

Oxana Yablonskaya

Oxana Yablonskaya's charismatic piano playing and profound interpretations have brought her acclaim for over thirty years. Known for her powerhouse virtuosity, exquisite sensitivity, and deep emotional drive, Ms. Yablonskaya has enchanted audiences worldwide.

Oxana Yablonskaya was born in Moscow. As an adolescent, she attended The Moscow Central School for the gifted children under the tutelage of great Anaida Sumbatyan, with whom she worked with until the age of 16. She later studied at the Conservatory of Moscow with the legendary Aleksandre Goldenweiser. At 22, she began a professional relationship with Tatiana Nikolayeva in the Doctorate Program, later acting as her assistant at the Moscow Conservatory.

Following graduation with high honors, she was introduced to the Western World in Paris at the Jacques Long-Thibaud Competition in 1963, the Rio de Janeiro Competition in 1965, and the Vienna Beethoven Competition in 1969. She won top prizes in all three competitions, and received numerous invitations for return engagements, but because of the Cold War, was not allowed to do so.

While still in the USSR, Ms. Yablonskaya performed Shostakovich's Piano Concerto #1 with the Moscow Philharmonic under conductor Yury Simonov at the Composers Jubilee Concert in the Kremlin. She was the first performer to play Rodion Shchedrin's "Basso Ostinato," which became her signature piece. Her status as a consummate professional was heightened by many prominent Soviet and foreign composers dedicating their music to her.

Despite the reputation she had earned within the Soviet Union and being a prize winner of three international competitions, she was never permitted to play outside the Eastern

Bloc. . Yet, she recorded for the Melodya label and had earned the prestigious title of Soloist of the Moscow Philharmonic. The title put her in the company of elite artists such as Gilels, Richter, Rostropovich, Ostrich and Kogan. Outstanding solo performances with the Bolshoi Orchestra, the Moscow Stars series, and the Shostakovich 65th Birthday Celebration Concert were confirmations of her remarkable talent.

In 1975, distressed over constant restraints on her personal and artistic freedom, she applied for a U.S. visa. Her actions resulted in a loss of her position as a professor at the Moscow Conservatory. She inherently was deprived of all concert engagements. She waited more than two years for a visa and finally, she was allowed to leave the country with her father and young son due to the diligence and petitioning by Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Richard Rodgers, Katherine Hepburn, Bar Ilan, and over 45 famous writers, musicians, senators, and actors.

Ms. Yablonskaya arrived in New York in 1977, unknown, unheralded, and not having touched a piano in more than two years. She made her first New York appearance in a recital at the Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center only four months later, and received laudatory acclaim from the press. Her Carnegie Hall debut recital the following October was attended by a capacity crowd, and she has since taken her place among the major pianists of the world.

Once considered 'The best kept secret of the Soviet Union,' Ms. Yablonskaya has now performed in more than 40 countries.

Following her triumph at her London recital debut in the Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1982, the Daily Telegraph wrote: "Yablonskaya is the sort of pianist who accomplishes with ease and naturalness what others struggle for a lifetime to achieve." In 1986, following her Canadian performance with the National Symphony under conductor Mstislav Rostropovich, a music critic of the Toronto Star wrote, "She played Rachmaninoff's 3rd as if it was written for her."

Ms. Yablonskaya has emerged as one of the most compelling talents of her generation. She has performed with many of the finest symphony orchestras in the world and with many of the leading conductors of our time. An extraordinary recitalist, she is equally renowned for solo performances. In addition to Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, she has performed in the Royal Albert Hall and Wigmore Hall in London, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, Great Hall of St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, Sheldonian Theatre and Holywell Music Room in Oxford, England, Magador Theatre and Champs Elysees Hall in Paris, Opera House in Sidney, Municipal Theatre in Rio De Janeiro, Seoul Arts Center, Shanghai Arts Center, Royal Thompson Hall in Toronto, 92 street Y in New York, Osaka Arts Center and many more.

Ms. Yablonskaya has collaborated in performances with such celebrated conductors as:

Alexander Dmitriev, Alexander Anissimov, Yury Aronovitch, Rudolf Barshai, Herbert Bloomstaadt, Boris Brott, Abraham Chavez, Sergiu Comissiona, Franz Paul Decker, Lawrence Foster, Youosh Forst, Pierro Gamba, Fedor Gluschenko, Inbal, Arnold Katz, Anton Kersies, Dmitry Kitaenko, Eric Klaas, Kirill Kondrashin, Uri Maier, Fuat Mansurov, Nathan Rakhlin, Mstislav Rostropovitch, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Stanislaw Skrowachevsky, Pavel Sorokin, Yevgeny Svetlanov, Yuly Turowsky, Victor Yampolsky and many others.

In 1990, after a 13 year absence, Ms. Yablonskaya returned to Russia for a sold-out concert, master classes and recitals at the Moscow Conservatory. Since then she has returned on a regular basis and is once more recognized as an elite piano virtuoso in Russia.

In recent years, Ms. Yablonskaya has collaborated with her son, renowned cellist/conductor, 2007 Grammy Award Nominee Dmitry Yablonsky. Their concerts have enjoyed vast public and critical acclaim. The New York Times called their Carnegie Hall debut, "A vibrant dialog." Their recordings together include duo performances for cello and piano as well as Khachaturian and Glazunov piano concertos recorded with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Prokofieff, Brahms, Liszt 1st concertos and Chopin 1st and 2nd Concertos with Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra.

In addition to her success as a concert pianist and recording artist, Ms. Yablonskaya has held the position of Professor of Piano at The Julliard School in New York City. She has lectured numerous master classes at many distinguished music schools, academies, conservatories and festivals throughout the world such as Newport and Bowdin in USA, Flaine and Tours in France, Lago Maggiore in Switzerland, and Oxford Philomusica in England. Dr. Yablonskaya is a Co- Founder of Puigcerdà Musica Clasica International Festival in Spain since 1998, Gabala International Music Festival in Azerbaijan.

Ms. Yablonskaya made numerous editions of piano music by Cimarosa, Tchaikovsky, Lyadov, Balakirev, Gluck, Glinka and others for International Music Company and currently continues her collaboration with this prestigious music publishing company.

Ms. Yablonskaya also serves on the jury of many international piano competitions such as Leeds in England, Franz Liszt in the Netherlands, Prokofiev in St.Petersburg, Russia, Hamamatsu in Japan, competitions in Taiwan, Andorra, at the 2005 Seiler International Piano Competition and Vladimir Horowitz International Piano Competition, Piano E- Competition in Minneapolis, Minn. Jose Iturbi in Valencia, Parnassos in Monterrey, Mexico and in 2007 she has been invited to judge Sendai Competition in Japan and Beethoven Competition in Bonn, Jose Iturbi in Los Angeles, Lev Vlassenko in Brisbane, Grieg in Oslo and Bergen, Shanghai Competition among others.

Among her numerous recordings, Ms.Yablonskaya's Liszt/Schubert CD won the Grand Prix du Disque from the International Liszt Society in Budapest. In the December 1995 review of her Tchaikovsky CD, the American Record Guide wrote, "Oxana Yablonskaya is an artist who deserves to be heard and in any repertory she chooses."

In March of 2006 Ms. Yablonskaya performed inaugural "Sold Out" recital in Carnegie Zankel Hall in New York marking the Founding of Chopin Society of New York of which she was appointed Vice -President and Music Director.

The 6 concert tour of France with a "Sold Out" concert in Paris's historical Magador Theatre followed immediately after, where Oxana Yablonskaya performed Rachmaninoff 3rd Piano Concerto with Orchestre National D'Ille de France .

After magnificent performance at Magador Theatre French critic Cyril Brun called Yablonskaya "Grand Tsarina of Russian piano who in an instant opened for us the whole Imperial Russia."

On December 15th of 2006 another "Sold Out " "Oxana Yablonskaya and Friends " event took place at Carnegie Zankel Hall , where Oxana and Dmitry Yablonsky performed Chopin's Cello Sonata and Grand Polonaise and received standing ovations. Composer Lowell Liberman wrote after attending this concert:" Profound performance of this Sonata will stay in my memory for a long time".

During this concert surprise ceremony took place – Oxana Yablonskaya was presented with a title of Honorary Academician of International Academy of the Arts at the United Nations, International Academy of the Arts in San Francisco and International Independent Academy of Liberal Arts in Moscow, Diplomas and Einstein Gold Medal for extraordinary achievements in the Arts. In October of 2008 Oxana Yablonskaya Piano Institute opened its doors in Castelnuovo di Garfagnana in Tuscany, Italy. The 2008 is a 70th Birthday Jubilee Celebration of Oxana and all year she has been performing starting in Italy with New Years Day recital in Catania, then in Israel she performed Tchaikovsky 1st concerto four times, Grieg concerto in Turkey, solo recital in Tuscany and Master Classes in Hamamatsu Academy, Japan, judging Liszt Competition in Utrecht, Jose Iturbi in Los Angeles, E-Piano Competition in Minneapolis, teaching in Spain, solo recital at MTNA in Los Angeles, Master Classes and chamber music concert in Nice, recording of Tchaikovsky "Seasons" and "Album for the Young". Two concerts on November 29th and December 1st were televised on National TV in Taiwan – Oxana performed Shostakovich 1st Concerto with National Symphony Orchestra in Taipei and Taichung. The Grand conclusion of yearlong celebration took place on December 11th with the Jubilee "Sold Out" Concert at Carnegie Zankel Hall in

New York where Oxana Yablonskaya performed Beethoven 4th, Chopin 2nd and Shostakovich 1st concerti and received standing ovation.

In 2009 and 2011 Mme. Yablonskaya Presided at the First and Second International Piano Competitions in Gabala, Azerbaijan and performed with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Beethoven "Emperor" concerto#5.

Mme. Yablonskaya performs regularly at the important Summer Festivals in Nice, France; Eilat, Israel; Shanghai, China; Gabala, Azerbaijan, performing recitals, chamber music and as soloist with symphony orchestras.

In December 2013 Oxana Yablonskaya and Shanghai International Piano Festival will celebrate their jubilee- Oxana's 75th Birthday and Shanghai Festival -10th Anniversary, where participation of 25 world renown pianists is expected.

Oxana Yablonskaya is a Yamaha Artist and Artistic Advisor of Yamaha Master Classes in New York City.

MENTIONS

"...Yablonskaya's musicality never gives way to merely exploiting the music for its own glory. If tastefulness and stylistic insight mean anything to you, you will thoroughly enjoy listening to Oxana Yablonskaya"

"An orchestra is superfluous for 'Pictures at an Exhibition' when there is a pianist of Yablonskaya's powers to paint them in such indelible colors. A thoroughly excited audience lingered for four encores."

Los Angeles Times

"...Yablonskaya is a mixture of passion, power and poetry, and in the course of one concert, put herself, her piano and the audience through everything that could be expected of a piano recital."

Toronto Star

“...An imposing figure at the piano, Yablonskaya goes for the large gesture rather than for subtle detail, and thus we had heard hard driving, percussive performances, which developed an enormous amount of visceral excitement and left no doubt that Yablonskaya is in complete command of the total resources of the keyboard.”

Monterey County Symphony

“...A large audience welcomed her back to Chicago, and her program revealed a technique as impressive as ever, as well as a temperament equally at home in the simple elegance of a Mozart rondo and the thundering chords of a Scriabin etude. Being perfectly able to manipulate the keyboard however she wants, Yablonskaya knows when to take risks and when to pull back and let the music speak for itself.

In the two major pieces, the Beethoven Sonata in D Minor, Op.31, both dramatic, emotional works – Yablonskaya’s bold originality surfaced. She took full liberty with the experiments in contrasting rhythm and dynamics in the first movement of the Beethoven. She lingered over the slow introductory bars whenever they returned, letting each rising tone build and echo before plunging into the short, answering flurry of notes.

In the famous Marche Funebre of the Chopin sonata, she emphasized the bass melody’s relentless nature rather than its overpowering volume. In the Sonata’s opening movement, she gave this almost chaotic music coherence by highlighting the return of early motifs. She made sure we heard a rumble of octaves under a singing melody and the harmonic twists that helped reinforce the shape of this hectic, headlong movement.

Yablonskaya’s sheer technical prowess was on the most vivid display in six Scriabin etudes from Op. 8, exercisers composed in imitation of Chopin’s etudes. But as the Mozart Rondo K.511 and the Chopin Noturne Op. 9, No. 1 and Scherzo Op. 31, No. 2 revealed, she also can weave a lyrically meditative melody.”

Chicago Sun-Times