



## Biography

### Louis Lortie

(piano)

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

French-Canadian pianist Louis Lortie has attracted critical acclaim throughout Europe, Asia, and the United States, not least for extending his interpretative voice across a broad repertoire range rather than choosing to specialise in one particular style. *The London Times*, describing his playing as "ever immaculate, ever imaginative", has identified the artist's "combination of total spontaneity and meditated ripeness that only great pianists have".

Celebrated for his interpretation of Beethoven, Mr. Lortie has performed complete sonata cycles at London's Wigmore Hall, Toronto's Ford Center, Berlin's Philharmonie, and the Sala Grande del Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan. *Die Welt* described his Berlin performances as "possibly the finest Beethoven since the time of Wilhelm Kempff." With the Montreal Symphony as both pianist and conductor he has performed all five Beethoven Concertos and all of the Mozart Concertos.

Mr. Lortie has also won widespread acclaim for his interpretation of Ravel and Chopin. He performed the complete works of Ravel in London and Montréal for the BBC and CBC, and is renowned for his Chopin's complete Etudes recitals all over the world. Of his Queen Elizabeth Hall recital, the *Financial Times* wrote: "Better Chopin playing than this is not to be heard, not anywhere."

In 2011 Louis Lortie celebrates the bicentenary of Liszt's birth by performing the complete *Années de Pèlerinage* at Germany's Liszt Kunstfest Weimar, Berlin's Radialsystem, the Bayreuth Festival and Rheingau Musik Festival, the Aldeburgh Music – Snape Proms, Brussels Radio 3 Festival, Lisbon's Centro de Belem, New York's Lincoln Center, London's Wigmore Hall, in Portland, La Jolla, Los Angeles, Toronto, Ottawa and Washington DC, at the Savannah Festival and to open the 2011-12 Cliburn Concerts Series.

Other 2011-2012 engagements include play/conducting the Kremerata Baltica at La Scala di Milano, Slovenian Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony and the Quebec Symphony, concerts with the Toronto Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the symphony orchestras of Sydney, Bournemouth, Saint Louis, Calgary, North Carolina, San Diego and Oklahoma City, and a performance of the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2 at the Brussels Brahms Festival.

Louis Lortie has performed with among other conductors Riccardo Chailly, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Seiji Ozawa, Charles Dutoit, Kurt Sanderling, Neeme Järvi, Sir Andrew Davis, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Sir Mark Elder and Osmo Vänskä. He has also been involved in many chamber music projects, with musicians such as Frank Peter Zimmermann, Leonidas Kavakos, Renaud and Gautier Capuçon, Jan Vogler, Augustin Dumay, the Takacs and Tokyo Quartets. His regular piano-duo partner is fellow Canadian Hélène Mercier, with whom he has made successful recordings on the Chandos label.

Louis Lortie has made over 30 recordings for Chandos, covering repertoire from Mozart to Stravinsky. His recording of the the Lutoslawski Piano Concerto and Paganini Variations with Edward Gardner and the BBC Symphony will be released in 2012. His Chandos set of complete Beethoven Sonatas was Editor's Choice in the January 2011 issue of *Gramophone*. His latest Chopin recording was released to great acclaim in May 2010; his album of Chopin's Nocturnes and Ballades will be released by Chandos in February 2012. A 2-CD set of Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage* was released in March 2011, while further recording projects include a disc of the composer's transcriptions. His Edison Award-winning recording of Beethoven's *Eroica* Variations was described by *Gramophone* as "spacious and magisterial, virile yet sensitive," while his disc of Schumann (including *Bunte Blätter*) and Brahms was judged among the *BBC Music Magazine's* best CDs of the year . The magazine also named his Chopin Etudes one of '50 Recordings by Superlative Pianists' and his interpretation of Liszt's complete works for piano and orchestra with the Residentie Orchestra of The Hague was a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice. Other titles include 'To the Distant Beloved' (works by Beethoven, Schumann and Liszt), and Franck's *Symphonic Variations* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. For the Canadian label ATMA Classique, Lortie has recorded Mendelssohn concertos with the Orchestre symphonique de Québec and, as conductor, the same composer's 'Reformation' Symphony.

Louis Lortie studied in Montréal with Yvonne Hubert (a pupil of the legendary Alfred Cortot), in Vienna with the Beethoven specialist Dieter Weber, and subsequently with Schnabel disciple Leon Fleisher. He made his debut with the Montréal Symphony at the age of thirteen; three years later, his first appearance with the Toronto Symphony led to an historic tour of the People's Republic of China and Japan. In 1984, he won First Prize in the Busoni Competition and was also prizewinner at the Leeds Competition. In 1992 he was named Officer of the Order of Canada, and received both the Order of Quebec and an honorary doctorate from Laval University. Lortie has lived in Berlin since 1997 but also has homes in Canada and Italy.

## **2011/2012**

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