

IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC

An exploration of the performance practice of the traditional Irish reel “Toss the Feathers” in its’ various contexts

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Abstract

Irish Traditional music: An exploration of the performance practice of the traditional Irish reel “Toss the Feathers” in its’ various contexts

The purpose of this essay is to try to realise what factors affect the performance practice of the traditional Irish reel *Toss the Feathers*. In doing so, it is important to recognise the nature of Irish music. This includes, especially the informal nature of the performance, and the role music has taken in accompanying dance.

The essay focuses on three versions of the tune, two traditional versions and one ‘fusion’ of the tune. I consider the tunes in terms of texture, melody, harmony, rhythm, all in context of the performance, and try to reason this in terms of the emphasis and the context.

I have drawn upon several important conclusions from these versions. The context of the music will determine which aspects are emphasised in the performance. Above all the technical aspects, the performance of *Toss the Feathers* will be defined by personal experience and taste.

Whether the rhythm or the melody is emphasized is up to the performer, however, the essential nature of traditional music is that it is melodic. In the fusion of *Toss the Feathers* it becomes obvious that the melody is drowned out by the conventions of harmony, thus becoming an entirely different form of music.

In addition, there is a natural rhythmic motion that is always present in the traditional music which means that in losing it, the tune becomes packaged into a new context. Performance is an individual experience, and to know the style is to be actively involved in it.

Word Count: 268

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Introduction

Singing 'Danny Boy' in a pub session in Ireland and hearing a remix of the song on a soundtrack – these clearly are at different ends of the spectrum. What it is I wish to explore is the elements that affect the genre of the music. In other words, how does one version of 'Danny Boy', or in this case 'Toss the feathers' become classed as traditional Irish music instead of world music fusion, or Scandinavian folk. What needs to stay the same for a performance to fit within the framework of traditional, what can be altered? How does the context of the performance affect the expression of the music? How also the instrumentation, the rhythm, the tonality?

In an attempt to answer these questions, I have chosen three versions of the reel 'Toss the Feathers' which I will compare. I will attempt first to place the versions into context, and thereafter break them down into their various musical elements in order to explore the differences and similarities between the recordings, in accordance with their context. Effectively, my aim is to realise the 'skeleton' of the music.

Having already planned a trip to an Irish folk music summer school, I decided to use this opportunity to find out more about the context of Irish music and indeed the origins of the music. This took place in County Clare, Ireland, so I had a chance to get the feel for the Irish music atmosphere.

Defining Context

By context, I am referring to the genre or *setting* of the tune's performance. The irony is that all the recordings are, due to a lack of materials, *studio* recordings. It is because of this that the effect an audience might have on performers can only be speculated, and my focus instead will be mainly on context in terms of instrumentation, influences on the performers – i.e. from the perspective of the performers themselves. Can we make generalisations about how musical elements or experience will affect the performance of 'Toss the Feathers'? It is this I will be studying.

Irish Traditional Music

"There is only one way of becoming a traditional player or singer, and that is by listening to genuine material performed in a traditional manner."¹ Irish music is an oral tradition, and inevitably, many different versions of the same tune have been developed. It is also this "re-shaping" and "re-creation" of tunes by the community, in the opinion of the famous ethnomusicologist and music collector Breandán Breathnach that makes a tune 'traditional'². Even though a tune ultimately is created by one person, it must belong to the community to become traditional.

It is with this definition of traditional music that I will be looking upon the music studied in the body of this essay. *Toss the Feathers* is a reel, falling under the category of Irish dance music³.

Irish reels are thought to have evolved between the 17th and 18th Century, with many of the tunes arriving then possibly of Scottish origin⁴. Dance music was originally played

¹ Breathnach, Breandán. 1996. *Folk Music and Dances of Ireland*. Ossian, Cork. p.88

² *Ibid.*, p.119

³ Ireland *In* Stanley Stadie and John Tyrrell (eds.). 2001. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2nd Edition, Grove's Dictionaries, London. p.563

⁴ There is some conflict on this matter: some, like Caoimhín Mac Aoidh, believe that the only reason this is 'known' is that there are not many publications of reels at this time, and, although it may have been influenced by the Scottish, he believes the reel was not unknown to Ireland, but merely became

solo and accompanied dancers, allowing for a certain degree of individualism in its performance, even if it would be, to an extent, dictated by the dancer.

Today this kind of solo-playing is a rare occasion. Instead it is more likely to find a group playing in what is called a 'session'. The session is a recent addition to the Irish music life, but is now extremely common. It is customary that sessions occur in pubs: a group of musicians will get together – perhaps a fiddler, flute player, tin-whistle player, piper, guitarist and bodhrán player. The group will then agree on a tune, or a musician might start to play. In the latter instance, musicians who know the tune may join in the playing. After two or three repeats, they will start to play another tune, and the process will continue until the performers decide to stop. The session is an informal affair, and is more about having fun than about being exact, according to Paddy Glackin, a well-known fiddle player in Ireland whom I had the privilege to talk to⁵.

Another setting common to dance music is as an accompaniment to *set dance*. Here, a *ceili band* accompanies dancers at the pace they request. Much the same type of music is used, although some dances require particular the dances have been created to dance to.

There are three versions of *Toss the Feathers*, but to keep the project focused, I have limited the analysis to the 'D (mixolydian)' version.

popularised later on. Mac Aoidh, Caoimhín. 18 Jul. 2005. The origins of Irish traditional music. 20 Aug. 2005. <<http://www.standingstones.com/cmaoitm.html>>.

⁵ Glackin, Paddy. Personal Interview. 9 Jul. 2005.

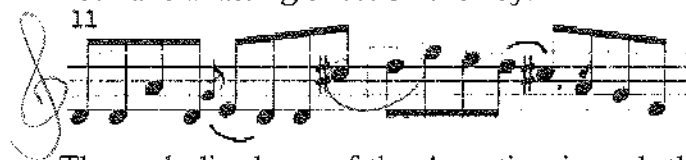
JAMES KELLY

The first version of *Toss the Feathers* I will be exploring is one recorded by fiddler James Kelly. Kelly was first taught the fiddle by his father, a famous fiddle and concertina player from Co. Clare, Ireland, at the age of three.⁶ As might be expected, Clare-style fiddling is one of the musician's major influences, along with Sligo fiddling. Both of these styles are said to be highly ornamented, though Clare-fiddling is less 'bouncy' than Sligo-fiddling.⁷

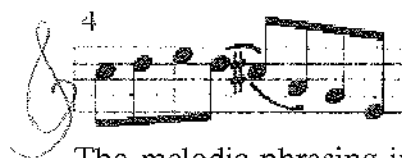
This version of *Toss the Feathers* is the only recording of the three which has a soloist performing without accompaniment. As I mentioned earlier, solo-playing was the original mode of performance. Consequently, I am taking *this* version first in order to focus on the reel in its 'raw' form.

The structure of the reel is binary. The A and B sections are repeated three times with some degree of variation such that the structure is: ABA'B'A''B". Each section is made up of two four-bar phrases repeated to make a 16 bar long section. The B section takes on a higher octave than the A section. This structure is typical of Irish dance music, about which it is said that 'Almost all tunes consist of two parts, one lower in pitch (tune) followed by a by higher (turn).'⁸

In the A section, the melody steers towards the note D in a drone-like fashion, giving it a tonal centre of D. Although the key signature suggests that the tune is in G major, it is based on the D mixolydian mode as a result of this emphasis. Having said this, the use of the C# might well create a D major feel. In the example below (b.11-12) however, the C#'s occur only as passing notes, and do not have a lasting effect on the key.



The melodic shape of the A section is such that there is great deal of movement between the notes D and the dominant A, in between which is found mostly scalar movement, and if not, small leaps, like in bar 4 (below), where there are only third and second intervals between consecutive notes. Because of this, the tonal centre is all the time continual and there is a sense of familiarity in the tune.



The melodic phrasing in this version is repetitive in nature. Setting the phrases apart are the phrase endings. In bar four (below) there is a symmetrical ascending and descending movement which keeps similar to the rest of the phrase, where as in bar eight, the ascending movement is extended from the previous bar so that it is set apart from the rest of the bar, achieving a conclusive ending also on the

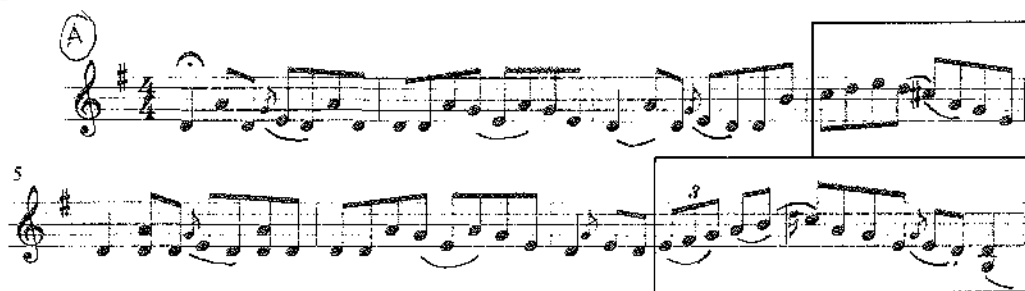
⁶ (Unknown Author). 1990. James Kelly - Biography P. 27 Aug. 2005.

<http://www.jameskellymusic.com/JK_Biography.html>.

⁷ Breathnach, Breandán. 1996. Folk Music and Dances of Ireland. Ossian, Cork. p.92. This chapter includes a discussion on the regional styles found in fiddling.

⁸ Ireland In Stanley Stadie and John Tyrrell (eds.). 2001. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. 2nd Edition, Grove's Dictionaries, London. p.563

tonic instead of leading into the next bar. The same can be said for each phrase ending: the shape depends on its role – whether as a lead into a new part or into a repeat.



Whereas the A section has a D mixolydian feel to it, the more frequent use of C# in the B section alters the mood. The movement in small intervals noted in the A section is also present in the B section. In addition, where previously there was a movement between D and A, the emphasis seems to lie on E, and the strong pulse that before was created by the repeated D is now much more subtle. In bars 18-20 (below), the supertonic E, is used to lead *into* D so that the D is played on the offbeat. In addition, Kelly uses slurs and grace notes and turns to soften the emphasis on D and A.



A notable factor in listening to the recording⁹ is that Kelly plays in a rhythm whereby, the first of two quavers is *slightly* longer than the second. This, apart from being a distinctly traditional element also gives the reel a more 'danceable' quality relatable to the context.

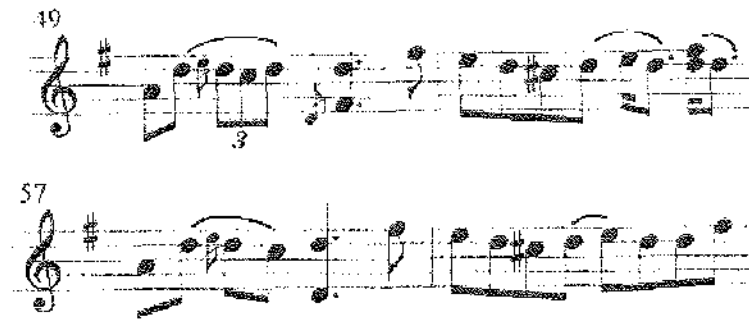
The rhythmic patterns in the melody are often based on two sets of four quavers, although the longer notes are used to emphasise the central tone (D), and triplets are always used as a scalar ascending or descending movement. Dotted rhythms are also used for rhythmic variation.

James Kelly puts a greater emphasis on *rhythmic* variation than he does *melodic*. He does this both through a) varying the length of notes and b) altering the note that is emphasised (using accents, double stops, slurs and ornamentation). Even though much of the variation uses subtle techniques, it at the same time shifts the whole motion of the music. Bars six and fourteen (below) show this. By changing the quaver beats to a triplet and shifting the slur from the fourth quaver to just before the second, the third beat of the bar is stressed, and hence an upbeat and flamboyant feel is achieved.



⁹ Refer to track 1

An obvious element in Kelly's music is that he elaborates significantly and skilfully in his use of ornamentation. His doing so individualises the performance and when combined with the different forms of variation makes for a more enjoyable performance. Bars 57-58 and 49-50 show the types of variation he does combine: rhythmic – the substituted triplet and dotted rhythms and slurred bowing, melodic – F# to D becomes D to F#, and harmonic – the use of F# in a double stop instead of D. The ornamentation does not vary here, but rather complements the other forms of variation and creates a legato style of playing individual to Clare-fiddling.



Kelly's version of *Toss the Feathers* is part of a set, a common phenomenon in Irish music. *Toss the Feathers* is followed by *Collier's Reel*. This must be taken into account when realising the effect context has on the performance. *Collier's reel* has the same tonality and a similar structure, rhythm and melodic form to *Toss the Feathers*. There is less prominence of the D and thus some change in mood is caused, one motivation behind having a set.

The recording is an upbeat one, and rhythmic variation is significant. The modal tonality and the rhythm form the traditional sound of the music, as does the individual sound that Kelly has, following a mixture of Sligo and Clare playing – a legato yet 'bouncy' technique.

PADDY KEENAN & PADDY GLACKIN

The second version of *Toss the Feathers* has piper Paddy Keenan and fiddler Paddy Glackin playing the melody. Glackin is said to be influenced by Donegal fiddling¹⁰. Although he was brought up in Dublin, Glackin's father was a Donegal fiddler, and was one of his early influences as a musician, both in his playing and in his connections. In my interview with him, Glackin said: "I wouldn't say I play Donegal style *all* the time, I like to think I have my own way of playing – but I *was* heavily influenced by Donegal." Glackin has been affected by fiddlers from Donegal, Sligo, Kerry as well as a range of musicians from other counties.

Keenan is associated with a very old piping tradition. He plays using the 'open-fingered' style. What this refers to is a method of playing where one note runs into the next one creating a legato effect¹¹. Apart from continuing the Irish tradition, Keenan has also performed blues and rock. This influence however, is not seen in this recording, which might be classed a traditional, session-style performance.

I chose this recording rather than one with another guitar-accompanied Donegal fiddler because, even though the stylistic differences between regions might be obvious, this recording captures the layered performances so often found in sessions. It was indeed in the musicians' aim to try to achieve 'the essential ruggedness and spontaneity of the music.'¹² Having said this, Glackin explains that "if you're committing something to a tape you want it to be pretty right; in a session...when there's loads of people around you, they don't hear the finer points." After James Kelly's solo version, a notable difference is the heterophonic texture of the music. There is also a build up in texture that could not have been possible with the previous instrumentation.

In this recording the fiddle, pipes and a bodhrán, can be heard. Because of the blending of layers, I am unsure about whether there is another part playing the melody, more precisely, a concertina, in the latter part of the melody.

This arrangement again is binary: AABBA'A'B'B', each section 16 bars long. Like in Kelly's version, the tune and turn are split into two phrases, four bars in length that are repeated. Indeed, what has been said about Kelly's version, the phrases and parts of the phrases are similar too in the Paddy's recording. The melody in the first section at bar 1-2 is repeated at bar 3 with a differing 'conclusion' in bar 4 (below).



¹⁰Taffe, Brendan. Summer 2003. Paddy Glackin: For the Fun of It. 31 Aug 2005.

<<http://www.fiddle.com/issues/sum03.htm#anchor296503>>

¹¹Breathnach, Breandán. 1996. Folk Music and Dances of Ireland. Ossian, Cork. p.90.

¹²Sleeve notes of *Doublin*, Paddy Keenan and Paddy Glackin. Tara Records, 2000.

This melody is based on D mixolydian mode, and the weight in the A section also lies on D. There is, however, a difference. Kelly's melody emphasizes the note A in the *second* beat, in the first and third bar, whereas in the second version, the A is played on the third beat. This changes the melodic feel quite considerably. In Kelly's, the leap on the second beat adheres to his 'bouncy' playing, whereas the melody of the second version follows Keenan's legato style piping.

James Kelly



Glackin/Keenan



In the second section, there are mainly C#'s in place of the C naturals. An example of this (below) is in the first phrase of the B section, where C# is used both the turns and in a group of notes. In bars 17-18, the D is more subtle than in the A section. The note is always placed on the offbeat and tied, as is the case in the fiddle part, and effectively, given the open-fingered style, on the pipes too.

Fiddle ¹⁷ [ⓑ]

Chanter (pipes)

21

In bars 19-20 and 23-24, the endings of each phrase, the D is hardly used at all, there being more emphasis on the A and E as a centre. It is used only as a leading note in bar 20 and 24 (above).

The different forms of ornamentation used by each performer, as hard as it is to hear in the recording¹³, has a considerable effect on the texture. Because there are different conventions in the ornamentation on the fiddle and the pipes¹⁴, the texture becomes heterophonic. To a certain extent, this displays a sense of the individual experience, even in a group setting, of traditional music. This is a

¹³ Refer to track 2

¹⁴ *Breathnach, Breandán. 1996. Folk Music and Dances of Ireland. Ossian, Cork. p.88-102.*

largely significant of the nature of a session, which might have more than six parts playing the melody at one time.

Melodic variation¹⁵ is only slight in this arrangement. Both parts sometimes vary in their own melody part, but separately, the extent to which the melody is varied is one note in a series. The main build up lies instead in rhythmic variation, harmony and texture.

In the second repeat of the melody, there is a continuous D drone on the pipes, an introduction to the bodhrán, and later the uilleann pipe *regulator*¹⁶ comes in. This build up in texture serves to heighten the energy of the performance. The regulator provides concordant harmony, as the notes used are D and F#, part of the D mixolydian chord. Apart from this, it lends an offbeat, syncopated feel to the music.

57



Rhythmic variation is not only effected by the regulator but also by the bodhrán part¹⁷. The bodhrán part starts by accenting the first and later the second beat of the bar, but there is later variation in rhythm affecting the pulse.

45



The displacement of the accents underscores the lively and informal nature of a session, and indicates an improvisational element to the music.

Like Kelly's version was the first of a set, this is the second. Attached to it is a tune called 'The Boyne Hunt'. The Boyne Hunt is also in D mixolydian, but emphasizes the B and F# in the same as D and A are emphasized in this recording so the change provides a change in mood and livens the performance. Kelly using the tune first makes it the *start* of a build up into the next tune.

In terms of *style*, Keenan's legato playing blended with Glackin's limited use of slurs provides a determined performance – helped also by the slightly faster tempo than Kelly's version. This and the build up in texture, rhythm and harmony creates a lively version I think captures a session at its best.

¹⁵ Refer again to track 2

¹⁶ The uilleann pipes have three parts: the chanter, used for the melody, the regulator and the drone. This is discussed further in the 1996 edition of *Folk Music and Dances of Ireland*. Ossian, Cork. p.72-79.

¹⁷ My notation of the bodhrán part is a simplified version which uses only high and low pitch as well as showing where the accents lie. The bodhrán part will of course have more than two pitches, but it is easier to understand where the emphasis is in this notation.

Green Man

I have chosen this third version of *Toss the Feathers* specifically because the band is involved in the genre of 'fusion'¹⁸. Based in America, the band performs both original compositions and arrangements of traditional Celtic songs and tunes blending a Celtic and Middle Eastern sound. They do so not only by using instruments from each tradition, but at the same time they use modern electric and traditional acoustic instruments. In that sense, there is more to it than a fusion of two traditions.

The instrumentation is entirely different to the previous versions. A traditional flute and accordion are the melody instruments, acoustic folk guitars, electric bass, a hand drum and tambourine are used in *Toss the Feathers*. This blend highlights the fusion element. Not only this, but it underscores the role of instrumentation. It is in Glackin's opinion that the drum kit and bass used in new traditional music 'bludgeon the music into tradition and (give) it a straight jacket.'¹⁹

The bass and guitar are used somewhat to this effect. Although there is some individual improvisation in the bass part, the basic outline at the start of the recording is set below. This regular beat restricts the melody somewhat, and contributes to creating the emphasis of the melody, rather than there being an interplay between the melody and rhythm section.

1

Guitar

Bass (w/Ornaments/improv)

Having said this, the hand drum *does* accent the melody's rhythm, which shows the longer crotchet and quaver beats imitating the melody, occurring (at b.13-16) on beats one and four. The apparent improvisational nature of the part also contributes to the energy and the variation of the performance.

13

Flute

Hand Drums

Indeed, the role of percussion varies throughout the different versions. To much the same effect as with the Green Man version, in the Paddy's version, the bodhrán alters the motion of the reel by shifting the accent.

¹⁸ (Unknown Author). Band Biography. 31 August 2005.

<http://www.garageband.com/artist/green_man>

¹⁹ Glackin, Paddy. "The Scope of Irish Music." Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare. 7 Jul. 2005.

The structure of the melody can be said to be AABBA'A'B'B' where A', through harmonic and melodic variation is entirely different to the minute variations in the two traditional versions.

The melody of the A section can be likened to Kelly's version of the reel. Where this melody emphasizes the note A in the second beat of the first bar, the second reel places more stress on the third beat.

1. James Kelly



2. Paddy/Glackin

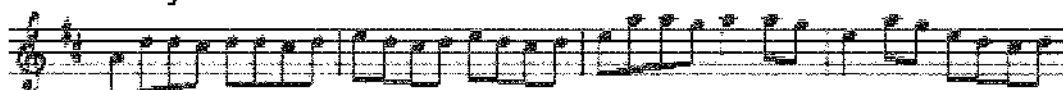


3. Green Man



The same similarities show in the B section, where the first two bars of Green Man's B section is similar to James Kelly's, though the ending is more similar to the other the Paddy's. Something which can be said is that the (notated) rhythm and the basic movement between the D and the A in the key of D mixolydian are kept the same. This, then, must form some part of the 'bones' to the reel.

1. James Kelly



2. Glackin/Keenan

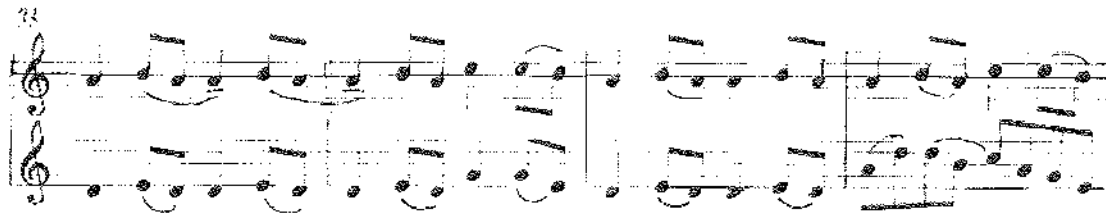


3. Green Man

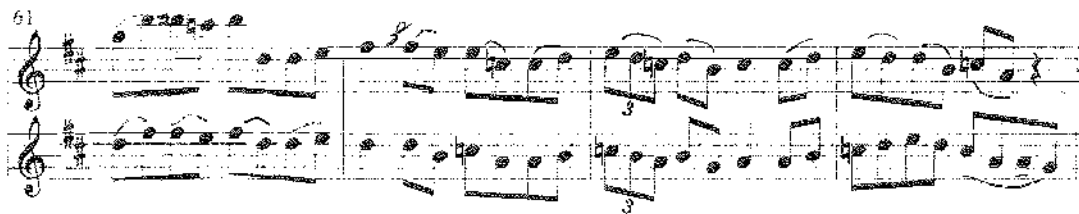


The second repeat of the B section ends on the note E instead of the tonic. This exposes the importance of the set in the performance: because it is the first tune of a set, and the second reel, 'The Battle of Aughrim' is in E minor; the change of tonality needs to be accommodated. The change to an unrelated key, as opposed to *no* change, creates a transformation in the mood.

In the A' section, the difference in tone colour of the flute and the accordion makes the harmony appear more significant than the melody. Even though the accordion is playing a variation on the A section melody, the flute's melody is carried through.



In relation to instrumentation, there being two parts playing the melody here, rather than forming the heterophonic texture the Paddy's version did, creates a clearly homophonic texture. Herein lies a difference between the traditional versions and the fusion: harmony and melodic variation hold great importance in this fusion. In bars 61-64, the flute and accordion play in thirds, and there is a very 'pleasant' feel that seems to indicate, rather than exposing an importance of a musical continuation, the role of 'taste' in performance.



The ornamentation in this version is limited, extending only to casual grace notes. As a fusion, it does not attempt to capture the individual virtuosic playing that comes with traditional music, but instead needs to consider musical elements of each tradition it is trying to represent. There being a more extended use of ornamentation in the traditional versions lies, I think, in the melodic nature of traditional music. Says Breandán Breathnach, 'Irish music is essentially melodic'²⁰. Music like Green Man's version instead focuses on the 'fullness' of sound in terms of harmony and range.

The *kind* of ornamentation used is the same but the *way* in which it is used differs. Grace notes might be used on the fiddle at the start of the bow to separate the sound, or it might be used in a series of tied notes to create continuity. Glackin believes that you 'pick and choose' what you like when you hear a good fiddler, thereafter begin forming your own style.

In the first two versions a rhythm distinct from the classical straight quavers. Green Man fusing Middle Eastern style to Irish will have a different feel altogether, and indeed it does, sounding more even, in the A' section than the other versions²¹. I think so much is attached to the rhythm, as it brings us back to the original role of the reel as an accompaniment to dancing. Experience too will have something to say, and not necessarily one's one tradition, with the 'mobility' of performers mentioned.

²⁰ Breathnach, Breandán. 1996. Folk Music and Dances of Ireland. Ossian, Cork. p.94.

²¹ Refer to track 3

Conclusion

The melodic importance in Irish music means that when the melody is obscured by layers of harmony, the *traditional* context dissolves, and creates an entirely new form of music.

The use of ornamentation is largely subjective, but there is an obvious virtuosic element to traditional performance that is lost in the layers of modern group music, forming an entirely new form of music. For the traditional sound, the personal variation of each individual performer is emphasised, but only to the point that it is set within the rhythm, the soul and the environment.

It's important to keep in mind that the reel is a type of dance music. The informal nature of the performance needs to be captured for the 'soul' to be present, some of which I think lies in the rhythm.

Indeed, the performance aspect of the music is a personal experience. Hence, I think the most important point I can take from this exploration is that the only way to know a musical tradition is to be actively involved with it. Having experienced the traditional setting has been a privilege, and having done so, I feel like I have in some sense entered the realm of the tradition.

The familiarity in the Irish sound and the freedom to vary it according to one's own influences is the truest factor of traditional music: folk music belongs to the 'folk'. What this essay reveals can be summed up in Glackin's words: 'It's all about feeling'.

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Appendices

Notations (inc. Ornamentation)

1. Toss the Feathers, James Kelly, Melodic Journeys

Toss the Feathers

Trad.
Arr. James Kelly

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

37

41

45

49 ⁸

53

57

61

The musical score is written on six staves, each beginning with a measure number. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic values and melodic ornaments. Measure 49 is marked with a circled '8' above the staff. Measure 61 concludes the sequence with a double bar line and a star symbol.

LOSS THE FEATHERS (D)

Trad.

Arr. Paddy Keenan & Paddy Glackin

①

Fiddle

Chanter (pipes)

5

9

13

17 B

21

25

29

Handwritten musical score for four instruments: Fiddle, Chanter (pipes), Regulator (pipes), and Béalhann. The score is written on five staves, with the first four staves corresponding to the instruments and the fifth staff for the Béalhann. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

The first system (measures 33-36) is marked with a circled 'A' and a '33' below it. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The second system (measures 37-40) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The third system (measures 41-44) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The fourth system (measures 45-48) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The fifth system (measures 49-52) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The sixth system (measures 53-56) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The seventh system (measures 57-60) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The eighth system (measures 61-64) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The ninth system (measures 65-68) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The tenth system (measures 69-72) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The eleventh system (measures 73-76) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The twelfth system (measures 77-80) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The thirteenth system (measures 81-84) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The fourteenth system (measures 85-88) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The fifteenth system (measures 89-92) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The sixteenth system (measures 93-96) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

The seventeenth system (measures 97-100) continues the melody. The Fiddle and Chanter parts play a melody, while the Regulator and Béalhann parts provide accompaniment. The Béalhann part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs).

15

19

53

J

'i *^*
J^

Musical score for a piece in G major, featuring a piano introduction and a main melody. The score is written for piano and includes measures 51 and 65. The piano introduction consists of a series of chords and arpeggios. The main melody is a fast, flowing line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The piano introduction is marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The main melody is marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The score includes measure numbers 51 and 65. The piano introduction ends with a double bar line. The main melody continues with a series of chords and arpeggios.

3. Toss the feathers, Green Man, Green Man

Trad.
Arr. Green Man

Toss the Feathers

The musical score is arranged in five systems, each containing five staves. The instruments are: Flute (treble clef, key of D major), Accordion (treble clef, key of D major), Guitar (bass clef, key of D major), Bass (bass clef, key of D major), and Tambourine (bass clef, key of D major). The time signature is 4/4. The Flute part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The Accordion part provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The Guitar part plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The Bass part plays a simple eighth-note bass line. The Tambourine part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with a series of eighth notes, often marked with an accent (>). The score is divided into three measures per system, with a repeat sign at the end of the first system.

13

17 (B)

21

/ # £ - y ' J

The image displays a musical score for three systems, each consisting of four staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system (measures 29-32) features a melodic line in the upper staves and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower staves. The second system (measures 33-36) continues the melody with more complex phrasing. The third system (measures 37-40) shows a continuation of the melody and accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

— A —

3rd J[#] / J 7 x
VIL[—] "IZTe:~

The musical score is written on five systems of staves. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single-line staff below it. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#).

40 (B)

This system contains measures 40 through 56. It features two systems of staves. The first system (measures 40-48) has a treble staff with eighth-note runs and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The second system (measures 49-56) includes a treble staff with more complex figures, a bass staff with a similar accompaniment, and a piano part indicated by a double bar line and a series of plus signs.

53

This system contains measures 53 through 56. It features a treble staff with eighth-note runs and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. A piano part is indicated by a double bar line and a series of plus signs.

57

This system contains measures 57 through 60. It features a treble staff with eighth-note runs and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. A piano part is indicated by a double bar line and a series of plus signs.

61

61

62

63

64

65

65

66

67

68

A – My father was a fiddle player and on my 6th birthday he decided that I was going to learn music, so I wasn't really asked or anything. The first few years really was learning to play music, I didn't particularly like it – you have to grow with it. It's a social thing: until I met people my own age who played, it didn't really register, but then it did.

Q – People have said that you play Donegal style. What has influenced your playing?

A – People say that, but I wouldn't say that I play Donegal style *all* the time, I like to think I have my own way of playing but I *was* heavily influenced by Donegal.

Q – How do you learn a new tune?

A – Mostly by ear...particularly at winter time I have a fascination with – I like to look through manuscripts and books – and sometimes you just find one that's nice, and hits you immediately.

Q – In a session, how do you know which version of a tune to play?

A – The first thing you would do is (toss the feathers has several versions, 4, 5) and the way I would look at it would be – I'd play what I'd feel like playing really, there's no particular 'reason'. I mean, obviously if you're playing with a piper you might play a certain version but – there's no particular reason for saying 'I'll play that one now' as opposed to another one. Well if I said to Paddy we'd say 'well, which one shall we play?' cause we know them as well so we'd say 'oh we'll play that one!' and that's it...

Q – What kind of setting could you play toss the feathers in?

A - You can play it in sessions, set dance, solo or group.

Q – How, do you think, is a studio recording different to a session or a set dance?

A – A recording is very different because obviously if you're committing something to a tape you want it to be pretty right, in a session you don't have to be so exact, when there's loads of people around you they don't hear the finer points, when you're on your own you have to be...you have to pay a lot of attention to detail. You have to practice and you have to get it right.

Q – Why did you decided to play together with pipes and fiddle?

A – Paddy and I played together for many years and we play a lot of tunes and I suppose because we liked it! The answer's quite simple, we play it because we like it!...There would be two tunes together and – we'd probably picked a version to go with another tune (Boyne Hunt). It's all about feeling as opposed to taking a cold, calculated decision...but the recording part of it is more of a calculated activity so you have to think about it and practice and you have to know that the version you have is

right...whereas in something like a session you don't – you just have to enjoy it you know?!

Q – What other musicians have influenced your playing?

John Doherty is the main one. I mean, I listened a lot to, mostly Donegal fiddle players, but I was very interested in hearing the music of Sligo Michael Coleman, James Morrison and then there's people like John Kelly who was a great friend of mine and great inspiration and then I absolutely love the music of Kerry, ... and Dennis Murphy...music that not so much influenced me but affected me. I enjoyed it very very much, you know, and so a broad range of fiddle players – but mostly Donegal – that I had been exposed to.

Q – How does ornamentation work in your playing a tune?

A – That's basically down to yourself and how you decide whether you'd like to apply it or not. It's all about what you feel. There are basic ornamentations you'll have to be able to do and then it's a question of how or when and where you decide to do it.

Q – How did/do you become a good Irish fiddler?

A – Basically you need to hear a good fiddler and make the connection, and when you've done that you can say 'well I don't like that, I think I'll put it there...' pick and choose you know? ... the best thing to do is to listen to records...