

TEMPO

dublin
international
piano
competition



SUMMER 2017

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WELCOME

I was delighted to take on the role of Chairman of the Dublin International Piano Competition in the summer of last year. As a pianist and a former student of John O’Conor, I value the work of the organisation and am proud to be leading it into the 2018 Competition.



The next Piano Competition will take place from 18th – 29th May, adjudicated by a highly respected international jury. We will shortly invite young pianists to apply to enter the Competition. This is a most exciting stage as we gain insight into the talented pianists internationally, the best of whom will be invited to compete on the stage in Dublin.

The support of our Friends is fundamental in enabling the work of the Dublin International Piano Competition to continue. As we mark the 30th anniversary of the Competition this year, I am mindful that many of you supported us from the very beginning. We are most grateful for your generous donations and hope that you can support us once again as the next Competition approaches.

Similarly, volunteers and host houses are a huge part of this successful event, providing the friendly welcome and wonderful hospitality that is now synonymous with the Dublin International Piano Competition. Once again I hope that we can count on your support in 2018.

We have also established partnerships with a number of new sponsors which are very important to us. In keeping with the legacy created by Tony Ryan and GPA, the first sponsors of the Competition, a number of companies involved in the aircraft leasing sector have become sponsors and we look forward to growing this connection.

We also have a number of exciting events planned in the lead up to the Competition which I hope that you can attend, including a Gala Dinner to mark the 30th anniversary of the Competition on 23rd October. I look forward to meeting many of you there.

John Hannon

1. Steinway's Master piano tuner Ulrich Gerhartz.

2. Trying out the piano in the RDS.



NATHALIA MILSTEIN

Nathalia Milstein, our most recent winner of the Dublin International Piano Competition, continues to be a wonderful Ambassador for the Competition while her performing career is going from strength to strength.

Nathalia was awarded the 2017 Young Soloist Prize by the Médias Francophones Publics in October 2016. In December last, the French Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Jean-Pierre Thébault, invited Nathalia to give a recital at his residence; and her debut CD, with works of Ravel and Prokofiev, will be released by the French label Mirare in the first quarter of 2018.

As part of her prize, Nathalia recently made her London Debut in Wigmore Hall and received a wonderful review from Peter Reed of Classical Source.

“ The French twenty-one-year-old Nathalia Milstein won the triennial Dublin International Piano Competition in 2015, and this Wigmore Hall recital was part of her bounty. In a recent Radio 3 interview, she came across as articulate and intelligent, and her ethereal, pre-Raphaelite stage presence makes an attractive contrast to her sturdy, musical and thoroughly grounded playing, projected with commendable directness.

Performances of Haydn's lovely F-minor Variations often don't

venture far beyond a formulaic, neo-Baroque conceit of alternating minor and major, but Milstein gave the set a far-ranging resonance shot through with a beautifully judged Romantic melancholy. She kept the Theme's inclination to droop under control and played the decorations and trills with a stylish and astute awareness of their expressive worth. It was the element of surprise and fantasy, though, and Milstein's insight into how the music expands in stature that stays in the memory.

Given the warmth and breadth of her playing, it wasn't such a wrench from the deceptive decorousness of the Haydn to the subjective turmoil of Schubert's imposing C-minor Sonata, but Milstein's impulsiveness here paradoxically got in the way of dramatic extremes rather than liberated them. I also had misgivings about some pulverising



fortissimos, which sounded out of synch with her otherwise considered approach to colour and attack, and occasionally she could have held her bigger guns in reserve to greater effect – although I had no problems with the dourness she added to the music’s bleakness in the first movement’s exposition repeat. The

harmonic wanderings that take the Adagio into ever remoter realms were powerfully realised, but again, especially given Milstein’s overall integrity and engagement, it was sometimes difficult to follow Schubert’s narrative.

The way into Rachmaninov’s piano music, for me, proved to

be the Etudes-tableaux, and Milstein’s account of Opus 39 refreshed that conviction. These nine pieces juggle many aspects of genre and technique while keeping faith with Rachmaninov’s default introspection, and this also seemed the guiding principle behind Milstein’s astonishingly mature and complete reading of music that suits her temperament. Balance, colour and momentum emerged from her accomplished virtuosity with spellbinding immediacy – the compulsive ‘Dies irae’-style ruminations in No.2, the virtuosic lift-off towards the end of No.6, the galvanising rhythms of No.3 and the blistering tragedy seeping out of No.7 all leapt off the page. Interestingly, her two encores, a Chopin Mazurka (Opus 50/2) and Liszt’s Valse oubliée No.1, rather than relax, kept up the same level of intensity. Nathalia Milstein’s talent is clearly to be nurtured. ”

THE FINLAYS

The DIPC Finlay programme, named after the first chairman of the Competition, selected six wonderful young pianists from auditions in December last - Jane Brazil, Dida Condria, Méabh Fitzgerald, Rowel Friers, Antonia Huang and Tiffany Qiu.

Earlier this year, in March, they were invited by Owen Lorigan, the Chairman of European Piano Teachers Association to give an evening recital in the Kevin Barry Room of the NCH. They presented a lovely programme of challenging pieces to which they gave their youthful exuberance. Their programme included music by Scarlatti, Haydn, Chopin, Brahms, Ravel, Kapustin, Schumann, Scriabin, Debussy, Liszt, and Pierné.

At the Feis Ceoil, Feis Maitiú, Sligo Feis, Arklow Feis, EPTA Piano

Fest, Piano academy of Ireland Festival and the RIAM Piano Fest, they achieved a staggering array of prizes between them. These included 14 First Prizes and 10 Second Prizes, two of which were in International Competitions - Dida in the Piano Talents International Competition in Milan and Tiffany in the César Franck International Piano Competition. They have also won many scholarships and bursaries.

In April they performed in the Westbury with John O'Conor. This was a lovely evening sponsored

by the Westbury for the Dublin International Piano Competition.

On September 30th they will give a lunchtime recital in Cork at the invitation of Gabriela Mayer, Head of Keyboard Studies at CIT Cork School of Music. If you are in the area and can attend it will be a wonderful recital. In November we hope that they will give a John Field Room Recital in the NCH to finish off their year.

We are very proud of them and look forward to having them as helpers next May for the International Competition in Dublin.



TEAM HARMONY

In this, it's 30th year, the Dublin International Piano Competition wishes to celebrate and acknowledge the role of the volunteers who are the 'working spine' of the Competition.

'Team Harmony' is the new collective for all volunteers.

Join 'Team Harmony' to be part of a dynamic group who work in unison to look after the needs of all Competitors through all the rounds.

'Team Harmony' options:

- > Host a Competitor in your home
- > Host a practice piano in your home
- > Volunteer in the RDS
 - Competitor Escort
 - Doors
- > Friends Room in the RDS
- > Drive a Competitor to practice and performance

To join Team Harmony, contact Sandra on (01) 272 1523 or email info@dipc.ie

THE IRISH AUDITION FOR THE 2018 DUBLIN INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION

The preliminary Irish Competition to choose 5 Irish competitors for the International Competition will take place in the Kevin Barry Room of the National Concert Hall on December 20th next, in front of a prestigious Irish jury. These 5 qualifiers will then enter into the Foley programme (named for our wonderful supporters Maurice and Maire Foley who previously sponsored this), which will give them many opportunities to perform their programmes before the International Competition takes place, preparing them to compete amongst their international peers.

Details of how to enrol for the Irish auditions to the Competition will be available on www.dipc.ie from September.

These auditions will be open to all to attend so please come along to hear the wonderfully talented Irish pianists and support your favourite!

DIPC AND THE WESTBURY PRESENT IRELAND'S PIANO STARS OF THE FUTURE

The Dublin International Piano Competition was delighted to partner with the Doyle Collection once again this year to present a beautiful summer evening piano recital in the Grafton Suite of The Westbury.

On the 16th May, the six wonderful young pianists who are participating in the Finlay Programme, Jane Brazil, Dida Condria, Méabh Fitzgerald, Rowel Friers, Antonia Huang and Tiffany Qiu played a stunning recital with their repertoire including Scarlatti, Rachmaninov, Debussy and Ravel. To conclude, four of the young pianists played the hilarious "Galop" by the French composer Lavignac, which the audience thoroughly enjoyed.

John O'Connor hosted this special evening and also wooed guests

with his wonderful rendition of Ginastera's Argentinian Dances. We were delighted to welcome so many Friends and Corporate supporters of the Competition to the event, which was also an opportunity to formally launch the 2018 Dublin International Piano Competition.

Speaking at the recital, John Hannon, Chairman of DIPC, paid tribute to the continued support received from Friends and Sponsors who are enabling the work of the Competition and also to the young pianists





who represent much of what the Competition is about - nurturing up and coming talent to perform and compete on a world stage.

Commenting on the recital, General Manager of The Westbury, Vincent O’Gorman said: “The Doyle Collection has a history of supporting the arts and culture and we are delighted to welcome these hugely talented Irish pianists to The Westbury and host this recital for a second year. To have a celebrated performer such as John O’Conor together with the rising stars of the Finlay programme, it truly makes it a unique event.”



- At The Westbury and the Dublin International Piano Competition Summer Evening recital were:*
- 1. Liz Barryl and John Hannon.*
 - 2. Frederic Rauser, Meabh Fitzgerald and John O’Conor.*
 - 3. Aisling O’Loughlin.*
 - 4. Cathy Clarke and Anna Maria Sisk.*
 - 5. John O’Conor and Vincent O’Gorman with students Dida Condria, Meabh Fitzgerald, Antonia Huang, Rowel Friers, Jane Brazil and Tiffany Qiu.*

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS - GALA DINNER

On 23rd October, the Dublin International Piano Competition, in partnership with The Westbury, will host a Gala Dinner and a very special concert to mark the 30th anniversary of the Competition.

John O’Conor, Artistic Director of the Dublin International Piano Competition and internationally acclaimed pianist will play alongside the first and most recent winners of the Dublin International Piano Competition, Philippe Cassard and Nathalia Milstein.

French pianist Philippe Cassard has established an international reputation as a concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. Since 2005, he presents a very popular weekly live programme on



Philippe Cassard, winner of the first Dublin International Piano Competition

France Musique Radio ‘Notes du Traducteur’ based on interpretation of piano music. Philippe is a multi-award winning Pianist and credits his win at the first ever Dublin International Piano Competition in 1988 as being essential to his career.

21-year-old Nathalia Milstein, also from France, is the most recent winner of the Dublin International Piano Competition and the first ever female winner. Born in 1995 to a family of musicians, Nathalia began playing piano at the age of 4 with her father Serguei Milstein. Having recently completed her Masters degree in the Geneva

High School of Music, Nathalia is a multi- award winning pianist, including recently being awarded the 2017 Young Soloist Prize by the Médias Francophones Publics.

Our 30th anniversary gala dinner will take place in The Westbury and feature piano performance as well as pre-dinner drinks and a three course meal. Tickets for the event are €150 and can be purchased by calling Sandra on (01) 272 1523, or email info@dipc.ie

DIPC AND THE AIRCRAFT LEASING SECTOR

We were delighted to be selected as the charity partner of the AirFinance Journal Global Aviation Conference which took place in the Convention Centre, Dublin in January.

Building on the legacy created by Tony Ryan and GPA 30 years ago, a number of companies involved in the aviation sector are sponsors of the 2018 Competition and the Conference provided a wonderful opportunity to showcase to the sector, everything that the DIPC is about.



Throughout the three-day conference, at our stand in the foyer, a number of young Finlays and other pianists delighted attendees with superb music, and the closing event was marked with a wonderful recital featuring John O'Connor and his young student Joe O'Grady with music including Rachmaninoff, Liszt and Beethoven.

Accipiter, Avolon, Airbus, Aircastle Aviation, Avinko and KPMG have already contributed to a collective aircraft leasing sponsorship and we are hoping that others will also join this initiative.

John O'Connor and Joe O'Grady with representatives from Turbine Services and Solutions Aerospace

ENTERING WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING

The inaugural Dublin International Piano Competition was held in 1988.

The Competition reaches its 30-year milestone in 2018, when it will celebrate outstanding international success. It will also celebrate connections, coincidences, and friendships forged for a lifetime. Music unites all cultures. For the Competitor 'practice to performance' is one of the key hurdles in their career. The Competition brings joy to both the Competitor and the audience.



Over three decades, competitors from all over the world, including Ireland, create a 'musical hub' in the RDS and National Concert Hall through all the rounds, culminating in the drama of the final night, where four finalists compete for the coveted 1st prize.

Thirty years on, the Competition has three French winners - Philippe Cassard won in 1988, Romain Descharmes (2006) with Nathalia Milstein winning in 2015 and three winners from Russia - Pavel Nersessian (1991), Alexei Naboulin (2000) and Nikolay Khozyainov (2012).

The other winners are Davide Franchesetti (Italy - 1994), Max Levinson (USA - 1997), Antti Siirala (Finland - 2003), and Alexei Gorlatch (Ukraine 2009).

CONNECTIONS AND CO-INCIDENCES ABOUND.

The host house for Philippe Cassard now has new owners, and is a piano practice house where Alexei Gorlatch, Nikolay and Nathalia all practised.

Pavel Nersessian and Alexei Naboulin were hosted by the same family.

Philippe Cassard, Pavel Nersessian and Max Levinson have returned to the Competition as members of the International Jury, with Antti Siirala joining the 2018 jury.

For the winners, entering the Competition was the beginning of the journey to winning the first prize and many other wonderful successes.

DIPC SCHOOLS PROJECT

Our Schools Project is going from strength to strength and continues to nurture an understanding and appreciation of piano music among primary school pupils and undergraduate teachers.

In collaboration with DCU Institute of Education we continue to work with schools in Dublin, Wicklow and other parts of Ireland. The project benefited hugely from the involvement and expertise of Muireann Conway, education specialist, who worked



Nathalia Milstein, with student teachers

with primary school pupils, student teachers and primary school staff to enhance the project's educational value. Artist in Residence, Adam McDonagh, visited schools to give recitals and engage with pupils about their responses to the music.

Here Muireann describes Adam McDonagh's recital for 90 children of Springdale National School.

'When introductions, welcomes and smiling words were spoken the music performance began. The programme consisted of pieces by Bach, John Field, Brahms, Gershwin and Philip

Martin. The children were enthralled. Rapt attention. Utter stillness. Gentle swaying from time to time. Shared smiles of delight with pals and then back to the music. It was a truly wonderful occasion.'

Two other recitals of note were by our most recent winner, Nathalia Milstein, who gave a beautiful lunchtime recital for student teachers and spoke to them about her experience of being a concert pianist. Sean Morgan Rooney, our 2015 Brennan Prize winner, also gave a lunchtime recital in April and this was a great success.

We acknowledge the financial support received from Avolon which enabled the DIPC to further develop the Schools Project and facilitated piano recitals for primary school pupils.

If you would like to support our education work please contact:

info@dipc.ie

INTERNATIONAL LAUNCH OF THE 2018 DUBLIN INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION IN NEW YORK

On 5th May, the international launch of the 2018 Dublin International Piano Competition took place in New York.

Denise and Bill Whelan generously hosted this event in their New York home and it was attended by a number of American and Irish-American supporters of the Competition. Denise is on the Board of DIPC and Bill previously wrote one of the compulsory pieces for the semi-finals of the 2009 Competition.

John O'Connor played a short recital with music including a John Field nocturne and Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

Speaking on the night, John Hannon, Chairman of the Competition acknowledged the strong connections that John O'Connor has made in the US which have resulted in huge support for the Competition. He also launched the new American Octave Club where eight generous supporters in the US will each give a donation of \$5,000 or more. We are delighted that five people have already become members of this club.



“ Despite weather challenges, about 30 of us made it to the lovely Whelan penthouse in NYC, joining John O'Connor to kick-off the 2018 DIPC. John played Beethoven and Field and spoke about the importance of the International Competition to young pianists. I was delighted to be a part of this very special event. ”

Bettie Miller

FLYING THE FLAG FOR IRELAND

We have had 10 superb winners of the Brennan Prize at the Dublin International Piano competition.

The Charles J. Brennan Prize is for the highest placed Irish competitor and is presented by his family.

1988 - Dearbhaile O'Donnell was the first recipient in 1988 and is now an Oncologist! But is still playing the piano.

1991 - Dearbhla Collins is currently in demand as a vocal coach and pianist, on the staff of RIAM. She is also the Artistic Director of the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition

1994 - Stuart O'Sullivan is teaching in Limerick School of Music

1997 - Finghin Collins - one of Ireland's most well known pianists and director of the New Ross Piano Festival. He has served on the Board of the DIPC and will be on the Jury in 2018.

2000 - Maria McGarry is teaching in the RIAM

2003 - Cathal Breslin is Professor of Piano at the University of Memphis

2006 - Michael McHale is another very well know pianist and has a very successful busy career

2009 - Fiachra Garvey divides his time between Dublin and London. He recently inaugurated the West Wicklow Festival, and is currently on the Board of the DIPC

2012 - Nadene Fiorentini is teaching in Donegal.

2015 - Sean Morgan Rooney, the most recent winner, made his debut with the RTESO on June 13th playing the Rachmaninov Paganini Variations. Currently studying in Amsterdam.



Sean Morgan-Rooney

All 10 have benefitted enormously from being recipients of this prestigious prize. It has been said that the Brennan prize is almost as valuable to the Irish winner as the big event! It opens doors and launches careers which is very difficult on a small island.

Good luck to all of them, they have certainly made us proud.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Established over 30 years ago, the Dublin International Piano Competition is now recognised as one of the most important piano competitions in the world and has helped to establish Ireland as an important destination for music events.

The Competition is also nurturing and supporting young Irish pianists to develop their talent so that they can compete and perform at the highest level and that we might one day have an Irish winner of the Dublin International Piano Competition.

As a registered charity, the work of the Dublin International Piano Competition is only possible because of the generous donations received from Friends and benefactors. The Competition receives no Government funding,

relying solely on individual sponsors and donors. Over the years, Friends of the Competition have contributed over €1,000,000, money which has been used to ensure that the DIPC can support the work of young pianists in Ireland and internationally. In addition, many of you have kindly opened your homes to competitors, providing accommodation and hospitality or somewhere quiet to practise piano.

By making a donation or becoming a Friend of the Competition you



can help to ensure the continued support of young pianists as well as the delivery of world class piano events including the triennial Dublin International Piano Competition. In return for your generous support you will receive priority access to purchase tickets for piano concerts and events, invitations to exclusive receptions and a seasonal newsletter. Your name will also be published in the official programme of the Competition. To become a Friend of the DIPC please complete and return the Friends form enclosed.