
IOANA ILIE

Pianist and composer

Ioana Ilie was born in 1988 in Sibiu, Romania. She began playing the piano at the age of three, and by the time she received her first piano lesson a year later, she had already composed numerous pieces. At the age of five, she won her first piano competition and has since performed in Europe, America, and Asia. The Constantin Silvestri Scholarship enabled her to spend the year 2004-5 at Pocklington College in York, England. In 2014, she was selected as the first scholarship recipient in the Young Musicians Artist Program of Notenstein La Roche Private Bank. She completed her studies at the Music Academy Basel FHNW with Adrian Oetiker (piano), Balz Trümpy (composition), Rudolf Lutz (improvisation), Jan Schultsz (Lied accompaniment and interpretation), and Rodolfo Fischer (instrumental conducting).

Described by the *Badische Zeitung* as a "master of improvisation," the Romanian-Swiss pianist is often heard as an advocate of the rare art of classical improvisation, which has meanwhile become her trademark. In collaboration with photographer Jeffrey Thomas Skrob, she released an online course in classical improvisation, which is available in three levels. At just 21, Ioana Ilie was appointed lecturer in piano improvisation at the Trossingen University of Music. Since 2015, she has been teaching piano at the Music Academy Basel.

Her music has been performed in Europe (among others, by the internationally renowned ensemble "Phoenix") as well as in the USA. She has been one of the three selected composers for the 2025 *Vienna Composition Lab Programme* held at the Musikverein, which allowed her to conduct and record her own works. Her compositions can be heard both on her latest recording, *Zodion - Piano Pieces on the 12 Zodiac Signs* and on her debut CD *On Cloud Ten*, and are published by the prestigious Universal Edition in Vienna. Her latest work, *Der Abendstern / The Evening Star*, was commissioned by the Basel Choral Society (Basler Gesangverein) and premiered in November 2025 at the Stadtcasino Basel. Scheduled for 2027 are both the Romanian premiere of *The Evening Star* as well as her *Anachronisms* for Wind Quintet, a set of pieces commissioned by Thüring Bräm which Ioana will premiere and conduct herself.