



PIANIST LIBBY BURGESS TAKES ON AN EXTRAORDINARY PROJECT, RAISING MONEY FOR MUSICIANS' CHARITIES

Can you help?

In 2021, I will perform Bach's epic "48" (the *Well-Tempered Clavier*), complete. 48 times. Once in each of the 48 counties of England.

Under current circumstances, most performances will be confirmed at relatively short notice, according to how the national situation develops. Audiences might have to attend in shifts, or be significantly restricted in number. Perhaps some performances will need to be outside!

But I am optimistic that somehow it will be possible to perform this wonderful music, across the country!

Bach wrote this massive and magnificent collection "*for the benefit and use of the musical youth eager to learn, as well as for the special pastime of those already skilful in this study.*" Part of the purpose of this project, then, will be **to fundraise for musical charities** who provide much-needed help to those categories of people today - musicians young and old.

If you would theoretically be interested in hosting one of the 48 performances, please get in touch and let me know. This needn't be a firm commitment at this point, not least as I realise planning is extremely difficult for venues, promoters, and individuals at the moment - but expressions of interest would be very welcome! In case it is useful in your thinking, a basic Q&A can be found below.

If you can't help put on a concert, but could offer assistance with fundraising, or with generally spreading the word, that too would be much appreciated! Musical charities, and the individuals they support, need every ounce of help they can get at the moment.

Would you like to host one of these performances? Read this Q&A to help your thinking.

What kind of venue is appropriate? Honestly - absolutely anything, from cathedral to pub to shopping centre to primary school. Or an actual concert hall of course. Outdoors is also, quite seriously, a possibility. My plan is that every performance should feel different.

How good should the piano be? The piano should be good enough to do the music justice: it needn't be a full-size concert Steinway (though lovely if it is!), but it should be respectable. Having said that - if there's a compelling reason for performing somewhere with a battered-up old instrument (in a school, in an old people's home, in a prison, at the top of a mountain), I'm open to discussion.

How long will the performance be? The 48 is arranged in two books (24 preludes and fugues in each). Each book lasts a little under 2 hours. So there are various possible formats. Two evening performances on consecutive nights, of one book each. Four or eight shorter performances staggered through a day. Music on the hour every hour, day and night. A procession around 48 different pianos in a city, one prelude and fugue on each.... The options are endless, and again, I'm keen that each rendition feels different.

How will the finances work? I will take a modest fee for each performance, after which all profits go towards the nominated musical charities of the project. (The exact line-up of these charities is being finalised at the moment.) So events could be ticketed, or could be run on a donation basis, or underwritten by patrons in the area - but they do need to make a profit! The project cannot pay hire fees for venues or pianos, so if your suggested setup includes these, they need to be funded locally.

Who is in charge of publicising the event? You are. There will of course be some more general publicity that comes with the project as a whole, but in terms of drumming up an audience, that needs to be done locally.

Is there scope for an educational component too? Yes, categorically, and enthusiastically! A university or school masterclass, a talk to introduce the music, a workshop for local amateur pianists, a school assembly.... Offer up your ideas and let's see what we can concoct!

If you would like to be involved, please drop me a line (libby@libbyburgess.com). Thank you in advance for any involvement you're able to offer. And now I'm off to practise some mind-boggling counterpoint....