

**HUBERMAN** Bronisław (1882–1947), violinist, pedagogue. He was born on 19th December 1882 in Częstochowa, the son of Jakub Jankiel, a music teacher at a Jewish school, and Aleksandra née Goldman, the brother of Stanisław, pseudonym *Juliusz*, an SDKPiL activist and a member of the German Communist Party who, after 1932, lived in the Soviet Union.

He took his first violin lessons from Mieczysław Michałowicz and J. Rozen. At the age of seven, he performed, publicly, P. Rode's *7th Violin Concerto*. In 1891, he gave concerts in the hall of the Warsaw Music Society. At the beginning of 1892, he made another debut playing, among others, L. Spohra's *2nd Violin Concerto* and the first part of the P. Rode's quartet. In that same year, he also performed in Łódź, Częstochowa (in the theatre hall at I Aleja 19) and in Piotrków.

In May 1892, with his parents, he went to Berlin, where he was introduced to J. Joachim. Thanks to his intercession, Huberman gave a number of concerts in Vienna and in local spa towns, which paid for his musical education. From that year, he began his regular education in Berlin.

In the middle of 1893, he left Berlin and performed in German cities, as well as in the Netherlands, Belgium and France. In Paris, he took lessons from M. Marsick. In 1894, he performed a concert in London. Then, as a gift from Count Jan Zamoyski, he received a 1773 Stradivarius violin. For some time, Zamoyski looked after Huberman and organised his concerts in Marienbad and Lwów.

At the end of 1894, he played in Berlin and, on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1895, he performed in Vienna. In the following year, again in Vienna, he performed Brahms *Violin Concerto* in the presence of the composer, who welcomed the young artist's interpretation and offered him his photograph with a dedication.

Following a series of concerts in Austria, Germany, France and Romania, in 1897, he left on a tour of the United States. At the turn of 1897/1898, he performed in Warsaw, Riga and Kiev. In 1901, he performed in Kraków and, in 1920, in Berlin, Bucharest and Vienna. On 15th May 1903, in Genoa, he played a violin which once belonged to Paganini and which was kept in the local town hall.

At the end of that year, he made his first recording with the company G. & T. Huberman gave concerts in various European music centres. He often performed in Polish cities including, on 1st January 1908, in Częstochowa, together with violinist Ryszard Singer. The event was enthusiastically received by the audience. In 1909, he again played the Paganini violin in Genoa (in the

Teatro Carlo Felice) during a charity concert for the victims of an earthquake in Messina.

During World War I, he lived permanently in Berlin, giving several concerts in Warsaw, as well as in Częstochowa (on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1917, together with Viennese pianist Leopold Spielman, and again on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1918) and in Łódź (in the spring of 1918 with pianist Eugeniusz d'Albert).

In the 1920s, he was at the height of his fame. He gave concerts in the United States and in Europe, often in Poland (Warsaw, Kraków, Poznań, Wilno, Lwów), and made numerous recordings. In 1927, during the 100th anniversary of the death of Beethoven, he performed in Vienna (together with I. Friedman and P. Casals). In 1929, he gave his first concert in Palestine. In 1932, he was a judge at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Singing and Violin Competition in Vienna. He was also involved in teaching, giving private lessons. He was politically active, especially interested in the idea of a *Paneuropa*, publishing articles in the press on this subject.

At the end of 1932, due to the antisemitic policy of the Nazis, he left Berlin and moved to Vienna. There, he took part in the celebrations of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Brahms, performing his piano trios and quartets together with A. Schnabel, P. Casals and P. Hindemith. He declined the invitation to play concerts with the *Berliner Philharmoniker*, appearing, in September 1933, with an open letter distributed in Prague, Paris and other cities and published in the "New York Times".

In 1934–1936, he conducted a violin master class at the Akademie für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna. At the same time, he gave concerts in Austria, Poland, Hungary, England, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, Palestine and the United States (1935). He often gave concerts for charity. In 1936, he settled permanently in Switzerland, in Corsier-sur-Vevey. He founded a symphony orchestra in Tel Aviv (from 1946, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra) It gave its first concert, on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1936, under the conductor A. Toscanini. In 1937, he performed in Austria, the United States and in Australia. In October of that same year, on his way to Sumatra, he injured both his hands in a plane crash. He resumed his concert activities in 1938

In 1939–40, he performed in Europe, Palestine and Africa. He later left for the United States. In 1944, in New York, he took part in a concert of Polish music,

conducted by Grzegorz Fitelberg, during which he played Karol Szymanowski's *First Violin Concerto* was played.

In 1946, he returned to Switzerland. He performed in Brussels, London, Paris and Lucerne. He published articles on musical topics. He was the author of *Aus der Werkstatt des Virtuosen* (Vienna 1912), and *From the Studio of a Virtuoso*, (Katowice 1954).

He died on 16th June 1947 in Corsier-sur-Vevey. Among his honours is the Order of Polonia Restituta (1926). A street in Częstochowa is named in his honour, as is the Częstochowa Philharmonic.

His wife was Elza Galafrés, with whom he had a son, John.

Helman Z., *Bronisław Huberman*, w: *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM*, część biograficzna, ed. E. Dziębowskiej, [vol. 4], Kraków 1993, pp. 312–313 (photo.); Błaszczyk, *Żydzi w kulturze muzycznej*, pp. 114–115. – J. Sętowski, *Rodowód geniusza. Jeszcze o Bronisławie Hubermanie*, „Gazeta w Częstochowie” 1999 (30th Septemer), p. 4; P. Szalsza, *Bronisław Huberman, czyli pasje i namiętności zapomnianego geniusza. Monografia muzyczna skrzypka – wirtuoza*, Częstochowa 2001. – “Goniec Częstochowski” 1908, No. 1, p. 3, 1909, No. 16, p. 3, No. 17, p. 2, 1937, No. 288, p. 7 (re: brother Stanisław); “Tydzień” (Piotrków) 1892, No. 15, p. 3; “Wędrowiec” 1892, No. 1, pp. 54–55.

**Juliusz Sętowski**