

# **VALENTINA LISITSA, Piano**

## **Biography**

Described by critics as an "electrifying pianist", and one whose plays like " [a] bona fide angel," the Ukrainian-born Valentina Lisitsa has been receiving rave reviews since making her Mostly Mozart Festival debut at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. Ms. Lisitsa is at home in a vast repertoire ranging from Bach and Mozart to Shostakovich and Bernstein and her orchestral repertoire boasts more than forty concerti, all of which have been performed. She admits to having a special affinity for the music of Rachmaninoff and Beethoven, and continues to add to her vast repertoire each season. In 2010 she will perform Rachmaninoff's "New 5<sup>th</sup>" Concerto with the Rotterdam Symphony. She is also taking on the ambitious project of recording all 32 of Beethoven's sonatas.

With her highly individual and fearless approach to every work she performs, Ms. Lisitsa has been greeted by enthusiastic audiences around the world. Her 2008 recital debut in Vienna's Musikverein Golden Hall received multiple standing ovations from the highly discerning Viennese audience. Valentina Lisitsa's 2008-09 season includes more than 80 performances world-wide.

Born in Kiev, Ms. Lisitsa began to study piano at the age of three and performed her first solo recital at four. After her studies - first in Lysenko School of Music and then in Kiev Conservatory – she moved to the United States and shortly thereafter became a citizen. She has performed in the world's most prestigious concert venues, and among recent collaborations have been tours with Sao Paulo Symphony, the New Zealand Philharmonic, Warsaw Philharmonic and Prague Chamber Orchestras.

Ms. Lisitsa has recorded 8 CDs on the Audiofon label and 3 independently released DVDs including her best-selling set of Chopin's 24 Etudes, which long held the coveted #1 spot on the Amazon.com list. A highly anticipated new CD featuring Beethoven, Schumann, Thalberg and Liszt is scheduled for release in 2009.

Valentina Lisitsa is a Bösendorfer artist and often plays the flagship Imperial model. She makes her home with her husband – and duo piano partner – and their son.

## CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“She connected phrases with a singing grace and a limpid sensitivity of touch that were a pleasure to hear, not least in the ravishing recitative at the end of the Adagio movement [Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 2*]. Her runs rippled, her tone was rounded and clear, and her finale sparkled.”

- *Chicago Tribune*

“...the glamorous Miami Beach resident proved her usual brilliant and scintillating self.”  
“Lisitsa’s great strength is not only her combustible virtuosity, but her ability to spin a long line like an opera singer.”

“The finale [of Rachmaninoff, *Piano Concerto No. 2*] had all the spontaneity, lyrical richness and excitement we expect from this artist...Lisitsa’s uninhibited swagger and the power of her cascading octaves, along with the refined and attentive support of [Roberto] Minczuk and the orchestra, made for a rich and sonorous conclusion.”

- *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*

“Valentina Lisitsa’s interpretation of the piano part in Strauss’ early work [*Burleske* for piano and orchestra in D minor, Op. 11] discovered a cosmos of expressive content, with her playing colorfully shining, clearly contoured yet at the same time totally decoratively drawn, lost in thought and dreamy, yet then once again unwaveringly pushing forward. The Stuttgart Philharmonic reacted flexibly and proved to be a partner who answered to her interjections in a very agile manner. Equipped with a phenomenal control of keyboard technique, the soloist also showed, during the Rachmaninoff Rhapsody, that there was no letting up in the continuous melodic chains of the phrases, nor any loss of profile and definition in the finely drawn conclusion. [Jörg-Peter] Weigle enabled the soloist to immerse herself completely into the orchestral sound and the orchestra was both highly motivated and totally reliable.”

- *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*

“Meanwhile, the Ukrainian pianist Valentina Lisitsa showed herself to be a perfect partner of the orchestra rather than a virtuosic egomaniac. Certainly the young musician overcame perfectly the massive pianistic challenges, but she was most at home in the sensitive, sparkling sections, something which she confirmed with the featherlight encore of Chopin’s *Minute Waltz* after two highly demanding pieces.”

- *Stuttgarter Zeitung*

“To put it simply, Lisitsa is a gigantic talent. She has infallible fingers, imagination and a control of dynamics – from the softest to the loudest sounds – little short of electrifying.”

- *Baltimore Sun*

“The way Lisitsa shapes a phrase, quick-changing from a flowing legato touch to a crisp staccato and back again, gives Mozart’s music an extra, joyful lift. The technique glitters like cut glass, with never a hint of overpedaling. Lisitsa’s constant smile as she plays might be suspect in some pianists, but here it mirrored an irresistibly smiling sound.”

- *Chicago Tribune*

“...Lisitsa impressed with an unerring dynamic sense. Soft passages were so delicate, you were afraid to breathe, while Rachmaninoff’s chords thundered effortlessly from Lisitsa’s fingers.”

- *Chicago Sun Times*

“Valentina has the rare gift...of generating enormous volumes of sound without ever sounding like she’s pounding the keyboard; her tone is always beautiful.”

- *Fi Magazine*

“Such electrifying pianism doesn’t come around often. Lisitsa is a powerhouse pianist in the tradition of Martha Argerich – the highest possible praise. Like Argerich, she does not settle for mere technical display, but makes genuine music...”

- *Sun Sentinel*

“...Lisitsa proved herself a remarkable pianist in her own right. Her performance produced a universe of emotions and a catalog of distinctive piano tones within the confines of good classical-era style.”

- *Fort Worth Star*

“Pianist Valentina Lisitsa brought the house down with her performance of Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. Her blend of power and grace in performing this piece was astonishing.”

- *The Daily*, (Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival)

“The best was saved for last as Ukrainian pianist Valentina Lisitsa joined the [Battle Creek Symphony] orchestra for Rachmaninoff’s *Concerto No. 2 in C minor*...and Lisitsa certainly did it justice and more. Her flawless execution was breathtaking...”

- *Battle Creek Enquirer*

“The Andante [from Mendelssohn’s First Piano Concerto] purred along, all softness and finesse. She sped through the frolicsome finale, finding wit amidst the keyboard gymnastics. Her engaging playing was the highlight...”

- *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

“What a marvelous work it is [Bartok’s *Third Piano Concerto*]. From the magic of the opening bars it establishes a mood of bewitching quality, and all three movements are chiseled gems. Ms. Lisitsa was clearly at one with the work, demonstrating a superb control at the keyboard, and a wonderful sense of repose and stillness in the deceptive simplicity of the sublime slow movement.”

- *The Dominion Post* (New Zealand)

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**PIANIST**

**SEASON 2008-2009**

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See and Hear Valentine Perform at [www.youtube.com/valentinalisitsa](http://www.youtube.com/valentinalisitsa)

Meet her on [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) and [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

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