



2018 HONENS PRIZE LAUREATE

NICOLAS NAMORADZE

CONCERTONET
ROMAN MARKOWICZ

February 21, 2019

"He is a pianist who proved that, once in a while, the distinguished members of the jury make a good choice and select a winner who plays like a true artist; who impresses not with pyrotechnics but rather with keen intelligence, a rich tonal palette and refinement... It was a most auspicious debut by an artist representing that rare breed, a thinking virtuoso. There are young pianists whom I like or admire very much for their strictly pianistic accomplishments. Nicolas Namoradze deserves not only admiration but a deeply felt respect."

BLOGCRITICS
JON SOBEL

February 15, 2019

"Only in his 20s, the New York-based pianist is a deep investigator of musical resonances over the centuries, an emphasis he touched on in our recent interview. His choice to flow directly from the Scriabin into Bach's *Sinfonia No. 9 in F minor* brilliantly illuminated the kind of continuity a perceptive mind can find... Namoradze has fully grasped the intellectual heft of these pieces too. Thanks in large part to the Honens prize, he has a busy concertizing and recording schedule. All indications are that his multiple gifts have well prepared him."

NEW YORK CLASSICAL REVIEW
DAVID WRIGHT

February 11, 2019

"Nicolas Namoradze is a pianist with a lot to say. And he likes to say it softly. The top-prize winner of the 2018 Honens International Piano Competition in Calgary, Alberta, made an impressive New York recital debut Sunday night at Carnegie's Zankel Hall with an unconventional program of (in this order) Scriabin, Bach, Schumann, and his own compositions. Like all recital programs, this one offered plenty of opportunities to play loud, and the 26-year-old native of the Republic of Georgia rose to them handsomely, without ever losing his cool demeanor on the piano bench. But the moments that linger long in the memory are the pianissimos. Long stretches of pianissimo, layered, multicolored, deep in thought or swirling like a spring breeze. Pianissimos dense with possibility, and pianissimos that just are."

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG
MALTE HEMMERICH

October 25, 2018

"[Nicolas Namoradze] was the most unique of the finalists. In his solo recital, the experienced competitor even played his own compositions. He commanded Beethoven's *Quintet for Piano and Winds Op. 16* with unbelievable precision and small inflections that made one sit up and take notice. The chamber music program was followed by a reading of the *2nd Piano Concerto* by Brahms, performed with a thoroughly compelling restlessness. One would want to pay to hear him even for just the sheer inexhaustible abundance of colors that Namoradze elicits from the piano." Translated from German

CALGARY HERALD
KENNETH DELONG

September 11, 2018

"It is frequently the case that there can be a measure of controversy surrounding these events when the audience and jury don't see eye to eye. But this was not the case here. As with the two previous winners of the Competition, Namoradze is not the conventional competition pianist, but his individuality was evident from the outset. While he certainly has the virtuosity to spare, he gained the top spot through his remarkable clarity of execution, refinement and variety of tone, and his uncanny ability to make even the most ordinary passagework sound meaningful and distinctive...The first prize went to Namoradze, someone who might be called a pianist's pianist. The refinement of his playing was of international standard, and everywhere his interpretative skills commanded attention and admiration. This was noticeably the case in his fine account of Schumann's difficult *Humoresque* and perhaps even more in the performance of his own *Etudes* — a daring thing to program."

MUSICAL AMERICA
STEPHEN CERA

September 10, 2018

"In the Brahms *Concerto No. 2*, Namoradze — also a soundtrack producer and composer — voiced the mellow rhetoric in long-breathed lines, and consistently built textures from the ground up. He addressed technical challenges, such as the notorious 'double octaves' in the second movement, with relative ease. It was a terrific match of performer and repertoire, and Namoradze appeared relaxed throughout, which was no small achievement."

THE WHOLE NOTE
STEPHEN CERA

September 10, 2018

"[Namoradze's] rendition of the Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 2* (one of the longest and most demanding in the repertoire) was etched in long lines and executed with an apparent ease that in the moment erased thoughts of this work's reputation as a beast to be tamed. Not so for Namoradze, who looked and sounded as comfortable playing this work as he had been with three of his own virtuosic *Etudes* in the Semifinals."

CONCERTONET
MICHAEL JOHNSON

September 7, 2018

“For the Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 2* Nicolas Namoradze chose a warmer-voiced Steinway. This factor surely helped bring forth the grandeur and sweep of the opening *Allegro non troppo*, accompanied by equal expansiveness from the orchestra. He seized the essence of the second movement (*Allegro appassionato*) from its first seconds, and ably expressed the many subtleties of the slow movement. The tight and sensitive partnership between pianist and conductor were once again evident in the concluding movement. And once again the audience gave vociferous approval... Definitely a talent to watch and listen for.”



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