

BRUNO MONSAINGEON – Complete Biography

Bruno Monsaingeon is a Paris-based concert violinist who, while still active in the field of performance has, in the last thirty years, devoted a large part of this time to the making of musical films.

He has directed films on and about some of the major musicians of our time, Nadia Boulanger, Yehudi Menuhin, Murray Perahia, Glenn Gould, Sviatoslav Richter, Viktoria Postnikova, Guennadi Rojdestvenski, Michael Tilson Thomas, Zoltán Kocsis, Friedrich Gulda, Paul Tortelier, Julius Katchen, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, David Oïstrakh, Julia Varady, amongst many others.

His long association with Yehudi Menuhin and Glenn Gould have been remarkable and have led to the production of numerous films on various subjects with these two musicians. Two of these productions in particular, **The Open Wall**, **Menuhin in China** and **The Goldberg Variations**, have gained worldwide acclaim.

Since 1986, Bruno Monsaingeon has directed the following films: **Retour aux Sources**, a documentary in three episodes on Yehudi Menuhin's return to the Soviet Union;

Tchaikovksy's trio performed by Viktoria Postnikova, Yehudi Menuhin and Marc Coppey;

Profile of a player, Andrei Chesnokov ;

a Barbara Hendricks Recital in Leningrad;

the 24 Caprices by Paganini performed by Alexander Markov;

Organs, Toccatas and Fantasies: Marie-Claire Alain plays Bach;

The Birth of a singer, Nicolas Rivenq.

In 1993, he dedicated two programmes, a documentary ***The Unknown Fiddler of Santa Barbara*** and a concert ***Gilles Apap and Friends***, to the award-winning young French violinist Gilles Apap.

In 1990, he began two vast and long term projects on Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and David Oistrakh.

He has filmed three recitals with Dietrich Fisher-Dieskau (***Die Schöne Müllerin***, and a programme of selected Lieder by Schubert, two Lieder cycles by Schumann: ***Liederkreis*** op. 24 et ***Dichterliebe*** op. 48) and three Masterclasses on works by Mozart, Schubert and Schumann.

To complete this impressive cycle, Bruno Monsaingeon then directed a major documentary profile of the maestro, ***Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Autumn Journey*** (• [Charles Cros Academy Video Prize, 1998](#) • [François Reichenbach Prize, Orphée du Lyrique en Images, 1998](#)).

After several years of research, Bruno Monsaingeon found, restored and edited a vast amount of archival footage on the great Soviet violinist David Oistrakh. In addition to the three programmes of ***The David Oistrakh Collection***, based on rare concert material filmed in the Soviet Union, Monsaingeon recently directed a major profile of the violinist, entitled ***David Oistrakh, Artist of the People?*** (• [West Flanders International Art Film Festival Prize, Knokke Belgium, 1995](#) • [Charles Cros Academy Video Prize, 1998](#)).

In 1995, he completed a two-hour special, ***Yehudi Menuhin, The Violin of the Century*** (• [Diapason d'Or, 1996](#) • [Charles Cros Academy Grand Prize, 1996](#) • [Gramophone Prize for Best Video, 1996](#)), to mark the violinist's 80th birthday.

He then directed ***Death and the Maiden***, with the world famous Alban Berg Quartet, for the celebrations of the bicentenary of Franz Schubert's birth (January 1997).

Bruno Monsaingeon simultaneously spent many years putting together a film on the Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter, reconstructing his life story for the major biographical profile ***Richter, The Enigma***. (• FIPA d'Or 1998 • Procirep Classique en images Prize - Ve biennale of filmed4 music, 1998 • Documentary Prize - Banff Festival, Canada, 1998 • Charles Cros Academy Video Prize, 1998 • Best audiovisual musical diffusion Prize - Professional Syndicate for dramatic and musical critics, 1998 • Grand Prix Pratt & Whitney Canada - Art Film Festival of Montreal, 1999 • Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, 1999 • Diapason d'Or Classical Music DVD, 2001 • Cannes Classical Award, Classical Music DVD, 2001).

He then directed ***Julia Varady, Song of Passion***, a profile of one of the best loved singers of the opera world. This profile presents the different stages of her career and is coupled with a recital in which Julia Varady sings works by Wagner, Strauss and Tchaikovsky, accompanied by the distinguished Russian pianist Viktoria Postnikova.

With the French violinist Gilles Apap, he directed the film ***Gilles Apap plays the Mozart's Third Concerto***.

In 2000, he directed ***the Art of Violin*** (• Choc du Monde de la Musique for the DVD • Diapason d'Or for DVD • Charles Cros Academy Grand Prize for DVD), a 2-parts series covering a vast panorama of the world's most celebrated 20th century violinists (Mischa Elman, Isaac Stern, Jascha Heifetz, Fritz Kreisler, David Oïstrakh, Yehudi Menuhin etc .)

In 2001, he directed ***Piotr Anderszewski plays The Diabelli Variations*** (• Choc du Monde de la Musique for CD • Citation Musique, UNESCO FIFAP 2001).

In 2002, he directed a documentary and a concert programme with the Artemis Quartet. ***Strings Attached*** (• [Prix Pédagogie Musique, Unesco FIFAP 2002](#)) illustrates how a small group of top musicians live and work together with the aim of perfecting the world's most beautiful musical works. This film focuses on one of the most ambitious and mysterious works in all the string quartet repertory, Beethoven's Grosse Fuge.

In 2002, he directed three piano concerts, with ***Francesco Libetta***, with ***Grigori Sokolov*** and with ***Piotr Anderszewski***, the latter playing and conducting from the keyboard two Mozart Concertos.

He also directed ***Gennadi Rozhdestvensky- Conductor or Conjuror?*** (• [“Grand Prix démarche d’artiste Musique”, FIFAP Unesco 2003](#)), a documentary featuring the Russian conductor talking about what he knows best: the art of conducting, and a concert with Rozhdestvensky conducting “Dead Souls” by Alfred Schnittke and “Zdravitsa” by Sergei Prokofiev. Following this, in 2004 he completed ***The Red Baton – Scenes from Musical Life in Stalinist Russia*** (• [Pratt & Whitney Grand Prize, Festival International des Films sur l'Art, Montréal 2005](#) • [Grand Prix Musique, FIFAP Unesco 2005](#)).

Also in 2004, ***Valery Sokolov, Natural Born Fiddler***, a concert cum portrait of the brilliant 17 year old Ukrainian violinist.

In 2004, Bruno Monsaingeon made his début as a conductor in Russia, playing in Ekaterinburg a Bach Concerto with the Ural Philharmonic Orchestra, and conducting them in two Concertos by Mozart and Beethoven performed by the brilliant Russian pianist Boris Berezovsky.

In 2006, he completed ***Glenn Gould, Hereafter*** (• [FIPA D'OR, Biarritz 2006](#) • [Choc of the Year 2006, Le Monde de la Musique](#)), a retrospective of the life and work of Gould, seen from today's point of

view and based on a synthesis of all the documents existing on Gould, whether of a musical or of a literary and intellectual nature, this film strives to deal with the question of Gould's genius such as it is perceived by his audience, an audience that extends far beyond the strict notion of a musical audience.

In 2007, Bruno Monsaingeon devoted a film to the Masterclasses of the distinguished singer Julia Varady.

In 2008, he directed **David Fray, Swing, Sing & Think**, in which *the young French piano star is seen recording some Bach Concertos with the Deutsche Kammer Philharmonie Bremen* » which he conducts from the piano.

Then, **A Piotr Anderszewski recital at the Warsaw Philharmonic**, and **Piotr Anderszewski, Unquiet traveller**, an *extraordinarily moving profile of the great Polish pianist.* (• FIPA D'OR, Biarritz 2009 - Festival International des Films sur l'Art 2009, Montréal category « meilleur portrait », Choc Classica 2009)

Also in 2008, he filmed **the Chamber Orchestra of Europe**, directed by **Vladimir Ashkenazy**, featuring **Valery Sokolov** as **soloist**.

Finally in 2009, a **Valery Sokolov/David Fray Recital** was filmed at the Verbier Festival.

Bruno Monsaingeon is also the author of seven books :
“*Mademoiselle*” (conversations with Nadia Boulanger), “*Le dernier Puritain*”, “*Contrepoint à la ligne*” and “*Non, je ne suis pas du tout un excentrique*”, a series of three books containing the entire literary output of the great Canadian pianist, composer and writer, Glenn Gould, “*Richter, Ecrits et Conversations*” (France Culture Muses Award, Pelleas 1999 Award) Editions van de Velde-Arte Editions-Actes Sud, “*Passion Menuhin, l'Album d'une vie* ” Editions Textuel-Arte Editions, and in 2002, *Glenn Gould : “ Journal d'une crise ”* followed by “ *Correspondance de concert*”.