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## Mostly Music: Feb. 18, 2002

Mostly Music Staff

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**Northeastern Illinois University  
School of Music**

**Presents**

***Jadwiga Kotnowska***  
**Flute**

***Yoko Yamada-Selvaggio***  
**Piano**

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**Monday, February 18, 2002 - 1:40 pm  
Recital Hall -- Fine Arts Center  
Northeastern Illinois University**

**This concert is sponsored by Mostly Music at NEIU**



Northeastern Illinois University

Presents

**Jadwiga Kotnowska** - Flute

**Yoko Yamada-Selvaggio** - Piano

\*\*\*\*\*

**Program**

**Les Folies d'Espagne** (solo flute).....**Marin Marais**

**La Merle Noir**.....**Olivier Messiaen**

**Meditation from Thais**.....**Jules Massenet**

**Dum Spiro Spero** (flute with tape)....**Joanna Bruzdowicz**

**Two Studies in Blue**.....**Robert Kritz**

I. Blue Bagatelle #2

II. Blue Reflections

**Sonata**.....**Francis Poulenc**

I. Allegro Malinconico

II. Cantilena

III. Presto Giocoso

**Carmen Fantaisie Brillante**.....**Francois Borne**

*Please hold your applause for a brief silence after each piece.*

*This will help everyone to enjoy every note.*

*As a courtesy to the audience and the performers, we ask that you turn off all electronic devices, including pagers and cellular phones.*

*Additionally, flash photography and recording devices are prohibited.*

**About the Music...**

**Marin Marais** (1656-1728) was one of the most important and popular opera composers in the baroque era. He was also the viola da gamba virtuoso at the court of Louis XIV and XV. In this position, he composed and played hundreds of works for his instrument. His stated intention was that these pieces should be played on other instruments, in his words "especially the flute," and adaptations were made of these lovely, melodic works, simply by modifying the key, the articulation, and the ornamentation. Today's work is the sacred "folia" theme, followed by a set of variations, dazzling in their day, and still engaging and moving.

**Olivier Messiaen** (1908-1992) wrote music which is among the most influential and idiosyncratic of the 20th Century. The warmth pervading his music is compounded from his deep Catholic faith, his celebration of human love, and his love of nature. His harmonies are rich and chromatic, often modal; his rhythms are novel, involving irregular metres; his timbres are drawn from sounds of nature, often imitating birdsong. But he always gives supremacy to melody, and today's composition, performed in its original form, lyrically and compellingly speaks to the soul.

**Jules Massenet** (1842-1912) composed 20 operas, all of them produced, and 8 of them still in the standard repertoire of most opera companies. His greatest success came with *Manon*, in 1884. But today's *Meditation*, from the now rarely performed opera *Thais*, is certainly his "biggest hit," with transcriptions for every instrument from piccolo to tuba often and regularly performed. In the arrangement for flute as performed by Ms. Kotnowska, we hear the graceful lilt, feel the pensive sadness, and marvel at Massenet's melodic gift.



**Joanna Bruzdowicz** (b. 1943) grew up in a home filled with music; her father was a cellist, her mother a pianist. She began composing at 12, and after receiving her M.A. at the Chopin Academy in Warsaw, she received a scholarship from the French Government to study composition in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen. A dramatic composer with strong classical structure, her music is now performed on all continents with increasing regularity. Her score for Agnes Varda's film *The Vagabonds* won many honors (including Cannes) -- and most recently she composed the music for a 36 episode TV Series with screenplays written by Ms. Bruzdowicz and her husband, Jergen Tittel. Melody -- graceful, intense, elegiac -- is at the heart of her *Dum Spiro Spero*, which means "When you breathe, you hope." This motto is at the heart of all her music.

**Robert Kritz** (b. 1925) is the only American composer on today's program. Jadwiga Kotnowska first heard his music in a performance by Saxophonist David Pituch, when he premiered Kritz's *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* with the Warsaw Symphony in 1997. The blend of accessible tonality and contemporary, jazz-inspired textures appealed instantly to Ms. Kotnowska. She wrote and asked Kritz to write a new piece for her. The new work was completed in the spring of 2001, and Ms. Kotnowska has already performed it in several of her European recitals to enthusiastic response. She now brings Kritz's music -- *Two Studies in Blue for Flute and Piano* -- back to the U.S., where it will be included in five of the concerts on her current tour. The first study, *Blue Bagatelle #2*, evokes memories and nostalgia for the past, some joyous, some melancholy. The second, *Blue Reflections*, is an expression of our ultimate loneliness, and an open plea for intimate communication. Both are technically challenging, as well as contagiously melodious.

**Francis Poulenc** (1899-1963) framed his creative life with chamber music for wind instruments -- the *Trio* and *Sextet* early in his career, and the three *Sonatas* in his last years. These late sonatas each received dedications to friends recently deceased -- the *Clarinet Sonata* to composer Arthur Honneger; the *Oboe Sonata* to composer Serge Prokofiev; and today's *Flute Sonata* to music patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. The *Allegro* is melancholy and limpid, yet filled with spicy harmonies; the soulful *Cantilena* is lyrical -- a vivid reminder that Poulenc's truest voice is that of a songwriter; and even the brittle and witty *Giocoso* finale is interrupted by a calm, elegiac return to the dolorous first movement theme. Because of its immense audience appeal, this sonata is one of the most performed works for flute in the entire literature of music.

**Francois Borne** (1862-1929) studied composition with Massenet and Saint-Saens. His early chamber music won him the Prix Chartier award from the Conservatoire de Paris. But later works met with little interest -- of his eight operas, only one was performed, and that only twice -- so he took a position as music critic for *Le Petit Parisien*. He heard Bizet's *Carmen* and was so moved that he decided to write a fantasy, a set of variations on themes from the opera. Today's performance is in the original version, for flute and piano, which has become an audience favorite, a *tour de force* attempted by only the most daring virtuosi.



## ***About the Artists...***

**Jadwiga Kotnowska** . Born in Warsaw, Ms. Kotnowska started her musical education at the age of ten, and for the next seven years she was a proficient performer on three instruments: the flute, the violin, and the piano. After winning several international flute competitions while still in her teens, she settled on the flute, and quickly established herself as a dynamic and exciting flute soloist, widely known and sought after throughout Europe.

After completing her Masters Degree at the Warsaw Academy of Music, she studied flute with Aurele Nicolet in Switzerland, with Jean Paul Rampal at the International Academy of Arts in Nice, and with Alain Marion in Paris.

Jadwiga Kotnowska was chosen to perform the premiere performances of the *Flute Concertos* by Penderecki and Georecki, and the *Flute Sonatina* by Pierre Boulez. She recently gained great attention and admiration for writing and performing her own transcription for flute and orchestra of Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. The performances took place in 2000 with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and the critics' reviews were wildly enthusiastic. She has recorded it with the Breslau Symphony, available on a Tonpress CD.

Following this U.S. tour, she returns to Germany for another solo appearance with the Berlin Philharmonic. In addition to her flourishing career as a soloist, and her deep involvement as a teacher, Ms. Kotnowska will this year complete her Musicology and Performance Ph.D. at the Warsaw Academy of Music.

**Yoko Yamada-Selvaggio** was born in Japan, where she began her career as a pianist while still a student at the Toho Institute of Music, receiving critical raves. After winning the prestigious all-Japan Student Competition, she gave concerts in Tokyo and Hamamatsu, both as a soloist and as an accompanist.

After her spectacular successes in Japan, she came to the U. S., where she continued her studies with Gabriel Chodos. She received her Master's Degree from the New England Conservatory, and went on to win their soloist competition.

Since embarking on a concert career, Yoko has appeared frequently with symphony orchestras in the U.S. She has gained a reputation as an outstanding pianist, both as a soloist and as a collaborative artist.

Currently living in Evanston, Ms. Yamada-Selvaggio now enriches the musical life in the Chicago area, where her impeccable skill and musicianship are in continual demand.

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