



Marta  
**PTASZYŃSKA**

**Double Concerto**

**Concerto Grosso • SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)**

**Daniel Mieczkowski, Flute**

**Roksana Kwaśnikowska-Stankiewicz, Wojciech Koprowski, Violin**

**Zuzanna Elster, Anastasia Razvalyaeva, Harp**

**Klaudiusz Baran, Rafał Grzaka, Accordion**

**Chopin University Chamber Orchestra • Mariusz Smolij**



Marta  
**PTASZYŃSKA**  
(b. 1943)

- |   |  |              |
|---|--|--------------|
| ❶ | <b>La novella d'inverno ('A Winter's Tale')</b> for orchestra (1984)   | <b>9:41</b>  |
|   | <b>Concerto Grosso</b> for two violins and chamber orchestra (1996)  | <b>11:13</b> |
| ❷ | I. Allegro con anima   | 3:07         |
| ❸ | II. Andante espressivo, con tenerezza  | 3:48         |
| ❹ | III. Allegro con brio  | 4:18         |
| ❺ | <b>Mancala</b> for two violins (1997)  | <b>6:44</b>  |
|   | <b>Double Concerto</b> for flute, harp and orchestra (2007–08)   | <b>18:25</b> |
| ❻ | I. Jeu des couleurs: Allegro moderato  | 12:41        |
| ❼ | II. Jeux du rythme: Vivo gioioso e molto ritmico   | 5:44         |
| ❽ | <b>Sogno d'Euridice ('Eurydice's Dream')</b> for two harps (2001)  | <b>7:31</b>  |
|   | <b>SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)</b> (2018)<br>(version for two accordions, percussion and string orchestra, 2023) | <b>12:24</b> |
| ❾ | Sequenza: Lento maestoso   | 8:21         |
| ❿ | Tarantella: Vivo, molto energico   | 4:03         |

## Marta Ptaszyńska (b. 1943)

### Double Concerto • Concerto Grosso • SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)

Born in Warsaw, Marta Ptaszyńska is one of the best-known female Polish composers. Her vast catalogue of compositions includes well-known works such as *Concerto for Marimba*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Sonnets to Orpheus*, *Voice of the Wind* (for 100 percussionists) and the operas *Oscar from Alva*, *Mister Marimba*, *Magic Doremik* and *Chopin in Majorca*, as well as numerous regularly preformed compositions for percussion. Ptaszyńska has received commissions from orchestras including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra (NOSPR), Sinfonia Varsovia and Polish Chamber Orchestra, and artists such as Ewa Podleś, Keiko Abe and Evelyn Glennie.

Ptaszyńska has been honoured with many prizes and awards, including the 2006 Benjamin H. Danks Award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Alfred Jurzykowski Award, multiple ASCAP Awards, the International Rostrum of Composers award (UNESCO, Paris), and awards from the Percussive Arts Society and the Związek Kompozytorów Polskich (ZKP, 'Polish Composers' Union'). In 1995 she received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland and in 2022 the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland for outstanding achievements in music.

Ptaszyńska's music has been performed at prestigious international festivals, including ISCM World (New) Music Days, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Salzburger Festspiele and Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music, among many others.

In her native Poland, Ptaszyńska studied at the Warsaw and Poznań academies of music. She also worked privately with Witold Lutosławski, who later became her mentor. As a French Government grant recipient, she studied with Nadia Boulanger in the early Seventies, and attended Olivier Messiaen's analysis classes at the Paris Conservatory. In 1974, she received an Artist Diploma Degree in Percussion Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she worked with Cloyd Duff, Richard Weiner and Donald Erb.

Widely acclaimed as a virtuoso percussionist, for several decades Ptaszyńska has performed extensively as a soloist and chamber player, and has participated in many European and American festivals. Many compositions have been written for and dedicated to her. In 1986 she co-founded the International Percussion Workshops in Bydgoszcz, Poland. She also often serves as a judge at international and national competitions for composers and percussionists.

Ptaszyńska's distinguished career as a composition teacher includes professorships at Bennington College in Vermont, the University of California in Berkeley and Santa Barbara, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Indiana University Bloomington and Northwestern University in Evanston. In 1998 she was appointed professor of music at The University of Chicago, and since 2004 has held the endowed chair of Helen B. & Frank L. Sulzberger Professor of Music and the Humanities.

From 1965 to 1970 Ptaszyńska was a president of the Young Composers' Circle of the ZKP, and from 1981 to 1984 served as a member of the board of directors of the Percussive Arts Society. In 1991 she co-founded the American Society of Polish Music in New York, and was subsequently vice president for several years. She is currently a member of ASCAP, ZKP, ZAiKS (Society of Authors) and the Percussive Arts Society.

In 2002 Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne (PWM) released a book about her music entitled *Music, the Most Perfect Language: Conversations with Marta Ptaszyńska*. In 2024 PWM released a second book entitled *The Power of Intuition*, about her music and overall work.

### **La novella d'inverno ('A Winter's Tale')**

Written for the Polish Chamber Orchestra who gave the premiere with Jerzy Maksymiuk (to whom it is dedicated) in Lisbon on 5 May 1985 as part of the Gulbenkian Music Foundation contemporary music festival, *La novella d'inverno* ('A Winter's Tale') takes its inspiration not from Shakespeare's play but from surrealist paintings by Max Ernst, Yves Tanguy and Giorgio de Chirico in music the composer has described as uniting 'elements of the real world with the subconscious imagery found in the world of dreams'. Motifs from the *Winter* concerto of Vivaldi's *Le quattro stagioni* are also present, albeit transformed into an entirely new entity. The piece opens with ghostly sounds from strings and woodwind, notably glissando (sliding) phrases that alternate with more impulsive gestures. At length this alternation generates more continuous motion, which opens out the music's expressive range accordingly, until it arrives at an ethereal passage for strings around its mid-point. Although the earlier motion tentatively resumes, the final stage sees a return to that evocative atmosphere heard at the beginning.

### **Concerto Grosso**

The *Concerto Grosso* for two violins and chamber orchestra was written for Yehudi Menuhin and dedicated to him on the occasion of his 80th birthday. He directed the first performance, which took place in Warsaw on 26 January 1997 featuring the soloists Erika Dobosiewicz and Piotr Kwaśny with Sinfonia Varsovia. Its three succinct and highly contrasting movements between them evoke numerous aspects of the Baroque archetype, while the solo parts could also be taken by players who are members of the violin section in the participating orchestra.

The opening *Allegro con anima* sets up a stealthy and rhythmic motion with the activity of the violinists thrown into relief against that of the orchestra, arriving at a forceful confrontation that tails off towards its ending. The central *Andante espressivo, con tenerezza* finds the soloists engaged in a plangent interplay, one which takes on a halting yet undeniable eloquence as it proceeds to an ending of subdued regret. The final *Allegro con brio* duly banishes such introspection with its energetic repartee between the soloists and, in turn, the orchestra; there are asides that divert such activity, though only briefly. At length, an assertive cadenza-like passage makes way for the decisive closing bars.

### **Mancala**

Deriving its title from what the composer has described as 'a number game [which] was one of the favoured mathematical recreations of the Pharaohs in ancient Egypt', *Mancala* ('Home') is for two violins, and received its premiere from Hanna Lachert (long-time member of the New York Philharmonic) with her son Yaniv Segal in 1997. As in the game of Pebbles, the music unfolds across successive stages but, unlike the game where 'the player who takes the last counter is the winner, [here] both players end together, which means they both win'. Opening in ruminative accord, the music subsequently assumes greater fervency as it takes on a correspondingly wider range of expressive gestures. From a plangently sustained climax, it heads with mounting impetus towards a conclusion marking a return to the earlier inwardness.

### **Double Concerto**

Commissioned by Helga Storck, head of the International Harp Society, the *Double Concerto* was first performed at the Second International Harp Festival in Katowice on 18 May 2008 by flautist Jadwiga Kotnowska and harpist Anna Sikorzak-Olek with the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra directed by Krzysztof Urbanski. Its two movements, respectively centred on harmony and colour then rhythm and texture, are contrasted in every respect, but they merge into a unity in which any such differences can be perceived as being more apparent than real. As its title implies, the substantial opening *Jeu des couleurs* ('The Game of Colours') focusses on timbral as well as textural concerns; flute and harp heard in numerous contexts that emphasise their versatility whether as soloists, as a duo or as primary melodic lines within the overall sonic tapestry. The harmonic writing is notable for its refinement and translucency, but this does not preclude an eventful culmination, with the music seeming to fold in on itself towards the evocative close. Barely half this length, the ensuing *Jeux du rythme* ('The Games of Rhythm') invokes an almost minimalist aura with its limpid and even-paced motion, so enabling the soloists to occupy the musical foreground without obscuring the overall discourse. At length the flute melds with the orchestral wind in a sonic synthesis maintained through to an understated while undeniably alluring conclusion.

### **Sogno d'Euridice**

Composed for what was the fifth edition of the International Krzysztof Penderecki Competition of Contemporary Chamber Music, *Sogno d'Euridice* ('Eurydice's Dream') was given its first hearing by harpists Elżbieta Baklarz and Malwina Lipiec in Kraków on 21 September 2001. As its title suggests, this is music that infers much but states relatively little. The harps are heard as a duo or in combination almost throughout, their frequent while not always graceful interplay suggesting a landscape of the mind that makes for a suitably somnolent ending.

### **SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)**

Written in 2018, *SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)* was given its premiere by the accordionists Klaudiusz Baran and Rafał Grzaka with the percussionists Scott Horey and Miłosz Pękala in Warsaw on 8 December 2018, this version with string orchestra being prepared five years later. Its two movements take the chant *O Ecclesia* by the 12th-century abbess Hildegard of Bingen and the eponymous Italian traditional dance for their twin sources of inspiration.

Once more these movements make a virtue of contrast. The initial *Sequenza* is slow-moving over almost the whole of its length – emerging little by little, even reticently with the sound of the accordions embedded into the lower strings. Only gradually does its range of expression come into focus, the music evincing a harmonic density that suddenly disperses around two-thirds of the way through to leave an ominous aura with accordions being heard against strings and percussion. This soon returns to the silence from which it had emerged some minutes earlier. The ensuing *Tarantella* could not be more different. Over a propulsive, motoric rhythm on percussion, accordions and strings unfolds a lively display that proves infectious in every sense. Nor is there any lack of finality even as the music heads toward its teasing conclusion.

**Richard Whitehouse**

*With thanks to Marta Ptaszyńska*





Photo: Aleksander Jalousinski

## Daniel Mieczkowski



Photo: Grzesiek Mart

Polish conductor and flautist Daniel Mieczkowski graduated from the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music where he specialised in flute performance and instrumental conducting. He currently teaches at his alma mater. He also developed his skills at the Internationale Musikakademie in Liechtenstein, the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. Mieczkowski has collaborated with the Polish National Philharmonic, Sinfonia Varsovia, Grand Theatre, Łódź, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Czech Virtuosi, Silesian Chamber Orchestra and the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra. He is a laureate of numerous flute and conducting competitions in Nice, Uelzen, Brno, Białystok and Kraków.

## Roksana Kwaśnikowska-Stankiewicz



Photo: Maria Pelc

Soloist, chamber musician and teacher Roksana Kwaśnikowska-Stankiewicz studied at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music with Jan Stanienda. She is currently an assistant professor in the violin class at her alma mater. Since November 2024 she has been the artistic director of the Jan Stanienda Chamber Music Festival 'Arsenal Nights' in Wrocław. The winner of Fryderyk and Diapason d'Or awards, she is also a laureate of many other competitions, including the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition in Sion, the Karol Szymanowski International Music Competition in Katowice and the 'Beethoven's Hradec' competition. She is first violinist of the Lutosławski Quartet, and a member of the Tansman Trio.

[www.roksanakwasnikowska.pl](http://www.roksanakwasnikowska.pl)

## Wojciech Koprowski



Photo: A. Wąsik-Płocińska

Wojciech Koprowski is a soloist, chamber musician and educator, and is a violinist of the acclaimed Meccore String Quartet. He has performed worldwide in prestigious venues and collaborated with top orchestras. A graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music, he also studied in Berlin, Brussels and Madrid. He has won 15 international and national awards and released acclaimed recordings. He currently teaches at his alma mater and the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Kraków.

[www.wojciechkoprowski.com](http://www.wojciechkoprowski.com)

## Zuzanna Elster



Photo: Mateusz Zaboklicki

Polish harpist Zuzanna Elster is a distinguished soloist, chamber and orchestral musician and pedagogue. She is associate professor at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, and is principal harpist of Sinfonia Varsovia. Elster is a laureate of numerous national and international harp competitions. As a soloist she has performed with Sinfonia Varsovia, Brandenburger Symphoniker, Tokyo Prime Symphony Orchestra, St Christopher Chamber Orchestra, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Lublin, Szczecin and Filharmonia Opolska, among many others. Elster has also recorded for Polish Radio and Television.



## Anastasia Razvalyaeva



Photo: Raffay Zsofia

Living in Budapest, Anastasia Razvalyaeva divides her time between performing and teaching. Razvalyaeva was born in Russia, in 1993 her family moved to Hungary, where she began learning the harp with her mother, Natalia Gorbunova. She continued her studies with Melinda Felletár at the Liszt Ferenc Conservatory in Szeged, and in 2011 she gained a Masters' Diploma at the Liszt Academy in Budapest under the guidance of Andrea Vigh. Razvalyaeva earned her Doctor of Liberal Arts degree in 2019. As a soloist she has performed with several Hungarian orchestras. Amongst her achievements are national and international solo and chamber music competitions, as well as acknowledgements such as the Junior Prima Award (2011), the Fischer Annie Scholarship (2015), or the UNKP Scholarship (2022).

[www.anastasiarazvalyaeva.com](http://www.anastasiarazvalyaeva.com)

## Klaudiusz Baran



Photo: Emilia Stec

Klaudiusz Baran has changed the perception of the accordion in Poland through charismatic, inventive and expressive performances. His musical creations have met with enthusiastic critical acclaim, and been awarded prizes at numerous competitions. In 2003 Baran was the first accordionist to receive the Fryderyk Award (Chamber Music Album of the Year) for his album *Piazzolla – Tango*, recorded for Sony Classical, and in 2019 he was awarded Album of the Year – Symphonic Music and Most Outstanding Recording of Polish Music by the same institution for *100 for 100: Musical Decades of Freedom – VIII 1988–1997* (PWM Edition).

[www.klaudiuszbaran.com](http://www.klaudiuszbaran.com)

## Rafał Grzaka



A graduate of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in the accordion class of Klaudiusz Baran and the Henryk Majewski Jazz Study in Warsaw where he studied with Andrzej Jagodziński, Rafał Grzaka is a Doctor of Music, and currently a professor at his alma mater. Grzaka has won numerous national and international competitions, and has been frequently recognised for his artistic and scientific activities. He served as vice-dean of the instrumental faculty of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music from 2018, and from 2020 to 2024 was head of the accordion department. He became vice-rector for student affairs and teaching in 2024.

## Chopin University Chamber Orchestra

Rafał Janiak, Artistic Director • Aleksander Zwierz, Manager



The Chopin University Chamber Orchestra was formed in 2017 by Fryderyk Chopin University of Music (UMFC) rector Klaudiusz Baran and then-orchestra inspector Aleksander Zwierz. The members of the orchestra are outstanding students, selected through a multi-stage audition process. The ensemble can boast numerous successes, as well as collaborations with eminent conductors including Grzegorz Nowak, Michał Klauza, Anna Sułkowska-Migoń and Marcin Nałęcz-Niesiołowski. The orchestra is also actively engaged in making recordings. In July 2019, it toured China, and in March 2023 performed in the hall of the Copernicus Center in Chicago, presenting, among others, a piece by Mikołaj Majkusiak entitled *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, written to commemorate Nicolaus Copernicus. In April 2023, members of the orchestra performed at the Grand Theatre in Warsaw, creating a Polish-Israeli symphony orchestra. The concert, attended by the presidents of Poland, Israel and Germany, was part of the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

[chopin.edu.pl/art/umfc-ensembles/chopin-university-chamber-orchestra](http://chopin.edu.pl/art/umfc-ensembles/chopin-university-chamber-orchestra)



## Mariusz Smolij



Photo: Laura Pedrick

Mariusz Smolij (b. 1962) has led over 150 orchestras on four continents, appearing in some of the world's most prestigious concert halls. In North America he has collaborated with the Houston Symphony, Lyric Opera Orchestra of Chicago and the New Jersey Symphony among many others. Elsewhere, he has directed concerts at the Tonhalle (Zurich), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), National Centre for the Performing Arts (Beijing), and Warsaw National Philharmonic Concert Hall, to name a few. A founding member of the Penderecki Quartet, he has served as associate conductor of the Houston Symphony and music director of the NFM Lutosławski Philharmonic, International Festival Wratistavia Cantans and Toruń Symphony Orchestra (Poland), and is currently music director of the Riverside Symphonia in New Jersey. He served on the faculties of Northwestern University (Chicago) and Tianjin Conservatory of Music (China). His album of works by Polish composer Grażyna Bacewicz won a 2015 Fryderyk Award (Naxos 8.573229). In 2019 the president of Poland awarded him the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland for the promotion of Polish culture.

The Polish-born composer, Marta Ptaszyńska, studied under Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen, and since 1972 has worked in the United States where she forged cultural links between the two countries. Ptaszyńska has composed in all major genres and has worked with many leading musicians and ensembles. Her harmonic writing is often refined and translucent, with an expressive intensity generated through contrasts. The orchestral works in this album illustrate her gifts for creating evocative atmospheres. Dedicated to and premiered by Yehudi Menuhin, the *Concerto Grosso* explores Baroque archetypes.

**UMFC** Uniwersytet Muzyczny  
Fryderyka Chopina

**Marta  
PTASZYŃSKA**  
(b. 1943)

- |             |  |              |
|-------------|--|--------------|
| <b>1</b>    | <b>La novella d'inverno ('A Winter's Tale')</b> for orchestra (1984)   | <b>9:41</b>  |
| <b>2-4</b>  | <b>Concerto Grosso</b> for two violins and chamber orchestra (1996)  | <b>11:13</b> |
| <b>5</b>    | <b>Mancala</b> for two violins (1997)  | <b>6:44</b>  |
| <b>6-7</b>  | <b>Double Concerto</b> for flute, harp and orchestra (2007-08)   | <b>18:25</b> |
| <b>8</b>    | <b>Sogno d'Euridice ('Eurydice's Dream')</b> for two harps (2001)  | <b>7:31</b>  |
| <b>9-10</b> | <b>SE-TA (Sequenza e Tarantella)</b> (2018)<br>(version for two accordions, percussion and string orchestra, 2023) | <b>12:24</b> |

**Daniel Mieczkowski, Flute** **6** **7**

**Roksana Kwaśnikowska-Stankiewicz, Wojciech Koprowski, Violin** **2-5**

**Zuzanna Elster** **6-8**, **Anastasia Razvalyaeva** **8**, **Harp**

**Klaudiusz Baran, Rafał Grzaka, Accordion** **9** **10**

**Chopin University Chamber Orchestra • Mariusz Smolij** **1-4** **6** **7** **9** **10**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

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