

Press Release of the Salzburg Festival

(SF 18 November 2020). The Salzburg Festival congratulates IGOR LEVIT on being acclaimed “Recording Artist of the Year” by the renowned specialist publication *Musical America*.

In 2019 the Salzburg Festival was honoured by *Musical America* as “Festival of the Year”. In 2020, the renowned American music publication bestowed the title “Recording Artist of the Year” upon the pianist **Igor Levit**. The prestigious honours are being awarded for the 60th time.

The jury offered the following statement:

“The decision to honour pianist Igor Levit as *Recording Artist of the Year* recognizes his early determination not to allow the pandemic to curtail his music-making. When COVID-19 hit, Levit was one of the first musicians to embrace the livestream with his marathon performance of Satie’s *Vexations*, rightfully hailed as an unflagging feat of artistic and physical endurance.”

“The Salzburg Festival, and especially I personally, are delighted to see this outstanding award bestowed on Igor Levit. His activism via livestream kept direct contact with our audience alive, even during the darkest times of the coronavirus. During recent years, his unforgettable concerts have been an essential contribution to the Salzburg Festival. His interpretation of the 32 Beethoven Piano Sonatas, a masterly achievement in pianistic and intellectual terms, were a highlight of our 2020 centenary festival. Needless to say, Igor Levit and I in my capacity as artistic director have plans for the coming years. I send him my heartfelt congratulations,” says **the Festival’s artistic director, Markus Hinterhäuser**.

The honourees will be recognized this year in an all-virtual ceremony to be presented via Facebook Live on December 6 at 10 am CET (4:00 pm EST).



Igor Levit performed the complete cycle of 32 Piano Sonatas by Ludwig van Beethoven at the 2020 Salzburg Festival over the course of eight evenings.

Photo © SF/Marco Borrelli



Igor Levit © Robbie Lawrence

In his playing, Igor Levit combines “technical brilliance, tonal allure and intellectual drive” (*The New Yorker*). His alert and critical spirit places his art in the context of social events, comprehending the two as inextricably linked. *The New York Times* describes Igor Levit as “one of the essential artists of his generation”.

Igor Levit is the recipient of the 2018 Gilmore Artist Award and was named “Instrumentalist of the Year” by the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2018. His political engagement won Igor Levit the 5th International Beethoven Prize in 2019. In January 2020 this was followed by the “Statue B”, the “Gift of Remembrance” of the International Auschwitz Committee, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Born in Nizhni Novgorod in 1987, Igor Levit moved to Germany with his family when he was eight. He graduated from his piano studies at the Hanover University of Music, Theatre and Media with the highest mark ever awarded in the history of the institution. The youngest participant to compete, Igor Levit won both the second prize, the special chamber music award and the special prize for a performance of the mandatory contemporary piece at the 2005 International Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Tel Aviv. In the spring of 2019 he was appointed professor of piano by his alma mater, the Hanover University of Music, Theatre and Media. In his adopted hometown of Berlin, Igor Levit plays a Steinway Model D concert grand – a gift from “Independent Opera at Sadler’s Wells” foundation.

Kind regards,

Press Office of the Salzburg Festival

presse@salzburgfestival.at

0043-662-8045-351

www.salzburgerfestspiele.at

If you prefer not to receive our emails in the future, please send us an email to presse@salzburgfestival.at. Our General Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy are available anytime from our Press Office and are online at <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/terms-conditions> and <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/privacy-policy>.