

# Gleb Ivanov

piano

STRAUSS GRÜN FELD LISZT  
SCAUBERT RESPIGI AICHOPI  
GRIEG RACHMANINOFF



DE 3520





# Gleb Ivanov

**"A young super-virtuoso, with musical sensitivity and an appreciation of style to go with the thunder and lightning" *The New York Times***

**STRAUSS-GRÜNFELD:** Soirée de Vienne, Op. 56

**RESPIGHI:** Notturmo, P 011

**SCHUBERT-LISZT:** Liebesbotschaft; Aufenthalt; Am Meer; Erlkönig

**SCHUBERT:** Sonata in A Major, D. 664, Op. 120

**CHOPIN:** 4 Mazurkas, Op. 41

**LISZT:** Die Lorelei, S. 532

**RACHMANINOFF:** Mélodie, Op. 3; Humoresque, Op. 10

**GRIEG-GINZBURG:** In the Hall of the Mountain King

**GLEB IVANOV, piano**

**Total Playing Time: 70:55**



# GLEB IVANOV

## piano

1. STRAUSS-GRÜNFELD: Soirée de Vienne, Op. 56 (Arr. Ivanov) (5:53)

2. RESPIGHI: Notturmo in G-flat Major, P 011 (6:11)

SCHUBERT-LISZT

3. Liebesbotschaft, S.560/10 (3:07)

4. Aufenthalt, S.560/3 (3:02)

5. Am Meer, S.560/6 (5:01)

6. Erlkönig, S.558/4 (4:34)

SCHUBERT: Sonata in A Major, D.664, Op. 120

7. Allegro (7:53)

8. Andante (4:52)

9. Allegro (7:16)

CHOPIN: Mazurkas, Op. 41

10. No. 1 in C-sharp Minor (2:52)

11. No. 2 in E Minor (1:50)

12. No. 3 in B Major (1:13)

13. No. 4 in A-flat Major (1:39)

14. LISZT: Die Lorelei, S.532 (5:59)

RACHMANINOFF

15. Mélodie, Op. 3, No. 3 (3:51)

16. Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 5 (3:20)

GRIEG-GINZBURG

17. In the Hall of the Mountain King (2:16)

Total Playing Time: 70:55

Russian pianist Gleb Ivanov is deeply sensitive to his musical ancestry. It informs every aspect of his playing, from his choice of repertoire to his stage presence. Indeed, his noble bearing and posture recall musicians such as György Cziffra (who barely moved even during the most physically exacting passages) or Vladimir Horowitz (whose expression when playing was nearly blank except for his exceedingly expressive eyebrows). Ivanov's technical prowess is no less than theirs; he has the ability to play highly challenging music so effortlessly that we may forget its pianistic difficulty and revel in its musical virtues.

Ivanov's fascination with the great pianists of the twentieth century reveals a dedication to the tradition of piano virtuosity. It is not enough for Ivanov to play a brilliant virtuoso piece, for that is not what he feels made Rachmaninoff a great pianist, nor Horowitz. That last stretch of greatness comes from an electricity that only

stems from a deep connection to the emotional triggers great technique can unlock. Ivanov listens to recordings obsessively. More interestingly, it is rarely the work that fascinates him, as much as the performer. His CD shelves are crammed with hundreds of recordings by Glenn Gould, Horowitz, Rachmaninoff, William Kapell, György Cziffra, and others (among them Jascha Heifetz, Maria Callas, and Paco di Lucia). There are few recordings of living performers.

To Ivanov, the piano is a vocal instrument. Even when playing the works of Prokofiev – a composer-pianist who believed the piano to be a true percussion instrument – Ivanov seeks to produce a human voice. His earliest performances were accompanying his father, the baritone Vladimir Ivanov, and the sound of opera permeated his childhood. It reached his sister, harpist Varvara Ivanova, and brother, cellist Danila Ivanov, and his mother, harpist Zoya Slootkovskaya. When Gleb and his siblings weren't at their

instruments, they were usually listening to recordings of nineteenth-century Italian opera, music resplendent with broad, soaring vocalism.

Therefore, for Ivanov to have chosen a program redolent with vocal music transcribed by some of history's finest pianists seems natural. The four Liszt transcriptions here of some of Franz Schubert's lieder are familiar to many pianists, but *Die Lorelei*, a transcription Liszt made of one of his own songs, is known by few pianists even as it has been familiar repertoire to some of the greatest singers.

Franz Liszt himself was enamored of great vocal music, and his transcriptions span both art song and opera. The Schubert transcriptions here were chosen from Liszt's nearly one hundred based upon the great German songwriter (comprising less than a sixth of Liszt's output of transcriptions). Liszt deftly treats Schubert's accompaniments with equal importance to the vocal line. To elegantly

bring forth the embedded vocal part is the great challenge in performing these works.

The first three transcriptions come from Schubert's song cycle *Schwanengesang*, D.957, which includes texts by three different poets and was published posthumously. In this performance, Ivanov brings together the songs *Liebesbotschaft*, where our narrator invites a brook to deliver a message of love, *Aufenthalt*, where he compares his emotional turmoil to forces of nature, and *Am Meer*, where he describes a seaside meeting of anguished lovers.

In this recital *Erlkönig* is a wonderful companion piece to *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. Schubert wrote the song at the age of eighteen, which tells of a father riding madly with his child, who is being terrified and chased by the evil Erl-King. But there is no escape: when they reach home, his child is dead. Schubert's accompaniment features

relentlessly repeating octaves, evoking the horse's desperate galloping. Liszt's transcription is true to the drama in Schubert's evocative setting.

Ivanov chose to include Schubert's *Sonata in A Major, D. 664, Op. 120* for its pristine vocal line. Ivanov feels that "Schubert writes with varied speech textures. To me, the music represents a human conversation, speech, real words; some of them are shorter and others are longer."

This sonata is believed to have been written in 1819. Schubert was vacationing with his friend, the acclaimed singer Johann Michael Vogl, when he met Sylvester Paumgartner, a wealthy iron miner and amateur cellist, who commissioned Schubert to write the quintet now known as "The Trout." This piano sonata, published posthumously in 1829, was commissioned at the same time by one of Paumgartner's friends for his wife. The manuscript is missing.

Liszt's *Die Lorelei* is set to a Heinrich Heine poem with a steady meter. Liszt abandons Heine's rhythm and pursues a melodic line governed by the meaning of the text, pausing on high notes paired with words of greater meaning. The song must have been an important one to Liszt. He first wrote the song in 1841, arranged it for solo piano in 1843, revised it in 1854, orchestrated it in 1860, and revised the piano arrangement again in 1861. It is this final version that Ivanov plays. The story of *Die Lorelei* is of a beautiful maiden who combs her golden hair with a golden comb. She sings on the cliffs, luring boatmen to their doom.

The *Notturmo in G-flat Major* by Italian composer Ottorino Respighi was written around 1905 as one of a set of six small works for piano. The composer was at this time in St. Petersburg as the principal violist of the Imperial Opera. During his three years in Russia, he studied composition

with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, whose influence on Respighi was profound.

For years Respighi's *Notturmo* has been a staple of Ivanov's performance repertoire, appearing frequently as an encore work when not programmed. Respighi was, after all, only one generation removed from Puccini, that most lionized opera composer of his time, and even Verdi had died only four years prior to the composition of the *Notturmo*. Though Respighi's operas may not be often performed today, it is worth remembering that he wrote at least ten that were premiered. Meanwhile, he played the substantially difficult piano part at the premiere of his Toccata for Piano and Orchestra.

One can hear the pianism on Rachmaninoff's many recordings to experience his noble and poetic musical vision. During his lifetime, he was often criticized for writing sentimental music in the Romantic tradition, and it is fair to note his disinterest

in the progressively dissonant music being written by his contemporaries. Yet all seem to be in agreement that he is one of classical music's greatest melodists.

*Mélodie, Op. 3, No. 3* and *Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 5* represent complementary sides to Rachmaninoff's lyrical and pianistic imagination. The *Mélodie*, a less-often performed work from the same opus as the famous Prelude in C-sharp Minor, is really a tenor aria, occasionally strengthened by octaves, but unwavering in its broad melody set upon a pulsating orchestral accompaniment. It is a reminder that in addition to his many famous works for piano, Rachmaninoff was also the composer of more than eighty wonderful songs. The *Humoresque*, following those written by Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and Dvořák, is a playfully moody work with many quick musical surprises.

"You know I have four new *Mazurkas*, one from Palma, in E minor;

three from here, in B major, A-flat major and C-sharp minor. They seem to me pretty, as the youngest children usually do when the parents grow old." These were the words of Frédéric Chopin, not yet thirty years old, in poor health and depressed at the time of these works' composition. The first of the Op. 41 set was composed in 1838 in Majorca, two years prior to the composition of the other three; those were written at Nohant, at the summer home of his lover George Sand.

Franz Liszt's words about the mazurka form were, "Coquetries, vanities, fantasies, inclinations, elegies, vague emotions, passions, conquests, struggles upon which the safety or favors of others depend, all, all meet in this dance" – and all are elements that are the stuff of poetry. Chopin dedicated this opus to Étienne (Stefan) Witwicki, a poet and close friend whose texts were set to ten of Chopin's nineteen songs. To Ivanov, the mazurka is also deeply part of Russia's literary tra-

dition, and not just for dancing. It makes extended appearances in Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*, and Arkady reserves the mazurka for Madame Odintsova, the object of his affections, in Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*. The American critic James Huneker observed that "In the salons of St. Petersburg, for instance, the guests actually dance; they do not merely sham-ble to and fro in a crowd... Mazurkas need a good deal of room, one or more spurred officers, and grace, grace and grace."

Ivanov bookends this recital with transcriptions by the pianists Alfred Grünfeld and Grigory Ginzburg. Grünfeld, an Austrian student of the eminent pedagogue Theodore Kullak, served much of his career as court pianist to Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany, and was a professor at the Vienna Conservatory. In keeping with his nationalistic post, he wrote many sparkling transcriptions and paraphrases on the waltzes of Johann Strauss, Jr.,



among them this *Soirée de Vienne*, Op. 56.

The Russian pianist Grigory Ginzburg, a student of Alexander Goldenweiser, won the prestigious Gold Medal of the Vienna Conservatory, and embarked on a performance career that was marked by an unusual balance of repertoire for his time. He was drawn to the operatic paraphrases of Liszt and the transcriptions by Busoni and Godowsky of J. S. Bach. Though Ginzburg's transcriptions are fewer in number, they are no less impressive in their pianism and electricity.

In the sixth scene of Act 2, *Peer Gynt*, Henrik Ibsen's hero from the eponymous play, appears in the presence of Dovregubben, the troll king of the mountain. Below his throne, a great host of goblins, trolls, and gnomes are in a great uproar. Through Ginzburg's transcription of this most familiar work, Ivanov concludes his program with a dazzling performance of this grotesque scene.

It is also through Grigory Ginzburg that this recording comes full circle. Ivanov's final piano teacher in Russia before he settled in the United States was Lev Naumov of the Moscow Conservatory, and his continued studies in New York have been with Nina Svetlanova. The teacher of both Svetlanova and Naumov at the conservatory, Heinrich Neuhaus, earned his teaching post only shortly before Ginzburg did in 1929. Ivanov is acutely aware that the Moscow Conservatory's pianistic tradition reaches back over the twentieth century, right to the time when Rachmaninoff himself walked the halls as a student eager to carry on the pianistic and compositional traditions of Liszt.

— William McNally

## ABOUT GLEB IVANOV

Ever since his auspicious New York debut, pianist **Gleb Ivanov** has been recognized as an important presence in the music world. *The New York Times* wrote: Gleb Ivanov "A cut above the usual, a young super-virtuoso, with musical sensitivity and an appreciation of style to go with the thunder and lightning." He has been thrilling audiences in recital and orchestra engagements, which have included concertos highlighting Russian composers: Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini with the Omaha Symphony Orchestra, Prokofiev's Concerto No. 3 with The Charlottesville Symphony Orchestra and Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 3 with the Marin Symphony Orchestra.

A sought-after soloist, he has performed a wide range of repertoire with orchestras including the symphony orchestras of Missouri, Johnstown, Western Mich-

igan, Eastern Connecticut, South Bend, Westmoreland, Southwest Florida, Peoria, Knoxville, Dearborn, Las Cruces, Grand Rapids, Fort Smith, Southern Finger Lakes, Springfield, and Napa Valley; the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra and the Colorado Springs Philharmonic.

Adored in Paris, he has been re-engaged four times by the Louvre Museum for specially requested all-Schubert and all-Chopin concerts. Mr. Ivanov has also been frequently re-engaged by Princeton University, The Paramount Theater in Vermont, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, "Pianofest" in East Hampton, Bargemusic in New York City, and at Fishers Island Concerts.

In recognition of impressive career achievement, Ivanov was awarded the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, which brought his Lincoln Center recital debut at Alice Tully Hall and a rave review in *The New York Times*. His program of Russian repertoire includ-

ed works by Prokofiev and the Rachmaninoff Cello Sonata with New York Philharmonic principal cellist Carter Brey (YCA alumnus) as his guest.

At a young age in Russia, Ivanov was a protégé of Mstislav Rostropovich, appearing as soloist under the famous maestro with the Nizhny Novgorod Philharmonic. He also performed with the Moscow State Orchestra, with the Kremlin Orchestra, and at the Pushkin, Glinka, and Scriabin Museums in Moscow. Mr. Ivanov won First Prizes at the 1994 and 1996 International "Classical Legacy" Competition, and the prize for Best Performance of a Beethoven Sonata at the First Vladimir Horowitz Competition in Kiev.

Months after arriving in the United States, Mr. Ivanov won First Prize in the 2005 Young Concert Artists International Auditions. He received an award from the Jack Romann Special Artists Fund of YCA and made his New York debut in 2006 at Carnegie's Zankel Hall

and his Washington, D.C., debut at the Kennedy Center, to critical acclaim.

Mr. Ivanov comes from a family of musicians, and began to accompany his father's vocal recitals at the age of eight. He has also played the clarinet and the accordion, and holds a diploma in clarinet from Lyardov High School. He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 2005, where his teachers included the renowned Lev Naumov. Moving to the United States after winning the YCA Auditions, Mr. Ivanov earned his master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music, working with Nina Svetlanova. Mr. Ivanov has received Musical Studies Grants from the Bagby Foundation.



Cover photo: Christian Steiner

Producers: Vladimir Ryabenko (Tracks 1-9, 14 and 15) and Maria Guryleva  
(Tracks 10-13, 16 and 17)

Editing and Mastering: Vladimir Ryabenko

Booklet editor: Anne Maley

Design and layout: Lonnie Kunkel

Tracks 1-9, 14 and 15 recorded September 2014 in St. Petersburg, Russia,  
PR-STUDIO (Petersburg Recording Studio).

Tracks 10-13, 16 and 17 recorded February 2011 in Red Hook, NJ.

Heartfelt Thanks To:

Ellen and James Marcus

Jane F. Ross

Roger Samet

Annaliese Soros

Ann and James O'Keefe

Young Concert Artists, Inc.



---

© 2016 DELOS PRODUCTIONS, INC., P.O. Box 343, SONOMA, CA 95476-9998

(707) 996-3844 • FAX (707) 320-0600 • (800) 364-0645

CONTACTUS@DELOSMUSIC.COM • WWW.DELOSMUSIC.COM

MADE IN USA



# Gleb Ivanov

STRAUSS GRÜNFEELD LISZT  
SCHAUBERT RESPIGI CHOPIN  
GRIEG RACMANINOFF

DE 3520

