

The Princess

CMH Caroline Murat Haffner



A princess by blood

A direct descendant, in the sixth generation, of **Joachim Murat** and **Caroline Bonaparte** — sister of **Napoleon Bonaparte** and **Queen of Naples** — Princess Caroline Murat embodies an imperial heritage that she has chosen to keep alive in a different way: through music, education and humanitarian work.

“Music is a universal language, capable of touching all audiences, to transcend differences and forge deep human connections...”

Pianist by vocation

She pursues her career as a pianist under the name Haffner, in homage to her maternal lineage, which traces back to **Sigmund Haffner**, mayor of Salzburg and a celebrated patron to whom **Mozart** dedicated, among other works, the Haffner Serenade and the Symphony of the same name. This artistic lineage profoundly shapes her musical identity.

A child piano prodigy, she was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire on an exceptional exemption. Very early on, **Alfred Cortot** recognised an extraordinary talent in her and steered her towards **Samson François**, of whom she would become the last pupil — heir to a tradition in which sound is already a thought.

Her training, continued under **Henri Dutilleux**, **Harry Datyner** and **Léonid Brumberg**, shaped her into an artist who was both rigorous and free. At the age of fourteen, she received the **Licence de Concert** from **Charles Munch** — she was then the youngest recipient — marking an exceptional musical maturity. Very quickly, the accolades began to pile up: the **Grand Prix de Genève**, the **gold medal at the Marguerite Long Competition**, **prizes at the Busoni and Casagrande competitions**, and a **Fulbright scholarship**. Critics saw in her “*the new Martha Argerich*”, a recognition of her rare intensity and freedom.



His career then took on a unique international dimension of its own. Invited to the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow by **Ekaterina Furtseva**, and having caught the eye of **Lev Oborine**, she found herself, in the midst of the Cold War, in that fragile space where music becomes a universal language. Her debut at the **Théâtre des Champs-Élysées** under the baton of **Igor Markevitch** opened the doors to the world's greatest stages — from **Carnegie Hall** to the **Royal Albert Hall** — where she performed alongside prestigious artists such as Mstislav Rostropovich and **Plácido Domingo** and collaborated with the great orchestras.

But beyond her career, a vision takes shape. As a heir to the French school, she upholds the pursuit of the 'beautiful sound' so dear to **Frédéric Chopin** and passed down by **Alfred Cortot**.

Her virtuosity, inspired by **György Cziffra** in the world of **Franz Liszt**, is never separated from a quest for expressiveness. As for her affinity with **Robert Schumann**, it is rooted in an intimate closeness to the poetic world of **Heinrich Heine** — a collateral ancestor, whose sister is one of her great-grandmothers — where music and literature come together in a single romantic breath.

A committed advocate of new music, she has inspired composers such **Yves Prin** and **Philippe Fénelon** (Diapason d'Or for her recording with the Ensemble Intercontemporain) and collaborates with **Olivier Messiaen** and **Yvonne Loriod**. As a resident at the **Casa de Velázquez**, she performs works by **Pascal Dusapin**, **Cristóbal Halffter** and **Luis de Pablo**, situating her work within a fruitful dialogue between contemporary music and the visual arts.

Philanthropy

Caroline Murat Haffner devotes a significant part of her career to humanitarian work. From her beginnings, she has organised major galas and given charity concerts, notably at **the Institution des Invalides for war wounded**. She works on the ground in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe, supporting numerous organisations such as the **Red Cross**, **Médecins Sans Frontières**, **Caritas Internationalis**, **Lions Clubs International** and **Rotary International**, as well as various foundations supporting children and health, putting her art at the service of great causes and making music a vehicle for solidarity and hope.

“The stage is a place of transmission, sharing and emotion...”

Teaching and Artistic Direction

Artist accomplished, Caroline Haffner Murat has naturally extended her career into teaching. She teaches at the Paris Conservatoire and is invited to major international institutions — Geneva, Beijing, Harvard University, Kazakhstan. Together with **Barbara Hendricks** and **Martin Engstroem**, she co-founded the **Verbier Festival Piano Academy**, where she works with rigour and generosity to pass on a musical legacy of excellence, supporting the emergence of new generations of artists.



Her commitment extends to the creation of international festivals, notably in Gstaad with **Les Sommets Musicaux** and the **Gstaad New Year Music Festival** — an international gathering of great opera voices — as well as the **Beausoleil Opera Festival** and **Ski et Musique en Valais**, dedicated to young musicians. A regular guest on international juries (piano, violin, voice, chamber music), she also maintains a busy career as a chamber musician, notably alongside **Maxim Vengerov**, **Gautier Capuçon** and **Gervase de Peyer**.

A film enthusiast, she founded **Le Piano fait son Cinéma** in La Baule and collaborates with **the Fellini Foundation** on projects centred around the filmmaker's work. Also drawn to the theatre, she devises interdisciplinary projects blending music, film and the stage, inviting artists such as **Marthe Keller**, **Clotilde Courau** and **Brigitte Fossey**.

A Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters, an **Honorary Doctorate** holder and recipient of an **Award for her cultural work in Poland "Gloria Artis"**, Caroline Haffner Murat embodies a demanding and profoundly humanistic conception of music — an art of sound, meaning and sharing.