

# Fanny Arthur Robinson and Annie Patterson: The Contribution of Women to Music in Dublin in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

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This thesis examines the contribution made by women to musical life in Dublin in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many important developments occurred in the country's capital in these decades, particularly in the area of music. The involvement of women was an integral element in Dublin's musical life at this time and while no account of music at this point could be accurate without mentioning some of the leading female musicians of the time, their contribution has not yet been comprehensively studied or appreciated.

## Preface

Women were important contributors to all elements of music, unlike in the eighteenth century where their only possible musical involvement at a professional level was as vocalists, for example as performers in operas at such venues as the Theatre Royal or at performances held at the Rotunda. In the nineteenth century, in particular during the second half of the century, many more opportunities were available to women within the professional music scene.

With the establishment of the Irish Academy of Music, later The Royal Irish Academy of Music, in 1848 and other musical societies increased possibilities became available in music. Women could now work as a teacher of music more freely than ever before. In fact, music teaching was one of the few positions that a woman could hold without it being seen as disrespectful or disgraceful. Some of the leading teachers were female such as Panny Robinson or Margaret O' Hea.

C.V Stanford, one of the leading Irish musical figures at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was himself taught piano by two women, Ms. Elizabeth Mecke and Ms Henriette Flynn. Women also managed to maintain their position as vocal performers in the theatres around Dublin and in occasional concerts held in the

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Capital. For example, Catherine Hayes was highly recognised throughout the country and the United Kingdom for her vocal talents. *The Freeman's Journal* referred to her as "The Famous Irish Songstress"<sup>1</sup>. However, in her case she spent more of her time travelling and performing abroad and only returned occasionally to perform in her native country.

Ireland, much like the rest of the world at the time, was very traditional in its views of women and the position they should uphold in society as successful mothers and wives rather than successful career women, especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nevertheless those women involved in music in Ireland were given a surprising amount of freedom and respect. They were allowed to teach in the Academy without any trouble and teachers such as Fanny Robinson taught both male and female students unlike female teachers in many of the *conservatoires* (Fr.= Academies) around Europe where female teachers when employed, were restricted to teaching female students.<sup>2</sup> Women were also allowed prosper in their own musical education. For example Annie Patterson who was the first women to receive a doctorate of music in this country from University College Dublin.<sup>3</sup> She also went on to make an important contribution to musical life in Dublin and nationally through her columns in the *Weekly Irish Times* and her involvement in *Feis Ceoil*.

This thesis is particularly concerned with Fanny Arthur Robinson And Dr Annie Patterson. Their involvement in musical life in Dublin in the latter half of the

<sup>1</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 9 December 1856

<sup>2</sup> Nancy B. Reich: 'European Composers and Musicians, ca. 1800-1890' *Women and Music: A History* ed. Karin Pendle (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991), 101.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Pinc & Charles Acton: *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1998), 289.

nineteenth century was of great importance and was extremely progressive in comparison to the traditional perceptions of the role of women in Ireland at that time. However while both women receive numerous references in the literature on music at that time, neither of them has been given sufficient exposure for the important contributions they made in the different fields of music. They are the only Irish women of that period who have earned themselves a position in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.<sup>4</sup> Fanny Arthur Robinson's fame and progression in the musical culture of the day was due in a large part to her marriage to Joseph Robinson, one of the leading musical figures of the time. However her talents were undeniably obvious. Although she was undoubtedly talented in her own right, her marriage opened many doors through which she could fully express her talents. Dr Annie Patterson made herself known through sheer determination to achieve what she believed in. She had strong opinions on music in Ireland and the need for a rebirth in the interest of Irish music.

The decades, which followed the famine, were a period of change and development in the musical culture of Dublin. Many of the developments made helped to form the roots of a culture that still exists within the capital today. All that was achieved was not only the work of many talented and dedicated men but also of many talented and dedicated women too. This thesis aims to begin to acknowledge the contribution made by some of these women, in particular Fanny Arthur Robinson and Dr. Annie Patterson.

This thesis conforms to the house style of the Department of Music, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

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<sup>4</sup> The 2001 edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Volume 19 and 21.

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This thesis is dedicated to my mum, Vera O' Connor in gratitude for everything.

For many, the eighteenth century was the Golden Age for music in Dublin. Music prospered through the theatre and the many concerts which became a regular part of life in Dublin at that time. However with the Act of Union of 1800, great changes occurred socially and culturally in Ireland, particularly in the capital. The eighteenth century had seen great prosperity in Dublin. The aristocracy were the leading social class and as the majority of them were absentee, Dublin imitated London in many of its fashions and trends. With the move of parliament from Dublin back to Westminster many of Dublin's aristocracy also returned to London, leading to an eventual decrease in wealth and patronage, which saw a fall occur in musical activity. However this did not occur immediately.<sup>1</sup> The absence of the aristocracy saw a new ruling class emerge, the middle-class. This was made up of traders, small businessmen and the landowner's middlemen.<sup>2</sup> The middle-class longed to imitate the aristocracy, whom they had formerly admired. As a result there continued to be a reasonable amount of musical events taking place in the capital after the Act of Union.

At this point a new interest developed around the possibilities for the amateur musician. Many amateur groups were formed which helped to keep music alive in many homes throughout the capital. However, with the economic depression of 1824, Dublin began a continuous descent in importance as a lively centre for music. This continued until the middle of the century when a new rebirth

<sup>1</sup> Aloys Fleischmann, 'Music Society 1850-1911' *A New History of Ireland, Volume VI*, ed. W.E. Vaughan, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 500

<sup>2</sup> These were men employed by the landlords, when they returned to England, to collect rent and ensure that the raising of their land went smoothly. They were usually middle-class friends of the landlord or a wealthy or highly trusted tenant.



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occurred in Dublin's musical culture, mainly as a result of the establishment of the Academy of Music and a renewed interest in music.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw Dublin become a hive of musical activity once again. The developments during the decades that followed the Great Famine were the humble beginnings of many features of Dublin's musical culture that are still in existence today. This period is perhaps, in many ways, of greater importance and worthy of more recognition than the eighteenth century because Dublin was no longer just imitating London's culture. England and the rest of Europe often inspired the developments made, but Ireland's musical developments were no longer direct imitations. The important musical figures of the time seemed to recognise the need to work around the differences between Dublin and other European capitals. It was not as large and not as wealthy and its population was not well educated in European art music or 'Classical' music. Because Ireland was separate from mainland Europe and further away from the mainland than London, it simply had never been possible to keep up with the current musical trends, which were mainly dictated by Germany. As a result the prominent figures in the second half of the nineteenth century appeared to choose simply to do their best with the available resources in their capital. Those who wanted to improve musical life in Dublin took inspiration from Europe in setting up musical societies and an Academy of Music in the city. But they kept everything on a relatively small level. Through the societies they brought a lot of music from the great European composers to Dublin, from

<sup>1</sup> *In* Bennett, 'Dublin Musical Societies, 1850-1900', *Irish Musical Studies: The eleventh International Musicological Conference 1995, selected Proceedings, Part Two*, ed. Patrick F. Devine & Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 172.

<sup>2</sup> Brian Boydell, 'Dublin', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Volume 7*, (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 623.

small piano recitals of music by Mendelssohn or Schumann to large-scale productions of Beethoven's symphonies.<sup>3</sup>

There was also a newfound interest in Irish music towards the end of the century, mainly growing out of the ideas of the Gaelic League and their enthusiasm for cultural nationalism and all things Irish. The second half of the nineteenth century saw Ireland reclaim its position as an important musical centre,

The many musical societies and organisations which were active all over Dublin, contributed to a great part of the city's musical activities. Through their performances and concerts they introduced a wide variety of music to the general public and they also provided aspiring musicians or vocalists an outlet through which they could use their talents and knowledge. One of the leading musical figures in the 1850s and the 1860s was Joseph Robinson, who was involved in all the important areas of musical development at that time, such as the setting up of societies and the establishment of a music Academy in Dublin. His father, Francis Robinson, had founded one of the earliest choral societies in Dublin in 1810, *The Sons of Handel*.<sup>4</sup> Joseph and his three brothers all followed in his footsteps by becoming musicians themselves. In their early years the brothers formed a quartet performing mainly German songs and thus introducing a new genre of music to their Dublin audiences. Joseph who went on to be one of the defining figures in the shaping of music in Dublin set up a

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<sup>3</sup> Ita Beausang: 'Dublin Musical Societies, 1850- 1900', *Irish Musical Studies: The Maynooth International Musicological Conference 1995, selected Proceedings: Part Two*, ed. Patrick F. Devine & Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 172.

<sup>4</sup> Brian Boydell: 'Dublin' *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Volume 7*, (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 625.

society of his own in 1834 called *The Antient Concerts Society* which became 'one of the chief choral societies of the nineteenth century.'<sup>5</sup> Joseph created the society at the age of eighteen and over the next twenty-nine years of his life he continued his involvement with it. Through its productions, which consisted of four or five choral concerts a season, Joseph played a huge part in bringing classical choral music to Dublin.<sup>6</sup> In 1834 the society, which was enjoying growing success, purchased rooms in Great Brunswick Street, (now Pearse Street) which were refurbished to form a concert hall and became known as the Antient Concert Rooms. As a writer for *The Freeman's Journal* noted in 1857, the only problem with the society was that there was not 'a better taste amongst the upper classes citizens for these great works'.<sup>7</sup> However Joseph Robinson was probably well aware that his audiences were not full of appreciation. It did not appear that this was what he was looking for. He was simply aiming to improve the knowledge of Dublin public through performing some of the great classical works of music.

The Philharmonic Society was another of the major societies of the period. Henry Bussell established it in 1826, but like The Antient Concerts Society it did not begin to flourish fully until the 1850s. One of the biggest areas that was greatly criticised in both societies was their importing of European solo vocalists and instrumentalists for large performances. However in their defence, Ireland did not have the resources to produce musicians of the same standards as England or the other European countries. Through their use of European soloists

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<sup>5</sup> Caitriona Doran: *The Robinson's, a nineteenth century Dublin family of musicians, and their contribution towards the musical life in Dublin* Unpublished MA thesis, NUIMaynooth, 1998), v.

<sup>6</sup> Ita Beausang: As no. 3, 170 and Aloys Flieschmann: As no. 1, 500.

<sup>7</sup> Ita Beausang: As no. 3, 170.

the societies probably hoped to improve the sound of their performances and thus the music being performed and also to inspire local musicians to achieve more. These two societies played a significant role in introducing Dublin audiences to the compositions of many of the great European composers, such as Mozart, Handel and Beethoven. Other smaller groups, such as the Amateur musical Society, followed their lead in setting up societies around the capital.<sup>8</sup> However the Antient Concerts Society and the Philharmonic Society dominated in the 1850s and 1860s. At the Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853, to which Queen Victoria was a visitor, Joseph Robinson conducted 1,000 performers in a musical extravaganza, many of the performers being drawn from the societies. In 1856 The Philharmonic Society illustrated its talents with the first performance of Beethoven's 'Choral' symphony, held on the 18 January and conducted by Henry Bussell himself. Again in 1865 the societies combined to perform at the opening of Dublin's International Exhibition of fine Arts and Manufactures, Joseph Robinson once again conducting the orchestra and choir. Through these societies many amateur musicians greatly improved their confidence and their knowledge and love of music. The societies also played a role in the establishment of the Academy of Music through their drawing together like-minded people who wanted nothing more than to create in Dublin a rich musical culture and an appreciation for the music of all the great composers.

The period between 1848 and the 1870s is often ignored in histories of Ireland possibly because these years were free from any major disasters or political

<sup>8</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *no Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1996* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1998), 1.  
 Charles Acton: *As no.12, 35*.

<sup>8</sup> Ita Beausang: *As no.3, 176*. Charles Acton: *As no.12, 58*.

conflicts. They lie between the famine and the quest to return home rule and parliament to Ireland. However it was during these years that ‘the themes were developed that dominated Irish life and politics for the rest of the century’ and into the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup> The establishment of the Academy in particular created a new era in musical learning and performance. It was founded by Joseph Robinson, and a number of his colleagues from The Antient Concerts Society, in 1848, for the purpose of establishing a school of instrumental music in the capital. They wanted to create a school where native musical talents could be nurtured and shaped and where musicians could be taught to a high level of skill and excellence. One of their main aims was that eventually societies such as The Antient Concerts Society and The Philharmonic Society would have professional musicians at their disposal in their own country. It was the first time that the teaching of music theory and musical instruments had been systematically approached in Ireland.<sup>10</sup> A detailed proposal in 1848 stated the advantages of creating such an establishment, which would cater for the cultivation of instrumental music. In time the teaching of music theory and vocal music also became an important feature of the academies activities.<sup>11</sup>

In 1856 the Academy was reorganised with ‘a more nationally focused institution coming into existence.’<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the original IAM in 1848 had been too keen to follow the old mistake of attempting to imitate London or other European capitals too closely, thus forgetting that Ireland did not possess the same resources as our European counterparts. The re-organisation of the

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<sup>9</sup> R.F. Foster: *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 373.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *to Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1998), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As no.12, 35.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As no.12, 56.

Academy in 1856 saw a more realistic approach being taken and it operated a lot more smoothly as a result of the changes made. It went from strength to strength in the years that followed with the numbers of staff and students steadily increasing.

In 1872 the addition of Royal was made to the title. In 1870 the Academy had been given a grant-in-aid from parliament amounting to £150 annually.<sup>13</sup> But with the addition of Royal to the title, making it The Royal Irish Academy of Music, the grant from parliament in England doubled. This was a helpful bonus to the Academy but it also made those in charge the subject of a lot of criticism, many believing that it was not worth putting the word 'Royal' in the title of an Irish organisation simply so that they could receive a larger grant. However the Academy had never been a nationalistic organisation or been involved in any political views. The limits of its nationalism were defined within its aim to improve the quality of music in Ireland. It had always operated on non-denominational lines, employing the best teachers they could no matter what their nationality or religion have been. The greatest aim for those in authority within the Academy was to promote music in Dublin and nationwide and to make it accessible to as many people as possible. Anything that aided this goal was greatly appreciated whether it was a talented European teacher or a grant from Parliament in London.

From the 1870s onwards there was a renewed increase of cultural activity in the country and this appeared to coincide with the continuing political successes of

*Creators of the Irish Nation State* (London: Uewin Hyman Ltd, 1987), 104.

<sup>13</sup> Marie McCarthy, 'The transmission of Music and the Formation of National Identity in Ireland', *Irish Musical Studies Volume 5* ed. Patrick F. Devine &

<sup>13</sup> Aloys Fleischmann: As no. 1 (1986), 147.

the Home Rule Party. These people felt that Ireland should be a self-ruling country, and hoped that this would eventually lead to full independence. For many nationalists at that time the need for cultural independence was necessary if political independence was to be achieved. Out of this came cultural nationalism and a move towards promoting all things Irish and making the Irish population more appreciative of their own cultural heritage.

The Gaelic League was one of the fruits of cultural nationalism. It wanted a 'full-blooded revival of the Irish Language as the core of a general return to native civilisation: its names, literature, music, arts, dress and industries.'<sup>14</sup> Through its association with Annie Patterson it became involved with a return to Irish music and the promotion of Irish music. She first spoke of reinventing the traditional Celtic Feiseanna at a meeting of the Gaelic League. It earned the League's backing because, as well as being one of 'the remnants of indigenous culture', the revival of Irish music and therefore also of Irish song was one way of helping to revive the Irish Language.<sup>15</sup>

As the nineteenth century drew to a close Dublin's musical culture had taken on a new lease of life. Music had regained the position it had held centuries before as an activity central to the lives of many Irish people. Irish traditional music was enjoying a revival through the work of the Gaelic League, Annie Patterson and Feis Ceoil. It was beginning to be respected and appreciated by more people rather than simply being the music of the poor rural class, a stigma it had

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<sup>14</sup> John Hutchinson: *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1987), 164.

<sup>15</sup> Marie McCarthy: 'The transmission of Music and the Formation of National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Ireland', *Irish Musical Studies, Volume 5* ed. Patrick F. Devine & Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 147.



received in the previous decades, particularly in the years during the Great Famine. Organisations had been established in Dublin which allowed the population to become more accustomed to European Art music. Through the many societies, the Academy and the concerts and recitals they held, the public had the opportunity to learn an instrument or to attend concerts and become well educated in music.

The involvement of women in music is an area that was greatly neglected in musicological research until the final decades of the twentieth century. Throughout the centuries their involvement was ignored and their contribution often passed undocumented and unappreciated. Women are not included among the canon of 'great' composers and are only sometimes mentioned in more recent histories of composers of the nineteenth century. Therefore, in the late twentieth century, feminists became particularly interested in examining the social and theoretical bases which have helped create the major canon and categories of music history.<sup>16</sup> As a result, since the late 1970s there has been a greater interest and awareness of women's contributions throughout the centuries to all areas of music.<sup>17</sup>

One of the greatest results of this growth in research into women composers and musicians is that musicologists have become aware of the differences gender made to women's work in music. As a result they have moved away from researching the musical output or involvement of women composers or musicians as a comparison with the output or involvement of their male counterparts. "Women have...generally been taken to have the same objectives as the men whom alongside they have worked and have been trained".<sup>18</sup> However, this is an unfair comparison to make and no realistic study of any woman in music can be made if they are evaluated only in comparison to male musicians of the same period. When you research a woman composer (or even a woman musician or teacher) there are two main areas that have to be

<sup>16</sup> Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 15.

<sup>17</sup> Julie Anne Sadle & Rhian Samuel, *The New Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1994), vii.

<sup>18</sup> Julie Anne Sadle & Rhian Samuel: As no.3, vii.

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<sup>18</sup> Julie Anne Sadie & Rhian Samuel: As no.3, vii.

considered- the woman and the composer. As Suzanne Cusick comments, “the woman in the ‘woman composer’ must be discussed in terms of her gender, a thing that is marginal to the composer in the women composer”.<sup>19</sup> A woman had more to conquer in order to be accepted as a composer, particularly in the nineteenth century when women were still expected to fulfil the traditional role of mother and wife. Women artists in music were often restricted by their domestic life, the wishes of their spouses or families, and by social opinions. Many women began their education in music because their parents felt it would improve their climb to social acceptance.<sup>20</sup> While it remained as nothing more than a hobby for many of these upper class young women, a few decided to challenge the boundaries and make more of their musical talents, particularly in the nineteenth century. Many met with great opposition from those who felt they were crossing the line. Another problem was that the public did not know how to perceive this new form of musician: were they to be admired or despised? Were they to be compared to men or were they to be considered as women? For example, the increase in female pianists in Paris in the nineteenth century meant that the critics, unsure of how to treat them, had to ‘develop critical rhetoric with which to evaluate the increasing numbers of professional female pianists’.<sup>21</sup> The main difference for the French critics was that the male performers of the time were illustrating their talents in two ways: both by performing and by performing music they had composed themselves. Women on the other hand were choosing to interpret the works of the well-known

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<sup>19</sup> Suzanne G. Cuisick: ‘Gender, Musicology, and Feminism’ *Rethinking Music*. Ed. Nicholas Cook & Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 475.

<sup>20</sup> Nancy B. Reich: ‘European composers and Musicians ca. 1800-1890’ *Women and Music: A History* ed. Karin Pendle (USA: Indiana University Press, 1991), 98

<sup>21</sup> Katharine Ellis: ‘Female Pianists and their Male Critics in Nineteenth-Century Paris’, *Journal of the American Musicological society*, Volume 50, Summer/Fall 1997. 355.

composers of the time, which created problems for their male critics. Some praised their abilities for interpretation while others saw it as another example of women being inferior to men. They believed that women could not compose as well as men so therefore they had to use the compositions of male composers to illustrate their talents as performers.

The move of women into the public music scene was a cause of much criticism all over Europe and also America. This was a difficult restriction to escape. However, in spite of the large amount of criticism and the risk it gave to their position in society, many women began to emerge into music all over Europe as composers, performers and teachers. This left many male musicians feeling threatened as they realised the potential of women in music. Women's first prominent role in music making was developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when music began to make a break from being connected mainly to the church and spirituality and a new phenomenon was born in the public concert. As the idea of public concerts grew in popularity, a new development occurred in women's history, the emergence of the female singer, "a new popular goddess, the prima donna"<sup>22</sup>. This was the first main area in which women had the opportunity to earn a living from music and to express themselves through music making. They were given the opportunity to be recognised and to be so much more than a wife or a mother. However, for many female singers, the glory and attention they gained on the stage had its downside. Their position in society became almost schizophrenic. On the one hand, they were admired and praised for their vocal talents and how they

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<sup>22</sup> Sophie Drinker: *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music* (New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1995), 230.

captured the audience's attention with their grace and beauty; on the other hand, a considerable portion of society undoubtedly frowned upon the methods they used to gain tuition and to make themselves known. Many of these women were bound to those who taught them either financially or personally. For many the only possible escape was to become bound by a husband or lover instead. Although many had the freedom to perform on stage, for some it was the only freedom they possessed and the female singers in Dublin were no exception. Anne Catley for example, one of the greatest sopranos of the eighteenth century, was a talented singer and admired by a multitude, but this did not save her from scandal. She was financially bound to her teacher, William Bates and only received freedom from him when her lover Sir Francis Deleval paid Mr Bates, thus leaving her in debt to Sir Francis.<sup>23</sup> However, in spite of these difficulties, these female singers opened the doors for those who followed.

Women vocalists began to enjoy an increased amount of freedom and respect in the nineteenth century and as a result they continued to strive for more than just being attractive and talented singers, beginning to branch out into other areas of performance and musical activity. "Women engaged in a determined but uphill battle to assert leadership in other kinds of endeavours associated with music".<sup>24</sup> Thus the nineteenth-century saw the rise of the female instrumental performer. The instruments these women played were usually only the harp or the piano, which were seen as the only instruments suitable for women to play because

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<sup>23</sup> Brian Boydell: *Rotunda Music in Eighteenth-Century Dublin* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992), 51.

<sup>24</sup> Sophie Drinker: *As no. 7*, 240.

they enabled them to remain lady like while performing.<sup>25</sup> Instruments which were positioned between the legs for performance, for example the cello, were completely taboo being seen as undignified and completely unladylike.<sup>26</sup> The piano provided female performers with an appropriate instrument, which allowed them to illustrate their talents and in some cases, provided them with a possible career as a teacher- "The piano proved to be a practical means of providing a satisfactory career in professional performance and especially in teaching others to perform."<sup>27</sup>

In Ireland there was rarely a concert held in the second half of the nineteenth century with a programme of piano music in which females were not represented. Through the establishment of the Royal Irish Academy of Music many women also managed to make their mark as teachers. Unlike some of the music conservatoires around Europe, female piano teachers were accepted members of staff. The Capital was also the home to many private female teachers who used it as a sideline to their traditional duties as wife and mother and taught from home.

In the nineteenth century, the constant growth in the number of music schools throughout Europe, the growth in the public's dedication and interest in concerts and the interest in musical societies meant there was a wealth of opportunities available in music and therefore more of an opportunity for women to be involved. However, unlike in other European countries, Ireland had no real

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<sup>25</sup> Uta Henning: 'The Instrumentarium of Women' *Musikfrauen- Women in Music* Gertrude Degenhardt (Germany: Mittelrhein-Museum Koblenz, 1990), 39.

<sup>26</sup> Antje Olivier: 'Possessed by a Demon', as no. 11, 49.

<sup>27</sup> Sophie Drinker: As no.7, 237.

strong musical traditions of their own in terms of art music and at that period of the nineteenth-century they were striving to establish a strong musical culture within the capital. Therefore any contribution made to this was appreciated whether it was by men or women. Yet it is important to note that the treatment of women in music in Ireland, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century, was progressive by European standards.

## Women's Contribution to Music in Dublin in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century



In the second half of the nineteenth century there was a constant increase in the number of women in music in Dublin. This was partly because it was an area where women's involvement was acceptable and their contribution was appreciated. However the main reason for the increase in women musicians was more likely the general growth in musical activity in Dublin that was occurring at the time. As well as working as teachers or performers they also aided musical development in less obvious ways as patrons or regular members of audiences all over Dublin. In the early years of the Academy a lot of its

## **Women's Contribution to Music in Dublin in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century**

of prominent and influential figures in the city. For example there was one held just days before the opening of the Academy in 1848 in the home of the Judge Advocate General, David Walker. Women's involvement in music was illustrated that night by the inclusion of performances by female musicians, both amateur and professional.<sup>28</sup> These occasions were frequent occurrences in the homes of many of Dublin's music lovers. They provided the city with a breeding ground for its talented musicians, both amateur and professional, to illustrate their abilities as well as giving many others an opportunity to enjoy music in a relaxed and informal setting.

Women seemed to gain a greater confidence in their talents as musicians and the possibilities before them in the nineteenth century. The Academy was a great help because it allowed women to achieve a better standard in musical education and their integration into classes that were made up of males and females probably gave them a greater confidence in their abilities and their

<sup>28</sup> Richard Piss and Charles Acton. *As no. 12, 45.*

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<sup>28</sup> *Santa C. Fox: The Contribution of Women in Ireland During the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century* (Unpublished MA Thesis, St Patrick's College Maynooth, 1997)

<sup>28</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: *As no. 12*, 45.

musical equality to their male counterparts. They gradually realised that this was an area that they could excel in with the least amount of prejudice and they began to make use of the opportunities that lay open to them. In many of the academies in Europe women were still at a disadvantage until towards the end of the nineteenth century. They were not accepted to learn at the academies and even when they were they were confined to opportunities as performers only.<sup>29</sup>

Thankfully this was not the case in Ireland, because the Academy was a new phenomenon in Ireland it welcomed all students.

Opportunities in music were usually limited to women who came from a relatively wealthy background. It cost money to excel at music or even to gain a basic understanding and only those from wealthy upper class families could afford a musical education. A good standing within society also helped gain many female musicians their earliest opportunities to perform or show off their talents.<sup>30</sup> This also makes it harder to generalize about women musicians.

Depending on their social status their opportunities differed and while this was often the case for men also, it was clearer in the treatment of women. Men were united, no matter what their social standing, by their gender. They were clearly the ruling sex in every area of society in the nineteenth century. Social distinctions at that time were clearer between women than men and this affected those involved in music in turn.

<sup>29</sup> Susan C. Fox: *The Contribution of Women in Ireland During the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century* (Unpublished MA Thesis, St. Patrick's College Maynooth, 1997)

<sup>30</sup> Jill Halstead: *The Woman Composer: Creativity and the Gendered Politics of Musical Composition* (Hants: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1997), 69.

The amount of professional teachers was one of the areas where the greatest increase in women's involvement occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century. *Thom's Directory* lists an ever-increasing list of female teachers during this fifty-year period.<sup>31</sup> In the general list of traders the numbers of female teachers listed increased by approximately sixty per cent. In the more detailed listings of Professors of Music we can see on a smaller scale the increase that took place. This list contains the names of the most prominent teachers around Dublin. In 1851 there were five women listed making up twenty per cent of the complete list. By 1900 there were twenty-eight women listed, this time making up forty two percent of the complete list. Judging by this increase it would seem that in the area of music teachers, particularly teachers of the pianoforte, there were as many female as male by 1900. This made music one of the few areas of society where, at the turn of the twentieth century, women had a standing almost equal to men.

The role of the female singer became less important in the nineteenth century. Female singers no longer received as much attention as they had in the eighteenth century because women had spread into other areas of music. However they were still present in Dublin's concert life. Although women seemed to gain respect and admiration in music life, the female singers seemed to be unable to shake their previous image, women who used their good looks and vocal talents to gain success and male admirers. They failed to gain the respect and levels of equality of female instrumentalists and teachers. Perhaps this was because their talents were perceived as requiring less effort and

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<sup>31</sup> *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (Dublin: Alexander Thorn Printer and Publisher) Years of the Directory used: 1851, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1891 and 1900.

dedication than learning an instrument. Many of their male critics still saw them as pretty women who had been fortunate enough to be blessed with good voices. Cruise, who played Anna, as being 'sang and acted gracefully'.<sup>31</sup> The male Catherine Hayes exemplified how female singers of that time were perceived. The Limerick-born soprano enjoyed an international career and was particularly successful in London. Catherine left Ireland at an early age and moved to London to improve her singing career. On her numerous returns to Ireland she was warmly welcomed and her audiences seemed to have had a sense of pride in her and her success abroad. After one such appearance in Dublin in 1856 the *Freeman's Journal* could not praise her enough. The article tells of how she was greeted with 'admiration' and that her music had 'become home music over half the world'.<sup>32</sup> She is praised for her execution of her chosen programme and her dramatic power for illustrating the meaning. However in spite of all the praise she receives, the article still moves away from her performance to her appearance and her feminine qualities. Further down the article there are references made to her face, lips and eyes, which seem somewhat irrelevant in describing the performance. Her femininity could not go unnoticed because it was obvious that while her audiences listened to her sing they watched her and noticed her appearance. The problem was that on many occasions it was still occurring that there was more notice taken of the appearance of the female singer than their actual voices. In many of the articles of this period which reviewed operatic productions or concerts the male singers were given adequate recognition and praise for their singing, while the female performers were

<sup>31</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, autumn of 1856 and 1857 (September - December)

<sup>32</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 4 November 1856.

<sup>33</sup> One might assume there were two Miss Rosset's since her involvement ranges from the 1820s up to the beginning of the twentieth century. However there is no record of it being two people and assumes that it is the same person.

<sup>32</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 8 December 1856.

referred to as being 'sweet' or 'graceful'.<sup>33</sup> For example a review of Weber's *Der Freischutz* on the 4 November 1856 describes the performance of a Miss Cruise, who played Anna, as being 'sang and acted gracefully'.<sup>34</sup> The male singers are reviewed with a lot more depth and analysis of their performance. The writing about female singers seemed to maintain a reminiscence of the previous century, and it was slightly melodramatic or romantic in its treatment of them. They were still being perceived in most cases as beautiful temptresses.

Elizabeth Bennett was a constant figure in Dublin's musical scene throughout her life which covered the majority of the nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup> She first made herself known to the public in Dublin in 1825 when an advertisement appeared in *The Freeman's Journal* announcing that she had returned from London and was available to teach piano, through-bass and composition. From this point onwards she became a regular entry in *Thom's Directory*, listed as a teacher of the pianoforte, living on Leeson Street. She remained one of the prominent teachers in Dublin throughout the rest of the nineteenth-century and she made the transition from private teaching to teaching in the Academy shortly after its establishment. She became the second piano teacher there, after Joseph and Fanny Robinson. She was one of the first teachers in Dublin to introduce the idea of taking an apprentice, an idea that she had first put into practice while teaching in London.<sup>36</sup> Many teachers in Dublin soon followed her lead and by the 1850s many of Dublin's private teachers had apprentices. Elizabeth became

<sup>33</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, autumn of 1856 and 1857. (September – December)

<sup>34</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 4 November 1856.

<sup>35</sup> One might assume there were two Miss Bennett's since her involvement ranges from the 1820s up to the beginning of the twentieth-century. However there is no record of it being two different people therefore one assumes that it is the same person.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As No.12, 24.

good friends with Margaret O Hea in her later life and the two were united in their love of music and teaching and on their views on the running of the Academy.

Two important female figures in music around the middle of the century were Elizabeth Meeke and Henrietta Flynn, who were both teachers of Charles Villiers Stanford. Both made lasting impressions on the young Stanford at the beginning of his musical education. They were active members of musical life in Dublin around this time and were regular participants in the musical evenings in the 1850s.

Elizabeth Meeke was Stanford's first official piano teacher, any previous musical training he had received before that was from his mother. Elizabeth, who was also his godmother, proved to be a lenient teacher who nonetheless taught Stanford a lot of his early technique.<sup>37</sup> She had been a pupil of Ignaz Moscheles and was said to have been one of his favourite students from his time in London.<sup>38</sup> She was also an admirer of Clara Schumann and often copied her style of playing.<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth was the first person to introduce Stanford to Beethoven and Chopin and to teach him the simplest elements of tone, touch and correct posture for performance.

When Elizabeth decided to leave Ireland in 1862 she passed Stanford's musical training on to her friend Henrietta Flynn. She too had been a pupil of Moscheles

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<sup>37</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no.12, 497.

<sup>38</sup> Jeremy Dibble: *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 25.

<sup>39</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no.12, 497.

and the two had often performed together at informal gatherings.<sup>40</sup> Miss Flynn had spent several years in Leipzig studying the piano under Felix Mendelssohn as well as Ignaz Moscheles. Stanford saw her as a patient and intelligent teacher but also a little eccentric in her methods.<sup>41</sup> Both of these women were subscribers to the academy in its earliest days keenly involved in concert life in Dublin in the 1850s and 1860s.

In its first fifty years the Academy had some of Dublin's most talented men and women as part of its teaching staff. They helped it to grow and to improve and they played an important role in creating the next generation of music teachers. Henrietta Flynn taught in the academy, mainly during its first ten years. As well as passing her knowledge on to Charles Stanford she also helped to give early guidance to two important figures of music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century-Annie Patterson and Margaret O' Hea.

Edith Oldham was a significant figure in musical developments also. She, like Margaret O' Hea, devoted her life to music and the Academy. However she is probably best remembered as the young Irish girl who captured the heart of Sir George Grove. Edith attended lessons in the Academy from an early age. In 1883 she was one of the first three students to be awarded a scholarship to attend the newly established Royal College of Music in London.<sup>42</sup> This was a new incentive introduced to connect the two music schools and also to give extremely talented Irish students the opportunity to experience the music scene

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<sup>40</sup> They performed at the musical evening in David Walker's house in 1848. -Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no.12, 45/6.

<sup>41</sup> Jeremy Dibble: As no.37, 25.

<sup>42</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no. 12, 112.



in London as well as availing of the excellent teachers in the College of Music. It was a result of her Scholarship that Edith crossed paths with George Grove.<sup>43</sup>

From their earliest meeting Grove became enthralled by the Young Edith. In many ways he seemed to be longing for his lost youth and perhaps he saw in Edith an opportunity to relive it.<sup>44</sup> He took a great interest in her musical studies and wanted only the best for her. Edith seemed to have thought fondly of Grove and greatly appreciated his kindness towards her. Her mother, on the other hand, was highly suspicious of his intentions towards her daughter, and very wary of their friendship. Their relationship was seen as being passionately platonic with their involvement and correspondence always very warm and affectionate.<sup>45</sup> He continued to be an important figure in her life until his death in 1900, offering advice on her professional life and reminding her regularly of how much she meant to him.

Edith returned to Dublin in 1888 and took a position on the teaching staff of the Academy soon after. She remained there until 1932. Edith was an excellent teacher and aimed to make her students love the music they played as well as learning the technique involved in playing it, 'she had a wonderful influence over her pupils, by all of whom she was greatly loved.'<sup>46</sup> After her retirement her talents as a teacher and her contribution to the Academy were rewarded when she was made a fellow of the Academy, receiving her FRIAM in 1938. In

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<sup>43</sup> Sir George Grove: (1820-1900) he was a writer, teacher and the editor of the first edition of Grove Dictionaries. He also became Director of the Royal College of Music in London after its establishment. (*New Grove* 2, Vol. 10, 452.)

<sup>44</sup> Percy M. Young: *George Grove 1820-1900, A Biography* (London: Macmillan London Ltd, 1980), 175.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no. 12, 167.

<sup>46</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: as no. 12, 507.

1968, eighteenth years after her death her memory was honoured further with the introduction of the Edith Best Scholarship.<sup>47</sup>

Edith's other memorable involvement in Dublin's music scene was her position as co-founder of Feis Ceoil along with Annie Patterson, in 1897. She provided it with endless support. She was involved in its administration and its promotion. She saw Feis ceoil as a method of bringing music into the lives of the entire population and making their lives better because of their love and enjoyment of it. It was Edith who extended the possibilities of Feis by allowing all genres of music to be included, not just traditional Irish music.<sup>48</sup> It was also through her involvement in Feis Ceoil that Edith met her future husband, Richard Best, who was the first registrar of the competition.

In the nineteenth century, particularly the second half women in Ireland were given a great opportunity to be involved in music in Ireland. The opportunities were often limited to the wealthier classes but Ireland was still progressive in its treatment of women in music. Their help was greatly appreciated and their talents praised. During that time an ever-increasing number of women were learning music, performing music and teaching music. It was one of the few areas where they were appreciated and allowed to excel.

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<sup>47</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no. 12, 454.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton: As no. 12, 430.

Fanny Arthur Robinson was a teacher, composer and pianist of English birth. She was born in 1831 and received her musical training in England before moving to Ireland in 1849.<sup>45</sup> She was a woman of immense talent, but like many of the musicians of this time, both male and female, her music died with her, her

## Fanny Arthur Robinson

participated in Dublin's concert life where she was rated as a fine pianist. She was also one of the few female composers of this period in Dublin, producing a reasonable amount of music, the majority of which was for the piano. However she often suffered from periods of depression, which overshadowed her achievements in her musical career. She was one of the first women who were adequately accepted into musical life in Dublin.

Fanny Arthur's teachers were of the finest standards from the beginning, two in particular having a lasting effect on the young Fanny and deservedly so. They were two important figures in music in Europe at this point, Sir William Sterndale Bennett and Sigismund Thalberg. Sir William Sterndale Bennett was an English composer, who was ranked among the most distinguished composers of the Romantic school in his country.<sup>46</sup> The majority of his compositions date from the early part of his life but from 1837 onwards he dedicated himself to his career as a teacher. It was probably in the early 1840s that Fanny became a student of the Royal Academy of Music where he taught from 1837.

<sup>45</sup> Axel Klein: *Irish Classical Recordings: A Discography of Irish Art Music* (London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 141.

<sup>46</sup> Roschary Williamson: 'Sir Sterndale Bennett', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, volume 2, (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 281.

Fanny Arthur Robinson was a teacher, composer and pianist of English birth. She was born in 1831 and received her musical training in England before moving to Ireland in 1849.<sup>49</sup> She was a woman of immense talent, but like many of the musicians of this time, both male and female, her music died with her, her talents forgotten. She was greatly involved in the Academy in its early years and participated in Dublin's concert life where she was rated as a fine pianist. She was also one of the few female composers of this period in Dublin, producing a reasonable amount of music, the majority of which was for the piano. However she often suffered from periods of depression, which overshadowed her achievements in her musical career. She was one of the first women who were adequately accepted into musical life in Dublin.

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<sup>49</sup> Axel Klein: *Irish Classical Recordings: A Discography of Irish Art Music* (London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 141.

<sup>50</sup> Rosemary Williamson: 'Sir Sterndale Bennett', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, volume 3, (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 281.

Sigismond Thalberg was a composer and together with Liszt regarded as one of the great virtuoso pianists of the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>51</sup> He enjoyed enormous popularity throughout Europe and travelled a lot giving concerts and it was presumably during one of his stays in London that Fanny Arthur had contact with him. However they would meet again several years later in Dublin. As a composer, Thalberg's style was simple but also very effective. One of his favoured features was keeping the melody in one hand and ornamenting it with chords or counterpoint in the other.<sup>52</sup> This idea is also evident in some of Fanny's compositions such as *Laughing Water* or *Stella*.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps Thalberg influenced her in her compositions as well as her playing.

Fanny's came to Ireland to perform in February 1849. It was her first professional performance and until then she had only played in informal settings in London. The concert was held in the Antient Concert Rooms and it was Mr Gustave Geary's 'first full-dress subscription concert'.<sup>54</sup> In the concert Fanny made two appearances: in part one she played a piece by Mendelssohn and in part two she performed a Grand Concert *Stück* by Weber with orchestral accompaniment. Her performance was well received and the praise given to her is noteworthy:

'We cannot avoid once more averting to the extraordinary and exquisite performance of Miss Arthur on the pianoforte...She was encored with enthusiasm.'<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Robert Wangermee: 'Sigismond Thalberg' *The New Grove dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 338.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Wangermee: as no.3, 338.

<sup>53</sup> Scores for both pieces in the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

<sup>54</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, 19 February 1849.

<sup>55</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, 20 February 1849.

Since the concert was held in The Antient Concert Rooms it is no surprised that Joseph Robinson was involved, He performed several songs in each part of the concert, and it is probable that this concert was Fanny's first encounter with her future husband. Joseph Robinson was highly praised in *The Freeman's Journal* the following day, as an old favourite rather than a newcomer. Whatever the nature of that first meeting, four months later Fanny Arthur married Joseph Robinson on the 17 July 1849. Although there is little information about their married life it was the subject of much speculation. Joseph was notorious for his infidelity and he was the subject of many rumours. Some believed this could have been a contributing factor to Fanny's illness, the first signs of which appeared in 1861. However whatever the downside of her marriage he was helpful in her career. Much of the progress she made can be tied in with her husband's position in musical life in Dublin. He had the connections to help her talent get the recognition it deserved. Her position in the Academy and the many concerts she performed in, even the first performance of her cantata, *God is Love*, can be traced to Joseph's involvement in the Academy and other music organisations. However while he may have created many opportunities for his Fanny, it was her own unquestionable talent that earned her a position as one of the most talented musicians in Dublin at that point.

In spite of her suffering, both from her husband's infidelity and from ill health, Fanny was nonetheless highly respected in the Dublin music scene in the second half of the nineteenth century. From the time of her first performance Fanny became recognised as a pianist of outstanding abilities. Through the years that followed she constantly reinforced this opinion of herself through numerous

performances. In 1849 she played for Queen Victoria along with Joseph and several other musicians. In 1852 she played at a concert of the Philharmonic society. In *The Freeman's Journal* the following day her talent was recognised and she was put in the same category as George Osborne which was quite an achievement considering he was one of Ireland's most talented exports at that time: 'We regard her playing as in a style only surpassed by Osborne.'<sup>56</sup>

It was her talents as a pianist that resulted in her being the first woman in Ireland, indeed the first person, to introduce Liszt's idea of the recital involving a single performer giving a complete concert. Aloys Fleischmann attributes Charles Hallé with the honour of giving the first solo recital in Ireland in 1867, but it seems that Fanny had already achieved this ten years earlier. She gave a solo recital in April 1856 in The Antient Concert Rooms.<sup>57</sup> It was advertised in *Saunders Newsletter* on the 8 April 1856 and was held in the Chamber Concert Room.<sup>58</sup> Her programme was huge and contained a wide variety of music which undoubtedly shows how talented a pianist this woman was. She played a Mozart Sonata, a suite by Bach, The *Moonlight* sonata by Beethoven and a selection of smaller pieces by Chopin, Bennett and Kullak. The fact that she successfully performed such an intense programme of music was quite an achievement. She made her first solo appearance in London in 1855 in the Musical Union playing Beethoven's Opus 24. She continued to perform in Dublin and occasionally in London until the late 1860s when her illness began to have a greater effect on

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<sup>56</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, 20 December 1851.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998), 500.

<sup>58</sup> *Saunders Newsletter*, 8 April 1856.

her. However she continued to excel in other areas of her musical career at this point.

Fanny became a member of the teaching staff of The Academy of Music in 1856 shortly after it was reorganised. During her time there she enjoyed a successful teaching career and was regarded as one of the finest teachers the Academy had to offer, second only to her husband Joseph. She was made a professor of the piano and her earnings are the clearest illustration of the high opinion that was held of Fanny in the Academy. In 1869 when the Academy was eager to add Robert Stewart to their teaching staff he was offered a position as a second piano professor alongside Fanny, with Joseph Robinson remaining the first professor of piano. Stewart was also offered £100 per year, the same salary that both Joseph and Fanny were receiving.<sup>59</sup> While it could be argued that her achievement was as a result of whom her husband was, this seems unlikely because the Academy authorities would not have had such respect for her unless she was deserving of it.

Like Joseph, Fanny put a lot of time and effort into the Academy in its early years. She put her heart and soul into her teaching and had a hand in producing the next generation of Academy teachers such as Margaret O' Hea.<sup>60</sup> In the first years in the Academy her performances in numerous concerts was a constant reassurance to any one who might have doubted her, that Fanny had a great deal to offer as a piano teacher.

<sup>59</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As no. 8, 85.

<sup>60</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As no. 8, 503.



Fanny Arthur Robinson was also a composer and probably the first female composer in Ireland whose music was truly respected and appreciated. Through her cantata *God is Love*, first performed by the choral class in the Academy for their first concert in May 1871, Fanny established herself as a composer. The cantata became a popular work in the decades that followed and it was often performed 'in sections as anthems' in the Dublin cathedrals in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>61</sup> It is the only one of Fanny's composition that was regularly performed and which is still referred to in literature about this time. While she did compose a few other vocal pieces her main output as a composer was in the form of music for the piano. Yet her piano music, and therefore the majority of her compositions, has remained unknown and ignored.

Fanny's skill as a pianist had provided her with a great understanding of the piano and this was clear in her piano compositions, even in the simplest of them. In her cantata it was her writing for the piano, particularly in the prelude, which earned her the most attention. Harry Grindle commented that 'in this prelude, untrammelled by a text, Mrs Robinson is at her best'.<sup>62</sup> In *To Talent Alone* her piece *Le Chant du Moulin* is described as charming, a comment which makes it sound unimportant and elementary.<sup>63</sup> Later Philip shields dismisses her other compositions as 'a number of ephemeral piano pieces and songs'.<sup>64</sup> Her music is too quickly dismissed in both cases. It is worthy of

<sup>61</sup> Caitriona Doran: *The Robinson's, a nineteenth century Dublin family of musicians, and their contribution towards the musical life in Dublin* (unpublished MA Thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 1998) 100.

<sup>62</sup> W.H. Grindle: *Irish Cathedral Music: A History of Music at the Cathedrals of the Church of Ireland* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast, 1989), 199.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As no.8, 38.

<sup>64</sup> Philip Shields: 'The Special Collections of the Academy Library', As no. 8, 488.

attention and contains many beautiful melodies and harmonies, all of which illustrate her talents as a composer.

Fanny was particularly diligent in her compositions in the instructions that she gave for the performer, each piece having clear instructions in tempo and timbre. She was fond of creating contrasting sections within her compositions, for which she had two main methods. In a piece like *Sentiments* she simply wrote six different sections or movements, each one varying in tempo and style. However in other pieces such as *The Haymakers*, a caprice pastorale for piano, she creates different sections within the piece through the use of varying tonality, dynamics and tempo markings. It begins in A minor marked *Presto Scherzando*. The opening (see example 1a) is made up of a busy rhythm in the right hand, made up of mainly semibreves.

### Example 1a

Fanny Robinson: *The Haymakers*, bars 1 and 2

The image shows a musical score for the first two bars of 'The Haymakers'. The music is written for piano in 6/8 time and A minor. The right hand (treble clef) plays a rhythmic melody of semibreves. The left hand (bass clef) provides accompaniment with groups of three semiquavers, rests, and chords.

The left hand alternates between groups of three semiquavers, rests and chords (see example 1b).

## Example 1b

Fanny Robinson: *The Haymakers*, bar 12



The left hand is taking us through the chord progressions while the right hand, moving mainly in step, is weaving its way around the chords. At bar 43 the next section is introduced with a change in tonality to A major and a tempo change to *Molto Tranquillo e Legato*. The music of both hands is rhythmically much slower than the previous section, (see example 2a). The left hand carries dotted minims across the bars while the right hand has a quaver rhythm that strengthens the harmony while the melody occurs above this in a crotchet, quaver rhythm.

## Example 2a

Fanny Robinson: *The Haymakers*, bars 43 and 44



The melody at this point is much more cheerful and illustrative of a summer's day and haymaking than the opening. At bar 60 (see example 2b) she begins to

introduce another melody in the left hand with the same crotchet-quaver rhythm of the right hand. It provides continuing support to the harmony.

### Example 2b

Fanny Robinson: *The Haymakers*, bar 60



At bar 91 the next section occurs, announcing a return to A minor, a faster tempo and music reminiscent of the opening.

Two more contrasting sections are created after this. At bar 114 the music moves to F major and the tempo slows down once more. This is short lived and the final section, which draws the piece to a close, begins at bar 132. It is predominantly made up of constant semi-quaver movement. At first the semi-quaver rhythm is just in the right hand but by bar 158 (see example 3) it gains control of the left hand two and the music rushes to the end, gaining speed and volume as it goes.

### Example 3

Fanny Robinson: *the Haymakers*, bar 158

At bar 178 it begins to slow down and unwind once more with the left hand returning to sparse chords before eventually dying out and leaving the right hand to draw the piece to a close.

Much of Fanny's music seems to contain these varying sections or movements. This could possibly be linked to the changing moods that Fanny's depression caused. A possible comparison could be made between her situation and that of Virginia Wolff who herself suffered from depression. For her, her writing was a method of escape from her life and all that worried or upset her. The same could have applied for Fanny. Perhaps composing offered Fanny a way to distance herself from reality and express herself through her music. This could explain the constantly changing dynamics, tempos and tonalities in her music.

Fanny seemed very keen to portray to who ever might play or see her music what she wanted it to illustrate. As well as the previous methods of doing this within the music she also provided a guideline before ever a note is played. Most of her piano compositions and indeed, even the cantata, are prefaced by quotes taken from poetry or literature. In her cantata she uses quotes from the sacred poets, Bonar, Keble, Monsell, etc., at the beginning of each section. In her piano piece *Infant Smiles* the quote she uses is by J.S.B. Monsell and resembles a lullaby. In *Laughing Water* she uses a quote from Longfellow, which embodies the pieces title:

'From the Waterfall he named her,

Minehaha Laughing Water.'<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Fanny Arthur Robinson: *Laughing Water* (London: Chapell & Co., 1870)

This is further expressed in the music itself through a falling right hand; it keeps moving down then leaps back up and falls again, perhaps as a musical illustration of a waterfall. There is also a staccato quaver pattern that occurs throughout the piece, which seems to be laughing at the listener, thus illustrating the laughing water. It begins in bar 17 and keeps reappearing. In *Sentiments* each of the six short movements has a quote at the beginning, which is related to the title of the movement. For example the first movement is called 'Gratitude' and the quote used is by J.F. Waller and it tells of a grateful heart. Through her use of these quotations Fanny seems to be giving her audience or the performer of her music the clearest idea possible of what she wanted to express. The quotations also illustrate Fanny's own intelligence; she was obviously well educated and well read.

Her style as a composer was often very simple but it was effective nonetheless. Like many of the Romantic composers she made great use of the pedal and varying dynamics in her compositions. In a large number of them another feature is her constant use of chordal passages in one hand while the other plays the melody, or occasionally she alternates the melody and the chordal passages between the two hands. This was an idea often used by Thalberg in his music. For example in *Stella* and *Evening Thoughts* the left hand remains chordal throughout, . However in *Le Chant Du Moulin* she chooses to continuously alternate the melody between the two hands.

*Sentiments* is possibly one of her greatest compositions. Through it we get a clear picture of her abilities and characteristics as a composer. It is made up of

six short movements each with a different theme and was first published by Clamer, Beale & co in 1853. It was also later published under the name *Pensees*. The opening section is called 'Gratitude'. It is in common time and in the key of A major. It opens the work on a cheerful and lively note with an *Allegro Moderato* tempo. It is made up almost completely of triplets on every beat of the bar, alternating between the right hand and the left (see example 4). Above the triplets in the right hand the melody weaves in and out of the music. In the left hand there is a constant minim presence below the triplets, which confirms the harmonic progressions. This section continues in this manner throughout, the triplets constant.

### Example 4

Fanny Robinson: 'Gratitude', *Sentiments*, bars 1-5

♩=144 *Allegro Moderato*  
*il canto ben marcato*

*Grazioso*

The second section is named 'Resignation' and it remains in common time but moves to the key of G major and a slower tempo. The third section, 'Absence',

marks a change to a minor tonality with a move to the key of B minor and it slows down further. The accompanying quote is by J.F. Waller and it describes the absence when one loses someone they love. The mournful melody that opens the section (see example 5) and the detailed use of dynamics contribute greatly to the overall melancholic feeling produced in this music.

### Example 5

Fanny Robinson: 'Absence', *Sentiments*, bars 21 and 22- the opening melody



In the fourth section the time signature changes to 6/8 and we return to G major and a quicker tempo in the form of *Allegretto Scherzando*. The 'Thrush's Morning Song' brings us back to cheerful mood with the constant use of staccato throughout helping to create a feeling of energy. The harmonies in this section (see example 6) are particularly reminiscent of the Victorian salon music of that time that was so popular for the piano.

### Example 6

Fanny Robinson: 'The Thrush's Morning Song', *Sentiments*, bars 48 and 49

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Example 6. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The first staff contains the first six notes of the melody: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), and F#4 (quarter). The second staff continues the melody: E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter). The notation includes dynamic markings and phrasing slurs.



In the penultimate section the theme is loneliness. The music slows down as it returns to the key of G major and to common time. In this section Fanny presents us with some of the most beautiful music of the work. Illustrating her talents as composer and her ability to capture the mood within her music. Arpeggiated chordal passages run in both hands beneath the melody ( see example 7), subtly complementing it while providing the chordal reinforcement that is typical of Fanny's piano music.

### Example 7

Fanny Robinson: 'Loneliness', *Sentiments*, bars 9 and 10

The musical notation for Example 7 consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The right hand melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then an eighth note G4 beamed with an eighth note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The left hand accompaniment consists of a steady pattern of arpeggiated chords, each starting with a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter note B2, a quarter note D3, and a quarter note F#3.

The final section, the longest of the piece, sees the piece draw to a close on a cheerful note. It is called 'Merriment' and is accompanied by a quote by Shakespeare, from his play *Love's Labours Lost*. It remains in G major but speeds up with the tempo marking *Allegro Molto e Capriccioso* been given. The left hand is made up of semi-quavers, which provides arpeggio accompaniment throughout. The melody in the right hand is quick and cheerful, supporting the harmony and the regular appearance of the chord of V7 at cadential points and throughout the music (see example 8).

## Example 8

Fanny Robinson: 'Merriment', *Sentiments*, bars 25 and 26

The piece illustrates Fanny's ability to create different moods through her music. Through her use of dynamics, tonality and tempo she manages to illustrate something new in each section.

Fanny was an extremely talented woman. She was well educated in all aspects of music and put it all to good use through her career as a performer, teacher and composer. Throughout her relatively short life of forty-eight years she managed to make an impression on many Dublin audiences and on many of her peers in music. In the Academy she gave an immense amount of time to help in its establishment and growth through her role as a teacher there. And, in her compositions she left us many beautiful melodies, which perhaps offer one of the best insights into who this woman was. Fanny's musical career and her long suffering fight against depression came to an end on the 31 October 1879 when she took her own life. *The Freeman's Journal* describes it as 'an event. .... which will be regarded with great and universal regret'<sup>66</sup>, an adequate description for the loss of one of Dublin's most talented musicians of that period.

<sup>66</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, 1 November 1879

Annie Patterson's involvement in music in Dublin towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century contributed greatly to the growth of music in the capital and throughout Ireland. She played a major part in improving the circulation of music and improving the involvement of the

## Annie Patterson

public in music through *Fair Deal* and her articles in *The Weekly Irish Times* between 1899 and 1901. Through her columns she managed to make music a part of the lives of a large percentage of Dublin's population. Annie Patterson took the role of women in music a step further. She was educated better than many of her male counterparts and her intelligence shone through in everything she did. Her gender never seemed part of the equation for her. If she believed in something, as she did for example in the rebirth of Irish Music, she worked to make it a reality, to improve the situation. She was a strong and confident woman whose determination resulted in a continuing progress in music in Ireland. She was 'one of the first prominent women musicians in Ireland'.<sup>87</sup>

Annie Patterson was born in Lurgan in Co. Armagh in October 1868. She became part of the music scene in Dublin when she became a student of the Academy at the tender age of seven. Her first teacher was Miss Kelly. After her time with her she went on to be taught piano by Sir Robert Stewart whose harmony classes she was already attending at that point. He later became her organ teacher too. She also studied sight singing and sang with the Academy choir.<sup>88</sup> She maintained, throughout her life, a great respect for Robert Stewart

<sup>87</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1845-1995* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998), 289.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *As* no.1, 288.

Annie Patterson's involvement in music in Dublin towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century contributed greatly to the growth of music in the capital and throughout Ireland. She played a major part in improving the circulation of music and improving the involvement of the public in music through Feis Ceoil and her articles in *The Weekly Irish Times* between 1899 and 1901. Through her columns she managed to make music a part of the lives of a large percentage of Dublin's population. Annie Patterson took the role of women in music a step further. She was educated better than many of her male counterparts and her intelligence shone through in everything she did. Her gender never seemed part of the equation for her. If she believed in something, as she did for example in the rebirth of Irish Music, she worked to make it a reality, to improve the situation. She was a strong and confident woman whose determination resulted in a continuing progress in music in Ireland. She was 'one of the first prominent women musicians in Ireland'.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1998), 289.

<sup>68</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: *As no.1*, 288.

and he had a strong influence on her musical beginnings. He made a lasting impression as a teacher and she felt he was one of the best of them-

*'I always felt inspired and encouraged by the fact that, talented and distinguished as he was, he could yet enter into the initial difficulties of the inexperienced and invariably bring out the best abilities that they possessed.'*<sup>69</sup>

Annie continued to develop her music education by studying at the Royal University of Dublin (UCD). She graduated firstly with a BA then in 1887 with a MusB and finally in 1889 with a MusD. This made her the first woman to receive a Doctorate of Music in Ireland. At this point the young and enthusiastic Dr Annie Patterson held an education greatly superior to many of her peers involved in musical activities in Dublin. She set about putting it all to good use and became involved in several areas of Dublin's musical culture.

Having also received one of the first organ scholarships that the academy gave out in 1887 in addition to everything else Annie was an accomplished organist and between 1887 and 1897 she worked occasionally as organist throughout Dublin. She also became involved with the Dublin Choral Union and became its conductor for a short period in 1891. However in the period between 1887 and 1897 Annie is not mentioned much in any of the existing literature. Perhaps this is because her achievements around 1897 were so great that they overshadowed anything else she had done before that.

<sup>69</sup> Richard Pine & Charles Acton: As No. 1, 287.

Annie Patterson is best remembered for her involvement in the founding of Feis Ceoil in 1897. Its establishment greatly added to musical life all over the country, giving musicians the opportunity to show their talents, particularly musicians of Irish music. As Grattan Flood noted 'the annual music making as the Feis Ceoil and the Oireachtas since the year 1897 has not a little influenced the musical life in Ireland'.<sup>70</sup> The Oireachtas was a festival organised the same year as the Feis, which aimed to promote the Irish language the same way Feis Ceoil aimed to promote Irish Music.

Annie Patterson first publicly announced her desire to re-establish the idea of the ancient Celtic *feiseanna* at a meeting of the Gaelic League in 1894. This occurred a year after the League had been founded and two years after the founding of the National Literary Society. Therefore it tied in with the strong feelings of cultural nationalism that were developing all over the country at this point when politics was concerned with the question of Home Rule and eventual independence. Irish culture was beginning to be reborn through the influence of the various organisations concerning themselves with the revival, such as the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association. Annie felt that through reviving the idea of the *feiseanna* in the form of Feis Ceoil there would be an increase in Irish musicians and a new interest in Irish music and as a result she hoped it would regain a place of importance in Ireland's culture. She also hoped to make it part of the culture of every part of society and to destroy the stereotype that had developed, particularly during the Famine, that Irish music was the music of the poor classes. Annie also hoped to make Irish music part of

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<sup>70</sup> W. H. Grattan Flood: *A History of Irish Music* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970), 336.

music education as well as it being performed. She suggested that music notation and sight singing be used in the teaching of Irish music rather than it remaining mainly an aural tradition. She also suggested that 'thoroughly cultured' musicians should teach 'theory and voice production classes' through the outlets of the Gaelic League.<sup>71</sup>

After her suggestion in 1894 a committee was formed on the 2 February 1895. It was made up of members of the Irish National Literary society and the Gaelic League and it also included some representatives from the RIAM.<sup>72</sup> As was usual for the Academy it took a central role in the early days of organising the Feis Ceoil with many of the early meetings being held at Westland Row and one of the main academy representatives was Edith Oldham who went on to be one of the main founders of Feis along side Annie Patterson. Annie became an honorary secretary along with Mr P.J. McCall. The first aim of this committee was to publicise the idea and what they were trying to do. This was achieved mainly through a series of lectures on Irish music given by Annie and Mr Alfred Perceval Graves.

Cultural Nationalism was such a growing issue at this point and Feis Ceoil was promoting cultural nationalism so therefore it gained a large amount of support relatively quickly. The idea that Ireland had once had a rich musical traditions and that through Feis Ceoil its organisers were trying to bring these traditions back to life appealed to many, particularly organisations like the Gaelic

<sup>71</sup> Marie McCarthy: 'The Transmission of Music and the Formation of National Identity in Early Twentieth Century Ireland' *Irish Musical Studies Volume 5* ed. Patrick f. Devine & Harry White. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 155.

<sup>72</sup> Aloys Fleischmann: 'Music and Society, 1850-1921' *A New History of Ireland, VI* ed. W.E. Vaughan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 214.

League.<sup>73</sup> The League's main aim was to promote the Irish Language, therefore Feis Ceoil appealed to it on two levels. Firstly it re-established an important element in Ireland's culture of the past and secondly it could help promote the Irish language through Irish songs, which would be one of the competitions in Feis. The Feis Ceoil would also help to re-establish the place of the harp, the national symbol of Ireland, in our musical culture. There was a competition created for the harp in both the Feis Ceoil and the Oireachtas in 1897.<sup>74</sup>

The first Feis Ceoil was held in Dublin from the 18-21 May 1897. It had 417 entries, a number that increased greatly in the twentieth century.<sup>75</sup> The Oireachtas was also founded in 1897. It was established as a sister of the Feis Ceoil aiming to further increase the population's awareness and interest in Irish culture. It was described as a festival of Gaelic literature and drama, traditional music and fine art.<sup>76</sup> Annie Patterson was also involved in the Oireachtas as music advisor. The Oireachtas was to satisfy those afraid that Feis would not sufficiently protect and promote Irish music and the Irish language. Between Feis Ceoil and the Oireachtas Irish music and the Irish language and culture in general gained an increasingly dominant position in Irish society. It illustrates Annie's importance in these initial steps to the rebirth of Irish culture because she was greatly involved in organising both. Her work began the process of bringing Irish music back into the lives of the Irish population, setting it on the road to becoming a central element of our culture as it is today.

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<sup>73</sup> Marie McCarthy: As No. 5, 147.

<sup>74</sup> W. H. Grattan Flood: As no. 4, 323.

<sup>75</sup> Aloys Fleischmann: *Music In Ireland: A Symposium* (Oxford: Cork University Press, 1952), 214.

<sup>76</sup> Brian Boydell: 'Dublin' *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, volume 3* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 627.



As well as her many other talents Annie Patterson was arguably one of the finest music journalists in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. She wrote several books on music, on topics varying from the Oratorio to Schumann.<sup>77</sup> However it was her articles that she wrote for the *Weekly Irish Times*, between 1899 and 1901, which had the greatest effect on promoting music in Dublin at that time. Through the articles Annie made music more accessible to a large amount of the public. She covered a wide variety of subjects, thus giving her readers a diverse general knowledge of all the aspects that she felt were important.

Over the three years Annie wrote over 100 pieces for the *Weekly Irish Times*. Through them perhaps she saw an opportunity to educate Dublin's general public in the basic elements of music, thus giving them a better understanding and appreciation of all that was going on musically in the capital at that point in history. She also encouraged them to attend concerts and to take part in their musical culture by providing them with reviews and announcements of all that was taking place. Each week she ended her article by previewing what she would cover the following week. This was probably in the hopes of keeping her readers interested in her articles, therefore keeping them interested in the music too.

As well as aiming to cultivate the musical knowledge of the public, Annie dealt with all the main themes in musical activity at that time. She gives her opinions

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<sup>77</sup> William H. Grattan Flood/ Patrick F. Devine: 'Annie Patterson' *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, volume 19 (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 237.

on women in music through her articles on Alice Adelaide Needham or Madame Fanny Moody. In them she expresses how great it is that women have become more involved in music in Ireland. In the article on Alice Needham she comments on how in history 'Irishwomen were as much to the front as Irishmen'.<sup>78</sup> She believes that then, at the turn of the twentieth century, that women were beginning to regain that position.

In her series of articles entitled 'Music in the Home' Annie covers many areas of music making, giving her readers the necessary information to improve their own enjoyment and understanding of music. As she put it in her first article on the subject in October 1899, 'there is no more popular feature in the amusements and pleasures of the home circle than music.'<sup>79</sup> It is possible that the popularity of this first article was Annie's incentive to continue the idea. Through the course of the series of articles on music in the home she gives advice on the main areas of music that she thought would be of relevance to the public: how to practice, what to practice, how to study music, and how to give a concert or host a musical evening. Her articles are informative while also being easy to understand.

Annie Patterson's ideas concerning the need for developing all forms of Irish music were also clearly illustrated within her articles. The majority of them have a common theme running through them. They deal with aspects of music in Ireland- Irish composers, Irish musicians and the music scene in Dublin. Cultural nationalism was still a major concern of society at that time. In many

<sup>78</sup> *Weekly Irish Times*, 9 June 1900

<sup>79</sup> *Weekly Irish Times*, 14 October 1899

ways some saw the connection between politics and music as nearly eclipsing ‘the possibility of independent musical growth.’<sup>80</sup> Annie was probably aware of this so she continued to support cultural nationalism and the promotion of all things Irish in her articles. Perhaps she hoped that her articles would encourage the public to become more involved and to take a greater interest in their country’s musical developments. This would in turn promote cultural nationalism while also helping to continue the growth in music.

On the 30 December 1899 Annie’s article, ‘Music in the Home: The Musical prospects of Dublin for 1900’, gives a good summary of the developments made in the previous decades. She opens by telling her readers that it is necessary to ‘consider how the Irish Metropolis is equipped musically for the coming year’. She goes on to list all the important developments such as the Academy, Feis Ceoil and the many societies, praising each one in turn. Through the article she makes her readers aware of the rich musical culture that is growing around them while also hoping to evoke in them a sense of pride in the these musical developments. Annie’s articles provided her with a source to advertise the talents in Ireland as well as educating the reader. During 1900 in particular she covers the Feis Ceoil that year, its composers and also eminent musicians in the city at that time.

Through the articles in the *Weekly Irish Times* and her involvement in Feis Ceoil Annie Patterson made a major contribution to the growth of music and of musicians and music lovers in Dublin and further a field. She used her talents to share her love of music, thus creating a new generation of music lovers. Annie

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<sup>80</sup> Harry White: *The Keeper’s Recital* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), 153.

went on to become a lecturer of Irish Music at University College Cork from 1924 until her death in 1934. In her later life she also composed several works. She wrote three operas, symphonic poems and arranged many Irish airs. The majority of her compositions are Irish in their themes and characteristics, illustrating how she carried on her love of Irish music in her compositions. She also continued to write, contributing to numerous books and periodicals.<sup>81</sup> A number of her articles from the *Weekly Irish Times*, particularly those from the music in the home series, were published in book form, probably as a result of their popularity when they originally appeared in the paper. Annie was a strong, intelligent and talented woman who worked hard to develop music in Ireland and to improve public awareness of the rich musical culture that existed. Through her work she also became an inspiration to women everywhere.

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<sup>81</sup> William H. Grattan Flood/ Patrick F. Devine: As no. 11, 237.

The contribution of women to music in the second half of the nineteenth century was significant in the growth in musical activity that occurred at that time. They were involved in all the major developments yet their contribution has always been overlooked. Any references made to the many women involved in the Academy, or the many musical societies and organisations of that time, have been brief and general.

## Conclusion

In the second half of the nineteenth century many developments took place in Dublin. By the dawn of the twentieth century music had regained a place of importance in the culture and recreational activities of Dublin's population. The establishment of the Academy was arguably the defining feature that set it all in motion because it provided Dublin with its own school to nurture and develop local musical talent. It also brought many leading musicians together under the one roof as teachers, students or even members of the audience at academy recital and gatherings. This led to greater communication between the musical personalities in Dublin at that time which often resulted in new ideas and developments. The academy itself had developed out of the similar ideas of several of the members of the Amateur Concerts Society in 1848.

Through the Academy women were given a newfound freedom. They were accepted as teaching staff and as students and this was one area where they held equal opportunities to their male counterparts. They were paid equal wages and their input into concerts and musical gatherings of the time were respected and appreciated. In spite of the fact that in the nineteenth century the position of women in society was still that of wife and mother, music seemed to be one of

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the few other areas where their involvement was accepted. Their contribution was particularly appreciated in music in Dublin at this time because the more effort that went in to music the stronger and more varied the musical culture became.

In the nineteenth century, particularly the second half, the main area of music that women were involved in was that of piano teaching. The piano had always been one of the few instruments that it had been acceptable for women to play, even in the previous century. At this point, with the establishment of the Academy and the growing popularity of concerts featuring more instrumental music women got the chance to illustrate their skills as a pianist and their knowledge of the piano through teaching. The female singer still existed, but not to the degree they had in the eighteenth century, probably because there were other possibilities available. However some women continued to perform as singers and gain wealth and fame through the beauty of their voices and their skills as a vocalist. The academy provided many teaching opportunities for women.

Fanny Arthur Robinson and Annie Patterson are of particular significance to the developments of music in the second half of the nineteenth century and the importance of women's involvement. Fanny Arthur Robinson proved herself as a talented pianist from her first appearance in 1849, far excelling many of the male pianists of that time in Dublin. She proved that a woman could master an advanced understanding of the piano and she further illustrated it by being the first person in Ireland to give a full recital on the piano by herself. She was also

a talented teacher and gave a lot of time and effort to the Academy and its development. As if that was not enough she was also a capable composer. She composed a notable amount of music, the majority of which was for the piano. Fanny's understanding of the piano was clearly illustrated in her ability to write music for it and her ability to manipulate it in performance. She was an admirable woman who inspired the next generation of piano teachers and pianists in Dublin. She also left a permanent record of her musical understanding and ability in the shape of her compositions.

Annie Patterson took the role of the female musician a step further and illustrated that women were capable of understanding music and developing it. Her most memorable achievement is undoubtedly the founding of Feis Ceoil, an achievement that created a growth in Irish music and which laid the foundations for continuing development in this area in the twentieth century. She also shared her great knowledge and love of music with the public through her articles in the *Weekly Irish Times*, which helped to further the interest in music in the capital.

Overall women played an important role in laying the foundations of the musical culture that lives on today in Dublin and in other areas of the country. Through music they made one of the earliest attempts to illustrate that women were capable of achieving equally with men, and being able to excel with their abilities. They worked hard to achieve their goals and in the process shared their love of music with many others. They deserve recognition for their talents and abilities, for their strength and courage. But most importantly they deserve to be



recognised for their contribution to the developments that helped revive a strong musical culture in Ireland.

This contains a list of Fanny Arthur Robinson's music available in Ireland.

It is compiled from the copies contained in the National Library of Ireland (NL) and the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM).

In chronological order:

*God is Love* (NL)

*Sentiments* (RIAM) 1853

*The Haymakers* (RIAM) 1858

*Infant Smiles* (RIAM) 1868

*Laughing Water* (RIAM) 1870

*Evening Thoughts* (NL) 1873

*Evening Thoughts* (RIAM) 1873

*Stella* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*The Song of the Mill Wheel* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*Le Chant Du Moulin* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980*<sup>62</sup> lists thirteen entries of music for the pianoforte by Fanny Arthur Robinson. However it does not include the last three on the above list. Therefore it is unclear exactly how many piano-pieces she composed but it seems probable that it was somewhere between fifteen and twenty. The catalogue also lists several editions of Fanny's cantata, *God is Love*, and the academy library holds several editions of this work.

<sup>62</sup> *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980* (London, K.G. Swan, 1983), 258.

## Appendix A

This contains a list of Fanny Arthur Robinson's music available in Ireland.

It is compiled from the copies contained in the National Library of Ireland (NL) and the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM).

### In chronological order:

*God is Love* (NL)

*Sentiments* (RIAM) 1853

*The Haymakers* (RIAM) 1855

*Infant Smiles* (RIAM) 1868

*Laughing Water* (RIAM) 1870

*Evening Thoughts* (NL) 1873

*Evening Thoughts* (RIAM) 1873

*Stella* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*The Song of the Mill Wheel* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*Le Chant Du Moulin* (RIAM) Date of Publication unknown

*The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980*<sup>82</sup> lists thirteen entries of music for the pianoforte by Fanny Arthur Robinson. However it does not include the last three on the above list. Therefore it is unclear exactly how many piano pieces she composed but it seems probable that it was somewhere between fifteen and twenty. The catalogue also lists several editions of Fanny's cantata, *God is Love*, and the academy library holds several editions of this work.

<sup>82</sup> *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980* xlviiii (London: K.G. Saur, 1985), 250.

## Appendix B

This is a list of the reproductions of Annie Patterson's articles contained in the library of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. There are no other sources of these articles available in this country. This list contains the date and main heading of each of the articles in the Library.

### In Chronological order:

- 14 October 1899: 'Music in the Home'
- 21 October 1899: 'Music in the Home: How to Practice'
- 28 October 1899: 'Music in the Home: What to Practice, The Choice of a  
Pianoforte Course'
- 4 November 1899: 'Music in the Home: Advice to Young Singers'
- 11 November 1899: 'Music in the Home: How Orchestral music speaks to the  
Listener'
- 18 November 1899: 'Music in the Home: The Rise and Progress of the Opera'
- 25 November 1899: 'Music in the Home: The Choice of Music as a Profession'
- 2 December 1899: 'Music in the Home: What it Means to be a Public Singer'
- 9 December 1899: 'Music in the Home: Concert Engagements'
- 16 December 1899: 'Music in the Home: The choice of Concert Repertoire'
- 23 December 1899: 'Music in the Home: Organ Playing and Choir Training'
- 30 December 1899: 'Music in the Home: The Musical Prospects of Dublin for  
1900'
- 6 January 1900: 'Music in the Home: How to Study Music Methodically'
- 13 January 1900: 'Music in the Home: How to Organise a Musical Evening'
- 20 January 1900: 'Music in the Home: How to Give a Concert'
- 27 January 1900: 'Music in the Home: The Comic Element in Music'

- 3 February 1900: 'Music in the Home: Military Music'
- 10 February 1900: 'Music in the Home: Musical Societies'
- 17 February 1900: 'Music in the Home: How to Form a Choral Union'
- 24 February 1900: 'Music in the Home: Oratorio Music'
- 3 March 1900: 'Music in the Home: Part Music and Song'
- 10 March 1900: 'Music in the Home: Music in Fiction'
- 17 March 1900: 'Music in the Home: Music and the Saints'
- 24 March 1900: 'The Queen and Music'
- 31 March 1900: 'Music in the Home: the Story of *God Save the Queen*'
- 7 April 1900: 'Music in the Home: Music in Dublin at the Queen's First Visit'
- 14 April 1900: 'The Native Music of Ireland'
- 21 April 1900: 'Famous Irish Opera Composers'
- 28 April 1900: 'A Plea for British Opera'
- 19 May 1900: 'The Feis Cantata Prize Winner- The Rrv. Dr Collison'
- 26 May 1900: 'Belfast Feis Ceoil'
- 2 June 1900: 'Creative Musical Genius'
- 9 June 1900: 'Alice Adelaide Needham'
- 16 June 1900: 'Feis Prize Winners for 1900: Mr Robert Dwyer'
- 23 June 1900: 'Feis Composer for 1900: Carl Gilbert Hardebeck'
- 30 June 1900: 'Feis Composer for 1900: Herr Henry Bast'
- 7 July 1900: 'Feis Composer for 1900; Mr Herbert Hardy'
- 14 July 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Dr T.R.G. Jose'
- 21 July 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Dr T.R.G. Jose....Continued'
- 28 July 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Dr Joseph Smith'
- 4 August 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Dr James Cullwick'

11 August 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Dr William Gater, BA'

18 August 1900: 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Mr Charles Marchant, Mus BAC'

15 December 1900: 'A Charming Prima Donna: Madame Fanny Moody'

22 December 1900: 'The work of the musical Association'

29 December 1900: 'The Story of Handel's *Messiah*'

5 January 1901: 'Music in the Home: The New organ at Chapel Royal'

23 March 1901: 'Musicians of the Day: Herr Adolph Willhelmj'

13 April 1901: 'Musicians of the Day: Madame Alex Elsner Stewart'

20 April 1901: 'The Music Scene in Dublin'

27 April 1901: 'Musicians of the Day: Herr Theodor Cmur'

8 June 1901: Irish Composers of the Day: Mr Charles Craddock and Mr Patrick

Delaney'

Brian Boydell: 'Dublin', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, volume 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), 623-629

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Marcia J. Citron: *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000)

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## Abstract

Fanny Arthur Robinson and Annie Patterson made important contributions to musical life in Dublin in the decades leading up to the twentieth century. They inspired and encouraged many of their female peers and this period saw a continuous growth in the involvement of women in music.

Fanny Arthur Robinson worked as a performer and teacher. She had a style of playing that was admired by many. She also composed and her piano music illustrates a clear understanding of harmony and the possibilities of the piano. Annie Patterson idea to recreate the ancient Celtic Feiseanna was created in Feis Ceoil, a huge development in Ireland's musical culture. She was also one of Ireland's first music journalists and through her articles she provided her readers with knowledge of a variety of areas of music.

This thesis examines the contribution made by women to music in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly that of Fanny Robinson and Annie Patterson. It examines their role within Dublin's musical culture at that time and how their male counterparts and the public perceived them.

It hopes to illustrate the contribution women in Ireland made to not only playing and composing music but also to developing and sharing an interest in the music with the public.