

RIPON
CONCERTS

Chamber music with passion

Iyad Sughayer – piano



Sunday 12 January 2025, 3pm
Holy Trinity Church, Ripon

Programme

www.riponconcerts.co.uk

Patron: Julius Drake

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Iyad Sughayer – piano

Programme

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Piano Sonata in A major, K.331

Andante grazioso
Minuetto
Alla turca - allegretto

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) Drei Klavierstücke, D946

Allegro assai
Allegretto
Allegro

– interval (refreshments in the undercroft) –

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) Six Impromptus, Op. 5

Moderato
Lento-Vivace
Moderato all marcia
Andantino
Vivace
Commodo

Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) Sonata for Piano

Allegro vivace
Andante tranquillo
Allegro assai

About the music

Mozart, Piano Sonata in A major, K.331

Mozart wrote twenty piano sonatas and that in A major is from halfway through this output. It has proved to be one of his most popular pieces, perhaps because it has some distinctive features, for example, the crossing over of left and right hands, the inclusion of a Turkish march, often played as a separate recital item, and the fact that none of the movements is in sonata form.

The first movement is rather a theme – a gentle lullaby-like melody – and six variations. Noteworthy among these is the demanding second variation with its melodic octaves; the aforementioned crossing of hands in the fourth; and the fifth with its decorative patterning. The minuet and trio which follows is relatively conventional material, although the unexpected 2014 discovery in a Budapest library of a manuscript of the score revealed some minor discrepancies from the version traditionally performed. You will have to ask Iyad Sughayer which version he has decided to play!

The famous final *alla turca* movement reflects the fascination with things Turkish current at the time in Austria, as does Mozart's opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, written a short time previously. The imitation of a military band was facilitated by the manufacturers of the fortepiano adding a new, so-called "Janissary" pedal to the instrument, capable of striking a small drum.

Schubert, Drei Klavierstücke, D946

The circumstances surrounding Schubert's Piano Pieces of 1828 are poignant. In March of that year the only public concert in his lifetime devoted exclusively to his music was given, but by May, when the Pieces were composed, the effects of syphilis were getting worse and affecting his creative capacities. He was to die in November, aged 32.

The *Klavierstücke* were not published until 1868, after they had been collected and edited by Brahms, no less, albeit anonymously. Although not titled as such, they were impromptus in character, following the D899 and D935 sets written in 1827: small-scale but with lilting melodies and unusual harmonies combining to engage the listener's emotions.

Much of the first piece is agitated and intense, but in the middle there is a calm, untroubled slow section with ornamentation above sonorous chords. The second piece, in rondo form, reverses the order: a gentle introduction leads to stormier waters and the pianist seems to be torn between the two expressive modes. The third piece takes us to an altogether happier location for relaxed and very human sounds. The dance-like jollifications must have engendered some release from the composer's physical misery.

Sibelius, Six Impromptus, op. 5

I have never heard live a note of Sibelius's piano music – perhaps you have been similarly deprived? If so, given the popularity of the composer's orchestral music, this appears odd, but Sibelius

famously remarked, “you must judge me on the basis of my orchestral works. The piano does not interest me. It cannot sing”; and critics have referred to his “uneasy keyboard style”. Yet he wrote piano music regularly throughout his career and you will have to make up your own mind on whether the harsh remarks are justified in relation to the Impromptus.

They were written in 1893 early in his composing career when he penned the famous *Karelia* orchestral suite, but also a piano sonata. At this period, a young composer could make his name known, and no less importantly, earn some much-needed income, by producing salon pieces for piano, particularly if they were not too demanding technically. The Impromptus, following in the tradition of Schubert which we have just experienced, can be considered such with attractive, delicate melodies interspersed with some interesting harmonies.

The opening piece is only a page in length, containing two sections: the first comprising mainly block chords, the other a simple melody. The second begins with a slow introduction but then turns into a lively folk dance. Next comes a march, interrupted with a slow middle section, followed by a slow, solemn excursion into melancholy. In contrast, the fifth piece is vivacious, the hands surging up and down the keyboard. The longest impromptu is reserved until last, nicely balanced in terms of content and mood, and requiring the performer to carry out an almost exact repetition of the material.

So, what do you think? Was Sibelius’s harsh judgement of his piano music justified?

Khachaturian, Sonata for Piano

The recital ends with another pianistic rarity. Apart from a few orchestral scores, including those for the ballets *Gayane* and *Spartacus*, the music of the Soviet-Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian is not well known in the West. Perhaps that is not surprising, given that he was generally considered to be an archetypally loyal Party member, having written that, “the October Revolution fundamentally changed my whole life and, if I have really grown into a serious artist, then I am indebted only to the people and the Soviet Government.” True, like some other notable Soviet musicians, including Prokofiev and Shostakovich, as well as his own composition teacher Myaskovsky, Khachaturian was in 1948 denounced by the Communist Party’s Central Committee for the “formalist” direction in his music away from the desirable path of “social realism”. And ironically the piece which most provoked this condemnation was his Third Symphony which had been written as a tribute to the 30th Anniversary of the October Revolution. Happily, the music which he wrote later in 1948 for a film biography of Lenin brought him back into favour.

In any event, much of his music which was less exposed to public and therefore political scrutiny has a freshness and vitality, not to say aggression, which makes for interesting listening. This is certainly true of his Piano

Sonata dedicated to Myaskovsky and written in 1961 (though revised in 1976). The challenging first movement, for example, contains complex rhythmic patterns, chromatic scales and cluster chords, thus earning it a rightful place in twentieth-century pianism. The second movement, contrastingly, begins quietly and sets an elegiac mood, but then shifts gear to a faster, emphatic style before concluding with the tolling of bells and a solemn *Lento*. With the third movement, we are taken back to rhythmic patterns, chromatic scales and cluster chords, building up to a climax of frenetic activity, calling for, and eventually receiving, release through a massive final C major chord.

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A message from the trustees:

At this time of year we are working on the content of next season’s concerts and would like to hear some of your preferences.

1. Are there any composers who you feel have been ignored or short changed?
2. How important is it to have ensembles with a piano?
3. Would you like more or less string, woodwind, brass, piano (solo), vocal music?
4. Are you happy for us to incorporate contemporary music?

Please email your answers to r.h.higson@btinternet.com

THANK YOU

About Iyad

Jordanian-Palestinian pianist Iyad Sughayer was chosen as 'One to Watch' by *International Piano* magazine. His debut album, *Khachaturian Piano Works*, for BIS Records was described by *Gramophone* as "exhilarating and delivered with perfect clarity" and "an outstanding debut" by *BBC Music* magazine. Iyad's second recording for BIS with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, conducted by Andrew Litton, was released to critical acclaim in autumn 2022.

Nominated as a 2022 'Rising Star' by Classic FM, Iyad was a prize-winner at the Young Classical Artists Trust international auditions in 2021.

This season Iyad makes his debut in Bogotá in Colombia, as well as undertaking his first professional tour of North America, including debut recitals in Toronto, Middlebury College Vermont, University of South Florida, Northeastern College in California and in Washington DC.

Previous season highlights included a return to the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, performances at the Berlin Konzerthaus, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Barber Institute Birmingham, and a series of recitals at the Leicester International Music Festival performing the complete Mozart Piano Sonatas alongside newly-commissioned pieces inspired by those great works.

Iyad has also performed in recital at the Bridgewater Hall and Stoller Hall in Manchester, Leeds Town Hall, Royal Concert Hall Nottingham International Piano series, Perth Concert Hall, Wigmore

Hall, the Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, Festival Musique d'abord in France and the Brighton, Bath and Lake District Summer Music Festivals in the UK among others.

As a concerto soloist Iyad has appeared with leading orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic, Manchester Camerata, European Union Chamber Orchestra, and Cairo and Amman Symphony Orchestras.

Iyad also regularly collaborates with oboist Armand Djikoloum, with whom he recently undertook a tour of Scotland. Previous appearances include concerts at the Lammermuir, Lichfield and Thaxted Festivals respectively.

In 2022 Iyad co-founded and launched a new specialist music school, the Mashrek Academy of Music, with the Mashrek International School in Amman. The Academy welcomes students from across Jordan, discovering and nurturing a new generation of creators and musicians.

In 2020 he contributed to a BBC Arabic documentary, 'London Lockdown', in which he took part as a character and recorded the soundtrack for the music.

Born in Amman, Iyad studied at Chetham's School of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance where he won the College's prestigious Gold Medal. In 2019 he completed his International Artist Diploma at the RNCM and became a City Music Foundation Artist. In 2021 he was made an Associate of the Royal Northern College of Music (ARNCM).





Ripon
Choral Society

Saturday 5 April
2025, 7.30pm
Ripon Cathedral

J. S. Bach St. John Passion

John Dunford - conductor • Orchestra d'Amici
Nicholas Watts - Evangelist • Phil Wilcox - Christus
Eleonore Cockerham - soprano
Chloe Latchmore - mezzo-soprano
James Savage-Hanford - tenor • Adam Green - bass

Tickets: £25 reserved; £22 unreserved (student concessions £10)

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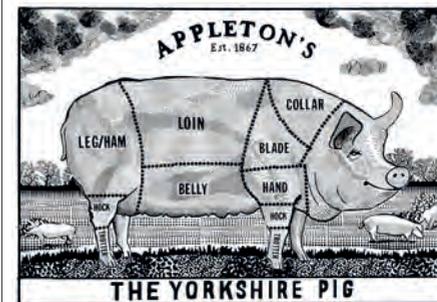
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North Yorkshire Music & Arts Events Diary

Visit www.st-cecilia.org.uk for full details of Music & Arts events in the Ripon area.



St Cecilia Orchestra
Winter Concert - see opposite
 Holy Trinity Church, Ripon
 25 Jan 2025, 7.30pm

Harrogate Philharmonic Orchestra
Beethoven, Graener and Price
 St Mark's Church, Harrogate
 8 Feb 2025, 7.30pm

Ripon Concerts
Tim Lowe - cello
Jack Liebeck - violin
Katya Apekisheva - piano
 Holy Trinity Church, Ripon
 9 Feb 2025, 3pm

Paulinus Singers
Spring Concert
 St John's Church, Sharow
 15 Feb 2025, 7.30pm

Jervaulx Singers
Ten-course Musical Tasting Menu
 St John's Church, Sharow
 1 Mar 2025, 7.30pm

Richmondshire Concerts
Carducci Quartet
 Richmond School
 8 Mar 2025, 7.30pm

Ripon Concerts
Kosmos Trio
 St John's Church, Sharow
 9 Mar 2025, 3pm

York Musical Society
Spring Concert
 York Minster
 15 Mar 2025, 7.30pm

Harrogate Choral Society
Mozart, Wainwright and Pärt
 St Wilfrid's Church, Harrogate
 22 Mar 2025, 3pm

St Cecilia Orchestra
Over Land and Sea,
with mezzo-soprano Beth Taylor
 Ripon Cathedral
 22 Mar 2025, 7.30pm

Ripon Choral Society
Bach St John Passion
 Ripon Cathedral
 5 Apr 2025, 7.30pm

Richmondshire Concerts
Lumas Winds
 Richmond School
 12 Apr 2025, 7.30pm

De Mowbray Music
Come and Play Day:
Shostakovich and Beethoven
 Thirsk Town Hall
 11 May 2025, 10am-5pm

Harrogate Choral Society
Summer Concert
 St Wilfrid's Church, Harrogate
 7 June 2025, 7pm

St Cecilia Orchestra
Schumann and Tchaikovsky meet
Stravinsky and Prokofiev
 Holy Trinity Church, Ripon
 14 June 2025, 7.30pm

Ripon Choral Society and
 Wetherby Choral Society
Mendelssohn Elijah
 Ripon Cathedral
 21 June 2025, 7.30pm

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Please see the website for full programme details.

Tim Lowe - Cello
Jack Liebeck - Violin
Katya Apekisheva - Piano
9 February 2025
Holy Trinity Church, Ripon
Debussy, Shostakovich,
Tchaikovsky



Tim Lowe, Jack Liebeck, Katya Apekisheva

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