



RTÉ Performing Groups
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**RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA SIGNATURE SERIES
NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
MAY–NOVEMBER 2008**

The RTÉ Concert Orchestra is proud to present the Signature Series, a gala concert season with an outstanding line-up of international singing stars, two of whom will be presented in association with BT Ireland.

In six concerts between May and November at the National Concert Hall, the Signature Series will feature:

- world-renowned mezzo-soprano **Katherine Jenkins** in her first public solo concert in the Republic of Ireland, in association with BT Ireland
- the acclaimed and ever-popular soprano **Lesley Garrett** (also in Limerick)
- New Zealand singing sensation **Hayley Westenra**, in association with BT Ireland (also in Limerick)
- star Icelandic tenor **Cortes**, following a sell-out Irish début with the RTÉ CO in January
- the Tony-award-winning tenor **Alfie Boe**
- all-female supergroup **All Angels**, making their first appearance in the Republic of Ireland

Full details below.

LESLEY GARRETT
Britain's most popular soprano

THURSDAY 1 MAY, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
Also in University Concert Hall, Limerick, Friday 2 May

Lesley Garrett has been described as everything from an 'operatic atomic kitten' and 'a singing whirlwind' to 'the Geri Halliwell of opera'. With 11 solo CDs and a CBE award in the 2002 New Year's Honours List for Services to Music, she has certainly earned the title of Britain's most popular soprano, and has won accolades such as 'phenomenal' (*The Independent*) and a 'true star' (*Daily Express*).

Lesley Garrett's impressive operatic repertoire includes engagements at English National Opera, Opera North, Welsh National Opera and the Wexford Festival, but her success extends well beyond the opera stage and concert platform to television (*Strictly Come Dancing*, *Loose Women*), radio and the West End.

On Thursday 1 and Friday 2 May she joins the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and special guest tenor Will Martin for operatic and classical favourites as well as songs from her recent album *When I Fall in Love*.

ALFIE BOE
'a stunning discovery' (Observer)

THURSDAY 19 JUNE, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

British tenor Alfie Boe – 'a stunning discovery who could be the best tenor of his generation' (*Observer*) – got his first big break courtesy of director Baz Luhrmann. Having spent two years looking for one of the main leads for his controversial production of Puccini's *La bohème*, Luhrmann approached Alfie Boe for the role. His performance on Broadway earned him a Tony Award.

Alfie Boe's passionate and captivating performances have also led him to the Royal Albert Hall and appearances with Michael Parkinson, who hailed him as a 'rising young talent in the world of classical music'. He has already released two classical chart-topping albums, earned a Classical Brit nomination and won both the John McCormack Young Voice Award and Lyric Tenor of the World Audience Award.

Alfie Boe joins the RTÉ Concert Orchestra on Thursday 19 June to perform famous operatic arias including Puccini's *E lucevan le stelle* and Bizet's *La fleur que tu m'avais jetée* as well a selection of Neapolitan songs, his own particular speciality.

ALL ANGELS
Female classical crossover supergroup

FRIDAY 1 AUGUST, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

All Angels are the world's first female classical crossover supergroup and this will be their first Irish concert. The four members are still only in their late teens – in fact the youngest of them will just have taken her A levels before their Dublin concert. Their début album earned them a platinum disc and a Classical Brit Nomination, and they have already appeared with Russell Watson and Katherine Jenkins, at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall where they sang in front of the Queen, and at several international England rugby matches.

All Angels join the RTÉ Concert Orchestra on Friday 1 August for a mix of classical and popular music with a contemporary edge.

HAYLEY WESTENRA

Million-selling New Zealand singer with a voice of remarkable purity

THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL
Also in University Concert Hall, Limerick, Friday 12 September
In association with BT Ireland

Young New Zealand soprano Hayley Westenra has won the hearts of millions with a voice of breathtaking natural beauty. Her début album, *Pure*, topped the UK classical charts and went to the Top Ten in the pop charts, while in her homeland it was the biggest-selling album of all time. With subsequent albums *Odyssey* and *Treasure*, she has combined record sales of over three million worldwide.

This will be Hayley's third appearance with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, following two hugely successful sell-out performances in 2007. BT Ireland, who sponsored her concert with the orchestra last December, renews its sponsorship for this eagerly awaited 2008 performance. Hayley joins the RTÉ CO in the National Concert Hall on Thursday, 11 September and in University Concert Hall, Limerick on Friday, 12 September.

CORTES
'the voice of Pavarotti' (Newsweek)

THURSDAY 30 OCTOBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

When Icelandic tenor Cortes made his début in Ireland in January, his performance with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra was greeted by a standing ovation from the capacity audience and queues of autograph hunters afterwards. Hailed as having 'the voice of Pavarotti' (*Newsweek*), he actually outsold the legendary Italian tenor with his first album. From an intensely musical family – the son of a tenor and a concert pianist – he has won critical acclaim for performances of lead roles in the operas of Verdi, Rossini and Donizetti. One critic observed of his performance of Puccini's *Nessun Dorma*, 'Seldom have I seen an audience so enraptured by what is unfolding on stage.'

A major star in the making, his return visit on Thursday 30 October will be eagerly anticipated.

KATHERINE JENKINS

Schoolteacher to superstar

SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL **In association with BT Ireland**

Bringing the Signature Series to a spectacular conclusion, mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins joins the RTÉ Concert Orchestra for her début solo concert in the Republic of Ireland, in association with BT Ireland.

Since the release of her debut album *Première* in 2003, mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins has already outsold opera legends such as Maria Callas. Her collaborations with Bryan Adams and Kiri Te Kanawa represent a unique and hugely successful crossover from classical to pop music. Winner of two consecutive Classical BRIT awards, she is the only singer in musical history to hold all three top spots in the classical charts simultaneously, also making an impact on the pop charts with a top 5 hit.

Katherine Jenkins has toured extensively and performed for the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace as well as singing in less conventional venues entertaining British troops in Iraq or performing before Welsh international rugby matches. She will perform her repertoire of core classical arias along with instantly recognisable modern hits with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra on Saturday 29 November.

RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA

The RTÉ Concert Orchestra has been cherished by Irish audiences throughout its 60-year history, whether performing with international stars such as Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Kiri Te Kanawa and Ute Lemper or with leading Irish artists ranging from Cara O'Sullivan and Virginia Kerr to Altan and Declan O'Rourke. With an unrivalled repertoire, the RTÉ CO appears at leading national and international festivals, on RTÉ Radio and Television and in the opera house, while through its commercial releases its recordings are distributed worldwide. The orchestra's education programme is presented nationwide to tens of thousands of young people as the RTÉ/The Irish Times Music in the Classroom series.

The RTÉ CO has been heard across the world in seven Eurovision Song Contests and its commercial recordings embrace many styles from the phenomenally successful *Riverdance* to Declan O'Rourke's *Big Bad Beautiful World*.

David Brophy, Principal Conductor of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, will conduct the performances with Lesley Garrett, Alfie Boe, Hayley Westenra, All Angels and Cortes. Anthony Inglis will conduct the Katherine Jenkins concert.

Booking details below.

For further information please contact
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BOOKING DETAILS

LESLEY GARRETT

1 & 2 MAY, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL AND UCH, LIMERICK

1 May, National Concert Hall

Tickets: €25, €40, €55

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

2 May, University Concert Hall, Limerick

Tickets: €42.50, €47, €50

Booking: 061 331549/www.uch.ie

ALFIE BOE

19 JUNE, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Tickets: €15, €25, €40

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

ALL ANGELS

1 AUGUST, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Tickets: €15, €25, €40

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

HAYLEY WESTENRA

11 & 12 SEPTEMBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL AND UCH, LIMERICK

11 September, National Concert Hall

Tickets: €15, €30, €45

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

12 September, University Concert Hall, Limerick

Tickets: €15, €25, €40

Booking: 061 331549/www.uch.ie

CORTES

30 OCTOBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Tickets: €15, €25, €40

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

KATHERINE JENKINS

29 NOVEMBER, NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

Tickets: €30, €50, €70

Booking: 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie

A limited number of concession tickets are available for each concert.