

JACK GIBBONS' 36th annual OXFORD SUMMER PIANO SERIES

July 10th to August 14th 2024

In partnership with



**WADHAM
COLLEGE**
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



8 concerts in Oxford's historic Holywell Music Room

"High spirited & historically informed" (New Yorker)

"One of this country's finest concert pianists" (Oxford Times)

"Jack Gibbons himself is a pianist of genius, with an endearing Jimmy Stewart-like awkwardness, a charming smile and about forty hands. His delight in and enthusiasm for the music is almost tangible in the haze of nervous energy that radiates from him." (Daily Information, Oxford)

See inside for full programme details and ticket information

“Jack Gibbons is an Oxford treasure”

OXFORD TIMES

A photograph of a pianist performing in a grand hall. The pianist is seated at a grand piano on a raised platform. In the background, a large, ornate organ is visible. The audience is seated in the foreground, and the room is lit with warm, ambient lighting. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

MOONLIGHT SONATA
RHAPSODY IN BLUE AT 100
CHOPIN IN MAJORCA
HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY
CLAIR DE LUNE
PORGY AND BESS SUITE
CHOPIN THE FOUR BALLADES
FAREWELL PIANO PARTY

The award-winning pianist and composer JACK GIBBONS has for over 40 years been performing regularly in the world's greatest concert halls, from New York's Carnegie Hall to London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. For 47 years he has also been presenting his regular concerts at Oxford's intimate and historic Holywell Music Room and this year celebrates the 36th year of his acclaimed Oxford Summer Piano Series, founded 1988.

CONCERT 1:

Wednesday 10th July 2024 at 8PM

MOONLIGHT SONATA

BEETHOVEN *Pathétique Sonata*

BEETHOVEN *Moonlight Sonata*

BEETHOVEN *Appassionata Sonata*

BEETHOVEN *Sonata in A flat Op.26 (Funeral March)*

BEETHOVEN *Bagatelle in A minor ("Für Elise")*



By longstanding tradition Jack Gibbons opens his summer piano series with an all-Beethoven programme featuring four of Beethoven's most beloved piano sonatas.

"Gibbons' affinity with Beethoven's music is such that he transcends mere recital; rather, he becomes one with the composer, absorbing his moods and passions." (OXFORD TIMES)

CONCERT 2:

Sunday 14th July 2024 at 8PM

RHAPSODY IN BLUE AT 100

GERSHWIN *Rhapsody in Blue*

GERSHWIN *An American in Paris*

GERSHWIN *Concerto in F (slow movement)*

& Gershwin's own improvisations on

Fascinating Rhythm, The Man I Love, Swanee, etc.



Hailed by the BBC as *"THE Gershwin pianist of our time"*, Gibbons celebrates the centenary of the birth of Gershwin's iconic *Rhapsody in Blue* with an all-Gershwin programme featuring Gibbons' meticulous recreation of the spectacular virtuoso style that made Gershwin's piano playing legendary in the 1920s and 30s.

CONCERT 3:

Wednesday 17th July 2024 at 8PM

CHOPIN IN MAJORCA

*CHOPIN Preludes from Op.28: nos. 1, 2, 4,
10, 11, 15 (Raindrop), 17, 19, 20 & 21*

CHOPIN Scherzo no.3 Op.39

CHOPIN Mazurka ("Son Vent") from Op.41

CHOPIN Etudes from Opp.10 & 25

CHOPIN Funeral March Sonata Op.35



The story of Chopin's sojourn on the Spanish island of Majorca told in the exquisite and haunting music he composed there, with readings from George Sand's memoirs.

"Glorious playing – now melting, now almost terrifying in its ferocity. Surely there was more than a touch of genius in Jack Gibbons." (FAIRFIELD HALLS CHOPIN REVIEW)

CONCERT 4:

Sunday 21st July 2024 at 8PM

HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY

The romantic music of Liszt & Rachmaninoff

LISZT Hungarian Rhapsody nos. 2 & 12

LISZT Liebestraum no.3

LISZT Un Sospiro

TCHAIKOVSKY/RACHMANINOFF Lullaby

RACHMANINOFF/GIBBONS Vocalise

RACHMANINOFF Preludes Op.3 no.2, Op.32 no.12

RACHMANINOFF Humoresque Op.10 no.5

RACHMANINOFF Preludes Op.23 nos.5 & 10

BACH/BUSONI Chaconne



The passionate and uniquely romantic music of two legends of the keyboard, Liszt and Rachmaninoff, plus Busoni's magnificent transcription of Bach's iconic Chaconne.

"Gibbons' playing is constantly vibrant and alive, and communicates a physical joy in his instrument one rarely experiences today" (CLASSICAL NET)

CONCERT 5:

Wednesday 24th July 2024 at 8PM

CLAIR DE LUNE



DEBUSSY Reflets dans l'eau (Images)

DEBUSSY Arabesque no.1 in E major

DEBUSSY Children's Corner (selection)

DEBUSSY Clair de lune

DEBUSSY La cathédrale engloutie

DEBUSSY La fille aux cheveux de lin

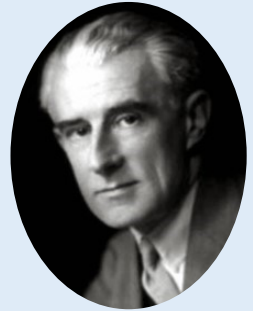
DEBUSSY L'isle joyeuse

RAVEL Jeux d'eau

RAVEL Ma mère l'Oye (selection)

RAVEL Pavane pour une infante défunte

RAVEL Gaspard de la nuit



The deeply evocative music of Debussy and Ravel, composers with whom Gibbons has a deep connection, having championed them at the beginning of his career.

"Jack Gibbons could be Britain's answer to Ivo Pogorelich. Gibbons's hyperactively poetic account of Ravel's Gaspard de la nuit - more considered, I felt, than Pogorelich's recorded performance - was yet both vivid and hypnotic" (THE TIMES, QEH LONDON DEBUT REVIEW)



CONCERT 6:

Sunday 4th August 2024 at 8PM

PORGY & BESS SUITE

GERSHWIN Rhapsody in Blue

GERSHWIN Suite from Porgy and Bess

*GERSHWIN They Can't Take That Away From Me
& Gershwin's own improvisations on*

I Got Rhythm, 'S Wonderful, Embraceable You, etc.

Gibbons, "one of the world's greatest Gershwin exponents" (Classic FM), plays his famous recreations of Gershwin's show-tune improvisations and concert works.

"This is music that requires verve, nerve, and Gibbons' enviable capacity to generate party atmosphere" (YORKSHIRE POST)

CONCERT 7:

Sunday 11th August 2024 at 8PM

CHOPIN THE 4 BALLADES

CHOPIN Ballade no.1 Op.23

CHOPIN Ballade no.2 Op.38

CHOPIN Ballade no.3 Op.47

CHOPIN Ballade no.4 Op.52

CHOPIN Nocturnes from Opp. 9 & 27

CHOPIN Mazurkas from Opp. 17 & 30

CHOPIN Waltz in C sharp minor Op.64 no.2

CHOPIN Etudes from Opp. 10 & 25



Chopin's immortal four Ballades interspersed with a selection of exquisite Nocturnes, Mazurkas, Waltzes and Etudes in an evening of Chopin's greatest masterpieces.

"Jack Gibbons is a unique phenomenon in the musical world of today. Thanks to his virtuosic skills Gibbons can hold an audience in thrall. His concert-giving style is equally attractive: before his performances he talks unassumingly but with great authority from the platform, drawing the listeners into a special relationship." (HUMPHREY BURTON CBE)



CONCERT 8:

Wednesday 14th August 2024 at 8PM

JACK GIBBONS' FAREWELL PIANO PARTY

Jack Gibbons concludes his 36th annual Summer Piano Series with his traditional end of summer mix of reminiscences and audience requests, including a selection of his own piano works, now available on his latest recording.

"Awe-inspiring" LONDON TIMES

"There is an immediacy, freshness and infectious sense of complete confidence that will certainly take your breath away... both moving and magical" (CD REVIEW MAGAZINE)

TICKET INFORMATION

Full price: £25

Purchased more than 24 hours in advance: £20

Season ticket for all 8 concerts: £88

All seating in the Holywell Music Room is unreserved. Tickets purchased in advance will be held for collection from the concert hall box office before the concert(s)

TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AS FOLLOWS:

- **SEASON TICKETS ONLINE:**

Available exclusively from www.jackgibbons.com/oxfordconcerts.htm

- **INDIVIDUAL TICKETS ONLINE, BY PHONE OR IN PERSON:**

from TICKETS OXFORD

Online: ticketsoxford.com/jack-gibbons-36th-annual-oxford-summer-piano-series

In person/by phone: Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford/O1865 305305

- **ON THE DOOR:**

Tickets on the door (full price only): £25 each

Full price tickets can be purchased (subject to availability) at the concert hall box office (Holywell Music Room, 34 Holywell Street, Oxford OX1 3SB) from 45 minutes before the start of each concert.

LOCATIONS

Holywell Music Room

34 Holywell Street, Oxford OX1 3SB

Tickets Oxford

Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford (tel: 01865 305305)

For refreshment before and after the concerts

Turf Tavern public house (entrance opposite the Holywell Music Room)

4-5 Bath Place, Oxford, OX1 3SU (tel: 01865 243235)

Kings Arms public house (on the corner of Holywell Street & Broad Street)

40 Holywell Street, Oxford, OX1 3SP (tel :01865 242369)



HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The Holywell Music Room, built on the grounds of Wadham College, Oxford, has been described as "*the oldest custom-built concert hall in Europe*". Designed by amateur architect Thomas Camplin the building was funded by a public subscription established in 1742. It opened its doors to the public for the first time in 1748, its opening concert likely being a performance of Handel's oratorio *Esther* on 9 July 1748, possibly directed by the composer himself. The room continued as a concert venue throughout the eighteenth century. Due to the unruly behaviour of students attending the music room in its early days various rules had to be introduced, including a notice that dogs should not be brought to the concerts. The throwing of fruit was also banned when, in 1792, a member of the audience threw an orange at John Malchair (1739-1812), the leader of the building's resident orchestra, the Holywell Music Room Band. The orange destroyed Malchair's Cremona violin and after that Malchair (whose sight was failing) never led the band again. After 1836 the music room was used for a number of other events, including auctions and exhibitions. By the 1870s it was being used by the Oxford Philharmonic Society for its weekly rehearsals and in 1910 the Oxford University Musical Union obtained a lease on the building. The Holywell Music Room was restored and refitted in 1959-60, based on the building's original plans.

Composer and pianist JACK GIBBONS was born in 1962, began performing in public at the age of 10, made his London debut at the age of 17 (with an all-Alkan programme) and at 20 won First Prize in the Newport International Pianoforte Competition with a performance of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto described by the renowned Beethoven scholar Denis Matthews as "*masterly*". His Queen Elizabeth Hall debut followed in 1984 with a programme of Bach (Goldberg Variations), Ravel (Gaspard de la nuit) and Chopin (Funeral March Sonata) which was described by the Times as "*monumental*". In 1990 Gibbons gave the first of what became for the next 16 years annual all-Gershwin programs at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. In 1991 he was invited to New York to meet friends and relatives of Gershwin, including Gershwin's sister Frances Godowsky, and which led to his New York debut in 1994.

Gibbons' recording career began in 1992 with a debut on the Hyperion label that was nominated for a Gramophone award. In 1992 he also began his acclaimed recording series *The Authentic George Gershwin*, a 4 hour collection of never before recorded original Gershwin described by the distinguished Gershwin biographer Edward Jablonski as "*a remarkable recreation of Gershwin's unique keyboard style*". In 1995 Gibbons made the first digital recording of Alkan's epic *Douze Études dans les tons mineurs* Op.39, which Gramophone described as "*among the most exhilarating feats of pianism I've heard on disc*", at the same time performing the set complete in historic recitals in Oxford and London. Gibbons has remained committed to promoting the extraordinary music of Chopin's contemporary Charles-Valentin Alkan, having premiered many of the composer's works in the US. In 2007 Gibbons gave the Carnegie Hall premiere of Alkan's gargantuan Concerto for Solo Piano, and in 2013 performed the complete *Douze Études dans les tons mineurs* for the bicentenary of the composer's birth in historic recitals in New York and Oxford.

In recognition of his developing career as a composer Gibbons was in 2010 appointed artist-in-residence at Davis & Elkins College, located deep in the scenic Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia. After childhood successes as a composer Gibbons had returned to composing in 2001 (after a gap of 25 years) while convalescing from a life threatening car accident. His music has since been performed at major venues in the US and the UK, and recorded by various networks including the BBC. Gibbons' music to date includes over 50 songs and choral works, 50 solo piano works, and two works for string orchestra. In November 2023 Gibbons became a U.S. citizen. For more information visit www.jackgibbons.com