



Michael Collins
Clarinet / Conductor

“Brilliant playing in every sense.” Classic FM

Contact
Email

Costa Peristianis
costa@ikonarts.com

ikon|arts
management

Ikon Arts Management Ltd
Unit 12 The Stableyard
+44 (0)20 7354 9199
info@ikonarts.com
www.ikonarts.com

Michael Collins is one of the most complete musicians of his generation. With a continuing, distinguished career as a soloist, he has in recent years also become highly regarded as a conductor. From 2010 – 2018 was the Principal Conductor of the City of London Sinfonia and Artistic Director of London Mozart Players from 2021-2023. Recent guest conducting and play-directing highlights have included engagements with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Zurich Chamber Orchestra.

Recent highlights include a return to the Philharmonia Orchestra, performances worldwide with orchestras including Minnesota Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, the Rheinische Philharmonie, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra and Kuopio Symphony Orchestra and tours in South Africa, Japan, and Mexico (with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional). 2025 will feature an Australian tour including performances with the Australian String Quartet at UKARIA, the Australian Chamber Festival of Music, and a play-direct performance with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

In January 2021, Michael gave the debut performance and became artistic director of Wigmore Hall’s newest Associate Ensemble, the Wigmore Soloists. Put together by Wigmore Hall’s John Gilhooly, Michael Collins, and violinist Isabelle van Keulen, the Wigmore Soloists sees leading international instrumentalists coming together to perform a wide range of chamber music repertoire from duets to works for up to 13 musicians. The ensemble has released five albums with BIS Records reaching critical acclaim in BBC Music Magazine, Gramophone Magazine, and has won two Diapason d’Or awards. January 2025 will see the ensemble’s debut performance at the Royal Concertgebouw.

Michael Collins has been committed to expanding the repertoire of the clarinet for many years. He has given premières of works such as John Adams’ Gnarly Buttons, Elliott Carter’s Clarinet Concerto – for which he won a Gramophone award for his recording on Deutsche Grammophon – and Brett Dean’s Ariel’s Music and Turnage’s Riffs and Refrains, which was commissioned by the Hallé Orchestra. Collins has gone on to perform Turnage’s work with the Residentie Orkest, Royal Flanders and Helsinki Philharmonics, as well as the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Collins has received the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Instrumentalist of the Year Award in 2007 in recognition of his pivotal role in premiering repertoire by some of today’s most highly regarded composers. His next commission includes the world and Australian premiere of Sally Beamish’s upcoming clarinet concerto.

In great demand as a chamber musician, Collins performs regularly with the Borodin, Heath, and Belcea quartets, Andrés Schiff, Martha Argerich, Stephen Hough, Mikhail Pletnev, Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis. His ensemble, London Winds, celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2018 and the group maintains a busy diary with high calibre engagements such as the BBC Proms, Aldeburgh Festival, Edinburgh Festival, City of London Festival, Cheltenham International Festival and Bath Mozartfest. During the 2019-20 season he was an Artist in Residence at the Wigmore Hall which included concerts with Stephen Hough, the Vienna Piano Trio, Leonard Elschenbroich, Michael McHale and the Borodin Quartet.

Michael Collins is one of the world’s most recorded clarinetists having covered an extraordinarily wide range of solo repertoire including releases on Chandos, Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, EMI, Sony, Signum Classics, and

BIS. Recent releases include the Mozart Clarinet Quintet and Concerto and Birchall Clarinet Concerto, performed with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Wigmore Soloists, which received a five star review from BBC Music Magazine. Prior to this, he released a disc of Brahms Sonatas with Stephen Hough, and in July 2020, released a disc featuring Vaughan Williams' Symphony No. 5 and Finzi's Concerto for Clarinet and Strings with the Philharmonia Orchestra, directed by Michael. This disc received multiple five star reviews in Gramophone and BBC Music Magazine alongside rave reviews on BBC Radio 3 and an exclusive interview in Presto Magazine. Other recent releases include a disc of Crusell Clarinet Concertos with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, which was Gramophone Magazine's 'Recording of the Month' in June 2018 and was nominated for BBC Music Magazine Award; and a disc of British Clarinet Concertos with the BBC Symphony Orchestra which features Collins as soloist and conductor. In 2017 he was awarded a Grammy for his disc 'Shakespeare Songs' with Ian Bostridge and Antonio Pappano. 2024 features the BIS release of 'Mozart Vol 1' with Michael conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra which will be paired with a published interview in Gramophone magazine's 'The Musician and the Score'. In September 2024, Michael also released a new disc with BIS of British Music for Clarinet and Piano, with pianist Michael McHale.

In the Queen's Birthday Honours of 2015, Michael Collins was awarded an MBE for his services to music. Michael also celebrated his 60th Birthday in 2022 and gave commemorative concerts at Wigmore Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall with the London Mozart Players. He plays on Yamaha clarinets.

November 2024 Please do not use this biography if it is more than six months old.