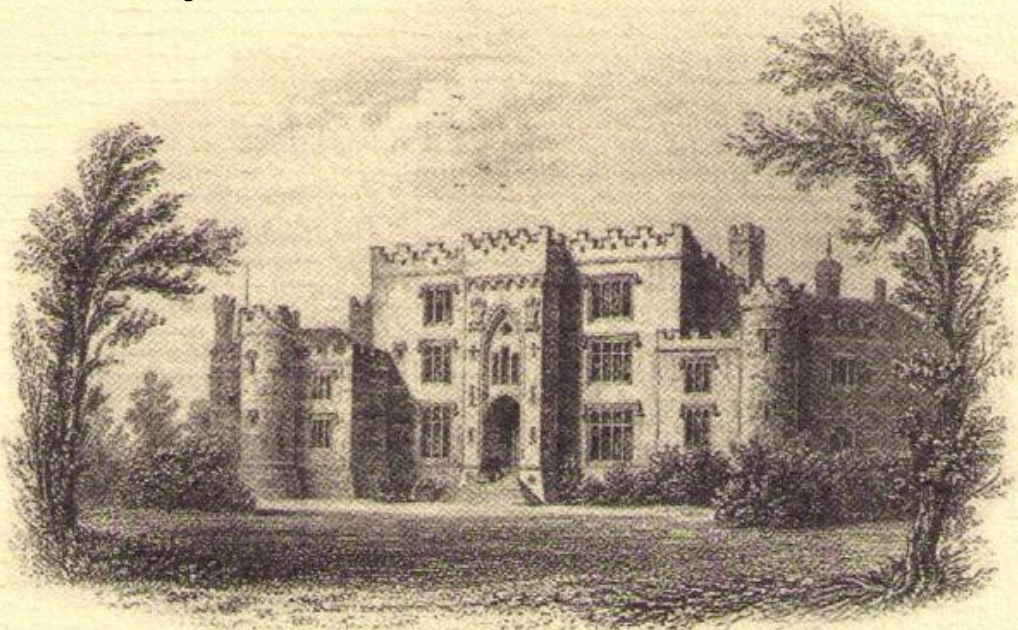




## Aoibhneas Na Bealtaine



*Á chur i láthair ag*

*Ensemble Ceol Oirghialla*

*Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Dhún Dealgan*

*Caisleán Bhiorra*

*Domhnach 24ú Bealtaine 2015, 19.00*

## Music at Birr

Birr Castle is renowned for its telescope and the contribution of the Parsons family to science, especially astronomy, engineering and photography. The gardens at Birr Castle are also famous for the unique collection of rare plants, trees and flowers, many collected in exotic places such as Chile, Tibet, and Mongolia by members of the Parsons family. What is not so well known, even by musicians, is the close family connection of the Parsons family with George Frederic Handel and the family's involvement with Handel's visit to Dublin in 1742. Sir William Parsons was a close friend of Handel and was instrumental in inviting him to Dublin. Such was their friendship that Handel presented him with an engraved walking stick in appreciation of his friendship, support and sponsorship which led to Handel's visit to Ireland and the first performance of the *Messiah* in Dublin in 1742.

Our concert programme tonight derives from the rich and varied collection of music which comprises the Birr Music Archive. The Archive presents us with an historical record of contemporaneous musical tastes and of the music patronised and preserved by the Parsons family from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, ranging from the music of O'Carolan, Handel, and Geminiani, all with Irish connections, to the popular music and songs associated with more recent times.

In this evening's performance we are recreating a typical programme of music which would have been performed in Birr Castle. Featuring in our performance is the castle's own Bechstein grand piano which graces the exquisite Gothick saloon, and two of our postgraduate students will perform a programme of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Salon Music. Our concert will also include a selection from *No No Nanette* in keeping with the popularity of the genre of the musical in the Birr Music Archive. Celebrating the strong links between Birr and the wider world, we are delighted to feature many of our international students from Malaysia, Germany and Russia. Our programme will conclude with a selection of pieces performed by members of the *Ceol Oirghialla* Traditional Ensemble who will include a version of the popular dance tune 'The Sweets of May' and a piece entitled 'Squire Parsons', which was published by D. Wright in London c.1731. *Ceol Oirghialla* is delighted to present this recreation of past music-making at Birr and to add to the musical memories of this beautiful music room.

### *Amhrán na bFhiann*



Sinne Fianna Fáil atá fé gheall ag Éirinn  
buíon dár slua thar toinn do ráinig chugainn  
Fé mhóid bheith saor sean tír ár sinsir feasta  
Ní fhágfar fé'n tiorán ná fé'n tráil  
Anocht a théam sa bhearna bhaoil  
Le gean ar Ghaeil chun báis nó saoil  
Le guna screach fé lámhach na bpiléar  
Seo libh canaidh Amhrán na bhFiann



# Ireland's Historic Science Centre

By Richard Wood

Since their move to Birr, from Youghal in Co Cork, in 1620, members of the Parsons family have contributed much to the country politically, economically, culturally, and socially, but it is their various achievements in the world of science that distinguishes them internationally and for which they can claim to be unique.

These achievements are celebrated in the fascinating display available to all visitors in Ireland's Historic Science Centre, through which visitors to the demesne gain daily entry. This Centre is not merely an attraction for tourists but is an outstanding educational resource which is designed to expand and excite the minds particularly of students, and of all who visit it.

At present it displays the achievements of no less than nine family members during the last two hundred years.

However the gene of enquiry in the family can be traced back to a close cousin, the famous Robert Boyle of Boyle's Law. President Michael D. Higgins, on the occasion of his State Visit to the United Kingdom in 2014, pointed out in his address to the Royal Society that its Irish connections go back to its "very first meeting in the mid-1640s. Among the founding figures, that group of 'natural philosophers' who put forward the virtues of observation and experimentation as a means of apprehending the natural world, we find Robert Boyle, the son of the Earl of Cork and one of the most prominent Irishmen to have made science his vocation." He was a second cousin of his Parsons contemporaries.

But the story told in the Science Centre begins in the early nineteenth century with Sir Laurence, the second Earl. Disillusioned by the Act of Union of 1800, and homesick whilst attending parliament in London, he turned to improving his estate at Birr.

He created the lake, diverting part of the flow of the Camcor River (which can be seen from the windows of the saloon where tonight's concert takes place) into a head race and then passing it under the river and an estate roadway to bubble up again in a little lagoon which then becomes the lake.

He also designed and built Ireland's first suspension bridge – which also can be seen from the windows of the saloon – one of the first in the world.



His son, William, was the great third Earl who built "The Leviathan of Parsonstown" as it was called, the largest telescope in the world for seventy-five years. As soon as it was completed in 1845 Lord Rosse discovered that a galaxy, more than ten million light years away, was spiral in composition. It is now known as M51. Sir Bernard Lovell, late director of Jodrell Bank Observatory (whose portrait showing him in his Irish retreat, by Alison the present Countess, can be seen in the Historic Science Centre) has commented that the third Earl's work "...opened an avenue of exploration which today has led us into the inconceivable depths of space and time."

The third Earl's Countess, Mary, was fascinated by the emerging possibilities of photography and was one of its notable pioneers. Not only are some of her early prints on display, but so too is her darkroom, recently removed from the castle. It is the oldest darkroom in the world.

A first cousin of the third Earl's, and a great friend of his Countess, was Mary Ward from the local Kings County, now Offaly. She was a frequent visitor to the castle, where she shared her passion for examining nature - not through a telescope but this time through a microscope. She published the first book on the microscope written by a woman called "Sketches with a Microscope" in 1857. Her instruments are, with copies of her books, preserved at Birr.

William, the third Earl, and Mary his Countess, had two sons who inherited their curiosity. Their eldest son Laurence, the fourth Earl, was interested in the moon, and he devised and built an instrument which can be seen in the Centre, which was the first to measure the temperature of its surface, which he did by taking readings before and after a lunar eclipse. This was done from the courtyard of the present Centre, from where he also drew the first and surprisingly accurate map of the moon's surface.

His younger brother, the Hon. Charles Parsons was a mechanical engineer, and his great contribution was the invention of what he called "the screw propeller" which revolutionized both the generation of electricity and the speed of marine transport. One of his steam turbines is to be seen against the east walk of the Centre's courtyard. It came from the local E.S.B. generating station at Ferbane. However Charles is most famous for his attempt to sell his screw propeller to the British Navy. He built a boat powered by this propeller and arrived uninvited at the Navel Review for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee at Spithead in 1897, sailing his boat "Turbinia", which he weaved in and out of the stately formation of battleships. He was chased but easily sped away. Subsequently ships such as H.M.S. Dreadnought were powered by his screw propeller, as was the Titanic. For this invention, he was



knighted and was the first engineer ever to be decorated with the OM (Order of Merit), which actually took precedence over his knighthood.

William Edward, the fifth Earl, laid the foundations of yet another great development at Birr, the botanical collection. He collaborated with the plantsman-explorer Augustine Henry and this resulted in the earliest importations to Ireland of exotic species from the Far East. Hence Birr now boasts some of the most spectacular examples of the flora of China, in particular.

The sixth Earl, Michael continued this interest, and with his Countess, Anne (mother-in-law of Princess Margaret, sister of Queen Elizabeth II) laid out the formal garden in 1935. Anne's home was Nymans just South of London, another famous garden, now formally linked with Birr. Many plants have been developed by the family and are called after them, the most famous being Paeonia 'Anne Rosse' which has flourished in the Formal Gardens for the last seventy-five years.

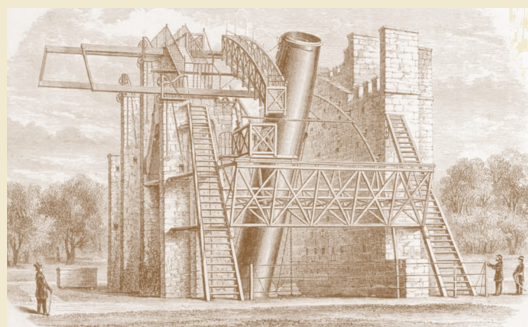
The seventh and present Earl, William Brendan, continues the hundred-year-old tradition of his father and grandfather of undertaking plant-hunting expeditions to remote corners of the world, along with his Countess, Alison, who is an accomplished artist, and together they have expanded the collection to be now the leading one in Ireland and one of international significance and renown. Lord Rosse is also responsible for the creation of Ireland's Historic Science Centre, the only such museum in the country. Most recently he facilitated the establishment of a new observatory at Birr, for Trinity College, Dublin. This time it is a radio observatory which monitors the activities of the sun, completing the trio of sun, moon, and stars. (This is not open to the general public) and he is not finished yet – watch this space...

To view the plant collection visitors must leave the Centre itself, taking with them an audio device, obtainable at the desk, which will direct them to the nearest and most spectacular examples of the collection which then will be described by either the Earl or Countess of Rosse.

Birr truly is a demesne of wonders, one of the most intellectually stimulating places in Ireland.

Richard Wood

Rathcrohan, Co. Cork, 2015



## Clár

### Goh Weh Jing

Nocturne no. 6	John Field
Serenade Nocturne in A flat major, op. 89	George Osborne
Ballade	Charles Villiers Stanford

### Fiona McErlane and Sebastian Marquez Blanc

Selections from <i>No No Nanette</i>	Irving Caesar, Otto Harbach, and Vincent Youmans
The Girl in 14G	Kristin Chenoweth
All That Jazz	John Kander and Fred Ebb

## Sos

### Ludmila Podlesnykh

Nocturne no.2 in C minor	John Field
Sonata in B major	John Field
Nocturne no.1 op.54	Alexander Dubuque

### Ceol Oirghialla Traditional Ensemble

The Bracken Lane / Bucks of Carranmore / Jack's Alive	Traidisiúnta
Lady Blaney	Turlough O'Carolan
Mick Rooney's Hornpipes	Traidisiúnta
The Coolin / Miss Monaghan / The Monaghan Twig	Traidisiúnta
The Stately Woods of Truagh	Traidisiúnta
The Swans Among the Rushes / Tír Raifeartaigh / Gort na Móna	Ed Reavy / Michael Rooney
Squire Parsons / The Sweets of May	Traidisiúnta
The Ballinahulla / Julia Clifford's Polka	Traidisiúnta



## Performer Biographies

**Goh Wei Jing** is a postgraduate research student at DkIT and graduate of the BA (Hons) Applied Music at DkIT. She holds an ALCM and LTCL for pianoforte performance. Active as an accompanist and performer, Jing has performed for the former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and has participated in several master classes with internationally acclaimed pianists. In 2013 she performed in the National Concert Hall for the Annual Student New Music Marathon organised by The Contemporary Music Centre.

**Fiona McErlane** is a fourth year music student from Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow. Fiona has been singing from a young age, has a passion for musical theatre, and is now currently specialising in Contemporary Musical Theatre. She is currently receiving tuition from Sarah Busfield. Fiona played the role of Nanette in DkIT's recent production of *No No Nanette*.

**Sebastian Marquez Blanc** is a second year student from Berlin, Germany. He has performance experience in Germany and Russia and performed the role of Jimmy Smith in DkIT's recent production of *No No Nanette*.

**Lee Choon Mon** is a second year student from Malaysia. Specialising in piano performance, he has travelled internationally, performing in Austria, Germany, and Japan with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra.

**Luodmila Podlesnykh** is a Russian native pianist and a postgraduate research student in DkIT. At the age of fifteen she entered Voronezh Rostropovich's College of Music, where she obtained her Teaching and Performing Diploma with Distinction. She has further developed her higher qualifications as a solo performer, teacher, ensemble performer and accompanist in the Voronezh State Academy of Arts and has been awarded a Bachelor (Hons) Degree.

## DkIT Ceol Oirghialla Traditional Ensemble

Bringing together faculty, undergraduate and postgraduate students from DkIT, the *Ceol Oirghialla* Traditional Music Ensemble draws inspiration from a variety of Irish traditional music groups, exploring possibilities of arrangement and inspiration with respect for both tradition and possibility. Celebrating in particular the rich musical heritage of the Oriel region in the north-east of Ireland, which includes the birthplace of Cúchulainn, the harper Turlough O'Carolan and poets including Séamus Dall MacCuarta and Peadar Ó Doirnín,

the Ensemble are the present-day culture bearers of the region. Members of the Ensemble engaged in hugely successful tours of America and Brazil where they performed to enthusiastic audiences and developed links with various institutions and organisations. As well as performing the group facilitated workshops in schools engaging young people in Irish music, song and dance, and delivered lectures on music in Ireland. They featured on *Ceili House* on RTÉ Radio One (2014), as part of their busy performance schedule.

**Aóibh Collier** from Co. Meath, has been studying piano accordion under the tutelage of Gerry Kelly for the past thirteen years. She has performed at concerts and competed in music competitions in Czech Republic, Italy, Belgium, London and France, and won All-Ireland and UK Regional titles.

**Joanne Cusack**, from Swords, Co. Dublin, began playing the button accordion at the age of nine. She started her musical journey in the Kinsealy branch of CCÉ and has competed at numerous Fleadhanna. Joanne has toured with Irish dancing group *Scoil Rince Cualann* in Hungary and Germany and the *Ceol Oirghialla* Ensemble to North America.

**Martha Guiney** is a traditional flute player from Co. Down. An All-Ireland champion, Martha has completed examinations with the London College of Music. She has toured internationally in Denmark, South Korea, Norway, Brazil and Italy. As a soloist, Martha has performed on RTÉ Radio One's *Céili House* (2015) and BBC Radio Ulster's *Folk Club*.

**Hui Sze Lee**, from Malaysia, is a pianist and violinist and has performed with a number of ensembles including the Malaysian Youth Orchestra. In the second year of her studies at DkIT, she hopes to specialise in performance.

**Ellie McGinley** is from Co. Donegal. A fluent Irish speaker, she is a member of *Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí* and participated in the *North Atlantic Fiddle Convention* in Aberdeen (2010) and Derry (2012). She has performed on *Raidió na Gaeltachta*, is a founding member of *Na Tonnta*, and toured with the *Ceol Oirghialla* Ensemble to North America and Brazil.

**Mike Waters** is a guitarist from Co. Wexford. At the age of ten, he started playing guitar and has many influences, mainly in the rock and blues genres but also Irish traditional music. Upon graduating, Mike hopes to pursue a career in teaching and performance.

**Daithí Kearney** is an ethnomusicologist, geographer and performer, lecturing in Music at DkIT. In 2012 he released an album with Cork accordion player John Cronin entitled *Midleton Rare*, which is related to a wider research project on the music and musicians of the Sliabh Luachra region. Recent publications include contributions to the *Companion to Irish Traditional Music* (ed. Vallely, 2012), *Ancestral Imprints* (ed. Smith, 2012), the *Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland* (ed. White and Boydell, 2013) and *Spacing Ireland* (ed. Crowley and Linehan, 2013).

Musicologist **Adèle Commins** is Head of Music at DkIT. She is an accomplished piano accordion player, pianist and soprano and is organist and Musical Director of two local church choirs in Co. Louth. Her primary research interests lie in music in Ireland and England during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She is a member of the RILM Ireland committee and Honorary Secretary of the Council of Heads of Music in Higher Education in Ireland. Recent publications include contributions to *Sonus* (2012), *Companion to Irish Traditional Music* (ed. Vallely, 2012), and the *Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland* (ed. White and Boydell, 2013).

**Eibhlís Farrell** is a composer member of Aosdána, the state-sponsored academy of Irish artists. She is a graduate of Queen's University, Belfast, Bristol University and Rutgers University, New Jersey and studied with Raymond Warren in England and Charles Wuorinen in the United States. Her works have been widely performed and broadcast and she has represented Ireland at the UNESCO sponsored International Composers' Rostrum. In 2011 she was honoured by Rutgers University with the Distinguished Alumna Award for Distinguished Accomplishments and Service in the Humanities in Music and Music Education. Dr Farrell is Head of Music and Creative Media and Director of the Centre for Research in Music at Dundalk Institute of Technology.



## ***Rannóg an Cheoil***

**Ceannasaí, Roinn Ceoil agus Meán Cruthaitheach, Stiúrthóir, Ionad Taighde Ceoil**  
Head of Department of Music and Creative Media, Director, Centre for Research in Music  
Eibhlís Farrell BMus (Hons) (QUB), MMus (Bristol), PhD (Rutgers), LLCM, DipIr (UU),  
FRSA, Member of Aosdána

### **Ceannasaí Rannóg an Cheoil**

Head of Section of Music  
Adèle Commins BA (Hons) (NUIM), PhD (NUIM), HDipEd (NUIM), LGSMD, ALCM

### **Dámh Ceoil**

Music Faculty

Mark Clarke BEng (DCU), MSc (London), DipEE (DkIT), CEng (IEI)  
Niall Coghlan MA (QUB), PhD (QUB)  
David Connolly BA (Hons) (NUIM), MA (NUIM), PhD (DIT), HDipEd (NUIM)  
Daithí Kearney BA (UCC), PhD (UCC), HDipED (UCC)  
Sean Keegan BMus (TCML), MA (UL)  
Aisling Kenny BMus (NUIM), PhD (NUIM), DipABRSM, ALCM  
Helen Lawlor BMusEd (TCD), MMus (UCD), PhD (UCD)  
Patrick McCaul BSc (QUB), MA (DkIT)  
Paul McIntyre BMus (Hons) (UU), PhD (UU), PGCEP (UU), DipMus (OU), LTCL  
Caitriona McEniry BA (Hons), MA (NUIM), MA (York), LRIAM, ARIAM \*  
Paul McGettrick BEd, BMus (Hons) (NUI), MSc (York)  
Hilary Mullaney BA (Hons) (NUIM), MA (DIT), PhD (Plymouth)  
Neil O'Connor BA (IADT), MA (TCD), PhD (TCD)  
Ciarán Rosney BA (Hons) (WIT), MA (DIT), MMus (DIT) \*  
David Stalling BA (Hons) (NUIM), MA (NUIM)  
Rachel Talbot BA (Mod) (TCD), PhD (DIT), LTCL, ALCM  
Rory Walsh BMus (Hons) (NUIM), MA (NUIM), HDip Mus Tech

Career Break \*





## *Cairde Ceol Oirghialla*

We welcome your support in enhancing the performance opportunities for our students. This could be as a patron of our ensembles, offering student internships, scholarships and prizes, sponsoring productions or purchase of instruments, or by contributing to the development of facilities. Every grant, donation, or contribution makes a real difference. If you would like to find out more about the *Ceol Oirghialla*

Section of Music please get in touch:

music@dkit.ie / 042-9370280

## *Cláracha Acadúla i Rannóg an Cheoil*

- ◆ Diploma in Composing for Games
- ◆ BA (Hons) Applied Music
- ◆ BA (Hons) Production of Music and Audio
- ◆ MSc Music Technology
- ◆ MA Music Technology
- ◆ MA Traditional Music Studies
- ◆ MA/MSc by Research
- ◆ PhD by Research

## *Future Performances*

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music@dkit.ie/ 042 9370280

For future events check out: [www.dkit.ie/music](http://www.dkit.ie/music)

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and following us on Twitter - MusicDkIT



Programme: Daithí Kearney & Adèle Commins



## *The Sweets of May*



*Presented by*

*Ceol Oirghialla Ensemble*

*Dundalk Institute of Technology*

*Birr Castle*

*Sunday 24 May 2015, 19.00*