

Leonard Cohen
EVENT

KRAKÓW, POLAND 6-8 AUGUST 2010

Leonard

MESSAGE FROM JARIKO

DEAR FRIENDS,

Leonard Cohen's music and poetry have brought us from all over the world to the wonderful city of Kraków. Here we will celebrate and enjoy Our Man's work and spend some memorable times and moments together. This is the seventh international Leonard Cohen Event, and many members here have participated in one or more of the previous gatherings. A special welcome to those who join us now for the first time!

The immense growth of Internet communication has enabled us to create a magnificent worldwide network of information and friendship. Our Leonard Cohen Events give us a chance to break the invisible

chains and limitations of the digital world. Instead of reading what's written on the websites, typing our emails and Forum or Facebook messages, gazing into the little screen to find out what is said in cyberspace – now, we are going to experience much more in the Real Life. We are able to meet and touch each other, to dine and drink together, to sing and enjoy the life together!

This is the third year in a row that we have had the privilege of seeing Leonard Cohen and his amazing band in concert. Before 2008, we had often discussed how wonderful it would have been to follow a tour online in real time, but we found it unrealistic. After 15 years, Leonard's decision to go on tour again was a dream come



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true. The tour announcement caused activity on the Forum to explode. The almost 200 concerts Leonard has done so far have resulted in phenomenal publicity and appreciation everywhere, and crowds in the sold-out venues continue to be ecstatic about the energy and strength of his performances. This long tour has won Leonard countless new fans from all generations!

During the tour itself, Leonard has created a number of new songs, and has performed a few of them live. According to the latest information, his new album will be finished next Spring!

Leonard is in Scandinavia right now, playing to the enthusiastic audiences in Oslo and Stockholm. Here in

Kraków, he is with us in spirit. Leonard has always been very generous with his fans. He sends us his kind-hearted greetings and is looking forward to seeing many of us in the audience somewhere along the way! Leonard also kindly extended to us the privilege of being the first to enjoy his new concert video *Songs from the Road*.

On behalf of The Leonard Cohen Files and The Leonard Cohen Forum, I'd like to thank Sebastian Korta and his competent team for their long and exacting work to make this Event in Kraków memorable for all of us. Now, it's time to enjoy our gathering with good friends, new friends, and Leonard's magical songs!

JARKKO ARJATSALO



MESSAGE FROM SEBASTIAN

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, COHENITES OF THE WORLD, FRIENDS,

On behalf of the organizing committee it is my pleasure to welcome you in Kraków at the seventh Leonard Cohen Event. The previous meetings took place in places related to Leonard Cohen's life and art and, although Leonard has never been to Kraków in person, his art certainly corresponds well with the city and its ambience.

This year, it is the 25th anniversary for the Various Positions tour during which Leonard Cohen visited Poland. Our country was then ruled by the communist government. Two years after martial law was imposed, Poland was a country of empty store shelves and censorship where the Solidarity movement was outlawed. During the difficult times, Cohen was greatly popular in Poland, probably enjoying more recognition than any other foreign

artist. The person greatly responsible for that was Maciej Zembaty - an artist who translated and sang Leonard's songs in Polish. In some ways, the songs managed to capture the mood that predominated in the bleak Poland of those days.

At the time, I was nine years old and my father worked in the steelworks named after V. Lenin. Nowadays, we're able to enjoy Leonard Cohen's music in a free, independent country which is a member of the European Union, and we have the honour of welcoming the fans of Leonard's music from all over the world in Kraków. Since then, a lot has changed in Poland, but Leonard Cohen is still greatly important to us.

Kraków, a former capital of Poland, is one of the oldest, largest, and most beautiful cities in Poland. It is culturally, educationally, and economically important. The tradition of what we refer to as 'sung poetry' is alive and



well in Kraków and the festival of Leonard Cohen songs that first took place here in the 1980s is a good case in point. As organizers, we chose to honour Leonard Cohen's Jewish heritage and, hence, decided we will offer us all a chance to enjoy a concert in the Tempel Synagogue.

We hope that the landmarks, monuments, and museums, as well as the pubs and restaurants in our city will offer you an unforgettable experience of Kraków.

The organizing of this Leonard Cohen Event was for me a demanding and time-consuming task, but it also gave me the unique chance to get to know many wonderful people – organizers, guests, artists. I hope we can live up to the high expectations all of you have after the great Events of previous years.

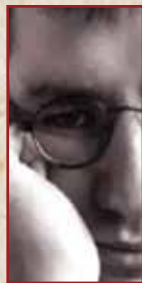
A long, long time ago, when Jarkko was talking to me about organizing the Event in

Kraków, he said, "the Event will bring a lot of things to do for the committee, but on the other hand it is very rewarding - I Could say the experience of a lifetime. I will always remember the Hydra 2002 Event that I organized; it was one of the highlights of my life!" Now I know what he was talking about; it is very much the same in my case. So, those words I would like to also pass on to the organizers of the next Event – the Madison, Wisconsin, USA, Leonard Cohen Event of 2012.

A number of people and institutions co-operated to make this Event possible. A lot of them enthusiastically offered their time, abilities, and efforts. Take a look at the last pages of the booklet and please appreciate their contributions.

To all the co-organizers, for their voluntary work, and to all the Guests who have put their trust in us – thank you. Enjoy your time.

SEBASTIAN KORTA



I STEPPED INTO HISTORY OF LEONARD COHEN EVENTS

More than 200 admirers of Leonard Cohen's music and poetry are now gathering together in Kraków to celebrate Our Man's work, and to meet with each other. This is the seventh international Event in a series started 12 years ago in Lincoln, UK.

Our gathering is possible thanks to the Internet and its Leonard Cohen websites and forums. Many of our members have been thrilled to find people who share their enthusiasm for Leonard's music and poetry. It is more than natural that after years of online communication the desire for face-to-face meetings awoke. This year is also a very special one – this summer many of us now in Kraków will also see Leonard in concert. After 191 concerts in 2008-2009, he returns to Europe for another leg of his World Tour. At the age of (almost) 76, Leonard is more popular than ever!

The history of meetings that celebrate Leonard Cohen's work goes back some 20 years. Let's cast a glance at what has happened and what is going to happen in the future.

The *Intensity* fanzine was published for 13 years (1987-2000) by Yvonne Hakze and Bea de Koning in Holland. Readers of the fanzine were invited to a club meeting every year in Hoofddorp near Amsterdam. These meetings typically had 20-30 participants who spent a Saturday afternoon at the home of Bea and her family. Most came from Holland, but there were occasional guests from other European countries. The 12th and last meeting was in 1998.

On the other side of the globe, in Toowoomba, Australia, another series of local Cohen meetings started in 1993. According to Andrew Darbyshire, it began with an idea of doing something to commemorate Cohen's lifetime of achievement when he was about to turn 60 years of age. The first year was to be a practice test to see what interest there might be for an event on Leonard's 60th birthday in 1994. The organizers didn't plan to make it an annual event, but what had started out as an experiment became a bit of a local institution. Every spring, a weekend close to Leonard's birthday

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AN AVALANCHE

BY JARKKO ARJATSALO

in September has been dedicated to live music, poetry readings, video presentations, and, last but not least, socializing.

The first large gathering was at The Leonard Cohen Conference, dedicated to Cohen's work, and it was both serious and impressive. Organized in Canada, in October 1993, *Singer as Lover, Reconsidered* was the title of this "international and interdisciplinary celebration of Cohen's contributions to fiction, drama, poetry, music, dance, and performance," and was held at the Red Deer College in Alberta, 80 miles from Calgary. The weekend was led by keynote speakers Stephen Scobie and Ira Nadel, and included eight other prominent academic speakers, as well. *The New Step*, a play from *Flowers for Hitler*, was performed by some of the college students; and many of Cohen's songs were performed by several artists, including Perla Batalla. The Conference included serious presentations and discussions of Leonard's work.

Yet, more was still to come in Canada. Now, at the end of every December, the haunting lyrics and hypnotic melodies of Leonard Cohen are performed by a diverse chorus of Newfoundland singers, songwriters, actors, filmmakers, writers, and musicians. *A Feast of Cohen*, launched by Vicky Hynes, has become a popular part of the local holiday tradition in St. Johns, NL. In September 2002, Natalie Fuhr organized First We Take Victoria: The Leonard Cohen Tribute Event in Victoria, British Columbia, where both professional and amateur artists and poets performed Cohen's work.

In 2002, Kim Solez, the founder and organizer of The Cohenights Foundation, started the Leonard Cohen Nights in Edmonton. Kim has explained, "In Scotland and all over the world, there is this 200+-year tradition of Robert Burns nights and suppers as an expression of Scottish culture and fun seeking. So I thought why not Leonard Cohen nights on September 21st, Leonard's birthday, as an expression of Canadian culture and fun seeking?" The ongoing annual Edmonton Cohen Nights are well organized and have outstanding performers.

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This article focuses on fan meetings, but we must also mention the numerous tribute concerts and tribute plays in many countries. The most well known of these are the *Came So Far for Beauty* concerts produced by Hal Willner (New York in 2003, Brighton in 2004, Sydney in 2005, and Dublin in 2006). The documentary film *Leonard Cohen: I'm Your Man*, produced by Hal Willner and directed by Lian Lunson, includes footage from the Sydney concert while its CD soundtrack has the songs from Sydney and Brighton. We also remember *Acordes con Leonard Cohen*, produced in Spain (2005-2006) by Alberto Manzano. A long-time Leonard fan known as Mean Larry instituted and hosts the Chelsea Hotel Tribute Night, which is now a long-lived tradition of more local nature in Minneapolis. This is just to give a few examples; a lot more has happened and continues to happen all over the world, but now let's share some details of our own Events!

LINCOLN, UK (MARCH 1998)

The roots of our Internet-based, international Events go back to March 1998, to Lincoln in the United Kingdom. Lizzie Madder tells the story:

"When I went home from the *Intensity* 1997 meeting in Amsterdam, I put an inquiry on the Newsgroup to see if anyone was interested in helping to set up a British gathering. That's how I met Chris Bolton. He had the perfect place in mind in his home city of Lincoln. The venue was a conference centre, which had once been part of Lincoln Asylum. It was famous for being amongst the first to remove all uses of physical restraint and isolation in the treatment of people with mental illness. It felt like a good omen. It felt a little crazy. We decided that if only 10 people replied, we'd meet in a pub. If 30 replied, we'd go ahead with Asylum. We had about 80 bookings from all over the UK and Europe!

"Everything was done on a shoestring. I believe we charged only £10 per person. Chris borrowed some computer and music equipment and brought cheap boxes of wine from Germany. Somehow, we managed to also include a lunch buffet and to produce posters and a booklet for the event.

"The day arrived. Although we were exhausted, we were on a high. It was so exciting to meet so many fans. The event exceeded all our expectations, turning out to be a wonderful celebration of Leonard Cohen. Imagine what it was like for the first time to be singing *So long*, *Marianne* with so many fans. It was so emotional and such a joy. We wanted it to go on forever. No one wanted it to end.

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"Musicians brought their song sheets and guitars. Jarkko brought us new videos. Fans brought their own collections to show and trade. Leonard had unexpectedly and generously sent us signed shirts, which we auctioned for the charity War Child. It was wonderful to meet so many Cohen fans, many of whom have since become close friends."

MONTREAL (MAY 2000)

Thanks to the successful first Event in the UK, new plans were made for one in Montreal. The idea of holding a Leonard Cohen Event at McGill University, in May of 2000, was first raised in the alt.music.leonard-cohen newsgroup some time in 1998. Bill van Dyk volunteered to take responsibility for the whole project, and for the first time an international committee was established – Bill, plus Anne Jayne, Dick Straub, and Jarkko Arjatsalo. By November, the first online meetings (using Internet Relay Chat) of the organizing committee were in progress.

There were clearly two, slightly different ideas about what the conference ought to be like: a gathering of fans to celebrate and acclaim; and a more formal symposium with panel discussions and workshops. The two ideas co-existed, sometimes uneasily, throughout the planning process; yet, they came to satisfying fruition in Montreal, in the form of workshops and panels, plays and open mike sessions, and walking tours of Leonard Cohen's hometown.

It was a challenging project. Respected writers and professors Stephen Scobie, Brian Trehearne, and Ira Nadel agreed to participate in a panel discussion of the status of Cohen's achievements in literature. The Damn Personals, a young band from Boston, were booked for the grand concert. Nancy White, known for her satirical song Leonard Cohen's Never Gonna Bring My Groceries In, opened the Friday night session; and a powerful and unforgettable, dramatic production of *Beautiful Losers* by the Laboratory for Enthusiastic Collaboration was presented.

The schedule of activities was unusual, and more than 200 fans of Leonard Cohen from Australia, Taiwan, Israel, Italy, France, Germany, Holland, UK, Sweden, Finland, Croatia, USA, and Canada, felt it was a tribute to Leonard Cohen's achievements that the program was both substantial and diverse.

We also had the privilege of hearing three songs from the forthcoming album Ten New Songs, and Leonard's delightful sister, Esther Cohen, completely and easily won the hearts of all participants, with her warmth, openness, and wonderful sense of humour. The unexpected surprise she gave our group came when she kindly welcomed everyone into Leonard's house. In the years since, Esther has become a deeply appreciated highlight of many various gatherings. It's not

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unusual to hear someone suddenly exclaim, "Oh, look! Here's Esther!" as she enters the area with her beaming, brilliant smile, and easy laugh; greets people individually; and engages with fans in a genuinely interested way suggestive of a longtime friend.

The Montreal Event also included a marketplace, poetry jams, and video/film presentations; and, of course, an active social schedule, including a dinner at Moishes, one of Cohen's favourite restaurants. Both the local and national media covered this successful gathering and the stage was set for more.

HYDRA (JUNE 2002)

With Montreal's successful gathering it became obvious that more Events would follow. I volunteered to organize the next one, which was held on the Greek island of Hydra in June 2002. Bobbie Chalou, Henning Franz, and Demetris Tsimperis later joined the committee; and Kelsey Edwards, who at that time was running Saronicnet, an incoming travel agency on the island, helped us immeasurably. Our biggest challenge was finding a room large enough to accommodate everyone for the main meeting. We finally obtained permission to use the hall of a beautiful, white church, which still sits glistening in the sun of the harbour. There was neither video nor sound equipment on the island, but we were able to rent the necessary equipment and employ engineers from the mainland.

We had 200 participants from over 20 countries, and the island of Hydra took everyone by surprise with its unique and idyllic atmosphere: no cars (only donkeys, primarily used for carrying various goods, supplies, and luggage); an old and well-preserved city around the harbour; and delicious food prepared at local restaurants. The Event itself took place on the weekend days, but most participants had reserved extra days, both before and after the Event – every evening, a new restaurant was chosen, and there was music and talk in the harbour until the very early hours at the Rolo Bar, which has since become our favourite informal gathering place.

The Event program on Hydra was filled with music, films and videos, and special performances. Roger Green, a poet from the UK, who lives on the island, read many of his Cohen-inspired poems. Henk Hofstede, the leader of the Dutch band The Nits, presented his road movie Film from a Room and performed, as well. Yasmine, the well-known artist from Belgium, sang Cohen songs and had a film crew with her. Lorca Cohen was our guest of honour. She came to Hydra with her friend, Martha Wainwright, whose wonderful

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rendition of Tower of Song charmed everyone; her first album and fame would come in 2005. They both were very engaging and open during their time with us. Lorca has since met many more of our members at the New York Event, as well as throughout her father's World Tour, where she has been the tour photographer and maintains responsibility for merchandise sales.

The Open Mic sessions were incredibly popular every evening and our music continued long into the night in the harbour, after we had no choice but to close the hall. There was also a guided, city walk to Leonard's house, a beach BBQ, and a long walk up the hills to the monastery.

It very quickly became clear how much people had fallen in love with the island, its lifestyle, and the Aegean Sea, and wanted to return and spend more time there. We all feel that Hydra has its own mysterious charisma. Its peaceful life is like a time capsule and its gentle, warm summer nights are so appealing and relaxing, especially for those who live in the colder climates. Since then, we have organized smaller, informal meet-ups on the island every second year between the much larger, formal Events in the interim years. The number of members joining these meet-ups has been steadily growing, with 80 of us having met on Hydra in 2009; and we expect even more at our next gathering there in June 2011.

NEW YORK (JUNE 2004)

Our choice of New York for the next convention was logical. Past Events, in Montreal and on Hydra, traced important locations and influences in Leonard's life in chronological order. In the fall of 1966, he moved to New York, at the same time his singing career was launched. Arguably, the next few years at the Chelsea Hotel, The Penn Terminal Hotel, and the Henry Hudson Hotel, were among Cohen's most important; not only as a songwriter, but also as a recording artist, ladies' man, and family man. New York is where Columbia Records' repertory executive John Hammond "discovered" Cohen and signed him to a recording contract that resulted in *Songs of Leonard Cohen*. The rest is history.

Geoff Gompers was appointed the chairman of the organizing committee, and was assisted by Bobbie Chalou, Valerie Shertzman, Joe Way, Dick Straub, and Jarkko Arjatsalo.

The early birds to the Event took an evening, sunset cruise around Manhattan on Thursday; and the official program began on Friday, with registration taking place at The Knitting Factory.

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After the opening words by Geoff Gompers, D. Nicklow, the *Respected Cohen Authority and Pundit*, shared some of his wisdom with us (the scholar looking suspiciously like one M. Wolkind from the UK). Henning Franz showed a video presentation he had created and titled *Cohen In New York*. Suzanne Holland joyfully welcomed the participants as she played her lush 12-string guitar and sweetly sang *The Guests*. After a break (and a few Red Needles, a drink of Leonard's own creation), we enjoyed an awesome *All Star Tribute Show*, starring Perla Batalla, Julie Christensen, and Paul Ostermayer, with the band. Their performances included special guest Bob Metzger, who is now again touring with Leonard.

On the weekend, we took a bus tour through the City, guided by Geoff Gompers. We also took a walking tour with Evelyn Stein, who took us to the International House (in *The Favourite Game*, it is World Student House); The Henry Hudson Hotel on 58th Street; the Rockefeller Center; and St. Patrick's Cathedral, to see the beautiful, bronze relief sculpture of Catherine (Kateri) Tekakwitha on the Cathedral's main door. *A Scavenger Hunt* in Greenwich Village, with clues relating to Leonard's life and work, created a lot of running, excitement, and hilarity, with many dead-ends and recalculations before it ended and the winning team was announced.

At Davis Hall, on the campus of Columbia University, we had four performing artists: Henning Franz, Zachary Oberzan, Jan Erik Lundqvist, and Suzanne Holland. Elizabeth Laishley and Marta Goebel-Pietrasz displayed their art inspired by Leonard's songs. The Open Mic sessions, again, showed how many talented members we have in our worldwide community. Bobbie Chalou and Marc Rigrodsky had created *A Birthday Performance*, which was spontaneously participated in by anyone who wanted and the stage quickly filled. On Sunday, Leonard's poetry was recited at The Poetry Jam hosted by Natalie Fuhr.

Once again, Leonard extended us the privilege of being the first to hear several songs from his forthcoming album *Dear Heather*. One of the main presentations of the program was *Sincerely, L. Cohen*, a brilliantly varied collage of the writings and songs of Leonard Cohen, performed by The Medicine Show Theatre Ensemble. After the official program ended, we had a magnificent after-event party with spontaneous performances and sing-alongs, at the West End bar, and another magical gathering came to a close.

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BERLIN (AUGUST 2006)

After the Event in Manhattan, it was logical to take Berlin next! Henning Franz was our host in Germany, assisted by Kadir Ercan, Ulla Piecha, Rita Hellmich, Andrea Dolfino, Friedemann Linke, and Jarkko Arjatsalo. The main venue was Heilige Kreuz Kirche, the beautiful Church of the Holy Cross. The Event started with a magnificent tribute concert featuring Die Sieben Leben (Germany), Ann Vriend and Wendy McNeill (Canada), Zachary Oberzan (New York), Michael E. Brauer (Austria), Laura Facci (Italy), and Jan Erik Lundqvist (Sweden).

We also had a marketplace with Elizabeth Laishley again displaying her paintings inspired by Leonard's songs. As we usually do, members had jam sessions after the official program, and Leonard's songs continued to be sung throughout the nights by an enthusiastic chorus at the Stresemann Restaurant and Ibis Bar.

On Saturday, the afternoon started with four hours of excellent Open Mic performances by various Event participants. The session was hosted by Andrew Darbyshire. In the evening, we had two bands on stage: Ars Harmonica (Poland) and ex-Walkabouts' Chris and Carla (Seattle, USA). Henning and his team had also organized city tours for those who had not been to Berlin before, including a private walk in Reichstag, the German Parliament. The Sunday evening show started with a dinner at the Universal Hall, and was followed by a video presentation, compiled by Jarkko, which included *Blue Alert* press kit materials. Then, it was time for a dance party! Our band, the Polkaholix, played a hilarious version of Dance Me to the End of Love, and the merrymaking continued into the early hours. On Monday morning, the Event officially closed with a very lively brunch at Restaurant Deponie 3; though, as always, some folks lingered on to enjoy more days in Berlin.

EDMONTON (JULY 2008)

After Berlin, we returned to North America and Edmonton, Canada, the city where Leonard wrote Sisters of Mercy. For the 2008 Event, we combined forces with the annual Leonard Cohen Nights, hosted by Kim Solez, with his effective and very professional local committee comprised of Jerome Martin, Karen Slevinsky, Monica Polanica, Ann Vriend, Elizabeth Rodriguez, Victoria Sheldon, and Colette Slevinsky. It was a pity that so few Europeans were able to travel to Western Canada – Leonard was simultaneously touring in Europe, which forced members who live in that region to make a choice. The missing Europeans, however, were replaced by enthusiastic local Canadians, who paid tribute to their great poet-novelist-singer-songwriter.

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The long weekend was full of both culture and entertainment. The program started with film-showing at the Stanley Miller Library (*This Begger's Description*, plus excerpts from *The Ernie Game*, and *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Leonard Cohen*). On Friday, we went to the Shocktor Stage of the Citadel to see Dance Me, an art exhibit and dance performance created by Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn. The following day, the Rice Theater featured On the other side, a live, cinema, audio-visual performance by Clinker. The New Step, a play that Leonard wrote in 1964, was performed in the Devonian Room at the Westin Hotel. This was also the venue for hosting other activities, such as the academic talks by professors Ira Nadel and Thomas Muller, and the marvelous concert by Monsieur Camembert, a band from Australia.

Songwriters in the round concerts featured Peter Elkas, Darrell Scott, Tom Rush, Karla Anderson, Ann Vriend, and Roddy Hart. The Open Mic sessions were as fun as ever, carrying forward the tradition that allows our talented, Leonard fans to openly share their own expressions of love for Leonard's various works.

The main feature at the Event was the magnificent, sold-out Gala Concert at the Whispear Centre, featuring famous Canadian artists such as Tom Rush, Kate Hammett-Vaughan, Roddy Hart, Todd Babiak, Ann Vriend, Peter Elkas, Darrell Scott, Serena Ryder, and Jann Arden – and, of course, Monsieur Camembert.

We immensely enjoyed taking the Sisters of Mercy Tour to the Campus of the Alberta University (and visited the house in which Leonard wrote his tender song of gratitude); and then went to the riverside of the Edmonton River to have a Picnic in the Park Party. After the Dance Party on Sunday night, there was a fitting Survivor's Breakfast on Monday morning, before many participants stepped onto a bus to go to Banff for an additional mini-Event. What a weekend, packed with great performances and interesting tours! The Event was well worth the trip to Leonard's own beautiful Canada!

COMING NEXT...

This summary has returned us to Poland in August of 2010. We will spend just one weekend together but, as we always do, we will cherish our many memories in the years to come. A comprehensive, photo report will be available online after this Kraków Event (the previous Events are also featured at The Leonard Cohen Files).

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The continuity of our Events has been secured by the growing popularity of these types of get-togethers and, of course, by the increasing number of members wanting to participate. After Kraków, the next Event will be in 2012, in Madison, Wisconsin, near Chicago. Joe Way generously offered to be our host, and already had many ideas in place, before he made his offer. Joe will be assisted by several American members, and as the time draws closer, the committee and sub-committees will grow, as that's the organic nature of these formal Events. There is always something for willing people to do; and whatever it is, they will be deeply appreciated. Anyone who has any desire to volunteer is always welcome!

Before we attend the Madison Event in the USA, in accordance with our biennial tradition, some of us will meet again on Hydra in June 2011. We will also keep in touch and see each other as we attend more of Leonard's concerts and our many and varied, pre-concert meet-ups around the World!

So, what about Leonard himself? All of our Events have always had Leonard's blessings and generous support. He has sent special gifts to the participants of those Events and contributed in many other ways to make them so very memorable and unique. Leonard's 2010 World Tour has now taken him to Norway and Sweden, while we gather to enjoy his works, each other, and ourselves, in Poland. Let's raise a toast here in Kraków to Our Man Leonard!

Special thanks to Lizzie Madder, Bill van Dyk, Andrew Darbyshire, Kim Solez, Henning Franz, Linda and Dick Straub and Elizabeth Bacon-Smith for their help in writing this article.

Waiting
in line
with you

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THE STORY OF KRAKÓW

BY ANNA LEONOWICZ





THERE IS A MAN who struggles to reach under the surface and reveal the true nature of life and human soul. There is a man who strives to set himself free while entrapped like a worm on a hook. There is a man who knows what it often takes to just get by but nurses a secret longing for more than mere survival. That man is Leonard Cohen and here is a story of the place where he found his audience.

THE GUESTS ARRIVE

Kraków's area witnessed the changing human fortune since the Palaeolithic era. Although the very beginnings of the city are lost in the mists of the past the legend says it was founded by Prince Krak. The ruler is believed to be buried nearby in the 7th-century pagan mound of his name. The first written notice of the city comes from the Jewish merchant, Ibrahim ibn Jakub, a Spaniard at Arabian service, who visited the vibrant commercial settlement in the 10th century. Situated at the crossroads of major commercial routes, Kraków was a meeting place for different cultures. In the following centuries, it became a member of the Hanseatic League of trading cities and the most important city in Poland.

In the 13th century, Kraków was destroyed by the attack of the Tartars who conquered the area from Mongolia to Central Europe. In 1257, Prince Bolesław the Shy placed the city under the Magdeburg law, in order to attract new citizens to the damaged city. This meant exemption from taxes and the implementation of a new urban plan, which allowed, among others, for the creation of Europe's largest medieval main square – still intact today.

The new opportunities brought in new settlers, among them the Germans and the Jews. As the years went by, the walls of the city limited

its development and merchants began to settle on the neighbouring island, systematically increasing its population over time. In the 14th century, King Kazimierz the Great bestowed municipal rights on this new settlement, which in an act of honour was named after the king. From its beginning, the city of Kazimierz was the centre of Jewish culture with numerous synagogues, schools, and printing-houses. It bore Rabbi Moses ben Israel Isserles called Remuh, one of the wisest Jewish scholars in Poland. In the 19th century, Kazimierz was incorporated into Kraków, but maintained its unique character until the brutal approach of the Second World War.

HERE IS YOUR CROWN

Apart from being the centre of economic life, Kraków also became a centre of political activity and the capital of Poland for the next few centuries. In the heart of Kraków, over the banks of the Vistula River, rises a castle which houses precious artefacts of the past, along with the necropolis of the Polish kings. Here, the sacred merges with the profane, the symbols of power with the symbols of its fragility, all serving as a reminder that "we're all on one road and we're only passing through." Under the royal kitchens lie the remains of St. Mary's rotunda, which hearkens back to the beginnings of Christianity in Poland in the 10th century. The kings rest in the tombs

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of the Gothic cathedral, which witnessed their coronation.

Along with the rising political role of the city came the growth of its intellectual potential. The very same king who founded Kazimierz also brought into being the Kraków Academy, the second oldest university in Central Europe. Marriage between Kazimierz's successor, Queen Jadwiga, and Jagiełło, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, created a union between the two countries, resulting in a foundation for a new Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth which, at its peak, extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The royal couple also restored the impoverished Kraków Academy, which began attracting intellectuals from all over Poland, Lithuania, and the neighbouring countries. Today, the Academy, currently known as Jagiellonian University, is a major learning centre and home to 50,000 students.

The scholars studying at the university gained for it a long-lasting renown. The 15th century rector of the Academy, Paweł Włodkowic, became a father of theory of international law. During Synod of Constance he represented Poland, as he courageously spoke against the Crusades and declared the rights of the pagans. The 16th century scholar and clergyman, Nicolaus Copernicus, with his publication entitled *On the revolutions of heavenly spheres*,

reinstated the heliocentric theory before his contemporary, Giordano Bruno. At the turn of the 20th into the 21st century, one doctor of philosophy and theology gained worldwide fame. He was a poet, who once wrote about the hopeless longing for the world where each man would be "the sacred and the genuine thing which cannot be denied in deeds nor distorted in speech." With time, he was appointed the Archbishop of Kraków and, in 1978, he was elected Pope, choosing for himself the name John Paul II.

Christianity always had great influence on the artistic, spiritual, and intellectual advances of the city. In the year 1000, Kraków became the residence of bishops. Wincenty Kadłubek, a 12th-century bishop, authored the oldest chronicles of Polish history. A 15th-century canon and teacher of kings, Jan Długosz, followed his example, providing further record of the country's past. In the 13th century, new Gothic churches were erected. Some of them rose on the foundations of Roman temples, among them St. Mary's Basilica, renowned for its splendid 15th-century wooden altar, constructed by a sculptor from Nuremberg, Veit Stoss. Members of the Franciscan and Dominican orders, who settled in the city during the 13th century, also built their own splendid churches. The Cistercian Order located its cloister in Mogiła nearby. All the congregations and their temples are still present in

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Kraków today. The golden age of the Renaissance gave the city the Zygmunt's Chapel of Wawel Cathedral, built on the Wawel Hill and designed by Bartolomeo Berecci. The Baroque style arrived in Kraków with the construction of the Jesuit church of St. Peter and St. Paul, by Jan Maria Bernardoni and Giovanni Battista Trevano. Its foundation was followed by erection of the university church of St. Anna by a Dutchman, Tylman of Gameren. The 17th century saw the arrival of the Camaldolian monks who practice a strict Rule of the Order demanding that they shall not speak. Their successors still lead their silent, contemplative life on Bielany Hill.

NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THE NIGHT IS GOING

Since the 16th century, the role of the city systematically decreased with the transfer of the centre of political life to Warsaw. In 1572, the death of the last king of the Jagiellonian Dynasty ended the Golden Age of Poland. Since then, the country was governed by foreign kings chosen in general elections. Henri de Valois, the first king-elect, unfortunately did not appreciate his new domain. Soon after his coronation, he escaped Kraków when the death of his brother made it possible for him to become Henri III, king of France. Throughout the 17th century, the city faced subsequent disasters: a plague, a great flood and a Swedish

incursion, which spread all over Poland. Many precious treasures were robbed by the invaders and the fire set incidentally by soldiers on the Wawel Hill destroyed its palace buildings. Although the country has risen from the invasion, popularly called the Swedish Deluge, its political structure remained frail. Unlike most of European kingdoms, Poland has never been under an absolute monarchy and traditions of individual freedoms were highly valued by the nobles. But it was this very freedom which caused the weakening of the country. The death of each elected monarch brought new general elections with their uncertain results. Kings became hostages of their electoral promises. The right of every nobleman to veto a new law, once a guarantee of freedom, became a danger for the freedom itself.

While the Wawel Hill saw the rise of the nation, it also saw its fall throughout 18th century, when Russia, Prussia, and Austria divided part by part the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between themselves. Shortly before one of the largest countries of the 18th-century Europe finally disappeared from political maps, a national insurrection was prepared in Kraków under the command of Tadeusz Kościuszko. The military expert who fought for the independence of the United States and fortified Saratoga tried to save the freedom of his own

country. Though his efforts proved unsuccessful, except for a few victories, the citizens honoured his bravery by building the Kościuszko Mound, a symbolic tomb for the hero. The nation without a country became like a captain without a ship, longing for it to be rebuilt. As a poet said, "man will suffer, man will fight, even die for what is right, even though they know they're only passing through." Thus, years of dependence were repeatedly interrupted by national insurrections which over and over again ended in "invincible defeats" causing mass deportations and large, political emigration.

SO CLOSE TO EVERYTHING WE HAVE LOST

Even though political repressions have not left the city untouched, Kraków retained the highest degree of freedom of all the Polish cities. First, after the Napoleonic Wars, at the Congress of Vienna, it gained the status of "independent city" under the "protection" of the three occupiers. This privilege was lost after a few decades and Kraków was again incorporated into Austria. But soon the Empire suffered defeats in wars with Italy and Prussia, which brought internal reforms and a new breath of freedom for Kraków. At the peak of Russification and Germanization in the other parts of divided Poland, the citizens of Kraków were given the right to

self government and were able to develop their national culture. The Jagiellonian University educated in the Polish language; the Juliusz Słowacki Theatre gave powerful, Polish performances; and the new School of Fine Arts brought in young, talented painters. Here, in Kraków, Jan Matejko illustrated on huge canvasses the most important events of Polish history; Jacek Malczewski created works full of symbolic meaning; and Stanisław Wyspiański filled the city with his stained-glass windows, wall paintings, portraits, and dramas. The city became perceived as the cultural and spiritual capital of the country.

One artist in particular entwined his life with Kraków in a special way. Adam Chmielewski, whose talent in painting developed during his studies in Munich, was on his way to a successful career, but instead of following the artistic path chose to answer the voice of a beggar: "please don't pass me by." The painter decided to live among the homeless and chronically ill people to help them and serve them. Later, he entered the Franciscan Order under the name of Brother Albert and was canonized in the 20th century.

The outbreak of the First World War gave new hopes to the nation. Kraków became the centre for training young men who, as members of the First Brigade, marched under the command of

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Józef Piłsudski, the father of Polish independence. With the end of the war, in 1918, Poland regained its independence, and its sovereignty was officially recognized by other European countries in the Treaty of Versailles. Before the political leaders stood the difficult task of reuniting Poland, which had functioned under three, different legal systems for over a century. The Bolshevik invasion and subsequent crises, which crippled European economies, were not the optimal circumstances for this undertaking. Despite these conditions, the country was rapidly rebuilding its position until the Second World War, which violently interrupted the process.

HOUSE AND GROUNDS DISSOLVE

On the 1st of September 1939, the blizzard which was to overturn the order of Europe tore into Poland, with Nazi soldiers pouring across the borders. On September 17, when the Polish troops were still fighting off the overwhelming German military machine, the Soviet army crossed the eastern border of Poland. The awaited support of the Allies did not come. After a month of military struggle, and being simultaneously attacked from both the west and the east, the Polish army surrendered. The Polish government and some military leaders managed to leave the country, while some soldiers "took their guns and vanished," later becoming the foundation

for the underground Home Army (AK – Armia Krajowa). Poland was partitioned again, this time by the Nazi and Soviet regimes, along the border lines previously agreed upon in a secret pact Ribbentrop-Molotov. Thus, the country was occupied by armies of two, totalitarian regimes striving to gain control over every living soul.

NIGHTS OF WILD DISTRESS

Kraków, declared the capital of the General Government, was intended to become the representative city of the Third Reich. Hans Frank, the General Governor nominated by Hitler, was supervising the establishment of the new order from his residence on the Wawel Hill, with the support of the military, the police, and the Nazi Party (NSDAP). With the intent of obliteration, anything deemed to be a clear reminder of Kraków's Polish history was to be destroyed, renamed, or relocated. The Polish citizens of the city were to be deprived of their historic memory, pride, and aspirations. Higher education was forbidden and in an effort to destroy the existing Polish intellectual elites many professors of the Jagiellonian University were sent to the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen, during the so-called "Sonderaktion Krakau." The Polish citizens lived in fear of deportation to the Third Reich as a slave labour force, or of being shot for disobeying

the numerous prohibitions imposed by the Nazis. Most people tried just to get by, feed their families, find jobs which would protect them from forced relocation, and keep themselves and their loved ones alive until the end of the war. However, many professors and teachers, who remained in the city, continued to lecture during secret meetings, while members of the underground military army, the AK, organized resistance.

Under the Nazi regime, the most tragic fate awaited the Jewish residents of Kraków who, in 1931, accounted for 26% of its population. The representative city of the Third Reich had to be cleared of the people stripped of their human status. In 1940, the Jews were given an order to leave Kraków. Those who managed to stay were forced to move to a ghetto in the Podgórze district. Any help for Jews was forbidden under the penalty of death for both the transgressor and his family. Currently, there are 350 documented cases of people shot for breaking this prohibition in what is presently the voivodeship of Little Poland. The horrifying 1942 report of Polish emissary, Jan Karski, who secretly entered a transitory camp where the prisoners were housed before they were sent to the death camp in Bełżec, was ignored in both London and Washington. In 1942, the dismantlement of the ghetto began with a few thousand people being

sent to Bełżec. The final liquidation took place in 1943, when some of the remaining Jews were sent to a forced labour camp in Płaszów, while others were taken directly to the death camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau (Oświęcim-Brzezinka) where the fiery hearts of furnaces turned their bodies into ashes.

Few Jewish citizens of Kraków survived the war, most of those who did being saved by the work in the factory of Oskar Schindler, who managed to get them out of the Płaszów camp, where forced labour meant only a delayed death sentence. In 1944, thanks to the Schindler's efforts, his factory along with its workers was evacuated to Brännlitz. The history of the survivors was shown in Schindler's List, a film by Steven Spielberg.

On January 17, 1945, the Soviet troops entered Kraków. Germans did not have enough time to blow up the charges installed under many important buildings of the city and thus Kraków remained almost undamaged by the war. But while most of the historic buildings remained untouched, the Jewish population of the city with its affluent culture practically disappeared. Their homes and houses of prayer remained the silent proof of their centuries-long presence in Kraków.

**THROUGH THE GRAVES THE
WIND IS BLOWING**

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The occupation period left the country in ruins, with Warsaw virtually swept off the face of the earth as a consequence of the courageous uprising of 1944. About 20 percent of the Polish population, half of them Jews, did not survive to see the end of the war. The peace treaties only formally restored Poland's independence. In reality, the country fell under the so-called "influence" of the Soviet Union in accordance with Yalta agreements between Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. The Allies withdrew recognition for the pre-war Polish government exiled to London. Everybody knew the deal was rotten. Everybody knew that the results of the "free elections" organized under the soviet "supervision" were fixed to prove support for the Communist Party. The partisans could not safely "come out of the shadows." Many soldiers of the underground resistance, fighting the Nazis during the war, were killed by the Soviets, among them the last commander of the Home Army, General Okulicki. Many others were arrested or imprisoned in the forced labour camps in the Soviet Union. In the constitution from 1952, some civil rights were written down, but there wasn't any burden in those provisions.

IN MY SECRET LIFE

The Communist Party, the self-appointed keeper of truth and guardian of beauty, dictated one official history, philosophy, theory of economy, and style of art. Kraków, where the results of the first elections were published before they were falsified, was declared to be a bastion of insurgence. Consequently, a new, industrial city of Nowa Huta (New Still Mill) was designed nearby on the fertile soils of the old village of Mogiła, since the influx of uneducated workers was expected to diminish the influence of the citizens opposed to the new regime. In the official propaganda, Nowa Huta became an island of happiness. Reading the papers could make one believe that its inhabitants did not die, and if they did, it happened only as a result of plots of the "enemies of the working class," the official cause of all evil in the country. Kraków's Catholic newspaper Tygodnik Powszechny ("the Universal Weekly"), in spite of censorship, tried to show views independent from the official ideology, but was closed after the death of Stalin when it objected to publishing an obituary praising the tyrant.

Leonard Cohen Event



After 1956, the regime became less oppressive, but, during the following decades, politics of mendacity continued, with restriction against any criticism of the official party line. It was hard to stand the scene. The hypocrisy of everyday life created the ambience of a hospital where none is sick and none is well. Thus, the songs of Cohen came as a breath of freedom, painting with their words a passionate and complex image of human life, longings, and desires, showing the depth under the surface of outwardly shallow existence. The giant, sleeping beneath the coat of a hunchback, was listening to the music.

DEMOCRACY IS COMING

The gradual collapse of the economy became more and more visible. The shops were universally short of the most basic items, but according to the official propaganda these were only temporary difficulties. A common belief emerged that the cracks in the walls of the "ideal" system could bring in the light. Strikes began in numerous factories and the workers united themselves in the Solidarity movement, which gained overall support of the society. The authorities tried to suppress the democratic voices by introducing martial law in 1981, arresting the democratic

leaders, and pacifying factories.

The Catholic Church, preaching the dignity and inner freedom of each man, became the spiritual support for the opposition. In 1984, the Polish priest and chaplain of the Solidarity, Jerzy Popiełuszko, was tortured and brutally murdered at the age of 37, by Poland's communist secret police. "Don't let the evil conquer you, but conquer evil with good" was his biblical motto and a message he left for the country's democratic leaders. Upon his death, he became a martyr, and over a million people attended his funeral. A year later, students in Kraków organized the first Leonard Cohen festival.

In 1988, a new wave of strikes broke out, with Lenin's Mill in Nowa Huta leading the way. In 1989, the democratic opposition forced the authorities to participate in negotiations at the Round Table. The same year, the first, partly-free elections took place and, in Kraków, the transitions were symbolized by the removal of Lenin's statue from Nowa Huta's central square. The holy dove was again free, but the sounds of the songs remained in the air, the songs for the burned and the burning, the maimed and the broken and the torn.





Leonard

EVENT

Cohen PROGRAMME



EVENTS

REGISTRATION

Hotel Karmel

(ul. Kupa 15)

Thursday

5th August 2010 (6 - 8 pm)

Friday

6th August 2010 (9 - 11 am)

Manggha

(ul. Konopnickiej 26)

Friday

6th August 2010 (1 - 2 pm)

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY

6TH AUGUST 2010

Hotel Karmel

(ul. Kupa 15)

9 am – 1 pm

City walking tour (gr. 1)

Manggha

(ul. Konopnickiej 26)

2 – 4 pm

Tony Palmer presents
"Leonard Cohen - Bird
on a wire"

7 – 11 pm

OPENING CEREMONY

CONCERT

Paweł Orkisz

Urszula Makosz

Stefan Mork

11 pm - ...

Singing, talking, mixing
(Cafe Manggha)

SATURDAY

7TH AUGUST 2010

Hotel Karmel

(ul. Kupa 15)

9 am – 1 pm

City walking tour (gr. 2)

Manggha

(ul. Konopnickiej 26)

1 – 4 pm

Open Mic

6 – 7 pm

Collectors' exchange
(Cafe Manggha)

7 – 11 pm

CONCERT

Mirosław Czyżykiewicz

Veronica Marchi

Ann Vriend

Maciej Zembaty

11 pm - ...

Singing, talking, mixing
(Cafe Manggha)

SUNDAY

8TH AUGUST 2010

9 – 12 am

Walking tour around
Kazimierz with
Przemysław Piekarski

Manggha

(ul. Konopnickiej 26)

1 – 2 pm

LECTURES

Przemysław Piekarski:

*Echoes of Synagoga
Liturgy in "Who by Fire"
by Leonard Cohen*

Doron Cohen:
*Liturgical, Kabbalistic
and Hassidic themes in
Book of Mercy*

2:30 – 4 pm

World Premiere of the
forthcoming Music DVD
Leonard Cohen: "Songs
From the Road"

7 – 22 pm

Synagoga Tempel

(ul. Miodowa 24)

GALA CONCERT

Urszula Makosz

Ann Vriend

Quartet Klezmer Trio

Circle Trio

Paweł Orkisz

Quattro Voci



Throughout the duration
of the Event, we will have
the opportunity to see
an exhibition of works
inspired by Leonard
Cohen's art. The venue
of the exhibition is the
hall of the Manggha
museum.

OPTIONAL TRIPS

Monday, 9th August 2010

9:30 am-3:30 pm

Auschwitz-Birkenau

Tuesday, 10th August 2010

9:30 am -1:30 pm

Wieliczka Salt Mine



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ENTRANTS

MANGGHA CENTRE MUSEUM OF JAPANESE ART AND TECHNOLOGY



The history of the Manggha Centre / Museum of Japanese Art and Technology is that of several people to whom Japan, and its art, culture, and technology were ideals worthy of study. One of them was the very famous, Polish film director, Andrzej Wajda. When he was 19 years old, Wajda had a chance to see a Japanese art exhibition for the first time and was enthralled by it. Years later, he said, "I had never seen so much brightness, order, and sense of harmony ... It was the first time in my life that I encountered real art."

In 1987, Andrzej Wajda received the prestigious award from the Inamori Foundation for lifetime achievement in film and for the high moral standards of his work. When thanking the Foundation for his commendation, he said he would like to use it [400,000 US dollars] to build a Japanese centre in Kraków. And that was, indeed, exactly what happened. His prize was the first contribution, which inspired hope, yet still was not sufficient. Additional

necessary help was provided by the East Japan Railway Workers Union and many people from Japan.

Another important figure in the history of the Centre was Arata Isozaki, an architect of international renown, who decided to create the building's design as a donation. Thanks to the favourable approach on the part of the city and voivodeship authorities, the building was erected at record-breaking speed alongside the Vistula River and across from Wawel Hill. The Centre was officially opened in November 1994, by President Lech Wałęsa, and Prince Takamado of the Japanese Imperial Family. After a few years, the Centre grew into the landscape of Kraków, as its contemporary architectural form gained acceptance. Today, the Centre/Museum is an institution with a wide range of activities, where Japanese art is presented and a variety of artistic and academic events are organized.

Leonard Cohen Event

THE TEMPEL SYNAGOGUE



The most recently built of the Kraków synagogues, Tempel was established by progressive Jews and built between the years 1860 and 1862, in an arcade style. Its original design, by Ignacy Hercok, was repeatedly enriched in the following decades. A five-sided apse with arcaded loggias and neo-Renaissance porches was added; the façade was enriched with details in neo-Romanesque style; the Ten Commandments lettered on tablets crafted in gold against black marble were placed high on the façade; and low side aisles were added, as well.

In keeping with the Reform programme of the temple, the sermons were preached here not only in Hebrew, but also in Polish and German. In addition, women were allowed to sing alongside the cantor and the choir (which attracted some criticism from members of the nearby Orthodox Remuh synagogue).

The Tempel Synagogue is an example of the Moorish-Revival style. Eastern motifs can be seen in the gilded woodwork; the shape of the gilded, wooden galleries for women; and the colourful, stained-glass windows with predominantly floral and geometrical designs. The most impressive of the Islam-influenced elements, though, is probably the exquisite Moorish design on the ceiling. The heart of the temple is the dome-shaped marble Aron Ha Kodesh, with the Holy Arc enclosing the Torah Scrolls. Its decorative patterns, especially that of alternating tall and short houses, echo the Polish folk art.


During the Second World War, the synagogue was damaged by the Nazis, who used it as an ammunition warehouse, but its interior was left largely unscathed. Services resumed after the war ended and were held there on a regular basis until 1985. Today, the synagogue remains an active place of worship, but services are held only a few times each year.

Nowadays, after extensive renovation, the building primarily hosts holiday services, as well as concerts featuring Jewish and classical music.

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ANN VRIEND

With over 11,000 albums sold independently, and over 200 concerts per year, Ann Vriend has earned a well-respected name for herself in many countries in the folk, roots, and independent pop music circuits. With her immediately identifiable and gripping voice, her strongly melodic and poetic writing style, and her self-accompanying prowess on the piano, Vriend is often compared to innovative artists such as Regina Spektor, Imogen Heap, Katie Melua and Joni Mitchell. She is also known for her great rapport with her audiences, engaging them with witty humour and gripping stories between her powerfully delivered songs.

Now, with the release of her new and already acclaimed live album, entitled Closer Encounters (recorded at live concerts in Australia and Canada in 2008 and 2009), Ann Vriend's music is soaring into even more concert halls, airwaves, eardrums, and hearts.

"Once every generation a singer-songwriter emerges with the creative fire to set the music world ablaze. Ann Vriend has the fire." – David Ritz

www.annvriend.com



CIRCLE TRIO

Circle Trio is an initiative, founded in 2010, by brothers Wojciech and Kuba. They attended the same music school in Lidzbark Warmiński and were inspired by similar music. They were joined by Piotr Gibner who enriched their music with his incredible voice. The trio is currently working on an album to be released in 2011.

Wojciech Leonowicz, actor and 2002 graduate of State Higher School of Theatre (PWST), has worked in Kraków's Bagatela theatre since 2004, and has also been performing at Stary Teatr. He has featured in theatrical as well as TV productions. In 2008, Wojciech received a Leon Schiller award for young performers. In 2010, he was awarded a Brown Medal of Honour for his achievements in the fields of culture and art.

Jakub (Kuba) Leonowicz was born in 1987 in Lidzbark, Warmiński. A musician, singer, and instrumentalist from Gdańsk, Kuba is also a graduate of social work and a psychology student.

Piotr Hibner was born in 1986 in Giżycko. An avant-garde musician, composer, singer, and lyricist, Piotr is also a graduate of sociology and music.

MACIEJ ZEMBATY

Maciej Zembaty – satirist, singer, songwriter, scriptwriter, translator, man of letters, and director of radio plays – is first of all an expert and admirer of Leonard Cohen's music, which has made this great artist's works popular in Poland. For years, he has been translating and performing Leonard's texts in Polish.

Maciej Zembaty is a Taurus and a Monkey. As everyone else, he comes from Wadowice. Maciej has lived in Katowice, Kraków, the Tricity, Hamburg, Kathmandu, Berkeley, Beijing, and Islamabad. He's been punished for being politically involved. Maciej studied art and music (piano). He's a graduate of Polish studies at Warsaw University, where he wrote his masters thesis on prison songs. Maciej is qualified to produce as well as to direct films. His favourite pastime is cooking, but to earn his living he dabbles in poetry, music, film, and journalism.

Maciej translates from several languages, but is best at translating songs by Leonard Cohen, as well as folk and camp songs. He is knowledgeable about music and TV production and once attempted to be a businessman, but became bored. In Poland, he is most famous for his lyrics for "Funeral March" by Chopin, "Dreszczowisko," "Rodzina Poszepczyńskich," and "Magazyn ZGRYZ." He recorded a number of albums and one them Alleluja sold 400,000 copies and became a gold record. He was the founding father and art director of "Review of True Songs," "Zakazane piosenki" ("Forbidden Songs"), organized in Sopot in 1981, after a wave of strikes that initiated the Solidarity movement.

Maciej is learning Chinese and Arabic. He considers himself a self-interested, sociable egocentric. Last year, on the 20th anniversary of free elections in Poland, Maciej recorded an album Wolność means Freedom, which includes recordings of covers of songs on the subject of freedom (also by Leonard Cohen).

www.maciejzembaty.pl

MIROSLAW CZYZYKIEWICZ

Mirosław Czyżykiewicz is considered one of the most renowned representatives of "author's song," as well as what in Poland and Eastern Europe is referred to as "sung poetry." He performs to the texts of authors such as Iosif Brodsky, Thomas Hardy, K. I. Gałczyński, Edward Stachura, Zbigniew Herbert, Tadeusz Różewicz, and Vladimir Vysotsky. A prize winner of many festivals, and deemed the master of pensive mood, he is one of the most original and charismatic performers of his kind in Poland. In both 1986 and 1987, he was the laureate of the FAMA festival (the Academic Youth Arts Festival in Świnoujście, "the greatest interdisciplinary event presenting young art and culture"), in the category of sung poetry.

Czyżykiewicz repeatedly appeared in the Review of Stage Songs, a performing arts festival that takes place in Wrocław every spring; and at the Student's Song Festival in Kraków. In 2003, celebrating the music of Leonard Cohen during the gala concert at the Song Festival, he charmed the audience with his performances of Sisters of Mercy and First We Take Manhattan. He also participated in multiple music projects, inspired by the music of other authors: for instance, *Zanim będziesz u brzegu* (directed by Jerzy Satanowski) in which, along with Hanna Banaszak, he puts to song the greatest Polish poems on the transience of life; *Paradise*, based on concerts of the late Jacek Kaczmarski; and *The World According to Nohavica*.

Czyżykiewicz has great appreciation of both music and the spoken word. In his performances, one can sense unique emotional authenticity, as well as respect for the audience.

www.czyzykiewicz.com



PAWEŁ ORKISZ

Paweł Orkisz is an author of mellow ballads and popular songs. For 30 years, he has been singing his own compositions and has performed songs by the greatest songwriters of our time. In Poland, Paweł is recognized as one of the greatest performers of songs by Leonard Cohen, Bulat Okudzhawa, and Vladimir Vysotsky.

Orkisz is a versatile author, who composes Christmas carols as well as patriotic songs. Affiliated with Kraków's "Beczka" group during the Communist martial-law period, he gave concerts for opposition activists all over Poland. In the 1970s, Paweł edited songbooks that were immensely popular across the country, which also accounted for the diversity of his repertoire. The music and lyrics in Orkisz's songs combine to create the cheerful mood in which he sings of love and hope.

Paweł Orkisz is a laureate of many festival awards in Poland, including for the "Revue of Leonard Cohen Songs," which took place in Zaścianek Club in 1983, with Maciej Zembaty as jury chairman.

Orkisz is also the initiator of the Ballady Europy festival ("Ballads of Europe;" www.balladsofeurope.pl), which takes place annually at the Niepołomice castle near Kraków.

In 2007, Paweł Orkisz recorded a double album Dno Serca ("The bottom of the heart"), on which he performs songs by Leonard Cohen, as translated by Maciej Zembaty, Maciej Karpiński, and himself.

Paweł Orkisz is a regular performer at Kraków's Kuranty Pub.

www.orkisz.pl



QUARTET KLEZMER TRIO

Magda Brudzińska, vocal and viola

Oskar Gut, accordion

Jarek Wilkosz, double bass

Quartet Klezmer Trio (QKT) is known as a band that performs inspired, traditional, instrumental, and vocal music in the Jewish, Balkan Klezmer, and Ashkenazi Jew traditions. They draw from the traditional melodies of the Galician Diaspora, as well, which links them with the traditional, as well as contemporary, modern sounds.

The Quartet Klezmer Trio consists of three professional musicians, who guarantee their finest levels of performance. The Trio utilizes four instruments in creating their distinct sound: the viola, the accordion, the double bass, and vocals of an inimitable quality. Together, they form the accomplished, ideal assembly for a perfect reflection of the unique sound and atmosphere of Klezmer music.

Their concerts transform their audiences' musical experience into an unforgettable and extraordinary trip to the magical world of Klezmer sounds and stories. Their music generates great excitement and interest, not only in their own country, but on international stages, as well.

The Quartet Klezmer Trio has released two CDs: *Klezmer street songs* and *8 p.m.*

www.qklezmer.pl / trio@qklezmer.pl

"... With klezmer it is necessary to be born. It is necessary to have this spark. If you love this music and it enters the heart, then it is possible to call yourself a klezmer musician. Magda Brudzińska is an unusually talented vocalist, she has a fine voice and she has this spark..." – *Leopold Kozłowski, "Last Klezmer of Galicia"*

URSZULA MAKOSZ

As a classically-trained singer with a long-standing passion for Jewish music, Urszula Makosz's voice brings to mind the Berlin cabaret singers of the 1920s; her musical style is characterized by unusual dramatic intensity. Urszula's repertoire includes primarily traditional songs in Yiddish, Ladino, and Hebrew. Among her favourite pieces are those written and sung in the Jewish ghettos, collectively titled *Songs of the Ghettos and Jewish Resistance*. Delivered with a theatrical flourish, Urszula's music offers a glimpse into the myriad layers that comprise what is often conveniently termed "Jewish culture," as it encompasses its various shades and linguistic traditions. Not only does she celebrate the exuberance of the Mediterranean Sephardic world of the Sephardi Jews, but also works at preserving the legacy of the 600-year-old culture of the Ashkenazi Jews, who flourished in Poland before the Shoah (Holocaust).

Urszula has collaborated with many acclaimed musicians and contributed to a number of important cultural events, including several editions of the world-famous Jewish Culture Festival in Kraków; various folk festivals across Poland; the Righteous Among the Nations award ceremony; Yiddish Summer Weimar; and the Internationales Klezmer Festival Fuerth (Germany). In 2008, Urszula was notably the recipient of the KlezKanada scholarship. Its website, www.klezkanada.org, states that "Over the past 12 years, our youth scholarship programs, unique in the Jewish arts world, have allowed hundreds of young artists and scholars of all backgrounds to explore the Yiddish/Jewish cultural heritage ... provides interdisciplinary youth scholarships for emerging artists and scholars, ages 10 to 35."

Urszula is accompanied on stage by Paweł Pierzchała (piano) and Michał Półtorak (violin & mandolin).

VERONICA MARCHI

Veronica Marchi was born in Verona in 1982 on the last day of the year. Her first album, *Veronica Marchi*, produced by Luigi Pecere (La Matricula / Venus), was released in 2005. With 10 songs written during the previous decade, it was coloured and enhanced by Veronica, Mauro Magnani, and a bunch of great musicians. She then traveled throughout the country with her essential and bare, acoustic show. Veronica spent two years working hard, interacting with her audiences and colleagues to refine her artistic skills. Earning many good reviews, she was asked to guest star for other famous Italian artists's shows.

Veronica began gaining well-deserved recognition and her career has spiraled upward ever since. Between 2005 and 2007, she was mentioned amongst the five ex-aequo winners of the Premio Tenco in the First Work section; won the "Rai Demo 2005" award and the first edition of the Premio "Bianca D'Aponte 2005;" won the third edition of "L'artista che non c'era" and first edition of the contest "Songwriters;" and won the Critics' Award of the "Premio Canzone d'Autore" in Ghedi, with her new self-arranged single *Saldi di primavera* [Spring Sales], produced by Luigi Pecere; it's a catchy ballad about her restless, disrespectful generation, with its diversity and doubts. She attended the GIFFONI Music Concept 2007, and her previously unreleased song *Splendida Coerenza* [Wonderful Coherence] won the competition and the critics' award. Since 2008, Veronica's second album *L'acqua del mare non si puo bere* [You can't drink sea water] was released on the La Matricula / Venus label, and she has returned to playing many Italian towns. She is artistic director for the Cultural Club Majakovskij (2008/2009); gives singing lessons at the CSM [Centro Studi Musicali] music school in Verona; and has a blog, "Nerosubianco" [transformed into her own radio program on Fuori Aula Network, University of Verona's official network].





STEFAN MORK WITH BAND

Danish songwriter Stefan Mork is best known for his collaboration with Lonnie Kjer in their duo-project, Lonnie Kjer & Stefan Mork.

With the release of their debut album 13 Songs, Kjer & Mork have already established themselves on the European music scene as an attractive and unique folk/pop duo.

Completely devoid of easy solutions, but with proverbial tongue firmly in cheek, they proudly and stubbornly go against the mainstream and its profit motive, to give a deeply honest example of how it sounds when music is truly taken seriously. They take no sneaky shortcuts – just a direct path to the honest essence of musicality with their deep love and devotion to the music. Burning real and melting hot.

This year, Kjer & Mork and their band have been touring Denmark and England, where they have repeatedly been selling out established venues.

Several tracks from 13 Songs are currently on rotation on radios in Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Italy, and the duo have been performing live on the respected Danish talk show Lounge on Danish TV 2 Lorry.

Kjer/Mork have recently signed a distribution deal with Swedish Plugged Records, which will be responsible for all distribution of 13 Songs in Te Benelux and Scandinavia, and with Hemifran, which will handle public relations and publicity in Europe.

www.stefanmork.com

QUATTRO VOCI

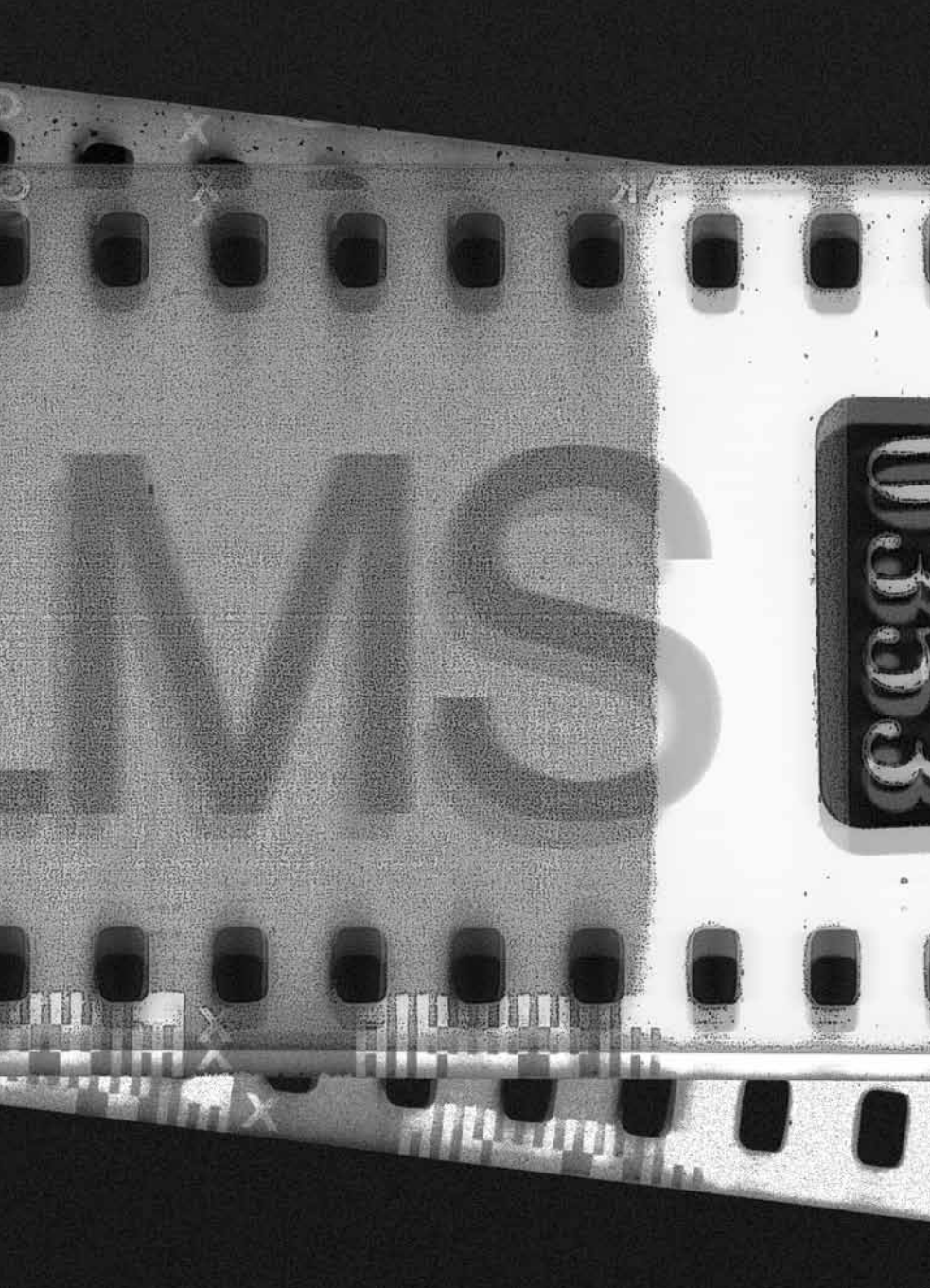
The chamber choir Quattro Voci (QV) was established in Kraków in 1998. A year later, it came under the auspices of the Dworek Białoprądnicki Centre of Culture, and Artur Sędzielarz became its conductor. The group's performances include musical compositions from medieval to modern, as well as vocal-instrumental compositions, gospel, and modern arrangements of contemporary pop music.

The choir is a laureate of several festivals that took place in Międzyzdroje, Będzin, Myślenice, Sopot, and Llangollen (Wales). It was featured in TV productions for Polish channel 2: Final Concert for Marek Grechuta "Ocalić od zapomnienia," benefit performance "Lubże Szweda lub...", during which it performed *Lokomotywa* by Julian Tuwim to the music by Stanisław Radwan, described in *Gazeta Wyborcza* as "bravura performance."

QV has made phonographic recordings performed, among others, with Grzegorz Turnau, Michał Bajor, Zbigniew Preisner, Jacek Wójcik, Anna Treter, Andrzej Lampert, Alicja Majewska, Włodzimierz Korcz. It has also had the privilege of having Jerzy Maksymiuk as one of its conductors. The chamber choir has taken part in festivals and concert cycles, Tynieckie Recitale Organowe, Koncerty Albertyńskie, and Koncerty u Świętego Marcina (where it performed by invitation of the Polish Bach Society).

The choir is regularly invited by the Kraków City Council, to add splendour to its special sessions. In 2008, Quattro Voci took part in Legnica Cantata Superstars concert during the Legnica Cantata Festival, where it performed *a capella* with Paweł Kukiz and Katarzyna Cerekwicka. The following year, it recorded the album *Legnica Cantata Superstar* with the above-mentioned artists. On its 10th anniversary, Quattro Voci celebrated with a gala concert: **Carmina Burana** by Carl Orff, in a scenic cantata in version for solo vocalist, choir, boys' choir, two pianos, and percussion.





TONY PALMER'S CLASSIC FILM

LEONARD COHEN

BIRD ON A WIRE



Leonard Cohen Event

BIRD ON A WIRE

FOR KRAKÓW BY TONY PALMER

My film about Leonard Cohen's 1972 European Tour has a complicated history.

Let me clear up one or two complete misconceptions. I might want to say misrepresentations. I was asked to make the film by Marty Machat, Cohen's long-time manager right up until Machat's death in 1988. It was essentially his initiative, at least in part because he feared Leonard might never tour again. Mercifully, this did not turn out to be the case, but given that at the time Cohen had frequently asserted: a) he did not enjoy touring, saying it exhausted him for no good purpose; b) he hated having to repeat the same old songs night after night, claiming he was rendering them meaningless through endless repetition; c) he believed he was a poor performer on stage, crippled by an unremarkable voice; & d) as his first four albums had sold unremarkably, he thought he might not have an audience. All of this, he explained to me the first time we met, in Machat's office in New York, October 1971. Leonard was resigned to a film's being made about the tour, however, only because he hoped it just might bring him to a wider audience. I say 'resigned' because he was less than enthusiastic, especially when I said a condition of my becoming involved was that I would require total access to whatever I thought was necessary for a stimulating and, I hoped, positive film. Very reluctantly, Leonard agreed, and Machat said he would pay for the film himself so that Leonard would not be burdened with the expense.

Leonard kept his word, and I was given complete access and encouraged to interpret the material collected in any way I thought desirable. I also said it would be pointless recording all of the songs for every single concert, so we agreed that although I would be there for all 20 concerts, I would only record the music on four or five occasions, which would be agreed upon beforehand. And, as I felt very strongly that his poetry was a key to understanding the man, I also suggested that we film him reading some of his poems. With this Leonard readily agreed. Indeed, so pleased was he with this idea that he even composed a poem especially for me, wrote it out by hand, and signed it in the frontispiece of my copy of *The Energy of Slaves*. And maybe what is valuable about the film today is that not only does it contain 17 of his greatest songs,

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performed by him in his prime (and it's nonsense of him to say he has no voice), but it has a real feel for the rough-and-tumble and difficulties of life on the road. I know of few other films where the backstage confusion comes so vividly to life, with Cohen apparently taking no notice whatsoever of the camera. And, don't forget, this film was shot in 1972, with slow celluloid colour stock, requiring a lot of light to get any decent exposure, at all. With today's digital technology, we would have been virtually invisible. But I doubt if, today, we would be allowed such access.

With a budget of around £35,000 and a crew of only four, the filming schedule went ahead as planned and, as I am my own editor, the rough-cut of the film was delivered about a month after the tour finished. I've read that during the filming, according to Bob Johnston, many of the sound tapes were lost. Sorry, Bob, but that's nonsense. The BBC asked to see the rough-cut and bought the film on the spot. Machat would have recouped three-quarters of his investment in one go. Alas, Cohen told me he thought the film was "too confrontational," and worried that he often appeared "exhausted, even wasted." While the latter is undoubtedly true, on the former, I believed he was wrong.

However, my regard for Leonard as a poet, a performer, and as a man, had grown hugely during the film's making, so I wanted to give him the benefit of the doubt. Machat asked me to make available all the raw material (the 'rushes' or 'dailies'), and "they would see what they could do." What I did not know at the time was that my assistant editor had told them he could do a whole lot better than I could. Nine months later, and hundreds of thousands of dollars later (now of Cohen's money), a second version of the film was ready. I was told it was shown to the BBC, who turned it down flat saying "it was a mess." I now have a copy of their letter. I was also told by Machat that he had refused to pay for the re-editing, thinking that this was now Cohen's responsibility. The second version had a brief theatrical outing and was shown for one night only at the Rainbow Theatre in north London, July 5th 1974, almost two years after I had delivered the original version. I was not invited to see the revised version, was not at the Rainbow, and only saw it for the first time six months ago. Had I seen it then, I would have insisted my name be removed because, although it contains about 50% of my original film, the structure was destroyed, the musical editing was crass beyond belief, and the whole purpose of the film (which I shall come to in a moment) was lost. When I read that Cohen would only promote the film "through gritted teeth," I think I can understand why.

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As is well known, the film then disappeared. Stupidly, I had never kept a copy of the original version for myself. Meanwhile, in every biography of Cohen that appeared, I read totally misleading information about the film – and, incidentally, not a single one of those biographers ever bothered to consult me. I read that I had made a film about Tom Jones, and that was why I was ‘chosen.’ I have never even met Tom Jones. I read that the film was Bob Johnston’s idea. Simply untrue. One recent biographer even gets the title of the film wrong, as well as the date of its filming. And so on, and so on.

In 2009, when 294 cans of film were discovered in a warehouse, in Hollywood, in rusted-up cans that sometimes had to be hammered open (and these cans were shipped to me by, of all people, Frank Zappa’s manager), I believed at first that nothing could be salvaged. The cans did not contain the negatives (still lost); some of the prints were in black & white; and much of it had been cut to pieces and/or scratched beyond use. But, when I finally opened one box and found most of the original sound-dubbing tracks, I knew we had a hope of putting the jigsaw back together.

So, now, taking full advantage of the latest digital technology, that is what we have done; piece by piece, slowly and painstakingly. It has taken months and months, and has probably cost more than the original filming; and, although it’s by no means perfect, it’s now very close to the original. On balance, it doesn’t look too bad, but it does sound wonderful – I would want to say that many of the recordings are far superior, and certainly more moving, than their equivalent on disc. Above all, what we have created is very close to the spirit of the original. In this, I have been helped enormously by Machat’s son, Steve, who has provided constant encouragement; by Jarkko Arjatsalo and his amazing website; by a devoted fan, from Wigan, by the name of Dave Curless, who seems to have collected every press cutting there has ever been about Cohen; and by Dominique Boile, who provided a pile of mostly unseen photos taken during that tour. Most amazing of all, the Picasso Estate has given permission (in what I am told are unprecedented circumstances) for use of the great Picasso painting “Dove of Peace,” as the main logo of the film and the front cover of the DVD.

All this finally brings me to the original purpose – my original purpose – in making this film. Yes, the songs are haunting, unforgettably so. The poetry, now restored (deleted in the second version, by persons unknown), is extraordinary. But so is the man. Cohen objected to scenes, in the original film, of a riot

Leonard Cohen Event

in Tel Aviv. I wanted the scenes because they showed Cohen's power over an audience, not by shouting, but simply by his presence. Authority doesn't really describe it; transparent goodness is probably closer. And a profound belief that it is the poet's responsibility to address the problems of the world, including political problems. In this, he is a true blood brother of Bob Dylan. Yes, his songs – like those of Dylan – are riddled with personal details, but like all great art, they transcend those and make them relevant in a more universal sense. Just look at the lyrics for The Story of Isaac. They begin with references to a father appearing "when I was nine years old." Cohen's father died when Leonard was only nine. But that's not what the poem or the song is about. It is about those "who would sacrifice one generation on behalf of another," as Cohen says in the film. That belief, tough and uncompromising though it may be, is the centre of my film, so woefully laid to waste by those who attempted to improve, but in fact destroyed, what we had done.

Now, looking back after 38 years, my admiration for Cohen as a poet, a singer, and as a man, remains undiminished. The original film was made with love, and I hope that quality, once again, shines through in the restored film.

TONY PALMER



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THE LEONARD COHEN EVENT IN Kraków PROUDLY PRESENTS:

World Premiere of the forthcoming Music DVD



LEONARD COHEN: "SONGS FROM THE ROAD" WORLD TOUR 2008-2009

Lover, Lover, Lover

Ramat Gan Stadium, Tel Aviv, Israel - September 24, 2009

Bird on the Wire

Clyde Auditorium, Glasgow, Scotland - November 6, 2008

Chelsea Hotel

Royal Albert Hall, London, England - November 17, 2008

Heart with No Companion

Oberhausen King Pilsener Arena, Oberhausen, Germany - November 2, 2008

That Don't Make It Junk

O2 Arena, London, England - November 13, 2008

Waiting for the Miracle

HP Pavilion, San Jose, California - November 13, 2009

Avalanche

Gothenburg Scandinavium, Gothenburg, Sweden - October 12, 2008

Suzanne

MENA Arena, Manchester, England - November 30, 2008

The Partisan

Hartwall Arena, Helsinki, Finland - October 10, 2008

Famous Blue Raincoat

O2 Arena, London, England - November 13, 2008

Hallelujah

Coachella Music Festival, Indio, California - April 17, 2009

Closing Time

John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario - May 24, 2009

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compilation will be released worldwide later in 2010

A BluRay compilation of songs and interviews in 16:9 high-definition quality

Special thanks to Leonard Cohen, Robert Kory and Ed Sanders



ART EXH

MARTA GOEBEL-PIETRASZ

Marta Goebel-Pietrasz has been an artist all her life. As a child, she wrote and created comic books about ghosts and skeletons. Yet, when Marta fell in love with painting, it became what she wanted to do in life. With varied topics, she utilizes a variety of techniques and styles, including humour, as she works in pencil/coloured pencils on paper, pen and ink, acrylic paints, and oil on canvas/wood. Inspired by the works of Leonard Cohen, her favourite artist, Marta's love is clear in her exceptional, imaginative drawings, such as "Freshly Cut Tears," "Famous Blue Raincoat," and "Hearts Burning in Hell." Striving to capture the ambience evoked by a piece of text, a sentence, or simply a few words that most appeal to her, she creates pieces that can still be perceived apart from their inspiration. Admirers of Leonard's work often find pleasure in guessing which words inspired her tribute pieces. Photos of Marta's work can be seen at www.blogger.com/profile/17118486537920478617.



ANIA NOWAKOWSKA

Ania conceptualises a way of expressing a feeling before approaching her work. Images come to mind; she intuitively how they might take shape in a two-dimensional form, and it all comes together. She's often intrigued by the results of the organic process. It flows and comes from the heart and spine. The results are real and true and that is what's most important to her.

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IBITION

LAURA NICOLAESCU

Laura Nicolaescu is a 30-year-old Romanian architect. Jewellery has been her hobby for more than five years. Laura learned all she knows about it on her own, from the Internet and through endless practice. Her architectural training can be seen in her beadwork, with her preferences for asymmetry, clean lines, and daring shapes. More than architecture, though, jewellery allows Laura's imagination to run free. What is the connection between jewellery and Leonard Cohen? There might appear to be none, but Laura spends many hours (often more than 30) working on each necklace, so she still has time to sew into it her stories and dreams. Two such necklaces are "Light comes in" (black crossed by a line of sparkling white) and a delicate "Light as a breeze;" and she hopes more will follow. Laura's work can be seen in her gallery at www.flickr.com/photos/lauranbeads/.

LAURA NICOLAESCU



CARYS MEURIG PARRY



CARYS MEURIG PARRY

Carys Meurig Parry is from Wales. Being a keen amateur photographer, she took up painting two years ago. Carys started with landscapes in watercolour, and then moved on to life drawing and experimenting with acrylics. Having spent time in Spain on painting workshops, her favourite media is now charcoal and acrylics. Carys is currently working on a personal project as a tribute to Leonard Cohen. It consists of charcoal sketches of Cohen, his house on Hydra, and a painting of Joan of Arc.

ANIA NOWAKOWSKA



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POEMS

TO POETS

(Dedicated to Leonard Cohen)

Well, perhaps you're an angel, perhaps you're a whore
No telling glimpse in those eyes as you watched from the doorway
Glass tightly gripped, the cheap expression your face bore
And you've known more than one, in more than one way

You sit in my corner asking softly is it worth a candle
To rend your garments over your fate-given dog's life
When Life from its sleeve, deals your hand
Us knowing we don't know, how to be losers in this fight

With never another word, giving me your hips'
Razored edge through water to a waltz beat swaying
Generous in caressing, miserly your lips
Sweet fulfilment for which these naked bodies were praying

Talking a little of everything that pleases
Our faces washed by dawn's clammy sun
You slip the last pence from my pocket with nimble ease
Sending me for vodka in our day that has come

Well, perhaps she's an angel, perhaps she's a whore
No telling glimpse in eyes as they see me
Glasses brimmed full now draining to her
This poetry (damn it) has again cheated me.

MIROSLAW CZYŻYKIEWICZ

Translated by Caryl Swift

WINDOW

Beyond Faith's horizon you set up shop
Old friend, farewell for a week, a year, an age....
Still in our vales, as you race for the peaks.
'tis nobody's fault, you owe nothing to us

Your choice is clear
With reasoned purpose
There is nothing I need
When my day comes,
I'll clench my hand, I'll make my fist
I'll go and fight my fate

Our journeys wait faithfully, each a dog on its threshold.
Running faster cannot be done, running faster's what we want
You and I are weary, weary, yet God gave you rest
Your path of stones leaves us no hidden trace

Your goal you reached, by the shortest routes.
Where is your life, dear friend, your worn out shoes and coat?
Such a frenzy yielded the last morsel of your warmth.
We had so very little of it, but now....even less.

PAWEŁ ORKISZ

Translated by Caryl Swift



The little Jew who wrote the Bible

BY TOM SAKIC

The times they are a-changin', indeed. The last time we met in Europe was in Berlin, 330 miles from Kraków, in the rainy German summer of 2006. Since then, some of us travelled to Edmonton for the 2008 Event, but many of us here in Europe missed it completely as Our Man, Mr. Leonard Cohen, hit the road for the first time since 1993, starting his comeback world tour in the small but (we hear) pleasant city of Fredericton, in his home land of Canada, on May 11, 2008. What followed was a busy and exciting summer and fall of 2008, from hot Italy to rainy Scandinavia to the four-time sold-out O2 Arena of London. And, yes, the show is still going on in its third year. At this very moment, during the first week of August 2010, Mr. Cohen should be performing in Sligo, Malmö, Oslo, and Stockholm, after the cities of Zagreb, Salzburg, Graz, etc. have already seen and heard him the week before, with many more cities and countries to follow, all the way to New Zealand and Phnom Penh. In 2006, we were thrilled about the release of the *Blue Alert* album, and the *Book of Longing*, but we did not dare dream of seeing Leonard live on stage. Four years later, the major change is not the fact of the tour itself, but that the Word has gone around the world – and the world obviously has changed. The Leonard Cohen community, gathered around The Leonard Cohen Files, its affiliated Forum, and many friendly international and national websites, is no longer a small and mysterious bunch of people keeping the flame for the future (which is *not* murder) alive in the time of the final days and the flood. And the flood is indeed gathering – in 1979, Leonard announced it; in 1992, he sung about the murderous future; and when it came, in 2001, he was healing us with *Ten New Songs*. But, in 2010, ***“when so much of the world is plunged into darkness and chaos,”*** we are, indeed, ***“privileged to be able to gather in moments like this,”*** be it at a Leonard Cohen show or here at our Event, to celebrate Leonard Cohen's musical and literary work. We are not underground anymore, the ***Order of the Unified Heart*** has gone public and its flag can be seen above Leonard Cohen's stage. There is no need to be ashamed anymore

Leonard Cohen Event

(if some of us ever were). The thing has gone public, the temple has been turned into an arena – or more precisely, Leonard, looking from **"the other side of intimacy,"** has turned vast arenas into consecrated temples.

Maybe the wide world (web), looking at him on stage for the first time, seeing the full concert video for the first time, listening to the full concert album for the first time, is wondering, but there's nothing new in all this for us who know Leonard Cohen the artist. The old video tapes and audience recordings we collected for years show the same Leonard, always perfectly dressed, always serious and dedicated, his shows always spiritual ceremonies turning venues into sacred spaces. Always the same audience report: people in awe, fascinated, in a trance; broken hearts moved and in amazement, their faces stunned or overwhelmed by emotion. The world also got old evidence of this new popularity with the release of concert footage from the very first tour of 1970. There he was also on **"the other side of intimacy," "alone in front of 600,000 people."** Okay, some things have changed – the new audiences can't help themselves when they scream out loud, but hey, the old man (as Leonard now is) deserves to know how lucky we feel to be in his presence. Yeah, everybody knows the times have changed, and Leonard was here to wait for the world to catch up to him, as he always did. Nowadays, we need old sages, from the late Johnny Cash to Bob Dylan and Tom Waits, and Leonard is, of course, and again, on top of the game. On the wave of the wild audience response, he has turned his shows into a celebration of his music, offering a three-hour journey through his back catalogue each night. His face does not wear the mask of melancholia anymore; instead, he's smiling at us all the time and even dancing for us and with us. The wandering heart is home at last.

In every venue where he performs, Leonard puts his Persian carpets under his feet marking, in a symbolic way, the area of the heart's and music's temple. This man was always healing with his music, his song, his voice. New, unison lauding of his work was always there, even if it was whispered quietly: from his first record back in 1967, to the early 1980s, when the likes of Nick Cave and punkers listened to him secretly after returning from clubs to their homes deep in the night, to the Roskilde festivals of 1985 and 1988, where he amazed punkers, rockers, and a similar, new young audience... **"My music will overtake the New Wave"** and he was right in 1980, but it needed another 20 years (and the advent of the Internet and YouTube) for the word to become fact and, with the 2008 and 2009 tours, Leonard Cohen became the world's number one live act. He has finally fulfilled the role for which he was raised. This wandering Jew, who we are celebrating with our Event, was born

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into the rabbinic family of Kohanim, Judaic priests, and had "a very Messianic childhood." "When they told me I was a Kohen, I believed it... ***I wanted to be that figure who sang, 'This is the Tree of Life'*** ... I was able to become that in my own modest way. I became that little figure to myself." So spoke Cohen in the mid-1990s, proclaiming he is – in his own way – ***"the little Jew who wrote the Bible. I am that little one."*** But 15 years later, that figure isn't so modest or little any more, if you ask his audiences. In the same 1994 interview, he admitted that he has had "delusions" of himself as ***"the High Priest rebuilding the temple;"*** in the same year, he pictured that temple in a modest, kitschy drawing behind him on his Cohen Live album, thus giving us a clear sign that he is aware of what he is trying to achieve with his music. Some people say that was just some kitschy cover art, as others over the years were ready to laugh off his work as ***"music to slit your wrists by."*** But, today, more than one million concert-goers (and all the people who bought his "80 five-star reviewed" DVD of the 2008 tour) experienced that temple which moves from city to city, from heart to heart, and appears wherever a Leonard Cohen record is played. In the end, he has turned vast arenas and stadiums and open-air fields into that temple, ending each of his shows with the Priestly Blessing, *Nesiat Kapayim*, which can be given only by Kohanim, which Cohen is... and people are moved. His temple, his synagogue, his church, his order, his Zendo has found a place around his body and his heart (be it ***broken*** or ***mighty***); ***omnia mea mecum porto*** or, indeed, every man is the temple, so the sacred place is where and when we are at peace.

The 2010 Leonard Cohen Event takes place in Kraków, in Poland, where Cohen is – as Daniel Wyszogrodzki put in his account of the 1985 concert in Warsaw – a household name, "widely recognized and loved by the Poles as no other singer in the world." Leonard described Poland during his historical 1985 concert at Pałac Kultury i Nauki, where he was put under the same pressure as he was in September 2009, in Tel Aviv, with these important words, ***"a holy land that has been sanctified by the blood of martyrs," "a land of Chopin and Copernicus, of Solidarity, of Lech Wałęsa,"*** but also ***"a land of Auschwitz."*** Our Event takes place 50 kilometres from Oświęcim, the place where ***"the greatest destruction of Jewry occurred."*** But, as Leonard said in 1985, we have ***"no thoughts about it,"*** only ***"feelings that cannot be spoken."*** ***"I have no judgement. My song has no flag. My song has no party. My song has no border."*** Kraków has been used as the location for both Steven Spielberg's ***Schindler's List*** and Poland's own Roman Polański's ***The Pianist***. Polański himself spent part of his childhood in the Kraków ghetto, and there is a scene in ***The Pianist*** that was shot on the square which is now the Kraków Ghetto & Deportation Monument – 33 large illuminated chairs and 37 smaller

Leonard Cohen Event

chairs on Plac Bohaterów Getta (The Ghetto's Heroes' Square), on the edge of the Podgórze district. (The chairs represent the furniture and other remnants that were discarded on that very spot by the Jews as they were herded onto the trains.) Podgórze was the actual Jewish ghetto under the Nazis, but as the traditional Jewish quarter of Kazimierz was better preserved, Steven Spielberg shot his movie there. In Kazimierz, you will easily recognize the courtyard at Józefa 12 Street from Spielberg's film (the scenes in which the Nazis are throwing suitcases from the upper floors and, later, the boy hides a woman under the stairs). Besides Oświęcim (a.k.a. Auschwitz), many of you will see the (in)famous Oskar Schindler factory of the movie fame, in Podgórze at Ulica Lipowa 4. Kraków has to live with the heritage of Shoah, but it also lives even more with its Jewish heritage, and as the city of Kraków celebrates the vibrant and living Jewish culture (and tries to avoid turning into a tourist attraction), we also do not meet at our Event to mourn but to celebrate the Jewish aspects of Cohen's work. That's why our stay here not only includes a visit to the place of the greatest destruction but also reminders of the happy moments; including the honour of gathering for our evening of music at the Tempel synagogue in the Kazimierz neighbourhood.

Leonard Cohen has "tried" many spiritual paths and, indeed, his whole Life in Art can be seen as a kind of journey of the soul. But, nevertheless, his Jewishness remained the firm foundation of his life and work; the wandering Jew with seemingly no roots, or with temporary roots in Greece, Los Angeles, or on Mt. Baldy, has had his roots always firmly grounded in old Montreal; though, today, it is also the vanished Montreal of his memories. His literary work is **"some kind of record"** of the soul's and heart's path and its dispute and fight with Love and G-d. Zen has given him the structure, but Judaism remained the foundation and the wide stream to swim in. As much of his early writing was informed not only by Romanticism, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Keats, Shelley, and Byron on one side, and T.S. Eliot, Pound, and Montreal's own (Ezra Pound influenced) school of poetry on the other, it also had a strong connection to classic poetry, the Bible, and Hassidic influences. Of course, Montreal gave birth to a strong literary group, probably so strong because it was Jewish- and English-speaking in the midst of a French province (Layton, Klein, Richler, Moscovitch, Mayne), and Cohen soon found his father figures in poets like Irving Layton and A. M. Klein, as well as confronting his Jewish tradition, be it in poetry, public speeches, or his 1963 novel *The Favourite Game*. His second and most romantic book of poetry, *The Spice-Box of Earth*, included the first, and maybe Cohen's most powerful, literary use of the Holocaust in the poem *The Genius* ("**For you, I will be a Dachau Jew...**"). The poem announced

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– although in a deeply romantic way with its list of (Jewish) masks the lover would wear for his loved one (thus foretelling later songs like I'm Your Man and There For You) – the disturbing and provocative book of poetry, *Flowers for Hitler*, the first book – as Stephen Scobie noticed – in Cohen's trilogy of poetical self-destruction (the other two being *The Energy of Slaves* and *Death of a Lady's Man*). Referring to Charles Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal* and thus arming the reader with the key for understanding – anti-aestheticism, the aesthetic of ugliness, the literary provocation, ennui, black romanticism – the poems from *Flowers for Hitler*, according to Sandra Wynands, represent "a series of disparate, surreal glimpses of scenes that reveal the grotesque, the senseless, the tasteless," and were a deliberate confrontation with conventional aesthetics (as well as with the romanticism of Cohen's own earlier writing). In that very attack, the poems find a way to speak about the Holocaust in art; and by becoming alienated from the traditional enjoyment in poetry, the reader becomes alerted to the literary convention, about the reception of literature itself, and thus – by questioning the literary process – questions the representation of what cannot be represented (the Holocaust – *Shoah*). Cohen's *Flowers for Hitler* is then an answer to Theodor Adorno's famous observation "**To write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric;**" but art has to speak, so in the shadow of the Holocaust it was forced to find a new language for itself. That is where Cohen's brave 1964 book *Flowers for Hitler* is located. By echoing Hannah Arendt's 1963 observation about the banality of evil, Cohen's book casts Adolf Eichmann of Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* even more memorably than Hitler through its title (Hitler is more shockingly but also more functionally used in the key "Argentinean orgy" scene of *Beautiful Losers* [1966], in which the Holocaust serves as the ultimate metaphor for the human extremity and suffering). The "passport-style" poem *All There Is to Know about Adolph Eichmann* is one of the best literary embodiments of Arendt's notion about the everyday face of evil.

All There Is to Know about Adolph Eichmann

EYES:Medium
HAIR:Medium
WEIGHT:Medium
HEIGHT:Medium
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES:None
NUMBER OF FINGERS:Ten
NUMBER OF TOES:Ten
INTELLIGENCE:Medium

What did you expect?
Talons?
Oversize incisors?
Green saliva?
Madness?

Primo Levi's quote (from his Auschwitz memoirs), which Cohen used as motto for *Flowers for Hitler*, is the clear sign for this objection: **"Take care not to suffer in your own homes what is inflicted on us here."** It is not the historical Holocaust, Shoah, anymore; it is **"the smoky Holocaust"** of the everyday. Thus, the Holocaust leaves the field of unrepresentational, and despite all calls to remain an untouchable subject, moves to the profanity of everyday life, to our homes, to our relationships, becoming a key metaphor of (and for) modernity – the Holocaust did not happen, it is happening. And the world goes round in "the surreal, disjointed ramblings" (Sandra Wynands) of *A Migrating Dialogue*, and the poem is an "attempt at overcoming this speechlessness," as Cohen shouts: **"I don't like the way you go to work every morning. / How come the buses still run? / How come they're still making movies?"** History should stop after Auschwitz, at least for a moment. In 1964's *Flowers for Hitler*, Cohen's new language of art was the language of anti-poetry, but Levi's quotation kept running through his work. Twenty years later, it is the key to understanding Leonard's ultimate love song, *Dance Me to the End of Love* – yes, basically (and originally) it was inspired by the Holocaust. Hence, the end of love and burning violins – a reference to the lager's small orchestras composed of Jewish prisoners. And it continues through: **"But you see that line there moving through the station? I told you, I told you, I told you I was one of those,"** exclaims the narrator's voice in the 1988 song *First We Take Manhattan*, referring to his place in the waiting line for the death trains that was avoided by the fact he was born in Canada, and not in Europe. And here's a line about Europe, from a discarded verse of the 1993 song *Democracy*: **"It ain't coming to us European-style, / concentration camp behind the smile."** The *Street*, which hopefully will be included on the next studio album, gives us these lines: **"I see the Ghost of Culture / with numbers on his wrist,"** thus bringing us back to The Future's political topic of Culture (which shapes us) and Nature (which we destroyed): **"Take the only tree that's left / and stuff it up the hole / in your culture,"** but now its Ghost wears the omen of the Holocaust which marks the culture's defeat.

In 1984, *Book of Mercy* was the peak of Cohen's dealing with his Jewishness and with Judaism itself. The book of 50 prayers is rooted deeply in the

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hermetics of Kabbalah, Jewish tradition, but also Zen Buddhism. In it, he admitted his whole life actually is about **"the Jew's business"** (i.e. studying Torah); as he joked during his 2008 shows, he "studied deeply the philosophies and religions, but cheerfulness kept breaking through." Twenty years later, it still rings through his 2006 ***Book of Longing***, the high product of this life of searching and "business." Its pages are still informed by facts which formulated Leonard Cohen as a child in the 1940s and as a teenager in the early 1950s: not only the poetry (college years, ***Beat*** literature), but even more the Holocaust and his Jewish heritage. Things are coming back, childhood memories of photographs of people in striped pyjamas and his mother's stories about pogroms in Russia, the fear, it's all still there. No, he can't forget, as he was trying to in the 1988 song **I Can't Forget**, which actually started as a song about the Exodus (under the title **Taken Out Of Egypt**), but ended as a daily life song about a man struggling to get out of bed, while not remembering what he can't forget. Ironically or not, it was his Jewish heritage that he doesn't remember and can't forget. ***The Book of Longing's*** poem-song **Puppets** opens with a memorable quatrain: **"German puppets / burnt the Jews / Jewish puppets / did not choose."** Then, later in the book, comes the final coda for this topic, the bitter short poem: **"Anyone who says / I'm not a Jew / is not a Jew / I'm very sorry / but this decision / is final."** We can notice it is not the Holocaust anymore (what-cannot-be-represented); it is Shoah (what-can-be-only-remembered). Or, "May Christ have mercy on your soul / For making such a joke / Amid these hearts that burn like coal / And the flesh that rose like smoke," as the poet answers to the Captain's criticism ("Complain, complain, that's all you've done / Ever since we lost / If it's not the Crucifixion / Then it's the Holocaust") in the lesser known, but – for our understanding – crucial 1984 song **The Captain**, before the Captain gives the poet some final advice which is the answer to most of Cohen's songwriting: **"There is no decent place to stand / In a massacre; / But if a woman takes your hand / Go and stand with her."**

All this brings the popular misconception of our poet as the singer of love ballads into question, or even as only a spiritual searcher. The political aspect was always very important in Cohen's work. Even before he **"the leader of a government-in-exile"** wrote the geopolitical-"demented" songs such as **First We Take Manhattan** and **The Future**, the prophetic, spiritual-political songs such as **Democracy** and **Anthem**, and, later, the consoling songs full of faith, such as **The Land of Plenty**, **Villanelle for Our Times**, and **The Faith** (or still unreleased **The Street** and **Lullaby**). Indeed, the reoccurring thematization of the Holocaust and the political in his poetry books and in his novel **Beautiful**

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Losers logically lead to the writing of songs like *Democracy*, *Anthem*, and *The Land of Plenty*; as Michel Houellebecq wrote, claiming that Leonard Cohen's songs are "perhaps the only poetry that applies to our painful, contradictory times": **"I thank Leonard Cohen for trying to speak of politics the way he speaks of love: with a profound honesty."** The political in Leonard Cohen's work is addressed as deeply and intrinsically as he treats the erotic, emotional, and spiritual areas. It is the call coming from **"those nights in Tiananmen Square"** (and the Tiananmen massacre happened on June 4, 1989, the same day European communism began to collapse with Solidarity's victory in Poland's election and the opening, in early summer, of the Autumn of Nations), the call for the heart **"to open in a fundamental way."** That radical, fundamental call (let's understand these words here in their literal meaning, without any "fundamentalist" allusions and far away from their daily use in the media) which goes beyond any daily duty – as his speeches during the concerts in Warsaw in 1985 and Tel Aviv in 2009 tell us – is the unheard call of Leonard Cohen's writing and songs.

Further reading:

The Jewish Book News Interview (Leonard Cohen: Stranger Music), by Arthur Kurzweil and Pamela Roth, 1994, available at <http://www.webheights.net/speakingcohen/jewish.htm>

Norman Ravvin, "Writing Around the Holocaust: Uncovering the Ethical Centre of *Beautiful Losers*," in *The Proceedings of the Leonard Cohen Conference*, Red Deer College, October 22-24, 1993, Edited by E.F. Dyck, *Canadian Poetry*, No. 33, Fall/Winter, 1993, available at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/canadianpoetry/cpjrn/vol33/vol33index.htm>

Sandra Wynands, "The Representation of the Holocaust in *Flowers for Hitler*," in *Intricate Preparations: Writing Leonard Cohen*, Edited by Stephen Scobie, ECW Press, 2000

Very special thank you to Marie Mazur, as always, and also to Doron Cohen, Jarkko Arjatsalo, Robert Kory and to people whose works I quoted.

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FREEDOM WILL

LEONARD COHEN IN WARSAW, 1985

BY DANIEŁ WYSZOGRODZKI

It is the first day of October 2008 and Leonard's first concert in Warsaw in 23 years – almost a quarter of a century (not counting his guest appearance with Anjani the year before). Poland is a different country now; neither am I the same young man who waited a week in line for his tickets back in 1985. Leonard Cohen is gracefully the same.

I've been in touch with Leonard over the translation of the Book of Longing; I've also interviewed him on several occasions. Recently, I went to Canada for some early shows of his tour. He was extremely kind to me. I attended the rehearsal; met the band (yes, including The Sublime Webb Sisters). Then, Leonard invited me to his Green Room and opened a bottle of white wine. A sip of wine, a cigarette...

- Are you going to do *The Partisan*? – I just want to know.
- You think I should? I think we did it in Wrocław, didn't we?
- Yeah. You should. They still think you're a rebel – I'm being a smart-ass.
- A rebel! That's a good one – Leonard is amused.

Sure enough, I hear it performed live some hours later. But, this time around, the audience is listening to an artist, not to a rebel. We've had our share of rebels.

SOON COME

And so I'm sitting in the front row of Torwar Arena with 5000 people behind me, but the concert is so intimate I almost feel all by myself with just Leonard and his band. This time around it's a true celebration – not a rally. The art has overcome the politics, the way it always should. Same artist, different country. Gracefully.

And here's my recollection of his 1985 performance in Warsaw, when things were the other way around. But we were coming from the shadows, nevertheless.

Leonard Cohen's trip to Poland in 1985 was as much welcomed as it was unexpected. Not included in the original schedule for the Various Positions tour, the four March dates were added at the last minute, thanks to promoter Andrzej Marzec – the first independent promoter in Poland (responsible for bringing Bob Dylan in 1994 and still active in the music business). It was a thrill for a number of reasons. First of all, PRL (Polish People's Republic, as the state was called while under a Soviet regime) was not a concert-goer's heaven. Quite the opposite. Foreign stars of popular music did not visit our country on a regular basis and the memory of The Rolling Stones show in 1967 never seemed to fade. Another important thing: it was a sad and very dark period in our contemporary history. A martial law imposed on the 13th of December 1981, only a year after an outbreak of Solidarity (the first, semi-free trade union in the Eastern Bloc and also a major social movement) had deepened the economic and spiritual crisis in our country and it seemed there were no realistic solutions at hand. It was generally believed the Soviet Union would

invade the country – as it did in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 – at the first sign of a real uprising. Our spirits had hit bottom.

But the main reason his visit was welcomed was the artist himself. Leonard Cohen was a cult figure by that time, considered the greatest living songwriter, widely recognized and loved by the Poles as no other singer in the world. He was known to be a writer as well, although none of his works were available in Polish translations. His songs were sung in Polish by Maciej Zembaty. I never liked his translations, but I recognize his role in making Leonard Cohen a household name in Poland. One would hear Suzanne at every campfire in the country.

This is no place for literary analysis, but our appreciation of Leonard Cohen's songs is easy to explain. We understood them. When he spoke about Suzanne or about Jesus, we felt his lyrics; they sounded familiar and struck familiar bells. His poetry seemed to be a distant branch of the ages-old tree of European literature. We dug the metaphors. He seemed – with all his originality – not unlike our own poets. Exotic – yes, and especially in his unorthodox treatment of sex and religion. But understandable, and opposite to the "Americana" of Bob Dylan or Bruce Springsteen.

All this added to the enormous interest in Leonard Cohen's shows in Poland. There were four of them. Besides the Warsaw concert, I joyfully attended (and recorded and took photographs of) a famous show in Wrocław's Hala Ludowa, where Hitler had addressed the crowds of his Nazi followers in the 1930s. Leonard Cohen made a comment on that and how performing in the place of such history gave him a very spooky feeling.

His latest album – *Various Positions* – had come out a few months before and Dance Me to the End of Love was a major hit, both on the radio and as the music video played continuously on Polish national television. Needless to say, obtaining a ticket was a problem and it had nothing to do with a very high price – on the day of the show, scalpers would get the equivalent of a monthly salary for a single ticket and people still considered themselves lucky to get in.

In front of the SPATIF office (a central box-office for all entertainment tickets) in downtown Warsaw, a line formed a week in advance. It was controlled by me and my friends from a car parked in front of the office day and night. Anyone interested would get a number – without it there was no way of getting inside after the tickets arrived. Mine was number two (because a

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friend I brought with me got to the door before me and signed his name first). People may still remember a very red Peugeot 305 with a cover of *Songs of Leonard Cohen* (a vinyl copy since the CDs just started to appear at that time) stuck behind the windshield – headquarters of the Unofficial Ticket Committee. More than a thousand people signed up!

The communist authorities were ambivalent. The tourneeé of Leonard Cohen in Poland was officially approved – otherwise it would never have happened. But it would only be given coverage by local TV channels like Kurier Warszawski (a Warsaw Courier) in the capitol, where a young, blonde journalist, Grażyna Bukowska, interviewed the artist, Leonard Cohen, every day during his visit. Unfortunately, a VHS tape of these interviews that I recorded off the television was later accidentally erased. As far as I know – and I spoke to Mrs. Bukowska recently – nothing remains in the archives. Luckily – there's an archive video tape of the entire Warsaw concert, itself.

I remember when Mr. Cohen heard a woman, filmed by a TV crew in front of Kongresowa on the day of the show, confess that she spent her monthly salary on a single ticket. He said she shouldn't have done so. In the studio, he seemed really disturbed and said it wasn't worth it.

Waiting for the concert was like waiting for a volcano to erupt. A funny feeling, considering how quiet and tranquil Cohen's concerts are. I knew basically what to expect. Although there was no bootleg material available, and we had to be satisfied with the *Live Songs* album (quite satisfying I still say), I knew what to expect because I had just gotten a tape of his Paris shows.

Another memory from that concert was the friendly welcome. And here comes my "WELCOME BACK" sign story:

As I said, Leonard Cohen's arrival to Poland – still broken after years of martial law – was an extraordinary event. For me, it was a dream come true. So, I had an idea for a concert sign that some friendly wives helped create. We made this sign with a few white sheets sewn together and painted letters using – an important detail – two different colours (black and red for the LC initials). In the only existing photograph, the letters seem brighter. It is in B&W.

The sign – when spread wide – said: WELCOME BACK. Neither imaginative nor appropriate, wouldn't you say? Well, not necessarily. For the idea was to fold it. When Leonard Cohen entered the stage for the first time, we had the

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BACK part folded so it showed only a friendly WELCOME. I swear he noticed – we had excellent seats in the first row of the amphitheatre (best seats in the house, take my word for that) and the sign was huge. When Mr. Cohen left the stage for the intermission it was a humble COME BACK, letting him know we'd be patiently waiting. Needless to say, when he showed up again for the second part of the show, we had the triumphant WELCOME BACK waiting, and he seemed slightly confused... or maybe it was just our imaginations overriding our sign holders' pride. I wonder if he remembers it at all.

As you might guess by now, his encores (Tennessee Waltz and the second performance of Bird on the Wire that never made it to the tape of the show and, hence, to the bootleg album) had us waving: COME BACK, WELCOME BACK, COME BACK, WELCOME BACK, COME BACK...

I suppose doing a trick like this today would get me and my friends all over the news. Back then, there was no Polish television present at the show and almost no journalists (we attended the show, privately smuggling in our cameras and recording devices). A friend of ours – his name was Lelek, and I have no idea where he is now – noticed our gang from a high balcony seat and taking the one shot he had left in his camera captured the moment and the sign. It was an evening of hope and beauty I shall never forget. I am that young guy right above the "O" (25 years old back then), the Mickey Mouse hair on my right belongs to Tomek Nowak, a lifelong friend and one of today's top Polish copywriters in the advertising business. Our girlfriends both bent down to pick up their purses; it was the very moment the lights came back on.

The show itself was a good one. Not a great one by Leonard Cohen's standards or by comparison to the bulk of his recorded performances available these days in such abundance. The tension was palpable. People gathered for the extraordinary, artistic event, but they did not leave their political expectations at the door. They should have and they better would have, but they didn't. It may seem difficult to comprehend for people who grew up under normal conditions in free countries. But, in a totalitarian country, everything is political.

And so the Warsaw audience listened to songs – both intelligent and beautiful – but waited for a statement. A political statement. I felt it, and I didn't sympathize with that. I was different. This put Mr. Cohen in a very delicate position. He sensed that tension. He felt the anticipation. There was also an amount of hope involved – no matter how silly that may seem today. But,

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obviously, he did not come as the Messiah to free the land and lead its crowds to freedom. He came to perform his songs and it was more than we had the right to hope for. But, he spoke, like he always does. The magic of his voice was making a contact, but the tension prevailed. Everyone wanted to hear The Word – the one word that was both sacred and forbidden. Solidarity. He finally said it and the audience erupted like it was more important than any of his own words. Or songs. I still think it was sad. We were the oppressed people.

We didn't realize, then, that he was under a different kind of pressure at that very same time. His band didn't want any trouble. They came to play the music and get paid for doing it. They didn't want anything to interrupt the tour. They had come from the very safe Sweden and were on their way to the very safe Italy. Poland was a "side job" and they were all professional musicians.

As I mentioned before, I recorded the show as many other people did. I also took some colour photographs from the audience and a friend of mine took some B&W shots from the balcony. There is also a VHS tape of the entire Warsaw show – I kept the one and only copy safe and secret for 20 years. How I got hold of it I would rather not say. The Warsaw bootleg album that appeared a couple of years ago for the 20th anniversary of the show comes from the audio track of that tape. It was conceived by Artur Jarosiński from Kraków – the greatest collector of the works of Leonard Cohen and Bob Dylan in Poland. He got the photos off the official Polish website and the quality of the prints is very low. But it sounds alright.

You know what? When I really think about it now, Leonard did help us to become free, after all. Exactly the way he likes it, "in other little ways" (as he phrased it in the book). Because a nation comes to freedom in thousands of steps – some of them huge leaps, the others small steps. And the evening with Leonard Cohen more than 20 years ago was an evening of hope. Difficult as much for him as it was for us. Not necessarily political, but intimate. And I learned to appreciate the power of intimacy. There are moments when nothing can get between you and the other person. And when this person is Leonard Cohen himself, you feel blessed. And you feel free.

Now, more than 20 years after the Warsaw concert, I am proud to be the Polish translator of the Book of Longing. It came out in Poland in November 2006. Thank you, Teacher.

This article originally appeared on leonardcohenfiles.com, along with the transcripts of Cohen's speeches at the Warsaw 1985 show. Daniel Wyszogrodzki is Polish translator of Book of Longing (Rebis, 2006). www.wyszogrodzki.pl

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2012 EVENT

INVITATION

In his only known trip to the Capital city of Wisconsin, Leonard described Madison as "Brigadoon with traces of Havana." This remains as apt a description as I can imagine for the site of the 2012 Leonard Cohen Event. Madison is a beautiful city not just in its physical environs, but in its cultural richness. It was here that folks tried to enlist Leonard into a political position & fight. Leonard, while not totally resisting, opted for the choice of beauty, a choice to which he has remained true throughout the years. Those of us who remain from those early days appreciate the beauty and still celebrate it today.

Madison has an ideal location for travel both from within North America and from Europe. Located within 120 miles of O'Hare International airport, with direct transportation both by air & bus, it should prove to be reasonable in cost and convenient for connections. There will be an optional portion of the event taking place in Chicago to highlight America's Second City and its historical heritage that includes spectacular architecture, tall buildings, and great food & bars.

Madison is the home of the University of Wisconsin and the University will be the official host for the visit with many of the events taking place on the beautiful campus located on the shores of Lake Mendota. Accommodations will be reasonably priced and plentiful. Beautiful old theater venues will host most of the musical aspects of the event and we are hoping to include an original play first produced in New York, exciting musical guests, our usual group

MADISON, WISCONSIN, USA

of outstanding talent from our own members, and maybe some surprises.

For those interested, there will be optional trips to Spring Green to visit Frank Lloyd Wright's home, Taliesin, and cocktail cruises on Lake Mendota. Or you may just enjoy all that Madison has to offer including the famous Farmer's Market that takes place on the Capitol Square each Wednesday and Saturday in the summer time, Concerts on the Square by the Madison Symphony Orchestra on Wednesday nights, the beautiful Wisconsin Memorial Union Terrace that borders the lake, Museum Mile, and the vibrant local musical scene.

Let me take this opportunity to offer you a very warm welcome to Madison, Wisconsin, Chicago & the U.S.A! We will plan the event sometime between early June, 2012 and mid-August, 2012.

We will be forming the Organizing Committee shortly after the Kraków Event and I pledge to work very hard to make the Madison Event an extremely memorable and enjoyable experience.

Respectfully submitted
JOE WAY



PARTICIPANTS

Mary	Aaftink	CAN
Faridon	Abdulla	AUT
Heindl	Adi	DEU
Fenna	Akerboom	NDL
Carmen	Ardelean	ROM
Jarkko	Arjatsalo	FIN
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Bryan	Baird	GBR
Anne	Bartels	GBR
Vincent	Benedict	GBR
Paula	Benedict	GBR
Carole	Bennett	GBR
Elizabeth	Betowski	CAN
Kerry	Bjarnason	CAN
Danielle	Black	GBR
Kees	Boeyen	NDL
Jack R	Bowerman	CAN
Sara	Bucciarelli	ITA
Monica	Butcher	GBR
Clive	Cass	GBR
Karen	Cass	GBR
Cras	Chantal	FRA
Véronique	Chaudanson	FRA
Judith	Clarke	GBR
Barbara	Clausen	DEU
Nicolai	Clausen	DEU
Doron	Cohen	JPN
Suzanne	Cras	FRA
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Tony	Curran	IRL
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Andrew	Darbyshire	AUS
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Monique	De Wispelaere	BEL
Marta	Deneka	POL
Arlene	Dick	CAN
Marco	Dolfino	ITA
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Rena	Egan	GBR
Ute	Egle	DEU
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Sue Merlyn Farebrother	GBR
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Cras Jean Baptiste	FRA
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Willy Lageveen	NDL
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Gesine	Lohse	DEU	Judy	Remy	FRA
Juergen	Lohse	DEU	Bøe	Rigmor	NOR
Janerik	Lundqvist	SWE	Jane	Robinson	GBR
Caixa	Lundqvist	SWE	Reinhard	Rohr	DEU
Roman	Luszkak	USA	Gabriele	Rohr	DEU
Bernadine	Lynham	IRL	Greg	Ross	AUS
Ursula	Macken	IRL	Jerzy	Ruszczak	POL
Julia	Mari	ESP	Breda	Ryan	IRL
Eva	Martonyi	HUN	Karin	Sauerwein	DEU
Eddy	Massa	BEL	Frances	Savage	CAN
Maarten	Massa	BEL	Susan	Savage	CAN
Paula	McCann	IRL	Bruce	Schmaltz	CAN
Bill	McLean	CAN	Monique	Schmaltz	CAN
Elaine	McSparron	GBR	Elizabeth	Sears	GBR
Helen	McSweeney	IRL	Sam	Sebban	FRA
Ann	Mechiels	BEL	Elisabeth	Sebban	FRA
Alejandro	Megias	ARG	Vernon	Silver	CAN
Miriam	Meyer	NDL	Paul	Skinner	GBR
Garth	Milne	GBR	Kim	Solez	CAN
Anne	Mitchell	CAN	Eric	Stapleton	IRL
Martti	Müller	FIN	Silvia	Stefancova	SVK
Pirkko	Müller	FIN	Evelyn	Stein	USA
Tomas	Muñoz	ESP	Sarah	Stirrup	GBR
Cras	Natacha	FRA	Willy	Storms	BEL
Dolores	Nedbalek	DEU	Shaun	Summerfield	IRL
Laura	Nicolaescu	ROM	Suzanne	Sunday	USA
Marie	Nolan	IRL	Yoshio	Tanahashi	JPN
Kelber	Notker	DEU	Keiko	Tanahashi	JPN
Pavel	Novak	CZE	Leo	Tarvainen	FIN
Milunka	Novakova	CZE	Gemma	Trainor	IRL
Marion	O'Reilly	IRL	Aarno	Turunen	FIN
Trish	O'Connell	IRL	Marianna	Vamos	HUN
Jimmy	O'Connell	IRL	Henrik	Van Der Leer	NDL
Nikki	Olson	CAN	Liesbeth	Van Ruth	NDL
Anna	Olszewska	POL	Lia	Van Zwietering	NDL
Sheila	O'Mahony	IRL	Dick	Van Zwietering	NDL
Brenda	Paras	AUS	Conny	Volk	DEU
Carys	Parry	GBR	Deon	Von Blerk	ZAF
John	Pennifold	GBR	Joe	Way	USA
Andrzej	Pfeiffer	POL	Anne	Way	USA
Nellie	Piepenbrock	NDL	Heike	Weizenkorn	DEU
Lech	Pietrasz	POL	Marsha	White	USA
Paola	Pigozzi	ITA	Marina	Wimmer	AUT
Gisle	Platou	NOR	Michael	Wolkind	GBR
Vlasta	Podebradska	CZE	Beata	Wotoszyn	POL
Margaret	Pullen	GBR	Louise	Wren	GBR
Sauerwein	Rainer	DEU			

Leonard Cohen Event



THANK YOU
LEONARD

Special thanks to
Leonard Cohen

for his goodwill
and support.

You are the reason
we are here.

Kraków, Poland 6-8 August 2010

THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The Leonard Cohen Event, Kraków 2010 was
organized by members and supporters of
Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Twórczości Leonarda
Cohena "Wieża Pieśni" (Association of Fans of
Leonard Cohen's Art "The Tower of Song")

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Weronika Woszek

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SPECIAL THANKS

The Jewish Community Council of Kraków and its Chairman Tadeusz Jakubowicz for kindly making the Tempel Synagogue available to us free of charge for the gala concert [www.krakow.jewish.org.pl]

Municipality of Kraków

Kraków Festival Office
[www.biurofestiwalowe.pl]

Jewish Community Centre of Kraków
[www.jcckrakow.org]
Mieczysław Majczak and "PROF-US"
[www.prof-us.com.pl]

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Barbara Majkowska and Maciej Słota

Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology
[www.manggha.krakow.pl]
Hotel Karmel
[www.karmel.com.pl] – seat of the Association

THE HOTELS

Apartamenty Oberża Sąsiadów
[www.apartamenty.oberza.pl]
Astoria Hotel
[www.astoriahotel.pl]
Eden Hotel
[www.hoteleden.pl]
Ester Hotel
[www.hotel-ester.krakow.pl]
Karmel Hotel
[www.karmel.com.pl]
Nathan's Villa Hostel
[www.nathansvilla.com]
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[www.hotelsecesja.krakow.pl]
SPATZ Aparthotel
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Cracow Tours
[www.cracowtours.pl]

Translation centre LinguaForum
[www.linguaforum.eu]

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Kraków, Poland 6–8 August 2010

the open-he
the broken
... and no one knows
where the night is going



... balloons and paper streamers
floating down on us
She says, You've got a minute left
to fall in love ...

Leonard Cohen Event

... tonight tonight will be
fine, will be fine, will be
fine, will be fine
for a while ...



passing through, passing through.
Sometimes happy, sometimes blue,
glad that I ran into you ...

Kraków, Poland 6-8 August 2010





Bland 2010

Brochure and Event designs by Ania Nowakowska
www.redwagon.com.au