

Irish Heritage

Promoting the best of Irish and Anglo-Irish literature, music and young performers since 1974

NEWSLETTER

May 2012

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to say that our Celebration of **60 Years of Wexford Festival Opera** on Tuesday 24th April was a resounding success. Thank you for your support. Judging by the feedback we have received from our Friends and guests, including Wexford Friends, it met the high standard expected of any event associated with Wexford and its renowned international festival. The performances of the artists, Fiona Murphy, John Molloy and Ciara Moroney were outstanding. It also provided us with an opportunity to pay tribute to Wexford's founder, the late Dr Tom Walsh, by honouring his daughter, Victoria Walsh-Hamer, who joined us in the Princess Alexandra Hall for the event and wrote a very gracious thanks to Irish Heritage. You will be hearing more from us on Wexford Festival Opera in forthcoming Newsletters.

Our Next Event

Although it may not feel like summer right now, we are preparing for our **Summer Recital at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8AU, on Tuesday 12th June at 7.30 pm**. It is our traditional night to finish the season, with sparkling songs and new faces.

This year we are delighted to introduce you to Dublin-born mezzo-soprano **Máire Flavin** who reached the final of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition 2011 and is on the threshold of a great career. Máire has worked with Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera and Glyndebourne. She is a recent graduate of the National Opera Studio and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Royal Irish Academy of Music and Queens University Belfast. Máire is an alumna of both the Opera Theatre Company [Ireland] Young Artist and Britten Pears Young Artist programmes. You can read more about her career and performances on her website www.maireflavin.co.uk

Máire will be joined by one of the outstanding accompanists of his generation, **Simon Lepper**. Simon is Professor of Piano Accompaniment at the Royal College of Music. He was educated at King's College, Cambridge and the Royal Academy of Music. Whilst a student he won every major award for piano accompaniment including the accompanist prizes in the Kathleen Ferrier and Royal Over-Seas League competitions. He is an official accompanist for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Simon performed with Irish Heritage, accompanying Ailish Tynan, at Leighton House in May 2003. You can read more about Simon on www.simonlepper.com

The musical programme they have chosen in consultation with Irish Heritage Artistic Director, Ethna Kennedy, will include songs by Schumann, and Irish Composer Philip Martin and popular opera and light opera arias by Bizet, Puccini and Lowe. Máire in fact sang Philip Martin's composition, *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, as part of her repertoire in the Cardiff finals. In return, Philip composed a special song for her - *The moon is hiding in her hair*. Máire will sing both in her programme on 12th June – more about the programme in the next Newsletter.

St Bride's Church is one of the most beautiful Wren Churches in London and for 500 years the spiritual home of printers and journalists and is a fine concert venue. It is also a major archaeological site as a result of discoveries made during restoration work carried out following its bombing during the Second World War. It is now one of London's earliest known Roman remains. (See www.stbrides.com)

Tickets are available from Kathy O'Regan, e-mail: Kathy.oregan@hotmail.co.uk , tel: 020 7226 4578. They can also be booked on-line through the **ammado** secure payment facility (no booking fee) on our website www.irishheritage.co.uk. We have **reduced our ticket prices** to reflect the difficult economic climate and we are charging £15 (or £12 for paid-up members) with a student price of £5.

After the recital we have arranged an excellent venue to meet and relax, The Press House Wine Bar, 1 St Bride's Passage, EC4Y 8EJ, which offers comfort and good value. www.presshousewinebars.co.uk

I hope you can join us on 12th June for a great night, and please book early.

With best wishes

Niall Gallagher

Chairman

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