

Praised as “technically flawless and impeccably musical” (*International Piano*), Illia Ovcharenko is one of the world’s most celebrated young pianists. He is the 2022 Honens Prize Laureate, embodying Honens’ ideal of The Complete Artist through his technical mastery, perseverance, and intellectual and emotional understanding of music. Besides winning at the Honens International Piano Competition, one of the world’s most prestigious events of its kind, Ovcharenko has received prizes at more than 20 competitions throughout the world. These include, in the last four years, first prize at the *Kissinger Sommer “KlavierOlymp”*, first prize at the *New York International Piano Competition*, second prize at the *Hilton Head International Piano Competition*, first prize at “*Prix du Piano*” *Bern International Competition*, as well as winning *Horowitz International Piano Competition* and obtaining Michelangeli Prize of the *Eppan Piano Academy*.

Ovcharenko has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the Deutsche-Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Israel Philharmonic, Edmonton Symphony, San Antonio Philharmonic, Orchestre National d’Île de France, the Orchestra of La Monnaie, the Toronto Symphony, Sinfonieorchester Liechtenstein, I Pomerrigi Musicali, Calgary Philharmonic, in recital at venues including Carnegie Hall, Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Konzerthaus Berlin, Wigmore Hall in London, Salle Bourgie in Montréal, Koerner Hall in Toronto and Salle Cortot in Paris. He has also been an artist in the prestigious Classeek Ambassador Programme.

Highlights of Ovcharenko’s 2025-26 season include performances at Wigmore Hall in London; Philharmonie de Paris, Klavierfestival “Le Piano Symphonique,” in Lucerne, Switzerland; National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice, Poland; Concertgebouw Amsterdam; Konzerthaus Berlin; Nova Scotia Symphony; and Bravo! Vail Music Festival. He will also perform on tour with the Orchestre National d’Île-de-France and the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine.

The season will also see the release of the debut concerto recording on *Pentatone* label.

His latest recital album, *Whispers & Thunder*, was released on the *Steinway* label and was named as “One of the Best Classical Albums of 2025” by *Gramophone* Magazine and acclaimed by *International Piano* as “splendidly executed and smartly programmed” with Ovcharenko’s playing being described as “iron hands cloaked in mink gloves”. His previous solo album *Litany*, was released on *Discauers*; Classique c’est cool praised Ovcharenko’s “very intelligently constructed program,” and the pianist’s “perfectly mastered technique.” The album also received high praise in *Diapason* and *Pianiste* magazines.

Ovcharenko was born in Ukraine to a computer engineer mother and an athlete father. As a 6 year-old living in Chernihiv, he attended a live performance with his mother of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1. After the concert, he told her that he wanted to be a pianist. At a tender age, he discovered an upright piano sitting in a corner of his house; he started plunking away and began formal piano studies at 9. At the age of 12, he gave his debut recital at the National Philharmonic of Ukraine, in Kyiv.

The following year, Ovcharenko moved to the city to study at the Kyiv Lysenko State Music Lyceum, for gifted musicians. Later he studied with Arie Vardi at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, in Tel Aviv, and at the Hannover Hochschule für Musik, in Germany. At the same time, Illia is a long time recipient at the International Musikakademie Liechtenstein.

Ovcharenko thrives on performing live, feeling as if two souls - his and the composer's - are being united on stage. He feels most at home playing Romantic repertoire. Off the stage, Ovcharenko loves athletics and practices origami.

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