

Karol Józef  
**LIPIŃSKI**  
(1790–1861)

**String Trios,  
Op. 8 and  
Op. 12**

Voytek Proniewicz,  
Solo Violin

Adam Roszkowski,  
Violin

Jan Roszkowski,  
Cello



## Karol Józef Lipiński (1790–1861) String Trios, Op. 8 and Op. 12

Karol Józef Lipiński was born on 30 October 1790 on the estate of the aristocratic Potocki family near Lublin, Poland. His father was director of music for the Potockis, and in this music-friendly aristocratic setting young Karol soon surpassed his father's musical ability. By age eight Karol Lipiński was playing concertos of Pleyel and Giornovich. His father suggested a tour in the manner of Mozart, but Karol flatly refused, betraying a humility that remained a part of his character. Following the partition of Poland in 1795 by Prussia, Austria, and Russia (thus ending Poland's independent existence until the 20th century), many Polish court orchestras were disbanded, and the Potocki orchestra was no exception. Karol's father moved the family to Lvov (capital of the Austrian partition called Galicia), where he served as Kapellmeister of Count Starzenski's musical establishment. Lipiński shared some of his father's duties as Kapellmeister, composing several dances and three symphonies before 1810. After a brief flirtation with the cello, Lipiński returned to the violin with renewed passion and obsessive practice, never sure that his technique was fine enough, though he would soon rival Paganini for the title of 'greatest' violinist in Europe. In 1809 Lipiński was appointed concertmaster of the Lvov Theatre. Promoted to Kapellmeister in 1812, he was able to champion serious dramatic efforts while using his own talents in a lyric or comic way. Lipiński's career in light opera began when he met the dramatist and impresario Jan Kaminski. Kaminski's productions often featured music – the Austrians allowed Polish performances in the German theatre twice a week. Soon Lipiński was contributing music for operettas, the first of which (*The Danube Mermaid*) was performed in 1814. His solid professional attainments provided enough financial security that he was able to marry his life-long love, Regina Garbaczynska. In 1814 Lipiński was granted an extended release from his theatre duties to visit Vienna. His purpose in travelling to Vienna was to make the acquaintance of Louis Spohr, one of the finest violinist/composers in Europe. Lipiński heard Spohr play in February 1815 and was so impressed that he abandoned the theatre and decided to pursue the life of a virtuoso. He spent two years preparing for public performance, and first performed as a committed

virtuoso in Lvov in May 1817. Later that year he departed for Italy with the aim of hearing Paganini. Catching up with the Italian master in Padua, Paganini invited Lipiński to dinner and to breakfast the following day. Lipiński played for Paganini his three *Capriccios*, *Op. 10*, which Lipiński had dedicated to the Italian. Paganini immediately picked up his guitar and played accompaniment, much to Lipiński's delight. In April 1818, the two violinists appeared in Piacenza, performing Kreutzer's *Concerto for Two Violins*. Paganini invited Lipiński to tour Italy together, but Lipiński missed his wife (who was about to give birth) and returned home. On the way he met with one of the last living pupils of Tartini and was much impressed, and while continuing to admire Paganini, he followed more closely the Tartini-Spohr artistic ethos. Lipiński performed in Galicia and neighbouring areas beginning in 1821; in 1823 he gave joint concerts in Kiev with Maria Szymanowska and in Poznań with Mazas. He appeared in Warsaw in 1827–28 and was appointed first violinist of the Royal Polish Court. At the coronation of Tsar Nicholas I as King of Poland in 1829, both Lipiński and Paganini gave concerts in Warsaw, which caused a furore in the press, especially since an unsuccessful attempt was made to dissuade Lipiński from performing. From 1830 to 1833, he suspended touring to (again) perfect his technique. In 1834 he performed in Poznań and Warsaw, and during 1835–1840 he toured Germany (where he met Robert and Clara Schumann and unsuccessfully vied for the position of concertmaster in Mendelssohn's Gewandhaus Orchestra), France (where Chopin helped him organise concerts and taught his daughter the piano), and Russia (where he met Richard Wagner in Riga). In 1839 Lipiński moved his family to Dresden after his appointment as concertmaster of the royal orchestra. In Dresden he worked with Wagner and Berlioz, became friends with Robert and Clara Schumann, and mentored a younger generation of violinists, among them Wieniawski and Joachim. In 1840 Paganini died and bequeathed his eight best instruments to the eight best violinists in Europe – he gave Lipiński an Amati. By 1846 Lipiński had begun gradually withdrawing from the rigours of the life of a virtuoso, concentrating on preparing or re-editing

his compositions for print. He still played in public occasionally – he performed Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata* with Liszt in 1853. His beloved wife died in 1856, and by 1859 his health had begun to wane. He moved to an estate near Lvov in 1861 and established a music school for peasant children but died shortly afterwards on 16 December 1861.

Lipiński's music is entirely within the great tradition of 19th century violin playing. Though mastering the innovations of Paganini and other 19th-century virtuosos, he disdained 'empty' technique devoid of musical depth and preferred the musical philosophy of Spohr, Tartini, and the French school following Viotti. Tone was most important to Lipiński, and while using many of Paganini's innovations (such as chromatic *glissando*, double trills, extensive use of double-stops), he rejected certain elements, including some bowings (*staccato volant*, *saltato*, ricochet), extensive use of pizzicato of the left hand, and rapid alternating pizzicato and bowed notes. Among his best compositions are the *Capriccios*, four (perhaps five) violin concertos (the most famous being *Op. 21*, entitled *Militaire*), paraphrases on opera tunes, several sets of variations, and assorted miscellaneous works featuring the violin.

The G minor and A major *String Trios*, both featuring two violins and cello, are less virtuosic than much of Lipiński's music – though by no means devoid of difficulties, especially double-stopping. Jozef Powrozniak, author of a full-length biography of Lipiński, wrote that, for works written in the early years of Lipiński's creative life 'the virtuosic element is lacking only in the *Trio in A major, Op. 12* for two violins and cello ... and the earlier *Trio in G minor, Op. 8*, both presumably composed for home music making to which Lipiński was so eagerly devoted.' Powrozniak described chamber music as Lipiński's 'favourite field' of activity and stated that these two trios used 'lyrical folk Slavic tunes with elements of the ballad'. The *primo* violin typically carries the melodic and technical weight throughout.

The *String Trio in G minor, Op. 8*, was probably written

sometime in the years 1814–1815, though the first published version appears to be in the 1820s. The work was dedicated to Ignace Woykowski. The opening *Moderato* begins with an eight-measure opening flourish, followed by a cantabile theme in the *primo* violin. After passage work, another cantabile theme appears, and the music gradually intensifies, leading to a *scherzando* section and more passage work; the exposition ending *pianissimo*. The development section displays the *primo* violin to virtuosic effect, featuring fast runs, octaves, and chromatic runs, including one in octaves. The recapitulation reworks material from the exposition in altered form, moving more quickly to passagework, *scherzando*, and coda. The following *Adagio* in 2/4 time begins simply and quietly with a lovely melody in the *primo* violin accompanied by pizzicato in the cello. The music becomes more florid, including a cadenza in the *primo* violin, before ending quietly. The *Bolero* finale begins with an eight-measure introduction, followed by the typical bolero rhythm in cello and second violin, soon joined by the *primo* violin singing the bolero melody. The music features several quiet interludes, long semiquaver runs, and double-stopping. The movement ends quietly.

The *String Trio in A major, Op. 12*, was written between 1818 and 1826, though probably not published until the 1830s. The work is dedicated to Nikolai Borisovich Galitzine (1794–1866), a Russian aristocrat and amateur cellist who commissioned three string quartets from Beethoven (*Opp. 127, 130 and 132*). The trio's first movement features warmly expressive themes. The cello takes the melodic lead several times in the development section, which is unusual in Lipiński's *primo* violin-dominated pieces. The second movement *Andante*, in 3/8, proceeds as a slow, highly accented dance, much of the *primo* violin part consisting of hemidemisemiquavers. The *Rondo* finale in 2/4, begins with a lively *rondo* tune, and features double-stops and chords, and ends *fortissimo*.

Bruce R. Schueneman

**Adam Roszkowski**

Adam Roszkowski plays first violin with the National Orchestra of Belgium. As a soloist he has performed with the Gorzów Philharmonic Orchestra, the Białystok Philharmonic Orchestra, the Camerata dell'arte Chamber Orchestra and the Carloforte Festival Orchestra. He has performed with artists such as the Polish pianist Janusz Olejniczak and the Ukrainian violinist Vadim Brodsky. In 2008, he co-founded a professional violin-cello duo with his brother, the cellist Jan Roszkowski. In 2011, the brothers launched a seven-concert tour around Poland, including performances at the 13th and 14th Festival of Baroque Music in Pąsk, and in May 2012 they gave recitals at the Polish Slavic Center in New York and East Poland House in Brussels. Adam Roszkowski graduated with honours from the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. [www.adamroszkowski.com](http://www.adamroszkowski.com)



Photo: Barbara Paszkowska



### **Voytek Proniewicz**

The violinist, Voytek Proniewicz, made his solo debut with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra in 2005. Since then he has appeared with the philharmonic orchestras of Wrocław, Szczecin, Rzeszów, Kielce and Gorzów, as well as the Sinfonia Iuventus Orchestra and the Sinfonia Viva Orchestra, performing under the batons of Jan Krenz and Jerzy Maksymiuk. He has performed at the philharmonic concert halls of Prague, Kraków, Gdańsk, Poznań, Lublin and Katowice, and at venues in Vienna, Paris, Madrid, Brussels, Munich, St Petersburg, Vilnius, Palermo, Caracas, Hanoi, Yangon and Singapore. Proniewicz is a third prize laureate of the Ludwig van Beethoven International Competition in Hradec nad Moravicí (1998) and a first prize winner at the Stanisław Serwaczyński National Violin Competition for Young Violinists in Lublin (2002). Voytek Proniewicz graduated from the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw.

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



Photo: Damian Porter

### **Jan Roszkowski**

The Polish cellist, composer and producer, Jan Roszkowski, is a laureate of the 27th National Chamber Music Competition in Wrocław, Poland. Thanks to a Fulbright Scholarship, he has completed a master's degree in music performance at the Manhattan School of Music in New York. He has given solo and chamber performances at Steinway Hall and the Kościuszko Foundation in New York, the Jay Heritage Center (Rye, NY), East Poland House in Brussels, the Hotel des Invalides in Paris and at festivals including International Mozartiana (Gdańsk), the 14th International Chopin & Friends Festival (New York), the EFG London Jazz Festival, the Vilnius Jazz Festival and at Delémont Jazz Days (Switzerland). Jan Roszkowski has collaborated with artists including Janusz Olejniczak, Tomasz Strahl, Voytek Proniewicz, Zbigniew Namysłowski, Adam Bałdych, Sean Noonan, Nina Kuźma-Sapiejewska, Steven Lutvak and Iwona Sobotka. He has made several recordings and has broadcast on Polish radio and TV.

[www.janroszkowski.wixsite.com/cellist](http://www.janroszkowski.wixsite.com/cellist)



Photo: Alexey Wind

Although Polish-born virtuoso and composer Karol Józef Lipiński embraced the innovations of Paganini and other 19th-century virtuosos, he disdained ‘empty’ technique devoid of musical depth, preferring the artistic ethos of Spohr, Tartini and Viotti. Described as ‘lyrical Slavic folk tunes with elements of the ballad’, the expertly crafted G minor and A major *String Trios* are notable for their warmly expressive themes to go along with the bravura runs and doublestopping heard in the primo violin part. Lipiński’s *Capriccios Opp. 10 and 27* can be heard on 8.572665.



**Karol Józef  
LIPIŃSKI**  
(1790–1861)



**String Trio in G minor, Op. 8 (1814–15)**

**41:17**

**1 I. Moderato**

**12:30**

**2 II. Adagio**

**11:07**

**3 III. Finale. Bolero**

**17:31**

**String Trio in A major, Op. 12 (1818–26)**

**32:29**

**4 I. Espressivo**

**8:30**

**5 II. Andante**

**9:57**

**6 III. Rondo**

**13:50**

**Voytek Proniewicz, Solo Violin**  
**Adam Roszkowski, Violin**  
**Jan Roszkowski, Cello**

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8.573776

**DDD**

Playing Time  
**73:57**



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