

assisted in tracing and restituting plundered cultural properties, including those that were “southernized” out of the country by U.S. servicemen. It is fascinating to follow the detective work of tracing such stolen art, but equally fascinating, as Shapreau pointed out, is the matter of what the items themselves reveal about the artistic sensibilities and aesthetics of their owners.

Certainly Landowska’s Polish roots are apparent in a program of two of her chamber works—Five Polish Folk Songs for harpsichord (played here on the piano), winds, and strings, and a Berceuse for piano. The two works were performed by ASU Music Department students Jordan Sera, flute; Wilson Harmon, oboe; Ryan Cerulla, bassoon; Oswaldo Zapata and Josh Coffrey, trumpet; Yerim Kim and Artur Tumayjan, violin; Daemin Kim and Sungjin Park, viola; Beth Weser, cello; Tyler Smith, double bass; and Qiyanao Zheng, piano. Bret Werb introduced each work and also provided background on Landowska’s career, productivity, self-identity, and superstar status. In 1907, for example, she personally presented a manuscript of the Berceuse to the work’s dedicatee, Alexandra Feodorovna, the last empress of Russia. The Five Polish Folk Songs reflect Landowska’s identification with her Polish background, but this theme also led Werb to discuss the degree to which she identified with her Jewishness. Landowska’s husband, Werb pointed out, had been a pioneer of Jewish ethnography and folklore, and she herself composed at least two works with Jewish themes, a *Hebrew Poem* for orchestra (not yet recovered) and a *Rhapsodie Orientale* for orchestra, which has been found. Landowska’s view of her cultural identity may eventually be better understood, because Werb mentioned that a cache of Landowska documents at the Library of Congress is presently off limits but will be released after all of her music has been catalogued.

The conference ended on a high note with a concert by the Toronto-based ARC Ensemble, which presented three chamber works by Polish-Jewish composers. Jerzy Fitelberg’s Sonatina for two violins (composed in 1947), performed with high-wire technical brilliance by Erika Raum and Benjamin Boman, was imaginative and completely captivating. Two piano quintets (with the additional musicians Steven Dann, Bryan Epperson, Dianne Werner, and David Louie) followed: Szymon Laks’s four-movement Piano Quintet on Popular Polish Themes (arranged in 1967 from a quartet composed in 1945), a fairly slight piece, as its title suggests; and Mieczysław Weinberg’s five-movement Piano Quintet op. 18 (composed in 1944). Weinberg’s was by far the most substantial work on the program; a recording of it by the ARC Ensemble was released in 2006 (on RCA Red Seal), and I’m sure that I was not alone in promising that I would listen to the piece again.

After two intense days of hearing tragic life stories and long rosters of names, it was heartening to know that the three composers featured in the event-concluding concert were survivors. It is true that all three of them lost their homeland and, with the possible exception of Weinberg, also lost the chance to fulfill their early promise, but all three were among the fortunate few most of whose works survived and remain accessible to performers and scholars. Some of Fitelberg’s works have yet to be published (the performance of the Sonatina for two violins was possible thanks to Simon Wynberg, the ARC Ensemble’s Artistic Director, who came across the manuscript at the New York Public Library), but Weinberg’s music is distributed by Edition Sikorski and peer music classical; the latter also carries some of Fitelberg’s music. All of Laks’s works were recently taken up by the “Suppressed Music/Musik verfolgter und exilierter Komponisten” series published jointly by Boosey and Hawkes and Bote und Bock. This series, plus brilliant live and recorded performances by groups such as the ARC Ensemble, will surely stimulate others to search for forgotten music from this period. The story will be continued.

## RETROPECTIVE OF AN AUSTRIAN VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

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Thanks to the invitation of Maureen Daly Goggin, in the Arizona State University Department of English, I was able to spend six months at ASU as a visiting assistant professor. As an Austrian historian, this unique opportunity allowed me to immerse myself in US academia. As well I’ve always been interested in getting to know the work, structures, and activities of Centers for Jewish Studies abroad. Meeting Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, Anna Cichopek-Gajraj and Anna Holian fulfilled this goal as they provided an insight into their Center’s work. The Center’s manifold activities offered information on topics I had not been familiar with so far. For instance, my knowledge of the Jewish history of Arizona was deepened by Hasia Diner’s talk on the Jewish presence in the Southwest. I have also followed the community outreach activities with great interest and was impressed with the communities’ variety of events and vivid activism.

The Center also facilitated a presentation of part of my current research project on Zionism in the Austrian-Hungarian border region. The constructive criticism I received in the following discussion was encouraging and gave fresh impetus to further research.

However, this semester was not only life-enhancing in terms of research, but also in terms of teaching. I offered an undergraduate class on Jewish Life in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe and a graduate class on “‘Truth’, Memory, and Testimony.” Although teaching students with diverse levels of knowledge was quite challenging, it was also very fulfilling. The courses aimed to promote open-mindedness and raise awareness for Jewish and non-Jewish surroundings. The students were very interested in the topics and their different perspectives and approaches led to lively discussions from which we all benefited.

It was a pleasure to spend a semester at ASU! I wish the Center for Jewish Studies all the best and I hope we will pave the way for future collaborative activities.



A sculpture of a menorah stands against a light-colored stone wall. The base is a tall, tapered cylinder composed of many small, square tiles, each featuring a black Hebrew letter. The top of the base is a dark, metallic band. From this band, several flames made of shiny, silver-colored metal ribbons rise and curl upwards. The background is a wall of rectangular stone blocks.

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# Center for Jewish Studies

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