

Jerzy BAUER

MUSIC FOR CELLO

CONCERTO FOR CELLO AND ORCHESTRA NO. 2
PASSACAGLIA – ALMOST IN THE OLD STYLE
SONATA IN ONE MOVEMENT
3 PRIMITIVI
THIS

Andrzej Bauer, cello
Jan Krzysztof Broja, piano
Aukso Tychy Chamber Orchestra
Marek Moś, conductor

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

'FOR MY SON': JERZY BAUER'S MUSIC FOR CELLO

by Rafał Augustyn

Jerzy Bauer was born on 12 May 1936 in Łódź and, together with Krzysztof Penderecki, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki and Wojciech Kilar, belongs to the generation which has played a central role in the creation and development of the 'Polish School' of composition. Although he now resides in Warsaw, almost all his professional life was focused on his place of birth.

Łódź is an industrial metropolis which expanded at the end of the nineteenth century. But over the centuries it had been inhabited by an international community: it was a place where Poles, Germans, Jews, Russians and other Slav minorities co-existed, creating a cultural and genetic mix. From such a German-Polish confluence comes Jerzy Bauer.

It was in the twentieth century that Łódź became an important artistic centre, housing a famous film-school, the best Polish collection of modern art and excellent drama theatres, as well as a cluster of major musical institutions at the centre of town: the opera, the Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic, as it is now known (Artur Rubinstein was a native of Łódź), and the Academy of Music, with its seat in the Izrael Poznański Palace, once owned by a Łódź-based textile-tycoon family.

It was at the Academy that Jerzy Bauer studied, and later worked for many years. It was an agreeable setting for a music student, but he soon felt the urge to explore beyond its walls. As with many other Polish composers, once he was awarded his degree diploma, or more precisely three diplomas (in composition, under the supervision of Tomasz Kiesewetter,¹ in music theory and in conducting), he went immediately to Paris, to be taught by two famous teachers, Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen –

¹ Kiesewetter (1911–92) was a composer and conductor as well as a teacher: he was conductor of the Łódź Philharmonic Orchestra from 1945 to 1970. His works include three symphonies, six suites and many other orchestral pieces, including two organ concertos, two string quartets and other chamber works, music for piano, stage-works and more, some of it with an explicitly Polish flavour.

rivals, and yet very distinct in their approaches. He has fond memories of them both. The French thread is present in the music of many Polish composers, even those who did not study in France (Lutosławski, for example), and it can be recognised in Bauer's work. One can thus find Bauer's music to be more or less related to Ravel's and Stravinsky's and, more intuitively and less directly, to that of Edgard Varèse, and also to the output of less obvious, less orthodox composers, such as Arthur Honegger and Bohuslav Martinů – neither of them French, but both anchored there for much of their lives.

Jerzy Bauer's extensive catalogue comprises orchestral music (including *concertante* pieces for piano, flute, violin, guitar and cello, and also more substantial works including choir); chamber music, usually accompanied by piano, but also works for unusual ensembles, such as a sextet of horns or a quintet of organ and woodwinds (he has written only one string quartet); a series of instrumental works, mostly for piano, guitar, organ and cello; song-cycles with piano; and music for mixed or children's choirs. There are no operas, but there is a good deal of incidental music for the theatre. Nor is there any electronic music, but then, none of the 1930s generation explored this territory.

Bauer's interest in the cello obviously has a biographical context: his son Andrzej is now one of the best-known cellists in Poland. And as Andrzej grew to maturity, he became not only a performer but also a consultant, even a co-composer from time to time. Yet the roots reach much deeper: Bauer Senior had already more or less mastered the cello, although he decided not to follow a full-time instrumentalist career. Hence, by a natural course of events, this album of Jerzy Bauer's music – only the second ever released – is focused on the cello.

The **Cello Concerto No. 2**, completed in 2013, is in essence a modified version of the Concerto No. 1, composed in 1985: the third of its original four movements was removed. The three which were retained have titles embodying the characteristic 'scientific poetics' of the 'Polish School' and correspond effectively to their functions and structures. The massive first movement, the most important, 'Emanacje' ('Emanations') [1], is derived from the elementary motif of the minor second, which is generally rising, often expanded by an octave, reversed and re-assembled, resulting in both smaller and larger structures, counterpointed by irregular chords in the orchestra. The course of the

music articulates five subsequent climaxes, followed by disappearing allusions by the soloist and individual instruments in the orchestra to these motifs, in a discrete halo of sound from the vibraphone.

The central Interludium [2] – again, as the title suggests – is of a much lighter character; the soloist's lyrical monologue is wrapped in a lucid veil of dominant pentatonic harmonies (chords, pitch-structures and so on) and a series of layered thirds. Following a calm but distinct climax, the soloist finishes with pieces of the main motif from the beginning of the movement, sounding like a question mark and a full stop at the same time.

The third movement [3] bears the title 'Analecta' – defined in the dictionary as 'selected passages from the writings of an author or of different authors'. It is something like an inverted rondo in which the refrain comes as interludes, in blocks of rough and rapid *tutti* with a quasi-aleatoric feel, but still with a precisely notated texture. The cello uses its entire range here, often reaching high violin registers and wittily interacting with the orchestra. As with the Interludium, the finale closes in tranquillity, with a sort of double punctuation mark: a combination of question mark and full stop, perhaps even as an unobtrusive ellipsis...

Bauer described his **3 *Primitivi*** as follows:

this is a result of a search for reasons for the fascination with the rhythm of the African people, listening to recordings, to the rhythms of the black land, and an attempt to transfer this 'rhythmic climate' to the piano and cello, as intended for my musically growing and developing son. The sound material is primitive and the rhythms are elementary, hence the title.²

But in spite of these comments, the primitive energy of the outermost parts [4] [6] does not result from any direct stylisation of African music. Instead, the asymmetrical rhythms can be recognised as Balkan to some degree, and the pentatonic echoes of the warm, gentle middle section [5] (remotely related to the Interludium of the Second Cello

² E-mail from the composer to me, dated 15 November 2016.

Concerto) as Asian. It should not be surprising that some rudiments of music and sound occur independently in different cultures. Using the material he found, or imagined, Bauer has made his own construction, and it is therefore reasonable to concede that he manages to perceive something 'black' in it, although the music is undoubtedly European in its entirety.

The *Sonata in One Movement* for cello and piano [7] is, like the Second Cello Concerto, tightly anchored in Andrzej Bauer's life and education. As the composer states himself, the piece was composed 'for my son's diploma concert at the time of his graduation, rehearsed independently by the candidate as a surprise for Prof. Kazimierz Michalik³ and the examination commission.'⁴ The short composition consisted of four distinct sections: the first and third are expressive, rhapsodic solo cadenzas, the first of which is transformed into a dialogue between the instruments, followed by a vigorous *allegro* where the piano, as at the beginning, is mostly concerned to punctuate the activity of the solo cello. The second cadenza evolves smoothly into a lyrical *andante* with a distinctly Ravel-like aura and a *pointilliste* cantilena texture, which is maintained to the very end. The cello part is almost a literal repetition of the material from the cadenza, whereas the piano texture gives it a different, contemplative character.

Bauer has composed passacaglias – more as a technique than in a strictly formal sense – in several of his chamber and orchestral pieces. The *Passacaglia – Almost in the Old Style* [8], composed in 2002 and dedicated to his friend Kazimierz Michalik, begins with an extensive introduction, starting with fractional muttering, gradually forming expanded melodies, which lead to the proper variation form founded on the ground bass – subsequently transposed upwards along the scale B flat–C–D–E–F sharp–G–A – and to a distinctive two-part cantilena imitation between the cello and the right hand of the piano. Harmonies – in expanded tonality, anchored in the triad from time to time – travel upwards, together with bass transpositions. The situation changes completely at the end: the cantilena remains alone, whereas the *staccato* ground bass

³ Kazimierz Michalik (born in Kraków in 1933) was Andrzej Bauer's teacher at the Music Academy in Łódź and, in 2002, the dedicatee of Jerzy Bauer's *Passacaglia – Almost in the Old Style*. He is a major figure in Polish musical life.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*

undergoes imitation, in the highest register (first in the cello part and later in the piano), accompanied by quick counterpoint, later given ever jauntier figurative runs on the cello. (There are perhaps echoes of Lutosławski's *Musique funèbre* here.) The qualification in the second part of the title – 'Prawie w dawnym stylu' ('Almost in the Old Style') – cannily specifies the areas within which the piece operates: the allusion might be understood as a reference to the 'former style' of the music of the mid-twentieth century, before the apogee of 'historically informed performance' and the wave of research conducted by musical archaeologists.

To ('This') is a short *scena* inspired by the eponymous poem from the last volume of poetry Czesław Miłosz published in the twentieth century (though not the last one of his career). Miłosz's 'To' is not only a Freudian 'Das Es' (or *id*, as the translators prefer) but also a Jungian or Christian shadow, both a real fear in the face of danger and an undefined fright. It represents a dark side of the human being as an individual and a painful stamp on the world, as well as the inferred (spiritual) world of the human being. Bauer draws on the last two lines of the poem:

[...] Ponieważ TO oznacza natknięcie się na kamienny mur, i zrozumienie, że ten mur nie ustąpi żadnym naszym błaganiom.

[...] *Because THIS means an encounter with a stone wall, and understanding that the wall will not yield to any of our begging.*

The central motif of the work is the repeatedly used (even misused) phrase from the *Dies irae* plainchant, which here undergoes simple diversification and continuous interruption by a contrasting, nervous intermezzo; the piano and the cello meet in ecstasy and diverge, the music losing itself in a kind of *danse macabre* and ending suspended in a question mark. One may wonder who (what) is the shadow of whom (what), but the symbolism of the relation between instruments is irresistible and undoubted, suggesting the wall hit persistently by both protagonists (or the two faces of the protagonist). The

work, which is as serious as possible, is not free of a dose of black humour, which can even be over-familiar in a sweeping episode featuring *oberek* rhythms.⁵

Rafał Augustyn (born in Wrocław in 1951) is a composer, music- and theatre-critic and organiser, and associate professor at the University of Wrocław. He is a former artistic director of two Wrocław festivals – Musica Polonica Nova (1984–96) and Musica Electronica Nova (2009) – and is a long-standing member of the programme board of the Warsaw Autumn festival. He studied composition with Henryk Mikołaj Górecki at the State School of Music in Katowice, received scholarships from the Stichting Eduard von Beinum, Fondation Acanthes, MacDowell Foundation, Salzburg Seminar and Stiftung Kulturfonds and is a laureate of many composers' competitions. His own compositions have frequently been performed at the Warsaw Autumn and other Polish festivals, as well as in numerous European countries, in America and the Far East.

The cellist **Andrzej Bauer** was born in Łódź, where he completed his studies under the guidance of Kazimierz Michalik. He continued his musical education with André Navarra, Miloš Sadlo and Daniil Shafran, among others, in numerous master-classes. He also completed a two-year course with William Pleeth in London, thanks to a scholarship funded by Witold Lutosławski. He is the winner of the first prize at the ARD International Competition in Munich, a prize-winner at the Prague Spring International Competition and recipient of the prize awarded under the auspices of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

Andrzej Bauer has given recitals in Amsterdam, Hamburg, Munich and Paris, and performed with many orchestras, among them the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, RAI Naples Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg and Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as a concert soloist with most of the Polish symphony and chamber orchestras, with ensembles like the National Philharmonic Orchestra and Sinfonia Varsovia inviting him to join them as a soloist on their European concert tours, and he has taken part in international festivals, performing in most European countries as well as the United States and Japan.



Photo: Tomasz Kulak

⁵ More information on Jerzy Bauer and his music can be found at www.jerzybauer.com.

Andrzej Bauer has recorded music for a number of radio and television stations in Poland and other countries and for several commercial labels. His recording of music by Schubert, Brahms and Schumann for Koch/Schwann won the quarterly Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. Subsequent CDs have featured works by Messiaen, Panufnik, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Stravinsky, as well as Lutosławski's Cello Concerto. He made the first-ever Polish recording (on two CDs) of all of Bach's cello suites, for the label CD Accord, for which he won the 2000 Fryderyk Award of the Polish Academy of Phonography.

His extensive repertoire features many works of contemporary music, including works composed especially for him. At the 2002 Warsaw Autumn Festival he gave a recital of premieres of pieces for cello solo and electronic media which he had inspired. This 'Cellotronicum' project he has continued ever since, resulting in new recordings and more premieres presented at major contemporary-music venues across Europe; the second edition of the 'Cellotronicum' project at the Warsaw Autumn won the 2006 Orpheus Prize.

Andrzej Bauer is professor at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw and the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz, where he is in charge of the cello classes. He is also the founder and artistic director of the Warsaw Cellonet Group. He has been devoting more and more time to composing and improvising music.

His website can be found at www.andrzejbauer.com.

The pianist **Jan Krzysztof Broja** was born in Warsaw in 1972, studied at the Hoch Conservatoire in Frankfurt, in Hanover and in the Music Academy in Warsaw, whence he graduated in 1998. He perfected his piano skills with Jan Ekier, Wolfgang Hess, Karl-Heinz Kämmerling, Szabolcs Esztényi (improvisation) and Krystyna Borucińska (chamber music).

He has won many awards, among them a special prize in the Paul Hindemith Competition in Hanau in 1989, third prize in the Grottrian-Steinweg Competition in Brunswick in 1991, second prize in the Dinu Lipatti Competition in Bucharest in 1995, three special awards in the Thirteenth International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in the same year, first prize in the Mykolajus Konstantinas Čiurlionis Competition in Vilnius in 1999 and a prize in the Sergei Rachmaninoff Competition in Pasadena, California, in 2002.



Photo: Andrzej Swietlik

He has given concerts in Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Russia, in South America, the USA and Japan, and performed in many music festivals. He also took part as an adviser in the production of Roman Polański's film *The Pianist*.

He has lived in Spain since 2004, working as a professor in the Conservatorio Superior de Música in Salamanca.

Marek Moś, born in Piekary Śląskie in Silesia in 1956, has been the artistic director of the Aukso Tychy Chamber Orchestra since its inception and of the festival 'Aukso Summer Philharmonia' in Wigry, also an outstanding Polish violinist and chamber musician. He trained in Bytom and Katowice under Kazimierz Dębicki and Andrzej Grabiec. He was the founder and long-serving leader of the Silesian Quartet – an ensemble that quickly became one of the leading string quartets in Europe, performing at the most prestigious festivals and on the leading concert platforms in the world, including the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Schauspielhaus in Berlin, Tivoli in Copenhagen, Tonhalle in Düsseldorf, Merkin Hall in New York and Jordan Hall in Boston. With the Silesian Quartet, he gave over thirty premieres of Polish and foreign works, some of which are dedicated to the ensemble. Moś has many archive recordings to his name for Polish Radio and Television, and also for record labels, including CD Accord and Olympia. Discs on which he plays have won numerous prizes. A disc of works by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki won a 1995 'Fryderyk' prize awarded by the Polish record industry. Another 'Fryderyk' and 'Disc of the Year' award from *Studio* magazine for 1997 featured quartets by Szymanowski and Lutosławski. Marek Moś has also won many prizes – at the Contemporary Music Competition in Kraków (1979), the UNESCO International Tribune in Paris (1984, 1988), the Polish Composers' Union Prize (1994, 2005) and the Ministry of Culture's 'Gloria Artist' silver award (2005). Besides his concert and recording work, he teaches at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice.



Photo: Krzysztof Lisiaś

Founded in February 1998 by Marek Moś and some young graduates of the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, the **Aukso Tychy Chamber Orchestra** ('Aukso' from the Greek for 'growth', and Tychy from the Silesian town where it is based) has become a symbol of their aspirations and a lodestar for the professional development of its members. Its name emphasises the necessity of constant improvement and creative development and the importance of taking on new and uncommon challenges. For more than fifteen years the Aukso Tychy Chamber Orchestra has been giving concerts in Poland and abroad – in Austria, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Italy, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine – throughout this time, working with such outstanding musicians as Piotr Anderszewski, Rudolf Barshai, Andrzej Bauer, Jacek Kasprzyk, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Marc Minkowski, Sergei Krylov, Howard Shelley and the Hilliard Ensemble. The Orchestra has performed at many festivals, such as the Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival, Wratislavia Cantans, Warsaw Autumn, the Star Festival in Międzyzdroje, the Festival Sotto La Rocca in Italy and the Film Music Festival in Kraków. It boasts 29 CD recordings, including music by Grażyna Bacewicz, Witold Lutosławski, Wojciech Kilar, Paweł Mykietyn and Zbigniew Preisner. Its most recent recording, prepared and released in co-operation with the Katowice City of Gardens Cultural Institution, comprises works by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki.



Photo: Krzysztof Lisiek

The Orchestra is also active in the borderland, bringing together classical music, jazz and rock, looking for whatever they share and skilfully playing with the elements that keep them apart, juxtaposing their different musical languages. Thus the Orchestra has performed and recorded with such eminent artists as Leszek Możdżer, Tomasz Stańko, Urszula Dudziak, Michał Urbaniak, Andrzej Jagodziński, Motion Trio and Voo Voo.

With each season the Aukso musicians expand their repertoire, coming back to places they know well and accepting new invitations. Winning ever-wider audiences and drawing increasing numbers of enthusiasts of the art they offer, they have grown into one of Europe's foremost chamber orchestras, an ensemble which combines versatility with a conscious concern for creativity and individualism.

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