

JOHANN SIGISMUND COUSSER, WILLIAM III AND THE SERENATA IN EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DUBLIN

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ABSTRACT

Among the holdings of Hamburg's Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky is an anonymous fifty-two-page score headed 'Serenata à 4', described in the corresponding catalogue entry by its former owner, German musicologist Friedrich Chrysander (1826–1901), as a 'cantata for the funeral of the English king William III of Orange, 1702'. But both the work's text and the recent identification of the manuscript as being in the hand of Johann Sigismund Cousser (1660–1727) call for a reassessment of this serenata's provenance, situating it in either England or Ireland between Cousser's arrival in London on Christmas Day 1704 and the end of Queen Anne's reign in 1714. Over the course of the two decades he resided in Ireland, from 4 July 1707 until his death, Cousser was responsible for the composition and musical direction of one ode and more than twenty serenatas, the majority of which were commissioned by the viceregal court at Dublin Castle for state celebrations of the reigning monarch's birthday. Taking printed librettos, contemporary newspaper reports, Cousser's own commonplace book and two further surviving manuscript scores as its primary evidence, this study seeks to establish a likely location and occasion for the performance of the 'William III' serenata within Dublin's musical life during the early eighteenth century. In their choice of terminology, compositional style and performance practices, Cousser's serenatas, which may have incorporated elements of theatrical staging and dancing, reveal his extensive Continental experience, and they can be seen to have functioned in part as an operatic substitute, presumably reflecting the limited financial resources of Dublin high society.

In 1729, in his *Directions for Making a Birth-day Song*, Jonathan Swift offered satirical advice to would-be poets on crafting the birthday odes that formed a central part of the musical life of British courts, both in London and its viceregal counterpart in Dublin.¹ Summarizing the stock characters employed in such works, Swift recommended that kings and princes be compared above all to Mars, Neptune and Apollo, while for female rulers the Graces 'and their mistress Venus' were fitting candidates. With regard to the text's musical setting, Swift's counsel was simple: apply to George Frideric Handel to set the words 'to

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1 Jonathan Swift, 'Directions for Making a Birth-day Song', in *The Works of Dr. Jonathan Swift*, collected and revised by Dean Swift (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1765), volume 13, 275–284. Rosamond McGuinness points out that the poem was a satire on the odes of Poet Laureate Laurence Eusden (1688–1730); see *English Court Odes, 1660–1820* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 62, note 1.



some Italian tune'.² In fact, despite Handel's popularity in England during this period, he was only ever to compose one royal ode, *Eternal Source of Light Divine*, for the birthday of Queen Anne in 1713.³ By the time Swift was writing, the provision of court odes was routinely allotted to the incumbent Poet Laureate, whose text was then set by the Master of the King's Music, a position that Handel never held.⁴

The composition of musical odes for English royalty stretched back at least as far as the first half of the seventeenth century, with works such as Orlando Gibbons's 1617 welcome song for James I, *Do Not Repine, Fair Sun* (poet unknown), and Ben Jonson's *A New-Yeaes-Gift Sung to King Charles* of 1635 (composer unknown).⁵ But while so-called 'welcome' songs had been popular in earlier reigns, by the time of George I occasions celebrated with an ode were limited almost exclusively to the king's birthday and New Year's Day, a tradition that lasted well into the nineteenth century.⁶ Given this, it is somewhat surprising to come across a work that, to all intents and purposes, follows the broad structural outlines and textual conventions of an early eighteenth-century English court ode and yet celebrates, posthumously, the life of King William III (1650–1702). Headed 'Serenata à 4', the piece exists in an anonymous fifty-two-page manuscript score in Hamburg's Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky, and consists of a French-style *ouverture* for an unspecified four-part instrumental ensemble followed by a succession of English-language recitatives and arias set for four vocal soloists: three sopranos, representing Fame, Albania (that is, Scotland) and Apollo, with the role of Neptune performed by a bass.⁷

The work appears in the Hamburg university library catalogue as a 'cantata for the funeral of the English king William III of Orange, 1702', a description made by its former owner, German musicologist Friedrich Chrysander (1826–1901).⁸ Yet this attribution is highly unlikely, given my recent identification of the manuscript as being solely in the hand of Johann Sigismund Cousser (1660–1727), a composer and music director whose professional career – from the 1670s until the 1720s – saw him work in France, the German-speaking lands of the Holy Roman Empire, England and Ireland.⁹ However, far from providing certainty regarding the work's authorship and purpose, this discovery only raises further questions. After an initial summary fleshing out Cousser's background and music-making activities during the twenty years he spent in Ireland (1707–1727), this article seeks to establish an occasion, date and venue for a hypothetical performance of the 'William III' serenata in early eighteenth-century Dublin, before investigating the compositional models and performance practices revealed by the primary source material that documents Cousser's serenatas for Ireland's viceregal court.

2 Swift, 'Directions for Making a Birth-day Song', 284.

3 George Frideric Handel, *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*, ed. Walther Siegmund-Schultze, Hällische Händel Ausgabe, series 1, volume 6 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962). On the question of whether this work was performed on that occasion see Donald Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 107–108.

4 There is some debate as to whether Handel's appointment as 'Composer of the Musick for his Majesty's Chappel Royal' (25 February 1723) was an official position; see David Hunter, review of Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, in *Eighteenth-Century Music* 4/1 (2007), 139–140.

5 McGuinness, *English Court Odes*, 2 and 10. Orlando Gibbons, *Do Not Repine, Fair Sun*, ed. Philip Brett (London: Stainer & Bell, 1961).

6 Rosamond McGuinness and Tony Trowles, 'Ode (ii): The Court Ode, 1660–1715' and 'Ode (ii): The Court Ode, 1715–1820', in *Grove Music Online* <www.grovemusic.com>, ed. Laura Macy (16 November 2006).

7 Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky (hereafter D-Hs), M A/836.

8 D-Hs catalogue: 'Kantate zum Begräbnis des englischen Königs Wilhelm III. von Oranien, 1702'.

9 For an example of Cousser's handwriting see Hans-Joachim Marx, 'Eine wiederaufgefundene Serenata teatrale von John Sigismund Cousser und ihr politischer Kontext', in *Rudolf Eller zum Achtzigsten: Ehrenkolloquium zum 80. Geburtstag von Prof. em. Dr. Rudolf Eller am 9. Mai 1994*, ed. Karl Heller and Andreas Waczkat (Rostock: Universität Rostock, 1994), 36.



JOHANN SIGISMUND COUSSER: FROM PREßBURG TO DUBLIN

An important figure in the musical history of the baroque era, Cousser participated in the production of countless operas, ballets and instrumental performances in both private and public spheres across Europe. Having moved with his family from the predominantly German-speaking town of Preßburg in Hungary (now Bratislava, Slovakia) to Stuttgart while still a teenager, Johann Sigismund Kusser went on to study music in Paris in the 1670s, during the supremacy of Jean-Baptiste Lully.¹⁰ On his return to the Empire in the early 1680s, when he began to use exclusively the French version of his surname, Cousser worked at a number of German courts as an apostle (not always welcome) of French-style performance practices, publishing his own set of *ouverture-suites* ‘following the French method’ in 1682.¹¹ This collection was suitable for various functions, including dancing and dinner music, and seems to have served also as a portfolio for future employers, since by 1690 Cousser had been appointed Kapellmeister of the ducal court of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel. There he continued to be involved in French-style performance, including the production of ballets, but also witnessed at first hand Italian opera performed by Italian virtuosos, an experience that was to be critical to his further development as both composer and performer.¹² Indeed, it seems that Cousser’s engagement had been central to Duke Anton Ulrich’s plans for the development of a German-language operatic repertory: in collaboration with the court poet Friedrich Christian Bressand (c1670–1699), Cousser composed a series of works melding elements of the French and Italian genres, which were performed in the duke’s brand new public opera house in Braunschweig between 1690 and 1693.¹³

Cousser’s operatic successes in Braunschweig led to his appointment as musical director of Hamburg’s celebrated Gänsemarkt theatre, the first public opera house in the German-speaking lands, dating back to 1678.¹⁴ Although his time there was only brief, Cousser’s reign was reportedly of some artistic importance, since the prolific Hamburg writer on music Johann Mattheson (himself a former opera singer at the Gänsemarkt) later attributed to him the introduction of a ‘formerly unknown manner’: ‘the Italian art of singing’.¹⁵ Cousser’s sojourn at the Gänsemarkt was followed by a period with his own itinerant opera

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- 10 August Bopp, ‘Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stuttgarter Stiftsmusik’, *Württembergische Jahrbücher für Statistik und Landeskunde* 1910 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1911), 225–226, and Johann Gottfried Walther, *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig: Deer, 1732), 189–190.
 - 11 Curt Sachs, ‘Die Ansbacher Hofkapelle unter Markgraf Johann Friedrich (1672–1686)’, *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 11 (1909–1910), 105–137, and Rüdiger Thomsen-Fürst, *Studien zur Musikgeschichte Rastatts im 18. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1996), 27–28. Johann Sigismund Cousser, *Composition de Musique suiuant la Methode Françoise contenant Six Ouvertures de Theatre* (Stuttgart: Paul Treu, 1682); for a modern edition see Rainer Bayreuther, ed., *Johann Sigismund Kusser: Suiten für Orchester*, *Musikalische Denkmäler*, volume 11 (Mainz and New York: Schott, 1994); for an assessment of this collection’s importance see Michael Robertson, ‘The Consort Suite in the German-Speaking Lands (1660–1705)’ (PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, 2004), volume 1, chapter 6.
 - 12 See, for example, the libretto for the ballet *Des Braunschw. Wolfenbüttelschen Landes Allgemeine Freude* (‘C. Zeigner’, text/Johann Sigismund Cousser, music/‘Mons. Nanquier’, choreography) (Wolfenbüttel: Caspar Johann Bißmarck, 1691), Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek (hereafter D-W), Xb 4° 55. On Italian opera see Sara Smart, *Doppelte Freude der Musen: Court Festivities in Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, 1642–1700* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1989), 240. Italian singers are listed in the librettos for *Gl’Inganni di Cupido* (Flaminio Parisetti, text/Giuseppe Fedrizzi, music; performed Braunschweig, 1691), D-W Textb. 179, and *Il Rè pastore ouero il Basilio in Arcadia* (Flaminio Parisetti, text/Giovanni Battista Alveri, music; performed Braunschweig, 1691), D-W Textb. 18.
 - 13 Smart, *Doppelte Freude der Musen*, 231–242; Friedrich Chrysander, ‘Geschichte der Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttelschen Capelle und Oper vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert’, *Jahrbuch für musikalische Wissenschaft* 1 (1863), 185–230; and Horst Richter, *Johann Oswald Harms: Ein deutscher Theaterdekorateur des Barock* (Emsdetten: Lechte, 1963), 66–77, 87–88 and 93–108.
 - 14 Werner Braun, *Vom Remter zum Gänsemarkt: Aus der Frühgeschichte der alten Hamburger Oper (1677–1697)* (Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 1987), 127–139.
 - 15 Johann Mattheson, *Grundlage einer Ehren-pforte* (Hamburg: author, 1740; reprinted Berlin: Liepmannssohn, 1910, ed. Max Schneider), 189 and 343: ‘eine bisher unbekannte Art [zum Singen]’; ‘die Italiänische Sing-Art’. Johann Joachim



company, performing in locations as geographically diverse as Augsburg and Kiel.¹⁶ In 1698, perhaps tiring of this peripatetic lifestyle, Cousser returned to his family home in Stuttgart, in the company of the French soprano Magdalena Sibylla Bex.¹⁷ Making good use of his connections with both the ruling family and local musicians, he quickly launched an ambitious series of operatic productions and in 1699 was rewarded with the position of court Kapellmeister; a year later he was promoted to Oberkapellmeister (chief music director).¹⁸ Cousser was to remain under the employ of Duke Eberhard Ludwig until 1704, and during this period was sent to Italy at least once at the court's expense to recruit suitable musicians, purchase instruments and gather repertory.¹⁹

With the onset of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1701, the Württemberg court's support for the costly business of opera soon waned.²⁰ By now in his mid-forties, Cousser set off from Stuttgart to try his fortune in England, arriving in London on Christmas Day 1704, one of a modest stream of musicians from the Holy Roman Empire attracted by the burgeoning public music scene, including Gottfried Keller, Jacob Greber, Johann Christoph Pepusch, Johann Ernst Galliard, Johann Gottfried Ernst and, most notably, George Frideric Handel.²¹ By early February 1705 the *Daily Courant* was advertising 'several Entertainments of Singing in Italian by Signiora Ziuliana de Celotte', to be performed between the acts of George Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, a play staged at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, with 'All the Instrumental and Vocal Musick compos'd by that eminent Master Sigismond Cousser, both lately arriv'd in England'.²² Beyond this reference, little information survives regarding Cousser's subsequent activities in London, although he is known to have given private music lessons and been active as a copyist of the newly fashionable Italian cantata.²³ Writing in the mid-1770s, John Hawkins also reported that Cousser gave 'an annual public concert' while in London, through which means he was able 'to support himself in a decent manner'.²⁴

A sign that Cousser's time in England was perhaps not as successful as he may have hoped can be seen in his departure from London on 29 May 1707, presumably in search of further professional prospects.²⁵ A

Quantz repeated this claim in *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin: Johann Friedrich Voss, 1752), 330. See also Dorothea Schröder, 'Die Einführung der Italienische Oper in Hamburg durch Johann Georg Conradi und Johann Sigismund Kusser (1693–1696)', in *Il melodramma italiano in Italia e in Germania nell'età barocca: atti del V Convegno internazionale sulla musica italiana nel secolo XVII, Loveno di Menaggio (Como), 28–30 giugno 1993 = Die italienische Barockoper, ihre Verbreitung in Italien und Deutschland*, ed. Alberto Colzani, Norbert Dubowy, Andrea Luppi and Maurizio Padoan (Como: Centro italo-tedesco Villa Vigoni, 1995), 45–55.

16 Braun, *Vom Remter zum Gänsemarkt*, 153–155, and Wilibald Nagel, 'Kleine Mitteilungen zur Musikgeschichte aus Augsburger Akten', *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 9/1 (1907), 151–154. In fact, according to J. G. Walther, Cousser had travelled so widely that there was hardly a place in the German-speaking lands where he was not known (*Musicalisches Lexicon*, 189).

17 Hans Scholz, *Johann Sigismund Kusser (Cousser): Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Leipzig: C. G. Röder, 1911), 35 and 200–202.

18 Samantha Owens, ed., *Johann Sigismund Kusser: Adonis* (Middleton: A-R Editions, forthcoming), Introduction.

19 Scholz, *Johann Sigismund Kusser*, 43, 47 and 239.

20 Once the war had ended, Duke Eberhard Ludwig's artistic endeavours centred chiefly on the construction and decoration of his magnificent palace at Ludwigsburg (begun in 1704).

21 New Haven, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Osborn Music MS 16, Johann Sigismund Cousser, commonplace book, 1.

22 Michael Tilmouth, 'A Calendar of References to Music in Newspapers Published in London and the Provinces (1660–1719)', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 1 (1961), 59.

23 Lowell Lindgren, 'J. S. Cousser, Copyist of the Cantata Manuscript in the Truman Presidential Library, and Other Cantata Copyists of 1697–1707, Who Prepared the Way for Italian Opera in London', in *'Et facciam dolci canti': studi in onore di Agostino Ziino in occasione del suo 65° compleanno*, ed. Bianca Maria Antolini, Teresa M. Gialdroni and Annunziato Pugliesi (Lucca: LIM–Libreria Musicale Italiana di Lucca, 2003), volume 1, 737–782.

24 John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (London: T. Payne & Son, 1776), volume 5, 249.

25 Cousser, commonplace book, 1.



note made in his commonplace book records his arrival in Dublin on 4 July, but, as with his stay in England, details regarding Cousser's twenty years in Ireland remain sketchy.²⁶ Given his substantial prior experience at courts across Europe, it was perhaps inevitable that he would soon become involved in music produced at Dublin Castle. The earliest reference to his presence in Ireland relates to a court ode 'Sett to MUSICK by Monsieur Coursrer [*sic*]' and performed in February 1708 for Queen Anne's birthday; as we shall see, he continued to write works of this kind on a regular basis for the remainder of his career.²⁷ That Cousser's pedigree impressed members of the upper echelons of Dublin society can also be seen in his designation on printed serenata librettos as 'Chappel-master of Trinity-Colledge' from 1711 until his death, although the absence of his name in extant college records suggests that this may have been a non-stipendiary position or one funded from another source, perhaps even an honorary post. In 1716, thanks in no small part to the machinations of Philip Perceval (1686–1748), 'Customer' for the Dublin port, member of the Irish parliament, keen amateur musician and 'Director and Supervisor of the State Musick', Cousser received an official appointment as 'Chief-Composer and Music Master' to the viceregal court.²⁸

'CHIEF-COMPOSER AND MUSIC MASTER': COUSSER'S SERENATAS FOR THE VICEREGAL COURT

Surprisingly little is known about musical life at Dublin Castle during the first few decades of the eighteenth century, not least because of the destruction of documents during a major fire at the Irish Public Record Office in 1922. In some respects, the English lords lieutenant who successively represented the British monarchy were noticeable by their absence, usually appearing only for parliamentary sittings, which took place about once every two years.²⁹ During the intervening periods, governance was maintained through a system of deputies known as the lords justice, most often a trio consisting of the lord chancellor, the speaker of the House of Commons and the primate of the Church of Ireland.³⁰ The political dominance of this largely Protestant ruling class was underpinned by cultural endeavours that aimed to display the power and wealth of the viceregal court, although in reality much of this sumptuous display had to be funded from the lords lieutenant's own pockets.³¹ An important role in the creation of such spectacle was played by the Irish 'State Musick', which between the years 1717 and 1725 (and beyond) numbered around ten to twelve instrumentalists (largely strings, some of whom also played woodwinds), with a further ensemble of as many as seven trumpeters and a kettledrummer, all employed on a permanent basis.³² Not all of the latter group could read

26 For summaries of the information presented in the commonplace book see Harold E. Samuel, 'John Sigismund Cousser in London and Dublin', *Music & Letters* 61/2 (1980), 158–171, and 'A German Musician Comes to London in 1704', *The Musical Times* 122 (September 1981), 591–593.

27 'Mr Griffith' and Johann Sigismund Cousser, *An Ode on Her Majesty's Birth-Day, February the 6th. 1707/8* (Dublin: Andrew Crook, 1707), Dublin, National Library of Ireland (hereafter IRL-Dn), Ir 6551 LB Dublin 1707 (1) 9.

28 David Hunter, 'The Irish State Music from 1716 to 1742 and Handel's Band in Dublin', *Göttinger Händel-Beiträge* 11 (2006), 174; on the date of Cousser's appointment (12 November 1716) see Scholz, *Johann Sigismund Kusser*, 48; regarding Philip Perceval's role in his appointment see London, British Library (hereafter GB-Lbl), Egmont papers, Ms. 47027, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 20 April 1716, f. 55r.

29 Toby Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland, 1641–1760* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 100, and Joseph Robins, *Champagne and Silver Buckles: The Viceregal Court at Dublin Castle, 1700–1922* (Dublin: Lilliput, 2001), 9–10.

30 Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland*, 101.

31 Toby Barnard, "'Grand Metropolis' or 'The Anus of the World'?: The Cultural Life of Eighteenth-Century Dublin', in *Two Capitals: London and Dublin, 1500–1840*, ed. Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 189–190.

32 Hunter, 'The Irish State Music', 171–198.



music, so their participation would have been limited mostly to ceremonial fanfares and processional pieces.³³ All of these musicians were Protestant.³⁴

In keeping with courtly traditions common across Europe, the state band provided music for balls and banquets as well as for official ceremonies and celebrations in court, civic and sacred settings. According to Dublin newspapers of the day, these could be quite lavish affairs amply befitting the rank of a British viceroy, providing high-quality entertainment on a variety of levels (musical, theatrical, visual and gastronomic):

Dublin, February 6 [1714]. This Day being the Anniversary of Her Majesty's Birth-Day, the same was observed with great Solemnity. About 11 a-Clock in the morning a very great many of the Nobility, Clergy, Judges and Gentry, and a great number of Ladies in very fine Cloaths, went to the Castle: About 12 a-Clock a Birth-Day Song in Honor of Her Majesty, was perform'd by the best Masters; when the Musick ended, the great Guns in the Castle-Yard were fired three rounds, and answered by three volleys of small Arms from the Regiments on Duty in *Dublin*, drawn up on *College-Green*. About 2, a great many of the Company dined with his Grace the Lord Lieutenant [Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury], an Entertainment being provided for them; in the Evening his Grace went to the Play, and from thence to a fine Set of Fire-works burnt on the *Custom-House-Key*, and on the Water; and the Night concluded with ringing of Bells, Bonfires [*sic*], Illuminations, and all other demonstrations of Joy.³⁵

The same day also saw 'a great Entertainment made at the Royal Hospital', presumably owing to the cramped conditions at Dublin Castle (all too frequently a bone of contention with the lords lieutenant).³⁶ The festivities were concluded several days later, when 'his Grace the Lord Lieutenant made a great Ball . . . and a Noble Supper, for the Company that came to the Castle of Her Majesty's Birth-Day'.³⁷

As in England, where annual celebratory odes constituted a regular and important part of courtly musical life, the equivalent performances at Dublin Castle must have counted among the highest-profile musical events on the calendar of Irish high society in the early decades of the eighteenth century. As confirmed by extant newspaper reports, this commemoration of the reigning monarch's birthday was hosted either by the lord lieutenant, should he be in residence in Ireland, or, if he was not, 'By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command'. While newspaper accounts of these occasions are largely formulaic in their prose, they do provide important information regarding not only the regularity of such celebrations but also the broader context in which these pieces were performed: almost invariably at Dublin Castle at noon 'by the best Masters here', before an invited, elite audience.³⁸ In addition to newspaper reports and cursory references in Cousser's commonplace book, the primary evidence for this musical activity comes in the form of published librettos distributed to the assembled spectators, which also served as mementos of the occasion. These sources reveal that throughout the course of his Irish career – both before and after his appointment as 'Chief-Composer and Music Master' in 1716 – Cousser was repeatedly called upon by the lord lieutenant (or his representatives, the lords justice) to provide works for the British monarchs' birthdays. Librettos survive for six written for Queen Anne (between 1708 and 1714), twelve for George I (from 1715 to 1727) and one for George II (following his accession in 1727) (see Table 1).

33 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47027, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 29 April 1716, f. 61r, refers to the 'State Trumpetts, who I hope in time to bring to know notes for their 70£ [per] an[num]. & do duty in y.^e orchestra'.

34 Hunter, 'The Irish State Music', 173.

35 *Dublin Gazette*, 6–9 February 1714; not mentioned in Brian Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar, 1700–1760* (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press, 1988).

36 On Dublin Castle see Toby Barnard, *Making the Grand Figure: Lives and Possessions in Ireland, 1641–1740* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 4–8; *Dublin Gazette*, 6–9 February 1714.

37 *Dublin Gazette*, 6–9 February 1714.

38 *Dublin Gazette*, 4–7 February 1710; not mentioned in Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*.



Table 1 Johann Sigismund Cousser's serenatas for Dublin

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1708	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'Perform'd at the Castle of Dublin'	ode	Libretto, <i>An Ode on Her Majesty's Birth-Day</i> . . . (Dublin: Andrew Crook, 1707); text: 'Mr Griffith'; music: 'Monsieur Cousser' [sic]	none (soloist(s) / 'Chorus' / 'Grand Chorus')	IRL-Dn, Ir 6551 LB Dublin 1707 (1) 9
1709	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'At the Theatre-Royal'	serenata	Libretto, <i>A Serenata. To be Represented on the Birth-Day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser</i> (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1709)	Fate, Fame, Britannia, Pallas, Neptunus, Gloria, Peace, Chorus	IRL-Dn, Ir 82259.c1
1710	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata	Libretto, <i>A Serenata. To be Represented on the Birth-Day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser</i> (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1710)	Apollo, Genius, Concordia, Mars, Victoria, Chorus	IRL-Dki, Pamphlet Number 344
	unknown	unknown	serenata	Score and libretto sent to London with [Sprackling] Dowdall on 8 October 1711; see Cousser, commonplace book, 366 (one of two dating from 1710, compare above)		lost



Table 1 continued

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1711	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata da camera	Libretto, <i>The Universal Applause of Mount Parnassus, A Serenata da Camera, to be Represented on the Birth-day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity-Colledge</i> (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1711); score (in Cousser's hand), untitled (text matches libretto, <i>The Universal Applause of Mount Parnassus</i>)	Apollo & the Muses (Calliope, Clio, Erato, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, Euterpe, Polymnia, Urania), Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P. hh.16 (1); IRL-Cdl, M.6.17-(10); GB-Ob, G.Pamph. 1140 (3)
1712	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata teatrale	Libretto, <i>A Serenata Teatrale. To be Represented on the Birth-day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity College</i> (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1712)	Britain, The Thames, Chorus of Nymphes, Apollo, Glory, Zeal, Chorus	GB-Ob, Ms. Tenbury 765
						US-Cah, *GC7 K9686 712s; IRL-Cdl, M.7.6.(15)



Table 1 continued

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
?1713	?Dublin celebration of the Peace of Utrecht (16 June)	?Theatre Royal	serenata teatrale	Score (in Cousser's hand), headed 'Serenata Theatrale à 5'. Annotated in a contemporary hand: 'John Sigismund Cousser Chappel Master to the Duke of Wirtemberg compos'd This in Ireland and gave it to me.'	Peace, Victory, Discord, Felicity, Plenty, Chorus	D-Hs, ND VI 2892
1714	birthday of Queen Anne (6 February)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata	Libretto, <i>A Serenata. To be Represented on the Birth-day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By His Grace the Lord Lieutenant's Command. Set by Mr John Sigismund Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity College</i> (Dublin: C. Carter[, 1714])	Valour, Fate, Glory, Fame, Victory, Chorus	GB-Lbl, 11631.bb.2
	coronation of King George I (20 October)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	?serenata	Libretto, <i>An Harmonious Rivalship of Virtues: Suited to the Happy and Glorious Coronation of the Most Serene George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: Daniel Tompson, 1714)	Clemency, Liberality, Lineage, Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Poetry, Fortitude, Chorus	IRL-Dn, L. O. P. 181 (4); IRL-Cdl, M.4.12.(21)

Table 1 *continued*

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1715	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>Fortune not Blind: A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity Colleg[e]</i> (Dublin: Daniel Tompson[, 1715])	Britannia, Fortune, Fame, Chorus	GB-Lbl, 1490.e.24
1716	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata theatrale	Libretto, <i>A Serenata Theatrale, to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesties State in Ireland, and Chapel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: E. Waters, 1716)	Jupiter, Britannia, Apollo, Astrea, Chorus	GB-Ob, Vet. A4 e.760 (4)



Table 1 continued

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1717	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata da camera	Libretto, <i>A Serenata da Camera, to be Represented on the Birthday of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesties State in Ireland, and Chapel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1717)	Honour, Valour, Fate, Fame, Glory, Victory, Delight, Chorus	GB-Lbl, 1875.d.6.(173); IRL-Dtc, P.egg.20 (14)
1718	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-Day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesties State in Ireland, and Chapel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1718)	Valour, Fortune, Clemency, Chorus	IRL-Dn, L. O. P. 181 (3); IRL-Cdl, M.4.12.(22)

Table 1 *continued*

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1719	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By His Grace the Duke of Bolton's Special Command. Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesties State in Ireland, and Chappel Master of Trinity College</i> (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1719)	Apollo, Britannia, Mars, Hibernia, Chorus	GB-Ob, Vet. A4 e.2199
1721	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Contest between Mars and Jupiter. A Serenade To be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepar'd by Mr. [sic] John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1721)	Mars, Jupiter, Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P.gg.10 (26)



Table 1 continued

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1722	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity College (Dublin: T. Hume, 1722)</i>	Minerva, Genius of the British Empire	IRL-Cdl, M.6.19.(4)
1723	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	?serenata	Libretto, <i>A Contest between Marsyas and Apollo to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1723)</i>	Apollo, Mars, Muse, Satyr, Mercury, Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P.8g.9 (8) and P. hh.22 (31)

Table 1 *continued*

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1724	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-Day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousseur, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1724)</i>	Genius of Hanover, Genius of Britain, Europe, Fame, Mercury, Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P.gg.9 (12)
1725	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By his Excellency the Lord Carteret's Special Command Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousseur, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1725)</i>	Genius of the British Empire, Minerva, Mercury, Heroick Virtue, Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P.gg.9 (17); IRL-Cdl, M.6.19.(3)



Table 1 continued

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1726	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenade	Libretto, <i>A Serenade to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1726)	Jupiter, Minerva, Peace, Mercury, Chorus	IRL-Dtc, P.egg.9 (23)
1727	birthday of King George I (28 May)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	'a musical entertainment'	Libretto, <i>Heaven Invaded. Or, a Contest between Jupiter and the Giants; Being a Musical Entertainment, to be Represented on the Birthday of His Most Sacred Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Compos'd by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: George Faulkner[, 1727])	Jupiter, Briar, Valour, Victory, Fame, Chorus of Jupiter, Chorus of Briar [Giants], The Last Chorus	GB-Ob, Mal. 720 (12)

Table 1 *continued*

Year	Occasion	Location	Genre	Libretto/score	Vocal roles	Location/callmark
1727	birthday of King George II (30 October)	'At the Castle of Dublin'	serenata teatrale	Libretto, A <i>Serenata Teatrale, to be Represented on the Birthday of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismond Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: George Faulkner[, 1727])	Peace, Discord, Justice, Apollo, Chorus	IRL-DTc, P.gg.9 (28); IRL-Cdl, M.6.19.(2)
<i>Library sigla</i>						
D-Hs: Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky						
GB-Lbl: London, British Library						
GB-Ob: Oxford, Bodleian Library						
IRL-Cdl: Cashel, Cashel Diocesan Library						
IRL-Dki: Dublin, Dublin Honourable Society of King's Inn						
IRL-Dn: Dublin, National Library of Ireland						
IRL-Dtc: Dublin, Trinity College, University of Dublin						
US-Cah: Cambridge, MA., Houghton Library, Harvard University						



The published text of Cousser's first essay in this type of composition, for Queen Anne's birthday on 6 February 1708, demonstrates his willingness to bow to accepted English conventions of the form, with the title page declaring the work an 'ode' and politely acknowledging the poet, 'Mr Griffith, Servant to Her Majesty'.³⁹ However, by the following February Cousser had signalled his distance from the English ode in two important respects. First, he failed to provide details of the poet commissioned to supply the work's text (in England this was invariably the Poet Laureate), a pattern repeated for the remainder of Cousser's career, with only the composer acknowledged on the libretto (see Table 1). Secondly, Cousser chose to use the label 'serenata' rather than 'ode', a habit he retained for virtually all his subsequent compositions of this kind; he was never again to use the title 'ode'. Employed as a generic term, 'serenata' (or 'serenade') could be expanded through the use of qualifiers: in Cousser's case 'da camera' or 'theatrale' were the most frequent. The possible significance of this choice of terminology, particularly in light of Continental prototypes and the question of theatrical representation, will be discussed in the penultimate section of this article.

Somewhat frustratingly, music survives for only two of Cousser's Dublin serenatas. One of these can be linked to a royal birthday entertainment: a manuscript score in Cousser's hand, now held by Oxford's Bodleian Library, whose text matches the printed libretto of his 'serenata da camera' *The Universal Applause of Mount Parnassus*, performed at Dublin Castle to honour Queen Anne in February 1711, thus confirming Cousser's authorship (see Table 1). Analysed in some detail by Rosamond McGuinness, the setting is scored for nine sopranos and one alto (representing the Muses and Apollo) plus SSATB chorus, accompanied by an orchestra consisting of strings and continuo (with movements featuring obbligato recorder, voice flutes, oboes, bassoon and lute). Structurally, following an initial French *ouverture*, it features alternating Italianate recitatives and arias (eleven of each), interspersed with instrumental ritornellos and dances, three choruses and 'A Ground' (the latter scored for all performers).⁴⁰

The second score, also in Cousser's hand, was among the manuscripts returned from St Petersburg (Leningrad) to Hamburg's Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek in 1991, having been seized as war booty towards the end of the Second World War.⁴¹ Headed 'Serenata Theatrale à 5', this autograph is annotated in a further contemporary hand with the comment 'John Sigismund Cousser Chappel Master to the Duke of Wirtemberg compos'd This in Ireland and gave it to me'. As has been argued by Hans-Joachim Marx, this particular work appears to have fallen outside the normal pattern of royal birthday celebrations at the viceregal court and was almost certainly part of the 'choice performance of Musick prepared . . . by Mr. Coussar, and Mr. [William] Viner' presented at Dublin's Theatre Royal on the evening of 16 June 1713 in celebration of the Peace of Utrecht (marking the end of the War of the Spanish Succession).⁴² Its special character is revealed by vocalists representing the allegorical figures of Peace, Victory, Discord, Felicity and Plenty, as well as frequent textual and musical references to war, with allusions to 'Conquering Legions', 'glorious Triumphs' and, finally, the 'Crowd of soft Pleasures' brought by peace. These literary images are complemented musically by a 'A Noise of Trumpett's and Kettle-drums', scored for three trumpets, timpani, oboes, strings and harpsichord, while the gentle affect of Peace's aria, 'Freedom is a Sovereign Blessing', is delicately painted through an accompanying duet of flute and 'Tamburino'.

Contemporary newspaper accounts reveal that such 'one-off' entertainments were not uncommon on significant state occasions, and Cousser, as the musician responsible for composing (and presumably directing) the annual royal birthday serenatas in Dublin, appears to have provided similar works for such special events. This was certainly the case for the coronation of George I the following year, for which he

39 IRL-Dn Ir 6551 LB Dublin 1707 (1) 9.

40 Rosamond McGuinness, 'An Eighteenth-Century Entertainment', *Soundings: A Music Journal* 3 (1973), 66–84; the piece was formerly believed to be the work of John Eccles, royal 'Master of the Musick' in England from 1700. See also Tony Trowles, 'The Musical Ode in Britain, 1670–1800' (PhD dissertation, University of Oxford, 1992), volume 1, 149–150.

41 D-Hs ND VI 2892; Marx, 'Eine wiederaufgefundene Serenata', 35.

42 Marx, 'Eine wiederaufgefundene Serenata', 34–39; *Dublin Gazette*, 16–20 June 1713.



prepared *An Harmonious Rivalship of Vertues*, a work lacking a genre designation in the printed libretto; it consists of stanzas sung in turn by Clemency, Liberality, Lineage, Temperance, Prudence, Justice, Poetry and Fortitude, and is framed by two choruses, ‘Glorious Prince! The Hope of Britain!’ and ‘Raise your Hearts, Exert your Voices to Record his Coronation’.⁴³ According to a report in the *Dublin Gazette*, the festivities on this occasion followed a similar pattern to those on royal birthdays:

a very great Number of the Nobility, Clergy, Judges and Gentry, and a great many Ladies in very fine Cloaths, went to the Castle: About 12 a Clock a Coronation Song in Honour of His Majesty, was performed by the best Masters; when the Musick was ended, the Great Guns of the Castle were fired three Rounds.⁴⁴

Given its subject, the Hamburg ‘Serenata à 4’ commemorating William III also appears to have been composed for a special occasion, positioning it outside the regular pattern of royal birthday odes and serenatas in either England or Ireland. Cousser’s copying of this English-language work dates the score to some time after his arrival in London in December 1704, but, regrettably, the manuscript contains few further indications as to its provenance and date. One possible clue lies in the fact that both this work and the other Cousser autograph now in Hamburg, the ‘Serenata Theatrale à 5’, feature the 1736 bookplate of Sir John Perceval, the Earl of Egmont (1683–1748), brother of Philip Perceval and a dedicated supporter of music in London (including the operatic venture known as the Royal Academy of Music).⁴⁵ Born in County Cork but educated in England, John held positions in the Irish parliament from 1704 (first as member for County Cork in the Irish House of Commons, and later in the House of Lords) until the 1720s, when he entered the English political arena.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, this offers little direct help with dating the manuscript, since John was frequently back and forth between England and Ireland during these years and music must often have formed part of his luggage, as indicated by Philip, who wrote from Dublin in March 1715: ‘I am very glad you think of being over this summer and pray bring a recruit of good musick with you, for our performance will please you.’⁴⁷ In 1721 John offered Cousser direct assistance in this respect, writing from London: ‘[I] will send M^r. Cousser the sonatas [by Andrea Fadini] he desires when I get them: Pray remember me to him as an old friend & acquaintance for whom I preserve the same good esteem I ever had.’⁴⁸ It seems equally possible that these two works – the ‘Serenata Theatrale à 5’ and the ‘Serenata à 4’ – had been sent in exchange on just such an occasion, or were presented in person, either in Ireland or when Cousser visited England and the Continent in 1716.⁴⁹

The manuscript itself provides no information as to the authorship of the ‘William III’ serenata, but given Cousser’s well-documented activity as a composer of serenatas for the Irish court, it seems reasonable at least

43 IRL-Dn L. O. P. 181 (4), and Ireland, Cashel Diocesan Library (hereafter IRL-Cdl) M.4.12.(21).

44 *Dublin Gazette*, 19–23 October 1714.

45 Betty Wood, ‘Perceval, John, First Earl of Egmont (1683–1748)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (www.oxforddnb.com) (30 August 2006), and Elizabeth Gibson, *The Royal Academy of Music, 1719–1728: The Institution and Its Directors* (New York and London: Garland, 1989), 78–80 and 342. It seems most likely that the Hamburg Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek acquired both manuscripts at the same time, probably in their 1875 purchase of part of Friedrich Chrysander’s music collection. Chrysander, in turn, had obtained the ‘Serenata Theatrale à 5’ (and surely the ‘William III’ serenata as well) at a London auction; see Marx, ‘Eine wiederaufgefundene Serenata’, 35, and Friedrich Chrysander, ‘Eine englische Serenata von Johann Sigismund Kusser’, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 26 (25 June 1879), 408.

46 Wood, ‘Perceval, John.’

47 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47028, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 5 March 1715, f. 10r.

48 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47029, letter of John Perceval to Philip Perceval, 14 March 1720 [*recte* 1721], f. 52r.

49 Cousser’s commonplace book, 204, indicates his intention to take at least one or two samples of his printed serenata librettos on this trip: ‘von allen hiegemachten Serenaten, ein od. 2 gedruckte Exemplaria’ (from all [the] serenatas made for here [Dublin], one or two printed copies); and on 1 November of that year Philip wrote to John (in London), ‘if you see M^r Cousser, pray tell him, that I believe Viner can hardly live out this Winter’, GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47028, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 1 November 1716, f. 169r.



to allow for the possibility that he was responsible not merely for copying the ‘William III’ serenata but also for its composition. Indeed, the rather limited uses for a musical work that openly extolled the former king’s virtues in England, where he had been a far from popular monarch, make the possibility of the work having originated there (and subsequently copied by Cousser) somewhat unlikely. For despite having married James II’s eldest daughter, Mary, William remained, after all, a Dutch prince whose route to the throne had involved the ‘invasion’ of England with a force of some 21,000 men. After his death in 1702, William appears to have received remarkably ‘little honour’ from the English, and neither of the two public monuments planned by the privy council to his memory (including one for Westminster Abbey) was ever erected.⁵⁰

THE ‘WILLIAM III’ SERENATA IN DUBLIN

In contrast to England, Ireland was, of course, one place where William III continued to be glorified long after his death (and is to this very day within the ranks of the Orange Order), further increasing the likelihood that it was the setting for both the composition and performance of the ‘William III’ serenata. The members of the minority, but politically all-powerful, Protestant ascendancy saw him as their saviour, owing in no small part to his successful military action against his father-in-law, the Catholic James II, following the latter’s flight from England to Ireland in 1688. One small clue linking the serenata’s provenance to Ireland lies in the text itself: in the recitative ‘His mighty Prowess Belgia’s plains can witness’, Fame sings ‘Hibernia’s streams have wash’d him, with their own purple dyed’, surely a direct reference to William’s decisive action in leading a charge against the Jacobites through a stream at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690. The text also hints at the work’s approximate date, since Queen Anne was clearly in power, with Apollo’s aria ‘Tho’ Envy often baffled the projects of his reign’ including the lines ‘The seeds he sow’d now flourish, by Anna’s influence nourish’d, who rules the Land and Main’. Indeed, it is possible that she had only recently gained the throne, since in another aria, ‘Great Queen of Isles, see! heaven smiles’, Apollo also sings ‘The mighty Monarch[’]s loss t’[o] attone, the best of Queens ascends the Throne’. It seems likely, therefore, that the serenata dates from between Anne’s accession in 1702 and her death in August 1714.

The beginnings of the Irish cult of William III have been linked by J. G. Simms to the unveiling of a statue of the king (‘clad in a Roman tunic with a laurel wreath on his head, riding a prancing horse’) on Dublin’s College Green on 1 July 1701, the eleventh anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne.⁵¹ Yet despite such outward symbols of the continuing power of the English monarchy and its supporters in Ireland, the early decades of the eighteenth century were an unsettled time for the Protestant ascendancy, with an increase in Jacobite activity involving both Catholics and Protestants. As at Oxford, Trinity College, Dublin (where Cousser was nominally chapelmaster) also became something of ‘a centre for a short-lived, muted but no less acrimonious Protestant opposition to the elector of Hannover’.⁵² Feelings of political unrest could also be seen in the frequent attacks against the effigy of William III on College Green, such as those that occurred in 1710 and 1714, with the former resulting in the imprisonment of two students (who, not surprisingly, were also sent down).⁵³ Erected by municipal authorities, the statue continued to be a focal point for civic celebrations held on 1 July throughout the eighteenth century.⁵⁴

The figure on College Green was also central to commemorations held on William III’s birthday, 4 November, a date that largely remained the preserve of the state (and hence the court), providing the focus

50 Tony Claydon, ‘William III and II (1650–1702)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (www.oxforddnb.com) (30 August 2006).

51 John Gerald Simms, ‘Remembering 1690’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 63 (1974), 234.

52 Éamonn Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite Cause, 1685–1766: A Fatal Attachment* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 168–173.

53 Simms, ‘Remembering 1690’, 235.

54 James Kelly, ‘“The Glorious and Immortal Memory”: Commemoration and Protestant Identity in Ireland, 1660–1800’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 94C (1994), 32.



for an annual ceremonial procession of the state's official representatives and local nobility.⁵⁵ The Castle generally played a role in the supporting festivities, a factor that threw into stark relief the refusal of the second Duke of Ormond (James Butler), as lord lieutenant, to hold a banquet for the occasion in 1711 (he later made his sympathies even clearer, fleeing in 1715 to the exiled Jacobite court in France).⁵⁶ More typical were the celebrations of 1713, when 'The 4th being the Birth-Day of the late King William of Glorious Memory . . . There was a great Entertainment at the Castle, where most of our Ladies, Din'd with her Grace the Dutchess of Shrewsbury, and at Night there was a Ball at the Castle.'⁵⁷

The Castle is undoubtedly the most obvious Dublin venue for a hypothetical performance of the 'William III' serenata in the early eighteenth century, a premise supported by the fact that Cousser was employed primarily under its auspices. An occasional work of this type is certainly unlikely to have been composed and/or copied without a specific function in mind, whether in England or in Ireland. Allusions made in the text imply either the anniversary of William III's death (8 March) or birthday (4 November), with references to paying adoration 'to his ashes ev'ry year' and strewing his tomb with flowers to 'hold his memory most dear'. That the latter date is perhaps more likely is suggested by the final aria, a duet performed by Fame and Albania, which includes the lines 'sacred ever be his birth, noted with auspicious white'. Attempts to slot the piece into the framework of Cousser's known serenatas for Dublin present the year 1710 as a distinct possibility, since in 1711 he is known to have sent to London a trunk of music containing two serenatas dated 1710, only one of which can now be identified: the expected birthday ode for Queen Anne (see Table 1).

Yet it also seems reasonable to allow that a possible Irish performance of the 'William III' serenata may have been produced outside the official confines of the viceregal court, in both physical and administrative senses. Cousser is known to have planned at least one benefit concert in Dublin, scheduled for 17 June 1710 – the same year for which one serenata remains unaccounted for.⁵⁸ A page in his commonplace book lists eighty-eight names, largely members of the Protestant ascendancy, including high-ranking clergy, judges, fellows of Trinity College and assorted nobility, perhaps forming the basis of an invitation list to this or a similar event.⁵⁹ Certainly, the 'William III' serenata would have appealed to the values of a particular sector of the Irish Protestant ascendancy, with the work's text containing a number of virulently anti-Catholic sentiments, including a reference by Albania (Scotland) to being 'Almost oppress'd with Romish superstition' prior to the arrival of William III. Elsewhere, 'Rome's locusts' are described as a 'spreading Pest', with Catholics being a 'Plague' of 'Romish Fry' successfully driven away by William (see Appendix below).

Surviving documentary sources also suggest a number of other places in Dublin, both public and private, that must be considered as possible performance venues. Chief among these was the city's Tholsel, home to a monument to William III unveiled in 1696. Banquets were regularly held there on the occasion of William's birthday, as in 1713, when 'above 300 Gentlemen Dined at the *Tholsel* of our City, where they had a splendid Entertainment'.⁶⁰ Such events were frequently followed by visits to the theatre, with Nicholas Rowe's play *Tamerlane* (1702) a favourite choice because of the identification of its hero with the figure of William.⁶¹ As

55 Simms, 'Remembering 1690', 235.

56 Toby Barnard, *Irish Protestant Ascents and Descents, 1641–1770* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 138, and Stuart Handley, 'Butler, James, Second Duke of Ormond (1665–1745)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (www.oxforddnb.com) (17 August 2007).

57 *The Post-Boy*, 9 November 1713; not mentioned in Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*.

58 Cousser, commonplace book, 235 and 366.

59 Cousser, commonplace book, 259.

60 *The Post-Boy*, 9 November 1713.

61 Kelly, "'The Glorious and Immortal Memory'", 32. As shown by surviving librettos and playbills, music also played an important role in plays produced in Dublin at this time; see, for example, John Fletcher (revised by Peter Anthony [Pierre Antoine] Motteux), *The Island Princess or, The Generous Portuguese* (Dublin: Stephen Powell, 1726), IRL-Dn Dublin 1726 (32), and John C. Greene and Gladys L. H. Clark, *The Dublin Stage, 1720–1745: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments, and Afterpieces* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1993), 66–71. On occasion, as we have already seen



noted by Martyn Powell, 'from a very early point the theatre became a kind of adjunct to the House of Commons, where political grievances could be played out on a rather different stage'.⁶² The same could surely be said of the serenata performances, which offered the potential to contribute to the politically highly charged atmosphere of early eighteenth-century Dublin.⁶³ Indication that the Tholsel festivities sometimes incorporated music can be seen in a newspaper report of 8 February 1709, which described how

a great Entertainment . . . designed in Commemoration of the Birth-Day of the late K. W. of Glorious Memory, but . . . put off on account of the Death of his late Royal Highness [Prince George of Denmark] . . . was observ'd here yesterday, particularly there was a Noble Entertainment at our Tholsel, where was at Dinner his Excellency our Lord Chancellor, his Grace our Arch-Bishop, the Right Hon. the Lieutenants General Ingoldsby and Langston, The Right Hon. my Lord Santry, the Hon. Mr. Justice Coote, Mr. Justice Macartney . . .⁶⁴

Significantly, on this occasion, 'The State Trumpets and Kettle Drum, Quire of Christ-Church and the City Musick [also] attended', perhaps pointing to the performance of an ode or serenata.

The death of Queen Anne's consort, Prince George of Denmark, on 28 October 1708 not only postponed festivities at the Tholsel for the anniversary of William III's birthday but may also have been responsible for a change in venue for the viceregal court's royal birthday celebrations early the following year. As Joseph Addison noted on 1 February 1709, 'His Excellency [the lord lieutenant] tells me there will be no rejoicings in the English court upon the Queens birth-day by Her Mat^{ies} order'; by extension, the customary performance at Dublin Castle was perhaps considered inappropriate.⁶⁵ Instead, for the only (known) time, Cousser's birthday offering was presented 'At the Theatre Royal' in Smock Alley, a venue that surely represents a third possibility for a hypothetical Dublin performance of the 'William III' serenata (after the Castle and the Tholsel). The theatre certainly hosted musical entertainments during the early decades of the eighteenth century, as was the case in March 1713, when, following a banquet, 'a great number of the Nobility, Judges, Officers of the Army and other Gentlemen . . . went to the Play-house, where a Consort of Musick and extraordinary Dancing was performed by the best Masters' to celebrate the anniversary of Queen Anne's accession.⁶⁶ Tellingly, Cousser is known to have investigated the practicalities of this performance space, noting in his commonplace book the fees for hiring the 'Playhouse in Dublin', along with its seating capacity (eighty tickets for the boxes, one hundred and fifty in the pit and two hundred in the gallery).⁶⁷

with the choice of plays, the repertory selected could take on extramusical meanings, as in the famous fracas of 1724 in which supporters of the lord chancellor (Lord Alan Broderick, Viscount Middleton), who were united in their opposition against the speaker of the House of Commons (William Conolly), seized upon one of 'Several scurilous ballads [that] have appear'd in ridicule of the latter' and 'made the Musick play that particular [Irish] tune all night between the Acts [of a play], on purpose to affront the Speaker' (GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47030, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 30 January 1724, f. 57r).

62 Martyn J. Powell, *The Politics of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 103.

63 For a specific example of the serenata's use in a political sense see Stefanie Tcharos, 'The Serenata in Early Eighteenth-Century Rome: Sight, Sound, Ritual, and the Signification of Meaning', *The Journal of Musicology* 23/4 (2006), 528–568.

64 *Dublin Intelligence*, 8 February 1709.

65 Walter Graham, ed., *The Letters of Joseph Addison* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1941), 127, writing to Joshua Dawson (Secretary at Dublin Castle), 1 February 1709.

66 *Dublin Gazette*, 7–10 March 1713; not mentioned in Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*.

67 Cousser, commonplace book, 409; he also recorded (410) the venue's overall dimensions, jotting down that 'die länge des Dublinischen *Theatri* ist vom *Orchestre* zum ersten Schluß 18. Fus. von dar zum anderten [*sic*] schluß, 5. schuh. Die Breite, nahe dem *Orchestre*, 26½ Fus. Die Breite bey dem Schieber 15. Fus.' (the length of the Dublin theatre from the orchestra to the first end is 18 feet [and] from there to the next end, 5 feet. The width, near the orchestra, 26 and a half feet. The width at the flats[,] 15 feet). The meaning of the term *Schluß* in this context is unclear. It may be that the opening sentence describes the length of the stage itself (approximately 5.5 metres plus a further 1.5 metres), which is



A further venue considered by Cousser was the hall of the King's Hospital (or Blue Coat) School in Dublin, with a detailed note in his commonplace book listing the various entrances to the 'Blue Coat Hospital' that needed to be watched (*verwahrt werden*: literally, to keep safe), presumably in an attempt to prevent audience members entering without purchasing tickets.⁶⁸ It may indeed be significant that the instrumentation of the 'William III' serenata – scored for a plain four-part band of unspecified instruments – is less lavish than many of Cousser's other Dublin works in this genre, perhaps indicating a smaller-scale entertainment, not sponsored by the court, for which Cousser was paying the performers himself.⁶⁹ Cousser's two extant serenata scores, taken together with references in the printed serenata librettos, show that in the court sphere he had at his disposal a diverse selection of obbligato instruments, with arias featuring the accompaniment of strings, violin solo, as well as combinations of lute and violin pizzicati, violins and voice flutes, solo recorder, transverse flute and 'Tamburino', a trio of oboes and bassoon, a violoncello duet, a trio of trumpets with kettledrums and strings, and 'hunting horn' and strings.

It must be noted, however, that the hiring of the King's Hospital hall for recitals had had a somewhat chequered history. After a 'Musick meeting' given in 1722 by the violinist Matthew Dubourg (1703–1767), the minutes of the School's board meeting recorded that, notwithstanding the sum of £20 4s. 6d. collected for the institution's benefit,

the lending ye hall of this Hospitall for Musick Meetings & other publick diversions has been found to tend much to ye prejudice of ye Interest of this house, [sic] It is therefore this day ordered & agreed . . . that ye former order made for not lending ye sd Hall to any publick use be revyved, and that ye Schl hall for ye future be not lent out at ye request of any person whatsoever for any musick meetings or diversions.⁷⁰

The 'former order' may well refer to the aftermath of a benefit concert given in the hall by the famous castrato Nicolini (Nicolo Grimaldi, 1673–1732) in 1711, an occasion noted in the minutes as 'Senior Nicholini one nights benefit of his Entertainm.t of musick at this Hospitall'. Despite having raised £39 15s. 10½d. for the School, this episode had 'given great offence & found [to be] prejudicial to the interest of the Good Government thereof', with the result 'that S.[ai]d Hall be not lent for the future or Employ.d for any Musick meetings or publick diversions whatsoever'.⁷¹ Intriguingly, no further indication is provided as to the exact nature of this 'offence'.

Notwithstanding such difficulties, it is clear that during the first few decades of the eighteenth century Dublin offered a selection of potential concert venues, although to a large extent musically interested Dubliners appear to have 'made do' with sporadic, 'one-off' recitals.⁷² Few details are known regarding a series of subscription concerts, 'perform'd by the best Hands in the Kingdom', that was advertised by Dublin

slightly longer than that of the Salle de Comédie at Versailles during the late seventeenth century; see Barbara Coeyman, 'Theatres for Opera and Ballet during the Reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV', *Early Music* 18/1 (1990), 30.

68 Cousser, commonplace book, 388.

69 Cousser appears to have been able to press musicians external to the state band into service on occasion, since a list in his commonplace book (391) includes the names of eighteen instrumentalists, six of whom are not known to have been employed by the State Music but who may well have acted as deputies to official members, although this was a practice that Philip Perceval was keen to stamp out; see GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47030, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 19 October 1723, f. 25r. Both George Hart, a member of the City Music, and either Oliver or Thomas Delahoyde ('de la Hide') are included in this list, despite the fact they appear never to have served with the State Music; see Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*, 277 and 280.

70 Dublin, King's Hospital School Archives, MS2 D/1/5, 253 and MS1 D/1/5, 'The Hospital & Free School of King Charles ye Second Dublin. A Booke of Lawes Order &c.', 409 and 264.

71 'The Hospital & Free School of King Charles ye Second Dublin', 221 and 251.

72 See Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*, 11–24 and 33–43.



instrument maker and music seller John Neal in 1723.⁷³ One promotional drawcard for Neal was the participation of the Italian composer and violoncellist Lorenzo Bocchi, a tactic also used to advertise a pair of concerts given at the Theatre Royal on 26 September and 8 December 1725 featuring ‘Signiora [Giovanna] Stradiotti, lately arriv’d from Italy’.⁷⁴ These concerts appear to have been instigated by Cousser’s colleague at Dublin Castle, Philip Perceval, who, as official ‘Director and Supervisor of the State Musick’ since 1716, surely enlisted the services of at least some of the instrumentalists under his command. At the second performance, in addition to a selection of popular arias by Handel (from *Ottone*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Acis and Galatea* and *Rodelinda*), Stradiotti performed an Italian-language cantata of Perceval’s own composition.⁷⁵

Perceval frequently hosted music-making in his own home, an activity he engaged in with such enthusiasm that it continued when on holiday, as, for example, in Bath in September 1718, when he asked his brother to send some concertos and a serenata by Johann Hugo von Wilderer (1670/1671–1724), since ‘we have got a spinnet, and [Matthew] Du Bourg the famous Violinist is here and so we have a little Musick’.⁷⁶ Back in Dublin, Perceval belonged to a semi-regular private musical ‘Concert’, or club, comprised of his friends, family and work colleagues (both male and female). Their repertory included Italian-language serenatas, one of which was given in April 1714: ‘Our Season for our Consort is now over, we perform’d y.^e Serenata w.th great applause.’⁷⁷ The possibility must also be considered, therefore, that just such a mixed group of professional and highly skilled amateur musicians may have performed English-language works in a similar mould, perhaps even commissioning Cousser to compose the ‘William III’ serenata. Cousser’s direct involvement was confirmed by Perceval later in 1714, when writing to his brother John of his family’s impending departure from Dublin to their country estate, ‘Wood-park’:

I believe we shall have [William] Viner, Cousser, Cousin Ushers, Cosen Cowly, all of whom together w.th y.^e humb. Serv.^t will be able to furnish out a good Consort there in our great Dining

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- 73 *Dublin Courant*, 8 September, 19 October and 12 November 1723, and Peter Holman, ‘A Little Light on Lorenzo Bocchi: An Italian in Edinburgh and Dublin’, *Music in the British Provinces, 1690–1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 72–73. See also Nicholas Carolan, *John and William Neal: A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes Proper for the Violin, German Flute or Hautboy, Dublin 1724*, facsimile edition (Dublin: Folk Music Society of Ireland/Cumann Cheol Tíre Éireann, 1986).
- 74 Greene and Clark, *The Dublin Stage*, 69; *A Cantata Composed by Philip Percival, Esq.; Which was Sung at the Theatre-Royal on Wednesday the Eighth of December, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty-Five, with an English Song; by Signiora Stradiotti, Lately Arriv’d from Italy. Done in Italian and English, for the Use of the Subscribers. Translated into English from the Italian, by Mr. Joshua Brunel, of Trinity-College, Dublin* (Dublin: Christopher Dickson, 1725), Trinity College, University of Dublin (hereafter IRL-Dtc), P.gg.9 (20).
- 75 T. J. Walsh discredited Perceval on the latter account, claiming he had merely ‘arranged the cantata . . . [which] consisted of a string of arias from Handel’s operas’ (*Opera in Dublin, 1705–1797: The Social Scene* (Dublin: A. Figgis, 1973), 23). However, the printed programme does indicate that Perceval is likely to have composed the first part of the evening’s entertainment, a ‘Cantata del Signior Percivalo’, consisting of two arias separated by a recitative, beginning ‘Dove sei dolce mia vita’. This may have been the ‘first Essay in vocal Musick’ that Philip sent his brother on 9 January 1722, noting that a ‘great allowance must be made, for it requires a very different Stile from Instrumentall’; by 22 January John had acknowledged receipt of this ‘Cantata’ and, having played it at his harpsichord, reported ‘I like it extremely’ (GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47029, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 9 January 1722, f. 95r; letter of John Perceval to Philip Perceval, 22 January 1722, f. 96r).
- 76 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47028, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 1 September 1718, f. 249r. Later that month in Bath (on 26 September), Claver Morris invited Dubourg, John Shojan, John Walter (all violinists) and the bass player David Beswillibald to an evening meal at his local inn, followed by ‘a Performance of Musick by these extraordinary Hands’; see H. Diack Johnstone, ‘Claver Morris, an Early Eighteenth-Century English Physician and Amateur Musician *Extraordinaire*’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 133/1 (2008), 108.
- 77 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47027, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 1 May 1714, f. 105v. The work in question was ‘y.^e little Serenata, you [John] brought from Italy, No, No, non ti credo: Kit. Usher performs Thirsis, his sister Fillis, & Nancy Chloris’; see GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47027, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 17 April 1714, f. 98v.



Room, as good in its kind, as y.^c Mask in y.^c Hall. . . . Pray if you meet any new Musick y.^l [that] is good, don't forget us.⁷⁸

COUSSER'S DUBLIN SERENATAS: COMPOSITIONAL MODELS AND PERFORMANCE TRADITIONS

While ultimately it proves impossible to pin down an exact location and occasion for the composition and performance of the 'William III' serenata, it is striking that the work's overall structure and musical style have much in common with the two serenatas for which music survives that can be attributed definitively to Cousser: *The Universal Applause of Mount Parnassus*, for Queen Anne's birthday in 1711, and the 'Serenata Theatrale à 5', possibly for the Peace of Utrecht celebrations in 1713. And while a close musical analysis of these three works is beyond the scope of the present article, they each begin with a French-style *ouverture*, followed by a succession of recitatives, solo arias, instrumental ritornellos, dances and choruses which mix the Italian and French styles, bearing a striking resemblance to the structure of *Adonis*, a German-language opera Cousser prepared (and probably composed) for performance at the Württemberg court in around 1700.⁷⁹ In this sense, then, all three serenatas accord with contemporary German descriptions of the genre as 'a daughter of opera', a concept echoed by later writers such as Daniel Gottlieb Türk, who described the form as 'a type of little opera'.⁸⁰ It appears that Cousser, in addition to labelling these works 'serenatas', deliberately drew upon the musical styles and structures of his Continental background rather than adopt the established model of English courtly ode composition, a form that continued to centre largely on the alternation of verses for one or more voices, choruses and instrumental ritornellos, in the manner of the English verse anthem, even when other elements were added, including French *ouvertures*, recitatives and virtuoso da capo arias. Indeed, while Cousser was presumably aware of the performance of court odes during his time in London, we cannot be sure of his access to scores of works in this genre by composers such as John Blow, Daniel Purcell or John Eccles.⁸¹

There is little evidence to suggest the existence of an Irish tradition of courtly odes parallel to the English one prior to Cousser's arrival in Dublin in July 1707. The earliest known work of this kind appears to have been 'Hail Happy Day', an ode performed at Dublin Castle for Queen Anne's birthday earlier that same year. Set by court musician Charles Ximenes (or Christmenes), the work – for which no music survives – appears

78 GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47027, letter of Philip Perceval to John Perceval, 1 May 1714, f. 105v.

79 Owens, *Johann Sigismund Kusser (Cousser): Adonis*; see also Samantha Owens, 'The Stuttgart *Adonis*: A Recently Discovered Opera by Johann Sigismund Cousser?', *The Musical Times* 147 (Autumn 2006), 67–80. Detailed analysis of the serenatas will be undertaken in conjunction with an edition of Cousser's *Serenatas for Dublin*, forthcoming with A-R Editions.

80 Anonymous, *Anleitung zur Poesie, Darinnen ihr Ursprung, Wachsthum, Beschaffenheit und rechter Gebrauch untersucht und gezeigt wird* (Breslau: Hubert, 1725), quoted in Wolfgang Hirschmann, 'Telemanns Frankfurter Serenata von 1716 und die Tradition der Abendmusiken', in *Telemanns Auftrags- und Gelegenheitswerke: Funktion, Wert und Bedeutung. Bericht über die Internationale Wissenschaftliche Konferenz anlässlich der 10. Magdeburger Telemann-Festtage, Magdeburg, 14. bis 16. März 1990*, ed. Wolf Hohohm, Carsten Lange and Brit Reipsch with Bernd Baselt (Oscherleben: Dr Ziethen Verlag, 1997), 81: 'Eine Serenata . . . ist eine Tochter von der Opera'; and Daniel Gottlieb Türk, *Klavierschule* (Leipzig and Halle: author, 1789), 394, note 1: 'eine Art von kleine Oper'.

81 Firmly ensconced in Dublin, Cousser was surely also unaware of John Eccles's court birthday ode for 1711, *Fair as the Morning*, the libretto for which proclaimed: 'This Song being Set after the Italian Manner, requir'd the *Recitativo-Parts* to be writ in Blank Verse, closing (for the most Part) with a Dissyllable, the Rest in *Roundo-Metres*, or *Da-Capo's*, as the Italians call them' (*The Song for Her Majesty's Birth-day*, Cambridge, MA, Houghton Library, Harvard University (hereafter US-Cah), *EC 65 T 1878. 708s; Nahum Tate, text; music lost). Despite Eccles's efforts, the court birthday ode that year appears to have been replaced by 'a Dialogue in Italian, in Her Majesty's Praise, set to excellent Musick by the famous Mr. *Hendel* . . . sung by Cavaliero Nicolini Grimaldi, and the other Celebrated Voices of the Italian Opera: with which Her Majesty was extramly well pleas'd' (quoted in Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, 43).



to have followed the pattern of the English royal birthday ode, with the libretto comprising verses sung by male vocalists ('Mr. Warren', 'Mr. Hodge' and 'Mr. Chumnes') interspersed with choruses (including a final 'Grand Chorus'), akin to the verse anthem.⁸² The only other sign of a 'pre-history' of the ode in Ireland is Henry Purcell's *Great Parent, Hail*, a work commissioned for the centenary of Trinity College, Dublin in 1694. But while in this case the music does survive, it is impossible to ascertain the extent to which such an import might have influenced local composers.⁸³

Beyond matters of musical style and structure, there are a number of further essential differences between the celebratory odes and serenatas supplied for the courts at St James's Palace and Dublin Castle respectively. Principal among these is the nature of the vocal forces, since unlike in London, where ode composers were able to rely on the trained singers – men and boys – of the Chapel Royal, joined by the occasional female theatre singer, Cousser's chorus appears to have been a rather less cohesive unit.⁸⁴ A page in his commonplace book lists the names of thirty-seven vocalists available to him in Dublin (the date is unspecified) – presumably a pool from which he was able to draw when circumstances required.⁸⁵ In addition to a number of actors and dancers from the Smock Alley Theatre, these included a selection of vicars choral from Dublin's two cathedrals, St Patrick's and Christ Church, with whom Cousser had had professional connections thanks to his involvement in music-making at Christ Church on official state occasions.⁸⁶ In 1712 the Master of the Boys at the latter institution, Henry Swords, was paid for five choristers who had participated in the royal birthday serenata earlier that year.⁸⁷ State payments were also made in 1711 and 1712 to the singer Giuliana Celotti (with whom Cousser had been associated in London; see above), and the fact that five further women were named in Cousser's list of vocalists also suggests that women may have taken part in serenata performances, at least as soloists.⁸⁸

A further major difference between the English and Irish royal birthday pieces is the occasional use in Dublin of sets, stage machinery and costumes, with some characters entering and exiting in what was clearly a dramatic presentation. Significantly, it is Cousser's three serenatas with the suffix 'Theatrale' that contain such references (dating from 1712, 1718 and 1727 respectively), suggesting that he may have chosen this phrase intentionally to describe a serenata featuring an unusually high degree of theatrical-style representation (see Table 2). It is also striking that from 1709 Cousser's serenata librettos all refer to the work having been 'represented', whereas his first foray into this arena, the *Ode on Her Majesty's Birth-Day* (1708), had merely

82 *An Ode on the Queen's Birth-Day, for the Year 1706/7. Set by Mr. Ximenes, and Performed at the Castle of Dublin* (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1706), US-Cah *EB7 A100 70702. Robert Hodge (died 1709, see Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*, 281) is listed by Cousser as 'Hodge, Maitre du Choeur de St. Patrick, in Dublin, in y back-close of St Patricks' (commonplace book, 6).

83 Henry Purcell, 'Great Parent, Hail', in *Miscellaneous Odes and Cantatas*, ed. Arnold Goldsbrough, Denis Arundell, Anthony Lewis and Thurston Dart, *The Works of Henry Purcell*, volume 27 (London: Novello, 1957), 59–92.

84 On the use of women singers in ode performances at the English court see Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, 108.

85 Cousser, commonplace book, 391.

86 As, for example, in early 1715, when Philip Perceval reported to his brother, 'M^r Cousser had a very fine Te deum [*sic*], Jubilate and Anthem performed on the thanksgiving day' (GB-Lbl Egmont papers, Ms. 47028, letter of Philip Perceval to Sir John Perceval, 5 March 1715, f. 10r). As noted by Barra Boydell, the timing of services allowed for vocalists to belong to the choirs of both cathedrals simultaneously; see *A History of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), 78–79 and 104.

87 Walsh, *Opera in Dublin*, 26, and Boydell, *A History of Music at Christ Church Cathedral*, 81, note 75.

88 'M^{rs}. Hollister; M^{rs}. Davis; M^{rs}. Sterling; M^{rs}. Vanderdank; M^{rs}. Goolding' (Cousser, commonplace book, 391). Mr and Mrs James Vanderdank were actors in the Smock Alley company from the 1720s, and a 'Miss Vanderbank' danced in the 1735–1736 season at Aungier Street; a 'Mrs Sterling' acted with the Smock Alley company from 1716 until 1732 (see Greene and Clark, *The Dublin Stage*, 48–49 and 61); Dublin City Library and Archive, Gilbert Collection Ms. 206, volume 2 (1707–1719), document 19, 'Payments on Concordatum from 1st January 1711 to 16th Dec: 1712 inclusive, in which are also included payments made in the year 1711 which were not discharged by the Queen's letter in that year', 10 April 1712; and Walsh, *Opera in Dublin*, 26.



Table 2 Staging instructions in the printed librettos for Johann Sigismund Cousser's serenatas for Dublin

Year	Libretto	Page	Staging instructions
1712	Libretto, <i>A Serenata Theatrale. To be Represented on the Birth-day of the Most Serene Anne . . . By Their Excellencies the Lords Justices Command. Set by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser, Chappel-Master of Trinity College</i> (Dublin: Edwin Sandys, 1712) Location: US-Cah, *GC7 K9686 712s; IRL-Cdl, M.7.6.(15)	3	'Britain in a Royal Throne.' 'The Thames encircled with <i>Najades</i> .' 'Apollo with the Nine Muses.' 'Glory and Zeal in Triomfant Carrs.'
1716	Libretto, <i>A Serenata Theatrale, to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesties State in Ireland, and Chapel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: E. Waters, 1716) Location: GB-Ob, Vet. A4 e.760 (4)	4	'Jupiter, Sitting on an Imperial Throne; holding in his Rig[ht] hand, Thunder, attended by the Eagle and <i>Ganime[de]</i> .' ' <i>Britannia</i> , Plac'd on a Royal Throne, encompass'd by <i>Nerei[des]</i> and Flood-Nymphs.' 'Apollo, Leading the Nine Muses; and holding in his Ha[nd] a golden Lyre.' ' <i>Astrea</i> , Blindfold, holding in her Right-hand a naked Swor[d] and in her Left an even Ballance.'
1727	Libretto, <i>A Serenata Theatrale, to be Represented on the Birth-day of His Most Serene Majesty George . . . By their Excellencies the Lords Justices Special Command. Prepared by Mr. John Sigismund Cousser, Master of the Musick, attending His Majesty's State in Ireland, and Chappel-Master of Trinity-College</i> (Dublin: George Faulkner[, 1727]) Location: IRL-DTc, P.gg.9 (28); IRL-Cdl, M.6.19.(2)	[3] 4 5 6 7 8	'Discord rises out of the Earth with a lighted Torch in her Hand.' 'Martial Sound of Drums and Trumpets is heard, at which <i>Peace</i> awakens.' 'Justice descends from Heaven in a Cloud.' 'Apollo in a triumphant Chariot drawn by four Steeds.' 'Apollo descends to the Earth, and takes <i>Peace</i> and Justice into His Chariot.' 'Here several Cupids take Olive-Branche, and lash Discord.' 'A Dart falls from Heaven, and plunges Discord immediately into the Earth.' 'The Chariot of Apollo ascends to Heaven, with <i>Peace</i> and Justice in it; and the Cupids separate, and go off the Stage on each side.'

been 'Perform'd at the Castle of Dublin', as was the case with Ximenes's ode the previous year.⁸⁹ As noted by Tony Trowles, the resumption of the earlier formula ('Perform'd') following Cousser's death – with Matthew Dubourg's ode for George II's birthday in 1728 – appears to have 'marked an immediate return to the traditional choral ode'.⁹⁰

89 Compare Trowles, 'The Musical Ode in Britain', volume 1, 144–146.

90 Trowles, 'The Musical Ode in Britain', volume 1, 153.



These features, in terms of both performance forces and staging, suggest that Cousser's works fit reasonably readily into Continental Europe's conception of the serenata: a courtly genre related to the cantata that generally formed part of a larger festivity.⁹¹ Particularly popular in some regions of Italy and at the imperial court in Vienna, it spread from there (along with Italian musicians and performance styles) to courts elsewhere in the Empire. Generally scored for vocal soloists and chorus and accompanied by the typical opera orchestra of the day, according to Michael Talbot's detailed study of the Venetian version of the genre, 'the great majority [of serenatas] . . . were performed in theatrical surroundings ingeniously transformed by the art of designers, decorators and carpenters into a "theatre for a day"'.⁹² The hints of staging in Cousser's serenata librettos imply that the latter approach may also have been customary in Dublin, possibly with a temporary stage constructed in the Castle, as was common at smaller courts elsewhere in Europe. But whereas outdoor venues such as courtyards or gardens were often used on the Continent, the timing of the British monarchs' birthdays (in February, May and October), combined with the realities of Irish weather, would have precluded the use of the *al fresco* settings frequently associated with the form elsewhere.⁹³

Complementing the elaborate scenery, Talbot notes, the singers in Venetian serenatas were 'often costumed in quasi-theatrical style', and very occasionally such entertainments were described as having been '*rappresentato* (acted) in preference to the more usual *cantato* (sung), *eseguito* (performed) or *recitato* (recited)', making Cousser's choice of the word 'represented' all the more striking.⁹⁴ In keeping with this possibility – and, again, in direct contrast to the English ode – Cousser's serenatas generally allot distinct characters to the vocal soloists, who each personify a country, a god, a virtue or a vice. Even the chorus is occasionally identified with a particular group, such as the 'Choir of Nymphes' that appears in the 1712 birthday serenata (see Table 1). That Cousser had at his disposal a selection of the necessary resources for a 'quasi-theatrical' presentation is suggested by an inventory of his Dublin home, which lists a chest of drawers containing opera costumes.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the scenario of a contest, one of the two favourite formulas for Continental serenata plots, also features in a number of Cousser's serenatas: *An Harmonious Rivalship of Vertues* (coronation, 1714), *A Contest between Mars and Jupiter* (1721), *A Contest between Marsyas and Apollo* (1723) and *Heaven Invaded. Or, a Contest between Jupiter and the Giants* (1727) (see Table 1).⁹⁶

Cousser was certainly well aware of the musical characteristics of the genre, as shown by the inventory of serenatas ('Serenate') in his commonplace book, comprising his own collection of copies that included Italian-language works composed by Wilderer, Pietragrua, G. M. Bononcini, Ziani and Giannettini.⁹⁷ Furthermore, it seems likely that Cousser had witnessed the performance of Italianate serenatas at first hand while visiting Vienna and Italy in the early 1700s; indeed, his own *La Grotta di Salzdahl*, an Italian-language 'Diuertimento musicale' penned by Wolfenbüttel court poet Flaminio Parisetti to welcome home Duke Anton Ulrich in 1691 (set for six singers representing allegorical characters: 'La Musica', 'L'Allegrezza', 'Il Piacere', 'Il Dissegno', 'Il Gusto' and 'Il Tempo'), was essentially an Italian serenata.⁹⁸ Cousser's engagement with the form also included his participation in the performance of Wilderer's serenata *La Presa di Landau*, since the commonplace book shows that he was owed travelling expenses for a return journey from an unknown location (possibly Stuttgart) to Heidelberg on this account for himself and two others.⁹⁹ In 1711, for

91 Michael Talbot, 'The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 18 (1982), 7.

92 Talbot, 'The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice', 3–4.

93 See, for example, the discussion of the serenata as an outdoor entertainment that took place in the evening, in Wolfgang Hirschmann, 'Telemanns Frankfurter Serenata von 1716 und die Tradition der Abendmusiken', 80–95.

94 Talbot, 'The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice', 7–8.

95 Cousser, commonplace book, 167: 'Opern-Kleider'.

96 Talbot, 'The Serenata in Eighteenth-Century Venice', 10.

97 Cousser, commonplace book, 189.

98 D-W Textb. 398; music lost.

99 Cousser, commonplace book, 448: 'Um La pr. di Landau. Reise à 3 biß Heidelb.[erg] h.[in] und zurück. 21 [Gulden].'



reasons that remain unclear, Cousser sent ‘all the parts’ of this serenata from Dublin to London, followed in 1723 by a further copy directed to one of his relatives from the Treu family.¹⁰⁰

Earlier in 1723 Cousser had adapted sections from another of Wilderer’s serenatas, *Apollo & Marsia* (date unknown), for his own work for George I’s birthday, *A Contest between Marsyas and Apollo*, noting in the printed libretto that

This Subject was some Years ago exhibited in the *Italian Tongue* in a Foreign-Court, where it afforded a general Satisfaction; and in hopes, that it may have the same good Fortune here; I have procured it to be translated into *English*, yet so as the *Italian Method* in this kind of Performance has been duly observed. The Character of *Apollo* is represented by a soft and sweet Musick, and that of *Marsyas* by a noisy and rural one. The whole Serenade is set a new, except the first and last Chorus, which being made with incomparable Skill, and happily adapted to both the above-mention’d Characters, by the Famous Mr. *Wilderer*, I have presumed to keep, being of Opinion [*sic*], they will be heard with pleasure, and procure honour to their Author.¹⁰¹

Cousser’s method of obtaining the serenata text here – arranging for the translation of a pre-existing text from Italian into English – may go some way towards explaining the lack of poets acknowledged on the title pages of his Dublin librettos. As mentioned above, in each case Cousser alone is named, described variously as having ‘set’, ‘compos’d’ or ‘prepared’ the work in question; perhaps he often sought out appropriate texts and then adapted them to suit his purpose. This marks a further difference from both the English ode – where surviving librettos invariably also mention the poet, usually the Poet Laureate – and the Italian serenata – where only the poet was generally identified, not the composer.

It is clear that Cousser was the key figure in the production of the Dublin serenatas: arranging texts or commissioning poets himself, setting the text to music (whether composing new music or adapting pre-existing works), rehearsing the musicians and directing the final performance. Further evidence from his commonplace book demonstrates that while on his overseas trip in 1716 Cousser hoped to obtain serenatas by a number of specific composers working predominantly in the Italian style, including Pepusch, Handel, Luigi Mancina, Attilio Ariosti, Nicola Francesco Haym, Francesco Bartolemeo Conti and Johann Georg Linike.¹⁰² He also jotted down a reminder to himself to obtain ‘Words for Her Majesty’s Birthday Serenatas’, and planned to commission an Italian poet resident in London, Giacomo Rossi (‘S^r. Rossi’), to ‘make a serenata’; it may even be possible that the latter relates to the translation of the Italian text of Wilderer’s *Apollo & Marsia*.¹⁰³

One final feature that may have been integral to Cousser’s conception of the serenata was the inclusion of ballet – perhaps not surprising given his training in France, his role as a disseminator of Lullian instrumental music upon his return to the Empire in the 1680s, and his subsequent activity as a composer of dance music for both operas and ballets during his time in Wolfenbüttel, Hamburg and Stuttgart.¹⁰⁴ While Continental

100 Cousser, commonplace book, 366 (‘alle die Partien von La Presa di Landau’) and 393. Cousser’s sister, Maria Elisabeth, had married the Stuttgart printer Paul Treu (born 1648) in the late 1680s; their son, Daniel Gottlieb Treu, was also a musician and composer. See Walter Pfeilsticker, *Neues Württembergisches Dienerbuch* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1957), volume 1, §1036, and Mattheson, *Grundlage einer Ehren-pforte*, 371–379.

101 Libretto, J. S. Cousser, *A Contest between Marsyas and Apollo* (Dublin: Thomas Hume, 1723), 2, ‘The Argument’.

102 Cousser, commonplace book, 202: ‘Serenata vom Pepusch’; ‘Serenata’s bey S.^r Hendel. Ariosto. Haym. Linneke’; and ‘Serenata vom S.^r Mancina. Conti[?] Hendel. Attilio’.

103 Cousser, commonplace book, 205: ‘Worte vor Ihr Maj’s Serenatas an Geburts-Tägen’; 204: ‘bey S.^r Rossi, in London eine Serenata machen lassen’; and 43: ‘Rossi. Ein Italianischer Poët in London’.

104 For example, his 1691 *Des Braunsch[w]eig[e]l. Wolfenbüttelschen Landes Allgemeine Freude* was a ballet of nine *entrées* performed to welcome the newly married Princess Christine Luise of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (D-W Xb 4° 55), while a selection of his theatrical dances appeared in 1700 in three collections published in Stuttgart by his brother-in-law, Paul Treu: *Apollon Enjouë Contenant Six Ouvertures de Theatre Accompagnées de Plusieurs Aïrs; Festin des Muses Contenant Six Ouvertures de Theatre Accompagnées de Plusieurs Aïrs*; and *La Cicala della Cetra d’Eunomio. Operetta Musicale*.



serenatas were occasionally known to include ballet, the possible presence of dancing may mark a further major difference between Cousser's Dublin serenatas and the 'typical' English courtly ode.¹⁰⁵ The dances in these works comprise two chaconnes (indicated in the librettos of 1710 and 1712) and four minuets (three in the 'Serenata Theatrale à 5' and one in the 'William III' serenata), which appear both as sung airs and purely instrumental pieces. The possibility that these individual movements were not simply played and/or sung but rather danced can be inferred from surviving accounts for the 1712 serenata, which record payment to a known dancing master, 'Mr. Delamain'.¹⁰⁶ This was presumably John Delamain, whose name appears in a list of 'Dancers in Dublin in Ireland' (comprising six women and fifteen men) found in Cousser's commonplace book, an indication that he may have been at least partly responsible for recruiting dancers on occasion.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, when making lists for his trip to England and the Continent in 1716, Cousser noted down the phrase 'Dances in figures', undoubtedly a reminder to himself to purchase examples of ballet choreography in Beauchamp-Feuillet notation, available in published form in England from at least 1706.¹⁰⁸

CONCLUSION

It is clear, then, that although Cousser's Dublin serenatas have been described as having drawn 'heavily on the [English] masque tradition', much more compelling is the way in which they reveal his extensive Continental experience.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, Cousser may well have been unaware of the older, courtly masque genre, and while he is known to have possessed copies of a selection of *ouvertures* extracted from semi-operas by Henry Purcell, including *Dioclesian* (1690), *King Arthur*, *The Indian Queen* (both 1691) and *The Fairy-Queen* (1692), it is not clear whether he had access to the full scores of these works and thus to the extensive masque

105 Thomas Schipperges, 'Serenade – Serenata', in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik*, second edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel and Stuttgart: Bärenreiter and Metzler, 1994–2008), Sachteil 8, columns 1312–1313. See, for example, Reinhard Keiser's 'Serenata' *Der zur angenehmen Mayen-Zeit in Ludwigs-Auen entstandene Lust-Streit* (Ludwigsburg, c1721), which includes a 'Ballet von Jägern und Gärtnern' (a ballet of hunters and gardeners) plus other dance movements (libretto in Stuttgart, Hauptstaatsarchiv, A21 Büschel 635). Martin Adams notes, however, that during the chaconne from Purcell's *Sound the Trumpet* (Z335/7), 'dances almost certainly did take place' ('Purcell, Blow and the English Court Ode', in *Purcell Studies*, ed. Curtis A. Price (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 173).

106 Walsh, *Opera in Dublin*, 26.

107 Cousser, commonplace book, 398: 'Däntzers zu Dublin in Irrland'; five of the names have been struck through, presumably indicating they were no longer available. Cousser also lists two further Delamains alongside John in the address book section of his commonplace book: Henry (also described by Cousser as one of the dancers in Dublin, as 'Harry De la Main') and Richard, who, according to Johann Christoph Pepusch, played 'violino tenore' in the band of the Duke of Chandos at Cannons in 1720; see Cousser, commonplace book, 23 and 398, and Philip Highfill, Jr, Kalman Burnim and Edward Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973–1993), volume 10, 60. Henry may have studied and worked in France, since he is described in the *Dublin News-Letter* in 1742 as a dancer 'from the Opera in Paris' 'lately arrived'; see Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*, 277.

108 Cousser, commonplace book, 202: 'Däntze in figuren'; and Moira Goff and Jennifer Thorp, 'Dance Notation Published in England c1700–1740 and Related Manuscript Material', *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 9/2 (1991), 32–50. While this may be a sign of Cousser's own engagement with dance in a practical sense, it is also possible that he had been commissioned by the Delamain family to bring back the latest dances, since a 'Mr Delamain of Dublin' (presumably John) subscribed to John Weaver's *Orchesography. Or, the Art of Dancing* (London: H. Meere, 1706) and an English translation of Feuillet's *Chorégraphie*, 1700, while the name of 'Mr. Delamain, the younger brother, of Dublin' (perhaps Henry, also known as Harry; see previous note) appears among the subscribers to E. Pemberton's collection of dances, *An Essay for the Further Improvement of Dancing* (London: J. Walsh, 1711), 'describ'd in characters after the newest manner of Monsieur Feuillet'.

109 McGuinness and Trowles, 'The Court Ode, 1660–1715'.



episodes they also contain.¹¹⁰ Neither is it clear how familiar he was with the later masques presented in early eighteenth-century London.¹¹¹ Given Cousser's background, it seems that the Italian serenata, coupled with elements of French opera, *ballet de cour* and the German *Singballett*, are rather more likely candidates in terms of possible sources of influence. And while it is true that many contemporaneous English court odes also feature elements of both Italian and French musical styles, Cousser's works come much closer to matching the textual, musical and performance conventions of the latter form.

Cousser's regular activity in Ireland as both a composer and director of serenatas, as outlined in this article, also offers a clue to answering the puzzle presented by his 'apparently limited activity in Dublin', often seen as odd for a musician who for the major part of his career had focused on the composition and production of opera at major venues across the Empire.¹¹² Having been resident in London during a particularly troubled phase in the history of opera in England, Cousser would have been all too aware of the difficulties and financial dangers of producing opera in a market largely unaccustomed to the genre. Indeed, he may well have participated in some of these early London performances, including *Gli Amori d'Ergasto*, an Italian-language production put together by his colleague Jacob Greber that flopped at the Haymarket in 1705.¹¹³ Surely, any sustained attempt to follow this path in Dublin would have seemed nothing short of madness.

To a degree, then, Cousser's serenatas can be seen to have functioned as an operatic substitute, but one that presumably reflected the limited financial resources of Dublin high society in the early eighteenth century. Indeed, the hostility towards the Italian musical style expressed by many local writers (above all Jonathan Swift) stemmed in large part from a genuine concern at the financial logic of supporting exorbitantly paid foreign performers in the generally depressed economic climate of early eighteenth-century Ireland. As Katherine Howard (*fl.* c.1655–1714), the widow of a prominent Dublin physician, pointed out to her son William, Nicolini's visit to Dublin in 1711 caused a sensation among polite society but came at a high price: 'Nick aleaney . . . has made a great noys and got abundance of money hear[,] more I fear than could well be spared in this pore place.'¹¹⁴ Whatever the case, the three serenatas that survive in Cousser's hand undoubtedly supply important musical evidence for performances associated with Dublin Castle during the first three decades of the eighteenth century, even though we may never be able to establish a concrete date, performance venue or composer for the 'William III' serenata, however tempting such speculation may be.

APPENDIX

This appendix presents the text of the 'Serenata, à 4. Fama. Albania. Neptunus. Apollo' as it appears in the sole extant source (D-Hs M A/836); the transcription preserves the spelling, capitalization and punctuation of the original.

110 Cousser, commonplace book, 248 and 394.

111 It is possible, however, that during Cousser's visit to England in 1716–1717 he attended performances of masques by Johann Christoph Pepusch; see J. Merrill Knapp, 'English Reactions to Handel and Italian Opera in London during 1711 to 1720', *Göttinger Händel-Beiträge* 2 (1986), 165, and Murray Lefkowitz, 'Masque: 6. 18th Century', in *Grove Music Online* (17 August 2006). See also Lucyle Hook, 'Motteux and the Classical Masque', in *British Theatre and the Other Arts, 1660–1800*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Washington, D. C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1984), 105–115.

112 Boydell, *A Dublin Musical Calendar*, 15.

113 The failure of *Gli Amori d'Ergasto* was partly due to competition from *Arsinoe*, an English-language opera arranged by Thomas Clayton that appeared simultaneously at Drury Lane; see Robert D. Hume, 'The Sponsorship of Opera in London, 1704–1720', *Modern Philology* 85/4 (1988), 423–424. As Lowell Lindgren notes, Cousser was also involved (presumably while in London) in the preparation of an Italian opera to be presented in English; see 'J. S. Cousser, Copyist', 748–749.

114 IRL-Dn Wicklow papers, MS 38, 632/2, letter of Katherine Howard to William Howard, 6 October 1711. Similar complaints were made regarding a series of concerts presented by the castrato 'Signor Benedetto' in 1725; see the comments of 'Hibernicus' writing in the *Dublin Weekly Journal*, cited by Walsh, *Opera in Dublin*, 22–23.

*Recitative* (Fame)

No! he's not dead! the God of Day, Encircled with Rays of light, shall sooner forget to guild the azure face of Heaven, than Nassau's Name shall cease to be adored, by Britain['s] worthy sons, by him restored.

Aria (Fame)

I'll blaze abroad her [Britain's] Glory,
and bright heroick virtues,
where Earth her shores displays;
Nor cease to sound his [William III's] story
till time and motion cease.

Recitative (Neptune)

What meant the Fates too prodigall to Nassau? I only seas obtained by Lott, my brother, Heaven, and Earth, but he partakes of all these Empires; with Laurels crown'd at Land, at sea victorious; Translated to the stars, now shines most glorious.

Aria (Neptune)

Still in endless toils embarrass'd,
thro the series of his reign,
at distant Glory's view,
he swift as lightning flew
and cross'd each year the main.

Recitative (Albania)

Almost oppress'd with Romish superstition, my groans to Belgia's shores arrived great William heard, and hast'ning with healing in his wings, my I'll [isle] relieved, and vent'ring all my sinking state retri[e]ved.

Aria (Albania)

Britons, strow his tomb with flowers,
hold his memory most dear,
your defender Fate ordain'd him,
in your cause no fears restrain'd him
dangers facing ev'ry where.

Recitative (Apollo)

His Wisdom join'd w.[i]th Courage, kept equal pace; nor one outstript the other. Had Envy's breath his laurels never blasted to what cou'd mighty he not have arrived, whose schemes were all w.[i]th Counsell well designed: oft prosp'rous, tho' by Traytors undermined.

Aria (Apollo)

Tho' Envy often baffled,
the projects of his reign.
The seeds he sow'd now flourish,
by Anna's influence nourish'd,
who rules the Land and Main.



Chorus

While the happy British Nation,
reaps the harvest of his care,
all shall pay him adoration,
and renew the sacred due,
to his ashes ev'ry year.

Recitative (Fame)

His mighty Prowess Belgia's plains can witness: with Glory crown'd, and cover'd ore with laurels torn from the Gallick Gen'ralls, I saw him come: Hibernia's streams have wash'd him, with their own purple dyed, the Monarch's growing Fortune to narrow tracts of Land was not confined: Fate more for him designed; Gaul's Navys burnt[,] their Crews all kill'd or drowned, the farthest shores his watry Empire bounded.

Aria (Fame)

Glorious Nassau, glorious Nassau's lasting Name
on the British hearts engrav'd,
e're shall fill the Trump of Fame.
He that so himself behaved
from oblivion shall be saved,
made the British Muses theme.

Recitative (Neptune)

I saw the Godlike Hero, when sinking Brittain call'd him firm on the deck, with Courage stem the surges.
Let's go, says he, these Storms awhile may stay us; but n'ere shall change our purpose, or dismay us.

Aria (Neptune)

Opposition Courage raises
kindling ardour to obtain.
Adverse Fortune to sustain,
gains a Hero greatest praises
makes a Monarch fitt to reign.

Recitative (Albania)

Unluckily deluded, I let Rome's locusts settle again within my borders, the spreading pest almost my Lands devoured what cou[ld] I do? This Plague had ne'ver been driven away, had Nassau not been sent by heaven.

Aria (Albania)

He the paths of Glory treading,
drove the Romish fry away,
Who our Church is overspreading,
preach'd up Arbitrary sway;
faith implicit allways pleading,
teaching blindly to obey.



His Examples Brittons firing,
 push'd them on to purchase Fame.
 They the daring Prince admiring,
 all in ardour, all in flame,
 to surpass his deeds aspiring,
 soon restor'd their father's Name.

Recitative (Apollo)

His Godlike mind cou'd never lie unactive; the toyls of War, or load of weighty Empire in endless cares invol'd him. Not only Brittain's Grandure, but Europe[']s safety all those hours employed, by Peers and other Princes for Recreation lawfully enjoyed.

Aria (Apollo)

Great Queen of Isles,
 see! heaven smiles
 thy mournfull scenes are cleared,
 when Nassau's sun,
 his Course had run,
 and threatning Clouds of grief again appeared.
 The mighty Monarch[']s loss t'[o] attone,
 the best of Queens ascends the throne.

Chorus

None the secret art to reign,
 better than that Prince cou'd know,
 none his point cou'd better gain,
 better counterplot his foe;
 His sagacious piercing Eye
 farther than the outside went,
 cou'd his Noble's hearts descry,
 reach their most abstruse intent.

Aria (Fame and Albania)

Godlike Actions were his aim,
 fear ne're seiz'd his dauntless soul;
 Foes his Courage ne're cou'd tame,
 or his brave attempts Controul;
 sacred ever be his birth,
 noted with auspicious white:
 may the finest crumbling Earth
 on his Urn lie ever light.