



ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

THE VANBRUGH & FRIENDS

National String Quartet
Foundation Gala Concert



Dvorak: String Quintet
in E flat major, Op.97

Mairiad Hickey & David McElroy | violin
Ed Creedon & Cian O'Duill | viola
Christopher Marwood | cello

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.6 (1st mmt)
Faure: Pavane | **Schubert:** Standchen
Popper: Polonaise de Concert



Aoife Burke, Eugene Lamy, Yseult Stockdale Cooper,
Zoe Nagle, Callum Owens, Maria O'Connor,
Aoife nic Athlaoich & Grace Coughlan | cello

Tchaikovsky: "Souvenir
de Florence", Op. 70

Elizabeth Cooney & Keith Pascoe | violin
Simon Aspell & David Kenny | viola
Brian O'Kane & Sinead O'Halloran | cello



Introduced by Evelyn Grant



Saturday 15 June 2019 | 7:30 pm
Aula Maxima, University College Cork

€25 | €20 (COS members & concessions)
Advance booking at www.corkorchestralsociety.ie & www.nsqf.ie



Welcome to the National String Quartet Foundation's annual gala concert.

The National String Quartet Foundation is a legacy of the work of the Vanbrugh Quartet. Resident Quartet to RTE from 1986 to 2013 and Artists in Residence at University College, Cork from 1990 until the retirement of violinist Gregory Ellis in 2017, the Vanbrugh Quartet gave nearly two thousand concerts throughout Ireland as well as enjoying a successful international career.

The Foundation creates and supports projects which bring live chamber music to audiences throughout Ireland. It is committed to supporting musicians who wish to explore and perform the string quartet repertoire and to helping concert promoters present this rich and rewarding music.

Its upcoming Arts Council funded Autumn 2019 season – details now on www.nsqf.ie - will present ten string quartets, all based in Ireland or including Irish players, in thirty five concerts nationwide. The Foundation is also supported by University College Cork, Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

Thank you for supporting tonight's concert, which is part of the Foundation's annual fundraising campaign to raise money for its three current sponsorship projects:

- *The masterclass programme at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, a rich source of inspiration for many of our emerging string players over the past twenty years*
- *The annual Chamber Music Gathering at the National Concert Hall, which brings around thirty top Irish musicians together in cross-generational collaborations and culminates in a remarkable day of three concerts on the first Saturday in January.*
- *The annual Ortús Chamber Music Festival brings together leading Irish and international musicians for a weekend of unique concerts in Cork City and County in early spring.*

This summer marks sixty years since the first concert of the RTE String Quartet Residency in Cork in 1959, and I conceived this concert as a celebration of the Residency and of the depth of great music making in Cork which in large part has flowed from RTE's initiative. It is disappointing that the Residency, which was moved from Cork to Galway in 2014, now no longer exists, but it is the aim of the National String Quartet Foundation to fill the void that has been left.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to tonight's concert; to our presenter, Evelyn Grant, to the President and staff of University College, Cork, to all at Cork Orchestral Society, and most of all to these wonderful musicians who dedicate themselves to music day in and day out, and who have all given their services tonight in support of the Foundation.

The National String Quartet Foundation is a registered charity. Donations are welcome and can be made via the Foundation's website at www.nsqf.ie

Christopher Marwood
Artistic and Executive Director
www.nsqf.ie

PROGRAMME

Mairead Hickey, violin

David McElroy, violin

Ed Creedon, viola

Cian O'Duill, viola

Christopher Marwood, cello

Antonín Dvořák [1841-1904]

String Quintet in E flat major Op. 97 'American'

1. Allegro non tanto

2. Allegro vivo - Un poco meno mosso

3. Larghetto

4. Finale: Allegro giusto

Dvořák's chamber music output was prodigious, 14 string quartets, 4 piano trios, 2 piano quartets, 3 piano quintets, 1 string sextet and 3 string quintets. The E flat Quintet dates from Dvořák's first American sojourn in 1893 and was written immediately after the American Quartet and in the middle of writing the New World Symphony. As in both those works the composer concentrates on simplicity of form placed at the service of an enchantment of melody.

As viola players are fond of pointing out, many great composers were also violists, Mozart & Dvořák being leading examples, and the fifth instrument opens this work with a gentle evocation of the main theme. The sustained and delightful lyricism of this movement and indeed the whole work is quickly made clear. Its unquestioning overflowing of delicious tunes marks it as belonging to an age of innocence unlike the intellectual questing of most contemporary music, which is entirely alien to Dvořák's world. Instead we have an irresistibly infectious joy in music making that reminds us why we are all here.

The *Allegro vivo* goes with a tremendous swing requiring precision playing and the counter-melodies both above and below the driving rhythm show the hand of an undisputed Master, just as the extra viola creates all sorts of exotic possibilities. The Trio is opened with a gloriously soulful solo on the first viola and a delicious pizzicato accompaniment. However the Scherzo refuses to be kept waiting and soon bursts in on this interlude with its unrestrainable energy.

The *Larghetto* is a set of variations based on a quiet and open-hearted theme, to which the composer is so attached that the variations are given to the accompaniment and the theme is left intact. Only the first variation takes the conventional form of tempo change and

decorations. So there is a whirling and plucked gypsy variation, a sobbing tremolo one, café style with guitars, all culminating in a full-throated singing before sinking to a hushed close.

The Rondo theme of the last movement is obsessively cheerful. A contemporary critic made the following enigmatic comment on this theme: *What American suggestions lie in this merry tune we scarcely dare suggest, as not wishing to mar innocent and pure enjoyment with hints of the ignoble; but that it reflects some of the pleasures of the lowly is obvious enough.* So we must consider the fertility of Dvořák's melodic invention in this movement as a cause of great, if lowly, pleasure. At the finish the cheerfulness is thrown aside and a big head of steam is built up for a stirring close.

Francis Humphrys

Aoife Burke, cello

Yseult Cooper Stockdale, cello

Christopher Marwood, cello

Callum Owens, cello

Grace Coughlan, cello

Eugene Lamy, cello

Maria O'Connor, cello

Aoife Nic Athlaoich, cello

Johann Sebastian Bach [1685-1750]

Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B flat major, BWV 1051

First Movement - Allegro

Arranged for cello octet by Valter Dešpalj

From an original score for two violas, two viole da gamba, cello, violone and harpsichord, this arrangement of Bach's celebrated work from around 1720 transposes it into G major and turns it into a virtuosic double concerto, with the eighth cello tuned down to take on the role of double bass.

Gabriel Fauré [1845-1924]

Pavane [1887]

Arranged for cello octet by Stephen Watkins

Fauré composed the *Pavane* in F-sharp minor, Op. 50, in 1887 in Le Vésinet. He dedicated the work to the Countess Elisabeth Greffulhe, who was a patron of Parisian society at the time. The pavane is a slow, processional dance form that was popularized in the 16th

century. It is said to have originated in Italy, the name possibly being derived from “Padovana,” a dance from Padua.

Franz Schubert [1797-1828]

Ständchen (Serenade) from Schwanengesang (D957)

Arranged for cello octet by Richard Birchall and Cellophony

This well-known song is taken from Schubert’s 1828 cycle *Schwanengesang*, and was written to an amorous twilight monologue by the poet Ludwig Rellstab. In this arrangement the solo vocal line is passed from player to player, and the original piano accompaniment is expanded in a variety of different textures.

David Popper [1843-1913]

Polonaise de Concert

Arranged for cello octet by Valter Dešpalj

David Popper was a Bohemian cellist and composer. He toured throughout Europe not only as a virtuoso soloist but as a chamber musician. He was cellist of the Budapest Quartet and premiered Brahms’ third piano trio with the composer in 1886. He wrote scores of works for cello, many of which remain popular today, including the Polonaise de Concert.

This arrangement by celebrated Croatian cellist and teacher Valter Dešpalj, passes the solo line amongst the players, depicting several characters, sometimes in dialogue, sometimes competing, but always in high spirits.

INTERVAL

Elizabeth Cooney, violin

Keith Pascoe, violin

Simon Aspell, viola

David Kenny, viola

Brian O’Kane, cello

Sinead O’Halloran, cello

Pyotr Tchaikovsky [1840-1893]

***String Sextet in D minor Op.70* [1890-92]**

1. *Allegro con spirito*

2. *Adagio cantabile e con moto*

3. *Allegretto moderato*

4. *Allegro vivace*

Tchaikovsky lived an incredibly restless life, forever wanting to be where he was not and forever travelling in search of a goal he could never reach, not unlike Schubert's famous Wanderer. As soon as a work had been written and premiered, he would wash his hands of it and flee to another city or country retreat or even another country. So after the premiere of *Sleeping Beauty*, he fled from Moscow to Europe, ending up in Florence, where he set about composing the *Queen of Spades*. He completed this remarkably quickly and then returned to Russia to orchestrate it.

Despite being totally exhausted by this enormous creative effort, he immediately turned to honouring a four-year-old commission for a string sextet from the St Petersburg Chamber Music Society. He found this very hard going, the problem being *not a lack of ideas, but the complexity of the form, there must be six independent yet compatible voices*. Nonetheless the work was finished in less than six weeks, though he later revised it after an unsuccessful first performance.

There is almost nothing Italian about the work except that he outlined the Adagio theme while he was in Florence. The first movement had two contrasting ideas; a vigorous, rhythmically dominating first subject and a more submissive and lyrical second subject. However the tension in the movement comes from the sense of the writing straining at the limitations of the form. Tchaikovsky claimed that he felt he was writing for a string orchestra and then arranging it for six solo instruments, so it is doubly curious that the string orchestra version has none of the charm and immediacy of the chamber version.

The justly famous Adagio opens with some forbidding chords before the gorgeous tune steals in on the first violin above a pizzicato raindrop accompaniment. Tchaikovsky unashamedly milks his theme for every teardrop he can get. There's a brief shuddering central section after which the theme returns to huge effect in the cello before being joined by the violin. The coda is most moving for as the end approaches, every last note becomes more precious as the theme is gradually swamped by the raindrops.

The Scherzo begins gently, but once the motto theme has been announced it soon warms up and becomes almost aggressive and even the hugely energetic Trio is swallowed up as soon as the Scherzo theme returns. At the end he uses Beethoven's old trick of pretending to repeat the Trio and then foiling your expectation with a single resounding chord. The contrapuntal finale really does try to take upon itself the mantle of a full string band as the six voices combine individually and collectively in a triumphant blaze of sound.

Francis Humphrys

THE END

Cork and the RTÉ String Quartet Residency

In the Spring of 1955, Cork's campaign for Radio Éireann to locate an orchestra in Cork culminated in a public meeting in the City Hall on 6 June 1955. The late Professor Aloys Fleischmann, leader of and inspiration behind the campaign, claimed in characteristically defiant language that 'Radio Diffusion Française was doing more for its Arab population in Algiers and Tunis than Radio Éireann would think of doing for Cork'. He drew attention to the provision of numerous regional orchestras throughout Europe and was supported by, among many others, the late Bishop Cornelius Lucey, who stated that 'the concentration of its orchestras in Dublin by Radio Éireann was socially and culturally indefensible.'

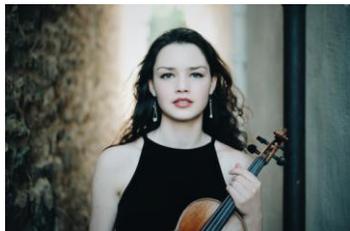
The meeting resulted in a petition presented to the Minister by the Lord Mayor of Cork on 5 July 1955, signed by 3,000 Cork citizens in addition to all public representatives and church dignitaries, with explicit support from Cork Corporation, Cork Harbour Board, the Governing Body, Academic Council and Music Department of UCC, Cork Chamber of Commerce, the Cork Branch of ICTU, Cork Workers' Council, Cork Public Library Committee, City of Cork VEC and the Cork Municipal School of Music.

In March 1955, Comhairle Radio Éireann had already in fact announced a decision ruling out 'either an orchestra or smaller musical combination' for Cork, but not dismissing the possibility of assisting a 'small combination' when circumstances might be more favourable. But now, faced with such a strong and united petition, action of some kind was inevitable and the then Minister, Michael Keyes, duly took the available loophole.

The inaugural recital by the first RTÉ String Quartet, the Raphael Quartet, was given in August 1959. In 1966 the post was taken over by a quartet led by David Lillis, which - with some personnel changes - remained in place until 1975. The Rumanian Academica Quartet held the position from 1978 until 1985, followed by the Vanbrugh Quartet's tenure from 1986 until 2013. In that year the Galway-based ConTempo Quartet was awarded what proved to be the last contract of the Residency.

*As Richard Pine observes in his 2005 book *Music and Broadcasting in Ireland*, 'the continued presence of successive quartets in Cork would prove to be the germ of its burgeoning musical life.' The RTÉ Quartets have also contributed in no small way to the musical life of Ireland as a whole, travelling the country extensively and supporting the work of Irish composers both at home and abroad. Richard Pine concludes that 'it can confidently be said that RTÉ, the first radio station in the world to establish a quartet-in-residence, led the concept internationally and stimulated the appreciation of chamber music in Ireland over the past forty-five years. The establishment of quartets-in-residence in Sligo (Vogler Quartet, 1999) and Galway (ConTempo Quartet, 2003) can be traced to this initiative.'*

Mairéad Hickey, violin



Mairéad Hickey was NCH Irish Young Musician of the Year 2010 – 2012. She won third prize at the 2016 International Louis Spohr Competition and has performed as soloist with both the RTÉ National Concert and Symphony Orchestras and in venues including the Royal Festival Hall, London, Beethoven-Haus, Bonn and Carnegie Hall, New York. From 2003 to 2014 she studied with Adrian Petcu. She is now studying with Mihaela Martin at Kronberg Academy, sponsored by the Hilmar Kopper Stipendium.

Mairéad has performed at the West Cork, Westport and Clondeboy Festivals, the Mantova Festival, the Grachtenfestival and the Rolandseck Festival. Mairéad participated in Chamber Music Connects the World 2016, Kronberg and performed with Steven Isserlis and Christian Tetzlaff. She has collaborated with artists including Barry Douglas, Tabea Zimmermann, Fazil Say, Alexander Lonquich and the Vanbrugh Quartet. In 2016 she co-founded the Ortús Chamber Music Festival in 2016 in her native Cork.

Mairéad also plays traditional Irish music and has won eight all-Ireland fiddle titles. Mairéad plays a Giovanni Tononi violin, loaned to her through the Beares International Violin Society. She is supported by the Arts Council and the Music Network Music Capital Scheme, funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

David McElroy, violin



David McElroy graduated in 2017 with a First Class Honours BMus from CIT Cork School of Music. He is continuing his violin studies with Gregory Ellis in the CSM Masters in Performance Programme, and is currently in his final year. He has performed in masterclasses in Italy, U.K., Romania and France and studied with Fernand Iaicu at the École Supérieure Musique, Lille, under the Erasmus programme while an undergraduate.

Twice winner of the CSM senior concerto prize, David has performed the Bruch and Glazunov Violin Concertos with CSM Symphony Orchestra, as well as leading the orchestra for two years. Since being accepted to the RTE NSO Mentoring Scheme in 2015 David has performed regularly with both the RTE National Symphony Orchestra and the RTE Concert Orchestra. He has also performed with the Irish Chamber Orchestra and Camerata Ireland.

He performed in the RDS Rising Stars platform in May 2017 and April 2018. David is first violin in the Doolan Quartet. Established in 2017 the quartet has won both Cork School of Music & Feis Ceoil Chamber Competitions as well as performing in the NCH Feis Ceoil Gala Concert. He will be attending the West Cork Chamber Music Festival this summer with the quartet for the third year.

Ed Creedon, viola



Ed Creedon enjoys a varied career as a viola player, performing chamber music, in recitals and as an orchestral musician. This year he has performed in the National Concert Hall Chamber Music Gathering, toured throughout Ireland with the Lir String Quartet, toured to Finland, France and India with Camerata Ireland as well as solo performances with Camerata Ireland and Barry Douglas.

Recent chamber music highlights include performances with the Vanbrugh Quartet, as well as appearances with the Ficino Ensemble in Dublin, the Piatti Quartet in the U.K., at the Ortús Festival in Cork, and repeat invitations to the Clondeboy Festival in Belfast and the Killaloe Festival of Chamber Music. For four consecutive summers he took part in the West Cork Chamber Music Festival Young Musician's Programme.

Ed comes from Cork and studied with Constantin Zanidache and Simon Aspell at Cork School of Music.

Cian Ó Dúill, viola



Cork born viola player Cian Ó Dúill has performed with the Vanbrugh, Carducci and Callino String Quartets, the Fidelio Trio, the Avalon Ensemble, Chroma and the Crash Ensemble. He has played in chamber music recitals with Anthony Marwood, Howard Shelley, Jorg Widmann, Natalie Clein and Patricia Rozario and has appeared at Cheltenham, Warwick Arts, Chichester, Aldeburgh, Wye Valley, Kings Lynn, Sligo Spring, Killaloe and West Cork Chamber Music Festivals.

Cian was a founder member of both the Regent String Quartet and the Rothko String Trio and is currently a member of the period instrument Giordani String Quartet and Prism Ensemble. Concerto appearances include performances of works by Bach, Telemann, Mozart, Bruch and Hindemith in Ireland, the UK, Spain and Greece.

Cian is a member of the Irish Chamber Orchestra, was co-principal viola of the London Mozart Players from 2010 to 2014 and works regularly with the London Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Britten Sinfonia.

Christopher Marwood, cello



Christopher Marwood graduated from Cambridge University in 1983 and went on to study at London's Royal Academy of Music and Conservatorium Maastricht. Cello teachers included Florence Hooton, David Strange, Ralph Kirshbaum, William Pleeth and Radu Aldulescu. His chamber music mentor for several years was Emmanuel Hurwitz.

As cellist of the Vanbrugh Quartet for 32 years, Christopher Marwood enjoyed a busy career performing throughout Ireland and touring worldwide. The Quartet released over thirty CDs encompassing a wide range of repertoire and including the complete Beethoven quartets ("fine enough to bear comparison with any set" Fanfare, USA). They built up a considerable repertoire including at least sixty Irish works, many of them commissions or premieres. The Quartet's contribution to music in Ireland was formally recognized in 2016 when they were presented with the National Concert Hall's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Christopher co-founded the West Cork Chamber Music Festival in 1996 and remains director of the Festival's string quartet masterclass programme. He is director of the National String Quartet Foundation. He teaches at CIT Cork School of Music and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and continues to perform both as soloist and as chamber musician.

Aoife Burke, cello



A native of Cork, Aoife Burke's numerous national prizes and awards include the Senior Cello Award, Bach Prize, Clyde Twelvetrees Cup, RTÉ Lyric FM Award and Hazel de Courcy Lewis Cup at Feis Ceoil, Dublin, and the Capuchin Order Perpetual Cup and Bursary at Feis Maitiú, Cork. Aoife studied at undergraduate level with Emma Ferrand at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, and with Christoph Richter at the Folkwang Universität der Künste, Essen, graduating with a first-class BMus. (Hons.) Degree and an LRSM Diploma in Performance with Distinction in 2014. During her studies, Aoife was awarded the Raphael Sommer Music Scholarship and was a Britten-Pears Young Artist, as well as taking part in masterclasses with Ralph Kirshbaum, Miklós Perényi and Frans Helmerson. Aoife also holds a first-class MA in Performance from the CIT Cork School of Music, where she studied under Christopher Marwood.

A passionate chamber musician, Aoife has collaborated with The Vanbrugh, Musici Ireland and the Gavin Bryars, Kirkos and Ficino Ensembles and she currently holds a residency at the Triskel Arts Centre, where she curates the Spotlight Chamber Music Series. Recent highlights include a Chamber Studio Mentorship with Richard Lester at Kings Place, London, and an Irish concert tour with the Shandon String Quartet, supported by the National String Quartet Foundation and the National Concert Hall.

As an orchestral player, Aoife has toured Europe, Asia and the UAE extensively with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the RTÉ Orchestras, Camerata Ireland and the Irish Chamber Orchestra, performing at the BBC Proms, and Würzburg Mozart, Naantali, Aldeburgh and Cheltenham Festivals, among others. As a session musician, Aoife has worked with artists including Ed Sheeran, The Cranberries and Van Morrison.

Yseult Cooper Stockdale, cello



Yseult Cooper Stockdale works extensively with both RTÉ orchestras while also performing as a soloist and chamber musician. Last year Yseult joined London's Southbank Sinfonia for their 2018 season. Since moving to London, she has also enjoyed working with Welsh National Opera, and returns frequently to perform in Ireland in a chamber and solo capacity.

In 2018 her concerto performances included the Schumann Cello Concerto with the Cork Fleischmann Symphony Orchestra, and Beethoven's triple concerto with Wexford Sinfonia. She was also invited to play with Musici Ireland, Ficino Ensemble, and performed in the inaugural Beckett Chamber Music Festival alongside artists such as Sarah Sew, Ioana Petcu-Colan and Joachim Roewer. Other concerto performances include the Dvorak Cello Concerto (nationwide tour, 2015), and Elgar, in the NCH (2014). Yseult has also worked with Crash Ensemble, given five ICC concerts and has an interest in historically informed performance as principal cellist of Fishamble Sinfonia. She is a very active member of the contemporary music ensemble, Kirkos, with whom she has given over 70 premiers, including several solo cello commissions, and was recently invited to perform at the London Contemporary Music Festival.

Yseult was a recipient of the John Vallery Memorial Prize for highest placed string player at the 2015 Freemasons Young Musician of the Year and was awarded the 2016 Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe scholarship. In 2017 she was selected a Britten-Pears Young Artist, performing at the Southbank Centre under Marin Alsop. Yseult has a 1st Class Honours MA, from the CIT Cork school of Music, and BA, from the Royal Irish Academy of Music, where her teachers were Christopher Marwood and Bill Butt. In 2015/16 she studied

at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater "Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy", Leipzig, with Peter Hörr.

Callum Owens, cello



Callum is a student of Christopher Marwood at CIT Cork School of Music. In 2017, he was jointly awarded the National Concert Hall Award for Young String Musicians (2017-2019). In 2018, at ESB Feis Ceoil, he won the Clyde Twelvetrees Trophy for Senior Violoncello Concerto, achieving a score of 100% for his performance of Shostakovich Cello Concerto No 1. He was invited to perform at the RDS Rising Stars concert in Dublin in April 2018 and was participated in the Camerata Ireland Academy at the 2017 and 2018 Clandeboye Festivals. In September 2018, he was a finalist in the Frank Maher Classical Music Awards.

Callum was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland for several years. In 2018 he was selected to play in the prestigious Verbier Festival Junior Orchestra in Switzerland and has been invited back to the orchestra for July 2019. He will perform at the 2019 West Cork Chamber Music Festival as a member of the Danu String Quartet. He has participated in masterclasses with Daniel Müller-Schott and Andrés Díaz.

Grace Coughlan, cello



Grace Coughlan is a second year BMus student at CIT Cork School of Music studying cello with Christopher Marwood. She has won numerous national prizes, including Feis Maitiú's advanced recital and cello concerto competitions, Feis Ceoil's senior cello and the CSM senior recital. In 2019 she was placed second in the competition for Feis Ceoil's prestigious Aileen Gore Cup. She was a finalist in the National Concert Hall "Young Musician's Award" for strings 2015 and was selected to perform at Feis Ceoil's Young Platform series at the National Concert Hall (2014 and 2018). Grace has participated in projects with the National Concert Hall and the Irish Chamber Orchestra including the Academos Project (2018). She has performed in masterclasses with Natalie Clein, Hannah Roberts, Maria Kliegel and Daniel Muller-Schott.

Grace is a member of the Doolan String Quartet, winner of both the Feis Ceoil Chamber Music Cup and the CSM Vanbrugh Chamber Music Competition in 2018. The quartet performed at the National Concert Hall Feis Ceoil Gala Concert and at the RDS Rising Stars series. They also participated in the West Cork Chamber Music Festival in Bantry in 2018 and have been invited to take part in the 2019 festival. Grace was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland and the Cork Youth Orchestra. She was also a member of SinfoNua and currently serves as principal cellist of the CSM Symphony Orchestra.

Eugene Lamy, cello



Brazilian born cellist Eugene Lamy Alves won first prize at the Feis Ceoil cello concerto competition 2014 in Dublin, which led to a series of solo debuts in Irish halls with recitals in the Royal Dublin Society Rising Stars Series, The Young Platform Series in the National Concert Hall, and the University of Limerick Rising Stars Series. He also won the Cork School of Music Concerto Competition, leading to solo performances of Schumann's Cello Concerto with the CSM Symphony Orchestra in Cork and Kenmare.

A member of the European Union Youth Orchestra since 2015, he toured Europe performing at world's finest halls including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the

Berlin Konzerthaus, the Usher Hall in Edinburgh and the Wolkenturm and Concert Hall in Grafenegg, Austria, where Eugene recently returned as member of Grafenegg's Academy Orchestra 2018. In Ireland he took part in the first Chamber Music Gathering in the National Concert Hall and in the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, as member of the 'Sonoro' and 'Beara' Quartets.

He graduated from CIT Cork School of Music in 2017 with first class honours in the MA in music performance under the guidance of Christopher Marwood. This followed a first class honours BMus in music performance in 2015 also from Cork School of Music.

Eugene is based in Cork City and can often be seen performing with the Cork Opera House Concert Orchestra, which will be performing next week at The Cork Proms in the Opera House.

Maria O'Connor, cello



Cellist Maria O'Connor holds both a B.Mus and an MA from the Cork School of Music (CSM). She has been a prize winner in numerous competitions including Feis Ceoil, Feis Maitiu and the CSM Concerto and Chamber Music Competition. During her studies she was a guest soloist with the CSMSO.

As the cellist with the Chiral Quartet, Maria was awarded the 2014 CSM Director's Prize. The quartet was subsequently named Ensemble in Residence in the CSM. They have been winners of the CSM Vanbrugh Quartet Chamber Music Competition, the KBC Great Music in Irish Houses Residency competition and the Music in Drumcliffe Strings *Attached* Competition and have studied with both the Vogler Quartet and the Vanbrugh Quartet.

Maria has performed in numerous venues and festivals at home and abroad including the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Killaloe Music Festival, Music in Drumcliffe festival and in the RDS Rising Stars recital series, the Jenneusses Musicales Festival and Guildhall, London.

Since completing her studies, Maria has enjoyed a diverse career as a chamber musician, orchestral player and teacher. She is currently principal cellist with the Irish Memory Orchestra and has toured with them in both Ireland and abroad. As a freelance cellist she also plays with Cello Ireland, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and the Kerry Scotia Ensemble.

Aoife Nic Athlaoich, cello



Dublin born but Cork based Aoife Nic Athlaoich enjoys a versatile musical career, equally at home playing on period instruments as performing newly commissioned works. She has collaborated with Jazz musicians and contemporary dance groups, as well as playing under the baton as such eminent conductors as Sir John Elliot Gardiner, Sir Colin Davis and Bernard Haitink as an orchestral musician.

Aoife has performed with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, la Serenissima, the Avison Ensemble, Irish baroque orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Classical Opera Company, London Mozart Players and is also a member of the Irish Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique.

Aoife won prizes for solo and contemporary music performance at Feis Ceoil, Dublin, as well as being awarded a Belfast Classical Music Bursary in 2007 and was awarded scholarships for her studies at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and at the Royal College of Music, London.

Elizabeth Cooney, violin



Elizabeth Cooney performs internationally as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral leader. London based, she was most recently guest leader of the dynamic and exciting Aurora Orchestra at the Oxford Lieder Festival, having toured with them to Australia in October 2014 as principal violin at the Melbourne Arts Festival for their residency there. She has also been invited as guest principal to the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Northern Sinfonia orchestras.

She has performed as soloist many times with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra, having toured with them and appearing on RTE TV Symphony Sessions. Other orchestras she has appeared as soloist with include the Musica Vitae Chamber Orchestra of Sweden, the Slovenian Philharmonic, the Ulster Orchestra (with whom she recorded Mozart's Concerto no.1 for BBC Radio 3) and the RTE Concert Orchestra.

Elizabeth is a keen chamber musician and has performed with pianists John O'Connor, Finghin Collins, Cristina Ortiz, Huw Watkins and Mei Yi Foo among others. She has performed chamber music recitals at the Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall, the Purcell Room, the Conway Hall in London, the Weill Hall at Carnegie and at many of the major festivals including Canterbury, Cambridge, West Cork Chamber Music, Edinburgh Fringe and the Musica Nova Festival in Brazil. In 2014 Elizabeth toured in Ireland with pianist Finghin Collins and cellist Marc Coppey; in 2015 she touring to music festivals with Finghin Collins performing repertoire for piano and violin by Schubert, Elgar and Szymanowski. In May 2017 she toured in Ireland as "Elizabeth Cooney" and Friends with Máiread Hickey, Simon Aspell, Ruth Gibson, Guy Johnston and Brian O'Kane.

Keith Pascoe, violin



In 2016 Keith Pascoe received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Concert Hall, Dublin for his work with the Vanbrugh Quartet. He is an internationally regarded violinist, conductor and editor. His professional career began after prize winning studies at the Royal College of Music, London where he studied violin with Jaroslav Vanecek, piano with Eileen Reynolds, and conducting with Norman del Mar.

His professional life began in 1981, when he became a founding member (and leader) of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Subsequent full-time positions included sub-leader of the London Philharmonic at the age of twenty-three, assistant director of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the Fields (with whom he has appeared as soloist), and ten years with exclusive EMI artists, the Britten Quartet. From 1998- 2017, he was a member of the Vanbrugh Quartet, artists-in-residence to University College Cork. He is currently (2019) Conductor of the Cork Fleischmann Symphony Orchestra.

His teaching and coaching commitments have taken him across the world, including to such major institutions as Royal College of Music, London; Royal Academy of Music, London; Chethams School of Music, Manchester; Edsberg Institut, Stockholm; Hong Kong University, Kiev Conservatory, University of Southern California, Liverpool University, Birmingham Conservatoire, Yehudi Menuhin School, inter alia.

He has received an honorary ARAM from the Royal Academy of Music of Music, and was awarded first-class honours MA, and first-class honours MPhil from Cork Institute of Technology and University College, Cork, respectively.

Simon Aspell, viola



A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, London, Simon Aspell is one of Ireland's leading viola players. In 1985 he and his colleagues formed the Vanbrugh Quartet, successfully auditioning to become the fourth resident quartet in Cork for RTE the following year. The Quartet won the London International String Quartet Competition in 1988, and an international performance career quickly followed throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas, at major concert halls, and international festivals, as well as the release of thirty CDs, culminating in the complete cycle of Beethoven String Quartets, released in 1996. That same year, the quartet co-founded the West Cork Chamber Music Festival in Bantry, now frequented by some of the world's finest musicians on the chamber music circuit. As a member of the Vanbrugh Quartet, he has with his colleagues dedicated his musical life to bringing chamber music to all corners of Ireland, and to supporting the country's composers and young musicians.

In November 2016, the Vanbrugh Quartet were presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Concert Hall, "for the enormous contribution they have made to their beloved art-form of the string quartet and to the musical life of Ireland."

Simon Aspell can list some of the world's finest artists as chamber music partners including violinists Julian Rachlin, Vivianne Hagner, Rafael Oleg, Anthony Marwood, Priya Mitchell and Catherine Leonard, viola-players Nobuko Imai, Kim Kashkashian, Lawrence Power and Brett Dean, cellists Natalie Clein, Guy Johnston, Ralph Kirshbaum and Robert Cohen, Oboist Nicholas Daniel, Clarinetists Michael Collins and Jorg Widmann and pianists Barry Douglas, Peter Donohoe, Marc Andre Hamelin, Hugh Tinney, John O'Connor, Enrico Pace and Phillippe Cassard, The Borodin, Lindsay, Chilingirian, Panocha, Pacifica and Shanghai quartets.

Simon teaches viola and chamber music at the CIT Cork School of Music and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin.

David Kenny, viola



A native of Cork, David Kenny studied with Constantin Zanidache and Simon Aspell at the CIT Cork School of Music. He has worked with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Wexford Festival Opera Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, John Wilson Orchestra and the Irish Chamber Orchestra. He has played Principal Viola with the European Union Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. In 2016, David was appointed to the viola section of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

He has performed at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Music in Drumcliffe and the Interlaken Classics Festival. He has collaborated with the Ficino Ensemble, Musici Ireland and the Vanbrugh Quartet. As violist with the Shandon String Trio he undertook a Chamber Studio mentorship under Richard Lester at Kings Place, London, last year.

He has participated in masterclasses with Yuri Bashmet, Nobuko Imai, Bruno Giuranna, Maxim Rysanov, Lawrence Power and with members of the Alban Berg, Vanbrugh, Pacifica, Artemis, Vogler, Danel, Danish and Casals Quartets.

Brian O’Kane, cello



Irish cellist Brian O’Kane enjoys a busy career as both soloist and chamber musician. Since winning first prize at the Windsor International String Competition in 2008, he has made his debuts with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra under Ashkenazy and in recital at the Wigmore Hall. Brian is a former "Rising Star" of Ireland's National Concert Hall and he recently recorded his debut CD for the Champs Hill label.

An avid chamber musician, Brian enjoys playing as a member of the Cappa Ensemble and Navarra Quartet. He has collaborated with a wide variety of artists such as Michael Collins, Aleksandar Madzar, Anthony Marwood, Pekka Kuusisto, Lawrence Power, Antoine Tamestit and Sir James Galway. Brian has also performed at concert halls and festivals throughout the world such as Sydney Opera House, Suntory Hall Tokyo, Seoul Arts Centre, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, West Cork, Radio France-Montpellier, Lockenhaus and the Weesp Chamber Music Festival, Holland of which his quartet are the artistic directors.

A graduate of both the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Brian’s biggest influences have come from Louise Hopkins and at Prussia Cove, Aldeburgh & Chamber Studio from studies with Ralph Kirshbaum, Steven Isserlis, Ferenc Rados and Eberhard Feltz. Brian currently plays on a Rugeri cello made in Cremona c.1690.

Sinead O’Halloran, cello



24-year-old cellist Sinéad O’Halloran is quickly establishing herself as one of Ireland’s most exciting young musicians. Co-founder and Artistic Director of the Ortús Chamber Music Festival, Sinéad is passionate about bringing together Irish and international musicians for concerts, education work and audience development in the wider community.

She began her musical studies at the CIT Cork School of Music under the guidance of Joan Scannell and Christopher Marwood. At the age of 18 she was offered an Artistic Merit Scholarship to pursue a postgraduate Performer’s Diploma at SMU Meadows School of the Arts in Dallas, Texas in the classes of renowned cellists Andres Diaz and Christopher Adkins. She is currently a student of Gregor Horsch (Principal cellist of Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra) at the Robert Schumann Hochschule Düsseldorf.

An avid chamber musician, Sinéad has performed at IMS Open Chamber Music (Prussia Cove), the West Cork Chamber Music Festival (Ireland), the opening of the Bozar Season (Brussels) and the 25th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. She has been a prizewinner in numerous competitions, both in Ireland and the USA. She has collaborated with musicians including Barry Douglas, Tasmin Little, the Vanbrugh String Quartet and Zoltán Fejérvári.

Sinéad gratefully acknowledges support from the Arts Council of Ireland, Music Network, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Cork City Arts Office and Deutschlandstipendium. She currently plays on a Benjamin Banks cello c. 1780.

**Beneficiaries of the West Cork Chamber Music Festival Masterclass programme,
supported by the National String Quartet Foundation, include:**

Eugene Lamy Alves
Claire Austen
Suzanne Brennan
Caoimh Browne
Aoife Burke
Joshua Burke
Jonathan Byers
Martha Campbell
Rebecca Capova
Anna Cashell
Ben Cashell
Sophie Cashell
Nozomi Coen
Finghin Collins
Alison Comerford
Yseult Cooper
Elizabeth Cooney
Grace Coughlan
Ed Creedon
Leonie Curtin
Dara Daly
Fiachra de hOra
Karen Dervan
Margaret Doris
Aoife Dowdall
Jenny Dowdall
Lisa Dowdall
Siobhan Doyle
Rachel Du
Eoin Ducrot
Christopher Ellis
Kate Ellis
Alison Fahy
Kate Fleming
Pauline Fleming
Michelle Fleming
Aiveen Gallagher
Brendan Garde
Fiachra Garvey
Heloise Geoghegan
Ruth Gibson
Paul Grennan
Rebecca Halliday
Jane Hackett
Elina Hakanen
Gregory Harrington
Cormac Henry
Mairead Hickey
Seamus Hickey

Kevin Jansson
Sarah Joyce
Philip Keegan
Stephen Kelleher
Fiona Kelly
Christine Kenny
David Kenny
Emer Kinsella
Brendan Lawless
William Lehane
Catherine Leonard
Cora Venus Lunny
Robert Mahon
Aisling Manning
Julie-Anne Manning
Gwendolyn Masin
Rachael Masterson
Ciaran McCabe
Stephanie McCabe
David McCann
John McCarthy
Abbie McDonagh
Ailbhe MacDonagh
Maria McGarry
Ruth McGinley
Gina McGuinness
David McElroy
Cian McGarry
Michael McHale
Sarah McMahan
Ealainn McMullin
David McNulty
Samantha Miller
Triona Milne
Siun Milne
Éanna Monaghan
Martin Moriarty
Anthony Mulholland
Jennifer Murphy
Tadhg Murphy
Hugh Murray
Zoe Nagle
Stephen Nicholls
Orla Ni Bhraoin
Colma Ni Bhriain
Caoilfhionn Ní Choileáin
Cliona Ni Choileáin
Roisin Ni Duill
Siubhan Ni Ghriofa

Aoife Nic Athlaoich
Peggy Nolan
Lucy Nolan
Callum Owens
Cormac O Briain
Cillian O'Breachain
Lynda O'Connor
Maria O'Connor
David O'Doherty
Cian O'Duill
Sinead O'Halloran
Jane O'Hara
Catriona O'Hara
Brian O'Kane
David O'Leary
Julia O'Riordan
Macdara O'Seireadin
Molly O'Shea
Schuyler Lillian Perry
Anne Phelan
Una Palliser
Gerald Peregrine
Ioana Petcu
Chris Quaid
Joanne Quigley
Niamh Quigley
Eoin Quinlan
Patrick Rafter
Helen Rutlege
Cliodhna Ryan
John Ryan
Eoin Schmidt-Martin
Sarah Sexton
Cliodna Shanahan
David Strange
Hanno Strydom
Karl Sweeney
Nicola Sweeney
Galina Tanney
Richard Thomas
David Tobin
Michael Trainor
Niamh Varian-Barry
Roisin Walters
Lauren Weavers
Peter Whelan
Killian White
Phoebe White
Carla White