

WILLIAM HOWARD is established as one of Britain's leading pianists, enjoying a career that has taken him to over 40 different countries. His performing life consists of solo recitals, concerto performances, guest appearances with chamber ensembles and instrumentalists. In 1983 he founded the Schubert Ensemble, with which he performed for the full 35 years of the Ensemble's existence (it gave its final concert in June 2018). Winner of the 1998 Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Best Chamber Ensemble, the Schubert Ensemble earned a worldwide reputation as one of the finest piano and string ensembles, as well as setting up several ground-breaking educational projects and commissioning 50 concert works.

His solo career has taken him to many of Britain's most important festivals, including Bath, Brighton and Cheltenham, and he has been artist in residence at several others. He has performed many times in the Wigmore Hall and the South Bank in London and has broadcast regularly for BBC Radio 3. For many years he has been invited to perform and teach at the Dartington International Summer School.

As soloist and chamber musician he can be heard on over 40 CDs, released by Chandos, Hyperion, ASV, NMC, Collins Classics, Black Box, Champs Hill, Nimbus and Orchid Classics. His recording of Dvořák Piano Works was selected in the Gramophone Critics' Choice, and his recording of Fibich's *Moods, Impressions and Souvenirs* won a Diapason D'Or award in France. His 2011 recording of Pavel Zemek Novák's extraordinary 75-minute cycle of 24 Preludes and Fugues, described by David Matthews as "*one of the finest piano works of our time*" received a double five-star review in the BBC Music Magazine. His album *Sixteen Love Songs*, released in June 2016 on Orchid Classics, was selected as 'Drive Discovery of the Week' on Classic FM and has been followed this year with the release of *Sixteen Contemporary Love Songs*, featuring premiere recordings of specially commissioned pieces by composers such as Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Nico Muhly, Howard Skempton, Joby Talbot, Judith Weir and others.

Recent solo engagements have included performances at the Bermuda Festival, the premiere of David Matthews's Four Portraits at the Spitalfields Festival in London and performances at the Cheltenham, Deal, Leamington, Petworth and Oundle Festivals, at Kings Place in London, in Brno, Czech Republic, and Bologna, Italy. Plans for 2020 include concerts in the Czech Republic and the USA as well as around the UK. February 2020 sees the release of a CD recording of Piers Hellawell's *Piani, Latebre* (written for him in 2010) and also the release of an album of piano works by Howard Skempton, featuring the premiere recording of his 24 Preludes and Fugues (written for William in 2019). The CD will be launched with a recital at Kings Place, London.

He is passionate about 19th century piano repertoire, especially Schubert, Chopin, Schumann and Fauré. He also has a strong interest in Czech piano music, and has been particularly acclaimed for his performance of Janáček, for which he received a medal from the Czech Minister of Culture in 1986. Many leading composers of the present day have written for him, including, Sally Beamish, Piers Hellawell, David Matthews, Pavel Zemek Novák, Anthony Powers, Howard Skempton and Judith Weir. In 2016 he launched a project to commission love songs for solo piano from leading composers in the UK and abroad. He also set up an international composing competition for writing piano love songs that attracted over 500 entries from 61 countries.