

JOHN BAYLESS - Pianist, Composer, Improviser, Recording Artist

John Bayless is *"an evocative pianist with a lovely piano sound and considerable personal pizzazz".....*
The New York Times

"John Bayless has an extraordinary imagination, sly wit, tremendous musicality and an imposing technique "..... High Fidelity Magazine

John Bayless was born on the wind swept plains of West Texas, in Borger, a small oil town forty miles north of Amarillo. He started to play piano by ear at age four. His mother, a singer and musician, was his first teacher. John's childhood heroes were Leonard Bernstein and Liberace. At age 13 he was the youngest church organist in the State of Texas, playing for his hometown Baptist Church and for services at the Synagogue in Amarillo. When he was 15 he won a scholarship to the Aspen School of Music where he met and first studied with the legendary Adele Marcus. At 17, he was off to New York City to attend the Juilliard School of Music and further his study with Ms. Marcus who shaped his musical gifts and encouraged his extraordinary ability in improvisation.

John was invited to participate as a composer in the inaugural class of New York University's Musical Theater Masters Degree Program where he studied with Leonard Bernstein, Julie Styne, Arthur Laurents, Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Maestro Bernstein was particularly intrigued with John's talent at improvisation and composition and a lifelong friendship ensued. John was artist in residence for the London Symphony Orchestra's Leonard Bernstein Festival, performing at a gala for Queen Elizabeth II. He also served as Associate Conductor for the 1981 production of Leonard Bernstein's Mass at the Kennedy Center.

As a performer, both solo piano and with orchestra, his extensive background includes appearances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, Tanglewood, Wigmore Hall in London, Philadelphia's Academy of Music, Davies Hall in San Francisco The Hollywood Bowl and London's Barbican Center. He has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Pops, San Francisco Symphony, and New York Pops among others. He created special programs for The New York Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra, performed at New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, The Budapest Spring Festival, made four tours of Japan, toured England and America playing *Rhapsody in Blue* with The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and has frequently concertized in Italy and Germany. Over the past nineteen years John has performed literally hundreds of concerts across the United States from Hawaii to Maine. Rosemary Clooney invited him to be her guest artist, performing on her pops concerts and her famed Christmas shows. He has been featured on many television and radio programs including NBC's Today Show and Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion.

As composer and performer he has received commissions from The Newport Music Festival, The University of Maryland International Piano Competition, The Virginia Waring International Piano Competition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and from PBS, where his music can be heard on many series and specials.

As a teacher John has conducted Master Classes at Juilliard, Kent State, Dennison University, University of Houston and The Royal Academy of Music in London.

A prolific recording artist, John's numerous CD's have been at the top of the Classical and Classical Crossover Charts since the mid-80's and many are still available today. His best selling collections include, Bach on Abbey Road (one of the top ten best selling albums of the 1980's), Bach Meets The Beatles, Romantica, The Puccini Album (Billboard Magazine's #1 top selling album for 19 weeks), The Movie Album, Circle of Life, Christmas Rhapsody, and West Side Story Variations. Most are readily available through Amazon.com.

John is Composer-in-Residence and serves on the Artistic Committee of the 2011 Virginia Waring International Piano Competition. Currently he is orchestrating an original composition for left hand he will premiere in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall with the Moscow Virtuosi Orchestra.