



Press release: Monday 17 February 2020

In the year of Beethoven's 250th anniversary, and for the first time in Nottingham, all 32 of his piano sonatas will be performed in 10 concerts over four days

Featuring a line-up of leading international artists, the Complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas will be performed at the Royal Concert Hall and Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts in Nottingham, alongside a series of illustrative talks, discussions and fringe performances.

Beethoven 250: The Complete Piano Sonatas
Thursday 14 – Sunday 17 May 2020

"Tones sound, and roar and storm about me until I have set them down in notes" – Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven's thirty-two piano sonatas represent arguably the most significant single corpus of work for piano in the repertoire, and demonstrate his development as an artist from the early Classical works inspired by Haydn and Mozart to the ferociously demanding 'Hammerklavier' Sonata of 1818 and the enigmatic and exploratory final three sonatas of 1820-1822. Remarkably, many of his most important solo piano works were written as he struggled with irreversible and profound hearing loss.

In May, to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth, all thirty-two of his piano sonatas will be performed in ten concerts over four days, at the Royal Concert Hall Nottingham and Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts.

Series curator, Emmanuel Despax, said, *"I am thrilled and honoured to be curating and performing in this series. Going on this wonderful journey through the 32 piano sonatas, is like glimpsing through a window, deep into the mind of one of the greatest composers that ever lived. I think that one of the main reasons why this music is still so powerful today and resonates within us on a universal level, is because of its inherent sense of struggle, and fighting to try to overcome that struggle. Beethoven's music taps into our common humanity and unites us, in a way that few other composers did."*

Neil Bennison, Music Programme Manager at the Theatre Royal & Royal Concert Hall said, *"Beethoven rewrote the rule book for successive generations of musicians and his works for solo piano reflected not only his Romantic, defiant impulse, but also his supreme artistry as a performer. His piano sonatas continue to ask searching questions for performers and audiences alike, and encompass a uniquely enthralling musical journey. It's a huge thrill, then, to have the*

opportunity to present them all in a landmark series that is built on the strengths of two of the city's leading music venues."

Catherine Hocking, Head of Music Programmes at Lakeside Arts, added, "*Lakeside Arts, University of Nottingham is proud to be a partner and co-producer of what will be an extraordinarily rich experience for audiences and performers alike. Presenting all of Beethoven's sonatas as a marathon event over four intensive days in two venues is the kind of exhilarating challenge that the city of Nottingham and its Universities thrive on, in the knowledge that the resulting Festival will truly be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Alongside the main concert programme we have devised a stimulating Fringe programme which features academic researchers and performers who will enthuse, provoke and educate audiences about this inspirational and innovative composer.*"

Launching the series on Thursday 14 May, the series curator, pianist Emmanuel Despax, will be joined for a pre-series introduction by musicologist and amateur, Dr Jonathan James, who will present three insightful pre-concert talks during the series. He will also be blogging and creating two podcasts to explore the world of Beethoven's piano sonatas.

There will be free events to enjoy including post-show Q&As with all the artists; two fringe concerts taking a sideways glance at Beethoven's music; a public masterclass on Beethoven performance, and a Building a Library session with broadcaster Katy Hamilton.

LISTINGS INFORMATION:

Concerts, Pre- and post-concert talks

Thursday 14 May, 1pm

Ji Liu

Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts

Piano Sonata No.1 in F minor, Op.2 No.1

Piano Sonata No.6 in F major, Op.10 No.2

Piano Sonata No.2 in A major, Op.2 No.2

Piano Sonata No.21 in C major, Op.53 'Waldstein'

Pre-show 12pm: Introduction to the Beethoven Piano Sonatas Series with Jonathan James and Emmanuel Despax

Djanogly Recital Hall

Post-concert Q & A with Ji Liu 5 minutes after the performance

Thursday 14 May, 7.30pm

Alessandro Taverna

Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts

Piano Sonata No.9 in E major, Op.14 No.1

Piano Sonata No.11 in B flat major, Op.22

Piano Sonata No.22 in F major, Op.54

Piano Sonata No.24 in F sharp major, Op.78

Pre-show 6.30pm: Pre-concert talk by Jonathan James

Djanogly Recital Hall "‘Big-shot’ Beethoven - Vienna's rising star"

Post-concert Q & A with Alessandro Taverna 5 minutes after the performance

Friday 15 May, 1pm

Cordelia Williams

Royal Concert Hall

Piano Sonata No.17 in D minor, Op.31 No.2 'Tempest'
Piano Sonata No.18 in E flat major, Op.31 No.3 'The Hunt'
Piano Sonata No.12 in A flat major, Op.26 'Marche Funebre'
Bagatelles Op.126

Post-concert Q & A with Cordelia Williams 5 minutes after the performance

Friday 15 May, 7.30pm

Martin Roscoe

Royal Concert Hall

Piano Sonata No.7 in D major, Op.10 No.3
Piano Sonata No.8 in C minor, Op.13 'Pathétique'
Piano Sonata No.10 in G major, Op.14 No.2
Piano Sonata No.23 in F minor, Op.57 'Appassionata'

Post-concert Q & A with Martin Roscoe 5 minutes after the performance

Saturday 16 May, 11am

Ingrid Jacoby

Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts
Piano Sonata No.20 in G major, Op.49 No.2
Piano Sonata No.15 in D major, Op.28 'Pastoral'
Piano Sonata No.25 in G major, Op.79
Piano Sonata No.16 in G major, Op.31 No.1

Post-concert Q & A with Ingrid Jacoby 5 minutes after the performance

Saturday 16 May, 3pm

Katya Apekisheva

Djanogly Recital Hall, Lakeside Arts
Piano Sonata No.19 in G minor, Op.49 No.1
Piano Sonata No.3 in C major, Op.2 No.3
Piano Sonata No.5 in C minor, Op.10 No.1
Piano Sonata No.26 in E flat major, Op.81a 'Les Adieux'

Post-concert Q & A with Katya Apekisheva 5 minutes after the performance

Saturday 16 May, 7.30pm

Paul Lewis

Royal Concert Hall
Piano Sonata No.13 in E flat major, Op.27 No.1
'Quasi una fantasia'
Piano Sonata No.14 in C sharp minor, Op.27 No.2 'Moonlight'
Diabelli Variations Op.120

Pre-show 6.30pm Pre-concert talk by Jonathan James "Trauma and triumph - the 'Heroic' chapter"

Royal Concert Hall, Level 4 Foyer

Sunday 17 May, 11am

Charles Owen

Royal Concert Hall
Bagatelles Op.33
Piano Sonata No.4 in E flat major, Op.7
Piano Sonata No.27 in E minor, Op.90
Piano Sonata No.28 in A major, Op.101

Post-concert Q & A with Charles Owen 5 minutes after the performance

Sunday 17 May, 3pm

Andrei Korobeinikov

Royal Concert Hall

An illustrated introduction to Beethoven's 'Hammerklavier' Sonata

By BBC Radio 3 Broadcaster, Katy Hamilton

Fantasy Op.77

Piano Sonata No.29 in B flat major, Op.106 'Hammerklavier'

Sunday 17 May, 7.30pm

Emmanuel Despax

Royal Concert Hall

Piano Sonata No.30 in E major, Op.109

Piano Sonata No.31 in A flat major, Op.110

Piano Sonata No.32 in C minor, Op.111

Pre-show 6.30pm: Pre-concert talk by Jonathan James "Master or madman? – Beethoven's Late genius"

Level 4 Foyer, Royal Concert Hall

Post-concert 9.30pm: End of Series Q & A with Emmanuel Despax, Jonathan James and Catherine Hocking

Level 4 Foyer, Royal Concert Hall

Fringe Events and Online Resources

All events are free but book in advance is advised as some venues have limited capacity

Thursday 14 May, 5pm

Djanogly Theatre, Lakeside Arts

Convention of Unconventional Keyboard Instruments

Dr Xenia Pestova Bennett, Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham and keyboard specialist Pascal Meyer perform music by living composers inspired by Beethoven on a Magnetic Resonator Piano and tiny toy pianos.

Free Admission, but please book in advance.

Friday 15 May, 5pm

Level 4 Foyer, Royal Concert Hall

Beethoven's Bereavement: Brilliance Afflicted with Hearing Loss

Yasmin Ali from the NIHR Nottingham Biomedical Research Centre and Professor Deborah Hall, the University of Nottingham in Malaysia, discuss the impact of hearing loss on the perception of music.

Saturday 16 May, 1.30pm

Performing Arts Studio, Lakeside Arts

Building a Library: Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata

Katy Hamilton, a regular guest on BBC Radio 3's Record Review programme, leads this guide to the best available recordings of Beethoven's 'Waldstein' Sonata

Free Admission, but please book in advance.

Saturday 16 May, 5pm

Level 4 Foyer, Royal Concert Hall

How to Play Beethoven: Piano masterclass with Ingrid Jacoby

Ingrid Jacoby offers fascinating insights into Beethoven performance as she observes and advises two outstanding young pianists as they take on a pair of the composer's sonatas.

Free Admission, but please book in advance.

Saturday 16 May, 9.45pm

Level 4 Foyer, Royal Concert Hall

Inspired by Beethoven: Angels in the Architecture

Late-night jazz from Simon Paterson, Assistant Professor of Music Technology at the University of Nottingham. Simon is an in-demand jazz bassist, composer and sound producer whose Angels in the Architecture ensemble fuses classical music with contemporary approaches to live electronic and jazz performance. Composed and improvised in equal measure, the performance features samples and electronics accompanying live electric bass to create a unique soundscape inspired by Beethoven's piano music.

Free admission, but please book in advance.

Blogs and Podcasts

Dr Jonathan James is an educator who speaks and writes on classical music, as well as running creative workshops. Based in Bristol, his work takes him all over the UK. He'll be producing an absorbing set of blogs and podcasts exploring the history and practice of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas, placing them within the wider context of his life and career.

Visit www.beethoven250.co.uk to read and listen to them.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

Images for the Beethoven 250 Piano Sonatas Festival are available to download here;
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/uss0jkgf2gv4ir7d/AABV7NPZ1zlbsGjg7xi_9_aUa?dl=0

For media enquiries, please contact Lucy Thomas in the Royal Concert Hall Nottingham press office lucy.thomas@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 989 5537.

Lakeside Arts is the University of Nottingham's public arts centre presenting a programme of visual arts and museum exhibitions, theatre, dance, children and families' productions, workshops as well as a learning programme for everyone. Its venues include the Djanogly Recital Hall which stages concerts by internationally renowned soloists and chamber ensembles; the Djanogly Gallery; the University Museum which has a permanent collection of archaeology covering a period of some 250,000 years; and the Djanogly Theatre presenting UK and international touring work as well as producing and co-producing new theatre and dance.

www.lakesidearts.org.uk