



# Kopernikana

THE COPERNICUS CENTER FOR POLISH STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**The Copernicus Center for Polish Studies (CCPS)** at the University of Michigan was established in 2019 after more than 40 years of activity and programs offered by the Nicolaus Copernicus Endowment. The endowment and a Polish program were launched in 1973 in cooperation with students, faculty, and the Polish Americans of Michigan who contributed generously with their time, energy, and financial assistance. CCPS continues the tradition today by supporting faculty, programs, and student fellowships in Polish studies. It also organizes the Annual Copernicus Lecture—established in 1980—which brings prominent academic, cultural, and political figures to campus to advance a deeper understanding of Poland’s people, culture, and history, as well as its growing influence in world academics, arts, and affairs.

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## Dear Friends,

Since February 24th, our hearts and minds have been turned toward Ukraine, fighting the Russian Federation’s attack on its sovereign state. CCPS stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and its democratically elected government, and is committed to provide programming to our students, faculty, and the Ann Arbor community that will shed light on the complexity of the war and its implications for Poland and the world.



Last winter, we hosted a lecture with **John A. Young** of the UN Refugee Agency about the refugee situation at the Polish-Belarusian border, and a talk with **Prof. Porter-Szűcs** on Polish society’s mobilization to welcome Ukrainian refugees. This year we will continue to pay close attention to the war raging at Poland’s borders. On September 13, CCPS and the Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia (WCEE) will host Solidarity leader, Nobel Peace Prize winner, and former President of Poland **Lech Wałęsa**, who will discuss the global impact of the war in Ukraine. Later that month, **Dr. Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz**, former Ambassador of Poland to the Russian Federation, will give a talk on “Poland as a Front-Line State: How to Defend Pax Europaea.”

CCPS is proud to collaborate with WCEE’s Scholars at Risk Program by funding a year-long fellowship for a Ukrainian scholar and her children. We trust the University and Ann Arbor will provide the peaceful home away from home scholars need to conduct their research and for their children to attend school, learn a new language, and make new friends.

I am pleased to announce that **Professor Łukasz Stanek** will join the Taubman College as a professor of architecture this fall and will be affiliated with CCPS. This latest addition confirms the status of CCPS as the premier center of Polish studies in North America, with faculty in architecture, comparative literature, history, sociology, Slavic languages and literatures, and music. Welcome, Professor Stanek!

Lastly, the Copernicus Endowment will commemorate its 50th anniversary in 2023, and we will mark this occasion with truly special events. We will kick off the year with a retrospective of **Wojtek Smarzowski**’s films at the Michigan Theater, including a visit by the acclaimed film director to deliver the 2023 Annual Copernicus Lecture.

As always, the Copernicus Center continues its core mission of supporting faculty research and Polish language instruction, and offering fellowships and internship opportunities for our students. Thank you for your loyal support. It is thanks to our enthusiastic and generous community that we are preparing to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

**Geneviève Zubrzycki, Director**

*Professor of Sociology*

## Fall 2022 Events

**Tue, Sep 13, 4-5:30 pm**

**WCEE Distinguished Lecture.** "Russia's War on Ukraine and Its Global Impact." **Lech Wałęsa**, President of Poland (1990-95). Rackham Amphitheatre, 915 E. Washington St.



**Thu, Sep 29, 4-5:30 pm CCPS Lecture.** "Poland as a Front-Line State: How to Defend Pax Europaea." **Katarzyna Pełczyńska-Nałęcz**, Polish Ambassador to Russia (2014-16), Director of Strategy 2050. Forum Hall, Palmer Commons, 100 Washtenaw Ave.

**Fri, Nov 4-Sun, Nov 6 29th Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival.** For films and tickets, see [annarborpolishfilmfestival.com](https://annarborpolishfilmfestival.com). Organizer: Polish Cultural Fund-Ann Arbor. State Theatre, 233 S. State St.

Visit [ii.umich.edu/polish/events](https://ii.umich.edu/polish/events) to register for our online events.

## Last Year in Review

**Wed Sep 22 Lecture.** "Translating Pan Tadeusz: A Conversation with Bill Johnston." **Bill Johnston**, Indiana University.

**Oct 3-7 Conference.** "What's New, What's Next? Innovative Methods, New Sources, and Paradigm Shifts in Jewish Studies."

**Oct 27 Lecture.** "The Carpathians: Discovering the Highlands of Poland and Ukraine." **Patrice Dabrowski**, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute.

**Nov 5-7 28th Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival.**

**Nov 17 Roundtable.** "Is a Polesit on the Horizon? Poland's Domestic Politics, Law, and the EU." **Marcin Menkes**, Warsaw School of Economics; **Sławomir Sierakowski**, Krytyka Polityczna; **Jarosław Szczepański**, University of Warsaw and Academy of Justice, Institute of Law. Moderator: **Geneviève Zubrzycki**, CCPS director.

**Jan 28 Lecture.** "Cuts: An Oral History of Transformation." **Aleksandra Leyk**, Educational Research Institute; **Joanna Wawrzyniak**, University of Warsaw.

**Feb 1-Apr 29 Exhibition.** "Fiddler on the Roof: A Story Told on Polish Posters."

**Feb 16 Roundtable.** "From There to Here: The Yiddish Origins and Cultural Travels of Fiddler on the Roof." **Mikhail Krutikov**, U-M; **Anita Norich**, U-M; **Karolina Szymaniak**, University of Wrocław. Moderator: **Geneviève Zubrzycki**, CCPS director.

**Feb 18 Lecture.** "Refugee Crises in Contemporary Europe, From the English Channel to the Polish-Belarusian Border." **John A. Young**, Head of the Protection Learning Unit in Budapest, UNHCR; **Geneviève Zubrzycki**, CCPS director.

**Mar 7 Annual Copernicus Lecture.** "Art, Museums, and Politics in Poland: A Conversation with Anda Rottenberg." **Anda Rottenberg**, art historian, critic, writer, and curator.

**Mar 16 Lecture.** "How to Write History from Below and Why it Matters: A Conversation with Adam Leszczyński about His People's History of Poland." **Adam Leszczyński**, journalist, sociologist, and historian.

**Apr 10 Film.** *The Wedding Day* (Wesele). **Wojciech Smarzowski**, director.





### Faculty News

**Anna Muller** (History, UM-Dearborn) published *Przetrwąć. Życ Dalej. Rozmowy z więźniarkami z Europy Środkowej 1945-1956* (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich, PAN, 2022). She is the recipient of the 2021 Ludwik Krzyżanowski Award for best article published in the *Polish Review* in 2020 from The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.

**Ewa Pasek** (Slavic) spent a month in Kraków working on a new translation as part of the “Found in Translation” award. The “Translator in Residence” program was founded in 2008 by The Polish Book Institute. She continues to serve as a board member of the North American Association of Teachers of Polish.



**Mackenzie Pierce** (Musicology) published “Messianism Refigured: Tadeusz Zygfryd Kassern’s Musical Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising” in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, and “Global Chopin: The 1949 Centenary and Polish Internationalism during the Early Cold War,” in *The Journal of the American Musicological Society*.

**Endi Poskovic** (Art & Design) exhibited at Artlink in Fort Wayne, Indiana. *Primavera: Hagar and the Angels in the Wilderness* from Dream Series, which he started at Jan Matejko Academy as a 2015-16 Fulbright Scholar in Kraków, was selected from over 500 entries for the Juror’s First Prize.



**Łukasz Stanek** (Architecture) was appointed professor of architecture at the Taubman College. He is a senior fellow at the Maria Sibylla Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa, University of Ghana, Legon. His publications include *Henri Lefebvre on Space: Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011) and *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton University Press, 2020), which won the Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion by the SAH GB and the RIBA President’s Award for History & Theory Research.

**Piotr Westwalewicz** (Slavic) presented “Strategies for Improving Student Engagement and Performance in Polish Language Classes during the Plague but Not Only” at AATSEEL 2022 / NAATPI Round Table.

**Geneviève Zubrzycki** (Sociology) was awarded the 2021 Bronisław Malinowski Award from the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America for her “widely-recognized research contributions to the social sciences, particularly as they relate to Poland and East-Central Europe.” In July, she published her third monograph, *Resurrecting the Jew: Nationalism, Philosemitism, and Poland’s Jewish Revival* (Princeton University Press, 2022).

## In Memoriam **Zdzislaw Najder** (1930-2021)

Some teachers have lives as affecting as the courses they teach. Such was Professor Najder, a world-famous expert on Joseph Conrad, a former director of Polish Radio Free Europe, and a man unjustly barred from his country. Professor Najder introduced us to the often arresting, complex, and philosophical novels by Borowski, Kosinski, Gombrowicz, Konwicki, Lem, and, naturally, Conrad. Many works contained the dual themes of survivor's guilt and the duty to bear witness. The haunting human condition on raw display. Professor Najder guided our young minds and impressionable hearts through them all. We built new mental passageways to connect to allegory and satire, and internal padded cupboards to shelve grief and loss. His course set my curiosity on a pathway to not only travel to Poland but to continue to read Polish literature long after class ended.

— Tribute written by **Emily Cunningham** (BA Economics '89)

### Student News

*Copernicus Master's Fellowship (2021-22):*

**Arina Vlasova**, MA MIRS-REEES;  
**Christopher Chorzepa**, JD Law.

*Excellence in Polish Language Award*

(2021-22): **Michele Jennings**, BA English;  
**Emma Peplinski**, BA Astronomy & Astrophysics.



**Michele Jennings** is a junior English major and Polish minor with a lifelong fascination for Poland. She received a 2022-23 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship and will take courses to enhance her understanding of Polish literature and culture. **Emma Peplinski** is currently working towards a major in astronomy and astrophysics and a minor in Polish.



*Copernicus/Slavic Polish Language Scholarships (2021-22):*

**Jack Chycinski**, BA LSA;  
**Caroline Freel**, BA Creative Writing-Literature; **Jakub Hann**, BA LSA; **Michele Jennings**, BA English; **Olivia Milosevich**, BA LSA; **Kendal Nelson**, BA LSA; **Emma Peplinski**, BA Astronomy & Astrophysics; **Kate Rozanski**, BSE Biomedical Engineering; **Dominika Urbaniak**, BA LSA; **Peyton Wadley**, BA LSA; **Maxwell Zarzycki**, BA LSA.

*Copernicus Summer Grants (2022):* **Lucjan Rostkowski**, MArch Architecture; **Ekaterina Olson Shipyatsky**, PhD Political Science.

*Amelia Kulesa-Konopka Fellowship (2022):* **Jakub Hann**, BA LSA.

The 2022 Alfred G. Meyer Prize for the best undergraduate essay in Russian, East European, and Eurasian studies went to **Ziqian Zheng** for his senior thesis in history, entitled "Reimagining the Communist World: China and the 1956 Polish-Hungarian Crises."

Kudos to **Joseph Blattert** and **Paulina Buchta**, who graduated with majors in Polish from the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures!

Congratulations to **Margaret Dominic**, **Sarah Gondek**, **Ewelina Papiez**, and **Kami Ziolkowski**, who graduated with minors in Polish from the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures!



### U-M Polish Student Association

The University of Michigan Polish Student Association is a student-run organization with the mission to promote Polish culture on campus. They bring together Polish students, citizens, and their friends by organizing a wide variety of social and cultural events throughout the year such as Andrzejki, Wigilia, conversation nights,

cooking nights, and much more! The PSA hosted the Wolverine Ball, their annual event that includes dinner, dancing, performance, and a silent auction. This year's Wolverine Ball raised \$1,500 for Habitat for Humanity: Huron Valley! As in past years, the PSA co-sponsored the Ann Arbor Polish Film Festival.

## Polish-Jewish Fellowships

Destroyed by the Nazis and suppressed by the communists, Jewish life in Poland was revived in the 1990s. It is again threatened by a new wave of anti-Semitism and legislation that restrict research and speech on the Holocaust. Given the urgent need to protect and encourage research in the history of Polish Jewry and the Holocaust in Poland, CCPS seeks to host researchers, NGO leaders, and Jewish activists whose activities are curtailed by the current government and the overall socio-political climate. CCPS has a strong program that captures Polish-Jewish culture; history; and problems of populism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism; as well as partnerships with institutions such as U-M's Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. We hope to fund one- to three-month research visits to U-M by Polish scholars, journalists, and artists whose work is targeted by the "Holocaust law." Visiting fellows will share their work with U-M faculty and students as well as with local communities and take advantage of our extensive library resources, writing workshops, and networking opportunities.

### Alumni News

**Alena Aniskiewicz** (PhD Slavic '19) accepted a position as assistant professor in the Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University. She published "Baking Bread and Burning Rainbows: Mister D., Hip-Hop, and the Critical Sampling of Polish Culture" in the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, and contributed writing on Polish literature and popular culture to Culture.pl.

**Paulina Duda** (PhD Slavic '16) accepted a position as visiting assistant professor at Brown University, where she teaches Polish

language and courses on Eastern Europe. She received an award from the North American Association of Teachers of Polish for her online project "Polish Language and Culture through Film," and was a guest panelist at the Kosciuszko Foundation's "Perspectives of Poland" webinar. Paulina also welcomed her second son, Gustaw.

**Erica Lehrer** (PhD Anthropology '04) published "Materiality and Holocaust Memory: Activating and Theorizing Poland's Unquiet Places" in *Jewish Quarterly Review*.

## Celebrating Marysia Ostafin

**M**arysia Ostafin, long-time administrator and executive director of the Copernicus Endowment (now the Copernicus Center for Polish Studies), retired from the University of Michigan in 2021. Among her many successes was the historic conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Polish Round Table talks that led to the collapse of communism in Poland, earning her the Cross of Service Award from the Polish Government. To honor her service to the university and dedication to the advancement of Polish studies, 50 individual donors contributed \$12,050 to the Copernicus Endowment! This is such a fitting tribute to Marysia, a tireless supporter of Polish studies and notable donor in her own right.



## To Our Donors

In 2021, 90 donors contributed a total of **\$89,434** to the Copernicus Endowment. Thank you for your generosity and ongoing support for Polish Studies at the University of Michigan!

A gift to the **Amelia Kulesa Konopka Endowment** was made in memory of Amelia E. Konopka Merry. This endowment was established in 2001 by the family of Amelia Kulesa Konopka to improve knowledge of Poland's culture and history among U-M students and memorialize her quest for knowledge and her Polish heritage.

*In accordance with guidance from the Office of University Development, we are no longer including donor honor rolls in our publications. Your important donations support the critical work of the Copernicus Center for Polish Studies, and directly support our public programming and student and scholarly research.*

**Estate Planning:** Create your own Polish legacy at U-M by learning about the different giving options available to you. The University will work with you to find a charitable plan that lets you provide for your family and the future of CCPS. For more information, go to: [plannedgiving.umich.edu](https://plannedgiving.umich.edu)

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