



**You have downloaded a document from
RE-BUS
repository of the University of Silesia in Katowice**

Title: The communication between conductor and choir in the process of creating a musical work of art

Author: Aleksandra Zeman

Citation style: Zeman Aleksandra. (2017). The communication between conductor and choir in the process of creating a musical work of art. "Musical Art in Educational Discourse" No. 2 (2017), s. 62-67, doi 10.28925/2518-766X.20172.6267



Uznanie autorstwa - Użycie niekomercyjne - Bez utworów zależnych Polska - Licencja ta zezwala na rozpowszechnianie, przedstawianie i wykonywanie utworu jedynie w celach niekomercyjnych oraz pod warunkiem zachowania go w oryginalnej postaci (nie tworzenia utworów zależnych).



UNIwersYTET ŚLĄSKI
W KATOWICACH



Biblioteka
Uniwersytetu Śląskiego



Ministerstwo Nauki
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

РОЗДІЛ. ФЕНОМЕН МУЗИЧНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА В ІСТОРИКО-КУЛЬТУРОЛОГІЧНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ

УДК 78.071.2:784]:316.4

Aleksandra Zeman,

University of Silesia in Katowice,
Bankowa str. 12, 40-007 Katowice, Poland

ORCID id 0000-0001-9598-939X

THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CONDUCTOR AND CHOIR IN THE PROCESS OF CREATING A MUSICAL WORK OF ART

The work of a conductor requires the ability of effective communication in order for a unique musical work to come alive. This communication is not a matter of dictionary definitions but a complex process requiring the ability to encode and decode messages. Starting from reading musical score, which still has a lot of hidden information, through the art of carrying out the thoughtful interpretation of the piece, ending up with the communication between the conductor and the listener via the choir, the artist, including the conductor, can explore the space in which they act, identify it and thus verify and enrich it. Three links may be distinguished in the process of communication between the conductor and the choir: the sender — the conductor who sends a verbal and non-verbal message, the receiver — the ensemble and the code by the means of which the information transfer takes place. What determines effective communication between the conductor and the choir? Undoubtedly, an important if not a crucial role is played by the conductor's attitude. The communication between the conductor and the choir in the process of creating a musical work depends on the conductor's abilities, skills and personality, the choir singers' vocal skills as well as on the regular, relentless work on the conductor's own and the choir's development.

Key words: verbal communication, non-verbal communication, conductor, choir, musical work, creation.

Земан Александра

Комунікаційний зв'язок між диригентом і хором у процесі роботи над художнім образом твору

Діяльність хорового диригента вимагає здатності ефективно взаємодіяти з колективом, здійснювати комунікацію задля розкриття унікального музичного образу під час виконання музичного твору. Під комунікацією у даному випадку розуміємо складний процес кодування та декодування інформаційних повідомлень. Починаючи з читання нотного тексту партитури, що містить закодовану у музичних знаках інформацію, через мистецтво осмисленої інтерпретації музичного тексту і закінчуючи виникаючим між диригентом і слухачем завдяки хорі зворотним зв'язком, виконавець, у тому числі диригент, досліджує простір, у якому вони діють, отримуючи можливість ідентифікувати його і тим самим стверджувати його та збагачувати. У комунікації диригента з хором як інформаційному процесі можна виокремити три ланки: адресант — диригент, який надсилає вербальне та невербальне повідомлення, адресат — хор, а також код, за допомогою якого здійснюється передача інформації. Що визначає ефективну комунікацію між диригентом і хором? Чи не критичну роль у цьому процесі відіграє ставлення диригента до виконавців. Окрім того, ефективна комунікація між диригентом та хором у процесі виконання музичного твору, розкриття музичного образу залежить від умінь, навичок та особистості диригента, вокальних навичок хорових співаків, а також від постійного, невпинного саморозвитку диригента та професійного зростання хорового колективу.

Ключові слова: вербальна комунікація, невербальна комунікація, диригент, хор, музичний твір, творчість.

Земан Александра

Коммуникационная связь между дирижером и хоровым коллективом в процессе работы над художественным образом произведения

Деятельность хорового дирижера требует умения эффективно взаимодействовать с коллективом, осуществлять коммуникацию для раскрытия уникального музыкального образа в процессе исполнения музыкального произведения. Под коммуникацией в данном случае понимаем сложный процесс кодирования и декодирования информационных сообщений. Начиная с чтения нотного текста партитуры, содержащей закодированную в музыкальных знаках информацию, посредством искусства осмысленной интерпретации музыкального текста и заканчивая возникающей между дирижером и слушателем благодаря хору обратной связью, исполнитель, в том числе дирижер, исследует пространство, в котором они действуют, тем самым получая возможность идентифицировать его, утвердить и обогатить. В коммуникации дирижера с хором как информационном процессе можно выделить три составляющие: адресант — дирижер, посылающий вербальное и невербальное сообщение, адресат — хор, а также код, с помощью которого осуществляется передача информации. Что же определяет эффективную коммуникацию между дирижером и хором? Едва ли не критическая роль в этом процессе отведена отношению дирижера к исполнителям. Кроме того, эффективная коммуникация между дирижером и хором в процессе исполнения музыкального произведения, раскрытия музыкального образа зависит от профессиональных умений, навыков и личности дирижера, вокальных способностей хористов, а также постоянного саморазвития дирижера и профессионального роста хорового коллектива.

Ключевые слова: вербальная коммуникация, невербальная коммуникация, дирижер, хор, музыкальное произведение, творчество.

© Zeman A., 2017

Introduction

The term “communication” is derived from the Latin verb “communico” which denotes connection, conferring, providing information¹. One of the universal explanations of the term, by Bogusława Bobek-Ostrowska, defines communication as “the process of intercommunication between individuals, groups or institutions. Its aim is to exchange ideas, share knowledge, information and conceptions. This process occurs on different levels using different measures and evoking certain effects.”² A conductor’s every-day work with an ensemble requires, among others, the ability to communicate effectively in order for a unique piece of music to come alive. It is not a matter of dictionary definitions, but a complex process which requires the ability to encode and decode messages. Starting from reading musical score, which still has a lot of hidden information, through the art of carrying out the thoughtful interpretation of the piece, ending up with the communication between the conductor and the listener via the choir³,

the artist, including the conductor, can explore the space in which they act, identify it and thus verify and enrich it. I hope that these reflections will mobilise conductors to share experiences of their work with musical ensembles and, likewise, be the inspiration to start discussion on the topics connected with the art of interpretation and creation of musical works.

This article is based on selected literature of the subject, but mainly on my own conducting experience⁴ as well as qualitative research which

Wartości w muzyce. Zarys współczesnych kierunków badań nad wartościami w muzyce. T. 3, ed. J. Uchyla-Zroski, Wyd. UŚ Katowice 2010, 212-219. oraz A. Zeman, *Szумы w procesie komunikacji między dyrygentem a chórem. Wybrane zagadnienia.* In: *Konteksty Kształcenia Muzycznego. Zagadnienia ogólne* TOM I, ed. Ewa Kumik i Grażyna Poraj, Wyd. AM im. Grażyny i Kiejstuty Bacewiczów w Łodzi, Łódź 2011, 111, 128.

⁴ I am engaged in scientific and artistic activities connected with choir music. Since 2000 I have been conducting “Melodia” Female Choir which functions in PZKO in Nawsie, the Czech Republic. I also worked with the Institute of Music Choir at the subsidiary of the University of Silesia in Cieszyn (from 2003 to 2006), Polish Singing Ensemble “Hutnik” in Trzyniec, the Czech Republic (2003-2006), the Chamber Choir at the National House Cultural Centre in Cieszyn (Cieszyński Ośrodek Kultury Dom Narodowy, 2nd conductor, 2004-2009), “Gloriam Dei” Choir at the Institute of Theology in Bielsko-Biała (2007-2014), see also: <http://chormelodia.webnode.com/o-nas/>, https://issuu.com/rajsir/docs/melodia_web_9558a42f0557dc

¹ K. Komanecki, Słownik łaciński – polski PWN Warszawa 1986, 101.

² B. Dobek-Ostrowska, Podstawy komunikowania społecznego, Wydawnictwo Astrum, Wrocław 1999, 13.

³ See also: A. Zeman, *Komunikacja werbalna i niewerbalna między dyrygentem a chórem. Wybrane zagadnienia.* In:

I conducted in the form of Qualitative In-Depth Interviews with conductors of both amateur, academic and professional choirs. It consists of three parts: the theoretical part, describing the links in the process of communication between the conductor and the choir, the second part in which I analyse my own research and the third part — the summary.

1. Communication between the conductor and the choir

The art of effective communication with the ensemble and the listener is a very important issue in a conductor's work. In my report I want to focus on the communication between the conductor and the choir.

Taking the process of interpersonal communication⁵ into account, one can similarly understand the process of communication between the conductor and the choir. Three links of that process may be distinguished: **the sender** — in this case the conductor who sends a verbal and non-verbal message, **the receiver** — the ensemble and **the code** by the means of which the information transfer takes place.

The sender — the conductor. Choir music performance depends mainly on the skills, abilities, personality and the disposition of the conductor, but also on the vocal skills of choir members. Henryk Wojnarowski, a conductor and the director of the Warsaw Philharmonic Choir from 1978 to 2016⁶, in the article entitled *The Choir is the Choirmaster*⁷ emphasises the great role of the conductors, their music education as well as their growing work experience which influences the artistic performance of the choir music. A good conductor has to be able to unleash the willingness of the ensemble to cooperate and to stimulate — through the contact with others — the openness which can observe and listen⁸.

The conductor must have at their disposal the appropriate conducting technique, which includes both musical abilities (a very good ear for music, a sense of rhythm, musical sensitivity, musicality, a very good musical memory, voice production, the ability to read and interpret music scores and suggestive conducting technique) and knowledge together with organizational skills.

Non-musical abilities (in other words, mental requirements) are also very important. Karol Lasocki

draws attention to imagination, observation skills, critical logical thinking and concentration. Other significant features include: diligence, accuracy, persistence, patience, punctuality, tactfulness, self-control and perseverance in pursuing the goals intended. It is scarcely possible not to mention kindness, sincerity, fairness, enthusiasm for work, self-confidence and the sense of humour⁹. Antoni Grochowalski points out that the following are important in conductor's work: leadership, organizational, pedagogical and psychological skills to work with people¹⁰. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov mentions the authority (which cannot be identified with pressure), self-control, enthusiasm and passion¹¹.

From my own 19-year conducting experience I would also add mutual respect, trust, speaking from the first person perspective, small steps principle, using time for re-thinking and explaining one's opinion to the choir members. It is also very important to reflect on one's expectations and to have a genuine vision of the piece itself as well as to try to bring out its beauty and emotions. I shall conclude this part of my article with Henryk Wojnarowski's words "Nothing will substitute conductor's personality. The conductor has to be attractive in some way, he or she must be able to release in the ensemble the will to cooperate and to stimulate — through the contact with others — the openness which can observe and listen. Personal experience is essential — meaning what I have already seen and heard. The level of the conductor depends on it¹²".

A conductor should continuously work towards improving his or her qualifications, attend better ensembles' concerts, participate in courses, symposia and competitions thus developing their skills and abilities.

The receiver — the ensemble, the choir. In order for the musical performance to come into being not only a conductor but also a choir is needed. It is thanks to the cooperation between the conductor and the choir that the piece of music can come alive. Of course the abilities of the choir members who understand the conductor and have the skills necessary to realise the conductor's intentions are crucial. The repertoire appropriate for the particular group is also important. It has to facilitate the progress of the ensemble and please the choir singers.

How can an ensemble develop? It is mainly the conductor who is responsible for the ensemble's progress. The most essential things are, above

⁵ https://www.bryk.pl/wypracowania/pozosta%C5%82e/psychologia/24115-charakterystyka_procesu_komunikacji_interpersonalnej.html

⁶ <http://filharmonia.pl/zespoly-artystyczne/chor-filharmonii-narodowej/>

⁷ Bronisław Tumiłowicz, *Chór to chórmistrz*, Wywiad z profesorem Henrykiem Wojnarowskim, dyrygentem, kierownikiem Chóru Filharmonii Narodowej. In: *Życie Muzyczne* Nr 11/12, Rok Wyd. L, Warszawa, Listopad-Grudzień, 1997, 28.

⁸ Ibid. 28.

⁹ J. K. Lasocki: *Chór*, PWM Kraków 1962, 18-19.

¹⁰ A. Grochowalski, *Dydaktyczno — wychowawcze funkcje amatorskiego ruchu chóralnego*, Akademia Muzyczna w Poznaniu, 1983, 58.

¹¹ Quoted in: *ibid.* 19-20.

¹² B. Tumiłowicz, *Chór to chórmistrz* — wywiad z profesorem Henrykiem Wojnarowskim, *Życie Muzyczne* 1997, nr 11/12, Rok Wyd. L, Warszawa, Listopad-Grudzień, s. 28.

all: regular rehearsals, clear aims which include attractive concerts, trips and competitions. There should be an ongoing process of a conductor's work verification, one should listen and learn from people who are better than themselves. Workshops, especially voice production workshops, are also helpful. You have to invest your time and financial resources and they will certainly bring significant benefits.

The code — information transfer between the conductor and the choir. The process of communication between the conductor and the choir takes place thanks to the interaction of words, gestures, facial expression, behaviour, body language, the tone and the timbre of voice etc.

How to produce a work of art which can be a kind of a musical — conducting creation? An outstanding performance occurs when audience is presented with a kind of effect of musical dialogue between the conductor and the choir, full of beauty, expression and emotions. Verbal and nonverbal communicating is a very important point of such work. Verbal communicating is based mainly on the transfer of information using words. It is closely connected with the conductor's knowledge which should be acquired and broaden continuously as well as with the ability to carry out the interpretation goals, mobilising choir members and motivating them positively. It is worth noting that verbal communication, though basic, is generally incomplete and insufficient. In such a specific kind of work as conducting work is, it is particularly easy to notice. The best situation is the one when nonverbal communication confirms the verbalized messages. In an every-day work with the ensemble it is recommended to carefully balance verbal and nonverbal communication in order for the choir members to get used to the conductor's gestures. What should an appropriate gesture look like? The source literature on the matter mentions some substantial elements such as: economy, vividness, dynamism and suggestiveness¹³. At this point, clarity is also worth adding — meaning a gesture which is clear and understandable for the choir members who in turn have different musical backgrounds, various experiences and vary in terms of intellectual level.

2. The results of the author's own research

Having in mind that the communication between the conductor and the choir is a continuous challenge for conductors, I have always been trying to answer the following questions:

1. What should be the characteristics of an effective conductor — choir communication?

2. What are the differences between the communication during the rehearsals and

the conductor — choir communication during the concerts?

3. What are the greatest obstacles in this type of work and communication between the conductor and the choir?

4. What conditions have to be met in order for an outstanding musical performance to occur?

I have recently introduced those problems to 10 choir conductors (of both amateur, academic and professional choirs). I conducted a research study in which I questioned, using Qualitative In-depth Interviews, conductors who are experienced in working with ensembles and at the same time have remarkable achievements, including, among others, Halina Goniewicz-Urbaś¹⁴, Renata Szerafin-Wójtowicz¹⁵, Beata Borowska¹⁶, Joanna Glenc¹⁷, Jadwiga Sikora¹⁸ and Janusz Siadlak¹⁹.

The first research question was "What should be the characteristics of an effective communication between the conductor and the choir?"

Halina Goniewicz-Urbaś pays close attention to the power of word supported by suggestive conducting gestures which result from a thoughtful interpretation of a given piece of music. According to the respondent, effective communication is the outcome of verbal expressions supported by the conductor's knowledge. Renata Szerafin-Wójtowicz shares the same opinion, underlying in her response "conscious and effective conveying

¹⁴ Prof. Halina Goniewicz-Urbaś, PhD, conductor, pedagogue in Zakład Dyrygowania i Wokalistyki Instytutu Muzyki (The Conducting and Vocal Department of the Institute of Music) in Cieszyn at the Artistic Faculty of the University of Silesia in Katowice, the conductor of the University of Silesia "Harmonia" Choir in Cieszyn (1978–1998).

¹⁵ Associate Professor Renata Szerafin-Wójtowicz, PhD, conductor, pedagogue in Katedra Chóralistyki i Edukacji Muzycznej (Choral Studies and Music Education Department) at Music Academy in Bydgoszcz, <http://www.amuz.bydgoszcz.pl/struktura/wydzial-iv/struktura/katedra-choralistyki-i-edukacji-muzycznej/>

¹⁶ Beata Borowska, PhD., adiunkt at Katedra Dyrygentury Chóralnej (The Choir Conducting Department) at Music Academy in Katowice, conductor of the Bielsko Chamber Choir, http://www.am.katowice.pl/?a=akademia_biografia&id_item=252, <http://www.bck.bielsko.pl/zespoly-bck/bielski-chor-kameralny>

¹⁷ Joanna Glenc, PhD, conductor, pedagogue in Zakład Dyrygowania i Wokalistyki Instytutu Muzyki (The Conducting and Vocal Department of the Institute of Music) in Cieszyn at the Artistic Faculty of the University of Silesia in Katowice, <http://www.institutmuzyki.us.edu.pl/files/joanna.glenc.htm>

¹⁸ Jadwiga Sikora, PhD., conductor, pedagogue in Zakład Dyrygowania i Wokalistyki Instytutu Muzyki (The Conducting and Vocal Department of the Institute of Music) in Cieszyn at the Artistic Faculty of the University of Silesia in Katowice, <http://www.institutmuzyki.us.edu.pl/files/jadwiga.sikora.htm>

¹⁹ Janusz Siadlak, PhD, conductor, choirmaster and music life organiser, the founder and conductor of "Collegium Cantorum" Choir — currently Częstochowa Filharmony Choir, <http://culture.pl/pl/tworca/janusz-siadlak>

¹³ E. Bury, *Podstawy techniki dyrygowania*. Kraków 1978, s. 13.

one's own artistic vision which in turn is connected with emotions". She emphasises on several occasions that effective communication is based on sincerity and the conductor's authority who should, above all, require discipline from him or herself and convince the choir members to his or her creation of the piece of music.

Joanna Glenc remarks that "A singing ensemble conductor who realises their own fixed interpretation of the piece of music should be an **authority** for the choir members — his or her comments or advice can help the singers understand the essence of the musical work and, simultaneously, arouse interest in the repertoire given. The conviction that a **common** work of music is being created and realised may in fact make every rehearsal attractive. Discovering something new in choir compositions each time will result in the ensemble's mature and conscious interpretation not only of the whole piece but also of each musical phrase and the choir members, showing the will to act **together** in the field of music, will reveal their sensitivity²⁰".

In the participants' responses what appears most often are the suggestions about a very good knowledge of the music score, the ability to introduce and execute a thoughtful concept of the piece. According to the respondents, the cooperation of both subjects (which they also call "symbiosis") plays the essential role. A pleasant atmosphere, openness to questions and mutual respect are also worth noting. Likewise, the commands' clearness adjusted to the specificity of the ensemble is of great importance.

Next, I asked the conductors for their opinion on the differences between the communication during the rehearsals and the concerts.

All the conductors questioned notice the differences which result from the specific situation which certainly the concert is. First of all, they point out that greater efforts during concerts can be observed, but on the other hand there is the stage fright which might have a mobilising effect thanks to the conductor's steadiness of mind. The exceptional attention and concentration during concerts facilitates the conductor — choir communication. The awareness of the choir's good preparation, a vocal warm up and a rehearsal before the concert in order to remind the piece's interpretation, eyes focused on the conductor whom the choir can trust are the guarantees of a successful vocal performance. J. Siadlak underlines that "if the ensemble is prepared well enough, the level of concentration must reach its peak. The performance may vary from the presentation during the rehearsal, something

unexpected may occur: noise, the lack of memory (memory gaps), but the ensemble together with the conductor should create the piece of music with care and attention."

J. Glenc adds that "the communicators evolved during rehearsals **should** likewise be exploited during concerts. Nevertheless, the experience gained shows that occasionally this language has to be modified (when, for example, the acoustic conditions encountered in the concert place are different from the ones they have in working conditions), acting carefully — the conductor needs to lead the performance in a way which provides the choir members with safety comfort. The conductor's interpretation of music **should not** modify drastically and unexpectedly during the concert, especially as an additional and at the same time destructive factor emerges in the choir — the stage-fright (which, on the other hand, is also known as a positive and mobilising sensation)."

The subsequent question concerned the most disturbing factors encountered in the communication process between the conductor and the ensemble.

The interviewees often listed here the ensemble's unwillingness, stubbornness, misunderstanding, disrespectful attitude towards the piece of music and the lack of discipline. How to deal with such situations? You have talk about them, explaining one's points, facing the truth. According to Halina Goniewicz-Urbaś, the conductor should persuade the ensemble so that the ensemble's members "would want the things I do." R. Szaferafin-Wójtowicz lists some of the other factors disturbing the communication between the conductor and the choir — these are: "the lack of concentration, the lack of good relationships between the conductor and the choir and some unexplained situations as well as some resentment and choir members' resistance". Other elements that disrupt the conductor's work and communication with the choir are: the conductor's lack of preparation for the rehearsal, the lack of the conductor's thoughtful concept, but also the lack of the choir members' musical background.

The last research problem referred to the conditions that have to be met in order for an outstanding musical performance to occur.

According to the majority of respondents, the basis is the detailed knowledge and assimilation of the score, which takes choir members' abilities into account. It occurs thanks to regular work concerning the elements of music, voice production and the interpretation of a given piece. Mieczysław Micherda²¹ points out that "sometimes a seemingly easy song may become exceptional in the conductor's as well as the ensemble's and audience's view, when **it has the depth which expresses the truth,**

²⁰ The quoted words of Joanna Glenc are the continuation of her reflections on choral conducting. See also: J. Glenc, *Twórczość chóralna Jacka Glenca — zamysł kompozytora a interpretacja*, Śląski Związek Chórów i Orkiestr, Śląska Biblioteka Muzyczna, Uniwersytet Śląski, Katowice 2011.

²¹ Mieczysław Micherda, pedagogue, conductor, graduated from the Music Academy in Cracow.

the emotions, the interpretation vividness, which is understood and performed by the choir members in a great way”.

J. Sikora remarks that “if it is possible, thanks to regular work to master the piece technically with the ensemble and make the choir sensitive to all the production nuances, the joy during the performance, the common perception, emotions, exceptional artistic experience allows it to be counted into **extraordinary** music performances”.

Joanna Glenc says: “An outstanding work of art? It means a beautiful work.”

“After all, we do not evaluate the composition in terms of content but the performance and the kind of interpretation which should shed the appropriate light on the musical work. The artistic level of each choir, including amateur choir, is determined not only by its vocal skills, but also by a high-quality repertoire chosen according to the choir’s performing abilities. Choosing such a repertoire is not an easy task for a conductor and it requires quite a considerable amount of work. The music program offered should, first and foremost, be attractive both for the performers and the auditors. It should preferably take the choir members’ interests and taste into account so as singing would be a pleasure for them. Music, especially song, influences the performer’s psyche and the musical works realised shape the choir members’ music and artistic taste and develop their personality. Music informs and expresses, illuminating the things being expressed — the spiritual content and the material by the means of which the content is expressed²².”

The participants of the conducted research underlined the fact that the performance of the musical work may become a masterpiece when the conductor has an outstanding personality, the power of expression and the ability to convince people to his or her own musical vision. If the conductor in accordance with his or her own unique disposition builds a kind of closeness with the ensemble and when they have the same goal: to achieve something which is the best, then one has the chance to lead to an exceptional music performance.

The respondents underlined the significant role of the conductor’s discovery of the piece. Janusz Siadlak says that “if the piece of music is thrilling for the conductor, these emotions are perceived by the ensemble and the extraordinary commitment of one side is transferred to the other

side. If the conductor can inspire and rouse the artists to perform the piece, they have the chance to create something extraordinary and remarkable.”

To conclude, I will quote B. Borowska: “in order for an outstanding performance of a musical work a complete understanding in achieving the interpretation objectives between the conductor and the ensemble is needed. The second necessary factor is the unity in experiencing the piece emotionally during the performance, with the assumption that the presentation is free from lapses (meaning both performance and stylistic failures) and the conductor is an outstanding personality and an excellent musician at the same time. Is such fullness possible? I am not sure of that.”

Summary

The communication between the conductor and the choir in the process of creating a piece of music depends on the conductor’s abilities, skills and personality as well as on the regular, relentless work on one’s own and the ensemble’s development.

Michael Zilm — the winner of the 3rd Grzegorz Fitelberg International Competition for Conductors — who observed Herbert von Karajan’s work while being his assistant, emphasises that Karajan implemented something “which revolutionised conducting, (...) it is the art of continual giving and taking²³.” Michael Zilm recollects: “One thinks about him as an absolute conducting authority, and it is exactly him who almost talks with the ensemble. One might say: when Karajan is conducting, a mystical sexual intercourse is taking place... What lots of practice you need in order for such a mystery to occur. It seems to me that this is the decisive, distinctive feature of his art of conducting. Certainly, Karajan is the greatest conductor of our times, precisely because the orchestra meets each of his musical demands in one hundred percent²⁴.”

And this is my wish for all the choir conductors — to work with ensembles which “meet each of their musical demands in one hundred percent”²⁵.

²³ *Pan jest kapelmistrzem! Rozmowa z Michaelem Zilmem, zwycięzcą III Międzynarodowego Konkursu Dyrygentów im. Fitelberga w Katowicach, w Dwutygodnik Ruch Muzyczny, XXXII nr 10, 8 maja 1988 (8th May 1988), 17.*

²⁴ *Ibid.* 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 17.

²² B. Schaeffer: *Dźwięki i znaki*. PWN, Warszawa 1969, 69.