

# IN TUNE

A MILLENNIUM OF MUSIC  
IN TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY

OCTOBER 2013 – APRIL 2014  
TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY DUBLIN



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**In Tune aims to reveal the richness of Trinity College Library's music holdings by highlighting a selection of its most significant treasures – many of them unique or extremely rare. The Library's music collections have been built up over the course of four centuries, and in their range and diversity reflect a thousand years of Irish and European musical history.**

Though the university awarded its first music degree in 1612, and appointed its first Professor of Music in 1764, formal tuition in music did not feature in its academic programme until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, music collecting was largely sporadic and unplanned, and significant items were often acquired almost by accident, as part of larger multi-disciplinary collections.

The exhibition is arranged in five sections:

### **1. Early Music Treasures**

The Library's earliest collections contain significant musical items. These include medieval liturgical manuscripts, music of the Reformation, and domestic music from the Elizabethan era. These sources also illustrate the development of musical notation and music printing in its early experimental stages.

### **2. Music in 18th-century Dublin**

The first performance of Handel's Messiah in Fishamble Street on 13th April 1742 was a highlight in the busy musical and social calendar of the city at this time. TCD's collection reflects this wide array of musical activity: royal birthday odes at Dublin Castle; benefit concerts in aid of Mercer's Hospital and other charitable institutions; cathedral and college chapel music; popular stage works; and the visit of Handel in 1741-2.

### **3. Irish Folk Music and Song**

Edward Bunting's *A general collection of the ancient Irish music* (Dublin, 1796) has been described as 'the most





*New instructions for the French-horn ...* (London, [c1790])

influential publication in the history of Irish music'. Thomas Moore used Bunting as a source for many of his *Irish melodies*, and later collectors followed Bunting's example in transcribing traditional tunes directly from folk musicians. George Petrie published his collection in 1855, including the tune generally known as the 'Londonderry air', and James Goodman transcribed over 2000 tunes from a variety of sources. Such collectors made a vital contribution towards saving an essential element of Ireland's musical heritage for future generations.

#### **4. Collection Expansion**

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, music collections have increased rapidly. The purchase of Ebenezer Prout's music library in 1910 was the first deliberate effort to improve coverage in this area, and the acceptance of printed music under legal deposit brought further sustained growth. Music of all genres is collected and preserved – from plainchant to rock'n'roll.

#### **5. Modern Irish Masters**

Trinity College Library has built up a rich body of material from some of the most prominent Irish composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Four composers are represented in the exhibition – Ina Boyle, Frederick May, Brian Boydell and Gerald Barry – and the archive also holds works by Arthur Duff, Gerard Victory, Edgar Deale, Colin Mawby, and James Wilson. These collections together constitute a major representation of Ireland's modern musical and cultural heritage.



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*In Tune* also celebrates the 250th anniversary of the University of Dublin's Chair of Music, first held in July 1764 by the Earl of Mornington (pictured above). Successive Professors of Music have contributed to the musical life of the country through their teaching, composition, and performance activities.

A series of lectures and concerts accompanies the exhibition: details are available at [www.tcd.ie/Library/about/exhibitions.php](http://www.tcd.ie/Library/about/exhibitions.php)



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