A LETTER TO MARC CHAGALL, CANTATA

HANA MARON, SHRAGA FRIEDMAN

THE KOL ISRAEL CHOIR AND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
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NARRATORS: HANA MARON, SHRAGA FRIEDMAN
FRIEDL TELLER-BLUM, MEZZO-SOPRANO; ZLATÁ GLUECK, SOPRANO

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The Cantata is based on a poem by the Polish writer Jerzi Ficowski and was written at the initiative of the composer Stanislaw Wiechowicz. Song and interwoven drama describe the fate of two Jewish children during the period of the Polish Holocaust of World War II. The work was written in the form of a letter to Marc Chagall, a close friend of the composer. Originally written in Polish, the poem was translated into Hebrew by Shraga Friedman. (It may be of interest to note here that both writer and composer are not Jewish.)

The Cantata was recorded live at its world premiere in Jerusalem.

The conductor of the concert, Jerzi Gert, is at present the musical director and conductor of the Orchestra and Choir of Krakow, Poland.

Jerzi Ficowski, the writer, was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1924. He took part in the underground uprising in that city during World War II. After the War, he published his first songs, writing "A Letter To Marc Chagall" (which forms part of a collection of poems in French, "Mes points cardinaux") in 1957. He is also known for his translation into Polish of many of the works of Federico Garcia Lorca.

Stanislaw Wiechowicz (b. 1893, Poland), studied at the conservatories of Krakow, Poland, and in Germany, Russia and France. Until World War II, he taught at the conservatoire of Poznan. After the War, he settled in Krakow and taught there at the State Conservatoire for Music until his death in 1963. In his lifetime he composed numerous choral works, amongst them many cantatas for solo voices, choir and orchestra.

The narrators, Hana Maron and Shraga Friedman, are both renowned members of the Israeli theatre. On the recording, Shraga Friedman takes the part of the narrator; Hana Maron performs here in the role of the girl Rosza.

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