



Polish Heritage

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ACPC 75th ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION

During July 27-29, 2023, the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) celebrated its 75th, Diamond Anniversary Convention in Troy, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit where the organization came into being in 1948. Later this year a book will be published documenting the past quarter century of ACPC activities, similar to the two that were compiled for the 25th and 50th anniversaries. The 2023 convention motto was "Celebrating our rich past - looking to a bright future."

The convention proceedings opened with a welcome by Richard Z. Tarnicki, President of the host organization the American Polish Cultural Society of Troy, Michigan, followed by a flag presentation ceremony by the Knights of Columbus with participation of the Wawel Folk Ensemble, featuring Michael Ostrowski in full hussar regalia which included the characteristic wings. The opening invocation was delivered by Father Gary Michalik of St. Colette Church in Livonia, Michigan, and was followed by the keynote address by the Polish Consul General in Chicago Dr. Pawel Zyzak.

After ACPC President Ray Glembocki took the podium and officially opened the convention proceedings, there was a special tribute to Reverend Canon Philip S. Majka, longtime chaplain of the organization who passed away earlier in the year. Most of the business sessions were filled with reports given by various committees. Among them was Cecilia Glembocki's presentation on the ACPC's participation in the annual National Council for Social Studies conference where the ACPC sponsors and operates a booth with educational material promoting Polish culture, history and information about the lives of Poles in America.

There were two interesting presentations given during the lunchtime sessions on Thursday and Friday: *The Great Return of the Brotherhood of St. Luke paintings to Poland* by Peter Obst and *Honoring the*

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The Myth of Warsaw Rebuilt

by David J. Motak

Myth and legends can be found in the histories of nearly every country. Poland is no exception. And its capital Warsaw – or rather the rebuilding of Warsaw after WWII - is a perfect example.

For decades, many of us were captivated by stories of Warsaw's near total destruction at the hands of the German army while the Russians stood on the other side of the Vistula River and waited for the work to be completed. The Germans systematically demolished nearly every building in the city center, particularly those that had a cultural, historic, or sentimental value to Poles. However, not all of Warsaw's landmarks were destroyed. That would happen during the city's reconstruction.

Perhaps some background is needed.

When Warsaw was part of the Russian Empire, it was regarded merely as a provincial garrison town; its growth and development were greatly stymied by Russian bureaucracy and malevolence. In fact, Warsaw stood far behind other east-central European capitals in housing, infrastructure, and standard of living. Certainly, the "historic core" of old Warsaw boasted many beautiful public buildings, palaces, and villas that have collectively contributed to our nostalgic image of the city. This was where the more affluent Varsovians lived and established their businesses, but further development was stymied for many years.

It was not until the later part of the 1800s that things began to change.

These improvements were not initiated by the Russian empire, but rather by a new generation of successful Warsaw businessmen. Beautiful new buildings were constructed, many in the lavish Beaux Arts, Art Nouveau and Empire styles. Warsaw's Marszałkowska Street and nearby avenues began to be lined with outstanding architecture, with businesses and shops on the first floors, apartment units above. In effect, Warsaw's business leaders wanted to "out Paris, Paris," and Marszałkowska was soon transformed into Warsaw's *Champs-Élysées*. As a result, Warsaw became known as the Paris of the North.

Another obstacle to improving Warsaw was topography. The city abuts the Vistula River from north to south. So, traditionally, it was difficult to maneuver easily throughout the particularly dense urban landscape. Outside of the affluent inner city, there were numerous poorer neighborhoods

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From the Editor.....

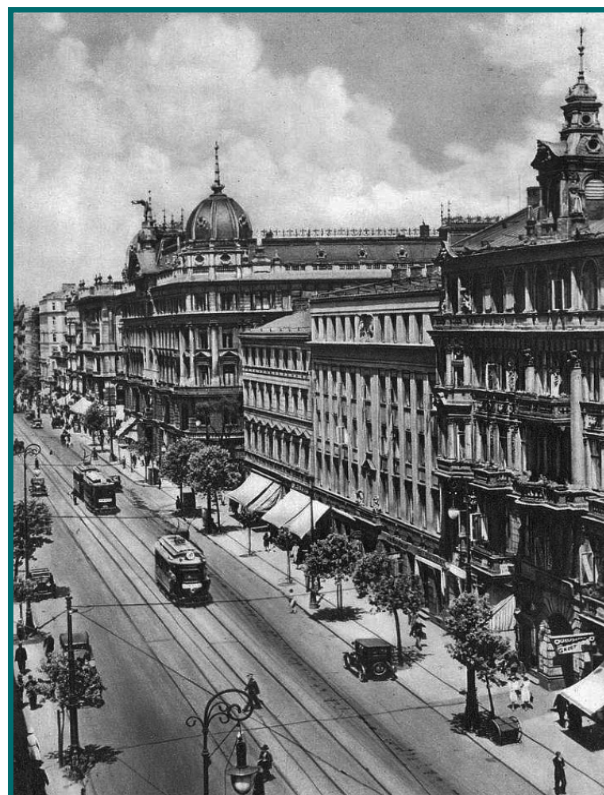
Dear Readers:

In the eleven years that I have served as your editor, this is the first time that I have addressed you through an Editor's Message. This is in conjunction with the feature article on Warsaw that I have presented in this issue of *Polish Heritage*. I have visited Warsaw countless times since the two years that I was a young foreign exchange student living in Poland. Each time I have come away with mixed feelings. I was impressed by those parts of the city that had been lovingly rebuilt from the ashes of WWII, but depressed by the gray, drab city that most of Warsaw had become over the years. The artist in me was appalled and saddened; the historian in me wondered how all this could have happened. Communist propaganda extolled the beauty of the city, an idea that was fostered in popular culture and in song. Warsaw, we were told, was one of the most beautiful cities on earth. While I tended to doubt this, I did feel that Warsaw was certainly the most heroic.

In *The Captive Mind*, Czesław Miłosz tells us that color is abhorrent to authoritarian regimes and - especially under communism - monotonous, gray environments force people to feel subjugated and compliant. I regard the rebuilding of Warsaw as very much in tandem with this thought. From public buildings to apartment towers, communists wanted large, bland, austere buildings. Color and style represented individuality to them, and individuality was threatening to their political agenda.

I soon developed a keen interest in Warsaw's pre-war architecture, but a jarring incident occurred few years ago during one particular visit there. I had just checked in to the Hotel Polonia located in the heart of the city. Hotel Polonia is one of the few older buildings in that area left standing after the Second World War. Arriving in my room, I began to unpack and turned on Polish television. A documentary was being aired about the reconstruction of Warsaw - rather - about the *demolition* of the exact same area in which my hotel stood. I was enthralled. The documentary told the story of the many fine buildings that had existed in that area which survived the war in relatively good condition and could have been restored, but instead were demolished. The broadcast presented a pictorial inventory of building after beautiful building that were destroyed on ulica Marszałkowska and neighboring streets, mostly to fulfill the designs of both the Communist Party and Warsaw's post-war urban planners. A large part of this destruction was to provide space for the soaring Palace of Culture (Pałac Kultury) as well as for the widening of key avenues to accommodate parades and public manifestations which seem to have been a favorite communist pastime.

As I watched the film, I became both distressed and angry that such beauty was destroyed, seemingly for no valid reason. I looked out of my hotel room window and took in the view of the mammoth Palace of Culture which stood across the street and the wide swaths of empty space



Warsaw's ulica Marszałkowska in happier times.

surrounding it. Could it be that a beautiful, vibrant part of Warsaw was intentionally destroyed to create this? How could this be?

This experience sent me on a multi-year quest to gather more information. Luckily, now that Poland is a free country, scholars can question the mistakes of the past, particularly those made during the communist era; I began to research the topic and locate as many books about Warsaw's reconstruction as I could find. I also conducted extensive research on the Internet including on-line lectures by prominent Polish architectural historians.

I have been pondering this subject now for a few years. The result is the article beginning on page one of this issue. Certainly, it is not a fully comprehensive discussion of the topic, nor does it examine every aspect of the issue. That would take many volumes. But I have attempted to at least broach the subject and present readers with some basic information, offering an alternate view contrary to what had been popularized in the past.

I realize that much of this information may be unsettling to some but the truth is - sometimes, unfortunately - the truth. Like Warsaw's ruins, the truth can be buried for some time, but, eventually, it sees the light of day.

I hope that you will find the article informative.

Dave Motak



President's Message



President
Cecilia Larkin

Dear ACPC Members and Friends:

Just two months ago, I was elected president of the American Council for Polish Culture. I thank you for entrusting me with this role and I can only hope to live up to the example of the twenty-seven extraordinary individuals who have held this office during the ACPC's seventy-five year history. Accepting this position at the 75th Anniversary ACPC Convention in Troy, Michigan, a nearby suburb of Detroit, was especially moving for me because Detroit is where I first arrived in America and where I began my association with our organization. As a member of the Friends of Polish Art and director of the *Polish Varieties* radio program, I participated on the publicity committee of the 30th annual gathering in Orchard Lake in 1978. That was also the year I left for Washington, D. C., where I immediately joined the Polish American Arts Association and became assistant editor, then briefly editor, of the ACPC newsletter *Polish Heritage*. So my history with the ACPC is quite long, even considering a hiatus of some twenty-five years when my job with the U. S. government took me overseas or otherwise prevented active involvement. I have been actively engaged for the past dozen years both in PAAA, of which I was president for six years, and ACPC where I served on the Board of Directors as Chair of the Music Committee and member of other committees. Since 2015, I've attended all the ACPC conventions and board meetings and worked closely with my two predecessors, Tom Payne and Ray Glembocki. The PAAA hosted a convention and two board meetings during that time.

I spent most of the latter part of this past summer going through years of ACPC materials to reinforce the understanding of our history and to get a sense of direction to be taken as we enter the fourth quarter century of our existence. I also talked with key members of the executive committee about more immediate agenda items.

As this issue of *Polish Heritage* goes to press, plans are underway for our Board of Directors fall meeting to be held in New Britain, Connecticut, hosted by its Polish American Foundation. Of special significance to us is the fact that New Britain is the home of the Central Connecticut State University and its Burrill Library Special Collections where the archives of ACPC and many of our affiliates are held, including a large amount of material that was delivered there from Minnesota in 2022. A good portion of the records has been digitized and is accessible online. We look forward to having more of the material available that way for those who wish to study our history. As part of learning

from the past, we will soon publish the third "quarter century book," covering the past twenty-five years of reports from our affiliates, committees and past presidents.

There is a lot to contemplate and many examples to follow. But I like to look into the future and what we are going to do in the next quarter century. Most of us may not be there to celebrate the ACPC's centennial but we can try to make sure that the new generation will have something to write about in the fourth quarter century book.

I very much look forward to meeting all of you, especially those whom I don't yet know personally. Ideally, each of our affiliates should be represented at board meetings by an affiliate's president, or his or her designee. The mission of the ACPC depends on all of us working together.

I wish to thank the American Polish Cultural Society of Troy, Michigan, and its president Richard Tarnicki, for hosting this year's important anniversary convention. Many thanks go to Jackie Kolowski and Basia Lemecha and all those who took part in getting everything done. I know how much effort it took but everything worked like clockwork and the result will be long remembered. My personal memories will always be very fond. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Have a great fall season and a happy Polish Heritage Month.

Cecilia Larkin,
President



Submitted by Peter J. Obst

Photos by Alicja Karlic, Richard Larkin and Conrad Miczko.

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The new slate of ACPC officers after being sworn in at the 2023 Convention: l-r: President Cecilia Larkin; Nominating Committee Chair Rose Kobylinski; First Vice President Jarosław Gołombiowski; Treasurer Tom Payne, Second Vice President; Lilia Kieltyka (in rear).



Banquet attendees perform the Grande Polonaise.



Newly elected President Cecilia Larkin and outgoing President Raymond Glembocki lead the banquet gathering in singing "Sto Lat" before cutting the 75th anniversary ACPC cake.



At the 2023 Sembrich Concert - Jarosław Gołombiowski, soprano Dorothy Gal, Cecilia and Richard Larkin, Ray Glembocki.

Soldiers of General Haller's Blue Army by Henrietta Nowakowski. The convention participants later visited the Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Southfield, Michigan, a site where a number of a site where a number of veteran soldiers from the Blue Army are interred. Henrietta Nowakowski worked with Poland's Institute of National Remembrance to sponsor the installation of proper grave markers and a monument on the site. For this work she received the *Republicae Memoriae Meritum* medal from the Polish government.

A third presentation was by John Cebrowski on a newly published book *Surviving Genocide: Personal Recollections* written by Donna Chmara, a member of the Polish Arts Club of Trenton, an ACPC affiliate.

Late Friday afternoon, Dr. John Radziłowski, director of the Polish Institute of Culture and Research in Orchard Lake Schools, conducted a campus tour with a visit to its beautiful chapel. Following a dinner in the school dining room, participants departed by bus for the Steinway Piano Gallery where the 2023 Marcella Kochańska Sembrich Award Concert was held in its Concert Hall. This year's Sembrich Award winner Dorothy Gal rendered a beautiful, often emotional and at times humorous singing performance, accompanied by Dr. Jarosław Gołombiowski on the piano. Among the numbers performed was a sung prayer *Zdowaś Mario* by a young composer Andrew Schneider who flew in especially from Texas to be present at the premiere of his work.

As it was an election year for the ACPC, a new Executive Committee, Credentials and Grievances and Nominating Committees, as well as six new board members were elected by the delegates. The executive committee includes:

- President - Cecilia Larkin
- 1st Vice President - Jarosław Gołombiowski
- 2nd Vice President - Lilia Kieltyka
- Treasurer - Tom Payne

It should be noted that Cecilia Larkin is a past president of the Polish American Arts Association in Washington, D. C. Her activities on behalf of Solidarity and Polish independence are listed in a recent book: *A Covert Action: Reagan, the CIA, and the Cold War Struggle in Poland* by Seth G. Jones.

The convention ended with an Awards Banquet and dancing at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy, Michigan, which is also home to the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame. The ACPC Legal Counsel Mark Szpak was master of ceremonies for the event. The new officers were sworn in by the Honorable Steve Bieda, Judge of the City of Warren, Michigan. Honored this year by the ACPC were:

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Henrietta Nowakowski
- Distinguished Service Award: Drs. Barbara and Waldemar Niklinski
- Cultural Achievement Award: Krzysztof Zimowski
- Founders Award: Brian Malski
- Founders Award: Carol J. Surma

There was also ample opportunity to thank the out-going president Ray Glembocki and his wife Cecilia for their four years of dedicated service to the ACPC. All participants were appreciative of the care and attention given to arranging the convention by co-chairs Barbara Lemecha and Jackie Kolowski.

All attendees at this convention received a (simulated) diamond as a souvenir to mark this important 75th Anniversary, and went back home inspired for another year of activity in their local Polish-American organizations.

Convention participants were appreciative of the care and attention given to arranging the convention by co-chairs Barbara Lemecha and Jackie Kolowski.



2023 AWARDS



First vice president Jaroslaw Gotembowski, with Polish Hussar Michael Ostrowski of Friends of Polish Art.



Henrietta Nowakowski, Ray Glembocki, Celia Larkin and Cecilia Glembocki at the Blue Army Memorial.



Mayor of Troy, Michigan Ethan Baker and Polish Consul General Pawel Zyzak at the convention opening



Master of Ceremonies Mark Szpak

President of Polish Arts Club of Chicago Arts Tadeusz Makarewicz, Cecilia and Ray Glembocki, with Waldemar Niklinski in his Bractwo Kurkowe regalia.

Wawel Dancers at the opening ceremony.



Henrietta Nowakowski Lifetime Achievement Award



First Vice President Jaroslaw Gotembowski (l) with Distinguished Service Awardees Drs. Barbara and Waldemar Niklinski.



Cultural Achievement Award recipient Krzysztof Zimowski (l) with ACPC Treasurer Tom Payne.



Founders Awardee Carol J. Surma and ACPC Board member John Cebrowski.



Founders Awardee Brian Malski with Vice President Lilia Kieltyka (l) and Awardeess Committee Chair, Jackie Kolowski (r).

where many of the working class often lived four to a room in cramped quarters without modern amenities. The situation was so bad that many Warsaw architects and urban planners dreamed of the day when they could eliminate those buildings and neighborhoods that were seen as obstacles and create a more open, greener, “perfect” city, easier to negotiate, in which the residents could live more comfortable, healthier lives. In essence, to create a modern capital city worthy of Poland.

The Soviets took over Poland in 1944 and installed their own puppet communist government. To Polish urban planners (and to the newly installed Polish Communist Party) the near destruction of the Polish capital - while certainly tragic - was also seen as an answer to their prayers. Now the planners were free to redesign Warsaw according to their wishes. Overseeing them was the Polish Communist Party which saw a ready opportunity to legitimize itself with the Polish populace by embracing the rebuilding of Warsaw as its own pet project under the slogan “Cały naród buduje swoją stolicę.” (“The Entire Nation Rebuilds its Capital.”) Fortunately, the Party was led by Bolesław Bierut, an educated man who – despite his repressive regime – worked well with architects, artists, and urban planners. It was not unusual to see Bierut ride around the ruined city in an open-air touring car accompanied by his staff who would meticulously note his directives to repair this or that building, street or even lamp post. He had an ongoing list of projects that did not meet his specifications and held the architects and planners accountable.

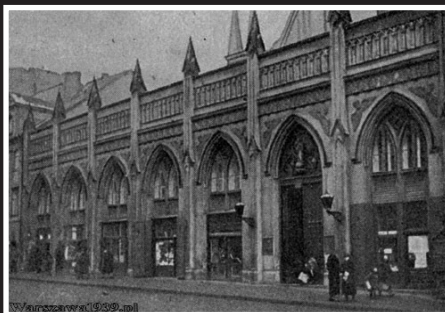
The core of Warsaw’s restoration project would be the Old Town and the “Royal Way” down Nowy Świat and Krakowskie Przedmieście avenues. Meticulous work was done researching the architectural history of these areas, which were nearly leveled by the Germans. These buildings were literally recreated from the ground-up. To facilitate the rebuilding process, the government created the Biuro Odbudowy Stolicy – BOS (Office for the Reconstruction of



“The Entire Nation Rebuilds its Capital” - communist propaganda posters promoting the rebuilding of Warsaw.

the Capital.) BOS soon became the battleground for two formidable forces in Warsaw’s reconstruction. On one side stood Professor Jan Zachwatowicz, a Polish patriot who championed the rebuilding of most of historic Warsaw as he deemed that – because of the great trauma of the war - Warsaw’s architectural monuments needed to be reconstructed for the emotional good of the nation. Opposing him was the camp led by chief architect Józef Sigalin, a harden communist who represented the “modernists.” This group advocated that nothing was sacred and that the primary goal was to transform Warsaw into a more modern “Soviet style” capital city. Unfortunately for Warsaw, Sigalin won. Zachwatowicz was only able to secure a commitment to rebuilding the Old Town area, which, as he noted, was merely a facsimile of what stood before the war.

During the collaboration between BOS and the Communist authorities, many historic Warsaw buildings met their demise at the hands of a Polish wrecking crews. Most of these were constructed during the “Warsaw Paris boom” beginning in the late 1800s. These buildings - many of which were architecturally significant and quite beautiful - were built by private entrepreneurs. Unlike buildings in the Old Town area, which dated back some hundreds of years and contained primarily flammable wood interiors, the construction of these newer structures incorporated stone, concrete, iron, and steel which



The graceful neo-gothic Dominican Arcade on ulica Freta.



The former Czertwertynski Palace, site of the current American Embassy.



The Warsaw Barbakan - newly created in 1954.

were not as combustible. Many of these buildings were merely gutted and still structurally very sound with their impressive facades and exterior ornamentation intact. These multistory buildings – both on Marszałkowska and elsewhere - had housed many prominent Polish businesses, corporate headquarters, and apartments. Once the war was over, a large number of the owners quickly returned to Warsaw to restore and inhabit their property and many of them were well on their way to completing the task. But the urban planners intervened.

This situation suited the needs of the Communist Party as they did not wish to have “capitalist” private entrepreneurs reopen their businesses in the new “socialist paradise” of People's Poland. The result was the notorious Bierut Decree of 1945 which designated that all the land within the city of Warsaw was government property. This worked into the hands of Sigalin and his group. Hundreds of structures that survived the war were soon condemned and demolished, many for no compelling reason. This was despite the fact that there was a great housing shortage in Warsaw and these multi-story buildings were excellent candidates for rapid restoration which was much cheaper than demolition and building new structures.

Those few buildings of this type that did survive were stripped of their ornamentation, wrought iron balconies and facades; most were then covered with a concrete “slip” that soon began to crack, deteriorate and, over time, turn dirty with the city’s pollution. Added to these were the erection of drab, poorly constructed monolithic Soviet-style buildings. Warsaw soon became a city devoid of its former architectural beauty; what was once one of Europe’s most beautiful capital cities became one of the ugliest. (Happily, this situation has begun to change in recent years.)

Unfortunately, there is a long list of many culturally significant structures that were demolished during this time and the reasons for this destruction were often illusive, even somewhat capricious. Among these were the stately neo-gothic archways of the Dominican Gallery along Freta Street and the elegant Taubenhau building on Aleje Ujazdowskie the façade of which was adorned with magnificent armored knights carved by Polish sculptor Jan Woydyga – reason? They were thought to show

Germanic influences.

The ornate multistory “Pod Huzarem” building (“Under the Winged Hussar”) at 74 Marszałkowska Street was demolished even though it could easily be saved. Standing atop the building was a grand carved Polish Winged Hussar, a tribute to King Jan Sobiecki’s victory over the Turks in the Battle of Vienna. Polish art historians regard the destruction of these and other buildings as barbaric and true acts of vandalism.

There are scores of such stories that sadly dot this period of Warsaw’s reconstruction. As put by journalist and art historian Jerzy Majewski, these acts constituted “city murder behind the screen of technical justifications.” Nearly all of Warsaw’s beautiful buildings from the late 1800s and early 1900s are gone. Visitors to such cities as Vienna, Prague, and Budapest are greatly impressed by the richness of their 19th century architecture that give these cities their unforgettable allure. Warsaw had many such buildings but they were erased from its cityscape much of it for no good reason. What the Germans could not achieve, Polish city planners completed.

Even the Americans got into the act. Surviving the war relatively untouched, the Czertwertynski Palace stood in a posh Warsaw neighborhood at 29 Aleje Ujazdowskie. The owner and head of the family, 87-year-old Albert Czetwertynski, a survivor of two death camps -- Auschwitz and Buchenwald -- was soon arrested by the Communist government and accused of being an American spy. While he was incarcerated, the Communist authorities entered into negotiations with the American government to “lease” the property for over \$992,000 in congressional appropriations giving the Americans land rights for 80 years (until 2036) with an option for another 20 years. For \$100,000 more, the two governments agreed that the Americans controlled the fate of the palace. The entire contents were sold at public auction. Once the negotiations were completed, the Americans demolished the structure and began construction of a modern steel and concrete embassy. The payment went directly into the pockets of the communist government; the Czertwertynski family never received a penny for their property. The callous destruction of this Warsaw gem by the American government caused significant uproar in Poland’s cultural community.

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Lubomirski Palace being moved to its new location.



Kronenberg Palace



One of the many fine buildings built on Marszałkowska in the late 1800s.

POLISH CULTURAL CLUB OF GREATER HARTFORD, INC.

Submitted by Lilia Kieltyka and Fran Pudlo

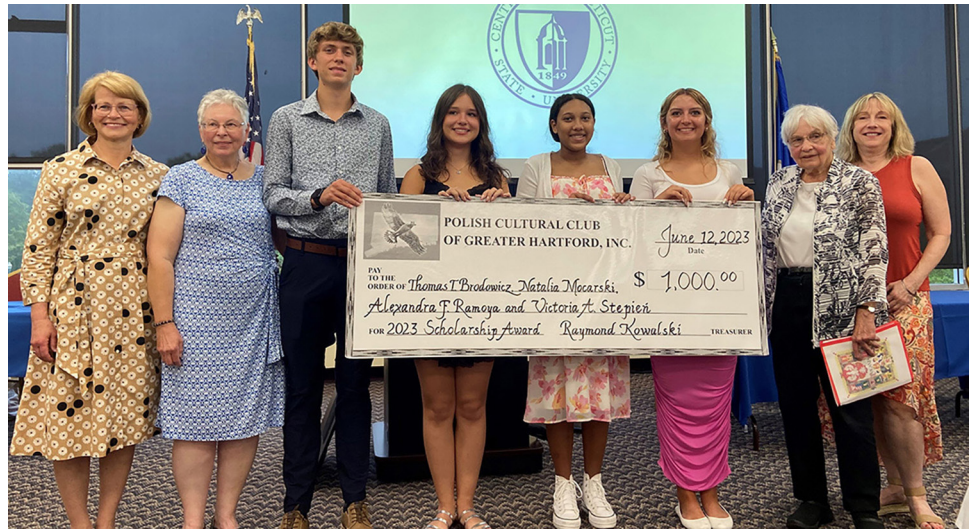
The 2023 Jennie Marconi-Javorski Scholarship Presentation and Reception was held at Central Connecticut State University's Memorial Hall on Monday, June 12 and honored four recipients with a check for \$1,000.00. All are excellent scholars, active in their communities, and fluent in Polish. They are: Thomas Brodowicz (Central Connecticut State University – Geographical Information Systems); Natalia Mocarski (University of Connecticut-Storrs – Pharmacy Program); Alexandra Ramoya (Bucknell University – Accounting & Finance); and Victoria Stepień (Western New England University – Business). We wish them all great success.

President Lilia Kieltyka attended the 75th Annual Convention of the ACPC in Troy, Michigan, where she was re-elected to the position of second national Vice President for two years.

On August 19, members of the PC-CGH participated in the 40th Dożynki Festival in New Britain. Popular Club items were featured – *Favorite Recipes* cookbook, a Christmas card designed by Ursula Brodowicz, and *Pillow for Baby Jesus* pierogi ornament crafted by Gini Pudlo. Wianki were also a big draw. Ladies of all ages stopped by to try on these traditional and colorful floral headpieces.

Two events are scheduled for October, Polish Heritage Month. The first is a Wycinanki (paper cutouts) and Kwiaty (paper flowers) workshop which will be held on October 4 with renowned Polish Kurpie Folk Artist, Wiesława Bogdańska, who is visiting from Poland. The second will be a lecture and slide presentation by Dr. Anna Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann on October 21 on "What's Cooking: Polish-American Cookbooks and What they Tell Us About Polonia." Dr. Jaroszyńska-Kirchmann is a Distinguished Professor of History and the CSU Professor Emerita in the Department of History at Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, Connecticut.

Sadly, we mourn the passing of two Club Founders this summer: Anna Oleasz, (6/24/23) who started the successful Szopka Competition and Festival and who had many friends in the ACPC; and Mary Marek Hartz (8/9/23), who was equally passionate about her Polish heritage and was an active volunteer in Hartford Polonia.



Presentation of PCCGH scholarships - (left to right) President Lilia Kieltyka, Scholarship Co-Chair Gini Pudlo, Thomas Brodowicz, Natalia Mocarski, Isabella Ramoya - standing in for sister Alexandra), Victoria Stepień, Scholarship Co-Chair Florence Langridge, and Vice President Ursula Brodowicz.



Above: Celebrating Dozinki were (left to right): Christine Panek, Sophia Panek, Fran Pudlo, Gini Pudlo, Ursula Brodowicz, and Lilia Kieltyka.



A young Wianki customer.

Skowroński Scholarship Awarded

submitted by Deborah Majka

The Leonard Polish Studies Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the 2023 recipient of a \$3,000 scholarship award.

Jason Albert Vogel is pursuing a BA in Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York. In addition to his BA, Jason is also anticipating his Certificate for Polish and Central European Studies, both in 2025. The Polish Studies courses completed are: Elementary Polish I and II, Intermediate Polish and Polish Review 101. He enriches his study of the Polish language by regularly contributing to conversations hosted by the University's intercultural center and tutoring when classes are not in session.

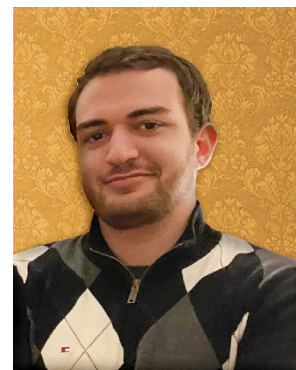
Jason has been laying the groundwork for the establishment of a University of Rochester Polish Cultural Club, designed to spread an awareness of and encourage interest in Polish culture, history and customs among the entire student body. He is also advocating for the establishment of a Polish minor program through the University of Rochester's Interdisciplinary Center.

Jason's article about his ancestors' Polish heritage and the importance of honoring and reviving the history of Polish Americans will be published in the next issue of the University's Skalny Center for Polish and Central European studies newsletter. He also travelled to Kraków to participate in the summer Polish language classes at Jagiellonian University.

Believe it or not, Jason has other interests in addition to his Polish heritage and culture. He has been an Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America since 2019. He describes himself as a habitual reader of books on World History and is a Band Leader, Emcee and Pianist with the Jason Vogel Jazz Quintet.

Up to two, \$3,000 scholarships are available to students who are pursuing Polish studies. These scholarships are intended for students pursuing some Polish studies (major may be in other fields) at universities in the United States who have completed at least two years of college or university work at an accredited institution.

The Scholarship Committee members are: U. Brodowicz, J. Droleski, A. Dutka, C. Meleski, D. Majka, Chair



Jason Albert Vogel

Raymond and Cecilia Glembocki were recently honored with membership in the prestigious Sovereign Order of Malta. Established by Pope Paschal II in 1113, the Sovereign Order of Malta was originally chartered to maintain a hospital for pilgrims in the Holy Land during the Crusades. Today, the Order of Malta is active in 120 countries providing care for people in need through its medical, social, and humanitarian works. Washington, D. C. is part of the Order's Federal Association Region.

Raymond recently completed his second two-year term as president of the ACPC. In addition, working as a team, the Glembockis have been instrumental in spearheading the NCSS Project an ACPC initiative which distributes educational materials on Polish history and culture at National Council for the Social Studies conferences held annual at various locations across the country. Through this project, Ray and Cecilia facilitate and staff ACPC information booths at these events, distributing materials to hundreds of attendees including K-12 teachers, college and university faculty, curriculum designers and social studies supervisors from every state of the Union. Through their efforts, the Glembockis have

A UNIQUE HONOR



Raymond and Cecilia Glembocki

provided instructional materials on Poland to hundreds of educators who integrate this information into their lesson plans and classroom presentations.

The Glembockis were honored in an Order of Malta Investiture Ceremony and mass on Saturday September 23, 2023 in the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D. C. Hundreds of Knights and Dames from around the country attended the impressive service to welcome the new members. Ray and Cecilia were also honored during an annual dinner gala that evening in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress. (See photo at left.)

Throughout the regions of the Federal Association there are dozens of locally run Hospitaller programs including assisted living facilities and medical clinics as well as soup kitchens, homeless shelters, clothing drives, and prison ministries.

The oath made by members of the Order to serve the poor and the sick is expressed in the activities they perform in their and communities. In this way, the Knights and Dames of the Sovereign Order of Malta maintain their commitment to expressing the spiritual development of its members.

Congratulations, Ray and Cecilia. And thank you for all your fine work for Polonia as well as for the general community.

The demolitions in Warsaw continued at a fast pace for some time. Finally, President Bierut had had enough and publicly criticized the demolition. The President's decision was perhaps influenced by Maria Dąbrowska, a prominent literary figure. Many of the buildings designated for removal were occupied and the residents were often not given much warning to vacate before their homes were destroyed. Dąbrowska confronted Bierut at a reception complaining "Mr. President, my apartment is scheduled to be demolished next week. Where am I to live?" At that point, Bierut turned to one of his chief architects saying "Dość rozbiórki!" ("Enough of the demolition!") and it soon stopped.

Certainly, one can say that there were reasons for these actions, but none of these excuses stand up to careful scrutiny. Sigalin himself later admitted that the destruction of many of these buildings was an unfortunate mistake.

Too little, too late.

As capricious as the destruction of these structures may seem, the approach to rebuilding other areas was just as odd. In restoring the Old Town, buildings that had stood for hundreds of years simply disappeared. Others suddenly reappeared. The Warsaw Barbakan – the city's medieval main gate, was dismantled hundreds of years ago, but it was recreated in 1954. Apparently the thought was "If Kraków can have a Barbakan, why can't we?" (except that Kraków's version is authentic.) The foundation for Warsaw's medieval town walls were unearthed and the walls were set to be reconstructed. However, the communist authorities vetoed the decision as it was thought that the rebuilt walls might potentially be used by anti-government rioters. Any religious statues and inscriptions that were on the original buildings in Old Town were replaced with secular ones. Some of the buildings on the Royal Way were replaced with entirely different ones as it was thought that the original designs did not fit the overall concept of the planners. These observations certainly do not diminish

the tremendous work done to recreate this part of lost Warsaw; UNESCO declared Warsaw's Old Town as a World Heritage Site in 1980.

The Kronenberg Palace, regarded as one of the most beautiful in Warsaw, stood vacant awaiting restoration until 1962 when it was demolished, even though it was listed on the Polish national historic register; the Lubomirski Palace was saved, but the planners did not like the location, so it was simply lifted from its foundations, set on rollers, and literally moved (actually pivoted) to face another direction.

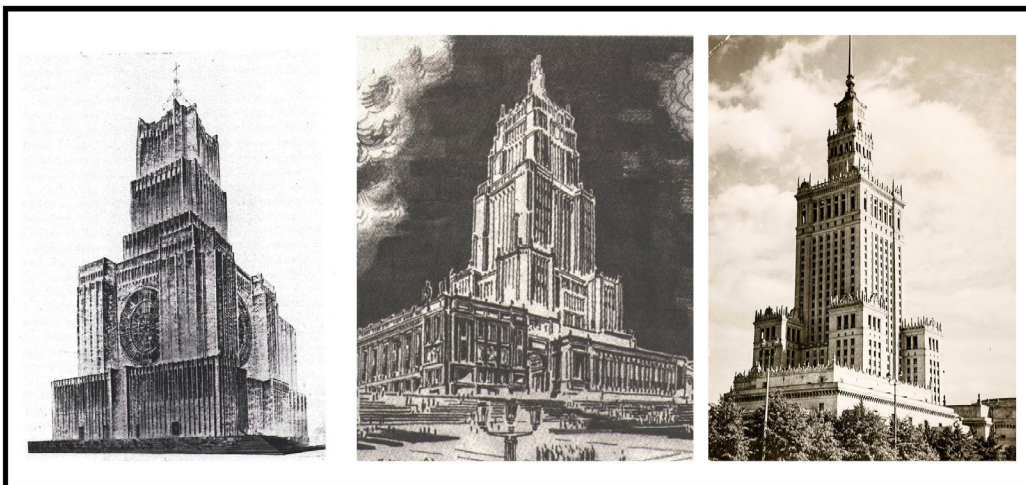
In all of these actions, there was never any solicitation of public input, no town halls. In addition, many of the new residents coming to Warsaw were recruited from the countryside and did not have any attachment to the city and were ignorant of its traditions. The rebuilding of Warsaw was an entirely "top-down" affair.

As Sigalin and his planning team were devoted to transforming Warsaw into a model "Soviet style" city they designed large, impersonal plazas and wide boulevards suitable for official party marches and military parades, (wide streets being easier to defend during any possible anti-government insurrections than narrower ones.) An example of this is the Plac Konstytucji (Constitution Square) which replaced many of the fine buildings on Marzalkowska. In plans for this area, the planners left room for a "tall building." This would eventually be the site of the soaring Palace of Culture - a "gift" of the Soviet Union. In fact, several blocks of notable streets were sacrificed to provide the room for this "gift."

Interestingly, some of the BOS architects practiced in Warsaw prior to WWII and had worked on the design of a proposed new Warsaw district to be named after Marshal Józef Piłsudski. This new district was to house university and government buildings and create a new center of Warsaw's administrative and intellectual life, however WWII intervened and the project went unrealized. Models of this proposed new district show austere modern structures, much like the "Soviet style" buildings that would be built in Warsaw in the 1950s. At one end of a wide, grand,

avenue, was to be a gigantic statue of Marshal Piłsudski. On the other end, dwarfing everything in the area, was to be the Temple of Divine Providence (Świątynia Opatrzności Bożej.) This was planned to be a skyscraper sized church, projected to be nearly twice as tall as Notre Dame in Paris and the tallest building in Warsaw. Strangely, to anyone who has ever visited modern Warsaw, designs for this building look oddly familiar and an apparent precursor to the future Palace of Culture. I will let the reader decide if there appear to be any similarities. (Please see the images on the left.)

The death of Bierut in 1956 and



Temple of Divine Providence (Świątynia Opatrzności Bożej) as conceived by Polish architects before WWII.

Postwar Polish architects' draft design for the proposed Palace of Culture.

Final version of the Palace of Culture as designed by Soviet architects.



Warsaw's Royal Castle at the end of the Second World War.



The Royal Castle after restoration.

the ascension of Władysław Gomułka marked a turning point in the rebuilding of Warsaw. A semi-literate peasant from the Rzeszów region, Gomułka resented the Polish aristocracy and had no use for rebuilding Warsaw's fine palaces and symbols of royalty, nor any reminders of Poland's capitalist past. So much so that there was no attempt to rebuild Warsaw's Royal Castle which was completely leveled in WWII. The site remained an enormous abandoned lot until the appointment of Gomułka's successor Edward Gierek.

As a gesture to national unity, Gierek announced the rebuilding of the Royal Castle and fund-raising committees were formed in Poland and in Polonia communities abroad. Work began in 1971. Visiting the completed Castle today makes an emotional impact on any visitor, as every detail in the interior and exterior were meticulously restored. Unfortunately, in rebuilding the structure, the architects decided on the time-saving method of using modern steel girders. This caused considerable consternation among Polish architectural preservationists as these were not an authentic building materials. However, the Royal Castle remains a splendid testimony to the Polish national spirit. With its completion, the story of the official reconstruction of Warsaw's Old Town could be considered concluded.

Although there are many wonderful landmarks in Warsaw that were reconstructed, the many stories of the opportunities lost still haunt us today.

The vision of pre-war Warsaw as a beautiful, picturesque city has remained very strong in the public imagination. While we can criticize Warsaw's post-war urban planners for making avoidable mistakes, we should also see them as individuals reacting to complex and unprecedented historic, economic and political circumstances beyond their control.

Hopefully, Warsaw will one day reassume its rightful place among the world's most beautiful cities.



Understandably, this is a complex topic that deserves more discussion than can be presented in the limited space available here. Much of this information was obtained from Internet sources as well as from the books: "Budujemy Nowy Dom – Odbudowa Warszawy w Latach 1945-1952" by Jerzy Majewski and Tomasz Markiewicz, Dom Spotkań z Historią, Warszawa, 2012 and "Warszawa Niezaistniała" by Jarosław Trybuś, Książy Młyn Dom Wydawniczy, Warszawa - Łódź, 2019. As well as the article "The Case of the Vanished Villa" by Christine Spolar, Washington Post, August 19, 1997.

POLANKI

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

submitted by Susan Mikos



Świąconka, 1953 - one of Polanki's first events.

Polanki, the Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, celebrated its 70th anniversary on September 24, 2023 at the Polish Center of Wisconsin.

Founded in 1953 with 25 initial members, Polanki has grown to embrace more than 125 members and has compiled an impressive record of cultural and humanitarian achievements. Polanki's annual College Achievement Awards program recognizes deserving college and university students of Polish descent and/or studying Polish language, culture, or history. Polanki maintains a sizable library at the Polish Center of Wisconsin and has supported numerous artistic performances in the Milwaukee area. Polanki has also contributed to the preservation of historic monuments such as St. Josaphat Basilica and Milwaukee's noteworthy equestrian statue of Tadeusz Kościuszko. Polanki presents Polish culture at Milwaukee's annual Holiday Folk Fair International and at the yearly Polish Fest, as well as to individual schools, libraries and organizations. In addition, Polanki provides humanitarian assistance to Poland, including the Laski School for the Blind, special educational opportunities for school children, and Ukrainian refugee support.

Over 130 guests attended Polanki's anniversary dinner. The program featured harp and piano music played by Polish-born musician Kinga Vnuk and ended with a performance of Polish folk dance by the Syrena Polish Folk Dance Ensemble.

Enjoy a Chopin Interlude....



The 30th Anniversary of Chopiniana featuring duo piano performers Kazimierz Brzozowski and Tomoko Mack-Brzozowski will take place at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy, Michigan. 3:00 pm, Sunday October 15, 2023. For more information, please call APCC 248-689-3636 or Jackie Kolowski at 586-558-3624.

A Summer to Remember!



Polish American Arts Association Washington, D. C.

Submitted by Matthew Stefanski
Photos: Celia Larkin

In June, PAAA organized its annual Wianki Festival of Wreaths on the National Mall. For the first time, the Wianki festival featured performances by four Polish groups, all part of the Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas: Ojczyzna Polish Dancers, Wiślanie Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble, both from Baltimore, Mazury Folk Dance Ensemble from Atlanta, and PKM Polish Folk Dance Ensemble from Philadelphia (see photos above.)

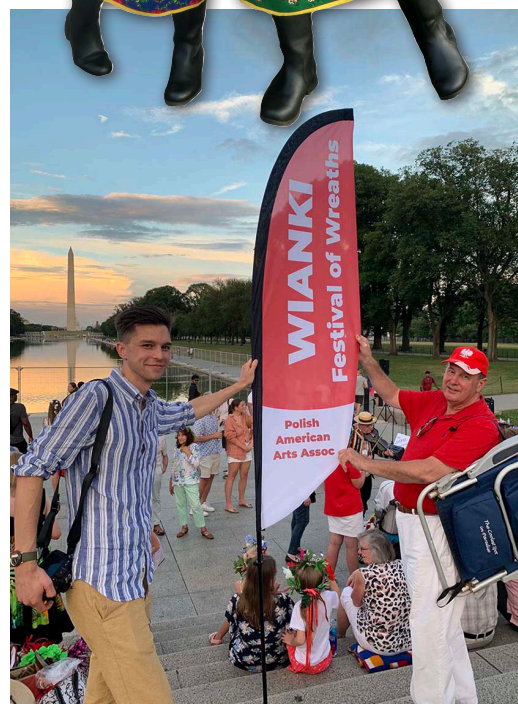
The event was chaired by Marianna Eckel and the artistic program was led by Stasia and Olek Skrypczuk of the Joyful Skrypczuk Duo. The Polish and American national anthems were sung by soprano Laura Kafka-Price. The event was made possible in part thanks to the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Washington, D. C. Polish Deputy Consul Edyta Hołdyńska described the festival as a “beautiful Polish performance in the heart of D. C.”

Please plan to join us next June as we mark 40 years of Wianki in the Nation's Capital! It will be a spectacular and joyful celebration.

Wisława Szymborska, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1996, is one of Poland's most celebrated poets. She published just about 350 poems during the course of her life, of which twelve were presented on July 9 at the legendary Busboys and Poets Restaurant in downtown Washington, D.C. The event, entitled *Inspired by Szymborska*, was organized by the PAAA on the occasion of what would have been the poet's 100th birthday and featured Szymborska's poetry, presented in both Polish and English, as well as jazz interludes performed by saxophonist Krzysztof Medyna.

The PAAA was well represented at the annual ACPC convention in Michigan, and we wish to extend our sincere congratulations to past PAAA President Celia Larkin on her election the Presidency of the American Council for Polish Culture. We look forward to continuing our close collaboration with the ACPC community.

Looking ahead, PAAA will be organizing their annual Wigilia on December 10. In 2024, PAAA will be continuing its partnership with the National Philharmonic, helping to promote the *Chopin the Virtuoso* concert by Brian Ganz February 24. Proceeds of ticket sales will benefit the PAAA Scholarship Fund.





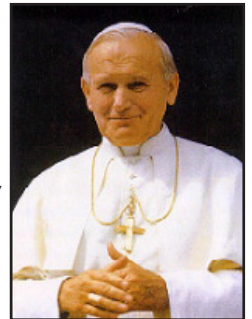
Members of the PAAA Polish Drama Club, and poet laureates from the Washington, D.C. area recited Szymborska's poetry during the "Inspired by Szymborska" event (photo below). They were joined on stage by PAAA President Matthew Stefanski and saxophonist Krzysztof Medyna.



Fr. Krzysztof Wieliczko

Commemorating Karol Wojtyła

On August 27, 2023, representatives from several chapters of the Friends of John Paul II Foundation gathered at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania to celebrate the feast day of Our Lady of Częstochowa and commemorate the 45th anniversary of the election of Karol Wojtyła to the papacy.



A commemorative program included reflections on the impact of St. John Paul II on Poland and the universal church as well as the singing of the Pope's favorite hymns by a choral group from New Britain, Connecticut.

During Mass, the Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami, Florida, presented the prestigious Pride of Polonia Award to Fr. Krzysztof Wieliczko, OSPPE, on behalf of the National Polish Apostolate. The Pride of Polonia Award is presented annually to recognize individuals who have made an exemplary contribution to the life of the Polish diaspora in the United States. Fr. Wieliczko, a member of the Pauline Order, was selected as this year's award recipient in recognition of his outstanding efforts to promote the spiritual and cultural legacy of St. John Paul II across the world.

Submitted by Cecilia Glembocki and Teresa G. Wojcik, Ph.D.



Saxophonist Krzysztof Medyna performs at the "Inspired by Szymborska" event.



Photos on opposite page:

Top: The four folk ensembles that took part in the 2023 Wianki.

Middle: Two young Wianki participants from the Wiślanie Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble out of Baltimore, Maryland.

Bottom: PAAA President Matthew Stefanski (l) and Greg Butler, PAAA Board Member.

Polish Arts Club Buffalo, New York

submitted by Robert Fronckowiak



The Polish Arts Club of Buffalo, in conjunction with Explore Buffalo conducted a tour of some of the sgraffito art works of Józef Sławiński on September 9th. Pictured above is ACPC Board member and 1st-Vice-president, Robert Fronckowiak, highlighting the Calasanctius Sgraffito on the grounds of Buffalo State University. The Arts Club raised funds to move this mural from a non-historic building which was going to be demolished on the grounds of Graycliff, a summer home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Józef Sławiński, a Polish born artist made his home in Buffalo from 1963 until his death in 1983. Proficient in many mediums including stained glass, mosaic, hammered copper and painting, his favorite medium was sgraffito. Sgraffito is an ancient art form using cement. The technique involves layering two or more colors of cement and scratching through the layers to create the desired effect. It is a labor intensive process. The work must be completed in 24 hours. Sławiński perfected the technique using four colors. His works can be found in Europe and in several states.

Józef Sławiński, was born in Poland in 1905 and trained there and in Italy as a muralist; he first came to Western New York on a visit in 1961-63. He returned in 1964 and lived and worked in the Buffalo Niagara area until his death in 1983.

Sławiński, a remarkably gifted artist whose work has been compared to such great Mexican muralists as Diego Rivera, also worked in other media, including fresco, scratched tempera, and wrought iron.

The bulk of Sławiński's work is located in western New York. To learn more about this uniquely talented artist and sgraffito visit www.PolishArtsClubofBuffalo.com

Three photos on right: "Buffalo Polonia" by Józef Sławiński, 1973, sgraffito located in the lobby of the Erie County Medical Center, Buffalo, New York. The three-panel work was created to mark the centenary of the foundation of St. Stanislaus Parish, the first organized Polish entity to be formed in Buffalo, New York. Source: Info-Poland - <http://info-poland.icm.edu.pl>



Józef Sławiński



Left panel of "Buffalo Polonia"



Central panel of "Buffalo Polonia"



Right panel of "Buffalo Polonia"



Celebrating Outstanding Talent

We are pleased to introduce the First Prize winner of the 2023 ACPC Marcella Kochańska Sembrich Vocal Competition, Polish-American soprano **Dorothy Gal**. She was presented during the ACPC Annual Convention on July 28, 2023, in a concert at the Steinway Hall in Commerce Township, Michigan.

Hailed as “alluring” by the *Houston Chronicle*, Dorothy Gal is a Houston Grand Opera studio alumna and recipient of the prestigious Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation. Recent performance highlights include originating the role of Ruth Bader-Ginsburg in Opera Theatre of St. Louis’ world premiere of *Slanted: An American Rock Opera*, Bach’s *Coffee Cantata BWV 211* with Mercury Chamber Orchestra, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and High Priestess in *Aida* at Houston Grand Opera. Dorothy has received awards and recognition from the Metropolitan Opera’s Laffont Competition (2023), Butler Opera International Vocal Competition (2023), Ada Sari International Vocal Artistry Competition in Nowy Sącz, Poland (2023), Gerda Lissner Lieder-Song Competition (2022), Tenor Viñas Competition (2021), and was the 2nd place prizewinner of HGO’s Eleanor McCollum Competition.

Enjoying a varied career as a soloist, Dorothy has performed with companies, orchestras, and festivals such as the Houston Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Des Moines Metro Opera, Aspen Summer Music Festival, Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Marilyn Horne’s The Song Continues Workshop at Carnegie Hall, Mercury Chamber Orchestra, Las Colinas Orchestra, Space Coast Symphony, Central Texas Philharmonic, and others.

She is a graduate of Mannes College in New York City with a degree in Vocal Performance and received her M.M. in Vocal Performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. She is a native of Cocoa Beach, Florida, and currently resides in Houston, Texas with her husband, Geoff. Please visit www.dorothygal.com for upcoming performances.

At the 2023 Sembrich Competition Recital in Steinway Hall on July 28 were:

Left: Soprano Dorothy Gal with Jarosław Golembiowski (right) and composer Andrew Schneider (rear) who came from Texas to attend the premiere of his vocal piece “Zdrowaś Mario.”

Center: President Cecilia Larkin presents the 2023 Sembrich Award to Sembrich Vocal Competition first prize recipient Dorothy Gal.

Right: Dorothy Gal.

The Second Prize winner in the Sembrich Competition and recipient of a scholarship for La Musica Lirica intensive five-week opera training program in Italy is mezzo-soprano **Caroline Friend**. She is a fourth-year undergraduate student from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, studying with Dina Kuznetsova at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Caroline’s stage credits include the Spirit from the 2021 CIM Opera-Film production of *Dido and Aeneas*, Dorothee from Massenet’s *Cendrillon*, and Mère Marie from Poulenc’s *Dialogues des Carmélites*. She has also made appearances in the opera program’s concerts and *Opera Scenes*. She also studied Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony at Most Precious Blood of Jesus Catholic Parish in her hometown. She performed in the 65th Annual Sewanee Summer Music Festival and Operafest in 2022. Caroline made her Prague debut as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* during the 2023 Prague Summer Nights Festival and will make her oratorio debut in October 2023 with the Beaver Valley Regional Choral Society in Pittsburgh.



Caroline Friend

The ACPC Music Committee extends special thanks to Brygida Bziukiewicz, Director of La Musica Lirica opera training program, for her donation of a scholarship for the most promising participant in the competition.

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