

**NAXOS**

**Jan Ignacy**

**PADEREWSKI**

**Songs and Mélodies**

**Suite in G major**

**Nocturne**

**Alina Adamski, Soprano**

**Agata Schmidt, Mezzo-soprano**

**Capella Bydgosiensis**

**Mariusz Smolij**



<b>Suite in G major (1884)</b>		<b>10:47</b>
1	I. Allegro molto	3:25
2	II. [Andante]	2:56
3	III. Scherzo	4:26
<b>Four Songs, Op. 7 (1882–85)</b>		<b>9:49</b>
Texts: Adam Asnyk (1838–1897)		
(arr. Marcin Gumiela [b. 1980] for soprano and string orchestra, 2019)		
4	No. 1. Gdy ostatnia róża zwiędła ('When the last rose wilted')	2:10
5	No. 2. Siwy koniu ('Grey horse')	1:28
6	No. 3. Szumi w gaju brzezina ('Birch wood rustling in a grove')	2:22
7	No. 4. Chłopca mego mi zabrali ('My boy was taken away')	3:49
<b>Six Songs, Op. 18 (1887–93)</b>		<b>14:50</b>
Texts: Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855) 8–12; Franciszek Morawski (1783–1861) 13		
(arr. M. Gumiela for soprano and string orchestra, 2019)		
8	No. 1. Polały się łzy me ('My tears have shed')	2:30
9	No. 2. Piosnka dudarza ('The Song of Bagpipe Boy')	3:51
10	No. 3. Moja pieszczotka ('My cosset')	2:02
11	No. 4. Nad wodą wielką ('Over a great water')	2:29
12	No. 5. Tylem wytrzymał ('I endured so much')	1:52
13	No. 6. Gdybym się zmienił ('If I had changed')	2:06
<b>Nocturne in B flat major, Op. 16, No. 4 (1890–92)</b>		<b>4:13</b>
(arr. Mariusz Smolij [b. 1962] for string orchestra, 2020)		
<b>Douze Mélodies, Op. 22 (1903)</b>		<b>30:49</b>
Texts: Catulle Mendès (1841–1909)		
(arr. M. Gumiela for mezzo-soprano and string orchestra, 2019)		
14	No. 1. Dans la forêt ('Into the forest')	3:16
15	No. 2. Ton coeur est d'or pur ('Your heart is pure gold')	1:12
17	No. 3. Le Ciel est très bas ('The sky is very low')	2:33
18	No. 4. Naguère ('In days gone by')	1:51
19	No. 5. Un jeune pâtre ('A young shepherd')	1:26
20	No. 6. Elle marche d'un pas distraité ('She walks distractedly')	2:22
21	No. 7. La Nonne ('The Nun')	4:14
22	No. 8. Viduité ('Emptiness')	3:19
23	No. 9. Lune froide ('Cold moon')	2:15
24	No. 10. Querelleuse ('Quarrelsome woman')	1:25
25	No. 11. L'Amour fatal ('Fatal Love')	3:05
26	No. 12. L'Ennemie ('The Enemy')	3:31

## Jan Ignacy Paderewski (1860–1941)

### Songs and Mélodies • Suite in G major • Nocturne

Jan Ignacy Paderewski is more readily associated with his career as an internationally celebrated virtuoso pianist than with his work as a composer. Indeed, such was the magnitude of his success on the concert platform that the relentless touring schedule that ensued left him with little time to write music. Added to this were his activities as a prominent advocate for Polish independence leading up to and during the First World War and his subsequent appointment as Prime Minister. Today, it is not easy to place Paderewski's creative achievements within the history of Polish music, and yet in spite of his modest output – 70 orchestral, instrumental and vocal works, and a handful of sketches and unfinished ideas – a few compositions have come to the forefront, including the *Douze Mélodies, Op. 22* set to poetry by Catulle Mendès, recorded here.

The unfinished *Suite in G major* for string orchestra (1884) joined the list of Paderewski's known compositions when in 1986 the Polish musicologist Małgorzata Perkowska-Waszek unearthed the autograph score in the collection of the library of The Chopin University of Music (UMFC) in Warsaw. Until then, all that was known was that Paderewski had been working on a suite for strings during his studies in Berlin with Heinrich Urban in the spring of 1884 and had probably not completed it. The young composer had communicated his reservations about the piece to his friend (and later, second wife) Helena Górska in a letter dated 25 January 1884. Nevertheless, the musical substance of the *Suite* showed promise, with a touch of endearing naivety.

The first movement, *Allegro molto*, features an energetic, cheerful and free-flowing pastoral-sounding melody that transforms to a forthright march, while the second movement *Andante* provides a beautifully contrasting static, hymn-like narration. The *Scherzo*, the most impressive movement of the three, glances towards the music of a young Mendelssohn.

The *Suite* was never performed during Paderewski's lifetime; its belated premiere took place on 9 June 1998 in

Kraków. This is the first commercial recording of the work. Given the fact that the intended fourth and final movement was never completed or has been lost, the conductor Mariusz Smolij has here switched the original placement of the second (*Scherzo*) and third (*Andante*) movements to achieve a more coherent flow and create a 'finished' artistic statement.

The 1880s was a period of intense creativity for Paderewski as he continued his studies in Berlin. In addition to writing numerous solo piano pieces and the *Piano Concerto Op. 17*, he penned *Four Songs, Op. 7*, set to poetry by Adam Asnyk (1838–1897) and published by the Bote und Bock publishing house in Berlin around 1888. Songs form a significant part of Paderewski's compositional output: to the *Op. 7* collection he added *Six Songs, Op. 18* and *Douze Mélodies, Op. 22*, plus three individual songs: *Dola, Konwalijska* and the miniature, *Dans la forêt*.

The *Four Songs, Op. 7* are full of melancholy and allusions to folk idioms, present in the melodic and harmonic phrasing, and the melodies contain a natural, flowing interval pattern. Throughout there is an atmosphere of seriousness, perhaps even incarnate sadness, but also a feeling of national pride created by indirect references to Polish folk music, notably in the song *My boy was taken away*, where Paderewski's score closely conveys the message of Asnyk's poetry.

Five years later Bote und Bock published a second collection of vocal works by Paderewski. Composed in the years 1887–93, the *Six Songs, Op. 18*, set to poems by Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855), attracted approval from audiences and critics alike when they were performed at a concert in London on 11 December 1893. The *St James's Gazette* reported: 'but what attracted so large crowds of music lovers, filling the room to the brim, was the prospect of hearing six new songs by Paderewski, sung by Edward Lloyd, accompanied by Paderewski himself.' The newspaper's reviewer found the works 'very beautiful, very Polish, almost exactly reflecting the spirit of poetry

and the meaning of words.' Furthermore, Paderewski himself accompanied the songs in the presence of the eminent critic Jan Kleczyński, who described them as 'lovely and full of tenderness' and 'small gifts, framed in simple but noble frames, with a clear melody that touches the soul.' (Incidentally, the final song, *If I Had Changed*, has been attributed to Mickiewicz but was in fact written by Franciszek Morawski [1783–1861]).

The *Op. 18* songs were the most mature of Paderewski's vocal-instrumental achievements to date until, a decade later in 1903, he composed a collection of songs to verse by the French poet Catulle Mendès: the *Douze Mélodies*, *Op. 22*. This late work (Paderewski's creative activity ended in 1903) turned out to be the most surprising and original of his *oeuvre*. The 43-year-old composer, who had so far spoken in a traditional tonal language, here leaped into the world of harmonic ambiguity and tonal ambivalence; a land full of dissonance and chromaticism. To the sophisticated poems of Mendès he created music from a palette of unusual colours and creative harmonies. In every aspect the *Op. 22* songs represents a departure for Paderewski:

the melody is almost stripped of ornaments; the thickened piano texture creates an otherworldly backdrop for the text. The orchestral translation of the piano original, recorded here for the first time, adds a new dimension, enhancing the aesthetic of ambiguity and exoticism in a way that might be compared to Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. It stands as the most original set of songs dating from the beginning of the 20th century in Polish musical literature.

The *Nocturne in B flat major*, *Op. 16, No. 4* (1890–92) was an important addition to Paderewski's concert repertoire. Unlike more typical 19th-century nocturnes, *Op. 16, No. 4* loses the traditionally melancholic, dark aura and instead emanates a light, almost carefree sound. Although relatively simple on the surface, in this quiet character piece one can find interesting harmonic shifts in the narration. A popular piano miniature in its day, the *Nocturne* netted Paderewski the considerable sum of 5,000 marks when Bote und Bock paid for the publishing rights.

**Marcin Majchrowski**  
English translation: Mariusz Smolij

## Alina Adamski



Photo: Michał Gruda

Coloratura soprano Alina Adamski is a graduate of Krystyna Rorbach's class at the Academy of Music Łódź and was a student at the Conservatory of Music 'Francesco Venezz' in Italy. In 2014 she debuted at the Grand Theatre in Łódź and the Podlasie Opera and Philharmonic in Białystok, and the same year she entered the Opera Academy at the Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera in Warsaw. She has won numerous awards, including first prize at the Paderewski Vocal Music Competition in Bydgoszcz in 2015. In 2016 she won a contract to perform at the Teatro Real in Madrid, and she was also a prize winner at the International Voice Competition 'Le Grand Prix de l'Opera'. Adamski has performed at Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera in Warsaw and the Grand Theatre, Poznań. She participated in Salzburg Festival's Young Singers Project and the International Opera Studio in Zurich. In 2019 she performed in Francesco Cilei's *Adriana Lecouvreur* with Anna Netrebko and Anita Rachvelishvili.

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

## Agata Schmidt



Photo: Kinga Karpati

Mezzo-soprano Agata Schmidt studied at the Bydgoszcz Music Academy in the class of Hanna Michalak. She went on to win second prize at Le Grand Prix de l'Opéra in Bucharest (2015) and the award for the best interpretation of a Polish song at the International Stanisław Moniuszko Vocal Competition (2016). Between 2011 and 2018 she was at the National Opera in Paris. As a member of Atelier Lyrique she debuted as Orpheus in Pina Bausch's production of *Orpheus und Euridice*, receiving the Prix de l'Arop and Prix du Cercle Carpeaux for best young singer (2014). In this role she returned to Palais Garnier in 2018. As a singer of chamber music and oratorios she has performed in Paris and London and at Aix-en-Provence, Verbier and Aldeburgh festivals. She performs as a duo with pianist Bartłomiej Wezner and the pair were prize winners at the 50th International Vocal Competition 's-Hertogenbosch.

## Chamber Orchestra of the Pomeranian Philharmonic 'Capella Bydgosciensis'



Photo: Filip Kowalkowski

Capella Bydgosciensis is one of the oldest and most prominent ensembles of its kind in Poland. It was founded in 1962 as one of the ensembles of the Pomeranian Philharmonic, and its artistic directors have included Stanisław Gatoński, Włodzimierz Szymański, Karol Teutsch, Daniel Stabrawa and Mirosław Jacek Błaszczyk. With a repertoire spanning Baroque to contemporary music, the chamber orchestra has performed with musicians including Paul Esswood, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Roman Jabłoński, Sumi Jo, Gary Karr, Wieland Kuijken, George Malcolm, Mariusz Smolij, and Wanda Wiłkomirska. Capella Bydgosciensis has made several recordings of note, including a disc of works by the Polish composer Grażyna Bacewicz – her *Symphony for Strings* and *Concerto for Strings* with pianist Ewa Kupiec and conductor Mariusz Smolij (Naxos 8.573229, 2015), which received a Fryderyk award for best recording of Polish music abroad. In 2019 the ensemble performed the world premiere of Paderewski's *Six Songs, Op. 18* (to poems by Adam Mickiewicz) and *Douze Mélodies, Op. 22* (to poems by Catulle Mendès) in an interpretation by composer Marcin Gumiela commissioned by the Pomeranian Philharmonic.

## Mariusz Smolij



Mariusz Smolij has led over 130 orchestras on four continents, appearing at 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 Rochester Philharmonic, among others. Elsewhere, he has directed concerts at the Tonhalle, Zurich, Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, National Centre for the Arts, Beijing, and Warsaw National Philharmonic Concert Hall, to name a few. A founder member of the Penderecki Quartet, he directed the NFM Lutosławski Philharmonic and the International Festival Wratlavia Cantans, and is currently music director of the Acadiana Symphony in Louisiana and Riverside Symphonia in New Jersey. For Naxos he has recorded music by Andrzej Panufnik, Tadeusz Szeliowski, Miklós Rózsa, Eugene Zádor, Ernst Bloch and Romuald Twardowski. His 2015 disc of music by the Polish composer Grażyna Bacewicz won the Fryderyk Award.

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

Although Paderewski is more readily associated with his career as a legendary virtuoso pianist, his modest output of 70 orchestral, instrumental and vocal works deserves to be more widely known. Prominent among his vocal output is a series of early songs that reveal natural flowing patterns while exploring both melancholy and folk idioms. The *Douze Mélodies*, written at the end of his compositional career, is the most original and striking Polish set of songs of the period, notable for dissonance, chromaticism and a palette of rich and unusual musical colours, to which this orchestral arrangement adds a whole new dimension. Little known, the early *Suite in G major* offers youthful warmth and brio.

Ministerstwo  
**Kultury**  
i Dziedzictwa  
Narodowego.

Jan Ignacy  
**PADEREWSKI**  
(1860–1941)



Województwo  
Kujawsko-Pomorskie

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|--------------|--|--------------|
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| <b>4–7</b>   | <b>Four Songs, Op. 7</b> (1882–85), arr. Marcin Gumiela (b. 1980)<br>Texts: Adam Asnyk (1838–1897)                         | <b>9:49</b>  |
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**WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS**

**Alina Adamski, Soprano** **4–13** • **Agata Schmidt, Mezzo-soprano** **15–26**  
**Capella Bydgosciensis • Mariusz Smolij**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

The Polish and French sung texts can be accessed at [www.naxos.com/libretti/579085.htm](http://www.naxos.com/libretti/579085.htm)

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Cover painting by Tadeusz Małachowski (photo by Filip Kowalkowski, courtesy of the Pomeranian Philharmonic)

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