



Elena Bashkistrova, Piano

Biography

The pianist Elena Bashkistrova once said, “Chamber music is music’s soul,” and this belief is evident in her work as a soloist, accompanist, ensemble musician, and program planner. Her approach to all aspects of music is one of empathetic collaboration and communication.

Among the highlights of the 2023/24 are her performances as soloist with the Transylvania State Philharmonic Orchestra in Cluj under the direction of Lawrence Foster with whom she will also join forces during her performance with the Opéra de Marseille Orchestra, the Cantus Firmus Orchestra in Plovdiv under the direction of Georgi Dimitrov, as well as the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. Further multiday chamber music residencies are planned with the Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival Ensemble, extensively as part of Blaibach Konzerthaus, the Musikverein Vienna, the Frauenkirche Dresden (curated by Daniel Hope), & Cologne Philharmonie, as well as a tour in South America. In December 2023 Elena, who is also the president of the Mendelssohn House Leipzig, will present a multiday Mendelssohn Festival at the Boulez Saal Berlin. Further artistic collaborations with Thomas Hampson will bring her to Israel in January and she will also give solo recitals at the Klavier-Festival Ruhr and Ludwigsburg, among others.

Bashkistrova comes from a Russian musical dynasty going back generations. Born in Moscow, she began her studies at the age of 15 in the class of her father, the legendary piano pedagogue Dmitry Bashkistrov. Together with violinist Gidon Kremer, with whom she has often performed as a duo and has made several recordings, Elena Bashkistrova left the Soviet Union in 1978 and moved to Paris. She has been influenced by her work with conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Sergiu Celibidache, and Michael Gielen. Since 1992, she has lived in Berlin with her husband, Daniel Barenboim.

Bashkistrova is Artistic Director of the Jerusalem International Chamber Music Festival, which she founded in 1998. The festival takes place each year in September and has become a pillar of Israel’s cultural life, bringing together outstanding soloists from around the world. In addition, the widely acclaimed Intonations Festival has taken place



in April of each year since 2012 in Berlin's Jewish Museum. Together with musicians from these festivals, Elena Bashkistrova performs regularly in the world's most important chamber music series, including summer festivals such as the Lucerne Festival, the Rheingau Music Festival, the George Enescu Festival in Bucharest, and the Beethovenfest in Bonn. Numerous recordings document the highlights of programs conceived by Bashkistrova for various chamber music groupings.

The repertoire for piano and voice is of particular importance to Bashkistrova. The list of singers with whom she performs as a duo includes Anna Netrebko, Olga Peretyatko, Dorothea Röschmann, René Pape, and Robert Holl.

Bashkistrova's recording of two Tchaikovsky cycles, "The Seasons" and "Album for Children", received the ICMA award in the category "solo instrument" in 2017. Her complete recording of Antonin Dvorak's "Poetic Tone Pictures" op. 85 was released in October 2020. She also recorded an album with a selection of Mozart works under the title "Mozart: Sonatas & Fantasies", which was released in November 2022.

In 2018, Elena Bashkistrova received the Ruhr Piano Festival Prize and was awarded an honorary doctoral degree by Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. She was recently named conductor Kurt Masur's successor as President of the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Foundation in Leipzig.

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