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## *Echoes of Tattered Tongues* Wins Gold in Prestigious Benjamin Franklin Awards

Los Angeles, California, April 10, 2017 — *Echoes of Tattered Tongues: Memory Unfolded* by John Z. Guzowski (Aquila Polonica Publishing, 2016) was named the winner of the Gold Award for Poetry in the 2017 Benjamin Franklin Awards. The gold winners were announced on Friday, April 7, 2017 during a gala dinner ceremony at the Historic Benson Hotel in Portland, Oregon.

For nearly 30 years, the Benjamin Franklin Awards sponsored by the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) have been regarded as one of the highest national honors for small and independent publishers. This year's gold winners include a variety of books from independent publishers large and small, hybrid presses, self-published authors, and major national groups like the American Cancer Society and The White House Historical Association. There were nearly 1,400 entries this year, which were winnowed down to three or four finalists in each category—from these, one winner was chosen by the team of judges.

“Becoming a Benjamin Franklin Award finalist showcases a publisher’s commitment to professional standards and high-quality book content and production,” said Angela Bole, IBPA’s Chief Executive Officer. “Winning can expand a book’s marketability and solidify a publisher’s credibility—two very powerful things in today’s crowded book market.”

In this major tour de force, author John Guzowski traces the arc of one of the millions of immigrant families of America, in this case, survivors of the maelstrom of World War II.

*Publishers Weekly* describes *Echoes of Tattered Tongues* as “gut-wrenching, narrative lyric poems,” and *Foreword Reviews* called it a “devastating, one-of-a-kind collection.” “A searing memoir,” said *Shelf Awareness*, naming the *Echoes of Tattered Tongues* book trailer its Book Trailer of the Day.

Kelly Cherry, Poet Laureate of Virginia (2010–2012) said about this book: “Deeply moving. A powerful, lasting, and sometimes shocking book. Superb.”

Using an innovative weave of poetry and prose, Guzowski unfolds the story of his own family backwards through time. His parents, young Christian Poles, were taken by Germans to work as slave laborers in German concentration camps, and barely survived. The author and his sister were born in refugee camps in Germany after the war. The family was finally able to immigrate to the United States in 1951 as Displaced Persons, and settled in an immigrant neighborhood in Chicago.

To learn more: [www.polww2.com/AboutEchoes](http://www.polww2.com/AboutEchoes). Watch the book trailer: [www.polww2.com/EchoesTrailer](http://www.polww2.com/EchoesTrailer)

“I’m sorry I was not able to be at the awards ceremony,” Guzowski said when contacted at his home in Lynchburg, Virginia. “Because of the three-hour time difference, I didn’t see the text from my publisher Terry Tegnazian that we’d won, until Saturday morning. My wife and I opened a bottle of champagne to celebrate!”

“We are very excited that *Echoes of Tattered Tongues* has won the Gold Award for Poetry in the 2017 Ben Franklin Awards,” said Aquila Polonica president Terry Tegnazian, who attended the award ceremony and gave a brief acceptance speech. “This is a haunting look at a virtually unknown aspect of World War II, with impacts that echo through generations and reflections relevant to today’s refugee situation. Guzowski’s writing, with its powerful imagery, will stay with you long after you close the book.”

**About John Guzłowski:** Guzłowski is Professor Emeritus of English Literature at Eastern Illinois University, and currently lives in Lynchburg, Virginia. He received his B.A. in English Literature from the University of Illinois, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in English from Purdue University.

Over a writing career that spans more than 40 years, Guzłowski has amassed a significant body of published work in a wide range of genres: poetry, prose, literary criticism, reviews, fiction and nonfiction. His work has appeared in numerous national journals and anthologies, and in four prior books. Guzłowski's work has garnered high praise, including from Nobel Laureate Czesław Miłosz, who called Guzłowski's poetry "exceptional."

**Aquila Polonica Publishing**, [www.AquilaPolonica.com](http://www.AquilaPolonica.com), is an award-winning independent publisher based in Los Angeles, specializing in publishing the Polish WWII experience in English. The company is a member of the Association of American Publishers (AAP) and the Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA). Aquila Polonica's titles are distributed to the trade in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Europe, Australia and New Zealand by National Book Network, [www.nbnbooks.com](http://www.nbnbooks.com), and are available from fine bookstores, online retailers, and all major wholesalers.

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