

NAXOS

PANUFNIK

Homage to Polish Music

Igor Cechoco,
Trumpet

Polish Chamber
Orchestra

Mariusz Smolij



Sir Andrzej Panufnik (1914-1991)

Homage to Polish Music

Born in Warsaw, Andrzej Panufnik started to compose aged nine. He graduated from the Warsaw Conservatoire with Distinctions in composition and conducting, increasing his classical repertoire as a favoured pupil of Felix Weingartner at the Vienna Academy, then studying impressionist composers with Philippe Gaubert in Paris, with further music explorations in London. At the outbreak of World War II he returned to Warsaw to look after his parents. In Nazi-occupied Poland, with public concerts banned, he played the piano in “artistic cafés”, collaborating with Witold Lutosławski, and with his Jewish violinist friend Tadeusz Geisler until the Ghetto was enclosed. Despite the terror on the streets of Warsaw, he also conducted illegal and charity concerts, and composed resistance songs, including the famous *Warszawskie Dzieci*. During the War he lost most of his closest relatives, and all the compositions of his first 30 years were destroyed in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

After the war, Panufnik became chief conductor of the Kraków Philharmonic and then the Warsaw Philharmonic, appearing as a guest conductor with the leading European orchestras. In those early post-war years he won international admiration and honours in his own country, the originality of his 1940s works placing him as the “father” of the Polish *avant garde*. After 1949, however, with the imposition of Soviet Socialist Realism, the situation changed dramatically. Stultified as a composer, unwilling to write the music the authorities required, in 1954 he left Poland as a protest against the controls over creative artists, resulting in total censorship of his name and his music for 23 years. He settled in England, Boosey & Hawkes became his publishers, and from 1957 to 1959 he was appointed musical director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, his last official position before deciding to dedicate his life entirely to composition. He took British nationality in 1961. At last unfettered by politics or conducting, the subsequent years became the

most freely creative of his life.

Eventually, from 1977, Panufnik works were performed annually on the insistence of the Polish composers in the ever-innovatory Warsaw Autumn Festival. In 1990, when democracy was restored, he made a momentous return to Poland to conduct his music at the Warsaw Autumn. Panufnik’s autobiography, *Composing Myself*, was published in 1987. He received a British knighthood in January 1991, the year of his death, and a posthumous Order of Polonia Restituta from President Lech Walesa in Poland.

Panufnik’s oeuvre includes ten symphonies, with century commissions from Solti in Chicago and Ozawa in Boston, and three commissions from the London Symphony Orchestra who also recorded much of his work. Menuhin commissioned his *Violin Concerto*, Rostropovitch his *Cello Concerto* (with the LSO), the Royal Philharmonic Society his *Ninth Symphony*. As well as four concertos, he composed three string quartets, three cantatas and many works for string ensembles. Choreographers of his music include Martha Graham and Kenneth MacMillan.

As Poland’s leading composer, after 1949 Panufnik was under extreme pressure to conform to the dictates of Socialist Realism. To keep the authorities at bay he sometimes turned to the self-imposed task of restoring musical fragments from Poland’s distant past. He had already discovered his passion for early music in London in 1938, developing a deep admiration for Purcell, Avison and Boyce. In the post-War period, he could find virtually no early Polish music to conduct. (At that time the Jasna Góra Monastery collection was still undiscovered.) Between 1947 and 1966 he composed four works from historical Polish manuscripts, about which he wrote:

My compulsion to restore some of the early Polish music was engendered as I witnessed the superb reconstruction of beautiful 16th and

17th century houses in the old part of Warsaw, which had been flattened during the uprising at the end of the Second World War. To see this almost miraculous re-growth of seemingly lost architectural treasures so lovingly brought about by my compatriots filled me with enormous admiration. I felt a strong desire to undertake a similar task with fragments of Polish vocal and instrumental music of the same centuries which had suffered near oblivion because of Poland's long and tragic history of numerous foreign invasions. Little of this music survived in a performable state and I wanted to fill the gap, endeavouring to recreate as near as possible the true period style, like those ancient houses of Warsaw, and firmly intending not to superimpose my own musical fingerprints. My intention was to bring alive the spirit of Poland at that time, and to make use of these precious fragments which otherwise would have remained lifeless on the bookshelves of libraries...

Old Polish Suite, for string orchestra, composed in 1950 (revised 1955), consists of three dances divided by two shorter interludes. The string writing has a richness combined with an apparent simplicity because of the composer's intention not to drown the essence of the ancient music with his own musical language. The first dance, *Cenar*, comes from the *Lute Tablature* of Mateusz Weissellius. Its somewhat rustic quality, according to an anonymous British critic in 1960, 'radiates primitive strength and naïvety, subtle as the arrangement is'. After the first dirge-like *Interlude (Lento espressivo)*, the central dance, *Wyrwany*, emanating from an anonymous seventeenth-century tablature, is a characterful minuet in a minor key. In the *Chorale (Andante tranquillo)*, Panufnik excludes the violins to emphasise the sonorities of the violas and cellos. The third and final dance, *Hayduk*, drawn from the *Tablature* of Jan of Lublin (written between 1537 and 1548), with elements of folk-dances of Southern

Poland, is more sophisticated and graceful in style.

Concerto in Modo Antico, for trumpet, timpani, two harps, harpsichord and strings, (1951, revised 1955), also includes elements from Polish music across the ages from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Again it demonstrates Panufnik's strength in composing with fragments from the past, the sonorous string writing here enhanced by the solo trumpet.

Jagiellonian Triptych in Panufnik's imagination conjured up a religious altarpiece from Poland's golden Jagiellonian age. The last of his restorations of ancient Polish music, composed in 1966 in England, using material remaining from the creation of his *Old Polish Suite*, it was specifically written for his London concert celebrating the Millennium of Polish Christianity and Statehood. (His other, major work to celebrate the Polish Millennium, his most performed, much recorded *Sinfonia Sacra*, won the Prince Rainier prize in 1963, having been commissioned by New York's Kosciuszko Foundation for performance by Leopold Stokowski).

Divertimento, by Janiewicz/Panufnik, for string orchestra was drawn from trios by the eighteenth-century Polish composer, Feliks Janiewicz, a founder member of the Royal Philharmonic Society, who came to Britain as a young violinist, eventually settling in Edinburgh. (While composing *Divertimento* in 1947 in Poland, Panufnik had no thought that he, like Janiewicz, and indeed Chopin, would also become an emigré composer, also for political reasons.)

A British critic wrote in 1957: 'The *Divertimento* begins with a vigorous but simple theme which expands easefully, and soon a rippling semi-quaver figure is added and each idea propels the other forward. Instead of a second subject the first is heard with a counterpoint superimposed, giving a more lyrical flavour. A *codetta* produces a new and significant syncopated rhythm. The development section, seemingly simple, works wonders of variation on the slender material. This shows the hand of a master. The reprise is yet another transformation. The music flows in new and surprising ways and comes to rest at a most satisfying point. The *Andante* is a piece of brilliant,

robust string writing. One amusing and charming tune seems to follow another breathlessly in the manner of Haydn's effervescent *rondos*. Every part of the orchestra has lively music to play. The whole joyous mood seems to round off the *Divertimento* proportionately and in a really convincing manner to send an audience off delighted.⁷

Hommage à Chopin, the fifth work on this disc, was orchestrated by the composer in 1966 for solo flute and strings, but was first performed in 1949 as *Vocalises* for soprano and piano, commissioned by UNESCO to mark the centenary of Chopin's death. In that year, jointly with Arthur Honneger, Panufnik was elected Vice-Chairman of the Music Council of UNESCO, though the heavy-handed Stalinist authorities would not allow him out of Poland to attend the première nor indeed any UNESCO events in memory of Chopin.

Panufnik wrote:

...I had an idea to pay my tribute to Chopin not by making use of his themes or his style of piano writing, but rather to attempt to go deep into his roots, drawing on his love of the rustic melodies and rhythms which inspired him throughout his life. Thus I made use of folk music from Masovia [Mazowsze], the central part of Poland where Chopin was born.

Throughout each of the colourful five movements of this spirited and spiritual composition, the line of the music is interwoven between the flute soloist and the string accompaniment. The work is designed symmetrically, both in metre and tempo.

Camilla Jessel Panufnik

Igor Cecocho

Igor Cecocho graduated from the Belarus Academy of Music, where he studied with N. Volkov. Between 1979 and 1990 he was soloist of the Minsk Bolshoy Theatre Symphony Orchestra and from 1986 to 1990 a lecturer at the Belarus Academy of Music. He is a laureate of several trumpet competitions, and a prize-winner at the International Competition in Daugavpils, Latvia, in 1983. Since 1990 Igor Cecocho has taught the trumpet at the Academy of Music in Wrocław, and since 1992 he has been a soloist with the Wrocław Philharmonic. He has appeared as soloist with a number of orchestras in Poland and abroad, playing both modern and historical trumpets. He is also an active chamber musician and leader of the Wratislavia Trumpet Consort.

Hanna Turonek

Hanna Turonek, was born in Warsaw, and studied there at the Fryderyk Chopin Academy, where she took her master's degree in flute in 1989. During her studies she took part in solo concerts and many international music festivals, including the 1987 Flute Symposium in Freiburg im Breisgau, with artists such as Jean-Pierre Rampal, Robert Aitken, and Aurèle Nicolet, the Warsaw Autumn Music Festival in 1987, 1988, 1990, and 1992, the 1991 Berliner Bach Tage, the 1993 Quakenbruck Musiktage, the Sixtieth Festival de Musique in Strasbourg in 1998, and the 1998 Lipsk MDR Musiksommer. She has been the recipient of honourable mentions and special prizes in a number of international flute competitions and since 1988 has played in the Sinfonia Varsovia, receiving the title of Soloist in 1991. She has also played with such orchestras as the Warsaw Philharmonic, the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Warsaw and with Justus Franz's Philharmonie der Nationen. As a soloist she has collaborated with the baroque orchestra Concerto Avenna, the Koszalin Philharmonic, the Słupsk Chamber Orchestra and the Białystok Chamber Orchestra.

Polish Chamber Orchestra

The Polish Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1972, originally as an orchestra for opera. Under the leadership of Jerzy Maksymiuk it underwent such rapid artistic development that soon it left the orchestra pit and was able to dedicate itself exclusively to the performance of concert music. The orchestra became independent. Years of work with talented young musicians, under a conductor who was just as young, and the orchestra's manager Franciszek Wybrańczyk, brought impressive results, and the orchestra quickly won renown as one of the most interesting chamber ensembles. The orchestra's first appearance abroad in 1978 began a new period in its career and concert tours in Tokyo, New York, London and Rome, among others, have been impressively successful. Soloists with the orchestra have included James Galway, Henryk Szeryng, Kiri Te Kanawa, Gideon Kremer, Yehudi Menuhin, Martha Argerich, and among its conductors have been Jerzy Maksymiuk, Charles Dutoit, Yehudi Menuhin, Leopold Hager, Hans Graf, and Mstislav Rostropovich. The Polish Chamber Orchestra has made numerous recordings for record companies, radio and television. It has also recorded a videocassette of a concert dedicated to Pope John Paul II. The Polish Chamber Orchestra holds such awards as Warsaw Autumn's *Orpheus*, and has also received prestigious prizes at the Poznań Spring festival, as well as the Vienna Flötenuhr for its recordings of Mozart, and others. Without a permanent conductor, it invited the legendary violinist Nigel Kennedy to take over as Artistic Director in March 2002. Since 1982 the Polish Chamber Orchestra has been part of the Studio Art Centre in Warsaw.



Photograph: Danny Izzo

Mariusz Smolij is considered one of the most exciting conductors of his generation. Praised by the international press, he has led over eighty orchestras on four continents, appearing in some of the most prestigious concert halls of the world. He is in his fourth season as the Music Director of the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra in Lafayette, Louisiana and his eleventh season as the Music Director of the Riverside Symphonia in New Jersey. Between 2000 and 2003, at the invitation of Christoph Eschenbach, he served as the Resident Conductor of the Houston Symphony, where he led the orchestra in over a hundred concerts, presenting an impressive and wide gamut of orchestral repertoire. He served as the assistant conductor of the New Jersey Symphony

Orchestra (1994-1997) where he led the ensemble in over one hundred and twenty performances. Mariusz Smolij served on the faculty of the School of Music at Northwestern University in Chicago-Evanston as a professor of conducting and director of the chamber orchestra from 1996 to 2000. At that time he was the youngest full-time conducting faculty member among the top conservatories and universities in North America. In Europe he is closely associated with one of Eastern Europe's most renowned orchestras, the Wrocław (Breslau) Philharmonic in Poland. He has been credited with restructuring the orchestra's operations and its artistic season and with introducing innovative artistic concepts as well as new repertoire. Between 2002 and 2004 he presided over the International Festival Wratislavia Cantans. The American Symphony Orchestra League in New York City named him in the prestigious list of the most promising young conductors in America and featured him during its special Conductors Preview. Born near the Polish city of Katowice, Mariusz Smolij is an accomplished violinist and was the founder and violinist of the internationally recognized Penderecki String Quartet, performing and recording with this ensemble in Poland, Germany, France, Italy and the United States. After training in Europe he studied conducting in the United States, earning a doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music.

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This disc contains all of Panufnik's post-war reconstructions of early Polish music originally written between the 14th and 18th centuries. Of these works the composer himself wrote: "My compulsion to restore some of the early Polish music was engendered as I witnessed the superb reconstruction of beautiful 16th and 17th century houses in the old part of Warsaw... My intention was to bring alive the spirit of Poland at that time, and to make use of these precious fragments which otherwise would have remained lifeless on the bookshelves of libraries..." The disc concludes with *Hommage à Chopin*, in which the composer draws on the folk music of Masovice, the region in central Poland where Chopin was born.

Sir Andrzej PANUFNIK

(1914-1991)

**WORLD PREMIERE
RECORDINGS**

Old Polish Suite for string orchestra	10:16	Old Polish Music: Divertimento after Janiewicz	11:31
1 Dance I ("Cenar" – Allegro giusto)	1:57	10 Allegro moderato	4:06
2 Interlude (Lento espressivo)	1:52	11 Andante	3:35
3 Dance II ("Wyrwany" – Allegretto leggero)	2:33	12 Allegro	3:50
4 Chorale (Andante tranquillo)	2:03	Hommage à Chopin: Five pieces for Flute and String Orchestra†	13:10
5 Dance III ("Hayduk" – Allegro deciso)	1:53	13 Andante	3:24
6 Concerto in Modo Antico*	14:13	14 Allegretto	1:37
Jagiellonian Triptych for string orchestra	8:47	15 Andantino	2:22
7 Preambulum (Vivace)	2:01	16 Vivo	2:28
8 Cantio (Adagietto)	3:23	17 Andante	3:20
9 Chorea polonica (Allegro non troppo)	3:23		

Tracks **1-9** are World Première Recordings

Igor Cechoco, Trumpet* • Hanna Turonek, Flute†
Polish Chamber Orchestra • Mariusz Smolij

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