

# Edition Klavier-Festival Ruhr

Premieren 2021:

Debüts und eine Uraufführung für Alfred Brendel

Live Recordings 2021



**Eva Gevorgyan**

**Roman Borisov**

**Pallavi Mahidhara**

**A Bu**

**Kit Armstrong, Andrej Bielow und Adrian Brendel**

**ALEXANDER SKRJABIN (1872–1915)**24 *Preludes op. 11*

- |    |                                    |         |
|----|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1  | <i>Vivace in C-Dur</i>             | [00:56] |
| 2  | <i>Allegretto in a-Moll</i>        | [02:17] |
| 3  | <i>Vivo in G-Dur</i>               | [00:44] |
| 4  | <i>Lento in e-Moll</i>             | [01:51] |
| 5  | <i>Andante cantabile in D-Dur</i>  | [01:31] |
| 6  | <i>Allegro in h-Moll</i>           | [00:42] |
| 7  | <i>Allegro assai in A-Dur</i>      | [00:52] |
| 8  | <i>Allegro agitato in fis-Moll</i> | [01:42] |
| 9  | <i>Andantino in E-Dur</i>          | [01:35] |
| 10 | <i>Andante in cis-Moll</i>         | [01:07] |
| 11 | <i>Allegro assai in H-Dur</i>      | [01:30] |
| 12 | <i>Andante in gis-Moll</i>         | [01:36] |
| 13 | <i>Lento in Ges-Dur</i>            | [01:23] |
| 14 | <i>Presto in es-Moll</i>           | [00:48] |
| 15 | <i>Lento in Des-Dur</i>            | [01:50] |
| 16 | <i>Misterioso in b-Moll</i>        | [01:30] |
| 17 | <i>Allegretto in As-Dur</i>        | [00:39] |
| 18 | <i>Allegro agitato in f-Moll</i>   | [00:50] |
| 19 | <i>Affettuoso in Es-Dur</i>        | [01:10] |
| 20 | <i>Appassionato in c-Moll</i>      | [01:08] |
| 21 | <i>Andante in B-Dur</i>            | [01:41] |
| 22 | <i>Allegro assai in A-Dur</i>      | [01:14] |
| 23 | <i>Allegro agitato in fis-Moll</i> | [00:40] |
| 24 | <i>Andantino in E-Dur</i>          | [00:59] |

**EVA GEVORGYAN**  
(Stipendiatin des Klavier-Festivals Ruhr 2020)

Zeche Holland, Bochum-Wattenscheid  
Live Recording: 8. September 2021

**SERGEI RACHMANINOW (1873–1943)***Préludes op. 23 (Auswahl)*

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 25 | <i>Nr. 6: Andante in Es-Dur</i>                      | [03:20] |
| 26 | <i>Nr. 5: Alla marcia in g-Moll</i>                  | [03:54] |
| 27 | <i>Nr. 3: Tempo di menuetto in d-Moll</i>            | [03:47] |
| 28 | <i>Nr. 4: Andante cantabile in D-Dur</i>             | [04:58] |
| 29 | <i>Variationen über ein Thema von Corelli op. 42</i> | [17:56] |

**ROMAN BORISOV**

Haus Opherdicke, Holzwickede  
Live Recording: 10. September 2021

**SERGEI RACHMANINOW (1873–1943)**

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 30 | <i>Flieder op. 21,5</i>   | [02:32] |
| 31 | <i>Hopak, aus: „Der Jahrmarkt von Sorotschinzy“ von Modest Mussorgski</i> | [01:54] |

**ANATOLI LJADOW (1855–1914)**

- |    |                             |         |
|----|-----------------------------|---------|
| 32 | <i>Barkarole op. 44</i>     | [04:20] |
| 33 | <i>Die Spieldose op. 32</i> | [02:15] |

**PALLAVI MAHIDHARA**

Haus Fuhr, Essen-Werden  
Live Recording: 1. Oktober 2021

**CD 1**  
[75:45]**CLARA SCHUMANN (1819–1896)**

- |   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | <i>Variationen über ein Thema von Robert Schumann op. 20</i> | [11:07] |
|---|--|---------|

**JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)**

- |   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| 2 | <i>Variationen und Fuge über ein Thema von Georg Friedrich Händel op. 24</i> | [28:57] |
|---|--|---------|

**PALLAVI MAHIDHARA**

Haus Fuhr, Essen-Werden  
Live Recording: 1. Oktober 2021

**KIT ARMSTRONG (\*1992)**

- |   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| 3 | <i>„fast zu ernst“ – Trio für Klavier, Violine und Violoncello (2021)</i><br><i>Auftragswerk der Stiftung Klavier-Festival Ruhr zum 90. Geburtstag von Alfred Brendel</i><br><i>Uraufführung</i> | [06:11] |
|---|--|---------|

**KIT ARMSTRONG****ANDREJ BIELOW (Violine)****ADRIAN BRENDEL (Violoncello)**

Robert-Schumann-Saal, Düsseldorf  
Live Recording: 21. September 2021

**CD 2**  
[47:08]**JAZZLINE**

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 1  | <i>Prelude</i>                                       | [06:30] |
| 2  | <i>Improvisation I</i>                               | [08:56] |
| 3  | <i>Bossa in G</i>                                    | [06:52] |
| 4  | <i>Daybreak op. 26 (Nikolai Kapustin)</i>            | [03:16] |
| 5  | <i>Ballade in E</i>                                  | [05:21] |
| 6  | <i>Someday My Prince Will Come (Frank Churchill)</i> | [06:47] |
| 7  | <i>Improvisation II</i>                              | [07:37] |
| 8  | <i>Aria</i>  | [09:06] |
| 9  | <i>Improvisation III</i>                             | [05:07] |
| 10 | <i>Lullaby (Kengo Nakamura)</i>                      | [03:39] |
| 11 | <i>Ain't Misbehavin' (Fats Waller)</i>               | [03:47] |
| 12 | <i>Paint My Heart Red (Keith Jarrett)</i>            | [00:50] |

*All tracks composed by A Bu, if not stated otherwise.*

**A BU**  
(Stipendiat des Klavier-Festivals Ruhr 2019)

Emil Schumacher Museum, Hagen  
Live Recording: 18. September 2021

**CD 3**  
[77:52]

ALEXANDER SKRJABIN (1872–1915)

- 24 Preludes op. 11  
 No. 1: *Vivace in C Major*  
 No. 2: *Allegretto in A Minor*  
 No. 3: *Vivo in G Major*  
 No. 4: *Lento in E Minor*  
 No. 5: *Andante cantabile in D Major*  
 No. 6: *Allegro in B Minor*  
 No. 7: *Allegro assai in A Major*  
 No. 8: *Allegro agitato in F Sharp Minor*  
 No. 9: *Andantino in E Major*  
 No. 10: *Andante in C Sharp Minor*  
 No. 11: *Allegro assai in B Major*  
 No. 12: *Andante in G Sharp Minor*  
 No. 13: *Lento in G Flat Major*  
 No. 14: *Presto in E Flat Minor*  
 No. 15: *Lento in D Flat Major*  
 No. 16: *Misterioso in B Flat Minor*  
 No. 17: *Allegretto in A Flat Major*  
 No. 18: *Allegro agitato in F Minor*  
 No. 19: *Affettuoso in E Flat Major*  
 No. 20: *Appassionato in C Minor*  
 No. 21: *Andante in B Flat Major*  
 No. 22: *Allegro assai in A Major*  
 No. 23: *Allegro agitato in F Sharp Minor*  
 No. 24: *Andantino in E Major*

Alexander Scriabin was a phenomenal pianist in his own right, capable of composing a great number of sparkling, exquisite miniatures for his instrument: for example, the 24 *Préludes* op. 11, in which we can trace the musical paths he followed between 1888 and 1896. Inspired by Chopin's preludes, the pieces in this collection strictly follow the circle

of fifths, with C Major and A Minor as points of departure, travelling through the keys with sharps, then with flats, and ending on F Major and D Minor. "Crystalline" and "perfumed" were the words Scriabin used to describe these subtle piano fantasias. Scriabin's music publisher and friend Mitrofan Belyayev was the one who encouraged him to gather the preludes in a collection, and they also trace Scriabin's wanderings and concert tours during those years. Thus, the first preludes in Op. 11 were composed in Moscow (No. 4 when he was only 16 years old); then he traveled to Kiev, Dresden, Heidelberg, and Vitznau (Switzerland), before returning to Moscow. Like Chopin, he noted the date and location at which each piece had been written, but he departed from his model by dividing the cycle into four parts of six preludes each. Prelude No. 8 in F Sharp Minor gave rise to a dispute with Rachmaninoff, who chose not to follow the rapid metronome indication. "It's my interpretation," insisted Rachmaninoff, and Scriabin retorted: "But it's my music!" The cycle culminates dramatically in No. 20, the Prelude in C Minor, in which the left hand covers the range of four octaves in just twenty-two measures. A comment by Russian poet Boris Pasternak seems quite fitting in this context; when Pasternak was thirteen, he had gotten to know Scriabin and tremendously admired his playing. "Scriabin liked to gather momentum and then go skipping along like a stone sent skimming across the water, as if at any moment he might leave the ground and glide on air. In general, he cultivated various forms of sublime lightness and unburdened movement verging on actual flight."

SERGEI RACHMANINOW (1873–1943)

- Selections from: *Préludes* op. 23  
 No. 6: *Andante in E Flat major*  
 No. 5: *Alla marcia in G minor*  
 No. 3: *Tempo di menuetto in D minor*  
 No. 4: *Andante cantabile in D major*

Sergei Rachmaninoff was only 19 years old when he obtained the coveted Gold Medal in piano as well as in composition at Moscow Conservatory in 1892. He crowned that event with the C Minor Prelude, which would accompany him for the rest of his life, bringing him fame and admiration as a brilliant encore in his concert tours. Ten years passed before he turned once more to the genre: between 1901 and 1903, Rachmaninoff wrote the Ten Preludes op. 23. Everything he had absorbed in his early studies with his cousin Alexander Siloti (a direct pupil of Liszt), as well as with Nicolai Zverev and Sergei Taneyev, now came to fruition. Not only was Rachmaninoff capable of surmounting any technical challenge; he could write pieces in an opulent texture that managed to avoid salon music style. The Prelude in E Flat major stands out for its meandering, arabesque-like accompaniment. Prelude No. 5, *Alla marcia*, is the most well-known piece in this selection. Prelude No. 3 in D minor sounds somber and defiant, and the following one in D major modestly reveals a sense of profound, heartfelt yearning.

- Variations on a Theme by Corelli op. 42*  
 Theme. *Andante*  
 Variation 1. *Poco piu mosso*  
 Variation 2. *L'istesso tempo*  
 Variation 3. *Tempo di Minuetto*  
 Variation 4. *Andante*  
 Variation 5. *Allegro (ma non tanto)*  
 Variation 6. *L'istesso tempo*  
 Variation 7. *Vivace*  
 Variation 8. *Adagio misterioso*  
 Variation 9. *Un poco piu mosso*  
 Variation 10. *Allegro scherzando*  
 Variation 11. *Allegro vivace*  
 Variation 12. *L'istesso tempo*  
 Variation 13. *Agitato*  
 Intermezzo  
 Variation 14. *Andante (come prima)*  
 Variation 15. *L'istesso tempo*  
 Variation 16. *Allegro vivace*  
 Variation 17. *Meno mosso*  
 Variation 18. *Allegro con brio*  
 Variation 19. *Piu mosso. Agitato*  
 Variation 20. *Piu mosso*  
 Coda. *Andante*

Music history is full of charming mistakes and misunderstandings, such as titles or nicknames of pieces that made them famous, but which do not stem from the composer. We have another such case in Rachmaninoff's "Corelli" Variations op. 42: the theme is not of Corelli's pen. Instead, it is an old Spanish dance tune that became well-known as "La Folia" and was taken by Corelli as a point of departure for a series of variations in his Violin Sonata No. 12. Rachmaninoff composed his own cycle on the same theme in June 1931, on a summer vacation

in Europe. This is the only work for solo piano he ever wrote after he left Russia in 1917. The set of variations became highly successful, but Rachmaninoff himself was not entirely convinced. Whenever he performed the cycle in his one of his acclaimed recitals, he might leave one or the other variation out. In a letter to Nikolai Medtner, he explained how we went about this: "I let myself be guided by the amount of coughing that went on in the audience. If the coughing increased, I would leave the next variation out. If there was no coughing, I played them all in the correct order." In the case of Nos. 11, 12, and 19, he even noted in the score that they were optional. "I have to disagree with Rachmaninoff," insists pianist Roman Borisov. "Each one of the variations is magnificent!"

*Lilacs op. 21,5*  
*Hopak from Mussorgsky's opera "Sorochinsky Fair"*

Rachmaninoff also had the knack of putting his legendary piano skills on impressive display in arrangements of other composers' works, as in his version of the Hopak dance from Mussorgsky's opera "Sorochinsky Fair." The same high level of technique and aplomb is notable in Rachmaninoff's pearly, subtly scintillating piano version of his own song Lilacs op. 21/5, which had been part of a cycle he originally wrote in 1902.

## ANATOLI LJADOW (1855–1914)

*Barcarolle op. 44*  
*The Music Box op. 32*

Anatoly Lyadov is remembered as Prokofiev's composition teacher, but in his own works he often looked back to Chopin in terms of style, while cultivating the same penchant for miniature forms such as preludes and waltzes. Just as Chopin before him, Lyadov also wrote his own atmospheric Barcarolle op. 44. But Lyadov's most popular piece is probably The Music Box op. 32, which he wrote in 1893 for his son.

## CLARA SCHUMANN (1819–1896)

*Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann op. 20*  
*Theme. Rather slow. – Variations I–VII*

Until quite recently, Clara Schumann was mostly remembered as a successful concert pianist in her time, and as the wife of the great composer Robert Schumann; during her lifetime, her own compositions went largely ignored. But it is interesting to note that she had launched her double career as pianist and composer when she was only eleven years old, by playing her own "Variations on an Original Theme" in her first public concert. Two years later, in 1833, she returned to the genre of theme with variations and dedicated her Opus 3, a Romance variée, to Robert, who would one day become her husband. Her next work in the genre was a birthday present she gave to her now duly wed husband in 1853: the Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, which "caused him great pleasure", as Clara reported in a letter to her stepsister. These seven variations are based on a theme from a piece in F Sharp minor called "Album Leaf," found in Robert's collection Bunte Blätter op. 99. Clara admitted that her variations were "quite tricky to play."

## JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

*Variations und Fugue on a Theme by George Frideric Handel op. 24*  
*Aria – Variations I–XXV – Fuga*

The following work was also a birthday present: this time, it was one for Clara Schumann. Her friend Johannes Brahms wrote the Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel op. 24 in her honor, and they saw their premiere on 7 December 1861 in Hamburg. One month earlier, Clara had already extolled the work's virtues in advance. "Johannes has recently written wonderful things, as well as variations I am charmed with, full of ingenuity, closing with a fugue that combines elaborate art and enthusiastic emotion in a way I have hardly ever seen elsewhere. These variations are beastly difficult..." The twenty-five brilliant character variations are based on a simple "Aria" in Handel's Suite in B Flat major for harpsichord from the year 1733, and they build up to a colossal, intricately structured four-part fugue.

## KIT ARMSTRONG (\*1992)

*"fast zu ernst" – Trio for piano, violin, and cello (2021)  
Commissioned by the Ruhr Piano Festival on the  
occasion of Alfred Brendel's 90th birthday  
World premiere*

Kit Armstrong on the subject of his new piano trio written to congratulate his mentor Alfred Brendel for his 90th birthday:

"Certain pieces are unintentionally funny. Emotional pathos can seem quite comical if we remain somewhat aloof, and who has not laughed at an antiquated figure of speech?

"The matter becomes trickier when we are dealing with 'great works' of music repertoire. Perhaps, I thought to myself, I could use a musical composition to express what I dare not say out loud. I thus harboured the intention of making fun of a piece everyone loves and admires. I will not say which one it was: I do not want to waste ammunition, and perhaps someday in the course of my piano career I might still play it in public.

"At any rate, once I started attempting to distill my mockery in a concrete compositional form, I lost all motivation or desire to provoke. The jokes had always been easy to spot just by hearing the piece; spelling them out in music would be just as unfunny as explaining them.

Then, all of a sudden, as if my conscience was punishing me for my impertinence, I couldn't get Robert Schumann's piece "fast zu ernst" from Kinderszenen out of my head. The next day I felt inspired by the title to use Schumann's piece as the basis for a free fantasia, the purpose of which would be to distort and mock the piece's original content.

The melody and bass line of Schumann's "fast zu ernst" pervade my

piece as they would in a passacaglia. The piece's structure is determined by eighteen occurrences of the passacaglia theme, a recurrent basic unit made up of five phrases: AA'BB'C, or occasionally the variant ABA'B'C.

The fact that Schumann's material seems to preserve all its dignity leads me to acknowledge that I ultimately was not making fun of the piece, but of myself."

*Prelude | Improvisation I | Bossa in G  
Daybreak op. 26 (Nikolai Kapustin) | Ballade in E  
Someday My Prince Will Come (Frank Churchill)  
Improvisation II | Aria | Improvisation III Lullaby  
(Kengo Nakamura) | Ain't Misbehavin' (Fats  
Waller) Paint My Heart Red (Keith Jarrett)*

*All tracks composed by A Bu, if not stated otherwise.*



Jazz from China? As Whitney Balliett, long-time jazz critic for the New York Times, once wrote: jazz was born in the US, but it does not belong to Americans. This is nothing new for fans of our JazzLine series at the Ruhr Piano Festival, since leading jazz pianists from almost all parts of the world have made guest appearances here: pianists from Europe, of course, but also from the Caribbean, from South Africa, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as from

Russia, Japan, and, now, China – where "there was already jazz before I was born", as A Bu explains. "In the late 1980s, musicians began to play jazz although they didn't have the training: they taught themselves. Many musicians listened to jazz, so they just started to play it."

Born in 1999 in Beijing, A Bu (whose real name is Dai Liang) started to learn piano when he was four. "My father is a music aficionado",

he tells us, "and not just of classical music. He encouraged me to listen to everything I could: jazz, blues, rock, etc." When the father took his four-year-old son to a music store, the little squirt headed straight for the largest instrument he could find. Ever since then, A Bu and the piano have remained inseparable. "Until I was nine, I only played classical music; then I was admitted to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. About that same time, my father introduced me to the great Chinese jazz pianist Kong Hongwei, known as the "Golden Buddha," and it was he who started to teach me to play jazz. My love for jazz was kindled once and for all by the time I was able to hear such pianists as Michel Petrucciani and Michel Camilo." (Incidentally, when Camilo was awarded the 2019 Ruhr Piano Festival Prize, he selected A Bu as the Festival scholarship holder for the 2019-2020 season.)

At the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music, A Bu expanded his classical training, studied music theory, and, in parallel, ventured his first steps in jazz and Latin music; he started to improvise, and, by the age of twelve, started to measure his strength in jam sessions with full-grown Chinese jazz professionals. This led to his first trio. Meanwhile, he was attending jazz summer camps in the US. "Until then, I had never learned jazz on a regular basis." At the age of fourteen he got to meet Chick Corea, who was playing a solo jazz piano recital in Shanghai. "We had dinner together before the concert; no one was talking about us playing together. But in the second half he called me onstage, and together we played in impro in A minor. I was clear about Chick's importance in the jazz world; I knew many of his albums. When he called me onstage, it felt like a dream. I got to meet him again once more; we always remained in contact."

The teenager was being recommended right and left as a prodigy. 2014 at the age of fifteen, he was admitted in classical and jazz piano at the prestigious Juilliard School of Music in New York City;

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

one year afterwards he won First Prize and the Audience Prize at the Parmigiani Jazz Piano Solo Competition as part of the Montreux Jazz Festival. Further awards and distinctions soon followed. In 2015 he started taking part frequently in the International Jazz Day Global Concert, held annually on 30 April in different worldwide locations under the sponsorship of Herbie Hancock.

That same year, in 2015, A Bu released his debut album, "88 Tones of Black and White", featuring solo pieces along with other numbers performed with his Chinese trio for a firm that is otherwise better known for its microphones and headphones. On that album he not only performed classics of modern jazz by Coltrane, Monk, Evans and Petrucciani, but also a version of Bach's Two-Part Invention No. 15. "A Bu's potential is extraordinary," one critic wrote. "His trio plays at a level of musicianship that many never even reach." On the next album, "Butterflies Fly in Pairs" (2016), A Bu focused on his own compositions, apart from the title piece, a Chinese folk tune. The music oscillates between modern mainstream, fusion, and Latin jazz, in the style of Chick Corea's Return to Forever albums. At one point, the Chinese jazzman adds a delightful touch to the mix: on the melodica he starts to play a tango that transforms itself midway into a Cuban-style rumba. In his most recent trio lineup on the new album "One Step East," A Bu finds himself in the illustrious company of Larry Grenadier (bass) and Eric Harland (drums), two eminent musicians who otherwise collaborate with jazz greats such as Brad Mehldau, Joshua Redman, Charles Lloyd, and Chris Potter. At age twenty-two, A Bu has come pretty close to playing in the first league on the jazz scene.

## KIT ARMSTRONG

Ever since Kit Armstrong set foot on the stages of international venues, he has never ceased to amaze classical music audiences. Hardly any other young artist is well-versed in so many areas, with such a universal upbringing. Described by the New York Times as a "brilliant pianist" who combines "musical maturity and youthful daring in his exceptional playing," Kit Armstrong has developed a unique artistic approach, naturally combining a profound, intense study of music with other arts, the natural sciences, and mathematics. His repertoire ranges from the dawn of keyboard music in the 16th century with the English Virginalist School up to the music of our time.

Armstrong collaborates with many of the world's most sought-after conductors, including Christian Thielemann, Herbert Blomstedt, Riccardo Chailly, Kent Nagano, Manfred Honeck, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mario Venzago, and Robin Ticciati. He has appeared with some of the world's finest orchestras, including the Vienna Philharmonic, Dresden Staatskapelle, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gewandhaus Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Recent solo recitals brought him to the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Munich Prinzregententheater, the Ruhr Piano Festival, Philharmonie de Luxembourg, and Cologne Philharmonie. An enthusiastic chamber music recitalist, Kit Armstrong has developed close artistic partnerships with other leading instrumental and vocal artists. Together with Renaud Capuçon he presented the complete Mozart violin sonatas at the Salzburg Mozartwoche Festival and at Berlin's Boulez Hall. With Christiane Karg, Julian Prégardien, and Benjamin Appl he has performed important Lied repertoire. Edition Peters publishes his compositions. Commissioners include the Leipzig Gewandhaus and the Musikkollegium Winterthur.

Born in 1992 in Los Angeles, Armstrong studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and at the Royal Academy of Music in London. At 7, he started studying composition at Chapman University and physics at California State University, later also chemistry and mathematics at the University of Pennsylvania and mathematics at the Imperial College of London. He earned a master's degree in pure mathematics at the University of Paris VI. Alfred Brendel, who has guided Armstrong as teacher and mentor since 2005, ascribes to him "an understanding of the great piano works that combines freshness and subtlety, emotion and intellect". Their relationship was captured in the film Set the Piano Stool on Fire by Mark Kidel. In 2021, Kit Armstrong performed at the Ruhr Piano Festival for the 12th time.

## ANDREJ BIELOW

Born in 1981 in Ukraine, Andrej Bielow had his first violin lessons at the age of five. His exceptional talent soon became evident; Professor Michael Kuzniezov took him under his wing and promoted his career and education. After just a few years of training, Bielow was already making public appearances as a violinist. As a soloist, he has collaborated with such renowned orchestras as the New Japan Philharmonic, Orchestra National de Radio France, the NDR Radio Philharmonic in Hamburg, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Deutsche Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, and the Munich Chamber Orchestra, under the baton of established conductors such as Kurt Masur, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Gianandrea Noseda, Miguel Gomez-Martinez, Christian Arming, Agnieszka Duczmal, Olari Elts, Mihkel Kütson, Junichi Hirokami, and Christoph Poppen.

He is often invited to perform at music festivals, including Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein, Music at Plush, the Heidelberg Spring Festival, and the Music Festival of Lower Saxony. His chamber music partners include Severin von Eckardstein, Nicolas Altstaedt, Kit Armstrong, Christopher Glynn, and Nils Mönkemeyer. At the Kronberg Academy he has performed with Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, and the Beaux Arts Trio.

At the age of fifteen, Andrej settled in Germany to study with Prof. Krzysztof Wegrzyn at the University of Music and Drama in Hannover, where he obtained his concert diploma in 2006. Further study followed with Gérard Poulet at the Paris Conservatoire, as well as with Herman Krebbers, Ida Haendel, Ana Chumachenko, and Benjamin Schmid.

Andrej Bielow won several major prizes at international competitions including Long Thibaud (Paris, 2002), Joseph Joachim (Hannover, 2000), and the ARD International Music Competition (Munich, 1999). He has recorded over 20 CD albums for the labels Hyperion,

Naxos, CPO, Cavi Music, Solo Musica, Guttingi, Castor, Hänslers Profil, Hänslers Classic, and Rekele Medien.

From 2005 to 2014, Andrej Bielow was the leader of the renowned Szymanowski Quartet; during the same period, he taught violin at the University of Music and Drama in Hannover, his alma mater. Since 2013, Andrej Bielow has become a regular visiting teacher delivering classes at the Royal Academy of Music in London; in 2014, he joined the violin faculty at the University of Arts in Graz and regularly gives masterclasses in Europe, Asia, and the US.

Andrej Bielow plays a violin made by Stefan-Peter Greiner in Bonn (1998), on loan from the German Music Instrument Collection. In 2021 he performed at the Ruhr Piano Festival for the sixth time.

## ADRIAN BRENDEL

Creative innovation and musical versatility rank high among the list of attributes cultivated by Adrian Brendel. The cellist has forged strong and lasting partnerships with many fine artists and appeared with them at the world's most prestigious festivals and concert halls. His love for contemporary music arose during his teens when he discovered works by Kurtág, Kagel and Ligeti; it has flourished since with landmark commissions and pioneering collaborations with such diverse composers as Thomas Adès, Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Eötvös, and György Kurtág. The breadth of Adrian's musical passions also encompasses jazz and world music and influenced his decision to join the Nash Ensemble in 2014. As a tireless champion of new music, Adrian always seeks to include contemporary work in his programmes. He recently concluded a three-year project with Birtwistle that delivered the world premieres of the song cycle *Bogenstrich* and *Trio* for violin, cello and piano, works which he has recorded for the ECM label. Other significant world premieres include York Höller's *Mouvements* for cello and piano and *Cello Concerto*, the latter presented alongside Zimmermann's *Canto di speranza* with the NDR Symphony Orchestra in Hamburg.

Adrian studied cello with William Pleeth. He later received lessons from Alexander Baillie and Frans Helmerson in London and Cologne, and participated in masterclasses with György Kurtág, Ferenc Rados, members of the Alban Berg Quartet, and with his father, Alfred Brendel. A critically acclaimed recording of Beethoven's cello sonatas with his father is available on Philips. Adrian's presence on the international stage is closely bound to his work as a recitalist and chamber musician. As a concerto soloist, he has appeared with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and many orchestras throughout Germany and Eastern Europe. His annual visit to the International Musicians' Seminar in Prussia Cove, founded by Sándor Végh as a perfect environment for music-

making, holds great personal and artistic importance. Until 2017 Adrian was artistic director of the Plush Festival held every summer since 1995 in Dorset.

The year 2021 marked the occasion of Adrian Brendel's 10th appearance at the Ruhr Piano Festival. In 2018 he generously performed for the Second Foundation Concert on the occasion of the Ruhr Piano Festival's 30th anniversary.

## ROMAN BORISOV

Roman Borisov was born in 2002. Since 2010 he has studied at the Novosibirsk Conservatoire Music College in the class of legendary piano professor Mary Lebenzon. He already makes regular appearances throughout Russia, having performed at the Novosibirsk Philharmonic, the Chamber Hall of the Moscow Philharmonic, the Concert Hall of the Jarosław Philharmonic (Poland), and the Kazakhstan Central Concert Hall (Astana) with such orchestras as the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia, the Novosibirsk Academic Symphony Orchestra, and the Astana Symphony Orchestra. He has taken part in the International ArsLonga Festival in Moscow, the Piano-en-Valois Festival (France), and the Trans-Siberian Art Festival (Novosibirsk).

Borisov has won prizes at several Russian and international competitions, including the Vladimir Krainev Piano Competition in Ukraine and the Youth Delphic Games of the CIS Member States (Gold Medal). In 2018 he was a prizewinner at the International Grand Piano Competition in Moscow.

Borisov has also frequently participated in the music projects of the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation, and is increasingly attracting notice in western Europe; thus, for instance, he was one of the academy participants at Verbier Festival in 2019. He gave his début performance at the Ruhr Piano Festival in 2021.

## EVA GEVORGYAN

Born in 2004, Eva Gevorgyan is currently a student at the prestigious Central Music School for Gifted Children at the Moscow Conservatory. When asked who her musical models are, she names Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, Emil Gilels, Mikhail Pletnev – and Natalia Trull, her teacher at the Central Music School. Eva Gevorgyan has won First Prizes at the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists, the Grand Piano International Competition in Moscow, the Robert Schumann Piano Competition in Düsseldorf, the International Piano Competition in Gorizia (Italy), the Santa Cecilia Competition in Porto, and the T. Amirejibi International Piano Competition in Borjomi (Georgia).

Eva Gevorgyan has actively participated in masterclasses imparted by Dmitri Bashkirov, Stanislav Ioudenitch, Pavel Gililov, Piotr Paleczny, and Klaus Hellwig. She has concertized in Switzerland, Poland, Russia, Italy, Germany, Armenia, and the UK, where she was awarded the Elena Cobb Star Prize at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Eva became the Discovery Winner at the ICMA (International Classical Music Awards) in Switzerland, and was awarded the Junior Prize at the Eppan Junior Piano Academy in Italy. She currently receives a scholarship from the International Academy of Music in Liechtenstein.

As laureate of the 2020 Ruhr Piano Festival Prize, Evgeny Kissin selected Eva Gevorgyan as scholarship holder of the Festival, leading up to her début performance in the 2021 season.

## PALLAVI MAHIDHARA

Indian-American pianist Pallavi Mahidhara made her orchestral debut at the age of 10, performing at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. She received her Bachelor's Degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and her Master's Degree at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin. She studied for several years with Dimitri Bashkirov at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía, where she is now the Artistic Advisor and a Piano Professor for their Music & Culture Summer Camp in Madrid, Spain.

Pallavi is the Second Prize winner and Young Audience Award winner of the 69th Geneva International Piano Competition, and of the VI International Prokofiev Competition in Saint Petersburg. She has won the Steinway Advancement Prize in Germany and has received, on multiple occasions, the "Sobresaliente" Award from the hands of Queen Sofía of Spain.

She has appeared in solo and orchestral concerts across five continents, performing at the Konzerthaus in Berlin, the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, and the Grand Hall of the Dimitri Shostakovich Philharmonia in Saint Petersburg. Sir Andrés Schiff selected her for his concert series "Building Bridges," a platform to support and promote young pianists. Pallavi has performed at important festivals such as Marlboro Music and Verbier Festival. Pallavi's musical projects have covered an extensive range, from standard Classical works to music of contemporary and living composers, to fusion and crossover projects. She has collaborated with drummer Questlove of "The Roots" and international singer/songwriter Keren Ann for a genre-defying concert, fusing the classical world with hip hop, jazz, and folk-pop artists, at the Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts. She gave performances of Steve Reich's Double Sextet with the multi-Grammy-Award-winning ensemble, "eighth

blackbird." She has premiered a large piano work, titled "Fantasia and Fugue in C," by one of India's leading film composers, Vanraj Bhatia.

Pallavi Mahidhara gave her début performance at the Ruhr Piano Festival in 2021.