



Rudolf Budginas Biography

In the best of all possible classical musical worlds, there would be a brilliant, internationally-renowned concert pianist, whose deft fingers have delighted audiences from Denmark to Japan and a dozen countries in between; who has acquired a slew of international awards and honors; and who has a movie star-like personal charm, charisma and perhaps most importantly, a sense of humor, which allows him to consistently connect and interact with his audiences. Such as explaining the direct musical line from Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody" to Johnny Cash's "Walk the Line." Or creating his own arrangements for piano, bass, percussion and guitar of classic and jazz hits such as "Claire de Lune," "Moonlight Sonata," Bizet's "Carmen" and pieces ranging from Chopin to Brubeck.

This best of all possible worlds is here...and his name is Rudolf Budginas. Hailed in the press as "A young hip Victor Borge-like entertainer," the Lithuanian-born pianist—who has performed in Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, Rome, Budapest, Salzburg, Cologne, Copenhagen, Tokyo, Riga and Moscow—returns to the California Central Coast in April 2010 from an 82-city tour to conquer the hearts, minds, ears and funny bones of American music lovers. Budginas (pronounced bud-ginness) was born into a family of musicians in Lithuania. He began his studies at the age of four and made his debut at the age of nine with the Lithuanian National Symphony.

During and after his studies at the Moscow Conservatory, he rose to international prominence performing solo concerts throughout the world. After moving to the U.S. in 1994, he discovered his true passion: giving classical music a broader audience appeal.

Transplanted to California after accepting a full scholarship at USC to complete a PhD in music, Rudolf settled in, took up surfing and developed a passion for expanding the accessibility of classical music to American audiences. He takes his music, but not himself, very seriously. With his charmingly accented English, Rudolf talks about the impetus for his new concerts: "I felt that after my strictly classical recitals, I was questioning if I had more to offer to my audiences. It was clear that they loved classical music but I felt there was more I wanted to do. I want to present an evening with more variety of musical styles. I want to keep my audience always guessing what will come next. I like to relax the atmosphere of the concert," says Rudolf. "Because, you know, the concert is a very formal thing. I like people in general. I like to talk to them. And when you have friendly atmosphere, when you explain what they're going to hear, it's much better, it's much easier."

As an accomplished soloist Rudolf has performed in Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, Rome, Budapest, Salzburg, Cologne, Copenhagen, San Francisco, Tokyo, Riga, Moscow, Los Angeles, Seattle and Fort Worth. His artistic poetry, virtuosity, and passionate interpretations have received critical praise.

He resides in the San Luis Obispo area of California's Central Coast and he is a professor of music at Cuesta College. He is also the Conductor of the Chamber Orchestra at Thomas Aquinas College.