

NICOLAS NAMORADZE

p i a n i s t + c o m p o s e r

a c c l a i m

CONCERTONET

Harry Rolnick

July 12, 2023

Sensitivity and extraordinary tone-coloration... In all three opening works, Mr. Namoradze was almost spiritually sensitive. Not that he eschewed the fireworks when necessary. But his was not a Chopin-ish decorousness. More a delight in translucent color... A genius for Russian music... Delight, accomplishment and sensory mastery.

MAGYAR NARANCS

Zoltán Farkas

June 7, 2023

The already world-famous Nicolas Namoradze's piano etudes gave a stellar impression: well-formed and inspired piano studies which reflect the inspiration of György Ligeti.

ÉLET ÉS IRODALOM

Zoltán Végső

June 2, 2023

Nicolas Namoradze premiered Lukas Ligeti's piece besides works by György Ligeti as well as his own two etudes, with an airy fluidity and a convincing technique. From observing their collaboration in Lukas Ligeti's duo piece, they seemed to me like long-time chamber music partners.

CONCERTONET

Roman Markowicz

May 5, 2023

What Mr. Namoradze achieved in his rendition of the famous *Andante*, probably one of most famous themes in Rachmaninov orchestral output, was creating an authentic, idiomatic, and natural sounding score that seemed created for the piano by composer himself. In his version, our transcriber permitted—at least some of us!—to forget the origins of the material and created a large canvas poem for the piano in an authentic style and idiom. The melodies flew easily and the arabesques and filigree passages weaved through the pages in unforced, natural way.

Pianistically, it was playing in a grand manner and one that was, perhaps consciously, modeled on the composer himself or perhaps his greatest interpreter, Vladimir Horowitz, minus the eccentricities of the grand wizard of the piano. In his approach to piano playing, Namoradze possesses that slightly capricious, free manner of playing that ideally suited the vocal melodic lines that faithfully imitate the orchestral instruments. With no apparent effort he was able to create an infinite variety of colors and shades of dynamics, from the most delicate to thunderous, but never banging. And what's even more important was the singing quality of his sound, which was also refined, subtle, selective in all registers of the piano and dynamic spectrum. That Rachmaninov's score sounded authentic under his fingers didn't surprise me all that much, as I still harbored in my memory a fearsome, supremely commanding and authoritative performance of Rachmaninov's *First Sonata* that Namoradze presented a few seasons back.

SOUTH FLORIDA CLASSICAL REVIEW

Lawrence Budmen

March 6, 2023

Namoradze's dynamic palette was varied and well-judged without allowing the sonority to become harsh... Namoradze's leisurely paced reading ran the gamut from soft lightness to bold thrusts, his sense of the score's deep romanticism strongly imprinted... The lustrous melodies were dressed up in the Russian brand of pianistic lyricism with flourishes and variants discreetly added. With a sensitive touch, Namoradze drew a rounded sound from the Steinway... Namoradze reveled in the entire range of both the piano's coloration and percussive effects... Namoradze is clearly an impressive young musician with a rock-solid technique.

FANFARE MAGAZINE

November 1, 2022

What proves beguiling here lies in Namoradze's sense of touch, easily suggestive of the magical dynamics achieved by former greats, like Benno Moiseiwitsch, in Schumann's

music... Namoradze juxtaposes lightness of heart with the presence of emotional, even polyphonic, frenzy, as in the fourth section, marked *Einfach und zart*, whose agitations arise from a simple, child-like *parlando*. For sheer velocity, the *Sehr lebhaft* section has few rivals.

CALGARY HERALD

Kenneth DeLong

October 30, 2022

In the performance of all these works, Namoradze played with the kind of nuance, ease, and refinement that the Honens family has come to expect of him, a type of musical searching and exploration found only in the playing of the most intelligent of pianists. And to cap it off, Namoradze concluded his program with Rachmaninov's Piano Sonata No. 1 in D minor, a rarely played, barnstorming work composed about the same time as the Second Symphony, whose transcriptions of the second movement was heard earlier in the concert - yet more refractions.

LA SCENA MUSICALE

Paul E. Robinson

October 26, 2022

Namoradze played the sonata as well as I can imagine it being played. Namoradze is extraordinarily undemonstrative at the keyboard; he never seems to be exerting himself. But close your eyes and you will hear an artist with an amazing command of dynamics from almost inaudible - as at the beginning of his 'Georgian Song' piece - to hair-raisingly loud as in the last movement of Rachmaninov's Sonata No. 1.

SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN

Mark Tiarks

July 29, 2022

The delicate touch and rhythmic variety in Namoradze's solos were especially noteworthy. The final *allegretto* had a genuinely playful quality, with the fast piano runs played "like oil," as Mozart always hoped for.

LUDWIG VAN TORONTO

Arthur Kaptainis

July 9, 2022

The big item was Rachmaninoff's Sonata No. 1, a 35-minute tour de force that is unaccountably absent from the standard repertoire. Possibly its sheer difficulty constitutes an obstacle, although Namoradze, 29, the winner of the 2018 Honens Competition in Calgary, proved to be equipped with the technical wherewithal... He articulated all the swirls and torrents without losing the romantic thread of the argument or sacrificing a heroic feeling of momentum. Colours were vivid, as they were in Alexina Louie's *I leap through the sky with stars*... There was ballast at the end of the recital in the form of a substantial encore, Scriabin's Sonata No. 4, delivered with otherworldly delicacy as well as force.

INTERNATIONAL PIANO MAGAZINE

Michael Church

March 3, 2022

Ravishingly beautiful... Namoradze's playing has a crystalline purity, and his art, which follows in Ligeti's footsteps, feels like an esoteric extension of Ligeti's art. Meanwhile the Schumann pieces are a delight.

THE GUARDIAN

Tim Ashley

February 22, 2022

Stravinsky formed the focus of Iván Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra's Festival Hall visit, a pair of remarkable concerts exploring his output early and late... Nicolas Namoradze, was ideally laconic and debonair, weighty yet exquisite, and exactingly precise in tone and touch.

THE TELEGRAPH

Ivan Hewett

February 19, 2022

In the Capriccio Fischer was joined by the young Georgian pianist Nicolas Namoradze, who showed just as keen an understanding of Stravinsky's blend of wit, balletic grace and stifled expressivity. He made the ball-room roudades and scales and odd little mechanical basses soft and tender rather than brittle, while Fischer urged the solo string quartet and plangent cor anglais to seize the odd moments of lyrical warmth.

INTERNATIONAL PIANO MAGAZINE

November 25, 2021

His beautifully considered programme, delivered at Kapelle Gstaad, showcased his skills in Baroque music (the First French Suite and two Contrapuncti from Die Kunst der Fuge), late Romantic repertoire (a Bach/Busoni chorale and Liszt's virtuoso Totentanz) and six of his own Etudes... It was a nice idea to bring Mephistophelean excess to a chapel; and how superbly Namoradze projected the "Dies Irae" in the bass. A superb sense of grotesquerie, brilliant glissandos and huge aggregations of sound confirmed the stature of this reading... His intellect, coupled with a superb, fearless technique and great inner musicality, makes for an intriguing mix.

CLASSICA

Michel Fleury

June 16, 2021

A dazzling technique at the service of a very sure poetic instinct, a youthful exuberance that morphs, when necessary, into a tender reverie, an extreme precision capable of bringing out details in the most dizzying accelerations, a brilliant and sonorous timbre that can round off in portamento singing for lyrical effusions: the pianist and composer Nicolas Namoradze stands out as the ideal performer of this elegant music to the point of dandyism, with the grace, humor, naturalness and restraint of an authentic gentleman.

Translated from French

PRESTO CLASSICAL

Katherine Cooper

February 2, 2021

It's early days, but I've already earmarked this young Georgian pianist's dazzling debut disc as a potential Recording of the Year: his sheer technical brilliance will make you catch your breath time and again, but he's also a born story-teller, bringing Andersen's Metal Pig and Tin Soldier to life with an abundance of charm, wit and warmth. Despite their rather utilitarian titles, the twelve Op 46 studies are scarcely less characterful in his hands, the alla marcia exercise 'for the glissando' a particular delight.

LIMELIGHT

Will Yeoman
February 2, 2021

Namoradze captures the magic and romance of these miniature masterpieces [Fragments from Hans Andersen] to perfection ... [he] relishes the insouciant romanticism and exuberant virtuosity of the Concert Study No 1 in G Flat; but this almost feels like a warm-up for the Lisztian (Mephistophelian?) Concert Study No 2 in F. Both are tremendous fun to listen to, and no doubt to play—providing you're equipped with a technique such as the present performer's!

SWR2 RADIO
Susanne Stähr
January 25, 2021

Had Nicolas Namoradze not just provided this evidence, one would doubt there's anyone in the world who could actually play such a piece without being buried by the avalanche of notes. But Namoradze not only succeeds in taming the turmoil at the piano. He plays Bowen's Second Concert Study with razor-sharp precision, irresistible panache and just the right pinch of irony that is needed to take this exalted music seriously—and yet not too seriously. *Translated from German*

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE
Kate Wakeling
January 21, 2021

This delightful disc is a treasure chest of lesser-known works given beautifully attentive performances from the acclaimed young pianist Nicolas Namoradze... Namoradze once more brings total technical assurance alongside exuberance and an unshowy sense of integrity to these fiendish pieces.

GRAMOPHONE MAGAZINE
Jeremy Nicholas
January 3, 2021

A terrific pianist (Georgian by nationality, b1992) with all the colouristic and stylistic attributes one could wish for allied to a formidable technique, the kind of musician whose artistry is like a compelling novel where you can hardly wait for what comes next ... performances that lovers of high-octane pianism will want to snap up ... superbly

recorded and performed with such distinction, this release must be an early Awards nominee.

INTERNATIONAL PIANO MAGAZINE

Michael Church

April 25, 2020

I'm not often lost for words, but Nicolas Namoradze's recital almost defeated me. I wasn't expecting anything amazing: he'd won the Honens competition, and this gig was his reward, but winning a comp is no guarantee of greatness. Yet from the opening phrase of Scriabin's 'Black Mass' sonata he had me hooked: those notes had honeyed grace, and the rest of the work unfolded in an opalescent glow, every bar being touched with beauty. I've never heard this puzzling work make such persuasive sense.

Namoradze then segued into Bach, with the Ninth Sinfonia followed by the sixth Partita whose Toccata led majestically on to six lovingly-characterised movements; the closing Gigue, which turns itself upside down and inside out, came with an exultant craziness which was never less than technically immaculate.

The programme for the second half didn't sound auspicious: York Bowen's Twelve Studies Opus 46, followed by six Etudes by a certain Mr Namoradze. Bowen is now all but forgotten, but his studies, written in 1919, are a fascinating blend of Romanticism and modernist experimentation. In this player's hands they were riveting, each one being brought out like rabbit from a conjuror's hat and allowed to run (very fast) wherever it liked. And if the virtuosity was dazzling, Namoradze's own studies, which seemed like a continuation of Bowen's, were doubly so. Finally five Scriabin encores delivered with a seraphic smile: through a slightly-open door we could see him literally jumping up and down with excitement in the backstage moments between coming back on and astonishing us. Come back and astonish us some more.

BOSTON MUSICAL INTELLIGENCER

Victor Khatutsky

March 2, 2020

Alchemist Nicolas Namoradze brought his lab of chromatic arts to the filled-to-capacity Calderwood Hall on Sunday, wearing his transmuting intentions on his lab apron sleeve... He enunciated and voiced to perfection, conveying a strongly felt concept, albeit not always a familiar one... Namoradze's own Etudes evoked Ligeti's Etudes, though much lighter in mood throughout. Engaging and brilliant, with names from Major Scales to Double Notes, they ironically suggested the theme of having fun during inevitable long practice sessions.

But they also served as ample vehicles to demonstrate the composer's wit along with digital prowess.

KVIRA

George Laliashvili

February 29, 2020

Nicolas Namoradze's London debut was a clear sign that he will have a very impressive career. The program itself was capacious and varied, presenting four contrasting composers and focusing on the particular connections found between them... Nicolas Namoradze is a musician with remarkable values. There is such power and conviction in his playing that one can hardly believe his age – one hears a multifaceted, wise master at one with the instrument. We hear so many young pianists, especially in London, and many of them are very talented and undoubtedly impressive – but the depth and sophistication that Namoradze displays is truly exceptional, earning him a special reputation among the new generation of musicians. *Translated from Georgian*

CULBYT

Lina Goncharskaya

December 11, 2019

I discovered an amazing, unconventional personality – 27-year-old pianist and composer Nicolas Namoradze, who has something to say to the world... In Scriabin's F Sharp Major Sonata, the pianist's super-sensual musicality seemed to find its Grail... Namoradze feels everything in his own way, whether it's desire, impulse, passion, intimacy – and with a sense of proportion in everything. Nicolas Namoradze is not just a poet of the piano, he is its artist. He displays no visible effort, an ease of imagination, harmony of proportions, perfect balance, impeccability and originality in tone. Each phrase seems to be crafted and considered, yet at the same time breathes with true vitality. They seem familiar (it is tempting to draw an analogy with Sofronitsky, the best performer of Scriabin, in my opinion) yet also surprising and unexpected, with unique tempi, pauses and contrasts of sonority. He possesses a sophisticated and rich palette of sound shades – what myriad colors in one pianissimo, sometimes brooding, sometimes windy, sometimes careless, sometimes wise – supplemented by an inquisitiveness and strength of mind, and this spirituality is transmitted to the audience. Namoradze can achieve all of this with his fingers, without having to resort to acting with faces or body movements. After the Scriabin, Namoradze played his own Etudes I-VI – and this, believe me, is an alternative universe, mobile, like a breathing Solaris, almost magical, with whimsical, unpredictable behavior... Namoradze's sharp mind gives birth to things that are hard to play, but which are charmingly simple in their

complexity. Everything is not as it seems, starting with a system that seems tonal, and ending with sonorous tricks in the spirit of Escher's paintings. *Translated from Russian*

CLASSICAL VOICE AMERICA

Wynne Delacoma

September 17, 2019

Namoradze, a rising young Georgian pianist and composer, was similarly eloquent in the Schumann concerto. Lingering over Schumann's tender, singing melodies, shading each phrase with precisely chosen color, he drew us into an intimate universe. In its virtuoso flights, his sparkling runs and chords flashed by like quicksilver.

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

Elaine Schmidt

September 16, 2019

Namoradze captured all of these elements in a charismatic performance that ranged from running passages played in shimmering whispers to bold emphatic declarations. This was a captivating delivery of an exquisite piece of music.

CALGARY HERALD

Kenneth DeLong

September 6, 2019

Namoradze is not your conventional competition virtuoso. As it concerns virtuosity, however, Namoradze yields nothing to overtly flashier pianists, as was evident in his stunning encore of the well-known D-sharp minor Etude by Scriabin that concluded his program.

Fundamentally, however, Namoradze wears his enormous technique lightly. He sits quietly, with mostly just his fingers in evidence. His playing is effortless to a degree that can hardly be imagined, and the focus of his performance is entirely upon musical values. And here the range of his imagination in the shaping of line, control of texture, and fleetness in execution takes one's breath away... It was quasi-mystical experience, in which the sound of the instrument, poetic ideas, textures and musical figures were combined in a unique synthesis.

Namoradze took his audience into his own special musical place, one that certainly involved technical execution, but where the aural center was always on melody and where texture

and shape intertwine... Namoradze performed two Scriabin works as encores, happily for me two of my favorite pieces, the early C-sharp minor etude and the equally famous D-sharp minor etudes previously mentioned. Both were the last word in how this music might be played, and served as capstone pieces in a concert as impressive as any I have recently heard and which brought the audience to its feet in its enthusiastic admiration.

ONGAKU NO TOMO

Hiroko Ueda

July 18, 2019

The selection of pieces by Namoradze, himself a composer, was intriguing... His etudes are brilliantly composed, and I was fascinated by how he incorporated typical elements of etudes with harmonic transformation. The recital program was nicely selected, as if one travels from the Romantic to Impressionism to the modern period... Listening with much interest and pleasure, I was impressed by his technique and wide range of expression... It was a recital full of delight and mysteries, which ended almost like a reincarnation.

Translated from Japanese

WERDENER NACHRICHTEN

Peter Noçon

July 7, 2019

Nicolas Namoradze sparkled on the piano... The spotless performance earned great applause... The grand ovation led to four encores that brought the concert to a close by transporting the mood into one of romantic lyricism.

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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nicolasnamoradze.com