

Biography

Alexander Melnikov

(Piano)



Alexander Melnikov graduated from the Moscow Conservatory under Lev Naumov. His most formative musical moments in Moscow include an early encounter with Svjatoslav Richter, who thereafter regularly invited him to festivals in Russia and France. He was awarded important prizes at eminent competitions such as the International Robert Schumann Competition in Zwickau (1989) and the Concours Musical Reine Elisabeth in Brussels (1991).

Known for his often-unusual musical and programmatic decisions, Alexander Melnikov discovered a career-long interest in historically-informed performance practice at an early age. His major influences in this field include Andreas Staier and Alexei Lubimov. Melnikov performs regularly with distinguished period ensembles including the Freiburger Barockorchester, Musica Aeterna and Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin.

As a soloist, Alexander Melnikov has performed with orchestras including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Philadelphia Orchestra, NDR Sinfonieorchester, HR-Sinfonieorchester, Russian National Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, Orchestre des Champs-Élysées and the NHK Symphony, under conductors such as Mikhail Pletnev, Teodor Currentzis, Charles Dutoit, Paavo Järvi and Valery Gergiev.

Together with Andreas Staier, Alexander Melnikov developed a programme that sets excerpts from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier (Andreas Staier – harpsichord) in musical dialogue with Shostakovich's 24 Preludes and Fugues (Alexander Melnikov – piano). Additionally, the artists recently recorded a unique all-Schubert programme of four-hand pieces, which they have also performed in concert. An essential part of Melnikov's work are intensive chamber music collaborations with partners including cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras.

Alexander Melnikov's association with the label harmonia mundi arose through his regular recital partner, violinist Isabelle Faust, and in 2010 their complete recording of the Beethoven sonatas for violin and piano won both a Gramophone Award and Germany's ECHO Klassik Prize. This album, which has become a landmark recording for these works, was also nominated for a Grammy. Their most recent release features the Brahms sonatas for violin and piano.

Melnikov's recording of the Preludes and Fugues by Shostakovich was awarded the BBC Music Magazine Award, Choc de classica and the Jahrespreis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. In 2011, it was also named by the BBC Music Magazine as one of the "50 Greatest Recordings of All Time." Additionally, his discography features works by Brahms, Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich and Scriabin. Along with Isabelle Faust, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Pablo Heras-Casado and the Freiburger Barockorchester, Melnikov recorded a trilogy of albums featuring the Schumann Concertos and Trios; the second installment, featuring the Piano Concerto and the Piano Trio No. 2, was released in September 2015. Other releases include a November 2016 recording featuring works of Prokofiev and his most recent release in June includes Chausson and Franck repertoire.

In the 2017/18 season Alexander Melnikov will tour his project "The Man with the Many Pianos", where he performs a solo recital on three different instruments reflecting the periods in which the works were written. Next to concerts with Musica Aeterna, Ensemble Resonanz and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale Rai he continues his collaboration with Camerata Salzburg and as an Artistic partner with Tapiola Sinfonietta.

Further highlights include recitals at Cité de la Musique Paris, Muziekgebouw aan't IJ Amsterdam, de Singel Antwerpen, the Kölner Philharmonie and the Chamber Music Hall of the Berliner Philharmonie as well as being an artist in residence at London Wigmore Hall in the 2018/19 season.

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