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***The Polish Mass* by Jan Adam Maklakiewicz and *Magnificat* by Christoph
Schönherr - the selected cognitive and performance issues with a due regard to the
perception of *sacrum***

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For centuries, religious music has been awakening in us unusual aesthetic experiences, and with its genuine attraction it brings us closer to Absolute Beauty - to God. The ability to perceive works of religious art is a great gift, the reality of their performance seems to be even greater - the perspective of delving into the content through music and word analysis, the cognitive and performance aspects and a creative search for something that makes the work „speak” to us, that we perform it and listen to it with true delight.

This dissertation describes the selected cognitive and performance issues with a due regard to the perception of *sacrum*, which the author was fathoming while preparing and realizing the concert entitled "My peace I give to you." The program included religious vocal-instrumental works: *The Polish Mass* by Jan Maklakiewicz designed for mixed choir, soprano, solo and organ and Christoph Schönherr's *Magnificat* designed for mixed choir, symphony orchestra and soprano solo.

In the first chapter „Music in the church. *The Polish Mass* by Jan A. Maklakiewicz and Christoph Schönherr's *Magnificat* - the perception of *sacrum*”, we find the considerations regarding religious and liturgical music. Their intention is to make us deeply aware that our contacts with religious music are not only aimed at showing and contemplating its beauty but, above all, at mediating and bringing people closer to God. This part of the dissertation also contains a general discussion of the *Polish Mass* and the *Magnificat* in terms of form and content. Moreover, it systematizes the both compositions in terms of the possibilities of performing them in the temple, in the liturgy and beyond it. The second chapter „*The Polish*

Mass by Jan Adam Maklakiewicz - the cognitive aspects" presents the profile of the composer who is also a recognized organist and choirmaster, whose compositions have been contributing significantly to development of musical activities of amateur choirs until present. A large part of the chapter is the analysis of the work as the basis for a better knowledge, understanding, concept, and thus a proper reading and performance of this work. The third chapter is devoted to the musical analysis of Christoph Schönherr's *Magnificat* and derived from it cognitive and performance issues of this composition. The necessary information about Schönherr - a contemporary living composer, teacher and choirmaster is also provided herein.

The fourth chapter discusses the performance aspects resulting from realization of the discussed works. Among them: the issue of the conductor's cooperation with the organist, taking place during the preparation and performance of the *Polish Mass*, observations regarding the conductor's cooperation with an amateur choir and professional orchestra - the issue of dissimilarity in working with such ensembles, and finally, the performance problems resulting from realization of the selected works by Maklakiewicz and Schönherr, inclusive of the proposals for their solution. There are presented here some remarks and guidelines from the part of the conductor and also the examples of exercises aimed at preparing and teaching the musical fragments specifically difficult for the performers.

The dissertation has a partial character and certainly does not fully exhaust the topic. However, it explicitly emphasizes the extremely important role of *sacrum* in music. It is just the sphere of sanctity that governs all the issues discussed in the dissertation. Each „exertion" of the conductor related to the cognition, learning and teaching of the selected works, as well as the efforts to achieve the highest possible level of performance, had one overriding goal: to guide the musicians and the recipients through the works and their sphere of sanctity. To bear witness to God's presence and actions with the most perfect beauty. Thus, in the era of spreading around the world tendencies towards secularization and de-Christianization of culture, our obligation is to take special care for *sacrum* in religious music, with priority to the one which is performed in churches.

Jan Adam Maklakiewicz