



Polish Heritage

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Fall 2015

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2015 Chicago Convention

The 67th convention of the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) was hosted by an affiliate, the Chopin Society of Chicago, with its president Jaroslaw Golembiowski leading the effort to create an atmosphere conducive to a pleasant meeting. The selected theme was Polish Emigrant Composers and Musicians.

Thursday morning opening ceremonies began on schedule with the presentation of colors by the Polish Army Historical Association, who wore uniforms of the Polish Armed Forces from the inter-war period. Justine Izewski led in the singing of the Polish and American national anthems. She also sang Michał Ogiński's *Pożegnanie Ojczyzny* (Farewell to the Homeland) and Fryderyk Chopin's *Życzenie* (The Wish). After greetings by host Jaroslaw Golembiowski and ACPC president Mary Ellen Tyszka, Fr. Philip Majka delivered the invocation. Keynote speaker Mark Dobrzycki, Polonia activist and trustee of the village of Harwood Heights, IL, referenced the involvement and significance of Polonia in the daily life of the greater Chicago community. His engaging speech resonated with many in the audience. At lunch, Dr. Sławomir Dobrzański presented on Tadeusz Zygfryd Kasem (1904-1957) - a Polish-Jewish composer in exile and his role in teaching music.



The newly elected officers of the American Council for Polish Culture at the Chicago Convention. (photo courtesy Jackie Kolowski)

The afternoon was devoted to some sight-seeing. Among others, the group visited the Ed Paschke Art Center, the nearby Masonic Lodge, Saint Hyacinth's Basilica, then stopping for dinner at the New England Inn for some good basic East-European cuisine. In the evening all enjoyed the Music of Polish Emigrant Composers, with the expressive violinist Krzysztof Zimowski, accompanied by Sławomir Dobrzański

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FALL BOARD MEETING

Friends of Polish Art (FPA) is pleased to host the Fall Board Meeting of the ACPC on Friday and Saturday, November 13-14, 2015
(Friday Meeting: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm /
Saturday Meeting: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm)
Location: Holiday Inn Express and Suites Hotel,
1020 Washington Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48226.
Direct Phone: 313-887-7000

A Welcome Reception will be held at 9:00 pm on Friday. On Saturday, the FPA invites meeting participants to the Opening Night performance of *The Passenger* at the Michigan Opera Theatre, only 1/2 mile from hotel (transportation available). Tickets can be purchased from Carol Surma for a 25% discount.

(Please see information on the performance elsewhere in this issue.)

Call Carol ASAP to reserve ticket(s) at 248-224-0251 or email surmalaw@gmail.com. Please call Carol if you have any questions.

THE PASSENGER

Join the Friends of Polish Art in supporting an opera of moral purpose. Be a witness to the reign of evil and its consequences.

Composed by Polish-born composer Mieczyslaw Weinberg, based on the radio drama by Polish novelist and Auschwitz survivor Zofia Posmysz, *The Passenger* is a tapestry of Polish themes: Nazi-German occupation, Polish resistance and defiance, faith and faithfulness, remembrance of those lost, and the inevitable moral accounting.

A related article is featured on page 9 of this issue.





From the President



Thomas Payne

Greetings to all fellow ACPC members! I am proud to be your newly elected ACPC President at the Convention in Chicago in August. That was indeed a fantastic event with a cornucopia of splendid musical performances courtesy of the hard work and planning of our Convention Chairman Jaroslaw Golembiowski and the affiliate host, Chicago Chopin Society. But I have a small bone to pick with Jaroslaw – amidst the all of the excitement of the Saturday night banquet with award speeches and musical performances, he only gave me time to officially close the banquet and I did not have any time to give my acceptance speech that was scrawled on a wine-stained cocktail napkin! So for my first Message from the President, I am going to give you a few snippets of my intended closing remarks:

I am humbled and honored to be nominated and elected as your President. I am awed when I glance at the resumes, achievements and awards that my predecessors have possessed. I am realistic enough to know that I could never match those records. All that I can do is promise to serve to the best of my ability and attend to the mission of the ACPC. Likewise the experiences of the Board members are similarly very impressive in the dedication and genuine concern that these beacons radiate in their activity and support.

I am a late bloomer in the activities of Polonia, but better late than never! My first involvement with ACPC was at the 2010 Convention in Rapid City SD as the newly elected President of the Polish American Arts Association of Washington DC. My mother, who introduced me to the PAAA in 1999, had recently passed away 6 months earlier, and I had always wondered why she made such a big deal of these ACPC Conventions. When I attended the meetings and participated in the tour of the Crazy Horse monument, I had several moments of tears, as I realized why my mother eagerly anticipated the Conventions. It was exhilarating to take a special trip with a limited few to the top of the monument, for a view that will not be available in the future. I witnessed people who were enthusiastically and energetically devoting their time and attention to promoting their culture. As the agenda unfolded and projects were explained, I understood that the intended beneficiaries of these unselfish activities were not even present – the Polish-American community, especially younger ones, as well as American society are the prime beneficiaries of these enlightening projects. What a great way to devote your spare time! I became an ACPC convert.

Lech Walesa once said, "The transition from capitalism to communism is easy, one decree on nationalization solves the problem. However, the transition from commu-

nism to capitalism is a totally different matter. It is easy to make fish soup from the aquarium with living goldfish, but just imagine what challenge it is to try to make the aquarium with living goldfish out of the fish-soup." I assure you, this is not a problem in assuming the reins at ACPC. We do not have to make the aquarium out of fish soup. With special thanks to Mary Ellen Tyszka, I have no plans to create transformation. There are very capable Board Members who have the vision, intellect and passion to successfully continue furtherance of ACPC aims. I just need to maintain a steady pair of alert hands on the steering wheel to keep things on track. Most of these Board Members have forgotten more than what I know about what they do, so I am a work in progress. Tact has been defined as the ability to build a fire under someone without making their blood boil, so I hope to preside tactfully, but sometimes extreme cases call for extreme measures, so don't hold me to that.

I want to remind all affiliate and supporting organization presidents that you are members of the Board by virtue of your presidency. There are some who do not attend our Board meetings and Conventions; there may be many good reasons for that. But I assure you that you are welcome to participate and you will gain more than what you give up if you do attend. We will be meeting in Detroit on November 13-14 and will catch up on what is being accomplished and planned in our various committee projects with a special opportunity to attend the opening of the opera *The Passenger*. Please come so that I may meet you.

October is always a very special month, as many of us celebrate Polish Heritage and then we will move through the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Please let our webmaster know of any events that your club is having so that we can list in our events calendar – you never know who might show up! Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely,
Thomas Payne
President

2015 Chicago Convention

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on the piano. Among the music presented was the first-ever public performance of *Melody*, Jaroslaw Golembiowski's original composition.

After the morning business session on Friday, lunch was accompanied by a presentation by Jaroslaw Golembiowski on the history of the Polish-Emigrant symphony, based on his doctoral dissertation and illustrated with Power-Point slides. At the end, the audience listened to the second part of his Third Symphony.

The evening was filled with a performance by Katarzyna Sądej, this year's Marcella Kochanska Sembrich Voice Competition winner. The songs included works by Fryderyk Chopin, Stanisław Moniuszko, Mieczysław Karłowicz, Ignacy Paderewski, Karol Szymanowski, and Jerzy Petersburski's languid tangos. Sławomir Dobrzański accompanied her superbly on the piano. Music Committee chair Dr. Wanda O'Brien-Trefil presented the mezzo-soprano with a plaque and flowers.

Among the items accomplished during the discussions were some much needed revisions to the ACPC Constitution and the election of executive officers for the 2015-2017 term of office. These were: Thomas Payne, president; Robert Synkowski, first vice-president; Alicia Dutka, second vice-president; Judy Tompkins, treasurer; and Marcia Lewandowski, recording secretary. Board members elected were Robert Dutka, Raymond Glembocki, Jackie Kolowski, Cecilia Larkin, Peter Obst, Patricia Skurzynski, and Ted Więcek. Outgoing President Mary Ellen Tyszka was recognized for her strong leadership over the past two years.

Raymond and Cecilia Glembocki presented on the 2014 Boston session of the National Conference for the Social Studies (NCSS), which happened to be the largest such conference ever. Helping the Glembockis and Debbie Majka at the booth were Dr. Andrzej Pronczuk and journalist Jason Franzen. They announced that the next NCSS session will take place in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 13-15, 2015. The Education Committee renewed its commitment to creating prizes for students addressing topics from Polish history at the annual National History Day (NHD) competition. In this year's finals there were 24 entries that featured Poland or individuals of Polish extraction. Unfortunately, none received prizes.

The Savannah Casimir Pulaski Committee reported that the next observance of Pulaski's birthday will be on March 5, 2016 at the Pulaski Monument, in Savannah, Georgia. Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia president Marie Hejnosz reported that, after a hiatus of several years, the Adam Styka Art Exhibit and Competition, would again take place this year at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Doylestown, PA (on Labor



Photo captions:

Top: Group Photo of ACPC 67th Annual Convention participants at the Ed Paschke Art Center. (Photograph shows less than half of the members attending the convention.)

Bottom: - Dr. Jaroslaw Golembiowski (Convention Chair), Mary Ellen Tyszka (ACPC President), Dr. Sławomir Dobrzański (Accompanist), Katarzyna Sądej (Vocalist), Dr. Wanda O'Brien-Trefil (Music Committee Chair) and Alicia Dutka (Music Committee Member)

Day weekend and Sept. 12-13). Henrietta Nowakowski announced that a 5,000 dollar grant is available to conduct research on the Polish "strike" of 1619 at the Jamestown colony in Virginia.

Two new organizations were welcomed to the ACPC: The Paderewski Symphony of Chicago, as an affiliate; and the Center for European Studies, University of Florida, as a supporting organization.

The site for the Autumn Board Meeting was announced to be Detroit, MI (Nov. 13-14) and planning is underway to investigate the feasibility of holding the 68th Convention in Pittsburgh, PA (dates TBA). The Detroit meeting will give members the opportunity to attend Mieczysław Weinberg's extraordinary opera, *The Passenger* at the Detroit Opera House. The Convention ended with the traditional Awards Banquet.

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37th Adam Styka Art Show & Sale

On Sunday, August 30, 2015 the 37th Adam Styka Art Show and Sale was opened at Our Lady of Częstochowa Shrine in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. The Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia (PHS) organized the show with the cooperation of the Pauline Fathers and the American Council for Polish Culture.

Marie Hejnosz, President of the Polish Heritage Society of Philadelphia, opened the show introducing Father Edward Volz, Director of the Shrine. Father Volz has been instrumental in reviving the Styka Art Show by providing an excellent venue to display the art work. During his opening remarks, Father Ed spoke about the huge contribution of the Polish Heritage Society in preserving and propagating Polish culture. He spoke about the influence that art has on our lives and about the fact that each artist leaves something of themselves in every work that they create.

After the opening remarks, Marie Hejnosz presented \$1,250 in awards to the artists who were chosen by three jurors. The prizes were awarded as follows: First Prize to Fred Place; Second Prize ACPC Award to Jas Szygiel; Third Prize ACPC Award to Marybeth Hucker; Fourth Prize Emilia Piasecka Award to Steve Zazenski and the Fifth Prize to Eugeniusz Maziarz. Honorable mentions were received by the following artists: Joanne Cannon, Nina Hons, Brian Oliver, Zygmunt Sawosko, Mathew Szczepanowski and Ewa Zeller. Overall, 32 artists took part in the show representing Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

By all accounts, this year's show had exceptional artists exhibiting their works. Seven original works of art and two prints were sold during the two weekends that the show was open to the general public. All the artists expressed gratitude to the exhibit organizers for producing such an excellent show.

The show was opened during the Annual Polish American Festival at the Shrine. The festival is attended by thousands of visitors of all ethnicities from as far as Chicago and Connecticut. At the show, Polish Heritage members were able to introduce a number of visitors to the activities of the Society as well as the American Council for Polish Culture. In addition, a number of new members were recruited to join the PHS of Philadelphia.

Marie Hejnosz, the director of the show for the past



Top Photo: The volunteers who helped to make the 2015 Adam Styka Art Show and Sale a success.

Bottom Photo: Marie Hejnosz with Father Ed Volz

15 years, would like to thank Father Ed Volz and the Pauline Fathers of Our Lady of Częstochowa, the American Council for Polish Culture as well as all the volunteers who brought this show to a successful fruition. "When you look at a beautiful work of art your soul sings"

*Submitted by Marie Hejnosz
President
Polish Heritage Society*



POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC

The first half of 2015 started out sadly for the Polish Cultural Club of Greater Hartford, Inc. (PCCGH), as we suffered the loss of four long-standing members: Lottie Pozniak, Mary Wilkos Bogan, Helen Zasada, and Ewa-Brodowicz Wickwire.

On February 15, a blustery, blizzardy Sunday, the PCCGH initiated its first "Pączki na Karnawał" to celebrate the beginning of Lent (Tłusty Wtorek - Fat Tuesday) before and after masses at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church in Hartford. (top photo on right) Those who made the challenging trip to church, including our intrepid volunteers, enjoyed a tasty array of fruit-filled pączki and contributed to a sell-out event. Plans are already in place for next year, along with prayers for better weather.

A lecture entitled "Gardens of the World — Madame Ganna Walska's Lotusland" was given by Richard Benfield, Professor of Geography at Central Connecticut State University on March 26. The audience was captivated by Professor Benfield's slide show and most especially with the life and career of Polish-born operatic sensation and garden enthusiast, Madame Ganna Walska.

The Club's first "Tag and Treasure Sale," held on June 13, was a phenomenal success. With over twenty volunteers on hand to help set up and stage this inaugural event, everything went like clockwork. The donations were varied and appealing, sales were brisk, camaraderie was rampant, and expectations were exceeded. We are grateful to all who participated. (bottom photo on right)

Three outstanding young scholars of Polish heritage were awarded the Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship at a presentation ceremony held at the Polish National Home in Hartford on June 18. They were: Jeffrey DePinto, Jr., who will be attending the University of Connecticut-Storrs and majoring in Biomedical Engineering; Matthew Guminiak, who will be attending the University of Rhode Island-Kingston, majoring in Marketing, and Kara Sitnik, a sophomore at Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island who is studying Fashion Merchandising and Retail Marketing. Each received a check in the amount of \$1,000. (These students are featured in the middle photo on the right.)

After a well-deserved summer hiatus, our Board and members look forward to a busy fall and winter.

*Submitted by
Patricia Kaczynski and Frances Pudlo,
Co-Presidents
Polish Club of Greater Hartford, Inc.*





2015 Awards

Presented at the
2015 ACPC Convention
in Chicago, Illinois



Alicia Dutka and Stanislaw Rawicka present Camille Kopielski with a bouquet of flowers from PNA Council 91.



Dr. Pawel Checinski receives the Cultural Achievement Award from Tom Payne.



ACPC Founders award presented to Raymond and Cecilia Glembocki.



ACPC President Mary Ellen Tyszka presents the Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Zbigniew Sobol.

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Music was provided by Jaroslaw Golembiowski, the superb Marcus Band, and singer Ewa Staniszewska whose songs took us back to Poland of the 1930s.

Honored with the ACPC Founders Award were Raymond and Cecilia Glembocki and Camille Kopielski. The Cultural Achievement Award was presented to Dr. Pawel Checinski, a pianist and teacher of piano, for a lifetime dedicated to music, especially that of Fryderyk Chopin. The Distinguished Service Award recipient was Dr. Zbigniew Sobol for his long service as a physician and surgeon who supported many charitable programs that helped the people of Poland through aid to hospitals and institutions. We were also very pleased to associate with a very large contingent of members from our South Bend affiliate.

As members started their return home from Chicago, it was with a satisfaction that the Convention accomplished some worthwhile goals and set out a plan of action for the next year. Our thanks to Jaroslaw and his organization for arranging the meeting. All agreed that it was a memorable Convention, with exquisite emphasis on Polish music.



2016 CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT

Pittsburgh, the Three Rivers City, beckons in 2016! The ACPC Convention Committee in cooperation with Pittsburgh Polonia are planning an exciting and fun-filled convention in Pittsburgh. Ride to the top of Duquesne incline to see "one of the best views in America". Visit the Andy Warhol Museum and the Polish Room at the University of Pittsburgh. Thrill to the Marcella Kochanska-Sembrich awardee's recital in an elegant venue. Just a few of the events that await us in Pittsburgh. More information will follow as it becomes available.

Frederick Chopin is regarded as one of the greatest influences that pulsated beauty, life and triumph into the Polish people. Known as the poet of the piano, he put into notes that which could not be expressed into words: the sentiments of a great nation recounted graciously by a grand soul. Chopin remains a constant source of pride and inspiration for Poles around the globe, from Warsaw to Chicago.

It is this very inspiration that led acclaimed Polish composer Jarosław Gołombiowski to pursue establishing a venue in which Polish musicians could be celebrated and given a chance to build blossoming careers.

A graduate of the Karol Lipinski Academy of Music in Wroclaw, and Frederik Chopin Music University in Warsaw, Poland, Gołombiowski understood the delicate balance of establishing a musical career. His music has been organized in over 100 opuses with published works such as his latest book, *Music for Hours*.

In 2003, along with board members Lida Kazmierczak, Ewa Zaborowski and Andrzej-Marek Urbaniak, Gołombiowski founded the Chicago Chopin Society, an organization with a mission to actively support and promote Polish composers, artists, and artistic organizations. Now celebrating over a decade, the Chicago Chopin Society has already left its mark on the Chicago, with years of beautifully dignified concerts and festivals.

Partnering with other Chopin Societies such as the Chopin Society of Houston and the Miami Chopin Foundation, the Chicago Chopin Society set a high standard for the celebration of Polish Music with the first Annual Chopin Festival in 2004 showcasing the talent of Adam Wodnicki with a tributary arrangement of Chopin's finest pieces. The Chicago Chopin Society's first benefit concerts were held later that year, with artists such as Hubert Salwarowski, the Penderecki String Quartet and Adam Golka who played the world premiere of Jaroslaw Gołombiowski's Opus 100.

The second Annual Chopin Festival in 2005 featured Polish violinists Mikhail Yanovitski and Jolanta Sosnowska. 2006 welcomed Chicago-based Rachel Naomi Kudo, the finalist at the XV International F. Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw. 2007 was filled with brilliant performances by Piotr Róžański, winner of the 2006 Polish National Chopin Piano Competition, as well as Chicago maestro Pawel Checinski, whose encores lasted over 40 minutes!



At left:
Edyta Kulczak, mezzo-soprano and
Jaroslaw Gołombiowski, accompanist.
Photo: Iwona Biederman:



At left:
Performers and Chopin Society
members after the concert in 2005:
from upper left: Pawel Checinski;
Monica Sillvan; Jozef Spewak;
Anna Luniewska; Urszula
Subczynska; Janusz Obara;
Jaroslaw Gołombiowski;
Jolanta Sosnowska; Violinist, Mikhail
Yanovitsky; Pianist, Andrzej Marek
Urbaniak.
Archival Photo by Iwona Biederman.

During the fifth Annual Chopin Festival in 2008, John Owings, Gold medalist of the first Robert Casadeus International Piano Competition, won the praise of the audience for his Chopin recital, followed in 2009 by violinist David Yonan and soprano Stefania Kondella.

In 2010, the 200th Anniversary of Chopin's Birthday welcomed lectures, recitals and master classes alike with performances by Nina Drath and young pianist Michael Pecak, while 2011 was graced with actor Wojciech Malec who presented an evening of poetry celebrating Chopin and his music. Sławomir Dobrzanski performed compositions by Maria Szymanowska, a respected Polish composer, in 2012.

In 2013 Edyta Kulczak, mezzo soprano of the Metropolitan Opera, performed works by Chopin, M. Karłowicz, S. Niewiadomski, and S. Moniuszko at the Polish Museum.

In the spring of 2014 Dr. May Phang gave a recital entitled Fryderyk Chopin and Our Contemporary Composers, while December brought talented guitarist Kacper Wierzchos whose performance of classical medleys from Bach to Takemitsu, resonated with an enthusiastic audience.

The 2015 season featured artists such as pianist Michal Korzistka, violinists Miguel Garcia Bender and Agnieszka

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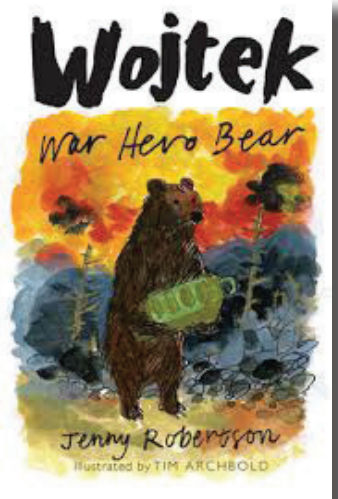
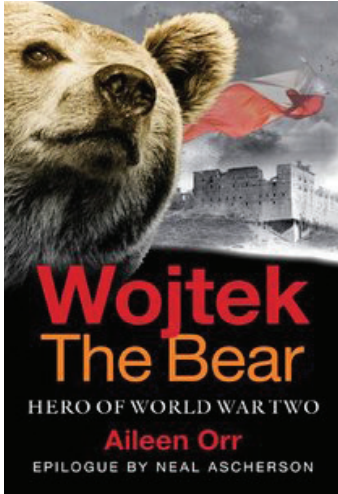
Wojtek

the Polish Soldier Bear

by Dr. Wanda O'Brien-Trefil



Private Wojtek and handler Peter Prendys are memorialised by this statue in Edinburgh, Scotland.



Children love bears.

Through the adorable symbol of Wojtek, the Polish soldier bear, children and everyone can learn about Polish history and Polish heritage.

On November 7th, 2015, a statue honoring Wojtek will be unveiled in Princess Street Gardens, Edinburgh, Scotland. Another statue of Wojtek was unveiled last year in Park Jordana, Kraków. Additional statues of Wojtek stand in the Sikorski Museum in London and in Grimsby, Scotland. Six books have been written about Wojtek, documentary movies are available on YouTube, and plaques commemorating the bear are in the war museums of London and Canada. So, what did a bear do to be so internationally distinguished?

In 1942, a native boy brought a tiny orphaned cub to the army camp of the Polish Second Army Corps (2 *Korpus Polski*), stationed in Iran. The Second Corps was a military unit of about 120,000 young Polish men and women,

released by Stalin from the Siberian labor camps to form a military presence in the Middle East. The 22nd Artillery Supply Division nursed Wojtek with condensed milk in a vodka bottle, and adopted him as their mascot. Even though Wojtek had no imprinting on how to behave like a bear, he had many examples of how to behave like a soldier. He learned to salute, drink beer, wrestle, beg for cigarettes, and play tug of war. As he grew to 6 feet and 500 pounds, Wojtek became very useful. He had the strength of five men, and helped to transport ammunition by carrying mortar rounds and heavy crates of artillery shells.

An enormous morale-booster, Wojtek moved with the army from Iran, to Syria, Palestine, Iraq, and finally, to Egypt. He lived in tents with the soldiers, ate what they ate, and was transported in a crate they constructed for

him. The Artillery Division identified with Wojtek, stamping their trucks and shirts with a logo of Wojtek carrying an artillery shell (top left).

When Polish soldiers were deployed to fight in the Italian campaign at the Battle of Monte Casino, the Artillery Division insisted on taking their mascot with them. However, the captain of the ship, the *Batory*, which was to transport the troops to Italy, refused to allow a 500 pound bear on board. So, with the approval of General Anders, Wojtek was made into Private Wojtek, with a rank, serial number, dog tags, and a ration card. In formal military documents, Wojtek is officially listed as a soldier of the Polish Second Army Corps.

Wojtek acquitted himself very bravely at Monte Casino, fearlessly carrying crates of artillery shells to supply the front line, and was promoted to Corporal Wojtek. At the end of the war, when the Polish soldiers emigrated to Scotland, England, and Wales, the Artillery Division took Wojtek to Grimsby, in Berwickshire, Scotland. He lived with the demobilized troops for a year at a base in Weelsby Woods, gaining fame in the Scottish country side and with the Scottish press. Eventually, the soldiers had no choice but to donate their comrade-at-arms to the Edinburgh Zoo, where he remained a very popular attraction for 21 years (1942-1963).

To commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Monte Casino, Wojtek was selected as the representative icon of this bloody battle which opened the way to Rome for the Allies, at the cost of 3,000 Polish soldiers, dead or wounded. In Poland, over 50,000 zloty were raised by private donations to mount Wojtek's bronze statue in Kraków. In Scotland, the bear who helped fight the Nazis was memorialized by Aileen Orr, Scottish author of the children's book *Wojtek the Bear, Hero of World War II*. She raised 200,000 British pounds and commissioned a bronze statue of Wojtek walking with his caretaker to be installed in Edinburgh. (photo above) Wojtek was also the subject of other children's books.

Wojtek is on Facebook, and t-shirts with his logo can be bought online. Photos of Wojtek playing with soldiers, carrying heavy objects, and boarding the *Batory* are readily available on Google Images. Documentary films

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Polonia and The Passenger

by Daniel Misteravich

The personification of the Polish nation as a woman named Polonia, the Latin word for Poland, has been a recurring theme for Polish artists. For many Polish artists in the Romantic Period, Polonia became a symbol of the Polish nation suffering under partition, a nation of people deprived of their independent country by three occupying foreign governments. The Polish painter Artur Grottger created a series of works entitled *Polonia* which memorialized the suffering of Poles under occupation. In turn,

Grotter's *Polonia* inspired the composer Ignacy Jan Paderewski to compose his *Symphony in B Minor Polonia*. Jan Matejko, in his painting entitled *Polonia-1863*, portrayed Polonia being shackled after a failed national uprising, seated before the soldiers of the occupying nations. Matejko's powerful, patriotic paintings were so influential that they were a threat to the Nazi Third Reich. According to Danuta Batorska in her article "The Political Censorship of Jan Matejko," *Art News* 51, Jan Matejko's paintings headed the list of works to be destroyed by the Nazi German armies invading Poland.

An audience might discover echoes of Polonia in Mieczysław Weinberg's opera *The Passenger*, not in the direct manner of the Romantics, but by suggestion and indirect reference in the modern style of the 20th century. Based on the play by Polish author Zofia Posmysz, half of the events depicted in *The Passenger* take place during the time period when Poland had once again been partitioned, this time by Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia during World War II. The main character of the opera, Polish prisoner Marta, like Matejko's Polonia, is held prisoner by an occupying army. Marta is a prisoner at the Nazi German concentration camp at Auschwitz. In contrast to Matejko's painting in which we see a defeated Polonia being shackled; in *The Passenger*, Marta is not shackled physically or emotionally; rather, although a prisoner, she is in continuous resistance to her SS guard Lisa. As the patriotic Matejko painted the image of Polonia on his canvas, in *The Passenger*, Marta's fiancé Tadeusz, an artist, member of the Polish Resistance, and fellow prisoner, draws Marta's image on a medallion. He depicts her without hair, the way she appears to him as a prisoner. The SS guard Lisa sees the medallion and is moved to call Marta the "famous Madonna of the camp."

Because of its sensitive subject matter, *The Passenger* is an experience that can evoke powerful emotions in its audience. Having in mind the symbolism of Marta as Polonia while viewing *The Passenger*, audience members may experience an additional emotional undertow and find the opera's meaning greatly enhanced. *The Passenger* will be performed by Michigan Opera Theatre, November 14, 18, 21, and 22, 2015.



The Passenger opera by Mieczysław Weinberg



"Polonia-1863" painting by Jan Matejko
(fragment)



"Branka" one of ten drawings by Artur Grottger
in the series "Polonia".

ACPC AWARDS TWO, \$3,000

LOUIS AND NELLIE SKALNY SCHOLARSHIPS

For the past nineteen years, the Louis Skalny Foundation has donated a grant for the Louis & Nellie Skalny Scholarships for Polish Studies. The American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) is the administrator in awarding the scholarships. The Committee: Evelyn Bachorski-Bowman, M.S.; Ursula Brodowicz, M.S.; Ange Iwanczyk, M.S.; Marion Winters, M.A.; Deborah M. Majka, M.S., Chair.



Kristina Kwacz

The Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at SUNY, Empire State College, focuses on independent, self-directed study, which involves an enormous amount of focus and independent initiative. Kristina came to the realization that she could pursue her goal of a Master of Arts degree and develop a creative project that would incorporate photos taken during past journeys to Poland

after returning to her childhood home in the Hudson Valley to care for her Mother, who had been the catalyst for these trips.

Kristina's primary method of promoting Polish heritage and culture is via the medium of photography. She began photographing life in Poland in 1988. The images captured then marked the end of an era as sweeping changes soon altered the political, social and economic climate of the country.

Of Kristina's photographs, Professor Joseph Caputo, a primary examiner at a Portfolio Review Workshop writes, "What I saw was an impressive series of black and white photographs taken in Poland. But these were no ordinary images. In the tradition of *Life Magazine's* Photo Essays (by such prominent artists as Dorothea Lange and W. Eugene Smith), I was shown a powerful story, a journalist's empathic instinct to identify and crystallize the essence of a rich and complex history into a form accessible to all. This is no small skill".

In her final Master's project at ESC, Kristina intends to significantly broaden the depth of her exhibitions by displaying her documentary images alongside family photos depicting life in the Polish Diaspora in the U.S. By adding memoir and narrative as well as artifacts and ephemera, she will present a three-dimensional, interdisciplinary view of a family, blending history, culture and visual art. It will allow for broad engagement in the mainstream community.



Jennifer Byron

Looking forward to a professional career, Jennifer Byron is passionate about learning foreign languages, and is a Ph.D. Spanish Cultural Studies candidate at Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. She has been a teaching assistant at the School of International Letters and Culture-Spanish Program since 2010.

Her interest in her Polish heritage is remarkable, given that her great grandmother, Jenny Ann, better known as Gienia, was a first generation child of a Polish immigrant

family, born in the United States. Life in a small town in Massachusetts where Jennifer grew up did not provide the appropriate setting for studying Polish culture and language. But upon arrival at Arizona State and learning that the Polish language was available, Jennifer immediately enrolled. (Incidentally, in class, Jennifer chose to be called "Gienia" after her great-grandmother as each student was asked to choose a Polish name.)

A recipient of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Scholarship, she completed the full summer language and culture program at the Jagiellonian University. Danko Spivka, her Advanced Polish instructor notes that, "her graduate work is about Polish-Latin American literary and cultural ties. She is stellar in both these areas for which she has been awarded both best student in Spanish and best student in Polish".



Likos, violist David Perez, and cellist Partycja Likos, with the world premiere of the 3rd String Quartet by J. Golembiowski.

In 2014 and 2015 the Chicago Chopin Society forged a relationship with the Polish Mission in Orchard Lake, Michigan to showcase Polish culture with artists from both cities participating in important Polish Mission events such as: the Commemoration of September 1939, Leon Wyczolkowski and The Art of His Epoch, and evening of Commemoration of Saint John Paul II.

Thanks to the Chicago Chopin Society, Chicago's Polish culture has been enriched with over a decade of flourishing artists. From star-studded festivals to concerts of aspiring musicians, the Chicago Chopin Society has stayed true to its goal: promoting Polish arts and bringing to the forefront the talent of Polish musicians. Inspired by Chopin, headed by Jarosław Golembiowski, and realized by a passionate Polish Community, we only imagine the talent that the next decade of the Chicago Chopin Society will bring.

MARY FLANAGAN AWARDED PRIDE OF POLONIA

by Marion V. Winters

On Sunday, August 23, 2015, the Pride of Polonia Award for 2015 was presented to Mrs. Mary Flanagan after a mass at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania during which Bishop Andrzej Zglejszewski of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York presided along with twelve additional priests. Bishop Zglejszewski along with Monsignor Anthony Czarnecki of St. Joseph Basilica, Webster, Massachusetts presented the distinguished award to Mrs. Flanagan. The annual Pride of Polonia Award is given by the National Polish Apostolate Committee to an individual whose cultural, educational and charitable activities benefit the life of Polonia.

Mary Eleanor Witkowski-Flanagan nee Lubienski was born in Detroit, MI. She holds a BA in Art History and an MA in Art History and City Planning. The thesis for the latter was on the Rebuilding of Warsaw's Old Town after WWII. Professionally, Mrs. Flanagan worked as a Congressional Aide to former Congressmen Lucien N. Nedzi, John D. Dingell of Michigan and Henry Nowak of New York.

After retiring from The Hill, she and her husband started a publishing and design business. They edited and published several newsletters for many years, which included the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC), the Polish American Arts Association, and Friends of John Paul II Foundation.

As President of the Polish American Arts Association of Washington, DC, she coordinated a traveling exhibit of contemporary works of Polish artists to raise funds for the School for the Blind in Laski, Poland. As President of the local Polish American Congress (PAC) she arranged a Parade in Washington, DC in honor of Pulaski. Thanks to Mrs. Flanagan's fund raising efforts the 40 foot mural by

Jan de Rosen in one of Pittsburgh's former Catholic was saved and moved to Doylestown in St. Anne's Chapel adjacent to the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa. This spirited Polonian also authored the biography of famed Polish-American Jan Henryk de Rosen, titled *With Paintbrush And Sword*.

Mrs. Flanagan has served on the Boards of Polish American organizations including the Polish American Arts Association and Friends of John Paul II Foundation in Rome. She served on the Committee of Five headed by John Cardinal Krol and Congressman Clement Zablocki to raise funds in the U.S. for the Polish Home in Rome as a gift to the newly elected Pope John Paul II. Six million dollars were raised worldwide.

Among her many awards, Mrs. Flanagan was given the honor of Knight Commander of St. Sylvester by Pope John Paul II and the Cavalier's Cross by the Polish Government. A long-time supporter of the Polish Seminary at Orchard Lake, Michigan and of their Polish Mission at which she is a Conservator donor of two Polish Panorama figures, Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski and Stefan Batory.

The American Council for Polish Culture and the Friends of John Paul II Foundation heartily congratulate Mary Flanagan on receiving this prestigious award for her many accomplishments and achievements that have richly benefited Polonia.



Msgr. Czarnecki, Robert Flanagan, Mary Flanagan and Bishop Zglejszewski.

Wojtek

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about Wojtek were made by Poles and Scots: *Niedzwiedz który poszedł na wojne* (1 hr. in Polish.)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=94Sj572pWzY

and *Soldier Bear Wojtek* (12 min. in English)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFdEUEJcfO0.

Promoting the story of Wojtek to American children is a new initiative for the ACPC Education Committee. Dr. Wanda O'Brien-Trefil has started the process of gaining approval of the Wojtek books for the libraries of elementary and middle schools. By gaining approval for these books in respective public school systems, thousands of children will have the opportunity to learn Polish history in this endearing and entertaining way.

Photo top right: At the unveiling of his statue in Krakow's Park Jordanów, Wojtek was shown full military honors.

Bottom right: Private Wojtek in the Polish Army camp.

