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The Top Five Kissing Spots in Warsaw, Poland

Karen Kovacik

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The Top Five Kissing Spots in Warsaw, Poland

Abstract

A list of five recommended kissing locations in Warsaw, Poland, as well as two not recommended locations.

Keywords

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The Top Five Kissing Spots in Warsaw, Poland

by Karen Kovacik

5) At the Café Antykwariat, preferably in the back room, at the table tucked into a prewar armoire—warning: no door—which will mean less privacy but a good view of the 1920s pinup in fedora and smoky stockings, perched on the sink in a train compartment, or the trapeze artist wearing only sequins, dizzy above the lion.

4) In the last row of the Kino Kultura during a thunderstorm, while watching Forman's *Loves of a Blonde*, or just after, when the Soviet-era sconces turn on, and the matronly usher opens the exit door onto a courtyard even smaller than this cinema, now dark and wet.

3) At a Chopin concert in the rose garden of the Park Łazienkowski, when the flowers are past their prime, and the pianist has departed from the standard repertoire, and you're trying not to touch, but she's embarked on a tarantella, and you sit ear to ear, not breathing, feeling each willow-switch of sound.

2) In the PZO, the Polish Optical Warehouse, which once stored carpet samples and now houses artists—you can't miss the blue eye winking on its roof—and on one weekend each June, its padlocked doors open, and you pass a man canoeing through the courtyard's sandy soil and a woman dressed as Marie Antoinette singing Puccini, and holding hands, you wander through corridors of eye charts that open onto exhibits, such as the three fresh graves, their soil mounded in the shape of women's bodies, and you wonder if you're the only

person turned on by death and Fellini. Apparently not...

1) On a pedal boat in the Park Kamionkowski, which abuts the Wedel candy factory, so everything smells like chocolate—even the dragonflies hovering over this cocoa-colored pond surrounded by poplars desperate to propagate, giving off the white fuzz that catches in your hair, and all the cyclists, runners, and squirrels are trying to stave off time, even when the sun melts into the chocolate water, and you stop pedaling for a good ten minutes, semisweet, bittersweet, filled with cognac and rum.

N.B. Not recommended:

a) Taking the elevator to the top of the Stalinist Palace of Culture, where you will look out over the microscopic sellers of ersatz amber, knockoff colognes, and hyacinths, and feel like Satan tempting Christ, the Vistula River now yours, the billboard ads for pushup bras, the trams impatient to get past the newly restored Hotel Polonia with its buttercream facade, where no one can afford to stay.

b) The KFC on Jerusalem Avenue, even if 25 years ago when the storefront belonged to Natasza, a Soviet-era Lane Bryant, you saw a man standing in his window above the neon “N,” blowing smoke rings, naked.

Karen Kovacik directs the creative writing program at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. She’s the author of several collections of poetry, including *Metropolis Burning* (Cleveland State, 2005), *Beyond the Velvet Curtain* (Kent State, 1999), and *Nixon and I* (Kent State, 1998). In 2004-05, she spent the year in Poland on a Fulbright grant to translate contemporary women poets. Her translations have appeared widely in such journals as *APR*, *Boston Review*, *West Branch*, *Crazyhorse*, and *Mid-American Review*.



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