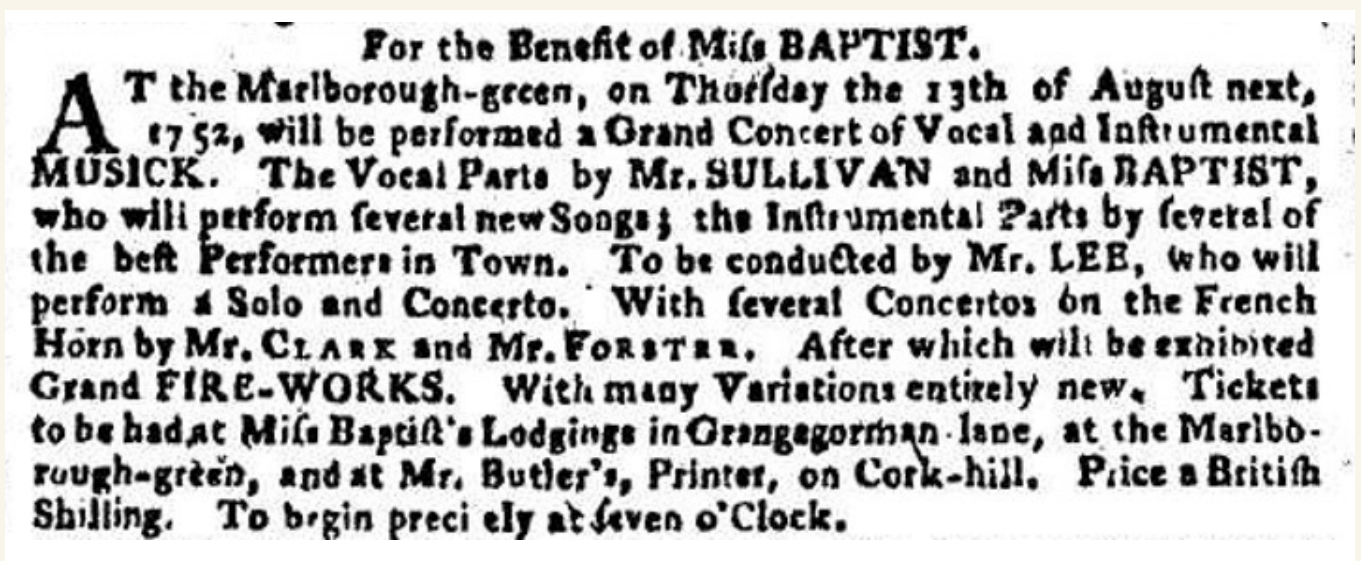
the privileged élite. As well as Marlborough Green, Dublin's pleasure gardens included those at the Rotunda, Portobello, and Ranelagh and, amongst other activities, these places offered the earliest examples of public concerts.

The singer, 'Miss Baptist' (or 'Baptiste'), had enough standing in Dublin's musical circles of the time to organise her own benefit concerts, yet now she is a tantalising figure with little known about her. One account from a few decades later, given by the playwright and librettist John O'Keeffe, stands out. In his memoirs he recalls attending concerts at Marlborough Green as a boy: 'among the many fine singers there was Rachel Baptiste, a real black woman, a native of Africa: she always appeared in the orchestra in a yellow silk gown and was heard by the applauding company with great delight, without remarks upon her sables.' The reference to 'her sables' indicates a dark complexion and the apparent lack of response to this - implying a possible racial blindness - was itself clearly worthy of comment. However, while Rachel Baptiste may have been of African descent, her own origins seemingly did not stretch that far.

The first reference to Baptiste in print, advertising a concert in early 1750, describes her and fellow-artist Miss Pocklington as 'Natives of this Country', suggesting they were both

born in Ireland. This was for a benefit concert for their teacher, Bernardo Palma, who (being Italian) could make no such claim. Perhaps the emphasis on these young artists' origins was deliberate. An advertisement for another benefit concert, published on St Patrick's Day that year, named Rachel Baptiste first—along with a radical ambition: 'At the Musick-hall in Crow-street will be performed a concert of vocal and instrumental music. The Vocal Part by Miss Rachel Baptist and accompanied in Recitativo by an Indian Gentleman lately arrived... and these two performers hope to convince, that the power of music is not confined to colour.'

Baptiste sang regularly in Dublin between 1750 and 1753, with twice-weekly appearances every summer at Marlborough Green, as well as performances at Crow Street Music Hall and Smock Alley Theatre. Her appearances lessened in the next three years, and the last time she is recorded performing in Dublin is at a concert in July 1756, which included the patriotic oratorio *The Triumphs of Hibernia*. She then moved to England, where she is occasionally listed giving concerts in London, Bath, Liverpool, and other provincial centres, before returning to Ireland ten years later. Her return (married, as 'Mrs Crow') was heralded by a successful set of concerts at the Tholsel, Kilkenny, in December 1767, which led to per-



Newspaper cutting 'for the Benefit of Miss Baptist'.

performances in Clonmel and Limerick. Now called the 'celebrated Black Syren', her appearance in Kilkenny coincided with that of the castrato Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci as well as performances by Thomas Ryder's acclaimed touring theatre company. Responding to this rich array of talent, *Finn's Leinster Journal* described Kilkenny as being 'a Capua, a town of Pleasure, rather than a town of Trade', and published an ecstatic ode in Rachel Baptiste's honour. After this, her career continued a few years more, and the last that is heard of this singer is in advertisements for concerts given at Belfast, Lisburn, and Carrickfergus in April 1773. The notice for one of these last appearances states that it was 'for the benefit of Mr Richard Lee... a musician who has come down on hard times.'

Her repertoire, typical for a singer at the pleasure gardens, would have drawn on traditional Irish and Scottish airs, popular theatre songs, and arias from cantatas and oratorios, including pieces by George Frideric Handel, William Boyce, Thomas Arne and Smock Alley bandleader Nicolò Pasquali.

Rachel Baptiste's presence in Ireland made her one of a select minority of black people living there during the eighteenth century. Of these, she is one of the very few we can actually name, a fact due to her success as a musician. Newspaper records attest to the presence of black people in many parts of Ireland at this time, employed mostly as domestic servants, but there were black musicians (including military band-musicians) and stage performers as well. They would have been largely descended from enslaved people who themselves had been transported from West Africa to the Caribbean and other parts of the Americas. While Ireland was not directly involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Irish economy was heavily invested in the commerce of slave-produced goods, notably sugar. The Irish role in Atlantic trade was also not restricted



to British networks, and included trade with (and, in some cases, ownership of) plantations located in Danish, Dutch, and French colonies.

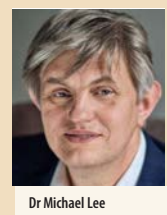
When freed, a slave needed to choose a surname under which to be registered, their original family name having been long lost, and 'Baptiste' - a common name in France at this time - suggests that Rachel Baptiste was possibly descended from slaves freed in a French Caribbean colony such as Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) or Guadeloupe. She may also have been mixed-race. Trade links between Ireland and France were strong and, where goods circulated, people followed.

Frustratingly, little more can be said with certainty about Rachel Baptiste, though the fact that she sustained a musical career for nearly a quarter-century in this period, both as a woman and part of a minority community, with little security or support, is itself impressive. Beyond the business of stately or theatrical entertainment, and religious ritual, a significant proportion of musical activity in Ireland at this time was concerned with supporting others through benefit or charity concerts, and this was certainly reflected across Rachel Baptiste's career. There is also that one tantalising expression of hope at-

tached to one of her first Dublin concerts, that 'the power of music is not confined to colour.' Coming from a time of widespread inequality and precarity, the suggestion of music's power to inspire understanding is startlingly poignant. History can have its uses, and even this bare story offers a radical view into the somewhat forgotten complexity of the past. What other mysteries are there waiting to be discovered?

*The Irish Baroque Orchestra's new release, 'Rachel Baptiste: Ireland's Black Syren', directed by Peter Whelan and featuring soprano Rachel Redmond, is now available on Linn Records. A new radio feature on Rachel Baptiste, 'The Black Syren', produced by Saibh Downes and co-written and presented with Michael Lee, will be broadcast on The Lyric Feature, RTÉ lyric fm.*

A music writer and researcher, Michael Lee is best-known for his work as a former broadcaster for RTÉ lyric fm, with which he presented concerts, operas, and feature programmes. He has lectured music history at Maynooth University, Trinity College Dublin, and University College Dublin, given online pre-season talks for Irish National Opera, and writes for the music website Goldenplec.com



Dr Michael Lee

# *the* contemporary music centre *Ireland*

## Music Collections in Ireland – 12: Contemporary Music Centre Library and Archive.

Co-authored by Aileen Cahill, Hannah Millington and Garrett Sholdice

**The Contemporary Music Centre (CMC) Library and Archive contains a collection of over 9,000 works by more than 220 composers from Ireland. Housed in the historic premises of 19 Fishamble Street at the west end of Dublin's Temple Bar, the Library provides access to these materials on a daily basis and is managed by Music Information Coordinators Aileen Cahill and Garrett Sholdice. The archive preserves digitally and physically these works for the future, playing a central and unique role in the musical heritage of the island. This valuable resource is the only**

**comprehensive collection of music by composers in Ireland in existence. Most of the works are unpublished and copies of scores and parts are available for reference, sale, hire or inspection to enable performances of works by composers from Ireland.**

An extensive audiovisual archive containing some 10,000 recordings of music by Irish composers is also housed at CMC. These encompass talks and interviews in various formats from CDs to LPs, cassettes and quarter-inch reels. Recordings range from commercially recorded releases to archival recordings and radio broadcasts. A large part of the collection consists of archival recordings from RTÉ, the national broadcaster, the result of an ongoing partnership with CMC where copies of recordings are transferred to CMC's collections.

CMC actively documents New Music activity by recording concerts of significant performances and premieres of new Irish works. [amplify](#), CMC's

regular podcast on New Music and composers from Ireland, presents New Music from the island of Ireland in an engaging and innovative way. It explores current issues relating to New Music in Ireland, as well as profiling some of its most interesting voices through interviews, features and discussions. By documenting the New Music scene through [amplify](#), CMC archives additional material for future generations to access and enjoy.

In addition to scores, manuscripts and recordings, the library holds a wealth of ephemera, such as concert programmes, publicity material, letters and photographs, relating to performances of New Music from Ireland from the 1940s to the present day. Library users can refer to published composer biographies and academic books on a range of topics pertaining to music in Ireland, as well as a substantial number of periodicals, magazines, and newspapers.

Music Information Coordinator Garrett Sholdice describes the value of the CMC Library and Archive

from his perspective as a composer, curator and teacher:

Any opportunity to sit down with a selection of scores and recordings, to give dedicated time to listening, to score study – this is hugely important to me. This kind of work has always underpinned my activities as a New Music creator; as a programmer; and as someone working in third level music education, aiming to engender a sense of excitement and possibility around New Music. When it comes to New Music on this island, the CMC Library offers an unparalleled resource for this kind of concentrated work.

As a composer, the Library affords me the opportunity to immerse myself in scores that interest me – analysing, increasing my understanding of orchestration techniques etc. But I often find that this kind of work can yield unexpected creative ideas. For example, looking at a richly scored orchestral work, say, might spark a visual image, or trigger a technical concept, leading perhaps to an artistic outcome unrelated to the work under study, yet also inextricably linked to it in terms of the creative process.

As a curator, the Library allows me to constantly refresh my understanding of a composer's work. The process of looking through the database has led me to surprising discoveries – especially in situations where I think I know a composer's style or aesthetic. As a teacher in the third level education space in this country, I have often

wanted to show students the multiplicity of practices, styles, pre occupations, and genres present in the New Music scene on the island of Ireland. To this end, the CMC Library is a powerful show case for the teeming ecosystem of creative activity all around us.

Aileen Cahill, who works alongside Garrett as Music Information Coordinator in the CMC Library and Archive, shares how she typically draws on this immense resource to enrich her own collaborative pianistic practice and research:

The Library and Archive's organisational system is especially conducive to perusal by the performer, as scores are sorted and displayed by genre and instrumentation. This simple aspect greatly facilitates the discovery of new, New Music! I have found browsing in this manner allows fresh ideas for new-to-me instrument or media combinations to easily come to the fore. As my own artistic practice has drawn me into the realm of combining music with text and spoken word, alongside diverse types of sound and visual art, frequent surveys of the physical Archive have sparked unexplored connections for me.

I frequently engage with the vast audio-visual archive, especially when inspiration starts to run dry. To approach one of the many shelves of recordings with eyes shut for a pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey approach, or to randomly select a digital recording by using the mouse wheel like roulette, is a lot of fun! I find it helps me to skip over any personal biases for and

against particular genres or instrumentation and to dip my ears into something totally different. As a practice-based researcher, the exploration of our extensive collection of composer's sketches and manuscripts is an integral part of the process of understanding the development of a composer's aesthetic. The examination of ephemera such as concert publicity materials, concert programmes and letters help to contextualise a composer's legacy within the broader artistic community. I have found that this, too, feeds back into my artistic practice, as the often-serendipitous juxtaposition of scores or ephemera left side by side can inspire different combinations. This leads to the deeper exploration of ideas, perhaps introduced many years ago by other artists, that can be brought to new audiences.

CMC warmly welcomes performers, composers, creative artists, scholars, researchers, and all interested members of the public to visit the Library. See [here](#) to book an appointment to do so.

Please do not hesitate to contact Music Information Coordinators Aileen Cahill and Garrett Sholdice with any specific enquiries regarding our collection.

**Aileen Cahill, Music Information Coordinator Contemporary Music Centre (CMC).** Aileen is a collaborative pianist, a Masters graduate in Solo Piano and Piano Accompaniment from RIAM and TUD. She is currently finishing a Doctor of Music degree in TU Dublin Conservatoire.



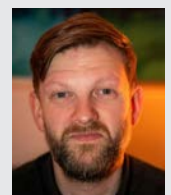
Aileen Cahill

**Hannah Millington- Library Support.** Hannah has a BA from Keele University, an MA from Oxford Brookes University, is a qualified secondary school teacher, and has recently completed a PhD at Dublin City University.



Hannah Millington

**Garrett Sholdice- Music Information Coordinator CMC.** Garrett is a composer, producer and teacher, and lectures in composition, orchestration and score analysis. He is a co-director of Ergados, a Dublin-based record label and audio-production company.



Garrett Sholdice

# From Liberdade to the Liberties – 30 years of Masamba Samba School

By Simeon Smith

**In 1994, a festival took place in Dublin which was to have a profound effect on community music in Ireland. The Big Bang Festival, hosted by the City Arts Centre and Wet Paint Arts, brought together percussion cultures from Ireland, Africa and Brazil. Over two weeks, a series of workshops**

**and performances took place, culminating in a earth-shattering show at the Ormond Multi Media Centre.**

Big bangs create sound waves, and the reverberations from this event are still being felt three decades later. Brazilian samba percussion was a popular element of the festival, with stand-out performances by the Drogheda Samba Band and Mac-Umba (Glasgow) wowing audiences and workshop participants alike. The City Arts Centre decided to harness this positivity and organised a series of team-building workshops facilitated by Colin Blakey of the Drogheda band. Colin had recently left the highly acclaimed Waterboys at the height of their success, and had settled in Drogheda, providing percussion workshops with local young

people. This process was replicated at the City Arts Centre, and the project was so successful that it soon became an independent project, renaming itself Masamba Samba School. 30 years later, the group is still performing and teaching – older, wiser and maybe a little deaf!

I came to the band from a background in community development, and had served as a shop steward when working in Galway. As a result, there has always been a social justice element to our work. One of our earliest influences was the sambareggae music of Ile Aiye and Olo-dum. What impressed me was that these groups could make beautiful music, and use their influence to promote equality and tolerance. These groups came from the Liberdade (liberty) neighbourhood of Salvador in North East Brazil, and ironically, we ended up in the Liberties in Dublin. Amazingly, we recently hosted Ile Aiye at our rehearsal space, rounding the circle in some ways.

In 2002, the City Arts Centre closed. Since then, Masamba has been moving from one rehearsal venue to the next, having had seven 'homes' in all. We have been based in the Liberties for over 20 years. The band incorporated as a company in 2002 and registered as a charity soon afterwards. Core funding for Masamba's activities is provided by the Community Services Programme (CSP), an initiative of the Department of Rural and Community Development. This is social enterprise funding, and we are expected to match government funding with traded income. This income comes mainly from the delivery of training projects, performances and grants from other agencies.

Currently, Masamba Samba School delivers over 400 percussion and dance workshops each year, and performs over 20 times. Current clients include the HSE, the National Concert Hall, and Dublin City Council, but the group is always available to work directly with small community

**Samba Drumming Workshop**  
with  
**Masamba Samba School**




**Join the Masamba drummers for an introduction to the exciting carnival rhythms of Brazil. No previous experience necessary. All instruments provided**

**Wednesday, April 5th, 7pm - 9pm. Free of Charge.**  
**Location: St. James's Primary School, Basin Lane, Dublin D08 EC96**

[www.masamba.com](http://www.masamba.com), [facebook.com/masambasambaschool](https://facebook.com/masambasambaschool), [info@masamba.com](mailto:info@masamba.com)









Masamba Samba band at the official Christmas lights event in The Liberties on 26th November, 2024

groups and other charities.

The group has also lent its support to many causes and issues over the years, including the March for Marriage, PRIDE, The 'Yes' campaign, and ongoing causes such as support for Palestine..

While deeply rooted in the community, we have also plenty of experience of performing at the highest level, having toured to the United States, Mexico, Germany, France, the UK and even carnival in Brazil. At home, Masamba has won awards at

the St. Patrick's Festival Parade in Dublin, and participated in most of Ireland's premier festivals and played at most of Ireland's most prestigious venues. There have even been a few TV appearances along the way.

These experiences are great opportunities for band members, but create challenges too. It can be difficult to negotiate the sometimes contradictory needs of the professional or 'high' art sector and the amateur or community arts. On one hand, there is the need to produce a professional level performance, while at the same time creating a welcoming environment for participants from diverse backgrounds and with differing needs. In some ways, the mainstream arts sector is now catching up with community based arts, as artists and audiences demand a more tolerant and accepting experience from their arts institutions.

One such challenge for us is on the immediate horizon. On 4th November, Masamba Samba School will perform a celebratory concert to mark our 30th birthday. The event will include the many diverse members of

the group, including members of the Masamba Youth Project. We will be joined on the night by our long time mentor and collaborator Dudu Tucci. Dudu has worked with the band in many different settings, going back as far as 1999, and this show celebrates our achievement, and looks to a bright future of samba in Dublin.

The Masamba 30th Anniversary celebrations are funded by Dublin City Council Arts Office.

Tickets for the Sugar Club show are free, but must be booked in advance from Eventbrite here: <https://tinyurl.com/4jnan4m4>



Simeon Smith has a BA in Arts, an MA in Community Development, both from NUIG, a qualification as a counsellor in Reality Therapy/Choice Theory, and a PhD in Arts Practice from the University of Limerick. Simeon has been playing samba for 30 years, and is a founding member of Masamba Samba School. Simeon endorses Contemporary Percussion, Leiva Cajons, Hardcase and Protection Racket



Simeon Smith

# Sunniva Grant (née Fitzpatrick) Remembers

Born 15th December, a bad date for presents as a child. “This is for your birthday AND Christmas”. She was gigging at 16, in shows in the Gaiety and Olympia and made permanent with the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra at 20. Sunniva became a founder member of the New Irish Chamber Orchestra (NICO) in 1970, and left the Symphony Orchestra in 1976 (on the birth of son Ronan). She continued touring with NICO and freelancing with many different groups. Joined the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in 1981. Sunniva was a doyenne of the violin section, incredibly professional, stylish and dignified. Lovingly called Ma in later years by all those around her, she could compliment you and shred you alive in the same sentence after a rehearsal, concert or a recording, for any professional transgression. Sunniva retired in December 2015.

## 1. Earliest musical memory?

There was always music in our house. My father had a rich baritone voice and used to sing me snippets from Rigoletto when I was very small. We had a wind up gramophone and the old 78 records (mainly operatic). There were many musical evenings with my parent’s pals.

## 2. Why the violin?

My mother told me to!!! She’d had violin and piano lessons in school and loved the fiddle.

## 3. Why did you become a professional musician?

It never occurred to me to do anything else. We lived in a Corporation house, weren’t wealthy, and nobody in the neighbourhood went to college. Thankfully my mother valued the Arts, especially music, so she enrolled me



Sunniva Fitzpatrick and Veronica McSwiney

(and subsequently my brother and sister) in what was then the Municipal School of Music, as the fees were very reasonable. I think I was six. After the first year, it was scholarships all the way. I was very lucky. Mr. Mack (Michael McNamara) was the principal, a force of nature and a lovely, inspiring man. He conducted the orchestra which I joined when I was about 7. I was well and truly hooked (after the initial terror)! Not only did I revel in being part of a like-minded group (which to my ears produced wonderful music) but I made friendships which have lasted to this day (Ruth, Hilary, Therese, Kitty etc.) I left school at 15. Around this time a student union chamber orchestra was formed, the violins were mainly by students of the renowned Czech, Jaroslav Vanacek. He was very calm, never lost his temper, but was exacting in his method. That was so exciting and rewarding. I was on the right path.

## 4. What instruments have you played and why?

I had a quarter-size when I was 6,

bought from Charlie Byrne’s, then half, and three-quarter size. When I was about 14, I got a violin through Willy Hoffmann, the well-known violin-maker and dealer who lived in Dublin. It was a beautiful instrument by William Forster, made in 17-something. It cost £120, a lot of money then, and I don’t know how my parents paid for it in the early 60s.

## 5. Who inspired you as a musician?

My parents first and foremost. My first teacher Miss O’Loughlin, so positive, enthusiastic and encouraging. My second teacher Jaroslav Vanacek. He opened new worlds for me and I’m eternally grateful. To name but two others, Yvonne McGuinness and the great Benny McNeill.

## 6. Best piece of advice another musician gave you?

“If in doubt, leave out”, (obviously only if you are a tutti player).

## 7. Favourite pieces of music?

I really have no favourites. I love

Baroque, probably from playing in NICO and blending and melding with my colleagues. I loved and still love the Beatles to the extent my lullaby at bedtime to my grandsons was "Blackbird Singing in the dead of Night" and at 2 years of age they could sing it back perfectly. Mahler always, feeds my heart and my soul. Bach for purity and Mozart for beauty.

I also love the Russians and the Slavs (Khachaturian, Rimsky Korsakov and, of course, Shostakovich).

**8. Most memorable concerts?**

A lot to choose from! The most important for me was performing Shostakovich's chamber symphony in St. Patricks Cathedral on the 5th of July 1972 in his august presence as a member of NICO. It's only now as I look back, remembering his applause and humility, I realise how privileged I was.

Greenwich in 1987 where we performed Shaun Davey's Granuaile with Gearoid Grant coordinating and conducting the extensive orchestra.

Or course ALL the concerts over 25 years in the Music In the Classroom series in Dublin and around the country, hundreds of them. The children's involvement and interaction with an orchestra was so rewarding for everyone involved. And of course Riverdance. It wasn't really a concert, it was more of a



Sunniva and Benny McNeill

happening. Three dress rehearsals I think we had. The reaction each time was the same, a spontaneous ROAR and everyone up out of their seats. It was visceral, and I think it remains so. Thank you Bill Whelan.

**9. Best conductors?**

Well, obviously, my first choice would be my husband Gearoid Grant. Totally committed to the music and impassioned, never accepting less from the musicians. Albert Rosen, a colossus, both terrifying and inspiring. Proinsias O'Duinn, all about the music, but with a deep commitment to the

welfare and wellbeing of HIS RTÉCO.

**10. Funniest incident?**

Ha! At a House Concert in the Municipal School of Music. I think I was 14ish. My teacher Vanacek was accompanying me on piano (which was unusual). I was playing 'Scene de Ballet' by DeBeriot- a flashy piece. All was going swimmingly when I made an over-enthusiastic up-bow to end a spectacular and very accurate run up the fiddle. In my enthusiasm and delight I lost the run of myself...and my bow! Up out of my grasp it went...I caught it on the way down and I'm told I only missed 2 beats. I've never seen Mr. Vanacek more proud of me. He also laughed so much afterwards that I was afraid he'd do himself a mischief.

**11. Any advice for young musicians?**

You're part of a team to make wonderful music. Don't show off.

**12. Favourite saying?**

" Does the Band take a drink?"  
 " Keep her goin' Patsy"



Sunniva and Rudolph Nureyev

# Gustav Holst

By Francis Harte

**This year, we commemorate both the 90th anniversary of the death of Gustav Holst as well as celebrating his 150th birthday. But much of his highly distinctive output has been eclipsed by his greatest masterpiece *The Planets*.**

Gustav Holst was born in Cheltenham on 21st September 1874. Holst's father (of Swedish descent) was a piano teacher and taught the young Gustav. In 1892, Holst was appointed organist and choirmaster at a Gloucestershire church. The following year, he went to the Royal College of Music to study composition with Stanford. He hoped to become a pianist but was hampered by chronic neuritis in his right arm. He took up the trombone instead. In the summer holidays Holst played in bands on Brighton pier and at other seaside resorts to supplement his college maintenance grant.

In these years, Holst joined the Hamersmith Socialist Club. His Socialism was never very active but he conducted the Socialist Choir where he met Isobel Harrison. The two became engaged, marrying a few years later when they could afford it. She took Holst in hand, persuading him to eat properly. Uncompromising in his approach to life, he had been living a frugal existence, not only because of his limited means but borne out of an idea that an artist should not indulge in the good things of life. He left the RCM in 1898, having formed a lifelong friendship with Ralph Vaughan Williams there. For some years after leaving college he made his living as a trombone player in the Carl Rosa Opera Company and in various orchestras.

In 1899 he became interested in translations of Sanskrit literature. He was captivated by the mysticism of the *Rig Veda* and the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. He even took lessons in Sanskrit enabling him to translate

poems from the *Rig Veda* as well as writing his own libretto for the operas *Sita* and *Savitri*. Another important influence was folk song, the revival of which had gained interest in England during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Holst became Director of Music at St. Paul's Girls' School in 1905 and at Morley College for Working Men and Women in 1907, work he continued for the rest of his life. Many of Holst's smaller choral works, folk-song arrangements, and instrumental pieces, for example his St. Paul's Suite for string orchestra of 1913, reflect the interconnectedness of Holst's activities as teacher and composer. He always regarded practical music-making at every level as of the highest importance.

As well as the folk song revival, he was also involved in the reawakening of interest in early music. He had been excited about the rediscovery of English madrigal composers, his favourite being the Tudor composer



In affiliation with SIPTU

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Gustav Holst

Thomas Weelkes. In June 1911, Holst and his Morley students gave the first performance since the 17th century of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. The full score had been lost soon after Purcell's death in 1695, and had only recently been found. No vocal or orchestral parts existed, however, and Holst got permission for his Morley students to copy out fifteen hundred pages of manuscript in their spare time. A performance of the work was given with an introductory talk by Vaughan Williams.

In 1913, Holst began work on his large-scale orchestral suite *The Planets*, which reflected his interest in astrology, sketching *Mars* just before the outbreak of war in 1914. Holst had never enjoyed good health and was always prone to over-working himself. He was rejected in 1914 for active war service because of his poor eyesight and his neuritis. He went to live in Thaxted, Essex at this time and began to organise his Whitsuntide Festival which first took place

in 1916 in the parish church there with performances of Bach, Palestrina, Byrd and Purcell. Later that year he began his choral work *The Hymn of Jesus*.

Although Holst had been turned down for military service, he was later offered the post of YMCA music organiser for troops in the Near East in 1918. As a parting gift, Balfour Gardiner, a promoter of contemporary English music, arranged a private performance of *The Planets* in Queen's Hall in London to an invited audience including Sir Henry Wood, conducted by Adrian Boult. Five months later, Boult introduced *The Planets* to the general public, at a concert in February 1919.

*The Planets* quickly became a great success but the clamour of attention he received brought him little happiness. In February 1923, Holst was conducting a rehearsal in the hall of University College, Reading, when he slipped off the platform and hit the

back of his head. He had concussion and it happened at a time when he was already feeling depressed and overworked. He was subsequently troubled by violent pains in the back of his head; noise and crowds were torture to him and he suffered a nervous breakdown. He eventually recovered by spending time in Thaxted, living alone there for a year.

Holst was absorbed by literature, setting the poetry of Whitman and of his friend, Thomas Hardy. In 1927, he composed *Egdon Heath*, commissioned by the New York Symphony Orchestra. Holst considered this to be his best work, taking its inspiration from that place in Dorset, described in Hardy's novel *The Return of the Native*. This was followed by works including his opera *The Wandering Scholar* and his *Choral Fantasia*. These works seemed as though they might usher in a new phase but he died in 1934 after undergoing an operation. He was able to hear the first performance of his last work, *Lyric Movement* for viola and small orchestra, on the radio from his hospital bed shortly before his death on 25th May.

In the words of his friend Vaughan Williams, Holst 'was a visionary but never an idle dreamer... Though he seemed sometimes to be living in a world of his own, yet if a friend or even a stranger wanted help, advice, or even a rebuke, he was there to give it. His music reaches into the unknown, but it never loses touch with humanity.'

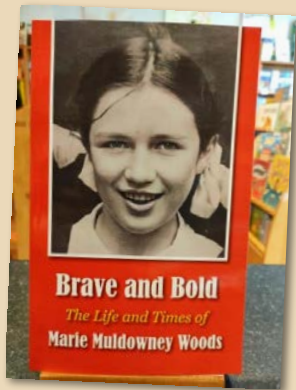
**Francis Harte worked as a viola player with all the major London orchestras, particularly the Philharmonia, before joining the National Symphony Orchestra in 2003. A Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Scholar of the Royal College of Music, he also studied in Vienna with Prof. Thomas Kakuska, of the world-renowned Alban Berg Quartet. Francis is a member of the MUI.**



Brian O'Rourke

## BOOK REVIEW

By Mary Muldowney



### **Brave and Bold The Life and Times of Marie Muldowney Woods**

(Umiskin Press, 2024)

Price: €25 (Paperback)  
ISBN 978-1-9166489-4-0

**Marie Muldowney Woods died in May 2024, not long after the launch of this fascinating memoir. This sometimes searingly honest account of her life from childhood in Daingean, County Offaly through unhappy years at school in Dublin to a move to England and later return to Ireland provides a narrative that is as full of energy and commitment to social justice as was the author herself. The book ends with the death of her beloved husband Paul, who died in April 2020. They had been married for 57 years.**

The book is divided into sections that reflect the different stages of Marie's life. Book One covers the years 1937-1949 and it describes a childhood that was relatively privileged in comparison to some of her classmates in her primary school in Daingean. Her parents were both schoolteachers and while Marie describes her sometimes troubled relations with them and her siblings, in

retrospect she acknowledges that she was probably a challenging member of the family. From an early age she was conscious of the closed-mindedness of an Ireland that was ruled by the Catholic Church and not for the benefit of the most vulnerable members of society. She was angry that the poverty of many residents of Daingean did not seem to be a matter of concern to those who might have been in a position to help them.

Book Two, 1949-1963 recalls the family's move to Dublin, as Marie's parents believed that their children would be better off attending schools in the city, rather than in Daingean. This was an unhappy period for Marie because despite her intelligence, she did not perform well in the education system at the time, which was largely based on rote learning. Her membership of the Rathmines Library helped her to overcome the misery of coping with the limitations of the school curriculum and the conservatism of her parents. It was during this time that she started to become interested in politics and to refine her own social conscience. Having completed the Leaving Certificate, she took up nursing studies and eventually chose to go to England, where she specialised in psychiatric nursing. She met Paul on a short break home to Dublin and they began their lifelong relationship.

The third Section (1963-1978) covers the expansion of Marie's professional and political interests. She and Paul had four children, and she says throughout the book that she felt she neglected them over the years, while putting her professional work first. She spent twelve years working with deaf people, which was very satisfying for her but quite time consuming. Her extraordinary energy levels saw her increasing involvement in political activism. After exploring several options, she joined the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1974. Also, during this period, she became active in the burgeoning

women's liberation movement. She writes at the end of this section that the seventies were a period of progress and hopeful change in Britain until the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979. She and her family returned to Ireland in 1978, and she began her membership of the Irish Labour Party. She says that it was Paul who wanted to come home, and she only reluctantly agreed. Marie soon resumed her frenetic lifestyle, as she describes in Book Four (1978-2006). Having to find a home and a job kept her busy for a time but after becoming active in her branch of the party she was elected to the Labour Women's National Council. She was appointed as a special advisor to then Labour Minister for Health, Barry Desmond. She was not a supporter of the coalition with Fine Gael and had her doubts about the justification that Labour would prevent some of the worst impulses of the right-wing party. This section ends with her and Paul setting up a nursing home, where she was able to ensure that their patients benefited from her knowledge of best practice in looking after people she describes as 'confused elderly'.

Book Five (2006-2004) commences with Marie's reluctant retirement. She and Paul had always enjoyed travel, and they ranged far and wide in the last years of his life. She continued to be busy after his death, but this is mentioned only briefly. The book concludes with a poignant account of Paul's funeral, which had to be restricted during a Covid lockdown. On the evidence of this account, Marie Muldowney Wood's life was indeed well lived.

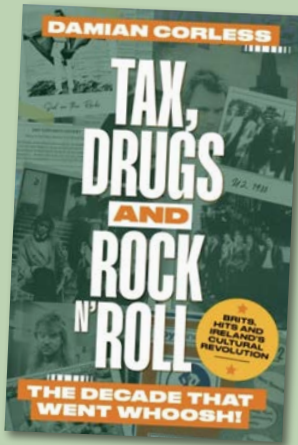
**Dr Mary Muldowney is Dublin City Council Historian in Residence for the Dublin North-West area. She is widely published, her research focussing particularly on labour and women's history.**



**Mary is a member of the organising committee of the Irish Labour History Society (ILHS) and she is co-editor of *Saothar*, the journal of the ILHS.**

## BOOK REVIEW

By David Agnew



### **Tax, Drugs and Rock and Roll**

(Mirror Books, 2024)

By Damien Corless

Price: €14.99 (Paperback)

The central thrust of this book is how the influx of British musicians in the 1980s, who came to live in Ireland for a year as a tax loophole, was a significant catalyst in the transformation of Ireland from poor, downtrodden and insular, to rich, confident and outward looking. The years that went whoosh are the '80s and 90s, dizzy decades, but essentially 1981-1995. From the drab dark days of the 1960s and '70s, 1981 was a year some colour came into our lives, and the start of a seismic cultural change, with the advent of MTV on TV and real pop stars walking amongst us. Damien Corless, as a journalist on the frontlines, tells vivid tales that are credible, fantastic and all as they are, because I remember witnessing and hearing some of those stories being told at the time. His personal yarns have a self-deprecating wit, despite some of the starkness, and none are dull.

I can remember many a night eating curries in the Eastern Tandoori with Tony Hadley and Martin Kemp of Spandau Ballet, generous with their drink at 2am, or watching Francis Rossi and the rest of Status Quo having a row in Jury's Coffee Dock, and dumping spaghetti Bolognese over each other, or standing next to Joe Elliott from Def Leppard in a pub down the quays, or Bono and Mick Jagger or David Bowie walking into The Pink Elephant. Or being in the posher pubs in South Dublin at a table beside Jim Kerr of Simple Minds and Lisa Stansfield. Seeing Billy Connolly on Grafton St, or Carole King in Francis St. on her way to the Tivoli, and whispers that Kate Bush was in Windmill Studios. We were all in a reality pop video. Ireland was a playground to these newly rich troubadours, Sting, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, The Rolling Stones, Kate Bush, Spice Girls, Kylie, AC/DC, Metallica all wandered around, some surreptitiously, some in broad daylight. They came for the tax break, but stayed for the craic, a true chapter title. Hot Press magazine came alive, the local music news was as good as anything else in the world.

An Ireland that had been poor, down-trodden by troubles and poverty, religious and political oppression, the spectre and legacy of Archbishop John Charles McQuaid, Gay Byrne on the radio with letters of misery, telling us all 'the country is banjaxed', Dublin, a crumbling capital city called Smogsville, bit by bit became a smorgasbord and hive of cultural activity, with producers, directors, creatives and later, footballers.

The book is a potted history from the 1920s, and there is a lot of toing and froing across the decades. The strangest stories from the banning of jazz and Frank Sinatra, seen as a conspiracy to capsize Christian civilization, the power of religious institutions, the othering of anyone who wasn't at mass on a Sunday, hippies on islands, Hare Krishnas, to

moving statues, lesbian nuns and sexually active priests. All the while an undercurrent of cruelty, physical and sexual abuse, interference of the Church in every aspect of people's lives, particularly the harrowing treatment of women and their babies. Countless examples of how the Irish State and its various classes embarrassed themselves, the threats and callous acts of the IRA, while all the time covering up the graft, bribery, golden circles, the sharp practice, exploitation, corruption and abuse of power.

By the time the 90s were in full swing and the Celtic Tiger was roaring, we had developed full-blown notions, from Italia '90 to The Commitments, Boyzone and Riverdance, and we were invincible as a nation. Jack Charlton had invoked the "Granny rule" permitting top-flight English footballers play for Ireland. We had World Cup competitions, Ryanair revolutionising Irish tourism, and the Disneyfication of the Irish dream abroad through U2, Van Morrison, The Chieftains, The Corrs and The Cranberries, to Father Ted and Westlife.

Damien Corless covers a multitude in this book, from Bono crashing his car outside the Corless' front-door, the development of a derelict Temple Bar as an artist's oasis, to the sadness of the life and loss of Phil Lynott captured in four paragraphs. It is a fascinating read for any musicians who want to remember how things happened if you're old enough, and if you're too young, perhaps to understand why things are the way they are in the pop music business in Ireland.

David Agnew retired recently after 40 years as oboist with The RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Currently working on a PhD in Music Education at TUD Grangegorman. He is Vice-President of The Musicians Union of Ireland and Editor of SoundPost magazine.



David Agnew Photo  
Chloe Agnew

# Sinn Féin Dáil Ealaíon Arts Assembly 10th September 2024

The purpose of the event was to listen to artists, arts workers, creators, performers, representative bodies and arts organisations gathered and respond to the draft policies for different aspects of the arts, drawn up by Sinn Féin, ten for each section of Performing Arts, Literary Arts, Audiovisual and Film Arts, Visual Arts, Craft and design, and Supporting Irish Artists across the different platforms.

The Assembly was address by Mary Lou McDonald TD, Sinn Féin President, Aengus Ó Snodaigh TD, Arts Spokesperson, Senator Fintan Warfield, Cultural and Educational Panel, and Toner Quinn, Musician, Writer, Lecturer, Editor of *The Journal of Music* and Independent Arts Commentator.

Mary Lou McDonald stated the economic benefit of the Arts to the state of €1.8 billion, supporting 40,000 jobs and 10,000 artists in local communities, and a factor 3.79 return on investment that is not shared by the majority of artists, with short-term contracts, copyrights taken, no residual payments or royalties rewarding success, inadequate studio space and a power imbalance resulting in an inability to determine meaningful careers. Also, that Sinn Féin would immediately give an extra €20 million to the Arts Council. This was interesting in the light of the subsequent budget announcement of €140 million to the Arts Council, a shortfall of €20 million on their request of €160 million.

Some of the standout draft proposals in the Performing Arts included establishing a dedicated National Strategy for Music, Theatre and Dance, recognising Comedy, Musical Theatre and Fashion Design as art, a law defining what 'Irish Music' is in order to facilitate greater airtime on radio and representation in film, affordable insurance coverage, secure cultural venues and infrastructure



for performers, and protected Copyright from exploitation and Artificial Intelligence.

In the Literary Arts, a National Strategy, support for bookshops, protected freedom of expression, investment in Journalism and a Traveller Language and Culture fund. In Audiovisual and Film Arts, priorities are Film Education, Funding for RTÉ, TG4 and the Irish Language. In Visual Arts, Crafts and Design, making space for artists, reviewing the Per Cent for the Arts, recognising Fashion Design as art, and the repatriation of Art and Artefacts taken due to Colonialism.

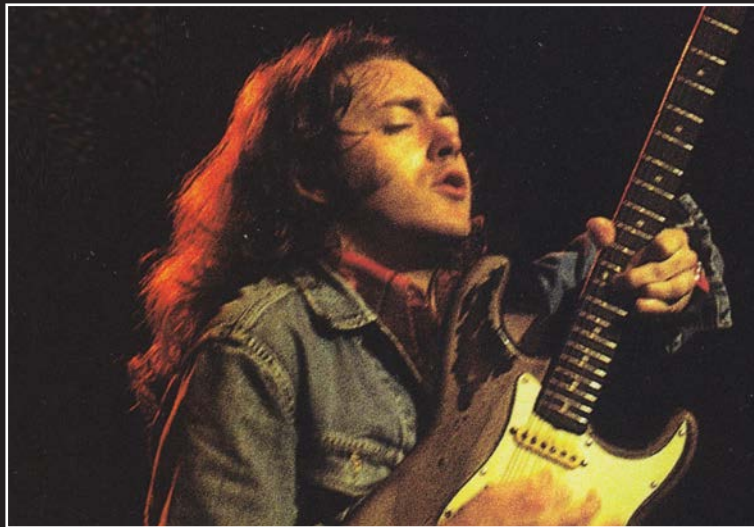
And finally, in Supporting Irish Artists, increasing core funding supporting Irish artists working at home and abroad, Art Space funding and a Housing pilot programme for artists, a continuation of the Basic Income for artists pilot programme, and help for artists to help the planet and promote peace. The layout in the room on the day was unusual, approximately 20 tables of 10 and an opportunity to sit and debate with people from different disciplines, backgrounds and agendas, with moving around every 40 minutes to meet others. The same issues continually

arose in discussions, over and above those listed in policies. The lack of a withholding tax from large visiting international acts ring-fenced to reinvest in Irish productions, the dependence on grants and the inordinate amount of time spent yearly in admin applying for funding, and the short time to plan future programmes if successful, no meaningful universal music education initiatives such as free tuition and free instruments, the over-centralisation of the Arts Council, insurance issues with public liability, no designated space within local authorities for arts events, no office space, no studios, no storage, 34 local authorities with no joint-vision, and lastly, no big ideas.

SIPTU and the Musicians Union of Ireland were represented. The scale of the work input to the day was very broad. It was good to see shiny printed policy documents, specifically focussed on the arts, even if purely aspirational at this time. An election has taken and the status of these policy documents will be clearer in relation to implementation of same or in contrast to those proposed by the Government.



# TIMES PAST



Rory Gallagher and Stratocaster

## Rory Gallagher's Stratocaster

**Rory Gallagher's signature Stratocaster is to be donated to National Museum after selling for more than €1m at auction.**

Irish rock and blues musician Rory Gallagher bought his iconic 1961 Fender Stratocaster guitar for £100 in 1963 on credit from the owner of Crowley's Music Store in Cork, Michael Crowley. According to the legend, this was the first Stratocaster to ever reach Ireland. Rory's version of the story is he was still at school when he saw it in a shop window for £100 with an old brown case thrown in, so he saved up enough to pay the deposit and bought it on HP. In a recent documentary, his brother Donal, curator of Rory's estate, said Rory got it from the shop and hid the guitar under the bed for several days while he figured out how to get his mother to take it on hire-purchase after telling the shop-owner she would.

The Fender Stratocaster guitar will be donated to the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) after it was sold for £700,000 (approximately €841,000) at a London auction in October 2024. A "premium" placed on the item brought the total to £889,400 (approximately €1,069,000).

Minister for Arts Catherine Martin said the guitar had been purchased by Live Nation Gaiety Ltd with a view to donation to the NMI under Section 1003 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997. She said the purchase agreement ensured the guitar would be "preserved in the ownership of the state", and made available to view for the public and Gallagher's fans around the world. Live Nation Gaiety Ireland Holdings Ltd is owned by the London-registered LN-Gaiety Holdings Ltd. Promoter Denis Desmond is a co-owner in the London-based joint venture with Live Nation.

The instrument was modified extensively over the years, according to the official Rory Gallagher website at [rorygallagher.com](http://rorygallagher.com), mainly due to the sweat and moisture absorbed during

many hundreds of concerts. There is a comprehensive analysis and detailing of the procedures and types of changes on the website. For guitar nerds and anoraks, the pick-ups packed in and were replaced with two Fender X-1s and a FatStrat 1 DiMarzio. The original neck was replaced several times temporarily and hung up to dry for several months, again from sweat and moisture absorbed. The frets were always replaced with standard Fender fret-wire. The machine heads for tuning were changed from the old Klusons, initially to Schaller, and later to 5 Sperzels and one Gotoh. A 5-way selector switch replaced the vintage 3-way for greater volume and tone control.

Finally, the wear on the paintwork was a feature of Stratocasters from the early '60s, and also as a result of it being stolen in 1966 where it spent several days in a rainy ditch. It was recovered from behind a garden wall on the South Circular Road, Dublin, after a report went out on the television programme *Garda Patrol*. Yes, the editor of *Sound Post* is an anorak.



Col. Fred O'Callaghan Photo: Association of Retired Commissioned Officers (ARCO)

**OBITUARY**

## Fred O'Callaghan (1927 - 2024)

**Fred O'Callaghan was born in 1927 and educated at the Christian Brothers School in Synge Street.**

He enlisted in the Defence Forces in 1942, at the age of 15, as a Trainee Bandsman in the Army School of Music. The Director at the time was Colonel Christian Sauerzweig who, like the first Director Colonel Fritz Brase, had been recruited from Germany in 1923.

After his initial period as a trainee, and then as a bandsman, Fred was offered a cadetship in 1947 and was commissioned in 1951. He was initially appointed as an instructional officer and in the same year graduated from University College Dublin as a Bachelor of Music.

He went on to hold the appointment of Conductor, Army No 1 Band, where he commanded that band's participation in ceremonial occasions over many years. These included Presidential Inaugurations, visits by foreign heads of state, the presentation of credentials by ambassadors, along with a wide range of

state and military commemoration ceremonies, including the 50th anniversary of the 1916 Rising.

Fred was a prolific composer and arranger; particularly of band music, and his output remains an essential part of the military band repertoire. He was Director of the Army School of Music from 1981 to 1987. Fred's interest and commitment to music also lay outside the Defence Forces. He was Chorus Master of the Dublin Grand Opera Society on a number of occasions throughout the 1950s and with James Cavanagh formed The Irish Youth Wind Ensemble in 1985, one of the lasting legacies of European Music Year.

By William Campbell, Association of Retired Commissioned Officers

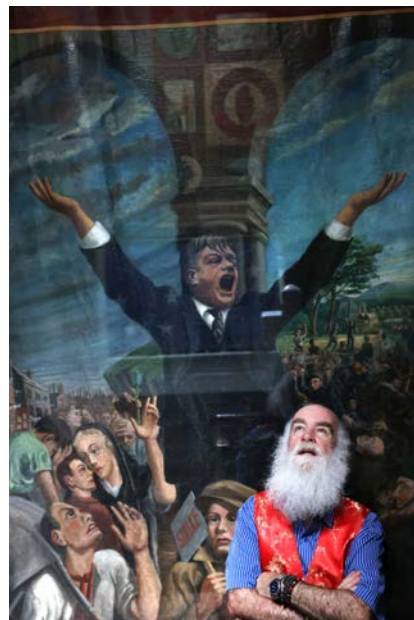


Jack McGinley

**OBITUARY**

## Jack McGinley (1954 - 2024)

**Jack McGinley was a union activist, labour historian and publisher. He worked for over 40 years in the Trinity College library and was a long-serving member of the SIPTU National Executive Council.**



Jack McGinley, beside an old Workers' Union of Ireland banner, organised the Irish Labour History Society 2nd International Conference in 2023. Photograph: Dara Mac Dónaill

He worked passionately with the Irish Labour History Society and his own Umiskin Press to preserve the stories of Ireland's labour movement. His contributions leave a lasting legacy of dedication and integrity.

Jack was a particular friend to *Sound Post* over the years, supplying many of the titles reviewed in the publication.

Although I only met him twice, I had recent correspondence with him. He was generous with his time and publications and I was grateful for his suggestions for the future in my role as editor of *Sound Post*. A real and unique character.

David Agnew



# Sound Post

## AND FREE EXPRESSION

A forum of free expression, *Sound Post* welcomes material from MUI members. Unless explicitly stated, the views expressed in this newsletter, including goods and services promoted in advertisements, are not necessarily endorsed by the union.

*Sound Post* is compiled and edited by David Agnew and produced by the Communications Department, SIPTU.

Material may be emailed to David Agnew at [davidagnew@live.ie](mailto:davidagnew@live.ie) or forwarded to the MUI office.

## Musicians' Union of Ireland Executive Committee

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to make a booking and to check that all musicians concerned are benefit members of the union.



Musicians'  
Union of Ireland  
Ceardchumann  
Ceoltóirí Éireann

## INTERVAL QUIZ

1. Who won the Best Folk Group award 2024 this year's RTE Radio Folk Awards?
2. What is the name given to the lower register of the clarinet's playing range?
3. Jimmy, Robert, John and John: Can you identify this rock band from the first names of their original line-up?
4. What is Irish musician Hozier's real name?
5. In what year did Elvis Presley die? (A bonus point for the month.)
6. Which B-word describes a "short and sweet," light-hearted piece usually composed for solo piano?
7. Who wrote a piece called the *Skittle Alley Trio*?
8. What type of guitar was Rory Gallagher's signature instrument?
9. Which singer-songwriter had studio albums titled *Hejira*, *Ladies of the Canyon* and *Blue*?
10. What's the difference between an oboe and a bassoon?

Answers  
1. Lankum. 2. Chalumeau. 3. Led Zepplin.  
4. Andrew Hozier-Byrne. 5. 1977 (August). 6. Bagatelle.  
7. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. 8. Fender Stratocaster  
Sunburst (1961). 9. Joni Mitchell. 10. You can hit a sliotar  
further with a bassoon.

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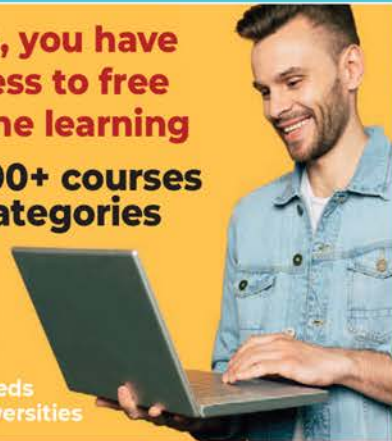


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