

CLARE HAMMOND

piano

"... *unfaltering bravura and conviction*"
Gramophone Magazine UK

"... *this array of wizardry is not for the faint hearted*"
BBC Music Magazine



PRESS RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

Pianist Clare Hammond releases a disc of 20th and 21st-century variations

Prison and school variations project also running in the summer

"a star interpreter of contemporary music", Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer*

On **5 March 2021**, Clare Hammond releases her fifth disc for BIS Records with an adventurous programme of twentieth and twenty-first-century variations for piano. From the monumental and imposing 'Chaconne' by Gubaidulina, to the tender grief of Hindemith's variations, or Copland's bold and uncompromising proclamation, this is an imaginative disc that presents a **fresh perspective** on the genre.

The programme opens with Szymanowski's 'Variations on a Polish Theme', a virtuosic and nostalgic outpouring that contrasts strikingly with the wit and irreverence of Lachenmann's set. Birtwistle's mercurial elegy is the polar opposite of its contemporary, a lyrical waltz by Adams, while Copland's gargantuan variations anchor the second half of the disc. Hindemith's set takes us to the very core of loss and consolation before we end with a dramatic *tour de force* by Gubaidulina.

From late spring / summer onwards, Clare will take this programme into prisons and schools across the South-West. Using Mozart's variations on 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' as a starting point, music by Szymanowski, Hindemith and Gubaidulina will be introduced to audiences in an interactive and engaging format that fosters curiosity and confidence.

This disc spotlights composers who, with dazzling ambition, expand our perception of what is possible. Clare Hammond says that "when preparing the repertoire, I was continually surprised by how an ostensibly limited form could stimulate such astonishing creativity. The drama, flair and, conversely, pathos of this music is exhilarating. It really does span the gamut of human emotion and experience".

Watch the trailer at: <https://youtu.be/kGcWloDAz4Q>

For further information, press CDs, downloads, photos and interview opportunities, please contact:
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Notes to Editors

A dedicated press site for the disc with a pdf of the press release, trailer, press photos, and audio demos can be found at <http://clarehammond.com/variations>.

Disc supported by Arts Council England, The John S Cohen Foundation, Fidelio Charitable Trust, Golsoncott Foundation and Stradivari Trust.



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Biography

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 with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (Vasily Petrenko), Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra (Jacek Kaspszyk), BBC Symphony Orchestra (Michael Seal), BBC National Orchestra of Wales (Martyn Brabbins) and the Philharmonia (Jamie Phillips). She was engaged to perform with the Britten Sinfonia (Ryan Wigglesworth), Sinfonia Varsovia (Jacek Kaspszyk) and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Christoph Altstaedt) in 2020 and appears with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Dalia Stasevska) in 2021.

Clare’s discs for BIS have been widely praised with the *Observer* describing her as a “star interpreter of contemporary music” and *The Times* commending her “deliciously unfussy poise and elegance”. Her discography includes world premiere recordings of over twenty works.

Clare obtained a double first in music at Cambridge University and undertook postgraduate study with Ronan O’Hora at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

BIS Records, BIS 2493 Release date: 5 March 2021 Total playing time: 72 minutes Distributed in the UK by Naxos Music UK. More information online at: http://www.clarehammond.com/ https://bis.se/	Variations Karol Szymanowski – <i>Variations on a Polish Theme</i> , Op. 10 (1904) Helmut Lachenmann – <i>5 Variations on a Theme of Franz Schubert</i> (1956) Harrison Birtwistle – <i>Variations from the Golden Mountain</i> (2014) John Adams – <i>I Still Play</i> (2017) Aaron Copland – <i>Piano Variations</i> (1930) Paul Hindemith – <i>Variations</i> (1936) Sofia Gubaidulina – <i>Chaconne</i> (1963)
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