



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE in NEW YORK and (LE) POISSON ROUGE

proudly present

In Memoriam

Henryk Mikołaj Górecki

**A FREE, ALL-GÓRECKI CONCERT
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2011**

6:30pm doors open, 7:30pm performance

at **(LE) POISSON ROUGE**

with

ENSEMBLE SIGNAL, led by **BRAD LUBMAN**
and the **JACK QUARTET**

"In using modernist ideas as just one building block in the forging of his own idiom, Górecki demonstrated that it was possible for a late 20th-century composer to write music of individuality and substance while simultaneously achieving unusual success." – Keith Potter for THE GUARDIAN, Nov.12, 2010



On Tuesday, November 8, 2011, the **POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE in NEW YORK** and New York City's groundbreaking multimedia art cabaret, **(LE) POISSON ROUGE**, present **IN MEMORIAM HENRYK MIKOŁAJ GÓRECKI**, a free and open to the public (with email RSVP) memorial concert honoring the Polish composer, **HENRYK GÓRECKI**, on the first anniversary of his death.

The all-Górecki program will be performed by internationally acclaimed ensembles, **ENSEMBLE SIGNAL**, led by Music Director and Conductor **BRAD LUBMAN**, and the **JACK QUARTET**.

Kleines Requiem für eine Polka (1993)

performed by Ensemble Signal, led by Brad Lubman

Quasi una Fantasia: String Quartet No. 2, Op. 64 (1990-91)

performed by the JACK Quartet

Although Górecki was known most especially for his immensely popular Symphony No. 3, "Symphony of Sorrowful Songs", this concert showcases extraordinary chamber works from his later compositional period.

Kleines Requiem offers an enigmatic memorial mass; "polka" can refer to a Polish girl or woman, as well as the Central European dance, and the cryptic Górecki never explicitly stated his intent. The work, in four movements, does not seem to contain any dancing levity, but is instead somber, manic, and starkly beautiful.

The Second Quartet, *Quasi una Fantasia* invokes Beethoven, whose piano sonatas and string quartets influenced Górecki in the compositional structure of his first two quartets. In *Quasi una Fantasia*, Górecki employs three major "Beethovenian" triads which appear throughout the work, leading to the folk-influenced last movement, and a final return to the solemn opening statement.

In both these works, Górecki's persistent, uncompromising communion with his artistic vision is paramount. Taken together, and performed by two truly vanguard ensembles of the new music scene, this program offers a personal, finely etched portrait of a great artist.

The brainchild of visionary programmer RONEN GIVONY and ANNA PERZANOWSKA, Music Programmer for the Polish Cultural Institute, (they have previously collaborated on Unsound Festival New York, the NYC presentation of the iconoclastic Polish festival of contemporary music,) IN MEMORIAM HENRYK MIKOŁAJ GÓRECKI has been in the works since the early hours following the composer's death in his hometown of Katowice, Poland.

"Ronen Givony contacted us on November 12, 2010, right after hearing of Mr. Górecki's passing, and we began a conversation about how best to present a memorial concert," says Anna Perzanowska, Music Programmer for The Polish Cultural Institute in New York. "The inclusion of the Kleines Requiem on the program was very important to us, as this great piece is heard less often than his quartets or the Third Symphony. The result of these conversations and our work together is what we think will be a very special concert, meaningful to the memory of Górecki and hopefully the larger community. We at the Polish Cultural Institute are very honored to be working with the Ensemble Signal, Brad Lubman and the JACK Quartet, and with Ronen and (le) Poisson Rouge."

Long known for his fierce artistic vision and vital contribution to the Polish avant-garde movement, Górecki's work was brought to greater attention in the West after signing a publishing contract with Boosey & Hawkes in 1988. This partnership led to collaborations with the Kronos Quartet (which commissioned and premiered his three String Quartets) and Nonesuch Records. It was the Nonesuch recording of the "Symphony of Sorrowful Songs", with soprano Dawn Upshaw, David Zinman and the London Sinfonietta, that catapulted Górecki to truly international fame. The album captured the imagination of the general public, topping classical charts in the US and Britain (where it also climbed the pop charts,) and selling an unprecedented million plus copies.

This attention, though, could not deter the quiet focus of Górecki's singular artistic voice. Whether exploring the starkest dissonant modernism or ravishingly beautiful tonality, Górecki's compositions are distinguished by his uncompromising dedication to the articulation of his specific musical vision.

"I think about my audience, but I am not writing for them," he said, in a 1994 interview. "If I were thinking of my audience and one likes this, one likes that, one likes another thing, I would never know what to write. Let every listener choose that which interests him. I have nothing against one person liking Mozart or Shostakovich or Leonard Bernstein, but doesn't like Górecki. That's fine with me. I, too, like certain things."

* * *

Henryk Mikolaj Górecki passed away on November 12, 2010, in Katowice, Poland, after a long illness. He was 76 years old.

Górecki's early output saw him as a leading composer of the Polish avant-garde in the 1950s, and he reached a worldwide audience in the 1990s thanks to the success of his Symphony No.3, "Symphony of Sorrowful Songs." The work was composed in 1976, and was at that time shocking in its tonality and simplicity, but it was with the release of the 1992 Nonesuch recording of the piece, featuring Dawn Upshaw and the London Sinfonietta, that its elegiac power attracted international attention, selling more than a million copies and climbing to the top of the classical music charts in both the US and the UK. It also reached number six on the mainstream UK album chart.

As a result of Poland's increasing political emancipation in the late 1980s, Górecki's music traveled more widely and attracted new performers and audiences in the West. This renewed interest led to the composition of three major string quartets, *Already it is Dusk* (1988), *Quasi una fantasia* (1991), and *...songs are sung* (1995), all written for Kronos Quartet. Górecki signed a publishing contract with Boosey & Hawkes in 1988, leading to collaborations with the Kronos and Nonesuch's recording of Symphony No. 3.

After musical studies in Rybnik and Katowice, Górecki's compositions first made their mark in the mid-1950s when he found himself at the forefront of the Polish avant-garde at the time of the post-Stalin cultural thaw. His early works show a clear development from the folk-influenced worlds of Szymanowski and Bartók in the Four Preludes for piano (1955) and *Songs of Joy and Rhythm* (1956) to the modernist techniques of Webern and Boulez in *Epitafium* (1958) and Symphony No. 1 (1959), both premiered at the Warsaw Autumn Festival. During the 1960s Górecki continued in a radical direction in the *Genesis* (1962-63) and *Muzyczka* (1967-70) cycles of works, whilst paring down his compositional material and exploring the folk music traditions of his beloved Tatra region in such works as *Three Pieces in Old Style* (1963) and *Muzyka staropolska* (Old Polish Music) (1967-69).

The simple yet monumental style for which Górecki is today renowned became fully established in the 1970s with such works as Symphony No. 2, "Copernican" (1972), the much lauded Symphony No. 3, "Symphony of Sorrowful Songs" (1976), and the large-scale Psalm setting for chorus and orchestra *Beatus Vir* (1979). With his withdrawal from public life due to political and health pressures, the early '80s saw Górecki concentrating on choral settings and chamber music, including *Miserere* (1981) and his trio *Recitatives and Ariosos 'Lerchenmusik'* (1984-85).

Górecki's most noted compositions of recent decades included Concerto-Cantata (1992) for flute and orchestra, *Kleines Requiem für eine Polka* (1993) recorded by the London Sinfonietta on Nonesuch, and *Salve, Sidus Polonorum* (1997-2000) for chorus, percussion, and keyboards, and *Lobgesang* (2000).

His music is performed throughout the world including Górecki features at numerous international festivals and many dance pieces choreographed to his music, in addition to the Nonesuch recordings.

Górecki's death leaves an incomplete Symphony No. 4, commissioned by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Southbank Centre in London, The Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, and the ZaterdagMatinee, Dutch radio's classical music concert series in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

* * *

The Polish Cultural Institute in New York, established in 2000, is a diplomatic mission to the United States serving under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

The Institute's mission is to build, nurture and promote cultural ties between the United States and Poland by presenting Polish culture to American audiences and by connecting Polish artists and scholars to American institutions, introducing them to their professional counterparts in the United States, and facilitating their participation in contemporary American culture.

The Institute has been producing and promoting a broad range of cultural events in theater, music, film, literature, the humanities, and visual arts. Among its American partners are such distinguished organizations as Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; Brooklyn Academy of Music; The Museum of

Modern Art; The Jewish Museum; The PEN American Center; The Poetry Society of America; National Gallery of Art; Yale University; Columbia University; Princeton University; Harvard Film Archive; CUNY Graduate Center; Juilliard School of Music; The New Museum; La MaMa E.T.C.; and many more. Our programs have included American presentations of works by such luminaries as filmmakers Roman Polanski, Andrzej Wajda and Jerzy Skolimowski; writers Czeslaw Milosz, Adam Zagajewski and Wislawa Szymborska; composers Krzysztof Penderecki, Witold Lutoslawski and Mikolaj Gorecki; theatre directors Krystian Lupa, Jerzy Grotowski, Tadeusz Kantor and Grzegorz Jarzyna; visual artists Krzysztof Wodiczko, Katarzyna Kozyra, Artur Zmijewski; and many other important artists, writers, historians, scholars, musicians, and performers.

* * *

Signal is a large New York-based ensemble dedicated to performing visionary works of our time. Under the musical direction of **Brad Lubman**, who founded the group along with cellist and co-artistic director **Lauren Radnofsky**, Signal's members include some of the most gifted young musicians working in the city. Since its debut in Spring 2008 at the Bang on a Can Marathon in NYC and the Ojai Music Festival in California, Signal has become "one of the most vital groups of its kind," according to *The New York Times*.

Lubman, one of the premier conductors of new music, has collaborated with some of the greatest composers of contemporary concert music – among them Boulez, Reich, Wuorinen, and Lachenmann – and has appeared with some of the world's most illustrious orchestras and new music ensembles. With Signal, Lubman has assembled a superb collection of musicians who have worked closely with him during the past decade, including members of *JACK Quartet*, *Alarm Will Sound*, the *Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center*, and other leading ensembles. Signal is flexible in size and instrumentation, enabling it to meet the demands of a repertoire that ranges from Philip Glass to Helmut Lachenmann to Jonny Greenwood of Radiohead.

Signal is at home in nightclubs, concert halls and international festivals alike. In 2010 alone, the group's New York season included performances at Columbia University's Miller Theater, Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Le Poisson Rouge, the Bell House (Brooklyn), and Merkin Hall, where it gave the US premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Corridor*. Future premieres will include the commission and tour of a new work for 20 players by Steve Reich.

* * *

Brad Lubman, conductor/composer, has gained widespread recognition during the past two decades for his versatility, commanding technique, and insightful interpretations. Conducting a broad range of repertoire from classical to contemporary works, Lubman has led orchestras including DSO Berlin, RSO Stuttgart, SWR Orchestra Baden-Baden/Freiburg, WDR Symphony Cologne, Dresden Philharmonic, National Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic, Taiwan National Symphony, and the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks. He has conducted major ensembles for contemporary music, including Ensemble Modern, London Sinfonietta, Musik Fabrik, Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Resonanz, Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, Chicago Symphony MusicNOW, and Steve Reich and Musicians. Lubman was assistant conductor to Oliver Knussen at the Tanglewood Music Center from 1989-94. He is on faculty at the Eastman School of Music and the Bang on a Can Summer Institute. He is represented by Karsten Witt Musik Management.

* * *

The JACK Quartet electrifies audiences worldwide with "explosive virtuosity" (*Boston Globe*) and "viscerally exciting performances" (*New York Times*). David Patrick Stearns (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) proclaimed their performance as being "among the most stimulating new-music concerts of my experience." The *Washington Post* commented, "The string quartet may be a 250-year-old contraption, but young, brilliant groups like the JACK Quartet are keeping it thrillingly vital." Alex Ross (*New Yorker*) hailed their performance of Iannis Xenakis' complete string quartets as being "exceptional" and "beautifully harsh," and Mark Swed (*Los Angeles Times*) called their sold-out performances of Georg Friedrich Haas' *String Quartet No. 3 In iij. Noct.* "mind-blowingly good."

The quartet has performed to critical acclaim at the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ (Netherlands), Festival Internacional Cervantino (Mexico), Donaueschinger Musiktage (Germany), Library of Congress, Miller Theatre, Morgan Library & Museum, Kimmel Center, Da Camera Society (Los Angeles), Monday Evening Concerts, Les Flâneries Musicales de Reims (France), and Wigmore Hall (United Kingdom) with recent and upcoming performances at the SONiC Festival as hosts of the Extended Play Marathon at Miller Theater, the National Gallery of Art, Newman Center for the Performing Arts, Vancouver New Music, Strathmore Hall, cresc... Biennale für Moderne Musik Frankfurt Rhein Main (Germany), Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik (Germany), Carnegie Hall, and the Lucerne Festival. JACK will also be the ensemble for the 2012 Finale® National Competition Contest in coordination with MakeMusic and the American Composer's Forum.

Comprising violinists Christopher Otto and Ari Streisfeld, violist John Pickford Richards, and cellist Kevin McFarland, JACK is focused on the commissioning and performance of new works, leading them to work closely with composers Helmut Lachenmann, György Kurtág, Matthias Pintscher, Georg Friedrich Haas, James Dillon, Toshio Hosokawa, Wolfgang Rihm, Elliott Sharp, Beat Furrer, Caleb Burhans, and Aaron Cassidy. Upcoming and recent premieres include works by Jason Eckardt, Zeena Parkins, Simon Steen-Anderson, Walter Zimmermann, Matthias Pintscher, Bent Sørensen, and Toby Twining.

* * *

polishculture-nyc.org
signalensemble.org

lepoissonrouge.com
jackquartet.com

IN MEMORIAM HENRYK MIKOŁAJ GÓRECKI
(LE) POISSON ROUGE

158 Bleecker Street, NY, NY 10012

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 8, 2011, 6:30pm doors, 7:30pm event

FREE w/ RSVP: Email gorecki@lprnyc.com to RSVP

All-Górecki program:

Kleines Requiem für Eine Polka, Op. 66 (1993) Signal and Brad Lubman, conductor
String Quartet No. 2 ("Quasi una Fantasia"), Op. 64 (1990-91) JACK Quartet

This is a general admission event. Seating is limited and available on a first come, first seated basis. There is a two item minimum per person at all tables. Standing room is also available. Early arrival is recommended.

###

FOR PRESS and INTERVIEW INQUIRIES:

Emily Motherwell, OtherARTS

646.266.6918 • motherwell@otherarts.net

557 W148th Street, New York, NY 10031 www.otherarts.net

FOR THE POLISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE:

Anna Perzanowska, Music Programming

Polish Cultural Institute

212.239.7300 ext 3004 • aperzanowska@polishculture-nyc.org

350 Fifth Ave. #4621 New York, NY 10118

www.PolishCulture-NYC.org