



Kamila HAWRYLAK

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-1341-2276>

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Doctoral School of Social Sciences

e-mail: kamila.hawrylak@mail.umcs.pl

Report from the 5th Scientific and Artistic Conference of Doctoral Students and Young Scientists "Faces of the Guitar in Scientific Research", Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Częstochowa, 9 April 2025

This is a translation of an article published in this volume:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/em.2025.20.18>

How to cite: K. Hawrylak, *Report from the 5th Scientific and Artistic Conference of Doctoral Students and Young Scientists "Faces of the Guitar in Scientific Research", Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Częstochowa, 9 April 2025*, "Edukacja Muzyczna" 2025, vol. 20, pp. 383–390, <http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/em.2025.20.19>.

Abstract

On 9 April 2025, Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa hosted the 5th Scientific and Artistic Conference of Doctoral Students and Young Researchers "Faces of the Guitar in Scientific Research." The event brought together scholars and performers from Polish academic centres, providing a platform for exchanging perspectives in the field of guitar studies. The inaugural lecture, delivered by Prof. Tomasz Spaliński and devoted to the guitar works of Józef Świdler, emphasised the role of performance practice in the analytical process. Three thematic panels featured papers on pedagogy, the history of Polish guitar making, the repertoire of the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as contemporary explorations of guitar sonorities. The conference was accompa-

Date of submission: 8.07.2025

Date of acceptance: 8.09.2025

nied by an artistic programme held at the Częstochowa Philharmonic, where guitarists presented selected works, including premieres.

Keywords guitar studies, guitar works, performance practice, guitar making, 20th and 21st-century music, Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

The Scientific and Artistic Conference for Doctoral Students and Young Scientists "Faces of the Guitar in Scientific Research" took place on 9 April 2025. It was the fifth edition of the event dedicated to guitar studies, organised by the Department of Music of Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa. The conference provides a platform for the exchange of ideas combining scientific and artistic perspectives, bringing together participants from various academic centres in Poland. The event was directly supervised by its organisers: Wojciech Gurgul and Marcin Kuźniar.

The conference was officially opened by the Head of the Department of Music at Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Prof. Barbara Karaśkiewicz, who noted that this was yet another occasion when a group of people with a passion for science and a love of the guitar had gathered within the walls of the University, wishing the participants success with their presentations and constructive panel discussions.

Following the welcome address, Professor Tomasz Spaliński from the University of Silesia in Katowice delivered the inaugural lecture entitled *Józef Świder's Guitar Works*. In his presentation, Professor Spaliński – a scholar specialising in the composer's guitar oeuvre and an active concert performer – drew particular attention to the performative dimension in the study of these works. He emphasised that, alongside a traditional formal analysis of Józef Świder's compositions, it is crucial to deepen reflection on performance practice, which is grounded not only in the study of musical structure but also in personal experience, both on stage and in the studio. During the lecture, Professor Spaliński presented musical examples illustrating various interpretative aspects of the discussed compositions, as well as audio recordings of his original performances of the pieces in question. He discussed their significance for the musical development and expressive interpretation of these works, drawing attention to the unique sonoristic effects resulting from the compositional techniques employed by the composer.

The session was, therefore, both analytical and performance-oriented – the presentation of research ideas was closely intertwined with musical practice, which made it particularly valuable and engaging. At this point, it is worth mentioning Andrzej Śnioszek, the grandson of Professor Józef Świder, who attended the conference as a guest. As a scholar, researcher, expert, and advocate of his grandfather's work, he shared both his personal recollections and scholarly insights. He offered observations on the composition and character of Józef

Świder's oeuvre, thereby enriching the understanding of the composer's work. Thanks to Śnioszek's presence and active engagement, Professor Spaliński's lecture gained an additional interactive dimension. Regrettably, the guitar conference in Częstochowa was one of the last events attended by Andrzej Śnioszek, and the audience had both the opportunity and honour to hear his personal recollections and scholarly reflections. The news of his sudden passing caused profound sorrow and marked the conclusion of a significant chapter in the ongoing study of Józef Świder's legacy. In the face of this tragedy, it is all the more meaningful that, the audience was able to hear his insights firsthand within the walls of the University.

This year's conference was attended by eight speakers – doctoral students and young researchers – whose presentations were organised into three thematic panels.

The first panel, entitled "A Perspective on Classical Guitar in Poland", was opened by Kamila Hawrylak, a doctoral student at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. Her presentation, *Personal Capital in the Approach of F. Luthans, C.M. Youssef-Morgan, and J.B. Avolio¹ as a Set of Key Personal Resources of Classical Guitar Teachers in the Educational Process at Polish Music Schools*, aimed to introduce the topic of personal resources within the framework of Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory.² She illustrated how the level of resources possessed by a classical guitar teacher – such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, i.e., the components of the so-called psychological capital (PsyCap, according to the aforementioned researchers) – can influence the effectiveness of their work in education, professional development, and mentoring.

The next presentation in the first panel was delivered by Radosław Michałek, a doctoral student at the University of Rzeszów. Entitled *Guitar Making in Poland after 1950 – Selected Representatives*, the paper focused on the development of guitar making in Poland after 1950 as one of the outcomes of the post-war cultural revival. The speaker outlined the activities of Polish luthiers in chronological order, considering aspects such as the date of construction of their first instrument, the opening date of their workshop, and their year of birth. He also highlighted the evolving approaches to instrument construction, including changes in design features and their impact on sound qualities, as well as the steadily rising standards of Polish guitar making, which is gaining growing recognition on the international stage.

¹ See F. Luthans, C.M. Youssef, B.J. Avolio, *Psychological Capital: Developing the Human Competitive Edge*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007.

² See S.E. Hobfoll, *Stres, kultura, społeczność. Psychologia i filozofia stresu*, Wydawnictwo GWP, Gdańsk 2006.

The first block of lectures concluded with a presentation by Wojciech Gurgul, Assistant at the Department of Music at Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, entitled *German Guitarists and Guitar Music Composers Active in the Second Polish Republic, as Exemplified by Otto Steinwender*. The speaker outlined and drew attention to a unique cultural mosaic and the interweaving of influences in the musical landscape of the Second Polish Republic. Against the backdrop of the historical and social context, including ongoing socio-political changes and national tensions, he highlighted the figures of German guitarists and composers active during this period – Oswald Rabel, Ewald Rudolf Cwienk, and Otto Steinwender. Particular focus was placed on the last of these composers: a cantor, teacher, and organist, winner of international composition competitions and, above all, the author of solo and chamber works featuring the guitar, with special emphasis on the value of his songs with lute guitar accompaniment. The audience had the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of guitar literature by exploring examples of the little-known works of Otto Steinwender, including suggestions for the potential use of some of his compositions in teaching practice.³ An additional merit of the presentation was the chance to examine archival sheet music publications containing guitar parts composed by Steinwender and to engage directly with the lute guitar.

Dr Małgorzata Żegleń-Włodarczyk was the first speaker in the next lecture block, “*Around the Repertoire of the 20th and 21st Centuries*”. In her presentation “*Litania*” (2023) for Solo Guitar by Leszek Wojtal – *Between the Composer’s Intention and the Work’s Autonomy*, she reflected on the relationship between the creator’s vision and the autonomy of the musical work itself. The piece *Litania* by Leszek Wojtal, based on the medieval sequence *Dies irae*, served as the basis and inspiration for these considerations. The presentation examined the genesis, formal structure, and musical material of the work. A particularly insightful aspect of the analysis concerned performance practice, both in terms of the possibilities offered by the classical guitar and its limitations, the latter of which require careful consideration and the application of specific interpretative strategies. Drawing on her own performance experience, the speaker emphasised the need to balance various factors: the composer’s intentions, structural and formal analysis, and the instrument’s capabilities, which represented an additional strength of the presentation.

The second discussion panel continued with a presentation by Łukasz Dobrowolski, a doctoral student at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, who delivered a lecture entitled “*Concierto de Aranjuez*” by Joaquín Rodrigo and the First

³ See O. Steinwender, *Für stille Stunden na gitarę solo*, ed. W. Gurgul, Wydawnictwo Eufonium, Gdynia 2020.

*Guitar Concertos of the 20th Century.*⁴ In the introductory part of his presentation, he examined the historical context of concertos emerging in the early 20th century, highlighting the growing interest in and renaissance of the almost forgotten genre of guitar concertos during this period. His discussion considered the contributions of composers such as Joaquín Rodrigo, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and Boris Asafiev. The second part of the paper focused on Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, with the speaker presenting the findings of his research on manuscripts of the work preserved in Spanish archives. He noted that their analysis revealed interesting and relatively significant differences between these manuscripts and contemporary editions, offering valuable insight into both the historical context and the composer's oeuvre.

The third lecture block, "*Contemporary Sound Spaces of the Classical Guitar*", began with a presentation by Marcin Kuźniar, a doctoral student at Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa. His lecture, entitled *Performance Practice of Music for Guitar and Tape*, addressed the performance of this repertoire. The speaker emphasised the fact that guitar-and-tape music occupies a niche, often overlooked, position in guitarists' concert programmes, yet constitutes an important and substantial part of the contemporary guitar repertoire.⁵ The presentation sought to familiarise the audience with this innovative genre. The speaker discussed the potential stages of working with music for guitar and tape – from the initial encounter with the score and audio files, to preparation for an artistic performance. The discussion also covered the technical aspects of working with the electronic layer, such as preparing audio tracks and methods of playback and amplification. The aim of the presentation was to demonstrate that the marginalisation of guitar-and-tape music may reflect misconceptions or concerns regarding guitarists' digital proficiency. Overall, the purpose of the lecture was to promote this type of music as an accessible and valuable form of artistic expression for contemporary guitarists.

The next speaker in the third lecture block was Radosław Wieczorek from the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Krakow. His presentation, *The Faces of Sonorism for Solo Guitar at the Turn of the 20th and 21st Centuries*, explored sonic possibilities as one of the dominant creative trends in guitar literature since the mid-20th century. In the first part of the lecture, the speaker emphasised the significance of sonorism in the analysis and interpretation of works, particularly those composed from the second half of the 20th century onwards. The lecture then discussed definitions and conceptual approaches to the notion of sonorism. Its second part presented examples of sonoristic analysis and

⁴ See Ł. Dobrowolski, *Pierwsze koncerty gitarowe w XX wieku – kompozytor a wykonawca*, "Edukacja Muzyczna" 2024, vol. 19, pp. 301–318, [DOI:10.16926/em.2024.19.14].

⁵ See *Database of Contemporary Guitar Music*, <https://www.sheerpluck.de> [accessed 3.07.2025].

related performance practice in compositions by selected contemporary composers. The speaker illustrated and analysed these works using musical and audio examples, including *Sette Studi* by Maurizio Pisati,⁶ *Vientulības Sonāte* by Pēteris Vasks, *Untitled [Largo]* by Paweł Malinowski, and *Sequenza XI* by Luciano Berio.

The third lecture block concluded with a presentation by Andrzej Grygier, a doctoral student at the Ignacy Jan Paderewski Academy of Music in Poznań. His lecture, *From Tone to Work: A Single Sound as the Foundation of Guitar Art*, complemented the thematic focus of the block by placing particular emphasis on the concept of a single sound as the foundation and building block of quality and artistry. The speaker reflected on the ontological aspects of sound, grounding his discussion in the principles of the philosophy of music⁷ and performance practice. In particular, he performed a comparative analysis of the sound produced by Julian Bream – which, while not technically perfect, reflects the authenticity of the guitarist's personality and artistic intentions – and that of a student performing a piece with a technically 'flawless' sound but lacking individual expression. By addressing the significance of sound in relation to technical, emotional, and philosophical dimensions, the lecture encouraged the audience to deepen their reflection on sound as not merely a structural element, but also as a carrier of the performer's individual artistic, emotional, and personal expression.

Each of the lecture blocks was followed by a panel discussion. The moderators invited conference participants to ask questions, engage in debate, and offer comments. The topics addressed during the conference were highly diverse, fostering a lively exchange of views and observations on the preceding presentations, leading to in-depth reflections from both speakers and audience members. As in the previous year, the conference concluded with an artistic performance. As part of the second Spring Evening at the Department of Music of Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, held at the Bronisław Huberman Philharmonic, the conference speakers and guitarists Radosław Michałek, Małgorzata Żegleń-Włodarczyk, Marcin Kuźniar, and Radosław Wieczorek gave a performance that linked the scholarly dimension of their earlier presentations with a purely artistic experience. The evening session began with a lecture by Wojciech Gurgul entitled "*Gitara w kręgu Fryderyka Chopina*" (*The Guitar in the Circle of Fryderyk Chopin*). The speaker focused on analysing the composer's biography, highlighting moments in which the guitar and guitar music could have intersected with episodes from Chopin's personal and creative life.

⁶ See R. Wieczorek, *Guitar Sonoristics in Sette studi by Maurizio Pisati*, "Edukacja Muzyczna" 2022, no. 17, pp. 211–227, [DOI:10.16926/em.2022.17.01].

⁷ See *Filozofia muzyki. Doświadczenie, poznanie, znaczenie*, ed. M. Gamrat, M.A. Szyszkowska, Wydawnictwo Chopin University Press, Wydawnictwo UNUM, Kraków 2022.

The following artists performed during the concert:

- Radosław Michałek, who presented *Mazurka Appassionata* by Agustín Barrios and *Fantasia La Traviata* by Francisco Tárrega;
- Małgorzata Żegleń-Włodarczyk, who performed Leszek Wojtal's *Litania* for solo guitar, a composition related to the topic of her presentation, allowing the audience to directly engage with performance practice and deepen their understanding of the lecture's content;
- Marcin Kuźniar, who presented interpretations of the solo pieces *No hubo remedio*, Op. 195 No. 12, from the *Caprichos de Goya* cycle by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and *Le Fandango Varié*, Op. 16, by Dionisio Aguado;
- the duo Marcin Kuźniar & Radosław Wieczorek, who premiered Odysseas Konstantopoulos' *Pontian Song (Ti Trichas to Ghefyrin)* and *Pontian Dance (Pyrrichios)* for two guitars.

After the concert, the audience had the opportunity to view a photographic exhibition by Marcin Wieczorek from the Department of Painting at Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa.

The conference "Faces of the Guitar in Scientific Research" brought together speakers and attendees with a wide range of academic, research, and artistic interests. The presentations covered a wide range of topics, including performance and interpretative issues, research on guitar repertoire in its broader historical and social context, as well as pedagogical aspects related to guitar teaching, the development and popularisation of guitar performance, and the growth of both guitar making and repertoire. The high academic standard of the conference was reflected in the fact that many of the papers were framed within exceptionally broad and deliberately constructed contexts. In numerous instances, they provided a basis for reflection of a psychological or philosophical nature and, at times, even referred to the ontological dimension of the art of music itself and the very concept of the artist-guitarist. All participants were warmly welcomed by the University and could at all times rely on the support of the organisers, Wojciech Gurgul and Marcin Kuźniar. The next, sixth edition of the conference is scheduled for April 2026.

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Source: Database of Contemporary Guitar Music, <https://www.sheerpluck.de> [accessed 3.07.2025].

Sprawozdanie z V Konferencji Naukowo-Artystycznej Doktorantów i Młodych Naukowców „Oblicza gitary w badaniach naukowych”, Uniwersytet Jana Długosza w Częstochowie, Częstochowa, 9 kwietnia 2025

Streszczenie

9 kwietnia 2025 roku na Uniwersytecie Jana Długosza w Częstochowie odbyła się V Konferencja Naukowo-Artystyczna Doktorantów i Młodych Naukowców „Oblicza gitary w badaniach naukowych”. Wydarzenie zgromadziło badaczy i artystów z polskich ośrodków akademickich, stając się forum wymiany doświadczeń w obszarze gitary. Wykład inauguracyjny prof. Tomasza Spalińskiego, poświęcony twórczości Józefa Świdra, podkreślał znaczenie praktyki wykonawczej w analizie dzieła muzycznego. W ramach trzech paneli zaprezentowano referaty dotyczące pedagogiki, historii lutnictwa gitarowego, analizy repertuaru XX i XXI wieku oraz współczesnych poszukiwań brzmieniowych. Konferencji towarzyszyła część artystyczna w Filharmonii Częstochowskiej, podczas której prelegenci-gitarzyści zaprezentowali wybrane dzieła, w tym prawykonania.

Słowa kluczowe: gitary, twórczość gitarowa, praktyka wykonawcza, lutnictwo gitarowe, muzyka XX i XXI wieku, Uniwersytet Jana Długosza w Częstochowie.