

OPEN THREAD: DON'T FORGET POLAND!

Recall the quaint mid-Oughts during the 2004 presidential



debates, when Dubya corrected his opponent John Kerry with, “You forgot Poland!”

Ah, those were the days, when an illegal war and torture were our biggest concerns.

Unlike now when nearly everything liberal democracy represents is in flames and ashes.

Last month I looked at a couple of works by Norwegian artist Munch; his *Angst* and *The Scream* still speak to us about existential crises. This month I want to look at a few works by Polish artists who also seem relevant to our condition.

Like Zdzisław Beksiński’s *The Trumpeter* featured here; how fitting with its many-fingered creepy playing. It’s fairly contemporary, published in 1983, and used as cover art for metal band Artistor’s album, ‘*Omen*’. Beksiński characterized his art as baroque or gothic. Hard to argue against this description given the wealth of dark detail. Some of Beksiński’s work reminds me of Swiss artist H.R. Giger’s monstrous surrealism like that used in the film *Alien*.

Take note of this piece featured in a write-up about Beksiński in a favorite art magazine. I’ll make reference to it next weekend when I look at another Pole’s work.

Sadly, Beksiński was murdered in 2005 for refusing to loan a young man some money. He left

behind a wealth of work which will stir our imaginations for years to come. You can find more of his work at Dmochowski Gallery online.

Non-artsy stuff:

- NCAA Basketball's March Madness begins on Tuesday. ESPN has key tournament dates. NCAA offers a bracket challenge to follow along.
- NHL Hockey regular season ends April 9. Come on, Red Wings, please don't finish this season dead last. Only a month to claw over the bottom two. For crying out loud don't roll over for the NY Rangers on Sunday or I'll never hear the end of it from the girls. It'll be all "Oh, that Mats Zuccarello this and that, he's so cute..." Just, no.
- PGA Tour is at Innisbrook Resort for the Valspar Invitational this weekend. Thankfully for tourney players and attendees Innisbrook is in Palm Harbor, Florida – the opposite side of the state from Mar-a-Lago. I can't get excited about the tour, though; these guys at the top of the leader board are like watching paste set up.
- NASCAR this week is in Las Vegas for the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series. So redundant, that line, but it is what it is. Not my thing, but I need to pay attention to this since my prospective son-in-law is a big NASCAR fan.
- UPDATE 2:32 PM EST – NFL Free Agency because somebody downstairs noticed I had ignored a professional sport about which I don't care, now in post-season. You'll notice I didn't originally mention the NBA (one month left in regular season) or the MLB (three weeks before regular season opening day) or the MLS (regular season started a week ago) either.

Next thing you know somebody will ask, "What about horse racing?" Yeah. And what about Poland?

That's a wrap. This is an open thread – bring your arts and sports and whatever here which doesn't belong in topic threads.