

Evgeny Kissin makes long-awaited return to Cleveland on April 24

by Mike Telin



After an absence of nearly 25 years, pianist Evgeny Kissin will return to Severance Music Center to perform a solo recital on Sunday, April 24 at 7:30 pm.

The program will feature J.S. Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in d* (arr. Carl Tausig), Mozart's *Adagio in b*, K. 540, Beethoven's *Sonata No. 31 in A-flat*, Op. 110, and seven of Chopin's *Mazurkas* as well as the *Andante Spianato* and *Grande Polonaise*

Brillante in E-flat, Op. 22. Tickets are available [online](#).

Since being recognized as a child prodigy at the age of six, [Evgeny Kissin](#) has enjoyed a celebrated international career as a recitalist, soloist with orchestras, and recording artist.

But Kissin's artistic interests extend beyond the keyboard. He has a strong interest in Russian and Yiddish poetry — three CDs of his recitations of classical and contemporary Yiddish poetry have been issued by the Forward Association.

As a writer, his autobiography *Memoirs and Reflections* was published in 2018. His book of poems, short stories, and translations in Yiddish, *A Yiddisher Sheygets*, was published in 2019, and his book of short stories and diaries in Yiddish, *Bloyz etlekhe minut gang* ("Only a few minutes by foot"), was released in 2021.

As a composer, Kissin's *String Quartet* (2016) was recorded by the Kopelman Quartet on Nimbus Records and received its UK premiere in 2019 by the Endellion Quartet.

Kissin graciously agreed to answer questions by email.

Mike Telin: You're presenting a great program, which you are touring in North America and Europe. How did you decide to include these pieces?

Evgeny Kissin: My tastes are very broad, so when I am thinking about a new programme, I am just going through the many pieces I would like to play and thinking which ones would sound well together and make a good programme. This was the case with this programme as well. By the way, I've played it not only in Europe, but also in Armenia, Israel, Japan and South Korea.

MT: It appears from your website that Cleveland is the first stop on a very long tour. Is the first performance more difficult?

EK: The very first performance of a brand new programme is more difficult, but if I have already played it dozens of times, the first performance on a new tour is not more difficult.

MT: How do you keep your performances fresh during a long tour?

EK: I don't do anything special to keep them fresh, as you say. I think they sound "fresh" simply because I love the music I play.

MT: How does it feel to be able to play in-person concerts again?

EK: I have never done any not-in-person concerts, and I have been playing in-person ones for more than a year already. Of course, when that happened, I was truly happy.

MT: Did the lockdown change you in any way?

EK: No, I do not think so. In any case, I didn't notice any changes in myself because of the lockdown.

MT: Congratulations on all of your successes and have safe travels to Cleveland.

EK: Thank you very much.

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