



## ***FPA Promotes Polish Art in Downtown Detroit***

Friends of Polish Art (FPA) partnered with the Metropolitan Museum of Design Detroit (MM-O-DD) and the Polish Institute of Culture and Research at Orchard Lake Schools (PICROL) to create the Polish section of the “2024 International Design Exhibition & Marketplace, Featuring Poland, Italy and Finland” now on display through December 21, at the MM-O-DD, located at 905 Henry St, Detroit.

The big gallery space, on the third floor of a postindustrial building, was divided into three parts, each one dedicated to one of the three participating countries.

The Polish section of the exhibition represents Polish cultural heritage as well as the works of five contemporary Polish American artists, the latter works available for sale.

In the heritage part of the Polish display there are two landscapes by Julian Fałat, and a hunt scene by Juliusz Kossak, which come from the PICROL collection, a Solidarity szopka, on loan from Eugenia and Tadeusz Górecki, an Opoczno folk costume on loan from Donna and Tom Skurski, and two pieces of so called “Kraków Glass”.

The much larger contemporary section has the works of five Polish American artists: Dennis Orłowski (paintings), Andrea Slomczenski (paintings), Martin Zane Skalski (metal sculptures), James Kaye (ceramics) and Mark Lewanski (glass).



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**The FPA Newsletter is published 4 times per year.**

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

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

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



*On the left: Dennis Orłowski and Andrea Slomczenski with a friend. On the right: FPA members at the opening at the MM-O-DD (continuing on page 3)*

## ***Łukasz Maciąg Wins the FPA Literary Competition***

At the general membership meeting on November 22, FPA presented Łukasz Maciąg with the award for winning the 2024 Estelle Wachtel-Torres, MD Literary Competition.

After the award presentation, Mr. Maciąg read his very creative and funny short story entitled “In Search of Our Heroes and Time Regained” to the audience, which included a group of his family and friends, who came to the meeting to share in his success.



*On the left: Łukasz Maciąg with Brian Malski (FPA President), Iwona Jędrzejczak (FPA Treasurer), Donna Bielecki (FPA Board Member) and Alina Klin (FPA First Vice President)*

*On the right: Łukasz Maciąg with his family and friends at the Award Ceremony (continuing on page 3)*





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Friends of Polish Art  
Founded 1937 Non-Profit Organization

Dear Members,

The past few months have been busy and very productive for FPA, with a variety of events we both hosted and supported. In total, there were at least ten when combining our events with those hosted by organizations to which we are closely connected.

Our first autumn event was the **September General Membership Meeting** held at the recently renovated Galeria on the Orchard Lake School campus where guest speaker, Orchard Lake Galeria Manager, Elijah Majeski gave an excellent presentation on the life of acclaimed Polish artist Stefan Norblin. The presentation focused on Norblin's numerous artistic talents which included murals he painted, interiors and furniture he designed, and art deco posters he created, some of which FPA acquired back in the mid-90s.

The next event was the **Szopka Workshop** led by board member & talented szopka creator Charles Pelshaw, held at the American Polish Cultural Center in early October. At the workshop, a group of over 30 members, parents, children and guests learned the process of creating szopki from used materials in forms and shapes replicating historic churches and buildings. Following our well attended and successful szopka workshop, there was our collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Design Detroit on the **Seventh Annual International Design Exhibition & Marketplace** which opened on November 8. The exhibit features work of talented local artists with connections to Poland, Finland and Italy. If you haven't been to the MM-O-DD yet, please make plans to see some exceptional high quality fine art in a variety of mediums and forms as the exhibit will remain open through Sunday, December 21.

Our most recent event was the **November General Membership Meeting** where Łukasz Maciąg received the Estelle Wachtel-Torres Literary Competition Award for his winning short story titled, "In Search of Our Heroes and Time Regained." Lukasz's short story is about a discussion an author has with Polish literary icons during a dream. You can read his story which is posted on the FPA website under the Blog tab.

Among the events FPA recently supported there was Chopiniana, the Galeria Reopening, Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival and the APCC 35th Anniversary celebration.

We still have three exciting FPA events before the end of the year, which we invite you to attend, and they are: the **Szopka Competition Award presentation, Annual Wigilia** and our first **Beading Workshop**. Please make time to see the Szopki entries submitted by both children and adults now on display at the Polish Art Center and/or attend the presentation which will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 2 pm. You are also encouraged to join us on Saturday evening, December 14 for our Annual Wigilia which is our most cherished event of the year, and for the Beading Workshop on December 21 (details on page 4).

Since this is the last newsletter until next year, let me take this opportunity to wish you, your family and friends a **Merry Christmas (Wesołych Świąt) and Happy New Year (Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku)!**

Warmest Regards,

Brian Malski

### In Memoriam

With sadness we remember the recent passing of long-time member Wanda Gongola. Ms. Gongola was an FPA member since 1973. She and her mother, Z. Irene Jankie, were past presidents of FPA. They were the first and only mother-daughter presidents of the organization. Wanda served for many years on the FPA Board of Directors and was a very strong promoter of Polish culture and traditions. She will be missed. Our condolences go to her family. May she rest in peace.



Wanda Gongola at the 2016 FPA Wigilia

The invigorating and glamorous opening of the exhibition took place on Friday, November 8 and was attended by many FPA members, representatives of PICROL, as well as Richard Walawender (Honorary Consul of Poland), Ann Bankowski (former PAC MI Division President), and Joseph Majcher (representing Orchard Lake Schools Board of Regents.)

During the evening, models dressed in traditional regional attire – in the case of Poland, in folk costumes from Nowy Sącz and Rzeszów – and contemporary haute couture gowns (Italy) mingled with very happy guests admiring the art, chatting with the artists, sipping wine and snacking on Polish pierogi, Finnish meatballs and Italian cookies. Chopin's music, performed by Jarek Golembiowski (ACPC) as well as an appearance made by two members of “Bractwo Kurkowe” dressed as Polish nobleman, also added to the festive atmosphere of the evening.

FPA is very proud to be a co-organizer of this important project which promotes Polish and Polish American culture to a broader audience.

We encourage all FPA members to make a trip downtown and visit the exhibition.

The MM-O-DD is open Wednesday - Saturday, 12-4 pm or by appointment.

The following institutions and people were instrumental in putting the exhibition together: Jessica Saunders (whose initiative it was to get FPA involved in the exhibition), MM-O-DD (Leslie Ann Pilling, Pamela Saunders and the staff), FPA (Brian Malski and Alina Klin), Alicja Karlic (Polish Media at PICROL), PICROL (John Radzilowski, Elijah Majeski and Ania Bieciuk), Eugenia and Tadeusz Górecki, Donna and Tom Skurski (Wawel Folk Ensemble).

FPA wants to thank the following organizations and individuals for their financial support of the exhibition: Raymond Okonski and Suzanne Sloat Foundation (Dennis & Susan Walkowiak, Legacy Donor Sponsor), American Council for Polish Culture, Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, Polish American Federal Credit Union, Dobrusin Law Firm, Polish Cultural Fund – Ann Arbor, Tekla Vintage, Dinka Dental, Polish Day Parade, American Polish Cultural Society, Wally & Joan Ozog, and Alina Klin & David Rhine.

Video from the event is available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJkSbdp2d68>



*On the left: Barbara Lemecha and artist Martin Zane Skalski with one of his sculptures  
On the right: Wawel Folk Ensemble dancers, Ania Toboy and Parker Baranski, with the "Solidarity Szopka"*

## ***Łukasz Maciąg Wins the FPA Literary Competition*** *(continuation from page 1)*

As befits a creative person, instead of providing a traditional bio, Mr. Maciąg wrote an eight-stanza humorous poem about himself, which Donna Bielecki read prior to the awardee reading his story.

The celebration of Mr. Maciąg's achievement continued over cake and coffee. FPA proudly congratulates Łukasz Maciąg on winning the competition!

FPA is also very pleased that the competition, which was dormant for a few years, was revived this year.



*Above: Charles Pelshaw leading the FPA Szopka Workshop on October 5, at the APCC*

*On the right: Szopki entered in the 2024 FPA competition now on display at the Polish Art Center in Hamtramck*

## ***The 2024 FPA Szopka Workshop and the Szopka Competition***





*Friends of Polish Art*  
 Founded 1937 Non-Profit Organization

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



*Elijah Majeski giving a presentation about Norblin at the FPA September General Meeting at the Galeria on the Orchard Lake Schools campus*

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

Like us on our Facebook page:  
<https://facebook.com/friendsofpolishart/>

## *Friends of Polish Art*

*Invites its members, dance groups, organizations, friends, etc., to*

### **First Beading Workshop**

*Led by Chuck Pelshaw*

**DATE:** Saturday, December 21, 2024 **TIME:** 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm



**Metropolitan Museum of Design Detroit**

905 Henry Street, Detroit, MI. 48083

*The workshop-class is open to youth, adults, retirees, etc. All skill levels are welcome.*

*Materials, needles and templates to start your bead project will be provided. Please bring scissors and a camera (phone). You are also welcome to bring other items you may think may be helpful.*

*The workshop will be limited to the first 20 individuals who RSVP.*

**TO ATTEND PLEASE RSVP by THURSDAY, DEC. 20, 2024, to:** [bjmalski@gmail.com](mailto:bjmalski@gmail.com)

**NOTE:** Class will be held at the Museum located on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor – elevator accessible

**ANY QUESTIONS?** – Please call Brian Malski @ (248) 217-5951



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Saturday, December 14, 5 PM:**

FPA Annual Wigilia.

See the website and FB for details.

**Saturday, December 21, 12- 3:00 PM:**

FPA Beading Workshop. At the MM-O-DD in Detroit.  
 RSVP by Dec. 20 to Brian Malski, [bjmalski@gmail.com](mailto:bjmalski@gmail.com).

[More details in the flyer.](#)

**Saturday, January 4, 12 noon – 3:30 PM:**

The WSDPAHS Annual Opłatek.

Details at: <https://www.detroitpolonia.org/calendar/>

**Tuesday, January 7, at 7 PM:**

Concert of “Polky”, a three-member female band out of Toronto. At The Ark in Ann Arbor.

Tickets: <https://theark.org/event/polky-250107/>

**Friday, January 24, at 6:30 PM:**

FPA General Membership Meeting  
 (elections will be held).