

HE WHO IS MUSIC!

On 9 April 2016, there will be 80 candles lit up on one of Poland's most prominent conductor, composer and pianist, Jerzy Maksymiuk's birthday cake. The anniversary of his birth is a good reason to organise a concert in his honour. Exactly one month before that day, at the Teatr Wielki-Polish National Opera in Warsaw there will be a concert by Nikolai Demidenko and the Orchestra of the Teatr Wielki-Polish National Opera under the baton of the birthday man himself. The repertoire will consist of Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 Op. 73, and Sergey Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2 Op. 27. May this jubilant occasion serve to remind us of the great artist, who received "Polish Market's" Pearl of Polish Culture in 2013, and a reason for us to offer him our best wishes. All the best, Maestro! Let the Music in you never go silent – wishes the "Polish Market" team!

Maciej Proliński

Maksymiuk's career, his concerts, his records, and his personality, have always inspired to speak out against dividing music. Maestro Maksymiuk is music in person. Purifying. Multidimensional. Transcendental. Live...

Born in Grodno, he has three degrees in music: piano, composing and conducting. In 1961 he was awarded first place at the Paderewski Piano Competition in Bydgoszcz, but he decided to leave the piano and become a conductor. In 1972 he set up the Polish Chamber Orchestra (POK), which many music critics have claimed to be one of the best orchestras in the world. Under his baton the POK gave concerts in many places around the world, including Carnegie Hall, the Proms, Wiener Ferein, and of course in Poland. In 1984 the orchestra was succeeded by the equally famous Sinfonia Varsovia. At the peak of his career in 1984 Maksymiuk took over for 13 years as chief conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Glasgow, and toured with it on multiple occasions around Europe. He recorded 100 albums for EMI, Hyperion, Naxos and many other record companies. Many of his albums received prestigious awards including the Wiener Floetenur for his and POK's interpretation of Mozart in 1982, and the Gramophone Award for "Best Concerto of the Year" in 1992 for his recording of "The Confession of Isobel Gowdie" by James Macmillan, or

his piano concertos of Nikolai Medtner (soloist Nikolai Demidenko, 1995). He has always promoted contemporary music.

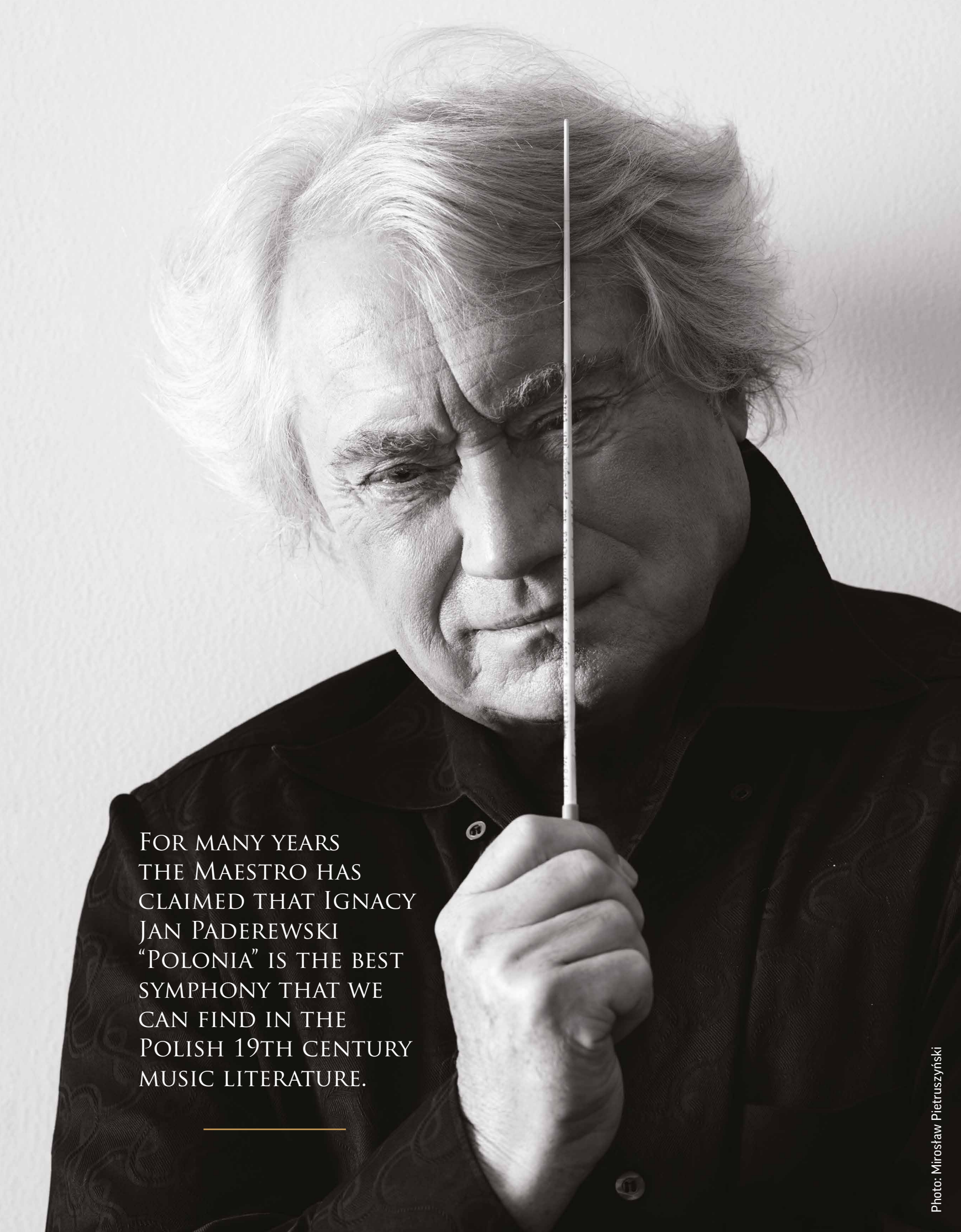
Maksymiuk is one of the founders of the Polish Society for Contemporary Music. He has performed for the first time 200 contemporary compositions. As an act of recognition of his honours Strathclyde University in Glasgow honoured him with the title Doctor of Letters.

Always with the same drive, curiosity, love for music and perfection, he studied the secrets of the greatest, those from the canon. What canon? "Mozart is no. 1. If there is a God then this genius is proof he exists. But maybe alongside Chopin... nobody had such imagination of the piano keyboard as Chopin. No. 2 will be Bach and Beethoven. No. 3 is Russian music: Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Stravinsky. No. 4 will be French Music – Debussy and Ravel. What about no. 5? Let's wait for a while", he has recently told "Polish Market".

Maksymiuk is one of the most persistent propagators of Ignacy Jan Paderewski's music. For many years the Maestro has claimed that Paderewski's "Polonia" is the best symphony that we can find in the Polish 19th century music literature. He played it frequently and always would play the full concert and has recorded it three times. "I don't know a second composition that in such an easy and obvious way would lift up our patriotic spirits", said Maksymiuk.

The monumental, almost one and a half hour long symphony, created over 100 years ago to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the January Uprising, was performed at the National Opera during a special concert on 4 June 2015. The event was co-organised by "Polish Market". It reminded us of Paderewski, a composer full of pomp and great maturity, a believer of harmony of sounds, with full awareness of composing and technical discipline.

During the Jubilee Concert at the National Opera on 9 March 2016 canonical compositions will be played that would seem to be familiar over the course of the years. The main soloist will be the renowned Russian pianist, a well known figure at concert halls around Poland – Nikolai Demidenko. Critics often admire his terrific technique connected with his musical vision. Maksymiuk says: "I have recorded for Hyperion two piano concertos by Nikolai Medtner alongside Demidenko and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, which Demidenko himself proposed, for which we received the Gramophone Award. I personally believe these concertos are fantastic, so we have a similar kind of sensitivity. I am very happy that we are meeting at my Jubilee Concert at the Teatr Wielki. Bearing in mind the fantastic pianistic abilities of Nikolai Demidenko, I recommended that he played Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5. And I will conduct Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2. This year will pass for me under the sign of this composer."

A black and white portrait of an elderly man with white, wavy hair, looking down and to the right. He is holding a white baton vertically in front of his face, which partially obscures his features. He is wearing a dark, patterned jacket over a dark shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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