

Bohdan Wodiczko's
Programming
Policies at

*Warsaw Philharmonic (1955-1958).
Toward the Warsaw Autumn.*

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ABSTRACT

As the managing and artistic director of Warsaw Philharmonic in 1955-58, Bohdan Wodiczko introduced an innovative programming policy which re-oriented the Philharmonic's repertoire toward 20th-century classics and focused on the links between new music and that of other historical periods. The aim was to create a vast sonosphere of a "musical inter-age" (S. Kisielewski after M. Wańkiewicz) encompassing radically different styles and genres and significantly transforming the axiology of the musical art. Wodiczko's novel programming, though largely concentrating on the already waning neo-Classicism, laid the foundations for the phenomenon of the Warsaw Autumn and was a harbinger of the political-cultural thaw that would come after October 1956. This paper examines Wodiczko's programming revolution in its political context, as well as the critical reception of Warsaw Philharmonic concerts, with particular emphasis on the aesthetic disputes arising around those composers whose works provoked the greatest controversies: Igor Stravinsky and Carl Orff.

Keywords: Bohdan Wodiczko, Witold Rowicki, conductor, Warsaw Philharmonic, October 1956, the thaw, "a musical inter-age", Igor Stravinsky, Carl Orff, 20th-century music, contemporary music, jazz, The Warsaw Autumn

INTRODUCTION

Attempts at opening up philharmonic repertoires to the so-called new music entailed – from the early 20th century – a number of paradoxes and determinants, such as the need for the programming reformers to confront the conservative audience (frequently prejudiced against the composer), to deal with the changing social-economic situation of concert venues (which emphasised programmatic contents not related to the music itself), and to cope with the generally indisputable (that is, absolutist) ideological programmes of the modernist artists themselves. Polish philharmonic institutions of the interwar period (1918-39) had no autonomous budgets or independent funding. After the war they were subordinated to the (frequently *ad hoc*) concepts of totalitarian state and to a distorted educational paradigm (in socialist Poland). Modernism often radically clashed with the romantic type of expression that reflected the musical elite's commitment to the revival of music life (with clearly emphasised national elements in the presented music) and was evidently used by the authorities for the purposes of the propaganda of national unity in the socialist spirit.¹ In the period of socialist realism

¹ For instance, the use of neoromantic music in the newsreels of that period had a clearly propagandist purpose.

in Polish music (1949-56), the authorities applied a distorted version of the modernist postulate of "giving voice to the civilisation" and the polyphony of artistic message – in order to combine genres hitherto reserved for popular music and monumental versions of folklore with new inventions: the mass song, and panegyric cantatas in praise of Stalin. Using the pretext of universal accessibility of music, the system in fact reinforced the (ideologically alien) model of bourgeois culture.²

The present paper is dedicated to the work of Bohdan Wodiczko – artistic director and principal conductor of Warsaw Philharmonic (1955-1958), whose consistently modernist programming policies foreshadowed the political and cultural thaw, which brought Polish music in long-awaited contact with the West. Wodiczko's ideas redirected the audience's sensitivity toward the major trends of the first modernist movement and prepared the ground for the Polish school of composition, which made its appearance in 1956.

THE FIRST STAGE OF BOHDAN WODICZKO'S WORK AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Bohdan Wodiczko took over Warsaw Philharmonic as a result of a phone call made by Włodzimierz

² According to Zofia Lissa, the taste promoted by the authorities in that period was a fusion of elitist and egalitarian tastes, created with a view to producing „a uniform musical culture corresponding to the statistical level of the majority of the nation.” What the authorities demanded was an „intermediate” music suspended between the elite and the mass audience, “stylistically located more or less in the regions of neo-Romanticism.” Cf. Z. Lissa, (1966). *Muzyka polska w latach 1945-1956*, in: E. Dziębowska, ed. *Polska kultura muzyczna 1944-1964*, Kraków: PWM, p. 15. Stefan Jarociński in his appraisal of that period wrote about the impoverishment of music culture, which resulted from consistently barring modern art from wide circulation, from wasting the new-found potential for the country's economic modernisation, and the neglect of mass media. “Rather than taking full advantage of the tools for the mass diffusion of culture goods (the radio, music records, films, etc.) and developing audience sensitivity to modern art, it was decided that the audience ought to be kept as far as possible from that modern art, and level-down standards were applied. Everything was to be adjusted to the untrained tastes and views of the mass audience – both the choice of values inherited from the bourgeois culture of the past and the current artistic production.” Jarociński, S. *Muzykologia i piśmiennictwo muzyczne w latach 1944-1956*, in: *Polska kultura muzyczna 1944-1964*, *ibid.*, p. 121.

Sokorski, Minister of Culture and Art, in March 1955, in the atmosphere of scandal associated with the artistic indisposition of the Philharmonic's reviver and founder of the postwar Warsaw Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Witold Rowicki. It happened in the very first days of the postwar Philharmonic's operations. After the official inauguration (on 21st February 1955), simultaneously with the Chopin Competition auditions, concerts of the world's eminent pianists – the Competition jurors – were held with the participation of the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra. On 25th February 1955, the orchestra under Rowicki's baton performed with Louis Kentner – considered as one of the piano world's greatest sensations, 5th prize winner in the 2nd Chopin Competition in 1932, who interpreted one of Mozart's concertos.

Two days later, another piano giant – Arturo Benedetti-Michelangeli – played Schumann's *Concerto*. Music critics present at this concert – such as Lucjan Kydryński, Józef Kański and Jerzy Wojciechowski – noticed that the orchestra was clearly indisposed, and made evident mistakes in the wind instrument parts.³ Irritated and anxious about the orchestral part quality during the Competition participants' performances in the finals, Benedetti-Michelangeli decided to lodge a complaint against Rowicki with Włodzimierz Sokorski, Minister of Culture and Art. The later called Wodiczko in Cracow several days later and asked him a direct question: "Could you lead the Philharmonic in Warsaw, sir?" Surprised at first, Wodiczko replied that Warsaw Philharmonic already had its director – Witold Rowicki – but when he heard about the orchestra's blunders, he agreed to come to Warsaw for negotiations. Eventually, after a conversation in which Wiktor Weinbaum, Minister and Music Department Director, also took part, Wodiczko agreed to take up the posts of artistic director and principal conductor at Warsaw Philharmonic and was appointed to these positions as of 1st September 1955.

3 All the three reviews leave us in no doubt as to the orchestra's level presented during those concerts. Lucjan Kydryński writes about "misunderstandings, almost a scandal" (cf. idem, *Dziesiąta Symfonia i pierwszy sezon*, „Przekrój”, 16th Oct. 1955, No. 549, p. 11); Józef Kański about "the evident shortcomings of the orchestra" and "the progressive decline of the Warsaw Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra's level in comparison with the Great Symphony Orchestra of Polish Radio (jk, 1955. Bilans otwarcia Filharmonii Narodowej, *Stolica*, No. 12 (378), 20th March, p. 11; Jerzy Wojciechowski notes the "overly harsh, uneven, frequently impure orchestral sound" and numerous "rhythmic blunders," claiming that only the pianists saved the performance (cf. idem, 1955. Występy jurorów Konkursu Chopinowskiego, *Dzisiaj i Jutro*, No. 10, 13th March, p. 7.

Having taken over Warsaw Philharmonic, Wodiczko introduced radical changes in the organisation of that institution, which served as the basis for his programming revolution. His reforms included: 1) reorganisation and improvement of the orchestra's standards by employing talented young musicians from all over Poland, as well as improving the orchestral sound; 2) the establishment of the first professional mixed choir (under the direction of Roman Kuklewicz); 3) the foundation (on the initiative of Professor Zofia Lissa) of the Early Music Vocal Ensemble, which under Zbigniew Soja and Mirosław Perz presented both Old Polish music and a rich selection of Western early vocal music in period style, and promoted the discoveries made in that field by the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Musicology⁴; the purchase of new instruments. These changes were supplemented by solving administrative problems. Excellent salaries and conditions of accommodation were guaranteed to the Philharmonic's artists (flats at the rear of Nowy Świat Avenue were secured for this purpose from the communist party elite). The opening of the Chamber Music Hall proved a spectacular success, and the Congress Hall was used for great popular music gigs (the so called Warsaw Concerts series). Talks were conducted with the authorities about the (unfortunately utopian) project of building a new, architecturally modern and acoustically perfect Philharmonic Hall in Defilad Square.

THE IDEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF WODICZKO'S CONCEPT

It will be worthwhile to place Wodiczko's concept of Warsaw Philharmonic's operations against the background of Poland's cultural map in that period – especially focusing on the ideas that reflected (and anticipated in the long run) the expressive qualities of new music, and the new-found social-cultural independence of Polish

4 Bohdan Wodiczko's views on the role of early music in philharmonic repertoires reflect his fascination with the impact of historical music on the entire first modernist generation (the neo-Classicists, dodecaphonists) and consequently also on the new school of conducting: "All modernity must be anchored in a solid school of early music. One can hardly become a good contemporary conductor without a thorough knowledge of the Franko-Flemish polyphony, the Renaissance a cappella style and the various stylistic trends of the Baroque," he said in an interview (1960, Bohdan Wodiczko o roli dyrygenta i problemach stylistycznych dyrygentury [interview conducted by B. Pocię], *Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 9, 15-31 May, p. 6).

art after October 1956. These very qualities make it legitimate to call this period in Wodiczko's career an "artistic thaw". According to the writers analysing this period, such as Andrzej Chłopecki⁵ and Stefan Kisielewski⁶, Wodiczko played a crucial role at that time. Analysts observe the dramatic, progressive isolation of Polish music life from Western modernism in that period, lack of access to scores (for both composers and musicologists), problems with the exchange of artists and with permissions for Polish musicians to tour abroad. In his analyses of the poverty of ideas in new Polish scores (in the context of the 2nd Festival of Polish Music), Zygmunt Mycielski talks about a decline in Polish musical culture – not only due to the literal approach to folklore (as composition material), but also due to the limitation of music education and music promotion in the society. Mycielski tackled these issues at the General Assembly of the Polish Composers' Union (on 4th June 1956) in his paper entitled *Twórczość muzyczna Dziesięciolecia (Music Composition in the Postwar Decade* – later printed in Nos. 7-8/1956 of "Muzyka"). Under the guise of terms borrowed from the communist newspeak, such as "confrontation", Mycielski also quoted examples of music from the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc countries. The conclusion was alarming for the music world:

I must stress it emphatically that we live on the outside, virtually isolated from the artistic life that surrounds us. [...] True artistic contacts depend on concerts, on programmes featuring the world's greatest musical achievements, on easy access to publications, exchange of the best soloists and conductors, as well as young musicians travelling abroad [...] We are becoming a backwater. We have no idea of what is being performed or produced either in the Soviet Union, the people's democracies or in the Western countries. We do not know what level the orchestras, violinists, oboists are in those countries, or how a conductor would interpret one or another piece of music there. In our country, most musicians are ignorant

⁵ Andrzej Chłopecki sees Bohdan Wodiczko as the one who "won the time of the political thaw over for the musical modernity," by transforming Warsaw Philharmonic into a European-class institution; *idem* (2001). *Filharmonia i kompozytorska współczesność 1945 – 2000*, in: M. Bychawska, H. Schiller, eds., *100 lat Filharmonii w Warszawie (1901 – 2001)*. Warsaw: Filharmonia Narodowa, pp. 165, 167.

⁶ Stefan Kisielewski observes that Wodiczko continued his artistic project from Cracow Philharmonic, but reoriented it from new Polish to contemporary European music. For Kisielewski, the Warsaw period was the heyday of this project, S. Kisielewski, (2012). *Bohdan Wodiczko, idem* (2012). *Pisma i felietony muzyczne*, Vol. 2, Introduction by Adam Wiatr, Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, pp. 216-217.

of Prokofiev's *Cello Concerto*, they do not know all of Shostakovich's symphonies, nor are they familiar with the current output of Honegger, Stravinsky, Britten, and Messiaen.⁷

When Mycielski was saying this, his younger colleagues from the Polish Composers' Union – Tadeusz Baird and Kazimierz Serocki – were presenting to the General Assembly (held on 4th-6th June 1955) their proposal for organising the 1st International Festival of Contemporary Music. The inaugural concert of that festival was conducted by Bohdan Wodiczko, who was then already at an advanced stage of the programming reform at Warsaw Philharmonic, carried out in the spirit of the eagerly awaited modernity.

Wodiczko's role in the post-thaw breakthrough (referred to as the first culmination of his artistic career) was thus characterised by Stefan Kisielewski:

His role was not a purely musical one; it was also social, psychological, ideological, even political. In that period concert life played a very important role in Poland, performing the [...] function of a "rotary platform" – an intermediary between the East and the West in the area of culture; in fact, a kind of mission.⁸

THE BAROMETER OF POLITICAL CHANGE

The process under study took place in a very special political context. From the spring of 1956, changes in the policies of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) were becoming evident. The faction of the previously persecuted activists (including Władysław Gomułka, now released from prison) came to the fore, and minister Włodzimierz Sokorski, associated with the ideology of socialist realism, was replaced on 17th April 1956 by Karol Kuryluk – a moderate communist whose attitude to left-wing views was strictly ideological, and who was also a talented

⁷ Z. Mycielski (1957). *Twórczość muzyczna Dziesięciolecia (Z referatu na Walnym Zjeździe Związku Kompozytorów Polskich, 4 VI 1956)*, in: *idem. Ucieczki z pięciolinii*, Warszawa: PIW, pp. 565-566. Lech Dzierżanowski was the first to quote this text in the context of the Warsaw Autumn, *idem* (2007). *Jak to się zaczęło, Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 18/19 (16th Sept.), pp. 8-15. Cf. M. Klubiński, (2009). *Konfrontacje z muzyką w świecie. Zygmunta Mycielskiego prolog do I „Warszawskiej Jesieni”*, in: Bristiger, M., Ciesielski R., Literska B., Guzy-Pasiak J., eds. *Krytyka muzyczna. Teoria, historia, współczesność*, Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, pp. 201-213.

⁸ S. Kisielewski, (1959). *Sprawy muzyczne czyli nowa Mazepa*, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, No. 25 (543), 14th June, p. 8.

journalist (editor-in-chief of “Sygnały” under the German occupation and of “Odrodzenie” after the war). Barbara Fijałkowska, author of *Polityka i twórcy (1948-1959)*, claims that Kuryluk was the only minister of culture in communist Poland who did not stress the ideological role of his ministry, and did not preach complete submission of artistic life to the Party's policies. Rather than seeing artists as subservient to the state, he believed in the state patronage of culture and in a broad campaign for the promotion of art. Several months later, the phenomenon known as the Polish poster school came to the fore; avant-garde poets and writers made their debuts; Polish literary circles developed an interest in the writings of the European existentialists, theatre of the absurd, and the American counter-culture. Notably, the political harbinger of changes in Polish cultural and political life that took place in 1956 was the 1st Polish edition (in April 1955) of Ilya Ehrenburg's novel *The Thaw* (Rus. *Ottepel*), translated by Jan Brzechwa, in which the word “thaw” became a cryptic synonym for relaxing the grip of the system. Ehrenburg presented the Russian society as infected by careerism, moral ambiguity and cynicism, and most of all – living in pitiable material conditions.⁹ The international communist youth movement supported the organisation in Poland of another event which struck the participants with its cheerful and light character – the 5th World Festival of Youth and Students “For Peace and Friendship” (hosting nearly 30 thousand young participants from 114 countries). It occasioned theatrical spectacles, poetry evenings, a literary competition, and exhibitions of fine arts. Warsaw was decorated with sets created by outstanding debutants from the Academy of Fine Arts. The coloured costumes of foreign students contributed to the release in Polish youth of unheard-of artistic energy and longing for dynamism like that observed in West European life. In the meantime, symptoms of political change also appeared at the top of the political system. After the Poznań June uprising, the communist Party leaders presented a project for “correcting the distortions and perversions” of the system.¹⁰ The charges against Party activists who represented “dissident” options and were kept in prison, were withdrawn. The new policy of the Party's Central Committee (presented at the 8th Plenary Session on 19th-21st October, when Gomułka was elected 1st Secretary) rejected the Stalinist regime and condemned

both the conspiracy theories and the raging terror of Stalin's era. The appeal for reducing the role of censorship in cultural life was also backed up.¹¹ The principle of creative freedom became a key tenet of the state's cultural policy, and of its patronage over music and the fine arts. The new attitudes were also supported by journalists who had previously sympathised with communism, such as Krzysztof Teodor Toeplitz, who on 15th September 1956 published in “Nowa Kultura” an article entitled *Katastrofa proroków [The Prophets' Disastrous Failure]* – an attempt to settle the score with socialist realism, which was by then on the wane. According to Toeplitz, socialist realism forced the Polish intelligentsia to choose between indisputable theory and the facts of life that blatantly contradicted it. The concluding sentence became (according to historians) a motto of the Polish thaw: “If facts contradict the theory, only the facts are to blame.”¹² The germinating political freedom inspired interesting debuts, such as those of Zbigniew Herbert, the “Współczesność” generation (named after a magazine founded by, among others, Stanisław Grochowiak and Roman Śliwonik, and featuring the works of e.g. Ireneusz Iredyński and Jerzy Krzysztoń), Miron Białoszewski, and Lech Emfazy Stefański (the private home Theatre in Tarczyńska St.) The same period also saw the debut of the Piwnica pod Baranami cabaret¹³, which promoted a lyrical, history-inspired and existentialist type of surrealism. Theatrical repertoires began to include Western dramas representing the theatre of the absurd (e.g. the Polish premiere of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*¹⁴) and the debuts of avant-garde directors (such as Jerzy Jarocki, Konrad Swinarski, and Helmut Kajzar). Artistically no less important were the debuts of graphic artists, who included the Cracow Group (Tadeusz Kantor, Jerzy Nowosielski, Jerzy Tchorzewski and Jonasz Stern – from 1958 at the “Krzysztoforzy” Gallery). The first postwar vernissage and exhibition were held of Polish abstract art pioneers – Władysław Strzemiński and Katarzyna Kobro.¹⁵ As a result of Polish composers developing an interest in Western trends in music, such as the twelve-note technique and sonorism – the 2nd “Warsaw Autumn” International Festival of Contemporary Music in 1958 saw the debut of the Polish school of composition, which represented both the older generation (now attracted to

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-304.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

⁹ M. Fik, (1991). *Kultura polska po Jalcie*. Kronika lat 1944-1981, 2 vols, Warsaw: Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, Vol. 1, pp. 253-254.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

more recent trends, e.g. Witold Lutosławski) and the expansive younger artists with their avant-garde concepts of sound (Krzysztof Penderecki, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Wojciech Kilar).

THE SPACES OF MUSIC

One of the issues that Wodiczko dedicated himself to was the project for a modern Philharmonic hall. He envisaged designing and constructing in Warsaw a large modernist, acoustically perfect urban concert hall that would become the centre for the promotion of his monumental, pluralist and constructivist vision. The project fell through¹⁶, but the conductor willingly took advantage of the Congress Hall in the recently built Palace of Culture and Science as a venue for his concerts. Wodiczko's real achievement as far as concert space is concerned was the opening of the long-planned Chamber Music Hall at Warsaw Philharmonic (on 12th September 1957). The inauguration was celebrated with a concert of the Czech early chordophone ensemble Pro Ante Antiqua.

THE NEW PROGRAMMING POLICY

The philharmonic repertoire announced in the music press by Bohdan Wodiczko testifies to his objectivity in the areas of style of interpretation, abstract qualities of music, the primacy of rhythm, and far-reaching aesthetic associations between different musical styles, as well as to his attempt at redefining the Philharmonic's social role. His stance was clearly in harmony with the transformations in attitudes to philharmonic companies as centres of the new musical culture. His ideas were not only aesthetically revolutionary, but also entailed the need for changing the perception of music (he postulated a shock effect) and its reception (broadening the semantic and axiological field of Philharmonic programme reception; unconstrained work on the formation of the 20th-century musical canon; questioning the boundaries between "good" and "bad", old and new music).

Bohdan Wodiczko turned Warsaw Philharmonic into a versatile music institution. His repertoire policy was based on three principles, which were expounded in the insightful interview conducted in 1960 for "Ruch Muzyczny" by Bohdan Pocij. The interview also contains

Wodiczko's first version of the creed of a modern conductor. His concept of the Philharmonic programme comprised:

1. "the elitist trend" – perceptively demanding contemporary works in best interpretations available;
2. the so-called "standard repertoire", consisting of 18th- and 19th-century works;
3. popular repertoire – the best known compositions or products of classical composers' fascination with popular genres (e.g. Stravinsky's *Circus Polka*, Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, Mozart's *Divertimento*).¹⁷

These three pillars of the repertoire, which agreed with the postulated crossover aesthetics and the idea of moving between different periods in music history, as well as catering to the romantic nature of the "Polish political soul" – were to persuade the audience to change its habits with regard to musical accessibility. According to Wodiczko, one of the key innovations was a change in the structure of the traditional concert, which abolished the division into overture or symphonic piece to start with, and a concerto or symphony as the main course. The change of the paradigm of institutional organisation – which foreshadowed the achievements of some of the present-day philharmonic companies in Europe – was to be accompanied by new, more effective forms of education, such as the school concerts, which no longer presented the traditional repertoire and elaborate educational commentaries, but were supposed to exert impact through musical detail and "action". In the reality which Stefan Kisielewski referred to five years later as the "musical interregnum"¹⁸, the music conductor's key task

¹⁷ Bohdan Wodiczko *o roli dyrygenta i problemach stylistycznych dyrygentury*, op. cit., p. 6. He also outlined a plan for orchestras' self-development which would help achieve these aims, based on: a) a repertoire divided into four stages according to level of difficulty: Baroque, Classical and contemporary (20th-century classics of the "great rhythmic renewal," including the neo-Classicalists Bartók and Hindemith), and Romantic (only marginally present); b) working on the maximum number of works within a short period; c) forming chamber music groups from within the orchestra; d) stylistic diversity, which allowed for the most effective confrontation with the technical and sound-related problems of 20th-century scores.

¹⁸ The concept of a "musical interregnum" (borrowed from Melchior Wańkiewicz) was used by Stefan Kisielewski in the title of his 1966 collection of essays. He referred to the period in music culture which he defined as "the period of transition, which combined the shadows of the past with the first sunrises of a new age dawning." Kisielewski noted the gradual re-orientation of the first-avant-garde constructivism toward the total sound control of the second avant-garde, accompanied by a diffusion of various musical genres, which co-formed the axiologically democratic

¹⁶ J. Waldorff, (1956). *Plany z za parawanów*, *Życie Warszawy*, 6th Nov. 1956, No. 267, p. 4.

was to present music that was “close to the mentality of the present-day man,” “to inspire enthusiasm for music reception,” “to cultivate a positive snobbery” and a vogue for the new art. In the longer perspective – to “educate the audience” so that it can subsequently start to follow its own aims and values. “The listeners ought to be disturbed in their safety, attacked and shocked, even irritated. All this leads to our most important objective: arousing interest,”¹⁹ explained Wodiczko in one of the interviews.

Here is how Stefan Kisielewski assessed Wodiczko's programming policy several years later:

Wodiczko's uncompromising, go-getter attitude, his tenacity and aggressive pressure – proved highly successful. He did not compromise his programming concepts, not even a tiny bit, and so in that period of pervading repertoire poverty, his concerts were a veritable oasis of artistic diversity and openness.²⁰

Zygmunt Mycielski (who in the already quoted text complained about the progressive isolation of music life in Poland) saw Wodiczko's programming policy in Warsaw Philharmonic as a milestone in the process of return to Europe, to the modernist paradigm. According to Mycielski, Wodiczko started the clock again for Warsaw Philharmonic, effectively initiating the counterpoint of Polish new music which would henceforth accompany the European musical modernity. A year later Bohdan Pocij wrote in his summary of Wodiczko's first season in Warsaw:

All those hungry and thirsting for modernity will remember very well this phenomenal season of plenty that has come after the time of socialist-realist and commercial famine; all those fascinations and intoxications with Stravinsky, Honegger and Berg.²¹

and mutually interactive space of musical life (avant-garde, neo-Classical, jazz, popular and folk music developed within a circle of mutual inspirations and interrelations). In: *idem, Pisma i felietony muzyczne*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

19 “B o r e d o m [spaced out as in the original], unfortunately so common in our concert programmes, is the greatest enemy. The listeners ought to be disturbed in their safety, attacked and shocked, even irritated. All this leads to our most important objective: arousing interest. How refreshing and inspiring proved the atmosphere of scandal that accompanied the premieres of many modern masterpieces! Concert programmes ought to be formed on the principle of contrast, of bold stylistic confrontations. V a r i e t y is the catchword,” said the conductor in an interview carried out by Bohdan Pocij. *Bohdan Wodiczko o roli drygenta i problemach stylistycznych drygentury*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

20 S. Kisielewski. *Bohdan Wodiczko*, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

21 B. Pocij, (1957). *Życie muzyczne w kraju – Warsaw*, *Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 1, p. 29.

JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC

Among the wide range of genres and styles introduced by Wodiczko, of much importance were not only the already mentioned concerts at the Congress Hall, featuring numbers from American musicals and dance music, evening performances combining jazz with experimental, late neo-Classical jazz-inspired compositions (one programme included Rolf Liebermann's *Concerto for Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra*) – but also Poland's first presentations of jazz music on the Philharmonic stage, in the form of the jazz evenings at Warsaw Philharmonic's Chamber Music Hall, organised (from January 1958) by the Polish Jazz Clubs Coordinating Committee, which featured excellent virtuoso line-ups such as Club Melomani (Jerzy „Dudus” Matuszkiewicz, Andrzej Kurylewicz, Roman Dyląg, Witold Sobociński, Janusz Zabieglński, and Zbigniew Namysłowski) and Jazz Believers (including, among others, Andrzej Trzaskowski and Krzysztof Komeda). The concerts were accompanied by talks given by Stefan Kisielewski, Roman Waschko, and Adam Ferch.

THE REPERTOIRE REVOLUTION

Wodiczko's first performances as director of Warsaw Philharmonic were the inaugural concerts of the 1955/1956 artistic season, held on 30th September and 2nd October 1955. Wodiczko conducted a programme that reflected his interests, clashing Beethoven's classicist *Symphony in C Major No. 1* with R. Strauss's brilliant orchestral showpiece *Don Juan* in part one and after the interval – presenting the Polish premiere of Shostakovich's politically significant *Symphony No. 10* – the composer's settling of accounts with Stalinism.²²

22 Wodiczko later recorded the piece for the Polskie Nagrania label, and in 1974 Polskie Radio also recorded a fine interpretation presented with the Great Symphony Orchestra of Polish Radio. Several sources wrongly inform that the composition was premiered under Wodiczko on 10th October 1956 during the inaugural concert of the 1st International Festival of Contemporary Music. In fact, the symphony had already been presented twice at Warsaw Philharmonic in 1955. The symphony entered Polish repertoires in October 1955 nearly simultaneously under Wodiczko in Warsaw and under Jan Krenz in Katowice. A review of Krenz's concert printed in Katowice's *Dziennik Zachodni* of 1st November 1955 suggests that his concert took place some days later and that Bohdan Wodiczko was in fact the first one to interpret this music in Poland.

Already this first Warsaw concert under Wodiczko provoked many contradictory opinions concerning his programming ideas, conducting style and impact on the orchestra. The atmosphere that this controversy created among the audience, as ironically described by Zygmunt Mycielski, gives us a glimpse of the scope of Wodiczko's vision, but also – of his rather aggressive, brutal interpretation of Shostakovich's symphony:

- One of Poland's best known musicians: *Have you ever heard such a splendid performance of Beethoven's 1st? At last we have an orchestra and a conductor who work hard and have good results!*
- Another famous Polish musician: *When will you drag Wodiczko through the mud? It's a scandal. He can't be allowed to conduct here anymore.*
- Yet another eminent Polish musician: *A phenomenal concert. But the Shostakovich was unbearable.*
- A musician who firmly believes he-is-the-very-best: *That Shostakovich was absolutely brilliant. At last we're going to hear something inspiring, not only Tchaikovsky and Brahms all the time.*
- Another musician, probably also the best: *He's going to kill that orchestra. It's too difficult for them.*
- *Have you ever heard of anything like this? A concert programme without the Romantics and without Polish music.*
- *A good programme at last. He will educate not only the orchestra, but first of all the audience.*
- *If you don't support Wodiczko, I won't believe there are sensible people in Warsaw any more.*
- *I'll stop going to concerts if this Wodiczko....*²³

The highlights of Wodiczko's (mostly 20th-century) repertoire from that period were the sensational Polish premieres of works previously unperformed in Poland. The most important of these were the first Polish performances of: Stravinsky (music for the ballet *Petrushka*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Les Noces*, the *Symphony of Psalms*), Milhaud, Honegger (*Symphony No. 5*), Hindemith, Britten, Orff (*Carmina Burana* and *Catulli Carmina*), Shostakovich, Messiaen, Berg (*Violin Concerto "To the Memory of an Angel"*), Martin (*In terra pax*, *Golgotha*, *Petite symphonie concertante*, *Concerto for Harpsichord and Chamber Orchestra*), Martinů (*Polní mše / Field Mass*), Petrassi (*Coro di morti*), Liebermann, and Palester (*Requiem*). Polish 20th-century music was somewhat less prominent in his programmes from that period, but he did conduct seven world premieres of new Polish music and about a dozen other titles. The Polish premieres were: Malawski's *Symphony No. 2 "Dramatic"* and *Hungaria 1956* (listed in the concert programme as *Hungaria*), Turski's *Symphony No. 3* and *Little Overture*,

Bacewicz's *Partita* for orchestra, Kazimierz Sikorski's *Flute Concerto* and Madey's *Piano Concerto*. Of special significance were performances of music previously forbidden in Poland: the *Requiem* by Palester (who worked for Radio Free Europe at that time) and Turski's *Symphony No. 2 "Olympic"* (which received the 3rd prize during the London Olympics and was condemned by the communist authorities for that reason).

The music of Igor Stravinsky took pride of place in Warsaw Philharmonic repertoires in that period. The composer's most important works had not previously been performed in Poland. Taking advantage of the inherent qualities of his conducting style: the discipline of work with the orchestra, emphasis on innervated rhythms, a predilection for condensed and violent expression, for textures that irritate the ear, and a selective approach to orchestral colour – Wodiczko became a key propagator of the music of this 20th-century Russian master, and critics soon hailed him as Poland's best expert on the interpretation of Stravinsky's music. For Bohdan Wodiczko, Stravinsky – along with Debussy – marked the symbolic beginning of objective, anti-Romantic type of sound in the 20th century, and of the change in the paradigm of thinking about beauty in music, which resulted from the supremacy in the musical work of a superior, Apollonian ordering factor. Especially memorable to the Warsaw audience was the triptych of Stravinsky's early ballets written for Diaghilev's company. Drawing on the composer's unfulfilled plans to obtain a Polish citizenship (as owner of a country estate in Ustylúh, situated before the war in Poland's eastern borderlands, now in Ukraine), Wodiczko strove throughout his career to turn Poland into a "Stravinsky land", using such opportunities as the Warsaw performances of *The Rite of Spring* (performed at Wodiczko's Warsaw Philharmonic for the first time by a Polish ensemble under Stanisław Skrowaczewski in 1957²⁴), *Les noces* and the *Symphony of Psalms* (Polish premieres), as well as the first Polish recording of *The Firebird Suite* with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra. Especially the three Warsaw Philharmonic premieres – *The Rite of Spring* under Skrowaczewski, the *Symphony of Psalms* and *Les noces* – met with a sensational audience reception. In his text about the reception of these three works in Poland, Stefan Kisielewski noted that their formidable technical

²⁴ The Polish audience had already had the opportunity to hear this music a bit earlier in the interpretation of the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion et Television Française under Jean Martinon during the 1st International Festival of Contemporary Music in 1956.

²³ Z. Mycielski (1955). *Lubię czasami stać przy schodach, Przegląd Kulturalny*, 5th Oct., p. 7.

difficulty made it impossible to perform them in Poland before the war.

Before the war, these compositions were simply considered unperformable. For instance, after seven days of rehearsals with the prewar Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra – which was considered as a high-class ensemble – Fitelberg had to give up his plans for the performance of *The Rite of Spring* (even though the rhythmic difficulty of the work was somewhat diminished by the composer himself in the new simplified version).²⁵ Only some selected orchestral works by Stravinsky were performed in Poland before 1939: *The Firebird*, *Petrushka* (many times), *L'Histoire du soldat*, *Pulcinella*, *Little Suite*, *The Fairy's Kiss*, *Jeu de cartes*, and the *Piano Concerto*, presented by Stravinsky himself in 1927. After the war, only three of these were performed: *The Firebird*, the new version of *Petrushka*, and *Little Suite*.²⁶

All the three performances of works by Stravinsky under Wodiczko attracted great audience interest and won critical acclaim as interpretations which perfectly grasped the design of these great forms, and wonderfully brought out the polymetric and polyrhythmic qualities, the pungent sound of the harmonies and the selective treatment of orchestral sound. After the performance of *Petrushka*, Lucjan Kydryński wrote:

It was a really inspiring and exhilarating interpretation. This is to a large extent due to the music itself, but also – to the passion and temperament with which Wodiczko conducted his orchestra. Despite a few mistakes, it was the overall panache, the splendid sound, the brilliant exposition of all the outstanding effects that *Petrushka* abounds in – that decided about the reception of the whole. The huge ovation confirmed this well enough.²⁷

Stefan Kisielewski concluded his already quoted review of the first performance of the *Symphony of Psalms* with these words:

Today's Polish premiere of the *Symphony of Psalms*, completed in 1930, has been a major event. We owe this largely to Bohdan Wodiczko and to his enthusiastic, persistent promotion of the music of our own age.²⁸

Another admirer of Stravinsky's music, Zygmunt Mycielski, gave the following review of *Les noces*:

The first performance of this work in Poland has been one of those premieres that we have awaited with or without hope, depending on the temperament of the given person (...). Our audience had to "hang down from the chandeliers" – as Szpinalski puts it – to squeeze into the concert hall. Everybody came to listen to that music (...). The tremendous effort made by the choir, the soloists (...), the pianists, the conductor Bohdan Wodiczko and the choirmaster Roman Kuklewicz – resulted in overwhelming success. Literally everyone did their best, including the percussion section, which plays an autonomous and exceedingly difficult role in this composition. The musicians played and sang with great enthusiasm.²⁹

By conducting Stravinsky, Wodiczko became for the critics a continuator of the historical effort of Grzegorz Fitelberg and Emil Młynarski. According to Jerzy Waldorff, however, what differed Wodiczko from his predecessors was the precision with which he interpreted the works, closely following the score.³⁰

As the author of the Philharmonic's programming policy, Bohdan Wodiczko also included in the repertoire compositions scored for untypical performing forces, which were then rarely presented on Polish concert stages. During his tenure, pieces by Stravinsky and Orff, as well as Goffredo Petrassi's *Canto di mori* to a text by Giacomo Leopardi for mixed choir, wind ensemble, 3 pianos, 4 percussionists and 5 basses were performed. For the first time in Poland, the audience had a chance to hear a different, dry, almost percussive orchestral line-up and sound. In the music of Carl Orff (the Polish premieres of *Carmina burana* under Zygmunt Latoszewski and *Catulli carmina* under Bohdan Wodiczko), the audience and the critics confronted the energetic qualities of music written in the 1st half of the 20th century and the distinct role of rhythm (though much simpler than in the case of Stravinsky). Performances of Orff's music provoked a stormy discussion among reviewers writing in, among others, "Przegląd Kulturalny" and "Ruch Muzyczny"³¹, who voiced their opinions concerning the simplicity of Orff's harmonic patterns, the

25 In the interwar period, the only publicly available performance of this piece was the recording made at Warsaw's Philips Showroom.

26 S. Kisielewski, (1956). „Symfonia Psalmów” Strawińskiego (pierwsze wykonanie w Polsce – Warszawa 23 III 1956), in: *idem* (2012). *Pisma i felietony muzyczne*, Vol. 1, Introduction by M. Gąsiorowska, Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, 2012, p. 408.

27 L. Kydryński, (1955). W poszukiwaniu straconego czasu, *Życie Literackie*, No. 50 (11th Dec.), p. 11.

28 S. Kisielewski. „Symfonia Psalmów” Strawińskiego, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

29 Z. Mycielski, (1957). „Wesele” Strawińskiego, *Przegląd Kulturalny*, No. 11 (14th-20th March), p. 6.

30 J. Waldorff, (1985). Wodiczko, *Polityka*, No. 24 (1467), 15th June, p. 10.

31 Z. Mycielski, (1957). „Carmina burana” Orffa, *Przegląd Kulturalny*, No. 22 (16th May), p. 10. *Idem*: *Notatki o muzyce i muzykach* [note of 30th May 1957], Warsaw: PWM, 1961, pp. 125-127. *Idem*, (1957). Sprawa Orffa. Brak muzyki? Niech żyje muzyka!, *Przegląd Kulturalny*, nr 48 (28th Nov.), p. 6. B. Pociąg, (1958). Życie muzyczne w kraju: Warszawa, *Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 1 (1), pp. 34-36.

reduced orchestration, and the ostentatious repetitions. Orff's supporters included Witold Wirpsza and Bohdan Pocij, his critics – Zygmunt Mycielski (“he makes up for the deficiency of genuine imagination and invention by using great and empty words”) and Władysław Malinowski (“there is no music in it”).

In his Warsaw period, Bohdan Wodiczko also presented abundant examples of music by other modernist composers previously unknown in Poland, and his special predilection for their music led him in the following years into new uncharted aesthetic territories. One of the composers he dedicated particularly much space to was Frank Martin. To Wodiczko, the works of this Swiss composer, uniquely combining qualities known from German music (the prominence of counterpoint, Baroque forms, late Romantic chromaticisms in the harmony combined with the twelve-note technique) and from French tradition (a sensitivity to sound colour, subtle expression and ethereal quality, classicism of forms) – reflected the conductor's ideal of unity between form and content, between classical logic and emotional expression in music³². In this period Wodiczko conducted Martin's *Études* for string orchestra, his *Petite symphonie concertante*, *Concerto for Harpsichord and Orchestra*, the anti-war oratorio *In terra pax*, as well as *Golgotha* – an example of the composer's Bach fascinations and a piece particularly attractive to the audience. Wodiczko also conducted the latter composition during his last concert at Warsaw Philharmonic in April 1976.

The music of the Czech neo-Classical composer Bohuslav Martinů, one of Wodiczko's favourites, attracted much interest among the audience, which was greatly impressed by the interpretations of *Symphony No. 4, Double Concerto* for two string orchestras, piano and timpani, as well the *Field Mass* (with Andrzej Hiolski singing the solo part). The works of Albert Roussel, which combine a French type of sound with discipline and references to Brahms (*Evocations, Suite en fa*) were also greeted with applause. One must also mention Wodiczko's discovery from that time – the music of André Jolivet, a representative of La Jeune France in music (*Concerto pour ondes Martenot*³³)

32 Konstanty Regamey characterised Martin's oeuvre as “a harmonious synthesis of Romanesque and Germanic musical components,” “music of exceptional nobility and sublimity,” *idem*. (1946). *Muzyka zachodnioeuropejska w czasie i po wojnie*, in *idem*, (2010). *Wybór pism estetycznych*, Wprowadzenie, selected and ed. by K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, Kraków: TAIWPN UNIVERSITAS, p. 92.

33 The conductor invited Ginette Martenot, sister of the instrument's inventor, to play this piece. She returned to Warsaw later for the performance of Messiaen's *Trois petites liturgies*.

as well as performances of three important pieces by Olivier Messiaen (*Trois petites liturgies de la présence divine, L'Ascension*, and *Les offrandes oubliées*).

Another major event was the Polish premiere (on 1st and 3rd November 1957) of the *Requiem* by a composer prohibited in Poland – Roman Palester. Dedicated to the soldiers and victims of the Warsaw Uprising and originally premiered in Brussels in October 1949, the *Requiem* was programmed together with Martinů's *Field Mass* and Respighi's symphonic suite *Church Windows*³⁴ despite the continued ban on performances of Palester's music in Poland³⁵. The hushed and subtle expression of this commemorative piece attracted the attention of Bohdan Pocij, who called it “the most outstanding Polish oratorio-type composition since Szymanowski”:

The *Requiem* does not electrify or shock with sharp, extreme harmonies or with colouristic eccentricities (...). It is a “summing up”, a consolidation rather than an experiment and a quest for new solutions. A mature work, full of internal balance.³⁶

The performance of Palester's work was not the only event that could provoke the audience to reflect on the political atmosphere in Poland at that time. Wodiczko commissioned two symphonic pieces with Artur Malawski: *Symphony No. 2 “Dramatic”* (premiered on 20th-21st April 1956) and *Hungaria 1956* (first performed on 14th-16th February 1958, already after the composer's death). The premiere of *Hungaria* – a deeply moving commentary on the Soviet invasion of Hungary (the date was left out of the title by censors) – symbolically coincided with the first postwar visit to Poland of

34 Performers: Jadwiga Dzikówna – soprano, Maria Załęska – mezzo-soprano, Jerzy Kobza-Orłowski – tenor, Witold Pilewski – bass, Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, cond. Bohdan Wodiczko.

35 The ban on Palester's music was only lifted in Poland in 1977, when the appropriate entry was deleted from censors' directories. Such issues were regulated by a special *Book of Instructions and Recommendations*, published by the Main Office for Control of Press, Publications and Public Performances, which under item 2 among the rules for the control of music publications contained the following instruction: “With respect to the following persons, the principle should be adopted of eliminating their names and mentions of their works from the press, radio, television as well as from non-periodical publications of non-academic character.” A list of 29 names followed; next to the name of Roman Palester, we have “Anul. 11th Febr. 1977). Cf. G. Michalski, (2012). *Krytyka (muzyczna) cenzury*, in: M. Bristiger, R. Ciesielski, eds. *Krytyka muzyczna. Krytyka czy krytyki?*, Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, p. 79.

36 B. Pocij, (1958). Roman Palester – „Requiem”, *Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 2, p. 23.

Witold Małcużyński, who on the same night also played Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No. 3* under Wodiczko's baton.³⁷ This peculiar union of modernism and the romantic quality that accompanied Poland's current social-political life – best express the conductor's ideas.

After this survey of the programmes, I will now attempt a synthetic characterisation of the repertoire presented at Warsaw Philharmonic by both Wodiczko and his assistants: Arnold Rezler and Stanisław Skrowaczewski, as well as by guest conductors. Though the conductor was for many years fascinated with the music of Debussy, this composer's oeuvre was only represented in Warsaw Philharmonic programmes by *Iberia*, *Images*, and two series of *Nocturnes*. There was a wider selection of works by Maurice Ravel (*Valses nobles et sentimentales*, *Suite No. 2* from *Daphnis et Chloé*, *Bolero*, *La Valse*, *Piano Concerto in G Major*, and *Trois ballades de François Villon*). The colouristically rich and varied works from the early modernist stage (e.g. Respighi's *Pini di Roma*) and neofolkloristic pieces (e.g. de Falla's *Suite* from *El amor brujo*, Enescu's *Romanian Rhapsodies*, Janaček's *Sinfonietta*, and Casella's *Italia, Rhapsody for Orchestra*) – were much less numerous in Wodiczko's programmes than compositions from the second stage of pre-WWII modernism (the 1920s and 30s), mostly neo-Classical, with individual technical solutions. Wodiczko demonstrated the entire range of the significance of this trend, but concentrated on its mature and final stages. The Parisian neo-Classicism was represented in his Warsaw concerts by several compositions from Les Six: Milhaud (*La création du monde*, *Concertino de printemps*), Poulenc (*Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*), with special focus on the late Honegger (*Symphony No. 5 "Di tre re"*, *King David*). Also regularly present in the programmes was the music of Bohuslav Martinů, who drew on the Parisian neo-Classicalists. Late neo-Classicism was represented by Frank Martin (from the last stage of his work: *In terra pax*, *Golgotha*, *Petite symphonie concertante* for harp, harpsichord, piano and 2 string orchestras) and by Alfredo Casella (*Concerto romano*). As

a counterbalance to the Parisian school of neo-Classicism, Wodiczko presented (for the first time in Poland) music by La Jeune France composers: Jolivet (*Concerto for Ondes Martenot and Orchestra*), Messiaen (two of his large-scale works: *L'Ascension* and the *Trois petites liturgies de la présence divine*, featuring ondes Martenot and solo piano, as well as Wodiczko's 'evergreen' – *Les offrandes oubliées*, performed as *A Symphonic Fragment*). The music of Albert Roussel represented a different aesthetic and technical direction as well as a different type of sound. Wodiczko also demonstrated considerable interest in the German neo-Classicism (Hindemith's suite from the ballet *Nobilissima vision*, Orff's *Carmina burana* and *Catulli carmina*, Blacher's *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*). Britten's oeuvre was represented by only a few pieces (*Four Sea Interludes* from *Peter Grimes*, *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell*, *Scottish Ballad* for two pianos and orchestra). Russian works had a special place in this survey of 20th-century music: Scriabin's *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire*, Stravinsky, Prokofiev's early and mature compositions (*Scythian Suite*, *Piano Concertos Nos. 2 and 3*, *Violin Concerto No. 2*), Shostakovich (*Symphonies Nos. 9 and 10*, *Piano Concerto No. 2*), and Khachaturian (*Piano Concerto*). Wodiczko also made up for the insufficient presence of the giant of 20th-century music – Béla Bartók – in Polish concert repertoires, by introducing such works as *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, *Divertimento* for string orchestra, *Piano Concerto No. 3*, *Concerto for Orchestra*, *Hungarian Sketches*, and *Cantata profana* (Polish premiere). Kodály, on the other hand, was only represented by one work: *Variations on a Hungarian Folk Song "The Peacock"*. Of the output of the Viennese dodecaphonists, only very few works were performed (including Berg's *Violin Concerto "To the Memory of an Angel"*), though Wodiczko did promote twelve-note neo-Classical pieces by Casella and Martin. A separate chapter in Wodiczko's programmes was dedicated to works drawing on popular music: Gershwin's *An American in Paris* and *Blue Rhapsody*, Liebermann's *Concerto for Basler Trommel and Orchestra* and *Concerto for Big Band and Orchestra*, as well as Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto* with its film-like type of expression.

Polish compositions featured less prominently in Wodiczko's programmes (apart from the world and Polish premieres mentioned above), even though in that period Polish composers were already beginning to turn toward dodecaphony and sonorism. The Polish compositions selected by Wodiczko included Szymanowski's flagship

37 The atmosphere in the Warsaw Philharmonic Concert Hall during this performance is reflected in Witold Małcużyński's letter to Zygmunt Mycielski of 13th March 1958 (manuscript in the Special Collection of the National Library of Poland, shelf mark III 14381): "It was a shock like no other that I had experienced before in my life. First of all, I am overwhelmed by the inexhaustible power of this nation, by its stamina, enthusiasm and vitality, which no one is likely to suppress." Cf. M. Klubiński, ed. (2016). *Listy Witolda Małcużyńskiego do Zygmunta Mycielskiego (wybór)*, *Ruch Muzyczny*, No. 3, p. 30.

works (*Symphony No. 3 "Song of the Night"*, *Violin Concerto No. 1*, *Harnasie*, *Stabat Mater*, *Litany to the Virgin Mary*), Witold Lutosławski's prewar (*Symphonic Variations*) and neo-folkloristic (*Concerto for Orchestra*) pieces, Malawski's highlights (premieres of *Symphony No. 2* and *Hungaria 1956*, as well as *Overture* and *The Peaks*), Kassern's *Concerto for Voice and Orchestra* (looking back to the aesthetics of the Young Poland), Perkowski's *Nocturne*, as well as other works by members of the Association of Young Polish Musicians in Paris; Grażyna Bacewicz's *Symphony No. 3*, Michał Spisak's *Toccata* for orchestra and *Serenade* for orchestra, and Bolesław Szabelski's *Concertino* for piano and orchestra.

THE WARSAW AUTUMN

The programme of the inaugural concert of the 1st International Festival of Contemporary Music, held on 10th October 1956 at Warsaw Philharmonic, had a symbolic significance. The Festival was also an opening up to the presentation of the Polish school of composition. On that evening, the audience heard two pieces of sacred music: *Les offrandes oubliées*³⁸ by Olivier Messiaen (a composer who caused a sensation in Poland) and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* (foreshadowing all the modern transformations in Polish music), as well as Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 10* (which reminded the audience that the period of socialist realism in Polish music had been closed once and for all). The programme of the first Festival edition featured music by, among others, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Bartók, Janaček, Honegger, Dutilleux, Berg, Spisak, Szabelski, Perkowski, Woytowicz, Turski, Malawski, Kilar, Baird, Serocki, and Dobrowolski. This proves that Bohdan Wodiczko was one of the very first to reflect the spirit of the place and time, as aptly defined by Zygmunt Mycielski in his review of the 2nd edition of the Festival in 1958:

The world splits and reunites, mixes and clashes, not only politically, but also culturally. This is a process (...) hard to follow closely and remain up to date with. The place we are in – Warsaw – should help us (...) find a proper perspective on these matters, in the context of our presentations of contemporary European music, which continues a thousand-year-old tradition.³⁹

38 At Cracow Philharmonic in 1953, the conductor still had to change its title to *Symphonic Fragments*.

39 Z. Mycielski, (1958). [Review of the 2nd Warsaw Autumn], *Przegląd Kulturalny*, 2nd Oct. 1958, reprinted in: T. Marek, ed. (1959). Programme of the 3rd Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music (12th-20th Sept. 1959), ed. T. Marek, Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, p. 126.

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