**■** NEWS

★ ARTS & LIFE

**J** MUSIC

**∩** SHOWS & PODCASTS

n p r music Tiny Desk All Songs Considered Best Music Of 2020 Music News New Music Music Features

**Q** SEARCH

Share



MUSIC NEWS

Tomasz Stanko, A Trumpeter Whose Music Spoke To Freedom, Has Died

July 30, 2018 · 12:03 PM ET DAVID R. ADLER



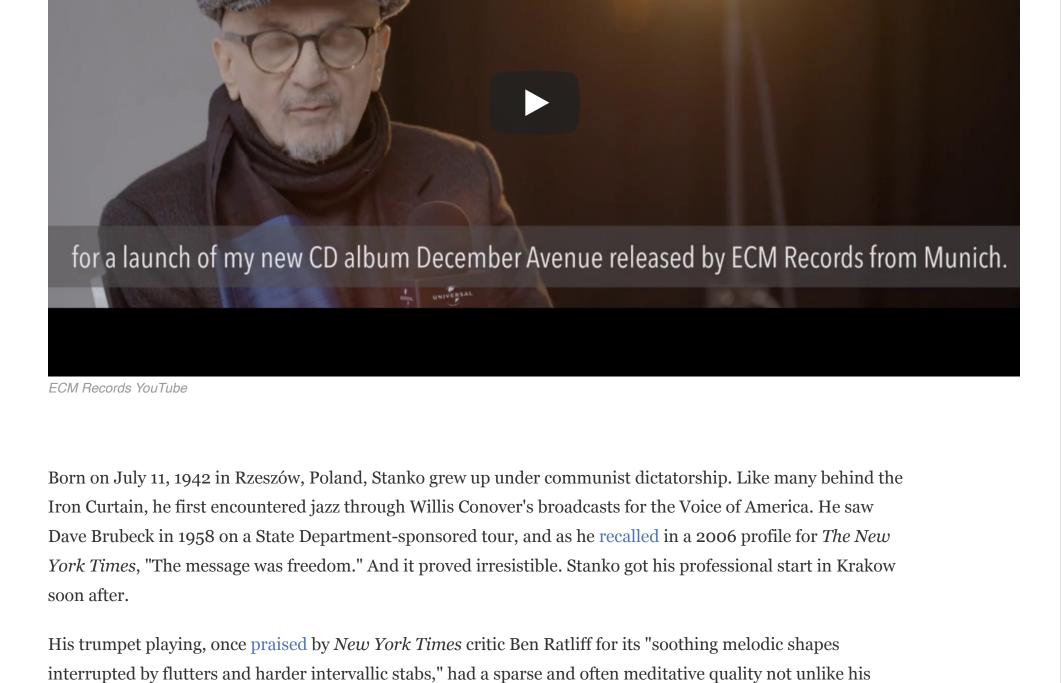
career resurgence over the past 20 years, died on Sunday in Warsaw. His death was confirmed by his daughter, Anna Stanko, who said that her father had been diagnosed with terminal cancer in April of this year, and had been suffering with pneumonia since June. He was 76 years old.

Polish trumpeter Tomasz Stanko, a leading figure in mid-1960s European avant-garde jazz who enjoyed a major

Stanko is best known for his soaring, elusively beautiful albums for the ECM label, most recently with a coterie of groundbreaking younger musicians he called his New York Quartet. Particularly through the New York Quartet, Stanko in his later years built strong bonds with young American players on the cutting edge of the music.

Watch later

ECM Tomasz Stanko New York Quartet - December Avenue | EC...



Stanko's writing, spacious and enigmatic but also possessed of a deep and abiding sense of swing, had a catalyzing effect on experimentally-minded musicians such as pianist David Virelles and others, documented on the New York Quartet albums Wisława (2013) and December Avenue (2017).

The uploader has not made this video available in your country.

Video unavailable

forebear Miles Davis. But his intensely concentrated lyricism owed as much to Don Cherry's work in the classic

Ornette Coleman quartet, one of his chief early influences.

approach carried over into Stanko's later work as a leader.

autobiography, Desperado (in Polish).

daughter Anna.

YouTube

Stanko gained his first major exposure in the '60s alongside two Polish pianists, Adam Makowicz and Krzysztof Komeda. With Makowicz, he co-led an Ornette Coleman-inspired group called the Jazz Darings (and later the Stanko-Makowicz Unit); with Komeda's quintet, he took part in the 1966 classic Astigmatic, certainly rawer and more dissonant than Stanko's ECM output but not without aesthetic linkages and commonalities. Open-ended as

it was, Komeda's music used melodic motives and formal structures to ground long improvisations, and this

While Stanko's ECM history dates to 1976 with the album *Balladyna* (featuring bassist Dave Holland and the

great Finnish drummer Edward Vesala, as well as saxophonist Tomasz Szukalski), it wasn't until the mid-'90s

that he hit his stride on the label, with a quartet featuring pianist Bobo Stenson, bassist Anders Jormin and

drummer Tony Oxley on the albums Matka Joanna and Leosia. Stanko also made From the Green Hill and

By 2002, Stanko was honing his late-career signature sound, with a Polish quartet featuring the exceptional

pianist Marcin Wasilewski, on releases including Soul of Things, Suspended Night and Lontano. (Through

that a piece from Suspended Night, "Suspended Night Variation VIII," was chosen as the very last track on

Litania: Music of Krzysztof Komeda in this '90s period, utilizing slightly expanded and more unorthodox

ensembles. (He revisited some of Komeda's work in 2009 on the vibrant quintet session Dark Eyes.)

Smithsonian Folkways' six-CD box from 2010, intended as a definitive jazz anthology from ragtime to the 21st century. Stanko went on to compose for film and theater as well. His notable sideman appearances include bassist Gary Peacock's Voice from the Past: Paradigm (1982) and a fierce 1985 offering from Cecil Taylor's Orchestra of Two Continents, Winged Serpent (Sliding Quadrants). He even made some deeply intriguing synthesizer-heavy fusion (Chameleon, Freedom in August, C.o.c.x., and Freelectronic in Montreux). In 2010, he published his

He is survived by his sister, Jaga Stanko Ekelund, and her family, as well as his ex-wife, Joanna Stanko, and their

Stanko, Wasilewski and Virelles both became ECM artists in their own right.) It speaks to Stanko's lasting impact

the History of Polish Jews. In this footage, Virelles is in captivating form, anchoring a new lineup with Ravi Coltrane on tenor saxophone, Dezron Douglas on bass and Kush Abadey on drums. Hearing the life force, the subtly attuned adventurism, of this multi-generational, multicultural quintet, with Stanko's horn burning calmly

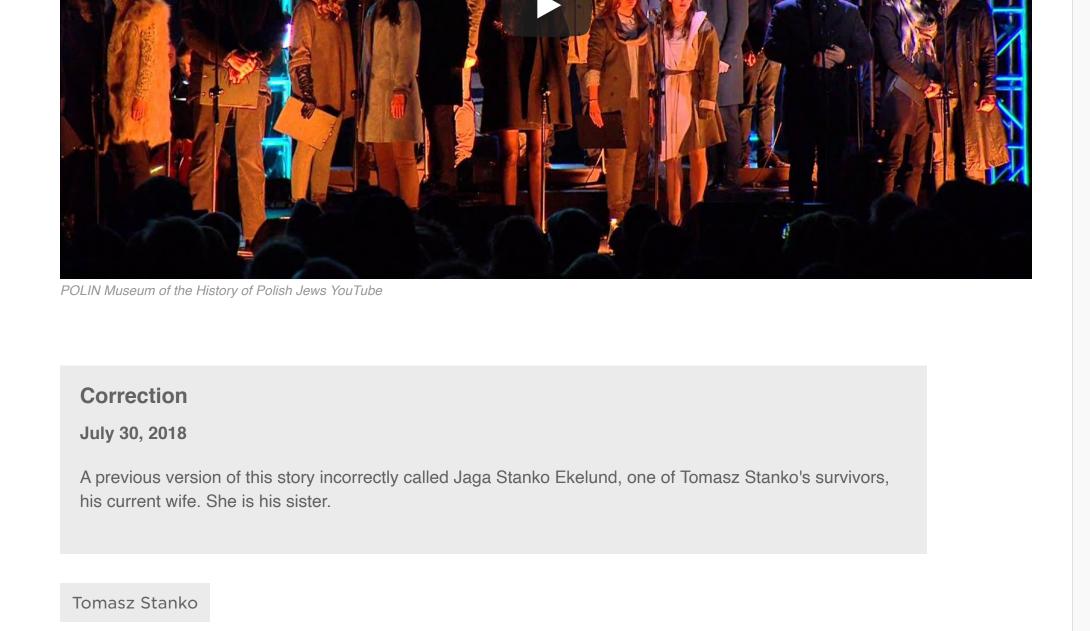
at its center, it's hard to deny what Stanko took to heart from the very beginning: The message is freedom.

One of Stanko's last major achievements was "Polin Suite," performed in October 2014 at the POLIN Museum of

Gramy OTWARCIE - koncert z okazji otwarcia wystawy stałej... Watch later

Share

SUBSCRIBE



## More Stories From NPR

In 'Soul,' Jon Batiste's Music Helps Bring Pixar's

Details. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply.

Sign Up For The NPR Music Newsletter

Listen to new music, watch the latest Tiny Desk concerts and more, sent weekly.

What's your email?

By subscribing, you agree to NPR's terms of use and privacy policy. NPR may share your name and email address with your NPR station. See

**OBITUARIES** Tony Rice, A Giant Of The Acoustic Guitar, Dead At 69

MUSIC INTERVIEWS 'Rompan Todo' Explores A Turbulent History Of **Latin America Through Rock Music** 

First Black Lead To Life **NEW MUSIC** Playboi Carti Finally Drops Second Album, 'Whole

ARTS & LIFE 'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom' Shines A Light On **August Wilson's Vision** 

Popular on NPR.org POP CULTURE

## NPR Editors' Picks

MUSIC INTERVIEWS

MUSIC INTERVIEWS

**Show Again** 

**NEW MUSIC** 

**NPR Classical** 

Viking's Choice

**Our 12 Favorite Things of 2020** 

MOVIES

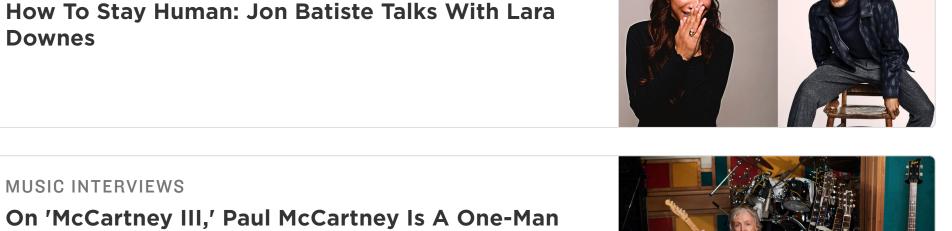
Lotta Red'

MUSIC FEATURES

**Enlightenment** 

Beethoven's Life, Liberty And Pursuit Of

**Downes** 

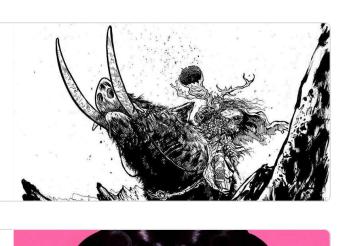


**MUSIC** 

In Memoriam: Jazz Night Radio Remembers 10 **Musicians Who Altered The Shape Of Jazz** 



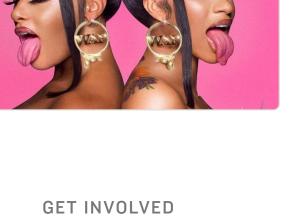
**NEW MUSIC** 



Listen To NPR Music's 100 Best Songs Of 2020

terms of use privacy your privacy choices text only © 2020 npr

**MUSIC LISTS** 



**READ & LISTEN** CONNECT **ABOUT NPR Newsletters** Home Overview **Support Public Radio Sponsor NPR** News **Facebook Finances** People **Arts & Life Twitter NPR Careers** Instagram **Press** NPR Shop Contact **Public Editor NPR Events** Corrections **Visit NPR** Help