

## Ivan Gajan



Ivan Gajan was born on September the 2nd, 1958, in Žilina. He was in contact with music in the circle of his family since his early childhood, and in 1966, he began to devote himself to piano playing at the Public Arts School in Žilina, under the guidance of Mária Lehotská. He continued in his studies at the conservatoire in Žilina under the guidance of Anton Kállay, graduating as the best school-leaver of 1977. During his studies, he took part in many competitions, collecting significant awards. From 1977-82, he continued his studies at the Moscow State Conservatoire of P. I. Tchaikovsky, under the guidance of Professor Stanislav Nejpgauz, and following his death, under Professor Viera Gornostajevova. As he himself states, Nejpgauz's Assistant Professor Jelena Richter also had a great influence on his artistic development. He remembers these studies as being a very demanding period of his life, but thanks both to them and the laureate award in the prestigious Robert Schumann International Piano Competition in Zwickau in 1981, the successful growth of his career was ensured. He became a recipient of the Slovak Music Fund scholarship, and shortly afterwards became the statutory soloist of the State Chamber Orchestra in Žilina. He has performed many concerts with this orchestra, both in Slovakia and abroad, and he still occasionally gives performances. From 1987-91 he was also a member of the Symphony Orchestra of Slovak Radio. Together with this orchestra, he gave concerts and recorded several radio recordings during that time. He performed with home and foreign orchestras, conductors of great importance soloises and chamber music bodies. He has long collaborated with the world-famous Luxembourgian cellist Françoise Groben, the laureate of the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, with whom he has presented himself on many leading and prestigious European stages. Ivan Gajan has performed throughout Europe, and also in Tunisia, Japan, Thailand, Nigeria and Cuba. His activities as a chamber player also include cooperation with the Panocha Quartet, the Slovak Quartet and the Moyzes Quartet. He was also a long-time member of the Istropolitana Trio and the Hummel Trio, with whom he studied and recorded complete piano trios of J. N. Hummel and W. A. Mozart. Since 1989, he has been active at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Bratislava as a pedagogue, currently as an assistant professor. Since 2004, he has also been active as a teacher at the Janáček-Academy of Performing Arts in Brno. He had previously held piano lessons in Žilina and Mikulov, and currently offers them on a regular basis in Olomouc His body of interpretative work is extensive. It includes many recordings for Slovak Radio, Czech Radio, Slovak TV, the OPUS company, and many other publishers. As a jury member, he has participated several times in the international piano competition 'Amadeus' in Brno, and also in the International Piano Competition of Stanislav Nejpgauz in Russian Chelyabinsk, in 2007. Some of the most challenging compositions have been selected for the contents of this recording, not only from Chopin's work, but from the whole of piano literature. They have been a long-standing part of his concert repertoire, and still represent a motivational platform for him, not only due to his recognition of their rich musical contents, but also because they keep his technical virtuosity in tune. Ivan Gajan has a unique, clear-cut and noble approach to the study and interpretation of Chopin's works, and therefore this recording in some way represents not only a high point in his personal interpretative work, but also a key contribution to the reproduction of classical music in Slovakia.