

OREGON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

AT SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Rare gem to conclude Tutunov Piano Series with sweetness and fire; 2026 season unveiled

(Ashland, OR). The Tutunov Piano Series will feature Russian-American pianist Margarita Shevchenko on Friday, May 2 at the Southern Oregon University Music Recital Hall in Ashland.

Presented by the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University, the concert will begin at 7:30 p.m., in-person and live-stream, with admission available for purchase at <https://sou.universitytickets.com>.

Alexander Tutunov, artistic director and namesake of the series, will unveil the high anticipated **2025–2026 concert lineup** prior to the concert, with season ticket subscriptions available for purchase by the audience at intermission. Opportunities for sponsorship of individual concerts and contributions to the entire series will be available for continued support of the series' mission to bring world-class pianists and music to Ashland.

"Margarita is a rare gem," Tutunov said. "She is brilliant pianist who seamlessly blends analytical precision with intuitive artistry. With a technique that is both fearless and fluid, she brings music to life through a breathtaking fusion of clarity, power, and poetic sensitivity," Tutunov said.

Reviews of Shevchenko's performances are packed with accolades and praise.

"Margarita captivates her audiences with thunderous octaves and exquisitely shaped phrases that seem to grow organically from one another. Whether illuminating the mercurial spirit of Chopin or the architectural grandeur of a demanding sonata, Shevchenko's playing radiates both sweetness and fire—gripping audiences in an experience that transcends the notes and lingers in the soul," Tutunov said.

Born in Perm, Russia, Shevchenko began her musical journey at the age of five and attended the prestigious Moscow Central Music School and the Moscow State Conservatory under the tutelage of Sergei Dizhur and Professor Vera Gornostayeva—both students of the legendary Heinrich Neuhaus. A distinguished prizewinner of the **1990 Chopin International Competition in Warsaw**, Shevchenko has also claimed top honors at numerous international competitions, launching her career as a globally recognized concert pianist. In 1994, she moved to the U.S. to study with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she later became a dedicated educator. She has since held faculty positions at the Cleveland Institute of Music and **Michigan State University College of Music**, sharing her artistry through masterclasses and festival appearances worldwide.

The evening program will open with Maurice Ravel's "Gaspard de la nuit" followed by Scriabin's "Poeme", Op.32, No. 1 and "Fantasie" in B minor. After intermission, Shevchenko will continue with two pieces by Frédéric Chopin: "Impromptu" No. 2 in F-sharp Major and "Sonata No. 3 in B minor."

"Shevchenko plays with such luscious charm and high intensity – this program is a fantastic finale to our season," Tutunov said. "The final performance will stun the audience, and leave them wanting to more. Don't miss this extraordinary evening of top-tier piano virtuosity!"

Tickets for the Tutunov Piano Series are available in-person at the OCA Box Office, Tuesday through Friday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., on the SOU campus. Reserved seats are \$35 per person/\$30 for seniors. Live-stream link is \$35/household. For online tickets: <https://sou.universitytickets.com> or call the OCA Box Office at (541) 552-6348.