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**Cheers! It's
Carnival Time!**

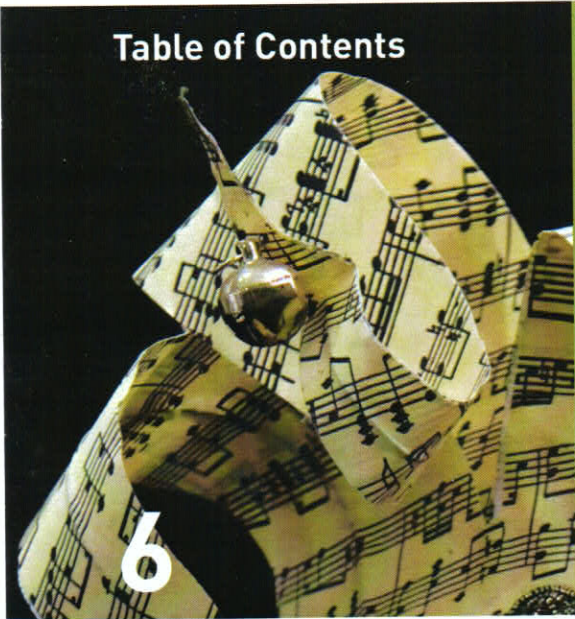
Behind the Scenes

This issue of *PolAm* explores Poland's *Karnawał* season. While most folks know that Poland approaches the pre-Lenten season differently than they do in Rio or New Orleans, we wanted to explore how the last 25 years have shifted the way Poles approach the season. As church attendance is dropping and younger Poles are adopting more secular values, it follows that church-based festivals and calendars would get short shrift. Although this seems to be the case in many urban settings, there are areas of the country where Poles still do what Poles have done for centuries.

Be sure to look at the new titles the PACIM library has just added to their collections. Page 8 has a full list of the new books and audio books for wide-ranging interests and ages. Hope to see you at the *Bal Karnawałowy* in February!

Do zobaczenia,
Jane Mrazek Flanders, *Editor*

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POLAM

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The Polish American Cultural Institute of Minnesota presents



Saturday, February 14, 2015

The Historic Saint Paul Hotel



PACIM's signature event, the *Bal Karnawatowy* (carnival ball), honors the pre-Lenten celebration that dates back several centuries in Poland. The formal event includes a three-course dinner, cultural dance performances, an awards program, a live band, social dancing and a silent auction of Polish and non-Polish items.

Honoree: The Polanie Club of Minneapolis-Saint Paul

Each year, PACIM honors an organization or individual who excels in promoting and supporting efforts to preserve Polish culture and heritage, thereby enriching society with the best of Polish traditions and ideals. Through its scholarship programs, publishing company, special events and dedication to the arts and Polish language education, the Polanie Club has been a leader in cultivating interest in Polish culture for more than eighty years in the Twin Cities area. PACIM is proud to honor the Polanie Club at the 2015 Bal and highlight its accomplishments with a special program.

Schedule:

5:30 PM – Doors Open — Social Hour and Silent Auction

7:00 PM – Dinner Banquet

9:00 PM – Opening of the *Bal*

1:00 AM – *Bal* Closes

Tickets:

\$65 for PACIM members, \$75 for nonmembers,

\$475 for a Table of 8.

Tickets are now on sale online at www.pacim.org
or can be ordered by calling 612-378-9291.

Polanie Club members should contact bal@pacim.org
or 612-378-9291 for special ticket information

Menu:

First Course:

Arugula with Goat Cheese, Poached Apple, Pecans and Cider Vinaigrette, paired with Celery Root-Apple Soup, Rolls and Butter

Main Course:

Roulade of Chicken with Spinach Mousse,
Grilled Asparagus, Roasted Rosemary Marble Potatoes
and Wild Mushroom Ragoût

or

Seared Salmon, Roasted Cauliflower Polonaise, Mashed Potatoes and Dill-Mustard Sauce

or

Wild Rice Stuffed Cabbage with Ragoût and Vegetables

Third Course:

Dark Chocolate Cremeux, Apple Gel and Red Glazed White Chocolate Mousse Hearts, garnished with Chefs Garden Flowers

Acclaimed Movie *Ida* Heralds Polish Cinema Renaissance



A Polish movie

vying for Golden Globe glory has raised hopes of a revival in the country's grand cinematic traditions — which include masters such as Roman Polanski, Andrzej Wajda and Krzysztof Kieślowski.

Ida, a reflective movie about the legacy of the Holocaust in communist Poland, has unexpectedly been showered with international awards since its release in 2013. Polish-British director Pawel Pawlikowski's film is a nominee for best foreign language film in Sunday's Golden Globes and is widely expected to win a best foreign film nomination when Oscar candidates are announced next week.

The movie tells the story of a young woman, *Ida*, who discovers on the eve of becoming a Catholic nun that she is Jewish. She sets out on a journey into her family's past and that of Poles under Nazi Germany — some saving, others killing Jews — then into the repressions of communism, in which some Jews played a role. Critics say that one of the film's strengths is that it passes no judgment.

The deceptively simple story has resonated worldwide because the protagonists mature and discover their identity by facing the tragic truth of their past.

Shot in black-and-white with a static camera, *Ida* reflects the style of European art house cinema of the early 1960s, the period in which the story is set. In December, it won best European film, best director, best screenplay and best cinematography at the European Film Awards. It has also won best foreign language film awards from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and from the New York Film Critics Circle.

The success brings recognition to a resurgent Polish cinema that went through a creative and financial crisis first under martial law in the 1980s, then during the first years of market economy in the 1990s. After the communist collapse, established directors lost their traditional theme of cryptically bashing the regime while finding themselves at a loss to respond artistically to the new Polish reality. The void was filled by Hollywood productions banned under communism.

"Poland's cinema is doing better," said film critic Barbara Hollender. "A new, very interesting generation has arrived. And we have a new system of financing movies which made a lot of difference."

Other promising Polish directors include Jan Komasa, who made *Suicide Room* about the teenage loneliness in the Internet age, and Małgorzata Szumowska, whose movies explore complex issues like abortion and homosexuality.

Ida was co-financed by the state-run Polish Film Institute, established in 2005 to provide technical support and funds for Polish movies that pass a rigorous script selection. In 2013 its budget was 170 million *zlotys* (euros 40 million; \$48 million.) Other funds for *Ida* came from European Union, Danish and Polish sources.

Under communism all movies were fully state-funded. Masters like Wajda and Kieślowski camouflaged the anti-communist message of their movies to win censors' approval — the chief condition for obtaining funding from the Ministry of Culture.

Under the market economy that system was abolished and directors had to secure money from private sponsors, a challenge that undercut art cinema and benefited pure entertainment. With the advent of the institute, filmmakers now have an avenue of funding that allows for ambitious projects like *Ida*.

Warsaw-born Pawlikowski left Poland with his mother at age of 14, eventually settling in England. His 2000 movie *Last Resort* won the British BAFTA award for Best Newcomer and his 2005 *My Summer of Love* won the Best British Film BAFTA.

Article courtesy of the Associated Press and Monika Scislowska

It's Carnival Time!

By Dan Schyma

Some of the best

known Carnival traditions throughout the world include parades, parties and masquerading. The traditions date back to pre-Christian ancient festivals such as the Roman Saturnalia festival. Rituals and sacrifices in the Temple of Saturn were followed by raucous parties. Parades may go back even further to the ancient Greek Dionysia festival, with processions leading to the theater where comedy and tragedy plays were presented. The Bacchanalia was a religious festival to honor the wine god Dionysus. The religious festivals included wine and feasting. Added to this were debaucheries of every kind and manifestations from medieval folk culture.

Among the numerous parties during Carnival time in Poland is the *kulig*, a sleigh ride party that was a favorite of the nobility. It is not certain where the custom began, but it has been enjoyed in Poland for over three hundred years. The sleighs of the organizers were elaborately decorated and accompanied by a group of hired musicians. They made surprise visits to various homes so that the homeowners could not hide or leave. Then, as now, the Polish proverb *Gość w domu, Bóg w domu* (a guest in the home is God in the home) prevailed, so the homeowner felt obligated to rush to the door to greet the arrivals while the matron started lighting the house and preparing food and drink. The ensuing singing and dancing were interspersed with ample vodka and wine. At some of the wealthiest residences the *kulig* lasted for days and could even turn into an impromptu hunting party in the nearby woods. When the revelers had eaten and drunk their host dry, they bundled their host and hostess up and moved on to the next person on their list.

Young men dressed in animal costumes were commonly seen during Christmas and Carnival time, but their appearance intensified during the last days of Lent. Various animal disguises figured as fertility figurēs. The goat was typically seen in Pomorze and Kraków. The bear was more common in the Śląsk and Kurpie regions.

A special day during Carnival time is *Thusty Czwartek* or Fat Thursday. *Thusty Czwartek* or *Pączki Day* is when children wait, hardly able to contain themselves, for the warm fried cakes called *pączki*. Today most bakeries in Poland offer these fried cakes during the entire Carnival season and even during Lent.

Another special day just before Lent is Shrove Tuesday or Fat Tuesday. It is also known as *Śledziówka* or Herring Day, when herring instead of *pączki* are eaten.

Because the music and dances have to stop on the last Tuesday of Carnival, a tradition from the Kujawy region developed called "killing the musician." At midnight, a musician (or sometimes just the man's clothes and fiddle) was taken beyond the village and symbolically decapitated. Carnival was over.

Today, Carnival in Poland is not celebrated in the streets, as in New Orleans or Rio, but with companies, college students or adults partying in clubs, at balls or bar hopping. It generally lasts from New Year's Eve until Lent. One of the traditional New Year's Eve greetings had its origins in the story of a very worthy and religious woman, Dosia from Kraków, who was always healthy, happy and charitable. She lived to be one hundred years old and died on Christmas Eve. Her influence was so strong that, upon seeing one another on New Year's Eve, people would greet each other by saying *Zycze ci Dosiego roku* (wishing you a Dosia year). This is remarkably similar to the song *Sto Lat* sung at many Polish celebrations today — "One hundred years, one hundred years, may you live a hundred years." So, *Sto Lat*!

Na Zdrowie, it's Carnival time!

Polonez to Penitence



by Jane Mrazek Flanders

“What has become a habit let it remain a habit, and this, what was, what we heard from our fathers, or we have seen already by ourselves, pass to those who will come after us; remembering that where the past was, there, also, the future will be...”

— Leon Potocki 1854

Old habits

die slowly. When social freedom is at stake in the modern era, the demise can become more dramatic. Consider Poland's social and cultural traditions, which have formed over centuries and are grounded in Christianity. During times of restricted freedom, or worse, war, the country has especially embraced church-based festivals and holidays. Today, however, Poland is undergoing fundamental changes. As the country becomes more secular, her traditions melt like last winter's snow.

For example, one of Poland's oldest winter traditions, *Karnawał*, is being transformed. Beginning just after Christmas and ending with Lent, this time of merrymaking now reflects, in some parts of the country, more of Weimar Germany's hedonism than Poland's ancient Christ-centered traditions. Church feast days and faith-based celebrations are supplanted by pub crawls and bacchanalian pursuits. Instead of lantern lit processions to neighbors' houses to sing and rejoice before the season of penance, one is more likely to see shimmering disco balls and hear thumping techno-pop music even after the start of Lent.

While city dwellers and suburbanites may forsake tradition, remote villagers still cling to centuries' old habits. Deep in the Tatra Mountains, the Bukowina Tatrzańska area embraces the parades, sleigh rides and carol singing long associated with Poland's pre-Lenten festivities. Occurring in February, *Karnawał Goralski* attracts visitors not only from around Poland but also from other countries. Beginning with a colorful procession of horse-drawn vehicles, carolers and dancing groups, the festival lasts five days. The opening procession causes a traffic jam in Bukowina when costumed participants stop cars to wish drivers and passengers good luck and health. Done in the spirit of fun, the revelers expect a token gift of small change for the right to pass through the village.

Celebrating the best of Highland music and dance, the festival also showcases folk art and competitions such as rifle shooting matches. The highlight of the festival, the *Kumoterki* races are a bit like a *kulig* on steroids where horse-drawn *kulig* sleigh rides are adapted for high speed and breathtaking action. The race's name, *Kumoterska gonba*, derives from the type of small sleigh, *kumoterek*, traditionally used to transport godparents and babies for baptisms in the region. Highlanders take great pride in preparing their sleighs and performing in them. While this festival more closely resembles Poland's old carnival traditions, others are changing to reflect the country's independence and strength.

Continued on page 11



The PACIM library recently purchased over two dozen books to strengthen its collections. Biographies, recent adult literature, children's and teen literature, women-focused literature and audiobooks offer patrons new books and subjects. All new materials are in Polish.

New books in PACIM library, Winter 2015

Matka feministka Agnieszka Graff
Zachcianki. Dziesięć zmysłowych opowieści
 Grażyna Plebanek, Jacek Dukaj, Krystyna Kofta
Tak jest dobrze Szczepan Twardoch
Samobójstwo i grzech istnienia Stefan Chwin
Rymowanki dla dużych dzieci Wisława Szymborska
Wiersze zebrane Barańczak Stanisław Barańczak
Złodzieje koni Remigiusz Grzela
Gimnastyka dla języka książka audio na CD (format mp3),
 Małgorzata Strzałkowska
Dwa serca anioła Wojciech Widłak
Kupa kultury Leszek Bugajski
Pra. Opowieść o rodzinie Iwaszkiewiczów Ludwika Włodek
Dzienniki Edward Stachura
Duch opowieści Jan Gondowicz
Trans-Autentyk. Nie-czyste formy Brunona Schulza Jan Gondowicz

Niebezpieczny poeta. Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński Anna Arno
Wschód Andrzej Stasiuk
O Podhalu, Galicji i Piłsudskim Jaroslav Hasek
Antologia polskiego reportażu XX wieku. 100/XX. Tom 1-2
 Mariusz Szczygieł
Zofia Kossak. Opowieść biograficzna Joanna Jurgała-Jureczka
Życie na miarę literatury Michał Paweł Markowski
Pan Kuleczka Wojciech Widłak
Wesoły Ryjek Wojciech Widłak
Księgi Jakubowe Olga Tokarczuk
Ziarno prawdy Zygmunt Miłoszewski
Miłość po polsku Manuela Gretkowska
Nielegalne związki Grażyna Plebanek
Maska Arlekina Hanna Kowalewska
Szum Magdalena Tulli



Bring the Kids!

Children's Corner features storytelling and small projects for children ages 2-5. Admission is free. This special program for kids takes place every third Sunday of the month through May.

PACIM Library

43 Main St SE, Ste 228
 Minneapolis, MN 55414
 Hours: Sundays 1 to 4 pm
 or by appointment

The Library's open hours on Sundays coincide with free parking along Lourdes Place (the street behind RiverPlace). Take advantage of the free parking to browse books, DVDs, CDs, and to visit with other PACIM members over a cup of hot tea. For directions or alternative parking suggestions, visit pacim.org or call 612-378-9291.

Local

February 14

Bal Karnawałowy

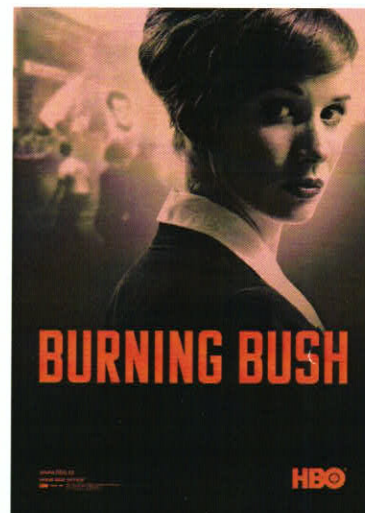
Spend Valentine's Day surrounded by elegance at PACIM's *Bal Karnawałowy* at the Saint Paul Hotel. This gala event includes fine food, live music, dancing, a silent auction and a brief award ceremony. Tickets can be purchased at PACIM's Library and online at www.pacim.org.



February 21

Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota Film Event

Burning Bush, a 2013 HBO film created by Polish director Agnieszka Holland, begins at 10 am at City Bella, 600 Lyndale Ave S, Richfield, MN. The drama is based on real characters and events surrounding Jan Palach, a Prague student who set himself on fire in protest against the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1969. The film will be followed by a discussion.



March 8

Chopin Society Concert

Argentine pianist Nelson Goerner will perform works of Bach, Mendelssohn and Beethoven at Macalester College's Maris Concert Hall. Goerner's first Chopin Society concert in 2012 showcased his richness of tone and poetic insight. He has won top prizes in Buenos Aires and Geneva, Switzerland, where he lives and teaches. Goerner's concert begins at 3 pm. Tickets and details at www.chopinsociety-mn.org.

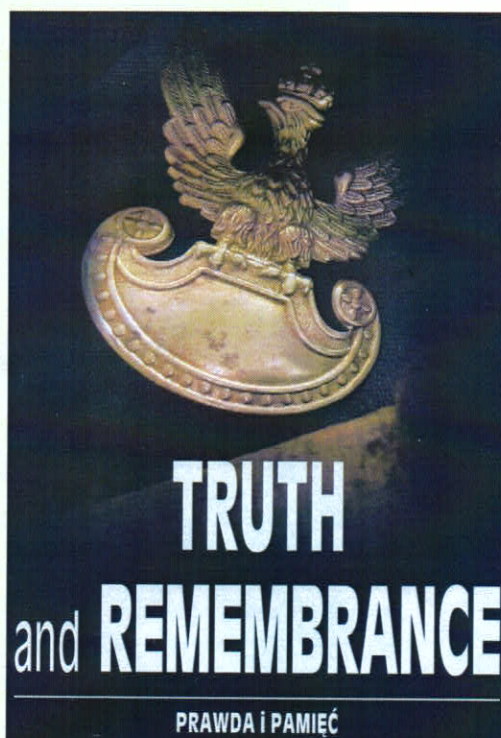


State/Regional

February 8 – March 11

Katyn: Truth and Remembrance Exhibit

The Polish Museum of America hosts a bilingual exhibit of 32 panels relating to the events leading up to World War II, including the executions, the cover-up and the unending search for truth. The exhibit opening begins at 2 pm at the museum with guest speakers Dr. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz and Piotr Uzarowicz.





Nearly **1,000 miners** stayed underground after their shifts in early January to protest the government's plan to close four unprofitable mines in southern Poland.

U.S. prosecutors are asking Poland to extradite Polish filmmaker

Roman Polanski for the 1977 charges that he had unlawful sex with a minor. Polanski, 81, is a French citizen and recently traveled back to Poland to promote his new film *An Officer and a Spy*.



Poland's GDP ended 2014 higher than anticipated although the unemployment rate continues to hover around 12%. The country's inflation rate remains negative.

Poland's first all **organic café** opened in downtown Warsaw. Organic Coffee & More hopes to defy the



stereotype of high prices and inaccessibility associated with organic foods.

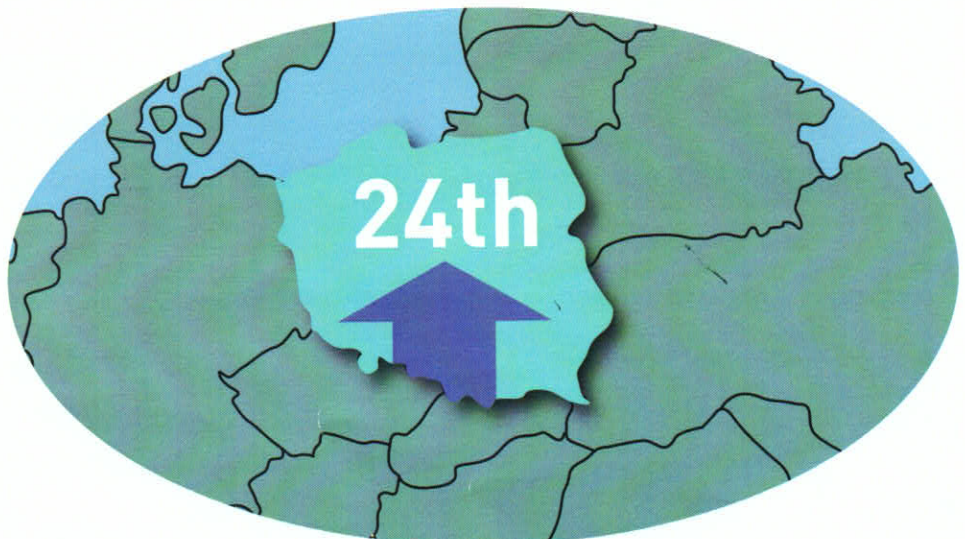
Poland's Population Decline *by Marie Przynski*

Poland currently enjoys a robust economy and by 2050 is projected to be the 24th largest economy globally. In order to maintain this high level of economic growth, it is vital to ensure that the work force remains stable and that demographic shifts such as outward migration, decreased birth rate and an aging population are addressed to avert a potential economic crisis.

Inclusion in the European Union has allowed over 2.2 million Poles to emigrate for job opportunities elsewhere, and it is estimated that an additional 3 million will leave in the next 25 years. It is also anticipated that the birth rate will continue to decline. As a consequence, the balance of power in the European Union could be altered because the EU system is based on a country's population.

Unemployment in Poland is still high at almost 9%, mainly in construction, food industries, sales and cleaning, positions that are lower skilled and lower paying. Large numbers of those who have left were in these traditionally lower paying and unskilled positions. They entered similar positions in other countries, but at a higher rate of pay. Increasing numbers of skilled technical workers are leaving as well. Generally they plan to save money and return; however, the reality is that over 70,000 Polish citizens have already given up their passports. The government admits that the outward flow will not be reversed as long as wages are higher in other parts of Europe.

Poland is seeking to stabilize jobs and economic opportunities to keep its population at home, but this will require maintaining its current high level of economic growth. There are various efforts to lower the unemployment rate, including the politically risky proposal of encouraging immigration from other countries and raising the retirement age. Many challenges lie ahead but, if Poland is not able to maintain the strength of its economy, it stands to lose its economic strength and influence.



Another well-known *Karnawał* tradition, the Carnival Ball, is receiving a new focus, especially in urban settings. The gala evening of formal dancing and dining highlights both Poland's vibrant economy and spirit of philanthropy. Balls that long marked Poland's *polonez* to penitence now serve as fundraisers for charities and schools.

A new date on Kraków's social calendar appeared last year. *Krakowski Bal Karnawałowy*, a lavish ball that raises money for disadvantaged children in the Nowa Huta area, was held at the elegant former Officers' Club that was once the residence of Józef Pilsudski. It appears the western approach to charitable outreach amid elegant dining and dancing has found a home in Poland.

Of course, Polish schools teach students the traditions surrounding *Karnawał*. These may be seen in the seasonal decorations and heard in the songs and stories. But to

Gen-X and Gen-Y Poles, the traditions are as relevant as ancient history. Poland may have a reputation as a pious nation, but in reality the influence of religion on people seems to be decreasing and there is pressure from younger generations to rid the country of many traditional religious trappings. To these young people, *Karnawał* means Saturday nights dancing in a disco or gathered around a bonfire with friends enjoying sausages and fortified drinks.




Kumoterki races are like a sleigh ride on steroids.




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