
A TRUE STORY BY ALAN BENNETT

The **LADY** in the **VAN**

Pianist Clare Hammond appears in a new Alan Bennett film adaptation, *The Lady in the Van*, as the younger Miss Shepherd



Pianist **Clare Hammond** will appear in the forthcoming film adaptation of **Alan Bennett's** play, *The Lady in the Van*, as the younger version of **Dame Maggie Smith's** character, Miss Shepherd. Clare performs in a number of flashback scenes recreating a Proms concert in the 1930s, and enacts Miss Shepherd's experiences as a novice nun some years later.

Clare's recording of excerpts from Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1, with the BBC Concert Orchestra, is featured throughout the film. The slow movement of Chopin's concerto and Clare's performance of Schubert's Impromptu in G flat major, are included on the soundtrack alongside music specially composed for the film by George Fenton, due for release by Sony on the **6 November 2015**.

Downton Abbey's" Dame Maggie Smith, a two-time Oscar® winner, recreates one of her most celebrated roles – the singular Miss Shepherd – in TriStar's *The Lady in the Van*, Alan Bennett's big-screen comedic adaptation of his own iconic memoir and honored stage play. Bennett's story is based on the true story of Miss Shepherd, a woman of uncertain origins who "temporarily" parked her van in Bennett's London driveway and proceeded to live there for 15 years. What begins as a begrudged favor becomes a relationship that will change both their lives. Filmed on the street and in the house where Bennett and Miss Shepherd lived all those years, acclaimed director Nicholas Hytner reunites with Bennett (*The Madness of King George*, *The History Boys*) to bring this touching, poignant, and life-affirming story to the screen. The film is due for release in the UK on **13 November 2015**.

For images from the film and further information please contact
Jo Carpenter on
jo@jocarpenter.com / 07771 538868



Clare Hammond on set with composer George Fenton. Photo © Nicola Dove



Clare Hammond on set with the BBC Concert Orchestra. Photo © Nicola Dove

BIOGRAPHY

Acclaimed as a pianist of “amazing power and panache” (*The Telegraph*), Clare Hammond is recognised for the virtuosity and authority of her performances and is developing a “reputation for brilliantly imaginative concert programmes” (*BBC Music Magazine*, ‘Rising Star’). The Guardian described her as a “dazzling athlete” following her Barbican debut in 2015, while in 2014 she gave debut performances at 7 festivals across Europe, including the ‘Chopin and his Europe Festival’ in Warsaw, world premieres of works by 10 composers, and three broadcasts for BBC Radio. In November 2015 she will appear as a younger version of Maggie Smith’s character, ‘Miss Shepherd’, in Nick Hytner’s film adaptation of Alan Bennett’s play *The Lady in the Van*.

Hammond’s latest disc release, ‘Etude’, has received unanimous critical praise for its “unflinching bravura and conviction” (*Gramophone*), was selected as Critic’s Choice by Classical Music Magazine, and the BBC Music Magazine stated that “this array of wizardry is not for the faint hearted”. Both ‘Etude’, and Hammond’s previous disc of music by Andrzej and Roxanna Panufnik, ‘Reflections’, were featured on BBC Radio 3’s ‘In Tune’ and ‘CD Review’. In 2014 Hammond recorded music by Sibelius and Rangström as part of a BBC Symphony Orchestra studio concert for ‘Afternoon on 3’ while in 2012 her live recital broadcast of Ravel’s *Le Tombeau de Couperin* from the Wigmore Hall was chosen as one of Radio 3’s highlights of the month.

Last year Hammond gave a Panufnik Centenary tour of Poland with a series of recital and concerto performances, under the auspices of the British Council’s ‘Artists’ International Development Fund’. Her debut recital at the ‘Chopin and his Europe Festival’ in Warsaw was recorded for broadcast on Polish Radio. Hammond also co-curated and managed the festival ‘Panufnik 100: a family celebration’ with the Brodsky Quartet at Kings Place in London which was hailed as the “culmination of this year’s Andrzej Panufnik centenary” (*The Telegraph*).

Contemporary music forms an important part of Hammond’s work. In recent years she has given premieres of major works by composers Robert Saxton, Edwin Roxburgh, John McCabe and Arlene Sierra. The Guardian wrote of her performance of Ken Hesketh’s *Horae (pro clara)* at the Cheltenham Festival in 2013 that she “displayed its scintillating passagework and poetic calm with great flair”. In 2015, she premiered a concerto for trumpet and piano by Geoffrey Gordon with Simon Desbruslais and the English Symphony Orchestra and will record a disc of solo piano works by Ken Hesketh for BIS.

An active chamber musician, Hammond has worked with the Brodsky, Endellion, Badke, Dante and Piatti Quartets and in duos with Henning Kraggerud, Andrew Kennedy, Jennifer Pike, Philippe Graffin and Lawrence Power. She is a member of the Odysseus Piano Trio alongside violinist Sara Trickey and cellist Gregor Riddell.

Hammond completed a BA at Cambridge University, where she obtained a double first in music, and undertook postgraduate study with Ronan O’Hora at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and with Professor Rhian Samuel at City University London. She completed a doctorate on twentieth-century left-hand piano concertos in 2012 and is in demand as a speaker, regularly giving presentations for research series at universities across the UK. In 2014 she was paired with French pianist Anne Queffélec on the Philip Langridge Mentoring Scheme run by the Royal Philharmonic Society.

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<http://www.clarehammond.com>