

ROBERT EDWARD THIES, PIANIST

A pianist of “*unerring, warm-toned refinement, revealing judicious glimmers of power,*” [Los Angeles Times] Robert Edward Thies (pronounced "Theece") is an artist renowned for his consummate musicianship and poetic temperament. He first captured worldwide attention in 1995 when he won the Gold Medal at the Second International Prokofiev Competition in St. Petersburg, Russia. With this victory, Thies became the only American pianist to win first prize in a Russian piano competition since Van Cliburn's famed triumph in Moscow in 1958.

This victory brought accolades from the White House, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Governor Pete Wilson, and Mayor Richard Riordan. The Los Angeles City Council declared February 16, 1996 "*Robert Edward Thies Day,*" and Robert was featured on the July 1996 cover of *Piano and Keyboard* magazine. His win was also announced in the International Herald Tribune, and the Los Angeles Times wrote a feature article, "*Another American Pianist Invades Russia, Successfully.*"

Conductor Jorge Mester hails Robert "*a genius*", and Maestra JoAnn Falletta touted after a recent performance, "*Conducting the Brahms Second Piano Concerto with Robert Thies was one of the most beautiful and deeply satisfying musical experiences of my life.*"

Praised for his "*thoughtful and intensely moving interpretations*" Thies enjoys a diverse career as an orchestral soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. He has already performed forty concerti with orchestras all over the world. In one season alone he performed thirteen different concerti, garnering consistent critical acclaim. He has appeared with such orchestras as the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic, Liepāja Symphony (Latvia), Mexico City Philharmonic, the National Symphony of Mexico, Auckland Philharmonia (New Zealand), Louisville Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony, Virginia Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Pasadena Symphony, and the Naples Philharmonic. His concerts have been broadcast throughout the United States, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Bolivia, Hungary, Mexico, and New Zealand.

Mr. Thies is a frequent recitalist in the United States and abroad, and he is known for his "*sincere*" interpretations of intriguing and delicately balanced programs. He made his South American debut in Cochabamba, Bolivia in 2002, and followed this with a European tour. Under the sponsorship of Community Concerts, he completed a forty-city tour of the United States in 2001. In May 1999, he was honored with a special invitation to perform in the Hermitage Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia, built for Empress Catherine the Great.

A dedicated chamber musician, Thies is highly sought after as a collaborator, and he has shared the stage with many esteemed musicians. He was a founding member of the *Thies Piano Quartet* and the *Pantoum Trio* and has appeared with established ensembles such as the Angeles, Calder, and New Hollywood String Quartets. In Los Angeles he appears regularly on the chamber series Jacaranda and the South Bay Chamber Music Society. He is founder and artistic director of *The Thies Consort* which performs a wide range of works of varying instrumentation and size, thus allowing for innovative and unique programming with musical continuity based on a style, composer, or other concept.

Thies's "grace and unsurpassed lyricism" are in high demand at festivals and special celebrations. In 2002, in conjunction with the Hollywood premiere of Roman Polanski's film *The Pianist*, he performed Wladislaw Szpilman's *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* with the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony. That same year Thies earned national recognition for his collaboration with noted cultural historian and author, Joseph Horowitz, in the Pacific Symphony's *Dvořák in America* festival. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Arnold Schoenberg's death, Thies was invited to Mexico City's *Palacio de Bellas Artes* in 2001 to perform the composer's seldom-heard Piano Concerto with the National Symphony of Mexico. During the fall of 1997 Mr. Thies worked alongside the distinguished Polish composer Henryk Górecki in the United States premiere of his *Sonata for Piano*. In a commemorative gesture just after Gorecki's recent passing, Thies's performance was broadcast on KUSC. Thies has performed at the music festivals of Ravinia, Aspen, Sedona, Cape May, Music Academy of the West, as well as the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival.

In Los Angeles, Thies has worked and recorded with many of the top studio musicians, and has also worked with film composers James Newton Howard, James Horner, Danny Elfman, Aaron Zigman, and Lalo Schifrin. He has premiered and recorded works written for him, such as Stu Phillip's *Variations for Piano and Orchestra*, and Kevin Kaska's *Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra*. His playing can be heard most significantly on Mychael Danna's score to the Anthony Hopkins film, *Fracture*. In 2010 he was invited by Grammy winning conductor, Lucas Richman, to join a full symphony orchestra on a North American tour of *Star Wars in Concert*. Thies's recordings can be found on the Centaur, Albany, and Golden Tone labels. He has recorded and premiered many works by the Austrian composer, Gernot Wolfgang. In February 2006 Robert released his debut solo recording *Live in Recital*. He has done multiple recordings for Yamaha Disklavier featuring the music of Prokofiev, Ravel, Brahms, and Beethoven. And in June 2006, he recorded a crossover improvisational CD *Difference* with Croatian flutist, Damjan Krajacic.

Mr. Thies is also sought after as a master class teacher, chamber music coach, lecturer, and adjudicator across the globe. From 2003-07, he joined the faculty of the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, to work beside his former teacher, Harold Heiberg, an authority on German art song. There Thies coached singers and pianists, and focused primarily on the works of Brahms, Wolf, Strauss, Schubert, and Schumann. He has also worked as a repetiteur for productions of Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*, and Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*.

Born in New Jersey, Thies makes a home in Los Angeles. His teachers have included Robert Turner and Daniel Pollack, both protégés of the legendary Russian pedagogue Madame Rosina Lhevinne, and the great pianist Josef Lhevinne. Mr. Thies is a Steinway artist. For more information, visit Robert Edward Thies at: www.robertthies.org.