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years. The 1980 Festival will be reviewed by Hilary Bracefield and published rather more speedily. (Ed.)

By any standard, the Warsaw Autumn Festival is an impressive affair, both as a platform for composers and artists of international repute and as a means of presenting home-grown talent. Last year's festival, slightly longer than usual, was no exception, although it can be said that there were fewer startlingly original works than in the previous year, some works were distinctly feeble and some, though not all, deserved the audience reaction they received. There were some disappointments too: Paul Zukofsky was prevented at the last minute from coming to play Ives' four sonatas for violin and piano, owing to personal circumstances. But on the whole, events went off smoothly in spite of the occasional changes to the programme.

The theme throughout the 1979 Festival was music-theatre of one sort or another: Maxwell Davies's *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus*, Orff's fairy-tale opera *Die Kluge*, Penderecki's *Paradise Lost* and Henze's *El Cimarron* were among the major events. The Fires of London were conducted by Peter Maxwell Davies and the usual cast of singers in a stirring performance of *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus* to a packed, patient and attentive house. However, it was the Stuttgart Opera Company (Württembergische Staatstheater Stuttgart) which made the most impact, presenting Orff, Penderecki and Henze. Klaus Hirte as El Cimarron the slave gave a strong and suitably nervous rendition, well-supported by his three instrumental colleagues. The previous evening Penderecki's opera *Paradise Lost* (1975-78) received a very good performance with impressive production and singing and firm orchestral playing under the direction of Janos Kulka. One immediately wonders how Penderecki's language will cope with Christopher Fry's libretto (after Milton). The simple answer is that the Penderecki-isms which are universally recognised are here hardly present at all. To suit the epic-drama proportions of the subject, Penderecki has modelled his musical language for this opera on examples from the past, most notably Wagner: a fact he seemed keen to deny at a press conference. No longer the jig-saw construction of contrasting and complementary textures, this music now respects operatic convention in the same way that the Violin Concerto (1976-77), heard earlier in the week, respects Sibelius and at the same time pays homage to Bach-Bruckner. Now the music is homogeneous; it moves forward in impressive arches with very clear tonal centres (sometimes too clearly imprinted in the listener's mind by long pedals which slow down the rate of harmonic change). The production moved from delightful, exotic gauzes (very reminiscent of Gustave Moreau's work) to the horrific (slides and films of war and mutilated children), and on either side of the stage sat tiers of chorus members in black costumes and with ghostly-white illuminated faces. The production seemed to be attempting to solve the problem of modern music drama in a way that the music was not. In German, the performance took on an aspect quite noble and impressive, qualities entirely missing from the later Radio 3 broadcast of the American premiere.

Just as Penderecki's music seems to have mellowed, so other Polish composers showed that their priorities are also changing. It would have been inconceivable for Jerzy Maksymiuk to present a concert with his excellent Polish Chamber Orchestra ten years ago without some evidence of the then characteristic Polish string techniques together with a good dollop of clusters. The two works which were acclaimed in their concert at this year's festival showed that the Polish string sonority, as used by younger composers, has grown up. Marek Stachowski's *Divertimento* (1978) and Krzysztof Meyer's Fifth Symphony (1978-79) were both striking and mature essays for string orchestra. In each there was a good deal of dramatic contrast, one was made to feel physically excited by the *real* virtuosity of writing and playing, and any 'effects' were achieved as part of the logical flow of ideas. To this extent one can draw a clear line from Lutosławski's *Funeral Music* to his *Preludes and Fugue*, without whose example, Bartók notwithstanding, Stachowski's and Meyer's works would not have been possible.

If experiment with sonority and texture for their own sake is waning, what is taking its place? Well, of course, some composers continue with their old preoccupations; Kazimierz Serocki's *Pianophonie* (1976-78) for piano, electronic sound-transformation (in collaboration with the

**23RD WARSAW AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL
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JOHN CASKEN

Not a fully comparative review of the 1978 and 79 Festivals as originally promised, which at this stage would possibly be a little redundant, but a report from a participating composer who has had connections with Poland for some

Experimentalstudio der Heinrich-Strobel-Stiftung des Südwestfunks, Freiburg) and orchestra showed a remarkable lack of sensitivity to the opportunities offered by this new piano-orchestra relationship. Nevertheless the work won the Italia Prize 1979 and was broadcast twice within a few weeks on Radio 3. May doodleclusters soon retire from the repertoire of contemporary piano techniques. On the other hand, there were Polish works in which the expressive element was to the fore at the expense of vigorous, dramatic argument. The mystic *Gloria* by the 26-year-old Paweł Szymański was a most evocative and economical work indebted in spirit if not in language to Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*. Scored for female choir and orchestra, it contains references to Renaissance liturgical music and a good mixture of oriental pluckings and birdsong; Holst's 'Neptune' would not have been out of place in the context of this work. Eugeniusz Knapik (b.1951) is another young Pole who showed that he was quite prepared to encompass a number of styles in his search for an immediate and expressive one. The first movement of his *Corale, interludio e aria* (1978) for flute, harpsichord and strings contrasted block chords made up of semitones, tones, minor or major thirds scored in octaves, reminiscent of the pomp of liturgical music, interrupted by wilder, more modern gestures. I was reminded of the simplistic but severely self-disciplined *Refren* by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Knapik's teacher, who has also written pieces 'in the ancient style'. By contrast, the 'aria' was romantic, almost Mahlerian, and after the 'Corale' sounded very sweet and tidy.

I was therefore pleased to discover untidy but invigorating qualities in Tadeusz Baird's uninspiringly-titled *Variations in the Rondo Form* (1978). This may well prove to be one of his most substantial works: the music showed a toughness and a deliberate persistence quite unlike his more usual rhapsodic style. Zbigniew Bargielski's recent works have been received with some success. Born in 1937, he was a law student who turned to music when he was 21. His *Alpine String Quartet* shares similar qualities with his later *Violin Concerto*, performed at the 1978 Festival: namely, a fondness for soaring lyrical passages based on thirds built up in the form of dominant and diminished sevenths and augmented triads in a high, singing register for all instruments. There is also more assertive writing with instruments playing *ff arco* in the lower violin range, but despite this, one's impression is of a rich, melodic work. And yet, paradoxically, there are no real melodies, merely lines with fixed nodal or harmonic points. The prize for the most original ensemble must go to Andrzej Dobrowolski for his *Music for three accordions, harmonica and percussion* (1977), a unique sound which is distributed symmetrically in space, as in a number of his works. His use of this ensemble is economical and, surprisingly, witty. The most amusing contribution came from Witold Szalonek with his piece for prepared tuba *Piernikiana*, written for tubist (and préparateur) Zdzisław Piernik. Looking a bit like an old tuba that's gone to seed, the instrument belches, grunts and screams its way across Szalonek's different musical levels. The concept of simultaneous, 'unbroken' strata is an interesting one, and the changing preparations added another, theatrical dimension: the tuba plays the tubist.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from this Dada-like piece was Lutosławski's *Les espaces du sommeil* (1975) which was performed in the opening concert and sung, as in the 1979 Prom performance, by John Shirley Quirk. Unmistakably in the same vein as *Mi-Parti* (a later work), this is the composer's first piece for solo voice and orchestra since *Paroles tissées* (1965), but in places it harks back even further, to the *Five Songs to words by Kazimierz Makowicz* (1958). It is not only the arisgo vocal line in *Les espaces* which brings Debussy's *Pelléas* to mind, but also the feeling that *we* shouldn't be there: in this sense he admirably captures the intimate world of the edge of sleep.

One of the great discoveries of the Festival was the playing of the young Russian cellist Ivan Monigetti, who introduced another Lutosławski work: *Sacher Variation* for solo cello (1976). This was written as a birthday tribute for the Swiss conductor Paul Sacher, at the request of Mstislav Rostropovich, who invited ten composers to write a short piece based on the letters SACHER (E flat, A, C, B, E, D). Lutosławski's solution is quite simple: each appearance of the notes of the theme is increased in a related sequence of pitches (always in the same order), from 1 to 2 to 4, 7, 11,

16, 22, 29 to 37 in number, with a final statement of 18. In between these phrases he characteristically uses the remaining hexachord, the treatment of which is non-thematic and more in the character of a fantasy, with rapid quarter-tone passages reminiscent of his earlier *Cello Concerto*. Monigetti also played *Ten Etudes* (1974) by the young Russian composer Sofia Gubaydulina, each of which uses different means of articulation. I rather admired these studies and would recommend them to any young cellist in search of an enterprising item for a recital. Xenakis's *Kottos*, named after one of the hundred-armed giants fought and defeated by Zeus, and requiring almost as many fingers, gave Monigetti a chance to show that he had not only mastered the technique of playing this most difficult work, but that he could convey the compelling passion behind the relentless scraping. In his second concert, Monigetti's programme had to be changed at the last minute due to the unavailability of the pianist. Nevertheless Toshiro Mayuzumi's *Bunraku* of 1960 (traditional Japanese puppet theatre) was a welcome item exploring the potential in adapting Japanese instrumental techniques to a Western instrument. Alfred Schnittke's *Sonata for cello and piano* (1978) aims to 'combine elements of new and old music in peaceful coexistence'. This produced some strong ideas but I would hardly have described their co-existence as peaceful.

One of the best works of the Festival was by Luc Ferrari: *Cellule 75 - Force du rythme et cadence forcée* for piano, percussion and tape (1975), a work with a committed socio-political message. The whole had a great presence and, growing from a simple opening to virtuosic complexity, made use of the phasing of rhythmic models which were interesting not only for their rhythmic intricacies but also for their musical types. The composer's declared aim was to express a number of ideas connected with everyday life and, more specifically, related to events in 1975, the year of composition. A 'cellule' is a musical cell but also a prison cell; 'Force du rythme' is an attempt to find liberation in rhythm (overtones of jazz-rock); 'cadence forcée' represents the reverse: 'compulsion, permanent work, exploitation, the madness of consumption and a march rhythm as a demonstration of repression' — hence a work

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in which individual and collective energies are set in opposition to authoritarian control. This was the final item in a concert given by Gérard Frémy (piano) and Jean-Pierre Drouet (percussion). The opening item, *Pour un pianiste* (1973-74) for tape (realised at Bourges) and piano by Michèle Bokanowsky, was a delicate gamelan-type piece with subtle piano preparation.

The Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra gave a concert of contemporary Finnish music. *Dia* (1979) by Paavo Heininen (b.1938) was a long work (over 30 minutes) with excellent details whose overall effect I found rather grand, even pompous. Nevertheless there were some tantalising sounds, showing a real command of the orchestra: a work I should like to hear again, but without the indigestible programme note. Erik Bergman, a senior composer (b.1911), was present for the performance of his *Birds in the Morning* (1978) for flute and orchestra. It is interesting that a composer of his generation should attempt something new, particularly with regard to flute technique, but the overall impression was that this was a very cosmetic work. Not so Kalevi Aho's Fifth Symphony (1975-76). I disliked this work, but it was one of the most striking things in the Festival, showing maturity in handling the orchestra in an outrageously bold manner. It was very loud for much of the time, the harmony was often aggressively diatonic, there were echoes of Nielsen, Shostakovich, Mahler and, especially, Ives, with a vulgar waltz emerging out of a *Fourth of July*-type tutti. It was professedly a work about chaos; in terms of sound Aho achieved this, but through well-organised material and form. A young composer (b.1949) of whom we should hear more.

This was music of a very different kind from the English composers represented: Maxwell Davies, Paul Patterson, Gwyn Pritchard and myself. Patterson's *Cracovian Counterpoints* received a hurried performance in Jerzy Maksymiuk's concert with the Polish Chamber Orchestra. The performance of Pritchard's striking *Nephalauxus* (1977) for string quartet and two percussionists was a good example of what can happen when the SPM invite foreign guests to their Composers' Weekend. Stachowski heard this work at the 1978 Weekend and suggested it for the 1979 Festival in Warsaw.

Bruno Canino and Antonio Ballista gave two concerts: the first a late-night performance of Stockhausen's *Mantra*, a work about planes of consciousness performed at a time when one's unconscious is desperately trying to take over. The second concert, at 5pm the next day, presented Ligeti's *Monument-Selbstportrait-Bewegung* (1976), a work I admire for the excellence of the piano writing and the appropriateness of the ideas for the medium. A sonata for two pianos (1966) by the young Italian Salvatore Sciarrino (b.1947) had a unique toy-shop atmosphere (high register and residues of tonal music) which remained constant and without contrast. Franco Donatoni's *Black and White No. 2* (ten finger exercises) was just that. In another concert, the fellow Italian Vettorico Gelmetti played his own *Eine Kleine K Music* (1979) for piano and Mozart-on-tape (having undergone equalisation and filtering): pure 'K'. *Sinfonia con giardino* (1977-78) for orchestra by Niccolò Castiglioni (b.1932), a composer we hear too little of nowadays, redressed the Italian balance. This was a delicate, finely-heard work, to the point and with a clear formal shape (similar, he claims, to an ancient Patrician garden).

Myr (1978) by the young Swede Rolf Enström (b.1951) and *Klangshatten - mein Saitenspiel* (1972) by the 44-year-old German composer Helmut Lachenmann were overtly experimental works. *Myr* is a visual electronic composition for three screens and quadraphonic tape. In the course of the work approximately 360 slides are used, reflecting images of 'soil/earth, the stones, the mirrors and the geometry', which together with sounds on tape deal with 'man's disasters, desire for power to transform nature to manifest himself — to prove to himself that he has the right to exist in the gigantic cosmos'. Visually the work is very fine: the composition of the individual slides and their sequence, three at a time, is well constructed. The quality of the tape is also very good, although I had difficulty relating the extended sounds ('the gigantic cosmos?') to the realist (landscapes) and supra-realist images (the latter are landscapes with mirrors reflecting the sky, and urban images) on screen, where the ideology may have been understood even without the music.

Lachenmann's work suffered from audience impatience and intolerance. A large body of strings and three partially-

prepared pianos made infinitesimal sounds during the course of the work, so infinitesimal at times and separated by long periods of silence that it was inevitable, although very regrettable, that the audience should feel the need to contribute its own sounds: a dropped bunch of keys here, a coin or two there. Eventually catcalls and handclaps stopped the work (during a live TV broadcast: what *would* Richard Baker have done...?) and resumed only after a personal plea from the composer to the audience to understand that the work was about 'pianissimo', the rejection of sound and a reversal of concert hall practice. This Cageian aesthetic of composing a piece around the sounds that an audience normally doesn't hear has much to recommend it. Like 4'33", so many of the actual sounds might have been startling, even poetic, given the chance. In the event perhaps the Festival Committee miscalculated the patience threshold of an audience at its last concert of a long festival. This came almost as an invitation for the post-Festival party to begin early.