

Syrian British Pianist Riyad Nicolas, was born in Aleppo, Syria in 1989 and has already established himself as a leading figure of his generation on the international performing circuit.

Riyad has given solo recitals in many prestigious venues at the UK, including Royal Albert Hall, Cadogan Hall, Wigmore Hall, Barbican, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St. James's Piccadilly, and Leighton House in London, and Bridgwater Hall and Staller Hall in Manchester. Concert performances have also taken him to the USA, including a debut at the Kennedy Center in Washington and the Chicago Cultural Center (Dame Myra Hess series), the Yehudi Menuhin Forum in Switzerland and other performing venues in France, Spain, Germany, Holland, Malta, the Gulf, Lebanon and Syria.

In the UK, Riyad is regularly invited to give recitals hosted by the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe and the Chopin Society UK, and has performed extensively as a solo pianist for over 80 music societies in the UK. He has also been invited to perform in numerous UK musical festivals such as Harrogate, Norfolk-Norwich, King's Lynn, Brighton, Devon, Darlington, Stratford-upon-Avon, Lincoln, Crediton, and Eastbourne.

Riyad made his first appearance as a soloist with an orchestra at the age of ten in Aleppo. Since then, he has performed with many orchestras including the London Chamber Orchestra at the Cadogan Hall, Emirate Symphony Orchestra in Dubai, Young Musician Symphony Orchestra at St. John's Smith Square, Todmorden Symphony Orchestra, the Syrian National Symphony Orchestra at the opening of the new Damascus Opera House, the Syrian Expat Orchestra as well as the Gomidas Chamber Orchestra of Aleppo.

Riyad has been selected to be a Tillett Trust Young Artist and an artist at the Countess of Munster Trust Concert Scheme in the UK. He has also won numerous international prizes and awards including First Prize with a recording contract at the Francaix International Piano Competition in Paris, the first Prize at the Ferenc Liszt International Piano Competition, and the first prize at the Norah Sande Award and the Christopher Duke Recital Prize in the UK. He also won Second Prize at the Seiler International Piano Competition in Greece and the Ciutat de Carlet International Piano Competition in Spain, Educational Award Prize at The London International Piano competition and was a finalist at the Busoni International Piano Competition in Italy.

Besides his solo career, Riyad is also a keen chamber music player, and has performed regularly in duos with violin and flute, collaborating with artists including the flautist Wissam Boustany and the violinist Levon Chilingirian.

Riyad first came to London in 2005 when he was awarded a two-year scholarship to study at the Purcell School of Music with Sulamita Aronovsky, continuing to work with her at the Royal Academy of Music from where he graduated in 2011. In June 2015, Riyad graduated from the Royal College of Music with a distinction in the Master of Performance course, studying with Dmitri Alexeev and Vanessa Latache and winning the Gold Medal at the prestigious Chappell Piano Competition. Riyad also teaches piano at the Junior Department of Guildhall School of Music, Dartford Grammar School and Woodford Green School.

Through music Riyad has been promoting peace and raising awareness for the plights of the Syrian people and performing for many organizations such as UNHCR, the International Rescue Committee, the Arab British Centre, Said and Asfari Foundation.

Riyad has been praised by such musicians as Daniel Barenboim, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Uchida Mitsuko and is one of the most exciting young artists to emerge from the Middle East.