



2008

# Kopernikana

The University of Michigan  
Copernicus Endowment



Brian Porter-Szőcs

## From the Director

We have particularly exciting news this year: starting in the fall, the University of Michigan will offer a bachelor's degree in Polish through our Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

The program, one of only a tiny handful in North America, will include 27 hours of coursework in Polish language, culture, history, and society. With distinguished faculty members like Bogdana Carpenter, Benjamin Paloff, Ewa Malachowska-Pasek, and Piotr Westwalewicz, the U-M Slavic Department has long enjoyed a reputation as one of the best Polish language programs in the country. When set alongside our broader offerings, including courses by 15 faculty members in seven different departments, this new BA degree provides further evidence that the University of Michigan is America's premier site for the study of Poland.

In addition to our regular courses and programs, we featured two special guests during the past academic year. In December, Agnieszka Graff visited Ann Arbor to lecture and participate in a symposium. In addition to her academic work in the field of cultural studies, Graff is a prominent journalist and one of the leaders of the women's rights movement in Poland today. She exemplifies the combination of activist, scholar, and public intellectual that remains characteristic of Poland, even as the country confronts new debates and challenges for the 21st century. In January we were honored to feature Neal Ascherson as the 2007–2008 Copernicus Lecturer. For decades Ascherson provided readers in Great Britain and the United States with news and analysis about Poland, publishing cogent and penetrating articles in a wide variety of newspapers and magazines. His 1988 book, *The Struggles for Poland*, remains one of the best short histories of that country available in English, and his reporting on the Solidarity movement throughout the 1980s was without equal. Two decades later, he continues to offer insightful analysis of Polish and European affairs, as he demonstrated in his well-received lecture at U-M.

Looking forward to the coming academic year, we are thrilled that the world-famous graphic artist Stasys Eidrigevičius will be delivering the 2008–2009 Copernicus Lecture and staging an exhibition of his work entitled *The Earth of Lithuania with the Wind of Warsaw*. Though born and educated in Lithuania, Stasys has made his career in Poland, thus embodying the tradition of multiculturalism that has so enriched the history of northeastern Europe that the Copernicus Endowment strives to promote.

Stasys Eidrigevičius



## Annual Copernicus Lecture

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS:

# Stasys Eidrigevičius Sept 8–Oct 17, 2008

Exhibition, lecture, and reception are free and open to the public.

### Exhibition

Mon, Sept 8–Fri, Oct 17  
*The Earth of Lithuania with the Wind of Warsaw*  
Institute for the Humanities Gallery, Institute for the Humanities, 202 S. Thayer St.  
Mon–Fri, 9 am–5 pm

### Copernicus Lecture

in the Penny W. Stamps Distinguished Visitors Series  
Thurs, Sept 11, 5 pm  
*My Road*  
Stasys Eidrigevičius, artist  
Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St.

### Opening Reception

Thurs, Sept 11, 6–8 pm  
Institute for the Humanities, 202 S. Thayer St.

Stasys Eidrigevičius, the artist more popularly known simply as “Stasys,” was born in Mediniskiai, Lithuania, in 1949. After earning degrees from the Kaunas College of Fine Arts and Crafts and the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, he relocated to Warsaw, Poland, where he established his reputation as a world-renowned artist. A master of many techniques as an illustrator, book cover designer, sculptor, painter, and photographer, Stasys is perhaps best known for his graphics and poster art. The unmistakable Stasys style, characterized by pierced bodies, grotesque demons, and masked faces, was shaped by a communist world in which people learned to hide who they really were and seek new, private identities. In the words of Ryszard Kapuściński, Stasys portrays seemingly demonic figures that “confirm the meaning of the world and look upon us with benevolence.” Stasys’s art conveys a full-range of human emotion even while focusing on ordinary objects—his photography, in particular, elaborates on the loss and preservation of everyday life by depicting common items in new ways.

Stasys has had over 60 solo exhibitions in 20 countries. His numerous awards include the Gold Plaque for children’s book illustration at the Biennial of Book Art in Brno, Czechoslovakia (1979); the Gold Medal at the International Biennial of Exlibris in Malbork (1980); the Grand Prix for book illustration in Barcelona, Spain (1986); the Grand Prix at the International Biennial of Posters in Lahti, Finland (1989); 3rd Prize at the International Biennial of Posters in Warsaw (1990); the Gold Medal at Toyama, Japan (1994); 1st Prize at the Biennial of Polish Poster in Katowice (1999); and the National Award in Arts, the most prestigious award offered by the Lithuanian Government (2001).

Stasys’s visit to the University of Michigan is a collaborative project of the Copernicus Endowment of the Center for Russian and East-European Studies, the Institute for the Humanities, and the School of Art & Design.



## A Recap of 2007–08

“...democracy has established itself in the collective consciousness as the re-masculinization of national culture...”



○ Agnieszka Graff discusses gender and nationalism in Poland.

December 5–6, 2007

### Feminist Author Agnieszka Graff at U-M

Agnieszka Graff, a scholar, activist, and author, critically examines those who are trying to define contemporary Poland. Her targets include the country's mainstream political, religious, and media elites, who are manipulating what it means to be Polish in ways that reinforce a very conservative approach to gender identity.

An assistant professor at the University of Warsaw's Center for American Studies, Graff presented a lecture on December 5 at U-M with the provocative title, "When the Virgin is Your Queen: Reflections on Gender and Nationalism in Poland." The next day she took part in a symposium called "New Lines of Tolerance and Intolerance in Europe," which touched on present-day attitudes on race, nationality, sexuality, and gender across the European continent. Her controversial book, *Świat Bez Kobiet: Pleć w Polskim Życiu Publicznym* (A World without Women: Gender in Polish Public Life) was published in 2001 and sparked a wide-ranging public debate on issues that had gone largely unexamined in Poland.

A conclusion Graff draws in her work is that Poland's "transition to democracy has established itself in the collective consciousness as the re-masculinization of national culture, supposedly feminized by state socialism." She said that the message being sent by the Polish right is that "Polish women, Polish mothers are true women ... not like in degenerate places like Germany, which is doomed because the women are not feminine enough."

As part of her concluding remarks, Graff showed photos of Warsaw's Equality Parade, which celebrates sexual, racial, and cultural diversity in Poland and its counter event, the Normality Parade, which she labeled as "Polish patriotism as celebration of heterosexuality."



Graff's controversial book *Świat Bez Kobiet: Pleć w Polskim Życiu Publicznym*

January 12, 2008

### Distinguished Lecture on Europe by Neal Ascherson

Scottish journalist and author Neal Ascherson delivered this year's EUC Annual Distinguished Lecture on Europe with a lyrical, wide-ranging talk entitled "Europe: Heir to the Ages or Pregnant Widow." The acclaimed writer-historian has written exhaustively about Polish and Eastern European affairs, including *The Polish August: The Self-Limiting Revolution* and *The Struggles for Poland*, which many consider the definitive primer on modern Polish history.

In his lecture, Ascherson talked about the evolution of Europe as a political entity, describing the European Union as "chaotic in purpose, confident in behavior." He said that the tragic flaw of reforms instituted since 1989 was "that they were not steered by democratic governments, but rather by market forces. Politicians don't feel like agents of change, and they are commonly identified as (parts of) dishonest cliques out to line their own pockets."

He said some newly democratized nations "plunged into the free market like going over Niagara in a barrel, Poland being a prime example. Some developed corrupt hybrids made up of grimy survivors of the nomenklatura, unreformed state sectors, and the secret police."

He finished his lecture by asking those in attendance to imagine Europe as a "gigantic, golden, beautiful sponge, inviting every creature to enter with each inhalation and exhalation... existing as a colony without frontier fences or tanks on the pavement."

“...chaotic in purpose, confident in behavior.”

○ Neal Ascherson discussed the EU and political change in Europe.



Ascherson's lecture can be heard on-line at [www.i.umich.edu/cas-euc/events/multimedia](http://www.i.umich.edu/cas-euc/events/multimedia).

February 11, 2008

### Michał Markowski

Michał Markowski, professor and chair, Department of International Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University, visited U-M and lectured on "Aesthetics and Existence: The Case of Bruno Schulz." His host was Benjamin Paloff.



Michał Markowski and Benjamin Paloff

## Faculty News

### Bogdana Carpenter Retires

On March 15, 2008, a special symposium was held in honor of Professor Bogdana Carpenter, who retired this spring from the U-M Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. A native of the Silesian region of Poland, Carpenter received an M.A. in Romance Philology from the University of Warsaw and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. She taught briefly at the University of Washington before coming to U-M in 1983. In her 25 years in Ann Arbor she taught classes on Polish literature from the middle ages to the present day, and helped turn the Slavic Department into a national center of innovative, interdisciplinary scholarship. Together with her husband, John Carpenter, she translated some of the greatest poets of modern Poland. Their work ranges from *Selected Poems of Zbigniew Herbert* (Oxford, 1977), to Julia Hartwig's *In Praise of the Unfinished* (Knopf, 2008). Her translations have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Paris Review*, *The New Yorker*, *The Manhattan Review*, *The Chicago Review*, and *The New York Review of Books*.

Bogdana Chępkowska Carpenter



### New Faculty: Benjamin Paloff

Added to the list of unique course offerings in Polish Studies was "Polish Literature in English: 1890 to the Present: No Other End of the World." The course was taught by Benjamin Paloff, a new U-M faculty member who completed his doctoral dissertation, a comparison of Polish, Czech, and Russian literatures, at Harvard in 2007.

Paloff, an accomplished poet, received an M.F.A. in poetry at U-M before returning to Harvard, where he did his undergraduate work. He received two Hopwood Awards for his writing and recently held a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship in Russia and Poland. He is a poetry editor for *Boston Review*, and his poems have appeared in *The New Republic*, *Paris Review*, *A Public Space*, *Diagram*, *Gulf Coast*, *The Modern Review*, and other publications.

Last fall, Paloff, who is originally from Atlantic City, New Jersey, began an assistant professorship at U-M in Slavic Languages and Literatures and Comparative Literature. He is also a postdoctoral fellow of the Michigan Society of Fellows.

### New Undergraduate Concentration in Polish

Starting in fall 2008, undergraduate students at the University of Michigan will be able to pursue bachelor's degrees in Polish in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. One of few such programs in the U.S., the new major requires two years of the Polish language to enter the program and completion of 27 hours of additional course work focused on Polish language, literature, culture, and history. U-M has one of the finest Polish language programs in the U.S., teaching four levels of Polish every year. Initiated by Bogdana Carpenter, professor of Polish at U-M from 1983–2008, the program gives students a unique opportunity to specialize and major in Polish. The Polish language and literature faculty currently includes Benjamin Paloff, assistant professor and postdoctoral scholar in the Michigan Society of Fellows, and lecturers Ewa Malachowska-Pasek and Piotr Westwalewicz. For more information about the new B.A. in Polish language and literature visit [www.lsa.umich.edu/slavic](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/slavic) or [www.lsa.umich.edu/crees/events/regionalprog/polish](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/crees/events/regionalprog/polish).

### Chopin Project Reaches Global Community

As the world's attention begins to focus on the Chopin Bicentennial in 2010, we are pleased to announce the launch of The Chopin Project, an online resource dedicated to promoting the discovery, research, and pure enjoyment of Fryderyk Chopin's keyboard works. Initiated by Arthur Greene, a professor of piano at the School of Music, Theater, and Dance, this project grew out of the enthusiastic response to last year's marathon series of recitals of Chopin's complete piano works by U-M students. Recordings of those performances are featured on the Chopin Project website, along with detailed entries about Chopin's solo keyboard works; notable quotations by and about Chopin; on-demand video performances; access to sheet music; further research and resources; performers' biographies and photos; the "Chopin Currency" (Chopin in the news); and much more. For more information, visit [www.chopinproject.com](http://www.chopinproject.com).



Benjamin Paloff, assistant professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Comparative Literature

## Student News

The recipient of the John J. Świdorski award for graduate research in Poland, **Alexandra Gerber** (sociology), is working on Poland's accession to the European Union and how ideas about national sovereignty and Polish national identity are changing as a result of European integration.

Copernicus Endowment summer research fellowships for 2008 were awarded to **Jessica Zychowicz** (Slavic languages and literatures) and **Iza Yue Ding** (junior, REES/Political Science). **Thomas Frank Michniacki**, a recent graduate in cognitive science, received the Annual Excellence in Polish Language Award.

**Wojciech Belkiewicz** (history), who received a Świdorski award last summer, traveled to Białystok, Warsaw, Smok, Przemysł, and Łwów gathering information on the history of Orthodoxy and Greek-rite Catholicism in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; **Paul Brykczynski** (history) is preparing for his prelims and beginning his dissertation research on anti-Semitism in interwar Poland; **Anna Cichopek** (history) is about to defend her dissertation on Jewish life in post-WWII Poland and Slovakia; **Sylvia Ejmont** (Comparative Literature) successfully defended her Ph.D. in April on the "poezja śpiewana" tradition in Poland during the 1970s and 1980s; **Alicja Kusiak-Brownstein** (history) has defended her prospectus and is now starting her dissertation research on images of femininity in 19th-century Polish culture; **Ray Patton** (history) will be in Poland in the coming academic year to do archival work on Polish rock and punk music in the 1980s; **Jessica Robbins** (anthropology) begins a research year in Wrocław and Poznań investigating changing national and state formations through the study of contemporary practices of memory; **Lenny Urena** (history) received a fellowship from the Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies and is putting the final touches on a dissertation that re-interprets 19th-century Polish-German relations in the light of European colonial ideologies.

The undergraduate student Polish Club's President, **Alicja Sobilo**, reports that the Club hopes to sponsor one student to go to the University of Lublin, Kraków, or Poznań for summer language and culture courses. "I had the opportunity to do so myself when I won the scholarship from the Polish Language School of Adam Mickiewicz in Sterling Heights," Sobilo says, "and I'd like to give that opportunity to others passionate about Poland's wonders."



Thomas Frank Michniacki, recipient of the Annual Excellence in Polish Language Award with Piotr Westwalewicz, lecturer in Slavic Languages and Literatures

## Obituary

### Professor Andrew Ehrenkreutz (1921–2008)

Professor Andrew Ehrenkreutz, University of Michigan professor emeritus, scholar, historian, political activist, and U-M football fan, passed away on April 6 in Melbourne, Australia. Born in 1921 in Warsaw, Dr. Ehrenkreutz belonged to the first generation of Poles raised in an independent Poland. He came from a distinguished, intellectual, patriotic, and civically-engaged family. His maternal grandfather was Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, a world-renown linguist and professor who was an unsuccessful candidate for president of the Polish Republic in 1922. His mother, Cezaria Baudouin de Courtenay Ehrenkreutz-Jedzejewicz, was one of the founders of the Polish School of Anthropology and a professor at the Universities of Wilno and Warsaw. Ehrenkreutz's father, Stefan Lukasz Ehrenkreutz, was the last prewar president of the University of Wilno, and served as a senator in the Polish Parliament. Like many of his cohort, Andrew Ehrenkreutz was engulfed by the outbreak of World War II. He served with the 1st Polish Grenadiers in France, and in 1940 was taken prisoner by the Germans on the front in Lorraine. After liberation, he was placed in a Displaced Persons Camp; in 1946, along with his wife Blandyna, whom he married in 1945, he joined his mother and stepfather in Palestine. There he became interested in the history of the Middle East, and he went on to complete a Ph.D. at the University of London's School of Oriental Studies.

In 1953 Ehrenkreutz accepted a post-doctoral fellowship at Yale University, and in the summer of 1954 he moved to Ann Arbor as a visiting lecturer in Islamic History at the University of Michigan. He remained at U-M, and from 1967–1985 he was a professor in both the Departments of Near Eastern Studies and History. In the 1960s, Ehrenkreutz became active in the Polish American Congress and its efforts on behalf of an independent Poland. In the 1970s, he was the co-founder of STUDIUM: The North American Studies Center for Polish Affairs, which became a leading source of information and support for the democratic opposition in Poland, and later, the newly-established Solidarity trade union. As President of STUDIUM, Ehrenkreutz carried the message of support for Polish dissidents and trade unionists to the State Department and the Congress. He issued policy white papers and participated in high-level diplomatic discussions. After immigrating to Australia, he founded the Australian Institute of Polish Affairs (AIPA) and was a key figure in Polish-Jewish dialogue.

While at U-M, in addition to pursuing his academic interests and responsibilities, Ehrenkreutz was also instrumental in helping Dr. Peter Ostafin establish the University's Copernicus Endowment that has brought world famous Polish intellectuals, scholars, and artists to Ann Arbor. Many of those Copernicus lecturers, including Leszek Kolakowski and Nobel Prize-winner Czesław Miłosz, were hosted at the Ehrenkreutz home, where local residents were given the opportunity to meet with them in an intimate social setting. Dr. Ehrenkreutz is survived by his son Stefan, daughter-in-law Carmel, and granddaughter Emilia in Australia. Memorial contributions may be made to the U-M Copernicus Endowment.



Professor Andrew Ehrenkreutz

Photo and obituary by Marian Krzyżowski.

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The Nicolaus Copernicus Endowment was established in 1973 to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the great Polish astronomer's multifaceted genius. Initially created with the cooperation of students, faculty, and the Polish-Americans of Michigan, the Copernicus Endowment is sustained today by the energy and financial assistance of hundreds of individual supporters. The principal goal of the Endowment is to enable faculty appointments, programming, and student fellowships in Polish studies. Income from the Endowment makes the Annual Copernicus Lecture possible, and ensures the continued scheduling of public events dedicated to advancing a deeper understanding of the people, culture, and politics of Poland.

### The Amelia Kulesa Konopka Endowment

This fund was established in 2001 by the family of Amelia Kulesa Konopka to improve knowledge of Poland's culture and history among undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students at the University of Michigan. In 1913 Mrs. Konopka came to the U.S. where she studied her new language and culture. These fellowships memorialize her quest for knowledge and her Polish heritage.

### The John J. Świdorski Fund

This fund was established in 1997 for the support of student research and travel abroad. We are grateful to Suzanne Świdorski Gruhl for her generous gift in honor of her father in support of this important fellowship program; we hope to make many John J. Świdorski awards available to worthy students in the coming years.

### The Annual Copernicus Lectures

Since 1980, the University of Michigan has hosted prominent political, cultural, and academic figures from Poland as part of the Annual Copernicus Lecture series. Prominent presenters in this series include Leszek Kolakowski, Czesław Miłosz, Stanisław Barańczak, Timothy Garton-Ash, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuron, Krzysztof Penderecki, Henryk Górecki, Krzysztof Zanussi, Ryszard Kapuściński, President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Kora Jackowska, Adam Zagajewski, Zbigniew Libera, Krzysztof Cyzewski, and many more. A complete list is available on the Copernicus website.

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2008

# Kopernikana

> **Annual Copernicus Lecture**

Stasys Eidrigevičius

Sept 8–Oct 17, 2008

See inside for details.