

“I’m not convinced as to whether an artist should ever grow up...”

A conversation with Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń

Anna Domańska

Photo: M. Filipczyk

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“As an introverted personality type, she exudes no ideas, on the contrary – the listener feels he has been shown just part of her secret, deliberately limiting resources and focusing on the power of expression”, Joanna Wnuk-Nazarowa said of the young composer. Words of appreciation for Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń from the mouths of music authorities are not uncommon. Polish critics point out the exceptional maturity of her music, great technical craftsmanship and individualism, while the 27-year-old Justyna believes in the power of her creative intuition and wins yet another prize in a composition competition.

[U. Mieszkioł]

Anna Domańska: You have just finished working over your first monographic album. Can you reveal some details concerning it?

Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń: The album *Śpiewam nowoczesnego człowieka* [The Modern Man I Sing], consists of compositions that constitute the most important points in my creative journey so far. The order the works have been arranged in is crucial in relation to the dramaturgy. It all begins with a huge blast of a symphony orchestra (*The Modern Man I Sing*). Next, through the sound of a mixed choir (*Sanctus*) we come to the smallest group – a string quartet of a hushed character (*A light exists in Spring*). Then, the power of the sound increases gradually again – from a string orchestra (*Te frazy...Te pieśni...Te arie...*) to a large symphony orchestra (*Obraz 1929 – Zdzisław Beksiński in memoriam*). In the album’s booklet there are computer graphics of my design. The abstract graphic art completes the sound stream.

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Dear Readers,

Composers from several generations meet again on the pages of QUARTA. It would seem that not just the difference in age separates these artists, but that they are divided in everything. However, in their works and their words we can read the same reflections about the sense of music and the same yearning, as Zbigniew Bargielski said, "to express the inexpressible". Violetta Przech was able to discuss Zbigniew Bargielski's wide creative personality with only three pages. In her article, the author captured the aesthetics, technique and style of the composer in a glance, who this year celebrated his 75th birthday.

We introduced Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń in QUARTA three years ago as a debutante, a new face among composers publishing their works with PWM. Today, the young composer's achievements are summed up in her first monographic album, which became a pretext to talk about her music and what is important to her in the process of composing. Just like so many artists before her, Justyna appreciates mountain settings, where she rests and composes. The theme of the Tatra Mountains, taken once before in QUARTA on the centenary of the death of Mieczysław Karłowicz, comes back this time in a broader sense. Stanisław Będkowski writes about music by Polish composers inspired by the beauty of the highland landscape and originality of highland folklore.

The second part of this issue is devoted to stage music. Counterpoint to Jacek Marczyński's article about Zygmunt Krauze's operas is the announcement of Paweł Mykietyn's latest work, King Lear, which will be a major event during this year's 'Sacrum-Profanum' festival in Kraków. King Lear, as all of Mykietyn's works in recent years, raises a lot of emotion even before its release. What will the composer surprise us with this time?

U.M.

ANNIVERSARIES 2013

Edward BOGUSŁAWSKI 1940-2003
 Joanna BRUZDOWICZ b. 1943
 Paweł BUCZYŃSKI b. 1953
 Zbigniew BUJARSKI b. 1933
 Andrzej CWOJDZIŃSKI b. 1928
 Henryk CZYŻ 1923-2003
 Florian DĄBROWSKI 1913-2002
 Grzegorz FITELBERG 1879-1953
 Jan FOTEK b. 1928
 Irena GARZTECKA 1913-1963
 Henryk Mikołaj GÓRECKI 1933-2010
 Adam KACZYŃSKI 1933-2010
 Zygmunt KRAUZE b. 1938
 Ryszard KWIATKOWSKI 1931-1993
 Witold LUTOSŁAWSKI 1913-1994
 Tadeusz MACHL 1922-2003
 Witold MALISZEWSKI 1873-1939
 Krzysztof MEYER b. 1943
 Marta PTASZYŃSKA b. 1943
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 Antoni SZAŁOWSKI 1907-1973
 Aleksander SZELIGOWSKI 1934-1993
 Stanisław WIECHOWICZ 1893-1963

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Let's move back in time. The first important point in your hitherto composing career was the *Obraz 1929* [Picture 1929] for symphony orchestra for which you were awarded the 1st prize in the Artur Malawski Composer Competition in Rzeszów. The composition was also nominated to the 2009 OPUS Public Media Award and presented at the UNESCO International Tribune of Composers in Lisbon in 2010. The opus was born from your fascination with Zdzisław Beksiński's paintings. Music is the art of organising time while painting of space. How did you bring these two dimensions together in your composition?

Andrzej Chłopecki described my music as 'incandescent paint-sounds'. In my composition I tried to 'show' the listener around the picture. Along with the development, they 'look at' its subsequent parts, but never are able to command a full view of it. However,

"In my personal opinion, the only and irrefutable sense of music results from its emotional and spiritual dimension."

none of any specific pictures or events were ever an inspiration to me. For me, an inspiration is always a combination of impressions, both those past and those yet to come. My work is rather 'polyimagery', some kind of stained-glass window that consists of many smaller elements – emotions related to what I've seen and remembered (sometimes subconsciously) of Beksiński works. Many images, many feelings. Beauty and shock. Ugliness and euphoria. Within the confines of such a form, both an organisation of time (in the predominant part by means of the second notation) and of space is therefore crucial. I'm reaching for powerful sounds, trying to 'release' the form leaving the performers quite a lot of freedom.

In that composition you are using the aleatoric technique. What significance does it have in your works?

I guess this is the most 'unconstrained' opus performance-wise. The aleatoricism assumes a few forms. In some fragments I control only the pitch of the sounds and the approximate duration of a phrase. However, I leave the performers to decide on the amount of repetitions and the shape of the rhythmic layer. I also include *glissandi*, which introduce the variables and impossible to predict harmonies into the aleatoric structures. It is such a 'waving microtonality'. All the aleatoric events are one-off and one-value structures. These are also 'free' structures which last a few or a dozen or so seconds. The technique allows me to make fuller use of the performers' potential. Because improvisation is an important element in the psychological comprehension. A spontaneous expression influences the efficiency of actions to a high degree, it causes that they become

more intense and less restricted. Improvisation is conducive to risk-taking and restores the ease of self-expression.

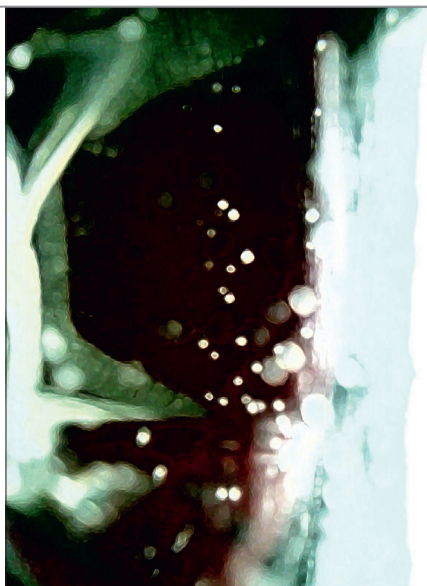
Some sort of structural frames are necessary, though. How do you manage to reconcile the improvisation with the formal requirements of a composition?

This seeming 'opposition' corresponds to the bipolarity of my character: a creative disarray and a temporary indifference to the course of actions on one side and on the other a strong need for precision and perfection, for giving the performer precise guidelines. My aleatoricism is always connected with something specific and planned, however, subtly enough to let the creative expression of the performer stay unfettered and free. Therefore I turn off their defence mechanisms which come from the fear of making a mistake and being received badly by the

listener. I had the opportunity myself, as an instrumentalist, to delve into the core of improvisation, setting these two worlds together. I cannot see the moment of leaving the world of the aleatoric freedom and entering the sphere of specific form. I can see the difference, but not a definite border. The passage is natural and unnoticeable to me.

Te frazy... Te pieśni... Te arie... [These phrases... These songs... These arias...] is a composition which was commissioned by the Festival of World Premieres in Katowice. This work was created in the breakthrough point of your composer life – you had finished your studies and didn't know how your future career would develop. Is this state of uncertainty somehow reflected in the composition?

For me, the time I spent on this composition was the point of a clash between the creative innocence and lightness of the student period and the burden of responsibility resulting from entering wider performance circles. A natural fear of the confrontation against the greatest appeared. The fear of being compared, having the shortcomings and the breaches of technique pointed out. I can remember a strong composer's block, a painful placement of each note of the composition. But it surely didn't influence the whole of the work. I set up a concrete border between the stress and uncertainty, the action and the final effect. In the opus *These phrases... These songs... These arias...* there are two calm arias which I quote indirectly or directly in almost every composition up to now. In the end, the work somewhat wrote itself – from the Zeitgeist, thought, intuition and divinity. *These phrases...* is a summary of the student years, but not the anticipation of an adult creative life. I'm not convinced as to whether an artist should ever grow up... Isn't it beautiful to



Computer graphics by Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń

keep a child's freedom over the norms imposed by adults? The simplicity, unpredictability, inability to use the references enabling you to create what is truly your own language. In this composition I abandon the ingrained frames of action for the sake of something new.

What is the significance of the self-quotation you mentioned earlier?

I like to go back to what was before. To read afresh, to experience once again. I have this inborn ability to remember events, gestures, smells, conversations and the emotions connected with them. This natural need becomes visible in my compositions too. The quoting happens directly being a clear and untouched reflection of ideas from the earlier works or it involves a natural change resulting from using a different instrumentation. It also happens that I consciously deform the quoted material, elaborate or modify it. And here I would indicate the trail of looking for 'the aria nature' in nearly every single work after 2009. I have discovered some unknown to me before harmonic and emotional quality in arias. The quality resulting first of all from a simplicity, which I had previously been deadly afraid of.

In *The Modern Man I Sing*, do you also refer to your previous compositions?

This opus refers to the earlier concepts, among others, through connecting the multifragmentariness in the strict singlefragmentariness. I also consistently use a unified system of the accidentals (I constantly use hash for F, G and C sharps or Bemolle for E and B minor). This way of notation contributes to the unification of the intonation of all my works. The consequence of applying this solution is also my leaving the classical harmonic inclinations. Everything sounds here and now, doesn't wait for resolution. However, surely what's new, is the way of me understanding my music myself. It's about arranging and giving the music a new sense, eliminating the theoretical nature which is

unnecessary, difficult and incomprehensible, arousing greater vitality, the pleasant feeling of vibrating, joy and a healthy euphoria.

So far your visiting cards are, first of all, orchestra compositions. However, you also compose for smaller groups. Recently you have written a few choral works – *in terra in mari*, *Sanctus*, *Błogosławiony w snach*, *we łzach szczęśliwy*. Does this performance apparatus meet your expectations?

I feel both of the groups in a similar way. It is such a symphonic nature of the choral, saturated with spirituality and divinity. It is full use of the number of voices, frequent operating with *tutti*, even in *piano*. Such an approach towards the choral texture becomes visible in the score – it's full, large, intense! A huge sound world for a choir. Loaded, but not overloaded. I need to watch that! Using the choral performance apparatus I can release the element of the divine spirituality that is in me! I sense the choral nature to be integral with religiosity. However, it isn't religiosity to 'show-off'. My music is about an intimate religiosity, the quiet, focused and personal one. It is a prayer to your own Creator, unspecified, indescribable and not laboured with institutionalization.

Many times you have emphasized that you are against composing music on the basis of complicated theoretical constructs. Therefore, according to you, what should be the basis of the creative process?

For me, the most important is the power of intuition. It gives sense to what I create. It introduces an element of indeterminacy, unpredictability and freshness. In the further stages of working over a composition the technique awareness also plays a great part, of course. However, it doesn't impose any rational constraints on me. Contemporary music these days is very often confined within the frames that are strongly intellectual and I'd prefer to avoid that. In my personal opin-

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Śpiewam Nowoczesnego Człowieka
The Modern Man I Sing
PNRSO, J. M. Florêncio (cond.)
Sanctus, Silesian Philharmonic Choir,
J. Wolanin (cond.)
A Light exists in Spring
K. Gawlas (electronics), Lasoń
Ensemble
These phrases... These songs... These arias...
AUKSO Chamber Orchestra,
M. Moś (cond.)
Obraz 1929
(Zdzisław Beksiński in memoriam),
PNRSO, M. Klauza (cond.)
Śląskie Tow. Muz. STMCD07, 2012

REPERTOIRE RECOMMENDATIONS

Obraz 1929 [Picture 1929] **(Zdzisław Beksiński in memoriam)**

for symphony orchestra (2008), 14'
3333-3331-batt(3-5 esec)-pf-archi
Premiere: 26 Sept 2008, Rzeszów
Rzeszów Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra,
M. Pijarowski (cond.)

1st Prize at the A. Malawski Composition Competition
in Rzeszów in 2008; Nominated for the Polish Public
Media OPUS Award 2009.

Śpiewam Nowoczesnego Człowieka **/ The Modern Man I Sing (2011), 8'**

0000-4441-batt (7esec) cel ar-archi
Premiere: 26 March 2011, Katowice
PNRSO, J. M. Florencio (cond.)

These phrases... These songs... These arias...
for strings (2009), 15'
Premiere: 29 March 2009, Katowice
AUKSO Chamber Orchestra, M. Moś (cond.)

...dotykam gór, a one dymią... / ...I touch the mountains, and they smoke...

for prepared solo flute (2011), 9'
Premiere: 2 March 2012, Katowice

R. Sojka (flute)
Distinction at the 9th T. Ochlewski's Composition
Competition in 2011.

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ion, the only and irrefutable sense of music results from its emotional and spiritual dimension. The emotional and intuitive element should act superior... highly superior.

what extent did your musical fascinations influence this artistic point of view?

My studies gave me the possibility of an intense contact with music of different epochs and styles – from the ancient music, through the important to me madrigals of Gesualdo and Monteverdi, Carissimi's oratorios, Messiaen's music and many contemporary composers, to alternative music: Aphex Twin's, Dream Theatre, TOOL, Iggy's... But it seems to me that I'm not only shaped by what I admire. Paradoxically it turns out that the most educational for me is what I reject, what causes aversion.

And these days? How have your musical interests changed recently?

I wouldn't say they've changed. They're still evolving. They were never permanent. That's my nature... I like to develop, transform and seek. It may not seem to be comprehensive, but I listen to my own music most often. Being with my own gives me pleasure: I feel an internal peace, I listen to myself from different perspectives all the time, I bury myself in my own feelings and visions. I have matured to understand the power of a sincere statement, of simplicity. It leaves the deepest trail in the listener if it's saturated with an emotional element. A human brain isn't able to interpret all the insincere intricacies. They are unnecessary, incomprehensible and aggravating to it, so it eliminates them. Therefore I turn towards the simplicity of the statement. Simplicity, but not the banality! It is a thin line and I never would like to cross it.

While listening to your music, do you sometimes feel like changing anything in it?

I never improve my works (not counting the adaptations for the needs of specific performances). The time of their creation has already passed and I shouldn't destroy that. Let them stay in the form I envisaged for them initially. Each note had been the right one for me, exactly the one I wanted to place. My music is in harmony with me. And I will never change it. It is simply my SATYA.

Can you let us know what your next composing plans are?

In the near future I will measure myself against another commission – this time from the Silesian String Quartet – for a composition whose first performance is to take place during the 5th Festival of the Worlds Premieres in 2013. A great group, a huge responsibility. I'm also placing the last notes in a new choral work... The summertime, on the other hand, is, first of all, a time devoted to my mountain 'resting place', where *...I touch the mountains, and they smoke... [...dotykam gór, a one dymią...]*.

Transl. A. Ó hAlmhain

Gergiev conducts Szymanowski

All four of Karol Szymanowski's symphonies were heard at this year's Edinburgh International Festival performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Valery Gergiev.



Valery Gergiev

One of the most important musical events of the Edinburgh International Festival were concerts by the London Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Valery Gergiev on 16-19 August. The programme included all four symphonies by Karol Szymanowski, presented in consecutive concerts with the four Brahms symphonies and both of the Polish composer's violin concertos in which the soloists were Leonidas Kavakos and Nicola Benedetti.

The Festival public could also hear two pieces by Witold Lutosławski in brilliant performances by the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Franz

Welser-Möst: the Concerto for Orchestra and Piano Concerto with soloist Lars Vogt.

The concerts formed part of a rich calendar of Polish cultural events that took place from mid-July to September during four festivals in the capital of Scotland organised by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, the 'Polish Arts in Edinburgh 2012' programme.

Symphony of Angels in Riga

Paweł Łukaszewski's Symphony No. 3, 'Symphony of Angels' had its world premiere in Latvia during this year's opening concert of the 15th International Sacred Music Festival in Riga.

The work was performed by the "Latvija" State Choir, who this year are celebrating their 70th anniversary of existence, and the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra. Liene Kinča performed the solo part. The work was led by Maris Sirmāis, a conductor with immense achievements in the field of choral singing, who has been artistic director of the Latvija choir since 1997. His repertoire also includes Paweł Łukaszewski's 1st and 2nd Symphonies, which were heard in Latvia last year.

Paweł Łukaszewski's new symphony consists of two movements. The texts were selected from the 1st and 2nd Books of Enoch (from the Old Testament Apocrypha), documents from the fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the first Vatican Council (1869-1870) and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. "The selection of texts was preceded by a rigorous exploration and study of angelological literature and old apocryphal books", said the composer. "Angels are spiritual beings, or intangible, having no body. They occur not only in Christianity and Judaism, but also in Islam and ancient Iranian religions."

Transl. L. Davidson

Symphony No. 3 'Symphony of Angels'
(2010), 27'

S solo-coro misto-3333-4331-batt cel ar pf-archi (7.6.5.4.3.)

The concert was held in St. Peter's Church on August 28. Andrew Lloyd Webber's Requiem was also in the concert programme.



Photo: A. Starks

The State Choir LATVIJA

Musicus poeticus

On Zbigniew Bargielski's works

Photo: M. Gumiab

Violetta Przech

The process of creation is a stage, on which a spectacle realising our longing for the elusive and even the unimaginable, for the desire to experience something that hasn't yet been experienced, for the elation, transfer, suspension, the moment of departure, oblivion; forgetting and recalling the images, relying on them and at the same time the alienation from what is known, perceived and experienced, is to be performed. But – so that we could experience all of those – we put our trust in the artist who himself must go through similar illuminations, revelations and evocations. Consciously (which is the art of imagination and the technique of using means of expression), or instinctively (which is the deepest mystery and phenomenon of creation). The artist must be a prestidigitator and a mystic, a personification of the courage to present what has been realised and at the same time full of fear, self-reliant, a discoverer of what is sensed. A struggle, the clash between these elements is the most spectacular symptom of creativity. A longing – to express the inexpressible¹.

THE AESTHETIC DOMINANTS

Zbigniew Bargielski, when asked about the aesthetic criteria which constitute his unique compendium and the *constans* value of creative thinking regardless of time, fashion and tendencies, therefore the sources of possible interactions, specifies²:

1. domination of thinking, which is a result of accepting the 'Romanesque' model of aesthetics
2. precision, logic and clarity, which are the consequence of applying the above mentioned model
3. complete departure from those artistic directions that give primacy to the scientific processes in art; an example here would be the serialism and all of its derivatives which didn't reflect on my creativity to any degree [let's add: in spite of more than thirty years spent in the circles

of German culture, which was connected to the composer's stay in Austria]

4. favouring form and emotional unequivocalness largely based on the sonorist treatment of the sound processes

As observed in Bargielski's compositions, the consequence of the acquired attitude is, on different levels of the music *métier*, the tendency for precisely planned constructions recognisable in the auditive reception and, on one side, marked with the logic of the takes and on the other – the varieties of lyricism endearing with finesse and astonishing with the sensual sensitivity to a sound, timbre and nuance which engage with the abundance of emotions...

THE RATIO ELEMENT: THE CENTRE SYSTEM, LOGIC OF FORM

The centre system. The crucial feature of his composing method and at the same time a noticeable symptom of the primacy of logic in music organisation is the 'centre system' elaborated by Bargielski. It is used for arranging the pitches in a composition: "At some stage I started researching the correlations between sounds, the meaning of chosen sounds which constitute something like an axis of different processes and of those [sounds] which are their complement – against them the role of those that stand out, the centre ones, is becoming particularly crucial. After a lot of consideration and practical tests I elaborated (for my personal use) the so-called 'centre theory', which principally describes the relations between sounds, dividing them into the fundamental (centre) and the secondary (neutral). [...] Balancing their proportions, allocating them to correct instruments, dynamics, texture, etc. – all of this is to serve the isolation of certain centres, which could replace the old tonality; they are deprived, however, of those correlations of the major-minor system. These centres are a footing for various sound structures"³. The first experiences connected to the practical application of the 'centre system' go back to the 1970s (e.g. Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra, 1975, String Quartet No. 1

('Alpine' String Quartet), 1976, Violin Concerto, 1976) and the composer still regulates the arrangements of pitches in his compositions by means of this method.

Zbigniew Bargielski's original theory undoubtedly enriches the spectrum of phenomena related to the sound centralisation in new music and it can be read as a sign of *quasi*-tonal thinking in the broad (in some universal sense) understanding of the concept of tonality (as meta-tonality).

The 'brick' form. Bargielski precisely determines the form of every composition as early as during the pre-composing stage. He identifies it, first of all, from the perspective of the work's perception (Lutosławski did like-wise). Therefore, he adds value to the psychological aspect of the form – since it comes down to accepting certain strategies of controlling the reception. At the heart of this strategy there is a full reduction of the distance between the artist's intention and the perceptive possibilities of a potential receiver. Particularly important, according to the composer is, the 'installation' of the opus in the receiver's mind by placing the components of the form adequately in time. A composition should be built of a fixed number of sections each of which has its own characteristic. Simultaneously, the manner of exposing the sections in time is extremely important. The composer assumed the rule that an introduction of a section with new material is possible only after a repetition (however, never literal) of the previous one or ones. This form, therefore, builds up two-dimensionally: by adding new sections and, at the same time, varyingly: when the previously exposed sections gain the status of invariants in the context of consecutively appearing variants. So, it is a segment-variable form (called 'brick' by the composer), whose model can be described by the following sequence of letters:

A, A1, B, A2, B1, C, A3, B2, C1, D, A4, B3, C2, D1, E, A5, B4, C3, D2, E1, F, A6....

The first attempts with this new way of 'assembling' form were carried out by Bar-

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gielski in a chamber composition *Ein Zimmer* (1972) for trombone, clarinet, cello, piano and reciter (of a Franz Kafka text), and the composition, which fully corresponds to the assumptions of the segment-variable form (according to the above presented letter scheme – to the F segment) is *Letter to Milena* (2005) for soprano, violin and piano (interestingly – it was composed to the text used earlier in *Ein Zimmer*). The rules of this form (in its different variations) determine the construction of such important Bargielski's compositions as, *Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra*, *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, *Trigonalia* for guitar, accordion, percussion and chamber orchestra (1994), *Requiem for orchestra* (1992) or *String Quartet No.4* ('Dramatic' String Quartet) (2006).

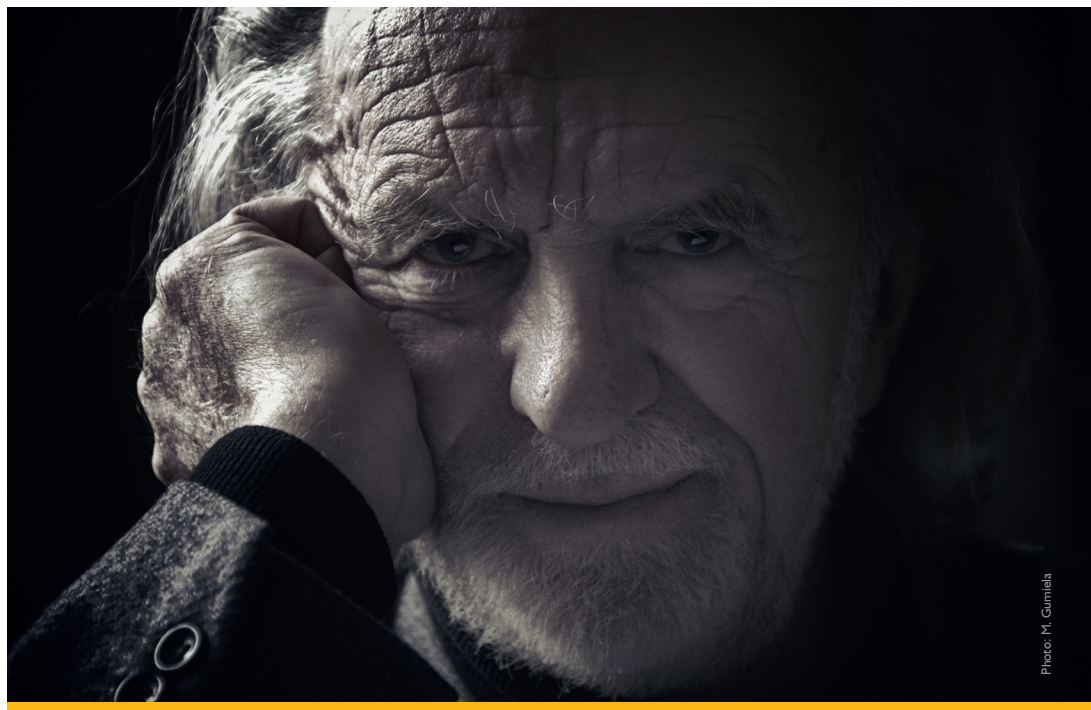


Photo: M. Gumiela

THE INTERMEDIARY SOUND, HENCE ON MERGING ARTS

The theatre-music form is also embraced in the circle of Zbigniew Bargielski's interests. He is an author of a few operas (e.g. *In a Little Manor*, based on Witkacy), in which he gets into the problem of the clash between word and music: "I mean my contemporary insight into opera and text [the composer explains], in which there would be justification that it is sung, not recited. I have been looking for a text like this and actually, have never found it."

The composer's interest in the music-word relations, in which "the duality of actions would be effaced, and a 'unity' would be born" [this is how the artist describes the core of the relations] are expressed in song (e.g. *Night-Day*, a cycle of five songs to the poetry of Teresa Tómsi, 1995) and the two largest of Bargielski's works: a quasi-mass *Sonnenlieder* (*Songs of Suns*, 1983) and *Im Niemandland*⁴ [*In No-man's Land*], 1989), in which Bargielski also looked into the problem of dimensionality of music.

Another important and extremely interesting trend in Bargielski's creativity, electronic music, stems from the inspiration by graphic art. Among its main representations one could mention *Muzyka Linii nieskończonych* [*Music of the Infinite Lines*] (1992), which is a music interpretation of Waław Szpakowski's *Linie nieskończone* [*The Infinite Lines*], *Mutacje '92* [*Mutations '92*] constituting a sound transposition of a graphic of metal nets by Wojciech Krzywobłocki; or the multimedia project *Shrine for Anonymous Victim* (1999) created with a graphic artist, Tadeusz Mysłowski for the State Museum in Majdanek.

WINK – ON COMPOSING FOR PIANO

Zbigniew Bargielski, when asked about the meaning and possibilities of exploiting piano in composing (especially when we take into account the fact that we are deal-

ing with a composer who actually plays the instrument), answered:

I consider piano as a quite common instrument in the rich music collection. [...] On one side, for example, the possibility of writing something like a piano concerto excites me, on the other – I'm not entirely convinced that it's possible, without being cliché, to revive it and strike significant impulses out of this magnificent three-legged animal. But yet, there is something lighter – a toy, prank, false mirror reflecting the dignified face of a fatman. No sophisticated play, but a skipping-rope of a trouble-free approach. Playing, wearing trainers, not platforms. Winking when looking at the voluminous instrument producing receivers' emotions, martyr-like experiences of those practising the scale and passage of youths in love with music. [...] The salvage of continuation of the shady business of composing for piano can be [...] a conscious 'anti-acting' depicting, as if in a false mirror, the hitherto achievements of creativity for this instrument.

Zbigniew Bargielski has realised this postulate in a few piano compositions, particularly representatively in *Panopticum* for piano four hands (1987). The *Scherzo* (*scherzo-musicale* – according to the composer's assumption) plays with the convention; the intertextuality (Bargielski quotes fifteen well-known works from the history of music), instrumental theatre with elements of parody, grotesque and irony – this is the set of artistic means constituting the composition.

TITLES OF WORKS

Even in this domain of creation the composer surprises with imagination; attracts and intrigues. The ability to juggle with word, poetic intuition for word, philosophical thought, spite and sometimes provocation – these characteristics of a creative personality impel one to call Zbigniew Bargielski an 'art-

ist of the titles'⁵. Let's mention a few: *L'espace attrapé* [*Caught Space*], *Versunkene Flamme* [*Sunken Flame*], *Tanz am Rande des Lichtes* [*Dance at the Edge of Light*], *Gemalte Wolken* [*Painted Clouds*], *Vergessene-Gefundene* [*Lost and Found*], *Le cristal flamboyant* [*Flaming Crystal*], *Zmyslenia i dziwostany* [*Fabrications and Wonder-states*], *Stilleben mit Rose* [*Still life with a Rose*], *Klatka dla motyli* [*Cage for Butterflies*], *Schattenkreis* [*Circle of Shadows*], *Sonnenlieder* [*Songs of Suns*], *Garten der Leidenschaften* [*Garden of Passion*], *Das Schöne Zimmer* [*The Beautiful Garden*]. The composer, when asked about the meaning of the titles, answered, emphasising that they don't have a programme-descriptive function, but constitute an expression of a 'game' he plays with the receiver:

It's a gesture I make towards the receiver in order to arouse their imagination, to stimulate perception. Throughout the titles, most often of a surreal character and which are a cluster of sometimes mutually exclusive concepts I intrigue the listener, but without showing them a concrete and real path they are supposed to follow towards the opus. [...] And apart from that – let the listener muse over the title, its meaning, its possible relation to the music they are going to listen to. It is something resembling oiling an engine before starting⁶.

ON STYLE, AN ATTEMPT AT DEFINING IDIOM

It doesn't seem to be possible to find one stylistic category that would manage to cover and accurately characterise Zbigniew Bargielski's creativity. For in this music there are legible references (more or less direct) to the tradition heritage, styles, aesthetics of various provenances, which, as might be assumed, give evidence (to some degree) of Bargielski being under the influence of specific artistic tricks, specific aesthetic paradigms, e.g. Impressionism (*Trigonalia*,

Traumvogel [Dreambird, 1980]), Expressionism (*Im Niemandsland* oratorio), Neoclassicism (*Siedem Studiów* [Seven Studies], 1957 or *Sonatina* for piano, 1959), 2nd avant-garde (especially the elements of sonorism and aleatoricism, treated by the composer, above all, as resources of useful technique) or postmodern music (*Le temps qui n'est plus* String Quartet No. 5 and *Panopticum*). Yet, at the same time – “Zbigniew Bargielski's music is a very distinct phenomenon” [A. Chłopecki], distinguishable, regardless of the period that given compositions were created, also, regardless of different possible stylistic connotations. Therefore, the following question can be asked: which elements produce the new quality that causes an impression of distinctness, works for the benefit of a stylistic idiom, what distinguishes this music from the rest? T.A. Zieliński in a letter to Zbigniew Bargielski wrote: “Your music DISTINGUISHES itself [T.A. Zieliński's emphasis] by not only the remarkable beauty of sound (a beauty ‘for the ear’), but also by its expression which is firmly atmospheric (and this atmosphere rivets and mesmerises), great subtlety and culture, not to mention the elegance of the métier. Another thing that I can strongly relate to in it is that the intervals and harmonies play an important part in it – they are expressly selected in spite of the neutral sound masses which are usually shaped in contemporary scores”⁷. It would seem that Bargielski has achieved that which cannot be overstated in composing: the element of harmony, interaction, correspondence (intuited?), or maybe – the specific ‘tension’ between the set of the technical means and their ability (susceptibility) to generate the so-called higher aesthetic sensations between the technical level (so the style) and **emotion**, which seems to ‘rule’ in his compositions, to take its place over the ratio element, plans, projects and strategies, which prompts appropriate strategies and technologies, suggests and determines (first of all with participation of intuition and the artist's imagination).

TOWARDS SELF-DETERMINATION

Let the artist speak:

From time to time I wonder what my music means to me and to others. Of course, ‘self-determination’ is a very difficult issue, because various conditions of ‘self-evaluation’ come into play. It can be done in the context of chronology, comparing your earlier artistic attempts to the actual, you follow the way which was passed from the first serious composing trials, remember the ‘submissions’ or ‘dependencies’, measure the output by a percentage of realised intentions or reaching – or not – certain significance on the ‘art market’. On one hand we are aware of those issues quite well, because who can know their artistic curriculum better than the artist themselves? On the other, plunging into your own world, often with a fairly limited perspective, deprives the ‘self-determination’ even the pretence of being apart from subjectivism. [...]

At some stage I lost the compass, which luckily had been leading me through the ‘innocent’ early years of the ‘musical delight’. I have recovered it back with great difficulty, starting nearly from zero. As an achievement, I consider introducing (I don't dare to say ‘inventing’) the ‘centre struc-

tures’ along with their systematics and the segment-variable form (it sounds terribly scientifically!), which allows me to build works rationally, to my compositions. It seems to me that that both spaces, especially the ‘centralism’ can bring in a characteristic element, which differentiates my music from the rest. I guess I will probably lack the time to do what I would like to do. Not in the quantitative sense, but rather the aesthetic, in the sense of internal development... [...]

I can say that at the beginning there was a certain amplitude of development, then, a sudden break, a crisis, and only later building a new line from scratch, a line, which I hope, is an ascending one.”

Bargielski still remains a seeking artist, I would say ‘permanently insatiable’, and moreover: overcoming the barriers of his own rigours, not susceptible to routine. In his recently composed works (e.g. *Non Omnis...* for chamber ensemble) I can see the attempts at departure from the ‘brick’ form, some kind of asceticism of means, and along with that – greater and greater sophistication of mood, emphasising the expression (however, without any traces of aggression...).

Transl. A. Ó hAlmhain

- 1 Zbigniew Bargielski said on March 1st 2012 in the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz during the celebration of his 75th birthday.
- 2 Zbigniew Bargielski's statements quoted in this article come from conversations with the author, carried out from 2005 to 2012.
- 3 *Ptak ze snów* [Dreambird], Zbigniew Bargielski answers Violetta Przech's questions, “Ruch Muzyczny” 2006, no. 16, p.12.
- 4 The premiere of the 2nd part of *Im Niemandsland* in Poland took place on 28 April 2012 in Wrocław within the confines of the Festival of Contemporary Polish Music ‘Musica Polonica Nova’. *Sonnenlieder*, however, has never yet been performed in Poland, although its successful first performances were held in Austria (1983 and 1994).
- 5 The description by Dorota Szwarcman, *Musica Polonica Nova*, “Ruch Muzyczny” 1988 no.8, p.7
- 6 *Ptak ze snów* [Dreambird], Zbigniew Bargielski answers Violetta Przech's questions, “Ruch Muzyczny” 2006, no. 16, p.12.
- 7 Tadeusz Andrzej Zieliński, [from a letter to Zbigniew Bargielski], Warszawa, Sept 29th, 2005



Zbigniew Bargielski
Music of Our Time
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra;
Trigonalia; Requiem
W. Wilkomirski (violin), K. Bargielska (guitar), Z. Kozlik (accordion),
Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra,
PNRSO, W. Michniewski (cond.)
Polish Radio CD 080, 2006



Zbigniew Bargielski
String Quartets
Quartet No. 1 'Alpine'; Quartet No. 2 'Spring'; Quartet No. 3 'Still Life with a Scream'; A Night of Farewells; Quartet No. 4 'Burning Time'; Quartet No. 5 'The Time That's Passed'; Quartet No. 6 'Dramatic'; Through the Looking Glass
Silesian String Quartet; M. Andrysek (accordion), R. Widaszek (clarinet)
CD Accord ACD 173, 2CD, 2012

REPERTOIRE RECOMMENDATIONS

Im Niemandsland

Oratorio (1988, 2012)

A Bar solo-2Rec-coro misto-222(+sxf)0-4331-batt
(2sec) 2keyb chit el. ar-archi

Premiere: 28 April 2012, Wrocław

A. Zubeł (mezzosoprano), P. Ostapenko (baritone), B. Krawczyk, A. Święs (reciter), A. Bauer (violinello), C. Duchnowski (computer), Wrocław Philharmonic Choir, W. Sirenko (cond.), PNRSO, S. Bywalec (cond.)

W małym dworku [In a Little Manor]

Opera in 3 Acts (2nd version) (1979), 90'

2S 1MS 1A 2T 1Bar. 1B solo-2Att -333(+1sxf)3-3331-batt (5sec) cel ar chit el. arm el. pf-senza archi

Premiere: 10 June 1981, Wrocław,

Państwowa Opera

R. Satanowski (cond.)

W kręgu / Im Kreis

for soprano, alto, baritone, bass and chamber ensemble (1969), 15'

S A Bar solo-220(+1sxf)2-0000-chit el. arm el.-archi
(0.0.2.2.1)

Text: A. Patey-Grabowska [Pol., Ger.]

Cat. no. 7737

...i zapłoną oboje, a nikt nie ugasi [...and they will both flame up and no one will suppress it]

for string ensemble (1978), 15'

0000-0000-archi (8.0.4.3.1 ad lib.)

Espace attrapé

for symphony orchestra (1974), 17'

404(+2sxf)4-4440-batt (7sec)-archi (0.0.8.8.8)

Parady [Parades]

for symphony orchestra (1965, 1970)

I: 443(+3sxf)3-4441-batt(5sec) 2/3pf-8cb; II: 343(+3sxf)3-4441-batt(5sec) 2pf-8cb

Portret z pamięci [Portrait from Memory]

for strings (1982), 12'

Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra

(1975), 14'

batt solo-444(+1sxf)4-4441-batt (3sec) cel chit.el.
arm.el. pf-senza archi

Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra

(1991, 2005), 15'

tr solo-434(+1 sax)2-4441-batt (4sec) pf key chit el.
ar-archi (0.0.0.0.6)

Premiere: 20 April 2007, Katowice

W. Heinrich (trumpet), PNRSO, R. Silva (cond.)

Violin Concerto (1975), 21'

vno solo-444(+1sxf)4-4441-batt (3sec) cel chit arm
pf-archi (0.0.4.4.6)

String Quartet No. 1 ('Alpine' String Quartet) (1976), 14'

Cat. no. 8114

String Quartet No. 2 ('Primaverile' String Quartet) (1980), 16'

Cat. no. 8697

String Quartet No. 3 ('Still Life with a Scream') (1986), 22'

Cat. no. 8983



The mountains and the highlanders' folklore in Polish music of the 20th century

Dangerous, wild and beautiful, mountains have been fascinating people ever since the dawn of time. Their inaccessibility and isolation also cause that the folklore of the inhabitants of the mountain regions in comparison to the folklore of the lowlands is always more interesting, original and uncontaminated by other influences. The Polish mountains are no exception and there is nothing surprising in the fact that they've already enchanted many artists. The evidence can be found in their biographies and works, inspired by the landscape, conduct and artistic specificity, predominantly of the Tatra Mountains and the surrounding areas (Podhale, Orawa, Spisz). Kasprowicz, Tetmajer, Orkan, Kurek, Gerson, the Witkiewicz, Stryjeńska, Hasiór, Karłowicz, Szymanowski, Kilar and Górecki – these are but a few names of the writers, painters and composers fascinated by either the autonomy, originality and richness of the sub-Tatra folklore or by the wild beauty of the mountains and most often, by both.

Stanisław Będkowski

The highlanders' appeared for the first time in main-stream music scene (both literally and figuratively) on the 1st March 1794 when the first performance of Wojciech Bogusławski's operatic comedy *The Pretended Miracle, or Krakovians and Highlanders* to the music of Jan Stefani took place in Warsaw. Both in this work and also in the adaptation of this composition, which was created 22 years later, "a drama plaything with songs" – Karol Kurpiński's *The Superstition, or Krakovians and Highlanders*, there was no connection to the authentic folklore, because the artists hadn't yet become acquainted with it. The highlanders in these operas are 'aliens' – simple, and even oafish newcomers from far-away lands.

In the beginning of the 19th century the first information on the original architecture, clothing, music and rituals of the highlanders comes to light. In spite of this fact, there is scant reference to highlanders' folklore in Moniuszko's *Halka* (1948-58) – the 'Highlanders' Dances' are such only in name and the closest to the folk original is the melody of the Piper from the 4th act (bagpipes perfect fifths, melody in a major third duo, ornaments describing a sound from the

top or bottom, the 'Lydian perfect fourth'). However, what is striking is that the melody is conducted in the minor key and harmonised by, among other means, minor major seventh chord. Moniuszko was the first composer who consciously tried to approach the highlanders' folklore and at the same time the last, who probably had to do it without the knowledge of the original highlanders' music.

In the late 19th century, the significance of the Tatra and Podhale increases rapidly. Precursors of mountaineers; researchers, artists and numerous tourists arrive here. The echo of these subjective impressions of the visit to the Tatra is such program music as follows: Władysław Żeleński's characteristic overture *W Tatrach* [In the Tatra] (1868-70), the Tatra theme will reappear in his work in the opera *Janek* (1900); or Zygmunt Noskowski's overture *Morskie Oko* (1875), also an opera *W Tatrach* (1888); the song *Pozdrowienie Tatry* [Regards to the Tatra] (1900) – both devoid of direct illustrative nature and references to folklore. At the same time, the first gatherers and researchers of folklore, including the father of Polish musical ethnography – Oskar Kolberg, arrive in the sub-Tatra region. Apart from Kolberg, the folk melodies of Podhale were also written down by Jan Kleczyński (*Melodye zakopiańskie i Podhalskie* [The melodies of Zakopane and Podhale] published

in *Pamiętnik Towarzystwa Tatrzańskiego* [The Memoir of the Tatra Society], v. XII, 1888), however, the accompaniment added by the author 'improving' the harmonics of the melody significantly reduces the value of the collection. On the other hand it also certifies the fact that they observed significant dissimilarity between the original highlanders' music and the music held in the functional system of major and minor. Ignacy Jan Paderewski also collected the Podhale melodies for his personal use – his *Album from the Tatra Mountains* for piano four hands (1884) is a collection of quite free, 'improving' the original, paraphrases of melodies from the repertoire of a folk fiddler, Bartłomiej Obrochta.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Zakopane has already established itself as the Mecca of Polish artists – 'everyone' comes for a longer or shorter period of time, some of them live here, e.g. Mieczysław Karłowicz, a composer, but also a famous mountaineer, skier and precursor of the mountain rescue in Poland. In his musical compositions it is hard to indicate direct inspirations by the Tatra, all the more so with highlanders' folklore, however his composer commentaries suggest that at least some of the poems (e.g. *Eternal Songs*) constitute a reflection on the idealised, Tetmajer-ish way of experiencing the mountain escapades (melting in the Omni-existence etc.). A similar theme is also



present in some of the composer's songs, e.g. to Tetmajer's words. Karłowicz's premature death in the avalanche under Mały Kościelec in February 1909 forever linked his name with the Tatra.

In the periods of Young Poland and the Interbellum the references to the highlanders' music in the works of the professional Polish composers are not a rarity, they are limited, however, to the use of the most external characteristics of the highlanders' music (the Lydian perfect fourth) or to 'civilising' or 'improving' it. Among the compositions of such themes one could note: Feliks Nowowiejski's ballet *King of the Winds (The Tatra)* op.37; an opera of Bolesław Wallek-Walewski *Jontek's Revenge* (1924); *Giewontowa baśń* [Giewont fairy tale] for male choir (1924) and *Na graniach Tatr* [On the arêtes of the Tatra] for mixed choir (1929); Michał Kon-dracki's *The Little Mountaineers' Symphony 'Pictures on Glass'* for a group of 16 soloists (1930); Witold Friemann's opera *Giewont* (1934), later, additionally, *Suita podhalańska* [The Podhale Suite] for solo baritone and string orchestra (1946); Jan Ekier's *Highlanders' Suite* for orchestra (1935 and 1937); *Taniec góralski* [Highlanders' Dance] for piano (1938) and Adam Soltys' *Highlanders' Suite* (1938).

Karol Szymanowski's *Variations on a Polish Folk Theme* op. 10 (1900-1904) could also be added to the above mentioned compositions. The theme was taken from Kleczyński's publication, because the composition doesn't have much in common with the latter 'highlander' works of the creator of *Harnasie*. Later Szymanowski became acquainted with the original music of Podhale, during his subsequent visits to the Tatra and only then did the live music make a huge impression on him. In the article *O muzyce góralskiej* [On the highlanders' music] (1924) he wrote: "I would desire that the young generation of Polish musicians understood what kind of richness bringing our anaemic music back to life is hidden in this Polish 'barbarity', which I have finally 'discovered' and comprehended – for myself."

The result of Szymanowski's 'discovery' were a few compositions from the so called national period of his creative activity, in which the composer used both the quotations from the original Podhale melodies (for the first time he introduced the 'Sabała note' to *Święty Franciszek* [St. Francis] song from the *Słowieńce* cy-

cle, 1921) and he also stylised them masterly. Undoubtedly, the crowning of this trend in his creative life is the ballet-pantomime *Harnasie* (1923-31), in which the highlanders' music (vocal and instrumental), while not losing much of its originality, was melted with the modern sound language of Szymanowski. Additionally, the composer didn't limit himself to quotations or merely stylisation of the melodic material, but he also imitated the highlanders' textural solutions (parallelisms in the multivoice singing) and the band's play in the typical sound configuration (first violin, second violin, cellos and double bass), he also introduced some folk performing styles (e.g. falling glissandi finishing the phrase). The connection to the original folklore is enhanced in *Harnasie* with the dialectal text, the folk stylisation of the dancers' costumes and the choreography. Less directly, however probably more successfully, Szymanowski filled his *Mazurkas* for piano (1925) with the spirit of the Podhale music, managing to elaborate in them the national style of Chopin's distinction. The echoes of highlanders' music can also be heard in the String Quartet No. 2 (1927), Symphony No. 4 (1932) and String Concerto No. 2 (1933).

After the Second World War, Artur Malawski referred to *Harnasie* in terms of content in *Wierchy* [The Peaks] ballet-pantomime for solo voices, choir and orchestra (in the process of being drafted at the end of the war, the work was recomposed during 1950-52). Musically, *The Peaks* are significantly different from *Harnasie*, because Malawski doesn't quote any original melodies in his work but only stylises them making use of the scales, motifs of the highlanders' 'notes' and metro-rhythmic patterns. Bogusław Schaeffer thought very highly of Malawski's composition, he even stated that "the composer outgrew his great predecessor, *Harnasie's* author". The highlanders' inspirations are also visible in other works of Malawski, for example, the *Mountaineers' Triptych* for piano (1949, version for small orchestra 1950).

For a twenty year period after the war, composers other than Malawski also created works inspired either by the mountains or the highlanders' folklore, e.g. Grażyna Bacewiczówna – Violin Concerto No. 3 (1948); Tomasz Kieseweter – *Krzesany w stylu góralskim* [Krzesany, the

continued on page 10 ►

REPERTOIRE RECOMMENDATIONS

GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ (1909-1969)

Violin Concerto No. 3 (1948), 21'

vno solo-3322-4331-batt (3esec) ar-archi

JAN EKIER (*1913)

Suita góralska [Highlander Suite]

for chamber orchestra (1935), 16'

1110-0000-batt (1esec) pf-archi

MICHAŁ KONDRACKI (1902-1984)

Little Mountaineers' Symphony 'Pictures on Glass'

for 16 instruments (1930), 16'

2231-1110-archi (1.1.1.1.1.1)

WŁODZIMIERZ KOTOŃSKI (*1925)

Tańce góralskie [Mountaineers' Dances]

(1950), 14'

2222-4231-batt (5esec)-archi

JAN MAKŁAKIEWICZ (1899-1954)

Violin Concerto No. 2 'Mountaineers'

Concerto (1952), 25'

vno solo-2222-4230-batt (4esec) ar-archi

ARTUR MALAWSKI (1904-1957)

Wierchy [The Peaks]

Ballet-pantomime in 5 parts and an epilogue (1944, 1952), 45'

Libretto: A. Malawski after Jan Mazur's folk poems [Pol.]

S T Bar solo-coro misto-3333-4331-batt (4esec) cel ar pf-archi

WOJCIECH KILAR (*1932)

Krzesany

Symphonic Poem (1974), 17'

4444-4440-batt (12esec) org (ad lib.)-archi (6.6.5.5.8)

Kościelec 1909

Symphonic Poem (1976), 18'

4444-4441-batt (6esec) 2ar pf-archi (8.7.6.5.4)

Siwa mgła [Grey Mist]

for baritone and orchestra (1979), 18'

Bar solo-0000-4330-batt (4esec) ar pf-archi (7.6.4.6.10)

Text: Pol.

Ricordanza per archi (2005), 12'

Orawa

for chamber string orchestra (1986), 9'

KAROL SZYMANOWSKI (1882-1937)

Harnasie

A Tatra Highland Ballet in 1 act and 2 tableaux, Op. 55

(1931), 40'

T solo-coro misto-3333-4331-batt (5esec) 2ar pf-archi

At the Source of Inspiration – *Harnasie* and *Krzesany* in Zakopane

An open-air dance performance to music by Karol Szymanowski and Wojciech Kilar was held on the Plac pod Wielką Krokwią in Zakopane. The show was presented in the jubilee year for Wojciech Kilar's 80th birthday, and the 130th anniversary of the birth and 75th anniversary of the death of Karol Szymanowski.

Inspired by legends of bandits of the Tatra Mountain and Podhale traditions, the ballet-pantomime, *Harnasie*, by Karol Szymanowski and ballet study to Wojciech Kilar's *Krzesany* given in unusual surroundings at the foot of the Tatra Mountains accompanied by a beautiful play of light made a beautiful spectacle, which took place on August 4 in Zakopane. Both pieces were heard in excellent performances: the recording used for the spectacle was of the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antoni Wit (*Krzesany*, 1995) and the Warsaw Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra and Choir under Kazimierz Kord (*Harnasie*, 1994). Interspersed between the recorded music was live music performed by the Trebunie-Tutki band and singers.



The choreography was prepared by Kaja Kołodziejczyk. The artist succeeded with great success in combining traditional dance and highlanders' costumes with modern dance – Tatra bandits danced breakdance and fought in the style of Eastern martial arts. An outstanding ensemble was formed by dancers from the Polish Dance Theatre, Poznań Ballet, Dance Theatre of Silesia and the Baltic Dance Theatre.

Transl. L. Davidson

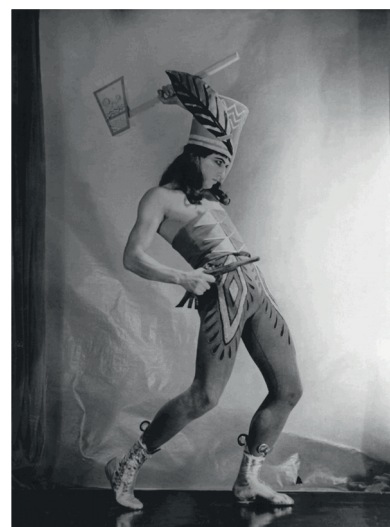


► continued from page 9

highlanders' style] for Symphony Orchestra (1949); Symphony No. 2 (1952); Witold Friemann – the *Podhale Suite* cantata (1950); Włodzimierz Kotoński – *Mountaineers' Dances* for symphony orchestra (1950); Jan Maklakiewicz – Violin Concerto No. 2 'Mountaineers' Concerto' (1952); Wawrzyniec Żuławski – *Wierchowce nuty* [The Peak Notes] for mixed choir and violin (1955). A unique place in the group belongs to Jerzy Młodziejowski, who was fascinated by the Tatra not only as a composer, but also as a mountaineer and geographer. He composed a lot of works on mountain and highlander themes for different ensembles, however, these are not widely-known compositions. Among the more significant, it's worth mentioning: *Legenda o Janosikowej sławie, miłości i śmierci* [The Legend on Janosik's Fame, Love and Death] for solos, boys and male choirs and symphony orchestra (1943); *Rapsodia Orawska* [Orawa Rhapsody] for symphony orchestra (1944); *Orawa* for symphony orchestra (1947); *Tatrzańskie drzewa* [The Tatra Trees suite] (1952); *The Podhale Songs* for tenor and symphony orchestra (1956); *Hey! Follow me into the Tatra* for male choir and symphony orchestra (1960); *Wysoko z przełęczy* [From a High Pass], a symphonic poem for flute and symphony orchestra (1962); *Tańcowali zbójnicy* [The Brigands Danced] overture (1963); *Ciemnosmreczyński las* [The Ciemny Smreczyn Forest] for clarinet and symphony orchestra (1963); *Samotna Limba* [A Lonely Swiss Pine] for cello and symphony orchestra (1963); *Od Orawy do Spisza* [From Orawa to Spisz] for solo voices, choir and string orchestra (1964); *Elegy after Janosik's Death* for tenor and symphony orchestra (1965).

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki was also fascinated by the Tatras and Podhale, to such a degree, that when looking for shelter against the turmoil of living in Silesia, he nearly settled there permanently. However, he considered the highlanders' music too one-dimensional as a source of inspiration, therefore the traces of the Podhale folklore are barely present in his music (*Concerto for Harpsichord (or Piano) and String Orchestra*, op. 40, 1980; *String Quartet No. 1 Dusk is Falling*, Op. 62, 1988).

What *Harnasie* was for the Interbellum period is comparable to the significance of Wojciech Kilar's *Krzesany* for symphony orchestra (1974) to the last decades of the 20th century. If the above mentioned artists retained their 'highlander' works in the non-avant-garde stylistics, Kilar, in his apotheoses of the highlanders' dance, intertwined original highlander melodies taken from Stanisław Mierczyński's collection *Muzyka Podhala* [The Music of Podhale] (published in 1932 with the Foreword by Karol Szymanowski) still in the context of avant-garde musical language (e.g. polyphonic clusters and the aleatoric piece at the end). The composition, ending with the repeated ostinato theme, performed vigorously in the style of a highlander band caused dismay in the audience during the premiere, which took place at the 'Warsaw Autumn' festival, and divided musical circles into its fierce supporters



Serge Lifar as Harnaś, Paris 1936

and opponents. Among Kilar's works, there are another three compositions that refer to the mountain and highlander themes. *Kościół 1909* (1976), whose title corresponds to the place and time of Karłowicz's death, is a free, poetic sublimation of the mountains' loftiness kept in the spirit of his poems or Żeleński and Noskowski's overtures, since the composer doesn't reach to the folklore (lack of quotations), neither is the stylisation very clear, and is certainly peripheral. *Orawa* for string orchestra (1986) is one large stylisation of the performance of a highlander band, and the song *Grey Mist* (1979) is actually an elaboration (harmonisation) of a folk original in which the composer added an orchestra accompaniment to the highlanders' melody.

In Kilar's case, his courage to treat folk music as a source of inspiration in the times of the avant-garde artistic ideology domination in Poland should be emphasised, especially if one takes into account the discrediting of the folk stylisation as well as of the direct programming as authentic means of expression (the authorities' recommendations as to connect the artistic music with the art and life of 'the people') during the socialism. Therefore, when everyone thought that the time for these sort of anachronistic musical solutions had already past, Kilar has reintroduced it to the artistic music, genuinely, while not resigning from the specificity of his own musical language. What's more, he reached to the folklore, which, as a source of inspiration, seemed to have been completely exhausted by Szymanowski.

The Tatra mountains, adamant, although demystified and trampled down by millions of tourists these days, are still a constant element of the Polish cultural tradition, however, their highlander surroundings and the authentic living folklore are practically ceasing to exist. The fact that it is made use of in artistic works proves that it still may have inspiring force which, perhaps, deflects the death blow for now.

Transl. A. Ó hAlmhain

* (trans. note) The Sabala note is a melody of the Podhale highlanders, played by Sabala (Jan Krzeptowski).

Word forms Music

Zygmunt Krauze's Operas

Unlike many contemporary composers who do it to varying degrees of success, Zygmunt Krauze doesn't try to create his own world and new rules in his operas. He respects theatre and its conventions. Exactly 30 years passed between Krauze's first opera *The Star* (1981) and his fifth and for the time being last – *The Trap* (2011). They are different, but they have one crucial feature in common. "In all my operas word is the most important", says Zygmunt Krauze. "It generates the emotional character of the music, rhythm and tempo."



The Trap. Ewelina Pietrowiak (dir.), Wrocław Opera, December 2011

Photo: M. Grotowski / Wrocław Opera

Jacek Marczyński

A MONODRAMA OF AN OLD ACTRESS

He entered the world of opera somewhat accidentally. "The director of the Universal Edition publishing house in Vienna, Mr Alfred Schlee, a great animator, eminent figure in music and European culture, addressed me with the question would I like to compose an opera for the National Theatre in Mannheim," Zygmunt Krauze recalls years later. "The proposition was very attractive. I knew Helmut Kajzar, who offered me his drama – *The Star*. We compiled the libretto together. The staging of *The Star* in Mannheim, however, was a one-off adventure for me; at that stage I was interested in symphonic music and chamber concertos. At that point I didn't precisely realise the elements which constitute opera and are connected to its production". Helmut Kajzar's *The Star* is a monodrama of an ageing actress remembering fragments of her former parts wishing to establish this way who she actually was, both in life and on the stage. Zygmunt Krauze composed a one-act opera for two sopranos and two mezzo-sopranos and seven instruments (a tenor saxophone, trumpet, percussion, accordion, electric guitar, violin and double bass). While staying faithful to the text, he applied a procedure which he would repeat in his future operas. Krauze breaks the prosody of the text with music, the stress is placed on the weaker part of a word, usually on the first syllable. It may seem artificial and against the natural flow of

speech. This way, however, the composer reinforces the drama of the situation, emphasises the characters' emotions.

After the first performance in Mannheim in 1982, *The Star* was staged in Theatre National de la Coline in Paris, Staatsoper in Hamburg and the Teatr Wielki in Warsaw. In 1994 Krauze re-worked a version for female voices, choir and symphony orchestra and this is the form that was produced by the Wrocław Opera. Eventually, in 2006, yet another interesting version of *The Star* came into existence, this time however, for solo female singer and music emitted from a computer which had earlier been programmed with the orchestra score. During the performance the soloist is covered by two cameramen, so the viewer observes the movements and close-ups of the title character on screens. This version of *The Star* was presented many times on various stages by the young singer, composer and performer, Agata Zubeł.

A MORALITY PLAY IN A BIBLICAL COSTUME

Zygmunt Krauze spent the 1980s in France, where, among other activities, he began a cooperation with the famous theatre producer, Jorge Lavelli, creating music to many of his productions. That time became, as he admits, "a real school of theatre, music in theatre, a school of stage and all of its elements". It was also instrumental to his opera creativity, whose new stage is set by *Balthazar*, finished in 2001 for the Warsaw Chamber Opera. From then on, all subsequent operas are, first of all, a sound inter-

pretation of text, music creates the emotional background. However, at the same time, the composer remains loyal to his 'unistic' artistic ideals realised in the concert music. They postulate for little variation of elements in his compositions and departure from the rule of contrasts and conflicts, the traditional tension and climax. In Krauze's operas, they take place in the word layer.

Balthazar was created to a forgotten libretto which Stanisław Wyspiański, the most prominent Polish playwright at the turn of the 20th century, wrote for his friend, Henryk Opieński. However, the music was never composed. In the original the biblical story of the prophet Daniel and the annihilation of the Babylonian kingdom ruled by Balthazar was full of typically Polish patriotic references. After more than a hundred years, an opera director, Ryszard Peryt, cleared the text of the nationalistic and liberation issues, added fragments of another two of Wyspiański's works and the new libretto became of a more universal character. At the threshold of the 20th century oppression and the struggle against it were the most important concern of the Poles deprived of their country. However, it is still an eternal and current topic, inscribed in the history of humankind, suffice to mention the Middle East conflicts, the lot of the Kurds or the Tibetan people.

Balthazar is an opera of an idea, while this genre of art, in its history, relied mostly on action. Music can support human actions, particularly feelings, it is much more difficult

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Pułapka / The Trap

Opera in 1 act (2011), 100'

Libretto based on the play by Tadeusz Różewicz:

Grzegorz Jarzyna and Zygmunt Krauze

voci soli-coro misto-2222-4230-batt (timp. gr.c., 2tmt. 2 gg, 2 ptti,

tmbno, vbf, mbf) chit.el. acc ar pf pno-archi

Premiere: 17 Dec 2011, Wrocław Opera

T. Szreder (mus. dir.), E. Pietrowiak (dir.)

Iwona, księżniczka Burgunda / Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy

Opera in 4 acts (2004-6), 90'

Libretto based on the play by Witold Gombrowicz:

Grzegorz Jarzyna and Zygmunt Krauze

IS 2MS 2A 2CT IT 1Bar 1B-2(picc)222Sax2-2210-batt(2esec) chitt
el. fsm ar pf-archi

Premiere: concert version: 20 Nov 2004, Theatre Sylvia
Monfort, Paris; stage version: 29 Sept 2006, National
Theater, Warsaw

Polish Radio Orchestra, A. Straszyński (cond.),

M. Weiss-Grzesiński (dir.)

Gwiazda / The Star

Chamber Opera, 50'

Libretto: Helmut Kajzar

ver. 1 (1981) for 2 sopranos, 2 mezzo-sopranos, alto,
tenor-saxophone, trumpet, percussion, accordion,
electric guitar, violin and double bass

Premiere: 7 Apr 1982, Nationaltheater Mannheim

D. Runnicles (mus. dir.), P. Rasky (dir.)

[publ. Universal Edition]

ver. 2 (1994) for soprano, mezzo-soprano, orchestra,
choir and ballet

Premiere: 12 June 1994, Wrocław Opera

Z. Krauze (mus. dir.), S. Szlachtycz (dir.)

[unpubl.]

ver. 3 (2006) for soprano, computer and 2 cameramen

Premiere: 19 Jan 2006, Teatr Polski, Wrocław

A. Zubel (soprano), C. Duchnowski (mus. dir.),

A. Makowiecki (dir.)

[unpubl.]

Polieukt (2010)

Opera in 5 acts for soloists, chamber choir and orchestra

Libretto based on Pierre Corneille's "Polyeucte": Alicja
Choińska and Jorge Lavelli

Premiere: 20 Oct 2010, Warsaw Chamber Opera

Warsaw Chamber Opera Soloists, Warsaw Sinfonietta,

R. Silva (mus. dir.), J. Lavelli (dir.)

[unpubl.]

Balthazar (2001)

Opera in 2 acts for soloists, choir and orchestra

Libretto basen on Stanisław Wyspiański's "Daniel":

Ryszard Peryt

Premiere: 7 Oct 2001, Warsaw Chamber Opera

Warsaw Chamber Opera Choir, Warsaw Sinfonietta,

R. Silva (mus. dir.), R. Peryt (dir.)

[unpubl.]



Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy. Marek Weiss-Grzesiński (dir.), Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa

Photo: M. Górecki / Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa

► continued from page 11

for it to deal with ideas. Modern theatre prefers fast action and constant variations of the stage situations, whereas *Balthazar* is a static opus, some kind of a contemporary morality play which was dressed in a biblical costume. Zygmunt Krauze, however, composed a work of transparent and clear construction. And the music, having its own rhythmic nerve, best describes the main characters – the blasphemous king Balthazar and the prophet Daniel.

THE COURT IN THE CORSET OF CONVENTION

Zygmunt Krauze attaches great importance to his next opera *Iwona, Księżniczka Burgunda* [Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy] by Witold Gombrowicz, which is the unique aftermath of the cooperation with Jorge Lavelli. This director is a great admirer of the Polish writer's creativity, he contributed to the success of his plays on the French stage. Together with Krauze they were planning to write an opera to a different text of Witold Gombrowicz – *The Operetta*, but the intention, unfortunately, was never realised. Somewhat as a replacement Krauze created *Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy*, whose concert version premiere took place in the Theatre Sylvia Monfort in Paris, whereas the first staged performance occurred two years later during the Warsaw Autumn Festival. Afterwards, the production entered the repertoire of the Teatr Wielki – Opera Narodowa in Warsaw.

Gombrowicz's play, about the clumsy Yvonne who gets to the royal court where everybody treats her with contempt and disrespect in spite of which her very presence destroys the royal order, inspires the producers. It allows them various interpretations. Zygmunt Krauze said before the Warsaw premiere of the opera: "I decided not to interpret at all, but to present each of the characters literally, in the simplest of ways, following the word, according to my personal understanding of this word and the situation by the means of music. I took the path,

because I believe in the power of the classical construction of Gombrowicz's play."

Krauze's intention with *Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy* is not to fight against the traditional tastes of the opera audience. The music, relying on a few stanzas, wafts slowly, doesn't shock with original harmonies, it encourages listening by its pastiche character. Yet, it doesn't constitute another attempt to reread Gombrowicz's drama. It's a work standing in accordance with opera rules. The composer assumed that it is enough to squeeze king Ignacy's court, which is dominated by the rituals of gestures, dignified steps and meaningful looks, into the corset of the opera convention in order to show its falsehood.

The second part of Krauze's *Yvonne* is more interesting, it is when the music becomes dramatically expressive and the breath of death perceptible. Much earlier than in Gombrowicz's, the viewer will recognise the fact, that the mysterious, taciturn Yvonne, who prince Philippe decided to make his fiancé, demolished the court ritual so thoroughly that she has to die. Additionally, in the Warsaw staging the part of the main character was given to an actress, which enhanced the contrast between Yvonne and the court. The extreme conventionalisation of Gombrowicz's theatre by the typical opera means bestows completely different significance to the main character's death. When Yvonne suffocates on a fish bone, there is nothing grotesque in it, unlike in the original text. This scene enters the opera tradition, in which there are many works with a similarly gloomy finale.

THE SAINT FROM ARMENIA

Polieukt [Polyeuctus], composed in 2010 as a commission for the Warsaw Chamber Opera, is a work in which Zygmunt Krauze appealed to the great dramatic tradition. It was also created as a result of the cooperation with Jorge Lavelli, who, when staging Corneille's drama in the 1980s in Comédie-Française, commissioned the Polish composer to write the music. It was his first theatre

job. More than a quarter of a century later Lavelli compiled *Polyeuctus's* libretto and directed a spectacle which was performed by the Warsaw company in November 2011 in Theatre Capitol in Toulouse. The association of the French critics – Syndicat de la Critique de Theatre, de Musique et de Danse awarded Zygmunt Krauze's *Polyeuctus* its annual prize of 'event of the season' in France. Years earlier, when working on Comédie-Française's commission, he endeavoured to make the music consistent with the action of Corneille's drama. *Polyeuctus* is an authentic figure, he was an Armenian serving in the Roman army, died a martyr's death in 259 unwilling to reject his Christian faith and was later canonised. In the drama theatre, Zygmunt Krauze used, among others, the traditional Arabic oud, large conches and primitive wind instruments. Then, he composed music for traditional orchestra with his characteristic micro-motifs and small intervals. Most important, however, are human voice and word, on which the orchestra is completely dependent. *Polyeuctus* is an opera where dialog dominates, aria as a form of personal statement appears sporadically. Zygmunt Krauze always treats the literary material thoughtfully. Although he never works on the text by himself (here the job was performed by Alicja Chojińska and Jorge Lavelli), he requires, however, that the work is limited, above all, to the necessary abridgements. Krauze's *Polyeuctus* maintains Corneille's five-act division, but particular scenes are so condensed, that the opera only lasts about 120 minutes. In accordance with the composer's suggestion, the authors of the libretto used the modern Polish translation departing from the classical 13-syllable meter of French tragedy. In Krauze's opinion this is what causes that the conflict becomes more comprehensible to the viewer. Nevertheless, a crucial change was introduced to the finale. In Corneille's, the death of the main character brings about his family's conversion; the opera *Polyeuctus* finishes with a sung appeal for respect for every religion; tolerance and love.

THE TRAPS OF THE MODERN WORLD

Even greater a thoroughness was applied by Krauze to *Pułapka* [The Trap] – one of the most important plays of the nestor of Polish poetry and drama, Tadeusz Różewicz. The libretto is a result of a cooperation with the director, Grzegorz Jarzyna (they worked together earlier on the text of *Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy*). It was no easy task. The literary world of Różewicz and the world of opera don't seem to cohere. When it comes down to this poet, every single word is important. He gives new meanings even to those spoken during trivial conversations, he is able to use them to describe problems and paradoxes of contemporary reality. Opera, though, often distorts words with music, prefers ambiguity to a semantic concrete.

Krauze and Jarzyna shortened the text of *The Trap* considerably, of course. However, they kept the structure and the arrangement of pictures, merely placing the scene of engagement of the main character Franz with Felice earlier, expanding it in the opera style



Agata Zubeł performing *The Star*, Warsaw, July 2008

– with the participation of a choir. In general though, the world of *The Trap* is as Tadeusz Różewicz devised it. The composer preceded each of its fifteen pictures with a short expressive orchestra entry. Nearly twenty characters appear on stage, diverse motifs have been assigned to most of them, for example the monologues of Franz's father are based on violent rhythms, the appearance of Felice is accompanied by dance music. Krauze doesn't avoid a pastiche tone, therefore with the perspective of the war approaching he introduced an ironic military march to the music. The vocal parts have mainly the form of a recitative, which enables the viewer to follow the word. The composer treated the choir quite absorbingly – it is present in a few scenes and its monosyllabic singing behind the stage is to build the atmosphere. The whole music construction of *The Trap* consists of easily recognisable elements, but Krauze

applies this procedure, which is known from his previous operas, consciously, so that the music wouldn't efface the word.

In his play, Tadeusz Różewicz settles with the spiritual and cultural heritage of the 20th century. Using the biography of Franz Kafka, he described the traps a man of those days fell into. Some of them were set by the history of the century, some – by biology and nature. After thirty years the opera version of *The Trap* has become a universal and metaphorical tale of an artist and their nation marked by the stigma of death.

The Trap staged by the Wrocław Opera in 2011 on the occasion of Tadeusz Różewicz birthday is one of the most interesting performances on the Polish stage of the last few seasons. Zygmunt Krauze remains loyal both to the proven models and his music and creates a living and moving theatre.

Transl. A. Ó hAlmhain

{ news }

Wojciech Kilar's Film Music live in Kraków

Famous theme music from films such as *Dracula*, *The Ninth Gate*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *Pan Tadeusz* and *Ziemia obiecana* [The promised Land] were heard during a gala concert which took place during the Festival of Film Music in Kraków.

Wojciech Kilar's 80th birthday, one of the most important contemporary Polish composers and most recognised composers of film music, became an opportunity this year for a number of concerts of his music and words of appreciation for his accomplishments. The artist was awarded the highest state decoration – the Order of the White Eagle, and also received an honorary doctorate from the University of Silesia in Katowice, where he has lived for many years. During this year's Film

Music Festival in Kraków a great gala concert took place, attended by directors, actors and great personalities from the film industry who had the honour to collaborate with Wojciech Kilar. The National Symphony Orchestra of Polish Radio and Polish Radio Choir under the direction of the Brazilian conductor José Maria Florencio and soloists: Iwona Hossa and Marek Szlezer performed, amongst other works, suites from



the films: *Dracula*, *The Ninth Gate*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, *Pan Tadeusz*, *Trędowata* [The Leper], *The Pianist*, *Ziemia obiecana*. The concert performance was accompanied by a projection of films, and birthday greetings, guests' commentaries and anecdotes from film sets and reminiscences of collaboration with the Master from Poland and abroad were woven into the concert.

The Gala was held on May 25 in the tinning hall of ArcelorMittal Poland in Kraków. The co-organisers were Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne and TVP 2.

Transl. L. Davidson

A macroparty marked by disaster

King Lear according to Mykietyń



Agata Kwiecińska (Polish Radio)

Searching for the key to understanding the music of Paweł Mykietyń can be a thrilling endeavour, even if it doesn't always end in success. What can we expect of his newest work, *King Lear*, its libretto based on the writings of William Shakespeare, Rodrigo García and Jean Amery? Hard to say. Mykietyń, quite deviously, calls it a musical theatre work. However, all it takes is a glance at the libretto to see just how far away *King Lear* lies from a typical musical. The title hero himself delivers a crushing diagnosis of our times – reality is “a macroparty marked by disaster”.

SO-CALLED CLASSICAL MUSIC

Paweł Mykietyń, a classically trained composer, had always emphasized his pop music fascinations. While at music school, he studied classical clarinet by day, and played bass guitar in a punk-rock band by night. When asked about his early inspirations, he lists Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Yannis Xenakis and late Beatles in one sentence. When he took on serious composition, he was captivated by the music of Paweł Szymański which clearly referred to old genres and ancient form, though in an elusive, ambiguous manner. When composing, Mykietyń's first stage of creation consists of laying down a highly complicated set of rules for the piece. Everything that happens later, is pre-planned and mathematically calculated – a process never noticed, and not meant to be noticed, by listeners.

Paweł Mykietyń's creative output is usually divided into two stages. The first one encompasses early instrumental works – *...choć doleciał Dedal* [...though Dedalus reached], *La Strada*, 3 for 13 but also *Epifora* for tape, an opera called *Ignorant i szaleniec* [An Ignoramus and a Madman] and *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. The period ends in the year 2000. The beginnings of stage two are marked by the 2004 premiere of *Ładnienie* [Becoming Fine] – a composition for baritone, a harpsichord tuned in microtones and string quartet. His

interest in the sonic possibilities which arise when the octave is divided into more than twelve parts was considered as a signal of something new by critics and researchers of Mykietyń's music alike. Today, this classification is not so obvious anymore – for how should one classify the piece called *Vivo XXX*, written to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the August Agreement between Solidarity and the communists government? Where to place this composition consisting of folk songs, a choir singing with great pathos, a minimalistic orchestra as well as special sound effects? It is harder still to find the key to understanding the *Symphony No. 3*, composed for the occasion of the Polish Presidency in the European Union Council. The juxtaposition of a symphonic orchestra which is set to mimic what the composer describes as ‘young people's music’ with a classically trained contralto, reciting rhythmically is yet another joke played on us by the composer. The lyrics derive from private text messages of Mateusz Kościukiewicz, a young actor. Had Paweł Mykietyń mocked the philharmonic tradition or did he just want to write an informal piece of music? Why did he call it a symphony? His previous composition of the genre was of a much different calibre. Those who expected something similar of *Symphony No. 3* must have been very surprised.

THEATRE

Mathematical calculation and coming up with complex structural models for autonomous compositions is only one of the methods used by Paweł Mykietyń in his work. His film and theatre music is created in a completely different way. For years, Mykietyń has been collaborating with Krzysztof Warlikowski, a theatre director, and in this case the job doesn't consist of producing ready-made musical segments but rather co-creating the show from beginning to end. Mykietyń comes in for rehearsals during which he improvises, searching for musical ideas and testing them on the spot. In one of his interviews he states that “Autonomous

music is a very different creative process. It is often a struggle with oneself at a desk, pouring over stave paper.” However, these two worlds are only seemingly apart. Many musical ideas born in the theatre flow into autonomous music and vice versa. The electronic explosion heard at the beginning of *Epifora* for tape can also be heard during the opening of the play *The Bacchantes*, directed by Warlikowski. The Chinese oboe leitmotif used in a scene in the *Angels in America* theatre production returns, slightly changed, as a saxophone solo in Mykietyń's *Passion according to St. Mark*. It was in that composition that Mykietyń's theatrical sense proved impeccable, though inspiration came from the Gaspar Noé film *Irréversible*. The story of Christ's passion and death is told in reverse. The composer upsets the chronology, but we know it all too well. The piece becomes a great retrospection, which poses the most vital question: why? Why did people kill God? As for musical content, it is an ingenious combination of Mykietyń's most foremost discoveries. We find delicate microtone structures, harmonies masquerading as tonality, oriental vocal lines and even electric guitars (perhaps an echo of his youth?). The part of Christ is sung by a female voice – Mykietyń assigns the task to a mezzo-soprano. Judas is also sung by a woman, a jazzy belt-type voice. Only Pontius Pilate is male, though it is a spoken, non-singing role.

Another important composition on the path to *King Lear* is a piece called *Two poems by Miłosz*, presented at last year's Sacrum Profanum Festival in Kraków. It is difficult to say whether this piece is more suited for the theatre or the concert hall. Two poems by Poland's Nobel Prize Winning Poet are recited by two actors. Perversely chosen texts – *A Poor Christian looks at the Ghetto* and *An Honest Description of Myself with a Glass of Whiskey at An Airport, Let Us Say, in Minneapolis* suddenly come into unexpected dialogue. Music sauntering in the background discreetly compliments this peculiar conversation. In reference to words being spoken, it serves as a background, rather than a counterpoint

or commentary. Even in this short composition it becomes clear that the borderline between Mykietyń's autonomous music and theatre music has blurred, almost into nonexistence.

"KING LEAR" – IN BETWEEN AN OPERA AND A MUSICAL

I don't want to say too much of Mykietyń's newest work. He came across Rodrigo Garcia's version of the play *King Lear*, which serves as the backbone of the libretto, by accident. However, the fascination with the character of King Lear is not accidental at all and leads us back into the realm of Krzysztof Warlikowski's theatre and his production of *African Tales according to Shakespeare* from last season. Mykietyń co-wrote the libretto of *Lear* with the playwright Piotr Gruszczyński, combining Garcia's text with pieces of the Shakespearean original and Jean Amery's essay *On Aging*. The score calls for three female voices – Lear's daughters: Cordelia (a belter), Regan and Goneril, two male voices – the Jester and Lear himself, an instrumental ensemble and electronics. The use of solo voices isn't typical, since the singers mostly speak – the libretto for the most part is made of Rodrigo Garcia's Spanish text, only the smaller fragments of the two other works are sung, in English. Mykietyń had already declared, years ago, (when working on his first opera, *An Ignoramus and a Madman*), that a musical form which demands singing in place of speaking is hard for him to accept. This time, he goes much further, drawing much closer towards theatre, at the same time taking care that each spoken word within the score has its precise place, rhythm and tempo. The disproportion between speaking and singing has led to calling the work a musical, though knowing Mykietyń's tricky nature, one should approach the classification of *King Lear* with reservation. The text of the work, permeated by bitterness, brought forth by a controversial playwright known for asking uncomfortable questions, touches upon modern man's greatest trauma – acute loneliness, which nothing can soothe.

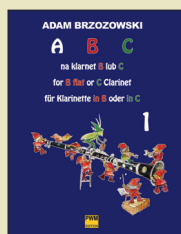
Transl. J. Trafas

+sacrum profanum

On September 9 the 10th anniversary Sacrum Profanum festival in Kraków will be inaugurated in with a presentation of *Król Lear* [King Lear]. Apart from Paweł Mykietyń's new work, during the festival we will be able to hear new compositions by Polish composers of the younger and middle generations: Agata Zubeł, Aleksander Nowak, Cezary Duchowski, Sławomir Kupczak and Martin Stańczyk, performed by the ensembles Alarm Will Sound, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Klangforum Wien and Ensemble Modern.

In a concert entitled 'Polish Icons', DJs associated with the London label Ninja Tune – DJ Food, DJ Vadim, Grasscut, King Cannibal and Wrocław duet Skalpel – will reach for works by the greatest Polish composers; Witold Lutosławski, Wojciech Kilar, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki and Krzysztof Penderecki. The original versions of the re-mixed pieces will be presented by the Kronos Quartet. The festival will run until 17 September.

► Selected Sheet Music Editions

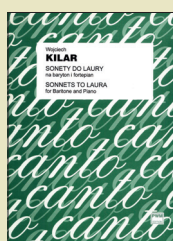


Adam BRZOZOWSKI
(b. 1930)
A B C for B flat or C clarinet, book I
Cat. no. 11261

Tunes you can play!
for B flat or C clarinet with piano
Cat. no. 11242

Fryderyk CHOPIN (1810-1849)
Variations in B flat major Op. 2
Transcription for piano and string quartet
score + parts
Ed. by Bartłomiej Kominek
Cat. no. 11202

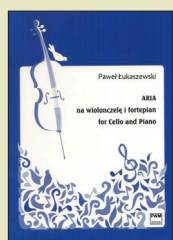
Wojciech KILAR (b. 1932)
Lumen
for mixed choir
Cat. no. 11291



Sonnets to Laura
for baritone and piano
Text by: Francesco Petrarca
Cat. no. 11304

Andrzej KRZANOWSKI (1951-1990)
Sonata No. 2
for accordion solo
Cat. no. 11290

Witold LUTOSŁAWSKI (1913-1994)
Variations on a Theme by Paganini
arrangement for 2 pianos and percussion
Ed. by Marta Ptaszyńska
score + parts
Cat. no. 9703



Paweł ŁUKASZEWSKI
(b. 1968)
Aria
for cello and piano
Cat. no. 11315

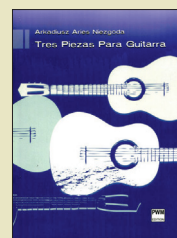
"Aria for cello and piano, although written for a young cellist, can be successfully performed by mature and fully trained instrumentalists. One can then attempt very interesting interpretations, especially considering that the piece's technical requirements are suited for an able fourth grader's capabilities; at the same time it is a quasi-polymeric melodic composition, in the major-minor system, with elements referring to jazz music."

[Paweł Wojciechowski]

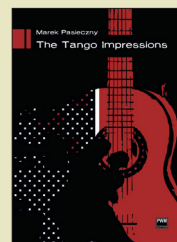
Roman MACIEJEWSKI (1910-1998)
Les Chansons de Bilitis
for soprano and orchestra
piano red.
Cat. no. 11262
Janusz MUNIAK (b. 1941)

Logabola
Cat. no. 11308

A selection of eight pieces by Janusz Muniak, who is one of the most colourful characters of the Polish jazz. The set is published on the 20th anniversary of the existence of this extraordinary jazz club "U Muniaka".



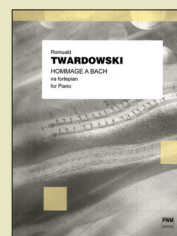
Arkadiusz Aries
NIEZGODA (b. 1978)
Tres piezas para guitarra
Cat. no. 11277



Marek PASIECZNY
(b. 1980)
The Tango Impressions
Tribute to the Art of Astor Piazzolla
for guitar
Cat. no. 11279

"I was never a huge fan of Astor Piazzolla's music, but always admired his original style, faithfulness to the musical culture from which he descended, and possibility his sense of style. Besides his obvious huge influence from Argentinian Tango, Piazzolla's music is largely based on improvisation, which also appeals to jazz (including the element of spontaneous and continuous creating of music, often based on sophisticated harmony). His cycle *Cinco Piezas* is originally written for solo guitar, and in my opinion it is one of the most valuable compositions from the 20th century for this instrument. However, I did not decide to write *Tribute to the Art...* because of the above elements. Contributed to the above are the following coincidences: Experiments from non-typical scordatura (in this case E 6th to F), exploring of innovative techniques (at least relating to classical guitar) such as tapping, hammering, and percussive effects and their infinite scale of colours to outputs on the guitar. To summarise – widely comprehended sonorism. Technical level, musical expression and ease, a necessity to perform this piece, creates great challenges for the instrumentalist."

[Marek Pasieczny]



Romuald TWARDOWSKI
(b. 1930)
Hommage à Bach
for piano
Cat. no. 11278



Agata ZUBEŁ (b. 1978)
What is the Word
for voice, flute, violin, violoncello and piano
Cat. no. 11298

► Selected Hire Titles

ZBIGNIEW BARGIELSKI (B. 1937)**Im Niemandland**

Oratorio for 2 singers, 2 reciters, 2 choral groups and 2 instrumental groups (new version) (1988/2012), 80'

A Bar solo-2Rec-coro misto-222(+sxf)0-4331-batt (2esec) 2keyb chit el. ar-archi

Premiere: 28 Apr 2012, Wrocław, 'Musica Polonica Nova' Festival

A. Zubel (MS), P. Ostapenko (Bar), B. Krawczyk, A. Świąs (rec), Wrocław Philharmonic Choir, W. Sirenko (cond.), PNRSO, S. Bywalec (cond.)

"Bargielski's oratorio is based on two ideas: musical dialogue and centralisation. The first idea manifests itself in the antiphonal use of the choirs and the responsorial dialogue of the soloists. The dialogue can also be seen in the verbal layer, where old Hebrew poetry meets with modern German language texts. The idea of centralisation has shaped Bargielski's music for over thirty years. Its reason to be is to highlight certain pitches as dominant."

[Marcin Krajewski]

WOJCIECH KILAR (B. 1932)**Tango from J. Majewski's film "Jealousy and Medicine"** (1973), 3'

2022-0440-timp pttto sosp. tmb c.c. ar cemb pf-archi (12.8.4.4.4)

PAWEŁ MYKIETYN (B. 1971)**King Lear** musical in 2 acts (2012)

Libretto: R. García, W. Shakespeare, J. Améry; adaptated by P. Gruszczyński
Premiere: 9 Sept 2012, Kraków, 'Sacrum Profanum'

K. Moś, B. Blanco, J. Gonzalez de Springer, J. Peter Kenny, J. Noval Moro, Ensemble Modern

"This is a form in which the text is completely equal to the music. The music always follows the text, Shakespeare's excerpts are sung, and García's – spoken. One could say that here this speaking

is a kind of Sprechgesang, written in rhythm, contained in bars, and the music plays all the time behind the text, sometimes more illustratively, sometimes less. There is no clear storyline, the plot is subordinate to the text. I called it a musical, though strictly it isn't. For sure it is not an opera, and I never intended to call it an opera because the essence of this work is that it is not sung, rather the opposite – nearly all of it is spoken."

[Paweł Mykietyn]

FELIKS NOWOWIEJSKI (1877-1946)**Legend**

for violin and orchestra (before 1914), 7'

vno solo-2222-2200-batt ar-archi

NEW EDITION!

AGATA ZUBEL (B. 1978)**Not I**

for voice, instrumental ensemble and electronics (2012), 21'

S/MS solo 1 (fl/picc./alt./bass)010 0000 pf batt el vn vc

text: Samuel Beckett [Engl.]

Premiere: 13 Sept 2012, Kraków, 'Sacrum Profanum'

A. Zubel, Klangforum Wien, C. Power (cond.)

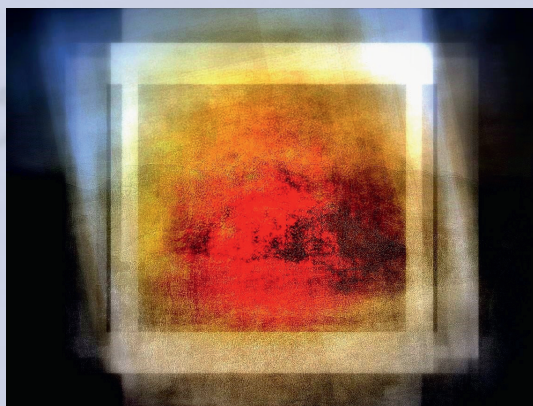
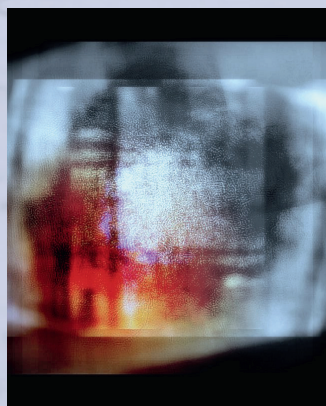
Streets of a Human City for instrumental ensemble (2011), 16'

Premiere: 20 Sept 2011, 'Warsaw Autumn' European Workshop for Contemporary Music, R. Bohn (cond.)

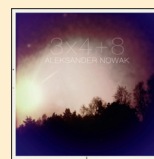
Work commissioned by Deutschlandfunk

"Streets of a Human City is an ingenious fusion of traditional musical material with the sounds of every day life. Laughing, coughing, the clanging of falling spoons, the clicking of typewriters and the steps of a pianist going to the instrument – almost no music lover could remain indifferent to this unusual walk."

[Marek Dolewka, polmic.pl]

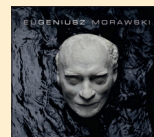


Computer graphics by Justyna Kowalska-Lasoń

**Aleksander Nowak**

3x4+8

String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2; Quantemporette; Ulica Spokojna 3 Silesian String Quartet, CELLONET CD Accord ACD 180, 2012

**Eugeniusz Morawski****Symphonic Poems**

Don Quichotte; Ulalume; Nevermore
Sinfonia Varsovia, M. Wolińska (cond.)
Bruckner Foundation/CD Accord ACD 176, 2012

**Henryk Mikołaj Górecki****Concerto-Cantata**

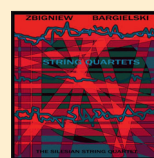
Kleine requiem für eine Polka; Three Dances, Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra (version for piano)
A. Górecka (piano), C. Wincenc (flute), Warsaw Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, A. Wit (cond.)
NAXOS 8.572872, 2012

**Stalowa Wola Generation**

Eugeniusz Knapik; Andrzej Krzanowski, Aleksander Lasoń
Silesian String Quartet
Fundacja Musica Pro Bono, 6CD, 2011

**Ignacy Jan Paderewski****Manru**

Choir, Ballet and Orchestra of the Opera Nova in Bydgoszcz, M. Figas (cond.)
DUX 9793, DVD, 2011

**Zbigniew Bargielski****String Quartets**

Quartet No. 1 'Alpine'; Quartet No. 2 'Spring'; Quartet No. 3 'Still Life with a Scream'; A Night of Farewells; Quartet No. 4 'Burning Time'; Quartet No. 5 'The Time That's Passed'; Quartet No. 6 'Dramatic'; Through the Looking Glass
Silesian String Quartet; M. Andrysek (accordion), R. Widaszek (clarinet)
CD Accord ACD 173, 2CD, 2012

**Wojciech Kilar****The very best of**

Polonez from the film "Pan Tadeusz"; Tango from the film "Jealousy and Medicine"; Agnus Dei from the film "König der letzten Tage"; Three Preludes; Missa Pro Pace: Kyrie (fragm.); Credo (fragm.); "The Ants" from the film "Pan Tadeusz"; Piano Concerto: Preludium. Andante con moto; Choral Prelude: Choral. Misterioso; Victoria; Magnificat: Magnificat anima mea Dominum; Orawa; Kościelec 1909; Krzesany
DUX 0906/0907, 2CD, 2012

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Edited by
Urszula Mieszkioło
Layout
Pracownia Register
Deadline 20.08.2012