Course Overview for **MU2269b Polish Music Since 1945**

Course Lecturer – Dr Daniel Elphick

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This course will provide an overview for a key cultural sphere in twentieth-century music, with detailed case-studies across the musical spectrum including film, popular, and classical music. Poland found itself in an extraordinarily difficult position after 1945, lodged between two worlds. It was initially dominated by the Soviet Union, only to tear free and subsequently struggle against the threat of Western hegemony; such political and nationalist struggles had a huge effect on the cultural life of the nation. Conceptual focuses covered on the course will include Polish responses to Socialist Realism, subsequent struggles with heritage and musical nationhood, and the push against Western influences. Composer-specific case studies will include key figures such as Lutosławski, Penderecki and Gorecki, through to more obscure composers such as Grażyna Bacewicz and Andrzej Panufnik, and finishing with contemporary Polish composers such as Krzysztof Meyer and Paweł Szymański. We will work closely with key scores, focusing on innovations in notation developed by the ‘Polish School’, as well as examining the international influence of Polish composers in film scores. By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate a detailed understanding of this important national school of twentieth-century music.

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