

# JACK GIBBONS' 32nd annual OXFORD SUMMER PIANO SERIES

*July 10th to August 14th 2019*



## **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



AN EVENING OF BEETHOVEN  
THE LIFE OF GERSHWIN  
THE LIFE OF CHOPIN  
A MUSICAL MENAGERIE  
BACH & MOZART CELEBRATION  
GERSHWIN & FRIENDS  
CHOPIN & FRIENDS  
FAREWELL PIANO PARTY

The award-winning pianist and composer JACK GIBBONS has for over 30 years been performing regularly in the world's greatest concert halls, from New York's Carnegie Hall to London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. For 40 years he has also been presenting his regular concerts at Oxford's intimate and historic Holywell Music Room and this year celebrates the 32nd year of his acclaimed Oxford Summer Piano Series, founded 1988.

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## CONCERT 1:

**Wednesday 10th July 2019 at 8PM**

### AN EVENING OF BEETHOVEN

*Pathétique Sonata*

*Moonlight Sonata*

*Appassionata Sonata*

*An die ferne Geliebte (extract, arr.Liszt)*

*Rondo in C Op.51 no.1, Bagatelle in A minor ("Für Elise"), etc.*

Jack Gibbons' opening concert features three of Beethoven's most beloved piano sonatas plus an extract from Liszt's transcription of *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the distant beloved) Op.98, the exquisite Rondo in C and selection of bagatelles.

*"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 2019 at 8PM**

### THE LIFE OF GERSHWIN

*Rhapsody in Blue*

*An American in Paris*

*Porgy and Bess (Catfish Row), Concerto in F (Andante)  
& the composer's own improvisations on*

*Fascinating Rhythm, The Man I Love, I Got Rhythm, etc.*

Hailed by the BBC as *"THE Gershwin pianist of our time"*, Gibbons traces the extraordinary life of Gershwin through his authentic recreation of the spectacular virtuoso style that made Gershwin's piano playing legendary in the 1920s and 30s.

*"Gershwin does not come more exhilarating than this"* (CLASSIC CD MAGAZINE)



## CONCERT 3:

**Wednesday 17th July 2019 at 8PM**

### THE LIFE OF CHOPIN

*Three Écossaises*

*Mazurka in A minor Op.68 no.2*

*Etudes Op.10 nos.1, 3 & 12 ("Revolutionary")*

*Nocturne (Lento con gran espressione)*

*Preludes Op.28 nos.16 & 15 ("Raindrop")*

*Scherzo no.3 Op.39*

*Impromptu in G flat Op.51*

*Polonaise in A flat Op.53*

*Berceuse Op.57*

*Scherzo no.4 Op.54*

*Waltz Op.64 no.2*

*Barcarolle Op.60*



*"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 2019 at 8PM**

### A MUSICAL MENAGERIE

*CHOPIN Cat Waltz (Op.34 no.3)*

*CHOPIN Valse du petit chien (Op.64 no.1)*

*BACH Sheep may safely graze*

*MOZART Concerto no.17 K.453: III Allegretto*

*SCHUMANN The Prophet Bird*

*RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Flight of the bumblebee*

*SAINT-SAËNS The Swan*

*ALKAN Le festin d'Ésope*

*PROKOFIEV Peter and the Wolf (with narration)*

*GIBBONS Solace · Appalachian Fancy*

*GERSHWIN Walking the dog*



Peter and the Wolf illustration, 1946 (Jim Flora)

Music inspired by the animal kingdom, including pets of the great composers, from Mozart's starling to Gershwin's terrier!

*"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 2019 at 8PM

### BACH & MOZART CELEBRATION

BACH

*Tocatta & Fugue in D minor (arr Busoni)*

*Allemande (Partita no.4) · Gigue (French Suite no.5)*

*Prelude & Fugue in F sharp, WTC I*

*Chorale: Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*

*Chaconne in D minor (arr Busoni)*

MOZART

*Rondo alla turca*

*Concerto no.23 K.488: II. Adagio (arr. Gibbons)*

*Sonata in C major K.545 ('Sonate facile')*

*Concerto no.27 K.595: III. Allegro (arr. Gibbons)*



Chopin's pupil Mikuli wrote of Chopin "above all he prized Bach, and between Bach and Mozart it is hard to say whom he loved more". Tonight's programme brings together some of Bach and Mozart's greatest and well-known works.

"Extraordinary talent... Gibbons has a distinct and distinguished recreative gift and artistic personality" (DENIS MATTHEWS CBE)



New York 1928 (from left): Fried, Gauthier, Ravel at piano, Leide-Tedesco, Gershwin.

## CONCERT 6:

Wednesday 7th August 2019 at 8PM

### GERSHWIN & FRIENDS

*GERSHWIN Rhapsody in Blue*

*GERSHWIN I Got Rhythm, 'S Wonderful, etc.*

*RACHMANINOFF Prelude in C sharp minor Op.3 no.2*

*RAVEL Pavane pour une infante défunte*

*& music by DEBUSSY, PROKOFIEV, JOPLIN, BERLIN, etc.*

Jack Gibbons, "THE Gershwin pianist of our time" (BBC), recreates the musical world surrounding Gershwin in 1920s & 30s New York.

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

## CONCERT 7:

**Sunday 11th August 2019 at 8PM**

### CHOPIN & FRIENDS

*CHOPIN Fantaisie, Op.49*

*CHOPIN Ballade no.3 Op.47*

*CHOPIN Waltz Op.18, Impromptu Op.36*

*LISZT La Campanella*

*LISZT, THALBERG, CHOPIN et al Hexaméron*

*SCHUMANN Chopin (Carnaval Op.9)*

*GOTTSCHALK Bamboula*

*ALKAN Marche funèbre Op.26 · Saltarelle*



'Young school of Paris pianists' (by Maurins). Standing (from left): Rosenhain, Döhler, Chopin, Dreyschock & Thalberg; sitting (from left): Wolff, Henselt & Liszt

A recreation of the musical world surrounding Chopin in 1830s & 40s Paris. Interspersed with Chopin's music are works by his contemporaries, Liszt, Alkan, Schumann, Thalberg, Gottschalk and others, including the spectacular Hexaméron (written in collaboration with Chopin and four other leading virtuosos of the day).

*"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 2019 at 8PM**

### JACK GIBBONS' FAREWELL PIANO PARTY

Jack Gibbons concludes his 32nd annual Summer Piano Series with his traditional end of summer mix of reminiscences and audience requests, with music by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Gershwin and others, plus some surprise items by Gibbons himself including the premiere of his *Suite for Piano Duet*.

*"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: £22**

**Purchased more than 24 hours in advance: £18**

**Season ticket for all 8 concerts: £72**

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:

- **ONLINE:**  
at [www.jackgibbons.com/oxfordconcerts.htm](http://www.jackgibbons.com/oxfordconcerts.htm)
  - **IN PERSON OR BY PHONE:**  
at TICKETS OXFORD  
Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford telephone: 01865 305305
  - **BY POST:**  
from MAYFIELD PROMOTIONS, PO Box 562, Oxford OX2 6ZH  
(cheques payable to "Mayfield Promotions", state concert date(s) and number of tickets required on reverse of cheque)
  - **ON THE DOOR:**  
Tickets on the door (full price only): £22 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.
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## 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 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. 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 was restored and refitted in 1959-60 and since that time has been the location for many hundreds of recitals and concert series featuring prestigious visiting musicians as well as many local groups and student performers.



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, 40 solo piano works, and two works for string orchestra. For more information visit [www.jackgibbons.com](http://www.jackgibbons.com)