i brałem udział w Kongresie Naukowców polskiego pochodzenia w Ameryce (zorganizowany w Columbia Uniwersytecie Millennium przez Instytut Polski, czyli Institute of East Central Europe of Columbia University). Kongres miał olbrzymie powodzenie i zjednał 400 delegatów, wśród nich wielu wybitnych naukowców. Ja wygłosiłem odczyt: "Composers of Polish Background and their creative work in the United States" (Stojowski, Jarecki, Rathaus, Zemy Fitelberg, Kondracki i Maciejewski). Również byłem obecny na Millennium Polish Concert w Carnegie Hall (pod batutą Stokowskiego). Osobiście przyczyniłem się trochę, że tak powiedzmy, do Millennium, komponując: "Polish Renaissance Suite" premiera której się odbyła tu w Styczniu. Suita oparta jest na muzyce 16-17 wieku na organy i lutnię, przeważnie anonimowych kompozytorów polskich tego czasu, według danych tabulatur. Załączam krytyki, czyli artykuły wstępny. O ile wiem, muzyka Renesansowa polska nie była dotychczas zorkiestrowana na wielką orkiestrę.
Wybieram się do Nowego Yorku na wiosnę. Ufam że zastanę was jeszcze tam. Artur powiedział że będzie tam do Kwietnia. Gdy będziecie od nas, otrzyj
Serdecznie

Lech.

2/19/67

Droga Neta,

Artur znów grał jak 40-letni "młodzieniec" – naprawdę do unieśmiertelnienia! Nie słyszałem ani jednego pianisty który w tym wieku zachował szczyt swej formy odtwórczej! Nadzwyczajnem jest to że Artur nie potrzebuje się "rozgrywać": od pierwszych taktów Appassionaty był w stuprocentowej formie muzycznej i technicznej i grał z olbrzymią swobodą i brawurą.

~~Wczoraj~~ Był po koncercie w doskonałej formie fizycznej i był w świetnym humorze. Nawiązałem rozmowę z nim przez telefon i dowiedziałem się nieco o nas wszystkich. Cieszę się że jesteś w dobrym zdrowiu i aktywna jak zwykle. Wiem że otworzyliście Bal "Polonaise" i że Ewa tańczyła Mazurka z Łazowskim. Podziwiam że przez te lata zachowała technikę taneczną.

Jak być może wiesz, spędziłem trzy tygodnie w Nowym Yorku (mieszkałem u syna w Scarsdale)

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER, DECEMBER 28, 1966

CSO Premiere

Poland Inspires Labunski Suite

BY HENRY S. HUMPHREYS
Enquirer Music Critic

FELIX LABUNSKI has no need to move his birth-date forward 10 or 15 years, like Leopold Stokowski; he actually looks (and moves about) like a man in his late forties. The energetic and genial composer, whose new Polish Renaissance Suite will be given its world-premiere by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, under Max Rudolf, at Music Hall, January 6 and 7, admitted in a luncheon chat the other day that "I have already said 'Goodbye' to the Biblical 'three-score and ten'; but I feel fine and am composing new works right along."

Felix Labunski

FELIX LABUNSKI, the only eminent Polish-American composer now living in the United States (and, since 1941, an American citizen), seldom uses Polish folk-music in his music, but the modality and singing quality of his melodies gives it a Slavic flavor. His melodies are clearly delineated and the harmonic structure is tonal. Labunski's music could be called Neo-Romantic — a Romanticism which does not eschew formal structure and is the predominant trend of present day American music.

When Labunski came to Cincinnati, in 1945, to head up the composition department of the College of Music he had already made his name known in Europe through his large-scale works for orchestra, as well as works for piano and chamber groups. After extensive studies in his native Poland, Labunski worked in Paris (France) with such famed composers as Dukas and Nadia Boulanger. His brother, Wiktor, was for many years director of the Kansas City Conservatory of Music.

I WAS TEACHING at the College of Music at the same time Felix Labunski was; I recall his zealous pioneering in projects like symposia for young composers—only Eastman was sponsoring that sort of thing in those post-war days. And the "New Music" programs, founded in 1955 by Labunski, Jeno Takacs and John Haussermann, were distinguished by 33 World premieres and 73 Cincinnati premieres. Many of Labunski's composition students went on to carve out impressive niches for themselves in the fiercely-competitive territory of contemporary music.

"POLISH RENAISSANCE SUITE"

for orchestra

by

FELIX LABUNSKI

WORLD PREMIERE BY THE CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

January 6 and 7, 1967.

PRESS REVIEWS:

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER - 1.7.1967:

"Felix Labunski's "Polish Renaissance Suite" was a happy choice as program opener. Beguiling lute and organ melodies of King Zygmunt's artistically sensitive 16th century Poland were deftly and expressively robed in the iridescent colors of a full symphony orchestra by Labunski - who has steadfastly stood by his life-long convictions regarding musical form and balance, clarity and lyricism. Labunski's especially skilled handling of antiphonal effects in the orchestra were impressively revealed in the second and third numbers of the Suite - "Cantio Polonica" and "Chorea Polonica No. 1". But these excellent transcribed sections were preceded and culminated by an original "Intrada" and "Conclusione" - sonorous and replete with majestic power. The only number in the Suite based on a work by a known composer - Jacob le Polonais - was No. 7 - a "Toccata" for strings alone which was almost a "Perpetual Motion" and which the string section of the orchestra, under Max Rudolf, played with exceptional brilliance and drama."

Henry Humphreys

THE CINCINNATI POST AND TIME STAR - 1.7.1967:

"Cincinnati has several working composers of music that merits recognition and Felix Labunski is one of the most solid and best organized among them. His "Polish Renaissance Suite" is a pleasing composition based on songs and dances popular in the composer's homeland during the 16th and 17th centuries. Labunski opens and closes the Suite in his own contemporary manner, and what comes in between are his own departures from the embellishments upon early dances and pieces for organ and lute by composers long forgotten. The effect is much like a flashback in a motion picture, or a novel that backwards in time, and Labunski's skill at contrapuntal manipulation and his keen ear for orchestration combined to make the Suite a delightful 12 minutes."

Eleanor Bell

EXCERPTS FROM THE PROGRAM NOTES, by Joseph Sagmaster:

"Polish music, as Labunski points out, benefited greatly from the country's intimate cultural as well as political relations with Italy through the Roman Catholic Church. In the 16th century they became closer when King Zygmunt I married Italian Princess Bona Sforza. Zygmunt was a patron of arts, and the years of his reign (1506-1548) and those of his son Zygmunt II (1548-1572) were called "the Golden Age in Polish History". Labunski was especially impressed by the lute and organ pieces of this period and from that interest originated the Polish Renaissance Suite. The dances of this period were usually a combination of song and dance. In some, one might already detect the rhythms of the polonaise and the mazurka, whose form was not to be cristallized until a century later. Some of the Polish dances, like "Chorea Polonica" and "Polnischer Danz", were highly popular in Italy, France and Germany. The musical structure usually followed the European dance forms: first part slow in duple time; second quick and in triple time. Choreographically, however, they were quite different.

The orchestra is scored for piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano and strings. The duration is 12 minutes. The Suite was composed in 1966.