

10th  
dublin  
international  
piano  
competition

SPRING/SUMMER 2015 ISSUE 8

# TEMPO

DUBLIN CAN BE HEAVEN...

## FEATURING

SENATOR  
DAVID NORRIS

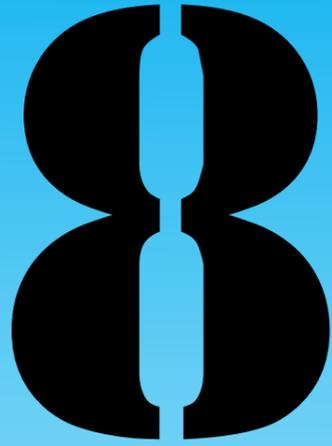
KATHLEEN WATKINS  
(AND GAY BYRNE)

JOE BRENNAN  
(AND ELTON JOHN)

GARVEY - GIGGING @  
GOOGLE

BEHIND THE SCENES

AND MUCH MORE...



TEMPO 10th Competition

## Welcome to the **10th** Dublin International Piano Competition

Now one of Ireland's premier classical music events, the Dublin International Piano Competition celebrates its tenth incarnation this May, when 66 competitors from 18 countries will vie for the coveted first prize.

This bumper edition of TEMPO is full of light-hearted articles, insights, reviews and exposés about the people who are involved, have been involved and will be involved in the 10th Dublin International Piano Competition.

As the song goes: 'Dublin can be heaven, with coffee at eleven and a stroll around Stephen's Green'. This May, however, the DIPC will show that Dublin will be heaven with eleven exciting days of musical contest in the RDS, and just around the corner from the Green, the National Concert Hall.

Cover Photo: Michael Moynihan  
 Sketches: David Mathuna  
 Editor: David Mahon  
 Design: ZINC

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## Who will be the **10th** Dublin International Piano Competition **Winner 2015** ?



1988  
**Philippe Cassard**  
France



1991  
**Pavel Nersessian**  
Russia



1994  
**Davide Franceschetti**  
Italy



1997  
**Max Levinson**  
America



2000  
**Alexei Nabioulin**  
Russia



2003  
**Antti Siirala**  
Finland



2006  
**Romain Descharmes**  
France



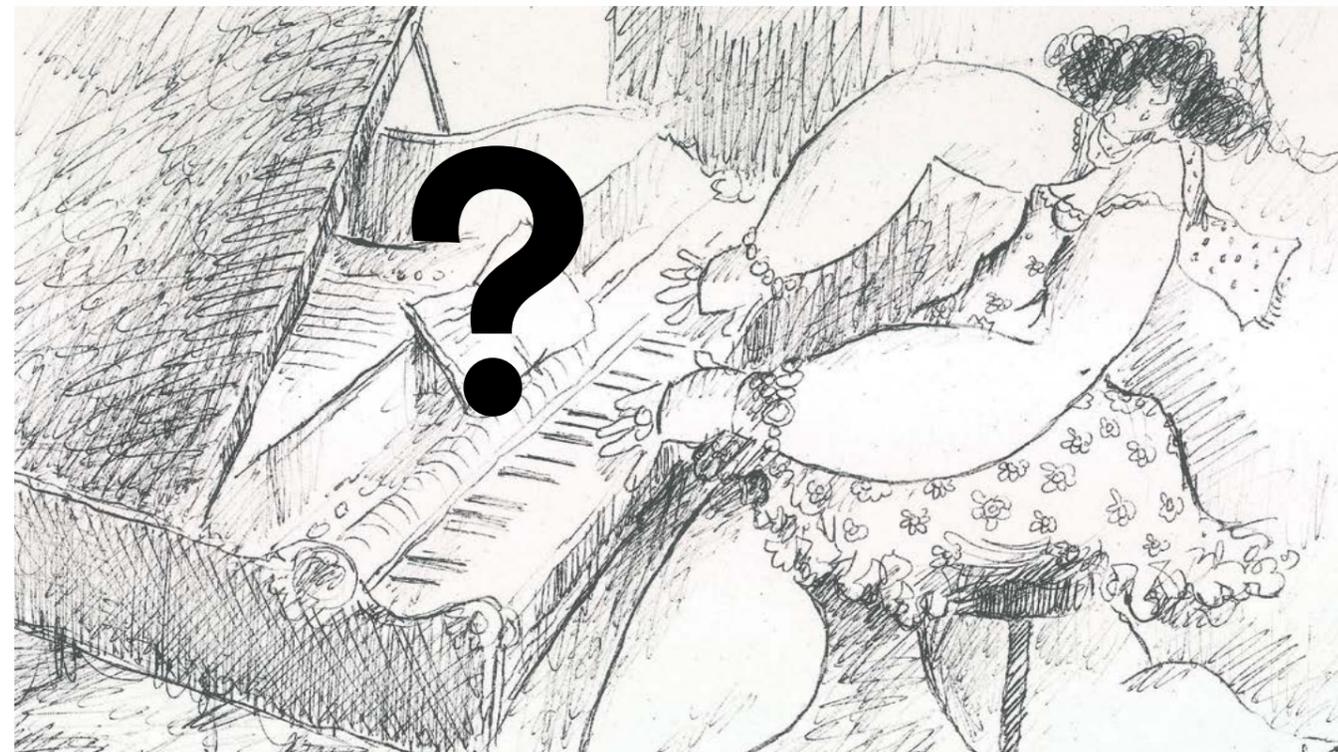
2009  
**Alexej Gorlatch**  
Ukraine



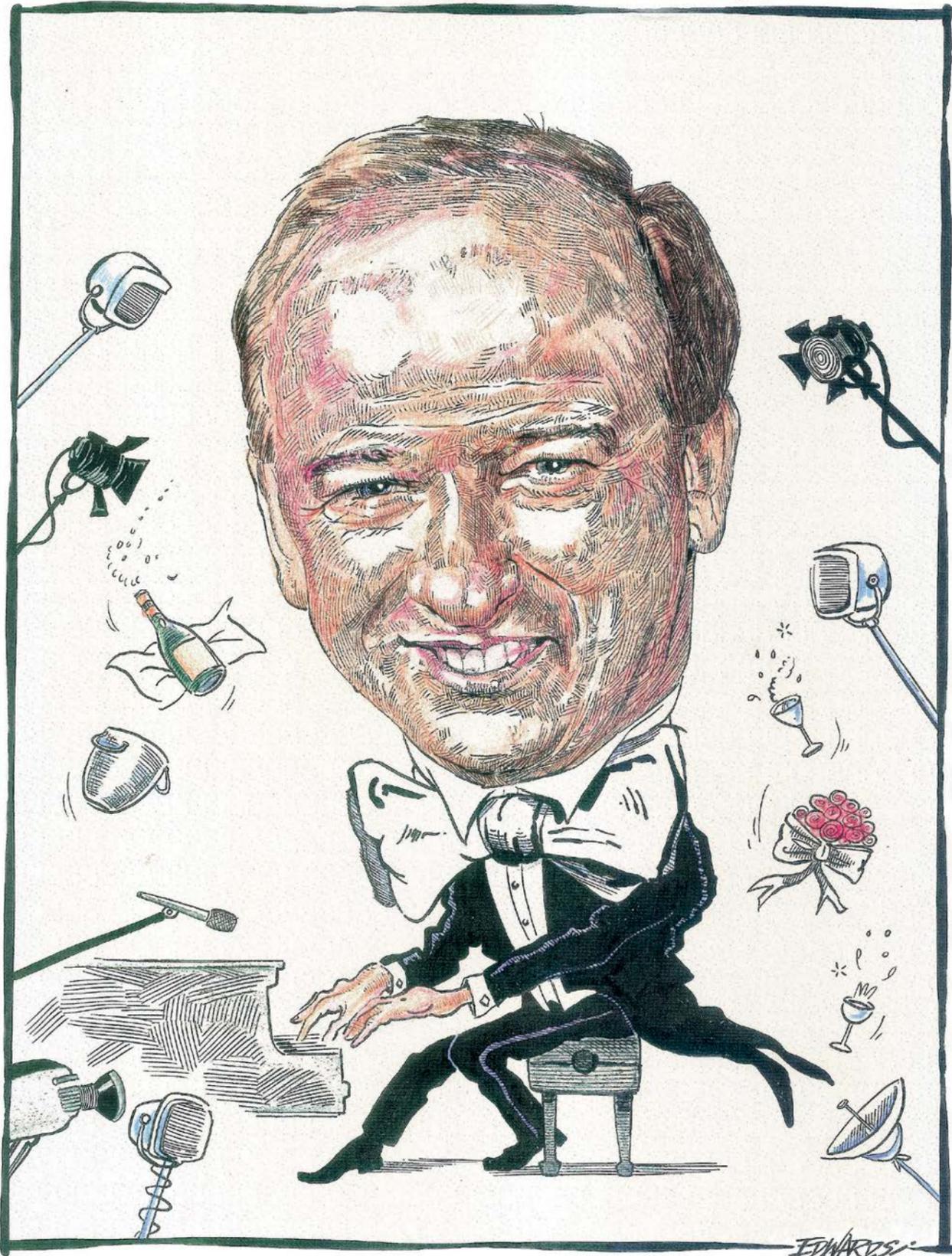
2012  
**Nikolay Khozyainov**  
Russia



2015



JOHN O'CONNOR



01 02

## DUBLIN CAN BE HEAVEN

“There was a tremendous entry of almost 170 pianists from all over the world, especially the Far East - China, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Vietnam.”

The excitement is mounting as the days countdown to May 15th, the first day of the 10th Dublin International Piano Competition. There was a tremendous entry of almost 170 pianists from all over the world with a huge entry from the Far East - 22 from China, 30 from Korea, 8 from Japan as well as entries from Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Vietnam for the first time. We also had 15 entries from the United States, which is the biggest entry we have had from there. Whittling it down to manageable proportions was a major headache. Róisín Grimley has to find host families for all who are accepted, so it was my first job to get it down to 60 entries - 55 international and five Irish qualifiers from the Preliminary Irish Competition, which was held in the RIAM last December.

But the standard of the Irish performers was so high that the jury put six through, representing all parts of Ireland, to the international competition and such was the standard of the international entry that I gave up when I had cut it down to 63.

The saintly Róisín is now trying to find host families for our projected 69 competitors - the highest number ever. Of course, there will be some drop outs (some will change teacher; some will fall ill; some may feel their programme is not ready...and some will forget to apply for a visa on time - despite all our nagging!).

It will be a huge entry nonetheless and the feast of music-making will be of the highest level.

The timetable of the Competition has been finalised. We are not only finalising the list of host families for our competitors but also the families with excellent pianos who will open their homes to the competitors, some of whom will spend every available hour practising when they arrive. We are also making the list of drivers who will ferry the competitors to and from practice-pianos, the list of so many volunteers who will look after the competitors when they arrive at the RDS, provide nourishment, encouragement for them...have a handkerchief ready if necessary and even a shoulder to cry on if they don't feel they have played their best. And if any one of our readers would like to offer their help, please email us and we will contact you by return.

In other words, the DIPC family is getting together once more to open our homes, our hearts, our city, our country, our culture, our warmth and our hospitality to our visitors. And we will cherish every single one of them.

John O'Connor  
Artistic Director and Co-Founder

## JOYCEAN MELODIES

“Joyce inherited his father’s voice and commanded a beautiful light tenor.”

One might almost say that James Joyce was conceived in music. His parents met while singing in the choir of the Church of the Three Patrons in Rathgar. It was a musical family and Joyce’s father was fond of a story comparing him favourably with the operatic tenor Barton McGuckin. Joyce inherited his father’s voice and commanded a beautiful light tenor. However when I interviewed the sons of Vincent O’Brien (music master of the Palestrina Choir in the Pro-Cathedral) in the 1980s and asked about their father’s memories of Joyce they said “Dad said he had a beautiful voice but he would never make a musician”.

When I asked why they replied that when instructing Joyce for the Feis Ceoil one of the pieces was by Handel entitled “Whom the Lord Loveth Those he Chastiseth”. Joyce came in, flung the piece on the piano lid and embarked on a twenty minute theological discussion of God’s failings in punishing those who loved him. O’Brien said Joyce thought far more of the words than of the music.

“Joyce came in, flung the piece on the piano lid and embarked on a twenty minute theological discussion of God’s failings in punishing those who loved him.”

Nevertheless he did compete in the Feis Ceoil in 1903 (not, incidentally as often said, against John McCormack). However, when it came to the sight reading element Joyce once more flung the music to the ground and decamped saying it was an insult to ask an artist to sing unprepared music. This was in fact to cover the fact that he could not sight read properly. The Judge was Luigi Denza composer of “Funiculi Funicula” and was so impressed by Joyce’s singing that despite his failure at sight reading he decided to award him the bronze instead of a gold medal. Joyce subsequently maintained that he had thrown it into the Liffey on the way home but this was not so. It surfaced some years ago at an auction of the effects of Joyce’s sister in law Stanislaus Joyce’s widow Nellie.

“Joyce once more flung the music to the ground and decamped saying it was an insult to ask an artist to sing unprepared music.”

Throughout Joyce’s work, music plays an important role. Joyce’s brother Stanislaus came to hate the middle class pretension and melodic insistence of the



Senator David Norris

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04

Victorian drawing room ballads which accompanied their family’s decline into poverty. Joyce was less fastidious and recognised the melodic beauty, as well as the social evasiveness. Dubliners, his first book, echoes with music from the Music Hall to the haunting strains of “I Dreamt that I Dwelt in Marble Halls” with which the story Clay ends.

“Joyce was less fastidious and recognised the melodic beauty, as well as the social evasiveness. Dubliners, his first book, echoes with music from the Music Hall to the haunting strains of “I Dreamt that I Dwelt in Marble Halls” with which the story Clay ends.”

Joyce’s nephew Ken Monaghan often spoke to me of the family’s disastrous decline due to John Stanislaus Joyce’s drinking habits. His eyes would fill with tears when he spoke of his mother and the other children in the cold empty tenement house singing “Oft in the Stilly Night” as they awaited their father’s drunken return. This scene is echoed towards the end of “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man”.

In Ulysses, James Joyce devotes one entire episode to the art of music – Sirens. Everything in this episode is musical, a woman’s hair falling over her shoulders becomes a trill and at the end Leopold Bloom becomes himself a musical instrument breaking wind decorously on the Dublin quay side. The first page and a half is at first glance a piece of nonsense. In it fragments of phrases and words appear mutilated. But this would be recognisable to anybody who attended the Abbey Theatre when it was playing in the old Proscenium arched Queen’s Theatre in Dublin’s Pearse Street where the late Sean O’Riada would conduct a small orchestra.

As we settled into our places, opened up the old cardboard covered programme across the centre of which ran the reassuring legend “The auditorium has been thoroughly disinfected with Jeyes Fluid” we could read the names of the various pieces that were to be performed before the play. Then out from under the apron of the stage would come the fat lady from Rathmines carefully plucking her evening skirt from the cheeks of her backside and discussing the weather with the little man who played the drums.

“There is an orchestra of words tuning up and then the music starts with the word “begin”.”

Then a complete cacophony ensued. It was the instruments tuning up, one playing for concert pitch against the other. Then out would come O’Riada, bow to the band members, bow to the audience, tap with his baton and commence the beat. This is exactly

what happens in Sirens. There is an orchestra of words tuning up and then the music starts with the word “begin”.

We do in fact have one of Joyce’s own original musical compositions. The late Maria Jolas once played for me a private recording of Joyce’s own setting for piano and voice of one of the poem’s from Chamber Music – “Bid Adieu to Girlish Ways”. There was a loping piano accompaniment and then the wonderful bass baritone voice of Joyce’s son Georgio. It was an electrifying performance.

“The late Maria Jolas once played for me a private recording of Joyce’s own setting for piano and voice of one of the poem’s from Chamber Music – “Bid Adieu to Girlish Ways”.”

Nora Joyce who knew of Joyce’s friendship with McCormack used to say that if Joyce had played his cards right he could have been a second McCormack. Most of us however would agree that with the wonderful musicality of his prose it was preferable to have a first James Joyce rather than a second John McCormack.

Senator David Norris

A long-time Friend of the DIPC, Senator David Norris has been a senator representing the University of Dublin since 1987.

He was a Senior Lecturer in the English Department TCD, and a College Tutor from 1968-1996.

He is Chairman of the James Joyce Cultural Centre, Dublin; the North Great Georges Street Preservation Society and Friends of the Library TCD.

David has broadcast and published internationally on a variety of literary, sociological and legal topics and has lectured at international scholarly gatherings in Europe, the Middle East and North America as well as Ireland.

He was also organiser of 1982 Joyce Centenary Celebrations in Dublin and Irish editor proceedings of the International James Joyce Symposium.

A political and human-rights activist, Senator Norris is credited with having managed, almost single-handedly, to overthrow the anti-homosexuality law, a feat he achieved in 1988 after a fourteen-year campaign. David was a candidate for President of Ireland in the October 2011 election.

## 2015 CONTESTANTS

For the 10th DIPC, 161 applications from some 30 countries were received. After a very difficult selection process, 63 international applicants from 18 countries were invited to participate. Added to this number are six Irish competitors who were chosen on 20th December at the Preliminary Irish Competition, bringing the total number of confirmed competitors as of mid April to 66.

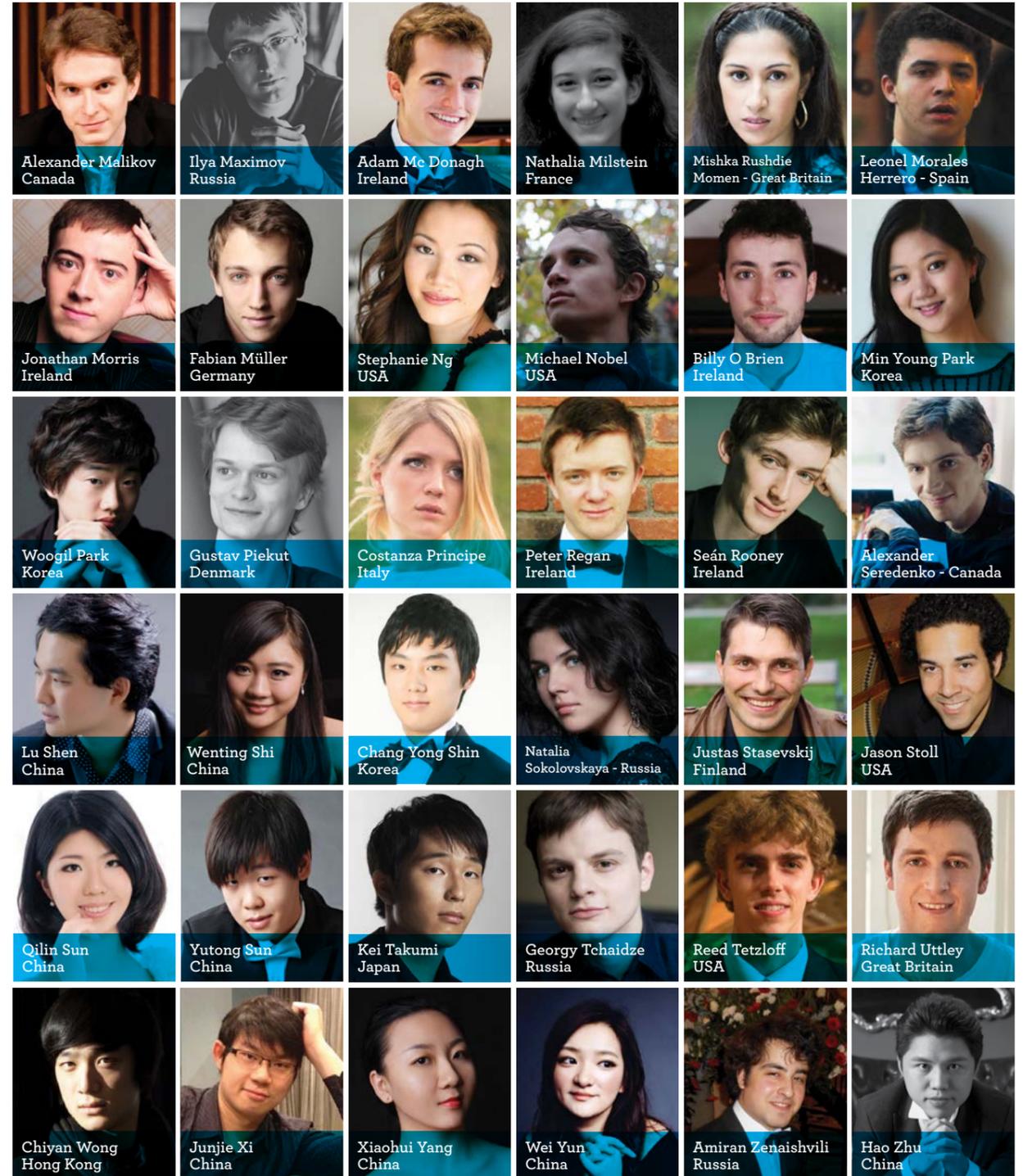
The 66 applicants, from 18 countries, are made up as follows:

- 45 males and 21 females;
- Mean age is 22, with 15 under 21;
- Big entry for China (12), Korea (10), Russia (7), USA (7) and Ireland (6).

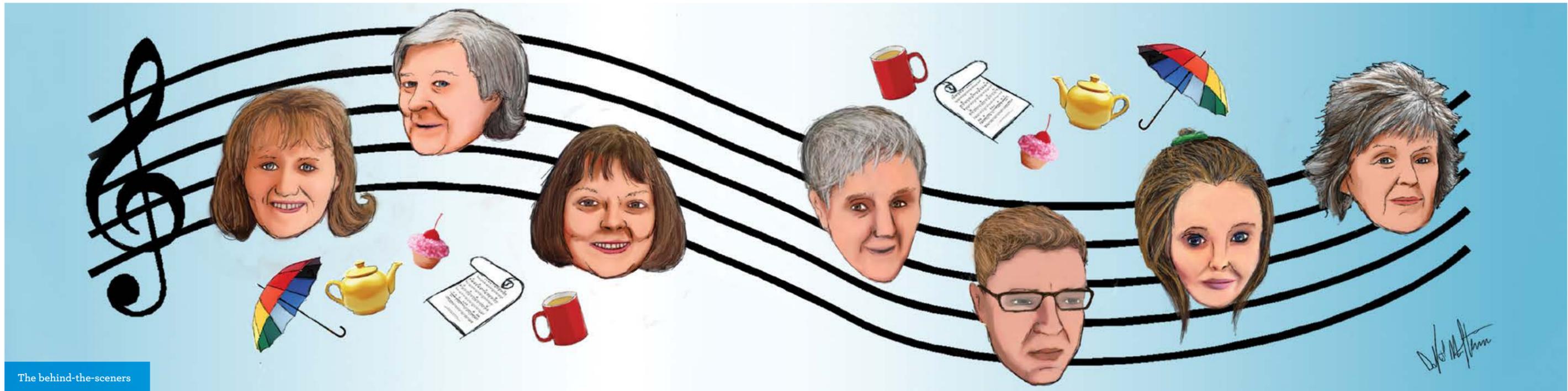


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GOOD LUCK TO ONE AND ALL!



The behind-the-scenes

## BEHIND THE SCENES – COUNTDOWN TO 26TH MAY

“Some 66 competitors from 18 countries will compete in the hope of being the winner of the 10th Competition, and launching a career to join the list of successful and loyal winners since the first Competition in 1988.”

### May 2015 – DIPC Convoy heads for the RDS

May is the month that brings a spring to everyone’s step, it heralds the onset of summer, the days are long and bright. Every three years in Dublin, May has an extra and very exciting dimension.

Pianists from all over the world come to Dublin to compete in the Dublin International Piano Competition and this year the Competition celebrates its tenth anniversary. Some 66 competitors from 18 countries will compete in the hope of being the winner of the 10th Competition, and launching a career to join the list of successful and loyal winners since the first Competition in 1988.

### 13th May 2015 - the countdown begins in earnest

The Administration Office decamps to the RDS. Volumes of music for the Library is carefully copied and collated. The Transport Team, Piano Team and PR Team set up ‘shop’ in their respective offices. Volunteers orientate themselves through the maze of practice rooms, corridors, concert hall and backstage areas of the RDS. The spirit and enthusiasm of the volunteers is infectious.

The Green Room team prepares to welcome the Competitors before they perform. The Competitor Escorts are always there to reassure before and after performance. The Transport Office and Drivers provide

a different type of ‘pedal power’ to bring their charges to and from performance and practice. The Piano Team keeps the Competitors happy with practice options. To keep everyone in the loop, the Media Team feverishly feeds up-to-date information to Facebook and Twitter, Instagram and the website

The Competition is in Dublin. Dublin is in Ireland. So there is tea, and more tea, and even more tea - tea to refresh and revive, tea to comfort and console, and just tea - because in Ireland we ‘put the kettle on’ no matter what!

### 14th May – the countdown continues

The competitors arrive, their expressions showing great anticipation of the days ahead. They are greeted by their Host Families, warm hugs are exchanged, and instantly lifelong friendships are made.

The atmosphere in The Concourse of the RDS as the competitors arrive shouts ‘welcome’ in advance of this wonderful feast of piano playing that takes place over 11 days. The competitors register, greet each other, go to their ‘host house’ and return for the Draw for the Order of Play - who will go 1st on the 15th, of the 5th, 2015?

At the draw, Host Families renew friendships with fellow Host Families, competitors wait for their practice and performance schedules, as the commencement of the Competition edges closer.

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### 15th May – ‘C-Day’

And then, on Friday, May 15th, the first round of the Competition commences. From the Concert Hall of the RDS, all the wonderful sounds of music that your mind can imagine will come from 52 white keys and 36 black keys of the piano. The competitors play, their fingers moving swiftly and surely, captivating the audience. This event is the ultimate May ‘sun-shower’ with the most glorious rainbow at the end of it - a rainbow of sound.

Each competitor goes on stage in the hope of winning, striving to impress the Jury who listen from 9.30am to 10pm on the four days of the first round, giving their first round results on Monday night, 18th May.

For the competitors preparation is intense and all-consuming, each one is passionate about their talent and craft, and each one is in it to win it.

“The passion and enthusiasm of everyone at the Competition continues through the second round, the semi-finals and the finals.”

### 18th May – the Competition heats up

The Jury have the ultimate decision to make - at the end of each round and at the finals - but the audience considers itself a jury and at the coffee breaks the air is heady with audience members exchanging views and opinions. Many draw up a list of who they think will get through, and the die-hards are competing to match the jury selection at the end of each round. True grit on stage from the competitors and in the hall from the audience.

The passion and enthusiasm of everyone at the Competition continues through the second round, the semi-finals and the finals. One gets sucked into this

typhoon of musical pleasure - this typhoon does not leave a trail of destruction, it leaves a trail of the most glorious sounds, laced with friendships and memories to treasure.

Over a ten day feast of music, there is also commitment, fun, laughter, consolation and great joy. When it is over, goodbyes are said, reunions are planned, and everyone is richer for the wondrous event they have been part of and the magical music they have heard. How much good fortune can anyone have?

Make the Competition part of what you are. Attend and enjoy the 10th Dublin International Piano Competition!

Adrienne Carolan

Adrienne Carolan worked in Independent Newspapers, as Editorial Administrator, responsible for the timetabling and rostering of all Newsroom personnel. For a time, Adrienne was PA to the Editor of the Irish Independent.

Adrienne volunteered as a driver for the 1991 Competition and during the 1994 Competition helped with the co-ordination of the drivers, taking on the chief organising role in 1997. To assist the drivers, host houses, and the Competitors, she compiles the A to Z Directory of the Competition

Adrienne’s role in the Competition gives her a unique insight into all the Competitors. In between the competitions, Adrienne looks after the day to day needs of the prizewinner for recital engagements in Ireland, London and New York, as well as acting as Secretary to the Board.



Fiachra at The Foundry

## GIGGING AT GOOGLE

“Fiachra’s performance was invigorating, strong and powerful, one that surely created classical excitement”

Every few months, in the depths of The Foundry – a neo-industrial space specifically built for sharing innovative experiences – in the Google EMEA HQ in Dublin, a musical diversion for Google staff is staged – called Musicians@Google. The Foundry has a classic Google entrepreneurial, technological atmosphere, and all previous Musicians@Google gigs have been rock, pop or folk.

On March 26th, there was a different buzz and excitement in the building from early morning as it was the first time a full grand piano had been brought into the premises – and the first time a classical music programme was to make up a Musicians@Google event. As midday approached, the foyer and entrance stairs of The Foundry were lit up with blue, red, orange, green laser-crisp lights, emblazoned with ‘Fiachra Garvey – Musicians@Google’ flowing across the narrow sci-fi-style screens, in-built into each step, leading to the auditorium entrance. Multiple large screens, spread all around, had images of Fiachra and the DIPC signature photograph of the Samuel Beckett bridge, all creating an almost light-fantastic, Times Square scene.

Some 300 Google staff, joined by a DIPC contingent of 20, poured into the performance area, all eager to experience something different at this Musicians@Google event.

The dark 350-seat auditorium was beautifully set-up, a massive on-stage screen displaying the Beckett Bridge at sunrise, and including looped images of DIPC banners and logos, with a grand piano all miked-up, awaiting the man of the hour.

Fiachra, dapperly dressed in Google-inspired tartan trousers, entered with a sharp, intense energy, immediately putting the audience into a state of

enlivened emotion. He chose to play powerful pieces, in a programme of Gershwin, Beethoven, Albeniz and Bartok, explaining each of them with historical context and feeling. The projection of the music was clear and hypnopompic. The technical crew were operating several cameras around the hall, and one of which had been placed inside the piano, capturing the full-on presence of Fiachra and the fluid movement of his fingers floating across the keys – all mixed and relayed live on a cinema-sized screen in the foyer, for those Google staff that could not get seats inside.

Fiachra concluded his programme with a surprise piece, ‘Too Much Information’, specially commissioned by the DIPC for the occasion and composed by Conor Linehan. This fun, lighter melody was accelerated and high-spirited, complementing the funky vibe of the environs. At the end, Google staff departed the auditorium to their work stations and next meetings with electric smiles.

For those who remained, a short reception was held for the DIPC guests including Board members Yvonne Mays, Joe Brennan, Judy Woodworth and Ian Fox, former Board member Kathleen Watkins and her husband Gay Byrne, both long-time supporters of the Competition and some of the Google organisers.

It was clear from the playing itself and the ambience around The Foundry both before and after, that Fiachra’s energy is an extension of his passion for classical music. Fiachra’s performance was invigorating, strong and powerful, one that surely created classical excitement in a very contemporary environment.

Rochelle Flett

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Clockwise from left

Fiachra Garvey

Kingsley Aikins & Joe Brennan

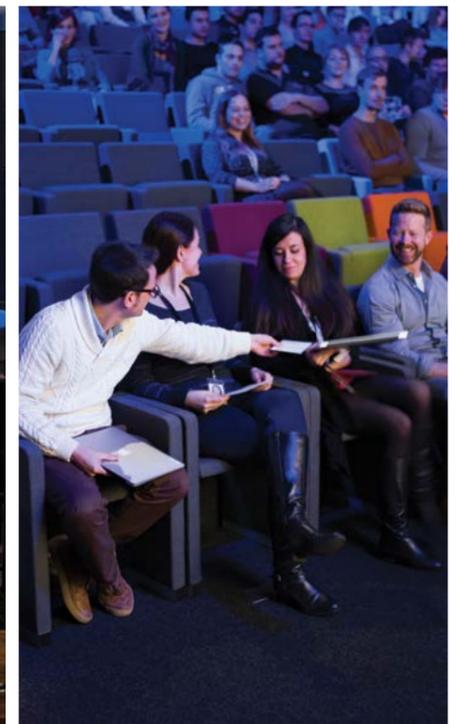
Sarah-Jane Campbell

Gay Byrne & Kathleen Watkins

Annie Kavanagh & Andrew Synott

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT!

CHECK OUT



### The Dublin International Piano Competition would like to thank

Google, in particular our counterparts Sarah-Jane Campbell, Head of The Foundry and Karl Ryan, Internal Communications Manager and also all the amazing ‘tech’ guys and other support staff who helped to make the Fiachra Garvey recital a memorable event for us and, we hope, for them.

We would also like to thank Darren Connolly for his special input to organising the event and helping to make it all seamless.

The DIPC must also single out Fiachra Garvey, Conor Linehan, Kingsley Aikins and our PR Tactical Support Team from DIT, Azamat Uzh, Dan Waugh and Rochelle Flett for helping to make the event happen.

From left to right

Adrienne Carolan

David Mahon

Fiachra Garvey

Ann Fuller

Sandra Price



**INTERVIEW WITH JOHN HERLIHY,  
HEAD OF GOOGLE IRELAND**

“Music is something that defies boundaries and languages.”



**Tempo:** What was the inspiration for the Musicians@Google series?

**John Herlihy:** Musicians@Google is a programme for employees and runs at various Google offices around the world. It gives our diverse audience of employees a chance to enjoy music from different genres and cultures. We have experimented with different formats, including live performances. It is always interesting to introduce different types of music from around the globe. The arts are as relevant as technology in terms of connecting people. Music is something that defies boundaries and languages. We recently had pianist Fiachra Garvey to perform at Google, which was our first foray into hosting a live classical performance. It was a great experience for our employees, and makes classical music more accessible for both fans and newbies alike.

**Tempo:** Google is famed for its excellent working environment. What role do extra-curricular activities play in forging stronger team relationships for Google employees?

**JH:** We look at the development of each Googler in the broadest sense. We try and create a workplace that is engaging, where people will want to come and work, innovate and make an impact. Initiatives like Musicians@Google are part of that. They broaden the mind, while also giving some other “brain food” during the average working day.

**Tempo:** Can you tell us a little bit about the establishment and growth of Google in Dublin?

**JH:** Since our decision to locate our EMEA HQ in Dublin in 2003, we have grown from a small office with just 5 employees on Earlsfort Terrace to over 2,500 employees today. The Silicon Docks area continues to thrive and we are glad to be a part of the area’s renaissance. Dublin is a great place for talented people to come and work in the world of digital and we see that talent continuing to be attracted to living and working in Ireland to take advantage of that.

**DIT Tactical PR Team**

In October 2014, the DIPC was lucky enough to benefit from the services of three young PR Masters students from the DIT, who have given us invaluable services as a part of their masters degree studies.

**Azamat Uzh**

A graduate from the Beijing University of Science and Technology in China, Azamat studied Information Management and Systems, he is fluent in Russian, Kazakh, Chinese and English. He worked at the VIP-A LTD Kazakhstan, where he developed system engineer skills. He worked at Sinopec Engineering Kazakhstan as Assistant Translator of Chinese to Russian, and he was also Director of Shisha Bar. In college he was involved in designing, manufacturing and selling university clothes.

**Dan Waugh**

Dan, 23, from Cork, is into the arts, and all things cultural in Ireland. As well as PR expertise, he is a live music professional. Dan acts as Chief Culture Writer for the DIT ‘Edition’. He worked as Productions & Visual Communications Assistant with festival and theatre company Roundhouse Productions. Dan was Venue Manager at the Cork Opera House during the Cork Film Festival and Assistant Stage Manager for the Cork Midsummer Festival. In March 2015, Dan was elected as the next Vice President for Campaigns with the Union of Students in Ireland.

**Rochelle Flett**

Rochelle is a Public Relations Professional with a Masters in Public Relations from DIT. Her love of writing and curating web content is inspired by fashion culture, music and lifestyle topics. Rochelle has worked for Irish Digital Marketing Agency, Gaumina, as an Inbound Marketer. Other jobs include Communications and Account Manager for a womenswear fashion brand, Style+Co and a Sales Agent for Condo Fashion Agency. Rochelle has greatly enjoyed her role in the tactical team for the DIPC.



Azamat Uzh



Daniel Waugh



Rochelle Flett

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**THE RED PIANO**

“I was used to playing Irish melodies in the background.”

I have been privileged to play the piano at Áras an Uachtaráin over many years now, especially following the Ambassadors’ credentials ceremonies. At home, I had been accustomed to play “something we can talk through”, so I was used to playing Irish melodies in the background. However, I also had opportunities to play during the Presidents’ and other official visits abroad, again in an informal manner but often in prestigious or exotic locations in Rome, Dakar, Singapore (Raffles) Granada (Falla and Lorca pianos), in Australia, and South America - no piano was safe from my attention!

The State Visit of President Higgins to Britain in April 2014, was very special in so many ways and provided me with a delightful piano souvenir. One of the highlights of the visit was the Ceiliuradh celebration concert at the Royal Albert Hall. Following the memorable performances, the artists were invited to a reception in the Elgar room. In the corner was a red grand piano on a platform, owned by Elton John.

Following the introductions of the artists to the distinguished guests, I saw my opportunity to play a few airs on this splendid instrument. I played “The west’s awake” in honour of the President, then “I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls”, “the Mountains of Mourne” and “Loves old sweet song” as well as some old standards, as the guests enjoyed the reception. However, a somewhat alarmed manager of the hall rushed up to me and asked did I have permission to play this piano. I replied that I was the President’s piano player and often played at receptions. She said was I “having her on”, to

which I explained that it was a long story, and she left me to play away.

So, while never aspiring to the classical heights of the competitors of the Dublin International Piano Competition, I could say that the encouragement of my teachers Alice Bryan and Kitty O’Callaghan, stood to me over the years, when I had the opportunity to tinkle away at parties and events in the President’s residence, embassies, churches, halls, nursing homes, restaurants and palaces, not to mention Elton John’s red piano in the Royal Albert Hall.

Joe Brennan

Joe Brennan has been a Board member of the DIPC since 1990s. The Brennan family has presented the Brennan prize since the foundation of the competition, to the most highly placed Irish competitor. All have been worthy winners and many have gone on to make distinguished careers in music.

Joe was in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for 40 years, serving at embassies in Brussels, The Hague, Paris, Jeddah and Rome, always accompanied by his piano.

He concluded his career as Deputy Chief of Protocol, accompanying the Presidents on many State and Official visits, and preparing the new Ambassadors for the Presentation of Credentials ceremonies to the President at Áras an Uachtaráin. He continues to play piano anywhere he is allowed!



Joe Brennan at Elton's piano

**KATHLEEN WATKINS  
TALKS TO RÓISÍN GRIMLEY**

“It has been a real joy to entertain the jury on two occasions in the past.”



Kathleen Watkins and Gay Byrne

The DIPC has a handful of unique features that set it apart from other international piano competitions. Apart from leaving competitors free to play their own repertoire in all of the rounds, from its foundation in 1988 the organisers set out to give a particularly Irish flavour to the event, so that it would be considered not only a tough competition with the highest of standards and standing, but that it would also be familial and warm.

One such unique feature of the DIPC is the hosting of the international competitors with Irish families, most other competitions leaving their participants to stay in hotels or hostels. This is, without doubt, one of the more important, and difficult, tasks of the organisation of each competition.

Carrying through with this welcoming philosophy, the Competition organisers also look after the international jury members with true Irish hospitality - which leaves the international jury 'set' clamouring to be invited to Dublin - by organising entertainment for the jury every night that they are in Dublin over the eleven days of the Competition. Aside from the formal, official receptions in Iveagh House and Farmleigh, the jury members have been invited to jury lunches and suppers hosted by Friends of the Competition in various parts of the city.

Gay Byrne and Kathleen Watkins have been stalwart supporters of the DIPC in many ways since its inception, from Kathleen being a founding Board member, to Gay's support for the event on radio and hosting First Prize winners on the Late Late Show - in one case hightailed to Studio 1 by Garda escort directly after receiving the coveted prize on the stage of the National Concert Hall.

Kathleen and Gay have also hosted members of the jury and others connected to the Competition both in their home in Howth overlooking Dublin bay and

latterly in their home in Ballsbridge, across the road from all the action in the RDS.

Kathleen says: 'It has been a real joy to entertain the jury on two occasions in the past. It really was lovely to have the international mix of music experts in our home. It is so important, I think, to give them a true Irish welcome, which has such a wonderful ripple effect around the world'.

I remember, on a glorious sunny day in Howth, and we entertained them in our sunroom, with the magnificent views of the bay. I served a rhubarb fool dessert and none of them had ever tasted rhubarb before - they absolutely adored it! They were all almost overcome with appreciation.

I also asked Waterford Crystal for a little token, to be presented to one jury member in a raffle. But, very generously, Waterford Crystal gave a little piece for all jurors - one for every one in the audience, so to speak!

I was also delighted to entertain the jury in our apartment across the road from the RDS, so nice for the judges to get a break from the music and experience warm Irish hospitality - all of them are so appreciative.'

Kathleen was also the master of ceremonies on the NCH stage for the very first Competition in 1988, graciously presenting the proceedings in Irish and English at the behest of Competition patron, President Patrick Hilary. Kathleen served on the Board of the Competition from 1988 to 1995.

Róisín Grimley

Róisín Grimley has been involved with the DIPC since 1987, when she launched the fund-raising campaign to get the Competition off the ground, with a concert celebrating the 40th birthdays of John O'Connor and Philip Martin. Róisín has continuous involvement in the organisation of the Competition since then. Spurred on by this experience in helping to root the Competition, Róisín obtained a Diploma in Arts Management from UCD and then went on to become a member of the staff.

Róisín took over the host family work in 2005 as well as continuing her unwavering work in fundraising and special projects. Being responsible for the finding and allocating of the host families is no mean task. For the 2015 Competition, Róisín must find 66 host families to agree to put up the competitors for what could be three days, or for the lucky hosts, two weeks...until the Finals night on 26th May when the 10th DIPC prize winner is announced in the National Concert Hall.



Róisín Grimley

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10th  
dublin  
international  
piano  
competition

## The 9 winners of the Dublin International Piano Competition

1. Philippe Cassard, France, 1988
2. Pavel Nersessian, Russia, 1991
3. Davide Franceschetti, Italy, 1994
4. Max Levinson, America, 1997
5. Alexei Nabioulin, Russia, 2000
6. Antti Siirala, Finland, 2003
7. Romain Descharmes, France, 2006
8. Alexej Gorlatch, Ukraine, 2009
9. Nikolay Khozyainov, Russia, 2012

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Pianos are the biggest logistical exercise of the DIPC. There are over 80 pianos involved for both practice and performance. Most of the practice pianos are in private homes and are in great demand as generous home owners frequently supply lunch and other delicious refreshments for the practising competitor. The pianos are placed in the RDS and in other private houses for the duration of the competition. In addition to these practice pianos, Steinway provides concert grands

for the competition performances. These pianos are accompanied by specialist technicians.

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John O'Connor



## 10 Most Interesting Facts and Figures about the Dublin International Piano Competition

**In its almost 28 years of existence, the DIPC has organised, presented, invited, hosted...**

1	Number of applicants for the 10 Competitions – 1,624.
2	Number of national and international competitors who have come to Dublin to compete – 533 (from 49 countries).
3	Number of international jurors who have come to Dublin since 1988 – 79 (from 23 countries).
4	Number of pieces of music played – 2,259, of which 33 have been pieces specially commissioned by Irish composers.
5	Number of pianos supplied for practice and performance – 542. Number of pianos used over the 10 Competitions – 586.
6	Numbers of major concerts in the National Concert Hall, separate to the 1st Prize Winners engagements, presented by the DIPC – 87; and 129 in various venues across the country.
7	Number of concerts given by the 1st Prize Winner under the auspices of the Competition, nationally and internationally - 163.
8	Number of recordings made by Prizewinners since 1988 – 112.
9	Number of television and radio broadcasts (including repeats) – 193.
10	Number of volunteers involved in all aspects of the Competition since 1988 – 448 host families; 254 drivers; 299 RDS volunteers; 168 Friends' Room helpers.



 dublin  
international  
piano  
competition

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