



2018 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE

# NICOLAS NAMORADZE

**"An extraordinary artist."** —Emanuel Ax

**"Set to become one of the truly important artists of his generation."** —Emanuel Ax

Pianist and composer Nicolas Namoradze, whose performances have been hailed by critics as "sparkling... sensitive and coloristic" (*New York Times*) and "simply gorgeous" (*Wall Street Journal*) came to international attention in 2018 upon winning the triennial Honens International Piano Competition in Calgary, Canada—the largest piano prize in the world. The *Calgary Herald* called him "unparalleled" and "a pianist's pianist," praising his "remarkable clarity of execution, refinement and variety of tone, and his uncanny ability to make even the most ordinary passagework sound meaningful and distinctive... Everywhere his interpretative skills commanded attention and admiration."

Namoradze's debut recitals at major international venues have been met with universal critical acclaim. Following his sold-out Carnegie debut at Zankel Hall in New York, Roman Markowicz in *ConcertoNet* wrote: "Namoradze is a pianist who proved that, once in a while, the distinguished members of the jury make a good choice and select a winner who plays like a true artist... It was a most auspicious debut by an artist representing that rare breed, a thinking virtuoso." His recent Wigmore Hall debut was selected as Editor's Favorite of the Month in *BBC Music Magazine*, and Michael Church in *International Piano Magazine* called the performance "astonishing," writing: "I'm not often lost for words, but Nicolas Namoradze's recital almost defeated me."

His current activities as the Honens Prize Laureate include recitals at concert halls including the Konzerthaus Berlin, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, Boston's Gardner Museum, New York's 92nd Street Y, and Tokyo Toppan Hall; appearances at Tanglewood, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Toronto Summer Music, Miami International Piano Festival, Telavi Music Festival, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Tbilisi Piano Fest, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival; and performances with the London Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Winnipeg Symphony, Windsor Symphony, and Ottawa National Arts Centre orchestras, among others. Upon the invitation of Sir Andrés Schiff, Namoradze will present recitals at leading venues around Europe including deSingel Antwerp, Munich Allerheiligenhofkirche, Orpheus Stiftung Zurich, and the Gstaad Menuhin Festival in the "Building Bridges" series.

A Gramophone "One to Watch" and *BBC Music Magazine* "Rising Star," Namoradze was recently named among *WQXR's* "20 for 20: Artists to Watch," a list that "includes long-time heroes, established favorites and newcomers set for stardom who are redefining what classical music can be."

Following releases of select live performances from the Honens International Piano Competition on the Honens label and his critically acclaimed, sold-out debut recital at the Klavier-Festival Ruhr on the Edition Klavier-Festival Ruhr, this season will see the release of two solo albums—a program of Schumann and Namoradze on the Steinway label, and a disc on the Hyperion label featuring the works of York Bowen.

Enthusiastic of innovative programs and technologies that expand the reach of classical music around the world, Namoradze has been closely associated with Juilliard Global Ventures, where he represented Juilliard students in the Juilliard-Nord Anglia Performing Arts Program. He is also featured in the most-watched episode of Juilliard Open Studios with his teacher, Emanuel Ax, and appears as a guest educator on the history of the piano for Juilliard edX courses.

Namoradze's interest in contemporary music and lesser-known works of the piano repertoire has led him to present original and exciting programs embracing works such as Godowsky's infamous *Studies on Chopin Etudes*, sets of Ligeti *Etudes*, rarities including Dvorak's *Piano Concerto*, and many works by his contemporaries. Following a recital devoted largely to little-known works of late-romantic British composer York Bowen, the *Calgary Herald* wrote that the recital "was a quasi-mystical experience," and that "his playing is effortless to a degree that can hardly be imagined, and the focus of his performance is entirely upon musical values. And here the range of his imagination in the shaping of line, control of texture, and fleetness in execution takes one's breath away."

Highlights of his work as a composer include commissions and performances by leading artists and ensembles including Ken-David Masur, Tessa Lark, Metropolis Ensemble and the Momenta, Verona and Barkada Quartets, at festivals such as the Chelsea Music Festival, Honens Festival, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and Klavier-Festival Ruhr, among others. He has also composed and produced a number of film soundtracks, including *Walking Painting* by Fabienne Verdier and *Nuit d'opéra à Aix*, a short film made in association with the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence. His compositions are published by the Japan-based Muse Press.

After completing his undergraduate studies in Budapest, Vienna, and Florence, Namoradze moved to New York for his master's at The Juilliard School and his doctorate at the CUNY Graduate Center holding the Graduate Center Fellowship, where his dissertation on macroharmony in late Ligeti received a distinction for exceptional achievement with a nomination for the Barry Brook Award. His teachers have included Emanuel Ax, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Zoltán Kocsis, Matti Raekallio, and Elisso Virsaladze in piano, and John Corigliano in composition. For four years Namoradze served on the faculty of Queens College, where he taught chamber music, composition, and music history.

## HONENS

The Honens International Piano Competition takes place every three years and is considered one of the world's most prestigious events of its kind. Honens prepares its Laureates for the rigours and realities of professional careers in music and creates opportunities for growth and exposure. The annual Honens Festival is one of Canada's premier classical music events, intended to share Mrs. Honens' love of world renowned music with Albertans every year.

## ESTHER HONENS

Esther Honens created a legacy of musical excellence to be enjoyed for generations. In 1991, knowing she was near the end of her life, Mrs. Honens gave \$5 million to endow an international piano competition in her hometown of Calgary, Canada. Her generosity, vision, and love of music continue to touch the lives of Calgarians, Canadians, musicians, and music-lovers around the world. Honens Legacy Partners follow in Esther Honens' footsteps by securing Honens' future. They support achievements in realizing Esther Honens' vision, including wide reaching programming through the annual Festival and enriching community outreach projects.

## LAUREATE REPRESENTATION

### **Worldwide**

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