

Biography

Italian pianist Igor Roma was born in Baden, in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, to where his parents had emigrated from Italy in the Sixties: his father came from the North and his mother from the South. His father discovered his son's remarkable musical talent very soon and showed him the rudiments of music theory. Later, at the age of eleven, he was given an upright piano and began to take piano lessons from a private teacher recommended by his mother.

When his family moved back to Italy in 1984 and settled in northern Italy, he started attending classes at the local school of music and later at the Conservatoire of Music "Arrigo Pedrollo" in Vicenza with Carlo Mazzoli until 1991, when he received his diploma with honors. Between 1988 and 1989, Roma successfully participated in various Italian piano competitions and won three National Competitions in Como, Ravenna and Gallarate, the Senigallia International Piano Festival and third prize at the National Competition in Mantua.

After these important achievements Igor Roma was admitted to the prestigious International Piano Academy "Incontri col Maestro" in Imola, where he studied with Franco Scala, founder, director and one of the main teachers at the School. Furthermore, he took lessons from Lazar Berman, Boris Petrushansky and Alexander Lonquich, as well the other main teachers at the Piano Academy. In 1990 he won second prize in the piano competition held for the students of the Institute assigning six important study grants.

During his military service, he took part in the National Piano Competition in Venice, where he won third prize. After his discharge in 1993, he returned to Imola to complete his studies at the Piano Academy and set up an intense study program with Franco Scala to prepare for the international piano competition scene.

During this period, he successfully took part in various competitions. In 1994, he won sixth prize in the International Piano Competition of Dublin and fifth prize in the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition. In 1995, he came fifth in the prestigious "Arthur Rubinstein" International Piano Master Competition in Tel Aviv.

The great success which represented the beginning of his intense and prized international artistic career was winning first prize at the "Franz Liszt" International Piano Competition in Utrecht. His dazzling and overwhelming interpretation of the Totentanz, performed accompanied by the Dutch Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jan Stulen, impressed the audience and amazed the jury, consisting a. o. of Earl Wild, Cyprien Katsaris, Arnaldo Cohen, Boris Bloch, Andrej Jasinski, Oxana Yablonskaya and Jan Wijn. Igor Roma was also rewarded with the special press prize and, what is more, the jury decided not to assign the second prize but to give the other two finalists a shared third prize, in order to stress the clear difference between the winner and the other candidates and as a recognition of his exceptional artistic level.

A part of this prestigious prize also consisted in a long concert tour which started the morning after his triumphal victory in Utrecht in the big hall of the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. This tour lasted throughout the entire summer and autumn, performing in the most important concert halls of The Netherlands.

In 1997, Roma brilliantly finished his studies at the Piano Academy in Imola and received his diploma with the title of "Master". On that occasion, he performed two consecutive times at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna accompanied by the theater orchestra conducted by Massimo de Bernart.

An important and enlightening influence on Igor Roma's musical and artistic development was, in addition to Franco Scala himself, a few charismatic figures such as the Belgian Jacques de Tiège, a pupil of Leon Fleisher, and the world renowned pianist and musicologist Leslie Howard, real icons of piano pedagogy and performing arts, whom he met and frequented during his carrier.

The fraternal friendship that bound Igor Roma to Ad de Roij, co-founder of the “Franz Liszt Festival” in Amsterdam was profound. Thanks to him, he was able to record his CDs and perform in The Netherlands several times.

His concerts were taking place mainly in The Netherlands, but he has also played in Spain, France, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, Malta, South-Africa, China, United States of America, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia as well as Italy.

He has performed with outstanding conductors, such as Stanislaw Skrowacewsky, Reinbert de Leeuw, Roberto Benzi, Ton Koopman, Philippe Herreweghe, Claus Peter Flor, Jaap van Zweden, Josep Pons, Zoltan Kocsis and has collaborated with prestigious international orchestras, such as the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonic, Symphony and Chamber Orchestra of Dutch Radio, the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, the Arnhem Philharmonic Orchestra, the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, the Symphony Orchestra of Bilbao, the National Orchestra of Spain, the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Hungary, the “Giuseppe Verdi” Symphony Orchestra of Milan, the New World Symphony Orchestra of Miami Beach and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

His wide repertoire ranges from Bach to Messiaen and includes lesser-known piano pieces by authors like De Falla, Szymanowsky and Kurtag.

His chamber music activity has also played an important regular role in his life. He has performed with the Brodsky Quartet, the Daniel Kwartet and the Quatuor Danel. He has also played in a trio with violinist Giovanni Battista Fabris and cellist Quirine Viersen as well as with oboist Bart Schneemann and bassoonist Andrea Bressan. He has been for many years a regular guest at the “Peter de Grote” Summer Festival in Groningen.

In 2002, Igor Roma performed in a piano duet at the Lincoln Center in New York with Enrico Pace. Together with Pace and with percussionists Gianluca Carollo and Alessandro Zucchi, he has also played in various Italian and Dutch theaters like the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, where he performed in the presence of Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands, achieving great success both with the audience and the public press.

In June 2001, he recorded his first CD, which includes works by Alkan, Liszt and Prokofiev. Since 2006, this Album has been published on the recording label “Challenge Records” with the title “Romantic pieces for piano”.

In 2009, he recorded a second CD called “Encores”, where he presents an anthology of original piano pieces as well as other pieces reworked by the performer himself.

Roma is often invited to sit on the juries of national and international music competitions, like in the 8th “Franz Liszt” Piano Competition in Utrecht in 2008 and in the subsequent editions of its “International Selection Rounds”.

He has combined his concert activity with an important educational commitment, fulfilled in several conservatoires and music institutions, where he has given piano and chamber music masterclasses.

Igor Roma has been a leading piano teacher at the Conservatoires of Trapani, Adria and Maastricht as well as a regular guest teacher at the Conservatoire of Groningen.

Since 2013 he is a leading piano teacher at the International Piano Academy “Incontri col Maestro” in Imola and since 2021 at the Conservatoire of Music “Arrigo Pedrollo” in Vicenza.