**11th Festival of Contemporary Music for Children ‘Little Warsaw Autumn’**

**17–26 September 2021**

In 2021, Little Warsaw Autumn becomes a teenager. Eleven is an age when the child is fully immersed in humanity. It is conscious both of its presence and of all the consequences and values of being a child, slowly becoming an adult. At the same time, it is a moment in life when amongst intellectual processes, critical thinking becomes particularly important.

This year’s Warsaw Autumn is a more critical teenager, hesitating between two major approaches to music: on the one hand as an aesthetic experiment, pure pleasure of immersing in sounds, timbres, musical structures, emotions and sheer musical action triggered by those emotions, and on the other hand, its social role and vocation. It will also perform its first autoanalysis, based on its experience of being a child, working with the youngest audiences in the context of contemporary music. It will look closely at the issues of childhood, but it will primarily—as always—invite you to play with sounds, experiment, and experience music from a purely aesthetic point of view.

In 2021, Little Warsaw Autumn will focus variously on what it stems for: the premises of the Festival’s main thread. Addressing the motif of immersing the listener in art, we shall invite our youngest audiences—but also the somewhat more aged—to a fuller sensual reception of art: listening–watching, i.e. the simultaneous perception of music and image. Our premiere installation *Lightsound (Neon Ninths)* by **Mirosław Filonik** and **Tadeusz Sudnik**, presented at the Warsaw Praga Museum, will immerse watchers–listeners in a geometry of stellar constellations, in which—just as in music—imaginary distances (virtual lines) are crucial, traced between stellar points through perspective. Who did not marvel at the night sky peppered with bright stars as a child? And can the visual distances between those stars be “measured” with sound intervals? This remote image symbolises an inaccessible spacetime, metaphorically expressed by the lights installation of Mirosław Filonik, while the music of Tadeusz Sudnik will help immerse in it.

Little Warsaw Autumn will show its critical face at the premiere performance entitled *Music Lesson*, authored by young artists **Anna Szwajgier** and **Horacy Muszyński**. Through an experimental combination of performative action and sound sphere, this works tackles the place of real issues and topics particularly important in childhood: school. At the Nowy Świat Muzyki space, we shall participate in a special lesson: perhaps not just of music but also relations, social life, expressing emotions, being together, collective action? And while this action takes place, we shall again and anew ponder over the role of music in society, its power of shaping the human character and building society. The role of modern music in the growth of young children will the topic of a special online panel, *Mozart effect or Szymański effect? Small Children and Contemporary Classical Music*, featuring educators, animators, music teachers, and composers.

By linking directly with the main thread of Warsaw Autumn, Little Warsaw Autumn will for the first time feature present in such a focused way the alternative creative faces of the Festival’s main protagonists: Polish composers. “Alternative” here means “leading composers of contemporary music” as authors of children’s miniatures, writers of music for the most demanding audience. Thus monumental, “serious” music at our evening and night events of the Festival’s main thread will be juxtaposed with witty, light, “ingenuous” music at children’s concerts. We shall compare and contrast this at concerts at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art (*Plushies*) and at the seat of Sinfonia Varsovia (*Bazylek at Warsaw Autumn*). The former will not so much allow our young audience to see and touch their favourite toys but find out what is a “musical fluffy.” During the latter concert, we shall accompany Basil—a now-famous fluffy, created during the pandemic and inseparable from the Sinfonia Varsovia orchestra ever since—in learning about the Warsaw Autumn Festival and find out for ourselves what contemporary music really is.

The above-mentioned protagonists of Little Warsaw Autumn, composers borrowed from the “Big” one, shall include Polish composers **Wojciech Błażejczyk, Krzysztof Knittel, Elżbieta Sikora, Lidia Zielińska, Tadeusz Wielecki, Agata Zubel**, and **Wojciech Ziemowit Zych.** Our young audiences will also familiarise themselves with the works of international composers such as **Salvatore Sciarrino**.

This year’s Little Warsaw Autumn invites you to venues symmetrically spread over the two banks of the Vistula rivers. In the Praga district, we shall be present at the Warsaw Praga Museum on Targowa Street (Praga North) and at the seat of the Sinfonia Varsovia at Grochowska Street (Praga South). We shall visit for the first time Nowy Świat Muzyki, on the river’s other bank.

In terms of instruments, Little Warsaw Autumn this year is dominated by the voice, piano, flute, and percussion. Performers include notably **Dorota Miśkiewicz, Joanna Freszel**, the **Kwadrofonik** ensemble**, Adam Kośmieja**, and musicians of the **Sinfonia Varsovia** orchestra**: Andrzej Krzyżanowski** and **Karol Krasiński**. Selected events and concerts will be chaired by favourite animators **Anna Szawiel** and **Malina Sarnowska**, the latter with the support of actors and animators **Aneta Jucejko-Pałęcka** and **Wojciech Pałęcki**. The 11th Little Warsaw Autumn will feature 11 premieres of works by Polish composers, including eight first performances and two first Polish performances.

All Little Warsaw Autumn events will take place live at concert halls with audience participation, and will additionally be recorded and made available on the Festival’s website.

*Anna Kierkosz*

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