



Hannah O'Brien announced as 2023 Danone Young Outstanding Female Artist as part of the Wexford Festival Opera sponsorship.

Monday 18 September: Danone Ireland today announced soprano Hannah O'Brien as the recipient of the 2023 Danone Young Outstanding Female Artist award. The award, which is in its third year, is part of the company's long-term partnership with the Wexford Festival Opera which began in 2010.

Danone introduced the Young Outstanding Female Artist award in 2021 to further strengthen the company's long-standing corporate sponsorship of the Wexford Festival Opera. The award is given to a young female artist performing at the Wexford Festival Opera to support their career endeavours.

The award fits in perfectly with the Festival's focus this year, telling the stories of strong women and female leaders. Likewise, it amplifies Danone's commitment to promote equality and support female leadership in all areas of its business.

The partnership also sees Danone support a main stage production each year. This year, Danone is supporting *La Ciociara*, which will be directed by the Festival's Artistic Director, Rosetta Cucchi.

Artistic Director of Wexford Festival Opera, Rosetta Cucchi, said: *"We are delighted to announce Hannah O'Brien as the Danone Young Outstanding Female Artist Award recipient this year. Hannah is a part of the current Wexford Factory, our academy for young Irish and Irish based singers, and is a rising star on the opera scene. This bursary will further support her in the beginning of her career journey. Many very successful opera careers have started in Wexford, and with the support of Danone we are happy to carry on this tradition through this bursary and their sponsorship of our main stage opera, La Ciociara."*

Danone employs over 700 people in Ireland, with over 350 people based at its factory just outside Wexford Town, many of whom actively support and volunteer with the Festival each year. Speaking about the sponsorship, Danone Supply Point Director in Wexford, Jean-Francois Cournil, said: *"We would like to congratulate Hannah as the well-deserved recipient of the Danone Young Outstanding Female Artist Award and wish her every success in her performances at this year's Festival and her future career. This year marks 14 years of Danone's sponsorship of the Wexford Festival Opera, a partnership that we are particularly proud of. Each year, the Festival unites the people of Wexford in a celebration of community and culture. We look forward to continuing our proud tradition of championing people and their talents through our partnership with the Wexford Festival Opera."*

Hannah is a member of the *Wexford Factory*, the Festival's academy for young Irish and Irish based artists. She will perform the role of Tatiana in *L'Aube Rouge*, at this year's Festival.



Speaking of the award, Hannah said *"I am thrilled and incredibly grateful to Danone and the Wexford Festival to be awarded the 2023 Award for Young Outstanding Female Artist. The Wexford Factory and Festival have been instrumental in my development as a singer and an artist, and this bursary will help me so much to continue building my career. The opportunity to get to work with such a talented group of colleagues, mentors and artists is an honour only made possible with the support of sponsors like Danone."*

ENDS

About Wexford Festival Opera 2023:

WFO 2023 promises a packed programme comprising of three mainstage opera rarities, two pocket operas, the Wexford Factory opera, 11 lunchtime recitals, an immersive community opera - a first for WFO, a choral recital with New Dublin Voices, the annual gala concert of festival favourites, film screenings, an impossible interview, the Dr Tom Walsh lecture given by Lara Marlowe, *From Innocent Victims to Daring Warriors; Real-life Stories of Women in War*, a myriad of joyous free pop-up events all around the town and an exuberant opening night.





The programme for the 72nd festival centres around the theme of ***Women and War***, with each chosen work highlighting a different aspect of the struggles women face; in conflict, fighting prejudice and in making their voices heard.

The three mainstage operas are:

- A modern premiere of ***Zoraida di Granata*** by G. Donizetti 1822 in co production with the Donizetti Festival in Bergamo
- French rarity ***L'Aube rouge*** by Camille Erlanger 1911
- ***La Ciociara*** 2015, in a new orchestration for WFO by original composer Marco Tutino
- The return of the Wexford Factory - including performances of ***L'italiana in Algeri***
- Pocket Operas/ Opera Beag: ***La fille du régiment*** by Gaetano Donizetti 1840 and ***Suor Angelica*** by Giacomo Puccini 1918

Wexford Festival Opera has a truly distinctive character. The festival's founders set Wexford apart from the beginning with a bold and unique vision: to rediscover long-neglected works, staging revivals of the highest artistic quality. It is a vision to which the Festival has held fast for more than 70 years and that continues to give Wexford Festival Opera its distinctive character. Establishing its reputation for high-quality productions that, every year, bring thousands of opera-lovers flocking to Wexford from all over the world tempts audiences to Wexford in pursuit of the next big discovery, whether that be an opera, a singer, conductor, director or Wexford town itself. A festival of discovery and celebration, join us on a journey to the ultimate Wexford Festival Opera experience.



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About Hannah O'Brien

Irish soprano Hannah O'Brien currently studies with Elizabeth Ritchie, having recently completed a Postgraduate Diploma at the Royal Northern College of Music. She previously studied at The Royal Irish Academy of Music. This year, Hannah will sing Pamina (The Magic Flute by Mozart) for Clonter Opera and is excited for her second season as a Wexford Factory Artist and to perform as Elvira (L'italiana in Algeri by Rossini), Nella (Gianni Schicchi by Puccini), and Tatiana (L'Aube rouge by Camille Erlanger). In May, Hannah gave a recital for the Italian Institute of Culture, Dublin in conjunction with WFO.

Previous operatic roles include Mary Crawford (Mansfield Park by Dove), Griselda (Cinderella by Deutscher), Polly in Kevin O'Connell's Dreamcatcher (film adaptation), Il Destino/Linfea (La Calisto by Cavalli), and Nance Farrell (Banished by Stephen McNeff). In competition success, Hannah recently reached the final rounds of the International Hans

Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition was awarded the Song Prize at the Glenarm Festival of Voice 2022, and placed 2nd in the Dramatic Cup and Lieder Prize at ESB Feis Ceoil.

About Danone Ireland

Danone is a leading health-focused food and beverage company dedicated to bringing health through food to as many people as possible. With manufacturing supply points in Macroom, Co. Cork and Rocklands, Wexford, Danone employs more than 740 people in Ireland. Danone's portfolio of market-leading food and drink products supports the health of millions of consumers and patients throughout all stages of their lives, and includes leading brands such as Actimel, Activia, Alpro, evian and Volvic. Danone is also a leading provider of specialised and early-life nutrition products and services through its Nutricia, Aptamil and Cow&Gate brands. In the UK and Ireland, more than five million people are eating or drinking one of Danone's products every day. Danone is one of the largest B Corps in the UK & Ireland. For more information, please visit www.danone.ie