

Stephen Kovacevich

Pianist

"Kovacevich's journey is always engrossing and never less than Beethovenian."



Stephen Kovacevich is one of the most searching performers who has won unsurpassed admiration for his interpretations of works by Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart and Schubert.

Born in Los Angeles in 1940, Kovacevich laid the foundation for his career as a concert pianist at the age of eleven. After moving to England to study with Dame Myra Hess, he made his European debut at Wigmore Hall in 1961. Since then he has performed with the world's finest orchestras and conductors, including Hans Graf, Bernard Haitink, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Simon Rattle, Georg Solti, Kurt Masur and Colin Davis, with whom he made highly acclaimed recordings.

Following Kovacevich's recent recital playing Berg, Beethoven and Bach, one critic remarked: "It was music making on a very high level of insight, illumination and intimacy."

His recent concerto performance highlights include Montreal Symphony Orchestra with David Zinman, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra with Sylvain Cambreling, Sydney Symphony Orchestra with Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra with Mirga Gražytė-Tyla. In recital Kovacevich frequently appears across Europe, Asia, the Far East, Australia, New Zealand and the United States – including at the NCPA Beijing, the Phillips Collection in Washington, the Paris Philharmonie, the Wigmore Hall in London and at the Verbier and Lugano Festivals.

Stephen Kovacevich has enjoyed a long and fruitful collaboration with the record labels Philips and EMI. To celebrate his 75th birthday, Decca released a limited edition 25-CD box set containing all of his work recorded for Philips. In 2008 he re-recorded Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, exactly 40 years after his first recording of this work. This Onyx recording earned him the Classic FM Gramophone Editor's Choice Award (2009) and Gramophone Magazine Top Choice Award (2015), writing: "His seasoned yet fearless command reveals something new with every listen...".

Stephen Kovacevich is a dedicated chamber musician who has worked with such legendary artists as Lynn Harrell, Jacqueline du Pré and Josef Suk, as well as the Amadeus and Cleveland Quartets over the course of his long career. His chamber music partnerships today include Nicola Benedetti, Renaud Capuçon and Alina Ibragimova, Gautier Capuçon, Steven Isserlis and Truls Mørk as well as Emmanuel Pahud, the Belcea Quartet and the distinguished duo with Martha Argerich.

Season 2023/2024