

ALEXANDRE KANTOROW : BIOGRAPHY (EN)

In 2019, at age 22, Alexandre Kantorow became the first French pianist to win the Tchaikovsky Competition's First Prize, as well as the Grand Prix, awarded only three times before in the competition's history. Hailed by critics as the “reincarnation of Liszt” (Fanfare Magazine), he received the Gilmore Artist Award 2024, considered one of the most prestigious international piano prizes, and awarded only every 4 years. He is the first French artist and youngest winner of the Gilmore Artist Award.

Alexandre Kantorow began his career at an early age, making his debut at La Folle Journée de Nantes with Sinfonia Varsovia at age 16. Since then, he has performed with some of the world's most prestigious orchestras, including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra with Manfred Honeck, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with Vasily Petrenko at the BBC Proms in London, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France with John Eliot Gardiner, Mariinsky Orchestra with Valery Gergiev and Budapest Festival Orchestra with Iván Fischer. Alexandre Kantorow has also performed on prestigious international tours with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Jaap van Zweden, as well as with the Orchestre National de France and Cristian Măcelaru.

In recital, he performs in major concert halls such as Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium in New York, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw in its Master Pianists series, Vienna's Konzerthaus, Philharmonie de Paris, Brussels' Bozar, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and Wigmore Hall, Tokyo's City Opera... and in the most prestigious festivals including La Roque d'Anthéron, Ravinia Festival, Verbier Festival and Klavier-Festival Ruhr.

Highlights of the 2024/2025 season include Alexandre's debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, a European tour with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, under Tugan Sokhiev, debut with the Orchestre Metropolitain under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. He will also perform Brahms' Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2 with John Eliot Gardiner and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. He will make his recital debut in China, including performances in Beijing and Shanghai as part of an Asian tour. In chamber music, he will perform with Janine Jansen and tour with Gautier Capuçon.

Alexandre Kantorow records exclusively for BIS. In 2022, he won two Diapason d'Or de l'Année for his Brahms disc and his Saint-Saëns disc (concertos 1 and 2). The latter disc, which finalizes the complete set of concertos recorded with the Tapiola Sinfonietta under Jean-Jacques Kantorow, has been hailed by critics as a “benchmark version of the Saint-Saëns concertos” (Resmusica). It was also selected by Gramophone magazine in their “Editor's choice”. His two previous recordings (Saint-Saëns concertos 3, 4 and 5, and solo works by Brahms, Bartok and Liszt) were both awarded Diapason d'Or and Choc Classica of the year in 2019 and 2020. Gramophone magazine describes his performance as “another outstanding example of his virtuosity and artistry, displaying both skill and sensitivity from start to finish”. His recital recording “à la Russe” also won numerous awards and distinctions in 2017, including Choc de l'Année (Classica), Diapason Découverte, Supersonic (Pizzicata) and CD des Doppelmonats (PianoNews).

He is a laureate of the Safran Foundation and Banque Populaire. In 2020, he won two awards at the Victoires de la Musique Classique: Recording of the Year and Instrumental Soloist of the Year, the latter also in 2024.

In 2022, he became artistic director of the “Les Rencontres Musicales de Nîmes” festival with violinist Liya Petrova and cellist Aurélien Pascal.

In 2024, Alexandre Kantorow was made Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite by the French President. Two years earlier, in 2022, he had been honored with the title of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture. In July 2024, Alexandre performed at the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympic Games.

Alexandre Kantorow studied with Pierre-Alain Volondati, Igor Lazko, Frank Braley and Rena Shereshevskaya.