

## **Biography: Emmanuel Despax**

***“Poetry and a genuine sense of the narrative together with breathtaking technical perfection ... a soloist with winged virtuosi fingers. This is first and foremost a musician that we had better follow very closely.”***

Michel Le Naour, concertclassic.com (Paris - Louvre auditorium)

***“Despax created a chaste and ethereal world ... a purity of utterance that was attractive ... (his) clarity was admirable, so too his finesse... Despax gave an epic account of Schumann’s Études Symphoniques.”*** (Colin Anderson, CLASSICAL SOURCE (London - Wigmore Hall))

**Emmanuel Despax** was born in Paris but his burgeoning career has led him to make his home in England. In 2009 he won the prestigious Dudley International Piano Competition. In September 2011, following his acclaimed Paris début at the Salle Gaveau, he gives the opening recital of the Louvre International Series and returns to London’s Wigmore Hall in a recital celebrating Liszt’s bicentenary year.

His musical ability was discovered early. At the age of 11 he entered the Aix-en-Provence Conservatoire, studying with Michel Bourdoncle and Florence Belraouti. At 13 he gained a place at the Yehudi Menuhin School where Ruth Nye, one of Claudio Arrau’s finest students, recognised a great talent in the making. In 2002 **Emmanuel** gained a full scholarship to the Royal College of Music; there he won many awards including the Kendall Taylor Prize in the Beethoven Competition, the Esther Fisher Prize for best undergraduate and the Chappell Medal. He was also awarded the RCM’s most sought after prize, the Tagore Gold Medal, *which was presented to him by HRH the Prince of Wales*. Whilst still at college, he performed Brahms’ First Concerto under Andrew Litton with the RCM Symphony Orchestra.

As winner of the Jaques Samuel Intercollegiate Piano Competition, **Emmanuel** made his Wigmore Hall debut in September 2005 which was recorded live and released on the Jaques Samuel Label. ***“This disc is about Despax – he impresses – and he is all about the music.”*** (Colin Anderson, International Record Review) Throughout his studies, he also participated in masterclasses and sought the advice of such eminent musicians as Bernard D’Ascoli, Nikolai Demidenko, Leon Fleisher, John Lill, Yehudi Menuhin, Dominique Merlet, Mstislav Rostropovich, Murray Perahia and Andrés Schiff.

Since graduating from the Royal College of Music with first class honours in 2006, **Emmanuel’s** international performing career has gone from strength to strength. In his native France he has appeared at Le Festival International de Musique à la Cour at Solliès-Pont, and a gala concert at La Roque d’Anthéron. Highlights this season include performances at the Salle Gaveau

in Paris and Le Festival des nuits du Château de la Moutte in St Tropez. Elsewhere in Europe he has given recitals at the Fazioli Auditorium in Italy, the Gasteig Blackbox in Munich and the Palais des Beaux Arts in Belgium as well as in Holland, Mallorca and Slovenia to name a few.

Amongst UK orchestras **Emmanuel** has played with are the London Festival Orchestra in their Virtuoso Pianists Series at Cadogan Hall, the City of Birmingham Symphony and the Arion Orchestra at St James's Piccadilly. As a recitalist he has appeared at the Chipping Campden and Petworth Festivals and given performances in London at the Cadogan Hall, the National Portrait Gallery, the Drapers' Hall and three appearances at Wigmore Hall.

International highlights include a second successful tour of New Zealand, where he appeared at the prestigious Fazioli International Piano Series in Auckland and played Schumann's Concerto with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. The performance, which was broadcast on national radio, was glowingly reviewed: "***His flawless technique, sense of precision in working with the orchestra and ability to project an unassuming strength of emotion created a spellbinding performance.***" (The Press, New Zealand)

In autumn 2011, **Emmanuel Despax** returns to Paris to give the opening recital of the Louvre International Series, whilst in London, he is invited to play for the UK Chopin Society and gives his fourth Wigmore Hall recital.

For further information please visit [www.emmanueldespax.com](http://www.emmanueldespax.com)