

Message from the President

EXPERIENCE AMAZING POLISH MUSIC IN PITTSBURGH

As a musician I listen to music a little differently than most people. When hearing a piece of music that catches my fancy, I listen for how the piece is musically constructed. Do the chord changes/progressions follow typical patterns or has the composer introduced something bold? Are the musician's harmonies out of the ordinary? Is the piece particularly difficult to play? Are the musicians talented? Is there a unique voice that I'm hearing, something that defines the genre?

These traits are not easy to find, because most popular music follows tried and true formulas in order to sell to the public. We can easily distinguish music written in the 1940s, 50s, 60s, 70s, each with its own sound and its own formula. So, when a different or unique voice

comes around, we have to stop and take account of it for what it is.

For years, I have been saying that Poland's new crop of musicians needs to find their own, unique Polish voice. Today, I am happy to say that an unusual musical voice is coming to Pittsburgh in September. A wonderfully unique Polish voice that I am encouraging all of our members and friends to discover for themselves. **Tekla Klebetnica**, "country gossip girl" in Silesian Cieszyn dialect, is an ensemble of a varied number of instruments: from two violins, accordion, upright bass, guitar, drums and cimbalom to the Trio of violin/vocals, accordion and upright bass, usually used on the tour. They are a crossover of Carpathian Polish folk music, with gypsy, classical and jazz

influences. Their music is fresh, bold and unapologetically Polish.

Tekla Klebetnica is internationally recognized. It tours extensively throughout the world. Recent stops included Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, and western and Eastern Europe. The Polish equivalent of *America's Got Talent* is *Mam Talent*. In this competition, Tekla Klebetnica finished as first runner up. To get a pre-concert taste of TK you can follow them on Facebook at www.fb.com/kapelagoralska.

Join the PCC in welcoming them to Pittsburgh on **Friday, September 27, 2019 at the Frick Fine Arts Building Auditorium in Oakland**. Support Polish culture!

—Rick Pierchalski

Tekla Klebetnica Concert



**Friday, September 27th
@ 7:00 pm**

Frick Fine Arts Building Auditorium,
University of Pittsburgh.

650 Schenley Drive
Oakland, PA 15260

Regular Ticket price \$30

Children under 12 years of age and students \$15

For tickets and information

email: pccorg.ms@gmail.com,

call 412.871.3347

or purchase online: polishculturalcouncil.org

A Sunny Day In Płock

by Magda Rybka,
our correspondent in Warsaw

It looked like the first day of spring. There was no wind and no rain, and only tiny snowflakes were visible in bright sunlight. Anyway, we just packed our sandwiches, carrots and apples; got into our new red car, which needed some testing; and went on a trip. We drove some scenic winding roads around Puszcza Kampinoska and suddenly we were able to enjoy, with great awe, a rare view of the Vistula River at the high river bank in Wyszogród. We crossed a long bridge, built after the old 1944 wooden structure proved to be no longer safe. The construction, however, is still quite impressive.

Finally we reached the city of Płock. It has been an important Mazovian city since the Middle Ages. It once was a capital of Mazovian dukes. There are now only two towers left witnessing those times; but once upon a time there was a big castle standing on the high bank and overlooking the wild Vistula River. Those castle towers now host the Museum of Sacral Art and are in the possession of the diocese.

The castle was the home of the dukes until the 15th century. Due to a partial collapse of the hillside, in 1532, the building was damaged and rebuilt. Later, the Masovian dukes settled in the new palace, outside the castle walls, allowing the castle complex to be given to the Benedictine monks. During the wars of



Płock Cathedral

the 17th century, the castle was severely damaged, first in 1657, and then in 1705. After its reconstruction, the castle complex became a Benedictine Abbey, in the Baroque architectural style, which existed until 1781. After WWII, the castle was renovated. Since 1973, it has housed a museum of sacral art. Nowadays, it is in the possession of the diocese.

You can't miss the Płock Cathedral, which towers over the Tumskie Hill. In the 12th century, this Romanesque, three-aisle basilica was one of the biggest churches in Medieval Poland. The bronze, two-wing doors of the church, which are made of panels showing scenes from the life of Jesus and the apostles, are a rare piece of art. Their expensive ornamentation is evidence of the high status of Płock at that time.

Władysław Herman and his wife, parents of Boleslaus the Wry-Mouthed, were buried in one of the chapels in the Cathedral. In 1127, it was destroyed during the invasion of Pomeranians, and the remains of the Dukes were profaned. The chapel which has been recently renovated, and the ducal sarcophagus, designed by painter Zygmunt Vogel in 1825, doubtlessly lures many tourists. Personally, I do love the exquisite polychromy of the Cathedral, which was painted by Nicholas Brucher in the beginning of the 20th century. I have no idea,

though, how much it has to do with original church decorations.

The cathedral, which has been rebuilt many times, is the greatest treasure of Płock, and a very interesting attraction; but please do not go there on Sunday morning. We had

the opportunity to hear a sermon about the sanctity of traditional gender roles; a good Catholic should fasten seatbelts. After acquiring this moral knowledge, we crossed the town market place and found what we were looking for. These were two beautiful townhouses. Both of them host the Museum of Mazovia in Płock. The main building of the museum houses the Art Nouveau exhibit. We didn't have time to see everything, so we settled on the latter one and we enjoyed every minute of our four-story climb, since this tenement house was unmercifully high. Mostly, the exhibition shows Belle Époque interiors. There are nicely furnished romantic boudoirs, elegant salons, dreamy libraries, sweet bedrooms and playrooms. Everything is decorated with curvy ornamentations, floral patterns, and Oriental motifs. On the walls, one can see paintings of Podkowiński, Mehoffer and works of many artists of the Młoda Polska period.

I was enchanted by the collection of coloured glass. I will not explain the technique of achieving the breathtaking effect, because it is probably rather complicated; but I can say that you may just drown in the depth of glass and intensity of colours. It is like a short glimpse of another world. There is also a jewelry room; ruby and diamond ornaments are also quite pleasant to look at. For a short while, I regretted not being a lady with a hat, umbrella and Fleur Forsyth's light dress.

Polish Journey is a publication of the Polish Cultural Council, a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization. Please address your correspondence to: Polish Cultural Council, P.O. Box 81054, Pittsburgh, PA 15217-0554, tel: 412.871.3347

"The opinions expressed by authors do not always reflect the views of the PCC."

Rick Pierchalski, President;

Maria Staszkiwicz, Executive Director,
pccorg.ms@gmail.com;

Eva Tumiel-Kozak, Editor-in-Chief;

Veronica Wojnarowski,

Maria Staszkiwicz, Editors;

Kasia Goszcz-Bruniany, Graphic Artist;

Mary Seamans, Graphic Design;

visit us @ www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org

After this journey in time, we prosaically went to a kebab place, which, as usual, offered vegan falafels. We are really grateful that such simple fast foods exist and that we may have something warm and fairly nourishing to devour.

A few streets from there we reached one of the most important sites in Płock – The Museum of Mazovian Jews. It is housed in a former synagogue which was called a minor synagogue because there also was a big synagogue, which was demolished in the 1950s. There was a large Jewish community in Płock, which was an important trade town. Jewish merchants were very welcome by Mazovian dukes to settle in Płock, because their commercial skills helped the town flourish. For many centuries, Jews participated in the multicultural life of the city. The population of Płock before WWII was between 30 and 40 percent Jewish. Most of them perished during the war, but until that time they formed a buzzing community with *mykhvas*, *cheders*, and their own *Yeshiva*. In Płock they built an important center of intellectual and religious thought. Płock Jews were active participants in political life, and took part in the Polish insurrections in the 19th century. The synagogues were the highlight of their interests.

The minor temple was a two-story building. Its construction started in the



Museum of Mazovia

beginning of the 1820s and lasted until the mid-1850s. It functioned as a house of prayer, a school and a seat of kahal authorities. In 1939, it became the home of the Judenrat. The Jewish population was contained within the limits of the Płock ghetto. On 1 March 1941, the ghetto was liquidated and its 8,000 Jewish residents were doomed for deportation.

The minor synagogue building survived the war. At first it was used by the Jewish Committee; but in the 1960s it was nationalised and ceased to be used. In 1997, it again became Jewish property, but was again sold to the municipality. In 2004, the Płock Synagogue Association was founded with the aim to establish a museum commemorating Mazovian Jews. Fortunately, these efforts, supported by EU funds, brought results. Since 2013, the Museum has been open to visitors. It does not make much sense to wonder why the Museum has few artifacts and is mostly multi-media. Still, one may learn there a lot about the history of the Jewish local community, its culture and religion. The exhibition room devoted to Shoa is based on a book entitled *Kartki z Pożogi (Leaves from the Flame)*, written by Symcha Guterman, a man who was a survivor of the tragedy of the Jews of Płock and the annihilation of their world. Eight thousand Jews were doomed to deportation and many of them to death.

At the entrance, there is a book in which visitors can write down their impressions. I just apologised for the new law about IPN, which had been recently signed by the Polish President. I know that it will not help much, but I just had this irresistible impulse.

It was a very intense day, and we were very tired and filled with all sorts of emotions. The good news is that you can safely visit Płock now because the petrochemical plant does not produce any unpleasant smells. The filters apparently do their work, so you can breathe freely and the view of the river is really enviable and worth admiring. If you have never seen Płock before, please make up for it at your earliest convenience.

NEWS BRIEFS

Historic Polish mine wins European Heritage Award

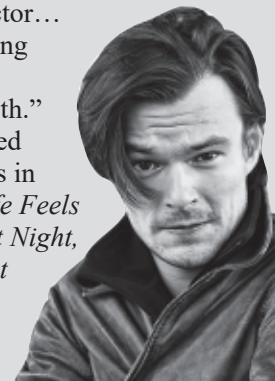
The **Queen Louise (Królowa Luiza) Mining Complex** in the Silesian town of Zabrze, southern Poland, is among the winners of the 2019 European Heritage/*Europa Nostra Awards* in the Conservation category. The mine opened in 1791. It now offers several underground tourist routes, with displays of mining equipment from the last two centuries and a boat trip along an underground river. The awards promote best practices related to heritage conservation, management, research and education.

Shakespeare Award for Pole

The director of the **Shakespearean Theatre in Gdańsk**, northern Poland, **Jerzy Limon**, a professor at the University of Gdańsk, has received the **Pragnell Shakespeare Award**. Introduced in 1990, the honor is an international award funded by Pragnell the Jeweller of Stratford upon Avon. The award recognizes “outstanding achievement in extending the appreciation and enjoyment of the works of William Shakespeare and in the general advancement of Shakespearean knowledge and understanding”.

Polish actor named a Shooting Star of 2019

David Ogrodnik has been named one of Europe’s ten most promising young film stars. He was selected by the European Film Promotion network. He has been described as “an extremely versatile and dedicated actor... a young acting force to be reckoned with.” He has played leading roles in the films *Life Feels Good*, *Silent Night*, and *The Last Family*.



I Meet Jędrzej Kitowicz

by Oscar E. Swan, University of Pittsburgh

A few years ago I came across on the internet a gruesome description of torture in 18th century Poland by an author unknown to me at the time, Jędrzej Kitowicz, a parish priest and former military man, veteran of the Bar Confederacy of 1768-1772. Fascinated by what I had “discovered,” I looked up the source of the text, which turned out to be a rambling, colorful, and often risqué 500-page chronicle of life in mid-18th century Poland under the reign of August III of Saxony, the second and last of Poland’s elected Saxon kings. The original manuscript, which I have visited, lies in Kraków’s Czartoryski Library. Nothing of any length by Kitowicz, I found, had ever been translated into English or any other language. In Poland he was and is largely unknown even to many or most students of Polish literature.

Kitowicz’s chronicle rides roughshod over one’s preconceptions of what life was like in the raucous times leading up to the May 3, 1791 Constitution and the country’s 123-year disappearance from the face of Europe. It’s much richer and more colorful than one might imagine. The author reveals himself to be not only the country’s most pitiless critique of his life and times, but also its pre-eminent humorist. Whether talking about the judiciary, the military, the nobility, or the common folk, his scathing wit leaves almost no subject untouched. Entire chapters are devoted to food and drinking habits, and many others to religious and folk customs.

Learning that Kitowicz’s portrait was hanging in the Academy of

Sciences in Kraków, I hastened to visit it. The academy’s director received me cordially and pointed me to the tiny village of Rzeczyca, near Rawa Mazowiecka in central Poland, where Kitowicz lived and wrote, and whose current parish priest, Father Henryk Linarcik, has made it his life’s mission to preserve the memory of Rzeczyca’s most famous citizen in the form of a museum, to be housed in the village’s oldest building, the church’s one-time organist’s cottage. Father Linarcik eagerly showed me around his charming neo-baroque church. It is not Kitowicz’s original wooden one, but it nevertheless preserves, along with other memorabilia, his ceremonial stole and baptismal, wedding, and burial records written in Kitowicz’s own hand. Father Kitowicz’s bones lie in an unmarked common priests’ grave on the outskirts of the village, at the end of one of only two streets in Poland named after the country’s major chronicler of the 18th century.

Since then I have made yearly visits to Rzeczyca, and my wife and I make financial contributions to the museum which will perpetuate Kitowicz’s legacy and bring his life’s work to broader public attention. This past April saw the publication of my translation of his remarkable work, which I recommend to anyone interested in Polish history or in just having a good read. A link to the book announcement is here: <http://ceupress.com/book/customs-and-culture-poland-under-last-saxon-king>.

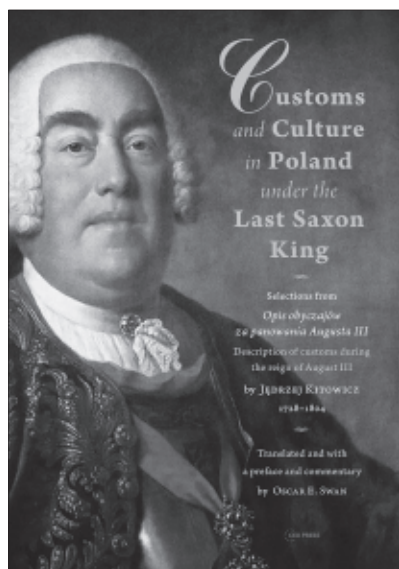


OSCAR SWAN RECEIVES POLISH AWARD

Oscar Swan, Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh, received the Officer Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland (May, 2019). The citation stated that the award was granted “in recognition of outstanding services in promoting Polish culture and Polish language, and for academic achievements in Slavic studies”. The order is awarded to foreigners or Poles resident abroad for distinguished contributions to international cooperation or cooperation between Poland and other countries. It is awarded by the President of Poland. For a video of Oscar receiving the award at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C., see <https://youtu.be/4t7OmokrJO4>.

***Congratulations from
all of us, Oscar!***

An Exciting New Book About Polish Culture



Oscar Swan, Professor of Slavic Literatures and Languages at the University of Pittsburgh, former Polonian of the Year, and a long-time PCC member, has just had published his most recent book. He has translated and edited

“Once coffee came into use among the households of the nobility, richer, gentry, and affluent town-folk, it was the first thing offered each morning, followed by vodka.”

*Customs and Culture in Poland under the Last Saxon King*¹, the memoir of Jędrzej Kitowicz. It promises to be a most enjoyable read.

“A husband could not expect a very warm welcome from a wife if he returned home from a trip to Warsaw without a bonnet.”

Here is a paraphrase of the publisher’s description:

Jędrzej Kitowicz was a parish priest in central Poland with a military and worldly past. In his later years, he composed a colorful chronicle of all aspects and walks of life under King August. He was a man with omnivorous tastes, a keen sense of observation, and a wry – at times bawdy – sense of humor, with a realistic and robust literary technique, and an ethnographer’s eye for material culture. He wrote of religion, customs, institutions, child-rearing, education, the judiciary, the military, and the lives of the nobility. A commentary by the editor introduces each chapter.

In an earlier article², Professor Swan described the memoir in this way: “The most complete record of day-to-day life in Poland in the mid-eighteenth century under the second of the two elected Saxon kings – and, within the wide range of the subjects it covers, a strikingly colorful and comprehensive record it is...”

“Sessions of the Sejm routinely began at ten o’clock in the morning and lasted sometimes until nine or ten o’clock in the evening. Any spectator who might want to be present for the entire session, first had to clean out the bodily filth from around their seat before sitting down.”

¹ *Customs and Culture in Poland under the Last Saxon King: Selections from Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III* by father Jędrzej Kitowicz, 1728-1804. Central European University Press: New York, 2019.

² Swan, Oscar (2017) Jędrzej Kitowicz and His Description of Eighteenth-Century Polish Culture. *The Polish Review*, Vol 62, No. 2, pp. 23-53.

COMING THIS DECEMBER – A POLISH CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



Join us in early December as the Polish Cultural Council teams up with the Polish Falcons Heritage Foundation to present a Polish Christmas Celebration. Featured will be a traditional Polish Holiday Feast, Oplatek, Polish kolędy, a visit from Polish Santa Claus and the

Star Man, and music for all ages. Special crafts and gifts will be available for children. Join us for a wonderful family holiday gathering, celebrated in a traditional Polish style. Check our website or follow us on Facebook for details. *You don't want to miss it. **Wesołych Świąt!***

Congratulations and Thanks

Congratulations to our recently re-elected Board Member, Tim Kuzma.

Our thanks and appreciation go to John Adamczyk, Esq. for his service on our Board. We are very grateful. Best wishes from all of us.

Ask The Poet – Leszek Chudziński *converses with Eva Tumiel-Kozak*

Leszek Chudziński has published poetry in Poland (in Polish), Japan (Kobe Haiku), Japanese translation from the English), and across the United States and Canada, in both Polish and English. His poems have appeared in such literary and artistic magazines as the *Schuykill Valley Journal*, *Polish News*, and *Strumien*. He is a Senior Librarian for the Seattle Public Library and a writer and presenter for *Radio Wisła* a Polish-language internet radio station in Seattle. His latest compilation of Polish-English poems, ***Sunday Poets (Niedzielni poeci)*** has been recently published in Poland.

ETK: Many of us remember you from Pittsburgh, from your interesting poetry readings. Now, at a distance, we would like to share with our readers at least your latest poems. You just had a new book of poems in Polish and English published in Poland: *Sunday Poets (Niedzielni poeci)*. Congratulations! I know you as a prolific writer. Why this metaphor in your title?

LC: I'm not sure how to answer this question. After all, stripping a poem of its metaphor and metaphysical qualities might be tantamount to deconstruction. Billy Collins wrote a wonderful poem, *Introduction to Poetry*. The last part of it could answer this question better than I ever could.

*...But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.*

*They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.*

ETK: I love your sense of humor! This particular book is different from your usual breadth of subjects on nature, music, romantic love, war, food, nature, humor and human folly. Your poems here are quite short, a bit philosophical...

LC: Though this book of poetry appears a bit eclectic, because it consists of three, if not four, distinct subjects: poems about poets, poetry and writing; poems about nature; and lyrical poems. It's unified by its philosophical reflections, consistent through the book. An idea was to entice

the reader into the poem and then leave room for him to ponder. Nicanor Parra, a Chilean poet, in his *Antipoesias* said, "Poet's task / is to improve / on a blank page". However impossible this might be, the shorter the poem, the closer a poet gets to being true to his task.



ETK: What is your inspiration when writing?

LC: Anything could be a source of inspiration. We all receive information through our senses and act in myriads of ways. The same could be said about poets.

Some poems just appear

out of thin air and the poet's task is to write them down, especially very short poems, like this one that flew into my mind recently, titled, *Two-line Poem*:

The second line killed the poet

So the crucial thing here is to capture that fleeting moment that may last a fraction of a second when it happens. It could be a word, a thought, a sight, another poem, a newspaper article, a hike in the mountains or on a beach; it could be anything. I've written recently a couple of volumes of poetry, *Podlesie*, consisting of seventy-six poems, and *Dyrđymatki*, consisting of eighty poems. A work on a collection, serendipitous as it might appear, takes planning and exploring and unifying one's work. It's facilitated by the writing process itself, for often one poem leads to another.

ETK: You started writing poetry as a young man. What prompted you?

LC: It must have been the magic of poetry. What else? Things you say or don't say, the language, it's playfulness, reading between the lines, its ability to say one thing while meaning another that I addressed recently in another of my one-line-poems titled, *One-line Poem*:

This poem does not read between the lines

Or was it that I felt I had something to say in a new way? Or was it szpan (roughly: zoot or attitude), the importance of being a poet, belonging to a poetic circle, shooting the breeze with other poets?

ETK: Interesting. What are your personal aesthetics and the relationship between your speaking voice and your writing?

LC: I believe that every person is a creator, an artist, or a poet at heart. I try to be true to this mantra in my writing and speaking; hence, quite a few of my poems are invitations to a conversation, a thought-provoking journey with no end. I've conducted numerous poetry workshops for children and adults and found this to be true, particularly in children whose creative demiurge might have been stepped on, but has not yet been killed. Both my speaking and writing voices are true to me at all times; often they are one, often they intertwine, but the speaking voice has an advantage of interacting, of feeding on my interlocutor's reactions, so it gets both interrupted but also enriched in the process. It's important to remember that sixty-five percent of a message is not the message itself, but HOW it was delivered. Hence a speaking voice, in particular, must be carefully tailored to the situation at hand. Finding and sustaining an appropriate writing voice through a poem or a collection of poems is key to one's writing to be consistent with their message.

ETK: What challenges do you face from your readers?

LC: Meeting a reader, any reader, is always a challenge. And yet, I welcome that challenge for the reader is the indispensable (often missing) ingredient without which writing has no sense. Unless one writes for the drawer. Often, it's this fantastic unpredictability of questions that I crave. Or readers' comments for they tell me that my invitation for conversation has been accepted. Not only because the listeners poke around a poem and question it, but even more so, the process makes both the poet and listener/reader more complete.

ETK: Despite the fact that poetry is a unique way of writing, describing our everyday experiences as more beautiful and wondrous, poetry is not as popular as fiction or non-fiction. People don't always know how to read poems. How would you explain the reason for the existence of poetry? Its power?

LC: Poetry, like music, borders on the untouchable. Prose, or any other form of expression, is not able to explain the mystery of our existence and anguish. How many of our feelings and thoughts (yes, thoughts, before they get formed into words) cannot be expressed with words? It's a common, daily occurrence. So we are in the dark. Having feelings we don't understand, having thoughts we cannot read. And then there's imperfect poetry, yet, it's the best tool we have. And music. And Miles Davis...

ETK: You were teaching poetry writing to young people. How did you find their reactions? Their interests? Do you see the young generation as future readers of poetry or, considering it's a "cyber age", a practically hopeless attempt to involve or interest them?

LC: Teaching children is a liberating, exhilarating experience. My approach enabled "young poets" to make their own decisions. They could write, read, critique, etc., if they wanted to; so every decision was theirs. Thus they became empowered, but also bore responsibility for their actions. Poetry is an innate power emanating from within and as such will be around as long as humans will, so I'm not worried about the future of poetry. True, it will most likely change, just like it always has and will evolve along with us and our technology. Already there are examples of poets writing on Twitter or for Twitter, creating cyber-age "haiku" and other forms. Let's step outside of this page and into the cyber-space. Here's a link to Twitter haiku: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/haiku?lang=en> and another one to Twitter poetry: <https://mashable.com/2015/04/30/twitter-poems-national-poetry-month/>. I'm confident future generations will be up to the task, just like our generation (and any other generation preceding us) has been.

ETK: Poland is known for many famous poets, such as Nobel Prize winners as

Milosz, and Szymborska, or twentieth century giants, such as Herbert, Różewicz, Zagajewski, or the practically unknown here and untranslatable, Leśmian. It's part of a tradition going back centuries. Is poetry more revered in Poland than here?

LC: Revered? - yes; more popular - probably not. The US developed in a different historical milieu with no need for a national bard. It wasn't until the Civil War when Walt Whitman wrote *Leaves of Grass* and Stephen Crane penned (after the war) *The Red Badge of Courage*. Both works became part of the national ethos known as the American Dream, while the Polish national ethos was survival of the country. In such difficult times poets were necessarily involved in the national struggle, while the greatest American poets of the Civil War era lived in New England, sat around the fireplace and were, deservedly so, called Fireside poets. Polish poets through poetry were elevated to become national heroes; no such thing ever happened in America. And this admiration of poets in Poland is still palatable today.

LC: What poem would I like to see in the *Polish Journey*? How about the one about good and evil?

*good will never win
nor will evil*

*bound to each other
they reflect each other in the mirror
of their own imperfections*

the poet walks in the middle of the road

*dobro nigdy nie zwycięży
ani złó*

*skazane na siebie
odbijają się w lustrze
własnych ułomności*

poeta idzie środkiem drogi

ETK: Thanks for sharing your poetry and your enlightening comments. Wishing you much success!

In the US, Leszek's book can be bought from the author. Please contact him at leszekzbig@gmail.com and send a check or money order for \$15.00 US plus \$3.00 S&H, made out to Leszek Chudziński. In Poland, please contact the publisher, Mimiatura, at mimiatura@autograf.pl

**RENEW
TODAY!**

Please fill in this form and mail it with your dues to the address shown below. Thank You!

Keeping Polish Culture Alive!

Polish Cultural Council
P.O. Box 81054
Pittsburgh, PA 15217-0554
www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Type of one year membership:
(January 1 to December 31)

☐ NEW ☐ RENEWAL

- ☐ Student (\$10)
☐ Individual (\$30)
☐ Family (\$45)
☐ Business (\$125)

Polish Speaking? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I would like to get involved in:

- ☐ Ostatki, Winter White Party
☐ Easter Breakfast
☐ Film Festival
☐ Performing & Visual Arts Events
☐ Newsletter
☐ Fundraising
☐ Polish Language Classes

Additionally, I would like to support PCC in the amount of \$ _____

Please make your check payable to:
Polish Cultural Council

or pay online at www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org

Speaking Polish – Piece of Cake

by Veronica Wojnarowski

Polish Tongue-Twisters

If you think that *She sells sea shells by the seashore* and *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers* are difficult to pronounce, let's try some famous Polish tongue-twisters. With its many sibilants, or hissing sounds, and the relatively lower ratio of vowels to consonants in many words, Polish is a veritable garden of loamy soil for the growth of tongue-twisters.

In Polish, a tongue-twister is *łamaniec językowy*. This term comes from *łamać*, the verb for *to break something*, a leg, a promise, or the law; and from *język*, which comes from a Proto-Slavic word, which means *tongue* and also *language*. *Łamać się* means *to falter*. *Łamany* is an adjective which means *broken*. *Mówić łamaną angielszczyzną* is to *speak in broken English*. A *łamiągówka* is a jigsaw puzzle. A *łamaniec językowy* is *trudny do wymówienia*, *difficult to pronounce*. A tongue-twister is *designed* to be difficult to pronounce, in order to produce humor, amusement and laughter. It usually makes no sense.

Some Favorites

The first line of a poem, *Chrząszcz*, by the Polish author Jan Brzechwa, is perhaps the most famous of tongue-twisters, and is even difficult for many native speakers to pronounce. It goes, *W Szczepleszynie chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie* (*In the town of Szczepleszyn a beetle buzzes in the reeds.*) Almost all of the consonants make distinct buzzing sounds. They imitate the sounds made by the insects which live among the reeds which flank the Wieprz River in the town. The poem is so well-known that the beetle became the symbol of Szczepleszyn. In 2002, a statue of the beetle, playing a violin, was placed in the town square. Founded in the 14th century,



The beetle of Szczepleszyn

Szczepleszyn is an old town of rich history in southeastern Poland, near Zamość. This Wikipedia article is quite informative (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Szczepleszyn>).

This next tongue-twister is an example of one in which every word begins with the same letter, k. *Król Karol kupił królowej Karolinie korale koloru koralowego*, *King Karol bought a coral colored necklace for Queen Karoline*.

Here is another tongue-twister of the same form, except that you must be able to switch between the sz (sh) sound and the s (ess) sound. *Szedł Sasza suchą szosą i suszył sobie spodnie*. *Sacha was walking along a dry road and he was drying his trousers*.

This phrase also mostly uses alliteration. *Żąb zupa żebowa, dąb zupa dębowa*. *Tooth, tooth soup, oak, oak soup*. Often, the speaker of this mouthful slips up and says a rather impolite and cheeky word.

Alternating s and sz is also found in this phrase: *W czasie suszy szosa sucha*. *In dry weather the road is dry*.

This tongue-twister challenges you to pronounce combinations of czy, cy

and ta. *Czy tata czyta cytaty Tacyty?* *Does Dad read quotations from Tacitus?*

The delight in this tongue-twister comes from the very long middle word, for which you must say *wy, wa, ta, my, ny* and *mi*, being careful not to confuse the Polish *y* (a short i sound, not a long e sound as in English) with the Polish *i* (a long e sound, not a long or short i sound as in English). *Stół z powyłamywanymi nogami*, *a table with broken legs*. Once you have mastered this tongue-twister, try *Drabina z powyłamywanymi szczeblami*, *a ladder with broken rungs*.

Here, you are presented with the Polish *sz* (sh) in combination with other letters, *szew, szy, trz, wszy, szł* and *szcz*. *Węszy płaszcza się zaszywszy w szyku marsza trzy wszy wyszły*. *Hiding in the seams of a coat, three lice entered marching in formation*.

This tongue-twister trips you up with alternating *ż* and *rz*. *Leży Jerzy na wieży i nie wierzy, że na drugiej wieży leży drugi Jerzy*. *George is lying in a tower and doesn't believe that there is another George lying in a second tower*.

Here are the confounding *pieprz* and *prz*. *Nie pieprz Pietrze wieprza pieprzem, bo przepieprzysz wieprza pieprzem*. *Peter, don't put pepper on the boar because you may put too much pepper on it*.

Why Practice These Tongue-Twister?

Because they are some of the most difficult phrases in Polish, practicing them will help you in the pronunciation of less daunting words and phrases. Find a native Polish speaker to help you. There are also many videos on Youtube of people reciting these tongue-twisters.

Baw się dobrze! Have fun!

ANDY OSTROWSKI –

That Famous Polish Lighting Designer!

Anytime you go to the opera, theatre, concert or event, how often do you think about the lighting effects? We usually take certain things for granted and forget how important the role of the lighting designer in the artistic world is.

ANDY OSTROWSKI is our pride and joy in Pittsburgh. His extensive credits include Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre, Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, The Repertory Theatre, Playhouse Theatre, City Theatre and, for the past 16 years, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble (PNME).

ETK: Andy, you'll start your seventeenth season with the PNME on July 12. Amazing! Recently, the ensemble is promoting themselves as *Theatre of Music*. How much of your work was put into it? How did you influence their performances?

AO: From year one, Kevin and I discussed a highly theatrical design approach. During rehearsals for the very first concert I asked him if I could show him what I was thinking for the opening of the concert. He loved the design and it was a "hit". From that point on, Kevin has given me free reign to bring to the table any and all ideas. He has trusted me quite a bit over the years and we discuss ideas all the time. Light and sound work together synonymously. My approach to the music is to support the emotion, the rhythm, and the story. I listen to the music and the inspiration starts. I allow the patron an opportunity to "see" the music.

ETK: New music is not always easy to perceive or to enjoy. Spending many, many years with PNME, I can easily tell how much your design has changed the character of performances, making them more accessible to the public.

AO: Thank you. I really want the audience to tap into the music as much as possible and enrich the experience. We all respond to music differently and consequently tune in and tune out at different points during a composition; but if I can help keep the attention from tuning out too far, then I help focus the patron to the music and push the composition along.

ETK: You got a nickname: *That Famous Polish Lighting Designer*. How did it happen?

AO: In December of 1990, I got a big break to design a show for the Public Theatre. On the first day of rehearsal there was a meeting with the director, the design team, the production team and the producer. It is usual to go around the table and introduce yourself even though you probably all know each other. As it was my turn to introduce myself, the production stage manager asked if she could have the honor. There was a little laughter and I said of course. She then said "I would like to introduce That Famous Polish Lighting Designer Andrew David Ostrowski". My birthday happened to be during the technical rehearsals and the crew got me a little gift which was a pen set for my desk. It was engraved "TFPLD". A few years later the internet came around and email addresses were needed. It was just perfect for me to use the moniker as my email address.

ETK: Could you briefly explain how you do your work, e.g. at the theatre, which is a collaborative project of artists, director, set designer, costume designer, and music, etc. How important is the role of lighting in a play or even in a concert? What's your aim when you are starting a new production?

AO: Theatre is a collaborative art form and when it works best you never notice the machine working. You come away from the production understanding the story fully. The lighting is integral to how people see, what they see, and when they see it. It is imperative to help the set and costume design look good and as they want it to appear.

The lighting can be subtle or overt. At times the lighting should be noticed. Color in the light will tell whether a story is realistic or fantasy. Angle of light also will tell a story. We as humans rarely notice light. We see it as part of the modern world. We need light to see and that is as far as many think. A horror movie is a simple example of how light informs. It causes anxiety because we don't get to see the "whole story".

On any new production, I am thinking about what light can bring to help tell the story. I am a non-verbal story teller. My story is seen visually. Since we have never had classes on what light means and how to interpret light, some members of the audience might find light distracting to think about. I try my best to keep it approachable and understandable.

ETK: You have been known and recognized all over the world. Please let our readers know about your achievements, and your engagements nation-wide. What about your international productions? Any new projects?

AO: I have been fortunate to work in quite a few countries. I was the lighting director for an international tour of the Gershwin opera *Porgy and Bess*. During the course of 5 years, we played in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Austria, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Denmark. My work with a dance company was seen in France and Spain. I returned to Sweden to design a production that also would play in New York. PNME played Edinburgh Scotland in 2008. We return this summer. I had a show tour Ireland in 2002. I assisted a lighting designer in London in 1996. In 1988 I worked for Club Med in the Caribbean for 2 resorts.

I have been fortunate to work in many large cities around the U.S, like New York City, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and others. In 2002 I was awarded a National Merit Award from the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Pittsburgh is home. Being self-employed for 23 years, I have designed over 300 productions and worked on over 400 productions as the associate lighting designer or lighting director. If you would like to see more of my work please do so at www.tfpld.com

ETK: Thank you for sharing with us your professional "secrets". I'm sure that from now on we'll look at the entire production with a different eye. Good luck in the new season!

– Eva Tumieli-Kozak

Chłodnik - The wonderful Polish Summer Cooler

Cold soups are a feature of many of the world's top cuisines. The French have *vichyssoise*. The Spanish have *gazpacho*. And the Poles, *chłodnik*. *Chłodnik* (pronounced: "h'wod-neck") means "cooler" in English and it is the most famous and most popular of Polish summer soups. In reality, it is more like a liquid salad than a soup. And the sky is the limit as to the various additions and accompaniments that can be used to make this wonderfully shocking pink soup truly memorable.

Chłodnik is as much fun to participate in as it is to eat. It's perfect for a family gathering, summer picnic or brunch out on the patio. A meal in itself, *chłodnik* is wonderful party food. The base is chilled flavored red beet stock to which sour cream is added, resulting in a bright pink color. A touch of vinegar adds a slight tang to the soup, which is fully complimented by sour cream and the other liquid ingredients. Folks - especially children - love to add their own accompaniments. These are limited only to the host's imagination, but usually include - among others - chopped hard cooked eggs, chopped dill, sliced scallions and radishes, diced peeled cucumber, diced dill pickles, diced roast beef or ham, chopped cooked shrimp or crab meat. The contrast between the hard cooked eggs, the bright green of the freshly chopped dill and scallions against the bright pink soup is as striking as it is delicious.

When serving *chłodnik*, ladle the soup into soup bowls (or even clear glass bowls), sprinkle with chopped dill and serve to your guests. I often like to make *chłodnik* an interactive event, providing small bowls with a variety of additions for guests to add to their soup themselves. This *Chłodnik Bar* can be set up on a kitchen counter or the items can be passed around the table for guests to augment their soup as they wish.

I usually like to serve *chłodnik* with breadsticks. Gourmet crackers are also a nice touch, or perhaps baked *zapiekanki* which are slices of French-style bread or toast covered with a variety of toppings, such as shredded cheese, mushrooms, chopped walnuts, then baked.

In preparing *chłodnik* you can either make your own stock from fresh red beets or purchase canned beet juice or *barszcz* (red beet soup) mix in ethnic delicatessens.

Chłodnik - Cold Beet Soup

For the Beet Stock:

2 lbs. raw beets, cleaned, peeled and coarsely chopped
 2 cups chicken broth
 1 cup water
 1 tsp salt

After the stock cools add:

2 tsp sugar
 4 tps white vinegar
 1 cup dill pickle juice (from pickle jar) (add to taste)
 salt and pepper to taste
 Add 2 cups sour cream (add gradually

until you attain the desired color -



should be a dark pink.)

Note: Adjust vinegar and sugar to taste; add more or less as desired.

Additions to Chłodnik:

Chopped red beets (from stock)
 1/4 cup chopped dill
 2 medium cucumbers, peeled and diced
 4 large dill pickles, minced
 1 cup diced ham
 6 - 8 hard cooked eggs, chopped or sliced
 12 large shrimp, cooked, peeled and chopped
(Note: Small langostino lobsters can also be used.)
 1 cup coarsely chopped or shredded roast beef

Instructions:

Scrub beets, peel and dice. Place in soup pot with water, chicken stock and salt. Bring to boiling. Cover. Reduce heat and cook slowly until tender, for about 30 minutes, depending on the size of the beets. Drain, reserving the liquid in a large bowl. Chill, then add the sugar, vinegar, pickle juice, salt and pepper to taste. Add sour cream as desired, whisk in until pink. Adjust the vinegar and sugar for the desired balance of "sweet and sour." Chill the *chłodnik* and serve it cold with sprinkled chopped dill. Add hard boiled eggs and generous portions of diced cucumber, radish slices, scallions, shrimp, etc. Or serve these additions on the side for guests to help themselves. Serve with breadsticks, gourmet crackers or *zapiekanki*. Smacznego!

The PIASA's Seventh World-wide Congress on Polish Studies, June 13-16, 2019 in Gdansk, Poland

The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America in New York (PIASA) was founded in 1942 by world famous Polish scholars. Their aim was to continue the work and tradition of the pre-war Akademia Umiejętności in Kraków (Polish Academy of Learning), which was destroyed by Nazi Germany in 1939. Founding members include anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski, poet Jan Lechoń, and historian Oskar Halecki. Since 1942, more than 1,500 scholars and artists have been members. The roster has included such luminaries as Zbigniew Brzeziński, Stanisław Skrowaczewski, Aleksander Wolszycan, and Nobel Prize winners Czesław Miłosz and Frank Wilczek.

The Institute's mission is to advance the knowledge about Poland and Polish America in the United States. To this end, it maintains a specialized reference library and rich archives, publishes The Polish Review, cooperates with academic organizations in the United States and in Poland, and makes awards to outstanding scholars and scientists. It also organizes annual, multi-disciplinary conferences across the US and Canada.

Several years ago, the PCC co-hosted such a conference with the University

of Pittsburgh. Every few years, when the Conference is open to international scholars, it becomes the Congress, and is usually in Poland, in Kraków or Warsaw. This year, the 7th World-Wide Congress on Polish Studies took place in historic Gdańsk, Poland, under the Honorary Patronage of the President of Gdańsk University, with such partners as the Embassy of USA in Warsaw, Fulbright Polska, and the Polish American History Association.

More than 230 international participants attended. There were 80 sessions offering a wide range of topics, and also various sightseeing attractions and site trips. The Congress culminated with a special lecture by Padraic Kenney, Professor of History and International Studies at Indiana University, an extensive Award Ceremony, and a banquet at the historic Artus Court in Gdańsk.

Pittsburgh and PCC were represented by two, long-standing members of PIASA: Dr. Jan Napoleon Saykiewicz, Honorary Consul of Poland, who gave a talk in the Annual Michael Sendzimir economic session, and our own board member and editor-in-chief of *Polish Journey*, Eva Tumiel-Kozak.

Screenings of Polish Films November 8th - November 23rd , 2019

We do not yet have a final schedule for the screenings of Polish films as part of the **37th Three Rivers Film Festival**. We plan to present a film directed by Władysław Pasikowski, *Courier*, about **Jan Nowak-Jeziorański**, the Polish *James Bond*, a famous WWII resistance fighter, and later, a security advisor to the US presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. Another presentation is **Agnieszka Holland's** newest film, *Mr. Jones*, which tells the story of a Welsh journalist who broke the news in the western media of the famine created by Stalin in the Ukraine in the early 1930s.

Please watch for future notices about the schedule and the complete lineup.

Did you speak Polish as a child? Do you have family documents in Polish? Are you planning a trip to Poland? Do you want to learn to speak Polish? If you can say "yes" to any of these questions, please consider the Polish language classes offered by the Polish Cultural Council.

REGISTER FOR POLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

POLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES WILL RESUME ON SEPT 7TH, 2019 AT 10 AM, AT THE CYA BUILDING IN LAWRENCEVILLE, CORNER OF FISK AND GOVERNMENT LANE, BETWEEN PENN AVE. & BUTLER. CLASSES RUN THROUGH MAY 2020.

Registration Form 2019-2020

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Email

Class Choice:

☐ Beginner ☐ Advanced

In the event of an emergency or change of schedule, list the telephone numbers where you should be contacted.

Day

Cell/Evening

Signature

Date

Registration and Class Fee \$175

PCC Membership is required

Please make your check payable to Polish Cultural Council and Mail to:

**Polish Cultural Council
P.O. Box 81054
Pittsburgh, PA 15217-0554**



Polish Cultural Council
P.O. BOX 81054
Pittsburgh PA 15217-0554



www.PolishCulturalCouncil.org



Screening of the documentary film “Colonel House”- Hero of Polish Independence!

Film produced by Discovery channel tells the story about Edward Mandell House, a remarkable man who lived his life mostly in the shadows yet was one of the most influential figures of the President Woodrow Wilson’s presidency. He is a figure that both Europe and Poland owe so much, but despite all of that he is almost completely forgotten. He had a significant role in shaping the Fourteen Points at the Paris Peace Conference after the First World War.

The event will be accompanied by a small exhibition “Class of 1926” about the Polish Declarations of Admiration and Friendship for the United States preserved by the Library of Congress.

Saturday, October 19th, 2019 @ 6:30 pm

University of Pittsburgh Cathedral of Learning room #232

Free and open to the public.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN POLAND

The next Polish parliamentary elections will be held no later than November, 2019. All 460 members of the Sejm and 100 senators will be elected. There is a possibility that we might have a polling place in Pittsburgh for this election. All eligible Polish citizens with a valid Polish passport should check for the details on our website, the PCC's Facebook or Pgh_Polonia.

