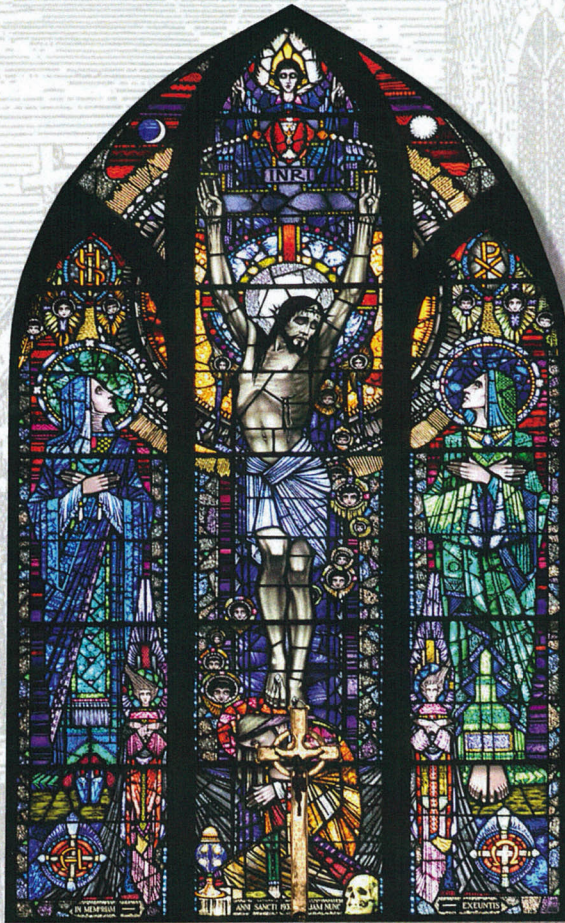


# CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION DOUGHTERARD

## FUNDRAISING CONCERT

Friday 11th November 2016 7:30 p.m.



Finghin Collins (*Piano*) Elizabeth Cooney (*Violin*)

Rachel Croash (*Soprano*)

Cois Cladaigh Chamber Choir (*Conductor Brendan O'Connor*)

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

# Welcome

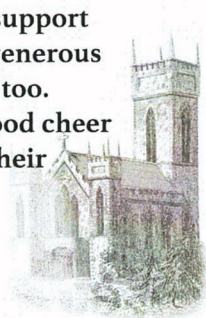
The honour falls to me of welcoming each and every one of you to this wonderful night, designed to kick-start a major fund-raising drive to support substantial church renovations. For a little over one month I have been the parish priest of Oughterard parish, having spent the previous ten years since my ordination in Mervue, Bushypark and Knocknacarra, in addition to the Bon Secours and Merlin Park hospitals. For visitors outside the locality, I have no doubt that the people of the parish will make you feel as welcome as I have felt; we are delighted you are here to share this occasion with us.

In a world so busy, at times even stressful and worrisome, it is a gift to be able to come to this holy place to be lifted up. To be in this parish church of the Immaculate Conception, we are reminded of a common heritage we possess in Oughterard. For almost two centuries men, women and children have come here to celebrate many joys; they have grieved sorrows too. New families were formed in marriage, their children were baptized and prepared for life by many graces from the sacraments. This is also where family and neighbours were prayed for before migrating, some never to be seen again; other loved ones were commended to the Lord. During our darkest times, starving people took solace within these walls during the great famine. Here God our Father often seemed so close, and at other times so far away. This is the mystery of the Cross, depicted in our stunning Harry Clark window before you.

We are blessed to have some of our country's finest contemporary musicians to play a selection of music for us tonight. Music, one of the highest expressions of human creativity, can lift our minds and spirits to a place beyond the here and now. Allow yourself to be taken and moved by this night's selection, feel the peace and tranquility of this place. Let your souls be refreshed.

This night would not have been possible without the help and support of so many people. I would like to thank Tom Finnerty for his generous support. The Oughterard restaurants have been most generous too. Above all I have to thank Doc Gilbert, for her dedication and good cheer in making this night a reality. Many, many more have given of their time and love; even if I add more names, many will be left out. I promise you, 'you will not go without your reward'.

*Yours sincerely, fr Michael Connolly pp., Oughterard*



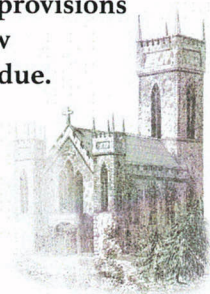
# The Church of the Immaculate Conception, Oughterard

Rev. Dr. Kirwan was appointed as Parish Priest to Oughterard in 1827 and, observing that there was no church, immediately set about planning for the building of a church on land donated by the Martins. The extreme poverty of the people precluded them from making significant financial support, but they freely gave their labour. Funds for the church were collected personally by Fr. Kirwan, particularly on his annual visits to London, where the people of Moorefield Parish responded generously.

The partly-constructed Church of the Immaculate Conception was opened temporarily for the first divine worship on Christmas Day, 1830. The Church was eventually completed and consecrated on 24 August, 1837. Fr. Kirwan later became the First President of Galway University, and his portrait used to hang in University College Galway with the background showing the church he had built in Oughterard.

By 1932, the church was in a dilapidated state, partly due to the effects of an extensive fire in 1879. It was also too small, so was renovated and extended between 1932 and 1934. During this time, the altar was moved from under the gallery to the north wall and the magnificent Harry Clarke window was installed behind the altar. Harry Clarke (1889-1941) was Ireland's greatest stained-glass artist and book illustrator.

Once again, almost 100 years after the previous rebuilding and almost 200 years since the church first began to serve its community, major renovations are needed to secure and update the Church's facilities. A survey commissioned following the recent ceiling collapse in the sacristy has revealed the extent of the problems and the renovations required: the complete replacement of the sacristy roof; the extensive renovation of the bell tower and the access stairs which are severely damaged by wood worm; changes to the existing choir gallery and church organ area, including an open plan for choral practice; and repairs to the wall and ceiling in the existing small children's room. Also, to bring church facilities up to standard, improvements to public toilets (including proper accessibility provisions for disabled users), better management of roof water, and a new eco-friendly heating system for the entire church are long overdue.



# CONCERT PROGRAMME

**Finghin Collins, piano**

*Beethoven Piano Sonata Opus 13 "Pathetique": Adagio*  
*Schubert Impromptu Opus 90, No. 2*

**Rachel Croash, soprano, and Finghin Collins, piano**

*Danny Boy, traditional*  
*The Sally Gardens, Britten*  
*The Mother, T C Kelly*

**Elizabeth Cooney, violin, and Finghin Collins, piano**

*Saint-Saens: Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*

**Cois Claddaigh Choir**

*Drinkin' of the Wine, Rosephayne Powell, USA (contemporary)*  
*Lux Aeterna, Brian Schmidt, USA (contemporary)*  
*Wangol, traditional Haiti, arranged by Sten Kallman*  
*(Swedish contemporary)*

**INTERVAL**



## **Cois Claddaigh Choir**

*Jeremiah's Fire, Rollo Dilworth, USA (contemporary)*

*Let My Love be Heard, Jake Runestad, USA (contemporary)*

*Cantique de Jean Racine, Gabriel Faure, French:*

*with Finghin Collins, piano*

## **Finghin Collins, piano**

*Chopin Opus 28, No. 15 "Raindrop": Prelude*

*Chopin Opus 64, No 1 "Minute Waltz"*

## **Elizabeth Cooney, violin, and Finghin Collins, piano**

*Ravel: Kaddish*

*Sarasate: Caprice Basque*

## **Rachel Croash, soprano, and Finghin Collins, piano**

*O mio Babbino caro, Gianna Schicchi, Puccini*

*I could have danced all night, My Fair Lady, Loewe*

*Somewhere over the rainbow, The Wizard of Oz, Arlen*



## Finghin Collins

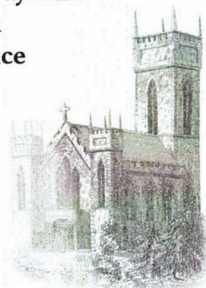


One of Ireland's most successful musicians, Dubliner Finghin Collins was born in 1977 and studied piano at the Royal Irish Academy of Music with John O'Connor and at the Geneva Conservatoire with Dominique Merlet. Winner of the RTÉ Musician of the Future Competition in 1994, he went on to achieve major 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. Collins has performed with many leading orchestras, such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, garnering consistent praise from critics and public alike. Finghin Collins has been Artistic Director of the New Ross Piano Festival since its inception in 2006, and is also Artistic Director of Music for Galway since 2013.

## Elizabeth Cooney



Elizabeth is one of the most talented violinists to have emerged from Ireland and performs nationally and internationally as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral leader. Now London based, she was most recently guest leader of the Aurora Orchestra at the Oxford Lieder Festival. She has also been invited as guest principal to the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Northern Sinfonia orchestras. Elizabeth is a keen chamber musician and has performed chamber music recitals at leading venues such as the Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall, the Purcell Room, and the Conway Hall in London. She has many CD recordings, and continues to teach violin at masterclasses, in workshops and privately, believing in the importance of sharing musical knowledge with violinists young and old.



## Rachel Croash

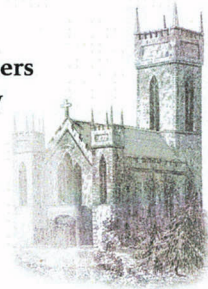


Rachel is an exciting emerging soprano from Dublin, recently graduated with a masters degree in performance from the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Oratorio engagements include Mozart's Requiem and Vaughan Williams' A Serenade to Music at The National Concert Hall, Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle with The Culwick Choral Society, and Mozart's Vesperae Solennes de Confessore and Bach Cantata BWV 41 Jesu nun sei gepreiset at St.Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh. She has performed in recital for Lismore Opera Festival, Opera Ireland, Opera Theatre Company, Wexford Festival Opera, The Contemporary Music Centre and the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition. She was recently awarded a Young Emerging Artist Award by Wexford Festival Opera.

## Cois Cladaigh Choir



Cois Cladaigh is a leading mixed voice choir based in Galway and was founded in 1982. The choir specialises in European music from the late 15th and early 16th centuries and also performs a formidable repertoire of contemporary choral music, particularly from Ireland, but also from Scandinavia, Eastern European countries, and North America. Cois Cladaigh has recorded four albums: Lux Aeterna, An Equal Music, Beatus Vir and Puer natus est nobis. The choir has performed widely throughout Ireland and in Europe. They take an active role in commissioning contemporary Irish composers to write pieces for them, and have also successfully commissioned New Zealand, Spanish, Icelandic and Estonian composers.



# The Harry Clarke Window

Briefly, the window features three distinct panels: the Crucified Christ in the middle with St. John: His Mother the Blessed Virgin Mary on the left, and St. Mary Magdalene in the right panel. Above Our Lord's head is the image of the Father and behind His head is the image of the Dove - the Holy Spirit. This represents the Most Holy Trinity of which Christ makes up the Third Person. Above the INRI inscription is the Chalice which is ready to receive the Precious Blood of Christ.

To the left of the angel of comfort is the crescent moon and to the right, the sun. This suggests that God's watchful care over us covers all of time: God is watching over us night and day. The large circle taking in all three panels represents the globe of the earth: all of God's creation is redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ. Christ is wrapped in golden light, as the colour gold or yellow always represents divine grace. The Blessed Virgin is wrapped in blue symbolising redeemed humanity. By comparison, Mary Magdalene is clothed in green, symbolising humanity yet to be redeemed. On the bottom right of the central panel is the skull. This stands for the first person created by God: Adam.

Under the feet of Our Lady is the first letter of the Greek alphabet: Alpha and on the opposite panel is the last letter: Omega. This signifies the beginning and the end of all time and this language is used when blessing the Paschal Candle every Holy Saturday night: consecrating every moment of human existence to Christ and offering it all up for sanctification. The two ranks or choirs of angels are represented in the window. The small faces in the bubble-like panels are the Cherubim, those innocent ones called to God before their time. They are often represented as babies in Christian art. By contrast the taller angels, near the legs of the Blessed Virgin and Mary Magdalene, are the Seraphim. They are messengers of God who feature in Biblical stories of visions and visitations.

The Latin inscription along the bottom of the window reads, 'In memory of the Holy Year 1933-1934 in which I am now made'. Sacred Art works are often referred to in that way as 'I'. They speak directly to the viewer and thus invite the viewer to fully interact with the scene before them.

