Poniedziałek 21, Lut.

2324 Park Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio
45206

1966

Droga Nela,

Wspaniały koncert! Artur grał Boskо! Brahmsa lepiej niż kiedykolwiek go słyszałem w tym utworze. Przypuszczam że żaden pianista w tym wieku kiedykolwiek grał na tym poziomie! Co za fenomenon! Mógłbym kontynuować bez końca na ten temat, ale ty to słyszyszałeś tysiąc razy w ciągu ostatnich lat, więc na tem zamilkłne... Nie widziałem Artura przez siedem lat - jest taki sam jak zawsze duchowo i fizycznie. Wielka to była radość dla mnie pogawędzić z nim trochę wczoraj popołudniu, oraz dowiedzić się o was wszystkich.

Bardzo zainteresowały mnie wiadomości o Alince i Janie. Karjera jego idzie blisko po linji Eda, który w obecnej chwili (wciąż prowadząc swój własny "jingles" interes) uczęszcza do theatre workshop José Quintero w Nowym Yorku for directors and actors, in order to learn all about direction of the musical shows. His ambition is still to compose music for a musical Broadway show. He wrote two already, of which one he produced in Scarsdale, N.Y. He has already 3 daughters, and they are living happily in Hartsdale, Westchester.

As to me, you probably know from Wiktor, or Wanda, that I was retired by the Un-ty of Cincinnati, two years ago, because of the age limit (70), with an impressive sounding title of Professor Emeritus in Composition, but without any pension. Thus, I have now practically all my time free for composition (I have a few private pupils), and as I am far from being senile yet, I am very productive creatively. I completed lately "MUSIC FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA" (not a concerto, but a completely new form in one movement). An excellent American pianist Grant Johanessen heard part of it last spring and is interested to play it. I am going next month (second half of March probably) to New York in order to show him the whole work.

I have more orchestral and other performances during the last couple of years than before. An orchestral piece of mine "CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE" is becoming very succesful. During the last two years (since I offered it to the conductors - it was a slow movement of the Symphony - as a separate piece) it had 14 times (8 in the U.S. and 6 abroad, including Poland). Last fall Vladimir Golschmann gave three excellent performances of this work with his Denver Symphony. Seldom I was so happy about the performance and the reception by the public. I was completely unknown in Denver, and no publicity on me preceeded the concerts. Yet, I was overhelmed by the reaction of the public: so many unknown people came to shake my hand and express their enthusiasm during the intermission and after the concerts, and, more than half of the musicians of the orchestra did the same (which is very rare for a contemporary work - usually they dont' understand, or care about the music they play). One concert was specifically for students - and this probably was the most succesful. This made me specially happy because if my music (this particular piece was composed in 1953, and is more conservative than those written later) can reach the young audiences - it has a chance to remain after my death.

Few days ago, Max Rudolf, the conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony, commisioned me, at my suggestion, a Suite of Polish Music of the Renaissance (mostly dances such as: Wyrwany, Hayduk, Cenar), which he intends to play next season. This is quite a victory: a German conductor commissioning a Suite of Polish Music! Financially it is not much, as the Cincinnati Symphony will pay only the expenses of preparing the orchestral parts (copyist, reproduction), but it is worth doing, as such a suite might catch the interest of other conductors. Rudolf believes in me as composer, conducted already two works of mine, and it is the second time he commissions a work (first was SYMPHONIC DIALOGUES).

Pokazałem Arturowi "FIVE POLISH CAROLS" freely transcribed by me for organ. He liked the cover and asked to keep it - he will probably show it to you. The cover was done by my wife: stylizowana polska "szopka", and he thinks it is very Polish in character. It is the first time that Polish carols were published in organ version here in the USA. The music came out in November, and during the first month the publisher sold 127 copies, which is excellent record for an organ work. The Carols were played during the Christmas, and pre-Christmwas services not only here in Cincinnati, but in other parts of the country (in New York at a Christmas party of the Kosciuszko Foundation).

I gave Artur the study pocket score of my "CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE" Would you be interested to have a tape-recording of this work? If so, I would be glad to send you one by mail.

Well, I think that I took already too much of your time with news about my music, but I trust that I may be excused as it fills partly the gap of about 10 years of communication between us.

Ufam że będę miał wielką przyjemność Cię zobaczyć kiedy będę w Nowym Yorku w Marcu (daty pobytu zależą od Johanessena), ewentualnie Aline i Jana. Ostatnio widziałem ich na statku w 1955 roku kiedy razem odbyliśmy podróż z Nowego Yorku do Francji (Statendam) i doskonale pamiętam ich udział w ships-concert - fortepjan na cztery ręce: obaj ogromnie byli utalentowani w grze fortepjanowej.

Objęcia łączymy serdeczności i pozdrowienia dla was wszystkich,

Wasz jak zawsze,

Lis

Still kicking!!!

"CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE"

(Song of Aspiration)

for orchestra

by

FELIX LABUNSKI

PRESS EXCERPTS:

CINCINNATI SYMPHONY under MAX RUDOLF on March 26 and 28, 1964

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER - MARCH 27, 1964:

"Labunski's CANTO is a beautifully-scored almost hymn-like Andante in which serenity contrasts with brief, but effective, introspective poignancy. It is a beautiful piece of music."

Henry Humphreys

THE CINCINNATI POST AND TIMES STAR - MARCH 27, 1964:

"CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE, a song of hope in which simplicity of design and sincerity of expression were very effective."

Eleanor Bell

DENVER SYMPHONY under Vladimir Golschmann on November 1, 2 and 3, 1965

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS - NOVEMBER 3, 1965:

"True to its title, Felix Labunski's CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE is a work in which long-singing lines are heard throughout. The orchestra made the most of these lines with a fine string tone occasionally alternated with colorful woodwinds that carried the piece to and away from its subtle climax."

Thomas MacCluskey

CERVI'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN JOURNAL - NOV. 10, 1965:

"And those prepared to suffer through Felix Labunski's SONG OF ASPIRATION were relieved to hear the beautiful soaring long lines with tonal support."

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE XALAPA, MEXICO, under Francisco Savin, August 13, 1965

FROM THE LETTER OF THE CONDUCTOR:

"I am sending you just a brief note to inform you of the great success the CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE obtained in last Friday performance. I would certainly like to play it again in our next season for I confirm the extraordinary success obtained with the public and musicians."

Francisco Savin

The CANTO DI ASPIRAZIONE (Song of Aspiration) is entitled Andante Tranquillo, in 4/4, to be played "freely like a chant". It is composed in Arch form (A-B-C-B'-A'-Codetta). The work is neither autobiographical nor programmatic, but could be best described as a meditation on the conflicts of human aspirations. The scoring is for woodwinds by two, four horns, harp, celesta and strings. Duration is 9 minutes.

to jest zupełnie nieznane!