



### **Voytek Proniewicz**

Voytek Proniewicz graduated from the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw. He has appeared as a soloist with the Warsaw National Philharmonic Orchestra, the Wrocław Philharmonic Orchestra, the Sinfonia Viva orchestra and the Sinfonia Iuventus orchestra, and performed in leading Polish concert halls. Awards include third prize at the Ludwig van Beethoven International Violin Competition in Hradec nad Moravicí, Czech Republic (1998), first prize at the Stanisław Serwaczyński National Violin Competition for Young Violinists in Lublin (2002), third prize at the Kiejstut Bacewicz International Chamber Music Contest in Łódź (2004), and distinction at the Karol Szymanowski International Violin Competition in Łódź (2005). His

international career has taken him to Germany, the Czech Republic, England, Denmark, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, China and Venezuela. He was a long-standing scholarship holder of the Polish Children's Fund, and was also granted a scholarship by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in 2001, with the Młoda Polska scholarship of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in 2009.

### **Alexander Jakobidze-Gitman**

Alexander Jakobidze-Gitman was born in Moscow in 1981 and by the age of three his musical abilities had been discerned by a prominent music teacher, Vladimir Kiryushin, on whose advice he entered the Special Music School of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory. He studied piano with Yuri Martynov and Mikhail Trushechkin, and cello, composition and instrumentation as subsidiary subjects. He was named a laureate of the French Piano Music Festival in 1989. In 1999 he entered the Moscow Conservatory as a pupil of Pavel Nersessian and in 2002 joined the Royal Academy of Music in London, studying with Hamish Milne and receiving a special RAM Full Scholarship Award. He won Prizes at the Second Tbilisi International Piano Competition in 2001 and at the Golden Khanukia International Competition in 2003. Since graduating in Moscow and London in 2004, he has performed throughout Europe and in the United States. In 2009 he received his PhD degree in art studies.



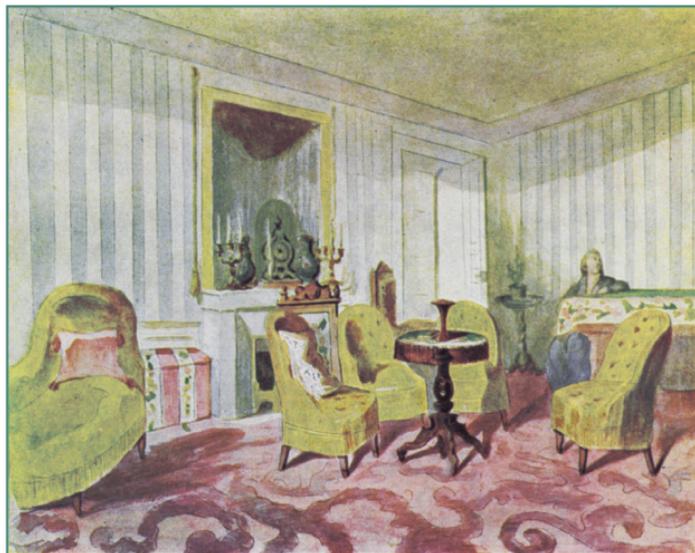
# **PUPILS OF CHOPIN**

## **Violin and Piano Works**

**Mikuli • Tellefsen • Filtsch**

**Voytek Proniewicz, Violin**

**Alexander Jakobidze-Gitman, Piano**



**Pupils of Chopin: Works for violin and piano  
Karol Mikuli (1819–1897):  
Grand Duo for Violin and Piano, Op. 26**

Mikuli was a man of very mixed origin with family roots in Armenia, Galicia, Poland and Romania. In 1844 he moved Paris where, during the next four years, he honed his skills as a pianist under the guidance of Frédéric Chopin, promptly becoming a favourite student and, subsequently, one of his closest friends. Mikuli was often the first to hear his master's new works, and Chopin would assign him to copy his compositions before handing them over for publication. In the years between 1847 and 1858, Mikuli toured extensively in France, Austria, Romania, and Poland, always paying particular attention to the performance of Chopin's compositions. Despite his very successful career as a concert pianist, however, in 1858 he retired from the stage to head the newly-founded Lemberg (Lviv) Conservatoire. Today he is remembered in the main as one of the most reliable and respected editors of Chopin's works.

Although Mikuli did not have great composing ambitions (he wrote barely over forty works), his *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano, Op. 26*, is amazingly innovative in its overall musical shape. The piece was written at the beginning of the 1860s and dedicated to the memory of the great Polish violin virtuoso Karol Lipinski (1790-1861), who was thought to be a rival of Paganini during his lifetime. All four movements are based on two prevailing themes, which are developed with extreme inventiveness. In the first movement, *Andante con espressione*, the double variations form is combined with a three-part form, where the two main subjects reappear in the last section harmonized with extremely intricate alternating chords, which remind one of Wagner. The short second movement, *Allegro gioioso*, with its naive tune and flowing accompaniment, evokes a song by Schubert, with its lyrical protagonist dissolving in serene nature. The third movement, *Lento quasi fantasia*, is composed as a dramatic operatic scene, where violin and piano play the parts of operatic heroes engaged in a breathtaking word

duel. In the flamboyant and furious fourth movement, *Allegro appassionato*, the two main themes triumphantly reappear as subjects of sonata form, heading towards a grandiose climax where the duet acquires the force of a symphony orchestra. Mikuli's *Grand Duo* blends, in a somewhat non-typical but quite natural manner, various and diverse influences. Chopin's "singing piano" can be heard, alongside salon-style virtuosity, Germanic polyphonic and motive development and a Lisztian emulation of orchestral sound.

**Thomas Dyke Ackland Tellefsen (1823–1874):  
Violin Sonatas Nos. 1 and 2**

Perhaps lacking the inventiveness of Mikuli, Thomas Tellefsen exceeded him in melodic richness and emotional impact. Tellefsen left Norway in 1842 to study music in Paris, where he met Chopin and studied with him until 1847. Chopin engaged him as a copyist and wanted Tellefsen to bring to fruition his plans for a piano school, a task that the Norwegian unfortunately failed to accomplish. Still, after Chopin's death, Tellefsen took on a number of his master's pupils and made a name for himself as a teacher. Beginning in the 1850s, he acquired the reputation of one of the great piano virtuosos of the time and toured successfully in France, England, and Scandinavia. The sense of nostalgia he apparently tried to convey in his music matched the curiosity that the Parisian public felt for exotic foreigners.

Tellefsen's two violin sonatas were composed in Paris. Created eleven years apart, they reflect, rather intriguingly, the evolution of his style as well as the general development of romantic music. In the *Sonata in G major, Op. 19*, (written in 1855-56), with its delicate and transparent texture, we see an interaction of various tendencies. The first and fourth movements are written in a classical "Beethovenian" style; in the development section of the first movement we can even hear a modified Beethoven "Fate motif", although it unfolds at a slower speed. The second movement begins as a love aria from an Italian opera. Yet in its dramatic middle section, the poignant outpouring of the violin

part is accompanied by vigorous piano octaves, proudly descending down the natural minor scale, which in this context sounds like a clear expression of the Nordic Viking spirit. This tendency is strengthened in the next movement, *Scherzo*, where Tellefsen succeeds in elegantly embellishing the Mendelssohnian style with simple, ascetic but at the same time passionate tunes with a barely perceptible Norwegian hue.

The *Sonata in E minor, Op. 37*, composed around 1867, shows Tellefsen striving for greater openness of feelings, as he combines a symphonic manner of writing with the improvisational style of salon music making. In the first movement his Nordic spirit at times attains a force more akin to a manifesto, which, incidentally, makes one think of Edward Grieg, Tellefsen's younger compatriot who was just appearing on the European music stage. In the second and third movements, however, we hear brightly articulated elements of French music, evoking heart-warming *chansons* that we associate primarily with the mid-twentieth century.

**Carl Filtch (1830-1845): Allegretto con variazioni**

A child prodigy from Transylvania, Carl Filtch was only six years old when his recitals in the aristocratic parlours of Vienna were hailed as nothing if not sensational. He was eleven years old when his talent conquered Paris. Filtch captivated his audience wherever he went – princesses, duchesses, countesses, and other high-society ladies, to say nothing of noted musicians, were all fascinated with the boy's

bewitching performance and matching personal charm.

To say that Filtch was Chopin's favourite student would be an understatement. The great maestro treated him like his son, permitting only George Sand to kiss him. Indeed, Filtch proved so gifted a student and learned so much from his mentor that some of their admirers would find it hard to distinguish between them when they played. Unfortunately the demand for the illustrious prodigy was so great that by the age of fourteen his health had been seriously impaired. He succumbed to a sudden illness just before the première of his magnificent *Konzertstück for piano and orchestra*. His elder brother took him to Venice for treatment, but it was already too late. Filtch was not yet fifteen when he died a painful death from an internal abscess.

These biographical circumstances cannot fail to set a special mood when one listens to his *Allegretto con variazioni*, a piece composed by this genius of a child with such a tragic fate. No information about the genesis of this work has survived (Filtch did not prepare it for publication), but the very style of this sparkling, buoyant piece, which so vividly evokes Weber, strongly suggests that it was composed in Vienna.

**Alexander Jakobidze-Gitman**

(I would like to express my profound gratitude to Ferdinand Gajewski and Ingrid Dalaker for sharing necessary biographical information)