



55th INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC
“WARSAW AUTUMN” 21–29 September 2012

The 55th “Warsaw Autumn” International Festival of Contemporary Music (21–29 September 2012) is titled “Warsaw Autumn... with a voice”. That slogan alludes to music that uses text, stage action, and meaning. In other words, opera? Opera too, but as a special case. This year’s festival will often feature an implicit text; a stage action that is merely suggested; an ambiguous meaning. Voice – in the sense of voicing one’s opinion, only then followed by voice as singing.

The programme, therefore, includes a variety of instrumental ‘spoken’ works, such as Jonathan Harvey’s *Speakings* for orchestra and electronics, a work in which the composer shapes the instrumental sound based on a spectral analysis of the human spoken voice, or Mauricio Kagel’s *Ein Brief*, where we only hear the opening expression (“Meine Liebe”) from the eponymous (love) letter, after which the soloist sings some very expressive music but with no words at all, although the latter’s presence can be felt. Similarly, American composer and vocalist Ken Ueno’s *On a Sufficient Condition for the Existence of Most Specific Hypothesis* for overtone singing and orchestra does without words, but alluding to a child’s singing, more specifically Ueno himself aged six, whose voice can be heard at the work’s beginning, aired from a boombox. Also Kryštof Mařatka’s *Zvěrohra*, a “collection of anthropoid songs” (as per the composer’s description), is a good example of this approach to music. “The piece evokes primitive vocal expressions of the first hominids that, apart from their gestures, begin to discover other possibilities of communication: a complex whole of vocal sounds to which they assign concrete meanings” (from the composer’s commentary).

The above notion of ‘allusion’, familiar from the work of Gombrowicz, leads to a special occasion of this year’s festival: the quasi-opera *Geschichte* based on Gombrowicz’s play under the same title. The work, composed by Oscar Strasnoy, is scored exclusively for singers: in this case the Neue Vocalsolisten ensemble from Stuttgart which will return to Warsaw for the occasion.

The idea of this year’s festival is also connected to the various ways in which music links to non-musical means of expression. Apart from *Geschichte*, we will present the first Polish performance of Georges Aperghis’ *Luna Park* for voice, contrabass flute, percussion and computer (a work co-commissioned by Paris’ IRCAM and Warsaw Autumn). The European Workshop for Contemporary Music will also present a music theatre concert featuring first world performances, commissioned by Warsaw Autumn with Jagoda Szmytka, by Polish Radio Channel 2 with Artur Zagajewski, and a new version of *Vivarium* by Manos Tsangaris, pupil of the creator of instrumental theatre as a genre, Mauricio Kagel. The Petrini–Jünger duo (contrabass flutes) will give the first world performances of works by Kent Olofsson, Pierre Jodlowski and Aleksandra Gryka. These will be multimedia works scored for low-register flutes, electronic sounds and video. The Camerata Silesia singers’ ensemble will present Paweł Szymański’s *Phylakterion*, a work performed in Greek that can be termed a musical praying ritual, inspired by early Christian writings uncovered at archeological excavations in southern

Egypt. This concert, which will take place at the Evangelical Reformed Church, will also feature choral works by Krzysztof Baculewski, Anna Korsun (Ukraine) and Justė Janulytė (Lithuania).

One of the festival's main events, relating to our central programme idea, will be *Inori*, a composition for dancers (or mimes) and orchestra (in a version for dancer and tape). Written by Karlheinz Stockhausen, the work features a number of gestures (prayers, rituals) borrowed from many world cultures closely synchronised with sounds and, in a way, visualising the musical flow. Our soloist for this occasion will be also the very demanding work's producer, Agnieszka Kuś.

For the first time, Warsaw Autumn will feature a duo of eminent young musicians: Maciej Frąckiewicz (accordion) and Magdalena Bojanowicz (cello). They will present compositions by Adriana Hölszky and Matthias Pintscher as well as talented young composer Wojciech Blecharz (another Warsaw Autumn debut). This will be the first world performance of a new work, part of a larger opera project on which the composer is currently working. This work, commissioned by Warsaw Autumn, is scored for accordion, cello and solo voice, the latter performed by leading mezzo-soprano Anna Radziejowska. In the second part of the concert, Ms. Radziejowska together with the Aukso orchestra will perform Salvatore Sciarrino's *Cantiere del poema*, a work composed and dedicated expressly to this singer. Sciarrino is one of Italy's leading composers, renowned for his vocal-instrumental works and operas.

On the 100th anniversary of Arnold Schoenberg's composition of the dramatic concert cycle *Pierrot lunaire*, the masterpiece of musical expressionism, Warsaw Autumn will feature a project including a performance of Schoenberg's classic by the New Music Orchestra directed by Szymon Bywalec as well as an artistic commentary to that work in the form of a new composition by Maciej Jabłoński: *Księżycowy Pierrot* [Lunar Pierrot] for actor, instrumental ensemble, electronic sounds and video, commissioned by Warsaw Autumn. The solo *Sprechgesang* part in Schoenberg's work will be performed by Agata Zubeł. *Pierrot lunaire* will serve as the historical context for a number of works referring to this year's festival's main slogan: "Warsaw Autumn... with voice". Let me mention that our final concert will feature Matthias Pintscher's *Herodiade-Fragmente*, also inspired by Schoenberg's work.

The human voice will also feature in two concerts that can unanimously be mentioned as one of this year's festival's major events: one played by the Experimental-Studio Freiburg, and the other by Ensemble Intercontemporain from Paris. Freiburg's renowned electronic music studio will present works scored for voices, instruments and electronic sounds: Luigi Nono's *Guai ai gelidi mostri*, works by Chaya Czernowin and Mark André, as well as the first world performance of a new composition by Jamilia Jazyzbekova. The Ensemble Intercontemporain, one of the leading chamber orchestras performing contemporary music, will be directed by Patrick Davin in two compositions by György Kurtág: *4 Capriccios* Op. 9 and *Four Poems* by Anna Akhmatova Op. 41 (sung by soprano Natalya Zagorinskaya), as well as three first performances of works by Polish composers Tadeusz Wielecki, Stanisław Bromboszcz and Lidia Zielińska (the latter two commissioned by Warsaw Autumn).

Other symphonic concerts, apart from the opening concert featuring the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Poland directed by eminent French conductor Pascal Rophé, and the final concert played by the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra in

Katowice under the charismatic Lucas Vis, will include another performance by the National Philharmonic, this time under the baton of young talented conductor Rafał Janiak. These concerts, apart from the aforementioned works by Harvey, Kagel, Mařatka, Ken Ueno and Matthias Pintscher, will also feature the *Pittsburgh Overture* by Krzysztof Penderecki (first Polish performance), Dutch composer Rosalie Hirs' *Roseherte* for orchestra and electronic sounds, Witold Szalonek's *Concerto per violbasso e orchestra*, and Kaija Saariaho's *D'om le vrai sens* (featuring Finnish clarinet virtuoso Kari Kriikku).

We will also continue Little Warsaw Autumn, our contemporary music festival for children. Among other activities, we will present *Federico's Little Songs for Children* by George Crumb, a cycle of seven short pieces for soprano, flute and harp to poems by Federico Garcıa Lorca, and *Cinq ętudes de bruits* by electronic music pioneer Pierre Schaeffer: the first works ever written for tape (in 1948) and, as such, an outstanding example of *musique concręte*. Moreover, an interactive installation *Dźwiękořwisty* by Łukasz Szalankiewicz will be open at the Zachęta Gallery throughout the festival. On a Warsaw Autumn commission, composer Jerzy Kornowicz will also perform a musical promenade / open-air composition at the Łazienki park. Dagna Sadkowska and Michał Górczyński will run a workshop for children (and partly for parents); these creative musicians will present, among others, beatboxing animals and musical cuisines of the world.

Tadeusz Wielecki
Festival Director