

IGNAZ RITTER VON SEYFRIED

Missa solemnis in B minor
cum Veni Sancte Spiritus, Graduale et Offertorio



Justyna Stępień soprano
Ewa Mikulska alto
Krzysztof Machowski tenor
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The Artur Malawski Philharmonic Orchestra in Rzeszów
Archdiocesan Choir 'Magnificat' of Przemyśl
Choir of the Music Department of Rzeszów University
Fr Mieczysław Gniady conductor



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Missa solemnis in B minor

cum Veni Sancte Spiritus, Graduale et Offertorio (1830)

arr/ Fr Mieczysław GNIADY

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Choir of the Music Department of Rzeszów University / choirmaster: Bożena STASIOWSKA-CHROBAK

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IGNAZ RITTER VON SEYFRIED – HIS LIFE AND WORK

Ignaz Ritter von Seyfried was born in Vienna on 15 August 1776 as the first of the three sons of Joseph Seyfried and his wife Maria Anna née Wess in a house located at 621 Goldener Greif (now 3 Rothenthurmstrasse). At the christening ceremony, which was held on the same day at the city's St Stephen's Cathedral, he was given the following names: Ignatius Joseph Maria Franciscus de Paula. The well-known wholesaler Melchior Peter was his godfather. Seyfried's father worked initially as an apothecary at the Viennese court and then as a counsellor at the court of Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe-Schilling. In 1788, by the decision of Emperor Joseph II, he was raised to the nobility.

Seyfried had many siblings. According to his autobiography, of the twenty children in the family, however, only four reached maturity: Ignaz's two brothers Joseph and Franz, and one sister, whose name the composer failed to mention. Franz worked in the town hall while Joseph was a long standing editor of the periodical 'Der Wanderer' and made a name also as a talented librettist and translator from French. In view of the fact that both Franz and Ignaz had professional contacts with the Viennese theatre, they were often mistaken for one another.

Years of childhood, adolescence and studies

On 23 December 1780, the four-year-old Ignaz contracted smallpox and lost his eyesight. He regained the ability to see on 1 February of the following year and even though he was a small boy the happy moment of recovery kept coming back in his thoughts. The disease resulted, however, in permanent damage to his health. Indeed, he battled against ill-health until the end of his life. Not only did he have scars on his face but also had to wear glasses from young age due to acute short-sightedness and spoke in a low and hoarse voice because of a throat defect.

This is how Seyfried described his childhood: "As far back as I can remember, I was quiet, polite and agreeable. I never came into conflict with any of my friends and I was never subjected to corporal punishment. I studied eagerly and diligently, and I used to finish my assignments ahead of schedule so that to have an hour of free time to abandon myself to play with other children in the garden. I was particularly delighted with the sight of the dragon of my own construction, which could raise from the ground and spin round towards the sky."

In 1783, at the age of seven Ignaz started regular musical studies. In the same year the father bought an upright of the Vienna-based Walthersch company. His first teacher was one Schubert, possibly an ancestor of Franz Schubert. The programme of studies included flute, violin, viola and cello. Seyfried was not particularly keen on any of these instruments, however, and preferred to spend all his free time at the piano. In addition, he took organ lessons from Joseph Hayda, who also taught him basso continuo, score reading and singing. As a reward for his hard work Seyfried was given the opportunity to play the organ during a Sunday mass at the city's Minoritenkirche. Seyfried also studied with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who was a friend of the family. After Mozart's death, he continued his musical education, most probably for a year, as a student of Leopold Koželuch. According to the German composer Hans Michael Schletterer, Seyfried received an excellent education, both general and musical.

Soon after Mozart's death, probably in 1792, Seyfried went to Prague, where he enrolled at the faculty of philosophy at the city's university. He lost no time in making contact with local musical circles and resumed his piano studies (with František Dušek), making friends with such acclaimed musicians and composers as Václav Jan Tomášek, Václav Vincenc Mašek, Jan August Vitásek and Jan Antonín Koželuch. He established a particularly warm relationship with the director of Prague Conservatory, Dionysius Weber. Their friendship lasted their whole lives and resulted in Seyfried's fairly frequent stays in Prague.

There is no precise information as to the duration of Seyfried's studies in the city. According to the two letters to his mother dating from 1794, he stayed there for two years and passed many exams between January and March 1794 (there are no details relating to the kind of exams). In the same year he returned to Vienna to study law at the city's University in the academic year 1795/96. A law diploma was required to start a professional career as a civil servant. In his letter, Seyfried reveals that he was close to gaining a doctorate in law. Having passed two *rigorosa*, he resolved to devote himself entirely to music before taking the third and final exam. This decision was surely prompted by his successes in piano performance and composition. His work *Die Wunderquelle* won him recognition in Viennese musical circles. At that time Seyfried became friends with the Kappelmeister at the Bavarian court, Peter von Winter. Having appreciated Seyfried's outstanding talent, he introduced him into the art of writing music for the stage and convinced his father that he should make music his vocation in life, assuring him that he would face a successful career. Winter's efforts to win the approval of Seyfried's father were supported by Albrechtsberger, Henneberg and Schikaneder, who wanted Seyfried to take the position of Kappelmeister at their Freihaustheater auf der Wieden. Seyfried's biographer, August Schmidt, claims that it was largely thanks to them that he gave up law and embarked on a musical career.

Work for the theatre

On 1 March 1797, at the age of 21, as a result of Winter's intercession with Schikaneder, Seyfried signed a six-year contract as Kappelmeister of the Freihaustheater auf der Wieden. During this period, his compositional career took. Seyfried started with musical miniatures to an occasional play marking the Treaty of Campo Formio. 15 July 1797 saw the premiere at the Freihaustheater of his first opera, *Der Löwenbrunnen* (with a text by Schikaneder), which won high critical acclaim and had many other successful productions in other venues. Seyfried also wrote songs, some of which were published. In 1798, at Winter's prompting, he penned a hunting overture, an arietta for two choirs, songs to the parody *Agnes Bernauer*, the singspiel *Der Feenkönig* and the first act of the operetta *Das Jägermädchen*. Seyfried's first major composition was the opera *Der Wundermann am Rheinfall* (1799). It was met with great enthusiasm. None other than Haydn himself wrote Seyfried a complimentary letter. As the composer wrote in his autobiography, after the premiere of the opera, Schikaneder, the author of the libretto, introduced him to the audience, said some warm words of thanks on his behalf and appealed for a friendly approach to the young, budding composer. In 1801 Schikaneder moved his theatre to a new seat and renamed it as Theater an der Wien. Seyfried's works had almost 1,700 performances there, his greatest successes, with both the critics and audiences, including his biblical music dramas, such as *Saul, König von Israel* (1810) and *Abraham* (1817).

Despite the successes Seyfried continued to develop his compositional skills and spent much time on analysing the scores of such great composers as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Joseph Haydn, Johann Sebastian Bach, Peter von Winter, Carl Heinrich Graun, Georg Friedrich Händel, Giovanni Paisiello, Domenico Cimarosa and Ludwig van Beethoven. He was on friendly terms with Beethoven, whose opera *Fidelio* and the overture *Egmont* he conducted at their premieres in 1805. Seyfried is also the author of a study on Beethoven's oeuvre. Even though the musicologist Martin Gustav Nottebohm (1817–1882) claimed that it was of little merit, it is worthy of attention, if only because of Seyfried's personal reminiscences of Beethoven.

On 6 August 1804 Ignaz Ritter Seyfried married Ludwika Schöning. During the thirteen-year-long marriage they had twelve children, only three of whom reached maturity. On 23 December 1814 the composer lost his father, who died from an acute distress caused by the loss of a considerable part of his fortune resulting from the change of the currency exchange rate. The father's death proved to be a very painful experience for Seyfried, who fell into a nervous breakdown.

Less than three years later, on 16 July 1817, he experienced another personal tragedy – the death of his wife. He decided to send their two daughters to a boarding school, while their son, Fritz enrolled in secondary school at the Benedictine Abbey in Melk. Upon graduation, in 1827, he entered the Benedictine, assumed the name of Leopold. From that time onwards, Seyfried maintained close contacts with the Abbey in Melk, furnishing it with numerous religious compositions.

Once his children became independent, Seyfried was left alone, finding his only consolation in music. This allowed him not to be totally preoccupied with his mounting health problems. These included acute stomach pain, which plagued him from the time of his work at the Theater an der Wien until the end of his life. The doctors were unable to diagnose the disease accurately and the various therapies which they applied proved ineffective. In 1823 the disease worsened so much that Seyfried found himself on the brink of death. This time, too, however, as after his father's death, he displayed fortitude and willpower and despite ill health took part in the rehearsal of his Singspiel *Die Ochsenmennette*, thus demonstrating to Vienna's musical world that he was still a figure to be reckoned with. The recurrences of the disease eventually forced him to go to the spa of Carlsbad for treatment. According to his autobiography and the letters to his brother, Joseph, he went there at the end of June 1824, with a stopover in Prague for a meeting with his friend Dionysius Weber. In Carlsbad, Seyfried met many of his old acquaintances, including Ignaz Moscheles and Jan August Vitásek. Disappointed with the lack of any positive effects of treatment, in August 1824 he returned to Vienna, totally exhausted, feeling even worse than before. This time, too, it took him many months to recuperate.

But soon new problems and adversities appeared. As was feared for a long time, on 1 May 1825 the Theater an der Wien was closed indefinitely. For Seyfried, who had to contend with financial problems arising from the high costs of treatment, this was a serious blow, all the more so that his ongoing battle against ill health entailed more expenditures. Fortunately, Doctor Menz's homeopathic therapy proved effective. The composer's condition improved considerably and he could again devote himself to music.

In anticipation of the problems of the Theater an der Wien, still before its closure Seyfried addressed a letter to Carl Maria von Weber, the director of Dresden Opera, offering his services as a church musician. He cited his weak health

and difficult financial situation as a justification for his request, adding that he would terminate his contract in Vienna with the commencement of a new assignment in Dresden. In a letter to Seyfried, dated 29 December 1823, Weber asked the composer whether he was indeed ready to leave Vienna and whether this would have a positive influence on his financial situation. In the same period Seyfried was offered a position in Hamburg from the director of the theatre there, one Lenz. In the end Seyfried decided to remain in Vienna in order to be close to his aging mother. He could have also hoped that he would eventually find a satisfying job there.

With the closure of the Theater an der Wien, his contract with the theatre came to an end. In November 1825 the theatre resumed its activity and its new director, Carl Carlem, offered Seyfried the post of Kappellmeister, but in a different capacity. This is how Seyfried described this period in his life: "My duties as acting Kappellmeister (there was no talk of opera at all) included no more than conducting the musicians behind the stage, selecting interludes and marches to be performed in the intervals, and directing a choir of trumpeters standing next to the group of swollen-headed drummer-boys and *altera odiosa*. Truly, the most charming, noble and honourable occupation; very peculiar for someone accustomed to do better things."

Following the death of Antonio Salieri on 7 May 1825, Seyfried, alongside Franz Schubert, Konradin Kreutzer, Anselm Hüttenbrenner and four other musicians, made efforts to assume the post of court Vice-Kappellmeister. He was interceded in his efforts by Joseph Leopold Eybler. It was all in vain, however, as the post went to Joseph Weigl, who, even though already past retirement age, had four decades of service at the court behind him, something that gave him an advantage over all the other candidates.

Seyfried concluded his work for the Theater an der Wien in April 1826. Later, he penned several operas but as of 1827 he embarked on a new working routine, dictated by the increasingly frail health. He composed almost solely religious music and very rarely appeared as conductor, earning his living mainly by writing articles and giving music lessons.

Last years

At the end of 1827 and the beginning of the following year Seyfried's health problems deteriorated again. The composer's autobiography contains a detailed account of the progress of the disease. After numerous courses of treatment failed to bring any improvement, the diagnosis left no illusions. It was an incurable stomach cancer. Seyfried was in severe pain and expected imminent death. But it proved slow in coming. The composer had to stay indoors for eighteen months. He himself likened his plight to that of a prisoner. The 'Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung' even published a premature obituary for the composer, which was promptly denied in the 'Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung Leipzig'. In 1831 his condition improved so much that he appeared in public, conducting his mass. It was an event widely reported in the Viennese press. There is little information relating to the composer's financial situation at the time. He received an inheritance after his father's death but due to the devaluation it accounted for a small share of his savings. On leaving the Theater an der Wien in 1826, after three decades of work, he was assigned a pension. It was most probably rather modest; hence the composer's activity as an author of articles and music teacher. The latter occupation did not bring him the expected remuneration, however, because of a falling number of pupils in the wake of the cholera epidemic in Vienna. Seyfried was not spared very painful personal losses, too, as among the victims of the epidemic were one of his daughters, Maria, and two close friends, Baron Joseph Pasqualati and the distinguished patron of the arts Ferdinand Piringer.

On 15 August 1831 Seyfried went to the Benedictine Abbey in Melk for the first mass said by his son Leopold. He wrote the *Missa solennis in B minor* specially for the occasion as a gift for him. The work was performed during the celebrations under the composer's direction. Straight after the solemn event Seyfried returned to Vienna, suffering from an acute headache and vertigo. He feared it could be a belated effect of the cholera epidemic. He proved right but fortunately the disease was diagnosed in its early stage and thanks to immediate medical help and the care extended by doctor Marquet, Seyfried recovered after eight months. During this difficult period, he experienced yet another personal tragedy – the death of his eighty-three-year-old mother.

In 1831 the composer realized that the payment of his pension became irregular. Almost four decades earlier he entrusted his financial matters to his brother Joseph. It turned out, however, that he made ill-fated investment decisions and failed to secure Ignaz's wealth properly. As a result, Seyfried's entire savings, which amounted to 8,000 guilders, diminished greatly by 1833, so much so that he was forced to move out of the apartment which he had occupied for twenty years and rent a smaller one.

Seyfried awaited the end of his life with a great deal of patience and peace of mind. He wrote in his autobiography that from the first serious stage of the disease and after increasingly frequent recurrences of its symptoms,

particularly in the years 1827–1829, he was convinced that the end was imminent. Aware of this, he placed himself under the protection of the Church, which, to use his own words, provided him with a refuge and allowed him to work *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. Providence, however, had a different plan for his life. Seyfried lived until 26 August 1841, battling against mounting suffering. His mood became melancholy but he remained cheerful until the end. His biographer quoted from an article published in Vienna's periodicals by Joseph Kumlick, Honorary Kappellmeister of the Municipal Union and professor of the Royal Music School in Pressburg, entitled 'A composer's last wish'. In it, he described his meeting with Seyfried on 18 August, that is several days before his death. The composer was delighted with the idea of performing his *Requiem in A flat major* in Pressburg and, in a gesture of a loving father, placed a roll of sheet music, probably of the *Requiem*, in Kumlick's hands.

Seyfried's death and funeral

Seyfried finished writing his autobiography on 15 August 1841, on his 65th birthday, eleven days before his death. It ended with the following remarks: "And so I put down my pen again. It is in God's hands whether I will ever reach for it. 15 August 1841, on the hour in which 65 years ago I entered into life. Seyfried".

Indeed, the composer did not reach for his pen any more. Several days later arthritis attacked his stomach, the weakest part of his organism. Even though his condition was deteriorating, the awareness of imminent death did not cast him into despair. On the contrary, he was in an almost cheerful mood, awaiting death in a truly Christian spirit.

He sorted out all his affairs with an admirable decorum and prudence. He returned by post to August Schmidt the materials which he used in writing an article for the 'Kunsthändler' daily and handed over his autobiography to his friend Tobias Haslinger, making him an executor of his last will. He also discussed with him the planned performance of his Requiem, gave him a detailed account of his disease, made a list of all the associations to which he belonged and even asked for a piece of paper and pen to write his own obituary.

In the composer's biography published seven years after his death, Schmidt described Seyfried's last days as follows: "The fortitude which Seyfried demonstrated while preparing himself for death testified to his irreproachable and unwavering character. He had a clean conscience, his noble soul was not burdened by any guilt, and when he was closing his tired eyes not to open them again here on earth, he was dying a death of a righteous man. His passing away caused a big stir in the capital. Among the many artists there was not a single one who would not mourn him with a sincere heart, and the large number of people attending the funeral celebration reflected the artists' attachment to the universally respected composer."

Seyfried died on 26 August 1841. The obituaries were published in several Viennese dailies. The most extensive one appeared in three successive editions of the 'Allgemeine Wiener Musik-Zeitung'. It was written by its editor August Schmidt: "On 26 August, between 9.45 and 10 pm, Kappellmeister, knight Ignaz v. Seyfried passed away. His old disease attacked the noble parts of his body, the ultimate cause of death being, according to the doctors, the paralysis of the lungs. His death is a profound loss for the arts. We are filled with sorrow after the death of our long-standing contributor."

Extensive obituaries were also published in 'Der Wanderer' and 'Der Wiener Zuschauer'. All the obituaries expressed great appreciation for Seyfried and his musical output. The 'Österreichisches Morgenblatt' of 1 September 1841 reported on the funeral ceremony: "Last Sunday, at half past five in the afternoon, Ignaz Ritter von Seyfried, a professor of musical art, Kappellmeister, former director of the opera, a very distinguished and esteemed corresponding member of many national and foreign music associations, was laid to rest."

Prior to the arrival of the clergy, numerous outstanding personalities from the musical world and other fields of the arts, his friends and Viennese music lovers gathered in the composer's apartment to bid farewell to him. As the cortege proceeded towards St Ulrich's Church, a men's choir with the accompaniment of four trombones performed the *Miserere*, which Seyfried composed for Beethoven's funeral, whereas in the church the choir sang Seyfried's *Libera* and the funeral motet *Seligkeit im Tode* with the accompaniment of an instrumental ensemble. After a solemn requiem service which was celebrated by many priests, the body of the deceased was transported to the new Währing cemetery, where, amidst funereal singing, it was placed in the grave, vis à vis the tombs of Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert.

In his account, Schmidt also mentions the location of the composer's grave: "The remains of Seyfried rest in the grave vis à vis the memorials to Beethoven and Schubert. All those who pay tribute to the great Beethoven by visiting his grave and shed a tear at the memorial to the German father of the song – Schubert, shall also stop by the tombstone of Seyfried and think about this tireless labourer in the garden of the arts."

Seyfried belonged to numerous musical associations. He was an honorary member of the Gesellschaft der Musik (from 1826), an extraordinary member of the Kirchenmusikvereins zu St. Anna (from 1826), an honorary member of the

Swedish Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm (from 1833), a corresponding member of the Royal Academy in Paris, and a member of the Union of Church Music in Pressburg (from 1833) and of the Netherlandish Union of Music in Rotterdam. In 1841 he received the Prussian Gold Medal of Merit for the Arts and Sciences. He also held other distinctions for the promotion of church music and contribution to its development, including those from the Bohemian Society of the Friends of the Arts and the Unions of Church Music at Vienna's Schottenfeld and Allservorstadt.

Father Mieczysław Gniady

MISSA SOLEMNIS IN B MINOR
BY IGNAZ RITTER VON SEYFRIED

Seyfried's legacy comprises 332 compositions: operas, melodramas, Singspiels, incidental music for the theatre, symphonies concertos, songs and chamber works. Sacred music constitutes an important part of his oeuvre, including five oratorios, four requiem settings, cantatas, psalms, 16 masses and numerous arrangements of religious works by Mozart, Handel, Palestrina and other composers.

Missa solemnis in B minor occupies a prominent place among Seyfried's masses. It was written in 1830 for the first mass celebrated by his son, Father Leopold, at the Benedictine Abbey in Melk. Page 2 of the manuscript contains the following dedication: *Missa solemnis ad festum primitiarum filii mei Leopoldi in perillustri monasterio Mellicensi, die 15 augusti, anno Domini 1831. Seyfried* (Missa solemnis for the first mass of my son Leopold in the distinguished abbey in Melk 15 August 1831). The work had its premiere at the abbey on 15 August 1831 during the mass celebrated by Father Leopold, with the composer conducting. The same mass, or its fragments, was performed at the same venue, also under Seyfried's baton, ten years later, to mark the 50th anniversary of the abbot's ordination.

Missa solemnis in B minor is scored for four solo voices, mixed choir and symphony orchestra. It consists of 16 sections, 13 of which constitute the ordinary of the mass and the remaining three the proper: *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, *Graduale (Assumpta est Maria)* and *Offertorium (Ave Maria)*. What is somewhat striking is the lack of the *Communio*. Perhaps the composer did not manage to write it because he was ill or because he thought of including Gregorian chant instead or some other piece, possibly Mozart's *Ave verum*.

The manuscript of the *Missa solemnis in B minor* is kept in the Austrian national Library in Vienna (catalogue number Mus.Hs. 37621–37624). It contains the composer's signatures on the front cover and inside of the title page, which also bears the dedication. The number of surviving copies of the manuscript remains unknown. One copy was discovered in the Polish city of Lublin. Several years ago, a woman who lived there paid a visit to Professor Kazimierz Górski, a prominent conductor and musicologist, the supervisor of my doctoral dissertation. She brought with her a pile of old sheet music which she came across while cleaning the attic, asking him to keep it or destroy it. As it turned out, among much music of little merit there was a copy of the manuscript of Seyfried's *Missa solemnis in B minor*. It was in excellent shape, in hard cover, A3 size. Having looked through the score, the professor instantly realized that what he had in his hands was a work of a very high artistic calibre which was worthy of public performance, even though he had never heard the composer's name before. He was busy with other musical projects at the time, so when I visited him in October 2008 he gave me the score and asked me to edit it and organize its public performance. I must confess that I did not get down to work straight away despite the frequent conversations with him over the phone during which he inquired about progress and conjectured about possible dates for the performance. Several months later, on 30 April 2009, Professor Górski suddenly died. I still have a vivid memory of our last phone conversation, the day before his death, and his words: 'Do it for me'. This is how he wanted to motivate me to proceed with the project. I treated his words as a testament.

While working on the score I looked for information about the composer, who was virtually unknown in Poland. In my preliminary archival search I came across Bettina von Seyfried's study *Ignaz Ritter von Seyfried. Thematisch-Bibliographisches Verzeichnis. Aspekte der Biographie und des Werkes*, published in 1990. Thanks to this I managed to get access to the original manuscript of the mass. It turned out that it differs from my copy in that it had three more variable parts (*Veni Sancte Spiritus*, *Graduale*, *Offertorium*) and the organ part was notated as a figured bass. As regards the musical material itself the copy is fairly faithful to the original. Despite this I used the Vienna manuscript as the basis for editing the performance score.

It took me almost two years to complete the project. It was crowned with the performance of the work under my direction on 5 November 2012 at the Archdiocesan Basilica in Przemyśl, by soloists and 'A cappella Leopoldis' chamber

choir from Lviv, the 'Magnificat' Archdiocesan Choir from Przemyśl and the orchestra of the Artur Malawski Philharmonic in Rzeszów.

In view of the technical problems with the recording of that performance, I decided to organize a professional recording of the mass. As far as I was able to establish, this is the first ever recording of the work. I have not been able to come across any reliable information relating to the number of the performances of the mass.

The production of this CD has been made possible thanks to the kindness and support of many people and institutions. My thanks go to Professor Marta Wierzbieniec, Director of the Artur Malawski Philharmonic in Rzeszów and Father Artur Janiec, Director of the Caritas of the Przemyśl Archdiocese. I also extend my words of gratitude to the soloists of the Warsaw Chamber Opera, the Orchestra of the Rzeszów Philharmonic, the Choir of the Music Department of Rzeszów University and the 'Magnificat' Archdiocesan Choir in Przemyśl. I also thank Father Marian Wolicki, the journalist Monika Maziarz and the DUX Recording Producers. I feel particular gratitude towards the late Professor Kazimierz Górski.

Father Mieczysław Gniady

Justyna STĘPIEŃ (soprano) is a soloist of the Warsaw Chamber Opera. She graduated from the Music Academy in Warsaw. She made her debut at the National Opera in Warsaw, as Stella in Giacomo Puccini's *Chopin*. She performs regularly at such prestigious venues as the National Philharmonic, the Witold Lutosławski Concert Hall of Polish Radio, the Royal Castle in Warsaw, and festivals (the Mozart Festival, the Claudio Monteverdi Festival, the Baroque Opera Festival, the Festival of Early Polish Opera, the Festival of Contemporary Polish Opera, the Early Music Festival at the Royal Castle – all in Warsaw, the 'Chopin in Autumn Colours' Festival in Antonin, the Wawel Soirées in Kraków, the Sacred Music Festival in Gdynia). Foreign tours have taken her to Japan, South Korea, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Holland, Lebanon, France, Russia, Lithuania and Hungary.

Her discography includes Jacopo Peri's *L'Euridice* and Jan Stefani's *Supposed Miracle or the Cracovians and the Highlanders* (with the Warsaw Chamber Opera ensemble conducted by Władysław Kłosiewicz), Janusz Stokłosa's musical *Romeo and Juliet*, *Etnofonie Kurpiowskie* (Kurpie Ethnophonie). *Tribute to Szymanowski and Skierkowski*, J.A. Hasse's *Miserere* and Rutter's *Requiem*.

Her diverse repertoire comprises the majority of Mozart's operas and oratorios, the oratorios, cantatas, masses and motets by J.S. Bach, Handel, Pergolesi and Vivaldi, songs by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Liszt, Schumann, Schubert, Chopin, Moniuszko and Szymanowski as well as works by contemporary composers Roman Palester, Zbigniew Rudziński, Paweł Łukaszewski, Stanisław Moryto, John Rutter, and Arvo Pärt.

She has worked with many prominent conductors (Enrico de Mori, Helmuth Rilling, Grzegorz Nowak, Antoni Wicherek, Władysław Kłosiewicz, Ruben Silva, Kai Bumann, Zbigniew Graca, Tadeusz Karolak, Jan Miłosz Zarzycki, Jacek Rogala, Ryszard Zimak, Andrzej Borzym, Tomasz Radziwonowicz, Father Kazimierz Szymonik, Father Jerzy Szurbak, Father Mieczysław Gniady, Włodzimierz Porczyński, Przemysław Fiugajski, Paweł Kos-Nowicki, Dariusz Waszak) and directors (Kazimierz Dejmek, Jerzy Grzegorzewski, Ryszard Peryt, Michał Znaniecki, Jarosław Kilian, Jitka Stokalska, Małgorzata Dzięwulska, Maciej Witkiewicz).

Ewa MIKULSKA is a soloist of the Warsaw Chamber Opera. She performs contralto and mezzo parts in a wide-ranging repertoire, comprising early and contemporary music, opera, oratorios, cantatas and songs.

She graduated from the Academy of Music in Gdańsk where she studied singing (with Wiesława Maliszewska) and drama (with Grzegorz Chrapkiewicz and Krzysztof Gordon). She developed her vocal skills under the guidance of Gérard Lesne and members of Il Seminario Musicale (thanks to a grant from the French Royaumont Foundation) as well as Krystyna Szostek-Radkova, Kaludi Kaludov and Jerzy Artysz.

She made her debut at the Warsaw Chamber Opera as Giuditta in Mozart's *Betulia liberata*. She also appeared in operas by Jacopo Peri (*L'Euridice*), Claudio Monteverdi (*Il ballo delle Ingrate*, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Cimarosa (*Il matrimonio segreto*), Mozart (*The magic flute*), Tchaikovsky (*Eugene Onegin*), Verdi (*Falstaff*), Rossini (*Tancredi*) and in works by contemporary Polish composers Bernadetta Matuszczak (*Quo vadis*) and Zbigniew Rudziński (*Antigone*).

She has participated in the Mozart Festivals in Warsaw, Vienna, the Hague and Madrid, the Warsaw Festivals of Baroque Opera, Early Polish Music, Contemporary Polish Music and Monteverdi's Music, the international festivals in Tarnów, Częstochowa, and Gdynia. In 2000 she represented Poland at the 'Octobre Musical' Festival in Carthage. She has been a featured artist at numerous events in France (Musicales Internationales Guil Durance, Musique en Dévoluy, Les Moments Musicaux de Charance, Musiques Vocales de l'Europe de l'Est, Fêtes Musicales de Savoie,

Musicales d'Ete de Rioclar, Saison Musicale de Royaumont, Les Mardis de l'Orgue-Cathédrale, Les Mardis de l'Orgue (Bourg-en-Bresse), Les Heures d'Orgue (Lyon), and Musique à Val des Prés).

Foreign tours have taken her to the Royal Theatre in the Hague and the opera houses in Spain, Japan, Lebanon, Germany and France. She has also taken part in many concerts of chamber music and in oratorios and cantatas in Poland and abroad. She sang in the world premiere of Marek Jasiński's *Da pacem Domine*, at the Gaude Mater International Festival of Sacred Music in Częstochowa. She has made recordings for radio and television (works by Vivaldi and Pergolesi) and for CD labels (Chopin's *Songs* and Telemann's *Cantatas*).

She received the 'Cultural Merit' Badge from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (2006).

Krzysztof MACHOWSKI (tenor) is a soloist of the Warsaw Chamber Opera. He graduated from the Ignacy Jan Paderewski Music Academy in Poznań, where he studied choral conducting with Stefan Marczyk, and from the Karol Lipiński Music Academy in Wrocław, where he studied with Eugeniusz Sasiadek at the Voice and Drama Department. He has worked closely with Capella Cracoviensis, Camerata Nova, Lord Singers, Cantores Varsovienses and the Philharmonic orchestras in Berlin, Kraków, Wrocław, Szczecin, Olsztyn, Bydgoszcz, and Koszalin, appearing with such conductors as Tomasz Bugaj, Hartwig Eschenburg, Stanisław Gałoński, Zbigniew Graca, Tadeusz Karolak, Jacek Kraszewski, Wacław Kunc, Eugeniusz Kus, Stefan Marczyk, Helmuth Rilling, Robert Satanowski, Volker Schmidt-Gertenbach, Ruben Silva, Jan Szyrocki, and Józef Wiłkomirski.

He was a soloist of the Opera and Operetta in Szczecin (1996–1998) and of Landestheater Detmold (1998–2000). Since joining the Warsaw Chamber Opera in 2000, he has appeared in leading roles in operas by Rossini (*Semiramide*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Tancredi*), Donizetti (*L'elisir d'amore*), Mozart (*The Magic Flute*, *The Abduction from Seraglio*, *Lucio Silla*, *Il Re pastore*, *Betulia liberata*, *Mitridate*), Janáček (*Jenůfa*) and Verdi (*Un giorno di regno*).

Foreign tours have taken him to France, Spain, Holland, Japan, Lebanon, Germany and Switzerland. He has taken part in the recordings of oratorios by Józef Zeidler and Giovanni Paisiello. He is a soloist and co-organizer of Cantores Varsovienses, with which he has performed at several festivals in Warsaw (European Vocal Music, Polish Sacred Music, Music in the Praga District) and France (Musique en Dévoluy, Les Moments Musicaux de Charance, Musiques Vocales de l'Europe de l'Est). He represented Poland at the Polish Days in France and Germany. He has sung in numerous oratorios (Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, Handel's *Messiah*, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and Saint-Saëns's *Oratorio de Noël* and *Requiem*).

In 1990-1998 he was in charge of artistic events at the Castle of Pomeranian Dukes and the Youth Palace in Szczecin. He is the founder and artistic and managing director of the group Sweet Four, which has worked closely with the 'Cellar under the Rams' cabaret in Kraków, Polish television, VOX group, Janusz Strobel, the Polish Society in Hamburg and the Polish Embassy in Berlin.

He also pursues a teaching career as a voice coach of the Choir of the Maritime Academy in Szczecin, 'Słowiki 60' Choir, the 'Słowiki' Boys' Choir, and the city's Arts Academy.

Krzysztof MATUSZAK (bass-baritone) is a graduate of the Catholic University of Lublin and the Voice and Drama Department of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw (the class of Edmund Kossowski). He is the winner of Academic Competition in the Performance of Polish Artistic Song (1998).

Since joining the Warsaw Chamber Opera in 1999 he has sung the solo parts in Jan Stefani's *Supposed Miracle or the Cracovians and the Highlanders*, Rossini's *La gazza ladra*, *Semiramide*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *L'Italiana in Algeri* and *La Cenerentola* and Karol Kurpiński's *King Henry VI at the Hunt*. His repertoire also includes parts in operas by Mozart (*The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *The magic flute*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Abduction from Seraglio*, *Idomeneo*, *La Clementa di Tito*, *Lucio Silla*, *Betulia liberata*, *Ascanio in Alba*, *Apollo et Hyacinthus*), Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Verdi's *Falstaff* and *Il finto Stanislao*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, Britten's *The Burning Fiery Furnace*, Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and Handel's *Gulio Cesare*. He has also appeared in operas by contemporary Polish composers: Zbigniew Rudziński's *Antigone*, Zygmunt Krauze's *Belshazzar*, Koffler's *Matrimonio con variazioni* and Bernadetta Matuszczak's *Quo vadis*.

He has made many foreign tours with the Warsaw Chamber Opera (France, Spain, Holland, Japan, Lebanon, Germany, Portugal, Russia). He also performs regularly in oratorios and cantatas, in Poland and abroad (Mozart's *Requiem*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, Elsner's *Passion*, Żebrowski's *Magnificat*, Moniuszko's *Milda*, *The Ghosts* and *Litanies of Ostra Brama*, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Gorczycki's *Completorium* and motets, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Saint-Saëns's *Oratorio de Noël*, and Józef Zeidler's *Litany in D minor* and *Stabat Mater*).

Since 2010 he has been on the faculty of the Fryderyk Chopin Music School in Warsaw.

The Symphony Orchestra of Rzeszów Philharmonic began its activity on 29 April 1955. It is currently one of Poland's most dynamically developing orchestras. Its high artistic standard is confirmed by its collaboration with such conductors as Jan Krenz, Henryk Czyż, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Antoni Wit, Eugene Tzigane, Jerzy Katlewicz, Krzysztof Urbański, Tadeusz Wojciechowski, Marek Pijarowski, Krzysztof Penderecki as well as many prominent foreign conductors. The long list of soloists who have appeared with the orchestra of Rzeszów Philharmonic includes Aleksandra Kurzak, Jan Krzysztof Broja, Adam Wodnicki, Waldemar Malicki, Krzysztof Jakowicz, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Piotr Pławner, Bartłomiej Nizioł, Eugen Indjic, Roby Lakatos, Kevin Kenner, Erzhan Kulibaev, and Joseph Malovany. The orchestra works closely with various choirs and ballet ensembles, including those of the Music Department of Rzeszów University, the Grand Theatre in Łódź, Kraków Opera, the National Opera in Warsaw and Lviv Opera (Ukraine).

The repertoire of the orchestra spans music from the Baroque to the present, with the emphasis on Polish music, also promoted on foreign tours (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Russia, France, Sweden, the United States, Spain). In addition to its regular concert activity, it has performed at numerous festivals, such as Wratislavia Cantans, the Festival of European Culture in Kraków, the Krystyna Jamroz International Music Festival in Busko-Zdrój, and the International Music Festival in Toledo. In October 2013 it performed at the Musikverein in Vienna and in Saarbrücken (Germany).

The orchestra has made numerous recordings for television, radio and various labels, including Mozart's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Messa di Gloria* (the work's second professional recording) and *Polish patriotic songs* (with conductor Tomasz Chmiel and the soloist Marcin Wolak).

Members of the Rzeszów Philharmonic Orchestra perform in various chamber ensembles which function within the structure of the Philharmonic and take an active part in the musical life of the region.

Archdiocesan Choir 'Magnificat' gave its first concert in Przemyśl on 9 June 1984. Since then it has established itself as an important cultural institution of south-eastern Poland, taking part in religious celebrations and promoting sacred music at state functions and public concerts.

It has given almost 1,000 concerts, mostly in the Podkarpackie province. Foreign tours have taken it to Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ukraine and Italy. Its repertoire includes about 400 works: motets, masses, psalms, chorales, hymns, Christmas carols, as well as folk and patriotic songs. It has received numerous awards, including those from the President of Przemyśl and the Marshal of the Podkarpackie Province.

The choir was founded by its present conductor Father Mieczysław Gniady, a graduate of the Department of Musicology at the Catholic University of Lublin and of the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz. Father Marian Wolicki is the choir's spiritual guardian. Jacek Gawron is its President and Franciszek Łamasz its accompanist. The choir works closely with many music ensembles and cultural institutions.

The Choir of the Music Department of Rzeszów University has taken part in many concerts and special events in a wide-ranging *a cappella* repertoire. It works closely with the Rzeszów Philharmonic performing in oratorios (Mozart's *Requiem*, Alfred Schnittke's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Bach's *St John Passion*, Liszt's *Via crucis*). In 1988, the Chamber Choir developed from the Choir of the Music Department (then the Institute of Music). Founded by Professor Marta Wierzbieńiec, it has scored many successes, including those at the 'Legnica Cantat' All-Poland Choral Tournament (1991, 1998; honourable mentions in the 'academic choirs' category), the Festival of Christmas Carols in Myślenice (1995; First Prize and 'Best Conductor' Prize for Marta Wierzbieńiec), the International Competitions in Sweden (Oskarshamn) and Slovakia (Banská Bystrica) – Second Prize, and in Prague (First Prize, with Bożena Stasiowska-Chrobak as conductor).

The Choir of the Music Department of Rzeszów works under the direction of Bożena Stasiowska-Chrobak.

Father Mieczysław GNIADY, PhD, was born in Dukla in 1951. He was ordained in 1975. He gained a diploma in musicology from the Catholic University of Lublin KUL in 1983. During his studies he was a member of the Choir of the Institute of Musicology and the Academic Choir of KUL, which were directed by Kazimierz Górski. In 2007 he gained a doctorate from the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz. He has been associated with the town of Przemyśl for many years, as a lecturer at the Higher Seminary (since 1983) and director of the Archdiocesan Institute of Sacred Music (since 1986). In 1984 he founded the 'Magnificat' Archdiocesan Choir, which he has conducted in numerous concerts in Poland and abroad. He also has composed songs, and written arrangements, for choir and

brass band. He serves as a chaplain for organists and is an expert on the construction and maintenance of organs. He has sat on the jury of many choral and brass band festivals. His distinctions include the Silver Medal of the Main Board of Voluntary Fire Brigades, the award of the Marshal of the Podkarpackie Province and the 'Gloria Artis' Bronze Medal of Cultural Merit.