



## LEISURE ... BOOKS, PLAYS, MUSIC, CONCERTS

### Verdehr Trio At Kosciuszko Foundation, March 1

**NEW YORK** - The Verdehr Trio returns to the Kosciuszko Foundation Sunday, March 1 at 3 PM, with music of Mozart, Fanny Mendelssohn, and New York composer Lee Hoiby, among others. Tickets are \$25, including a reception and discussion with the artists, and can be reserved by calling the Foundation Office at (212) 734-2130.

An acknowledged leader in the field of new music, the Verdehr Trio for over thirty years has concentrated on works for their unusual violin-clarinet-piano ensemble. Over the years, the Trio has created a large repertoire by commissioning over 160 new works from some of the world's most prominent and exciting composers - known and unknown, young and old, from this



country and abroad. To round out its repertoire with Classical and Romantic works, the Trio has rediscovered as well as transcribed 18th and 19th century pieces for inclusion in its concert programs. The Verdehr Trio is in residence at Michigan State University. Their website is [www.verdehr.com](http://www.verdehr.com).

The next event in the Foundation's Chamber Music series is a concert by the Adaskin String Trio, with oboist Tom Gallant, on Sunday, April 26.

For information about the Kosciuszko Foundation and its many programs, call (212) 734-2130 or visit [www.thekf.org](http://www.thekf.org).

### The Gizmo Guys To Perform At Bergen Community College

**NEW JERSEY** - The Gizmo Guys, a comedy juggling act who has amazed audiences around the world, comes to Bergen Community College on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre at the College, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$8 for children 17 and under.

The Gizmo Guys appeal to audience members of all ages with their rapid-fire act that exhilarates and inspires sidesplitting laughter. They have performed for more than a million people, and have won international juggling competitions and taught at top circus schools. Their combination of dazzling technique and infectious humor, highlighted by original routines and quick-witted verbal repartee offers a light-hearted approach to the art of juggling. The New York Times refers to their show as "Virtuosity with a touch of lunacy."

The performance is part of Bergen Community College's "This & That from Here & There" Performing Arts Series. For ticket information or for a full schedule of events, please call Bergen's Office of Community and Cultural Affairs at (201) 447-7428 or visit them on the Web at [www.bergen.edu/cca](http://www.bergen.edu/cca)



### NJ Choral Society presents "A Night at the Oscars"

**NEW JERSEY** - Let the New Jersey Choral Society entertain you with "A Night at the Oscars," a rousing montage of music inspired by the Silver Screen spanning 75 years of Hollywood movies. Academy Award-nominated and Oscar-winning songs will be featured in concerts, under the direction of dynamic conductor Eric Dale Knapp, on Saturday, February

28 at 8:00 pm and Sunday, March 1 at 3:00 pm in the Emil A. Cavallini Middle School, 392 West Saddle River Road, Upper Saddle River.

Highlights of the program include "Hooray for Hollywood" from the 1937 film **Hollywood Hotel**, "Lullaby of Broadway" from **Gold Diggers of 1935**, "Pennies from Heaven" from the 1936 movie of the same name, "Over the

Rainbow" from the classic film **The Wizard of Oz**, and "That Old Black Magic" from the Paramount Picture **Star Spangled Rhythm**. Films from the 50's and 60's also inspired such memorable songs as "Mona Lisa" from **Captain Carey U.S.A.**, "That's Amore" from **The Caddy**, the stirring "Moon River" from the

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### Sibling Prodigies In Concert

**NEW JERSEY** - On Sunday, March 1, 2009, the Polish Cultural Foundation will have the honor of presenting Ania and Piotr Filochowski an accomplished brother and sister pair of violin prodigies. The Filochowski's are currently studying at the Juilliard School of Music in New York City under the guidance of Maestro Itzhak Perlman who personally invited them both to participate in his program. Having made their orchestral debuts at ages 10 and 11 respectively, both have played in the National Philharmonic of Warsaw, the Carnegie Hall series "From the Top" and numerous European and American competitions. Ania was named "Personality of the Year" by Polish National Radio in 2005 and recently Piotr claimed first prize at the at The William Choral Performing Arts Competition.

On stage, the two create an intriguing vision as Piotr stands tall and upright, exuding confidence as he elegantly moves his fingers and his bow with a steely precision. Ania, meanwhile, gently sways to and fro as the music effortlessly carries her fingers over the strings of her instrument. Looking at her it feels as though the emotion of the music is not coming from her violin but rather from somewhere within her. Their performance creates a brilliant contrast and has much of the playfulness that one would expect from siblings on stage at the same time.

The concert begins at 3:30 PM and we will be treated to selections from Mozart, Bach, Brahms and Sarasate among others. Mr. Ivan Solomon will provide accompaniment for the concert. Tickets are priced very reasonably and children under 12 are free of charge. As the Fall 2007 Concert with Ania and Piotr was a great success, we suggest that you contact the office at (732) 382-7197 to reserve your seats as soon as possible. The Polish Cultural Foundation is located at 177 Broadway, in Clark, N.J. [www.polishculturalfoundation.org](http://www.polishculturalfoundation.org)



## Polish Literature (GAINED, NOT LOST) IN TRANSLATION

By

Ewa Bronowicz

**ANDRZEJ SZCZYPIORSKI**  
**Self-Portrait with Woman**  
**(Autoportret z kobieta)**  
*Translated from Bill Johnston*

252pp. Grove Press, New York. \$12.00



### History's Broken Mirror

If *World Literature Today* was right—that "with the publication of *Self-Portrait with Woman*, Szczypiorski has set new standards for modern Polish fiction"—then those standards, regrettably, are not high enough. However, if you take the novel for what it is, and read it without any record-setting adjectives in mind, then you may actually enjoy it.

My only recommendation would be to somehow avoid glancing at the front and back covers, both promising much more than the content of the novel could ever fulfill.

That Andrzej Szczypiorski (1924-2000), a Polish novelist and politician, would set to write about his country's turbulent events that happened during his lifetime comes as no surprise, considering that the author himself was a participant in the Warsaw Uprising and as a prisoner in a concentration camp. That he does it quite creatively and with a language that can sometimes pierce right through you with its lyricism cannot be denied either. In *Self-Portrait with Woman*, published in 1994, Karol decides to talk about recent Polish history through reminiscing about the numerous women he's had in his life. He is invited to Geneva as one of the participants of an oral-history project about the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, and gradually reveals his past to a female interviewer, Ruth Gless. His past, as one would expect, includes being both the receiver and the giver of inhumane behavior during the war as well as the time he spent as a prisoner of war, and the inevitable loss of loved ones. However, Kamil is unwilling to open up about the communal tragedies and instead takes refuge in giving endless accounts of his love affairs with, more often than not, married women. When the man in charge of the project, Mr. Gaunting, expresses dissatisfaction with the collected material and insists that Kamil talk more of the political and less of the personal, Kamil bursts out, "You share the view, universal here, that people such as me, who have been ground in the merciless mills of totalitarian regimes, have through that torment come to enjoy some kind of extraordinary wealth of their inner lives." Kamil calls this view a delusion, and his decision to omit the details of his life in a concentration camp and to instead stuff his story with detailed descriptions of his desire for Kasia or Beata seems to stem from the protagonist's animosity against the West, from his desire to rebel against the fixed and romanticized notions that West Europeans and Americans share about East Europeans. Despite Kamil's convincing argument, we sense that he has a secret that would blend politics and love into one, a compromise between Europe divided in two. We await this secret impatiently, but the momentum never comes, leaving us, too, and perhaps purposefully so, unsatisfied.

Another question that remains unanswered is about the relationship between Karol and Ruth, who, unsurprisingly, is married. As Ruth attentively listens to Kamil's stories, his attitude towards Ruth changes capriciously from resentment to fascination to love. Since the novel is written in the third-person close narration and occasionally switches to Kamil's first-person streams of consciousness, we can only see Ruth through Karol's prism, and somehow she never becomes a real person. Instead, she represents an image of a woman who loves Kamil and whom Kamil loves back. Kamil believes that she "saved him from memory," but if that's the case, then they should all live happily ever after, which they don't.

Any questions or comments for Ewa...

You can contact her by visiting her website: [www.literatka-nyc.com](http://www.literatka-nyc.com)



**Polish American  
Cultural Center**  
308 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
(215) 922-1700

When You're in Philadelphia's  
Historic District Visit The  
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Museum Exhibit Hall**  
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**Open 10 AM to 4 PM**  
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**Monday to Saturday**

Gift Shop is Open During  
**Regular Exhibit Hall Hours**

**Closed on Holidays**

**Visit the Polish American Cultural Center Museum  
on the Internet at: [www.PolishAmericanCenter.org](http://www.PolishAmericanCenter.org)**

Featured on the web site are brief outlines of Great Men and Women of Polish Heritage, information about Polish customs and traditions, and information about organizations and activities in the Polish American Community.

