

# Abstracts

ALISTAIR WIGHTMAN: *Religious Elements in the Young Poland Music*

Positivism dominated Polish intellectual life in the final third of the nineteenth century, and Young Poland attitudes in the succeeding decades were largely opposed to the production of functional art, whether nationalistic or religious. Consequently, the leading composers of this era avoided purely liturgical music. Some of their works, however, reveal a sense of a spiritual dimension to human experience. In Karłowicz's 'Rebirth' Symphony, an essentially positivistic programme is still expressed in terms of traditional religious symbols. Most of his works are concerned with a psychology of the self or else tragic love, but in the case of *Eternal Songs*, a broadly pantheistic attitude is discernible. Szymanowski's prose-poems (*Sketch for my Cain* and *The Last Farewell*) dating from his student years also reveal a pantheistic aspect, and in the *Three Fragments* on poems by Kasprówicz (Op. 5), one of his finest earliest works, he clearly responded sympathetically to the poet's fusion of traditional religious themes and imagery suggested by the Polish landscape.

MICHAEL MURPHY: *The Actuality of Karłowicz's Artistic Authenticity and Authority*

Karłowicz's songs and orchestral works engage with Poland's literary, artistic, musical, and intellectual culture. They equally engage with culture emanating from beyond Poland's historical boundaries. In this chapter I will consider Karłowicz's concern for his own artistic authenticity and authority. This was a vital issue for Karłowicz whose career can only be understood in the context of Poland's highly contested cultural environment, when the imperatives of a Messianic romanticism were at odds with the aspirations of a more individualistic modernism. At the heart of Karłowicz's artistic vision was the notion of the musical work as a stable text, the performance of which was of crucial significance.

LUCA SALA: «*What Has Already Been Will Return No More*». «*Bianca da Molena*» by Mieczysław Karłowicz: *A Test of Musical Theater*.

This article analyses the discussion of aesthetic reformulation embodied in Karłowicz's first genuinely symphonic work, *Bianca da Molena* (1899-1900). By embracing the logic of expanded drama, a more remarkable modification of extra-musical signifiers constitutes the point of arrival and the decantation of the aesthetic reflection of Karłowicz. In *Bianca da Molena* a kind of epistemological metamorphosis takes place in which all participating elements are wed in continuously changing signification. In this way the theater, in its multidimensional facets, becomes a powerful, harmonious container, capable not only of expressing itself but also of delving into itself with new approaches and new viewpoints. This is an expansion of the forms of musical content that are redefined in a new syncretism and in an 'extended' mysticism of the concept of the art object's 'individuality', as in the instinctive formulation of a new spiritual syllogism, but remaining well within the framework of modernist secular thought, to which *Bianca da Molena* returns us in pointed manner. Through this, that initial, unfinished *opus* of Karłowicz's youth reveals a particular method in the deployment of the techniques of the symphonic poem.