

Isata Kanneh-Mason

Isata Kanneh-Mason is the recipient of the 2021 Leonard Bernstein Award, a 2020 Opus Klassik award for best young artist and, as a member of the Kanneh-Mason family, the 2021 best classical artist at the Global Awards.

Her debut album on Decca Classics, “Romance – the Piano Music of Clara Schumann”, drew popular and critical acclaim, entering the UK classical charts at No. 1 when it was released in July 2019 and leading Gramophone magazine to extol the recording as “one of the most charming and engaging debuts” and Classic FM to praise Isata as “a player of considerable talent”. This was followed in July 2021 by “Summertime”, a journey through the varied piano repertoire of 20th-century America featuring Samuel Barber’s Piano Sonata and a world premiere recording of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s Impromptu in B minor.

Since studying with Hamish Milne and Carole Presland at London’s Royal Academy of Music, graduating in 2020 with a Master of Arts in Performance and the Diploma of the Royal Academy of Music (awarded for outstanding postgraduate final recital performance), Isata has embarked on a successful and increasingly busy concert career as a solo artist, with concerto appearances, solo recitals and chamber concerts throughout the UK and abroad. During the UK’s Covid-19 lockdown in spring 2020, Isata performed a livestreamed rendition from her family home in Nottingham of the first movement of Beethoven’s third piano concerto accompanied by her brothers and sisters, which garnered over one million views. She recently gave her Wigmore Hall solo recital debut, which featured repertoire by female composers for International Women’s Day, and appeared in streamed performances with orchestras such as the Hallé and the BBC Scottish Symphony. In the 21/22 season, Isata will continue as Young Artist in Residence with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Highlights of the next season include the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, the Royal Philharmonic at the Edinburgh Festival, the Rheingau Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, the Klavier Festival Ruhr, the Paris Mozart Orchestra at the Philharmonie de Paris, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and Auditorium National de Lyon, Tonhalle Orchestra Zürich, Dallas Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony orchestras, and a solo recital tour of North America.

During the 21/22 season, Isata will be one of the European Concert Hall Organisation’s Rising Stars, and will perform recital programmes at some of the continent’s most illustrious concert venues. As part of her ECHO Rising Stars season, she will also engage in educational and outreach activities and collaborate with Jamaican-British composer Eleanor Alberga on a newly commissioned piece. Isata also continues to perform with her siblings, including regular duo recitals with her brother, the cellist, Sheku Kanneh-Mason. Recent highlights include appearances at the Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Paris, Teatro della Pergola, Florence, L’Auditori, Barcelona, the Auditorio Nacional, Madrid, and Carnegie Hall, New York.

Isata has performed several times on television and radio including the BBC One documentary “Imagine... This House is Full of Music”, a feature for CBS Sunday Morning, and the Spanish TV show, La Resistencia. Isata made her debut as a television presenter for the coverage of the 2019 BBC Proms.

She completed her undergraduate degree at the Academy as an Elton John scholar, and performed with Sir Elton in 2013 in Los Angeles. Isata is also grateful for support from the Nottingham Soroptimist Trust, Mr and Mrs John Bryden, Frank White, and Awards for Young Musicians. She is currently continuing her studies privately with Alasdair Beatson.

573 words

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