



# Kosciuszko Foundation

An American Center for Polish Culture Since 1925

## Newsletter Spring 2009

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*"Always remember that by nature, we are all equals, that riches and education constitute the only difference."*

~TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO  
SEPTEMBER 15, 1792

Join us for the  
**KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION DINNER AND BALL**

Saturday, April 25, 2009

at the world famous Waldorf=Astoria

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# From the President and Executive Director

**A**S THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION I have to find ways to attract a new generation of members, donors, volunteers and scholars to our cause while also honoring those who paved the way for us in creating The American Center for Polish Culture. Our founder, Stephen Mizwa, wrote in his memoirs that he had “a good idea,” when he founded the Kosciuszko Foundation in 1925. He made it clear that his goal was to educate Poles and improve relations between Poland and the United States, but lamented: “all the principles of Economics, Money and Banking courses that I was teaching did not tell me how to ask people for money for which they would not receive anything in return.”

This remains the foundation’s greatest quandary today. What are we selling? The answer: Patriotism, Scholarship, and Polish Culture – love for the old country infused with the American Dream. The buyers are not investing in their own future, but rather the future of Polish scholars seeking a ride the collegiate merry-go-round and a chance to grab the brass ring. But once they grasp that ring, (a scholarship and a career), and they get off that carousel, we have to convince them to help pay for the next generation to take that ride.

For the Foundation to flourish, it must ensure that this circle of scholarship, commerce and goodwill continues to circulate between Poland and the United States.

Because of the Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship that I received in 1985 I was able to earn a master’s degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. While most of my journalism career focused on issues in New York and the United States, in recent years I began feeling a calling to write more about Polish issues in newspapers like the *New York Daily News*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The New York Sun*, *am-NewYork* and other papers. I wrote articles about Kosciuszko, Pope John Paul II, Andrzej Wajda, Lech Walesa, Irena Sendler, Lech Kaczynski, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Poland’s exclusion from the Visa Waiver Program, and the Special Forces command unit – GROM. I even flew to Iraq to write a story about the Polish troops that ran the multinational zone in the desert.

Last year I wrote a chapter for the book *Catholics in New York* called “From Serfdom To Freedom: Polish Catholics Find a Refuge.” And in April, St. Martin’s Press will publish my book, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*.

Many of my journalist friends make fun of me for being so proud that I’m Polish. I can’t help it. The history of our people is so fascinating and noble. Poland had the first written democratic constitution in Europe, the second in the world only to that of the United States. And for centuries, it was the most tolerant society in Europe, giving religious freedom for Catholics,

Protestants, Orthodox Christians, Jews and Muslims. So nothing upsets me more when I hear misrepresentations of Polish history.

When I read the words “Polish concentration camps” in American newspapers, I cringe. That is why when I read an Op-Ed in the *Washington Post* that made it seem like the Poles built Auschwitz, I wrote a letter to the editor which the paper published on Feb. 14, 2009.

## The Washington Post

### *Death Camps in Poland*

*Richard Cohen, writing about the Holocaust [“Dithering Before a Denier,” op-ed, Feb. 10], perpetuated a common misstatement in calling Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec and Majdanek “Polish camps.”*

*This is incorrect. They were German concentration camps in which Jews were horribly murdered by the army of Hitler’s Third Reich. Jews were at the top of Hitler’s hit list, but Poles were right behind. Nearly 3 million Polish Catholics were killed in World War II, many of them in the very camps that Cohen wrote about.*

*Calling them “Polish camps” is so offensive to Poles that in 2007 UNESCO changed the name of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp to “Auschwitz Birkenau. German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945).” The Post should banish this term from its pages.*

*-- Alex Storozynski  
New York, The writer is president and executive director of the Kosciuszko Foundation.*

And when Pennsylvania Sen. Arlen Specter told Polish jokes, I wrote a letter to him as well.

Poles should hold their heads high because the ideals of freedom and tolerance are strong in our history. Our namesake, Kosciuszko was one of the most tolerant souls in history, standing up for the rights of African-American slaves, European serfs, Jews and Native American Indian tribes. The fact that our foundation is named in honor of Kosciuszko is no accident. On Sept. 15, 1792, Kosciuszko wrote to his sister Anna ... "always remember that by nature, we are all equals, that riches and education constitute the only difference."

During his years in exile in France and Switzerland, Kosciuszko dedicated the rest of his life to educational issues for Polish peasants, schoolchildren and American slaves. In his late sixties, he was ordered by his doctor to keep in shape so he rode his horse through the neighboring towns searching for poor people that had befallen tragedies such as fire, floods, or crop failures. He asked local ministers and magistrates to guide him to the most needy people so he could help out and give them what little money he had left.

Kosciuszko got it right. And so did Mizwa. Our mission is to educate Poles, who can in turn succeed

in their chosen careers and make more money and help to educate more Poles. It is a

paign so that we can continue to give out scholarships and hold events promoting Polish arts, language and culture.

At the very least, I urge all members of the foundation to attend the glamorous ball that we are holding this year on April 25 at the Waldorf Astoria. We also need individuals and businesses to take out ads in the ball journal to raise money that goes directly to help pay for the foundation's operating costs such as electricity, heat, phones, internet connections, insurance on the foundation's paintings, the alarm system, etc.

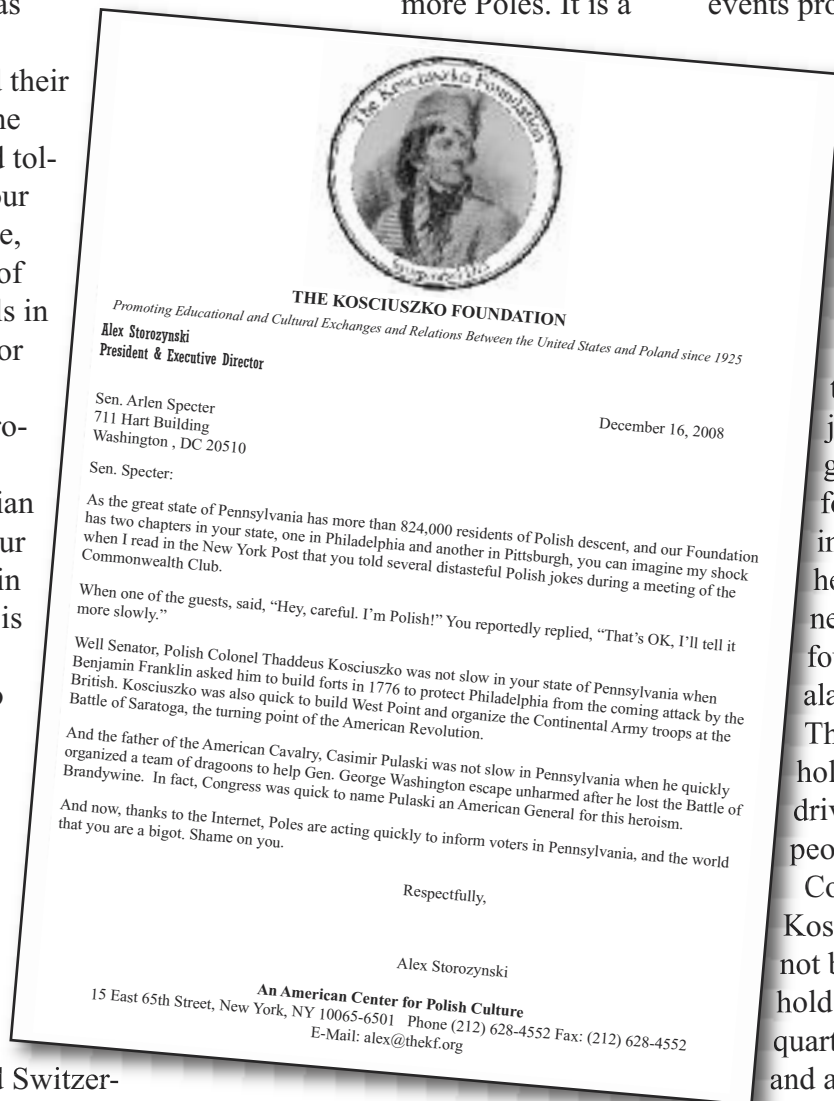
The foundation will also hold a major membership drive to reach out to young people.

Continuing the work of the Kosciuszko Foundation will not be easy. We would like to hold more events at our headquarters on East 65th Street and award more scholarships and cultural grants to worthy

scholars and artists. But to do so we must hold more fund raising events and reach out to different sectors of Polonia and America. With your help in obtaining gifts, donations and bequests, the foundation will be able to modernize its operations, computer, Internet and telecommunications infrastructure and continue its role as the American Center for Polish Culture in the United States.

I thank you for your support, and look forward to seeing you at this year's ball.

*Alex Storozynski*



circle that we have entered, and we must make sure that this carousel keeps turning, and churning out more scholars who can come back to help the foundation.

We must also keep scholarship recipients in that circle, either as members, contributors or mentors to new scholars through a Kosciuszko Foundation Alumni Network.

Bequests and gifts have always been the foundation's largest source of funding, but in these tough times they have been sporadic and the foundation needs to begin a major fundraising cam-

## Kosciuszko Foundation Offers Prizes for World War II Essay Contest

The Kosciuszko Foundation and the Polish Army Veterans Association of America have teamed up to offer prizes for the best essay written by an American student between ages 18 and 22 on the worldwide significance of the 1939 invasion of Poland.

The Polish Army Veterans Association District 2 will fund the first prize of \$2,000 and the Kosciuszko Foundation will offer the second prize of \$1,000.

Kosciuszko Foundation President Alex Storozynski said, "With the 70th anniversary of World War II approaching, the Kosciuszko Foundation wants to encourage students to study and comment about the events of 1939 that changed the lives of their parents and grandparents. Many of these Polish-American students were born in America because their forefathers were refugees from a horrible war waged on humanity by the Nazi dictator of Germany, Adolf Hitler, and the dictator of the Soviet Union Jozef Stalin."

PAVA District 2 Commander Antoni Chroscielowski, a decorated World War II veteran who served in Gen. Anders Army and fought at Monte Cassino, said, "It is important for Polish-American students to study the history of their homeland. Poland is now free, but it took decades of struggle against the Nazis, and then the Communists to get to where we are today."

World War II was the deadliest war in history. Approximately 6 million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust by the German SS Einsatzgruppen commandos and in German Nazi concentration camps. Three million Polish Catholics were also killed in that war, and by some estimates, 70 million soldiers and civilians were killed during the reign of terror begun by Hitler and Stalin. After the war, the map of Europe was redrawn and millions of refugees were forced from their homes.

The contest will be spearheaded by Maria Szonert-Binienda, Esq., with co-judges Professor Donald E. Pienkos, University of Wisconsin, and Professor Thaddeus V. Gromada, President of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.

For more information call: (330) 666-7251.



## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

THE KOSCIUSZKO FOUNDATION is looking for volunteers to help organize events to raise awareness of Polish history and culture, and to raise money to provide scholarships for Poles, Polish-Americans and anyone interested in learning more about Poland's rich 1,000 year history. We would like to plan ski trips, radio and television telethons, antique auctions, a 10-K run, tennis tournament, golf outings, beach parties, student get-togethers, and a sailing regatta.

The Foundation is also planning an Imieniny, or Name's Day celebration for October 28, to honor Tadeusz Kosciuszko.

On Oct 28, 1792, the name's day for Tadeusz, Prince Czartoryski held a party at the Sieniawa Palace for Kosciuszko. Russia had just crushed Poland's army, outlawed the May 3 Constitution and banned the Virtuti Militari medals given to Polish heroes. The officers who received this medal sent the blue ribbons from these orders to their wives and girlfriends. At the party for Kosciuszko, women wore white dresses with black and azure sashes and tied their hair into ponytails with the ribbons from the medal. The women also made a garland crown on Kosciuszko's head made from branches and leaves from an oak tree planted 100 years earlier by King Sobieski.

The Kosciuszko Foundation will commemorate this event, inviting women to wear white dresses, and the honoree each year should wear a garland crown of oak leaves.

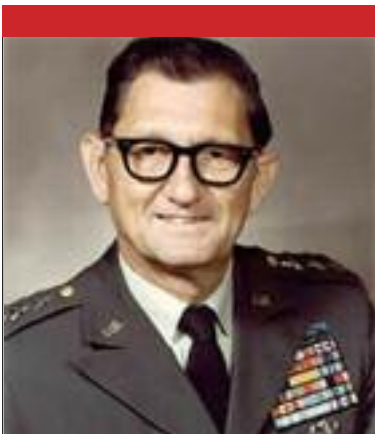
New York City Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe (right) visited the Foundation to view the artwork and discuss events that promote Poland and the Foundation and could be held in the parks. Alex Storozynski at left.



**To Volunteer at the KF  
Call 212-734-2130**

# The KF Alumni Hall of Fame:

Your donations at work, paving the ways for Polonia's next leaders



**"I was awarded a Kosciuszko Foundation Scholarship in 1936 to study at the Jagiellonian University. During my studies and travels in Europe, especially at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, I was struck by the fervor of the Nazis. Convinced that war was imminent, I entered the United States Military Academy in 1937. After graduating in 1941, I served in three wars and in 1979 retired from the U.S. Army as a lieutenant general. In 1981 I became the chief negotiator of START (Strategic Arms Reductions Talks) with the rank of Ambassador. From 1985 to 1991 I was special advisor to the President for arms control. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the Kosciuszko Foundation for embarking me upon my subsequent military and civilian careers."**

***Lt. General Edward Rowny, U.S. Army, (Ret)***  
~ Graduate of  
West Point, 1941  
~ Rep. Joint Chiefs for  
SALT II, Geneva,  
1973-1979

The contributions that you and previous members have made to the Kosciuszko Foundation have provided scholarships for thousands of students, many of who reached the top of their fields. These grants have been used to educate Polish and Polish-American doctors, lawyers, economists, journalists, professors, historians, actors, musicians, painters, directors, and scholars that have achieved worthy goals in their chosen academic fields. Many of these grant recipients have brought glory to Polonia and Poland and changed the face of our world.

We are pleased to announce the establishment of the Kosciuszko Foundation Hall of Fame where we will highlight the achievements of some of these past winners to show the impact that your generous gifts can have.

Eighteen-year old Edward Rowny received a Kosciuszko Foundation Scholarship in 1936 to study at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. When he traveled to the Berlin Olympics that year, he was shocked by the aggressive attitude of the Nazis. After his studies in Poland, he returned to the United States and enrolled at the United States Military Academy at West Point, which had been built during the American Revolution by Thaddeus Kosciuszko.

After graduating, Ed Rowny became an officer, commanding troops in World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars, before rising to the rank of Lt. General. During the 1970s, he served three Presidents as the representative to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Soviet Union in Geneva. In 1981 he became the chief negotiator of START (Strategic Arms Reductions Talks) with the rank of Ambassador. From 1985 to 1991 he was special advisor to the President for arms control.

In 1973, twenty-six year old Leszek Balcerowicz arrived in New York from Poland and received a grant to work on his MBA at St. John's University. He returned to Poland with his knowledge of capitalism and worked for the Polish government, eventually becoming an economics advisor to the Solidarity trade union. After the collapse of Communism, Balcerowicz became the chief architect of Poland's shock therapy transformation to capitalism.

Mr. Balcerowicz served his country as the Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister of Poland and President of the National Bank of Poland. In 2005 he was awarded his country's highest decoration, the Order of the White Eagle. Today he lectures at the Warsaw School of Economics and is chairman of Bruegel, a European think tank.

For their contributions to the United States and Poland, the Kosciuszko Foundation inducts them into our Alumni Hall of Fame.



**"Thanks to a Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship, I was able to earn my MBA at St. John's University in the 1970s, which proved to be an important step in my future professional and public life."**

***Leszek Balcerowicz***  
~ Architect of Poland's  
"Shock Therapy"  
transformation from  
Communism to  
Capitalism.  
~ Former President of  
the National Bank of  
Poland  
~ Finance Minister  
~ Treasury Secretary  
~ Deputy Prime Minister  
~ Currently Professor  
at the Warsaw School  
of Economics.

## Bankers' Cocktails With NBP President

President of the National Bank of Poland, Sławomir Skrzypek met with Polish-American leaders and bankers on February 27 at a cocktail party at the Kosciuszko Foundation where he spoke about the economic situation in Poland.

The assembled guests included bankers from Wall Street's top firms, and Mr. Skrzypek told them that Poland's economy still stands out in Eastern Europe. Despite the worldwide financial slowdown, Mr. Skrzypek said his nation's economy is doing relatively well. Poland's economy grew by 2.9 percent in the last quarter of 2008. While that was still ahead of many European countries, it was down from the fourth quarter of 2007 when the Polish economy grew by 6.5 percent.



**Sławomir Skrzypek, President  
of the National Bank of Poland**

Poland's National Bank has also issued a series of coins to commemorate the arrivals of the first Poles to North America more than 400 years ago. The first Polish settlers in the United States landed in Jamestown in 1608.

Join the Kosciuszko Foundation  
Call 212-734-2130  
Or visit [www.thekf.org](http://www.thekf.org)

## Ohio Chapter Growing Quickly

Operating in our second year, the Northeast Ohio Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation is very active promoting educational and cultural exchange between the United States and Poland. During the fall, we welcomed home our 12 participants from Ohio who volunteered to teach in Poland as part of the Teaching English in Poland program. We received a report from our Tomaszkieucz-Florio scholarship winner, Danielle Chmielewski, highlighting her summer study at the Jagiellonian University and travel in Poland.

Our President, Mary Kay Pieski visited Marywood and Kent State University on several occasions to promote the Teaching English in Poland program and the new addition, The Arts Enriched English Language Camp due to pilot this summer in Zalecze, Poland. We are proud to announce that we had two Kosciuszko Foundation Grants and Scholarships winners from Ohio for the school year 2008-2009. We hope to see this number increase as our visibility in the state of Ohio grows. We continue to encourage new membership by speaking at the various Polish organizations throughout Ohio and at the educational institutions. We anticipate another educational institution in Northeast Ohio to promote the rich culture and history of Poland as Cleveland State University prepares to offer Polish language courses in fall 09 and explores, with the aid of the Kosciuszko Foundation, the possibility of establishing of a Polish studies program.

Two well-attended events were co-sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Chapter and the Polish American Cultural Center in Cleveland. In November, we featured a photography exhibition of KF member, Tomasz Kowalczyk followed by an informative lecture by Dr. Teresa Kaczorowska. The focus of her lecture was Prof. Miecislav Haiman and his contributions to Polonia, which is well documented, in her newest book, Herodot

Polonii Amerykanskiej: Mieczyslaw Haiman (1888-1949).

Winter was quite busy with two events hosted at Kent State University. Jonathan Floril, the 2008 KF Chopin competition winner at Kent State University performed an exquisite piano recital in February followed by a lecture at Prof. John Michalczyk on the topic of Zegota: Polish rescue and resistance in World War II, in March.

Our Second Annual Awards and Fundraiser planned for March 14 will honor Mr. Eugene Bak, Executive Director

*Only in its second  
year, the Ohio Chapter  
has already become  
one of the most active*

of the Polish American Cultural Center in Cleveland. We will also acknowledge the volunteer participants in TEIP as well as our second annual Historical Essay Contest winner. Our historical

essay contest continues to develop through the efforts of our Vice President, Maria Szonert-Binienda.

Julian Kociuban, winner of the 2008 Polish National F. Chopin Piano Competition will present a piano recital on April 19 in the beautiful shrine of St. Stanislaus located in the heart of Slavic Village in Cleveland.

Several members of the chapter plan to march in the parade on May 3 to be held in Cleveland. The parade will commemorate the 218th anniversary of the Polish Constitution. The Polish American Congress organizes the parade each year.

In closing we would like to welcome the new President and Executive director of the Kosciuszko Foundation, Mr. Alex Storzynski and Mr. Rick Bentley, serving as the Northeast Ohio Chapter secretary and congratulate our Northeast Ohio Chapter member, Prof. Mietek Jaroniec, from Kent State University, recipient of a Doctor Honoris Causa from Nicholas Copernicus University for his contributions to interfacial chemistry and promotion of Polish science and culture. For more detailed information and photos please visit our webpage at <http://northeastohio.thekf.org>.

# Chicago Chapter Celebrates 25 Years

The Chicago Chapter celebrated its 25th year anniversary in November, and to honor the work of the chapter, the Kosciuszko Foundation Board of Trustees held its fall board meeting in the windy city and then attended a celebration at the Polish Consulate in Chicago.

The chapter has been very active, and on October 24, it co-sponsored a Polish American Heritage celebration at Northeastern Illinois University. The chapter also co-sponsored a program entitled "Life in a Jar: The Irena Sendler Project" organized at the Harold Washington Library on October 30. The program honored Irena Sendler who rescued 2,500 Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust.

On Jan. 24, it organized a book signing event at the Polonia Bookstore at 4738 N. Milwaukee Avenue in Chicago for author Teresa

Kaczorowska who read excerpts from her newly released book entitled: *Herodot Polonii Ameryka skiej Mieczyslaw Haiman (1888-1949)*.

Mr. Mieczyslaw Haiman was a historian, poet, journalist, and the founder of the Polish Museum of

America. He continues to be the foremost historian concerning Poles in America,



Polish Consul Zygmunt Matynia, Polish American Congress President Frank Spula, KF Chicago Chapter President Lidia Filus and Trustee Dr. Ewa Radwanska toast the chapter's 25 anniversary at the Polish Consulate.



from the 17th through the 21st century. Until his death in 1949, Mr. Haiman's life and work were dedicated to researching

and preserving the history of Polish-Americans. This work was made possible in part by a grant from the Kosciuszko Foundation.

To mark its 25th anniversary the chapter became a Legacy Life Member of the Polish Museum of America in memory of our late member, Mr. Romuald Hejna. The Chicago Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation had a donor plaque permanently inscribed in the Museum. For the first time, the Chicago Chapter will send a debutante, Alexandra Golota, to the April Debutante Ball in N.Y. The ball will be held at the Waldorf Astoria on April 25. For tickets call 212-734-2130.

## Summer Programs in Poland for 2009

The Kosciuszko Foundation offers two fulfilling and exciting options for educational travel to Poland each Summer:

### Summer Studies Courses

A program for students and adults interested in learning the spoken and written language of Poland and its culture.

### Teaching English in Poland

For for U.S. educators and college/university students interested in volunteer teaching and cultural opportunities in Poland.

For applications please send an e-mail request to [Addy@thekf.org](mailto:Addy@thekf.org) or call Addy Tymczynsyn 212-734-2130 ext 210.

## U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

### **DEBUTANTE LUNCHEON**

Sunday, March 29, 12 Noon  
Tavern on the Green, New York City

### **60TH ANNUAL CHOPIN PIANO COMPETITION**

Friday, April 3, 10 AM  
No charge

### **CELEBRATING CHOPIN**

#### ***60th Anniversary Concert of the Chopin Piano Competition***

Sunday, April 5, 8:30 PM  
Weill Recital Hall  
*Eight former Laureates, from the most recent to the legendary Roy Eaton, will perform in a program highlighting music of the Polish master.*  
\$25 / \$15 KF Members  
Sponsorship opportunities available

### **74TH ANNUAL DINNER AND BALL**

Saturday, April 25, 7 PM  
Waldorf=Astoria, New York City  
For more info, call the KF at 212-734-2130

### **ADASKIN STRING TRIO with THOMAS GALLANT, OBOE**

Sunday, April 26, 3 PM  
*Chamber Music Series*  
*Music of Janiewicz, Beethoven, Dohnanyi, and Mozart*  
\$30 / \$20 KF Members  
(WQXR Broadcast Sunday, May 3 at 6 PM)

### **CAMERATA NEW YORK**

Sunday, May 10 at 3 PM  
*Chamber Music Series*  
*Music of Tadeusz Baird, Andrzej Panufnik, and Mozart's "Eine kleine Nachtmusik"*  
\$30 / \$20 KF Members  
(WQXR Broadcast Sunday, May 17 at 6 PM)

### **The Kosciuszko Foundation**

*An American Center for Polish Culture since 1925*

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