# Герман, Анна

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Anna Wiktoria German-Tucholska[1] (Russian: Анна Виктория Герман, romanized: Anna Viktoria German, 14 February 1936 – 26 August 1982)[2] was a Polish singer (lirico-spinto), immensely popular in Poland and in the Soviet Union in the 1960s–1970s. She released over a dozen music albums with songs in Polish, as well as several albums with Russian repertoire. Throughout her music career, she also recorded songs in the German, Italian, Spanish, English, and Latin languages.

## Contents

## Family background and early life

Anna German was born in the town of Urgench in Uzbekistan (Central Asia; then the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic of the Soviet Union).   
  
  
Her mother, Irma Martens (1909—2007), was the child of Plautdietsch-speaking Mennonites with descendants from the Netherlands who exchanged Friesland for the area around the Vistula delta and on Empress Catherine the Great's invitation came to live in the Russian Empire.[3] Martens' mother Anna Friesen had been born in present-day Ukraine.[3] Later, the family settled in the Kuban. Martens' native language was a Plautdietsch variant with both German and Dutch influences.[3] In the 1996 radio programme Spoor Terug on Dutch public broadcaster VPRO, Irma Martens said that she and her family always identified as Dutch despite her Polish passport.[3] Martens studied German in Odesa, but had to leave her village due to a lack of work as a teacher and instead moved to Redkaya Dubrava in Altai Krai.[3] Due to NKVD Order No. 00439,[note 1] Martens fled to Uzbekistan, where she met Eugen Hörmann.[3]  
  
  
Her accountant father, Eugen (Eugeniusz) Hörmann (in Russian, Герман), was also of a German–Russian pastor family and born in Łódź in Congress Poland (part of the Russian Empire), now in Poland. Eugen Hörmann's father, Anna's grandfather, Friedrich Hörmann, who had studied theology in Łódź, was in 1929 incarcerated in Gulag Plesetsk by communists for being a priest; he died there. In 1937, during the NKVD's anti-German operation, Eugen Hörmann was arrested in Urgench on false charges of spying, and executed (officially, sentenced to ten years in prison).   
  
  
Thereafter Anna[note 2], with her mother and grandmother, survived in the Kemerovo Region of Siberia, as well as in Tashkent, and later in the Kirghiz and Kazakh SSRs.  
  
  
In 1946, German's mother (who had married Herman Gerner, a Polish People's Army soldier) was able to take the family to Silesia, first to Nowa Ruda and in 1949 to Wrocław.

## Career

Anna quickly learned Polish and several other languages and grew up hiding her family heritage. She graduated from the Geological Institute of the University of Wrocław. During her university years, she began her music career at the Kalambur Theater. German became known to the general public when she won the 1964 II Festival of Polish Songs in Opole with her song Tańczące Eurydyki ('Dancing Eurydices'). One year later, she won the first prize in the Sopot International Song Festival.   
  
  
German performed in the Marché international de l'édition musicale in Cannes, as well as on the stages of Belgium, Germany, United States, Canada and Australia.  
  
  
She also sang in Russian, English, Italian, Spanish, Latin, German and Mongolian.[4] She recorded several albums for Polskie Nagrania Muza in Poland and Melodiya in the Soviet Union. In 2001, six of her Polish albums were reissued on CDs. In recent years, many compilation albums of her songs have also been released in both Russia and Poland.

## Career in Italy

In December 1966 in Milan, German signed a contract with the CDI company to release her records, thus becoming the first performer from behind the "Iron Curtain" who recorded in Italy. In Italy, German had performed at the Sanremo Music Festival, starred in a television show, recorded a programme with the singer Domenico Modugno, performed at the festival of Neapolitan songs in Sorrento and received the "Oscar della simpatia" award.

## Car accident and treatment

On 27 August 1967, while in Italy, on the road between Forlì and Milan, Anna German was involved in a severe car accident. At high speed, the car driven by the impresario of the singer crashed into a concrete fence. German was thrown from the car through the windshield. She suffered multiple fractures and other internal injuries. An investigation revealed that the driver of the car – her manager Renato Serio – fell asleep at the wheel.  
  
  
After the accident, German had not regained consciousness. After the plaster was taken off, the singer still lay in a hospital bed for half a year. Then it took her a few months to relearn to sit and walk.  
  
  
Later, she released the autobiographical book Wróć do Sorrento? ('Come Back to Sorrento?'), dedicated to the Italian period of her career. The book's circulation was 30,000 copies.

## Career in the Soviet Union

In 1964, German toured the Soviet Union for the first time as part of a delegation of Polish artists, performing songs by George Gershwin, Mark Fradkin, Arno Babajanian. The editor of the "Melodiya" Anna Kachalina invited German to record some songs in Polish and Italian.[5] Her first songs in Russian were recorded in the fall of 1964.[6]  
  
  
In the 1970s, German toured, performed and recorded in the Soviet Union, working with Aleksandra Pakhmutova,[7] Yevgeniy Martynov,[8] Vladimir Shainsky,[9][10] David Tukhmanov,[8] Oscar Feltsman,[8] Yan Frenkel, Vyacheslav Dobrynin,[9] Alexander Morozov and others. She had become an acclaimed and popular artist there. She remembers: "I loved touring the Soviet Union. <...> These tours did not bring a lot of money, it was much more profitable to fly to America or even participate in some kind of concerts in Europe. But nothing can compare with the emotional reception in Soviet cities and towns."[11]  
  
  
Her most notable songs in Russian are "Shine, Shine, My Star", "And I like him" (Russian: А он мне нравится, lit. 'A on mne nravitsya'), "Hope" (Russian: Надежда, lit. 'Nadezhda'), "No Hurry" (Russian: Не спеши, lit. 'Ne speshi'),  
"Randomness" (Russian: Случайность, lit. 'Sluchaynost''), "When Gardens Bloomed" (Russian: Когда цвели сады, lit. 'Kogda tsveli sady'), "Echo of Love" (Russian: Эхо любви, lit. 'Ekho lyubvi').[12][13]

## Personal life

On 23 March 1972, German married Zbigniew Tucholski. Their son, Zbigniew Tucholski, was born in 1975. In the last years of her life, German composed some church songs. Before she died in 1982 of osteosarcoma (at the age of 46), she joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church.[14] German was buried at the Evangelical Cemetery in Warsaw.

## Remembrance

## Books about Anna German

## Literary works

## Discography

## Albums

## Singles

## Later reprints and compilation albums

## Filmography

## See also

## References

## External links

Media related to Anna German at Wikimedia Commons