

ADRIAN MANTU

MA (arts/performance, 1st class hon. CIT/Cork School of Music), MA (performance/teaching, 1st class hon./University of Music, Bucharest), BA (hons.), ATCL, LTCL, FTCL (Royal Academy of Music, London)

IRISH/ROMANIAN CELLIST

Cellist and founding member of

RTÉ CONTEMPO QUARTET (since 1995)

Ireland's National Television & Radio Broadcaster's Quartet in Residence (since 2014)

and

Galway Ensemble in Residence (since 2003)

Curator of OurTunes, Dublin MusicTown Festival (since 2014)

Artistic Director of ConTempo Partnership (since 2009)



*with the late Pope John Paul II at Castle Gandolfo

ADRIAN was born in Bucharest, Romania and studied at the George Enescu Music School and the "**George Enescu**" **University of Music Bucharest**, gaining his performing diploma and **MA in performing and teaching** with maximum points.

He continued his studies at the **Royal Academy of Music in London**, Reina Sofia School of Music in Madrid, Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Académie Européenne de Musique in Aix-en-Provence, Cork School of Music and **Banff Centre for the Arts Canada**, under the guidance of **Radu Albulescu** (from Menuhin School), Martin Lovett, **Stefan Popov** (from the Guildhall School of Music in London), **Zara Nelsova**, Antonio Lysy, Lawrence Lesser, Marin Cazacu, **Josef Calef** and members of the renowned **Alban Berg Quartet**, Amadeus Quartet, Emerson Quartet, Tokyo Quartet, Vellinger quartet, St Lawrence string quartet, **Hagen quartet**, Quartetto Italiano and Arditti quartet .

He has an **MA in Music performance** with first class honours from Cork School of Music.

This year he started a DMusPerf at Trinity/Riam exploring 100 years of String Quartet history in Ireland since the Rising.

Adrian has been the cellist in the **RTÉ ConTempo Quartet** since its foundation in **1995**. The group studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies in Aldeburgh, UK, Banff Centre for the Arts Canada, Reina Sofia Music School in Madrid and have taken part in numerous master classes under the guidance of distinguished musicians including Norbert Brainin, Siegmund Niessel and Martin Lovett from the legendary **Amadeus Quartet**, Gunther Pichler & Thomas Kakuska (**Alban Berg Quartet**), Rainer Schmidt (**Hagen quartet**), Piero Farulli (Quartetto Italiano), Hugh Maguire, Walter Levine and Milan Skampa.

On **cello**, Adrian has won **12 National competitions** in Romania, two International Prizes in cello

Competitions in Bucharest (Jeunness Musicales - 2nd prize) and in Sofia (where he won the Orpheus medal) and was awarded the Romanian Musical Critics' Union Award.

As a member of the RTÉ ConTempo quartet, **he has won a record of 14 International prizes** (including London String Quartet Competition, Wigmore Award, Berlin, Graz, Munich, Prague, Hamburg, Weimar and Rome).



*with Prince Charles in London

In 1999, Adrian and the ConTempo quartet were offered a **fellowship position at the Royal Academy of Music in London**, where they coached third level and post graduate students until 2003.

In 2003, following an International audition, The **ConTempo Quartet became the Ensemble in Residence in Galway**, on the West coast of Ireland. During the years that followed, they developed a summer school, a festival, a leaving certificate program for secondary Schools, an apprentice ensemble program and other such initiatives. As part of their schools program Adrian and ConTempo have worked with in excess of 15,000 students.

The aims of the Residency are to foster an interest and appreciation in music, particularly classical music, among the wider public in Galway and among the students and staff of educational institutions; to develop audiences for music among sections of the community often excluded - such as young people and those from disadvantaged communities; to enhance the international reputation of Galway as a global centre for artistic excellence and to further the widely held aspirations for the establishment of a Centre for Music Education and Performance in Galway. The internationally acclaimed ConTempo Quartet began their work as Galway's ensemble in residence 12 years ago and celebrates its 20th anniversary as a string quartet this year.

Since the beginning, ConTempo have made invaluable contributions to Galway City & county communities by sharing their talents through performances with thousands of audience members; by mentoring aspiring young musicians; by introducing classical music to young school children very often for the first time; through collaborative projects and by performing with a wide variety of talented international artists across all genres.

RTÉ RESIDENCY

In 2014, following a competitive european tender process, RTÉ has announced the internationally acclaimed **Contempo Quartet** as the new **RTÉ string quartet in residence**. Replacing the outgoing RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet, Contempo will provide chamber music services to RTÉ as the RTÉ Contempo Quartet for three years.

Speaking today Aodán Ó Dubhghaill, Interim Executive Director of RTÉ Orchestras, Quartet & Choirs, welcomed the announcement: *"In 2011 RTÉ reaffirmed its commitment to chamber music, as well as its commitment to the provision of chamber music services from Cork and Munster. At that time we signalled our intention to tender for services. That tender is now complete, following a*

lengthy process that considered a range of requirements. I would like to pay tribute to the Vanbrugh Quartet, who have played as the RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet for 27 years. Rightly acclaimed, they defined the standard for chamber music in Ireland and we wish them well in what will undoubtedly be their continued success.”

Mr Ó Dubhghaill welcomed the arrival of the RTÉ Contempo Quartet: *“With this appointment we open another exciting chapter for chamber music in Ireland. With an exceptional background in performance and education, the RTÉ Contempo Quartet will maintain the chamber music and string quartet presence in Cork while also opening up a new and welcome presence in for RTÉ’s musical presence in Galway.”*

The appointment sees RTÉ maintain its commitment to chamber music and the string quartet medium, in Cork and beyond. The RTÉ Contempo Quartet will seek to develop opportunities through a range of activities including concerts, broadcasts, recordings, educational and community workshops, multi-media, digital and social media initiatives at local and national levels.

CONCERTS

Adrian has toured the world extensively, performing at the **major International festivals** in Europe, Asia and North America both as a **soloist** and a **chamber music** player.

Examples include:

Concerts as **Soloist with Orchestras** in Germany, Italy, Romania, Austria, France, Canada, Bulgaria, UK and Ireland (where he has performed concertos by J.Ch.Bach, Ph.E. Bach, Boccherini, Vivaldi, Haydn, Beethoven, Brahms, Lalo, Saint-Saens, Schumann, Tschaikovsky, Dvorak, Elgar, Williams, Bernstein, Piazzolla and so forth).

Numerous **recitals** where he partnered with a **wide range of artists** (performing on piano, accordion, pan-pipes, guitar, lute, violin, viola, flute, clarinet, saxophone, percussion or singers, actors, writers, dancers, visual artists or trad, jazz, pop or world musicians) performing on either **classical, baroque or electric cello**.



*with President Michael D Higgins

As a chamber musician, Adrian has performed in over **1500 concerts, in 42 countries** around the world, including venues such as: **Wigmore Hall**, St Martin in the Fields, **Berliner Philharmonie**, **Theatre de Chatelet Paris**, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels, **Opera House in Tel Aviv**, Stockholm Concert Hall, Romanian Atheneum, **Carnegie Hall NY**, The Radio Hall Bucharest,

National Concert Hall Dublin, Waterfront Belfast, Geidai Hall in Tokyo.

He had the honor to perform in front of world-renowned personalities such as: the late **Pope John Paul II, Prince Charles, Michael D Higgins, Nelson Mandela**, presidents of Romania, **Hollywood** actors Angelica Heuston, Angela Lansbury, Martin Sheen, Merv Griffin, EU Ministers, **Seamus Heaney** and many others.

Collaborations with renowned **Irish musicians** including: Dr **John O'Connor**, Clóna Doris, Hugh Tinney, Finghin Collins, Barry Douglas, William Butt, Christopher Marwood, William Dowdall, Dermot Dunne, Vanbrugh quartet, David Brophy, James Cavanagh, Fergus Sheil, Julie Maisel, Concorde and Crash ensembles, ICO, RTÉ NSO and Concert orchestra, Cor na Nog.



*with DIT/RIAM colleagues after the performance of Kaija Saariaho's work Maa, in a multimedia project.

Collaborations with **International musicians**: **Emma Johnson**-clarinet, Peter Donohoe and Martin Roscoe-piano, Diemut Poppen-violin, Chen Zimbalista-percussion, Jerome Pernoo-cello, Leonard Elschenbroich-cello, Vellinger and Casals string quartets, members of Amadeus, Maggini, Endellion, Balanescu, Ebene and Enggegard quartets, Royal Philharmonic London, Philharmonie der Nationen, RIAS choir-Berlin, BBC singers-London.

Over the past 12 years, since moving to Ireland, Adrian has commissioned/**premiered over 60 works** by both young and well established **Irish composers**, including works by Ian Willson, Jane O'Leary, Gráinne Mulvey, Donnacha Dennehy, Jennifer Walsh, Eric Sweeney, Kevin O'Connell, Deirdre McKay, Rhona Clarke and John McLachlan.

Crossover projects



*performing Steve Reich's "different trains"
for pre-recorded tape, electric quartet & visuals

Collaborations with **traditional musicians**: Martin O'Connor, Frankie Gavin, Zoe Conway, Cathal Hayden, Bill Whelan.

Irish and UK tours with Chrysalis **Dance company**, Ireland and Henry Oguik Dance company, UK.

Collaborations with **Irish writers**: Seamus Heaney, Moya Cannon, Joan McBreen.

Other collaborations with **Irish Pop artists** include: Julie Feeney, Declan O'Rourke, Tommy Flemming, DJ Anthony.

Collaborations with **Irish actors** Barry McGovern "Game of thrones", Tara Lynne O'Neill "EastEnders", Caoilfhionn Dunne "Love/Hate", Caitriona Ni Mhurchu "Fair City", Bronagh Gallagher "The Commitments".

Film industry: Adrian has arranged the music for Lucian Pintilie's film "Trop Tard" (film selected for Cannes Festival) and has been collaborating with The National Theatre Company Bucharest performing/arranging/improvising music for many plays.

He recorded the music for **Steven Spielberg & Tom Hank's** "Band of Brothers" TV series. He co-arranged and performed music for the 1921 silent film "The Abyss".

Recordings

As a member of ConTempo quartet, Adrian has recorded for **Universal, Sony, Deutsche Schallplatten, Quartz, CMC** and Capstone labels.

A film about ConTempo quartet, "**ConTempo goes West**" was made by **Bob Queen, Irish film maker**, writer and photographer,

Appearances in the film "Deutschland, Deutschland", a co-production of the German and Austrian television channels, SAT 3 and ORF.

EU PROJECT

The Galway Music Residency, represented by Adrian, participated in a **major European initiative** designed to encourage the exchange of repertoire between countries and to develop audiences for new music. CMC with Crash Ensemble and The Galway Music Residency and the ensemble in residence, ConTempo Quartet were the participating Irish Ensembles in the ***New Music: New Audiences*** project.

For a period of two years, ***New Music: New Audiences*** involved 17 countries, 16 national music organisations and 31 ensembles and orchestras cooperating intensively across borders for the purposes of researching and developing new concert forms and new ways of disseminating contemporary music. The Irish organizations were supported by Culture Ireland as they took part in this large-scale European cultural project. During the first six month of 2013 this major initiative featured as part of **Ireland's EU Presidency Culture Programme**.

Over the course of the project, the **31 ensembles** formed 'working groups', performing the music of each other's countries and meeting (in London, Brussels, Dublin, Helsinki, Galway) to share experience and collaborate creatively on new ways to present concerts and engage with audiences. The result was a series of concerts across Europe, beginning in the spring of 2013.

Participating European ensembles included Athelas Sinfonietta (DK), Avanti! Chamber Orchestra (FI), Court Circuit (FR), ensemble recherche (D), Klangforum Wien (AUT) and London Sinfonietta (UK).

Participating ensembles provided a selection of works by composers from their countries, as well as sharing their experience of presenting new music in new settings. As a result, more than 100 contemporary works were circulated between European partners. The project created an increased exposure for the music of Irish composers across Europe, whilst also creating opportunities for Irish audiences to hear new European works.

New Music: New Audiences has arisen out of the ongoing search to develop and engage with new audiences in contemporary music, whether through the inclusion of other art forms or performance in non-traditional spaces, with producers reassessing the act of performance in the 21st century. The project aim was to strengthen the concert experience and to define new concert forms that are in tune with a contemporary audience. The 31 ensembles, which include many of Europe's most talented musicians, engaged in more than **50 concerts**, each prepared in close collaboration with other participants in the project. Though different in style and size, the

ensembles share a devotion to contemporary European art music, and a strong desire to engage a new audience for this music.

New Music: New Audiences was officially launched at a conference attended by all the participants on 24-25 October 2012 in Brussels during the World Music Days and concluded in October 2014.

Teaching experience



*chamber music classes at Termonfeckin

Adrian's **teaching experience** includes a fellowship teaching position at **The Royal Academy of Music in London** where, from 1999 to 2002 he and his colleagues from ConTempo Quartet taught cello/chamber music groups at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

This year **Royal Irish Academy of Music Dublin**, in partnership with RTÉ, started a String Quartet Project with the **RTÉ ConTempo Quartet**.

The RIAM is committed to developing chamber music across all ages and stages, because they believe that the ability to listen, play in tune and negotiate interpretation within a small group is a powerful skill for all musicians. For these reasons RIAM is delighted that the RTÉ Contempo Quartet will partner with them to give high level coaching and advice to selected RIAM junior quartets (for students aged 8-18 years old), starting this September.

Adrian's teaching experience includes also numerous master classes (held on regular basses) at the **University of Music Bucharest (1997, 1998, 2000, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2015)**, Icon Arts Sibiu (2006-2015), Brasov Music Academy (2000, 2007), Geidai Tokyo (2000, 2003, 2007), **Royal Irish Academy of Music Dublin (2003, 2005, 20013, 2015-), DIT (2003, 2007, 2011, 2014),**

UCC (2012, 2015),

Cork School of Music (2015),

University of Limerick (2014, 2015),

NUI Maynooth (2010),

Dundalk Institute of Technology (2011),

Ulster University Derry (2009, 2014),

Rome Summer Academy in Italy (2013-2015) and several others.

He was also invited to teach in many **Irish summer schools/courses**, including:

ConTempo Summer School (2005-2010),
Concorda (2006-2008),
Tullamore (2009-2015),
AIC (2010, 2011, 2012, 2014),
ICC (2014, 2015),
Termonfeckin (2007-2015),
West Cork Chamber Fest (2011),
Sligo (2009, 2015),
Aravon (2005),
Summer Music on the Shannon (2010-2015),
IAYO (2014, 2015),
TGMR's Academy (2015) and many others.

As part of the Galway Music Residency, Adrian and the other members of ConTempo run an early **"Apprentice" program (September/June)**, where they are coaching musicians from all over Ireland, including RIAM, DIT, Maynooth, Belfast and UL (2007-2015).

During the past ten years of his Residencies with both RTÉ & TGMR, Adrian has worked closely with **over 15.000 students (primary, secondary, undergraduate, postgraduate and adult students)**.

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*Icon Arts Academy, final concert

Many of **his students**, both cellists and chamber music students, have **won several awards**, including Freemason Young Musician of the Year (Iulian Pusca), Feis Ceoil (Gavin Brennan, Chatham Saxophone Quartets), TGMR's Rising Stars scheme (Alex Petcu) , are part of several national and International youth orchestras (Mahler Youth Orchestra, Aida Carmen Soanea, Romanian Youth Orchestra, Aleca Potinga), cellists in important orchestras ("George Enescu" National Orchestra & Radio Orchestra Bucharest, Ella Bokor) or were selected for MA in performing by well known Music Academies (George Enescu University of Music, Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome/Italy - Cosmin Banciu or Switzerland).

Orchestras

Before embarking on a solo/chamber music career, Adrian was the **principal cellist** of both "George Enescu National State Orchestra" in Bucharest, Romania and "Philharmonie der Nationen" Hamburg, Germany and was touring, as guest principal cellist, with orchestras such as Camerata, Wexford opera, Opera Theatre Company, Romanian Chamber Orchestra and others.

Artistic-directorship skills

Adrian's organisational, administrative, communication and artistic-directorship skills have helped him to succeed in the musical world.

As a result of his skillset, Adrian has been selected to take over some pivotal administrative roles such as Curator at the Dublin MusicTown Festival/CMC, Artistic Director of Galway Music Residency, Manager of ConTempo Partnership, Organizer of RTÉ ConTempo Quartet's artistic activities or representing Ireland at EU's project "NewMusic/NewAudiences".

Adrian is also RTÉ Quartet's public relations person, taking part in TV/Radio shows (BBC3, ORF, SAT3, TG4, RTÉ1, LyricFM, RadioOne, Galway Bay FM) and interviews (The Strad, Irish Times, Irish Independent, Connacht Tribune, Goldenplec).

Adrian is very positive, full of fun and open to new ideas, all based on his knowledge of music, history, literature, fine arts and philosophy.

Curator

This year, CMC presented a mini music festival for children on 18-19 April. Entitled OurTunes – A weekend in eight colours, the boutique festival for 5–10 year olds took place from 18-19 April in CMC as part of the Dublin MusicTown festival. The event, curated by cellist Adrian Mantu, Galway Ensemble-in-Residence, RTÉ ConTempo Quartet, was repeated four times across the weekend. Lasting three hours, the show featured 8 unique 15 minute performances of new music taking place in different locations in and around the Contemporary Music Centre's premises in 19 Fishamble Street.

Instrumentation included trumpet, saxophone, clarinet, cello, guitar, keyboard, flute, voice, violin and video performed by Masters students from the DIT Conservatory of Music and the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Galway Ensemble-in-Residence apprentice ensembles were also featured alongside professional musicians Adrian Mantu (cello), Andreea Banciu (viola) and Elizabeth Hilliard (voice).

Children attending were invited to watch out for the Pink Lady, Dark Sounds, Blue Brothers, Golden Sax, Green Shades, Grey Clouds, Royal Fanfare and Red Ribbons!

Adrian Mantu talks about the ideas behind the festival at:

<https://cmcireland.wordpress.com/2015/03/25/cmc-presents-a-mini-music-festival-for-children-on-18-19-april/>

Adrian/CMC's participation in MusicTown aims to encourage newcomers and enthusiasts alike to engage with the music of Irish composers and to open up the world of contemporary music to young listeners.

REVIEWS

"wonderful cellist" - The Times, UK

"Adrian is just great" - Norbert Brainin from the Amadeus Quartet

"outstanding contribution from Adrian Mantu on cello"
Irish Theatre Magazine

"..the romanian cellist Adrian Mantu is sensational..." - Aachenen Nachrichten

"the cellist Adrian Mantu commands, with an excellent self-control, a vivid sensitiveness, a musical imagination which is functionally exhibited" - Curentul

"..the baritone voice of the soloist cello came to light as a compact, round, expressive and shaded sound, Adrian Mantu proving a fluent and intelligent phrasing." - Actualitatea Muzicala



*RTÉ ConTempo Quartet, Galway Ensemble in residence

"At the end of this concert, I would like to offer my cordial thanks to the musicians of the Contempo Quartet, who with their sensitivity and skill have offered us a moment of deep aesthetic contemplation. The alternation of serene and lively, dramatic and nostalgic passages has been for all of us an opportunity for involvement and reflection. I wish the talented musicians a successful professional career and an even more satisfying human fulfilment." The Pope Giovanni Paolo II

"Polished and professional group ... The Mozart was given a delightfully skittish reading, full of exuberance and with a fine sense of ensemble ... real sensitivity ... exceptional performance" The Strad/ Wigmore Hall

" In the ConTempo's typical fashion, risks were taken, and unusual rewards achieved... the sense of something exceptional at work in the music was unmissable in this performance." The Irish Times

" ... Amazing technique and rhythmic homogeneity ...Very impressive way to approach Enescu's quartet, an extremely difficult work, belonging to the first class quartets of the 20th century ... ConTempo succeeding to demonstrate this with great intensity and fervour." Süddeutsche Zeitung

"Far and away the most outstanding performance was given by the Con Tempo Quartet, playing Beethoven's op. 132 ...well-balanced tone and firmly articulated rhythms ... everyone in the audience was convinced of the superiority of the Con Tempo ... there was no doubt that it was the

best in the finals." *The Times* (London International String Quartet Competition)

"The string playing was both intimately engaged and subtly but distinctly extrovert. Lively and intricately balanced, the ConTempo worked the gallery acoustic to best advantage, and their sound ranged from a full bodied richness to a searing, almost period-instrument quality ... lucky Galway" *The Irish Times*

"The combination of English clarinettist Emma Johnson and the Galway-based Romanian ConTempo Quartet meant a truly musical gala at Castletown House on Saturday...The ConTempo Quartet were her magnificent partners. How fortunate for Galway to have such a fabulous foursome as its first 'Ensemble-in-Residence'!!"

IRISH INDEPENDENT

"Debussy's String Quartet ...Masterfully played by the Romanian ConTempo Quartet... The grand finale was Carnival of the Animals by Saint-Saens ... deliciously played in its original chamber version by Peter Donohoe, Martin Roscoe, the ConTempos plus Emma Johnson (clarinet), Laura Jellicoe (flute), Chris West (double bass) and John Abendstern (percussion), its inclusion was a joyous, colourful and delicious irony." *Yorkshire Post/The French Impressions, International Fest Leeds*

"It was a sort of homecoming for composer/singer/songwriter Julie Feeney, playing in the Galway Arts Festival in her home county, and teaming up with Galway's resident ensemble ConTempo for a memorable concert. . .the combination of instruments and voice was inspiring." *The Irish Times*

"The marriage of string quartet and accordion was a happy one, first delicately and subtly ... [then] by turns ethereal and frenzied, with the high, relentless sound of the accordion meeting the lower cello and building to a wild energy." *The Irish Times*

"A group set on pushing the interpretative envelope ... performance full of imaginative daring... ConTempo quartet conveyed..the strong sense of a quartet on form and in its prime." *The Irish Times*

" ... a professional string quartet ... well-balanced ... very good technique ... their articulation and phrase are extremely clear." *Münchener Merkur*

" ... exceptional concert performed by ConTempo Quartet formed by extremely gifted young musicians, who were rewarded with long stormy applause ... the audience was subjugated by their sensitivity and virtuosity." *Wildungen Landes Zeitung*

"I have not heard for a long time even at professional well-established ensembles such a performance, that is at the same time impetuous and well-balanced, tender and rigorous, ingenuous and vivid." *Actualitatea Muzicala*

" ... the four musicians have the sense of ensemble, as well as the instrumental and interpretative inspiration that animates and guides them towards an exquisitely special encounter with the music." *La Sicilia*

"I am happy to predict an excellent career for this fine ensemble" *Martin Lovett (Amadeus Quartet)*

ConTempo at Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast

" The concert is being given by the Rumanian ConTempo Quartet, which has been resident

ensemble in Galway since 2003. Its style is emotional, unbounded and vibrant – a thousand miles distant from the stuffy image so unfortunately and often so mistakenly associated with chamber musicians.

Opening with George Crumb's Black Angels quartet proves that there is to be no pussyfooting in this concert – no soft toned easing into the more 'difficult' music the audience is here to sample.

The ConTempo hold back nothing and the performance is exhilarating...I find a real immediacy in the bright, exaggerated extroversion of the ConTempo Quartet's music making which is as unusual and as refreshing as it is pleasurable."

By Philip Hammond/ Culture NorthernIreland.org

CONTACT INFO

Adrian Mantu

Co-Artistic Director ConTempo Partnership

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Ireland's National Television & Radio Broadcaster's Quartet in Residence
and

Galway-Ensemble-in-Residence

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