

ORLI SHAHAM  
2022-2023 Season Biography

A consummate musician recognized for her grace, subtlety and brilliance, Orli Shaham has established an impressive international reputation as one of today's most gifted pianists. Hailed by critics on four continents, Ms. Shaham is in demand for her prodigious skills and admired for her interpretations of both standard and modern repertoire. *The New York Times* called her a "brilliant pianist," *The Chicago Tribune* referred to her as "a first-rate Mozartean" in a performance with the Chicago Symphony, and London's *Guardian* said Ms. Shaham's playing at the Proms was "perfection."

Orli Shaham has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Nashville, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego and Utah symphony orchestras; and internationally with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Bilbao Symphony, Filarmonica della Scala, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic, Orchestra della Toscana, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de Lyon, Stockholm Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and the Taiwan Philharmonic. A frequent guest at summer festivals, she has performed at Amelia Island, Aspen, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Bravo Vail, Caramoor, La Jolla, Mostly Mozart, Music Academy of the West, Orcas Island, Peninsula, Ravinia, Spoleto, Sun Valley, Tanglewood, and Verbier music festivals.

Ms. Shaham has given recitals in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia at such renowned concert halls as Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Chicago's Symphony Hall, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Frankfurt's Alte Oper, the Herkulesaal in Munich and City Recital Hall in Sydney, and has worked with many eminent conductors including Sir Neville Marriner, Sir Roger Norrington, Eric Jacobsen, Steven Sloane, Joshua Weilerstein, Christopher Hogwood, David Robertson, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Leonard Slatkin, Robert Spano, Jaap Van Zweden, Gerard Schwarz, Nicholas McGegan, Hans Graf and Jacques Lacombe among others. In performance she has collaborated with the pianists Emanuel Ax, Joseph Kalichstein, Jon Kimura Parker and Marc-Andre Hamelin, the cellist Lynn Harrell, the violinists Gil Shaham (her brother) and Phillip Setzer, and the sopranos Christine Brewer and Michelle DeYoung, among many others.

Highlights in the 2022-23 season include the world premiere of a concerto written for her by David Robertson with the Orlando Philharmonic; *Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes?* by John Adams with the Finnish Radio Symphony; Beethoven's "Triple" Concerto with Pacific Symphony; performances with the Fort Wayne, Milwaukee, and Chataqua symphonies and recitals in St. Louis, Cape Cod and Bowdoin, Maine. She is in her 15<sup>th</sup> season as the Artistic Director for Pacific Symphony's chamber music series in Costa Mesa, California. She is a featured performer, as well as host, on each of the chamber

recitals throughout the series. In 2021 she gave the world premiere performance of the chamber work by Margaret Brouwer commissioned by Pacific Symphony, "Parallel Isolations" with musicians from the symphony.

In 2022, she was named the first Artist-In-Residence at Vancouver Symphony (USA). Her activities in that role include performing Schumann's Piano Concerto with the orchestra and curating and performing in chamber music concerts with members of the VSO.

In 2022, as part of her multi-year, multi-disc Mozart project, Orli Shaham released Volumes 2 and 3 of the complete Mozart piano sonatas on the Canary Classics label. "Shaham's skills are nothing short of awe inspiring," hailed *Take Effect Reviews*. Volume 1 was released in 2020, and the remaining three volumes are released in 2023.

Ms. Shaham's Mozart recording project kicked off in 2019 with the release on Canary Classics of piano concertos K.453 and K.491 with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, David Robertson conducting. "Orli Shaham and David Robertson are at-one interpretatively and the SLSO members are stylish and sympathetic confreres," praised Colin Anderson of *Classical Source* who also selected the album as "The Editor's Choice".

Other recent highlights include two solo recitals at Kaufman Music Center's Merkin Hall, an appearance on the highly celebrated concert series "What Makes It Great" with Rob Kapilow, performances with the Grand Rapids Symphony (Marcelo Lehninger conducting), the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (Jader Bignamini conducting), and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (Ken Selden conducting), as well as a performance with the Los Angeles Philharmonic performing John Adams' *Grand Pianola Music* (conducted by the composer). She also made appearances at Kaufman Music Center's unique 'Musical Storefronts' series in 2021 and 2022, performing in recitals with the composer and violinist Caroline Shaw and the violinist Deborah Buck.

Celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Leonard Bernstein's birth over the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons, Ms. Shaham joined the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Orlando Philharmonic, China NCPA Orchestra, Bochumer Symphoniker, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and San Diego Symphony for performances of Bernstein's Symphony No. 2 *Age of Anxiety*.

In addition to her Mozart recording project, Ms. Shaham's discography includes her acclaimed album, "Brahms Inspired", a 2-CD set released in 2015 of new works by Brett Dean, Avner Dorman, and Bruce Adolphe alongside works of Brahms and his compositional forefathers. *The New York Times* praised Ms. Shaham's "beautiful performances" on the recording, calling it "a treasurable album." The St. Louis Post-

Dispatch stated that the album "takes the listener on an intellectual as well as a musical journey" and cited Ms. Shaham's "musical intelligence and integrity."

Ms. Shaham's other recordings include her performance of John Adams' *Grand Pianola Music* with the pianist Marc-André Hamelin and the San Francisco Symphony, with the composer conducting, featured on the SFSO album "Absolute Jest". *Arts Desk's* Graham Rickson raved, "Pianists Orli Shaham and Marc-André Hamelin dazzle..." In 2014, Orli Shaham released "American Grace", an album of piano music by John Adams and Steven Mackey featuring the recorded premiere of Mackey's *Stumble to Grace* (written especially for Ms. Shaham) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, David Robertson conducting. Brian Wigman of *Classical.net* praised the album as having "nuance to the playing, and a sense of grace and poetry." Composer John Adams himself wrote of Ms. Shaham's collaboration with Jon Kimura (Jackie) Parker on his two-piano work *Hallelujah Junction*, "any composer should be so lucky to receive such a reading as Orli and Jackie have done," and the French magazine *Pianiste* praised the CD, saying "this album could well propel [Shaham] to the forefront of the world stage." The previous year, Ms. Shaham released the CD "Nigunim - Hebrew Melodies", recorded with her brother, the violinist Gil Shaham. The album features showpieces by Ernest Bloch, Joseph Achron, and Leo Zeitlin as well as a newly commissioned work by Avner Dorman. She and Gil Shaham have collaborated on several additional recordings including "Dvorák for Two" on Deutsche Gramophone, an all-Prokofiev disc ("As fine a recording of the violin and piano music of Prokofiev as has ever been made by one of the finest violinist and pianist teams of the last ten years." *Barnes&Noble.com*), and "Mozart in Paris" featuring Mozart's Six Sonatas, Op. 1.

Founded in 2010, Orli Shaham's interactive concert series for young children, 'Orli Shaham's Bach Yard', is recognized by parents, media and the music community as a significant force in music education and entertainment for children age pre-K to early elementary. The wildly popular series is included in *New York Magazine's* "Best of New York" list, and has been cited as "magical" and "a terrific family event" in the press. The concert programs provide hands-on activities with musical instruments, concepts and concert performances that promote good listening skills, and feature chamber music performances by professional musicians with Ms. Shaham as host and pianist. Orli Shaham's Bach Yard has been presented by Kaufman Music Center and 92nd Street Y in New York, Princeton University Concerts in New Jersey, the Aspen Music Festival, and Rochester Philharmonic, and in Los Angeles and St. Louis. Orli Shaham's Bach Yard regularly collaborates with highly acclaimed musicians and ensembles including Sō Percussion, WindSync, Rolston String Quartet, the Westerlies, and Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect.

In 2020, Orli Shaham's Bach Yard and Kaufman Music Center collaborated to create a 10-episode video series called "Playdates". Each interactive video introduces musical concepts, instruments, performances, and the experience of concert-going to a global audience of children and their families.

In addition to her activities on stage, Ms. Shaham frequently gives master classes and has served on the jury of numerous piano competitions, including the Cliburn International, Honens International, New York International, Sydney International, and Virginia Waring International piano competitions. Committed to music education, Orli Shaham serves as Chair of the Board of Trustees of Kaufman Music Center through 2023, which includes Merkin Hall, Special Music School, and the Lucy Moses School, New York's largest community music school. Ms. Shaham also serves as the Chair of The Advisory Board to the Lucy Moses School.

Driven by a passion to bring classical music to new audiences, Ms. Shaham has maintained an active parallel career as a respected broadcaster, music writer and lecturer. She is Co-host and Creative for NPR's "From the Top", the nationally broadcast radio program featuring performances and conversations with talented teenage musicians, hosting several episodes each season since 2018. She also served as the host of America's Music Festivals in 2012 and 2013, a radio program nationally broadcast to over 100 stations. From 2005-2008 she was host of "Dial-a-Musician," a feature she created especially for The Classical Public Radio Network. The concept of the program was to enhance listeners' experiences of music and musicians by directing listeners' questions about classical music to internationally renowned musicians, calling them on the phone to discuss the topic.

Ms. Shaham is on the piano and chamber music faculty at The Juilliard School. She has taught music literature at Columbia University, contributed articles to *Piano Today*, *Symphony*, *Musical America*, *Playbill*, NPR's 'Deceptive Cadence' blog, and was artist in residence on National Public Radio's Performance Today.

Orli Shaham was recognized early for her exceptional talents. She received her first scholarship for musical study from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation at age five to study with Luisa Yoffe at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem. By age seven, she traveled to New York with her family to begin study with Nancy Stessin, and became a scholarship student of Herbert Stessin at The Juilliard School a year later. She won the Gilmore Young Artist Award and the Avery Fisher Career Grant, two prestigious prizes given to further the development of outstanding talent. In addition to her musical education at the Juilliard School, Orli Shaham holds a bachelor's degree in history from Columbia University and pursued a master's degree in musicology from Columbia. Orli

Shaham is married to conductor David Robertson, and has two stepsons Peter and Jonathan, and twin sons Nathan and Alex.

Orli Shaham has been a Steinway Artist since 2003.

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