

Polish Cultural Monitor

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What to do in Warsaw after hours? What events to pick in other Polish cities? Which music festivals, concerts and exhibitions are worthy of a detour? Maciek Proliński offers some tips for culture vultures.

Singer, poet and novelist Leonard Cohen is to play at the Torwar in Warsaw October 1. In the same venue on October 7 Polish bass guitar fans will have the opportunity to admire three virtuosos Marcus Miller, Victor Wooten and Stanley Clarke. This will be their only concert in Poland.

The Era Jazz Festival celebrates its tenth anniversary with a gala concert at the National Philharmonic in Warsaw. The guest attraction will be the eminent jazz pianist Omar Sosa. He has been the star performer at top jazz festivals the world over for a number of seasons. His sole Polish concert will be held on October 6. At the Silesian Museum in Katowice you can visit an exhibition of prints by Leszek and Leon Wyczółkowski. It is entitled "Wyczółkowski Twice. Ties". Leszek is Leon's paternal grandson. He is a graduate of the Fine Arts Academy in Warsaw. Since 1978 he has been living in Canada practicing canvas painting and art graphics. With a great many one-man shows under his belt, he goes in for graphic works. He no longer uses narration. Instead, he shows the world through geometrical figures that bear a symbolic and metaphorical meaning. The exhibition features several dozen works by the artist executed in aquatint and etching techniques, which he has mastered to perfection. Leon Wyczółkowski (1852-1936) was a versatile artist fascinated by graphic techniques. He mostly used lithography. At the exhibition you will find a dozen of the artist's lithographs in a narrative, romantic style. Wyczółkowski was particularly fond of landscapes, e.g. of the primeval Białowieża Forest and old architecture, e.g. Krakow churches. Works on show come from the Silesian Museum collection. The exhibition lasts until October 12.

The 24th Warsaw International Film Festival (October 10-19) is one of the leading such events in the region. The organisers' aim is to present the best films from all over the world, including Asian and African countries, released in the past season and about to go on release. The idea is to include works which are probably unlikely to reach beyond the art house circuit. Each year a competition is held among the audience for the most popular movie of the festival. New Polish productions are part of the fare. In the main competition Poland will be represented by Małgorzata Szumowska's film "33 Scenes from Life" which recently won the Silver Leopard award in Locarno. In the '1-2' competition Dariusz Gajewski's "Mr Kuka's Lessons" will be shown, a film version of the best selling book by Radek Knapp. Productions of students of the Łódź Film School "The History of the Lack of Car Transport" by Grzegorz Jaroszek, "Couple" by Dara Van Dusen and "Marathon", an animated work by Izabela Plucińska, will compete in the short film contest. September 18-October 26 at the Modern Art Centre in Warsaw sees "Fly", an exhibition of photographs, videos and installations by Yoko Ono, who has been one of the top experimental and avant-garde artists for more than fifty years. The show is to spotlight the key, decisive strands in Yoko's rich and varied artistic career. The presentation is based on works from the "Instructions" cycle, which concern conceptual principles that stand behind an art work. Having strong social and political references, they express Yoko Ono's critical vision. The exhibition received the backing of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage within the operational programme for the promotion of artistic endeavour and the Trust for Mutual Understanding.

The world-renowned director Robert Wilson has accepted the invitation of the National Opera in Warsaw to produce Gounod's "Faust", perhaps the most famous music version of the Faustian theme. It premieres on October 26.

On October 31 Kraków's Ethnographical Museum opens its doors to an exhibition devoted to the ethnographical collection of the renowned Polish filmmaker Andrzej Wajda. "My collection is large enough to fill the exhibition. My links with Polish folk art goes back to the beginning of my studies at the Fine Arts Academy in Krakow and my collaboration with Professor Roman Reinfuss who rebuilt the Ethnographical Museum from wartime ruin. A meeting with him left a clear trace in my life. I shot two documentaries devoted to Polish folk art, as well as sketches from a number of museums all over the world, where I drew the exhibits I found interesting. That is why I was glad to go through my collection to put together the show. Through this exhibition I wish to express my gratitude to the Ethnographical Museum in Kraków and Professor Roman Reinfuss," Andrzej Wajda says in the introduction to the show. The exhibits come from Wajda's personal collection, as well as from the collections of Zofia Gołubiew, Professor Leszek W

ajda and the Ethnographical Museum in Kraków.

Between November 14 and 23 Warsaw's Kinoteka is launched into space with the 2nd Sputnik over Warsaw Russian Film Festival. Over the ten days more than 100 Russian films will be shown, many of which have won awards at the Cannes, Berlin, Venice and Toronto festivals. Festival director Małgorzata Szlagowska says that to mark the one hundred years of the Russian cinema, some of the best movies produced over the years will be shown. New productions, as well as children's and young people's cinema will also be represented. Apart from a retrospective of works by director Nikita Mikhalkov, who is to officially inaugurate the event, there will also be documentary and animated film showings, as well as retrospectives devoted to the women's cinema and rock in Russian movies. The 6th Pianist Festival will be held in Warsaw November 18-20. It is meant to promote classical music, notably piano music. The idea is to promote young pianists and to treat the audience to performances by the winners of top competitions. The organizer of the event, the Beethoven Society, has links with the Van Cliburn Piano Competition and Geza Anda Concours. Among the performers will be Barry Douglas, Yung Woo Yoo and Marian Sobula. The Krzysztof Penderecki Jubilee Year is on, honouring the best known Polish contemporary music composer. It reaches its climax on November 23 at the National Opera in Warsaw with a performance of "Seven Gates of Jerusalem" under the artist himself. Another attraction will be the world premiere of Penderecki's latest string quartet performed by the Shanghai Quartet.