

Tirsdag den 18. juli 2023, kl. 20:00

# Alexander Melnikov, klaver

## Sergei RACHMANINOFF (1873 – 1943)

### Etudes-Tableaux op. 39 (1916-1917), 40'

1. *Allegro agitato (C minor)*
2. *Lento assai (A minor)*
3. *Allegro molto (F# minor)*
4. *Allegro assai (B minor)*
5. *Appassionato (E♭ minor)*
6. *Allegro (A minor)*
7. *Lento lugubre (C minor)*
8. *Allegro moderato (D minor)*
9. *Allegro moderato. Tempo di marcia (D major)*

### Fra Préludes op. 32 (1910), 10'

5. *Moderato (G major)*
10. *Lento (B minor)*
12. *Allegro (G# minor)*

### About the Etude-Tableaux

As the title already reveals, Études-Tableaux are so much more than mere studies. The key word is thus "tableaux", while the "études" suggests their high technical demands. The virtuosity serves here as an indispensable vehicle for the expression of visual images and feelings he wanted to address. Although the pieces are intended as "picture studies", Rachmaninov was never specific about what inspired each piece. He preferred to leave such interpretations to listener and performer, suggesting they should "paint for themselves what it most suggests". However, he made an exception

with five of the "Études-Tableaux" when, upon Sergei Koussevitzky's recommendation, the Italian composer Ottorino Respighi orchestrated them, and revealed some of the ideas which prompted him to compose them. For example the A-minor (No. 2) is "The Sea and the Seagulls", the other A-minor (No. 6) was inspired by the tale "Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf", the C-minor (No. 7) is a "Funeral March" (Rachmaninov gives a very detailed explanation especially about this étude in his letter to Respighi), while the last étude resembles an "Oriental march". Tradition of composing music related to paintings / images is not unfamiliar to the Russian tradition; a well-

10:00 Kunstnermøde

15:30 Alexander Melnikov, klaver

20:00 Kærlighedssange af Brahms



known example being Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition". It is quite sure that "Ivanovka" - an estate set deep in the Russian countryside and a haven of tranquility, also gave him a close contact with the nature he found so essential for his creativity.

In an interview that he gave to the American journal "The Etude" in December 1941, Rachmaninov opened up on this subject: "When composing, I find it of great help to have in mind a book just recently read, or a beautiful picture, or a poem. Sometimes a definite story is kept in mind, which I try to convert into tones without disclosing the source of my

*inspiration. By that I do not mean that I write program music. Since the sources of my inspiration are never revealed, the public must listen to the music absolutely. But I find that musical ideas come to me more easily when I have a definite non-musical subject to describe. This is particularly true in writing a shorter piece for the piano."*

And added: "A small piece can become as lasting a masterpiece as a large work. The artist learns, after long experience, that it is more difficult to be simple than to be complicated."

Bruno Vlahek, 2021

## Alexander Melnikov

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Initially, Melnikov (born 1973) was interested in the brass instrument horn until his older sister sparked his enthusiasm for the piano. At the age of six, Melnikov attended the Moscow Central Music School. He subsequently studied at the Moscow P.I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory under Lew Naumov, which he completed in 1997. He then studied in Munich with Elisso Wirsaladse, Andreas Staier, and Karl Ulrich Schnabel at the Fondazione per il Pianoforte in Lago di Como. Even as a student, he received awards at international competitions.

In addition to solo and orchestral performances, chamber music also plays a significant role in his artistic activities. He played with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra under Teodor Currentzis, violinists Vadim Repin and Isabelle Faust, with whom he has a fruitful collaboration, as well as cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras. He frequently performs four-hand piano pieces with Andreas Staier, Boris Vadimovich Berezovsky, and Alexei Lubimov.

As an artist with Harmonia Mundi, he has recorded numerous CDs as a soloist and chamber musician. Melnikov regularly performs on BBC 3 in solo

programs, chamber orchestras, and with the BBC Orchestras, with whom he has also made repeated recordings.

**Highlights of the 2023/24 season** will be Alexander Melnikov's concert tour to Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, his residency as "Porträtkünstler" at the Kölner Philharmonie, concerts with orchestras such as the Bayerisches Staatsorchester, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, a.o.

He continues in 2023/24 his chamber music work in various formations with partners such as Isabelle Faust, Antoine Tamestit and Jean-Guihen Queyras.

Solo concerts at the Berliner Philharmonie, Toppan Hall in Tokyo, Wigmore Hall, Amsterdam's Muziekgebouw, Munich's Prinzregententheater – not to mention Hindsgavl Festival - will complete Alexander Melnikov's season this year.

*Wikipedia/Impressariat Simmenauer/Bernard  
Villaume*

### Other facts

Melnikov's second (or third?) love is aviation, and he is a qualified commercial pilot.

Melnikov removed the Russian Romantics - an early love of his - from his active repertoire for several years; it took an encounter with Mikhail Pletnev to reignite his interest in their music and he went on to make deeply insightful and much praised recordings of Sergei Rachmaninov (2008) and Scriabin (2006) for Harmonia Mundi.

His grandmother was the Soviet pianist and composer Zara Levina.

Previously presented 4 times at Hindsgavl Festival: 2013 (w. Isabelle Faust; Theunis van der Zwart), 2016 (w. Isabelle Faust; Jean-Guihen Queyras), 2017 (w. Steven Isserlis), 2021 (w. Jean-Guihen Queyras)