

Janina Fialkowska

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Janina's Biography

Beloved the world over for her exquisite pianism, Janina Fialkowska has enchanted audiences for over thirty years with her glorious lyrical sound, her sterling musicianship and her profound sense of musical integrity.

Blending her vast experience with her refreshingly natural approach "Fialkowska has become an artist of rare distinction as well as retaining all the virtuosity of her youth" (La Presse, Montreal, February 13, 2009)

Celebrated for her interpretations of the classical and romantic repertoire, she is particularly distinguished as one of the great interpreters of the piano works of Chopin and Mozart. She has also won acclaim as a champion of the music of twentieth-century Polish composers, both in concert and on disc.

Born to a Canadian mother and a Polish father in Montreal, Janina Fialkowska started to study the piano with her mother at the age of five. Eventually she entered the Ecole de Musique Vincent d'Indy, studying under the tutelage of Mlle. Yvonne Hubert. The University of Montreal awarded her both advanced degrees of "Baccalaureat" and "Maitrise" by the time she was only 17.

In 1969, her career was greatly advanced by two events: winning the first prize in the Radio Canada National Talent Festival and travelling to Paris to study with Yvonne Lefebure. One year later, she entered the Juilliard School of Music in New York, where she first studied with Sascha Gorodnitzki and later became his assistant for five years. In 1974 her career was launched by Arthur Rubinstein after her prize-winning performance at his inaugural Master Piano Competition in Israel.

She has performed with the foremost North American orchestras, among them the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Houston Symphony and the Pittsburgh Symphony as well as with all of the principal Canadian orchestras, including the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, the Calgary Philharmonic and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. In touring Europe each year, Ms Fialkowska has appeared as guest artist with such prestigious orchestras as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, the Halle Orchestra,

the London Philharmonic, London's Philharmonia Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, the Royal Philharmonic, the Scottish National Orchestra, the Warsaw Philharmonic and the French and Belgium National Radio Orchestras. She has also performed with the Israel Philharmonic, the Osaka Philharmonic and the Hong Kong Philharmonic and has worked with such renowned conductors as Sir Andrew Davis, Charles Dutoit, Hans Graf, Bernard Haitink, Kyril Kondrashin, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Georg Solti, Leonard Slatkin, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski and Klaus Tennstedt.

She has won special recognition for a series of important premieres, most notably the world premiere performance of a newly discovered Piano Concerto by Franz Liszt with the Chicago Symphony in 1990. She has also given the world premiere of a Piano Concerto by Libby Larsen with the Minnesota Orchestra (October 1991) and the North American premiere of the Piano Concerto by Sir Andrzej Panufnik with the Colorado Symphony (February 1992) and the Piano concerto by Marjan Mozetich with the Kingston Orchestra (March 2000).

Janina Fialkowska was the Founding Director of the hugely successful "Piano Six" project and its successor "Piano Plus". This latest project brings together some of Canada's greatest Classical pianists, instrumentalists and vocalists with Canadians who, for either geographical or financial reasons, would otherwise be unable to hear this calibre of "live" classical performance. In 2000 "Piano Six" won one of Canada's top Arts' awards, the Chalmers Award.

In 1992 the CBC produced a sixty-minute television documentary, "the World of Janina Fialkowska" that aired to great acclaim throughout Canada. This program won a Special Jury Prize at the 1992 San Francisco International Film Festival. In October 2002 Ms Fialkowska was appointed Officer of the Order of Canada. In 2006, Acadia University, one of Canada's oldest and finest educational institutions awarded her an honorary doctorate.

In January, 2002 at the onset of a major European tour encompassing eight different countries, Ms. Fialkowska's career was brought to a dramatic halt by the discovery of a tumour in her left arm. After successful surgery to remove the cancer, Ms Fialkowska underwent further surgery in January 2003; a rare muscle-transfer procedure. After 18 months of performing the Ravel and Prokofiev "concertos for the left hand" which she transcribed for her right hand she has resumed her two-handed career beginning with a tremendously successful and highly emotional recital held in Germany in January 2004.

Ms Fialkowska's discography includes discs

featuring the 24 Chopin Etudes, Op. 10 & Op. 25, the Sonatas Nos. 2 & 3 and the Impromptus, a solo album of Liszt piano works and her astonishing version of the 12 Transcendental Etudes by Franz Liszt. Also a solo Szymanowski album and the highly praised CD, "La jongleuse - Salon pieces and encores." She has also recorded her immensely popular CD of the Paderewski piano concerto with the Polish National Radio Orchestra, the rarely heard piano concerto by Moritz Moszkowski and the tremendously successful CD of the three Liszt piano concertos with Hans Graf conducting.

Ms Fialkowska's recent recordings include performances of piano concertos by Chopin and Mozart in authentic versions consisting of piano solo and string quintet accompaniment. Both of which were released to highest critical acclaim. Just released for the 2010 Chopin bicentennial: a Chopin Recital, her third collaboration with the successful Canadian ATMA classique label: "This is high-class Chopin playing, deeply felt and demonstrably authentic" (Norman Lebrecht).

The current season started with concerts in the United States, Canada and Ireland, where she had a highly successful debut concert in Dublin with the National Symphony Orchestra. The Chopin year 2010, celebrating the 200th birthday of the great master, began in Germany where Ms Fialkowska had an overwhelming response from the critics and her public performing the F minor concerto: "Stupendous ... irresistibly virtuoso ... enormous applause. The whole audience was transported. Amazed, we experienced what Chopin demands, how his difficult, rich, and mysterious art still has such an impact." (Sueddeutsche Zeitung, Munich). The rest of the anniversary year will be spent on both sides of the Atlantic with recitals and orchestral performances in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Chicago, St. Paul, London (England) and many others. 2010 will also witness the first performance of a Chopin inspired piano concerto written for Janina Fialkowska by composer John Burge and scheduled to be played with four different orchestras.

As of January 2010