

SYMPHONY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS

Young
Artists
Make
Their
Moves



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On the Rise

Young artists to watch

by Jayson Greene

de la Parra



Urioste

Newman



Kolkay



Ivanov

Roe



Peter Schauf

With each new season, reports about the talented crop of young newcomers arrive at SYMPHONY's doorstep. Differences in taste and the sheer heft of each year's class make it impossible to choose the absolute "best" up-and-coming orchestral artists. But if, as *New Yorker* critic Alex Ross recently stated, "classical music is saving itself," then these are six who lend a much-needed personal voice to the process. Unwilling to sit around and wait for orchestra gigs and big contracts to come in, these highly committed musicians are out there commissioning new music, self-producing recordings, organizing their own ensembles, and engaging with music-education programs as they carve a niche among classical music's elite. On the following pages they share their discoveries, successes, pet peeves, and hopes for the future.

Gleb Ivanov

Age: 25 **Piano**

Gleb Ivanov is a sternly serious pianist of the classic Russian school whose mentors include the late Mstislav Rostropovich. His playing is steeped in his Russian heritage, prompting a *Washington Times* critic to marvel at pianism that seemed to recall “the ghost of Horowitz.” Ivanov’s pure, limpid tone, graceful phrasing, and careful articulation helped him win the 2005 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and he was also awarded a grant from YCA’s Jack Romann Special Artists Fund. In the 2005–06 season, he gave his recital debut at Carnegie’s Zankel Hall. Despite lingering difficulties with English, the Moscow native speaks forcefully about the importance of not overextending one’s career and his misgivings about contemporary music—though not without displaying an adventurous and ambitious side as well. “There is so much music that no one plays that is fantastic,” he says. “I want to play the music that nobody else is playing.”

Favorite musical milestones:

I have several moments. First one was when I was a kid, seven or eight. It was the first time I heard Rostropovich conducting Tchaikovsky’s *Symphony No. 6*. It gave me memories for my whole life. I was almost crying. He puts so much passion in the playing.

Another was Claudio Abbado conducting Dvorák’s *Symphony No. 4*. I just admire his way of thinking. He puts so little emphasis on himself in his music-making. He’s from an older generation like Karajan and Kleiber, where this was the norm. Unfortunately today there are very few conductors like that. For those people, the most important thing was music. Now commercialism takes everything. There are a lot of conductors who play more gigs than they should, overextending themselves; quality is the second

point, not the first point. The great Italian tenor Franco Corelli was always keeping [in good] condition. He was fresh because he would sing today one opera and then the day after tomorrow, he would not even speak. Most musicians today are losing that quality control.

Does that apply to your own career?

My career just started, but when I play a solo concert it’s nice to have a few days to get back to the right condition, because it’s a very big stress. To play music, it has to take its time. I’d honestly prefer not to play one concert after another, but I know that I will have to do it soon, because the modern world demands it.

Favorite performance:

I think it would have to be my Lincoln Center performance with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s in April 2007. We performed Prokofiev [Piano Concerto] No. 3. I don’t think I have ever had such a deep inspiration as that evening. The orchestra is an amazing ensemble, and I also felt I was in the best condition of my life.

“I have two favorite pianists: Evgeny Kissin and Barry Douglas. These people like music first, and themselves only after. With so many conductors and soloists, it’s just, ‘Only me first. I am the greatest and you are nobody.’”

Favorite classical works:

My two favorite works for piano are Liszt’s *Sonata in B Minor* and Rachmaninoff’s *First Concerto*. I care about these pieces like people, and they are hardly played. Rachmaninoff’s *First* deserves attention, because it is



Christian Steiner

a wonderful piece—so fresh for the ear.

Favorite contemporary composer:

Lots of people ask me about that. I don’t think about contemporary music as music. It’s something else to me. Most contemporary composers have one principle: to make something new—new instruments, new forms—without regard to what is lasting. My [most recent] favorite was Alfred Schnittke. Even for me it’s very difficult to listen to Shostakovich.

Favorite non-classical artist:

My hobby is flamenco-style piano because of one musician: [guitarist] Paco De Lucia. He is a hugely important musician for me. He didn’t record only flamenco but also works like *Concierto de Aranjuez*. I can compare him with great pianists for sure.

Musical role models:

I have two favorite pianists: Evgeny Kissin and Barry Douglas. These people like music first, and themselves only after. With so many conductors and soloists, it’s just, “Only me

first. I am the greatest and you are nobody.” And if they didn’t like somebody they just crush them. Kissin and Douglas have a completely different way of dealing with people and with music. They are so humble.

If you weren’t a pianist:

I always have this fantasy that something will happen to the conductor during the concert and I will have to finish the concert for them!

Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

All artists have only one thing on their minds, and that is to play more and more and more and to have the opportunity to work. I really want to have a family, actually. I am 25 and I feel it’s time. I want to live my own life and stand on my own two legs.

If you weren’t a musician, what would you do?

I would be involved in the Russian Orthodox Church, as a seminary student. I think I would be a deacon or something. It’s not enough to live without the church. One needs something to keep rules of life, to know what is good.