

TU Dublin Conservatoire

# RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Thursday 27th April 2023

East Quad, Grangegorman, Dublin



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**DUBLIN**  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA  
BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

Guest Speaker  
**Dr Conor McGarrigle**

*Admission free, registration on Eventbrite*

# **TU Dublin Conservatoire Research Symposium**

## **Thursday 27 April 2023**

East Quad, Grangegorman, Dublin 7

TU Dublin Conservatoire's Research Symposium series celebrates and highlights the research activities at TU Dublin Conservatoire, and provide an opportunity for staff, students, graduates, and visiting scholars and performers to share their research and practice.

Today we look forward to papers and performances by research students on our Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Music in Performance (DMus) degree programmes. We are delighted to welcome Dr Conor McGarrigle as our guest speaker. As new media artist and researcher, Conor has exhibited and presented internationally, and published extensively on art and technology. He is currently Head of Research in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Technological University Dublin.

TU Dublin Conservatoire has developed an active research profile in the areas of musicology, performance, music education and composition. The Conservatoire is also home to the Research Foundation for Music in Ireland. Our staff and students produce a wealth of research outputs that make a significant contribution to our understanding and knowledge of the creative and performing arts.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

#### **Organising Committee:**

David Bremner, Aileen Cahill, Clíona Doris, Maeve Kelly, Maria McHale, Marco Ramelli

**Events Manager:** Lisa O'Brien





I'd like to warmly welcome you all to today's Research Symposium, the third in our new facilities in Grangegorman. The breadth of today's programme showcases the wide range of research opportunities that are available at TU Dublin Conservatoire. We have composers, musicologists and performers on our staff who have considerable experience in supervising doctoral studies.

The Conservatoire prides itself on collaborating with prospective researchers by working on proposals before formal applications are submitted and helping with funding applications. The University has three points of entry per year (September, January and May) so, if you have a research idea, you are most welcome to contact us at any point.

I'd like to thank the organising committee (especially Professor Clíona Doris), those chairing sessions, and our postgraduate students for their work in preparation for today's symposium. I also look forward to Dr Conor McGarrigle's keynote address this afternoon. As part of our regular Thursday lunchtime recital series, there will be a vocal recital (solos and duets) at 1.10pm in the Concert Hall, to which all are welcome (no need to register/book!).

The day will conclude with the launch of the films from the PERFORM\_LIVE Festival Conference of Music Performance Research held in the National Concert Hall in March 2022. In addition to excerpts from the filmed sessions (which will be available on open internet access), this session will include several instrumental presentations and talks. I'm very grateful to my Conservatoire colleagues (particularly Professor Una Hunt) and our visiting scholars for their work on this and I'm delighted that TU Dublin Conservatoire is hosting.

From traditional research to collaborative and artistic projects, I'm sure there will be plenty to invigorate and inspire!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Paul McNulty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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Dr Paul McNulty  
Head of Conservatoire

# SCHEDULE

<b>9:30am-10.30am</b>	<b>Session 1</b> (EQ-119) Chair   Fiona Gryson
<b>Helen Doyle</b> <b>Rachel Duffy</b>	Choral decline in the Feis Ceoil, 1916–1926: views from the archive An examination of the impact of Cairde na Cruite on harping in Ireland 1960-1985

10:30am Tea/Coffee Break

<b>11:00am-12.00pm</b>	<b>Session 2</b> (EQ-119) Chair   Kevin Free
<b>Yue Song</b> <b>Ian Cecil Scott</b>	Composition through characterisation: a discussion of the compositional processes of the five individual characters in the chamber opera <i>Tattoo</i> Looking at nature as a stochastic generator

12:00pm Lunch Break

<b>1:10pm-2:00pm</b>	<b>Lunchtime Concert</b> (TU Dublin Concert Hall)
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<b>2:30pm</b>	<b>Keynote Address</b> (Concert Hall) Chair   Dr Mary Lennon
	<b>The Evolution of Artistic Research</b> <b>Dr Conor McGarrigle,</b> Head of Research, Faculty of Arts and Humanities

<b>4:00-5:00pm</b>	<b>Session 3</b> (Concert Hall) Chair   Sandra Oman Farren
<b>Jimmy Goeijenbier</b> <b>Fiona Gryson</b>	Performance research: insights from practicing and performing contemporary Irish piano music <i>The Irish Harp Book: a tutor and companion</i> by Sheila Larchet Cuthbert: a pedagogical evaluation of '27 Studies' by Mother Attracta Coffey

<b>5:00pm-6:00pm</b>	<b>Session 4</b> (Concert Hall) Chair   Maeve Kelly
<b>Julia Mahon</b> <b>Aleksandr Nisse</b>	Techniques of current song writing/DJ-ing and current issues of social importance as a construct for contemporary classical pieces The application of the partial pitches of the harmonic series in a compositional context: a detailed analysis of NOTINTUNE commissioned by the Crash Ensemble

6:00pm Refreshments

<b>6:30pm</b>	Launch of the films on open internet access from <b>PERFORM_LIVE Festival Conference of Music Performance Research</b> TU Dublin Concert Hall
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# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Dr Conor McGarrigle**

## **The Evolution of Artistic Research**

Research is generally understood as a systematic endeavour that produces or increases knowledge. For funding bodies research is typically allied, in various degrees, to innovation, and not so subtly weighted toward technological and scientific research with a narrow definition of innovation.

As ideas of artistic research emerged within the academy the focus was on knowledge production: how did creative and performance practices produce knowledge and how could this knowledge be valorised against standard benchmarks? The problem was that these knowledge claims were often benchmarked against those of scientific research to establish their legitimacy as quasi-scientific research, rather than building a deeper understanding of what constituted research across creative disciplines. Today this debate has shifted: artistic research, and its related variants practice-based research and research-creation, is more established as a “legitimate” research activity. Definitions and approaches have evolved and expanded, and the anxiety that demanded it prove its validity as research within these narrow parameters has receded. Where then does this leave research in disciplines characterised by creative practice? What does research bring to artistic practice, and where does artistic practice meet artistic research, can artistic research transcend disciplines to provide broader insights and perspectives unavailable through other means?

Rather than simply posing the question what artistic research is and how we do it, this talk will examine what artistic research does in an expanded research field, how this is achieved, and what the implications are for creative practice and doctoral research in the creative arts.



**Conor McGarrigle** is a new media artist and researcher. He holds a BSc from UCD, an MFA from NCAD and a practice-based PhD from DIT. He has taught Fine Art at NCAD, the University of Denver Colorado, Parsons the New School Paris, and TU Dublin where he is currently Head of Research in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

His art has been exhibited internationally including the Venice Biennale, the St Étienne Biennale, Transmediale Berlin, Fundació Miro, SIGGRAPH, Site Santa Fe, FILE São Paulo, EVA International, and

Science Gallery Dublin and Detroit.

His research has been widely presented including the Centre Pompidou Paris, Computer Art Congress, Pact Zollverein Germany, College Arts Association in Chicago and New York, and SIGGRAPH in New Orleans and Los Angeles. His writing on art and technology has been published as book chapters by Routledge, Springer, and Blackdog and as articles in journals such as Visual Resources, Leonardo Electronic Almanac, Digital Creativity, and the International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media.

# ABSTRACTS

**Helen Doyle**

## **Choral decline in the Feis Ceoil, 1916–1926: views from the archive**

In 1921, a report by Feis Ceoil choral adjudicator, Sir Ivor Atkins, stated: ‘It is greatly to be hoped that the Feis of 1922 will be marked by a revival in the number of entries for choirs.’ The idea of ‘revival’ reflected the fact that choral activity in the Feis Ceoil experienced growth and expansion in its first decade, and by 1906, the choral syllabus extended to eighteen competitions which attracted forty-six choirs, a three-fold increase on the inaugural 1897 festival. However, by 1917, just eighteen choral entries were received. In this paper I examine the decline which characterised the Feis’ choral platforms and attempts by the Association to stem the deterioration. This pattern of choral decline and stagnation in the period 1916–1926 will be considered through the lens of key archival documents to examine the views held by the Executive Committee, adjudicators, and choral competitors. The sustained period of unrest which impacted Irish society in these years cast a long shadow over choral activity. Despite this decline in contrast to the positive start at the beginning of the century, this paper identifies a core cohort of choirs from school and religious settings which became the backbone of Feis Ceoil choral activity.



Helen is a final year PhD candidate under the supervision of Dr Maria McHale and Dr David Mooney. Her doctoral research centres on the archive of the Feis Ceoil Association held in the National Library of Ireland, with a specific focus on choral music in the Feis since its inception. She has presented papers at conferences of the Society for Musicology in Ireland, the International Council for Traditional Music Ireland, the Royal Musical Association UK, and the North American British Music Studies Association.

**Rachel Duffy**

## **An examination of the impact of Cairde na Cruite on harping in Ireland 1960-1985**

Cairde na Cruite (Friends of the Harp) was established in 1960 in order to promote the Irish harp. The society quickly set about achieving its objectives, namely organising public performances and harp festivals, providing tuition, publishing music for the instrument, and commissioning new works for Irish harp. Through consideration of the society’s activities and outputs, this paper examines Cairde na Cruite’s impact on harping in Ireland between 1960 and 1985. It explores how the society responded to and influenced developments within the Irish harp landscape during this period with a particular focus on the creation of an infrastructure for the instrument in the later twentieth century. Drawing on interviews, archival research and literature, this paper provides an account of Cairde na Cruite’s history with reference to key individuals and events, while also considering the society’s work within the context of the wider international harp scene. It builds on recent research by Helen Lawlor (2012) and Teresa O’Donnell (2021), incorporating newly available archival materials from the Cairde na Cruite Archive (private collection) and the Gráinne

Yeats Collection (Irish Traditional Music Archive). The implications of this research lie in providing a more nuanced understanding of the instrument's recent past, particularly relevant in light of the harp's growing popularity in a contemporary Irish context.



**Rachel Duffy** is a harper from Bray, Co. Wicklow. She is currently completing a PhD at Technological University Dublin under the supervision of Professor Cliona Doris on the twentieth-century development of Irish harping, funded by a TU Dublin PhD Scholarship. As a performer, she has appeared at festivals in China, Spain, Germany, Scotland, England and Wales and plays regularly with groups including Na Cauci, Triad Trio and the National Folk Orchestra. She enjoys teaching the harp in Wicklow and Dublin and working with harp ensembles at Bray CCÉ and TU Dublin. She will co-direct An Chúirt

Chruitreachta International Harp Festival in June 2023.

## **Yue Song**

### **Composition through characterisation: a discussion of the compositional processes of the five individual characters in the chamber opera *Tattoo***

This paper will introduce the chamber opera *Tattoo* through the main characters who have solo arias in this opera, and the process of using different techniques to portray the different characters from a compositional perspective.

The chamber opera *Tattoo* was composed as the primary component of a PhD in composition. The paper will outline the various compositional techniques and aesthetic qualities of the work, including the assimilation of Chinese traditional music elements such as Beijing opera, Chinese children's songs, and the use of scales and melodic contours taken from Chinese traditional music. Additionally, the paper will discuss the process of writing the libretto, which was written by the composer, and the historical basis for the work's story.

Set during the Japanese invasion of China from 1931 - 1945, the opera deals with the history of the so-called 'comfort women', women and girls forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese army during the invasion of China and other countries. The opera is centred on a fictional character, Lian, through whose eyes the ordeals and life-long traumas experienced by these women and girls are depicted.

The paper will include analytical discussion of the musical materials and musical examples, including segments from a performance of an aria from the opera at FemFestival 2021 in Florence and from a performance by Elizabeth Hilliard and David Bremner at TU Dublin Conservatoire in 2022.



**Yue Song** is a Chinese composer based in Dublin, Ireland. She is currently in the final stages of her PhD in Music Composition at TU Dublin under the supervision of Prof. Gráinne Mulvey. She has composed works in various genres including opera, orchestra, Chinese orchestra, various combinations of ensembles, solo pieces, and electronic music, and her pieces have been performed in various music festivals internationally. She is interested in different styles of music and art forms, in particular theatre and literature - for this

reason she has always been particularly interested in opera and prefers to write her own librettos.

## **Ian Cecil Scott**

### **Looking at nature as a stochastic generator**

In the last century composers moved away from the traditional musical structures and towards a mathematical approach. Specifically, mathematical concepts and formulas were applied to define the structure of a piece. For example, concepts like probability distributions or set theory were used to develop and determine the sequence of notes and rhythms in a score. The advent of computers greatly supported and eased the development of this approach since it allowed composers to use powerful computing machines and algorithms to quickly generate a stochastic random combination of notes and other parameters.

However, the randomness generated with a computer has one shortcoming. Though the generated stochastic sequence appears random to us, it in fact is a pseudo-random one. This happens because the sequence determined by the computer is based on a specific distribution and, moreover, the sequence can be repeated.

In nature instead, true events or sequences that better approximate randomness can indeed be found. Therefore, in my research I am looking at natural phenomena to inspire and determine my compositions' structures, using real events as stochastic parameters. During the talk I will present samples of music written using this approach as well as examples of how natural events have inspired and informed my compositions.



**Ian Cecil Scott** is a PhD candidate in Music Composition under the supervision of Prof. Gráinne Mulvey at TU Dublin Conservatoire. His PhD main project, titled '3D Orchestration' and funded by the IRC Postgraduate Scholarship Programme, aims to explore sound spatialisation moving away from the stereophonic approach and towards a full immersive experience while experimenting with stochastic music techniques by introducing natural events as parameters for the algorithms. He graduated in Music Composition at

Florence Conservatoire 'Luigi Cherubini' and completed a Master's degree in Contemporary



Orchestration. Outside of the academy, he has a well-rooted 10-years-long experience in working in Media production.

## **Jimmy Goejenbier**

### **Performance research: insights from practising and performing contemporary Irish piano music**

This presentation will focus on how I have prepared the pieces commissioned for the Dublin International Piano Competition for performance. Insights from practising and performing these forty-one contemporary piano works by Irish composers will be shared and a performance of two of the works will take place (Philip Hammond's 'French Blue' and Brian Boydell's 'The maiden and the seven devils'). I will introduce the methods used to collect data and I will discuss issues including practice strategies, problem solving and pianistic techniques. Journal excerpts will be featured, providing further insight on the process of preparing for performance.



**Jimmy Goejenbier** began his DMus research at TU Dublin Conservatoire in September 2021 under the supervision of Dr Mary Lennon and Dr Maria McHale. His research involves the practising and performing of all forty-one works commissioned for the Dublin International Piano Competition between 1988 and 2022. He has previously given a lecture-recital on this project at the Contemporary Music Centre in December 2022 and a paper presentation at the TU Dublin Artistic Research Day in April 2022. Jimmy is also active as a pianist and has performed in Ireland, The Netherlands, Romania, and the United States.

## **Fiona Gryson**

### ***The Irish Harp Book: a tutor and companion* by Sheila Larchet Cuthbert: a pedagogical evaluation of '27 Studies' by Mother Attracta Coffey**

*The Irish Harp Book: a tutor and companion* by Sheila Larchet Cuthbert, first published in 1975, is a seminal pedagogical resource for harping in Ireland. This publication includes repertoire of the historical harping tradition and contemporary works for harp, as well as studies, technical exercises and instruction. This paper explores '27 Studies' by Mother Attracta Coffey, a member of the Loreto Order and a distinguished harp teacher, who compiled studies for Irish harp from a variety of sources, including works by Czerny, Schumann and Viner. The studies are a thread throughout *The Irish Harp Book* and they help students with finger placement, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, articulation, ornamentation and harp-specific techniques such as lever changes and harmonics. Through identification, analysis and comparison of learning outcomes, the studies are considered in terms of their relevance in contemporary pedagogical practice in Ireland. The research is contextualised by reference to relevant pedagogical literature and the original sources of the studies. Recorded excerpts

illustrate pertinent parameters and practical considerations when learning and teaching the studies.



**Fiona Gryson** enjoys a varied career as a freelance harpist and teacher, performing extensively nationally and internationally. She is co-director of the TU Dublin Harp Ensemble. Fiona was awarded a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship from the Irish Research Council to pursue PhD research at TU Dublin Conservatoire under the supervision of Prof. Clíona Doris and Dr Helen Lawlor. Fiona completed postgraduate harp studies at the Civica Scuola di Musica Claudio Abbado, Milan with Irina Zingg having graduated with a Master's

degree in music performance, BMus degree in pedagogy and the Nuala Levins Perpetual Award for Pedagogy from DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, studying with Denise Kelly-McDonnell.

## **Julia Mahon**

### **Techniques of current song writing/DJ-ing and current issues of social importance as a construct for contemporary classical pieces**

This research, for the most part, is investigating the blurred area between current song writing and contemporary (classical) composition (does it exist and is it definable? Is it a subjective and abstract experience from the writer's or listener's point of view?) and questioning ideas of elitism in art music and the academic world; and supporting the idea that artistic endeavours with integrity are of equal merit. These ideas are being explored through the composition and performance of a song cycle; for choir and ensemble of piano/synths, samplers, backing tracks, drums, brass and strings.

The work will be utilising standard equipment from the pop/hip hop genres and bringing them into a more contemporary classical setting. Drum machines, standard guitar pedals, samplers and synthesizers will feature heavily; but the focus will largely be on the use of TC-Helicon vocal harmoniser pedals, along with delay and reverb, for choir. A '2D choir' idea will be explored; the mixing and arranging of the manipulated choir in the foreground, along with the traditional acoustic choir in the background. Themes of social influence and inclusion are also present, as the material uses the work of immigrant/LGBTQ+ poets living in Ireland. Questions around the integration of backing tracks, the validity of, and the most effective way of achieving expression through this, will also be explored and experimented with during the research period.

**Julia Mahon** is currently undertaking a PhD in electro-acoustic composition, with Prof. Gráinne Mulvey. Having completed a BMus in composition and an MA in composition, her work is now looking at techniques and sonic aesthetic traditionally used in contemporary song writing and pop/hip-hop music and using these to create contemporary classical ensemble works which probe the possible area between songwriting and composition. Parallel to, and through these various

mediums, her work challenges the perceived elitism of art music and its place in academia. Julia is particularly interested in ideas surrounding the democratising of creative output, and the promotion of urban music and contemporaneous sub genres in academic study.

## Aleksandr Nisse

### **The application of the partial pitches of the harmonic series in a compositional context: a detailed analysis of NOTINTUNE commissioned by the Crash Ensemble**

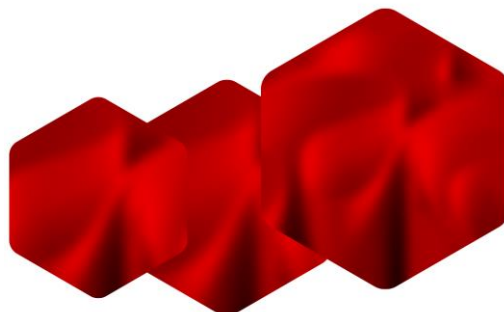
The presentation will consist in a detailed analysis of the work NOTINTUNE for percussion, piccolo and pre-programmed organ.

The work is a reflection on the impact of digital devices on society, mainly inspired by the findings of the German psychiatrist Manfred Spitzer presented in his book *Cyberkrank!* in 2015. The piece explores what happens when humans, distracted and out of tune with their natural selves and surroundings, lose empathy, a quality without which it is suggested our human civilization might cease to exist. The different research stages will be presented. Practical solutions for the precise partial pitches of the harmonic series will be demonstrated in an instrumental context.



**Aleksandr Nisse** is the Titular Organist of St Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Dublin. He studied the organ at the Conservatoire National de Region de Lyon, where he was unanimously awarded 'Premier Prix de Perfectionnement' with distinction. A scholarship for postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London followed.

He succeeded in obtaining an award from TU Dublin for a PhD in composition under the supervision of Prof. Gráinne Mulvey. His research area lies in the application of the exact partial pitches of the harmonic series.



# PERFORM\_LIVE LAUNCH

**Thursday 27 April 2023, 6:30pm**  
**TU Dublin Concert Hall**

The launch of the films on open internet access from

**PERFORM\_LIVE Festival Conference of Music Performance Research 2022 at the National Concert Hall Dublin.**

This was the first festival conference of Music Performance Research presented in association with the National Concert Hall where expert Irish and international artists performed and discussed their work before new audiences.

**Supported by the Irish Research Council's New Foundations Scheme and Research at TU Dublin**

The evening includes a range of festival presentations and the launch of the first title in the Performance Research Ireland book series published by Peter Lang Oxford:

***Gabriela Mayer: The Art of the Unspoken: Rhetorical Devices, Linguistic Parallels and the Influence of the Singing Voice in Classical and Romantic Piano Literature***

## CONCORDE ENSEMBLE: CONSERVATOIRE COMPOSITION SHOWCASE

**Friday 4 May 2023, 6:30pm-8:00pm**  
**TU Dublin Recital Hall**

TU Dublin Conservatoire is proud to showcase the work of our postgraduate and undergraduate composers in a performance by our resident professional contemporary ensemble, **Concorde**.

Elaine Clark (violin), Martin Johnson (cello), Elizabeth Hilliard (soprano), Meadhbh O'Rourke (flutes), Patrick Burke (clarinets), David Bremner (piano)

Works by Kian Beatty, Áine Brennan, Ciarán Gilpin, Muireann Lohan, Matthew Rockett and Ian Cecil Scott will be performed.

**Admission is Free**  
**Booking on Eventbrite**