

Winter - Spring 2026 Newsletter

Concert Diary

at **Westminster Cathedral Hall**

ARTUR HAFTMAN recital

Sunday 25th January at 4:30pm

All Chopin

Members of the Chopin Society: FREE

Friends of the Chopin Society: FREE

Non-Members: £16 (standard), £14 (seniors over 60),

£8 (students with ID, school children)



ALEKSANDRA ŚWIGUT recital

Sunday 22nd February at 4:30pm

*Chopin, Michałowski, Grieg, Mikuli, Karmanov,
Różycki*

Members of the Chopin Society: FREE

Friends of the Chopin Society: £10 (standard),

£8 (seniors over 60)

Non-Members: £16 (standard), £14 (seniors over 60),

£8 (students with ID, school children)



KRZYSZTOF JABLONSKI recital

Sunday 22nd March at 4:30pm

All Chopin

Members of the Chopin Society: FREE

Friends of the Chopin Society: £10 (standard),

£8 (seniors over 60)

Non-Members: £16 (standard), £14 (seniors over 60),

£8 (students with ID, school children)



TO BOOK

Tickets go on sale approximately one month before the performance date.

Members & Friends: contact the Chopin Society on info@chopin-society.org.uk

Non-Members: visit www.chopin-society.org.uk, recitals

or

visit Wegottickets.com and search for the concert “Haftman” / “Świgut” / “Jablonski”

ARTIST NOTES & PROGRAMMES

ARTUR HAFTMAN & String Quartet

Sunday 25th January at 4:30pm

Chopin

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21

This concert is supported by The Polish Cultural Institute.



Artur Haftman is an internationally renowned concert pianist, widely acclaimed for his exceptional artistry and profound interpretation of Chopin's compositions, as acknowledged by music critics on a global scale.

Born in Poland, Artur Haftman's passion for music was kindled under the guidance of his mother, Marzena Haftman, also a pianist herself. At the age of six, he embarked on his piano journey under the tutelage of Ewa Kubiak-Kubacka and Jolanta Reszelska, culminating in his debut performance with the Koszalin Youth Philharmonic Orchestra when he was merely eight years old.

During his studies at the Royal College of Music, he was the esteemed recipient of the Gary and Eleanor Brass Scholarship, as well as the Carnwath Piano Scholarship, an honor exclusive to him among all pianists in the entire United Kingdom. In 2020, he graduated from the Royal College of Music with highest honours for the Artist Diploma Degree in the class of Professor Dmitri Alexeev and Professor Jianing Kong.

Additionally, Artur has conducted masterclasses and performed across the globe—in China, South Korea, Russia, the United States, France, Germany, Estonia, Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom, and beyond—appearing in prestigious venues such as presidential palaces, Steinway Hall, and the philharmonic halls. He has performed both as a solo artist and in collaboration with world-renowned musicians, including Professor Tomasz Strahl, Rector of the Chopin University in Warsaw, among others.

Moreover, Artur actively serves as a jury member for the London International Chopin Competition, which he co-founded and where he is the Artistic Director. He also holds the position of Artistic Director at SIMA Classics Education and SIMA Classics Masterclass, leading classical music education organizations based in London. In the upcoming year, Artur will be teaching masterclasses and performing in Seoul, South Korea; Shanghai, China; Szczecin, Poland; London, United Kingdom; and other international cities.

ALEKSANDRA ŚWIGUT recital

Sunday 22nd February at 4:30pm

Chopin

Ballade No.1 in G minor, Op.23

Michałowski

Prelude in B-flat minor, Op.9

Chopin

Scherzo No.3 in C-sharp minor, Op.39

Grieg

Lyric Pieces: "*Arietta*", Op.12, No.1 - "*The Poet's Heart*", Op.5, No.2 - "*Little Bird*", Op.43, No.4

Étude "Hommage à Chopin", Op.73, No.5

In the Hall of the Mountain King from Peer Gynt, Suite No.1, Op.46

Karmanov

Past Perfect

Mikuli

Rêverie, Op.9, No.6

Chopin

Ballade No.3 in A-flat major, Op.47

Ballade No.4 in F minor, Op.52

Różycki

Waltz from Opera Casanova, Op.47

This concert is supported by The Polish Cultural Institute.



Aleksandra Świgut is a Polish pianist, graduate and teacher of the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, known for her distinctive artistry on both modern and historical instruments. She won Second Prize and major special awards (Orchestra Prize, Audience Prize and Steinway Prizewinner Concert Prize) at the 17th International Edvard Grieg Competition in Bergen (2022), and is a prize-winner of the 1st International Chopin Competition on Period Instruments in Warsaw (2018).

She was a semi-finalist of the International Artur Rubinstein Piano Competition in Tel Aviv and a participant of the XVIII International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw. Her early successes include prizes at competitions in Ettlingen, Enschede, New Orleans, and the Polish Chopin Competition in Warsaw.

Aleksandra has performed at leading festivals such as "Chopin and His Europe," Beethoven Easter Festival, Nohant Festival Chopin, Chopin Genève Festival, Cremona Musica and Eufonie Festival, and has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Sinfonia Varsovia, Aukso Orchestra, Sinfonietta Cracovia and numerous Polish and European philharmonic orchestras. She has collaborated with distinguished conductors including Lawrence Foster, Michał Klauza, Maxim Pascal and Grzegorz Nowak.

Her discography includes three albums: Chopin works and her own composition on an 1858 Érard piano (Fryderyk Chopin Institute), *Portraits of Nature* with the Beethoven Academy Orchestra, and piano concertos by Witold Maliszewski with the Opole Philharmonic Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she performs with her sister, violinist Agnieszka Świąt, and with Janusz Wawrowski; together they released the album *Free but Lonely* on historical instruments.

She debuted with the International Lutosławski Youth Orchestra at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig and has represented Polish culture internationally, including performances at EXPO Osaka 2025 and Dubai Opera. She also composed music for the theatre production *Dancing Conrad* (Tokyo, 2023).

A former grant-holder of the Polish National Children's Fund, Aleksandra has received numerous cultural and artistic scholarships. In 2023 she was awarded the Velotalent prize, and in 2025 she was nominated for the prestigious Coryphaeus of Polish Music award. Since 2025, she has collaborated with Arte dei Suonatori as a soloist, conductor and artistic director.

KRZYSZTOF JABLONSKI recital

Sunday 22nd March at 4:30pm

Chopin

Nocturne in C-sharp minor, Op.posth
Fantaisie-Improvisation in C-sharp minor, Op.posth.66
Prelude in D-flat major, Op.28, No.15
Scherzo No.2 in B-flat minor, Op.31
Nocturne in C minor, Op.48, No.1
Étude in C minor, Op.10, No.12
Polonaise in A-flat major, Op.53

This concert is supported by the Polish Cultural Institute.



Krzysztof Jablonski is a Laureate of the F. Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1985. He has won numerous top prizes at international piano competitions in Milan, Palm Beach, Monza, Dublin, New York, and Calgary, and a Gold Medal at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition in Tel Aviv.

For more than 30 years, Jablonski has been active in performing solo and chamber music as well as with orchestras on stages in Europe, the Americas, Asia, and Israel in prestigious concert halls, including appearances on the Master Concert Series at Berliner Philharmonie.

As a chamber musician, he performed with Tomasz Strahl, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, Arto Noras, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, and Teng Li - to name just a few. He is a “Warsaw Piano Quintet” member, founded by W. Szpilman in 1962.

In February 2013, Jablonski performed Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto with Maestro Valery Gergiev and the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra during the fundraising event “Clean Baltic Sea Concert” in Helsinki. This performance was streamed live over the Internet and recorded by Finnish Radio and TV.

He has made live recordings for radio and television in many countries and numerous CDs in Germany, Japan, and Poland. The F. Chopin National Institute invited him to record complete works by Chopin both on modern and historical pianos. Two first CDs (Etudes) were released in 2016 and 2017, and more will come soon. Jablonski himself says it is his once-in-a-lifetime project, but he hopes to be able to complete this work in a few years.

Studied with Janina Butor and Prof. Andrzej Jasiński, he has worked during master classes with R. Kerer and N. Magaloff. He graduated with honors in 1987 from the Academy of Music in Katowice and later earned his Doctorate in 1996. He was a tenured professor at The F. Chopin University of Music in Warsaw from 2004 to 2017 and a piano faculty member at the Mount Royal University - The Conservatory in Calgary and the University of Calgary. He has been a Morningside Music Bridge Program faculty member since 1998. He was also a Professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lethbridge from 2016 to 2017. In addition to academic responsibilities, he presents master classes and lectures. He has delivered seminars for piano teachers. Jablonski specializes in piano technique, helping many people achieve better results.

He is a jury member at international piano competitions, including Chopin Piano Competitions in Warsaw, Toronto/Mississauga (Chair of the Jury), Miami, Tokyo, and Foshan in China. He was recently on the Jury of the Lang Lang Shenzhen Futian International Piano Festival Competition, the 3rd International Competition of Polish Music in Rzeszów, Poland (Chair of the Jury), the 5th China Shenzhen International Piano Concerto Competition, the 12th Gulangyu Piano Art Week Competition, 2023 ZJCM & DEQING International Piano Festival Competition, and RNCM James Mottram International Piano Competition.

Jablonski is the Head of Piano and keyboard and Academic Leader of Piano and keyboard at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen. He performed with the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra in January 2023 during the final GBA Festival concert and during the 2023 Belt and Road International Music Festival opening concert in September 2023.

VENUE & TRAVEL INFORMATION

for our main venue

Westminster Cathedral Hall
Ambrosden Avenue
London
SW1P 1QW



Getting there

By train or tube: **Victoria** (train & tube) and **St James's Park** (tube) are both less than 5 minutes walk.

By bus: **Nos 11, 24, 211 and 507** buses stop immediately in front of the Cathedral piazza on Victoria Street.

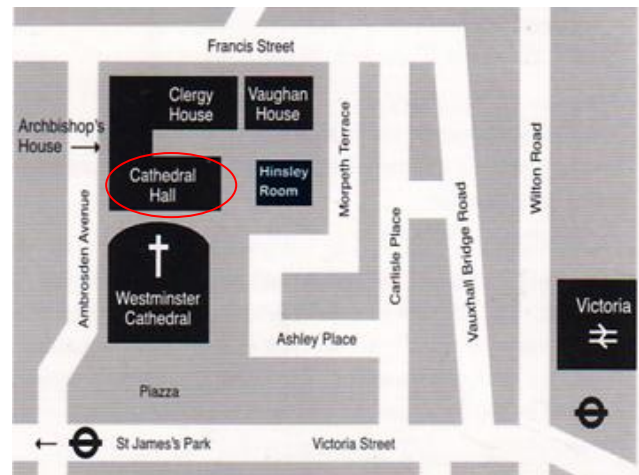
By car: Not recommended due to the new ULEZ charge and the Congestion charge which now operates on Sundays. However to avoid both of these, you can park on the far side of Vauxhall Bridge Road and walk to the Hall down Francis Street, turning left into Ambrosden Avenue (about 5 minutes).

A POLITE NOTICE

The doors officially open **45 minutes** before our concerts start.

We would really appreciate it if audience members did not arrive any earlier than this.

Thank you for your understanding.



STAY FOR TEA and meet the artist!

We offer 'Tea' after every concert. This is a generous buffet consisting of a variety of freshly made sandwiches, savouries, cakes and biscuits. There is a choice of tea, coffee, juice, mineral water or a glass of wine. **If you have a specific dietary requirement, please email us in advance.**

The artist(s) usually attend the tea and are happy to meet the audience. We can serve up to 70 people.

Tea tickets are £10, £5 (students), £4 (Youth Members)

Book in advance: info@chopin-society.org.uk, or purchase on the door (cash/cheque only)

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members & Friends,

First of all, on behalf of the Committee of the Chopin Society, I would like to send you all our best wishes for New Year 2026.

However I must apologise for the fact that having said in the last Newsletter we were hoping to arrange a New Year's Party this year, we are not now doing so.

This will be a disappointment to many, and I must take much of the blame. I usually do a lot of the arrangements for our parties myself, and invite people etc., but following various health issues last year I did not yet feel up to it. Also, I felt it was too much for Adam and Yurie to take on now when they are in the middle of taking on new responsibilities.

Important changes have had to be made at the bank for the Society to move to online banking. We are also in the process of receiving a substantial grant from another charity, The Pennycress Trust, who have often supported the Chopin Society in the past.

Since the Guildhall Gala in 2018 I have been mentioning in the Newsletter that the Society had enough in its bank account to take it to the end of 2027, when, if it had not greatly increased its annual income, or received a sizeable cash injection, we would have to prepare to close in 2028.

Happily, we have received the necessary injection from The Pennycress Trust, and all our thanks go to them for their support and generosity. If managed carefully it should take the Society at least to 2039, during which time we can develop in many ways.

By the end of 2026 we should have all the administrative changes sorted out and plans made for the future. That will be the best time for a party.

I am delighted to announce that the eminent pianist, Martino Tirimo, has kindly agreed to become a Joint President of the Chopin Society on the Executive Committee with me. With his great knowledge of music and vast repertoire, combined with his special love of Chopin – whose complete works he is in the process of recording – he will be a great source of inspiration and ideas to assist the Society.

Co-Chairman Charles Grant is taking over the financial aspect of the Society as Treasurer from April onwards.

Marina Chan was co-opted as a Co-Chairman at the last Committee Meeting. Chizuko Winter will become Membership Secretary from April onwards.

Our Year of Polish Pianists, supported by the Polish Cultural Institute and part of the Polish/British Cultural Year 2025 has proved particularly successful with a very high standard of playing and record audiences thanks to publicity from the Polish Cultural Institute.

The pianist for September, Jakub Kuszlik, first came to my notice at the POSK Chopin Festival in 2024, and I was very pleased that we were able to engage him for our Polish Year. Once again, I was inspired by his commitment and involvement in the music. He is undoubtedly a born Chopin player. His concert was also supported by the Polish Ministry of Culture and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, as well as by the Robert Turnbull Piano Federation.

For health reasons I was obliged to take a month's rest in October and so missed Krzysztof Moskalewicz's recital on the 26th. This was a big disappointment to me, but I heard that it was outstanding from every point of view and drew a crowd so that there wasn't a spare seat in the house. I hope he will return soon so I can have the chance to hear him.

I first heard Mateusz Borowiak when he performed at our Guildhall Gala in 2014. He was very good, but I was amazed in November last year by how he had grown as an artist. His Szymanowski was a revelation, and his performance of the Chopin B-flat minor Sonata was probably the most electrifying I have ever heard.

On 14th December we had a wonderful Christmas Members' Matinée at Leslie MacLeod-Miller's amazing flat. There was a delicious spread and fewer pianists than usual as several cancelled at the last minute. Pianists' time was limited to five minutes each, so the concert lasted for one hour – which was fine. All thanks to Leslie for his exceptional generosity. His Matinées are highlights in the year.

In October Marek Ostas took a party of fourteen members to Warsaw for the 19th International Chopin Competition. Thanks to the help of the Director of the Chopin Institute in Warsaw, Dr. Artur Szklener, and their Spokesman, Aleksander Laskowski, tickets were obtained for the finals and Gala Concert. Marek had organised a wonderful visit, so many thanks to him for making the arrangements. A description of the visit appears on pages 12-14. Sadly, the three pianists we sponsored did not make it to the finals despite playing brilliantly. In fact the standard was extraordinarily high.

Secretary Gill Newman and I had been invited to go, but I did not feel up to it and instead went to the country for a month's rest.

For this reason I did not take part in the talks at the POSK Chopin Festival, and asked Adam Repa to take my place in a conversation about the Competition with Professor John Rink. This I understand he did most successfully.

The Polish/British Cultural Year concluded at the end of December, but the Chopin Society's Year of Polish Pianists will continue until the end of March this year.

On January 25th, Artur Haftman will be playing both Chopin Piano Concerti – the E minor Op.11 and F minor Op.21 – with a string quartet. On February 22nd – which our Chopin Society considers to be Chopin's birthday – Aleksandra Świgut will perform a programme of Chopin, Grieg and an assortment of other composers. She is another pianist who performed at the POSK Chopin Festival to great acclaim. On March 22nd Krzysztof Jablonski will give the closing concert of the Series.

Magdalena Filipczak, an amazing violinist, and her accompanist Sam Armstrong will open our year 2026-27 on April 26th, followed by Peter Donohoe on May 17th.

The International Chopin Competition for Young Pianists will take place at Ognisko this year with the finals and Gala Concert on the 2nd and 3rd of March. As before, the Chopin Society will be supporting the Competition. We will be reinstating the Young Artists' Concerts this year, probably in June.

Gillian Newman, now Honorary Secretary, will finally be giving up as Membership Secretary at the end of March and handing over to Chizuko Winter. However, she will very kindly be continuing to do publicity and deal with ticket selling, as well as managing the website for the time being.

I was delighted with Yurie and Adam's "new look" Newsletter and thought it a brilliant first effort. Lots of people have made complimentary remarks about it. Now that we find ourselves in the final quarter of the financial year, the time for membership renewals is approaching. Subscriptions for the year are due in by March 31st and should be sent to Gillian as usual.

The Chopin Society depends on you, the Members and Friends, for its success, so I do hope you will continue to support us. All my thanks go to our committee who have attended regularly and worked very hard, as well as to Westminster Cathedral Hall and its administrator Peter McNulty, who is so very helpful.

Wishing you again a Happy and Successful 2026,

Yours faithfully,

Rose Cholmondeley

MEMBERSHIPS



JOIN THE CHOPIN SOCIETY!

Benefits:

- ❖ Free entry to all regular concerts at Westminster Cathedral Hall
- ❖ Priority booking for Galas and special events
(A ticket charge is made for Galas and special events)
- ❖ The opportunity to perform with other amateur and professional pianists in our Members' Matinees held in private houses in Greater London
- ❖ Invitations to events only available to Members and their guests
- ❖ Regular newsletters and mailings (email and postal)

Membership categories *The Membership Year runs from 1st April to 31st March.*

Single Membership (31-59)	£75
Joint Membership (2 people aged 31-59 at same address)	£130
Senior Membership (60 and over)	£65
Senior Joint Membership (two people 60 and over at same address)	£110
Youth Membership (30 and under)	£35
Life Membership	£750
Senior Life Membership (aged 60 and over)	£500
Friends of the Chopin Society	£25 per annum

*Friends pay £10 (£8 for seniors) for each concert they attend. This price will be higher for special events. Friends receive:

- ❖ free entry to three nominated recitals a year
- ❖ priority booking for in-house Galas and special events
- ❖ regular newsletters and mailings (email or postal)

JOIN NOW to get the best value!

YOUR MEMBERSHIP WILL RUN RIGHT THROUGH TO MARCH 31st 2027

(up to 3 extra concerts for no extra money)

“ROLLOVER” Membership forms are available at our concerts and our website www.chopin-society.org.uk

Alternatively, email info@chopin-society.org.uk and our Hon. Secretary Gillian Newman will send a form.

This offer is open from January to mid-March 2026

WHEN DO I RENEW?

Most Members and Friends will need to renew their subscriptions at the end of March. Please check the expiry date on your Membership card.

A renewal form is included with this newsletter.

***A VERY WARM WELCOME
to the latest
CHOPIN SOCIETY
MEMBERS & FRIENDS***

Mr. Rus Alin
Mr. George Byczynski
Ms. Miho Chan
Ms. Anna Dyńska-Gezer
Ms. Asia Feliks
Mr. Gabriel Gezer
Fr. Marek Galuszka
Ms. Ting Ho
Brig. Justin Maciejewski
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Miss Natalya Piotrovskaya
El Barón de Polop y Benidorm
Ms. Susan Quine
Miss Elisa Scagnetto
Rev. Julian Staniforth & Mrs. Andrea Staniforth
Ms. Anna Tilley
Mr. Adam Titcombe
Mr. Alexander Varouxakis
Miss Audrey Zhang

MEMBERS' TRIP TO WARSAW

The Chopin Society Members' Trip to Warsaw | 17–22 October 2025

The Chopin Society members travelled to Warsaw in October for a five-night cultural and musical programme celebrating the life and legacy of Fryderyk Chopin. Accommodation with breakfast was provided at the centrally located Novotel Warsaw Centrum, with group airport transfers arranged for members travelling on the designated LOT flights.



Members at the Holy Cross Church

Photo by: Co-Chairman Marek Ostas

On arrival, members of The Chopin Society attended a commemorative event at the Holy Cross Church, where his heart is kept, marking the anniversary of Chopin's death. The occasion featured a performance of Mozart's Requiem, a work Chopin greatly admired and reportedly requested to be performed at his own funeral. The music served as a powerful tribute to his life, faith and enduring artistic legacy. The members were fortunate enough to have received VIP tickets, putting them in prime position to Chopin's heart.

The visit coincided with the **19th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition**, one of the world's most prestigious classical music events, held every five years in Warsaw and attracting top young pianists from across the globe. More than 80

competitors from some 19 countries took part in several rounds of performances of Chopin's works at the Warsaw Philharmonic, culminating in the finals in mid-October. The competition was judged by a 17-member international jury, including Chopin Society Member Professor John Rink, and chaired by pianist Garrick Ohlsson.

American pianist **Eric Lu** won the top prize and a €60,000 award for his performances in the final, with **Kevin Chen** (Canada) receiving second prize and **Zitong Wang** (China) third prize.

Members were privileged to attend the finals of the competition at the Warsaw Philharmonic, followed by the Gala Winners' Concert held at Teatr Wielki – the Polish National Opera. These experiences were made possible through the generous support of **Dr. Artur Szklener** (Director of the Chopin Institute in Warsaw) and **Aleksander Laskowski** (Press spokesman). In addition to attending these performances, members had the unique opportunity to meet and engage with several of the competitors as well as members of the distinguished international jury.



Members on the Red Carpet at Teatr Wielki

Photo by: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina



Assistant Artistic Director Adam Repa being interviewed by Radio TVP Kultura

Photo by: Yurie Lee

Highlights also included a visit to the Fryderyk Chopin Museum, a guided excursion to Żelazowa Wola (Chopin's birthplace), and a walking tour of central Warsaw and the Old Town.

A particularly memorable experience was an exclusive talk and private visit with **Professor Miziołek** who is a distinguished Polish art historian. His work has significantly enriched the study of Chopin's cultural legacy. During the guided tour, Miziołek combined scholarly insight with engaging storytelling to bring Chopin's world to life, particularly through a visit to the Chopin family apartment, which is not yet open to the public! He explained the historical importance of this private space and how it shaped Chopin's early family life, education, and artistic development. This was truly an insightful experience for the members. His interdisciplinary approach connected historical interiors, visual art, and musical history to deepen their understanding of Chopin's enduring role in Polish cultural identity.



Members receiving a lecture by Professor Miziołek

Photo by: Adam Repa



The Society thanked Professor Miziołek with British biscuits

Photo by: Co-Chairman Marek Ostas

The trip offered a rich blend of music, history, and exclusive access, making it a memorable and rewarding Chopin Society experience. It also gave members the opportunity to get to know one another better and form lasting friendships. The fact that the WhatsApp group chat is still going strong is a true testament to its success! We hope to do this again in the future.

Special thanks go to our Co-Chairman, **Marek Ostas**, for organizing the entire trip. His attention to detail, excellent time management, and positive attitude made the experience both smooth and enjoyable for everyone!



Co-Chairman Marek Ostas



Members John Hart and Ian Williams at the Finals

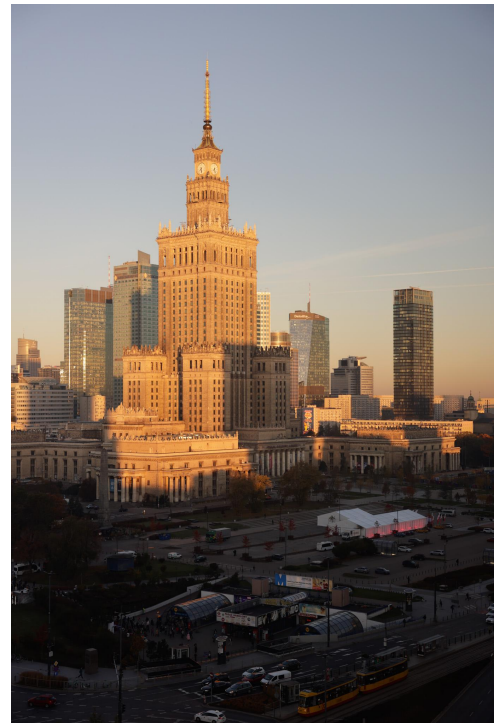
Photo by: Marek Ostas



Żelazowa Wola

Photo by: John Hart

Article by: Yurie Lee



**The Palace of Culture and Science
Warsaw**

Photo by: John Hart

The Chopin Society

Founded 1971 by Lucie Swiatek

Registered Charity No. 271562

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ROYAL PATRON: HRH Princess Alexandra

HONORARY PRESIDENT: Mr. Murray Perahia KBE

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Dr. & Mrs. Jozef Przybylski | The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere | Mr. & Mrs. Mark Tompkins

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Mr. Adam Repa BA(Hons) MA
Assistant Artistic Director, Joint Administrator & Newsletter Editor

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