

Pianist **Matei Varga** is the 2021 recipient of the Romanian - American Fine Arts Award, conferred by the Romanian government. His artistry has garnered superlative reviews from critics around the world, who have found his performances “magical” (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*), “colorful, vivacious [and] engaging” (*Le Diapason*). Of his latest recording “The Year That Never Was” (Sono Luminus, 2022), *MusicWeb-International* raved: “This is meant to be music making to revive the mood... Mission accomplished!... I can enthusiastically prescribe a course of this joyous disc!” (David McDade); while *The Whole Note*’s Adam Sherkin wrote: “An eclectic, highly personal recording... executed with much joy and a tasteful, rollicking fondness for this personalized set list”.

Mr. Varga is a top prizewinner at several international piano competitions such as “Maria Canals”, “Premio Mozart”, “Ústí nad Labem”, “Cidade do Porto” and “George Enescu”, where he also won the award for the best performance of Enescu’s music. He is a recipient of the Salon de Virtuosi Career Grant in New York and the *Virtuoso* prize at the 2003 Vendome Prize in Lisbon, a recognition given by Elisabeth Leonskaja. In 1994, he was awarded a “High Commendation” by Diana, Princess of Wales.

Matei Varga has appeared as a soloist and recitalist in many of the world’s leading concert halls, among them Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York, Konzerthaus Berlin, Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona, the Romanian Atheneum in Bucharest, Victoria Hall in Geneva, Rebecca Crown Auditorium in Jerusalem, National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing, and the Auditorium du Louvre, Salle Cortot and Salle Gaveau in Paris. In 2002 he was invited by Gian Carlo Menotti to appear at the “Festival dei Due Mondi” in Spoleto, Italy. In 2016 he was chosen by prima ballerina Alina Cojocaru to perform Liszt’s Piano Sonata in Frederick Ashton’s “Marguerite and Armand”, presented during the “Fall for Dance” Festival at City Center (New York).

Mr. Varga has collaborated with conductors such as Otto-Werner Mueller, Elio Boncompagni, Christian Reif, Gabriel Bebeselea, and frequently accompanied the great Romanian soprano Mariana Nicolesco. He has performed with the “George Enescu” Philharmonic, the Romanian National Radio Orchestra, the Hartford Symphony, Orchestre des Nations and many others.

He studied with Ana Pitis, Ioana Minei and Sandu Sandrin at the National University of Music in Bucharest, and with Pavlina Dokovska at Mannes College. He now lives in New York City and is Artistic Director of the Vendome Prize, a piano award described by *Le Figaro* as "the world's most prestigious competition" and currently presented by the College of Performing Arts at The New School.

Mr. Varga's discography includes releases for Naxos, Electrecord, Sono Luminus, AIX Records and Coviello Classics.