

Foreigners from all walks make effort to master Polish

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More and more foreigners are learning Polish in Krakow. Much of the interest in learning the language is connected with Poland's entry into the EU. PHOTO/LUK Agency

Anna Biernat
STAFF JOURNALIST

More and more foreigners are learning Polish in Krakow.

Most are from Europe but "we have had students from Asia, Africa and South America, too," said Anna Kulasik, a teacher at the Inter Lang & Text school.

Much of the interest in learning the language is connected with Poland's entry into the EU.

Many international students decide to learn Polish while taking other courses.

Andrea, a 24-year-old student from Bologna, came to Poland under the Erasmus exchange program to study political science at Jagiellonian University.

He wasn't required to take Polish as part of his studies but wanted to learn it. "All in all I really enjoy speaking Polish, and I want to continue learning it when I am back home in Italy," he said.

Another sizable contingent of language students is international-company managers, some of whose companies require them to learn Polish. But, unlike students, managers usually prefer individual lessons to group classes.

A number of people who visited Krakow as tourists liked the city and decided to stay and learn the language.

Another sizable group of language

students is men with Polish wives or girlfriends.

"Once we had a student from Switzerland who said he always wanted to learn some exotic language," said Ola Goldyn of the Varia Center of Polish Language. "He was thinking about Chinese but finally he decided on Polish."

Martin, a 25-year-old Austrian, is in Krakow for a three-month-long internship. "I found the Polish language very interesting and I decided to learn it," he explained.

After two months of hard study he can already communicate in Polish.

His teacher, Goldyn, said the school focuses on conversation rather than grammar. The staff teaches Polish "in real-life situations," she said. "That's why classes are held not only in lecture rooms but also in pubs, on cycling trips, tours around museums or hiking in the mountains. Learning Polish shouldn't be boring."

In addition to the regular curriculum, the school offers two-week intensive courses in summer. Students are provided with accommodations and an interesting cultural program.

"We combine teaching with enjoyment and sightseeing," Goldyn said. "If we take our students for a trip, we encourage them to practice newly acquired vocabulary in everyday situations. It's the best way to

learn to speak Polish."

Teachers say two to three months is enough for students to obtain "survival Polish." "That means they can go shopping, ask questions or introduce themselves," said Anna Kulasik of Inter Lang & Text.

But if they want to speak Polish well, at least one year of hard study is necessary.

What is the biggest problem for students trying to learn the language? Most say pronunciation.

Many find some grammatical rules absurd. But surprisingly, foreigners often have fewer problems with grammar than native Poles.

Another problem can be discouragement. "People are usually very enthusiastic at the beginning but many become disheartened when they realize they must expend a lot of effort to learn Polish," Kulasik said. "But if they don't lose their enthusiasm after the first few lessons, they should be all right."

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REGIONAL NEWS

Slovak doctors successfully separate conjoined twins

Slovak doctors said late last week that they had successfully completed a marathon operation to separate five-month-old conjoined twins who were joined at the chest. The operation on Michal and Marek took the 46-person surgical team at the Children's Faculty Hospital in Bratislava almost 20 hours, with the boys under anesthetic for 22 hours.

"We won the surgical battle," consultant Jaroslav Siman said at a news conference on Saturday, adding that the twins were still not out of danger following the risky operation. The babies had to be operated on because their vital organs did not have room to develop. Already, they could only breathe with the help of a ventilator. The operation was broadcast on the Internet, apparently followed by hundreds of Slovaks. (AFP)

"No difference" between Nazis and Soviets: Estonian prez

Estonia's President Tomas Hendrik Ilves early this week rekindled the Baltic state's verbal battle with Moscow, likening the World War II Nazi occupation with the Soviet rule which followed it.

"From the Estonian viewpoint, there is no difference between Nazis and Communists. Both acted brutally and repressed Estonians. Neither the Nazis nor the Communists tolerated democracy, and that's a fact any Estonian knows," Ilves said. He was speaking at a ceremony in honor of a short-lived independent Estonian government which was ousted by the Red Army on September 22, 1944, after Nazi troops fled a Soviet advance. Ilves denounced Moscow's stand that the operation marked the liberation of Estonia.

"The truth is that the Red Army and its NKVD security police 'liberated' Estonia as much as the Wehrmacht and Gestapo before them," the Estonian president said.

In April, ties with Russia plunged to a new low when Estonian authorities decided to shift a Red Army memorial from central Tallinn to a quiet military cemetery.

Moscow lashed out at Estonia for moving the monument, which Russians — including many in Estonia's large ethnic Russian community — considered a tribute to the Soviet defeat of Nazism. The decision also sparked rioting in Tallinn. (AFP)

German Commerzbank takes over Bank Forum of Ukraine

Commerzbank has bought 60 percent of the shares in Bank Forum of Ukraine in a deal aimed at strengthening the German bank's presence in Central and Eastern Europe early this week.

Commerzbank paid \$600 mln (435 mln euro) for the stake, which can be raised by another 25 percent in three years and made it "the first German bank with an operational presence in Ukraine," a statement said.

The purchase of Bank Forum, a specialist in loans to small- and medium-sized businesses, "represents another step in our strategy of selective acquisitions to grow within our target regions," Commerzbank Director Martin Blessing was quoted as saying.

"Commerzbank will finance the transaction through existing financial resources," the statement added.

Bank Forum was founded in 1994 and currently has assets of around 1.4 bln euro, with small- and medium-sized businesses representing two-thirds of its clientele. The bank employs 3,100 staff in 230 branches, but plans to increase that number to 400 in the next four years. (AFP)

Czech jets in mid-flight incident at airshow

The wings of two Czech army jets touched each other in midair during a weekend air show attended by tens of thousands of people, the Czech Ministry of Defense said late last week. The incident involving two army L-39 Albatros jets happened at the NATO Day airshow, which was attended by 60,000 people near the eastern Czech city of Ostrava over the weekend. The pilots safely landed their damaged aircrafts. The cause of the accident was being investigated, Defense Ministry spokesman Andrej Cirtek told the CTK news agency. Training flights, for which the L-39 is often used by Czech and other air forces worldwide, have been cancelled temporarily, Cirtek added. (AFP)

Rebellion in the convent

Conflict grows among Sisters of the Family of Bethany

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

Dozens of rebellious nuns continue to occupy a convent in the southern Polish city of Kazimierz Dolny, defying both the Vatican's and a court's orders for them to leave.

The recalcitrant nuns are followers of Sister Jadwiga Ligocka, the former mother superior of the Sisters of the Family of Bethany.

Two years ago Sister Jadwiga began issuing directives to the convent's dozens of nuns that she said were based on conversations she had with the Holy Spirit.

The directives upset many of the nuns, however. For example, she accepted into the convent nuns whom the others felt were unsuited for life there.

She also wanted to change the character of the convent from one where considerable conversation was acceptable into one that was mostly quiet contemplation.

To deal with the discord, the Vatican two years ago named Sister Barbara Robak, in Lublin, to replace Sister Jadwiga as mother superior. Sister Jadwiga and 64 other nuns refused to accept the Vatican's decision.

They remained at the convent, with Sister Jadwiga continuing her duties as mother superior. Meanwhile, Sister Barbara remained in Lublin, near Kazimierz, where she has tried to convince the rebellious nuns to abandon Sister Jadwiga.

Last October the Vatican stripped the rebels of their nun's status and ordered them to leave the convent for refusing to accept the new mother superior. The rebels refused.

Catholic Church officials ordered the building's electricity and gas cut off a few months ago, but sympathizers from the town continued to provide the rebellious nuns with food and water.

Two months ago, on July 3, a Polish court issued eviction notices to the rebellious nuns. The order specified that they leave the convent early this month.

No one is sure what will happen if they reject the court order.

Jozef Zycinski, the archbishop of Lublin, said the Vatican was expelling the nuns for "open violation of monastic vows."

Ursuline Mother Jolanta Olech, the president of Poland's Conference of Women Superiors, told the Washington-based Catholic News Service that she had asked Catholic Church officials for an explanation for the unprecedented action against the nuns. The explanation satisfied her, she said.

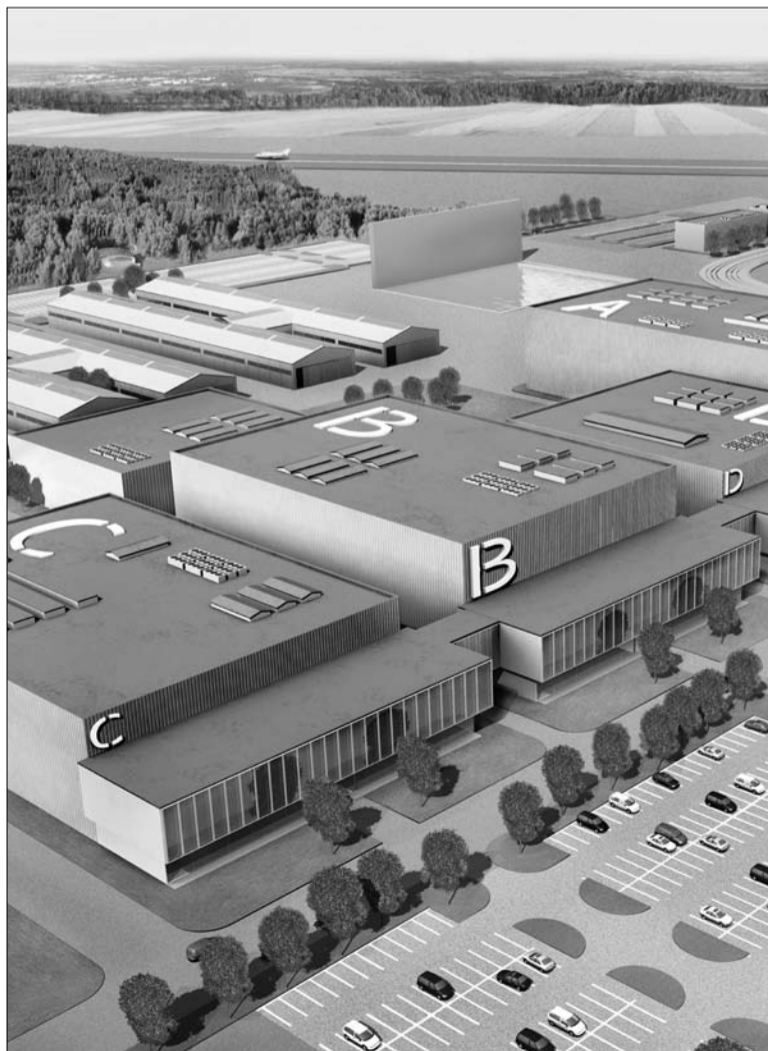
"The church gave them a chance to defend their stance and has now made its decision," said Mother Jolanta Olech, whose conference represents 93 women's religious orders in Poland. "The drama lies in the fact that they've refused to accept church directives and thus found themselves excluded. It's hard to see how this conflict will end, but it seems there can be no good solution."

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Dozens of rebellious nuns continue to occupy a convent in the southern Polish city of Kazimierz Dolny, defying the Vatican's orders for them to leave.

Polish Hollywood to be built in Nowe Miasto and Pilica



Two towns south of Warsaw will be home beginning in 2009 to what is being called "City Town," a sort of Polish Hollywood.

THE KRAKOW POST

Beginning in 2009, two towns south of Warsaw will be home to what is being called "City Town," a sort of Polish Hollywood.

The idea to create a Polish Hollywood in Nowe Miasto and Pilica, 80 kilometers south of Warsaw, came from the Polish Filmmakers' Association and the Polish Audio-Visual Producers' Chamber. Total cost of the investment is estimated at 400 mln zloty (100 mln euro).

Polish Hollywood will produce feature films and documentaries as well as commercials and television series. The new studios' first set will be built for a movie about the Warsaw Uprising.

Polish movie sector representatives started to campaign for construction of the studios in the late 1960s. But the project was given the go-ahead by authorities only recently.

Thanks to the Polish government's support, construction will begin in September 2008 for what is expected to be one of Europe's most modern film studios.

All documentation required to obtain funding is to be ready by the end of this year.

The technological park of Polish Hollywood will be situated on 467 hectares of the former military air base in Nowe Miasto and Pilica.

Ten film production facilities will be constructed there, along with a stage-setting construction plant, vehicle and artifact rentals, costumes, weapons and casting studios.

Construction will be financed with the use of EU's structural funds, resources of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Polish Institute of Film Arts and Association of Polish Filmmakers.

A letter of intent concerning the construction of a "Movie City" was signed June 13 by Kazimierz Ujazdowski, min-

ister of Culture and National Heritage; Defense Minister Aleksander Szczyglo and Tomasz Siemoniak, speaker of the Mazovia region (Warsaw is situated in Mazovia). Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski was also present at the ceremony.

"The state has numerous obligations, also in relation to the arts sector. We are the ones who are aware of it, and who are willing to fulfill such obligations," Kaczynski emphasized. "There is nothing better than art-related successes that can improve the position of a nation in Europe and worldwide."

Therefore, the Polish government will do its best to make the Polish arts stronger, as they are a part of our national achievements. You can count on us."

He said that in Poland's history Polish movie-makers have exerted a positive influence on the country's reality.

"We are at the very beginning of a difficult path, but I am certain a big film studio will be built to support the Polish art community," he said.

Director of the Polish Film Institute Agnieszka Odorowicz said Movie City may attract top international productions and become strong competition for the Pinewood Studio near London, which produced the "Harry Potter" movies, and the Barrandov Studio in Prague, where "Casino Royale" the latest 007 movie was produced.

When the movie productions are finished, officials plan to attract tourists.

In Pinewood, more than 10 mln visitors have visited back lots used for "Harry Potter" or the "Da Vinci Code" movies.

Andrzej Wajda, a Polish film director and recipient of an honorary Oscar, said Movie City is needed to allow young directors to make both TV productions and movies.

It will give young artists a chance to make films dealing with contemporary issues in Poland.

Three young Chechen girls mourned

Aslan Nurbiyev
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Tearful relatives and friends of three young Chechen girls who died trying to enter Poland gathered to mourn in a ramshackle house in the girls' hometown of Shali late last week.

"They probably died of cold and hunger," said Belant Minzayeva, the grandmother of Khava, 13, Seda, 10, and Elima, 6, who received the mourners in her home, while still in a state of shock.

Her daughter Kamisa Jamaldinova, 35, travelled from Chechnya with her three daughters and a son in the hope of finding a better life in Europe after her husband Khampash fell ill and had to leave his job as a bus driver.

Chechnya, a small province of southern Russia, has been ravaged by war for more than a decade. Unemployment and poverty are widespread and thousands of Chechens have emigrated to Europe.

"She wanted to try to get to Switzerland or Austria. For some reason she thought she would do well there. We tried to persuade her not to leave but I couldn't stop her," said Minzayeva, as the tears rolled down her cheeks.

Minzayeva, in a long dark dress embroidered with gold threads and a traditional headscarf, spoke while surrounded by some 20 female relatives and friends in the courtyard of her home in Shali.

Jamaldinova and her children got lost while trying to cross the mountains between Ukraine and Poland. She left her three daughters - hungry, exhausted and freezing - in a desperate bid to seek help, Minzayeva said.

After finding some Polish border guards, she came back to the spot where she had

left her daughters some three hours earlier. By the time she returned, the girls were dead.

Polish security officials said that the children were found covered with fern leaves late on Thursday at an altitude of 1,163 meters (3,815 feet) in a region of southeastern Poland just a few kilometers from the border.

A local Polish prosecutor said that the girls were dressed lightly, and that one had no shoes. They were found pressed against each other, apparently trying to stay warm.

Meanwhile, Poland's first lady Maria Kaczynska Sunday visited Jamaldinova and her son in hospital and pledged to help her obtain refugee status.

"We are ready to help her," Kaczynska told reporters. "Poland wants to help her and offer its protection," she said.

The first lady took fruits and toys and said Jamaldinova wanted her daughters to be buried in their native land.

Jamaldinova had to enter the EU illegally because a visa costs \$2,400 (1,730 euro), Minzayeva said. "If she had that kind of money, then she wouldn't have gone there," Minzayeva explained she had not yet managed to speak to her daughter, who is being treated in hospital, but was being kept informed by family members living in Poland and through Internet news sites.

The mournful grandmother said that her daughter's husband and some other relatives have set off for the region of western Ukraine from which Jamaldinova had crossed into Poland. She said they had been told that Jamaldinova and her son will be let out of the hospital and escorted back to the border early this week and that the corpses of the children will also be sent back for burial.

Chechnya, a small province of southern Russia, has been ravaged by war for more than a decade. Unemployment and poverty are widespread and thousands of Chechens have emigrated to Europe.



The Bieszczady Mountains where the girls were found. They died due to the severe conditions of the journey.

Tatra and Rocky mountains to cooperate



Tatra Mountains.

Michal Wojtas
STAFF JOURNALIST

The Polish and Slovak Tatra National Parks have signed cooperation agreements with Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. The partnership, which was formalized on September 12, should result in an intensive exchange of ideas between employees of the three parks.

The building of tourist trails, measuring of tourist activity, development of park infrastructure and cooperation with volunteers are the main areas in which the Polish National Park should benefit after visits of its employees to Colorado in the U.S.

"But these are just a few possible advantages," said Szymon Ziobrowski, who is responsible for the partnership program on the Polish side. "It's hard to anticipate what good ideas we can bring home until we see how the Americans organize many things in their parks."

According to the daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the cooperation should particularly help the local brown bear population, 17 of which are on the Polish side of the border.

The bears cause many tourist problems in the Tatra Mountains as they become accustomed to man's presence. They often steal food from people and even rob backpackers' hostel storage-rooms. The problem of a shrinking wilderness for animals is called synantropization and has been investigated by employees of U.S. parks. Their methods should now be adopted by the Polish Tatra Park, even though it's five times smaller. American delegations visited both the Slovak and Polish National Parks last week. According to Ziolkowski, they were surprised by the number of tourists who hike 8.5 kilometers to Morskie Oko - the biggest lake in the Tatras.

New look for police as new uniforms tested

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

Police officers in Warsaw, Szczecin, Bialystok, Wroclaw and Lublin received new uniforms last week to determine if the new dark blue jackets, trousers and shirts are more functional and more comfortable, TVN24 reported.

The officers have already tested a summer version of the new uniforms but the winter ones have to undergo testing as well.

Police officers say the new uniforms are different, and much better, than the previous ones. The tested uniforms are made from waterproof materials, which perform better, especially in wet-weather conditions. The new uniforms replace the previous blue-grey and black uniforms with dark blue ones.

"The process of implementing new uni-

forms can last even two years," said Zbigniew Urbanski of the media department of the Polish National Police. "There are 100,000 uniforms to be made, and not all patterns have been chosen yet. This is just the beginning."

He said police officials are waiting to hear the officers' opinions on how the new uniforms work in everyday circumstances. Only then can they know for sure whether the uniforms have elements that criminals can take advantage of.

The total cost of the summer uniform is about 2,500 zloty (more than 650 euro). The set for the whole year costs 4,000 zloty (more than 1,000 euro).

The uniform style is the same for policemen as well as police-women.

Poland plans to extend troop presence in Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Defense Minister Aleksander Szczyglo said late last week he had asked for government approval to keep 1,200 Polish soldiers in Afghanistan deployed there until 2008. The Polish Press Agency (PAP) said he made the announcement during a visit to Kabul. The Polish force in Afghanistan operates under NATO's 36,000-strong International Security Assistance Force and handle security in the southeast Ghazni and Patika provinces.

Elite units are also stationed in Kandahar

in the south of the country.

According to a June poll, 78 percent of Poles disapprove of Poland's continued military role in ISAF, while 17 percent are against and five percent had no opinion.

A 28-year-old lieutenant killed by a grenade blast in August became the first Polish casualty in Afghanistan.

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REGIONAL NEWS

Polish trawlermen protest EU cod fishing ban

Hundreds of Polish trawlermen staged a protest early this week against a EU ban on catching cod in the Baltic Sea, which Brussels says is needed to protect stocks hit by overfishing.

The Polish National Fishing Industry association said that hundreds of trawlers gathered for two hours off the country's five main ports, Swinoujscie, Kolobrzeg, Darlowo, Ustka and Gdynia.

"Today we're protesting, and showing that we're determined. We're not blocking the ports yet. We're waiting for the outcome of talks in Brussels," association president Kazimierz Wojnicz told AFP.

Poland's Maritime Affairs Minister Marek Grobarczyk was early this week due to meet with Joe Borg, the member of the EU's Executive Commission who is in charge of the fishing industry.

Some 430 Polish trawlers fish for cod in the Baltic, employing a total of 5,000 people on board and in the onshore processing industry. In July, Brussels ordered the Poles to stop fishing for cod for the remainder of the year, saying that they had already reached their annual catch quota.

"The cod fishermen have not gone out to sea for the past three months. And they're told they don't have the right to fish for the next three months either. No company can hold out for six months without compensation," said Wojnicz.

"The commission surprised us in July when it banned us from fishing for the rest of the year. On top of that, next year's quota has been cut by 23 percent, to 10,443 tons from this year's 13,990," he added. (AFP)

Pope keeps pressure on for treaty's "conscience" clause

Pope Benedict XVI urged Slovakia late last week to ratify a treaty that includes a "conscience clause" affecting many areas of public life.

While accepting the credentials of new Slovak ambassador to the Holy See, Jozef Dravecky, the head of the Roman Catholic Church hailed "the republic's reassurance that it is committed to finalizing the basic accord concerning conscientious objection."

Critics say the clause would allow doctors to refuse to carry out abortions, teachers to refuse to teach the theory of evolution and employees to refuse to work on Sunday. The issue sparked early elections in Slovakia last year, after then Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda refused to back the clause, which allows any citizen "to refuse to act in a way that his or her conscience thinks is contrary" to the tenets of Catholicism. The European Commission's juridical consultative committee criticized the clause in January last year, while Dzurinda argued that it would accord special status to the country's Catholic majority. (AFP)

Car and truck production in Poland

Poland's auto factories produced more than 50,000 cars and almost 10,000 trucks in July of this year.

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

Poland's auto factories produced more than 50,000 cars and almost 10,000 trucks in July of this year, a 4.2 percent increase in cars but a 1.2 percent drop in trucks, according to the Warsaw-based Automotive Market Research Institute SAMAR.

Poland's top car producer is Tychy-based Fiat. It built more than 195,000 cars from January to July of this year, 16 percent more than in the same period last year. Fiat has 52 percent of Poland's car market.

Gliwice-based Opel produced 100,000 cars between January and July. Although it is Poland's second-biggest car manufacturer, its production is down 13 percent from last year. In third place is Poznan-based Volkswagen, whose production numbers also plunged from July to January. It made 43,000 cars, 22 percent fewer than in 2006.

FSO produced 38,000 of its Matiz and Lanos car models between January and July, giving it the industry's highest growth rate - 68 percent.

The revamped Intrall Polska made 35 cars in the January to July period, a 65 percent de-

crease.

Intrall Polska was established in December 2003 when British investors took over the bankrupt Daewoo Motor facility in Lublin. Intrall Polska has just begun to rebuild the Lublin 3 light commercial vehicle brand. Volkswagen increased its dominance of Poland's truck market in the January to July period. In fact, it was the only truck maker in Poland to boost production, manufacturing 54,000 trucks in the January to July period. That is a 24 percent jump over last year, giving it a whopping 85 percent share of the truck market. Last year it had 68 percent.

Fiat produced 9,700 trucks, a 51 percent decrease, and Intrall 73, a 92 percent drop.

As for the new-car and -truck market in Europe as a whole, the London-based industry-tracking company JATO Dynamics said dealers sold 1,311,084 vehicles in July, 5.6 percent more than in July of last year.

Volkswagen was the leader in car sales, although they fell 1.5 percent to 141,000 cars from July 2006. Opel/Vauxhall sold 109,000 cars, up 7 percent; Ford, 105,000, up 11 percent; Renault, 96,000, down 0.8 percent; and Peugeot, 92,000, up 5 percent.

"New models tend to be the catalysts for

brand growth," said Nasir Shah, JATO's business development director. "The new Corsa has spearheaded Opel/Vauxhall's sales increase this year and the 207 has been fundamental to Peugeot's growth."

However, Ford has demonstrated that "there is still life in existing models," Shah said. Although such new models as the Mondeo, S-Max, Galaxy and recently revised C-Max are boosting Ford sales, the model that is experiencing the greatest growth is Fiesta, which has been around for some time. Citroën had a good July, with sales jumping 11 percent to 83,456 cars, largely on demand for its C4 Picasso and Grand C4 Picasso models. Toyota sales rose 5 percent in July to 75,868 cars. BMW sales increased by 17 percent to 57,703 cars and Audi sales rose 8 percent.

The Peugeot 207 was Europe's most popular individual car model in July, with 37,000 sold. Other leaders were the Volkswagen Golf, 36,000; Opel/Vauxhall Astra and Ford Focus, both at 33,000; and the Opel/Vauxhall Corsa, Fiat Punto, Renault Clio, Volkswagen Polo, Ford Fiesta and Volkswagen Passat, all at 26,000 each.

Bread tops list of products exported

Bread is the number-one nat'l export.

THE KRAKOW POST

Polish vodka and ham are well-known internationally. But it's bread that became No. 1 on the Polish export list lately.

Polish bread and cakes worth more than 400 mln euro were exported abroad in 2006, the National Research Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics reported. In comparison, vodka and other alcoholic drinks brought exporters only 77 mln euro, reported Informacyjna Agencja Radiowa (IAR), a press agency working with Polish Radio.

According to the Warsaw-based research center, exports of baked products were about 20 percent higher than in 2005. Germany, Great Britain and Ireland are the main importers of Polish bread because those countries have significant numbers of Polish emigrant workers.

Various Polish processed foods have good export opportunities, including pickles, marinated mushrooms and honey. Apart from meat products, Polish vegetable preserves, jams and pierogi could be attractive not only to Poles but to foreign consumers as well.

Ermenegildo Zegna's market diversification plan

THE KRAKOW POST

"Recent turmoil in the financial markets may cause a serious crisis," says the world leader in luxury men's clothing.

Ermenegildo Zegna, chief executive officer of the family-owned, Italy-based Ermenegildo Zegna Group, added: "I'm rather optimistic, but we should be prepared also for such eventuality."

He told the *Dziennik* daily newspaper: "The best way to prepare is diversification, spreading investments around in many markets, not keeping it in one place. The positive performance of some investments will neutralize the negative performance of others."

The U.S. is the Zegna Group's main market and it generates about 25 percent of company revenue. Italy is the second biggest customer, Japan third and China fourth. Russia may be the biggest hope for future success. Russia and China are BRIC countries. The BRIC name is taken from the first letters of four countries: the other two are Brazil and India.

The economies of the BRICs are rapidly developing and by the year 2050 will eclipse most of the current richest countries of the world. Poland is also on the list of Zegna customers, with one shop in Warsaw and one in Poznan, a city in west-central Poland. Another four shops are planned, said Zegna, but none will open earlier than September 2008. The key decision is to find the best

store locations. The list of possible towns includes Krakow, as well as Wroclaw in southwestern Poland on the Oder River, Gdansk on the southern Baltic Sea Coast and Lodz in the center of Poland.

It is four years now since the Ermenegildo Zegna Group began doing business in Poland. Revenue from Poland has not been disclosed, but Zegna said it has increased 20 percent every year, which is more than twice the world's average.

When asked about the expensive price-tags on his clothing-line, Zegna explained: "Our offering is not for everybody; it is addressed not even to one percent of the population. It is maybe for one tenth of 1 percent in developing countries and for a small percentage even in highly developed places. We are focused on special clients. Apart from the well-known formal business suits, we have some products with a lower price, too, like sportswear. Its targeted customers are younger consumers. We open the world of luxury for the future wealthy men."

The company's consolidated revenues reached 779.4 mln euro in 2006. Continued growth has been possible through shrewd diversification of products, which now include accessories as well as clothing.

The success of Ermenegildo Zegna Group is made possible by the work of more than 6,000 people, half of whom work outside Italy. They are involved not only in production but also in distribution through 501 stores, of which 198 are directly operated.



Poland is on the list of Zegna customers, with one shop in Warsaw and one in Poznan, a city in west-central Poland.

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First Polish university to be opened in Nigeria



The Academy of Humanities and Economics in Lodz will open a branch campus next year in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria.

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

The Academy of Humanities and Economics in Lodz will open a branch campus next year in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria.

Poland's largest private university has already bought land for the Nigerian facility, which will be named Zuma Rock University. Construction will start soon.

The campus will open in October 2008 with 300 students, university spokeswoman Karolina Wojcik said. For the first few years most of the teachers will be Poles, the daily newspaper *Dziennik* reported.

"We are impressed by your school's decision," said Christopher Maijaki, an aide to Julius Okojie, head of the National Universities Commission, a government agency.

"We hope that it will be a good signal for other countries. Nigeria is a developing land and we care about education. We want to teach our students in our country so they don't have to go abroad."

The idea of the Nigerian campus arose five years ago when Makary Stasiak, chan-

cellor of the Academy of Humanities and Economics, met Gombe University Vice Chancellor Abdullah Mahdi at an academic conference. Mahdi told Stasiak he should start a university in his country.

Noticing young Nigerians' thirst for learning, Stasiak thought a campus there would be a great investment.

Every year a million Nigerian students fight for a very limited number of places in the country's universities.

Each year more private universities open to meet the demand. The Academy of Humanities and Economics will be one of the first foreign institutions.

The campus, which will have classrooms, sports facilities, restaurants, shops and dormitories, will be built in Diko, near Abuja. Initially the university will offer two majors: computer science and managing and marketing. Later it will offer degrees in economics, engineering and medicine.

"We are making plans for close cooperation between our universities," Wojcik said. The Academy of Humanities and Economics will offer fellowships so "the cleverest Nigerian students can continue their stud-

ies" in master's and Ph.D. programs in Lodz, she said. The academy also plans to make arrangements for Polish students to study in Diko. To start with, almost all the Diko professors will be Polish. After the Nigerian students complete their advanced degrees at Lodz, they will have the credentials to be hired at Diko.

Professor Tadeusz Markowski of the University of Lodz wonders how many Polish students will want to study in Nigeria. "Life in this third-world country is very difficult," he said, and the time when a foreigner could make great money in Nigeria – such as in the oil industry – has passed, he said.

In addition, he said, "I don't think a highly regarded professor will decide" to head to what would be a very uncertain situation. "I would say 'absolutely no' if someone asked me."

Poland's higher educational institutions are likely to keep a close eye on the Diko experiment, *Dziennik* said.

If it succeeds, other Polish universities are likely to consider branch campuses there, the newspaper said.

Poland to join UK opt-out of EU rights charter

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Poland officially announced late last week it would join Britain in opting out of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, a cornerstone of the new treaty meant to replace the proposed EU constitution.

"Poland has announced it will join the British protocol, while negotiating in parallel the clauses confirming Poland's respect for the elevated social norms," said a Polish Foreign Ministry statement.

EU leaders in June agreed the framework of a treaty to improve EU organiza-

tion in place of the constitution that was torpedoed by French and Dutch voters in 2005. Britain negotiated its opt-out at the EU summit. The summit framework said the treaty would note that "nothing" in the 54-point Charter of Fundamental Rights – rights enjoyed by EU citizens and residents – "creates justifiable rights applicable to the United Kingdom."

Portugal, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, has been pushing EU members to keep the new treaty on track, amid fears that Poland could derail efforts to finalize an agreement next month.

It wants a deal by an October 18-19 summit, even with Poland due to hold politically sensitive legislative elections just days after that meeting.

Poland, the biggest of 10 mainly ex-Communist countries that joined the EU in 2004, has regularly used its political weight, notably to get its way on its share of the bloc's long-term budget.

At the June summit Ireland and Poland made it clear that they could consider an opt-out. Warsaw later said it would probably reject the charter.

The Foreign Ministry statement now said Poland would press for an inclusion in the future treaty of the so-called Ioannina mechanism which allows for a temporary freeze of EU decisions when a small number of EU countries disagrees.

Warsaw does not want the clause, named after a Greek city, to be merely mentioned in an annex as planned in the current draft.

But Italian Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema said last week that almost all other EU governments were rejecting the Polish demand.

The provision would compensate Poland's relative loss of influence in the new weighting mechanism provided for by the treaty from 2017.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Robert Szaniawski meanwhile told AFP the "gov-

Writer turned murderer



THE KRAKOW POST

A court in Wroclaw has convicted the crime novelist Krystian Bala of a murder in 2000 that prosecutors say he described in his book "Amok" three years later.

The court sentenced Bala to 25 years in prison for murdering a businessman that the author thought was having an affair with his former wife.

The body of the victim, Dariusz Janiszewski, was found in the Oder River in Wroclaw, near the German border. The body in the novel was found in the Wroclaw River.

The chief detective in the Janiszewski case, Jacek Wroblewski, received an anonymous call in 2005 telling him to read the book. Wroblewski was shocked at what he found.

The book contained details of the Janiszewski murder that only police or the killer would have known – although of course the victim's name was different in the book. The book describes how the victim was tortured before being killed. Police began trying to find a link between Bala and Janiszewski. They quickly learned that Janiszewski knew Bala's former wife. That gave police a motive: a jealous rage. They arrested Bala in the murder.

Janiszewski was kidnapped, then starved and tortured for several days. Finally he was thrown alive into the Oder River with his hands bound behind his

back and a noose around his neck. His death was due to drowning, doctors who looked at the body said.

The initial investigation yielded no results. Police could find neither a suspect nor a motive. To try to get help from the public, police even arranged for the case to be broadcast on Poland's version of the BBC TV program "Crimewatch."

After the broadcast police received only strange e-mails describing the murder as "the perfect crime." The emails came from Indonesian and South Korean Internet cafes. It was Bala bragging.

Police discovered later that the emails were sent while Bala was on a diving trip to Japan, South Korea and Indonesia.

They also learned he had sold the same model of mobile phone that Janiszewski had owned four days after the body was found. They have never been able to recover the phone, however.

Judge Lidia Hojenska noted at Bala's trial that there were many similarities between the author and Chris, the murderer in "Amok." The similarities include life experiences, biographical data, psychological characteristics, the men's social environment and the way they reacted to events, the judge said.

Bala was so jealous of his former wife, whom he considered his property, that he could not accept her having ties with another man, the judge added.

Bala's family has indicated he will appeal the conviction. He will remain in jail until his appeal is heard.

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Balcerowicz founds NGO to monitor politicians



Former Deputy Prime Minister Leszek Balcerowicz is best known for implementing the Polish economic transformation program, commonly known as "shock therapy," in the 1990s after the fall of the Communist regime.

Alicja Natkaniec
STAFF JOURNALIST

One of Poland's best-known political and financial leaders has founded an organization aimed at improving democracy in the nation through educational programs and a research center designed to monitor the activities of Polish politicians. Leszek Balcerowicz, an economist, former deputy prime minister, finance minister in the first non-Communist governments of Poland and a former chairman of the National Bank of Poland, has founded a non-governmental organization called "Forum for a Civil Development."

The organization will aim to improve the quality of Polish democracy, its founder said. He would like to "spur the citizens to make a greater effort in development of civil society."

The forum will provide special educational programs to reach the organization's goals – popularizing democratic values, according to Balcerowicz. It is already preparing an effort in cooperation with other non-governmental organizations encouraging Poles to vote.

Balcerowicz said he doesn't want a return to politics after the early elections, which are going to be held in October. The organization he is going to run is not a political party. But as an independent research center it will monitor and evaluate every new idea and decision

of Polish authorities. As Balcerowicz stressed, making important decisions should be based on knowledge, and not on a demagoguery or populism. That's why he would like to monitor the activities of Polish politicians.

Among members of the management board of the Forum are prominent lawyers and economists or former activists of European organizations and institutions. The Program Committee of Forum is supported by such leaders as Andrzej Zoll, former Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection; Dariusz Filar, professor of economics, and former president of the Constitutional Tribunal; Marek Safjan, president of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; Marek Antoni Nowicki, professor of history; Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, former Auschwitz inmate and foreign minister; and Norman Davies, professor of history. The forum will become operational in October 2007. It will be modeled on such institutions as CATO, Heritage and Brookings institutions in the U.S. and the Institute of Economic Affairs in Great Britain. Balcerowicz is best known for implementing the Polish economic transformation program, commonly known as "shock therapy," in the 1990s after the fall of the Communist regime. He was awarded the country's highest decoration, the Order of the White Eagle, for his contribution to Poland's transformation.

Belarus jails four soldiers on spying charges

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

The supreme court in Belarus sentenced four army officers to prison terms of between seven and ten years late last week after finding them guilty of spying and treason. Viktor Bogdan, Sergey Korniliyuk, Pavel Petkevitch and Vladimir Russkin, who had been accused of spying for neighboring Poland, were stripped of their ranks and ordered to serve their sentences in a maximum security prison. Petkevitch, a captain, and Korniliyuk, a major, were sentenced to seven years each, while Bogdan, also a major, was handed nine years. Russkin, a first lieutenant, was sentenced to ten years after being found guilty of recruiting the others. Belarus' secret service announced on public television on July 15 that it had arrested four Belarusian citizens and one Russian who had been spying for Poland. Viktor Veguera, the deputy head of Belarus' KGB, told ONT television that all were former soldiers, adding: "The information they were gathering mainly concerned the air defense system of Belarus and Russia."

Two days later Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko sacked his Intelligence Chief Stepan Sukhorenko but did not say if it was linked to the discovery of the spy ring.

Relations are tense between neighbors Poland and Belarus, once both part of the Soviet bloc, which went their separate ways after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. Poland adopted parliamentary democracy while Belarus stayed under the authoritarian Lukashenko regime. In 2006, Poland imposed visa restrictions on several members of the regime which it accused of repressing political opponents, many of whom come from the Polish minority in Belarus.

Poland blocks EU plans for day against death penalty

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Poland early this week blocked EU plans to hold a day against the death penalty, the EU's Portuguese presidency said, after Warsaw set yet another obstacle in front of its European partners.

"Unfortunately, it was not possible to find a consensus among all the 27 member states," Portuguese Justice Minister Alberto Costa told reporters after a meeting of EU justice and interior ministers in Brussels.

"This does not mean that Europe is not committed to the abolition of the death penalty in the world," he said, "and this position shall not change."

In refusing to establish a "European Day Against the Death Penalty" on October 10, a day that has existed internationally since 2003, Poland argued that the right to life – abortion and euthanasia – should also be marked.

Costa did not explicitly criticize Warsaw but he said that "it's clear that Poland confirmed its previous position," expressed during meetings of EU ambassadors.

EU officials confirmed that Warsaw alone objected to the move. Instead, Costa said, Portugal would host a high-level international conference on the death penalty in Lisbon on October 9. Poland's use of its veto, which comes just ahead of early elections there on October 21, is the latest in a series of problems it has caused at EU level.

Warsaw has continually held up the drafting of a new treaty of sorely-needed EU reforms – sometimes baffling its partners – which is meant to replace the now defunct constitution.

It also delayed agreement on the bloc's long term budget.

British Justice Secretary Jack Straw rejected Poland's stance. "I am afraid I don't accept this," he told reporters during a break in the talks. "The abolition of the death penalty is something of which the EU should be very proud."

"We've arrived at a situation in the United Kingdom, and so have most other countries in the EU, where [the right to life] is seen as a private matter," he said.

"I do not wish us, the United Kingdom, to end up in a position where an issue of conscience then becomes a big, partisan issue."

EU Justice Commissioner Franco Frattini said Europe's opposition to capital punishment "is the basis of our core principles," and he argued that the issue would not undermine Europe's moral authority.

He said that while it was not possible to strike this deal, "there is unanimous agreement about confirming that all the 27 member states of Europe are against the death penalty."

According to human rights group Amnesty International, 1,591 people were executed in the world last year. China, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan and the U.S. are among countries that still impose the death penalty.

Poland to commemorate attacks on NY

Joanna Zabierek
STAFF JOURNALIST

Poland will commemorate the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York.

On September 11, when terrorists hijacked four American airliners, two of which hit the WTC towers, almost 3,000 people were killed, including six Poles.

On the sixth anniversary of this tragedy, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MSZ) reaffirmed that Poland would still be a U.S. partner in the fight with terrorism, the Polish Press Agency (PAP) reported.

MSZ will paid homage to victims of the attacks and prayed for them. The ministry has said the attacks were an act of barbarian aggression against all basic values of contemporary civilization. According to experts on terrorism, a special center for anti-terrorist coordination is still lacking in Poland. And many Poles have not been educated on how to respond to an attack.

In August, the Ministry of Interior announced the creation of a group consisting of anti-terrorist forces, policemen, diplomats and other specialists. The anniversary was celebrated in various ways in Poland.

People put wreaths and flowers at a monument for WTC victims and lit a fire.

A special concert will be held in Warsaw's Sowińskiego Park in the near future to commemorate those who lost their lives.

The patron of the concert entitled "For NY" will be U.S. Ambassador to Poland Victor Ashe. Performers will include Al Jarreau, the American jazz vocalist, and Michal Urbaniak. This will be the second time Urbaniak, a saxophonist and violinist as well as a composer and arranger, has performed at such a concert. The first occasion was last year when he played pieces prepared specially for the anniversary of the attack and was accompanied by the Aukso Orchestra. This year's concert will surely be a source of timeless emotions. Urbaniak will play with simple phrases that are catchy enough even for those without an ear for music. There is always a lot of novelty in his performances, too, as he is a great improviser. And his charismatic personality increases audience appreciation. Jarreau will amuse the audience during the concert by imitating the sounds of various musical instruments, including a double bass and a guitar.

The date for the concert has yet to be confirmed.



Poland will commemorate the anniversary of the World Trade Center attacks.



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Center roars with drunks

The city has been advertised as a great place to have fun, particularly cheap fun. Dozens of web sites advertise the city as a place for wild stag parties, and the results are clearly visible

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

The number of tourists coming to Krakow has increased recently. But while alcohol sales are high and getting higher, the restaurant industry has suffered a big decline in business, perhaps 20 percent, the newspaper *Dziennik Polski* reports.

"This situation may be a result of Krakow's latest promotion strategy," said Boguslaw Kosmider, a city councilman.

The city has been advertised as a great place to have fun, particularly cheap fun. Dozens of web sites advertise the city as a place for wild stag parties.

For a few months now, local media have sounded the alarm that Krakow is becoming a magnet for drunken tourism.

They say Krakow should think about

changing its promotions and switch from the cheap-fun proposals to more cultural ones appropriate for a historic city.

But Grazyna Leja of the mayor's office says the drunk problem accounts for only 4 percent of the 8 mln tourists who visit annually. She says journalists are making a big issue out of nothing.

Regarding the decrease in the food business, Leja said prices have become too high. Tourists also complain that Krakow restaurants close too early.

In 2006, of the 8 mln tourists visiting Krakow, 2.1 mln were foreigners. Polish tourists left in Krakow on average 236 zloty (over 60 euro); foreigners spent 662 zloty (about 175 euro).

The tourists spent about 3.6 days in Krakow. It is estimated that Krakow may attract up to 9 mln visitors this year.



For a few months now, local media have sounded the alarm that Krakow is becoming a magnet for drunken tourism.

Eighty years of local bus transportation



On September 8, Krakow celebrated 80 years of bus transportation.

Magdalena Lyko
STAFF JOURNALIST

On September 8, most of the picture-taking in Krakow's Rynek Glowny was being done not by tourists but by residents of the city. The occasion was the celebration of 80 years of bus transportation in Krakow.

The story starts in January 1927 when the first buses became alternatives to trams in the rapidly expanding city. This month's celebration began near the Royal Castle on the Wawel Hill on ul. Powisle.

A parade formed there and moved across ul. Zwierzyniecka, Franciszkanska, and Grodzka to Rynek Glowny in the afternoon to the sound of a bugle call from St. Mary's Church. In the square, everybody could take photos of the different kinds of buses that have served Krakow for 80 years.

For older citizens it was an occasion to reminisce; for younger residents it was a first opportunity to view the old buses.

After another bugle call, buses full of people left Rynek Glowny and traveled to the Park of Polish Aviators. There, among the old airplanes, the main attraction was the buses. The more curious were allowed

to climb inside the buses and sit in the driver's seats.

Children learned how to change the numbers and route signs on the buses. Przemek Jaskowiec said: "I have been interested in buses since my childhood. I remember riding "Cucumbers" (Cucumber was the nickname for Koda 706 RTO), their streamlined shape and the characteristic roar of their engines."

On some of the buses, visitors could take a short ride past the old airport. The first ride was by Jelcz RTO and the driver was the first woman in Krakow's bus system, Kamila Panczyk. Also, at the Park of Polish Aviators, people were renovating old bus engines.

Thanks to people like these throughout Poland, many old buses have new lives. The nearly 1,000 visitors at the celebration included some amateur bus experts. They were the members of Krakow's Railway Modelers Club. Their main interests, of course, are the trains but they also organize events such as Krakow's Night in January, when they ride buses through the streets and take pictures of the vehicles in Krakow's nighttime winter scenery.

Malopolska residents prefer calmer country living to noisy city life

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

Thousands of Poles across the country are moving from big towns to small ones because it's "Better to live in the village in a house than in the city in a tiny apartment."

Escapes from cities to villages have become a popular trend in Malopolska, reported *Dziennik Polski*, local daily newspaper.

According to 2006 figures from the Warsaw-based Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS), the biggest group of people, 42 percent, would choose villages as a place to settle, 21 percent want to live in a small city, and 18 percent prefer a city of average size. Big cities are

the least favored among those questioned with just 16 percent of Poles with that preference. The situation was completely different in 1998, when only 30 percent respondents favored countryside living.

Many people are searching for a "new rhythm of life," one where the pace is slower and the rat races scarce. Others observe that apartment rental prices have reached what many consider absurd prices that don't offer a corresponding lifestyle.

Krakowians started the boom toward suburban estates. Now inhabitants of Tarnow, Nowy Sacz, Olkusz and other cities of the Malopolska region are following in the quest to get away from the crush and noise of

big-city life.

In the last year Malopolska cities shrunk by 3,000 residents. Some 4,200 new inhabitants have been registered in the villages. In 2006, Nowy Sacz lost half of its 1,000 inhabitants, and Tarnow more than 800.

"Earlier Tarnow city counted 121,000 inhabitants, but now only 116,000. This phenomenon aches," said Henryk Slomka-Narozanski, vice mayor of Tarnow. "We are lucky that people who moved out into villages do not give up work in Tarnow. They may even work more efficiently as they are more relaxed."

The situation in Krakow is slightly different because the city is still considered an attractive place to

live. As some people leave, others arrive, leaving Krakow with a stable population of 670,000 people.

"This is normal," said Marcin Helbin, spokesman of Mayor of Krakow. "The richest move out. But they do not break relations with the city. Their business is still here and of course they send children to Krakow schools."

Another argument for moving out is that Krakow has run out of room for residential constructions. New areas for such buildings are ready but they are outside city borders. Krakow inhabitants have chosen mainly the western areas of city growth far from Nowa Huta's factory chimneys. The most popular locations are Zabierzow, Zielonki,

Mogilany and Michalowice.

Many one-family homes are available, said Jaroslaw Medynski, spokesman of Olkuse Municipality. He also pointed to the city's stone landscape, which he said attracts many Krakowians.

Based on the Opinion Research Center's figures it is apparent that symptoms of "village renaissance" have appeared in Poland, where the majority of people have country roots.

The countryside is more often perceived as an attractive place to live.

However, many point out that the younger generation does not show the same desire to live in villages as many of their elders.

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Jesuits and volunteers team up for tons of summer fun



This year's camp, which ran in July, was the fourth. Each Catholic diocese in Poland, which covers several churches, selected one student for the two-week course.

Grazyna Zawada
STAFF JOURNALIST

Krakow Jesuits, a Catholic charitable organization, and volunteer teachers from Poland and the U.S. team up to offer an English-language summer camp to poor

youths each year.

The organization, known as the Work of the New Millennium, sponsors the youths, most of whom are 16 to 18 years old.

They must come from impoverished areas or from families unable to afford special language classes.

"One crucial criterion for these teenagers is very good grades at school, together with a level of English sufficient for communication," said Maciej Kranc, a Jesuit priest who oversaw this year's course. "We host an elite group of young people – not in terms of material possessions, but in

an intellectual sense. Some of them have participated in national English-language competitions or are preparing to pass the International Baccalaureate exam."

This year's camp, which ran in July, was the fourth. Each Catholic diocese in Poland, which covers several churches, selected one student for the two-week course.

The students were divided into classes according to their skill levels.

The classes were intensive, running all day long.

The youths stayed in rooms at the Jesuit monastery, or in rented university dormitories.

The camps include a lot of grammar, but the main focus is conversation. To give students the best conversational experience, native English speakers lead the practice sessions.

"I participated in the course at the beginning of July, my candidature was proposed by the Work of the New Millennium," says Ewa Czapiewska, a participant of this summer's course.

Czapiewska added that before she came she wondered how much she would learn.

When classes started, though, her attitude changed. "We had wonderful teachers from the U.S. and excellent learning conditions in small groups," said Czapiewska. "For 50 students there were 14 teachers, so groups consisted of eight to nine students each. We did exercises in grammar, but the main emphasis was speaking."

At first the students held back, she said. "The teachers had to drag everything from us." Later the students opened up.

The teachers, both Poles and Americans, were all volunteers, she said. Some were Jesuits but many were not.

Volunteer teachers came from Loyola University in Chicago and other American universities, Father Kranc said. In all, he said, "about 40 people came to Poland to help us this year. Some of them are professionals who instruct non-professionals on how to teach English."

The volunteers were very friendly with the students, Czapiewska said. "We exchanged contact information and have emailed each other since then. The camp

allowed me to overcome my shyness and proved that I can speak English well."

She added that her high school teacher noticed how less pronounced her English-language accent had become.

Late afternoons at the camp were filled with recreational activities and sightseeing around Krakow.

It was the first time most of the students had really become acquainted with Krakow, Father Kranc said. "They had passed through the city at one time or another, but had never seen its monuments. They became enchanted with the place's atmosphere."

The students were also given the opportunity to attend an English-language mass each day, although it wasn't mandatory, Father Kranc said.

"We advised them to take part in it just as a language exercise because all of them were in English," he said. "It turned out that everybody attended every day."

At the end of the camp each student received a certificate for completing the course. The paper was nice, but the real payoff was the progress each student made.

Teachers could see the students' confidence soaring by the end of the first week.

At that point these young people "had overcome their language barrier and started using English boldly," Father Kranc said.

In addition, he said, they had become motivated to continue mastering English during the regular school year.

Some of the volunteer teachers also worked with grade-school children at a Jesuit orphanage in Zmiaca.

The volunteers didn't do formal teaching with the orphans, who were 10 years old or younger.

They played and had other interactions with them.

Father Kranc said he hoped the experience gave some of the orphans the motivation they needed to learn and to develop relationships with others.

"All the participants showed their gratitude towards us for the time spent with them," Father Kranc said. "We felt rewarded," he said.

"Who Stole the Eggs in the Forest?" exhibit

Małgorzata Mleczko
STAFF JOURNALIST

A new genre of photographic exhibition has become popular in recent years – one that features the works of amateurs.

Some exhibitions of what are called vernacular photos include the kind of snapshots you see in family photo albums.

The ZPAF i S-ka gallery will open a vernacular-photos exhibition beginning Friday but it will not offer shots from family photo albums.

All of the 30 photos are from a forest research project that caught animals stealing eggs.

The common bond among vernacu-

lar photos is that any visual or artistic effects they contain were most likely unintentional.

In fact, in some instances, a human didn't even take the photos – a remote camera setup did.

That's the case with the eggs-in-the-forest exhibition photos. Researchers from the Krakow Teachers University's Institute of Biology left thousands of eggs in a forest, locating each according to a precise plan.

The idea was to see which eggs forest critters made off with.

Tracking the egg thefts was difficult so the researchers decided to place digital cameras with remote sensors on trees near places where they left the eggs. The photos would help determine which

critters took the eggs, and when.

The cameras provided the researchers with thousands of photos. Thirty were selected for the ZPAF i S-ka gallery exhibition. Why are vernacular photos so popular nowadays? The exhibition director, Karol Hordziej, believes people long for genuineness in our post-modern world.

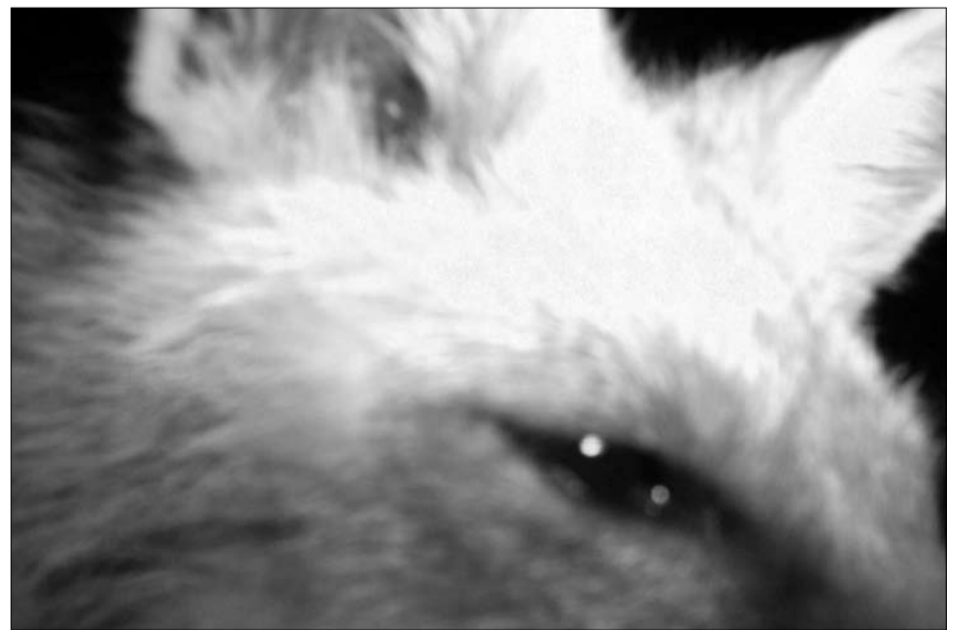
It also could be because many people find reality more intriguing than artistic creation.

Part of the fun at the exhibition will be a digital camera that will snap photos of gallery-goers. Like the animals in the eggs-in-the-forest experiment, gallery visitors won't know when their photos will be taken, however.

Remote sensors will trigger the exhibition camera the same way they triggered the forest cameras.

Thus visitors may find photos of themselves in which they look stunned – like the animals caught egg-napping in the forest. That is part of what vernacular photos are all about: You never know when or where one of these photos will be taken, or how it will be used.

"Who Stole the Eggs in the Forest?"
September 14-October 7
ZPAF i S-ka Gallery, ul. Tomazsa



All 30 photos are from a forest research project that caught animals stealing eggs. The common bond among vernacular photos is that any visual or artistic effects they contain likely were unintentional.

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Balice airport changes image



Balice Airport is changing its image and name to establish a strong position in the international flight market.

Grazyna Zawada
STAFF JOURNALIST

Balice Airport is changing its image and name to establish a strong position in the international flight market. There are three major points in airport management's plans: new connections, new marketing policy and a new logo.

The new symbol consists of an image of a flowing dandelion in a blue and white setting that in the future will be official colors of the airport. The new name is Krakow Airport, written in a classic-style font, and there are three sub-versions. The basic one contains only a name and a dandelion, the broadened contains the name of the airport's patron, John Paul II, in Polish, and the international version has all this in English.

"A dandelion is an element of nature, known to most people in the world. It's a warm and intimate symbol, and a good metaphor for flight," says Krzysztof Tkaczyk, creative director of the Schulz agency, which worked on this project for

over a year. "Our proposition was based on marketing trend research and surveys of both Polish and foreign people. What's interesting, the non-Polish name 'airport' was positively received in both those groups," he said.

Implementing the new brand will first be done among Poles, and then further abroad. The slogan recommending the place is, "The World Starts Here."

The new marketing policy would consist of building up a strong brand that would make Krakow as recognizable as other airport brands. Implementing the new brand will first be done among Poles, and then further abroad. The slogan recommending the place – "The World Starts Here" – shows the potential of the airport. New flight connections are planned to replace 19 that have been officially designated for canceling as SkyEurope moves from Krakow Airport to Prague and Vienna. Other companies, such as Easy Jet, Ryanair and Centralwings, already are planning to fill in for SkyEurope. However, none of those flight operators has decided to open a regular base, as SkyEurope did. The good news is that the operators are strengthening Krakow as a destination site on their schedules.

New concert season at Krakow Philharmonic

Alicja Natkaniec
STAFF JOURNALIST

The Krakow Philharmonic opened its 63rd concert season last weekend. Following tradition, the music was devoted to Polish contemporary composers – Karol Szymanowski, Antoni Szalowski and Artur Malawski. The inaugural concert began with the neoclassical Overture by Szalowski. It was followed by the major work of this evening – Symphony No. 4 by Szymanowski. This last symphony in the composer's output is deeply rooted in the folklore of the mountainous Tatra region in southern Poland and the highlanders' music.

The concert was concluded by Malawski's ballet-pantomime Wierchy. The Orchestra of the Krakow Philharmonic was conducted by its artistic director, Jan Krenz. The coming season will be strongly marked with the presence of music by Szymanowski, especially during the autumn months. It is connected with the celebration, as announced by the Polish Parliament, of The Year of Karol Szymanowski, on the 70th anniversary of his death. The composer is a

patron of the Krakow Philharmonic and had a special connection to the city.

In 1930 Szymanowski was awarded an honorary doctorate from Jagiellonian University. After his death, Szymanowski was buried in a crypt under the famous Krakow church "On The Rock." In addition to the music by Szymanowski, music lovers this season can also expect outstanding works by other European composers. The Orchestra and Choir will perform Mass in B minor by Johann Sebastian Bach, Elijah by Mendelssohn, Ein Deutsches Requiem by Brahms, Lied von der Erde by Mahler and the works of Grieg, Rimsky-Korsakov, Sibelius and Messiaen, to name only the most important ones. Among the most significant artistic events are two remarkable premieres: a new symphony by one of the greatest Polish contemporary composers, Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki, and Requiem by Jan Krenz. On September 30, the Philharmonic Hall will host the New Chamber Orchestra from Warsaw with the renowned conductor Christopher Hogwood.

More information is available on the web site www.filharmonia.krakow.pl.



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Tourists in their home city



Wieteska has been traveling around the world since 1986. His journeys to Australia, North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Japan and the U.S. were always an inspiration for photographic projects.

Wieteska's aim was not to make a classical reportage which reveals the poverty or the disorder of the capital's architecture.

Malgorzata Mleczo
STAFF JOURNALIST

Wojtek Wieteska is one of the most popular Polish photographers. Born in 1964, he studied cinematography at the National School of Film, Television and Theater in Lodz and art history in Warsaw University and Sorbonne University in Paris.

Wieteska has been traveling around the world since 1986. His journeys to Australia, North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Japan and the U.S. were always an inspiration for photographic projects.

Among them the most popular are: "Paris - Decline," "A Man Without Propriety," "Far West," "Tokyo" and the most recent one - "NYC#2." He had solo exhibitions in the Center of Japanese Art and Technology Manggha in Krakow and the Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle

in Warsaw.

Wieteska is also well known for his fashion photos made for the best Polish daily papers and journals. In Pauza Gallery we can see a series of photos made especially for Agata Passent's book "Stacja Warszawa" (Warsaw Station). It's a selection of her weekly articles that she has been writing for PiN Radio.

Most of her texts concern everyday life in the Polish capital. Warsaw is no ordinary city. Asked for the essence of the city, Agata Passent answered that although she lives and works there, it constantly slips away.

Warsaw is full of contrasts. It is ugly, gray and at the same time modern and stunning. That's why it was so difficult to photograph.

What's more, Wieteska said that it was a big challenge just to cover the distance to places and situations that one experiences

every day. Wieteska's aim was not to make a classical reportage which reveals the poverty or the disorder of the capital's architecture. This project departs from his previous style; it's less conceptual and more varied.

The artist took photos of a chimney sweep as well as nostalgic views of Vistula's riverside. Agata Passent is a journalist, columnist and writer. Her mother was Agnieszka Osiecka, a Polish poet, journalist, and songwriter. Her father, Daniel Passent, is a journalist who studied in Warsaw, Leningrad, and at Princeton University and Harvard University in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s.

Since 1959 he has been working for the political weekly "Polityka," interrupted only by stays abroad. Between 1997 and 2002, Passent served as a Polish ambassador to Chile. Their daughter Agata graduated from Harvard University and Warsaw

University. Her style is concentrated on lifestyle topics and avoids politics.

It's full of irony and jokes. Since 1997, next to Krystyna Kofta and Olga Lipinska, she has had her own column in "Twój Styl," the most popular women's journal in Poland.

Together, Wojtek Wieteska and Agata Passent have created an original combination - a book in which intelligent and brilliant texts of one of the most fashionable columnists are mixed with sensual and unique photos.

We can read about a cold winter morning while admiring a picture of a snowy car's windscreen. We can read about a new trend called Holming next to a photo of a girl sitting behind the counter of a sushi bar. Like Passent's topics, Wieteska's photos are about ordinary life, but their literary and artistic skills make them really special.



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Dagmar Zechmann, General Manager of Sheraton Krakow Hotel

Dagmar Zechmann was appointed as general manager of the Sheraton Krakow Hotel in July 2007.

Her professional life has been dedicated to the hospitality business and her education focused on tourism and hotel management.

Since 1994, Zechmann has worked for Starwood brands on various positions as banqueting and catering manager, training manager, and area quality manager

for Central Europe (for three different brands: TLC, Westin, Sheraton).

Her experience also includes quality management as Six Sigma Black Belt.

Zechmann arrived to Poland from Zagreb, where she worked as hotel manager of Sheraton Zagreb Hotel.

Zechmann is Austrian. Apart from German, she is fluent in English and Italian. She also speaks French, Spanish and Croatian.

Her previous assignments included Austria, Italy, Maldives, Bangkok, Bali, again Austria and Croatia.

"I'm very proud of managing such a great facility as Sheraton Krakow Hotel. I was very excited about this appointment as well as having the possibility to be here in such a wonderful, historic and traditional city like Krakow. I'm a passionate host, I love to work with people and for people," said Zechmann.

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Medieval art and early music in newly opened Bishop Erazm Ciolek Palace



After the restoration, the Bishop Erazm Ciolek Palace became one of the branches of the National Museum of Krakow.

Alicja Natkaniec
STAFF JOURNALIST

A concert series featuring Renaissance and Baroque music begins soon at the once neglected and dirty Bishop Erazm Ciolek Palace, now thoroughly restored to its former beauty.

During restoration work, scientists and archeologists uncovered elements of early decorative design that survived the years of neglect. The palace, once the most splendid of Krakow's residences, now displays Polish art not seen in decades. The concert series complements and completes the palace's return to its place as a Krakow treasure.

After the restoration, the palace became one of the branches of the National Museum of Krakow. The ground floor of the palace is devoted to Orthodox art, the first such exhibition ever shown in the National Museum. Two other floors host one of the most interesting collections of Polish art, dating from the Middle Ages to the 18th Century.

Previously these works of art, owned by the National Museum, were not accessible to the public. Only a small and the most precious part was displayed in the Wawel Royal Castle.

The palace is on ul. Kanonicza, at the

foot of Wawel Hill, the most picturesque and one of the oldest corners of Krakow. This interesting Gothic-Renaissance building was erected at the beginning of the 16th Century and belonged to Bishop Erazm Ciolek – an outstanding diplomat, humanist and patron of the artists. The palace was designed by the greatest masters living in those days in Krakow.

For ages the building served as an interesting example of residential architecture. In the 19th Century, when Poland was partitioned, it was taken over by Austrian authorities and turned into barracks and government offices. Dilapidated for years it has finally become a treasure of great artistic value.

And now music will be added to the palace. Starting September 29 a series of classical music concerts will be held in the museum. The concerts will present early Renaissance and Baroque music related to the gallery exhibition. Each concert will be introduced with a talk on art by a local historians.

The project was prepared by the National Museum together with the City Council. The invited musicians include Polish and foreign early music ensembles. Music lovers will have the opportunity to listen to "Dekameron" (Sept. 29), Krzysztof Sadlowski and Ludmila Staron (Oct. 23), "Capella Leopoldis" from Lviv (Nov. 13), "Schola Specialis Familiae" from Prague (Nov. 27) and "Hortus Artium" (Dec. 4).

The organizer is the National Museum in Krakow. Information. Tel.: (0) 12 429-15-58. Tickets (15 zloty) available before the concert.

Wisla Stadium on way to Euro 2012



Krakow will be a reserve city for the Euro Cup in Poland and Ukraine in 2012.

Danuta Filipowicz
STAFF JOURNALIST

Krakow will be a reserve city for the Euro Cup in Poland and Ukraine in 2012. Euro 2012 will be the 14th European championship for national football teams sanctioned by the UEFA. Wisla Stadium, the football-specific stadium on Reymonta Street in Krakow, may be hosting some games during the event, so it must be updated to meet the requirements set by UEFA for host stadiums. The newest redesign, with a seating capacity of at least 32,500 spectators, was published by the daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*. First of all, new drawings of both the eastern and western stadium sections have appeared

in the new proposal. Part of these drawings refers to the historic colonnade which was built around the stadium in the 1950s. The stadium skyline has changed in the newest design. The new construction will add a second balcony level on each tribune, and the stadium will look much lighter.

"All the time we do research to see if the view will be good enough from all angles and if people can see what happens on the playing field from any side of the tribunes," said Wojciech Obtulowicz, the architect responsible for the project. City officials are not the only people taking part in the remodeling discussion. Wisla fans also have tried to help their club contribute to the redesign. As soon as *Gazeta Wyborcza* has published the newest proposals, club supporters have offered their opinions and proposed changes. Critics have pointed out that beyond the aesthetics, that new proposals will increase

the cost of the remodeling and that the stadium's appearance will not improve as the highest part of the colonnade is not going to be altered at all, according to the plans. A tunnel under the playing field, which would link both tribunes, also may be built.

A special building is planned for the media, to hold press conferences, player presentations, etc. The total cost of the entire project is estimated at 12 mln zloty over 3.15 mln euro and has been criticized as an unnecessary expense. Also proposed for the stadium are a panoramic entrance hall, with glass elevators lifting to skyboxes and positions for commentators, VIPs and others.

Authorities also want to make Wisla suitable for other events in addition to football, which requires a good lighting system. At one stage authorities were considering a permanent roof over the stadium, but this idea has been discarded.

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International mining trade fair

Joanna Zabierek
STAFF JOURNALIST

Hundreds of influential outsiders got a chance to see Upper Silesia's rejuvenated coal industry last week.

Representatives of about 400 companies from 16 countries attended the International Trade Fair for Mining, Power Generation and Metallurgy in Katowice from September 11-14.

That made it the largest fair ever.

The fair is the biggest European exhibition dealing with developments in mining, power and heavy industry.

This year's exhibitors came not only from EU countries but also from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Romania, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, India, China, Nigeria and South Africa.

For decades coal was the linchpin of the economy in Upper Silesia, which is considered the center of heavy industry in Poland.

Other key industries have been iron, zinc and lead metallurgy, chemicals, building materials, textiles, engineering and power generation.

Automobile manufacturing has added to the diversity in recent years.

Silesian business and government leaders want to restructure the economy from one focused on heavy industry to one that offers a mix of non-heavy-industry products plus services.

Polish and international investors have poured money into Silesia to help it begin the transition. Investors have also spent billions of euro to modernize mining and the other "old" industries in the area.

"Now we have the best coal mining indus-

try in the EU," Economic Minister Krzysztof Tchorzewski said in an interview with the newspaper *Dziennik Zachodni*.

He said the exhibition was a showcase for Polish mining and the companies that support it.

Polish companies produce every machine used in mining – and displayed them at the exhibition, hoping for orders. They got them, mainly from Russia, but also from Vietnam, which produces more than 40 million tons of coal a year.

The demand for coal has been increasing around the world because it is cheaper than any other energy source.

Poland can export even more coal than it does now if it is able to get to seams that are more difficult to reach.

Doing that will require a lot of capital, however – an estimated 17 bln to 20 bln zloty.



Early election spoils welfare campaign

Joanna Zabierek
STAFF JOURNALIST

A campaign warning women of the dangers of drinking alcohol when pregnant has suffered a setback because free billboard space usually provided to charitable causes has instead been sold to politicians in a heated early campaign.

The campaign was launched in early September with the motto, "I Don't Drink to its Health," after months of planning by the National Agency for Solving Alcohol Problems (PAPPA) in cooperation with the Polish Gynecologists' Association.

Billboards promoting the issue were supposed to be displayed in 600 of 800 Polish cities.

However, as the newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* reported, none were seen in Silesian cities. It seems that an early election has spoiled the plans of the campaign's originators.

Krzysztof Brzozka, chief of PAPPA, said agencies that owned billboards preferred to sell them to politicians rather than donating the space to educational nonprofit campaigns. Media Concept is the only agency that provided some free billboards for the

anti-alcohol campaign. Silesia has only three and all are in Katowice on ul. Pukowca.

Bielsko-Biala, Gliwice, Zabrze and Sosnowiec won't get a single one.

Even Warsaw, where usually it is not difficult to find money or advertising space for charitable campaigns, has only four billboards. In such circumstances PAPPA will have to limit its action to pamphlets distributed in clinics and gynecologists' waiting rooms.

"It is not enough. Nothing is as forceful and effective as outdoor advertising and television commercials," Brzozka told *Gazeta Wyborcza*. He added that the campaign will go forward again after the election.

Campaign organizers stressed the importance of their cause. They point out that some women, even highly educated ones, believe that if they consume just three drinks and limit their drinking to wine or beer their babies will be unharmed. But last week in Dabrowa Gornicza (Upper Silesia) a baby girl with 1.9 percent blood alcohol content alcohol was born.

Such incidents alarm campaign organizers, who cite the bad effects of alcohol on the unborn, including fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).



Warsaw, where it is not difficult to find money or advertising space, has only four billboards.

FAS is an entirely preventable birth defect caused by the use of alcohol during pregnancy. Symptoms include growth retardation, certain facial features and brain damage.

Brain damage means that a child may have serious difficulties with learning and remembering, analysis and getting along with others.

FAS babies may also suffer from heart, kidney, liver or other organ damage as well as from vision and hearing difficulties.

Many people believe effective media campaigns create awareness, change attitudes and motivate individuals and communities to engage in healthy behaviors. The goal of this campaign is to reach the maximum number of women with a small

budget using targeted marketing strategies to encourage women to abstain from alcohol while they are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.

Campaign organizers want to educate women about what FAS through various channels, such as magazine editorials, TV programming, web sites, pamphlets and posters, with an emphasis on Silesian women. As for now, however, the campaign in question has been defeated by an election campaign.

"We couldn't find cheap or free-of-charge billboards and TV commercials. We have an early election and everyone wants to use this time to earn money," Malgorzata Zakrzewska of Media Concept told *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

Exhibit: "With Joy Around the World"

Joanna Zabierek
STAFF JOURNALIST

An oversized photo exhibition opened in gallery "Rondo sztuki" in Katowice September 10.

What is so special about it is the fusion of two different worlds the pictures present: the underground world of miners at work, and the world's most recognizable landscapes.

The display is a collective project of the Polish company Joy, "National Geographic" magazine and Academy of Art in Katowice, Rondo Sztuki's host. The exhibition coincides with the International Trade Fair for Mining,

Power Generation and Metallurgy. The exhibition titled "With Joy Around the World" combines unique photos taken underground with photos showing the world's most famous objects and most characteristic and recognizable places.

The pictures come from five continents: North America, Australia, Africa, Asia and Europe.

The display was arranged to make the contrast between underground pictures and landscapes. The originators wanted to show the specific of the miners' work, which is similar all over the world.

The exhibition was the idea of the Joy Mining Machines company, which has opened a new fabric store in Tychy recently.

"Most people don't realize how this work looks like. [Because] we have such photographs to illustrate that, we have decided to show them. We needed, however, an artistic look," Marek Growiec, the chief of Joy, told the Polish Press Agency PAP. All underground photos come from the collection of this company, which is one of the leading producers of mining machines in the world.

It is the first time that a mining company has conducted a project with the Academy of Art.

This cooperation adds to the exhibit, as does the participation of "National Geographic," author of half of all exhibited pictures.

"Two photographs showing [the aboveground] and underground worlds created a unique combination of two different perspectives of view. We often don't realize it but there is also a world and life underground, and it is really fascinating," Martyna Wojciechowska, editor-in-chief of the Polish edition of "National Geographic," told PAP. The exhibition was inaugurated by Marek Growiec, chief of Joy company; Justyna Lauer – the dean of the Academy of Art, and Martyna Wojciechowska. It will be on display in Rondo Sztuki until September 17.

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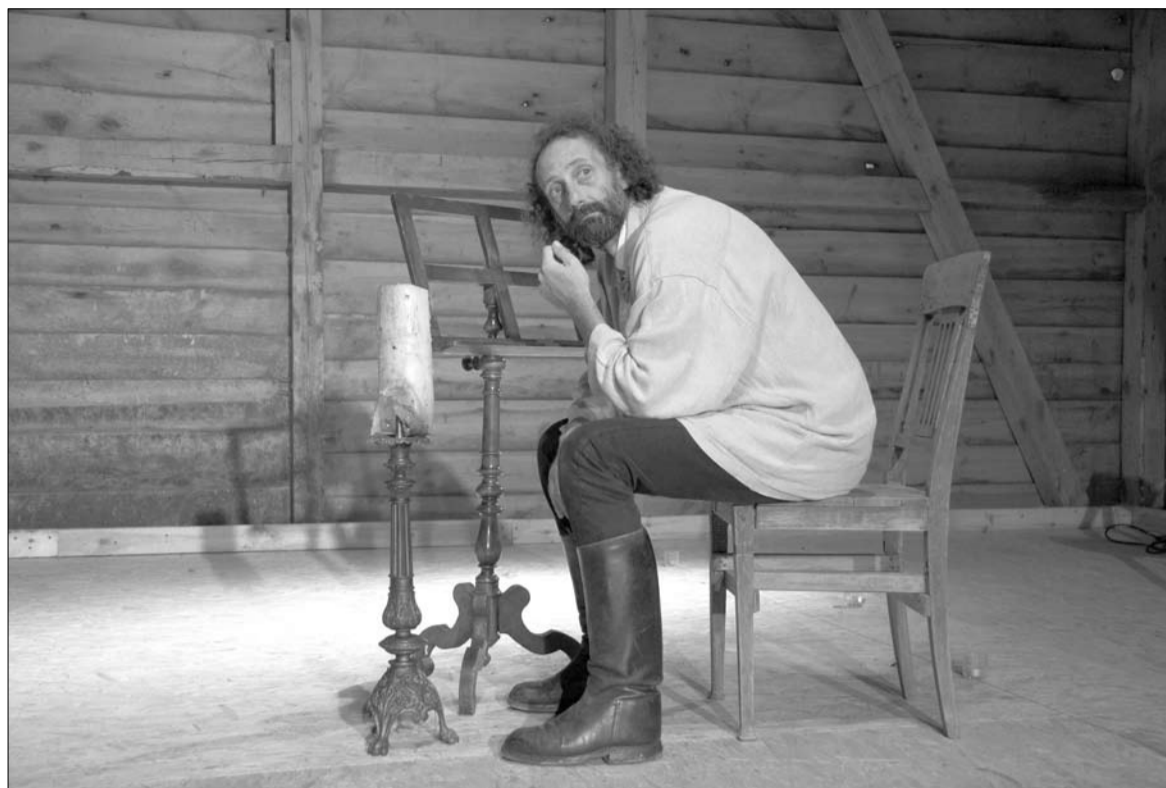
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Angst and Teeth-Gnashing; Dostoyevsky Plays at Theater STU



When Dostoyevsky's monstrously-long books become condensed, and thus distilled, into theatrical productions or films, their flaws tend to become glaringly apparent.

Soren A. Gauger
STAFF JOURNALIST

Everyone loves Dostoyevsky. This has never been totally comprehensible to me, in fact, but I can partly rationalize it to myself by saying that Dostoyevsky is a seductive combination of 19th-Century melodrama and epic dimensions, a kind of cartoon version of Russian morbidity (in the same way that Chagall paints a cartoon version of the Russian fantastic imagination), psychological introspection and good, old-fashioned kitsch. Consider the famous scene of the old money-lender getting hacked to pieces by Raskolnikov in "Crime and Punishment," the part most people remember of this very popular book. In any American film, this would be considered kitsch of the highest order. But because Dostoyevsky serves this up in a kind of quasi-philosophical, proto-existentialist sauce (the last key to his phenomenal popularity amongst the literati), the kitsch is generally tolerated – even adored! – as a kind of means to an end.

When Dostoyevsky's monstrously-long books become condensed, and thus distilled, into theatrical productions or films, their flaws tend to become glaringly apparent. Such is the case, alas, with the new four-hour adaptation of "Biesy" (translated variously into English as "The Possessed" or "The Demons") performed by the once-great STU Theater at al. Krasynskiego 16-18, and directed by Krzysztof Jasinski.

The plot here is quite a complicated one, even by Dostoyevsky's standards, but in brief it is the story of a nobleman convinced he is possessed by the spirit of a young girl who was raped, and goes to see an exorcist. His family home, meanwhile is filled with scandalous and unlikely situations – a madwoman is found outside church begging and is brought back to the house for tea, her drunk "brother" (a google-eyed and very energetic Dariusz

Gnatowski) blunders in and makes a scene, a stately gentleman is "given" a young servant-lady as a present from his dying wife. Lots of angst and teeth-gnashing ensues.

STU is charging a jaw-dropping 100 zloty a ticket for this "super-production," in part because many of the actors and actresses have been featured in super-popular Polish television series and soap operas, and in part because the Voskresinnia Orthodox Choir from Ukraine has been engaged to "give this performance the dimension of a spiritual experience" (thus enthuses the press release). And indeed, the first ten minutes of the performance, consisting of no more than a young boy dusting the audience with incense, and the choir singing and holding candles, has a compelling beauty about it. Thereafter, however, the choir is used mainly to underscore emotions that are already histrionic to begin with.

In fact, the overwhelming impression when a 500-page Dostoyevsky novel is presented "in a nutshell" like this, is of a 19th-Century costume drama/soap opera with a slightly macabre edge. There is some imaginative use of the very small space, with different props often popping out of the wings on a kind of flat trolley, and the acting is solid and sometimes even very good indeed (Andrzej Rog makes for a very fine grizzled exorcist, and the younger actors pitch in some very enthusiastic work),

but all this is little more than the garnish on a very conventional piece of meat.

As for the philosophical sauce I mentioned, to continue our bad culinary analogy, Dostoyevsky's religious and philosophical writing comes across as a bit uninspired in his books, but in this kind of summarized form it can be downright embarrassing. The lead protagonist, Stavrogin, at one point (provocatively!) asks the exorcist in a woebegone voice: "Can a man believe in the Devil without believing in God?" and the audience has little alternative but to slap their foreheads and groan. At one point the elderly Stavrogin stops the tea party and begins a sermon in defense of art and beauty that is so dreadfully conceived and contrived that one begins to question if Dostoyevsky genuinely valued art and beauty himself (although in fairness this may just as well be a weakness of Jasinski's adaptation, or the actor, who is not among the play's best). In general, whenever the script makes a foray away from soap-opera intrigue and into the dark woods of spirituality or philosophy, Dostoyevsky's weakness as a writer becomes most apparent.

All that is left to do is to encourage you to take your 100 zloty elsewhere, donate it to a charity where it will do some good. And go in search of your "spiritual dimensions" in the churches, and your theatrical pleasure at another theater.

Center for Jewish Culture shows life in snapshots

"Żydowska dzielnica w paryskim le Marais"



Fotografia Bogdan Borkowski. Paris bogbor@hotmail.com

As part of its "Encounters with Jewish Culture" program, presenting a number of concerts, lectures and other meetings, the Center for Jewish Culture has organized a photography exhibit, displaying a collection of works by Bogdan Borkowski.

Adelina Krupski
STAFF JOURNALIST

As part of its "Encounters with Jewish Culture" program, presenting a number of concerts, lectures and other meetings, the Center for Jewish Culture has organized a photography exhibit, displaying a collection of works by Bogdan Borkowski. Taken in April of last year, the photographs depict the daily life of residents in Le Marais, the Jewish Quarter of Paris, primarily made up of Rue des Rosiers and surrounding streets.

The scenes, vibrant with bright colors and movement, portray the liveliness and distinct spirit of the "pletzl," Yiddish for "little square." While focusing on the small businesses set up in the area, such as shops with books and devotional items, bakeries and delicatessens, restaurants and hair salons, Borkowski's photographs also depict relations among the residents, creating a feeling of friendly community. Culture and religion evidently provide a key theme in the series, through scenes of people congregating outside a synagogue, musicians playing and singing in the street, and a Torah learning Center for children.

The collection successfully conveys the energetic atmosphere of the Parisian Jewish Quarter, while also capturing the authenticity of the moment, as the neighborhood disappears nearly day by day as small shops are progressively bought out and residents exit, often to Israel. In response to his perception of a cherished lifestyle under threat, Borkowski adopts the role of a guardian of memories, attempting to save a vanishing world from oblivion. One striking example of this aim is a three-photo

series, depicting the story of a Kosher market being closed, remodeled, and finally reopened in its latest guise – a designer boutique.

Photographer and filmmaker of Polish descent, Borkowski studied in Paris, where he has been living since 1972. As a resident of Le Marais for over 12 years, Borkowski feels as though he owed the exhibit to his chosen home. His work has been exhibited throughout Europe as well as overseas, in Toronto and New York. In addition, Borkowski works with a number of press agencies and publications.

According to Weronika Rehman, organizer of exhibits shown in the Center for Jewish Culture, the display of Borkowski's photos is not to be missed, as it is fascinating to compare Kazimierz, the Jewish Quarter in Krakow, to that of Paris. "It's like a collision of two worlds," she says. The grand opening of the exhibit, attended by the artist, takes place at 18:00 on Thursday, September 20, in the main reception area of the center. The exhibit will continue until the start of November.

For more information, contact or visit the Center for Jewish Culture
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More Profanum than Sacrum



The concert.

Soren A. Gauger
STAFF JOURNALIST

Pity poor Gershwin. The celebrated American populist composer par excellence, this composer's glitzy star that once shone so brightly has by now dimmed to almost nothing, his catchy jingles are just as likely to make you snort in condescension as they are to make you tap your feet. But here, to open Krakow's high-budget Sacrum Profanum festival, we have the much-praised Marc Minkowski saddled with the thankless chore of conducting an entire evening of Gershwin's greatest hits package.

To his credit, Minkowski really did try his best. Instead of trying to find some profound and serious layer to Gershwin, to adopt the air of a serious European composer in the high tradition, Minkowski preferred to waggle his hips and encourage the kitschy flaring of the trumpets by pumping his fists in the air. In this way, by

swimming with the current of kitsch instead of trying to fight against it, Minkowski did manage to squeeze a few interesting moments out of the pieces. I don't recall "Summertime" from "Porgy and Bess" ever sounding so syrupy and dreamlike, and the honking of horns in "American in Paris" became a great clattering mess here. On the other hand, the refrain of the latter piece is repeated until the listeners want to scream for it to stop (the Tchaikovsky Effect) and "I Got Rhythm" is just patently absurd from beginning to end, and should be removed from all repertoires at once. The main problem seems to be that Gershwin's music has been best served by jazz musicians, and the symphonies he himself wrote simply sound like schmaltzy soundtracks to films you can't quite put your finger on. Jazz pianist Leszek Mozdzier battled heroically with the symphonic works, but really only shined in his multiple encores, receiving a standing ovation from this crowd who paid 190 zloty for their tickets and should have been too tired and glum to do any such thing.

The next day was another filled-to-capacity crowd for Tomasz Stanko's renditions of Miles Davis with a four-man backing ensemble. Stanko, a jazz trumpeter whose reputation started in the 60s with the famous Krzysztof Komeda ensemble, did not stray far from Davis's blue ballads, and appeared to be almost too tired to lift his horn. Saxophonist Joakim Milder was also oddly reticent during the concert, blowing a few lazy notes from time to time and then stepping

back to let the young rhythm section show their stuff.

The great jazz drummer Art Blakey had a policy in the 60s and 70s of continually playing with younger musicians, because he said it challenged him and "kept him fresh."

During this Sacrum Profanum concert the younger musicians slipped into Stanko's comatose pace whenever the trumpeter was playing, and only when they were given a chance to solo did things heat up a bit. Slawomir Kurkiewicz on upright bass and Stefan Pasborg on drums were particularly effective. Stanko's lethargy was infectious, however – by the end of the concert the audience (60-100 zloty per ticket) could barely summon the strength to clap.

I don't recall "Summertime" from "Porgy and Bess" ever sounding so syrupy and dreamlike, and the honking of horns in "American in Paris" became a great clattering mess here.

It may seem rather prosaic to point out the cost of the concert tickets so methodically; art, as we all know, has no price tag, and world-acclaimed performers deserve every penny they get. But in a country where the average monthly salary is around 1,900 zloty, the Sacrum Profanum festival is creating an exclusivity around an artistic event of this sort that serves neither the artists nor the audiences, and ultimately makes culture more inaccessible to the "ordinary people."

As is generally the case, the best concert of the festival thus far was also the most poorly attended. The night devoted to Charles Ives was a generous four hours of music by this unjustly-neglected 19th-/early 20th-Century composer, including pieces for solo piano (some splendid work by Polish pianist Maciej Grzybowski, particularly in the hypnotic "Three-Page Sonata" and the frenetic "Concord Sonata"). The Royal String Quartet were also impressive in their rendering of both of Ives's quartets, particularly the second.

This piece is described by Ives himself as follows: "String Quartet for 4 men – who converse, discuss, argue (in "politics"), fight, shake hands, shut up – then walk up the mountainside to view the firmament." And whether or not such programmatic notes are always desirable, seeing this piece live did allow the viewer to follow the "conversation" between the instruments, adding a great deal to the piece. The small audience got smaller as the music progressed, an old woman dropped a purse full of coins, which rattled all over the floor, and by the time the musicians were taking their final bows I doubt there were more than 30 audience members, though the remaining few did beat their hands wildly.

Encounters with Jewish Culture

Thursday, September 20th, 2007, 6:00 p.m.

Le Marais – The Jewish Quarter of Paris – an opening of the photographic exhibition by Bogdan BORKOWSKI (France), organized in cooperation with the French Consulate General in Krakow.

Monday, September 24th, 2007, 6:00 p.m.

Film showing: *The Wedding* by Andrzej WAJDA.

Tuesday, September 25th, 2007, 6:00 p.m.

Rydlówka Museum, 28 Tetmajera Street, Kraków-Bronowice

About The Wedding and More – A meeting with Maria RYDŁOWA in the Rydlówka Museum in Bronowice.

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Venice honors Polish movie "Tricks" by Andrzej Jakimowski

Alicja Natkaniec
STAFF JOURNALIST

The movie titled "Tricks," directed by Andrzej Jakimowski, won the Label Europa Cinemas Award for the Best European Film during this year's 64th International Film Festival of Venice.

The movie was honored during the Venetian special screenings called Giornate degli Autori (Venice Days), a local version of the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors' Fortnight) in Cannes or Berlin's Panorama section.

The movie now will receive additional promotion and will be introduced to the international audience. It will be distributed in more than 400 European cities and 55 countries.

The Europa Cinemas Label Jury in Venice consisted of Jan de Clercq (exhibitor at the Cinema Lumière in Bruges, Belgium), Antonio Llorens Sanchis (exhibitor at the Cines Babel and Albatros in Valencia, Spain), Stefan Kitanov (exhibitor at the Cinema House in Sofia, Bulgaria) and Thomas Bertacche (exhibitor at the Cines Visionario and Centrale in Udine, Italy). The jury said in a statement, "This is a director of real promise.

"Tricks" is a touching and intimate look at everyday working class life in the Polish countryside."

"Tricks" is a story of a 6-year-old boy named Stefek, who challenges the fates. He believes that a chain of small insignificant events will help him to get closer to his father, who abandoned his mother. His older sister helps him to learn how to "bribe" fate with small sacrifices. "Tricks" eventually bring their father home, but in the crucial moment, they have nothing valuable left to bribe with. Desperate, Stefek tries his luck with the riskiest of tricks. Produced, directed and written by Jakimowski, "Tricks" stars Damian Ul, Ewelina Walendziak, Rafal Guzniczak, Tomasz Sapryk, Iwona Fornalczyk and Johanna Liszowska. The movie will be on in Polish movie theaters beginning October 26. Earlier it will inaugurate the 23rd Warsaw International Film Festival to be held from October 12-21.

Andrzej Jakimowski was born in 1963 and studied film making in Katowice. His first feature, "Squint Your Eyes" won numerous top awards at Polish and European Festivals and turned out to be the cinematic event of 2003.



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