

IVRY GITLIS, violin

Biography



To many he needs no introduction. Israeli violinist Ivry Gitlis was presented with his first violin at the age of five. Bronislaw Huberman heard him play three years later and encouraged him to pursue his musical studies in Europe. The young Gitlis studied with Jacques Thibaud, Georges Enesco and Carl Flesch, in Paris and as a war refugee in London, where he was to make his European debut at the Royal Albert Hall. His first American tour, underwritten by Sol Hurok, paired him with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra and George Szell and the New York Philharmonic.

Ivry Gitlis has performed with the world's finest orchestras: Vienna, Berlin, London, New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Toronto, Israel, Leningrad, Tokyo, Paris, Amsterdam, with leading conductors including Zubin Mehta, Daniel Barenboim, Jascha Horenstein, Michael Tilson Thomas, Eliahu Inbal and Charles Dutoit, to name but a few.

His debut recording, Alban Berg's concerto "To the Memory of an Angel" received the *Grand Prix du Disque*. Subsequent recordings, many of which until their recent re-releases had become sought-after collectors items, have included the concertos of Paganini, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Stravinsky, Bruch, Sibelius, Wienawski and the Bartok Concerto and Solo Sonata for which he received the Best Record of the Year award from the *New York Herald Tribune*.

Although perhaps less widely known as a chamber player, Ivry Gitlis has made music with a wide range of artists over the past few decades from Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, William Primrose, members of the Amadeus and Budapest String Quartets, Isaac Stern and Leonard Rose to Stephen Isserlis, Truls Mork, members of the Hagen Quartet, Gary Hoffman, Mischa Maisky and Martha Argerich, with whom he recorded the Franck and Debussy Sonatas.

Ivry Gitlis is also a renowned pedagogue giving master classes all over Europe and beyond, regularly spending summers at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and in France where he has created memorable festivals. A frequent contributor to the cinema as a composer as well as an actor, he has worked with the likes of Truffaut and Schlöndorff. In 1981 his autobiographical book, *L'Ame et la Corde* was published to unanimous critical acclaim. In 2001 he was one of the artists featured in Bruno Monsiegeon's film, "The Art of the Violin". Tony Palmer's 2004 film on Ivry Gitlis was premiered at the Prague Spring Music Festival where it was heralded by the Oscar-winning director Andrea Anderman as "the best artist's profile I have ever seen". And, most recently, he was honored in 2004 as part of the Festival devoted to great violinists of the 20th century, at the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Based in Paris, Ivry Gitlis performs extensively throughout the world. His triumphant return to the London stage in 1996 after a long absence marked the 50th anniversary of his Wigmore Hall debut and an unforgettable experience for many. From "Gitlis electrifies the Wigmore" (*The Strad*) to "A performance rich in weird and wonderful gestures...staggeringly effective" (*The Independent*) and "From Gitlis they heard only music no praise can be higher" (*The Daily Telegraph*), critics and audience alike seemed to agree on the immense impact of a unique personality.

Plays with the seductive force of Mephistopheles himself

Boston Herald April 27, 1999

It was as if we had never before heard the first Paganini concerto, and **once the first movement came to a close there was a thunderous, lengthy ovation.**

ABC Madrid, January 18, 1997

What so impresses in Gitlis" playing - aside from an **astounding technical capacity** - is his extraordinary way of making every piece he tackles sound fresh, almost as if he has been handed the manuscript still dripping with ink from the composer.

The Strad after Wigmore Hall, London recital of September 1996

This Israeli artist has an ironic wisdom forged from the lifetime of performances and success. Ivry Gitlis **says the essential in a few notes.**

24 Heures Lausanne January 1997

From Gitlis they heard only music. No praise can be higher.

The Daily Telegraph London September 1996

Gitlis is an astonishing player. His facility is amazing as is the palette of colors and breadth of subtle inflections in his articulation. At 77, come August, he **plays with far more vigor than most virtuosi at the beginning of their careers.**

Boston Globe April 29, 1999

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