

"Mariana Popova presented the B-minor Sonata by Franz Liszt with intensity and breathtaking virtuosity. Confident and spirited, she explored the work's sophisticated dynamic range right to its outer limits. The piece and its interpreter were the highlight of this evening's concert." (*Hamburger Abendblatt*)

"An Olympic achievement was Karg and Popova's staging of the Gretchen monologue 'Meine Ruh' ist hin' from Goethe's *Faust*, set to music by Franz Schubert. The contrast between the exciting crescendo of the soul and harrowing *sospirando* was so moving that the enthusiastic audience fought with tears." (*Rhein-Neckar Zeitung*)

"In well contoured colours, Mariana Popova draws much more than just a background for the emerging sound patterns... a musical rosebed full of sweet smells and sensitivity, and determines the success of the concert evening through her pianistic finesse. " (*Weilheimer Tagblatt*)

A special interest in musical dialogue brought German-Bulgarian pianist **Mariana Popova** at an early age to an intensive study of chamber music and song accompaniment alongside her solo career. Mariana Popova's concert activity has taken her to nearly all European countries, China, Russia and the United States. As an accompanist, chamber musician and soloist, she has been invited to the *Summit Music Festival* in New York, the *Aarhus Festival of Contemporary Music* (Denmark), the *Varna Summer Festival* (Bulgaria), the *Heures Musicales de Biot* (France), the *Castelló Festival* (Spain), the *Hamburger Klangwerktagen* and to the *Schwetzingen Music Festival*. In a series of Liederabend recital in Hamburg, which she conceived for the Schumann anniversary in 2010, the pianist performed core works by Robert and Clara Schumann together with eight vocal partners. She has taken part in various CD productions and also made numerous radio and television recordings in Bulgaria (BNT), Germany (NDR, SWR, MDR) and France (Radio France). In the summer of 2012, Mariana Popova was invited by the German Foreign Office to record a CD of song compositions from all the Baltic countries to celebrate the German presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

Mariana Popova studied piano with Evgeni Koroliiov and chamber music with Niklas Schmidt at the *Hochschule für Musik und Theater* Hamburg. At the *Franz Liszt Musikochschule* she studied vocal accompaniment with Karl-Peter Kammerlander. She received significant artistic impulses from teachers like Oxana Yablonskaya, Dalton Baldwin, Bruno Canino, Gernot Kahl and Menahem Pressler.

Among the young pianist's major international successes were prizes at the *Maria Canals International Music Competition* in Barcelona, Spain, the *Köster Classical Chamber Music Competition* and the *Elise Meyer Competition* in Hamburg, and together with soprano Lini Gong at the *Concours international de musique de chambre* in Lyon, France. In 2010, with mezzo-soprano Judith Thielsen, she was awarded the second prize and the special award for contemporary song in the Lied Division of the *International Johannes Brahms Competition* in Pörschach, Austria. Further, Mariana Popova was a fellow of the *Oscar and Vera Ritter Foundation*, the *Budge Foundation*, Yehudi Menuhin's project *Live Music Now* and the French *Schlumberger Foundation*.

Mariana Popova has been a collaborative pianist for vocal masterclasses with Brigitte Fassbaender, Reri Grist, Angela Denoke, Margreet Honig, Edda Moser and Robert Holl. Since 2007, she has been a lecturer for vocal accompaniment at the *Hochschule für Musik und Theater* in Hamburg. In 2013, Mariana was invited to be a guest lecturer at the *Shanghai Conservatory* in China and offer courses in art song performance.

