

Justyna Ball from 2

amounts of money. What they actually want is a sum to cover medical expenses and provide social aid to elderly victims. As Władysław Bartoszewski commented that although he never took nor ever will take any money from Germans, he suggested that the group should do what he did once before - hire Jewish lawyers from NYC and give it more international attention by including Jewish victims amongst others. Back then he demanded monetary compensation for forced laborers. And it worked!

No matter what conclusion they will agree to, the Polish railroads are getting a face lift due to the upcoming Euro 2012. Construction of stadiums is under control, and the check-up visit by the UEFA representative went smoothly.

The Euro skeptic, Magdalena Środa, predicts that the stadiums will only serve for the event and after that will stay empty. However, she does not understate that stadiums not only serve a sport event, but with good management, can cover concerts and other shows. Even now with the lack of such, Poland can attract foreigners who will travel from neighboring countries for a good concert.

Well, of course for Środa, any money that isn't spent on the "equality parade" (used to be known as the 'gay parade') or an anti-Catholic happening is not worth spending.

Back when the first shopping malls opened, many wondered who will shop there - not the average Poles for sure, since they have no money. Now not only are the malls still there, they are full and more pop up every day... There was a time when indoor tennis courts multiplied, thanks to the achievements of major tennis players, Magda Dmochowska and Agnieszka Radwańska. More public swimming pools opened, one after another, due to the success of Otylia Jędrzejczak and Paweł Korzeniowski. We also heard stories about how some young lovers misunderstood the purpose of a jacuzzi and had to be reminded of what not to do while in there... The promotional fees for public pools were so low that it happened that at some facilities Gypsy families, with 12 kids in tow showed up. It was cheaper than using water at home!

I was actually glad (unlike residents of Warsaw) that the city so far had only one metro line. I always get lost in the metro system elsewhere, but Warsaw's is easy.

In general, people are more positive, in contrast to how they used to feel.

Since the smoking ban, while driving in Warsaw, you see funny scenes like a small crowd of office clerks squeezed onto balconies, in the freezing cold puffing down to the last precious minute of their break time... of course they do not realize how silly they look to the people on the street below. The balconies are solid, but to have even several people elbow to elbow, shivering without their coats, seems ridiculous.

Of course, the debate became a daily topic. Because many publicists and celebrities smoke - they are the loudest opponents of the smoking ban. Chief Editor of "Przekrój," Piotr Najtusz argued that marriages will break up. Restaurants will close. But his arguments totally lost aspects of logic... None of the predictions happened in the US or other places in Europe. Smoking actually decreased 15-20%. It became very unfashionable.

(At the Schiphol airport in Amsterdam, the smokers are squeezed into a "fish tank" the size of an average closet. I guess for the entertainment of others...). If you can stay away from your smokes for an hour and a half I can recommend you see a play... On each visit to Warsaw, I promised myself to see one. This time, "Chopin in America" was our choice, not only because it is the Year of Chopin but because I wanted to support young artists, so they won't go job hunting in, let's say,

Great Britain. The play was performed by senior year students of Collegium Nobillum Theatre on Miodowa St. And what a performance that was!

The plot was based on an unknown fact from the composer's life that at some point Chopin, while in Paris, was so much in debt that he actually wanted to immigrate to America. He supposedly even purchased the ticket, but what stopped him was a dinner at Rothschilds' where he met an influential crowd, received job offers and life became easier and the future suddenly seemed brighter. The authors speculated on what would have happened if he continued with his original plan and actually came to the land of opportunity. It was extremely well done and funny, as different ethnic groups in America claimed to own the great composer. The music was splendid and the show magnificent although the actors on the stage (all 21 of them) often outnumbered the people in the audience due to the fact that the play was not widely advertised. What a shame!

One of the authors, Stanisław Dygat used to live across the street from me. His eccentric wife, famous actress Kalina Jędrusik, the Polish scandalous, bombshell of the 60s... often walked her cats down Krasiński St, my street... Jędrusik wearing bright long dresses in psychedelic prints, huge platform shoes and her cats, oddly enough, in suspenders.

Chopin is visible throughout the city and his music live, emanating from ... benches along the Royal Route. I mean - you just press the "play" button, and the bench will play a mazurka or polonaise. What a better way to wait for the bus?

This year not only marks Chopin's 200 year birthday, but it's also the presidential election year.

Of interest might be the fact that one of the candidates is Radek Sikorski, (he swears to change his name to Radosław, if he becomes president) the present Minister of Foreign Affairs in Tusk's administration.

He is intelligent, popular, tempered but may eventually restrain himself ...when he truly understands his role... Many Poles don't mind having their president young, fluent English speaking, and Oxford-educated with connections. Compared to Lech Kaczyński who cannot even exchange a simple "hello" at photo opportunities. That would be quite a change... Speaking of Sikorski as president makes his wife, Anne Applebaum a potential future First Lady. Yale graduate, Pulitzer Prize winner, the author of "Gulag: The History," the Washington Post correspondent ...etc... may open a whole new chapter in Poland / US relations...

Whatever happens after the elections, one thing is for sure, Poland is on the right track. It also attracts more and more foreigners, Americans among them...Our son has no problem finding other Americans or Canadians to play hockey with. And he constantly complains on lack of time! Attractions, especially for the younger generation are endless...

Last Friday we saw a free showing of a documentary about Sidney Poitier (followed by the movie) at Zamek Ujazdowski to celebrate Black History Month. A restaurant and museum are on site.

We only saw a glimpse of Warsaw life. We were trying to concentrate on our family but I can tell that the energy is there now, Europe's top secret is out now and everybody wants to be part of it!

As my rose petal jams were confiscated at the airport. My American friends won't have a chance to taste the real paczki with their original filling... Darn it - I was so close to bringing our two cultures together! □

Music News from 3

At the height of his success in America and the moment when further commissions were forthcoming, Maciejewski decided to leave California. At first he spent some time on the Canary Islands and then travelled around Europe, visiting Poland and attending the funeral of his mother. The last two decades of Maciejewski's life were spent in Sweden. A chance encounter in a music shop in Gothenburg, where he bought a piano on an impulse, led to his settling there permanently. Maciejewski died in Gothenburg on 30 April 1998 and his ashes were transported for a burial in Leszno, Poland, on 3 June of that year.

Roman Maciejewski composed music throughout his life—his first works date from the late 1920s and his last from around 1990. Maciejewski's musical language was quite eclectic and is best epitomized by his monumental Requiem, where a successful synthesis of different musical styles—from the Baroque to the twentieth century Neo-classicism—testifies to the composer's wide-ranging fascination with a variety of compositional techniques developed throughout the history of music. His writing for orchestra is as skillful as it is rich in highly refined colors and textures. Maciejewski's use of orchestra undoubtedly owes a great deal to the orchestral sound of Debussy and Ravel, especially the latter, whose methods of melodic and motivic development are also evident in the Requiem. On the other hand, Maciejewski's works for piano and orchestra generally belong to the early twentieth century neoclassical style as represented by Stravinsky and Bartok. As a gifted pianist, Maciejewski composed several works for piano and orchestra, works for two pianos, piano transcriptions, and a small but interesting body of chamber music.

Maciejewski's Mazurkas for solo piano are the other important pillar in the catalogue of his works. His first set, Cztery Mazurki [Four Mazurkas], was written in Poland in the late 1920s; he added to them during the 1940s and 1950s in Sweden and the United States, and revisited the genre during the last decades of his life in Sweden. About thirty of Maciejewski's Mazurkas have been published; dozens more remain in manuscript as many of them were left unfinished. Besides the Mazurkas of Chopin and Szymanowski, those by Maciejewski form a significant addition to the piano repertoire inspired by folk music in Poland. In his Mazurkas Maciejewski builds upon the legacy of Chopin and Szymanowski, creating an expressive style and language very much of his own.

Maciejewski's activities as choral director in Los Angeles naturally led to several choral works, both secular and religious, a cappella and with organ accompaniment. Still another aspect of his wide-ranging interests blossomed during his stay in Sweden, when Maciejewski met Ingmar Bergman. This chance encounter led Maciejewski to compose stage music for several of Bergman's productions during the 1940s, including Camus' Caligula and Macbeth.

With such a rich and varied catalogue of compositions, one can only speculate on the reasons for their absence from the concert repertoire. Some blame could be assigned to the composer, who rarely sought the spotlight and did not actively pursue performance opportunities for his music. Maciejewski was a prolific composer who definitely had a lot to say in his works, but his bursts of creative activity were at times followed by long periods away from music. His intellectual restlessness and curiosity led him on occasion to pursue projects only to abandon them later. His Requiem was a great exception in his *modus operandi*—for with this work, Maciejewski wholeheartedly invested his artistic credo

and fifteen years of his life. His pacing of work was consistently, even stubbornly, independent of all kinds of constraints and deadlines, and Maciejewski habitually returned to compositions already finished in order to revise and refine them. Often—as is the case with several of his Mazurkas—several alternate versions exist and the chronology of their evolution is now impossible to establish. For most of his life Maciejewski composed for his own pleasure and only towards the end of his life he reluctantly entrusted a desk full of manuscripts to his brother, Wojciech. Sorting through over one hundred compositions (apparently several others were lost) will undoubtedly require many years of dedicated and painstaking work. Given such an extraordinary and unusual talent, and the importance of this composer in the history of modern Polish music, Maciejewski's compositions should be brought to the concert stage in the years to come. Such is, at least, the hope that the one hundredth anniversary of Maciejewski's birth brings about this year.

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One such celebration took place at Westminster Cathedral on February 4, with the UK premiere of Maciejewski's monumental Requiem - Missa pro defunctis. The BBC Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Singers and the BBC Symphony Chorus combined forces with conductor Michał Dworzyński and soloists Olga Pasichnyk (soprano), Agnieszka Rehlis (mezzo-soprano), Aleš Briscoin (tenor), and Tomasz Konieczny bass. This concert is supported by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute and is part of Polska! Year. It will be broadcast on the BBC Radio 3. □

Dare we Forget from 4

WALDEMAR OCIEPSKI who does not want to forget WWII and does not want you to forget it neither can be obtained on the INTERNET and from the local journal MAGAZYN of the Kedzierzyn-Koźle area which is where we verified much of our information.

The person who cannot forget WWII is a retired information specialist from the Hollywood area **Eugene Kapaloski**, whose older brother Lieutenant Edward Kapaloski was a co-pilot on many missions with the 15th Air Force, 485th Bomb Group. Returning from a mission to bomb Linz, Austria, his bomber either developed engine problems or, it may be assumed, was shot down and the plane and crew were never found. Requiescat in pace! □

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