

**AITHISG IUL CIVIL**  
**GAELIC MUSIC CONFERENCE**  
**REPORT 2006**

PROISEACT NAN EALAN  
the gaelic arts agency



**A way forward for Gaelic Music**



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## **PROISEACT NAN EALAN / THE GAELIC ARTS AGENCY**

***Proiseact Nan Ealan is the national development agency for the Scottish Gaelic arts.***

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Proiseact Nan Ealan (PNE) is the national development agency for the Scottish Gaelic arts. PNE is based in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, but works nationally and internationally. It is a registered charity, employs a staff of twelve, generates an annual income of approx £500,000 and its key stakeholders are the Scottish Arts Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Bord Na Gaidhlig.

PNE is not a funding agency but researches, develops and pilots new initiatives in the Gaelic arts which, when they prove sustainable, are set-up as independent companies and organisations. Past PNE initiatives include Feisean Nan Gaidheal, the Ceolas summer school and the Tosg theatre company. PNE productions such as An Leabhar Mor: The Great Book of Gaelic, have won an extensive range of awards.

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# Ro-ràdh / Forword

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Chaidh an aithisg seo ùghdarrachadh le Pròiseact nan Ealan (PNE) an dèidh na Co-labhairt Ciùil, lùl Ciùil, ann an Tallaichean Baile Ghlaschu air 22 is 23 Màirt 2006. B' e iomairt PNE a bh' anns a' Cho-labhairt Chiùil, a chuir Kate Craik agus Marisa Dhòmhnallach air chois le taic bho Iomairt Chultarach na h-Alba. Thug an tachartas, a mhair dà là, raon de phrìomh òraidichean còmhla agus còrr air 70 riochdaire bho Coimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig a' Chiùil. (Faic Pàipear-taice 6).

Tha sinn gu mòr an comain an Oil. Anna Latharna NicGhill'losa airson aithisg na co-labhairt seo ullachadh agus luchd-maoineachaidh na co-labhairt (Comhairle Ealain na h-Alba, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean & Comhairle Baile Ghlaschu).

Tha Pròiseact nan Ealan taingeil airson comhairle is stiùireadh Fòram Ciùil na Gàidhlig, agus airson an taic ann a bhith a' dèanamh na co-labhairt, lùl Ciùil, cho soirbheachail.

This report was commissioned by Proiseact nan Ealan (PNE) following the lùl Ciùil Music Conference in Glasgow City Halls on 22nd and 23rd March 2006. The Music Conference was a PNE initiative organised by Kate Craik and Marisa Macdonald with the support of Scottish Cultural Enterprise. The two day event brought together a range of key speakers and over 70 delegates from the Gaelic Music Community (See Appendix 6).

We are indebted to Dr. Anne Lorne Gillies for preparing this conference report and to the conference funders (Scottish Arts Council, Bord na Gàidhlig, Highlands and Islands Enterprise & Glasgow City Council).

Proiseact nan Ealan is grateful for the the advice and guidance of the Gaelic Music Forum, and their support in making the lùil Cuil conference such a successful event.

## Gaelic Music Forum:

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Arthur Cormack

Mary Ann Kennedy

Donnie Munro

Carolyn Paterson

Matthew Rooke

Allan Macdonald

Margaret Bennett

Anne Lorne Gillies

Fiona Mackenzie

Anna Murray

Kenna Campbell

Malcolm Maclean





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# 1. Introduction

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**1.1** Gaelic music can be seen as a window upon an ancient and still vibrant culture, or as one of Scotland's premiere commercial assets; as a vehicle for teaching the language, or a way of getting together and having a good time; as a career-path, or as food for the soul. It plays a much more significant part in the Scottish Music industry than might be expected from its now perilously diminished language base, and has helped attract interest in Scottish and Gaelic culture at international level. Its status was confirmed by *lùl Ciùil* (Guiding Music) – Scotland's first dedicated Gaelic Music Conference – which took place in the newly refurbished Recital Rooms in Glasgow's City Halls on the 22nd and 23rd March 2006.

**1.2** *lùl Ciùil* was designed and marketed as "a key stage in the development of Gaelic Music in Scotland", and a forum for "key players from the Gaelic arts scene" to "celebrate the incredible growth in Gaelic Music, as well as supporting those involved in the industry to develop their skills and increase audiences for their work". Pre-publicity was distributed widely through the local and national media, in addition to personal invitations to target individuals and groups: professional performers (mainstream and new-wave, established and upcoming); administrators and promoters (both private, public and voluntary sector); teachers, tutors, students and amateur enthusiasts throughout Scotland and beyond.

**1.3** The aims of *lùl Ciùil* were ambitious: "to share ideas, contacts, and to help develop future strategy for Gaelic Music in Scotland"; its objectives were loosely defined – perhaps deliberately so. For Gaelic music is not homogenous: professional Gaelic music-making takes place across a variety of styles, tastes, contexts and modes of delivery – traditional, rock, semi-classical, country, fusion, choral etc, even, in the shape of Seattle-based band *Mill a h-uile rud* (Ruin everything) punk. (Imagine a two-day conference on "Scottish music": Blazin' Fiddles and Franz Ferdinand, Carol Kidd and the Kevock Choir, Paolo Nutini and Nicola Benedetti, the SCO and the Trashcan Sinatras...?) "Non-professional" Gaelic music can mean anything from amateur choirs to *fèisean* participants, young hopeful virtuosi to singers in pubs and *cèilidhs* and summer-schools and playgroups – and the edges between professional and amateur are even more blurred in Gaelic music than they are in non-Gaelic. For the oral Gaelic musical tradition was not about "who is a good singer", but "what the songs say", and the idea of people making professional careers out of singing the songs seemed anomalous in a community where everyone sang anyway – at work, at play, at sea, on land, in Church, in school...? Perhaps this is why even the most successful Gaelic musicians have tended to be pathologically modest about their achievements, and shy of promoting

themselves or targeting their music towards particular audiences. Instead they have tended to sing when someone invites them, to anyone who happens to turn up – people who like traditional music, or world music, or Celtic sounds, or anything at all in Gaelic – and just hope someone will understand it, join in its chorus, wash the cups at the interval, and perhaps even pay for it.

**1.4** Of course the Gaelic language base in 2006 is tiny in comparison to its English counterpart. Even if every Gaelic-speaking man, woman, child and infant in Scotland bought a copy of an album it would not reach gold status. Yet perhaps the most persistent – certainly the most optimistic – theme to emerge from Iùl Ciùil was that not only does “Gaelic music already punch well above its weight” but that there is far more untapped potential out there, in terms of discovering and promoting new talent and audiences. Of course there may be an element of wish fulfilment at play here: any Conference has its share of axes to grind, fishes to catch, dreams to sell... But the number of people interested in Gaelic music (performers, audiences, composers, arrangers, researchers, producers, promoters etc) already far exceeds the numbers actually able to speak – or even understand – the language; which in turn suggests the existence of even greater numbers as yet unaware of its existence, let alone its cultural interest, aesthetic attractiveness and the skill of its exponents. There are many black holes to plug: lack of promotion, funding, stimulus, networking, collaboration, entrepreneurial skills, self-confidence – but Iùl Ciùil provided opportunities to identify, discuss, and begin to find ways of addressing all of these issues and more.

**1.5** Some of the challenges facing Gaelic music are shared with the music industry across the developed world. Some could be defined as peculiarly Scottish. Some are specific to Gaelic, including the need to confront some deep-seated, perhaps subconscious cultural habits, as we have seen. But most of our problems arise out of the survival struggle of a tiny minority language in a world dominated by a few super-tongues; a once-vibrant but long-neglected culture trying to make itself relevant and appealing to today's musically sophisticated young people without destroying what remains of its own essential spirit in the process.

**1.6** The general decline in Gaelic usage was a theme which ran throughout Iùl Ciùil – sometimes unspoken but always present. It is unclear whether hard-sell promotion of Gaelic music would have a positive impact upon the number of people speaking the language itself. Certainly PNE made every effort to maximise usage of Gaelic as the medium for Iùl Ciùil's proceedings, within the bounds of practicality and politeness. During plenary sessions Gaelic was the language used by all fluent Gaelic-speaking delegates, both from the platform and the floor, with simultaneous translation provided for non-Gaelic speakers. But the fluent Gaelic-speakers appeared predominantly to be performers, presenters and teachers of Gaelic music, or representatives of Gaelic arts organisations, while the English-speakers seemed predominantly to be music industry representatives, agents, promoters, consultants etc, or representatives of funding bodies. Whether Gaelic-speaking musicians can evolve a more entrepreneurial approach, adopt the in-your-face approach needed for marketing and promotion, or infiltrate the corridors of power and influence, without compromising the very cultural and artistic qualities that typify their culture, inspire their pupils and move their audiences... whether we can win the big bannock and keep the mother's blessing – to borrow a metaphor from Gaelic folktale: these are questions that will take more than a two-day conference to answer. But Iùl Ciùil provided the ground – to borrow another metaphor, this time from the pipers – a bold opening statement, the inspiration of the pibroch, establishing its mood, and suggesting the direction in which subsequent variations may be developed and resolved.

**1.7** And (perhaps even more importantly) it gave Gaelic musicians of all ages and ambitions a chance to network not only with key industry stakeholders (agents, promoters, funders etc) but also with one another; a chance to identify their own needs and begin addressing them for themselves; a chance to see themselves as players in a huge global field, yet players with enormous advantages: cultural riches, friendly support mechanisms, and official good-will – all of which were patently represented in Iùl Ciùil.

**1.8** Iùl Ciùil was organised by Pròiseact nan Ealan (PNE) – The Gaelic Arts Agency – and serviced by Scottish Cultural Enterprise. It was supported by the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), Bòrd Na Gàidhlig (BnAG), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Glasgow City Council, and Comann na Gàidhlig.



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## ***2. Historical Context***

**2.1** Pròiseact nan Ealan – the Gaelic Arts Agency – was established in 1987 as a SAC / HIE research project. PNE is both the lead-body for Scottish Gaelic arts development and a prize-winning arts production company whose awards include a BAFTA, a Civic Trust Award and two Scottish Tourist Board Thistle Awards for Excellence in Cultural Tourism. PNE is based in the Western Isles but works both nationally and internationally. Past work has involved successful arts events in Europe, Canada and the USA plus a wide range of arts collaborations in Ireland. PNE's key funders are SAC, HIE and BnaG, but the organisation fundraises from a wide variety of sources to progress specific projects.

**2.2** As a production company PNE focuses on concept development and the piloting of new ideas. Sustainable PNE initiatives, such as Feisean nan Gàidheal and the Ceòlas summer school, have evolved into fully independent companies. Current arts production activity is focused on the international touring exhibition An Leabhar Mòr (The Great Book of Gaelic); a Gaelic storytelling initiative involving live events and new media; and a trans-national music production for 2007. PNE is not a funding agency but, as lead-body for the Gaelic arts, it fulfils an advocacy and co-ordination role for the Gaelic arts sector. It is currently progressing a Gaelic arts audience development strategy on behalf of the Gaelic Arts Strategic Development Forum (GASD), and developing a web-publishing initiative.

**2.3** Historically Iùl Ciùil is the latest in a series of measures to analyse current practice and identify – and hopefully implement – strategic approaches to the promotion of Gaelic music. It may also usefully be seen within the UK-wide context of research and development in music. Myerscough's ground-breaking survey of the economic impact of the arts in general (Economic Benefits of the Arts, 1988) inspired a series of studies in similar vein, which analysed the music industry in terms of sales, value added, consumer expenditure, market size, balance of trade, employment, secondary economic effects etc: e.g. The Overseas Earning of the Music Industry, British Invisibles, 1995; The Value of Music, National Music Council, 1996, and The Creative Industries Mapping Document, DCMS 1998. The most recent reports which have focused on issues and problems within the music industry include A Sound Performance (Dane et al, 1999), Banking on A Hit (Wilson et al, 2001) and Counting the Notes (National Music Council, 2002).

**2.4** Developments in Post-devolution Scotland have included the establishment of the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Groups on Culture and the Media, the Scottish Contemporary Music Industry, and Scottish Traditional Arts, and the Scottish Executive's strategy document Creating our future, minding our past. Scottish Enterprise launched its Creative Scotland strategy in 2001, a £25 million package aimed at 'the development of Scotland's creative industries to exploit the wealth of talent, skills and expertise in the sector'. This included analyses of the current situation within the Scottish music industry, notably The Value of Music in Scotland (Laing, 2000) and Mapping the music industry in Scotland (Williamson, Cloonan and Frith, 2002).

**2.5** The Enterprise structure has provided the catalyst for many developments of crucial importance to Gaelic and other forms of music, notably in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise area, including

- Highlands and Islands Arts (HI Arts)
- Highlands and Islands labels (HAIL) which supports the independent recording industry in the region
- Music Industry Development And Support (MIDAS)

and 2007 will see a concentration of effort and a major promotional boost, both for the music and related industries, in the Year of Highland Culture.

**2.6** Pròiseact nan Ealan has itself commissioned research into issues of particular importance to Gaelic music:

- Traditional Music and Copyright (a) Issues and (b) Attempted solutions (McCann, 1998)
- Gaelic Music: Intellectual Property Development (Scottish Cultural Enterprise, 1999)
- Gaelic Music Research: Artists' Consultation Report (Scottish Cultural Enterprise, 2002)

**2.7** It also initiated and managed FasTrac (1996 and 2000) – a series of intensive training courses specifically tailored to the needs of people starting out on a career in the music business, including insight into professional rights and responsibilities and experience in studio and TV recording technologies and techniques.



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## ***3. Iùl Ciùil: conference***

### ***3.1 Iùl Ciùil focused on two key areas:-***

#### **3.1.1 Day One (An Tobar / The Well) comprised two sessions:**

- Gaelic Music and the Community, addressing areas such as tradition-bearing, festivals, summer schools, informal music-making in the community etc
- Gaelic music and education, which looked at the formal education system, rôle of song in language development, informal tuition (fèisean, summer schools etc)

#### **3.1.2 Day Two (An Sruth / The Stream) examined Professional Development:**

- The Music Industry raised issues such as new music and songwriting, recording, marketing, promotion and distribution, audience development, etc.
- Music and the Media debated TV, radio, digital technology etc and their rôle in supporting and developing Gaelic music

### ***3.2 Each session was made up of***

- a scene-setting keynote speech or speeches
- brief presentations from specialist panellists followed by plenary question-and-answer discussion sessions
- “breakout” discussion groups – each group facilitated by a specialist
- plenary report-back discussion sessions

**3.3** Attendance of discussion groups was elective, and to a large extent the make-up of each reflected the personal interests, priorities – and hobby-horses – of its members. An element of discreet orchestration by the Conference organisers avoided unwieldy group-numbers and ensured that each group enjoyed the presence of experienced practitioners and specialist advisers.

**3.4** The first day culminated in a Civic Reception. Lord Provost Liz Cameron of Glasgow City Council welcomed delegates to her city and emphasised the importance of Gaelic music to Scotland's cultural life. The Reception was also attended by representatives of Bòrd nan Gàidhlig, the Scottish Record Industry Association (SRIA) and other key groups, organisations and industry stakeholders. It was followed by a Cèilidh to which delegates were "invited to bring their songs and instruments for what promises to be an electric session!" – an invitation to which they responded with alacrity.

**3.5** Iùl ciùil was attended by 120 people on each of its two days. Many top names from the Gaelic Music Industry were present, including Margaret Bennett, Kenna Campbell, Arthur Cormack, Alasdair Gillies, Anne Lorne Gillies, Mary Ann Kennedy, Rona Lightfoot, Ishbel MacAskill, Alyth MacCormack, Maggie MacInnes, Fiona MacKenzie, Simon MacKenzie, Murdo ('Domino') MacLeod, Flora MacNeil, Calum Martin, Dòmhnall Angaidh Matheson, Anna Murray, Donald Shaw and Kenneth Thomson.

**3.6** In the unavoidable absence of both Agnes Rennie (Chair of PNE Board of Management) and Donnie Munro (key member of the Iùl Ciùil Organising Committee) Iùl Ciùil was chaired by PNE Board Member Kenna Campbell and by PNE Director, Malcolm MacLean, who also summed up at the end and thanked all delegates, guests, contributors, translator, PNE staff and Kate Craik of Scottish Cultural Enterprise. It had been, all agreed, a most stimulating exercise, imbued with optimism for the future. As the Report that follows demonstrates, there was a palpable desire for collaboration and mutual support, not only to maintain and transmit our language and musical tradition but also to develop Gaelic music in new directions: to create a supportive environment in which Gaelic musicians can create new songs that will not only appeal to our own young people (and in turn stimulate their interest in Gaelic) but also cross language barriers, to bring Gaelic to a much wider, global audience.



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## **4. An Tobar / The well: Gaelic Music and the Community**

### **4.1 Keynote 1: “Mairidh gaol is ceòl...?” / “Love and music will endure..?”**

Dr Anne Lorne Gillies (singer, writer, broadcaster and tutor) delivered what she herself called “a warm-up act” – and as this was a music conference her contribution began, continued and ended in song, in which she was enthusiastically joined by all the delegates. She urged the Conference to become more than just a talking shop or a chance to renew old friendships. While agreeing that Iùl Ciuil was an all-too-rare opportunity to meet fellow Gaelic musicians for mutual enrichment and support, she suggested that above all the Conference should aim to be a catalyst for real change. She delivered a reminder of why Gaelic music is so important, not just to its exponents but to the whole world; a warning about the forces, local, national and global, which threaten it; and a challenge to Conference – and to all who love Gaelic music – to find ways of protecting, promoting, strengthening and celebrating it.

She analysed the development of Gaelic music in terms of its natural strengths, its obvious weaknesses, the new opportunities that its younger exponents enjoy (opportunities for training, networking, collaborating, showcasing etc) and the threats that beset it – some of them shared with the global music industry as a whole, some “Scottish”, some specific to Gaelic, not least the diminishing language-base and the tension that can occur between artistic, commercial, cultural and linguistic priorities. And she challenged artists, arts administrators, funders, politicians and educationalists to work together to create a cultural ambience in Scotland in which all the arts flourished. In which Gaelic music is recognised as an important repository of social history, oral literature and lore, but also developed in new directions, made accessible to wider audiences, attractive to younger people. In which musical talents and interest are freely nurtured and encouraged in children of all backgrounds. In which musicians are properly trained, advised, represented, promoted and helped to earn a proper living...

(The full text of Anne Lorne Gillies’s address is given in Appendix 1, below.)

## 4.2 Gaelic Music in the Community

Panel 1 was made up of Anne Lorne Gillies (as above), Flora MacNeil (Gaelic singer), Jo MacDonald (BBC radio producer) Màiri Bh MacInnes (organiser, Ceòlas: Gaelic music and dance summer school, South Uist), and Kenneth Thomson (Gaelic choir conductor). Each gave a brief presentation of their work and experience: Anne as a representative of Argyll, and author of the book "Songs of Gaelic Scotland" which presents traditional Gaelic songs from throughout the Gàidhealtachd in a broad context of history, lore, legend, culture and musical theory; Flora as a native of Barra, recognised and honoured throughout the world as a seminal tradition-bearer (though she just said she had been fortunate enough to learn some songs from her mother and aunties!); Jo as a native of Lewis and BBC radio producer with a special interest in Gaelic traditional music, and a track-record of making the tradition accessible to the listener through meticulous research and high-quality programmes (though again, those were not her words!); Màiri, who showed a film of some of the activities of Ceòlas, which has re-invigorated the community, increased local skills and self-confidence, and attracted students from across the world to enjoy indigenous traditional arts in their own heartland; and Kenneth – another Argyll representative – whose wide-ranging, largely voluntary work includes not only choirs and choral arrangements, but also An Lòchran – the organisation which promotes Gaelic cultural and social activities in Glasgow, from Ceòl 's craic, the regular informal song-and-blether sessions in a pub, to Flower of the West, the flag-ship musical production in the Royal Concert Hall (May 2005).

After questions and debate from the floor delegates split up into four break-out groups, each of which had one of the expert panellists present to assist and contribute to the discussion:-

- New routes and uncharted territories (Facilitator, Anne Lorne Gillies)
- Festivals and summer schools (Mairi Bh. MacInnes)
- Mòds and Gaelic choirs (Kenneth Thomson)
- Tradition-bearing (Jo MacDonald)

Delegates reconvened afterwards to report back on their deliberations. The thoughts, questions, opinions and recommendations that arose during all these sessions are collated below. As Iùl Ciùil comprised a large group of people with widely differing backgrounds, aims, opinions, fears and interests, the ideas expressed may at times seem contradictory. On the whole, however, a remarkable degree of unison was achieved in such a short time.

## 4.3 Gaelic music and the community: comments, questions, recommendations

### 4.3.1 Defining the community, defending the tradition

- "Community" can be defined in many ways – geographically, socially, in terms of religion or culture, or just as "A group of people who share a common interest" ... But there was a feeling that in some fundamental way "the sense of Gaelic community has been shattered"
- Tension between the need to "protect our spiritual home" (preserving, protecting and transmitting Gaelic music in its own traditional heartland) and developing it in new directions, bringing it to new audiences. Are the two necessarily incompatible?
- Understandable resistance within heartland communities to well-meaning attempts to "normalise" Gaelic. After all, the conservatism of Gaelic music has been its primary source of strength during ages of rapid social change and neglect. This cannot be replaced by music schools based in big cities, or annual events like the Fèisean and Ceòlas however stimulating these may be.
- "Traditional music comes from the community not from the professionals." Measures to develop new skills have to be based on sustained, ongoing tuition within each community (which is, after all, the ideal context for organic growth of this kind)

### 4.3.2 Building upon the success of the Fèisean

- There have been welcome advances, and new things growing up to replace or replenish the stable society that once existed and sustained the Gaelic language. One of the most important has been the Fèisean movement. But is it sustaining and spreading the language? (5,000 children pass through the Fèisean movement, yet only 2,000 children are in Gaelic-medium education or GME).
- The Fèisean have succeeded in making traditional music trendy. Can they also make the Gaelic language trendy?
- What measures can be taken to increase the supply of tutors who are (a) fluent Gaelic-speakers, (b) able to teach through the medium of Gaelic, (c) expert musicians, and (d) great teachers?
- Even within the Fèisean movement there is still a feeling that "traditional Gaelic song is not fun" – at least in comparison with instrumental tuition. How can this be addressed – both in informal and formal education contexts?

- How can we ensure that music is found in GME at all stages (pre-school to tertiary) both as cultural enrichment and as a tool for language learning and development?

### 4.3.3 Developing the tradition, writing new songs

- “Respect tradition but welcome change”. Communities should seek new vehicles and contexts for celebrating and presenting their own Gaelic musical tradition: radio, film, video, internet, multi-media presentation; drama, musicals, opera, dance etc. Above all, new songs!
- Create an environment where people have the confidence to write freely, to have faith in their ideas and develop their skills. In the past there has been too much emphasis on techniques and “functions” in Gaelic song, not enough on the feelings that the song is trying to express and the fact that a song is first and foremost a form of human communication between writer and listener.
- “Why are good singers not writing new music?” Bring songwriters together in supportive groups, providing them with a “sounding board”, exchanging ideas, forming collaborations. Summer schools could also become catalysts for new songwriting, but the most important thing is to provide support for indigenous songwriters within their own communities.

### 4.3.4 Taking new songs to wider audiences

- “Talent is everywhere: people within the Gaelic community are writing poetry and composing tunes all the time.” But how to get new Gaelic songs into the public domain?
- How do songwriters get airtime or other exposure so that songs can become familiar? How do we draw in audiences? Where can we find new ways of letting the world know about our music...?
- There is an urgent need for better marketing: Gaelic artists to learn promotional skills; producers, events organisers etc to be willing to take risks on new material; and for the media – radio, TV and print – to air new songs and hype them to the hilt.
- Also needed are advice and support to songwriters as to how to protect their rights and earn money from their work.

### 4.3.5 Getting the right kind of support

- There is an urgent need for financial support in order to form and maintain appropriate training and support mechanisms for Gaelic musicians – and to make sure that they are accessible to the remotest communities. Gaelic needs to build a

network of individuals across Scotland – people who understand their own communities and can represent their needs, to lobby for funding and for the other forms of support necessary to bring these aims to fruition.

- Television and radio could do far more to nurture positive attitudes among young people towards Gaelic singing. Many young people are happy to go to live cèilidhs, where they enjoy the whole range – unaccompanied and fully arranged song. But they hardly ever see this on TV: Julie Fowls on Hogmanay Live was the exception that proved the rule.
- How can we change attitudes if young people never see vibrant young bands and singers, or if programmes have low production values – badly presented with no apparent theme or explanation, or transmitted during the day or late at night? The broadcaster should be proactive in championing the tradition, and also making it more interesting and accessible. An example of best practice was the BBC’s *Sruth an Eòlais*: its thematic approach heightened the sense of what the songs are about.

### 4.3.6 The rôle of the Mòd

- An Comunn Gàidhealach is a community-based member organisation, which could contribute far more to the development and showcasing of Gaelic music, especially through the National Mòd. The Mòd has enjoyed an influx of young people from GME, the Fèisean, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the specialist music schools and the RSAMD. It has had some healthy competition of late: e.g. the big-prize-money Gaelic singing competition *Seo Seinn* and the Young Traditional Awards. Yet as “Gaeldom’s premiere showcase” its image remains “dull and formulaic”, its repertoire “stagnant”. The Mòd needs a radical re-vamp both of image and content. The competitive element may be useful for maintaining standards, but also involves a real sacrifice of energy, spontaneity, “attitude” etc.
- As regards showcasing new songs, Mòd organisers feel torn between trying to achieve a measure of innovation and what they perceive to be the original aims of An Comunn, with which they have been entrusted. Similarly, competitors are scared to try new material for fear of losing marks from conservative or purist adjudicators. But An Comunn should proactively encourage new songwriting as a top priority, including commissioning new songs and innovative choral arrangements. The Mòd should give exposure to recent compositions – both as prescribed works and through rewarding competitors who choose to sing new material. This should become policy across the board – not hived off into a “new song singing” category of competition: old and new, traditional and modern should be inter-mixed throughout the Mòd. And An Comunn should make more effort to research the archives to find different, rarely-heard traditional materials to prescribe to competitors.

- The Mòd has included competitions for new song-writing in the past but (a) these have been discontinued and (b) why were the songs that were written for these competitions not promoted thereafter? The New Song Competition should be re-designed and reinstated, and efforts made to promote the winning songs through recordings, airplay, publication etc (cf. again Seo Seinn's prize-winners' albums, and the Footstompin' offshoots of the Young Traditional Awards.)

#### 4.3.7 The Gaelic choirs: closed shop or spectator sport?

- Gaelic choirs also have their roots at the heart of the community. The average age of members has fallen in recent years, and the proportion of fluent Gaelic-speaking choristers has increased. Yet the perception persists that they are "un-cool closed shops who sing to themselves". This must be urgently addressed, both from within the choirs, and by An Comunn, whose staid image and conservative musical requirements rub off not only on the choirs but also on the TV and radio programmes broadcast from the Mòd: the overall impression is dull and uninspiring.
- Gaelic choirs should widen their horizons and seek new non-competitive contexts in which to sing, especially inter-cultural events: not just Pan-Celtic but multi-cultural (e.g. Glasgow's West End Festival) – to become part of an international mix. "You can blend cultures through social involvement and passion," as, for example, through the Siubhal nan Salm project: a marvellous way both of celebrating Gaelic's age-old choral tradition and bringing communities together across the world.
- Gaelic choirs also need to seek ways of promoting a more positive image within the community: after all Gaelic choirs are as much a social, participant "sport" as a musical experience! They should seek imaginative ways of breaking down barriers; recruiting new members; making themselves attractive and accessible to the community; making the community feel involved in the choir and its activities.

#### 4.4 Gaelic Music and Education

Panel 2 was made up of Arthur Cormack (Director, Fèisean movement), Fiona Mackenzie (first incumbent of the Màiri Mhòr Gaelic Song Fellowship), Calum Martin (Gaelic Music Singing Instructor, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar), and Brian McNeill (Director, Traditional Music Department, Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.) All of them are successful professional Gaelic music practitioners in their own right. Each gave a brief résumé of his / her work in Gaelic musical training: Art in the hugely successful Fèisean movement, bringing young people together to develop skills in the Gaelic arts – song, dance, drama, and traditional music on a wide range of instruments: the Fèisean are among the most successful arts initiatives in Scotland and a blueprint for similar activities in non-Gaelic contexts; Fiona, remitted to develop interest and participation in Gaelic singing throughout the Highlands and especially in schools; Calum a psalm-precentor who teaches Gaelic singing in the schools in Lewis, in addition to producing, for example, the ground-breaking album *Salm and Soul*, recorded live in Glasgow Cathedral on 21st January 2005; Brian, founder-member of the Battlefield Band, now in charge of the equally ground-breaking traditional music stream in the RSAMD.

This was again followed by questions and debate from the floor, after which delegates once again broke up into discussion groups:-

- An t-ionnsachadh òg: Youth Tuition (a) Informal (Arthur Cormack)
- An t-ionnsachadh òg: Youth Tuition: (b) Formal Education & Schools (Calum Martin and Fiona Mackenzie)
- Higher / Further Education (Brian McNeill)
- Community & Lifelong Learning (Mairi Bh. MacInnes)

Delegates reconvened thereafter to report back on their discussion groups. The thoughts, questions, opinions and recommendations that arose throughout this session are once again collated below.

## **4.5 Gaelic Music and Education: comments, questions, recommendations**

### **4.5.1 The informal education context – advantages and disadvantages**

- There are enormous advantages in teaching people of all ages within the informal, familiar, supportive community context: identifying existent skills, knowledge and expertise, then drawing them out, developing them. This approach is preferable for initial traditional music tuition wherever possible.
- But there are real difficulties in persuading local people to work voluntarily. In sparsely-populated communities busy people are thinly spread across many different voluntary activities, committees etc.
- Any level of external funding impacts upon community relations: tensions between paid and non-paid personnel – both administrative and teaching – can fragment a longstanding volunteer network. Funding must be extremely well-focused, and the transition from voluntary to paid support sensitively handled, otherwise resentments will surface and volunteers may be lost forever.
- Funders should recognise that the strain upon voluntary organisers is further exacerbated by the requirement to apply for grants on an ongoing project-by-project basis. The vital importance of traditional music training should be reflected in commitment and continuity of provision.
- Properly targeted support and incentive (including training in transferable skills – book-keeping, fund-raising, marketing etc – and, where appropriate, recognised accreditation) must be available to volunteers in all communities
- Importing tutors to remote communities involves expensive travel and subsistence. We need to support and train local musicians to become tutors. Many have the skills, but few are musically literate. TOSG (the Gaelic Theatre Company) for example has recently identified a demand for skills training among people with basic skills wanting to develop them to professional level. We need
  - to identify the skilled people in the community and re-invest their expertise
  - to enhance the skills of people with musical talent but no teacher training
  - to establish mentoring schemes, using trained tutors to pass on their expertise to “apprentice” tutors
- Residency-led projects are offered by SAC, and offer a degree of continuity and stability for both tutor and community which cannot be achieved in seasonal fèisean or summer-schools.

- Partnerships might be set up to address identified community needs: for example the Community Arts course in Strathclyde University (Jordanhill Campus) might be interested in partnering skills training, both by sending students to the Gàidhealtachd on placements and also by attracting people from Gaelic communities onto their courses. (CNES already have a policy of supporting Gaelic-speaking students to attend GME teacher-training courses in Strathclyde.)
- Could the Inter-Authority Community Education Review Group (CERG) be doing more to support traditional music training in the Gàidhealtachd?
- Tuition is not the only form of exposure young people need. Encouragement and funding are also needed for local traditional music-making activities – informal sessions or gatherings, cèilidhs, etc. – and to ensure that children participate in and become part of that on-going tradition.

### **4.5.2 Gaelic music in formal education**

- The “Gaelic community” is no longer a geographical concept: on the one hand there are Gaelic-speakers living in Seattle; on the other hand non-Gaelic speaking parents living in the Gàidhealtachd (for example in Sleat) may opt to remain “outside” the Gaelic community. And of course there are hundreds of children going through Gaelic-medium education (GME) in communities where no Gaelic is spoken at all: 57% of GME now takes place outside the Gaelic heartland.
- Language cannot live in a vacuum. We must make every effort to ensure that all Gaelic-speakers enjoy a cultural dimension and a sense of communal support wherever they live, whether through cultural exchanges or by finding kindred spirits on the web and keeping in touch by e-mail.
- This is a good time to lobby for changes in educational thinking, both at national and regional level, as curricular reviews are currently underway. Formal education is crucial, yet the formal Scottish educational system neglects all aspects of Scottish culture – history, literature, music – which ought to be taught in a properly integrated way. People who feel deprived of their own culture often seek out GME for their primary aged children, while many adults end up going to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in search of their cultural identity – something of which they can be proud.
- Similarly, we must insist upon free access to music tuition, and exposure to traditional music, in all schools. It is the duty of Directors of Education to ensure that all children in their authorities get their entitlement: this should be national policy rather than left to the discretion of individual councils. February 2003 saw the launch of the Scottish Executive's Youth Music Initiative, which committed £17.5 million over three years towards

ensuring that all school children should have access to one year's free music tuition by the time they reach Primary 6. A further £10 million per year has been invested to develop this important initiative. Yet lùl Ciùil delegates reported a continuing lack of parity of provision from local council to local council.

- Lack of resources for Gaelic music teachers / tutors is also cause for concern. All schools (not just GM schools / classes) should be enabled to teach Gaelic music and to access appropriate material from Stòrlann (The National Gaelic Resource Centre).
- Music should be recognised as a vital tool for reinforcing 2nd language teaching at all stages (not just in infant classes). Teachers and lecturers should be trained, encouraged and resourced to utilise this fully across all age-groups from pre-school to tertiary and in community education.
- Gaelic song and singing games should be introduced into all the feisean as a 'fun' way of teaching all participants some Gaelic.



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## ***5. An Sruth / The Stream*** ***– Professional development***

### ***5.1 Keynote 2: Aislingí, Meas agus Airgead / Dreams, Respect and Money!***

Dermot McLaughlin (musician, Chief Executive, Temple Bar Cultural Trust, and former Music Director of the Irish Arts Council – An Chomhairle Ealaíon) gave delegates an overview of the various ways – ideas and policy initiatives – in which the ‘traditional arts’ (including the Gaelic Arts) are supported in the Republic of Ireland. In general, he explained, activity in the traditional arts tends to be voluntary, amateur, informal and participatory across all age groups and genders. High priority is given to ‘transmission’ – i.e. setting these activities within a context of social as well as cultural and aesthetic values.

A large number of organisations has evolved to support such activities, including

- Taisce Cheol Dúchais Éireann / Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) – the largest collection of Irish traditional music materials in the world.
- Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) devoted to the revival and practice of the traditional arts and the Irish language, with community-based branches all over Ireland and around the world: CCÉ provides classes and organises a series of local, regional and national competitions, culminating in Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.

- Music Network – a national concert promotion and music development agency established by An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council in 1985.

Competition is largely absent from the methods by which the traditional arts are handed on, performed, promoted and celebrated in Ireland. There are many educational or transmission-based events (sharing and imparting skills, insights and understanding, as well as repertoire and technique) including Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy / Willie Clancy Summer School – a mixture of graded instrumental, song and dance classes, plus recitals, talks, lectures and concerts. However there are some competitive events, notably CCÉ’s Fleadh Cheoil (mentioned above), and Oireachtas na Gaeilge – an annual festival of Irish language arts.

The Arts Council’s Report – 2004 – is a radical policy statement aimed to build better links and trust between the traditional arts community and the Arts Council. Measures include the appointment of a traditional arts specialist to advise the Council; an ambitious budget target; and the establishment of a 3-year initiative to invest in and develop ‘the key players in the traditional arts community’.

Meanwhile Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht development authority, whose remit includes the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht) has three full-time regional arts facilitators working to a national co-ordinator with funds available directly from the Údarás and also from a strategic funding programme operated jointly with the Arts Council. Another publication – recognises the environmental weakness of both the Irish language and the Gaeltacht, but outlines the peculiar strengths and opportunities for Gaeltacht arts. Added together all these measures have caused “a most unusual outbreak of optimism and consensus within the traditional arts community, as they begin to believe that State recognition of them and their work may now indeed be a secure reality!”

The full text of Dermot McLaughlin's address is given in Appendix 2, below.

### **5.2 Keynote 3: Drive and Innovation**

Pete Hagen (of Argyll Management, specialising in commercial, underground and roots artist management) explained the nature of his work: finding new talent, or reinvigorating a flagging career, then developing a career strategy – including deals with major recording companies and indie labels around the world. He has overseen artists' careers across a wide variety of circumstances. As a business man he sees huge commercial opportunities in Gaelic music. He sees no language barrier, but instead a music and culture which is part of world culture – in which many people are interested – but with outstanding music and musicianship which the Gaels take for granted but which blow everyone else away.

Pete then gave his perspective on working with professional musicians as they break into the commercial industry, explaining how he assembles a team around each artist according to their personal needs, and how he tries to balance that with industry demands. What he finds unusual in Gaelic music is that (“despite all the grumbling!”) there is actually a support structure in place, a pool of talent, performance opportunities, facilities, etc, though the geographical spread does make it harder to operate. But much more likely to let artists down is failure (a) to get good advice and (b) to create “fantastic product”. There is a need for Gaelic music to be developed and grow in the 21st century; to find ways to encourage innovation, writing and performance; to equip musicians with great coaches,

advisors and strategists, and the need to get proper advice early on in the career. But again the most important thing is great material, a great product, great tracks and a supportive team who can work with and exploit that material to the full.

He singled out PNE / Donna Cunningham's FasTrac programme as an important source of advice and understanding of the music industry. It should be revived at once, he advised! Other strategies he suggested included a road show of pro advisors: the distance between the Gàidhealtachd and London is a disadvantage, but it could be got around by a musical “flying doctor” service – a team of specialist management / legal advisors who could visit key areas within the country to give professional advice free (as happens, for example, in Scottish Cultural Enterprise's New Deal for Musicians programme) in order to avoid “ropey record deals”, and to address other questions, plans, career worries etc. But of course this needs funding to be put in place. “Let's find a way to do this and do it quickly.”

Workshops and collaborations were also vital, he said: opportunities to develop and be challenged as a writer and musician – collaborating with one another, using local specialists and importing additional professionals – writers and producers. He called on Gaelic artists to “raise the bar”, both creatively and professionally.

Other practical suggestions included Technology / websites: perhaps there should be a brand / website / presence on the net, and at industry events in the UK and abroad, which supports all Gaelic acts? Also we need to support the industry, not just the artist: labels, publishers, managers and agents need support too in order to be able to create the environment in which artists' careers can grow. Above all, he said, get the right advice, the right deals and the right support to be able to handle your career in a businesslike way. “You have a massive head start culturally and creatively, and fantastic early stages tuition and education, but no support thereafter. But it's down to you as to how much you want to improve things, not to organisations or arts bodies to tell you. So if nothing changes it's your fault not theirs!!!”

The full text of Pete Hagen's address is given in Appendix 3, below

### **5.3 The Music Business**

Panel 3 was made up of Dermot McLaughlin, Peter Hagen, Donna Cunningham, Julie Tait and Matthew

Rooke. Each made a brief presentation and answered questions about their work: we have already met Dermot and Pete; Donna represents artists through Firefly Productions, and directed the highly successful FasTrac course for upcoming young professional Gaelic musicians; Julie has worked in the private and public sector, in senior marketing and commercial development rôles across the Culture, Leisure and Tourism industry. She now specialises in audience development; Matthew works at Scottish Cultural Enterprise – consultancy to the creative and cultural industries. His career has embraced both arts management and professional music-making. He has special expertise in Negotiation & Mediation, Business Start Up, Strategy Development, Feasibility Studies and Funding and he was, for seven years, Music Director and, subsequently, Group Director at the Scottish Arts Council.

Break-out discussion groups were then formed as follows, and retained the same facilitators for both the morning and afternoon sessions:-

- Promoting Gaelic Music in the Music Industry (Donna Cunningham and Matthew Rooke)
- New Gaelic Music (Donald Shaw & Calum Martin)
- Marketing and Audience Development (Julie Tait)
- Gaelic Music and the Media (Mary Ann Kennedy & Niall Ian Dòmhnallach)

Delegates re-convened to report back on their discussions. Findings from the first three groups are collated in the next paragraph. Findings relating specifically to Gaelic Music and the Media (morning and afternoon sessions) are given in Section 5.6 (page 28) below, though the media are unavoidably implicated in the promotion of Gaelic music as well, especially new Gaelic music.

## **5.4 The Music Business: comments, questions, recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Promoting Gaelic Music**

- Boundaries exist in people's minds. Gaelic music crosses linguistic boundaries, whether marketed as "world music" or as "Celtic folk". There is already great interest in live Gaelic music in other countries (e.g. Italy and Spain). Yet this is not reflected in sales of Gaelic music either at home or abroad. We need to find new ways of developing and maximising marketing opportunities.
- We should not be apologetic about this: the Scottish Executive should be taking the lead in creating a cultural environment in which Gaelic

music can realise its potential, because this in turn contributes to the Scottish economy and adds value to Scotland's international cultural profile.

- Should there be a concerted approach to Visit Scotland and Events Scotland, demanding that our tradition be put at the forefront of the branding and promotion of Scotland? In Ireland cultural tourism is big business – tourists come looking for "living heritage". Yet the way in which Scotland is branded and marketed internationally entirely fails to recognise the interest and value of genuine Gaelic culture. If tourists came looking for "living Gaelic heritage" in Scotland what would they be shown? (The Cèilidh Trails run and marketed entirely independently by the Fèisean movement show the tourist potential of such events, while also giving teenagers an exhilarating experience of performance.)
- What can we do about the Scottish print media? It is almost impossible to interest them in Scottish, let alone Gaelic, culture, apart from occasional staged shots of clàrsach strings beside twilit lochs! How can we orchestrate a more proactive and positive engagement with them? Interest them in our achievements? Persuade them that their readers would be interested in reading about Gaelic music projects and the people behind them?
- And how can anybody sell Scottish music, however good, if Scottish TV and radio stations fail to give it airplay? There is now access to huge worldwide audiences through the web, especially in the USA, but why should people in the USA tune in to our radio stations if they are playing mainstream anglo-American music almost all the time?
- Artists don't usually have business skills, especially marketing and promotion. They need training and support. The FasTrac training programme was excellent, but it was a one-off. Why did PNE not create a bilingual Gaelic Music package (hard copy) giving all the information needed for people trying to get into the industry and for existent artists trying to sell their product? Why don't they revive FasTrac? Make it a regular occurrence?
- But that will only go part of the way: more sustained training in business and marketing skills is urgently needed throughout the Gaelic music industry. Existent centres might contribute to this process, perhaps: the RSAMD? The UHI? The University of Strathclyde?
- Is PNE itself enabled and properly resourced to play a proactive part in the training and supporting Gaelic artists? Should this be its primary rôle? Does reliance on project funding inhibit its more sustained and supportive rôle as a state-funded arts "agency" / consultancy, catering for the needs of all existent artists, and instead force it into taking the rôle of "producer", devising and realising its own creative ideas and projects, which by definition only benefit some artists?

## 5.4.2 New Gaelic Music

- The renaissance of Gaelic & traditional music (seen in feisean, RSAMD, Ceòlas etc) must be channeled towards the creation of new music. We cannot just sit down at a conference and decide there will be another Runrig. We need to create an infrastructure of support in order to nurture new talent.
- We must persuade the recording, radio and TV companies that it is in their own interests to support artists' careers and develop new music. We must put mechanisms in place to ensure that artists are protected from recording contracts that inhibit their careers, deprive them of the ability to earn money from their recordings and sew up their intellectual rights.
- Artists and songwriters must be empowered both to write songs and to take the flak that inevitably comes when new material is floated. There is always resistance to new music. It has happened down the ages and in other cultures: e.g. Sardinia, where traditionalists "put down" new work of young energy.
- We need to broaden the musical tastes of the Gaelic community, make people more receptive to new Gaelic music, or at least persuade them that they don't have to like everything that appears in Gaelic! The piping world has already shown the way: the purists have loosened their grip, yet the classical music is alive and well.
- Grassroots projects and key community players must acknowledge the importance of injecting new music into the tradition, and encourage it proactively. Events organisers, local media, recording companies etc. must work together to ensure that new music is composed, commissioned and heard.
- High profile proactive measures are needed to kick-start new songwriting at professional level. "Hot-housing" – professional songwriters' workshops: professional artists and songwriters working together intensively over a short period of time, with mentors, agents, record producers etc. on hand to facilitate real outcomes at the end of the project: record deals, live performances, promotional tours etc.
- The impetus created by this should be fully exploited through a raft of measures at grassroots level
- "Winter song-schools", professional mentoring and mutual support groups to support talented people to realise their potential within the community.
- Intensive short courses bringing young writers and musicians together with experienced songwriters, musicians, arrangers etc (not necessarily Gaelic-speaking) with positive outcomes – recordings, performances etc. Projects like this could start at local level, then spread outwards across Scotland.
- Songwriting fellowships to retain inspiring (cool) musicians in the community for longer periods.
- Radio programmes devoted entirely to new Gaelic music, presented by, with and for young people.
- Travelling scholarships, exchanges, collaborations, research-projects etc to introduce young people to entirely new and different musical influences (Western African, Indian, Scandinavian, Eastern European etc).
- "New Gaelic music" needs to be properly defined. We desperately need Gaelic music which will speak to young Gaels. It is vital that we get 17 – 24 year olds to connect to Gaelic music. We need to create a critical mass of young people forming new bands, trying out new sounds, writing new songs – capable of changing attitudes and removing perceived barriers.
- Many young people are scared of formal music training: standards are frighteningly high among today's young musicians, especially those enjoying specialist musical training which is not available to everybody. But skills and creativity can be encouraged and developed in other ways. For example authority-financed rehearsal rooms where bands can get together and make (loud) creative noise.
- Songs need inspiration, both musical and lyrical. People of all ages should be encouraged to read the poetry of their peers, and also published traditional and modern Gaelic poetry, as part of the process of writing their own songs. Poets and composers could come together to create song-partnerships (cf. for example, Donald Shaw's classic Breisleach, based on a poem by Aonghas MacNeacail).
- The music archives (School of Scottish Studies etc) should be made accessible to young songwriters / composers to find inspiration and roots for their own compositions. This must be a pressing priority for Tobar an Dualchais – the huge project which is going to make all the Gaelic archives available on the web – and Tobar an Dualchais must hurry up and be ready!
- We also need to encourage the playing and composition of other genres within Gaelic music: Gaelic is the medium, but Gaelic-speaking people's tastes range across country, classical, MOR, jazz etc. and this should be reflected in our music-making. Collaborations in these areas with expert non-Gaelic speaking musicians would be very valuable.
- Gaelic music has influenced Scottish culture so strongly. This should be properly reflected in a major Scottish musical, film or stage production like Riverdance, which is classy, highly commercial, yet rooted in authentic tradition. This would

benefit not only Gaelic music but the entire Scottish tourist industry and international image.

### 5.4.3 Marketing and Audience Development

"This session took a slightly different form to the others," Julie Tait explained. "Delegates were encouraged to think about how audiences make assumptions about us and how we make assumptions about our audiences, using practical exercises. More questions were raised than answered and I think this is because the definition of audience development is still uncertain. Audience development also begins with finding out who the audience is, and who the audience isn't. Therefore these notes cover the 'prompts' for discussion as raised by panellist and delegates, rather than projecting ideas for the future."

- Know your audience
- Know who isn't your audience
- Find out how to reach them and what benefits they are looking for
- Think about: what do people perceive they will get out of going something. Try to understand the experience they're having or expecting to have. People involved in the Gaelic arts can become very close to the subject – you have to try and think about people outwith the sector and what they think they will get from it.
- How do you make a connection with people who don't know anything about your event / Gaelic music?
- What are the benefits to the potential audience? How do they decide to come to one event over the next?
- But with many Gaelic events there is nothing else programmed for the same time – and they are often operating at full capacity
- You have to help potential audiences overcome their fear. They don't know what to expect. They think "it's 'Not For the Likes Of Them'" (nationwide Audience Development Programme)
- Not only do audiences make assumptions about what we are offering, but we make assumptions about who the audience is and what they want – we need to challenge these assumptions.
- We can't just assume, we need to find out
- Who is the existing audience and
- (more importantly) who is not in the existing audience
- How do we get them to come? What papers do they read? Where do they look? How do we

reassure them and what benefits are they looking for? How do we reach them?

"Is there a tension between audience development and the Gaelic arts? People feel that in making something accessible to new audiences, such as non-Gaelic speakers, you have to take away from the language. Audience Development can be a barrier to language use. You have to ensure that there is enough Gaelic for the Gaelic speakers. Many non-Gaelic speakers are interested in Gaelic events because of the language, even if they don't speak the language they may want to hear it being spoken. For Gaelic music language isn't the deciding factor – the feeling can be portrayed through the actual music. And people enjoy hearing Gaelic song without understanding it. Language needn't be a barrier to audience development!"

### 5.5 Keynote 4: Positioning Gaelic music within the Scottish music industry

Ian Smith (Head of Music at the Scottish Arts Council) asked delegates to imagine what an outsider's perception of Scottish Gaelic music might be: late-night TV music programmes –

the Mòd, perhaps, or an offering from Scottish television that does "neither music nor Gaelic language and culture any service whatsoever". Ian's job is to collaborate with the Gaelic community to promote the best of Gaelic music (and of every other kind of Scottish music) at every available opportunity.

Ian had just returned from Austin, Texas, from South by Southwest (SxSW) – the world's biggest convention for contemporary popular music – where SAC assisted financially ("in a ridiculously modest way compared to other countries") to promote "the best of our young Scottish bands in an international arena": successful showcases and deals with representatives from recording, promotion, festival, media, television, tour and management companies who attended – 10,000 delegates in total. Earlier this year, in partnership with HIE and the Shetland Arts Trust, they presented a Scottish Showcase at the US/Canadian Folk Alliance, and Julie Fowles was among the Scots represented.

So where does Gaelic music lie within the Scottish, UK and wider European music industry: do we celebrate the tradition or do we celebrate the quality of the product, or both? Can Gaelic music really

have a position that is both aesthetic and commercial, and are the two mutually complementary? It MUST take up the latter position, or die of terminal parochialism. Gaelic music will only develop if it takes and realises its potential position in the market place. We cannot allow the quality of Gaelic music to be compromised in, for example, "those cheap late-night TV programmes", instead of properly showcasing, supporting and promoting the many great musicians young and old who use the medium of the Gaelic language to such great effect.

Julie Fowlis is a good example of quality leading to commercial success: gifted, hard-working, professional, talented, a truly creative writer, a significant ensemble player, modest and self-effacing, who makes the songs accessible to every audience. She also enjoys good professional management, who capitalised upon her success in the Radio 2 Horizon Award. This is how the music business works, and Gaelic Music is ready for that sort of commercial exploitation without losing one ounce of its cultural and aesthetic importance....

## **5.6 Gaelic Music and the Media**

Panel 4 was made up of Ian Smith (as above), Donald Shaw (musician, producer), Mary Ann Kennedy (singer, harpist, broadcaster), and Niall Iain Dòmhnallach (broadcaster). Each gave brief presentations and answered questions about their work: Ian as, until recently, Scottish Regional Organiser of the Musicians' Union and now Head of Music at the Scottish Arts Council; Donald as a founder-member of Capercaillie, working across all the media as musician, music arranger and producer, including the seminal "Harvest" at the Celtic Connections festival, broadcast by the BBC, in which Gaelic-speaking young people from all over Scotland ("graduates" of the fèisean movement) took part alongside professional musicians from all over the Celtic world in a specially-composed composition (since Iùl ciùil Donald has also become Artistic Director of the Celtic Connections Festival); Mary Ann as a founder-member of Clìar and a Director of the fast-growing recording company Macmeanmna, as producer of imaginative projects such as Lasair Dhè, and as presenter of BBC Radio Scotland's Celtic Connections. This broadcasts 'roots' or world-music from across the globe – music of the kind little-heard on other programmes, including the best of traditional Gaelic and other UK music, presented as equal among equals in a global context: invaluable cross-fertilisation; Niall Iain as presenter of Rapal –

Radio nan Gàidheal's popular youth music programme: young people listen to him because they want to – they don't think of his programme as a Gaelic programme but as a "normal" programme. He is given a completely free hand to choose the music he plays, which he believes to be unusual in BBC terms, and his remit is not to play Gaelic music but to play what he thinks is good music – including new Gaelic music. One delegate suggested that this programme provided even more valuable cross-fertilisation than Celtic Connections and another said that the best hope for the future of Gaelic would be to clone Niall Iain!

Delegates then returned to the same discussion groups as in the morning, with the same facilitators as earlier in the day, or visited other groups as preferred. Reports from three of these groups (Promotion, New Gaelic Music and Audience Development) have already been given (5.3, above, pp. 21ff).

### **5.6.1 Gaelic Music and the Media: comments, questions, recommendations**

- "There is a real sense of hunger for traditional Gaelic music", and a perceived lack of it on radio and TV. Young people especially never get to hear it: music programmes are either on during the day or very late at night. Late-night music strands like Ceòl aig a' Chaisteal are merely masquerading as Gaelic programmes. The instrumentalists who are show-cased on it are excellent, but the production values are appalling – they are little more than musical wallpaper, without any presentation whatsoever, and they make all the other Gaelic musicians feel excluded.
- The TV companies must be accountable: they are spending public money (through the Gaelic Media Service) and it must be spent on quality. Good production benefits musicians and audience alike. Yet far too many Gaelic music TV programmes are produced cheaply and "sloppily" – with a complete lack of imagination or cultural context, and little thought to musical arrangement. (The BBC's Aig cridhe ar ciùil was a very fine exception to prove the rule.) Low production values in Gaelic music programmes indicate lack of commitment to Gaelic: musicians themselves cannot be exonerated from this, in that they keep agreeing to participate in such programmes. But it's hard for individual artists, who feel constrained to take whatever chances of exposure they can get. Artists must be empowered (by supportive management structures) to insist on saying "no" where necessary. If this were a collective decision it would influence the TV companies.
- CBC stepped in proactively to support French in Quebec: "Both support for the official languages and the development of official language minority communities in Canada are at the heart of the

CBC's mandate." (Perrin Beatty, September 17, 1998). As a public service broadcaster the BBC must show the same level of proactive commitment to Gaelic in Scotland.

- Radio Scotland's day-to-day musical output does not sufficiently support the Scottish music industry by regularly broadcasting its product – whether in Gaelic, Scots or English – except in the context of specialist music programmes like Travelling Folk. This is in stark contrast with Ireland, where traditional Gaelic music is inter-woven with popular music of all kinds all day, every day, or Isles FM (the Stornoway-based community radio) where again traditional is played alongside popular.
- The new Digital Channel will increase the amount of Gaelic television available. But will it have the funding and the commitment to Gaelic music to improve programming and provision?
- Television and radio are not the only options available. We must ensure that everyone becomes "technically enabled" – including audiences. The Gaelic music industry, and individual bands and artists, must learn to exploit the new digital media opportunities: distribution, promotion and sales via the web; each artist establishing their own web presence; Gaelic artists and bands using the MySpace Music site, which is a valuable focal point for musicians to advertise on. Perhaps it would be useful if a similar site were set up dedicated to Gaelic music. Gaelic podcasting is already established: Gaelcast.

The Scottish media largely ignore Gaelic music, except during Celtic Connections and (to a lesser extent) the Mòd. For the rest of the year Gaelic events struggle to get exposure, and Gaelic albums are seldom reviewed. There is sometimes more interest and support in England than in Scotland (e.g. the recognition of Shaw / McKerron's Gruth is Uachdar) How can we alter this situation? Are we supplying the media with the right sort of information? In the right sort of format?



**AITHISG IUL CIUIL**  
**GAELIC MUSIC CONFERENCE**  
**REPORT 2006**

## **6. Summary and Recommendations**

A sense of optimism ran throughout Iùl Ciùil – a palpable desire, as delegates remarked, “to get things moving at last”, “to respect tradition but welcome change” and “to really make things happen” for Gaelic music: in the community (however defined), in the schools and Colleges, and in the commercial Music Industry. To nurture our heartland roots and language, without which Gaelic music would not survive in any meaningful sense; to break down barriers and let Gaelic music sing to young people, to the Scottish tourist industry, to the UK media-moguls, to the people with the money, and to millions of people in all corners of the world who have never even heard of us yet. To find ways of inspiring people to write new Gaelic songs; of creating sustainable career paths for our musicians; of making our Mòd sexy and our Gaelic choirs cool!

This report reflects the hopes and wishes and recommendations of the delegates at Iùl Ciùil. These are the thoughts of the people most crucially involved in Gaelic music at all levels and in all ways, amateur and professional, young and less young, innocent and cynical, community-based and

industry-based, unknown and celebrated: to edit their ideas, or put them in order of importance or urgency, seems disrespectful. They should all be carefully considered, and they should give us the confidence, smeddum (spionnadh) and ammunition to get some (most? all?) of them put in train.

Things cannot be achieved just by wishing. The conference delegates were right: we cannot just sit down and “decide there will be another Runrig” or wave a magic wand and “make the media interested in Gaelic” (let alone “broaden the musical tastes” of old ladies in Vatersay or Scalpay)! But we can work together to create an environment which will encourage new bands to emerge and make careers as successful as Runrig’s; in which our artists will create music that is so professional, show-stopping, moving, funky, whatever, that the media will be much more inclined to sit up and take note – especially if we make sure that they get the opportunity of hearing it; and in which enough good-quality Gaelic music of all kinds will be available, through a variety accessible media, to satisfy the tastes of everybody.

And Iùl Ciùil has without doubt identified some very real challenges which can, and ought to be addressed, notably:-

### **1. A challenge to the Scottish Executive, the Local Enterprises, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the Gaelic Media Service, the Scottish Arts Council and Pròiseact nan Ealan...**

#### **...to pledge their support to the collaborative creation of a cultural environment and appropriate, supportive infrastructures to enable**

- Gaelic musical tradition to be maintained and transmitted
- Gaelic music to realise its own potential, increase its audience, play its part in the regeneration of the Gaelic language, contribute fully to the Scottish national economy and Scotland's international cultural profile
- new Gaelic talent to be nurtured, new Gaelic music to be composed and promoted
- Gaelic musicians to develop the technical, creative and business skills and acumen needed to sustain professional careers
- expert industry professionals to support Gaelic artists and protect their interests at all stages of their careers
- public service broadcasters and independent companies publicly funded to produce Gaelic programmes, to show real commitment to Gaelic music, and to support it fully in terms of production values, scheduling, airplay, promotion etc
- the Gaelic music industry and the Gaelic community to be enabled, informed, and encouraged to exploit new digital media opportunities

### **2. A challenge to the Scottish Executive, Visit Scotland and Events Scotland...**

- to recognise the importance of Gaelic tradition and reflect this in the branding and promotion of Scotland
- to ensure that cultural tourists are properly informed about the riches of Gaelic tradition and talent so that they will come to Scotland to hear for themselves
- to ensure that our musicians and singers are gainfully employed providing a wide array of unforgettable, imaginative and genuine experiences for them to enjoy when they get here

### **3. A challenge to the Scottish Executive and Chairs and Directors of Education Committees throughout Scotland to ensure that all children in all authorities enjoy what delegates at Iùl Ciùil consider to be their entitlement of musical experiences according to the spirit of the Youth Music Initiative. Free access to instrumental music tuition and to the Traditional Musicians in Schools Scheme is seen as a top priority. To reinforce this as national policy rather than leaving it to the discretion of individual councils.**

### **4. A challenge to Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Ceòlas, TOSG, Meanbh-chuileag, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig etc...**

#### **...to find ways and means of**

- increasing the supply of skilled music tutors at local level in the community, so that travel and accommodation costs can be kept down, training can be sustained throughout the year
- increasing the supply of skilled tutors who are also Gaelic-speakers
- turning Gaelic singing into a learning experience as trendy / fun / cool as instrumental tuition – through devising more imaginative / informative / relevant / cool / interesting ways of presenting them to young people, and encouraging young people to think of more imaginative etc things to do with them (drama, musicals, sound and video recording, band arrangements etc)
- making the ability to speak Gaelic equally trendy and fun and cool – through Gaelic-medium tuition of bilingual young people, plus fun “language immersion” activities for all young people (games and drama and stories and puppetry...)
- encouraging the writing and playing, singing and composition of new Gaelic songs.

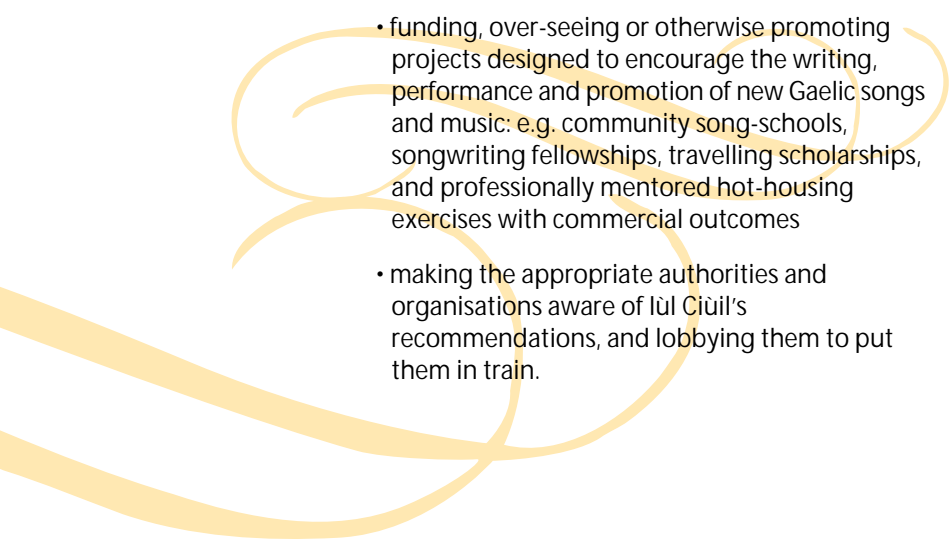
### **5. A challenge to An Comunn Gàidhealach...**

#### **...to find ways and means of**

- turning the Mòd into a showcase of which we can be proud
- encouraging the BBC to reflect this in the nature and transmission times of their TV coverage
- encouraging the writing and performance of new songs

## 6. A challenge to *Pròiseact nan Ealan...*

### ...to find ways and means of

- researching, funding and organising training programmes, packages and other appropriate strategies to teach business skills to upcoming or would-be professional Gaelic musicians
  - funding and arranging support mechanisms to protect the rights and interests of professional Gaelic artists at all stages in their careers
  - funding, over-seeing or otherwise promoting projects designed to encourage the writing, performance and promotion of new Gaelic songs and music: e.g. community song-schools, songwriting fellowships, travelling scholarships, and professionally mentored hot-housing exercises with commercial outcomes
  - making the appropriate authorities and organisations aware of *lùl Ciùil*'s recommendations, and lobbying them to put them in train.
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# **Appendix 1: Key-note address**

**Dr Anne Lorne Gillies**

*(singer, writer, educationalist)*

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***Thig crìoch air an t-saoghal ach mairidh gaol is ceòl  
The world may end, but love and music will always endure.***

## **1. Strengths**

**1.1** Music has always been, and always will be, of vital importance for the pleasure, stimulation, comfort and well-being both of individuals and of society as a whole. Music is the expression of aspects of humanity that no other art-form can articulate; a means of developing both the emotions and the intellect that no other science can properly explain, far less rival; and a source of revenue in the developed world that few other industries can match. Music can change lives, raise spirits, transcend linguistic and cultural divides and send out powerful political messages – more powerful, in fact, than 100 speeches!

*Here (to prove her point) Anne led delegates in a rousing rendition of the Gaelic anthem Cànan nan Gàidheal by the great Lewis song-writer Murdo MacFarlane, 1901 – 1980, sometimes called the ‘Cole Porter of Gaelic’:*

*Cha b’ e ’n sneachda ’s an reothadh bho thuath,  
cha b’ e ’n crannadh geur, fuar bhon ear,  
cha b’ e ’n t-uisge ’s an gailleann bhon iar  
ach an galar a bhliain bhon deas  
blàth, duilleach, stoc agus freumh  
cànan mo threubh is mo shluaigh...*

*It wasn’t the snow and frost from the north,  
it wasn’t the sharp withering cold from the east,  
it wasn’t the rain and the storms from the west  
but the disease from the south that blighted  
the blossoms, foliage, trunk and roots  
of the language of my race and my people...*

**1.2** Thinkers – poets, philosophers, scientists, writers, soldiers, churchmen and, of course, musicians – have confirmed the importance of music from time immemorial, expressing this in a huge variety of beautiful, wise, witty, controversial and, ultimately, inadequate words: for ‘writing about music is like dancing about architecture’, as Elvis Costello once aptly remarked!

### Here she proved her point again with a series of quotations:

#### Music...

- ... produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without. (Confucius)
- ... is the movement of sound to reach the soul for the education of its virtue. (Plato)
- ... is one of the fairest and most glorious gifts of God. (Martin Luther)
- ... washes away from the soul the dust of every day life. (Johann Sebastian Bach)
- ... is that to which the legislator ought to give the greatest encouragement. (Napoléon Bonaparte)

#### Or, to put it another way...

- Where words fail, music speaks. (Hans Christian Andersen)
- Without music, life would be a mistake. (Friedrich Nietzsche)
- If I were not a (physicist) I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music. (Albert Einstein)
- Music was my refuge, I could crawl into the space between the notes and curl my back to loneliness. (Maya Angelou)

#### And anyway, she joked, making music is easy!

- There’s nothing remarkable about it. All you have to do is hit the right keys at the right time and the instrument plays itself. (Johann Sebastian Bach)

**1.3** Music is food for the soul, but it can also put food on the table – if you’re lucky! Few other UK industries produce greater contributions to the UK balance of payments than the music industry. Retail sales of UK recordings account for, literally, billions of pounds. Listening to recorded music is the most popular home-based leisure activity in Britain apart from watching television and listening to the radio (much of which is itself listening to music). And in global terms the UK music market is hugely important – the 4th largest in the world.

**1.4** We should recognise and proclaim the importance of Gaelic music too, both within its own indigenous cultural context and in a wider – international – context. Gaelic music is fascinating from a purely musical point of view: for the beauty, interest and variety of its melodic and rhythmic patterns; from a literary point of view – the craftsmanship of its lyricists and the interest and variety of its subject matter; and from a historical and anthropological point of view – for Gaelic song is as rich in information about the past as any major archaeological site, and yet, miraculously, it is still alive: a continuous oral song tradition stretching across hundreds, if not thousands, of years of social history. Extending in an unbroken line from the great halls of the Iron Age Celts to the recording studios of today’s Gaelic rock and folk singers. Helping us to fill in the many gaps left by official documents and dusty clan histories. A window into a flourishing Celtic culture – non-literate, but far from ‘ignorant’ – in which the arts (especially music) were held in the highest reverence and artists were the considered to be the aristocracy of society.

*Anne illustrated this point by leading the audience in a verse or two of the great Gaelic song “Òran mòr MhicLeòid”, composed by Roderick Morison, “The Blind Harper” (c.1646 – 1713) in which the poet bewails the decline of the arts since the succession of a new chief to the Clan MacLeod, a man educated in the South who did not appreciate the importance of music and poetry and was unwilling to patronise and support his artists as his father had done.*

*Chaidh a’ chuibhle mun cuairt, gun do thionndaidh gu fuachd am blàths.*

*Nàile! Chunna mi uair dùn flathail nan cuach a thràigh,*

*far ’m biodh tathaich nan duan, iomadh mathas gun chruas, gun chàs:*

*dh’fhalbh an latha sin uainn, ’s tha na taighean gu fuairaidh fàs....*

*The wheel has gone round, and warmth has turned to cold.*

*Alas! I saw, once upon a time, our princely castle before its conviviality ebbed away,*

*where flourished poetry and every generous, unstinting virtue:*

*but those days have gone and the halls are chilly and deserted....*

We should think long and hard about how our artists are supported (“patronised”) nowadays, and whether we are ensuring that today’s musicians are being enabled to make a career that reflects their talents and training and satisfies their needs and ambitions...

## 2 Weaknesses

### 2.1 'Music is spiritual. The music business is not,' to quote Van Morrison!

Gaelic music is a tiny part of a vast global industry which, as a whole, is facing many challenges in today's world. A huge number of small-scale independent production companies struggle to keep their heads above water; a tiny number of monolithic large-scale operations, who are of course much less open to experimentation and risk-taking, dominate the market, though their power is being eroded by the development of digital recording and distribution. Similarly many small-scale independent retail outlets, accessible to small production and distribution companies, have surrendered in recent years to the inexorable march of multi-nationals, supermarkets, garages, the internet... Again, the many advantages of digital technology and universal access to the web, which are of untold benefit to many independent companies, must be weighed against loss of sales and intellectual rights through piracy and file-sharing. Album sales around the world have fallen steeply in recent years, despite ever-increasing numbers of people who want to break into the recording business.

**2.2** Sadly, despite apparent good-will among all political parties, musicians still have to lobby continually for public sector support in a world of conflicting interests, pressing social priorities and crowded educational curricula, where music is all too often dismissed as an optional luxury despite its proven efficacy in developing children's learning, self-confidence and communicative skills. We still have to jump through hoops to win private sector sponsorship for any kind of music, especially that which is not perceived to be of obvious mainstream, majority interest. We still have to involve scandal, super-stars, or both in order to excite the interest of the media in our music-making! We still have to fight to establish a mainstream education system in which all our children from all socio-economic backgrounds can have equal opportunities to discover and develop their musical talents. We still have to devise means of protecting our emergent young artists from exploitation, or discouragement, or loss of direction, or lack of opportunity. We still have to ensure that our musicians can make something approximating to a decent living. Yet without them there is no music:

*In any assessment of the music industry, it is crucial to remember that without the musicians, writers and composers, the rest of the industry would be*

*superfluous. It is not uncommon for practitioners in the industry – and this is not limited to Scotland – to assume a sense of (self) importance that diminishes the role of the musicians and composers on which they rely for their income. (Williamson, Cloonan and Frith: Mapping the music industry: Scottish Enterprise, 2003)*

**2.3** Musicians are popularly believed to enjoy fabulous earnings and rock-star life-styles. They are therefore often expected to sing for charity, for their supper, for nothing... And yet they are, in the main, struggling to survive.

*These points were illustrated by statistics from the New Earnings Survey, the National Music Council and the BPI Statistical Handbook (1991 – 2000)*

- Earnings within cultural occupations relative to all occupations declined by 8% during this period
- This decline coincided with an increase in the size of the pool of cultural labour, almost 50% of whom musicians or composers – mostly aspiring pop and rock performers of whom only a tiny proportion will gain a living from it
- Of all people employed in cultural occupations, gross weekly earnings were highest for actors (£484 per week), architects (£471 per week) and writers (£464 per week). Earnings were lowest among musicians (£219 per week).
- Among the self-employed, the highest incidence of part-time employment was among writers (41%) and musicians (32%).
- Among employees, the highest incidence of part-time employment was among musicians, where almost half are employed on a part-time basis.
- Gross weekly earnings from second, supplementary, jobs were highest among writers (£108 per week) and lowest among musicians (£34 per week).
- Only 28,000 of the 43,000 musicians surveyed were in full-time employment.

It is notoriously hard to get reliable information about freelance musicians' earnings. But one can examine the earnings of those employed on a regular basis by orchestras. Recent surveys indicate that most rank and file orchestral musicians currently earn between £22,000 and £24,000 (full-time) despite having been in the profession for an average of 21 years. Almost half, however, are employed on a part-time basis, and, according to a survey commissioned by the Musicians' Union, nine out of ten musicians in Britain's top orchestras are forced to take on outside jobs as a result of poor pay. And for freelance musicians situation is, of course, even worse.

**2.4** Recording contracts (unless you are at super-star level and/or or are extremely well-advised legally) don't make artists rich. Indeed in Scotland, with a few honourable exceptions, they don't make artists any money at all, except for what they themselves make through sales at live gigs. Major labels can afford to give artists advances on sales, but this pertains to very few Scottish artists:

*Of the seven acts in Scotland listed as being signed to major labels, only Texas are likely to have reached a point of recoupment (where the advances have been repaid through sales). It is often in the record companies' interest to keep a band in debt – new advances are often offered as the band reaches a point approaching recoupment. Royalties from smaller labels to artists will vary according to the level of advance involved, the structure of the deal and the method of the accounting. This is true of both major and independent labels. (Williamson, Cloonan and Frith)*

Major recording companies are also ruthless in their dealings with artists. I myself recorded for Philips / Phonogram, who decided to delete all my albums on the death of my record producer, Johnnie Franz, unaware that I had just finished recording a six-part series of 50-minute music "own-shows" for the BBC (with guests like Fairport Convention and the Chieftains, Marisa Robles and Stephane Grapelli) which were about to go out on network (UK) television! (They also neglected to tell me of Johnnie's death!)

Smaller-scale recording deals in Scotland (and again I speak purely from my own first-hand experience, which I nevertheless think may be fairly representative) vary from companies like Greentrax, who pay me royalties regularly, account openly and promote their artists sensitively, to Lismor, who pay me no royalties, submit no returns, and whose dealings seem (at least from the artists' point of view) shrouded in mystery. Even companies like KRL, who submit regular royalty statements, follow the widespread practice of paying off the production costs of each album (typically thousands of pounds) through the artists' royalties (typically a few pence per album sold). In reality the company pays off the costs fairly quickly through sales, copyright etc, while the artist receives a royalty statement which tells her (me!) how much she now owes the company (tens of thousands of pounds and still growing each time the company decides to produce another compilation or "best of..." album!) And of course she has nobody to blame but herself (myself!) for signing the contract in the first place! And of course she's also been kicking herself for twenty years for signing away the publishing rights to them too!

**2.5** The media: the music industry at all levels relies upon the media for exposure of its work, both live and recorded, and to excite the interest of live theatre / concert audiences and album buyers. And of course it's a two-way process. Priorities have altered since the days when I was making regular, popular (and expensive!) musical programmes on TV, which reached audiences of many millions; but music continues to fill the radio airwaves, and to provide radio companies with listeners and revenue of other kinds. And yet it's almost impossible to get airplay in Scotland for Scottish music, outwith a few specialist Gaelic and English programmes. And it's equally difficult to get coverage of traditional music events or recordings in the Scottish press, though the local papers are usually sympathetic.

**2.6** And so today's musicians don't make the comfortable living that the Blind Harper expected for himself in the 18th century! Most of us live on the borderline of real poverty, or give up, or boost our earnings with other employment – which is of course ruinous for our own career development: we often don't have time to practice, let alone learn new repertoire, write new songs, find new audiences. Most musicians have difficulties getting mortgages, supporting their families, making pension arrangements for their old age, let alone living super-star lifestyles – yet we have to look smart and professional and maintain and update our instruments. We need safe transportation and housing for ourselves and our equipment, yet we typically have to pay ridiculously high levels of car and home insurance. Our politicians constantly repeat the mantra that the arts are important, and queue up to rub shoulders with successful musicians, but are they willing to pay for us? We should look to Ireland, where artists are exempt from income tax on their earnings. The Blind Harper would approve of that!

### **3 Opportunities**

**3.1** Traditional music in Scotland, and Gaelic music in particular, enjoys many advantages undreamt of by artists of my generation when I was at the start of my career. In my day it was assumed that you had to leave and establish yourself in London to have any real hope of success. Scottish identity in music was seen as something we should play down, unless we were invited to sing at Burns Suppers or on (often gruesome) TV programmes like "Songs of Scotland" or "Thingummyjig" – and a Gaelic identity was even harder to sell, and most Gaelic programmes equally gruesome! Which of course

compounded the process and left a whole generation of people thinking that Scottish and Gaelic music was gruesome! I myself tried to avoid the gruesome as much as possible, and pursued the alternative scenario by going to London to get started. But this of course could be seen as “selling out”, and of course you never got control of the artistic decision-making however successful you became. I was told by one TV Producer, at the planning stages of one of my TV series, that I could sing “anything at all except protest and Gaelic”! Nowadays the reverse would probably pertain. Nowadays it’s probably easier to get on TV (at least at “regional” – i.e. Scottish – level) as a Gaelic singer than it is as any other kind of singer. Nowadays Scottish identity in general, Gaelic / Celtic identity in particular, is recognised as a highly marketable commodity, especially outwith the UK – in Europe and America.

**3.2** And traditional musicians enjoy new opportunities for learning and training in all aspects of their art undreamt of in my young day. The circuitous route I had to take to gain my musical training was a long and, in the main, lonely process. You really had to be dedicated and tough in those days, as any of us survivors will tell you! Nowadays kids are learning and playing traditional music together in specialist schools (e.g. Plockton), colleges and Universities (the RSAMD, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Strathclyde etc), and informally in fèisean throughout the country. Their efforts are encouraged and recognised through awards given by the SAC, TMSA, BBC; show-cased and developed through events like Celtic Connections and Seo Seinn. And all of these, of course, have impacted upon the National Mòd. In my day in Oban you couldn’t even do Higher Music at school and traditional music was beyond the pale.

**3.3** Nowadays we have many examples of best practice, and we are going to hear more about some of them over the next two days: the Fèisean movement (which Art Cormack will talk about – widely recognise as a blue-print for musical development across other traditions and in other situations), Ceòlas (which Màiri Bh. will describe – the vibrant music event / festival / celebration which has done more for South Uist than years of local government!) radio programmes like Rapal and Celtic Connections (which broaden the horizons of Gaelic music and place them in a new context – as Niall Iain and Mary Anne will tell us) and of course the many cultural developments in the Highland and Islands area which are culminating in next year’s

Year of Highland Culture. (Perhaps we should all migrate quickly!) And then there have been examples of best practice which have not been maintained, but which we must fight to revive – notably FasTrac (the training structure for young Gaelic musicians put in place by Pròiseact nan Ealain and delivered by Donna Cunningham – who we are lucky to have with us at Iùl Ciùil) and examples from other countries and contexts, like the Irish one which Dermot will outline for us tomorrow.

**3.4** Digital technology The rise of Digital Technology also offers musicians huge potential advantages: not least the opportunities to make high quality, relatively low-cost recordings. This is of special help to people living far from industrial centres with recording studios, rehearsal spaces etc. – though of course the product has to be of the highest quality, and there can be no compromise on backing musicians etc in favour of electronically generated sounds. Again, the Internet gives artists access to a potentially huge global market through which sell these products directly and independently. Our own company Brigh is an example of this, though, again, maintaining such a resource is hard work and steals valuable creative time.

## 4. Threats

There are many threats implicit in what I’ve already described, and these will be rooted out, no doubt, in the breakout sessions planned for Iùl Ciùil. I would just like to highlight one particular threat – my own particular hobby-horse, and also a concern, I know, of many people here today. It is a threat which lies at the heart even of the most seductive of the “best practice” described above: the danger that we may be lulled into thinking that Gaelic music is being promoted through all these different strategies (education, training, marketing, the media etc etc) without noticing that the language itself is being used less and less in the implementation of them.

*Here Dr Gillies sang a little of Bailerò, one of the beautiful Songs of the Auvergne, which she recorded on her second album in 1978, having first heard it – comme tout le monde – on a TV Martini advert! Yet though the songs are still sung there are no speakers of Auvergnese left, and modern singers can only guess at the pronunciation, let alone the cultural meaning, of the songs!*

Music may last forever, as the Gaelic proverb says, but Gaelic won’t unless we are very careful!

*Here Dr Gillies sang her own, specially-written,*

version of “Òran mòr MhicLeòid”, using the same premise as the, but suggesting that it is not just the Gaelic arts but Gaelic itself that is under threat – something which the Blind Harper never dreamt of:

Òran mòr lùl Ciùil: Anna Latharna NicGilliosa

The great song of lùl Ciùil: Anne Lorne Gillies

Thig crìoch air an t-saoghal ach mairidh an gaol 's an ceòl;

thig crìoch air a' bhliadhna' – as t-earrach gum fàs an t-eòrn';

thig ciaradh na h-oidhche' – sa chamhanaich seinnidh na h-eòin,

ach gun chleachdadh 's gun bhruidhinn cha mhair cànan ar sinns' rean beò.

Though the world may end, love and music will last forever;

though the year may end, in the springtime the barley grows;

the twilight may fall, but at dawn the birds will sing,

but if it's not used and spoken the language of our forefathers will not survive.

Bidh ceòl ann gu sìor ged thig crìoch air gach cluain is beinn,

air gach cladach is òb is air stòras na tìr fo thuinn;

bidh ceòl anns an athair far robh labhairt nan Gàidheal sna glinn –

guth na gaoithe 's an fheòir gabhail an òrain gu ceòlmhor grinn.

Music will last forever even if every meadow and mountain were to be destroyed,

every seaside and bay and the treasure of the land below the waves;

music will be in the air where once the Gaels chattered in the glens –

the voice of the wind and the grass singing their sweet, lovely musical songs.

The good news is that not only are traditional music students learning Gaelic song in the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama today, and enjoying

the brilliant tuition of today's lùl Ciùil Chair, Kenna Campbell, but that after they finish their music degrees they are beginning to realise that they must also polish their linguistic skills and cultural understanding, and so are taking themselves off to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig for a year or so of sustained Gaelic immersion.

## 5. Challenges

**5.1** We have been offered a real chance not just to bletcher and renew friendships (though that is a vital part of lùl Ciùil) but also to make a difference for Gaelic musicians through our proceedings over the next two days. And so here are some challenges from me to you. They are a bit random, and by no means exhaustive, but they may help to focus your minds, as you embark upon this exciting voyage:

**5.2** First, to the professionals – musicians (and would-be professionals) and those who promote and support them and sell their product. Let us challenge them all to find ways to make a difference:-

- to ensure that artists and composers retain and benefit fully from their own work at both local and international level
- to train and develop the technical, entrepreneurial and accounting skills of artists and small independent production companies
- to ensure that the finished product is of a high enough standard to merit promotion by distributors, media outlets etc
- to improve product marketing and distribution – including finding new and wider markets and audiences
- to ensure that individual artists are properly advised at all stages and levels
- to ensure that they are properly represented, by agents and producers and event organisers who not only understand the money-making process but are also respectful of the cultural goose that lays the golden egg
- to give artists and writers the confidence and skills to write new music and songs
- to encourage the audience to hear and then to buy those new songs, and other singers to sing them
- to encourage the media and the retails outlets that Gaelic music really is popular and can be commercial if people are given the chance to hear it performed at the highest standard
- to “keep Gaelic music live” and relevant to young people, without frightening off the older generation whose needs also must be served

- to find new ways for Gaelic musicians to come together and collaborate, inspire and help one another...

**5.3** Secondly to those involved in education – not just to the teachers or head teachers of schools or music tutors, but to the education system as a whole:-

- to create a society as a whole in which the importance of music is accepted, taken for granted, indisputable: a top priority
- to ensure that music is given its proper place in the school curriculum
- to ensure that music tuition is freely available to all children...

**5.4** Thirdly, to those involved in the media:

- to make more effort to reflect public need and popular taste in their output
- to broadcast more Scottish (including Gaelic) music on public service radio and television
- to cover musical events so that the public will get to know what a lot of great music-making is going on...

**5.5** Fourthly, to those with control over the public (and private) sporrán (Scottish Arts Council, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, local authorities, Scottish Tourist Board, local enterprise etc)

- to recognise the value of traditional music to the economy – not to mention the heart, the soul and the mind of individuals and communities
- to take proactive, creative, imaginative and properly informed measures to keep our music (and our musicians!) alive
- to spend money on it (them!) (us!)

**5.6** Lastly, to them all – and to us all

- to “keep Gaelic alive”: for there will be no Gaelic music if there is no Gaelic

*Here Dr Gillies finished her speech (or rather, “warm-up act”) by leading delegates in one last verse of Cànan nan Gàidheal, with its last line ( Murdo MacFarlane’s own challenge to Gaelic speakers):*

*bi na claidheamh ’s na sgiath nad dhòrn! / make Gaelic the sword and the shield in your hand!*



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# **Appendix 2: Key-note address**

## **Dermot McLaughlin**

***(musician, Chief Executive, Temple Bar Cultural Trust, and former Music Director of the Irish Arts Council)***

### ***Aislingí, Meas agus Airgead / Dreams, Respect and Money***

My intention today is to give some insight into the various ways that Gaelic Arts are understood and supported in the Republic of Ireland.

It goes without saying that what works in Ireland may not easily transfer to Scotland. What I will focus on today will be a brief overview of the main kinds of support and a look at the ideas and policy initiatives that underpin the development and support of Gaelic Arts in Ireland. My emphasis will be on the here and now and also on what's next – I'll refer to history only where it is useful.

My own interest in this area is primarily as a performer; but I have been extremely fortunate, through my work in professional arts management for over 20 years with An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council and elsewhere, to have been closely involved in policy initiatives and funding programmes aimed at what we describe as 'the traditional arts' – which is a term that may include what you understand as Gaelic Arts.

Nomenclature is always difficult, and it's really only in the last 2 years or so that a reasonably acceptable 'definition' of traditional arts has been established in Ireland – and this is included in a very innovative national policy document created by An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council in 2005. Having said that, I think it is important to observe that this 'definition' is in fact a non-exclusive list of a set of activities that are generally agreed to be some of the constituent parts of whatever the universal set of 'traditional arts' might be.

It is useful to quote this 'definition':-

*"The Irish traditional arts should be defined as comprising traditional music, song and dance, and oral arts such as storytelling and agallaimh bheirte."*

Both Irish language and English language arts are included within these activities.

However there are other, slightly more complicated, questions to do with what Gaelic Arts might mean within the Irish context. This complexity includes the classification of Gaeltacht arts (defined by location and language) as well as creative activity

expressed through Irish in any medium such as film, literature, radio, music, theatre (defined by language alone).

There are regulatory issues to do with language status and equality that, in theory, anticipate and resolve some of these issues, but the extent to which aspiration and reality are in harmony will always be a matter of contention. For example the Arts Council and the local authorities are mandated, like all public agencies, to provide equal services in both Irish and English. However the question we are looking at requires a more finely-tuned policy approach that is sensitive not only to language but also to the nature of creative activity in the traditional arts at the level of the individual and the community.

So, to a brief overview of how things work in Ireland.

The first point I'd make is that I'll focus on traditional music, song, dance and oral literature and you can take it that in general what I have to say about these art forms applies equally to the Irish language and English language communities of practice. Where material distinctions arise, I'll indicate them.

In general, activity in the traditional arts tends to be voluntary and amateur in the literal sense of the words, and there is no correlation between artistic standards in performance or composition and the terms amateur / professional. In fact in its very enlightened policy document, An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council deals with this issue with an admirably light and authoritative touch as follows:

*"Such is the informal nature of these art forms that trying to place a traditional artist solely in one of these categories would often be inappropriate. Not only would artists generally engage in activities across these kinds of groupings, but the status of an artist within the traditional arts community would rarely be determined according to such terms."*

There is a relatively high level of active participation in the traditional arts across all age groups and genders, and in the last 20 years or so there has been a remarkable growth in the number, range and quality of organisations and events to support this level of activity. Traditional artists tend to be self-reliant and not accustomed to seeking grants and other supports – in contrast to other areas of the arts such as classical music, jazz, theatre, film or the visual arts, where State funding through the Arts Council or others is seen as a normal and even necessary part of the food chain.

Many of the main organisations in traditional arts can be characterised by the priority that they give to 'transmission' – and this really means a lot more than just teaching either melodies, words, steps or the technical tools to perform them. In traditional arts 'transmission' also has to deal with context and values that are social as well as cultural or aesthetic. Human interaction and exchange are of prime importance. A very brief, and by no means comprehensive, overview of the main organisations will give you a sense of this – and I'll categorise these as resource / service organisations and events.

In the first category of resource / service organisations some of the main players include:

- Taisce Cheol Dúchais Éireann / Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) which is perhaps the closest thing we have to a transfusion service for traditional music, song and dance! It also lets us 'keep in touch' with the dead and this is equally important. Established in 1987 as an initiative of An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council, the Archive houses that largest and best collection of the materials of Irish traditional music anywhere in the world. It is engaged in collection, documentation, preservation and dissemination and it is extensively used by performers, researchers, composers, writers, journalists, broadcasters, academics and the general public. Its contribution to the development of traditional music, through its direct support for transmission, is invaluable.
- Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) is a national membership organisation or movement that is devoted to the revival and practice of the traditional arts and the Irish language. It operates a very effective community based structure of branches all over Ireland and in centres of Irish settlement or interest around the world. It operates an extensive programme of classes and organises a series of local, regional and national competitions that culminate in the annual Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann held every August.
- Na Piobairí Uilleann (NPU) is the society of Uilleann Pipers and was established in 1968 to preserve and promote the arts of piping and pipe making. In the 1960's, a tiny number of pipers were active in Ireland and perhaps no more than five people were involved in pipe-making. Since that time, NPU's activity and its excellent work in popularising this unique instrument has seen its membership grow spectacularly throughout the world and now numbers in excess of 1,000. Pipe-making is now in very robust shape with leading centres of manufacture in Ireland, Germany and the United States.
- Music Network is a national concert promotion and music development agency established by An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council in 1985. Its annual programmes include touring

performances of traditional music with an emphasis on solo performers and small ensembles.

In the category of events, it is important to note that my focus here is not so much on festive events but rather on educational or transmission-based events that are all about sharing and imparting skills, insights and understanding as well as repertoire and technique. Many festive events now incorporate workshops, lectures, master classes and similar events in their main programmes. I'll give you a short description of two types of summer school – one generic and one specialist.

- Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy / Willie Clancy Summer School was established in 1973 and takes place each July in the small village of Miltown Malbay in west Clare. The School was set up to honour, celebrate and commemorate the legacy of Willie Clancy who was one of the 20th century's most influential musicians, singers and storytellers. The School has, in effect, established the successful template for generic traditional music summer schools in Ireland with a mixture of graded classes in most instruments, in song and in dance, plus recitals, talks, lectures and concerts, and a special Foundation Course in traditional music plus specialist technical workshops on reed making and instrument maintenance for pipers.
- Cairdeas na bhFidléirí was set up in 1986 to revive and promote Donegal fiddle playing by providing a respectful platform for the older generation of players, by providing classes and performance opportunities for young Donegal players, and by publishing printed materials and sound recordings of important players and key repertoire and technique. Cairdeas runs a specialist Summer School of Donegal fiddle playing in Gleann Cholmcille in the south west Donegal Gaeltacht every August, an annual meeting of fiddle players in Glenties in the central Donegal Gaeltacht area, and a series of weekend encounters that bring youngsters and more advanced learners into close contact with master players and dancers from the Donegal tradition. I was involved in setting this up along with Mairéad ní Mhaonaigh and Caoimhín Mac Aoidh and I have to say that it is very rewarding to be able to say that this simple model of an arts development organisation has worked really well – the evidence for this is that local youngsters who came to the Summer School and other events as learners and students are now an integral part of the teaching and performance corps.

What I would also underline as a key point here is that competition is almost wholly absent from the ways that traditional arts are handed on, performed, promoted and celebrated – but there are some

important exceptions. I've already mentioned CCÉ, and other important events that include competition are Oireachtas na Gaeilge which is an annual festival of Irish language arts. And then there are smaller local competitive events based around sean-nós dance and song – although the competitive element here is often an atmosphere-enhancer more than anything else!

Summer schools, whether generic or specialist, are now an important part of the traditional arts calendar in Ireland and these are supplemented throughout the rest of the year by shorter weekend events that include classes, master classes, workshops and similar events.

The policy and funding framework that enables all of this to happen has undergone massive change in recent years, and the key players here are An Chomhairle Ealaíon / The Arts Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht development authority).

There was a major overhaul of the arts legislation in Ireland which led to the Arts Act 2003, and this contained a number of significant changes and updates to the original Acts of 1951 and 1973.

Section 2 (1) of the 2003 Act makes reference for the first time to 'traditional' and reads:

*"arts' means any creative or interpretative expression (whether traditional or contemporary) in whatever form, and includes, in particular, visual arts, theatre, literature, music, dance, opera, film, circus and architecture, and includes any medium when used for those purposes."*

Section 21 (1) (a) of the 2003 Act allows the Minister for the Arts to establish special committees as follows:

*"The Minister may, by direction in writing, require the Council to establish one or more than one committee to advise it on such matters relating to the arts as are specified in the direction, and a committee established pursuant to such a direction is hereafter in this section referred to as a 'special committee'."*

From our perspective today, the important development here was the decision by the Minister in December 2003 to establish a special committee to report on the traditional arts and to suggest policy and funding directions that the Arts Council could adopt. In summary, following a period of public discussion and considerable political debate and manoeuvring, the Arts Council adopted and published in 2004 the Committee's report and this contains some practical as well as radical thinking

on how traditional arts should be supported in Ireland.

The key outcomes that we need to focus on are that the Council decided to appoint a traditional arts specialist to advise the Council and to harness the energy and interest of the traditional arts community; the Council set a very ambitious budget target to grow from €800k to €3m within a year; the Council also established a 3-year initiative to invest in and develop 'the key players in the traditional arts community'. The Council set as an objective that traditional arts should be an integral part of the Council's mainstream operations at the end of the 3-year initiative; and the Minister provided a special extra allocation of €0.5m in 2005 to kick start the initiative.

The main practical elements of this new approach are the appointment of a very well regarded musician (fiddle-player Dr Liz Doherty) as specialist and the creation of an innovative proposal-based funding scheme for traditional arts called Deis (chance, opportunity).

One of the aims of this initiative is to build better links, and perhaps more confidence and trust, between the traditional arts community and the Arts Council. One very smart practical step that Liz Doherty undertook was the establishment of a network of 10 Deis advisers located all around Ireland to provide a support structure for traditional artists who have ideas but little experience in turning them into funding proposals. This has created an important bridge between the community and the national agency responsible for policy and funding. The fact that both Liz and the 10 advisers are respected figures in the traditional arts community adds greatly to the perceptions of integrity, strength and credibility of the process.

In addition, all funding decisions made under Deis, as well as the names of the assessment panels, are published on the Arts Council's website and this is useful in showing real examples of the type of project that can attract funding and other support.

I mentioned Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht development authority) earlier – and part of their remit includes the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht. The cultural remit is increasingly well resourced with 3 full-time regional arts facilitators working to a national co-ordinator with funds available directly from the Údarás and also from a joint strategic funding programme operated with the Arts Council. Although relatively young, this joint policy approach

seems likely to bear fruit provided that each of the agencies involved can recognise and agree where several and joint responsibilities begin and end.

One very clear example of the quality of thinking and effort that is going into this policy area can be seen in the 2004 publication. This recognises critically important strengths and weaknesses in the environment for both the Irish language and the Gaeltacht (which is defined with reference to physical geography rather than on the basis of language use, so that important urban areas are outside the sphere of influence of the Údarás). It also acknowledges the peculiar strengths and opportunities for Gaeltacht arts and identifies medium to long term approaches for both agencies in creating fitting support structures for artists and audiences in Gaeltacht areas.

This is necessarily a summary sketch of what is a more complex area, but I hope that it gives you a flavour of the kinds of intervention that are currently being implemented in Ireland. I think it is fair to say that the initiatives at Government level, and their implementation through Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Arts Council, have given rise to a most unusual outbreak of optimism and consensus within the traditional arts community! The full impact of these interventions will become clearer after 2008 and in the meantime there is really exciting work coming to light through the Deis scheme and traditional artists are beginning to grasp that State recognition of them and their work is now a secure reality.



# **Appendix 3: Key-note address**

## **Pete Hagen**

***(Argyll Management: artist manager, specialising in commercial, underground and roots artist management)***

### **Drive and Innovation**

Essentially I have the job of finding new talent, or reinvigorating a flagging career, then plotting a strategy, finding and doing the deals with a label, a publisher and an agent and selling albums and concert tickets and then developing a career strategically across a release through press and radio and administrating it. I've done that for over 10 years and worked across many genres and with many major and indie companies in the UK and internationally, from top 40 dance tracks to roots and Gaelic artists.

I totted this up this week and I have done around 25 significant deals, from major label album deals and major publishing deals, film and TV deals to remix, licensing and override deals. I never really discuss my work publicly, as client confidentiality is paramount, but for example I signed Martyn Bennett to Real World for his album 'Grit' and I have handled the careers for a major UK dance producer and a leading UK drum and bass act at the other extreme, signing deals with RCA, EMI, Chrysalis, Virgin, Universal MCA and a host of indie labels around the world. It's a very very hard thing to do.

I have an unusual perspective, as I started working in London in 1985 for a major concert agency, then moved in to management down south, and then moved to Edinburgh five years ago. What that means is that I have seen at first hand how artists' careers can work in very different circumstances.

So why am I here today as a non-Gael? That's really easy – I am a business man and I see commercial opportunities in Gaelic music as I do in dance music, singer song writers and rock bands. For me, and I think a vast number of people, there isn't a language barrier – your music and culture is part of a worldwide series of cultures which a lot of people are interested in, but in your case you really stand out I think, with harmonies, song arrangement and musicianship which are natural and everyday to you but which blow everyone else away.

Anyway, I could spend days wittering on about artists, Gaelic or otherwise, but in the 20 minutes I have I'd like to focus on a couple of issues which I feel are important, and which focus on new artists or acts which can 'break through'; and then I'll raise

some ideas for you to discuss later. We're all very opinionated in the music industry so my health warning here is that these are my thoughts and my experiences: others will have different views based on what they've done and are equally valid.

I've been asked to touch on two areas :-

- Firstly working with pro musicians as they break into the commercial industry
- Secondly what's involved once that's happening and how it's done.

When I say 'commercial' I'm not necessarily talking about the Sugarbabes or Kylie Minogue, but music which can sell a reasonable quantity – as the industry has become a series of respected genres rather than just one or two dominant styles. Which is good news for you, as it means you don't have to see Arthur Cormack dressed as a haggis, rapping over an old fisherman's tune on Top of the Pops to get Gaelic music heard.

Working with artists and breaking through the glass ceiling are issues which are very difficult to convey in such a short time, principally as each artist's career is completely different and requires in-depth consideration in each individual case. There are so many personal considerations; location issues; questions of genre and appropriate marketing to fit the genre; size of existing audience; what the long term plan is.

A commercial dance-producer with Top 40 remixes under their belt, who's been dropped by Universal Music but is trying to keep their publishing deal, is a wholly different proposition to kick-starting a rock band from Skye with one great song and no audience. What I do is try and assemble a team around the artist according to their needs, and balance that with what the industry demands. It doesn't always work, and that's why people often have such short careers in the industry and, regardless of genre, there's 101 reasons for it to fail or even not to get beyond Album One.

What I find really interesting and unusual in Gaelic music is that despite all the grumbling there is actually a support structure, and there's a genuine culture. But you're all spread out geographically, so it's hard to get drive and innovation and competition going. The world has really moved on since the 70's and 80's and technology and the growth of niche markets is great news, but I want to focus on the two things which drive me nuts and which I think can really hold artists back. Getting good advice and creating fantastic product.

I also don't want to criticise or moan too much – this should be a positive and progressive meeting of people and minds. On the positive side there's a lot for you to celebrate – masses of talent, great performance opportunities; there are great supportive record companies here, there are facilities and technical people and a supportive media – and great international support too.

My first question is: is Gaelic music a museum piece to be preserved through song arrangements, or is it also something to be developed and which can grow in the 21st century?

My second question is why – when there's so much going for you with public interest and financial support, with all the gigs and festivals and facilities etc – why aren't you making a decent living?

The first question is really for you to decide. However if you want to develop Gaelic music then you need to find ways to encourage innovation, writing and performance. Then you need to equip people with great coaches, advisors and strategists to do something with it once you're semi-professional.

The second question – why don't you make money? – well, these are some of my thoughts.

From my perspective as a manager the industry is really simple. If I think I can sell 30,000 records or more it becomes financially viable for me and the mainstream industry. Anything less and it's a loss-leader. But the music has got to have a great angle or a great story to tell. In short, it must be a really great product. You can't just turn up at a label or management office with an idea.

However, there are multiple levels to the industry: some artists sell 3,000 records, some 30,000 and some 3 million. But today I just want to focus on ideas which help all these artists at the start – as this is where it can go very wrong and stop you breaking through this glass ceiling.

In terms of working with artists, and with the constituent parts of the industry, it's always a complete nightmare. Everyone loathes each other and their opposing agendas: the artist wants to make and sell records, the label wants to sell them at a time and budget which works for it, the publisher wants the record out faster and in more territories, and they need a hit to get the TV ad deals in. Meanwhile the agent freaks when the release schedule is put back as the tour is set up and the manager somehow juggles cats to make it all happen – often, as Benjamin Disraeli said, "it's well known what a middle man is: he is a man who bamboozles one party and plunders the other".

And the poor old artists generally don't realise the industry is this big game of poker and transient schedules. They miss opportunities at the start, as they don't know what to look out for or how a situation can be useful, and they tie themselves in contractual knots with early deals which can kill their career stone dead. For example I made one new client £50k in a day by reading his old publishing contract properly – which he hadn't. This mess can be what I inherit at the start of a client's career, and has happened with almost every artist I have worked with – and fixing it is not easy. If it's too complex I just won't get involved. I had a dance producer client in London and the label commissioned £50k of remixes one week and the next week dropped the act from their roster. I turned this round and re-negotiated the publishing deal, licensed back the tracks to the producer and re-sold them to Japan and Australia.

I did an album deal with one major label and then the MD was sacked. End of deal. I lost the act as a result. It's a very quick and very brutal industry.

But before you do the wrong deals – and just look at the small picture – how do you get the best creative material? Having a great song to sing, and having the freedom to sing it, is the bottom line be you a hip hop Producer, songwriter or Gaelic singer and musician. We can talk for hours about image, marketing, the Internet – but the starting point is great material and a charismatic artist. Everything else can be fixed.

In footballing terms you're not going to play premiership football straight off. You start as an amateur, learn a few skills, grow through that, join a local league, grow more, get pro coaching and maybe a scout spots you and you keep learning and being challenged. This is how it should be in music, and sometimes it is, if you are based in a big city like London or Los Angeles. But it isn't in Gaelic music, as it stops dead – mainly because of geography and lack of support once you're pro or semi pro: you have a great start, but there's no one to keep pushing you after leaving music college, after the fèis or after you leave school, and you have to find your own way. That's where it goes wrong. It becomes a struggle to release an album, do gigs, and you get hacked off and embittered and fail to explore your potential.

It's up to you to decide if that's right or not. That's not my job: it's your heritage and your culture. But if you do want Gaelic music to be more than a museum piece, today is a unique opportunity to do something to make it happen.

As I say, it's all about having a great product. Every year for the past 20 years that I've been in the business I have seen an endless stream of showcases, initiatives and the like, but run by people who have no idea of what actually sells into the industry. It's a complete waste of time. The point is that anyone who's good at talent-spotting has already found the great act another way! All this does is reinforce a mistaken idea that all you need is a bit of local press and the odd London showcase to get a deal. Wrong! You need great tracks and a team behind you: that's generally enough. So focus on getting great tracks, and not on signing up to endless showcases. Showcases are great if you're up and running, but not much use to a new unsigned act. There are plenty of labels, publishers and agents around the world who'll work with you if you're good enough and have a good support team and without you having to dilute the music.

So how can you get great product, get great advice and be in a good position to understand the industry? My thoughts about useful key areas are threefold:

### **1. Donna Cunningham's FasTrac programme**

I'll start with this first, as just about everyone mentioned this when I came round asking questions for the PNE report. Everyone got a lot from this and it just stopped. Just bring this back quickly please!

This sort of help is a great place to start and gives you an idea of the business basics. This helps not just at the start but it gives you an idea of the wider business, which really helps me – as it's easier for me to help you if you have an idea of how it all works.

### **2. Create a road show of pro advisors**

You're not in London, so you can't blag free advice over a pint or two. But you must get great advice. What you should then do is have a flying doctor service. Managers, and lawyers can be very hard to get to. Talking to publishers and labels is difficult. Meeting people and getting 'free advice' is hard – you're knackered after playing a show and are probably fully of booze or have a long drive home so it's not a good time to meet people.

Well, if PNE are gee-ing up music development, can we please get some funding to support a team of advisors who can visit key areas within the country so you can get some pro advice for free. I work with

Scottish Cultural Enterprise and we jointly set up the New Deal for Musicians programme. We can cover a lot of ground quite quickly in this manner. If we work as a team we can help stop you making fatal mistakes (like ropey record deals and really thinking through a strategy). I know that the M.U. have a contract- checking and legal service and that's great, but it can only go so far: and I have first hand experience of dealing with the disasters caused by limited advice. Advice is really complex. Why not have an advisory team available in person every two or three months for you to hook up with? We could come to Glasgow, Fort William, Portree and Stornoway, and I could try and persuade guests from relevant London publishing and record labels and agencies to come up. Come to us with your questions, your plans, and career worries: but we need support to do that.

Let's find a way to do this and do it quickly.

### **3. Workshops and collaborations**

You don't all live next door to a great producer, so blagging free studio and production time is hard and your flat mate hasn't just signed a deal with EMI – so there must be opportunities for you to develop and be challenged as a writer and musician: collaborating with each other and not just boozing in the bar after a gig. Let's find a way to use local specialists properly and try and bring up additional professional writers, and producers and get ideas and projects going.

Competition is really vital. Being jealous of that flat mate who got the EMI deal is what provokes you in to working harder and coming up with better material than you would otherwise. In particular I recall an email from the Unusual Suspects trying to get help to release an album. An ensemble as vital as them should be properly helped and treasured and not left looking for scraps. Again, there's no safety net or system to help. Who can handle this and get it going?

So what I'm saying, is raise the bar creatively and everyone and everything benefits! Raise the bar in terms of getting professional advice and you'll have a career that may earn money.

Finally, I'd like to touch briefly on a couple of points you might discuss in a breakout group.

1. Technology / websites This area of profile building and marketing has really taken off since PNE commissioned their report. Should you be building a brand / website / presence on the net, and at

industry events in the UK and abroad, which supports all Gaelic acts?

2. Support the industry not just the artist: this is a pet concern of mine! How am I as a manager going to develop artists so I can get them into the industry as real players? I will only sign someone if they're close to being able to do a good deal – it's too risky otherwise! So there should be support for labels, publishers, managers, agents – not just shoving a few quid into a recording or tour budget. The Scottish film industry I believe supports research and development: why not the Scottish music industry?

3. Licensing deals which let the artist grow. (A big problem I have is removing an artist from an early deal to move them to a bigger label as their career grows.)

1. Artists! Please don't sign multi album deals at the start of your career!

2. If you're a label, move quickly to let the eager artist move from the deal with you: it's in your interest for them to sell records as much as theirs. You can kill an act dead by trying to hang on to them. Do a deal and let them go!

4. Train up an artist's 'other half' to co-manage the act. The industry generally hates dealing direct with an artist but will never say this publicly. There's a huge groan at the label when 'the girlfriend' starts managing the band. Right or wrong the industry believes that the act is great at music and the business team is good at business. Because of your unusual physical location maybe we should develop collaborative business relationships with your 'other half', who can use a professional manager as a partial front whom the industry will deal with. According to the PNE report you're subsidising your partner's career through other work – so why not adapt that role?

5. How should you handle the structure of your business – DIY / license / sign it all away? There's no easy answer to this as it varies according to so many things. In general I feel it's best to keep it simple: let others take the risk and use their expertise. Once you have profile and decent record sales then think about licensing or DIY. At the start DIY is OK, but to get a career going you need good cash flow from advances and a high level of experience to build a career and be in a position to move like lightning if your career takes off – which you can't do if bogged down in old deals and no cash.

6. The basic points, however, are: most artists are flat broke, and do you want your culture and heritage

to wither and become a distant memory and a curiosity for the visitors? Or do you want to push yourselves and see where it takes you – be assertive and be happy about it?

Matthew Rooke coined the wholly apt phrase “cultural crofting”. There’s a whole other issue here of the pros and cons of public funding versus surviving in a competitive market place. But in a farming context some farmers muddle through with grants, subsidies and ill-looking cows, and others take off by getting the B&B going, specialising in rare breeds, working the farmers’ markets, making speciality products and getting a good living...

What I do know is that you have a massive head start culturally, and creatively, and fantastic early stages tuition and education but no support thereafter. Don’t wait for the music equivalent of BSE or Foot and Mouth to force you into action and change! All you need to do is bring it together a bit more and plug a few gaps. Some of you will earn a slightly better living, and some much more. Maybe we can get more projects happening at all levels, but it’s down to you as to how much you want to improve things, not organisations or arts bodies to tell you. So if nothing changes it’s your fault not theirs!!!



# **Appendix 4: Key-note address**

## **Ian Smith**

***(Head of Music/Scottish Arts Council)***

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### ***Positioning Gaelic music within the Scottish music industry***

What is an outsider's view, even a Scottish-based outsider's view or perception of Scottish Gaelic music? Is it the Mòd, often discovered by mistake once a year when trawling through late-night terrestrial television channels or – more frequently – the often awful late-night manifestations of Gaelic music on Scottish television that do neither music nor the Gaelic language and culture any service whatsoever. Is Gaelic a live language? Is Gaelic culture alive and well outside of the Western Isles – its stronghold, as so often incorrectly perceived by that same ignorant observer? Is Scots Gaelic as widely spoken as Irish Gaelic? How are these observations and comments to be answered, disproved, and – hopefully – that observer enlightened? As Head of Music at the Scottish Arts Council am I that observer? And if so, should my contract be terminated immediately? Or should I be allowed to proceed only on the clear understanding that I will atone for any sins expressed here and engage fully with the Gaelic community?

That is to say, with fellow musicians who want exactly the same as me: to promote the very best music from Scotland nationally and (just as importantly) internationally; to demonstrate what we all know we have in spades: great music. Putting it simplistically, that is my job-description and my stated mantra: to promote great music from Scotland world-wide at every opportunity.

I have just returned from South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin, Texas, where we assisted financially in a ridiculously modest way compared to other countries – not least Canada – to get the best of our young Scottish bands onto that vitally important international stage. Highlights were seeing not only hugely successful showcases, in terms of performance and audience reaction, but equally importantly to do business successfully with the many representatives from the recording, promotion, festival, media, television, tour and management companies who attended the world's

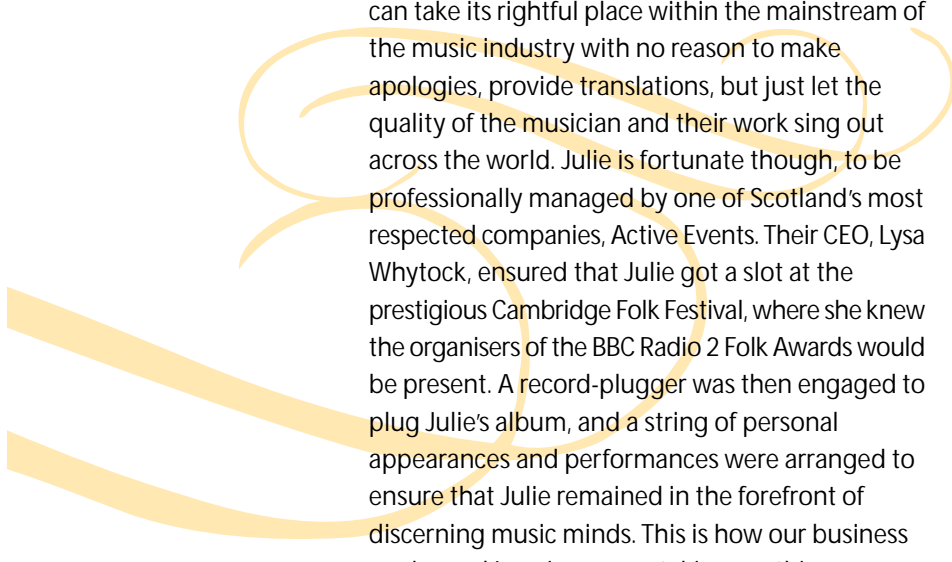
biggest convention for contemporary popular music – with this year, 10,000 delegates. Paolo Nutini from Paisley signed to Warner, Aberfeldy from Edinburgh signed to Rough Trade Records, the Hazey Janes from Dundee signed to Measured Records (one of Scotland's largest labels with a strong presence in the States) and Camera Obscura from Glasgow signed to Shoeshine Records with an American licensing deal on the table following their showcase. Add to that the already established acts in – America Belle & Sebastian, Mogwai, Isobel Campbell, and recent Brit Award Winner KT Tunstall, and you can begin to understand where I am coming from here today.

Earlier this year we were in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Shetland Arts Trust to present a Scottish Showcase at the US/Canadian Folk Alliance, which coincidentally also took place in Austin and featured Fiddler's Bid and Shoormal from Shetland, Blazin' Fiddles, Karine Polwart, Emily Smith – celebrated at SXSW as a category winner at the International Songwriting Awards in Nashville – and Julie Fowlis, known to some of you here, I'm sure, as the winner of the Horizon/Best Newcomer Award at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2006, following Karine's astonishing success in 2005. But this is the Pròiseact nan Ealan Conference, and why is this Englishman with an honorary Scottish pedigree (he hopes) wittering on about contemporary music and folk music awards and showcases? What has this to do with Gaelic Music...? The answer is EVERYTHING!

When thinking specifically about the position of Gaelic music in the Scottish, UK and wider European music industry, do we celebrate the tradition or do we celebrate the quality of the product, or both? Can Gaelic music really have a position that is both aesthetic and commercial, and are the two mutually complementary? Or like magnet poles placed in the wrong position, diametrically opposed? From where I stand it MUST be the former, because even to contemplate the latter will mean parochial isolation and ultimate demise. Gaelic music will only develop if it takes and realises its potential position in the market place. There are already good examples of those musicians who promote the language and its culture professionally: Anne Lorne Gillies, Margaret Bennett, Ishbel MacAskill, Donny Munro, Karen Matheson, Mary Anne Kennedy, Arthur Cormack, James Graham – the first solo Gaelic singer to win the coveted BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year Award two years ago, Alyth McCormack and the aforementioned Julie Fowlis. But there's still plenty of room for more.

Let's take those awful late-night broadcasts from Scottish Television (which now includes Grampian). Scottish Television is obliged to broadcast 250 hours of regional broadcasting as part of its license. The Gaelic slot has moved later and later, and the quality has, sadly, diminished. I perceive that the role of the Gaelic Media Service (GMS) and its relationship with STV is an important factor here. GMS don't want Gaelic programmes going out in the middle of the night, I am sure and as GMS can invest in the service but not directly commission, the control remains with the broadcaster. We have seen how things have moved from a much more healthy position in the 90's, when people like Don Coutts and the Capercaillie production team led by Donald Shaw, were making quality programmes compared to what we have today. It is quite apparent that programmes are being made cheaply, with no regard for the commodity that is my (and I hope all of our) stock and trade: QUALITY. With the greatest regard for the career pathways of often very young musicians who are Gaelic speakers, this would appear to be the main criterion for participation, rather than properly showcasing, supporting and promoting the many great musicians young and old who use the medium of the Gaelic language to such great effect. I fear the broadcaster is currently leading us all up a blind alley and it must stop. We know there is increasing pressure on the broadcaster, and Scottish television is very vulnerable right now and potentially subject to being absorbed within the Carlton/Granada Group and then becoming part of the Clear Channel Corporation. So again, our only significant independent commercial broadcaster will be owned outwith the UK, leaving BBC Scotland as the solely identified Scottish public service broadcaster – despite the significant and growing independent sector represented by PACT. Could we ever aspire to what our colleagues across the Irish sea have, namely TG4 – which I understand came into being partly as a result of the Irish thinking that Scotland was pressing ahead with plans to have its own dedicated channel and didn't want to be left behind? Let's hope that we can have such a potential here in Scotland soon, even if, as most of us suspect, that channel might be run by the BBC.

But this isn't meant to be a tirade against Scottish Television. That is only part of a larger problem. Let me give you a cogent example of why one of Scottish Gaeldom's most impressive musical daughters is currently enjoying so much commercial success. Reasons 1 through 10 are easy: she is a fantastically gifted, hard-working professional, with a voice to die for, a level of musicianship that is embarrassingly fluent for one so young, a truly



creative writer, a significant ensemble player with Dòchas and others, and a modesty (and indeed beauty) that are entirely self-effacing. I refer, of course, to Julie Fowlis. When Lesley Garret presented Julie with her BBC Radio 2 New Horizon Award in London recently, I was gratified to hear Lesley refer to Julie in such respectful terms as someone who not only celebrated their language so effectively, but made the songs she sang so accessible to every audience. Therein lies the reason why Gaelic music can take its rightful place within the mainstream of the music industry with no reason to make apologies, provide translations, but just let the quality of the musician and their work sing out across the world. Julie is fortunate though, to be professionally managed by one of Scotland's most respected companies, Active Events. Their CEO, Lysa Whytock, ensured that Julie got a slot at the prestigious Cambridge Folk Festival, where she knew the organisers of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards would be present. A record-plugger was then engaged to plug Julie's album, and a string of personal appearances and performances were arranged to ensure that Julie remained in the forefront of discerning music minds. This is how our business works, and I am in no way taking anything away from Julie being successful in winning that Horizon Award – as it was deserved on merit absolutely – but what I am saying, and I hope saying clearly, is that Gaelic Music is ready and ripe for that commercial exploitation without losing one ounce of its cultural and aesthetic importance.

I can only reiterate on this platform that the SAC's and my personal commitment to promoting great music from Scotland are undiminished and grow stronger with every performance I attend. I have no indication that that will change as the SAC moves towards becoming Creative Scotland, a new, progressive organisation that MUST be developmental, enterprise-driven, and properly reflect entrepreneurial vision and values – if not why change?

The position of Gaelic Music within the Scottish Music Industry, and its potential for growth, are enormous and significant. I would say one last thing to you all in promoting your language and your culture through music: never has there been a better time.

*GO FOR IT AND GO FOR IT NOW!*



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# **Appendix 5: Gaelic Music Conference Program**

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## ***Iùl Ciùil***

### ***Gaelic Music Conference & Gathering***

**Wednesday 22 & Thursday 23 March 2006**

The Recital Rooms, City Halls, Candleriggs, Glasgow G1 1NQ

### ***Day 1: An Tobar / The Well***

12.00 – 1.00 Registration and lunch

1.10 – 1.20 Welcome from PNE's Director, Malcolm MacLean

1.20 – 1.30 Introduction from the Conference Chair

1.30 – 2.00 Mairidh gaol is ceòl...? / Love and music will endure...?

Anne Lorne Gillies, singer, writer, broadcaster and educator:

A reminder – of why Gaelic music is so important, not just to its exponents but to the whole world; a warning – about the forces, local, national and global, which threaten it; and a challenge to Conference – and to all who love Gaelic music – to find ways of protecting, promoting, strengthening and celebrating it.

2.00 – 2.45 Panel 1: Gaelic Music and the Community with

- Anne Lorne Gillies
- Flora MacNeil
- Jo McDonald
- Mairi Bh Macinnes
- Kenneth Thomson

- 2.45 – 3.30 Breakout groups 1: Gaelic Music and the Community – the Way Ahead
1. New Routes and Uncharted Territories – Anne Lorne Gillies
  2. Festivals and Summer Schools – Mairi Bh Macinnes
  3. Mods and Choirs – Kenneth Thomson
  4. Tradition Bearing – Jo McDonald
- 3.30 – 4.00 Refreshments
- 4.00 – 4.45 Panel 2: Gaelic Music and Education with
- Arthur Cormack
  - Brian McNeil
  - Calum Martin
  - Fiona Mackenzie
- 4.45 – 5.30 Breakout groups 2: Gaelic Music & Education
1. An t-ionnsachadh òg Youth Tuition (Informal Education) – Arthur Cormack
  2. An t-ionnsachadh òg Youth Tuition (Formal Education & Schools) – Calum Martin & Fiona Mackenzie
  3. Higher / Further Education – Brian McNeil
  4. Community & Lifelong Learning – Mairi Bh Macinnes
- 5.30 – 7.00 Free time
- 7.00 – 8.00 Civic Reception
- 8.00 – 11.30 Ceilidh

## **Day 2: An t-Struth / The Stream**

- 10.00 – 10.30 Refreshments
- 10.30 – 11.30 Introduction from Proiseact nan Ealan Chairperson, Agnes Rennie
- Aislingí, Meas agus Airgead / Dreams, Respect and Money! Dermot McLaughlin, musician and former Music Director of the Irish Arts Council will address:
- Harnessing the vitality and energy of the traditional arts in Ireland
  - How a dynamic policy approach can bridge the gap between the traditional arts community and the funding bodies/State
  - From ad hoc to road map – recent experience in the Republic of Ireland
  - Threats and difficulties for Gaeltacht based arts
  - A bright future?

## **Drive and Innovation**

Pete Hagen, Argyll Management, specialising in commercial, underground and roots artist management

*“What I find really interesting in Gaelic Music is that despite your grumbling there is a support structure and there’s a genuine culture, but you’re all spread out and it’s hard to get drive and innovation going. The world has really moved on since the 70’s and 80’s and technology and the growth of niche markets is great news but I want to focus on the one thing which drives me nuts and which I think holds artists back.*

*So what I want to do today is shed light on what I think can help an act and their music develop. Regardless of how many records a project could sell, it doesn’t matter – the starting point is the same.....A great product.”*

- 11.30 – 12.15 Panel 3: The Music Business with
- Donna Cunningham
  - Julie Tait
  - Matthew Rooke
- 12.15 – 1.00 Breakout groups 3: The Music Business and the Media
- 1.Promoting Gaelic Music in the Music Industry – Donna Cunningham & Matthew Rooke
  - 2.New Gaelic Music – Donald Shaw & Calum Martin
  - 3.Marketing and Audience Development – Julie Tait
  - 4.Gaelic Music and the Media – Mary Ann Kennedy & Neill Ian Domhnallach
- 1.00 – 2.00 Lunch
- 2.00 – 2.15 Ian Smith, Head of Music, Scottish Arts Council will address the growing value, both commercial and aesthetic, of Gaelic music and language within the infrastructure of the music industry in Scotland.
- 2.15 – 3.00 Panel 4: Music and the Media with
- Donald Shaw
  - Mary Ann Kennedy
  - Neill Ian Domhnallach
- 3.00 – 3.45 Breakout groups 4: The Music Business and the Media (as morning)
1. Promoting Gaelic Music in the Music Industry – Donna Cunningham & Matthew Rooke
  2. New Gaelic Music – Donald Shaw & Calum Martin
  3. Marketing and Audience Development – Julie Tait
  4. Gaelic Music and the Media – Mary Ann Kennedy & Neill Ian Domhnallach
- 3.45 – 4.30 The past, the present and the future with Agnes Rennie and Malcolm Maclean

Don't miss this opportunity to catch up with the key issues which have emerged over the two days and to contribute to the future of the development of Gaelic music and language in the 21st century.



# **Appendix 6:**

## ***List of speakers and delegates***

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### ***Speakers:***

Agnes Rennie

Anne Lorne Gillies

Flora MacNeil

Jo Macdonald

Mairi Macinnes (Bh)

Arthur Cormack

Brian McNeil

Calum Martin

Fiona Mackenzie

Dermot McLaughlin

Pete Hagen

Donna Cunningham

Julie Tait

Matthew Rooke

Mary Ann Kennedy

Niall Iain Domhnallach

Donald Shaw

Derek 'Pluto' Murray

Ian Smith

Kenny Thomson

### ***Delegates:***

Chrisella Ross

Kirstie Anderson

Seumas Morrison

Moira Maclean

Fiona Mackenzie

Kenna Campbell

John Murphy

Anna Murray

Margaret Bennett

John Blair

Joy Dunlop

Rona Macdonald

Iain Domhnallach

Mary Ellen Stewart

Steve Byrne

Doileag Macleod

Elise Kelly

Laura Green

Chas Domhnallach

Katie Adam

David Boag

Ingrid Henderson

Iona MacDonald

Christine MacIntyre

Nicola Marshall

George Stoddart

Helen Macneil

Alison Buchanan

Margaret MacKelvie

John Saich

Elizabeth Blair

Alasdair Macleod

## ***Delegates cont:***

Carol-Ann Jackson	Carolyn Paterson
Christine Coombe	Simon Mackenzie
Angus Campbell	Danny Kilbride
John M Doig	Meic Llewellyn
Phyllis R Khanna	Jane Gray
Cynthia Leitch	Rhona Johnstone
Mary McIndoe	C M Bould
Margaret McInnes	Barnaby Brown
Rab McMurdo	Sile Denvir
Ann Robertson	Alasdair Gillies
David Robson	Gillebride MacIllemaoill
Calum Angus Mackay	Mairi Macinnes
Maggie MacInnes	Archie Maclean
Duncan McCrone	Donald Angus Matheson
Murdo Morrison	Iain Angus Macleod
David Arcari	Norma Macdougall
Sheena Macdonald	Ishbel Macaskill
Almut Boehme	Frances McEachen
Duncan MacInnes	Cathlin Macaulay
Katie Mackenzie	Fiona Campbell
Mairi Kidd	Angela McLaughlin
Derek Doyle	Michael O' Farraigh
Susan Chisholm	Rona Lightfoot
David Bowen	



PROISEACT NAN EALAN   
the gaelic arts agency

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**AITHISG IUL CIUIL**  
**GAELIC MUSIC CONFERENCE**  
**REPORT 2006**  
**By Dr Anne Lorne Gillies**

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