

Music at St Michael's Sunday 21 May 3 pm

Jill Crossland (piano)

- D. Scarlatti** **Sonatas in G minor and D minor (Kk 476 and Kk141)**
- J. S. Bach** **Selection from the well-tempered Clavier: Bk 1**
Nos. 2 and 5 (C minor, D major); Bk 2 No. 12 (F minor)
- Mozart** **Fantasy in D minor K397**
- Beethoven** **7 Variations on "God Save the King" WoO78**

Jill Crossland pursues an active concert and recording career. Jill plays regularly on the South Bank and at the Wigmore Hall in London, and her recent appearances have also included Cadogan, Bridgewater and Fairfield Halls, St George's Bristol, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Vienna Musikverein, Vienna Konzerthaus, the National Concert Hall, Dublin and the Sage Gateshead. Jill's recordings include the Bach Goldberg Variations on Warner Classics and works by Handel, Scarlatti, Mozart and Beethoven. Jill has featured in the Classic FM Hall of Fame and her release of the complete Bach's Well Tempered Clavier has received high praise, described by the *Penguin Guide* as 'a remarkable achievement, ranking with the finest' Jill has appeared on radio and TV, including live and recorded broadcasts on BBC Radios 3 and 4. Jill's more recent CDs are of Rameau (the collections from 1706 and 1724) issued on Signum Classics, described by *Gramophone* as 'intelligent, stylish, tasteful, tonally resourceful and beautifully recorded.' And another of Mozart and Beethoven (the Moonlight sonata and the Bagatelles Op 126) described as having "thoughtfulness, liquidity" and "driven excitement" in *International Record Review*. Jill's recording of Bach pieces, including today's English Suite, was re-mastered on Divine Art last year to critical acclaim, described in *Fanfare Magazine* as 'exquisite' – a "synthesis of elegance, intimacy, and tonal beauty.... a lovely and captivating release." Jill's digital album of Bach's Partita No. 2 and Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, and Mozart pieces including the Three Rondos K485, K494, K511 was released on Signum Classics at the end of last year.

Jill played this programme last Thursday in Bangor Cathedral, and in Lutterworth on Wednesday and repeats it on Friday at St Mary's, Warwick.

See videos of Jill at: <http://www.youtube.com/c/JillCrosslandPiano> Her website is www.jillcrossland.com

Domenico **Scarlatti** (his father Alessandro was a noted composer of vocal music) emigrated from his native Italy to Portugal and then to Spain and wrote more than 500 sonatas for his pupil and patron, the Portuguese Princess Maria Barbara, who later became Queen of Spain. These works show his evident fascination with Iberian ambience and rhythms. She must have been no mean student to have played them all - today's second example, with its repeated notes is especially fiendish.

Bach's well-tempered Clavier (48 Preludes and Fugues) is widely seen as the greatest ever pedagogical keyboard work - two sets of preludes and fugues in all possible keys, which may (or may not) have been linked to the arrival of equal temperament as a system for tuning instruments. The early preludes of Book 1 were first written specifically for Bach's eldest son and clearly have an origin as finger-exercises. No. 5 is especially virtuosic and No. 2 toccata-like in its perpetual motion, while the fugue of No. 5 is written as the opening of a French Overture. Twenty years later, Bach returned to the idea, and assembled a generally more ambitious and chromatically daring set. No. 12 has a long prelude in the new 'galant' pre-classical style paired with a very traditional fugue.

Mozart is thought to have written this fantasy as an extension from an improvisation and as a response to those of C.P.E Bach. Arpeggios lead to a slow, mournful aria and then a more cheerful resolution into the major key. This popular work was actually left unfinished and was not published until 1804. The last few bars were completed by another composer.

Beethoven wrote these variations in 1803, and they were published by George Thomson (whose hobby was commissioning Scottish folk song arrangements by famous composers such as Haydn and indeed Beethoven) in Edinburgh, the variations also by Clementi in London. The original was a patriotic song popularised during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 and had already been turned into sets of variations by Forkel, Bach's first biographer, and by Bach's son Johann Christian. Beethoven allegedly said he 'wanted to show the English what a blessing they have' and manages to incorporate both tenderness and virtuosity in his variations. The same melody was also used as the Prussian national anthem from 1795 on and so would have been doubly familiar to Beethoven.