



The singular, compelling artistry of pianist Thomas Labé has been embraced by audiences and critics alike the world over. His 1987 debut at New York's Carnegie Hall (as First Prize winner of the *Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition*) was singled out by *The New York Times* as "the most interesting among the week's debutantes." He has also been praised by the same publication for "moments of great beauty between thunderous outbursts."

A subsequent New York appearance caused *The New York Post* to run the headline "A Pianist of Virtuoso Caliber" over an exuberant review. His engagements have included appearances as soloist with numerous ensembles including the Chattanooga and Houston Symphony Orchestras (as First Prize winner of the *Ima Hogg/Houston Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition*) and in recitals in such prestigious venues as Chicago's Ravinia Festival and Dame Myra Hess concert series, the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall (Troy, NY), at Washington University in St. Louis, the Staatstheater Darmstadt (Germany),

*Midem classique* (France), KHS Concert Hall in Taipei (Taiwan) and the *International Piano Festival Monterrey* (Mexico). Along with his pianist wife Hyunsoon Whang, he shared the unique honor of being invited by world famous pianist Alexis Weissenberg to premiere and record Weissenberg's original two piano accompanied score for the surrealistic musical *Nostalgie*. The work was premiered at the Staatstheater Darmstadt and recorded for the Arkadia label.

Thomas Labé's growing discography of internationally released recordings have garnered exceptional praise in such diverse publications as *The Washington Post*, *Gramophone* magazine, *American Record Guide*, *CD Review* (U.K.) and *The Age* (Australia). His debut release, *The Virtuoso Johann Strauss* (Dorian 80102), received a Best of the Year citation from the editors of *H&B Recordings Direct*. His most recent release, a recording of piano works by American composer Howard Hanson for the Naxos label (8.559047) was lauded in *Classics Today*: "Thomas Labé plays as if his very life depended on it, totally in command, completely aware of the vital 'ebb and flow' of the music. The recorded sound is just short of demonstration caliber, too. All the pluses add up to a release that simply must be heard." He has also recorded chamber music with acclaimed violinist Rachel Barton-Pine, and their pairing in works of Liszt for the Dorian label (90251) was awarded an "A+" for artistic quality by *Audio* magazine which remarked: "Thomas Labé accompanies with great sensitivity and, just as often, with exceptional virtuosity. His playing in the *Grand Duo Concertant*, one of the most difficult pieces of its kind, is bold and authoritative. Labé's solo rendition of Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*, which has to compete with recordings by every prominent pianist, is well interpreted and brilliantly executed." *The Strad* noted that "you will have to go a long way to hear any of this material better played." Labé's recordings are found with great frequency on the play lists of classical music stations the world over and as a recording industry professional, he is a voting member of The Recording Academy, taking part in the nomination and voting process for the *Grammy Awards*.

As a scholar he is involved in exploration of the piano repertoire, and has examined manuscripts and original documents of Schumann, Grieg (in Bergen, Norway), Liszt (in New York and Weimar, Germany), J.S. Bach (at Yale University and the British Library) and Howard Hanson (resulting in a world premiere recording of his piano works). His first publication as editor-in-chief, a landmark new edition of the Schumann Piano Concerto, was issued by Alfred Publishing Company in March 2003. It is the first critically revised two-piano score to be based on examination of the autograph manuscript (which until recently had been held in private hands) and the composer's own copy of the first printed edition.

He is currently Professor of Piano in the Department of Music at Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma.