

## The Other Tchaikowsky



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1947)

In this 1947 passport photo, Andrzej is age 12. During the Second World War, many Polish citizens changed their names and used false papers. Most retained their new identities after the war and this was true for Andrzej Czajkowski and Celina Czajkowska.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

Robert Andrzej Czajkowski was nine years old when Germany capitulated on May 9th, 1945. The loss of over six million Polish citizens from a total population in 1939 of thirty-five million represented a casualty rate of 18 per cent. In proportion to its size, Poland incurred far more damage and casualties in the war than any other country. Although his grandmother's adroit maneuvering had kept Andrzej out of the death camps, he did not escape the psychological effect of this nightmare period in which life had descended to the level of barbarism, as it had in much of eastern Europe, and especially for Jews. His mother, sent to the Treblinka death camp, became one of the unnamed millions who in some particular but unwritten scene of inhumanity added her count of one to the estimated six million Jews whose final disposition had been effected by the Nazis. Perhaps even worse for Andrzej, she had rejected him, and seemed to have chosen this fate in preference to trying to stay with him and struggle for their mutual survival.

Perhaps his confusion and survivor's guilt, if treated with immediate understanding and consolation, might have been ameliorated to some extent, but such treatment was not possible in the grim struggle to survive in the aftermath of the Polish catastrophe. Instead, his psychological impairment may have been aggravated by the machinations of the very person who had struggled so hard each day to ensure his survival -- grandmother Celina.

The most common psychological manifestation of the survivors of the Holocaust was a chronic depressive state, including feelings of fatigue, nervousness, and emptiness. Disorders of sleep were common and included the fear of falling asleep as well as of early morning awakening. There were also numerous physical symptoms, mainly headaches and disorders of the gastrointestinal tract. In years to come, Andrzej would exhibit these symptoms in the extreme.

Grandmother Celina perhaps aggravated Andrzej's mental and emotional state by transmitting to him the message that he must justify their existence by becoming a living monument to the triumph of their survival and to the world's triumph over the Nazis' nearly successful annihilation of the Jews. Andrzej had to "pay for" having survived where so many others had not. Since he had already demonstrated phenomenal intelligence and intellectual abilities, great deeds were expected.

Celina was not a subtle person and as long as she was alive Andrzej would have little choice over the direction of his life. Not an easy child under any circumstances, Andrzej resisted and hated Celina for her efforts "on his behalf." Their relationship, indeed the entire question of Andrzej's exact psychological state, is beyond the limits of this biographical sketch; nevertheless, there is no doubt that Andrzej suffered severe effects from the whole horrible situation, as well as the effects of being, from the age of seven, without mother or father and in the hands of his domineering, over-ambitious and sometimes heartless grandmother.

### Move to Lodz (1945)

By the end of the war, Grandmother Celina had decided Andrzej was going to study music and become one of the greatest pianists in the world. Andrzej had demonstrated he could learn piano music without playing a note, and in Celina's view, with proper training, he would undoubtedly rise to the top. Before the war, the best piano teacher in Poland, by most accounts, had been Stanislaw Szpinalski. In 1945, Szpinalski was teaching at the Poznan Conservatory, but was only accepting advanced students. There was no possibility of Andrzej studying with him at that time. Celina moved to Poznan to convince Szpinalski otherwise, but he refused to take on a nine year old student who had never studied the piano before. Celina deferred study with Szpinalski and selected the only remaining option -- study at the Lodz Academy of Music. Lodz, within 100 miles of Warsaw, had a strong musical presence before the war. Before 1940, it had both a philharmonic orchestra and an opera company, and after the war it was one of the first cities to reorganize a music school.

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The Lodz Academy of Music was modest, but on the faculty were two well-known piano teachers: Wladyslaw Kedra and Emma Altberg. Kedra (1918-1968) had studied with Antoni Dobkiewicz at the Lodz Conservatory (1935-1937) and Magda Tagliaferro (1937-1939) at the Paris Conservatory. Known for his excellent memory and great technical facility, he won fifth prize in the 1949 Chopin Competition. But in 1945, Kedra was just 27 years old, and he agreed to teach Andrzej at the Lodz school.

Celina was now completely out of money, but still managed to find a small apartment in Lodz and moved in with Andrzej and with her widowed sister, Dorka Swieca-Lanota. Dorka was employed at the Lodz library as a typist, and it is believed that Celina worked as a hatmaker as well as whatever jobs she could find in the beauty and fashion business. The apartment was too small for a piano so Andrzej had to practice on school pianos or on pianos belonging to acquaintances who lived nearby.

To Celina's gratification, Andrzej's abilities were awesome and immediately obvious to everyone: he could simply play the piano as if there were nothing to it. Kedra would assign a lesson and Andrzej would sight read it on the spot. Lessons Andrzej did take home were often ignored; instead, he would learn something by Szymanowski, or Chopin, and play them in place of the assigned work. Kedra did nothing to discourage such an obvious talent, but he was a bit overwhelmed. At the end of the first year, there was a jury competition to see which piano students would advance to the class of Emma Altberg. The violinist Wanda Wilkomirska was a new student at Lodz and remembers the jury recital. Wanda Wilkomirska:

"I was sitting with other students; because the school was so small, we were eager to get new students, to meet new people. This boy was playing his own composition, Theme and Variations, and couldn't manage one of these variations; it was too difficult for him, and he started crying. I will never forget that. I tried to console him. This boy, with his ten years, was a real gentleman. I told him something like, 'You shouldn't cry, you will have red eyes.' He told me, 'The ladies always like me. I never cry because I don't want to have red eyes and I want to look nice.' He said I would always look nice."

In spite of this difficulty with the variations, the jury recital was a success for Andrzej and he advanced to the class of Emma Altberg. How could they hold back a 10 year old who played the standard composers so excellently and only faltered on the variations he had written to his own composition? Altberg, a student of Wanda Landowska, was popular at the Lodz Conservatory, and Andrzej liked her very much, both as a teacher and as a person. Another student at Lodz during this time was Andrzej's distant cousin, Tadeusz Kerner. Kerner was ten years older than Andrzej, which precluded a close friendship at that time, but a few years later they became close friends.

Like Kedra, Altberg saw an enormous talent growing in Andrzej. She did her best to guide and discipline his skills. It wasn't easy as Andrzej needed constant challenge and would often learn too quickly: he never seemed really to master something because he could simply do it on the first try. For her other students, mastering a composition meant long hours of practice and study until, slowly, the technique as well as the composition was imbedded in the mind and fingers. To be able to do something immediately somehow fell short. But what could be done? Altberg had never seen a student like this and wasn't sure what to do.

As Andrzej started the 1946-1947 school year with Altberg, he decided to enter a Mother's Day poetry contest sponsored by the school. In Andrzej's unpublished autobiography, for the year 1946, he wrote the following:

Homework that afternoon was a rushed, perfunctory affair because the poem for Mothers' Day was far more important and would no doubt take a lot of time. I tried to think of it at various times during the classes, but all it did was to make me inattentive, and now I could neither remember anything the teacher had said, nor produce a single line of verse. Grams was sitting across the table trying to knit. She was really hopeless at it and only kept it up because her doctor had recommended physical exercise. In keeping untypically silent to help

me concentrate, she glanced at me occasionally, but didn't tell me to straighten up, take my elbows off the table, or keep my tongue in. At length, seeing the page still blank, she asked, "No divine fire today?"

From Aunt Dorka, the remark would have been sarcastic, but Grams' tone showed nothing but solicitude. "Divine fire" was the least she felt entitled to expect of me. She could always kindle it herself. "I really can't get started," I said. "Shall I give you the first line?" "I wish you would." I could always trust Grams to provide one line. A single line was no rhyme. So it takes no real poetic gift to summon it up. Grams got up, put down her knitting, and took her glasses off. She walked over to where I was sitting and put her hands on my shoulders. I did not look around.

After a silence, in a soft, solemn, theatrical voice I heard her say, "Mummy, where are you? Why aren't you here?" She paused, partly for effect, partly because her share of the task had been completed. Indeed, I had been right to rely on her. A tearjerker. Of course! My mistake had been to think of Mothers' Day as an occasion for which only a festive, cheerful poem would be suitable. I could always produce a tearjerker. I looked 'round and smiled gratefully. She kissed me, watched me write her line down, and then went back to her chair and her knitting. The next time she looked up, the page was three quarters full, and she rewarded me with a happy smile. Two artists went on working in comradely silence.

It was a double performance. Grams had unwittingly started me off on two activities at once, the sugary poem, which took little concentration and no effort and an imaginary dialogue, which took me by surprise. It could neither be stopped nor controlled. It started as soon as I wrote down "Why aren't you here?" and it went like this:

"Yes, why?  
Shall I tell you why?  
I know it all.  
You preferred Albert, didn't you?  
You called him a swine, I remember.  
But you preferred death with him to living with me.  
That's a fine compliment to a son."

Mother didn't raise her voice to reply. It was sweet and quiet:

"Darling, try to remember.  
What chance would two people have had of escaping?  
Three, including Grams.  
A small child is easier to hide than a grown woman.  
I just wanted you to have the best chance."

"I didn't want a chance.  
I wanted you.  
I had every bit as much right to die as you had.  
You defrauded yourself of life and me of my place by your side.  
Wherever you went.  
And you lied to me like a slut, remember that?  
Remember saying, 'Mummy will be with you in a few days:  
I knew you were lying at the time.  
I saw right through you."

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You know I did. So don't look so bloody angelic.  
You're probably a cake of soap by now."

"Darling, please stop.  
You really mustn't miss me so much.  
It does you harm and me no good."

"Miss you! I haven't thought of you since that day,  
the day you didn't even have the guts to say good-bye.  
Miss you?  
You fucking sentimental cunt.  
You certainly took great pains to prevent the swine, Albert,  
from missing you too much.  
He was allowed Treblinka, but not I.  
Did you have a nice honeymoon?  
You must have looked a picture, dying in each others' arms."

"Just how much do you know about Treblinka?"

Her voice was still quiet, but from its sternness I could tell her anger.  
I did not interrupt her this time.

"You don't seem to know much. I am glad.  
Men and women died in different chambers.  
Are you feeling a bit better now?"

"Mother,"  
I said, all anger gone,  
"Mother, is it true that sometimes the gas supply ran low,  
and it took people several days to die?  
You weren't part of such a batch, were you mother?  
Answer me this.  
I am sorry for all I've said, but just answer this."

"Have you finished?" asked Grams. I started and blinked. The poem had been ready for some minutes now, and I had forgotten all about it. I handed it over to her and was silent while she read. I tried very hard to continue that interrupted dialogue, but could no longer visualize mother. "The humble tribute of an orphan's tears," said Grams repeating the last line aloud. "Why that's wonderful, Ducky. And all that in this one little head." The poem won first prize in the competition and was printed in the school magazine.

This portion of the autobiography was written in the mid-1970's and, like the rest of the autobiography, was a therapeutic exercise that expressed powerful feelings long sequestered in his subconscious. That such a poem or contest really existed seems improbable. However, the important fact is the terrible distress that turned into the outer vilification of his mother, the bitterness Andrzej felt towards his mother for most of his adult life. The scatology arose from the emotional content of this distress, and emerged in his autobiography and whenever his personal relationships came under stress. In the late-1970's, after Andrzej visited Israel, he learned many others had similar experiences and similar problems. The perceived uniqueness of his situation

turned out to be not so unique after all. Only then did Andrzej forgive his mother for her actions nearly 40 years before. In the meantime, bitterness and self-torment often filled his mind and eroded his spirit.

When Andrzej asked questions about his mother, Celina's standard response was that Karl was responsible for what happened because he didn't try hard enough to get them out of Poland before the war came. This was extraordinarily unfair to Karl, who had made every effort to get them out before the war. Once hostilities started, there were no longer any possibilities, and no one could have helped them escape Poland. One must suppose Andrzej believed what he was told; he always harbored an undercurrent of hatred towards his father. Andrzej's mother was dead and had not cared for him anyway, and his father was a monster.

In the spring of 1947, at the age of 58, Celina had a heart attack. She had had a mild attack in 1938 (and was told she should live a quiet life!), but this one was much more serious. For several days, Celina was in critical condition. Dorka, sure Celina would die, wrote to their sister Mala Zeiden in Paris advising her of the situation. She wrote that if Celina should die, she would place Andrzej in a Polish orphanage. Mala wrote back that she had contacted Karl Krauthammer and Karl said Andrzej should be sent to Paris if anything happened to Celina.

Dorka looked after Andrzej while Celina was in the hospital. Although Andrzej and Celina didn't get along and engaged in almost constant shouting matches, they nevertheless understood each other. Dorka was another story. Dorka was a devout communist, until the death of her husband; then she became a religious fanatic. She went to church many times a day, starting with 5 a.m. Mass, and was constantly preaching to anyone who would listen about the "true faith." Intellectually, Andrzej was able to run circles around Dorka, and, while Celina was in the hospital, he did this as much as possible to escape her religionism. However, he still ended up at a lot of Catholic Masses praying for Celina's recovery.

Celina surprised the doctors with her recovery, perhaps thinking of what would happen to Andrzej if she were to die. She was angered by Dorka's plan for Andrzej in the event of her death. Sending Andrzej to an orphanage was unthinkable; however, sending Andrzej to his father was also unthinkable. She was further angered when Karl sent a letter directly to Andrzej, inviting him to Paris. Celina forbade Dorka to visit the hospital, but welcomed visits by Andrzej. In a portion of Andrzej's autobiography for 1947, he relates one of his hospital visits:

She still saw the boy once a week and took him away after the mandatory half hour (or sooner, as Celina sometimes lost her temper and ordered him out). Everyone agreed in deploring Celina's heartlessness towards her sister, who now showed her unaltered devotion by sitting in mute patience on an uncomfortable bench just outside the ward. The nurse gave heart-rending descriptions of Dorka whispering over her rosary. While she was thus engaged, Celina struggled to control the boy and her own nerves. She was determined that this time there should be no scene. She had rehearsed her remarks as one might prepare an examination, discarding anything that led to trouble in the past, and she had taken her behavior through an almost military drill. Her studied pose seldom survived the boy's first remark.

"And how is your father?" she asked at the start of Andrzej's fourth or fifth unaccompanied visit. It was one of the questions she had vowed (to herself) not to ask. "Certainly better than you," laughed the boy. "Though you are trying to outdo Rasputin. Most people decay after death, but you have managed to reverse the process." Celina gasped. She knew he would never before have dared to insult her so openly, but she could not recall the sister on whose absence she had just insisted or even use her name to frighten and restrain the boy. Both of them would have sneered at so abject an admission of incompetence.

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"I am sorry to keep you waiting," she said, managing a somewhat labored irony. "I am quite as impatient as you, I assure you, more, if possible. Anyway you needn't wait, need you? Who's keeping you? Are you afraid I might survive without your tender care? Or must it take your hand to close my eyes?" This was already getting near to a scene, the one disgrace she had hoped to avoid. The realization only accelerated her loss of control. She heard her voice gaining speed and volume. Her breath came in short and rancorous gusts. She sounded like somebody about to be sick. The boy knew all those symptoms. He also knew how to bring them on. He had not long been able to enjoy his particular game with impunity, and still found it fun.

"Waiting?" he repeated. "Why, I am only waiting for my passport. No doubt you'll look your best being laid out. But I can take your performance on trust. Anyway, it's not such an event, being grandorphaned. You have survived that in your time yourself." "Then why have you come here," cried Celina, "to jeer at me too?" "You tried to make me an orphan!" shouted Andrzej into her face. "And a bastard! Like all those shitty beggars at the orphanage. They only know they have a father because somebody beats them. You would have killed my father if you could. That would have been another of your sacrifices. You'd have made lovely tirades, wouldn't you, about the poor kid who had no one but you in the world, even if you had done the orphaning yourself."

The boy's outburst stunned Celina into a short silence. It was now he who quivered. All other conversation in the ward had stopped. "I'll never forgive Felicja for giving you life," she said, softly but heavily, "I'll curse her memory for that. I'll, I'll ...." "On the contrary, you should appreciate her tact in leaving me to your sole care with such good grace. You didn't try very hard to save her did you. It's too bad that a forgotten father should now have risen up from the ash heap to claim his own son. The 5.5. should have helped you there too. Anyway, it's now your turn to make a graceful exit, and you've been taking your time about that."

"Look at him," called Celina to the ward. "This is the kind of creature that survives. My Ignacy had to hang, but this survived to pollute the world. This was my crime, giving my life to let this reptile loose." But the only reply she received was the familiar tinkle of a patient's bell. Someone a few beds down had decided to summon the nurse. In a minute the boy would be gone. "Don't you dare come to my funeral," she thundered at him. "I shall curse you with my dying breath." "Do it now!" screamed the boy. "Let's see your dying breath!" But the nurse grabbed Andrzej and led him out. Two days later Celina was informed that any future interviews would have to include Dorka, who had sent the authorities a most cogent account. Of course, Celina was free to see neither if she so preferred. Celina did refuse with firmness and pride and let 2 weeks and 1 whole visiting day go by without asking to see them.

Celina recovered from her heart attack and came home after six weeks in the hospital. The relationship between her and Dorka was irreparably damaged, and Dorka decided to move to Sopot, a resort town on the Baltic Sea. But the whole illness episode gave Celina ideas. Why live in Poland? Why not Paris? Poland was in chaos from the war, the Stalinist communists were taking over the government and clamping down on travel outside of Poland, and money was hard to come by. They couldn't even afford a piano. Why not let Karl take over for awhile? Maybe he could control Andrzej and get him to behave. Celina was thinking a lot about money. Karl was "wealthy" by their standards; she could retire and have a few years of peace.

Celina met with Emma Altberg and was given the name of a Madame Breton, a woman who could continue Andrzej's piano lessons in Paris. Emma agreed that Andrzej should have the best piano teacher in Paris and that would be Lazare Lévy at the Paris Conservatory. The problem was that Andrzej was too young.

Lévy's studio had but a few openings each year and he accepted only senior students; a 12-year-old wouldn't have a chance. Celina decided that if Lévy was the best, then Andrzej would study with Lévy.

Karl responded to Celina's letter that if Andrzej wanted to receive his education in Paris, then Andrzej was most welcome to stay with him. Karl would pay all the expenses. Celina agreed. On the basis of Karl's support, Andrzej and Celina were granted passports to leave Poland. True to his word, Karl sent expense money and two train tickets to Celina and Andrzej, Warsaw to Paris, one way.

#### Move to Paris (1948)

Celina and Andrzej left for Paris in January, 1948. Andrzej was fairly fluent in French from his studies in Lodz, and Celina helped him as well. Their arrival in Paris, with the Glasburg/Krauthammer family waiting at the train station, is best described by Andrzej himself. From his autobiography for 1948, Andrzej relates the first time he met his father:

The one certain thing about father, according to Grams, who had spent most of our long journey preparing me for the horrors ahead, was that he was unspeakably, monstrously evil, and that I showed every disposition to grow up like him (even the train at that point fairly shook with righteous indignation). Everything else was vague. Grams enlarged on his moral depravity at the expense of any physical characteristics which, however appalling, would at least have enabled me to recognize him, and none of his letters had enclosed a photograph. That might have been wise: what if the sight of his face put me off the trip? For all I knew he was equally likely to look like Quasimodo, Boris Karloff, or the Loch Ness monster.

Perhaps though (at this point I got really excited), perhaps he had brought this refined duplicity to the supreme pitch of looking like everyone else. After all, I didn't look so unusual myself. Only Grams and Aunt Dorka knew the ghastly blackness of my heart. Perhaps I alone would sense the full depth of father's covert villainy: like would call to like. He was cleverer than I knew, for, after all these speculations, he still managed to present a surprise.

One possibility I had not envisioned was the sight of two identical middle-aged gentlemen waving their four arms above the throng of the Gare de l'Est and yelling in an almost flawless unison, "Looking for the little Tchaikowsky." I merely gaped. Trust Grams not to warn me that father was double. Twin children were, of course, a routine affair, but twin fathers could only belong to some obscure and weird mythology. At the moment, they were both plainly eager to belong to me.

"Is it you, Papa?" I quavered, attempting a squint that would take both of them in. This failed. So I smiled diplomatically at the air between them. They refused to make do with that. "Are you speaking to me?" Their voices were perfectly blended. The second question forced me to consider each of them in turn. Both were bald. Both were paunchy. Both showed a similar number of gold teeth in their grinning mouths. I thought with a vague distaste that I might have to memorize the distribution of the gold teeth to tell them apart. "Don't you feel even who your father is? Doesn't your little heart cry that out to you?"

They were having a great time. They laughed. At that moment Grams (who could always be relied upon to cry out louder than my little heart) pointed out one of them and nudged me on. I wondered how she knew, but I was ready to grab at any clue. After all, there was at least a fifty-fifty chance. Besides, if I chose wrong, there would be incidental satisfaction of proving Grams a fool, a satisfaction to the unrecognized father as well as myself. So I flung myself, in what I hoped would look like a spontaneous movement of the heart, at the indicated gentleman. As I hugged him, a far more troubling thought occurred to me. Suppose neither



of the two was father. For if blood really does speak in such cases, mine had told me nothing, but it was too late to stop the movement, and the choice proved right.

"Well then! I knew you'd recognize your old Dad by instinct. If you hadn't, I should have had the gravest of suspicions of your mother's conduct." This was a joke, so we both laughed. At the same time I noticed father's double gave him a sharp warning tug on his sleeve. Father, misunderstanding it, said "Ah, of course, this is your Uncle Herman. He has two little boys of his own. You will meet them at lunch, it's all arranged."

The other members of father's family were also introduced at this point. There were his unimpressive parents (my grandparents, I thought with a shock) who seemed to speak no language but Yiddish. They were dismayed when I turned out not to understand it. His red-haired sister, Gisele ("She used to steal your mother's stockings," whispered Grams to put me in the picture), who proved by contrast alarmingly voluble in French. And Uncle Herman's wife, a tall, calm lady, Ida, who won me over at once by confining her welcome to a single, silent kiss on the forehead.

I was still being passed from mouth to mouth like an Indian peace pipe when an outburst of excited Polish made me turn my head. Grams had also achieved her hour of popularity. She was being hugged, kissed, laughed with and wept over by what seemed at first a large group of enthusiasts. I tried to catch what they were saying, but they insisted on talking and kissing Grams at the same time, and what emerged was more heartwarming than articulate. It says a lot for her that in such circumstances she still managed to remember my presence.

"Andrzej!" she cried, snatching me out of Aunt Gisele's arms. "Andrzej, look! This woman here is an angel. Never forget that today you have met an angel!" "Oh Celina, you are just the same!" said the angel, combining improbably a sigh with a laugh. "It takes more than a world war to change you, and thank God. Are you an angel, Andrzej? I'm glad to say you don't look like it! Has she told you? I'm your Aunt Mala."

She didn't look it either. She was small, wrinkled, ugly, and fun, like a monkey. And no angel could have been as welcome. Her quick look of sly complicity, not quite a wink, accomplished more than all my other relatives' exertions. "Crazy, aren't they!" she seemed to say. "But let's humor them as best we can." This came over in one fleeting smile and it was all she had needed to establish herself as my ally. "And this is your cousin, Kazik," pointing to a youngish, heavy-shouldered man that made me think of the Minotaur. "I take full responsibility for him. All right then, half. You will like him. He improves on acquaintance." Kazik gave me a wrestler's embrace, and I was panting when he set me down.

"Do you want to kill our Robert?" cried father in protective anguish. "Robert?" I repeated the name. "Of course, you're Robert. Didn't she tell you? No? I bet not. 'Andrzej' was your mother's idea. Still, you're Robert now." Grams opened her mouth to protest, remembered she was not on speaking terms with father, and shut it again. "Hush Celina!" said Aunt Mala in Polish. "What does it cost you. He's been called enough different names not to mind one more."

"What is your name my son?" asked father in his stern voice. "Robert," I whispered, looking quickly around at Grams. "Are you ashamed of your own name? Can't you say it out loud?" I suddenly realized that it was not I who was being bullied. Grams was. All my discomfort disappeared. "Robert!" I shouted and had the pleasure of catching father's quick, cold smile at Grams. She pretended not to hear, which Mala's continuous easy chatter made almost plausible. But her own regal look gave her away. She only ever assumed such facial dignity to conceal defeat. Father knew this as well as myself. "That's my son!" he said.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

After the grand reunion at the train station, Andrzej went with his father for a quick tour of Paris, including the Eiffel Tower. Noticing that Andrzej was wearing a rather worn and out-of-date suit, Karl decided that "Robert" needed something better to wear. In his autobiography, Andrzej remembers the experience:

The suit in question was distinguished by a red tag marked "SALE." It was an impressively formal three-piece affair, dark blue with white vertical stripes. Father followed me into the cubicle to supervise the procedure of trying it on. "No, it won't do," he said to the attendant. "For one thing, the sleeves are too long. And with the waistcoat on, the jacket looks ridiculously tight. How quickly can you make the alterations?" "I'm sorry monsieur we're not allowed to alter 'sale' goods." Father frowned. The attendant stood still in an attitude of professional off-the-peg respect. Just at that moment a black boy dressed in a dazzling, complete tennis outfit came out of the next cubicle. He seemed quite unaccompanied, although he was only about my own age.

"All right," said father at last. "I know someone who will be only too glad to alter for me free of charge. How much will it be without the waistcoat?" The attendant apologized again; the waistcoat was part of the suit and could not be sold separately. So the price couldn't be further reduced. "But my dear friend ... " "I'm not your dear friend, monsieur." The phrase was uttered as calmly as the rest, but all pretense of respect had vanished. Father glowered, and the boy turned round. He looked ravishing and seemed totally unaware of it. Luckily he was also unaware of me. I stood there gauche and blushing in a tight, heavily ceremonious suit with a ridiculous red bargain tag still dangling from one of the sleeves and besought God to let me stay unnoticed.

"Call the manager!" demanded father. "He's out." "This won't do," stamped father. "Come on Robert. Get out of those unaltered rags." The boy's glance turned to me. I lowered my eyes. The harm was done. He had not merely seen me, he had connected me with Father and the argument. I knew then that it was not the suit, but Father that had caused my shame. I could take off the suit, but Father would stay to shame me each day of my life. I could never again forget whose son I was, and that shame would always degrade me more than he could. I quickly ran into the cubicle.

Andrzej was to stay at Aunt Mala's at night and at Karl's during the day. Celina was going to find a place of her own and settle into retirement. Karl returned Andrzej to Mala's apartment at 38, rue des Martyrs, in the 9th Arrondissement. Andrzej remembers his initial impressions:

Mala's flat was a modest affair, three small adjacent rooms overlooking a courtyard and linked at the back by a narrow and dark corridor. Its windows faced a blank wall, which somehow made me think of executions. Catching my eye, Mala said, "Would you rather have nosy neighbors watching all your movements? Why these windows are our greatest blessing. They face south, we get all the sun there is. Some days I only have to close my eyes and I'm back on the Riviera."

Within a few days, Karl had an upright piano delivered to Mala's apartment and the entire family gathered to hear Andrzej play. Apparently Karl was not impressed as he decided Andrzej should consider some other field besides music. Karl would pay for Andrzej's education if it were anything else. This created an immediate crisis as all of Celina's plans were predicated upon Karl paying for Andrzej's piano lessons and paying for tuition so Andrzej could study with Lazare Lévy at the Paris Conservatory. The crisis heightened when Karl personally cancelled Andrzej's piano lessons at Madame Breton's studio.

Before Celina could negotiate an understanding with Karl, there was an event that ended the tense situation. There are different versions of what exactly happened, but what is certain is that Karl and Andrzej

were walking in public, there was an argument, and Andrzej called his father a "cunt." After the name-calling, Andrzej remembers in his autobiography:

He hit me so hard that I reeled. Another blow followed, but this time I did not try to regain my balance and had the luck to fall both plausibly and not too painfully. I'd had no time to form a plan, but instinct told me that I could win this battle only from the ground. Merely by lying still with my eyes closed I was bound to collect a crowd and turn it against him.

"Get up!" ordered Father. I did not move. "I said up," he repeated. This time I already heard some fear in his voice, and by now there were other voices, allies' voices: "You should not strike this little one." "That was sadistic." "That was the worst thing I've ever seen." Father's silence gave the measure of his fear. I hoped that my own face would not betray my sudden, overwhelming joy. I had won. He had maltreated me in public, proved himself unfit to bring me up; strangers would testify against him if he should try to press his rights in court. The incident would find its way into an official file.

As I lay there, seemingly helpless but alert and triumphant, I realized that this complete, irrevocable break had been my goal all along and that I had deliberately worked for it since I first saw him, just as Mala had patiently pursued the opposite aim. My work had been unconscious, but no less determined. It was my own life that was at stake. "Let me through, I'm a Doctor." My care had already gone out of my father's hands. I now saw him stand mutely by while an elderly gentleman bent over me.

"How are you, little one?" I nodded. There was a general murmur of relief. The doctor put his arms under me and gently lifted my head. "No concussions," he said. "This is lucky for you, monsieur. Well, my lad, shall we try to get up?" The crowd watched me do that as if it was an act of levitation. I was careful not to look at Father. No one could know for certain that I was his son. Perhaps they might assume that I had been assaulted by a total stranger. Apparently some men did molest small boys.

"Well done," said the old doctor. "Now let us see you walk." He held my elbow while I gingerly took a few steps. "Where do you live?" I quickly gave him Mala's address. Father still said nothing. His Jewish accent would not have helped him on such an occasion. Perhaps he hoped to slink away unnoticed. "Come on. I'll take you there," volunteered the doctor. "It's nearly on my way. Taxi!"

Could it all be as simple as that? While being guided to the car, I passed Father, still motionless among the dispersing crowd. He neither looked at me nor tried to stop me. His face was blank. It was his posture that expressed defeat. He merely looked like any other aging Jew, exhausted, humiliated, and lost among strangers.

"Robert" was once more Andrzej. Celina knew that Karl was now out of the picture and wouldn't provide the financial support for Andrzej's education unless he studied something other than music. The question was, how to manage? Mala was in no position to help other than by providing shelter for Andrzej and Celina. Mala's husband, Isidor, wasn't in good health, and was, in fact, confined to a wheelchair. Mala and Isidor are remembered by Halina Swieca-Malewiak:

"Mala lived a long time in her apartment and it wasn't comfortable at all. There were some hard times in Paris. Mala's husband was a brilliant man and had connections. He became a Mason in Paris, so he had many, many connections. He was a chemist with a University degree, who did everything, but had no money. There is a type of Jew who couldn't make money, not many of them, but unfortunately for his family, he was one of them."

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In the spring of 1948, Andrzej continued his private lessons with Madame Breton and lived at Aunt Mala's. Celina, faced with a money crisis for Andrzej's education, visited the Polish Embassy and asked for assistance. She assured them that Andrzej was going to be one of the most important pianists in the world; he would be an everlasting credit to Poland and his accomplishments in the future would reward the benevolence of state sponsorship. She told them that Andrzej was already playing an impressive repertoire, even writing his own compositions, and he was only 12 years old. Celina suggested that Andrzej should play a recital at the embassy to demonstrate his extraordinary abilities. The embassy personnel were impressed by this woman who made such an effort for her little grandson. A recital date was set for May 1, 1948.

The recital at the Polish Embassy was Andrzej's first public recital. He played Chopin, of course, the Scherzo in B minor, a Nocturne in F minor, and then a suite of compositions of his own, including a Nocturne, which Andrzej called his Opus 1, Number 1. Embassy personnel were impressed and pledged a nominal monthly stipend to Celina to help pay for Andrzej's education.

Some years later, when asked about his first public performance, Andrzej stated it was in 1948 at the Polish Embassy. This fact is often repeated in reference books. For example, the International Who's Who in Music (9th edition), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* (3rd edition), among others, correctly list: "Debut -- Paris, 1948."

Encouraged, Celina was now ready to present Andrzej to the Paris Conservatory and to Professor Lévy. Lazare Lévy (1882-1964) had entered the Paris Conservatory in 1894 as a 12-year-old student, to study with Diemer, and had found a permanent home. In 1898, at the age of 16, he graduated with first prize for piano performance, awarded unanimously. He also composed numerous studies, sonatinas, and preludes for the piano. His later compositions included two string quartets, organ pieces, and a sonata for cello and piano. Lévy toured Europe, playing with the principal orchestras, and giving numerous recitals. In 1920, at the age of 38, he succeeded Alfred Cortot as professor at the Paris Conservatory. He retired in 1953 at the age of 71. When Andrzej appeared for his audition, Lévy was 66 years old.

Mala's son, Charles Fortier, remembers Andrzej's audition for Lévy:

"Lévy had more students than he could handle and was ready to turn Andrzej away. However, the 12-year-old Andrzej sat down and played and made such an impression that Lévy couldn't believe Andrzej had studied only two years. Lévy said it was impossible, that no one could play that well in such a short period of time as this. So Lévy put Andrzej to the test, thinking that this might be a trick. He gave Andrzej two initial trial lessons to see for himself."

The first trial lesson was on July 5, 1948 and a week later, Andrzej wrote the following letter to Emma Altberg in Lodz:

July 12, 1948  
Dear Professor,

I miss you very much. Although I understand that you are very busy, I would like to ask for even a few words about yourself, for which I'm waiting impatiently. Each time we're visited by our postman, I think it's from you -- in vain. So I'm writing to you myself -- perhaps I'll receive an answer?

What I'm most interested in are exams in the conservatory. I would like to ask for a few hints in that regard; although in France, in my thoughts I'm with you dear Professor, and with my nice colleagues.

Exactly a week ago I had a lesson with Professor Lazare Lévy. I played the Fantasia in C minor by Mozart, Scherzo in B-flat minor by Chopin, Etude in E major (27th) by Clementi, and one exercise by Czerny. At present, I have a new program, which I'm preparing for the

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next lesson: Etudes F-sharp minor (20th), and C major (24th) by Clementi, Etude in G-sharp minor by Chopin, Prelude and Fugue in E minor by Bach from volume 1, and Konzertstück in F minor by Weber.

The lesson with Professor Lazare Lévy went amazingly well, I'd like the next one to be the same -- but Konzertstück is very difficult; one has to work hard. After that lesson, I'll write to you about it.

You're going for holidays, I'd like to know when and where? How are you? You should have a good rest after the whole year of work and difficulties.

As for my holidays, I'll write about that in my next letter. Now I'm going to practice.

I finish this letter with great esteem and affection, which can't be changed by our parting.

Your devoted pupil,  
Andrzej

Karl was kept informed of Andrzej's progress and his antagonism towards Celina diminished. The piano Karl had moved into Aunt Mala's apartment stayed and he made no attempt to further disrupt Andrzej's studies. Charles Fortier was able to give some money to Celina to help pay for Andrzej's lessons with Lévy, but Celina didn't know that Charles was pleading directly to Karl on Andrzej's behalf. Karl secretly provided a small amount of money to Celina via Charles and, through bits and pieces, Andrzej and Celina were able to survive.

Andrzej passed Lévy's two-lesson trial and was accepted as a student, although not to the highest class. Andrzej's repertoire was somewhat lacking and he needed a bit more "maturity" in his playing to attain to the highest class. Still only 12 years old, Andrzej began working with an assistant of Lévy's and, in August 1948, wrote the following letter to Emma Altberg:

Dear Professor,

I am very sorry that I haven't answered your letter, or my colleagues' letters, which were a great pleasure to me. It's not because I have forgotten about you or my colleagues, for that would be entirely impossible; not because Poland is of no interest to me any more (words of Jurek in the previous letter); not because of a moral obligation, but because of lack of time (this time no quibbling). I go to the French school here mornings and afternoons, then I do my homework, and after that I practice and then go to sleep. In addition, I now have a lot of music to learn.

Professor Lévy's assistant is giving me very difficult pieces to make me work because she has already learned what an idler I can be. And she changes the program every second week, so that I won't be bored and discouraged from work.

After the "Pathétique" there was Chopin's Fantasia Impromptu in C-sharp minor, and later the "Moonlight." Encouraged, I asked for Chopin's Etude in F minor, Opus 25, Number 2, and I received two: this one and F major Opus 25, Number 3. Then, my greatest effort so far, Scherzo in B minor by Chopin, which I played on May 1st at the Polish Embassy. I'm enclosing a bit of a review, where they exaggerated my age. The other piece I played at the Embassy was a Nocturne in F minor, the one you instructed me in.

At a school recital, I played the "Moonlight," one of my own compositions, the Nocturne (the same), and two pieces of professor Lazare Lévy. Now I'm playing Beethoven's Variations in C minor, Chopin's Polonaise in E-flat minor, Chopin's Etude in A-flat major, Opus 25, Number

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1, Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C minor from volume I, and two Etudes of Clementi, the C major (3rd), and the B major (25th).

From Saturday, my new program is Bach's Italian concerto, a theme with variations by Fauré, and also Clementi's Etude in A-flat major (29th). I'll be playing on Mother's Day, "Le Coucou" of Daquin, Chopin's Fantasia Impromptu, and my own composition.

On my examinations (Oct. 20, 1948), I'll be playing one piece, the same as everyone else, for comparison, and then three individual pieces (probably Beethoven's C minor Variations, Faure's Variations, and Chopin's B minor Scherzo, which I haven't started yet). Maybe some changes will happen. Clementi's etudes, written for the right hand, I also play with the left hand.

Oh, I have almost forgotten the most important thing -- I have broken relations with my father because he didn't want me to learn music and wanted to take me away from my grandma. He should be grateful, but he hates her. As for our finances, it's harder now, but my brave and loving grandma got a job and somehow, without father and quarrels, we manage. I work a lot to be able to help grandma as soon as possible.

I miss you and my colleagues very much. I catch myself remembering the times when I was your most naughty pupil. I trust we will meet and perhaps it won't be long for that joyous moment. Maybe the next holidays I'll be coming to Poland. Maybe you'd like to come to Paris? We would be so happy to have you here.

As it's late, I have to finish this letter. I send sincere regards to you, my dear professor, from myself and my grandma. To all my colleagues, many thanks for your notes and warm regards.

Yours,  
Andrzej

Although the break with his father was complete, Andrzej did accept the invitation to visit Herman Glasberg, Karl's brother, for Sunday brunch. The only stipulation was that Karl wouldn't be there. This meeting had Celina's blessing, and, after all, it was a free meal. Of the Krauthammer/Glasberg family, Andrzej liked only his Uncle Herman, having no use for Aunt Gisele who "never stopped talking." Soon Karl was no longer a problem for this relationship, as he broke away from the family business and started a competing fur business of his own. For this, he was ostracized from the family. Karl considered Herman a simple-minded tailor instead of a hard-nosed businessman. He didn't speak to his brother again for 22 years.

The examinations on October 20, 1948, mentioned in Andrzej's last letter, were to determine which students could advance. There were also competitions to see which students could advance to Lazare Lévy's higher class. The results of the examination and competitions were posted in early November, 1948, prompting the following letter from 13-year-old Andrzej to Emma Altberg on November 15:

Dear Professor,

Forgive the long silence. The reason was my preparing for competitions for the conservatory higher course, in particular, for the class of professor Lazare Lévy. Of 340 candidates, 30 were admitted to the higher course, and only 4 to the class of professor Lazare Lévy, myself included.

As "morceau impose" we were given "Grande Polonaise Brillante" by Chopin, Opus 22 for piano and orchestra. As "morceau choisi" I selected the great Fantasia in C minor by Mozart. After that, the "morceau de dechiffage" I composed especially for this event, lest anyone should know it.

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The "jury" consisted of twelve professors, each time different and they were awfully strict. I was just lucky! Here in the conservatory, it's different than in Poland: after playing, a student can't walk out of the class; you have to be there from 9 to 12 and listen to the others play.

I'm now repeating the "Moonlight," and working on the Prelude and Fugue in A-flat major from Bach's volume I, exercises by Czerny and Philipp, and on "Mephistovalse" of Liszt, which for the time being I've put aside until after Christmas, so one has to wait until January [1949].

I've been writing a lot of compositions for the piano, and even for orchestra (symphony in B major). Professor Lazare Lévy and his assistant, Mlle Fossier-Brillot, are working on two piano sonatas I wrote and dedicated to them. Here's the plan for the sonatas:

Piano Sonata in F minor (for Mlle Fossier-Brillot)

- I - Allegro. Very widely developed with the dynamics of constant crescendo and polyphonic transformation. It's great.
- II - Theme and Variations. 35 variations based on a theme of a friend of mine from Lodz.

Piano Sonata in C-sharp Minor (for Professor Lazare Lévy)

- I - Introduction and Allegro
- II - Aria and 27 Variations. It's in the form of a fugue, waltz, nocturne, recitative, march, funeral march, etc.
- III - Grande Fugue. For four voices, cadenza, recitative, finale, and coda.

The sonatas are treated in a symphonical way, which is hard to achieve for an average pianist, but for my professor, it's nothing. Unfortunately, I myself can't play these sonatas yet.

I'd like to ask you also for a few lines about yourself, most of all about our old conservatory and my colleagues. Even during my efforts in competitions, I was remembering and following your instructions. I'm sending my hearty regards to you as well as to all my colleagues and Miss Sabinka.

Your devoted pupil,  
Andrzej

The relationship that developed between Aunt Mala and Andrzej was quite different from the relationship between Celina and Andrzej. Mala was wonderfully kind to Andrzej. Halina Swieca-Malewiak remembers:

"Andrzej had a real home with Mala. He didn't want to get up early, even relatively early. It was always difficult for him. Celina was not very patient, but Mala was a wonderful lady, kind, patient, and understanding. She would see Andrzej lying on the bed trying to get up, and she would say, 'Andrzej, give me your leg and I'll put on one sock, now the other sock. Now, please, sit on the bed, make an effort.' Slowly, she would get him up. I remember Mala told me, 'When Andrzej finally did arise, I prepared him chicken, fried in eggs.' Andrzej was interested in cooking and liked to do a bit of cooking himself."

Sigmund Rukalski, a friend of the family who was studying at the Sorbonne, made a social call to Mala's home at 38, rue des Martyrs, and met Andrzej. His impressions:

"Aunt Mala's apartment was small, modestly furnished, consisting of two bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. Aunt Mala installed a piano in one of the bedrooms, but with André at the keyboard, even that old-fashioned bedroom seemed transfigured into a magnificent concert hall. What is left in my memory is the qualitative impression of having met a truly

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outstanding musician. I remember that I was astounded by the depth of his intelligence and his already budding musical genius. Physically, he was then a very young boy, but his mental stature was simply overwhelming for his age. I still vaguely remember his grandmother. She was a very courageous, generous person, totally dedicated to the well-being of her only grandson; so was in fact her sister Mala. Both always did their level-best, under difficult circumstances, to foster Andrzej's musical capacities. Andrzej already knew French quite well. He had a prodigious memory, particularly for music."

Andrzej continued studying with Lazare Lévy into 1949, and there was the usual round of student recitals and music classes. Andrzej wrote a composition, *Sonatina* in G major, which he liked very much. He made copies for his friends and teacher. For the most part, Andrzej did little to promote any of his compositions. Many of them were juvenile, and he simply outgrew them and advanced to more complex and more interesting works. At the end of the school year, on June 16, 1949, he entered the conservatory competitions for *solfeggio* (sight-reading and singing the names of the notes) and piano performance. The results were announced on July 12, 1949: 2nd honorable mention in *solfeggio* and a 2nd prize (silver medal) in performance for Andrzej.

Towards the end of the school year, on May 25, 1949, Andrzej gave his first public performance with an admission charge, 100 francs for adults and 50 francs for students. The program included two Bach Preludes and Fugues from the Well Tempered Clavier, Volume I, Mendelssohn's Rondo Capriccioso, and four impromptus by Chopin. The second portion of the program was dedicated to Andrzej's own compositions, the Introduction and Scherzo from a Sonata in E minor, Variations on a Chopin Prelude in C minor, and Six Fantaisies. The occasion of this recital is not known. Perhaps it was simply to raise money for Andrzej's expenses.

It is not known how Andrzej spent the summer of 1949, but it is clear that he didn't visit Poland. When Celina entered France in 1948, she had not obtained the proper French visas for an extended stay, and thus there were difficulties in leaving and returning to France. From Celina's point of view, this was not a problem, as she had no intention of ever leaving France again. However, it meant that she could not readily accompany Andrzej to Poland when he wished, as he frequently did, to visit former teachers and classmates.

Andrzej began his last year of study at the Paris Conservatory in the fall of 1949. He had many friends, one of whom was Jean-Leon Cohen. Little is known about Cohen, but Andrzej did write a piece of piano music for him called "Variations on a Theme of Cohen." Years later, this piece was incorrectly referred to as "Variations on a Theme of Harriet Cohen" (Harriet Cohen was an English pianist) and was duly listed that way in reference works such as the Riemann Musik Lexikon (1975). As with many pieces of music Andrzej wrote during these years, this one was destroyed. Aunt Mala had kept every program, every review, and anything at all related to Andrzej's life, including the compositions. However, years later, when Mala was widowed and ill, Andrzej found out about this collection and ordered it destroyed. Mala followed his instructions.

Andrzej continued to live at Aunt Mala's for the 1949-1950 school year. He was offered and happily accepted a two-year scholarship from the Polish government. As a result, he was expected to return to Poland in the summer of 1950. In the Spring of 1950, Andrzej was invited by the Minister of Culture to attend the summer music camp at Lagow, Poland. He quickly accepted. Celina was devastated by his decision. She had no desire to return to Poland. In fact, because of her passport problems, she felt she wouldn't be able to return. Andrzej persisted in wanting to go and, in the end, Celina agreed.

At end of the term, on June 14, 1950, Andrzej once again entered the conservatory competitions in *solfeggio* and piano performance. His competitors were older and more experienced students. It didn't seem likely that this 14-year-old would give them much trouble. The results were announced on July 12, 1950:



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winner of the first prizes (gold medals) in both solfeggio and piano performance -- Andrzej Czajkowski. At the age of 14, Andrzej graduated from the Paris Conservatory with its highest honors.

Elevated to this new height of accomplishment, he eagerly prepared for his return to Poland. Initially, he would study at the Lagow music camp. Following his summer at the camp, he was promised the best possible facilities for advanced study at the Warsaw Conservatory. He would be given an apartment for himself and his grandmother, he would have the best teachers, he would be given free use of a grand piano, which would be moved into his apartment, and, as a composer, he would be offered membership in the Polish Composers' Union. Celina demurred. She felt no obligation to anyone in Poland. Paris suited her needs and Andrzej could still be a credit to Poland even if he didn't return. Although she had dedicated her life to seeing Andrzej become the best pianist in the world, it wasn't necessary to return to Poland to reach this goal.

### Return to Poland (1950)

Celina could not long stand in the way of the opportunities that unfolded for Andrzej in Poland. On July 17, 1950, a few days after Andrzej received his prizes at the Paris Conservatory, he and Aunt Mala left Paris for Warsaw. Celina stayed behind and one can imagine her distaste for the development, especially galling because it was due to her own neglect of her passport. Andrzej and Mala's final destination was Aunt Dorka's home in Sopot. To receive the largesse promised by the Polish Embassy of an apartment in Warsaw and study at the Warsaw Conservatory, Andrzej first would have to complete a certification course for his secondary schooling. Andrzej could then enter the Warsaw Conservatory starting with the 1951-1952 class. Until that time, it was agreed, Andrzej would live with Aunt Dorka and attend the Sopot High School of Music.

A letter sent to Andrzej in Paris by Emma Altberg was answered by Celina on August 7th:

Today I received your letter to Andrzej. Since July 17th, Andrzej has been in Poland. He went with my sister Mala (a French citizen) to stay with my sister Dorka, who lives in Poland. Her address is: 7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3, Sopot. Because of Andrzej's sudden decision to leave for Poland, he was not able to let you know about his trip and promised to write to you from Warsaw or Sopot. I am astonished he hasn't written to you.

On August 7th, he was to be in Lagow, near Poznan, where he was invited by the President. Andrzej was slightly disappointed because in the Polish Embassy in Paris he was told that Lagow, a summer camp for musicians and Polish composers, is situated near the mountains. Since he never before had been in the mountains, and also because the company of musicians attracted him a lot, he accepted the invitation with tremendous joy. In Warsaw, he learned the Lagow summer camp has a compulsory course in music, that they're playing only Bach, and he has to prepare a big holiday program. So the tone of his letter to me was more than doleful.

On July 30th, my two sisters saw him off to Lagow. Since then I've been rather worried and I haven't had any news -- either from my sisters or Andrzej. If he hasn't written to you, dear one, he must have forgotten the address -- I can't explain his silence otherwise. He was so overjoyed with the thought of meeting you.

I'm enclosing a photo-copy of this year's certificates in the Conservatory. About the lectures, he'll tell you personally.

I'm sending my warm regards.

Yours sincerely,  
Celina Czajkowska

At the Lagow music camp, for the first time, Andrzej was completely on his own. No Celina or Dorka or Mala to watch over him and make his life "miserable." The Lagow music camp was attended by many well-

known musicians, and Andrzej also found old friends from the Lodz conservatory, including violinist Wanda Wilkomirska and his cousin Tadeusz Kerner; Kerner was about 25 years old and Andrzej not quite 15. In spite of the age difference, the two cousins got along very well. Andrzej, with his constant joking and ability at the piano, was a sensation. Tadeusz Kerner remembers:

"Andrzej was an excellent pianist, so talented. His talent came from his body in simply the most natural way. We made an experiment with Andrzej. Andrzej would learn by heart the most complicated fugue by Bach in a few hours. The same fugue took me several weeks to learn and memorize, for some other pianists, several days. But I never saw in my life someone who could memorize a four-page fugue in a few hours. We gave him in the morning a Bach fugue that was totally unknown to him and that evening, he played it for us by heart. It was like a photographic memory, it was unbelievable. It made such an impression on us and made us feel terrible, like he was from another planet.

"He also had a fantastic ability to play polyphonically, where each of his fingers played a different timbre, like he could read an orchestral score and make each finger a different instrument. It was fantastic.

"As a person, he was very charming. Very warm, very charming, but he didn't know it's complicated in life, or how to be a diplomat. So he made enemies, unconsciously, probably. He behaved in an original way because he was not normal, not 100 per cent normal like most people. In my opinion, he was a genius and genius cannot be normal. So his abnormality showed up in his personal life. "

Andrzej was already aware that his intellect was beyond that of most adults. This plus his stunning musical talents allowed him to play just about any role he wanted to assume, and to be thoroughly convincing. He could be shocking, he could be charming, he could be loving. The dark side, which he would only begin to understand many years later, was growing inside him as he denied the normal growth of his own self, substituting a self he imagined, one which perhaps was suggested to him by external influences. While this use of his gifts was amazing and exhilarating to him, it diverted him from the very essential role that other 15-year-olds were busily pursuing: themselves. And, in retrospect, it contributed to later catastrophes.

The summer camp had its boring moments. Andrzej felt an obligation to liven things up. One day he asked to borrow some clothing from Wanda Wilkomirska. Later that evening, there appeared at the camp a new "girl." But this wasn't an ordinary girl. This was a, shall we say, a self-employed girl. It was Andrzej, of course. Emboldened by the enthusiasm for this venture of a few of his friends, he set off with them for the village tavern. One of his friends remembers:

"Andrzej changed his attire for that of a woman, and not just a woman, but a prostitute. 'She' had big lips, short skirt, nice legs and was handsome. So we went to the bar and some young boy made advances. Andrzej made a date with him to meet in the forest. Of course, we were afraid of what would be a big surprise. So we went with him and hid in the trees. The boy was waiting there and immediately started to make advances and Andrzej screamed. Then we ran up and scared the boy off. He was frightened to death with seven or eight of us coming. 'She' never returned."

Dressing as a woman had a great attraction for Andrzej as a joke -- it combined his delight in shocking people with his taste for bizarre humor. He tried it once again that summer, this time just walking around the camp. Wanda was in on the trick and remembered, "He had these big eyes, and one of the professors almost fell in love with this new girl."

The Lagow summer camp ended and Andrzej moved into the apartment of Aunt Dorka in Sopot. He attended the High School of Music for the school year of September 1950 to June 1951, where his piano

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teacher was Olga Ilwicka. Also in Sopot was his cousin, Tadeusz Kerner. Together they studied music and attended concerts. Tadeusz remembers several incidents from these times:

"Once we went to a concert in Sopot and a pianist was playing and he made a mistake. Andrzej screamed out, "F sharp!" All the people and the pianist didn't know what happened.

"Another time my neighbor came home at 4 am, after playing cards very late, and found Andrzej sitting on the steps at my home, with a score on his knees, conducting. My neighbor asked, 'What are you doing here at 4 am?' Andrzej answered that I had told him to come by at 4 so he came at 4 am. So my neighbor asked, 'Why don't you go upstairs and see Mr. Kerner?' Andrzej answered, 'I can't. He's sleeping and I don't want to wake him up.' It was a joke."

The relationship between Aunt Dorka and Andrzej was strained. Aunt Dorka, still the religious fanatic, forced Andrzej to attend services and to become a Catholic. Many years later, he wrote to a friend who was having family problems:

"Your younger brother's attitude is typical of a Roman Catholic. They'd only like to burn live people. I am unlucky enough to have an Aunt like this in the family, and one hour with her makes me need a week's thorough rest. To them, conscience is not a sense of direction, but a passion for looking back rather than forward, and they are always ready to deplore other people's past faults. This type of conscience, like cancer, eats one up from inside."

Andrzej's cousin, Halina Swieca-Malewiak, would sometimes visit in Sopot. She recalls a time when 15-year-old Andrzej had a girl friend named Youla:

"One day I came to Dorka. I saw Andrzej on his knees and next to him this Youla on her knees. They were praying because Dorka had caught them kissing. Yes. She was really out of her mind. Not her intelligence, which was practically quite all right, but her emotional side was deeply troubled. On the other side, the literary discussions she had with Andrzej were certainly helpful to his development because she was a very, very gifted person. The first idea for an opera was from this period, during the talks with Dorka. I don't know if Dorka was suggesting this, but they were discussing libretto, this and that. And she was ready to do for Andrzej everything, and Andrzej was in her life like a son."

Andrzej's piano studies were not particularly demanding. Olga Ilwicka fell into the same trap that Andrzej's other teachers had fallen into: they were overly impressed with Andrzej. They couldn't stop praising his abilities or remarking on his talent. They would shake their heads and say, "Andrzej, you are just amazing." And Andrzej allowed himself to be amazing -- without understanding or appreciating any of it.

During his year in Sopot, Andrzej concentrated on composition. Since he was going to be in Warsaw soon, Andrzej made application for membership in the Warsaw-based Polish Composers' Union, which had been part of the deal offered by the Polish government to induce him to return. While he was still in Paris, Andrzej had already written to the Polish Composers' Union on June 13, 1950, as follows:

To: Polish Composers' Union Warsaw

Fm: Andrzej Czajkowski

7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3  
Sopot (Temporary Address)

I was born in Warsaw on November 1, 1935. My father, Karol Ignacy, was a doctor of law. My mother, Felicja Alexandria, was without occupation. They were both murdered during the German occupation and I was left under the care of my grandmother, Celina Czajkowska.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

Shortly after the war, I began my musical studies. In 1948, because of the bad state of health of my grandmother, I went with her to Paris, where I continued my studies up to the year 1950 and graduated with high accord, with first medals in piano and reading music *prima vista*.

On the invitation of the ministers' council, I came back to Poland for the course at Lagow. Accepting the proposition of the Minister of Culture, I decided to settle permanently in Poland to continue my studies. Beginning with the school year 1948, I've had a scholarship with the Polish Government.

Yours,  
Andrzej Czajkowski

With this brief biography, which eventually evolved into his official program biography, Andrzej made his father a Pole and then "killed" him. The tone of the letter certainly leads one to believe his father was Polish, using the Polish "Karol" instead of the German "Karl." To this day, reference books incorrectly report that Andrzej lost both his parents during the Nazi occupation.

In response to Andrzej's letter, the Polish Composers' Union sent him a membership application. He was asked to return the application with a list of his compositions and samples of his work. Andrzej responded on November 6, 1950:

To: Polish Composers' Union Warsaw

Fm: Andrzej Czajkowski

7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3  
Sopot (Temporary Address)

Please accept the enclosed application for membership into the Polish Composers' Union, Youth Section. Below is a list of my compositions:

(10) Dances (manuscript is lost)

(10) Etudes (manuscript in preparation) Sonatina in G Major

Suite for piano

Piano Sonata in F minor (lost)

Piano Sonata in A major (lost)

Variations on a theme of Handel (lost) Variations on a theme of Cohen (in preparation)

Variations on an original theme (lost)

Concerto for piano and orchestra (lost)

Concerto for violin and orchestra (in preparation) Sonata for violin and piano (lost)

Concerto for flute and orchestra (in preparation)

Yours,  
Andrzej Czajkowski

Only the Sonatina in G major and the Suite for piano were not lost or in a preparatory state. Andrzej enclosed only one composition with his application: his Suite for Piano, which was probably composed expressly for his application. There is a conflict with his Piano Sonata in A major, listed as lost. This was probably the sonata he wrote for Lazare Lévy, which he reported to Emma Altberg as written in C-sharp minor. It's possible none of the sonatas were written.

## The Other Tchaikowsky

The membership committee must have been amused by all the "lost" manuscripts and manuscripts "in preparation," but they seriously considered Andrzej's application and his Suite for piano. The eminent Polish composer, Zygmunt Mycielski, was given the task to write his opinion about Andrzej's application and Suite for piano, which he did on November 8, 1950:

To: Membership Committee

From: Zygmunt Mycielski

Subj: Assessment of compositions submitted by Andrzej Czajkowski, age 15

Re: List of compositions submitted: Suite for Piano

I wish to draw the attention of the Polish Composers' Union to the fact that Andrzej Czajkowski shows considerable composing talent through his musical inventiveness, which is remarkable for such a young boy. On the basis of his piano Suite that I have read, I can state that Czajkowski undoubtedly possesses a great talent, musicality, and originality. The Suite has four pieces:

1. Preludium - It is Scriabin-like, but I prefer it to many compositions that are built on the piano arpeggiare. It is still a youthful search, but it is not a copy of any style.
2. Variations - He couldn't introduce a great variety, he struggles, but still his inventiveness shows through the descending chromaticism.
3. Waltz - Not enough variety in the right hand, but it has an inborn sense of style and form.
4. Lullaby - Shows an outstanding musicality, although it contains a lot of wrong notes. It is not precisely put down, but I prefer these childish mistakes to school routine and correctness.

In my opinion, Andrzej Czajkowski should be trained by the best teachers, who will be able to develop his talent and at the same time respect his musical individuality, which is shown by his first piano pieces.

Zygmunt Mycielski

This endorsement by Mycielski reinforced everyone's high opinion of Andrzej Czajkowski. The music community was fairly compact in 1950, and an outstanding talent was immediately identified and discussed. Although composition was an important aspect of his abilities, he was already keeping this part of his life to himself. Once proud enough to include his own compositions on his recital programs, even those composed before the age of 16, he stopped this self promotion and composed in private. His friends knew he was a composer, but no one had recollections from this period of hearing his compositions, either in public or private.

Shortly after Mycielski's report to the Polish Composers' Union, Andrzej Czajkowski was accepted for membership. Andrzej wrote two letters to the Union on January 5, 1951:

To: Polish Composers' Union  
Warsaw

Fm: Andrzej Czajkowski

7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3  
Sopot (Temporary Address)

I wish to inform you about my composition projects:

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a. Piano Etudes - A series of 12 piano etudes to be used at the higher music schools, in which I touch upon new piano techniques and rhythm problems. I think I can complete this work by the beginning of April 1951, but not later than the end of April 1951.

b. Piano Concerto - A piano concerto will be written in F-minor, accompanied by an orchestra, enlarged. The tempo is still something I have to determine. The concerto movements shall be allegro, moderato, andante spianato, and scherzo.

c. Flute Concerto - A flute concerto will be written to use in a natural way, that is, in the original scale.

The piano and flute concertos will be finished by the end of the next academic year, or at least one of them will be done. I wish the Union to commission these works and grant me a subsidy, which will allow me to finish both or one of the above mentioned compositions.

Yours,  
Andrzej Czajkowski

In the same envelope was another letter:

To: Polish Composers' Union  
Warsaw

Fm: Andrzej Czajkowski

7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3  
Sopot (Temporary Address)

I hereby apply for music paper to be given to me free: paper #2 and #12, 75-sheets of each, in order to make it possible for me to write 12 piano etudes, a concerto for piano with orchestra, and a concerto for flute with orchestra. Grave financial difficulties I am going through make it impossible for me to buy the above mentioned paper, the lack of which causes a disruptive break in my creative activities. This application is made in connection with my other application for a commission for the above mentioned works to be made.

Yours,  
Andrzej Czajkowski

The mention of "grave financial difficulties" could have described any time in his life; Andrzej was always dogged by financial woes. Andrzej received his music paper, as requested, and some piano etudes were written. There is no record of any piano and flute concertos from this time; however, they were reported in the Riemann Musik Lexikon (1975 edition).

By the end of May 1951, Andrzej had graduated from the Sopot High School of Music. Once again, he spent part of the summer at the Lagow music camp, and then moved on to Warsaw for his first year of study at the Warsaw Conservatory. The Ministry of Culture and Art was an important organization in the wide-ranging state patronage system. Housing was scarce in Warsaw in 1951, and to provide a valuable apartment to a 16-year-old pianist was confirmation of their commitment to the arts. It also says a lot about this powerful organization's view of Andrzej's abilities.

On June 29, 1951, Andrzej replied to an inquiry from the composers' union about his relocation to Warsaw:

To: Polish Composers' Union  
Warsaw

Fm: Andrzej Czajkowski

## The Other Tchaikowsky

7 Dabrowskiego Street, Apartment 3  
Sopot (Temporary Address)

In reply to your letter, I wish to inform you that I intend, beginning with the next school year, to settle in Warsaw. I ask you to keep the piano which was intended for my use. (I would prefer that it be a grand piano.) After my vacation I will ask you to transport the piano to my new address. I also wish to express my gratitude for all your kindness, and I ask you to forgive the delay in this reply, which was caused by my trip to Lagow for auditions organized by the Polish Minister of Culture.

Yours,  
Andrzej Czajkowski

The leverage afforded by the sponsorship of the Polish Minister of Culture was not lost on him, nor did he hesitate to wield this big stick to manipulate the matter of the piano. By the end of the Summer, 1951, the Ministry of Culture had kept its promise. Andrzej was to have a new apartment in Warsaw, which he was to share with his grandmother. Also, a Bleekner grand piano was delivered to the apartment. By this time Celina had obtained a proper passport and, with "death in her soul" (according to Halina Swieca-Malewiak), Celina returned to Poland and met Andrzej in Warsaw at their new apartment at 36 Nowolipki Street, apartment 12.

### Warsaw Conservatory (1951)

The apartment on the fourth floor at 36 Nowolipki Street was of modest size, even small at 500 square feet (45 square meters). However, it was sufficient for the needs of Celina and Andrzej, although Celina did not fare as well as Andrzej. Andrzej had a large, comfortable room for his grand piano, desk, and bed, while Celina was stuck into a small area off the kitchen. The most difficult problem for Celina was the arduous hike up four stories several times each day. She was rather large, her heart was not in good condition, and now she had diabetes as well. Her existence still centered on Andrzej, and she did everything possible to help him with his developing career. However, there was little harmony between Andrzej and Celina, and they engaged in frequent and vicious verbal assaults on each other.

Everyone at the Warsaw Conservatory had either already met Andrzej or had heard about him. When Andrzej appeared for classes in 1951, he was nearly 16 years old and at once considered one of the most important students in the school. The young ladies were particularly impressed by his good looks; to receive any attention at all from this outstanding young man was a considerable event in their lives. Andrzej already had friends in school from the Polish Composers' Union and from acquaintanceships made at the Lagow summer music camp. His professors were, for piano, Stanislaw Szpinalski (who, six years earlier, Celina could not persuade to take Andrzej as a student) and for composition, Kazimierz Sikorski.

Stanislaw Szpinalski (1901-1957) studied piano in Moscow and at the Warsaw Conservatory, which he left with distinction in 1924. During the first Chopin International Competition for pianists held in 1927 in Warsaw, he was awarded the second prize. Szpinalski continued his studies with Paderewski at Morges, Switzerland (1928-1932) and then toured Europe. In 1934, he was appointed teacher, and shortly afterwards director of the Wilno Conservatory (1934-1940). After the war Szpinalski taught at Poznan Conservatory and then, in 1951, was appointed director of the Warsaw Conservatory.

Kazimierz Sikorski (1895-1975) studied composition at the Chopin School in Warsaw, graduating in 1919. He then studied philosophy at Warsaw University and musicology at Lwow University. He continued his studies in France, and in 1926 he was appointed professor at the Poznan Conservatory. In 1927 he became a professor at the Warsaw Conservatory. After the war he was appointed principal and teacher of composition at the Lodz Conservatory. Like Szpinalski, Sikorski was appointed professor at the Warsaw Conservatory in 1951. He published three textbooks, and his compositions include three symphonies, suites, choral works, and three string quartets.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

Jozef Kanski, conductor, music critic, and journalist, was a piano student at the Warsaw Conservatory when Andrzej arrived:

"Andrzej studied piano and also composition. He was one class behind me because he was younger, but he was rising very quickly. His studies should have taken five years, but he did it in only three years. He could learn very quickly. He could see a score and then play it with no difficulty. He had no technical difficulties, but professional difficulties, yes. He asked me, 'How do you make such a beautiful tone?' I had to laugh because he was much more talented than I. He was wonderful."

The Warsaw Conservatory was not large at the time; it had about 200 students. Andrzej was one of the best known and most talented. Andrzej and piano professor Szpinalski got along very well. Besides music, they shared a taste for jokes and both could be very charming. Szpinalski found Andrzej's abilities beyond those of his other students and a challenge to his role as teacher. His composition teacher Sikorski viewed Andrzej differently. There were many disagreements about harmony, and Andrzej did not hesitate to suggest he knew more than his teacher. For Andrzej, to be right was paramount, above any obligation to show respect for the role of teacher or for age or experience, and, of course, Andrzej was always right. What seemed like the arrogance of youth to the older man was, to Andrzej, an insistence on honesty and candor.

The Polish composer Augustyn Bloch was a student of composition and member of the Polish Composers' Union when Andrzej first attended the Warsaw Conservatory. Bloch recalls Andrzej as a composer and pianist:

"Andrzej came to us, the Composers' Union, from abroad. It was after my first association with the Union, which began in 1950. Andrzej came the next year, 1951, and we became friends. Most all of us were friends to Andrzej. He was an experience, especially because of his sight reading of notes. We didn't believe that anybody could read at such a tempo. So, we wrote music that he had never seen before and we put a page of this music on the piano. Andrzej played all the notes that were written there. It was impossible.

"We didn't call him André; we called him Andrzej. It's Polish. His family were -- I don't know how to tell it -- they were killed in the war. So his only family was his grandmother, and they both lived here in Warsaw. They had a very beautiful flat. At that time it was unusual because Warsaw was completely destroyed in the war, and there were no flats. It happens that when they were away for vacation or something, I took care of the flat. He gave me the keys, and sometimes I lived there.

"I remember we both prepared ourselves for an examination called 'Marxism,' a test of our knowledge of the philosophy of Marx. We had practically no time to prepare for it, because, first, we were musicians, and second, we didn't like it. So Andrzej, in one night, prepared all the material for one year, and gave me only some sentences. I came for the examination and I remember until now the question was, 'Could you say something about Marxism?' and I put down just one sentence. The professor said it was wonderful, and I received a very good mark.

"Andrzej really had a special memory, a special kind of brain, to reduce from lots of material just a few very important sentences, which were not written in the book. But Andrzej could do this. He was completely conscious of what was important.

"With playing and composing, he had some troubles with us, I think. We were such normal students, needing normal time for learning. Andrzej needed not so much time. He could read a piece for piano immediately. To learn it by heart took a few minutes. But the professors had problems with Andrzej because he was different. We were all there, but Andrzej was the star.



## The Other Tchaikowsky

"Andrzej was a joking fellow and we loved him. There are many in Warsaw, not only his fellow students, that remember him very deeply. He was really a genius, in my opinion. He was. Maybe, the only bad thing was he had no difficulties. Where another person practiced five hours, Andrzej was ready in five minutes. It was unbelievable how few technical problems he had, and how quickly he learned the notes by heart.

"We had one composer, Andrzej Markovsky, a composer and conductor who couldn't believe that Andrzej could sight read at such a tempo. So he wrote something, made sure no one had stolen his notes, and gave the pages to Andrzej just before a concert. Andrzej played it immediately, every note as written -- it seemed impossible that a man could play like he did.

"Andrzej was known as a pianist more than a composer. It helped the Composers' Union to have someone like him, because we needed someone who could play. During the time Andrzej was a member, there were a lot of piano pieces written especially for him. He was known especially as a pianist, but, then he did study with Sikorski, who was the best composition teacher at the time in Warsaw, in our country. Andrzej was fortunate to study piano with Szpinalski and composition with Sikorski.

"I remember my professor -- I liked him very much, but he wasn't as deep thinking as Sikorski -- wrote an overture called 'Popular Overture.' After the first performance of the work my teacher asked Andrzej, 'What do you think of my piece?' At the time, there was a special kind of meal in our restaurants called 'Lunch Popular,' so Andrzej said, 'Your piece is like Lunch Popular -- it's cheap and hard to digest.' Andrzej was sharp in giving his impressions about some things, so he had enemies. Still, I think the number of friends was greater."

Although Andrzej had the mental capacity to learn music with seemingly impossible speed, there was still the physical requirement to develop a pianistic technique. Tadeusz Kerner remembers Andrzej's technical problems:

"If Andrzej had a technical problem, he wrote an etude, just like Chopin. You know, each of the 24 etudes Chopin wrote was written to solve a different technical problem. So he took the idea from Chopin and Andrzej wrote an etude for any technical problem he was having. He composed it immediately, instantly. I remember a day he had problems with trills, so he wrote an etude that was all trills, for all fingers. Then he used his etude until he gained the facility he was looking for and it was easy. He composed for himself, never wrote it down, just improvised and wrote from his head."

Andrzej the composer is also recalled by Kerner:

"Andrzej was a modest man about his compositions. He never wanted to play them for anybody. I don't know why. He always was composing something and I think was more interested in composing than playing the piano. His real aim was composition and he played the piano only to survive. Even back then, he was working on an opera. He told me he wanted to write an opera and this was in the early 1950s. Chopin never wanted to write an opera."

The violinist Wanda Wilkomirska was also a student at the Warsaw Conservatory in 1952. Although five years apart in age, Wanda and Andrzej were good friends. She recalls preparing to play in a violin competition and needing a pianist to accompany her in the Szymanowski violin concerto:

"I wanted to play the Szymanowski concerto, which I just heard for the first time and had never played. I just adored it. But I had a very short time to change my program and the Szymanowski was not easy. The date was already set by the teacher. I decided to play the

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

Szymanowski, but I could find no pianist in the whole school who would accompany me, because of the difficulty of the piece. Andrzej said give it to him, it's no problem. He could sight read anything."

The performance was a success. Wanda won a prize in the competition and Andrzej's reputation was further enhanced.

On January 13, 1953, Andrzej, now 17 years old, returned to Sopot to give a Chopin recital. His program included:

- Polonaise Fantaisie in A-flat (Opus 61)
- Nocturne in E-flat major (Opus 55, Number 2)
- Sonata in B minor (Opus 58)
- Impromptu in G-flat major (Opus 51)
- Etude in A-flat major (Opus 10, Number 10)
- Etude in A minor (Opus 25, Number 4)
- Etude in F major (Opus 10, Number 8)
- Mazurka in C minor (Opus 56, Number 3)
- Mazurka in F-sharp minor (Opus 59, Number 3)
- Ballade in F minor (Opus 52)

The 1953 school year ended as the previous year had ended: Andrzej had a high academic standing and was the number one student at the conservatory.

There is no school record of Andrzej Czajkowski studying English, yet, in 1954 he was fairly fluent. Since English is the international language of musicians, it is not improbable that he would have picked up some by this exposure. Andrzej showed a great facility for languages and seemed to learn them as he learned music, almost instantly. At the end of his life he had an excellent command of Polish, French, English, German, and Spanish, and could manage in Russian, Italian, and Portuguese.

Soon after the start of the 1953-1954 school year, the students organized a dance to allow the old and new students to get acquainted. It was at this dance that Andrzej formed what would prove to be the longest friendship of his life. He met a beautiful young woman named Halina Wahlmann. She remembered him from the school at Lodz when they were both students in 1947. She recalled a short, chubby, 12-year-old who played the piano in front of the whole school. Although they were the same age, she had no interest in him at that time. In the spring of 1953, Halina completed her studies in piano at Lodz and passed the examinations to enter the Warsaw Conservatory. At the conservatory, her teacher was the sister of Wanda Wilkomirska, pianist Maria Wilkomirska.

Andrzej was used to being with people of ordinary intelligence, but was always on the lookout for someone who had something extra, someone who could knowledgeably discuss his interests in literature, piano performance, and composition. Halina Wahlmann fit the role. Already an excellent pianist in 1953, she continued at the Warsaw Conservatory and graduated in 1959. After a stint as a concert pianist, piano teacher and accompanist, she launched into other fields, earning a Ph.D. in Criminology in 1974, and writing numerous articles and two books on psychology and criminology. Halina won five literary awards for magazine articles and worked at various positions in academia. Her friends describe her as a brilliant woman with an amazing variety of abilities.

In 1988 Halina published a book of correspondence between herself and Andrzej Czajkowski that covered the period from 1956 to 1982 (with a few breaks when their friendship faltered). The title of the book gives a clue to the haunting friendship between them: *Moj Diabel Stroz* (My Guardian Devil). Andrzej was an ever-present figure in her life from the moment they met until his death in 1982. Their relationship was a remarkably self-defeating and self-sustaining tangle of love, friendship, destructiveness -- toward self

and toward each other -- and rejection, and surely one of the most complex psycho-sexual puzzles ever recorded. What she wanted most of all from Andrzej, she never got, which was to have his baby. What he wanted and received from her is a puzzle, but need her he did, to the end of his life. We have many pieces of the puzzle by way of their almost continuous correspondence. To construct a coherent picture of the relationship, however, is no easy matter.

Halina remembers her first meeting with Andrzej at the Warsaw Conservatory in the fall of 1953:

"It was an unforgettable experience. And very funny too. It was during my first year at the Warsaw Conservatory. I had just passed my exam and been admitted to the piano class of professor Maria Wilkomirska. The students organized a fancy-dress ball. Not everybody was in disguise. I had no idea what to put on either. At the ball someone pointed at Andrzej and told me: 'This is the famous Andrzej Czajkowski -- a real genius!' I saw a pretty, brisk, young boy. A friend of mine who knew him from Lagow introduced us to each other: 'This is Andrzej, and this is Halinka -- our new student,' she said. Andrzej looked at me attentively, unsmiling, then took my hand and led me away.

"We entered one of the classrooms in which there was a grand piano. I was scared for a while because I thought that Andrzej would make me play the piano, but instead, he said imperatively: 'Take off your clothes.' I was stupefied. He repeated with impatience: 'Take off your clothes. Don't you understand? This is a fancy-dress ball, we must swap our clothes.' And so we did.

"I rouged Andrzej with my lipstick and I tied a colorful scarf around his head. In my long, black velvet dress he looked beautiful and exotic, like a singer in the part of Carmen. His beauty attracted everyone at the ball. A Party Secretary who hadn't recognized Andrzej asked him to dance and ceremoniously kissed his hand. Our colleagues were delighted. And so was I, although I didn't dance at all because in Andrzej's clothes I looked awful.

"After the ball, we wandered back to our 'changing room.' Andrzej thanked me and said courteously: 'You must be an able pianist. They've accepted so few people for the piano class this year.' I said, 'You know, I am surprised myself because during the exam I omitted half of the second part of Beethoven's sonata in D minor. Andrzej replied, 'That might well have been the reason why they accepted you. It was a fine idea! That part is definitely too long!'"

Also at the conservatory in 1953 was an oboist, Stefan Sutkowski. Stefan was working on two oboe sonatas as part of a school music series. Stefan Sutkowski:

"We worked together in a series started in this time and sometimes Andrzej and I had free time to play together. I remember especially one very interesting time when we played two oboe sonatas together. Two weeks later, it was the same situation for free time and Andrzej said, 'If you have time and your oboe, we can play the sonatas together.' Unfortunately, or fortunately, I had only my oboe part, not the piano part. Andrzej said, 'No problem.' He then played the whole accompaniment of the two sonatas, after one rehearsal, from memory! It seemed impossible. He was not even looking at my part. No! He said it was not necessary. For me it seemed absolutely impossible. I remember he played this piano part very well, as it was written. He had a photographic memory."

Later in the school year, Halina Wahlmann had another encounter with Andrzej:

"I was enchanted with Andrzej and I dreamt about another meeting. It took place a month later. We were riding on the same bus to the Conservatory. The bus was overcrowded and we were standing far from each other. Andrzej saw me and cried: 'What's the matter with you? I haven't seen you for ages! Tell me, do you want to have many children?' The people in the bus

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burst forth into laughter. We got off together. He repeated the question: 'Well, do tell me if you want to have many children?' Blushing, I said: 'Yes, I think I do.' 'What a pity,' Andrzej heaved a sigh, 'I won't be able to marry you. I am an artist and children would disturb me. See you!' Later, we met occasionally at the Conservatory."

At the start of the 1953-1954 school year, the highest ranked piano students were selected for special training for the upcoming 1955 International Chopin Competition. These special students were excused from their conservatory classes to develop their Chopin repertoire and to perform numerous recitals and concerts at concert halls around Poland. Andrzej Czajkowski was, of course, part of this select group, as was his cousin Tadeusz Kerner.

The first concerto concerts Andrzej played were in Lublin on October 9 and II, 1953. The orchestra was the National Philharmonic of Lublin, conducted by Eugeniusz Dziewulski. The concerto was Beethoven's piano concerto number 4 in G major. Perhaps Andrzej had something to do with the selection of the program since the Beethoven G major was one of his all-time favorite concertos.

The next concerto concert was in Poznan on February 10, 1954. This was a special "double" concert in which both Andrzej Czajkowski and Tadeusz Kerner played. They were billed as "Polish candidates for the 5th International Fredrick Chopin Competition." The first part of the concert was a recital, with Kerner appearing first. The second part consisted of the two Chopin piano concertos, with Kerner playing the E minor and Andrzej the F minor. The orchestra was the Philharmonic Orchestra of Poznan conducted by Stanislaw Wislocki. Szpinalski was backstage. Kerner remembers that when it was time for Andrzej to play, he froze:

"Some pianists get nervous. Szpinalski and I pushed him on the stage, by force, because he was having problems."

This was a harbinger of difficulties to come; pre-concert nervousness plagued Andrzej for most of his life. Colleagues of his concert-playing days cited nervousness on stage often prevented Andrzej from performing at his best.

During all these preparations, Andrzej still had time to play little jokes. He entered a student-organized competition to see who could play the worst Chopin Mazurka. Halina Wahlmann remembers:

"Someone, it may have been Andrzej, conceived the idea of organizing a competition for the worst performance of a Chopin mazurka. All this happened during a ball at the conservatory. Many people took part in the competition. Finally, Andrzej entered the stage. In a masterly way he blurred the notes of a mazurka at a crazy tempo. This gallopade was densely filled with convulsive accents in the rhythm of a mazurka. He scarcely finished playing when the audience burst out with roaring laughter and stormy applause. He got the first prize for the worst performance of a Chopin mazurka. 'Where did you get this idea from?' they asked him. 'It wasn't my idea,' Andrzej replied modestly, 'I simply imitated professor X.' And he mentioned the name of one of the most famous professors in those days."

On another occasion, he played a Chopin concerto with the Gdansk Philharmonic. First on the program was Ravel's orchestral, "The Serenade of the Clown," which was followed by Andrzej playing the concerto. Halina Wahlmann remembers what happened:

"The audience demanded an encore after Andrzej's performance of a concerto with the orchestra. Since the orchestra was to play a symphony next, the grand piano was already lowered underground. But the applause did not cease. So Andrzej went underground, sat down at the grand piano and asked the stage manager to hoist the platform with the piano up to the stage again. Then he started to play, 'The Serenade of the Clown.' And thus the grand piano began to emerge from below stage with Andrzej playing Ravel. The audience was

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having a good time and a reviewer wrote the following day that Andrzej 'played The Serenade almost autobiographically!'"

Not everything went well in the Chopin Competition preparations. Andrzej was consistently late for orchestral rehearsals. During one Chopin recital, he ended a piece, not softly as called for by the music, but with a crashingly loud chord. This petulant act seemed designed to destroy his creation, and it confused the audience and his friends. Everyone thought him a genius, and many things were forgiven in concession to the belief that genius makes its own rules.

At a preparatory concert of the Warsaw Philharmonic, with Andrzej as soloist, partisans were in the audience. Andrzej began to feel the pressure. He was considered to be one of Poland's best hopes to win the 1955 Chopin Competition; many had told him so, and now they filled a concert hall to witness and acclaim the proof. These were serious expectations, and for Andrzej, the word "expectation" contained dread. He could play in Lublin, Sopot, or Gdansk because they didn't know him, there were no great expectations of him. But a concert hall in Warsaw filled by his peers caused him acute physical discomfort and stage fright. The oboist Stefan Sutkowski was in the Warsaw Philharmonic and remembers the concert:

"Before the Chopin Competition, there was a special preparation here in Warsaw. I was at this time in the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra playing oboe. I remember that Andrzej was playing a Chopin piano concerto, but I don't remember which one. During this concert, he lost his memory of his part, but he played in Chopin's style. It was not very long, but it wasn't very short either. It was so good that afterwards in speaking with a friend, I remarked that it was only possible to know it was not precisely right because I was looking at the music, the improvising was so perfect. Of course, it was a problem for the orchestra. I thought he should be given a special prize, the improvisation prize. He was so talented that it was difficult to predict how big his career was going to be."

While Andrzej's lapses during performances were attributed to memory slips, the real cause was nerves. He was extraordinarily hyperactive before a performance and often physically ill. When his performance was affected by this problem, the physical effects grew worse. This threat to his career needed immediate attention but it got none. Of course Andrzej's attitude of denial was one of the reasons no resolution was sought. Unresolved, it surfaced from time to time, and became more acute in years to come.

The school year ended for 1954, and all the Chopin Competition candidates headed for a special summer music camp at Lagow. Andrzej and the others were given a school vacation for the academic year 1954-1955 to allow them to prepare for the competition. Celina was also in Lagow, always dominating Andrzej while trying to do the best for him that she could. As usual, they argued continually.

For Andrzej, the summer camp at Lagow presented the same familiar faces. Tadeusz Kerner was there, as were other good friends, including Adam Harasiewicz and Włodzimierz Obidowicz. The trio of friends Czajkowski-Harasiewicz-Obidowicz -- were famous at the Warsaw Conservatory as being inseparable, and the three were known for high spirits and high jinxes. There was one surprise student at Lagow, a slightly-built, shy, 20-year-old young man from China named Fou Ts'ong. Andrzej approached Ts'ong and asked him in English, "Do you play bridge?" Ts'ong, speaking no Polish and very little English, replied that he did. With this exchange, a friendship was formed which lasted until Andrzej's death 28 years later, although, as in all of Andrzej's friendships, there were difficulties and periods of deterioration.

The arrival of Fou Ts'ong at the Lagow summer music camp was by special invitation of the Polish government. The year before, in 1953, Ts'ong had entered a Youth Festival Competition in Bucharest, Rumania, and was a sensation, winning third prize in piano. Afterwards, Ts'ong travelled to Poland as piano soloist with the Chinese Ensemble of Song and Dance. When asked what he would play in Poland, Fou Ts'ong answered, "Why, Chopin, of course." This led to some concern and Ts'ong remembers the story:

"I think the head of the Chinese Embassy was a little bit apprehensive for me to play Chopin in Poland. So they thought it best to get an opinion. I played privately for Andrzej Panufnik [a leading Polish composer] at the Conservatory of Music in Warsaw before I had any public concerts. Panufnik was full of superlatives. He was telling everybody that the Chinese had somebody who played as well as our first prize winner and that he really must come to the Chopin Competition. In fact, Andrzej said, the story goes, that other Polish candidates at the time were watching. Andrzej had said to them that he heard me the year before. He had told them that there was no more sense in the Chopin Competition because we already knew who the first prize winner would be. It seems that the report about me went right up to the leaders of the country. The Polish president actually invited the Chinese government to send me to the Chopin Competition."

Within a few weeks, Ts'ong could communicate with his fellow students at the Lagow summer camp in a combination of Polish, English, and sign-language. He became a student of Zbigniew Drzewiecki. Ts'ong remembers his first impressions of Andrzej:

"He was the youngest of the Polish group. He was studying with Szpinalski, who was also at the camp. We were always joking, always laughing, pulling legs, and also demonstrative in a physical way, which the Chinese are not used to. You do know Andrzej was a homosexual? But at that time, it was difficult to tell because he had a girl there. She was very young, about 14 or 15 I think. She was very beautiful. He was always excessively demonstrative in a physical way. Always kissing and hugging. I remember I was very jealous. Not very, just slightly jealous. Envious, rather than jealous. But already at that time everybody in that place was talking about Andrzej as the most brilliant, extraordinary boy.

"Of course, they were joking all the time in Polish, and he always made remarks to which everybody else reacted with either shock or by laughing their heads off, or something of the sort. Some of them explained to me what he said. The real point often escaped me because of my poor command of English, or because my understanding of Polish or of European psychology in general was not great enough.

"I remember Andrzej practicing the Chopin F minor concerto, the finale, the very last place where it goes into F major. Tremendous tempo all the time, terribly fast. The most senior professor in Poland was criticizing him for playing so fast. Andrzej answered, 'It's only because you can't, and you're jealous.' I remember that!"

After the summer camp at Lagow ended, the musicians selected to represent Poland at the 1955 Chopin Competition were announced:

Andrzej Czajkowski	18 years
Danuta Dworakowska	26 years
Lidia Grychtolowna	26 years
Adam Harasiewicz	22 years
Tadeusz Kerner	28 years
Edwin Kowalik	26 years
Milosz Magin	25 years
Wlodzimierz Obidowicz	24 years

Andrzej received a letter from the Polish Composers' Union on October 28, 1954 informing him that his composition "Prelude and Fugue" had won an award of 200 Zlotys and he was invited to play the work in a November 28, 1954 concert. As usual, he didn't discuss his composing activities with anyone. The concert was played, and Andrzej pocketed the money.

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Andrzej started to avoid home at 36 Nowolipki Street, staying with friends overnight; what practicing he did was done elsewhere. He apparently did this to upset Celina as much as to avoid her. Andrzej did introduce Fou Ts'ong to Celina and Ts'ong remembers:

"His grandmother was a character. She saved his life, smuggled Andrzej to places of hiding during the war. She was incredible. I just remember she used to yell at him all the time, and he was always making very cutting remarks."

A favorite place for Andrzej to practice was at the home of his Aunt Irena. Aunt Irena, the widow of Andrzej's Uncle Ignacy, had survived the war, married Zbigniew Paszkowski, and had two children. She had a wonderful grand piano on which Andrzej was allowed to practice at any time. Celina had concerns, as related by Irena Paszkowska:

"I remember the time leading to the Chopin Competition, grandma going to extraordinary lengths to make him practice; again, her whole life seemed to center on his career, to the extent that she became negligent of herself. Celina was already suffering from diabetes but did not take as much care of herself as she should have, being so concerned about Andrzej. It was also the time when Andrzej was beginning to display his unusual sexual interests. Apparently, grandma, on noticing this, made every effort possible to make sure he was always surrounded by nice-looking girls, in the perhaps naive and vain hope that he could take interest in one of them. I think it was ironic and tragic that the person he disliked the most was, at the same time, the person that devoted her whole life to him."

In early February 1955, Celina was frantic. It was just three weeks to the start of the Chopin competition and she hadn't heard from or seen Andrzej for several days. Was he all right? Was he practicing? She suspected (correctly) that Andrzej was spending his days and nights with a certain tall young man. On Thursday, February 3, Celina paid a visit to Irena's house. Perhaps Andrzej would be there practicing. It was to be her last effort in behalf of Andrzej's career. Irena's son, Piotr Paszkowski, remembers Celina's final moments:

"I can remember when she died. This is one of my earliest memories and she died in our house. We led a peaceful life; then one day there were hundreds of people in the house, all running around, screaming and shouting. Grandmother had collapsed. Some of the people put her legs up, some put her legs down. Someone saw me and ordered me upstairs, but I only went half way. I was interested because I never saw anyone die before. They couldn't save her. It was a heart attack. She went into a coma and died on the way to the hospital. "

Andrzej didn't learn of Celina's death until he appeared the next day on February 4. He felt enormously guilty about the circumstances of her death. Perhaps they hadn't gotten along, perhaps he had suffered as a consequence of her character defects, but he understood the debt he owed this remarkable woman who had fought for his life, who had risked so much for him, and who hoped so much for his success. It also afforded the perfect excuse to drop out of the Chopin Competition, which was causing him increased anxiety. How could he play at all with Celina's death? She was the last of his direct relatives, except for his father who, of course, didn't count. Professor Szpinalski didn't accept the argument. Instead, he urged Andrzej to redouble his efforts so that he might win the competition in memory of his grandmother.

Aunt Dorka came from Sopot to attend Celina's funeral. Andrzej made a scene by inappropriately laughing during the funeral service. Following the service, Aunt Dorka moved into Andrzej's apartment, but Andrzej didn't return there. Instead, he moved in with his Aunt Irena who remembers:

"It was at that time that Andrzej was practicing all the time at my house. Andrzej also had a piano at his apartment, but, when the grandmother died, he didn't go home. He stayed at my house and practiced for the last few weeks before the contest. When the grandmother died,

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Andrzej first decided that he could drop out of the competition. This sounded to me like an excuse, because Andrzej was terrified of the competition and hated practicing so much."

Aunt Mala in Paris was informed of Celina's death. Mala couldn't afford to come to Warsaw, but offered to help Andrzej in any way she could. Mala wrote a letter to Karl Krauthammer informing him that Celina had died. Karl believed that soon Andrzej would be living with him, expecting Andrzej to show up on his door step at any moment.

### Chopin Competition (1955)

Much could be written questioning the value of music competitions, but it cannot be denied that they can be extremely important to the making of a career. Much depends not only on receiving an award but on the placement among the others receiving awards. The differences among the judges' opinions are seldom clear cut or consistent. A few things are certain: members of the competition jury rarely reward individuality; instead, they tend to compromise in favor of conformity. The wisdom of their choices usually remains to be seen for many years. Frequently, decisions are mixed, and end by taking into account a variety of factors, including past performances, and a surprising variety of biases. Fou Ts'ong, who did very well in competitions and who, many years later, was active as a juror in various competitions, has strong feelings about their benefits:

"I just think competitions are ridiculous. There is no point in talking about a prize because there are so many ridiculous things. There is the element of luck, and politics play such a big role that it doesn't really matter who is one, two, or three. What's really important is the years you have to go on proving yourself as a musician. There are so many first prize winners. It really means nothing."

The 1955 Chopin Competition was divided into three stages. In the first stage, the performers selected works from predetermined categories and played them in any order they desired. For the first stage, Andrzej had selected pieces he had played at Sopot in January 1953 (except for the D-flat major Etude):

Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-flat, Opus 61  
Nocturne in E-flat major, Opus 55, Number 2  
Impromptu in G-flat major, Opus 51  
Etude in A minor, Opus 25, Number 4  
Etude in D-flat major, Opus 25, Number 8

The members of the jury were:

Austria: Joseph Marx, Bruno Seidlhoffer  
Belgium: Stefan Askenase, Emile Bosquet  
Brazil: Magda Tagliaferro  
Bulgaria: Lubomir Pipkov  
Chile: Flora Guerra  
China: Ma Su-Cun  
Czechoslovakia: Frantisek Maxian  
France: Facquest Févier, Lazare Lévy; Marguerite Long  
German Democratic Republic: Hugo Steurer  
German Federal Republic: Erik Then-Bergh  
Great Britain: Harold Craxton, Louis Kentner  
Hungary: Imre Ungar  
Italy: Guido Agosti, Arturo Benedetti-Michelangeli, Carlo Zecchi  
Poland: Zbigniew Drzewiecki, Jan Hoffman, Witold Lutoslawski, Stanislaw Szpinalski,  
Henryk Sztompka, Margerita Trombini-Kazuro, Jerzy Zurawlew



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Russia: Lew Oborin, Jakov Zak

Yugoslavia: Emil Hajek

After the first stage, the 77 participants from 25 countries were reduced by about one-half. Andrzej Czajkowski was, as expected, one of those promoted to the second stage.

The sensation of the first stage of the competition was a 17-year-old Russian named Vladimir Ashkenazy, who placed first at that point in the contest. No one had ever heard of him. Of the initial 300 candidates in the USSR who tried to qualify, he was one of six who made it to Warsaw. Even more amazing was the fact that Ashkenazy had little of Chopin in his repertoire and, once selected, had to prepare his Chopin repertoire just for the competition. It was obvious he was enjoying the competition very much, being the subject of few expectations and just enjoying the chance to be abroad. As the pianists advanced into the second stage, the repertoire requirements were more severe and represented a greater test of their abilities.

For the second stage, Andrzej selected five works; again some of them had appeared in his Sopot concert of January 1953:

Prelude in C-sharp minor, Opus 45

Barcarolle in F-sharp, Opus 60

Etude in A-flat major, Opus 10, Number 10

Etude in D-flat major, Opus 10, Number 8

Mazurka in C minor, Opus 56, Number 3

At the end of the second stage, the top 20 contestants graduated to the third and final stage. Andrzej Czajkowski was included among the survivors, and the winner of the second stage was once again Vladimir Ashkenazy. In fact, all six of the Russian pianists advanced to the final stage of the competition. Of the Polish contingent, five of the eight were still in the competition. Tadeusz Kerner was eliminated as was Andrzej's other friend, Włodzimierz Obidowicz. Kerner did win a prize for the best interpretation of a Polonaise (F-sharp minor, Opus 44).

The third and final stage was a required performance of either the Chopin E minor concerto (Opus 11) or F minor concerto (Opus 21). In a way, the competition started over again at this juncture, since no points accumulated in the earlier stages were carried over, and the winner of the competition was to be selected solely from the concerto performance. Andrzej selected the F minor concerto. He had played this work in many public concerts, but not in an international competition. This was his debut concerto performance at this level of critical judgment. This was also true, of course, for others.

Additional pressure was placed on the third stage finalists. A special guest of honor had arrived: Her Majesty, Queen Elisabeth of Belgium. Perhaps she was looking over the contestants, knowing that the next year, 1956, would be the Queen Elisabeth Piano Competition in Brussels. Up to this point in the competition, Vladimir Ashkenazy had been the clear-cut winner. Seemingly, all he had to do was play his selected Chopin concerto in his now "usual" manner and take home the first prize.

It was a nervous time and disagreements arose. The finalists performed. The jury deliberated. Feelings and prejudices surfaced. Juror Lazare Lévy threw off the average scores by giving 20 points (the maximum) to pianists he liked and 1 point (the minimum) to pianists he didn't like. Michelangeli disagreed so strongly with the selection of Harasiewicz as the winner over Ashkenazy that he refused to sign any of the prize diplomas. Finally, the winners were announced:

1st - Adam Harasiewicz (Poland)

2nd - Vladimir Ashkenazy (USSR)

3rd - Fou Ts'ong (China)

4th - Bernard Ringelssen (France)

5th - Naum Shtarkman (USSR)

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6th - Dimitri Papierno (USSR)  
7th - Lidia Grychtolowna (Poland)  
8th - Andrzej Czajkowski (Poland)  
9th - Dimitri Sacharov (USSR)  
10th - Kiyoko Tanaka (Japan)

Honorable Mention - Emi Behar (Bulgaria)  
Honorable Mention - Monique Duphil (France)  
Honorable Mention - Peter Frankl (Hungary)  
Honorable Mention - Stanislav Knor (Czech.)  
Honorable Mention - Edwin Kowalik (Poland)  
Honorable Mention - Nina Leltchuk (USSR)  
Honorable Mention - Milosz Magin (Poland)  
Honorable Mention - Annerose Schmidt (GDR)  
Honorable Mention - Irina Siyalova (USSR)  
Honorable Mention - Tamas Vasary (Hungary)

One can now evaluate these rankings with the advantage of knowing the progress of the careers that were launched by this competition. Of the names in the ranking, the strongest showing by any country was Russia. Four of their six pianists sent to the competition won prizes and the two others won honorable mentions. The real winner, based on the overall competition, was Ashkenazy. Of his "defeat" he graciously wrote his feelings in his 1984 book, *Beyond Frontiers*:

I had to play first at the final stage which was rather unsettling, and the Queen of the Belgians was there, so it was even more of an event than usual. As a result, I felt terribly exposed and didn't do well. I ended up with the second prize because the distribution of the prizes was based on the finals. I was told that points from the earlier rounds were not carried over, although naturally the members of the jury make their own notes for the final placing based in part on their impression of each participant throughout the competition.

If true, this is rather an odd system, considering that the bulk of the repertoire is performed in the preliminary rounds, whereas the final involves only one or other of the two concertos - not, after all, perhaps the most representative

works of Chopin. The jury must have remembered that I was good in the earlier rounds, so at least I got the second prize; it could easily have been worse, I suppose.

I remember that Michelangeli, who was a member of the jury, refused to sign our prize diplomas because he thought it was unfair that I got only the second prize. When I heard about this, silly boy that I was and not realizing that one doesn't do such things, I took my diploma to him in his hotel room and asked him to sign just mine. He replied, "No, I can't sign yours because you shouldn't have had this prize in any case, and if I sign one I might just as well sign all the others."

Andrzej professed to be satisfied with his eighth prize, although his ups and downs were well illustrated during the competition. He never considered himself a Chopinist, and he was so nervous throughout the competition that winning any kind of prize was a triumph. His playing was rather more personal and introspective than the others, when he was playing well. When he was playing badly, it came out more self-indulgent and hard-driving, which robbed the performance of excitement.

Something far more important than eighth prize resulted for Andrzej Czajkowski from the 1955 Chopin Competition. In the audience was another celebrated figure, the most famous, and best, Chopin pianist in the world, Arthur Rubinstein. Rubinstein always promoted Polish musicians, and he may at that time have been

looking for a replacement for himself, someone special who would take over as the leading Chopin pianist in the world when he was done with the title. He certainly would have wanted this person to be a Pole. Rubinstein heard something special in Andrzej's playing, something more deeply felt and more probing than he sensed in the playing of the other Polish contestants. Rubinstein wanted to hear more of Andrzej Czajkowski and his piano playing.

A gala reception for the participants and guests of the competition was held at the Council of Ministers' palace. Rubinstein spoke with Andrzej at the party, urging him to enter the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Belgium. Rubinstein was going to be on the jury of that competition and might be in a position to help. Andrzej would be able to play a more wide-ranging list of works, and his strengths, which perhaps were not completely exploited in works by Chopin, might be more evident.

Andrzej was also approached at the gala by a jury member from Belgium, Stefan Askenase. Askenase, who was considered the best teacher of Chopin in the world and was a well-known concert pianist as well, specializing in Chopin, also saw something special in Andrzej's playing. Stefan invited Andrzej to visit him in 1956 in Brussels where they could discuss some possibilities; perhaps Andrzej would like to study with him. Stefan remembers the first time he heard Andrzej play in the Chopin competition:

"Andrzej's was a wonderful gift. When I heard him the first time, I wanted to stop playing. I first heard him in the Chopin Competition in Warsaw in 1955. I was a member of the jury. I was not so much interested in his Chopin. It was a competition where the candidates and the jury lived in the same hotel in Warsaw. I met him and was struck by his personality."

Pianist Peter Frankl also recalls his first impression of Andrzej Czajkowski from the 1955 Chopin Competition:

"I first met Andrzej in February 1955, at the Chopin Competition, where we both participated. He was still a teenager. He was recognized in Poland at that time as quite an exceptional talent, already a kind of famous person. People were always looking forward to his appearances and he was a great favorite. But already his playing was controversial. To the surprise of many Poles, he didn't win, but came in 8th. I was one of the finalists as well, but didn't win a prize.

"It was a very interesting competition and another competitor, Fou Ts'ong, was a great friend of Andrzej at the time. But in time, this friendship deteriorated. Friendships with Andrzej changed very often. Eventually they were all alienated for some reason. We were always friends, but we were never that close, so I'm not sure why his close friendships would break up. I think part of it came from Andrzej's being so emotional, just the opposite of the others, who were superficial. Andrzej took everything so to heart, so deep. He just could not tolerate even a little remark with such deep feelings, so he would have a falling out."

Andrzej attended the competition gala with Halina Wahlmann. Andrzej was in high spirits, and Halina remembers one interesting point in the evening:

"Andrzej's presence in a company promised unexpected situations and great fun. It happened in 1955 at a solemn banquet during which prizes were to be handed to the winners in the Chopin Piano Competition. Queen Elisabeth of Belgium was an honorary guest. The orchestra played a polonaise, then lively sounds of a Polish folk-dance, a mazurka. Andrzej jumped to his feet, bowed low to the old queen and invited her to dance. The queen replied with dignity, 'I've had to dance often enough in my life, so allow me to have some rest now.' The then Minister of Culture, Sokorski, ran up to Andrzej and said with horror in his voice, 'What are you up to, you milksop? You have offended the queen. You may have started a third world war.' Andrzej smiled innocently, 'But why, Minister? I am dressed so beautifully!'"

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Andrzej was given special awards as the youngest Polish pianist (19 years old) in the Chopin Competition, a "Calisia" piano, 10,000 Zlotys in cash, and a concert tour in Poland and Bulgaria. He could have considered his career as launched by the results of this competition. He could have settled into a comfortable existence in Poland as a pianist and composer, receiving recognition in both fields, and perhaps a position at one of the better music schools. But he realized that Poland gave little freedom to state musicians. His discussions with Arthur Rubinstein and Stefan Askenase promised much, and pointed towards the West. The Queen Elisabeth Piano Competition of 1956 would afford an opportunity to play more of the repertoire that exhibited his talent to the greatest advantage. If he could win a top prize, Rubinstein held out the lure of an "instant" and large career.

### Preparation for the Queen Elisabeth Competition (1955 - 1956)

With the great excitement surrounding the 1955 Chopin Competition subsiding, Andrzej returned to living in his apartment on Nowolipki Street, initially with his Aunt Dorka. Within a few months, the living arrangement with Dorka wasn't working. Dorka's religious fanaticism was oppressive, and they just didn't get along. Unceremoniously, Aunt Dorka was sent back to Sopot. Halina Wahlmann moved in as Andrzej's new roommate. Halina recalls the move:

"After the death of his granny, our meetings became more frequent -- Andrzej felt very lonely. He liked to have a listener when he practiced. Before, it was his granny, and after her death he asked me to listen to his playing. In the Fall of 1955, we settled down together in his modest flat on Nowolipki. At that time he was preparing for the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium Competition."

Andrzej had two main tasks during 1955 and early 1956. First, he had to build up his repertoire in preparation for the Queen Elisabeth Competition, and second, he had to perform concerts in Poland and Bulgaria. His first concerts in Poland were just a few months after the competition, on May 19 and 20, 1955, and then June 10 and 11. In both concerto concerts, he played the Beethoven G major concerto. The May concerts were with the Wroclawska Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Jozef K. Lasocki, and the June concerts were with the National Philharmonic of Poznan, conducted by Jozef Wilkomirski. Later on, Andrzej would play a different concerto with the Poznan Philharmonic, the Prokofiev third. Jozef Wilkomirski, the brother of the violinist Wanda Wilkomirska, had some recollections of his concerts with Andrzej:

"At that time, Andrzej was already a magnificent pianist, excellent musician, extraordinary person, and attractive conversationalist. He had a lively way of reacting, but I never found him offensive. He knew French because he read and translated for me fragments from 'In Search of Lost Time' by Proust. It should be stressed that he was then just a young man. I, personally, 'matured' to that book much later.

"Even then his mastery of the piano was already excellent. As much as his rendition of Beethoven's G major concerto may be considered as good, his rendition of Prokofiev's third concerto was a revelation. I recall he asked for the orchestra to play as quietly as possible especially during the most difficult variation in the second movement because he actually played each and every note. I remember the ovations from the public.

"Andrzej had immaculate technique, beautiful and differentiated tone, and real temperament. At the keyboard, he was spontaneous and at times, unrestrained. I feel that, for his young age, Andrzej demonstrated in his music extraordinary maturity, cleverness of logical structuring, deep sensitivity, and much forethought in his interpretations. His apparent conflict between lust for life and his intellect produced overwhelming results.

"I remember one incident which proves Andrzej's phenomenal memory. He made a bet with two other pianists (I shall not mention their names) as to who could learn a Bach Invention

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the fastest. In one hour, he telephoned both contestants and informed them that he had already memorized the whole thing. Once, for an encore after the completion of a concerto, he played the entire 'Carnaval' by Schumann; another time, the entire Sonata No. 7 by Prokofiev.

"Just before one concert he asked me, 'May I play for you today?' Somewhat surprised, I consented. Then he explained that he always needed to play for one particular person and that on the repeat of this concert on the following day he would play for his ex-professor who was going to attend."

The concerts continued into the fall. On October 21, 1955, in Lublin, he played the Chopin F minor concerto with the National Philharmonic of Lublin, conducted by Karol Strzempa. This must have been at their request, since Andrzej was trying to concentrate on repertoire other than Chopin. An example of the varied repertoire he was developing is the program for a piano recital in Lublin on October 27, 1955:

Bach-Busoni - Prelude and Fugue in D major  
Schumann - Fantasy in C major, Opus 17  
Albeniz - Triana  
De Falla - Cubana and Aldaluza  
Ravel - Gaspard de la Nuit

In December 1955, he left Poland for the concert tour in Bulgaria. He asked Aunt Dorka to travel with him, as he disliked being alone and genuinely needed someone to help him with matters unrelated to music. On his first program on December 3, 1955, in the capital city of Sofia, he played in a double-recital with a violinist. His part of the program was:

Bach-Busoni - Prelude and Fugue in D major  
Beethoven - Piano sonata in E major, Opus 109  
Chopin - Barcarolle in F-sharp, Opus 60  
Szymanowski - "Masks," Opus 34

Andrzej's next recital in Bulgaria, on December 8, included Bach, Schumann, Chopin, Ravel, Szymanowski, and Prokofiev. In a concert on December 6, with the State Philharmonic of Sofia, Andrzej played the Schumann concerto. At the beginning of 1956, Andrzej returned to Poland for additional concerts. On January 13 and 14, he played the Prokofiev third concerto, with Jozef Wilkomirski conducting the Kracow Philharmonic Orchestra. In a February 2 recital, he added the Bach-Liszt, Fantasy and Fugue in G minor and three Mazurkas by Szymanowski to his repertoire.

Back in Warsaw, at his apartment on Nowolipki Street, Halina Wahlmann continued to be his roommate and helpmate. She observed that Andrzej was attracted to the 20th Century repertoire:

"It is true that he felt more at ease in the repertoire of the 20th Century composers and discovered that music in his own way. In the years 1955-1956, alongside his Chopin repertoire, he played superbly Prokofiev's Sonata No.7 and his Third Concerto. The same is true of his Gaspard de la Nuit by Ravel, and Stravinsky's Petrushka. On the other hand, one cannot say that he was a pianist who played exclusively modern music. He performed music by almost all major composers, except for Peter Tchaikovsky, whom he couldn't stand. Andrzej loved to play Bach. Music critic Jan Weber described his execution of the Goldberg Variations at the Poznan Philharmonic as an unusual, unrepeatable concert."

Weber had travelled to the Poznan concert with Andrzej and had an interesting recollection:

"We were travelling to Poznan by automobile. Andrzej and I had a good laugh because we said, 'Here we are, the famous composers Tchaikowsky and Weber on the way to the concert.'

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Just then, the driver turned around and said, 'You won't believe this, but my name is Schubert!'"

Andrzej was on fairly good behavior during this period of time, but there was one untoward incident that Halina Wahlmann remembers:

"We were living together at that time. Before each of Andrzej's concerts it was my task to have ready for him a snow-white shirt and a clean dress coat and, finally, to tie his bow-tie for him. That last thing was the most difficult as the bow-tie had a crooked clasp and it would maliciously turn in all possible directions before it finally rested in its proper position. That night, Andrzej was to give a recital at the Warsaw Philharmonic and he was to begin with a Bach Toccata. The hour of the recital's beginning was approaching. It was getting really late and I was still busy trying to tame the bow tie. My hands were trembling, I was terribly nervous -- I was afraid we might not make it. Andrzej tried to calm me down, 'Don't worry, the worst that can happen is that we won't hear the toccata.' We left home at five before 7:00 and at 7:00 Andrzej was supposed to be sitting at the piano. There were no taxis in the taxi rank. Andrzej waved a lorry [truck] to halt, and thus he arrived at the Philharmonic in a lorry, wearing his dress coat and bow tie. We heard the toccata!"

Although it wasn't easy to get a passport to leave Poland in April of 1956, Andrzej had no difficulties in obtaining his. He was a famous Polish State musician and was supported in his efforts to win a prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition. His destination was the Polish Embassy in Brussels, where he would stay for the early stages of the contest. He would be travelling alone.

### Queen Elisabeth Competition (1956)

The International Queen Elisabeth Competition for pianists started on Friday, May 4, 1956. A total of 59 pianists from 20 countries turned up to compete for world renown. In four weeks, they would be reduced to just 12 finalists. The jury consisted of 13 members:

United States: Alexander Brailowsky, Arthur Rubinstein  
Hungary: Annie Fisher  
Italy: Renato Borgatti, Guido Agosti  
France: Robert Casadesus, Marcel Ciampi  
South Africa: Cor de Groot  
Venezuela: Eduardo del Pueyo  
Russia: Emile Guilels, Nikita Magaloff  
Belgium: Emile Bosquet, Marcel Gazelle

The "eliminations of the first degree" found Andrzej playing the very first day of the competition during the evening session. For his program, he selected:

Handel - Suite in F-sharp minor  
Chopin - Etude in A-flat minor  
Liszt - Etude in F minor  
Stravinsky - Etude in F-sharp major  
Prokofiev - Sonata No.7

Music critic Jo Grinnaert wrote of Andrzej's performance under a headline "Some Transcendental Elements are Revealed":

Andrzej Czajkowski asserted himself immediately with a beautiful sonority in Handel's Suite in F-sharp minor, despite a second movement played a bit too slowly. The Chopin Etude in A-flat minor "fit him like a glove." His interpretation was transcendental and it is impossible

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to criticize it. In Liszt's and Stravinsky's etudes, the young Polish pianist showed a remarkable mastery of the piano. He achieved his best performance in the wonderfully executed second and third movements of the terribly difficult Prokofiev Sonata No.7. No doubt, he is one of the stars of the competition.

Of Andrzej's performance, music critic Jacques Stehman reported:

Andrzej Czajkowski is a young and impetuous Polish pianist with a considerable technique, mixed charm and poetry, abruptness and confusion, scuffles, inopportune accents, unexplainable brusqueness, and sometimes amazing control among the confusion. His interpretation of Prokofiev's Sonata No.7 was remarkable in its authority and comprehension, and stood out against his other executions. He is nervous and temperamental, but interesting.

After the first elimination, 26 pianists advanced to the second elimination, Andrzej included. Andrzej's part in the second elimination occurred on Wednesday, May 16. His program was:

Bach - Two Preludes and Fugues (From the Well-Tempered Clavier)  
Rodrigo - "Campeador"  
Beethoven - Sonata in C minor, Opus 111  
Ravel - Gaspard de la Nuit

Music critic Jacques Stehman reported his impressions of Andrzej's playing on May 16, 1956:

Andrzej Czajkowski, Polish, 20 years old, owns a considerable talent for his age, as a pianist and as a musician. As in the first elimination, his playing can be, at the wrong time, abrupt and brutish, but he is still a gifted performer understanding with deep awareness the pieces he plays, and making a glowing, natural, and suggestive interpretation. He remains a convincing performer. His Bach was simple and pure; the "Campeador," except for a few awkward moments, was distinguished; Beethoven's Opus 111 was both eloquent and controlled; Ravel's Scarbo, despite some confused and awkward passages, showed he knew how to interpret the heat, the colors, and the sarcastic spirit wanted by Ravel. One cannot be perfect and Mr. Czajkowski doesn't entirely have his playing under control, but he has eloquence, vitality, and sure musical instinct.

Andrzej advanced to the final stage. The finals required one short solo piece, one undesignated concerto, and a modern, unpublished concerto by Brussels composer Rene Defossez. At this point in the contest, Andrzej had become one of the audience's favorites. Knowledgeable listeners knew that here was a pianist willing to take chances and they loved this quality so rare in a competition. Where other pianists relied on flash and technique, Andrzej had analyzed each piece of music and determined what he believed was the best way to reveal the composer's intentions. As a composer himself, Andrzej had perhaps more insight into structure and the inner workings of each composition; in effect he presented his "ideas" concerning these elements in the form of a performance. It was risky because it was so personal and contained so much of his intellectual analysis, and also because it didn't always reflect the accepted interpretation. It was the insightful listener who caught what Andrzej was trying to achieve.

Quite the opposite of the 1955 Chopin Competition, where pianist Stefan Askenase was on the jury and Arthur Rubinstein in the audience, the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition found Askenase in the audience and Rubinstein on the jury. Both of these legendary musicians understood what Andrzej was about, and both wanted to aid his career. But first there was the hurdle of the final stage of the competition.

The 12 finalists were moved into the comfortable Chapelle Musicale, a kind of musical "castle" where each contestant received a private room and a practice piano. The finalists were (alphabetically):

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Vladimir Ashkenazy (Russia)  
Gyorgy Banhalmy (Hungary)  
Lazare Berman (Russia)  
John Browning (United States)  
Claude A. Coppens (Belgium)  
Andrzej Czajkowski (Poland) Peter Frankl (Hungary)  
Hans Graf (Austria)  
Hiroko Kashu (Japan)  
Stanislav Knor (Czechoslovakia)  
Cecile Ousset (France)  
Tamas Vasary (Hungary)

It was reported that Lazare Berman, then 26 years old, practiced 15 hours a day, taking time only for meals, and went to bed each night with bleeding fingers. Ashkenazy, just 18 years old, "stupefied" a critic with his technique and profound insight. It was piano playing of the highest order and the competition was very close. Andrzej was known as the pianist who took long walks rather than long practices.

When Andrzej moved from the Polish Embassy into the Chapelle Musicale, he was able to renew acquaintances from the 1955 Chopin Competition. Of the 12 finalists, five had been in Warsaw the previous year: Ashkenazy, Banhalmy, Frankl, Knor and Vasary. Peter Frankl remembers Andrzej when they were all ensconced in the Chapelle Musicale:

"We were in Brussels for the final and we 12 finalists were all enclosed in a castle. We were there for a week or 10 days to learn a new concerto written for the competition. I remember Andrzej learned the concerto in two days, memorized. He had such an incredible memory, fantastic memory, musical memory, and every other kind of memory. Ashkenazy learned the piece as well in two days. But they decided that it wouldn't look well to play it by memory at the performance, so they didn't. We were all supposed to agree. However, Tamas Vasary did play it from memory and was the only one to do so.

"At the castle, at the dinner table, I remember once and suddenly, the composer's name Tchaikovsky came up. Somebody off-handedly said that he was a homosexual. Andrzej, as he was a homosexual, had a violent reaction he threw a glass of wine into somebody's face. It was so sudden and incredible, that we all froze -- it was an incredible feeling. Then there was total silence. It was so difficult to get back to normal after that. That was a clue to how emotional he was."

Andrzej, wanting to practice his English, struck up a friendship with the American pianist John Browning. Andrzej promised Browning that he would write a piano concerto for him. The competition continued, with the finalists finishing up at the rate of two a night. Each night, haggard but happy, the contestants went through a ritual, solemnly crossing the silverware at the places of the two absent finalists who were performing that night, sticking a knife into an erect piece of bread at each place, and turning the chairs upside down.

The final stage of the competition commenced on Thursday, May 31. The first two contestants to play were Andrzej Czajkowski and Peter Frankl. Andrzej, who played first, had selected the program:

Bach-Liszt - Prelude and Fugue in G minor  
Prokofiev - Piano Concerto No.3  
Defossez - Piano Concerto (required)

The music critic for the newspaper *Le Peuple* reported Andrzej's performance:



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The first competitor was obviously the public's favorite. In fact, there are many reasons to appreciate the young Polish pianist, Andrzej Czajkowski. He has what we call "character," and the public likes that even if one doesn't know how it can be used. Actually, Mr. Czajkowski has adapted his talent, which is huge, to the fantasies of his character when, perhaps, it would have been better if he had dedicated his talent to the music. He doesn't betray it, but for extracting the picturesqueness, he sometimes exploits the music at the expense of its structure.

In Bach-Liszt's Prelude and Fugue, which he chose to play for his solo piece, there was -- in the prelude -- a modulating richness reducing the piece to its real meaning, and in the Prokofiev Piano Concerto No.3, which was "his" concerto, he insisted on the sarcastic view, which certainly did not represent the whole concerto.

The liberties Mr. Czajkowski took made the accompaniment difficult for conductor Mr. Franz André and the National Orchestra, especially as they were both in pretty bad shape.

As for Mr. Czajkowski, he is a great virtuoso and a mature artist. He did wonderful things with the cadenza in the Defossez concerto.

The contest continued until all 12 finalist had performed. In an article "Trial by Music," *Time* magazine summarized the results of the competition:

On the advice of Manhattan's Leon Fleischer, who won the last piano Concours, Browning chose Brahms' Concerto No.2 for his big selection, playing it stunningly, and he was the first finalist to bring order out of the Defossez chaos. Czajkowski reminded observers of Chopin (he is attractive to women and prefers composing to playing) and amused them with his jokes. But his playing was no joke to his intense competitors.

The finalists finished up at the rate of two a night. At week's end, at last they filed onto the stage, where they heard the verdict of the 13-member panel of judges (including Pianists Arthur Rubinstein, Robert Casadesus, and Emil Gilels). The winners: first Ashkenazy, second Browning, third Czajkowski.

Ashkenazy won the first prize unanimously this time, and time has proven the wisdom of the selection. The complete listing of the prize winners was:

- 1st - Vladimir Ashkenazy (Russia)
- 2nd - John Browning (United States)
- 3rd - Andrzej Czajkowski (Poland)
- 4th - Cecile Ousset (France)
- 5th - Lazare Berman (Russia)
- 6th - Tamas Vasary (Hungary)
- 7th - Stanislav Knor (Czechoslovakia)
- 8th - Claude A. Coppens (Belgium)
- 9th - Gyorgy Banhalmy (Hungary)
- 10th - Hiroko Kashu (Japan)
- 11th - Hans Graf (Austria)
- 12th - Peter Frankl (Hungary)

Following the competition, there was a reception for the prize winners. The friendship between Andrzej and John Browning was already faltering; Browning found Andrzej just too crazy. Browning remembers what happened at the reception:

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"He was extremely intelligent from what I remember. He tried to be shocking and say something startling. I remember what he said to the ex-Queen of Italy, who is a member of the Belgian Royal Family. Andrzej met her at the reception and we were all there. He said in French that he'd like to have sex with her and then push her off a fast-moving train. It was just to be amusing, just to be a little monkey. He tried very hard to be shocking and unconventional. It was very difficult to tell how much of the eccentricities were real and how much were fake. But he was a very sweet boy; he was really very kind and very decent."

Receiving a top prize in this prestigious and highly competitive contest was a great success for Andrzej. The difference between first and third in a competition of this stature was hardly worth discussing. A future of almost limitless possibilities was opening before him. He accepted Stefan Askenase's offer for advanced study. But it was Rubinstein who cornered Andrzej and convinced him that his career could now be launched to the highest levels. The really astute listeners thought that Andrzej played like a young Rubinstein; Rubinstein thought so too. With the enormous Rubinstein prestige and influence behind it, Andrzej's career was quickly under way.

### Launching of a Career (1956 - 1957)

From the start, it takes about a year to arrange concerts and set up a tour. Andrzej allowed the enthusiastic Rubinstein to take over and make the arrangements for a grand beginning. First, Rubinstein persuaded the world's leading impresario, Sol Hurok, to arrange a concert tour in the United States for Andrzej, starting with the 1957-1958 season. Hurok was given little choice in the matter, as Rubinstein told him, "If you want Rubinstein, then you also have Czajkowski." Rubinstein lent further impetus by limiting his own concert schedule for the 1957-1958 season in the USA. If they wanted a Polish pianist, then it would have to be Czajkowski.

Hurok wasn't pleased with the pressure put upon him by Rubinstein, but he could not give it anything but his best effort. The first thing he decided was that Andrzej Czajkowski would have to westernize his name. Thus Andrzej Czajkowski became André Tchaikowsky. As André, he was soon getting a first-hand view of what it meant to have a top musical career, with all the behind-the-scene activities and manipulations. To him the word "career" started to have negative connotations. However, with Rubinstein guiding the way, André went along with everything.

Wanda Wilkomirska was a Sol Hurok musician when she toured the US in the 1950's. She remembers Hurok telling her about his early experiences with André:

"This story was told to me by Sol Hurok. I was his artist until he died in 1974 and even saw him two days before his death in New York. He was fantastic. Hurok got a letter from Rubinstein who wrote him, 'Dear Sol, If you want someone who plays like a young Rubinstein, then remember this name: André Tchaikowsky. If you can, grab him.' Well, Hurok had a European representative and sent him to catch the boy. If he was as talented as Rubinstein said, and his name is Tchaikowsky, then he must have him.

"So this representative gets back to Hurok and told him that since he has met this boy, his life has been a disaster. He was supposed to go to a tailor with him to get a suit with tails, but he never comes. He forgets. If he made an issue of it André would say, 'I had a very difficult childhood.' That was his favorite. The representative asked Hurok to write a fatherly letter to André because he really doesn't know what to do with the boy. He comes late to rehearsals, or he doesn't come at all. So Hurok wrote to André:

Dear André,  
I have heard wonderful things about your playing from Mr. Rubinstein, who thinks a great deal of you. Believe me, my boy, with your talent and your

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name, put your career in my hands. Please don't make it difficult. Be an adult, be disciplined, be reliable.  
Sol Hurok

What happened next is characteristic of everything André did for the rest of his life and career. It may be viewed as a reaction against what he viewed as hypocrisy or dishonesty -- in this case, the exploitation of his adopted name -- or it may be viewed as a compulsive tendency for self-destruction. Wanda Wilkomirska continues:

"So André thinks this is a big joke and writes back to Hurok:

Dear Sol,  
I was deeply touched and moved by your letter. Yes, you are right, and I will change. Really. If you say that my career is assured, I am definitely going to change. The first thing I am going to change is my name, back to Czajkowski.  
André

"Then Hurok sent a telegram to André that said, 'Stick to Tchaikowsky -- or we part.' It's a wonderful story. You know how they were, they dig up a young artist, they overload him with concerts. Maybe André didn't want to play so many concerts. He was too interested in music as such. He wanted to compose. He was too big a talent to be just a pianist, if you know what I mean. André was never so eager to have a career, absolutely not. Never."

Rubinstein went to his record producers at RCA and gave them the same ultimatum: "If you want Rubinstein, then you also have Tchaikowsky." At the age of 69, Rubinstein was one of the best and most sought after pianists in the world and his recommendations carried an indisputable cachet in the music world. For Hurok and RCA promotional enterprises, Rubinstein devised a quote that André used for the rest of his life:

I think André Tchaikowsky is one of the finest pianists of our generation -- he is even better than that -- he is a wonderful musician.

After the Queen Elisabeth competition, André played a number of concerts that had been arranged for the winners; he spent a few months in Western Europe before returning to Poland. André received \$1,000 US as a contest winner, and everything seemed to be going his way. However, as events unfolded, he soon seemed out of control. The money was gone in no time, including a portion given to his cousin Charles Fortier in Paris. André was unkind to Aunt Mala who had come from Paris to be with him in Brussels. This was inexcusable, given her gentle nature.

His unevenness in the concerts following the competition was reported by the newspaper *Les Beaux-Arts* on June 22, 1956:

Andrzej Czajkowski was in bad shape. After Prokofiev's Concerto No.3, he decided to show another side of his talent with Beethoven's Concerto No.4. But his interpretation was neglectful and dull. A few days later, he gave us the reason for this failure: "What was exhausting wasn't the competition itself, but all the banquets which followed it. Really, I was asleep during the concerto and I swear that I never play Beethoven like that."

We must believe him because the Polish pianist recovered his talent during the final gala concert, which was organized by the Brussels Tourist Bureau. He played another concerto, Schumann's concerto, which he realized perfectly without a romantic grand eloquence. As encores, he played a Bach prelude and fugue and then two Prokofiev works in which all could view his richly talented nature.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

We spoke a lot about the lack of discipline of Czajkowski, but discipline is not always the most important consideration; fighting against romantic excesses, we may arrive at another excess: the virtuoso performance, without inaccuracies, but with a lifeless, icy perfection. Czajkowski isn't faultless, but, for him, at least art is not bureaucracy.

Regarding this concert, André wrote to Halina Wahlmann in Poland:

For a few days I've been so unhappy as never before in my life. I played Beethoven's G major Concerto so badly that a newspaper wondered what I had received the third prize for. I began in A minor, and every three bars I stumbled. In the second part, I forgot to come in altogether.

André also had a boyfriend. He wrote to Halina on June 7, 1956, "My little kisser, keep your fingers crossed for me. Yes, you've guessed, I fell in love." And later, "Yesterday I was made so very happy that it was worth living for 20 years to live up to it. Never before has my happiness been on such a firm base. I'm very happy at the very thought of telling you all about it." The love affair, however, had no "firm base," and was soon over.

By July 1956, it had been arranged that, after spending the late summer in Poland, André would return to Brussels to study with Stefan Askenase in the Fall and to play some concerts that Stefan would arrange for him. With some time to himself, he started composing the piano concerto he had promised John Browning. To say that they were friends was stretching the point. Friendship was almost impossible from the start. Both men had ambitions for a career on the concert stage, but their approaches were completely different. Browning was more likely to play the political games and was quite willing to socialize in the interest of encouraging patronage, as is often required of performing musicians. An even more distasteful characteristic, from André's point of view, was Browning's liking for the adulation of the audience and the recognition afforded him. After a concert, Browning would be eager to discuss the reaction of the audience rather than how the music was performed. For André, the music was everything. The crowd was a necessary annoyance. The two fell into arguments, always instigated by André, and the result was the termination of their friendship.

### Return to Poland (1956)

In early August, André returned in triumph to Warsaw. He brought with him a major purchase made with his contest winnings, a magnificent radio/phonograph. His music programs now announced: "Andrzej Czajkowski -- prize winner in the Chopin and Queen Elisabeth contests." Concert and recital dates suddenly appeared in growing numbers for the emerging international artist. Since all concerts and recitals in socialist Poland were arranged by the Minister of Culture, André had little to say about when, where, or what he would play. He knew perfectly well that a career in Poland or anywhere in the Eastern Bloc wouldn't be in his own hands, but would be arranged and controlled by the government. He was a full member of the Polish Composers' Union and would have adequate time to compose, although there were restrictions on what was considered acceptable for performance.

During one of the trips to Brussels for study with Stefan Askenase, Rubinstein urged André to leave Poland and make his home in the West. Despite some guilt about leaving family and friends, there was really very little conflict for André. He answered that he would leave Poland for good, and it would be soon. André discussed his plans at that time with Halina Wahlmann who remembers:

"I was there from 1955 to 1956 when André left for the West. Before I moved in, we met at the dormitory. It was a relationship of friends, more than of romance. It would have been a strange romance. André at one moment wanted to have a family with children and to marry me, but the next moment he wanted to be an artist without family responsibilities."

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André's sexuality is a complicated puzzle, of which this is one of the early pieces. Although he was even then thought to be homosexual, his feelings for Halina were very strong over his lifetime and arguably ambivalent with regard to romantic context. Many other pieces of the puzzle are provided by those who knew

him, but instead of fitting together to form a single picture, they seem to oppose each other and to offer nothing conclusive about the real nature of his sexual orientation.

In October 1956, André made passport arrangements to leave Poland to continue piano study in Brussels. At this time, Poland was in the political upheaval of becoming a Russian client state, as distinguished from a Russian puppet state. There was a change of government during the "Polish October" and the new government made things easier in just about all aspects of life. For composers, it meant the freedom to write and perform music that was more avant garde. Still, Andrzej was determined to leave Poland and to begin his promised career in the West.

The day before his departure, he travelled around Warsaw saying good-bye to his family and friends, then returned to his apartment on Nowolipki Street. He would let Halina stay in the apartment as long as possible. Eventually, everything would be confiscated, but for a few months at least, she was to stay there and give the appearance that everything was normal. They talked of their friendship and affection for each other, and Halina boldly asked for a favor: could André make love to her so she could have his child? After some deliberation, André agreed and in Halina's words, "functioned like a man."

### Escape to the West (1956)

André returned to Brussels in early October 1956, and once again stayed at the Polish Embassy. The charade of remaining a Polish citizen could continue for a while longer and was necessary if he were to receive a stipend for study with Askenase. On October 12, 1956, André wrote to Halina in Warsaw:

Dear Halina,

Write to me. Every time I get a card from Poland, I think it is from you, and that you send your love to me. You have not forgotten me so quickly, I hope. Please write to me. I love you as I have never loved anyone. I cry like a new-born baby. I not only think about you, I feel you are a part of me. I am not afraid to think about our common needs. I would like to have you here, or I will come back to you. Halina, it's very sad, and you are very good.

Andrzej

André thought about the possibility of Halina having their child. Could she be pregnant? He telegraphed Halina Wahlmann a brief message on October 21, 1956:

WE WILL CALL OUR SON GASPARD. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT? WRITE IMMEDIATELY. KISSES, ANDRZEJ

Halina telegraphed back to André:

I WANT HIM TO BE CALLED DANIEL. I KISS YOU. HALINA

In a few weeks, however, it became clear that there would be no child. Halina wrote back to André:

It's difficult to hope that Daniel will jump out of your head the way Athene jumped out of Zeus's head. You must come back, my love. One swallow doesn't make a summer.

There was an exchange of letters in which André said Halina must leave Poland and move to Paris and become his wife. She remembers her reaction:

"André went to the West in 1956, to Brussels and Paris. He told me to come to Paris, to be together. I was nervous, and was afraid that I would be like a fifth foot on a cat, so I turned him down."

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

André studied with Stefan Askenase in Brussels and grew closer to both Stefan and his wife, Annie. The men played the piano for each other and had long discussions on performances. André found Annie Askenase to be an interesting person and liked her very much. True to his word, Stefan had arranged concerts for André. Stefan remembers this period:

"In the Fall of 1956, André returned to study with me, and never went back to Poland. He wanted to get away from Poland and to be free. He received from the Polish government a scholarship to study with me. Then he played often for me and we discussed his playing -- he was then very critical. He was not a pupil who accepted everything. No, we discussed things. But mostly, he adopted my advice, or my opinion. He would listen, but make up his own mind. Then he became my friend, more than my pupil. He studied, not regularly, but when he gave concerts in Brussels, he came to see me. He lived then between Brussels and Paris, where he had an Aunt [Mala]. I recommended him to my agent in Germany, and he went there and had a great success. Then he went on tours and took his Paris Aunt with him.

"I brought André to Germany, Switzerland, and Holland. I helped André in Europe. I brought him to Oslo too. It was good luck that this Norwegian conductor from Oslo was visiting in Brussels. I asked him and André to dinner and it was very nice. André had some wine and was very charming, and they were charmed by him. So André was invited for an Oslo concert."

But the future of André's life and career were about to come under the direction of Rubinstein and Sol Hurok, in America. Hurok was assembling the US concert tour for André to start in the Fall of 1957. This gave André one year to perform in and around Europe and to prepare for his first RCA recording, which was scheduled for June 1957.

André left the Polish Embassy in Brussels and moved into his Aunt Mala's apartment in Paris. He officially defected from Poland. Aunt Mala wrote to Halina Wahlmann on December 11, 1956:

My Dear, Beloved Halinka:

André, as usual, is practicing two or three hours a day when others are working eight to ten hours a day. In spite of that, after his last recital, where he played Goldberg's Variations by Bach, the reviews were fantastic. He's considered to be the best contemporary artist. Right now, he's given up practicing altogether and begun composing. For the past few days, André has worked all night and slept during the day. Right now, it's noon and he is still asleep. Yesterday, he got up at seven in the evening, we went out and came back at ten. André is tired, often irritated, but I do hope that it will soon go away.

The composition André was working on was the piano concerto for John Browning. Any friendship with André was difficult, and it seems André was having a greater success than Browning, which didn't help matters. Mala's letter continues:

We're going to spend the holidays in Paris. On January 11th, André will be playing at the greatest concert hall in Paris. Browning is undoubtedly jealous that André had made such a career already. Browning puts music and career above everything else, but I have my doubts about this career of his. At this time, André gets a lot of invitations, is in great demand, whereas Browning is constantly turned down. This was the case in Paris, in Italy and in America. My dear Halinka, this jealousy in artistic circles has always been, is, and will be. Only André is not jealous because he's self-confident. He doesn't speak about it, but I know it very well. Browning plays very well, but given that André works only two or three hours a day, André will play definitely better.

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Anyway, you, Halinka, are a very talented pianist, as André tells me, so you understand it all very well.

I kiss you,  
Aunt Mala.

One must wonder if Aunt Mala's assessment was true. If André practiced as much as his contemporaries, would his career have been different? Or was he primarily a composer who would never have been able to spend eight hours a day practicing? Would he never have had bad reviews if he had spent the time other performers spent in practice?

In February, 1957, André moved from Mala's apartment and into the apartment of his boyfriend, prompting this letter from André to Halina:

Dear Halina,

You're smiling because I mention this significant name. This is true. But do I really have to be such a buffoon and clown as him? Right now, I'm drunk, and of late, I've made an acquaintance with hashish and cocaine. I'm very sad, although I'm beginning to recover. Objectively speaking, this is more sad than the wild sorrow and confusion I felt before. It's obviously practical that one forget. Write to me at my new address.

Yours,  
André

André's recording debut with RCA Records was set for Sunday, June 2, 1957. On one side of the record would be Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*, on the other side, Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, Opus 22. The recording was to take place in Paris at a hall rented by RCA for the occasion. André did not seem to be practicing. On May 28 he was vacationing in Nice with Aunt Mala. On that date, he wrote a letter to Halina about personal items left behind in Poland. The apartment at Nowolipki Street was being confiscated and there were questions about who owned what. André had to file legal papers to get things straightened out.

On the day André was to have his recording session in Paris, he wasn't even in town. In fact, he was still in Nice. It seems the weather in Nice was very pleasant. The beaches were warm, the swimming was great, so why ruin everything with a return to Paris? RCA wanted to make the recording no later than early June so that it would be in the record shops in America at the time of the American debut in October. There was barely time to accomplish all of this. Charles Fortier, André's cousin, remembers the recording session:

"André made a recording for RCA in Paris during 1957. This was a piano recital recording. RCA rented the Salle Wagram for a recording on a Sunday. The piano was tuned, the technicians were ready, and everything was set for the recording. Sunday came, and no André. He skipped the recording session and went swimming. He called them that he was sick. Monday, the same thing happened and André didn't show up. On Tuesday morning, RCA sent a doctor to Mala's apartment to see how sick André was. [André had probably returned to Paris on Monday, June 3.] With this development, André felt much better and made the recording that afternoon.

"There were problems during the recording session as André would start to play, but then they would have to stop him and adjust the microphones. They kept asking him to start over. This annoyed André greatly because they made it seem like he was supposed to be able to be creative under such conditions. The recording didn't go well, and it bothered André that they were going to edit all the tapes to make a single good recording. But the RCA producer [Peter Dellheim] was patient with André and should be given a lot of credit that the recording was even made."

The recording was released in October 1957, and reviewed by a number of publications, including the American magazine, the *Saturday Review*.

As the citation of the repertory will suggest, there is more to be learned from this disc about the fingers than the heart of the young pianist whose American debut occurs concurrently with the release of his first recording. Particularly, insofar as "Gaspard de la Nuit" is concerned, the fingers have to be capable of delicacy as well as incisiveness, finesse as well as force. It is the revelation of this excellent recording from France that a pianist of major power has come to join the ranks of those who really count.

I wouldn't say that Tchaikowsky gets as much out of "Le Gibet" as this mystical, moody piece contains, but if he did, now, what would be the challenge for the future? He does demonstrate, however, every latent capacity for matching that challenge in the future. As for the "Visions Fugitives," they are articulated within a whisper of their sharp-edged contours, and with a certain driving intensity of style not unlike that of Horowitz himself. Certainly this "Scarbo" shows that he is no cautious precisionist, but a really daring young man on the pianistic trapeze.

This was another major success for the start of his career. In spite of the ill portents of some other matters, it looked at this point to all who mattered that a great career was about to spring into the concert world arena. To all except, perhaps, André. In his heart, composing was the important thing. And there were his devils: performance jitters, active and irregular social life, and uneven temperament.

André had plans for July and August 1957. Through a letter of introduction from André's longtime composer friend in Poland, Zygmunt Mycielski, he was going to study for two months with Nadia Boulanger at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, near Paris. Boulanger was known as an outstanding and influential teacher of composition. She had studied at the Paris Conservatory, winning first prizes in harmony, counterpoint, fugue, orchestration, and accompaniment. She had also studied with Faure. Her list of pupils was long and included many distinguished composers, especially Americans. Copland, Harris, Thomson, Carter, and Piston were all on the list. But before this delightful summer could start, André had to get through the month of June and more recording sessions with RCA.

These sessions apparently did not go well. Recordings of the Goldberg Variations, Bach's Preludes and Fugues, and Scarlatti Sonatas made during the session were never released by RCA. André tried again to record Scarlatti for RCA in the US, but this recording, too, was never released. Some years later, he recorded the Goldberg Variations for Pathe Marconi, which was released, but the recording never received much attention. Part of this might be due to the magnificent recording of the Goldberg Variations by Glenn Gould released in 1956. It was a tough act to follow, although André had plenty to offer to this Bach masterpiece.

#### Study with Nadia Boulanger (1957)

The first thing André liked about Boulanger, who was then 70 years old, was that she was totally unimpressed with him. He was just another brilliant student wanting some instruction in composition. Some years later, Zygmunt Mycielski asked Nadia what André was like and he recalled her reactions:

"I introduced André to Nadia because I also had studied with her. Stravinsky wrote the 'Symphony of Psalms' at Fontainebleau, working and showing Nadia what he was doing. Stravinsky trusted only Nadia and no one else. André was very happy at Fontainebleau and happy with all the possibilities. André said he learned more with Nadia in two months than he had learned with anyone else totally. He was impressed. André said he did very well with Nadia, but she tells a different story. She says he never did so well, and there were quarrels.

"At the end, André left Nadia because of a quarrel. It wasn't about music. He was supposed to stay for two months and then leave because they needed his room. He couldn't extend his



## The Other Tchaikowsky

stay. But he wanted to stay a few more weeks and she said, 'No, you must leave your room.' So there was a big quarrel and André left. She tried to help him and make suggestions."

Also at Fontainebleau that summer was Wendy Brennan, a 17-year-old cellist from the US. She found André to be the most handsome, most interesting, most wonderful man she had ever met. Wendy has some recollections from Fontainebleau:

"I went to Fontainebleau in the summer of 1957. On the airplane I met this fellow, John, who was 18 years old. We sat together and became friendly. We spent three days in Paris before going to Fontainebleau. I could see that he kind of liked me, but I decided to wait. We got to Fontainebleau and were living in the same hotel as André Tchaikowsky. I didn't know this André and I was still going around with John.

"Somehow, I was running around outside and I skinned my knee. Then this André showed up. He had shorts on and he was so bubbly, and had so much energy. John was better looking, but André was the one who was so sensitive. He was so worried about my knee. André was kind of short. He said to John, 'Don't worry, I'll take care of your friend.' He lifted me up and carried me up the stairs and went in the back way because I don't think girls were allowed in his hotel. I found myself in his room, and John was looking at my knee, and André was looking at my knee. He went to the bathroom and got some disinfectant and put it on. That's how I met André and, frankly, I fell for him.

"Of course I was fascinated by André, and of course John didn't know it. André was fascinated by me, I guess, because I came from California, and he was interested in Americans. He said he was going to play in Los Angeles, with the LA Philharmonic. The three of us hung around together, went to movies or something. I remember André loved to play Bridge. I remember seeing him play bridge with these people from Harvard. I was so jealous. This was one thing he loved to do. He was a marvelous player. Then he used to stay up all night composing and talking about his life. I really didn't know much about his life in Poland, but I was so fascinated by André that I found out from friends all that they would tell me.

"What happened is he knew that I had a kind of crush on him, so he asked, 'What are we going to do?' He knew John liked me. So he said, as only André could, 'Don't worry, I will explain this to John.' So he went to John and said, 'I'm sorry to inform you this, but Wendy likes me now instead of you.' Unfortunately, about a week later, John died unexpectedly of a brain tumor. Nobody knew he had a brain tumor. He was supposed to be taking some medicine, but neglected to take it because he was having such a great time.

"In Fontainebleau, they have this cafeteria with a piano. André was playing and, of course, I was crying my eyes out. Everyone else was practicing 15 hours a day, but André went out into the fields with his composition, and he was studying the score. He had a photographic memory. I remember when he was sight reading a Brahms cello sonata. He went straight through it. That was the first time he had played it. It went marvelously.

"André would go to the master classes. Rubinstein was there that year. In fact, Rubinstein knew him quite well. He took on André as a protege. I had one cello lesson with Gregor Piatigorsky and I mentioned André. He said it was a shame that André had this temper, that he would somehow ruin it, that Rubinstein was trying to help him. Rubinstein kept André there for hours playing Chopin pieces, over and over. Apparently Rubinstein liked André so much that he gave him a key to his house in Paris. I think André gave some piano lessons to the Rubinstein children.

## Chapter 4 - Years of Training (1945-1957)

"When André was in Paris, I went to visit him at his Aunt's house. He practiced on an upright piano. His Aunt was a nice Jewish lady. She was very pleasant. I saw his cousin at a concert. He had a big fight with André over something and said he had disappointed the family. I talked to all his friends, and they were telling all these stories. Apparently his parents were burned in their farmhouse by the Nazis and he watched it. Also, he had an illegitimate son by a Polish girl. He was telling a story to everybody at Fontainebleau that he had offered to marry her, but she would have nothing to do with him.

"He said with six million Jews being killed by the Nazis that he doesn't believe there was any God. That's why he was an atheist. I thought he was very pro-Jewish. That concerned him at his age of 21. Apparently, he was dependent on taking showers, on cleanliness. He was really mixed up, but with a heart of gold. I remember using California slang, something like, 'This stuff here.' He asked, 'What is stuff?' That was a new word to him. He learned it for John Browning, that's what he said. My parents went to his concert in Los Angeles. They said he practically ran out onto the stage when he came to play."

### Piano Concerto (1956 - 1957)

The piano concerto promised to John Browning was completed at Fontainebleau in July, 1957, and first performed in April, 1958, with the Belgium National Orchestra conducted by André Vandernoot. André Tchaikowsky was the piano soloist. The score is dated, "Juillet 1956 -- Juillet 1957 (Bruxelles -- Varsovie [Warsaw] -- Sofia -- Paris -- Fontainebleau)." André had hoped that Browning might have considered giving the first performance, but he wasn't interested in the concerto. André describes his composition in a letter to Halina Wahlmann (now Halina Wahlmann-Janowska) on June 18, 1957:

Dear Pussycat,

My little kisser, I'm very worried about you, and I myself am going through a difficult time. I have to do everything at once -- finish my concerto by the first of August, record three long playing records: Gaspard de la Nuit, Visions Fugitive, Goldberg Variations, Bach's three preludes and fugues, plus six Scarlatti sonatas.

I visit the Rubinstein's every day, which is far less fun than it would seem. Mr. Rubinstein is very much interested in my piano concerto, and he says that it will be Bartok's fourth concerto (he doesn't like Bartok). He gave me the following advice: "Open up! Let your soul sing! You're very talented, child, a golden talent. You should write as to make everybody in the audience cry." But I doubt if I'm going to listen to him. I could end up with the fifth concerto by Rachmaninoff. My conductor, the handsome André Vandernoot, gives me the opposite advice: "Oh, such a beautiful theme! Isn't it a waste to use it for the piano? Turn it into a symphony. What do you need this typewriter for? It was fashionable during its era. In ten years' time, almost nobody will be playing it. Listen mate, the orchestra plays much better when no twiddle, twiddle interrupts her."

Under Rubinstein's influence I wrote a theme, which all my friends consider to be terribly sweet and weepy. Under Vandernoot's influence, I added accompaniment on the post twelve-tone series with "concrete" whispers on percussion, pianissimo kettle drums, glides and trills in the quarter tones. God only knows how it's going to turn out, but I'm looking forward to the first performance, and I feel we are all going to have a lot of fun.

I can just imagine the look on the faces of the orchestra during the first rehearsals. (By the way I'd like to have you there.) It will be nothing less than a zoological symphony: Drums growling, clarinets meowing, brass roaring, and flutes barking. But the real menagerie will be the audience.

## The Other Tchaikowsky

My love, it's already past four, and at five I begin recording. Let me be blessed by God, because I don't know what I shall be doing. Hopefully, I'm not the only one. A few days ago I went to a concert given by C. P., who plays and looks like an old, used-up French letter. Men of learning find in him a certain resemblance to Rameses II, but it must be said that the Egyptian civilization has so far fared better. It didn't cross anybody's mind to mummify C. P. when there was still time for it. As of now, I'm seriously afraid it's too late, both for him, as well as for Mrs. M.L. [Marguerite Long?], who, for a change, in terms of her face, resembles Moby Dick. The only one that holds his age quite well is King Arthur [Rubenstein?].

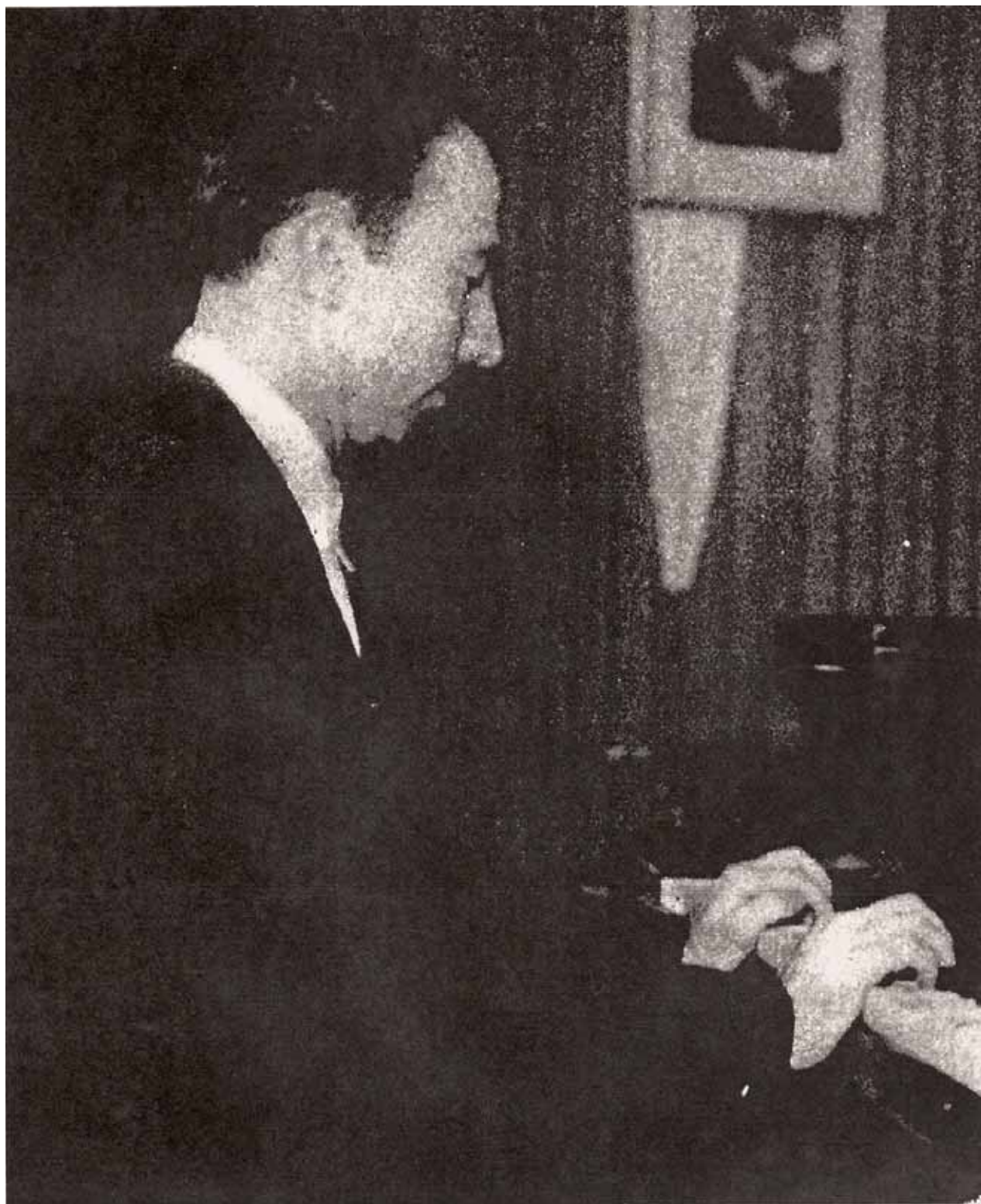
Well, be well, be well. Aunt Mala keeps hurrying me up, bangs me on the back, pulls my hair so as to make me hurry up, because you should know, I'm still in my pajamas. I kiss you a thousand times.

Yours,  
André

After the premiere performance, the work was never played again. The complete score is in the Josef Weinberger André Tchaikowsky archives.

### Enter the Artist (1957)

With the completion of André's study with Nadia Boulanger in the summer of 1957, his formal training as a piano virtuoso and composer was finished. His official full-scale career was about to begin with an arduous tour in the United States.



Courtesy of Frederic Chopin Society

Wladyslaw Kedra (c. 1949)

Kedra was Andrzej Czajkowski's first piano teacher for the years 1945-1946. Kedra received his piano training at the Lodz Conservatory and the Paris Conservatory in the 1930's. He later won fifth prize in the 1949 Chopin Competition.

## The Other Tchaikowsky



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Celina Czajkowska (c. 1947)

In this 1947 passport photo, Celina was age 58. At this time; she was not especially healthy, suffering from heart trouble and diabetes. She was told before the war, after a mild heart attack in 1938, to live a calm life as her heart was weak!

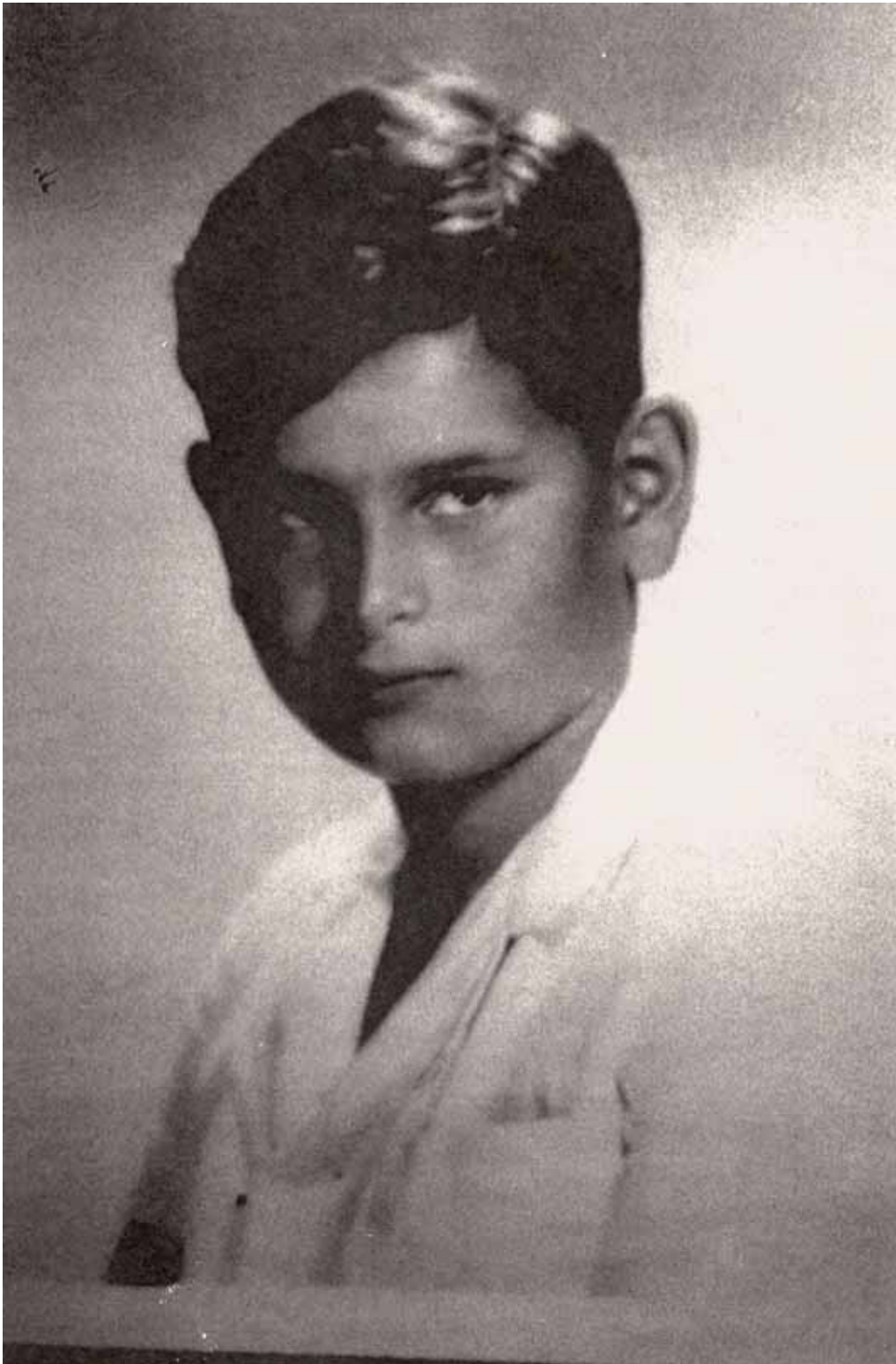


Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej and vacation friend (c. 1947)

Andrzej has a hug for the lifeguard while visiting a Baltic seaside resort. By 1947, after only two years of piano instruction, Andrzej was already an incredible pianist and had composed a number of piano studies. In a 1946 recital at school, he was unable to play one of his variations and started to cry.

## The Other Tchaikowsky



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1948)

Andrzej Czajkowski at age 13 in Paris. Andrzej moved from Lodz to Paris at the urging of his father, who had done very well in Paris in the family fur-trade business and was interested in providing an education for his son. However, he did not support Andrzej's decision to study music.



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Celina Czajkowska and Charles Fortier (c. 1948)

Celina in Paris in 1948 with Charles Fortier, Mala Zeiden's son. Fortier's original name was Kazimierz Zeidenstrumph. He changed it when he joined the French Foreign Legion in 1939. Mala's other son was Fredrick Zeiden, a medical student who died in a 1932 influenza epidemic.

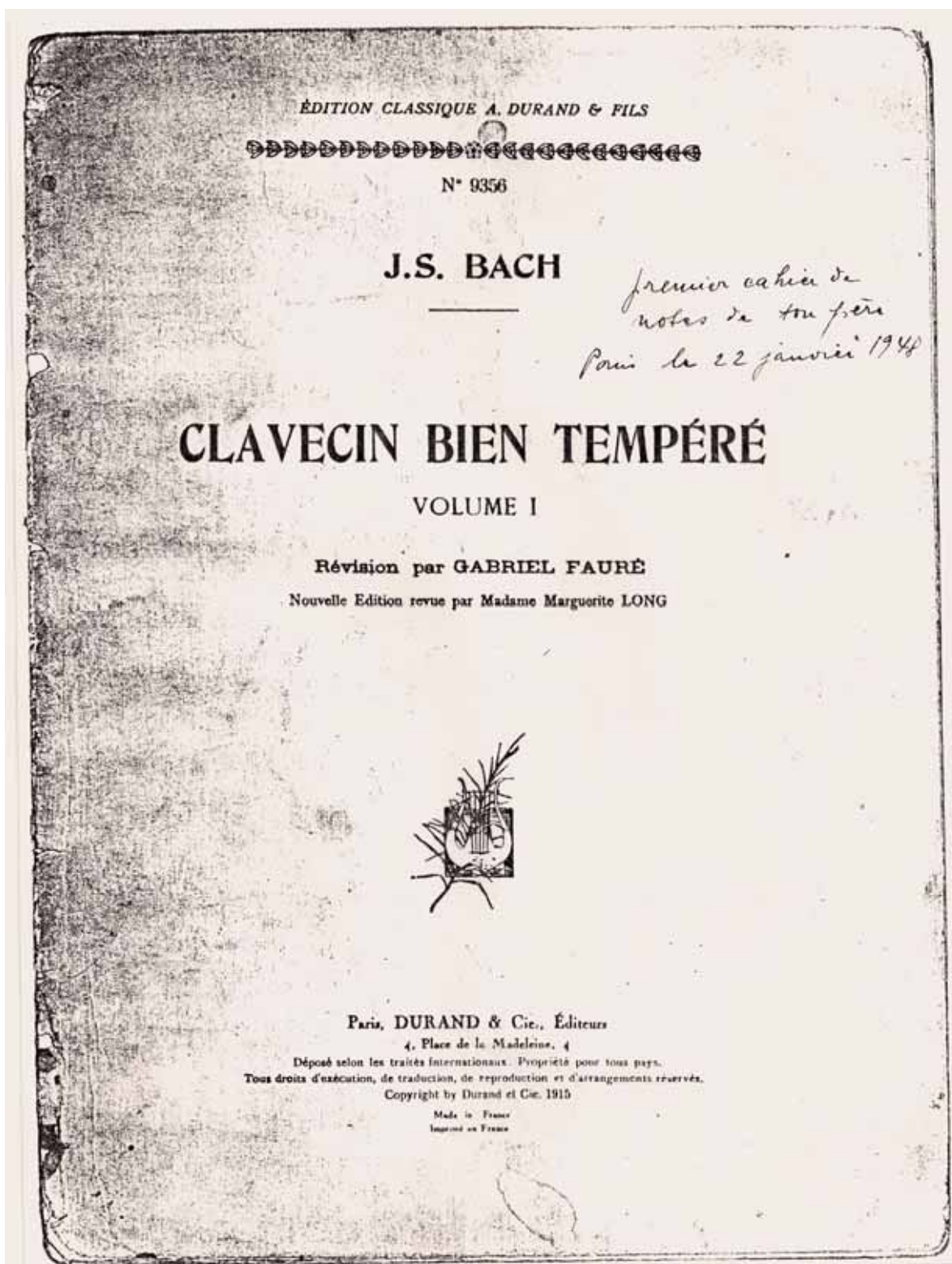




Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Charles Fortier and his American wife, Vivi (c. 1947)

Charles was Aunt Mala's son. He had an adventurous life, leaving home at the age of 17 to fight in Spain (against Franco), and joining the French Foreign Legion during the second world war. After the war he married and became a dentist. Andrzej was close to the family and would often vacation with them.



Courtesy of Terry Harrison

Music given to Andrzej by his father (c. 1948)

Andrzej's father provided a piano and purchased some music for Andrzej. Karl did not directly pay for Andrzej's education but did provide financial help via Charles Fortier. Karl wrote on this music: "First notebook of notes from your father. Paris, the 22nd January 1948."



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej at his “World-debut Recital” (c. 1948)

Celina arranged a recital at the Polish Embassy to convince the Polish government to financially support Andrzej. The May 1, 1948 recital included Andrzej's own compositions as well as a Chopin Scherzo and Nocturne. Following this convincing demonstration, embassy officials provided a small monthly stipend.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

An early composition by Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1948)

This Nocturne by Andrzej, marked opus 1, number 1, was dedicated to his grandmother. In this same note book were other compositions with some creative opus numbers: Valse, opus 51; Preludio, opus 1, no. 12; Impromptu, opus 60, no. 22; and Valse, opus 80, no. 1. Only the Nocturne was given a dedication.



Courtesy of Halina Swieca-Malewiak

Halina Swieca-Malewiak and Mala Zeiden (c. 1962)

Halina (left) was Andrzej's cousin and his kindergarten teacher in the Warsaw Ghetto. Mala was especially kind and understanding with Andrzej all of her life. Although Celina and Mala were sisters, they were very different as individuals.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Class of Lazare Lévy at the Paris Conservatory (c. 1948)

Lazare Lévy, at age 66, with his Higher Class. Andrzej (far left), obviously the youngest student, had just turned 13. Of 340 candidates, only four were admitted to Lévy's higher course. Perhaps in gratitude, Andrzej wrote a piano sonata for Lévy that included a movement with 27 variations.

PROGRAMME					
1.	TROIS ETUDES <i>M<sup>me</sup> HUREL STEINMANN</i>	CHOPIN	13.	ETUDES SYMPHONIQUES. <i>M<sup>me</sup> BOURBOULDI</i>	SCHUMANN
2.	3 <sup>e</sup> BALLADE <i>M<sup>me</sup> GRANIER</i>	CHOPIN	14.	ETUDES SYMPHONIQUES (Posthumes) <i>M<sup>me</sup> SAGLIER</i>	SCHUMANN
3.	TROIS ETUDES <i>M<sup>me</sup> TCHENKO</i>	CHOPIN	15.	TOCCATA <i>M<sup>r</sup> GALLI</i>	SCHUMANN
4.	SONATE op. 58 (Final) <i>M<sup>r</sup> MILLECAH</i>	CHOPIN	16.	RHAPSODIE EN SOL MINEUR <i>M<sup>me</sup> DE NOLHAC</i>	BRAHMS
5.	TROIS ETUDES <i>M<sup>me</sup> CLAUSADE</i>	CHOPIN	17.	CHACONE VARIÉE <i>M<sup>me</sup> ZERAH</i>	HENDEL
6.	2 <sup>e</sup> IMPROMPTU <i>M<sup>r</sup> CZAIKOWSKI</i>	CHOPIN	18.	FEUX D'ARTIFICE <i>M<sup>r</sup> GILBOND</i>	DEBUSSY
7.	11 <sup>e</sup> RHAPSODIE HONGROISE <i>M<sup>me</sup> TERRAL</i>	LISZT	19.	POISSONS D'OR <i>M<sup>me</sup> DEMIERRE</i>	DEBUSSY
8.	LA LEGGIEREZZA <i>M<sup>me</sup> DECHESNE</i>	LISZT	20.	ONDINE <i>M<sup>me</sup> CHANTEAU</i>	RAVEL
9.	LA CHASSE. (Étude d'après PAGANINI) <i>M<sup>me</sup> PELLERIN</i>	LISZT	21.	TARENTELLE <i>M<sup>me</sup> SAPOUNOFF</i>	CHOPIN
10.	FEUX FOLLETS <i>M<sup>me</sup> DE SECCHI</i>	LISZT	22.	TRIANA. <i>M<sup>r</sup> LASRY</i>	ALBENIZ
11.	CHASSE SAUVAGE. <i>M<sup>r</sup> GARDEL</i>	LISZT	23.	DEUX DANSES BOHEMIENNES <i>M<sup>r</sup> HOUSNY</i>	SMETANA
12.	ETUDE (Variations sur un thème de PAGANINI) <i>M<sup>me</sup> CLIDAT</i>	LISZT	24.	TOCCATA (après le 5 <sup>e</sup> concerto) <i>M<sup>r</sup> N'KAOVA</i>	SAINT-SAËNS

PIANO ERARD

Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Lazare Lévy's Higher Class recital program (c. 1949)

This "Audition de la Classe de Monsieur Lazare Lévy" recital was given on Saturday, April 30th, 1949, at the Paris Conservatory "Salle Berlioz." A total of 24 students played, with Andrzej appearing as number six. At about this same time, Andrzej was preparing for prize competitions at the Conservatory.

L'ASSOCIATION DES ELEVES, ANCIENS ELEVES ET AMIS  
DE L'ECOLE DES LANGUES ORIENTALES

vous prie d'assister au concert que donnera  
le **Mercredi 25 Mai, à 18 heures**, à l'Ecole des Langues Orientales  
2, Rue de Lille - Paris (VII<sup>ème</sup>)

**ANDREEJ CZAJKOWSKI**  
Elève au Conservatoire National de Paris, âgé de 13 ans

•

**PROGRAMME**

<u>Première Partie :</u>		<u>Deuxième Partie :</u>	
<b>BACH</b>	- Deux Préludes et Fugues, extraits du premier livre du Clavecin bien tempéré	<b>ANDREEJ CZAJKOWSKI</b>	- Introduction et scherzo de la sonate en mi mineur
<b>MENDELSSOHN</b>	- Rondo Capriccioso	-	Varlations sur le Prélude de Chopin en do mineur
<b>CHOPIN</b>	- Quatre Impromptus	-	Six Fantaisies

*Participation aux frais : 100 francs (50 francs pour les étudiants)*

Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej recital program (c. 1949)

In this May 25, 1949 recital, Andrzej played his own compositions in the 2nd part of the program. Andrzej's teacher, Lazare Lévy, was also a composer and understood perfectly Andrzej's need and desire to write his own music. This was Andrzej's first recital for which an admission was charged.

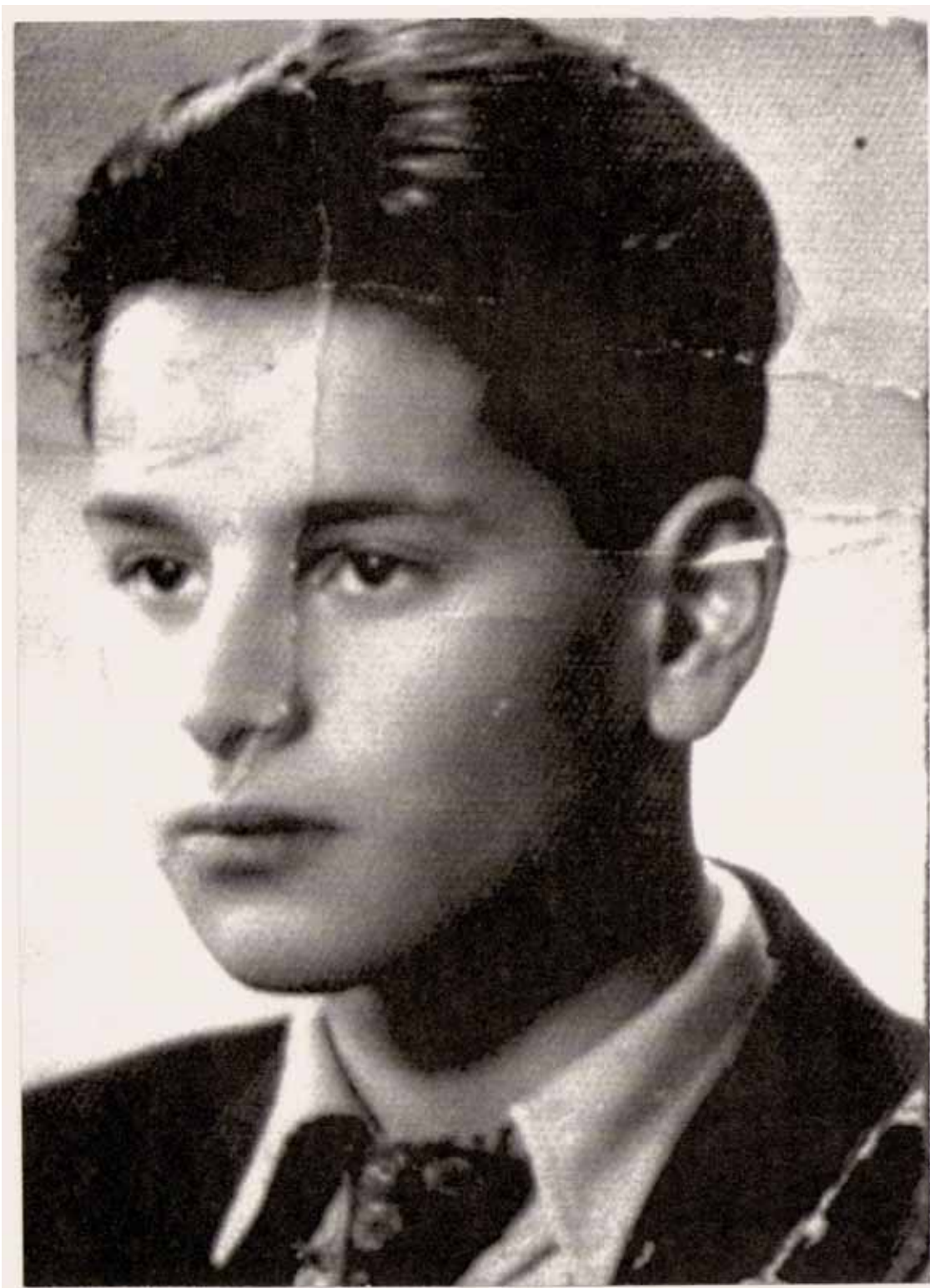




Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

First Medal in Piano awarded to Andrzej from the Paris Conservatory (c. 1950)

Andrzej attended the Paris Conservatory on a Polish Government scholarship. In 1949, he was awarded the Paris Conservatory's second medal in piano and 2nd mention in solfeggio. In 1950, he won first medals in both piano (above) and *solfeggio*. (*Solfeggio* is sight-reading with vocalization of notes.)



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1950)

Andrzej, pianist and composer, at age 15. He was accepted for membership in the Polish Composers' Union, Youth Section, in 1950. Andrzej then requested commissions for piano etudes and concertos for piano and flute. He also asked for music paper to carry out the commissions.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski at the keyboard (c. 1951)

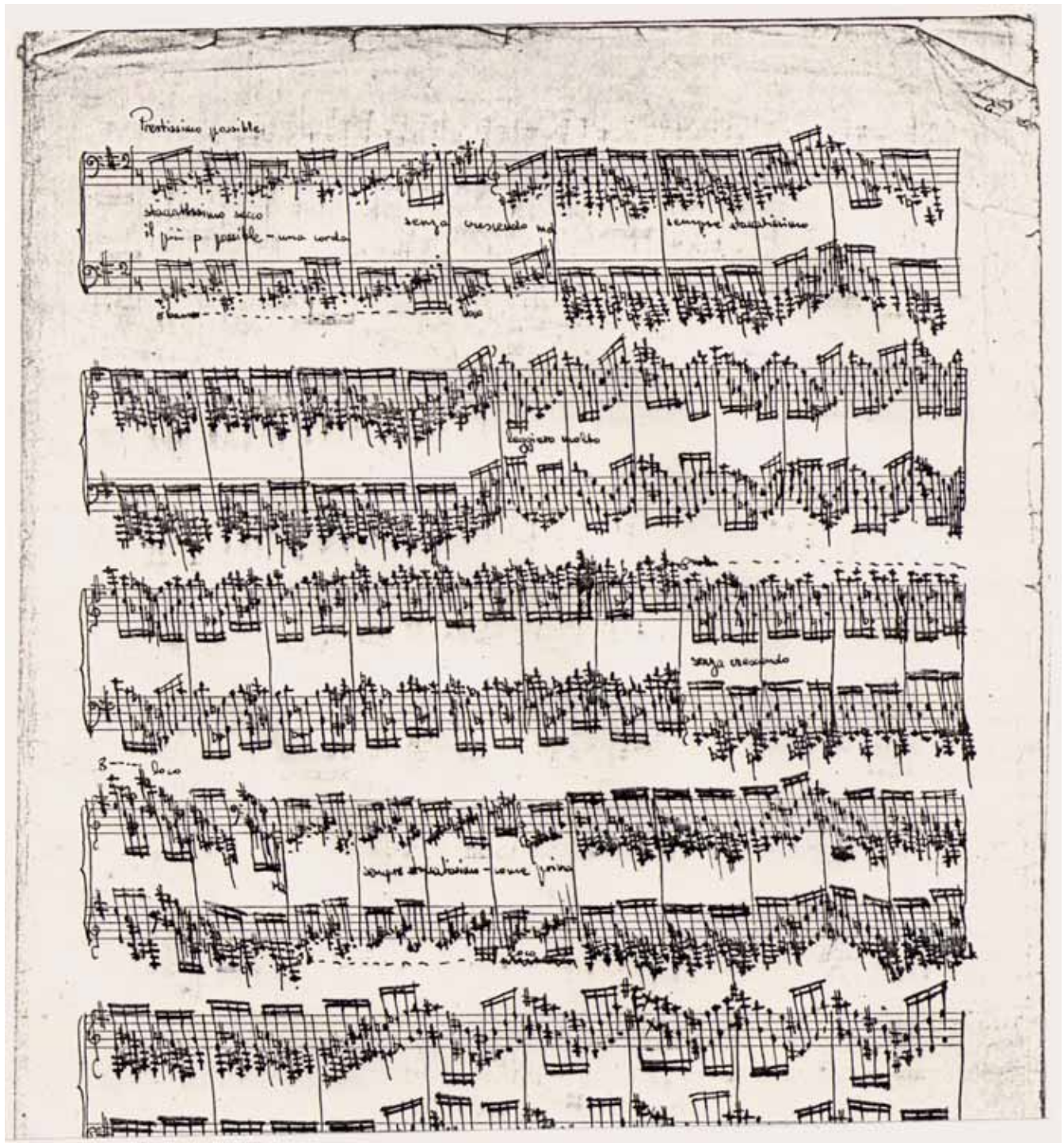
Although active as a composer, he rarely played his own compositions for others. His friends knew he was composing, but all remember him as a pianist and no one recalled ever hearing anything that he wrote. This grand piano was located at the house of his Aunt Irena Paszkowska.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Tadeusz Kerner (c. 1951)

Andrzej's distant cousin Tadeusz Kerner was also a fine pianist. Although there was an age difference, Kerner being ten years older, the two were great friends. Kerner has many recollections of Andrzej's amazing abilities at the piano, particularly of Andrzej's ability to sight-read and memorize music.



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Piano Etude by Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1951)

Andrzej wrote his own piano studies to develop certain aspects of his piano technique. His eventual goal was to write 12 etudes to be published and used at the higher schools of music. He never completed the project but some imitating Chopin were written and sketches exist of others.



  
**PAŃSTWOWA KOMISJA EGZAMINÓW**  
**Z ZAKRESU PROGRAMU NAUCZANIA SZKOŁY Powszechniej**  
**DLA DOROSŁYCH**

w Gdańsk powiat Gdańsk

**ŚWIADECTWO EGZAMINU**  
**Z ZAKRESU PROGRAMU NAUCZANIA SZKOŁY Powszechniej**  
**DLA DOROSŁYCH**

urodzony dnia 1 listopada 1935 r. w Warszawie  
 powiat: \_\_\_\_\_  
 uczęszczał w ostatnim roku szkolnym 1946/47  
 po ukończeniu poprzednio w latach 1945/46 - 1946/47  
 nauki w zakresie klasy śródstaj  
 i poddał się egzaminowi na podstawie zarządzenia Ministra Oświaty z dnia  
 4 sierpnia 1949 r. Nr V KD-628/49 oraz pisma Inspektora Szkolnego  
 z dnia 17 maja 1951 r. nr 1027/51 uzyskując następujące oceny:

język polski	<u>bardzo dobry</u>
historia z nauką o Polsce i świecie współczesnym	<u>dobry</u>
geografia	<u>dobry</u>
przyroda	<u>dobry</u>
matematyka	<u>bardzo dobry</u>

Świadectwo niniejsze jest równoznaczne ze świadectwem ukończenia  
 szkoły powszechniej dla dorosłych.

Gdańsk dnia 4 czerwca 1951 r.

Nr 10

CZŁONKOWIE KOMISJI:  PRZEWODNICZĄCY KOMISJI: M. Jasiński  
K. Kieczyński W. Jasiński  
F. Kiliński M. Jasiński  
J. Kłacz M. Jasiński  
S. Szwed

Skala ocen: bardzo dobry, dobry, dostateczny

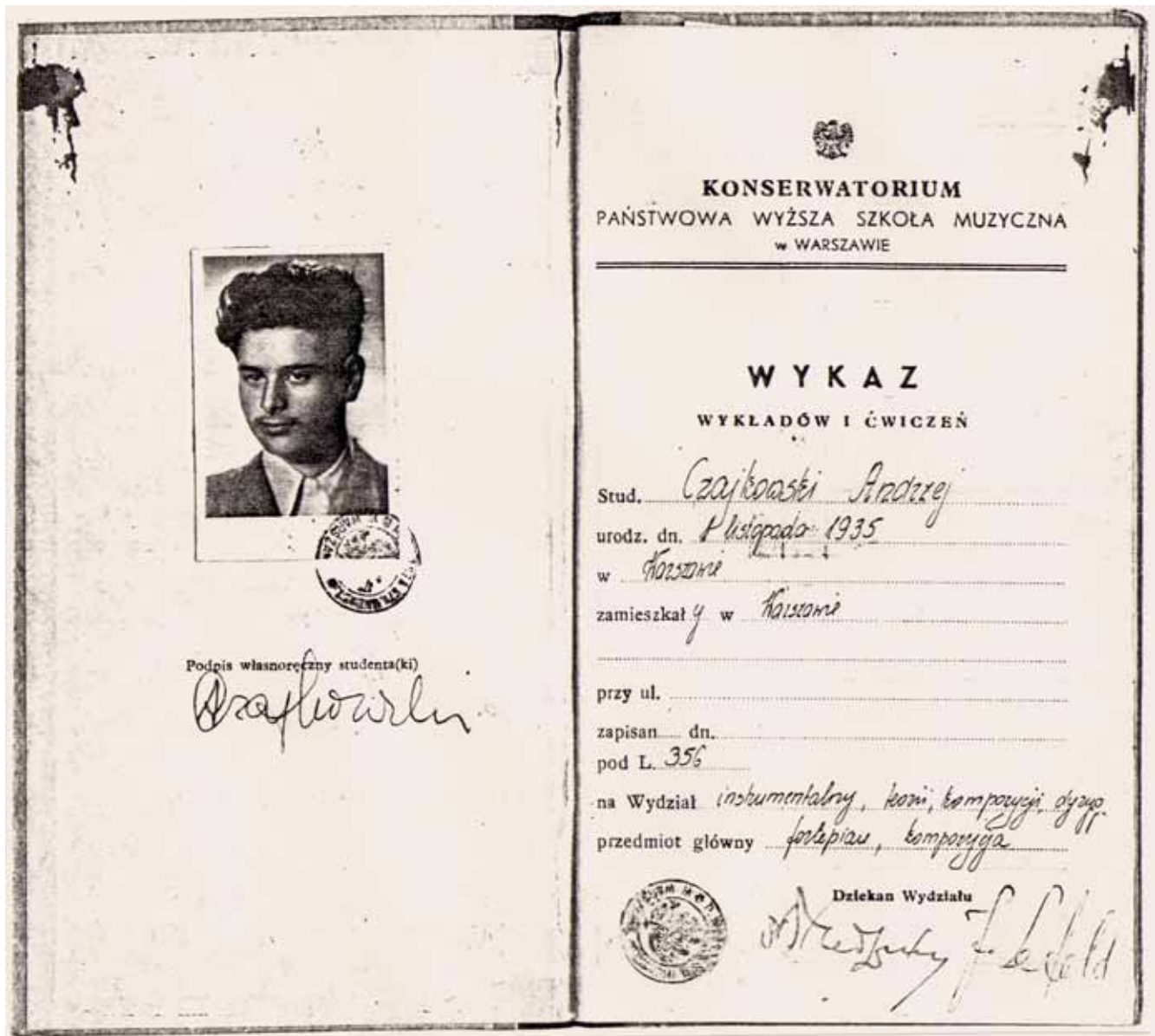
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FZWi Bydgoszcz - Nr zam. C 164 - Nakł. 20 000  
 Data uk. druku 29. 12. 1949 - E-12294

Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej's Certificate of Examination (c. 1951)

To enter the Warsaw Conservatory, a certificate of secondary schooling was required. Andrzej's certificate shows a good academic record: Polish, very good; History, good; Geography, good; Biology, good; Mathematics, very good. He took the tests on May 17, 1951 in Gdansk.



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

Andrzej's Warsaw Conservatory Grade Book (c. 1951)

Each student at the Warsaw Conservatory is given a grade book and identification number to be used throughout the period of study. Andrzej's grade book shows his student number of 356 and his course of study: piano and composition. Few students tried to study both during the same school year.

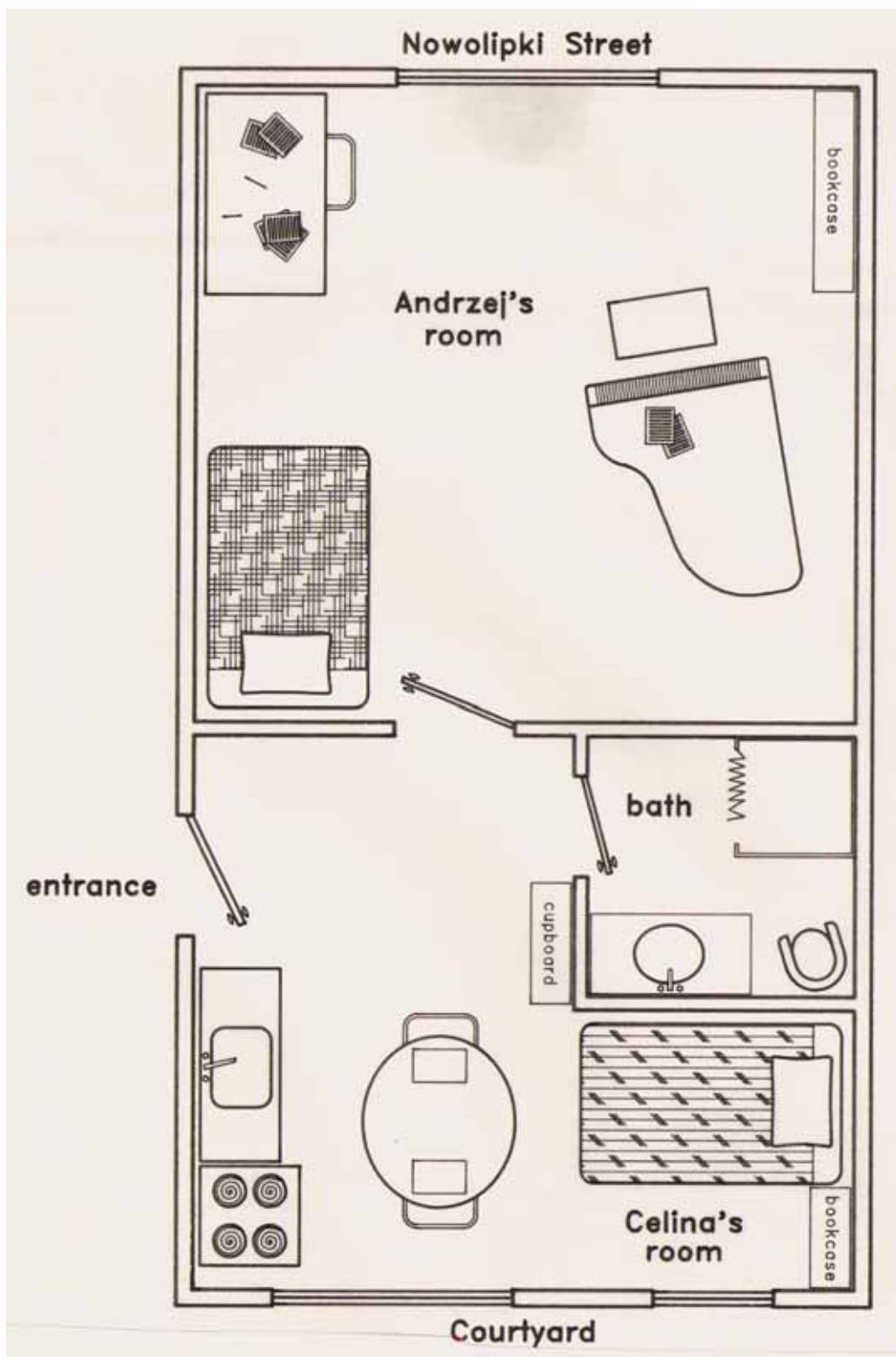


Courtesy of Irena Paszkowska

Andrzej's apartment building in Warsaw (c. 1986)

Andrzej and Celina's apartment was located on the fourth floor of this building (courtyard window at top-right). The address was 36 Nowolipki Street, apartment 12. Unfortunately for Grandmother Celina, with her heart problems, and now with diabetes, it was a difficult climb.

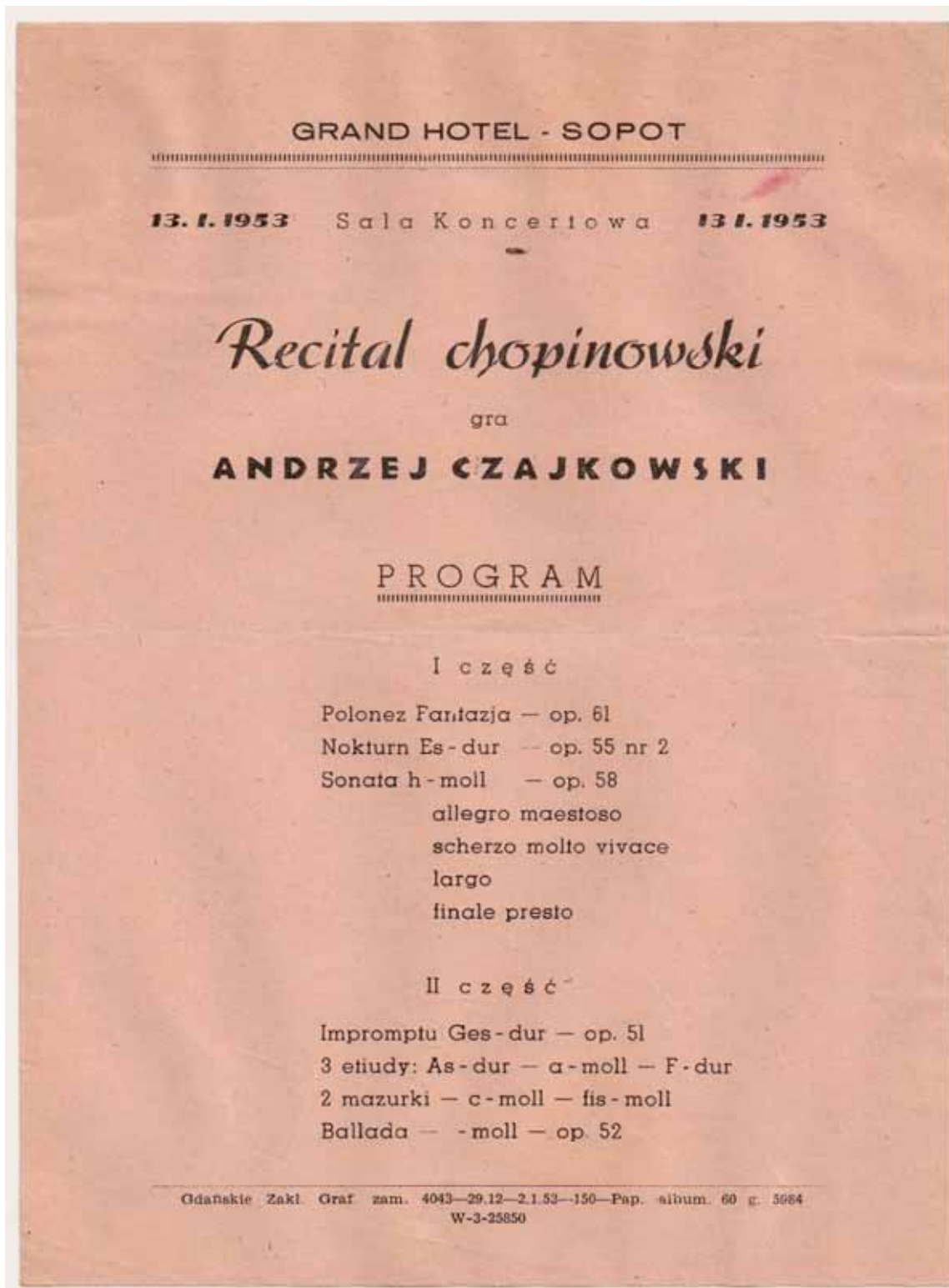




Courtesy of Pamela A. Houghtaling

Andrzej's apartment floor plan (c. 1951)

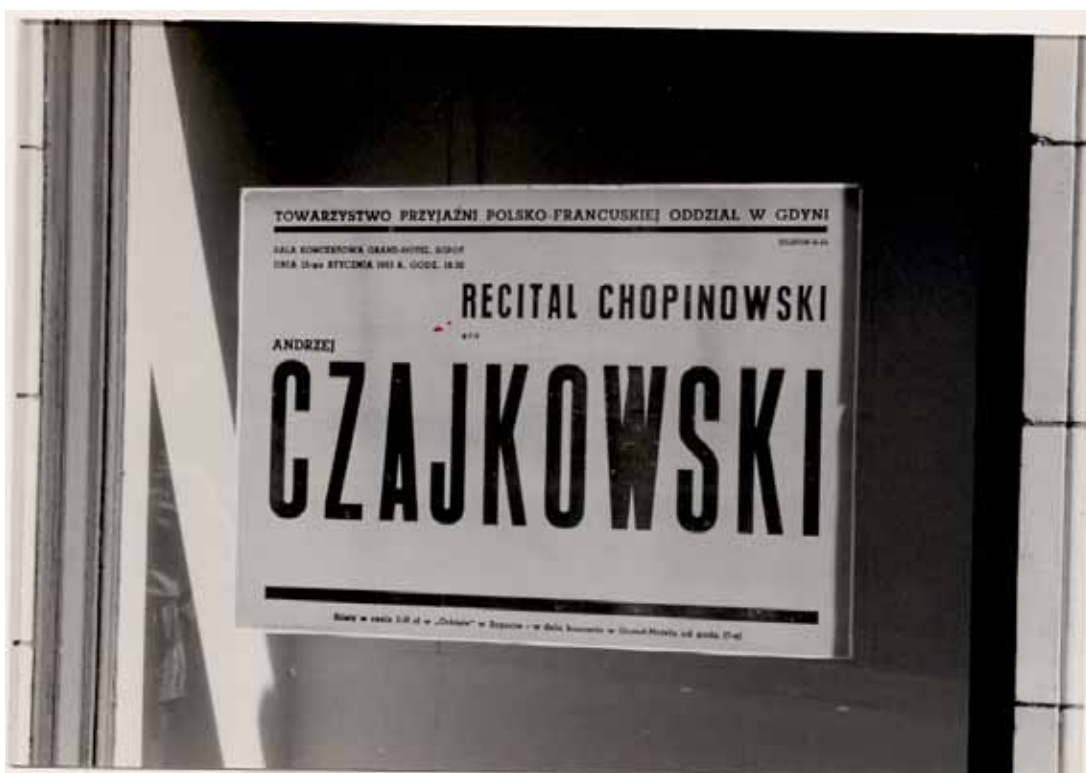
The two-room apartment Andrzej and Celina shared was rather small (500 square feet or 45 square meters). Andrzej had the larger room for his grand piano, bed, and desk. His window looked out on Nowolipki Street. Celina was left with a kitchen pantry area for her bed, with windows that looked out on the courtyard.



Courtesy of Piotr Paszkowski

All Chopin recital program (c. 1953)

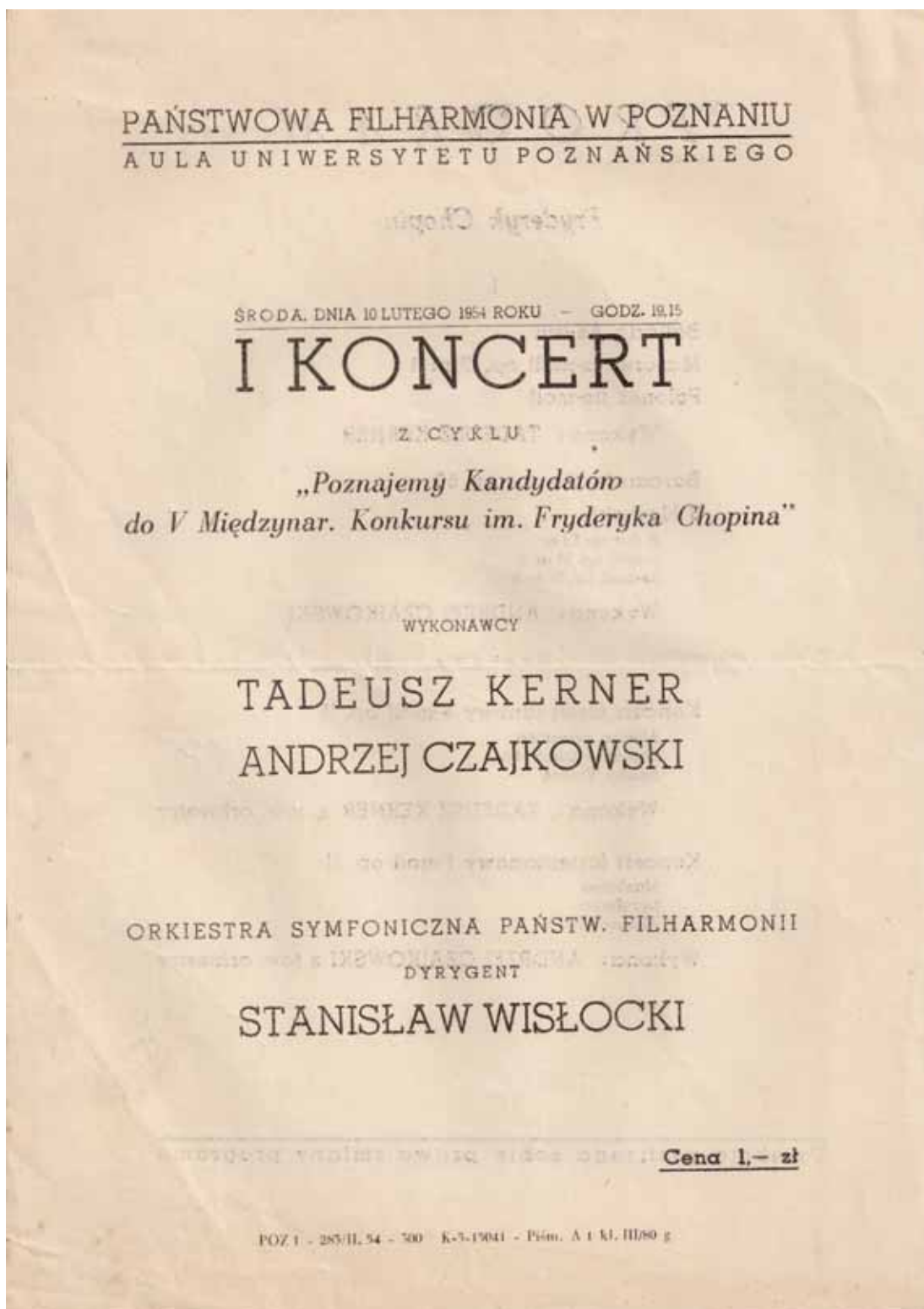
At the age of 17, Andrzej returned to Sopot to give an all-Chopin recital at the Sopot Grand Hotel Concert Hall on January 13, 1953. Grandmother Celina travelled with Andrzej to all of his concerts, so she was certainly there. Aunt Dorka, living in Sopot, also attended.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Posters announcing Andrzej Czajkowski concerts (c. 1953)

The piano recital poster announces a Chopin recital in Sopot on January I, 1953, when Andrzej was 17 years old. The concerto concert was given with the National Philharmonic of Lublin on October 9 and II, 1953. Andrzej played his favorite Beethoven concerto, the G major.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Concerto Program (c. 1954)

In this marathon concert, shared with Andrzej's cousin Tadeusz Kerner, each gave a piano recital in the first part of the concert. In the second part, each played a Chopin piano concerto with the National Philharmonic of Poznań. They are identified as candidates for the 5th Chopin Competition.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Halina Wahlmann (c. 1955)

The friendship between Halina Wahlmann and Andrzej Czajkowski lasted nearly 30 years. They met while attending the Warsaw Conservatory. In 1988, Halina published a book of letters they had exchanged over the period of their friendship called "My Guardian Devil." Halina is a concert pianist, psychologist, and writer.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Celina Janina Sandler-Czajkowska (c. 1954)

Grandmother Celina died from a heart attack on February 3, 1955, at the age of 66. She never lived to see Andrzej become a famous concert pianist, which she had sacrificed and risked her life for. At the end of her life, she and Andrzej were greatly at odds.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski at the 1955 Chopin Competition

Andrzej is shown at the piano with another contestant, Naum Shtarkman from the USSR. Andrzej was one of eight Polish pianists to enter the Chopin Competition and Shtarkman was one of six Russian pianists. Andrzej and Naum became friends and spent many hours together playing chess.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej's 8th prize diploma from the 1955 Chopin Competition

The jury consisted of 30 members from 16 countries. They all signed the prize winners' diplomas except Arturo Benedetti-Michelangeli, who believed that Vladimir Ashkenazy had won the competition and refused to sign anything to the contrary. In addition to 10,000 Zloty, Andrzej won a piano.





Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Winners in the 1955 Chopin Competition

First Place, Adam Harasiewicz (top left); second place, Vladimir Ashkenazy (top right); third place, Fou Ts'ong (bottom left); eighth place, Andrzej Czajkowski (bottom right). To just about everyone, Ashkenazy won the competition, but judges' politics and competition rules put him in second place.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej's promotional photograph for 1955

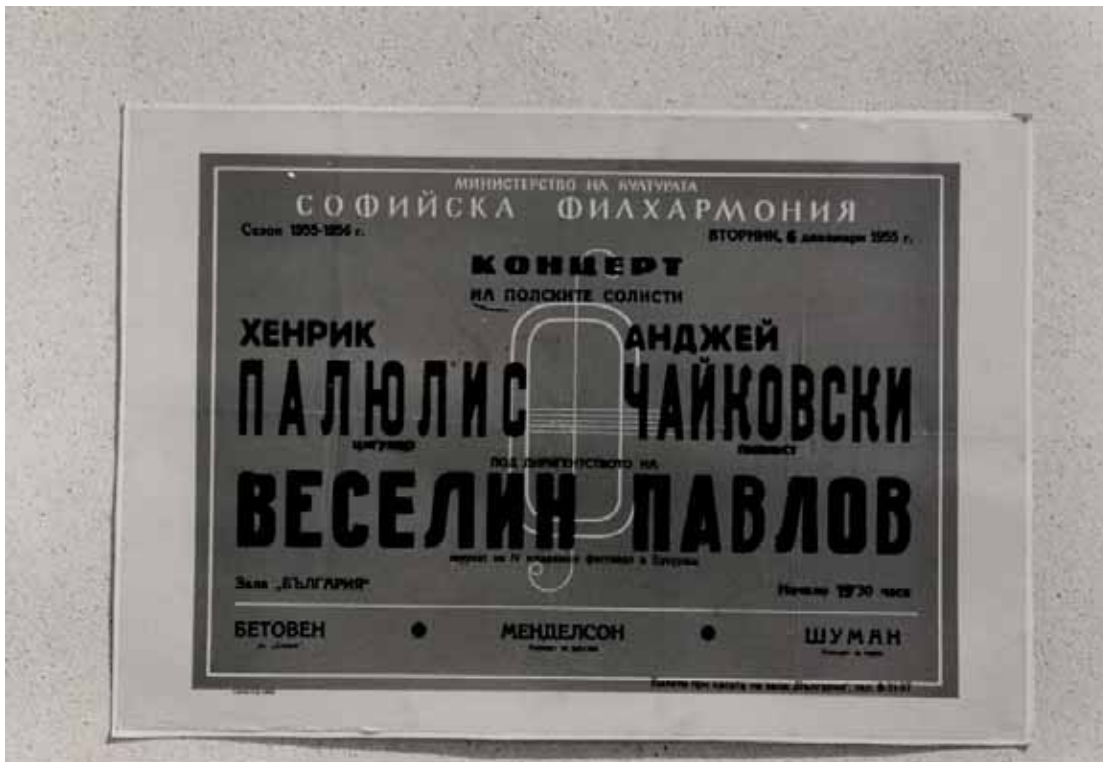
After Andrzej's success in the Chopin Competition, promotional photographs were taken. This is one of them. His 8th prize in the competition resulted in concerts in Poland and Bulgaria. At this time, Andrzej was not quite 20 years old.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Poster announcing a Czajkowski concerto concert (c. 1955)

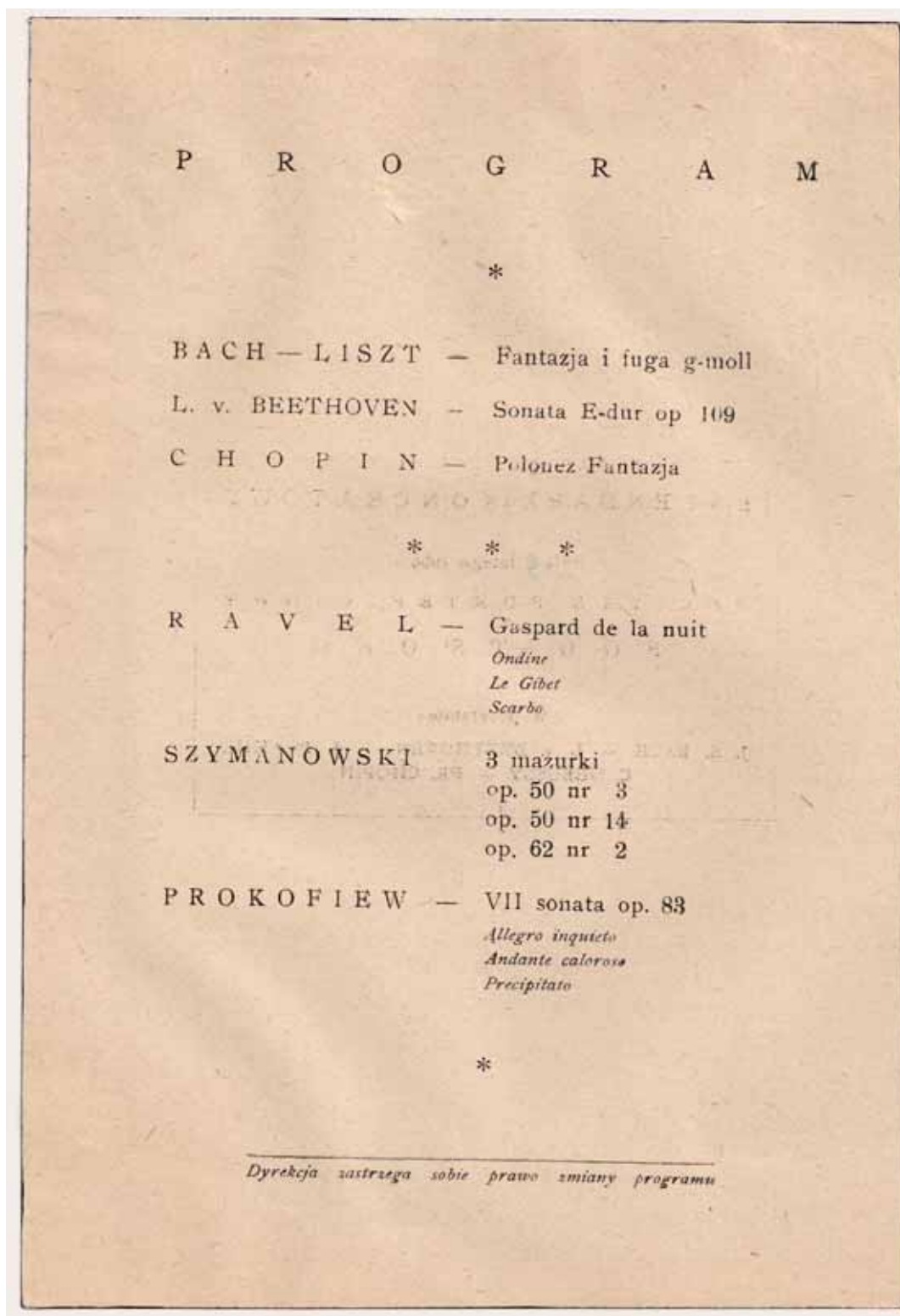
For these Poznań concerts, Andrzej played the Beethoven G major concerto. After one concert, Andrzej played as an encore the entire "Carnaval" by Schumann. The conductor, Jozef Wilkomirski, remembers Andrzej as " ... a magnificent pianist, excellent musician, extraordinary person, and conversationalist."



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Posters announcing Czajkowski concerts in Sofia, Bulgaria (c. 1955)

For his December 8, 1955 recital (lower photo), Andrzej played works by Bach, Schumann, Chopin, Ravel, Szymanowski, and Prokofiev. The recital was at the Technical Institute Hall. For the concerto concert (upper photo), which included himself and a violinist, Henrik Paulese, Andrzej played the Schumann concerto.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Recital program, February 2, 1956

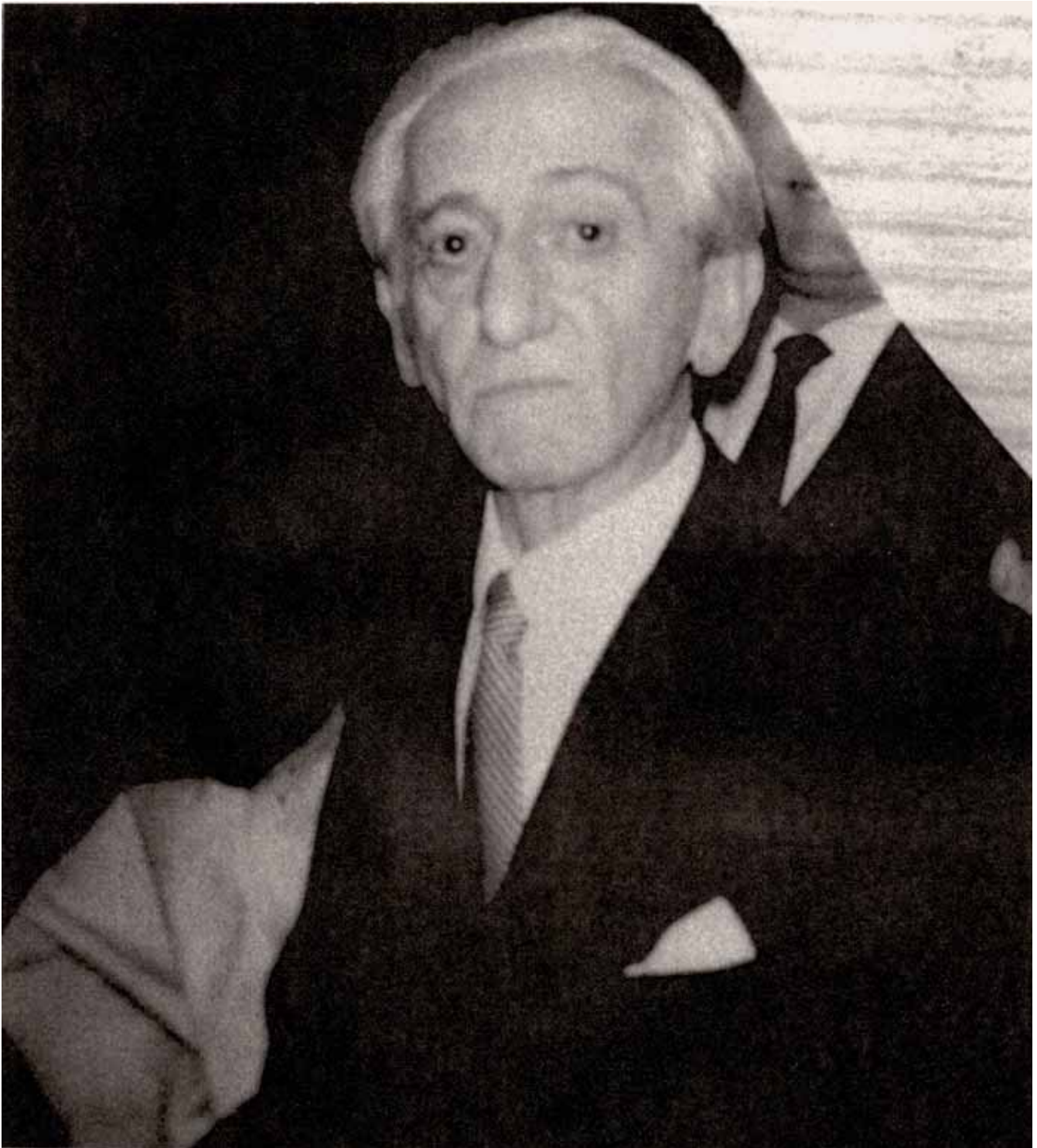
Andrzej continued to expand his repertoire in preparation for the Queen Elisabeth Competition for May 1956. All these works, from a Cracow recital, were performed during the Queen Elisabeth competition except the Szymanowski. Especially impressive was Andrzej's performance of Gaspard de la Nuit.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1956)

A promotional photograph used for the Queen Elisabeth Competition. Andrzej was remembered by the other contestants as the pianist who took long walks instead of practicing long hours. Andrzej proved to be the audiences' favorite.



Courtesy of Culver Pictures

Stefan Askenase (c. 1960)

During the 1955 Chopin Competition, Stefan Askenase was on the jury and Rubinstein in the audience. For the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition, Askenase was in the audience and Rubinstein on the jury. Both of these influential musicians wanted to help and be involved in Andrzej's career.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej's diploma for his third prize at the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition

This time, all jury members signed the prize certificates. The awards were made at a reception on June 2, 1956 and were handed out by Queen Elisabeth of Belgium. This was the last competition Andrzej entered. With this major prize, Rubinstein, Hurok, and others were able to launch Andrzej's career.





Courtesy of Renata Swieca-Rosenberg

Andrzej and Queen Elisabeth of Belgium (c. 1956)

Andrzej in conversation with Queen Elisabeth, after the piano competition. A year earlier, at the 1955 Chopin Competition gala, Andrzej had asked her to dance when the orchestra played a mazurka. Partly visible behind Andrzej is Stefan Askenase, pianist and teacher, who became a great friend and mentor.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Arthur Rubinstein (c. 1945)

After Andrzej's third prize in the Queen Elisabeth Competition, Rubinstein took charge of his career and saw to it that he had huge tours in America and a recording contract with RCA records. Rubinstein was sure Andrzej was the pianist to take over when he retired from the concert stage.

~~MR. HOWARD OGDON, M.A., M.E.D.~~  
~~TELEPHONE WHITEFIELD~~

~~PLANE TREE FARM,  
OF HIGHER LANE,  
WHITEFIELD,  
NEAR MANCHESTER~~

77 Bury New Road  
Whitefield  
LANCS.  
England.

Dear Mr. Czajkowski,

I should just like to send this belated note to congratulate you on your success in the Brussels Competition, and to say — what you must already know — how deeply moved I was by your performance of the Beethoven Op. 109 Sonata in the second test.

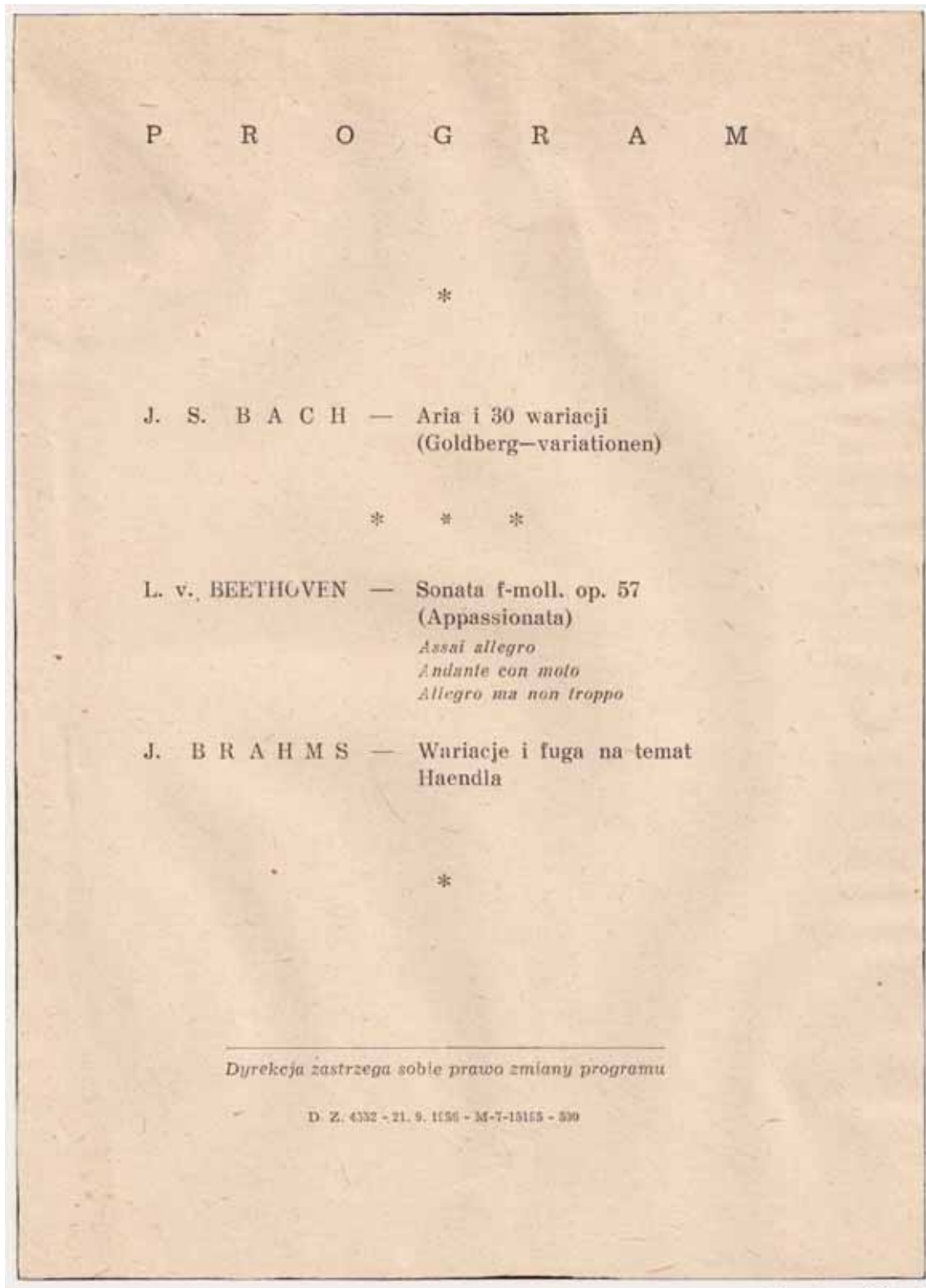
I am enclosing one or two modern works that might interest you: Busoni's 'Sonatine Seconda', and Alexander Goehr's Piano Sonata. Goehr (son of the conductor Walter Goehr) has here written I think a most promising work: it has structural affinities with the Liszt Sonata. I thought you might like to see it.

I am beginning work at the Beethoven Op. 109: your performance certainly opened my eyes to much in it that I had not seen before.

Courtesy of Terry Harrison

Letter of congratulations to Andrzej from pianist John Ogdon (c. 1956)

John Ogdon (1937-1989) was 19 years old at the time of the Queen Elisabeth Competition and a member of the audience. Andrzej received a number of highly complimentary letters after the contest. Ogdon later went on to a big career and was influential in the publication of a piano suite composed by Andrzej.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Program from Andrzej's last concert in Poland (c. 1956)

On Andrzej's September 27, 1956, concert program, he is identified as a winner of the Queen Elisabeth Competition. This was his last public performance in Poland; a week later he was in Brussels. The Goldberg Variations continued to be a favorite work.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski (c. 1956)

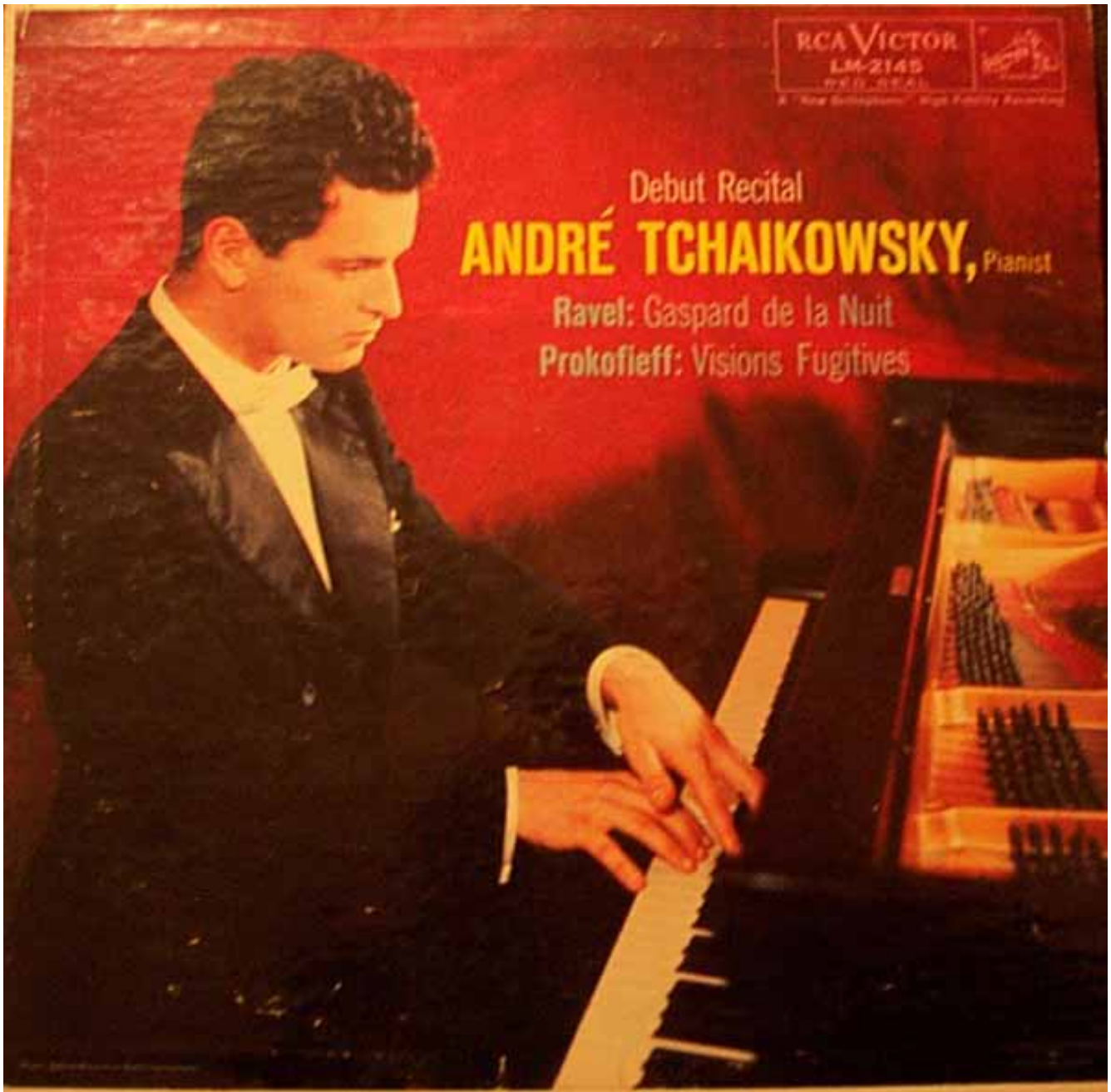
This passport photo was used for Andrzej's last Polish passport. He was given permission to travel out of Poland to the West for piano lessons with Stefan Askenase in Brussels. Initially, he stayed at the Polish Embassy in Brussels, but soon left to live with his Aunt Mala in Paris.



Courtesy of Halina Swieca-Malewiak

Program from Paris, November 16, 1956

Andrzej was a success everywhere he played in Europe, although some concerts were uneven. In this Paris recital, he played Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. His early career was arranged through connections made by Stefan Askenase and Arthur Rubinstein.



Courtesy of Judy Arnold

Record cover from André's debut recording for RCA (c. 1957)

This RCA album was recorded in June 1957 and released in October 1957, just in time for his USA debut. André showed up for the recording session two days late and did not react well to studio conditions. However, the record reviews were very complimentary.



Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej Czajkowski becomes André Tchaikowsky (c. 1956)

Adopting the Western spelling of his name, Andrzej Czajkowski became André Tchaikowsky. The name change was enforced by Sol Hurok, who had begun to promote André in the USA in preparation for his 1957-1958 tour. This signed photograph is the official 1956 Hurok photo for promotional materials.





Courtesy of Halina Janowska

Andrzej promotional photograph (c. 1956)

This promotional photograph was taken in Europe and used in the early stages of André's career. His good looks were sometimes exploited in the promotional efforts that he grew to dislike intensely. At the time of this photograph, André had just turned 21 years old.

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"BEYOND ALL PRAISE"  
— The Times, London



Courtesy of Musical America Magazine

Advertisement promoting André Tchaikowsky (c. 1956)

During the year before André's debut in the US, Sol Hurok was promoting him for the next season. Arthur Rubinstein cut back drastically on his North America performances that season to give André a better chance. Hurok would say, "Rubinstein is not available, but we do have André Tchaikowsky."