

Creative Music Production, Professional Project

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The Role of Sean-nos in Preserving Irish Identity: How modernisation and short form content can affect its practice, perception and cultural relevance.

27/04/26, Pete Meighan

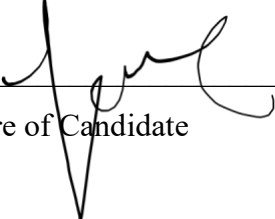
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Abstract

This project aims to explore the role of Sean-Nós in preserving Irish cultural identity, and how modernising through short form content can affect how people understand and connect with it. Sean-Nós is a very old Irish traditional style of singing and is often perceived as old fashioned, difficult to understand or having lack a connection for many Irish people who don't derive from a Gaeltacht. The idea of this project is to test whether presenting Sean-Nós in a more modern way can bridge this gap and change people's perception and knowledge on the topic.

A mixed-methods approach was used to research this project, combining a series of interviews, a survey and practice-based research. A short form content series was created, six episodes were posted online consisting of three main styles of Sean-Nós, 'Traditional', 'Fusion' and 'Modern. Four Sean-Nós singers were interviewed gaining insight to their opinions and views on the tradition including three performance videos showcasing said three styles. A survey was then posted to gather audience insight after watching the series.

The findings have showcased that although Sean-Nós was heavily associated with Irish cultural identity, that identity itself is not defined. People were open to the idea of modernisation as long as the respect and understanding for the tradition remained, the results suggest that modernising helps make the singing tradition more accessible without Sean-Nós losing its value and essence.

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Introduction

Sean-Nós is a traditional Irish singing art form, with a deep connection to Irish history, language and its identity. It is one of the oldest surviving forms of Irish music, passed down from generations through oral practice, where its stories, emotions and experiences are shared. In a globalised world where digital media shapes how culture is consumed, there is a tension brewing whether traditions such as Sean-Nós remain relevant or risk being stuck to the past, stuck lost or misunderstood, ultimately making it hard to connect with modern audiences.

This study aims to research, test, analyse and answer the following research question, how and does modernisation affect Sean-Nós and its practice, perception and cultural relevance.

It explores the role of Sean-Nós in preserving Irish cultural identity and aims to explore how modernisation and short form content can affect its practice the way its sung, and how it is perceived by larger audiences today. It considers whether adapting Sean-Nós to more modern formats can support its longevity future engagement with audiences.

The investigation is done by combining practice-based research with qualitative and quantitative methods. A short form content series was created, centred around of three performance styles, traditional, fusion and modern. This was supported by interviews with Sean-Nós singers and a survey measuring audience perception and engagement.

Literature Review

Cultural Identity

As stated in "Diaspora and Cultural Identity: A Conceptual Review" by Doctor Bhandari, cultural identity is defined by multiple factors, including an individual's ethnicity, religion, language, nationality, gender, sexuality, and even social class (104). Bhandari further explains that identity formation is not a standstill process but a dynamic one in which an individual is shaped. This occurs typically through social interactions, personal awareness, shared historical experiences, and cultural practices (107). Similarly, Chen describes cultural identity as a person's connection to a specific culture, characterised by a "collective consciousness"; this collective consciousness is constructed through shared meanings, symbols, beliefs and norms (Chen 1). Cultural identity is only possible when "self-identity, personal identity, and social identity" align through interaction with others who share the same cultural rules (Chen 1). Together, these define how cultural identity is shaped through both personal experiences and communal forms. Wan et al. note in their article that defining cultural importance is typically done by members of the culture, who consider what is important to them within their culture (Wan et al. 1).

Globalisation is a key factor in reshaping cultural identity today. Scholte defines globalisation as the ability for people to connect across the entire planet, changing the basic understanding of social space (Scholte 11). At the same time, Hauser describes globalisation as weakening the importance of fixed geographic spaces as a foundation for cultural identity (Hauser 2). Both globalisation and the internet allow communication across long distances in instances, allowing local cultures to operate on a global scale, connecting individuals and communities worldwide (Hauser 3). This understanding is essential in explaining how aspects of a culture can be circulated beyond their local origins.

Irish Cultural Identity

Ethnomusicologist Helen O'Shea frequently cites the twentieth-century composer Sean Ó Riada in her discussions on Irish cultural identity and his specific views on how tradition evolves in her book. Ó Riada quotes, "You might compare the progress of tradition in Ireland to the flow of the river. Foreign bodies may fall in, or be dropped in, or thrown in, but they do not divert the course of the river, nor do they stop it flowing; it absorbs them, carrying them with it as it flows onward", it is a metaphor suggesting that external cultures or people may

influence but Irish culture absorbs without changing its essence (qtd in O'Shea 1). He describes Irish music as "one of the few things left which we can call our own", having endured years of colonisation and oppression from British powers (qtd in O'Shea 2). His perspective is an optimistic stance on cultural nationalism, which seems to describe Irish identity as a shared culture, language, land and heritage. However, the author notes that there are also counter visions of what Irish identity is, a fear of cultural contamination, and the desire to define Irishness by excluding outsiders (O'Shea 2). What makes Irish traditional music so significant is how the art itself embodies paradox. Although it is often defined as the epitome of Irishness, the tradition has a long history of absorbing outside influences and spreading globally as a transnational cultural form. For example, the banjo, originally hailing from West Africa (McNeela), only developed into a key component of Irish traditional music around the mid-twentieth century (Fergus). O'Shea also argues a key question: Does Irishness reside in the performer, the music itself, its social context or its performance style? (3). This questioning is central to understanding how practices like sean-nós will respond to modernisation.

Scholar Michael May's definition of Irish identity describes it as not fixed (May 2); with globalisation, it is performed, negotiated and packaged for a specific idealistic view (May 9). Globalisation reshapes what it means to have a national identity, mixing local and global forms, as seen in how people feel a "nostalgia for Ireland" in brand new pubs that aim to look old (May 3) or in the manufacture of Irish pubs in Abu Dhabi and other places (May 8). The romanticisation of Ireland, its Gaeltachts and Irish-speaking natives is no longer an identity most Irish people share (May 8).

In Crowe's "Preserving Irish Culture Through Art", she discusses being from Canada and being Irish, how her lost sense of culture is something that is felt commonly for people who are Irish but not native (113). This connects with my project, as there is a sense of isolation among people who struggle to connect with their Irish cultural identity. The goal of this project is to bridge the gap for individuals who feel isolated or are interested in discovering their cultural roots. This project examines how globalisation can impact perceptions of authenticity: at what point does modernisation go too far, and does the loss of Irishness in art occur? Alternatively, will it evolve like a river, absorbing the new and evolving for more people while maintaining its essence?

Sean-Nós

What is Sean-Nos, where does it come from, and what makes it so important to revitalise? Steve Colam, an anthropologist, describes Sean-Nós singing as a traditional Irish single style sung with ornamentation (Colam 4), as well as emotional expression and storytelling (Colam 3). Sean Williams' book provides an in-depth look at the history of sean-nós and its cultural significance. Sean Nós is considered “the soul of Irish music”, being one of Ireland's ancient musical forms (Williams 4). Sean-nós, meaning “the old style” in translation, is an example of Irish language songs, poetry, and dance that have survived centuries of oppression (Williams 58). The following explains and connects with O’Shea’s writing on Ó Riada’s views that Irish music has survived centuries of political oppression (qtd in O’Shea 2). In 1541, King Henry VIII exerted his influence on the island, ordering the suppression of all musical activity and anything related to music in 1533 (Williams 53). There was a period during Elizabeth's first rule, in 1603, when Irish musicians were deemed “sedatious” and dangerous persons” (qtd. in Williams 53), advocating for the death of all harpers and for their instruments to be burned with them (Williams 53). Only two harps survived the destruction of this era and served as models for many contemporary harps seen today (Williams 53).

After the exile of all harpers, the destruction of all instruments and musicians silenced, all that was left was “the vernacular music and poetry of the people” (qtd in Williams 58). Since then, it has become the most important form of Irish traditional music in Ireland (Williams 58). Viewing Sean Nós or the Irish language in general as a form of revival is incorrect, as it has survived and should be considered as a renewal of a living tradition (Williams 160). It was in the twentieth century that the term “Sean-Nós” was developed as a term to describe “the old way”(Williams 162). During the “cultural implosion”, a new contemporary form of composers emerged called “sraid-eigse” (“street poetry”), “It was only after the complete break-up of the Gaelic polity, after the wars of Cromwell and of William, that the verse-maker merges in the musician, and the harper and the bard become fused in one”(qtd in Williams 162). They were described as verse makers who were singers who would travel from place to place, earning a living through song, writing straightforward poetry compared to what had been previously written. Over time, it had evolved to Sean-Nós (Williams 162).

Along with this contemporary poetry, there was a strong connection to European courtly love songs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Sean-Nós singing tends to be less about the events that actually happen in the story, but rather the expression of emotion through singing, creating a connection with the community as a listener. The attention is placed on the singer,

who can almost disappear in the song and tell a story through dynamics and expressions. It is also common for Sean N6s singers to tell the story of the song before singing, bringing context to the scene (Williams 162).

Modernising

Ciar6 O Geallbh6ain's review of the book "*Dh6 Leagan D6ag: L6argais Nua ar an Sean-N6s*" by Philip et al describes today's Sean-N6s as an ever-growing tension between preserving the inherited tradition and evolving it into a more modern cultural landscape (2). Several contributors state that there have been attempts to define authenticity strictly and that doing so can restrict the arts' national evolution and growth. Seomsamh Mac Donnacha, a Sean-N6s singer being interviewed in the book, challenges the over-reliance on archival recordings when deciding what is correct for Sean-N6s, comparing early collections to viewing black-and-white photographs. It is useful in that it teaches us what Sean-N6s is, but it lacks the colour, emotion, and performance nuance that once shaped live singing. He argues that sean-nos should not be frozen in time but be allowed to evolve and grow with the people who practice the art (6).

Others mentioned in the text also highlight how modernisation is already reshaping the form. Roisin Nic Dhonnacha, a scholar and interviewee of the book, discusses how recording technologies have made the tradition more accessible by removing songs from their communal settings. However, Triona N6 Sh6och6ain, a scholar, emphasises that Sean-N6s is rooted in its dynamic, created through interaction between the singer and the audience (7). Instead of ruining a tradition, this highlights that an open, creative environment for the songs will evolve from the effects of new media. Additionally, access to archival recordings and RT6 and Radi6 na Gaeltachta show that Sean-N6s has long been adapting to new platforms. (7). These insights show that Sean-N6s is often in the midst of an argument, either evolving or sticking to an idea of what it should be. Modern ideas of what Sean-N6s could be, including short-form content, could represent not a break from its traditional roots but a way for Sean-N6s to evolve and continue its history of adaptation.

Short-form content

The project aims to modernise Sean-N6s through short-form content. It will educate on the topic of Sean-N6s, including interviews with Sean-N6s singers and recordings of traditional Sean-N6s songs. The recordings will feature a traditional Sean-N6s song, a Sean-N6s fusion with traditional Irish music, and a modern take on a Sean-N6s song. To begin, one must examine the question: What is short-form content? In "Short Form Video Content And

Consumer Engagement In Digital Landmarks” by Marius Manic, he describes it as quick and concise media that typically ranges from a few seconds to a couple of minutes in length. This form of media aims to achieve large-scale engagement and consumption. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts cater to this the most. (1)

The idea for modernising a Sean-Nós song involves integrating different stylistic genre elements into the tradition, such as pop music. An approach that heavily inspires this idea can be seen in the artist CMAT. CMAT, also known as Ciara-Mary-Alice Thompson, is an Irish musician and singer (CMAT - Website). Her official lyric video *Euro Country*, where Irish language elements function as a central musical hook was received positively by audiences (0:00-0:42). Similarly, Kneecap, an articulate rap trio who merge Irish and English lyrics in their music (Kneecap - Official Website), demonstrate the impact of modernising the Irish language through their internationally successful biopic movie (O’Connor 219). The movie features Michael Fassbender and was distributed by Sony Pictures, which has received many awards (O’Connor 219). They have also gained significant recognition for their music, which is a direct fusion of the Irish language and hip-hop. An example of this success is Kneecaps’ song “C.E.A.R.T.A.,” which has garnered 2.6 million views. (1:13-1:31). The Mary Whallopers are another contemporary example. The Guardian notes they are a trad-punk band that has gained global success and impacted many (The Mary Whallopers - The Guardian). The Gloaming, featured on the RealWorldRecords website, is described as having a unique approach to Irish Music. They respect traditions while bringing a new approach to songs (The Gloaming - RealWorldRecords).

Methodology:

The purpose of the methodology is to detail the process in creating the project and the steps taken to answer the following questions, does Sean-Nós preserve Irish Identity? And how does modernisation and short form content affect: practice, perception and cultural relevance?

Mixed-Method Research Synthesis (MMRS) was used during this process, it is defined as combining qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches to get a broader and deeper understanding of a variety of different sets. (Hyaever et al. 4). This aligns with the project's design, which involves quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and creative practice through short-form content. The project consisted of six videos as part of a short form content series named 'The Old Way', the purpose of the series was to seek engagement for the tradition Sean-Nós, as well as that to answer the research question by having three performance videos and three interviews. The interviews aimed to discuss relevant topics and the performances represented traditional, fusion and a very modern take on Sean-Nós.

Interviews

The qualitative interview design and process was inspired by Virginia Wilson an academic librarian and researcher and her paper on 'Research Methods: Interviews' and leans on the work of Beck and Manuel in which she breaks down interview research methods into a series of steps. As well as that it tells that if you want to understand and explore "finely shaded human issues" your question is best answered "in prose rather than with numbers", then interview as a research method is a good choice for this project in collecting data. (qtd in Wilson 96) An apple tripod, an iPhone 13 pro max and an interview RODE mic kit was used to create and capture the interviews. As well as that a regular tripod and phone recording audio.

Three interviews were conducted for the project following, step one from Wilson's paper, Identifying participants. The first interviewee was Máire Ní Churraoin, Máire is known on tiktok as 'The Native Irish Speaker' with over a hundred thousand followers, she's known for her Irish content and Sean-Nós singing, (*Máire | Native Irish Speaker* ❤️ (@maire_na_greine) | *TikTok*) she also has a band with her sister called 'an chéad ghlúin eile', ('An Chead Ghlúin Eile') where they harmonise and recreate Sean-Nós songs. The plan was to find a popular Sean-Nós influencer, to aid in boosted with the series and to try and schedule an interview with them. Máire was chosen due to her success in modernising Sean-Nós by making short form content

videos about the singing tradition, she was the interviewee representing the ‘Modern’ aspect of the project. After emailing back and forth the interview was decided to meet and on location at DCU campus (Dublin University College), where I had up to an hour with her for an interview. Equipment was tested outside to prepare for a lot of B-roll footage. B-roll is footage that “supplements your main video clips”, “It helps establish a scene, smooth out a transition or add meaning”. (Adobe) B-roll is essential when filming and producing high quality videos as that in return will enhance storytelling and viewer engagement when put in with the main narrative. (Huey et al. 542) Portrait filming was chosen for the series as it aligns with how people naturally use their phone by filling the screen and giving an immersive experience. (Winter, Contents) Similar questions were asked of all interviewees, and questions were designed based on my literature review and research question. The questions centred around connections with Sean-Nós, Irish cultural identity, Sean-Nós itself and modernising.

The second interviewee was Gráinne Ní Fhlathárta, a native Irish speaker from Connemara, who has performed and competed in Sean-Nós competitions her whole life and comes from a family rich of professional Sean-Nós singers and is also a Sean-Nós teacher. The interview was organised and filmed inside a home; she was contacted through personal connections. Gráinne has no social media and was traditionally trained, therefore for this project Gráinne represented the ‘Traditional’ aspect of the project but the questions were similar but slightly varying to suit her own personal experience more. Questions were similar to those asked of Ní Churraoin, but varied slightly to suit her own personal experience more. The questions covered her story, Irish cultural identity, Sean-Nós and modernising. It was filmed on a tripod and with the rodeo interview mics, B-roll footage was shot the next day to begin the process of making more high-quality footage out of the interviews.

The third interviewee’s chosen were Seamus and Caoimhe Ní Fhlathárta, a siblings duo who are also native Irish speakers from Connemara. (*Séamus & Caoimhe*) Similarly to Ní Churraoin they have a large on social media as a Sean-Nós performers. (*Séamus & Caoimhe (@seamusandcaoimhemusic) • Instagram Photos and Videos*). They were chosen as they aligned most with the ‘Fusion’ aspect of the project because Seamus and Caoimhe in their performance’s fuse traditional Irish music and Sean-Nós together. The interview was done over zoom with phone audio recording due to scheduling conflicts. Therefore, a lot of b-roll footage was needed. All the interviews were translated, transcribed and edited on DAVINCI resolve.

Performance

Practice-based research informed my methodology utilising “The Routledge International Handbook of Practice-Based Research”. Gathering insights through creative practice combines practicality and research to produce new knowledge (Vear et al 27). This is relevant to the project as it not only analyses Sean-Nós academically but also creates new work, that is, a modernised song and a short-form content series uploaded to Tik Tok, Instagram and YouTube Shorts.

Three performance videos were made to accompany and pair alongside the three interview videos. The goal was to showcase Sean-Nós, to engage audience members so they can understand the history of the tradition. The first video being ‘Traditional’, represented by Gráinne, showcased how Sean-Nós has been sung for hundreds of years and then performed a very old Sean-Nós song, ‘Anach Cuan’. (‘Anach Cuan Lyrics and Chords’)

The second performance video would be ‘Fusion’ represented by Seamus and Caoimhe, as they are traditional Sean-Nós singers but when performing they sing in harmony and with accompaniment instrument. The song chosen for this was ‘Sí do Mhaimeo í’ an old Connemara Sean-Nós song. (‘Sí Do Mhaimeo Í Lyrics and Chords - Anúna’) The song was chosen because of the Celtic Woman version blended Sean-Nós song with traditional instruments. (CelticLadies) There were collaborators in this performance, with the researcher’s personal band ANIAR (Cox) and a trad band called ré-rua. (*Ré Rua (@reruaceol) • Instagram Photos and Videos*)

The third video was a modern take, the composition idea was heavily inspired by Passion Pit’s sleepyhead, (*Passion Pit - Sleepyhead (Official Video) - YouTube*) where the producer vocal chopped an Irish song. The composition made for this project used an old Sean-Nós song ‘Amhráin mhuínse’, (*Amhrán Mhaínse Lyrics and Chords - Liadán - SongsInIrish.Com*) chopped up using modern day production tools and daw such as Logic X Pro to create it. (‘Logic Pro’) The song ‘Euro country’ by CMAT was another inspiration to modernise and make the song possibly more accessible by having both Sean-Nós and English lyrics so listeners could understand more. The song’s lyrical content was based off of amhráin mhuínse’s lyrics. The visuals for the ‘Traditional’ was a mix of B-roll of Connemara and a video of the performance singing live into the microphone in the studio. The ‘Fusion’ video was footage gathered of the performance live as it happened ANIAR and Ré-rua in the studio. The ‘Modern’ video was a music video, “music videos already have had a powerful effect on their context-

commercial pop culture and its promotion”. (Aufderheide 73) It’s theme being old vs new. It was visually inspired by a painting called ‘Mary of Connemara’ by Robert Henri, made in 1913. (*Mary Of Connemara*) As well as that visually a pinterest board guided the videos aesthetic which can be seen in the supporting artifacts. Contrasting visuals of a Connemara woman in a older times to a woman in the city. All the videos were edited again on DAVINCII but also Capcut, a popular short form content video editor app designed by the creators of TikTok, (CapCut) the fonts in the app as well as the slow-motion feature was used in the process of the music video. The introduction of the videos, the ‘theme song;’ was made with the split stems of the ‘Fusion’ video, and all compiled footage throughout the entire process of making the project, the videos were put together on Capcut for the accessibility of accessing camera roll. (CapCut)

Recording

The average ‘LUFS’ (loudness units full scale), meaning loudness units are the exact same as decibels but they attempt to factor “in the ways in which our ear-brain system interprets loudness based on the tonal balance of a sound”. (qtd in *What Are LUFS?*) This was attempted for the videos to be posted on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube Shorts. The average LUFS are -14 LUFS. (*Loudness Analyzer & LUFS Normalizer - Free & Ad-Free*) For this project Studio 1 of Sound Training College was booked three times where vocals for the ‘Modern’ composition were recorded. The ‘Fusion’ performance was also recorded in this studio as well as the adlibs and harmonium for the ‘Modern’ Sean-Nós song. There was dedicated collaborative Engineer’s to help record Owen Hurely, Ben Verdes and Abby Nagle Garne. The MP Studio of Sound Training College was booked three times to produce the ‘Modern’ composition and record vocals for the ‘Traditional’ Sean-Nós piece. The mixing suite in the Button Factory was booked four times where mixing and producing the ‘Modern’ composition took place taking use of the pods that were available in that building as well. Pre-Production plans for the Studio 1 days were used and can be seen in the supporting artifacts. The preproduction plan recommended by this projects mentor to keep organisation throughout the recordings. For the Studio recordings Standard ProTools Daw was used for the recording, for every other mixing suite, studio and at home producing Logic Pro X was used. A template was used from a previous internship created by Richey McCourt, it helped with the learning process of how to produce a higher standard demo.

Survey

Survey designs were informed by “Handbook of Web Surveys 2nd Edition” by Silvia Biffignand. The surveys measured perception of Sean-Nós, Irish identity, Authenticity, Modernisation and Engagement Preference. The survey questions were based off interview and literature review themes; and survey design questions followed a mix of Likert scale-based questions. (Joshie et al 1) designed to measure people's attitudes, perceptions and opinions by changing subjective qualitative attributes into objective quantitative data, it consists of set statements where participants of the survey pick their level of agreement, typically ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.(2) The Likert scale is useful as it allows researchers to quantify complex human traits such as attitudes and opinions, difficult to measure in conventional methods. (2) A ranking system is a tool that takes a list of people each being described as a number or text and puts them in order from best to worst, most relevant to least etc. (Zehlike et al. 3) Finally there was also open ended questions, this is used sparingly as it asks the participant to use their own words to formulate an answer making it cognitively more demanding but they are used to gather rich more nuanced information and are particularly valuable in situations requiring understanding reasons, testing theories, encouraging a truthful answer or providing feedback. (Neuert et al. 3) The survey was created on microsoft forms, college recommended but a server that easily creates custom surveys and has built in intelligence, as well as that can easily export to excel for customised in depth analysis.(*Surveys, Polls, and Quizzes | Microsoft Forms*) The data then will be analysed through Excel, a Microsoft server that can organise data, calculation and tracking. (‘Excel for the Web - Microsoft 365’)

Analysis

An analysis is done on the three interviews with Máire Ní Churraoin, Gráinne Ní Fhlathárta and Seamus and Caoimhe Ní Fhlathárta, as well as that there will be an analysis through excel of the survey results in which there were 60 respondents.

Interviews

The following analysis will be divided into the main themes found in interview and survey answers.

Sean-Nós and Cultural Identity

The interviewees were asked their opinion and their background on Sean-Nós and how they would go about describing it, their answers highlighted some similar themes but overall, it resulted that there is not one fixed description for Sean-Nós.

Gráinne has a very traditional view of Sean-Nós, it being something that was a part of her entire life, growing up with influences from family members who were Sean-Nós singers, the Griallais family. (Appendix A) When asked her thoughts, she defined Sean-Nós as something that should feel natural, that at its core it should be unpolished and not focused on the perfection sought in performance, “Bhíodh daoine casadh ar an Sean-Nós san áit nádúrtha, áit a bhí taobh amuigh agus ní mhotaím go ceart go mbeadh amhránaíocht foirfe ann”. (“People used to sing Sean-nós in natural settings, outdoors, and I don’t feel that the singing should be perfect.”) Emphasising that the most important trait in Sean-Nós is storytelling and that should prioritize over sounding good. Her focus centred around Sean-Nós being a tradition that belongs in natural environments such as at home or out at work, not on stage. (Appendix A)

Seamus and Caoimhe’s background were similar to Gráinne’s as their background was also growing up with a family heavily involved in Sean-Nós, having also spent their schooling learning Sean-Nós, where it was seen just as important as Maths or English. (Appendix B). Similarly to Gráinne, they describe Sean-Nós as a story-based tradition, sung as a way to process emotions and events in people's lives, however, they carry a much more modern perspective, they personally add instruments and harmony to the tradition to allow emphasis on the song’s story telling capabilities. Leaving room for intentionality while also acknowledging the pushback they receive by doing that, “I’d heard people kind of resist it. You know, I’ve heard. I’d heard people saying that the song should be left alone. And, you know, there shouldn’t be harmony, there shouldn’t comhcheol (backing track) or ceoluirilis (instruments) with it.”, (Appendix B)

Máire describes her background similarly to both previous interviewees' also coming from a family rich in Sean-Nós singers. (Appendix C) Although rather than having a focus on performance like the previous interviewees, Máire places a focus on its ancestral connection, placing less emphasis on how it's sung but more about how and what Sean-Nós is communicating. She describes Sean-Nós as human, rich in emotion and shared struggles, where the songs act as the voices of ancestors and emphasises the significance of meaning over the importance of technique, "Tá go leor daonachtas sna h-amhráin", "Focla ár sinsear ag teacht amach as mo bhéal". ("There is a lot of humanity in the songs.", "The words of our ancestors are coming out of my mouth.") (Appendix C)

Irish Cultural Identity

The interviewees were asked directly on their perception of how Sean-Nós fits into Irish cultural identity, they highlighted common themes amongst each other.

Gráinne emphasises Sean-Nós being deeply rooted in Irish cultural identity, she believes Sean-Nós is an oral tradition and something that is a shared experience within communities and families. She talks about the tradition historically only being learnt in peoples family homes, "oicheantaí arnóin", 'winter night gatherings', (Appendix A) where people would travel to houses, sharing stories, old tales and songs orally, Sean-Nós is story telling through song, "Bheith siad ag roinnt scéalta agus a roinnt amhrán leinne chéile agus béil oideas agus sean scéalta mar sin," ("They would be sharing stories and songs with each other, and passing on oral traditions and old stories like that."). (Appendix A) Interestingly Gráinne being the only interviewee with this opinion describes there being a shift in the past 30 years in how Sean-Nós is practiced. Bringing back the point that she believes Sean-Nós's has too much of a focus on performance-based Sean-Nós now, she believes Sean-Nós is only true when in its natural state, in those family sharing of stories, not at Oireachtas where she thinks it takes away from what Sean-Nós is meant to be. (Appendix A)

Seamus and Caoimhe share a similar perspective to Gráinne where Sean-Nós in their opinion is rooted heavily "in the country, in the people, in things that happen there". (Appendix B) Highlighting a relevance to wherever you learn or hear Sean-Nós, it is rooted in that area's story and history. They acknowledge Gráinne's point that the songs originally were never meant to be something that's commercialised but instead have more of a "ways to deal with

emotions and process different events”. (Appendix B) The songs enriched with histories and stories is how they view it being fit into the cultural identity of Ireland.

Máire shares the same opinion with the other interviewees that Sean-Nós fits into Irish cultural identity through its history of practice of sharing stories with “the next generation.” (Appendix C). She talks about a collective identity that Sean-Nós is not exclusive, it belongs to everyone, “Is linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós”. As well, as mentioned before places emphasises on connection with ancestors. (Appendix C)

Authenticity

All three interviewees explained their own understandings of authenticity with Sean-nós, highlighting that it's not one fixed thing that makes it authentic but rather something that can be interpreted in a lot of ways depending on their own personal experience and perspective.

Gráinne’s take on authenticity is that to be authentic with Sean-Nós you can't be perfect, she describes people being influenced by what they hear on radio and television that, that perfection is not what true Sean-Nós is. She uses the word “raw”, to describe how imperfect Sean-Nós should be, that it’s ok to make mistakes, it's supposed to be natural. (Appendix A) She emphasises a focus on how Sean-Nós used to exist, it’s everyday life people would sing outside while they worked, that, that's the kind of song it is, songs about people in natural places. For authentic Sean-Nós you need to feel that outdoor environment, that sense of nature when you’re listening, “ba cheart go mbeadh tú ag mothú an taobh amuigh sin, an nádúr sin nuair atá tú ag éisteach le Sean-Nós.” (Appendix A)

Seamus and Caoimhe’s responses were about having an inclusive understanding of authenticity with Sean-Nós. They discuss how authenticity by others can be interpreted as having a background in the singing style, or even the implication that being “born into it” is the measure of its worth. (Appendix B). They challenge this common perception by wanting authenticity with Sean-Nós to come from accessibility to others. There not being a hierarchy to those not from the ‘right’ places and for there to be an openness to anyone who expresses interest in the tradition, “or people who just have a GRA for all things Irish culture and that they should feel that it's accessible to them, you know?”. (Appendix B)

Máire views authenticity in Sean-Nós songs as coming from the past when people would struggle to describe their feelings or their struggles in life, and used Sean-Nós to sing through those problems and emotions, something that even now when singing Sean-Nós you can do too, “nach mbeadh daoine fadó, seans nach bhfuil fós, daoine in ann cur síos a dhéanamh ar a

gcuid mothúcháin ar a gcuid deacrachtaí”(“People long ago, and maybe still today, might not have been able to describe their feelings or their difficulties.”). (Appendix C) She tells even if a song may have been sung by hundreds or thousands of people, within that you can still hear the humanity whether its love, joy or other emotions. (Appendix C)

Modernisation

All interviewees were asked of their role in the future of Sean-Nós as well as questions that involved the modernisation of Sean-Nós and their opinion of what they make of that or what they want it to become in its future.

Gráinne when asked about her role within Sean-Nós mentioned that it consisted of teaching Sean-Nós and making sure to pass the story and history that comes with it, that even if kids only come out with the knowledge of Sean-Nós she'd be happy, putting an emphasis on the importance of storytelling with the tradition. (Appendix A) Gráinne's outlook on contemporary Sean-Nós is rather strict not favouring the 'modernisation'(Appendix A). In saying that when talking about the future of Sean-Nós she says she just wants balance, not for people to only listen to contemporary but that they listen and acknowledge the original Sean-Nós and understand where Sean-Nós comes from, she thinks the very traditional form of Irish in the songs as well as the language is being lost and that is why she puts such an emphasis on people trying to understand the Irish that exists in it. (Appendix A) Protecting the tradition first and putting tradition first is what can be taken from this.

Seamus and Caoimhe have a differing perspective to Gráinne in how they would like Sean-Nós to carry on in the future, acknowledging its popularity through social media, how people are hearing all the different styles of songs and learning about the tradition on the internet. They also highlight how they want to abolish the exclusion felt by people who are not from a Gaeltacht. They describe it as “a window into the tradition”. (Appendix B) They want modernisation but with respect of it to remain and for people to understand the stories and the social context of the style and songs. (Appendix B) They want the modernisation but with the respect of the tradition prioritised.

Máire's opinion on the future of Sean-Nós aligns with that of Seamus and Caoimhe when it comes to accepting and liking social media's power, noticing young people having a strong interest to Sean-Nós online, “Airím go bhfuil an- suim ag an dream óg sna hamhrán Sean-Nós ar líne anois mar gheall go bhfuil sé le chloisteáil ar tiktok agus ar instagram” (“I feel that young people have a strong interest in Sean-nós songs online now, because they can hear them

on TikTok and Instagram.”). (Appendix C) She discusses the interest in how people have the choice with social media to scroll and control that space but Sean-Nós is reaching them, in that way they operate their lives, how different generations are engaging with specifically her content on Sean-Nós because the songs belong to everyone. Máire’s outlook on the future says even though she doesn’t know what it will actually look like for fact she would love to still be alive seeing the next generation working with innovation and creativity, adding they might add more accompaniment, or beats or even jazz but as long as the tradition is alive and the Sean-Nós songs are being sung that's all that matter. (Appendix C)

Survey

The survey analysed similar themes to the interview. The survey had three performance videos embedded withing to provide respondents with context for the answers.

Likert questions

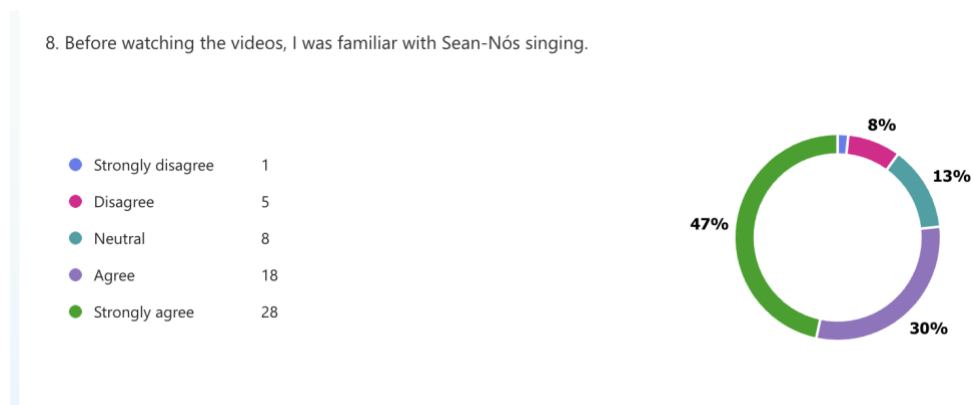


Figure 1

Figure 1. suggests that the majority of participants had a familiar background with Sean-Nós before watching the short form content series.

9. After watching the videos, I feel I understand Sean-Nós better.

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	6
● Agree	19
● Strongly agree	35

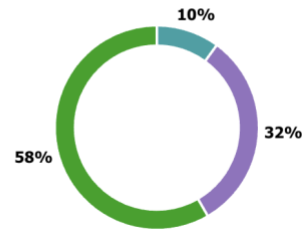


Figure 2

Figure 2. suggests that all participants of the survey had a moderate to completely better understanding of Sean-Nós after consuming the short form content series.

10. Watching different versions (traditional, fusion, modern) helped me compare styles.

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	4
● Agree	29
● Strongly agree	26

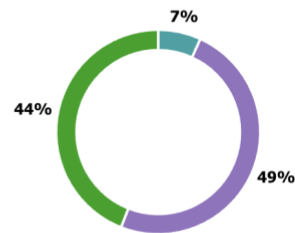


Figure 3

Figure 3. suggests that all participants felt moderate to complete agreement in being able to compare the styles through the different versions of performances,

11. The videos changed how I think about Sean-Nós.

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	3
● Neutral	15
● Agree	16
● Strongly agree	26

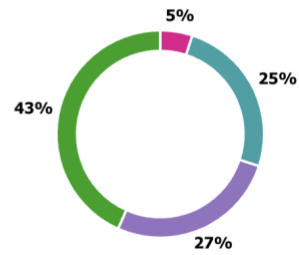


Figure 4

Figure 4. suggests a more varied response, the majority felt moderate to complete agreement that the videos changed their perception of Sean-Nós while a small number disagree with the fact.

12. I found the performances engaging

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	1
● Agree	13
● Strongly agree	46

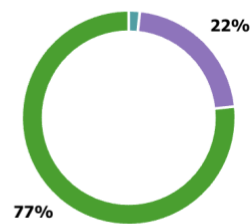


Figure 5

Figure 5. suggests an overwhelming confirmation that the performances were engaging for audience members.

13. I found the performances emotionally engaging



Figure 6

Figure 6. suggests a moderate to complete agreement that the performances were emotional for viewers.

14. The performances felt meaningful to me.



Figure 7

Figure 7. suggests a moderate to complete agreement that the performances were meaningful to the participants.

18. The traditional version felt easy to understand

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	11
Agree	25
Strongly agree	20

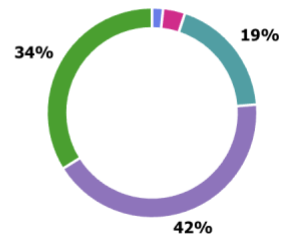


Figure 8

Figure 8. suggests a varied response; the majority of participants had a moderate to full agreement that the traditional performance was easy to understand with 3 participants in disagreement.

19. The fusion version with instruments added something new to the experience

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Neutral	2
Agree	22
Strongly agree	35



Figure 9

Figure 9. suggests a slightly varied response, with the majority having neutral to full agreement that the fusion performance, having instruments added, gave a new experience to Sean-Nós, with only 1 disagreement.

20. The modern version made the style feel more accessible

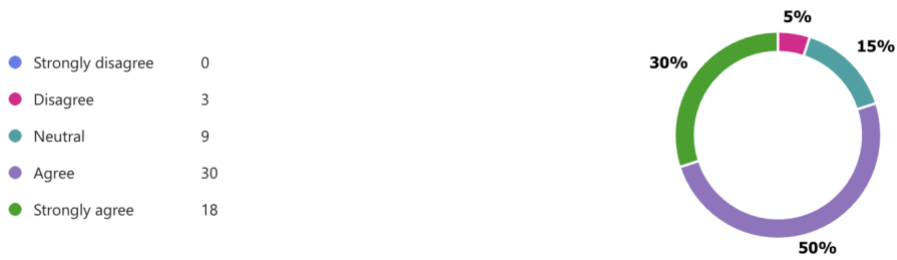


Figure 10

Figure 10. suggests another varied response, majority feeling neutral to full agreement that the modern version made the style feel more accessible to them where 3 participants disagreed.

21. The different versions showed that this style of singing can change over time



Figure 11

Figure 11. suggests that the majority of participants who answered agreed that the different versions showed how the style can evolve over time with 1 strong disagreement.

22. Traditions like this should be able to change over time.



Figure 12

Figure 12. suggests a slightly varied response; majority have a neutral to full agreement that traditions like Sean-Nós should be able to change over time with 2 disagreements.

Ranking System

23. Rank the three versions from 1 most preferred to 3 least preferred

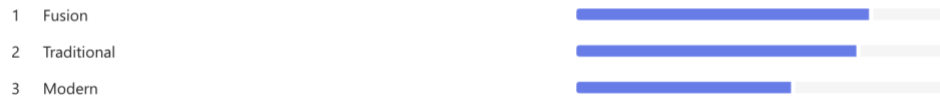


Figure 13

Figure 13. suggests that Fusion was the most preferred, with modern being the least preferred and traditional being in the middle.

Open Questions

Thematic coding was used to analyse the common themes found among these answers, thematic coding involves carefully reading through data such as interviews, transcripts, written notes or even images and picking out sections that show or represent a particular idea, concept or theme that is relevant to your research. (Gibbs 19) This analysis was done through Excel where the results for each question was placed in a stacked column.

The first open ended question asked was “After watching all three videos, did any parts of the performance change how you felt about this style of singing? If so, how?”.

Table 1

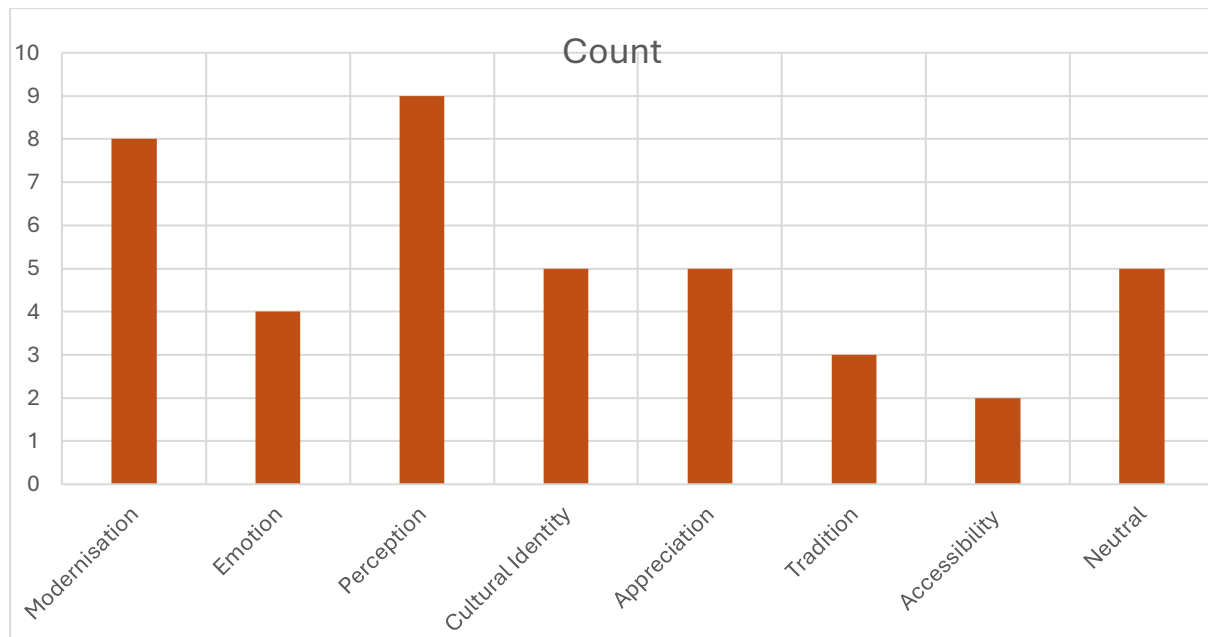


Table 1. presents the overall themes analysed in all 45 responses to the question. The first theme recognised was ‘Modernisation’ this represents the participants that mention modern, fusion or contemporary elements that helped change their view. The participants answer that fell into this theme meant they view Sean-Nós as not a thing of the past but something that can exist in modern interpretations too. Examples of the answers would be:

1. “really made me realise how as a singing style it can melt its way into any genre of music while still remaining what it is.”,
2. “It made me see how Sean-Nós singing is evolving and get have more modern aspects in it.”

The second theme was ‘Emotion’, this represented people growing a stronger emotional connection to Sean-Nós in their responses, examples of this include:

1. “The final performance made me feel very emotional and excited.”,
2. “but felt I understood the sentiment”.

The third theme was ‘Perception’, this theme represented how participants’ views changed in terms of how they viewed Sean-Nós, examples of include:

1. “I thought Sean nos was more about sounding pretty and nice and “bín” “
2. “But it’s more about story telling..”
3. “Both can coexist and ultimately help sean-nós to survive.”.

The fourth theme was 'Cultural Identity', representing if the participants felt a stronger sense of the Irish culture within Sean-Nós, examples of this include:

1. "It really felt like we could see what it means to be a gaeilgóir in the modern day"
2. "It definitely proved to me that this style of singing has been central to our culture".

The fifth theme was 'Appreciation', this represented if participants liked it more or enjoyed Sean-Nós, examples of this include:

1. "I really enjoyed it",
2. "It made me appreciate it more."

The sixth theme analysed is 'Tradition', this represented if participants felt they preferred the traditional style of Sean-Nós more, examples of include:

1. "though the traditional version showed more emotion."
2. "..and appreciate the old style more now."

The seventh theme was 'Accessibility', this represented how many participants recognised or saw Sean-Nós as more inclusive, examples of this include

1. "I also think the theme of accessibility that appears in some of the episodes is really important to the maintenance of the tradition and was really well executed.",
2. "Yes it made me feel like it can be more inclusive to everyone young and old".

The eighth category was called 'Neutral', these were the participants who responded in a manner that didn't feel as though the project changed how they felt about the style of singing, example of this include:

1. "No not really, I enjoyed the kind of remix of Amhrán Mhaínse."
2. "..it didn't particularly change how I felt about it..".

There was a total of 6 answers excluded from the analysis as they didn't show any strong direction to any theme or descriptiveness to interpret.

The second open ended question was, “Was there a specific moment or element that stayed with you, across the three videos? If so, please describe.”

Table 2

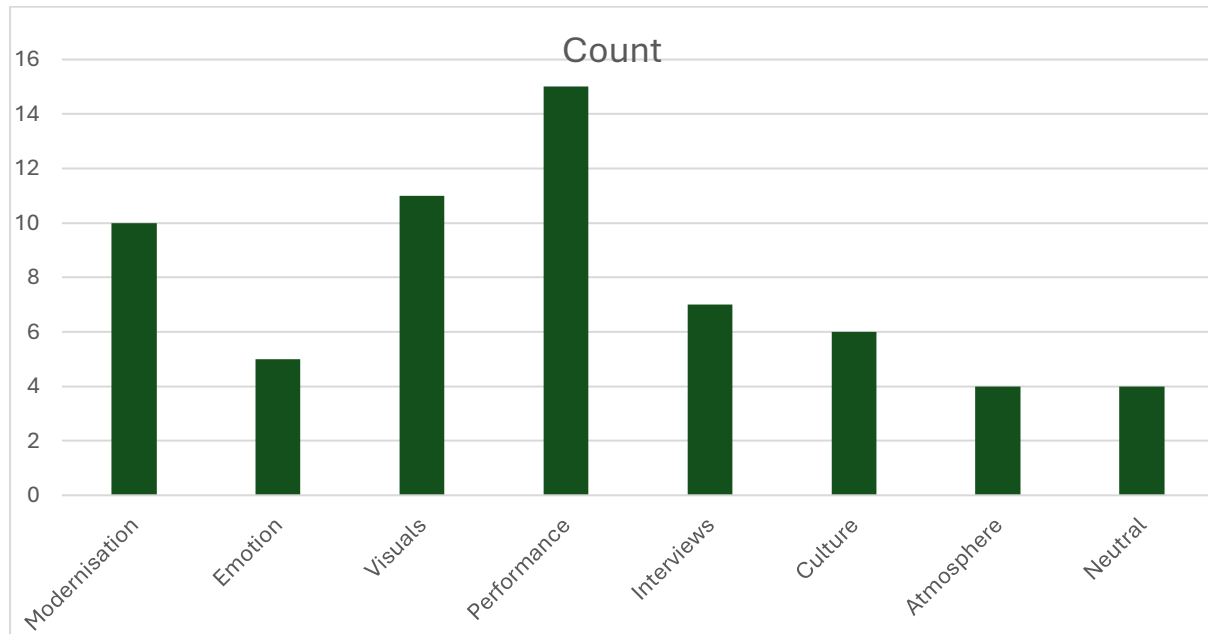


Table 2. presents the overall themes in the question, with a total of 46 responses. The first theme analysed was 'Modernisation', this suggested that the modern elements and fusion elements were most memorable in the series, examples of include:

1. “How Sean-nós was integrated into a modern track in the final video stood out to me.”
2. “I think the fusion video really stuck with me as I feel like both the Irish instruments and Irish singing complimented each other perfectly”.

The second theme was ‘Emotion’, this suggested that the videos made a strong emotional impact on the participant, examples of this include:

1. “The emotion, time, and effort that was clearly put into them was very moving.”
2. “Emotional”

The third theme is ‘Visuals’, this suggested that the imagery of the videos is what stayed with the participants the most, examples of this include:

1. “use of the 19th century woman as the performer dancing to the “modernized” use of seanos. As an anthropologist with a special interest in this period there was something

quite anthropological about connecting different temporalities and the dance sort of undermines the expectations of women in that period of history. It was a very lovely juxtaposition.”.

The fourth theme is ‘Performance’, this theme suggested that the voice and singing itself is what stuck with the participants the most, examples of this include:

1. “Both an Gaeilge bhreá and the performances hit close to home for me.”
2. “The raw vocal in anach cuan.”.

The fifth theme is ‘Interviews’, this meant that what the interviewee’s said in the videos is what stuck with the participants the most, examples of this include:

1. “The interviews gave memore of an insight into how important Sean-nós is to our culture”,
2. “Talking about how the singing wasn't always meant to be good but raw”.

The sixth theme is ‘Culture’, suggested that the Irish identity and tradition stuck with them the most, examples of this include:

1. “You can feel the connection in the videos with Ireland and especially with Conamara.”, “Episode 4. The performance felt refreshing, powerful and modern whilst acknowledging the history behind Sean-Nós”
2. “teanga”, showing a clear connection to language and culture. There was a nod to “Ireland and Conamara”

The seventh theme is ‘Atmosphere’, this suggests that the mood/tone or feeling of the videos is what stood out the most to the interviewee’s, examples of this include:

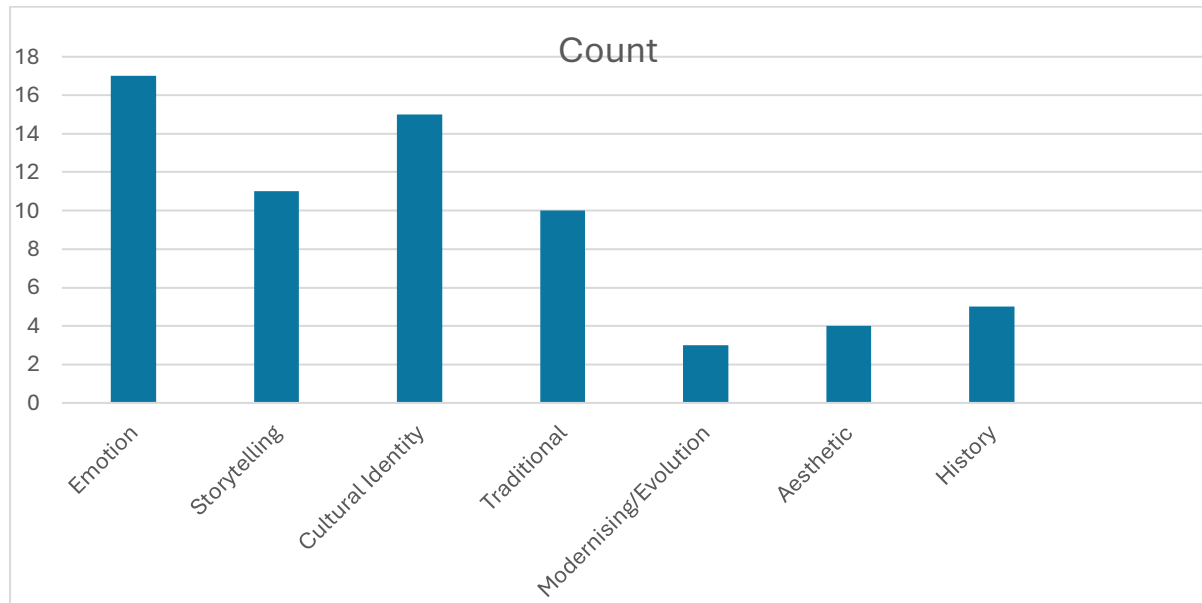
1. “The performance in video 2 juxtaposed with the rugged landscape of Connemara was quite haunting”, “The calmness of all tunes”.

The final theme again was ‘Neutral’ and there was a total of 4 answers that fell into this, examples of this include:

1. “Not so much but I think that's due to the Medium of short form content. It's hard for something to feel meaningful when it's being given less than 5 minutes of attention at a time.”.

Table 3. is the next open question “In your own words, how would you describe Sean-Nós after watching these videos?”

Table 3



The first common description for this question was Emotion, participants describing how Sean-Nós makes them feel, examples of this include:

1. “Sean-Nós I think is an emotional,”
2. “Beautiful, ancient, storytelling deep and emotive.”.

The second common description was ‘Storytelling’, this means participants described Sean-Nós as a way of telling stories, examples of this include:

1. “I would describe it as an intricate style of singing that brings across a story”
2. “Beautiful yet haunting storytelling”.

The third description found was ‘Cultural identity’ meaning people described Sean-Nós linking it to Irish identity, heritage and language, examples of this include:

1. “exciting music with strong cultural historic notions behind it.”
2. “I would describe it as an old way of Irish singing that fills you with emotion and pride for our heritage”

The fourth description was ‘Traditional’, people describing Sean-Nós as its old original style, examples of this include:

1. “An old style of singing with a lot of ornamentation and minimal to none backing”
2. “A very old tradition”.

The fifth would be ‘Modernisation/Evolution’, this means participants described it as changing or adapting over time, examples of this include:

1. “I really enjoyed the modern take in terms of music and also filming as I felt it really helped develop the idea of moving Ireland forward.”.

The sixth was ‘Aesthetic’ this means how the participants described Sean-Nós by how it sounds or feels artistically to them, examples of this include:

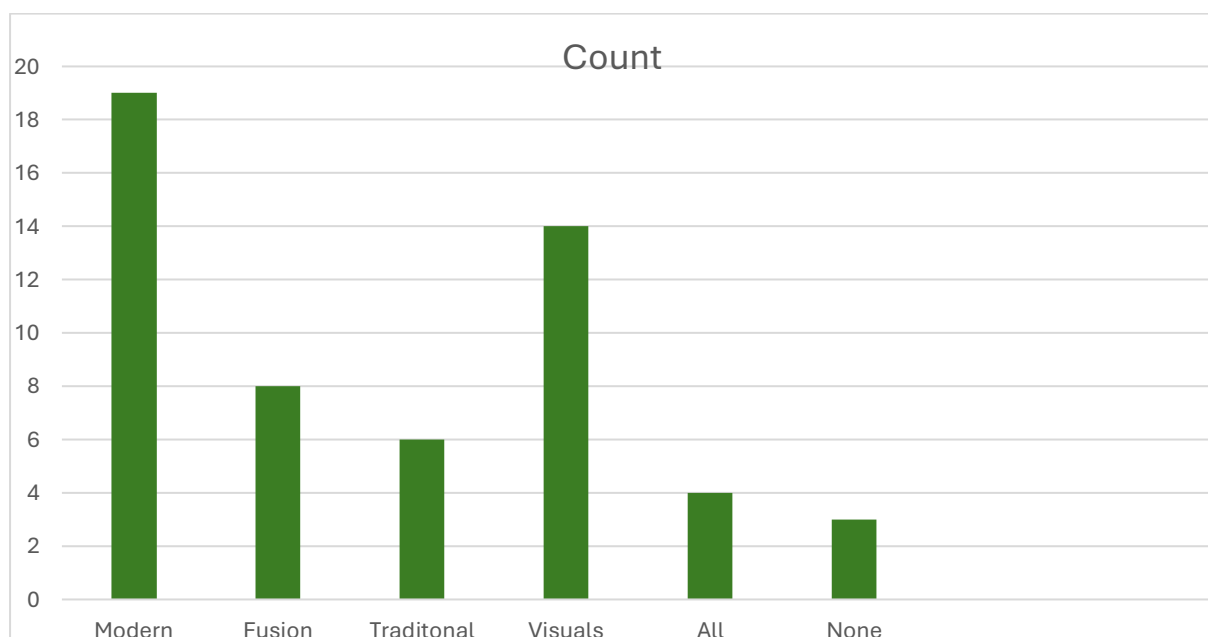
1. “Beautiful”
2. “Beautiful yet haunting storytelling”.

The final one was ‘History’, people referred to the past or preservation when describing Sean-Nós, examples of this include:

1. “It’s more ornate and nasally and often tells a story or oral history”
2. “Cultural, personal, historic, diverse”.

Table 4. is the next open question, ‘Did any video version stand out to you more than the others? If so, why?’.

Table 4



42 participants responded to this question. The version that stood out the most to the participants was the 'modern' video. This suggests that people found the modern version more engaging, examples of this include:

1. "The modern version stood out to me as it was unexpected but it showed how Sean-nos fits into different genres and eras"
2. "The final video, switching it up between girl in a shawl to city girl was class!!".

The second version to stick out was 'Fusion', showed that these people enjoyed the combination of older style kept traditional but updated, examples of this include:

1. "Fusion stood out to me the most, as it was managed somehow to stay true to tradition by using trad-style accompaniment, but was also changed and modernised with the harmonies/arrangement of the song."

The version to stick out the least was 'traditional', meaning people valued the raw performance and strong appeal of the tradition on its own, examples of this include:

1. ", i love acoustic/acapella versions where it shows the raw talent of the singer/performer",
2. "The singing over the landscape really sucked me in, even without speaking the language."

Next was visuals of the entire project, meaning imagery really helped people engage with the content, examples of this include:

1. "I think the visuals of the modern take was the most engaging"
2. "Visuals were amazing."

Some participants responded that all versions were equally stand out, examples of this include:

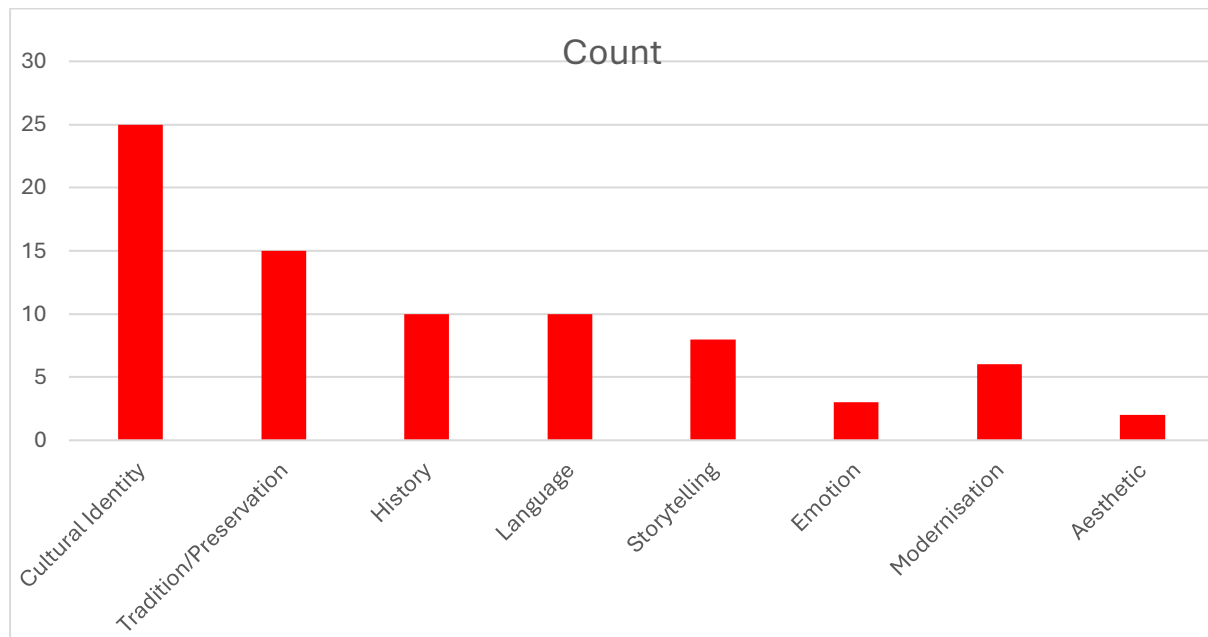
1. "They all stood out in there own way"
2. "All stood out as individual videos".

Some participants didn't regard any video to stand out, examples of this include:

1. "no"
2. "n/a".

Table 5. is the final open question ‘What do you think makes this style of singing important?’.

Table 5



The first common themes found in the participants describing what makes the singing style so important is ‘cultural identity’. This suggests that people describe it as representing Irish culture and who they are, examples of this include:

1. “I believe that this style of singing is so important to our heritage and to the conservation of the Irish language.”
2. “cultural preservation”.

The second theme is ‘Tradition/Preservation’, this suggests that people said that it’s important to keep what is had and pass it on and finding the traditional style of singing to be the most important. Examples of this include:

1. “Because it’s a part of our cultural heritage and a form of expression that should be preserved”
2. “Keeping tradition alive”.

The third theme is ‘History’, suggesting the most important part is that of understanding and connecting to the history of Sean-Nós, examples of this include:

1. “It’s special to Ireland and holds a lot of historical weight”
2. “Its history”.

The fourth theme is 'Language', meaning people find keeping Gaeilge alive as the most important, examples of this include:

1. "i would say that the use of the irish language is super important."
2. "Just the Irish language itself."

The fifth theme is 'Storytelling', meaning the story of Sean-Nós is the most important, examples of this include:

1. "Its our culture, our families and neighbours' stories"
2. "It keeps memories, language, stories and culture alive".

The sixth theme is 'Emotion', meaning the way Sean-Nós made the participants feel was most important, examples of this include:

1. "Its connectivity to the emotions of the singer and the maintenance of Irish language"
2. "The sheer amount of emotion put into each note that is heard. I".

The seventh theme is 'Modernisation', meaning the way Sean-Nós can adapt and stay relevant is most important to these participants, examples of this include:

1. "or can also be made more modern and it gives everyone a chance to enjoy the story behind them doesn't matter what type of music you enjoy."

The eight theme is 'Aesthetic', suggesting that how Sean-Nós looks or sounds as an art form is most important to them, examples of this include:

1. "That it's beautiful".

Discussion

How the role of Sean-Nós preserves Irish identity, and how modernisation and short form content affect its practice, perception and cultural relevance? This thesis was created to seek and find out the answer to this question, now in the discussion section of this dissertation, combining the literature research and the analysis of the interviews and survey, the questions involved with the project can now be answered.

Sean-Nós and Irish Cultural Identity

Sean-Nós is not just a singing tradition that is simply a part of Irish cultural identity, its identity comes from how Sean-Nós is expressed, experienced and passed on.

The interview with Gráinne brought about the idea that this ‘identity’ is in the old sense of community. When asked about how she would describe Sean-Nós in her own words, she describes the origin of where Sean-Nós comes from, which was people sharing stories and songs with each other, travelling house to house “oicheantaí arnóin” they were called. It was strictly an oral tradition “béal oideas” that relied on people passing on these stories and songs to families and friends in their community, she emphasises Sean-Nós coming from a natural environment and that alone is true Sean-Nós. This natural environment and sense of community in sharing this tradition, is the cultural identity of Sean-Nós in her opinion. (Appendix A) Seamus and Caoimhe’s idea of how Sean-Nós fits into Irish cultural identity is place and experience. Seamus described Sean-Nós in his eyes as something that’s completely original “and from the things that happen here” in this country. Its connection is not only to the place, being Ireland but the lived experience by the people of Ireland. The identity is not something seen only in family homes, but it is completely linked to the landscapes and the events that have been lived in these lands, something the pair and Gráinne agree on. Sean-Nós songs are completely representative of the area in which they originate from in Ireland and whatever unique events that take place there, “rooted in the country”. (Appendix B) Their definition expands on Gráinne’s idea that it’s not just a community identity but something that is completely engraved in the entire area in which the songs originate from. Máire’s definition of Irish cultural identity with Sean-Nós is ancestry and collective ownership. Máire’s interpretation of identity is different to the other’s idea as it’s not something defined by just its history and past, she acknowledges the importance but places a focus on the present. She describes how she thinks a lot about the connection between her and her ancestors when singing Sean-Nós, that it’s her ancestor’s words coming out of her mouth as she sings, “Focla ár sinsear ag teacht amach as mo bhéal”, how its inherited and shared across many generations through this chain of connections. (Appendix C) Sean-Nós connects the past and the present together as well as the individual and the idea of collective ownership from generation to generation, that is how she sees Sean-Nós in Irish cultural identity.

The participants of the survey, when asked how they would describe Sean-Nós, overall agree with the opinions of the interviewees saying that Sean-Nós’s is embedded in Irish culture through its heritage, its the national language and it’s the emotional expression when singing.

(Table 3) The interviewees have a very deep understanding and definition of this topic whereas the survey participants carry a simple but agreed understanding of Sean-Nós, identity is understood differently depending on personal experience.

What does this mean? Sean-Nós is not a fixed identity it has fluidity. It is something that is lived says Gráinne, something that is experienced says Seamus and Caoimhe, something that's inherited says Máire and something that is overall recognised by the participants of the survey. This aligns with Bhandari's definition of cultural identity, it being shaped through shared experiences and social interaction (Bhandari 104), as well as Chen's concept of "collective consciousness", it being formed through shared cultural meaning (Chen1). It's this not one answer identity as to why Sean-Nós even survived in the first place, William's work emphasis the survival and continuity of Sean-Nós being that it is a tradition that has endured historical oppression (Williams 58) having a history as such and only ever being an oral tradition, means it survived because it lived with people, in their homes, in their community and with their memory.

Authenticity and Tradition

Authenticity is something that is not easily agreed upon with Sean-Nós, it is still negotiated to this day. This is justified in Ó Geallbháin's writing how contributors state that trying to define authenticity restricts its natural evolution and growth (Ó Geallbháin 6) we also see this in May's argument that identity is not fixed but constantly negotiated (May 2) these theories reflect the contrasting data received in the interviews.

Gráinne's perception of authenticity is one that Seamus and Caoimhe described as the resistance they see with Sean-Nós today, preservation. Gráinne's idea of authenticity with Sean-Nós is rooted in the past, anti-modern, and emphasises a traditional view on Sean-Nós, that anything that is not the original old traditional practice of Sean-Nós, is not truly authentic. She believes authenticity is rooted in the imperfections when singing, the natural environment you are in when you sing, on a farm, in a boat, beside the fire, she argues this is the only way to have true Sean-Nós. (Appendix A) Rejecting to see authenticity in any form of performance culture with its polished vocal techniques and environment, her authenticity is rooted in resisting any kind of evolution for the tradition or change, keeping it as it once was. Seamus and Caoimhe acknowledge the resistance they feel to not change the Sean-Nós practice, "the song should be left alone" (Appendix B). They acknowledge but they also modernise carefully as a solution, they try to go for a more balanced approach to modernising Sean-Nós something

they do in their own professional performances where modern elements such as harmonies and instruments can be introduced without losing the respect for the tradition, only ever emphasising the story and the performance and adding “color”. They’re idea of authenticity is constantly negotiating. (Appendix B) Máire’s view on authenticity with Sean-Nós is much more flexible, she places authenticity not on how it sounds or how you perform it but more how and what it communicates to the listeners. “Tá go leor daonachtas sna h-amhráin”, (Appendix C) she places emphasises on the humanity in Sean-Nós, as an emotional expression.

Modernisation and Tradition

Modernising seems to be creating tension in the Sean-Nós community, although there is no agreement on how far it should go, the tension appears not only in literature research but the interviews as well, the survey being less so.

For Gráinne, we have established she is resistant to modernisation as it is seen as a threat to the tradition. In her words it would “damage” the tradition. A focus on singing perfectly, “Níl sé sin seanósach”, (Appendix A) has lost its authenticity and all she wants it for Sean-Nós to remain natural and to protect the tradition, “Tá daoine ag iarraidh a bheith ró-foirfe”. (Appendix A)

Seamus and Caoimhe who represent a more balanced outlook on Sean-Nós, are aware of the criticism they face, “I’d heard people resist it”, (Appendix B) but they still manage to find a balance with their instruments and harmony to keep the storytelling and respect of the tradition, the modernisation is more acceptable as its quite controlled and careful with its intention. Then there is Máire who has full acceptance on modernising, this is apparent as she’s an influencer on social media, posting her Sean-Nós alone is a form of modernising but she also expressed her openness to innovation and creation with Sean-Nós. She embraces the change, viewing the modernisation as survival for the tradition as it’s a huge platform for the tradition to grow and spread and again more focused on the emotion and meaning of Sean-Nós. (Appendix C) Modernisation is necessary and positive to Máire. There isn’t an agreed view among the interviewee’s, Gráinne wants to protect, Seamus and Caoimhe are for balance and Máire is all for evolution.

While the interviewee’s showed disagreement, the survey had a clear preference on which performance of Sean-Nós stood out in the project series. ‘Fusion’ was voted by the participants to be the most preferred version of the performance videos, where there is a balance of traditional music and harmonies with the Sean-Nós. The second preferred version was the

‘Traditional’, and ‘Modern’ last. (Figure 13) This means the participants preferred balance in the tradition. In table 4, the question which version stood out more than others, ‘Modern’ stood out the most to participants, followed strongly by ‘Fusion’, (Table 4) this suggests that modern might be more engaging to people who viewed the performances, but the fusion is what provided satisfaction for the participants. The participants do not agree with Gráinne, accepting modernisation better but prefer fusion representing an overall balance. Modernisation does not destroy Sean-Nós, it just changes how it is expressed but only when the storytelling and cultural meaning remain intact. This means the strongest idea of modernisation is not full change or the complete rejection, but rather a balance, a fusion, this aligns strongly again with the river metaphor in O’Shea’s writing, Sean-Nós can never be damaged or destroyed, it only ever absorbs change (O’Shea 1).

Short form Content

The Short-form content series not only improved engagement but also changed how Sean-Nós is understood and accessed. When asked if the participants understood Sean-Nós better after the series there was overwhelming agreement, showing the impact the series had on educating the people who watched, (Figure 2) they were also asked on the engagement of this series in which an almost all, bar one person, agreed to have found the performances of Sean-Nós engaging, this means there was definitely audience engagement through the series. (Figure 5) When asked about the ‘Modern’ version making the style feel accessible, 80% of the participants agreed that the ‘Modern’ offered a more accessible route into understanding Sean-Nós and feeling like they can be a part of Sean-Nós. (Figure 10) Interestingly the participants also emphasised with 98% of them having agreed that the short form content showed that the style of singing does have the ability to change over time, it can evolve. (Figure 11)

In the interviews, Máire mentions how young audiences discover Sean-Nós through platforms such as TikTok, (Appendix C) and as an influencer she sees this first hand making it real-world evidence of this being effective not just survey based. Sean-Nós is reaching new audiences digitally. When the survey participants were asked about what performance changed how they felt about Sean-Nós, people saw it as something that could be ‘Modern’, adaptable not just something that’s historical (Table 1), as well as that when they were asked what stood out the most to them, they emphasised not just performance and emotion but visuals. It makes the short form content not just about audio to the participants but visuals, and an emotional and performance-based experience. (Table 2) In the series, three performance videos were shown,

there was the 'Traditional', it being more raw and solo just vocals, there was 'Fusion' where it was instruments and harmony added and then there was 'Modern', where a song was produced accompanied by visuals through a music video, because of the three different styles were shown it allowed participants of the survey to answer and compare, understand and feel accessibility to this tradition. However, there are examples in the survey where it's mentioned that short form content can also limit depth, suggesting that maybe it can function more as an entry point having wide reach rather than being full representation of the tradition. This aligns with Manic's description of shortform content being a tool for engagement and rapid consumption (Manic 1) and as well as this Hauser's discussion about globalisation opening a wider cultural reach. (Hauser 3) Short form content is not going to replace how Sean-Nós is presented and received it doesn't replace the tradition, but it does introduce it to a wider audience almost like an entry point for people to learn and find out about the tradition.

Limitations

It would be foolish to assume the project avoided all flaws; there were some limitations recognised throughout the process of this project. The first being parts of the survey design. The open-ended question section relied too much on the participants to respond, there was a question that was a follow up to the one previous, and there was an inconsistency with response numbers and therefore I could not link or track the responses across the themes that were established. Time was also a limiting factor as the survey was conducted too late into this process and therefore there was limited time to possibly gather more participants and fix the survey design flaw I mentioned above, as well as that with production, there was a need for more references when writing the composition as I feel it would have ended up with a better result. Finally, there was a short form content limitation, based off of a response received in the survey where its engaging but possibly too shallow as 40-minute interviews were condensed to two minutes of footage and audio.

Conclusion

The role of Sean-Nós in preserving Irish Identity and how modernisation and short form content affect its perception, practice and cultural relevance. After collecting data from interviews with Gráinne Ní Fhlathárta, Máire Ní Churraoin and Seamus and Caoimhe Ní Fhlathárta, survey analysis with Likert, Ranking and Open questions and through the process of practice-based research here are the answers to this dissertation. Sean-Nós does preserve Irish identity but identity isn't fixed and is experienced differently for each individual person.

This can be seen in the difference in the interviewee's responses and supports May's literature as well.

'Fusion' was the most preferred version of the series, 'Modern' was the one that caught the most attention and 'Traditional' was the one most respected. Modernisation does not damage tradition, it only ever expands on it, making it accessible to those who might not feel connected to it and helps keep it relevant for the continuity of its lifespan. Supporting O'Shea on how tradition evolves and Ó Geallbháin on how tension does exist around this topic but doesn't stop or ruin it.

The short form content increased the accessibility of Sean-Nós to a wider audience, essentially bridging the gap, it increased engagement on the topic of Sean-Nós and introduced it to new audiences, this can be seen in the figure such as figure 2, 5 and the open questions of the survey. As well as the fact that the series got over ten thousand views. Although short form content does limit depth, being only two minutes of information, it functions more as an entry point rather than a full representation, this links back to Manic's paper on engagement and Hauser with globalisation.

In terms of practice, it expanded not just from traditional but to fusion to modern to visuals, perception shifted, viewing Sean-Nós as old and traditional to something adaptable and relevant, cultural relevance it is still very strong because of the language, its history and people's relation with cultural identity. The project had the comparison between the different styles of Sean-Nós, a better understanding of the tradition and its importance to our culture and increased accessibility for people within the tradition, Sean-Nós wasn't just analysed in this project it was tested to see if it could evolve.

There is no solution for the tension felt between tradition and change but the findings from this research show that the tradition is not lost through this modernisation nor is it being reshaped. At the start of this thesis there was a metaphor which felt like the identity and description of what Sean-Nós is, it being like the flow of a river, absorbing outside influence without changing its essence (Ó Shea 2) the data shows that this tradition absorbing change does not mean its being replaced. This project exists within that flow of the river, and the river has not changed direction it has simply widened.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Gráinne Interview

J: An bhféadfá cur síos a dhéanamh ar do chúlra féin le hamhránaíocht sean-nóis agus conas ar fhoghlaim tú í ar dtús?

G: Mo chúlra phearsanta fhéin ná stóigh gur fhás mé suas agus go raibh an Sean-Nós just mar chuid go mo shaol. Um Ag fás suas ag éisteacht le muintir, clann Grealish um agus díreach trasna an bhóthair uaim bhí mo aintín Síle Ní Fharthárta ina conaí agus bhí an-

, thug sí sin an- ionspráid dhomsa agus mé fás suas ag éisteacht léi mar bhí sí óg agus ag éisteacht léithe ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós agus stóigh go raibh stíl béidir beagánín níos nua-aimseartha aici leis an tSean-Nós, chomh maith agus ag breathnú, um, ag breathnú ar an aistir Sean-Nós a bhí aici chomh maith, ag glacadh páirt san oireachtas agus stóigh ag breathnú ar na céimeannaí ar fad a bhain leis an oireachtas agus cé chomh deacair is a bhí sé aici Corn Uí Riada a bhrúcha agus na comórtas sin ar fad, so, um thug sise ionspráid dhomsa nuair a bhí mé ag fás suas mar níl sé éasca um a bheith casadh ar an Sean-Nós agus just an muinín sin a bheith agat a dhéanamh agus a leanacht ar aghaidh leis.

J: An raibh muinteoir agat?

G: Um d'fhreastal mé ar rangannaí Máire Pheter, thoir scoil na tulaí. Thosaigh mé ranganaí Sean-Nós nuair a bhí mé sé bhliana daois. Um, bhí muinteoir agam agus mhúin sí go leor leor amhráin dhom, tá cineál cómhra ceist faoin Sean-Nós ann, An féidir é a mhúnadh? Nó a bhfuil sé isitigh ionat go nádúrtha. Um d;fhreastal mé ag ranganna go dtí go raibh mé thart ar dó-dhéag nó trí-déag agus ansin stop mé dul ag rangannaí ach um, tá sé cineál deacair um é sin a oibriú amach, an féidir Sean-Nós a mhúnadh nó a bhfuil sé ionat go nádúrtha, ach tá mé an-bhuíoch go Máire Pheter go raibh sí agam mar munteoir agus gur mhún sí cupla amhráin dhom fhéin, tá mé an-bhuíoch di agus an sásta léithe.

J: Cén ról a bhí ag a bheith as Conamara nó ag fás aníos sa Ghaeltacht i do chéannacht cheoil a mhúnlú?

G: Um, cínnte bhí, mar stóigh go raibh na féilte ar fad i gConamara, caithfidh tú freisin a thuiscint nuair atá tú ina chonaí i gConamara tá na scéimeannaí seo ar fáil amháin i gConamara. I gConamara amháin tá deontais churtha ar fáil le haghaidh na féilte ceol seo a bheith ann na comórtas áitúil ar fad a bheith ar fáil. So, Rinne sé sin, bhí an-éifeacht aige sin ormsa agus mé ag fás suas i gConamara agus ar an Sean-Nós. Stóigh nach bhfuil mor an chur amach ag daoine taobh amuigh go an ghaeltacht ar an amhránaíocht Sean-Nós, ní bheadh mór an cur amach ag daoine ar an stíl sin amhránaíochta. So, cínnte mura mbeadh mise conaí san ghaeltacht, ní bheadh Sean-nós agam. Bhí sé an tábhachtacht.

J: What is authentic to you, sa Sean-Nós, sin bharantúlacht?

G: Leis an Sean-Nós, ceapann daoine go bhfuil gá ar Sean-Nós a bheith go h-álainn agus go mbeadh glóir álainn bím agat mar sin atá curtha isteach ionat nuair atá tú ag éisteacht le duine a bhíonn ag casadh ar an teilifís nó ag éisteacht le duine éicint ar an radio. Nuair a bhíonn tú ag éisteacht le duine éicint ag casadh amhrán, tá tú ag iarraidh éisteacht le glóirdeas bínn ach má tá tusa ag iarraidh an Sean-Nós ceart bíonn sé, níl a fhios agam ar an focal le haghaidh 'raw'

, bíonn sé, tá sé ceart go leor botúin a dhéanamh, níl gá go bhfuil

gach rud foirfe, níl gá go bhfuil gach rud díreach ceart tá sé ceaptha bheith nádúrtha. Bhí Sean-Nós ann, bhí daoine taobh amuigh, ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós nuair a bhí siad ag obair ar an bhfeirm, bhí siad ag casadh Sean-Nós nuair a bhí siad amuigh ar an mbád, sin an sórt amhrán atá ann, amhrán faoi daoine a bheith ar an mbád ag dul amach go Arán, ag tabhairt múin go h-Áran. Bhíodh daoine casadh ar an Sean-Nós san áit nádúrtha, áit a bhí taobh amuigh agus ní mhotaím go ceart go mbeadh amhránaíocht foirfe ann nuair atá tú ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós, ba cheart go mbeadh tú ag mothú an taobh amuigh sin, an nádúr sin nuair atá tú ag éisteach le Sean-Nós.

J: Nuair a smaoiníonn tú ar an sean-nós, cad a chuireann an Ghaelachas nó an Éireannachas sin in iúl duit?

G: I dtús báire, stóigh mar gheall go bhfuil sé in ár dteanga náisiúnta fhéin, tá sé i nGaeilge. Tá go leor stíleanna éagsúla ann, tá bailéadaí ann, tá go leor amhrán agus stíleannaí ceol, seánraí ceol as tíortha eile againne ach níl Sean-Nós in aon tír eile ach sa tír s'againne fhéin. Is fiú ann, níl sé ach sa ghaeltachtaí, má théinn tusa go gaeltacht atá thíos i gCorcaigh nó thuas i nDún ná nGall tá an Sean-Nós ansin difriúil ná an Sean-Nós atá thoir againne. So, tá sé an-éireannach agus an-ghaolach an Sean-Nós agus an rud faoi Sean-Nós chomh maith, cé go bhfuil na téamaí atá sna h-amhrán, tá siad iollaíoch brise croí agus daoine fáil bháis agus grá ná dtugtar ar ais dhuit. Tá stair na tíre san Sean-Nós chomh maith mar shampla an gorta agus stóigh an bealach a chaith na sassanaí linne anseo in Éireann. Fágann tú blaise go an stair sna h-amhrán Sean-Nós chomh maith um agus ní sé sin ach sa stair na héireann níl sé i stair na tíortha eile. So, tá sé an-tábhachtach meas a bheith agat ar an Sean-Nós agus foghlam faoi na h-amhrán, le go mbeidh tú in ann foghlam faoi do thír féin chomh maith.

J: I do thuairim féin, cá bhfuil an Éireannachas is láidre sa sean-nós – sa teanga, sa ghlór, sa hamhránaí, san áit as a dtagann sé, nó sa chomhthéacs sóisialta timpeall air?

G: Cínnte go baineann sé leis an comhthéacs sóisialta mar shampla an bealach a mhair daoine an t-am sin, tá sé an-tabhachtacht go cuireann tú an scéal sin trasna sna h-amhrán nó nuair atá tú ag éisteach leis an Sean-Nós. Go bhfaighfidh cineál an comhthéachs sóisialta a bhí sa gceantar an am sin. Tá an guth fíor thabhachtach chomh maith agus go ndéanann an duine an t-amhrán a chuir trasna i bhealach atá ceart agus go bhfuil neart Sean-Nós ag an té atá ag casadh an amhrán, go bhfuil ornáideacht san amhrán agus go bhfuil tú ag canadh i stíl tradisiúnta chomh maith agus cínnte an cur i láthair sin, tá an cur i láthair thar a bheith tabhachtach, an ghlóir ach níl ghá go bhfuil chuile rud foirfe nó tada mar sin ach an-tabhachtach go cuireann tú an scéal an amhrán trasna agus an cultúr sóisialta agus an stair sóisialta a bhí sa tír san am sin, a chuir trasna chomh maith.

J: Conas a oireann an sean-nós do fhéiniúlacht chultúrtha na hÉireann sa lá atá inniu ann, agus an bhfuil sé athraithe, dar leat?

G: Tá an Sean-Nós ag athrú, tá sé théis athrú go mór le blianta fada anuas. Tóg mar shampla, an Sean-Nós caoga blian ó shin, bhí sé nádúrtha, dá gcloisfidh tusa fadó duineicint caint ar Sean-Nós fadó, bheith siad ag caint gur fhoghlán tú an Sean-Nós ar leice teaghlach. So, fadó bhíodh daoine dhul ó theach go teach san gheimhreadh agus bhí siad ag roinnt scéalta le chéile, oícheantaí arnóin an t-ainm a bhí orthu sin. Bheith siad ag roinnt scéalta agus a roinnt amhrán leinne chéile agus béil oideas agus sean scéalta mar sin, sin an rud faoi Sean-Nós is scéalta tá tú roinnt ach i bhfeidhm amhrán agus fadó bhíodh daoine

casadh ar an Sean-Nós istigh sa teach ar leice teaghlach, so, suite ar thaobh an tine sin an bhealach a d'fhoghlam daoine Sean-Nós fadó. Sin an t-aon bhealach a bhí Sean-Nós curtha trasna ach i mo thuaraim fhéin tá Sean-Nós beagán scriosta ansin beidir thart ar 30 bliain ó shin go dtí le gairid, sílimse go bhfuil an stíl Sean-Nós béidir go bhfuil daoine ag iarraidh a bheith ró-foire, ag iarraidh casadh ar Sean-Nós ar mhaithe le comórtais a bhúichint nó le bheith ar stáitse agus má tá mé fhéin san aireamh, má tá mise casadh amhrán ar an Sean-Nós ar stáitse, má tá mé dhul a bheith ar teilifís níl mé ag iarraidh aon bhotúin a dhéanamh. Tá mé ag iarraidh gach rud a bheith déanta i gceart agam, tá mé ag iarraidh go mbeidh mé ag cur trasna an íomha is fearr dhom fhéin ach níl sé sin Sean-Nósach. Tá tú ceaptha bheith ar an mbealach ceart, tá an Sean-Nós le bheith cur i láthair ar leice teaghlach in oíche arnóin So, tá go leor athraithe teacaí le Sean-Nós le caoga blian anuas, le seasca blian anuas. Tá muid ag g-iompú ar ais ar na h-oícheantaí arnóin, tá go leor acu ann arís san gceantar anseo i gConamara. Tá daoine casadh i dtithe, tá daoine casadh i teach tairbhne ag tíoct le chéile agus sin atá i gceist leis an Sean-Nós go bhfuil tú ag roinnt an scéal, go bhfuil tú ag roinnt an tradisiúin agus sin an rud le Sean-Nós tá sé nádúrtha agus níl sé ceaptha bheith roinnt thuas ar stáitse. Níl soilse ceaptha bheith scáladh anuas ort agus is maith an rud an oireachtas agus tá an t-oireachtas chomh speisialta dhom fhéin, go mo chlann fhéin na griallachaí, bhrú siad go leor dúiseanna oireachtas tá sé thar a bheith tabhachtach dúinn, cúis an Corn Uí Riada. Mothaím go dtógann sé ón nádúr amantaí an nádúr a bhainnean leis an Sean-Nós, go bhfuil sé ceaptha bheith nádúrtha agus botúin a dhéanamh agus níl ghá go mbeidh chuile rud iontach nuair a bhíonn tú ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós.

J: Cé leis, dar leat, an sean-nós, agus cén ról atá agat féin sa traidisiún sin?

G: Sílim go mbaineann Cé leis, dar leat, an sean-nós, agus cén ról atá agat féin sa traidisiún sin? Linn ar fad anseo i gConamara, níl ghá a bheith ar chuile dhuine amhrán ar an Sean-Nós a chasadh, tá sé ag cur eagracht orainn, well, mé fhéinn mar amhránaí Sean-Nós agus bím ag múnadh Sean-Nós anseo i gConamara. Bímse ag múnadh na h-amhrán go h-áitúil agus bím ag múnadh, sé an leagann amach atá agamsa nuair a bhíonn mise ag múnadh rangannaí go ghaisúir, bím mise múnadh, tá caoga gásúir a bhíonn cláraithe i rangannaí agamsa, agus béidir nach teagann amach as na rangannaí sin ach beirt nó tríúir a bhéas ag casadh amach anseo, go poiblí. An ról atá agamsa, sílim fhéin ná an méid atá ar eolas agam múnadh go na gásúir, an scéal a bhainnean le na h-amhrán a mhúnadh go na gásúir agus mura fhoghlamíonn siad ach an scéal agus go bhfuil siad in ann é sin a thabhairt leo, a mhúnadh go duine éicint eile, sílimse go rud deirfeach é sin fhéin. Níl aon ghá go mbeidh siad casadh ar an Sean-Nós amach as é seo ach go dtuigeann siad céard faoi a bhí amhrán mhuinse agus céard faoi a bhí amhrán na trá báine agus go mbeidh siad in ann é sin a inseacht go a gcuid ghasúir fhéin níl ghá go mbeidh siad in ann a mhúnadh mar amhrán ach go mbeidh siad in ann an scéal a mhúnadh go ghasúir amach anseo agus é a thabhairt ar aghaigh. Sin atá i gceist ar amhránaíocht ar an Sean-Nós is scéalta atá ionad agus iad á thabhairt ar aghaigh ó ghlúin go ghlúin amach anseo. So, i mo thuaraim fhéin is linne ar fad an Sean-Nós agus is féidir linn é a roinnt.

An ról atá agamsa ná iad a roinnt leis na gásúir a bhíonn ag freastal ar mo chuid rangannaí agus más rud é go gcasann duine nó beirt amach anseo tá mise sásta.

J: Conas a dhéanfá cur síos ar an sean-nós do dhuine nach bhfuil cloiste aige riamh?

G: Go bunúsach amhrán ar an Sean-Nós níl aon tionlacán leis ní bhíonn aon ceol leis. Tá go

leor ornáideacht ann nuair a bhíonn tú casadh, sna h-amhrán málle, cuireann tú trasna, go leor acu bíonn siad brónach, casann tú go b@onach iad. Tá sé an- tabhachtacht nuair atá tú ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós go léireann tú, más amhrán brónach atá ann, go léireann tú na mothúchán sin agus tú ag casadh agus go cuireann tú trasna iad. Mar arís is scéal atá ann, sin an rud go bunúsach atá mise ag iarraidh miniú go duine éicint nár chuala Sean-Nós cheana. Is féidir ceol a chuir leis ach i mo thuairaim fhéin, is fearr an ceol a fhágáil amach as agus a fhágáil deas simplí mar in dháiríre is scéal atá tú ag roinnt ach is amhrán atá ann.

J: Cad a dhéanann an sean-nós difriúil ó chineálacha eile amhránaíochta?

G: Níl tionlacán san amhránaíocht ar an Sean-Nós, go hiondúil níl tionlacán i gceist leis. Ní morán daoine a bhíonn ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós. Céard eile atá difriúil? Má tá tusa casadh amhrán ar an Sean-Nós baineann sé le do cheantar fhéin nó ceantar gaeltachta eile agus baineann sé le stair nó cultúr na háite sin. Is féidir an rud céanna a rá faoi amhrán eile ach múineann an Sean-Nós go leor dhúinn faoin mbealach a bhíonn tí béidir fadó nó an bhealach a cathú le daoine agus an brise croí a bhí ar daoine.

J: Cad a chuidigh leis an sean-nós fanacht tábhachtach do dhaoine thar na glúnta?

G: Múineann an Sean-Nós go leor dhúinn faoi daoine agus an chaoi a mhair daoine sa tír fadó, tá sé sin thar a bheith tabhachtacht leis an Sean-Nós agus sin an fáth go bhfuil sé tabhachtacht an deilt sin a thusicint gur scéalaíocht atá i gceist chomh maith. Tóg mar shampla, an t-amhrán, amhrán mhúinse. Nuair a bhíonn mise muna amhrán, go ghasúir beaga tá cuid acu níl siad ach sé nó seacht bhilanta dhaois. Múinim i gconaí t-amhrán, an amhrán a dhéanann mé ná amhrán mhúinse. Níl a fhios agam a bhfuil a fhios agat an scéal? So Máire Ní Flarthátaí, bhí sí ina conaí i Leitir Ceallaigh i LeitirMóir. Bhí sí pósta le fear as leitreachaigh ach ba as muínse í i gcarna. Bhí sí fáil sean agus thuig sí gur raibh sí ar an cailleadh agus rinne sí, is cinéal uachta atá ann, agus seo béidir 200 bliain ó shin. Bhí a fhios aici go raibh sí chun báis a fháil, agus scríobh sí an t-amhrán seo le go mbeadh a fhios ag an chlann céard ba cheart a dhéanamh leithe nuair a chailleadh í. Ok, so sin an rud is maith liom faoi na hamhrán mhúinse mar taispeánann sé an ceiliúradh íontach a dhéanann muide ar an mbás. Tá muđi an-mhaith mar thír ag déanamh ceiliúradh ar an mbás, má bhreathnaíonn tú ar an méid daoine a bhíonn ag breathnú ar RIP.ie, is bráth leo, níl a fhios agam a bhfuil ceart a rá gur bráth leo an báß ach is maith leo a bheith caint ar an mbás agus an comhrá. Leis an amhrán sin ar fad, insíonn sí an bealach gur mhaith leithe, caithfidh leithe nó cén chaoi gur cheart an bás a bheith ceiliúradh. Tá sé insí aice cén duine ba cheart an cúntra a dhéanamh, Seán Ó heinn, bhíodh mo chúntra déanta ó na dhá lámh, bíodh mo chaipín is mo ribín inti istigh í, leacaí ar mo cheann. Deireann sí chomh maith go bhfuil sí ag iarraidh trúir ban óg ó shléibhte, lena í a chaoineadh ós cionn clár. Tá sé sin chomh speisialta an líne sin ann fhéin, mar ní thuigeann daoine an bealach a déanfar ceiliúradh ar an mbás 100 bliain ó shin in Éireann. Bhíodh daoine ag casadh in aice le do chúntra, so bhí mná caointe ag tíocht ag an teach, so má bhí neart airgead agatsa bhí tú in ann cuple duinea fháil le suí in aice leis an gcúntra agus bheadh siad ag canadh ar nó s go raibh siad ag caoineadh ag suí in aice leis an chúntra. So nuair a bhead daoine teacht isteach chuig an teach le a shasú leis an dream leis an clann le té chailiú, dá bhfeicfidh iad cúigear in aice le do chorp, agus iad ag caoineadh, ní raibh siad ag caoineadh i ndáiríre bhí siad ag casadh caoineadh. Dúirt siad go raibh an duine seo an-speisialta, bhí cúigear ag casadh nó ag caoineadh in aice leo, d'íocfadh siad na daoine seo le suí in aice leis an corp, a bheith

caoineadh in aice leo. Níl a fhios agam a bhfuil sé sin in aon tír eile, ach sin an rud atá speisialta faoi na hamhrán Sean-Nós seo, tá muid foghlam ar an bhealach a mhair daoine fadó. Sé an rud atá an-bhrónach faoi an t-amhrán seo amhrán mhuínse, ceann go na línte san amhrán ná, ná cuireagáí i leitirceallaigh mémar ní ann atá mo dhream, ach nuair a cailiúdh í bhí stoirm úafásach sa gceantar so bhí sí ina conaí i leitirceallaigh agus bhí siad ag iarraidh í a thabhairt trasna na farraige i mar tá a fhios agat faoin gceantar seo i leitirceallaigh tá muínes díreach trasna na farraige. Bhí sí ag iarraidh go dtabharfaidh í trasna ar an mbád í, ach bhí storim ann agus níor tharla sin, so mar théann tú chuig reilg leitirceallaigh, tá sí cuirfidh anois ann, so Máire Ní Flarthárta an bhean tá sí cuirfidh ansin. Sin amhrán atá an-speisialta, tá a fhios agat faoin mbealach in a rinne siad ceiliúradh ar dhaoine nuair a fuair siad bás, tá sé freisin san amhrán, bhíodh píopaí deas sa cailce ann is na ceagannaí is iad lán, so bhíodh ól isitigh sa teach nuair a chaileadh daoine bhí píopaí sna títhe nuair a chaileadh daoine sin an sórt ceiliúradh a déanú ar an mbás. Tórradh trí oíche is trí lá, deireann sí é sin chomh maith, so ya tá an Sean-Nós ÚAFÁSACH SPEISIALTA le haghaidh an stair agus an chultúr a bhí againn in Éireann a choinneáil beo agus a thuiscint.

J: Cad é do bharúil faoi thionlacan uirlisí leis an sean-nós?

G: Ní dhéanfadh mise é, mar gur stíl anm fhéin é an t-amhránaíocht ar an Sean-Nós. Tá neart stíleanna eile ceol ann agus amhrán ann agus mar tá tú ag iarraidh amhrán eile Gailge a chasadh nó má tá tú ag iarraidh amhrán béarla a chasadh is féidir é sin a chasadh le ceol ach leis an Sean-Nós ceapaim mise ba cheart é a fhágáil deas simplí agus nádúrtha agus é a chasadh go deas agus sin an bhealach a chasadh mise é. Fanacht leis an nádúr agus fanacht leis an tradisiúin maidir leis an amhránaíocht ar an Sean-Nós. Béidir go ndéanann daoine le harmonies agus rudaí mar sin, tá sé sin go deas freisin, ní bheith sé sin chomh nua-aimseartha is a bheadh sé ceol a chuir leis ach i mo thuaraim fhéin é a fhágáil deas simplí mar sin an bhealach ina raibh sé fadó agus an bhealach ceart a fhágáil.

J: An bhfeiceann tú an sean-nós á scaipeadh ar líne? Má fheiceann, cad é do thuairim faoi sin?

G: Tá sé iontach Sean-Nós a fhéiceáil ar líne, tá sé go h-álainn an árdáin atá Sean-Nós a fháil is a fheiceáil, ach caithfidh muid a bheith an-chúramach, nuair a chloiseann tú an Sean-Nós ar líne go bhfuil an leagan ceart go an t-amhrán á chloisteáil agat nó á fhoghlam agat. Tóg mar shampla, duine óg fiú ann dhom fhéin, is múinteoir mise a bhíonn ag múna amhránaíocht ar an Sean-Nós, tugann mise mo leagán fhéin go na gásúir a bhíonn ag freastal ar mo chuid rangannaí, bíonn siad á réiteach le haghaidh comórtasáí oireachtas agus ansin bíonn siad ag téigh abhaile agus béidir go mbíonn siad ag cleachtadh an amhrán sin sa mbaile agus téann siad ar líne amánntaí, mar sin an bhealach a foghlamaíonn gásúir óga san lá atá inniu ann. So, téann siad ar líne ach fáigheann siad amánntaí leagán nach bhfuil ceart, so tá sé an- tabhachtacht nuair atá tú ag éisteacht leis an Sean-Nós ar líne nó má bhíonn tú ag brath ar Sean-Nós atá ar líne go bhfuil an té atá ag casadh an amhrán sin, go bhfuil siad á chasadh i gceart, go bhfuil na focal i gceart acu, agus nach bhfuil véarsaí acu ó amhráin eile. So, is maith liom ar lámh amháin go bhfuó an árdáin ansin á fáil ag Sean-Nós ach caithfidh tú bheith an-chúramach chomh maith go bhfuil a fhios agat go bhfuil an leagan sin i gceart, más rud é go bhfuil tú fhéin ag foghlam agus rudaí mar sin.

J: How would you balance tradition and creativity?

G: I don't know how to balance it. Is féidir leat a bheith cruthaitheach leis an Sean-Nós, cínnte is féidir leat ó thaobh fuaim an amhrán, ornáideacht a chuir isteach, in áiteanna béidir nár

ndéarna amhránaí eile é. Cínnte is féidir rudaí mar sin a dhéanamh leis an Sean-Nós, níl aon rud mícheart le bheith casadh ar an Sean-Nós agus ceol ann ach an oiread mar tabhfaidh sé sin ogacht go fhaoine óga eile an Sean-Nós a phiocadh suas, níl aon rud mícheart tionlacán a bheith agat agus ag casadh le harmonies agus rudaí mar sin mar tá tusa ag tabhairt spreagadh go dhaoine óga. Is stóigh, go leor go na ghlúine óg, atá anois ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós go bhfaca siad daoine ag casadh ar an oireachtas, Chonaic siad an glam, na daoine óga seo a bhí ag casadh thuas ar stáitse agus bhreathnaigh siad go hálainn agus gur bíonn iad a spreagadh iadm le amhrán a chasadh ar an Sean-Nós, agus gur bíonn an fáth go bhfuil siad fhéin ag casadh Sean-Nós. So níl aon rud mícheart leis an Sean-Nós is fad is go coinneann tú beo í. Sin an rud is tábhachtach.

J: An gceapann tú go n-athraíonn an sean-nós go nádúrtha le himeacht ama?

G: Athraíonn cínnte, ya, má éistaíonn tú siar le daoine a bhí ag casaadh 100 blian ó shin ó taifeadh a bhí ann 100 blian ó shin, bhí an stíl amhránaíochta a bhí acu chomh Sean-Nósach, bhí siad chomh sean agus chomh 'raw' , nach bhfuil daoine casadh mar sin

níos mó. Tá an n-oiread athraithe tagtha ar, tá go leor amhránaí anois is tá siad bím agus tá glóir árainn acy agus tá siadsan casadh ar an Sean-Nós chomh maith. Fiú an áit a bhí daoine casadh fadó mar a dúirt mé ar ball bhí siad ag casadh ar leice teaghlach bhí siad ag casadh amuigh sa gharraí, bhíodar ag casadh san báid seoil. Bíonn daoine casadh anois le 50 bliain anuas, bhí daoine casadh ar an stáitse, is i comortas bhí daoine casadh agus d'athraigh sé sin an Sean-Nós mar a dúirt mé, bhí daoine ag iarraidh a bheith foirfe ní raibh siad ag iarriadh aon-bhotúin a dhéanamh ag casadh ar mhaithe le moltóirí a shású nó casadh ar mhaithe le lucht féachanna a shású aus ag iarraidh daoine a mhealladh le thíocht ag ceolchoirmeacha. Níl daoine chun freastal ar cheolchoirm má tá tú chun déanamh botúin agus má tá tú dhul chasadh an bealach a bhí daoine casadh 60 go 100 bliain ó shin. So tá an Sean-Nós athraithe agus anois béidir 20 bliain anuas, no fiú ann le 5 bliain anuas tá daoine casadh Sean-Nós le ceol. Tá daoine casadh Sean-Nós le harmony agus tá sé sin go hálainn, is breá liom bheith ag éisteach le na amhrán sin mar isn an stóigh is maith le daoine bheith ag éisteach le anois, agus tá daoine á tharraing é sin isteach leis an Sean-Nós agus tá sé go hálainn a bheith ag éisteach leis. An rud atá go hálainn ná níl téamaí an Sean-Nós ag athrú t á tú fós ag éisteach leis na scéalta Sean-Nós an bealach a caithú leis na héireannai nuair a bhí na sassanaí sa tír, an brise croí tá tú ag éisteach le na scéalta sin a bhí i mbéal an phobail 100 - 200 blian ó shin so sin an rud atá speisialta faoi Sean-Nós.

Béidir go bhfuil an stíl ag athrú ach tá na scéalta is na hamhrán ag fanacht mar an gcéanna.

J: Conas ba mhaith leat an sean-nós a fheiceáil sa todhchaí?G: Ba bhreá liom an Sean-Nós a fheiceáil fós beo, ba mhaith liom go bhfeicfidh daoine an

tabhách a bhaineann leis in ár gcúltúr agus go bhfeicfidh daoine, go cloisfidh daoine na scéalta atá taobh thiar go na hamhrán agus cé chomh brónach is cé chomh deacar is a bhí saol daoine fadó. Sin an rud atá tabhachtach dhomsa leis an Sean-Nós, ba bhreá liom freisin go mbeadh an stíl ornáideachta fós ag daoine nuair a bhíonn siad ag casadh ar an Sean-Nós agus stóigh ba mhaith liom go dtuigfidh daoine an bhealach gur chas daoine fadó chomh maith nuair a bhí siad ag casadh Sean-Nós, éisteach siar leis na taifeadh a bhí ann na blianta fada ó shin. Nách mbeadh daoine ag éisteach leis béidir an Sean-Nós comhaimseartha ar fad ach go mbeadh an meascán sin fós i mbéal an phobal agus go mbeadh sé ag cloisteáil ag dhaoine sa bpobal. IS BREÁ LIOM bheith ag éisteach le amhrán

oíche óga, agus an bealach a chasann siad ar an Sean-Nós leis an gceol, leis na harmonies agus na rudaí sin ar fad, agus is breá liom á chloisteáil ach ba bhreá liom freisin go dtuigfidh daoine na bealaí a chas daoine fadó agus gur as sin a tháinig an Sean-Nós an chéad lá ar riamh. An scéal ata san amhrán go tuigfidh daoine na scéalta sin agus an ghaeilge atá iontú chomh maith. Tá sean ghaeilge ceart sna hamhrán seo, agus tá an ghaeilge á chailleadh againn agus tá sé tacháchtach go dtuigeann daoine an ghaeilge atá san amhrán chomh Maith.

English Translation:

J: Could you describe your personal background with sean-nós singing and how you first learned it?

G: My personal background is that I suppose I grew up and sean-nós was just part of my life. Growing up listening to my family, the Grealish family, and just across the road from me my aunt Síle Ní Fhlathárta lived there and she gave me great inspiration as I was growing up listening to her, as she was young and I was listening to her singing sean-nós and I suppose she maybe had a slightly more modern style with sean-nós as well, and also watching, watching the sean-nós journey that she had as well, taking part in the Oireachtas and I suppose watching all the stages that were involved in the Oireachtas and how difficult it was for her to win the Corn Uí Riada and all those competitions, so she gave me inspiration when I was growing up because it is not easy to be singing sean-nós and just to have that confidence to do it and to continue on with it.

J: Did you have a teacher?

G: I attended classes with Máire Pheter over in Scoil na Tulach. I started sean-nós classes when I was six years old. I had a teacher and she taught me a lot of songs, there is a kind of common question about sean-nós, can it be taught or is it inside you naturally. I attended classes until I was about twelve or thirteen and then I stopped going to classes, but it is kind of difficult to work that out, whether sean-nós can be taught or whether it is naturally in you, but I am very grateful to Máire Pheter that I had her as a teacher and that she taught me a few songs myself, I am very grateful to her and happy with her.

J: What role did being from Connemara or growing up in the Gaeltacht play in shaping your musical identity?

G: Definitely it did, because I suppose all the festivals are in Connemara, you also have to understand when you are living in Connemara there are these schemes available only in Connemara. In Connemara only there are grants provided so that these music festivals can exist and all the local competitions can be available. So that had a big effect on me and me growing up in Connemara and on sean-nós. I suppose people outside the Gaeltacht do not have much knowledge of sean-nós singing, people would not really have much knowledge of that style of singing. So definitely if I was not living in the Gaeltacht I would not have sean-nós. It was very important.

J: What is authentic to you in sean-nós?

G: With sean-nós, people think that sean-nós needs to be very beautiful and that you would have a lovely voice because that is what is put into you when you are listening to someone who is singing on the television or listening to someone on the radio. When you are listening to someone singing a song you want to listen to a nice sweet voice but if you want real sean-nós it is, I do not know the word for "raw", it is, it is okay to make mistakes, there is no need that everything is perfect, there is no need that everything is exactly right, it is supposed to be natural. There was sean-nós there, people outside, singing sean-nós when they were working on the farm, they were singing sean-nós when they were out on the boat, that is the type of song that it is, songs about people being on the boat going out to Aran, bringing things to Aran. People used to sing sean-nós in a natural place, a place that was outside and I do not feel it is right that singing would be perfect when you are singing sean-nós, you should feel that outside element, that nature when you are listening to sean-nós.

J: When you think about sean-nós, what expresses that Irishness to you?

G: First of all I suppose because it is in our own national language, it is in Irish. There are many different styles, there are ballads, there are many songs and styles of music, genres of music from other countries, but there is no sean-nós in any other country except our own country. It is worth it, it is only in the Gaeltacht areas, if you would go to a Gaeltacht that is down in

Cork or up in Donegal the sean-nós there is different from the sean-nós that we have here. So it is very Irish and very Gaelic, and the thing about sean-nós as well, even though the themes that are in the songs, they are often sorrowful, heartbreak and people dying and love that is not returned to you. There is the history of the country in sean-nós as well for example the famine and I suppose the way that the English treated us here in Ireland. You get a taste of history in sean-nós songs as well and that is only in the history of Ireland it is not in the history of other countries. So it is very important to have respect for sean-nós and to learn about the songs so that you will be able to learn about your own country as well. |

J: In your opinion, where is Irishness strongest in sean-nós, in the language, the voice, the singer, the place it comes from, or the social context around it?

G: Definitely it relates to the social context for example the way that people lived at that time, it is very important that you put that story across in the songs or when you are listening to sean-nós, that you would get a sense of the social context that was in the area at that time. The voice is very important as well and that the person makes the song come across in a way that is correct and that there is strong sean-nós in the person who is singing the song, that there is ornamentation in the song and that you are singing in a traditional style as well and definitely the presentation, the presentation is extremely important, the voice but there is no need that everything is perfect or anything like that but it is very important that you put the story of the song across and the social culture and the social history that was in the country at that time, to put that across as well. |

J: How does sean-nós fit into Irish cultural identity today and has it changed in your opinion?

G: Sean-nós is changing, it has changed a lot over many years. Take for example sean-nós fifty years ago, it was natural, if you would hear someone long ago talking about sean-nós they would be saying that you learned sean-nós within the family. Long ago people would go from house to house in the winter and they would be sharing stories with each other, “óicheanta airneáin” was the name that was on those. They would be sharing stories and sharing songs with each other and oral tradition and old stories like that, that is the thing about sean-nós, it is stories you are sharing but in the form of a song and long ago people would sing sean-nós inside in the house within the family, sitting beside the fire that is the way that people learned sean-nós long ago. That was the only way that sean-nós was passed on but in my own opinion sean-nós was a bit damaged maybe around 30 years ago until recently, I think the style of sean-nós maybe that people were trying to be too perfect, trying to sing sean-nós to win competitions or to be on stage and even myself if I am in that situation if I am singing a sean-nós song on stage, if I am going to be on television I do not want to make any mistakes. I am trying that everything would be done correctly, I am trying that I would be putting across the best image of myself but that is not sean-nós. You are supposed to be in the correct setting, sean-nós is to be presented within the family in those house gatherings. So there have been many changes with sean-nós over fifty years, over sixty years. We are turning back again to the house gatherings, there are many of them again in the area here in Connemara. People are singing in houses, people are singing in pubs, coming together and that is what sean-nós is about that you are sharing the story, that you are sharing the tradition and that is the thing about sean-nós it is natural and it is not supposed to be shared up on a stage. Lights are not supposed to be shining down on you and the Oireachtas is a good thing and the Oireachtas is very special to me and to my own family the Grealish family, they won many Oireachtas prizes it is extremely important to us, especially the Corn Uí Riada. I feel that it takes from the nature sometimes, the nature that belongs to sean-nós, that it is supposed to be natural and to make mistakes and there is no need that everything would be perfect when you are singing sean-nós. |

J: Who does sean-nós belong to and what is your role in that tradition?

G: I think that it belongs to all of us here in Connemara, there is no need for everyone to sing sean-nós, it puts responsibility on us, well myself as a sean-nós singer and I am teaching sean-nós here in Connemara. I teach the songs locally and I teach, I have fifty children that are registered in my classes and maybe out of those classes only two or three will be singing publicly in the future. The role that I have I think is that the amount that I know to teach to the children, the story that belongs to the songs to teach to the children and if they only learn the story and that they are able to bring that with them, to teach it to someone else, I think that is a perfect thing in itself. There is no need that they will be singing sean-nós out of this but that they understand what the song “Amhrán Mhuinse” is about and what “Trá Bhán” is about and that they will be able to tell that to their own children there is no need that they will be able to teach it as a song but that they will be able to teach

the story to children in the future and to bring it forward. That is what sean-nós singing is, it is stories that are in it and they are being brought forward from generation to generation in the future. So in my own opinion it belongs to all of us and we can share it. The role that I have is to share them with the children that attend my classes and if one or two sing in the future I am happy.

J: How would you describe sean-nós to someone who has never heard it?

G: Basically a sean-nós song has no accompaniment, there is no music with it. There is a lot of ornamentation when you are singing, in the songs slowly, you put across, many of them are sad, you sing them sadly. It is very important when you are singing sean-nós that you show, if it is a sad song, that you show those emotions while you are singing and that you put them across. Because again it is a story that is there, that is the main thing that I am trying to explain to someone who has never heard sean-nós before. You can put music with it but in my own opinion it is better to leave the music out and leave it nice and simple because really it is a story that you are sharing but it is a song that it is.

J: What makes sean-nós different from other types of singing?

G: There is no accompaniment in sean-nós singing, usually there is no accompaniment with it. Not many people are singing sean-nós. What else is different, if you are singing a sean-nós song it belongs to your own area or another Gaeltacht area and it belongs to the history or culture of that place. The same thing can be said about other songs but sean-nós teaches a lot to us about the way that life maybe was long ago or the way that people lived and the heartbreak that people had.

J: What helped sean-nós stay important for people across the generations?

G: Sean-nós teaches a lot to us about people and the way that people lived in the country long ago, that is extremely important with sean-nós and that is the reason that it is important to understand that difference that storytelling is also part of it. Take for example the song “Amhrán Mhuínse

J: What is your opinion about instrumental accompaniment with sean-nós?

G: I would not do it, because sean-nós singing is its own style. There are many other styles of music and songs and if you want to sing another Irish song or if you want to sing an English song you can sing it with music but with sean-nós I think it should be left nice and simple and natural and to sing it nicely and that is the way that I would sing it. To stay with the nature and to stay with the tradition in relation to sean-nós singing. Maybe people do it with harmonies and things like that, that is nice as well, it would not be as modern as putting music with it but in my own opinion to leave it nice and simple like that because that is the way that it was long ago and the correct way to leave it.

J: Do you see sean-nós being spread online and if so what do you think about that?

G: It is lovely to see sean-nós online, it is beautiful the platforms that sean-nós is getting and to be seen, but we have to be very careful, when you hear sean-nós online that the correct version of the song is what you are hearing or learning. Take for example a young person, even myself, I am a teacher who teaches sean-nós singing, I give my own version to the children that attend my classes, they are preparing for Oireachtas competitions and then they go home and maybe they are practising the song at home and they go online sometimes because that is the way that young children learn today. So they go online but sometimes they get a version that is not correct, so it is very important when you are listening to sean-nós online or if you are relying on sean-nós online that the person who is singing the song is singing it correctly, that the words are correct and that they do not have verses from other songs. So I like on one hand that those platforms are there for sean-nós but you have to be very careful as well that you know that the version is correct if you yourself are learning.

J: How would you balance tradition and creativity?

G: I do not know how to balance it. You can be creative with sean-nós, definitely you can in terms of the sound of the song, to add ornamentation in places maybe that another singer did not do it. Definitely you can do things like that with sean-nós, there is nothing wrong with singing sean-nós and having music either because that will give encouragement to younger people to take up sean-nós, there is nothing wrong with having accompaniment and singing with harmonies and things like that because you are giving encouragement to young people. I suppose many of the young generation that are now singing sean-nós saw people singing at the Oireachtas, they saw the glamour, those young people that were singing up on

stage and they looked beautiful and that encouraged them to sing sean-nós and that is the reason that they themselves are singing sean-nós. So there is nothing wrong with sean-nós as long as you keep it alive, that is the most important thing.

J: Do you think sean-nós changes naturally over time?

G: It definitely changes, yes, if you listen back to people that were singing 100 years ago from recordings that existed 100 years ago, the style of singing that they had was very sean-nós, very old and very raw, people are not singing like that anymore. There has been a lot of change, there are many singers now and they are sweet and they have beautiful voices and they are singing sean-nós as well. Even the place where people were singing long ago as I said earlier they were singing within the family, they were singing outside in the yard, they were singing on sailing boats. People now for the last 50 years have been singing on stages, in competitions and that changed sean-nós because people were trying to be perfect, they were trying not to make mistakes to satisfy judges or audiences and to attract people to concerts. People will not attend a concert if you are going to make mistakes and if you are going to sing the way people sang 60 to 100 years ago. So sean-nós has changed and now maybe in the last 20 years or even the last 5 years people are singing sean-nós with music. People are singing sean-nós with harmony and that is beautiful, I love listening to those songs because that is the way people like to listen now and it draws people into sean-nós and it is beautiful to hear. The thing that is beautiful is that the themes of sean-nós are not changing, you are still listening to the stories of sean-nós, the way Irish people were treated when the English were in the country, the heartbreak, you are listening to those same stories that were in the mouths of the people 100 to 200 years ago so that is what is special about sean-nós. Maybe the style is changing but the stories and the songs are staying the same.

J: How would you like to see sean-nós in the future?

G: I would love to see sean-nós still alive, I would like that people would see the importance that it has in our culture and that people would see, that people would hear the stories that are behind the songs and how sad and how difficult life was long ago. That is what is important to me about sean-nós, I would also love that the ornamentation style would still be with people when they are singing sean-nós and I suppose I would like that people would understand the way that people sang long ago as well when they were singing sean-nós, to listen back to the recordings that were there many years ago. That people would not be listening only to contemporary sean-nós but that there would be that mixture still in the mouth of the public and that it would be heard by people in the community. I love listening to young singers and the way that they sing sean-nós with music, with harmonies and all those things, and I love hearing it but I would also love that people would understand the ways that people sang long ago and that it is from that that sean-nós first came. The story that is in the song that people would understand those stories and the Irish language that is in them as well. There is old Irish proper in these songs and the Irish language is being lost by us and it is important that people understand the Irish that is in the songs as well.

Appendix B:

Máire Interview

J: Déan cur síos ar do chúlra pearsanta le hamhránaíocht ar an sean-nós agus cén chaoi a d'fhoghlaim tú í ar dtús?

M: Rugadh agus tógadh mé i ghaeltacht Rath Chairn mé, Rath Chairn city centre a thugann mudi ar ghaeltacht s'againne. D'fhás mudi suas leis na h-amhrán uilig thimpeall orainn agus and dream ba shean ag an am thar a bheith brodúil as muid nuair a bhain muid trial as amhrán nua agus ní raibh mise go maith ag canadh nuair a bhí mé níos óige, bhí mé actually cat agus chaith mé i bhfad niomaraca ama ag canadh agus an chéad amhrán a bhí agam ná dtionta chonamara agus mé ag éisteach le CD, Ríona Ní Chonghaile, cé go raibh an t-úafás amhrán oíche thart ach fós bhí daidí s'againne bhí fios aige, ok, suífidh muis síos í, beidh sí ag éisteach leis an amhrán céanna arís is arís, like, ní bheadh foid ag múinteoir dhó sin. Ach bhí ag an CD, agus bhí mé mar, 'ag fágáil...HUHHH...go na HUHHH..., like bhí mé cat ag fás aníos, ach ansin bhí an dream ba shine that a bheith bródúil

asam agus spreagadar muid i gcónaí. Bhíodar íontach just an- an- mhaith díreach tacú linn i gcónaí. Is anois is íontach an rud é, ansin nuair a théann an ghlúin is óige anois, nuair a théann siadsan a mó go mbíonn na focla againne anois ag glúin s'againne go bhfuil muide in ann tacú leosan, agus is íontach an rud é sin go bhfuil an sleamhrá seachada seo fós ag fáil agus tá muid fós ag cur leis na hamhrán, agus ag cur leis an sleamhra seo agus an neart i lúb sleamhra seachada ionas go mbeidh na hamhrán ag an chéad ghlúin eile.

J: Céard is brí le “barántúlacht” sa sean-nós dhuit mar amhránaí?

M: Airím go bhfuil go leor barántúlachta sna hámhrán seo agus go bhfuil go leor daonachas sna hamhrán Sean-Nós mar gheall nach mbeadh daoine fadó, seans nach bhfuil fós, daoine in ann cur síos a dhéanamh ar a gcuid mothúcháin ar a gcuid deacrachtaí ach trí mheall na hamhránaíochta bhíodar in ann agus tá siad in ann anois, cur síos a dhéanamh ar an méid atá dhul ar aghaidh agus fíú ansin, seans dhá mbeadh mise ag streachailt le rud éicint, seans nach mbeadh ortsa amhrán a chuma faoin rud sin mar seans gur chuma amhrán faoi na céadta nó na mílte blian ó shin agus gur chas an céadta nó na mílte duine an tamhrán sin agus ansin go bhfuil, tá an daonacht le cloisteáil ann, tá grá croí béidir nó tá gleondar ní hé go bhfuil dar uilig in isle brí i gcónaí ach is íontach an rud é go bhfuil an bharántúlacht le cloisteail sna hamhrán agus go mealann sé sin muid agus go spreagann sé sin muid freisin, díreach tabhairt fuithi.

J: Nuair a smaoiníonn tú ar shean-nós, Céard é an rud a go mbreathainn sé an-éireannach dhuit?

M: Airím agus mise i mbun amhránaíochta ar an Sean-Nós, go bhfuil amhrán á rá agam ach cé gur liomsa an t-amhrán seo, is le mo mhamó an tamhrán seo, is le mo shean-mháthair an tamhrán seo, coinním i gcónaí ar na mná go háirithe ach

is linne uilig na hamhrán seo agus cé go bhfuil namná seo agus na fir seo, cé go bhfuil siad uilig imithe ar shlí na firinne, tá d ar uilig beo arís agus mise

á rá an amhrán seo agus tá dar son le cloisteáil agus mise á rá na namhrán seo agus cuirim aithne orthu agus aithne thar a bheith pearsanta orthu ós rud é go bhfuil a gcuid focal ag teacht ó mo bhéal agus ní shé go bhfuil mudi ag shiftáil ná tada ach tá sé thar a bheith gear. Is breá liom an rud é sin gur féidir liomsa bheith ag canadh rud éicint agus mé ag streachalt le rud éicint is béidir nach beidh sin scéal an amhrán ach béidir go dtagann sé le téama an amhrán seo agus go bhfuil mé ansin díreach ag canadh liom mar a bhí na mná agus na fir romhan ag canadh leo agus tá sé spéisiúil.

J: An féidir leat plé a dhéanamh ar an gcaoi a n-oireann an sean-nós do féinúlacht chultúrtha na hÉireann inniu, agus cén chaoi atá sé athraithe, má tá sé athraithe ar chor ar bith, ón am atá thart?

M: Fadó, fadó in Éireann ní raibh ann ach na hamhrán lenár gcuid scéalta a roinnt leis an chéad glúin eile. Ní raibh againn ach na hamrán lenár gcuid staire a roinnt leis an chéad ghlúin eile, agus chum muid na hamhrán seo ní raibh muid i mbun pigin, ní raibh aon duine á scríobh ag an am agus dhá bhrí sin nochta muid ár gcroí sna hamhrán Sean-Nós. Roinn muid ár gcuid scéalta, ár gcuid staire, ár gcuid mothúcháin sna hamhrán seo, dhá bhrí sin cé go bhfuil muid uilig thar a bheith litríthe anois, cé go bhfuil léamh agus scríobh againne uilig an chuid is mó, ní chílceann sé sin nach bhfuil tabhách ag baint leis na hamhrán Sean-Nós seo san lá atá inniu ann. Airím go bhfuil níos mó tabhách ag baint leis na hamhrán Sean-Nós sero mar gheall go léireann na hamhrán seo linn go mbeadh ár sinsir fadó ag streachailt leis na rudaí, leis na mothúcháin céanna a bhfuil muide streachailt le inniu. Béidir nach bhfuil iad sin á dhul viral sa lá atá inniu ann, béidir nach bhfuil siad ag fáil hate comments, nó hibí cén rud ach theasta uathu go mneadh meas acu sa bpobal, theasta uathu go mbeadh cairde acu nó seans go mbeadh clann acu nó go mbeidh siad i ngrá. Bhí na míonta céanna acu, fadó fadó in

nÉireann go dtí le dearnaí agus sa lá atá inniu ann, má thuigeann tú leat mé. So, dhá bhrí sin, airím go nascann na hamhrán Sean-Nós le chéile muid, lenár sinsir ach ansin le chuile dhuine mór thimpeall orainn mar is linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós agus ní héa go bhfuil díreach amhrán amháin ann agus sin é. Tá go leor leor leagannaí go aon amhráin amháin ann, fiú amhráin mhuínse nó dúin leog nó na hamhrán seo uilig, is iomaí leagan atá ann. Tá na leagannaí uilig ceart so , dhá bhrí sin, cuma cá as thú, cuma cén ghaeilge atá agat, cuma cén caighdeáin gaeilge atá agat, is cuma is leatsa na hamhrán Sean-Nós. Is linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós, agus tá sé de dhúlgas orainn iad a roinnt lena chéile agus a bheith bródúil as iad.

J: Cé leis a mbaineann an sean-nós dar leat, agus cén chaoi a fheiceann tú do ról laistigh den traidisiún sin?

M: Airím gur linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós agus tá mé cuimhnú ar mo mhamó, ar mo dhaideó, ar mo dheifúir, ar mo neacht álainn, is linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós, is le muintir na gaeltachta na hamhrán Sean-Nós ach is le muintir na hÉireann na hamhrán Sean-Nós agus is le daoine a bhfuil suim acu san ghaeilge is leosan an Sean-Nós is le daoine a tháinig ar amhrán Sean-Nós éicint ar Spotify trí thimpiste, is leosan na hamhrán Sean-Nós, so dhá bhrí sin, ní dolam go bhfuil ‘elitism’ i gceist anseo, is linn uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós agus má tá amhrán Sean-Nós againn tá sé de dhúlgas orainn iad a roinnt leis an chéad ghlúin eile ach leis na glúinte thart orainn agus lenár gcairde is le daoine eile lena iad a mhealla isteach , so dhá bhrí sin, airím gur linne uilig na hamhrán Sean-Nós is ní hé go bhfuil pass ar leith ag duine amháin is nách bhfuil cead isteach ag duine eile, is linne uilig iad.

J: Cén chaoi a chuirfeá síos ar an sean-nós do dhaoine nár chuala riamh cheana é?

M: Níl a fhios agam an bhféadfadh cur síos a dhéanamh ar an Sean-Nós gan amhrán a rá dhóibh, ionas go dtiocfadh díos, níl a fhios agam, is braitheann sé, braitheann sé ar an amhrán, braitheann sé ar stíl an amhránaí, tá an t-úfás i gceist leis sin mar fós tá a fhios agam go gcreideann daoine an, tá a fhios agam go gcreideann daoine gur amhránaíocht aonar atá ann agus amhránaíocht aonar amháin agus sin sin, agus thar cinn. Creditear go bhfuil rialachaí baint leis agus ansin tá daoine eile nách gcreideann go bhfuil rial ar bith baint leis agus tá an bheirt acu seo ceart. Dhá bhrí sin, airím go bhfuil ,ós rud é go bhfuil an traidisiún thar a bheith osclaí agus siar-athraitheach, dhá bhrí sin, tá sé an-an deacair cur síos a dhéanamh ar an Sean-Nós, ach deirfim dhá rud é go raibh orm, gurb é focla ár sinsear ag teacht amach as mo bhéal, sin an chaoi a gcaoineaoín mise ar na hamhrán Sean-Nós. Ní bhím i mbun cumadaóireachta, tá sé an-éasca dhom é sin á rá, seans go bhfuil amhrán á gcuma faoi láthair a bhéas ag tíocht ó mo bhéal amach anseo. Ach faoi láthair is amhrán, is focla mo shinsear ag tíocht nó á geraobhscaoiladh agamsa, rud éicint filleanta mar sin.

J: Céard a cheapann tú a dhéanann sean-nós difriúil ó chineálacha eile amhránaíochta?

M: Airím nach bhfuil an bhfeidhm uilig ar chumas amhránaíochta an amhránaí, má thuigeann tú leat mé. Tá go leor amhrán oíche Sean-Nós thart agus beidh mé cancelled á rá é seo, ach ní héa go bhfuil siad iomlán bínn, ní héa go bhfuil siad dóchreidte amach, ní sheasadh mé go pearsanta san sneachta ach tá scoth na scéalaíochta acu, má thuigeann tú leat mé, dhá bhrí sin, tá scéal san amhrán ach ansin scaipeann scaití ansin, níl tús, lár is deireadh baint leis an amhrán.

J: Cén fáth a gcheapann tú go leanann sean-nós air, ar dul i bhfeidhm ar dhaoine fiú i ndomhan chomh nua-aimseartha sin?

M: Tá macalach san amhrán Sean-Nós, tá macala ón am atá caite san amhrán Sean-Nós, ach tá na mothúcháin céanna san amhrán Sean-Nós ó na mílte is na céadta bliain ó shin is a bhíonn orainn an lá atá inniu ann. Dhá bhrí sin, ní héa go bhfuil siad go hiomlán scartha uainn is nách bhfuil aon bhaint ag na hamhrán Sean-Nós seo linne, ach anuas ar sin airím mar gheall seans go bhfásann daoine

aníos agus amhrán á rá ag duine éicint sa mbaile nó ag mamó, nó ag daideó, nó ag duine éicint san pobal ansin airím go dtagann sé ansin, go dtagann an lá, seans go bhfuil gá orthu cinne a dhéanamh an bhfuil mise

ag iarraidh na hamhrán seo a fhoghlam nó a bhfuil mé chun iad a roinnt leis an chéadghlúin eile, airím go mbíonn , go dtagann an lá agus níl a fhios agam an lá mór a bhíonn ann i saol

chuile dhuine ach airím mar gheall go rud idir ghlúineacha atá ann seans go ndearna duine amháin cinne, cupla glúin siar na hamhrán a roinnt leis an chéad ghlúin eile agus ansin go nádúrtha chuir an duine eile orthu agus choinnigh and duine eile orthu is choinnigh an duine eile orthu dhá bhrí sin, thosaigh an sleamhra seachadta seo á fás , go laethúil agus á scrios go laethúil , má thuigeann tú leat mé. Airím chomh maith le sin, go bhfuil cúis ag teastáil ó chuile dhuine san lá atá inniu ann, rud éicint a dhéanamh. Tá muid an-fhillte agus bartaíonn muid , oh ní íosfadh mé é sin níos mó oh ní dhéanfadh mé é seo, siopadóireacht san áit seo níos mó, tá muid an-fhillte agus tagann sé sin leis an cinneadh a fhoghlam mé é nó a dhéarfá mé na hamhrán Sean-Nós leis an chéad ghlúin eile nó a bhfágfadh mé é. Dtuigeann tú leat mé? So, airím go dtuigeann daoine nách bhfuil ionann ach lúb amháin sa sleamhra seachada, seans go bhfuil daoine eile ann nách bhfuil suim ar bith sa sleamhra seachada seo, like tá mise obsessed leis, bíonn mise i gcónaí ag smaoineadh ar seo so béidir go bhfuil daoine eilse agus is cuma sa tioc leo, ach ní thuigim é shin, so sin é, airím go bhfuil spás ag na hamhrán Sean-Nós sa lá atá inniu ann agus go mealtar isteach daoine i spás tairseachúil, i spás ársa ach i spás thar a bheith daona, mar gheall go bhfuil na mothúcháin céanna is scéaltaí céanna le cloisteáil.

J: Céard a spreag tú chun amhránaíocht sean-nóis a roinnt ar ardáin ghearra ar an idirlíon?

M: Bhí mé fhéin is mo dheirfiúir Étáin, an chéad ghlúin eile, bhíodh muid ag canadh linn i gcónaí so fás aníos i Rath Chairn, city centre, bheadh muid i gcónaí canadh lena chéile agus ag cur isteach ar chomórtaí cosúil le féile na mí nó oireachtas na samhna agus bhrúthach Étáin i gcónaí, bhuaigh Étáin i gcónaí, agus dhéanfadh sí cleachtadh le bheith fairáilte di agus tá glóir thar a bheith bím aici, is breá liom mo dheirfiúir ach níor thaitin sé liom go ndearna daoine comporáid idir adrainn, níor thaitin é sin liom. Dhá bhrí sin, thosaigh muid ag canadh lena chéile, thosaigh mise ag déanamh cómhcheol le Étáin, ní raibh daoine in ann idirdhealú a dhéanamh níos mó agus ansin thosaigh muid ag cur na físeáin seo ar an líne le chéile is bhí an- t-am, bíonn an t-am againn ag canadh le chéile ar líne agus ansin bím ag tasiteal go ríolta agus ní bhíonn mo dheirfiúir Étáin liom, dhá bhrí sin, má bhíonn mé ag canadh liom sure déanfadh mé tiktok nó instagram nó rud éicint, sin é, like níl séthar a bheith ‘deep’. Is breá liom na hamhrán Sean-Nós agus ní héa go cloisfeá Máire Ni Churraoin a riamh ag casadh ‘Someone like you’ le Adele, like psh no way, ach ar an laghad leis na hamhrán Sean-Nós airím go bhfuil, ní héa go bhfuil an caighdeán níos ísle tá caighdeán an-ard ann, ach mar gheall go tradisiúin thar a bheith fáiltiúil atá ann ní gá orm a bheith foirfe amach is amach agus mé á rá na namhrán seo.

J: An raibh teannas ort riamh idir meas a bheith agat ar an traidisiún agus do chlaonta cruthaitheach féin a leanúint?

M: Bhfuil s’agat céard agus mé ag fás aníos chiall mise go raibh ormsa an tamhrán a rá díreach mar mo sheanuncail Darach Ó Guthain nó shíl mé go raibh orm an tamhrán a rá díreach cosúil le Iníon NíFhlártharta, mo mhúinteoir amhránaíochta agus mé fás aníos, bíonn a shíl mé, ach ansin spreagú mé le mo twist féin a chuir ar mo hamhrán is ní héa go bhfuil mé ag dul crazy, like níl mé ag cur majors nó minors insteach ann na tada ach airím ansin go nádúrtha nach féidir leat carbon copy a dhéanamh go an amhrán, má thuigean tú leat mé, mar fiú, má fhoglamim amhrán an tseachtain seo beidh an tamhrán sin sách cosúil ach ní bheidh sé díreach mar a chéile lesi an amhrán céanna a

déarfais mé i gceann bliana, nó leis an amhrán céanna a déarfais mé agus mé croí briste agus an tamhrán céanna á rá agam agus rím agus gleondar ar mo chroí. Beidh an tamhrán éagsúil mar gheall ar mo chuid amhránaíochta má thuigeann tú leat mé agus anuas ar sin, is iomaí leagann go chuile amhrán éagsúil a mhaireann, dhá bhrí sin bhí a fhios agam, oh bhí daoine a goid, níl a fhios agam an féidir goid a rá, ach bhí daoine, déarfadh mudi goid, véarsaí ó amhrán éagsúla agus á gcuir isteach in amhrán eile, seans nach raibh aon bhaint acu lena chéile ach binn a rinne siad bhíodar breá sásta le sin agus bhí an ceart sin acu. DHÁ BHRÍ SIN, AIRÍM AGUS MÉ FÁS ANÍOS ní héa gur dúirú a riamh liom ach díreach gur thuig mé, oh is féidir liomsa cuir leis na hamhrán seo, is féidir liomsa cuir leis is tháinig sé go nádúrtha agus tháinig sé sin leis an tradisiúin é fhéin.

J: An bhfuil frithoirí difriúil déanta ag lucht féachana ar líne ná ag lucht féachana beo traidisiúnta?

M: Tá sé iomlán éagsúil a bheith ag canadh leat agus lucht éisteachta ós do comhar, is breá liom é fhéin mar gheall agus mise i mbun cheolchoirm níl fágfadh mise go dtí go mbeidh véarse nó cúrfa nó go mbeidh rud éicint ar eolas acu. Níl aon suim agamsa a bheith canadh ionas go mbeidh a fhios ag chuile dhuine go bhfuil máthair iníon churraoin dóchreidte, ní shin atá uaim, tá mise ag iarraidh go mbeidh na hamhrán seo Sean-Nós ag an chéad ghlúin eile agus ag an dream atá suite ós mo comhar agus mé sa seomra leo, feicim agus tuigim na hamhrán ag dul i bhfeidhm orthu. Tá sé sin i bhfad níos speisialta ná ó milliún view fáilte agam ar an rud seo, like níl airím é shin ionam fhéin.

J: An bhfaca tú níos mó spéis ag lucht féachana níos óige nó lucht féachana nach labhraíonn Gaeilge sa sean-nós ar líne?

M: Airím go bhfuil an- suim ag an dream óg sna hamhrán Sean-Nós ar líne anois mar gheall go bhfuil sé le chloisteáil ar tiktok agus ar instagram, níl mise ar snapchat so níl a fhios agam, ach airím mar gheall go bhfuil an oiread, tá an túafás ag teacht aníos ar an scáileáin anois. Feiceann siad rudaí éagsúla, go leor nuacht tá an túafás ag teacht aníos, agus is íontach an rud anois go bhfuil na hamhrán Sean-Nós ag teacht aníos freisin. Tá an deis acu ansin éisteacht leis an Sean-Nós nó coineáil orthu ag scrolláil. Is íontach an run é sin mar gheall go bhfuil an Sean-Nós ag tíocht acu, sa chaoi ar mhaith leo go dtiocfadh cúrsaí an tsaol acu, má thuigeann tú leat mé. Is spéisúil an run é sin, agus fiú bíonn mé ag léamh na comments ansin ar líne agus daoine éagsúla agus béidir scéal an saol á mbraca síos acu agus is spéisúil an rud é mar gheall go bhfuil na sean daoine, níl a fhios agam ar féidir liom é sin á rá, ach béidir dream níos sine ar facebook agus ansin dream níos óige ansin ar instagram agus an dream is óige, dar liomsa agus tá a fhios agam go dtagann siad sáil ar a chéileach ansin ar tiktok. Is spéisúil an rud é, na hamhrán seo dhul i bhfeidhm ar na glúinte éagsúla, ach is íontach an rud é go bhfuil na hamhrán Sean-Nós á gcloisteáil ag an dream óg ach go hairid, mar gheall gur leosan na hamhrán, le chuile dhuine na hamhrán Sean-Nós, ach is leosan na hamhrán Sean-Nós le cur leo agus len iad a roinnt leis an chéad ghlúin eile a thiofadh ina dhiaidh nuair ná mbeidh muid thart.

J: Cén chuma a bheidh ar shean-nós sa chéad ghlúin eile, dar leat?

M: Níl a fhios agam cén chuma a bhéas ar an Sean-Nós, agus an chéad ghlúin eile i mbun fuaimdeoireachta leo ach airím go fileann chuile dhuine ar an tradisiúin go réir a chéile. Béidir go mbeidh siadsan níos tradisiúnta ná muide, béidir go mbeidh nó béidir go mbeidh siad níos nuálaí ná muide agus béidir go gcuirfidh siad tuille comhcheol leis na hamhrán seo nó beidir go gcuirfidh siad tuille beats leis na hamhrán nó jazz nó hibi cén rud is tá daoine i mbun na hoibre sin faoi láthair agus is íontach an rud é sin is béidir go dtiocfadh fás ar sin agus ní droch rud é sin nó béidir, bhfuil a fhios agat céard, tá mé ag súil, tá súil le dia go mbeidh mé thart, ach tá súil le dia agam go mbeidh mé thart leis an chéad ghlúin eile a fheiceáil agus iad i mbun nuálaíochta agus iad i mbun cruthaitheachta agus

cuid acu béidir ag filleadh ar an tradisiúin cuid acu ag cur leis ach fad is atá an tradisiúin beo ní hé go bhfuil mo chead uathu ach níl mhiste liom, fad is go bhfuil na hamhrán Sean-Nós á rá, thar cinn.

English Translation:

Máire Interview (English Translation)

J: Describe your personal background with sean-nós singing and how you first learned it?

M: I was born and raised in the Gaeltacht of Rath Chairn, Rath Chairn city centre we call our Gaeltacht. We grew up with all the songs around us and the older generation at the time were very proud of us when we tried a new song and I was not good at singing when I was younger, I was actually cat and I spent a very long amount of time singing and the first song I had was *Dtonnta Chonamara* and I was listening to a CD, Ríona Ní Chonghaile, even though there were loads of songs around, but still our dad knew, okay, we will sit her down, she will be listening to the same song again and again, like, a teacher would not have patience for that. But the CD did, and I was like, “ag fágáil... HUHHH... go na HUHHH...” like I was cat growing up, but then the older generation were proud of me and they always encouraged us. They were really just very very good, just always supporting us. And now it is a wonderful thing, then when the younger generation now go, when they grow up, that our words now, our generation, that we are able to support them, and that is a wonderful thing that this chain of passing on is still growing and we are still adding to the songs, and adding to this chain and the strength in the chain of passing on so that the songs will be with the next generation.

J: What does “authenticity” mean in sean-nós to you as a singer?

M: I feel that there is a lot of authenticity in these songs and that there is a lot of humanity in sean-nós songs because people long ago, maybe still now, people were not able to describe their feelings, their difficulties, but through the medium of singing they were able, and they are able now, to describe what is going on. And even then, maybe if I was struggling with something, maybe you would not have to compose a song about that thing because maybe a song was composed about it hundreds or thousands of years ago and hundreds or thousands of people sang that song and then there is, the humanity can be heard in it, maybe there is love of the heart or there is joy, it is not that we are all in low spirits always but it is a wonderful thing that the authenticity can be heard in the songs and that that attracts us and inspires us as well, just to go for it.

J: When you think about sean-nós, what is the thing that makes it look very Irish to you?

M: I feel when I am singing sean-nós, that I am saying a song but although this song is mine, this song is my grandmother’s, this song is my great-grandmother’s, I always think of the women especially but these songs belong to all of us and although these women and these men, although they have all gone to the way of truth, they are all alive again when I am saying this song and their sound is to be heard when I am saying these songs and I get to know them and to know them very personally because their words are coming from my mouth and it is not that we are shifting or anything but it is very close. I love that thing that I can be singing something and I am struggling with something and maybe that is not the story of the song but maybe it comes with the theme of this song and I am then just singing with myself as the women and the men before me were singing with themselves and it is interesting.

J: Can you discuss how sean-nós fits into Irish cultural identity today, and how it has changed, if it has changed at all, from the past?

M: Long, long ago in Ireland there was nothing but the songs to share our stories with the next generation. We had nothing but the songs to share our history with the next generation, and we

composed these songs, we were not writing, no one was writing them at the time and because of that we exposed our hearts in the sean-nós songs. We shared our stories, our history, our feelings in these songs, because of that although we are all very literate now, although most of us all have reading and writing, that does not mean that there is not importance attached to these sean-nós songs today. I feel that there is more importance attached to these sean-nós songs because these songs show us that our ancestors long ago were struggling with the same things, with the same feelings that we are struggling with today. Maybe those are not going viral today, maybe they are not getting hate comments, or whatever thing but they wanted to have respect in the community, they wanted to have friends or maybe to have a family or to be in love. They had the same desires, long long ago in Ireland up to recently and today, if you understand me. So, because of that, I feel that sean-nós songs connect us together, with our ancestors but then with every person around us because sean-nós songs belong to all of us and it is not that there is just one song and that is it. There are many many versions of one song, even *Amhrán Mhuinse* or *Dúin Leog* or all these songs, there are many versions. All the versions are correct so, because of that, no matter where you are from, no matter what Irish you have, no matter what standard of Irish you have, it does not matter, the sean-nós songs are yours. The sean-nós songs belong to all of us, and it is our duty to share them with each other and to be proud of them.

J: Who does sean-nós belong to, in your opinion, and how do you see your role within that tradition?

M: I feel that sean-nós songs belong to all of us and I am thinking of my grandmother, of my grandfather, of my sister, of my beautiful niece, the sean-nós songs belong to all of us, the sean-nós songs belong to the people of the Gaeltacht but the sean-nós songs belong to the people of Ireland and they belong to people who have an interest in Irish, sean-nós belongs to them, it belongs to people who came across some sean-nós song on Spotify by accident, the sean-nós songs belong to them. So because of that, I do not think that “elitism” is involved here, the sean-nós songs belong to all of us and if we have a sean-nós song it is our duty to share them with the next generation but with the generations around us and with our friends and with other people to attract them in, so because of that, I feel that the sean-nós songs belong to all of us and it is not that one person has a special pass and that another person is not allowed in, they belong to all of us.

J: How would you describe sean-nós to people who have never heard it before?

M: I do not know if I could describe sean-nós without singing a song to them, so that they would understand, I do not know, it depends, it depends on the song, it depends on the style of the singer, there is loads involved with that because still I know that people believe that, I know that people believe that it is solo singing and only solo singing and that is that, and well done. It is believed that there are rules attached to it and then there are other people who do not believe that there are any rules attached to it and both of these are correct. Because of that, I feel that because the tradition is very open and flexible, because of that, it is very very difficult to describe sean-nós, but I would say two

things if I had to, that it is the words of our ancestors coming out of my mouth, that is the way I feel about sean-nós songs. I am not composing, it is very easy for me to say that, maybe there is a song being composed at present that will be coming from my mouth in the future. But at present it is a song, it is the words of my ancestors coming or being broadcast by me, something returned like that.

J: What do you think makes sean-nós different from other types of singing?

M: I feel that all of the emphasis is not on the singing ability of the singer, if you understand me. There are many sean-nós singers around and I will be cancelled saying this, but it is not that they are completely sweet, it is not that they are unbelievable, I personally would not stand in the snow but they have the best storytelling, if you understand me, because of that, there is a story in the song but then sometimes it scatters, there is not a beginning, middle and end attached to the song.

J: Why do you think sean-nós continues to affect people, even in such a modern world?

M: There is an echo in the sean-nós song, there is an echo from the past in the sean-nós song, but there are the same feelings in the sean-nós song from thousands and hundreds of years ago as there are on us today. Because of that, it is not that they are completely separated from us and that these sean-nós songs have nothing to do with us, but on top of that I feel maybe because people grow up and a song is being said by someone at home or by a grandmother, or by a grandfather, or by someone in the community then I feel it comes then, that the day comes, maybe that they need to make a decision whether I want to learn these songs or whether I am going to share them with the next generation. I feel that there comes the day and I do not know if it is a big day in everyone's life but I feel because it is an intergenerational thing maybe one person made a decision, a few generations back, to share the songs with the next generation and then naturally the other person kept them going and the other person kept them going and the other person kept them going, because of that, this chain of passing on started to grow, daily and to be destroyed daily, if you understand me. I feel as well as that, that every person today needs a reason, to do something. We are very folded and we decide, oh I would not eat that anymore, oh I would not do this, shop in this place anymore, we are very folded and that comes with the decision will I learn it or will I say the sean-nós songs to the next generation or will I leave it. Do you understand me? So, I feel that people understand that there is only one link in the chain of passing on, maybe there are other people who have no interest at all in this chain of passing on, like I am obsessed with it, I am always thinking about this so maybe there are other people and they do not care at all, but I do not understand that, so that is it, I feel that there is space for sean-nós songs today and that people are attracted into a threshold space, into an ancient space but into a very human space, because the same feelings and same stories are to be heard.

J: What inspired you to share sean-nós singing on short platforms on the internet?

M: Myself and my sister Étaín, *An Chéad Ghlúin Eile*, we used to sing with ourselves always so growing up in Rath Chairn, city centre, we would always be singing with each other and entering competitions like Féile na Mí or Oireachtas na Samhna and Étaín always won, Étaín always won, and she would practice to be ready and she has a very sweet voice, I love my sister but I did not like that people compared us, I did not like that. Because of that, we started singing together, I started doing harmony with Étaín, people were not able to distinguish anymore and then we started putting these videos online together and we had great fun, we have fun singing together online and then I travel regularly and my sister Étaín is not with me, because of that, if I am singing with myself sure I would do TikTok or Instagram or something, that is it, like it is not very "deep"

. I love sean-nós songs and it

is not that you would ever hear Máire Ní Churraoin singing "Someone Like You" by Adele, like psh no way, but at least with sean-nós songs I feel that there is, it is not that the standard is lower there is a very high standard, but because it is a very welcoming tradition I do not have to be absolutely perfect when I am saying these songs.

J: Did you ever feel tension between respecting the tradition and following your own creative leaning?

M: Do you know what, when I was growing up I thought that I had to say the song exactly like my great-uncle Darach Ó Catháin or I thought that I had to say the song exactly like Iníon Ní Fhlatharta, my singing teacher when I was growing up, I used to think, but then I was encouraged to put my own twist on my song and it is not that I am going crazy, like I am not putting majors or minors in there or anything but I feel then naturally that you cannot make a carbon copy of the song, if you understand me, because even, if I learn a song this week that song will be fairly similar but it will not be exactly

the same as the same song that I will say in a year's time, or with the same song that I will say when I am heartbroken and the same song being said by me and rhyme and joy on my heart. The song will be different because of my singing, if you understand me and on top of that, there are many versions of every different song that live, because of that I knew, oh people were stealing, I do not know if you can say stealing, but people, we would say stealing, verses from different songs and putting them into another song, maybe they had no relation to each other but a tune they made, they were very happy with that and they had that right. Because of that, I feel growing up it is not that it was ever said to me but just that I understood, oh I can add to these songs, I can add to it and it came naturally and that came with the tradition itself.

J: Have audiences online reacted differently than traditional live audiences?

M: It is completely different to be singing with a listening audience in front of you, I love that myself because when I am doing a concert I would not leave until they know a verse or a chorus or that they know something. I have no interest in singing so that everyone knows that Máire Ní Churraoin is unbelievable, that is not what I want, I want these sean-nós songs to be with the next generation and with the people sitting in front of me and when I am in the room with them, I see and I understand the songs affecting them. That is much more special than a million views, I welcome that on the thing, like I do not feel that in myself.

J: Have you seen more interest from younger audiences or audiences who do not speak Irish in sean-nós online?

M: I feel that young people have great interest in sean-nós songs online now because it is to be heard on TikTok and on Instagram, I am not on Snapchat so I do not know, but I feel because there is so much, there is loads coming up on the screen now. They see different things, a lot of news, there is loads coming up, and it is a wonderful thing now that sean-nós songs are coming up as well. They have the chance then to listen to sean-nós or keep scrolling. That is a wonderful thing because sean-nós is coming to them, in the way they would like life matters to come to them, if you understand me. That is an interesting thing, and even I do be reading the comments then online and different people and maybe the story of their lives breaking down to them and it is interesting because the old people, I do not know if I can say that, but maybe an older group on Facebook and then a younger group then on Instagram and the youngest group, in my opinion and I know that they overlap with each other but then on TikTok. It is interesting, these songs affecting the different generations, but it is a wonderful thing that sean-nós songs are being heard by the young people especially, because the songs are theirs, sean-nós songs belong to everyone, but the sean-nós songs are theirs to add to and to share with the next generation that will come after when we will not be around.

J: What will sean-nós look like in the next generation, in your opinion?

M: I do not know what sean-nós will look like, and the next generation doing their sound-making, but I feel that everyone returns to the tradition gradually. Maybe they will be more traditional than us, maybe they will or maybe they will be more innovative than us and maybe they will put more harmony with these songs or maybe they will put more beats with the songs or jazz or whatever and there are people doing that work at present and that is a wonderful thing and maybe that will grow and that is not a bad thing or maybe, do you know what, I hope, God willing I will be around, but I hope to God that I will be around to see the next generation and them innovating and being creative and some of them maybe returning to the tradition, some of them adding to it but as long as the tradition is alive it is not that they need my permission but I do not mind, as long as the sean-nós songs are being sung, well done.

Appendix C:

Seamus and Caoimhe Interview - Seamus phone recording

J: I kind of have them break down into categories so like your background, Sean-Nós and Irish cultural identity. And then it kind of moves on to like Sean-Nós in general and maybe the future of Sean-Nós. And I kind of told you guys about my project anyways. I'm doing like a short form content series seeing if there's any way of like popularizing or modernizing Sean-Nós and Yeah, and you guys are brilliant candidates. So thank you so much for doing this.

S: It's a pleasure. It's a pleasure.

J: And also there's no right answers or anything. It's just your opinion. So you can say whatever you want and I'll obviously edit out things if you don't want them in there and stuff. So I'll start with saying can you guys tell me a bit about your background with Sean-Nós, how you guys both started learning it.

S: Yeah. So we're very, very lucky to be born in Connara like yourself. We were born into a very special region called Irisanneach, and there I suppose first and foremost we were born into a family that have kind of history of Sean-Nós singing and composing in Sean-Nós tradition. So it's in our blood first and foremost. Two of our great grand uncles were well known composers in our area. Micheal Bheirtle and Val Bheirtle Ó Donnachú or Michael Bheirtle is actually how he used to go by the English version. But yeah, they composed a lot of songs. One of them we have in our EP caisleáin an tsléibhe or on the Steamer, different songs that are kind of popular in the area. So. So that was kind of in the bloodline I suppose, if you want to put it that way. That sounds very regal but you know then our other kind of exposure to it and probably what was most instrumental in our kind of learning Sean-Nós and developing a grá for it was we went to school an ard here Scoil na harde here and na harde would have been very well known for some of the biggest channel singers like Johaney. He went to the same school as us, Josey Sheain Jack, Joe John Mac an Iomaire catríona Ní cheannaire bríd chiarán. I could literally go on for for ages about the amount of wealth of singers and songs and poetry and tradition that was in that area. So there is really where we got absolutely saturated with some of the most rich and most authentic culture that we could offered. So yeah, I don't know caoimhe, if you want to add, I don't want to do all the talking.

C: I suppose primary school as well as Seamus said our teacher in the younger classes was actually Bríd Ní Chiarán who is Joe éanna's great grandniece. So she. We kind of got to learn from the greats of the great. And we were so lucky. We spent an hour every day in school learning lyrics of songs. I think we learned amhrán mhuínse and the big ones when we were like four years old and learned the stories behind them as well. So having that as part of our schooling, it was as important as maths and English, Irish, all of those. I think that really benefited us growing up.

J: That's amazing. So when did you guys start performing as a duo?

S: So that was serendipitous. You take the Caoimhe.

C: It was kind of just during COVID really. Seamus had been doing his own thing with a couple of bands and different tours while I was still in secondary school. And then Covid kind of put. Put to that. And we were in the same house for months on end and got really bored and started singing.

Yeah, Seamus, maybe you can say a bit more about it.S: Yeah, like that. It was serendipitous. It wasn't planned at all, at all. Like Caoimhe said, I was off

doing music for a couple of years till Covid, and she was just fresh out of school. So we were kind of thrown into doing something for a television program at the time called Slí na mbiobliach. It was Carl Ó biblioch and his father Brendán. They were going around in a van. That was just before COVID actually. And they said to us, we'd love a Sean-Nós song, but we know that you sing together. Could

you do something? And Caoimhe and I have really varying vocal ranges. Like, Caoimhe got this really. Now in recent times, Caoimhe has really broadened her range. But at the time, let's say she's this really gorgeous tone, kind of deep and raspy. And she can also get a lot of head voice now, and it's gorgeous. But at the time, I'm saying she was that kind of color. And I was kind of, I suppose, on the higher end before I started getting older, my voice started getting deeper. So it wasn't compatible in terms of singing in unison. So the only kind of alternative we had was to sing in harmony. So we sang, as Caoimhe mentioned earlier, on the first song that I ever learned amhrán mhuinse on that program, and it was in harmony. And I remember thinking at the time, I was like, this is not something that's typical of the Connemara songs that we would have heard. And as well, I'd heard people kind of resist it. You know, I've heard. I'd heard people saying that the song should be left alone. And, you know, there shouldn't be harmony, there shouldn't be comhcheol or ceoluiris with it. It should just be the song and the singer. And I was thinking, Jesus Christ, this could go one of two ways. You go very well or really bad. We did that anyway, and that went down well. That was released in May, then of COVID that led on to another program, which is fleadh 2020. And again, I think we had like three days to arrange a song. So we did Eleanor na rúin for that one and for this one, we both wanted to take the melody, so we added a modulation. And that went down very well with people as well. So that's kind of what forced us into performing as a duo kind of full time after that. Sorry, really long winded story for that.

J: No, no, this is great. This is great. Thank you. So, you guys, I, I'm. I love that you said that. Because when it comes to traditional. You guys also tend to sing with some instruments, is that something you've always done or is this something new that's happened? How did you guys go about doing that?

S: Do you want to do that Caoimhe? All right. Well, she. So the both of us, I suppose first and foremost were singers when we were younger, but we were very fortunate to be instrumentalists as well. So we were exposed to both things, but both things were very separate when we were younger, so. So I suppose the instruments just lend us more color, more. More methods, more kind of slíeannaí, more kind of pathways to express emotion and color in things and percussion and stuff like that. Just ways to make the arrangements different. So, yeah, first and foremost, vocal arrangement is what we loved doing first. And that's what we feel most comfortable doing. And that's where we find most expression. But yeah, I suppose just given that we were trained in various different instruments growing up as well, it just gave us a few more tools in our toolbox to. To add to the stories and the songs.

C: I think with like the slower songs, I think it's. It's good to be able to do those with just two voices and they work really well. But when we started like gigging and doing like 40 minute sets, we needed a bit of variety as well. We wanted to do some more uptempo stuff. And I think that. And two voices can sometimes be really, really nice. But for like a full length set, the instruments kind of really helped kind of build those up and add more textures and Add more kind of to keep it interesting for the

audience as well, as well as ourselves. J: Yeah, no, so cool and so amazing to hear as well, because again, I just love the way that it's kind of

evolving and stuff. And I like that it's. It doesn't have to be just the voice. It's really cool to hear. So moving on to, like, Irish cultural identity. Very, like, big word. But when you think about Sean-Nós, what makes it feel distinctively Irish to you?

S: There's a few different things. I think the. The main one being the songs are so heavily rooted in the country, in the people, in things that happen there. You know, that's something very unique about Sean-Nós tradition, is that it seems. And this is changing as well. It seems to have become very rooted

in whatever area the songs are composed and they kind of stay there. So when we were growing up, all the songs we were learning were relevant to Connemara, to Irisannach. You know, it was mentioning people that lived in the same locality to us in the past. And then as you move around to different regions like Guidor or other gaeltacht regions around in Donegal or down to Cork, through the songs, you get to hear a lot about the people, their history, the relationships that were formed there, the events that took place, the tragedies that took place. You know, it's real kind of historic insight into the different regions. So I think that in and of its own kind of fiber, and the fact that the songs, they were never meant to be commercial. You know, they were never like, obviously it was a form of entertainment, but it wasn't. Songs were never written. Kind of like, oh, this sounds catchy. I'm gonna spread it around the country and it's gonna be heard. It was ways to deal with emotions and process different events and develop relationships and to preserve people and. And different events in lyric and in music for. For centuries. So I think that's something that makes me feel, ah, Jesus, that belongs to this place. And I'm so lucky to have tapped into that from a young age.

J: Yeah. Yeah. That's so cool. So talking about that Irishness that you feel in the Sean-Nós and the Irish identity, do you think it comes strongly from the language, the voice, the storytelling, or maybe the place you're singing it from, where do you think is the most important aspect of it?

C: Good question. I think probably all of the above. Like Seamus says there, like, it's a window into the past. Like our as we said before. Our great grand uncles, who we didn't know, wrote songs and about events that took place just in Kilkern over the road. And we got to see how they lived back then and how. What their everyday life was. You know, it's kind of like a time capsule. So, like, us being able to see that without having ever met them, we kind of feel like we know them and. And that just kind of gives, like, a connection to the area and to our family as well.

S: Yeah. [10:06] And to kind of custom and culture that was prevalent at the time. It's like, I studied linguistics, so I'm a huge linguistics nerd. So I would obviously act towards the language side of it. And not just that I don't think, like, I really don't mean it to be, like, exclusive. I don't mean, like, oh, you need to be perfect at your pronunciation. That's not the aspect of language I'm talking about at all. It's more so like the nuances, the. The. The poetry, the. The hyperbole, the metaphor. The way that they spoke about the world back then was so unique, and it's changed so much, even in like, two, three centuries. So I think that's such a kind of linguistic treasure to be able to kind of look back and see how they spoke and how it's so different to the way we. We see the world or the. The challenges or the kind of obstacles we face in the world. I think that is such an interesting part of it. Yeah. That informs my performance then, like, I'm thinking, Jesus, that's what they had to deal with. I. I'm fucking really well off in my little warm house here at the moment, you know,

J: That's so true. And like, talking about Sean-Nós in general, because obviously this is going to be posted, and there might be people who don't know. How would you describe Shamos singing to

someone who's never heard it before?C: That's good. Yeah. So, like, obviously the kind of basic definition and like, the kind of original

definition I suppose is that it's a solo, unaccompanied practice singing Gaeilge on your own again. The songs tell stories about what has happened before. It deals with, like, tragedies. It can tell about love songs. It's songs with people like. Like folk music as Gaeilge.

S: Yeah, yeah. An art form of the people that people share that is inclusive of every. Everybody who. Who lives within that society or who wants to become a part of that society as well. I think that's such an important part, is the accessibility to Seannós as an art form as well. I think there is a mindset or an interpretation out there that you need to be born into it or you need to have been raised in a Gaeltacht region or in Connemara, let's say, to get specific from our own background, that you need to have

been born and raised there. That there's a pedigree involved in Sean-Nós. And I don't think that should be the case. I think there's loads of people who have either ties familiarly to Ireland and the Irish language, or people who just have a GRA for all things Irish culture and that they should feel that it's accessible to them, you know?

J: Yeah, exactly. Yeah. That's what I mean. This is what the project's for. It's kind of bridging the gap because I feel like for people who want to get into their Irish culture, sometimes it gets lost in them thinking that it's just a Gaeltacht thing. Yes. Where, like, it used to be everyone's thing. It used to be all Irish people's things. So it's all about bridging gaps. So that's great that you said that. Yeah. And what is my next question? There's actually not much left, so we're actually flying through this. You guys are great at answering.

S: Sorry. I hope we're not getting ahead of ourselves or anything.

J: So in your experience, adding instruments to Sean-Nós when you guys sing, how does it affect the way audiences listen or understand channel singing, do you think?

C: Yeah. So we kind of see this a lot when we go abroad, to places that might never have heard channel singing before, or who understand the language, won't understand Gaeilge. A lot of what me and Seamus try to do with our harmonies or with our instrumental arrangements is try and tell the story through those things. And people have come up to us after the show who might have very broken English and will say, we didn't understand a word you were saying, but we felt all the emotions of the song. We knew what the song was about and it resonated with us. So we find that that kind of helps tell the story in places away from home.

S: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think that's kind of opening up to a point that I forgot to make earlier on when we're talking about the instruments, like, we try to be as intentional as possible without whatever elements we add. So first and foremost, with harmony, you know, that the harmony. The harmony tells the story so that if it's something that's very dark and Heavy that you add elements of dissonance and, like, kind of different intervals that really express what's going on in the lyric. And then furthermore that when you add in instrumentation that if you're striving for attention or a yearning in a song, that you could reflect that in whatever elements you add, whether it's percussion on a bow run or kind of chopping on a fiddle. And then if there's more of a love song situation going on or something that's much more shavenach and. Yeah. That you can achieve that as well. That everything is kind of thought out. Caoimhe knows, to her detriment, how particular I get about, like, if an element doesn't make sense to the story, I'm like, why the hell are we doing it? So that's. That's our kind of outlook as a pair when we come to arranging, like, everything has to make sense. Not to the detriment of the art.

Because I think you need to have freedom, too. J: Yeah, because I was gonna ask, how do you guys balance. Not taking it too far, I guess, or taking

way too much from Sean-Nós?

S: It's a really fine line, isn't it? Yeah. Yeah. I suppose that's why I think we need to have a purpose, because we try and we're trying to tell the story. And I think as long as you're sticking to that, as long as that's your main intention, as long as that's your goal, you can't really take it too far. I guess if you're just putting things for the sake of putting them in, then yes, of course. But if everything has a purpose and if everything is adding to the story that's being told, then I think you're kind of safe and that that's the unique part as well. Loads of different artists are so instrumental, like your own. By the way, I have to add, huge fan, first and foremost, of Midnight Summer Night. I was obsessed with that. I swear to God. I'm not just saying that, like, when. When you got onto it. That's cool. And then I've only literally, in the last few days, put two and two together that you're in Aniar. I've seen you see you coming up on Tik Tok. You're doing unreal, like, stunning arrangements. You doing class stuff.

J: So, like, such a happy accident.

S: I know. Isn't it great, though, when it works out that way?

J: We were doing it just do some pub gigs and then it took off. We're like, okay, well, it's happening now.

But you're like the likes, you know, are, you know, bláth na hóige. (Flower of Youth) Yeah. I could literally go on forever. Like, there's so many people in the Sean-Nós tradition and in Irish music creating such important music note and that are not afraid of. I think people are not afraid anymore of going too far. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know it's. It's a. It's a really delicate thing because I suppose sometimes you can commercialize the music in a certain way that makes it very lack a bit of content and fiber. But I. I just feel like the groups that are operating now at the moment have such great purpose, and they're bringing it into the 21st century because essentially, Sean-Nós is in the 21st century now, and it's been performed in other countries and it's coming into contact with other art forms. It's existing very much as a vibrant cultural art form. And I think the way that it evolves has to kind of show that and indicate that. So I think people are not afraid anymore to let it live in the 21st century. It doesn't need to stay in the past. It can actually be brought into the future as well.

J: And you can see how Sean-Nós probably does evolve over time. So I think I'll ask my last question and let you guys go, because you. You've answered so well. What would you guys like to see for the future of the tradition?

C: Yeah, just that it continues for generations and generations. I think social media might be helping with that as well. We kind of spoke a little bit earlier about how people might feel kind of detached from it because they're not from a gaeltacht area, or they might feel that they can't partake in it. I think the fact that so many people are posting and making it so accessible on social media, people are hearing all different kind of styles and songs, and they're learning about the tradition on the Internet. They're kind of going down rabbit holes and wanting to learn more. It's like an invitation or a window into the tradition that's making it a lot more accessible. People. So I hope people kind of act on that and learn and learn about it. Learn the songs, learn the lyrics, and join in and keep it going for generations to come. S: Yeah, I'm literally just going to echo Caoimhe. I'd love to see that us and them kind of attitude towards it be kind of dissolved a bit. Not that it's like, this is ours. You can only have it if you come to us and stuff like that on, like, kind of a Similar note, but kind of getting into a more cautious thing. I'd love for. For people to still maintain the respect for it and for the content of the lyrics to really connect with the content of it and understand the stories and the social context and stuff like that. Because I think sometimes it can. It can get really kind of a party and this is great and stuff and people kind of lose sight of what we're actually singing about or you know, really getting into grips with what we're singing about and the content of the lyrics and different parts like that. So I'd love the respect for it stayed as strong as it is now. But that like we were said that people can feel like, ah, you can come in and enjoy it and learn it and. And use it to whatever way you want and that it'll still be alive for our kids and their kids and generations after that. That's. That'll be my wish.

Figures:

Figure 1.

8. Before watching the videos, I was familiar with Sean-Nós singing.

Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	5
Neutral	8
Agree	18
Strongly agree	28

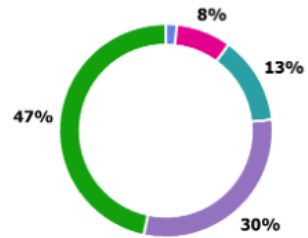


Figure 2.

9. After watching the videos, I feel I understand Sean-Nós better.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	6
Agree	19
Strongly agree	35

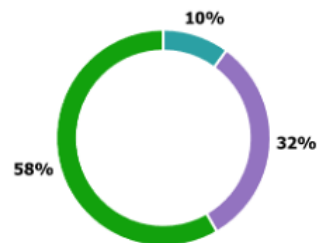


Figure 3.

10. Watching different versions (traditional, fusion, modern) helped me compare styles.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	4
Agree	29
Strongly agree	26

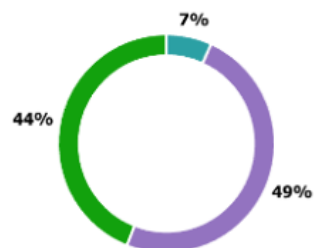


Figure 4.

11. The videos changed how I think about Sean-Nós.

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	3
● Neutral	15
● Agree	16
● Strongly agree	26

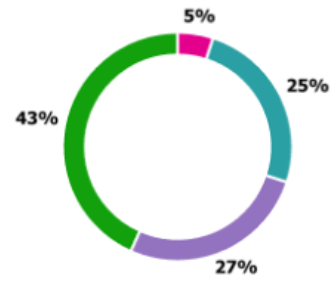


Figure 5.

12. I found the performances engaging

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	1
● Agree	13
● Strongly agree	46

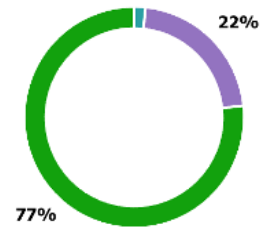


Figure 6.

13. I found the performances emotionally engaging

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	3
● Agree	15
● Strongly agree	41

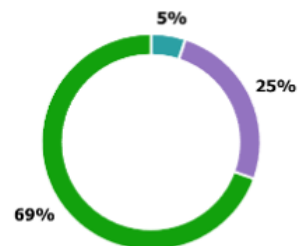


Figure 7.

14. The performances felt meaningful to me.

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	0
Neutral	2
Agree	21
Strongly agree	37



Figure 8.

19. The fusion version with instruments added something new to the experience

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	1
Neutral	2
Agree	22
Strongly agree	35



Figure 9.

20. The modern version made the style feel more accessible

Strongly disagree	0
Disagree	3
Neutral	9
Agree	30
Strongly agree	18

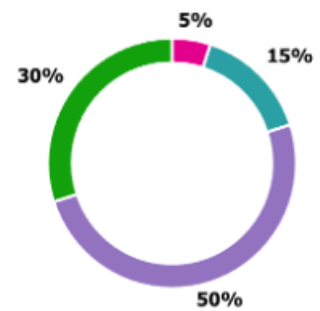


Figure 10

21. The different versions showed that this style of singing can change over time

● Strongly disagree	1
● Disagree	0
● Neutral	0
● Agree	27
● Strongly agree	32



Figure 11

22. Traditions like this should be able to change over time.

● Strongly disagree	0
● Disagree	2
● Neutral	11
● Agree	26
● Strongly agree	20

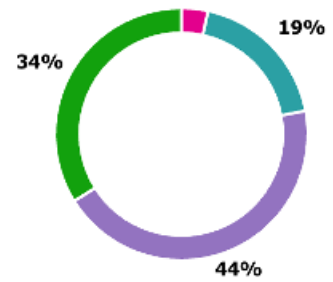


Figure 13

23. Rank the three versions from 1 most preferred to 3 least preferred

- 1 Fusion
- 2 Traditional
- 3 Modern



Tables:

Table 1.

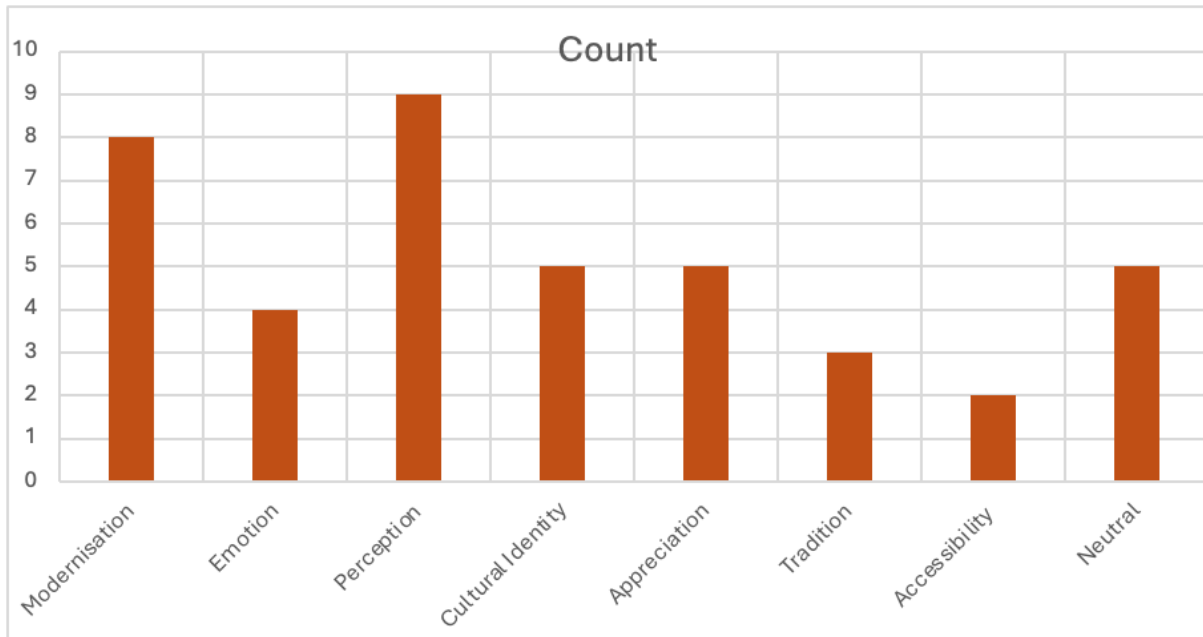


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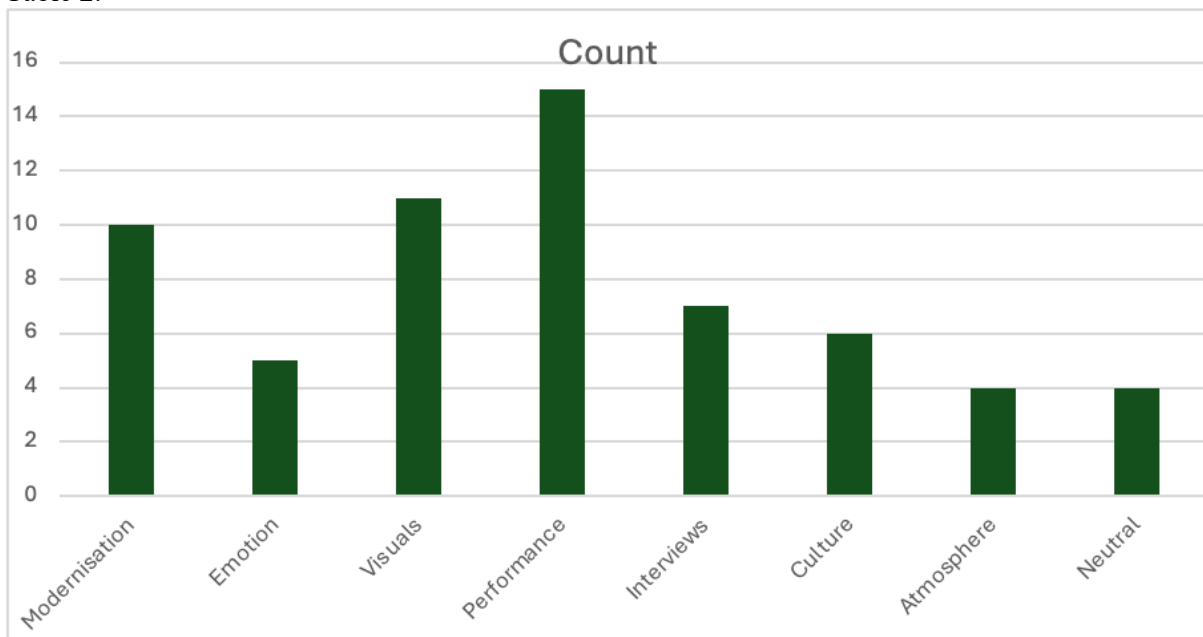


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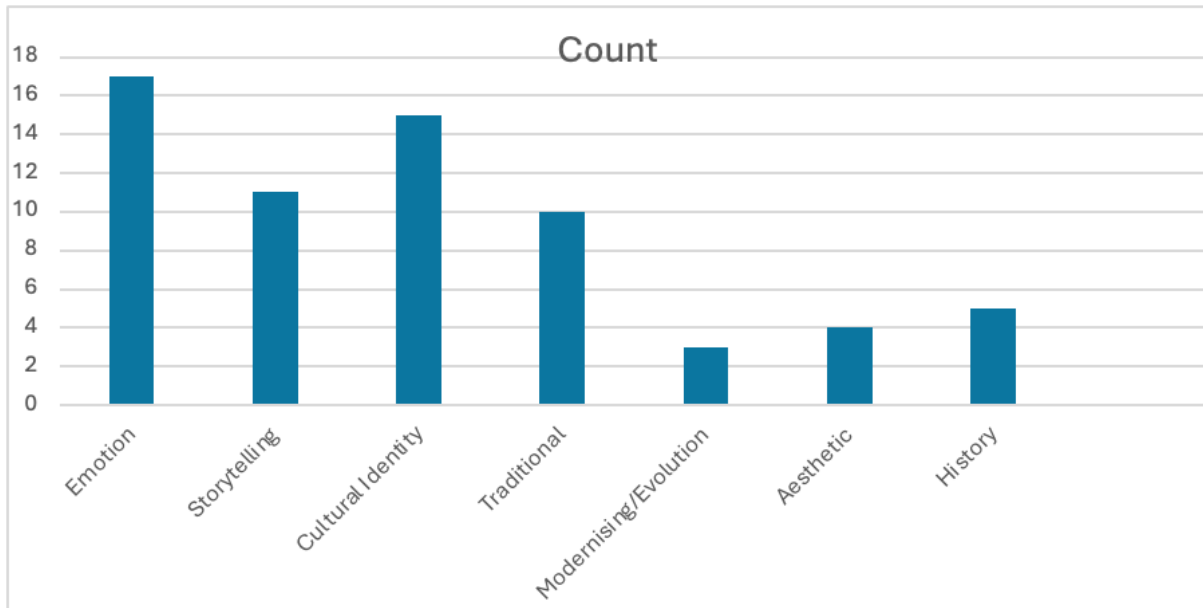


Table 4.

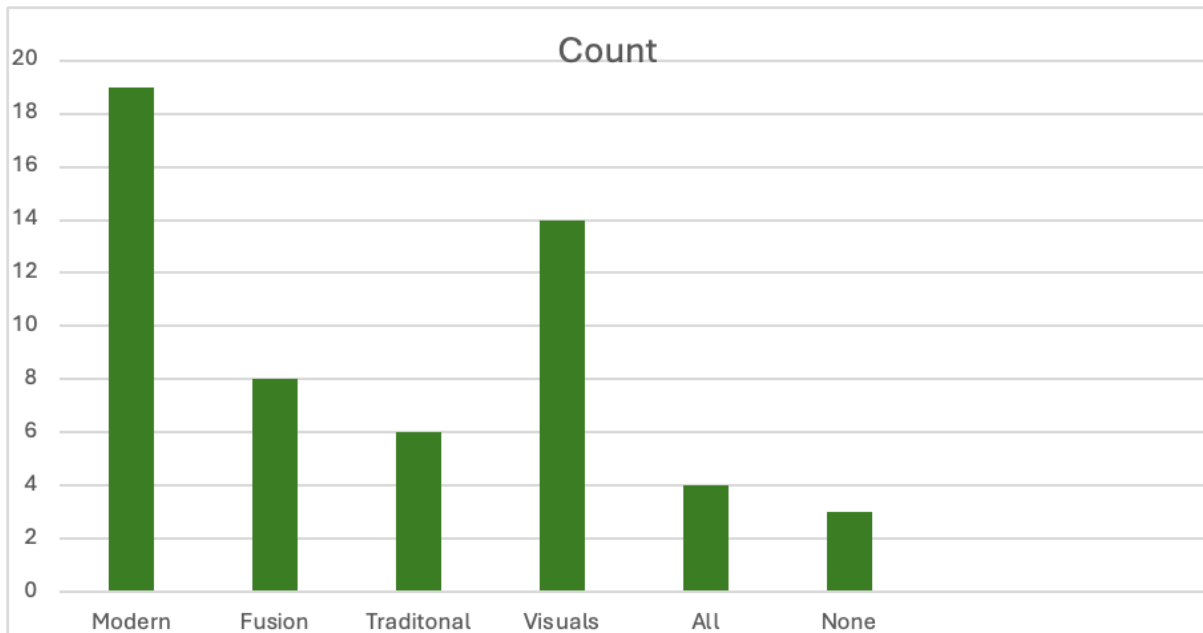


Table 5.

