

Mark Taratushkin is a pianist whose interpretations offer fresh perspectives on familiar repertoire and reflect a deep curiosity for lesser-known musical terrain. Celebrated for his performances of some of the most demanding works in the piano literature — such as **Bartók's Études**, **Prokofiev's concertos and sonatas**, and **Brahms's Paganini Variations** — he draws on the Russian pianistic tradition while shaping his interpretations with personal insight and a precise sense of musical structure.

Born in Ukraine, Mark Taratushkin began his piano studies at the age of five and later enrolled at **Moscow's Central Music School**, where he was mentored by renowned pianists such as **Pavel Nersesyan** and **Dmitry Bashkirov**. His formative years were marked by prizes at several international competitions, including the "**Anton Rubinstein**" Competition in Paris, "**The Muse**" in Santorini, and the "**Yakov Flier**" Competition in Moscow.

Taratushkin continued his musical education at the **Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory** under Professor Natalia Troull, delving deeply into the philosophical and expressive potential of the music of the 20th century. He developed a strong affinity for the innovative compositions of Bartók, Prokofiev, Barber, and Ginastera. This dedication culminated in his debut album, featuring Bartók's Études for Piano, Sz. 72 — described by the composer himself as "virtually unplayable" — alongside select works by Prokofiev. The album led to invitations across Europe and helped establish his reputation as a fearless and original interpreter of modernist repertoire.

In 2013, Taratushkin moved to Germany to pursue further studies — first at the **Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover** under Gerrit Zitterbart, and later at the **Universität der Künste Berlin** with Klaus Hellwig. This period marked the beginning of a steadily growing international career, with performances across Europe and Asia. He has appeared at major venues such as the **Berliner Philharmonie**, **Munich's Gasteig**, and **Bremen's Die Glocke**, as well as at festivals in China, Japan, and Singapore. His concerts have been broadcast on **WDR3**, **Kulturradio Berlin**, and **Bayerischer Rundfunk**.

Immersed in Germany's rich musical traditions, he deepened his engagement with the repertoire of the Viennese classical era and German Romanticism — most notably in the works of Schubert, Brahms, and Beethoven, composers he interprets with structural insight, historical awareness, and a distinct expressive freedom. Notable highlights from this period include a performance of **Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto** alongside trumpeter **David Guerrier** under **Peter Csaba** at the **Santander Music Festival**, and a program of rarely heard chamber works by Enrique Granados at Berlin's Crescendo Festival. His artistic development during this time was supported by scholarships from the Swiss Foundation Clavarte, the Paul Hindemith Foundation, the Ad Infinitum Foundation, the Otilie-Selbach-Redslob Foundation, and Yehudi Menuhin's Live Music Now.

In recent seasons, Taratushkin has increasingly devoted himself to recital programs shaped by thematic and architectural coherence, often centered around a single composer. His concerts are frequently accompanied by spoken introductions, creating a direct dialogue with the audience. His Schubert program "**Der Wanderer**" combined the Four Impromptus, Op. 90, the G major Fantasy, Op. 894, and Liszt's most virtuosic Schubert transcriptions — including Erlkönig and Gretchen am Spinnrade — highlighting contrasting dimensions of Schubertian lyricism and drama. His recital programs frequently feature daunting pianistic milestones: notably, his recent Chopin program, which paired all four Ballades with the complete Études Op. 25 — a combination rarely attempted in a single evening, demanding an unusual level of interpretative intensity and technical command.

Taratushkin's interdisciplinary interests led to a collaboration with artist Ming Wong on **Rhapsody in Yellow – A Lecture Performance with Two Pianos**, a politically charged stage work that blends live music, spoken word, archival footage, and theatrical performance. Premiered at **Steirischer Herbst** and later presented at **Berliner Festspiele**, **SPIELART Munich**, **KunstFestspiele Herrenhausen**, and **Singapore's Esplanade Studios**, the piece reimagines an international piano competition and a ping-pong match as metaphors for Cold War diplomacy. Together with pianist Ben Kim, Taratushkin performs, narrates, and improvises around musical material drawn from George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and the *Yellow River Concerto*, adapted from Xian Xinghai's wartime cantata. The result is a surreal and immersive reflection on cultural identity, myth-making, and the entangled musical legacies of the United States and China.

Alongside his performance career, Taratushkin actively contributes to musical education. Together with his partner Maria Yulin, he founded **Piano Insel** in Berlin, a vibrant educational and cultural hub hosting over one hundred students. Piano Insel has quickly become one of Berlin's most distinguished institutions for piano education, renowned for its professional-level teaching, intimate concert series, and nurturing artistic atmosphere.