

## Council for International Teaching and Research

### GLOBAL SCHOLARS



#### **2012-13 Princeton Global Scholar Donnacha Dennehy**

Donnacha Dennehy, an Irish composer and lecturer at Trinity College, Dublin, composes exuberantly cross-cultural music that interweaves Irish folk music with contemporary urban sound. His work incorporates such iconic Irish elements as the poems of William Butler Yeats and the ornamented unaccompanied singing known as *sean nós*. He describes his approach to composing as a fruitful “internal collision” between the constraints of one specific musical tradition and the manifold global choices and influences of the Internet age. His music has been described as a “love affair with the anatomy of sound” and has established him as one of the foremost Irish composers of his generation.

Dennehy is also the longtime artistic director of Crash Ensemble, the innovative Irish music group that he founded in 1997. The group’s superb playing and adventurous programming has garnered it an international following, and it tours regularly in Europe, Canada, and the U.S.

Among Dennehy’s recent commissions are major works for the San Francisco-based Kronos Quartet, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the New York-based chamber orchestra Alarm Will Sound, and American soprano Dawn Upshaw. He won international acclaim for his most recent full-length CD, released with Nonesuch Records in 2011, which featured Crash Ensemble, Dawn Upshaw, and the Irish singer Iarla Ó Lionáird. He has collaborated with musicians, artists, and choreographers in Europe and the U.S. and his compositions have been commissioned by noted performers and featured in festivals worldwide.

At Trinity College, Dennehy teaches music composition, music technology, instrumentation, text setting, and aesthetics. He supervises student composers at all levels from undergraduates to PhD candidates, and today a number of strong young composers owe their promising careers to his teaching and mentorship.

As a Princeton Global Scholar in the Department of Music, Dennehy teaches graduate seminars and an undergraduate composition workshop, organizes panels with students and invited collaborators, and performs his own work. He also brings Princeton faculty and students to Trinity and organizes performances of their work in Ireland, including offering Princeton graduate students an unprecedented opportunity to work directly with Crash Ensemble and compose a major work to be premiered by these world-class musicians. In forging these transatlantic connections, Dennehy is creating an enduring legacy — an exciting new musical exchange between Princeton and Ireland that will benefit students and faculty for many years to come.