

Cracow Duo

Kalinowski, Szlezer - cello & piano duo

www.cracowduo.com

The prestigious magazine *The Strad* wrote about the Cracow Duo: "Kalinowski and Szlezer, friends since childhood, have a wonderfully natural rapport and there is an arresting quality to their playing that gives life to the music." They studied together in Cracow and Paris and began to perform together as Cracow Duo fifteen years ago. Since that time their concerts and recordings received the highest critical acclaim in Poland and abroad with reviews in such media outlets as Polish National Radio, Slovenski Rozhlas, Radio Sueddeutsche Rundfunk and important magazines and websites such as *ClassiqueInfo*, *Classical Music Review*, *Res Musica*, *American Record Guide*, *Ruch Muzyczny*, *Twoja Muza*.

The Cracow Duo was heard in concert all across Europe and Asia, including a tour celebrating the centenary of Witold Lutosławski's birth in 2013. In 2015 the Cracow Duo toured South Korea and the United States, performing at such prestigious venues as Seoul Arts Center in Seoul, Alfred Newman Hall in Los Angeles and Carnegie Hall in New York. Later that year, the artists performed the opening concert of their music tour in Mexico at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. Spring 2016 included their first tour in Argentina and Brazil with performances at the First Polish Music Festival at the State University in Campinas, Brazil. Their 2016 tour continued with a second visit to Mexico and concerts celebrating the 150th anniversary of the National Conservatory. They were reinvited to Brazil for the Second Polish Music Festival in Campinas. Cracow Duo visited also United States for the second time to perform an autumn 2017 tour with concerts of Polish music. In December 2017, at the Krzysztof Penderecki European Center of Music in Luśławice, they performed the world premiere of Krzysztof Meyer's "Musica concertante" with the Sinfonietta Cracovia Orchestra conducted by Jurek Dybał.

Cellist Jan Kalinowski and pianist Marek Szlezer share a special commitment and fascination with music written by lesser-known Polish composers, whose works they tirelessly perform at home and abroad. Among their many programs, the Cracow Duo frequently presented compositions for cello and piano by Aleksander Tansman, Zygmunt Stojowski, Ludomir Rożycki and Tadeusz Majerski, as well as works by contemporary Polish and foreign composers written specially for them. In addition to concertizing, the Cracow Duo has been featured on several CD recordings. Their disc of works for piano and cello by Alexander Tansman (2009) was awarded the La Clef de Res Musica and nominated for Polish Music Awards. Published in 2010, their recording of Chopin's chamber music was also recognized with La Clef de Res Musica and received a nomination for the Polish Recording Academy Fryderyk Award 2011. In 2014 DUX Records issued a special CD featuring works dedicated to Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer. Both artists were also involved in recording CD on the occasion of the 80th birthday anniversary of Krzysztof Penderecki. This recording was awarded the Gramophone Editor's Choice 2015 and nominated for the 2015 Fryderyk Award. Recorded with Jan and Marek, Joanna Freszel's CD real life song, received two Fryderyk nominations in 2016.

A similar understanding of music and common artistic vision coupled with an excellent command of the instrument and a high degree of experience on the concert platform have produced interpretations that are emotional, sincere and spontaneous.



Jan Kalinowski (born 1982) studied at the Music Academy in Cracow, the École Normale de Musique in Paris and the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart under the guidance of Professors: Witold Herman, Paul Julien and Peter Buck. He has also taken part in master classes given by David Geringas, Ivan Monighetti and Arto Noras. He has held grants from Polish and foreign foundations, as well as the City of Cracow, the Malopolska Region and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. He has received awards and favourable reviews at numerous competitions and festivals. He has recorded for radio and television, including the cello concertos by Witold Lutosławski (Lebanese National Orchestra, Azerbaijan State Philharmonic) and Marek Stachowski (Beethoven Academy Orchestra). At present he focuses on the cello works by Chopin, Tansman, Rozycki, Stojowski, Lutosławski and Penderecki. In 2014 he has performed cello concertos: K.

Pendereckiego (Kalisz Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. A. Klocek); M. Weinberg (Beethoven Academy Orchestra, cond. J. Kaspzyk); Andrzej Panufnik (Tbilisi Conservatory Orchestra, cond. P. Kotla). He holds his own cello class at the Music Academy in Cracow, where he received his postdoctoral qualifications in music in 2015. He has led courses in Bremen, Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Fermo and Tbilisi within the framework of an international academic exchange programme. In 2014 DUX recording producers published a CD with his artistic project *Polish Cello Music* containing works by Polish composers for cello ensembles from one to eight instruments. He is a teacher of the Malopolska Academy of Talents.

Marek Szlezer (born 1981) is one of the most sought-after Polish pianists of his generation. His career started with the Grand Prix at the International Piano Competition in Rome at the age of 12. He has studied at the École Normale de Musique in Paris, the Music Academy in Cracow and the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth in Belgium with Ewa Bukojemska, Abdel Rahman El Bach, Dmitri Bashkirov and Marcella Crudeli. He has held grants from Polish and foreign foundations, as well as the City of Cracow and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. He is a prizewinner of many prestigious competitions in Poland and abroad. Many of his awards are for the interpretation of Chopin's music. One of his recitals was on a historic piano once owned by the composer. He has performed with leading orchestras, including the English Chamber Orchestra and the National Polish Radio SO, and at such venues as the Palais des Beaux Arts, Salle Cortot, the Wigmore Hall and St.Martin-in-the-fields. At present he concentrates on the music of Polish composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He discovered the piano music of Jadwiga Sarnecka and recorded a selection of her compositions for DUX. He also prepared them for publication by the PWM Edition. He holds his own piano class at the Music Academy in Cracow, where he received his postdoctoral qualifications in music in 2015. He is the author of numerous research paper about piano works of Polish composers published by Polish Music Publishers PWM and Euphonium. He has recorded several albums for the recording companies Dux, EMI, Amadeus and Moderato Classics receiving an enthusiastic critical acclaim in prestigious musical magazines (among others Gramophone, Kulturspiegel, The Strad, Pizzicato, Fanfare, American Record's Guide). He is a teacher of the Malopolska Academy of Talents.



MAIN REPERTOIRE:

Grażyna Bacewicz	Sonata da camera
Ludwig van Beethoven	Complete Cello and Piano Sonatas
Lubos Bernáth	Images for cello and piano (2009)*
Lukas Borzík	In the Silence of Stone Gentle Breeze Has Come (2009)*
Nadia Boulanger	Trois Pieces
Johannes Brahms	Sonata in e minor op. 38
	Sonata In F major op. 99
Max Bruch	Kol Nidrei op. 47
Zbigniew Bujarski	Kalszlez (2010)*
	Ornifania
Bartosz Chajdecki	Three Glimpses (2007)*
Carlos Chavez	Sonatina
Fryderyk Chopin	Introduction and Polonaise op. 3
	Grand Duo Concertant
	Sonata in g minor op. 65
Marcel Chyrzyński	Farewell (2013)*
Piotr Czajkowski	Pezzo Capriccioso
Dezyderiusz Danczowski	Melody
Claude Debussy	Sonata (1915)
Joanna Drobisz	Pumilio (2011)*
Antonin Dvorak	Klid
Edward Elgar	Salut d'amour
Gabriel Faure	Elegy op.24
Cesar Franck	Sonata in A major
Massimo di Gesu	Arc-en-cello (2014)*
Alberto Ginastera	Sonata op.49
Anna Zawadzka-Gołosz	Essay on Earth and Sky (2014)*
Konstanty Gorski	Aria op.1 nr.5 (transkr.Kalinowski/Szlezer)
Marcin Gumieła	Le impressioni fiorentine (2002)
Evgenij Irszaj	Musical Remake
Maciej Jabłoński	Unfortunately, it's over ... (2006)*
Jacek Kita	Oczekiwanie (2002)*
Zoltan Kodaly	Adagio
	Sonatina
	Romance lirique
Szymon Laks	Sonata for Cello and Piano
Ferenc Liszt	II Elegy
Witold Lutosławski	Grave
Juliusz Łuciuk	Variations (1981)
Dymitr Łybin	The House with Phantom (2013)*

Tadeusz Majerski	Sonata (1949)
Bohuslav Martinu	Sonata nr 1
	Variations on a Theme of Rossini
Krzysztof Meyer	Sonata op.62
	Cazona op. 56
Maurycy Moszkowski	Three Pieces op.29
Piotr Moss	Polonaise dramatique
K. Moszumańska Nazar	Configurations
Karol Nepelski	Dead Faces (2013)*
Tomasz Jakub Opałka	The Glitch (2015)*
Henryk Pachulski	3 Morceaux op.4
Andrzej Panufnik	Dreamscape
Isidoros Pappadakis	Aurora (2009)*
Michał Pawełek	Ritardo (2005)
Astor Piazzolla	Adios Nonino
	Le Grand Tango
Jarosław Płonka	Croon (2009) *
Manuel Ponce	Sonata (1916)
Eugeniusz Popławski	In the Moonlight (2012)*
Sergei Prokofiev	Sonata in C major op.119
Sergei Rachmaninov	Sonata in g minor op. 19
Ludomir Rogowski	Arietta
Ludomir Różycki	Sonata in a minor op. 10
	Deux Mélodies op.5
	Deux Nocturnes op. 30
Camille Saint-Saens	Swan
Alfred Schnittke	Musica nostalgica
Franz Schubert	Des Madchens Klage
	Sonata a minor op.137
Robert Schumann	Adagio and Allegro op. 70
	Fantasiestücke op.73
Marek Stachowski	Recitativo e la preghiera
	Adagio ricordamente
Zygmunt Stojowski	Sonata in A major op. 18
	Romance sans paroles
Richard Strauss	Sonata in F major op.6
Igor Strawinski	Italian Suite
Antoni Szałowski	Aria and Burlesque
Dmitri Schostakovitch	Sonata in d minor op. 40
Karol Szymanowski	Sonata In d minor op. 9
K.Szymanowski /Bacewicz	Prelude op. 1 nr 1

Alexander Tansman	Sonata nr 2 (1930) Fantaisie (1936) Deux pièces (1931) Partita (1955) Quatre Pieces Faciles Sonatina Transatlantycka (Blues) Cakewalk de la Carnival Suite (transkr. Kalinowski/Szlezer)
Wojciech Widłak	All my anger (2013)*
Władysław Żeleński	Berceuse op.32 Grażyna Bacewicz Sonata da camera
Ludwig van Beethoven	Wszystkie Sonaty na fortepian i wiolonczelę
Lubos Bernáth	Obrazy na wiolonczelę i fortepian (2009)*
Lukas Borzík	In the Silence of Stone Gentle Breeze Has Come (2009)*
Nadia Boulanger	Trois Pieces
Johannes Brahms	Sonata e-moll op. 38 Sonata F-dur op. 99
Max Bruch	Kol Nidrei op. 47
Zbigniew Bujarski	KalSzlez (2010)* Ornifania
Bartosz Chajdecki	Three Glimpses (2007)*
Carlos Chavez	Sonatina
Fryderyk Chopin	Introdukcja i Polonez C-dur op. 3 Grand Duo Concertant Sonata g-moll op. 65
Fryderyk Chopin/Glazunov	Etiuda cis-moll op.25 nr 7
Marcel Chyrzyński	Farewell (2013)*
Piotr Czajkowski	Pezzo Capriccioso
Dezyderiusz Danczowski	Melodia
Claude Debussy	Sonata (1915)
Joanna Drobisz	Pumilio (2011)*
Edward Elgar	Salut d'amour
Antonin Dvorzak	Klid
Gabriel Faure	Elegia op.24
Cesar Franck	Sonata A-dur
Massimo di Gesu	Arc-en-cello (2014)*
Alberto Ginastera	Sonata op.49
Anna Zawadzka-Gołosz	Esej o ziemi i o niebie (2014)*
Konstanty Gorski	Aria op.1 nr.5 (transkr.Kalinowski/Szlezer)
Marcin Gumieła	Le impressioni fiorentine (2002)
Evgenij Irszaj	Musical Remake
Maciej Jabłoński	Niestety już po ... (2006)*
Jacek Kita	Oczekiwanie (2002)*

Zoltan Kodaly	Adagio Sonatina Romans liryczny
Szymon Laks	Sonata na wiolonczelę i fortepian
Ferenc Liszt	II Elegia
Witold Lutosławski	Grave
Juliusz Łuciuk	Wariacje (1981)
Dymitr Łybin	The House with Phantom (2013)*
Tadeusz Majerski	Sonata (1949)
Jean-Paul Martini	Plaisir d'amour
Bohuslav Martinu	Sonata nr 1 Wariacje na temat Rossiniego
Krzysztof Meyer	Sonata op.62 Cazona op. 56 Drei mal Vier op.123
Maurycy Moszkowski	Trzy utwory op.29
Piotr Moss	Polonez dramatyczny Petite Valse Bizarre
K. Moszumańska Nazar	Konfiguracje
Karol Nepelski	Dead Faces (2013)*
Tomasz Jakub Opałka	The Glitch (2015)*
Henryk Pachulski	3 Morceaux op.4
Andrzej Panufnik	Dreamscape
Isidoros Pappadakis	Aurora (2009)*
Michał Pawełek	Ritardo (2005)
Astor Piazzolla	Adios Nonino Le Grand Tango Croon (2009) *
Jarosław Płonka	Sonata (1916)
Manuel Ponce	In the Moonlight (2012)*
Eugeniusz Popławski	Sonata C-dur op.119
Siergiej Prokofiew	Sonata g-moll op. 19
Siergiej Rachmaninow	Dwa utwory op.2
Ludomir Rogowski	Arietta
Ludomir Różycki	Sonata a-moll op. 10 Dwie melodie op.5 Dwa nokturny op. 30
Camille Saint-Saens	Łabędź
Alfred Schnittke	Musica nostalgica
Franz Schubert	Des Madchens Klage
Franz Schubert	Sonata a-moll op.137

Robert Schumann	Adagio i Allegro op. 70 Fantasietücke op.73
Marek Stachowski	Recitativo e la preghiera Adagio ricordamente
Zygmunt Stojowski	Sonata A-dur op. 18 Romance sans paroles
Richard Strauss	Sonata F-dur op.6
Igor Strawiński	Suita włoska
Antoni Szałowski	Aria i Burleska
Dymitr Szostakowicz	Sonata d-moll op. 40
K. Szwed	Colors of transgression, colors of flowing... na wiolonczelę i fortepian (2011)*
Karol Szymanowski	Sonata d-moll op. 9
K.Szymanowski /Bacewicz	Preludium op. 1 nr 1
Aleksander Tansman	Sonata nr 2 (1930) Fantaisie (1936) Deux pièces (1931) Partita (1955) Quatre Pieces Faciles Sonatina Transatlantycka (Blues) Cakewalk de la Carnival Suite (transkr. Kalinowski/Szlezer)
Wojciech Widłak	Wszystkie złości moje (2013)*
Władysław Żeleński	Berceuse op.32

* compositions dedicated to Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer

REVIEWS

It was a very individual interpretation, of great strength.

Von Gisela Schwarz, Kölner Stadtanzeiger, 27 June 2017

The grand finale in Konserthusteatern became a dazzling display of musical virtuosity. The varied program, commonly making music in a relaxed atmosphere with musicians in master class! [...] Polish pianist Marek Szlezer proved that he is a brilliant pianist. His performance of the Chopin Polonaise in A flat major was marked by both the strength and the ease. His style was full of passion, which appeared even more clearly when he and the cellist Jan Kalinowski performed Astor Piazzolla's Grand Tango. It was a dazzling display of musicality and technical skills of both soloists.

Jane Betts, Blakinge Lans Tidning, August 2016

[...] The two outstanding instrumentalists from Cracow performed in the Casa de Fernández Blanco under the patronage of the Polish Embassy in Buenos Aires. [...] It was an evening illuminated by these two artists. Endowed with impeccable technique, rhythmic compatibility and beautiful phrasing they let us experience the cleverly chosen repertoire, composed with lightness. Jan Kalinowski has a velvety and rich sound that constantly dialogue with the piano, and Marek Szlezer understands it perfectly.

Francisco Troccoli, www.criticosmusicales.com, 7 May 2016

The concert has enchanted the audience thanks to the perfect playing of Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer. [...] The universe, in which the piano and cello spoke to each other in perfect harmony. In this consistent dialogue emerged filigree virtuosity of both performers. Two friends had attracted attention with their executive experience and sensitivity to the content of the works they performed. Their extremely thoughtful musicianship and brilliant cooperation, focusing on each of the presented works made single one of them a moment of pleasure. [...] Under their fingers the age-old music has come back to life, dabbed touching personality of genius. Waving sounds transformed into time became witnesses of a journey through the ages, from one epoch to another following a scheduled program, on the border of the worlds, in clean notes, transforming all the splendour of music in its beauty, suffering, and boisterousness. These feelings were only possible thanks to the genius of both of these artists.

Raouf Medelgi, Le Temps, 16 October 2014

I have to admit, that I had never heard something like that before, astonished with a discovery of expressiveness of Shostakovitsch's music, admiring Marek Szlezer and Jan Kalinowski I entered with them in a complicated world of Dmitrij Schostakovitsch.

Walentyna Żdanowicz BELARUS N5, May 2013

Each following composition – by Zygmunt Stojowski, Władysław Żeleński, Henryk Pachulski, Dezyderiusz Danczowski, Maurycy Moszkowski, Ludomir Rogowski and arrangement of Prelude op.1 n.1 of Karol Szymanowski done by Grażyna Bacewicz – was coming closer to the goal. The program composed of emotional contrasts, alternation between lyrical and energetic vivacity, was stunning in two ways. Rarely we may hear the music of composers which were mentioned above. The Cracow Duo's effort was not only scoped on perfect, spectacular and above-average emotional execution of these selected compositions but, first and foremost, it was an enterprise taken to interpret the pieces which have no registration which could serve as a pattern to follow. Cracow Duo has taken in its absolute possession the public's attention, living it in lack and with wild need for at least one little while more to spend with the ghosts from Szymanowski's era.

Maria Peryt, fineLIFE, April 2012

Marek Szlezer and Jan Kalinowski duo has presented itself formidably. Both gentlemen had caused listeners to enter in the preternatural state of mind, allowing them to forget about time and space, transferring them into the land of wonderful sounds, deep cello tone with fascinating light and pure sound, outstanding „pianos”, in other words into the world of Music written with real majuscule M. Jan Kalinowski had masterfully harmonized himself with his instrument, emitting from it the sound of outstanding beauty and touching bloom, and very melodious repertory had widely shown the artists' capabilities. Marek Szlezer, the pianist, was not even a step behind a cellist – incredibly flexible, soft passages of the accompaniment were creating a unique, glamorous aura. Arietta by

Ludomir Rogowski had particularly caught my attention with its lyricism and finesse, perfectly presented by that duo.

Marzena Pikulska, Polska Muza, March 2012

Artists play beautifully, I think they have in common understanding of the music and share a vision of their art. Moreover they are excellent virtuosos of their instruments, phenomenal mutual fitting of the musicians impressed me with precision.

Beata Górecka-Młyńczak, Hi Fi i Muzyka, August 2011

[...] But it is a Sonata for piano and cello that allows better to appreciate both performers. In this mature oeuvre, that exposures cello the most, the two musicians are giving their mastery not in a service of loud demonstration of virtuosity but contrary using it to leave space for each other. It is the principal valor of this duo, because it is much easier to shine then to let to forget. Or better, Szlezer and Kalinowski are having a subtle respect for each other. It is an art of discrecy that besides a fact that it renders justice to Chopin intentions brings us an intelligent and reflective reading of that Sonata. “

Bertrand Saint-Etienne, ResMusica , March 2011

[...] Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer, friends since childhood, have a wonderfully natural rapport and there is an arresting quality to their playing that gives life to the music, even when its content is less than inspiring.

Janet Banks, The Strad, January 2010

[...] The final act of the evening was Frederic Chopin's Sonata in G minor. The remarkably beautiful and surprisingly mature performance was delivered by two young musicians from Cracow, performing under the name of Cracow Duo: cellist Jan Kalinowski and pianist Marek Szlezer. The rendition of the Sonata was not only technically superb, as its exceptional musicality and depth have brought out romantic melancholy and “eternal longing”, which were especially prominent in the second movement.

Marek Brzeźniak, Silesia No 61, April 2009

[...] Interpretation of Partita for cello and piano (1955) had full rights to be named an artistic creation. Tansman's music, dense and full of dramatic expression has found its ideal performers in Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer.

Anna Woźniakowska, Ruch Muzyczny, January 2008

[...] Marek Szlezer is performing often with cellist Jan Kalinowski. Both gentlemen has already managed to present together quite a lot of fine artistic creations. During this concert [...] they have very accurately and clearly showed to public the composers ideas, without omitting an individual touch in their interpretation [...]

Maciej Jabłoński, Dziennik Polski, 12th of May 2008

Cracow Duo, that is Jan Kalinowski cellist and Marek Szlezer pianist, assistant professors in Cracow Academy of Music, have played Sonatas by Ludomir Różycki, Karol Szymanowski (transcription of

Violin Sonata) and Zygmunt Stojowski. I have made it in time to listen the Sonata in A major by Stojowski, composer that has turned out to be completely forgotten in our country. Young musicians are one of the few to reach for the Polish music of XIX/XX century with a success, showing to all of us that we have really nothing to be ashamed of. The Sonata by Stojowski, well composed, interesting in its melodic and harmonical aspects, is moving for a listener and very demanding for both performers. It deserves to stay in our all to day concert repertory.

Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer are two, completely different musical personalities that are outstandingly complementary. Rarely one can hear and observe such good cooperation onstage, such mutual understanding of a music performed. As an encore young artists have added also unknown to us, brilliant Fantaisie of Alexandre Tansman, and finished this beautiful evening with a touching interpretation of Largo from Chopin's Cello Sonata op.65.

Anna Woźniakowska, Dziennik Polski, March 2007

The big event of a festival was a final concert by Cracow Duo, Jan Kalinowski (cello) and Marek Szlezer (piano).

Daniel Cichy, Ruch Muzyczny, July 2006

The Ministry of Culture, Dar Al-Assad for Culture and Arts, in cooperation with The Polish Embassy in Damascus, invited music lovers to a concert given by the Cracow Duo: Mr. Jan Kalinowski, Cello, and Mr. Marek Szlezer, Piano.

[...] The young artists concluded their fine concert by playing A. Piazzolla's Le Grand Tango. This is a grand concert piece of great vitality, bravura emotional ebullience and of virtuosity. It made a great climax. The audience gave a high ovation. Roses were presented to the artists. Thus ended one of the finest concerts in this season [...]

dr Sadek Pharaon, Syria Times, 12th of April 2006

Sonata in G minor, that held has filled up the first part of the evening was a true eruption of virtuosity of two young artists - Jan Kalinowski and Marek Szlezer.

Virtuosos had fully completed and understood each other – Kalinowski seen as a subtle melodic player and Szlezer, more fascinated by the harmonical complexity.

Particularly the finale with its broad-flowing theme and large number of secondary melodic ideas was full of an incredible energy. In Trio elegiaque, those two outstanding virtuoso were joined by an as well talented Anna Majcherczyk – and again musicians had show us a mature chamber playing, not lacking of its juvenile enthusiasm. A very good concert, the great instrumentalists and an unforgettable evening.

Adrianna Ginał, Gazeta Krakowska, 4th of April 2003

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