

JACK GIBBONS

plays

The *Authentic* GEORGE GERSHWIN

on **ASV**



Jack Gibbons is THE Gershwin pianist of our time. Gibbons has transcribed the composer's flamboyant and fiendishly difficult recreations of his own show-tunes... he dashes off the most insanely difficult passage-work with a broad grin. This is music that requires verve, nerve, and Gibbons' enviable capacity to generate party atmosphere" YORKSHIRE POST

To listen to Gibbons's performances is to marvel afresh at his astonishing virtuosity, his rare control of the music's rhythmic vigour and his supreme relish for its melodic richness. A unique testimony to Gershwin's genius" CLASSIC CD



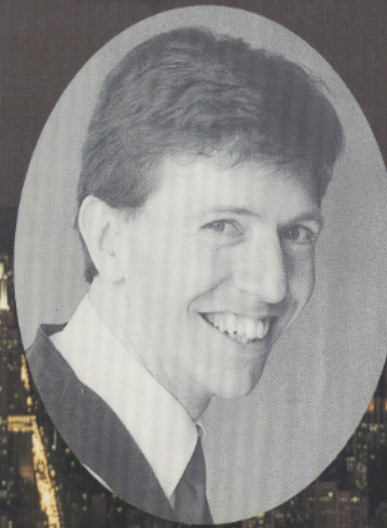
"From the opening numbers there is an immediacy, freshness and infectious sense of complete confidence that will take your breath away... a magnificent trilogy of discs from a young lion of the keyboard" CD REVIEW

"A treasure-house of Gershwin... there are jewels everywhere. Gibbons plays with a blend of verve, virtuosity and love that really does them justice" CLASSIC FM MAGAZINE



"Wonderfully enjoyable, with irresistible rhythmic drive and sparkle, and both power and tenderness" BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

"Jack Gibbons' awesome technique and irresistible enthusiasm mirror Gershwin's own... a remarkable young musician" WESTERN MAIL



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PLAYS THE

Authentic

GEORGE GERSHWIN



CELEBRATING THE CENTENARY OF GEORGE GERSHWIN'S BIRTH (1898-1998)

"Exciting and uncanny... a remarkable recreation of Gershwin's unique keyboard style"

Edward Jablonski, Gershwin biographer & archivist

"Sensational... Gershwin does not come more exhilarating than this"

Classic CD Magazine

ABOUT JACK GIBBONS...



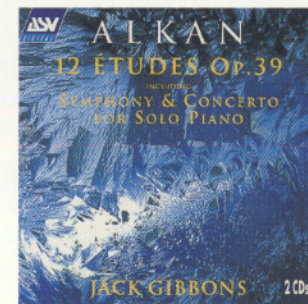
Jack Gibbons with Frances Gershwin Godowsky (Gershwin's sister) and Edward Jablonski, New York, March 1994

Jack Gibbons has been described by the press as *"THE Gershwin pianist of our time"*, through his concerts and broadcasts around the world and his award-winning recordings on the ASV and Hyperion labels, he has established a remarkable reputation as one of the leading pianists of his generation. Public performer from the age of 10 and winner at 20 of the Newport International Pianoforte Competition, he has played in major venues throughout the UK and in Europe, Australia and the Middle East; he made his US debut in 1994, being greeted with tremendous standing ovations in New York, Washington DC, etc. His all-Gershwin concerts have become an annual feature at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and attract capacity audiences. He has also taken part in many celebrity concerts, including a special 75th birthday concert for H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh. Jack Gibbons has performed with the UK's major orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic, BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia, etc., and in 1995 he made a triumphant debut at the Centenary Season of the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, performing the work with which he has become so closely associated: George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

In addition to his unique Gershwin repertoire, Jack Gibbons is also highly acclaimed as a virtuoso classical pianist. By the age of 14 he was winning awards for his

performances of music by Liszt, Chopin and Alkan, and at the age of 17 he made his London solo debut with a breathtakingly virtuosic all-Alkan programme. He was still in his teens when the distinguished pianist Denis Matthews CBE described him as an *"extraordinary talent... the most exciting I have heard since John Ogdon's London debut. His playing is imbued with a sense of vitality and spontaneous enjoyment. He has a remarkable command of the keyboard even in these days of high technical standards, but far more important, he has a distinct and distinguished recreative gift and artistic personality"*. Jack Gibbons has given many solo classical recitals in London at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall and St Johns Smith Square, and his annual "Summer Piano Series" in Oxford, in which he performs seven weekly concerts of hugely varying repertoire ranging from Bach to Debussy, now attracts an international following.

Jack Gibbons made his classical recording debut in 1992 on the Hyperion label with Constant Lambert's "Rio Grande"; the recording received remarkable critical acclaim — *"scintillating performance, by far the finest I have yet heard"* (Edward Greenfield, The Guardian), *"The magic of Jack Gibbons' playing becomes the focal point of this performance"* (Gramophone) — and was nominated for a Gramophone Award. Jack Gibbons' latest recording is a two-CD set on ASV featuring the spectacular "Studies in the Minor Keys, Op.39" by Charles-Valentin Alkan, the legendary 19th century French composer and virtuoso pianist; this recording has also received ecstatic reviews: *"staggering... this ranks among the most exhilarating feats of pianism I've heard... [Jack Gibbons] proves equal to the challenge the music poses not only in terms of virtuosity but, more importantly, artistry"* (Gramophone); *"Pianist Jack Gibbons, famed for his Gershwin recordings, turns his hand (or rather his hands, on each of which he seems to have rather more than the usual allocation of fingers!) to the devilishly difficult Études by Alkan. Here is a truly remarkable recording that brings together an astonishing array of pianistic pyrotechnics that worthily reflect their extraordinary composer"* (Brian Kay, BBC Music Magazine).



Jack Gibbons' future schedule includes a major concert tour of the UK in 1997/8, an all-Gershwin concert in the Alice Tully Hall in New York's prestigious Lincoln Center, and two new recording projects including a new "authentic Gershwin" CD to celebrate the Centenary of George Gershwin's birth in 1998.

ABOUT THE MUSIC...

Since his death, appreciation of Gershwin's genius as a composer has continued, and continues, to grow, but his remarkable piano-playing — admired by figures as diverse as Rachmaninov, James P. Johnson, Ravel, and many others — has been largely forgotten today. Gershwin possessed not only a phenomenal piano technique but also an amazing gift for improvising on his own show-tunes, and his spectacular renditions were guaranteed to make him the centre of attention at any social gathering; indeed his playing at New York parties in the 1920s and 30s became legendary. Although Gershwin never wrote down his elaborate show-tune arrangements, he did record some of them on 78s and on piano-rolls, and these have been meticulously reconstructed, note by note, from the original recordings by Jack Gibbons; Gibbons' unique performances of these reconstructions allow this music to be heard live for the first time since Gershwin himself played it.

Gershwin also frequently played his larger works for the concert hall on the piano, and likewise Jack Gibbons has recreated all Gershwin's concert works in the form of virtuoso solo piano arrangements: *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris*, *Cuban Overture*, *Second Rhapsody*, *I Got Rhythm Variations*, and Gershwin's original *Porgy & Bess Suite*. All the arrangements are faithful to Gershwin's own, being based on the composer's own recordings, original scores, etc.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME...

Jack Gibbons' unique all-Gershwin programmes bring together both show-tunes and concert works, highlighting all facets of Gershwin's genius. From virtuoso transcriptions of such masterpieces as *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris*, *Cuban Overture*, etc., to recreations of Gershwin's spectacular show-tune improvisations, the whole programme presents as complete and authentic a picture of George Gershwin as it is possible to give in a single evening. Jack Gibbons' performances have been described by the press as "compulsively communicative", and he always intersperses his programmes with brief anecdotes and musical illustrations explaining and revealing secrets of Gershwin's piano skills in a way that is both educational and highly entertaining. "So far has Gibbons perfected his art that this was not an evening OF Gershwin but, as near as we could ever come to, an evening WITH Gershwin" (Gulf Daily News).

SAMPLE PROGRAMMES...

Jack Gibbons has over 5 hours of "authentic Gershwin" repertoire at his disposal; the following are just two examples of programmes that he has performed in the UK and USA:

Programme I

(New York, 13.11.94)

Do,Do,Do*
Someone to Watch Over Me*
When Do We Dance?*
Meadow Serenade†
That Certain Feeling*
Looking For a Boy*
He Loves and She Loves†
My One and Only*
Embraceable You†
An American in Paris†

Interval

Fascinating Rhythm*
The Half of it, Dearie, Blues*
The Man I Love*
'S Wonderful/Funny Face*
They Can't Take That Away from Me†
Variations on I Got Rhythm†
Bess You Is My Woman†
Rhapsody in Blue†

Programme II

(Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, 31.6.94)

Strike Up The Band Overture†
Looking For a Boy*
When Do We Dance?*
Oh, Lady, Be Good!†
The Half of it, Dearie, Blues*
The Man I Love*
Sweet and Low-Down*
Maybe*
I Got Rhythm*
Isn't It a Pity?†
Cuban Overture†

Interval

Porgy & Bess Suite†:
I. Catfish Row
II. I Got Plenty O' Nuthin' –
Bess You Is My Woman
III. Fugue
IV. Hurricane
V. Good Morning, Brother
They Can't Take That Away from Me†
Let's Call The Whole Thing Off†
Rhapsody in Blue†

*Gershwin's original show-tune improvisations, reconstructed by Jack Gibbons from Gershwin's own recordings, piano-rolls and recorded radio broadcasts made in the 1920s and 30s.

†Arranged by Jack Gibbons from Gershwin's original scores and recordings