

Jean-Nicolas Diatkine

Jean-Nicolas Diatkine, born in 1964, began his piano studies at the age of 6 with the pianist Wilfredo Voguet, who quickly encouraged him to become a concert performer. His parents, renowned doctors, preferred to wait until the end of his scientific studies at lycée before supporting him in this direction. After working with several students from the Arrau school in France and the United States (Carlindo Valériani, Joseph Villa, Kenneth Broadaway), it was in London that he met Ruth Nye, a student of Claudio Arrau, with whom he perfected his technique and the art of producing the colours of sound. Then it was the composer Narcis Bonet, who for 13 years introduced him to the meticulous analysis of the musical architecture of the works he performed.

Chopin advised his pupils to listen to singers; Jean-Nicolas Diatkine took him at his word and chose to work between 1996 and 2007 as an accompanist and then vocal coach at Yva Barthélémy's singing school in Paris. This experience enabled him to explore the German Lied repertoire, knowledge of which is essential for grasping the poetic universe of composers such as Schubert, Schumann and Brahms.

In 2000, he came to the attention of mezzo-soprano Alicia Nafé and tenor Zeger Vandersteene, accompanying them on numerous recitals in France, Belgium and Spain. The stage experience he shared with these great artists inspired him to perform as a soloist, and this is what he did from 1999 onwards in France and Belgium, notably in the "Autour du Piano" concert series, at the "Pianissime" piano festival, at the Opéra Bastille, and in Ghent in Belgium, where the public voted him "best piano revelation of the last ten years". Since 2011, he has performed every year at the Salle Gaveau in Paris and in numerous private concerts. In May 2017, he made his first tour of Japan (Tokyo, Yamanashi) and recently performed in Berlin.

Jean-Nicolas Diatkine conceives his concert programmes as a play in which the place of the works must make sense. This approach has led him to perform a wide range of well-known and lesser-known works for piano, including Beethoven's Appassionata Sonata and Op.101 Sonata, Schubert's last Sonata D.960, Schumann's Symphonic Studies, Chopin's Four Ballades, Brahms' Variations on a Theme by Handel, Handel's Suites, Soler's Sonatas and Shostakovich's Preludes. In gratitude to his master Narcis Bonet, he has performed and recorded his Five Nocturnes. His repertoire also includes rarely-played works by Liszt, such as Les Réminiscences de Boccanegra, not forgetting Ravel's Gaspard de laNuit, which won him critical acclaim in Belgium (" A symbiosis of lyricism and architecture ", W. van Landeghem). His interpretation of Rameau and Debussy is not to be outdone: *" A rediscovery of Rameau by Debussy: the imaginary journey of a composer in search of his original roots, by an immense pianist who remains unjustly unknown to the general public "*. Thierry Hilleriteau, Le Figaro 2012. His latest Chopin recording (2023) has also earned him rave reviews in Poland, Luxembourg and Belgium, among others:

"I came across this recording by chance, but from the very first bars of the Sonata in B minor, Op. 58, I knew I was in for a sleepless night, devoted to an in-depth and repeated reading of this fascinating recording (...) The Preludes, Op. 28 have been performed in the studio since the beginning of the 20th century. As a teenager, I discovered **Claudio Arrau**'s philosophical and Olympian creation (Philips 1990). Later, I reveled in the perfect sonic vision of **Sergio Fiorentino** (Saga 1959) and the exuberant conception of **Vladimir Sofronitsky** (Moscow recital 1949, Vista Vera 2006). A few years ago, I discovered - my enthusiasm expressed in the newspaper - a noble disc by the Spanish master **Joaquin Achúcarro** (La Dolce Volta 2018). **None of the aforementioned, often fascinating interpretations that I have heard, however, can compare with Diatkine's playing.** His imagination is as inimitable as Ervin Nyíregyházi's sound, Grigori Sokolov's selective articulation, Arkady Volodos's technique or Ivo Pogorelic's exceptional expression. Diatkine is quite simply a visionary". The musical movement, Darius Marciniszyn 2024

"In the 3rd Sonata (by Chopin), Jean-Nicolas Diatkine expresses himself in a subtle language, full of nuances, very refined (...) He plays (the preludes) with fantasy and in a very personal way, with original colourations, moving expressively from fast pieces to others that are more contemplative and partly oppressive, all with accents that seem spontaneous and a good sense of expressive rhythms. It's enriching to hear, alongside the many pianists who work at breakneck speed, someone who has a very personal vision of life, who has his own take on things, and who above all doesn't want to dazzle us with his brilliance". **Rémy Franck, Pizzicato 12/10/2023**

"His Chopin (Sonata No. 3 and the 26 Preludes) surpass everything we have heard up to now, so much so that the pianist's approach seems to revive Chopin in a poetry that is unprecedented, natural and sober, without effects, and with an overwhelming sincerity. **Hugo Pabst Classiquenews 13/11/23**

On his recording of Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert and Wagner (2022):

"One is struck by his musical intelligence; his modest and humble figure but his overpowering keyboard, capable of the most feverish nuances (...) Jean-Nicolas Diatkine is an immense performer; his piano whispers and transports; his sensitivity dazzles by its accuracy and sincerity. Magistral. **Classiquenews 08/06/22**

"A lucidly conceived musical direction, a touch of drama where necessary, a more refined aspect at moments of great introspection, and an orchestral imagination endowed with all the colours it is possible to give to a score".

Ayrton Desimpelaere Crescendo Magazine 08/06/22

Discography

Just released: Chopin: Sonata No. 3, Complete Preludes Solo-Musica 2023 (***** in Ritmo, Spain, eeee in Pizzicato.lu)

Liszt: Transcriptions of Schubert Lieder and Wagner operas, Ballade N°2 Solo-Musica 2022 (**** in Classica, eeee in Pizzicato Magazine, 29/30 in Crescendo Magazine)

Beethoven: Sonatas No 7, 23, 28 Solo Musica , 2020 (4 diapasons in Diapason April 2022)

Beethoven: Sonata No.21 op.53 Schumann Carnaval op.9 Solo Musica 2011

Schubert: 4 Impromptus op.142 Brahms Sonata No.3 op.5 Parnassie Editions 2016

Liszt: Sonate en si mineur, Schumann Kreisleriana, Bonet Nocturnes Parnassie Editions 2004

Bizet: Mélodies with Zeger Vandersteene, tenor Gents Muzikaal Archief 2004

Duparc : 16 Mélodies with Zeger Vandersteene, tenor Gents Muzikaal Archief 2003