

## Grazyna Bacewicz – Polish Capriccio (Works for Violin and Piano)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Violin Sonata No. 4: I. Moderato - Allegro non troppo* 6:18 2. *Violin Sonata No. 4: II. Andante ma non troppo* 4:59 3. *Violin Sonata No. 4: III. Scherzo - Molto vivo* 3:14 4. *Violin Sonata No. 4: IV. Finale: Con passione* 6:33 5. *Violin Sonata No. 5: I. Moderato - Allegro* 5:19 6. *Violin Sonata No. 5: II. Nokturn: Andante dolcissimo* 3:27 7. *Violin Sonata No. 5: III. Finale: Allegro inquietamente* 5:12 8. *Oberek No. 1* 1:54 9. *Violin Sonata No. 2: I. Adagio - Allegro* 6:39 10. *Violin Sonata No. 2: II. Adagio* 3:12 11. *Violin Sonata No. 2: III. Presto* 2:30 12. *Partita: I. Preludium: Grave* 4:30 13. *Partita: II. Toccata: Vivace* 3:15 14. *Partita: III. Intermezzo: Andantino melancolio* 3:32 15. *Partita: IV. Rondo: Presto* 3:11 16. *Capriccio* 2:03 17. *Kaprys polski (Polish Capriccio)* 2:58 Joanna Kurkowicz – violin Gloria Chien – piano

This release presents what must be a very demanding selection of pieces for piano and violin (sometimes solo violin) by Polish composer Grazyna Bacewicz, who played both instruments to a professional level and displays great inventiveness in writing for them, her music having plenty of unsettling moments and possessing a kind of hard-edged passion. All works here date from the 1940s and 50s and as a general rule the earlier pieces, though never exactly joyous, have the occasional note of optimism whereas the later ones turn more abstract and bitter, sometimes even aggressive. The two capriccios that close out the disc and the Sonata No. 4 belong to the former category, with lyrical and rhapsodic violin lines set against dance-like piano figures and the music alternating between high drama and more contemplative moments.

The extraordinary Sonata No. 2 for violin only is quite a desolate affair and has a dizzying effect, especially in its final movement, a rollercoaster ride of great virtuosity and a real assault on the violin. In fact, all the writing for violin has a very physical quality to it. Although Bacewicz is linked to Szymanowski and studied neo-classicism in pre-war France, in hindsight Shostakovich must also count as a reference point. Apart from a similarity in style Bacewicz's music has some of that same calculated madness and sense of defiance in the face of adversity. One cannot help feeling this might have had something to do with the situation in Poland at the time, rather

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like in Shostakovich's case with regards to Russia.

High marks therefore to pianist Gloria Chien and violinist Joanna Kurkowicz for delivering this obscure but remarkable and interesting repertoire. --- Ivar de Vries (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

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