

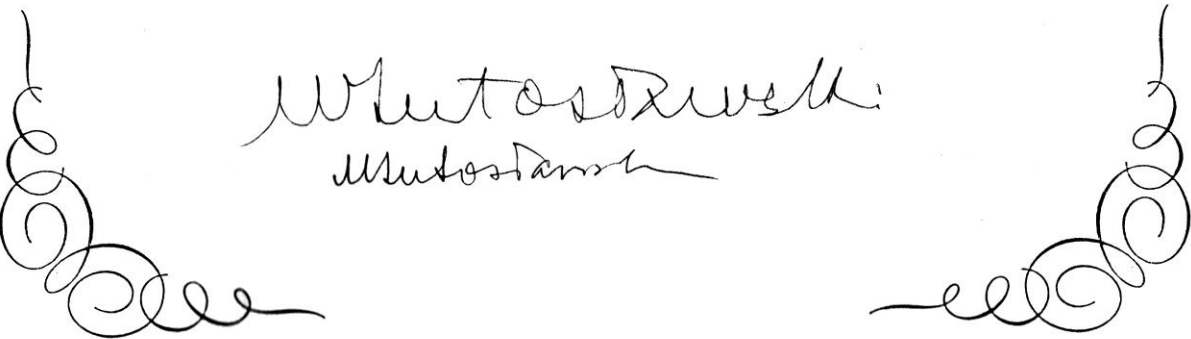
**Lutoslawski's visit
at the Polish Institute
(October 1993)**



Obchody 50-lecia Polskiego Instytutu Naukowego w Kanadzie

Wizyta

prof. Witolda Lutostawskiego



*Witostawski:
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NA UROCZYSTOSCI ZWIAZANE Z 50 CIOLECIEM POLSKIEGO INSTYTUTU
NAUKOWEGO W KANADZIE KTORE ODBEDA SIE 30 PAZDZIERNIKA 1993
WSZELKIE SZCZEGOLY PRZEKARZEMY PANU NIEZWLOCZNIE LISTOWNIE
Z WYRAZAMI GLEBOKIEGO SZACUNKU

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i Biblioteka Polska im. Wandy Stachewicz
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Wielce szanowna Pani, wielce szanowny Panie Profesorze,

W odpowiedzi na list z 27 lutego 1993, jaki otrzymałem od Państwa za pośrednictwem p. Dzieduszyckiej uprzejmie komunikuję, że zaproszenie mnie na uroczystości 50-lecia Polskiego Instytutu Naukowego w Kanadzie w dniu 30 października 1993 poczytuję sobie za zaszczyt i przyjmuję je z satysfakcją. Jestem również gotów wygłosić przy tej okazji prelekcję w języku francuskim /lub angielskim/ na temat związany z kulturą współczesną.

Jednocześnie proszę o przyjęcie wyrazów mej gorącej wdzięczności za wyrazy uznania, jakie zechcieli Państwo skierować do mnie w Państwa liście. Pragnę zapewnić, że wysoko je sobie cenię.

Łączę wyrazy głębokiego szacunku



Witold Lutosławski





Martina Homma i Witold Lutosławski

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1993

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES IN CANADA



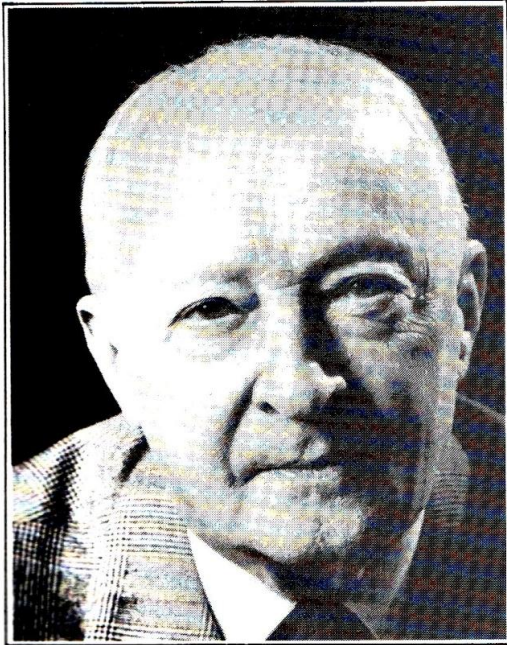
50^{ème} ANNIVERSAIRE DE L'INSTITUT POLONAIS DES ARTS ET DES SCIENCES AU CANADA

POLSKI INSTYTUT NAUKOWY W KANADZIE JUBILEUSZ 50-LECIA

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Gość honorowy - Guest Speaker - Conférencier d'honneur



WITOLD LUTOSŁAWSKI
1913-1994

COMPOSER

Witold Lutosławski, was born, and has lived most of his life, in Warsaw, Poland. His musical talents surfaced at an early age, with his first compositions dating from 1922, when he was nine. He studied piano, violin, and composition, graduating from the Warsaw Conservatory in 1937. His compositional debut took place in 1939 with the premiere of his first substantial orchestral work, the Symphonic Variations.

The war years, and the Stalinist period which followed, were difficult years for Lutosławski, who survived by playing two-piano arrangements of banned works in underground cafes with Andrzej Panufnik, and by writing "functional" music for radio, film and theatre, along with music for children, arrangements of folk-songs. At the same time, though, Lutosławski continued to develop his own musical language (for the most part in private - his 1st Symphony of 1947 was banned for being too "formalist"). The culmination of this early period was the large-scale Concerto for Orchestra (1954), which combines his formal concerns with his practical experience working with Polish folk music.

Beginning in 1955, Lutosławski was able to travel again, and through his involvement with the International Society for Contemporary Music, he visited various countries, heard the music of his contemporaries around the music, and began receiving international performances of his own music. At the same time as his reputation started to spread, his musical style matured rapidly, incorporating the use of 12-tone harmonies in the Funeral Music of 1958, and

introducing his own form of rhythmical eatoricism in the Jeux Vénitiens of 1960. From that time on, Lutosławski's music has been widely performed, and he has traveled extensively, conducting his own music and lecturing about it in most major cities of the world. Over the past 30 years, Lutosławski has composed almost twenty major orchestral works, including the Symphony No.2 of 1967, the Symphony No. 3 of 1982, for which he was awarded the highly prestigious Grawemayer Award, and his latest, the Symphony No. 4, premiered last year by the Los Angeles Philharmonic along with concertos for Mstislav Rostropovich, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Heinz Holliger, and Krystian Zimerman.

Lutosławski has garnered numerous honours and prizes throughout his distinguished career. He has been awarded honorary membership in a number of prestigious academies and societies in various countries among them Royal Swedish Academy of Music, Royal Academy of Music in London, American Academy of Arts and Letters, Académie des Beaux-Arts, Deutsche Akademie der Künste, and has received honorary degrees from such institutions as the Warsaw University, Cracow University, Glasgow University, University of Cambridge, Cleveland Institute of Music. McGill University was the last to so honour him. It is also important to note that Lutosławski has always worked for the cause of other composers, through his participation in various organizations for example the ISCM, Warsaw Autumn Festival and Polish Union of Composers, by his financial support for young Polish composers wishing to study abroad, and by his forthrightness in speaking out against injustice and his steadfast refusal to compromise himself or his music for the sake of any political advantage.

Witold Lutosławski died in Warsaw on February 7th, 1994.

James Harley

HOMMAGE À LUTOSŁAWSKI

Music from Montreal - CBC Stereo: producer: Frances Wainwright

Program broadcast December 12th 1993

Re-broadcast February 13th 1994 to mark the death of the composer.

Music recorded at the **Hommage à Lutosławski** concert held at

Pollack Hall, McGill Faculty of Music, October 30th 1993.

Program:

Epitaph (1979) for oboe and piano

Normand Forget - oboe, Marc Couroux - piano

Sacher Variation (1975) for solo cello

Antonio Lysy - cello

Partita (1984) for violin and piano

Sylvia Mandolini - violin, Marc Couroux - piano

Chain I (1983) for chamber ensemble

McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble,

Bruce Mather - conductor

String Quartet (1964)

Penderecki Quartet

The following is a transcription of the broadcast conversation between Jim Coward, host of *Music from Montreal* and James Harley, coordinator of the McGill *Hommage à Lutosławski* concert.

Jim Coward (JC): Now, as promised, I am joined by James Harley, a composer at McGill, to discuss Lutosławski from a composer's point of view. Welcome to "Music from Montreal." What is it about this kind of event that makes it so important to have someone like Lutoslawski in Montreal?

James Harley (JH): Well, it's important because he is without a doubt one of the great living composers. He is 80 this year, and his music is performed all over the world. He is studied by all music students who learn about the 20th century--his name will come up. So, he's part of the history of the century, and happily is still alive. In addition, his music is quite well known, unusually so for a living composer.

JC: But that brings me back to my question though. The music is known. Certainly people who study music, people who are aware of, familiar with, contemporary music know the name Lutoslawski and his music. But to have the man himself walking among us in Montreal, what does that add to the experience?

JH: I think it is a rare opportunity, partly because most of the composers we concern ourselves with are dead, and we just don't get the chance to have them walk among us. But to see the man, to hear what he has to say, is a great occasion for people interested in music. And in the case of Lutoslawski, he is very gracious as well as articulate and cultured, and has a lot

that he himself can add to the experience of his music. He is also able to contribute his perspective on music in general, on the way it has developed in this century.

JC: How do you explain the appeal of Lutoslawski's music? Pollack Hall was full the evening of the concert, and the applause was not just polite, people genuinely enjoyed what they were listening to. There was quite a bit of variety as the evening went on. What is there in the music that has that direct appeal?

JH: Lutoslawski's music really comes directly out of the classical-romantic tradition. He has never tried to be radical. His training as a musician, his classical training, is always coming through. He also has, I think, a sense of drama that's important to his music. He is not just trying to express abstract ideas, he's working with expressive ideas. I think it is always appealing when music is conceived in dramatic terms rather than in more formal ways. In addition, the language that he uses does not break sharply with the tradition; he is trying to carry things forward from the way they were before, from more familiar kinds of material to more contemporary elements, whereas a lot of other composers really did want to break with the way things were, particularly after the Second World War. He wasn't attempting that. Instead, he was trying to develop his own language on the basis of what he had done before and what everybody else had done.

JC: As for these developments which took place after the Second World War, we have to remember that a large part of Lutoslawski's career was spent in Poland during a communist regime, which would illuminate, to some extent, everything he did.

JH: Well, he certainly has struggled with that. Poland was never as successfully oppressed as some of the other countries in Eastern Europe. Lutoslawski did have a particularly difficult period during the Stalinist era. That was the toughest time in Poland, in which the "social-realist" policy was enforced quite strictly, and his music was banned as being too formalist and not relevant to the people. It was quite a dark period for him. After that, though, conditions relaxed somewhat, Lutoslawski was able to travel abroad and he became a truly international composer. But at the same time, I'm sure, there were always struggles with the authorities. For instance, he had another difficult period in the 1980's during the imposition of martial law when, at a certain point, no one was allowed to travel, and phone lines were cut. For someone like Lutoslawski, who had an international career as a composer as well as conducting engagements around the world, that was a particularly painful period. In addition, he has always stood up against oppression and has never cooperated with the regime. I think he was hurt a great deal by the martial law ordeal, and in fact, refused to make any public appearances during that time, just to make sure that the point was taken that he wasn't supporting the regime in any way. So, he has made some strong political statements, more by example than by being outspoken, but at the same time, his international stature has always been there, and he has been able to rise above the particular difficulties of living in a communist country.

JC: Let's move away from a discussion of Lutoslawski the individual, and focus back on the music again. The next work we are going to hear is the Partita for violin and piano. Can you introduce this for us?

JH: All right. This is a big piece for violin and piano, which really comes out the tradition of violin sonatas--Beethoven, Brahms and so forth. It contains three substantial movements laid out in a kind of classical form, fast-slow-fast. In between those movements are two shorter movements that resemble cadenzas, but cadenzas that involve both players.

In fact, they are called "Ad Libitum" sections, in which the two players are playing quite freely, **not trying** to coordinate with each other. So they form an interesting contrast to the other **movements**, being based on a different kind of rhythmic energy. Altogether, though, the music **is quite** substantial and serious. There is a lot of virtuosic writing for the violin, and, being very **idiomatic** for the instrument, it works well. Of course, Lutosławski studied violin and piano **himself**, so these are the two instruments with which he is the most intimately familiar.

JC: He hasn't written a lot of chamber music. In fact, the music on this program was a **good chunk** of his total output in chamber music, wasn't it?

JH: It was, yes. He has mostly concentrated on orchestral works - it makes the arrival of **a new** piece of chamber music by Lutoslawski quite an event.

JC: The quality of the performances that evening at Pollack Hall was very good, and part **of that**, I suppose, is the inspiration of having the composer there in the hall listening.

JH: Oh yes, certainly, I think that's part of it. Plus having the chance to get to meet him **before**, and in the case of some of the musicians, having the opportunity to play the piece **through** for him and to hear his comments. Lutoslawski has always been a performing musician. **Now he's** a conductor, but earlier on he was a working concert pianist, so he has a very practical **knowledge** of the music; of his own music of course, but also of what it means to play the music **as a performer**. So, I think he's able to relate easily to the performers, and I think that that helps **inspire** the musicians. It certainly did in the case of this concert.

JC: Not just knowing the music, but knowing how to make it work.

JH: Exactly.

JC: The last work we are going to hear on *Music from Montreal* this week is Chain I. **Now this** is a work for chamber orchestra, 14 members altogether, strings, winds, percussion and **harpsichord**. How does this work?

JH: The title refers to the idea of having different kinds of music going on at the same **time**. You might have, for example, a clarinet solo, and then in the middle of the phrase, **somebody** else in the ensemble begins playing a different kind of material. It's counterpoint, **really**, but the idea of the chain comes from the fact that one kind of material or phrase by a **particular** musician or group of musicians will start first and then another one will come in in the **middle** of that, and the first one will end while the other one carries on, and so on, creating a **series** of "links." The result is that you get a continual overlapping of phrases. So there is a **sense** of continuity, but at the same time, of a series of contrasting little events.

JC: What I want to know before we conclude is, what is your connection with Lutosławski?

JH: Well, first of all, I was interested in his music, that's how I started to get to know him. Then, I spent some time in Europe, in London, Paris, and then had the opportunity to **spend** a year in Poland, in Warsaw. I actually first met Lutoslawski in London, and since then have had a few chances to talk to him, attend workshops with him and hear him give lectures, as well as to hear a lot of his music performed live, which is always a great experience. He has also been on juries of competitions where I've won prizes, so I guess I've gotten to know him a little bit, over the years.

JC: This program was a highlight of a week at the end of October when Witold Lutoslawski was visiting Montreal. Thank you James Harley for visiting *Music from Montreal* to introduce us this afternoon to the personality and the music of Lutoslawski.

JH: Thank you, it's been a pleasure.

James Harley, who has just completed his doctorate in composition at McGill University, hails from British Columbia. He lived in Europe between 1982 and 1988, and, after winning a prize in *The 1st Kazimierz Serocki International Composers Competition* (Witold Lutoslawski was one of the members of the jury for that competition), traveled regularly to Poland, eventually receiving a Polish Government Scholarship to spend the year 1987-88 as a guest post-graduate student at the Chopin Academy of Music. Harley's music has been performed at the Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music as well as elsewhere in Poland. In 1990, he was awarded a prize in *The 1st Witold Lutoslawski International Composers Competition*, and as a result his orchestral work, *Windprints*, was performed by Kazimierz Kord and the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Warsaw in April 1991. In 1987, James married Maria Trochimczyk, a Polish musicologist, and in 1988, they moved from Warsaw to Montreal.