

# GWENDOLYN MASIN

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*Biography / Short Version (2024/25)*

*"A daring and exciting performer who ventures courageously into unknown territory with relish."*

– The Irish Times

Gwendolyn Masin is one of today's significant concert violinists and an innovator in classical music. She performs internationally as a soloist, and in collaboration with musicians, artists, and orchestras. Tours and live recordings include concertos and virtuoso repertoire with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the Hungarian National Philharmonic, Hungarian Chamber Orchestra, Slovak State Philharmonic, Savannah and Georgia Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Bernese Symphony Orchestra. Concerts take her all over Europe and the United States, as well as Asia, South Africa, and the Middle East.

Gwendolyn is a recording artist for Naxos and Orchid Classics. Her albums include solo appearances with and without orchestra, as well as chamber music. Her discography covers virtuoso, classical, and romantic repertoire including neglected works by Irene Wieniawska or Zara Levina and much-loved favourites such as Leonard Bernstein's "West Side Story". The latter was voted amongst the top five releases of 2020 by Art Muse London.

As a commissioner for contemporary music, Gwendolyn has premiered works by, amongst others, Antoine Auberson, Raymond Deane, Thorsten Encke, Thomas Fortmann, Ákos Hoffman, Don Li, Urs Peter Schneider, Daniel Schnyder, Eric Sweeney, Dobrinka Tabakova, Martijn Voorvelt, and John Buckley, the latter of whom dedicated his first violin concerto to her.

Gwendolyn is descendant of a lineage of classically-trained musicians from Central Europe. Early experience with teaching sparked an holistic interest in communication through the art of music. This has led to myriad expressions of how she presents music. Violin in hand, she has been a keynote speaker at platforms as diverse as international conferences of the European String Teachers Association, TEDxBern, TU Dublin's Conservatory of Music and Drama, the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Conservatório de Música da Metropolitana Lisbon, Swiss Fundraising, a string of colleges in North America including Princeton University, Berklee College of Music, Georgia Southern University Armstrong Campus and the Faculty of Music of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) as well as major institutes in South Korea, Hong Kong, and Israel.

Gwendolyn is founding artistic director of GAIA Music Festival, that held its first edition in Stuttgart in 2006. The festival takes place annually in Switzerland since 2009, recognised as one of the country's most important. She established the multidisciplinary series, In Search of Lost Time in 2004 which has taken place in numerous cities in major halls in Ireland as well as in Berne, Switzerland. Notable artistic partnerships include her own series for Casino Bern, Cocktail für die Musen, for which Gwendolyn created elaborate, one-off productions involving classical music and other music genres and art disciplines from 2018 to 2023. Gwendolyn is artistic director of the International Chamber Music Series, and artistic director and faculty member of the International Master Course (NCH IMC) at Dublin's National Concert Hall. Faculty members of the NCH IMC summer festival academy have included Mihaela Martin, Frans Helmerson, Lars Anders Tomter, Gary Hoffman, Kim Kashkashian, Gilles Apap, Adrian Brendel and Maximilian Hornung.

Gwendolyn is an educator, musicologist and author. In 2009, the award-winning, Michaela's Music House, The Magic of the Violin, was published. At the time of printing, it marked her as the youngest female violinist to have penned her own method. Michaela's Music House includes her own studies and compositions and is available in English and German as part of the ESTA Edition collection available via Müller & Schade.

Gwendolyn's articles have been published in *The Strad Magazine* and other trade journals. From 2013 to 2020, Gwendolyn was professor and researcher of violin studies at the Haute École de Musique de Genève, Switzerland.

In 2020, as a response to COVID-19, Gwendolyn brought her in-person retreat, *The Exhale*, online. *The Exhale* provides professional courses and holistic masterclasses to musicians, practitioners, and artists from across the globe. During its two-year online presence, it employed a team of 90 artists, and created more than 1,000 hours of classes, attracting more than 2,000 participants.

Gwendolyn began an arts association called "Bridge Club" in 2021. Patrons of the club enjoy salons and boutique events several times a year. The club's intention is to democratise the delivery of music and the arts.

Since 2022, Gwendolyn is on the executive board of the Music Instrument Fund of Ireland, which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. As of 2024, Gwendolyn is a member of the Cultural Commission of the City of Berne.

The 2024/2025 season sees Gwendolyn premiering and touring "The Journey". She conceptualised, developed, and produced the stage production with writer Lukas Bärfuss, who plays his first acting role in it. Featuring her ORIGIN Ensemble, "The Journey" will play twelve times in Switzerland and Liechtenstein during the course of the season. Further performances include solo and guest concert master appearances with *Animae Musicae Chamber Orchestra*; recitals with Finghin Collins in Ireland; and numerous solo performances and chamber music concerts throughout Europe.

Gwendolyn holds degrees with highest honours from the Royal Schools of Music in London, England; the Hochschule der Künste in Berne, Switzerland; the Musikhochschule in Lübeck, Germany, and a PhD from Trinity College, Ireland. Her teachers include her parents, Herman Krebbers, Igor Ozim, Ana Chumachenco, Zakhar Bron and Shmuel Ashkenasi. She is the first Licensed Body Mapping Educator (Association for Body Mapping Education) in Switzerland. The violinist has Dutch, Hungarian, Czech, Irish, South African, and Swiss background, and speaks five languages.

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