Ivo Kahánek - Biography

A musician of tremendous emotional power, depth and expressiveness, Ivo Kahánek has gained a reputation as one of the most exciting artists of his generation and is the Czech Republic's most acclaimed pianist. He is universally recognised as one of the foremost interpreters of Romantic piano music and is a particular specialist in Czech repertoire. He possesses a rare gift of creating an immediate and compelling emotional connection with his audiences.

Kahánek came to public attention after winning the Concertino Praga and, in 2004, the Prague Spring International Music Competition. He was subsequently a prize winner at many other competitions (Maria Canals Piano Competition in Barcelona, Vendome Prize in Vienna, Stiftung Tomassoni Wettbewerb in Cologne, Fryderyk Chopin International Piano Competition in Marienbad, and others).

After his successful debuts at the Beethoven Festival in Bonn and the Prague Spring Festival in Prague Kahánek was invited to perform Martinů's *Fourth Piano Concerto* ("Incantations") at the 2007 Proms Festival with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Jiří Bělohlávek. The performance was broadcast live by the BBC as well as the Czech National Radio station “Vltava”. This truly memorable Proms debut is currently available on Deutsche Grammophon as a digital download.

In 2014, Kahánek was selected by Sir Simon Rattle to perform two critically acclaimed concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic. He is only the second Czech pianist after Rudolf Firkušný to perform with this legendary orchestra. Ivo Kahánek performs regularly with the Czech Philharmonic and has also appeared on stage in front of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Wiener Symphoniker, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Glasgow, Essener Symphoniker, WDR Cologne, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Prague SO, Czech Radio SO, Prague Philharmonia, Brno Philharmonic and many others. He has collaborated with some of the world’s greatest conductors, including maestros Semyon Bychkov, Jakub Hrůša, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Rafael Payare, Pinchas Steinberg, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jiří Bělohlávek, Tomáš Netopil, Andrey Boreyko, Libor Pešek or Zdeněk Mácal. A passionate chamber musician, he has worked with other instrumentalists, including violinist Daniel Hope, cellist Alissa Weilerstein, violist Paul Neubauer and the Pavel Haas and Tetzlaff Quartets, or the soprano Martina Janková and tenor, Pavel Černoch.

Ivo Kahánek has already released thirteen CDs on the Supraphon Music label (with which he has an exclusive contract since 2007) of works by Chopin, Dvořák, Janáček, Martinů, Klein, Kabeláč, Francaix, Ibert and more. A recording of songs by Martinů with singers Martina Janková and Tomáš Král was awarded the prestigious Diapason d’Or and the Selection of the month in the Opernwelt and Opera News magazines. His most recent recording of the piano concertos by Dvořák and Martinů, where he is accompanied by the Bamberger Philharmoniker under the baton of Jakub Hrůša, was selected as the recording of the month in the BBC Music Magazine, Choix de Classique HD, and it was also the recording of the week on BBC Radio 3. At the same time it was included in the nominations for the ICMA Award as well as the BBC Music Magazine Award. He also regularly appears on and records for both Czech Radio and Czech Television.

Ivo Kahánek is a graduate of the Janáček Conservatoire in Ostrava, the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.