



face value	200 zł
metal	900/1000Au
finish	proof
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	15.50 g
mintage	8,000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. Above the Eagle, a stylised image of a score. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and in the rim, the notation of the year of issue, 20-07. Below the Eagle, an inscription, 200 ZŁ. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: An image of Karol Szymanowski on the background of a stylised image of a score. On the right, an inscription, 1882/1937. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, 125. ROCZNICA URODZIN KAROLA SZYMANOWSKIEGO. Between the beginning and the end of the inscription - a dot.

Coin designer: Urszula Walerzak



face value	10 zł
metal	925/1000 Ag
finish	proof
diameter	32.00 mm
weight	14.14 g
mintage	53,000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on the background of a stylised image of a score. Below the Eagle, an inscription, 10 ZŁ. On the left, a fragment of a piano keyboard. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and the notation of the year of issue, 20-07. Between the beginning and the end of the inscription - a dot. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: The stylised images of the bust of Karol Szymanowski and a score incorporated into the figure. On the left, an inscription, 1882 or an inscription, 1937 can be seen depending on the tilt angle. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, 125. ROCZNICA URODZIN KAROLA SZYMANOWSKIEGO. Between the beginning and the end of the inscription - a dot.

Coin designer: Urszula Walerzak



face value	2 zł
metal	CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy
finish	standard
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	8.15 g
mintage	990,000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. At the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue, 20-07. Below the Eagle, an inscription, ZŁ 2 ZŁ. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: An image of Karol Szymanowski and a stylised image of a score. At the bottom, a diagonal facsimile of the signature of Karol Szymanowski. Below the images, an inscription, 1882/1937. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, 125. ROCZNICA URODZIN KAROLA SZYMANOWSKIEGO (125th anniversary of the birth of Karol Szymanowski).

On the edge: The inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: Ewa Tyc-Karpińska

Reverse designer: Urszula Walerzak

*Information on the purchase of coins is provided at:
www.nbp.pl*

Coins struck by the Mint of Poland plc. in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office

Coins

125th Anniversary of the Birth of Karol Szymanowski



On 3 October 2007, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating the 125th anniversary of the birth of Karol Szymanowski, with face value amounting to:

- 200 zł - struck in proof finish in gold;
- 10 zł - struck in proof finish in silver;
- 2 zł - struck in standard finish in Nordic Gold alloy.

Karol Szymanowski is "second after Chopin" in Polish music. Both of them created universal works with a national character. They knew how to translate what is Polish into what is global.

Szymanowski was born in a small village of Tymoszkówka south-west of Kiev on 3 October 1882. He came from a landowning family with a gentry background. Culture, and music in particular, was very important at his home.

He took his first piano lessons from his father and later from his uncle Gustav Neuhaus, the founder of the Russian piano school. He also took private lessons from Zygmunt Noskowski, the most important composer of the post-Moniuszko era. However, Szymanowski was first of all a self-taught person and had no academic diploma. He even took a secondary school-leaving examination without enrolment as a student. He later commented tersely on this fact: *In art you are either self-taught or an ignoramus.*

Although his first works, mainly piano compositions, were not free from foreign influence, they nevertheless drew attention to him as a very promising author. Famous Polish pianist Artur Schnabel was among the first who noticed the growing talent. Schnabel became not only the first promoter of Szymanowski on the stages of Europe but also his long-time friend. It was similar with talented violinist Paweł Kochański with whom Szymanowski, during World War I, created a new original style, similar to French Impressionism. The style is represented by two masterpieces, namely, *Myths* poem and brilliant *Violin Concerto No. 1*. Both those works have been performed and recorded many times until today. The circle of Szymanowski's closest music friends included Grzegorz Fitelberg, the conductor who performed the orchestral scores for the first time and acted as a consultant for instrumentation.

It was with Kochański and Schnabel that Szymanowski twice visited the United States, the music centre of the world at the time, at the beginning of the 1920s. The intention of "making a name for himself" was not fully realized, mainly due to Szymanowski's aversion to self-promotion. Nevertheless, it

resulted in the performance of his works under the baton of such famous conductors as Pierre Monteux or Leopold Stokowski.

Between 1905 and 1914, Szymanowski went on several long trips to Italy in the company of, inter alia, S. I. Witkiewicz. He also visited Northern Africa. The travels gave rise to his interest in the ancient and oriental culture. The traces of this interest can be found in his masterly works: mystical *Symphony No. 3*, *Metopes* triptych for piano based on mythological motives, colourful *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin*, as well as in *the King Roger opera* on philosophical and religious motifs. It is developed in the novel entitled *Efebos* which was written almost at the same time and survived only in parts.

The life of the composer changed along with the style of his works. After the outbreak of the civil war and then the revolution in Ukraine, the Szymanowski family had to leave Tymoszkówka and settled in Warsaw. As a result of the loss of the family estate, the composer became responsible for supporting his family.

When Poland regained independence, it was necessary to reorganise the music education. It concerned in particular the music conservatory in Warsaw which had an outdated structure and curriculum. As the most outstanding Polish composer, Szymanowski was appointed dean of the conservatory. He performed this function for a short time since he was discouraged by the opposition to the reforms he implemented.

The failure in his work as the dean resulted in the deterioration of the health of Szymanowski, who suffered from progressing tuberculosis. He moved then to Zakopane, hoping that its mountain climate would help him to fight the disease. It is there, in 1930, that he rents a small villa called Atma, where today the only one biographical museum of Szymanowski is located.

He then became familiar with highland music, which enchanted him with its archaic sound. This enchantment resulted in the ballet entitled *Harnasie*, based on authentic "tones" of the Podhale region and impressive in its symphonic scale. Its second premiere in Paris became the greatest life achievement of the composer. This period, later called the national period, resulted also in *Songs from Kurpie* which were the modernistic presentation of the folk music of the upper Mazovia region and in his last great work, i.e. *Stabat Mater* cantata, which is a homage paid to the folk piety.

In the last years of his life, the deteriorating financial standing forced the composer to make numerous trips to make a living, although he had always jibed at his own piano skills. He performed

as a soloist in *Symphony No. 4*, which was in fact a piano concerto specially written for this purpose. The work has a classically perfect form and rich content, enchanting lyrical melodiousness of themes and breathtaking final vigorous oberek.

Szymanowski left Zakopane for good in 1935 with a hopeless prognosis on his health and died in Lausanne in Switzerland on 29 March 1937. Since he was decorated posthumously with the Grand Cordon of the Order of *Polonia Restituta*, the costs of his funeral were covered by the state. His burial was like a royal ceremony. He was buried in the crypt at Skałka in Kraków which is a burial place for the most distinguished Poles.

He remained in the memory of his contemporaries as a man with irresistible personal charm, a true aristocrat of spirit, a polyglot and a high class humanist.

In order to commemorate the 125th anniversary of his birth and the 70th anniversary of his death, the Sejm proclaimed the 2007 the Year of Karol Szymanowski.

Andrzej Głowaczewski
Head of the office of the Karol Szymanowski Music Society
in Zakopane

All coins issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.