

HUMANITAS

VISITING PROFESSORSHIPS AT THE UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

Humanitas Visiting Professorship in Chamber Music 2011: Professor Alfred Brendel

Press release 1 March 2011

World-renowned pianist Alfred Brendel is to be the inaugural Humanitas Visiting Professor in Chamber Music at the University of Cambridge, from 13 to 18 May 2011. He will give a series of public lectures, which he will illustrate at the piano. In addition, he will participate in an open rehearsal with the Szymanowski Quartet, who will be performing at West Road Concert Hall subsequently.

Humanitas is a series of Visiting Professorships at Oxford and Cambridge designed to bring leading academics, practitioners and scholars to both universities to address major themes in the arts, social sciences and humanities. Managed and funded by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue, it is coordinated in Cambridge by the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH). The Humanitas Visiting Professorship in Chamber Music 2011 has been made possible by the generous support of Mr Lawrence Saper.

Since Alfred Brendel's retirement from concert performances in 2008, he has continued to work around the world with young musicians and has given lectures, poetry readings and masterclasses with the Berlin Philharmonic and at London's Wigmore Hall, in Hamburg and Paris, and at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna, the University of California (Berkeley), Harvard University and the University of Zurich.

Alfred Brendel was the first pianist to record Beethoven's complete piano works. Through his efforts, Schubert's Piano Sonatas and the Schoenberg Piano Concerto were recognised as integral to the piano repertoire. During his sixty-year career, he performed regularly at the world's musical centres and festivals, and with the leading orchestras and conductors. His extensive discography has made him one of the most respected artists of our time. He gave his final concert appearance with the Vienna Philharmonic in December 2008.

Alfred Brendel will give two public lectures at the Faculty of Music in Cambridge: the first, 'On Character in Music', will show that the perception of character and atmosphere in musical performances is no less important than that of form and structure. In the second lecture, 'Light and Shade of Interpretation', he will examine performance details such as sound, articulation, notation, rhythm and character through recordings and projections. In both, he will play musical examples on the piano to illustrate his ideas.

The Humanitas Visiting Professorship in Chamber Music 2011 will conclude with an open rehearsal and concert with the Szymanowski Quartet. In the open rehearsal Brendel and the Quartet will discuss Beethoven's Quartet in A minor, Op. 132, which the Quartet will perform in the concluding concert at West Road Concert Hall, University of Cambridge. The Szymanowski Quartet, a group with which Brendel has developed a special partnership, started playing together in 1995. They are now Quartet in Residence at the Musikhochschule, Hanover.



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Mary Jacobus, Director of CRASSH at the University of Cambridge, comments, “We are delighted to host Alfred Brendel as the first Humanitas Visiting Professor in Chamber Music and that he will inaugurate this series of annual keynote lectures in music. We are delighted, in addition, to welcome to Cambridge the acclaimed Szymanowski Quartet with whom Brendel has had such a productive and close association.”

John Rink, Professor of Musical Performance Studies at the University, adds, “The Faculty of Music is privileged to host Alfred Brendel’s Humanitas lectures and the open rehearsal that he will conduct with the Szymanowski Quartet. Mr Brendel has had an enormous influence on contemporary musical thought and practice, and all of us will greatly benefit from his insight and wisdom during his Cambridge residency.”

Alfred Brendel’s tenure as Humanitas Visiting Professor will be the first in an ongoing, annual series of Humanitas Visiting Professorships in Chamber Music, held at the University of Cambridge.



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Notes to Editors:

The public events in Alfred Brendel's residency in Cambridge are as follows:

Lecture 1: On Character in Music

Friday 13 May 2011, 5pm

Lecture 2: Light and Shade of Interpretation

Monday 16 May 2011, 5pm

Open Rehearsal

Szymanowski Quartet and Alfred Brendel discuss Beethoven's Quartet in A minor, op. 132.

Tuesday 17 May 2011, 2-5pm

Concert by Szymanowski Quartet

Szymanowski Quartet no. 2, Op. 56

Beethoven Quartet in A minor, Op. 132

Wednesday 18 May 2011, 7.30pm

Concert tickets: £20, £15, £12, students £5, from Corn Exchange Box Office (01223 357851)

All events take place in West Road Concert Hall, Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge. The lectures and open rehearsal are free; pre-registration is recommended for the rehearsal (at www.crassh.cam.ac.uk) and tickets are required for the final concert.

For photographs and more information please see the contact details below.

About Humanitas

Humanitas is a series of Visiting Professorships at Oxford and Cambridge intended to bring leading practitioners and scholars to both universities to address major themes in the arts, social sciences and humanities. Created by Lord Weidenfeld, the Programme is managed and funded by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue with the support of a series of generous benefactors, and administered in Cambridge by CRASSH.

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