

Kun-Woo Paik, piano

Kun-Woo Paik is considered one of the most important pianists of his generation. Born in Seoul, Kun-Woo Paik's first concert was at the age of ten performing Grieg's Piano Concerto with the Korean National Orchestra. At the age of fifteen, Kun-Woo Paik moved to New York to study with Rosina Lhevinne at the Julliard School and with Ilona Kabos in London. Paik is the winner of the Naumburg award and Gold Medallist at the Busoni International Piano Competitions. His international career took off following his first New York appearance, in which he performed complete piano works by Maurice Ravel at the Lincoln Center, and his orchestral debut at the Carnegie Hall.

In 1974, Paik made his European debuts with three consecutive recitals at the Wigmore Hall, London, followed in 1975 by a recital in Berlin's Philharmonie. Since then he has closely collaborated with conductors such as Lorin Maazel, Mariss Jansons, Long Yu, Sir.Neville Marriner, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Jiří Bělohlávek, Dmitri Kitaenko, James Conlon, John Nelson, Eliahu Inbal and Antoni Wit, and performed with orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, St Petersburg Philharmonic, London Symphony, BBC Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, Berlin Symphony, Hungarian National, Oslo Philharmonic, Rotterdam and Warsaw Philharmonic. He is also a regular guest artist of festivals including Berliner Festwochen, Aix-en-Provence, La Roque d'Anthéron, Ravinia, Mostly Mozart, Colmar, Montreux, Dubrovnik, Aldeburgh and Moscow Easter Festival. He was the first Korean artist to be officially invited by the Chinese government in October 2000.

Kun-Woo Paik's numerous recordings include Scriabin, Liszt, complete works for solo piano by Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov's complete piano concerti and Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini (under Vladimir Fedoseyev for BMG). His complete Prokofiev piano concerti recording received both Diapason d'Or of the year and Nouvelle Académie du disque awards in France.

As an exclusive Decca artist and to celebrate JS Bach's year in 2000, he recorded Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's organ works followed by an album of Fauré's Piano works, which won all the major prizes in France. He recently released the complete works for piano and orchestra by Chopin with Antoni Wit and the Warsaw Philharmonic.

Kun-Woo Paik has recorded all thirty-two Sonatas by Beethoven for Decca.

Paik's sense of drama, his wit, mastery of nuance, thoughtfully weighted chords and fleet-fingered virtuosity, all are remarkable. (Rob Cowan, The Independent)

Kun-Woo Paik lives in Paris and is the Artistic Director of the Emerald Coast Music Festival in Dinard, France and was made the "Chevalier de l'ordre des arts et des lettres" by the French Government in 2000.