



Adamant Music School

Faculty

John O'Connor

"A pianist of unbounding sensitivity" (Gramophone) ; "He represents a vanishing tradition that favors inner expression and atmosphere over showmanship and bravura" (Chicago Tribune) ; "Impeccable technique and musicality ... it would be hard to imagine better performances" (Sunday Times – London) ; "This artist has the kind of flawless touch that makes an audience gasp" (Washington Post) ; "Exquisite playing" (New York Times).

The Irish pianist John O'Connor has been gathering wonderful reviews for his masterly playing for over forty years. Having studied in his native Dublin and in Vienna with Dieter Weber and been tutored by the legendary Wilhelm Kempff his unanimous 1st Prize at the Beethoven International Piano Competition in Vienna in 1973 opened the door to a career that has taken him all around the world.

He has performed in Europe, North America, Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand and has appeared with such orchestras as the London Symphony, Royal Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, l'Orchestre National de France, the Scottish and Stuttgart Chamber Orchestras, the Israel Camerata, the NHK, Yomiuri, Kyushu, Kyoto and Sapporo Symphonies in Japan, the KBS Symphony in Korea, the Shanghai Sinfonietta, the Singapore Symphony, the New Zealand Symphony and the orchestras of Atlanta, Cleveland, San Francisco, Boston, Dallas, Detroit, Indianapolis, Seattle, Montreal, Toronto, Tampa and Washington DC in North America.

He has given concerts in many of the world's most famous halls including Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington, the Wigmore Hall and South Bank Centre in London, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Dvorak Hall in Prague and the Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo.

He also enjoys collaborating in Lieder Recitals and performing chamber music with many instrumentalists and ensembles such as the Cleveland, Tokyo, Vanbrugh, Vermeer, Takacs, Vogler, Ying, Audubon and Navarra Quartets.

Mr. O'Connor also continues to make significant contributions to the arts in his native country and has championed the works of Ireland's leading 19th century composer, John Field. He became a key figure in the development of young artists through his role as Director of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and was a co-founder of the Dublin International Piano Competition of which he is Artistic Director and Chairman of the Jury.

John O'Connor first gained widespread attention in the United States in 1986 with the release of his first volume of Beethoven Sonatas on the Telarc label. He went on to record the complete sonatas and these were issued as a box set in 1994. CD Review described Mr. O'Connor's performances of these sonatas as "recordings of the highest calibre and Beethoven playing at its best" and went on to say "This Beethoven series should become the complete set of choice".

Mr. O'Connor has made more than 20 recordings for the Telarc label including the complete Beethoven Bagatelles, cited by the New York Times as the best recording of these works; four volumes of Mozart Piano Concertos with Sir Charles Mackerras and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra; numerous works of Schubert including the late A major Sonata, the complete Impromptus and Moments Musicaux, some Waltzes and the Trout Quintet with the Cleveland Quartet; and two volumes of short piano pieces entitled "Piano Classics" and "Autumn Songs". He has recorded most of the major works of John Field including the complete Concertos, Sonatas and Nocturnes. His recording of Field's Nocturnes featured on Billboard's classical charts for many weeks. He has also made a recording of his favourite Irish Airs with the Irish Chamber Orchestra entitled "Irish Classics".

In 2007 and 2008 he recorded the complete Piano Concertos of Beethoven with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andreas Delfs and these recordings have been greeted with great acclaim.

John O'Connor is deeply committed to the development of young pianists in Ireland and in other countries. He gives masterclasses and lectures in many of the places he performs as well as in many of the major music institutions including the Juilliard and Manhattan Schools in New York, the Peabody Institute, Harvard, Yale, Temple, Rutgers, Indiana, Texas and Seattle Universities and those in Vancouver, Kansas City and Tampa, the Ravinia Festival, the Aspen Music Festival and School, the Adamant Music School in Vermont, Piano Texas at TCU, the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, the Hamamatsu Piano Academy in Japan, Seoul National University and the National University of the Arts in Korea, the Australian National Academy and the Sydney Conservatorium in Australia, the Paris Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music in London.

He has been invited on the juries of most of the world's most prestigious International Piano Competitions including those in Leeds, Moscow (Tchaikovsky), Vienna (Beethoven), Warsaw (Chopin), Tel Aviv (Rubinstein), Hamamatsu, Beijing, Shanghai, Munich, Bolzano (Busoni), Cologne, Vevay (Clara Haskil), Cleveland, Salt Lake City (Gina Bachauer), Sydney, Pretoria, London, College Park (William Kapell), Valencia (Jose Iturbi), Hilton Head, Bonn (Beethoven), Seoul and Xiamen (China).

From 1997 to 2011 he took on the mantle of his revered professor Wilhelm Kempff and gave the annual Beethoven Interpretation Course in Kempff's own villa in Positano, Italy where Kempff gave the course from 1957. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the course in 2007 a TV documentary was made entitled "Beethoven Bootcamp" which was shown in many countries and is now available on YouTube. Prof. O'Connor now gives this course annually at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin.

Prof. O'Connor is regarded as one of the most important piano teachers in the world today. He is Distinguished Artist in Residence, Professor of Music and Chair of the Piano Division at Shenandoah Conservatory in Virginia, a faculty member at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, International Visiting Artist at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and Visiting Professor at Showa University in Japan. His students have won many international prizes (most recently First Prizes at the Maria Canals Competition in Barcelona in 2012 and the Beethoven Competition in Bonn in 2013) and he is in great demand for masterclasses and as a juror at the most prestigious International Piano Competitions worldwide.

For his services to music he has been awarded Honorary Doctorates by the National University of Ireland, by Trinity College Dublin and by Shenandoah University, Virginia and an Honorary Fellowship by

the Royal Irish Academy of Music. He has been decorated with the title "Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" by the French Government, has been awarded the "Ehrenkreuz für Wissenschaft und Kunst" by the Austrian Government, the "Order of the Rising Sun" by the Japanese Government, and has also been decorated by the Italian and Polish governments.

John O'Connor is a Steinway Artist.