



CLÉLIA IRUZUN

With her combination of colourful Brazilian spirit and musicianship, London-based pianist **Clélia Iruzun** is one of the most exciting musicians to emerge onto the international scene in recent years. Part of a tradition of female South American pianists that includes Teresa Carreño, Guiomar Novas, Magda Tagliaferro and the legendary Martha Argerich, critics have praised her powerful performances of the romantic repertoire where “the lyricism pours out with the clarity of crystal”.

Clélia’s childhood was spent in the rich cultural atmosphere of Rio de Janeiro where she began playing the piano at the age of four, winning her first competition at seven and making her orchestral debut playing Grieg’s Piano Concerto at 15. At 17 Clélia won a scholarship to continue her development by studying with the highly regarded Maria Curcio in London, and then with Christopher Elton, who took her under his wing at the Royal Academy of Music. Later she also studied with Noretta Conci and then with Mercês de Silva Telles, who encouraged Clélia to develop her own definitive style. Her mentors have included Fou Ts’Ong, Stephen Kovacevich, and her compatriots, the great pianists Jacques Klein and Nelson Freire. Even from the early years of her career, Clélia’s stunning piano playing caught the attention of prominent musical figures such as Francisco Mignone who wrote a Suite especially for her. Clélia has won many awards in Brazil and in Europe, such as the Tunbridge Wells Piano Competition in the UK, the Paloma O’Shea in Santander and Pilar Bayona in Zaragoza.

Clélia Iruzun has given recitals and concerto performance all over Europe, the Americas and Asia. Her tours in China included concerts for huge audiences, including recitals at the Grand Theatre in Shanghai, Hangzhou, Ningbo and the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, where she performed repertoire never before heard in China including works by Villa-Lobos. Her recital in Shanghai was voted one of the ten best concerts of the year. In the UK she has performed at the Wigmore Hall, where she gave the UK premiere of Joao Guilherme Ripper’s Sonata, having previously premiered Marlos Nobre’s Sonata Breve in the same venue. Clélia has also performed at the Purcell Room and Queen Elizabeth Hall, St John’s Smith Square and music societies and festivals across the country. At a BBC invitation concert in 2004 she performed a new work by Elena Kats-Chernin entitled ‘Torque’ for piano, accordion and strings, conducted by Odaline de la Martinez and broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

<http://www.cleliairuzun.com/cms/index.php>

Concert tours have taken her across Canada and the USA, to Yugoslavia and the Czech Republic, Portugal and Spain, where she performed a Chopin recital at the prestigious Valdemossa Monastery in Mallorca. She has given recitals in Paris and at the Montpellier Festival, and has performed at the Konserthusets in Stockholm and in Gothenburg. In 2002 **Clélia** played Mignone's *Fantasia Brasileira No.3* for piano and orchestra for the first time in Norway with the Kristiansand Chamber Orchestra, a

work which she also premiered in Poland with the Poznan Philharmonic in 2004 in a programme which included Marlos Noble's Concertante do Imaginario and more recently in London with Lontano at the Brazil Plus Festival at the South Bank Centre in 2008. In her native Brazil she is a regular performer on TV and radio and has performed at the Teatro Cultura Artistica and Teatro Municipal in São Paulo and the Theatro Municipal and Sala Cecilia Meireles in Rio de Janeiro where she has also premiered works by British composers such as York Bowen and Arnold Bax. Clélia also dedicates a great deal of her performances to the Classical and Romantic repertoire and has been praised for her interpretations of Mozart, Chopin and Schumann. She has recently taken part in the Festival Folle Journée in Rio performing in the cycle of the Beethoven Sonatas.

On disc, Clélia's has championed the music of South American composers: Villa-Lobos Piano Music (1992, Meridian Records-re-issued 2005), Latin American Dances (1998, Intim Musik), The Waltz Album (2002, Intim Musik), and Brazilian Mosaic – including a world premiere recording of Marlos Noble's Concertante do Imaginario (2003, Lorelt), the music of Lecuona (2005, Lorelt) and the recently released Francisco Mignone-Piano Music (2007, Lorelt). A disc of Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No 1 and Concerto for Violin and Piano with Joachim Gustafsson (1999, Intim Musik) was selected by Swedish Radio as the best recording of the double concerto available.

Clélia is married to Renato and has two children Raphael and Maria Clara and makes her home in London, returning to Brazil two or three times each year. When not performing, Clélia enjoys reading about Philosophy, following films, is an avid art lover and enjoys cooking.

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