

OLIVIER GARDON

Pianist

Concerts reviews

"Hommage à Debussy", Salzburg, August 2010

"[...] Debussy's *Images* by Olivier Gardon, [...] a musical high point!"

Karl Winkler – DREHPUNKTKULTUR

"Here's a pianist who paradoxically but undeniably combines poetic playing and fingers of steel."

Clarendon – LE FIGARO

"It is sheer pleasure listening to him play. There are no spectacular effects, just a beautiful sound palette, inspiration, and lyricism combined with virtuosity, supple playing, subtlety and musicality to produce a harmonious, coherent, logical and amazingly well-structured whole, an accomplishment serving Prokofiev's beautiful but demanding Concerto N°3."

J.V.L. – LE COURRIER DE GAND

"Mr. Gardon's playing gave particular pleasure because it was full-bodied, clear, clean and refreshingly un sentimental."

R. Ericson – NEW YORK TIMES

"Olivier Gardon, a great pianist."

D. Aronowicz – LE JOURNAL D'ISRAËL

"Olivier Gardon revives the art of piano playing in France!"

Claude Samuel – LE POINT

"Olivier Gardon or The Triumph of Music ...

All useless effects have been banned and replaced with soulfulness. The technical challenges are perfectly mastered so that listeners may focus on the essence of the musical message."

Philippe Depetris – NICE-MATIN

"His playing is supported by technical and musical mastery, power and rhythm and demonstrates his command of the sound palette, from purely technical movements to restrained poetic lyricism to dramatic pianistic gestures."

SALZBURGER TAGBLATT

"He ranks among those great pianists who remain regrettably discreet."

X. Lacavalerie – TELERAMA

" ... Olivier Gardon's noble and intense style..."

LA CROIX

"His playing was admirably masterful be it in terms of form, emotion or virtuosity. The nuance of his music perfectly conveyed his emotions. In short, he gave a beautiful rendition of Grieg's Concerto. The wonderful pianist, Olivier Gardon, and the excellent conductor, Uri Segal, made for a superb concert."

NICE-MATIN

"Olivier Gardon's touch is beautiful, his playing is crystal-clear and he fully masters the art of using all the "colours" of the piano."

LA VOIX DU NORD

"Olivier Gardon gave us a convincing rendition of Prokofiev's sonata N°7, and was heartily applauded by Sviatoslav Richter himself... Olivier Gardon's evocative rhythm and colourful tones certainly carry over to the audience."

Alfred Hoffman – CONTEMPORANUL BUCAREST

Astonishing debut and clearly Olivier Gardon, who has a style all his own, can be counted among the elite."

LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH

Grand Prix Marguerite Long 1973

"The Marguerite Long competition featuring the exceptionally gifted Olivier Gardon ..."

Bernard Gavoty

"Throughout the competition, Olivier GARDON demonstrated his strong stage presence, his torrential sensitiveness, his ability to work the keyboard like a sculptor giving shape to living material... A highly colourful artist."

J. Thuilleux – LE FIGARO

Concours Reine Elisabeth 1975

"Olivier Gardon made a wonderful impression with his elegance, ease, refined touch, (...) and his style. (...) He can be counted among the few candidates who don't mistake effusiveness for expressiveness."

J. Stehman – LE SOIR

Journée FRANZ LISZT Festival RADIO-FRANCE Montpellier

"Olivier Gardon's style is confident, sincere and sensitive."

J. Longchamp – LE MONDE

"No objections to the technical feats performed by Olivier Gardon, in superb form, ..."

R. Tellard – LA CROIX

"... the excellent Olivier Gardon..."

J. Drillon – LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR

Prague Spring Festival

"The Prague Chamber Orchestra played Mozart's last concerto with a remarkable soloist, the young but already famous French pianist Olivier Gardon. What a wonderful second movement!"

Svobodne Slovo

Concert in Singapore

"Olivier Gardon, a world-class pianist..."

Concert in Cannes with the Orchestre PACA

"Olivier Gardon, a magnificent pianist, the torch-bearer of the French school from Paris to Tokyo, from Nice to Salzburg, provided a superb opening to the concert with Mozart's poetic, bold and sublime Concerto N°22. He gave a thoroughly convincing rendition of Ravel's concerto by highlighting all the work's facets, hidden emotion and cascades of devilish arpeggios."

Aurore Busser – NICE-MATIN

Concert in Salzburg (About Prokofiev's Concerto N°3)

"Olivier Gardon showed such powerful dynamism that he managed to revive the provocative nature that originally characterised the Concerto."

Peter Cosse

Concert in Montevideo

"Olivier Gardon took a transcendental approach to Schumann's Concerto, with his clear yet subdued touch, his great musicality and his full technical and stylistic mastery of the work. Olivier Gardon gave an ideal rendition."

Julio Novao

RECORDINGS REVIEWS

Johannes BRAHMS – Sonata in F minor N°3

Variations and fugue on a theme by Handel

"Since he won prizes in the Marguerite Long and Reine Elisabeth competitions some thirty years ago, Olivier Gardon has managed, without fanfare or ostentation, to win the hearts of music-lovers through a few well-produced recordings. This rendition of Brahms is perfectly in line with his previous releases of Liszt and Vierne, and although these works are the most frequently recorded and Brahms' most difficult pieces, Olivier Gardon's endeavour is a clear success. He starts the *Sonata in F minor* with poise and the first movement develops majestically until the beautifully ethereal passage which marks the climax of the movement. The terrifying *andante*, with its dark final passage, is smooth and fluid. The rest is built

on rich carefully sculpted moods-the *intermezzo* is remarkable. The *Handel Variations* exude imperial poise. Olivier Gardon follows their sinuous course with aplomb and loyalty while preserving the warmth and tenderness of the music."

Etienne Moreau – DIAPASON

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

The last three sonatas – opus 109, 110, 111

" After recording a great number of rare pieces – such as Louis Vierne's complete piano works, some of Vincent d'Indy's compositions for the cello and the piano, the songs of the Groupe des Six (Auric, Durey, Milhaud, etc.) with texts by Jean Cocteau – Olivier Gardon now takes on Beethoven's monumental last three sonatas. It is hardly surprising that, Olivier Gardon, who is past forty years old, should give us a refined version of Beethoven's last pianistic testament, highlighting its intimate and secretive nature and the euphoria which underpins each note and shatters the traditional mould of the sonata. Using his amazingly multifarious palette (the staccatos of the andante in opus 109, or the magnificent full-bodiedness of the nostalgic theme of the moderato in opus 10), he tames the wildness, and reins in the playful jubilation, the meditative moods and the virtuoso excesses of the piece... His elegance is all French (especially the fugal interludes!), his impetuosity romantic, and his expressiveness deeply Beethovenian."

Xavier Lacavalerie – TELERAMA

Louis VIERNE – The piano works (2 CD)

"The complete piano works of the composer best known for his genius as an organ player are revealed through the performance of an exceptional musician. All of you who love romantic and strongly expressive piano pieces should immediately purchase this recording. It is a major musical event. Olivier Gardon is a pianist of the first water [...] both a virtuoso with unlimited resources and a poet whose expressiveness ranges from the most powerful to the most sensitive."

Harry Halbreich – CRESCENDO

"Gardon responds to the many moods and tangled technical requirements of the Parisian composer. True to French *sensibilité*, he sculpts clear formal patterns, especially in the earlier works so strongly swayed by Chopin such as the opus 7 pieces, or the somewhat coquettish *Suite Bourguignonne*. But Gardon's artistry extends to the dark hues and loftier architecture of the later opus numbers, those scores written during the war years, despite illness and depression, Vierne enjoyed his artistic zenith. Gardon evokes a gladdening panoply of pianistic colors, relishes each [...]"

J.F. Weber – FANFARE

ALKAN – The chamber music

"Amazing! [...] Such was my impression as I listened to D-S Kang, Y. Chiffolleau and, above all, the pianist O. Gardon, the very backbone of the recording. "

Jean Hamon – REPERTOIRE

"We love it!"

Paul Meunier – TELERAMA

Modest MUSSORGSKY – Pictures at an exhibition

"He is able to be epic, playful and sombre and to conjure up pictures and stories... while remaining intangible and simple when the narrative is meant to be heavy and repetitive [...] An authentic and convincing Mussorgskian programme by a non-Slavonic pianist.";

Pierre-E. Barbier – DIAPASON

"[...] Olivier Gardon musters all the virtuosity he is well-known for... But beyond the virtuosity, the listener is charmed by his poetry. More than power, colour and feeling are what makes his playing so unique."

A.P. – NICE-MATIN

Franz LISZT

"What a beautiful programme this difficult music makes... Olivier Gardon has opted for evocativeness and dreaminess, which is perfectly adapted to *Bagatelle* without tonality or to the nightmarish atmosphere of *Czardas Macabre*.

The *2nd Ballad* is given the same sensitive and luminous treatment [...]

A complete success."

Etienne Moreau – DIAPASON

"Olivier Gardon fully controls his tone, removing any unnecessary glitter while preserving substance. It's as though all the different shades of grey were being laid out before our eyes, in *Nuages* of course, but also in *Unstern* or the two versions of *La Lugubre Gondola* . "

Alain Cochard – REPERTOIRE