Press release, date 2023

As part of events accompanying the exhibition, “The Dark Arts. Aleksandra Waliszewska and the Symbolism from the East and North” Adam Mickiewicz Institute and its partners will organise a discussion with Łukasz Kozak, author of the book “With Stake and Spade” and a concert by Adam Strug, “The Songs of wandering beggars, or *dziady*.”

On 11 May at the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, together with Łukasz Kozak, we will discuss the various *upiórs*, *strzygas*, and *wieszczys***.** The author will discuss Polish folk mythology and the Slavic tradition conveyed in sources from Poland and Lithuania. According to Kozak, while vampires are a popular motif in this tradition, they are rarely associated with Slavic folk beliefs. In his view, *upiórs* originally come from Poland.

Kozak is a medievalist and lecturer, author and expert in the field of technology and promotion of cultural heritage. He researches the less obvious threads in the history of culture and is associated with the Department of Digital Collections at the National Library in Poland.

The discussion will be chaired by Rūta Miškinytė, an anthropologist at the Vilnius University, a Lithuanian historian, curator, and doctoral student, as well as a member of the organising committee of the annual Lithuanian sci-fi and fantasy convention, “Lituanicon.”

On 13 May at 22:00, during the Night of Museums, the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art will host a concert by Adam Strug, who will perform folk songs, focusing on the repertoire one performed by the travelling singers and beggars known as *dziady*. During the concert, the poems of Adam Mickiewicz and Bolesław Leśmian will also be recited. Strug will be accompanied by Hipolit Woźniak playing the hurdy gurdy, known in Poland as the crank lyre.

Thanks to his extensive experience in the field of instrumental music and extraordinary voice, Strug fits perfectly with the themes of the exhibition of works by Aleksandra Waliszewska. It opened in Kaunas on 3.02.2023 and features more than 200 works by 36 artists from Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Baltics, dating from the 19th century to the present. The exhibition is centred on the works by the Polish artist. The partners of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute in the organising of the show are the “Romuva” cinema, the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art, and the Polish Institute in Vilnius.

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Established in 2000, The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is a national cultural institution whose goal is to build a lasting interest in Polish culture around the world. The Institute cooperates with foreign partners and initiates international cultural exchange in dialogue with recipients, in line with the goals and aims of Polish foreign policy.  By 2022 the Institute has completed projects in more than 70 countries on 6 continents. The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is endorsed by the Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport.