



2022 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE

ILLIA OVCHARENKO

When he was 6-years-old and living in Chernihiv, Ukraine, Illia Ovcharenko heard a performance of Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto. After the concert, Illia told his mother he wanted to be a pianist when he grew up.

Today, just a dozen years later, he's a celebrated virtuoso playing concerts all over the world.

Most recently, he won the Honens International Piano Competition in Calgary, Canada, which recognizes an artist who demonstrates technical mastery, perseverance against adversity, and an understanding of musical text that is intellectual and emotional. He's also won top prizes at the New York, Hilton Head, Busoni, and Horowitz Piano competitions, and has performed with La Monnaie Symphony in Brussels, the Jerusalem Symphony, and l'Orchestre National d'Île de France. This season, he'll debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, offer a solo recital at Koerner Hall in Toronto, and appear in Hamburg, Düsseldorf, and Montréal.

Illia began piano lessons at 9-years-old and gave his first concert at 12 at the National Philharmonic of Ukraine.

At age 13, Illia went to study in Kyiv at a high school for gifted musicians and later moved to Tel Aviv. He's currently living in Hannover, Germany, where he's finishing a master's program with his longtime mentor, Arie Vardi.

He thrives on live performance, feeling as if two souls—his and the composer's—are united together on stage. He's most at home playing romantic repertoire.

"I'm so happy when people hear me play and say I brought something new to their life or let them forget about their current troubles," he says. "Playing the piano is usually a much better way of communicating since there is something intimate involved in this process."

HONENS

Honens discovers, nurtures, and presents Complete Artists—21st century pianists for 21st century audiences.

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 PRESENTATION

Worldwide
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