
Roman Maciejewski – An Independent Artist, A Truly Free Man

Marlena Wieczorek

Building identity

Roman Maciejewski was a Polish émigré composer of the twentieth century. Born in Berlin in 1910, he spent the first years of his life in that city, graduating from the prestigious Julius Stern Conservatory (the piano class of Maria Goldenweiser). From this period he remembered, among others, the specific atmosphere associated with the rise of racism in Germany. Years later he recalled that he was not popular in his school class because he was a Pole,¹ and, as his brother claimed, “that experience was the first to make little Romek aware of his national identity” (Kozub 2010: 252). Due to the unstable economic situation and the worsening political and social conditions in Germany, in 1919 the composer’s parents decided to return to Poland. The family resided in Leszno, where Maciejewski went to Jan Komeński State Secondary School for Boys. He did not abandon his passion for playing the instrument, to which he dedicated all his spare time.² His interest was kept up by the atmosphere of his family home, always full of music, as his mother was a piano teacher. Maciejewski frequently recalled how she played Chopin, and this influenced his musical taste and made him choose piano as his main instrument (Gołaszewski 1999: 12). In Leszno, Maciejewski also joined the boy

¹ Roman Maciejewski, comment made in the film *Outsider*, dir. by S. Szlachtycz, TVP 1993.

² Based on Marlena Wieczorek’s interview with Wojciech Maciejewski, Warsaw 30th March 2002.

scouts, which was a forge of patriotism, with a strong impact on the views of young people (Kozub 2010: 252).

In 1924 Maciejewski began to study piano at the Music Conservatory in Poznań,³ where he met eminent artistic personalities, such as Bohdan Zaleski, Stanisław Wiechowicz or Kazimierz Sikorski, who introduced him to the secrets of contemporary art. The overall atmosphere of the university and its concert activity also played a role in the formation of his musical tastes. The composer participated, among others, in the concerts of the State Music Conservatory choir and orchestra (for example in the performance of Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*) (Latoszewski 1929: 213). This kind of events sensitised him to developments in contemporary Polish music and helped crystallise his compositional idiom. The first examples of his individual style can already be found among his youthful compositions, such as *Mazurkas* for piano (dedicated to Sikorski) or the choral *Kurpie Songs*, whose style was modernist and up to date. These first attempts convinced Maciejewski that he should study composition. He started at the Higher School of State Music Conservatory in Warsaw in 1931. By choosing Warsaw, he followed his master – Sikorski, who was at that time a professor in the Conservatory. From the first moments of his stay in the capital, Maciejewski's talent stood out among other students and he was even called the hope of young music in Poland (Drzewiecki 1971: 144). He also became one of the favorite composers of Szymanowski, who quickly recognised the Maciejewski's talent, admired his music, served him with advice and even took him under his care (Lilpop-Krance 1991:69). The master tried to expand the horizons of his pupil and shape music tastes, among others by introducing him to the artistic life of the capital⁴ or arranging for public performances of his own works. Thanks to these efforts, Maciejewski gained popularity as a composer and pianist, and some predicted a great future for him (e.g. Zalewski 1977: 135). The Institute for Art Promotion played a special role in this context. The first concert of Maciejewski's works was held there in 1932.⁵ A close re-

³ Based on the degree certificate issued by the Music Conservatory of Poznań (the original), in the collection of R. Maciejewski Music Society in Leszno, Poland.

⁴ Letter of R. Maciejewski to Marcella Hildebrandt, 20th November 1932, Warsaw.

⁵ Letter of R. Maciejewski to M. Hildebrandt, 19th October 1932, Warsaw.

lationship with Szymanowski helped Maciejewski to crystallise of his artistic individuality, developed him both professionally and personally, but it also prevented him from completing his conservatory studies. His student career came to an abrupt end when the composer took part in a strike against Szymanowski's dismissal from the post of vice-chancellor. However, expelling from the Conservatory (Kisielewski 1957: 36–37) did not break Maciejewski, as he was strongly convinced that he had stood up for the right side. It did not stop his artistic development and even opened up many new opportunities thanks to his acquaintance with the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs – Józef Beck and his wife – Jadwiga. The Beck family were not only interested in Maciejewski's music, but also developed a liking for him as a man. He visited them many times for various celebrations and also gave private concerts in their villa, which met with acclaim.⁶

Personal contacts in the circles of state diplomacy and politics proved useful in Maciejewski's career. One positive effect of these relationships was, for example, a tour of the Balkans, where he presented his compositions, which met with an enthusiastic critical and public reception ("*Polska muzyka zagranicą*" 1934: 40). Another effect was a government scholarship to study in Paris, which Maciejewski obtained thanks to the patronage of Minister Józef Beck and his wife.

Leaving the country, Maciejewski certainly could not know that as from this moment on he would become a lifelong emigrant and that only the urn with his ashes would come back to Poland. It does not mean, however, that the composer forgot where he was from. The years spent in Poland had formed him as a man, but had also shaped his artistic identity, to which he would remain faithful till the end of his days. Also his musical inspirations fit into the context of his biography, and the interwar period, when he developed his artistic views, had a profound effect on him.

⁶ Maciejewski recalled in a letter: "Concerning the reception of my music. All the diplomats liked it and as Mrs Beck said, they did not applaud me conventionally, as it usually happens, but they were captivated. The result is that wife of the Romanian ambassador wishes to have a concert of my music arranged in Bucharest and the Italian ambassador also said something about a similar event." Letter of R. Maciejewski to M. Hildebrandt, 14th [or 16th] January 1933, Warsaw. Dated after Chylińska (2002: 18).

Different shades of emigration

For a young composer during the interwar period a stay in Paris was the realisation of dreams. The city attracted artists from all over the world; it was the place for the first performances of the most important works, and the atmosphere was favourable to creativity and development (Helman 1972: 81). The young scholar quickly immersed himself in the whirl of local life, benefiting from his residence in the artistic centre of the continent; he expanded his knowledge, built his views and developed his musical talent. He met distinguished personalities of the world culture⁷ and he also had numerous Polish friends, such as: Kazimierz Kranc, Felicja Lilpop, Czesław Miłosz (with whom he lived in one hall of residence), Alexander Tansman⁸ and in particular, Arthur Rubinstein, whom Maciejewski owed much and honestly liked him (Cegieła 1976: 169). The composer associated also with painters, whom he joined almost every Sunday for a visit to the Louvre. The group was guided by Józef Pankiewicz (Lilpop-Krance 1991: 81).

After arriving in France, Maciejewski began private consultations with Nadia Boulanger, and although he rather quickly gave up these classes, he still intensively studied and practised. The result of this work was the pinnacle of his artistic achievement from that period – *Concerto for Two Pianos*, which had many performances. The first one, in Paris, took place on 25th March 1936 at the Salle Chopin (at Pleyel House), with the composer himself and Kazimierz Kranc as performers (Helman 1972: 103). The piece was also premiered in Poland on 23rd February 1937⁹ – the concert was broadcast on the radio. On 23rd June 1937 the concerto was presented again in Paris during a concert held in the Salle de Comedie Théâtre des Champs Elysées, under the auspices of the World's Fair in Paris (ISCM festival).¹⁰ A few months

⁷ Among others: Igor Stravinsky, Alfredo Casella, Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, Albert Roussel, Maurice Ravel, Francis Poulenc. Janusz Cegieła's interview with Roman Maciejewski, 19th June 1979; tape recordings with the interview come from the archives of Wojciech Maciejewski in Warsaw.

⁸ Interview of J. Cegieła with R. Maciejewski and W. Maciejewski, 19th April 1979.

⁹ *Kurier Warszawski* no. 56, 25th December 1937, evening issue, p. 6, in Chylińska (2002: 246).

¹⁰ The programme also included compositions by other Polish contemporary composers (Woytowicz, Szałowski, Gradstein, Palester). In the concert schedule printed in Zofia Helman's article (1992: 103), there are two dates of the performance of Maciejewski's *Concerto*: 8th or/and 23rd June 1937. It is therefore not certain if there was actually one or two concerts.

later, Maciejewski was invited by the section of contemporary music of the Royal College of Music to London (“Polska muzyka i polscy wykonawcy zagranicą” 1938: 45), where he presented his concert in Wigmore Hall (Z.G. 1938). Thanks to this invitation he came in contact with the famous choreographer and ballet master Kurt Jooss and, although the composer had fallen in love in Paris at first sight (Cegiełła 1976: 168), he nevertheless decided to start working at Dartington Hall (Totnes).¹¹ Jooss ordered with Maciejewski dance music for two ballets for his group (Artsman 1980); it is, however, difficult to say whether the music was eventually written. In Dartington Hall, Maciejewski composed two intermezzi: *Tarantella* and *Lullaby* for two pianos (Cegiełła 1991).

Shortly after the start of his collaboration with Jooss, Maciejewski fell in love with one of the ballet dancers – a Swede named Elvi Galeen, who was the daughter of a filmmaker – Henry Galeen¹² and, being fatally in love (as he wrote¹³), he married her in December 1938.¹⁴ In the summer 1939 they both travelled to Sweden in order to let the composer meet the family of his wife. The outbreak of World War II stopped Maciejewski from returning to England. He stayed in Gothenburg at the house of Elvi’s uncle – a lonely millionaire – Axel Adler Adlerbert. From the beginning, the composer tried to find employment, with varying success. Probably already at the turn of 1940–41 he began writing transcriptions for two pianos of well known works from music literature. These were made for a series of piano duet recitals that Maciejewski gave in Sweden in the 1940s (with the English pianist Mar-

¹¹ Jooss was a German choreographer of international renown; his spectacle *The Green Table* won the first competition of contemporary choreography (Archives Internationales de la Danse) in Paris. In autumn 1933, due to the Nazi tendencies prevailing in Germany, Jooss’ team had to leave the country. It found refuge at Dartington Hall in England, which housed a school, used as a refuge for immigrants who for political reasons could not work in their homelands. In the 1930s and 40s, Jooss’ ballet gave a number of performances in countries like Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Norway, the USA. In the 1950s Jooss returned to Germany, where he worked among others as a choreographer, teacher, ballet opera director in Düsseldorf and was the founder of *Folkwang Tanzstudio*. Based on (Cohen 1998: 624–631).

¹² Henrik Galeen was an important figure in German expressionist cinema; his greatest films include, among others, *A Student of Prague* (1926) and *Nosferatu – Symphony of Horror* (1922). See (Bucher 1970: 5).

¹³ R. Maciejewski’s letter to Zygmunt Maciejewski copied by his mother Bronisława Maciejewska, probably of 1947; date and the original letter are missing, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

¹⁴ Based on the *Certified Copy of an Entry of Marriage*. Private archive of W. Maciejewski, Warsaw.

tin Penny and the Russian Alex Portnoff), which enjoyed much popularity among the listeners (C.T. 1944). In that period he also wrote other works, such as: *Matinata* for violin, viola and cello, *Spanish Songs* for soprano and small orchestra, *Primitiven* for percussion, and, above all, more *Mazurkas* for piano. The largest work composed by Maciejewski in Sweden (in terms of the number of instruments) was *Allegro concertante* for piano and orchestra, premiered on 11th January 1945 in the Gothenburg's Philharmonic Hall, under the direction of Heinz Freudenthal (G.N. 1945). Maciejewski's other professional activities included collaboration with the radio (where he played different works, mostly Chopin, as well as his own compositions).¹⁵ He was also an accompanist and composer in the ballet school of Ellen Lundström, through whom he met her fiancé – Ingmar Bergman. This director addressed Maciejewski with an offer to write music for his plays staged at the City Theatre in Gothenburg. As the first, Maciejewski composed music for A. Camus' *Caligula* (premiered on 29th November 1946), then to William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (premiered on 12th March 1948) and to R. del Valle-Inclan's *Divinas Palabras* (premiere: 3rd February 1950). He also collaborated with another director from the City Theatre – Knut Ström – on Kao Tse-Tcheng's Old Chinese drama *Lutans sång* (*Song of the Lute* – premiered on 25th October 1947 in Gothenburg and in Oslo on 24th August 1948). Although Maciejewski, due to the theatre's difficult economic situation, did not have too many instrumentalists at his disposal, his musical illustrations still achieved critical acclaim (L. M-m. 1948).

The Swedish period was a breakthrough time for Maciejewski. This is where he underwent three major surgeries and, due to the minimal chances of recovery, he decided to change his lifestyle. He became interested in alternative therapies, as well as in Eastern philosophy (including yoga and meditations) (Danowicz 1979: 6), became a vegetarian, and took up systematic physical exercise. He also re-evaluated his worldview. Maciejewski began to meditate deeper on the purpose of human evolution,¹⁶ and the source of en-

¹⁵ R. Maciejewski's letter to his family (copied by Maciejewski's mother), probably of 1946, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

¹⁶ R. Maciejewski's letter to his family, 24th July 1957, 3424 W. Adams, Los Angeles 18.

ergy ruling the world¹⁷ which resulted in his withdrawal from active artistic career, to which he preferred the simple fact of existence (and not its symptoms, such as – being a composer) (Markowska 1997: 93). All this helped him in his convalescence, and resulted in finding calm and inner balance. He said:

There were periods in my life when I fell silent, because in order to express myself, to communicate inner truth, one must first understand it [...]. Then one also enters a certain timelessness that makes it much easier to find the right attitude to the Time in which one lives (Winnicka 1999: 138).

In this context, Maciejewski's emigration acquires a new meaning. Apart from emigration in the traditional sense (simply – leaving one's place of residence), it also can be interpreted in a symbolic way, as a change of the old lifestyle and beliefs.

Without an explanation of Maciejewski's ideological standpoint and without emphasising the fact of his spiritual transformation, it is difficult to fully understand the artistic path of a composer who chose the position of a free artist, philosopher, even a sage. This freedom also concerned the music style which he adopted – opposed to fashion and to his times, far removed from the prevailing trends in music. After the inner crisis, he wrote:

I am trying to move away from modernity (Kaczyński 1995). [...]. The avant-garde [...] is a total hysteria. I hate it. The avant-garde attempts to violate the laws of physics and music¹⁸. [...]The avant-garde leads nowhere.¹⁹

Naturally, he did not completely give up his artistic activity. On the contrary, the illness and recovery even inspired Maciejewski to work on his *Requiem*, which – from the original idea – became his ultimate artistic goal. He

¹⁷ Towards the end of life Maciejewski said that being closer to God, he was further away from religion. Maria Woś's interview with R. Maciejewski, Wrocław 3rd Sept. 1990. The recording comes from the archive of W. Maciejewski, Warsaw.

¹⁸ Not without significance in this change of beliefs was the composer's relation to nature. Taking advantage of its gifts, in almost every aspect of life, influenced the artist's aesthetic views and, consequently, his musical language. When composing, he took into account the physiological and psychological processes of the human organism, which were reflected in the elements of a musical work (e.g. the rhythm modelled on the calm heartbeat or musical phrases – on the length of his own breath, long arches of melody reflecting the physiological function of the lungs). See (Kaczyński 1995).

¹⁹ "Avant-garden [...] är helt och hållet hysterisk. Jag avskyr den. Avant-garden har försökt göra våld på fysikaliska och musikaliska lagar. [...] Det går inte. Avant-garden leder ingenstans. Den behövs lika lite som sjukdom" (Cleasson 1980).

dedicated the mass, first and foremost, to victims of human ignorance, and wars of all times. In this finest and largest of his works, he avoided all attempts to find new, experimental musical techniques, a fact which was to reflect the universal nature of the work and was in line with the composer's aesthetic views.

The composer admitted in his letters that in Sweden he experienced more than in all the previous years of his life, and that he owed much to that country. Despite this, he felt no attachment to it and was often thinking about leaving. He even said that he sees Sweden as the North, alien to Poles,²⁰ which sounds particularly harsh, given the fact that Maciejewski had Swedish citizenship.²¹ A catalyst for negative emotions was also the divorce from his wife (which enhanced the sense of loneliness), and a longing for a warmer climate. His plans for leaving Sweden finally crystallised thanks to a visit by Artur Rubinstein, who helped the composer obtain a visa and invited him to his house in Los Angeles.²² Departing from Sweden, Maciejewski believed that in the United States he would find the conditions to complete his *Requiem*.

Before his arrival in California, Maciejewski stopped in Oshkosh with Kazimierz Kranc, with whom in September 1951 he gave a concert of his own compositions (mainly for two pianos), which was then repeated in Chicago.²³ Upon his arrival in Los Angeles, he lived in Rubinstein's residence, and shortly afterwards moved to Santa Monica, to the seat of Huntington Hartford Foundation, which gave him a scholarship. He could work freely there, without financial worries, but also – to present his works in concerts.²⁴ After leaving the seat of the Foundation (in March 1953) Maciejewski rented his own

²⁰ R. Maciejewski's letter to J. Maciejewski, 2nd August 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

²¹ In the certificate of his emigration to California, issued on 7th April 1951, we can find information that Maciejewski was a Swedish citizen. It is not known whether upon its receipt he renounced Polish citizenship. Comm. by M.W.

²² R. Maciejewski's letter to J. Maciejewski, 6th October 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

²³ Based on the programme of the two concerts (Recreational Building, Oshkosh, 26th September 1951 and Mayfair Room, Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, 25th October 1951).

²⁴ *Matinata* for violin, viola and cello, *Spanish Suite* for two guitars, a version of *Lullaby* for string trio, two guitars, flute and celesta, and *Notturmo* for flute, guitar and celesta. Programme of the concert *Summer Serenade*, The Huntington Hartford Foundation, Santa Monica, 20th September 1952.

apartment, where he intensively worked on completing the 1st version of his *Requiem*. He wrote:

[...] I'm so absorbed in my work on the mass that I have lost sense of time and physical existence. I live in complete isolation, I do not see almost anyone and I do not maintain any contacts with people. [...] All my thoughts are focused on this task.²⁵

In December 1954 he finished the most important part of the work on his *opus vitae* and already on 27th March 1955 presented it to the Polish émigrés (probably playing it on piano). In addition, he performed his other works – *Mazurkas* and *Lullaby*. The concert took place thanks to the efforts of Janina J. Dwonkowska (President of the Paderewski Art Club) in the Ocean Front in Santa Monica. Leon Łoński recalled:

[...] this Requiem sounded in my ears for a long time after returning home and in spite of its piety, it provoked a rebellious thought: to summon the whole Polish emigration to that one and only cry: We want Roman Maciejewski's concerts! (Łoński 1955).

Soon, in the autumn of 1955, Maciejewski moved to the vicarage of the Polish Church of the Holy Mary of Jasna Góra in Los Angeles, where he worked as conductor of a choir of Polish émigrés (“Apel do Polonii w Los Angeles” 1955). While he felt well there and scored successes as a choirmaster and organist, in 1958 was forced to resign from this position, because some of the bigoted and conservative parishioners did not accept the composer's lifestyle (such as practising yoga on the terrace). In 1963 he came back to the work of a choral conductor, this time – in the Franciscan Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Nativity Church in Torrance. In both churches, he led the choirs, which soon began to gain recognition in Los Angeles and the neighbourhood. Finally he merged the two choruses and founded the Roman Choir,²⁶ with whom he gave a number of performances. These were both large-scale, paid concerts and annual, charity tours-pilgrimages, undertaken in order to promote sacred music and to give joy to the poor and

²⁵ R. Maciejewski's letter to J. Maciejewski, 5th August 1953, 1351 Ocean Front Santa Monica, California.

²⁶ Based on the programme of the concert *Roman Choir in Sacred Music Concert*, Mira Costa High Auditorium, 18th December 1965 [in the programme, the year is not indicated – comm. by M.W.]. (Ossetyński 1965).

the sick. For the Roman Choir, Maciejewski also wrote a number of religious pieces for church use, mostly masses.

Notwithstanding his numerous professional activities, one must not forget that Maciejewski still dedicated most of his thoughts to the *Requiem*; he wanted the work to be performed in concert. For this reason, he decided to present it in Poland. The performance took place on 20th September 1960 at the 4th "Warsaw Autumn" International Festival of Contemporary Music; the Polish Radio Choir and Orchestra in Cracow was conducted by Maciejewski himself.²⁷ Unfortunately, the *Requiem* did not bring the expected success, but despite this, on his return to the United States the composer presented the recording of the premiere in many places, which proves how important the promotion of this work was for him.²⁸ It was the only composition he wished to promote among various circles of listeners²⁹ An example of this might be his visit to Roger Wagner. The conductor recalled it the as follows:

Twelve years ago, this strange little man appeared on my doorstep. [...] He was carrying a huge suitcase, and he told me his name. [...] "That's my work," he said. [...] It was the large and bulky score of his *Requiem* [...]. It was overwhelming. There was no doubt in my mind, then or now. It is a master piece ("Composing Disturbs His Composure" 1975).

²⁷ H. Lukomska – soprano, K. Szostak-Radkova – alto, K. Pustelak – tenor, E. Pawlak – bass.

²⁸ For example, in New York, on 5th May 1961, at a concert organized by the Kosciuszko Foundation and Research Institute, the Polish world premiere recording of the *Requiem* was presented (Archived Radio Recording, Polish Radio 1960, D. 96 / 1, D. 97 / 1, D. 98 / 1, 99 / 1; 2h 24 '). Similar events were held: on 26th May 1961 in the National House under the aegis of the 7th Circle of Singers' Union in St. Marks Place in New York (after *Czas* 1961: 1); on 1st June in the same year at the Public Museum in Oshkosh (source: ("Personable Composer..." 1961); on 1st April 1963 in St. Robert's Auditorium, organized by the Committee of Loyola University in Los Angeles for the Cultural Advancement of the Westchester-Inglewood-Beach Cities (only fragments of the *Requiem* were presented; the composer gave an introduction to his work; information based on the concert programme). Then on 28th May 1963 the recording was presented on the occasion of the Memorial Day at Mira Costa Music Club (R. Maciejewski's letter to B. Maciejewska, probably of 1st February 1963, 11 Park Avenue, Venice, California); and on 30th June 1964 at a concert entitled *The Bohemians of Los Angeles* at the Studio of Dr Arthur George Carr (based on the concert programme); also in the spring of 1974 on the initiative of The Helena Modjeska Art And Culture Club a presentation of the work was arranged in the villa of the famous actress of Polish descent – Stephanie Powers (*The Quarterly Review* 1974).

²⁹ Maciejewski intended to present the *Requiem* on the stages of many countries, e.g. through the UN, as the work was dedicated to universal peace in the world. Cf. (Chruściński 1960: 7).

Maciejewski wanted his *Requiem* to be performed also in the United States, and although the the American premiere was postponed several times, the work was finally presented on 1st November 1975 in the prestigious Los Angeles Music Center in Hollywood by the famous Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia Orchestra conducted by Wagner.³⁰ The concert was an artistic success, and the American press reviews were much better than the Polish. The conductor was planning a wider promotion of the work in America and more performances, also on television.³¹ This plan was thwarted by Maciejewski himself, who overwhelmed by numerous job offers, decided to emigrate from the United States in 1977. He did not like splendour, but on the other hand he realized that with the modest American pension he would not be able to live on a satisfactory level. He was looking for a place where it would be possible without constant struggle for money.³² It is worth noting that Maciejewski often changed his attitude towards America; at one point he claimed that it was not a country for him,³³ and on another occasion he said he admired the Californian climate, which suited his lifestyle.³⁴ In 1958 he even submitted an application for American citizenship³⁵ – an idea he eventually gave up.³⁶ Despite these mixed feelings, Maciejewski was leaving the United States full of gratitude to the country where he found peace and inspiration to write his *Requiem* (Kaczyński 1994: 55–56). Michał Wesołowski summed up his American residence in these words:

I have met many people who knew him personally – he left behind many warm memories. They all knew him – Poles from the church and social contacts, and others also

³⁰ L. Cole-Adcock – soprano, Ch. Krooskos – contralto, J. Guarnieri – tenor, H. Enns – bass-baritone.

³¹ R. Maciejewski's letter to W. Maciejewski, 27th February 1975, 900 A Esplanade, Redondo Beach, California.

³² R. Maciejewski's letter to W. Maciejewski, probably winter 1973, 900 A Esplanade, Redondo Beach, California.

³³ R. Maciejewski's letter to W. Maciejewski, 16th April 1962, 11 Park Avenue, Venice, California.

³⁴ R. Maciejewski's letter to W. Maciejewski, 19th April 1966, 900 A Esplanade, Redondo Beach, California.

³⁵ The main reason for such a step was to obtain a scholarship from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. Maciejewski had applied for it already in March 1956, and the only obstacle was the fact that it was not granted to foreigners. R. Maciejewski's letter to Arthur Rubinstein, 1st February 1955, the original and envelope are missing, 1343 Ocean Front Santa Monica, California.

³⁶ The reason was that Maciejewski did not want to declare that in case of war he could be enlisted and sent to the front. R. Maciejewski's letter to Zygmunt Maciejewski, 20th June 1958, 11 Park Avenue c/0 Bleckman, Venice, California.

eagerly invited him; his personal charm and fame, though he tried to escape from it, won over everyone. Despite persuasions, he did not “sell his freedom” and did not surrender to the temptations of Hollywood – he worked and he was happy (2002: 10).

On his departure from Los Angeles, Maciejewski wanted to settle in a place with a warm climate and unpolluted air, but close to Poland, so that he would be able to visit it more often. Therefore, he chose one of the Canary Islands, the desert isle of La Graciosa, where he experienced the life of a hermit – he lived in a tent, met people only sporadically, slept without any set hours and relished the sense of freedom coming from close contact to nature, away from civilization.³⁷ Although the composer was delighted with the place, after a few weeks he left La Graciosa, as he had to go to Sweden to obtain the documents necessary to grant him the pension. He wanted to spend there only a few days, but already during one of the first walks in Gothenburg, quite spontaneously, he bought a piano which delighted him. He wrote:

[...] I discovered a wonderful instrument, a pre-war Swedish piano, like new, something I have long dreamt of – and at a ridiculously low price – probably because it was out of fashion, but the tone ... [...] makes me cry now when I touch the instrument with devotion [...]³⁸

Eventually he decided to stay in Gothenburg with his beloved instrument. There too, already about seventy years old, for the first time since his divorce he started a relationship with a woman – Elsi Thorsten, who accompanied him till his death (although they never lived together). In this last period of life Maciejewski composed rather little, he only worked intensively on improving the *Mazurkas* and creating new ones. He also re-edited the *Concerto for Two Pianos*. Slowly his works began to attract the music institutions. And so, on 3rd and 5th December 1980 the Gothenburg Philharmonic gave the Swedish premiere of the *Requiem* conducted by Roger Wagner,³⁹ and the piece was that claimed to be a work of genius (“Tropami Maciejewskiego” 1982). The performance was recorded by Gothenburg Radio, as also was an-

³⁷ R. Maciejewski’s letter to W. Maciejewski, 29th March 1977, La Graciosa, Canary Islands.

³⁸ R. Maciejewski’s letter to Waclaw Gaziński, 7th August 1977, Rymdtorget 61/III, Gothenburg.

³⁹ Performers: Könserthuskören and Gösta Ohlins Vokalensemble, Musikhögskolans Kammarkör, A. Soldh – soprano, B. Kallenberg – alto, L. Devosa – tenor, C. Appelgren – bass. The artists were tutored by L. Bernstrop.

other work – the *Wind Quintet* – performed on 6th February 1979 by the *Göteborgs Blasarkvintett*,⁴⁰ as well as *Allegro concertante*. In Sweden, Maciejewski did find the desired peace of mind. He took full advantage of the benefits of the surrounding nature; he jogged around the lake in the mornings, walked in the woods, still practiced yoga and remained a vegetarian. He enjoyed the green neighbourhood where he was given an apartment, which reminded him to some extent of Podhale (the Tatra Mountains).⁴¹ And even though – as he stressed many times – he was not particularly fond of the local climate, Sweden became his second homeland, where he died in 1998.

The professional and financial situation of the composer in exile

As already mentioned, Maciejewski (especially after his mental breakthrough) had little interest in material goods. He frequently repeated that his life needs are minimal and that he earned money mainly to be able to work peacefully on the *Requiem*.⁴² His financial situation was therefore often difficult, though in many cases it was his own doing. In this context, it will be worthwhile to analyse his varied professional career and his sources of livelihood in emigration.

1. Composer

Maciejewski's multi-faceted career as a composer means that his musical output is of variable artistic quality. The most valuable were those works that were not written to make a living, for example his first, youthful compositions (*Kurpie Songs*, *Triptych*, *Krzesany* with the lost *Zbójnicki*), the *Mazurka* cycles which he composed almost throughout his life, the Parisian *Concerto* for two pianos,⁴³ or the *Allegro concertante* written in Gothenburg. Above all

⁴⁰ S. Schön – flute, W. Lindgren – oboe, E. Andersson – clarinet, E. Schleiffer – bassoon, A. Linder – horn.

⁴¹ R. Maciejewski's letter to W. Gaziński, 7th August 1977, Rymdtorget 61/III, Gothenburg.

⁴² R. Maciejewski's letter to the Kranc family, date missing, 1950 or 1951, Scotstown House, West Linton, Peeblesshire, Scotland.

⁴³ The original title was: *Concerto pour deux piano solo*. In 1984 the composer made a few small changes in the work (four parts combined into three) and changed its title to *Pianoduo concertante*.

these stands the *Requiem*. It defies classification, not only because of its musical language, monumentality, the non-musical inspirations, related to the composer's artistic standpoint, but also because of the time devoted to the completion of this mass (around to 15 years). The second group comprises a considerable number of works of the so-called "functional" type. These were written from his earliest years,⁴⁴ but especially after 1943. Maciejewski, in order to fully dedicate himself to the creation of the *Requiem*, as well as earning a livelihood in the difficult conditions in emigration, began to write works on commission and for commercial purposes (also – for his own piano performances). Taking into account the functions of these works, they can be classified as follows:

- Music for the theatre and film⁴⁵
- Dance music for ballet schools⁴⁶
- Works created for the choirs which the composer conducted⁴⁷
- Transcriptions associated with his concert activities.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ For example, he agreed to write the music (as a contributor) for a newly created Warsaw academic revue and musical illustrations to fourteen ballads by Bolesław Leśmian. R. Maciejewski's letter to M. Hildebrandt, probably of 17th November 1931, Warsaw. The future fate of these compositions is unknown, perhaps they were never created. Comm. by M.W.

⁴⁵ For example for *Caligula* by A. Camus, *Macbeth* by Shakespeare, *Palabras divinas* by R. del Valle-Inclan, *Lutans' Sång* by Kao-Tse Tchong as well as *Dziady [The Ancestors]* and *Koncert Jankiela [Jankiel's Concert]* by A. Mickiewicz. An example of film music is e.g. *Truk* (presumably written for a documentary film by Jacques Cousteaux, it also functions as an orchestral suite entitled *Widoki znad morza [Views from the Seafront]*).

⁴⁶ Among the works intended for dance, one could list four piano miniatures: *Prelude, Fjättrad (Bound), Drömmen (A Dream), Eko (Echo)* and *Bajka [Fable]* for piano.

⁴⁷ *Msza Pasterska [Shepherd Mass], Missa Brevis, Missa Brevis a cappella, The Mass of Resurrection, Msza ku czci św. Cecylii [Mass for St Cecilia], Carols, two Hosannas and Hosanna, Gloria, Sanctus, and America the Beautiful.*

⁴⁸ R. Maciejewski's transcriptions include: No. 1, I. Albéniz – *Navarre*, No. 2, I. Albéniz – *Tango*, No. 3, J.S. Bach – *Fantasy and Fugue in G minor*, No. 4, J.S. Bach – *Passacaglia*, No. 5; L.N. Clerambault – *Suite*, No. 6, P. Tchaikovsky – *Humoresque*, No. 7, P. Tchaikovsky – *Chant sans paroles*, No. 8, C. Franck – *Grande Fantaisie*, No. 9, E. Granados – *Andaluza*, No. 10, G. F. Haendel – *Concerto in F Major*, No. 11, F. Kreisler – *Liebesfreud*, No. 12, F. Kreisler – *Liebesleid*, No. 13: F. Kreisler – *Schön Rosmarin*, No. 14, F. Liszt – *Liebestraum*, No. 15, W.A. Mozart – *Variations 'Unser dummer Pöbel meint'*, No. 16; I.J. Paderewski – *Elegie*, No. 17; I.J. Paderewski – *Mélodie*, No. 18; I.J. Paderewski – *Menuet*, No. 19; I.J. Paderewski – *Nocturne*, No. 20; I.J. Paderewski – *Sarabande*, No. 21; M. Ravel – *Pavane pour me Infante défunte*, No. 22, E. Taube – *Potpourri*, No. 23, A. Vivaldi – J.S. Bach – *Concerto in A minor*. The "functional" piano works also include an arrangement of traditional *Negro spirituals* for two pianos and arrangements of the violin *Capriccios* by Paganini op. 1, for violin and piano.

Maciejewski's entire oeuvre is dominated quantitatively by works for piano (especially miniatures and pieces for two pianos), which is largely a consequence of the fact that the composer often wrote for himself as a performer. Another quite important part of his output is choral music (in the United States the composer conducted amateur church vocal ensembles, which required a proper repertoire). In his piano music, the pride of place belongs to the miniatures, particularly mazurkas, whereas his choral music is dominated by masses. In quantitative terms, the percentage of orchestral and chamber works is rather small. The solo song was not Maciejewski's cup of tea and remains marginal to his work.⁴⁹ The composer showed no predilection for the great vocal, or vocal-instrumental and symphonic forms. The exception is *Requiem*, which should be considered separately. Two trends – the folkloric-national and the Neoclassical – provided the foundation for Maciejewski's work. They coexisted side by side and interpenetrated, deciding about the continuity of his style. The composer built his idiom of those elements that determined Polish music in the interwar period. The links between his works and the currents of that time corresponded to the general trend in Polish music, which on both sides of the iron curtain continued the development of Neoclassicism and – as Zofia Helman writes – it was on the basis of this style that individual compositional idioms were created. On the other hand, what was characteristic of Polish artists working abroad was the nearly complete neglect of folklore. Maciejewski, however, composed works containing references to Polish folk music as well as national topics almost throughout his life. His *Requiem* occupies a special place in Polish music, enriching its heritage not only because of its artistic value, but also because the genre of religious music was almost completely ignored by artists composing in Poland in the first decade after the war (Helman 1992: 215–217). It should also be emphasised that Maciejewski's art was not involved politically, which in this case brought him closer to other émigré artists, who "opposed the totalitarian tendencies in art by their artistic standpoint and the very choice of living in exile" (Ibidem: 221).

⁴⁹ There are two preserved two "mini-cycles": *Pieśni Bilitis* [Songs of Bilitis] and *Pieśni hiszpańskie* [Spanish Songs].

2. Concert pianist and accompanist

Already in the mid-1920s Maciejewski began his professional concert career (Markowska 1997: 103), which he later continued as an émigré. These concerts were not so numerous if we consider his entire lifespan, but they were quite diverse. They constituted not only a standard type of artistic activity for an educated pianist, but also a way to bolster his household budget. Most of Maciejewski's recitals were held in Sweden (also in a duet). Based on the reviews, we can see that his abilities as a pianist were highly praised, though he is not generally regarded as an eminent instrumentalist. The press praised e.g. the genius of his performance (G.N. 1945), perfect technique (C.T. 1944), emotionality (J.R. 1944), artistry (C. B.-g 1944), the vivid, masterly technique (Atterberg 1944), temperament and musicality (Wirén 1944). What was funny, Maciejewski did not like giving recitals, since he had no aspirations to make a concert career. Once he even confessed that he had no qualifications whatsoever as a concert virtuoso.⁵⁰

Maciejewski also earned a living as an accompanist. His first job of this kind was in the private dance school of Walentyna Szaposznikow-Wiechowicz in Poznań. He got this post thanks to his rare ability of quick sight-reading; he could also effortlessly and interestingly improvise (Dąbrowski 1999: 25). Later, in November 1931, he was engaged as an accompanist for the spectacle *Romeo and Juliet* at the Polish Theatre in Warsaw.⁵¹ At the same time, Professor Turczyński recommended Maciejewski as a pianist-accompanist to the Polish Radio,⁵² and between 1931–33 Maciejewski worked for the School of Rhythmics and Plastic Arts of Janina Mieczysława in Warsaw. This professional practice probably helped him obtain a post with Kurt Jooss and in Ellen Lundström's School, where he also composed music for dance routines (Cegieła 1991). During his stay in Sweden, Maciejewski worked as a pianist-accompanist for Gothenburg Radio ("Stars of Europe Concert Stages..." 1951). He played there once a month on average (Interview with R. Maciejewski

⁵⁰ R. Maciejewski's letter to Z. Maciejewski, 4th April 1957, 3424 W. Adams Los Angeles 18, California.

⁵¹ R. Maciejewski's letter to M. Hildebrandt, 13th October 1931, Warsaw.

⁵² R. Maciejewski's letter to M. Hildebrandt, 30th October 1931, Warsaw.

1980), mostly the works of Chopin,⁵³ but also e.g. Haydn⁵⁴ Gluck, Rameau, and Couperin.⁵⁵ He gave recitals made up of his own compositions (such as the *Mazurkas*⁵⁶) and works for two pianos (mostly with Alex Portnoff) (G.G. 1944).

3. Choral conductor and church organist

In 1920 the young Maciejewski joined the boys scouts movement,⁵⁷ where he became conductor of the boy's choir which gave concerts at numerous events and during trips.⁵⁸ He really enjoyed this activity, so when in 1926 in Poznań he received from Wiechowicz an offer of conducting the choir of Polish Singers' Association (Koło Śpiewackie Polskie (Brodniewicz 1996: 93)) in the latter's absence, Maciejewski agreed without hesitation.⁵⁹ He also had contact with choral art at the academy in Warsaw; as Witold Lutosławski recalled,

[...] he was a star among the students. He conducted even his own works performed by a student choir, where I also sang. I remember, for example, a cycle of very beautiful *Kurpie Songs*. Maciek – as we called him then – conducted with great enthusiasm and temperament.⁶⁰

These experiences and skills proved useful to him in the autumn of 1955 when he took over the choir of the Church of the Holy Mary of Jasna Góra in Los Angeles (Nowiński 1997: 50; cf. "Apel do Polonii..." 1955) and again in 1963, when he founded The Roman Choir.⁶¹ With that latter ensemble he

⁵³ R. Maciejewski's letter to Z. Maciejewski, probably of 1947, copied by his mother, date and original letter are missing, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁵⁴ R. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, 28th July 1947, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁵⁵ R. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, 10th February 1949, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁵⁶ R. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, probably of 6th May 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁵⁷ On the basis of R. Maciejewski's scout membership card of 1920.

⁵⁸ Based on the author's conversation with W. Maciejewski, Warsaw, 30th March 2002.

⁵⁹ Maciejewski was probably the conductor of another choral ensemble in Poznań – the F. Nowowiejski Circle. This can be gleaned from the following information about the choral competition in 1930: "The Nowowiejski Circle is on a totally wrong way. From the beginning, it had no luck with conductors, and also the current conductor cannot do anything [...]. It is unfortunate that the Nowowiejski Circle was not able to keep Mr. Maciejewski. Mr. Maciejewski's resignation was reportedly the result of his excessive 'artistic demands' " (*Przegląd Muzyczny* 1930: 12).

⁶⁰ W. Lutosławski's comment, in S. Szlachtycz's film, *Outsider*.

⁶¹ On the basis of the programme of *Roman Choir in Sacred Music Concert*, Mira Costa High Auditorium, 18th December 1965 [the year is missing from the programme – comm. by M.W].

scored a number of artistic successes, noted by the American press: “It was a masterful performance” (*American Echo*, Chicago); “a most beautiful and inspiring performance” (*New World*, Chicago); “an outstanding choir” (*Our Affairs*, Los Angeles); “the concert was wonderful ... first-rate performance of sacred music” (*Mission Santa Inez*, Solvang); “these people are really praying by singing” (*Buddy Bishop*, San Diego).⁶²

4. Scholarship holder and contest winner

Other sources of income included Maciejewski’s numerous scholarships received both from institutions and from private individuals. The first major support he obtained was a grant to study in Paris in 1934. It gave him opportunities for development, but the meagre amount assigned by the National Culture Fund for this purpose was rather insufficient, and so his financial situation was difficult.⁶³ From the same source he received support when he was in Sweden, thanks to which he could dedicate himself exclusively to composition,⁶⁴. Another example is the scholarship of Huntington Hartford Foundation, which in the years 1952–53 enabled him to stay and work undisturbed in the so-called artist colony (located in a Santa Monica mountain canyon).⁶⁵ Around 1957, Maciejewski again received financial support (from unknown sources) to make microfilm photographs and bind the first volume of the *Requiem*.⁶⁶ Polish émigré institutions strove to aid him as well, e.g. on 27th May 1961 the Women’s Branch of the Polish National Union voted to set up a fund to help the composer return to concert life.⁶⁷ On the initiative

⁶² Based on the English-language information leaflet advertising activities of the choir, Redondo Beach, California.

⁶³ Maciejewski stated that despite receiving a state scholarship, it was not easy for him to make ends meet, since these funds were sufficient only for the first half of the month. On the basis of interview of J. Cegiella and W. Maciejewski with R. Maciejewski on 19th April 1979.

⁶⁴ During that time Maciejewski wrote for example: a number of pieces for two pianos, *Allegro concertante* for piano and orchestra, and he began his work on *Missa pro defunctis*. Cf. R. Maciejewski’s letter to Z. Maciejewski, probably of 1947, rewritten by their mother (date and the original letter missing) Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁶⁵ R. Maciejewski’s letter to J. Maciejewski, note on the letter: December 1951 (no date and no envelope), 1139 Tower Road, Beverly Hills, California.

⁶⁶ R. Maciejewski’s letter to A. Rubinstein, 1st February 1955, 1343 Ocean Front Santa Monica, California.

⁶⁷ A letter of 27th June 1961 from The Kosciuszko Foundation to Roman Maciejewski, *The Kościuszko Foundation, American Center For Polish Culture*, 15 East 65th Street, New York 21: “[...] The

of L. Dudarew-Ossetyński, on 26th July 1964 a Committee of the American Première of Roman Maciejewski's *Requiem* in the Millennium Year was established. The work was considered to represent an important achievement of the Polish culture in America and it was believed that, also because of its theme, it would be a perfect choice to mark the one thousandth anniversary of Polish Christianity.⁶⁸ The organizing committee consisted of a number of eminent personalities (including Arthur Rubinstein as honorary chairman).⁶⁹

Maciejewski also received substantial support from private individuals. Already in his childhood Count Krzysztof Mielżyński, in recognition of the young musician's talent and temperament, decided to grant him a monthly scholarship for his musical education.⁷⁰ We know that while in the United States, in New York he met up at least once with an unknown patron⁷¹ who provided him with financial assistance for no less than two years.⁷² In the early 1940s he is known to have been sponsored by his wife's uncle – Adlerbert, and many other friends also gave him a helping hand. For example, in 1951 he spent several months on the estate of his friend Jan Tarnowski in Scotland;⁷³ he moved to California thanks to Rubinstein, who invited him

Kosciuszko Foundation forwards to you two cheque sent to the Foundation's recently established Roman Maciejewski Fund: 1) a cheque from the Polish National Association for \$100 and 2) a cheque from the Women's Branch of the same Association for \$100. [...]"

⁶⁸ This view was expressed by Bronisław Młynarski at the concert on 5th June 1965. Cf. (Ossetyński 1965).

⁶⁹ The members of the Committee were, among others: Leonidas Dudarew-Ossetyński, Michael Chekov, Andrzej Tyszkiewicz, Sylwin Strakacz, Bronisław Młynarski, Anna Mahler (Gustav's daughter), Roger Wagner, Dr. Richard Wilk, Spinoza Paeff. (Based on an invitation to a concert of 1st November 1975.)

⁷⁰ The money enabled Maciejewski to go to Poznan for further education (based on the author's conversation with W. Maciejewski, Warsaw, 30th March 2002).

⁷¹ It was probably the same woman who had earlier for ten years helped Szymanowski. Her first married name was Warthon, the second – Czitadini (Citadinni). Maciejewski met her in the company of the Kocharński family in Aleje Ujazdowskie in Warsaw. The composer also remembered a meeting in a hotel in New York, during which the Rubinsteins asked him to take care of her health. Interview of R. Cegiella with R. Maciejewski, 29.06.1979.

⁷² R. Maciejewski's letter to Bronisława Maciejewska, note on the letter: September 1951 (no date and envelope), Box 66B, Route 1, Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

⁷³ R. Maciejewski's letter to his family, probably of 25th September 1950, 21 Woodville Gardens, London W. 5.

to his home in California and paid for the trip;⁷⁴ he also benefited from the hospitality of the Kranc family in Oshkosh.⁷⁵ In the USA he lived for some time at his friend Jack Bleckman and his mother's house (Danowicz 1979: 6). This family created ideal conditions for his work, and the Jewish community to which they belonged, involved in the task of completing the *Requiem*, supported his work.⁷⁶ Even the American premiere of the mass was funded by a private person – Blanche Seaver (widow of Frank Roger Seaver, to whose memory the performance was dedicated) (“Composing Disturbs His Composure” 1975).

In addition, Maciejewski was the recipient of several prizes, which were often associated with financial awards, such as the I. J. Paderewski Foundation Award which he received in 1959 for his work on *Missa pro Defunctis*.⁷⁷ He used this money to pay for a trip to Poland in order to present *Requiem* at the “Warsaw Autumn.” Another organization which awarded him a prize in the field of music was the Alfred Jurzykowski Foundation.⁷⁸

* * *

In the context of this discussion of the composer's financial situation in emigration, it is important to note Maciejewski's “nonchalant” attitude to material goods, career and fame. What he cherished the most was a sense of freedom, also the freedom to decide about the course of the day. He said: “I am far from the professional doggedness that usually characterises artists”

⁷⁴ R. Maciejewski's letter to Nelli Rubinstein, 26th April 1951, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg. The original is kept in the collection of the Albeniz Foundation in Spain. This letter contains information about another letter of gratitude which Maciejewski wrote to Irene Cittadini. Possibly that patron of art helped him finance his travel to the USA. Comm. by MW.

⁷⁵ Mrs Kranc recalled that Maciejewski lived there for several months, introducing many changes in the family's life (1991: 190).

⁷⁶ R. Maciejewski's letter to Z. Maciejewski of 20th June 1958, 11 Park Avenue c/0 Bleckman, Venice, California.

⁷⁷ The chapter argued: “[...] Maciejewski's composition is the greatest of the Polish artistic achievements in emigration since the war. [...] The Foundation [...] awards not only the great talent, but also the outstanding creative achievement resulting from many years of the composer's work and diligence.” Reprinted in *Naród Polski* (“Nowe dzieło kompozytora polskiego, R. Maciejewskiego” 1959).

⁷⁸ The justification of the award by the Foundation's chapter: “The Alfred Jurzykowski Foundation presents one of its awards to: Mr. Roman Maciejewski [...], an outstanding composer, honoring him for his subtle and penetrating works. His unusual talent, combining classical motives with contemporary technique and form, has won him international recognition.” Alexis C. Coudert, *The Alfred Jurzykowski Foundation*, 59 East 66 Street, New York, 10021, 09.02.1973.

(Kaczyński 1961: 6). [...] “When [...] it comes to the tyranny of such delusions and seducers such as wealth, reputation, position and fame, it seems to me that I can thank God for being perfectly free.”⁷⁹

This attitude influenced both the financial situation and the artistic path of the composer. He repeatedly rejected lucrative proposals, first – during his stay in Paris, when he refused Serge Lifar who asked the composer to write music for the ballet of Paris Opera.⁸⁰ Rubinstein, who was then at the peak of his fame, hoped that he would obtain a *Piano Concerto* dedicated to him – that was one of the reasons why he invited Maciejewski to America.⁸¹ Similarly in March 1953 the composer decided not to write compositions for André Segovia, although he regarded him as the best guitarist in the world.⁸² Maciejewski could also become a teacher of composition. In 1974 he received a proposal to give private lessons to a group of a dozen American composers, who treated him as “an old master.”⁸³ Initially enthusiastic about the project, he met them only twice and eventually gave up.

Maciejewski also received numerous offers to promote his works. For example on 27th June 1972, the President of the Polish Arts and Culture Foundation, Wanda Tomczykowska, sent him a letter in which she offered to promote his music in a radio broadcast cycle entitled *A History of Polish Music*, presented from 1966 by the KPFA-FM station in Berkeley.⁸⁴ Maciejewski was

⁷⁹ R. Maciejewski’s letter to Z. Maciejewski, probably of 16th December 1947 (no date and envelope), Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁸⁰ Maciejewski argued: “I did not want to – that was first, and second – Lifar did not quite suit me as an artist. He tried to create a new type of dance based on sound technical principles and patterns of movement derived from the classical ballet, which did not interest me then. These attempts were very naive. Furthermore, he staged his ballets with great pomp, which did not attract me.” Interview of J. Cegieła with R. Maciejewski, 19th June 1979.

⁸¹ Rubinstein reportedly joked that usually he refused to perform works written for him, but this time it was the composer who did not accept his proposal. M. Wieczorek’s interview with W. Maciejewski, Warsaw, 30th June 2002.

⁸² Maciejewski recalled: “[...] Segovia [...] asked me to start working immediately and write for him a few pieces for solo guitar. However, I now have something else on my mind, not the guitar – but some time I will probably jot down something, because I really like the guitar.” R. Maciejewski’s letter to J. Maciejewski, note on the letter: March 1953, 1351 Ocean Front Sta. Monica, California.

⁸³ R. Maciejewski’s letter to B. Maciejewska, probably of September 1974, 900 A Esplanade, Redondo Beach, California.

⁸⁴ An offer of promotion for Maciejewski and his works was also made by Jerzy C. Walter, who sent a letter to L. Ossetyński with the following suggestions: “On another occasion we arranged to borrow your friend Roman Maciejewski’s materials – the manuscript of his composition (the *Requiem*) as

expected to write a note about himself and send a tape with a recording of his compositions.⁸⁵ Also in Poland, in the 1970s, Maciejewski was to organize a concert of his chamber works, as well as preparing a TV broadcast. For this purpose, his brother – Wojciech – came in contact with Piotr Perkowski and took care of the organisation of both projects. At the last moment, Maciejewski resigned from these plans.⁸⁶ Another example was the success of *Alle-gro concertante* in Sweden News of that success reached Witold Małcużyński, who in 1945 sent a telegram to Maciejewski asking him to copy and send the script to New York for performance.⁸⁷ The composer probably did not respond to this request. Neither did he return to England to work with Kurt Joss, though the choreographer asked him to do so.⁸⁸ When he was hired by the film producer Samuel Goldwyn as music director in the film studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer,⁸⁹ he soon quit because he was not able to comply with the demands, such as – being available. It was at odds with his sense of

well as the only one recording of that composition, which is in his possession. I was going to organise an exhibition – naturally, a modest one. Now I am preparing to perform Krzysztof Penderecki's *Passion*, and so I thought that – the *Requiem* being a truly great composition of the best quality, it would allow to push Maciejewski out of his Californian obscurity. The matter is urgent and immediate – I have a feeling that it can be beneficial for Maciejewski. Please hurry and send the materials as soon as possible as I have no doubt Maciejewski is in the possession of some other manuscripts as well. We also need several of his photographs – it would be advantageous if he has a copy or the original or the first edition of that fantastic *Mazurka in C*, as well as some manuscripts, photographs (these are a must) [...].” Jerzy C. Walter to L. Ossetyński, *The Polish Museum of America*, 984 Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60622.

⁸⁵ On the basis of a letter of the President of the Polish Arts and Culture Foundation W. Tomczykowski to R. Maciejewski, Polish Arts and Culture Foundation, 1950 Oak Street, 27.06.1972, San Francisco, California. It is not known whether he responded to this offer, possibly the plans did not work out due to his trip to Poland, which took place in late summer and autumn of 1972. Comm. by M.W.

⁸⁶ W. Maciejewski's letter to R. Maciejewski, Warsaw 30th August 1972.

⁸⁷ He wrote: “Can Photostat score here in one week kindly send score urgently air mail registered guaranty return immediately after paying all expenses including transportations insist instantly having opportunity introduce New York to major American Symphony Orchestras,” Witold Małcużyński care of Michel Kachouk, 59 West 55 Street, New York, to R. Maciejewski, 13th November 1945, 30 Kronhusgatan, Gothenburg.

⁸⁸ Cf. the telegram written on Jooss's behalf from Cambridge on 12th August 1942 (“[...] ballet Jooss just returned from America want You immediately stop Possibility for composing publishing exists for You and Elvi guaranteed stop Write immediately if interested return England. Love Roshka”). Jooss also sent a telegram on 21st April 1945 from 13 Kings Parade, Cambridge (“Are You interested to compose major ballet with me here earliest possible orchestra of 25 regards”). The telegrams are in the collection of W. Maciejewski in Warsaw.

⁸⁹ Maciejewski was able to work legally in the film industry because immediately after his arrival in the USA he received a Social Security Account Number: 572 1944 2677.

independence and, above all, was a threat to his work on *Requiem*.⁹⁰ Many years later, he said:

The atmosphere of Hollywood never appealed to me. In my life I always had that luck that I managed to run away in time from what seemed to pose a threat to my freedom and to life without compulsion (Markowska 1997: 91).

Poland – a home which one always carries inside

Maciejewski's emigration was not mainly the result of political factors or strategic thinking about career development (although this aspect also appeared in his biography). His life story was the result of a number of events (often coincidental), and additionally, after his internal crisis, it was linked with his worldview, in which the most important were freedom and life in harmony with oneself. These psychological elements are essential and cannot be omitted from a discussion of Maciejewski's life; focusing on facts and analysis of musical works will simply not suffice. Although Maciejewski – because of his numerous trips – was a “world citizen” who did not like to get attached to goods and places, it should be stressed that he always felt a Pole at heart, and he proved his devotion to his homeland on many levels.

The most symbolic evidence of the depth of Maciejewski's association with Poland is his musical style, in particular the folkloric-national streak developed in the decades between the world wars and continued in later years (mainly in the *Mazurkas*.⁹¹ These were influenced by the mazurkas of Chopin and Szymanowski. Roman Maciejewski, like Chopin, was writing them almost throughout his entire life. Both émigrés expressed their relationship

⁹⁰ On the basis of M. Wieczorek's interview with W. Maciejewski, Warsaw, 30th June 2002.

⁹¹ References to folk material and characteristic features of folk music are also present in: *Kurpie Songs*, *Krzesany*, the lost *Zbójnicki*, two *Mazurs*, in the *Oberek* – ballet scene for two pianos, *Shepherd Mass*, *Quintet* for wind instruments, as well as *Matinata* (“folk” motifs in Part III). Given the literary component, we can also list among those national-folkloric works illustrative functional music such for such spectacles as *Dziady* [*The Ancestors*], *Betlejem polskie* [*The Polish Bethlehem*], *Bajka* [*The Fable*] and *Koncert Jankiela* [*Jankiel's Concert*] (incomplete). Through compositions in “the folkloric-national spirit,” Maciejewski wished to maintain the idea of a broadly conceived Polish character in music – comm. by M.W.

with Poland in the same fashion – the very choice of the mazurka was a demonstration of patriotic sentiments. After the first four youthful *Mazurkas*, Maciejewski took a long break from writing these miniatures, but he was inspired to return to their composition by a Polish Radio broadcast he heard in Sweden, in which Stanisław Szpinalski performed one of his pre-war *Mazurkas*,⁹² what further intensified his longing for the fatherland and became an impulse to composer.⁹³ Maciejewski also returned to *Mazurkas* towards the end of life. He said at that time that he feels as if he had returned to his homeland, because in these works he sought to capture the fullest image of the Polish soul (Wieczorek 2005: 14). Thus, such miniatures became a musical reflection of the composer's Polish identity, and a proof of his strong relationship with the country.

Parallely to elements of folk music, Maciejewski drew in his works on the Neoclassical style, developed on the French soil. However for him it was not a departure from the Polish character. He argued:

[...] I wrote a number of mazurkas, highlander dances, Kurpian songs, but under the influence of conversations with Szymanowski, I developed a deeper view of the foundations of the national style. Already in my sonata I broke with the so-called folklore. The national character always manifests itself in music, it is not necessary to emphasise it specially by borrowing or imitation of folk art. A good composer – no matter if he wants to or not – will always remain national (Maciejewski 1937: 138–139).

One of the most important proofs of Maciejewski's connection with Poland is also the way he maintained ties with his family. Maciejewski's extensive correspondence with his parents and siblings is well preserved (over 200 items) In these letters he wrote not only about his life, but also about the emotions associated with separation from relatives:

I miss you today and I missed you through all the years of our separation. Today also, when I sufficiently know people and the world, I know how privileged I was to have you and your home for my parents and my cradle. Often in moments of weakness I sought and found solace in you and the strength to live.⁹⁴

⁹² Interview of J. Cegieła with R. Maciejewski and W. Maciejewski, 29th June 1979.

⁹³ R. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, 5th January 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁹⁴ R. Maciejewski's letter to parents, probably of 11th April 1947, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

For patriotic reasons Maciejewski played Chopin's compositions nearly every month on the Swedish radio (almost at the same time the music was forbidden by the Germans in occupied Poland) (Kozub 2010: 252). He informed about it his loved ones, because the fact that they listened to his broadcasts had enormous significance to him – in this way, he was mentally with his family.⁹⁵ Maciejewski's patriotism, however, was not only manifested in what he wrote about his attachment to the fatherland or in the performance of *Mazurkas* on the radio, but also in his involvement in the aid for Polish immigrants. In Sweden, he took part in concerts under diplomatic auspices, profits from which were assigned to aid for the fatherland,⁹⁶ and not later than in 1948 the Association of Poles in Sweden was founded, whose chairman was Maciejewski.⁹⁷ This organization mainly helped refugees from communist Poland^{footnoteR}. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, 22nd March 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

The composer was always interested in what was happening in Poland. As he wrote:

I take part in Poland's life through the radio. I know everything that happens, concerts, lectures, and exhibitions. When I'm talking about the state of affairs in Poland, it's not out of thin air. [...] I'm very strongly emotionally connected with Poland. That's what Tansman said – internationalism is a curse.⁹⁸

A "tradition" of maintaining ties with the country, despite living far away, was initiated already in the Parisian period before World War II. Then, thanks to his friendship with Szymanowski, Maciejewski took part in meetings of Polish artists, with whom he discussed literature, art, music, and also spent some holidays (Lilpop-Krance 1991: 89). His relations with Poles were also close in other countries such as the United States, for instance through his

⁹⁵ R. Maciejewski's letter to his parents, probably of 31st August 1947, note 47/5. Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁹⁶ For example, in Gothenburg, in the Small Philharmonic Hall in Stockholm on 8th May 1942, he gave a concert (under the auspices of Polish and British ministers) for the Polish Aid Committee in Stockholm. ("Polsk konsert" 1942)

⁹⁷ On the basis of R. Maciejewski's membership card (no. 3). The card comes from the private archives of W. Maciejewski, Warsaw. Cf. A letter from R. Maciejewski to his parents, 31st May 1948, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

⁹⁸ J. Cegięła's interview with R. Maciejewski, 2nd February 1979.

work in Polish churches. As Wojciech Maciejewski explained, “He soothed his longing for Poland which plagued him [...] by always maintaining some contacts with the Polish community, and less with specific Poles” (Kozub 2010: 253).

Despite all this, during his many years in emigration Maciejewski visited Poland only incidentally. His longest stay took place when he came for the première of the *Requiem* in Warsaw. Maciejewski was then invited to the Ministry of Culture and Arts, where the Vice-Minister Kazimierz Rusinek asked him to take over the chair of composition in the Academy of Music in Cracow, vacated by the retiring Stanisław Wiechowicz. He was also offered a flat in Warsaw’s Old Town.⁹⁹ But however much the authorities insisted on his return to Poland, he did not take up the offer, even though he had previously declared: “only the longing for you and my country nags me and will nag until I get back [...]”.¹⁰⁰

Why did he not return? Because he was an opponent of the communist system, he did not accept restricting the space of human rights man’s independence, freedom of thought and creation. In this context we should note the words he uttered during a walk through Bank Square (then Dzerzhinsky Square) in Warsaw, when he said that he could not possibly live in a country that erects a monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky¹⁰¹ (Kozub 2010: 253–254).

Roman Maciejewski returned to his fatherland in 1998, when the urn with his ashes was interred in the parish cemetery in Leszno.

* * *

The varying fortunes of Maciejewski’s life had a direct impact on the reception of his work in his homeland. One can distinguish three stages of its presence in the awareness of Polish audiences, which, interestingly, were not correlated with any evolution of the artist’s musical language. In the first period (1924–1939), he was a star among the young modernists. The “society” valued him for the exceptional emotionality of his works, for melodic invention

⁹⁹ Based on M. Wieczorek’s interview with Wojciech Maciejewski, 30th June 2002.

¹⁰⁰ R. Maciejewski’s letter to his parents, 22nd May 1947, Avidingsgatan 6, Gothenburg.

¹⁰¹ Polish-Russian communist revolutionary, famous as the first director of the Bolshevik secret police, the Cheka. The agency became notorious for torture and mass summary executions, performed especially during the Red Terror and the Russian Civil War.

and technical skills. He had many supporters, not only among his colleagues and teachers from the Music Academy. In the second period (1939–1989) for the critics he became an eclectic and a forgotten outsider. The reason for the near-absence of his works from concert life was the change in Poland's political situation, which was not favourable to the promotion of composers living abroad. Lack of interest in Maciejewski's works was also due to his change of worldview, which meant that he was no longer concerned with the promotion of his works (he did not care to have them published in print, did not lend manuscripts to other artists, and presented them only in those places where he currently stayed). The only exception to that rule was his willingness to present the *Requiem* to the world; it was performed for the first time at the Warsaw Autumn Festival. The première was not a success, though, because in the era of the domination of the avant-garde, a work rooted in tradition was seen as proof of the lack of individuality. The composer's looks and lifestyle were, on the other hand, too individual, and it stood out uncomfortably in communist Poland. Jerzy Waldorff, his friend from the 1930s, summed it up in these words:

When I saw him, I thought I would faint. [...] I saw an old prophet with tufts of gray hair on his balding head, his eyes shining with an otherworldly flame, and in place of his former wide smile a grimace of something like bitterness or amazement with the surprising ways of the world. [...] For his stay in the Peoples' Republic he chose a sort of a white monk's habit with a hood, with a matching long beard. He slept on the floor and ate only raw vegetables. [...] The presented part of his *Mass* lasting more than two hours without interruption did not gain success in Warsaw. It seemed eclectic and it dragged on [...], and furthermore it stood out from the rest of that festival of contemporary music, as a grandmother would at a teenage big-beat party. Maciek¹⁰² remained dauntless he put the recorded tape under his arm, returned to America, and again for a long time we had no news about him (Waldorff 1966: 15).

The change in the attitudes to Maciejewski's works which took place (more or less) in 1989 was caused by several factors: in Poland the hegemony of the avant-garde was over; Communism had collapsed; and, perhaps most importantly, the composer passed the manuscripts of his works to his brother, who became deeply involved in the promotion of his oeuvre. Thanks to Wojciech Maciejewski his brother's works begin a new concert life in Poland. After a

¹⁰² Maciejewski's nickname from his youth. Comm. by M.W.

period of obscurity, gradually his music experiences a renaissance. More and more is said about the composer, not only in Poland but also abroad. Every year, more compositions are printed, more records released, new academic and popular scientific works are published (e.g. Wieczorek 2008). In the case of the *Requiem*, there has been a noticeable change in the views of critics, as compared with those from the 1960s, which is evident in this statement:

[The *Requiem* did not fit in with – ed. MW] the stylistic trends and the dominant moods at the Warsaw Autumn, especially in those years. Against the background of pieces born of a fascination with the Darmstadt avant-garde, noise sonorism, and the game of chance, Maciejewski's masterpiece, which presents a synthesis of the sound discoveries of twentieth-century classics with the old polyphony, could appear as a manifestation of a conservative standpoint, or ostentatious advocacy of the past. And yet – inspired with genuine experience – the music proved much more lasting and vital than so many high-profile compositions of the "avant-garde" programme. It is performed still today, and its deep expression attracts and moves the listener even more than it did some decades ago (Zieliński 2007).

Maciejewski example thus shows how over many decades the reception of one composer's work may substantially change. His musical language, from the beginning seen as modernist and innovative, fell into disfavour with the passage of years and was perceived as oldfashioned, eventually to be reassessed as classic and timeless – a praise which it fully deserves. Maciejewski himself is also becoming a cult figure. His life philosophy and the colourful life story have made him into a charismatic outstanding and remarkable artist. A composer living abroad, he nevertheless never gave up his Polish identity, just as he did not give up his personal freedom, which led him to live in places more favourable to his health, creativity and peace. Staying away from his fatherland, he did not consider his choice as isolation, which allowed him to say at the end of life: "I do not consider myself an emigrant. I am a Pole, and some even claim that I speak Polish more beautifully today than I did before leaving the country" (Tumiłowicz 1990).

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