

Matinée mit Rachmaninoff Awardee Estel Vivó Casanovas, Saxofon & Lucrezia Liberati, Klavier

Samstag, 15.8.2026 und Sonntag, 16.8.2026, Villa Senar

Steven Banks (1993*)

Salleras Variation

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

From Violin Sonata no. 1 in G minor BWV 1001

iv. Presto

Fritz Kreisler/Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninoff

Liebesleid

Liebesfreud

Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Transcription by Estel Vivó Casanovas

From Morceaux de Fantaisie Op. 3

i. Elegie

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)

Transcription by Estel Vivó Casanovas

Praeludium and Allegro in the Style of Pugnani

i. Praeludium

ii. Allegro

David Salleras (1980*)

Mi bailaora

Estel Vivó Casanovas, Saxophone

In November 2025 in New York City, Estel Vivó Casanovas emerged as the winner of the Young Concert Artists, Susan Wadsworth International Auditions. In this context, the Serge Rachmaninoff Foundation presented her with the Rachmaninoff Award.

Estel Vivó Casanovas is an exceptional talent who combines performance, breathtaking technique, infinite melodic artistry, and joy of playing. She studies at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, is originally from Spain, and enchants Rachmaninoff's rooms in a particularly unusual way, illuminating Villa Senar anew with the color palette of the saxophone.

Additional questions and thoughts:

You are a saxophonist and the winner of the Rachmaninoff Award 2026 – That's rather special – How did you feel, when you got the announcements during the YCA Finals ins New York 2025?

I felt incredibly grateful, like a dream had come true, and it didn't feel possible that something so great was happening. It was a wonderful week getting to know so many people dedicated and passionate about the arts. It's definitely a week I remember very fondly and with joy. I am very grateful to have the honor of being part of such an admirable organization.

Did you already play the famous Saxophone Solos in Sergei Rachmaninoff's orchestral works? Which is your favourite passage?

Yes, I've played the solos in Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*, Op. 45, and it is my favorite. I love how the saxophone sound blends into the orchestra—it feels like the melody grows and expands, melts like butter, and is then taken over by the full orchestral tutti.

Which music moves you most?

Violin and piano concertos, orchestral works by Haydn, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff, Chopin etudes, pop artists from my region in Spain like Rosalía and Oques Grasses, and classic operas by Verdi and Puccini.

When and how did you first encounter Sergei Rachmaninoff's music?

It's hard to remember the first time I encountered Rachmaninoff's music, as it feels like it has always been part of my musical journey. In a way, I feel like I have always known his music. He is such an important composer in music history, and I have always admired his complex and deeply expressive works. Many of my teachers and professors have helped me grow closer to his music, guiding me in understanding its richness and complexity.

What are you dreaming of?

I am living my dream. I feel very grateful to be part of YCA, to receive honors like the Rachmaninoff Award, and to perform in historic places like Villa Senar. Traveling, living abroad, and being able to share music and learn from others has always been a big dream of mine, and it's incredible to realize that I am now living that life.

Would you like to share something else with the audience?

Storytelling and movement are the aspects of music I resonate with most deeply, and together in this program they shape a musical journey full of excitement, drama, joy, and aliveness. I hope this recital invites the audience to follow me through moments of fire, tenderness, and discovery, and to share in the joy of experiencing music as multidimensional.

Lucrezia Liberati, Piano

Born in Viterbo in 1997, Lucrezia Liberati has pursued a musical path nourished by a constant artistic exploration within international contexts. She graduated with honors and special distinction from the Conservatorio P. Mascagni in Livorno and subsequently moved to Lucerne to attend the Master's program in Solo Performance with Konstantin Lifschitz at the Hochschule Luzern – Musik. Key milestones include her June 2025 debut at the KKL Lucerne with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester conducted by Francesco Cagnasso, the Respighi Prize 2026 awarded by the Chamber Orchestra of New York which will give her the opportunity to make her Carnegie Hall debut with the same orchestra during the 2027/2028 season, and the 2024 release of her first CD, *Crossing Roads* (Da Vinci Classics), a project dedicated to Adolf von Henselt, Clara Wieck-Schumann, and Theodor Döhler.

Her affinity for literary themes and interest in obscure repertoire earned her a place in the PhD program at Conservatorio Venezia, where she focuses on Ottorino Respighi.

What is your personal favorite piece or work by Sergei Vasilievich and why?

I am naturally drawn to piano music and share a special bond with the *Etudes-Tableaux*, Op. 39; for a long time, they represented an unreachable goal for me, until I finally studied them for my bachelor exam and thesis. However, I deeply appreciate his entire output, from the concertos and sonatas to the symphonies. I am also very fascinated by his *Isle of the Dead* Poem and the connection between music and visual art that inspired Rachmaninoff himself.

In your opinion, what relevance does Rachmaninoff's music have nowadays?

I believe Rachmaninoff's music is universally loved by both musicians and audiences alike. This suggests that his writing reaches the minds and hearts of people with both mastery and sincerity.

Would you like to share something else with the audience?

It will be a great honor to return to Villa Senar and play his instrument once again. When I was younger, I studied his life extensively and watched documentaries about his history and his residence at Villa Senar too. Experiencing this now in person will be a further step toward bringing his emotional states into the music and striving to be as faithful as possible to his musical intentions.