Classical saxophonist **Valentin Kovalev** is one of the leaders of his generation in developing the musical and technical possibilities of the saxophone. Valentin is the first Russian saxophonist who entered the prestigious **Paris Conservatory** as an undergraduate, as well as the first Russian saxophonist to be admitted to the historic graduate program at the **University of Michigan**, which possesses the oldest and most celebrated saxophone program in the United States.

He received awards from several foundations in France and Russia, including the **Mstislav Rostropovich Foundation**, the Fondation **Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet** pour la vocation, Fonds de **Tarrazi**, **Legs** Edward **Jabes**, la Fondation **L’Or du Rhin**. Valentin earned two awards from **The** **President of the Russian Federation** and won a grant from the mayor of Moscow City.

 As a soloist, he has performed with major orchestras around the world, such as the “New Russia*”* Orchestra (chief conductor Yuri Bashmet), the Orchestra of Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Center, the Tchaikovsky Big Symphony Orchestra (chief conductor Vladimir Fedoseev), the Belarusian Orchestra of Folk Instruments, and Orchestre de Strasbourg. In 2019, Valentin performed in the live-broadcast concert “Génération France Musique. Le live.”on the radio **“France Musique”.**

 Valentin won prizes at many international competitions,including “MTNA Young Artist Woodwind Competition” – National Winner (USA, 2021), “University of Michigan Concerto Competition” (USA, 2021), The Eugene Bossart Prize Winner (USA, 2021), unanimous First Prize in the Online Saxiana International Competition (2021), second prize of “Classic Winds Competition” (Israel, Tel Aviv, 2020), first prize of the “AndorraSaxFest competition”(2019), first prize of the “Anches simples de Toulouse” competition(2019), and Grand-Prix of the “EkaterinburgSaxFest” (Russia, 2018).

 Valentin also enjoys performing as a musician in the symphony orchestra and had the honor of performing with well-known orchestras, including MusicAeterna (chief conductor Teodor Currentzis), with whom he participated in the Diaghilev festival (Perm, Russia), and the alto-saxophone part with the Orchestra of Moscow chamber musical theatre on the “Pärnu Opera days” (Estonia).

As the soprano saxophone chair of the saxophone quartet “Triton”, he had a concert tour to China, where he performed ten concerts in nine cities in April 2019.

Together with the Mstislav Rostropovich Foundation and the “Russian seasons” he had annually concert tours since 2016 in Germany, France, Luxembourg, and Belgium.

Valentin began his education in Barnaul, Russia with Viktoria Fedyaj and Alexei Gotsulyak. He proceeded with his studies at the College of Gnessins in Moscow with Leonid Drutin, the College of Frederic Chopin in Moscow with Nikita Zimin, and finished his Bachelor’s degree at the Paris Conservatory with Claude Delangle. He is currently studying with Timothy McAllister at the University of Michigan.