

## **Biography Sofya Gulyak**

In September 2009 Sofya Gulyak was awarded the 1st prize and the Princess Mary Gold Medal at the Sixteenth Leeds International Piano Competition – the first and up to the day of writing the only woman to achieve this distinction. Since then she has appeared all over the world to great acclaim.

Her recital programmes are frequently reviewed in superlatives, and her concerto appearances with major orchestras are noted in glowing terms by the world's music press. Sofya has been praised for her "tremendous precision and colouration...exquisite soft playing ...with delicacy" and described as a "Rach star"(Washington Post).

Sofya Gulyak's resume includes prizes from many prestigious piano competitions: she is a 1st prize winner of William Kapell International Piano Competition in the USA, Maj Lind Helsinki International Piano Competition, Tivoli Piano Competition in Copenhagen, Isang Yun International Piano Competition in South Korea, San Marino Piano Competition, winner of Busoni Competition in Italy and prize winner of Marguerite Long Piano Competition in Paris.

Recitals and concert appearances have been numerous, with Sofya Gulyak having performed all over the globe in such venues as La Scala Theatre and Sala Verdi in Milan, Herculessaal in Munich, Salle Cortot, Salle Gaveau and Salle Pleyel in Paris, Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, Konzerthaus in Berlin, Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Kennedy Center in Washington, Palais de la Musique in Strasbourg, Hong Kong City Hall, Shanghai Grand Theatre, Musashino Cultural Centre in Tokyo, Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, Bridgewater Hall in Manchester, Teatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro, Auditorium Manzoni in Bologna, Aberdeen Music Hall, Salle Molière in Lyon, Walt Disney Hall in Los Angeles, King Theatre in Rabat, Kursaal in Bern, Tivoli Concert Hall in Copenhagen.

Sofya Gulyak appeared as a soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony, Saint-Petersburg Philharmonic, Rio de Janeiro Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra dell' Arena di Verona, Orchestra Filarmonica di Bologna, Enescu Philharmonic, Stavanger Symphony, Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Slovak Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic, Copenhagen Symphony, Ulster Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Shanghai Philharmonic, Oulu Philharmonic, Leipzig Philharmonic, Pensacola Symphony, Tatarstan Symphony, Philippines Philharmonic, Morocco Philharmonic.

She collaborated with conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Sakari Oramo, Mark Elder, David Hill, Donald Runnicle, Vasily Petrenko, Alan Buribayev, Eivind Gullberg Jensen, Theodor Guschlbauer, Rory McDonald, Danail Rachev, Fabio Mastrangelo, Michele Mariotti, Fuat Mansurov, Alexander Sladkovsky, Mario Kosik, Jesus Medina, and Peter Rubardt.

The festivals in which Sofya Gulyak participated include Klavier Ruhr Festival, Chopin Festival in Duzniki-Zdroj, Festival de Sceaux, International Keyboard Festival in New York, International Strasbourg Festival, Busoni Festival, Harrogate Festival, Kraków Piano Festival, New Zealand Piano Festival, Ravello Festival, Festival Chopin in Paris, Shanghai International Piano Festival and many others.

Sofya Gulyak's recording of Russian piano music (Medtner, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev) was released on Champs Hill Records in 2013 and received a 5 stars review in Diapason magazine

(“What a pleasure to hear the piano blossoming and projecting in the most vivid of ways when played by Sofya Gulyak. The singing sound alongside dazzling and powerful execution distinguishes an outstanding natural pianist”) and praising reviews in Gramophone (“This is a stunning debut album...”) and Guardian magazines (“Sofya Gulyak is a fearless pianist, never afraid to scale the most technically demanding heights of the repertoire and equally proud to wear her heart on her sleeve”).

Her second CD, released on Piano Classics in the spring of 2015, includes compositions by Johannes Brahms: Two Rhapsodies Op. 79, Fantasias Op. 116 and Handel Variations Op. 24.

Sofya Gulyak is a native of Kazan (Russia) where she studied in a Special Music College under Nailya Khakimova, and then in Kazan State Conservatoire under Professor Elfiya Burnasheva. After that she continued her studies at the Piano Academy "Incontri coi Maestri" (Imola, Italy) with Boris Petrushansky and at the Royal College of Music in London with Vanessa Latache.

Sofya Gulyak attended as a jury member the international piano competitions in Italy, Serbia, France, Greece, USA, and was invited to teach master classes in China, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Hong Kong, Mexico, USA, and Germany. She is presently a professor of the piano at the Royal College of Music in London.

Her playing has been broadcast on radio and TV in Russia, Poland, France, Italy, Germany, USA, Finland, Denmark, Serbia, New Zealand, Brazil, Mexico, and the United Kingdom (BBC 3 and BBC 4).

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