

CANADIAN POLISH CONGRESS
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
POLISH CULTURE SOCIETY OF EDMONTON
present

The
Silesian

String
Quartet



SUNDAY,
12 MAY 1991
8:00 pm

CONVOCATION HALL
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



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Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933). Polish composer and conductor. His teachers include Artur Malawski and Stanislaw Wiechowicz. Penderecki is considered to be one of the exponents of the so called Polish School of Composers. First, he belonged to the group of avant-garde artists exploring timbral possibilities of acoustic instruments. In early 60's, he wrote a series of works which, in some respects, were the most acoustically shocking music ever written. Then, he switched to the more traditional style. His *St. Luke Passion* is a great synthesis of the 20th century compositional techniques, with certain references to the music of Middle Ages and Renaissance. His opera in two acts, *Paradise Lost* (after Milton), was composed on the commission to celebrate the bicentennial of the United States and then produced in Chicago, New York (Metropolitan Opera), and Milan (Teatro alla Scala).

Major works: operas - *The Devils of Loudun* (1968 -1969), *Paradise Lost* (1976 - 1978), *The Black Mask* (1987); orchestra - *Emanations* (1958), *Anaklasis* (1960), *Threnody* (1960), *Polymorphia* (1961), *Fluorescences* (1961), *Canon* (1961), *Sonata for 'cello and orchestra* (1964), *De natura sonoris I & II* (1966, 1971, respectively), *Actions* (1971), *'Cello Concerto* (1972), *Ist Symphony* (1973), *The Dream of Jacob* (1974), *Violin Concerto* (1976), *IInd Symphony* (1980); voices (chorus) and orchestra - *Psalms of David* (1958), *Strophes* (1959), *Dimensions of time and silence* (1960), *Stabat Mater* (1963), *St. Luke Passion* (1963 - 1966), *Dies Irae* (1967), *Utrenja* (1969 - 1971), *Kosmogonia* (1970), *Canticum Canticorum Salomonis* (1973), *Magnificat* (1974), *Te Deum* (1979), *Polish Requiem* (1985); chamber works - two string quartets (1960, 1968), *Capriccio per Siegfried Palm* (1968), string trio (1990).

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Alfred Joel Fisher (born 1942). Composer, pianist, writer. He taught at the University of Western Ontario, Acadia University and now teaches composition and theory of music at the University of Alberta. His pieces have been performed in Canada, the USA, Europe (Great Britain, Ireland, Holland, Poland), Israel, New Zealand, Australia, Japan and other countries.

He has published essays and articles in periodicals such as Alberta Psychology, Canadian Journal of Native Studies, Canadian University Music Review and others.

In May of 1991, Dr. Fisher was invited to lecture at major Polish Academies of Music in Warsaw, Cracow, Katowice and Wroclaw.

Major works: opera-cabaret *Wanderers*; orchestra: *Warrior, Morning: Peniel, Elegiac Variations* for 'cello and orchestra; chamber music: *The Owl at Dusk* for soprano and chamber ensemble, *Small Worlds* for string trio, *Zakhor: Remember* for baritone and piano, *Time Prisms* for chamber ensemble, *Cry Wolf* for male low voice and instrumental ensemble, *Six Fantasy Pieces* for piano, *In Darkness* for 'cello solo, *Ancient Love* for mixed choir a cappella, *Tour de France* for alto saxophone and piano.

Karol Szymanowski (1882 - 1937). Polish composer, pianist and writer. His teachers include H. Neuhaus and Z. Noskowski. His artistic activity should be divided into three periods. First, Szymanowski wrote a series of works reflecting his attraction to music of Richard Strauss and other German Romantics. Then, he developed a unique, deeply emotional and unbelievably imaginative style, influenced by Impressionists. At that time he experimented with polytonality, atonality, microtonality, rhythm and gestural units. The third, synthetic period, is characterized by his fascination with Polish folklore, especially of the Tatra mountaineers. The Karol Szymanowski Festival, devoted entirely to his music, took place in London, England, in the summer of 1990.



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Major works: operas - *Hagith* (1912 - 1913), *King Roger* (1920 - 1924); ballets - *Mandragora* (1920), *Harnasie* (1926); orchestra - *Concert Overture* (1905), *Symphony No. 1* (1907), *Symphony No. 2* (1908), *Symphony No. 3 Song of the Night* for voice (either soprano or tenor) and orchestra (1914 - 1916), *Violin Concerto No. 1* (1916), *Symphonie Concertante* for piano and orchestra (1931 - 1932), *Violin Concerto No. 2* (1932 - 1933); voice (chorus) and orchestra - *Penthesilea* (1907), *Demeter* (1917), *Agawa* (1917), *Stabat Mater* (1926), *Veni Creator* (1929), *Litany of the Virgin Mary* (1930 - 1933); chamber music - *Violin Sonata* (1904), *Romance* for violin and piano (1909), *Myths* for violin and piano (1915), *String Quartet No. 1* (1917), *String Quartet No. 2* (1927), *Berceuse d'Aitacho Enia* (1935); piano - *Preludes* (1900), *Variations* (1901), *Sonata No. 1* (1905), *Sonata No. 2* (1909), *Sonata No. 3* (1917), *Metopes* (1915), *Masks* (1916), *20 Mazurkas* (1924 - 1926), *2 Mazurkas* (1934); vocal (chamber) music - *Słowieńie* (1922), *12 Kurpian Songs* (1930).

Grazyna Bacewicz (1913 - 1969). Polish composer and violinist. She studied in Warsaw (with Kazimierz Sikorski and violin with J. Jarzebski) and Paris (with Nadia Boulanger, A. Touret and K. Flesh). Considered one of the best (if not the best!) female composers in the history of music, she left a large number of works of rare quality.

Major works: opera - radio opera *King Arthur*, ballet - *Desire* (after Picasso); orchestra - four symphonies, *Music for strings, trumpets and percussion*, *Musica sinfonica in tre movimenti*, *Pensieri notturni*, *Concerto* for orchestra, seven violin concertos, *Viola Concerto*; chamber music - seven string quartets, series of sonatas for violin and piano (here *Sonata No. 4* is of particular interest).

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Maurice Ravel (1875 - 1937). French composer and pianist. He studied with Charles Wilfrid de Beriot and Gabriel Faure. He is conveniently classified as an "impressionist" although his personal style differs a lot from that of, let's say, Debussy. Throughout his life, Ravel showed admiration for such composers as Mussorgsky, Chabrier, Strauss and Satie and was influenced by folk music of the Basque region (where he was born) and, later on, by early jazz. His music is characterized by great clarity of texture and purity of form (his famous Bolero is a very good example here). Ravel is, first of all, a master of orchestral music. He also wrote a series of magnificent, prophetic pieces for piano.

Major works: operas - *L'Heure espagnole* (1907), *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (1924 - 1925); ballets - *Daphnis et Chloe* (1909 - 1911), *Bolero* (1928); orchestra - *Rapsodie espagnole* (1907), *Pavane pour une infante defunte* (1910), *Ma Mere l'oye* (1911), *Daphnis et Chloe*, Suites No.1 and No.2 (1911 and 1912, respectively), *Valses nobles et sentimentales* (1912), *Alborada del gracioso* (1912), *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1919), *La Valse* (1919 - 1920), *Piano Concerto* for left hand (1931), *Piano Concerto in G* (1931); voice(s) and orchestra (chamber ensembles) - *Sheherazade* (1903), *Trois Poemes de Stephane Mallarme* (1913), *Chansons madecasses* (1925 - 1927); chamber music - *String Quartet* (1902 - 1903), *Sonata* for violin and piano (1920 - 1922), *Tzigane* for violin and piano (1924), *Violin sonata* (1923 - 1927); piano - *Pavane pour une infante defunte* (1899), *Jeux d'eau* (1901), *Miroirs* (1905), *Ma Mere l'oye* (1908), *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1908), *Valses nobles et sentimentales* (1911 - 1913), *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1917).



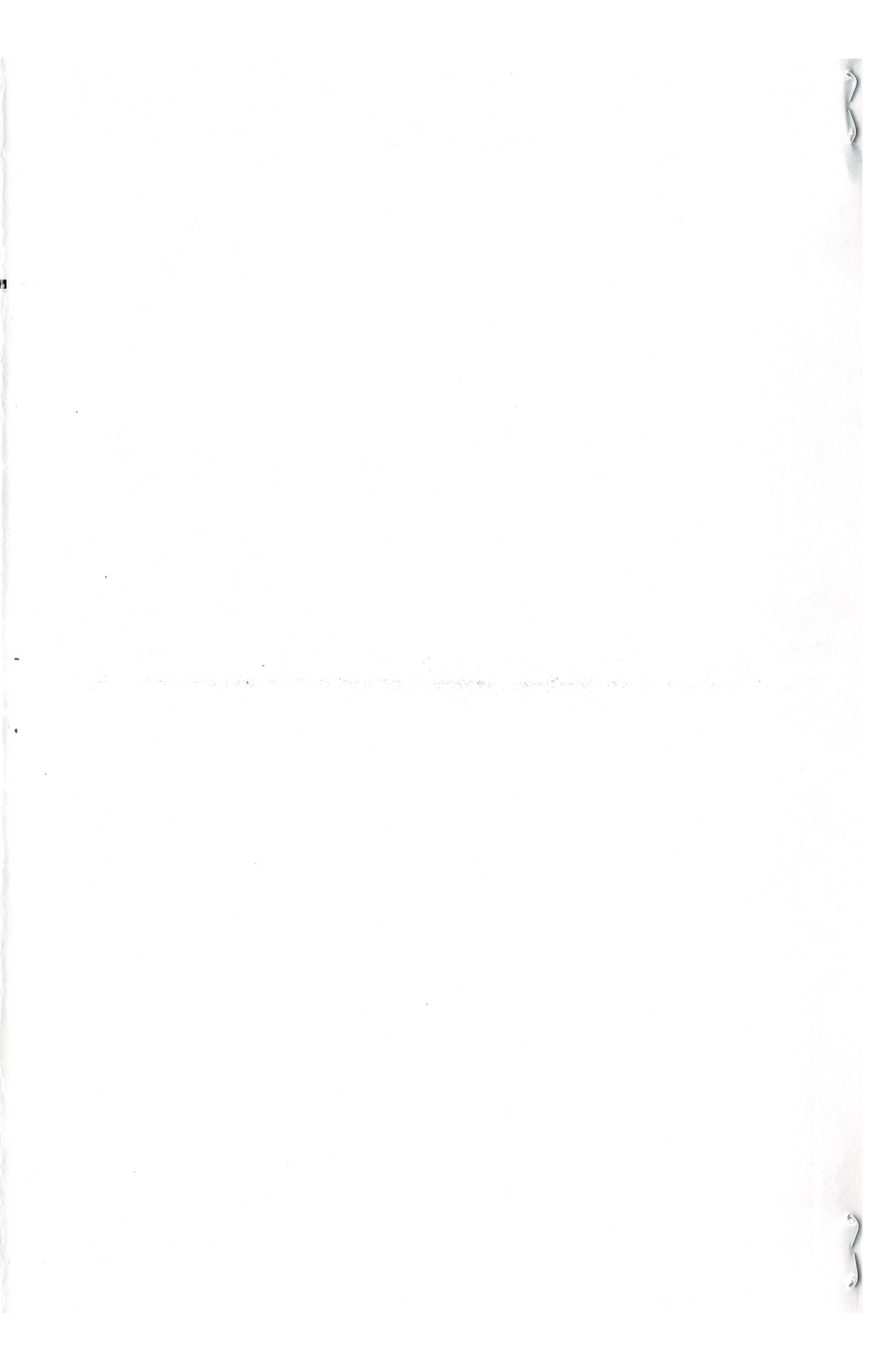
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The Silesian String Quartet was founded in 1978 by students of the Karol Szymanowski Conservatory of Music. Since then the musicians have established themselves as one of the leading European ensembles. Their repertoire embodies works of virtually every period of the quartet music, including compositions by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Debussy, Ravel, Ives, Bartok, Shostakovich, Stravinsky and contemporary artists (they play over one hundred scores of the 20th century alone!). So far, they have performed in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Italy, Japan, the Soviet Union and Sweden. The quartet have appeared at major world's festivals such as Berliner Musiktage, Bologna Festival, Holland Festival, The Poznan Music Spring, The Warsaw Fall Festival and many others. The quartet won awards in Krakow (1979), Poznan (1981) and Paris (1984, the first prize at the UNESCO Tribune of Composers for their interpretation of the String Quartet No.1 by Eugeniusz Knapik). The Silesian String Quartet is recording for the Polish record company Polskie Nagrania and the Dutch label Etcetera.

They are coming to Canada with only one concert. They hope it will result in closer cooperation with Canadian composers. So far, they have three Canadian works in their repertoire, two of them by the Edmonton's own Dr. Alfred Fisher. This concert in Edmonton will be their North American debut.

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Marek Mos.....	1st Violin
Roland Orlik.....	2nd Violin
Lukasz Syrnicki.....	Viola
Piotr Janosik.....	'Cello



PROGRAMME

Krzysztof Penderecki.....String Trio* 2

Alfred Joel Fisher.....Small Worlds, String Trio 4

Karol Szymanowski.....2nd String Quartet 1

Grazyna Bacewicz.....4th String Quartet 3

Maurice Ravel.....String Quartet 5

intermission

* North American Premiere

Photography: Zbigniew Furman

Text: Piotr Grela

Design: Barbara Krzymien