

**59th International Contemporary Music Festival “Warsaw Autumn”
*Opera Operations***

**16–24 September 2016**

This year’s Warsaw Autumn will direct our eyes, ears and attention to the stage, understood both literally and symbolically. The starting point will be “opera,” associated with a specific theatrical space a musical work in several acts, going through the meanders of tradition and modernity toward a variety of theatrical and parastage forms, from miniopera through instrumental theatre and objectophone monodrama to the most complex and innovative—in both form and content—multimedia works.

The para— and —operatic events of the 59th Warsaw Autumn will include the Warsaw premiere of *The Magic Mountain*, an opera by Paweł Mykietyn staged in the Nowy Theatre; the children (and family) microopera *Silent Fish* by Jarosław Siwiński (within the Little Warsaw Autumn programme); and the multimedia opera *Aaron S* by Sławomir Wojciechowski. In the latter work, the tragic character of Aaron Swartz, American programmer, columnist, political activist and hactivist becomes a symbol of protest against capitalist attempts to limit universal access to knowledge and information. At the same time, the eponymous *Aaron S* is an example of nonconformism in terms of timbre, language, ideas, and even instrumentation. Those listeners sensitive to new media will enjoy Olga Neuwirth’s opera *Lost Highway*, composed to a libretto by controversial Nobel Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek. Besides the schizophrenic Fred/Pete, music and video image are also the work’s main protagonists. The operatic thread of our festival will culminate in two works by Salvatore Sciarrino: *Infinito nero* and *Luci mie traditrici*, each staged twice (similarly to Mykietyn’s *The Magic Mountain* and Fabián Panisello’s chamber opera *Le malentendu* after Albert Camus) in order to allow more people to watch them. Opera will be the main theme (or perhaps the sound space) of this year’s Warsaw Autumn.

But before opera speaks, the Festival will open with a work reminding us that art was first and foremost nature before it became part of culture. A musical tale of a tree changing into music, or rather music inspired by trees, will be narrated by the flutes of Łukasz and Agata Długosz, who will perform Grażyna Pstrokońska-Nawratil’s *Rainforests*. On that same evening, we have another treat for lovers of instrumental theatre, trash music, and resounding “strange” objects: Juliana Hodkinson’s *Angel View*. As always, Warsaw Autumn will focus on new sounds, extraordinary narratives, improvised tales, lights and shadows and spaces of the modern sono—, phono—, and audiosphere.

Our 59th edition shall take place in both highly popular and lesser-known concert venues throughout Warsaw: the Warsaw Philharmonic, Witold Lutosławski Polish Radio Concert Studio, Fabryka Trzciny, Basen Artystyczny, Królikarnia, Centre for Contemporary Art, Zachęta, Nowy Theatre, Imka Theatre, and other venues. We shall present many first performances by artists both well-established and debuting in Poland, including GrauSchumacher Piano Duo, Spółdzielnia Muzyczna, SCENATET, and Berlin’s LUX: NM. Featured composers will include Mark Andre, Marcin Bortnowski, Ondřej Adámek, Brigitta Muntendorf, Zofia Dowgiałło, and others. The central character of this Festival is Salvatore Sciarrino, with not only two operas but also instrumental works, including orchestral *Shadow of Sound* in the programme of this year’s final concert.

2016 Warsaw Autumn, by filling the space of Warsaw’s stages, halls, galleries, theatres, former factories, and swimming pools with peculiar sounds, will primarily refer to what happens between the stage and the audience, the “listener’s eye and ear”: the free (in every meaning of the word) inner and outer space of man, filled with the individual theatre of objects, characters, ideas, and sounds: imagination.