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The FPA Newsletter is published 4 times per year.

Submissions from FPA members are highly encouraged. Please send them as an e-mail to the editor.

The opinions and editorial views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Friends of Polish Art.

FPA does not assume any responsibility for statements advanced by contributors to this newsletter. The editor reserve the right to edit any submission.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS AND GRANTS FOR POLISH FOLK DANCE GROUPS

FPA is very pleased that this year our society is again able to continue the important mission of supporting students and dance groups in their endeavors through offering scholarships and grants. We do not offer the Frank Filipek Scholarships anymore. As planned, these funds were exhausted. We are very grateful that for many years we were able to award these scholarships and over 100 students studying different sciences, medicine and law benefited from them.

FPA MITCHELL SCHOLARSHIPS AND FPA MITCHELL FINE ARTS SCHOLARSHIPS

To replace the Frank Filipek Scholarships, this year we created three new Mitchell Scholarships which will support studies in the same fields as the Frank Filipek Scholarships. In addition, we are continuing to offer Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships – two offered - to students pursuing studies in painting, sculpture, music, drama, theater, dance and other forms of creative expression, as well as history, literature, religion, philosophy and Polish Studies. The amount of each scholarship this year is \$2,000 and the money will be paid to students.

FPA DONALD SAMULL POLISH FOLK DANCE GRANTS

For the fourth year in a row, Friends of Polish Art will award up to four grants in an amount up to \$2,500 each to Michigan-based Polish folk-dance groups. The purpose of the grant program is to support local Polish dance groups with their regular activities, with special consideration given to groups traveling to Poland to attend folk dance festivals.

The deadline to apply for scholarships and grants is April 24, 2026. For details and application forms please check the FPA website: <https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/>

FPA MEMBER JOHN CEBROWSKI RECEIVES GOLD CROSS OF MERIT FROM POLAND

On November 16, 2025, Friends of Polish Art member John Cebrowski, formerly of Grosse Pointe Park, now residing in San Antonio, TX, was presented with The Gold Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland by Houston Consul General Jarosław Łasiński. The presentation took place at the Polish Heritage Center (PHC) in Panna Maria, TX, during its annual end-of-year "Dziękuję" event for supporters. In addition to serving on the board of directors of the PHC, on the board of the Austin Polish Society, and being a vice president of the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC), John also supports and is a member of eight other Polish American organizations. John is also a former Citizens Democracy Corps volunteer, having worked for a Polish healthcare and laboratory systems distributor in Warsaw. FPA is very proud of John's achievements and congratulates him wholeheartedly!



John Cebrowski and Consul General Jaroslaw Łasiński





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Dear Friends of Polish Art

I hope this letter finds you, your family and friends in good health and high spirits.

First, I'd like to welcome our new members, Joseph Barczyk and Christina Wrzesinski and returning members, Kazmierz & Tomoko Mack Brzozowski. Thank you for joining FPA. We are glad to have you in our organization.

Second, I'd like to thank last year's board members, committee chairs and committee members for your time and effort to serve the organization. All your contributions are very much appreciated! An organization like ours can only be successful if it has a dedicated and committed group of volunteers. Serdecznie dziękuję!

Reflecting on 2025, FPA upheld its tradition of hosting notable events, activities, and programs, including Święconka, grants and scholarships, the Szopka Competition, and Wigilia. Several initiatives were also successfully resumed such as the 29th Fine Arts Competition (formerly known as the Kubinski Art Competition) and the summer picnic. Additionally, the Youth and Adult Literary Competitions, reintroduced in 2024, garnered considerable interest and enthusiasm.

Looking ahead, FPA has already scheduled and announced several events and programs for this spring and is in the process of arranging other new activities. Details about these activities will be provided in the coming weeks. For the latest information about our events and programs, please visit our website and follow us on Facebook. Announcements about our activities and those we support are also sent via email. If you have not received our emails, please contact us so we can resolve the issue.

At our last General Membership meeting in February the elections were held and four new members joined the board. I am excited to tell you that the new board members are Director, Donna Bielecki, 2nd Vice President, Barbara Lemecha, Director, Deanna Welemirov and Corresponding Secretary, Christina Wrzesinski. Those of us who are returning to serve another year are looking forward to working with this new group and with all of our members. Together we will continue to carry out the organization's mission of promoting Polish culture, arts and traditions.

The next event on our calendar is Święconka, taking place at the APCC on Sunday, April 12. We invite you to celebrate Easter with us as we recognize sixty years of Polish Song and Dance by the Wawel Folk Ensemble. Invitations to Święconka were sent to members by mail. Additional information is provided in this newsletter and on our website.

Sadly, we remember the passing of long-time member, Wallace Ozog. Wallace was once President of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America and served on the board of trustees at Orchard Lake St. Mary for many years. He was a devoted and lifelong leader in the community who was an organizer and supporter of countless Polonia events. He will be dearly missed.

Wishing you a Happy Easter/Wesołego Alleluja!

Warmest Regards, Brian Malski

FPA ELECTS NEW OFFICERS AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the general meeting on February 7, 2026, Friends of Polish Art elected new officers and the board of directors. All the positions, except for the president - who is elected for two years - are for one year. FPA welcomes to the board Deanna Welemirov and Christina Wrzesinski, first-time board members and welcomes back Donna Bielecki as director and Barbara Lemecha as an officer!



In the photo, sitting: Brian Malski, FPA president and Barbara Hantz, director. Standing (L-R): Barbara Lemecha, 2nd vice president, Stella Szczesny, director; Carol Surma, financial secretary, Patty Malski, director; Deanna Welemirov, director; Alina Klin, 1st vice president and Iwona Jędrzejczak, treasurer. Not in the photo: Donna Bielecki, director and Christina Wrzesinski, corresponding secretary. Photo: Alicja Karlic

The mission of Friends of Polish Art (FPA) to promote Polish culture was clearly on display during the 2025 FPA Wigilia, on Saturday, December 13, at the APCC in Troy. In addition to a traditional Polish Christmas Eve dinner, opłatki sharing, the exchange of Christmas and New Year's greetings and the singing of kolędy, there were beautiful szopki on display, an excellent performance by the Wawel Folk Ensemble, and the “favors” of origami bookmarks, made by Patty Malski, and little pierniki (gingerbread cookies) baked and decorated by Iwona Jedrzejczak.

The Wigilia guests were also able to see photos of what FPA has been doing in a continuous slide show.

To those unfamiliar with the Polish Christmas Eve dinner (Wigilia) Brian Malski, FPA President introduced the custom and talked about Wigilia traditions. Among the guests were representatives of local Polish American organizations, such as the American Polish Cultural Society, the Polish American Congress – MI Division, the Polish Institute of Culture & Research (PICROL), the Polish National Alliance, and the West Side Detroit Polish American Historical Society (WSDPAHS). WSDPAHS President Reverend Gary Michalik blessed the food and the opłatki. Mr. Richard Walawender, Honorary Consul of Poland conveyed good wishes from the Polish diplomatic corps, and on a personal note, revealed that 47 years ago, he took his date, who is now his wife, to an FPA Wigilia, where she ate for the first and only time śledzie (herring).

In 2025 the Wawel Folk Ensemble, one of the recipients of the 2025 FPA Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Group Grants, celebrated its 60th anniversary. At the Wigilia the Wawel Folk Ensemble not only danced four dances (the Krakowiak, the Sieradz dance and two polkas), but also led the Polish Christmas sing-along, while Curtis Posuniak played the piano.

Also present at the Wigilia was artist Nancy Kozlowski, whose painting “Rzepak” won the FPA Best in Show – Richard Kubinski Award, at the 2025 FPA Fine Arts Competition, organized by FPA together with PICROL.

Celebrating the art of szopka making was a prominent theme of the 2025 FPA Wigilia. At the APCC hall there were six beautiful szopki on display, each one interesting and intriguing in its own way. A spectacular “Solidarity” szopka, brought from Poland by Mrs. and Mr. Górecki in the early 1990s, and gifted by them to the Polish American Congress - MI Division, received a lot of attention from the Wigilia guests. Especially Carolyn Janosky, the winner of the 1st prize of the 2025 FPA Szopka Competition, whose szopka was also on display, was in awe of the beauty, impressive craftsmanship and the detailed work of the “Solidarity” szopka.

The children present at the event were thrilled with the large multicolored wooden szopka, recently restored by Chuck Pelshaw and with the szopka made by their peer, Ezekiel Van Steenkiste, for which he won the 1st prize in the 2025 FPA Szopka Competition. Chuck Pelshaw, the Competition Chair, presented all four winning szopki displayed during Wigilia.

FPA extends a very special “dziękuję” to all of the 2025 Wigilia guests, benefactors, patrons and donors. FPA is very grateful to everybody who supported the organization by buying raffle tickets, to the basket donors, and to Deanna Welemirov, who very generously donated the lotto tree.



*(left) Victor Jiompkowski, Zofia & Frank Dmuchowski, Honorary Consul of Poland Richard Walawender, Ms.&Mr. Woloch, Dariusz Klepko and Michael Ostrowski
(right) Carolyn Janosky proudly shows her winning szopka*



The Wawel Folk Ensemble and (left) Curtis Posuniak at the piano.



(Left) Children admiring a vintage szopka recently restored by Dr. Charles Pelshaw. (Right) The Quigley family with Nancy Kozlowski, Anne Tyszka and Lydia Dyhdalo.



FPA WISHES HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND “STO LAT!” TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS IN MARCH, APRIL AND MAY:

Judi Tompkins (March 2), Barbara Lemecha (March 5), Annette Tyszka (March 14), Stella Slimko (March 14), Elizabeth Rodzik (March 14), Dennis Holt (March 15), Joseph Kalenkiewicz (March 19), Gena Jurek (March 26), Delphine Iwankowski (April 3), Christa Zabawski (April 6), Susan Walkowiak (April 9), Gregory Biestek (April 13), Delphine Puscas (April 26), Mary Pearlman (April 28), Stella Szczesny (April 30), Frederick Tyszka (May 3), Jo Obloy (May 7), Jane Wojtan (May 8), Ewa Greenbaum (May 11), Ann Bankowski (May 14), Michael Obloy (May 18), Danusia Malski (May 18) and Maria Conrado (May 30).

Congratulations to Ann and Walter Bankowski who on May 14 celebrate their wedding anniversary!

FPA Calendar of Events

DATE/ TIME	EVENT	PLACE
<p>Friday, April 10</p> <p>This is THE ONLY DAY this documentary is playing in Michigan!</p>	<p>“The True Story of Tamara de Lempicka & The Art of Survival”, an award-winning documentary</p>	<p>Different AMC Theaters.</p> <p>For screenings, check: https://www.amctheatres.com/movies/the-true-story-of-tamara-de-lempicka-the-art-of-survival-82768</p>
<p>Sunday, April 12</p> <p>2 pm: doors open</p> <p>2:45 pm: Award Presentation and Dinner</p>	<p>2026 FPA “Święconka” Honoring the Wawel Folk Ensemble</p>	<p>American Polish Cultural Center 2975 E. Maple Road Troy, MI. 480832026</p>
<p>April 17 & 18</p>	<p>ACPC Spring Board Meeting @ Polish Center of Learning and Discovery</p>	<p>33 South Street, Chicopee, MA 01013</p>
<p>Saturday, April 18,</p> <p>11:00 am</p>	<p>Polish American Congress - MI. Elections</p>	<p>PAC Office in Troy</p>
<p>Friday, April 24</p>	<p>The deadline to submit scholarships and grants application</p>	<p>Send to: Scholarships/Grants c/o Friends of Polish Art 2615 W. 12 Mile Road, Suite 118 Berkley, MI 48072-1627</p>
<p>Sunday, April 26</p>	<p>American Polish Federal Credit Union 50th Anniversary Celebration</p>	<p>American Polish Cultural Center 2975 E. Maple Road Troy, MI 48083</p>
<p>Sunday, May 3</p> <p>Afternoon</p> <p>Time: TBA</p>	<p>3rd Annual 5 K Run/Walk Vivat 3 Maja</p>	<p>OLS Campus 3535 Commerce Rd Commerce Township, MI 48324</p>
<p>Saturday, May 9, 1:00 pm</p> <p>More info to come soon</p>	<p>DIA Exhibition Tour w/FPA</p>	<p>DIA 5200 Woodward, Detroit, MI 48202</p>
<p>Friday, May 22, 6 pm</p>	<p>FPA General Meeting and Scholarships and Grants Presentation</p>	<p>American Polish Cultural Center, Hall 1 2975 E. Maple Road Troy, MI. 48083</p>
<p>Thursday, May 28,</p> <p>5:00 pm</p>	<p>Polish Day Parade Roast & Fundraiser</p>	<p>American Polish Century Club, 3204 Maple Ln Dr., Sterling Heights, MI 48312</p>

**LETTER FROM GRACE LEONARD, A
COLLEGE OF CREATIVE STUDIES
STUDENT AND A WINNER OF A
“HONORABLE MENTION” IN THE 29TH
FPA FINE ARTS COMPETITION**

“I recently completed my first ever historical look recreation. I chose to do my work based on a 1905 Łowicz painting. I am really proud and excited to share some images of the project with you. I also created a book that goes through the research and history of the garments, heritage, art, and culture behind the costume. It is one of the few projects I completed this semester which led to my first 4.0 GPA.

Łowicz Woman in Red” is a historical recreation project that brings the history and culture of an early 19th-century Polish painting to life. The reference comes from Łowicz, selected as a way to reconnect with heritage and culture held close in my childhood. The final look consists of seven layers—undergarments and outer garments—constructed entirely from cotton in varying shades of red, including six gathered skirts and a fully hand-embroidered vest. Łowicz, long celebrated for its vibrant traditional dress, embodies the richness of Polish identity, heritage, and artistry. Polish folk traditions and dance culture were a joyful part of growing up, with the song, 'Łowiczanka' holding a special place in my memory. (...) This recreation serves as an offering of gratitude to my teacher Marcia Lewandowski and family members who kept/keep the culture alive. I am very proud to be a Polish woman.”

Grace has also informed FPA that the piece "Polska 6105" that won her the Honorable Mention at the 29th FPA Fine Art Competition, will be featured alongside her jewelry piece, "Repoussé of Quetzalcōātl", in the group show Orange II: The Art of Community, at The Gallery at Ideation Orange, in Hazel Park, MI, from March 6- March 27, 2026.

We are very proud of Grace and wish her much success!



“Łowicz Woman in Red” photographed by @xvkiwii (Kiwi Barranco).
Model: @maddie.bunny (Maddie Rubin)

**YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR SECOND
BEADING WORKSHOP**

Friends of Polish Art is excited to announce our second beading workshop, “The Art of Beading for Beginners.” In this workshop, Dr. Charles Pelshaw, an FPA member and local expert in beading, will guide us through hands-on instructions. By the end of the two-hour session, we’ll all gain an appreciation for this relaxing and creative activity.

To give you a bit of background, beading in Poland is a traditional art form used in making Polish costumes and it reflects the country's regional diversity. With different beads and sequins elaborate, hand-stitched elements of floral embroidery are created - most often - on velvet bodices known as “gorsety”.

We'd love for everyone, especially our dance group members, to discover more about the traditional costumes they so proudly showcase at each recital or performance. The schedule and location for this workshop will be announced on our website and Facebook as soon as they become available. For further information and registration, please contact Barbara Lemecha at 313-580-7988.



Dr. Charles Pelshaw conducting the first FPA beading workshop (2024).

Friends of Polish Art

Over 89 years of service to the Detroit area and Michigan Polish Community
Established in 1937 as an educational and cultural non-profit organization.

FPA Accepting Scholarship Applications for 2026


Friends of Polish Art is announcing that applications are now being accepted for the Lillian & Chester Mitchell Scholarships and the Lillian & Chester Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships. **The deadline to apply is April 24, 2026.**

Through the generosity of Lillian & Chester Mitchell, **three Lillian & Chester Mitchell Scholarships** are available for academic studies in areas including, but not limited to: law, medicine, architecture, engineering sciences and liberal arts. The amount of each scholarship is **\$2,000.**

Additionally, **two Lillian & Chester Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships** are available for students pursuing studies in painting, sculpture, music, drama, theatre, dance and other forms of creative expression as well as history, literature, religion, philosophy, and Polish Studies. The amount of these scholarships is also **\$2,000 each.**

All applications and required documentation must be received no later than April 24, 2026. Previous recipients of the Filipek and Mitchell Fine Arts Scholarships, as well as non-Michigan residents, are not eligible. Award-winning recipients will be notified on or before May 17, 2026. Awards will be made payable to the individual. All scholarships will be presented at the Friends of Polish Art General Membership Meeting scheduled the week of May 22, 2026 (tentative). **To download an application form please go to:** <https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/scholarships/>

Disclaimer: In the event that submissions do not qualify or are unacceptable, the Friends of Polish Art Scholarship Committee reserves the right to not award a scholarship for the current calendar year. More details are available on the FPA website: <https://www.friendsofpolishart.org>





(right) Sasha Gilders with her mother

Sasha Gilders won the First Prize in the 2025 FPA Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Literary Competition for her cycle of poems “The Metronome of Warsaw: The Story of Antoni Słonimski”. Sasha is also a recipient of the 2025 FPA Frank Filipek Scholarship.

Below are four out of 15 poems that comprise the cycle “The Metronome of Warsaw: The Story of Antoni Słonimski”. Antoni Słonimski was a poet, playwright and prose writer.

Torn Child

On the 15th of November, I entered this world,
as a child on two sides of a single line.
My soul was baptized twice:
once in a fountain of holy water,
once with the ink of a Hebrew printing press.
I remember the clicks of the typewriter
as my grandfather edited the Ha-Tsefirah.
I remember his words, his love of science,
all in Hebrew despite their hatred.
I remember the church bells
ringing from the top of St. Anne's.
I remember my mother, her prayers,
evenings dedicated to Jesus.
I remember being in too many places.
I remember being everywhere.
I remember belonging nowhere.
I'm glad I remember,
because these memories
are the reason I'm here today.

Letter to a City Which No Longer Exists

Dear Warsaw, There's not much point in writing
to a pile of bricks and dust, stained red,
or to the smell of wet ash and charred wood,
or to the sight of bodies, lifeless in the streets,
or to the only sound left:
silence.

The Poet as Witness

Even though I am now dead
I still am very much alive.
The clicks of the typewriters
and the pages of ink
contain my hope, my voice, my legacy.
Without poetry, we have nothing.
We lose the wars and exiles,
the triumphs, the oppression.
But because my poems live,
we have witnessed this testimony.
These writings are our past.
They are our present.

The Metronome of Warsaw

I can hear the clicking of the tempo.
The monotonous transport schedules,
our strict government curfews,
and the police patrols.
Many don't notice,
they listen to the song
and take in its beauty
but we who write
cannot ignore the ticking
of Warsaw's metronome
that keeps us in line.
The clock towers are alive.
They click in time
with our state's routine
as they chime.
People line the streets.
They walk along in time,
keeping the rhythm with their feet.
But I stand here.
Hesitant.
Breaking the rhythm with my silence.

Friends of Polish Art Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grants



For the fourth year in a row, Friends of Polish Art will award
up to four grants in amounts up to \$2,500 each

to Michigan-based Polish folk-dance groups.
The purpose of the grant program is to support local Polish dance groups
with their regular activities, with special consideration given to groups
traveling to Poland to attend folk dance festivals.

The application process is very simple!

Deadline to apply: April 24, 2026.

Apply now!

To download the application form, go to:

<https://www.friendsofpolishart.org/scholarships/donald-samull-dance-grant/>



Friends of Polish Art

Founded 1937 Non-Profit Organization

2615 Twelve Mile Road, Suite 118
Berkley, MI 48072-1627



Pisanki by Marcia Lewandowski

Check out the FPA website:
<https://friendsofpolishart.org>

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<https://facebook.com/friendsofpolishart/>



Friends of Polish Art

Cordially invites you, your family and friends to its annual

ŚWIĘCZONKA

Honoring
Wawel Folk
Ensemble



SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2026

Make your reservation with Brian Malski, Friends of Polish Art
Please pay by Saturday, April 4, 2026.

FPA General Membership Meeting

and

The 2026 FPA

Mitchell Scholarships

and

Donald Samull Polish Folk Dance Grants

Awards Ceremony

will be held

on Friday, May 22, 2026

at

The American Polish Cultural Center, Hall 1

2975 E. Maple Rd, Troy, MI 48083

Doors open at 6:00 pm

Light refreshments will be provided.