# BOLESLAW SZABELSKI

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Boleslaw Szabelski is a very important Polish composer but there are comparatively few who know of him and his works. There was a time when he was acclaimed throughout Poland and the rest of the world. He received many honours and awards and justly so.

He was born at Radorz on 3 December 1896 and studied at the Polish Music Society School with Lysakowski in 1915. Thereafter, he studied at the Warsaw Conservatory with Szymanowski, who was highly regarded.

From 1929 to 1939, Szabelski taught composition and the organ at the Conservatory.

His early works were neo-classical and/or romantic but he was not a composer 'stuck in a rut', as so many are. In the 1950s, he used the 12 note serial style which is both challenging and demanding and only great composers can compose in this way. In this, he was said to be a founder of the New School of Polish Music. Among his many students was Gorecki. He was a co-founder of the famous Silesian School of Music.
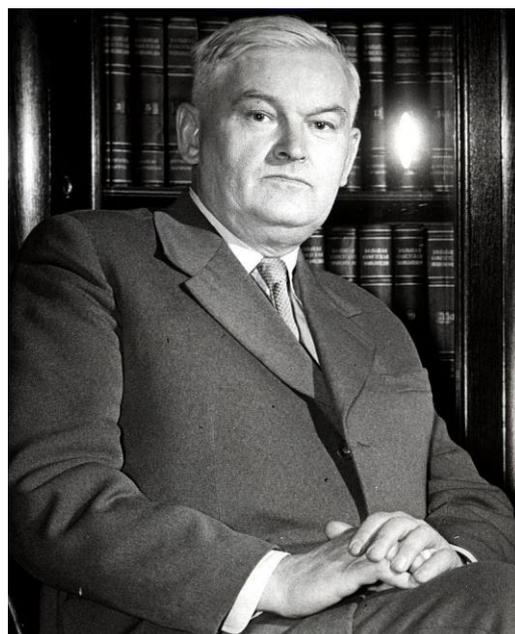
He married Irena Marmol and they had a daughter, Maria.

Among his 30 works or so, there are five symphonies (1926,1934,1951, 1956 and 1968) the famous Toccata from the Suite for orchestra 1938, Aphorisms for nine instruments of 1962, a Concertino for piano and orchestra , Mikolay Kopernik for choir and orchestra, Kantata Reduta for choir and orchestra, Concerto grosso and a Sonatina for clarinet and piano.

The aforementioned Toccata is an incredible piece so richly and expertly scored and full of excitement. The Symphony no 3 is an impressive piece in which both the slow music and the agitated music is brilliantly realised. The Symphony no 5 is stunning, full of originality, with a chorus and organ and its welcome modernity should please everybody except those who are shallow and/or prejudiced.

The Concertino for piano and orchestra is a work full of charm without being banal as you find in Chaminade.

Szabelski died in Katowice, Upper Silesia on 27 August 1979.

Again one has to ask the question, Why does this very fine composers get ignored?

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