



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)**, when he completed the Recital Artist Diploma, and upon being awarded the **BVOF | RIAM John Pollard Bursary**, pursued a Master's in Music Performance (Vocal Studies) at the RIAM, under the mentorship of his teacher Owen Gilhooly-Miles and vocal coach Dearbhla Collins.

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*, *The Flying Dutchman* 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. He was awarded the **Patricia Eberhart Aria Prize** at the Irené Sandford Award for his dazzling performance of "Ah! Mes amis" from *La Fille du Régiment*, and was a quarterfinalist in the **2024 Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition** in Latvia. 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**.

Looking ahead, the 2025/26 season promises to be a landmark year. Seán joins the **Wexford Factory at Wexford Festival Opera**, where he will make his role debut as 'Conte di Libenskoof' in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims*, and take part in the premiere of *Urban Legends*, a new opera trilogy by Andrew Synnott and Colm Tóibín. He also makes his debut with **National Symphony Orchestra Ireland**, singing 'El Remendado' in *Carmen* at the National Concert Hall. As an **Accademia dell'Opera Italiana 25/26 Artist**, he continues to refine his artistry through elite training in Italian operatic style in London.

Whether on stage, in recital, or in community spaces, Seán Tester is carving out a dynamic and thoughtful career — rooted in craft, driven by curiosity, and committed to bringing powerful, imaginative and emotive storytelling to audiences at home and abroad.

