

Mark Bebbington - Biography

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The critical plaudits which have greeted Mark Bebbington's performances and recordings have singled him out as a British pianist of the rarest refinement and maturity ("Bebbington is without doubt one of Britain's finest pianists." wrote Michel Fleury recently in *Classica*).

Internationally recognised as a champion of British music, in particular, Mark has recorded extensively for the Somm label to critical acclaim, with no fewer than nine of his recent CDs awarded 5***** by BBC Music Magazine.

His most recent CDs include three British Piano Concertos with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, an all-Gershwin album with Leon Botstein and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra ("Recording of the Month" from MusicWeb International). A CD of Concertos by Grieg (including the premiere of his sketches for a Second Piano Concerto, edited by Robert Matthew-Walker) and Delius with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Jan Latham-Koenig was released in April 2018 and became 'CD of the Week' in The Times and Mail on Sunday.

His premiere recordings include one of Arnold Bax's Piano Concertino coupled with John Ireland's Piano Concerto and *Legend*, and premieres of Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia* and William Mathias's first two Piano Concertos (Ulster Orchestra).

In addition to concerto recordings, Mark completed his John Ireland and Frank Bridge solo piano series and released a CD of William Alwyn's piano works in 2015. As well as his *BBC Music Magazine* success, he has won *Gramophone Magazine*'s 'Editor's Choice', *International Record Review*'s 'Outstanding' accolade and many others. *International Piano Magazine* wrote of him, 'Bebbington's revivals of British piano music are second to none; he could well be dubbed the concert pianists' Richard Hickox. Bebbington has almost single-handedly demonstrated that 20th-century British piano scores have an exciting role to play in the concert hall and recording studio".

Over recent seasons Mark has toured throughout Central and Northern Europe and in the United States (both as recitalist and as soloist with some of the world's leading orchestras), as well as the Far East and North Africa. In 2017 he made his Carnegie Hall debut with Leon Botstein and the American Symphony Orchestra and also appeared with the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra and on tour with the Israel Camerata and Czech National Orchestra. Within the UK, he has appeared in concertos with the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic and Philharmonia Orchestras, Flanders Symphony Orchestra, the London Mozart Players, Orchestra of the Swan and BBC Concert Orchestra. He has featured both as soloist and recitalist on BBC Television and Radio and also on major European Television and Radio networks.

Mark studied at the Royal College of Music where he was a recipient of numerous international awards and prizes, including a Leverhulme Scholarship, a Winston Churchill Fellowship and the Ivan Sutton Recording Prize – the latter awarded to the one outstanding graduate of the combined London Music Colleges. He later studied in Italy with the legendary Aldo Ciccolini.

Mark's programming demonstrates a commitment to the music of our time and he regularly includes contemporary composers as diverse as Takemitsu, Julian Anderson, John McCabe, David Matthews, Pierre Boulez and Elliot Carter in his recital series.

Upcoming projects include continuing releases for the Somm label, appearances in major concert series and festivals both in the UK and throughout Europe (including a debut at the Husum "Piano Rarities" Festival in Germany and the Grand Theatre – Opera National de Bordeaux as part of the Bordeaux International Festival), and closer to home, concerto performances with the London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic. He recently completed a two-week tour with the Czech National Orchestra. He will return to the US for concerts with the Buffalo Philharmonic, and make his Israel debut with a tour with the Israel Camerata.