

## Minnesota Voice

## Music and Remembrance: Minnesota Marks Poland's Centennial

by Mark Dillon

MINNEAPOLIS — Among the congratulatory communications offered to Minnesota's Polish community ahead of a Nov. 10 classical music concert and gala marking Poland's Centennial of Independence was a poignant letter from the Most Rev. Bernard Hebda.

"While they immigrated while Poland was still partitioned, traveling with Austrian passports, (my maternal grandparents) never doubted for a moment that they were Polish, and they raised their children and grandchildren to have love for the traditions and culture that have long distinguished Poland," Hebda wrote.

The Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul- Minneapolis said his appreciation of Poland deepened in the 1980s:

"Pride in our heritage was not only nur-

country and culture that formed him."

Those sentiments were echoed in a letter of gratitude from Stanislaw Karczewski, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, to Minnesota's Polish community and some 30 groups and individuals statewide who organized and funded a Saturday afternoon and evening of musical celebration at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

"I know that some of you think of yourselves as Poles living in the U.S. while others as Polish Americans. What is common to all of you, though, is something far greater and more important than semantics: it is the wish for well-being of an independent Poland." Karczewski wrote (in Polish).

The Nov. 10 lineup of events at the art institute included afternoon children's activities, dance exhibitions by three Polish folk groups, a "living wax museum" whereby

children depicted famous figures in Polish history, and films. Students from the Adam Mickiewicz Polish Saturday School, Minneapolis, and Polish Educational Solutions of Minnesota participated in and helped lead the program.

In the art institute's rotunda, an exhibit from the Instytut Pamięci Narodowej w Warszawie included panel displays explaining the contributions of Pilsudski, Dmowski, Paderewski, Witos, Korfany and Daszynski to Polish Independence.

The evening's performing arts theme was a "Musical Journey to Polish Independence" that included:

A **Sonara Ensemble** of Marta Troicki (bassoon), Madeline Miller (Oboe) and Anastasiya Nyzkodub (clarinet)

**Adam Zukiewicz**, an internationally rec-



A global group of journalism students from the University of Minnesota and visiting editors from the Czech Republic, France, Latin America, and Africa wave Polish flags at a dinner that accompanied Minnesota's Polish Independence Gala at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

ognized Polish pianist and **Tulio Rondón**, a celloist. Together they performed four compositions of Frederic Chopin. Zukiewicz also performed Chopin's Polonaise in A flat Major "Heroic," Op.53

**Pawel Izdebski**, an internationally known bass and baritone vocalist who performed Bogurodzica (Mother of God), Hymn do miłości Ojczyzny (Hymn to the Lover of the Motherland), Mazurek 3-go maja (May 3rd Mazurka), Dalej chłopcy, dalej żywpo (Hey Boys, Hurry Up), Polonez Kosciuszki (Kosciuszko's Polonaise), Rota (The Oath), Aria Skolubyabd and Polesia Czar

**Mirandola Ensemble**, a Minnesota choral music ensemble of Mikolaj Zielinski, Henryk Gorecki and Joseph Kromolicki

In organizing the day's events, multiple groups came together for the first time to form a new statewide Polish umbrella 501(c)(3) non-profit called the Poland Independence Celebration Committee (PICC). The group also created the PoloniaMinnesota.org and polandcelebration.org websites. Persons of Polish heritage currently make up the sixth largest ethnic group in Minnesota, U.S. cen-

sus figures show.

The first wave of Poles came to the region in the aftermath of attempted revolutions in Central Europe in 1848, several years before Minnesota was admitted as a state in 1858. Poles established some 40 communities from Winona to Duluth. A large second wave came from the Austrian-Hungarian and Russian partitions from the 1880s to just before World War I.

A third wave of first generation Polish immigrants have arrived in Minnesota since the early 1980s. Also, many third and fourth generation Polish Americans like Hebda with century-old roots and ties to Polish communities in the Eastern and Midwestern U.S. now make Minnesota home.

Recalling the military service of the more than 22,000 Americans (including 336 Minnesotans from the Twin Cities) who volunteered in 1917 as members of the Polish Army in France during World War I, Polish Senate Speaker Karczewski said in his letter that: "you can be proud your ancestors selflessly served our Homeland and its local communities, and rest assured that Poland remembers."



A Minneapolis panel exhibition entitled "Fathers of Independence" details the contributions of Pilsudski, Dmowski, Paderewski, Witos, Korfany and Daszynski to the formation of the Second Polish Republic in 1918.

tered in my hometown of Pittsburgh but also in Rome, where I was privileged to study and work for 18 years. Especially in the early years of the pontificate of Saint John Paul II, Rome was flooded with Poles passionate about freedom and the dignity of each life. I was always inspired to see their commitment not only to their faith but also to their country. Later, after my ordination, when I had the opportunity to serve Saint John Paul in the Vatican, I grew in my love for him and for the

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## Katowice's Climate Summit: A Minnesota Perspective

by Mark Dillon

For Minnesota architect Jesse Turck, the Katowice Climate Change Conference was not only an opportunity to network with global building design peers, but a chance to see his maternal grandfather's homeland for the first time.

Raised on a farm on rural Litchfield, Minn., the third generation Polish American was part of a 35-member Minnesota delegation who traveled to one of Silesia's most industrialized cities in early December. The group also included executives from retailers Target Corp. and Best Buy Inc. and a dozen graduate students from the University of Minnesota.

Reached shortly before a flight to Krakow via Frankfurt on Dec. 4, Turck said that, though it was unlikely he would get to see his family's ancestral Pomeranian villages near Kiedrowice in Bytow County, he was nonetheless looking forward to experiencing Polish culture.

"It's real. And it is happening now," Turck said of climate change. At the conference, Target, Best Buy and Best Buy were also representing Climate Generation, a Minnesota activist group founded in 2006 by polar explorer Will Steger after Steger learned that an Antarctic ice shelf he had traversed in a dog sled had melted into the ocean.

As an architect at Minneapolis' BWBR firm, Turck focuses on improving buildings to bolster energy efficiency, typically through creative use of materials, site design and improved insulation. Why? Some 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from the "urban built environment," with 39% from buildings, according to Architecture 2030, an industry website.

In Katowice, a coal-mining region still recovering from the environmental effects of misguided Communist-era central plan-

ning, some 22,000 delegates gathered at the United Nations-sponsored two week "COP24" conference.

The stated goal: agree on global planning and regulatory rules for signatories to the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to live by.

Polish COP24 conference President Michael Kurtyka opened the event with a call for inclusive dialogue that recognizes the difficult, financially expensive path that consumers and aging industrial areas are being asked to take to avoid permanent damage to the earth.

"Be ambitious. But be realistic. Be firm. But hold compromise in no less regard. Be focused. But dare to see and acknowledge another's perspective," Kurtyka asked delegates on Dec. 3. "Today we see the wave of optimism and global cooperation which carried us to and through Paris – crested, broke and now tumbling. The societies of the world don't seem to be as global minded as they appeared to be back then. Global cooperation is strained."

As Kurtyka delivered his talk, violent rioters in France were protesting a new 12 cent per gallon gasoline tax designed to reduce the country's hydrocarbon emissions. On Dec. 5, France suspended implementation of the tax for six months.

For U.S. delegates, the fact that the current White House has walked away from the Paris climate deal is "disappointing" but not fatal,



The Katowice climate change summit was the first visit to Poland for Jesse Turck, a third generation Polish American architect from Minnesota.

said Jacob Herbers, a University of Minnesota researcher at its Humphrey School of Public Affairs and head of the Minnesota delegation.

Herbers pointed to the We Are Still In "climate action coalition" U.S. activist group as evidence that some state-level public sector and private sector institutions are still willing to independently conform to directives voted upon in Katowice.

Target is the largest Minnesota-based company to be a party to *We Are Still In*, and Katowice delegate Alissa Mattheis Tamasi was sent as the company's business integration lead on climate matters. Other U.S. corporate participants and *We Are Still In* members at Katowice include Walmart, Microsoft and McDonalds.

In a video released before the conference, Mattheis Tamasi said Target has installed solar panels at 436 locations — mostly stores — with a goal of 500 locations by 2020. She also reiterated the retailer's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from its facilities by 25% from 2015 levels by 2025, first stated in October 2017.

"I am most excited to learn from the brightest and most ambitious leaders in climate," she said of Katowice in her video.

Delegates to the Katowice convention have only to look at the history of Silesia following the Versailles Peace Conference in the aftermath of World War I to see what can go wrong when the best and brightest world leaders decide one thing, and affected peoples think otherwise.

In 1919, negotiators at Versailles, in recreating an independent Poland, decided to allow voters to decide if areas surrounding Katowice and Upper Silesia should be part of Poland or Germany. A long, bitter and violent debate followed that included a series of three armed uprisings in the then ethnically mixed area between 1919 and 1921.



The Silesian Insurgents' Monument in Katowice is a 1967 monument to those who took part in the three Silesian Uprisings of 1919, 1920 and 1921, which aimed to make the region of Upper Silesia part of a newly independent Polish state. Designed by sculptor Gustaw Zemla and architect Wojciech Zabłocki, the wings symbolize the three uprisings. Some 2,500 Poles were hanged or shot by firing squad by the German military during the first conflict.

To settle the border dispute, the League of Nations stepped in 1922 and divided Silesia between Germany and Poland, allowing Germany to purchase coal from the region at a discount. Germany stopped buying Polish coal three years later, and the resulting energy policy debate set off a tariff war in the late 1920s between Germany and Poland. (Source: *The Rebirth of Poland* by Anna Cienciala).