

Richard Sweeney : lute

Richard was born in Dublin in 1978 into a musical family. In 1985 he began playing the cello and 3 years later received a guitar under the Christmas tree.

It was during his studies as a guitarist that Richard discovered the lute. He was instantly drawn to the instrument, its repertoire and to the opportunities it presented for social music-making. He began studying with Nigel North in 1998 and in 2001 moved to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music with the Elizabeth Kenny.

Richard has played with many renowned ensembles including; The Kings Consort, Early Opera Company, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Academy of Ancient Music, English Concert, I Fagiolini, Les Talens Lyriques, Concerto Palatino, Irish Baroque Orchestra and Sonnerie. He has been described by The Irish Times as '*no mean master of his instrument*'.

Richard has researched extensively historical performance techniques and is unique in his approach to *really* historical continuo realisations on the lute and related instruments. He lives close to the sea in Malmö in the south of Sweden.

Richard is the recipient of the Arts Council of Ireland Bursary Award for 2009 / 2010.