

WINTER  
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# BEETHOVEN

**No. 10**

M A G A Z I N E



16th Chopin  
Piano  
Competition

Concerts  
and Festivals  
Poland 2011

New Polish  
Avant-garde  
Art

New York  
Philharmonic  
Plays Chopin



## FROM THE PUBLISHER



### The Polish Dream

In different periods, Polish culture has had plenty of ambassadors: one of those who made his name famous on all continents was Fryderyk Chopin. His Jubilee Year 2010, culminating in the 16th Chopin Piano Competition brimming with emotions, made

Poles aware of the role of Chopin, who in Poland is called “a citizen of the world,” in the reinforcement of their national identity, and reminded the world symbolically about the Polish contribution to the global cultural heritage. Symbolically, as Chopin was followed by others: Paderewski, Lutosławski, Penderecki, Górecki... a long line of composers who turned their awareness of their Polish roots into a forte of their artistic creation, known in all of the concert halls in the world. The same subjects are present in the works of artists operating in different arts: Abakanowicz, Miłosz, Wajda, and Kieślowski are citizens of the world who have been able to ask fundamental questions from a Polish perspective. This sensitivity has also brought about a political watershed: the awareness of cultural heritage certainly buttressed the Poles’ stout-hearted attitude towards the Communist government, and as a result—to the liberation of Central Europe from under totalitarian dominion.

Today Poland is quickly catching up, transforming into the key country of its region. Artists of the young generation—Mariusz Kwiecień, Wilhelm Sasnal, and Abel Korzeniowski—enter the circulation of world culture without any complexes. They are the ones to carry on the Polish dream today, thanks to their skills and a perfect understanding of the mechanisms behind success. Today, Polish festivals, adapting to playing the role of key European events, attract the greatest artists. Among them is the Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival, which in the 14 years of its operation has gained the renown of an international event held in the largest cities of Poland.

*Beethoven Magazine* has for two years followed this new opening of Polish culture. Initially designed as a periodical accompanying the Festival, it quickly became a phenomenon in its own right, combining visual attractiveness with an intellectual message. A testimony to its success is the prestigious award for the press cover of the year from the Polish Press Publishers Chamber, the Grand Front 2009, and the Stevie Award in the Best House Organ—For General Audience category, in the International Business Awards competition. It is my pleasure to recommend to you *Beethoven Magazine*’s special, 10th edition.

**Andrzej Giza**

Director of the Ludwig van Beethoven Association

## EDITOR’S NOTE



### Secret of Music

Last year, the name of Fryderyk Chopin was mentioned in Poland in a plethora of contexts. The 200th anniversary of his birth was accompanied by thousands of events, often initiated by private people, acting spontaneously, outside institutionalized

contexts. An example is the marathon public performance of Chopin’s works for 24 hours, held as an initiative of residents of a townhouse in Warsaw. The composer of the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* was on the lips and in the minds of nearly all Poles. One cannot over-exaggerate the educational and promotional significance of the jubilee for classical music in Poland. Celebrating his birthday, the composer continues to attract millions of fans and aficionados, with many new ones being accrued. During the Chopin Competition in Warsaw, I was amazed to observe crowds of foreigners, frequently very young people, whose various statements for the press and television as well as those published online were a testimony to their admiration of Chopin, bordering on a cult following. There is something in his music that makes it impossible to be ever truly satiated with it. It is a mystery; and a very important constituent of his music is beauty. I am very glad that—indirectly, thanks to the Chopin Competition and the special award from the Chopin Institute in Warsaw for the winner, namely a concert with the New York Philharmonic—I may present to you a brief glance at the cultural life of Poland.

**Anna S. Dębowska**

Editor-in-Chief of *Beethoven Magazine*

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On the cover: a work of **Jakub Julian Ziolkowski**, a painter, draughtsman, and sculptor.

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### Beethoven Magazine

has been recognised with the prestigious Stevie Award in the American International Business Awards in the Best House Organ—For General Audience category.



**Dorota Kozłńska, Aleksander Laskowski, Monika Małkowska, Jacek Marczyński, Dorota Szwarman, Róża Świączyńska (Polskie Radio), Łukasz Waligórski**  
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# AVDEEVA



Yulianna Avdeeva, winner of the 16th Chopin Competition, was selected by the jury for the gold medal and \$41,500. She is pictured here playing with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert at the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall on October 29th, 2010, immediately after her victory.

BRUNO FIDRYCH

## The best Chopinist at Lincoln Center

For the first time in the history of the Fryderyk Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw, two concerts with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra (NYPO) were awarded to its winner as a special prize. This singular

distinction for the young pianist assumes the form of a joint performance at the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall on January 4th. The program of the night includes the Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. This exceptional trophy was founded by

the Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Warsaw, which organized the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the birth of the great Polish composer (1810-1849) in 2010, from a commission of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. **BM**



# To Lead the New York Philharmonic

“EVEN AS MEMBERS CHANGE, THE SOUL  
OF THE ORCHESTRA REMAINS CONSTANT,”

*says ALAN GILBERT, the music director  
of the New York Philharmonic.*

**Róża Świątczyńska (Polskie Radio): In an unprecedented event for the New York Philharmonic, you are going to accompany Yulianna Avdeeva, the winner of the Chopin Piano Competition. How did this happen?**

**Alan Gilbert:** Ordinarily, we don't take soloists we don't know, and I don't work with soloists that I have not heard or heard about. This is a special case, as we have such a high regard for the Chopin Competition that we trust that the jury is going to choose somebody who is going to be as spectacular as in the past years. **The list of soloists who dream of a performance with the NYPO is very long. Even the former winner of the Warsaw Competition, Rafał Blechacz, had to wait. Do you agree that talents are promoted better through real performances than competitions?**

We in the New York Philharmonic are in a privileged situation. We can choose whom we want to have play with, and of course there are some that we hope we can work with. A concert with the NYPO should be thought of as a big honor and a big opportunity, and a great education, especially for young soloists. We have a philosophy of supporting youth, and many young soloists feel a little surprised when they first play with the orchestra, because there is so much support, and so much energy coming from the orchestra. This is not always the case with accompanying orchestras.

**Herbert von Karajan conducted a Chopin piano concerto only in his later years, with Krystian Zimerman, while Leonard Bernstein never performed it with a soloist. How about you?**

It's deceptive both Chopin piano concertos often sound very simple to the orchestra, but to really make an organic performance, in which you are creating music together, and for it to be completely unified in the conception, is harder than it sounds, and I think that's maybe why orchestras would often say: "Oh, Chopin's piano concerto, there isn't much to do." Yet if they take it seriously and approach it in the right way, it becomes a very musical experience, and this music itself is so imaginative and so wonderful. Obviously it's about the piano. But I think it can be a wonderful experience for everybody, if the creation of music is on an artistically exquisite level.

**You are only the third American and the first New Yorker leading the NYPO. Is your relationship with the orchestra personal and very emotional?**

Yes, as I have grown up with the orchestra. My parents are violinists, and my mother is still playing in the orchestra. I have listened to the orchestra for my entire life. To be music director of such an orchestra is something that I guess conductors hope

for, but you can't expect it. Even being a great conductor is no guarantee that you're going to have this chance. So when the opportunity came up this early in my career I was thrilled, surprised, and honored. It is incredibly gratifying; I am in the beginning of my second season, and the relationship is very strong with a lot of trust. We've been growing together, and we're very happy to be able to influence the cultural life of the city. It is a great privilege.

**NYPO has had great conductors. How are you planning to preserve the tradition?**

There is an automatic chemistry that occurs when you have an orchestra meeting a conductor and you hope that this chemistry is positive. All orchestras, no matter how good, need to work hard and to think about their attitude and approach to creating music. And as soon as you stop trying to develop it, as soon as you stop trying to get even better that's when you immediately start to get worse.

**In what way would you like to influence the direction of the orchestra?**

One of the great things is that the NYPO plays an incredible amount of music, and it is able to play it. I don't believe that there is any other orchestra that goes through as many different programs in a season as the New York Philharmonic. For me, the most important thing is to have a personal, unique point of view for every piece that we play, and to be flexible enough to change our sound. It is useful and beneficial for the orchestra to think actively about adjusting the quality and character of the sound even for every measure that we play. Every bit of music that we play should have a real stamp, and a personal point of view.

**Working with many orchestras, do you think there is something like an individual sound or style of an orchestra?**

Even as the members change, there is often an essential quality that does not change. In different orchestras in Europe for example, in Germany there are different qualities to each orchestra. In the States, you can't say that the New York Philharmonic sounds like the Cleveland Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, or the Philadelphia Orchestra. Even as members change, the soul of the orchestra remains constant. People that join the orchestra somehow grow to find their place in that tradition. It really is about the moment, about finding the sound and the quality and the chemistry of a particular moment with a particular orchestra. I think I am one of the luckiest conductors in the world, to do what I do, to grow together with the Orchestra, and to find our way.

Interview by **Róża Świątczyńska** (abridged)





**Alan Gilbert:**  
"There is a wonderful  
distinguished tradition  
in New York, and it is  
something that I can use,  
something I can build on."



# Racing Pianos

**Anna S. Dębowska**

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY,  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
FRYDERYK CHOPIN  
PIANO COMPETITION  
IN WARSAW HAS  
SPARKED POWERFUL,  
ALMOST SPORT-LIKE  
EMOTIONS IN THE  
MUSICAL WORLD.

**M**artha Argerich in the glare of flash lamps. Krystian Zimerman besieged by reporters waving microphones. Ivo Pogorelich surrounded by an audience brought to its boiling point. Yundi Li carried on the shoulders of his fans. Standing ovations for Rafał Blechacz. And finally, the journalists' mad run after Yulianna Avdeeva. These are pictures from the successive Chopin Competitions that became known worldwide and turned into the icons of the Warsaw tournament. Poles are proud of the history of the competition, written in the names of grand pianists. The contest, moreover, serves as the touchstone for other competitions devoted to Chopin, including the National Chopin Piano

Competition of the United States in Miami, Florida, whose winner receives the right to participate in the Warsaw challenge.

## The World's First

This story has been ongoing since 1927. The oldest of the biggest piano competitions in the world developed as an initiative of a Polish pianist, Aleksander Michałowski, who was a student of Chopin's pupil, Karol Mikuli, and ergo an heir to the composer in a straight artistic line. He organized the competition thanks to the support of the pianist and teacher Jerzy Żurawlew. The objective was to reward the most talented Chopinists keeping to the composer's score, which at the time was not that obvious at all. It was in Warsaw—the city where Chopin spent the first half of his life—that the standard for performing Chopin's music was to be



Gold medal for the Pole: **Krystian Zimerman**, 1975

located. To emphasize the exceptional quality of the competition, a decision was reached to repeat it every five years, as true talents do not come up every year. Even though the world has changed since then, interest in the Competition never diminished. Participating in its first edition were only 34 pianists from seven European countries. Five years later, 200 candidates had applied, including some from the United States. More than 346 artists competed for participation in the 16th competition organized in 2010.

### In the Days of the Internet

The curiosity among the audience does not diminish either. The competition is accompanied by a highly unique atmosphere, and it attracts lovers of Chopin's music from all over the world, as it is their main event. In a communist Poland crippled by crises—the period when the most Chopin competitions were held—it additionally provided a window to the world. For example, in 1980, there were no fewer than 149 participants from distant parts of our globe competing in Warsaw, which allowed Poles to forget for a moment that the borders were sealed. In 2010, especially heated disputes concerning the course of the auditions took place in online forums and social websites, including Facebook. The profile established by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute (NIFC) on Facebook attracted 13,000 participants in the discussion. The powerful interest in the Competition all over the world was reinforced with the broadcast of all of the performances, aired from dawn to dusk online and on the Polish thematic channel TVP Kultura. Worth adding is the fact that more than 100 journalists from various continents received accreditation to report on the auditions.

### Challenge for the Best

From its earliest days, the Warsaw competition has been the event devoted to the music of just one composer. And this is where the exceptional difficulty lies, as Chopin—like no other composer of music—mercilessly lays bare all drawbacks, failures, and shortages. In the successive four stages, the pianist must prove a capacity of interpreting various forms. There are only a few who are capable of playing a polonaise, a waltz, or a mazurka, yet it is for them that special awards have been set up, including the Polish Radio award for the mazurkas (R3000, approx. \$4,000) and one for the sonata founded by Krystian Zimerman (€12,000, approx. \$15,000).

The jurors have always been a forte of the competition too. Their number has included great pianists, teachers and musicians, such as Maurice Ravel, Wilhelm Backhaus, Harry Neuhaus, Marguerite Long, Arturo Benedetti-Michelangeli, Nadia Boulanger, Magda Tagliaferro, Paul Badura-Skoda, Nikita Magaloff, Maria Tipo, Edward Auer, Harold C. Schonberg, Vera Gornostaeva, Artur Schnabel (honorary) and also previous winners—Vladimir Ashkenazy, Martha Argerich, and Dang Thai Son. The Chopin Competition in Warsaw is a great heritage of musical culture. **BM**

## They Won in Warsaw:



### Rafał Blechacz

#### 15th Competition, 2005

Three CDs released by Deutsche Grammophon, début in the world's premiere concert halls, fan clubs in Japan—five years after his undisputed victory, the Pole is at the peak of his success, and closest to Chopin's ideal.



### Yundi

#### 14th Competition, 2000

The 18-year-old Chinese Yundi Li (currently just Yundi) charmed with his youth, virtuoso quality, and elegance. A born lyricist, during the Chopin Year he released records with all of Chopin's nocturnes (EMI).



### Philippe Giusiano, Alexei Sultanov

#### 13th Competition, 1995

The reserved Frenchman and the Russian endowed with an independent spirit (deceased suddenly at Fort Worth in 2005) were the favorites of the audience, yet they never won the first prize, as it was not awarded.



### Kevin Kenner

#### 12th Competition, 1990

The American winner was awarded the silver medal: "The most magnificent, the most experienced, and the most mature of all,"—the press was enraptured indeed. Lectures at the Royal College of Music in London and lives in Kraków.



### Stanislav Bunin

#### 11th Competition, 1985

Won with the cheek proper

for a 19-year-old. Related to the doyen of the Russian school of piano, Harry Neuhaus; in the days of globalization, he is one of its last inheritors.



### Dang Thai Son

#### 10th Competition, 1980

The quick and sharp ear of the jury sifted out the 22-year-old Vietnamese, especially sensitive to the poetic quality of Chopin's music. One of the few pianists performing the composer's works on pianos from the period.



### Krystian Zimerman, 9th Competition, 1975

One of the greatest pianists of our times was 19 years old when he won in Warsaw. Today, he travels with his own piano, does not concert too often, and records even less often than that. A citizen of the world, remembering his Polish roots.



### Garrick Ohlsson

#### 8th Competition, 1970

The only American to have won the gold medal in Warsaw. A brilliant and charming pianist. His performance of the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* is believed to be the model. Magnificent artistic partner of the Polish singer Ewa Podleś.



### Martha Argerich

#### 7th Competition, 1965

The pianist legend, whose veneration in Poland verges on religion. Her Chopin interpretations today belong to the canon. Every year, she eagerly participates in Warsaw's Chopin and His Europe festival in August.



### Maurizio Pollini

#### 6th Competition, 1960

His fame began in Warsaw, which he conquered as an 18-year-old, with an Apollinarian calmness and the great power of influence. His repertoire is impressive, yet he still eagerly returns to Chopin.



### Adam Harasiewicz

#### 5th Competition, 1955

Won the first prize with ease. A marvelous interpreter of Chopin's works, his interpretations perfectly render the romantic style of the composer tainted with nostalgia.



### Bella Davidovich,

#### Halina Czerny-Stefańska

#### 4th Competition, 1949

Winners of the first Chopin competition after the second world war. Czerny-Stefańska (died in 2001) became the star of the Polish piano school, and Davidovich settled in New York, where she lectures at the Juilliard School of Music.



### Yakov Zak

#### 3th Competition, 1937

The Polish press on the pianist born in Odessa: "Zak is a virtuoso of the highest order, he works like a clock, never fails, to which he adds a colossal temperament." He was a concerting pianist and a professor at the Moscow Conservatory (died in 1976).



### Alexandre Uninski

#### 2nd Competition, 1932

A Ukrainian-Russian émigré competing for France. From 1955 to his death in 1972 he was professor of piano at the Conservatory in Toronto, and the Musical Faculty of the University in Dallas.



### Lev Oborin

#### 1st Competition, 1927

From the Polish press: "...has all the predispositions for interpreting Chopin, thanks to the soft touch and the focused play that is not excessively sentimentalized." Long-term artistic partner of the great violinist David Oistrakh, Professor of the Moscow Conservatory (died in 1974).



# OHLSSON:

## *I was Taught to Dance the Mazurka*

“I CAN DIVIDE MY LIFE INTO TWO PARTS: BEFORE AND AFTER THE  
CHOPIN COMPETITION,”

GARRICK OHLSSON, THE WINNER IN 1970, REMINISCES.

**Róża Świątczyńska (Polskie Radio):**  
**What made you take part in the  
Chopin Competition?**

**Garrick Ohlsson:** Number one was my ambition. When I was 18 I entered the Busoni. I didn't expect to win it, but I did. Then came Montréal. I was 20 years old and I was beginning to make a name for myself and I was more ambitious. I knew that out of all of the piano competitions in the world, there were two or three important ones: Queen Elizabeth of Belgium in Brussels, the Tchaikovsky in Moscow, and the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. They certainly would give me a boost in the eyes of the world, and I had to decide between Moscow and Warsaw. I knew that, even if you were perhaps the best competitor, you wouldn't necessarily win first prize. With Chopin, I knew that even if I didn't win any prize at all, this would be with me for the rest of my life, as I like Chopin very much and I have very strong feelings for Chopin. The fantastic part is that it all came true: it was the right time, and I did win.

**What is the major difference between  
the Chopin Competition and Moscow?**

Tchaikovsky is the usual kind of competition the general piano-playing Olympics: many composers, many styles, some baroque, some classic, some romantic, some modern... this and that. In Warsaw, your repertoire is just Chopin, so I used it as an opportunity to develop my knowledge and love for Chopin, and my pianism, and everything.



PAUL BODY



**You were the first American to win in Warsaw. Earlier, only Edward Auer had reached the finals in 1965. Do Americans avoid Chopin?** I don't know exactly. I was studying at this time at Juilliard with the great Rosina Lhevinne, a great Russian teacher, and she was maybe the most famous piano teacher in the world. She liked me very much and thought me extremely promising. She said I was a born Chopin player, which she found very rare, and in her generation this was perhaps the most important thing for a pianist. She found my style of playing "a bit like a cowboy from the Wild West;" a sort of Russian-influenced big style of playing, whereas in Poland she believed the style to be more refined, more French-influenced. When I told her my reasons for going to Warsaw, she was very rational and she simply said: "Good luck, my dear!"

**Was it Mrs. Lhevinne who coached you for the Warsaw competition?** I had two principal teachers. My secondary teacher was perhaps even more important. Her name was Olga Barabini. She studied first at the Curtis Institute with Joseph Hoffman, the great Polish pianist. A powerful, old tradition. I was influenced by both very much. Rosina Levin asked me if I played mazurkas at my first lesson. She

made me learn them and explained the ethnic importance of the different kinds of dances. Olga insisted on preparing mazurkas very carefully. She even took me to some Polish friends of hers who showed me the Kujawiak, the Oberek, and the Mazurka. In New York, pianists who play mazurkas mostly sound like they're playing a melancholy slow waltz, which is not enough.

**Did you have any Polish models to help you understand Chopin's music?**

My first favorite pianist was Artur Schnabel. I was nine years old when I heard him play a recital of only Chopin at Carnegie Hall. Having won the Prize of the Polish Radio for the Mazurkas, which was really rather radical, I became friends with Jan Weber, the head of music for Polish Radio at the time. He had the recordings of Ignacy Friedman, Aleksander Michałowski, Moriz Rosentahl, Raul Koczalski, and Józef Hoffman not easily available in those days. That style of playing I had only heard live by the famous Vladimir Horowitz in America, who at that time was really like a dinosaur. Jan Weber showed me that he was not just one building in a landscape, but one of the many buildings.

**How did your life change after the competition? You were announced the national hero, weren't you?**

My life changed dramatically. Every major paper in the world noted it on the front page. It was almost like being a rock star in America... Or like in 1958, when the American pianist Van Cliburn won the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, they had a ticker-tape parade.

**Would you take part in the Chopin Competition today?**

In a way the world was simpler in 1970. Chopin or Tchaikovsky: if I won, it guaranteed a certain amount of success. And now, we have an explosion of piano competitions in the world. It was the Van Cliburn Competition in Texas that started it, and now they use the power of the media, and also the idea of guaranteed prizes for the winners, or guaranteed appearances with the New York Philharmonic. Yet to insist that in every year we have ten major new artists discovered in the world... That's probably not possible. Even if the prestige of the major competitions is not quite as high, the Chopin Competition has more prestige than most. The Tchaikovsky went through a catastrophic loss of prestige. Queen Elizabeth of Belgium has gone quite far down. Right now

what leads, I suppose, is the Van Cliburn. Especially in the world of musicians, the Chopin prizes are still rated at the top maybe because almost all of the winners have had really good international careers. This is better than any other competition.

**Do you think it is still worthwhile to dedicate a year or two to only to Chopin?**

Because I am me, I would like to spend this year or two working with Chopin, because even if you don't win, it gives you something that is priceless.

Interview by **Róża Świątczyńska**  
(abridged)

**Garrick Ohlsson**, born in 1948, New Yorker, winner of international piano competitions in Bolzano, Montréal, and Warsaw. Performs all over the world as a soloist and chamber musician, works with the singer Ewa Podleś (contralto).

Congratulations on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Institute, wishing you further  
successes in promoting Polish culture  
abroad.

Elżbieta Uściłowska  
President of the Ludwig van Beethoven Association

10

YEARS OF  
EXPERIENCE

More than  
3000 events  
3 continents  
26 countries  
18 million visitors

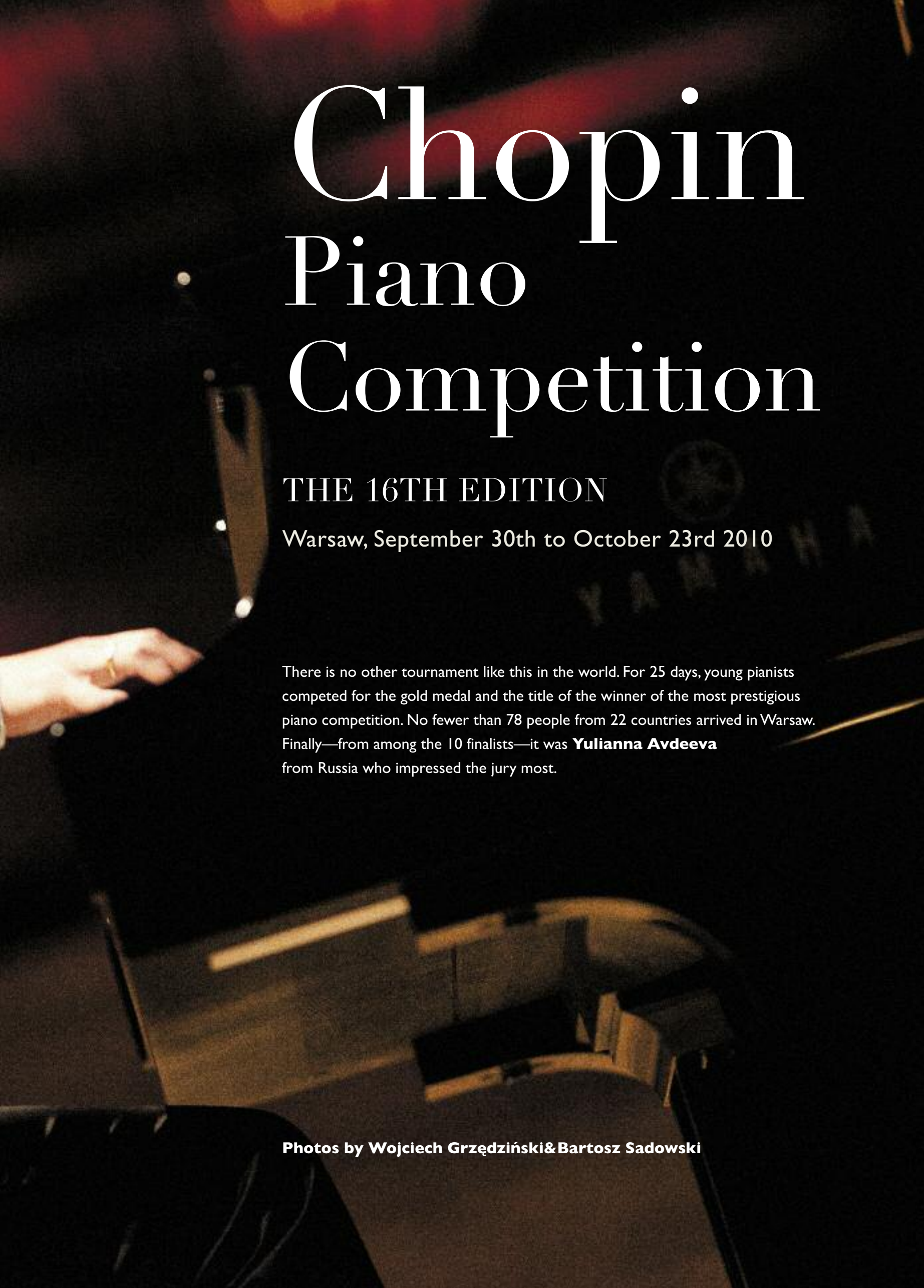
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# Chopin Piano Competition

THE 16TH EDITION

Warsaw, September 30th to October 23rd 2010

There is no other tournament like this in the world. For 25 days, young pianists competed for the gold medal and the title of the winner of the most prestigious piano competition. No fewer than 78 people from 22 countries arrived in Warsaw. Finally—from among the 10 finalists—it was **Yulianna Avdeeva** from Russia who impressed the jury most.

Photos by Wojciech Grzędziński & Bartosz Sadowski





Every day, music lovers gathered at the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall ask themselves whether a new Blechacz will arise—whether somebody of the order of Argerich will appear?









It is the composition of the jury that is decisive for the prestige of every competition. In Warsaw, the evaluation was in the hands of the greatest pianists, eminent teachers, and winners of previous Chopin competitions.





Standing: Nelson Freire, Michie Koyama, Adam Harasiewicz, Martha Argerich, Kevin Kenner, Piotr Paleczny, Albert Grudziński (director of the competition), Dang Thai Son, Andrzej Jasiński (chairman of the jury); seated: Philippe Entremont, Bella Davidovich, Fou Ts'ong, Katarzyna Popowa-Zydroń.





They were accompanied by stage fright, a desire for victory, their belief in music, joy, and tears.

**Irene Veneziano** from Italy, just before entering the stage of the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall at 8 pm on October 11th.

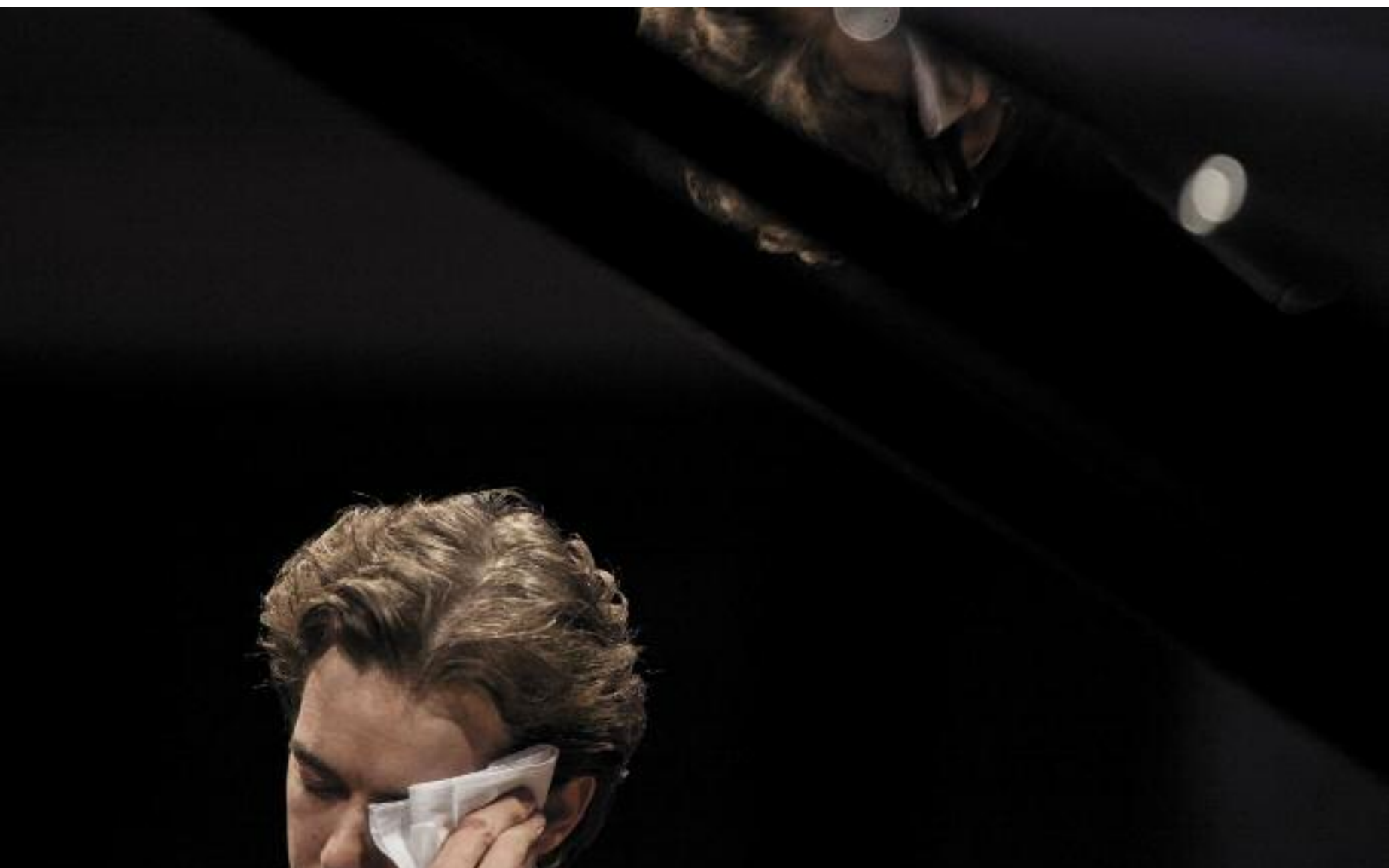








Eri Goto



Ingolf Wunder, winner of the second prize





Daniil Trifonov, winner of the third prize




Marcin Koziak









The piano, like no other music instrument, made an astounding career in the concert halls of 19th-century Europe and America. The most perfect composer of works for the piano was Chopin. Little wonder that his music is the greatest challenge for every pianist, and there are only a chosen few who can play it well indeed. In the photo: **Evgeni Bozhanov** from Bulgaria, winner of the fourth prize, playing a Yamaha.





CHRISTINE SCHNEIDER

# TEMPERAMENT & INTELLIGENCE

**Dorota Szwarcman**

*Fifth representative of Russia with the gold medal,  
the first woman in 45 years to triumph.*

**W**hen I heard her more than two years ago at the Chopin and His Europe International Festival of Music in Warsaw, days after her victory in Geneva, she played Schubert and Liszt. It was a highly intriguing interpretation, brimming with temperament, powerful, and at the same time, nearly anti-romantic: a performance from the position of “a young, angry one.” I found this position sufficiently different to remember Avdeeva, and later—having learned that she was admitted to the Chopin competition—wondered how she would cope with Chopin. And cope perfectly she did! Moreover, Chopin changed her and told her how to approach lyricism. From one stage to another, it was visible how she

began to be transformed, as if the music opened her up emotionally. She is best in the pieces that require temper. Her militant spirit helped Avdeeva greatly to interpret shorter pieces—for example, the tempestuous Etude in A minor, Op. 25 No. 11 and the Nocturne in C-sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 1: elegiac, yet with the heroic central movement—as well as the longer ones, being among those most difficult to interpret: the Fantasy in F minor, Op. 49 and the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* in A-flat major, Op. 61 and even the Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35, whose performance won her the special award. Moreover, Avdeeva demonstrated features that are highly useful, both in competitions and on stage: she is enduring and intelligent. The program of this year’s Chopin competition was set up in a way that strongly impinged on the condition of the young pianists, and nearly every one of them experienced smaller or greater “failures.” The Russian had

hardly any, and was self-assured from the beginning to the end. She was capable of composing the program of each of the stages into a whole perfectly, and behaved highly intelligently. In addition, in the final round, during the Piano concerto in E minor she forced the conductor, Antoni Wit (the finalists of the competition were accompanied by the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra), to adjust to her interpretation. A personality that is certain to keep on surprising us in the future. **BM**

**Yulianna Avdeeva** is 25, comes from Moscow. Received education in her home city, in Zurich, at the Accademia Pianistica Lago di Como, where she had contact with the great names in piano music. In 2006, she won the Geneva Competition, and went on to win the second prize at the I.J. Paderewski International Piano Competition in Bydgoszcz a year later. Lives in Munich.



# Chopin? I keep on discovering him...

**“THERE IS NO SINGLE INTERPRETATION OF HIS MUSIC,”**

*says YULIANNA AVDEEVA, the winner of the 16th Chopin Competition.*

**Anna S. Dębowska: How do you understand the idea of playing Chopin in line with the style?**

**Yulianna Avdeeva:** There are certain rules connected to his music, rhythm, *tempo rubato*, and sound. It is what we call the style. Yet what Chopin calls for from the performer is love, and a personal attitude. There is no single interpretation of his music, and the margin given to liberty is vast. I am fascinated in the genesis of his works. He was a consummate improviser, and many of his works originated from recordings of his earlier improvisations. Enduring in them is the spirit of freedom and inspiration. Mazurkas are always an unfinished story, there is always a sense of doubt suspended at their end—the idea becomes suspended. Chopin requires an unbelievable readiness, an open mind to allow for the summoning of the elusive, poetic character so typical of him at a concert. This is, quite naturally, even more difficult to achieve at a competition.

**Are you planning to focus your career on Chopin?**

This is what everyone expects from me now, do they not? Yet, I would like to find time for other composers too. Chopin is a crucial part of my repertoire. I have played piano since I was five, and Chopin nearly from that day. My acquaintance with him was gradual;

it began with the short forms, and then came the ballads and scherzos, which I first played for myself and only later at recitals.

It is music that does not allow boredom, and I continue to discover it. I want to learn the Sonata in B-flat major, and more mazurkas. This is still all ahead of me. The competition helped me to understand Chopin better; during the Warsaw competition I lived solely on his music for nearly a month.

**This was not your first visit to Warsaw. Do you feel ties with Poland?**

My mother studied at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and to this day she speaks fluent Polish. Thanks to her, I became acquainted with the great Polish pianist, Halina Czerny-Stefańska (winner of the Chopin Competition in 1949—editor’s note) when she was a member of the jury of the Tchaikovsky Competition. My mother was studying under Professor Ludwik Stefański and played for Halina Czerny-Stefańska.

Poland was my first foreign visit, when I was just eight. And in 2002, I won the 5th Artur Rubinstein in Memoriam Competition in Bydgoszcz. It was then that I got to know Rafał Blechacz, who came in second. Today, we are both winners of the Chopin Competition.

Amazing! **BM**

*The entire interview was first published in the Gazeta Wyborcza national daily, October 23th–24th, 2010.*

*Her finest playing came in the C-sharp minor Nocturne, where she established a palpable, shadowy, romantic atmosphere from the outset and allowed the piece to grow organically into a statement of impressive and lasting power.*

**Financial Times**  
on Avdeeva’s recital  
at Queen Elizabeth Hall, London,  
November 3rd, 2010

*Avdeeva first painted the charm of a Viennese drawing room (Op 34, No 1), then, in the Fantasy in F minor, reflected on a heroic past; her final chords resounded with triumph. Then she played the Op 30 Mazurkas. The Mazurka in C-sharp minor was a moment of personal confession.*

**Jan Popis, Chopin Express**  
on Avdeeva recital in the second  
round of the Chopin Competition

**And the winner is... Yulianna Avdeeva!** October 20th, 2010: the final verdict in the 16th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition is announced at the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall.

**Avdeeva receives congratulations from Martha Argerich,** glad to see another woman winning the Chopin competition—even though it has been 45 years since her triumph.







# CHOPIN

## & WARSAW:

### *An Unbreakable Tie*





COLLECTION OF ROYAL CASTLE IN WARSAW

Bernardo Belotto (Canaletto), *Krakowskie Przedmieście*, 1768. On the left: The tower of the Bernardine Convent. Until 1831 it housed the Music Conservatory of Warsaw, where Fryderyk Chopin studied.

## Wojciech Bońkowski

*It was in the capital of Poland that Chopin spent half of his life.*

**E**ven the greatest artistic individuality grows from the culture of his or her time. The intellectual context of the family home, the first teachers, the leading minds of the period, and institutions of culture, make their profound mark even on the artists whose creative strategy assumes breaking away from tradition and revolutionist pursuits. Such is the case with Fryderyk Chopin. For many decades, researchers have sought the source of his creativity in his natural, independent genius and direct inspiration from folk music, at the same time neglecting the importance of his school and university years, that is the period before November 1830, when he was forced to leave Poland. It has only been recently that the role of Chopin's education and acculturation in the Warsaw milieu was fully appreciated. The extensive research of Fryderyk's paternal and maternal family, the various schools and other institutions of cultural life and the salons of Warsaw's high society, makes it possible to outline the period and the environment that provided the cradle for the genius spirit of the young Chopin.

**The City** | Chopin (1810–1849) grew up in the capital of the ancient Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, which in 1815 became only the capital of the so-called Congress Kingdom of Poland (a state established on the power of the decision of the Congress of Vienna in 1815 from but a fraction of the former Polish lands remaining in an informal and later actual union with Russia, to which it was entirely subjugated after 1864). At the time Warsaw was inhabited by approximately 100,000 residents. Beginning with the 1750s—that is, before the successive partitioning of the Polish state among Russia, Prussia and Austria, which took place in 1772, 1793, and 1795—the city developed dynamically. Being no paragon to such hubs as Paris and Vienna, Warsaw could nevertheless boast a developed cultural and society life and good infrastructure. The cobbling and marking of streets, lanterns, and firefighting service were introduced already in the mid-18th century. Under the last king of Poland, Stanisław August Poniatowski, the city received more than 200 new brick buildings and a new public theatre, while the Royal Baths Park was established over a huge space as a fastidiously tended garden (which it remains to this day, providing one of the most

precious elements of heritage in today's Warsaw). By the power of Europe's first constitution, the Constitution of Poland approved on May 3rd, 1791, Warsaw became a modern administrative district. Operating in the city were 30 churches, eight hospitals, five public schools, 10 concert halls, nine musical bookshops (which must be more than today, one cannot fail to remark), and 90 cafes.

The beginning of the 19th century was a period of persistent development and modernization. In the first years of the reign of Tsar Alexander I (whom the Congress of Vienna also made the king of Poland), many streets that function to this day were modernized or mapped out. What proved the turning point was the establishment of the Royal University of Warsaw in 1816, with the following milestones, including the inauguration of the Grand (Wielki) Theater in 1833, and the railroad connection of Warsaw to Vienna in 1847. It goes without saying that in the first decades of the 19th century, Warsaw joined the bevy of the modern European metropolises, and developed a dynamic environment, which allowed the development of Chopin's creative personality. The number of favorable factors must also include



the relatively liberal, though short, reign of Alexander I. One can safely claim that the appearance of Chopin would be possible neither a generation earlier—as in the last decades of the 18th century, Warsaw was still a backwater city with a much less lively artistic life—nor a generation later. It is not a coincidence that by the end of the 19th century no personality that could even approach Chopin's level emerged in Polish music.

**The Family** | Of great significance for the shaping of Chopin's personality was the atmosphere of his family home. Full of warmth and love (which early in the 19th century was not a standard), it favored the development of artistic interests of the young Fryderyk and his three sisters: Ludwika, Izabella, and Emilia. The preserved testimonies leave no doubt as to the freedom that the young Chopins were given in their first artistic attempts, not only in music, but also in literature, drawing, and theater. For their father's patron saint's day, Fryderyk and Emilia staged a play they wrote—notably, Fryderyk's extraordinary gift in mimicking people was emphasized later during his Paris years by George Sand, Berlioz, and Liszt. Many caricatures and drawings that are a testimony to the other talents of Chopin's hand have been preserved. Józefa Wodzińska (sister to Maria, the would-be fiancée of the composer) called him the “versatile genius,” adding that she was “convinced that if Chopin only devoted himself to any other art, for example, painting, also in that field he would make works of genius.” The first person to exert an overwhelming influence on Chopin's mind was his father. Coming from a poor peasant family from Lorraine, he served at the court of one of the many Polish families residing in the region, the Pacs, when he was spotted and invited to Poland as a supervisor for the tobacco factory being established. Thus, on the eve of the French Revolution, Nicolas Chopin moved to Poland, where with time he thoroughly assimilated, and married an impoverished noblewoman, governess Justyna Krzyżanowska. Soon after Fryderyk's birth Nicolas—in Polish Mikołaj—was offered the post of a teacher of French at the Lyceum of Warsaw, where the Chopins established a highly successful dormitory for boys. His honesty and the ethos of work let Mikołaj Chopin advance to the Polish bourgeois elite, and made it



Warsaw, as painted by Canaletto, 40 years before Chopin was born.

possible for him to provide his children with education. Being an obvious beneficiary of the French Revolution, he nevertheless imbued Fryderyk with the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and the respect for tradition and authorities. If today we consider Chopin the most levelheaded among the romanticists, capable of combining powerful individualism with a particular aesthetic classicism, it is to an unquestioned degree a feature inherited from his father.

**The Teachers** | It is as interesting as it is significant that the complicated national and linguistic identity was true not only for Chopin's father, but also the young boy's teachers of music—Wojciech Żywny and Józef Elsner. Żywny was a Czech brought up in the Czech-Austrian tradition, while Elsner represented a Silesian—German—Polish mix, with his mother tongue being German. Educated in Wrocław and Vienna, having settled in Warsaw, Elsner became involved in the Polish cause. For nearly a quarter of a century he was the director of the National Theater and is still considered a leading personality in Polish musical life of the first half of the 19th century. He had a profound influence on the shaping of Chopin's style. The fascinating copy of Bach's *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* with Chopin's handwritten annotations, published recently by Chopinologist Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, lets us perceive Elsner's influence also in Chopin's interest in Bach, whose echoes continued to resound in his music until the Sonata in B minor, Op. 58.

**The Institutions** | These were not only individuals who decisively influenced Chopin's intellectual formation. Warsaw institutions played an equally significant role. At the Royal University of Warsaw, Chopin listened to Elsner's lectures in composition and counterpoint. Another center of ideas in whose orbit the young composer remained was the Warsaw Society of the Friends of

the Sciences, established in 1800. Moreover, regular visits to the national theater had a profound influence on the shaping of Chopin's musical style. It was here that Chopin for the first time saw works so seminal in the history of music as *The Barber of Seville* (1825), Rossini's *Othello* (1826), and Weber's *Der Freischütz* (1826), as well as eight other Rossini operas. In Warsaw, he listened to performances by the greatest virtuosos of his period: the pianist and composer Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1828) and the violinist Niccolò Paganini (1829). Chopin learned the latest instrumental music not only through live performances but also thanks to the very up-to-date publication of scores. In this scope, Chopin's access to the latest musical trends was no different than if he had lived in Dresden, Milan, or London.

**Salons and Cafes** | An important role in Chopin's education must also be ascribed to the informal institutions of culture. Already in his childhood, the composer was a regular guest in the *crème de la crème* of the Warsaw society, including the salon of Princess Idalia Czetwertyńska, Princess Łowicka, and the Count Alexandre de Moriollles, governor to the son of the Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov (the military governor of the Congress Kingdom of Poland). Moreover, he was present in the milieu of the court. In his student years, he frequented the literary cafes of Warsaw and had the opportunity to become familiar with the leading authors of the romanticism being born in literature of the time: Bohdan Zaleski and Stefan Witwicki, to whose poems he composed the majority of his several songs. In the salons of Warsaw, Chopin was learning new aesthetic ideas, acquiring social refinement, and became saturated with the customs of the high elites. When, in 1829 and 1830 he went for his first trips to Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Wrocław, and Berlin, invited thanks to his fame as a piano virtuoso to the

leading salons in these European metropolises, he experienced no cognitive shock. Among the “society” he moved with the freedom and natural quality that he had learned in his contacts with the Warsaw milieu.

It was to be not otherwise in Paris, where after several months of a “trial period” Chopin was quickly accepted as “one of our own.” His legendary elegance, suaveness of presence, gracefulness of manners, fluent French and German, and consummate taste in the selection of clothing made him—a foreigner—one of the leading personages in the high society of Paris. These features were not imbued with his mother's milk, nor were improvised after his arrival in the capital of France, but were the result of the many years of the *Bildung* in the milieu of his hometown of Warsaw, which in this sense proved far less provincial than it was usually pictured.

**The Melting Pot of Cultures** | It is a constituent of Chopin's genius that—having come to Paris—he was capable of such a quick recognition of the expectations of the local audiences, and make adjustments to his artistic communication strategy accordingly. Chopin felt particularly well that the days of romanticism left room for a pinch of Slavic exoticism. After 1833, Chopin, quickly subscribed—from the heights of his genius—to the Romantic mainstream. In his career as a professional piano teacher, pianist and composer, he was very careful so as not to move away from the musical world of Parisian society. He strenuously resisted the persuasions of the milieu of Polish émigrés in Paris to compose a more “Polish” music, including, for example, a national opera, which was expected of him. This assimilation, nevertheless, does in no way diminish the original quality of Chopin's talent, and can in no way deny the cultural value of the education that he brought from his years as a student in the most important institutions of Warsaw. Without the course of counterpoint with Elsner, without the profound experience of the *belcanto* at the National Theater, and the profound examination of the *style brillant* in Warsaw musical bookshops, Chopin would have never achieved what became his fill. It was from the modest cosmopolitanism of 19th century Warsaw that the most universal musical style in the history of the West developed—one whose communicative power does not wane to this day. **BM**



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## POLAND: *Where Dreams Come True*

**WALDEMAR DĄBROWSKI**, *interim director of the Fryderyk Chopin Institute*,  
ON CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF FRYDERYK CHOPIN  
AND THE MODERN MUSEUM DEVOTED TO HIM, OPENED IN WARSAW IN 2010.

**Aleksander Laskowski: What were the goals of the Chopin Year 2010?**

**Waldemar Dąbrowski:** The answer is extremely simple: to exploit the great interest of the world in the genius of Chopin on the 200th anniversary of his birth, and to show Poland from its best angle. This, however, would have been impossible unless we were very well prepared for the jubilee year 2010. We had a horrible backlog. After the ravages that Poland experienced during the second world war, the country was a Soviet satellite for over 40 years. In key places of importance for Chopin, modern infrastructure needed to be built, usually from scratch. Which is why in 2010 we revitalized the historical park surrounding the renovated Manor House in Żelazowa Wola, where Fryderyk Chopin was born. We installed a state-of-the-art high-end sound system to allow visitors to listen to music among the greenery. In the summer, I like to spend Sundays there, looking at nature and seeing Chopin charming the visitors, especially the children.

The new Fryderyk Chopin Museum opened in Warsaw, the most modern biographic museum in the world. After all, showing classical music is no simple task. It is easy to scare visitors away with specialist jargon or musical notation that today only few can read. We were keen to have the guests that came to the museum become emotionally involved with Chopin. Which is why you not only watch, but also listen, touch, and smell—part of the exhibition that we called Fryderyk's living room in Paris smells like violets, a scent that the composer liked so much. The museum is a success: it has gathered great reviews from journalists from all over the world,

and the public likes it so much that tickets must be booked in advance, just like the Gauguin exhibition in London.

**What about recordings and concerts?**

The Chopin Institute owns a collection of historic pianos from the times of the composer, which are used for recordings and concerts. We have managed to assemble the complete recordings of Chopin's works performed on these original instruments (the *Real Chopin* series; editor's note) on CDs. The Chopin and His Europe festival of music that the Institute organizes annually specializes in juxtaposing different styles of playing Chopin's music, and that of his contemporary composers on new instruments, e.g. Steinways, and on historical Erard and Pleyel pianos. It also makes me proud to think about the new, critical edition of the complete scores of our composer. It would be impossible not to mention this special project, namely the preparation of a ballet about the life of Fryderyk Chopin (*Chopin, artysta romantyczny / Chopin, the Romantic Artist*, choreographed by Patrice Bart; editor's note) by the Warsaw Teatr Wielki—Polish National Opera. It is a lesson in history told by the dancers, understandable for everyone and posing no language barriers.

**Can the Chopin Competition be considered the culmination of jubilee celebrations in Poland?**

Without a doubt. The jury of the competition is a true dream team, led by Martha Argerich and Nelson Freire, and supported by the immense authority of its chairman, Professor Andrzej Jasiński, whose students included Krystian Zimerman. For three weeks, young pianists

from all over the world were competing for the first prize, not unlike an Olympic games for classical musicians. Everywhere, they were accompanied by cameras, the auditoriums were full, and a multilingual crowd waited for tickets. Everyone could be a star for a moment. Yet the greatest reason to enjoy it is the level of this year's competition; it was truly magnificent. Every awarded pianist would certainly captivate New York audiences with their playing. Thus, Yulianna Avdeeva was not simply the best, but the best of the best.

**The concert with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the many prizes that she received.**

True, but it is an extremely important award, much like her appearance in Japan (Avdeeva will perform with the NHK Orchestra conducted by Charles Dutoit; editor's note). A victory in Warsaw allows a young pianist to find his or her way to the best stages of the world. You can therefore say that thanks to visiting Poland, dreams come true—even ones that the young artists dream very humbly.

**Did your dreams come true in 2010?**

Yes, because today Poland enjoys really good press, and that is thanks to Chopin. One day, the Chopin Museum in Warsaw was visited by a delegation from the World Bank. One of the high representatives of this institution said later that "the country that builds such modern museums must simply have a good economy". "Well," I thought. "We have succeeded!"

Interviewed by **Aleksander Laskowski**





Billboard advertising the **Chopin in the City** artistic actions in Kraków in 2010.

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## The exceptional museum

The most durable “keepsake” of the Jubilee is the Fryderyk Chopin Museum in Warsaw, opened officially on March 1st, and proclaimed one of the most modern biographic museums in the world. Nearly fully computerized, it provides an interactive tale of the composer, divided into the four floors of the historical Ostrogski Palace from the early 17th century. It is divided into 11 thematic halls devoted to the life and art of Chopin. The hi-tech exhibition is complemented with authentic mementos of the great artist, as envisaged by the designing team of the Migliore&Servetto Architetti Associati from Milan (Italy). In the first six months of operation, it was visited by over 100,000 people.

More: [www.chopin.museum/en](http://www.chopin.museum/en)

COLLECTION OF FRYDERYK CHOPIN MUSEUM



Chopin Museum in Warsaw—a present for the composer for the 200th anniversary of his birth (1810-2010).

## Chopin in Poland 2010

In 2010, Poland was the stage of hundreds of events connected to the 200th anniversary of the birth of Fryderyk Chopin and the Chopin Year declared by the Polish Parliament to commemorate the occasion. These were recitals, concerts, festivals, plays, and exhibitions; tens of books and press articles were written, posters designed, gadgets created, and public utilities referencing Chopin opened. The most important events included: the Birthday Concerts with the participation of the greatest pianists continuing from February 28th to March 1st, the Chopin and His Europe Festival, the Fryderyk Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw, the world premiere of the *Chopin* ballet at the Polish National Opera, and another opera—Marta Ptaszyńska's *Lovers from Valdemosa Monastery* at the Wielki Theatre in Łódź, and the exhibition entitled Chopin's Visiting Card, presenting priceless manuscripts of the composer's works and Chopin memorabilia.

### in brief:



COLLECTION OF SINFONETTA CRACOVIA

**The new face** of Deutsche Grammophon (Universal Music Company) will be 16-year-old pianist Jan Lisiecki, a Canadian of Polish origin. His CD with the recording of Chopin's Concerto in E minor was awarded the prestigious Diapason d'Or prize last year. The artist was born in Calgary in 1995 to a family of Polish immigrants.

**Marc Minkowski's new CD** (Naïve Records) will be released this February. Following Haydn's *London Symphonies*, and Handel's *Water Music*, this record will include orchestral fragments and arias from Gioacchino Rossini's operas. The soloist will be Russian soprano Julia Lezhneva, discovered by Minkowski, and accompanied by the Sinfonia Varsovia Orchestra.

**Krzysztof Urbański**, a 28-year-old Polish conductor, will be the musical director of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, starting this September. From the beginning of the 2010/2011 season, Urbański—a graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw—has been the chief conductor of the Trondheim Symfoniorchester.



# NOT ONLY CHOPIN

Dorota Szwarcman

*Polish music is still being discovered.*

Polish music recently experienced a great loss: **Henryk Mikołaj Górecki** (1933–2010) passed away. The world discovered the composer in the 1990s, and he is generally known for his *Symphony No. 3, Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*, and perhaps somewhat less for the three quartets commissioned by the American Kronos Quartet. Before these, Górecki was one of the last representatives of the Polish avant-garde that in the 1960s held Western Europe in their thrall, and predominantly Germany. These were the German critics who invented the moniker “Polish school of composing,” even though it was difficult to define the points of convergence among the works of the composers it encompassed. Many of them have long been gone—**Kazimierz Serocki** (1922–1981), **Witold Szalonek** (1927–2001), **Tadeusz Baird** (1928–1981), and last but definitely not least **Witold Lutosławski** (1913–1994)—or had departed even earlier, such as **Grażyna Bacewicz** (1909–1969), an eminent representative of neoclassicism, who towards the end of her life adjusted her style to the then current tendencies. Recently, Krystian Zimerman attempts to revive her works: he has toured with her chamber music, a CD has been announced, and her *Sonata No. 2* is included in the artist’s recital programs. Still composing are **Krzysztof Penderecki** (born in 1933) and **Wojciech Kilar** (born in 1932)—today, both are quite distant from the avant-garde tendencies.

## The posthumous career of Szymanowski

On the wave of discoveries of the forgotten or underappreciated composers of the 20th century sweeping the world, a few important Polish names from the past surfaced. A handful of them had also been hardly known in Poland. This was only partially true about **Karol Szymanowski** (1882–1937), who has long been considered second only to Chopin in Poland. Yet abroad he remained next to unknown, with individual, brave musicians performing his works. The turning point did not come until the early 1990s, when it was Simon Rattle—at the time, a young, dynamic conductor, and head of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (today of the Berlin Philharmonic) — who took an interest in Szymanowski. Rattle recorded a series of four records devoted to the Polish composer, released later as a single box set (EMI). From that time he has increasingly reached for his works, with the opera *King Roger* becoming somewhat of a fashion recently, as it has been staged in Edinburgh, Paris, Bregenz, and Barcelona.

## Emigrants in Russia...

A discovery made primarily by the West (with Poland still lagging behind in this aspect, paradoxically) is the person of **Mieczysław Weinberg** (1919–1996), born in Warsaw, who escaped to the USSR in 1939, where he lived till the end of his life. He remained in the shadow of his great friend, Dmitri Shostakovich, and was frequently considered his epigone. After the artist’s death, when his works were more thoroughly researched, it was noticed that the influence was mutual, and moreover that in his later works Weinberg developed his own style. The summer of 2010 brought the world stage premiere of Weinberg’s 1968 work entitled *The Passenger*, which took place at the Opera Festival in Bregenz. A part of the plot takes us

and Stravinsky, and had the famous composing Group des Six eager to admit him as the seventh, yet he chose to join the Ecole de Paris. His style is neoclassicism, with colorful harmonies and influences of jazz. Even though he spent most of his life abroad, he too felt himself a Pole. His hometown, Łódź, promotes Tansman’s music quite well, by holding the International Competition of Musical Personalities that shares his name.

## ... In England...

For a relatively short time, Polish stages also brought back the memory of **Andrzej Czajkowski** (**André Tchaikovsky**, 1935–1982), earlier known only as a pianist. Born in Warsaw, winner of the Chopin Competition and later the Queen Elisabeth

Music Competition in Brussels, he performed on world stages before finally setting in England, where he died prematurely at 47. As a “refugee” he found his way to the blacklist of the People’s Republic of Poland’s censors, much like **Andrzej Panufnik** (1914–1991) —another famous Polish composer, who emigrated to the United Kingdom. Yet there were only a few who knew Andrzej Czajkowski to have been a composer, and moreover, an eminent one. It is only now that his works have begun to be really discovered.

## Contemporary composers, and in the United States

Polish audiences can become familiar with music being composed today primarily thanks to the annual **Warsaw Spring International Festival of Contemporary Music**. It is run by one of the most

interesting artists of the current generation, **Tadeusz Wielecki**, with his influential peers, including **Lidia Ziełińska**, **Paweł Szymański**, **Stanisław Krupowicz**, and **Hanna Kulenty**. Names worthy of attention in the younger generations (i.e. born in the seventies and eighties) include **Paweł Mykietyn**, **Agata Zubeł**, **Cezary Duchnowski**, **Dobromiła Jaskot**, and **Aleksandra Gryka**. Many of these composers, younger and older alike, find electronic means and new media very important. Polish composers increasingly often take residence abroad, though keeping contact with their homeland. A few of them operate successfully in the United States. **Marta Ptaszyńska**—since 1998, a professor at the University of Chicago—earlier lectured composition at the University of California at Berkeley, Santa Barbara in California, Indiana University in Bloomington, and the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and Northwestern University in Chicago. In 2010, she was awarded the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship. ■■



The greatest composers of 20th century. **Krzysztof Penderecki** (on the left) has always been a visionary. **Henryk Mikołaj Górecki**’s expressive music—and especially the *Symphony No. 3*—was discovered by the world only in the 1990s.

to Auschwitz, which makes *The Passenger* the first and possibly only opera on the subject. Besides this production, and the premiere of another of the artist’s opera, *Portrait*, a Weinberg symposium and a number of concerts were held at Bregenz. Published throughout the world are an increasing number of recordings with the composer’s music. Even though *The Passenger* has been staged also in Warsaw, Poland has yet to assimilate Weinberg into its culture. For many years, he was treated as a Soviet composer, while he always felt himself to be a Pole, or—to speak more specifically—a Polish Jew. Years needed to pass to allow the appreciation of this music.

## ... In Paris...

Poland fares better with the recollection of another emigrant, a person of significance especially in France, where he took residence. **Aleksander Tansman** (1897–1986), another Polish Jew, a triple winner of the first composing competition in independent Poland, moved to Paris, where he immediately became a part of the local music





PIOTR KUCIA

# Determined Competition of Talents

**ELŻBIETA PENDERECKA**

*President of the Ludwig van Beethoven Association on how to help young musicians in their careers*

**Jacek Marczyński: Do you believe that competitions are an efficient way of promoting young musicians today?**

**Elżbieta Penderecka:** I do, despite the vast number of competitions and the very many perfectly prepared young people, all trying to attract attention. Yet not everyone goes for the competitions. Some avoid such forms of rivalry, as for example the eminent Russian pianist of the current generation, Arcadi Volodos, who simply does not participate in piano competitions. Yet the Fryderyk Chopin International Piano Competition enjoys exceptional prestige and recognition in the world.

**Do you compare it with other events where young pianists compete?**

Yes, there are plenty of other important competitions that can be named. The Ludwig van Beethoven Association cooperates with the Géza Anda Competition in Zürich, and we promote their winners. There is the Van Cliburn competition, the Beethoven Competition in Bonn, the Anton Rubinstein Competition in Dresden. A victory at such an event is a great opportunity for a young musician, yet to be truly successful, you need a personality, not unlike Krystian Zimerman. At the Chopin Competition in 1975, he was the luminary from the very first moment. This was the reason why he immediately received the interest of Deutsche Grammophon; and support from a recording label is what an artist needs.

**Do you not believe that there are few true individuals in the young generation?**

Indeed. My husband, Krzysztof Penderecki, is of the same opinion, as he observes the new generation of future composers. The world has opened up very much, and we can travel without hindrances, we have access to a variety of information that we immediately download from the Internet. This kills the ambition for independent discoveries, and pursuits for your own creative path. It is easier and quicker to use ready-made templates. When

I see Krzysztof Penderecki sitting by the table and writing his manuscripts by hand, I have the impression that I am watching the last Mohican of art.

**What is an efficient way of promoting a young artist today?**

I believe that what is most important is the possibility of performing at the best concert halls, and especially, to a good audience, whose number includes critics and artistic managers. Moreover, the company on the stage counts: which orchestra you play with, and who conducts it. What the audience today expects from an artist is not only magnificent interpretations but also an interesting image.

For example, I have known Anne-Sophie Mutter from her youthful days, when she performed with Herbert von Karajan. As soon as she began to work with public relations advisors, her meticulous technique, sense of music, and self-assuredness were joined by her immaculate public image. Nevertheless, even taken together all these factors cannot replace what is the most crucial: the personality.

**And the last question: of all the things we have talked about, what can Ludwig van Beethoven provide for the artists it manages?**

Our artists are magnificent young people; talents that are certainly worth investing in. We organize concerts for them in Poland and abroad, try to help them navigate into deeper waters, and establish contact with influential people in the world of music. For example, when the greatly talented violinist Agata Szymczewska recently performed in London with the London Philharmonic under Osmo Vänskä, Poles should be present in the world. Whenever conductors of the order of Charles Dutoit, James Conlon, Valery Gergiev, and Paavo Järvi arrive at our Ludwig van Beethoven Easter festivals in Warsaw, I ask them to listen to the musicians we represent. And they are frequently captivated by them. Poles should be present in the world.

Interviewed by **Jacek Marczyński**

## in brief:



**The world premiere** of a new piece by Krzysztof Penderecki will take place at the Warsaw Philharmonic Hall on January 14th. The Sinfonia Varsovia Orchestra will be conducted by Valery Gergiev.

**Polish film, theatre, and opera director Mariusz Treliński** signed a contract with New York's Metropolitan Opera for the staging of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* and Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* in 2015. These one-act operas will be combined into a single program and conducted by Valery Gergiev. Treliński has directed on the stages of the Washington National Opera, the Los Angeles Opera, the Mariinsky Theater and the Staatsoper unter den Linden in Berlin.

**World-class violinist Maxim Vengerov** will preside over the 14th Henryk Wieniawski International Violin Competition in Poznań. He began by changing the rules and regulations.

The prestigious competition will be held from October 8th to the 23rd, 2011. The 37-year-old Vengerov, whose talent was supported among others by Mstislav Rostropovich, will preside over the 14-person-strong jury (whose honorary chairwoman is Ida Haendel). Supported by Mstislav Rostropovich, the artist's great career began in Poland, when he won the Competition for Young Violinists in Lublin in 1984. More information available at: [www.wieniawski.pl](http://www.wieniawski.pl)

COLLECTION OF SINFONIETTA CRACOVIA



**Sinfonietta Cracovia** with its leader Robert Kabara (violin) will play twice at the Lincoln Center on April 6th. The programme includes Krzysztof Penderecki's *Passacaglia*, *Larghetto*, *Sinfonietta per Archi*, and *Chaconne*, Steve Reich's *Duet* and *Triple Quartet*, and Ben Frost and Daniel Bjarnason's new piece of music inspired by Andrei Tarkovsky's 1972 film and the original novel *Solaris*, written by Polish author Stanisław Lem. Featuring presentations of Kraków's Unsound and Sacrum Profanum festivals, the concerts are produced by the Krakow Festival Office, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, and the Municipal Office of Kraków.



# POLISH CAREERS AT THE MET



BRUNO FIDRYCH

## Piotr Deptuch

IT IS HARD TO LIST ALL OF THE POLISH SINGERS PERFORMING ON THE NEW YORK STAGE.

**Mariusz Kwiecień** was hailed as “the Polish Prince” not only for his marvelous baritone voice, but also for his charismatic acting and handsome bearing.

**T**he legend, the prestige, and the esteem that singers all over the world have for New York’s Metropolitan are indisputable. Performance on this stage is a distinct final approval of one’s artistic and market position. It must be remembered that New York did not have a great operatic tradition. It was built abruptly, with the aid of the huge investments and ambitions of a number of aficionados, who were as audacious as they were persistent. Mahler and Toscanini, Caruso and Gigli, Flagstadt and Melchior, Callas and Tebaldi, Bergonzi and Corelli, Price and Nilsson, Domingo and Pavarotti, Scotto and Freni—they all, much like many other eminent artists, developed the legend of the New York stage. Polish singers also left a significant mark on its development and establishment.

### Generation after generation

Certainly, the Polish icons of the Metropolitan Opera are Marcelina Sembrich-Kochańska (soprano), the brothers Jan and Edward Reszke (tenor and baritone), and Adam Didur. But there are also names that have been altogether forgotten: Felicja Kaszowska, a magnificent dramatic soprano who was triumphant late in the 19th and early in the 20th centuries primarily in the works of Wagner; Wiktor Grąbczewski, a consummate baritone; and the soprano Bella Alten.

All of the records were broken by Adam Didur (1874–1946), who appeared on the Metropolitan

Opera stage for 25 seasons, and performed 932 times in 57 parts, with his greatest success being Boris Godunov.

Marcelina Sembrich-Kochańska (1858–1935) in turn captivated with her consummate technique, precision, and musicality in a difficult coloratura repertoire. She was a magnificent Lucia, fantastic Gilda, virtuoso Rosine, and the flirtatious Norina. When at the age of 51 she said her farewells to the stage, she uttered the memorable words: “I’d rather you ask why now, than in a few years sigh ‘finally’.”

### Yesterday and today at the MET

In the latter half of the 20th century the tradition was continued by Teresa Żylis-Gara, Teresa Kubiak (sopranos), the tenor Wiesław Ochman, and the mezzosoprano Stefania Toczyska. In addition, Zdzisława Donat and Hanna Lisowska (sopranos) were highly successful on the MET stage.

It seems that the 21st-century follower of the legendary Sembrich-Kochańska is Aleksandra Kurzak, whose début as Olimpia in *The Tales of Hoffmann* roused the audience to a standing ovation. The enraptured critics compared the impressive vocal technique of the young soprano to the legendary coloratura creations by Joan Sutherland and Beverly Sills. Also, the debut of Małgorzata Walewska (mezzosoprano) was a success: highly popular in Poland, the singer had her MET debut in Saint-Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*, which she performed with José Cura.

### Kwiecień and Beczała

The globalized present, with its instantaneous flow of information and ease of travel, awards artists with far more possibilities than in the past; this is perfectly utilized by Mariusz Kwiecień and Piotr Beczała, who earned the status of stars in New York. Moreover, Kwiecień was hailed as “the Polish Prince” not only for his marvelous baritone voice, but also for his charismatic acting and handsome bearing. His career does impress, with his persistence and daring in making strategic decisions. The young artist was quickly gaining recognition in Poland and Europe; while still a student he had his debut at the Wielki Theater in Poznań, soon to appear at the Hamburg Opera and Milan’s La Scala. Yet he decided to stake everything on one card and try his luck making a career on the other side of the Atlantic. Regressing nearly to his beginnings, he entered the MET’s vocal study program, which gave him the grounds for a dazzling conquest of American stages.

Having an established position in Europe, Piotr Beczała captivated New York spectators with his performance of the difficult part of the Duke of Mantua in Verdi’s *Rigoletto*, which was his debut performance on December 16th, 2006, to later replace the indisposed Rollando Villazon in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, by the side of the famous Anna Netrebko.

The success of the Polish tenor was so great that Peter Gelb—the general director of the MET—declared his eagerness to put up a new opera, especially for him.





KRZYSZTOF BIELIŃSKI/POLISH NATIONAL OPERA

**Aleksandra Kurzak** is Poland's first singer to sign a contract with the Decca/Universal Music Group. Her solo CD will be released this year. In the photograph: as Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Polish National Opera. **Piotr Beczała** (below) earned the status of star in New York.

### The Podleś case

Vocalists very often follow a difficult and winding road that is the result of numerous factors, frequently far removed from vocal and artistic qualifications. Many eminent voices, popular and recognized on the European continent, have either never been invited to the distinguished MET, or long awaited an invitation. An eminent example of this is the acclaimed Slovene mezzosoprano Marjana Lipovšek, who—in spite of her gigantic successes on European stages, cooperation with legendary conductors, and participation in productions of great renown—had to wait for four years for a debut at the New York opera, which unfortunately took place only at a late stage of her career. Very similar was the case of the Polish singer, Ewa Podleś, who had her debut on the MET stage in 1984 as Rinaldo in Handel's opera, performing this technically neck breaking part interchangeably with Marilyn Horne. The following years of the Polish contralto's career unfortunately brought no invitations to New York, even though in the 1990s Podleś won the status of a near-legend, especially in the operatic works of Handel and Rossini. When she climbed the stage at Carnegie Hall, she hypnotized the public and charmed the discriminating critics, who publicly asked questions about the reasons behind her absence from the MET. In this way, Ewa Podleś returned to the famous stage singing the small but demanding part of La Cieca in Ponchielli's *Gioconda* in 2008. Much like in the case of Marjana Lipovšek, the appearance of the Polish artist was of more symbolical than artistic significance. **BM**





# PROBLEMS WITH IDENTITY

**Dorota Kozińska**

## *Were Leopold Stokowski and Artur Rodziński really Polish?*

When listing the conductors who led American orchestras, Polish music lovers begin with Artur Rodziński and Leopold Stokowski, who in the 1940s directed the New York Philharmonic. The problem is that Poland did not exist on the map of Europe for 123 years as an independent state, and its borders did shift. Not everyone who was born within them felt a Pole, and those who subscribe to Polish origin were frequently born in distant parts of Europe.

Leopold Stokowski saw the light of day for the first time in the family of a London artistic carpenter, who married an Irish woman of the name Annie Marion Moore. Some say that his parents baptized him with the Polish names Antoni Stanisław, others that from his first days he was Leopold Anthony and it was only in his adult life that he began to emphasize his Polish roots. Published in 1950, the *Hugo Riemann Musiklexicon* still read that Stokowski was born in Kraków, while the artist himself (who actually

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Leopold Stokowski

subtracted five years from his biographies) used to say that he came to this world in Pomorze (Pomerania), which at the time was German. Catty tongues claim that Stokowski fashioned himself into an exotic Pole under the influence

of his first wife, the pianist Olga Samaroff, who was actually born in Texas and bore a more mundane name, Lucy Mary Agnes Hickenlooper. It is a fact that Stokowski spoke with a strong Central European accent, which in a born Brit applying for an American passport was a reason to wonder.

Artur Rodziński was born in Split (today's Croatia), far away from Poland. His father was an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army stationed in Dalmatia. Soon the family moved to the Polish Lwów (Lemberg), where Artur began his musical education. Nevertheless, he continued it in Vienna, where he graduated after studying law. After the first world war, he began his activity as a conductor at the Lwów Opera. Later Emil Młynarski, director of the Philharmonic, "kidnapped" him to Warsaw, where none other than Stokowski became infatuated with the artist's talent, and invited Rodziński to Philadelphia. What about Poland, then? Was Stokowski a Pole at all? Did Rodziński not "betray" his homeland, choosing a career in the United States at the tumultuous time when Polish statehood was being reborn? What definitely counts is the fact that Stokowski promoted to the world works by Bolesław Szabelski, which had long been forgotten by Poles. He was, moreover, an apostle of the works of Andrzej Panufnik. Artur Rodziński conducted Karol Szymanowski's Symphony No. 4 at Carnegie Hall, with Stanisław Szpinalski at the piano and the New York Philharmonic. He fought like a lion for the recognition of the *King Roger* opera on the world's stages. Thus, instead of just possessing a love for the ideal of a homeland, they worked for the tangible benefits of the same homeland. **BM**

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COLL. ZABUDOWICZ. PICTURE COURTESY OF HAUSER AND WIRTH, ZACHĘTA NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

*The Great Battle Under the Table*, 2006, a painting by **Jakub Julian Ziolkowski**  
 Author of the poster for the 15th Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival, he is considered greatest among recent sensations in Polish art.

# The White-and-Red Wave

**Monika Małkowska**

AN ONSLAUGHT OF POLISH VISUAL ARTISTS CONTINUES WORLDWIDE.  
 IN NEW YORK, THEY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL FOR 40 YEARS.



I have received greetings from Paulina Ołowska from New York, where she just opened an exhibition, her second at the Metro Pictures Gallery. In a few months, it will be admired by San Francisco—the city where Ołowska was invited for a residency, concluded in an exhibition at the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art. “I frequently visit New York, and I like the city, but it never occurred to me to stay there longer,”

galleries, and are pampered by recognized art traders. No more complexes of being citizens of a worse—communist—category, incapacitated by a lack of passports and resources. No more hasty emigration, only to grasp at any opportunity of changing addresses.

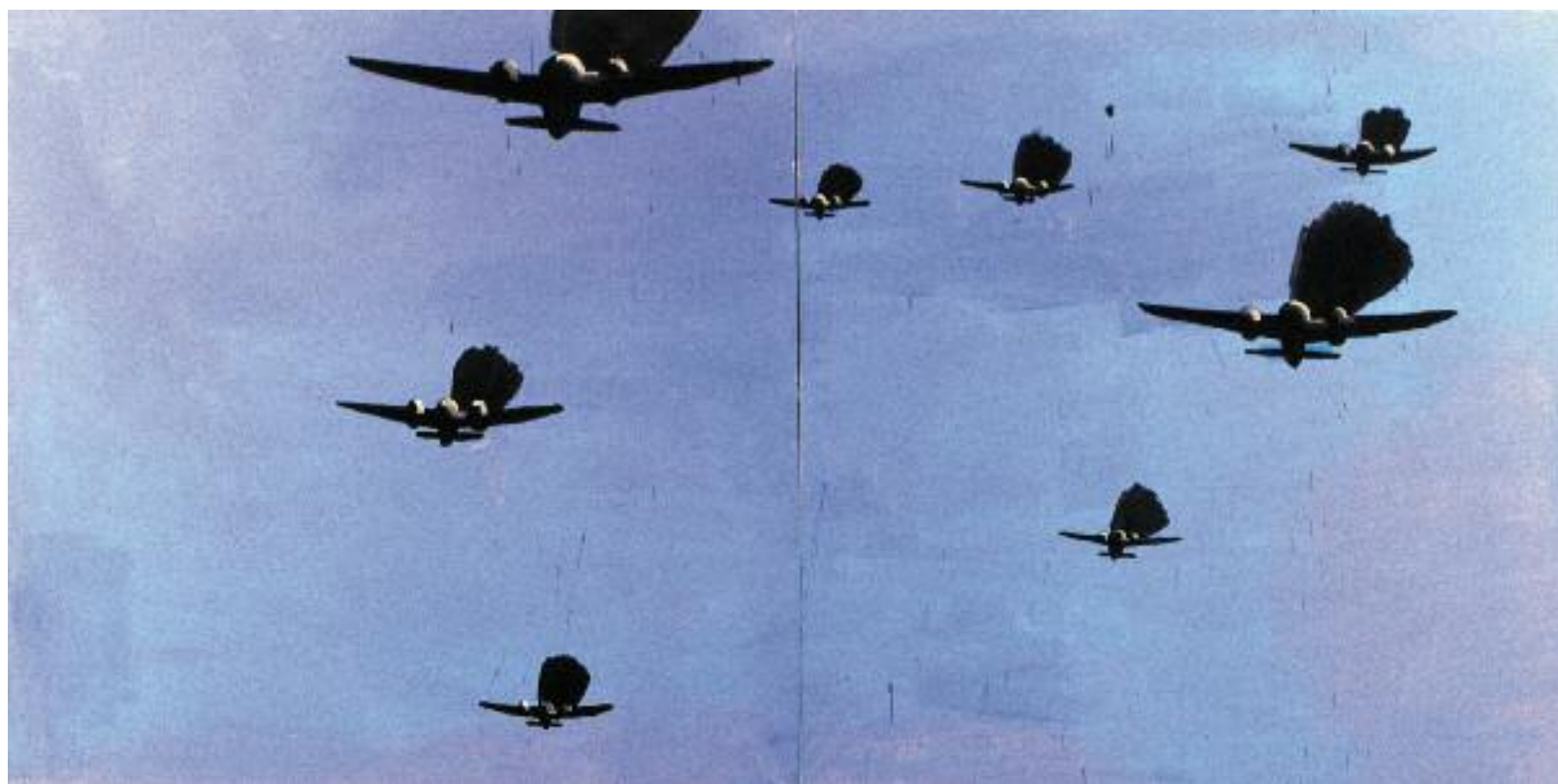
#### Premier league

Profitable transactions, travelling, and living in the hotspot of the cultural melting pot is what Polish artists can boast of. **Monika Sosnowska** (born

in New York is **Anna Molska** (born in 1983), the creator of surprising and amusing films. In the spring of 2010, she had an individual presentation at Malmö Konsthall and a show of video works at London’s Tate Modern.

#### Global careers

Somewhat older than the artists listed above is **Piotr Ukleński** (born in 1968), the designer of the acclaimed *Biało-czerwona* exhibition at New York’s Gagosian Gallery. In 1991 he went to the US



COLLECTION OF CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART UJAZDOWSKI CASTLE

**Wilhelm Sasnal's** painting entitled *Airplanes* sold at Christie's at USD 396,000.

**Paulina Ołowska** (born in 1976), confessed. “I want to get to know as many different places as possible, so I studied in Chicago, The Hague, Lisbon, Kitakyushu, and Amsterdam. A one-year scholarship to Berlin gave me a taste of the city—and also there I felt it was not for me. Now with my partner, I bought a house in the Polish mountain spa of Rabka. There I find peace for my work.

#### The greater world within their grasp

Paulina is not the only citizen of the world with a Polish passport to be successful in the Big Apple. Her generation finds the nomadic existence somewhat ordinary. The Polish offensive in world art has intensified in the last decade. Today, it does not need to be combined with emigration and other sacrifices. You can also attack the West from a base in your homeland.

The artists born in the 1970s and the following decade have not become attached to a single location. They begin their peregrinations already while studying. They are not limited to a single university, but study at different faculties, in different cities, and then they go on to postgraduate courses. A cosmopolitan CV makes scholarships to different parts of the globe easy. This is how young artists—at least those who have become a part of the global circulation—roam the world, and carry out projects. This international society is not short of Poles. They garner magnificent reviews, are exhibited in prestigious

in 1972), **Wilhelm Sasnal** (born in 1972), **Marcin Maciejowski** (born in 1974).

New York’s Hauser & Wirth Gallery hosted Monika Sosnowska’s solo show (until December 18th) with sculpture objects whose style brings to mind the socialist modernism of the People’s Republic of Poland.

Sasnal’s great market success came through Charles Saatchi: his painting entitled *Airplanes* sold at Christie’s at USD 396,000; in 2007 the Warsaw Zachęta National Gallery of Art devoted a retrospective exhibition to the works of the artist, who has been exhibited at the Tate Modern, Centre Pompidou in Paris, MoMA, Guggenheim Museum, and at New York’s Anton Kern Gallery (2009).

Maciejowski collaborates with a number of fashionable galleries: Meyer Keiner in Vienna (Austria), Wilkinson in London, and Leo Koenig Inc. in New York.

Recently, the constellation was joined by another star—**Jakub Julian Ziolkowski** (born in 1980); in 2010 he displayed his works at New York’s Hausner & Wirth Gallery, and opened his exhibition entitled “Hokaina” in Warsaw’s Zachęta. He has attracted the attention of super-collectors, including Francois Pinault and Dakis Joannou. His “hallucinogenic” compositions represented Poland at the 8th Gwangju Biennale of Art in South Korea. His interests are protected by art traders from the Hausner & Wirth team. The youngest of the artists reaching for the laurels

for good, where he took to directing video clips, photography, and activities bordering on art and advertising. His strategy is always to surprise. He is unpredictable. Movie? Why not, and yes, once he is down to it, it must be a cowboy picture called *Summer Love*. Perhaps participation in a photo fashion show? Well yes, but among Narciso Rodriguez’s top models. Living in London is **Goshka Macuga** (born in 1967), nominated two years ago for the Turner Prize, who also uses a variety of techniques and media.

Truly global careers are experienced by Polish aces: **Mirosław Bałka** (born in 1958), **Katarzyna Kozyra** (1963), **Paweł Althamer** (1967), **Artur Żmijewski** (1966), and **Robert Kuśmirowski** (1973). They are all versatile artists, freely reaching for various forms of expression—from sculpture to film and performance art and long-term projects. Bałka received much publicity this year, thanks to his installation entitled “How It Is” at the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern. Operating nearly parallel in London was Kuśmirowski, who presented his *Bunker* at the Barbican Gallery. Żmijewski, in turn, presented a film entitled *Sculpture Plein-air* at an individual exhibition at the MoMA, and two political films at the Royal Academy in Dublin, all in the same year—2010. Last comes the controversial Kozyra, sharing her time between Warsaw and Berlin, with the latest success being *Casting*: a retrospective presentation at Warsaw’s Zachęta Gallery.





EAST NEWS

**Piotr Ukiński** and his New York exhibition “Biało-czerwona” (“white-red”) referring to Poland’s bi-colored flag, Gagosian Gallery, 2008

## The White-and-Red Wave

**Marcin Maciejowski**, *Pure Blood*, 2006

### Pioneers and asylum seekers

No more than five decades ago, hardly anyone in Poland believed it was possible to succeed in the American, or more generally speaking, Western, art market. The smallest career was combined with an involvement in politics. It was well known that escapees from behind the red or Iron Curtain cannot return to their communist homelands, where they were awaited by trials and persecution.

The first great wave of emigration left Poland after 1968. Most of them were Poles of Jewish origin, who the system stripped of any illusions concerning their nationality. They were branded as “alien,” and as such were forced to move out. The next phase of departures to America was caused by martial law. At that time, Poles received very friendly reception—their immigration meant opposing the Reds, and the threat of repression on behalf of the communist powers. This is how many talented artists reached the US after 1981. The Greenpoint area of New York City swarmed with printmaker artists: **Janusz Kapusta**, **Andrzej Dudziński**, **Andrzej Czeczot**, and **Rafał Olbiński**. Their number was joined by **Krzysztof Wodiczko**, an artist making annexations of public spaces and video installations with a socially involved message. Another important artist, representing film animations, **Zbigniew Rybczyński**, was given political asylum in Australia, yet moved to the Big Apple having been awarded an Oscar for the animated short *Tango*. **BM**

COLLECTION OF GALERIA RASTER





# AN OSCAR FOR THE POLE



Jan A.P. Kaczmarek's Oscar-winning achievement: Kate Winslet and Johnny Depp in Mark Forester's *Finding Neverland*.

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**Łukasz Waligórski**

## HOW POLISH FILM MUSIC CONQUERED AMERICA, WITH A FOCUS ON HOLLYWOOD.

**I**t is hard to state clearly what makes works by Polish composers so eagerly used by the American film industry. Possibly, they resound with the Slav soul of the artists composing them, the magnetic and heroic qualities of culture that took shape in centuries of incessant struggle for independence. Zbigniew Preisner, Jan A.P. Kaczmarek, and Abel Korzeniowski make music that reaches deep into the spectators' imagination and inspires hidden emotions: gloomy, disturbing, but also joyful. These composers never cease to surprise with their music, imagination and Slav fantasy, offering soundtracks that simply cannot leave one unaffected.

### Pioneers reach Hollywood

If awards are a measure of success in the world, the most important among the yardsticks is the Oscar.

So far, two Polish composers have managed to reach for the much-desired statuette. Frequently, their number is augmented with **Leopold Stokowski** (born as Antoni Stanisław Bolesławowicz, 1882–1977)—an exceptionally highly valued conductor of Polish origin, born and brought up in London.

His Oscar was awarded in 1941 for the soundtrack to Walt Disney's *Fantasia*. Another Oscar-winning composer from Poland was Warsaw-born **Bronisław Kaper** (1902–1983). He emigrated to the United States after the outbreak of the second world war. His earlier successes in Germany and France helped him quickly to become a composer for the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio, where he earned his first Oscar nomination already in 1942 for *The Chocolate Soldier*. In the 1960s, he received additional nominations for *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Lord Jim*, and *The Dirty Dozen*, yet it was not

until 1953 when he could hold the statuette, awarded for his music to the musical *Lili*.

### The Polish *Finding Neverland*

Precisely in the same year when Kaper collected his Oscar, **Jan A.P. Kaczmarek** was born in Konin in central Poland. Initially, much like Kaper, he saw his future walk of life in the legal profession, yet he eventually devoted himself to writing music. In 1989, left for America, where, after years of disappointments and sacrifices, the first awards for theatre music came his way. They turned the ears of Hollywood towards the composer. His first opportunity to work for a high budget production came from his compatriots: director Agnieszka Holland and cinematographer and director Janusz Kamiński, winner of two Oscars. A range of films, including Holland's *The Third Miracle*, *Total Eclipse*, and Kamiński's *Lost Souls* won Kaczmarek his due recognition. Yet it was not



until Adrian Lyne's *Unfaithful* that the works of the Polish composer reached their apex. The affirmation of his extraordinary talent and the magnetism of his works was the Academy Award for *Finding Neverland* in 2005.

### **When a Man Loves a Woman the Polish way**

Once the Iron Curtain was down and communism was in tatters, Polish composers that had enjoyed respect and established positions in European cinema frequently looked for the opportunity of a career in Hollywood. One example was **Zbigniew Preisner** (born in 1955), who established himself to American spectators thanks to his cooperation with Agnieszka Holland in the movie *The Secret Garden*. At that time, the composer was an extremely highly valued artist, known for his cooperation with director Krzysztof Kieślowski (*The Double Life of Veronique*, *The Decalogue*). The attraction exuded by the music of Preisner captivated numerous directors. This let the composer work for a number of films, including Luis Mandoki's *When a Man Loves a Woman* with Andy Garcia and Ellen Burstyn.

### **Polański, Kilar, Kidman**

Another artist whose name has been repeated all over the world in the 1990s was **Wojciech Kilar** (born in 1932). While already a recognized composer of classical and film music in Poland (with a long-standing cooperation with Andrzej Wajda), he had not amazed American critics and spectators until 1992, when he contributed his music to *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. The amazing talents of the Polish composer found their confirmation in his cooperation with Roman Polański on *The Ninth Gate*, *Death and the Maiden* and *The Pianist*, and with Jane Campion on *The Portrait of a Lady* starring Nicole Kidman. Unfortunately, the Polish origin of Kilar is frequently misinterpreted, as he was born in Lemberg—today's Lviv in the Ukraine. Yet the composer was born in 1932, i.e. before the second world war, when the city—at the time known as Lwów —was Polish.

### **Komeda's Lullabye**

Hollywood was also the site of one of the direst tragedies in the history of Polish film music. It was there that **Krzysztof Komeda** (born in 1931) experienced a dramatic car accident in 1968. The composer sustained a head injury, which resulted in his death in 1969. One of the last films with his music was the famous *Rosemary's Baby*, directed by Polański. It was to this film that the memorable *Lullabye* hummed by Mia Farrow was composed. Komeda's adventure with music began in quite an unusual way: he quit his original profession, that of a laryngologist. He abandoned a safe job for the uncertain life of a jazzman. As luck had it, at the threshold of his career Komeda met Roman Polański, and wrote music to a number of his short student films. The meeting brought to fruition many years of cooperation and the soundtracks to *The Fearless Vampire Killers* and *Knife in the Water*. Komeda's death came immediately after his arrival in California, when he was standing at the threshold of a great career.

### **When a man loves a man**

The influence of Polish composers on Hollywood continues, proof being the recent success of **Abel Korzeniowski** (born in 1972) and his music to Tom Ford's *A Single Man* starring Colin Firth and Julianne Moore. The young artist surprises with the mature quality of his music and mesmerizes with his unique style. A student of Krzysztof Penderecki, as he admits he remains fascinated with the works of Philip Glass. Korzeniowski moved to America just a few years ago, and his music has already been noticed and considered the essence of Slavic finery and depth. **BM**



# Culture is our Most Powerful Brand

**BOGDAN ZDROJEWSKI**, *Minister of Culture and National Heritage, assesses state and private art patronage.*

**Jacek Marczyński: In the budget of the New York Philharmonic—with whom the winner of the latest Chopin Competition is currently performing with—federal, state, and city grants do not exceed three percent, which is absolutely normal in the case of artistic institutions in the US. Why should we in Poland, then, support culture financially from the state budget?**

**Bogdan Zdrojewski:** The European and American systems for supporting artistic activity are extremely different; they cannot be compared. It is not true, however, that there are no public funds in the system of financing culture in the US. They simply operate in a different manner. You also need to remember that an entire system of tax deductions for private sponsors has been worked out in America. Moreover, it is also a different market with revenues constructed in a dissimilar manner, with a different leveraging of business sponsoring. In Europe, there are no opera houses or philharmonic halls with budgets based to such a degree on non-public funds.

**Much has changed in the Polish system of financing culture since the political and economic transformation of 1989. Do you believe that these changes are going in the right direction?**

The system in Poland is still anachronistic. It was built haphazardly, and then repeatedly modified in small degrees, without systemic changes, and—this is more crucial—without a serious long-term perspective. Today, faced with a significant economic crisis, looking for state-of-the-art solutions is even more difficult. I can say that in individual institutions we have perceived visible progress in cost calculation, and I have also noticed changes in the mindset of the managing and investing staff. Finally, the conviction that expenditure for the development of culture is a significant investment in the power of the Polish state is a more frequent occurrence.

**How do you assess the private sponsorship of culture in Poland?**

It is still very poorly developed. Business in Poland has frequently been subjected to various ordeals, which is the reason why gaining trust today is extremely difficult. Luckily, there have emerged excellent examples, and they will be—to an ever-greater extent—defining the rules of good practices. Let me just call to mind the participation of Polish Telecommunications in a large-scale program of modernizing public libraries in Poland; the Biblioteka+, and the Grupa Żywiec supporting the Malta International Theater and Music Festival in Poznań.

**How do you answer when you hear the opinions of eminent economists who claim that culture should yield to market principles, and finance itself?**

I admit that they are right, and then explain that it does not have to be so. It is a joke, of course. Seriously speaking, the awareness of the need to incur certain costs for institutions of culture has by now become nearly universal. There is only a lack of capacity to perform regular, financially significant gestures. Nevertheless, I am convinced that today, when we talk about the attitude towards culture—we are in a different world of knowledge and awareness.

**Should we protect the so-called high culture from the invasion of lowbrow amusement, or do you believe that true artistic values will defend themselves?**

By all means. High culture dictates the low too. Both these realms of values complement each other and intertwine, and sometimes may also conflict.

**What does high culture need more today: money or wise, educated recipients with roused aspirations and needs for communing with art?**

What comes first is education—artistic and cultural education, and general education. Thanks to the first we will have eminent artists, thanks to the second, sophisticated recipients develop. Research proves that exclusion from culture is predominantly a function of a lack of competence and not the lack of financial capacity.

**What is the image of Poland compared to other countries that emphasize culture as an engine of economic growth and prestige of the state?**

Not bad. Culture is our most powerful brand. Film, theatre, and classical music are the areas of our numerous true international successes.

Interviewed by **Jacek Marczyński**



# State of Play

## Musical events in Poland in 2011

### WARSAW

Inhabited by two million people, the capital of the state with a population of 3.8 million, Warsaw is the most significant center of Polish business. Its residents included Fryderyk Chopin, Ludwik Zamenhoff—the inventor of Esperanto—and the eminent writer Isaac Bashevis Singer. Known as “the city of palaces and churches” in the 17th century, Warsaw was the most painfully affected European city: it was razed nearly to the ground by the Germans in 1944. Rebuilt by the Communists in late modernist style, the city today offers a surprising amalgamation of styles. Before the second world war, Warsaw was home to a great Jewish community, comprising 30 percent of all of its residents, who were annihilated by the German Nazis in 1943. Now the city increasingly makes reference more eagerly to this part of its lost identity, for example, by investing in the state-of-the-art Museum of the History of the Polish Jews.

Operating in Warsaw are plentiful artistic institutions; the city is the stage for one of the first contemporary music festivals—Warszawska Jesień / The Warsaw Autumn. It is also home to the Warszawskie Spotkania Teatralne / Warsaw Theatre Meetings Festival, hosting plays by leading European theatres. Krzysztof Warlikowski, one of Europe’s most eminent directors, has his stage in the city.

#### Warsaw Philharmonic

[www.filharmonia.pl](http://www.filharmonia.pl)

Operating since 1901, the Warsaw Philharmonic is a Polish national institution. Its managing and artistic director is Antoni Wit, an eminent Polish conductor. The following are the most notable concerts of the upcoming season:

January 14th—world premiere of a new piece by Krzysztof Penderecki to the words of Polish poets; under Valery Gergiev, with Sinfonia Varsovia Orchestra and soloists: Wioletta Chodowicz (soprano), Agnieszka Rehlis (mezzosoprano), and Mariusz Godlewski (baritone).

February 4th—Piotr Anderszewski playing Karol Szymanowski’s *Symphony Concertante*, Op. 60, accompanied by the SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg, conducted by Sylvain Cambreling.

February 11th—*Lettere amorose*: a concert by a great Czech singer, Magdalena Kožená; the program comprises 17th-century monodies with love themes. Promotion of Kožená’s new CD (DG).

March 20th—great Israeli violinist Pinchas Zukerman performing with his ensemble Zukerman ChamberPlayers.

April 5th—Joshua Bell to play his famous 1713 Stradivarius with Sam Haywood (piano).

May 8th—*Sacrificium. La scuola dei castrati*, a bravura baroque program by phenomenal Italian singer Cecilia Bartoli.



#### Polish National Opera

[www.teatr Wielki.pl](http://www.teatr Wielki.pl)

It is thanks to its directors—culture manager Waldemar Dąbrowski and director Mariusz Treliński—that the



Polish National Opera aspires to the role of one of the most ambitious operatic stages in Central and Eastern Europe, balancing between the opera powers of Berlin and St Petersburg. Its directors include David Alden, Willy Decker, David Pountney, and Keith Warner. The coming premieres: Hector Berlioz's *Trojans* (conducted by Valery Gergiev, directed by Carlus Padrissa of La Fura dels Baus group—January 11th), Toshio Hosokawa's *Matsukaze* (directed and choreographed by Sasha Waltz—May 31st), Karol Szymanowski's *King Roger* (directed by David Pountney—July 1st), with the last being the premiere accompanying the Polish takeover of the Presidency of the European Union.

#### **Sinfonia Varsovia**

[www.sinfoniavarsovia.org.pl](http://www.sinfoniavarsovia.org.pl)

Orchestra and institution with a concert season, world tours, and numerous recording sessions on renowned labels. Its artistic director is Krzysztof Penderecki, and the musical director is famous French conductor Marc Minkowski. The patron of its establishment in 1984 was Sir Yehudi Menuhin. During the coming season, the Sinfonia Varsovia under Marc Minkowski will perform works by Jacques Offenbach and Johann Strauss (son) on January 13th, and works by Szymanowski and Górecki in mid-October.

#### **15th Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival (April 9th-22nd)**

[www.beethoven.org.pl](http://www.beethoven.org.pl)

The Jubilee Easter Festival, initiated by its artistic director Elżbieta Penderecka, boasts the presence of Anne-Sophie Mutter in its honorary committee. Its star will be the famous Austrian pianist Rudolf Buchbinder, who will perform Beethoven's sonatas and all piano concertos (April 10th). Performed at



J.J. ZIOLKOWSKI

the festival will be the symphonic and oratory works of Gustav Mahler, J.S. Bach's *St John Passion* (April 18th) and *St Matthew Passion* (April 19th). The festival will close on April 22nd, with the epoch-making *St Luke Passion* by Krzysztof Penderecki conducted by the composer.

#### **20th Mozart Festival (June 15th - July 26th)**

[www.operakameralna.pl](http://www.operakameralna.pl)

Europe's only festival whose program includes all stage works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, produced in the spirit of the composer's times. The festival is held in the Warsaw Chamber Opera, a building dating back to 1775.

#### **7th Chopin and His Europe International Music Festival (August 16th-September 2nd)**

[www.chopin.nifc.pl](http://www.chopin.nifc.pl)

Europe's only festival that allows viewers to listen to the works of Fryderyk Chopin performed on pianos from his time. Following the idea of Stanisław Leszczyński, the artistic director of the event, the line-up of performers includes the greatest stars of the piano: Martha Argerich, Ivo Pogorelić, Andreas Staier, Maria João Pires, Nelson Freire, Arcadi Volodos, Menahem Pressler, and famous orchestras and chamber ensembles.

#### **54th Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music (September 16th-24th)**

[www.warsaw-autumn.art.pl](http://www.warsaw-autumn.art.pl)

The artistic director of the festival is the composer Tadeusz Wielecki. The theme dominant in 2011 will be "music as a commentary to reality," and will let the composers comment on matters of civic, political, and civilizational importance. Speaking through their music will be Heiner Goebbels, Klaus Huber, Louis Andriessen, Mauricio Kagel, and Cornelius Cardew. Plans include performances of vocal and instrumental works, the presentations of opuses combining music and theatre, multimedia compositions, performances, and installations.

#### **La Folle Journée Festival (September 29th-October 2nd)**

[www.sinfoniavarsovia.org.pl](http://www.sinfoniavarsovia.org.pl)

The Polish version of the festival that for several years has been held in the French Nantes is an initiative of culture manager René Martin and gathers more than just music lovers around classical music. In 2010, the first Warsaw edition was devoted to Chopin. This year—following the French example—the main theme will be late German Romanticism.



Marc Minkowski

MARCO BORGGREVE





# KRAKÓW

Polish royal capital, the country's cradle of culture, and architectonic gem. One of most beautiful cities of Central and Eastern Europe, it exudes a highly unique atmosphere, which gained Kraków the title of "magical city". Its history dates back to the 7th century A.D., and lets the city boast the status of the crossroads of Jewish, Italian, German, Austrian, and Bohemian influences present here for over a millennium. Buried in Wawel, the historical complex of the cathedral and royal castle, are the kings of Poland.

Czesław Miłosz, a great Polish poet and Nobel Prize winner, spent his latest years in Kraków, and was buried here.

Among the Polish cities, Kraków is the one most favored by foreigners moving to Poland. Thanks to the *Misteria Paschalia* Festival and the *Opera Rara* series, the city has become a major center of the historical performance movement. Especially elated are the Italian musicians, who can trace the influences of Italian Renaissance architects in the local architectural heritage.

## Kraków Opera

[www.opera.krakow.pl](http://www.opera.krakow.pl)

Mariusz Kwiecień, a baritone star of New York's Metropolitan Opera, sings in *Don Giovanni* and *Eugene Onegin*.

## Sinfonietta Cracovia

[www.sinfonietta.pl](http://www.sinfonietta.pl)

The Orchestra of the City of Kraków, Sinfonietta Cracovia, has collaborated with eminent conductors, including Marc Minkowski, John Axelrod, and Maxim Vengerov.

## 8th Misteria Paschalia Festival (April 18th–25th)

[www.misteriapaschalia.pl](http://www.misteriapaschalia.pl)

The festival made Kraków the hub of Italian music and "the center of baroque Europe". Every year, the city becomes the stage for the most important early music ensembles of the continent, and this year once again, music associated with Eastertime will be performed by among others Europa Galante, Accademia Bizantina, Les Musiciens du Louvre-Grenoble, l'Arpeggiata, the Venice Baroque Orchestra, and Les Talens Lyriques. Jordi Savall will present his project, entitled *La Tragédie Cathare* (April 20th).

## Opera Rara

[www.operarara.pl](http://www.operarara.pl)

The operatic version of the *Misteria Paschalia* Festival boasts a no less eminent roll of artists. In 2011, the series will encompass four operas: Pergolesi's *L'Olimpiade* (January 20th),

Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso* (June 5th), Handel/Mozart's *Acis and Galatea* (November 17th), and Vivaldi's *L'Oracolo in Messina* (December 8th) performed respectively by Ottavio Dantone's Accademia Bizantina, Jean-Christophe Spinosi's Ensemble Matheus, Marc Minkowski's Les Musiciens du Louvre-Grenoble, and Fabio Biondi's Europa Galante.

## 9th Sacrum Profanum Festival (September 11th–18th)

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

The *Sacrum Profanum*, much like *Misteria Paschalia* and *Opera Rara*, is a work of Filip Berkowicz and the Kraków Festival Office, yet unlike the other two, it focuses on contemporary music. In 2011, it will be devoted to American composers of minimalist music, and focus especially on a true pioneer, Steve Reich. The composer will inaugurate it on September 11th in quite an extraordinary concert with rock guitarist Jonny Greenwood and Ensemble Modern. Other performers include Asko | Schönberg, Klangforum Wien, and London Sinfonietta.

The festival also includes another project in the Made in Poland series: this time, five outstanding young Polish composers will present new pieces devoted to Czesław Miłosz on the centenary of the birth of the poet, who died in 2004.



# WROCLAW

A city on the Odra River, situated partially on islands connected with 112 bridges. Although for 600 years it lay first in Prussia and then in the German Reich, the city is of purely Polish heritage. Early in the 16th century, it was home to the great Polish astronomer Mikołaj Kopernik (Nicolas Copernicus). In the 19th century, it belonged among the most beautiful in Germany, yet it was these Germans who turned it into the Festung Breslau—the fortress of Wrocław in 1945—as the last stand against the advancing Red Army, which contributed to the near obliteration of its architecture. All that remained is truly imposing, especially the Gothic churches, the ancient City Hall, and one of Europe's largest market squares.



## Opera Wroclawska

[www.opera.wroclaw.pl](http://www.opera.wroclaw.pl)

Operating under the management of the conductor Ewa Michnik, the Wrocław Opera is preparing among others *Jeanne d'Arc*—an early work by Verdi (conducted by Ewa Michnik, directed by Natascha Ursuliak—January 29th), Wagner's *Parsifal* (conducted by Walter E. Gugerbauer, directed by Viesturs Karišs—April 16th), Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (conducted by Roland Böer, directed by Mariusz Treliński—May 28th), and also a super-production in the Centennial Hall (with 4,000 seats), namely Borodin's *Prince Igor* opera (conducted by Ewa Michnik, directed by Laco Adamik—November 11th–13th).

## 46th International Wratistavia Cantans Festival (September)

[www.wratistaviacantans.pl](http://www.wratistaviacantans.pl)

This recognized festival devoted to oratorio and cantata and early music is held in the historic churches of Wrocław, and also outside the city in the most interesting venues of the Lower Silesia Region. Its artistic director is an eminent English conductor, **Paul McCreesh**. Divided into three September weekends, the festival will be strictly connected to religious themes, and focus on themes including "Saints and Sinners", "Song of Transience", and "Biblical Heroes". The works will include Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Krzysztof Penderecki's Symphony No. 8 *Songs of Transitoriness*, Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* oratorio, and a number of performers, including Gabrieli Consort & Players.

## 4th Musica Electronica Nova International Festival (May 14th–21st)

Combines various kinds of electronic, studio and live music with instrumental music, theatre, and video art. Stars: Pierre Jodlowski, IRCAM, Ensemble Court-Circuit, M.I.M.E.O.

Paul McCreesh LUKASZ RAJCHERT



COLL. SINFONETTA CRACOVIA

Maxim Vengerov

# POZNAŃ

The city where Polish statehood began in the 10th century.

Operating here are distinguished institutions, including the Amadeus Polish Radio Chamber Orchestra and the Polish Dance Theatre. Famous Poznań events include the Malta Theatre Festival and the Klezmer Tzadik Poznań Festival.

## Teatr Wielki w Poznaniu

[www.opera.poznan.pl](http://www.opera.poznan.pl)

An opera house with over 100 years of tradition. The director of the stage is Michał Znaniecki, who learned to direct from Giorgio Strehler and Italian operatic theatres. In Valencia, he staged the *Cyrano de Bergerac* opera with Plácido Domingo in the title role. Cooperating with the theatre is American conductor Will Crutchfield. 11 opera premieres ranging from Purcell to contemporary world premieres are being currently prepared here. Highly promising is Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, directed by young and talented Barbara Wysocka (October 15th).

## 14th International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition (October 8th–23rd)

[www.wieniawski.pl](http://www.wieniawski.pl)

One of Europe's most important violin competitions bears the name of the famous Polish virtuoso. In existence since 1935, it was held first in Warsaw and later in Poznań. Its winners include Ginette Neveu, David and Igor Oistrakh, Wanda Wiłkomirska, Charles Treger, Alena Baeva, and Agata Szymczewska. This year, the jury is presided by Maxim Vengerov.





Piotr Anderszewski

K. MILURA

## GDAŃSK

Situated on the Baltic Sea, Gdańsk has all the charms of a Gothic port. Between the two world wars, it had the status of a free city: Poles and Germans living here were to enjoy equal rights. This provided a bone of contention between Nazi Germany and Poland, and one of the pretexts for the Nazis to unleash the second world war. The city plays a unique role in the history of Poland: born in the Gdańsk Shipyards was Solidarity, a great anti-Communist worker movement that brought about the fall of the Iron Curtain, under the leadership of Nobel Peace Prize winner Lech Wałęsa.

### Opera Bałtycka

[www.operabaaltycka.pl](http://www.operabaaltycka.pl)

One of Poland's most intriguing opera stages, managed by director Marek Weiss and conductor José Maria Florêncio. The opera is preparing five opera premiers, in addition to such classics as *Traviata* (conducted by J.M. Florêncio, directed by Marek Weiss—March 5th) and *Salome* (by the same artists—June 24th), including an opera diptych composed of Kurt Weill's one-act pieces (*The Seven Deadly Sins*) and *Rothschild's Violin* by Veniamin Fleischman, the favorite student of Shostakovich (conducted by J. M. Florêncio, directed by Janusz Wiśniewski—April 16th). September will see guest performances by the Nederlands Dans Theater showing Jiri Kylián's *Last Touch First*.

## KATOWICE

Capital of Upper Silesia—the region that for a century has been the center of the coal mining industry. Operating dynamically in the city for decades is the Academy of Music, whose graduates include Krystian Zimerman, and professors—Henryk Mikołaj Górecki (1933–2010).

### Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice

[www.nospr.org.pl](http://www.nospr.org.pl)

Has operated in Katowice since 1947 under the greatest Polish conductors. The ensemble has performed world premieres of works by leading Polish composers, notably Witold Lutosławski, Krzysztof Penderecki, and H.M. Górecki. Its musical director is the conductor Jacek Kasprzyk, and artistic director is Joanna Wnuk-Nazarowa.

## ŁÓDŹ

The youngest of Poland's major cities, it originated in the 19th century, during the Industrial Revolution, as a manufacturing center. Łódź provides a highly unique conglomerate of magnificent architecture of stately homes of Polish, Jewish, and German factory owners, workers' houses, and a post-Communist concrete jungle. It was about Łódź that Andrzej Wajda made his *Promised Land*, nominated for an Academy Award in 1975. It is also the place where the Polish “dream factory” is situated; it comprises film studios and a recognized film school, whose graduates include Roman Polański, Andrzej Wajda, Jerzy Skolimowski, and Krzysztof Kieślowski.

Artur Rubinstein is among the most famous citizens of Łódź.

### 3rd Piotr Anderszewski and Friends Festival (31st May–5th June)

[www.filharmonia.lodz.pl](http://www.filharmonia.lodz.pl)

The signature festival of the eminent Polish pianist held in Łódź's Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic Hall. The recitals will be accompanied by a screening of films by the French documentary filmmaker Bruno Monsaingeon, who made two films about Anderszewski, and numerous others about great musicians, including Sviatoslav Richter.





Rafal Blechacz

UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

## BYDGOSZCZ

This city in the north of the country lying in the region of Kujawy (Cuiavia), known as “the granary of Poland,” boasts a Philharmonic Hall and Opera famous for their fantastic acoustics.

The ambassador of Bydgoszcz is Rafal Blechacz, the winner of the 15th Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, and a graduate of the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz.

The **Ignacy Jan Paderewski International Piano Competition** and the **Artur Rubinstein in Memoriam International Competition for Young Pianists**, which in 2002 was won by Yulianna Avdeeva, are held every three years in Bydgoszcz. The latter festival is held under the patronage of the daughter of the great Polish pianist, Ewa Rubinstein.

**18th Bydgoszcz Opera Festival (30th April–15th May)**  
[www.opera.bydgoszcz.pl](http://www.opera.bydgoszcz.pl)

Poland's largest review of Polish and foreign opera performances. Held on the highly modern stage of the Opera Nova in Bydgoszcz.

## LUBLIN

The hometown of the great Polish violinist Henryk Wieniawski, it witnessed some of the events most crucial in the history of Poland, including the Union of Lublin that merged the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into a single state, the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania in 1569. From 1930 to the outbreak of the second world war, Europe's largest Talmudic school, the Chachmei Lublin Yeshiva, operated here.

Situated in one of the most fertile regions of Poland, in its southeastern corner, the city boasts a beautiful historical old town.

**3rd Codes Festival of Traditional and Avant-garde Music (in May)**

[www.kody-festiwal.pl](http://www.kody-festiwal.pl)

Combines traditions of music of yore with avant-garde pursuits. In 2010, the festival's guests included Philip Glass, Arvo Pärt, and musician of the New York avant-garde stage Laurie Anderson.

## BIAŁYSTOK

The city that for centuries has been a mix of various cultures — Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Lithuanian, and Jewish — lies in the vicinity of the Knyszyn Forest, Europe's largest woodland.

Operating in the city for nearly 60 years, **the Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic** ([www.filharmonia.bialystok.pl](http://www.filharmonia.bialystok.pl)), will move to its new seat—the European Centre of Art—most probably this year.



Philip Glass





COLLECTION OF NIFC

## DUSZNIKI ZDRÓJ

Formerly Bad Reinertz,  
a spa in Lower Silesia  
where Chopin spent  
the summer of 1826.  
Today, one of the most  
important centers  
of the Chopin cult  
in Poland.

**66th International Chopin  
Piano Festival in Duszniki Zdrój  
(August 5th–13th)**  
[www.chopin.festival.pl](http://www.chopin.festival.pl)

It is the world's oldest piano festival to be  
held every year without intermission.  
Initiated in 1946, it is held in the Chopin  
Manor House built in the early 19th century.  
Its artistic director is an eminent Polish  
pianist, Piotr Paleczny.

## JAROSŁAW

A small town at the  
foot of the Carpathian  
Mountains, a vast  
mountain range in  
southeastern Europe.  
A true paradise  
for early music  
aficionados.

**The Song of Our Roots  
Early Music Festival  
(August 21st–28th)**  
[www.festiwal.jaroslaw.pl](http://www.festiwal.jaroslaw.pl)

Specially designed concert programs are  
performed in historical churches.  
Musicians present their programs,  
participate in debates  
on the philosophy of music, historical  
performances, and the traditions  
of liturgical song. Every day of the festival  
is filled with a series of events from the  
morning, from Gregorian matins to dance  
revelries to the accompaniment of folk

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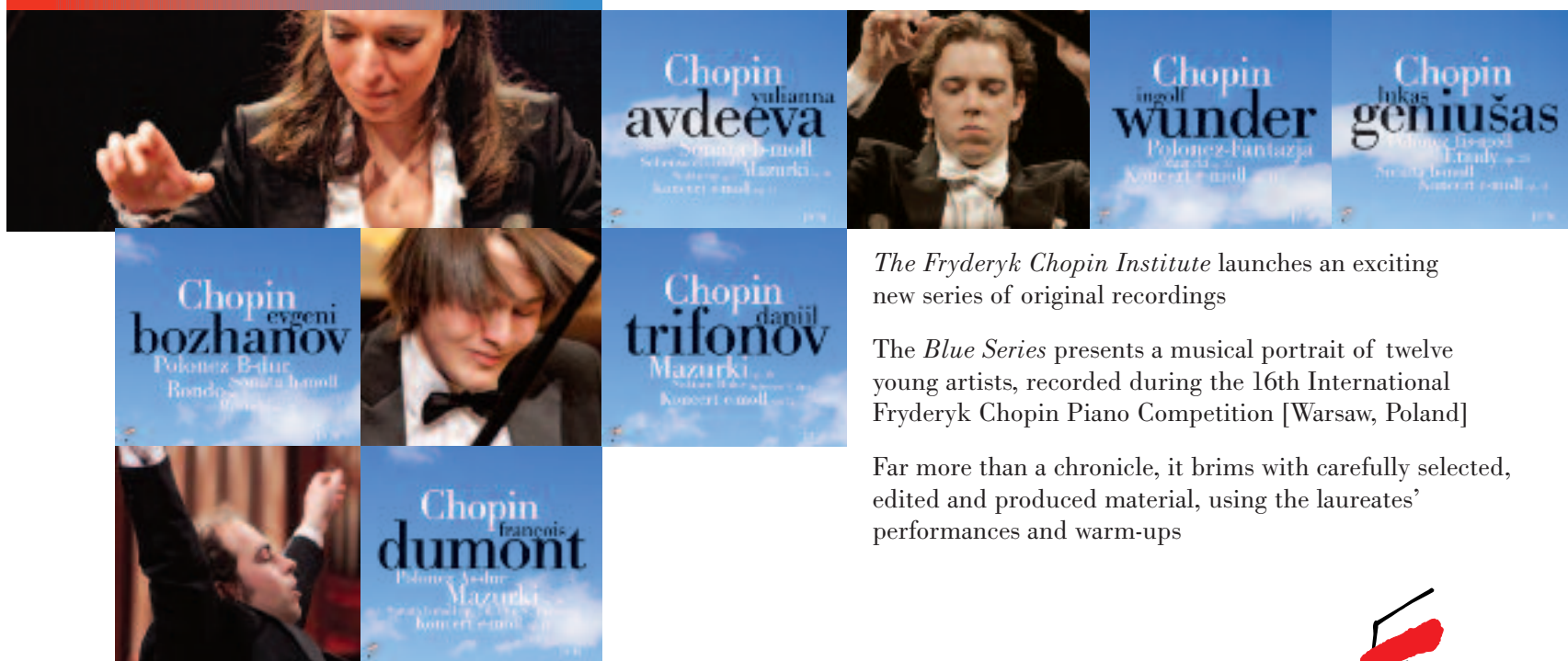
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Symphony Orchestra of Witold Lutosławski Philharmonic in Wrocław

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[www.chopin.nifc.pl](http://www.chopin.nifc.pl)