



Variations

School and prison concerts
in Spring - Summer 2021

Pianist Clare Hammond will release a disc of 20th and 21st-century variations for BIS Records on the 5 March 2021. She has planned a series of accompanying recitals in 8 primary schools, 6 adult prisons and 1 youth prison across Gloucestershire, Bristol, Warwickshire and Wiltshire to take place in June - December 2021.

The school concerts will take place at 8 primary schools across Gloucestershire with limited music provision that serve underprivileged areas, while the prison concerts will be at HMP Eastwood Park (in collaboration with charity 'Changing Tunes'), HMP Erlestoke, HMP Ashfield, HMP Onley, HMP Rye Hill, HMP Leyhill and the Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre (for young people aged 12-18).

Concerts will be presented in an interactive format, tailored to the experience and interests of the audience, and each will feature variations. Clare will use Mozart's variations on 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' as a launchpad before performing excerpts from Szymanowski's Variations on a Polish Theme, Op. 10, W. G. Still's 'Phantom Chapel' from The Bells, variations by Hindemith and Gubaidulina's Chaconne. Clare will engage the audience throughout with spoken introductions and questions, and each concert will end with a Q&A.

Through extensive work in prisons and schools, Clare has developed ways of framing music that inform, enthuse and excite audiences, regardless of age or level of musical experience. Through this project, she hopes to use music to inspire, bring people together, and (in a prison context) as an agent of change. The aim of these recitals is to introduce listeners to a range of musical styles and new ways of listening, while providing a 'hook' to latch onto, as they listen for the return of the theme, particular sonorities or textures.

Analytical engagement with music may seem esoteric, yet Clare has found prison and school audiences relish the opportunity to respond to a challenge. It fosters confidence and encourages them to engage more fully in other areas, even to pursue self-directed study. Last year, Clare tried a similar programme out in a prison and was surprised by the delight listeners showed on recognising the return of a theme, and the sense of social cohesion that emerged as they grappled with new concepts together. Their sense of achievement and desire to learn more was striking.

Thanks to Covid, there has been little to no cultural provision in prisons and schools for months, and prisoners have been particularly isolated as visitor numbers are so reduced. Clare will travel with her electronic piano and will perform twice at each institution, if necessary, so that as many people as possible can hear the concerts in a socially-distanced setting. This is a safe way to bring music back to these environments, restore a sense of normality and expand audiences' horizons.

More information at:

www.clarehammond.com/variations



Clare Hammond, pianist

Acclaimed as a pianist of "amazing power and panache" (The Telegraph), Clare Hammond is recognised for the virtuosity and authority of her performances and has developed a "reputation for brilliantly imaginative concert programmes" (BBC Music Magazine). In 2016, she won the Royal Philharmonic Society's 'Young Artist Award' in recognition of outstanding achievement and in 2020 she was engaged to perform at the International Piano Series (Southbank Centre) and the Aldeburgh Festival.

In recent seasons, Clare has performed Hesketh with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (Vasily Petrenko), Panufnik with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra (Jacek Kaspszyk), Roxburgh with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Michael Seal), and Connesson with the Philharmonia (Jamie Phillips). In 2019, she gave the world premiere of Uncoiling The River by Kenneth Hesketh with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales (Martyn Brabbins) and released the Complete Keyboard Works of Myslivecek with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra (Nicholas McGegan) for BIS Records. She was engaged to perform with the Britten Sinfonia (Ryan Wigglesworth), Sinfonia Varsovia (Jacek Kaspszyk) and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Christoph Altstaedt) in 2020 and performs Rachmaninov with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Dalia Stasevska) in 2021.

Community engagement forms an increasingly important part of Clare's work. In 2017, she set up a partnership with Gloucestershire Music to give recitals in local schools and, since then, has performed to over 5,000 schoolchildren. She frequently gives children's concerts and masterclasses at festivals in the UK and France, and runs an ongoing series of recitals at prisons.

www.clarehammond.com

VARIATIONS

- Karol Szymanowski** Variations on a Polish Theme, Op. 10 (1904, 19')
- Helmut Lachenmann** 5 Variations on a Theme of Franz Schubert (1956, 7')
- Harrison Birtwistle** Variations from the Golden Mountain (2014, 8')
- John Adams** I Still Play (2017, 5')
- Aaron Copland** Piano Variations (1930, 12')
- Paul Hindemith** Variations (1936, 7')
- Sofia Gubaidulina** Chaconne (1963, 9')

with pianist **Clare Hammond**

for **BIS Records**

released internationally **5 March 2021**



With the generous support of:

Arts Council England

John S Cohen Foundation

The Fidelio Charitable Trust

The Golsoncott Foundation

The Scops Arts Trust

The Stradivari Trust

Penny Wright and Andrew Neubauer



Supported using public funding by
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