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THE VERY BEST OF GORECKI

CD 1

*** Concerto for Harpsichord (or Piano) and String Orchestra Op.40**

Anna Górecka – piano, Silesian Chamber Orchestra, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk – conductor

*** Totus Tuus**

Silesian Philharmonic Choir, Waldemar Sutryk – conductor

*** Four Preludes Op. 1**

Magdalena Prejsnar – piano

*** Three Pieces in Olden Style**

Sinfonia Academica Chamber Orchestra, Włodzimierz Promiński – leader

*** From The Marian Songs Op.54**

-Zdrowaś bądź Maryja "Musica Sacra" Warsaw-Praga Cathedral Choir, Paweł Łukaszewski – conductor

*** String Quartet No.1 "Already It Is Dusk" Op.62**

DAFÔ String Quartet

***Refrain for orchestra**

The Silesian Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk – conductor

CD 2

*** Three Dances Op.34**

The Silesian Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk – conductor

*** Sonata for Two Violins Op.10**

Krzysztof Węgrzyn – violin, Tomasz Tomaszewski – violin

*** From the Church Songs for unaccompanied mixed choir**

Kraków Singers in Tribute to Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Włodzimierz Siedlik – conductor

*** Little Music No.4**

The New Music Orchestra, Szymon Bywalec – conductor

*** From the Broad Waters Op. 39**

Silesian Philharmonic Choir, Jarosław Wolanin – conductor

*** From Five Kurpian Songs for the mixed choir a cappella**

The Choir of the Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic in Białystok, Violetta Bielecka – conductor

CD 3

*** Symphony of Sorrowful Songs, No.3 for soprano solo and orchestra Op. 36**

Barbara Tritt – soprano, Orchestra of the Szczecin Philharmonic, Academia Orchestra, Bohdan Boguszewski – conductor

The music of **Henryk Mikołaj GÓRECKI** (1933-2010) has gained popularity long ago exceeding significantly the circle of experienced listeners. It happened not only because of the composer's simplification of the musical language and abandonment of some avant-garde achievements which are usually difficult for an average recipient, but most of all because of finding the common ground with the listeners in terms of expressing emotions and referring to the most important values.

The artist's abandonment of avant-garde took place as early as in the second half of the 1960-ties. Górecki, the leading representative of the progressive trend at that time, the co-creator of "Warsaw Autumn" Festival and the author of the famous *Scontri*, surprised the critics by abandoning serialism and simplifying his musical language significantly. Refrain Op.21 for orchestra (1965) was a breakthrough masterpiece. "Looking at all Górecki's works [this composition] seems to be the key work, relating to preceding works and being ahead of some subsequent compositions at times. In this sense his role is fundamental" – Adrian Thomas commented in one of his interviews. The structural idea of the work – the slowly developing and constantly shaping chord structure, focused on the incredibly narrow melodic ambitus – remained present in the further composer's output being a characteristic visiting card of his style. Similarly to Wojciech Kilar's compositions, the intensification of expression and emotions was achieved by reduction of means, homogenization, condensation of sounds, stoppage of the chords and repetitions.

The melodic factor also gained a significant role in the composer's works. What is interesting, the author of such lyrical and beautiful melodies was accused of lack of melody in his music. As his reply to this criticism he composed Three pieces in the old style for string orchestra (1963), referring to early music, such as the 16th century anonymous song for four voices, but also to some elements of folk music – natural scales and dance rhythms. The melody as the mean of expression gained more and more significance in the composer's output as time went by, especially in connection with words. Górecki willingly took inspiration from religious music, elaborating Christian hymns and traditional prayers. He was also interested in traditional vocal works, especially the one connected with the folklore of Kurpie. Apart from the simple song form, he also wrote larger forms for choir, for example Totus tuus Op.60 (1987) for mixed choir a cappella, composed on the occasion of Pope John Paul II pilgrimage to Poland. A famous Pope's call served as a motto to Maria Bogusławska's words; the composition itself was performed twice during the Pope's visit.

Górecki also introduced voice to his symphonies, among which Symphony No.3 also known as the Symphony of Sorrowful Songs Op.36 (1976) has been the most popular till today. Initially the work evoked mixed feelings; it was even regarded by some critics as a primitive attempt of going back to tonality. One needed time to discover the real value of this work, in which the mood and the form was similar to Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*. Almost an hourly, focused contemplation of one of the hardest sufferings to bear – losing a child, came into a being. The reduction of musical means allowed the composer to avoid pathos and recall enormous amounts of emotions, expressed in archaic, modal harmonies which resemble the medieval Passion Plays. In the first fragment of the soprano part the Renaissance lamentation of the Virgin Mary under the cross appears ("My dearest and chosen Sonny, share your wounds with your mother"). In the second part, however, we can hear the shocking words coming from the wall of the Gestapo torture chamber in Zakopane, written by a prisoner, Helena Błazusiak who was put there during the war: "Mummy do not cry, no... The Transparent Queen of Heaven, please always support me", which ended with a prayerful invocation of "Hail Mary".

When the art director of the famous Kronos Quartet heard the recording of Symphony No.3, he immediately asked the composer to write music for his own musical ensemble. Górecki accepted his offer and that is how their cooperation started. The first of the three quartets, Already it is Dusk (Już się zmierzcha) was created in autumn 1988. Basically it is a one-piece composition with a contrasted middle part, resembling the impetuous folk music from the Polish Highlands. The initial and closing parts are lyrical and focused. Here the composer made use of (not for the first time after all) the Renaissance song by Waclaw of Szamotuły *A Prayer When the Children Go to Sleep (Modlitwa, gdy dzieci śpią)*, however, the musical language, which the composer used to transform the melody, is far from the simple elaborations of canticles which were characteristic for that epoch. The melody is generally difficult to recognise, one can perfectly feel the mood of prayerful peace, calming down in the evening after a busy day, and finally – the image

of the village in the mountains – Chochółów where the composer used to write his work and which does not exist anymore.

When the listeners and the critics slowly began getting used to the “new Górecki”, he surprised them again. Harpsichord/Piano Concerto Op.40 (1980) was described as “excess” by the composer himself. The piece is short, dynamic and lively, and seems not to match the long, focused and contemplative previous ones. The old Górecki returns here with strong dynamic contrasts and the ostinato, impetuous rhythm. Some critics made the point that this work should be included in the reductive trend as well because of its homogenous texture, a limited supply of harmonic means and raw, disciplined simplicity. “Where is Górecki heading to with his ‘just two chords’?” wondered Małgorzata Gašiorowska, being in a quandary. Besides, the composer disliked the way the critics read into his works and searched for the subsequent stages very strongly. “You, who write, have several Góreckis, because you like drawers and labels: the one who wrote *Scotri*, the other one who composed Sonata, another one, the composer of *Refrain*, and the author of Symphony No.3. It must be pleasant to arrange reality in such a way but that authentic reality is a little bit different” – was his reply. It is difficult not to agree with such statement – real art will always get out of precise definitions, allowing the listeners to have a real meeting and individual discovering of newer and newer meanings and values.

Agnieszka Jeź

Translated by Agnieszka Licińska

Anna GÓRECKA is interested primarily in the whole breadth of 20th and 21st-century music (from Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit* to the Sonata by her brother, Mikołaj Górecki). Her repertoire also includes works by the great Classical and Romantic composers (Mozart, Chopin, Brahms), the dialogue between composers of various periods and styles constituting the main strand of her artistic explorations. This is also the hallmark of her close contacts with other musicians, including prominent conductors (Reinbert de Leeuw, Juozas Domarkas, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczak, Agnieszka Duczmal, Jacek Kaspszyk, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Grzegorz Nowak, Antoni Wit) and the violinist Krzysztof Bąkowski, with whom she has performed a broad repertoire from Mozart to Arvo Pärt. Their CD of Karol Szymanowski's music for violin and piano, released in 2005 on CD Accord (ACD 077-2) was named 'Record of the Month' by the British periodical Classical CD Reviews MusicWeb.

In 1991 Anna Górecka graduated with distinction from the Academy of Music in Katowice where she studied with Andrzej Jasiński. In the same year, she was admitted, with the best result in the entrance exam, to the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Trossingen (Germany), where she studied for two years with Victor Merzhanov. She held grants from the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst.

She is a prizewinner of the piano competitions in Senigallia and Hamburg, as well as of the Polish Piano Festival in Słupsk. Foreign tours have taken her to many European countries, Japan and the United States, including such venues as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, the Bosendorfer Saal in Vienna, the Colston Hall in Bristol, the Tokyo Geijutsu Gekijo, the Osaka Festival Hall, the Palau de la Musica in Barcelona and the Hermitage Theatre in Petersburg. Following her London recital, one critic wrote: 'Górecka proved herself an outstanding pianist at her Wigmore Hall debut. Her talent is more than just the result of having had lessons since the age of four. There is God-given ability here. [...] Her performance of the middle section of Ravel's masterpiece *Gaspard de la Nuit* was one of the most moving pieces of piano-playing I have ever heard.'

Anna Górecka has taken part in the first performances of numerous contemporary compositions (H.M. Górecki's *Salve Sidus Polonorum*, *Lullabies and Dances*, the revised version of *Songs of Joy and Rhythm*, Zygmunt Krauze's *Letters*, Mikołaj Górecki's Capriccio and Sonata). Many works have been written specially for her, including piano sonatas by Mikołaj Górecki and Tomasz Kamieniak. Compositions by her father Henryk Mikołaj Górecki occupy a special place in her repertoire.

Anna Górecka also derives much satisfaction from teaching, numerous awards won by her students giving her a great deal of joy.

SILESIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The orchestra was established in 1981, as the third artistic ensemble of the Silesian Philharmonic. Its founder and artistic director until 2006 was the composer and conductor Jan Wincenty Hawel, who is its Honorary Director. He was succeeded in the post by Massimiliano Caldi (2006-2010).

The orchestra brings together highly talented string players, graduates of the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice. It has an extensive repertoire, spanning music from the Baroque to composers of the youngest generation.

It also includes sacred music and arrangements for strings of chamber works by such composers as Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Shostakovich.

The Silesian Chamber Orchestra is a regular guest at festivals and special events, such as the Music Festival in Łańcut, the 'Music in Old Kraków' Festival and the International Festival in Český Krumlov. It has performed at such prestigious venues as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Golden Room of the Town Hall in Augsburg and the Verdi Hall of the Conservatory in Milan.

The list of distinguished conductors and soloists who have worked with the orchestra and have spoken highly of its standards includes Jan Krenz, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Tadeusz Wojciechowski, Bruno Canino, Eugene Indjić, Garrick Ohlsson, Jeffrey Swann, Piotr Paleczny, Ivan Monighetti, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Krzysztof Jakowicz and Kaja Danczowska.

The orchestra has given over 200 concerts on European tours. Its recordings include Mozart's piano concertos (with Christopher Soldan as soloist), a CD with works by J.S. Bach, Astor Piazzola and Krzysztof Komeda (recorded in the Katowice studio of Polish Radio with the pianist Waldemar Malicki and conductor Mirosław J. Błaszczyk), Stanisław Moryto's *Cello Concerto* (for the DUX label, nominated for the Fryderyk Award in 2006), the highly acclaimed album 'Little Big Music' (works by B. Britten, G. Holst, W. Lutosławski and W. Kilar conducted by Massimiliano Caldi), and an album 'Alexandre Tansman' (for NAXOS), featuring the premiere recordings of the composer's *Clarinet Concerto* (soloist: Jean-Marc Fessard) and *Concertino for oboe, clarinet and strings* (soloists: Jean-Marc Fessard and Laurent Decker), with Mirosław J. Błaszczyk as conductor. In 2011, Polish Radio Katowice released an album with works by Silesian composers Jakub Gołębek, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Michał Spisak and Jan Wincenty Hawel, with the Silesian Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jan Wincenty Hawel.

Mirosław Jacek BLASZCZYK

Artistic Director of the Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra

Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk graduated with honours from the Academy of Music in Katowice, where he studied conducting with Karol Stryja. He developed his skills in Los Angeles and New York thanks to a grant from the American Society for Polish Music (1993). He was a prizewinner at the 4th Grzegorz Fitelberg Conducting Competition in Katowice (1991). In 1984-86 he conducted a chamber orchestra consisting of the best musicians of the National Polish Radio SO in Katowice, with which he took part in prestigious festivals such as the Warsaw Autumn and Silesian Days of Contemporary Music. He has served as Artistic Director of the symphony orchestras in Zabrze, Białystok and Poznań. In 1995 he conducted the Białystok Philharmonic Orchestra on a tour of the United States, which included a concert at New York's Carnegie Hall.

In 1999-2002 he served as Chief Conductor of the International Piano Competition in Porto (Portugal) and in 2003 he was a jury member and conductor at the International Piano Competition in Morocco. He has conducted all leading Polish orchestras, including the National Philharmonic. Foreign tours have taken him also to Albania, Austria, Belarus, China, the Czech Republic, France, Spain, the Republic of Ireland, Japan, Canada, Lithuania, Latvia, Morocco, Germany, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Tunisia, Ukraine and South Korea.

He has made a number of recordings with the Silesian Philharmonic and the Silesian Chamber Orchestra and has given many premiere performances.

Since 1998 he has served as Artistic Director of the Silesian Philharmonic in Katowice and of the Grzegorz Fitelberg International Conducting Competition.

In 2010 he served as Artistic Director of the 2nd International Violin Competition in Toruń and in 2011 as chairman of the jury of the 8th Witold Lutosławski International Cello Competition in Warsaw. He is on the faculty of the Music Academy in Katowice. In 2012 he received the title of Professor.

Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk's honours include an award from the President of Katowice for the promotion of Polish music, especially by present-day composers, and for the great successes of the Silesian Philharmonic under his leadership (2001) and the 'Gloria Artis' Medal of Cultural Merit (2009).

SILESIA PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

One of the oldest philharmonic choirs in Poland, the Silesian Philharmonic Choir was established in 1974 on the initiative of Karol Stryja. During the first three decades it was directed by Jan Wojtacha, who was succeeded by Waldemar Sutryk (2004-2009). In August 2009, the post of artistic director and choirmaster was assumed by Jarosław Wolanin.

Already in the third year of the choir's activity, it was invited to the prestigious festival Wratistavia Cantans to perform Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* with the Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra. The singers are particularly proud of giving Polish premieres of Edward Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Alfred Schnittke's *Choir Concerto* and Wojciech Kilar's *Missa pro*

pace (the liturgical premiere).

In addition to regular performances in major Polish artistic centres, the choir has toured Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Germany, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Switzerland and the Vatican. It is frequently invited to such festivals as Wratislavia Cantans, the Warsaw Autumn, Haendelfestspiele in Halle, Arena di Verona, the Poznań Musical Spring, the Music Festival in Łańcut, Organ Music Days in Gliwice, the Krystyna Jamroz Festival in Busko-Zdrój, the Polish Contemporary Music Festival in Wrocław and the 'Music in Old Kraków' Festival. In 2011 it took part in the 1st Henryk Mikołaj Górecki International Contemporary Music Festival in Kraków and the Adam Didur Days of Vocal Music in Sanok. The Silesian Philharmonic Choir has performed under many prominent conductors including Karol Stryja, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk, Jan Wincenty Hawel, Jan Krenz, Antoni Wit, Gabriel Chmura, Jacek Kaspszyk, Tadeusz Wojciechowski, Marek Pijarowski, Jerzy Salwarowski, Jerzy Swoboda, Krzysztof Penderecki, Michael Zilm, Massimiliano Caldi, Mykola Dyadiura, Peter Tiboris and Paul McCreesh. It works closely with numerous philharmonic orchestras in Poland and the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice.

The choir's repertoire consists of masterpieces of all periods, from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary music, and includes hundreds of vocal-instrumental works (masses, cantatas, oratorios) and a cappella compositions. The latter play an increasingly important role in the choir's recent activity. Among those invited to conduct the a cappella concerts have been such prominent choirmasters as Professor Czesław Freund and Professor Matthias Geissler.

The Silesian Philharmonic Choir has made many recordings for radio and various labels. Albums with all of Karol Szymanowski's vocal-instrumental works and a selection of Henryk Mikołaj Górecki's compositions are among the choir's prime achievements. The choir has also made recordings of film music by Wojciech Kilar and Zbigniew Preisner (to films by Agnieszka Holland and Krzysztof Kieślowski).

Waldemar SUTRYK

Artistic Director and Conductor of the Silesian Philharmonic Choir

He graduated from the Department of Music Education of the Music Academy in Poznań (diploma in choral conducting in 1987) and from the Department of Symphonic Conducting, Composition and Theory of the Music Academy in Wrocław, where he studied symphonic conducting with Marek Pijarowski and Radomir Reszke (diploma in 1994) and composition with Jan A. Wichrowski (1997).

He has pursued a teaching career, as a faculty member of the Music Academy in Poznań (1991-2007) and a professor at the Institute of Music of the Arts Department of the Silesian University in Katowice (from 2007), where he is engaged as chair of the Conducting and Music Education Department. He has taught a wide range of subjects including conducting, score reading, harmony, instrumentation, composition, arrangement, ear training, music in multi-media technology and directing musical ensembles.

He has worked with many choirs and symphony orchestras in Poland and abroad (as well as with the Śląsk Folk Song and Dance Ensemble). He has coached choirs for such conductors as Gary Bertini, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk, Gabriel Chmura, Czesław Grabowski, Jan Wincenty Hawel, Jacek Kaspszyk, Kazimierz Kord, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Wojciech Michniewski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Marek Pijarowski, Jerzy Salwarowski, Jerzy Semkow, Tadeusz Strugała, Antoni Wit and Tadeusz Wojciechowski. Foreign tours have taken him to Germany, France, Spain and Belarus.

In August 2004, following a selection process, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Silesian Philharmonic Choir. Rehearsals and performances under his baton have included Bach's *Passions*, *Magnificat* and *Great Mass in B minor*, Handel's *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *Lobgesang*, Haydn's *The Creation* and *Stabat Mater*, Cherubini's *Medéa*, Mozart's *Requiem*, *Masses in C major* and *C minor*, *Vesperæ solennes de confessore* and *Così fan tutte*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* and *Il Trovatore*, Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* and *Schicksalslied*, Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and *Petite Messe solennelle*, Berlioz's *Te Deum*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, Poulenc's *Stabat Mater* and *Gloria*, Mahler's Symphonies Nos. 2 & 3, Rachmaninov's *The Bells*, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Szymanowski's *Harnasie* and *Stabat Mater*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Penderecki's *Seven Gates of Jerusalem* and Symphony No. 8, H. M. Górecki's *Beatus vir*, *Ad Matrem* and *Totus Tuus*, Wojciech Kilar's *Angelus Domini*, *Victoria*, *Exodus*, *Magnificat*, Symphony No. 5 'Advent', *Symphony 'De motu'*, Eugeniusz Knapik's Symphony No. 2, Krzysztof Meyer's Symphony No. 3, Józef Świder's *Te Deum*, Krzesimir Dębski's Symphony No. 2, J. W. Hawel's Symphony No. 4 and Polish Oratorio, A. Lloyd Webber's *Requiem* and H. Shore's soundtrack to *The Lord of the Rings*. Many of these performances were Polish and world premieres. Waldemar Sutryk has taken part in numerous festivals in Poland and abroad and has made many recordings for radio, television and various labels with the Silesian Philharmonic Choir.

He is also active as a composer and arranger of vocal, vocal-instrumental and popular music. His works have been

performed in Poland, Germany, Belgium, Holland and the United States.

Organ playing is another chapter of his career. At the age of 14 he started working as an organist and for 26 years held posts in the churches of Lublin, Szczecin, Gorzów and his native Torzym in the Lubuska Region in Western Poland.

Jarosław WOLANIN, Artistic director and conductor of the Silesian Philharmonic Choir

Jarosław Wolanin was born in Brzozów, in the Podkarpacie province. He is a graduate of the Karol Szymanowski Music Academy in Katowice, where he studied choral conducting with Jan Wojtacha, gaining a diploma with distinction in 2002. A year later he received a diploma in saxophone performance. He is a prizewinner of numerous saxophone competitions and taught saxophone for several years in various music schools. He also held a grant from the Minister for Culture and National Heritage.

Since 1999 he has conducted many vocal ensembles in the Upper Silesia, including the Chamber Choir Silesia Singers and the Mariacki Choir from Katowice. He has also served as conductor of the Sinfonietta Sonora Orchestra at the Music Academy in Katowice.

In 2001 he joined the Silesian Philharmonic Choir as a singer (bass) and in August 2009 won a competition for the post of its artistic director and conductor. He has prepared the choir for performances under the baton of such personalities as Mirosław Jacek Błaszczuk, Jan Wincenty Hawel, Jan Krenz, Krzysztof Penderecki, Marek Pijarowski, Tadeusz Wojciechowski, Mykola Diadiura, Massimiliano Caldi, Paul McCreesh and Matthias Geissler. He has considerably expanded the a cappella repertoire of the choir, from early music to contemporary compositions, from Gregorian chant to pieces for more than one choir. Under his leadership the choir has given many premieres of works by Polish composers as well as Polish premieres of such masterpieces as Alfred Schnittke's *Choir Concerto*.

He has also conducted concerts of choral music in Germany, the Czech Republic and France.

Magdalena PREJSNAR-WĄSACZ studied at the Frederic Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw (now: Frederic Chopin Music University), in the piano class of Bronisława Kawalla, and in the chamber music class of Maja Nosowska. She perfected her skills at the International Masterclasses in Duszniki Zdrój, Freiburg, Zurich and New York, under the guidance of Halina Czerny-Stefańska, Elza Kolodin and Rudolf Buchbinder.

In 2001 she was awarded a doctorate from the Fryderyk Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw. She performs regularly and records in Poland and abroad.

In 2004 she received a prize from the Rector of Rzeszów University in recognition of her artistic achievements in the promotion of musical culture, particularly in the Karpaty Euroregion.

She currently works as an assistant professor at the Rzeszow University Institute of Music. She also teaches at the Zygmunt Mycielski State School of Music in Strzyżów.

SINFONIA ACADEMICA

The chamber orchestra of the Department of Instrumental and Educational Studies of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Białystok, formed by Leszek Sokołowski, appeared on the artistic circuit in the year 1998. Since 2003 the ensemble has been co-led by Włodzimierz Promiński, first violinist of CAMERATA Quartet. The Orchestra has played with success at many prestigious concerts in Poland, among others at Royal Łazienki Park in Warsaw, at the closing gala of the season at Białystok Philharmonic, the final gala of the 18th Organ Conversatorium in Legnica, Fryderyk Chopin Music University concerts in Warsaw and abroad (France).

Over fourteen years of its existence, the ensemble has performed with outstanding Polish conductors and soloists, among them Jerzy Maksymiuk, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Andrzej Mysiński, Katarzyna Duda, Mirosław Jacek Błaszczuk, Marcin Nałęcz-Niesiołowski, Jan Miłosz Zarzycki, Elżbieta Pańko, and choirs: Cantica Cantamus, Schola Cantorum Bialostociensis, Polish Peace Choir, "AXION" Chamber Choir of the Wrocław University of Technology, lecturers of the Białystok branch of the Fryderyk Chopin Music University in Warsaw. The ensemble has also done several recordings for radio and television, and published six albums on CD with the music of W.A. Mozart, Stanisław Moniuszko, J.S. Bach, D. Cimarosa, Milosz Magin, Miłosz Bembinow, also carols.

Włodzimierz PROMIŃSKI – took his musical education at the Music School in Opole, in the violin class of Karol Reiman. Graduated with distinction from the Academy of Music in Warsaw, in the class of Franciszek Jurys. Studied chamber music at the Hochschule für Musik in Köln, class of Amadeus Quartet, in Berlin under Eberhard Feltz and in Detmold with Ernst Mayer-Schierning. In 1984 he formed the CAMERATA Quartet where he plays first violin. Laureate of international competitions in Tokyo (1989), Munich (1990) and Paris (1990 1st prize).

He has performed on renowned stages throughout Europe, America and Asia, such as: Alte Oper Frankfurt, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan Recital Hall, Sibelius Conservatory Great Hall (Helsinki), Bruxelles Great Hall of the Conservatory, the Concert Hall of Radio Luxembourg, Sophia Philharmonic, Great Hall of the Conservatory of Bern, Munich (the Great Hall of the University), Silvestre Revueltas Conjunto Cultural Ollin Yolotzli (Mexico City), Hermitage Theatre Hall and the Conservatory in St Petersburg, the National Philharmonic in Warsaw.

He has participated in many international festivals, to name: Ludwigsburger Schloßfestspiele, the International Music Festival at Łańcut, Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, Festival de Wallonie, Festival van Flandern, Ost Belgien Festival, Plovdiv International Festival, Bodensee Festival, "Warsaw Autumn", the Mozart Festival in Warsaw, Sintra Festival (Portugal).

His albums of recordings (on DUX, Ricercar, Koch, Thorofon, Polskie Nagrania) have received many prizes: Record of the Year 1995 of "Studio" monthly for the Franz Schubert quartets, Diapason d'Or (1994) and Sforzando (the monthly "Crescendo" 1995) for chamber compositions by Guillaume Lekeu recorded for Ricercar, "Fryderyk" award of the Polish music industry (1999) for *Złote Cztery Pory Roku (Golden Four Seasons)* by Antonio Vivaldi, and "Pizzicato Supersonic Award" in Luxembourg (2009) for chamber music by Weronika Ratusińska.

In 2008 he received his postdoctoral degree in the art of music. He is a professor at the Fryderyk Chopin Music University, Department of Instrumental and Educational Studies in Białystok. He also leads violin class at the G. Bacewicz Complex of Music Schools in Warsaw, and at masterclasses in Gorlice and Głuchołazy (Opole).

Since 2003 he has led from the pulpit Sinfonia Academica chamber orchestra which plays without a conductor.

MUSICA SACRA CHOIR was founded in 2002. Since 2004 it has functioned as the choir of the Warsaw-Praga Cathedral. It specializes in sacred music of all periods, with a special emphasis on the Romantic and modern repertoire. It has been acclaimed for its performances of Gregorian chant as well as gospel. It has also participated in the performances of large-scale vocal-instrumental works. Working closely with several artistic agencies, MUSICA SACRA has taken part in numerous prestigious events including the Festival of Polish Culture in Italy, the 19th Festival des Cathedrales in France, Polska.lu in Luxembourg, Wratislavia Cantans, Laboratory of Contemporary Music in Warsaw, the 'Gaude Mater' International Festival of Sacred Music in Częstochowa and the Film and Arts Festival in Kazimierz Dolny. Foreign tours have taken it to the United States, Italy, Luxembourg, Germany and France. It has given concerts for PWM Edition (Polish Music Publishers), the Fryderyk Chopin Music University in Warsaw, the Białystok Philharmonic Orchestra, the Finance Academy and Yamaha Promusica. Recent highlights have included a series of twenty performances of the jazz chorale setting of Stabat Mater, with the participation of the outstanding Polish jazz pianist Włodek Pawlik. After a series of concerts in Polish churches, the work was performed at the Santa Maria in Trastevere Basilica in Rome, at festivals in Germany (Wege durch das Land in Schloss Corvey and Altstadt Herbst in Dusseldorf) and released on the choir's debut CD (Musica Sacra Edition 001), which was dedicated to Pope John Paul II and received the prestigious Fryderyk Award of the Polish recording industry (2005).

The discography of MUSICA SACRA comprises seven CDs, five of which received Fryderyk Awards. In addition to the Stabat Mater, these are: 'Liebeslieder-Walzer' featuring music by Brahms and Mendelssohn (MSE 002, with the Ravel Piano Duo and the pianist Marcin Łukaszewski), 'Masterpieces of Choral Music' (MSE 003, a selection of works by Górecki, Kilar, Tavener, Pärt and Vasks), a live recording of Marian Borkowski's 'Dies Irae', with the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Piotr Borkowski (MSE 011, the Award in the Best Recording of Polish Music category, 2006) 'Laudate Dominum' (MSE 027, the Choral and Oratorio Music category, 2010) and John Rutter's „Requiem" (MSE 034).

The CD featuring Stanisław Moryto's 'Gorzkie żale' (Lenten Psalms, MSE 019) received two Fryderyk nominations: in the Contemporary Music and Best Recording of Polish Music categories.

MUSICA SACRA has performed with several Polish orchestras (Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Piotr Borkowski and Jan Łukaszewski, the Łomża Chamber Orchestra under Jan Miłosz Zarzycki, the New Chamber Orchestra under Paweł Kos-Nowicki and Concerto Avenna directed by Andrzej Mysiński) and prominent soloists (Iwona Hossa, Anna Mikołajczyk, Bożena Harasimowicz, Bernadetta Grabias, Wojciech Gierlach, Joanna Woś, Urszula Kryger, Jacek Laszczkowski, Rafał Siwek, Dariusz Machej, Robert Cieśla, Ryszard Cieśla, Leszek Skrla, Jan Bokszczanin, Przemysław Firek, Jarosław Bręk). The choir has given first performances of works by Witold Lutosławski, Stanisław Moryto, Joël Merah (France), Boris Alvarado (Chile) and Daniel Luzko (Paraguay).

The ensemble's honours include the Award of the town of St Quentin (for the best performance of a contemporary work) at the Concours Europeen de Choeurs et Maitrises de Cathedrales in France (2006).

In 2007 the choir was invited by the Paderewski Symphony Orchestra to take part in the performances of Stanisław Moniuszko's The Haunted Manor at the Rosemont Theatre in Chicago.

MUSICA SACRA functions as part of the MUSICA SACRA group which also comprises the 'Musica Sacra' International Composers' Competition, the 'Musica Sacra' International Festival in the Warsaw-Praga Cathedral and the 'Musica Sacra Edition' label.

The group's activity is coordinated by the 'Musica Sacra' Association, whose Artistic Director, Paweł Łukaszewski, is also the Conductor of the choir. Joanna Łukaszewska is the vocal coach.

Paweł ŁUKASZEWSKI born in Częstochowa in 1968, he is a graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw, where he studied the cello (with Andrzej Wróbel, diploma in 1992) and composition (with Marian Borkowski, a diploma with distinction in 1995). He also finished the School for Arts Management at the University of Poznań (1994) and the postgraduate course in choral conducting at the Music Academy in Bydgoszcz (1996). He took part in the course of computer music in Warsaw (1992), the courses for young composers in Kazimierz Dolny (1992, 1993) and the summer courses in contemporary music in Kraków (with Bogusław Schaeffer, 1993). He has been on the faculty of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music since 1996. In 2000 he gained his Ph.D. in composition (supervisor: Professor Marian Borkowski) and in 2007 he received a postdoctoral degree. He worked as a visiting professor in Chile and Argentina (2003, 2006). He gave a series of lectures in France, Germany, Spain and Norway (2010). He has received numerous commissions from Poland and abroad (Japan, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland) and has held many grants, including those from the Częstochowa Town Council (1991-1992), the Professor Bogdan Suchodolski Foundation (1995), the ZAiKS Authors' and Composers' Association (1996), the Arts Promotion Fund of the Ministry of Culture (several times) and the President of Warsaw (2010).

His honours include First Prize at the Composers' Competition in Łomża (1988), an honourable mention at the Tadeusz Baird Composers' Competition (1994), First Prize at the Warsaw Music Academy Competition (1994), Second Prize at the 2nd Young Composers' Forum in Kraków (1994), Second Prize at the Adam Didur Competition in Sanok (1996), and Second Prize at the 27th International 'Florilege Vocal de Tours' Competition in France (1998). He won the 'Fryderyk' Awards of the Polish Phonographic Academy (2005, 2006), the Award of the town of St Quentin (for the best performance of a contemporary work) at the Concours Europeen de Choeurs et Maitrises de Cathedrales (2006).

He has received the Commander's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1998), the award of the Mayor of Częstochowa for outstanding compositional achievements (1995), the award of the Rector of the Music Academy in Warsaw (2005), the Saint Brother Albert Chmielowski Award for outstanding achievements in composition, conducting and organization of musical life (2006), the Gloria Artis Medal of Merit for Culture (2011) and the Award from the Primate of Poland (2011), Fryderyk Award-Artist of the Year (2013).

His works have been performed at over 100 festivals in Poland and abroad (Britain, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Spain, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Moldova, Peru, Romania, Russia, South Korea, Switzerland, Ukraine, Uruguay, the Vatican and the United States). His discography includes over 100 CDs (Hyperion, Acte Préalable, Polskie Nagrania Edition, DUX, Musica Sacra Edition, Signum Records), five of which received the Fryderyk Awards. Over fifty of his pieces have been published in Britain (ChesterNovello), Poland (PWM Edition), Germany (Edition Ferrimontana, Choris Mundi), Italy (Edizioni Carrara) and the United States (Lorenz Corporation).

He has served as the Director of the International Festival 'Laboratory of Contemporary Music' (since 1995) and as President of the Musica Sacra Association (since 2000). He is a member of the ZAiKS Association of Authors and Composers, the Presidium of the Council of the Phonographic Academy and of the artistic council of the Gaude Mater International Festival of Sacred Music in Częstochowa. He has sat on the juries of the composers' competitions in Arezzo, Moscow and Bucharest.

He is Artistic Director and Conductor of 'Musica Sacra' Choir of the Warsaw-Praga Cathedral and of the Musica Sacra Edition.

In recent years Paweł Łukaszewski's music has gained a high recognition in Britain. His works have been performed (and some premiered) by such renowned choral ensembles from London and Cambridge as The Holst Singers, BBC Singers, Trinity College Choir, Tenebrae, Britten Sinfonia and Polyphony under the direction of prominent conductors Stephen Layton and Nigel Short. Two CDs devoted exclusively to his music have been released by Hyperion.

www.lukaszewski.org.uk

The DAFÔ QUARTET was formed in 1993. It is made up of Justyna Duda (violin I), Danuta Augustyn (violin II), Aneta Dumanowska (viola) and Anna Armatys (cello). The Quartet graduated with distinction from the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Stuttgart in the masterclass of the Melos Quartet (February 2000) and in the soloist class (2004). The group

participated in courses and lessons conducted by Marek Moś (the Silesian String Quartet), Piero Farulli (Quartetto Italiano) and members of the Borodin Quartet and the Tokyo String Quartet.

Since its inception, the Dafô Quartet has been involved in contemporary music, gaining numerous prestigious prizes in this field. Two CD albums 'Polish Quartets of the 20th Century', released on the DUX/PWM label, twice received the 'Fryderyk' Award of the Polish recording industry (1999 and 2001). Another album, released by Robert Bosch Foundation/SWR, is a collection of Szymanowski's quartets, Górecki's Quartet No.2 and Schubert's String Quintet in C major, in which the Dafô Quartet is accompanied by Peter Buck, the cellist from the Melos Quartet.

The Quartet has received numerous awards at national and international competitions, including First Prize and a special prize (for the best interpretation of a Polish work) at the Kiejstut Bacewicz Chamber Music Competition in Łódź in 1995 and First Prize at the Valentino Bucchi International Competition of 20th-Century Music in Rome (1995). 1996 brought a special jury prize at the Dmitri Shostakovich International String Quartet Competition in St Petersburg. In 1997 the Quartet took the top award at the Krzysztof Penderecki International Competition of Contemporary Chamber Music in Kraków and in 1998 at the String Quartet Competition in Katowice.

The group has participated in various festivals in Poland and abroad, including the Kissinger Sommer (Bad Kissingen), Schleswig Holstein Festival, Ludwigsburger Festspiele, the Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music, The Silesian Quartet and Its Guests (Rybna), Karol Szymanowski Music Days (Zakopane), Music Days of Kraków Composers, Festival Okada (Zakopane), Oberstdorfer Musiksommer (Oberstdorf), Forum Est-Ovest (Cologne), The Kitchen (New York), Frankfurter Römer, Kraków Chamber Evenings, Bravo Maestro (I.J.Paderewski's Manor House), Europäische Wochen Passau, Heidelberger Frühling, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Gammertinger Schlosskonzerte, Setimana Internacional Música de Cambra Montserrat Valencia, Festival im Herzogschloss, Europalia, Festival Van Vlaanderen, Ostbelgien Festival, Bergische Biennale Neue Musik, Festival Euro Mediterraneo, Bodenseefestival, Musikfestival von Colmar, Falsterbonäsets kammarmusikdagar, Festival du Périgord Noir, Festival d'Île de France and Usedomer Musikfestival.

Apart from contemporary music, the repertoire of the Dafô Quartet encompasses chamber music works from different periods, quintets, sextets, octets and concertos for quartet and orchestra. The ensemble also performs popular music. It has joined the American band The Lambchop for its European tour, did concerts with Bester Quartet and has participated in theatrical projects.

THE SILESIAN PHILHARMONIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The orchestra inaugurated its activities with a concert on 26 May, 1945. Within a relatively short time, it achieved high artistic standards and became one of Poland's leading symphony orchestras. Its wide-ranging repertoire encompasses music of various periods, including works by many contemporary composers.

The Silesian Philharmonic SO has been invited to many prestigious events in Poland (Warsaw Autumn, Wratistavia Cantans) and abroad. Since its first foreign tour, to former Czechoslovakia in 1958, the orchestra has performed all over Europe, as well as in Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. Over thirty years ago it made its debut at the Festival of French Music in La Chaise-Dieu. All in all, it has given over 500 concerts in 25 countries. Right from the start, the Silesian Philharmonic hosted such top artists as Leopold Stokowski, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Fou Ts'ong, Krystian Zimerman, Ida Haendel, Victoria de los Angeles and Montserrat Caballé. All these names are yet another proof of the orchestra's prominent position and prestige.

Highlights in the orchestra's activity have included a concert (with the Silesian Philharmonic Choir) for Pope John Paul II during the celebration of Jubilee Year 2000 in Rome.

The Silesian Philharmonic SO has one of the most extensive recording catalogues of all Polish symphony orchestras. During the 43-year tenure of Karol Stryja as Music Director, it was the first ensemble to record and publish the complete vocal-instrumental works by Karol Szymanowski (and they are still available on the Naxos label). The album featuring George Gershwin's works (conducted by Jerzy Salwarowski) won the Golden Record Award. The orchestra's discography also includes all of Mieczysław Karłowicz's symphonic poems (with the same conductor), the premiere recording of Wojciech Kilar's *Magnificat* (released in 2007, under Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk, with Izabela Kłosińska, Tomasz Krzysica, and Piotr Nowacki as vocal soloists), the world premiere recordings of Kilar's *Solemn Overture*, *Symphony No. 5 'Advent Symphony'*, and *Paschal Hymn*, and of two works by Aleksander Tansman. CDs with music by Witold Lutosławski, Bolesław Szabelski, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki and Eugeniusz Knapik have also won high acclaim.

During a concert to mark the naming of the Silesian Philharmonic after Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, the orchestra gave the world premiere of Mikołaj Górecki's *Nocturne*, dedicated to the composer's father. It was conducted on that occasion by Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk.

Tomasz TOMASZEWSKI was born in Czechowice, Poland and studied at the Warsaw Music Academy under Professor Wroński. After graduating with distinction he continued his studies at the Leningrad Conservatory under Professor Gutnikov as well as in Freiburg under Professor Marschner and attended master courses under the supervision of Druzhnin, Krysa, Fournier, Liebermann, Hiller and Szerny. With the Polish String Quartet he went on extensive concert tours across Europe and Australia. As a soloist of the Polish Chamber Orchestra he also gave concerts in many different countries. Tomasz Tomaszewski has won numerous international competitions has been first concert master of the Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper Berlin since 1982 and has held a teaching position at the University of the Arts Berlin (Universität der Künste) since 1983. Tomaszewski is the founder and director of the chamber orchestra Chamber Soloists of the Deutsche Oper Berlin which has been very busy giving concerts since 1988. He has also been in charge of the Jerzy Heller International Music Course, held under the patronage of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. He is a much sought-after soloist with concerts in many European countries, Japan, China and the USA and his many recordings for radio and on compact disc show his great talent, ability and versatility. Since 2001 he has been a professor at the University of the Arts Berlin (Universität der Künste).

The CRACOW SINGERS in TRIBUTE to H.M. GORECKI is a unique project, specially created for the purpose of recording the present album. Włodzimierz Siedlik, artistic director of the enterprise, invited outstanding singers to participate in the undertaking. The singers are affiliated with the very best Cracow choirs, and they have been recruited for the project on the basis of their vocal and interpretative skills that match Górecki's unique choral music.

Włodzimierz SIEDLIK – graduate of the Academy of Music in Cracow (honours degree), Liturgy Institute at the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Cracow (honours degree), as well as the Postgraduate Voice Emission School in Bydgoszcz (honours degree).

In 1990, he won the National Choral Conductors Competition in Poznan. In the years 1990-1992, he held the position of Director of the Paderewski Centre in Tarnów. In 1991, he founded the Tarnów Chamber Orchestra. In the years 1992-1996, he served as Director of the Tarnów State Music Schools Complex.

In the years 1990-1994, he served as councillor on the Tarnów District Council, and in the following term of office, 1994-1998, he held the position of President of the Tarnów District Council.

In the years 1995-2010, he worked as the Manager and Artistic Director of the Polish Radio Choir in Cracow.

Since 1994, he has worked as assistant professor at the Liturgy Institute of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Cracow (now the John Paul II Pontifical University). During his conducting career, in cooperation with the Cantus, Psalmodia PAT, and the Jagiellonian University choirs, he has received numerous Polish and international awards. In 2001, he won the Jerzy Kurczewski Prize for outstanding achievements in the field of conducting, awarded by the committee acting under the honorary patronage of Professor Krzysztof Penderecki.

In 2002, he received his doctoral degree at the Academy of Music in Cracow, and in 2012 he was awarded the post-doctoral degree.

In 2008, he received the most prestigious radio award ("Golden Microphone") for the promotion of Polish music at home and abroad.

As part of the International Gaude Mater Festival in Częstochowa, the Polish Music Festival in Cracow, as well as the Polish World Premieres Festival in Katowice, he has presented numerous world premiere performances of choral music. Since 1 October 2012, he has acted as Head of the Chair of Choral Studies at the Academy of Music in Cracow.

The NEW MUSIC ORCHESTRA (OMN) was founded in 1996 by Aleksander Lasoń. It focuses on the exploration of contemporary music, with particular attention paid to innovative works that are of special importance for the development of musical culture and are interesting for audiences, some of which are unjustly forgotten and which are worthy of public presentation and recording.

The ensemble has given over 100 premieres of new pieces at festivals in Poland and abroad (Warsaw, Wrocław, Kraków, Poznań, Bratislava, Copenhagen, Lviv, Prague, Paris, Beijing) and has made many recordings, of live performances and studio sessions as well as for radio. Some of its CDs have won prestigious awards, including the P2-Prize (Copenhagen), the Pizzicato Supersonic Award (Luxembourg), the UNESCO International Composers' Rostrum (Paris, Amsterdam), and a nomination for the 'Fryderyk' Award of the Polish recording industry.

The high performance standards of the New Music Orchestra, which are highly appreciated by composers, festival managements, promoters of new music and record labels, have been achieved thanks to its collaboration with

outstanding conductors, soloists and sound engineers as well as the courage to perform some of the most difficult and challenging 20th-century compositions and in giving premieres of pieces that have been rejected by other ensembles as unperformable.

The New Music Orchestra also acts as an initiator and organiser of numerous artistic events, including CD recordings, New Music Festivals, promotional concerts and interdisciplinary projects with the participation of dancers, soloists and vocalists and the application of multimedia and informational technologies, held in post-industrial and other unconventional venues.

For a number of years the New Music Orchestra has been taking part in international projects working closely with leading new music ensembles and institutions promoting contemporary music in Europe, Asia and the United States. Within the framework of these projects, the New Music Orchestra has received commissions from Eastern European composers and subsequently premiered these pieces (the programme Fördeprens für Polen of the Siemens Music Foundation, 2001-2006), has exchanged repertoire with leading European new music ensembles (Re: New Music, 2009-2010, as part of the Culture Programme 2007-2013), and has participated in the Asia Project of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, aimed at increasing Poland's cultural presence in Asia (2010-2011). At present the New Music Orchestra is participating in the project New Music: New Audiences (Culture Programme 2007-2013), whose goal is the exchange of experience with European ensembles and promoters of contemporary music and the building of strategies to search for new music audiences.

Szymon BYWALEC studied conducting with Jan Wincenty Hawel at the Music Academy in Katowice (diploma with distinction), where he currently teaches at the Department of Composition, Conducting and Music Theory. In 2006-2013 he served as Artistic Director of the Academy's Symphony Orchestra. He worked closely on various projects with such renowned conductors as Krzysztof Penderecki, Gabriel Chmura, Takuo Yuasa, Arturo Tamayo, Jacek Kasprzyk, and Paul McCreech. He is also a graduate of the Music Academy in Kraków, where he studied oboe with Jerzy Kotyczka. He continued his education thanks to a grant from the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, attending masterclasses for conductors given by Gianluigi Gelmetti (2001) and Lothar Zagrosek (2002, Diploma di Merito). He also took part in masterclasses led by Gabriel Chmura, Kurt Masur, Zoltán Peskó, and Pierre Boulez

He won First Prize at the 2nd National Young Conductors' Competition in Białystok (1998), and two special awards (including one from the conductor Antoni Wit) at the 6th Grzegorz Fitelberg International Conductors' Competition in Katowice (1999). He has held a grant from the Minister of Culture and Art and has also received the award from the President of the City of Katowice for his artistic achievements.

He is the permanent conductor of the New Music Orchestra, with which he has performed at many festivals of contemporary music, including the Warsaw Autumn, Musica Polonica Nova and Musica Electronica Nova in Wrocław, the Poznań Musical Spring, Melos-Ethos in Bratislava, Velvet Curtain 2' in Lviv, the Paweł Szymański Music Festival in Warsaw, Beijing Modern and Hindsgavl Festival in Denmark. During the Warsaw Autumn in 2005 he collaborated with IRCAM and soloists of Court-Circuit Ensemble (France) in the performance of *Répons* by Pierre Boulez.

He has many world and Polish premieres to his credit and has made numerous recordings with the New Music Orchestra for Polish Radio. Their debut CD was nominated for the 'Fryderyk' Award in 2003. The composer's portrait CD with music by Weronika Ratusińska (with the New Music Orchestra, for DUX) won him the 'Pizzicato Supersonic Award' (Luxembourg) in 2009. His recording of *Three Songs to words by Trakl* by Paweł Szymański won a recommendation at the UNESCO International Composers' Rostrum in Paris (2007). The recordings of Magdalena Długosz's *Gemisatos* (with Sinfonia Varsovia) and of *things lost things invisible* by Ewa Trębacz (with the Symphony Orchestra of the Music Academy in Katowice conducted together with Arturo Tamayo) received a recommendation at the same event in 2009. The CD *Momentum*, featuring cello concertos by Norgard, Nordheim, and Saariaho, recorded with the New Music Orchestra and Jakob Kullberg, won the Danish Radio Prize (2013).

As a guest conductor, Bywalec has performed with many orchestras in Poland and abroad, including the National Polish Radio SO in Katowice, Sinfonia Varsovia, the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Romanian National Radio Orchestra, the Slovak National Philharmonic, the Miskolci Szimfonikus Zenekar, Camerata Strumentale 'Città di Prato', Orchestra Filarmonica Europea, Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain and Melos Ethos Ensemble.

Szymon Bywalec is a member of the Repertoire Committee of the Warsaw Autumn Festival (since 2011). In 2013 he was appointed the director of Musical Polonica Nova in Wrocław.

The CHOIR of The PODLASIE OPERA and PHILHARMONIC in BIAŁYSTOK was founded in 2006 on the initiative of Violetta Bielecka. The core of the ensemble is made up of long-standing members of the excellent 'Cantica Cantamus'

Chamber Choir directed by V. Bielecka, as well as of other choirs (Schola Cantorum Bialostociensis and the Choirs of the Białystok University and Medical Academy).

The Choir of The Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic has performed in many Polish towns and abroad (Belgium, France, Germany, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Italy). Its repertoire includes many works by contemporary Polish composers. Highlights in the Choir's career include performances at the Warsaw Autumn International Festival (works by H. M. Górecki) and the 'Gaude Mater' International Festival of Sacred Music in Częstochowa (Mendelssohn's Symphony in B flat major Op. 52 'Lobgesang' with the Orchestra of the Częstochowa Philharmonic).

The Choir also performed, in Białystok and Warsaw, in a wide ranging repertoire (Rossini's Stabat Mater, Szymanowski's Stabat Mater and Harnasie, Verdi's Requiem, Mozart's Coronation Mass, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream under the prominent German conductor M. Zilm, Handel's Messiah, Penderecki's Symphony No. 8 'Songs of Transcience' under the composer's baton. The Choir took part in the performances of the concert versions of Verdi's La Traviata and Aida.

Recent highlights in the history of the Choir include performances at the 13th International Festival 'Laboratory of Contemporary Music' in Warsaw (works by M. Borkowski and P. Łukaszewski (2006) and the 'Musica Sacra' International Festival in Warsaw (2007). The Choir's repertoire also includes popular music (K. Gaertner's musical *Zaczarowany bal, czyli Krasnoludki*, *Krasnoludki* (An Enchanted Ball or Dwarfs, Dwarfs)).

Violetta BIELECKA

She is the conductor and Artistic Director of the Choir of The Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic in Białystok, as well as a Professor in the Białystok Branch of the F. Chopin Music Academy in Warsaw. In 1999-2005 she served as Head of its Department of Choral Conducting. She also teaches voice in the music schools in Białystok and directs the Schola Cantorum Bialostociensis Female Choir of the city's music schools. In 1998-2006 she also directed the 'Cantica Cantamus' Chamber Choir. Since 1995 she has served as President of the 'Cantica Cantamus' of the Association of Lovers of Choral Music. She is the organizer of international workshops for young people from Poland and Polish communities abroad held under the motto 'The Polish Choir of Peace'. She had earlier been a faculty member of the Music Academy in Bydgoszcz (1995-1999) and a consultant of the National Opera Chorus in Warsaw (1995-1997). In 2006 she was given the title of Professor of Music. Her honours include the 'Gloria Artis' Silver Medal of Cultural Merit (2008).

Barbara TRITT has graduated from the Ignacy Jan Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznań in the flute class, Private Academy of vocal Art in Poznań in the singing class, Postgraduate College Vocal Pedagogy at the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz. At the Poznań School of Social Sciences Tritt gained a manager of culture specialization. In 2010 she completed the Faculty of Vocal Studies at the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz, in the singing class of Professor Katarzyna Nowak-Stańczyk, receiving a diploma with a distinction. She participated in numerous Master's Courses, led by outstanding vocal pedagogues.

In the academic year of 2006/2007 she was a student of Opera Studio in Rome where she worked under the supervision of Renata Scotto, Anna Vandi and Cesare Scarton. During her career she has had numerous solo recitals in Poland and abroad, performances of many oratorio and cantata parts in, among others, John Sebastian Bach's *St John Passion* and *Magnificat*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Carl Orff's *Carmina burana*, but also soprano parts in operas by Purcell, Mozart and Donizetti. She specializes in the interpretation of contemporary sacral music and songs. Tritt received a distinction at Raul Koczalski Contest-Tournament (2009), a special award for a distinctive soprano at the 1st Summer Academy in Gdańsk and a special award for the best vocalist during the European Voice & Music Festival in Karpacz.

The MIECZYŚLAW KARŁOWICZ SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA of the SZCZECIN PHILHARMONIC began its concert activity in 1948. Its artistic development was particularly influenced by its directors: Józef Wiłkomirski, Stefan Marczyk, Józef Radwan, Jerzy Salwarowski, Zygmunt Rychert and Mykola Diadura. The orchestra gave concerts in Bulgaria, Italy, at Festival of Flanders, in Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and France. In more than 60-year-old history of the Szczecin Philharmonic nearly a thousand soloists such as: Halina Czerny-Stefańska, Lidia Grychtołówna, Witold Małcużyński, Piotr Paleczny, Krystian Zimerman, Rafał Blechacz, Ewa Pobłocka, Adam Makowicz, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Kaja Danczowska, Bartłomiej Nizioł, Stefania Toczyska, Ewa Podleś, Urszula Kryger, Wiesław Ochman, Andrzej Hiolski, Edward Auer, Emmanuel Ax, Zahar Bron, Eugene Indjic, Rudolf Kerer, Kevin Kenner, Natalia Gutman, Maurizio Pollini, Ivan Monighetti, Avri Levitan and Dina Joffe have performed with the Orchestra of this respectable cultural centre in the West Pomerania region.

Among conductors performing concerts with the Orchestra of the Szczecin Philharmonic were such famous names as: Krzysztof Penderecki, Tomasz Bugaj, Jerzy Katlewicz, Kazimierz Kord, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Marek Pijarowski, Krzysztof Missona, Witold Rowicki, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Tadeusz Strugała, José Maria Florêncio, Karol Stryja, Karol Teutsch, Antoni Wit, Andrzej Markowski and Łukasz Borowicz.

ACADEMIA ORCHESTRA was founded by Bohdan Boguszewski in 1992. After five years of its artistic activity the ensemble inaugurated a cycle of concerts called "Through music to the world of values", in which it performed many masterpieces of Early music and contemporary symphonic and chamber music. The orchestra has recorded six CDs with compositions by Vivaldi, Mendelssohn, Bartholdy, Chausson, Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Klimek. The ensemble cooperates with some outstanding Polish and foreign soloists, such as: Nicola Benedetti, Kevin Kenner, Jadwiga Kotnowska, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Rodolfo Llambias, Tove Lonskov, Adam Makowicz, Gregorio Nardi, Bartłomiej Nizioł, Piotr Paleczny, Hanna Dora Sturludotiór and Agata Szymczewska.

Academia Orchestra has performed in many prestigious concert halls such as: Herbert von Karajan Berlin Philharmonic, Hamburg Philharmonic, Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen, Witold Lutosławski Concert Studio of Polish Radio in Warsaw, but also on stages at festivals in Italy. In December 2010, with concerts conducted by Bohdan Boguszewski at Lincoln Center (Alice Tully Hall) and Carnegie Hall (Weil Recital Hall) in New York, Academia Orchestra closed the International Chopin Year.

Bohdan BOGUSZEWSKI has conducted in almost all European countries and in the United States. He has performed with some outstanding artists, such as: Andrzej Chorosiński, Julian Gembalski, Kevin Kenner, Konstanty A. Kulka, Adam Makowicz, Bartłomiej Nizioł, Piotr Paleczny, Patrycja Piekutowska and Agata Szymczewska. He gave concerts at the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen, at the World Chamber and Symphonic Orchestras Festival in Florence, at Berlin Philharmonic, at Witold Lutosławski Concert Studio of Polish Radio in Warsaw and at the Hamburg Philharmonic concert hall.

He has worked in opera houses in Bydgoszcz and the Castle in Szczecin for many years, where he conducted such excellent operas and operettas as: Moniuszko's (*The Haunted Manor, Halka, Flis* and *Verbum Nobile*), Verdi's (*Traviata, Rigoletto*), Puccini's (*Madame Butterfly, Tosca, La Bohème*), Tchaikovsky's (*Eugène Onegin*), Bizet's (*Carmen*), Rossini's (*The Barber of Seville*), Lehár's (*The Merry Widow, Gypsy Love*) Strauss' (*The Gypsy Baron*), Zeller's (*The Bird Seller*). With Academia Orchestra, which celebrates its 20 year jubilee of its artistic activity this year, he has recorded six CDs. Together with Mikołaj Szczęsny and Marek Jasiński he co-created and realized a cycle of concerts called "Through music to the world of values" and Sacrum Non Profanum International Music Festival. He is a tutor of six doctorates on conducting led at the Ignacy Jan Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznań. At University of Szczecin he created the faculty of Artistic Education in Musical Art which had the key importance in creating the Academy of Art in Szczecin. He ran the Department of Music and Artistic Education Faculty at University of Szczecin, at the same time fulfilling the function of the Musical Director of this Academy.

In 2010 he closed the International Chopin Year in New York at the famous Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall concert halls. At that time he conducted Frederic Chopin's compositions performed by Olga Kern, Sławomir Wilk and Adam Makowicz. To appreciate Professor's remarkable achievements, the Chapter consisting of members of the West Pomeranian Science Leaders Club, granted him with the Noble of West Pomerania in 2010 in the area of arts.