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Jeremy Geffen

s many of you already know, last week, Cal Performances announced details of its upcoming 2022–23 season. Beginning in September, with the brilliant Miami City Ballet and its legendary production of George Balanchine's iconic *Jewels* (1967), and continuing into June 2023, when the ever-popular Eifman Ballet arrives at Zellerbach Hall with its lavish, fully staged *Russian Hamlet*, it's a schedule packed with extraordinary opportunities to experience the very best in live music, dance, and theater.

And what a schedule! More than 70 events, with highlights including the return of the legendary Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, under conductor Christian Thielemann; the beloved Mark Morris Dance Group in Morris' new *The Look of Love*: An Evening of Dance to the Music of Burt Bacharach; revered South African artist

William Kentridge's astonishing new *SIBYL*; a rare Berkeley performance with the San Francisco Symphony and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen; and a special concert with chamber music superstars pianist Emanuel Ax, violinist Leonidas Kavakos, and cellist Yo-Ma. And these are only a few of the amazing performances that await you!

Illuminations programming next season will take advantage of Cal Performances' unique positioning as both a renowned international performing arts presenter and a part of one of the world's top-ranked public research universities. Each season, Illuminations takes up a pressing theme reflected in both the arts and scholarship, and offers the public a multifaceted understanding of the issue by connecting research on the UC Berkeley campus with exceptional performances. This third season of Illuminations centers on the theme of "Human and Machine," investigating how technology continues to catalyze and challenge creative expression and human communication. Through programming that includes performances, public events, artist talks, and symposia, we'll be engaging communities on and off campus to examine the evolution of musical instruments, the complex relationships between technology creators and users, technology's impact on the creative process, and questions raised by the growing role of artificial intelligence in our society.

This concept of "Human and Machine" has never been so pertinent to so many. Particularly over the course of the pandemic, the rapid expansion of technology's role in improving communication and in helping us emotionally process unforeseen and, at times, extraordinarily difficult events has made a permanent mark on our human history. Throughout time, our reliance on technology to communicate has—for better or worse—influenced how we understand others as well as ourselves. During this *Illuminations* season, we will investigate how technology has contributed to our capacity for self-expression, as well as the potential dangers it may pose.

Some programs this season will bring joy and delight, and others will inspire reflection and stir debate. We are committed to presenting this wide range of artistic expression on our stages because or our faith in the performing arts' unparalleled power to promote empathy. And it is because of our audiences' openness and curiosity that we have the privilege of bringing such thought-provoking, adventurous performances to our campus. The Cal Performances community wants the arts to engage in important conversations, and to bring us all together as we see and feel the world through the experiences of others.

Please make sure to check out our brand new 44-page season brochure and our website for complete information. We can't wait to share all the details with you, in print and online!

Finally, thank you for joining us for today's concert. It's great that we're all back together again, enjoying the pleasures and rewards of live performance.

Jeremy Geffen
Executive and Artistic Director, Cal Performances



Thursday, April 28, 2022, 7:30pm Zellerbach Hall

Daniil Trifonov, piano

PROGRAM

Karol SZYMANOWSKI (1882–1937) Sonata No. 3, Op. 36 (1917)

Presto-Adagio-Assai vivace-Fuga

Claude DEBUSSY (1862–1918) Pour le Piano, L. 95 (1894 and 1901)

Prélude Sarabande Toccata

Sergei PROKOFIEV(1891–1953) Sarcasms, Op. 17 (1912-1914)

Tempestoso Allegro rubato Allegro precipitato Smanioso

Precipitosissimo

INTERMISSION

Johannes BRAHMS (1833–1897) Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 (1853)

Allegro maestoso Andante espressivo

Scherzo. Allegro energico – Trio Intermezzo. Andante molto

Finale. Allegro moderato ma rubato

Daniil Trifonov records exclusively for Deutsche Grammophon.

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Karol Szymanowski Sonata No. 3, Op. 36

Composed in 1917.

Karol Szymanowski was the preeminent Polish composer of the first half of the 20th century. His father was an ardent connoisseur of the arts, and Karol grew up in a household rich in culture. Szymanowski (shee-man-OV-skee) showed exceptional musical talent early in life, and he began his professional studies in Warsaw in 1901. In 1905, he and three of his student colleagues founded the Association of Young Polish Composers, a group, analogous to the Young Poland movement in literature, dedicated to the publication and performance of works from Poland. He made frequent trips to Berlin and Leipzig during the following years to arrange concerts of Polish music and oversee the publication of his music, which was then heavily influenced by that of Wagner and Richard Strauss.

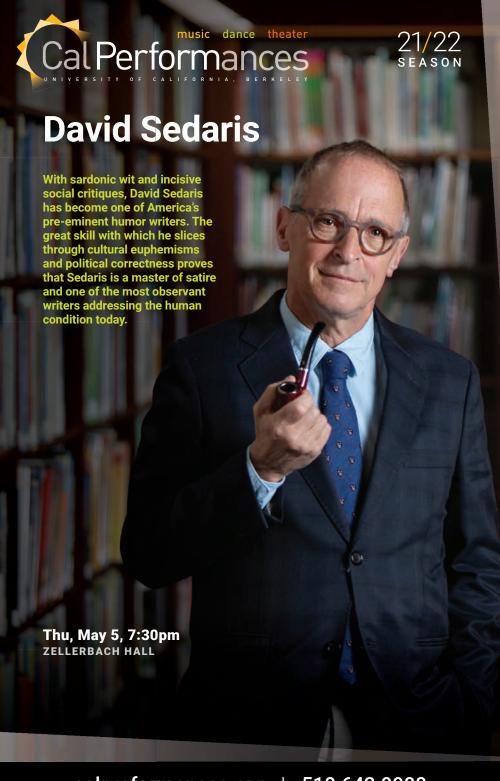
In 1911, Szymanowski settled in Vienna, where he signed a 10-year publishing contract with Universal Edition and achieved notable successes with performances of his Second Piano Sonata and Symphony No. 2. After World War I ended, he made several trips to the European Mediterranean and North Africa, and his direct contact with the ancient, early Christian and Arab cultures of Italy, Constantinople, Tunis, and Algiers profoundly altered his artistic temperament. He abandoned the Germanic Post-Romanticism of his earlier works and turned instead to the music of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, and the Russian mystic Scriabin to help in defining an idiom suitable to his new creative direction. During the years of World War I, when travel was restricted, Szymanowski, back in Poland, occupied his time with an intense investigation of ancient and Oriental cultures, and became an authority on those subjects; his music of that period reached its zenith with the Third Symphony (Song of the Night) and the opulent opera King Roger.

During the early 1920s, Szymanowski resumed the travels that had been interrupted by the war. Those years also saw another reconsid-

eration of his compositional style. Having absorbed the influences of Strauss, Ravel, and Scriabin, he turned to his own country for renewed inspiration, and became intent on finding a national identity for contemporary Polish music based on the songs and dances of its people. He found his richest native source in the music of the mountain folk of the Tatra region, spending much time in their chief city, Zakopane. In 1927, he was simultaneously offered the directorships of the conservatories of Cairo and Warsaw, and it is indicative of his loyalties at the time that he accepted the post in Poland. In the early 1930s, Szymanowski achieved his greatest success and prosperity. His health, however, never robust, began to fail, and he resigned the directorship of the Warsaw Conservatory in April 1932, thereafter devoting himself entirely to creative work until his death in Lausanne in 1937.

Szymanowski's Sonata No. 3 is his last major composition for piano and the culmination of the increasing formal integration of these three works. The Sonata No. 1 (1904) was in the conventional four movements, with some motives shared between movements. The two-movement Sonata No. 2 (1911) comprises a large sonata structure and an even larger set of free variations, an unusual arrangement that echoes Beethoven's late E major (Op. 109) and C minor (Op. 111) piano sonatas. The Sonata No. 3 (1917) is a continuous span comprising analogues of the traditional four-movements—a sonata structure, slow movement, scherzo, and finale. All three of Szymanowski's sonatas close with extended fugues. (Jean Sibelius' almost contemporaneous seven symphonies trace a similar formal evolution, from the four-movement Symphony No. 1 [1900] to the singlemovement Symphony No. 7 [1924], with an increasing formal integration across the intervening works.)

The main theme of the Third Sonata's opening movement, soft at first and with harmonic echoes of both Debussy and Scriabin, circles around a repeating motive before closing with a modest upward leap. It becomes more intense as it is builds to a climax, but quiets again for



the more melodic second subject, a scalar motive in distinctive dotted rhythms. The compact development section treats both themes before the movement closes with their considerably modified recapitulation. A mysterious, rustling variant of the main theme provides the transition to the Adagio, whose pensive mood at beginning and end is countered by an impassioned central episode. A quickly repeated note, almost a fanfare, announces the one-minute Scherzo, through whose hammered figurations and vehement expression Szymanowski may have vented some of his anger over the terrible misfortunes of the time of the sonata's creation. The closing Fugue is marked "scherzando e buffo"—"joking and funny") though its stern music and tense expression cast that description in a cold emotional light. The finale's powerful motion is interrupted twice by returns of the opening movement's second theme, the first almost nostalgic, the second grandiose, before the sonata comes to an abrupt but emphatic close.

Claude Debussy Pour le Piano, L. 95

Composed in 1894 and 1901.

Premiered on January 11, 1902 in Paris by Ricardo Viñes.

The title that Debussy chose for himself musicien français—points directly to the heart of his music and the center of his artistic philosophy. His entire career as composer and critic was dedicated to finding a uniquely French musical language, free from the German influence he believed had dominated Gallic composers since the late 18th century. To that end, he sought to revive the old, long-dormant traditions of French Renaissance and Baroque music, as much for their spirit as for their technique. "French music is all clearness, elegance; simple, natural declamation," he wrote. "The aim of French music is, before all, to please. The musical genius of France may be described as a fantasy of the senses." He viewed the two giants of French Baroque music-Jean Philippe Rameau and François Couperin—as the lodestars guiding his quest. The evaluation he gave in 1912 of Rameau might very well have been written about himself: "Rameau's major contribution to music was that he knew how to find 'sensibility' within harmony; and that he succeeded in capturing effects of color and certain nuances that, before his time, musicians had not clearly understood."

The meeting of ancient and modern in Debussy's creative output is seen nowhere better than in his suite Pour le Piano. The work's three movements-Prélude, Sarabande and Toccata—trace their formal and stylistic lineage to quintessential genres of the Baroque era, yet they are realized with the iridescent harmony and luminous keyboard sonority that set Debussy apart from any of his predecessors. "Pour le Piano seeks the hard discipline of Bach and the early French and Italian keyboardists, and at this limpid source recaptures gaiety, fluency and charm, an untrammeled rhythmic life and novel harmonic energies," wrote E. Robert Schmitz in his survey of Debussy's piano music. "Yet, despite its backward look to the harpsichord and organ ancestry, this suite is an outstanding contribution to the expression of the total resources of the modern concert piano. Its achievement is gliding unassumingly but with mastery over the piano literature of three centuries, integrating their musical resources into a new fabric that reflects this vast space of time without the slightest affectation or embarrassment."

Though the final autograph of Pour le Piano is dated "January-April 1901," the second movement is actually a revision of a work Debussy originally composed in 1894 with the title, "In the tempo of a Sarabande, that is to say with a slow serious elegance, rather like an old portrait, or a memory of the Louvre." The piece was published in the February 17, 1896 issue of the Grand Journal de Lundi with a dedication to Yvonne Lerolle, daughter of his friend Henri Lerolle, painter, musical aficionado, and brother-in-law of Debussy's one-time mentor, composer Ernest Chausson. When the score was published by Fromont late in 1901, the outer movements were dedicated to two of Debussy's very few pupils: the opening Prélude

to Mlle. M.W. de Romilly, who studied both voice and piano with him from 1898 to 1908; and the closing Toccata to Nicolas Coronio, a wealthy dilettante who did not pursue a career in music. The suite was given its premiere at a concert of the Société Nationale in the Salle Erard in Paris on January 11, 1902 by the Catalan pianist Ricardo Viñes, who was to become one of the leading exponents of Debussy's music. The Sarabande was orchestrated by Maurice Ravel later that year, and first heard in that form at the Salle Gaveau as part of the Concerts Lamoureux performance of March 18, 1903, conducted by Paul Paray.

The Prélude, with its tightly repeated figurations and freely unfolding form, not only recalls similarly named pieces by Bach, but also "tellingly evokes the gongs and music of Java," according to Mlle. Romilly, a reference to the Javanese gamelan orchestra that had so impressed French musicians at the Paris World Exposition of 1889. The Sarabande, whose parallel harmonies and pseudo-archaic style were probably influenced by Erik Satie's Sarabande of 1887, was modeled on the dignified triplemeter dance form found in many Baroque suites. Of the Toccata, inspired by the virtuoso showpieces with which early keyboardists displayed their skills, E. Robert Schmitz noted, "It has all the youthful, carefree impetus of the arabesques of Scarlatti or Couperin, but it has the strength of a rich harmonic canvas which is completely personal to Debussy.... Debussy here sought the ideal musical texture in an intimate and balanced integration of melody, harmony, rhythm, contrapuntal concepts and instrumental coloring, while preserving an architectural sense of form."

Sergei Prokofiev Sarcasms, Op. 17 Composed in 1912-1914.

Premiered on November 27, 1916 at the St. Petersburg Conservatory by the composer.

Prokofiev was both the whiz kid and the bad boy of early-20th-century Russian music. By the time he graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1914, he had compiled an amazing student portfolio comprising two piano sonatas and two-dozen shorter piano pieces, a piano concerto, three orchestral works, two choruses for women's voices, an opera, a Ballade for cello and piano, and songs; he also won the Conservatory's first prize for his piano playing. His musical style, however, was gleefully iconoclastic, full of crushed dissonances and motoric rhythms, and it drove his professors to the point of distraction. (One critic's thoughts became so scattered upon exposure to the First Piano Concerto that he allowed that if that was music, he "much preferred agriculture.") Prokofiev, by age 23, when he was at work on the Sarcasms for piano and a ballet for Diaghilev on a primitive, pagan subject titled Ala and Lolli (from which Prokofiev later extracted the thunderous Scythian Suite for orchestra), had acquired "a reputation."

The five Sarcasms for Piano that Prokofiev composed between 1912 and 1914 embody, according to his biographer Israel Nestyey, "the most extreme manifestations of his 'grotesquerie'...elements of mischief, of devilish skepticism, predominate." The Sarcasms created a sensation when Prokofiev premiered them at the St. Petersburg Conservatory on November 27, 1916. "People took their head in their hands," he wrote to his friend composer Nikolai Miaskovsky. "Some in order to plug their ears, others to express their excitement, and still more out of pity for the poor, once-promising composer." He indicated the cynical attitude of the entire cycle when he wrote of the closing movement, "Sometimes we laugh malevolently at someone or something, but when we look more closely at what we're laughing at, we see just how wretched and miserable it is. Then we begin to feel uneasy. Although the laughter resounds in our ears, it is now laughing at us."

"While the odd-numbered pieces are filled with violent, unbridled emotions," wrote Nestyev of the *Sarcasms*, "a fantastic, almost eerie atmosphere pervades the even-numbered ones." Though they all have surreal qualities, ranging from manic activity to dream-descending-into-nightmare, from nearly frozen inaction to frenzied motion, each one is

carefully built, motivically integrated, and often surprisingly melodic, even if in a disjunct, decidedly modern manner. The opening movement (Tempestoso) has a driven, sardonic quality (one performance instruction is "ironico") enhanced by abrupt dynamic changes, rhythmic dislocations, and a nose-thumbing ending. With its fractured phrasing, wildly leaping melodic notes, and sudden sweeping gestures, the second movement would be a musical stream-of-consciousness if it were not so precisely structured. The third movement is like a glimpse into the movie multiplex of the absurd, a madcap chase film playing in one theater (the movement's outer sections), a weepy romance next door (the central episode). The fourth movement is also bi-polar, beginning with music marked "Smanioso"—"agitated, restless" or even "raving, raging"—before turning lugubrious and funereal. The closing movement follows a similar expressive path, with pounding repeated chords giving way to cautious, whispered fragments set in the piano's darkest sonorities.

Johannes Brahms Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5

Composed in 1853.

The F minor Piano Sonata, composed when he was 20, was among the creations upon which Brahms' fame was founded—Clara Schumann. one of the era's most esteemed piano virtuosos, immediately took it into her repertory and performed it with great success across northern Europe; Eduard Hanslick, the leading music critic of the time, said that "it belongs to the most inward experiences that recent piano music has to offer"; Richard Specht believed that the work and its immediate companions "are the most wonderful beginning ever made by any master"; and Brahms' biographer Malcolm MacDonald said that "it stands with Liszt's B minor Sonata and the Grande Sonate of Alkan as one of the three greatest piano sonatas of the mid-19th century." Even the redoubtable Richard Wagner, after hearing Brahms play the sonata in recital in Vienna in January 1863, is said to have "overwhelmed him with praise,"

and pronounced that the work "shows what may still be done with the old forms, provided that one knows how to treat them."

The F minor Sonata is remarkable for the way in which Brahms harnessed the surging Romantic language of his youthful style into the logical constructions of Classical form. It is this masterly balance of ardent emotional expression and intellectual formal necessity-of heart and head-that imparts such power to this music. Also evident here is Brahms' ability to blend rigorous counterpoint with singing lyricism, a technique that generates the thematic material of the sonata-form opening movement: a dramatic, leaping motive as principal subject; and a chordal strain (to which the leaping motive in the bass acts as accompaniment) as complementary theme. These two expressive states-drama and lyricism-contend in the development section before the recapitulation of the themes, somewhat abbreviated, closes the movement.

The tenderly eloquent Andante is headed with lines by the German poet Sternau: The evening falls, the moonlight shines, Two hearts, joined in love, Embrace each other blissfully. This poignant nocturne (which may have been sketched as early as 1852 in Hamburg) extends across a sonata form modified so that the second theme of the exposition, a quiet melody in sweet sixths divided equally between the two hands, is replaced in the recapitulation by a hauntingly beautiful strain of folkish simplicity in full chords. The Scherzo is Brahms' tribute to the Florestan-esque character pieces of impetuous nature that loom so large in Schumann's output. Ominous, sometimes demonic, it is one of the most vehemently expressive pieces that Brahms ever wrote, and his sense of Classical formal propriety required him to balance it with a sedate central Trio that glides smoothly along in an almost hymnal manner.

Instead of proceeding directly to the finale, Brahms next inserted a movement titled Intermezzo, which "looks back" (*Rückblick*) to the Andante by transmuting its theme into a tragic threnody accompanied by the cadence of distant funeral drums. Though he did not as-

cribe a literary reference to this sullen music, it may perhaps be related to an entry in a note-book wherein he collected poems that struck him as suitable for songs, in which the earlier lines from Sternau were followed by the next stanza of the poem: If ye knew how soon, How soon the trees are withered, And the wood is bare, How soon comes the dreary day When the heart's beat is dumb. The finale, blended from elements

of rondo and sonata forms, is built upon the contrast between the tensely rhythmic opening theme and two lyrical melodies revealed in later episodes of the movement. The sonata ends with a brilliant, major-key coda whose flamboyant virtuosity documents the technical panache that marked Brahms' pianism as a young man.

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ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Grammy Award-winning pianist Daniil Trifonov (dan-EEL TREE-fon-ov)-Musical America's 2019 Artist of the Year—has made a spectacular ascent of the classical music world, as a solo artist, champion of the concerto repertoire, chamber and vocal collaborator, and composer. Combining consummate technique with rare sensitivity and depth, his performances are a perpetual source of awe. "He has everything and more...tenderness and also the demonic element. I never heard anything like that," marpianist Martha Argerich. veled Transcendental, the Liszt collection that marked his third title as an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist, Trifonov won the Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Solo Album of 2018. As The Times of London notes, he is "without question the most astounding pianist of our age."

In October of 2021, Trifonov releases Bach: The Art of Life on Deutsche Grammophon, including The Art of Fugue with the pianist's own completion of the final contrapunctus, selections from the Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach, music by four of Johann Sebastian's sons, two pieces known to have been Bach family favorites, and more. He tours a recital program in the 2021-22 season centered on The Art of Fugue in Europe, and a second program in the US of Prokofiev, Szymanowski, Debussy, and Brahms, Brahms' First Piano Concerto serves as the vehicle for appearances with the Dallas Symphony led by Fabio Luisi and Philharmonia Zurich under the direction of Gianandrea Noseda, and with Rome's Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia led by

Antonio Pappano he performs Mozart's Ninth Piano Concerto (Jeunehomme) on a European tour. He also performs all five of Beethoven's piano concertos in various combinations with eight different orchestras: the New York Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, Mariinsky Orchestra, Orchestre des Champs-Élysées, Budapest Festival Orchestra, and Toronto Symphony. Balancing out these staples of the repertoire, Trifonov gives the world premiere performances of Mason Bates' new Piano Concerto, composed for him during the pandemic, with the co-commissioning Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, before reprising the piece in the spring with the New Jersey Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, and the other co-commissioner, the San Francisco Symphony.

Highlights of recent seasons include a multifaceted, season-long tenure as 2019-20 Artistin-Residence of the New York Philharmonic under Jaap van Zweden, featuring the New York premiere of Trifonov's own Piano Quintet, and a seven-concert, season-long Carnegie Hall Perspectives Series. Trifonov played Tchaikovsky's First under Riccardo Muti in the historic gala finale of the Chicago Symphony's 125thanniversary celebrations; launched the New York Philharmonic's 2018-19 season; headlined complete Rachmaninoff concerto cycles at the New York Philharmonic's Rachmaninoff Festival and with London's Philharmonia Orchestra and the Munich Philharmonic; undertook season-long residencies with the Berlin Philharmonic and at Vienna's Musikverein, where he appeared with the Vienna Philharmonic and gave the Austrian premiere of his own Piano Concerto: and headlined the Berlin Philharmonic's famous New Year's Eve concert under Sir Simon Rattle. Since making solo recital debuts at Carnegie Hall, London's Wigmore Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, Japan's Suntory Hall, and Paris' Salle Pleyel in 2012-13, Trifonov has given solo recitals at venues including the Kennedy Center in Washington DC; Boston's Celebrity Series; London's Barbican, Royal Festival and Queen Elizabeth Halls; Amsterdam's Concertgebouw (Master Piano Series); Berlin's Philharmonie: Munich's Herkulessaal; Bavaria's Schloss Elmau: Zurich's Tonhalle: the Lucerne Piano Festival: the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Théâtre des Champs Élysées and Auditorium du Louvre in Paris; Barcelona's Palau de la Música; Tokyo's Opera City; the Seoul Arts Center; and Melbourne's Recital Centre.

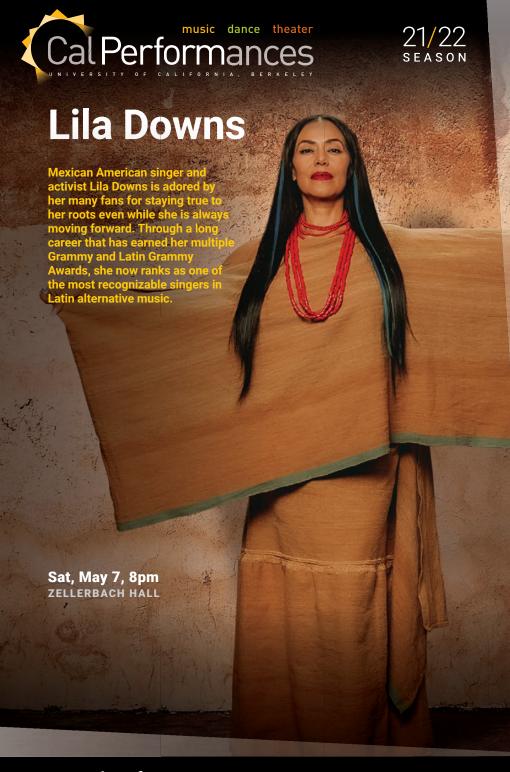
Fall 2020 brought the release of Silver Age, an album of Russian solo and orchestral piano music by Scriabin, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. This followed 2019's Destination Rachmaninov: Arrival, for which Trifonov received a 2021 Grammy nomination. Presenting the composer's First and Third Concertos, Arrival represents the third volume of the Deutsche Grammophon series recorded with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Nézet-Séguin, following Destination Rachmaninov: Departure, named BBC Music's 2019 Concerto Recording of the Year, and Rachmaninov: Variations, a 2015 Grammy nominee. Deutsche Grammophon has also issued *Chopin Evocations*, which pairs the composer's works with those by the 20thcentury composers he influenced, and Trifonov: The Carnegie Recital, the pianist's first recording as an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist, which captured Trifonov's sold-out 2013 Carnegie Hall recital debut live and scored him his first Grammy nomination.

It was during the 2010–11 season that Trifonov won medals at three of the music world's most prestigious competitions, taking Third Prize in Warsaw's Chopin Competition, First Prize in Tel Aviv's Rubinstein Competition, and both First Prize and Grand Prix—an additional honor bestowed on the best overall competitor in any category—in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition. In 2013, he was awarded the prestigious Franco Abbiati Prize for Best Instrumental Soloist by Italy's foremost music critics, and in 2016 he was named *Gramophone*'s Artist of the Year.

Born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1991, Trifonov began his musical training at the age of five, and went on to attend Moscow's Gnessin School of Music as a student of Tatiana Zelikman, before pursuing his piano studies with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has also studied composition, and continues to write for piano, chamber ensemble, and orchestra. When he premiered his own Piano Concerto, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* marveled: "Even having seen it, one cannot quite believe it. Such is the artistry of pianist-composer Daniil Trifonov."

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