

Homage to
SZYMON LAKS 1901-1983

“Engaging personality, polemicist of a universal culture”

IN PRAISE OF SZYMON LAKS – ALEKSANDER TANSMAN 1984



Jacqueline
Cole piano



Photo by Clive Barda

*Laks Haas Chopin
Messiaen Schul*



Sunday 16 January 2005 at 5.00 pm

In Commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz Birkenau

“If only.....”

Ludwik Żuk Skarszewski*

In anticipation and commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day 2005 whose ‘theme’ is survivors, this concert is a tribute to SZYMON LAKS, a Polish Jewish composer and writer.

* Ludwik Żuk Skarszewski – born in Poland 1905 – fellow comrade and Notenschreiber in Auschwitz. Composer, folklorist, musicologist and survivor of the Holocaust.

PROGRAMME

SZYMON LAKS (1901-1983)

Sonata Brève (1946) UK Première

PAVEL HAAS (1899-1944)

Suite Op. 13 (1935)

FRYDERYK CHOPIN (1810-1849)

Nocturne in B, Op. 62, No. 1 ‘Tuberose’ (1846)

Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53 ‘Heroic’ (1840)

I N T E R V A L

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)

Première communion de la Vierge; Regard du silence
from ‘Vingt regards sur L’Enfant-Jésus’ (Paris 1944)

SIEGMUND SCHUL (1916-1944)

Fugue (Prague 1941)

SZYMON LAKS

Ballade – Homage à Chopin (Paris 1949)
UK Première



Szymon Laks



Pavel Haas



Fryderyk Chopin



Olivier Messiaen



Siegmund Schul

SZYMON LAKS was a student of Melcer and Stakowski at the Warsaw Conservatoire, and with Paul Vidal and Henri Rabaud at the Paris Conservatoire. He was one of the young generation of Polish composers active in Paris prior to the Second World War. Despite the interruption to his musical career and the loss of many scores destroyed by war, Szymon Laks was abundant in his output with some works still waiting to be discovered. He died in Paris in 1983.



Szymon Laks's arrest and deportation occurred in Paris 1941, first to Pithiviers camp in France and then to Auschwitz Birkenau in July 1942. His remarkable and unusual survival was in part due to his gifts as *Notenschreiber*, translator, orchestral violinist and conductor of the Auschwitz II Mens Orchestra 1942-1944.

Aleksander Tansman wrote: “After returning from Auschwitz, it took a few years before Szymon Laks was able to return completely to composition. One does not recover one’s creative equilibrium easily after such a harrowing experience. But once he resumed his musical work, he bestowed upon us works of excellent quality, which immediately met with great public success.”

JACQUELINE COLE – pianist, artist, writer and founder and artistic director of the Viktor Ullmann and Pavel Haas Foundations UK, and the Fundacja Instytut Viktora Ullmanna Cieszyn Poland – has given concerts throughout the United States, Sweden, France, Holland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and in the Czech Republic and Poland. She is an international artist whose focus is performance of the neglected and unrecognised composers of the first half of the 20th Century. She is currently engaged in research for the writing of a biography of Szymon Laks. Future concert engagements in Europe as ambassador for Viktor Ullmann and his contemporaries include an interest in discovering, commemorating and collating the neglected works of Polish and Polish Jewish composers who suffered in the Holocaust.

Jacqueline’s teachers have included Nadia Boulanger, Vlado Perlemuter, Yvonne Loriod Messiaen, Jeanne Loriod (Ondes Martenot), James Gibb, Kenneth van Barthold and Mary Fedden RA.

“Thank you Jacqueline Cole for your most poetic interpretation of ‘Alouette Lulu’. With all my very friendly congratulations.”
Olivier Messiaen, Centre Acanthes, 1987. “Tremendous resources of musicianship and artistry.” Musical Opinion 2003

TICKETS: £20 £17 £14 £10 all bookable in advance from Wigmore Hall Box Office Tel: 020 7935 2141

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Online Bookings: www.wigmore-hall.org.uk There is no administration charge for online bookings. Only MasterCard and Visa are accepted online.

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