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*Editorial*

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“Music and Expression” was the theme of the 51st Musicological Conference of the Polish Composers' Union, held on 13–15 October 2022 in Katowice (Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music). The reflection on the mystery of the expressivity of music resulted in a number of highly interesting research approaches, the aim of which was to unravel the mystery from a variety of perspectives and by means of a variety of methods. The conference participants tackled issues like the definition of expression, its presence in specific works and their performances, the way of perceiving it, its importance and meaning. The present volume of *Polski Rocznik Muzykologiczny* – in accordance with the well-established tradition of our periodical – presents a representative selection of articles that are the result of the Katowice meeting of musicologists and music theorists.

First, we present to readers two plenary lectures delivered by special guests of the 2022 conference. In the first Krzysztof Guczalski seeks to answer the fundamental question “Is music expression?”, taking into account various theoretical and aesthetic positions, while in the second, Karol Berger examines Gustav Mahler’s Fifth Symphony from the perspective of overcoming the “per aspera ad astra” tradition epitomised by Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.

In the following article Sławomira Żerańska-Kominek places the problem of expression in a different context, referring it to the properties of birdsong. The author reflects on the source of expression and aesthetic meaning of birdsong for humans, on how bird “music” resonates with the human world.

The main block of articles in this volume of *Rocznik Muzykologiczny* concerns various aspects of expression in the context of musical works by specific composers. Bartłomiej Barwinek discusses Josef Matthias Hauer's *Klavierstücke mit Überschriften nach Worten von Friedrich Hölderlin* Op. 25, seeking to decipher the expressive categories adopted by the composer. Szymon Borys examines the way expression works, using examples from *Kafka-Fragmente* Op. 24 for soprano and violin by György Kurtág, the Hungarian master of musical aphorism. Further on we will find in the volume an analysis of the unique expressive qualities of a song cycle for soprano and piano written by Mieczysław Wajnberg to the words of Julian Tuwim, *Old Letters* Op. 77, an analysis carried out by Agnieszka Nowok-Zych. Next, the expressive forms and categories in the music of Andrzej Krzanowski music are insightfully explored by Magdalena Stochniol, who refers them to the composer's autobiographical experiences. Finally, Joanna Schiller-Rydzewska analyses four musical settings of Joseph Eichendorff's poem "In Danzig" by Hans Pfitzner, Max Stange, Alfred Balfanz and the young Gdańsk composer Kamil Cieslik, drawing conclusions about the importance of the expression of the poetic word in relation to music.

Izabela Zymer's article contributes yet another perspective to the volume. On the basis of selected contributions by Zofia Lissa, especially her speech at the 1949 conference in Łągów Lubuski, the author examines the question of expression with regard to the categories of realism and formalism, and attempts to reconstruct the Lissa's way of thinking about the emotional impact of music.

The last article included in the volume is an abridged, diagrammatic version, as it were, of a paper delivered at the conference by Krzysztof Bilica, who attempts to capture the essence of expression on the metaphorical "selfie".

Wishing you a satisfying reading experience,

*dr hab. Iwona Lindstedt, prof. UW*

*Editor-in-Chief*