

Among the many jazz initiatives and projects, there are those whose implementation is based on the consistency of the artistic concept and the ambitions of the producers. This is how the most important, original Montreux Jazz Festival (Claud Nobs), Newport Jazz Festival (George Wein) and a number of national events were born, with the exception of the personalities of producers (from Warsaw Summer Jazz Days - Mariusz Adamiak and Bielska Zadymka Jazzowa - Jurek Batycki to Gorzów Jazz Celebration - Bogusław Dziekanski or my original Jazz Era). Among those mentioned, belonging to the event, is also Poznań's JazZamek, which has been divided for many seasons in CK Zamek, led by Bożena Szota. So it is not surprising that they invite artists who warmly welcome these stages and ... This was the case with Marta and Robert Ratajczak's invitation to their Japanese favorite and piano virtuoso, Takeshi Asai, who on an autumn evening in 2022 gave an excellent recital as part of JazZamek edition.

Takeshi Asai is a pianist who - as he is in the jazz clubs of New York - made his way to real professional music, giving concerts all over the world, recording his own albums, additionally own recording studio, also devoting himself to teaching work. "I learned music by listening to The Beatles, Bach and Chopin," recalls the pianist. The effects influenced me Keith Jarrett. There are also a whole range of great jazz pianists, including Bill Evans, Oscar Peterson, Herbie Hancock, Red Garland, Fred Hersch and Brad Mehldau, I also loved Takemitsu, Messiaen and Poulenc. I'm inspired by both Broadway musicals and Taylor Swift hits." The Japanese pianist and composer's discography ranged from jazz albums to duo albums (with pianist Catherine Schneider and vocalist Laura Noejovich) and sessions with the New York Trio (with Daniel Ori and Rob Garcia) and the French Trio (with Pascal Combeau and Maxime Legrand). Takeshi Asai is perfectly at home as a film and theater music composer and in music projects.

Solo recitals and recordings are important projects of the Japanese pianist. Poznań concert ("Live Recording of JazZamek # 42, November 6th, 2022, Poznań, Poland") is Takeshi Asai's third solo album. As in previous sessions, the virtuoso pianist presents his own interpretations of standards, intertwining them - keeping them in a neat, stylistic convention - with his own compositions. The recorded Poznań concert - showing the depth of the concept and the emotion of the pianist's playing - was released as an authentic "live" recording without unnecessary ultra mixes. In addition to interesting interpretations of the standards of J. Kosma ("Autumn Leaves"), B.Strayhorn ("Lotus Blossom"), H.Arlen ("Over The Rainbow"), T.Monk ("I Mean You") and H.Carmichael ("I Mean You") "The Nearness of You") is also hit by J. Lennon and Paul McCartney ("Ticket to Ride") and the classic, evocative "Conversation with the J.S. Bach." Takeshi Asai also presents a set of his own, interesting and impressively played compositions ("Dark Rain", "Wa no Canon"), but the show of cordiality and delight gives compositions with which I thank you for the concert in Poznań ("Ave Maria - for Marta Ratajczak", "Le Crepuscule - for Robert Ratajczak", "Zamek Blues") and honoring the beautiful "One for Bożena" by the promoter of the JazZamek series.