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Sulamita Ślubowska, MA

DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

**From youthful style to creative maturity: an analysis of selected violin sonatas
by Grażyna Bacewicz in the perspective of the evolution of her compositional
language**

Supervisor:
Prof. Szymon Krzeszowiec

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Introduction

„Grażyna Bacewicz, one of the most important figures in Polish music in the second half of the 20th century, an outstanding composer and violinist, was once the object of fascination for the music world and the interest of music lovers not only in Poland. Her work, distinguished by its exceptional individuality and stylistic coherence, is currently not sufficiently known, especially by younger generations. Three years from now, it will be half a century since the composer's death, and this anniversary will certainly be an opportunity to reinterpret her music and her position in 20th-century Polish and European music.”¹ The above excerpt opens the publication *Grażyna Bacewicz: Konteksty życia i twórczości* [Grażyna Bacewicz: Contexts of Life and Work], a collection of essays devoted to the composer's life and artistic output, written as a literary follow-up to the academic conference *Grażyna Bacewicz - interpersonalnie i kontekstualnie* [Grażyna Bacewicz - Interpersonally and Contextually]. I decided to quote these words at the beginning of this work because they accurately diagnose the phenomenon associated with the contemporary reception of Bacewicz's work: an artist who during her lifetime was one of the leading figures on the Polish composing and violin scene, and who – despite her established presence in the canon – remains a well – known but still underappreciated creator.

This work is part of a broader trend aimed at ‘re-hearing’ Bacewicz's music – not as a monument to the past, but as a living repertoire that requires interpretative activity and creative engagement. I decided to devote my doctoral dissertation to Grażyna Bacewicz's work because I was fascinated by her IV Sonata for violin and piano, which I had the opportunity to record on my debut album in 2022. I decided to deepen my knowledge of the composer's musical language and – using a genre bracket – to present selected works from her sonata oeuvre. The programme of my recital, performed on 11 January 2026 in the Bolesław Szabelski Hall of the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice, was as follows:

Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano (1929)

Allegro. Moderato

Adagio sostenuto

Presto

Sonata No. 1 for solo violin (1941)

Allegro

Adagio

—

Variazioni

Sonata No. 5 for violin and piano (1951)

Moderato. Allegro

Andante dolcissimo

Allegro inquietamente

Sonata No. 2 for solo violin (1958)

¹ *Grażyna Bacewicz: Contexts of Life and Work*, ed. Marta Szoka, The Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Lodz, Lodz 2016, p. 7.

The chronological arrangement of the programme allowed me to present an extremely interesting aspect of the composer's work – the evolution of her musical language, from her early works to her mature compositions. This perspective allows us to capture the gradual formation of Bacewicz's individual idiom: from compositions still marked by expressive experimentation, through works that increasingly highlight the characteristic features of her style, to works in which the composer's language achieves full autonomy and recognisability. The chronology of the programme therefore serves not only an organisational function, but also becomes an interpretative tool, enabling Bacewicz's aesthetic development to be presented as a fascinating creative process.

From the perspective of a performer, I would like to express my deep gratitude to researchers of Grażyna Bacewicz's work, thanks to whom a rich resource of studies devoted to her life and music has been created, forming the basis of the written part of my doctoral dissertation. The knowledge I have gained in this way has allowed me to shape my interpretations of the analysed works with much greater understanding. Since this work is a subjective translation of the sound of Grażyna Bacewicz's music into a verbal description of its interpretation, rather than a strictly theoretical dissertation, I have taken the liberty of formulating my own personal observations on performance. However, I rely on scientifically and historically grounded reflections of prominent figures associated with Bacewicz, which is why this work abounds in quotations from the works of Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, Stefan Kisielewski and Joanna Sendłak.

I devoted a significant part of my work to the composer's biography, the creation of which had a particular influence on my approach to Bacewicz's person and work. Delving into her life story allowed me to better understand the artistic principles, creative motivations, successes and hardships of this extraordinary artist's life. Stefan Kisielewski, a long-time friend and devoted commentator on Bacewicz's work, wrote: "True creators, both in terms of talent and disposition, are not born 'on a stone', and even if someone already has an innate disposition in this direction, how much strength of character is needed to realise it, to fill one's life with it, giving their work intensity, developmental rhythm, seriousness and greatness."² The biographical sketch I have created does not, of course, fully reflect the richness and intensity of the composer's life, but it may contribute to an understanding of the process described by Stefan Kisielewski.

My interpretations are based on official sheet music published by Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne. All references to the analysed fragments refer directly to the scores found at the end of the work. This text consists of eight parts – an introduction, a biography (chapter I), an analysis of the pieces I performed (chapters II-V), a conclusion and scores.

As Kisielewski aptly observed: 'It is not just about notes and sounds: it is about a peculiar and rare creative energy that is released through these notes and sounds. Take a closer look at this peculiar phenomenon, think not only about the sounds, but also about the background to their creation, about the creative skills built up over many years and about the man behind it all. I recommend and praise it: it's really worth it, really interesting!'"³

² Stefan Kisielewski, *Bacewicz and her times*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1963, p. 5.

³ Ibidem, p. 44.

I hope that the observations presented in this work – resulting from stage experience, studies of sources and dialogue with existing literature on the subject – will contribute to a deeper reflection on Grażyna Bacewicz's place in the history of 20th-century music, as well as to a broader interest in her work among performers and academics. For if, as Kisielewski wrote, behind the notes there is a human being and their creative energy, then the performer's task is not only to read the score faithfully, but also to reactivate that energy in the act of interpretation.

Chapter I. Grażyna Bacewicz – her life and creative path

Grażyna Bacewicz was born on 5 February 1909 in Łódź, the third child of Maria Modlińska and Vincas Bacevičius. Three days later, on 8 February 1909, Mieczysław Karłowicz died near Mały Kościelec. Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, referring to the symbolism of birth and death, interprets these two events as a symbolic clash of two eras and stylistic attitudes – romantic and rationalist. Of course, this division is not historically unambiguous: neither did Karłowicz's death mark the definitive end of romantic expression in Polish music, nor did Bacewicz's birth bring about a categorical change in artistic style. However, it is worth noting that the composer was born during a period of intense historical, social and cultural change. Progressive urbanisation fostered the formation of a new social class – the intelligentsia – which particularly valued the values associated with the positivist idea of organic work. The imperative of effort and discipline at work as the basis for social development was brought to the fore.

These values were also instilled in Grażyna's mother, Maria Modlińska, daughter of engineer Stanisław Modliński and pianist Natalia Zdzitowiecka. Maria received a thorough education at the Marian Institute for Girls of Noble Birth in Warsaw, completed administrative and economic courses, and took up a position at the Warsaw branch of the Bank of St. Petersburg. Independent and determined, she became involved with the Lithuanian music teacher Vincas Bacevičius, even though their marriage was seen as a social misalliance.

Vincas, born in the tiny Lithuanian village of Muraszkowizna in the Mariampol district, son of Piotr Bacevičius and Anna Aliszewska, was an educated music teacher. Described by his great-granddaughter, Joanna Sendłak, as a 'subversive element'⁴ due to his belief in the national rebirth of his homeland, he was banned from teaching by the tsar and forced to leave the country. Settling in Łódź, a dynamically developing centre of culture and education, he found employment in his profession. After marrying Maria on 28 June 1903, the couple settled in Łódź, where they started a family.

For their four children – Kiejstut, Vytautas (Witold), Grażyna and Wanda – their parents were their first teachers. The eldest of the siblings, Kiejstut, recalled them thus: "We owe both our parents our upbringing in the cult of science, art and creative work, and in general, universal human values. In short, our parents were truly extraordinary guides – open-minded, open-hearted and, above all, distinguished by their great strength of character."⁵

⁴ Joanna Sendłak, *Bacewicz*, Polish Music Publishing, Krakow 2021, p. 11.

⁵ Kiejstut Bacewicz, *My Brother Witold*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 16/1986, p. 17.

Grażyna Bacewicz's granddaughter, Joanna Sendlak, reflects on her grandmother's upbringing: „It seems that the secret of our family's strength lay in our love of music and our need to create, accompanied by constant work on our spiritual development. My father worked hard himself, so he expected a lot from his children, instilling in them the imperative of self-improvement. Without exception, they all became art enthusiasts, believing in beauty and harmony, which was also manifested throughout the universe. Their home was filled with music. The little children in the Bacewicz family home, as in Maria Modlińska's family home, would ,take lessons with footstools placed under the piano so that their short legs would not touch the floor’.”⁶

Grażyna herself, in her collection of short stories *Znak szczególny* [Distinguishing Feature], described her childhood as follows: „I slept in a cradle, my brothers in cots (my sister was not yet born), and around us resounded the sounds of the cello, violin, piano, sometimes the human voice, and even the trumpet. (Now that we know that it is possible to learn through sleep, it is understandable why all three of us became musicians.) But the grumpy relative did not accept the situation. (...) She attacked my mother: ‚Have mercy, don't you understand that children who are fast asleep need peace and quiet? Isn't it enough for him (meaning my father) to torment the boys during the day? Who has ever heard of teaching such young children to play two instruments? The piano – yes, but why the violin!’”⁷

She continues: „I am already five years old. I am catching up with the boys – especially in playing the violin. The piano is worse. My younger brother, Witek, is unbeatable. Anyway, competition is not on our minds. [...] My brothers are already ‘bachelors’ – each with a different personality. Kiejstut is a philosopher, focused, perhaps even secretive. Witek is an original, full of imagination and unexpected ideas. Wanda plays, yes, but without enthusiasm. She keeps looking under the table. Only me: they tell me to practise, I practise; they tell me to play scales, I play scales. But it's boring. I should have rebelled.”⁸

The young artist did not rebel against her father's strictness, but with diligence and discipline she developed her instrumental skills, thanks to which she was perceived as an extremely talented person at a very young age. In 1919, she began her education at Janina Pryssewiczówna's Private Girls' Humanities Gymnasium and Helena Kijeńska's Music High School. At the latter, she studied piano with Kijeńska herself and violin with Feliks Wiesenberg and Feliks Dzierżanowski. From 1921, she also took lessons in harmony, music theory and counterpoint with Kazimierz Sikorski, who played a particularly important role in her life.

Bacewicz undertook her first attempts at composition at the age of 12. Many of these early works were destroyed by the composer herself, as she was extremely demanding of herself. The first surviving composition was *Theme with Variations for Piano*, which the composer wrote at the

⁶ Joanna Sendlak, op. cit., p. 15.

⁷ Grażyna Bacewicz, *The Distinguishing Feature*, The Reader, Warsaw 1974, p. 9.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 7.

age of 15. The author recalls her first creative steps as follows: „At that time, I was attending harmony and counterpoint classes at the Conservatory, and composing was not compulsory for me, if I may say so. These attempts were therefore spontaneous and voluntary. I could not and did not want to defend myself against them. From these first attempts, I already knew that my aspiration, my main goal in life, would be to write music.”⁹

The year 1923 brought dramatic events for the Bacewicz family. As a result of the economic crisis affecting Łódź, Vincas was unable to support his loved ones and began to consider returning illegally to Lithuania, which had regained its independence. He finally decided to take this step in July 1923. In agreement with his wife, he decided to take a job in Kaunas to support his family financially and then bring them to join him. From today's perspective, we know that the couple never reunited. Thanks to his financial support, the family survived the most difficult years, and in 1924 Kiejstut was able to begin studying philosophy at the University of Warsaw.

Grażyna followed in her brother's footsteps, leaving for Warsaw four years later. Bacewicz studied violin at the State Conservatory of Music in Warsaw (as the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music was then called) in Józef Jarzębski's class, piano in Józef Turczyński's class, and composition in the class of her teacher from the Łódź secondary school, Kazimierz Sikorski. Professor Sikorski had just returned from Paris, where he had been studying composition with Nadia Boulanger on a scholarship. In addition, Grażyna enrolled in the philosophy department at the University of Warsaw, attended a Lithuanian language course, and took private Japanese lessons. However, after completing her first year of studies, the artist selected her classes so that the multitude of academic responsibilities would not distract her from her most important task – composing. She therefore focused on playing the violin and composition.

During Grażyna Bacewicz's studies, the State Conservatory of Music was in a state of prolonged crisis, which reached its peak during Karol Szymanowski's term as rector. Since 1919, there had been a dispute between the conservatory and the Ministry of Art and Culture over the status of the institution, which was still treated as a secondary school with an 'artistic and vocational'. Szymanowski was very cautious about the very idea of teaching within the framework of academic studies, as he believed that: „[...] artistic development, if based on genuine talent and the will to learn, should take place in an environment of complete freedom, unhindered by any routine requirements. Nevertheless, aware of his artistic position and the resulting responsibility for the fate Polish music, he agreed to put forward his candidacy. He had come to the conclusion that schools, especially the 'highest university in the country', as he considered the Warsaw Conservatoire to be, could play a significant role in freeing Polish music from the shackles of 'backwardness' in which it was trapped by the fierce conservatism of most musicians, teachers and critics of the time.”¹⁰

Szymanowski was entrusted with high hopes for reforming and reorganising the structures of the institution, with the aim of emphasising the superior status of the Warsaw music academy

⁹ Statement by Grażyna Bacewicz for the Foreign Cooperation Radio Editorial Office in 1964, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 3/1989.

¹⁰ Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, *Bacewicz*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1999, p. 39.

over other institutions of this type. This reform became the source of a serious conflict, which led to a deep polarisation of the academic community and, as a result of the actions of an opposition group, to the resignation of the position.

These events were described from a student's perspective by Stefan Kisielewski: "In the early 1930s, the Warsaw Conservatory was going through a heroic 'period of turmoil and upheaval'. As a result of the struggle waged by Karol Szymanowski and his friends for the renewal and modernisation of Polish music, momentous structural changes took place at the university. [...] a unified conservatory was restored, with Eugeniusz Morawski as its rector and Piotr Rytel and Walerian Bardiejew as its pillars. The fierce struggles of the 'old guard' were echoed among the youth: a student strike broke out at the conservatory in defence of the 'modernist' professors who were in danger of being dismissed; I was heavily involved in this strike, forming a self-proclaimed strike committee together with Roman Maciejewski and Franciszek Doleżał. It all ended in defeat and a suspension lasting several months. Szymanowski, who was staying at a Swiss sanatorium at the time, fell ill as a result of the whole affair and never returned to teaching. Fitelberg was dismissed without mercy, while Sikorski and Drzewiecki remained at the university. Of course, all this organisational conflict had its background and cause in differing musical concepts, in the polarisation of the musical community into 'old' and 'new', and in different stylistic preferences."¹¹

Grażyna quickly found herself among the students supporting Szymanowski, and I will describe his overwhelming influence on the work of the young Bacewiczówna in the chapter devoted to Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano. She completed her education at the Warsaw academy with a degree in composition and violin in 1932. Kisielewski reviewed her diploma performance as a violinist as follows: 'She played with verve and energy, very cleanly and precisely, though not with a particularly powerful tone, with great emotion that was contagious; in general, her slender figure, focused energy, and a kind of fervent ferocity in relation to music were extremely evocative and commanded respect. I was personally impressed that the girl played the violin and, in addition, composed. What a born demon of musicality!'"¹² The young artist obtained her diploma in composition, presenting to the examination committee, among other works, her Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano, String Quartet No. 2, *Sinfonietta for symphony orchestra*, and Psalm *De profundis clamavi ad Te, Domine* for solo voices, choir and orchestra.

After completing her studies, Grażyna visited her father in Kaunas, Lithuania, for the second time (she had first done so in 1930). Witold and Kiejstut and his wife were also there at the time. Together with her younger brother, the violinist gave concerts in Kaunas and Riga, which were received with great enthusiasm by the audience. Despite these successes, however, she was unable to find permanent employment in Lithuania – her applications for jobs in orchestras and music schools were consistently rejected. These difficulties prompted her to decide to leave for Paris at the end of 1932.

¹¹ Stefan Kisielewski, op. cit., p. 11.

¹² Ibidem, p. 12.

Before World War II, Paris was a city pulsating with freedom and life, a true centre of musical innovation. The composer moved into the Polish musicians' house on Rue Lamandé, became a member of the Young Polish Musicians in Paris and enrolled in supplementary studies at the École Normale de Musique. There she studied violin with André Tournet and composition with Nadia Boulanger, who had previously taught Kazimierz Sikorski, the Bacewiczówna's professor in Warsaw. Boulanger said of the young Grażyna: „I do not believe that we, as professors, can give our students more than what they already possess. The Bacewicz talent was shaped in Warsaw by a man like Sikorski. [...] Grażyna, like almost all my Polish students, came from a solid school: both classical and modern.”¹³

Her stay in Paris resulted in her first significant success as a composer – in May 1933, Bacewicz won first prize in a competition organised by the Aide aux Femmes de Professions Libérales society for her Quintet for Wind Instruments, written a year earlier.

Between 3 and 16 March 1935, Grażyna Bacewicz took part in the 1st Henryk Wieniawski International Violin Competition. She prepared for the competition under the guidance of Carl Flesch in the autumn of 1934, during her second stay in Paris. The first prize in the competition was won by Ginette Neveu, the second by David Oistrakh, while Bacewicz received an honourable mention. The heroine of this work was the subject of high hopes for higher laurels, especially after her excellent performance in the first stage of the competition. However, an unfortunate coincidence happened that on the night before her performance in the final stage, the artist's flat was almost completely ransacked. Almost completely, because, as she herself recalled: „On the sofa in the first room, in the most visible place, lay the concert dress I was to wear the next day, carefully laid out, with my slippers on one side and my violin on the other the violin. What charming thieves, so interested in art! All that was missing was a note saying: 'We wish you luck'. It is easy to guess how we spent the night. The police, the investigation, etc. There was no question of sleeping. I failed the second stage. I disappointed those who were expecting a prize.”¹⁴

In September 1935, Grażyna Bacewicz began working with the Polish Radio Orchestra (now the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice), founded by Grzegorz Fitelberg. Her work with the orchestra allowed her to deepen her knowledge of instrumentation. At the same time, she also performed in a string quartet, among others with violinist Bohdan Łosakiewicz. It was thanks to him that Grażyna met her future husband, Dr Andrzej Biernacki. However, before the wedding (6 August 1936), the couple had to part for a year due to a research scholarship from the Jakub Potocki Foundation, which Andrzej had received. Many letters from this period of separation have been preserved, from which it is worth quoting a short excerpt: "I am in the last period when I can leave for a longer time. Old men don't get scholarships! Do you

¹³ Documentary film *Grażyna Bacewicz*, dir. Ludwik Perski, Telewizja Polska, 1974.

¹⁴ Grażyna Bacewicz, op. cit., p. 78.

think that the time would come when you would look at me a little differently, you who are constantly developing, if I remained at the level of mediocrity?"¹⁵

Time has clearly shown that the doctor never even came close to being "average", and that the aforementioned trip was not his last scientific journey. Andrzej Biernacki, an outstanding internist and hepatologist, graduated in medicine from the University of Warsaw and also studied in Paris at the famous Pasteur Institute. He was the head of the Internal Medicine Clinic at the Medical Academy in Warsaw and a member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The above quote emphasises his perception of his future wife as a person who constantly strived for development, and it was in this context that he persuaded her in November 1938 to give up her job in the orchestra and go to Paris again. Meanwhile, a shadow of deep political unrest was slowly spreading over Europe, caused mainly by Adolf Hitler's increasingly bold and unpunished actions.

The most important event during Grażyna's third stay in Paris was undoubtedly her composition concert, which took place on 26 April 1939 in the École Normale de Musique hall. The composer described the course of the concert in letters to her sister and mother: „It started with a 15-minute delay, at 9:15. I didn't listen to the trios and piano sonatas because I had to play, but I went out later with cold hands and suddenly, when I stood on the stage, I lost my stage fright. I played very calmly, simply extraordinarily. There were surprisingly many people for such a concert, about 300. I was expecting 50 people. [...] A lot of people came up to me. Everyone was delighted that it had gone so well. composer concerts are unsuccessful. Lechoń is also very pleased and I think he does not regret that the embassy gave the money. [...] In a word, a tremendous triumph! Something incredible!"¹⁶

Despite her enormous success as a composer, Bacewiczówna unfortunately did not receive a scholarship to continue her studies in Paris, and as a result she returned to Poland in May 1939.

On 1 September 1939, at 4:45 a.m., the radio news reported that German troops had invaded Poland. As men were being called up to march eastwards, and Grażyna's parents-in-law lived in Marynin near Lublin, the Biernacki and Bacewicz families left Warsaw. During their journey on foot, they stopped for a rest in Garwolin. In her story *Na naszych oczach* [Before Our Eyes] (in the volume *Znak szczególny* [Distinguishing Feature]), the composer described how, on a sudden impulse, she almost forced her loved ones to immediately interrupt their rest and flee across the bridge. Moments later, bombs fell on their resting place.

After reaching Marynin, Andrzej and Kiejstut volunteered for the army. However, after a month, they returned to Warsaw and, after checking the living conditions, brought Grażyna, Wanda, Maria and Halina to the capital. The Biernacki family home at 35 Koszykowa Street was never bombed, which seemed almost miraculous in the realities of war.

On 20 July 1942, Grażyna gave birth to a daughter, Alina. The composer's pregnancy was by no means a foregone conclusion, as according to her granddaughter, the artist once wrote to her

¹⁵ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

¹⁶ Ibidem.

husband: „Actually, the violin itself exempts me from having children, because as a violinist I cannot be tied to one place [...]. Now add composition to that, and having children becomes completely impossible.”¹⁷ Time has shown that in Bacewicz's case, having and raising a child did become possible, and both the composer's daughter and granddaughter made enormous efforts to document the life and preserve the musical heritage of Grażyna Bacewicz.

During the war, the composer took care of her young daughter, mother and sister, while actively participating in public and secret concerts organised by the Secret Union of Musicians and the Main Welfare Council. Bacewicz also organised private concerts in her flat, which – due to the presence of a small child – was a safer and logistically easier solution, especially since every time she left the house she risked encountering German patrols. In addition to her performing activities, the artist also continued her compositional work. During the occupation, she composed, among others, Sonata No. 1 for solo violin, String Quartet No. 2, 3 Preludes for piano, Piano Sonata No. 3, *Suite for two violins* and *Overture for orchestra*. All these works testify to the consolidation of the neoclassical style in Bacewicz's work, and the war period was a time of stabilisation in her compositional technique.

After the fall of the Warsaw Uprising, the Biernacki-Bacewicz family left Warsaw on 2 October 1944 and went to Grodzisk Mazowiecki. Andrzej worked at the hospital, while Grażyna gave private piano lessons. In Grodzisk Mazowiecki, they also reunited with Kiejstut and Halina, from whom they had been separated during the Uprising.

After the war, Grażyna threw herself into a whirlwind of concerts, which she performed with Kiejstut. On 22 April 1945, the duo performed at the Łódź Conservatory, where they both began working as lecturers. In letters to her husband, who remained in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Grażyna wrote: „Actually, if it weren't for the fact that there is no flat, I would feel very good. I am finally doing what I should be doing. [...] We belong to the Musicians' Union. Today, at the general meeting, I was elected to the disciplinary committee, so watch out! I am not only a professor, but also a judge. *Voilà!*”¹⁸

Unfortunately, the composer did not live to see her own flat and, tired of the uncomfortable conditions of her stay in Łódź, she returned to Warsaw in November 1945. After the war, the vast majority of Polish artists found themselves in difficult living conditions, but despite this, the future looked moderately optimistic. The new authorities announced that they would take patronage of culture, which raised hopes for a system of support for artists in the form of commissions for composers, awards and scholarships.

Krakow became the post-war musical capital. In April 1945, Tadeusz Ochlewski founded the Polish Music Publishing House in Krakow, and in August, the National Composers' Congress was held, which resulted in the establishment of the Polish Composers' Union. On 1 September 1945, during the 1st Festival of Polish Contemporary Music, the reconstructed Overture by

¹⁷ Joanna Sendlak, *OSTINATO – Grażyna Bacewicz's wartime days*, Polish Writers' Association, Warsaw 2020, p. 84.

¹⁸ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

Grażyna Bacewicz was premiered there, and on 1 October 1945, the first issue of „Ruch Muzyczny” (Musical Movement) was published, with Stefan Kisielewski as its editor-in-chief.

In 1946, from March to June, the artist toured France. She performed, among others, Karol Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Paweł Klecki, gave a recital with pianist Jerzy Witas at the famous Salle Gaveau in Paris, and also appeared at the Franco- Slave Festival at the Sorbonne, presenting works by Szymanowski and her own compositions. After returning to Poland, she performed Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's Violin Concerto in E minor with the National Philharmonic Orchestra in Warsaw and her own Violin Concerto No. 2 with the Łódź Philharmonic Orchestra. Although it might seem that Bacewicz was then experiencing the heyday of her violin career, her correspondence from that time reveals a clear note of bitterness: "If someone told me to give up my career as a violinist, I would only be happy. I play because it would be inappropriate to stop, out of momentum, and because I earn a living from it in Poland, but I would prefer to earn less, have peace and quiet, sit at home and compose – that is my dream. After all, when I am in Paris, there is no question of composing (I have nowhere to do it, etc.), in Poland I travel around giving concerts, and I only compose in passing, at night. It is not right."¹⁹ It was composing that was Grażyna's main artistic goal, and today it forms the core of her musical legacy.

At the beginning of 1939, the composer wrote to her husband from Paris: „I am glad that I still have 10 years to develop. At the age of 40, you have to give something really good.”²⁰ And so it happened – a year before she turned 40, in 1948, she composed one of her most important works: *Concerto for String Orchestra*. Witold Lutosławski, reminiscing about the composer after her death, said: “*The Concerto for Strings* is probably the high point of Grażyna's ‘objective’ period, which encyclopaedias dismiss with the simplistic term ‘neoclassical.’”²¹

It is worth noting the word 'objectivity' in Lutosławski's statement. The concept of New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit) was closely associated with the person and work of Paul Hindemith. The essence of this objectivity was a shift towards a more objective and functional narrative, combining traditions derived from the Baroque and Renaissance heritage with the achievements of modern 20th-century harmony. According to Maria Piotrowska: „The principles of Neue Sachlichkeit were expressed in the view that the essence of the sound process boils down to its purely structural properties; the sound arrangement ceases to be a means of expressing extra-musical ideas and becomes an object in itself; its peculiarities are irrevocably exhausted in the concrete, sonic embodiment of the.”²²

These assumptions are very reminiscent of neoclassical principles, but their essence is not a return to tradition or its transformation through the prism of new harmonic achievements, but an

¹⁹ Grażyna Bacewicz, *From a letter to her brother Witold*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 1/1994, p. 1.

²⁰ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

²¹ Witold Lutosławski, recollection, in: *Ruch Muzyczny*, 7/1969, p. 5.

²² Maria Piotrowska, *Neoclassicism in 20th-Century Music*, The Catholic Theology Academy, Warsaw 1982, p. 66.

emphasis on the functionality of music and its objectivity as such. This view was close to Grażyna's heart, who, in a conversation with Stefan Kisielewski, is said to have remarked: "Music does not express any normal, everyday feelings. It simply expresses itself and its own emotions."²³

The piece was first performed on 18 June 1950 by the Polish Radio Grand Symphony Orchestra conducted by Grzegorz Fitelberg during the General Assembly of Polish Composers in Warsaw. In this context, it is impossible to ignore the famous statement by Stefan Kisielewski, who wrote in *Tygodnik Powszechny*: "It can be said with a clear conscience that this time the honour of Polish composers was saved by 'a woman'. [...] We finally felt a 'hearty piece' of healthy and tasty music, written with creative potency – truly masculine."²⁴ Although this statement may evoke ambivalent feelings today, it is an expression of genuine appreciation for Bacewicz's work. An examination of the composer's relationship with Kisielewski reveals the complexity of their long-standing acquaintance, in which he was not only a close friend, but also a sincere and insightful commentator on her works.

The Concerto for String Orchestra was also highly acclaimed internationally. In one of the American reviews, references to the composer's gender reappeared: „Her personality dominated the last evening of the National Symphony Orchestra at Constitution Hall. [...] There was nothing feminine about Bacewicz's work. It was powerful, even masculine, pulsating with rhythm and bold thematic material. It was neither conservatively modernist nor radically classical. In any case, it was worth hearing."²⁵

In the same year, the artist created another extremely important work – Violin Concerto No. 3. Kisielewski wrote about it: „[...] Grażyna Bacewiczówna struck the perfect balance with her Violin Concerto No. 3. I must admit that, knowing her work to date, I was sceptical about this attempt to create a piece 'in the folk spirit', thinking that it was an expression of some artificial, self-imposed concept. However, I quickly changed my mind: this composition was undoubtedly born of a thoroughly sincere impulse, great ambition and conscious, intelligent work. The result is a piece that organically combines original folk elements (highlander music) melted in the crucible of mature compositional technique with elements of Bacewiczówna's previous work, elements undoubtedly derived from contemporary European music."²⁶

Kisielewski drew attention to an extremely important aspect characterising Grażyna's work – the work of a person open to change, absorbing aesthetic innovations, but always processing these impulses through her individual, thoughtful and mature musical language.

On 5–8 August 1948, a Conference of Composers and Music Critics was held in Łagów Lubuski. Ostensibly, it was intended to serve as a forum for the free exchange of artistic views and

²³ Stefan Kisielewski, *Conversation with Grażyna Bacewiczówna*, in: *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 28 February 1960, p. 4–5

²⁴ Stefan Kisielewski, review, in: *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 9 July 1950, p. 13.

²⁵ Milton Berliner, review, in: *Washington Daily News*, 31 December 1952, p. 19.

²⁶ Stefan Kisielewski, *After the Polish Folk Music Festival*, in: *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 5 June 1949.

the integration of the community, but in reality it turned out to be a gathering of a clearly political nature. Its aim was to steer artists in line with the prevailing authorities, i.e. towards socialist realism. The goal of the new artistic doctrine was to create 'classless' art, capable of reaching the widest possible audience, primarily by rejecting decadent romantic tendencies in favour of national art. Grażyna Bacewicz was present at this conference, and the first and second parts of her aforementioned Violin Concerto No. 3, inspired by Podhale folklore, were played from recordings. Theoretically, the direction taken by the composer might have seemed consistent with the principles of socialist realism, but her actual attitude towards this aesthetic was much more complex. Due to the constant surveillance of her correspondence, she could not openly express her views when writing letters from Poland. It was only many years later, when reminiscing about Artur Malawski – a composer who was particularly criticised by the authorities at the time – that she allowed herself to make a more candid confession: "I could smell Paris. [...] I could smell those years full of creative freedom, hope and enthusiasm. Perhaps this was because we were heavily burdened by pressure and restraint during that period."²⁷

Undoubtedly, drawing on folklore became a safe way for the composer to escape the shackles of communist control over art. The Third Violin Concerto was performed by the artist during the inauguration of the new artistic season of the Warsaw Chamber Orchestra in 1949. In the same year, she composed one of her most famous chamber works – the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano, dedicated to her brother Kiejstut. The siblings performed this piece on 26 September 1950 in the hall of the Polish Music Publishing House in Krakow.

For Grażyna, 1950 was primarily a time of concert performances – she went on tour in Romania, gave concerts in the Soviet Union (Moscow, Kiev, Kharkiv) and also gave recitals in Czechoslovakia (Prague, Bratislava, České Budějovice, Třinec). At the end of the year, in Budapest, she performed her Violin Concerto No. 3 with the Budapest Radio Orchestra under the baton of Grzegorz Fitelberg. In addition, the artist received the Third Degree State Award for her *Concerto for String Orchestra* and became a member of the Board of Polish Composers.

The year 1951 proved to be a turning point in Bacewicz's compositional career, thanks to the International String Quartet Competition in Liège, where she won first prize for her String Quartet No. 4. At the end of November, she travelled to Belgium to receive her prize and also went on a concert tour with pianist Monique Pichon in Belgium and France. Interestingly, it was only a matter of minutes that decided whether Grażyna's composition would be eligible to participate in the competition at all. The composer's mother described: "Grażyna finished her Fourth Quartet and sent it to PWM to be typeset, but due to the very short deadline, PWM sent the Quartet back and Grażyna gave it to a copyist from ZKP, who kept it for a long time. On 12 June, the copyist returned the Quartet so poorly transcribed that Grażyna cried. She had to spend many hours correcting it, sticking things on, struggling and rushing to meet the deadline for sending it to Liège. And indeed, Grażyna and Turski's two quartets were sent from Poland by the ZKP to Liège two minutes before the competition closed. On 5 October 1951, Grażyna received a phone call

²⁷ Grażyna Bacewicz, *Remembering Artur Malawski*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny*, 6/1958, p. 13.

from the PAP informing her that she was the winner. [...] Our brilliant woman, as we were immediately informed, beat 54 men from 13 countries.”²⁸

A year later, Bacewicz was already appearing as a juror at the Liège Competition, and she also received a Second Class State Award for her Fourth String Quartet, Fourth Violin Concerto and Fourth Sonata for violin and piano. The artist diligently composed even during her holidays, which her mother repeatedly commented on in her diaries: ‘I am concerned that Grażyna is already getting down to work in August. She is resting for such a short time after a year of intense creative work. She keeps saying: ‘I have to leave a lot behind – I have to hurry’. She is leaving in a few days to compose the Piano Quintet.”²⁹ The composer worked constantly – after concerts, after trips, mostly at night. She called herself a ‘speedster’ and wrote: ‘Nature, having graciously endowed me with compositional abilities, has also equipped me with something that allows me to cultivate these abilities. Namely, I have a tiny, invisible motor, thanks to which I can do in ten minutes what others do in an hour; thanks to it, instead of walking, I run, I can write fifteen letters in half an hour, even my pulse beats much faster than others, and I was born in the seventh month. [...] Those who live with a speedster – forced to watch his constant struggle with time – experience a variety of feelings: some feel terribly tired, others feel a kind of shame or jealousy that they cannot do the same, and still others feel that they are dealing with a madman or even a lunatic.”³⁰

In a letter to her brother Witold, she continued this thought: ‘Namely, I have a completely different pace of life than everyone around me, which means that I do everything faster than others, and everyone around me constantly irritates me with their slowness. However, this also has its good sides, because, for example, I can write a large piece in two weeks. Sikorski knows this. He sometimes asks me when we meet, ‘Well, how many symphonies have you written today?’”³¹

This ‘motor’ was an extraordinary driving force for the composer, thanks to which we can enjoy the true richness of her work today. One of her most famous pieces, the aforementioned Piano Quintet, was premiered on 16 November 1952 by the Krakow Quartet and Kiejstut Bacewicz. At the end of 1952, from 5 to 16 December, Grażyna sat on the jury of the 2nd Henryk Wieniawski International Violin Competition, and she wittily recounted the work of the committee in letters to her family: “[...] Jarzębski makes jokes unintentionally – he pulled Jahnke's chair away – Jahnke didn't know and fell over, pulling Jarzębski with him, and they both fell with their legs up onto the flowers separating the audience and our table, and the Bulgarian sitting next to me was terribly frightened because he thought Jarzębski was dying.”³²

²⁸ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ Grażyna Bacewicz, op. cit., p. 25-26.

³¹ Grażyna Bacewicz, *From a letter to her brother Witold*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 1/1994, p. 1.

³² Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

Fortunately, Professor Jarzębski was unharmed, but death touched Grażyna Bacewicz in a different way at that time – on 22 December 1952, the composer's father passed away. The news of his death did not reach the family until 18 January 1953, as a result of correspondence from Lithuania being held up by the communist authorities.

In June 1953, the composer was invited to participate in the jury of the Marguerite Long and Jacques Thibaud International Competition in Paris. That same year, she made an extremely important decision – she finally gave up her career as a violinist. In her short story *Jesteśmy na remi* (We Are at a Standstill), she wrote: „For quite some time, I had been thinking about giving up the violin in favour of creative work alone. The matter might seem simple. If you want to give up the violin, just give it up and that's that. There's nothing to talk about. However, it's not that simple. Many years of playing an instrument brings to mind the idea of marriage. Is it easy to leave your husband or wife after a silver wedding anniversary? Not easy! Even if you really want to. So I delayed my final decision. And then a cat arrived at our house, a little kitten. He was very cute and funny. Everyone in the house liked him very much. Meanwhile, he hated the violin. When I picked it up, he would start growling like a dog, and at the first sound I made, he would run screaming under the wardrobe. I couldn't agree to the kitten sitting under the wardrobe all the time. So the matter resolved itself.”³³

Czarusia's behaviour was merely an anecdotal pretext for a decision that the artist had been contemplating for quite some time. According to Eugenia Umińska's memoirs, Grażyna is said to have remarked: „I am giving up playing the violin; it is too stressful for me! And if I do play, it will only be my own music!”³⁴ And so it happened – from then on, the composer devoted herself exclusively to creative work, returning to violin performances only to perform a few of her own pieces, including *Humoresque* for violin and piano, *Partita* for violin and piano, and Sonata No. 2 for solo violin, which I will describe in detail in Chapter IV.

On 5 March 1953, Joseph Stalin died, raising hopes for a political thaw after a period of repressive rule, including in the sphere of artistic life. That year, composer created among others, Symphony No. 4, Piano Sonata No. 2 and the ballet *Z chłopaka król* [From Peasant to King], and was also awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

The year 1954 saw many premieres of the composer's works. On 15 January, Bohdan Wodiczko conducted the Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra in a performance of Symphony No. 4, while on 25 July, Walerian Bardijew and the Poznań Opera Orchestra gave the world premiere of the ballet *Z chłopaka król* (From Peasant to King). and on 10 December, again conducted by Wodiczko and performed by the Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra, *The Polish Overture* was heard.

However, her series of artistic successes was dramatically interrupted – on 26 September 1954, Grażyna and her family were involved in a serious car accident, in which she suffered numerous injuries. As a result of a sudden manoeuvre, forced by an oncoming lorry driven by a drunk driver, Andrzej lost control of the vehicle and crashed into a tree on the side where Grażyna

³³ Grażyna Bacewicz, op.cit., p. 75.

³⁴ Eugenia Umińska, recollection, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 7/1969, p. 9.

was sitting. Acting on a sudden impulse, reminiscent of the instinct that saved her loved ones during the bombing of Garwolin at the beginning of the war, the composer categorically forbade her daughter from taking her favourite seat by the window at the beginning of the journey, thanks to which the child escaped the accident unharmed.

The composer, with a broken pelvis and numerous head injuries, was taken to hospital. In her story She's already delirious, the artist described her recovery period as follows: "I wasn't doing well, especially in the first two weeks. There were even moments when I was on the brink of death. And that's when I was protected by a wave of sounds obsessively ringing in my head. The beginning of Bach's Fugue in F minor. Always that. It was a thread that I clung to desperately so as not to be pulled to the other side."³⁵ The composer's attachment to the work of the Leipzig cantor is evident not only in her emotional memories, but also in her own work, to which I refer in the chapter devoted to the Sonata No. 1 for Solo Violin.

In 1955, Warsaw hosted the Second Polish Music Festival, during which nine works by Grażyna Bacewicz were performed. This testifies to her exceptionally strong position in the Polish music community, which is also confirmed by her invitation to a reception accompanying the 5th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition, attended by Queen Elisabeth of Belgium. In the same year, Grażyna Bacewicz was honoured with the Medal of the Decade of the Polish People's Republic, the Commander's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta and the Minister of Culture's Award.

Also in 1955, an event of great importance for Polish culture took place – during the 7th General Assembly of the Polish Composers' Union, Tadeusz Baird and Kazimierz Serocki proposed the establishment of the Warsaw Music Autumn festival, whose aim was to introduce Western music to the Polish public and overcome the effects of cultural isolation during the Stalinist period. During the elections to the board of the Polish Composers' Union, which took place at that time, Grażyna Bacewicz received enough votes to become president, but decided to accept the position of vice-president. She was soon informed of her participation in a delegation to India and Egypt. She described her memories of this trip, which lasted from 16 February to 31 March 1956, in *Znak szczególny* [The Distinguished Sign], focusing – in her characteristic ironic style – on cultural differences in the perception of music. The trip also inspired her to compose the music for Bałwant Gargi's play *Kobieta indyjska* [The Indian Woman].

After returning from India, the composer resubmitted her composition (String Quartet No. 5) to the String Quartet Competition in Liège and was awarded second prize. She attended the award ceremony with her daughter Alina, stopping off in Paris on the way to take care of matters related to the preparations for the 1st International Festival of Contemporary Music, known since 1958 as the Warsaw Autumn. The festival took place on 10-21 October 1956 in Warsaw and hosted distinguished ensembles. Among others, the following performed: '[...] the Paris Radio Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, ensembles from Bucharest, Brno and Moscow, the National Philharmonic Orchestra and the Silesian Philharmonic Orchestra from Katowice. One of

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 109.

the guests visiting Warsaw was David Oistrakh.”³⁶ Do stolicy Polski przyjechała także sama Nadia Boulanger.

In 1957, Bacewicz was invited, together with Zbigniew Drzewiecki, to a conference of the International Federation of Music Competitions in Geneva, where she represented the Henryk Wieniawski International Violin Competition. During the third edition of the Competition, held from 1 to 15 December 1957, she served as chair of the jury.

In 1958, Bacewicz was again active as a juror, this time at the 1st International Pyotr Tchaikovsky Violin Competition. In June, once again in the role of delegate, the composer travelled to Strasbourg for the festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music. The summer of 1958 brought tragic news – on 18 July, Maria Modlińska, Grażyna's mother, passed away. In a letter to Vytautas, the composer described the painful time of saying goodbye to her mother: „[...] mummy, dying, when she could still speak, said to Kiej and Wan [...] that I should now be in charge of everything, that I have the most work to do, so you must help me and listen to me. [...] Neither I don't intend to rule over anyone or impose anything on anyone. Mum just understood that, despite the fact that I have a lot of work, I look after everyone in the family, whether they see it or not, so she obviously thought that I should be made the head of the family.”³⁷

This quote shows how many responsibilities Grażyna Bacewicz took on – both in the creative sphere, including composing and institutional activities, and in her family and home life.

After her mother's death, correspondence between Grażyna and Witold, who had been living in the United States since the outbreak of World War II, intensified. It is from their letters that the composer's famous statement about her attitude to creation comes: „For me, composing is like chiselling stone, not transferring the sounds of imagination or inspiration. Most composers in the world work systematically, like civil servants. If they lack inspiration, they do their craftwork; when inspiration strikes, they slowly move forward.”³⁸

As a result of this ‘chiselling’, two very important works were created in 1958, marking a symbolic turning point in the composer’s creative transformation: Sonata No. 2 for solo violin and *Music for strings, trumpet and percussion*. Both works testified to the composer's increasingly bold interest in sonorism and were clear evidence of her creative development, which was richly rewarded – *Music for strings, trumpet and percussion* received third prize at the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers in Paris.

In July 1960, Grażyna and her daughter went on holiday to Italy. Taking advantage of the fact that her correspondence was not restricted by communist censorship, she was finally able to describe the situation of Polish artists to Witold honestly: “I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you that the situation here is currently worse than it was a year ago in every respect, e.g.

³⁶ Joanna Sendlak, op. cit., p. 162.

³⁷ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

³⁸ Ibidem.

copyright is killing writers and journalists. [...] They are even starting to interfere with us musicians. Of course, this is not a return to Stalinism, but they are tightening the screws. It is more difficult to travel, and even more difficult for artists to earn a living, because they 'make sure' that we don't have too much."³⁹

The year 1961 brought another groundbreaking work in the composer's oeuvre – *Pensieri notturni*, premiered during the Biennale di Venezia by the Krakow Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra conducted by Andrzej Markowski. As the composer herself wrote, the idea behind the piece was: "to present in an organised manner something that is in no way organised, namely what is happening in the tired composer's head."⁴⁰ Fatigue accompanied the composer until the last year of her life, as she worked tirelessly, travelled and actively participated in the musical community.

At the beginning of December 1962, Grażyna decided to move to a smaller flat at 4 Mochneckiego Street in Warsaw. She made this decision primarily due to the deteriorating health of her husband, Andrzej, who was no longer able to run his private medical practice in their previous flat on Koszykowa Street. On 30 July 1963, Professor Biernacki died and was buried at the Military Cemetery in Warsaw. Grażyna wrote to Vytautas: "There were several hundred people – about a thousand at the funeral. [...] There were masses of wreaths and flowers, and there were many announcements and obituaries in the press, as well as articles from various institutions, and from us, and programmes on the radio and television."⁴¹

This account clearly demonstrates the high position that Andrzej Biernacki held in the medical community. Although, as the composer's correspondence shows, their marriage was not always harmonious, they were a couple of extremely ambitious people who respected each other and supported each other in pursuing their own professional paths.

In April 1964, Nadia Boulanger, whom Grażyna described: "This old woman, never tired and always full of energy. Incredible!"⁴² Apart from unfortunate term 'old woman', this characterisation also surprisingly accurately reflects Bacewicz's own personality – tireless and extremely dynamic in her actions. As a result of this constant activity, between 1964 and 1969 the composer created, among other works, a Quartet for Four Cellos, the ballet *Esik in Ostend*, *Musica sinfonia in tre movimenti*, Violin Concerto No. 7 (for which the composer received an award from the Belgian Government and a Gold Medal at the Queen Elisabeth International Competition in Brussels), String Quartet No. 7, *Contradizione for chamber orchestra*, and *Concerto for Two Pianos*.

In September 1966, Grażyna took on new professional responsibilities. In one of her letters, she wrote: "I agreed to teach composition at the Higher School of Music in Warsaw because they are giving me very favourable conditions. I will only have six hours a week, and

³⁹ Ibidem.

⁴⁰ Grażyna Bacewicz's private notes, in: *Ruch Muzyczny*, 1/1994.

⁴¹ Correspondence between the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

⁴² Ibidem.

sometimes meetings.”⁴³ In the same year, she also enrolled in a driving course and quit smoking. At the beginning of the 1966/1967 academic year, Bacewicz took up a position as a lecturer in composition. In September 1967, the composer was awarded the title of full professor, and in November of the same year, she once again chaired the jury at the 5th Henryk Wieniawski International Violin Competition.

The year 1968 proved to be exceptionally rich in artistic events for the artist. On 15 March, the *Concerto for Two Pianos* was premiered, performed by Jerzy Maksymiuk and Jerzy Witkowski, accompanied by the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Witold Rowicki. The work was also performed during the composer's trip to Armenia in December 1968, this time conducted by Andrzej Markowski. At the same time, Bacewicz was finishing work on her *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, dedicated to Stefan Kamasa, and she also wrote the excellent crime novel *Sidła* (The Snares). She also received news from Television Theatre about the production of her play *Jerzyki albo nie jestem ptakiem* (Swallows, or I Am Not a Bird), written several years earlier, which had been awarded a prize in the Ateneum Theatre Competition.

From July 1968, Bacewicz worked on the music for the ballet *Pożądanie* [The Desire], based on a libretto inspired by Pablo Picasso's play *Desire Caught by the Tail*. In September, she travelled to Budapest, where she sat on the jury of the String Quartet Competition. On 2 October, during the International Festival of Contemporary Music in Havana, the Cuban National Orchestra performed her piece, commissioned and conducted by Manuel Duchesne Cuzán. The composer was warmly invited to visit Cuba, but ultimately decided against the trip. Instead, she chose to travel to Armenia for the Decade of Polish Music.

This trip had a significant impact on her future – exhausted by intense work and numerous responsibilities, she fell seriously ill with the flu after returning from her trip. She described her ailment in a letter to Witold: „I was afraid that our house would blow up when I started sneezing. I know it is rude to sneeze loudly, but it was stronger than all considerations. The Kiejstuts are coming to visit us for Christmas. Still three days ago, they were grumbling, but I "explained" to them over the phone that we could die, so it would be worth see it before that. (Of course, I know we'll live a very long time, it's just a way to get them to agree.) My trip (3,500 km one way by plane) was not interesting in any way. Ten days of my life gone. I don't think I can afford that anymore. Now I will be more selective about my trips.”⁴⁴

From today's perspective, these words sound particularly poignant. On the night of 16-17 January 1969, as a result of her body being weakened after suffering from the flu, Grażyna Bacewicz suffered a heart attack. Her granddaughter described these events: „The ambulance took Grażyna to the Infant Jesus Hospital, where Andrzej had worked his entire life. She spent several hours in the ward, but her condition worsened. She was taken to the intensive care unit. When she regained consciousness for a moment, she whispered barely audibly: 'Why did you wake me up? I

⁴³ Ibidem.

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

was so comfortable...'. Grażyna Bacewicz died on 17 January 1969. She would have turned 60 in February.”⁴⁵

The funeral took place on 21 January 1969. It was described as follows: „The Minister of Culture and Art and professors from the academy stood guard of honour at the coffin displayed at the Academy of Music. The funeral procession set off from the Academy of Music and stopped at the National Philharmonic building. She was bid farewell by musicians and representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Art. The funeral was paid for by the state. The composer was buried in the Avenue of Merit at the municipal cemetery in Powązki”⁴⁶

It is also worth recalling Tadeusz Baird's memory of Grażyna: „I saw Grażyna Bacewicz for the last time at the National Philharmonic 10 days ago. As always, she was lively, smiling, friendly to people and the world. A few days later, I learned about her illness, but this bad news was accompanied by the comforting news that the crisis had passed and that her health was improving. So I thought I would wait a day or two and call her to wish her a speedy recovery. And so, instead, I am trying to write a few sentences with my clumsy and unskilled pen, which are a farewell to the person and artistic phenomenon that Grażyna Bacewicz was for our art and our lives. [...] she was pure righteousness, a person who was honest with herself, with others and with facts. She had a simplicity of kindness, a kindness that stemmed from a rare ability to understand others, an instinctive wisdom that sought expression in doing justice. [...] She belonged to those happy souls gifted with the ability to clearly see the bright side of life. I think she was a good, noble person, beautiful in her deepest essence.”⁴⁷

These moving words aptly describe Grażyna Bacewicz's life. Based on the collected materials, the composer appears as an extremely cheerful, open and kind person towards others, and at the same time disciplined, honest and demanding towards herself and her own performing and compositional work. Exploring her biography allowed me to better understand the context of her work and to take a more in-depth look at the creative process that led the composer to create the works I analyse in this thesis. The biographical perspective is an integral part of the interpretations presented in this work, based largely on knowledge of the composer's performance preferences and her artistic principles and values.

⁴⁵ Joanna Sendłak, op. cit., p. 211-212.

⁴⁶ Joanna Sendłak, *VIVO – Grażyna Bacewicz's Post-War Days*, The Light of Literature Foundation, Gdansk 2022, p. 241.

⁴⁷ Tadeusz Baird, recollection, in: *Współczesność*, 29 January 1969.

Chapter II. Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano

The first of a series of five sonatas for violin and piano was composed by Grażyna Bacewicz in January 1929, during her studies at the State Conservatory of Music in Warsaw in the class of Professor Kazimierz Sikorski. The context of the conservatory's functioning during this period was discussed in the chapter devoted to the composer's biography, but it is worth recalling it again: „[...] the artist came to study at a particularly difficult time for the academy. At that time, there was a clash of different visions concerning issues fundamental to the development of music in Poland, which had been independent for only a dozen or so years. [...] The dispute between the parties reached its peak during Grażyna Bacewicz's final year of studies, when Szymanowski resigned from his position. This was the result of a series of events that were unpleasant for him: the reversal of reforms by the ministry, the dismissal of several respected teachers, including Sikorski, and a student strike. Grażyna Bacewicz herself was also affected by a kind of repression, simply because she was a student of the future author of textbooks on harmony and counterpoint. Her final exam before a committee headed by the new rector of the university, Eugeniusz Morawski, was graded with a B. As Professor Sikorski recalled years later: '[Grażyna] laughed about that four afterwards. She was aware of everything.’”⁴⁸

The First Sonata for Violin and Piano was part of the aforementioned diploma examination, which took place in 1932. The style of this work strongly evokes the music of Karol Szymanowski, who was influencing Grażyna Bacewicz at the time. The charismatic composer, paradoxically regarded in Poland as a symbol of musical modernity, was already considered a somewhat outdated artist from the perspective of the dominant trends in the West. Regardless of this, Szymanowski remained the highest artistic authority in the country and felt a strong need to set the direction for the development of the creative skills of the young generation of Polish composers. This direction led unequivocally to Paris.

Before Grażyna Bacewicz left for the French capital to learn the principles of the neoclassical style, she worked intensively on developing her own compositional technique during her studies in Warsaw. Małgorzata Gąsiorowska described the period preceding her fascination with neoclassicism as follows: „[...] for several years, the young composer struggled with the overwhelming influence of Szymanowski's impressionistic poetics, not only in his famous Stained Glass for violin and piano from 1932, but also, for example, in his Sonata for violin and piano from 1929. (...) However, the composer overcame the obstacle of succumbing to suggestive patterns that blocked the path of individual exploration. According to Kisielewski's assessment, she was one of those people with a natural inclination towards constructive, creative optimism, and perhaps that is why, in the first phase, it was precisely in neoclassicism, imposing a specific

⁴⁸ Miłosz Bazela, *Professor, mentor, friend – on the role of Kazimierz Sikorski in the life and work of Grażyna Bacewicz*, [in:] *Grażyna Bacewicz: Contexts of Life and Work*, ed. Marta Szoka, Lodz 2002, p. 58.

formal discipline, shaped outside the 'protocol [traditional] tonality [...] found space for her musical explorations'."⁴⁹

Certainly, the fruit of these creative explorations is not a “struggle” with compositional material or the overcoming of stylistic “obstacles”, but a work of exceptionally light, clear and enchanting expression. Despite numerous references to the aesthetics of Karol Szymanowski, the beginnings of the composer's individual style are already clearly evident in her First Sonata for Violin and Piano. They manifest themselves primarily in the logically and consistently shaped formal structure of all parts, in the sarcastic, playful expression and folk-dance character of the third movement, as well as in the way the climax is shaped by means of increasing dissonances.

The work opens with a short introduction, characteristic of the first movements of Grażyna Bacewicz's sonatas for violin and piano. Interestingly, in mature works of this genre, such as Sonatas Nos. 4 & 5 for violin and piano, the introductory section is slower than the main section. In the case of the First Sonata, this situation is reversed: the eight-bar introduction is marked *Allegro* and leads to a calmer *Moderato* in bar (b.) 9. The beginning of the piece, initiated by the piano, is mysterious and enigmatic, and thanks to the use of low dynamics, it gives the impression of shyness. This shyness is overcome with the arrival of the *Moderato* section, which is as swaying and seductive as Narcissus from Karol Szymanowski's *Myths*. The alternating use of triplets and duplets in both instruments gives the impression of pleasant languor, from which the composer gradually awakens by creating a climax in bar 20.

An extremely important aspect in building the interpretation of this piece is to pay attention to its colouristic qualities, which are evident, for example, in the phrases in bars 18–20 through the use of chromaticism and fifth parallels, giving this music an impressionistic character. Another ‘colour of sound’ is revealed through the violin harmonics (bars 22–24), reminiscent of the call of the Pan Flute from Szymanowski's third *Myth*. The fragment from bar 25 raises the musical tension again and leads to a stormy piano solo, in which the rhythmic phrase characteristic of Karol Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No. 2 (example 1) is heard for the first time. This motif will be of key importance in shaping the narrative of this movement.



Example 1. K. Szymanowski – Violin Concerto No. 2 bars 121-125.

⁴⁹ Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, *Two on the Swing of Neoclassicism: Bacewicz – Kisielewski*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 58.

The second theme appears in bar 32 in the harmonic aura of the Lydian scale. More emphatic in its sound due to the use of poignant fifths in the low register of the piano, it was specified by the composer with the term *espressivo*, but only in the violin part. The transformative densification of the musical material leads to a climax which, from bar 53 onwards, bears a striking resemblance to the figurative phrases from *The Fountain of Arethusa* (example 2).



Example 2. K. Szymanowski – *The Fountain of Arethusa* from the cycle *Myths*, Op. 30, bars 57-59.

Bacewicz seals the peak of tension with a dramatic march in bars 57–58, taken from Szymanowski's aforementioned Violin Concerto No. 2. However, the expected ecstatic culmination does not follow – the composer suspends the tension by using a fermata on the bar line. In my interpretation, I treat this unique moment as a time for the rich and complex sound texture to transform into the Dionysian swaying familiar from the initial *Moderato*, beginning in bar 59, which marks the start of the recapitulation. The last link in the first movement of the Sonata is, formally, a kind of neat summary of the exposition, presenting its most important themes.

The second movement, *Adagio sostenuto*, begins with a heart-like rhythmic pulsation in the piano part, in 6/8 time. The unobvious accentuation of every third eighth note gives the impression of deliberate „limping”. The time and rhythm suggest, on the one hand, the need for movement, but on the other hand, the composer marks the beginning as *sostenuto*, which brings to mind a state of trance- like suspension, confirmed by the repetitiveness of this phrase. On the horizon of this texture, in bar 5, a violin voice appears, emerging like the melody from the beginning of *The Fountain of Arethusa* – in the high register of the violin, with low dynamics and a similar rhythmic notation (example 3).



Example 3. K. Szymanowski – *The Fountain of Arethusa* from the cycle *Myths*, Op. 30, bars 1–15.

The suspension is broken by a sudden increase in dynamics in bar 13, leading to a climax through very tense sevenths and a melodic sequence of seconds reminiscent of a characteristic phrase from Karol Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No. 1 (example 4). The climax is summed up by a phrase written in harmonics in bars 21–23, which in its delicacy is more reminiscent of a sound impression. It leads to the last phrase of this short section (bars 24–33), which is reminiscent of the first musical sentence.



Example 4. K. Szymanowski – Violin Concerto No. 1, bars 382-293.

The third part is certainly the closest to the characteristics of Bacewicz's later work. Gąsiorowska describes it as follows: „[...] lively, energetic, maintained in polka rhythm, full of characteristic turns of phrase testifying to the young composer's sense of humour, such as interrupting the flow of music with sudden violin glissandos, disrupting the symmetry of the progression, unexpected melodic turns, an 'iambic' ending (pizzicato!) – heralds the future, 'businesslike' Bacewicz with her particular brand of vitality, sharp humour and objectivity of expression.”⁵⁰

Sarcastic, predatory and amusing in its expression, this part is extremely close to the composer's written style, as can be seen from her extremely insightful short stories collected in the volume *Znak szczególny* [The Distinguishing Feature].

The composer begins the last movement of her Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano with an eleven-bar piano solo, initially inconspicuous in its expression, only to suddenly surprise the listener with energetic and rebellious *sforzato* chords. From bar 12, the violin accompanies the piano in this lively polka, and the entire beginning of Part III reminds me of the expressiveness of Pablo Picasso's cubist paintings – vivid and uncompromising, just like Bacewicz's own playing (which can be heard thanks to recordings available on YouTube). From bar 26, a real 'social game' begins between the violin and piano parts – Bacewicz, in a *leggero* style, leads both voices in lively eighth notes, and the sound of this fragment reminds me of children playing tag or some other kind of playful chase between the voices. In bar 35, the composer writes an unexpected *Adagio allargando*, only to return to the fast tempo a bar later, this time in a completely different guise. The most dramatic part, truly gargantuan and grotesque in its musical momentum, prompted me to choose a more grounded approach to playing. Once again, the violin is 'chased' by the piano part creeping in in eighth notes, which, however, decides to end this game by silencing the phrase (bars 48–49). In the last fragment of this movement (from bar 60), the piano plays the leading role, performing breakneck sixteenth-note figurations, additionally embellished with grace notes that

⁵⁰ Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, *Bacewicz*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1999, p. 45.

add a sarcastic character to the melody. The coda leads to a musical resolution through an *accelerando* and a dynamic rising to *fortissimo*, which suggests a vigorous ending. However, this is not the case – the composer surprises the listener in the last bar. She writes *pizzicato piano* in the violin part and even *pianissimo* in the piano part, summarising the entire movement and thus the entire Sonata as a kind of unreal joke, a fleeting fantasy.

Grażyna Bacewicz performed this piece together with her brother Witold during their Lithuanian performances in 1930. An extremely favourable review by Vladas Jakubenas has survived from one of the concerts: „Bacewicz’s interpretation is characterised by excellent technique, truly feminine delicacy, expressive temperament and pure intonation – qualities characteristic of virtuoso interpretation. The programme of her concert, composed with great taste, represented three creative eras in the persons of Handel – a classic, Grieg – a romantic, and Bacewiczówna – a modernist. [...] The performer, with her high artistic intelligence, accurately highlighted the specific stylistic features of each of these eras. Bacewiczówna’s great erudition, [...] and the composer’s Sonata, bearing all the characteristics of today’s modernist music, was performed in a manner befitting an artist with enormous interpretative abilities – that is, in the most perfect way possible.”⁵¹

Referring to Małgorzata Gąsiorowska’s words describing Bacewicz’s creative ‘struggles’, it is also worth quoting Szymanowski himself: „The point is not to create too easily, seduced by technical ease. Every artist knows that you have to set high standards for yourself, demand more and more of yourself. Otherwise, a modernist cliché could develop, just as there was already an academic cliché. And even the most contemporary language can be used to spout platitudes. One must be hard on oneself. Otherwise, the time may come when even laymen, having become accustomed to the new musical language, will begin to distinguish between what springs from the depths and what is superficial and derivative.”⁵²

Grażyna Bacewicz was a perfect example of an extremely disciplined artist, ‘hard on herself’ and striving for constant musical development, which ultimately allowed her to develop her own distinctive musical language. The First Sonata for Violin and Piano, analysed through the prism of her entire compositional output, is far from her ‘own sound technique’, thanks to which Bacewicz’s works are easily recognisable today. As the artist herself said: “I divide my music into three periods: the first, youthful and very experimental; the second – wrongly called neoclassical by us, but in fact atonal; and the third period, in which I still remain.”⁵³

The piece that opens my live presentation is the result of these experimental explorations, and I find it to be a work of extraordinary charm. It does not resemble the composer’s most iconic works in terms of sound, and for this reason alone it seems logical that she did not include it in the official catalogue of her works. However, it is an excellent starting point for reflections on the

⁵¹ Vladas Jakubenas, review, in: *Rytas*, 14/04/1930.

⁵² Karol Szymanowski, *A Quarter of an Hour with Karol Szymanowski*, in: *The Writings*, ed. Kornel Michałowski, Krakow 1984, p. 76.

⁵³ Grażyna Bacewicz, *A Draft Response to an Unknown Questionnaire*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny*, 7/1969, p. 4.

evolution of her compositional style. Stefan Kisielewski, recalling memories of the diploma exam at which the composer presented her Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano, wrote: „I also remember the words of the unforgettable performer, promoter and friend of young Polish music, Grzegorz Fitelberg. When I asked him about Bacewiczówna, he said: ‘She will be a very good composer one day, but first she has to write a lot, ‘write herself out’ before she can develop her own language and technique.’ Years later, I reminded him about this – he turned out to be a prophet.”⁵⁴

Indeed, by „writing herself out”, Grażyna developed an extraordinary musical language, which, in the case of the violin and piano sonata genre, found its most magnificent fulfilment in the form of her most famous Sonata No. 4 for violin and piano. A look at the beginning of Bacewicz's compositional career allows us to understand the artist's creative path much better and to view her later works, which reflect her spectacular artistic development, with even greater admiration.

⁵⁴ Stefan Kisielewski, *Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Times*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1963, p. 13.

Chapter III. Sonata No. 1 for solo violin

Polish artists in Warsaw, occupied during the war, made numerous efforts to sustain musical life by organising open and secret concerts. Legal performances took place mainly in artistic cafés, including Zygmunt Latoszewski's *Gastronomia*, Bolesław Woytowicz's *Salon Sztuki* and *SIM* (*Sztuka i Moda*), where the famous Lutosławski–Panufnik duo performed. This type of activity allowed Polish musicians to circumvent German restrictions, as they were unable to work after the bombing of the Philharmonic and the Opera House and the closure of most concert halls and the Conservatoire. Secret performances mainly included concerts organised in private apartments, referred to as ‘war concerts’. It was in such conditions that Grażyna Bacewicz's *Suite for Two Violins* was premiered, performed by Eugenia Umińska and Irena Dubiska. The composer's granddaughter recounts: „The underground concerts were usually shrouded in secrecy. [...] The audience also behaved differently than usual. People sneaked in pairs, disappearing unnoticed into the doorway of the house so as not to attract the attention of the Germans. [...] In the cramped space of a private flat, the music sounded louder than usual, as if it wanted to drown out the distant explosions of grenades coming from the ghetto. The violinists played with concentration, but at the end no one dared to applaud. They congratulated each other quietly, with handshakes and smiles, and then went out into the street in pairs. Thus ended one of the concerts organised by the Main Welfare Council.”⁵⁵

At one of these underground concerts, Grażyna Bacewicz performed her Violin Sonata No. 1, written in 1941, for the first time. Among the audience was Stefan Kisielewski, who commented on her performance: „I liked the Sonata as rarely before, which, however, I could see, gave Grażyna great pleasure. Despite her outward mask of indifference, she was – like every artist – extremely sensitive to opinions, which could upset her internally – that is why she avoided casual or superficial conversations about her music.”⁵⁶ However, when such conversations did take place, documented primarily in Kisielewski's own memoirs, the composer's guiding principle of “pure music”, rooted in the postulates of neoclassicism and vitalism, became clearly apparent. Sonata No. 1 for solo violin is an excellent example of the realisation of these aesthetic principles, as I will endeavour to demonstrate.

Neoclassicism in music is defined as a movement referring to the aesthetic principles of the 17th and 18th centuries, characterised by the use of typical classical and baroque phrases, combined with means of expression typical of music from the first half of the 20th century – motoric rhythms, dissonant harmonies and rapid musical narration. It was seen as a response to Wagnerian-Romantic excess, bringing freshness, lightness and clarity. This style was the main determinant of compositional trends in pre-war Paris, which Bacewicz visited three times before the outbreak of the Second World War.

⁵⁵ Joanna Sendlak, *OSTINATO – Grażyna Bacewicz's war days*, Polish Writers' Association, Warsaw 2020, p. 205.

⁵⁶ Stefan Kisielewski, *Grażyna Bacewicz and Her Times*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1963, p. 23.

During her stays in France, the composer honed her skills under the tutelage of the eminent Nadia Boulanger at the École Normale de Musique. Boulanger meticulously cultivated neoclassical ideas of music that was orderly in form and untainted by programmaticism. Both Bacewicz and Kisielewski and Michał Spisak, with whom the composer shared her third stay in Paris, absorbed the neoclassical theses that became the foundation for an extremely important direction in 20th-century musical art. In conversations with Bacewicz, Kisielewski described the musical principles of neoclassicism as follows: „Music is a “pure form”, it contains no extra-musical content. It remains itself, that is, a perfect system of sound organisation.”⁵⁷; and: „I have come to the conclusion that pure form can be understood as a perfectly beautiful and perfectly logical arrangement of elements.”⁵⁸

Referring to the timeless norms of classical forms was intended to be a true manifesto of a modern attitude, characterised by "emphasising the role of knowledge, intellect and craftsmanship in the creative process; a return to the classical balance between emotional and structural factors and to *serenitas* as a desirable category of expression; the perception of the act of perception as a purely aesthetic experience, detached from emotions not related to the music itself.”⁵⁹ This attitude not only coincides perfectly with the reflections of the aforementioned Stefan Kisielewski, but also with the values that Grażyna Bacewicz greatly valued and cultivated in her life and art.

Bacewicz begins her Sonata with tremendous energy, writing a kind of exclamation in the first bar, which Gąsiorowska compares to the beginning of Johann Sebastian Bach's Partita No. 3 in E major for solo violin, BWV 1006. Composed mostly of dissonances, combined with a selected rhythm, an accent and *fortissimo* dynamics, it gives the performer the opportunity to outline the truly virtuoso character of this music and is the essence of neoclassical vitality. In the first six bars, the composer manoeuvres the dynamics five times, leading the sound texture from *piano* to *fortissimo*, which heralds the high intensity and elusive variability of the entire movement.

Particularly noteworthy is the motif visible in bars 5–6, which will become a frequent link between the individual parts of this musical „mosaic”. Analysing it from the second sixteenth note, one can see a progression built of major seconds, set between pairs of notes separated by a perfect fourth. The composer uses this pattern repeatedly in the further course of the movement (e.g. bars 86–87, 177–179, 217–219, 231–233), most often as a gesture leading to the climax. This is usually achieved by a descending progression, visible in bars 7–9. The composer maintains *fortissimo* for six consecutive bars, reinforcing the lower voice with accents and revealing the first clear polyphonic motif in the Sonata. This material can be interpreted as a climactic conclusion without a punchline, as the sevenths appearing in the lower voice do not bring harmonic rest.

⁵⁷ Joanna Sendłak, dz. cyt., s. 73.

⁵⁸ Tamże, s. 111.

⁵⁹ Zofia Helman, *Neoclassicism in 20th-century Polish music*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1985, p. 16.

The long-awaited theme (bars 16–17) surprisingly appears in a lower dynamic than the section leading up to it. This can be interpreted as a manifestation of the composer's distance and a kind of caution towards the actual thematic material of this part. In my performance, I tried to present it lightly and playfully. I support this interpretative choice with information about the attitude of the composer herself, described by Gąsiorowska as follows: „This element [neoclassicism] must have been close to (...) Bacewicz, a person overwhelmed by creative passion, but full of distance and scepticism, especially towards collective emotions and passions.”⁶⁰ The main theme, or rather the main motif, containing a polyphonic dialogue between the first and second parts of the bar, serves as a kind of release of tension in this energetically raging section. It reminds us of composure and restraint, although it is maintained in a very cheerful tone. Only once, in bars 185–189, does it appear in *fortissimo*, deceptively suggesting the climax and conclusion of the entire section, which, however, does not come. The composer postpones it by using another interesting section, which can be seen in bars 190–196 (similar also in bars 56–59, 118–124, 149–156). Bacewicz weaves striking accents into the monotony of the sixteenth-note movement, which deform the four-beat pulsation. For me, this fragment was an excellent opportunity to bring out the more humorous and cheeky character of this music in its contrariness.

It is also worth noting the motif in bars 21–22, in which one can see not only the descending harmonic progression characteristic of Baroque aesthetics, but also its incorporation into the pendulum-like movement typical of Grażyna Bacewicz. The Baroque provenance of the musical fabric is also evidenced by the idiomatic sixteenth-note and eighth-note motifs typical of preludes and cadential phrases (bars 63–65). In my opinion, such a detailed description of the beginning of this part allows us to grasp the key to understanding the entire section. The composer „juggles” the elements discussed almost throughout, building diverse phrase structures from small musical elements, each time precisely thought out and confirming her attachment to a logically shaped form.

The performance challenge of this section is to maintain a balance between highlighting the individual „components of the mosaic” and integrating them into larger phrase structures – between maintaining continuous energetic tension and creating space for musical breathing. Bacewicz requires the performer to be constantly focused and alert to the numerous musical „turns” that appear on this lively and surprising narrative path.

The beginning of the second movement of the Sonata refers even more clearly to Bach's cycle – I am thinking of the comparison to the *Adagio* from the Third Sonata for Solo Violin in C major, BWV 1005 (example 5). Bacewicz performed the first and second movements of this work in the first stage of the 1st Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition in 1935.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 74.



Example 5. J. S. Bach – Sonata No. 3 for solo violin in C major, BWV 1005, Mvm. I *Adagio*, bars 1–5.

Bacewicz, like Bach, constructs the narrative through the use of dotted rhythm, but differs from the German master in his use of slurs – Bach uses them regularly, Bacewicz irregularly. The interval that outlines the tension of this entire section is a minor second – it appears between the first notes, between the quarter notes in the descending lower voice in the first bar, and finally in the upper and lower voices of the motif visible in bars 7–8 and 19–20. In bars 16, 18, 22–23, further examples of the pendulum motif can be observed, which I used interpretatively to create greater mobility in the narrative of this section. Another example of a musical pendulum, this time written in sixteenth notes, can be seen in the *Meno* fragment (bars 33–36) – the composer makes the performer ‘bounce’ like a clock pendulum between the lowest and highest strings, and these bounces are marked by tenuto on selected sixteenth notes. The fragment in 3/4 time (from bar 38) is reminiscent of Bach's *Chaconne* in its structure. Naturally, there is a strong emphasis on the second beat of the bar, while the third beat functions as an upbeat. This material constitutes the climax of the entire movement, concluded by another significant section in bars 46–48, also visible earlier in bars 26–30. There is a noticeable periodic oscillation around the interval of a perfect fifth, which introduces an aura of mystery and ambiguity.

In my opinion, it is the term ‘enigmatic’ that best captures the character and mood of this section. On the one hand, it brings respite after the rush of the first section, and on the other, it harmoniously builds strong tension and a sense of constant sonic exploration. Its goal is the phrase contained in the last two notes: the descending second brings to mind the religious amen, reinforced by a dynamic “inhalation” on the note “h” and an “exhalation” on the note “a”, marked by dynamic forks.

This „breath” proves absolutely essential when performing the third part. The graphic notation itself, extremely complex, resembles a musical maze. It is significant that the composer does not include any tempo markings at the beginning, which gives the performer considerable freedom, but also interpretative responsibility in shaping this peculiar link. In my opinion, the tempo of this section should contrast with the tempos of the neighbouring sections, while at the same time allowing for the interweaving and „shimmering” of small phrasal arcs, which are the basic building blocks of this music.

It begins with a characteristic gavotte upbeat in *forte* dynamics, giving it a decisive character and introducing a constantly recurring theme (bars 1–6). It is constructed of two voices initially separated by a decima (first minor, then major), which gradually approach each other through a second movement, like two snakes from the mythological Caduceus, to finally intertwine in a perfect prime in bar 4.

The mutual approaching and distancing of the two voices is enriched by a dense network of dynamic markings (e.g. bars 10–27). The composer shapes the narrative by contrasting dynamic sections – as if she were leading the performer towards a goal with a *crescendo*, only to immediately change direction and order a new search in *piano* dynamics. These *crescendos* and sudden retreats create the impression of sound waves, and each return to low dynamics brings to mind meandering through a musical labyrinth in an uncertain search for the way.

The paths of this labyrinth are marked by frequent barriolages (e.g. bars 27–28), fragments enriched with accents (bars 48–52) and harmonic progressions (bars 80–92, 113–118). Theoretically, they should lead to a musical conclusion, but most often they lead the performer onto another, less obvious narrative path. The solution to this formal ‘puzzle’ turns out to be ambiguous. The composer ends the movement as if withdrawing from the game: from bar 166, she notes the dynamics *piano* and gently slows down the musical pendulum. One might even get the impression that the solution does not come, but only leads to another puzzle – the fourth movement.

The last movement of the First Sonata for Solo Violin is a kind of textural variation. Once again, the composer leaves the performer with only the term *variazioni*, without suggesting any tempo or mood, or even dynamics. I therefore decided on a tempo and dynamics that would make the performance comfortable and allow the musical narrative to flow. The variations begin naturally with the theme – an 8-bar section which, in my opinion, works best with an emphasis on the second half note in the bar. The resulting tension in the bar, the resulting dance-like quality and the reappearance of the theme as the conclusion of the variations bring to mind the Baroque form of the passacaglia or chaconne and constitute another nod by the composer to Baroque traditions.

The first variation (bars 9–20) evokes the rhythmic texture of the second part of the work, which, transformed by the tempo of the finale, gains much more lightness and freedom. The pendulum appearing in bars 19–20 introduces another texture – from a dotted rhythm we move to a triplet rhythm in the second variation (bars 21–39). The triplets clearly contrast with the lightness of the material from the first variation. Bacewicz writes the sound material here exceptionally densely (e.g. bar 21 and the first half of bar 22), allowing only a moment’s respite in the melodic swing (second half of bar 22). The dialogue between the ‘swirl’ of two-note chords and momentary melodic swings leads to the third variation (bars 40–50), marked *fortissimo* and written entirely in sixteenth notes. The main motif of this variation sees the return of the 5–4–3–2–2 grouping of notes, whose rhythmic monotony brings to mind the Baroque technique of *notes inégales*, i.e. the deliberate, artistic ‘uneven’ shaping of rhythmic values. This technique allows the narrative to be more flexible and resilient, and brings out the melodic nature of the material more clearly. In terms of dynamics, this is the most intense point of the finale. After a long section of dramatic *fortissimo*, the composer gradually softens the texture from bar 49, only to revive it again in the fourth variation (bars 51–58). The material from bars 51–52 clearly refers to the famous fragment from the first movement of J. S. Bach's Partita No. 3 in E major, BWV 1006:



Example 6. J.S. Bach – Partita No. 3 for solo violin in E major, BWV 1006,
Mvm. I *Prelude*, bars 1–5.

The fourth variation, containing frenzied trills interspersed with dramatic, accented triplets (bars 54–55), leads to an exclamatory recitative in the fifth variation (bars 59–78). The steady, decisive eighth notes are „wrapped” in virtuoso passages and, growing in harmonic intensity, transition into a cascade of thirty-second notes and triplets in bars 75–78. This cascade leads back to the theme, this time presented in a much more impressive manner than at the beginning. Extremely rich in sound thanks to the addition of chords, it could be a natural culmination of the variation cycle. However, this is not the case, as Bacewicz introduces one more link, beginning in bar 87. It can be read as a kind of coda, containing a synthetic summary of the entire sonata.

According to the latest research by Janusz Wawrowski, an outstanding Polish violinist who has been promoting Grażyna Bacewicz's work for many years, the form of this movement should be different. In this work, however, I have adopted a solution based on an analysis of official materials of the Polish Music Publishing House, which form the basis of the presented performance and interpretation.

Sonata No. 1 for solo violin appears to be the result of the composer's consolidation in the neoclassical style, with clear elements of vitality. References to the Baroque come to mind almost spontaneously, especially those relating to Johann Sebastian Bach's famous cycle of sonatas and partitas for solo violin. The German composer's work was extremely important to Bacewicz, as indicated by several factors:

- in the programme *Moje ulubione kompozycje* [My Favourite Compositions], recorded in 1956 for Polish Radio, she listed her favourite compositions, she listed Bach's Organ Toccata in D minor
- after a car accident in 1954, she wrote in letters to a friend about the beginning of Bach's Fugue in F minor as a piece that helped her survive the most difficult period of her convalescence
- Bacewicz regularly performed Bach's violin works – the first and second movements of Sonata No. 3 in C major, BWV 1005 she performed during the 1st Henryk Wieniawski International Competition, and also described her adventures practising the Fugue in G minor from Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001 in her short story *Też coś takiego!* [Something Like That!] in the volume *Znak szczególnie* [The Distinguishing Feature]
- in a letter to Tadeusz Ochlewski, Grażyna confessed: „I have returned from the Bach concert. How foolish my experiences seemed in the face of the greatness of this music. If I knew that I could achieve even a thousandth of it, I would humbly submit to my fate. Am I not conceited?”⁶¹

⁶¹ Letter to Tadeusz Ochlewski, April 1950.

- the composer also wrote an essay on Bach's work, from which the following excerpt is worth quoting the following excerpt:

„Jan Sebastian Bach, a modest organist and teacher, have touched the very core of Life with his mind and heart, since after two centuries his work continues to amaze us, still gives us food for thought and still stimulates the imagination, since amid the clamour of today's great struggles and changes, his voice remains unchanged, alive and clear. [...] Bach stands on the border between two musical eras, looking in two directions of time – the past and the future – and building an indestructible bridge between them with his creative mind. By refining the musical past in his brilliant mind, he gives his own perfect form of polyphonic thought in traditional polyphonic forms, and at the same time, with this work, he introduces music to the broad path of tonal harmonic thought with its far-reaching consequences. Bach's work, as the realisation of the synthesis of these two opposing directions of musical thought, it becomes a guidepost for later musical generations. This is one of Bach's victories over time. His second victory over time lies in the perfect unity of form and emotion in his work. Every structure in his work is emotion, every emotion is an iron structure. There are no dead, 'empty' forms in his work, no shapeless emotions. From this point of view, the issue of artistic craftsmanship rises to the level of a fundamental issue in his work. It is true, of course, that artistic craftsmanship does not always go hand in hand with artistic expression, but artistic expression is always conditioned by artistic craftsmanship. Bach's work is the pinnacle of artistic expression and craftsmanship. This is why Johann Sebastian Bach is so close to us, today's composers.”⁶²

The search for inspiration from the music of the German genius in the First Sonata for solo violin therefore seems entirely justified. Małgorzata Gąsiorowska summarises Bacewicz's work as follows: "All this [Baroque references – author's note] makes the Sonata a peculiar commentary on the work which undoubtedly nourishes it and to which it owes a great deal (J. S. Bach's cycle of Partitas and Sonatas for solo violin), stripping the music of its Arcadian illusions, leaving it with its musical verve, its unquestionable violinistic sound and energy, which is solely the energy of the material, without any extra-musical references.”⁶³

In my opinion, it is energy that constitutes the „heart” of this work. It does not stem solely from the way the sound material is organised, but is rooted in the very structure of the phrasing – in the way tensions are shaped and in the unusual density of musical events. Its activation and maintenance during performance requires the player to have considerable resources – both physical and mental – necessary to maintain the continuity of tension and narrative coherence.

However, it is not only about physical endurance, although this plays an important role due to the high technical demands of the piece. The real artistic challenge is maintaining maximum concentration during performance. It is this concentration that enables not only control over technical details, but above all the conscious awakening, planning and sustaining of the energy encoded in the score. I emphasise this aspect particularly strongly because, in the light of my stage

⁶² Grażyna Bacewicz, *Jan Sebastian Bach*, in: *The Reader*, 1951.

⁶³ Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, op. cit., p. 131.

experience to date, which also includes performances of other sonatas for solo violin, the preparation of this work and its presentation as part of my doctoral thesis proved to be an exceptionally demanding task. The difficulty lay not only in mastering the technical material, but also in the need to maintain a stable performance throughout the entire work – one that allows for the consistent development of tension and avoids the fragmentation of the musical flow.

In this sense, interpretation becomes a process of managing energy over time: initiating, dosing and sustaining it. With respect for neoclassical principles, which exclude programmaticity and the search for extra-musical content, my interpretation of the work focuses on emphasising and logically shaping the musical energy contained in Grażyna Bacewicz's Sonata No. 1 for solo violin.

Chapter IV. Sonata No. 5 for violin and piano

Sonata No. 5 for Violin and Piano, composed in 1951 and dedicated to Tadeusz Ochlewski, was chosen by me in order to show – through a genre bracket – the clear evolution of Grażyna Bacewicz's compositional language. A comparison of the first and last works in her cycle of sonatas for violin and piano allows us to observe the development of the composer's individual creative expression within the genre itself, as well as in terms of shaping emotional expression and the selection of instrumental means, especially those for the violin. It cannot be denied that Sonata No. 5 has been overshadowed in popularity by its 'older sister', the famous Sonata No. 4 for violin and piano from 1949. Stefan Kisielewski wrote about it: "[...] the uniformity and consistency of the musical language, combined with a clear and logical structure [...] give the work a monumental character, which Bacewicz seems to have been striving for some time."⁶⁴ This quote seems to accurately describe the creative tendency characterising the composer's post-war works, which also resulted in the creation of Sonata No. 5 for Violin and Piano, so similar in its monumental expression to its predecessor.

The year 1951 was a string of professional successes for Grażyna Bacewicz, the greatest of which was winning first prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Liège. The verdict was announced in October, and on the 29th of the same month, a radio recording of the Fifth Sonata was planned, performed by the composer and her brother Kiejstut. In Jan Targowski's radio broadcast of 2 March 1989 on Radio Łódź, the eldest of the Bacewicz siblings shared his memories of working with Grażyna: „In my work as a pianist, concert collaborations with my sister were a completely separate strand; in short, they were creative in nature. It is understandable that I attach particular importance to this chapter of my artistic life. Various considerations play a role here. The international standing of Grażyna's performing art obviously determined the quality of our joint music-making. That is one thing. In addition, as Grażyna's partner, I had the opportunity to perform her own compositions for violin and piano with her on concert stages. And that was the key moment of our collaboration for me. Direct – so to speak – intimate contact with Grażyna's music, assimilating her authentic, original vision of the pieces we performed together, learning the secrets of my sister's musical thinking – these were fascinating and inspiring experiences for me. Experiences that enriched my musical awareness and imagination with new, original values.”

According to stories recounted by the composer's granddaughter, Joanna Sendlak, the siblings were to perform Sonata No. 5 at a private concert for family and friends, attended by Witold Lutosławski, among others, who was said to have particularly appreciated the first movement of the work. I definitely share his enthusiasm – it is the most impressive and formally rich part of the work. It begins, as in the case of Sonata No. 4, with a calm introduction in *Moderato* tempo. From the very first bar, the piano spreads a beautiful sound horizon, to which the violin very discreetly joins with a pastel harmonics. Noteworthy is the important motif in the violin part from bar 26, reminiscent in its pendulum-like nature of the beginning of the *Concerto*

⁶⁴ Stefan Kisielewski, review, in: *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 02/03/1952.

for *String Orchestra*, or the main motif from the finale of Bacewicz's Third Symphony. In the case of Sonata No. 5, however, it does not play a major role – it merely leads to the main section, i.e. *Allegro* (bar 31). The motoric sixteenth notes with a persistently repeated E in the lower voice are the material driving energy and giving this section a very decisive character. This is also evident in bars 41-42, which rhythmically refer directly to the main motif of the first movement of the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano (example 7).



Example 7. G. Bacewicz – Sonata No. 4 for violin and piano, mvm. I
Moderato. Allegro non troppo, bars 22–25.

The composer builds a sound that is alternately powerful and monumental (bars 41–44, 56–61), grotesque (bars 45–48) and playful (bars 125–160). After a grand climax in bar 61, the piano gradually loses energy, and the repetition of sounds in the thematic motif brings to mind the sound of a carillon, whose bells ring further and further apart and slower and slower. Against the backdrop of this ostinato texture, Theme II appears – ethereal and supple, even impressionistic in its delicacy. Presented first by the piano, it offers a moment of musical respite and allows the performers to reveal a much more tender side to their sound. In her characteristic manner, Bacewicz does not allow this sentimental mood to linger too long and once again mobilises the performers to play intensely and energetically from the *Allegro* in bar 110. In the middle section of this part, there are many 'humorous' phrases, such as the sixteenth-note figurations of the violins accompanied by lively eighth notes in the piano part, or the quiet 'creeping' from bar 153, leading to a reprise-like fragment from the thematic *Allegro* in bar 167. As in the first movement of the First Sonata for Violin and Piano, the composer creates a rather synthetic summary of earlier formal solutions rather than a literal reproduction of the exposition.

In my opinion, second movement, *Nocturne*, is a true test of the performers' chamber music skills. The composer creates a nocturnal aura and its unique atmosphere by noting the term *Andante dolcissimo*, which suggests the exceptionally intimate character of this music. Bacewicz alternately endows the instruments with a melodic line, which means that throughout the entire movement, the performers must carefully select the sound means to highlight the melodic fragments marked *en dehors*, and skilfully convey this delicate melodic texture to their chamber music partner, in order to immediately change the sound relationship in their part to one of an

accompanying nature. This resembles a situation in which two people tell one story, taking turns to speak after a few words, and requires the performers to be highly sensitive to the function they are performing at any given moment – leading or accompanying, always chosen in relation to the musical activity of their stage partner. The composer transcribed this part for orchestra at the request of Polish Radio. It is extremely delicate and subtle music, providing a perceptual respite from the intensity of the neighbouring parts.

The last movement of the Sonata abruptly awakens the listener from the calm contemplation of the previous part. The term *Allegro inquietamente* used by the composer accurately reflects the energy of this section – dramatic and saturated, yet full of tension and anxiety from the very first notes of the piano, which throw a kind of challenge or provocation to the violins. Interestingly, the same material is treated differently in the violin part, which repeats the initial sixteenth notes after the piano. The keyboard instrument begins with an accent and is supposed to soften its declamation, but this does not apply to the violin. It is the violin that leads both instruments to the first narrative peak of this movement, i.e. the *con passione* fragment from bar 7. Through her dynamic notation, Bacewicz brings the string instrument to the fore, giving it a passionate theme in *più forte* dynamics. The piano takes on an accompanying role, creating sensual waves in *mezzoforte* dynamics. This is one of many examples of the composer's differentiation of dynamic planes, which allows performers to create a more interesting interpretative structure and skilfully manage the balance of sound. In my opinion, it also testifies to Bacewicz's excellent chamber music sensibility. The intensity of this music increases until it culminates in bar 27, and its energy is clearly marked by the sixteenth-note motif in the piano part, familiar from the beginning.

In bar 42, the extremely mysterious, almost oriental-sounding theme II appears for the first time. The violin part resembles the rhythmic devices used in the first and second movements of the First Sonata for Violin and Piano – the composer uses duos and irregular bowing, which, combined with the piano part's swirling eighth notes, give the impression of pleasant procrastination, lazy seduction. The aura of the second main idea of this movement brings to mind Szymanowski's inspired sensualism of sound and his Dionysian colouristic impressions. Their delicacy is gradually shattered, mainly due to the increasingly blunt ostinatos in the piano part, which thicken the sound material and intensify the emotional expression. Immediately after reaching the *fortissimo* dynamic in the violin part, the tension quickly dissipates and returns to a shorter version of the second theme, the material of which will be transformed into a piano solo from bar 68. After this dramatic statement, the piano returns to the initial sixteenth notes, again provoking the violin to respond. This dialogue, bearing the hallmarks of artistic "banter", leads to an extremely intense section from bar 84. The composer allows both instruments to present themselves with exceptional grandeur – the violin performs rapid sixteenth-note figures, while the piano wanders across the keyboard with expressive chords alternating between the low and high registers. After this monumental climax, Bacewicz makes a characteristic, sudden narrative turn, introducing a clearly playful sequence in bar 95.

From the idiomatic quintal parallelisms in the violin part, visible in bars 99–104, the composer introduces another sound impression from bar 105. The swaying violin harmonics create an almost hypnotic impression and deceptively calm the narrative, whose intensity will quickly increase, leading to the return of theme I in bar 118. Presented this time a decade higher than at the beginning, it perfectly confirms the words of the composer herself, who wrote in a letter to her brother Witold: “I write emotional music”.⁶⁵ The high register, *forte* dynamics and the use of *espressivo* allow the violin to display this emotionality in all its glory.

Another phrase characteristic of Bacewicz's compositional language can be found in the violin part in bars 136–140 – a combination of trills and nimble thirty-second ornaments already appeared in the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano (example 8), and this texture leads to the climactic fragment known from bars 27–32, similarly presented in the piano, but commented on differently by the violin – this time it is the violin that plays the role of ‘provocateur’ and, with virtuoso passages, emphasise the expressive exclamatory sixteenth notes in the piano part.



Example 8. G. Bacewicz – Sonata No. 4 for violin and piano, mvm. I *Moderato. Allegro non troppo*, bars 134–136.

Bacewicz treats the motivic arrangement in the recapitulation quite freely, often shortening the fragments between the phrases characteristic of the exposition, creating a kind of collage. The composer used the same technique in the first movement of the Sonata in question, as well as in the first movement of the First Sonata for Violin and Piano. The formal richness of the exposition is neatly summarised, and the new arrangement of elements inevitably leads to the striking conclusion of the work. It contains many phrases characteristic of the ending of Sonata No. 4 – trills in the violin part, sixteenth-note passages, a short fragment showcasing the qualities of the G string (bars 217–219, in Sonata No. 4, bars 183–185 in example 9), monumental chords in the piano and a jointly formed whole note in the last bar, preceded by a blunt upbeat.

The sonata is characterised by an extraordinary variety and allows performers to showcase both the power and delicacy of the instruments, and above all their chamber music balance, as the composer treats both voices as equal partners. The work is the last in a series of sonatas for violin and piano, and I admit that it is a source of regret for me as a performer that the composer gave up this chamber form so early on. Comparing the first and last sonatas, one can observe a striving for a monumental deepening of artistic means of expression, achieved through a much more orderly and intuitive musical notation.

⁶⁵ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.



Exemple 9. G. Bacewicz – Sonata No. 4 for violin and piano, mvm. IV *Finale. Con passione*, bars 176–185.

Working on the youthful Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano gave me an extremely valuable perspective on the composer's artistic development, which culminated, in the case of the violin and piano sonata genre, in Sonata No. 5. The First Sonata was ultimately withdrawn by the composer from the official catalogue of her works. This move did not apply only to this piece and testified to the composer's extremely harsh attitude towards her own work. Stefan Kisielewski wrote about the artist: „For many years, Grażyna was extremely critical of her creative achievements. [...] She never liked sharing the intimate details of her compositional craft with anyone, but after some time it turned out that she was withdrawing her works without telling anyone. In this way, a long series of her compositions disappeared, almost until the post-war period, when she finally decided that the level and stability of her expressive apparatus had become permanently established, ‘set in stone’.”⁶⁶

Sonata No. 5 for violin and piano is a perfect example of the stabilisation of Bacewicz's compositional language mentioned by Kisielewski and reveals her creative maturity. Let me conclude this chapter with the wish that Grażyna Bacewicz's last sonata for violin and piano will be performed at least as often as its famous predecessor, for it is a work that is absolutely worthy of attention.

⁶⁶ Stefan Kisielewski, *Bacewicz i jej czasy*, Polish Music Publishing House, Kraków 1963, p. 17.

Chapter V. Sonata No. 2 for solo violin

Sonata No. 2 for Solo Violin, which concludes my doctoral presentation, was composed in 1958. It was a particularly intense year in terms of Grażyna Bacewicz's creative activity. As Stefan Kisielewski recalled: „In the 1950s, the “woman” had already forced men to recognise her and broke into the first ranks of our composers; alongside Witold Lutosławski, Artur Malawski, Roman Palester, Bolesław Szabelski and others, she began to determine the stylistic and ideological face of our music. At the same time, she works on all fronts, working like the devil. She travels all over Europe with concerts, [...] participates in various competitions either as a 'competitor' or as a juror.”⁶⁷

In addition to her intense artistic activity, the composer also cared for her sick mother. Despite the considerable burden of her family responsibilities, Grażyna did not cease her creative work, consistently striving to find time for composing. The result of these efforts was her Sonata No. 2 for solo violin.

The time of its creation coincides with a particularly interesting moment in Bacewicz's work – on the one hand, the artist had already reached full compositional maturity, and her musical language was idiomatically recognisable and repeatedly awarded, as confirmed by Kisielewski's words. On the other hand, 1958 marks the symbolic beginning of a new chapter in her oeuvre. That year, Bacewicz created two extremely important works: Music for Strings, Trumpet and Percussion and the Second Sonata for Solo Violin discussed here. The combination of openness to development, intellectual curiosity and consistent technical work meant that the composer began to reach for sonoristic means with increasing boldness, giving her work a new dimension of sound. Sonorism – the dominant trend in music in the 1960s – brought sound, its colour and texture to the fore. This was most often achieved through the use of extended instrumental techniques such as glissandos, clusters and instrument preparation. Grażyna Bacewicz, however, followed her own path: while reaching for new sonoristic means, she did not abandon the expressiveness of her previously developed musical language, but creatively expanded and enriched it.

The work was premiered by the composer herself in Krakow on 9 March 1959. It is worth noting that Grażyna Bacewicz had not performed publicly as an active violinist for six years, but she made an exception for this piece. Tadeusz Ochlewski, who was present at the concert, recalled: „She played perfectly, as always, but this time with particular expression, which was especially noticeable in the middle section of the Sonata – in the *Adagio*. I was moved by this and asked: 'Grażyna! That was wonderful! But so dramatic! What was that? What happened? There was a note of bitterness in her reply. Putting her violin into its case, she turned away and said: 'You can play this at my funeral...’”⁶⁸

This statement suggestively indicates the type of expression that permeates the piece I am analysing. While composing her First Sonata for solo violin, Grażyna Bacewicz clearly

⁶⁷ Stefan Kisielewski, *Bacewicz i jej czasy*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1963, p. 31.

⁶⁸ Tadeusz Ochlewski, memoir, in: *Ruch Muzyczny* 7/1969, p. 7.

emphasised the neoclassical idea of ‘pure music’, which was close to her heart at the time, understood as an autonomous artistic expression requiring no extra-musical references, her approach to musical expression underwent a noticeable transformation in Sonata No. 2. Evidence of this change can be found, among other things, in a letter from the composer to her brother Witold in 1952, in which Bacewicz declares that: "I write emotional music"⁶⁹, thus expressing a view that was unpopular among neoclassicists.

The emotionality of Sonata No. 2 for solo violin is evident from the very first bars. The piece opens with a violent ‘shot’ – an accented open D-D in forte. The subsequent piano and glissando in the next bar initiate a sonorous oscillation around the open D string. This process is enriched by increasing dynamic ‘bulges’, leading to a climax in bar 9, achieved by means of two fingered passages based on an identical fingering pattern transferred between the strings. The sound material from the first fragment of the work (bars 1–12), labelled Adagio by Bacewicz, will formally constitute an important point of reference throughout the first movement, sombre and disturbing.

Unlike in her First Sonata for solo violin, the composer very generously and precisely provides the performer with information about her preferred tempos. These indications are extremely important for understanding the formal structure of the work, which was of great importance to Bacewicz. In her notes, she wrote: "Polish composers have long since freed themselves from Szymanowski’s influence and gone their separate ways. I walk quite alone, because I care mainly about form in my compositions. [...] A musical work must have structural laws that allow it to stand on its own two feet."⁷⁰

The law of construction governing the Second Sonata for solo violin is governed by segments, separated by the composer precisely through tempo markings, usually specified by an exact metronomic indication. This precision in the agogic notation reflects the words of the author herself: "The structure of a musical work in the broadest sense of the word is the planning of music in time."⁷¹ I consider consistent adherence to these markings in the performance process to be a key factor in clearly revealing the form of the analysed work. I perceive the entire first part of the Sonata as a kind of fantasy, but one that has been carefully organised through the use of a segmented form. Its fancifulness is manifested in the composer's free use of varied sounds, textures and types of sound material, each of which is concluded by the return of the disturbing motif that opens the work.

To illustrate the idiomatics of the composer’s musical language, I would like to draw attention to bar 28, which features material clearly referring to the fourth movement of the First Sonata for Solo Violin (bars 62–64), while the use of the alternating *pizzicato–arco* technique is a

⁶⁹ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

⁷⁰ Wanda Bacewicz, *From the letters and notes of G. B.*, in: *Ruch Muzyczny*, 1/1994, p. 11.

⁷¹ Grażyna Bacewicz, *Znak szczególny*, The Reader, Warsaw 1974, p. 117.

self-quotation from, among others, the First Violin Concerto (example 10). From bar 41, we observe a combination of the *sul ponticello* and *ordinario* techniques, already familiar from the First Sonata for solo violin (bars 131–149), also visible in example 10. Strong tension is generated by the descending seventh progression (bars 47–52), leading to the climax of the segment – an expressive „cry” in bars 53–54. However, the drama of this exclamation is immediately extinguished by a dynamic retreat and the return of material from the initial *Adagio*, this time in 6/8 time.



Example 10. G. Bacewicz - Violin concerto No. 1, mvm. I *Allegro*, bars 87-93.

Mentioned time will be the dominant feature of the third segment, *Meno mosso* (bars 65–89). The calm tempo, combined with a rounded eighth-note movement organised by irregular slurs, gives the impression of a relaxed rocking motion. Bacewicz uses the term *dolce* at the beginning, which further emphasises the contemplative nature of this section. However, the contemplation does not last long – through increasing dynamics and *accelerando*, the building of dissonant sounds and insistent *tenuto* on selected eighth notes, Bacewicz builds narrative tension, which finds its outlet in the fourth segment (bars 90–130).

Its beginning shows strong sonoristic influences – it is based on second trills accompanied by an open E string, glissandos and poignant accents on double stops with a flageolet in the upper voice. These introduce a kind of sonic violence that will culminate in the extraordinary passages from bar 113 onwards. The composer again uses fingerings leading to melodic eighth notes marked with lines, which maintain tension and continuity in the phrase. Gradually shortening these fingerings and introducing *poco rallentando*, Bacewicz softens the intensity of the narrative and leads to the mysterious fifth link (bars 130–148).

The composer bases this fragment on a sound cell consisting mostly of a minor or major second, covered by a slur. The repetitiveness of this slur, the closeness of the interval and the pianissimo possibile dynamics bring to mind a kind of regret, a quiet lament. From bar 133, the melodic line is enriched with another sonoristic effect – a *pizzicato* appears in the left hand, reminiscent of a clock striking the hour. In bars 142–144, the striking becomes increasingly insistent in its repetition, which gives a particularly poignant effect of waiting for something irresistible and inevitable.

The anticipation is crowned with a fragment (bars 150–186) which is the essence of the phrases from the second segment. Once again, we see the use of the *sul ponticello–ordinario* technique, alternating *pizzicato–arco* and sixteenth-note figurations, composed of Bacewicz's beloved seconds and sevenths. In bar 166, the dramatic exclamation from bar 53 also returns, but this time its intensity lasts much longer and increases even further, until the poignant chords in bars 175–176. This is the most dramatic point of the first part, and it is natural that it is followed by material that provides a narrative counterbalance.

This appears in the *Adagio* (bars 186–207), which so moved Tadeusz Ochlewski, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. This music, constructed mostly of dissonant two-note chords, gives the impression of a doubt-filled search for answers that never come. The composer initiates this fragment in *pianissimo* dynamics, additionally introducing the performance instruction *sul tasto*. Performing two-note chords in such low dynamics, using the technique of deliberately producing sound on the fingerboard, makes it much more difficult to maintain a stable sound texture, but allows for the achievement of an effect of sonic mysticism and mystery. In bars 201–202, a sound carrying more hope and clarity appears for a moment – a combination of a major third and a perfect fifth, written in natural harmonics, but this ray of optimism does not bring a happy ending, leading instead to the last, gloomy oscillation from bar 208. This is the longest fragment based on the material appearing at the beginning of the Sonata. In its trance-like repetitions, it reminds me of the meditative mantras that Bacewicz may have heard in India during her trip in 1956. The harmonies chosen by the composer cause the instrument to vibrate strongly, finally merging in bar 230 into a cleansing prima. The narrative calms down completely after the last musical crescendo in *Meno mosso*, from bar 231. Gąsiorowska summarises this part as follows: „Despite the caesuras in the first part, which are fragments of the transformed initial motif, this part – perhaps as a result of constant internal fluctuation, variability of movement and sound, as well as dynamics and agogics – seems to be underpinned by some hidden anxiety, a need to move ‘forward’, which is indeed fulfilled in the second part.”⁷²

The *Presto* fragment, which follows from bar 237, is conventionally treated as the second movement of the Sonata, although the composer does not write it down as a separate part of the work. However, it is so elaborate and different from the preceding material that even I cannot deny the sense of treating this link as a separate part. Entirely based on the *glissando-spiccato* technique, it is perhaps the most revolutionary part of the entire work and definitely the most emphatic testimony to the composer's sonoristic fascinations. A recording of this fragment, performed by the artist herself, is available on YouTube – her playing is impressively precise and extremely energetic. The way the musical material is written leaves some freedom in the choice of pitch, but the composer limits this by indicating specific two-note chords, often highlighted with an accent.

Dynamics play a very important role in the construction of the interpretation of this movement. Bacewicz begins the movement with *pianissimo possibile* and gradually intensifies it,

⁷² Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, *Bacewicz*, Polish Music Publishing House, Krakow 1999, p. 39.

also noting many intra-phrase dynamic rises (bars 275–289), thereby raising and lowering the tension to bring about the final release of musical energy in the three *pizzicato–sforzando* chords that conclude the Sonata.

As a performer, I perceive Grażyna Bacewicz's Second Sonata for solo violin as an extremely moving and complex work, offering opportunities to elicit poignant expression and emotion from the instrument. Perfectly thought out in its structure, innovative, virtuosic and poignant at the same time, it is certainly one of the most important pieces in the artist's compositional oeuvre. I find her creative attitude, which she described in a letter to Vytautas after the end of the Warsaw Autumn in 1962, extremely endearing: „Of course, there is a lot of nonsense in contemporary composition, but there are also many very interesting things. One thing is certain: we must somehow break away from old ways of thinking about music. [...] Naturally, I am already too old to completely break away from my old music, even if I wanted to, but I will push forward as long as I have the strength.”⁷³

In my opinion, the Second Sonata for solo violin is a beautiful fruit of these efforts, and the composer's attitude, full of openness and curiosity, is an extremely valuable role model for me.

⁷³ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

Conclusion

An analysis of selected violin sonatas by Grażyna Bacewicz reveals a consistent evolution in her compositional language – from early formal explorations to mature works in which her individual idiom reaches its full expression. The works discussed in this study represent successive stages in the development of her creative thought: the youthful-experimental phase, the neoclassical phase, the monumental phase and the sonoristic phase. Importantly, this development took place through the synthesis of newly developed compositional means with elements of her previously formed musical language.

Although Grażyna Bacewicz's style is most often associated with neoclassical aesthetics, Witold Lutosławski's observation that "the nature of Grażyna's work is such that it does not fit into the trends that accompanied it"⁷⁴ remains accurate. The composer herself, writing an open letter to *PWM's Guidebook* in 1965, objected to her entire oeuvre being described as neoclassical. The letter reads: „For 10 years, I have been observing a certain phenomenon in our musical life concerning my person (I apologise for talking about myself) and I must confess that with each passing year I am increasingly amazed. In the distant post-war days, my work was labelled 'neoclassical'. At the time, this was not entirely without foundation. However, my work has undergone changes. I have composed *Music for Strings, Trumpets and Percussion*, Quartets Nos. 5 and 6, *Pensieri notturni*, *Concerto for Large Orchestra* [...] and you don't even need to be a professional musician – just a music lover – to see that these works have nothing to do with neoclassicism. Only those who write about music have failed to notice this. The label once applied is still valid for them. In this way, the true state of affairs is distorted.”

According to Zofia Helman, the composer's aversion to the term “neoclassical” was caused „not only by her desire to escape classification. [...] In the 1950s and 1960s, during the heyday of Adorno's Philosophy of New Music, the word neoclassicism had a pejorative meaning and was almost an insult to composers. At that time, there was a simplified [...] understanding of neoclassicism as the restoration of a specific historical style. [...] If Grażyna Bacewicz encountered such a colloquial understanding of the term, she was right to protest.”⁷⁵

It is also worth quoting Kisielewski's comment here: "People have become accustomed to describing Grażyna's music as neoclassical, while at the same time reproaching her for her origins, i.e. her studies in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. Undoubtedly, a general feature of Grażyna's work to date is her penchant for the disciplined architecture of great classical forms, extended tonality, a tendency towards expressive rhythms, energetic movement and decisive dynamic contrasts. But these are only external features, a kind of framework which the composer fills with her own specific musical content.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Witold Lutosławski, memoir, in: *About Grażyna Bacewicz*, ed. Małgorzata Gąsiorowska, Lidia Zielińska, Rafał Augustyn, Poznań 1998, p. 15.

⁷⁵ Zofia Helman, statement, in: *ibidem*, p. 167.

⁷⁶ Stefan Kisielewski, *Bacewicz and Her Times*, Polish Music Publishing House, Kraków 1963, p. 429.

The nature of the artist's works is primarily determined by the balance between expression and rationality. The elements that are permanently present in Grażyna Bacewicz's work include a consistent pursuit of order and harmony, which contribute to the structure of the piece and the realisation of the idea of a logical, coherent form. These are principles that are fundamental to the ahistorical approach to the aesthetic attitude defined as "classical", i.e. universal, perfect and timeless. These principles remain present in her music regardless of the stage of her creative development and the compositional techniques used in a given work.

The quotations from Bacewicz and Stefan Kisielewski's reflections cited in the work also reveal an interesting philosophical concept behind her work. As he recalled: „In connection with the words 'discipline', 'technique' and 'form', I asked her what feelings music evoked in her. She replied literally: 'Music does not express any normal, everyday feelings. It simply expresses itself and its own emotions'. I noted this with great satisfaction, for I had been proclaiming for years [...] that music is primarily an organisation of sound, and the emotions evoked in us by the perfection of this organisation are peculiar, disinterested and difficult to put into words.”⁷⁷ The written part of my doctoral dissertation is an attempt to address the difficulty mentioned by Kisielewski of expressing, commenting on or illustrating music through words.

In retrospect, Bacewicz's creative motto, expressed repeatedly in her family correspondence, sounds particularly meaningful: focus on honest work, distance yourself from judgements, and have a deep faith in the meaning of the act of creation itself. As the composer herself wrote: „[...] hundreds of people criticise us all the time, but what does it matter? If we cared so much, we would never have written anything. My motto is: try to do what I do as best I can, without thinking about the consequences, because we have no influence over them anyway. For example, I can't help it if people in the future decide that my work is not on a par with that of Brahms. I have less talent than him, there's nothing I can do about it. And yet, maybe one day my 'pieces' will be useful to someone, and that's enough for me.”⁷⁸

Grażyna Bacewicz's violin sonatas confirm that this approach resulted in works that are enduring, vibrant and still open to new interpretations – both in terms of research and performance – constituting an important point of reference in 20th-century Polish music.

⁷⁷ Ibidem, p. 40.

⁷⁸ Correspondence of the Bacewicz and Biernacki families, typewritten copies in the family archive, original manuscripts stored in the National Library.

Scores

I Sonata • Sonata no. 1

I

Grażyna Bacewicz
1909–1969

Allegro

Violino

Pianoforte

pp

rit.

p

pp

Moderato

mf

13

cresc.

16

f

2

18

cresc.

Detailed description: This page contains musical notation for measures 13 through 18. The score is written for a piano and a voice part. The piano part is in G major, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The voice part is in G major, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The voice part has a melodic line with some grace notes. Measure 13 is marked with a piano (p) dynamic. Measure 16 is marked with a forte (f) dynamic. Measure 18 is marked with a piano (p) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings.

Measures 19-20 of a musical score. The top staff (treble clef) features a melodic line with a long slur and a crescendo hairpin. The bottom staff (bass clef) begins at measure 20 with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and contains a complex, fast-moving melodic line with many beamed notes. An 8-measure rest is indicated above the staff at the end of measure 20.

Measures 21-22 of a musical score. Measure 21 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic in the top staff and a piano-piano (*pp*) subito dynamic in the bottom staff. The bottom staff has a complex, fast-moving melodic line. Measure 22 features a decrescendo (*dim.*) dynamic in the top staff and a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bottom staff. An 8-measure rest is indicated above the staff at the end of measure 22.

Measures 23-25 of a musical score. Measure 23 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic in the top staff and a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bottom staff. The top staff has a melodic line with a crescendo hairpin. Measure 24 features a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the top staff and a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bottom staff. Measure 25 features a crescendo (*cresc.*) dynamic in the top staff and a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bottom staff.

28

f

p

30

dim.

sf

8...1

dim.

sf

8...1

espressivo

32

mf

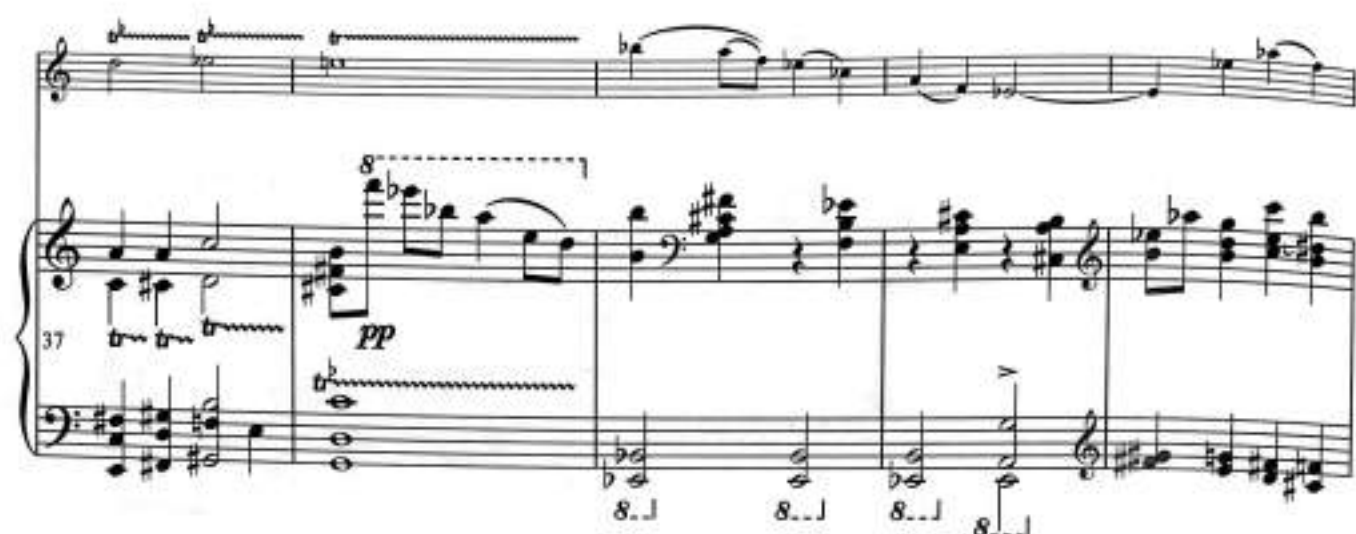
cresc.

8...1

8...1

8...1

8...1



37 *pp*

8..J 8..J 8..J 8..J

This system contains three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff. The middle staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line. The bottom staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords. A piano (*pp*) dynamic marking is present. A measure rest of 8 measures is indicated above the middle staff. The system ends with a repeat sign.



42 *più mosso*

8

This system contains three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff. The middle staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line. The bottom staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords. A *più mosso* tempo marking is present. A measure rest of 8 measures is indicated above the middle staff. The system ends with a repeat sign.



46 *meno mosso*

This system contains three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff. The middle staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords and a melodic line. The bottom staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat, followed by a series of chords. A *meno mosso* tempo marking is present. The system ends with a repeat sign.

più mosso

48

a tempo

52

cresc.

f

m.f.

55

cresc.

f

m.f.

*accelerando***Tempo I**

57 *f cresc.* *ff* *p*

cantabile

60 *mf* *cresc.*

64

66 *ff* *cresc.* *pp*

68 *p* *rit.* *dim.* *2*

70 *a tempo espressivo* *accelerando* *(cresc.)* *8-1*

72 *cresc.* *ff* *cresc.* *poco a poco* *cresc.* *ff* *8-1*

Adagio sostenuto

The musical score is for a piece titled "Adagio sostenuto". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment.

System 1: The piano accompaniment begins with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. The vocal line is marked *espressivo* and *p* (piano). The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

System 2: The piano accompaniment continues with the same texture. The vocal line has a melodic phrase with a slur and a fermata. The piano part includes a measure marked with a "5" in the left hand.

System 3: The piano accompaniment continues. The vocal line has a melodic phrase with a slur and a fermata, marked *pp sub.* and *f* (forte). The piano part includes a measure marked with a "10" in the left hand, and a section marked *ppp sub.* (pianissimissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

System 14: Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a fermata. Bass staff has a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking is present in the bass staff.

System 17: Treble and bass staves. Treble staff features a melodic line with a fermata. Bass staff has a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking is present in the bass staff.

System 20: Treble and bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a fermata. Bass staff has a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines. A piano (*pp*) dynamic marking is present in the bass staff. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is above the treble staff.

This musical score page contains three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8.

System 1 (Measures 23-25): The vocal line begins with a whole note chord (F#4, A4, C5) and a half note (B4). The piano accompaniment starts at measure 23 with a triplet of eighth notes (F#4, A4, C5) in the right hand and a single eighth note (F#4) in the left hand. Measures 24 and 25 show the piano part continuing with chords and moving lines. A dynamic marking of *p* is present at the start of measure 25.

System 2 (Measures 26-29): The vocal line continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A dynamic marking of *pp* is present at the start of measure 26.

System 3 (Measures 30-33): The vocal line has a long note in measure 30, followed by a half note in measure 31, and a whole note in measure 32. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns and chords. A dynamic marking of *ppp* is present at the start of measure 30.

III

Presto

6

p *f* *sf* *sf*

sf *sf* *sf* *sf* *dim.*

12 *f*

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano piece, marked 'Presto'. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 1-5) shows a treble staff with rests and a bass staff with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics include piano (*p*), forte (*f*), and sforzando (*sf*). The second system (measures 6-11) continues the bass staff pattern, with the treble staff adding chords. Dynamics include *sf* and *dim.* (diminuendo). The third system (measures 12-16) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with sustained chords. The dynamic *f* (forte) is marked at the beginning of measure 12.

16

18

dim. e rit.

dim. e rit.

8.....

a tempo

leggero

24

p

mf

(8).....

mf

(Adagio)
allargando

30

p

a tempo

f

36 *f*

p cresc.

40 *f poco cresc.*

mf cresc.

8^{va}

8^{va}

gliss.

(2)

43



System 1 (Measures 46-48):

- Staff 1 (Treble): Measures 46-48. Measure 48 features a slurred eighth-note figure with a first ending bracket.
- Staff 2 (Bass): Measures 46-48. Measure 46 is marked *cresc.* and measure 48 is marked *dim.*



System 2 (Measures 49-52):

- Staff 1 (Treble): Measures 49-52. Measure 49 is marked *rit.* and *mf*. Measure 50 is marked *leggero*. Measure 52 is marked *mf*.
- Staff 2 (Bass): Measures 49-52. Measure 49 is marked *p*. Measure 52 is marked *mf*.



System 3 (Measures 53-56):

- Staff 1 (Treble): Measures 53-56. Measure 54 is marked *f*. Measure 56 features a slurred eighth-note figure with a first ending bracket.
- Staff 2 (Bass): Measures 53-56. Measure 54 is marked *f*.

(Adagio)
allargando

a tempo

p *p* *gliss*

57 *p* *p*

SONATA

ca 20'

Grażyna Bacewicz, 1941
op. posth.

Allegro

ff p f cresc.

7

ff

14 rit. a tempo mf

21

28

35 p f

42 p

48 rit. a tempo dim. f

55

dí-mi-nu-en-do

61 *di-mi-nu-en-do*

67 *mf ff mf*

73

79 *f*

85 *p f ff molto energico*

91 *V V*

97 *ff*

103 *sul G ff*

109

114

120 *0* *sul A*

126 *ff* *p* *sul pont.*

132

137 *ord.* *ff*

143 *p* *sul pont.*

149 *ord.*

155

160 *sul G* *0*

165

171 *ff*

Detailed description: This page contains ten staves of musical notation for guitar, numbered 120 to 171. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, accidentals, and performance instructions. Measure 120 has a natural sign (0) above the staff and 'sul A' above the final measure. Measure 126 starts with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic and ends with a piano (p) dynamic and 'sul pont.' instruction. Measure 137 has an 'ord.' (arpeggio) instruction above the staff and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic below. Measure 143 starts with a piano (p) dynamic and 'sul pont.' instruction. Measure 149 has an 'ord.' instruction. Measure 160 has 'sul G' and a natural sign (0) above the staff. Measure 171 ends with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic. The notation includes many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes, as well as slurs and ties.

177 *mf* *molto cresc.*

183 *ff*

189 *restex*

195

201 *cresc.* *molto cresc.* *ff*

207 *mf* *cresc.*

213 *ff*

219

225 *rit.*

231 *poco/accelerando* *Va tempo*

||

Adagio

4

sul D

restex

8

12

16

p

f

p

20

24

f

p

28

poco accel.



III

Musical score for a single melodic line, measures 1-50. The score is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features various dynamics (f, p, mf, cresc., poco a poco cresc.) and articulations (accents, slurs, ties). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Measures 1-50 are shown, with dynamics and articulations indicated below the staff:

- Measures 1-5: *f*
- Measure 6: *p*
- Measures 7-10: *cresc.*, *mf*
- Measures 11-14: *p*, *cresc.*, *mf*
- Measures 15-18: *p*, *cresc.*, *mf*
- Measures 19-22: *poco a poco cresc.*, *cresc.*, *f*
- Measures 23-26: *p*
- Measures 27-30: *p*
- Measures 31-34: *f*
- Measures 35-38: *mf*
- Measures 39-42: *p*, *mf*
- Measures 43-46: *p*, *mf*
- Measures 47-50: *cresc.*, *f*

The score concludes with the instruction "sul G e D" above the final measure (measure 50).

54 *mf*

59 *p* *cresc.*

64 *mf* *p* *mf*

69 *p* *cresc.* *mf*

73

78

83 *cresc.* *cresc.* *f*

88 *cresc.*

93 *ff*

98

103

106 *cresc.* *rit.*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a single melodic line, spanning measures 54 to 106. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *ff* (fortissimo). There are also performance instructions like *rit.* (ritardando) and a fermata over a measure at measure 105. Fingering numbers (1-4) are present above several notes. The score is divided into systems of five staves each.

a tempo

113 *f*

118

123 *mf*

128 *p*

133 *p* *cresc.* *mf* *p*

138 *mf*

143 *cresc.* *p sub.* *p*

148 *p* *mf* *p*

153 *rit.* *a tempo* *p* *cresc.* *f*

158 *cresc.* *f*

163 *mf* *p*

168 *rit.* *p*

PW12-0001

IV

VARIAZIONI

A musical score for a piece titled 'VARIAZIONI'. The score is written on ten staves, each containing a single melodic line. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals), and dynamic markings (e.g., 'f' for forte). The staves are numbered 1, 5, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, and 28, indicating the starting measure of each line. The music is written in a single system, with the key signature and time signature not explicitly shown but implied by the notation. The overall style is that of a classical or romantic-era musical exercise or variation.

31

33

35

37

39 *ff*

41

43

45

47

49 *dim.* *p* *dim.* *pp*

Detailed description: This page contains ten staves of musical notation, numbered 31 through 49. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings. A fermata is placed over measure 35. The dynamics *ff* (fortissimo) appear in measure 39, and a series of dynamics (*dim.*, *p*, *dim.*, *pp*) are used in measure 49. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in measure 49.

This image shows a page of a musical score for 'The Swan' by Camille Saint-Saëns. The score is written on a single treble clef staff. It includes measures 31 through 83. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several slurs and ties used to group notes. Dynamic markings include 'f' (forte) and 'V' (crescendo). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The time signature is 3/4. The score is presented in a clear, legible format with standard musical notation.

67 *molto allegro*

Meno

129 *f*

133 *p molto cresc.*

143 *f*

147 *dim.*

151 *cresc.*

154 *molto cresc.*

157 *ff*

160

165 *sul G* *sul G* *sul G* *restex*

169 *ff* *cresc.* *ff*

V Sonata

Tadeuszowi Ochlewskiemu

ca 13' 30"

Grażyna Bacewicz

1909-1969

Moderato

Violino

Pianoforte

ppp *pp*

mp *rit.* *cresc.*

mp *pp* *p* *cresc.*

mf *cresc.* *f* *pp*

13 *pp* *poco più mosso* *poco accelerando*

18 *mf* *cresc.* *p*

24 *mf* *poco più mosso* *cresc.* *poco accel.* *cresc.*

30 *Allegro* *f* *p*

35

mf *cresc.*

mp *p* *f*

40

stentato *a tempo*

mf *f* *mf*

45

mf *cresc.*

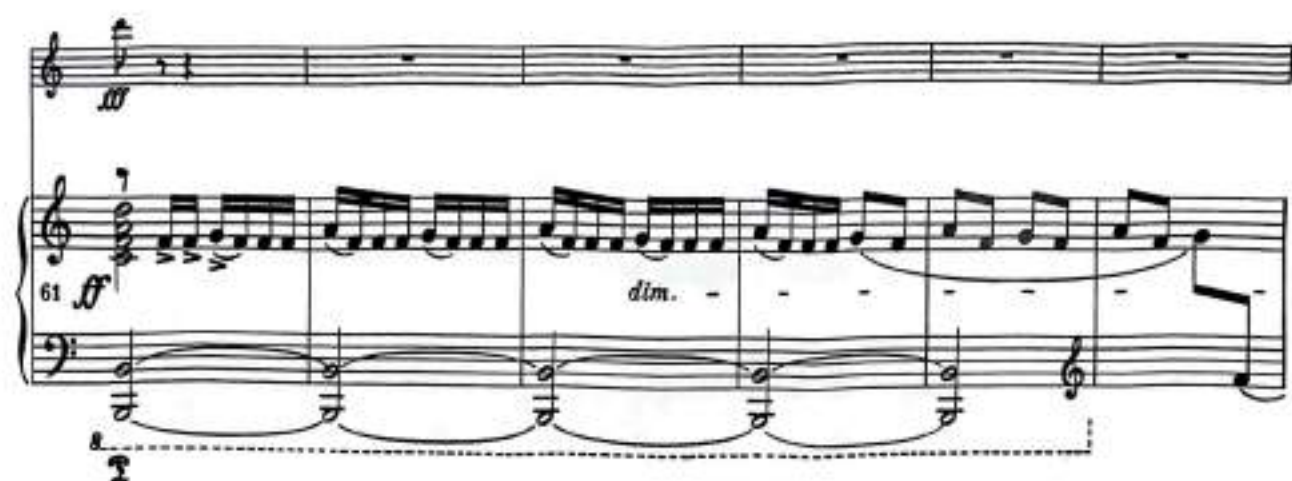
tr

51

cresc.



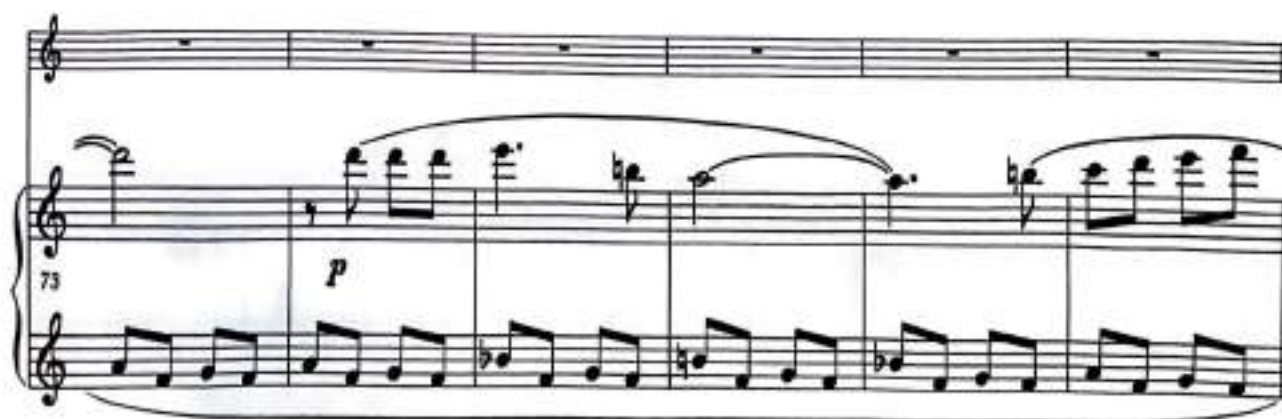
System 1: Treble and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a crescendo marking. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a crescendo marking. Measure numbers 56 and 8 are indicated.



System 2: Treble and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a decrescendo (*dim.*) marking. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a decrescendo marking. Measure numbers 61 and 8 are indicated.



System 3: Treble and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a *poco meno* marking. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic. Measure number 67 is indicated.



System 4: Treble and Bass staves. Treble staff has a melodic line with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure number 73 is indicated.





First system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line with a few notes and a slur. The middle staff is a treble clef staff with a series of eighth notes and slurs. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with a series of eighth notes. The measure number 79 is written below the middle staff.



Second system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff continues the melodic line. The middle staff continues the eighth-note pattern with slurs. The bottom staff continues the eighth-note pattern. The measure number 84 is written below the middle staff.



Third system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff has a melodic line with a slur and the word *dolce* written below it. The middle staff has a melodic line with a slur. The bottom staff continues the eighth-note pattern. The measure number 89 is written below the middle staff.



Fourth system of musical notation. It consists of three staves. The top staff has a melodic line with a slur and a dynamic marking *mf*. The middle staff has a melodic line with a slur. The bottom staff continues the eighth-note pattern. The measure number 94 is written below the middle staff.

99 *cresc.*

105 *poco meno* *f* *più f*

Allegro *rit.* *mf energico* *marcato* *simile*

109 *ff* *mf energico*

115 *cresc.*

System 1, measures 120-124. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has two staves. Measure 120 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature has two flats. The tempo is marked with a quarter note.

System 2, measures 125-129. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has two staves. Measure 125 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature has two flats. The tempo is marked with a quarter note.

System 3, measures 130-134. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has two staves. Measure 130 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature has two flats. The tempo is marked with a quarter note.

System 4, measures 135-139. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has two staves. Measure 135 is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature has two flats. The tempo is marked with a quarter note.

140 *f*

145

150 *p*

156 *p subito* *cresc.* *poco rit.*

a tempo *mf* *cresc. e poco accel.*

161 *f* *mf*

Allegro

166 *f* *p*

171 *f* *cresc.*

stentato *a tempo* *mf* *f* *mf*

176

181 *mf* *cresc.* *più f* *cresc.*

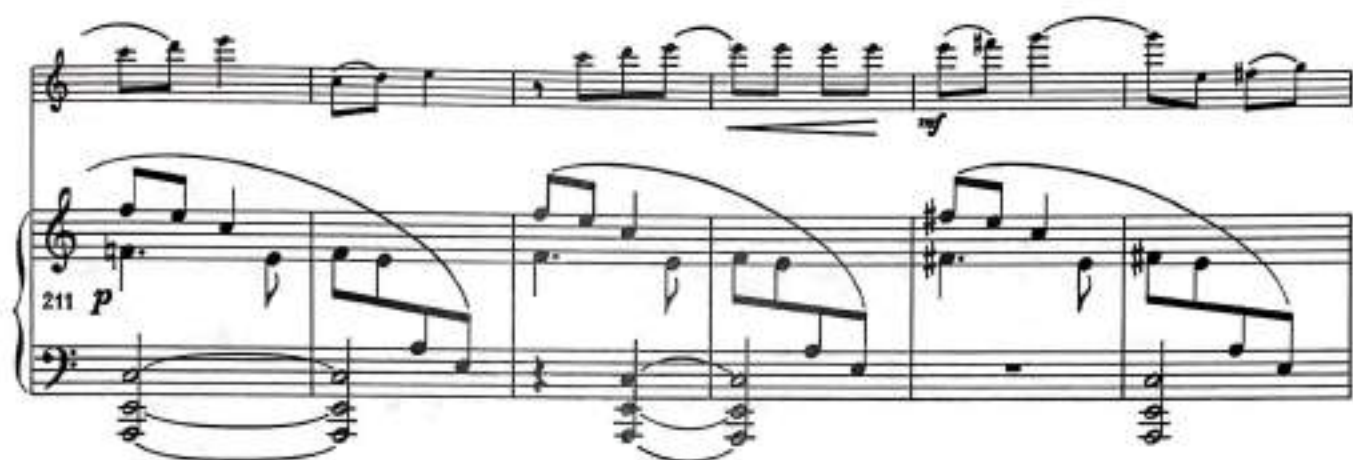
187 *cresc.* *ff*

193 *dim.* *7* *8* *9* *10* *11* *12* *13* *14* *15* *16* *17* *18* *19* *20* *21* *22* *23* *24* *25* *26* *27* *28* *29* *30* *31* *32* *33* *34* *35* *36* *37* *38* *39* *40* *41* *42* *43* *44* *45* *46* *47* *48* *49* *50* *51* *52* *53* *54* *55* *56* *57* *58* *59* *60* *61* *62* *63* *64* *65* *66* *67* *68* *69* *70* *71* *72* *73* *74* *75* *76* *77* *78* *79* *80* *81* *82* *83* *84* *85* *86* *87* *88* *89* *90* *91* *92* *93* *94* *95* *96* *97* *98* *99* *100* *101* *102* *103* *104* *105* *106* *107* *108* *109* *110* *111* *112* *113* *114* *115* *116* *117* *118* *119* *120* *121* *122* *123* *124* *125* *126* *127* *128* *129* *130* *131* *132* *133* *134* *135* *136* *137* *138* *139* *140* *141* *142* *143* *144* *145* *146* *147* *148* *149* *150* *151* *152* *153* *154* *155* *156* *157* *158* *159* *160* *161* *162* *163* *164* *165* *166* *167* *168* *169* *170* *171* *172* *173* *174* *175* *176* *177* *178* *179* *180* *181* *182* *183* *184* *185* *186* *187* *188* *189* *190* *191* *192* *193* *194* *195* *196* *197* *198* *199* *200* *201* *202* *203* *204* *205* *206* *207* *208* *209* *210* *211* *212* *213* *214* *215* *216* *217* *218* *219* *220* *221* *222* *223* *224* *225* *226* *227* *228* *229* *230* *231* *232* *233* *234* *235* *236* *237* *238* *239* *240* *241* *242* *243* *244* *245* *246* *247* *248* *249* *250* *251* *252* *253* *254* *255* *256* *257* *258* *259* *260* *261* *262* *263* *264* *265* *266* *267* *268* *269* *270* *271* *272* *273* *274* *275* *276* *277* *278* *279* *280* *281* *282* *283* *284* *285* *286* *287* *288* *289* *290* *291* *292* *293* *294* *295* *296* *297* *298* *299* *300* *301* *302* *303* *304* *305* *306* *307* *308* *309* *310* *311* *312* *313* *314* *315* *316* *317* *318* *319* *320* *321* *322* *323* *324* *325* *326* *327* *328* *329* *330* *331* *332* *333* *334* *335* *336* *337* *338* *339* *340* *341* *342* *343* *344* *345* *346* *347* *348* *349* *350* *351* *352* *353* 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199 *p* *mf*



First system of the musical score. The upper staff features a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs. The lower staff, starting at measure 205, provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.



Second system of the musical score. The upper staff continues the melodic development. The lower staff, starting at measure 211, includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and features more complex chordal textures.



Third system of the musical score. The upper staff includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) and a mezzo-forte subito crescendo (*mp subito cresc.*) marking. The lower staff, starting at measure 217, shows a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a more active bass line.



Fourth system of the musical score. The upper staff includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) and a fortissimo (*ff*) marking. The lower staff, starting at measure 223, includes a piano (*p*) dynamic, a fortissimo (*ff*) marking, and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) marking, with a *più f* (further fortissimo) instruction.

Musical score for piano and voice, measures 229-246. The score includes vocal lines and piano accompaniment with various dynamics and tempo markings.

Measures 229-234: *p* *cresc.* *simile* *più mosso*

Measures 235-240: *cresc.* *f* *più f*

Measures 241-246: *rit.*

The score features complex piano accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and vocal lines with various ornaments and phrasing.

II. Nokturn

Andante dolcissimo

con sord. *pp* *en dehors*

pp *en dehors* *en dehors*

en dehors *en dehors*

en dehors

en dehors

v

6

11

en dehors

16

en dehors

en dehors

21

cresc.

mp

cresc.

p

26

cresc.

mf

en dehors

mp

cresc.

mf

dim.

31

pp

cresc.

cresc.

mf

cresc.

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system (measures 16-20) features a vocal line with the instruction 'en dehors' and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 21-25) includes dynamic markings such as 'cresc.', 'mp', 'p', and 'cresc.'. The third system (measures 26-30) continues with 'cresc.', 'mf', 'en dehors', 'mp', 'cresc.', 'mf', and 'dim.'. The fourth system (measures 31-35) includes 'pp', 'cresc.', 'cresc.', 'mf', and 'cresc.'. The piano part is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto range.

13 - - - *f*

rit.

mf

en dehors

pp

en dehors

en dehors

40 *pp*

45

perdendosi

50 *perdendosi*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for piano and voice. The score is written in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piano part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The voice part is written on a single staff. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 13, 36, 40, 45, and 50 indicated. The dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte). The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The phrase *en dehors* is used to indicate passages where the voice is singing outside the main harmonic structure. The phrase *perdendosi* (fading away) is used at the end of the piece. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and ties.

III. Finale

Allegro inquietamente

The first system of the musical score is in 2/4 time. The right hand (treble clef) begins with a series of eighth notes, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The left hand (bass clef) provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes, also marked *f*. The system concludes with a measure marked *mf* (mezzo-forte).

The second system begins with a section marked 'A'. The right hand features a melodic line with a crescendo (*cresc.*) and the instruction *più con passione* (more with passion). The left hand continues with a bass line marked *cresc.* and *mf*. The system ends with a measure marked *mf*.

The third system begins with a section marked 'B'. The right hand has a melodic line marked *f* and *cresc.*, leading to a measure marked *ff* (fortissimo). The left hand features a bass line marked *f* and *mf*. The system concludes with a measure marked *f* and a final chord marked *ff*. The system number '12' is indicated in the left margin.

This musical score page contains measures 18 through 36. It features a vocal line at the top and a piano accompaniment in two staves below. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. Measure numbers 18, 24, 30, and 36 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. The piano part includes various dynamics: *mf* (measures 18-23), *cresc.* (measures 24-29), *mp* (measures 30-35), and *dim.* (measures 36-39). The vocal line includes lyrics: "G D A" above measures 18-20, and "dim. rit." spanning measures 32-39. The piano accompaniment consists of complex chordal textures and melodic lines in both hands, with some passages marked with *f* (forte) and *rit.* (ritardando). The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 39.

Poco meno

42 *pp*

rit. a tempo *arise.* *mf*

arise. *accelerando* *più f*

52 *p* *mf* *f* *m.s.*

57 *più f* *allargando* *pp* *a tempo*

63 *p*

68 *mf* *espressivo en dehors* *poco a poco cresc.*

74 *rit.* *a tempo* *mf* *poco a poco cresc.*

79 *f* *poco a poco cresc.*

ff *cresc.* **ff**

84 *più f* **ff**

88

92

simile

95 **f**

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains measures 84 through 95. It features a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part begins with a forte (ff) dynamic and a crescendo, followed by a section marked 'più f' and another 'ff'. The vocal line starts with a melodic phrase in measure 84, followed by a series of eighth-note runs in measures 85-88. Measures 89-92 show a more complex piano accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The vocal line continues with a melodic phrase in measure 93, marked 'simile', and then a series of eighth-note runs in measures 94-95, marked 'f'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

100 *mf*

105 *dolce p* *mp*

109 *p*

114 *mf*

cresc.

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of five systems of staves. The first system (measures 100-104) features a vocal line with complex intervals and a piano accompaniment starting at measure 100 with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system (measures 105-108) includes a piano part with a *dolce* (sweet) marking and a piano (*p*) dynamic, and a vocal line with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The third system (measures 109-113) shows the piano part with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the vocal line with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a *dolce* marking. The fourth system (measures 114-118) features a piano part with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a vocal line with a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. The score concludes with a final measure in 2/4 time.

Musical score for piano and voice, measures 118-138. The score is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piano part is in the left hand, and the voice part is in the right hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Measures 118-123: The piano part begins with a *mf* dynamic. The voice part starts with a *f* dynamic and an *espressivo* marking. The piano part has a *mp* marking. The voice part has a *cresc.* marking. The piano part has a *più f* marking.

Measures 124-129: The piano part continues with a *mf* dynamic. The voice part has a *dim.* marking. The piano part has a *rit.* marking. The voice part has a *poco meno e rubato* marking.

Measures 130-135: The piano part begins with a *p* dynamic. The voice part has a *cresc.* marking. The piano part has a *dim.* marking. The voice part has a *mf* marking. The piano part has a *p* marking.

Measures 136-138: The piano part continues with a *cresc.* marking. The voice part has a *a tempo* marking. The piano part has a *cresc.* marking. The voice part has a *f* marking. The piano part has a *cresc.* marking.

System 1, measures 141-145. The top staff features a melodic line with a trill (tr) and a grace note (G) at the end. The bottom staff contains a complex accompaniment with many beamed sixteenth notes. Measure 141 is marked with the number 141.

System 2, measures 146-151. The top staff shows a melodic line with a trill (tr) and a grace note (G). The bottom staff continues the accompaniment. Measure 146 is marked with the number 146. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*. Chord symbols G, D, and A_b are present above the staff.

System 3, measures 152-157. The top staff includes a trill (tr) and a grace note (G). The bottom staff features a complex accompaniment. Measure 152 is marked with the number 152. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *mp*. The instruction *cresc.* is written below the staff, and *p subito* appears at the end of the system.

System 4, measures 158-163. The top staff shows a melodic line with a trill (tr) and a grace note (G). The bottom staff continues the accompaniment. Measure 158 is marked with the number 158. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, and *mp*. The instruction *poco rit.* is written below the staff.

Poco meno

164 *pp*

169 *cresc.* *mf* *p*

174 *cresc.* *mf* *poco accelerando* *mp*

179 *mf* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

185 *p* poco a poco cresc.

186

187

188

This system contains measures 185 through 188. It features a piano introduction marked *p* and *poco a poco cresc.* The upper staff has a melodic line with some tied notes and a fermata at the end. The lower staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

189 *cresc.* *ff*

190

191

192

This system contains measures 189 through 192. The upper staff has a dense texture of sixteenth notes, marked *cresc.* and *ff*. The lower staff has a melodic line with some tied notes.

193

194

195

196

This system contains measures 193 through 196. The upper staff has a melodic line with some tied notes. The lower staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

197

198

199

200

This system contains measures 197 through 200. The upper staff has a melodic line with some tied notes. The lower staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Più mosso

196 *sf*

201 *p* *cresc.*

206 *p* *cresc.*

211 *cresc.*

216

Meno

219

SONATA

ca 10'40''

Grażyna Bacewicz, 1958

Adagio $\text{♩} = 58$

6

9

cresc. *più f* *p* *mp*

Allegro $\text{♩} = 116$

13

18

23

28

34

pp *0* *cresc.* *p* *mp* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *G* *V* *pizz.*

arco *f* *cresc.* *pp* *sul ponticello* *G*

f subito *ord.* *G* *sul pontic.* *pp*

p *mp*

cresc. *ord.* *f* *ff*

mp *poco* *p*

a poco *rallentando*

Meno mosso *♩ = 66*

dolce *pp*

cresc. *mf*

cresc. *mf*

accelerando

Poco più mosso *L. 45*

90 *p* *pp* *poco a poco cresc.*

95 *p* *pp*

100 *poco a poco cresc.*

105 *cresc.*

109 *cresc.*

113 *poco a poco dim.*

116 *poco a poco dim.*

119 *poco a poco dim.*

122 *poco a poco dim.*

125 *p* *dim.* *pp*

128 *poco rallentando* *ppp*

134 *p* *mf* *A* *V*

140 *V*

145 *cresc.*

149 *accelerando* *f* *pp* *sul pontic.* *ord.* *pizz.*

153 *arco* *pizz.* *(sempre pizz.)* *arco* *f* *pp* *sul pontic.*

158 *cresc.* *ord.* *f*

162 *mf* *cresc.* *cresc.*

166 *ff*

170 *cresc.*

173 *fff*

177 *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz. arco* *pizz.* **Poco meno mosso** (pizz.) 25
pp

Musical staff 177-182: Treble clef, 2/4 time. Measures 177-182 feature a sequence of eighth notes with a 'pizz. arco' (pizzicato then arco) instruction. The tempo is 'Poco meno mosso' and the dynamic is 'pp'.

183 *rit.* **Adagio** $\text{♩} = 52$ *arco sul tastó* *pp* *poco allarg.* *a tempo* *p*

Musical staff 183-190: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 183-190 start with a 'rit.' (ritardando) and 'Adagio' tempo marking with a tempo of 52. The instruction 'arco sul tastó' (arco on the keyboard) is present. Dynamics include 'pp' and 'p'.

191 *mp* *pp* *p*

Musical staff 191-195: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 191-195 continue the melodic line with dynamics 'mp', 'pp', and 'p'.

196

Musical staff 196-200: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 196-200 show a continuation of the melodic phrase with various fingerings indicated.

201 *en dehors*

Musical staff 201-205: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 201-205 include the instruction 'en dehors' (out of the key) and continue the melodic development.

206 **Poco più mosso** $\text{♩} = 60$

Musical staff 206-211: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 206-211 mark the beginning of the 'Poco più mosso' section with a tempo of 60.

212

Musical staff 212-217: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 212-217 continue the melodic line in the 'Poco più mosso' tempo.

218 *poco a poco dim.*

Musical staff 218-223: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 218-223 include the instruction 'poco a poco dim.' (poco a poco diminuendo).

224 *dim.*

Musical staff 224-229: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 224-229 include the instruction 'dim.' (diminuendo).

230 *rit.* *pp* **Meno mosso** $\text{♩} = 52$ *p* *ppp*

Musical staff 230-235: Treble clef, 3/4 time. Measures 230-235 mark the beginning of the 'Meno mosso' section with a tempo of 52. Dynamics include 'pp', 'p', and 'ppp'.

237 *ppp*

241 *E A*

245 *A D G* *pp*

249

254

258 *E A A D D G* *p*

262 *E*

267 *A D G*

272 *E A* *mf*

276 *A D E A D G* *p mf p mf*

280 *D G A E D G* *mf mp*

7772-2443

This musical score is for a piece titled 'Presto J-144 glissando spivato'. It consists of ten staves of music, each beginning with a measure number. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The music features a series of descending and ascending glissandi, often marked with 'pizz' (pizzicato) and 'spivato' (spivato). Dynamics include *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, *mf*, and *mp*. Chord symbols (E, A, D, G) are placed above the notes to indicate harmonic structure. The piece concludes with a final measure on the tenth staff.

285 *f* *mf* *f*

290 *f*

294 *f* *mf*

298 *f*

303 *p*

308 *mp* *p*

312 *f*

316 *ppp*

320

324

328 *pp*

332 *E A*

336 *mp*

340 *mf* *mp* *mf*

344 *E A* *D G* *E A* *3 2*

348 *ff*

353 *f*

357 *ff* *gliss*

361 *ff*

364 *mp* *p*

367 *pp* *ff*

372 *pizz.* *sf* *sf* *sf*

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