

JAMES W. IMAN

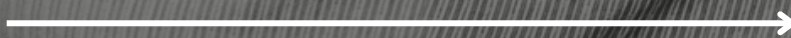
PIANIST

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-2025

BIO

Pianist James Iman plays the usual and the unusual, by composers known and unknown. As a specialist in music written since 1900—with an emphasis on music written since 1945—his repertoire spans every stylistic development since Debussy. He is meticulous in his study of the scores and the aesthetic concepts behind each of the works he plays. This allows him to find fresh approaches to established canonic warhorses and to make complex contemporary works engaging and immediately clear to audiences.

He is constantly looking for new and interesting works to add to his repertoire and curates his programs with an interest in diversity, contrast, and continuity. He is a vocal advocate of underrepresented composers—striving to be socially conscious as an artist—and frequently performs music by women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ composers. He regularly appears on Chatham University's Friday Afternoon Musicales concert series, where he has presented four programs of works by women composers as well as the complete piano sonatas of Ukrainian composer, Valentin Silvestrov.

James has given World and United States premieres of works by both established and emerging composers. These include World premieres of works by Charlie Wilmoth (a work written for the pianist), David Dies, and Everette Minchew, and United States premieres include works by Gilbert Amy, Alwynne Pritchard, Raphaël Languillat, and Soe Tjen Marching. James has also commissioned works from emerging composers, among which are Lowell Fuchs' concert-length work "People," and a forthcoming commission by Jenny Beck.

In 2021, James signed with Divine Art's new music division, Métier Records, for three albums of modern and contemporary music. The first to appear, will be a reissue of his debut album, recorded in Belgium's famous Flagey Studio, featuring works by Schoenberg, Boulez, Webern and Gilbert Amy, will see release in the summer of 2022. This re-release will be followed by two albums that will include works by Alban Berg, Betsy Jolas, Morton Feldman, Klaus Huber, Claude Debussy, Donald Martino, and Jenny Beck. As with his debut release, both albums will include world premiere recordings.

In addition to his activities as a performer, James is active as a lecturer and clinician. He is a frequent guest lecturer on contemporary music at Shenandoah Conservatory, and has been a resident at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and at Grand Valley State University giving master classes for pianists and clinics with composition students.

As a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, James holds an MA in Piano Performance and a BA in Music History and Piano Performance. While at IUP, he studied piano with Judith Radell and James Staples. In 2015, James worked with Steve Drury as a fellow at New England Conservatory's Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice.

PRESS

"This is a most thoughtfully conceived program... James Iman's performances are characterized throughout by a passionate sense of commitment to each of the works...I was particularly impressed by his playing in the rarely heard Sonata by Gilbert Amy, and the remarkable resonances obtained from the instrument in his performance of Constellation from Boulez's Third Sonata. A most welcome release."

-Peter O'Hagan

"An outstanding and imaginative artist...from the very first notes...one is aware of the fact that Iman is an artist and not just a technician. His phrasing and subtle use of dynamics...mold and shape this music in ways I've never quite heard before."

- Lynn René Bayley, Art Music Lounge

"Few can rise to the challenge of this music and meet it head on with conviction, musicality, and a supreme alertness to its myriad details and quirks: James Iman more than achieves this. Indeed, throughout the album one has a very clear sense of his total commitment to this music, and also how comfortable he feels in this repertoire. His performance of the Boulez Third Sonata equals Maurizio Pollini's animated performance of the Second Sonata..."

- Fran Wilson, crosseyedpianist.com



"Faced with the undoubted and disturbing difficulty of these pieces, James Iman's reading is truly remarkable: precision, sense of balance, structural speech, programmatic rigor, these are the "watchwords" of his execution, whose summit is represented, in my view, precisely by the Boulezian Sonata, which places it among the reference versions."

-Andrea Bedetti, MusicVoice.it

"It has to be said that Iman is a fierce and forceful advocate for the material and that he handles it with both understanding and technical skill."

-Mark J. Estren, infodad.com



"[Iman] displays a remarkable appreciation of Debussy's music which I really enjoyed, allowing me to hear these well-known pieces afresh. Jenny Beck's 'Stand Still Here' provides an extraordinary contrast. Iman is able to achieve a wonderful sense of spontaneity and improvisation: notes linger, vibrate, shimmer and fade. It's a deeply absorbing interlude. Iman gives a masterful performance of this collection of pieces [by Martino] which combine virtuosity and expression, improvisation and structure, making them the perfect complement to Debussy."

-Frances Wilson, Art Muse London

PROPOSED PROGRAMS

Donald Martino
Claude Debussy
Claude Debussy

Fantasies and Impromptus (1981)
Images I (1905)
Images II (1907)

OR

Jenny Beck
Donald Martino
Claude Debussy
Claude Debussy

Stand Still Here (2012)
Twelve Preludes (1991)
Images I (1905)
Images II (1907)

Ann Boyd
Slemet A. Sjukur
Slemet A. Sjukur
Claude Debussy

Angklung (1974)
Yu-Taha (1997)
Svara (1979)
Estampes (1903)

OR

Ann Boyd
Feruccio Busoni
Akira Nishimura
Claude Debussy

Angklung (1974)
Fantasia nach Bach (1909)
Carillions of Ekstasis (1987)
Estampes (1903)

Valentin Silvestrov
Valentin Silvestrov
Valentin Silvestrov
Valentin Silvestrov

Piano Sonata No.1 (1972)
Piano Sonata No.2 (1975)
Piano Sonata No.3 (1979)
Der Bote (The Messenger) (1996)

Morton Feldman

For Bunita Marcus (1985)

BEYOND THE KEYS

Extended techniques have significantly expanded instruments' expressive possibilities, and a comprehensive grasp of their notation, execution, and sound is crucial for both 21st-century performers and composers.

This presentation explores exclusively piano-based extended techniques, excluding prepared piano. It covers their historical development, categorization, resulting sounds, notational intricacies, and precise execution. Notable compositions featuring these techniques are also showcased.

Available versions tailored to various audiences are:

- A performer-focused version emphasizing nuanced challenges and step-by-step demonstrations.
- A composer-focused version stressing notation, logistics, and technical considerations.
- A hybrid version integrating all aspects for a comprehensive view.

All versions incorporate audio/visual examples and hands-on guidance. Access to a grand piano and appropriate audio/video equipment is necessary.

ORGANIZED CHAOS

Modern classical music poses distinctive aesthetic and, notably, technical challenges to performers. Conquering these challenges can appear formidable, particularly for those new to the genre.

In this lecture, I elucidate the analytical and pragmatic approaches I have amassed throughout my years as a contemporary music specialist. These encompass:

- Repertoire curation
- Practical analysis
- Core annotation
- Strategic practice scheduling

Although I have refined these methodologies to suit the demands of contemporary music, they possess a wide-ranging relevance and the potential to enhance students' comprehensive aptitude and adaptability.

MID-CENTURY TO MODERNITY

This lecture is a survey of important piano works since 1945. It gives brief biographical information about the composers, the context of the works under consideration, and discusses the contributions made to the repertoire.

REPERTOIRE SOLO



Gilbert Amy	Sonate pour Piano (1961)*
Mark Andre	iv 11 a-c (2011-15/2017)
Kyle Bartlett	la figure se brûle (1997)
Jenny Beck	Stand Still Here (2012)
Alban Berg	Klaviersonate Op.1 (1910)
Pierre Boulez	Troisième Sonate (1955-57/63)
Sylvano Bussotti	Novelletta (1973)
	Fogli d'Album (1984)
John Cage	A Room (1943)
	Two Pieces for Piano (1946)
	The Seasons (1947)
	Dream (1948)
	In a Landscape (1948)
	Waiting (1952)
	Music for Piano 4-84 (1961)
	Cheap Imitation (1969)
	ASLSP (1985)
John Corigliano	Fantasia on an Ostinato (1985)
Claude Debussy	Estampes (1903)
	Images I (1905)
	Images II (1907)
David Dies	Arqueología de la razón de los sueños (2013)+
Richard Emsley	For Piano 1 (1997)
Ivan Fedele	Études Boreales (1990)
Morton Feldman	Illusions (1948)
	Two Intermissions (1950)
	Nature Pieces (1951)
	Intermission 3 (1951)
	Intermission 4 (1951)
	Variations (1951)
	Intermission 5 (1952)
	Extensions 3 (1952)
	Piano Piece 1952 (1952)
	Intermission 6 (1953)
	Three Pieces for Piano (1954)
	Piano Piece 1955 (1955)
	Piano Piece 1956 A (1956)
	Piano Piece 1956 B (1956)
	Last Pieces (1956)
	Piano Piece 1964 (1964)
	Piano (1977)
	For Bunita Marcus (1985)
	Palais de Mari (1986)
Lowell Fuchs	People (2017)+

+ WORLD PREMIERE
* UNITED STATES PREMIERE

Beat Furrer	Voicelessness, The Snow has No Voice (1986)
Talib Rasul Hakim	Drei Klavierstücke (2004)
Betsy Jolas	Sound-Gone (1967)
	B for Sonata (1973)
	Trois Etudes Campanaires (1980)
André Jolivet	Cosmogonie (1938)
Jonghee Kang	The Ocean was Still (2013)
Adrienne Knight	Abide With Me (2007/2012)
Barbara Kolb	Appello (1976)
Raphael Languillat	La Remise des clefs à saint Pierre (2013)*
Annea Lockwood	Red Mesa (1993)
Elisabeth Lutyens	Plenum I Op.86 (1972)
Bunita Marcus	...but to fashion a lullaby for you... (1988/98)
Soe Tjen Marching	Kenang (2001)*
Donald Martino	Fantasies and Impromptus (1981)
Everette Minchew	Proem (2015)+
Federico Mompou	Paisajes (1942-60)
Adrienne Knight	Abide with Me (2007/2012)
Maurice Ohana	Trois Caprices (1963)
Hans Otte	Das Buch der Klänge (1979/82)
Matthais Pintscher	On a Clear Day (2004)
Alwynn Pritchard	Der Zwerg (1997/98)*
George Rochberg	12 Bagatelles (1952)
Nikolai Roslavets	Cinq Préludes (1919-1922)
Rebecca Saunders	Mirror, Mirror on the Wall (1994)
	Shadow (2013)
Salvatori Sciarrino	Perduto in una città d'acque (1990-91)
	V Sonata (1994)
Alexandar Scriabin	Deux Morceaux Op.57 (1908)
	Cinq Préludes Op.74 (1914)
Valentin Silvestrov	Piano Sonata No.1 (1972)
	Piano Sonata No.2 (1975)
	Piano Sonata No.3 (1979)
	The Messenger (1996)
Howard Skempton	Eirenicon 1-4 (1973-1985)
Ann Southam	Simple Lines of Inquiry (2007)
Slamet A. Sjukur	Svara (1979)
	Yu-Taha (1997)
Linda Catlin Smith	The Surroundings (1995)
Karlheinz Stockhause	Nr. 2 Klavierstücke I-IV (1952)
	Nr. 4 Klavierstück V (1954/61)
	Nr. 4 Klavierstück VII (1954/61)
	Nr. 4 Klavierstück VIII (1954/61)
	Nr. 4 Klavierstücke IX (1954/61)
	Nr. 7 Klavierstück XI (1956)

+ WORLD PREMIERE
* UNITED STATES PREMIERE

FORTHCOMING
SOLO

Arnold Schoenberg

Drei Klavierstücke Op.11 (1909)

Sechs klein Klavierstücke, Op.19 (1911)

Galina Ustvolskaya

Sonata No.5 (1986)

Jacob ter Veldhuis

Postnuclear Winterscenario I (1991)

Aleksandra Vrebalov

Indigo Codes (2019)

Anton Webern

Variationen Op.27 (1936)

Charlie Wilmoth

Untitled (2013)+

Joji Yuasa

Cosmos Haptic I (1957)

Cosmos Haptic II - Transifuration (1986)

Chris Dench

Quiescence for BP (2022)+

Passing Bells (2004/2020)*

Vagantes (TBD)+

Richard Emsley

for piano 2 (1997)

for piano 3 (1997)*

for piano 4 (1997)*

for piano 5 (1998)*

for piano 6 (1999)*

for piano 7 (1999)*

for piano 8 (1999)*

for piano 9 (1999)*

for piano 10 (1999)*

for piano 11 (1999)*

for piano 12 (1999)*

for piano 13 (2000-03)*

for piano 14 (2004)*

for piano 15 (2005)*

for piano 16 (2020)+

for piano 17 (2020)+

for piano 18 (2020)+

for piano 19 (2020)+

for piano 20 (2020)+

for piano 21 (2020)+

for piano 22 (2021)+

for piano 23 (2023)+

Pierre Boulez

Deuxième Sonate (1947-8)

+ WORLD PREMIERE

* UNITED STATES PREMIERE