



INTROSPECTION: SOLO PIANO SESSIONS
YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN



I would like to dedicate this album to the loving memory of Anisia Campos (1928–2020), my piano teacher and my inspiration in music and life.

I would also like to express my profound gratitude to Pierre Tourville and Jennifer Bourdages. Without their hearts and ears, I wouldn't have been able to make this recording.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862–1918)

- 1 La Cathédrale engloutie** 6:57
No. 10 from *Préludes I* L 117: Profondément calme

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810–1849)

- 2 Nocturne in G minor** 7:27

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

- 3 Rhapsody in G minor** op. 79/2: Molto passionato, ma non troppo allegro 7:22

- 4 Intermezzo in B minor** op. 119/1: Adagio 4:27

DOMENICO SCARLATTI (1685–1757)

- 5 Keyboard Sonata in B minor** K 87: Andante 6:59

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873–1943)

- 6 Moment musical in B minor** op. 16/3: Andante cantabile 7:52

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

- 7 Adagio in B minor** K 540 14:09

ÉRIC CHAMPAGNE (*1980)

8 D'après Hopper 6:32

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Tocatta in D minor BWV 913

9 Allegro 0:52

10 Adagio 1:48

11 Fuga. Presto 3:45

12 Adagio – Andante 2:43

13 Fuga. Allegro e Presto 4:20

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)

Prelude & Fugue in C major op. 87/1

14 Prelude 2:50

15 Fugue 3:49

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)

16 Impromptu in C minor D 899/1: Allegro molto moderato 10:34

LUCIANO BERIO (1925–2003)

17 **Wasserklavier**

3:22

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Keyboard Sonata No. 33 in C minor Hob. XVI:20

18 1. Moderato

12:03

19 2. Andante con moto

9:15

20 3. Finale. Allegro

7:29

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

21 **The Little Shepherd**

2:45

No. 5 from *Children's Corner* L 113: Très modéré

Yannick Nézet-Séguin *piano*

About this album

Last summer (2020), Anisia Campos, my great piano teacher, passed away. Her long life was dedicated to young musicians. She was an extraordinary teacher – I really owe most of my musical knowledge to her. I studied with Madame Campos from age 13 to 22, the formative years of development for any musician, and any human being.

Anisia Campos was born in Brazil. At a very young age she travelled to Europe and studied with Reine Gianoli and Alfred Cortot at the École Normale de Musique in Paris, and she later worked with Claudio Arrau. I am very fortunate to be a part of this incredible lineage; she passed on the wisdom of this great line of teaching and of musicianship in every repertoire. To have access to this when I began studying with her at 13 was an incredible gift.



Madame Campos was what we would today refer to as an “old-school” teacher, never compromising – even though she knew that I wanted to become a conductor (a decision I made when I was 10). It is through these uncompromising piano lessons that I developed my skills as a musician, which is, I think, one of the most important things for conductors: to develop one’s self as an accomplished instrumentalist. This is how we improve our leadership, and also how we learn to surmount challenges technically, which is very useful on the podium. This knowledge allows you to request things from the musicians, knowing technically what is possible. And it helps you to understand what you have to overcome as a musician, in order to express musically what you want in spite of – or even

embracing – any technical difficulties. I thank her for instilling all of these qualities in me.

This pandemic year has been, of course, a great crisis for the world, especially the cultural field. I had started to reconnect with the piano before Madame Campos passed away, but being confined at home like many musicians, and obviously, as a conductor, unable to make music with an orchestra,

the piano was a kind of salvation – a way of self-expression. But it also gave me an opportunity for introspection, something that I think most of us did – not only artists and musicians, but every human being: recalibrating our priorities, what our purpose is in life, and what our aspirations are. To get in touch with this, my avenue was through the piano – especially through my piano parts from when I was a student, and reading all the markings of Madame Campos. I was already in this process when she left this earth, and her death was a big shock for me, but at the same time it was a wonderful moment to reflect and pay tribute.



So, very spontaneously, I decided to go into the recording studio at Domaine Forget, this gorgeous, magical place in Charlevoix – a beautiful, natural region of Quebec near the St. Lawrence River. In the summer it is home to an amazing academy and music festival; many recordings are made here; and it also has a great Steinway. I spent a week there, near the river, which is wide enough to feel like the ocean at that point. This union of nature and the reflection on my past and my studies, combined with the piano, was a true salvation, and a true moment of reconnection with my way of expressing music.

When I was a student, I had a very orchestral way of thinking about the piano. The piano was never big enough to encompass all my imagination of sound for the orchestra. It's almost a paradox, but now that I'm a conductor, when I go back to my instrument I especially want to find the intimacy and the softer colours, the soothing ones and also the painful ones, the unknown areas where composers go. And especially, I think, the piano, or the keyboard, has been a place of confidence for composers through the years, whether it's Brahms, Schubert, Berio, Scarlatti or Bach. These are all



parts of the piano repertoire I learned as a student, and this album is a kind of journey through my discovery of these pieces, and now more than ever, what they mean for me. Hopefully this provides a journey for the listeners around the world who also need these moments of reflection. I believe the piano is the ideal instrument to convey these feelings.

I am no stranger to performing as a pianist in chamber music or collaborating with singers to perform recitals and Lieder, but I have rarely performed as a piano soloist. That is why this project is very special for me, since playing the piano is a vulnerable and hidden place. Sometimes artists must have the courage to give this part of themselves to the world, so that it can touch hearts and inspire listeners. This is what I try to achieve when I'm in a group, whether it's chamber music or chamber music at large – when I conduct orchestras and operas. But being directly at the piano without any intermediary – just the keyboard – is a very special way to communicate.

It was important for me to reflect the whole range of repertoire that Madame Campos taught me, and to offer this album as a journey through some very dark and intimate places, but also through some dreamy ones, more positive and hopeful. It's a broad spectrum from Scarlatti to

today. One piece included on this album has been composed especially for me by the great composer Éric Champagne, and dedicated to me during the pandemic.

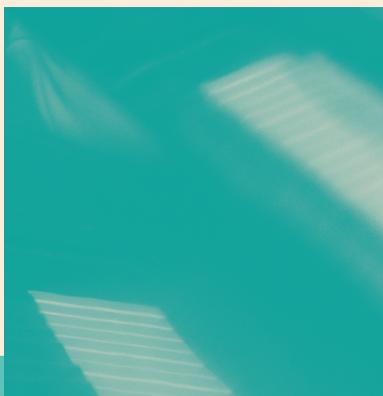
And of course, there is Rachmaninoff, who has been

so important in recent years in my relationship with the Philadelphia Orchestra. He, of course, is such a great piano composer, as well as a legendary pianist. I wanted to offer a rarely played piece, which I believe is Rachmaninoff at his most intimate, all about reflection and the depth of the human soul.

It is with humility and dedication, with all my heart, that I offer you this album, a journey of introspection through piano playing. And I hope it gives you moments of enjoyment, inspiration, hope and peace.



Jannis Maïst-Regoni



Recording: Saint-Irénée (Québec),
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Assistant Engineer: Pierre Lévesque
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A&R Production Manager: Malene Hill
Product Manager: Meike Lieser
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