

**INNA FALIKS**  
piano

**REBECCA MOZO**  
narrator

**Polonaise-fantaisie:**  
**The Story of a Pianist**  
Text by Inna Faliks



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# POLONAISE-FANTAISIE: THE STORY OF A PIANIST

**INNA FALIKS**, piano  
**Rebecca Mozo**, narrator

## CD 1

**Rodion Shchedrin**: Basso Ostinato ♦ **J. S. Bach**: Prelude and Fugue in G-sharp Minor ♦ **Jan Freidlin**: Ballade in Black and White  
♦ **Mozart**: Fantasia in D Minor ♦ **Chopin-Liszt**: The Maiden's Wish  
♦ **Paganini-Liszt**: La Campanella

## CD 2

**Chopin**: Polonaise-fantaisie ♦ **Gershwin**: Preludes 1, 2 and 3  
♦ **Elliot Carter**: Retrouvailles ♦ **P. I. Tchaikovsky**: Nocturne in C-sharp Minor ♦ **Harrison Birtwistle**: Oockooing Bird

Total Playing Time: 98:18

Note: Musical selections alternate with narrated passages to tell the pianist's story in both words and music.



# Polonaise-fantaisie:

## The Story of a Pianist

**INNA FALIKS, piano**  
**REBECCA MOZO, narrator**

### CD 1 (52:54)

1. **Rodion Shchedrin:** Basso Ostinato (3:52)
2. "Today, Odessa is torn..." (4:12)
3. **J.S. Bach:** Prelude and Fugue in G-sharp Minor, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1 (4:29)
4. "In the few years of early lessons..." (4:03)
5. **Jan Freidlin:** Ballade in Black and White\* (7:20)
6. "The word 'immigration' popped up..." (2:15)
7. **W.A. Mozart:** Fantasia in D Minor, K 397 (5:51)
8. "Aunt Dolly and Uncle Ilya took us in..." (3:01)
9. **Chopin-Liszt:** The Maiden's Wish (3:24)
10. "We moved closer to the school..." (3:27)
11. **Paganini-Liszt:** La Campanella (4:48)
12. "A serious student of Emilio del Rosario meant..." (6:05)

### CD 2 (45:24)

1. **Frédéric Chopin:** Polonaise-fantaisie, Op. 61 (12:59)
2. "In case you think that by the 18th century..." (3:33)
3. **George Gershwin:** Prelude 1 in B-flat Major (1:41)
4. Gershwin: Prelude 2 in C-sharp Minor (3:25)
5. Gershwin: Prelude 3 in E-flat Minor (1:27)
6. "We emailed each other non-stop..." (4:29)
7. **Elliot Carter:** Retrouvailles (1:47)
8. "The festival musicians had rooms..." (5:26)
9. **P. I. Tchaikovsky:** Nocturne in C-sharp Minor (3:10)
10. "Amalia was very angry." (3:54)
11. **Harrison Birtwistle:** Oockooing Bird and "Living with Music..." (3:30)

Total Playing Time: 98:18

### ARTIST'S INTRODUCTION

Five years ago, when I was pregnant with my son Nathaniel, I started writing down vivid memories of my childhood in Odessa, the former Soviet Union, and of immigration to the United States. Gradually, these started to take the shape of a book about a life in music. At that time, I was living in New York City, performing, and curating my series Music/Words, where poets read between musical performances. Poetry has inspired me for as long as I can remember, and found expression in my first CD (*Sound of Verse*, MSR Classics). As I hadn't written in years, it was profoundly satisfying to be exercising that aspect of my persona once again.

A few years later, after I had moved to Los Angeles to head the piano department at UCLA, the chapters of the book found their way into the hands of one Cynthia Comsky, an incredible producer and magnificent lady. She insisted that I use them to create a recital-monologue. Many memories described in the book had musical pieces inexorably connected to them. I chose pieces that had been with me since childhood, as well as others that—along my path to becoming a concert pianist—had found their way into my repertoire. The format—play-read-play-read—duplicated the structure of my Music/Words programs, where the poems and the music create an arch that, I hope, resonates emotionally with my audiences. In 2015, just a few months after my daughter Frida was born, the brilliant director Cameron Watson directed

me and wonderful actress Rebecca Mozo in a performance of the work at the Ebell of Los Angeles.

I know that I am the artist that I am partially thanks to growing up in the Odessa of the past: seven people in a three-room apartment, surrounded by books, music, ideas and childhood friends—one of whom is Misha. You will meet him in the story. He is my husband and the father of my two children.

Recording this story, and this music, is the most personal project I have ever undertaken. It not only chronicles and illuminates my life's path—travels, seminal influences and evolution as an artist—but it's also my love story.

— Inna Faliks



Inna and Misha as children in Odessa

Misha's response to "Draw me a sheep."



"Adventurous and passionate" (*The New Yorker*) Ukrainian-born pianist **Inna Faliks** has established herself as one of the most exciting, committed, communicative, and poetic artists of her generation. Faliks has made a name for herself as a highly versatile artist through her commanding performances of the standard piano repertoire, as well as her genre-bending interdisciplinary projects and attention to contemporary composers, including Richard Danielpour, Timo Andres, Paola Prestini and Billy Childs. After her acclaimed teenage debuts at the Gilmore Festival and with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, she has appeared on many of the world's great stages throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, both in solo recitals and concerto performances with many leading orchestras, collaborating with

such conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, and Keith Lockhart. Her better-known performance venues include Carnegie Hall's Weill Concert Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Salle Cortot in Paris, Chicago's Orchestra Hall, Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall and major halls in China.

Ms. Faliks's distinguished career has encompassed innumerable tours throughout America as well as international tours to nations including China, Canada, Mexico, Israel, Italy, and France. She has participated in a host of important festivals such as Verbier, Brevard, Newport Festival and Portland piano festival, among others. Her artistry has been featured on domestic broadcasts from radio stations such as WQXR, WNYC, and WFMT as well as on many international television broadcasts. Her chamber music partnerships include work with Gilbert Kalish, Fred Sherry, Ilya Kaler, Colin Carr, Wendy Warner, and many others. She has won many prestigious competitions, including the coveted International Pro Musicis Award in 2005.

Critics have called Inna Faliks "a concert pianist of the highest order" (Chicago WTTW), and praised her "courage to take risks, expressive intensity and technical perfection" (*General-Anzeiger*, Bonn), "riveting passion, playfulness" (*Baltimore Sun*) and "signature blend of lithe grace and raw power" (*Lucid Culture*). Her October 2014 all-Beethoven CD release on MSR Classics drew rave reviews: The disc's preview on WTTW called Faliks "High priestess of the piano, a pianist of the highest order, as dramatic and subtle as a great stage actor." A previous critically acclaimed CD on MSR Classics, *Sound*





*of Verse*, was released in 2009, featuring the music of Boris Pasternak, Rachmaninoff, and Ravel. Her discography also includes a recital recording for the Yamaha Disklavier library.

Faliks is the founder and curator of the Manhattan Arts Council's award-winning poetry-music series Music/Words, dedicated to creating performances in collaboration with distinguished poets ([www.musicwordsnyc.com](http://www.musicwordsnyc.com)). This poetry-music series has been described as "surreal, impactful, and relevant" (*Lucid Culture*).

Her past teachers include Leon Fleisher, Boris Petrushansky, Gilbert Kalish, Ann Schein, and Emilio del Rosario. She currently serves as professor and head of piano department at UCLA, and is also in demand as an artist-teacher, frequently invited to judge competitions and to give master classes in major conservatories and universities. Inna Faliks is a Yamaha artist.

[www.innafaliks.com](http://www.innafaliks.com)

Actress **Rebecca Mozo** has appeared on stages across the country and currently resides in Los Angeles. Her film and television credits include "You Bury Your Own," "Zerophilia," "Headless Horseman," "The Waterhole," "Cold Case," "Medium," "Modern Family," and "Break a Hip." She has also narrated several audio books including *The Vampire Diaries* series as well as Sara B. Larson's *DEFY* series. Current projects include a featured performance alongside eight other Los Angeles-based theater actors in the documentary *LOVE 99*, narrated by Helen Mirren. She



is a longtime member of The Antaeus Theater company. Mozo earned her BFA from Rutgers University and studied at The Globe Theatre in London.

I am grateful to the following people, without whom this project would not exist: Bob Attiyeh, Cynthia Comsky, Cameron Watson, Rebecca Mozo, Joseph Patrych, Nicolas Essig, and Luis Henao.

I dedicate this recording to my family: my parents, Irene and Simon Faliks, who were brave enough to leave their homeland in search of a better life in 1989 ... as well as my husband and best friend, then and now, Misha Shpigelmacher—also my two lovely children, Nathaniel and Frida.

— Inna Faliks

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For program notes on this album's piano selections, go to <https://delosmusic.com/apianiststory>

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