Emmanuel Despax

www.emmanueldespax.com

"His musicianship is described as prodigious, his career meteoric and, even at a young age, his reputation formidable." THE PRESS, Christchurch, New Zealand

"Here was an outstanding performance by a young musician of great potential." David Alker, MUSICAL OPINION, U.K

French pianist **Emmanuel Despax** is one of the most sought after **rising stars** of his generation. He has performed widely in Europe and as far afield as **New Zealand** and **South America.**

Emmanuel began his piano studies at the age of 9 with his mother before passing the entrance exam to the **Conservatoire Darius Milhaud** in **Aix-en-Provence**, studying with **Michel Bourdoncle** and **Florence Belraouti.** From the age of 13 he continued his studies in the UK where he gained a place at **the Yehudi Menuhin School**, studying with **Ruth Nye**, one of **Claudio Arrau's** finest students. When she heard his audition, she recognized a great talent in the making and has been his mentor ever since.

During his five years at the prestigious Menuhin School, Emmanuel was given numerous opportunities to appear in concerts, both as a soloist and as a chamber musician, most notably

in London, at **the Royal Festival Hall**, **St. John's Smith Square** and **Wigmore Hall**. He is also keen to develop his talent as a composer, his score for the ballet **"Le Petit Bal Nocturne"** was premièred in 1999 at the **Queen Elizabeth Hall** by **L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Danse de Marseille**, with himself at the piano and the strings of the Menuhin School Orchestra.

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 prestigious prize, **the Tagore Gold Medal,** which was presented to him by **HRH the Prince of Wales**. While still at college, he made his London debut performing **Brahms' First Concerto** under **Andrew Litton** with the **RCM Symphony Orchestra**. Throughout his studies, Emmanuel also participated in masterclasses and sought the advice of such eminent musicians as **Emanuel Ax**, **Nikolai Demidenko**, **Leon Fleisher**, **John Lill**, **Bernard D'Ascoli**, **Yehudi Menuhin**, **Mstislav Rostropovich**, **Murray Perahia** and **András 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 â la Cour at Solliès-Pont, Le Château de Lourmarin** and a gala concert at **La Roque d'Anthéron**. Elsewhere in Europe he has given recitals at **the Fazioli Auditorium in Italy**, **the Gasteig Blackbox in Munich**, **the Palais des Beaux Arts in Belgium**, and in **Holland**, **Mallorca** and **Slovenia** to name a few.

As winner of the **Jaques Samuel 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, June 2006. He has played with many orchestras throughout the UK, most notably with the **London Festival Orchestra** as part of **the Virtuoso Pianists series** at **Cadogan Hall, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** and **the Arion Orchestra** at **St James's Piccadilly**, as well as in many **festivals** including **Chipping Campden** and **Petworth.**

Recent and upcoming highlights include a second appearance at **the Chipping Campden festival**, performances in London at the **Cadogan Hall**, **the National Portrait Gallery**, **the Drapers' Hall** and another acclaimed **Wigmore Hall** recital. **"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

International highlights, include a second successful tour of **New Zealand**, where he appeared at the prestigious **Fazioli International Series in Auckland** and played **Schumann's Piano Concerto** with **the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra** under **Tom Woods**, which was broadcast on national radio. Both performances drew glowing reviews. **"Hailed as a rising star, French-born Emmanuel Despax excelled, living up to the accolades of rapturous superlatives that audiences and reviewers around the world have showered upon him. From the initial fierce descending attack by the piano in the first movement Despax breathed new life into this popular work. His flawless technique, sense of precision in working with the orchestra and his ability to project an unassuming strength of emotion created a spellbinding performance."** THE PRESS, New Zealand

In **France** he returns to **Le Château de Lourmarin** and is invited to play in his home city of **Aix-en-Provence** at **the Cour de l'Hôtel de Ville**. In the forthcoming season, **Emmanuel Despax** will also make his **Paris** debut at the **Salle Gaveau** and **Louvre Auditorium**, and come back to perform at the **Fazioli Auditorium** in **Italy**. In September 2010 he will give his third recital at **Wigmore Hall** under the auspices of the **Kirckman Concert Society.**

Most recently, **Emmanuel Despax** was awarded **1st prize** in the prestigious **Dudley International Piano Competition** in England, performing **Brahms 1st Piano Concerto** in the final with the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Michael Seal**.

For further information please visit **www.emmanueldespax.com** or **YouTube** http://www.youtube.com/user/EmmanuelDespax