

400th Anniversary from 1

omitted this contribution. He continued, "Poles need to share what transpired here. Be disciples. Spread the word about the efforts of Poles. We are the beneficiaries. This is where it started." Spula and other PAC officers then presented the first wreath.

Mrs. Eva Janelska, Polish Secretary of State, stated that she was proud to represent President Kaczyński and the Polish government, and that Polonia was always behind Poland. "There are 10,000,000 Polish Americans. Many martial law immigrants came with their children. They have prospered. Many have graduated from prestigious universities such as Harvard and Yale, and are honored as professionals. We need them to be active in Polonia, they are our future."

The next speaker was Deputy for the Prime Minister of Poland Jan Borkowski, who said that he was honored to represent the Polish government. He reminded the audience that Poles and Americans have always shared a bond in their struggles for freedom. Kościuszko and Pułaski came to America and were heroes of the American Revolution. This is the 19th anniversary of Poland's independence. He was grateful to the Polish American community, especially the PAC for being faithful to Poland - recently in acceptance to NATO. Poland had been with the US from the Balkans to Afghanistan, and now there is an American defense system in Poland. He then mentioned that there is, however, unfinished business - with the visa issue for Poles.

In addition, there were other notable guests from Poland, including Consul General (New York) Krzysztof Kasprzyk (formerly Consul General in Los Angeles, who was pleased to see the Californians in the crowd - Frank Kosowicz, Andrzej Prokopczuk, and Marty Cepielik)

The representatives of the Republic of Poland placed wreath also.

Polish Ambassador Robert Kupiecki reminded the audience that 50 years ago the PAC presided over a ceremony in the same place. Present at that ceremony was President Dwight Eisenhower. Also present 50 years ago and this year were Francis X. Gates (PACD - New York) and Hilary Czaplicki (Philadelphia), who both remembered well that experience.

The Polish Falcons of Pittsburgh unveiled a new plaque. (The one they had presented previously had mysteriously disappeared.)

In closing, Debbie Majka thanked everyone for coming.

The group then adjourned to the museum's spacious meeting room, where a very spectacular reception with wine and hors d'ouerves took place.

This was a very momentous event, which will be long remembered by all who attended. Congratulations to Debbie Majka and her committee for an outstanding job. □

KRAK Art Group

Anniversary Exhibition of "KRAK" In Los Angeles

By: **Braden Wright**, freelance writer



L. standing - A. Gajewska, W. Wójcik, K. Czerska, Consul General P. Kapuścińska, N. Siedzińska, J. Fodczuk. Kneeling - L. Konopelski, K. Pawluskiewicz, A. Kolodziej - Curator

To celebrate its quarter-century mark, the California-based KRAK Art Group of Polish-American painters opened its silver anniversary exhibition with a lively reception on Saturday, October 11, 2008 at the Modern Art Gallery in downtown Los Angeles.

Revealing the influence of California light and aesthetics on these accomplished artists, "KRAK Confessions" was an exhibition of 50 large paintings from KRAK member artists, including: K. Czerska, J. Fodczuk, A. Gajewska, H. Iglukowska, A. Kolodziej, L. Konopelski, K. Węgliński, T. Misztal, W. Mitrowski, B. Paleta, K. Pawluskiewicz, A. Popek, M. Sledzińska, J. Sytnik, N. Witkowska and W. Wójcik.

The opening reception hosted over 150 distinguished guests from the greater Los Angeles area and such distant places as Seattle, Washington, Chicago and even Mexico. Tasty treats, refreshments and wine heightened the magical ambience of the evening for guests marking KRAK's honorable landmark achievement.

TV Host Rich Skidmore introduced Miss Paulina Kapuscinska, Consul General of the Polish Consulate of Los Angeles, who presented KRAK with a Certificate of Achievement. Hosting Modern Art Gallery owner Justin Kim Jong—also a successful art promoter, collector, and filmmaker—additionally received a Certificate of Recognition from the Consul General for his decades-long patronage, gracious support and promotion of the group's efforts.

Mr. Andrew Ettinger, Director of Cultural Affairs for the Polish American Congress, addressed the reception, emphasizing the immense significance and value of art in the lifeblood of modern society. In closing, exhibition curator Andrew Kolodziej summarized the highlights of KRAK's 25 years and introduced the group's artists. Kolodziej, a painter and teacher, founded the group, which started with an exhibition of four artists at the "Top O Art Gallery" in West Hollywood, CA.

Through the years, KRAK Art Group grew significantly, now encompassing the work of seventeen artists. In 1986, at the opening reception for an exhibition of paintings in UCLA's International Students Center gallery, Polish-American poets from Los Angeles and San Francisco enhanced the group with a reading of poetry.

The biggest event organized by KRAK was an exhibition of work by 44 leading Polish artists from eight countries called: "Art Confrontations" in the Modern Art Gallery in Los Angeles in 2003. It was acclaimed as the biggest exhibition of Polish artists in the western United States.

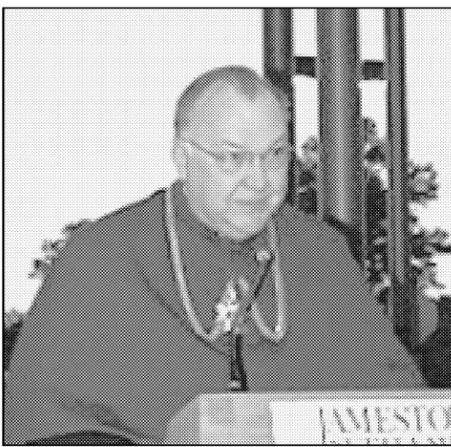
This success lead KRAK to participate in the "International Art Festival" in Guadalajara, the cultural center of Southern Mexico, in 2005, with another exhibit immediately following at the "Galeria Del Sur" in Mexico City.

KRAK's recent exhibits were in New York City's "Kurier Plus Gallery" in 2006, and at the "Amber Gallery" in Washington D.C. that same year.

KRAK has received rave reviews for its body of work, describing the group as demonstrating the avant-guard of Polish contemporary art abroad. A leading Polish art magazine, *FORMAT*, titled a recent three-page article: "KRAK—The California Phenomenon." Here's to the phenomenon continuing to grow for another 25 years! □



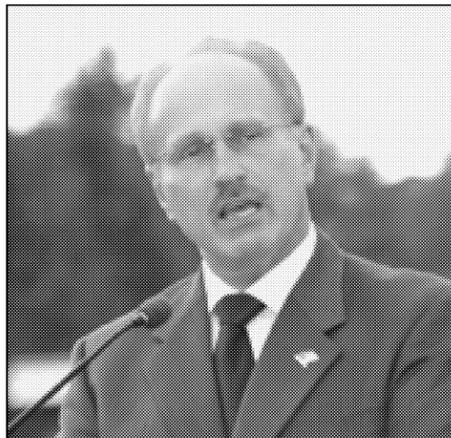
Reverend Carl Urban - Invocation



Reverend Canon Joseph Siedziński - Benediction



Polish Ambassador Robert Kupiecki



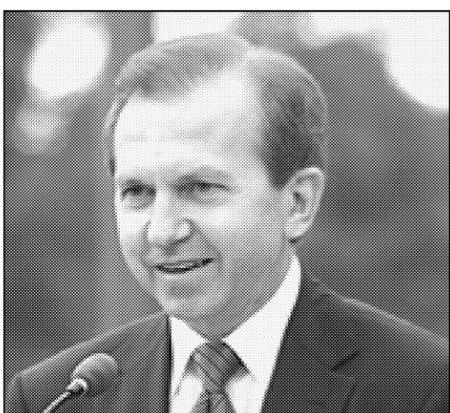
PAC President Frank Spula



**Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka - Secretary of State
President of Poland's office**



Deborah M. Majka - PAC VP Cultural Activities



**Jan Borkowski
Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland**



Malina Stadnik - Editor of Nowy Dziennik

Polish American Congress

Of Southern California

Invites you to attend our monthly meeting
Sunday, November 9, - 12:30 P.M.

**Pope John Paul II Polish Center
3999 Rose Drive - Yorba Linda**

OPLATEK LUNCHEON and AWARDS PRESENTATION

Sunday, Dec. 7 - 2:00 pm

**Our Lady of the Bright Mount Church Hall
3424 W. Adams Blvd. - Los Angeles**

Recipients: - Frank Kosowicz

Posthumous Awards

Zbigniew Janczur and Henry Silka

Donation \$35.00 per person - Advance Reservations

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