



## LESZEK MOŹDŹER

Pianist, composer and arranger

**Pianist Leszek Moźdźer, born 1971, is regarded as the most important discovery in Polish jazz during the past 10 years. It is particularly the smooth interweaving of the sound aesthetic and playing culture of classical music with the openness and energy of jazz, the rhythmic and melodic qualities of his playing and his breathtaking technical skills combined with the highest musicality which form the hallmark of his music. He is one of the most famous and successful musicians in his home country and enjoys the attention and public recognition usually reserved only for popstars. His albums regularly reach gold and platinum, thousands go to his concerts and there is hardly any important award which Leszek Moźdźer has not won. At the same time he is also internationally acclaimed, has toured through all European countries as well as in the USA, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Brazil, Canada, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Uruguay and Chile. There are, meanwhile, more than 100 albums featuring Leszek Moźdźer including many under his own name.**

**Born in 1971, he has been playing the piano since the age of five.** He has covered every stage of the formal education until graduating from the Gdańsk Academy of Music named after Stanisław Moniuszko in 1996. He became interested in jazz relatively late - in the last grade - when he was 18. He was introduced into jazz in the band of Emil Kowalski, a clarinet player, but his proper start took place at the first rehearsal with a band called Miłość (Love) back in 1991.

**From then on, the young pianist has been receiving some of Poland's most prestigious music awards.** Among them the „Krzysztof Komeda Prize“ by the Foundation of Polish Culture (1992), the 1st prize at the International Jazz Improvisation Competition in Katowice in 1994, the most important Polish music award “Fryderyk 1998” as Jazz Musician of the Year, the Prize of the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk for outstanding artistic achievement (1999) and the Grand Prize of the Polish Culture Foundation 2006 for outstanding performances promoting Polish Culture. In the poll organized among the readers of the Polish jazz magazine “Jazz Forum”, Leszek Moźdźer was voted the most promising musician of the year in 1993 and 1994, as the musician of the year in 1995 and 1996 and as best pianist for 14 years in a row – from 1994 – 2008.

**Besides working with the band Miłość, Leszek Moźdźer later became a member of the Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet.** On many occasions he recorded film music with Zbigniew Preisner and also regularly works with Jan Kaczmarek, Polish composer working in LA, while recording music score (for 20th Century Fox and Mira Max). He has been invited to perform jointly with the celebrities of Polish jazz, such as Tomasz Stańko, Janusz Muniak, Michał Urbaniak, Anna Maria Jopek, Adam Pierończyk and Piotr Wojtasik and has also worked with acclaimed international musicians, including Arthur Blythe, Buster Williams, Billy Harper, Joe Lovano, Pat Metheny and Archie Shepp.

**Improvisations on the themes by Fryderyk Chopin have further strengthened Leszek Moźdźer's position and ranked him among the most outstanding individualities and virtuosos of the European jazz.** His theatrical projects are also remarkable, among others "Hair - love, rock musical" at the Musical Theatre in Gdynia, "Tango with Lady M." at the Polish Theatre of Dance in Poznań, "4.48 Psychosis" at the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, "Rewizor" at the Teatr Dramatyczny, Warsaw and "Mandarynki i Pomarańcze" at the Teatr Muzyczny, Wrocław. Leszek Moźdźer also created the music for the first in the world trans-opera based on William Shakespeare : "A Midsummer Night's Dream". The premiere was held in Musical Theatre in Gdynia in October 2001.

**On 26th August 2006 Leszek Moźdźer was featured in the final concert of Pink Floyd guitarist and singer David Gilmour in Danzig.** The mega music event with more than 50,000 spectators in the port of Danzig was recorded on the live CD / DVD “David Gilmour – Live in Gdansk”.

**On 21st of August 2010 Leszek Moźdźer performed in Gdansk on three stages for 22 000 people in a project called “Moźdźer +”** together with Marcus Miller, John Scofield, Lars Danielsson, Steve Swallow, Bill Stewart, Naná Vasconcelos, Zohar Fresco, the Aukso Chamber Orchestra directed by Marek Moś and numerous other guests.

**Besides numerous solo concerts, Leszek Możdżer's most important current projects** include particularly his Możdżer / Danielsson / Fresco trio and the duo with Swedish bassist and ACT artist Lars Danielsson. Leszek Możdżer's first two albums with ACT also featured this line up.

***Pasodoble* (ACT 9458-2), released in 2007, was an important milestone for Leszek Możdżer's prominence outside his home country of Poland and was highly acclaimed by the international press.** Fono Forum described the line up as, "a dream team of intuitive interplay"; Great Britain's most famous jazz journalist Stuart Nicholson was highly impressed with the "*clarity of thought and execution rarely encountered in jazz*" and the French Jazzman / Jazz Magazine named *Pasodoble* as the album of the year. In Poland the album reached gold and platinum.

***Tarantella* (ACT 9477-2) followed in 2009 and is the continuation of the highly successful collaboration between Lars Danielsson and Leszek Możdżer** – this time with an expanded line up which also includes trumpeter Mathias Eick, guitarist John Parricelli and drummer Eric Harland. *Tarantella* reached gold in Poland and, in Germany, an overwhelming majority of the listeners of NDR Play Jazz voted the CD as album of the year. The critics were also euphoric – Jazzthetik wrote: "*artistically performed chamber jazz full of diverse timbres with a previously unheard richness of melody and unmistakable tendency to classical music.*" Jazz thing added: "*compositions which are intoxicated with melodies, dream-like, full of yearning, weightlessly dancing and fearlessly beautiful.*"

**Leszek Możdżer's new album, *Komeda* (ACT 9516-2), which will be released on 24th June is his first under his own name with ACT.** He uses the recording as an opportunity to pay homage to his idol Krzysztof Komeda. The jazz pianist and film music composer who died in 1969 aged only 38 years, is regarded as the second national hero of Polish music alongside Chopin and wrote, amongst other things, the soundtracks to almost all of Roman Polanski's films which were filmed during his lifetime.

Możdżer's *Komeda* project has undergone a long maturing period. The album's producer Paweł Potoroczyn, tried to get him in the studio for this project for six years but Możdżer only feels ready for it now. The album's entire repertoire comprises solely of compositions by Komeda although Możdżer emphasises how much freedom he still had, despite this, also because he was able to select the pieces and put them together in any way he wanted. He also had freedom with regards to the interpretation: "*Komeda leaves so much freedom for the improvisational musician. If you look at the notes you can say that Komeda regards the interpreter as a partner. He trusts him and I can see that in the compositions.*" In this way, many small masterpieces have been created which go far beyond any pigeonholed way of thinking and offer a musical romance for lovers of classical music as well as jazz fans.

## Awards:

- Krzysztof Komeda prize awarded in 1992 by the Foundation of Polish Culture
- 1st prize at the International Jazz Improvisation Competition in Katowice in 1994
- Mateusz Świącicki Prize awarded by 3rd Channel of the Polish National Radio
- Grand Prix Melomani – the Artist of the Year 1997 awarded by Łódź Music Lovers' Society
- Fryderyk 1998 – the Jazz Musician of the Year 1998
- Prize of the Mayor of the City of Gdansk for outstanding artistic achievement 2004
- "Paszport Polityki", awarded by the Polish magazine "Polityka" - 2004
- Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Prize for the Polish Culture Promotion abroad – 2007
- Readers of "Jazz Forum" prize: "Pianist of the Year" – from 1994 till 2008
- Prize of the President of the City of Gdansk for the artistic achievements Neptuny 2009
- Sztorm Roku Prize of Gazeta Wyborcza Trójmiasto for the best event in 2010 – Moźdżer +
- Splendor Gedanensis – The City of Gdańsk in Music category, 2011
- MocArty 2010 RMF Classic – The Man of The Year 2010, 2011
- "Jazz Forum Magazine, Reader's Poll – „Musician of the Year“ 1995 & 1996
- "Jazz Forum Magazine, PL, Reader's Poll – „Pianist of the Year" 1994 - 2008
- "Jazz Forum Magazine, PL, Reader's Poll – „Rising Star“ 1993 & 1994

## Discography:

### Leszek Moźdżer on ACT

- "Komeda" (ACT 9516-2), 2011
- "Tarantella" with Lars Danielsson, Mathias Eick, John Parricelli, Eric Harland (ACT 9477-2), 2009  
*Gold Award, PL / Album of the Year, NDR Play Jazz, DE*
- "Pasodoble" (ACT 9458-2) Lars Danielsson & Leszek Moźdżer Duo, 2007  
*Gold and Platinum Award, PL / Album of the Year – Jazzman / Jazz Magazine, PL*

### Leszek Moźdżer on other labels

- "Kaczmarek by Moźdżer" (2010)
- "Missa gratiatoria" – Leszek Moźdżer with Gdańsk University Choir (2008)
- "FIREBIRD VII" Phil Manzanera, Leszek Moźdżer, Charles Hayward, Yaron Stavi (2008)
- "LIVE CD & DVD" Moźdżer, Danielsson, Fresco (2007)
- "Between Us And The Light", Moźdżer, Danielsson, Fresco (2006)  
*Double-Platinum Award, PL*
- "The Time", Moźdżer, Danielsson, Fresco (2005 )  
*Double-Platinum Award, PL*
- "Piano" (2004)
- "Makowicz vs Moźdżer" - At The Carnegie Hall NYC, (2004)
- "Live in Ukraine" (2003)
- "Chopin Demain-Impressions" (1999)
- "Live in Sofia" mit Adam Pierończyk (1997)  
*Album of the Year, Jazz Forum, PL*
- "Facing the Wind" Duo mit David Friesen (1996)
- "Talk to Jesus" (1996)  
*Album of the Year, Jazz Forum, PL*
- "Chopin-impresions" (1994)

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