

Poland

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POLAND IS A key player on the European jazz scene, as evidenced by the innumerable accomplishments of Polish jazz musicians, from the unparalleled successes of Krzysztof Komeda's film scores to Tomasz Stańko's current achievements. The large number of Polish entries in Leonard Feather and Ira Gitler's famous *Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz*¹ is further testament to this fact. Poland today is a European jazz breeding-ground, producing an ever-growing galaxy of talented young musicians. Poland now hosts more than a hundred jazz festivals every year. The pianist and composer Włodzimierz Pawlik's 2014 Grammy award for the disc *Night in Calisia*,² which he recorded with the American trumpeter Randy Brecker, could be regarded as a symbol of Poland's standing within the jazz community. Poles are increasingly performing and recording with American musicians, and effectively commissioning works from them. One exponent of this sort of large-scale collaboration is Michał Urbaniak. And the rich body of work by Zbigniew Namysłowski figures among the world's artistic jazz treasures and draws inspiration from Polish folk music in a most original way.

How has it come to pass that Poland is now a major player in the jazz world? What role did jazz play in twentieth-century Poland, particularly during the period following World War II and during the Stalinist

era, when conditions for the very existence of this type of music were highly unfavourable and, even thereafter, far from advantageous?

The inter-war years and the war

In the first half of the twentieth century, the famous Original Dixieland Jazz Band sound arrived in Great Britain and became hugely popular. A constant stream of US jazz bands subsequently performed there, all contributing to the unprecedented growth of the native jazz scene. Equally, France, Belgium, Italy and Sweden were involved in jazz music from its earliest days. By comparison, Poland enjoyed no such contact: Poland as a state did not exist at that time. The end of the eighteenth century had seen the former Commonwealth of Poland wiped off the map of Europe as a result of its annexation by Austria, Prussia and Russia, who divided up former Polish territories. Not until 120 years of subjugation had passed did Poland regain its independence in 1918, but within a mere two years it looked as if it was about to lose it again. Bolshevik armies attacked Poland from the east, nearly reaching Warsaw, although the Polish army under Marshal Józef Piłsudski did, ultimately, defeat the Russian aggressors. Meanwhile, in Great Britain and other Western countries, a totally different triumphal procession was just beginning in the form of the foxtrot.

It is unlikely that the Poles would have taken an interest in jazz during this early stage of independence. Yet, as life in Poland began to return to some sort of normality, the appetite for fun and entertainment increased.

¹ New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

² *Randy Brecker Plays Włodek Pawlik's Night in Calisia* (Włodek Pawlik Trio, Kalisz Philharmonic Orchestra and Adam Klocek) (Pawlik Relations, 2012 [LEMCD014]; Kayax, 2014 [730]; Summit Records, 2014 [DCD 612]).

The regular bands that played in restaurants and night-clubs in Warsaw, Lwów (Lemberg, Lviv), Wilno (Vilnius), Kraków, Poznań and Łódź began to popularize the new sounds that had reached the country, predominantly via Germany. To their existing repertoire of mostly waltzes, polkas and tangos, these bands added the Charleston, the shimmy, the Boston and the two-step. And the foxtrot. There are jazz elements in evidence in all of these dances. Although we have no phonographic evidence to prove that Polish dance bands of the 1920s had any soloist/improvisors (which would mean they could be regarded as jazz bands), we do have other proof in the form of comments made in the press by musicians of that era. One such early exponent of jazz in Poland was the violinist, pianist, saxophonist and composer Zygmunt Karasiński.

Following music studies in Warsaw and a spell in local movie theatres as a piano accompanist for silent movies, Karasiński arrived in Berlin in 1921 and began playing with the little-known American dixieland musician Harry Spieller. It was Spieller who taught Karasiński about jazz and persuaded him to learn the alto saxophone. On his return to Poland, Karasiński formed a band of alto saxophone (doubling violin), piano, banjo, bass and drums, which, according to him, was the first jazz band in Poland. Naturally, like every other Polish jazz band of the period, Karasiński's band played dance music—in clubs in Gdańsk, Warsaw and other Polish towns and cities. The pianist and composer Szymon Katuszek soon became co-leader. The band met with success, not only within Poland itself, but also abroad, for instance in the Middle East, where it toured for several months. One of the band's core members was the saxophonist Aleksander Halicki, who later played in the 1930s in trumpet legend Ady (later known as Eddie) Rosner's band.

Another early exponent of jazz in Poland was the pianist and talented composer of film scores Henryk Wars, whose 'New York Times' foxtrot of 1927 is evidence of his initiation into the world of jazz music. Wars was an important figure in the world of Polish show-business during the inter-war years, from 1928 being musical director of the Syrena record label. He composed scores for over 60 films.

At the turn of the 1930s, Poland had the following bands and musicians who, to a lesser or greater extent, can be regarded as pioneers of Polish jazz:

1. Karasiński/Katuszek's band (mentioned above);
2. The Jazz Band led by violinist Artur Gold and pianist and talented composer Jerzy Petersburski;
3. Fred Melodyst's band;
4. Henryk Gold's Jazz Band;
5. Zygmunt Wiehler's dance band;
6. Henryk Wars's dance band;
7. Artur and Henryk Gold's eight-piece band.

Notable among the musicians who played with Melodyst is the alto saxophonist Franciszek Witkowski, who, during the following decade, went on to lead one of the best jazz bands in Poland and was much admired by Rosner.

Ady Rosner, born in Berlin to Polish-Jewish parents, gave up his classical music studies to pursue 'light music'. To escape Jewish persecution, he found himself in Poland in 1934, as did a number of talented German-Jewish jazz musicians, their arrival galvanizing jazz in that country. Rosner formed a band from among his émigré friends and resident Poles, the line-up being: Ady Rosner (trumpet), Tony Lewityn (alto sax), Bobby Fiedler (tenor sax), Szymon Heliszowski (piano), Stanisław Piecuch (bass and trombone), Joe Schwarstein (drums) and Lothar Lampel (vocals). The band debuted in 1936 at the Cyganeria dance club in Kraków.

The style of Rosner's band would no doubt have been early swing. This new music-dance craze had reached Poland around 1937, initially through the movies—notably Busby Berkeley's *Hollywood Hotel*, with music from Benny Goodman's big band, and his jazz quartet featuring Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton and Gene Krupa (a drummer of Polish origin). Sadly, these giants of swing never set foot in inter-war Poland, but swing nevertheless soon began to dominate Polish dance floors.

Between March and May 1938, Rosner's band recorded eight tracks in Paris for the Columbia label: these appear to be the only recordings made abroad by a Polish jazz band in the inter-war years, and stand as remarkable examples of pre-war jazz.

On 1 September 1939, the Third Reich invaded Poland. As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (a neutrality agreement between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union), on 17 September Soviet forces followed suit from the east, thereby completing the next stage

of the country's annexation. Many Polish musicians, especially those of Jewish origin, moved to the town of Białystok (now occupied by Soviet forces) where they were responsible for a new cultural scene developing. The town of Lwów (Lviv) later became their sanctuary. Following instructions from Panteleimon Ponomarenko, First Secretary of the Belarusian Communist Party, Rosner formed the National Jazz Orchestra of the Belarusian Republic of the USSR, which toured all over the Soviet Union to great acclaim.³

But the majority of jazz musicians who left Poland (among them Henryk Wars) joined General Władysław Anders's Polish Armed Forces in the East who, armed by the Western Allies, left the USSR to start the long combat trail through Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and Italy, as far as Bologna. Wars formed an orchestra, which performed concerts for Anders's forces and provided the accompaniment for singers. While this was not a jazz orchestra as such, it did draw on certain jazz conventions. After the war, Wars emigrated to the USA where he continued his career as a composer of film scores.

The early post-war years: 1945-49

Following the notorious arrangement drawn up at Yalta in July 1945 by the so-called 'Big Three' (Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin), a substantial part of Poland's eastern territories were annexed by Soviet Russia (including Wilno [Vilnius], Grodno and Lwów [Lviv]), in exchange for which Poland was handed smaller territories that had until that time belonged to Germany (Eastern Prussia, Pomerania, Upper Silesia and Lower Silesia). While the Soviet army headed for Berlin, the Russians, with the agreement of the Polish Communists, installed a police system that was modelled on the Soviet one. The repression of the Gestapo and SS gave way to the repression of the NKVD (the law enforcement agency of the Soviet Union). However, for the benefit of the West, the authorities in Warsaw tried to create an impression of democracy and independence. Within this limited framework, Polish artists, musicians included, managed to rebuild their creative lives—forming orchestras and putting on operas and operettas.

³ See also 'Belarus', this volume.

As for jazz, its fate initially rested in the arms of pre-war Polish musicians, those who played in dance bands and put on concerts—for example, the multi-instrumentalist Kazimierz Turewicz at the YMCA in Kraków. The Young Men's Christian Association, tolerated for a while by the Communists, played a significant role in the gradually emerging Polish jazz scene of the second half of the 1940s. Admittedly, the 'Iron Curtain' did not, as yet, exist, but Poland was already isolated from the West: there was no question of bringing over American or Western European jazz bands to perform there; there was no record industry as we understand it; no normal exchange of information via the press; and no exchange of sheet music or books.

Kraków, the beautiful former capital of the Polish kingdom, thankfully escaped destruction. Shortly after the so-called 'liberation' of the Małopolska region (Lesser Poland) by the Red Army in January 1945, the older generation of professional musician-improvisers—bandleaders such as Turewicz (who played tenor sax, clarinet, trumpet, accordion and violin) and trumpeter Zbigniew Wróbel, and their soloists: the Łysak brothers (tenor saxophonist Józef and double-bassist Stefan) with drummer Marian Puc, and others—began to perform in the well-known nightclubs that had survived from pre-war Kraków: Cyganeria, Feniks, Casanova and Maxim. Both these bands played a repertoire of swing music. Keen young jazz fans frequented these clubs, among them the clarinetist and alto saxophonist Jerzy Matuszkiewicz, who was to become one of the most important jazz musicians in Poland.

Matuszkiewicz was born in 1928 in the town of Jasło and was brought up in Lwów in a musical family. After the war and their forced removal from Lwów, the family settled in Kraków where Jerzy formed his first band, which played jazz classics. In 1947 he became the fourth saxophonist in Turewicz's big band, which played classic swing numbers by Ellington, Woody Herman, Count Basie and Benny Goodman.

In 1946 the fortnightly *Ruch Muzyczny* ('Musical Movement') published the first post-war press article in Poland on the problem of syncopated music. Entitled 'What is Jazz?', it was written by Leopold Tyrmand, a young intellectual and writer who was to become the undisputed guru of the jazz movement in Poland until well into the 1960s.

Although Warsaw was still lying in ruins, those buildings and halls that had survived quickly began to reverberate to the sound of music. Back in 1945 Zygmunt Karasiński had put together the first post-war Polish musical roadshow called ‘1,000 Bars of Jazz’. Alongside Karasiński, the master, were other excellent musicians, among them the brilliant pianist Waldemar ‘Valdi’ Maciszewski, guitarist and vocalist Zbigniew Kurtycz, and two English vocalists, the wives of Polish airmen from the famous wartime RAF squadrons: Jeanne Johnstone-Schiele and Elisabeth ‘Betty’ Charles, who was Black. One of the capital’s music venues was the undamaged part of the European Hotel, where there was a functioning restaurant. The resident saxophonist was the Czech musician Charles Boverý (tenor saxophone, violin, vocals). Among his band were trumpeter Franciszek Górkiwicz, alto saxophonist Juliusz Skowroński, pianist Waclaw Czyż and drummer Janusz Byliński—four prominent figures on the Polish jazz scene of the 1940s.

The first really high-profile event that made people take notice of the Polish jazz scene was the sensational concert ‘Jam Session—Hot Jazz—Swing—Boogie Woogie’ on 30 May 1947. It was organized by Leopold Tyrmand and Wojciech Brzozowski and took place in the auditorium of the Polish YMCA in Warsaw. There were performances from two saxophonists (Charles Boverý and Juliusz Skowroński), three pianists (Waclaw Czyż, ‘Valdi’ and Wiesław Machan), bassist Jan Issakiewicz, two percussionists (Maciej Dobrzyński and Janusz Byliński) and vocalist Jeanne Johnstone. A jazz club sprang up at the YMCA and, under its auspices, a jazz band, Marabut, was formed, made up of young musicians. Similar clubs were formed in other branches of the Polish YMCA: for example, in Łódź, where the club was known as the Melomani Club; and in Kraków, led by the graphic artist Jerzy Skarżyński, an expert on the history of jazz.

In 1948, small privately run record labels began recording jazz artists, among them the Łopatowski brothers’ label. A Polish jazz record market was beginning to form; but it wasn’t to last . . .

The late 1940s saw the start of a campaign by the USSR against so-called formalism in music. At a Polish composers’ music convention in 1949, the Communists ordered the Poles henceforth to compose ‘socialist’ music following directives from the Kremlin. The

directives for ‘socialist’ art applied equally to literature, film, painting and so forth. American films disappeared from Polish cinemas to be replaced by ‘worthy’ Soviet ones. Jazz, being the kind of music that is resistant to control, was unable to thrive in such a climate. It was labelled a rotten product of American imperialism, as were dances such as the jitterbug or the boogie-woogie. It came as no surprise when the authorities dismantled the YMCA on the grounds that it was ‘a tool for the promotion of bourgeois fascism’.

In the catacombs: 1950–55

The years 1949–54 are commonly referred to as the ‘catacomb’ era of Polish jazz. Essentially, an underground jazz movement came into being, and musicians met up in the privacy of their homes, where they used the excuse of birthday, nameday and wedding celebrations to play jazz. Playing jazz was forbidden in public places, although it could be heard at dances where it masqueraded under different titles (as was the case in Mussolini’s fascist Italy). When inspectors showed up, the musicians would instantly change the rhythm from swing to polka or oberek. An interest in jazz drew young people into all sorts of chicanery, including going so far as to abandon their studies, as was the case with the pianist Andrzej Kurylewicz.

The catacomb period did have its positive side: jazz now caught the attention of many, including intellectuals, who had previously not shown any interest. Jazz musicians became a symbol of the Polish resistance to imposed authority.

In June 1949, Jerzy Matuszkiewicz moved from Kraków to Łódź to pursue his studies as a studio operator at the National Higher School of Film (PWSF). Despite the inauspicious climate, he was determined to form a band with the percussionist Wojciech Sobociński, bass player Witold Kujawski, trumpeter Andrzej Wojciechowski and pianist Andrzej Trzaskowski, who would later become the leading exponent of modern jazz in Poland. Some time later, the band was joined by a young pianist from Poznań, Krzysztof Trzciniński, who subsequently changed his stage name to Komeda. They began performing under the name of Melomani (‘Music Lovers’) at the PWSF film school dances in Łódź and at the Academy of Fine Arts (ASP) in Warsaw. Their audi-

ences loved them. Fortunately, the directors of these institutions took a tolerant stance.

As mentioned, the dominant jazz style in Poland at this time was swing; dixieland was virtually unknown. When, in 1952, the members of Melomani got to hear New Orleans-style jazz on a bundle of contraband records, they decided on a radical change of style and reinvented themselves as a dixieland jazz band. Pianist Zygmunt Wichary's band in Katowice followed suit, and soon a host of dixieland bands could be heard in Kraków, Gdańsk and Wrocław.

By happy coincidence, during the first half of the 1950s, a group of young jazz-loving musicians found themselves together at the Kraków School of Music (Krakowskie Liceum Muzyczne). They were to become the next generation of jazz players, among them Andrzej Dąbrowski (drums), Roman Dyląg (bass), Wojciech Karolak (piano), Zbigniew Namysłowski (trombone) and Jan Byrczek (bass). They used to jam together in between lessons, and the teaching staff, to their credit, showed a marked forbearance towards these young pioneers.

On 5 March 1953, on Stalin's death Khrushchev took over the reins of power. It was common knowledge that changes were afoot at the Kremlin and that the Polish Communists would have to be alert to them. The authorities relaxed their attitudes, and that included on cultural matters. In this new climate, Polish jazz musicians were able to hold a national jazz convention in Kraków on All Soul's Day (1 November), 1954. This resulted in what was essentially a three-day-long highly enthusiastic jam session in one of the school gyms, amid much socializing. It was evident to all at the convention that Polish jazz was a powerful force.

In January 1955, impresario, jazz fan and Voice of America presenter Willis Conover started a new daily radio programme called *Jazz Hour*, on which he played the best of jazz. Conover's appealing sonorous voice soon became known to jazz fans the world over, especially in Poland, where his broadcasts essentially served as a jazz university.

On 5 and 6 March 1955 in Warsaw, Leopold Tyrmand organized the first official all-Poland jazz jam session. Representing Warsaw were Janusz Byliński (drums), Maciej Kasprzycki (bass) and Jan Walasek (tenor saxophone); from Kraków came Witold Kujawski (bass), Jerzy Matuszkiewicz (tenor saxophone) and Andrzej

Trzaskowski (piano); Łódź sent Witold Sobociński (drums) and Andrzej Wojciechowski (trumpet); and Poznań sent Alan Guziński (trumpet). Although they had been invited, the older jazz musicians declined, highlighting a clear demarcation between the generations.

In 1955 Warsaw played host to the V International Festival of Youth and Students, organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth (supervised by the Comintern). Among with delegates from 140 countries came assorted jazz bands—including from France and from England (the latter represented by the Bruce Turner Quintet). Given the political climate, the Polish authorities thought it wise to present Poland's very own jazz bands—the Communist way of showing the world what freedom was enjoyed by the citizens of the Polish People's Republic. Those chosen for this role by the Communists in power (in other words, the Polish United Workers' Party) were: Andrzej Kurylewicz's quintet, with the vocalist Wanda Warska; the Łopatowski Brothers' Jazz Band; the Warsaw band Pinokio; and the band Melomani; as well as the Polish Radio Light Entertainment Orchestra (established in 1946 with Jan Cajmer as its conductor; admittedly, this was not a jazz band as such, but it did number jazz musicians among its ranks).

In October 1955 there were jazz 'parties' in Warsaw and other cities; known as 'Jazz Tournaments', they essentially took the form of a jazz roadshow, a kind of small-scale touring festival, organized by the Capital Events Team. The brains behind the event was Zofia Lach (née Tittenbrun), one of Poland's first jazz impresarios who later married Krzysztof Komeda. The four jazz bands performing at the event were regarded at the time as the best: Kurylewicz's sextet, with Warska on vocals; Melomani, with Jeanne Johnstone; Zygmunt Wichary's Jazz Band with the half-Hispanic vocalist Carmen Moreno; and, last but not least, the Mazurka Jazz Band, led by clarinetist and violinist Józef Mazurkiewicz, whose musical career predated World War II. During the Jazz Tournament, Mazurkiewicz was joined by tenor saxophonist Jan Walasek, vibraphonist Alan Guziński and percussionist Mirosław Ufnalewski; the vocalists were Carmen Moreno and Zbigniew Kurtycz. The Tournament met with such an enthusiastic public reception that Tyrmand was inspired to organize a series of concerts in Warsaw running over several

consecutive days under the title Studio 55. Melomani and the Jan Walasek Band played. Tyrmand's explicit mission with this series of jazz events, and those that followed, was one of educating the Polish public about jazz. These events were, in essence, Poland's first 'jazz clinics'.

The mature phase: 1956-59

By 1956, Poland could boast a substantial number of jazz musicians; some of these, such as Zygmunt Wichary, were even making a living playing jazz—although this would have been a lively, cheerful, dance-music type of jazz. Melomani were also meeting with success, making a number of recordings of jazz standards, and enjoying the status of jazz pioneers. The jazz public did not forget Melomani's bravery in standing up to official cultural and political sanctions during the jazz catacomb era, not so very long ago. Meanwhile, at the other end of the spectrum, modern jazz was increasing in prominence, centred primarily around the figures of the musicologist Andrzej Trzaskowski and the laryngologist Krzysztof 'Komeda' Trzciniński. Andrzej Kurylewicz also gravitated toward modern jazz.

The year 1956 was a turning point in Poland's history and indeed in Polish jazz as well. In June, factory workers in Poznań went on strike in protest against the prevailing socio-economic policy; although the strike was met with bloody repression, it also led to a political crisis when, in October, Władysław Gomułka (the Communist leader who was persecuted by Stalin for his right-wing leanings) took over the reins of power. This marked the start of a political thaw. In cultural policy there was a partial opening-up to the West (as evidenced by the creation in 1956 of a state orchestra called Blue Jazz under the direction of Ryszard Damrosz). The events of this period have gone down in history under the term 'The Polish October'.

It is reasonable to ask why, in the unfavourable environment of Communist Poland, jazz continued to increase in popularity and attract thousands of young people. There is more than one answer. First, jazz represented a way of life, a reflection of the multicoloured dream that was America, in contrast to the greyness of everyday life. It offered a glimpse of freedom, a hope of escape from the cage. It enabled

entry into a dream world where people were free to forget about the reality of life in the Polish People's Republic, however temporarily. Second, jazz was the music of youthful rebellion against the established world order, imposed by adults. And, third, and quite simply, jazz was seen as the essence of modernity, in tune with the twentieth century. It was 'our' music.

In early 1956 in Gdańsk, a four-page pamphlet entitled *Jazz* was published under the editorship of the journalist and major proponent of jazz in Poland, Józef Balcerak, who saw the need for a regular jazz magazine. Continuing until 1977, the monthly bulletin was a rich source of information, as much for the amateur jazz lover as for the professional musician. Balcerak had to overcome enormous difficulties to obtain permission from the authorities, and of course every single issue was vetted by the Central Office of Control for Press, Publications and Performances in case it contained covert anti-socialist propaganda.

The most important event of the year was the first-ever Polish Jazz Festival in the Baltic resort of Sopot. The concept for the festival had been proposed in February by Franciszek Walicki, a journalist for *Głos Wybrzeża* ('Coastal Voice'), the organ of the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party in Gdańsk, along with Jerzy Kosiński, director of the state-run organization Gdańsk Events, when the pair were visiting Tyrmand in Warsaw. Tyrmand approved of the idea. A committee was organized, with Kosiński as chair. Tyrmand and Walicki were joined by: Jerzy Broszkiewicz, writer and publicist for the weekly opinion-forming *Przegląd Kulturalny* ('Cultural Review'); Marian Eile, editor-in-chief of the popular weekly publication *Przekrój* ('Cross-section'); Stefan Kisielewski, writer, composer and activist with the Union of Polish Composers; Professor Jan Kott, theatre critic; Professor Zygmunt Mycielski, composer and critic; and Jerzy Skarżyński, set designer. The participation of so many prominent people seemed to serve as protective armour against the anticipated attacks on the event.

On hearing news of a festival in Sopot, around 50,000 young people from all over Poland descended on the seaside resort. Between 6 and 12 August 1956, Sopot resembled a massive campsite. At the opening of the festival, Tyrmand delivered a fiery speech from the seaside pavilion, an extract from which reads:

Jazz is already a great period in the history of music; and I'm sure that I don't need to persuade anyone in this auditorium that jazz is an artistic phenomenon, a true art form—art with a capital 'A', expressing as it does the joys and sorrows of our age and our generation.⁴

There were performances at the festival from Poland's foremost jazz bands:

- Melomani (average age: 27), led by Jerzy Matuszkiewicz (with Jeanne Johnstone);
- Andrzej Kurylewicz's jazz band (average age: 25) with Wanda Warska;
- Zygmunt Wichary's jazz band (average age: 28) with Elisabeth Charles;
- *Drażek i Pięciu* (The Rod plus Five) (average age: 23), led by alto saxophonist Stanisław 'Drażek' ('The Rod') Kalwiński
- The Krzysztof Komeda Sextet (average age: 23), with Jerzy Milian (vibes) and Jan 'Ptaszyn' ('Birdie') Wróblewski (clarinet and baritone saxophone).

All styles of jazz were represented, up to and including cool. Komeda, who by now was influenced by Gerry Mulligan and the Modern Jazz Quartet, received the highest critical accolades. One member of Komeda's band, a little-known clarinetist and saxophonist from Kalisz called Jan Wróblewski, was to become a towering figure in Polish jazz over the next five decades.

Sopot was proof that some Polish musicians (notably Komeda) were no longer content to confine themselves to traditional jazz and were already creating their own new forms of modern jazz. A quarter of a century later, the German critic Joachim-Ernst Berendt observed that there was a point at which it became clear that interest in jazz had moved away from a focus on traditional jazz to modern jazz and that this shift first took place in Europe, its earliest manifestation being in Poland.

After the 1956 festival in Sopot, Melomani (aka Hot Club Melomani) decided to split into two: one band playing traditional jazz and the other playing modern. Kurylewicz was brought into the band, along with two new talents: Alojzy Thomys on alto saxophone and Roman Dyląg on bass. Matuszkiewicz led the tra-

ditional jazz group and Trzaskowski the modern one (which featured alto, tenor, baritone, trombone, piano, bass and percussion).

In 1956 three important clubs appeared. On 5 April in Warsaw, near to Emilia Plater Street, a jazz club called Stodoła ('the Barn') was launched by students at the Warsaw University of Technology. The Barn was located in some vacant former barracks, which had once served as a temporary home for the construction workers of the Joseph Stalin Palace of Culture and Learning in Warsaw. The Barn was to become a centre for traditional jazz in Poland and subsequently hosted many major jazz events. On 19 October, in the city of Zabrze, the Silesian Jazz Club was formed, and on 28 November in Kraków an association called the Kraków Jazz Club was formed in the Yacht Club building.

In 1957 the publisher PWM (Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne) Edition published Leopold Tyrmand's *U brzegów jazzu* ('On the Border of Jazz'), the first book to be published in Poland on the subject of African-American music. The monthly periodical *Jazz* began to publish sheet music by Polish jazz musicians. And a thread of jazz content became evident in the poetry of the period; proponents of this movement were Andrzej Brycht, Bogusław Fac and Jerzy Skolimowski. A young jazz fan, the lawyer Roman Waschko, started to write a regular jazz column in the daily *Sztandar Młodych* ('Banner of Youth'), while Lucjan Kydryński wrote regularly on jazz in *Przekrój*. Every fortnight, Polish radio broadcast yet another new recording by Komeda's band. On 21 December, the inaugural broadcast of the long-running radio programme *To jest jazz* ('This is Jazz') went out with Tyrmand as its presenter.

Among the many jazz clubs that sprang up in 1957 was Hot Club Hybrydy, which was housed in the Central Club for Warsaw Students and was to play an important role in the Polish jazz movement. A student activist, Jan Borkowski, became president, and among the bands affiliated were: Modern Dixielanders, led by pianist Witold Krotochwil; Modern Combo, led by pianist Krzysztof Sadowski; and a band led by clarinetist Janusz Zabiegliński. The Tri-City (Gdańsk–Sopot–Gdynia) had the Gdańsk Jazz Club.

A Coordinating Committee of Polish Jazz Clubs was established: the first national institution to represent the interests of the jazz fraternity.

⁴ All translations from Polish are by the translator of this chapter.

Roman Waschko, a leading patron of jazz music in Poland, put together a TV programme called *TV Jazz d Club*. This was rapidly followed by support from the socio-cultural Association of Polish Students (ZSP), the Wrocław branch of which organized the first National Review of Polish Student Jazz Bands. Six bands attracted particular attention: *Drażek i Pięciu* (Kraków); *Hot Seven* (Łódź); *Koliber* (Katowice); and *Modern Combo*, *Modern Dixielanders* and *Zabiegliński's Band* (Warsaw). Zbigniew Namysłowski, the trombonist with *Krotochwil's* band, was also singled out for special attention.

The most important event of the year was the Second International Festival of Jazz Music: Sopot '57 (14–21 August), organized by the Gdańsk branch of the ZSP with its jazz club *Żak*. Again, a huge number of jazz fans came from all over Poland. In the inaugural parade, which took place in the *Lechia* Gdańsk football stadium, there was a delegation of musicians and activists from West Germany, with Joachim-Ernst Berendt at its head, which received a warm reception from the Polish public. It was a significant occasion—politically, too: it marked the first post-war cultural meeting between Poland and West Germany (all thanks to jazz) and the start of a long and fruitful relationship between Berendt and the Poles, which opened up access to the jazz scene in West Germany.

Two Americans came to the Sopot '57 Festival: the singer Big Bill Ramsey and the legendary New Orleans clarinetist Albert Nicholas. Poland was represented by *Hot Club Melomani* (with both their traditional and modern line-ups) and the *Krzysztof Komeda Sextet* (an expanded version with French horn and cor anglais), as well as some recently formed groups such as the Gdańsk-based *Modern Jazz Sextet*, *Medium* from Śląski (Silesian) Jazz Club, a combo formed out of the *Hot Seven* from Łódź and *Zabiegliński's* band from Warsaw, *Koliber* from Katowice and, finally, the *Modern Combo*, which featured the *Modern Dixielanders'* 17-year-old trombonist Zbigniew Namysłowski on cello—the first step in the formidable career of this hugely talented musician. The contemporary line-up of *Melomani* included the exceptional bass player Roman Dyla, who would soon become one of Europe's outstanding jazz instrumentalists.

In the summer of 1957 Roman Polański asked Komeda to compose the music for his short film *Two Men and a Wardrobe*, marking the beginning of Komeda's

film career.⁵ On its release in 1958, the film won awards at various film festivals (Brussels, San Francisco) not only for its originality and direction but also for its music, including its tuneful 'Lullaby'.⁶

The next two years saw jazz music in Poland grow steadily in maturity, aided by a visit from the *Dave Brubeck Quartet* (with Paul Desmond) in March 1958. This was the first time that Poland had played host to the top rank of US jazz musicians. The Polish public gave Brubeck an enthusiastic reception; as a token of gratitude he regaled them with a piano composition 'Dziękuję' ('Thank You'),⁷ written especially for the Poles after a visit to the Chopin Museum in *Żelazowa Wola* near Warsaw.

In January 1958, Bohdan Wodiczko, director and conductor of the National Philharmonic in Warsaw, initiated the first in a series of regular jazz concerts, 'Jazz at the Philharmonic'. The first concert of the series was also the last in *Hot Club Melomani's* glorious career. Matuszkiewicz commented on the end of their collaboration as follows:

It was clear by the end of the second festival that things were falling apart. Trzaskowski already knew what he was steering towards and the kind of musicians he wanted to collaborate with; as for me, I'd started working with the *Hybrids*, who had invited me to join with them for the opening night with the *Hot Club Hybrydy*. I felt really at home there; I felt ten years younger; I encountered a new generation of musicians; these people were full of the spontaneous joy of making music.⁸

Komeda's Sextet also disbanded—the result of internal disagreements between the band members about lack of work. The appearance of Bill Haley, Elvis Presley and rock 'n' roll music in general on Radio Luxembourg, to which Polish youth now listened avidly, unseated Polish jazz from its throne; jazz audiences began to decline, as did jazz concerts. Contemporary jazz was the first to be affected.

⁵ See also 'Film,' this volume.

⁶ Not to be confused with another famous Komeda lullaby—the one from the Polanski film *Rosemary's Baby*.

⁷ The audience's reaction is described in Brubeck's liner notes to the album *Jazz Impressions of Eurasia* (Columbia, 1958 [CS 8058]), on which the track appears.

⁸ Author's interview with Jerzy Matuszkiewicz, published in *Jazz Forum* 73 (1981): 15.

A new jazz band was formed: the Jazz Believers with Komeda and Trzaskowski alternating on piano. March saw the appearance in Poland of Adrian Benzton's Jazz Band from Copenhagen, and, in a reciprocal gesture, the Frederiksberg Jazz Club in Copenhagen invited Polish jazz musicians to perform in Denmark. Also performing in Denmark were the Warsaw–Kraków group the Polish All Stars, in an arrangement made by the Hot Club Hybrydy. The Polish All Stars were made up of Jerzy Matuszkiewicz (soprano saxophone), Bogdan Styczyński (cornet), Zbigniew Namysłowski (trombone), Andrzej Kurylewicz (piano), Roman Dyląg (bass) and Tadeusz Federowski (drums). They played dance music, in response to public demand, and went down a treat.

Brubeck had barely left Poland when a new group of guests arrived from the USA in the form of George Wein, pianist and director of the famous Newport Jazz Festival, and Marshall Brown, composer and teacher. The two were traversing Europe with the intention of identifying the best young jazz musicians and forming an International Youth Jazz Band to perform at the next Newport Jazz Festival in the name of international fellowship. The Polish saxophonist (and former member of Komeda's band) Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski was selected and, after a month of rehearsals, these young musicians performed at the Newport Jazz Festival. Wróblewski's sojourn in the USA, where he was able to hear the top jazz performers of the time, forced him to reconsider the views that had prevailed in Polish jazz circles following Brubeck's visit. In *Jazz* magazine, Wróblewski wrote:

The spontaneity factor was clear: glaring, if not brutal. The American jazz musicians know how to captivate their audience with their playing; their music pulsates with life: it seethes, it rages, whereas our musicians, while technically correct, for some reason don't always manage to command their audience. We seem to have conceived the notion that traditional jazz should be captivating, whereas modern jazz should be intellectual with a harmonically refined, melodic line, which should be expressed in a muted sort of way—God forbid any loud or strident type of delivery . . .

This extract offers a good insight into Polish jazz at the end of the 1950s.

Under the pretext of 'disruption to public order', the planned third jazz festival in Sopot was called off by the authorities. 'Party machinery' made itself known. Consequently, the president of Hot Club Hybrydy, Jan

Borkowski, decided to organize a festival in Warsaw under the name of Jazz '58 (its title was later changed to Jazz Jamboree) with the support of the ZSP. It took place in September in the Barn club and featured just one foreign band (the Louis Hjulmand Quartet from Denmark) and a hotch-potch of Polish bands: Kurylewicz's Trio (with Roman Dyląg and Andrzej Dąbrowski—then the best rhythm section in Poland); the Jazz Believers; Komeda's Trio; two of Zabiegliński's bands (dixieland and swing); Matuszkiewicz's Quartet (with pianist Wojciech Karolak); the Modern Combo; Witold Krotochwil's Sextet (with Jerzy Bartz on drums); and the New Orleans Stompers (NOS) led by Mieczysław Wadecki on drums.

In 1959 Willis Conover first visited Poland; indeed, it was his first visit behind the Iron Curtain. Two concerts were put on especially to give him an overview of the situation of jazz in Poland. Conover was delighted with the reception of the Polish jazz community and revisited Poland on 20 further occasions, each one resulting in his playing recordings by Polish jazz artists on his *Jazz Hour*, Polish jazz thereby being heard throughout the world.

Polish jazz clubs (often going under the title of 'jazz club' or 'hot club') were growing more active, although they bore no resemblance to the fully equipped affairs in the West, where there was jazz every night and the whole set-up was at the discretion of the clubs' owners—be they jazz fans or jazz musicians. Such a model was inconceivable in Soviet Poland. Polish jazz clubs of the day were essentially associations of highly engaged jazz fanatics, without material support, who put on concerts, dances and reading events wherever they could, usually in association with some youth or social organization, on whose goodwill they depended. The one exception was the Helikon Jazz Club in Kraków which, from 1957, enjoyed a permanent base in an old tenement building.

Contacts between the worlds of jazz and film were developing apace. For instance, Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski was invited to write and record music for Jan Rybkowski's films *Pan Anatol Szuka Miliona* ('Mr Anatole Tries to Make a Million') (1958) and *Inspekcja pana Anatola* ('Mr Anatole's Inspection') (1959). Matuszkiewicz got heavily into film music, composing for feature films, documentaries and animations. By January 1959 he had scores for around ten films to his credit. In 1959 Jerzy Kawalerowicz directed the feature film *Pociąg* (*Night Train*) and asked Trzaskowski to write the score.

In Gdańsk Rhythm and Blues were formed—the first of many rock 'n' roll bands to appear in Poland around the turn of the decade.

One of the new bands to appear at Jazz Jamboree '59—the Wreckers, led by Andrzej Trzaskowski—would go on to become one of the most significant bands on the European contemporary jazz scene in the following decade. Trzaskowski's early piano compositions suggested a Horace Silver influence, while his later ones were very much in his own style.

There was a noticeable increase in interest in jazz in Soviet Russia, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, as well as in other countries in the Eastern Bloc—no doubt due to Poland's influence. It was for good reason that Poland was known as 'the cheeriest barracks in the socialist camp'.

The 1960s: maturity

The 1960s were a time of great political unrest in Poland as elsewhere, although Polish jazz musicians managed to steer clear of politics throughout the decade. A healthy Polish jazz scene continued to develop throughout this time, seemingly independently of what was going on around it. The 1960s in Poland can be regarded as a decade of jazz maturity and international success.

In 1962 Jerzy Milian composed music for Belgian and East German radio. Zbigniew Namysłowski's Quartet recorded the LP *Lola* in Great Britain; other than Ady Rosner's 1938 Paris recording, this was the first Polish jazz music to be recorded abroad. Krzysztof Komeda achieved international fame thanks to his music scores for films by Polański, Skolimowski and the Danish film director Henning Carlsen, among others.

The Jazz Jamboree (JJ) festivals turned into huge, international events with star jazz performers from the USA and Europe taking part. And each successive festival brought new creative opportunities for Polish musicians. In 1964 Wrocław saw the inception of an important new festival: Jazz nad Odrą (Jazz on the Oder), a prestigious annual competition for young bands and soloists and a veritable breeding ground for new talent. The record label Polskie Nagrania (Polish Recordings) launched two major new series: 'Kronika Jazz Jamboree' ('Jazz Jamboree Chronicles') and 'Polish Jazz'. The records released at this time became jazz milestones in

Poland: *Astigmatic* from Komeda; *Polish Jazz Quartet* from Wróblewski; *Seant* from Trzaskowski; *Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet*; and *10 + 8* from the Andrzej Kurylewicz Quintet. The leading Polish jazz musicians were joined by new talent in the form of Michał Urbaniak (tenor saxophone, violin), Adam Matyszkowicz (aka Makowicz) (piano), Tomasz Stańko (trumpet) and Janusz Muniak (tenor saxophone); towards the end of the decade additional names included Czesław Bartkowski and Janusz Stefański (drums), Mieczysław Kosz (piano) and Zbigniew Seifert (alto saxophone, violin). New vocal talent appeared in the form of Urszula Dudziak and the group NOVI Singers.

Although contemporary jazz was the sound of this period, there was a wide panorama of traditional jazz bands which included both older ones, such as the New Orleans Stompers and Zygmunt Wichary's band, and new ones, such as Jazz Band Ball,⁹ the trumpeter Henryk Majewski's Old Timers, the Ragtime Jazzband, Asojacja Hagaw, Flamingo, High Society and others.

The Polish jazz musicians' organization, the Coordinating Committee of Polish Jazz Clubs, was replaced by the Polish Jazz Federation (PFJ). A new jazz publication, *Jazz Forum*, appeared under the aegis of the PFJ, published initially in Polish and shortly thereafter in English as well, the English edition being read in many countries throughout the world. Those involved in running the PFJ under the leadership of president Jan Byrczek can take credit for considerable achievements in the world of jazz, operating deftly within the political constraints of socialist Poland. However, Leopold Tyrmand, unhappy with the political situation in the country, decided to emigrate to the USA, never to return.

The start of the decade was marked by two significant events. In March 1960 the excellent New York Jazz Quartet, featuring legendary trumpeter Idrees Sulie-man, played a two-week stint. Then, in October that year, the American saxophonist and jazz superstar Stan Getz visited Poland. Arriving without his rhythm section, he performed at Jazz Jamboree '60 backed by Polish musicians Trzaskowski, Dyląg and Dąbrowski—and he wasn't disappointed. The event had enormous symbolic significance: a grand-master tenor saxophonist playing with the Poles—who rose magnificently to

⁹ This band is still playing at the time of writing under the name Jazz Band Ball Orchestra.

the challenge. This is a key reason why 1960 marks the starting point of the mature period of Polish jazz.

American composer Gunther Schuller's approach, like that of a number of other White artists who sought to meld jazz with highbrow European avant-garde music, essentially engendered a new style, which went by the name of Third Stream and was championed as a liberation from jazz's 'parochialism'. Around the same time, free jazz made its appearance with its ideology of free improvisation, shedding itself of established forms such as 12-bar blues or 32-bar songs. Some of the most talented Polish jazz musicians were fascinated by this new approach and took their music into various avant-garde directions.

In 1960 Andrzej Wajda's film *Niewinni Czarodzieje* (*Innocent Sorcerers*) was released, presenting a somewhat superficial treatment of the dilemmas of modern youth, with jazz as background music. In 1962 Roman Polański's film *Nóż w Wodzie* (*Knife in the Water*) caused a sensation both in Poland and abroad, won the coveted critic's prize at the Venice Film Festival and was nominated for an Oscar. The composer of both films' scores was Krzysztof Komeda, who also composed soundtracks for *Jutro Premiera* (*Opening Tomorrow*),¹⁰ *Cul-de-sac*¹¹ and *Dance of the Vampires*¹² among others. Jazz as mood music or a backdrop was now ubiquitous.

There now follows a few words on the leading musicians of the 1960s.

Andrzej Trzaskowski (1933–98)

As previously mentioned, Trzaskowski made several recordings with Stan Getz during the latter's first trip to Poland; these included 'All The Things You Are', 'Cherokee', 'Darn That Dream' and 'Out of Nowhere' and all appear on *Stan Getz w Polsce* ('Stan Getz in Poland') on the Polskie Nagrania label. They still sound fresh today.

In mid-1962, Trzaskowski received a bursary from the American State Department, which enabled him and his band to travel to the US. This was a landmark event. He travelled with Michał Urbaniak, Zbigniew

10 1962; dir. Janusz Morgenstern.

11 1966, UK; dir. Roman Polański.

12 Aka *The Fearless Vampire Killers*, 1967; dir. Roman Polański.



Last concert by Andrzej Trzaskowski: Jazz Jamboree, 1996. He died two years later.

Photo: Krystian Brodacki

Namysłowski, Roman Dyląg and Adam Jędrzejowski, and, as ever, they were accompanied by their manager Roman Waschko (a secret agent for the Communist security service, a fact that came to light only after his death in 2002). On his return to Poland, Trzaskowski wrote in his correspondence for the *Jazz* monthly:

There is such a huge distance between European jazz and US jazz that it's practically unbridgeable; it's dependent on so many factors: really, only a madman would ever attempt to cross that divide and break through.

Twelve years later that 'madman' turned out to be Michał Urbaniak.

At that time Trzaskowski was turning out a fair number of complex, original compositions, such as 'Synopsis' and 'Cosinusoida', which caught the attention of the jazz editors at the German broadcasting station Nord Deutscher Rundfunk in Hamburg, where, between 1965 and 1970, he ran jazz workshops attended by American and

European jazz musicians, including Poles. Trzaskowski's variations on folk themes, such as 'Oj Chmielu' ('Hey, Hop!') and 'Oj tam u Boru' ('Near the Forest') are successful examples of a sophisticated attempt to import Polish folk music into jazz. Besides his folk-inspired tunes, Trzaskowski also played experimental Third Stream jazz alongside avant-garde musicians such as Bogusław Schaeffer and Włodzimierz Kotoński, an example being his composition 'Nihil Novi'.

Krzysztof Komeda (Trzciński) (1931–69)

Komeda's talent blossomed during the 1960s. Following an invitation in 1960 from the poet Jerzy S. Sito, he took part in a performance called 'Jazz and Poetry'. Seven years later he recorded the album *Meine süsse europäische Heimat*¹³ with West German producer, Joachim-Ernst Berendt—a work based on an anthology of Polish poetry translated into German by Karl Dedecius. Komeda composed the music, and he and Tomasz Stańko, Zbigniew Namysłowski, Roman Dyląg and Swedish drummer Rune Carlsson performed it. The Austrian actor Helmut Lohner recited the poems.

Two years later, Komeda composed *Etiudy baletowe* ('Ballet Studies') for the choreographer Witold Gruca, as well as the excellent film score for *Knife in the Water*. At the age of only 30, he was famous within the film world. He composed the music for a number of short films as well as the soundtracks for some of Henning Carlsen's feature films. He continued to take part in the Jazz Jamboree events.

In 1965 he presented a programme of two compositions: 'Astigmatic' and 'Kattorna', which, in addition to appearing on Jazz Jamboree recordings, were also recorded in different versions on an album in the Polish Jazz series (volume 5) as *Astigmatic: The Music of Komeda*. His collaborators on this recording were Stańko (trumpet), Namysłowski (alto saxophone), German bassist Günter Lenz, and Rune Carlsson (drums). A third Komeda composition, 'Svantetic', recorded the same night, completed the disc.

Astigmatic is a landmark album and possibly the apogee of Komeda's jazz creativity. Komeda's music here is characterized by simple motifs consisting of just a few

notes, with a definite shift away from major–minor to modal music, offset by a series of chords that shift up or down by a semitone, the simultaneous clash of major and minor seconds (so beloved by the composer), a whole composition based essentially on two chords, and sometimes just on one, building tension through a change of tempo (speeding up, slowing down), or a rhythmic layering peculiar to Komeda, a predilection for triple meter, plenty of space in the music—few sounds, a manipulation of silence.

In 1968 Komeda went to the US to record the soundtrack to Polański's *Rosemary's Baby*, a film that met with great success, as did Komeda. Just as he was destined for a stellar career, he met with an unfortunate accident and fell into a coma. His wife Zofia had him flown back to Poland but he never regained consciousness and he died on 23 April 1969.

Zbigniew Namysłowski (1939)

From 1960 onwards, the alto saxophone was Namysłowski's main instrument. The 1960s were a triumphant period for him, although the peak of his success came in the following decade. He formed a quartet called the Jazz Rockers, and then a quintet

Zbigniew Namysłowski.

Photo: Krystian Brodacki



13 'My Sweet European Home' (Columbia, 1967 [SMC 74 432]).



Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski in November 2015.

Photo: Krystian Brodacki

with the tenor saxophonist Michał Urbaniak. When the Rockers disbanded, Namysłowski formed a new quartet with Włodzimierz Gulgowski on piano; they played their own compositions, but mainly those by Namysłowski, who was beginning to experiment with asymmetric rhythms and Polish folk music. When Gulgowski left to seek freedom in Sweden, the virtuoso pianist Adam Matyszkowicz (later known as Makowicz) joined the band, and the subsequent European tour met with great success. In mid-January 1966, the Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet recorded an album of Namysłowski's own compositions for the Polish Jazz series (volume 6): an important moment in the history of Polish jazz. The opening track, 'Siódmawka' (in 7/4 time), was a milestone in the saxophonist's creative journey. Its melodies and harmonic scale relate directly to Polish highland music. The composition is complex, far removed from standard structures.

Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski (1936)

Wróblewski's talent also blossomed in the 1960s. His Polish Jazz Quartet (PJQ) (featuring Karolak, Dyląg and Dąbrowski) became one of the most representative exponents of Polish jazz. Wróblewski was influenced by the Jazz Messengers and Sonny Rollins, but performed his own compositions, as well as those of Karolak. PJQ disbanded when the three members of the group left for Sweden in 1966. A year later, Wróblewski became leader of the Polish Radio Studio M-2 Orchestra, transforming it into the Polish Radio Jazz Studio, which lasted a decade and left a legacy of 187 recordings.



As mentioned above, in 1964 the first Jazz on the Oder festival took place in Wrocław. This national review and competition for student jazz groups from all over Poland hosted 13 ensembles of different sizes performing to an enthusiastic audience. The winners of the first festival (as well as subsequent festivals) were all subsequently to play a major role in Polish jazz; among them were pianist, saxophonist, flautist and composer Włodzimierz Nahorny; alto saxophonist Zbigniew Seifert (yet to take up the violin); vocalist Marianna Wróblewska; Henryk Majewski's band the Old Timers; and the Metropolitan Jazz Band. At that time the Jazz on the Oder jury awarded prizes in two categories: contemporary jazz and traditional jazz.

The 1970s: the development continues

The 1970s in Poland were a preparatory period for the breakdown of communism in the following decade. Economic collapse led to protests, to which the authorities responded with repressive measures. The communist regime became more hardline, enforcing the communist constitution and reiterating the inviolability of the Polish Communist Party's leading role and communist Poland's alliance with the USSR.

Such political turmoil, however, had no bearing on the development of jazz music in Poland; the 1970s were eventful for Polish jazz, though not in the same

fundamental way as in the 1960s. The first half of the decade saw a number of musicians leave the scene, including Andrzej Kurylewicz, and in the latter half he was followed by Andrzej Trzaskowski and Jerzy Milian. Some emigrated, mainly to Scandinavia. Of the jazz old guard, Zbigniew Namysłowski was left on the battlefield, along with keyboardists Wojciech Karolak and Krzysztof Sadowski, trumpeter Henryk Majewski and saxophonist Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski. Although Tomasz Stańko's career had begun somewhat earlier, he, along with Włodzimierz Nahorny and Adam Makowicz, can be counted among the second generation of Polish jazz musicians.

Makowicz, already a jazz star in the 1960s, is now a twenty-first-century superstar. No doubt the blind pianist Mieczysław Kosz's career would have followed the same trajectory had it not been for his tragic death. Makowicz boldly set off to conquer the USA, where he met with considerable success. The Jazz on the Oder festivals of the 1970s continued to play a significant role, and Jazz Jamboree became the main meeting place in Poland for jazz from Europe, the US and, on occasion, Asia too.

The Polish Jazz Federation and its successor, Polskie Stowarzyszenie Jazzowe (PSJ) (Polish Jazz Society), became the engine of Polish jazz life, setting up regional branches in Bydgoszcz, Wrocław and Kraków, and establishing its own record label: PolJazz. Several new jazz festivals appeared in the 1970s. Kalisz hosted the first International Jazz Piano Competition (in memory of Mieczysław Kosz); Katowice held a Jazz Improvisation Competition; and Kraków put on a Jazz Juniors Competition. In 1971 the PSJ ran the inaugural Jazz Workshops in Chodzież. These subsequently become central to jazz music education in Poland, independently of the Jazz Department at the Academy of Music in Katowice. The 1970s also saw the formation of a number of new jazz ensembles in Poland: two jazz-rock groups from Kraków—Laboratorium and Extra Ball—as well as the Janusz Muniak Quartet and the Warsaw quintet Jazz Carriers (JC), featuring the very talented alto saxophonist Henryk Miśkiewicz, a band that fused their exuberant jazz style with Polish folk.

The Michał Urbaniak Group was formed in 1970 with Urszula Dudziak (vocals), Czesław Bartkowski (drums), Paweł Jarzębski (bass) and Adam Makowicz (piano and electric piano). Three years later the band changed

its name to Michał Urbaniak Fusion and recorded an album for CBS. Jan Wróblewski and Wojciech Karolak formed a quartet called Mainstream with the talented guitarist Marek Bliziński and the excellent vocalist Ewa Bem, winner of the new Jazz Vocalists Meeting Competition in Lublin.

Traditional jazz in Poland remained in fine fettle. The top nine jazz ensembles of the period were: Gold Washboard, High Society, the Jazz Band Ball Orchestra, the Old Metropolitan Band, the Old Timers, Royal Rag, Sami Swoi, Swing Session and the Vistula River Brass Band. These bands performed regularly in West Germany, The Netherlands and Switzerland.

The saxophonist Andrzej Olejniczak, along with Władysław Sendecki (piano), Witold Szczurek (bass) and Marek Stach (drums), formed a new group called Sun Ship, borrowing the name from the title of one of John Coltrane's albums. In a new line-up, with Henryk Miśkiewicz on alto saxophone, the band produced a joyful, optimistic sound in the style of Chick Corea and became very popular.

The pianist Sławomir Kulpowicz, with Paweł Jarzębski (bass) and Janusz Stefański (drums) and also the excellent tenor saxophonist Tomasz Szukalski, formed a band called the Quartet, so named to indicate that all four members of the band shared leadership. The mainstay of the Quartet's repertoire was compositions by Kulpowicz, which were often either based on modal scales or were bitonal with a predilection for asymmetric rhythms. They delivered a post-Coltrane jazz sound—expressive and deeply moving.

The NOVI Singers (or just Novi) recorded a bold new album: *Novi Sing Chopin*.¹⁴ Following his return from Sweden, percussionist Andrzej Dąbrowski became a successful vocalist, and was three-time winner at the Festival of Polish Song in Opole. Another notable event was the appearance of the Old Timers at the National Theatre in Warsaw in their role as musical narrators in *The Threepenny Opera*. In 1973 a traditional jazz festival was born in Warsaw, namely Old Jazz Meeting, incorporating a competition called Złota Tarka ('the Golden Washboard').

A particularly important aspect of Polish jazz in the 1970s was the unprecedented success of the free-jazz-playing Tomasz Stańko Quintet. Trumpeter Stańko

14 Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1971 (SX 0755).

Zbigniew Seifert
with guitarist
Philip Catherine in
Brussels in 1975.
Photo: Gérard Rouy



had already expressed his fascination with the music of Ornette Coleman through his earlier band, Jazz Darings, whom Joachim-Ernst Berendt had dubbed the first European band to play free jazz. Very early in his career, Stańko had already played with the leading bands of Trzaskowski and Komeda, the latter having a particular influence on him. By the end of 1969 Stańko had assembled his 'dream' line-up in the form of Janusz Stefański (drums), Bronisław Suchanek (bass), Janusz Muniak (tenor and soprano saxophone, flute) and Zbigniew Seifert (alto saxophone, violin)—a group that performed together consistently from 1969 to 1973. Stańko's early recordings (as heard on his album *Music for K*, which he recorded in January 1970 and dedicated to the memory of Komeda) clearly show Komeda's influence. The Quintet's 1970 concert at the Berliner Jazztage met with a ten-minute standing ovation. Their music became freer over time, less restricted by form, moving away from notated music into new territory, unbound by any collective improvisatory frameworks. The Tomasz Stańko Quintet was especially popular among young people, who saw the music as an expression of freedom. In 1976 Tomasz Stańko and Dave Holland recorded *Balladyna*—Stańko's first album on the ECM label.

Other key events of the 1970s were two excellent albums by Namysłowski: *Winobranie*¹⁵ and *Kuyaviak Goes Funky*. The latter's eponymous track 'Kuyaviak', a three-part suite in 15/8 time, is a convincing fusion of Polish folk with sophisticated jazz. The folk thread was to become a constant in Namysłowski's music in the following years.

The year 1979 witnessed the death of Zbigniew Seifert following an unsuccessful operation. Despite being in the advanced stages of cancer, Seifert managed to record a number of albums, two of the exceptional ones being *Man of the Light*¹⁶ and *Passion*,¹⁷ which he recorded with some outstanding American musicians. Seifert created a new style of violin playing in which he transferred John Coltrane's saxophone style to the four strings of the violin.

In 1971 Michał Urbaniak won first prize at the Montreux Jazz Festival, which gave him a year-long scholarship at Berklee College of Music. Before his departure for the USA, he recorded three albums in Germany, one

15 Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1973 (SXL 0952).

16 MPS, 1977 (68.163).

17 Capitol Records, 1979 (ST-11923).

of these being *Super Constellation*.¹⁸ His wife, singer Urszula Dudziak, recorded a duet with Adam Makowicz (electric Fender piano) on the LP *Newborn Light* (1972), on the small-time Swiss Cameo label, announcing a new type of vocal jazz, where the voice is treated as an instrument and enhanced with electronic effects.

With recorded proof of their creativity now in hand, the Urbaniaks set off for New York in April 1973 and a year later recorded the album *Fusion* on the CBS label. CBS organized a busy national promotional tour: audiences liked them and their fame spread. Michał sought out young Black jazz musicians—players who went on to make a career out of jazz—and recorded a succession of LPs with them: *Urbaniak Fusion III*,¹⁹ *Body English*,²⁰ *Funk Factory*²¹ and *Ecstasy*.²² Dudziak recorded the LPs *Urszula*²³ and *Future Talk*²⁴ and widened her vocal electronic instrumentation, gaining much admiration. Urbaniak played electric violin to the sound of a rich collection of synthesizers, including the lyricon (an electronic wind instrument), with his rhythm section giving a rock feel to the whole sound. His music appealed to both young audiences and critics. The Urbaniaks had fulfilled their American dream.

At Jazz on the Oder, the Kraków-based jazz-rock quartet Extra Ball met with great success, winning first prizes in both the jazz band and soloist categories, along with guitarist Jarosław (Jarek) Śmietana and pianist Władysław ‘Adzik’ Sendeki. Under its ambitious director Wojciech Siwek, the Jazz on the Oder festival had grown massively—in 1975 playing host to 250 musicians and an audience of 13,000.

‘Komeda Day’ in April 1979 saw percussionist Kazimierz Jonkisz’s band Kwintet debut at the Hybrydy jazz club. Soon after, the band was joined by violinist Krzesimir Dębski, who infused the band’s style with enthusiasm, humour and an experimental sound.

In April 1979 the trad jazz band Jazz Band Ball Orchestra, under the leadership of trumpeter Jan Kudyk, performed at the Jazz Jubilee Festival in Sacramento, USA. They went down so well that they virtu-

18 CBS, 1973 (65 744).

19 CBS, 1975 (PC 33542).

20 Arista, 1976 (AL 4086).

21 Atco, 1975 (SD 36-116).

22 Marlin, 1978 (2221).

23 Arista, 1975 (AL 4065).

24 Inner City Records, 1979 (IC 1066).



Urszula Dudziak.

Photo: *Krystian Brodacki*

ally became a resident act at the festival over the next 20 years.

The young vocalist Stanisław Sojka also shot to fame, winning a competition in Lublin.

How was it that the greatest American jazz musicians, whose costs must undisputedly have been high, were able to perform at successive Jazz Jamborees and other Polish music festivals? Who paid? There is no clear answer. Hotel and travel costs were covered by the PSJ from the profits they made out of the various rock concerts they supported and possibly by one or two advertising agencies. At the time, the cost of buying flights in Poland was much lower than in the West, which meant that it was sometimes possible to cover the performance costs of a US band by paying for their flights in lieu (and booking them through the Polish airline LOT). The cost of foreign exchange transactions was covered partly by the State Artists’ Agency (Pagart) and partly by the American State Department, through the American Embassy in Warsaw. This was nominally a gesture of goodwill on the part of the American authorities, but it was essentially political in nature.

The hot ‘80s

Although, on the threshold of the 1980s, Poland was rich in jazz talent, there was nevertheless a dearth of

musicians in some areas, particularly in modern jazz. Vibraphonists Jerzy Milian and Józef Gawrych gave up performing in public, and no obvious successors were to be seen. Trumpeters such as Zbigniew Czwojda and Marek Stopnicki came to prominence through the Jazz on the Oder competitions, but they did not approach Stańko's level. The top electric guitarists of the time were Marek Bliziński and Jarek Śmietana. After Urbaniak's departure and Seifert's death, the only jazz violinists of note were Krzesimir Dębski and Henryk Gembalski. There were three flautists worthy of mention—Krzysztof Zgraja, Mieczysław Wolny and Jerzy Jarosik—and an increasing number of saxophonists, such as Tomasz Szukalski and Andrzej Olejniczak. There was no cause to complain on the piano front, with Sławomir Kulpowicz, Henryk Słaboszowski, Władysław 'Adzik' Sendeki, Paweł Perliński and Janusz Skowron all now on the scene, along with two pianist-organists, Krzysztof Sadowski and Wojciech Kamiński, and Wojciech Karolak now specializing on organ having relinquished piano. These latter three were all 'old boys'. This period witnessed the happy resurgence of double bass players: although Roman Dyląg and Bronisław Suchanek remained abroad, Poland now had Paweł Jarzębski, Andrzej Dechnik, Witold Szczurek (aka Witold Rek), Zbigniew Wegehaupt and Andrzej Cudzich. The bass guitar fraternity now had Krzysztof Ścierański, Jan Cichy and Andrzej Pluszcz. Percussion, the Achilles heel of Polish jazz, underwent a transformation. Poland now had excellent drummers in the form of Czesław Bartkowski and Janusz Stefański, with Kazimierz Jonkisz and Zbigniew Lewandowski not too far behind in ability.

As the 1980s dawned, there were a number of notable bands, such as the Quartet, Sun Ship, Wróblewski's new Kwartet, Extra Ball, Laboratorium, the jazz-rock band Crash, the duo Bednarek-Zgraja (bass and flute), the Janusz Muniak Quartet (and his Quintet), and also Kazimierz Jonkisz's Quartet and Quintet. In April 1980 a new jazz club, Rura, was set up in Wrocław by the local branch of the PSJ, following the model of the Warsaw jazz club Akwarium, which had been running since 1977. This was a landmark moment for the PSJ, establishing a professional jazz club with its own particular character and atmosphere.

While Chodzież was celebrating its tenth anniversary of Jazz Workshops, news came of the strikes in the

Gdańsk shipyard, and of other strikes in the Tri-City area. An Inter-Factory Strike Committee was set up in Gdańsk, and sympathetic strikes soon spread to other areas of the country. On 31 August 1980, government and workers' representatives signed an agreement (the Gdańsk Agreement) ratifying many of the workers' demands. On 17 September, workers' representatives formed a nationwide trade union, *Solidarność* ('Solidarity') and the communist stranglehold in Poland was finally broken.

No social group could remain indifferent to the political situation in Poland. 'Initiative groups' sprang up spontaneously country-wide with the aim of curing the nation's ills, of putting right social wrongs and fixing problems in the immediate environment. Within the PSJ the driving forces in this regard were Jan Borkowski, the new president Tomasz Tłuczkiwicz and vice-president Krystian Brodacki.

The emergence of *Solidarność* awoke a desire within the Polish nation for real change, beyond just the economic sphere. However, hopes were dashed—at least temporarily—when General Jaruzelski brought in martial law on 13 December 1981.

Both the main board of the PSJ and its new body, the PSJ Council, took the decision not to hold a Jazz Jambo-ree in 1982, as a gesture of solidarity with other creative associations (such as the Actors' Association, the majority of whom were boycotting state TV).

In this gloomy climate, which continued even after martial law had been abolished, something emerged which was the perfect antidote to the daily trials and tribulations of the world-weary Poles: that something was . . . jazz.

In 1981 Zbigniew Namysłowski returned to Poland after several years spent in the USA in an unsuccessful attempt to forge a career there. On his return, he formed a band: Air Condition, with Adzik Sendeki (piano) and Krzysztof Ścierański (bass guitar). The band played Namysłowski's compositions—calm, melodic, easy on the ear: a kind of pop-jazz-funk, but of high artistic merit. It felt like an expression of joy in the face of everything. *Follow Your Kite*, the band's first LP,²⁵ sold around 65,000 copies, a considerable number given the size of the Polish jazz market. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of Namysłowski's first creative endeav-

25 Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1980 (SX 2303).

ours, Krystian Brodacki wrote a biography of the artist entitled *Follow Namysłowski*, published by PSJ.²⁶

The other new jazz band of the 1980s which provided a degree of light relief for the Poles was String Connection (SC), a kind of jazz-rock band formed by the violinist Krzesimir Dębski and playing Dębski's compositions. Before SC, Krzesimir played his compositions in performance with Kazimierz Jonkisz, with whom he recorded the excellent album *Tiritaka*²⁷ in December 1980. Though SC played well-arranged, highly expressive music, their style was somewhat tongue-in-cheek—maybe it was 'just what the doctor ordered' for the troubled times, because they soon became the most popular jazz band in Poland. The line-up varied over time, the finest incarnation probably consisting of Dębski (leader, violin), Andrzej Olejniczak (tenor saxophone), Janusz Skowron (piano), Krzysztof Ścierański (bass guitar) and Zbigniew Lewandowski (drums). In addition to being a fine composer and sophisticated jazz instrumentalist, Dębski turned out to be something of a showman. His first LP as leader, *Workoholic*, with some excellent tracks like 'Bokra', 'Cantabile in B Minor' and the LP's title song appeared on PSJ's Klub Płytowy PolJazz label in 1982. In the years 1983–84 SC and Dębski were at the height of their popularity.

There was another jazz band of the day exuding a feelgood factor: the fusion-oriented quintet Walk Away, formed in 1985 by the percussionist Krzysztof Zawadzki, which became very popular in the latter half of the 1980s. Their sound was similar to the group Steps Ahead, although they played their own compositions. The musical 'joker in the pack' was Bernard Maseli, who played the KAT—an electronic version of the vibraphone.

In January 1981 an important new band arrived on the scene: In/Formation, led by Sławomir Kulpowicz, with Czesław Bartkowski on drums and Witold Szczurek on bass, the latter, along with Zbigniew Wegehaupt, becoming the outstanding Polish bass player of the 1980s. Kulpowicz aspired to so-called 'open playing', where, for instance, the bass did not impose a harmonic framework onto the music, but played with a harmoni-

cally non-committal sound that allowed the piano to go off on distant forays, thereby approaching the feel of free jazz.

The annual Jazz Jamboree festival staged a spectacular return in 1983. Its 25th jubilee event was organized with exceptional flair by its director (and president of PSJ), Tomasz Tłuczkiwicz, and it would be fair to describe it as the high point of the festival's existence. Performing were: the Wynton Marsalis Quintet, Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition, James Blood Ulmer, the David Murray Octet, the Jan Garbarek Group and, last but not least, Miles Davis—his first gig in Poland. These musicians were impressed by what the Polish jazz scene had to offer. Also on the bill were Henryk Majewski's Swing Session, String Connection, Air Condition, In/Formation, Jan 'Ptaszyn' with New Presentation, Heavy Metal Sextet, Extra Ball, Stanisław Sojka, Tomasz Stańko with DeJohnette and Rufus Reid, the PRiTV Orchestra Studio S-1 under the leadership of Andrzej Trzaskowski, and Janusz Muniak with Don Cherry. In addition, 21 other Polish bands performed under the auspices of PolJazz Studio.

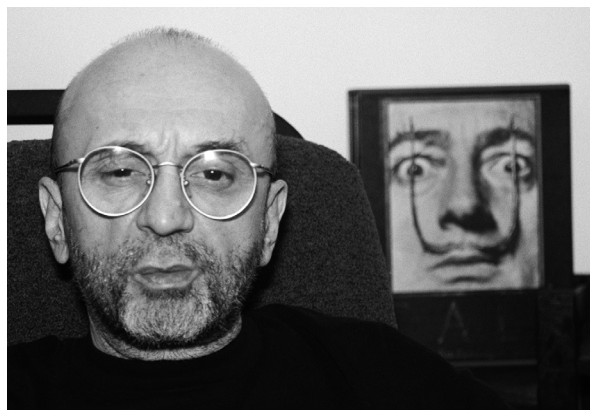
Following the experience he had gained in collaborating with Namysłowski and Stańko in the 1970s (on albums such as *Winobranie*, *Kuyaviak Goes Funky*, *Twet* and *Balladyna*) and his success with the Quartet, Tomasz Szukalski, one of the finest saxophonists in the history of Polish jazz, combined his successful experimentation with tenor and soprano saxophone with the colourful harmonic power of Józef Skrzek's parley of electronic instruments, as heard in his rock band SBB. Bass player Witold Szczurek set up a new band called Basspace.

Rybnik-born flautist Krzysztof Poppek's band, Pick Up, with Henryk Gembalski (violin) and Aleksander Korecki (alto saxophone), played free funk-type music, inspired by the US drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson and other 'harmolodics' exponents. The band Tie Break, from Częstochowa, played in the style of New Black Music in the US. The mainstream band New Presentation, with the Niedziela brothers, Wojciech on piano and Jacek on double bass, gained in popularity.

The 1980s was a period of travel for Polish jazz musicians. Thanks to the PSJ's contacts with the Indian jazz impresario Jhaveri, Ewa Bem, Ptaszyn, Bliziński and the Old Timers were able to perform at the Jazz Yatra Festival in Bombay (Mumbai) and other Indian cities.

26 An accompanying album also called *Follow Namysłowski* was released on PolJazz the same year (PSJ 100).

27 Kazimierz Jonkisz Quintet, *Tiritaka* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1981 [SX 2301])—Polish Jazz series vol. 62.



Tomasz Stańko at his home in Warsaw.

Photo: Krystian Brodacki

Extra Ball, hot on the heels of Big-Band PWSM Katowice's showcase tour in the US, undertook its own massive tour of that country, following an invitation from the international student jazz festival in Reno, Nevada. The Quartet performed at the famous Village Vanguard club in New York.

In February and March 1980, Tomasz Stańko made some amazing recordings inside the Taj Mahal mausoleum and the Karla Caves. Building in the long 'reverb tail' of the Taj Mahal acoustics, Stańko duetted with himself on solo trumpet on a dozen or so of his compositions. The result of this experimental venture was an album on Leo Records,²⁸ the Finnish label formed by Edward Vesala.²⁹ Stańko then moved on to perform in a number of European cities with the international band Cecil Taylor's Orchestra of Two Continents, performances of which were immortalized on the Milan-based record label Soul Note.³⁰ In 1985 Stańko set up a new and innovative band, Freeelectronic, with Janusz Skowron on DX7 synthesizer, Witold Rek on bass guitar and Tadeusz Sudnik on noise generator.

²⁸ Not to be confused with the British Leo Records label founded by Leo Feigin which—at that time—specialized in Russian jazz.

²⁹ Tomasz Stańko, *Music from Taj Mahal and Karla Caves* (Leo Records, 1980 [LEO 011]).

³⁰ Cecil Taylor Segments II (Orchestra of Two Continents), *Winged Serpent (Sliding Quadrants)* (Soul Note, 1985 [SN 1089]).



Poster for the 1984 Umbria Jazz Festival highlighting the Polish contingent. Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski is in the centre.

The violinist Krzesimir Dębski took part in a 'String Summit' in Baden-Baden which had been organized by Joachim-Ernst Berendt for jazz's top violinists. Saxophonist Piotr Baron won the best soloist category at the 19th International Competition for International Jazz Bands in San Sebastian, Spain. The band In Tradition (formed towards the end of 1983 by the pianist Włodzimierz Pawlik) came top in a competition in Dunkirk. Pawlik was already quite well known in Poland, having played with NOVI Singers and with Jonkisz's Quintet.

The Umbria Jazz Festival in 1984 had a 22-strong contingent of Polish jazz musicians, led by this author, Krystian Brodacki.

Blues Duo SZ-SZ (Tomasz Szukalski on tenor saxophone and Janusz Szprot on piano) travelled to Turkey, with the aim of both performing and teaching jazz at Bilkent University in Ankara. Szprot would eventually settle there.

In order to enjoy a decent standard of living, a growing number of Polish jazz musicians, including the very best, sought bookings on Western-owned cruise liners to play jazz swing and popular music.

Exporting jazz was a profitable avenue for the Polish authorities, and not just in terms of propaganda: any money that the musicians earned in the West incurred taxes, with 10 per cent of all earnings going to the Polish Artists' Agency Pagart. All such trips abroad were still state-controlled, and, on returning from foreign engagements, musicians had to hand in their passports to their local branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In 1985, Urszula Dudziak visited Poland for the first time in 12 years, performing a duet at Jazz Jamboree '85 with Bobby McFerrin. Her solo career had been launched in October 1982 when Joachim-Ernst Berendt assembled a number of vocalists for his Vocal Summit in Baden-Baden. Dudziak performed there with Jeanne Lee, Jay Clayton, Lauren Newton and McFerrin.

Also worth mentioning are Dudziak's performances with Gil Evans's orchestra in Perugia, Italy, among other places. She had a fruitful collaboration with the group Walk Away, audiences being blown away by her masterful use of electronic devices to further the possibilities of her voice.

All the leading Polish jazz bands of the period worked with the various concert agencies of the PSJ, of which all the top jazz musicians were members. In total (including its PR people and organizers) the PSJ had a membership of around 200, all professionals from the jazz world. Although this does not seem a particularly large number, it should be noted that the PSJ Record Club had around 12,000 listeners, the jazz press enjoyed a readership of around 50,000, and jazz concerts and festivals had audiences that numbered in the thousands.

Seventeen young and newly formed bands entered the 1981 Jazz Juniors competition in Kraków, where Krzysztof Popek's Pick Up was the winner. The 1983 Jazz Juniors soloist category winner was the trumpeter Robert Majewski.

The new dean of the Department of Popular Music at the Katowice Academy of Music, Andrzej Schmidt (author of the first Polish book on the history of jazz [Schmidt 1988]),³¹ transformed it into the Department of Jazz and Popular Music; it became a hothouse of talent.

In 1981 Feliks Falk finished filming *Był Jazz* about the catacomb period, and Andrzej Wasylewski continued to work on his seven-part series *Mój jazz* ('My Jazz'), each programme dedicated to a leading figure of Polish jazz. Wasylewski already had around 30 jazz documentaries to his name, as well as over 100 jazz study programmes for the Polish broadcasting corporation TVP.

November 1983 in Łódź saw the inaugural International Competition and Review of Jazz Films, 'Jazz Film Salon', an idea conceived by Krystian Brodacki, and the world's only jazz film competition. Joint silver medalists in this first competition were the documentary *List*

do Michela Petruccianiego ('Letter to Michel Petrucciani') by the Frenchman Frank Cassenti and the feature film *My iz Dzhaza* ('We, Jazzmen') by Karen Shakhnazarov from the USSR. The Jazz Film Salon subsequently gained international renown, as a result of which Bertrand Tavernier's *Round Midnight* and Clint Eastwood's *Bird* had their Polish premieres in Wrocław and Warsaw respectively.

Communist Poland had only a few years left; and 1988 was a breakthrough year. The wave of workers' strikes throughout the country forced the authorities to make concessions: to initiate dialogue with the political opposition; to free political prisoners; to allow Solidarność to operate legitimately; and, finally, to allow round-table proceedings. The first (partially) free elections led to defeat for the Communists.

The second half of the 1980s saw the birth of a rebellious movement of young musicians, known as Young Power and led by Krzysztof Popek. Popek succeeded in forming a large ensemble of disparate musicians who performed regularly in bands such as Pick Up, New Presentation, Tie Break and Walk Away. Other musicians who joined the movement were the sensational mainstream trumpeter Piotr Wojtasik and the vocalists Jorgos Skolias and Ewa Uryga. Young Power performances were visual spectacles, the musicians jumping and dancing all over the stage. It was a buzzing, rhythmic, explosive type of music, even chaotic on occasions, and like nothing that had been seen on stage in Poland before.

Meanwhile, traditional jazz was in crisis. Owing to a lack of willing contestants, the Złota Tarka jazz competition was suspended in 1989 for a period of nine years.

There were new recordings from Zbigniew Namysłowski (and his band the Q), and from Michał Urbaniak. Among 1989's outstanding albums was Stanisław Sojka's *Radioaktywny*.³²

Adam Makowicz was gradually climbing the steep ladder to American success. In the 'Great Pianists' concert series he performed alongside legends such as George Shearing, Earl Hines and Teddy Wilson, and also got to share a stage with other excellent jazz musicians in the 'Portrait of Art Tatum' concert. Makowicz's first concerts back in Poland after a 12-year absence met with a warm reception. He played a standard pro-

31 Later accompanied by a 28 CD set.

32 Polskie Nagrania Muza (SX 2661).

gramme in a trio with Lars Danielsson and Rune Carlsson, and also gave an original concert with the Kwartet Wilanowski (Wilanowski Quartet), along with the two Scandinavians. Makowicz had good reason to feel trepidation about his return home, given that back in 1982 in the US he had taken part in a pro-Solidarność concert called 'Let Poland Be Poland'.

In 1985 Leopold Tyrmand, former guru of Polish jazz, passed away. And in 1989, following a serious illness, the leading jazz guitarist Marek Bliźniński died, not yet aged 42.

The 'free market' era (1989–2000)

On 29 December 1989, the term 'PRL' (People's Republic of Poland) was removed from the Polish constitution and replaced with 'Rzeczpospolita Polska' (the Republic of Poland). The Balcerowicz Plan, which was put into place to help Poland transition from a communist to a free economy, came into operation. The new free market had an immediate effect on the lives of jazz musicians.

At an extraordinary meeting, called by the PSJ on 27 March 1991, Henryk Majewski was voted Board President. Polish Radio made cuts to its budget, to the detriment of musical output. The victims of the cuts were mainly the large radio orchestras—those led by Andrzej Trzaskowski, Jerzy Milian, Zbigniew Górny and Henryk Debich, for instance—and as a consequence many orchestral players lost their jobs, a large percentage of whom were jazz musicians. The laws of the free-market jungle were soon felt by the PSJ who, unexpectedly, lost control of Akwarium, their flagship club in Warsaw, which had been started from scratch during the 1970s by Stanisław Cejrowski. The PSJ-appointed manager of Akwarium, Mariusz Adamiak, went behind the back of the PSJ and submitted an application to the Warsaw authorities to privatize the club for his own profit. The authorities agreed. Between 31 May and 8 June 1991, Adamiak ran the Akwarium Jazz Festival, now the first privately run jazz festival in Poland's history, putting on performances by Archie Shepp and Robin Eubanks. In June 1992 Adamiak put on the inaugural Warsaw Summer Jazz Days with an impressive line-up which included the John McLaughlin Trio, Chick Corea, Bob Berg, Steve Gadd, Eddie Gomez, Kenny Wheeler, Ralph Towner,

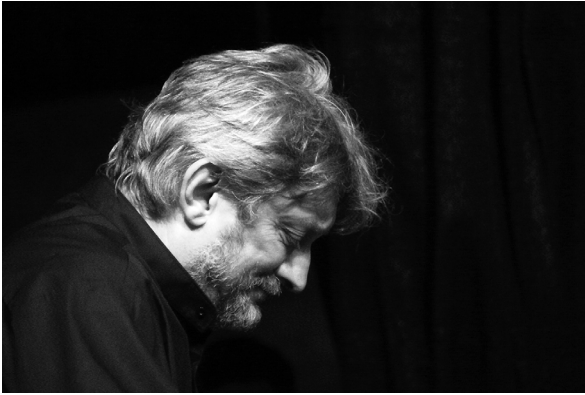
Gary Peacock, Steve Coleman and Five Elements, and the Modern Jazz Quartet (their first performance in Poland). This new festival became a permanent fixture in the city's calendar.

In May 1994 the magazine *Jazzi* was launched by Stanisław Sobóła, a returning émigré from Australia who, in 1992, had founded Polonia Records (one of the first private record labels in Poland) with the prime aim of producing records by Polish jazz musicians. By the end of 1993, he had recorded Zbigniew Namysłowski (*Last Concert*), Tomasz Szukalski (*Body and Soul*), the Włodek Pawlik Trio (with Richie Cole from the US) (*The Four Seasons*), Michał Kulenty (*Polska*), Stanisław Sojka, Piotr Wojtasik, Ptaszyn Wróblewski's Quartet, and many others. The PSJ's production arm, PolJazz, already in debt, could not compete with such competition and soon folded.

As a result of Sobóła's initiative, in 1993 the pianist Andrzej Jagodziński and his band—Adam Cegielski (bass) and Czesław Bartkowski (drums)—recorded a CD for Polonia Records with jazz reworkings of Chopin's compositions. It met with an enthusiastic reception and sparked a new trend for Chopin in Polish jazz circles. Jagodziński picked out six themes (Prelude in E minor, Study in A minor, the Trio from the Polonaise in C# minor, Mazurka in F minor, Prelude in C minor, Waltz in D♭ major) and developed them into a loose suite, held together with the Prelude in E minor as a sort of framework. Jagodziński and his trio travelled extensively abroad, including to the US and Mexico. He went on to record other 'Chopinesque' albums, as did a multitude of others, among them Leszek Możdżer, Krzysztof Herdzin, Leszek Kułakowski, Lora Szafran, Marek Bałata and Włodzimierz Nahorny.

Sobóła encouraged the musicians to weave elements of Polish folk music into their recordings—hence Jerzy Milian's *Silesian Sketches*, Piotr Baron's *Take One* and duets from accordionist Bogdan Precz and trombonist Bronisław Duży: *Grudusko*.

Things were looking up for Polish jazz, with plenty of new trends emerging on the scene: Chopinesque, folk-inspired, hip-hop, oriental, along with existing styles such as jazz-rock, fusion, free, harmolodic, hard bop and traditional. Newly formed groups with original concepts appeared and could be seen at festivals in Poland: some of these had survived the political transition but an increasing number were brand new. They



Andrzej Jagodziński plays Chopin.

Photo: Krystian Brodacki

played mainly in private clubs: only a few of the student jazz clubs were still going, such as Remont in Warsaw and Esculap in Poznań. They recorded albums with new record labels—Polish branches of multinational record labels or dynamic private Polish companies. The number of Polish jazz recordings rose steadily, eventually reaching a level unimaginable during the communist era. Facilitated by the newly open borders, Polish jazz musicians were increasingly collaborating with top American and European stars, thus guaranteeing work for the latter while assuring fame for themselves: in the communist era, jazz musicians couldn't count on getting either a passport or a visa. Although Poland continued to be a poor country, the improvement in the economy was beginning to be felt, with an increasing number of visitors arriving with disposable income and keen to spend it on cultural experiences; among them were young entrepreneurs with a passion for jazz.

In this climate, the PSJ was now only one of a number of jazz-related organizations and institutes. What kept it going was an ideological bond comprising a shared consciousness of its past achievements, a shared attitude, and social and family connections. In time, the PSJ managed to carve a niche for itself in an organizational capacity, taking responsibility for a handful of jazz festivals and—above all—running jazz education workshops. PSJ continued to play an influential role with *Jazz Forum* and the jazz club Rura in Wrocław.

The 1990 15th Jazz Juniors competition was won by the acoustic trio Central Heating, namely Filip Wojciechowski (piano), Adam Cegielski (bass) and Cezary Konrad (soon to become one of the country's

best percussionists). At Jazz Juniors 1991 the stand-out new faces were: Marek Napiórkowski (guitar), Sławomir Kurkiewicz (bass) and Marcin Wasilewski (piano), all of whom were to become top figures in the world of Polish jazz. The following year, second-prize winner was the avant-garde band *Miłość* ('Love'), led by Ryszard (aka Tymon) Tymański (bass, guitar, vocals) with Leszek Możdżer on piano, the latter soon to become a key figure.

Also responsible for the high standard of 1990s Polish jazz were Maciej Sikała (tenor saxophone), Krzysztof Herdzin (piano, arranger, bandleader), Adam Pierończyk (tenor and soprano saxophone, composer), Grzegorz Piotrowski (tenor saxophone, composer, bandleader) and Michał Tokaj (piano). There were more female vocalists on the scene, such as Dorota Miśkiewicz and Anna Serafińska, but only one new male vocalist: Janusz Szrom.

When deciding which band should be credited with having the greatest influence on the jazz scene of the 1990s, we shouldn't just look at the younger bands, as almost all the musicians from both the intermediate and older generations were still active and still forming new groups. Quintessence, formed by percussionist Eryk Kulm, who was born in 1952, started out in 1990 with this mission statement:

We play the quintessence of jazz, which is: swing, blues, the joy of making music, the desire to give ourselves entirely to our performance on stage.

Another notable band performing in the 1990s was *Miłość* (mentioned above), formed by Tymon Tymański in 1988. Tymański's previous ventures with the anarchic artistic group Totart (from Gdańsk) had a profound influence on his music. Just as the 'Totartists' had sought to create an alternative society, so Tymański sought to create an alternative jazz, which meant opposing just about everything that Polish jazz musicians had established. Just as a joke, he gave the name 'jass' to the music that he and his followers performed. He rejected the standards and conventions of traditional jazz, his music rejecting cliché and unfurling in an improvisatory, unexpected manner, characterized by humour and parody. The new Kraków-based record label GOWI Records released a whole series of his (and the group *Miłość*'s) albums: *Miłość* ('Love') (1993), *Taniec Smoka* ('Dragon dance') (1994), *Asthmatic* (1995) and *Not Two*

(1996, with trumpeter Lester Bowie of the Art Ensemble of Chicago).

The Simple Acoustic Trio (SAT), with Marcin Wasilewski (piano), Sławomir Kurkiewicz (bass) and Michał Miśkiewicz (drums), had its own original way of playing contemporary jazz, recording a fine album on the GOWI label: *Komeda* (1995). Tomasz Stańko, quick to pick up on what the group had to offer, began a collaboration with them in the late 1990s, culminating in the 2003 ECM album *Suspended Night*. Other noteworthy jazz bands of the 1990s were In Spector, Back to the Bass (influenced by Miles Davis, Jan Garbarek and Pat Metheny) and Traveling Birds Quintet (TBQ). TBQ was formed in 1994, recording their first album that same year with a sound evocative of the Jazz Messengers and Blue Note music of the 1950s and '60s. TBQ's excellent musicians, united in their desire to play an intense type of American-style hard swinging were: Piotr Baron (tenor saxophone), Piotr Wojtasik (trumpet), Kuba Stankiewicz (piano), Cezary Konrad (drums) and Dariusz Oleszkiewicz (bass). Włodek Pawlik's Quartet fused Polish folk with jazz in the style of Herbie Hancock, Keith Jarrett, Bill Evans and Thelonious Monk; Pawlik's 'Polish Jazz Dance' is the best example of this style.³³ Stanisław Sojka (vocals) and Janusz Iwański (guitar) formed a duo, Soyka–Yanina, which became very popular.

Festivals that had been running during the communist era needed to be galvanized for operation in the new free market, but some of them weren't up to the task, with Jazz Film Salon, for example, coming to an end in 1991. The winner of the final competition was an excellent Australian documentary made in 1989 by the director Kevin Lucas: *Beyond El Rocco*. Jazz Jamboree managed to keep going in its original form but Jazz on the Oder went through a period of crisis: a shortage of funds prevented it from taking place at all in 1990, although it did return later. When the trad jazz convention Złota Tarka disappeared from the festival calendar in 1990, it seemed unlikely to return; fortunately, the excellent organizer Stanisław Cejrowski managed to revive it in 1994 in a new location, the attractive holiday town of Hawa, where it still takes place at the time of writing, in the Louis Armstrong Amphitheatre.

33 On the album by Włodek Pawlik Quartet, *The Waning Moon* (Universal Music Polska, 1999 [546 739-2]).

Notable new festivals that have appeared over the years include Warsaw Summer Jazz Days (WSJD), Gdynia Summer Jazz Days, Poznań Jazz Fair, Warsaw's International Jazz at the Old Town Square and the Summer Jazz Festival in Kraków's Piwnica Pod Baranami club. Słupsk now hosts the Krzysztof Komeda Composers' Competition, founded in November 1995 by the pianist and composer Leszek Kułakowski. Among the new festivals, the Bielska Zadymka Jazz Festival stands out: set up in Bielsko-Biała in 1999 by the actor and director Jerzy Batycki, it soon became one of the main jazz events in the Polish calendar.

The fast-changing 1990s also saw the establishment of new private jazz clubs. On 18 October 1992, a new club, U Muniaka, opened its doors in the medieval cellar of 3 Floriańska Street, Kraków, run by the famous saxophonist Janusz Muniak. This was a landmark in Polish jazz, being the first club in the country with a jazz musician as its proprietor. In January 1997, the Harris Piano Jazz Bar, at 28 Main Square, Kraków, became very active, and Kraków acquired another new club in December 1999 when Alchemia opened in its Kazimierz district, a club leaning towards free and alternative jazz, with American saxophonist Ken Vandermark being a regular act in the somewhat small basement.

On 14 March 1998, in Poznań, the Blue Note club opened under the direction of Dionizy Piątkowski. In May that year the Jazz Café appeared in Łomianki, just outside Warsaw, and soon made its name among jazz performers on account of its fine acoustics, its atmosphere and live recordings—Henryk Miśkiewicz's group Full Drive recorded there. A further venture is the Pod Filarami jazz club in Gorzów Wielkopolski, set up by jazz fan Bogusław Dziekański in 1981, and still run by him at the time of writing.

In 1991 Krzysztof Popek established the Power Bros record label in Rybnik, kicking off that year with *Bluish* by Tomasz Stańko with Jon Christensen and Arild Andersen. The idea behind Power Bros was (and remains) to get famous international jazz musicians to collaborate with Polish jazz musicians. The label gained renown in many different countries with its catalogue of top jazz musicians (among them David Liebman, Joe Lovano, Billy Harper and Victor Lewis) but also on account of a series of multi-media recordings by Krzysztof Komeda. Buoyed up by the success of Power Bros, Popek began recording outside Poland, going to

the very heart of jazz—New York—where he recorded *To Know Where One Is* by the Ed Schuller Group featuring Joe Lovano, Billy Hart and Gary Valente. In 1994 the Austrian record label Koch International had the cream of Polish jazz artists under contract: musicians such as Marek Bałata, Ewa Bem, Jacek Kochan, Wojciech Konikiewicz, Sławomir Kulpowicz, Zbigniew Lewandowski, Zbigniew Namysłowski, Włodzimierz Pawlik, Kuba Stankiewicz, Jarek Śmietana and Michał Urbaniak.

In July 1991 the cultural centre Dom Chemika in Puławy held its first jazz clinics, which were called 'Chodzież '91 in Puławy' to link them to Chodzież's jazz workshop tradition. Among the lecturers were four Americans from Berklee College of Music, and Henryk Majewski, the driving motor behind the PSJ's jazz education programme, was artistic director. These workshops are still taking place at the time of writing.

In September 1992 a new Jazz and Singing Department was set up at the State School of Music in Warsaw on Bednarska Street. Majewski was appointed director of the Jazz Department. In 1994 the Jazz Department at the Katowice Academy of Music celebrated its 25th anniversary, its dean, pianist, composer and arranger Andrzej Zubek, having been in post since 1990. The contribution of this institution to the development of jazz in Poland is beyond dispute. In 1998, the Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music (WSJPM) opened its doors on the banks of the Oder, its directors being trumpeter Zbigniew Czwójda and his wife Mirosława, the former having led the band the New Sami Swoi between 1990 and 2001. In 2003 WSJPM gained state music school status and the right to offer a full state music education with specialism in jazz and popular music.

The last English edition of *Jazz Forum* appeared towards the end of 1992, although the Polish edition continued and with a much-improved design. Its editor-in-chief was the long-serving Paweł Brodowski. If the magazine's annual polls (the so-called 'Jazz Top') are to be believed, the 'king of jazz' in Poland during the first half of the 1990s was Zbigniew Namysłowski who won the 'musician of the year' title four years in a row. In 1993 Henryk Miśkiewicz beat Namysłowski to top spot in the alto saxophone category; in 1995 Leszek Możdżer came top. This was a clear signal that the Polish music scene was changing—another being the fact that the avant-garde group Miłość also topped the polls. In the electric

band category, Walk Away were regular winners. The first half of the decade saw Tomasz Stańko and Piotr Wojtasik constantly vying for top spot in the trumpet category. The older musicians tended to win only in certain categories, such as organ (Wojciech Karolak), guitar (Jarek Śmietana), clarinet (Janusz Zabiegliński), flute (Krzysztof Popek), vibraphone (Bernard Maseli), double bass (Zbigniew Wegehaupt) or bass guitar (Krzysztof Ścierański). Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski was usually voted best arranger, until Krzysztof Herdzin knocked him off the top spot. Tomasz Szukalski and Janusz Muniak usually headed the best tenor saxophone category, although in 1995 that accolade went to a young Maciej Sikala. In the 1995 piano category, Janusz Skowron had to concede the crown to Leszek Możdżer; while in the violin category Maciej Strzelczyk broke Michał Urbaniak's four-year reign. Cezary Konrad consistently led the best percussionist category. The best trombonist category was dominated by young musicians: initially Bronisław Duży, followed by Grzegorz Nagórski. Top-voted vocalists were Lora Szafran and Marek Bałata.

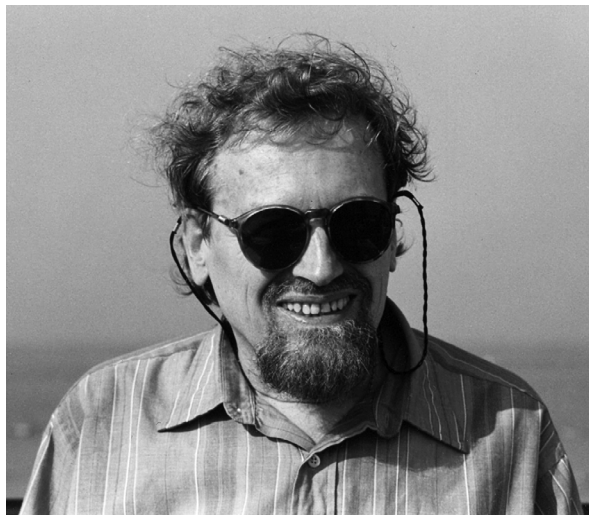
In 1994 Zbigniew Namysłowski began a collaboration with Jan Karpiel-Bułecka's Highland Band. While Namysłowski's music had always been evocative of Polish folk music, albeit subconsciously, the collaboration with Karpiel-Bułecka marked a deliberate return to ethnic musical roots. It constituted a new musical departure for Namysłowski and led to the album *Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet & Zakopane Highlanders Band*, which features traditional music from the Podhale and Spisz regions of Poland.

At the same time, Stańko had found his ideal partners in Bobo Stenson, Anders Jormin and Tony Oxley—the kinds of musician who are able to take advantage of the leader's offer of freedom as defined (among other things) by alternating a classic treatment of American pulsating four-beats-to-the-bar rhythmic phrases with free, irregular phrases, in which the musicians are guided by their own musical intuition and European phrasing. In 1994, Manfred Eicher, founder of ECM Records, invited the whole of this 'wonder team' to the Rainbow Studio in Oslo, where they recorded the album *Matka Joanna* (as the Tomasz Stańko Quartet), inspired by Jerzy Kawalerowicz's 1961 film *Matka Joanna od Aniołów* (*Mother Joan of the Angels*). Its sequel, *Leosia*, followed on ECM in 1996 and the band toured widely in Europe.

Adam Makowicz spent the 1990s touring Poland on an annual basis, both performing his own compositions (to a lesser extent) and popularizing the compositions of the giants of American music, such as George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and Duke Ellington. The rhythms of Polish folk can be heard in a succession of albums that Makowicz recorded in the USA: *Adam Makowicz Plays Irving Berlin* (VWC Records, 1992), the solo album *At Maybeck* (Concord Jazz, 1993), *The Music of Jerome Kern* (Concord Jazz, 1993) as the Adam Makowicz Trio with George Mraz and Alan Dawson, the duo album *Adam Makowicz–George Mraz* (Concord Records, 1994), *My Favourite Things: The Music of Richard Rodgers* (Concord Records, 1994) in trio with Mraz and Dawson again, *A Handful of Stars* (Chiaroscuro, 1997) with Mraz and Jack DeJohnette and, finally, two solo albums: *A Tribute to Art Tatum* (VWC Productions, 1998) and *Makowicz Plays Duke Ellington* (Musicians Showcase, 2000).

In 1993 Michał Urbaniak recorded an album of mainly jazz standards: *Some Other Blues* (on Steeple-Chase) with the Canadian-born pianist David Kikoski and the American rhythm team of bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington (no relation). However, the genre in which he found most acclaim was the one that was closest to his heart—the contemporary music of the Black ghetto. But, musically, he never denied his Polish roots, and the influence of Polish

Adam Makowicz.
Photo: Krystian Brodacki



Michał Urbaniak.
Photo: Krystian Brodacki

folk music can be heard throughout much of his work. The first half of the 1990s was an interesting period in Urbaniak's already exceptional career. In *DownBeat's* 1992 charts his name appeared among jazz music's biggest names in five categories: second in the 'album of the year' category, fifth in 'musician of the year', fifth in 'jazz electronic combo', ninth in 'best jazz composer of the year', and fourth in 'best jazz violinist'. Urbaniak had finally reached the heights of originality, as can be clearly heard in the album *Manhattan Man* (Milan Jazz, 1992), where he harnesses the power of electronic music (violin in particular), electric percussion and synthesizer to creative, improvisatory effect.

In 1994, with his album *Urbanator*, Urbaniak finally recorded the sound that he'd been dreaming of for many years: a fusion of hip-hop rhythms and rap with jazz music. It was thanks to Urbaniak that, on 27 January 1995, the Częstochowa Philharmonic Concert Hall became the venue for the first-ever joint rap–classi-

cal music venture, with the Częstochowa Symphony Orchestra performing alongside the New York-based rapper Solid. In the US, Urbaniak also recorded the albums *Music for Violin and Jazz Quartet*³⁴ and *Serenade for the City*, the latter on Motown in 1981, alongside Black musicians who were signed to the legendary soul label. Urbaniak also had the honour of playing on Miles Davis's album *Tutu*.³⁵ Davis liked Urbaniak's so-called 'talking violin' (Urbaniak's own invention)—a special synthesizer that enabled him to use his mouth to re-create the sound of the violin.

Jarosław (aka Jarek) Śmietana, a leading Polish jazz guitarist, composer (with a gift for a strong melody), bandleader and manager rolled into one, continued to make an impressive contribution to the world of Polish jazz throughout the 1990s. He released an outstanding album *Ballads and Other Songs*³⁶ with arrangements by Wojciech Karolak and the American percussionist Ronnie Burrage, famous for his collaboration with Sonny Rollins and McCoy Tyner. Two years later Śmietana recorded *Flowers in Mind*³⁷ in a trio with Andrzej Cudzych on bass and the New Orleans-born Idris Muhammad, the former drummer for Johnny Griffin and Pharoah Sanders. It was during the 1990s that Śmietana achieved his ambition of acquiring his own, individual instantly recognizable sound.

Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski joined the 'jazz-folk fusion' stream (or the 'patriotic' stream, as it became known in Poland on account of the pro-Polish activities of the country's jazz musicians, particularly after 1989) and in 1993 recorded the interesting *Made in Poland*.³⁸ He spent the years 1997–99 composing a large work he called 'Altissimonia'—a kind of suite consisting of four parts with three interludes, composed for symphony orchestra with improvising alto saxophone. The clash of twentieth-century symphonic music with jazz sounded like a return to Third Stream. The world premiere of 'Altissimonia' took place on 28 June 2000 at the Philharmonic Hall in Wrocław, with Henryk Miśkiewicz as soloist.

34 As the NY5 (Jam Records, 1981 [JAM #001]).

35 Warner Bros, 1986 (92 5490-1).

36 Starling, 1993 (CD 0004).

37 Koch, 1995; re-released on JSR Records (2012 [CD JSR 016]).

38 GOWI Records (CDG 20).

The pianist and composer Włodzimierz Nahorny undertook a reworking of early-twentieth-century composer Karol Szymanowski's *Mity* ('Myths') and released an album, simply titled *Mity*, in 1997.³⁹ One characteristic of the 1990s patriotic stream was its interest in the music of Fryderyk Chopin. Meanwhile, Grzegorz Piotrowski (tenor saxophone) with his Acoustic Jazz Sextet recorded the excellent *Alchemik*,⁴⁰ a fusion of jazz and folk, the band having achieved first place at the 20th Hoeilaart International Jazz Competition in Belgium in 1997, where the 16-year-old Marcin Masecki also won best pianist.

The American clarinetist Brad Terry was responsible for discovering some exceptionally talented musicians during his jazz education ventures in Poland; these included Michał Barański (bass), Tomasz Torres (drums) and Mateusz Kołakowski (piano). In 1999 Terry organized a US tour for these three outstanding musicians, aged only 15, 15 and 13 respectively at the time. Then, at his own expense, he released two records featuring his pupils: *Polish Youth Jazz Trio* with Brad Terry and *Triology*.

The pianist Leszek Możdżer was a jazz star by the turn of the twenty-first century, regarded as both talented and controversial. In 1991 he was in the 'jazz' group Miłość, as well as playing both in Namysłowski's quartet and Eryk Kulm's Quintessence; he also collaborated with numerous Polish and American jazz musicians. It is not clear how he managed to reconcile such a diverse array of ventures, yet he did so with equanimity, retaining both his sanity and his sense of humour. His first solo success was his 1994 album *Chopin Impresje* ('Chopin Impressions'), and it was on the heels of this release that he was voted 'musician of the year' by *Jazz Forum* readers in 1995, as well as 'best musician' for the third year running. In 1995 he began musical collaborations with the American bass player David Friesen and in 1996 formed the Leszek Możdżer Sextet and recorded the CD *Talk to Jesus*.⁴¹ In May 1999, at the 19th International Festival of Sacred Music Gaude Mater in Częstochowa, he premiered his music to Czesław Miłosz's setting of the Psalms of David.

39 Polskie Radio (PRCD 200).

40 Alchemik Studio, 1999 (AS 002).

41 GOWI Records, 1996 (CDG 35).

In 1997 in the Kalatówki Hotel in the Tatra Mountains, after a gap of 37 years, Jazz Camping was finally revived. It was a place where jazz musicians could network, where different generations could meet and join the endless jam sessions. Zbigniew Namysłowski was the main driving force behind its rebirth, something that must be regarded as one of the main phenomena in Polish jazz at the turn of the twenty-first century. In 1997 Namysłowski recorded the album *Dances*,⁴² signaling a return to his previous and most popular style.

By the end of the twentieth century, Tomasz Stańko found himself in the spotlight, performing at the world's biggest jazz events and regarded as one of the most creative European jazz musicians of his time. Stańko's 1997 recording of Komeda's music, *Litania*, is one of his best, including such Komeda compositions as 'Astigmatic', 'Svantetic' and 'Repetition'. Accompanying him on the album are the Swedish tenorist Bernt Rosengren (who recorded with Komeda on the soundtrack to *Knife in the Water*) and the much younger Swedish saxophonist Joakim Milder. The other members of the septet were also Scandinavians: Terje Rypdal (electric guitar), Bobo Stenson (piano), Palle Danielsson (bass) and Jon Christensen (drums). Stańko was voted musician of the year in the 1997 Jazz Top charts, and *Litania* best album. In 1998 Stańko received the same accolade, and again in 1999, when he came top in four categories: musician of the year, best trumpeter, best acoustic band (his sextet and his quartet, the latter essentially being Stańko playing with Simple Acoustic Trio) and album of the year (*From the Green Hill* on ECM, with an international band including Argentine bandoneon player Dino Saluzzi and British saxophonist John Surman). He followed with some equally outstanding albums in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Final thoughts

The Polish jazz community has proved to be both highly resilient in the face of challenges and full of creative initiatives. Various factors have had an influence on Polish jazz in the first decade of the twenty-first century:

1. The older (and intermediate) generations of musicians were enriched by a host of highly talented youngsters;
2. Collaborations with international musicians (especially those from the US) became a permanent feature, such arrangements taking place in Poland, other countries in Europe and the US;
3. A huge rise in the quality of musicians overall was evident—these artists are capable of taking on the most ambitious of musical ventures;
4. There was increased interest in Polish folk music and culture, as well as in native religious and classical music, notably Chopin;
5. The alternative 'yass', which arose initially as a contrast to the jazz establishment, produced some interesting musicians, such as Leszek Możdżer and Maciej Sikała;
6. New festivals, clubs and other jazz venues materialized—both permanent and temporary;
7. There was an unprecedented rise in the number of new jazz record labels, the smaller, independent ones leading the pack;
8. Jazz education developed, with notable input from American jazz musicians such as Isi Rudnick (trombone), Brad Terry (clarinet) and jazz lecturers from the Berklee College of Music;
9. Jazz managed to retain its strong multi-media presence (with both public and private broadcasting corporations), and Polish jazz musicians quickly learned how to make the most of the internet revolution;
10. The PSJ managed to keep going and make a contribution to the Polish jazz community, albeit in a more limited capacity.

Overall, then, the catastrophe that pessimists had predicted for the future of Polish jazz never actually happened; indeed, at the dawn of the twenty-first century the future is looking bright. ☞

⁴² Polonia Records (C133).

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- Urszula Dudziak and Adam Makowicz, *Newborn Light* (Cameo Records, 1972 [LP 30373, 101]).
- Stan Getz, *Stan Getz w Polsce* ('Stan Getz in Poland') (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1960 [PN L 0329])—10" LP.
- Andrzej Jagodziński Trio, *Chopin* (Polonia, 1993 [CD 022]).
- Komeda Quintet, *Astigmatic: The Music of Komeda* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1965 [PN XL 0298])—Polish Jazz series vol. 5.
- Andrzej Kurylewicz Quintet, *10 + 8* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1967 [XL 0439])—Polish Jazz series vol. 14.
- Leszek Możdżer, *Chopin Impresje* ('Chopin Impressions') (Polonia, 1994 [CD 029]).
- Nahorny, *Chopin. Fantazja Polska: Odcienie Błękitu* ('Polish Fantasy: Shades of Blue') (Polskie Radio, 2000 [PRCD 228]).
- Zbigniew Namysłowski Modern Jazz Quartet, *Lola* (Decca, 1964 [LK 4644]).
- Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet, *Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1966 [XL 0305])—Polish Jazz series vol. 6.
- Zbigniew Namysłowski, *Kuyaviak Goes Funky* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1975 [PN SX 1230])—Polish Jazz series vol. 46.
- Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet & Zakopane Highlanders Band, *Zbigniew Namysłowski Quartet & Zakopane Highlanders Band* (Koch International, 1995 [3-3864-2]).
- Włodek Pawlik & Gregorian Choir, *Misterium Stabat Mater* (Polonia Records, 2000 [CD 263]).
- Polish Jazz Quartet, *Polish Jazz Quartet* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1964 [PN SXL 0246])—Polish Jazz series vol. 3; Jan 'Ptaszyn' Wróblewski, Wojciech Karolak, Juliusz Sandecki, Andrzej Dąbrowski.
- Zbigniew Seifert, *Man of the Light* (MPS, 1976 [68.163/5C 064 60586]).
- Tomasz Stańko Quintet, *Music for K* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1970 [PN SXL 0607])—Polish Jazz series vol. 22.
- Tomasz Stańko Septet, *Litania: Music of Krzysztof Komeda* (ECM, 1997 [1636]).
- String Connection, *Workaholic* (Poljazz, 1982 [PSJ 107]).
- Andrzej Trzaskowski Sextet featuring Ted Curson, *Seant* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1965/1966 [PN SXL 0378 586])—Polish Jazz series vol. 11.
- Urbanator (featuring Michał Urbaniak), *Urbanator* (Hip Bop Records/Silva Screen Records, 1994 [HIBD8001]).
- Michał Urbaniak's Group, *Live Recording* (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1971 [PN SXL 0733])—Polish Jazz series vol. 24.

Compilation

Spotkanie z Conoverem w Polsce ('Willis Conover Meets Polish Jazz') (Polskie Nagrania Muza, 1959 [PN L 0291])—10" LP.

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Krystian Brodacki is a journalist, jazz critic and historian, and also a photographer, jazz pianist and vocalist. He studied journalism at Warsaw University. He was involved with Warsaw's monthly magazine *Jazz*, and subsequently *Jazz Forum* magazine, also in Warsaw (from 1968 to the time of writing), as well as the *Musica Jazz* monthly in Milan. He was vice-president of the Polish Jazz Society (1982–86). He has published hundreds of articles and a number of books on jazz and other subjects, including *Historia jazzu w Polsce* ('The History of Jazz in Poland'; PWM, 2010). In 1983 he established and led the Jazz Film Salon, a unique international competition and review of jazz films, which has had eight editions in Łódź, Wrocław and Warsaw. Exhibitions of his photography have been held both in Poland and in Italy. A collector of Polish jazz posters, Krystian occasionally gives solo performances (piano and vocals). He is a lover of the American standards but also has a keen interest in experiments with Polish folk in a jazz context.