



WHO *Choral* WE *Scholars* ARE



of
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
DUBLIN

Biography

Choral Scholars^{of} UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN



Choral Scholars is an internationally-acclaimed chamber choir of gifted student singers led by founding Artistic Director, Dr Desmond Earley, based at University College Dublin College of Arts & Humanities, and a member of the suite of ensembles fostered by UCD School of Music.

The choir frequently performs with Ireland's leading instrumentalists and orchestras and has in recent years collaborated with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, and the European Union Chamber Orchestra. In touring the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, the group has brought University College Dublin and its music to an international audience.

The choir regularly broadcasts on television and radio. Notable recent appearances include Centenary (RTÉ), for which the ensemble provided the choral soundtrack, and concerts

with Hans Zimmer and Ennio Morricone. In March 2019, they marked their 20th Anniversary with a debut concert at New York's Carnegie Hall.

The performance and commissioning of works by living composers is a hallmark of this ensemble. New compositions have been written for the group by Elaine Agnew, Ivo Antognini, Mark Armstrong, Seán Doherty, Eoghan Desmond, Desmond Earley, Eriks Esenvalds, Damien Geter, Andrej Makor, Colin Mawby, Michael McGlynn, Natasa Paulberg, Laura Sheils, Timothy Stephens, Dale Trumbore, Bill Whelan and Kevin Whymys.

Be All Merry (2020) is their third album on Signum Classics following the hit release *Invisible Stars* (2015) and *Perpetual Twilight* (2019), and is a collection of traditional and contemporary Advent and Christmas music from Ireland and Scotland, including new arrangements and compositions by some of Ireland's most celebrated composers.

who WE ARE

Choral Scholars is an internationally-acclaimed chamber choir of gifted young singers led by founding Artistic Director, Dr Desmond Earley, based at the College of Arts & Humanities, University College Dublin (UCD). Scholars come from various academic disciplines and commit to an intensive programme of ensemble activities.

Since its formation in 1999, the choir has maintained strong links with its family of over two hundred alumni, who often return to perform with the ensemble on national and international platforms.

what WE DO

This unique scholarship programme broadens the experience of students at University College Dublin, connecting them to audiences across the world through live and recorded performance.

With a classical focus and an inspiration found in the music and literature of Ireland, the ensemble's repertoire ranges from contemporary choral music to the re-imagining of Irish traditional song.

Choral Scholar members serve as ambassadors for University College Dublin, representing the best of Ireland and its distinct culture.

how WE WORK

Through a selective audition process, the ensemble is chosen annually. Throughout each semester singers receive intense vocal coaching, language instruction, and performance-practice studies.

The choir regularly commissions new works from internationally-renowned composers. Singers also participate in specialist workshops with musicians of the highest calibre.

What differentiates Choral Scholars from other choirs is an ambitious vision, a commitment to artistic excellence, a strong identity, a joyful camaraderie, and a dynamic, youthful sound.

MESSAGE FROM
OUR FOUNDING

Artistic Director



Choral Scholars is a different kind of choir with a different impact on the world.

Choral Scholars illustrates how an ensemble can achieve international success through a commitment to outstanding performance standards.

Choral Scholars has re-invented the collegiate choral experience.

My mission, as Director, is to create an unparalleled opportunity for the students of University College Dublin, providing a special platform for young singers to work together and experience the benefits of communication, expression and emotional intelligence through music. Our work represents the “living actuality” of artistic endeavour.

We perform and record imaginative repertoire, enabling each student to experience choral music through an Irish lens, in an environment of fellowship. Our practice is grounded in scholarly research and artistic excellence.

Choral Scholars has already produced a generation of some of Ireland’s greatest artists, thinkers and leaders. By altering the course of these young lives, we are influencing the future.

Photography: Frances Marshall

Desmond Earley

Hailed by The Irish Times as ‘enterprising and wide-ranging’, Desmond Earley, Artistic Director of the Choral Scholars of University College Dublin, has established a reputation as one of Ireland’s foremost choral directors and early-keyboard specialists. Desmond is a lecturer in Performance Studies at University College Dublin (UCD). In 2017-2018 he was Visiting Scholar at Lewis & Clark College, Oregon (USA) and Scholar at Bowdoin College, Maine (USA).

As an instrumentalist and director, Desmond works with many of the world’s finest orchestras including the Irish Chamber Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Irish Baroque Orchestra, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, European Union Chamber Orchestra and English Chamber Orchestra. Desmond has also collaborated with some of the world’s great musicians

including Sir James Galway, Roy Goodman, Christopher Hogwood, Monica Huggett, and Konrad Junghaenel. As a celebrated composer and arranger, Desmond has published works with Music Sales (UK), Hal Leonard Corporation (USA), Alliance Music (USA) and with Seolta Music (IRL) where he serves as editor of the international ‘College Choral Series’.

His acclaimed work *Body of the Moon* (2017) based on a setting of texts by Galileo Galilei, was commissioned by All Classical Portland Radio (USA) for the total solar eclipse across the United States of America. He has created special arrangements for renowned ensembles including the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the Portland Symphony Orchestra (Maine, USA), Tenebrae (UK), the Irish Baroque Orchestra, and Irish Chamber Orchestra.

www.desmondearley.ie

Presented by
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

The
CHORAL SCHOLARS
of University College Dublin

& special guests

Desmond Earley, Conductor

Friday March 15, 2019 7:30pm
Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall

**Imagining
Ireland
Songs
of
Home**



Carnegie HALL



Photography: Chris Lee.

INVISIBLE
STARS (2015)

PERPETUAL
TWILIGHT (2019)

BE ALL
MERRY (2020)

6 MILLION
STREAMS

ON SPOTIFY, APPLE MUSIC
AND AMAZON MUSIC



10,000

PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL
ALBUM SALES

SOCIAL MEDIA SENSATION

21 Million 

Views on YouTube
& 70000 Subscribers

FEATURED VIDEO PARTNER OF

3 CLASSIC *fm*
million followers



THOUSANDS
OF FOLLOWERS
AND FANS

FACEBOOK
TWITTER
INSTAGRAM

ALBUMS REACHING
150 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE



INVISIBLE STARS
BEST-SELLING
CHORAL ALBUM
ON SIGNUM CLASSICS

2016
2017

INTERNATIONAL PRESS



- CBS Sunday Morning, USA
- Gramophone Magazine, UK
- BBC Music Magazine, UK
- American Public Media, USA,
- Late Late Show, RTÉ, Ireland

GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION

COLLEGE CHORAL SERIES

published with

Seolta Music Ltd (IRL)

14,000

COPIES OF DESMOND EARLEY'S SCORES
DISTRIBUTED TO CHOIRS WORLDWIDE



gifted
YOUNG SINGERS

signum
CLASSICS

BE *a* MERRY

*The Choral Scholars of
University College Dublin
Irish Chamber Orchestra
Desmond Earley*

PRAISE
FOR

Be All Merry:

“

The glowing tonal blend that [Earley] elicits is a constant pleasure, and there's a real emotional connection in the performances.

BBC Music Magazine, December 2020

A slick album of new, largely unrecognisable settings of old carols woven through with the sound of Gaelic folk song [... providing] something different that's still consistent and festive [... this is] a choir very well trained with an idea of its own sound.

Gramophone Magazine, December 2020.

What's great here is that their voices are non-choir, non-posh, honest and heartfelt [...] the Irish language settings on the album are beautiful; the solos are really fine.

Record Review on BBC Radio 3

”



WHAT
THE

Experts say:

“

*The Choral Scholars is one of the best choirs
I've worked with on my live tour.*

Hans Zimmer, Film Composer & Performer

*The Choral Scholars of University College Dublin
is one of the finest college choirs I have ever
heard on my travels: such fabulous intonation,
blend and musicality.*

Nigel Short, Artistic Director, Tenebrae Choir

A fantastic choir!

Bill Whelan, Composer and Arranger, Riverdance

”



WHAT
THE

Critics say:

“

Whatever Artistic Director Desmond Earley and voice coach Síle McCarthy-Cannon are doing with the Choral Scholars of University College Dublin, it's something every other choral director should be knocking down their door to discover.

Gramophone Magazine (April 2019)

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CHORAL SCHOLARS ALUMNI 1998/1999 – 2020/2021

James Aherne	Jeremy Crothers	Matthew Gibbons	Denis Kilty
Stephen Allen	Clodagh Curran	Toby Gilbert	Sorcha Kinder
Victoria Allen	Aoife Daly	Rebecca Gilbert*	Serine Kirkebø Landa
Fionnvola Armstrong	Maura Daly	James Gilbert*	Tilen Kranjc
Emma Arthur	Elliot Davis	Rachael Gilmore-Murphy	Mollie Lalor
Amy Barrett	Fionnuala De Frein	Erik Goulding	Jill L'Estrange
Emer Barry	Ruairí De Frein	Peter Harper	Catherine Landicho
Rhiannon Barry	Rachel Dilworth	Gary Hayes	Elaine Lavery
Rebecca Beck (Duff)	Amber Dixon	Gemma Healy-Murphy	Jane Lawrence
Jimmy Billings	Emily Doyle	Siobhán Hearne	Clara Leahy
Anja Blöhm	Niamh McCaughey	Aoife Heeney	Mark Lee
Owen Brady	Cian Elliott	Fiona Hickey	Kate Lenehan
Tadhg Brennan	Mark Ennis	Rose Higgins	Ross Loughran
Ritchie Burbridge	Eoin Falconer	Ryan Hitchcock	Fiona Lynch
Emily Ann Byrne	John Fallows	Mark Hogan	Matthew Lynch
Rachel Byrne	Emlyn Farrell	Niamh Hyland	Rory Lynch
Siobhán Calpin	Stephen Fennelly	Patrick Hyland	Rebecca MacCann
Cian Carolan	Michael Fenton	Harriett Jenkins,	Mairéad Maguire
Méabh Carron	David Finn	Åste Jensen-Sjøvaag	Ruth Malone
Aoibhe Casey	Eimer Finn	Derina Johnson	Ian Maxwell
Myles Cassidy	Alan Fitzgerald	Oisin Johnston	Eoghan McArdle
Denise Cassidy	Emma Fletcher	Francesca Keane	Sadhbh McCarrick
Paul Choisel	Niamh Fogarty	Séamus Kearney	Niamh McCullough
Seoirse Claffey	Cameron Folens	John Keegan	Andrew McDermott
Trevor Clarke	Dani Fox	Noel Keegan	Lorcan McDonnell
Lucy Cleere	Oisín Friel	Paul Keegan	Caireann McFadden
Eleanor Coleman	Máire Gaffney	Colm Keegan	Elizabeth McGloughlin
Gavin Coll	Niamh Gartland	Mark Keegan	Valerie McGrane
Róisín Commane	Martha Garvey (Bredin)	Thomas Kehoe	Cristina McGrath
Hazel Conway	Jennifer Geraghty (O'Neill)	Colm Kenny-Vaughan	Niall McGrath*
Fergal Cooke	Susie Gibbons	Audrey Keogan	Ann McLaughlin
Liam Cotter			

Luke McMonagle	Kevin O'Connor	Ronan Scolard
Brian Merriman	Aoife O'Connor	Caitríona Sherlock
Abby Molloy	Linda O'Halloran	Colm Shortall
Fearghus Montague	Gillian O'Halloran	Ali Shortt
Aaron Mooney	Alex O'Hanlon	Colm Skelly
Tomás Moore	Gráinne O'Hogan	Christine Smyth
Stephen Moores	Aoife O'Hora	Selina Smyth
Simon Morgan	Ivan O'Neill	Billie Sparks
Jeremy Morgan	Kiri O'Neill	Niall Stafford
David Morgan	Maximillian O'Neill	Ronan Sugrue
Geraldine Mulhall	Megan O'Neill	Brian Sugrue
Miriam Mulhall	Orla O'Neill	Shane Sugrue
Barry Mulvey	Hannah O'Reilly	Diarmuid Sugrue
Andrew Murphy	Caitríona O'Sullivan	Shane Sweeney
Glenn Murphy	Donal O'Sullivan	Stephen Tennant-Humphreys
Niamh Murray	Fiona Peacock	Léa Thouvenin
Alice Morgan	Dominic Perrem	Sarah Thursfield
Orla Mulvey	Jeanne-Maire Phillips	Lucy Thurston
Justin Neville	April Pouch	Caitriona Timmins
Caitríona Ní Chathasaigh (2014)	Martin Purtill-Kalk	Barry Toolan
Caitríona Ní Chathasaigh(2016)	Annette Quinn	Orna Toolan
Micheál Ó Cathasaigh	Michelle Quinn	Daniel Twomey
Caoileann Ní Cheallaigh	Tommy Redmond	Michael Walsh
Méabh Nic Mhaoláin	Andrew Redmond*	Tagdh Walsh-Peelo
Blathnaid Nicholson	Sophie Redmond Kehoe	Harry Watchorn
Andrew Nicoll	Clodagh Reid	Mark Waters
Ciarán O'Donovan	Gavan Reilly	Niamh White
Stephen O'Brien	Clare Salley	Declan Wildes
Sinead O'Brien	Grace Sauder	Marie Woulfe
Neassa O'Callaghan	Greta Scanlon	Katrina Yoder
Óisín O'Callaghan	Eóin Scanlon	

*Denotes honorary member





artistic
EXCELLENCE



WHAT
THE

“Scholars say:

Twenty years later, when I think of University College Dublin, Choral Scholars is what comes to mind every time... the Choral Scholars family was not only the most important at the time, it is also the one that has vividly stayed with me over the years.

Stephen Fennelly (class of 1999)

Being a scholar was one of the most formative elements of my college experience. It was a chance to use a different part of the brain, discover works of art and expressions of culture that would have never come my way through other avenues, and feel a great sense of achievement for working hard with a close group of people achieving great things!

Linda O'Halloran (class of 2007)

My four years with Choral Scholars was the most memorable period of my life during which I gained invaluable transferable skills and life-long friends. After studying Law at UCD Sutherland School, I continued my studies at Duke University School, and I can proudly say that the interdisciplinary model, work ethic, and pursuit of excellence that Choral Scholars cultivates seems to me to be unrivalled. My experience with the Choral Scholars played a critical role in securing my position as a lawyer with a prestigious law firm in New York City.

Óisín O'Callaghan (class of 2015)

”

Something we are working on...

Chamber Music – James Joyce

James Joyce, a graduate of University College Dublin, is considered one of the fathers of modern literature for his creative brilliance. Joyce was also an accomplished tenor, having won a bronze medal for solo singing in 1904 at the Dublin *Feis Ceoil* competition. According to a review of the competition in the *Irish Daily Independent* on 17 May 1904, ‘Mr. Joyce showed himself possessed of the finest quality voice of any of those competing’.

Joyce wrote a letter to his brother expressing the hope that his collection, *Chamber Music* (1907) would one day be set to music: ‘The book is in fact a suite of songs and if I were a musician I suppose I should have set them to music myself’. Joyce also expressed the hope to his brother that ‘someone will do so, someone that knows old English music, as I like’, and as a singer, perhaps he even had a choral ensemble in mind.

To mark the twentieth season of Choral Scholars in 2018-2019, the Latvian composer Eriks Esenvalds set the Joyce poem *My Love is in a Light Attire* for choir and violoncello, funded by matched-funding donations provided by private supporters of the choir and

the university. Esenvalds often divides his choir into multiple parts allowing for deliciously rich textures that almost overwhelm the audience. In setting poem VII from ‘Chamber Music’ he chooses a less complex approach which allows him to reflect the innocence of the imagery presented by Joyce: ‘*My love goes slowly, bending to/Her shadow on the grass.*’ The result is essentially a love-song filled with nostalgic longing.

To celebrate the unique connection that University College Dublin has with James Joyce, the Artistic Director of Choral Scholars, Desmond Earley, wishes to curate and commission the setting for choir of the entire collection of thirty-six poems comprising *Chamber Music*, each by a different composer from around the world.

If you share our passion for excellence and wish to be part of our journey through the poetry of James Joyce, and bring new choral music to life, contact Desmond Earley, Artistic Director at desmond.earley@ucd.ie

Poem XXXI
Chamber Music

O, it was out by Donnycarney
 When the bat flew from tree to tree
My love and I did walk together;
 And sweet were the words she said to me.

Along with us the summer wind
 Went murmuring—O, happily!—
But softer than the breath of summer
 Was the kiss she gave to me.

James Joyce

signum
CLASSICS



PERPETUAL TWILIGHT

THE CHORAL SCHOLARS OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
DESMOND EARLEY

Thank you for:

Supporting

YOUNG
ARTISTS

Sharing our

PASSION
FOR
EXCELLENCE

Being part

OF OUR
JOURNEY

Choral Scholars of University College Dublin relies on a network of supporters, advisers and artistic partners to deliver our ambitious programme of musical activity each year. Your support can transform the experience of each scholar. If you can be part of this mission to provide outstanding opportunities to students and bring Irish choral music to new audiences, contact:

Aoife Perry,
Ensemble Manager at
choralscholars@ucd.ie
or +353 (0) 87 1036630



Advisory Board to Choral Scholars: David Agnew, Sarah Blackman, Prof Joseph Brady, Prof Mary Codd, Dr Desmond Earley *ex officio*, Prof Orla Feely, John Keogan (Chair), Eilis O'Brien, Prof Sarah Prescott *ex officio*, Dr Bill Whelan.

