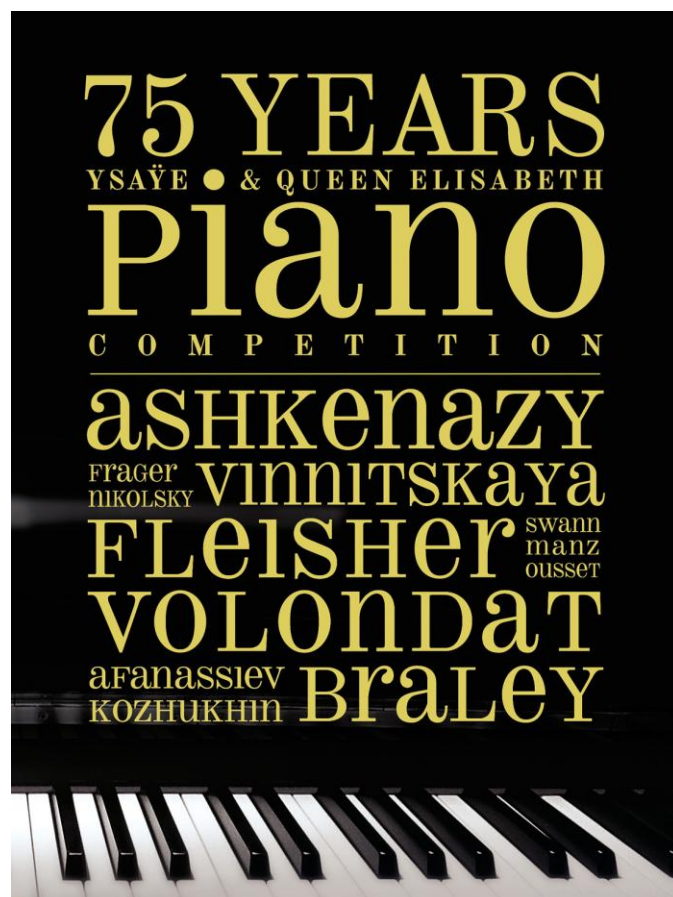


# NEW RELEASE MUSO

## April 2013

- CD1** Pyotr **TCHAIKOVSKY** - Concerto n. 1 in B flat minor op. 23  
Valery **AFANASSIEV** (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1972)  
**Franz LISZT** - Concerto n. 1 in E flat major  
Vladimir **ASHKENAZY** (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1956)  
**Franz LISZT** - Concerto n. 2 in A major  
Pierre-Alain **VOLONDAT** (France, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1983)
- CD2** Sergey **RACHMANINOV** - Concerto n. 2 in C minor op. 18  
Wolfgang **MANZ** (Germany, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize 1983)  
Sergey **RACHMANINOV** - Concerto n. 3 in D minor op. 30  
Andrei **NIKOLSKY** (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1987)
- CD3** Ludwig **VAN BEETHOVEN** - Concerto n. 4 in G major op. 58  
Frank **BRALEY** (France, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1991)  
Johannes **BRAHMS** - Concerto n. 1 in D minor op. 15  
Leon **FLEISHER** (USA, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1952)
- CD4** Johannes **BRAHMS** - Concerto n. 2 in B flat major op. 83  
Denis **KOZHUKHIN** (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 2010)  
Sergey **PROKOFIEV** - Concerto n. 2 in G minor op. 16  
Anna **VINNITSKAYA** (Russia, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 2007)
- CD5** Sergey **PROKOFIEV** - Concerto n. 1 in D flat major op. 10  
Malcolm **FRAGER** (USA, 1<sup>st</sup> prize 1960)  
Fryderyk **CHOPIN** - Concerto n. 1 in E minor op. 11  
Jeffrey **SWANN** (USA, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize 1972)  
Fryderyk **CHOPIN** - Concerto n. 2 in F minor op. 21  
Cécile **OUSSET** (France, 4<sup>th</sup> prize 1956)



National Orchestra of Belgium & deFilharmonie - Franz André, René Defossez, Edo de Waart, Georges Octors, Gilbert Varga, Ronald Zollman, *cond.*

In 2012, the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Eugène Ysaÿe Competition, inaugurated in 1937 on the initiative of Queen Elisabeth of Belgium. That very first competition, devoted to the violin and won by David Oistrakh, was followed in 1938 by the first competition for the piano, which was one by another, equally prestigious, Russian: Emil Gilels!

After an interruption caused by the Second World War, the Competition returned, taking the name of its patron: from now on, it would be known as the Queen Elisabeth Competition. The first piano competition, in 1952, was won by an American whose name would go down in history: Leon Fleisher.

Now a veritable institution, the Competition has for three quarters of a century been one of the most prestigious of its kind and one of the most demanding for its participants. The quality of its international jury, brought together year after year to judge talented young musicians from every corner of the world, is one of its most important assets.

Following the success of the box set devoted to the violin, which was released in 2012, muso has delved in the treasure trove of the Queen Elisabeth Competition's archives once again and put together a de luxe box set of 5 CDs, containing 12 of the most celebrated piano concertos in the repertoire as performed by outstanding laureates, including 9 First Laureates. Almost 60 years separate the performances of **Leon Fleisher** (1952) in Brahms's First Concerto and **Denis Kozhukhin** (2010) in his Second; for the first time on CD, we can now enjoy that incredible evening in 1983 when a young Frenchman, **Pierre-Alain Volondat**, just 20 years of age, triumphed in Liszt's Second Concerto, making his mark on the history of the Competition. Prominent in this selection, too, are those laureates who won a succession of the Competition's First Prizes against the background of the Cold War: the Russians **Vladimir Ashkenazy**, **Valery Afanassiev**, and **Andrei Nikolsky** and the Americans **Malcolm Frager** and **Jeffrey Swann**. This set also allows us to rediscover personalities who made a sensational impact on both audiences and juries: **Cécile Ousset** in 1956 and the emerging talents of **Frank Braley** in 1991, the German pianist **Wolfgang Manz** in 1983, and, more recently, **Anna Vinnitskaya**.

Presented in a luxury book-disc that has been produced in the best possible technical conditions on the basis of archives spanning more than half a century, this box set plunges you into the electric atmosphere of the Brussels Palais des Beaux-Arts (Centre for Fine Arts) on those unforgettable final evenings.

5 CDs box set

Total time: 6h32'42

Digibook (DVD format) / Booklet 40 pages

Text by Michel Stockhem in English, French and Dutch

Live recordings 1952-2010, restored and remastered in 2013

Contact: Olivier Vannieu - Tel. +32 2 524 49 24 - E-mail: olivier@arteverum.com

[www.muso.mu](http://www.muso.mu)

(P) 1952-2010  
Queen  
Elisabeth Competition  
(C) 2013 Off The Records

**muso**

Reference: mu-005





Following its historic box set devoted to the violin, muso has once more delved in the archives of the Ysaÿe Competition (which became the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 1951) and come up with a de luxe book-disc of 5 CDs containing 12 great piano concertos, played by 12 outstanding laureates, including 9 First Laureates. From Fleisher to Kozhukhin, via Ashkenazy, Afanassiev, Braley, Frager, Swann, and Volondat, this box set takes you on a voyage of discovery through 60 years of wonderful musicians!



Vladimir Ashkenazy, 1956



Valery Afanassiev, 1972



Pierre-Alain Volondat, 1983

## Laureates' memories

When I think back to 1952 Brussels the first thing that comes to mind is the warm and gracious dignity of Queen Elisabeth, her readiness to smile and even laugh. The next thing that comes to mind is, with my colleagues, our sequestration at the 'Chapelle'. We all became great friends with a real appreciation of each other's gifts. And the sight of all twelve of us on our knees around a ping pong table, without a net, trying to blow the ball off the table!

Leon Fleisher

I'd participated in the Chopin Competition in Warsaw in 1955, the year before I entered the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 1956, so the rigours of the Competition were no surprise to me as I was used to meeting other young pianists from around the world. What did surprise me however, was the feeling of freedom that I encountered. This was the first trip of my life to a non-communist country, and the atmosphere I experienced, what I saw, and the people I met during the Competition had a tremendously positive impact on me and have remained with me ever since. My most enduring memory of the Queen Elisabeth Competition is therefore not so much about the Competition itself (during which I was delighted but very surprised to be awarded first place), but the unexpected feeling of freedom during my first visit to the West; the sights of Brussels, the friendliness of the Belgian people, and the sense of possibility I felt. It is an experience I shall never forget !

Vladimir Ashkenazy

The very first thing that comes into my mind when I think of the Queen Elisabeth Competition is the deep and lasting friendships I made in the month I spent in Brussels, not only with my own host family, the Veldekens, but also the hosts of friends and colleagues of mine who were also competing, especially the Ansiaus, who were hosting Emanuel Ax, and whom I continue to visit to this day. Then I think of the eight days in the 'Chapelle', the extraordinary intensity, and how fascinating it was – even with my all too young 20 years! – to observe how each of us reacted to the tension. It seems amazing to me now, but I actually was having fun, enjoying the challenge of the 'Concerto imposé' (of which I am sorry to confess that I don't remember a single note), and the sense of being survivors on a desert island. And I can still hear the roar of the audience at the end on my Chopin Concerto, the special passionate enthusiasm of the audience, who followed each contestant with a mixture of a deep love of music on the one hand, and on the other, a partisan support of their favourites that seemed to rival the atmosphere of the World Cup! To be completely honest, I have to add to my list of unforgettable experiences my first 'Moules frites' near the Grand-Place.

Jeffrey Swann

## Also available

### 75 Years Ysaÿe & Queen Elisabeth Violin Competition

In 2012, as part of the celebrations to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ysaÿe Competition and the Queen Elisabeth Competition for the violin, muso released a historic box set of 4 CDs, containing 8 great violin concertos played by 8 laureates whose performances were memorable occasions in the history of the competition. In this sumptuous box set you can follow the first steps on the international scene of Vadim Repin, Nikolaj Znaider, Gidon Kremer, Philippe Hirshhorn, and Miriam Fried, among others.

4 CDs box set – Total time: 4h43'03 – Digibook (DVD format) – Booklet 32 pages in English, French and Dutch  
Live recordings 1967-2005, restored and remastered in 2011

Reference: MU-002 – Bar code: 5425019973025

