



La Tempesta – Ancient Music Ensemble

The Polish, Warsaw Ancient Music Ensemble was established in 1998 by young singers and instrumentalists playing the Renaissance and Baroque music on ancient instruments. The main creator of the ensemble, the artistic director and conductor is **Jakub Burzyński**.

Depending on the performed repertoire, the ensemble consists of various artists – from male vocal ensemble in case of the Renaissance polyphony to expanded orchestra and choir in oratorios.

During the concerts, the ensemble plays the music by such composers as: Josquin Desprez, Palestrina, Monteverdi, Schutz, Carissimi, Purcell, Vivaldi, Bach, Haendel. But the repertoire is being constantly enlarging by including later epoch composers, especially those who created great oratorio forms of Baroque and Classicism, such as Haydn or Elsner.

The object of *La Tempesta's* special interest is creating elevated music performances, such as reconstructions of important events from the past or concerts combining music and literature. The artists' unconventional approach to the presented repertoire can be seen in the titles of their concerts, e.g.: *Holy Week in Rome* (the music by Carissimi, Durante and Allegri); *He and She in three Scenes*¹ (madrigals by Monteverdi); *Christmas Mass* (compositions by Schütz and Scheidt).

La Tempesta played at well-known Polish festivals, such as the Ancient Music Festival at the Royal Castle, the Summer Ancient Music Academy in Wilanów, the Modern Music Festival „Warsaw Autumn”, the European Days in Katowice, Vratislavia Cantans, Gaude Mater Polonia in Opole, Viva il Canto in Cieszyn – and also at famous foreign events, e.g. : Berliner Tage für Alte Musik in Berlin.

The ensemble performed, among other places, at the National Philharmonic Hall, Royal Castle in Warsaw, the Silesian Philharmonic Hall, Witold Lutosławski Polish Radio Concert Studio, and also in churches and on opera stages all over the country.

¹ The original title is a rhymed couplet (On i ona w trzech odsłonach)

La Tempesta co-operated with such musicians as Andreas Lebeda, Constanze Backes, Evelyn Tubb, Didier Talpain, the ancient instrument ensemble Il Tempo (directed by Agata Sapiecha) or the old dance ensemble Pawanilia. In 2000, the Bach Year, the concert of La Tempesta choir and the soloists of the International Ancient Music Academy in Wilanów was broadcast by The European Radio Union (EBU).

In October, 2002, at the National Philharmonic Hall in Warsaw, the ensemble, in the form of female choir and orchestra, presented "The Mass for Ospedale" - sacral compositions by Antonio Vivaldi (among others, **Gloria** RV 589) – and it was for the first time in Poland that the music was presented in the original performing set of musicians. In 2003, invited by the Alliance Française, the ensemble made a concerting tour, presenting French music and literature of the 16th century. In the same year, at the 13th Festival of Ancient Music in Warsaw, La Tempesta was awarded with the Eugenia and Julian Kulscy Distinction. In 2004, the ensemble made their debut at the Vratislavia Cantans festival, in which also Olga Pasiecznik, an eminent soprano, took part. In 2002, for the Canon recording company, the ensemble made a record containing instrumental and vocal-instrumental compositions of the late Baroque. Two years later, in 2004, a Swedish recording company BIS issued the next La Tempesta record, containing sacral compositions by Antonio Vivaldi. It was hailed the record of the year of the British internet portal MusicWeb. In 2005 La Tempesta was invited to permanent co-operation at the wide-ranging project of phonographic recording of Jasna Góra musical pieces.

At present, the ensemble is preparing three records containing compositions by Józef Elsner and Fathers Cyryl Gieczyński and Amando Ivancic.

The Ancient Music Orchestra takes part in opera performances, among others, *The Fairy Queen* by Henry Purcell (The Szczecin Castle Opera), and at the Great Theatre in Poznań.

The discography of La Tempesta comprises 12 CDs issued in Poland (DUX, Musicon) and abroad (BIS, ARTS, Divox)

The text is based on the article by Anna Iwanicka-NIjakowska, the Polish Centre of Music Information, The Polish Composers' Association, November, 2006.