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For immediate release

## The 2023 Aquila Polonica Article Prize Winner Announced

### Biennial Prize Awarded for Best Article on Polish Studies

LOS ANGELES, November 14, 2023 — We're thrilled to announce that **Barbara Milewski**, Daniel Underhill Professor of Music at Swarthmore College, and **Bret Werb**, Music Collection Curator at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum have won the 2023 Aquila Polonica Article Prize.

The biennial Aquila Polonica Article Prize is given to the author(s) of the best English-language article published during the previous two years on any aspect of Polish studies. Administered by the Polish Studies Association ("PSA"), which appoints the independent judges, the award carries a \$500 honorarium donated by Aquila Polonica Publishing.

#### About the Winning Article:

Barbara Milewski and Bret Werb, "Chopin's *Żydek*, and Other Apocryphal Tales," *Journal of Musicology* (2022) 39 (3): 342–370. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2022.39.3.342>

Through an in-depth and robust analysis, Barbara Milewski and Bret Werb explore the attitude of Fryderyk Chopin to Jewish music. Drawing on a rich array of sources, they trace the birth and development of the narrative that has seen Chopin as genuinely interested and inspired by Jewish musical traditions.

As Milewski and Werb show, this narrative has been sensitive to the changing historical context, leading to the perception of Chopin as either a friend of Jews or an anti-Semite. Through a rich and impressive analysis, the authors challenge these narratives. By getting back to the sources and building on ethnographic accounts, they provide a new and complex interpretation, putting Chopin in a broad socio-cultural context.

The article is engaging and beautifully written, and offers a compelling model of an interdisciplinary analysis that uncovers historical realities that broaden our understanding of central themes in Polish studies.

In addition to the winner, the committee also awarded honorable mention to the following two articles:

Tomasz Frydel, "The Polish Countryside as a Gray Zone: Village Heads and the Meso Level of the General Government, 1939–1945," *East European Politics and Societies* 37, no. 1 (2023): 202–228. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325420977651>

Karolina Watroba, “Blind Spots on the Magic Mountain: Zofia Nałkowska’s Choucas (1926),” *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 99.4 (2021), 676-698.

<https://doi.org/10.5699/slaveasteurorev2.99.4.0676>

“It is our very great pleasure to congratulate Professor Milewski and Mr. Werb. We also want to congratulate our two honorable mentions, Tomasz Frydel at the Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and Karolina Watroba at All Souls College, University of Oxford,” said Aquila Polonica president Terry Tegnazian. “And of course, we wish to thank this year’s prize committee, which consisted of Natalia Jarska, Chair, Robert Pyrah and Agata Tumiłowicz-Mazur, for their hard work and thoughtful commentary.”

The prize will be presented the evening of November 30, 2023, during PSA’s annual meeting and reception at the national convention of the Association for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies (“ASEEES”).

Keely Stauter-Halsted, immediate past PSA president and current treasurer, commented, “The prize committee reported that it was extremely difficult to make a choice because there were so many strong articles. What a nice problem for our field to have! The existence of this prize helps to highlight the accomplishments of our membership.”

### **About Aquila Polonica Publishing**

Aquila Polonica is an award-winning independent publisher based in Los Angeles, specializing in publishing, in English, the World War II experience of Poland—the first of the Allies to fight Hitler. It is a member of Association of American Publishers and the Independent Book Publishers Association. All of its books to date have won awards. They have garnered rave reviews in major media such as the *New York Times*, *New Republic* and *Atlantic*; most have been Selections of the History Book Club, Military Book Club and/or Book-of-the-Month Club. They’ve been translated to foreign languages and licensed as audiobooks. See more at: [www.AquilaPolonica.com](http://www.AquilaPolonica.com).