

1. Name and surname: Romuald Erenc

2. Degrees and titles held:

- Master's degree in art, Academy of Music. Kiejstut and Grażyna Bacewicz in Łódź.

- Degree of doctor of musical art in the artistic discipline: instrumentalist, based on a solo recital with chamber elements. Academy of Music Kiejstut and Grażyna Bacewicz in Łódź.

3. Information on previous employment in scientific and artistic units.

-1984 - present, Public Music School in Sieradz

-1991-2005, Henryk Melcer Public Music School in Kalisz.

-1991 - present, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Faculty of Pedagogy and Art in Kalisz.

4. Indication of the achievement resulting from art. Article 16 paragraph 2 of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and titles and titles and title in the field of art (Journal of Laws No. 65, item 595, as amended), original arrangement, development and performance of selected works by Fryderyk Chopin for classical guitar, jazz violin and jazz double bass. Hereby the following works:

-Mazurek in A minor, Op.7 No. 2

- Prelude in E minor, op.28 no.4

- Prelude in G minor op.28 nr.22

-Prelude in C minor op.28 nr. 20

-Mazurek in A minor, Op.67 No. 4

- Mazurek in G minor op.67 nr. 2
- Nocturne Es-dur op.9 no.2
- Walc in A minor op.34 nr.2
- Prelude in A major, Op.28, No.7
- Grande Valse Brillante Es-major op. 66
- Valse in a minor No. 19 op. Posthumous

Co-performers: Maciej Strzelczyk (jazz violin) and Piotr Rodowicz (jazz double bass).

Recorded in February 2017 in the Adam Potęga studio in Łódź.

## Auto-abstract

Being a concerting artist for nearly thirty years I have been fortunate to cover many areas of my interests during my professional activities. However, when analyzing the long and complex path of my music journey, the practicing of the chamber music is what I consider to be most fulfilling. I have been always enjoying the cooperation with other musicians and the whole creative process together. For me, sharing the artistic experience is the very essence of what can be called creating or interpreting music. Notwithstanding the undoubtedly captivating aspect of an artist's solitude as a soloist, I personally appreciate the interpersonal relations and human connection between the fellow musicians that I have been experiencing in the past years. In regard to musical inspirations I consider human interactions to be much more stimulating and therefore helpful in the development of the musical imagination.

As a result of abovementioned work environment preferences and musical fascinations, together with other artists I participated in numerous concerts and created lots of recordings. Just after my graduation, performing under the name *the Duo Entr`acte*, I recorded, as first in Poland, in the cast guitar and flute (and then, the cassette. That piece was produced together with the flutist of the Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic, Urszula Borowska-Urbaniak. In this pioneer recording, I reached for the repertoire of Heitor Villi-Lobos, Maurice Ravel and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

My next project evolved to the quartet, named *the Entr`acte Ensemble*, that consisted of guitar, flute, viola and cello. The works that have been recorded then were those of Wenzeslaus Matiegka and Franciszek Schubert.

My other professional challenge, that was experimental and unique at that time in Poland, was the recording of *Romancero Gitano* by Mario Castelnuovo -Tedesco for choir and guitar. I recorded this together with *the Con Vigore* choir under the supervision of Professor Andrzej Ryłko.

Further, as the initiator and the member of *the Esfahan* project I recorded live concert in Mannheim, Germany. I was accompanied by a jazz flutist, a drummer and an instrumentalist playing the Arabic lute. Afterwards, we recorded a folk repertoire with some elements of jazz. In the meantime, I have been still actively involved in my other concert activities with various performers. Those other professional endeavors are confirmed by the documents I attached.

*The Esfahan* project, as described above, has deepened my fascination with the art of the improvised game. That, among other things, led to the creation of the album titled *Chopin on Strings* which is the subject of my habilitation. During my cooperation with many instrumentalists my professional contact with jazz violinist Maciej Strzelczyk and double bassist Piotr Rodowicz deserved special attention. Therefore, I invited these two musicians to work with me on the *Chopin on Strings* project.

It should be noted that plenty of various jazz musicians has been reaching for the repertoire of Fryderyk Chopin before. In particular, the daring interpretations of Andrzej Jagodziński's Trio or the solo performances of

Włodek Pawlik and Leszek Możdżer are worth mentioning. Thus, being encouraged by my predecessors mentioned above, I approached *the Chopin on Strings* project with no fear. However, I had several concerns. Firstly, I had in my mind unquestionably outstanding studies of Chopin's music. Secondly, I was aware of the magisterium of the performance tradition associated with the classical music environment, for which I have deep respect. Those last fears, however, proved to be unjustified, because I had the honor, along with other musicians, to perform this program at a concert commissioned by the Fryderyk Chopin Society in Warsaw (sic!) in April 2018. The concert was received enthusiastically. An additional worrying factor was also that for the first time such a difficult task, playing and interpreting Chopin, is undertaken by a classical guitarist, doing so with instrumentalists who use the jazz idiom. Of course, I am not a novice in this matter, because I have many years of experience playing with jazz musicians as well as practicing improvised music. Nevertheless, I would never dare call myself a jazz musician. Bearing all the above in mind, I finally concluded that this idea has one basic attribute, namely: it undertakes the task of interpreting Fryderyk Chopin's music on three stringed instruments, completely ignoring the basic medium of the great composer, which is the piano. It does not mean that I completely got rid of the original sound. On the contrary, piano scores and their permanent study were the starting point in this case.

The aim of this project is to present the music of the great Polish composer among people who are open to experiments and non-traditional approach to such a repertoire. Furthermore, I trusted that listening to Chopin's material on the strings may give intellectual satisfaction in recognizing well-known Chopin themes. My belief was grounded in the fact that we are dealing with a popular part of the canon of romantic piano literature, clad

in a completely new sound garment. An important group of listeners are complete listeners indifferent to Chopin's music. However, it often happens through the real source, the original music is reached through jazz or popular arrangements.

*"Periphery perfection"*, in a nutshell, one can characterize Chopin's compositions, quoting Cyprian Kamil Norwid, a poet who accompanied me during the creative process. It should be a sound material with humility supported by substantive preparation.

Fryderyk Chopin was a violinist, guitarist or double bass player. All the works of this project have been arranged. The recorded material, in addition to displaying the beauty of the composer, which is very close to Chopin. We have a lot of life and work. Musicians even claim that Chopin's compositions, written in notes, are the shadow of the artist during live concerts. The work on the recording of selected works consisted mainly in the selection of a repertoire that would give the listener a concise picture of the climate of Chopin's solo works. When choosing the repertoire I primarily took into account their feasibility on instruments that were available. The album contains 12 compositions:

- Mazurek in A minor, Op.7 No. 2
- Prelude in E minor, op.28 no.4
- Prelude in G minor op.28 nr.22
- Preludium in C minor op.28 nr. 20
- Mazurek in A minor, Op.67 No. 4
- Mazurek in G minor op.67 nr. 2
- Nocturne Es-dur op.9 no.2
- Walc in A minor op.34 nr.2
- Prelude in A major, Op.28, No.7
- Fantasia Impromptu in C sharp minor op.66

-Grande Valse Brillante Es-major op. 66

-Valse in a minor No. 19 op. Posthumous

While the part of the composition was made entirely, the rest were outlined the main themes. The structure and formal structure of some works were also specified, as well as the changed time signature.

As a classical guitarist, I was supposed to perform chord accompaniment, improvisations, a melodic line and a complete transcription in the case of three songs. In this performance, the idea is to have the classical guitar's unique sound to be emphasized. There was no question of adapting to the jazz sound, or even its parody. Despite the large number of augmented chords and the use of the so-called voicing, or the flagship way of accompaniment in a jazz guitar, the classical guitar does not lose its peculiarity. It is worth adding that I was very interfering with the harmonic structure by increasing the number of chords in the bars. There are chords in the upheavals and chordal substitutes. The guitar blends in with the double bass very much, creating a rhythmic section typical of jazz aesthetics. All the time I wanted to make the guitar in the project *Chopin on Strings* the only link with the classical tradition. One of the characteristics of Chopin's works boil down to their rich texture. Therefore, in order to accentuate that, I made the melodic line, also during improvisation, referring to the right-hand sound of the original piano, from time to time, adapting it to the guitar's specificity. The guitar etching is basically classic. All to contrast the jazz idiom realized by the violin and double bass. The improvisation was constructed in such a way as to avoid, enter the mannerist, duel for improvisation, which is undoubtedly very attractive to the listener, but there was no question of bringing Chopin motifs to the role of jazz standard. Violin solo, very dynamic and energetic, is toned by a quieter guitar and double bass. We would not get such a

unique sound if a guitarist strictly adhering to the jazz modus played in this project. I also used the technical capabilities of the recording studio, in which I could multiply the guitar voices. I managed to combine the classical guitar sound with the octave guitar, which greatly enhanced the sound image of the works. This procedure aimed to make the pieces more interesting for the listener. However, in live concerts reality, I do not use this type of electronic devices.

The choice of songs on the album was very carefully curated and it is certainly not accidental. These are mostly the songs played in the trio, but there is no shortage of duos and guitar playing solo. It was about creating a very intimate atmosphere and introducing changes in moods so that the whole musical narrative would be intriguing for the listener and transfer him/her into a specific state of the creative attention.

The compelling but also challenging work on the Chopin project has taught me a lot and gave me a lot of artistic satisfaction. It was a fascinating opportunity to move between different genres of music. The most essential aspect of this work was that Chopin's ingenious music had a huge appeal to my imagination. The more I have been diving into the creative process behind the project the more and more freedom and courage I felt to overcome my limitations while interpreting his works.

Despite the relatively short time since the release, the album continues to be warmly received and has positive reviews in the jazz community but not only there. Adam Baruch, a well-known and opinion-forming music critic, wrote in the Jazz Forum magazine: *“Chopin's music was a source of inspiration for countless Polish jazz recordings. In the last decade, Chopin's music was less frequently measured, so the project is like a nice*

*breath of fresh air. Since Chopin's music is mostly written for piano, the idea of rewriting it for stringed instruments is original and completely changes the point of view of contemporary interpretations of this music. The absence of a piano in Chopin's music is a novelty, attraction and trump of this band. Through arranging the musicians allow themselves to have a lot of freedom towards the original text, especially in the sense of rhythm, which may not appeal to some purists. Notwithstanding that, the concept of freedom in interpreting music is a main principle of art that should not be questioned or diminished. As a result, listeners are now able to become familiar with Chopin's preludes and mazurkas in the rhythmical disguise of Swing or Bossa Novy, and in other similarly unusual sceneries. On this CD, music is treated with respect and obvious love that belongs to the Polish National Composer.” (Review of the album at the Jazz Forum January 2018 - Adam Baruch \*\*\*\*\*)*

The program from the *Chopin on Strings* project was successfully performed on the stages of very respectable international festivals where we have been invited. To name a few: international Jazz Festival 2017 in Bansko, Bulgaria (where the concert was entirely broadcasted by the public television network in Bulgaria), Krakow Summer Jazz Festival 2018, Zakopane Jazz Spring 2018. Moreover, we were invited to festivals related to classical music in: XXI International Organ Music Festival in Lublin, XXXIII International Organ and Chamber Music Festival at the Cistercian Monastery in Jędrzejów. Without a doubt however, the special honor for me and other musicians involved in this project, was the opportunity to perform at the 100th Anniversary of Regaining Independence of Poland in front of many distinguished guests, such as ambassadors and employees of the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Poland operating in Nairobi, Kenya.

Further, the *Chopin on Strings* disc appeared on the air of Polish Radio and Polish Public Television. Also, some of the fragments were introduced to the wider radio audience by Marcin Kydryński, in his trademark radio program called *Sjesta*. In the *Three Quarters of Jazz* broadcast, he presented the recordings of Jan Ptaszyn Wróblewski. We also played live selected fragments of the album on TVP Polonia. On the RDC, long programs were prepared by the editor Marek Wiernik (I refer to podcasts on the internet). At the same time, on the YouTube there is a lot of videos from concerts with the *Chopin on Strings* project.

As I mentioned earlier, during my artistic journey I had the honor to cooperate with outstanding instrumentalists and vocalists. Particularly noteworthy is my cooperation with the following organists: the outstanding prof. Andrzej Chorosiński, prof. Jan van Mol (Belgium), Giampaolo di Rosa (Italy), Robert Grudzień, as well as the representative of the younger generation of gifted organists, Łukasz Mosur. I have been performing together with the Belgian soprano Sara van Mol and we touched upon the repertoire of John Dowland. I also had the pleasure and the honor to work with the following jazz musicians: Trio Andrzej Jagodziński, Maciej Sikala, Ryszard Grzegorz Borowski, Romuald Szalek, Bohdan Lizonia.

My scientific activity is focused on several research interests. One of them is the exploration of the pieces written for the sixteenth-century lute and the vihuel. I consider that to be the fundamental and at the same time extremely formative guitar literature for every guitarist. However, I still feel that is applied to the modern concert and the didactic needs in an

insufficient manner. For many years, I collected literature and sources about the beginnings of creativity for lacerated instruments. Interest in this subject was already born at the Academy of Music in Łódź. Then I started a fairly intense collaboration with the magazine "The World of the Classical and Acoustic Guitar" where I have been publishing articles related to guitar musicology.

My further research on this matter was deepened by visits to seminars and guitar festivals as well as personal contacts with authorities in this field. Those meetings were of considerable importance to me. Thanks to the knowledge of artists such as Hopkinson Smith, Jakob Lindberg, Graham Wade, and Javier Diaz Lattore, I have been able to enrich my knowledge about the sixteenth-century music. Since then, I have been constantly presenting Spanish, English, Italian and Polish music as part of solo and chamber concerts. I strongly believe that the use of a contemporary instrument is not an obstacle to the presentation of these works to the public. Playing this kind of music on a classical guitar reduces the distance between the listener and the repertoire of lacerated instruments created in the sixteenth century. Many years of study on the development of the old guitar repertoire has profoundly deepened my knowledge and broadened my interpretation horizons. After many years of work on this subject, I came to the conclusion that the Polish guitar environment should have at its disposal a publication that would introduce the problems of performing lute and vihuel music on a contemporary instrument. Therefore, I decided to write a compact compendium of knowledge on the subject that was the first this type of publication in the country, entitled *"The Lute and Vihuel Music of the Renaissance in the Light of Classical Guitar Performance"*. It was published in 2012 by the Adam Mickiewicz University publisher in Poznan.

That book was accompanied by a CD recorded by me, that included thirty songs from this historical period. The publication proved to be very helpful for students of music schools and music academies in the country. Currently it is planned to be published in English.

Another aspect of my research is the history of the instrument analysis of the artistic personality, which had a huge impact on the development of modern guitar. My collaboration with an outstanding musicologist and guitarist, biographer Joaquin Rodrigo and Andres Segovia, resulted, among others, in joint lectures in 2012 during the Science Session - Classical guitar formerly and today-a look at the last 50 years, organized by the Academy of Music in Krakow. In March 2012, at the invitation of prof. Ken Keaton, I had the honor to give a lecture on techniques in classical guitar music at the Florida Atlantic University in the United States of America. In November 2018, I had the opportunity to conduct guitar workshops in the Korogocho slums in Nairobi. It was an unforgettable, deeply moving pedagogical and psychological experience for me. I was also a co-host of music workshops at the National Conservatory of Music in Nairobi. I am also being invited to be a member of the jury of guitar competitions. In 2019 I participated in the jury's work during the *Hits for the Guitar* competition organized by the Youth Palace in Koszalin. In 2018 I had the pleasure of evaluating the students' play during the Christmas Guitar Competition in Bełchatów organized by the Public Primary Music School.

The composition and improvised music became the next source of inspiration and a path for my creative activity. What I mean by that is not limited to the jazz music only, it encompasses all spontaneous creation of

new artistic qualities. My collaboration with artists such as: Guenther Johannes Schmitz, flutist and German composer, a graduate of Berklee College of Music in Boston and Florian Alexndru-Zorn, a German drummer, turned out to be very helpful. With them, firstly in the *Esfahan* project, and next in the *Mantra* project, we use my compositions for improvisation, apart from rigid formal frames. With those projects I performed dozens of concerts in Germany, France and Poland.

Although my compositional activity may be described as a search for my own way of expression, rather than creativity *sensu stricto*, for a long time, especially in the initial period of music education, it has had an inspiring role in building my artistic personality. My lack of humility towards the difficult matter of composing music always justified for the small representation of creators fully deserving of the name of the composer, I justify the fact that the guitarist for being a performer and composer in a sense allows the tradition of this instrument. Violinists and linguists have always been there, and then the guitarists were just one and the other. We find confirmation of this fact in the biographical notes of the age of guitarists. I also want to develop my own compositional language, which will introduce a new quality to the guitar music. My compositions are very positively received by listeners in recitals and concerts. They are also played by pupils and students. The fact that they are not only for their own self-development is evidenced by the fact that they are published in the well-known Danish publishing house Bergmann Edition. In this publication, I published four solo works, a guitar duo, four trios for guitar, piano and cellos. Songs are available to guitarists around the world, because the publishing house is international in scope (the title pages in the documentation). Next items are under preparation.

Also, I composed and made music for nature documentaries. The movies are the following: *The Natural Phenomenon of Jeziorsko* and *the Great Warta Arch* (both are available on the YouTube).

Pedagogical work and teaching process is an important element of my professional activities. American education theoretician Henry Adams wrote: *"The teacher brushes against infinity. He never knows where his influence may end."* Indeed, I am aware that I have a great influence on shaping the young generation. I conduct guitar and improvisation exercises on a daily basis. The specificity of working with students in the Department of Music Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy and Fine Arts at the Adam Mickiewicz University is based on moving in many musical disciplines. In my case, conducting guitar lessons does not mean that I only deal with strictly classical repertoire, as is the case in music academies. The faculty goes to students with various skills and instrumental interests. Among students are graduates of first and second level music schools in the guitar class. In this case, I can continue this path by expanding their education with a new classical repertoire. Teaching process regarding the advanced students is quite different. Nowadays, I work more often with students who have chosen the way of a fingerstyle game, very popular today. It requires continuous self-education, enlarging the collection of professional literature, which will be very popular in the world. Furthermore, an adjunct I was a supervisor of master's and bachelor's theses. The thematic scope of them was very diverse but the core remained the same: a guitar and its variants. The topic of the students' works were also historical problems and teaching methodologies in early school phases (with the research-based approach).

I continue to work with students of 1st and 2nd degree music schools. Currently, my three students are continuing education at the Second Degree Public Music School in Zduńska Wola. The students won several prizes, received honors at various guitar competitions and had high scores at hearings on regional and national level.

Another very important element of my activity is management and organizational work. For many years I have been the artistic director of the Music in the Old Sieradz International Festival. Throughout many editions of this festival, outstanding artists from Poland but also from abroad have been performing in Sieradz and in other places in Sieradz's powiat. I was also the initiator of the Chanterelle Festival in Ostrów Wielkopolski. Moreover, I have been many times actively engaged in the organization process of the Aleksander Tansman Music Individual Competition in Łódź. For this involvement as well as for other accomplishments, I have been granted with the Marshal of the Lodzkie Voivodship Award.

On my initiative in September 2012, the 16<sup>th</sup> century musician Cyprian Bazylik's pieces were recorded. Together with the *Ars Nova* band, under the supervision of Jacek Urbaniak, the *Cantilen* choir and the *Subtilior Ensemble*, I coordinated the recording of all of the abovementioned composer's works. It should be noted that this is the first modern recording of Cyprian Bazylik's works. The CD has received two nominations for the phonographic *Fryderyk* Award.

I was also the initiator of the creation of the record with violin treasures of folk music from the area of Sieradz. The album is titled *Sieradz Violins* and was recorded with the participation of the Marta Cichej band, in which my student, Magdalena Kowalczyk, played. The CD was awarded as part of

the Musical Sources competition organized by the Polish Radio II Program.

One of the most important goals I set for myself in the near future is to record *Chopin on Strings 2* where there will be arrangements for a trio, extended with the participation of a string quartet. Another record project is a CD with my own solo and chamber compositions. Next, I would like to pursue further publications under the Bergmann Edition publisher. I am also working on a script for students who want to broaden their knowledge and skills on accompaniment on the classical guitar based on jazz harmony.

I have plans for the next editions of the Music in the Old Sieradz International Festival.

Romanol Eben