



JONATHAN BISS

Piano

Pianist Jonathan Biss is recognized globally for his “impeccable taste and a formidable technique” (The New Yorker). Praised by The Boston Globe as “an eloquent and insightful music writer,” Biss published his fourth book, ‘Unquiet: My Life with Beethoven’, in 2020. The book was the first Audible Original by a classical musician and one of Audible’s top audiobooks of the year.

Throughout the 2024-25 season, Biss will continue his ongoing project pairing Schubert's last sonatas with new compositions by Alvin Singleton, Tyson Gholston Davis, and Tyshawn Sorey, including performances at the Frederic Chopin Society in St. Paul, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Meany Center in Washington and more. He appears with the Boston Symphony led by Xian Zhang, BBC Symphony led by Jakub Hrusa, Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, and the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. Biss will also join the Doric String Quartet for dates in Denmark before going on to perform with Liza Ferschtman, Malin Broman, and Antoine Lederlin in Madrid, Helsinki, and throughout the Netherlands.

Biss has appeared as a soloist with some of the world's foremost orchestras, including the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics, Boston Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw, London Symphony and more. He has served as the Co-Artistic Director of the Marlboro Music School and Festival alongside pianist Mitsuko Uchida since 2018. He served on the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music for ten years and has been a guest professor at schools such as the Guildhall SOMAD and the New England Conservatory of Music. As author of ‘Unquiet: My Life with Beethoven’, he examines music and his own life's journey through the lens of Beethoven's last piano sonatas.

In 2015, Biss embarked on a groundbreaking journey with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, launching the Beethoven/5 commissioning project, which has yielded a collection of five new piano concerti, each written by a distinguished composer in response to one of Beethoven's iconic works. In April of 2024, Orchid Classics released the first volume of the recorded series, pairing Beethoven’s fifth piano concerto, the ‘Emperor’, together with its companion work, ‘Gneixendorfermusik: Eine Winterreise’, by lauded composer Brett Dean, recorded with the Swedish Radio Symphony under the baton of David Afkham. The second volume of the series releases in October 2024 and features the commissioned concerto by Sally Beamish, ‘City Stanza’s, paired with Beethoven's piano concerto no. 1. The three subsequent volumes will include works by Caroline Shaw, Timo Andres, and Salvatore Sciarrino with releases planned through 2026.

Over the course of his career, Biss has collaborated with a wide range of esteemed musicians, from Mark Padmore to Midori. In the 2023-24 season, he joined the critically acclaimed Brentano String Quartet and double bassist Joseph Conyers for a tour of Beethoven's late works and Schubert's Trout Quintet. In the spring of 2024, Biss joined forces with fellow pianist Mitsuko Uchida to highlight Schubert's four-hand piano music in a series of concerts at Carnegie Hall, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Princeton University, and Schenectady's Union College, following an international tour to London, Dublin and at the Salzburg, San Sebastian and Gstaad Festivals. An advocate of newly commissioned works, Biss most recently collaborated with composers Alvin Singleton, Tyshawn Sorey, and Tyson Gholston Davis for his Schubert commissioning project, which he presented at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, San Francisco Performances, and the Ravinia Festival in the 2023-24 season.



Coinciding with the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth in 2020, Biss recorded the composer's complete piano sonatas, and offered insights to all 32 landmark works via his free, online Coursera lecture series 'Exploring Beethoven's Piano Sonatas'. In March 2020, Biss gave a virtual recital presented by 92NY, wherein he performed Beethoven's last three piano sonatas for an online audience of more than 280,000 people. In 2024, Biss participated in Princeton University Concert's Healing Through Music Series, appearing alongside author Adam Haslett for a panel discussion on anxiety, depression, and creativity.

Biss is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Leonard Bernstein Award, the Andrew Wolf Memorial Chamber Music Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, and a Gilmore Young Artist Award. His albums for EMI won the Diapason d'Or de l'Année and Edison awards. He was an artist-in-residence on American Public Media's Performance Today and was the first American chosen to participate in the BBC's New Generation Artist program.

Biss is a third-generation professional musician; his grandmother is Raya Garbousova, one of the first famous female cellists (for whom Samuel Barber composed his Cello Concerto), and his parents are violinist Miriam Fried and violist/violinist Paul Biss. Growing up surrounded by music, Biss began his piano studies at age six, with his first musical collaborations alongside his mother and father. He studied with Evelyne Brancart at Indiana University and Leon Fleisher at the Curtis Institute of Music.