



2018 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE

NICOLAS NAMORADZE

“Set to become one of the truly important artists of his generation.” —Emanuel Ax

Pianist and composer Nicolas Namoradze, whose performances have been hailed by critics as “sparkling... sensitive and coloristic” (*New York Times*) and “simply gorgeous” (*Wall Street Journal*), came to international attention upon winning the 2018 Honens International Piano Competition in Calgary, Canada—among the largest competition prizes in classical music. The *Calgary Herald* called him “unparalleled” and “a pianist’s pianist,” stating: “Namoradze is not the conventional competition pianist, but his individuality was evident from the outset. While he certainly has the virtuosity to spare, he gained the top spot through his remarkable clarity of execution, refinement and variety of tone, and his uncanny ability to make even the most ordinary passagework sound meaningful and distinctive... Everywhere his interpretative skills commanded attention and admiration.”

In February 2019, Namoradze gave a critically acclaimed, sold-out Carnegie debut at Zankel Hall in New York, about which *ConcertoNet* wrote: “[Namoradze] is a pianist who proved that, once in a while, the distinguished members of the jury make a good choice and select a winner who plays like a true artist; who impresses not with pyrotechnics but rather with keen intelligence, a rich tonal palette and refinement... It was a most auspicious debut by an artist representing that rare breed, a thinking virtuoso.”

Further highlights of the past year include appearances at the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan (Japan), Klavier-Festival Ruhr (Germany), Tanglewood (USA), Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity (Canada), Telavi International Music Festival (Georgia), and the Rubinstein Society Piano Festivities (Israel). In September, Namoradze joined the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (USA) in the season-opening inaugural concerts of their new music director, Ken-David Masur. The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* described his Schumann Concerto performances as “a captivating delivery of an exquisite piece of music” and “a charismatic performance that ranged from running passages played in shimmering whispers to bold emphatic declarations.”

Following a release of select live performances from the 2018 Honens International Piano Competition on the Honens label, this season will see the release of two solo albums—a program of Schumann and Namoradze on the Steinway label, and a disc on the Hyperion label featuring the works of York Bowen. Namoradze’s live performances from his critically acclaimed, sold-out recital at the Klavier-Festival Ruhr will also be released by the Edition Klavier-Festival Ruhr.

Upcoming performances include recitals at Wigmore Hall (London), the Gardner Museum (USA), 92nd Street Y (New York), Miami International Piano Festival (USA), Toppan Hall (Japan), and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival (USA). At the invitation of Sir Andrés Schiff, Namoradze will present recitals at leading venues around Europe including the Konzerthaus Berlin, deSingel (Belgium), and the Orpheus Stiftung Zurich in the “Building Bridges” series.

Enthusiastic of innovative programs and technologies that expand the reach of classical music around the world, Namoradze has been closely associated with Juilliard Global Ventures, where he represented Juilliard students in the Juilliard-Nord Anglia Performing Arts Program. He is also featured in the most-watched episode of Juilliard Open Studios with his teacher, Emanuel Ax, and appears as a guest educator on the history of the piano for Juilliard edX courses.

Namoradze's interest in contemporary music and lesser-known works of the piano repertoire has led him to present original and exciting programs embracing works such as Godowsky's infamous *Studies on Chopin Etudes*, sets of Ligeti *Etudes*, rarities including Dvořák's *Piano Concerto*, and many works by his contemporaries. Following a recital devoted largely to the work of late-romantic British composer York Bowen, the *Calgary Herald* wrote that the recital "was a quasi-mystical experience," and that "his playing is effortless to a degree that can hardly be imagined, and the focus of his performance is entirely upon musical values. And here the range of his imagination in the shaping of line, control of texture, and fleetness in execution takes one's breath away."

After completing his undergraduate studies in Budapest, Vienna, and Florence, Namoradze moved to New York for his master's at The Juilliard School. He now pursues his doctorate at the CUNY Graduate Center, holding the Graduate Center Fellowship. His teachers have included Emanuel Ax, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Zoltán Kocsis, Matti Raekallio, and Elisso Virsaladze in piano, and John Corigliano in composition.

HONENS

The Honens International Piano Competition takes place every three years and is considered one of the world's most prestigious events of its kind. Honens prepares its Laureates for the rigours and realities of professional careers in music and creates opportunities for growth and exposure. The annual Honens Festival is one of Canada's premier classical music events, intended to share Mrs. Honens' love of world renowned music with Albertans every year.

ESTHER HONENS

Esther Honens created a legacy of musical excellence to be enjoyed for generations. In 1991, knowing she was near the end of her life, Mrs. Honens gave \$5 million to endow an international piano competition in her hometown of Calgary, Canada. Her generosity, vision, and love of music continue to touch the lives of Calgarians, Canadians, musicians, and music-lovers around the world. Honens Legacy Partners follow in Esther Honens' footsteps by securing Honens' future. They support achievements in realizing Esther Honens' vision, including wide reaching programming through the annual Festival and enriching community outreach projects.

LAUREATE REPRESENTATION

Worldwide

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