

Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema



Monday 2 March 2015, London

Throughout April and May BFI Southbank will host, in partnership with the KINOTEKA Polish Film Festival and Filmhouse Edinburgh, *Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema*. At a time when Polish cinema is in the spotlight, with Pawel Pawlikowski's *Ida* taking home a slew of international awards in the past 12 months (including the Oscar for Best Foreign Language film) this two month season of films, curated by Martin Scorsese and screening in pristine digital restorations, will focus on a period when Polish filmmakers shook off the creatively stifling policy of Socialist Realism (a social, political, and aesthetic principle enforced on art-forms by the pro-Soviet communist government) and produced a series of films which presented a remarkably clear-eyed vision of their country.

Martin Scorsese said: "These are films that have great emotional and visual power. They are serious films that, with their depth, stand up to repeated viewings. The themes in these films will resonate, as they did profoundly for me... There are many revelations in the *Masterpieces of Polish Cinema* series, and whether you're familiar with some of these films or not, it's really an incredible opportunity to discover for yourself the great power of Polish cinema, on the big screen in brilliantly restored digital masters".

The season will include films such as *Camouflage* (1976) by **Krzysztof Zanussi**, who will also attend for a special **Q&A** to open the 13th KINOTEKA Polish Film Festival, **Krzysztof Kieślowski's A Short Film About Killing** (1987) and **Andrzej Wajda's** Palme d'Or winning *Man of Iron* (1981). A national tour of *Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema*, presented by Filmhouse Edinburgh, with the support of the BFI, awarding funds from the National Lottery will also continue at venues throughout the UK until the end of September.

From the late 50s onwards, Poland's filmmakers explored their country's war-torn landscapes, fantastical worlds of the imagination and the moral anxiety of existing within a corrupt Communist society that few Poles actively supported. A special talk *Discovering the Masterpieces of Polish Cinema* will see critic and filmmaker **Kuba Mikurda** sketch the historical contexts that inform the films in the season and examine the aesthetic, cultural and political concerns shared by the auteurs that made them. These auteurs include **Krzysztof Zanussi**, who was known for exploring the complexity of moral choices and metaphysical questions in everyday life; he did so to striking effect in *Camouflage* (1976), *Illumination* (1972) and *The Constant Factor* (1980). Following a screening of *Camouflage* on **Wednesday 8 April**, Zanussi will take to the BFI Southbank stage for an 'In

Conversation' to mark the opening of the 13th KINOTEKA Polish Film Festival, while Zanussi will also introduce a screenings of *The Constant Factor* and *Illumination* the following evening.

Another filmmaker integral to this period in Polish cinema was **Krzysztof Kieślowski**, perhaps best known to British audiences for his *Three Colours Trilogy* (1993-94). Screening in the season will be ***Blind Chance*** (1981), which presents three separate storylines about a man trying to catch a train, and how such an ordinary incident could influence the rest of his life. Also screening the season is Kieślowski's ***A Short Film About Killing*** (1987), which won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1988. This grimly confrontational study of the protracted process of ending someone's life, whether through casual murder or meticulously planned execution, contributed to a national debate that ultimately ended capital punishment in Poland. The screening on **Wednesday 15 April** will be followed by a **Q&A** with **screenwriter Krzysztof Piesiewicz**. The cinematographer on that film, **Sławomir Idziak**, is one of Europe's most acclaimed in the field and he will take part in a BAFTA masterclass on **Wednesday 15 April** to discuss his career working with Polish directors Kieślowski, Wajda and Zanussi as well as his international work with Ridley Scott and Michael Winterbottom. Also appearing at BFI Southbank during the season will be the highly regarded cinematographer **Witold Sobocinski**, who supervised the restoration of the films he shot for this season (***The Wedding*** and ***The Hourglass Sanatorium***). Acclaimed for his sensitivity to rhythm and design, his filmography also includes work with Zanussi, Kawalerowicz and Polanski, and he will be joined onstage by his grandson, award-winning, third generation cinematographer, **Piotr Sobocinski Jr.**, to discuss the evolution of their craft in Poland and abroad.

Part one of the season also includes two films by **Wojciech J Has** - ***The Saragossa Manuscript*** (1964) and ***The Hourglass Sanatorium*** (1973). The former is a Napoleonic adventure crammed with duels and damsels, one of the great 1960s 'head-trips', and a favourite of the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia. *The Hourglass Sanatorium* meanwhile is a hallucinatory head-swiveller of a film, which follows a man visiting a mysterious sanatorium. Two contrasting films depicting relationships in April are ***The Last Day of Summer*** (1958) and ***To Kill This Love*** (1972). Already an important novelist, **Tadeusz Konwicki** made his directorial debut *The Last Day of Summer* on a tiny budget, with no script and a cast of two – a revolutionary approach at the time. **Janusz Morgenstern's** *To Kill This Love* depicted the lives of two young lovers in early 70s Poland who find themselves constantly buffeted by official obstacles as they try and find a place to live. Completing the April programme will be **Andrzej Munk's *Eroica*** (1957), a black comedy about WWII, ***Jump*** (1965) starring Zbigniew Cybulski, in a role many Poles consider his greatest, and ***Knights of the Black Cross*** (1960) a lavish widescreen epic set at the turn of the 15th century, which was one of Poland's biggest hits.

As the season moves into May the significance of **Andrzej Wajda** and **Jerzy Kawalerowicz** will be focused on. Five of Wajda's films will be screened, including ***Ashes and Diamonds*** (1958), a complex, morally ambiguous masterpiece starring the 'Polish James Dean' Zbigniew Cybulski, and Wajda's study of disaffected twenty-somethings ***Innocent Sorcerers*** (1960), for which he enlisted younger colleagues Roman Polanski and Jerzy Skolimowski. Also screening will be ***The Wedding*** (1972), which sees nineteenth-century Poland imagined as a grotesque and raucous wedding party, and ***The Promised Land*** (1974), a vivid portrait of ruthless entrepreneurs during Poland's industrial revolution. The final film by Wajda to be screened will be his Palme d'Or winning ***Man of Iron*** (1981); this story of government-backed espionage was filmed against a real-life backdrop of the Polish Trade Union protests of 1980. There will also be a display of international posters for these films by Wajda; sourced from the archives of the Film Museum in Łódź, these posters will illustrate a wide range of graphic styles, showing the diverse priorities of different cultures and the compelling nature of poster art.

Four films by **Jerzy Kawalerowicz** will screen in May, beginning with ***Night Train*** (1959), a psychological thriller about the passengers on an overnight train, including a possible murderer. ***Mother Joan of the Angels*** (1961) is a drama about demonic possession in a convent, and although notionally based on the same historical events that inspired Ken Russell's *The Devils*, Kawalerowicz's treatment is subtler and more psychologically acute. Also showing will be ***Pharaoh*** (1965), one of Poland's most expensive films, screening in its original full length form, having been heavily edited in the past. The final film by **Kawalerowicz** to screen will be his most personal project, ***Austeria*** (1982), a tale of anti-Semitic persecution during WWI.

The contribution of Wajda and Kawalerowicz to their national film culture went well beyond their own films. As the head of the Kadr Film Unit, Kawalerowicz also acted as producer on a number of Polish classics, while Wajda mentored numerous younger talents at a very early stage of their careers, including **Roman Polanski**, **Jerzy Skolimowski** and **Agnieszka Holland**, each of whom are represented in the season by a key early work. Polanski's riveting first feature ***Knife in the Water*** (1961) was Poland's first Oscar nominee, and established him as a world-class talent; Skolimowski's ***Walkover*** (1965) starred the director himself as a washed-up amateur boxer who is distracted from his bouts when an old university friend re-enters his life; while Agnieszka Holland's debut feature ***Provincial Actors*** (1978), an ensemble piece about warring actors, completes the programme.



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Press Contacts:

Liz Parkinson – Press Officer (Acting), BFI Southbank

liz.parkinson@bfi.org.uk / 020 7957 8918

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema

Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema is presented in the UK by Filmhouse Edinburgh in partnership with KINOTEKA and BFI Southbank with the support of the BFI, awarding funds from The National Lottery and organised by Di Factory, Propaganda Foundation, all DOTS and The Film Foundation, in cooperation with Tor, Zebra, Kadr film studios and CRF, in partnership with the National Audiovisual Institute of Poland, and with the support of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland and the Polish Film Institute.

About Filmhouse

Filmhouse was opened in 1979 and has established itself as one of the leading independent cinemas in the UK. Filmhouse showcases the best cinema from across the world, including new feature films, re-releases,

retrospectives, and a variety of mini-seasons and festivals, as well as playing host to its sister organisation the Edinburgh International Film Festival each June. Filmhouse regularly distributes films in the UK, organises UK-wide touring programmes, and also runs a wide range of audience development, education and learning and talent development programmes year round. Filmhouse is run by the registered charity, The Centre for the Moving Image. Filmhouse's year round programme is supported by Creative Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council and Europa Cinemas. www.filmhousecinema.com

About The 13th KINOTEKA Polish Film Festival

The 13th Kinoteka Polish Film Festival takes place 8 April - 29 May at venues across London and the UK, presented by the Polish Cultural Institute in London in partnership with POLA Arts Foundation and co-financed by the Polish Film Institute. The annual celebration of Polish Cinema, Kinoteka offers audiences an enticing mix of film, music and visual arts including screenings, retrospectives, exhibitions, concerts, interactive workshops, industry masterclasses and special guests encompassing all aspects of Polish film culture.

www.kinoteka.org.uk

For 13th Kinoteka Polish Film Festival and Martin Scorsese Presents: Masterpieces of Polish Cinema UK national tour enquiries:

Sarah Bemand - Margaret PR

sarah@margaretlondon.com / 0207 923 2861

SEASON LISTINGS:

13th Kinoteka Opening Night: Camouflage + Krzysztof Zanussi in conversation

Krzysztof Zanussi is known for exploring the complexity of moral choices and metaphysical questions in everyday life. We're delighted that this award-winning director, screenwriter and producer will join us in conversation, following a screening of his film *Camouflage*, to launch the opening of the Martin Scorsese Presents Masterpieces of Polish Cinema programme in the UK, and the opening of the 13th Kinoteka festival.

WED 8 APR 18:00 NFT1

BAFTA presents: Cinematography With Sławomir Idziak

Sławomir Idziak is one of Europe's most acclaimed cinematographers. He has worked with Polish directors such as Andrzej Wajda, Krzysztof Zanussi and Krzysztof Kieślowski, and internationally with Ridley Scott, John Sayles, Michael Winterbottom and John Duigan. In 2002, he was nominated for an Academy Award and BAFTA for *Black Hawk Down*. His latest project is *The Tale of Love and Darkness*, directed by Natalie Portman and due for release this year.

WED 15 APR 18:10 NFT3

Discovering the Masterpieces of Polish Cinema with Kuba Mikurda

To introduce Martin Scorsese's survey of the greatest Polish cinema, critic and filmmaker Kuba Mikurda will sketch the historical contexts that inform the films and examine the aesthetic, cultural and political concerns shared by the auteurs that made them. Richly illustrated with clips, photos, posters and archive documents, this talk will introduce key figures and movements in Polish film history, and indicate the season's unmissable highlights.

TUE 14 APR 18:15 NFT3

Andrzej Wajda's Films in World Film Posters (FREE)

From the archives of the Film Museum in Łódź we're pleased to present international posters of the Andrzej Wajda films selected by Martin Scorsese for this season on Polish cinema. Illustrating a wide range of graphic styles, they display the diverse priorities of different cultures and the compelling nature of poster art.

Presented with the support of the Polish Cultural Institute in London

APR – MAY ATRIUM

Key Scholars in Film Studies: Ewa Mazierska on the Polish Cinematic Canon

The latest in this series of lectures featuring the world's best film scholars sees Ewa Mazierska (University of Central Lancashire) join us to discuss the challenges associated with recounting Polish cinematic history. She'll raise fascinating questions such as 'how has the desire to project a particular national cultural identity affected the Polish critical establishment's approach to cinema from the period of state socialism?'

WED 22 APR 18:10 NFT3

Camouflage Barwy ochronne

Poland 1976. Dir Krzysztof Zanussi. With Piotr Garlicki, Zbigniew Zapasiewicz, Christine Paul. 101min. EST. 15. Tor

A linguistics competition at a university's summer camp is the backdrop for a wittily satirical drama about the elusiveness of language. An idealistic teacher and his more manipulative older colleague assess not only each entry's intrinsic merit, but also whether it ticks sufficient official boxes to be prizeworthy – an experience Polish filmmakers were all too ruefully familiar with.

TUE 14 APR 20:30 NFT3

Illumination Iluminacja + intro by Krzysztof Zanussi*

Poland 1972. Dir Krzysztof Zanussi. With Stanisław Latało, Monika Dzienisiewicz-Olbrychska, Małgorzata Pritulak. 93min. EST. 15. Tor

This dazzlingly original film-essay combines an intensely intimate portrait of a young would-be scientist with a quizzical analysis of his sincere (if fumbling and naïve) attempts at grasping the very meaning of life. Its frequent scholarly digressions into both art and science anticipated Peter Greenaway by many years.

THU 9 APR 18:15 NFT3*

SUN 12 APR 20:30 NFT3

The Constant Factor Constans + intro by Krzysztof Zanussi*

Poland 1980. Dir Krzysztof Zanussi. With Tadeusz Bradecki, Zofia Mrozowska, Małgorzata Zajączkowska. 91min. EST. PG. Tor

A man obsessed by the impending death of his mother and a dream of climbing mountains retreats into mathematics, trying to discover a 'constant factor' that will make sense of the world's apparently random capriciousness. It's one of Zanussi's most mordantly clear-eyed films about the moral challenges posed by trying to maintain a normal life in a corrupt bureaucracy.

THU 9 APR 20:50 NFT3*

SUN 12 APR 18:20 NFT3

Blind Chance Przypadek

Poland 1981. Dir Krzysztof Kiełowski. With Bogusław Linda, Tadeusz Łomnicki, Zbigniew Zapasiewicz. 123min. EST. 15. Tor

Banned for years for getting too close to the political knuckle, Kiełowski's three-part narrative hinges on whether medical student Wittek catches a train, and on what happens afterwards. Will he be recruited by the government, become a political protester, or continue studying in neutral isolation? And can he control these outcomes, or is his life dictated by fate?

TUE 14 APR 18:00 NFT2

SAT 18 APR 18:10 NFT1

A Short Film About Killing Krótki film o zabijaniu + Q&A with screenwriter Krzysztof Piesiewicz*

Poland 1987. Dir Krzysztof Kieślowski. With Mirosław Baka, Krzysztof Globisz, Jan Tesarz. 86min. EST. 18. Tor

A grimly confrontational study of the protracted process of ending someone's life, whether through casual murder or meticulously calibrated execution. Kieślowski's masterpiece contributed to a national debate that ultimately ended capital punishment in Poland – for who could still justify it after seeing it? Cinematographer Sławomir Idziak's inspired use of bilious coloured filters turns 1980s Warsaw into a living hell.

WED 15 APR 20:30 NFT3*

SAT 18 APR 20:50 NFT1

FRI 24 APR 18:30 NFT1

Eroica + intro by Dr César Ballester, independent film scholar*

Poland 1957. Dir Andrzej Munk. With Edward Dziewoński, Kazimierz Rudzki, Barbara Polomska. 81min. EST. PG. Kadr

Black comedies about WWII were understandably thin on the ground in post-war Poland, but this brilliantly incisive two-part dissection of 'courage' and 'valour' offers a decidedly subversive take on the traditional image of Polish heroism. In the first half, a hapless incompetent becomes a Resistance hero; in the second, Polish POWs are anything but keen to escape.

MON 13 APR 20:30 NFT3
THU 23 APR 20:30 NFT3*

The Saragossa Manuscript *Rekopolis znaleziony w Saragossie*

Poland 1964. Dir Wojciech J Has. With Zbigniew Cybulski, Iga Cembrzyńska, Elżbieta Czyżewska. 184min. EST. 15. ZF/Kadr

You wouldn't expect a rip-roaring widescreen Napoleonic adventure crammed with duels, damsels and cryptic manuscripts to be the favourite film of the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia. But this is actually one of the great 1960s 'head-trips' – an adaptation of Count Jan Potocki's legendarily labyrinthine 1814 novel into a bewildering but exhilarating lattice of stories within stories within stories.

MON 20 APR 19:40 NFT1
SAT 25 APR 19:30 NFT1

The Hourglass Sanatorium *Sanatorium pod klepsydrą + intro by film expert Michael Goddard**

Poland 1973. Dir Wojciech J Has. With Jan Nowicki, Tadeusz Kondrat, Irena Orska. 125min. EST. 15. Silesia/Kadr

A hallucinatory head-swiveller of a film, which turns Bruno Schulz's novella into a floridly baroque journey of a man visiting a mysterious sanatorium. He enters a world based as much on his anxieties and long-buried memories as it is on objective reality, a world crammed with exotic birds, mechanical automata of historical figures and haunting images of Poland's now-vanished Jewish past.

TUE 21 APR 20:30 NFT1
THU 30 APR 20:20 NFT1*

Jump *Salto*

Poland 1965. Dir Tadeusz Konwicki. With Zbigniew Cybulski, Jerzy Block, Włodzimierz Boruński. 105min. EST. Kadr

In this rich and subtle dream-play a man arrives in a small country town and demands sanctuary from an unspecified threat, but who is he, why do people remember him differently, and can he really perform miracles? Many Poles consider this Cybulski's greatest performance and he's on riveting form, especially when performing a 'salto' folk dance towards the end of the film.

SAT 25 APR 18:20 NFT2
TUE 28 APR 20:50 NFT3

The Last Day of Summer *Ostatni dzień lata*

Poland 1958. Dir Tadeusz Konwicki. With Irena Laskowska, Jan Machulski. 62min. EST. Kadr

Already an important novelist, Konwicki used his position as the Kadr Film Unit's literary advisor to make his directing debut for a tiny budget, with no script and a cast of two – a revolutionary gesture at a time of rigorously pre-vetted projects. A man and a woman meet on a deserted beach, their obvious attraction undermined by traumatic wartime memories.

SUN 26 APR 20:50 NFT2
TUE 28 APR 18:20 NFT2

To Kill This Love *Trzeba zabić tę miłość*

Poland 1972. Dir Janusz Morgenstern. With Jadwiga Jankowska-Cieślak, Andrzej Malec, Władysław Kowalski. 97min. EST. Zebra/Perspektywa

Magda and Andrzej are young lovers in early 1970s Poland, notionally a socialist paradise, in reality anything but as they find themselves constantly buffeted by official obstacles and supposedly non-existent class barriers as they try to find a place to live together. The film was formally criticised for its pessimism, but the feeling was very much shared by its audience.

SUN 26 APR 15:15 NFT2
WED 29 APR 20:45 NFT2

Knights of the Black Cross *Krzyżacy + intro by critic and filmmaker Kuba Mikurda**

Poland 1960. Dir Aleksander Ford. With Urszula Modrzyńska, Grażyna Staniszevska, Andrzej Szalawski. 165min. EST. PG. ZF/Kadr

One of Poland's biggest hits, this lavish widescreen epic was based on Henryk Sienkiewicz's much-loved novel The Teutonic Knights. Set at the turn of the 15th century, it depicts the tension between the Poles and

Lithuanians and their Teutonic neighbours, culminating in a thrilling reconstruction of the 1410 Battle of Grunwald (a pivotal event in Polish history) which featured thousands of extras.
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THU 16 APR 20:00 NFT3*

SUN 26 APR 16:40 NFT1

Witold Sobocinski and Piotr Sobocinski Jnr. In Conversation

Supervising the restoration of films he shot (including *The Wedding*, and *The Hourglass Sanatorium*) in the Masterpieces of Polish Cinema programme Witold Sobocinski contributed to their look, both as innovative DoP and respected consultant. Acclaimed for his sensitivity to rhythm and design his filmography also includes work with Zanussi, Kawalerowicz and Polanski. Award winning, third generation cinematographer, Piotr Sobocinski Jnr., (his grandson) will join him to discuss the evolution of their craft in Poland and abroad.

THU 28 MAY 18:10 NFT3

Ashes and Diamonds Popiół i diament + Intro*

Poland 1958. Dir Andrzej Wajda. With Zbigniew Cybulski, Ewa Krzyżewska, Waclaw Zastrzeżyński. 107min. EST. Kadr

Long established as one of Polish cinema's supreme masterpieces, Wajda's film vividly captures the turbulence and confusion immediately following WWII, as a former resistance hero turns anti-Communist assassin. Audiences were officially supposed to empathise with his intended victim, but Zbigniew Cybulski's astonishingly charismatic performance as the morally and politically riven killer crystallised the fears and uncertainties of an entire generation.

THU 14 MAY 20:45 NFT1*

TUE 19 MAY 18:20 NFT2

MON 25 MAY 20:30 NFT3

Innocent Sorcerers Niewinni czarodzieje

Poland 1960. Dir Andrzej Wajda. With Tadeusz Łomnicki, Krystyna Stypułkowska, Zbigniew Cybulski. 91min. EST. Kadr

After three successive films about Polish history, Wajda turned his attention to the (then) present, enlisting younger colleagues Roman Polanski and Jerzy Skolimowski to add verisimilitude to this study of disaffected twentysomethings. Newly qualified doctor and jazz fanatic Bazyl (Łomnicki) has so little time for emotional engagement that when he actually falls in love he doesn't know how to handle it.

FRI 8 MAY 18:20 NFT2

SUN 17 MAY 20:30 NFT3

The Wedding Wesele

Poland 1972. Dir Andrzej Wajda. With Daniel Olbrychski, Ewa Ziętek, Andrzej Łapicki. 106min. EST. Zebra

First performed in 1901, Stanisław Wyspiański's play turns the marriage of a poet and a peasant into a state-of-the-nation allegory about the attractions and pitfalls of national self-determination at a time when independent Poland didn't exist. Wajda's splendidly grotesque adaptation pulls out every cinematic stop in emphasising the piece's phantasmagorical elements as his camera hurtles from reality to fantasy.

WED 20 MAY 20:30 NFT3

THU 28 MAY 20:30 NFT3

The Promised Land Ziemia obiecana

Poland 1974. Dir Andrzej Wajda. With Daniel Olbrychski, Wojciech Pszoniak, Andrzej Seweryn. 179min. EST. Zebra

Stanisław Reymont's Nobel-winning novel is Poland's equivalent of 'Hard Times' or 'Germinal', a ruthlessly clear-eyed anatomising of the industrial revolution from the perspective of three young entrepreneurs vying to be the most ruthless. Wajda's viscerally vivid adaptation is intoxicated by this brave new world (the factory sequences have a you-are-there immediacy) without ever losing sight of the appalling human cost.

THU 21 MAY 17:40 NFT3

SUN 24 MAY 14:00 NFT1

Man of Iron Człowiek z żelaza

Poland 1981. Dir Andrzej Wajda. With Jerzy Radziwiłowicz, Krystyna Janda, Marian Opania. 147min. EST. Zebra
As the Solidarity protests swelled in 1980, Wajda grabbed camera and crew, pulled ready-made characters off the shelf (from his earlier *Man of Marble*) and filmed this story of government-backed espionage against a real-life backdrop of world-changing history unfolding: even Lech Wałęsa has a cameo. It won both the Palme d'Or and a domestic ban when martial law was declared.

SUN 3 MAY 14:00 NFT1

SAT 23 MAY 17:30 NFT1

Night Train Pociąg

Poland 1959. Dir Jerzy Kawalerowicz. With Lucyna Winnicka, Leon Niemczyk, Teresa Szmigielówna. 93min. EST. Kadr

A sleeper train rockets through the night, its passengers possibly including a murderer. Although this isn't quite as overtly Hitchcockian as that sounds, as Kawalerowicz was primarily interested in the quirks that people show in artificial social environments. Leon Niemczyk (*Knife in the Water*) and the director's wife Lucyna Winnicka are strangers sharing a compartment while studiously hiding personal secrets.

SAT 2 MAY 18:10 NFT3

SAT 9 MAY 20:45 NFT3

Mother Joan of the Angels Matka Joanna od aniołów

Poland 1961. Dir Jerzy Kawalerowicz. With Lucyna Winnicka, Mieczysław Voit, Anna Ciepielewska. 103min. EST. Kadr

Notionally, this is based on the same historical events that inspired Ken Russell's *The Devils*, but Kawalerowicz's treatment is subtler and more psychologically acute. His wife Lucyna Winnicka plays an allegedly possessed abbess whose bona fides are investigated by a hapless investigator who finds himself hopelessly out of his depth when confronted with forces that he does not understand.

SUN 3 MAY 17:30 NFT3

FRI 8 MAY 20:30 NFT3

Pharaoh Faraon + Intro*

Poland 1965. Dir Jerzy Kawalerowicz. With Jerzy Zelnik, Wiesława Mazurkiewicz, Barbara Brylska. 175min. EST. Kadr

Ancient Egyptians speaking Polish? Well, why not – they didn't speak English either. Kawalerowicz spent three years making what was once Poland's most expensive film, a huge widescreen epic about the struggle between Rameses XIII and his high priests. But this is no Cecil B. DeMille spectacle: co-screenwriter Tadeusz Konwicki regarded it as "a penetrating analysis of a system of power".

THU 7 MAY 20:00 NFT2*

SUN 10 MAY 15:00 NFT2

Austeria

Poland 1982. Dir Jerzy Kawalerowicz. With Franciszek Pieczka, Wojciech Pszoniak, Jan Szurmiej. 102min. EST. Kadr

Kawalerowicz spent decades trying to realise his most personal project, a tale of anti-Semitic persecution during WWI that allowed him to suggest without tackling the Holocaust directly that the culturally-engendered pacifism and passivity of Poland's Jews sowed the seeds of their later destruction. This was, to put it mildly, a controversial notion, but Kawalerowicz's sympathy and sincerity is evident throughout.

WED 13 MAY 20:50 NFT3

SAT 23 MAY 15:30 NFT2

Knife in the Water Nóż w wodzie

Poland 1961. Dir Roman Polanski. With Leon Niemczyk, Jolanta Umecka, Zygmunt Malanowicz. 101min. EST.

Polanski's first feature spun ostensibly simple ingredients – two men, a woman, a yacht, a vast expanse of water and a haunting jazz score by the great Krzysztof Komeda – into not just one of the most psychologically gripping films of its era but also Poland's first Oscar nominee.

SAT 23 MAY 20:45 NFT1

MON 25 MAY 18:10 NFT1

TUE 26 MAY 18:20 NFT2

Walkover

Poland 1965. *Dir Jerzy Skolimowski. With Aleksandra Zawierusanka, Jerzy Skolimowski, Krzysztof Chamiec. 70min. EST.*

Skolimowski's second feature (and first full-length narrative) cemented his status as a one-man Polish New Wave, the rhythms of his films at least as influenced by jazz and (his own) poetry as more conventional storytelling. Skolimowski himself plays a dropout turned itinerant amateur boxer who is distracted from his bouts when Teresa, an old university friend, re-enters his life.

MON 4 MAY 20:45 NFT2

SUN 17 MAY 18:20 NFT3

Provincial Actors *Aktorzy prowincjonalni*

Poland 1978. *Dir Agnieszka Holland. With Halina Łabonarska, Tadeusz Huk, Iwona Biernacka. 104min. EST.*

After an apprenticeship as Wajda's assistant, Agnieszka Holland made her solo debut with this ambitious ensemble piece, both an allegorical study of cultural interference (a trendy young theatre director is attempting a politically controversial reinterpretation of a Polish stage warhorse) and a lacerating portrait of a withering marriage, its participants actively contemplating suicide or murder as an escape route.

FRI 15 MAY 18:10 NFT2

SAT 16 MAY 20:40 NFT2

About the BFI

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- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
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- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / BFI Southbank / April 2015 / Masterpieces of Polish Cinema

