



## Victoria Samek MSc ARCM (hons)

Victoria Samek is a critically acclaimed international artist, a highly respected teacher and a thoughtful and caring mentor. Combining breath-taking technicality and musical integrity in her performances and recordings she is driven by her commitment to musical excellence.

The power of communication in performance, the discipline of practice and the love of music through her chosen instruments have all shaped her musical career. Holder of a Masters in Performance Science from the Royal College of Music, she teaches and lectures on practice preparation and working with and understanding the anxieties related to performance, using OPC, her own unique, holistic method.

She is also founder and director of international recording and publishing company Clarinet & Saxophone Classics, which in 2017 celebrated its 25th anniversary. 2017 also saw the launch of Samekmusic.com, home to the label and embracing her extensive activities as performer and educator.

## Background

Born of Czech and Hungarian parents, she was a pupil at The Purcell School and studied clarinet with Roger Fallows before winning a Foundation Scholarship to the Royal College of Music studying clarinet with Colin Bradbury and bass clarinet and saxophone with Steve Trier. She later studied clarinet with Antony Pay. Prize winner of the prestigious Frederick Thurston Memorial Prize, she graduated with honours.

## Performance and recording

As a Radio 3 artist Victoria has given live and studio broadcasts including the premiere recording of a bass clarinet concerto by Thea Musgrave with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Jerzy Maksymiuk. She has subsequently recorded Thea Musgrave's Autumn Sonata and Clarinet Concerto under the direction of the composer. As soloist she has performed concertos with orchestras including the City of London Sinfonia.

Victoria has performed in the major concert halls in the UK including the South Bank Centre and Wigmore Hall as soloist and chamber musician; she has also toured extensively throughout Europe, North and South America, where she also gave masterclasses.

Victoria's recordings for her Clarinet & Saxophone Classics label include the world première recording of Copland's Clarinet Sonata, voted 'most sheerly seductive record of the year' by The Sunday Times. Other recordings include two CDs devoted to Solos de Concours and premiere recordings of clarinet and saxophone chamber music by Joseph Horowitz, Rob Keeley and Richard Rodney Bennett with pianist and duo partner Michael Bell, The Samek/Brannick Duo and The Samek Players, (formally East Winds, ReedPlay and The Mühlfeld Trio). She has also recorded for other labels including Hyperion and Naxos.

As well as performing clarinet music from the 18th and 19th centuries, her long-standing commitment to contemporary music has resulted in over thirty commissions and dedications from notable composers; her first commission in 1978 from Elisabeth Lutyens and Roger Marsh and most recently works by Graham Williams, Jeffery Wilson and Rob Keeley for Bb, Eb and bass clarinets, soprano, alto and tenor saxophone and Thea Musgrave who recently transcribed Orfeo IV for Eb clarinet especially for Victoria which also goes to demonstrate the versatility and formidable qualities of Samek's musicianship and technical prowess.

2018 sees three major concerto performance and recording premieres by Malcolm Arnold Concerto No.2 and Stamford Concerto transcribed for clarinet and wind-band by Stephen Roberts who is also writing her a double saxophone concerto.

## Teaching

Victoria has enjoyed an extensive teaching career at, amongst others, Pimlico Special Music School, Royal Holloway College and Guildhall School of Music & Drama. She is also associated with Goldsmiths University and Trinity Laban.

For seven years Victoria was professor of clarinet and saxophone for The Royal Military School of Music, but resigned her position in July 2016 to pursue further research related to her Performance Science Masters. This has culminated in the development of an innovative method, OPC (Organise, Prioritise, Commit), an analytical tool, systematic approach and flexible framework through the organisation and prioritisation of tasks within the Performance Preparation and Performance Simulation stages from which the resulting blueprint of instruction for Performance Realisation to be secured.

Through the constructive tools offered within OPC; its flexible framework for inquiry, systematic approach, methodical and explanatory reasoning, will enhance constructive self-evaluation and self-awareness for the performer. Practical systems driven by intellectual rationale combine to generate a sense of positive self-worth and ownership, commitment and control to withstand and manage pressures and potential anxieties, thereby optimising performance. The full OPC method (formal title to be unveiled on publication!) will be published in September 2018.

Being actively involved in performance, Victoria is in a unique position to take the academic concept and theories drawn from Performance Science into the practical world of music.

## Reviews

'... Victoria Samek, whose sumptuous sound is a feast in this age of blandness.'  
The Daily Telegraph

'she has a beautifully rounded tone, a sensitive feeling for style and seemingly effortless technique.'  
Musical Times

'Performances are as attuned to Musgrave's idiom as one would expect from Victoria Samek ... this is a disc that listeners and performers alike should investigate.'  
Gramophone

'Victoria Samek plays all the works with a virtuosity, finesse, and full attractive tone.'  
Fanfare

'Victoria Samek projected the personality of the bass clarinet and Thea Musgrave's music with technical mastery and glowing musicianship.'  
Musical Opinion

'The commitment and quality of the playing is at once apparent; Victoria Samek and Michael Bell are a formidable duo'.  
International Record Review

'Victoria Samek's energy as a curator of Clarinet & Saxophone Classics continues to impress.'  
International Record Review

'The clarinet world owes her its gratitude'  
American Record Guide

Victoria is a D'Addario Performing Artist and an official endorsee for Selmer Paris.

**For more information, visit [www.samekmusic.com](http://www.samekmusic.com)**