

**Emmanuel Despax appears at Bechstein Hall in a series of concerts: 3 solo programmes & 3 with the newly-formed Bechstein Trio between December and March**

**Tuesday 3rd Dec at 6.30pm & 8.30pm**

Liszt: *Benediction de Dieu dans la solitude*

Liszt: Sonata in B minor



**"Despax is a formidable pianist, thoughtful and imaginative"**  
BBC Music Magazine

**"....he masters the ferocious challenges with ease, delicacy, and strength."**  
The Observer

**Emmanuel Despax** will perform a series of concerts at London's newest concert hall **Bechstein Hall** which will open on **5 November** with Despax joining Terence Lewis and Luka Okros for Rachmaninov's joyous Two Pieces for Six Hands, before presenting 6 programmes between December and March. For the first of three 1-hour solo programmes beginning on 3 December at 6.30pm and 8.30pm, the French pianist has chosen a Liszt programme including the monumental Sonata in B minor, as featured on his latest Signum album released in April 2024.

Terence Lewis invited Emmanuel Despax to form a piano trio for the Hall. Despax has brought together colleagues **Guy Johnston** and **Priya Mitchell** for their debut concert in the Hall on 11 December performing trios by Beethoven and Brahms.

Emmanuel says about the formation of the trio:

"I'm excited to embark on a journey with the Bechstein Trio, the hall's new resident chamber ensemble. When Terence Lewis approached me with the idea



of forming a trio, he mentioned the iconic Beaux Arts Trio as inspiration—he had known and been close friends with its founding pianist, Menahem Pressler.

Guy, Priya, and I were all brought up with the recordings of the Beaux Arts Trio, and have a connection with them. Guy studied with its cellist, Bernard Greenhouse, and I vividly recall a few incredible chamber music masterclasses with him. Priya was a student at the Menuhin School alongside Daniel Hope, who also performed with the trio in more recent years.

This is a rare opportunity to explore this remarkable repertoire each season with exceptional colleagues, and I can't wait to share this extraordinary music in such a beautiful new venue."

For Chopin's birthday on 1<sup>st</sup> March, Despax returns to present Chopin's 24 Preludes and 1<sup>st</sup> Piano Concerto with **Chineke! Ensemble** with whom he recorded an album for Signum. A week later on 7 March, Despax will be back for a solo recital to mark Ravel's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary including the composer's ravishing *Jeux d'eau*, *La Valse* and *Gaspard de la nuit* as featured on his critically-acclaimed *Après un rêve* album. In a collaboration with the **Piatti Quartet**, Despax and the Piatti's will release a new Schumann album with Signum Classics in spring 2025.

For week day concerts, Bechstein Hall is offering a fine-dining service by chef Netish Nunnan after the first performance at 6.30pm or before the 8.30pm performance in the 100-seater auditorium. With a concierge service to ensure maximum enjoyment of the musical offering, Bechstein Hall is one of the newest venues to offer a premium service.

Emmanuel says about Bechstein Hall:

"I am thrilled to be performing at London's new Bechstein Hall. This beautiful, intimate recital space will allow a real closeness with the audience. Bechstein pianos are, of course, legendary—among Liszt's favourites. Near the end of his life, he wrote to Bechstein: "To judge your instruments means nothing else but to praise them. I have been playing your pianos for twenty-eight years now, and they have ever confirmed their superiority." So it's no coincidence that I've chosen a complete Liszt programme for my debut here on 3rd December, centred around the monumental *Sonata in B Minor*. Later in the season, I'll return to perform works by two composers close to my heart, Chopin and Ravel, celebrating the latter's 150th anniversary."

## Emmanuel Despax



Emmanuel Despax is in demand across the globe, appearing regularly at Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall, Louvre Auditorium, Salle Gaveau, International Festival Les Nuits Pianistiques in Aix-en-Provence, L'été Musical au Pujoula, and Les Nuits du Château de la Moutte in Saint-Tropez, and across the globe from Holland and Italy to South America. Despax has performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestras, among others.

His extensive catalogue of recordings includes:

- Brahms Piano Concerto No.1 with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Andrew Litton
- 'Spira, Spera' (Bach transcriptions)
- Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 and Stephen Goss Piano Concerto
- Chopin preludes (Classic FM's "*Album of the Week*")
- Chopin's Piano Concerti with the Chineke! Chamber Ensemble
- *Après un rêve* (5-star review in BBC Music Magazine)

### BECHSTEIN HALL LISTINGS

#### **Tuesday 3rd Dec at 6.30pm & 8.30pm**

Liszt Benediction de Dieu dans la Solitude  
Sonata in B minor

#### **Wednesday 11 December at 6.30pm and 8.30pm**

##### **Bechstein Trio**

Beethoven Piano Trio in E flat major  
Op.1 No.1  
Brahms Piano Trio No. 1 in B major  
Op.8

#### **Saturday 1 March 2025**

Chopin 24 Preludes  
Concerto No.1 with Chineke!  
Ensemble

#### **Saturday 7 March 2025 A celebration of Ravel's 150th anniversary of birth**

Ravel - Sonatine  
Ravel - Jeux d'eau  
Ravel - Gaspard de la nuit  
Ravel - Miroirs  
Ravel - La valse