

Nuala McKenna (*1993)

Born into a family of musicians, the German-Irish cellist Nuala McKenna (*1993) first took up playing the piano when she was four years old. At eight years she started to play the cello. Only four years later she was accepted as a pre-student at the Musikhochschule Lubeck in the class of Prof. Ulf Tischbirek. From 2011-2014 she studied with Prof. Jean- Guihen Queyras at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg. She continued her studies in the class of Prof. Ivan Monighetti in Basel and is currently enrolled in the Soloists Program at the Musikhochschule Stuttgart in the class of Prof. Conradin Brotbek.

She gained further inspiration by attending masterclasses and festivals with renowned musicians such as Frans Helmerson, Miklos Perenyi, Steven Isserlis, Truls Mørk, Philippe Muller, Gabor Tacaks-Nagy, Ferenc Rados, Anner Bylisma, Troels Svane, Jens Peter Maintz, Peter Bruns, Reinhard Goebel and Julian Steckel.

Since 2012 Nuala is a member and also solo cellist of the Balthasar-Neumann-Ensemble led by Thomas Hengelbrock. Here she discovered her passion for authentic historical performance and playing on gut strings. In the season 2013/14 she played as an academist in the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam. Afterwards she completed a two-year academy in the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen led by Paavo Järvi.

She has participated in various international festivals like the Verbier Festival, International Bach Festival Gran Canaria, Schwetzingen Festspiele and the Podium Festival Esslingen. In the Netherlands she has performed at the 'Grachtenfestival' and 'Wonderfeel Festival' and can be heard at the 'Klassifest' next spring. She is artistic leader of her own festival 'Musikfest Kahleby' which was founded in summer 2016.

She has performed concerts with renowned artists such as Maria Joao Pires, the Talich Quartet, Boris Garlitsky, Augustin Dumay, Miguel da Silva, Olli Mustonen, Axel Strauss and Jean-Guihen Queyras and has played recitals and chamber music in halls such as the Laeishalle Hamburg, Concertgebouw Amsterdam and the Flagey in Brussels.

As a finalist of the Dutch Classical Talent, Nuala will play a concert tour with a solo program throughout all major halls of the Netherlands during the season 2018/19.

Since 2014 she is member of the chamber music foundation program 'Villa Musica', performing concerts together renowned musicians. Furthermore the foundation is lending her a cello by William Forster with which she can perform baroque and early classical repertoire.

For nearly seven years she has been receiving a scholarship by the „Heinz-Wüstenberg- Stiftung“ and has been supported by the 'Marie Luise Imbusch-Stiftung' and the 'Oscar und Vera Ritter-Stiftung'. Furthermore she has also been annually presented with a scholarship by the „Deutsche Stiftung Musikleben“ and most recently been awarded their 'Gerd Bucerius' scholarship award.

Nuala will commence work in her new position as solo cellist in the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen in March 2019.

She is currently playing a cello with the label „Joseph Guarnerius, 2nd half 18th century“. It is on loan to her by the “Deutsche Stiftung Musikleben” as a result of being a laureate in the “Wettbewerb des Deutschen Musikinstrumentenfonds”.