

## Biography

### Saleem Ashkar

Piano

[www.saleemashkar.com](http://www.saleemashkar.com)



Berlin based Israeli-Palestinian pianist Saleem Ashkar was born and raised in Nazareth. He completed his studies in Europe and, since making his New York Carnegie Hall debut at the age of 22 under Daniel Barenboim, is considered one of the most interesting pianists of his generation. "He captures just the right balance of clarity, swiftness of attack, poetry and élan: every note shines with sun-reflecting clarity as the finales whirl along" – writes the BBC Music Magazine about Ashkar's interpretation of Mendelssohn's piano concertos.

He performs regularly with conductors such as Riccardo Chailly, Christoph Eschenbach, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti and Daniel Barenboim and works with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, the Staatskapelle Berlin, the Filarmonica della Scala, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Leipziger Gewandhaus, the NDR Hamburg, the DSO and the Konzerthausorchester in Berlin, the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome as well as the Mariinsky Orchestra St. Petersburg. He appears regularly in recital series and concert halls like the Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, the Mozarteum Salzburg, and the Wiener Musikverein, as well as at the festivals in Salzburg, the BBC Proms, in Lucerne, Ravinia, Rison, Menton and the Ruhr Klavier Festival.

Saleem Ashkar is a dedicated recitalist and chamber musician, a longstanding musical partnership was formed e.g. with Nikolaj Znaider. His current focus is a complete cycle of all Beethoven sonatas presented by the Konzerthaus Berlin, developed from his own idea, which spans the 2016/17 season. He will perform the cycle in Berlin, Prague and at the Morgenland Festival in Osnabrück as well as in his native Israel, and will also record it for Decca. The concerts will be complemented by short films, produced at the different concert venues, conversations and discussions evolving around topics including music and identity, power and music, music and religion. These evenings address questions extending beyond Beethoven's work.

Highlights of the current season include, in addition to the Beethoven cycle, his participation in the opening festival of the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie together with Yo Yo Ma and Kinan Azmeh, concerts with the Bamberger Symphoniker and Christoph Eschenbach, the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg and Nikolaj Znaider, a recital with Beethoven sonatas at Wigmore Hall, Beethoven's 4th piano concerto with the Orchestra Verdi under Pietari Inkinen, a tour of Australia including concerts with the Adelaide Symphony and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, whose invitation he is following for the third time already, a re-invitation to Canada for concerts at the National Arts Center Ottawa with Alexander Shelley, concerts at the Cal Performances in San Francisco and a Residence including lectures, concerts and master classes at Brown University.

His CD productions for Decca include recordings of both piano concertos by Mendelssohn with Riccardo Chailly and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, as well as Beethoven's 1st and 2nd piano concertos with the NDR Symphony Orchestra under Ivor Bolton; for EMI he recorded a CD with Mozart, Schubert and Brahms sonatas. As ambassador of the Music Fund, Saleem Ashkar supports musicians and music schools in conflict areas and developing countries.

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