

## **Chopin bez fortepianu / Chopin without Piano**

In Chopin without Piano, actress Barbara Wysocka and director Michał Zadara create a new art form of musical performance: they take both piano concerti by Frédéric Chopin and surgically remove the piano part, replacing it with a monologue that fits precisely in its place.

In this transformative work Wysocka hijacks the piano with her physical, virtuoso performance and proceeds to explore cultural, political, and philosophical tensions of the composer's time that feel strikingly contemporary. This new form of concert theatre captures the composer as a dynamic living presence within the full force of his music.

Music should not only be listened to – it should also provoke discussion. Chopin without Piano grows out of a conviction, that the experience of music should not be limited to the organisation of sound and time, but that the conversation about a work is an integral part of this experience. Chopin without Piano is based on an act of blasphemous violence toward the music, whose aim it is to make possible a conversation about Chopin, his concerti, about music, about Poland, and about culture in general.

An inescapable part of that history is Chopin's death abroad, and the legendary gesture that his death included: the surgical separation of the composer's heart from his body, with his preserved heart sent to Warsaw as a symbolic relic and the rest of his remains buried in Paris. If Chopin's pianism is inseparable from his Polish artistic identity, then the separation of the piano from the orchestra in his concerti is a parallel act to the separation of his physical heart from the rest of his body. That body is like the concerti without the piano, and those Parisian remains are what constitute the focus of Zadara and Wysocka in this piece. The European Chopin in contrast to the Polish one. Each is equally important – but the remains of Chopin in Paris contain his brain, ears, hands and tongue: his means of expression.