

IDIL BIRET

Idil Biret manifested an outstanding gift for music at the age of three and was trained at the Paris Conservatory under the tutelage of Nadia Boulanger. She graduated at the age of fifteen with three first prizes. She studied piano with Alfred Cortot and was a lifelong disciple of Wilhelm Kempff who considered her as her best student. Since the age of sixteen Idil Biret has given concerts throughout the world with major orchestras including the London Symphony, the Philharmonia, BBC Orchestras, Leningrad Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Dresden Staatskapelle, Berlin Radio Symphony, French National Orchestra, Polish Radio Symphony, Orchestre Suisse Romande, Warsaw Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic and Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Among the eminent conductors she collaborated with are Pierre Monteux, Joseph Keilberth, Hermann Scherchen, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, Alexander Dimitreev, Eric Leinsdorf, Rudolf Kempe, Adrian Boult, Malcolm Sargent, Charles Mackerras, Moshe Atzmon, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Andrew Davis, Anthony Wit and Aaron Copland.

Idil Biret made her first tour in the then USSR in 1960 upon the invitation of the great Russian pianist Emil Gilels giving sixteen concerts. Over the years she made many more visits performing nearly 100 concerts in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities in the great concert halls of the country. Idil Biret's US debut then took place in 1963 when she played a six concert series with the Boston Symphony conducted by Erich Leinsdorf performing Rachmaninov's 3rd piano concerto. The same year she played Rachmaninov's 3rd concerto also with the London Symphony conducted by Pierre Monteux.

Idil Biret has participated at many Festivals including Montreal, Berlin, Paris, Nohant, Duszynki, Athens, Persepolis, Dubrovnik, Montreal, Royan, Montpellier and Istanbul. She has played Beethoven Sonatas with Yehudi Menuhin and the Mozart Concerto for two pianos with Wilhelm Kempff. Idil Biret has been member in the juries of many competitions including the Van Cliburn (USA), Queen Elisabeth (Belgium), Montreal (Canada), Busoni (Italy), Liszt (Weimar, Germany). She has received the following awards; Lily Boulanger Memorial, Boston; Harriet Cohen - Dinu Lipatti gold medal, London; Adelaide Ristori prize, Italy; Artistic Merit, Poland; Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite, France.

Over the years Idil Biret has made more than seventy records which include the world premiere recording of the nine Beethoven Symphonies' transcriptions by Liszt for EMI (6LP/1986). She also recorded the complete solo piano works and all the concertos of Chopin (15CD/1992), Brahms (12CD/1997), Rachmaninov (10CD/2000) and the three piano sonatas of Pierre Boulez (1995) for Naxos. In 1995 her recording of the complete works of Chopin was awarded a "Grand Prix du Disque Chopin" prize in Poland. The same year, her recording of the Boulez sonatas won the annual Golden Diapason award and was selected among the best recordings of the year by Le Monde newspaper in France. Idil Biret has also

recorded for Naxos the Etudes of Ligeti and the Firebird ballet music's piano transcription by Stravinsky which were released in 2003. The sale of her recordings for Naxos is nearing two million copies worldwide. Biret is presently recording the complete cycle of Beethoven's 32 Sonatas.

The **Idil Biret Archives** contains all her professional recordings and aims to bring together as many of the radio/tv recordings as possible. As the copyrights are obtained, those recordings not commercially available will be released under the IBA label. The Beethoven/Liszt Symphonies originally recorded for EMI in 1985/1986 are the first of these (released in January 2004). The 9 LPs recorded for Atlantic/Finnadar in New York will follow. Idil Biret is also recording new works for release under the IBA label including the 32 Sonatas of Beethoven.

Idil Biret has played in cycles the complete piano works of Beethoven and Brahms. In the 1980s she performed in two series of concerts Beethoven's 32 sonatas and the piano transcription (Liszt) of all the 9 Symphonies, the latter broadcast live by Radio France. In the 1990s she played Beethoven's five Piano Concertos, the Choral Fantasia and the Triple Concerto in five concerts. In 1997 she played all the solo piano works of Brahms in a series of five recitals in Germany during the composer's centennial anniversary and also performed Brahms' two piano concertos at a single concert the same year.

Release: March 2004

* * * * *

Wilhelm Kempff (Germany) *"My favourite disciple Idil Biret... This genius pianist belongs to the class of elect musicians of our time."*

Igor Kipnis (USA) *"The complete Chopin set by Idil Biret can stand among the highest echelons of contemporary Chopin playing."*

Donald Henahan (USA) *"Only a brave soul and a confident technician would set out in public to play Liszt's transcription for piano of Berlioz' Symphonie Fantastique, as Idil Biret did."*

Tully Potter (England) *"The distinguished pianist Idil Biret shows herself to be one of the finest exponents of Chopin's Concertos in the world today. I cannot think of any competitor who can offer better performances than these."*

Henry-Louis de la Grange (France) *"Idil Biret, this great pianist, who in 1986 victoriously launched an assault on Liszt's transcription of Beethoven's nine symphonies, does it again today by playing Chopin in its entirety in a breathtaking interpretation."*