



Nadzwyczajna premiera teatralna w Cleveland

„Straszny Dwór” Stanisława Moniuszki wcale nie jest straszny, raczej piękny, jak ten pokazany w The Ohio Theater Playhouse Square, a zrealizowany przez Cleveland Opera. Przedstawienie odbyło się 16 czerwca 2018 roku i było jedną z najwspanialej wystawionych oper przez Dorotę i Jacka Sobieskich. Pokazanie tego Opus Magnum Moniuszki, to początek obchodów stulecia odzyskania niepodległości przez Polskę, a rocznica ta przypada w roku bieżącym.

„Straszny Dwór” należy do kanonu polskich dzieł i oparty jest na romantycznych ideałach rodzinno-szlacheckich. Są w nim deklarowane wartości, takie jak: ważność danego słowa, honor, patriotyzm, bohaterstwo, gotowość obrony ukochanej ziemi ojczystej gdy znajdzie się w potrzebie.

Takie były czasy w one lata. Polacy kilka razy próbowali uwolnić się od narzuconych im niewolniczych pęt, niestety ciągle naród popadał w zastrzony reżym ze strony rosyjskiego imperium. W 1865, po klęsce powstania styczniowego społeczeństwo pogrążone było w głębokiej żałobie. Kobiety nosiły wyłącznie czarne suknie, a na szyje zakładały drewniane krzyże. Stanisław Moniuszko stworzył tę operę „ku pokrzepieniu serc”, z licznymi wątkami patriotycznymi ale nie pozbawioną humoru. Akcję umieścił, zgodnie z librettem Jana Chęcińskiego, w dworku szlacheckim. A w muzykę wpisał sporo narodowego folkloru, zaczerpniętego z pieśni, dumek i tańców o kolorycie ludowym. Rytmu taneczne prezentują polonezy, kujawiaki, krakowiaki, oberki oraz wypełniający trzeci akt ognisty mazur. I choć „Straszny Dwór” jest operą z gatunku komicznych, świetnie opowiada tematy poważne, dotykające



życia w dawnej Polsce, a także przemyca szlachetne idee. Czterooaktowa opera ma świetną konstrukcję scen, barwną instrumentację, jest wyjątkowo szlachetna melodycznie.

Akcja opery rozgrywa się w drugiej połowie XVII wieku. Dwaj bracia Zbigniew i Stefan wracają do domu po zwycięskiej wyprawie. Atmosfera obozu wojskowego, a także potrzeba obrony ojczyzny skłaniają ich do złożenia ślubów: oni nigdy się nie ożenią. Wznoszą hasło: „Vivat semper wolny stan”. Jednak kiedy spotykają dwie urodzive szlachcianki Hankę i Jadwigę, miłość okazuje się silniejsza od kawalerskiej przysięgi. Po licznych perypetiach i intrygach dochodzi jednak do szczęśliwego zakończenia. Utwór wieńczy podwójny ślub, Stefana z Hanną i Zbigniewa z Jadwigą. A Miecznik, ojciec panienek błogosławi zakochane pary.

Od prapremiery w Warszawie „Straszny Dwór” stał się narodową epopeją muzyczną, a duch polski przewija się nie tylko w muzyce, ale w

pokazanym życiu polskiego dworku szlacheckiego, szlachetnym patriotyzmie, pięknych ubiorach, zwyczajach i obrzędach.

Cleveland Opera wystawiła „Straszny Dwór” bez uduwnień, w stylu tradycyjnym, z zachowaniem historycznych detali. Kostiumy oddawały charakter epoki, a wypożyczone zostały z Chicago od Paderewski Symphony Chorus. Wcześniej odkupione od Teatru Wielkiego w Warszawie. Dekoracje, architekturę dworku, zegar do słynnej arii z kurantem zawdzięczamy artyście konstruktorowi Charles Gliha i architektowi Hubertowi Wiśniewskiemu. W pracach technicznych uczestniczyli Andrzej Stępień, Ben Malkevitch, Jiana Peng oraz cała rodzina Sobieskich.

Duży chór Cleveland Opera, powiększony o osiem osób przybyłych z Chicago wykonał muzyczne partie nadzwyczaj harmonijnie. Zwłaszcza miły, pełen wdzięku liryczny śpiew hafciarek, wzbudził zachwyt publiczności.

Prym wiedli bardzo dobrze dobrani soliści. Każda postać w tej operze ma swój popisowy numer i każdy wykonawca to znakomicie wykorzystał. Śpiewacy przybyli z wielu różnych miast Stanów i zza granicy.

W operze wystąpił Cleveland Ballet, którego dyrektorem jest Gladisą Guadalupe. Zespół, w pięknych kostiumach zatańczył mazura ogniście i z właściwą werwą. A zespół „Piaś”, którego choreografem i dyrektorem jest Agnieszka Kotlarska zaprezentował bardzo ładnie taniec młodzieżowych tancerek: Anastazji Gołąb, Sophii Kopasaki, Pauliny Kramarczyk i Joanny Sychła.

Dyrygent, Grzegorz Nowak, związany na stałe z Royal Philharmonic Orchestra w Londynie, prowadził przedstawienie niezwykle precyzyjnie, z uwypukleniami piękną muzyki.

Dyrektorzy Dorota i Jacek Sobiescy i współpracownicy Jamie Thornburg i Wanda Sobieska, a także Ola Sobieska i Julian wystawili przedstawienie, z nakładem ogromu zaangażowania. Niech ich artystyczna praca zapisze się złotymi zgłoskami w historii zagranicznych pokazów moniuszkowskiego dzieła, jakim jest „Straszny Dwór”, ukończona opera Polaków.

Elżbieta Ulanowska



Agata Wojno

It still really bothers me when someone asks me where I'm from. It happened again recently when I asked an older man at a store to help me take my bags out of the cart, and, hearing my accent, he of course asked:

Where are you from?

From Poland (I responded, but I would really prefer not to repeat this cycle.)

Ah! This is the country of Wałęsa! A beautiful country. Beautiful... the older man enthused.

So of course I thanked him, and of course the country is beautiful, but... why always Wałęsa?, I think to myself... And I make a mental note that I have to tell Richard about this... He is happy and shouts out, „Ha! I always say that!

The change is his middle name...

A conversation with Richard Romaniuk, a friend, a community leader, therapist, social worker, author of many publications, and lecturer at Case Western Reserve University.

Warm, cozy, atypical, gracefully cluttered, colorful, and in its own way extravagant—inside Richard and Sean's home is a peaceful oasis in which everybody feels comfortable. Nobody here treats me like a guest anymore. Even the crazy cats just ignore me, though they're still afraid of other visitors. We drink tea. Oceans of tea. There is never enough mint tea... and we chat... I insist that Richard say something about politics. He's unusually open, enthusiastic, and emotional about his views, very engaged in Facebook political discussions, but he avoids politics in our discussion gracefully and effectively. But the recent intrigue around Lech Wałęsa raised his blood pressure and this time Richard spoke up: „Wałęsa will always be a hero for me. Wherever I was in the world, I noticed that when people heard Poland, they always knew Wałęsa! So if Poland now wants to „wipe out” Wałęsa from its common memory, the only thing that will remain is Poland without Wałęsa. And this won't be the same Poland. Whenever some Pole becomes known in the world, other

Poles will destroy him. This for me is a 100% example of Polish „suicide”, Rysiek says, feverishly. „You could write half a page on this! To „erase” Wałęsa but to make of Konopnicka the greatest poet – so Polish... Richard is exceptionally politically sensitive. His introduction to politics was March 1968, when he was 19. This was such a formative time for him that what he learned then defined his values for the rest of his life. From then on he's fought against lies and injustice directed toward social groups. When he fought in defense of justice again in 1980, he became a leader of Solidarity in the Institute of Experimental Medicine at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. He is very attuned to the concerns of minorities, to „the other”, from the perspective of his Ukrainian origins, which, in an earlier Poland, did not make for a painless process of social assimilation. He still remembers the cutting comments and the nickname „prawosławny Żyd”, or „Orthodox Jew”, using the Polish word for the Ukrainian Orthodox church. Fascism and nationalism disgust him. And fascism in his dictionary is „against everything I like”...

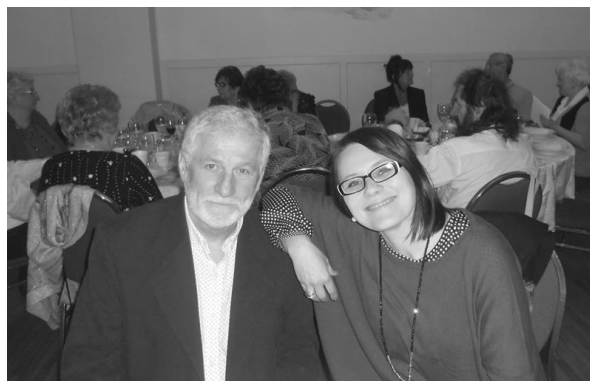
Biophysicist, Neurophysiologist, and Social Worker

Richard Romaniuk's professional specialization was a mistake. He has said many times that biology was his first love. When he chose a field, he turned away from biology only because everyone said, „Don't be stupid, only girls study biology.” For once in his life he decided that „he won't be a girl.” He studied physics, but he never stopped loving biology. In 1973 he finished his study in biophysics. In 1979 he worked in Sweden at the Institute of Neurophysiology with Tony DiMarco. Several years later Tony received a grant of his own in the United States and he invited Rysiek to work with him. And so Richard Romaniuk arrived in the States in 1988 „temporarily.” In the meantime, everything changed in Poland in 1989 and academic science was not a priority given the changing economic conditions. So, because he could stay, he stayed. Later he stayed for another couple of years and again for another couple of years and so, without making a decision to emigrate, he became an emigrant. He never consciously wanted to leave the Poland he always missed. More than that, he regretted not being there for the great changes that were happening, especially since he had been active in Solidarity since

1980. As everything was changing around him, Richard began to change himself and one day concluded: „I no longer want to work in a laboratory. I want to work with people.” Working at Case Western Reserve University, he was able to begin studying for free and so he began his next adventure in his professional life: he began to study social work. Because of his own painful experiences, the focus of his attention became helping people with addictions. From the start he developed his interest in the neurobiology of addiction. He later became a social worker and chemical dependency counselor at the Free Clinic of Greater Cleveland and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Change

At some point in his life Richard sobered up and took his life into his own hands. He changed everything, starting with his profession, including his marriage, his name, his friends, his surro-



undings, etc. In the course of these changes the Internet developed and there, in one of the many discussion groups, he met Sean Martin. In reaction to my friendship with Richard, people often ask me, usually with a confused smile, „so which one is the guy, and which one is the woman?” And then I look surprised and say, „Oh, no, it's not like that at all...”

Because to know Richard and Sean is to understand that it's not about a division of roles or standards or names or obligations. Their partnership relies on love, freedom, and mutual respect. Like any other relationship. Richard identifies with the rights of women with a real intensity and he explains why: „when I changed my life,

I started to understand my own, ingrained sexism. And I began to think more deeply about gender in Poland and I saw my own behavior as dependent on stereotypes, and, well, I wasn't proud of this. I discovered then that many of these behaviors came from my trying to be the „big man” that I never was. And I had in myself many behaviors that were feminine. When I met Sean, this understanding helped our relationship last until today. This is the longest relationship in my life, more than twenty years.”

Since we're talking about change... Richard recently made another change in his life, this time in his diet. He stopped eating beef and pork, arguing his decision: „when people said to me that beef and pork make arthritis worse, I smiled, because how is it possible to not eat meat? But then I went to India and I saw that millions of people do not eat beef and pork and they live well, so I decided that I could do the same. And so that was my next change. I don't know if I feel better without meat, but I know that if I eat it I will definitely feel worse. That's enough for me.”

But Richard's views haven't changed: „I don't change my views, I don't need to fight for them any longer, I can simply have them.”

Polonia Close to his Heart

„Being in Polonia you get the impression that you are among your own, only... they are from the other side of the tracks,” Richard says. About his years of active engagement in Polonia, he says that „Polonia is like an unplowed field on which you can and should do a lot, but its strength is missing, because one style of working with Polonia persists and it's very difficult to change it.”

Many years ago, as a newly trained social worker, Richard wanted to help older women in Polonia, but they were only interested in dancing. He threw up his hands. The older women “danced their own dance,” they didn't expect any help... Later he wanted to help men who were drinking. Who drink too much. Well, and the men, they didn't come, because, what for? Poles drink like Poles – normally, why mess with their normal drinking? And then Grażyna Hryniewicz came up with the idea that Richard could help women whose

husbands drink. And so Porada (Advice) was born. Women came and talked, Richard listened, explained, and facilitated group therapy sessions. The women began to heal themselves. So it was worth it to help within Polonia, but this doesn't mean it was easy. The more people who are engaged in helping alcoholics, such as AA groups, the better. And in the Polish environment everyone says, “You're not drinking with me?” Many times Richard has despaired because of these common attitudes and behaviors; people call him, desperate, asking, begging for help, he explains, helps, counsels. And then? Nothing. Most often people from Polonia don't listen. They know better. Their father drank, their neighbor drinks, they don't have any problems, you only live once. And everyone accepts this as normal. He's a social worker; the lives of people with problems interest him, but that doesn't mean that he can help everyone.

Travel

Richard doesn't like to be closed up in one space. He likes things happening, he wants to be doing something. He doesn't like to travel like we once traveled with Orbis. His idea for travelling the world is a trip somewhere as a volunteer. He wants to get to know people through working with them and getting to know the country from the inside. He works as a volunteer first, learning some of the customs, and then he sightsees and enjoys everything new. He says, „Guatemala is the most beautiful, Tanzania is the most fun, and India is the most interesting. Poland... in general, it's in another category – I live in Poland, I don't travel to Poland. A special form of travel around the world every year is the Cleveland International Film Festival, during which he disappears from life. „The film festival is like traveling the entire world while staying in one place,” he says. Richard has already been in enough corners of the world that his Facebook profile is like a flowery carpet embroidered with the most beautiful colorful photographs. It makes everyone envious...

Cats and Criminals

Maybe not in that order, but the order's not important. Cats... „because everyone has a

Weakness,” he says. And mysteries work the imagination, drawing you in, taking you away from the daily stress. The more intrigue, the more effective it is in taking away stress. For years he’s been such a fan of Joanna Chmielewska, to the extent that a friend in Warsaw once invited the author to a birthday party for him, as a present... Cats, though, are a completely different story. The cats came into his life when he was already with Sean, and they’ve stayed. They built a special place in their garage as a shelter for homeless cats, so they could have a peaceful place to eat and sleep. Richard feeds them regularly. There are two cats in the house, Bury and Biały Nosek and both take advantage of Richard’s weakness....

Retirement

This is the best period in Richard’s professional life. He retired as a social worker and now teaches as a lecturer at Case Western Reserve University. A great way to spend retirement, right? And, besides, it’s hard to imagine Richard in a stereotypical retirement, without work, doing nothing – that’s not his style. I hear from him all the time, „you’re getting older, I’m not getting older,” and, unconsciously I agree with him. Rysiek says, „what happens at this age is that people begin to disappear for many reasons and you start to be okay with it. You learn that you won’t be here forever, that this is the time to sit and calm down and not to plan life. Because it’s already happened.” This incomprehensible nostalgia comes over me as I listen to him... Now Richard likes most writing articles for journals in Poland on a topic not as well developed there as in the United States, therapy for those who have experienced trauma. This allows him to share the knowledge he has acquired here with his colleagues in Poland. He recently wrote two articles on chemical dependency among women. Treatment for women has to be different than treatment for men; people in Poland change „she” for „he” and think that will work.

Retirement has given Richard time to explore his interest in Poland. Every day he reads online about what is happening there. Because he never made a conscious decision to emigrate... He

now has time to be a part of the Kościuszko Foundation, and he’s grateful for the opportunity to cooperate further with Dr. Kathy Farkas, a professor of social work at Case who is the Foundation’s current President. His retirement is something of a „golden age,” when he has the great good fortune to organize his life so that his garden of professional interests and life’s passions can continue to grow. Everyone should be open to each new day, just as Richard is.

Dreams

... „my dreams are fulfilling themselves; I also wish good lives for my daughters and that nobody in the family has difficulties...”

Not everybody has had such challenges in life as Richard Romaniuk. Or maybe it’s just that his challenges are already behind him? Or maybe it’s his positive attitude to life? Or is it the balance of his experiences? Maybe it’s because he helps people? In any case, there is something that allows Richard to say that he is „a fulfilled person.” Maybe it’s simply because he lives at harmony with himself? He never pretends to be someone he’s not. He knows who he is. Such internal peace and joy seems to be the fulfillment of a dream.

Rebecca Petrey

Why did you decide to go to the Poland?

The main reason I decided to study abroad was that I have never been out of the country before and I felt this would be a great opportunity for me. I chose Poland because I like to work with underserved populations and advocate for better services for them. I have read different things about different countries in Europe related to how they assist their citizens. I have thought that these European countries were providing the assisting differently and maybe even better than the U.S.

What kinds of activities related to social welfare did you do while in Poland?

I think all of the places we visited related to social welfare. We started our time in Poland by meeting with the Vice-President of Poznan. The Vice President explained to us all the ways that the government is trying

to revitalize Poznan to make it a more welcoming place for the people of Poland to want to live. We moved on to have lectures about the social economy model of Poland, gender differences in mental health in Poland, and conflict resolution methods. We ended our day with a lecture and discussion on the lack of multiculturalism in Poland and the hope to improve upon multiculturalism in Poland. As the week progressed, we were given the opportunity to meet with youth living in a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, just outside of Poznan, where we were able to learn about the rehabilitation program and model that is utilized in Poland. We were then able to meet with youth, tour a youth home, and learn about the institutionalization model of child welfare in Poland. Moving forward we learned about the educational system in Poland and the career counseling methods utilized in Poznan to assist youth in determining their career goals and educational path. We were able to tour a day facility for adults with mental health issues and learn about the treatment modality. This was followed by a meeting at the Regional Center for Social Support where we held a discussion to learn about child welfare in Poland. We then toured a museum dedicated to the riots of 1956 and the struggle that people in Poland had endured during communism days. The following day we travelled to a center for children with intellectual disabilities and were able to tour the facility. There we learned about how the children come into the care of the center, how the children are cared for and the different therapies used in the center.

Thinking back on the experience, what was the biggest surprise?

For me the biggest surprise was how neat, clean and orderly all of the centers were. I think about my experiences visiting similar places in the U.S, where the centers are somewhat rundown and often disorganized.

What did you gain personally from the trip? What did you learn about yourself because of this experience?

For me this trip was an amazing opportunity and I have come back feeling worldlier. I have never been out of the country and I returned feeling as if I was a new person with more travelling experience than I have ever imagined. I have learned to be more

culturally aware, this was my first time being an outsider in a new place and I can only imagine what people from other countries feel like coming to the United States.

1. What did you gain professionally from the trip?

Visiting and learning about all of the different ways that Poznan helps their people, I returned wanting to advocate for better services and better facilities for American people struggling with similar problems.

2. What experience was the most memorable? Most pleasant? Least pleasant?

For me the most memorable part of the trip was the visit to the home for children with intellectual disabilities. I have never seen a facility like this one before and I am sure I will never see a similar one again. I absolutely loved the way the facility was designed and ran and I think that the therapies I witnessed were beautiful. I met so many new people and gained so many new connections. I learned about more countries besides just Poland as the group of students we met were from all over Europe. I cannot say there was any part of the trip unpleasant.

3. How could the experience be enhanced for others in future courses?

The only thing that I felt would have been better is if we would have been given more opportunity to explore the city during the day. We passed fleetingly through some places where I would have liked to have had more time.

4. Would you participate in such a project again? Would you encourage others to participate in such a project?

I would participate again in a heartbeat. I had such a wonderful experience and I would encourage everyone to study abroad at least once.

5. Why do you think these types of opportunities are important?

I think the most important thing about this opportunity is to learn about a different culture. I think often Americans are very ethnocentric and do not want care to learn about other cultures.

Kathleen Bates

Personal Reflection Paper

I am a non-traditional, part-time, student enrolled in the Masters of Nonprofit Organization (MNO) program, through The Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, MSASS. I consider myself “non-traditional” because I am older than my classmates. I went back to school to earn my master’s degree after working full time for many years and raising a family. This is a new chapter in my life and I wanted to take advantage of every opportunity offered by my educational program and school. I heard about the Travel and Study Abroad Seminar from a classmate in the spring of 2017. He had just come back from Poland and had very good things to say about his experience. I decided then that I would travel to Poland the following spring semester. Other than visiting Canada, I have never traveled outside the United States and I knew the class would be an opportunity to understand the Polish culture and its people more than if I were a tourist on holiday. Also, as a result of the MNO program, I am interested in helping young adults aging out of the foster care system in here in the United States. I was interested in finding out the systems of support the Polish people may or may not have for the same population in their country.

While in Poland, we visited a residential facility in the country, Wierzenica, that provides support and treatment for youth struggling with addiction and a Youth Home, Wojska Polskiego, which is also a residential facility for youth, who, for various reasons, do not have another place to live. The drug treatment facility housed both male and female teenagers for twelve months. This facility was only ten years old, and was located in the quiet countryside outside of Poznan. The setting was bucolic and it gave the teens a break from their lives at home and in school. The facility had a low recidivism rate but when questioned the youth responded they were afraid to leave the facility because they would be back in the same environment that led them to the facility. The youth home, run by the Salesians of Don Bosco, a religious order dedicated to helping youth, was located in the city and housed children who were removed from their homes. The state takes responsibility for the kids that cannot be raised by their parents. Both facilities offer focused treatment through a team of professionals. Residential support ends at the age of 18. Most youth return to their homes when leaving the addiction treatment center.

However, the residents of the youth home often do not have this option. The facility, with the help of state funding, helps them find suitable housing. This is the same situation for foster youth in the United States and it is recognized in both countries that troubled youth do not do well when they are “emancipated” at the age of 18. I had a few surprises but the biggest surprise is that 93% of the country is white and Catholic. The second biggest surprise is that education is free, including college. The next surprise is that women are encouraged to stay home and raise young children by receiving a monthly stipend for each child. As a result there are not many day care centers or pre-schools. The women are also given job re-entry assistance when their youngest child enters kindergarten.

Personally, I gained confidence to travel abroad and the desire to visit more countries. From a professional standpoint, since I want to create an agency that supports young adults aging out of foster care here in Northeast Ohio, I would like to visit other countries to see how they are handling this issue.

The most memorable experience is that even though people are from different countries and different cultures, we all like to sit down and have good food, good company, and good conversations. We had a meal with an exchange student from the country of Georgia and his comment was that more people would get along if they sat down together, shared a meal, and talked to each other. The least pleasant experience was feeling inadequate because I did not know the language. The Polish education system teaches Polish, English, and a third language. I feel most Americans are at a disadvantage by knowing only one language.

I think the program did an excellent job of exposing us to as many different organizations as possible in five days. I can’t think of anything that needs to be changed in order to improve this program. I would go back if I had the opportunity. I know there is more to see and to learn and I would love to go back (when it’s a little warmer) and see other cities and areas of Poland. Also traveling abroad gives you an experience that cannot be obtained from a book or a video. I learned more in one week of travel than I could have in three months in a classroom.



Józef Hart

O emocjach...

Siedzę przy stole i gram z moją Najdroższą w remika. Wyrzucam kartę, a ona ją bierze i wkłada swoją rękę – remik! Ona zadowolona, śmieje się, a mnie o mały włos szlag trafia: jak ja mogłem tak zagrać? Rzucam kartami, „krew mnie zalewa”, a przecież gramy tylko o „pietruszkę” (czyli o nic). Skąd u mnie taka złość? Za chwilę już się śmiejemy i gramy dalej jakby nigdy nic.

Siedzę przy stole i słucham rozmowy, a właściwie gwałtownej dyskusji dwóch znajomych (na tematy polityczne). Jeden wyzywa drugiego od bałwanów i idiotów, przerywają sobie co chwilę i o mały co nie skoczą sobie do gardła. Obydwaj są dobrze wykształceni i wychowani, a jednak emocje biorą górę. Dlaczego nie mogą porozmawiać spokojnie, bez wyzwisk, przecież widać, że ich argumenty nie są wystarczająco przekonujące. A może to właśnie jest powodem tego, że tracą równowagę? Mogłoby się wydawać, że w tym pięknym i wspaniałym świecie w którym żyjemy każdy ma prawo do swoich przekonań, wyznań i opinii (dopóki nie szkodzi to innym). A jednak, lepiej by było, gdyby oni myśleli tak jak my, bo to przecież my mamy rację i powinno być tak jak my myślimy (i chcemy). No tak, ale co to ma wspólne z emocjami?

Kiedy byłem jeszcze dzieckiem moja mama często mnie pouczała abym panował nad swoimi uczuciami (emocjami). Nie mówiła dlaczego, to miało być dla mnie oczywiste. Z drugiej strony, jako studenta muzyki uczono mnie żeby moje wykonanie utworu było pełne ekspresji, bo to przemawia do słuchaczy. Przykładów na to jaką wielką rolę emocje odgrywają w naszym życiu można podawać bez liku: nosi serce na rękawie, ma twarz pokerzysty (czyli nie można go odczytać), miłuj bliźniego jak siebie samego, zmiążdżyl przeciwnika bez litości, szczęśliwy jak niemowlaczek itd., itp. Tyle, że nikt mnie nie uczył co to są emocje, jakie są dobre a jakie złe, czy można emocje opanowywać i jak. Owszem, dowiedziałem się, że są flegmatycy i cholerycy, a trochę potem, że geny mają wpływ na moje reakcje, ale tak właściwie moje pytanie co z tymi emocjami nie bardzo zostało wyjaśnione...

Dość dawno temu kupiłem książkę Daniela Golemana „Inteligencja emocjonalna” (Emotional Intelligence) bo zainteresował mnie tytuł książki – jak to, inteligencja emocji? Książka leżała na półce, bo tyle innych, ciekawszych książek wpada człowiekowi w ręce... Ostatnio jednak doczekała się tego, że zacząłem ją czytać. Znalazłem w niej mnóstwo ciekawych wiadomości. Między innymi to, że

już ponad dwa tysiące lat temu Arystoteles zadawał sobie podobne pytania jak ja teraz. I że to nic dziwnego, że tak mało wiedzieliśmy o emocjach, bo dopiero niedawno technologia rozwinęła się na tyle, że można było zajrzeć do mózgu człowieka (żywego). I wtedy stwierdzono, że mózg można podzielić na emocjonalny i intelektualny, czyli część mózgu zajmuje się emocjami, a część rozumowaniem i wszystkim, co z tym związane czyli między innymi analizą, syntezą, pamięcią, i wnioskowaniem. Te dwie części współpracują ze sobą, ale mózg emocjonalny reaguje dużo szybciej, błyskawicznie, bo to jest mózg pierwotny, niezbędny do naszego przetrwania. Najwięcej badań dokonano nad częścią mózgu, która kieruje uczuciem strachu. Udokumentowano dokładnie mapę obwodów mózgu zajmujących się strachem, stwierdzono skąd i gdzie idą sygnały informujące o strachu i gdzie podejmowane są decyzje. Mniej znane są natomiast trasy sygnałów dotyczących innych uczuć, ale badania posuwają się do przodu. Trwają dyskusje nad tym jak podzielić emocje na grupy. Do najbardziej podstawowych emocji zaliczyć można uczucia strachu, gniewu, smutku i zadowolenia, bo są one rozpoznawalne przez kultury społeczne na całym świecie. Pokazano nawet fotografie twarzy wyrażających te emocje członkom prymitywnego plemienia w Nowej Gwinei. Pomimo, że to plemię jest prawie całkowicie odizolowane od naszej cywilizacji, jego członkowie nie mieli żadnych problemów z rozpoznaniem tych emocji. Według autora książki nasze genetyczne dziedzictwo nadaje każdemu z nas szereg emocji, które określają nasz temperament, ale obwód mózgu jest niezwykle plastyczny, i jako dzieci w szkole i w domu możemy się uczyć kontrolować swoje emocje. I właśnie taką kontrolę emocji autor nazywa inteligencją emocjonalną. Dokładniej mówiąc inteligencja emocjonalna to zdolność do samokontroli, do gorliwości, wytrwałości i motywacji siebie samego. Zdolność do kontrolowania impulsów jest zasadniczą podstawą silnej woli i charakteru. Brak kontroli impulsów prowadzi do moralnych braków.

Idea, że emocje można i należy kontrolować rozwinęła się na tyle w Stanach (i nie tylko w USA), że szkoły zaczęły wprowadzać do swoich curriculum programy zwane SEL (Social and Emotional Learning czyli społeczne i emocjonalne uczenie). Programy te pomagają w zmniejszaniu problemów wśród dzieci w wieku szkolnym poprzez edukację charakteru, zapobieganiu przemocy, zapobieganiu narkomanii i utrzymywaniu dyscypliny szkolnej. Badania wykazały, że programy te dają pozytywne wyniki. No i okazuje się, że moja mama miała rację, tyle, że teraz wiem dlaczego.



Stanisław Kwiatkowski
**O „Teatrze bez granic”
 i księdzu Twardowskim**

W sztuce nie lubię amatorstwa. Być może dlatego, że zostałem wychowany na filmie, który jest dziełem zbiorowym i od każdego twórcy, który jest zaangażowany w proces powstawania filmu, wymagana jest wiedza teoretyczna. Dlatego też, zanim wybiorę się na przedstawienie, czy na koncert, zawsze chcę dowiedzieć się czegoś o tym, co będę oglądał, albo słuchał.

Tak było również kilka lat temu, gdy dowiedziałem się, że ma przyjechać do Cleveland Teatr Polski z Toronto. Pomyślałem lekceważąco, że zapewne jest to jakaś amatorska grupa zapaleńców teatralnych. Byłem o tym przekonany, aż do momentu, kiedy zobaczyłem na ulotce nazwisko Marii Nowotarskiej. To nazwisko pamiętałem jeszcze z Polski. Po sprawdzeniu w internecie moje przypuszczenia potwierdziły się, że jest to znana aktorka, mająca w swoim dorobku chyba kilkadziesiąt ról filmowych i wiele teatralnych na scenie Teatru Słowackiego w Krakowie, jednego z najbardziej prestiżowych teatrów w Polsce. Drugą aktorką była



Teatr Słowackiego w Krakowie



Widownia Teatru Słowackiego
w Krakowie.

Agata Pilitowska, córka Mari Nowotarskiej. Pani Agata ma również swoje znakomite referencje w postaci dyplomu Szkoły Teatralnej w Krakowie, obok warszawskiej, najbardziej prestiżowej szkoły aktorskiej w Polsce i ponad dwudziestoletnią pracę w Teatrze Polskim w Toronto, znaczącą wielu znakomitymi rolami.

Nie wahałem się już więcej. Wiedziałem, że mam jedną z nielicznych okazji spotkania z Polską sztuką. I nie myliłem się. Przedstawienie tamto trzymam w specjalnej szufladce, gdzie przechowuję najmiłsze wspomnienia z Cleveland.

A później śledziłem nieco losy tego teatru i wiem o przedstawieniach w Ameryce Południowej, Europie Zachodniej, Stanach Zjednoczonych, no i oczywiście w Polsce, szczególnie w Teatrze Słowackiego w Krakowie, gdzie przy wypełnionej do ostatniego miejsca widowni, wzruszona powrotem na deski swej rodzimej sceny, pani Nowotarska przy współudziale pani Agaty dała pokaz swojego kunsztu aktorskiego.

Teraz już się nie wahałem, gdy dowiedziałem się, że przyjeżdża do nas ten „Teatr bez granic”, jak głosi tytuł książki pamiątkowej, wydanej na dwudziestopięciolecie Teatru Polskiego w Toronto. Panie przyjechały tym razem z przedstawieniem „Dobry wieczór Monsieur Chopin”. Gdy wieczorem, w niedzielę 20 maja, w sali Polsko-Amerykańskiego Centrum Kultury przygasły światła, siłą magii teatru przenieśliśmy się w świat Fryderyka Chopina, najpierw do dworku w Żelazowej Woli, a później do Paryża i Nohant, posiadłości sławnej ówczesnie pisarki George Sand, wielkiej miłości naszego kompozytora. Słowa przeplatały się z muzyką, a poezja z prozą. Mnie osobiście kolejny raz zaskoczyły listy Chopina. Po prostu odnoszę wrażenie, że Chopin to nie tylko genialny muzyk, ale również ktoś z dużym talentem literackim. Te listy są po prostu piękne. A może tak się objawia geniusz, nie jednokierunkowo, ale jako genialny artysta wrażliwy na piękno.

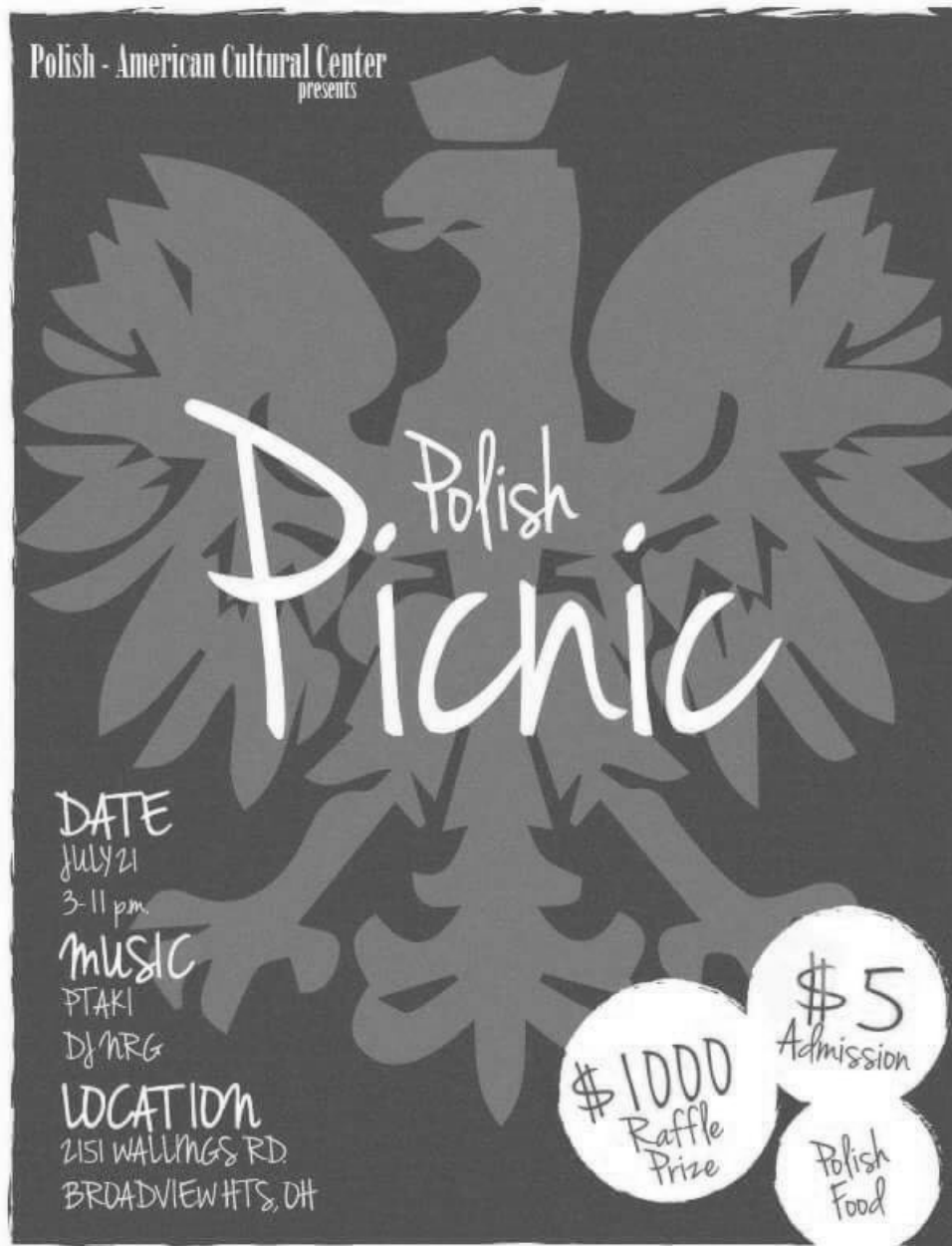
Niezapomniany wieczór.

Po przedstawieniu miałem okazję rozmawiać z paniami Nowotarską i Pilitowską. Nękanie przeze mnie i prośbony o jeszcze obiecały, że na jesieni przyjadą do Cleveland z przedstawieniem poezji księdza Twardowskiego. Przypomnę tylko, że zmarły kilka lat temu ksiądz Twardowski, jest autorem wierszy, które dosłownie trafiły pod przysłowiowe strzechy. Bez względu na wiek, światopogląd czy wykształcenie, wszyscy niemal zachwycają się tą poezją. Znane powszechnie słowa: „śpieszcie się kochać ludzi, bo tak szybko odchodzą”, napisane zostały właśnie przez tego księdza-poetę. A ja obiecuję wszystkim, nawet tym, którzy na co dzień nie interesują się poezją, że po tym przedstawieniu wyjdą zachwyceni mądrością i pięknem jego wierszy.

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www.naforumcle.com, E-mail: forumpacc@yahoo.com, Publisher: Polish-American Cultural Center. **Agata Wojno** - Editor in Chief (216-832-7638), **Stanislaw Kwiatkowski** - Editor in Chief Emeritus, **Fr. Jerzy Kusy** Associate Editor, **Darek Wojno** - Managing Editor, **Editorial Contributors:** Eugeniusz Bak, Lech Foremski, Alexandra Hart, Joseph Hart, Sean Martin, Malgorzata Oleksy, Ryszard Romaniuk, Elzbieta Ulanowski, Andrzej Stępień, Zofia Wisniewski, Maria Sladewski