

● On 8 March 1968, students organised a rally on the Warsaw University campus in defence of their fellow students expelled for their role in the protests. The gathering participants were brutally clubbed with truncheons and scattered by workers from the so-called "factory defence" units and regular militia units. However, the rally ushered in a wave of demonstrations held in solidarity with the Warsaw students at almost all Polish universities. Students held street demonstrations and clashed with the militia in several cities.

● At the same time, anti-intelligentsia and anti-Semitic campaigns were launched in parallel to the youth demonstrations. A lot of people in key positions were removed from the party and their posts. A "purge" began and its first target was the security apparatus, then members of the party apparatus and state administration, the world of science, culture and art, the media and the armed forces. Poland had an explicitly bad reputation in the West, which further worsened after Polish troops had participated in the invasion of Czechoslovakia and suppression of the Prague Spring.

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The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency in Poland.

Whereas the NBP issues **coins and banknotes of general circulation**, since 1966 it has also been issuing collector coins.

In 2006, the first Polish **collector banknote** was put into circulation. The issue of collector items is destined both to commemorate events, anniversaries and well-known personalities and to disseminate knowledge about Polish culture, science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also issued the **occasional Nordic Gold coins of 2 złoty denomination**, which accompany the series of collector coins.

In 2004, the issue of 2 złote coins of the two new series *Images of Voivodships' Arms* (2004-2005) and *Historical Cities in Poland* (2005-2008) was commenced.

All coins issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

Information about the Schedule of Issue and the Sale of Collector Coins can be found at the website:

www.nbp.pl

www.numizmatyka.nbportal.pl

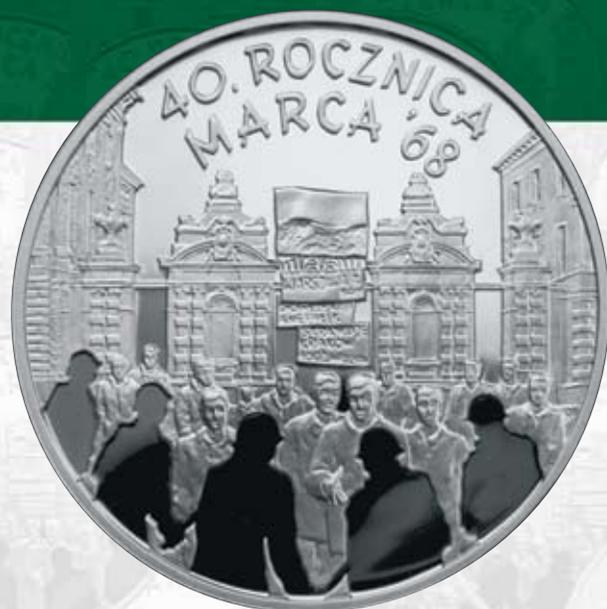
The coins have been struck at the Polish Mint Plc in Warsaw.

Edited and printed: NBP Printing House

NBP

National Bank of Poland

COINS



40th Anniversary
of March '68 Events

40th Anniversary of March 1968 Events

● The National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating the 40th anniversary of the March 1968 events, of the following face values:

10 zł – struck in proof finish, in silver
on 3 March 2008

2 zł – struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold alloy
on 5 March 2008

MARCH 1968 EVENTS

● This conventional concept includes a few various and unnecessary interrelated trains of thought. What's more, depending on who uses the concept "March events", these persons first of all underscore these aspects which primarily concern themselves and the community they used to mingle with. Thus, it is clear that the persons who emigrated from Poland after that March and their relatives who chose to stay in the country most frequently recall the disgraceful anti-Semitic

campaign; it was ineptly hidden by official authorities under the banner of anti-Zionism. In such a climate, over 15,000 Jews and citizens of Jewish origin left Poland in the years 1968-1972.

● To the people who studied in 1968, the student factor of the Polish March events is the most important aspect. Student rallies, sit-ins and demonstrations were most strongly engraved in the memory of the people. In 1968, Polish students protested under the slogans of freedom, drawing on leftist phraseology. They were engaged in the struggle for democratisation and liberalisation of the political system as well as in the battle for the right to live in truth. "The press tells lies", one of the most popular slogans of the time, may have come from the urge.

● In turn, to people from the worlds of culture, science and art, the Polish March events appear – even after all these years – primarily as an anti-intelligentsia pogrom. It was the time when named writers and scholars were extremely brutally attacked in the mass media. What all the attacks (the carbon copy of the comments made by the party activists) had in common was that

the mass media accused the persons attacked not only of the lack of ideological and moral qualities but simply of the lack of professionalism.

● The origin of the "March events" can be found at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s when the Władysław Gomułka team began to more openly depart from the liberalised policy of October 1956. Conflicts between intellectuals and the party and state authorities steadily intensified. These conflicts were accompanied by a secret struggle for power and influence within the Polish United Worker's Party leadership. The younger middle and lower level activists, who wanted to get promotion at the expense of the old comrades – not infrequently of Jewish origin, were mostly engaged in the infighting. They backed the so-called partisans, an informal party clique formed around Gen. Mieczysław Moczar, the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. To achieve their own goals, they wanted to use the students who protested against the administrative decision to pull Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve*, performed at the National Theatre.

COINS ISSUED IN 2008 COINS ISSUED IN 2008



FACE VALUE **10** ZŁ

metal **925/1000 Ag** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **32.00 mm**
weight **14.14 g** ■ mintage (volume) **118,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: On the right-hand side, an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the right-hand side at the top, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA. Below the Eagle, on the right-hand-side, the notation of the year of issue, 2008. Below, the images of an open book on top of a closed book. On the left-hand side, the stylised images of falling book pages. The Mint's mark, M/W, under the Eagle's right leg.

REVERSE: A stylised image of the main entrance gate of the University of Warsaw. Below, a stylised flag symbolizing the Polish national flag and stylised images of banners. At the top, a semicircular inscription, 40. ROCZNICA MARCA '68 (40th anniversary of March '68 events). At the bottom, the stylised images of militiamen and protesting students.

Coin designer: **ANDRZEJ NOWAKOWSKI**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.00 mm**
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **1,400,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. At the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue, 20-08. Below the Eagle, an inscription, ZŁ 2 ZŁ. In the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark, M/W, under the Eagle's left leg.

REVERSE: A stylised image of the main entrance gate of the University of Warsaw. At the top, an image of the Eagle established as the Emblem of the University of Warsaw. Below, a stylised flag symbolizing the Polish national flag, and falling book pages. At the bottom, the stylised images of banners and protesting students between the walls of the entrance gate. Below, a semicircular inscription, 40. ROCZNICA MARCA '68 (40th anniversary of March '68 events).

ON THE EDGE: The inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**
Reverse designer: **ANDRZEJ NOWAKOWSKI**