
Responses to Martial Law: Glimpses of Poland's Musical Life in the 1980s

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The intellectual and creative communities in Poland headed into the 1980s guardedly optimistic, thanks to the emergence of the Solidarity labor movement, the growth of the publishing world's *drugi obieg* [second circulation] and the development of the so-called Flying University courses during the latter part of the 1970s (The Independent Press in Poland, 1976–1990; Jas-trzębski and Krysiak 1993: 470–73; Fik 1989: 611). Warmer relationships with the Catholic Church had resulted in the introduction in 1975 of annual Weeks of Christian Culture. These series of lectures, poetry readings, theatrical performances, and concerts had begun in Warsaw and spread to other cities and towns in subsequent years (Tracz 2009: 4; Fik 1989: 560, 578, 594, 616, 634, 645, 759; Niewęglowski). All of these activities had taken place without governmental support or approval.

Polish composers were not immune either to the spirit of the times or to a history of harassment by the government. For example, in 1975, the Ministry of Culture and Art had briefly considered halting its support for electronic music and *musique concrète*, even though such compositional techniques had existed in Poland for nearly twenty years (Stęszewski 1995: 115–116; Tejchma 1991: 97–98). Composers had sometimes been refused passports for international travel and performances of their compositions had often been subject to approval by either the Ministry or local Party organizations (Kisielewski 1996: 935, 940–944; Stęszewski 1995: 115, 119, 130; Ćwik-

liński and Ziarno 1993: 140–42). Most musicians expected these and other forms of censorship and harassment to occur again in the future, unless the Polish United Workers Party (the Communist Party) either made significant changes to its cultural policies or was removed from power.

In September 1980, the Composers Union publicly voiced its opposition to the Communist system—perhaps for the first time since 1956 – when its Executive Board issued a resolution voicing support for the Polish Association of Artists and Designers, which was actively defending the striking workers in Gdańsk.¹ Within the next year, the Union passed at least two other resolutions, one responding to Solidarity’s official government registration and the second siding with intellectuals who opposed the government. During the same period, the Ministry of Culture and Art permitted Roman Palester to be re-admitted to the Composers Union, decades after his voluntary exile and subsequent dismissal from the professional society. Several concerts in support of Solidarity were held, with leading performers and composers participating. Musicologist Andrzej Chodkowski and composer Edward Pałłasz attended the Solidarity congress held in Gdańsk, while musicologist Józef Patkowski worked extensively with Solidarity’s Coordinating Committee of Creative and Scientific Associations. The 25th Warsaw Autumn Festival in September 1981 was reviewed in such newly established, uncensored newspapers as *Trybuna Robotnicza* [Workers Tribune], *Kurier Polski* [Polish Courier] and *Trybuna Mazowiecka* [Mazowiecka Tribune].² The future looked promising for Polish musical life.

This period of optimism proved to be short-lived. Polish composers, along with their entire country, were shocked by the implementation of martial law on December 13, 1981. The Composers Union was forced to suspend operations, universities and theaters were closed, nearly all newspapers ceased publishing, and meetings were forbidden. *Ruch Muzyczny*, the bi-weekly pub-

¹ In November 1956 the Polish Composers Union sent a telegram to the Hungarian Composers Union expressing its opposition to the tragic events that had occurred there recently and its solidarity with that country’s fight for freedom. See: *50 lat Związku Kompozytorów Polskich* 1995: 79; *Biuletyn Informacyjny Związku Kompozytorów Polskich* 1981.

² See *50 lat Związku Kompozytorów Polskich* 1995: 134, 137, 147; Fik 1989: 662, 683, 728, 764; Malinowski 1981: 11–12; Szczepańska-Malinowska 1981: 12; Kaczyński 1981: 2; Chodkowski 1995: 171; Skórzyński and Pernal 2005: 76, 78; Brzeźniak 1981; Fuks 1981; Swolkień 1981.

lication that provided the only glimpse into Poland's classical musical life, was among those discontinuing operations. Approximately 800 people employed in the cultural arena, including the media, lost their jobs in the aftermath of the military crackdown (Patkowski 1995: 149–150, 172; Paczkowski 2003: 456, 488).

Once martial law restrictions were lifted, the government was determined to continue operating as it had in the 1970s and even earlier. The Ministry of Culture and Art was to remain the sole patron of the arts, dispensing nearly all necessary funds and expecting artistic unions and ensembles to follow its dictates. Composers and performers had to answer the rhetorical question 'Will we be satisfied with this?'

Limited resistance to governmental restrictions on composers and performers had occurred throughout the history of post-World War II Poland, and, indeed, Polish contemporary music had gained considerable international fame during that time. However, inspired by the political gains made by Solidarity, professional musicians reacted differently in the 1980s than they had in previous decades. No longer were they willing to continue their low-key manner of voicing opposition that had been prevalent in the past, when many of them may have expressed anti-government opinions in private gatherings, but opted to work within existing governmental constraints to effect change. The framework of artistic expression that had been created by Solidarity's short-lived period of legal activity now empowered them to pursue less conservative means of opposition (Filipowicz 1982: 18).

Individual reactions varied in response to the renewed or, in some cases, continued governmental restrictions, but as a group, musicians were bolder and more willing to place their own careers in jeopardy than they had been previously. Organizers and participants alike were propelled by a shared opposition to the status quo as well as a renewed awareness of the importance of national traditions. Participation in clandestine musical activities increased. Musicians were not so naive as to think that these actions would result in a dismantling of the current system, but they did want to press the authorities into reducing the many restrictions that haunted musical life. At the same

time, these actions offered a creative outlet for both participants and audiences.

Although some musicians chose to be active in either official or unofficial events, others appeared in both spheres. This differed to some degree from the literary and journalistic world, where certain writers refused to work for official, censored publications and approximately one-third of the journalists left their official positions (Smolar 1991: 193–195). Although not every musician participated actively in unofficial events, each almost certainly supported them.

A glimpse into the classical musical world of the mid-1980s can be obtained by comparing the annual government sanctioned Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music with the unofficial concerts of patriotic songs and readings presented under the guise of the Traugutt Philharmonia beginning in 1983. The public image of the Warsaw Autumn Festival consistently reflected the event's advantages, which included international exposure for Polish composers and the opportunity for Polish audiences to hear a wide range of contemporary compositions.³ Behind the scenes, however, objectionable maneuvers by various governmental entities had occurred annually since the Festival's inception in 1956. Its programs had been subjected to restrictions that would not have occurred had the event not been situated in post-World War II Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the Festival's Repertoire Committee, composed of Composers Union members, persisted in its attempts to present the finest performers and compositions, regardless of what country the musicians came from and in what favor they were held by their home countries.⁴ Following the imposition of martial law, as will be shown below, the Committee went a step further by placing an anti-government stamp on its programs.

Several examples from the 1970s illustrate the way the Repertoire Committee had been stymied in its programming efforts prior to the onset of martial law. In 1972 and again in 1973, the Committee had asked Mstislav Rostropovich to perform Lutosławski's *Cello Concerto*, but the cellist never re-

³ See, for example, *erg*, 'Warszawska Jesień' 1984: 1, 5; *Gojowy* 1985: 36–37.

⁴ For a broader discussion of the Festival's organizational challenges, see *Bylander* 1989.

ceived permission from the Soviet Union to participate. The work was eventually performed in 1973 by Heinrich Schiff. A year earlier, the Repertoire Committee had to withdraw a work by Edison Denisov due to pressure from the Soviet Composers Union. Instead, it was compelled to program Khrennikov's *Second Piano Concerto* and Khachaturian's *Second Symphony*. The latter piece replaced scheduled works by Jan Rääts, Herman Galynin, Sergei Balasarian and Lew Knipper. In protest, the members of the Repertoire Committee refused to have their names printed in that year's program book, as was the usual practice. They also evaded the censors by presenting a composition by Denisov under his wife's name, Gala Wawarin, as part of Warsztat Muzyczny's *Enyklopedia*, a set of 15 short pieces (Interview with Zygmunt Krauze 1985; Rozkosz 1972: 2; Pisarenko 2007: 19–21; Kański 1973: 5; Sierpiński 1973: 7; 16th *Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music* 1972; Pisarenko 1995: 188). Remarkably, Denisov's music had been performed as recently as 1969 and would be again in 1973, which made these 1972 complications seemingly inexplicable.⁵ In 1979, Soviet keyboardist Aleksiej Lubimov did not appear as scheduled, resulting in the cancellation of Pärt's *Trivium* and Silvestrov's *Second Piano Sonata* (Interview with Marek Stachowski 1986; 23rd *Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music* 1979). As recently as 1981, during Solidarity's period of legal operation, the organizers had expected to greet the Tbilisi Symphony Orchestra at the airport, but the Moscow State Conservatory Orchestra disembarked instead (Baculewski 2007: 25). Polish audiences frequently reflected their displeasure with the Communist system by boycotting concerts presented by Soviet performers (Pisarenko 2007: 21, 24).

Shortly after martial law was declared, the Composers Union office was allowed to re-open on a limited basis. The Festival's Repertoire Committee, however, was not permitted to function. In March 1982, the Union was fully reactivated, although other artists' and writers' unions remained suspended or were disbanded. In the minds of many Composers Union members, the motive for their organization's reactivation was clear. The Ministry of Cul-

⁵ For a summary of Denisov's relationship with Soviet authorities in the 1970s, see Kholopov and Tsenova 1995: 23–25.

ture and Art wanted the 1982 Festival to occur as a signal to the world that normal conditions prevailed in Poland, despite the fact that martial law was still in effect and people arrested during the crackdown were still imprisoned. This was unacceptable to the Union. In April 1982, its Executive Board voted to cancel the Festival for that year, declaring that it 'could not have a ball in a cemetery,' although the compulsory delay in organizational efforts also played a role in its decision (Paczkowski 2003: 471; Patkowski 1995: 150–152; Curry 1984: 432–433).

Precedence existed for the Ministry's desire to portray Poland's culture in a positive light. Following a performance of Penderecki's *Cosmogony* in the early 1970s, the composer had knelt before Cardinal Wyszyński to kiss his ring. For lesser known composers, this might have brought reprisals, but Wincenty Kraśko, the director of the Central Committee's Culture Department, declared that Penderecki's international fame precluded such antagonistic activity (see Paczkowski 2003: 396 and 'Kto to jest Wincenty Kraśko'). Several Composers Union members have also alluded to the government's use of music as a propaganda tool during the Communist era (Meyer 1995: 159; Pisarenko 1995: 186; Gwizdalanka 1989: 10).

Martial law ended in July 1983. The Festival occurred that year, though organizational efforts were impeded in part by a ban on international phone calls until January of that year. All international cultural agreements had been cancelled in March 1982, which further complicated the Repertoire Committee's work (Patkowski 1995: 153; Słowiński, 1995: 111). During the mid-1980s, the Committee's efforts continued to be hindered by governmental maneuvering. One of the most well-known stories of censorship involved Arvo Pärt, who had emigrated from the Soviet republic of Estonia to the West in 1980. Due to pressure from the Soviet Union, his compositions were not permitted at the Festival again until 1987, or until after Gorbachev had become the leader of the Soviet Communist Party. Pärt's *Fratres* had been scheduled for the 1985 Festival, but was cancelled by the Ministry of Culture and Art, after protests from the Soviet Embassy in Warsaw. It was rescheduled for 1987, and although it was performed that year, the Committee members

had initially expected it to be rescinded (Interview with Marek Stachowski 1987).

Each year, approximately half of each Festival's events were expected to be comprised of works or ensembles from the East bloc or the Soviet Union, while the remainder could be from the West. However, according to Repertoire Committee members, the Ministry's definition of East and West was not applied consistently. For example, a Western ensemble playing a work by an East bloc composer was labeled a 'Western' event but an East-bloc ensemble playing a composition by a Western composer might also be considered a 'Western' event. The Repertoire Committee was required to keep the Ministry of Culture informed of its plans each year, but their efforts were circumvented annually by last-minute decisions regarding East bloc and, especially, Soviet ensembles (Interview with Zygmunt Krauze 1985; Interviews with Marek Stachowski 1986, 1987).

As Olgierd Pisarenko, a Repertoire Committee member, has related, from 1984 to 1988 the Committee had to submit the Festival program for review to two government offices instead of the usual one: the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Censorship Office. This was construed by the Committee as punishment for attempting to program Andrzej Panufnik's *Katyn Epitaph* in 1983, a time when talk of the murder of Polish military officers at Katyn was still forbidden. Also, compositions by Panufnik, who had emigrated in 1954, could not be programmed on the Festival's first or last concerts, although beginning in 1977 they could be heard at other times (Interview with Augustyn Bloch 1986; Pisarenko 2007: 20; Pisarenko 1995: 189).

As late as 1987, restrictions were still in effect. Attempts to bring an Israeli orchestra that year were rebuffed by the Polish government because the same ensemble was already scheduled to perform at the Wratislavia Cantans festival, and two appearances in the same year by an Israeli ensemble were not permitted. Moreover, Warsaw Autumn Festival performances by groups from Israel, a country with which neither Poland nor the Soviet Union had diplomatic relations, were discouraged due to the Festival's broad international exposure. In the end, no Israeli group played at the Wratislavia Cantans, but the Israel Philharmonic gave several concerts in Poland in Novem-

ber of that year (Interview with Marek Stachowski 1987; Interview with Józef Patkowski 1987; 'The Israel Philharmonic To Play in Eastern Bloc' 1987: 22).

Even the more mundane tasks proved difficult to accomplish. For example, scores for Polish works needed to be sent to invited foreign performers every year. This was the task of *Ars Polona* and the Central Score Library. However, because these Ministry of Culture and Art agencies were difficult to deal with and often failed to pay their bills in a timely manner, Western performers frequently corresponded directly with the Warsaw Autumn Festival office to obtain necessary materials. They also often declined to take any payment, saying that the prestige of performing at the Festival was sufficient reimbursement, while implicitly acknowledging the economic and political complications faced by the Repertoire Committee (Interview with Augustyn Bloch 1986; Wróblewski 1983, quoted in 'Muzyka w prasie' 1983: 10). Similarly, obtaining scores from East bloc countries for pieces deemed worthy of Festival presentation was problematic. The almost complete lack of foreign recordings, scores, and books in Polish stores handicapped both Festival preparations and more routine educational efforts. Personal contacts and trips to the East bloc often brought more fruitful results than did the use of official channels, which involved requesting information from the Ministry of Culture and Art, which then submitted the same proposal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in both Poland and the East-bloc countries. Indeed, composers such as Schnittke, Denisov, and Gubaidulina had been discovered by the Repertoire Committee prior to martial law through personal exchanges rather than bureaucratic procedures (Pisarenko 1995: 190).

Despite the obstacles encountered by the Repertoire Committee each year, the Festivals in the 1980s continued to be highly praised in Poland and the West (Kiciński 1984: 1). Nonetheless, the Repertoire Committee felt that it needed to send a two-fold message to both its audiences and its governmental patron. The symbolism evident in the programming of the 1983 and 1984 Festivals reflected a funereal, yet patriotic atmosphere, as if to say that the country, although chagrined by the painful repercussions of martial law, was resilient and proud of its heritage. A distinctly somber tone set the stage at the opening events of the 1983 Festival. The traditional festive display of

flags from the countries represented at the Festival was intentionally omitted (Patkowski 1995: 153; Waldorff 1983; Kydryński 1983: 17). The first concert featured Boulez's *Rituel in memoriam Maderna* and Denisov's *Requiem*, while the late evening concert the same day included Pierre Henry's *Apocalypse according to St. John*. Tadeusz Kaczyński noted in an unpublished review that these ideas of mourning and religion permeated the Festival. At other concerts, works such as Alexander Knaifel's *Lament*, Udo Zimmermann's *Sinfonia come un grande lamento*, Edward Sielecki's *Agnus Dei*, Byron Adams' *Requiem Songs*, Arne Nordheim's *Clamavi* (inspired by texts from Psalm 141), Paweł Buczyński's *Oratio MCMLXXXII*, and Dimitar Tapkov's *Lamento* were heard. The Festival's final composition was Juliusz Łuciuik's *St. Francis of Assisi*. The program notes for Zimmermann's orchestral piece alluded to a funeral march, grief, and human suffering, while those for the opening work by Boulez referred to a 'ceremony of remembrance.' (26th *International Festival of Contemporary Music* 1983: 11, 105–106; Kaczyński 1983; Patkowski 1995: 153). Although Patkowski hinted that the symbolism evident at this Festival was "not entirely planned," he did admit that the organizers did not want the 1983 event to be viewed internationally as a celebratory occasion (Patkowski 1995: 153). As one Polish critic, Lucjan Krydryński (1983: 17), stated, the mood was 'adequate to the times in which it [the Festival] took place.' (Dzieduszycki 1983: 96–98).

At the 1984 Festival, Polish patriotic and religious themes were frequently in evidence. Excerpts from the Polish hymns *Bogurodzica* [Mother of God] and *Boże, coś Polskę* [God Save Poland] were heard in Krzysztof Meyer's *Polish Symphony*, *Święty Boże* [Holy God] appeared in Penderecki's *Polish Requiem* and Augustyn Bloch's *Supplications* for cello and piano, and a quotation from Chopin's *Mazurka*, op. 6, no. 2 was audible in Bronisław Przybylski's *A Varsovie* for orchestra. Zygmunt Mycielski's *Psalm XII* included the phrase 'How long shall my enemy be exalted over me!' (Thomas 2005: 350; 26th *International Festival of Contemporary Music* 1983). These reminiscences of Polish heritage helped to create an atmosphere, that in Kaczyński's (1984) words, made the week 'more than a music festival.' Spiritual subjects were

also featured in the opening concert of the 1985 Festival, when Messiaen's *Les offrandes oubliées* and Stravinsky's *Requiem Canticles* were heard.

Given the apparently strict control over the Warsaw Autumn's programs that was exercised by Poland and other governments behind the Iron Curtain, the number and prominence of these works of symbolic importance at the 1983 and 1984 Festivals seems surprising, at least at first glance. Why did the Ministry of Culture and Art permit these pieces to be heard? Perhaps most importantly, this Ministry and by extension, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were historically more concerned with the programs involving Soviet and East-bloc ensembles or composers than they were with the works by Western composers or their own Polish composers (other than those in exile), the latter of whom had not been severely restricted with regard to compositional style for more than two decades. Because most of the afore-mentioned compositions were by Polish and/or Western composers, and many of those by Soviet or East-bloc composers were purely instrumental, they may not have been scrutinized very closely by the various governmental agencies whose approval was needed. The compositions by Sielecki, Buczyński, and Penderecki used liturgical texts, but by the 1980s these were of little concern for Polish censors. Tapkov's orchestral *Lamento* contains references to Bulgarian mourning chants, but the composer was the vice-president of the Bulgarian Culture Committee, which presumably smoothed the way for its inclusion.⁶ Moreover, rational explanations cannot be provided for all of the programming decisions made by the government each year—witness the experience with Denisov in the early 1970s as one seemingly nonsensical act, compared to the successful presentation of Meyer's *Polish Symphony* and Mycielski's *Psalm XII* in 1984. Another plausible explanation is that the Polish government was attempting to be more accomodating as it prepared to 're-present' the Warsaw Autumn Festival to the world in the mid-1980s. The Repertoire Committee could not have foreseen this, however, even if it were true.

⁶ The pieces by Knaifel, Nordheim, Zimmerman, Tapkov, Bloch, Meyer, and Przybylski were for instruments only. Denisov's *Requiem* is not based on liturgical texts. See 'Dimitar Tapkov'; 26th *International Festival of Contemporary Music* 1983: 136–140.

As shown above, the Festival remained subject to the restrictions of official cultural policy in the mid-1980s, although the specific works or performers that might be prohibited could not always be anticipated. The Repertoire Committee was relentless in its quest to present the finest examples of contemporary music each year, yet its members were also able to select compositions that reflected their dismay with martial law and its aftermath. By infusing the Festivals of the immediate post-martial law years with an atmosphere that was more memorial than triumphal, the Repertoire Committee signaled its refusal to provide the government with a public relations coup. The Polish government, in turn, may have unintentionally benefited the organizers with its acceptance of these programs.

While the Composers Union continued to work with the government in post-martial law years to present these Festivals, some members of the Composers Union opted to pursue additional, non-Union activities. Kaczyński, a well-known music critic and musicologist who wrote for *Ruch Muzyczny* throughout the 1980s, was a member of the Union's Executive Board from 1983–1985. In 1981 he had belonged to Solidarity's Cultural Committee for the Mazowsze region.⁷ Before martial law even ended, he had established a series of concerts that consisted of songs and readings related to specific themes in Polish history. The group of performers for these concerts became known as the Traugutt Philharmonia [Filharmonia im. Romualda Traugutta], although initially the only accompaniment was solo piano. The ensemble's first performance, which took place in Warsaw's St. Jacek's Church on January 30, 1983, focused on music from the January Uprising of 1863, when Polish insurrectionists had begun battling for independence from Russia. This military activity lasted more than a year, during which time an underground press was created and unofficial communication links were established, all as part of an alternative government that aspired to act as an independent state (Lewandowska). The parallels between this clandestine state of the 1860s and those of the Solidarity era were most likely not lost on the 1983 audience. This first Traugutt Philharmonia concert ended with the audience singing all ten verses of *Boże, coś Polskę*, including the banned version of the refrain,

⁷ *Ruch Muzyczny* had begun publishing again in June 1983. Sitarz 1997: 4–5.

'Return our homeland and freedom to us, Lord' (Marczyński 2008: 7; Bilica 2008: 22–23).

Kaczyński's initiative in organizing this concert came as a direct response to martial law. He recognized that these programs would have been banned by censors if they were scheduled for official venues. He turned instead to churches, where performances could occur mostly unhindered, as had been demonstrated in the 1970s by the Weeks of Christian Culture. In 1981, the regional Solidarity union had sponsored a concert at the Royal Castle that commemorated the Constitution passed on May 3, 1791 (Kaczyński 1981: 2). This latter concert, while not located at a church, also featured music and readings and may have served as the model for Kaczyński's own endeavors two years later.

The success of the first Traugutt Philharmonia concert led Kaczyński to repeat the same program in other churches and to create additional themed events. The May 3rd Constitution was the subject of the second such show, which was first heard on May 2, 1983. In 1984, concerts paying tribute to the Kościuszko Insurrection in 1795 and the Warsaw Uprising in World War II were premiered ('Kalendarium' 2008: 28–29). Each included songs that could not be heard openly in Poland. That the national traditions of Poland were displayed most successfully in unofficial venues reflected poorly on the government, but even more damaging, those attending the concerts exhibited a patriotic zeal that doubled as a sign of opposition to the current regime. In the words of Krzysztof Bilica (2008: 22), 'In those sad and oppressive times, [these concerts] strengthened and fortified people's spirits.' The songs and readings incorporated into each event also educated concert-goers about their own country's traditions, particularly those from the long periods in which the nation itself was non-existent.

In addition to the thematic concerts given by the Philharmonia, the Traugutt musicians presented concerts for other occasions. One of these took place during the memorial services held October 18–20, 1985 at Warsaw's St. Stanisław Kostka Church on the occasion of the first anniversary of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko's murder. Attended by thousands, including this author, and watched by police outside the church yard, which was festooned with

Solidarity banners, the service on October 19 lasted for hours. It included hymns, Polish folk songs, and prayers interspersed with chants for Solidarity. The Traugutt ensemble performed on October 20th, when a quieter but still large crowd milled around the church.⁸

For the most part, the Traugutt Philharmonia consisted of unpaid volunteers who were among the most talented of Polish performers. These musicians and actors united in a common bond of social obligation and patriotic enthusiasm, where to be patriotic meant to be anti-government, just as it did for their audiences. Some performers, including famed soprano Stefania Woytowicz, refused to participate in government sponsored concerts in the 1980s, but willingly took part in underground events. Rehearsals for the Philharmonia performances took place in private homes or church halls. (see Marczyński 2008: 9; Komorowska 2009: 24–26; Szwarzman 2007: 69; Ratajczyk 2008: 184). Invitations for the concerts, which were free and open to the public, were transmitted either orally or via short typed ‘telegrams’ that omitted performers’ names in an attempt to avoid governmental harassment.⁹ Concerts took place throughout Poland in churches, schools, and museums, despite a certain level of ‘repression and annoyances from the Security Service.’ (Kur 2008: 20).

Kaczyński was not the only musician whose days included both official and unofficial activities. The Traugutt Philharmonia program commemorating the Warsaw Uprising included songs by Krzysztof Knittel, Paweł Szymański, Edward Pałłasz, and Adam Sławiński that were set to texts of poets from the World War II era. These pieces had been commissioned by the Philharmonia, but the composers accepted no honoraria (Marczyński 2008: 8; Długosz 2008: 79; ‘Concert program’ 2008: 78–79). Pałłasz was a member of the Composers Union Executive Board at that time, while Sławiński became the Union’s treasurer in 1985. Kaczyński and Knittel were members of Solidarity’s Independent Culture Committee from 1983–1989 (‘Władze naczelne ZKP’ 1995: 19; ‘Kalendarium sierpień 1984.’) Knittel was a younger Union

⁸ Cindy Bylander, private correspondence, 20 October 1985.

⁹ Author’s private collection, typed invitations and programs for the Songs of the November Uprising concert on 29 November 1985 and the 3 May Constitution concert held on 4 May 1986. These invitations give the time, place, and theme of the concert; the performers were listed in the programs.

member who also co-founded an improvisational group called the Cytula Tyfun Da Bamba Orchestra. Initially conceived at least partly as a joke, the imposition of martial law caused this ensemble's goal to become 'freedom in art despite a totalitarian regime.'¹⁰ In 1985 Knittel was awarded a Solidarity prize for his *String Quartet*, an honor received in 1983 by Lutosławski for his *Third Symphony* and in 1984 by Kaczyński for his work with the Traugutt Philharmonia (Szczepańska 2007; Szwarzman 2007: 80).

Always well-attended, the Traugutt Philharmonia concerts quickly became a source of conspiratorial pride. These and other unofficial performances, frequently held in churches, reflected not only the frustration of musicians and their audiences with existing conditions in the country, but also their willingness to participate in acts of civil disobedience. Not all church concerts were intentionally covert, however. Some could be described as 'semi-underground,' in that they were not officially sanctioned by the government, yet they were advertised on University campuses and in churches, in contrast to the more secretive manner in which the Traugutt Philharmonia programs were announced. For example, this author participated in several semi-underground concerts, including a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* at Warsaw's St. Anthony of Padua church on November 10, 1985 and another, on January 19, 1986, in which Lutosławski's arrangements of 20 Polish carols were given their Polish premiere in a version for soprano, women's choir and chamber orchestra.¹¹ At that time, Lutosławski was in a self-imposed 'internal exile,' when he permitted his pieces to be played in public, but refused to appear at those concerts or other civic events. However, he worked behind the scenes with the Composers Union and occasionally attended unofficial performances of his works.¹² To this author's knowledge, Lutosławski faced no recriminations, in part because he made no overtly adversarial moves, but

¹⁰ This ensemble changed its name to the Independent Electroacoustic Music Studio and was active until 1984. Szwarzman, 2007: 77.

¹¹ Joseph Herter directed the Schola Cantorum for both concerts. See Bylander, private correspondence, 7 October 1985, 11 November 1985, 6 January 1986, 14 January 1986.

¹² For example, he attended a performance of his *Third Symphony* at St. Michael's Church in Sopot on 31 August 1984, which was billed as an anniversary celebration for Solidarity. This 'internal exile' ended in 1986 after the amnesty granted by the government. See 'Kalendarium sierpień 1984'; Patkowski 1995: 154; Szwarzman 2007: 71.

also because the composer's fame was such that any reprisals would have been made known internationally, thus damaging the government's carefully construed publicity campaign.

Such unofficial concerts, regardless of the depth of their clandestine intent, functioned as the equivalent of literature's *drugi obieg* [second circulation], in which private publications were distributed 'underground,' avoiding the reach of the government's censors. Both courage and a sense of moral imperative were reflected in these activities as well as in the actions of the Warsaw Autumn Festival's Repertoire Committee, which repeatedly tried to side-step governmental wishes regarding performers and compositions. Solidarity's short-lived period of legal activity had given hope to the entire nation, including musicians of all generations. The window of opportunity provided in 1980 and 1981 had been so brief that the Composers Union and individual musicians had been unable to implement major changes, but it was long enough for them to realize what artistic freedom might mean in their lives. This, in turn, provided the impetus for these clandestine performances. As stated earlier, the goal of Polish musicians was not to remove the government from power, but to bring about change. If the current regime had modified their policies so that conditions in musical life were similar to those in Western countries, musicians would have been satisfied. The government's apparent acceptance of the so-called 'semi-underground' concerts and the solemn programs of the 1983 and 1984 Warsaw Autumn Festivals may have been an attempt to do just that, but more extensive changes were needed.

Although the details given in these pages do not present a complete picture of Polish musical life in the mid-1980s, they do show that by working unofficially, composers and other musicians willingly put their careers at risk. Although they were not severely harassed, the threat of disciplinary action was always present; as proof, Józef Patkowski and several other leading writers and musicologists were dismissed from their positions with Polish Radio.¹³ Nonetheless, obedience to governmental dictates was not obligatory,

¹³ Patkowski was dismissed from his position as director of the Polish Radio Experimental Music Studio. Andrzej Chłopecki, Mieczysław Kominek, Grzegorz Michalski, Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, and Ewa Obniska were released from their jobs with Polish Radio. See Słowiński 1995: 113; Patkowski 1995: 151.

in their minds. In fact, the ease with which they were able to circumvent governmental restrictions while intertwining official and unofficial 'duties' is noteworthy. Protected by the international reputation of the Warsaw Autumn Festival and the global stature of composers such as Lutosławski and Penderecki, the Composers Union and individual composers, performers, and musicologists succeeded in acting decisively upon their anti-governmental sentiments. In some small sense, the Polish musical world participated in the narrative that eventually compelled the Communist government to yield power in 1989.

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