

# Cambridge Elements

Elements in Women in Music

edited by

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*Bangor University, UK*

## GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ, THE 'FIRST LADY OF POLISH MUSIC'

Diana Ambache  
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**Abstract:** This Element explores the life and work of Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969) as a composer, violinist, pianist, and author. She lived a remarkable life in Poland, navigating the complex world of Polish communist society and Soviet dominance after World War II, and she brought Polish music to wider European attention. The Element also describes the historical context of her life, her major achievements, and the language and development of her compositions, which attracted notable interest in Polish musical life. She wrote a wide range of pieces, making a significant contribution to the string repertoire, with important string quartets and violin works. In her sixty years she achieved impressive triumphs as a woman composer, served the Polish Composers Union, and often judged major international competitions.

This Element also has a video abstract: [www.cambridge.org/ambache\\_abstract](http://www.cambridge.org/ambache_abstract)

**Keywords:** Bacewicz, Poland, composer, violin, strings

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**Figure 1** Grażyna Bacewicz by B J Doris, 1959.