

2012 Hefner Competition Judges

Graciella Kowalczyk

French born, Polish raised pianist Graciella Kowalczyk has appeared in concerts and recitals as a soloist in over fifteen countries and four continents, including the National Philharmonic in Warsaw, Poland; Sergei Rachmaninov Concert Hall in Moscow, Russia; Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria; Bellini Conservatory in Palermo, Italy; Kölner Philharmonic in Cologne, Germany; Ed Landreth Auditorium in Fort Worth, Texas; Bragg auditorium in Kansas City, Missouri; and Medellin Philharmonic, Medellin, Colombia. She received prizes such as: First Prize in the Philharmonia of Greater Kansas City Concerto Competition; First Prize in the International Seiler Piano Competition, Italy; First Prize in the International Young Artist Competition, Germany (the prize included a scholarship to study in Moscow); First Prize in the All-Poland Competition, when she received an award from the Polish Ministry of Culture and Art.

She received her doctorate in piano performance from the University of Kansas. She is presently enjoying a very successful musical career and serves as Artistic director for the international non-profit foundation, Doctors for Music...Where Medicine Meets the Arts.

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Jeni Slotchiver

Jeni Slotchiver attended Interlochen Arts Academy and the Aspen Music Festival, before earning the bachelor and master of music degrees in piano performance at Indiana University. Honored with performance grants from The Smithsonian Institution and the New York Public Libraries, she made her solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall as the first prize winner of the Artists International Young Musicians Auditions. A champion of twentieth century composers, Ms. Slotchiver is dedicated to the presentation of new and rarely heard music, and has given the world premieres of many American works. She received critical acclaim in Asia, England, France, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Russia, and Spain. Her articles and essays are published in several languages and appear in prominent music periodicals, including *Piano Magazine*, where she was a featured contributor for the Busoni Symposium in London. In 1997 Jeni Slotchiver presented an historic all-Busoni performance at Merkin Concert Hall, the first of its kind in New York City in thirty years.

Anthony Tommasini, writing for *The New York Times*, selected Ms. Slotchiver's debut CD *Busoni The Visionary*, as a Critics Choice for 1999. David Hurwitz, in *Classics Today* wrote, "*Her wide range of keyboard color and sense of mystery are quite simply mesmerizing... Positively physical.*" Volume Three of this series will be released this year.

American radio and broadcast appearances include NPR's *Performance Today*, WNYC's *The Fishko Files*, WPLN's *Live in Studio C*, WKCR's *Live Constructions*, and WQXR's *Reflections from the Keyboard* with David Dubal. Profiles of Jeni have appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Piano Magazine*, *CDNOW*, *SEQUENZA/21*, *Mundoclasico*, *Time Out NY*, *Café Momus* (Budapest) and *PJK* (Moscow). Tony Gualtieri, in Singapore, called her performance, "A revelation...*Bold and brazen. Jeni Slotchiver is a pianist of the highest artistry.*" And in Canada, Lucie Renaud said succinctly, "A delight! *Her technique is superior...Her interpretation refined.*"

Ms. Slotchiver is a favorite guest recitalist and concerto soloist at the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC, the Americas Society and the Yamaha Piano Salon Series in New York City, the City Universities of New York, Dartmouth College, Bennington Museum, C. W. Post University, Florida International University, the Presidential Library in California, and Rudolf Ganz Memorial Hall in Chicago.

Visiting-Artist honors include University of Tulsa, Chicago Musical College and Tennessee State University, where Ms. Slotchiver served as Co-Artistic Director of the Nashville International Piano Festival. This season, Jeni Slotchiver received a third invitation to appear as Celebrity Recitalist and Lecturer at the *World Piano Conference* in Novi Sad, Serbia.