Bard College Conservatory of Music

Presents

Guest Artist Masterclass

Gábor Farkas, *piano*

Monday, November 2, 2026 at 3:00 pm
László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building, Performance Space

Wanderer Fantasy, D. 760 — Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Tianxiang Tessa Ni, *piano*

La Valse — Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

YuanKai Zhang, *piano*

Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 54 — Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
- Allegro affettuoso
- Intermezzo: Andantino grazioso
- Allegro vivace

Juliette Benveniste, *piano*
Xiaoyi Lin, *piano*

Alternate:
Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 16 — Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)
- Allegro molto moderato
- Adagio
- Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto – Andante maestoso

Ivy Chen, *piano*

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gábor Farkas is a pianist whose artistry is built not simply on virtuosity, but on the ability to create a recognisable personal voice at the instrument. A Liszt Ferenc Prize-winning artist, he is particularly associated with the Romantic repertoire, while his playing is distinguished by a rich, singing bel canto tone, refined agogics, a broad palette of colour and formidable technical command. Tamás Vásáry famously called him “the poet of the piano” – a phrase that captures both the lyrical quality of his sound and the individuality of his musical thinking.

Farkas graduated from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest in 2005, studying with Sándor Falvai and Attila Némethy. He later completed his DLA at the Academy, with Zoltán Kocsis and Tamás Vásáry as his musical mentors. His international career was shaped by a series of major competition successes, including first prize at the 6th International Liszt Piano Competition in Weimar in 2009, where he also received the Audience Prize and an award for the best performance of a Haydn sonata. He had previously won the Hungarian National Radio Piano Competition and the Bartók Béla Piano Competition in Baden bei Wien. In 2015 he won the New York Concert Artists & Associates competition, leading to his Carnegie Hall debut in 2016.

Since then, he has appeared at major venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and Merkin Hall in New York, Teatro la Fenice in Venice, BOZAR in Brussels, Konzerthaus Berlin, Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid, NCPA Concert Hall in Beijing, Seoul Art Center, Oriental Art Center in Shanghai and Tokyo Bunka Kaikan. His collaborators have included conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Ádám Fischer, Olli Mustonen, Zoltán Kocsis, Tamás Vásáry, Gilbert Varga and Henrik Nánási. He is a regular guest at leading festivals across Europe, Asia and the United States.

His discography includes releases with Warner Classics, Hungaroton, Toccata Classics, Brilliant Classics and Steinway & Sons Records. His debut recording, An Evening with Liszt, was released in 2008 and received the Franz Liszt International Society’s Grand Prix as the best Liszt recording of 2009. His Chopin Ballades and Impromptus recording was warmly received by the international specialist press, earning five-star reviews from Fanfare Magazine and Piano News. In 2023 he released Chopin’s Piano Concertos in E minor and F minor with the Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Tamás Vásáry. He is currently recording Mozart’s complete piano sonatas for Hungaroton.

Teaching, artistic leadership and the development of musical communities are equally central to Farkas’s work. He has served as President of the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest since May 15, 2025, with his term running until May 15, 2030. Between 2020 and 2025 he headed the Academy’s Keyboard Department and its Keyboard and Accordion subprogramme within the Doctoral School. Since 2024 he has been Professor of Piano at the International Piano Academy Lake Como. In 2017 he was appointed Professor at the Tokyo College of Music, becoming the institution’s first European and youngest professor at the time. Farkas regularly gives masterclasses at leading institutions in the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Europe, and is a returning jury member at major international piano competitions. His work also extends into artistic direction and institution building: since 2022 he has been the founder and Artistic Director of the Far Eastern Classical Music Festival in Budapest; since 2025 he has been a founding partner of the International Liszt Music Center in Wenzhou, China, as well as Artistic Director of its Liszt–Bartók Festival.

Across these different roles, his approach is consistent: musical tradition is not a fixed monument, but living material – something to be interpreted, questioned, shared and carried forward. His artistic and educational achievements have been recognised with the Franz Liszt Award, Junior Prima Prize, Gundel Art Prize and Japan’s Aoyama Music Award. He has been a Steinway Artist since 2017.