

A ticket for a concert is a ticket for adventure.....



# IVAN ILIĆ

*pianist*

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LAST UPDATED: NOVEMBER 18<sup>th</sup> 2005

# IVAN ILIĆ

“Ivan Ilić is one of the most talented young musicians I have ever met...listening to his music you are immediately gripped with the knowledge that this is a man who feels deeply.”

**Dmitri Tymoczko**, *Princeton University Professor of Composition*



A rising star on the Parisian classical music scene, twenty-seven year old pianist Ivan Ilić is quickly gaining international recognition for his “unique blend of a Gallic touch, a Slavic soul and a mathematician’s precision.”

Ivan started musical studies at the age of six and gave his recital debut at the age of eleven. He went on to take degrees in music and mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley. After capturing all of Berkeley’s music awards, including First Prize in the Concerto Competition, an Eisner Prize, First Prize in the Senior Recital Competition, and a Mary J. Nunes travel grant to the Aspen Summer Music Festival, he left for Paris on an Alfred Hertz Memorial Traveling Fellowship from the university.

One month later Ivan was admitted to the esteemed Conservatoire Supérieur de Paris, where he was awarded a “Premier Prix” in piano performance, followed by a “Diplôme à l’Unanimité” and a “Diplôme Supérieur” from the École Normale de Musique, “Alfred Cortot” in Paris. Before age twenty he had launched an international career of solo and chamber music recitals that has taken him to Belgium, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic, the United States and throughout France.

During his studies he took public classes with the following master-pianists: François-René Duchâble, Dmitri Bashkirov, Jacques Rouvier, Stephen Bishop Kovacevich, Paul Badura-Skoda and Aldo Ciccolini.

In 2004 Ivan was the recipient of awards, fellowships and grants from: the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, the Fondation des États-Unis (Paris), the Karić Foundation (Belgrade), the John Ernest Foundation (California), and the Helen von Ammon Fund for Emerging Artists (San Francisco). The City of Paris sponsored his last recording.

Ivan has been the subject of television and radio interviews in the United States, France, and the former Yugoslavia. In 2005-2006, Ivan is a resident of the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. He was recently awarded a grant from the Nadia and Lili Boulanger Foundation in Paris for 2006-2007.

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**REVIEWS and RECOMMENDATIONS**

“Ivan Ilić is one of the most talented young musicians I have ever met. He has a formidable pianistic technique, a deep understanding of music, and a rare commitment to contemporary composers. [There is a] fiery, passionate quality of Ivan’s playing. Listening to his music you are immediately gripped with the knowledge that this is a man who feels deeply.”

**Dmitri Tymoczko**, *Professor of Composition at Princeton University*

“[He is] a very motivated young pianist...I admire his professionalism, his concentration, and his explorations of wide-ranging repertoire.”

**François-René Duchâble** *Concert Pianist*

“In the sixty-plus years I have been teaching piano I have been fortunate in having some very talented students. Among these, I would place Ivan in the top ten. He will succeed, I feel. Also, he loves and is really interested in MUSIC – including, thank heaven, 20th century and beyond.”

**Robert Helps** *Composer and Concert Pianist (1928 – 2001)*

“One was especially appreciative of the great respect of melodic lines...an astonishing performance of the Intermezzi opus 117 #1 and #2 of Johannes Brahms, both of a highly beautiful expressive quality, almost Debussy-like...a very beautiful dynamic.”

**Marc Develey** *of Anacalse (France)*

“He has constructed a special combination of a Gallic touch, a Slavic soul, and mathematical precision that makes him entirely unique.”

**Gordana Krajačić** *of Novosadski Dnevnik (Yugoslavia)*

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ARTICLE

May 25<sup>th</sup> 2005

Excerpt from “Musical Life” of the newspaper ‘DNEVNIK’ (Serbia)

**Rare Concert Events**

Two young musicians performed two brilliant concerts on two consecutive days in Belgrade. Firstly, Ivan Ilić, an American pianist (and mathematician) of Yugoslav origin, who completed graduate studies in Paris by taking a *Premier Prix* in piano interpretation, brought a demanding and rarely performed program to his parents’ birthplace combining three centuries of music and his university training (Bach, Beethoven) with his conservatory training in Paris (Ravel).

**Freedom from Tradition**

In Bach’s Second Partita Ivan Ilić emphasized the cantilena melodies and rhythms of the Baroque style while preserving the balance, reserve, and noble elegance of the baroque dances’ rhythmic foundations (Bach wrote these pieces in Leipzig in 1726). Mr. Ilić’s stylistic mastery was even more obvious in Beethoven’s late Sonata Opus 109 in E-sharp Major (the rarely used tonality of Wagner’s “Tannhäuser” and Beethoven’s “Fidelio”). His affinity for variation form has already been noted (his performance at the Marble and Sounds Festival in 2003 included Beethoven’s rarely performed “Eroica” Variations, Opus 35). This late Beethoven Sonata, composed an entire century after Bach’s Partita (around 1820), with its intimate dream-like expression, subjective lyricism and spirituality completely free from formal restrictions, can only be undertaken by totally mature pianists who are able to leave out virtuoso flash from their interpretations and dive into the Sonata’s substance consisting of various, often contradicting flows of deep melancholy (the first two movements) with the final variations which are one of Beethoven’s most poetic epilogues. Romain Rolland called the theme of the third movement a “heart’s poem,” linking it to Beethoven’s song cycle “To the distant beloved.” Ivan Ilić dove majestically into the six characteristic variations while altering their structure and form (the first is a waltz, the fifth is a fugue, the final variation evaporates in trills).

**Baroque and Contemporary**

During the second half of the concert Ravel’s “Valses Nobles et Sentimentales” and “Le Tombeau de Couperin” were interpreted as their respective titles suggest: infinitely tender, noble and sweet slow movements, with their metric structures intact, coupled with an ephemeral impressionist palette. When Ravel orchestrated “Le Tombeau de Couperin” five years after completing the solo piano version he omitted two of the most remarkable movements, the Fugue and the Toccata, which Ivan Ilić brought off with baroque reflections and a contemporary harmonic sensibility...

## INTERVIEW

**Interview with Ivan Ilić by Biljana Lijeskić,  
Published in "Glas" ("Voice") June 10<sup>th</sup> 2004**

### **Pianist Ivan Ilić makes his Belgrade debut**

**"My goal is to be a complete human being"**

### **A humanitarian concert at the "Cvijeta Zuzorić" Pavillion.**

Born in San Francisco, twenty-five year old pianist Ivan Ilić never abandoned his heritage or forgot his mother tongue, and after his recent successes in Europe, our audiences will be able to hear him for the first time, at 9 p.m. at the "Cvijeta Zuzorić" Pavillion. For his first encounter with the Belgrade public he chose works by Schumann, Beethoven, and Chopin. Admission is free of charge, but donations will be accepted to help Serb refugees from Kosovo.

Ivan Ilić's interests span a wide range of subjects. At U.C. Berkeley, for example, he took degrees in music and mathematics. Thanks to awards he received in the US, he was able to pursue graduate work in Paris. He has studied with distinguished pianists [François-René] Duchâble and [Aldo] Ciccolini.

#### *Why haven't you play in Belgrade earlier?*

- My parents are natives of Belgrade and I've always wanted to perform here. But I was patient because the public here is quite sophisticated and discriminating. I am negotiating future concerts.

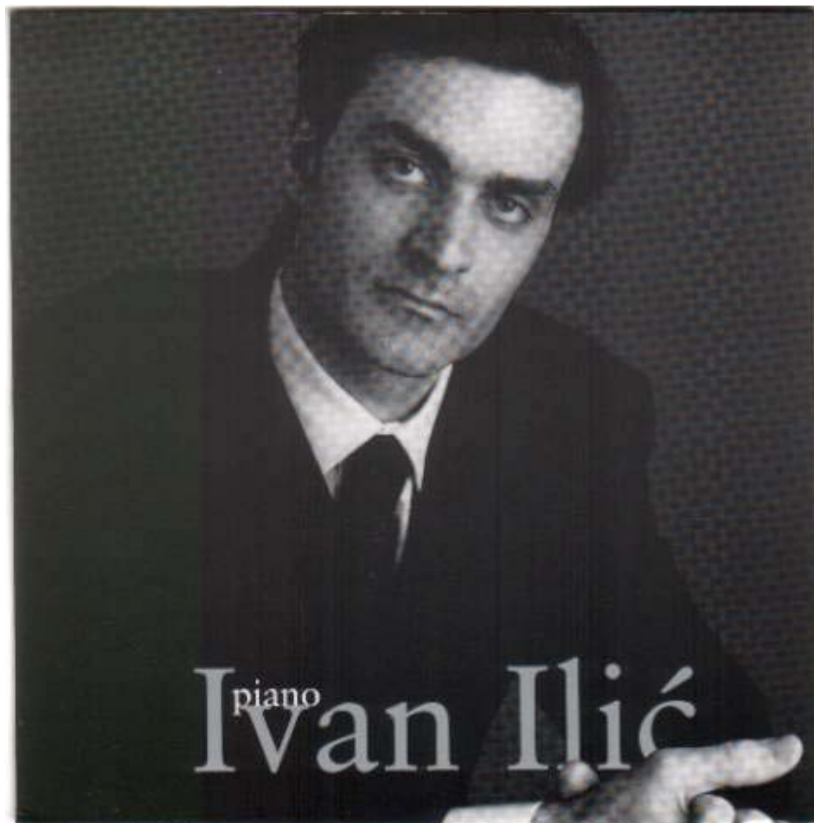
#### *Are you collaborating with any Serbian composers? Which pianist inspires you?*

- I work with Ivan Jevtić [composer] and Dušan Trbojević [pianist]. The French pianist François-René Duchâble has especially influenced me; he is incredibly energetic, he thinks quickly and is eccentric. I will continue to work with him over the next few years.

#### *How did you find the time to do mathematics as well as music?*

- I am thankful to have been educated at the American University U.C. Berkeley, where both music and mathematics are world-class. And the two subjects are obviously quite connected. During my studies I was interested in a lot of other things as well. Nowadays I see some of my colleagues in France who graduated from the Conservatory at age 20. For many it wasn't a real choice and they have no other options or any other non-musical interests. It's sad! My goal is to be a complete human being and to express myself with music, not just a complete musician without other interests, otherwise ten years from now I will have nothing left to say.

IVAN ILIĆ



This CD available upon request:



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REPERTOIRE
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Solo Piano
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**Bach**

Tocatta and Fugue in E minor  
 Partita in C minor  
 Partita in D major  
 Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue  
 16 Préludes and Fugues from the WTC:  
 BK I: 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 13, 17  
 BK II: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 22

**Beethoven**

“Eroica” Variations and Fugue, Opus 35  
 Sonatas Opus 26, Opus 31 #2, 109, 110

**Brahms**

Handel Variations Opus 24  
 Paganini Variations Opus 35  
 Bach Chaconne (left hand transcription)  
 3 Intermezzi Opus 117  
 Rhapsody Opus 79 #2 in g minor  
 Intermezzo Opus 119 #1

**Chopin**

Sonata in B minor Opus 35  
 24 Préludes Opus 28  
 Scherzo Opus 31  
 14 Etudes:  
 Op 10 #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12  
 Op 25 #1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 12

**Copland**

Variations

**Debussy**

3 Préludes : Danseuses de Delphes  
 Ce qu'à vu le Vent d'Ouest  
 La Cathédrale engloutie  
 3 Études : Pour les « cinq doigts »  
 (d'après Monsieur Czerny)  
 Pour les degrés chromatiques  
 Pour les tierces

**Gershwin**

3 Préludes

**Liszt**

Funérailles  
 Atonal Bagatelle (Méphisto Waltz #4)  
 Transcendental étude #10 in F minor

**Messiaen**

Le Lioriot (The Golden Oriole)

**Mozart**

Sonatas K 330 and K 333

**Ravel**

Le Tombeau de Couperin  
 Valses Nobles et Sentimentales

**Scarlatti**

Two Sonatas

**Schönberg**

6 Pieces Opus 19

**Schubert**

Sonatas D 664 and D 958  
 Impromptus D 899 #3 and D 935 #4

**Schumann**

3 Romances Opus 28  
 Études Symphoniques Opus 13

**Shostakovich**

Préludes Opus 34

**Tymoczko**

Piano Games (2000)

**Webern**

Variations Opus 27

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Chamber Music/Concerti

**BARTOK**

Sonata for two pianos & percussion  
Marvelous Mandarin Suite

**BEETHOVEN**

Violin Sonatas: Opus 24, Opus 30 #3, Opus 96  
Cello Sonata Opus 5 #1  
Concerto #3 in C minor Opus 37

**BRAHMS**

Clarinet Sonata Opus 120 #2  
Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann Opus 23\*

**CHABRIER**

Cortège Burlesque\*

**COPLAND**

Dance of the Adolescent\*\*  
Sextet  
Appalachian Spring

**DEBUSSY**

Lindaraja\*\*  
Fêtes\*\*  
Divertissement\*  
Prélude to the Afternoon of a Faun\*

**N. LEE**

Diversions \*

**LUTOSLAWSKI**

4th Symphony (piano cadenza)

**MASSENET**

Grande Overture de Concert opus 1 \*

**MOZART**

Concerto K 415

**RAVEL**

Concerto for the left hand alone

**SAINT-SAËNS**

Polonaise in F minor Opus 77\*\*

**SCHUBERT**

Overture D 675\*

**SCHUMANN**

Fantasiestücke for clarinet and piano Opus 73

**STRAVINSKY**

Pétrouchka  
The Rite of Spring\*\*

\* = four-hand piano repertoire \*\* = two-piano repertoire

Song Repertoire

**BRAHMS**

Chansons tziganes\*

**BUTTERWORTH**

A Shropshire Lad\*

**CAPLET**

Cloches d'aube, L'adieu en barque

**CHAUSSON**

Cantique à l'épouse, La chanson bien douce, Le temps des lilas, Le colibri,  
Chanson perpétuelle, Nanny, Sérénade italienne, Le charme

**DUPARC**

Chanson triste, Extase, La Manoir de Rosamonde, La vie antérieure,  
Lamento, L'invitation au Voyage, Phidylé, Soupir, Testament

**DUROSOIR**

A ma mère

**DUTILLEUX**

Pour une amie perdue, Regards sur l'infini

**DVORAK**

Chansons tziganes\*

**GURNEY**

Sleep

**HAHN**

L'heure exquise, Offrande, D'une prison

**MOERAN**

When Smoke stood up from Ludlow, Farewell to Barn

**RAVEL**

Chansons grecques, \* Don Quichotte a Dulcinée\*

**SCHUMANN**

Der arme Peter Opus 53,\* Frauenliebe und Leben Opus 42,\*  
Liederkreis Opus 39,\* Liederkreis Opus 24\*

**SCHOENBERG**

Erwartung, Schenk mir deinen goldenen Kamm (Jesus bettelt)

**WOLF**

Herr, was trägt der Boden hier, Wunden trägst du mein Geliebter

\* = cycle of songs

## Two Program Suggestions

### Program # ① Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Ravel

**Johann-Sebastian Bach**

Partita in C Minor

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Sonata Opus 109 in E Major

*intermission*

**Maurice Ravel**

Valses Nobles et Sentimentales

**Johannes Brahms**

Variations and Fugue on a theme by Handel Opus 24

### Program # ② Schumann, Ravel and Chopin

**Robert Schumann**

Phantasiestücke Opus 12

**Maurice Ravel**

Le Tombeau de Couperin

*intermission*

**Frédéric Chopin**

24 Préludes Opus 28

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