



SEÁN TESTER

- TENOR -

B I O G R A P H Y

From the vibrant musical town of Drogheda, Irish tenor **Seán Tester** discovered his passion for the performing arts at the Drogheda School of Performing Arts (*the Little Duke Theatre*), where he studied drama, dance, and singing. Alongside his theatrical training, Seán developed a strong foundation in choral music as a dedicated member of **St. Peter's Male Voice Choir**, Drogheda — a formative experience that continues to shape his musical instincts and ensemble sensibility. His artistic path took a more focused turn at the **Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM)**, where he completed the **Recital Artist Diploma**. Awarded the **BVOF|RIAM John Pollard Bursary**, he went on to pursue a **Master's in Music Performance** at the RIAM under the mentorship of his teacher Owen Gilhooly-Miles and vocal coach Dearbhla Collins, graduating with distinction in 2025. Recognised for his promise, he is the **inaugural RIAM Emerging Artist Fellow**, a role that affirms his place among the Academy's most exciting alumni.

Opera has always been central to Seán's musical identity. With a voice ideally suited to the lirico-leggero tenor repertoire, he brings clarity, elegance, and dramatic nuance to the stage. His international role debut came in Switzerland as 'Rodolphe' in *Guillaume Tell* (Rossini) in a co-production between Irish National Opera and **Nouvel Opéra Fribourg/Neue Oper Freiburg (NOF)**, and he has since performed a variety of roles including the 'Man with an Old Suitcase', 'Puppet No. 1', and 'Operetta Singer' in Dominic Argento's *Postcard from Morocco* (**RIAM Opera**), and 'Mopsa' in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at the **Korkyra Baroque Festival** on the island of Korčula, Croatia and the **Sligo Baroque Festival**. He has worked extensively with **Irish National Opera**, appearing in productions of *Guillaume Tell*, *Faust*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Der fliegende Holländer* and *Rigoletto*, and covered the role of 'Il Duca di Mantova' (The Duke of Mantua) in *Rigoletto*. In 2025, he returned to **Blackwater Valley Opera Festival** as 'Snout' in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, while also appearing in the festival's *Arias at Villierstown* and *Irish Writers Series: George Bernard Shaw* recitals. A firm believer in the accessibility of opera, Seán has brought his voice to **Electric Picnic**, the **Limerick Opera Festival**, and other community-centred initiatives aimed at demystifying opera for wider audiences.

Beyond the opera stage, Seán is a sought-after **concert and oratorio soloist**, known for his expressive style and lyrical tone. His repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Johannes-Passion*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and Haydn's *Seven Last Words*, with recent highlights including a performance with the Dublin Bach Singers, a recital at **Drogheda Classical Music Series** alongside Celine Byrne and David Munro, and appearances in the **Dublin Song Series** with Dearbhla Collins. He made his international recital debut at the **Franz Liszt Old Academy of Music, Budapest**, with his regular collaborative pianist partner, Ella Nagy, and appeared at the **Dublin International Chamber Music Festival** performing Brahms's *Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 52* with collaborative pianists Finghin and Dearbhla Collins and a distinguished vocal ensemble. He also featured in **RIAM ChamberFest 2025**, performing Chausson's *Poème de l'amour et de la mer, Op. 19* with pianist Rowel Friers.

Seán's rising profile has been marked by several important accolades and invitations. A memorable milestone came in May 2024, when he performed at the **State Dinner at Áras an Uachtaráin**, hosted by President Michael D. Higgins in honour of the President of Italy. Seán also proudly serves as Series Ambassador for the **Drogheda Classical Music Series**.

The 2025/26 season promises to be a landmark year. In addition to his appointment as the inaugural RIAM Emerging Artist Fellow, Seán has been named a recipient of the **Danone Young Outstanding Artist Award** at **Wexford Festival Opera** alongside his répétiteur colleague Frasier Hickland, where he also joins the **Wexford Factory** to debut as Conte di Libenskof in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* and to take part in the world premiere of *Urban Legends* by Andrew Synnott and Colm Tóibín. He also made his debut with **National Symphony Orchestra Ireland** in the role of El Remendado in Bizet's *Carmen* at the National Concert Hall, Dublin and begins work as an **Accademia dell'Opera Italiana Artist** where he continues to refine his artistry through elite training in Italian operatic style in Nardò, Puglia.

Seán looks forward to exploring new opportunities and collaborations as he continues to build his career on the international stage. Whether in opera, recital, or community settings, he is carving out a dynamic and thoughtful artistic path — rooted in craft, driven by curiosity, and committed to bringing powerful, imaginative, and emotive storytelling to audiences both at home in Ireland and abroad.

