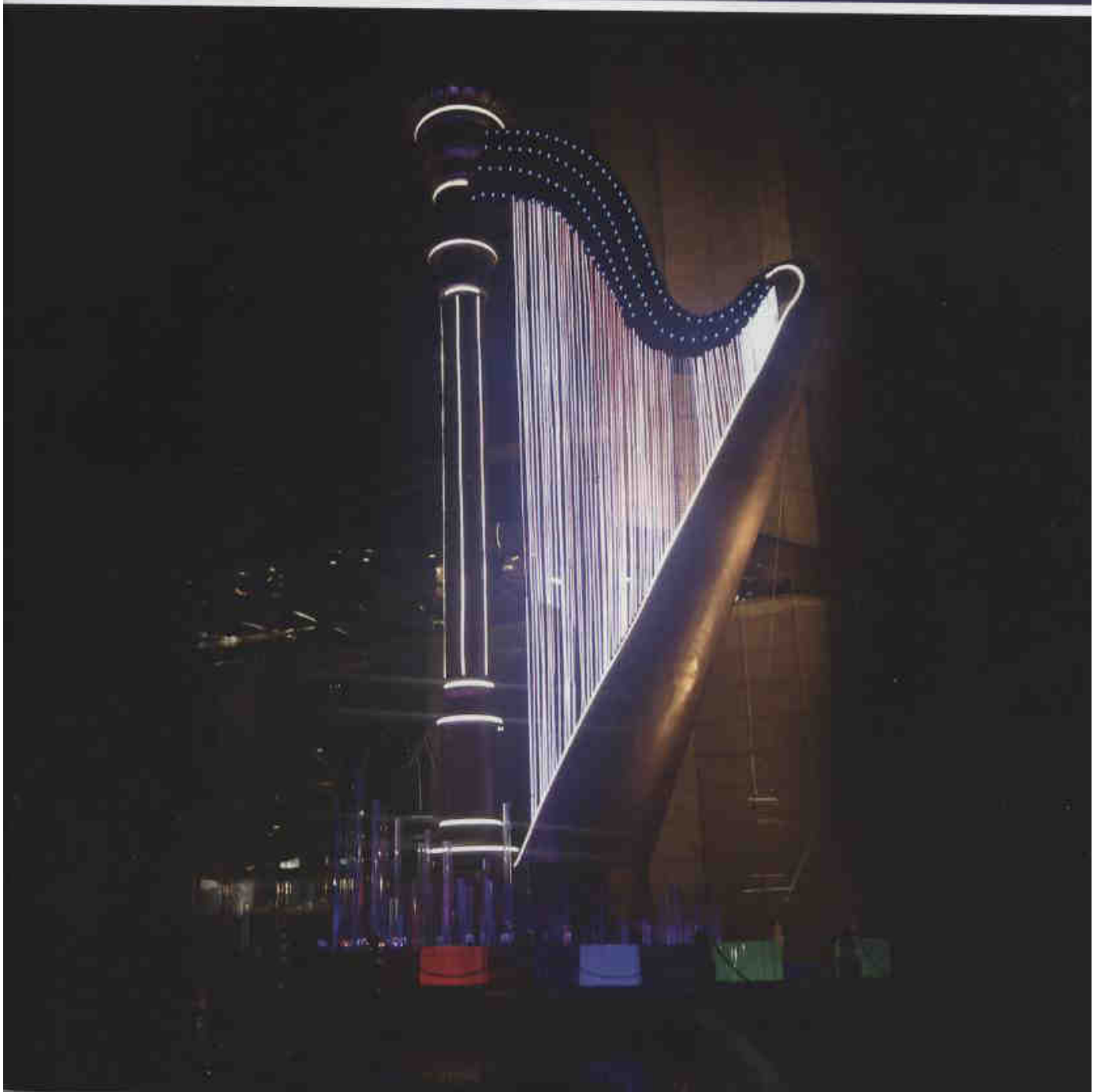


FALL 2012 • VOLUME XI, NO. 3



WORLD HARP CONGRESS REVIEW

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
WORLD HARP CONGRESS, INC.





WORLD HARP CONGRESS
REVIEW
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
WORLD HARP CONGRESS, INC.

WORLD HARP CONGRESS



Giant harp sculpture in the Pudong district of Shanghai, China (2011).
Cover design by Petra Bryan.

WORLD HARP CONGRESS
REVIEW

EDITOR
Ann Yeung

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jung-I Jang

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Claire Happel

GRAPHIC DESIGN/LAYOUT
Petra Bryan

The *World Harp Congress Review* is published biannually in November and May and is distributed to over 50 countries. The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and are necessarily those of the World Harp Congress, Inc.

Memberships to the World Harp Congress, address changes, and other business matters should be directed to:
Margaret Shelton, WHC Membership
3106 Marine View Drive
Tacoma, WA 98422, USA
Email: MembershipWHC@gmail.com
The *WHC Review* is included in membership dues.

Advertising in the *WHC Review* is open to all harp-related businesses and events as well as schools and conservatories. Deadlines for ad copy are September 1 and March 1. Advertising copy, payment and inquiries should be directed to:

Claire Happel, 3050 Rose Valley Lane
Quincy, IL 62305-8618, USA
Email: whcr.ad@gmail.com

News items should be directed to the official correspondents of each country.

Editorial letters and photos must be received by September 1 (Fall issue) and March 1 (Spring issue). **Articles** must be submitted by June 1 (Fall issue) and December 1 (Spring issue). Please direct all material to:

Ann Yeung, 3114 W. Nevada St.
Urbana, IL 61801, USA
Fax: +1-217-352-0901
Email: whci.ed@gmail.com

ISSN 1542-9415

www.worldharpcongress.org

© 2012 World Harp Congress, Inc.
All rights reserved.



WORLD HARP CONGRESS
REVIEW
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
WORLD HARP CONGRESS, INC.

C O N T E N T S

FALL 2012 • VOLUME XI, NO. 3

3 WORLD HARP CONGRESS NEWS

Letter from the Chair
Greetings from the Artistic Director
Greetings from the Twelfth World Harp Congress Chair
Twelfth World Harp Congress Proposal Information
Focus on Youth Guidelines
2012 WHC Membership Report
WHC International Harp Competitions Guidelines

9 PEOPLE

Susann McDonald "Friendships ... Around the World" - Part II
- *Linda Wood Rollo*

12 HARP HISTORY

Franz Poenitz (1850-1912) - *Andreas Fischer*
Élégie pour la mort d'un berger by Bernard André - *Astrid Desantoine*

16 FORUM

Chamber Music Ensembles - Part II

19 IN MEMORIAM

Mirella Vita

20 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS AND COMPETITIONS

The Dutch Harp Competition and Festival
The Ksenia Erdely Competition

22 SPOTLIGHT

The Israeli Harp Festival and Competition
The Korean Harp Festival

26 NEW MUSIC

Arabesque no. 8 and the *Arabesques* series by Ami Maayani
Malas Vyta by Dragana Jovanović
Recent Premieres and Publications

32 INTERNATIONAL HARP NEWS

49 WORLD HARP CONGRESS CORRESPONDENTS

50 NATIONAL HARP ASSOCIATIONS OF THE WORLD

50 INDEX OF ADVERTISERS to the *World Harp Congress Review*



Franz Poenitz (1850-1912)

by Andreas Fischer

Translated and revised by Isabel Moretón

Ed. – 2012 is the centennial of Poenitz's death.



Franz Poenitz (1909).

Born Franz Burkowitz in the small West Prussian town of Bischofswerder¹ on 17 August 1850, Franz Poenitz was the eldest son of a respected merchant. When he was two years old, his mother died in childbirth. Franz was sent to Berlin to his mother's childless sister, who was married to the violinist and music director, Heinrich Poenitz.²

The couple soon recognized his talent and provided for his musical education. A harpist friend of the family was so impressed by Franz's violin playing, that he persuaded Heinrich to let Franz try the harp. At age five, Franz had his first harp lesson on 19 November 1855. At age six, he made a concert tour in Sweden, which was a triumph. At age seven, he appeared as a child prodigy (*wunderkind*) in Berlin's famous *Bilse-Konzerten*.³ At age eight, he was appointed harpist to the Kroll'sche Orchestra, where his uncle was the concertmaster of the orchestra. Franz took on his uncle's surname "Poenitz" as his professional stage name, although his first appearances were made with the addition of his original surname ("Poenitz-Burkowitz").

In a concert organized by the Russian ambassador in Berlin, Franz caught the attention of the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV's counselor, who immediately obtained a royal scholarship for him. Louis Grimm, one of the best harpists at the time and a student of Elias Parish Alvars, took over Franz's harp instruction. After two years of instruction,



Franz Poenitz in Berlin (1876).

Grimm suddenly fell ill and asked Franz (aged ten) to substitute for him for two weeks as the harpist in Paul Taglioni's ballet *Ellinor*.⁴

At age eleven, Franz went on another concert tour, which took him to Kiel (North Germany), Copenhagen (Denmark), Stockholm (Sweden), Oslo, Trondheim (Norway), Finland, and Estonia. Another tour took him to London, where he played for Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle.

Poenitz was sixteen when he was appointed harpist to the Royal Court Opera in Berlin. He held the

→ see below



position until his death, forty-six years later. His colleagues were Alfred Holy and Wilhelm Posse. When Richard Wagner opened the Bayreuth Festspielhaus in 1876, Poenitz was part of the first "Bayreuth Seven," the festival theater's famous harp group.⁵

From age eleven, Poenitz also studied music theory and composition with Carl Friedrich Weitzmann (1808-1880). He liked to read and was very well versed in lyric poetry. Poets, whose work he set to music, included Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, Heinrich Heine, Emanuel Geibel, Johann Ludwig Uhland, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. His setting of Goethe's ballade *Der Fischer* (op. 28), for soprano or tenor and harp, is a wonderful piece.⁶

His first composition, the *Romance* (with no instrumentation given), was published in 1862 in Copenhagen.⁷ It took many years before a piece specifically including the harp was published. His first composition with harp to be published was the *Elegie in A-flat major*, op. 20 for violin, cello, and harp, dating from 1889.⁸ His first piece for solo harp is the famous *Der Todestanz der Willys* (*The death dance of the Willys*), published in 1892. Interestingly, the dance does not relate to a "Scottish" legend as noted on the music. The legend about the Willys is related in H. Heine's *Elementargeister* (*Elemental spirits*), originally inspired by a Slavic saga, that is also the basis for the ballet *Giselle ou les Willis* by Adolphe Adam. This piece also exists in a version for harp and harmonium.⁹

By this time, Poenitz had turned to the harmonium as his second favorite and well-mastered instrument.¹⁰ In 1892, Poenitz also published a piece without opus number, which awaits rediscovery: *Meditation* on the sixth prelude from the first part of *The Well Tempered Clavier* by J.S. Bach for violin, harp and harmonium *ad libitum*.¹¹

Poenitz' oeuvre contains about 60 published pieces: songs; chamber music with harp and/or harmonium; solo works for harp or two harps; and *Vineta*, op. 74, a fantasy for orchestra and solo harp, considered his magnum opus. Poenitz was the harp soloist of *Vineta* at its premiere on 20 January 1911 under the baton of Richard Strauss. Unpublished in his oeuvre remains the opera *Cleopatra*. Under his pseudonym "Francesco Benizzo," Poenitz's opera parody *Una famiglia fina* was published and performed a few times.

In 1877, Poenitz married Else Herrlich, a former student who was two years his senior. The couple had two daughters, and the family settled in the Platanenallee 4-6 in Westend, Berlin.¹² The house does not exist any more, but a plaque commemorating Poenitz was installed at the site in May 2012. Poenitz's private passions were painting and hunting. Several of his paintings still exist and display varied painting techniques.

Poenitz's last public appearance was on 5 November 1911. He played his *Wikingerfahrt* (*Viking*



Pen drawing (1908) by Franz Poenitz.

Journey) for two harps with his student Max Saal, who became his successor at the Royal Court Opera. In March 1912, he had appendicitis and died after an operation on 19 March 1912. Often the year of death as 1913 is given, which is not correct. Poenitz was buried in the old village graveyard of Berlin-Dahlem, but the grave no longer exists.

More information (in German), pictures, and paintings can be found at: franz-poenitz.de.

Endnotes* annotated and compiled by Ann Griffiths, WHC Review Historical Advisor

1. Since the Potsdam Conference (1945) and subsequent border changes, Bischofswerder is now in Poland and re-named Biskupiec.
2. Franz's sister Therese was also sent to Berlin with him.
3. The German violinist Benjamin Bilse (1816-1902) formed his own ensemble and from 1867, he promoted the *Bilse-Konzerten* (Bilse Concerts) in a new hall on Berlin's Leipzigerstrasse. In 1882, 54 of his 70 musicians left to form the orchestra that eventually came to be known as the Berlin Philharmonic.
4. Dancer and choreographer Paul Taglioni (1808-1884) was Ballet Master at the Royal Court Opera in Berlin from 1856-1883. *Ellinor* dates from 1860.
5. The original "Bayreuth Seven" (and their cities of employment in 1876) were: Franz and Josef Moser (Vienna); Franz Poenitz-Burkowitz (Berlin); Heinrich Saxperger (Vienna); August Tombo (Munich); Heinrich Vitzthum (Hannover); and A. Wiedemann (Braunschweig), based on research by Andreas Fischer and Isabel Moretón. Also, female harpist Oleane Baker (Bayreuth) performed, according to Hans Joachim Zingel's article, "Die Bayreuther Sieben" (*The Bayreuth Seven*), *VDH: Verband der Harfenisten in Deutschland*, no. 3 (May 1965). Therefore, eight harpists were actually employed as the "Bayreuth Seven" in the beginning years of the festival ***Endnote by I. Moretón.**
6. *Der Fischer* (*The Fisherman*) dates from 1891.
7. Poenitz gave fourteen concerts at the Copenhagen Casino in 1862 where this piece was almost certainly included in the performances. Laura Vinciguerra plays the *Romance* on the recording *Poenitz: Songs and Hymns with Harp* (Brilliant Classics-9179).
8. *Elegie*, op. 20 was published by Zimmerman in 1889.
9. The duet version of *Der Todestanz der Willys* is op. 24b. The Willys (French: *Willis*) are evil female spirits, who, jilted before their wedding days, rise from their graves at night and seek revenge upon men by dancing them to death.
10. The harmonium was quite a new instrument at the time. It was known in continental Europe as a harmonium, but elsewhere was often referred to as a reed organ, or American reed organ. Poenitz introduced the harmonium to the Berlin public in the early 1890s. His harmoniums were made by the brothers Julius and Paul Schiedmayer. The Schiedmayers' so-called "concert harmonium" had twenty-four stops. Their largest "Kunstharmonium," marketed as the Schiedmayer "Dominator," had a range of six octaves, with two keyboards and forty-three stops.
11. *Meditation* was published by Carl Simon, Berlin.
12. Poenitz and his wife had two daughters, Charlotte (1878-1919) and Eva (1881-1962).

Andreas Fischer (born 1942) is a great-grandson of Franz Poenitz. His mother was a daughter of Poenitz's younger daughter, Eva Elisabeth Burkowitz, who studied harp with Max Saal prior to her marriage in 1939. Since his retirement, Fischer has dedicated himself to cataloging his great-grandfather's legacy, to retrieving and digitizing all of Poenitz's music, and to preparing the donation of Poenitz's comprehensive legacy to the Berlin Staatsbibliothek in December 2012.