

Famous Poles





Photo	Name and Surname	Description*
	<p>Fryderyk Chopin – a great Polish composer.</p>	<p>“ A Varsovian by birth, a Pole at heart, a citizen of the world by virtue of his talent.”</p> <p>This is what Cyprian Kamil Norwid, a romantic visionary poet, said about Chopin.</p> <p>A Polish composer of the 19th century whose adult life centred mainly on Paris. A Romantic composer who wrote almost entirely for the piano, Chopin changed the world of keyboard music forever. His distinctively expressive style is reflected in his many small-scale works and two concertos he created for the piano.</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fryderyk_Chopin</p>
	<p>Maria Skłodowska-Curie – famous physicist and chemist.</p>	<p>Through her discovery of radium, Marie Curie paved the way for nuclear physics and cancer therapy. Born of Polish parents, she was a woman of science and courage, compassionate yet stubbornly determined. Her research work was to cost her her own life.</p> <p>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Curie</p>
	<p>John Paul II (1920-2005) – Pope</p>	<p>Probably the most famous Pole ever, Pope John Paul II was born Karol Jozef Wojtyla in the small town of Wadowice in Poland. By being elected pope by the Catholic Church in 1978, he became the first non-Italian pope in 455 years. This pope modernised the papacy and spread his reach internationally through massive gatherings of Catholics and frequent consultations with heads of state.</p>
	<p>Lech Walesa- leader of the Solidarity movement</p>	<p>This feisty, moustachioed electrician from Gdansk shaped the end of the 20th century as the leader of the Solidarity movement that led Poland out of communism. Walesa's contribution to the end of communism in Europe, and hence the end of the cold war, stands beside those of his fellow Pole, Pope John Paul II, and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.</p>

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	Jozef Pilsudski- marshal	<p>Undoubtedly the dominant figure in Polish history of the first half of the twentieth Century. He was without doubt a major figure in European history and, at two points at least, in November 1918 and in the Summer of 1920, World history was profoundly influenced by his actions (in 1918 he led the Polish nation to independence, and in 1920 he stopped the Red Army's aim to invade Western Europe).</p>
	Tadeusz Mazowiecki- first post-communist premier	<p>Former Polish dissident, journalist of the Catholic newspaper, first post-communist premier in Eastern Europe, and a UN special human-rights investigator in former Yugoslavia. One of the founders of the "Solidarity" movement, a lawyer and author, a staunch human-rights fighter, persecuted for his thoughts and activities, a Catholic and close friend of the Pope John Paul II.</p>
	Tadeusz Kosciuszko (1746-1817) –general	<p>This great Polish patriot was leader of the forces taking part in the national uprising of 1794 (the so-called "Kosciuszko insurrection"). He had distinguished himself previously during the American War of Independence, notably as a brigadier at the battle of Saratoga in 1777.</p>
	Kazimierz Pulaski (1747-1779)- commander of the Bar Confederacy	<p>The commander of the Bar Confederacy and defender of Jasna Gora against the Russians. He commanded a cavalry brigade in George Washington's army during the American War of Independence. He died of wounds inflicted at the Battle of Savannah.</p>
	Adam Mickiewicz- poet	<p>As a poet Mickiewicz first gained attention with his "Ballads and Romances". This collection of poems opened the romantic era in Polish literature. Following this, Mickiewicz wrote the fantastic drama "Forefathers' Eve" (1823-32), in which Poland had a messianic role among the nations of Western Europe. The drama presents a vision of the country where the sufferings of Polish nation are equated with the Passion of Christ.</p>







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	Witold Gombrowicz- writer	Novelist, short-story writer, dramatist, and best known for the novel "Ferdydurke" (1937) and other absurdist satires. The dominant theme of his writings is the innate immaturity of human beings.
	Czeslaw Milosz- poet	Polish author, translator and critic, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980. Milosz's poetry and essays are a mixture of autobiographical confessions dealing with the effects of exile, religious or metaphysical fragments, as well as historical and literary analyses. Acclaimed as a Catholic poet, Milosz has also a strong pantheist element in his work.
	Wislawa Szymborska- poetess	Poet and translator, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1996 at the age of seventy-three. Szymborska is one of the few woman poets who have received the prize. Her early works were born more or less within the straitjacket of Socialist Realism. Later she expressed her pessimism about the future of mankind in poems that are written in a misleadingly casual manner or in an ironic tone.
	Krzysztof Penderecki- composer	He is a "doctor honoris causa" at several universities, and has been awarded numerous distinctions, including several Grammys and the award for the best composer at the Midem Festival of Cannes (2000).
	Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki- composer	The first living classical music composer to have music topping the Billboard charts; his Symphony No. 3 has sold over 1,200,000 copies.
	Witold Lutoslawski- composer	He was indisputably one of the major composers of the twentieth century. Born in Warsaw in 1913, he showed prodigious musical and intellectual talent from an early age.
	Zbigniew Preisner- composer	One of the most outstanding Polish film composers, best known for his work with the directors Krzysztof Kieślowski and Agnieszka Holland. His scores for the films such as

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		<p>“Decalogue”, “The Double Life of Veronique”, “Three Colours: Blue, White and Red”, have brought him international acclaim. Preisner received numerous prizes for his dedication to film music including a Silver Bear from the Berlin Film Festival and The Los Angeles Critics Association Award.</p>
	<p>Urszula Dudziak- vocalist</p>	<p>A Polish vocalist, ex-wife of jazz violinist Michał Urbaniak, and ironically much more popular in the USA than in Poland. She started her career in the late 1950s, within a few years becoming one of the most popular jazz artists. In the late 1960s and early 1970s began to travel overseas, finally settling in New York. She has frequently worked with leading contemporary musicians, including Archie Shepp, Lester Bowie, Bobby McFerrin and Sting.</p>
	<p>Barbara Trzetrzelewska-jazz singer</p>	<p>Better known as “Basia”, she is a Polish pop and jazz singer. She has forged a wildly successful international career after moving to the UK at the beginning of the 1980s. She was the female singer for the group Matt Bianco and pianist Danny White, and then debuting her own solo projects in 1987. She has released a great number of successful records, and while recognized in Britain she is almost completely unknown in her native country.</p>
	<p>Nicolaus Copernicus- astronomer</p>	<p>Copernicus is said to be the founder of modern astronomy. Born on February 19, 1473, in Torun, Poland, Nicolaus Copernicus was destined to become, through the eventual publication of his heliocentric planetary theory 70 years later, one of the seminal figures in the history of scientific thought.</p>
	<p>Jan Heweliusz- astronomer</p>	<p>Polish 17th- century astronomer from Gdansk, who studied comets, catalogued the stars, and constructed some of first accurate maps of the moon's surface. In recognition of his scientific endeavours, one of the moon's craters is named after him.</p>




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	Henryk Arctowski- oceanographer	A Polish scientist, oceanographer and Antarctic explorer. His name has been given to a phenomenon of a rainbow in the shape of a halo that forms around the sun as light is refracted through ice crystals in the atmosphere.
	Ernest Malinowski- sociologist	In 1859 he submitted a very courageous plan to the Government of Peru for building a railroad line connecting the Pacific coast with the abundant resources of the country's interior. It climbs from sea level at Callao to an elevation of 15,806 feet by means of many zigzags and double zigzags. He is also a famous sociologist.
	Kazimierz Funk (1884-1967)- biochemist	A Polish biochemist born in Warsaw, who studied in Berlin and Berne (Switzerland), worked in Paris, Berlin and London before eventually settling in America and becoming a US citizen in 1920. He was the first to discover a vitamin - a substance containing an amine group, one of the most important nutrients in human health. He put forward the hypothesis that vitamins could cure diseases like scurvy. Funk also carried out important work into animal hormones and into cancer, diabetes and ulcers. He improved methods for drug manufacture and developed several new commercial products.
	Ludwik Zamenhoff (1859-1917)- physician and linguist	A Polish-born Jew, a great physician and linguist, born in Bialystok and known for the invention of Esperanto - a pan-European language that he hoped would bring understanding between all the people across the world, notwithstanding national distinctions and cultural diversity. In fact, Esperanto was essentially a "corrected" Latin. All aspects of grammar and syntax, including the formation of derived words, was relentlessly regularized so that the language could be learnt in the least possible time. Eventually nothing came of it, because Esperanto was not accepted by many people; however, a lot of research is still being done into it and there are 8 million speakers worldwide.
	Korczak Ziolkowski (1908-1992)- architect and sculptor	He was of Polish descent, being born in Boston, and was a completely self-taught architect and sculptor. He never took any lessons in art, began experimenting with woodwork as a







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		<p>teenager, and was soon sculpting in wood and stone. In 1939 Ziolkowski briefly worked as an assistant on the construction of Mount Rushmore Monument in South Dakota, commemorating the four greatest US presidents. Later on was got involved in many other cultural projects of the time and became a distinguished artist.</p>
	<p>Irena Szewinska- sportswoman</p>	<p>From the age of 18 until she was 34, Szewinska had one of the longest (and most glorious) careers in international sport. Between 1964 and 1980 she participated in five Olympic Games, winning seven medals, three of them gold. She also broke six world records and was the first woman to hold world records at 100m, 200m and 400m at the same time.</p>
	<p>Adam Malysz- ski jumper</p>	<p>A ski jumper, and the most famous Polish sportsmen of today. Malysz is known for his spectacular success at the prestige Tournament of Four ski jumps and soon after this in ski flights in Harrahaw. Later came the triumphs in Salt Lake City, Spporo, Willingen, Falun, Trondheim well as in Holmenkolen. At the end of the season he set a new record for Poland in Polanica - 218.5 m, and then he received the Crystal Ball for becoming World Champion</p>
	<p>Kazimierz Deyna- football player</p>	<p>He was the best Polish football player in history. He was nicknamed "Rogal" (croissant), so called by his team mates because Deyna's shots looked like croissants. His life was just like his shots - unforeseeable.</p>
	<p>Robert Korzeniowski- the best walker</p>	<p>The best walker in the world, he won 4 gold medals at the Olympics (Atlanta, Sydney and Athens).</p>
	<p>Zbigniew Boniek- football player</p>	<p>One of the most talented Polish footballers, debuting on the Polish national team at the age of 20, an effective goal scorer (24 goals in 80 matches), has played for Italian football teams such as Juventus Torino and AS Roma, and since then has settled permanently in Italy. After finishing his professional career prematurely in 1988 he set up his own business.</p>



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		<p>Nevertheless he has remained closely related to football, serving as the vice-president of the Polish Football Association and the main coach of the Polish national team.</p>
	<p>Dariusz Michalczewski- boxer</p>	<p>A remarkably successful boxing champion of recent years, born in Gdańsk, came up through Poland's state-run sports program as a boy and had a brilliant amateur career before turning professional in 1991. Fighting mostly in neighbouring Germany, he began piling up wins and was soon signed by Universum Boxing Promotions, one of the leading boxing promoters in Europe. His aggressive style earned him the nickname "The Tiger".</p>
	<p>Roman Polanski- film director</p>	<p>One of the most famous Polish directors and an Oscar winner. The story of Roman Polanski's life is as tortuous and full of incident and tragedy as one of his dark films. Polanski survived the Nazi atrocities committed in the Krakow ghetto, but lost his mother in a concentration camp gas chamber. He spent a large part of his life in the US and made several important films with top American actors, such as <i>Chinatown</i> (with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston), and <i>Rosemary's Baby</i> (with Mia Farrow). In 1969 he experienced another personal tragedy when his pregnant wife, Sharon Tate, was murdered by the Manson Family. In 1978 he fled to France where he has directed <i>Frantic</i>, <i>Death and the Maiden</i>, <i>The Ninth Gate</i>, <i>The Pianist</i>, and <i>Oliver Twist</i> (2005).</p>
	<p>Andrzej Wajda- film director</p>	<p>On Sunday 26 March 2003, Hollywood acknowledged the talent of one of the men commonly regarded as the father of modern Polish cinema, by awarding Andrzej Wajda with a special Oscar for lifetime achievement. Andrzej Wajda is considered by the world to be Poland's finest directors, especially respected for his ability to engage the audiences' emotions as well as their intellects. His films were considered political and rebellious, especially the notorious <i>Man of</i></p>




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		<p><i>Marble</i>. Many of his films were based on the famous books of Polish writers, such as <i>Ashes and Diamonds</i>, <i>The Wedding</i>, <i>The Promised Land</i> and <i>The Maids of Wilko</i>. In 2007 he finished another important film, <i>Katyn</i>.</p>
	<p>Krzysztof Kieslowski- film director</p>	<p>Although probably the best-known Polish film director of the last two decades, Kieslowski began by making documentaries. These films concentrated on aspects of Polish life, culture, and political conditions under the Communist Party. Indeed it was these conditions that helped spark the Solidarity movement that ultimately forced the Party to relinquish power by way of new general elections. Among his best-known films are <i>Camera Buff</i>, <i>A Short Film about Killing</i> and <i>A Short Film about Love</i>, and the <i>The Decalogue</i> cycle. Many of his films were produced in France, such as the <i>Three Colours</i> trilogy and <i>The Double Life of Véronique</i>.</p>
	<p>Krzysztof Zanussi- film director</p>	<p>A director and producer, he studied not only film but also physics and philosophy, all of which influenced his psychological films and which are often associated with the <i>cinema of moral concern</i> - a tendency in Polish film of the 1970s. Among his notable films are <i>The Structure of Crystals</i>, <i>The Illumination</i>, <i>The Contract</i>, <i>Camouflage</i>, <i>In Full Gallop</i>, and <i>Life as a Fatal Sexually Transmitted Disease</i>.</p>
	<p>Janusz Kaminski- cameraman and film director</p>	<p>A cameraman and director, making his feature directorial debut with <i>Lost Souls</i> following a decade as an acclaimed director of photography, most recently for Steven Spielberg in <i>Saving Private Ryan</i>, for which he received an Academy Award. Kaminski also won an Academy Award and a BAFTA Award for his black-and-white cinematography for <i>Schindler's List</i>, as well as honours from New York and Los Angeles Film Critics. Kaminski is currently working as Director of Photography for Steven Spielberg.</p>



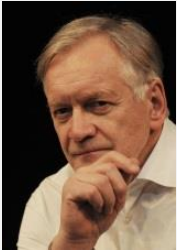



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	Krystyna Janda- actress	<p>One of the most famous Polish actresses, frequently acting under the guidance of that renowned Polish director Andrzej Wajda, Krystyna Janda has appeared in politically oriented films mostly aimed at the negative effects on their homeland following the death of Stalin. Her most famous roles were in <i>Man of Marble</i>, <i>The Iron Man</i>, <i>The Interrogation</i>, and <i>My Mother's Lovers</i>, but she has also starred in many stage plays. Janda now runs her own theatre in Warsaw.</p>
	Jerzy Skolimowski – film director	<p>A Polish director, one of the most original and innovative of all eastern European film-makers, graduate of the famous Lodz Film School and classmate of Roman Polanski, he emigrated to the UK to strive for a professional career. He has not achieved commercial success; nevertheless, he gained international respect for his great imagination and the realism of his films, which presented difficult and often prohibited topics.</p>
	Andrzej Seweryn- actor	<p>A film and stage actor, graduate of the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Warsaw, distinguished within the television and film industry, which quickly caught wind of him. Seweryn starred in several Polish films, including: Andrzej Wajda's <i>The Promised Land</i> and Jan Rybkowski's <i>The Peasants</i>. In 1980 he decided to move to France, where started his international career. In 1993, he was accepted into one of the most prestigious theatre troupes in the world, the Comédie Française. Seweryn's French stage debut was in the title role of Molière's <i>Don Juan</i>. He also acted in Steven Spielberg's <i>Schindler's List</i>, Peter Brook's <i>The Mahabharata</i> and Marco Bellocchio's <i>The Conviction</i>.</p>
	Izabella Scorupco- actress	<p>An actress and model known for her role as a Bond girl opposite Pierce Brosnan in Martin Campbell's <i>Golden Eye</i>. She then returned to Poland to star in Jerzy Hoffman's <i>With Fire and Sword</i> - a historical film based on Nobel prize winner</p>

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	Joanna Pacula- actress	<p>Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel of the same name.</p> <p>This actress was born in Poland and remained relatively obscure in her native country until forced by the changing political climate to relocate to Paris, where she started her professional career as a model and screen star. Later she appeared in Hollywood productions, mainly in B-class films.</p>
	Daniel Olbryski – actor	<p>Polish actor best known for leading roles in several Andrzej Wajda movies and also known for playing the Russian defector and spymaster Vassily Orlov, alongside Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie in the movie Salt.</p>
* information from the webpage Staypoland.com		