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Classical Music News of the Week, January 15, 2012

Telarc Signs Venezuelan-American Pianist Vanessa Perez - First Release Will Feature Chopin's Preludes



The Venezuelan-American pianist Vanessa Perez "returns home" with a recording of Chopin's *Preludes* on Telarc, due for release May 8, 2012 in the U.S. and April 10, 2012 in Europe/UK.

"The idea of recording all the Chopin Preludes came to me one night as I was playing them at home this past January," said Perez from her home in New Jersey. "Chopin brings me back to my childhood [in Venezuela]. It connects me to every possible emotion, and to so many memories. It is music I have always loved, and that reminds me how truly blessed I am to be a pianist."

Perez debuted at age eleven playing Grieg's *Piano Concerto* with Orquesta Sinfonica Municipal under the direction of Carlos Riazuelo in Caracas; and was later awarded the Jose Felix Ribas Prize from the President of Venezuela in 1998, the highest honor for a young performer based on their contribution to the artistic enhancement of the country.

Her studies began in Venezuela with Luminita Duca and then in the US with Claudio Arrau, Ena Bronstein, Daniel Epstein and Rosalina Sackstein. At the age of 17, she was awarded a full scholarship by the Royal Academy of Music (London) to study with Christopher Elton. Thereafter she continued her studies at the Italian Accademia Pianistica Incontri Col Maestro in Imola with pianists Lazar Berman, and Franco Scala and later completed postgraduate work at Yale University with Hungarian pianist Peter Frankl.

Perez has performed frequently across the Americas and Europe, including at Puerto Rico's Casals Festival with the Orquesta de La Juventud Simon Bolivar and Conductor Diego Matheuz,

Berliner Symphoniker, tour in Latin America with conductor Eduardo Marturet in Germany with conductor John Axelrod and the Luzerner Sinfonie Orchester and in Caracas with the Orquesta de la Juventud Simon Bolivar and conductor Gustavo Dudamel in 2007. Recent concerto performances took place with conductor Ligia Amadio and the USP at the Sala Sao Paulo, Brazil, Carlos Riazuelo and the Sinfonica de la Juventud Simon Bolivar in Caracas, Rafael Gintoli in Buenos Aires, Enrique Batiz and the Orquesta del Estado de Mexico, and David Gimenez Carreras at the Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona, Spain.

In addition to her orchestral performances, she has given solo and chamber music recitals at the Wigmore Hall, London, Schnittke Festival at the RAM and the Montpellier Festival.

Perez has recorded Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in C major* with the Berlin Symphoniker, and Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor* with Venezuelan conductor Eduardo Marturet and among her chamber music recordings, she was the pianist for Jan Vogler's "Tango" CD and the Moritzburg Ensemble released by Sony Classical in August 2008, and in 2009 collaborated with Joshua Bell and Bandoneon player Carel Kraayenhoff on Bell's recording "At Home With Friends."

--Amanda Sweet, Bucklesweet Media

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