

MARTA MILINOWSKI

1885 - 1970

Marta Milinowski was Professor of Music at Vassar College from 1930 until her retirement in 1950. Born in Berlin of a German father and American mother, she began her musical studies in Hannover when she was but six and a half. Her first piano teacher was Maria Reinecke, sister of the famous conductor, composer, and pianist, Carl Reinecke. In 1899, the family left Germany to settle in Buffalo, New York where Marta prepared for college at the Masten Park High School and at Buffalo Seminary and continued her piano studies with Mrs. Frank Davidson. In 1902 she returned to Germany for a year of study at the Hochschule fflr Musik in Berlin. Such was Marta Milinowski's preparation when, in 1903, following her mother's example, she entered Vassar College. She completed the course in three years instead of the required four and was thus able to spend her entire junior year in Paris where she studied piano with Maurice Moszkowski and attended classes at the Sorbonne. After graduating with academic honors and membership in Phi Beta Kappa, she continued her studies with Buonamici in Boston, and with Breithaupt in Berlin, and began her long association as student, friend, and subsequent biographer of Teresa Carrého, the famed woman pianist who was one of the most able and colorful musicians of her age.

Her debut as a pianist was in 1910 with the Berlin Philharmonic under Ernst Kunwald. Of her performance of three concerti, the Mozart A major, Beethoven C minor, and Schumann A minor, the press called her a "remarkable pianistic talent" whose work was "intelligent in conception and clear in form."

Soon after her return from Europe in 1913 Miss Milinowski settled in Lake Forest, Illinois where she founded and directed the Lake Forest University School of Music and was appointed Professor of Music at Lake Forest College. There she remained until 1930, when, upon the retirement of Kate Chittenden with whom she had studied during her Vassar years, Marta Milinowski was appointed Professor of Music at Vassar. In a note to President MacCracken, Professor Gow noted that he and Professor Dickinson had found her "alive to the problems of handling applied music in college and interested in working them out."

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At Vassar, her teaching and her many recitals in the newly opened Skinner Hall won her the respect and admiration of the community. She also found time to bring to fruition her biography of Carrefio on which she had been at work for some years. This was published by Yale University Press in 1940 "in celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of Vassar College." Retiring from Vassar in 1950, Marta Milinowski simply transferred her activities from "gown to town." That very year she appeared as piano soloist with, and accepted the presidency of, the Dutchess County Philharmonic Orchestra, an ailing organization which she helped transform into the present Hudson Valley

Philharmonic Orchestra. And for a full fifteen years she shared her rich musical experience with innumerable students from the Poughkeepsie area. Although failing physical and mental health at last forced her to terminate professional activity, Marta Milinowski was able, throughout her declining years, to maintain the same warm and positive manner which had been characteristic of her. She died in Poughkeepsie October 1, 1970.

Respectfully submitted,

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Faculty Meeting

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