



15 August, Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Cracow Opera House, ul. Lubicz 48

OPENING CONCERT

Grigory Sokolov
piano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756–1791)

SONATA No. 16 in C major, K. 545

Allegro

Andante

Rondo. Allegretto

FANTASIA & SONATA in C minor, K. 475/457

FANTASIA in C minor, K. 475

Adagio – Allegro – Andantino – Più allegro – Tempo I

SONATA in C minor, K. 457

Molto allegro

Adagio

Allegro assai

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Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770–1827)

SONATA No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90

Mit Lebhaftigkeit und durchaus mit Empfindung und Ausdruck

Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorgetragen

SONATA No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111

Maestoso. Allegro con brio ed appassionato

Arietta. Adagio molto semplice cantabile

GRIGORY SOKOLOV

The unique, unrepeatable nature of music made in the present moment is central to understanding the expressive beauty and compelling honesty of Grigory Sokolov's art. The Russian pianist's poetic interpretations, which come to life with mystical intensity in performance, arise from profound knowledge of the works in his vast repertoire. His recital programmes span everything from transcriptions of medieval sacred polyphony and keyboard works by Byrd, Couperin, Rameau, Froberger to the music of Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Brahms and landmark twentieth-century compositions by Prokofiev, Ravel, Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, Schoenberg and Stravinsky. He is widely recognized among pianophiles as one of today's greatest pianists, an artist universally admired for his visionary insight, spellbinding spontaneity and uncompromising devotion to music.

Grigory Sokolov was born in St Petersburg (at that time Leningrad) on 18 April 1950. He started to play piano at the age of five and, two years later, began studies with Liya Zelikhman at the Central Special School of the Leningrad Conservatory. He went on to receive lessons from Moisey Khalfin at the Leningrad Conservatory, and gave his debut recital in Leningrad in 1962. Sokolov's prodigious talent was recognized in 1966 when at 16, he became the youngest musician ever to receive the Gold Medal at the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow. Emil Gilels, chairman of the Tchaikovsky Competition jury, subsequently championed Sokolov's work. While Grigory Sokolov undertook major concert tours to the United States and Japan in the 1970s, his artistry evolved and matured away from the international spotlight. His live recordings from Soviet times acquired near-mythical status in the West, evidence of an artist at once entirely individual, like no other, yet nourished by the rich soil of the Russian tradition of piano playing. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Sokolov began to appear at Europe's leading concert halls and festivals. He performed extensively as concerto soloist with orchestras of the highest calibre, working with among others the New York Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, the Philharmonia London, the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and the Munich Philharmonic, before deciding to focus exclusively on giving solo recitals. Sokolov performs around 70 concerts each season, immersing himself fully in a single programme and touring extensively throughout Europe.

Unlike many pianists, Sokolov takes the closest interest

in the mechanism and set-up of the instruments he plays. He spends hours exploring their physical characteristics, consulting and collaborating with piano technicians to achieve his ideal requirements.

“You need hours to understand the piano, because each one has its own personality and we play together,” he explains. The partnership between artist and instrument is critically important to the flow of Sokolov’s musical ideas. Sparing in his use of the sustaining pedal, he conjures everything from the subtlest tonal and textural gradations to the boldest contrasts of sound through the sheer brilliance of his finger-work. Critics regularly draw attention to his uncanny ability to articulate individual voices within a complex polyphonic texture and project seamless melodic lines.

Grigory Sokolov’s charismatic artistry holds the power to cultivate the concentration necessary for audiences to contemplate even the most familiar compositions from fresh perspectives. In recital he draws listeners into a close relationship with the music, transcending matters of surface display and showmanship to reveal deeper spiritual meaning. Sokolov’s art rests on the rock-solid foundations of his unique personality and individual vision. In 2014 Sokolov signed an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon and a first album was released in January 2015, a sensational recital recorded live at the 2008 Salzburg Festival. The double-disc set’s contents reflect the breadth and depth of his repertoire, comprising two sonatas by Mozart, Chopin’s 24 Préludes Op. 28 and encore pieces by J.S. Bach, Chopin, Rameau and Scriabin. Sokolov’s Salzburg Recital album was followed in January 2016 by the release of a second two-disc set, *Sokolov: Schubert / Beethoven*. The latter includes Schubert’s Four Impromptus D 899 and Three Piano Pieces D 946, recorded live at the Warsaw Philharmonie in 2013, and Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata No. 29 “Hammerklavier”*, recorded in performance at the 2013 Salzburg Festival, together with encores by Rameau and Brahms.

THE CRACOW OPERA. The history of Cracow Opera is the evidence of great passion for this branch of art on one side, and equally great inability that resulted from scarce fund resources and lack of understanding for music lovers from authorities on the other side. Until 2008 the music theatre didn't have its own house. It was always an undertenant, and another persistent attempts to build an opera house in Cracow ended with an inevitable fiasco. Only great determination of Bogusław Nowak, who was leading Cracow Opera at that time, allowed to open a tender for "Modernization and building a house for the Cracow Opera".

The Cracow Opera at that time owned the buildings of former military manege. In 1923, works of adapting it for theatre purposes and then movie theatre The House of Polish Soldier started. It was there where on 22 June 1945, first post-war opera show in Cracow took place – Moniuszko's *Verbum Nobile*.

Also there, Cracow Opera Society has staged Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Music Theatre's Lovers' Society showed Kálmán's *Countess Marica*. These two premieres announced the beginning of a permanent stage for opera and operetta, first as City Music Theatre, then Cracow Music Theatre, Opera and Operetta in Cracow and finally Cracow Opera, which has soon taken a leading position among Polish stages of opera.

For a tender for raising a new building, open in 2002, 23 projects has been sent and jury has chosen a Romuald Loegler's project. The opera finally inaugurated its residence on 13 December 2008 with Krzysztof Penderecki's *Devils of Loudun*. The Cracow Opera has multidisciplinary music functions and cooperates with artists of various arts and is a special place on a cultural map of Cracow.

