

**West Wicklow  
Chamber Music  
Festival**



17-21 MAY

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**MICHAEL COLLINS CLARINET**  
**MICHAEL MCHALE PIANO**  
**WIGMORE SOLOISTS**

**SUNDAY 21 MAY 7.30PM**

**Johannes Brahms**  
**Robert Schumann**  
**Clara Schumann**  
**Mozart**

Clarinet Sonata in E-flat major Op. 120 No. 2  
Piano Quintet in E flat major Op. 44  
Three Songs, arranged for piano quartet  
Clarinet Quintet in A major, K 581

*Tickets: €17.50, €24.50, €29.50*

*(10% Discount for NCH Friends & Groups of 8+)*

*15% Discount when booking three or more concerts in the series.*



## Welcome everyone to the West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival's action-packed May 2023 edition!

I've known renowned Irish violinist Patrick Rafter for as long as I can remember, from our days at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and later the Royal Academy of Music in London. As well as sharing a love of music, we both come from very similar rural backgrounds, so many of our conversations would span from Beethoven to Belgian Blue cattle! Patrick and I will spend the month of June as artists in residence at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, so much of our programme has a French inspiration, along with Irish and Italian flavours too. I'm particularly thrilled that the festival has commissioned the phenomenally versatile composer Conor Linehan to write *DIVA*, a new Suite for violin and piano, which will be premiered in this concert.

Jess Gillam has taken the music world by storm since rising to fame after her appearance in the final of the BBC Young Musician of the Year. I got to know Jess in London when I was invited to appear on her hugely popular show on BBC Radio 3. Jess is a person of great warmth and energy and exudes these qualities in her performances. I'm so excited that Jess will be making her Irish debut and performing twice at the festival, in trio formation with Sam Becker (bass) and Leif Kaner-Lidström (piano), as well as with her widely-praised Jess Gillam

Ensemble. In both programmes, Jess and her colleagues present programmes of great musical variety, from J.S. Bach to Chilly Gonzales and everything in between. Jess will also give a masterclass to some of Ireland's brightest saxophonist stars of the future during the festival at the National Concert Hall.

The London based Navarra quartet are one of the most dynamic string quartets on the world stage and have a strong connection to Ireland through their cellist Brian O Kane! As a quartet and as individual artists, they are truly of the highest calibre. I first performed with the quartet during the dreaded Covid lockdowns and it is a real joy to be able to invite them to Wicklow and to collaborate again, with an audience this time round! As well as much heralded audience favourites by Mozart and Brahms, the concert will feature the world premiere of Jane O'Leary's *Beneath the Dark Blue Waves* (for piano quintet), a new musical treat for us all!

Our Rising Stars concert features one of the most exciting flute talents to come out of Ireland in recent years in Amy Gillen, partnered by Frasier Hickland. Amy was chosen by the Royal College of Music London to perform for King Charles on his visit of the college, a reflection of the high esteem Amy is held in.

The Irish Chamber Orchestra are coming to the festival for their debut performance in County Wicklow! What better way to celebrate than with two concerts for our younger audience members and their families. We'll be exploring the magical world of Saint Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals* with South Korean pianist Soo-Jung Ann and myself fighting it out on two pianos to bring all the various animals to life! The concert will be narrated by actor Evanna Lynch.

Another Irish debut is on the cards for Apollo 5, who bring the festival to a fitting close. As part of the world famous Voces8 Foundation the group showcase the voice in all its glory, with no gimmicks or distractions, just pure unaccompanied vocal purity and beauty. Not to be missed and a perfect end to a magical few days of music!

On behalf of our festival manager Muireann and I, we hope you all have a wonderful experience at festival.

**Fiachra Garvey**  
**Founder & Artistic Director**

# Wed 17 Nov 8pm

## Russborough

This concert is kindly supported  
by Stephen Hubbard

*Patrick Rafter / violin*  
*Fiachra Garvey / piano*

**Esposito** Sonata for Violin and  
Piano No. 1 in G major, Op. 32

**Ravel** Sonata No. 2 for Violin and  
Piano

INTERVAL

**Conor Linehan** DIVA (*World  
Première, WWF Commission*)

**Lekeu** Sonata for Violin and Piano  
in G major

**MICHELE ESPOSITO**  
(1855-1929)

**Sonata for Violin and Piano  
No. 1 in G major, Op. 32**

- i Moderato
- ii Lento con molto sentimento
- iii Allegro vivace

From a large Italian family (the fourth of seventeen children) near Sorrento, Esposito won a scholarship to the Conservatory in Naples, studying piano and

composition, and revealing a virtuoso talent, particularly for the German and French repertory. Marrying into a wealthy Russian family, he moved to Paris where he gave recitals but made little progress as a composer. He then learned that the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin was looking for a piano teacher and he joined the staff in 1882. He remained for 46 years, becoming a key figure in music in Ireland at that time. He became the highly influential Professor of Piano at the Academy and a frequent performer as a soloist and in chamber music concerts. He worked closely with the Royal Dublin Society, frequently giving recitals in its lecture hall at their premises in Leinster House, now the Dail Chamber. He taught a huge number of musicians and was greatly loved by the Academy's many pupils, including John F. Larchet and Frederick May, and he was a mentor to Hamilton Harty. He was instrumental in creating the Dublin Orchestral Society in 1899 which enabled a wide range of orchestral music to be performed in Dublin at the time.

Esposito gave the first performance of his Sonata in 1893 with his fellow-Italian Guido Pappini, who had joined him at the Academy as Professor of Violin at the Academy. He dedicated this Sonata to Pappini. It is a charming creation with a strongly Italian

flavour to the melodies. The violin opens the first movement with a swirling, romantic theme which is cleverly developed by the two instruments. The slow movement features a gentle ballad with a languid, melancholic timbre. It expands passionately, suggesting a love song, if a rather sad one. The finale launches a very lively, almost gypsy theme. The pace slackens for a while, presenting a slower, more meditative idea, but soon accelerates to prove a thrilling conclusion.

## *MAURICE RAVEL*

*(1875-1937)*

### **Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano**

- i Première mouvement (Allegretto)
- ii Blues (moderato)
- iii Perpetuum mobile

In the 1920s Ravel became increasingly fascinated with American jazz and blues music. In May 1921 he wrote to a friend about the visit of a jazz band to Paris: "Their virtuosity is at times terrifying". During his later American visit he played only a few works, including the piano part of this Sonata. He had been working on the composition for a number years and gave the first performance in Paris with Romanian violinist Georges Enescu on May 30th, 1927. He had

decided that the first movement should demonstrate the incompatibility of violin and piano, a strange premise for writing a Violin and Piano Sonata, but as always with Ravel there is much more to the music than this rather flippant remark might suggest. There is considerable separation between the two instruments, certainly, but at no time is there a feeling of discontinuity, indeed the interweaving of the lines for the two instruments has a strongly polyphonic basis and produces many fascinating effects.

The famous "blues" movement is one of the composer's sauciest creations. Here is a marvellous clash as French impressionism meets Harlem soul music. The violin has a considerable amount of pizzicato to play and opens the movement with a dramatic, strumming line over dark piano mutterings. A languorous violin theme follows with cheeky syncopations and sudden bursts of jazzy reflections.

The Finale is a brilliant "perpetual motion" movement, leaving the violin hardly a moment to relax. The music recalls some of the earlier phrases, mainly given to the piano, as the violin is too busy coping with the relentless rush of semiquavers.



## CONOR LINEHAN

### DIVA

- i Two Track Mind
- ii An Eternal Diva
- iii Slán Abhaile.

When Fiachra asked me to write the piece for himself and Patrick which you'll hear tonight, I jumped at the opportunity. The brief given to me was to compose a fusion work, incorporating elements of traditional Irish music, French cabaret and American jazz. That might seem like a strange dish but I hope I have incorporated elements of all three while maintaining a consistent musical through-line. It is, as its title suggests, a highly 'performative' work with a more than a hint of theatricality.

My own musical life has been pretty varied. In the last 18 months alone I've played both Radiohead and Míchéal O'Súilleabháin with the RTÉCO as well as recently touring a wide programme of works from Handel to Piazzola with the wonderful soprano Claudia Boyle and equally wonderful Niall O'Sullivan on trumpet. I grew up on a diet of 1980's pop music which I would try to recreate on my tiny two-octave synthesiser after school. I love American soul music. I also love the great Irish band Planxty. While a student of Music and English in Trinity I played Gershwin and Cole

Porter songs in every restaurant in Dublin - this while fervently practicing the core classical piano repertoire under the inspirational teaching of Thérèse Fahy at the RIAM.

All of these elements and influences come into play in *DIVA*. The first movement 'Two Track Mind', opens with a two-part riff in the violin and piano parts. These rhythmic and melodic elements will recur through all three movements. The 'second subject' is a somewhat cooler longer-phrased melody. As the music develops the 'two tracks' crash into each other increasingly, leading to (what I imagine to be, at any rate) a 'film-noirish' climax. The middle moment 'An Eternal Diva' begins with a simple melody played first by violin, then piano. The writing becomes more agitated leading to a solo violin 'cadenza' and a fiery return to the initial melody. The coda references both the hymn 'Be Still my Soul' and Joni Mitchell's 'Both Sides Now'. It segues into the final movement 'Slán Abhaile' a simple melody in 7/8 which with a sort of lopsided jig as counter-melody. The music develops in an improvisatory fashion until it modulates to a slow, simple valedictory melody in E flat. The original material returns and moves into a fierce exultant and celebratory coda to conclude the piece. I hope you enjoy it.

## GUILLAUME LEKEU

(1870-1894)

### **Sonata for Violin and Piano in G major**

- i Très modéré – vif et passionné
- ii Très lent
- iii Très animé

Born in Belgium, Lekeu's family moved to Poitiers in France and then to Paris in 1888, when he entered the Conservatory and studied with César Franck and Vincent d'Indy, both of whom considered him a genius, he even impressed the usually taciturn Debussy. He managed to compose some 50 works before his early death from typhoid, the day before his 24th birthday, caused by drinking contaminated water. His Violin Sonata is a remarkable and substantial work, lasting around 35 minutes and was written between 1892 and 1893. The influence of his teachers, especially Franck, can be heard in its richly-composed lines and well-constructed sequences.

The first movement, unusually for a sonata, is set at a slow space. The violin launches a melancholic, passionate theme with the piano adding its comments shortly afterwards. The two instruments undertake an extended analysis of the theme until the tempo changes – vif et passionné – and a second melody or subject is

introduced. A lively discourse follows until the pace slackens with a return to the opening theme with fresh embellishments. The movement finishes with a calm conclusion, as the theme slowly dies away.

The second movement continues the meditative mood with a solemn tune which proceeds slowly and thoughtfully. There is a change of rhythm to 6/8 as a new idea is introduced on the violin with a strongly phrased piano accompaniment. Lekeu noted that this melody should be treated like a folk song and it is developed at leisure and at length, finally drifting into a pianissimo conclusion. The finale changes the mood with an animated fanfare as the violin introduces a lively melody which is treated to a passionate and exciting exploration. A slower pace emerges – Très modéré – offering further variations on the theme before the rapid opening pace returns to bring this splendid Sonata to a triumphant conclusion.

PROGRAMME NOTES © IAN FOX 2023



# Thu 18 May 8pm

## Russborough

**This concert is kindly supported  
by Margaret Downes**

*Jess Gillam / saxophone*  
*Sam Becker / double-bass*  
*Leif Kaner-Lidström / piano*

**Chilly Gonzales** Overnight

**Kurt Weill** Je ne t'aime pas

**Poulenc** Sonata for Oboe and  
Piano, FP185

**Ayanna Witter Johnson** Lumina

**Barbara Thompson** The Unseen  
Way

**Telemann** Sonata in F minor,  
TWV 41:f1

INTERVAL

**Piazzolla** Nightclub from Histoire  
du Tango

**Meredith Monk** Early Morning  
Melody

**Philip Glass** Melody for  
Saxophone No. 10

**Luke Howard** Dappled Light

**Dave Heath** The Celtic

**JS Bach** 3rd Movement from  
Sonata for Violin and Keyboard  
No. 3 in E major, BWV 1016

**David Bowie** Where Are We Now?

**Czarda** Pequena

Chilly Gonzalez is the professional name of Canadian musician and composer Jason Charles Beck (b. 1972). A musical polymath he

is now based in Cologne and was a Grammy award winner in 2014. He wrote the lyrics and music of *Overnight* in 2004.

Kurt Weill (1900-1950) was an important German composer, noted for his collaborations with Berthold Brecht. In 1933 he fled the Nazi regime, at first to Paris and then ending up in New York where he had a number of Broadway successes. During his Paris stay he wrote the song *Je ne t'aime pas* to words by Maurice Magre, released in 1934 in a recording by the popular cabaret singer Lys Gauty.

French composer Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) wrote his Oboe Sonata in 1962, the year before his death. He dedicated it to the memory of Sergei Prokofiev who had died in 1953. There are three movements which are in the order slow-fast-slow rather than the other way around. The first – *Elégie* – features a lyrical, song-like melody which builds to a dramatic climax before returning to a restful conclusion. It is followed by a *Scherzo – Très animé* – introducing a brilliant theme. A contrasting central section, or, trio, provides a rest, “very sweetly”, before returning to the opening merriment. The Sonata concludes with a “*Déploration*” – *Très calme* – which is peaceful and smooth and certainly not deplorable, the music finally fading away contentedly.

Ayanna Witter-Johnson was born in London in the 1980s to a Jamaican family. Her mother is a teacher and she began playing the piano at 4. She went on to study the cello and composition, also becoming a successful singer. She earned a Master's degree in composition at the Manhattan School of Music in New York in 2012 and has worked with a wide range of musicians including Courtney Pine and the London Symphony Orchestra. *Lumina* was written for Jess Gillam in 2021 who also gave the first performance at the Guildhall School of Music in London on March 30th, 2022.

Barbara Thompson MBE (1944-2002) was a leading British saxophone player, flautist and composer. She was a major figure in British jazz and was involved in founding three bands, the final one, Paraphernalia, was featured on her last disc in 2015 and included the melody *The Unseen Way*, a short rhapsodic work with an oriental touch. She worked closely with Andrew Lloyd Webber on a number of scores including *Cats* and *Starlight Express*.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) was a leading figure in German baroque music in the early 18th century, writing a huge range of highly successful music. He was based in Hamburg in his

final years. In 1728 he published a series of 70 compositions suitable for performing at home: *Der getreue Musikmeister* – The Faithful Music Master. It includes this Sonata in F minor in four movements which is typical of his style. The work begins with a slow movement – Triste – followed by a lively Allegro, then a calmly lyrical Andante and a lively finale, Vivace, completing the musical delights.

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was born in Argentina to Italian parents, and was mainly brought up in New York, his family having moved there. This allowed him to absorb a wide range of music from Bach to jazz. He developed a considerable proficiency on the bandoneón, the Argentinean accordion. Returning to Argentina he became involved in playing in night clubs. He won a scholarship to work with Nadia Boulanger in Paris in 1950 who encouraged his writing and playing of tangos. He returned to New York in 1955 and launched his controversial "Nuevo Tango" which caused quite a stir in traditional tango circles. His *Histoire du Tango* was composed for flute and guitar in 1985. "Nightclub" is one of its four movements and conveys the mood of the Argentinian clubs of the 1960s where the new tango was being developed.

*Early Morning Melody* is a brief song by the doyenne of American

avant-garde music, Meredith Monk (b. 1942) and has been arranged for saxophone by Simon Parkin.

Another leading American composer is Philip Glass (b.1937) who in 1995 wrote a suite of thirteen Melodies for solo saxophone for use in a New York production of Jean Genet's play *The Prisoner of Love*; this is the tenth piece, a highly lyrical work in a romantic mood rather than his usual minimalist style. Another track from Jess Gilliam's second album of 2020 is *Dappled Light* by Australian composer Luke Howard (b. 1978); it reflects its title imaginatively with a dreamy rhapsody full of natural, lyrical phrases.

Dave Heath (b. 1956) is a leading composer and flautist who has specialised in writing pieces for leading performers such as Nigel Kennedy, James Galway and Evelyn Glennie. Saxophonist Gerard McCrystal commissioned *The Celtic*, a concerto for soprano saxophone in three movements.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) spent seven years of his career, from 1717, as music director at the Court in Cöthen, where Prince Leopold was an accomplished musician and enthusiast. Bach provided a set of six Violin Sonatas for the Court which are among the finest he ever wrote. The third movement of

the Third Sonata, marked Adagio non tanto, is particularly charming with its graciously flowing melody.

*Where are we now* is a late creation by David Bowie (1947-2016). After a decade of silence he emerged with this pensive song and its Berlin backdrop (he spent many years there) and included it on his 66th birthday album *The Next Day*.

Pedro Iturralde (1929-2020) was Spain's leading saxophonist for many decades. He studied at the Madrid Conservatory and in Boston, setting up his own jazz quartet in Madrid, where he also taught at the Conservatory. He wrote music with a blend of classical and flamenco. In the case of *Pequeña Czarda* (Little Czardas) for saxophone he employed Hungarian colourings in a virtuoso display, complete with cadenza. It is an exhilarating creation with which to end!

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# Fri 19 May 8pm

## Russborough

This concert is kindly supported  
by Howard Gatiss

### *Navarra Quartet & Fiachra Garvey*

Benjamin Marquise Gilmore / violin  
Bartosz Woroch / violin  
Sascha Bota / viola  
Brian O'Kane / cello  
Fiachra Garvey / piano

**Mozart** String Quartet No. 15 in  
D minor, K.421

**Jane O'Leary** Beneath the Dark  
Blue Waves (world premiere)

INTERVAL

**Brahms** Piano Quintet in F minor,  
Op. 34

### *WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)*

**String Quartet in D minor No.15,  
KV 421**

- i Allegro
- ii Andante
- iii Menuetto
- iv Allegretto, ma non troppo

In 1782 Mozart commenced work  
on a set of six String Quartets  
dedicating them to Josef Haydn

whom he greatly admired and  
who had declared Mozart to be  
the greatest composer he knew.  
The second of these Quartets  
appeared the following year and  
is a substantial work full of original  
ideas and remarkable creativity.  
The first movement of the D minor  
quartet is marked “moderately”  
and opens quietly and calmly  
before introducing a lilting lyrical  
melody. The second main theme  
is rather more animated and  
features a little four-note motive,  
often heard throughout the six  
Sonatas. The second movement  
introduces a nocturnal mood,  
employing a stately 6/8 rhythm  
for its heartfelt lines. A central  
section adds some variety before  
returning to the opening theme.

The Minuet may follow the  
framework of that dance but  
there is little of the ballroom in  
its sombre and hesitant phrases.  
The central section is rather more  
suited for dancing, as its pizzicato  
accompaniment suggests. The  
finale is a set of variations on a  
more lively tune in the style of  
an Italian song or siciliano. The  
variations provide entertaining  
diversions and the four-note  
figure is apparent once more, as  
the music sails serenely before  
reaching its rather abrupt, though  
satisfying, conclusion.

## JANE O'LEARY

(b. 1946)

### **Beneath the Dark Blue Waves**

Jane has been active as a composer, performer, teacher, mentor, curator and concert promoter since arriving in Galway in 1972 from the USA. Born in Hartford, Connecticut, she is a graduate of Vassar College and completed a PhD in composition at Princeton University. Jane was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music Degree by the National University of Ireland and is a member of Aosdána, Ireland's honorary academy of creative artists.

As founder, director, and pianist of Concorde, Ireland's first new music ensemble, Jane has been deeply committed to connecting performers, composers and listeners since the group was founded in 1976.

In the past year her music has featured in performances across Ireland, in Chile, Lisbon, Belfast, London, Chicago, Cambridge MA, and on albums released in Italy, USA, Greece and Ireland.

She has provided the following note on the première of her new Piano Quintet:



*Image: LIMEN 1 (Oil on canvas, 300cms x 200cms, 2019)  
by Gwen O'Dowd*

In two movements, the quintet moves in waves of sound, continually sparkling with colour. The fluid, shimmering string sound contrasts sharply with the bright, incisive gestures of the piano.

The music was inspired by the abstract sea paintings of Irish artist Gwen O'Dowd. We share a fascination with the mystery of the sea and its turbulent, effervescent moments. I have chosen an excerpt from Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1825 poem "The Ocean" for my title. The poem contemplates the many layers of the sea - quietness and peacefulness below the 'fury on the waves.'

Originally written for a mixed ensemble and premiered by Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble in Belfast in January 2020, tonight's performance is the world premiere of an adaptation for piano quintet.

## *JOHANNES BRAHMS* *(1833-1897)*

### **Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34**

- i Allegro non troppo
- ii Andante, un poco adagio
- iii Scherzo: Allegro
- iv Finale: Poco sostenuto -  
Allegro non troppo

Dating from 1864, early in his career, this Piano Quintet is one of Brahms's greatest achievements, a work of real maturity and originality. It began life as a string quintet, then became a sonata for two pianos, which he played with Clara Schumann, widow of the composer Robert and an outstanding pianist and close friend. She convinced him that it needed strings after all and the final version was created in 1865. The opening movement involves five main themes, no less, which are presented in rapid succession at the start, almost overlapping. Brahms uses his ideas to create music of great impetus at the same time as providing a well-constructed overall scheme; as the themes are developed with vigour and remarkable imagination.

The slow movement is a romantic outpouring in a straight-forward A - B - A or ternary format. The opening melody is Schubertian and builds to a glowing climax. A more energetic theme provides

the contrast in the middle section before the opening theme returns, freshly scored.

The Scherzo starts with quiet mutterings before breaking into a stormy sequence. Brahms presents three powerful, related ideas, treated to a vigorous development. The central section also employs a variant of the opening material: a gentler, sighing melody. The Finale commences with a slow introduction starting deep on the cello. Serpentine, brooding lines swirl about until the cello slips into a fast rhythm and launches the main theme, tranquillo. A slower, musing theme is added and given a leisurely treatment. Gradually the tempo and tension increase as the movement powers away, only to be interrupted by a slow, halting variant of the main tune. The music is elaborated on in some reflective passages. The momentum gathers pace again and the music seems to be heading for its conclusion. Instead Brahms adds a large coda, presto, bringing this great work to a galloping conclusion.

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# Sat 12 Nov 4pm

## Russborough

**Maestro Touring are pleased to support the Rising Stars concert**

*Amy Gillen / flute*  
*Frasier Hickland / piano*

**Takatsugu Muramatsu** Earth  
**Briccialdi** Fantasia on Verdi's Macbeth

**Prokofiev** Romeo and Juliet Suite

**Donnchadh Mac Aodha** Music for Flute and Two Handed Pianist  
(*World Première, WWF*

*Composition Competition Winner, supported by Contemporary Music Centre, Ireland*)

**Mendelssohn** Nocturne from Midsummer Night's Dream

**Taffanel** Fantaisie on themes from 'Der Freischütz'

*TAKATSUGU*  
*MURAMATSU (b. 1978)*

### Earth

Takatsugu Muramatsu is an award-winning Japanese composer who has written extensively for the cinema and television. He provided the music for *Cabaret*, a Japanese musical staged on Broadway and has worked with a wide

range of musical events and artists including Russel Watson, Katherine Jenkins and Celtic Woman. Lasting about seven minutes, *Earth* dates from 2003 and is one of his most popular pieces, having been arranged for various versions and orchestrations. It is a charming theme, elegantly developed. There is a strongly pastoral style to its lines along with some elements of Japanese melody.

*GIULIO BRICCIALDI*  
(1818-1881)

### Fantasia on Verdi's Macbeth

Giulio Briccialdi was an Italian composer and virtuoso flautist, highly regarded throughout Europe in his day. A very important figure in flute music, he made a modification to the instrument for a London maker, which carries his name to this day. He wrote a large amount of music including many fantasias for himself and his pupils to play; he taught the flute at the Conservatory in Florence. The *Fantasia on Verdi's Macbeth* Op. 47 is a fine example of his skills, lasting some ten minutes and giving a real flavour of Verdi's dramatic score. The opera *Macbeth* is being performed shortly at the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival in Lismore; details on their website.

## SERGEI PROKOFIEV

(1891-1953)

### Romeo and Juliet, Op. 64a – Ballet Suites – extracts

- i Montagues and Capulets
- ii Juliet as a young girl
- iii Madrigal, Minuet, Masks
- iv Balcony Scene
- v Tybalt's Death
- vi Romeo and Juliet's Grave

Prokofiev's great ballet on *Romeo and Juliet* had a difficult gestation. Both the Kirov Ballet in Leningrad, who originally commissioned it, and the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow rejected it, finding problems with the music, thinking it unsuitable for dancing, and wanting a happy ending.

Because of the delays Prokofiev released two orchestral suites in 1936 and 1937 which rapidly became popular. The ballet was eventually premièred in December 1938 in Brno in Czechoslovakia and it finally reached the Kirov the following year where it was not a success. It was not until a new, later production in 1955, after Prokofiev's death, that it at last began to be recognised as one of the great modern ballets. It continues to have a parallel career in the concert hall as an orchestral display piece.

## DONNCHADH MAC

AODHA (b. 2002)

### Music for Flute and Two Handed Pianist

Donnchadh Mac Aodha is a composer and multi-instrumentalist from Dundalk. He is a Quercus Creative & Performing Arts Scholar at UCC where he is undertaking a BMus degree. As both a traditional Irish and classical musician, Donnchadh finds himself most at home at the interface of these genres and allows his bi-musical upbringing to influence his compositional output. In particular, he is drawn to the Irish language and deals with ideas of belonging and identity in his music.

In 2020, Donnchadh won 1st prize in the composition competition at the New Ross Piano Festival for his piano work *Music in the Tuileries* which was premiered by Finghin Collins at the 2021 festival. His piece *Port na bPúcaí* was performed by the Ficino Ensemble at the Irish Composition Summer School in July of 2022.

#### *Composer's note:*

This piece centres around the idea of musical dialogue, exploring the many ways in which the flute and piano can interact and converse in a musical setting. The work begins with a focus

on close interplay between the hands of the pianist, a busied and incoherent murmuring against the coherent, fluent musical sentences of the flautist. The music then turns to erratic exchanges as both instruments imitate and talk-back to each other.

The outer-extremities of the piano's range are explored following this as the flautist moves to the work's second melodic idea, a flowing jazz-like theme which provides respite from the energetic music of before. When the original melody returns it is echoed in the piano part and grounded against a more intelligible C drone. Unity seems on the horizon for this dynamic duo, but is quickly snatched away with the reiteration of those earlier, heated exchanges. In the end harmony is achieved, the piano's murmurings eventually agreeing with the flute's singing melodies.

### *FELIX MENDELSSOHN* (1809-1847)

#### **Nocturne from Midsummer Night's Dream**

Felix Mendelssohn wrote his overture to Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1826, when only 17 years old, a feat of remarkable maturity. Seventeen years later King William of Prussia commissioned him to provide

incidental music for a production of the play which was to open the new theatre in Potsdam on October 18th 1843. He created twelve more pieces for the play, managing to maintain the freshness and wonderment of his youthful Overture. The Nocturne serves to introduce the third act with its dreamy horn solo, a fine melody that has been adapted to many other instruments.

### *PAUL TAFFANEL* (1844-1908)

#### **Fantaisie on themes from 'Der Freischütz'**

Paul Taffanel was born in Bordeaux and was a highly influential flautist and composer and is regarded as the founder of the French school of 19th century flute playing. He was a prolific writer and his *Fantaisie on themes from Der Freischütz* is his Opus 167. The opera by Weber was premièred in Berlin in 1821 and its popular tunes were often used by other composers.

Taffanel wrote his *Fantaisie* in 1869 and it was published in 1876. Opening with a slow aria, it continues with versions of various tunes from the opera, providing the player with both lyrical and virtuoso opportunities.

PROGRAMME NOTES © IAN FOX 2023

# Sat 20 May 8pm

## Tramway Theatre

This concert is kindly supported  
by Piers Hedley

### *Jess Gillam Ensemble*

Jess Gillam / saxophone  
Ciaran McCabe / violin  
Michael Jones / violin  
Alex Mitchell / viola  
Gabriella Swallow / cello  
Sam Becker / double bass &  
bass synth  
Elsa Bradley / percussion  
Leif Kaner-Lidström / piano

**Will Gregory** Orbit  
**CPE Bach (arr. Simon Parkin)**  
Allegro Assai from Flute Concerto  
in A Minor H.431 10  
**Thom Yorke (arr. Benjamin  
Rimmer)** Suspirium  
**Bjork (arr. John Metcalfe)**  
Venus as a Boy  
**Piazzolla** Histoire du Tango  
(Bordel, Cafe and Nightclub)

INTERVAL

**Bernstein (arr. Simon Parkin)**  
Excerpts from West Side Story  
**Retrograde** James Blake (arr.  
Benjamin Rimmer/Alex Mayday)  
**Ryuichi Sakamoto (arr. John  
Metcalfe)** Merry Christmas Mr  
Lawrence  
**Rune Sorensen (arr. Simon  
Parkin)** Shine You No More

**Debussy (arr. Simon Parkin)**  
Clair de Lune  
**John Harle (arr. John Harle and  
Simon Parkin)**  
Briggflatts: I Flare - II Garsdale -  
III RANT!

A musical force of nature,  
Jess Gillam has been forging her  
own adventurous path since she  
shot to fame becoming the first  
saxophonist to reach the finals of  
BBC Young Musician and the  
youngest ever soloist to perform  
at the Last Night of the Proms.

Passionate about inspiring and  
bringing joy to people through  
music, Jess invites audiences on  
journeys of musical discovery  
through her electrifying  
performances and eclectic  
programming. She is the winner of  
a Classic Brit Award, an  
Associate Artist of the Royal  
Albert Hall and signed exclusively  
to Decca Classics - she's the first  
saxophonist signed in the  
history of the label. Her latest  
album *TIME* topped the classical  
charts and her debut album *RISE*  
was listed in the Times Top  
100 Albums.

Jess performs in venues across  
the globe - from New York's  
Carnegie Hall to Hamburg's  
Elbphilharmonie and has worked  
with orchestras such as Munich  
Philharmonic, London Symphony  
Orchestra and Minnesota  
Symphony Orchestra. Her  
infectious enthusiasm and passion

for classical and non-classical music lights up every stage and in her newly-formed Jess Gillam Ensemble she brings together a group of brilliant musicians who share her bold, uplifting and open-minded approach.

Building on a near sold-out 2021 tour with this 8 piece ensemble, the concert promises to be an explosive showcase of the

diversity, dynamism and versatility of the saxophone. Traditional classical music is paired with innovative reimaginings, arrangements and commissions.

Performing music from JS Bach to Bjork and Piazzolla to Will Gregory (Goldfrapp), Jess hopes to inspire audiences to reflect, dance and smile!



## Jess Gilliam's Playlist Picks!



**We caught up with Jess a few weeks before the festival, to find out more about what's at the top of her playlist.**

I can't wait to travel over to beautiful Ireland and perform live in the country for the very first time! We're playing in Scotland a couple of days before and we're planning to drive down to Wales and make the journey over on the ferry. It will be a bit of an epic road trip and there will definitely be some tunes keeping us going and (safely!) blaring out of the car stereo! I'll be playing at West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival with my band - the Jess Gilliam Ensemble - and also in a trio with Leif Kaner-Lidström on piano and Sam Becker on bass. The saxophone is one of those instruments that can sit in just about any style of music. It has such a lyrical and beautiful sound

as well as being capable of being the driving energy force in any group. We'll be playing a massive range of music in these concerts - from CPE Bach to Sakamoto and Barbara Thompson to the folk inspired Rune Sorensen. We might even throw in a little bit of Bjork!

I tend to live by Miles Davis' idea that 'good music is good music' and I try to listen far and wide... hopefully these tunes give you a little flavour of what's in my ears right now!



**Clair de Lune - Debussy -  
arranged for Theremin and  
Voice by Carolina Eyck**

*Clair de Lune* is one of those pieces that manages to cast a magical spell in any room no matter how many times I listen. In this reimagining, there's an extra ethereality with the theremin and Carolina Eyck's voice and it's 4 minutes of bliss...

**Flute Concerto in A Minor - CPE  
Bach - 1st movement - played by  
Emmanuel Pahud**

Emmanuel Pahud's playing in this is absolutely on fire! He draws out so many colours from the flute and the music is fizzing with energy, drive and excitement one second and then turns back on itself with a beautiful melody the next. There's a moment about 3 minutes in where you might find your jaw on the floor (or your head banging!).

**Love Your Grace - Vega Trails**

Leif, the pianist in our trio and also the ensemble, sent this tune to me a while ago. I hear it as a mini ode to the double bass - there's a tranquillity to it but also such a great groove. It almost sounds like someone singing. This will definitely be one for our journey over!

**Les Fleurs - Minnie Riperton**

With her legendary vocal range, Minnie Riperton has become one of my musical icons! In this tune,

she reaches up to the heavens with her voice but the whole track is a burst of sunshine and brightens any day. I also love that she's singing from the perspective of a flower - every time I listen to it, it makes me look at the world from a slightly different perspective!

**Lazarus - David Bowie**

Get that volume cranked up for this one! David Bowie has been a massive inspiration to me and his last album *Blackstar* is an absolute masterpiece. The saxophonist on this album is Donny McCaslin and his solos across the album take it to a new level. I don't really have any words for his sound.

**Impromptu 5 from 6  
Impromptus by Sibelius played  
by Leif Ove Andsnes**

Sometimes a piece of music can act like a spaceship away to another planet - it gets hold of your ears and heart and lifts you up to another place. This is one of those pieces for me - as soon as I hear the magic of those opening cascades, I can feel myself melting into the beauty of the piece.

**Stars - Nina Simone Live at  
Montreux**

I think this is a beautiful example of what music has the potential to do - it can connect us, unify us and sometimes even inspire us to feel things we didn't even know we were feeling. There are some

stunning moments of silence in this and for me, the song acts a reminder of the fact we're all in this together. We're all on this planet looking for a way through. When Nina Simone sings the line 'everybody has a story', we somehow hear the whole universe of emotion captured in one voice.

**Swan Lake Suite - Tchaikovsky**

It's a classic but there is always a reason why the most famous music becomes so widely loved. The drama and the crashing heights of emotion this piece reaches are all encompassing.

**Lest we forget (Blood) - Esperanza Spalding**

This is from Esperanza Spalding's album 12 Little Spells, on which she pays homage to different parts of the human body. There's such a cool beat in this song and I LOVE her voice!

**You Don't Own Me - Dusty Springfield**

There's a chance I'll get this on in my headphones a few hours before the concert to help banish any nerves! The feeling of empowerment and defiance in this track is infectious!

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Your  
Festival!*



West Wicklow Festival is a registered charity which aims to enhance the cultural landscape of West Wicklow through high-quality, accessible concerts and educational events for audiences of all ages. We rely heavily on the support of the local community, our supporters, patrons and of course, our audience. All donations are gratefully received and can be made through **[westwicklowfestival.com](http://westwicklowfestival.com)** or by contacting us directly.



# TULFARRIS

HOTEL & GOLF RESORT



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Tulfarris is yours to enjoy.  
[www.tulfarrishotel.com](http://www.tulfarrishotel.com)

# Sun 21 May 3.30pm St. Mary's Church

This concert is kindly supported  
by Niamh Ní Ghairbhia

## *Apollo 5*

Clare Stewart / Soprano  
Penelope Appleyard / Soprano  
Oscar Golden-Lee / Tenor  
Oli Martin-Smith / Tenor  
Augustus Perkins Ray / Bass

**Vigilate** William Byrd  
**Beata viscera** Pérotin  
**Beata viscera** William Byrd  
**Agnus Dei (from Mass for Five Voices)** William Byrd  
**O Radiant Dawn** James MacMillan  
**Ubi Caritas** Ola Gjeilo  
**Dieu! Qu'il La Fait Bon Regarder** Claude Debussy  
**This Marriage** Eric Whitacre  
**Psalms 2, the Third of Nine Tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter** Thomas Tallis  
**Lost Innocence** Paul Smith for Apollo5

## INTERVAL

**Am gaeth i muir** Michael McGlynn  
**O Pia Virgo** Michael McGlynn  
**Where All Roses Go** Michael McGlynn  
**My Spirit Sang All Day** Gerald Finzi

**We Shall Walk Through The Valley** trad. American arr. Undine Smith Moore

**The Last Rose of Summer** trad. Irish arr. Fraser Wilson for Apollo5  
**Wayfaring Stranger** trad. arr. Paul Smith for Apollo5

**Your Song** Elton John arr. Matt Greenwood for Apollo5

**Only You Vince Clark** arr. Deke Sharon & Anne Raugh

**Homeward Bound** Marta Keen arr. Paul Smith for Apollo5

Much of the music in this afternoon's programme is featured on Apollo 5's 10th Anniversary album *Where All Roses Go* and in their 2023 album *Invocations*.

Most of the repertoire on the *Where All Roses Go* album was recorded during the long, quiet months of 2020, the recording process giving the singers a wonderfully creative focus in the midst of such uncertainty. Its cover artwork and title refer to that most potent symbol of love and its transience: the rose.

The album unites a diverse collection of choral music spanning 500 years, from some of the earliest known polyphonic writing through to new compositions, in an energetic exploration of the joy and despair of human love. Love has many different manifestations. It is a rich tapestry intricately woven with conflicting strands: life and loss; beauty and mortality;

brave romance and fragility in rejection; the steadfast devotion of a mother's love (heightened by the awareness of inevitable separation); and in the Christian narrative the Virgin Mary and the eventual ultimate sacrifice. The repertoire chosen for the album reflects the different strands of this tapestry.

Released in March 2023, Apollo5's studio album, *Invocations*, was born out of the group's desire to share fragments of their life stories with audiences, and to encourage listeners to discover their 'life music' too. Alongside long-term collaborator Fraser Wilson, Apollo5's singers individually hand-picked songs and texts that have emotionally resonated with them over the course of their lives; the songs selected were then reworked by Fraser into brand new versions.

Critically acclaimed a cappella five-piece Apollo5 is one of Britain's smallest but most formidable vocal groups. Comprising a soprano, mezzo-soprano, two tenors and a bass, the ensemble – which takes its name from the ancient Greek god of music – has become known for its rich, dynamic sound, demonstrating how powerful five voices alone can be. With a versatile approach to music programming, and a repertoire spanning renaissance, classical

and contemporary choral works to folk, jazz and pop, the group's five voices bring the music of five centuries to life.

During its 12-year career, Apollo5 has delivered an ambitious education programme and accumulated a busy touring schedule that has taken the group to many European countries, the USA and Asia. In addition to performing at prestigious UK venues such as the Barbican Centre, the Royal Albert Hall, Wembley Arena, St John's Smith Square and St Martin-in-the-Fields, the group has toured extensively across Belgium, Germany and France. 2022/23 concert highlights include a major tour to the USA, appearances at French festivals such as La Folle Journée and Festival de la Vézère, and a debut at London's Cadogan Hall.

The group is signed to Voces8 Records and has released a number of critically acclaimed albums under this label. Two recent studio albums, *Where All Roses Go* and *O Radiant Dawn*, charted in the top 5 of the UK Classical Charts, whilst collaborative studio album *The Spirit Like A Dove* (with the Ingenium Ensemble) and winter disc *A Deep But Dazzling Darkness* charted in the top 10 of the UK Classical Charts. Other albums include *Renewal* and *Reflections*,

Paul Smith, jazz and pop album *With A Song In My Heart*, and *Journey*, released on the Edition Peters Sounds label and featuring former King's Singer Paul Phoenix.

During the pandemic, Apollo5 were part of the launch of LIVE From London, a series of live broadcasts from many of the world's leading vocal ensembles and orchestras. These online concerts brought music to the homes of millions during the pandemic, and raised funds for more than five hundred artists, composers and production teams in the process.

Their current 2022/23 season involves an exciting recording schedule, with two albums being released in 2023. *Invocations*, which was released in the spring, stems from Apollo5 and regular collaborator Fraser Wilson's recent LIVE From London offering, and *Haven*, which endeavours to shed light on music written in exile, pairs William Byrd's Mass for Five Voices with engaging responses from contemporary Ukrainian composers Victoria Vita Plevá and Anna Kuzina-Rozhdestvenskaya. Other season highlights include a major orchestral project with Voces8 and the Voces8 Foundation Choir, and new commissions from Donna McKeivitt, Eric Whitacre, Michael McGlynn and Paul Smith.

As part of the Voces8 Foundation, Apollo5 works alongside Voces8 and Paul Smith to deliver a transformative programme of workshops, masterclasses and concerts to over 40,000 young people annually in the UK, Europe, the USA and Asia. Much of this education work is carried out at the Foundation's home, the Voces8 Centre at St Anne & St Agnes Church in the heart of London. The group also oversees an extensive singing project in the London boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets, working closely with inner-city schools and supporting their teachers. Now in its seventh year, this project is supported by Arts Council England, The Worshipful Company of Plaisterers' Charity and the Goldsmiths' Company Charity. The education programme is also supported by the City of London.

## Fiachra Garvey *piano*

Wicklow born pianist Fiachra Garvey is possessed of a maturity and profound understanding of his art, which when combined with his infectious enthusiasm for music-making, has already captivated audiences in concert halls across Europe and beyond.

First prize-winner at the 2012 Jaques Samuel Competition, London, Fiachra has performed in venues from the Fazioli Auditorium in Italy to London's Wigmore Hall. He has also been a prize-winner at AXA Dublin International Piano Competition, EU Prague and the

Soirees-Concours Internationales de Piano a Collioure, France.

The NCH awarded Fiachra the "Rising Star" prize in 2011, which subsequently led to a series of concerto and solo debuts.

Concerto appearances include the Janáček Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, UCD Symphony Orchestra, RIAM Symphony Orchestra and the Hibernian Orchestra working with eminent conductors including John Wilson, Theodore Kuchar, Stephen Bell, Mihhail Gerts and Duncan Ward to name a few.

Fiachra has recorded and



broadcast for BBC and RTÉ television and radio and has released two solo albums, "For the Piano" (RTE Lyric fm label) and a Live from Wigmore Hall disc.

As a keen entrepreneur Fiachra is the Founder and Artistic Director of both the West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival and Classical Vauxhall.

When not performing, Fiachra loves nothing more than returning home to help on the family farm with the yearly lambing, dipping, shearing, harvesting and all the other elegant and refined activities on the farm! Fiachra feels this makes him a more inspired and fulfilled musician.



## Patrick Rafter *violin*



Regarded as one of Ireland's most outstanding musicians, international award winning violinist and conductor Patrick Rafter has toured Europe, the Middle East, South America and Asia as soloist, recitalist and chamber musician.

Internationally, Patrick has been the grand prize winner of multiple competitions including Valiant Violin Competition, Switzerland 2016 and the London Performing Arts Competition 2017. During his career, Patrick has studied with and performed alongside some

of the greatest performers in the world today, including Maxim Vengerov, Schlomo Mintz, Barry Douglas and John O'Connor. He has also worked with some of the most prominent composers of the world today, such as Arvo Pärt, and performed with some of the leading conductors including Semyon Bychkov, Marin Alsop, Sir Mark Elder and Gianedra Nosedà. As a conductor, Patrick has directed the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in the finals of the RDS Feis Ceoil and has taken choral masterclasses with distinguished names such as Zoltan Pad and Volker Hempfling.

A protege of the legendary violinist, Maxim Vengerov, Patrick was born in 1991 into a musical family in Kilkenny, Ireland. He quickly became recognised as a prodigious talent winning over 50 national accolades. Patrick went on to receive a full scholarship to study at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, studying with Eyal Kless and Fionnuala Hunt. In 2011, Patrick was awarded a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he graduated with first class honours and was awarded multiple prizes throughout his studies. He was also selected as a member of the R.A.M.'s elite string ensemble 'Sainsbury Royal Academy Soloists' with whom he made his Wigmore Hall debut in January 2015. In October 2015, Patrick was personally invited to study under Maxim Vengerov at the International Menuhin Music Academy.

## Conor Linehan *composer*

Conor studied piano at the Royal Irish Academy of Music with Thérèse Fahy and in London with Professor Peter Feuchtwanger. He has written scores for theatre companies including CoisCéim, Druid, The Abbey, The Royal Shakespeare Company, the British National Theatre, The Gate Theatre, the Lyric Theatre Belfast, Liverpool Playhouse, Hampstead Theatre, The Corn Exchange and Siren Productions. Recent productions include Richard the Third and Sive for Druid, Woyzeck in Winter for Landmark/Galway International Arts Festival and



Dublin by Lamplight for Corn Exchange at the Abbey Theatre. Conor has solo piano commissions for the 2018 Dublin International Piano Competition and the renowned British pianist Joanna MacGregor which she performed on her 2015 Irish tour.

Conor was 2018 Musician in Residence for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. As a pianist he has performed as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, The RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra and Crash Ensemble. He is a member of the WhistleBlast Quartet. Conor is on the piano faculty of the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

## Jess Gillam *saxophone*



Hailing from Ulverston in Cumbria, Jess Gillam is animating the music world with her outstanding talent and infectious personality. She has been forging her own adventurous path since she shot to fame becoming the first saxophonist to reach the finals of BBC Young Musician and the youngest ever soloist to perform at the Last Night of the Proms. Passionate about inspiring and bringing joy to people through music, Jess invites audiences on journeys of musical discovery through her electrifying performances and eclectic

programming.

As well as performing around the world, Jess is a presenter on TV and Radio. She became the youngest ever presenter for BBC Radio 3 with the launch of her own weekly show, *This Classical Life*. The show is in its third year now and in 2020 won the prestigious ARIA Award for Best Specialist Music Show. Jess has presented a special live edition of *This Classical Life* at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall. She has also been a guest presenter for BBC Radio 2 and co-hosted a miniseries for BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme. Keen to explore the creative output of her home county, Jess presented a series of *Cumbrian Chats* on BBC Radio Cumbria. TV presenting includes the BBC Proms and BBC Young Musician.

Jess is the first ever saxophonist to be signed exclusively to Decca Classics and both of her albums reached No. 1 in the UK Classical Music Charts. Her debut album was listed in *The Times* Top 100 albums of 2019. She has been the recipient of a Classic BRIT Award, has been nominated for *The Times* Breakthrough Award and was awarded an M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours list 2021 for Services to Music. Jess has performed live at the BAFTAs to millions of viewers at home and is currently Artist in Residence at the Wigmore Hall.

## Sam Becker *double-bass*

As an in demand bass player, Sam is equally at home in the studio as he is on stage. He graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in 2018 and has since enjoyed a busy and varied musical career in the classical arena as well as on the pop stage with his own band SUN SILVA. He has performed and recorded for some of the UK's leading orchestras and artists including Bryan Ferry, the John Wilson Orchestra, the Hallé, Alexis Taylor (of Hot Chip) and the BBC Philharmonic. Sam's band SUN SILVA were billed by BBC Radio 1's Jack Saunders on his



UK wide tour *Hopscotch* and their debut single "Blue Light" featured on the international best-selling game FIFA 19, a game bought by over 20 million people. Their newer releases have been met with critical acclaim; they were featured as 'track of the day' by *Clash Magazine* and *DIY Magazine* described their music as "remarkably assured... propulsive and idiosyncratic".

## Leif Kaner-Lidström *piano*



Leif Kaner-Lidström is a pianist and composer, a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music where he studied with professor Dina Parakhina. Leif has performed in a number of venues across the UK and internationally. He made his solo debut at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall in October 2017, where he also played a recital with his father Mats Lidstrom, cellist and professor at the Royal Academy of Music in May 2019. Together, they have performed duo recitals around the UK, Sweden, Italy and performed on BBC Radio 3 In-

Tune with Sean Rafferty. In 2018 Leif accompanied mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter on a recital tour to Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand. Since then they have performed together in Germany, Sweden, Teatro Massimo in Sicily, and on national radio. Their collaboration will continue at the Wigmore Hall, Neuhardenberg, Germany, and in Helsinki, Finland this year.

# Navarra Quartet

Taking its name from a bottle of red from the wine region famously known for its multi-coloured landscapes, the Navarra Quartet's diverse cultural backgrounds are united in serving the music they play with relentless passion and commitment.

Recent highlights included chamber music at the Lammermuir Festival, and performances in Ireland, Holland, Tenerife and across the UK. In 2022, the Navarra Quartet also celebrated their 20th anniversary, with the release of the complete Mozart quartets dedicated to Haydn, new commissions, and tours to Europe, the USA, and Australia. Previous appearances at major venues throughout the world include the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Luxembourg Philharmonie, Berlin Konzerthaus, Queen Elizabeth Hall, King's Place, Sydney Opera House and international festivals such as Lockenhaus, Verbier, Aix-en-Provence, Grachten, Schwetzingen, Heidelberg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and the BBC Proms. The quartet has also toured extensively to Russia, the USA, China, South Korea and the Middle East.

Navarra String Quartet enjoys sharing the stage with a variety



of partners such as Tom Poster, Mark Simpson, Francesco Piemontesi, Guy Johnston, Allan Clayton among others, and their friends the Castalian and Elias Quartets. Beyond the versatile repertoire from di Lasso to Kurtág, the quartet finds collaborating with contemporary composers highly nourishing.

Highly-acclaimed recordings include Joseph Haydn's *The Seven Last Words* for Altara Records and a disc of Pēteris Vasks' first three String Quartets for Challenge Records, which was recorded whilst working closely with the composer himself. The disc was described by critics as "stunning", "sensational" and "compelling", and was nominated for the prestigious German Schallplattenkritik Award.



## Amy Gillen *flute*



Irish Flutist Amy Gillen plays with “incredible dexterity and musicality” and “sparkling fluidity and pristine clarity”. This review comes from the Irish Freemasons Young Musician of the Year Final by music critic Dick O’Riordan where Amy was the winner of the 2018 Irish Freemasons Young Musician of the Year and was also awarded the Conrad O’Sullivan Memorial Award for the best woodwind/brass performance in the competition. Amy graduated from the Royal College of Music London as a Russell Race Scholar with a Distinction First Class

Honours Masters of Music Performance in Classical and Jazz Flute. She was also awarded the prestigious Tagore Gold Medal for her outstanding contribution musically and to the life of the RCM. Amy was awarded the McCullough Cup and RTÉ Lyric FM Bursary at the 2019 Feis Ceoil Dublin. She has performed as soloist with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra in 2018 and 2019. In February 2022, she recorded some solo music with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra for broadcast on RTÉ Lyric fm. This was as a result of winning the 2019 RDS Jago Award.

In November 2018, Amy made her debut performance at the Wigmore Hall in London where she was awarded the 2018 Irish Heritage Bursary for Performance. Commenting on the bursary being awarded, John Gilhooly OBE Chairman of the adjudicators and director of the Wigmore Hall said, “Amy is an immediately engaging artist from the moment she steps on the platform. She is a true musician in every sense. She greatly impressed the jury and this bursary comes at an important time in her development.” In December 2019, Amy played at the Soiree d’Or Royal College of Music event at the Victoria and Albert Museum London.

Amy is now a Nagahara Flutes Boston Artist & plays on a 14K gold flute.

## Frasier Hickland *piano*

Pianist Frasier Hickland studies with Simon Lepper, Kathron Sturrock and Roger Vignoles at the Royal College of Music, London, after graduating with a First Class Honours degree from the Royal Irish Academy of Music under the tutelage of Anthony Byrne. He is a Leeds Lieder and SongEasel Young Artist, and has participated in masterclasses with renowned musicians Sir Thomas Allen, John O'Connor, Finghin Collins, Kathryn Harries, Ingrid Surgenor, Dennis O'Neill, and Iain Burnside. He has been featured on both BBC Radio 3 'In Tune', and on



BBC Radio Ulster's 'Classical Connections'. Frasier has also performed in many prestigious venues in Europe and America, including Wigmore Hall, London, the Willard InterContinental, Washington DC, the Royal Over-Seas League, London, the Yacht Club de Monaco, Monte-Carlo, the National Concert Hall, Dublin, the Ulster Hall, Belfast, and at the BMS International Festival of Chamber Music. He was selected to work in a residency with distinguished composer Sally Beamish OBE, and gave the Irish premiere of her piece "Wild Swans" as part of ChamberFest Dublin. Alongside flautist Amy Gillen he will give a recital as a West Wicklow Chamber Music Festival 'Rising Star'.

Competition successes include winning First Prize for Accompaniment in the John Kerr Award for English Song, the Irish Heritage Competition, and the Brooks-van der Pump English Song Competition. He was also a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards and the Lies Askonas Vocal Competition. As a result of collaborations with Northern Ireland Opera, Ulster Touring Opera and Blackwater Valley Opera Festival, he has performed for dignitaries, such as, HM King Charles III and HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco. Répétiteur roles include Verdi's *La Traviata*, Puccini's *La Bohème*, Offenbach's *Daphnis et Chloé* and *L'île de Tulipatan*, Seán Doherty's *Waking Beauty* and Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*.



# Acknowledgements

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**The Apollo Foundation**

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The Festival would also like to acknowledge the significant contribution made by the following, whose donations to the festival charity are vital in supporting our work as a platform for the arts:

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A further thank you to everyone who has donated any amount to the festival over the past year. Donations of all sizes are hugely appreciated.

West Wicklow  
Chamber Music  
Festival



CARNIVAL  
OF THE  
ANIMALS



17-21 MAY

WWCF

Family Concert  
Irish Chamber Orchestra

Fiachra Garvey & Soo-Jung Ann pianos  
Evanna Lynch narrator

Tramway Theatre, Blessington  
Sunday 21 May 12:15pm & 1.30pm