

# The Irish Times

June 6, 2000

Cellist Steven Doane held the audience spellbound throughout his solo cello recital at Christ Church Cathedral. In his short programme last Thursday night of two Bach Cello Suites and John Taverner's Threnos, given as part of the Celliuradh International Conference on Christian Liturgy, the playing endorsed the peerless reputation of Bach's music for solo strings and did full justice to the Taverner.

The performance options in Bach's Suites can be simplified into a choice between showing the music's origins in dance and emphasizing its expressive potential, its transcendence. Doane was decisively inclined towards the latter, but he also showed that these options are not mutually exclusive. His freedom of pulse in the Prelude and Allemande of the Suite No. 1 in G, BWV 1007, had improvisatory flair. Yet in the same suite the Minuets had a dance-like spring.

This all-round flexibility reached its height in the more darkly hued Suite No. 5 in c minor, BWV 1011. Clarity of part-writing, combined with impassioned shaping—dashing and pausing, light and shad—showed profound, independent insight; and the impeccable control of intonation and color was always a pleasure.