

# CORK ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

*Founded in 1938 by Aloys Fleischmann (1910-1992)*

Registered Address: Civic Trust House, 50 Pope's Quay, Cork, T23 R6XC

Email: [info@corkorchestralsociety.ie](mailto:info@corkorchestralsociety.ie) Website: [www.corkorchestralsociety.ie](http://www.corkorchestralsociety.ie)



## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Prepared for the 2016 Annual General Meeting of Cork Orchestral Society

Thursday 13 October 2016

### Board & Society Management

The 2015 – 16 season included the last six months' maternity leave for me as Chairperson, and also benefitted from a new administrator through a work placement scheme who took on parts of everyone's roles. Thanks to everyone for managing everything so well in my absence. The season was our third under the new board. The transition from Allin Gray to Tom Doyle (TomD) as Treasurer and all matters financial was very smooth, thanks also to TomD for assuming some responsibility to further our governance structures and obligations. For my own part especially, thanks to TomD for making such a good job of the Arts Council application.

### Concerts & Venues

We had a great year in terms of concert organisation, thanks Hugh. Concert organisation was simplified by running fewer gigs outside the Curtis Auditorium this season, especially in comparison to the challenge of the Forte Festival the previous year, as well as with the additional administration hours the festival demanded. Using other venues brings both challenges and opportunities, and isn't something we have consciously put aside, it is just how things turned out for this season. We are very grateful to the CIT Cork School of Music for facilitating access to the Curtis Auditorium and hope that it can continue to be our main venue. Being able to welcome national and international artists to a world-class concert hall and to have such a fine piano available for them is something that both our audience and our guest artists greatly appreciate.

### Programming & Audience

Tom Crowley (TomC) is doing a great job in the role of programmer, both in terms of artistic vision as well as confirming plans on time and within budget. The year has just started in terms of the fruits of his labour. Attendance fluctuated last year as ever and presented no particular high points I don't think and a couple of lows. The vastly improved record keeping of audience figures and box office income which Hugh introduced a couple of years ago, coupled with access to much more detailed forward-planning records of projected audiences, can now start to give us a clearer picture of what is happening overall. Here's hoping a refocussing of marketing efforts can help us fill a few more seats next year.

### Marketing

Marketing was not consistent and continues to present a logistical and administrative challenge even with an administrator. I intend to devote time, freed up from programming, to marketing this year. We did spend significantly on it for one concert this year. We chose a 'difficult sell' concert, Mr McFall's Chamber, and it was a reminder of what 'difficult sell' means. Blue Monkey, the company whose services we procured five weeks, got great coverage for us. They returned value for money spent, in terms of the value such presence would cost us if it were advertising in those media (over €33,000, for an outlay of €1,000). It didn't translate into ticket sales however which was a shame for such a good and accessible concert, but they were an unknown ensemble to our audience,

---

**President:** Dr Máirín Quill

**Directors (Sep 2019):** Tom Crowley (chair), Nicola ffrench Davis, Tom Doyle, Ciara Glasheen-Artem, Maria Judge, Pax Ó Faoláin, Joan Scannell

Cork Orchestral Society is a company limited by guarantee registered in Ireland (No. 181608) and a registered charity (CHY 8808).



playing unknown music by mostly unknown composers. It would be worth considering again in my opinion, although this time focusing on concerts with more potential to attract an audience.

### **2016 – 17 Outlook**

In all I think we are going into the new season in a strong position. TomC has put together a great year of music. The apparently diminished bank balance is due to a change in the scheduled drawdown of grant funding which TomD introduced since last year, with our bottom line projected to be more or less in line with that of last year by year end of 2016. Our administrator, whose work scheme just came to its time limit, has just started a short paid administration term with us, funded by money freed up from the programming budget, and he brings with him a wealth of knowledge and ability under very favourable terms with the society. TomD has made a very strong case to the Arts Council for funds to secure a salaried part-time administration role as part of an increase in our annual grant for them, with the outcome of that expected to be announced at the end of November.

Nicki ffrench Davis  
Chairperson  
Cork Orchestral Society

---

**President:** Dr Máirín Quill

**Directors (Sep 2019):** Tom Crowley (chair), Nicola ffrench Davis, Tom Doyle, Ciara Glasheen-Artem, Maria Judge, Pax Ó Faoláin, Joan Scannell

Cork Orchestral Society is a company limited by guarantee registered in Ireland (No. 181608) and a registered charity (CHY 8808).

