

**ZAKS** Izaak Icchak (1887 or 1900-1942), musician, conductor and composer. He was born in Noworadomsko (Radomsko), the son of Reb Szlomo, the local cantor.

He studied with his father and, later, studied the basics of music and harmony with Gerszon Grojsberg, the choir's conductor. He also took lessons from the best Polish teachers in Noworadomsko. Prior to 1914, he established the music section of the "Kultura" youth organisation.

During World War I, he became a music teacher at the L. Weintraub Jewish Gimnazjum in Noworadomsko.

At the end of the war, he organised an orchestra. In 1923, he moved to Częstochowa, where he completed his musical education with local teachers. He was later appointed as conductor at the Jewish community's Old Synagogue. At the same time, he taught singing at the Jewish Gimnazjum. He also studied with Cantor → Abraham Fiszel (of the New Synagogue) and with other local musicologists.

As an external student, he graduated from the Pedagogical Faculty of the State Conservatorium of Music in Warsaw and was promoted as a music teacher. On 16th April 1931, he took part in the founding meeting of *Lira's* Singing and Music Lovers Circle and joined the organising committee. The chairman was → Mojżesz Mehring. He also ran the choir and orchestra. The Circle was registered on 14th January 1932.

He created a two-hundred-member choir, which he conducted until he left the city. During the choir's performances, it was accompanied by a large orchestra, which contributed to its success and prestige. One of its most successful concerts was a performance of → Abraham Ber Birnbaum's rhapsody *Bame Madlikin*<sup>1</sup>. The last concert took place in the "Luna" hall – 180 people performed (120 choristers and 60 orchestra members). In the alleyways of the Jewish district, he discovered young talents whom he turned in young boy soloists.

During his time in Częstochowa, he was the most trustworthy spokesman for Jewish music. In 1932, he became a member of the music section of the Society for the Support of Regional Culture in Częstochowa. He was a judge in the soloist singer competition and took part in arranging the concert program for Chopin Days.

---

<sup>1</sup> [TN: A Mishna tractate customarily recited on Shabbat eve.]

In January 1933, he left for Łódź, where he led and conducted the “Hazomir” choir. He was also the synagogue’s conductor. He was later to take over the leadership of the Łódź Philharmonic.

In September 1939, following the outbreak of war, he fled to Białystok. In 1942, he returned to his wife and children who, at that time, were living in Warsaw. In the Warsaw ghetto, he was musically active. In the summer of 1942, at the very beginning of the deportations, he was taken to the Treblinka extermination camp and, there, was murdered.

*Polski słownik judaistyczny*, vol. II, Warszawa 2003, p. 819. – E. Ringelblum, *Kronika getta warszawskiego wrzesień 1939 – styczeń 1943*, Warsaw 1983, pp. 466, 598, 622; Fater, *Muzyka żydowska*, pp. 206–214; Malko, *Życie muzyczne*, pp. 253, 305, 310, 314. – “Częstochower Cajtung” 1933, No. 2, p. 6.

**Wiesław Paszkowski**