

### VERBA SACRA

Polish Cathedral PrayersÂÂ European Cathedral Prayers

The Great Classical Works

The Art of Word Festival

VERBA SACRA is an artistic-scientific-religious project, dedicated to the tradition of the Word in spiritual culture with special regard to European heritage. Its idea was initiated by the stage director, *Przemysław Basiński* and was started in January 2000 having the form of a course of twelve presentations of biblical texts. The course from its beginning has met with a wide public response and has been acknowledged as the one of the most spectacular events of The Great Jubilee. VERBA SACRA became the subject in about 1 700 publications - articles, reviews and news information. The number of spectators has been estimated at 200 000 people.

Word is the domain of actors, who are able to express its holy dimension. The most distinguished artists of the national stages who have taken part in Verba Sacra events, include: *Teresa Budzisz-Krzyżanowska, Maja Komorowska, Zofia Kucówna, Halina Łabonarska, Anna*

*Polony, Anna Seniuk, Joanna Szczepkowska, Halina Winiarska, Piotr Adamczyk, Krzysztof Globisz, Gustaw Holoubek, Jerzy Kiszki, Krzysztof Kolberger, Wiesław Komasa, Marek Kondrat, Aleksander Machalica, Henryk Machalica, Piotr Machalica, Tadeusz Malak, Daniel Olbrychski, Jan Peszek, Andrzej Seweryn, Jerzy Trela, Krzysztof Wakuliński, Zbigniew Zapasiewicz, Jerzy Zelnik.*

The implementation of the project consists of connecting tradition and modernity. The project is conceived as a series of public presentations of great classical literature (The Holy Bible, operas of The Fathers of the Church, literature of Eastern Europe, Old Polish literature and Polish classic), read out by the most renowned actors. The presentations are preceded by philological, biblical, historical, translation and artistic works. Distinguished theological consultants, literature specialists and historians support the actors.

From January 2000, the presentation of one work in the form of a grand recitation by an actor has taken place monthly. The oldest Polish sanctuary - The Archsee Basilica under the invocation of St Peter and St Paul in Poznan was chosen as the location for the pre-view. The successive editions took place in cathedrals and basilicas in Bielsko - Biała, Częstochowa, Gdańsk, Gniezno, Katowice, Lublin, Pelplin, Radom, Toruń and Wrocław. At present the series is continuing. The main event of every presentation is the recitation of the text by an actor. It is precluded by a short introduction prepared by the most notable biblicists and philologists. The recitation of the text is diversified with a musical setting performed by famous choral groups. Till now 177 premieres have been performed. Moreover the production of audio cassettes and CDs, with registered presentations, has begun.

In 2001 the project has widened with three new series: The Great Classical Works, containing

both world classical operas as well as great national works; The Art of Word Festival which includes the competition of the interpretation of sacral and religious texts, and also European Cathedral Prayers. The Festival's objective is: to expose the beauty of the Bible`s word and of the greatest Polish and World classical works in an artistic interpretation; promotion of the most interesting phenomenon of the spoken word`s art by young performers, leading authors and their works; to show approval to journalists, programs, media and patrons spreading and supporting the culture of word. From this year the competition will have both an international and ecumenical range. In December 2001 in Vilna the next - the fourth - series of European Cathedral Prayers has been inaugurated. The leitmotif of the event is to reveal the beauty of monuments of literature and sacred architecture of European countries. It is an exceptional occasion to recall the presence of the word and the development of the European nations` languages that are the foundation of the modern Europe's common heritage. Europe`s farthest boundaries were marked by its cathedrals.

The promotor of the events is the University of A. Mickiewicz in Poznan. VERBA SACRA is linking the circles who generate the most important trends of a human being's spiritual culture - faith, science and the arts to representatives of political, social and economic life, who are convinced that there is a need for the nations to affirm and jointly experience spiritual beauty. Patronage over the event will be assumed by prime ministers, church authorities, presidents of cities and regions where VERBA SACRA presentations will be held. This will add to the gala nature and exceptionality of the project. VERBA SACRA is symbolic link to the heritage where the history of our states meets the origins of Christianity. It reveals our oldest ties with the world of Latin culture.