

FINGHIN COLLINS – PIANO

"The young Dublin pianist Finghin Collins made his London Proms debut last year with the Ulster Orchestra, and this fine partnership continued in the Ulster Hall on Friday night. This time they combined in Brahms' massive Piano Concerto No 2 which again demonstrated the close rapport between the pianist and the orchestra, under the direction of its Principal Conductor Kenneth Montgomery. Finghin Collins was equal to the technical and emotional demands of the differing moods of this concerto, with its power and sensitivity delicately balanced throughout.... This was an evening where the soloist, the orchestra and also the conductor were on top of their form."

Alf McCreary, Belfast Telegraph, February 27th 2010

One of Ireland's most successful musicians, Dubliner Finghin Collins studied at the Royal Irish Academy of Music with John O'Connor and at the Geneva Conservatoire with Dominique Merlet. Winner of the RTE Musician of the Future Competition in 1994 and the Classical Category at the National Entertainment Awards in 1998, he went on to achieve major international success by taking first prize at the Clara Haskil International Piano Competition in Switzerland in 1999. Since then he has developed a flourishing international career that takes him all over Europe, the United States and the Far East.

Finghin has performed with such orchestras as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Gulbenkian Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, garnering consistent praise from critics and public alike. Conductors with whom Finghin has collaborated include Christoph Eschenbach, Hans Graf, Emmanuel Krivine, Nicholas McGegan, Gianandrea Noseda, Sakari Oramo, Tadaaki Otaka, Heinrich Schiff, Leonard Slatkin and Vassily Sinaisky. Finghin also performs on a regular basis with the Ulster Orchestra and the RTE National Symphony Orchestra.

Finghin has performed right across Europe in such prestigious venues as Symphony Hall Birmingham, Wigmore Hall, Barbican Hall and Cadogan Hall, London, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam (both halls), Théâtre du Châtelet and Salle Cortot Paris, Salle Molière Lyon, Liederhalle Stuttgart, Auditorio Nacional Madrid, Palao de la Musica Valencia, Gulbenkian Hall Lisbon, Sala Verdi Milan, Konzerthaus Vienna, Philharmonic Hall Warsaw and the Auditorium Stravinski Montreux. He has also performed at Carnegie Hall, New York and the Kennedy Center, Washington DC, as well as at both Ravinia and Gilmore Festivals in the USA. European Festival appearances include the Piano Festival at La Roque d'Anthéron (France), Klavier-Festival Ruhr and Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival (Germany), Lockenhaus Festival (Austria), Delft International Chamber Music Festival (Holland), Chopin Festival (Poland), Musical Olympus Festival (Russia), Festival de Bellerive (Switzerland), Bergen International Chamber Music and Elverum Festival (Norway) as well as Harrogate, Chichester and Mostly Mozart Festivals (England)

Chamber music plays a significant role in his musical life and he collaborates regularly with London Winds and the Aviv, Callino, Chilingirian, ConTempo, Ebène, Shanghai, Skampa, St Petersburg, Vanbrugh, Vertavo and Vogler String Quartets. Recital partners include violinists Isabelle van Keulen, Anthony Marwood and Pekka Kuusisto, cellists Han-Na Chang, Marc Coppey and Guy Johnston and clarinetists Michael Collins and Sharon Kam.

In August 2008 Finghin made his début at the BBC Proms in London, performing Stanford's Second Piano Concerto with the Ulster Orchestra conducted by Kenneth Montgomery; his

performance was widely praised by the critics. During the 2008/09 season he made his débuts with the Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Tatsuya Shimono, the Seoul Philharmonic conducted by Myung-Whun Chung, the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ralf Sochaczewsky and the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz conducted by Ari Rasilainen, as well as giving recitals at the Wigmore Hall in London and – together with soprano Lenneke Ruiten – at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. During the 2009/10 season he makes return visits to the Northern Sinfonia, the Ulster Orchestra, the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz and the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. He also makes his début at the Korea International Music Festival as well as giving a major recital tour of Korea with cellist Han-Na Chang. In January 2010 Finghin makes his solo début in the National Concert Hall's Celebrity Recital Series in Dublin.

In May 2005 RTE Lyric fm released Finghin's début solo CD album; entitled 'Impromptu', it features 19 sparkling piano classics. In May 2006 Claves Records in Switzerland released a double CD set featuring the piano music of Schumann; these recordings have received glowing reviews in the international press, including "Editor's Choice" in the October 2006 issue of Gramophone Magazine, 4 stars in BBC Music Magazine and 5 Diapasons in "Diapason" Magazine in France. A further double album was released in March 2009 to great acclaim, including 5 Diapasons in "Diapason" Magazine in France. In June 2010 Finghin will record works for piano and orchestra by Stanford with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra, also for Claves Records.

"The present disc is a worthy successor, attuned to all the sudden mood shifts, arresting harmonic shifts, and rhythmic delights that Schumann composed into his early music. Pedaling is judicious and the touches are varied, so that even in sections with fastest harmonic rhythm the textures are kept unusually clear. The performance of the Abegg Variations is up with Kissin's fine live one (on his Carnegie Hall debut), and the six whimsical Intermezzi are perfectly characterized and paced..."

Charles Timbrell, Fanfare Magazine, 2010

In September 2009 Finghin was appointed to the newly-created position of Associate Artist with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland for the three seasons 2010 - 13. He is also Artistic Director of the New Ross Piano Festival.

Finghin Collins acknowledges the support of The Arts Council and Music Network through the Music Capital Scheme 2008.

See www.finghincollins.com for more.