

"A
gift
from the
great beyond
[from] the late
**Krzysztof
Kieslowski.**"

— Eddie Cockrell,
VARIETY

MILESTONE FILMS PRESENTS

The BIG Animal

A FILM BY JERZY STUHR

FROM A SCRIPT BY KRZYSZTOF KIESLOWSKI

THE BIG ANIMAL (DUZE ZWIERZE)
PRODUCED BY TELEWIZJA POLSKA EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY FILM STUDIO PERSPEKTYWA DIRECTED BY JERZY STUHR
SCREENPLAY BY KRZYSZTOF KIESLOWSKI STARRING JERZY STUHR ANNA DYMNA AND "RUBIO" THE CAMEL
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY PAWEŁ EDELMAN EDITING BY ELŻBIETA KURKOWSKA MUSIC BY ABEL KORZENIOWSKI
SOUND BY NIKODEM WOLK-LANIEWSKI
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THE BIG ANIMAL

(Duze Zwierze)

2000. Poland. Running time: 72 minutes. Aspect ratio: 1:1.66. Black and White. Dolby SR.

Cast

Jerzy Stuhr	Zygmunt Sawicki
Anna Dymna	Marysia Sawicki
Rubio from Zalewski Circus.....	Camel
Dominika Bednarczyk	Bank Clerk
Blazej Wojcik.....	Bank Clerk
Andrzej Franczyk	Bank Manager
Feliks Szajnert	Drunkard
Zbigniew Kaleta.....	Photographer
Radoslaw Krzyczowski	Advertising Agent
Stanislaw Banas.....	Fire Chief
Piotr Dabowski.....	Fireman I
Zbigniew Rola.....	Fire Man II
Ewa Worytkiewicz.....	Councilwoman I
Malgorzata Zabkowska	Councilwoman II
Beata Schimscheiner	Councilwoman III
Tomasz Schimscheiner	Builder
Zbigniew Kosowski.....	Stefaniak
Krzysztof Gluchowski.....	Mayor
Katarzyna Mrozek	Little Girl
Leszek swigon	Posterunkowy I
Tomasz Karolak.....	Posterunkowy II

With

P. Durska, D. Godzic, D. Zieciewska, J. Cielecki, K. Gadacz, K. Gorecki, R. Jasinski, T. Lomnicki, R. Lukowski, K. Konopka, T. Miedzik, K. Najbor, K. Stawowy, D. Zawadzki

Crew

Director.....	Jerzy Stuhr
Screenwriter	Krzysztof Kieslowski
Based on the novel by	Kazimierz Orlos
Producer.....	Slawomir Rogowski
Production Company	Film Studio Perspektywa
Cinematographer	Pawel Edelman
Film Editor.....	Elzbieta Kurkowska
Set and Prop Design	Monika Sajko-Gradowska
Assistant Set Design.....	Dariusz Wolski
Costume Design.....	Elzbieta Radke
Assistant Costume Design.....	Anna Kowalska
Production Manager	Jan Kaczmarek
Assistant Directors	Sylwia Czaplewska Maciej Swierzawski

children a camel ride, and old men yell over the gate demanding the animal's removal. When Sawicki tries to register the camel at the town hall, he is forced to pay the horse tax, since there has never been another camel in town before.

Eventually, a TV station offers Sawicki more than his annual salary to appear in a commercial with his camel. While he signs the contract, he does so hesitantly and under strict conditions that protect the camel. Everyone in town wants something from the camel, while Sawicki and his wife merely want to be left alone to enjoy the time they share with him.

The next day, the Sawickis travel to the local schoolyard to give the village children a lesson on camels. The children squeal with delight as they learn about the camel's diet, work, and anatomy. They also hold a *Name the Camel* contest. Though the children suggest names such as "Pampoosh," "Pooshek," "Fuzzy," and "Hunchback," Sawicki decides to wait to give his camel a more dignified name.

Later, when Sawicki is out, town officials come by to collect a donation for the lottery at the annual Great Jubilee Celebration. Though Marysia contributes a jar of honey, as she does every year, the officials seem more interested in acquiring the camel, or his coat, for the tax. Though the officials are persuasive, Marysia forces them away. Their angry departure exposes the jealousy and resentment the townspeople are starting to feel towards the camel.

Despite this friction, the bond between the couple and their camel only seems to grow stronger. Both Sawicki and his wife decide that they could never, under any circumstances, part with their camel. At this point, the couple also decides to put their own needs aside to save money for a new camel stable on the side of their house. In the evening, after the camel joins the couple for dinner through the kitchen window, Sawicki plays his clarinet. They are both delighted and surprised to find that the camel sings along to the music. The relationship this odd trio has formed is a heartwarming testament to the simple joys of life.

But outside, things continue to worsen. In contrast to the beginning of the film, when the town paraded behind the man and his camel, people suddenly begin to ignore Sawicki's greetings, close their doors, and drag their children inside as Sawicki passes through town with his camel. After finding only three children at the *Name the Camel* celebrations in the schoolyard, Sawicki is called to a meeting. Once there, three town officials repeatedly degrade his camel and tell Sawicki that it is not welcome in their town. They call the camel dirty, distracting and useless. Because the camel serves no public purpose for the common good, they suggest sending it to a farm where it can work. They fear the camel and are unmoved by the love the Sawickis have for their animal. Their heartless comments and suggestions cause Sawicki to storm out of the office. Yet, it's quite clear that the overbearing town officials are keeping watch over the camel.

Amidst a climate of hatred and fear, the Sawickis never give up hope. They take extra measures to protect their camel and make him feel at home. After concluding that the camel is from Arabia (since he has a particular affinity towards the Arabic music Sawicki plays on his clarinet), the couple designs a mosque-like stable for him. Though the builders claim Sawicki to be a fool, the camel's new home suits him nicely. Marysia also bestows upon the camel a handmade blanket with openings that fit perfectly around his two humps.

But, beyond the fence that separates the Sawicki's home from the town, tensions worsen between the couple and the townspeople. Sawicki is forced to stop playing clarinet in the local band, while Marysia must abandon her endeavors with the local children whose parents fear their children will be infected with disease. But they are both willing to give up things that bring them great joy to be with their camel. Upon discovering angry protesters with signs reading "OUT" waiting silently in

front of their peaceful home, the Sawickis race to lock themselves inside the newly built stable with the camel. They have become prisoners in their own home.

Finally, Sawicki is ordered to attend a town council meeting to determine the fate of his camel. At the meeting he is attacked from every angle by town officials who want to destroy the camel or remove him from Sawicki's care. No one wants to listen to or help the Sawickis. Their threats and ulterior motives cause Sawicki to leave silently before giving consent to put his camel in what the mayor calls a "Mini Zoo."

Sadness and confusion settle on the Sawicki home. The camel does not sing anymore and the couple fears for his safety. That night, the couple awakes to a noise in the stable. Rushing outside to check on their camel, they discover that he has disappeared. The two race through the fog-covered streets searching for their friend to no avail. Ominous strangers on the street laugh at Sawicki as he pleads for their help. Even the police refuse to take him seriously when he attempts to make a missing camel report. They are jealous and hateful, wondering why he couldn't just have a "normal, human animal." As he leaves the station, Sawicki finds a destroyed muzzle, only large enough for a camel, in a puddle on the ground. He comes to understand that his camel friend is truly lost. Intolerance and fear in the community around them have destroyed the love that the Sawickis had found with their camel.

Hopelessness fills the Sawickis as the loss of the camel sinks in as a reality. As they eat dinner quietly, loneliness fills the space in the window where the camel used to eat. Later, when Sawicki ventures into a snow-covered field, a small dog comes to beg at his feet. Sawicki ignores him. This small, domesticated animal seems a weak substitute for the powerful, majestic camel who once accompanied Sawicki through this field. The loss of his large companion has clearly devastated him.

Though he does not reappear, the memory of the camel continues to live in the hearts of the Sawickis and even in some of the townspeople. At the village fair, Sawicki refuses numerous propositions to work for the men who previously betrayed him and probably took his camel. As he is about to leave, a small girl motions to Sawicki. Befuddled, he pauses. She pulls a small figurine of a camel out of her pocket and smiles. Sawicki smiles triumphantly in return, regaining some hope just knowing that his camel's memory has not been completely destroyed.

In fact, the Sawickis never give up hope. To avoid the critical eye of their village, they travel to Warsaw by train to go to the zoo. Snow falls as they discover three massive, black camels. The magic of the moment envelops the couple as the snow-covered camels nuzzle them. Great smiles fill their faces and they exude a child-like joy as the picture fades to white.

Background

A brief excerpt from Kieslowski on Kieslowski on the political climate in Poland at the time when the script was written, Pgs. xv-xvi.

During these years, the First Secretary of the Communist PZPR (the Polish United Workers' Party) was Wladyslaw Gomulka, brought to power during the Polish October of 1956 (three years after Stalin's death) on a wave of popular unrest. He was welcomed by both Nikita Khrushchev, who then recalled his troops from their march on Warsaw, and by the Polish people. Gomulka wanted to 'lead Poland on a new road to Socialism' and the extreme restrictions on personal and public freedom enforced during the Stalinist era were slightly relaxed. A brief period of relative freedom followed, but by 1968, some thought Gomulka was becoming incompetent. A number of party members, among them General Mieczyslaw Moczar, the head of security services, were simply

waiting for the right moment to discredit Gomulka and to take power. The opportunity Moczar had been looking for came in January 1968 Adam Mickiewicz's *Forefather's Eve* (*Dziady*), first published in 1823, was playing in Warsaw's National Theater to students who cheered the anti-Russian references. The government took drastic measures of banning the play. The resulting student demonstrations were violently repressed and many students were arrested or expelled from the University. Demonstrations spread to other student communities including the Lodz Film School. General Moczar accused Zionists agents of subversion. In the spring of 1968 there followed a purge of thousands of Polish Jews from the Party and from Poland. Gomulka was lenient in issuing exit visas for Jews and many, including a large percentage of the intelligentsia, emigrated. Lodz Film School lost many of its finest professors. The party, blaming the demonstrations on Zionist conspiracies, managed quite successfully to set the media, and most importantly, the workers of large factories against the rebellious students. Many students, if not themselves arrested, suffered great disillusionment. They had been duped but their social and political awareness had been sharpened. Kieslowski graduated from Lodz film school in 1969.

The turn of the decade, 1970, was a time of unrest in Poland generally. A combination of Gomulka's resistance to imports and the bad harvests of 1969 and 1970 led to severe food shortages, while throughout the 1960s the cost of living had risen and wages had remained low. Gomulka's announcement on 13 December 1970 of a 30 per cent price-rise in basic foodstuffs burst the dam. Workers at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk went out on strike and marched on the Party headquarters where police opened fire on the crowd. The workers burnt down the building. Other shipyards followed, the army was called in to restore order, but fighting broke out, and hundreds died. An emergency session of the Politburo was held without Gomulka, who had allegedly suffered a stroke and after infighting between Edward Gierek's and Moczar's factions, Gierek, First Secretary in Katowice, Silesia, the most industrial area of Poland at the time, succeeded Gomulka.

Jerzy Stuhr (April 18, 1947–) Actor/Director



Jerzy Stuhr was born in Krakow in 1947. He stayed in his hometown to attend Jagiellonian University, from which he graduated with a degree from the Department of Polish Philosophy. He later attended the Krakow State Theater School, where he was first introduced to the study of theater and acting. Later on in his career, Stuhr would eventually become both a theater teacher and rector at his alma mater, the Krakow Theatrical School. In 1972, Stuhr began to work at the Old Theater in Krakow. There he gained experience acting under the guidance of many famous Polish directors.

Soon after, Stuhr began to act in film with great success. His breakthrough film was 1976's *The Scar*, which was directed by Krzysztof Kieslowski. It was during this film that Stuhr and Kieslowski formed their legendary relationship. Stuhr's phenomenal work in *The Scar* opened him up not only to a wide Polish film audience, but also to the world of directing. At the same time, this early film gave Stuhr a chance to help Kieslowski understand how to work with his actors. Stuhr and Kieslowski eventually made many films together, including *The Scar*, *Camera Buff*, *Blind Chance*, the tenth episode of *Decalogue*, and *White*, the middle film of the *Three Colors Trilogy*. Throughout his

career, Stuhr worked closely with many famous Polish directors such as Jerzy Jarocki and Andrzej Wajda, it was his relationship with Kieslowski that had the most influence on him.

In fact, after acting in numerous Kieslowski films, Stuhr developed a pointed interest in the directorial aspects of filmmaking. After expressing his desire to direct to Kieslowski, the seasoned filmmaker helped Stuhr break through with his first two directorial attempts, *The List of Adulteresses* in 1994, and *Love Stories* in 1997. Kieslowski and Stuhr also co-wrote the scripts for both of these films. Stuhr won many awards both domestically and internationally for his directorial debuts. Stuhr possesses a directorial style and sense of morality that is reminiscent of Kieslowski's best work. Yet as he has continued to pursue his directorial career, Stuhr has increasingly gained his own sense of style, keeping the influence of Kieslowski close at hand. This combination of two minds culminated after Kieslowski's death, when Stuhr decided to pay tribute to his friend and teacher by directing Kieslowski's lost script of *The Big Animal* in 2000.

Over the years Stuhr continued to both act and direct on the stage of Krakow. On stage, his biggest success was his direction of Patrick Suskind's *Double-Bass Player*, which played over 800 times around Poland. He also worked briefly in the film industry of Italy, during which time he became well known throughout Europe. Throughout his career Stuhr has continued to stay away from showy costume dramas, while trying to focus on contemporary themes concerning the world around him.

Today, Stuhr is a professor of directing at the Katowice Film School. Though he has no formal training in the directorial aspects of filmmaking, his hands-on experience and the advice he has garnered over his years from his film gurus and friends have given him exceptional credentials for teaching a new generation of Polish film students how to create quality films. He continues to be one of the most recognizable faces in modern Polish cinema, and has recently completed his autobiography, entitled *Heart Condition*.

Jerzy Stuhr: Director Filmography

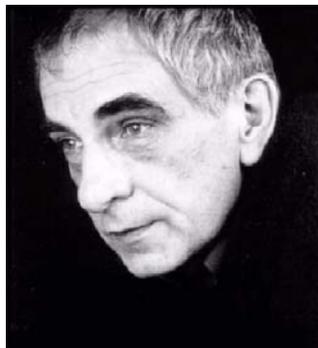
List of Adulteresses (Spis cudzolożnic) 1995
Love Stories (Historie miłosne) 1997
A Week in the Life of a Man (Tydzień z życia mężczyzny) 1999
The Big Animal (Duże zwierze) 2000
Tomorrow's Weather 2003

Jerzy Stuhr: Actor Filmography

Third Part of the Night (Trzecia część nocy) 1971
Calm Before the Storm (Spokój) 1976
The Scar (Blizna) 1976
Top Dog (Wodzirej) 1978
Rough Treatment (Bez znieczulenia) 1979
Camera Buff (Amator) 1979
Inspection of the Crime Scene 1901 (Wizja lokalna 1901) 1980
Chance (Szansa) 1980
The Moth (Cma) 1980
Provincial Actors (Aktorzy prowincjonalni) 1980
The War of the World – Next Century (Wojna światów – następne stulecie) 1981
Blind Chance (Przypadek) 1982
Sexmission (Seksmisja) 1984
The Year of the Quiet Sun (Rok spokojnego słońca) 1984

Medium 1985
O-bi, O-ba – The End of Civilization (O-bi, O-ba – Koniec cywilizacji) 1985
Ucieczka 1986
Ga-ga: Glory to the Heroes (Ga, Ga – Chwała bohaterom) 1986
Train to Hollywood (Pociąg do Hollywood) 1987
Cupid's Bow (Luk Erosa) 1987
ero of the Year (Bohater roku) 1987
King Size (Kingsajz) 1988
Though Shalt Not Covet They Neighbor's Goods (Dekalog, dziesiec) 1988
Déjà vu (Dezha vju) 1988
Citizen Piszczyk (Obywatel Piszczyk) 1989
Life for Life: Maxmilian Kolbe (Zycie za zycie) 1991
Hijacking of Agata (Uprowadzenie Agaty) 1993
Three Colors: White (Trzy kolory: Bialy) 1994
List of Adultresses (Spis cudzoloznic) 1995
Love Stories (Historie milosne) 1997
Kiler (1997)
A Week in the Life of a Man (Tydzien z zycia mezczyzy) 1999
Kilerow 2-och 1999
The Other's Life (La Vita altrui) 2000
The Big Animal (Duze zwierz) 2000
Weiser 2000
Down House 2000
Show 2003
Tomorrow's Weather 2003
Persona non grata 2005
Doskonale popoludnie 2005
Il Caimano 2006

Krzysztof Kieslowski (June 27, 1941-March 13, 1996) Screenwriter



"I always think on a small scale, and I certainly don't want to make a film about things on a macro scale, on a global scale. That doesn't interest me in the least because I don't believe societies exist, I don't believe nations exist. I think that there simply are, I don't know, 60 million individual French or 40 million individual Poles or 65 million individual British. That's what counts. They're individual people."

- Krzysztof Kieslowski

Krzysztof Kieslowski was born in Warsaw in 1941. His childhood, shadowed by the towering figures of both Hitler and Stalin, was very unstable. Because of his father's tuberculosis, the Kieslowskis were frequently forced to move throughout Poland to seek out suitable healthcare. At the young age

of 16, Krzysztof attended the Fireman's Training College. He so hated the discipline and uniformity required of firemen that he decided to quit.

Soon after, Kieslowski was accepted to the Warsaw College for Theater Technicians. It was this decision that allowed him to avoid military duty and more deeply involve himself in film production. In 1965, after being rejected twice, Kieslowski was finally admitted to the Lodz Film School. The film school in Lodz has an incredible reputation with an even more incredible track record for training virtually all of Poland's top filmmakers. Here Kieslowski made his first short film, *The Tram (Tramwaj)*, in 1966. His career at Lodz Film School prepared him technically and gave him enough resources to produce five short black-and-white films. His final graduation project, *From the City of Lodz*, was finished in 1969.

In the years just following his graduation, Kieslowski became a representative of what is now known as the Polish Cinema of Moral Anxiety. Poland in the sixties and seventies was a hotbed of political unrest and social upheaval, and Kieslowski was attuned to the fact that film was an extremely important medium for social commentary and political movement. Along with Tomasz Zygadlo, Krzysztof Wojciechowski, Andrzej Titkow, Marek Piwowski and Grzegorz Krolikiewicz, Kieslowski became one of the leading representatives of the new wave in Polish documentary cinema. It was during this time that Kieslowski wrote his screenplay for *The Big Animal*. The themes present in this film are subtle, yet striking, for in a climate so severe and unstable the choice to comment critically on the social conditions underneath the eye of political oppression was difficult. The subtle discontent is also reflected in his early films, many of which were documentaries and all of which commented on Polish life, culture, and political conditions under the Communist Party.

Throughout the earlier parts of his career, Kieslowski received multiple commissions from Polish Television and WFD Documentary Studios to make short documentaries about working conditions, struggles and everyday life in Poland. When making his early pictures, Kieslowski presented the events in his films very precisely, thus enabling him to key in on the essence of his subjects. However, he also expressed his own attitude towards the reality through his art, since making films for him was not only recording the world but interpreting it as well.

His first success, *The Photograph (Zdjecie)*, in which Kieslowski himself appears as a cameraman searching for two men in a photograph, was shown on television in 1969. Kieslowski was very conscious of the social conditions surrounding him, and used film to fight for what he believed in. In 1971, he made his most famous documentary called *Workers '71: Nothing About Us Without Us (Robotnicy '71)* about the strikes in Szczecin. Three years later, *First Love*, a short documentary made for Polish Television, won the Golden Dragon Prize at the International Festival of Short Films in Krakow and the European Film Prize. Amidst the critical acclaim and his future ventures into drama and narrative feature film, Kieslowski's style consistently continued to reflect the realism and simplicity so important to his documentaries.

Kieslowski eagerly directed numerous feature films for Polish television and cinema. After his 1973 documentary *Bricklayer (Murarz)*, Kieslowski's *Pedestrian Subway*, a drama, appeared on television. After a few more television dramas (such as 1975's *Curriculum Vitae*), Kieslowski made his first foray on the big screen with *The Scar* (starring Jerzy Stuhr) in 1976. Only a few years later, in the late seventies, one of Kieslowski's first feature films attracted international attention. *Camera Buff (Amator)*, also starring Jerzy Stuhr, became a great success that would eventually launch Kieslowski into both the national and international spotlight.

Kieslowski continued to work during much of the political upheaval of the 1980s in Poland. Eventually, though, it became very difficult to make films under such unpredictable conditions. Government censorship made both production and distribution a great challenge. Kieslowski also

had a lot of trouble finding funding for his projects. He was, however, given funding from Polish television to make a ten part series based on the Ten Commandments. In 1988, this project *Decalogue* became extremely well known in Poland, later gaining wide critical acclaim around the world. Two of these episodes were expanded into feature length pictures, *A Short Film About Love*, and *A Short Film About Killing*, which were also very successful. Kieslowski would win many awards for his 13 feature films, 23 documentary shorts, and two multi-part works. No matter their form, Kieslowski's films share a quality that continues to move, inspire, provoke and disturb audiences around the world.

After the fall of communism in Poland, Kieslowski decided to move to France due to financial difficulties. It was here that Kieslowski completed some of his most striking and memorable features. In 1991, he made *The Double Life of Veronique*, starring Irene Jacob, which was a huge international success. A few years later, French producer Marin Karmitz backed Kieslowski financially to make his famous trilogy, *Blue*, *White*, and *Red* (which was, perhaps, the most well received of the three). These three art house hits were based on the colors of the French flag and the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, and are considered to be Kieslowski's final masterpiece.

After finishing *Red* in 1994, Kieslowski decided to retire from the film industry, and moved from France back to Warsaw with his wife, Maria, and his daughter, Marta. He did not, however, leave the spotlight completely. In 1995, Krzysztof Kieslowski was nominated for an Academy Award® for the last film of his *Three Colors* trilogy, *Red*, for Best Director and a shared Best Screenplay nomination with co-author Krzysztof Piesiewicz.

Sadly, on March 13, 1996, at the age of 54, Krzysztof Kieslowski died after suffering a heart attack while undergoing open-heart surgery at Warsaw Hospital.

Krzysztof Kieslowski: Filmography

The Tram (Tramwaj) 1966, short
The Office (Urząd) 1966, documentary
Concert of Requests (Koncert zyczen) 1967, short
The Photograph (Zdjecie) 1968, documentary
From the City of Lodz (Z miasta Lodzi) 1969, documentary
I Was a Soldier (Bylem zolnierzem) 1970, documentary
Factory (Fabryka) 1970, documentary
Before the Rally (Przed Rajdem) 1971, documentary
Refrain (Refren) 1972, documentary
Between Wroclaw and Zielona Gora (Miedzy Wroclawiem a Zielona Gora) 1972, documentary
The Principles of Safety and Hygiene in a Copper Mine (Podstawy BHP) 1972, documentary
Workers '71: Nothing About Us Without Us (Robotnicy '71: Nic o nas bez nas) 1972, documentary
Bricklayer (Murarz) 1973, documentary
Pedestrian Subway (Przejscie podziemne) 1973, television
X-Ray (Przeswietlenie) 1974, documentary
First Love (Pierwsza milosc) 1974, television
Curriculum Vitae (Zyciorys) 1975, drama documentary
Personnel (Personel) 1975, television
The Scar (Blizna) 1976, feature
Hospital (Szpital) 1976, documentary
Slate (Klaps) 1976, short
The Calm (Spokoj) 1976, television
From a Night Porter's Point of View (Z punktu widzenia nocnego portiera) 1977, documentary
I Don't Know (Nie wiem) 1977, documentary

Seven Women of Different Ages (Siedem kobiet w roznyim wieku) 1978, documentary
Camera Buff (Amator) 1979, feature
Station (Dworzec) 1980, documentary
Talking Heads (Gadajace glowy) 1980, documentary
Blind Chance (Przypadek) 1981, feature
Short Working Day (Krotki dzien pracy) 1981, feature
No End (Bez konca) 1984, feature
Seven Days a Week (Siedem dni w tygodniu) 1988, documentary
A Short Film about Killing (Krotki film o zabijaniu) 1988, feature
A Short Film about Love (Krotki film o milosci) 1988, feature
The Decalogue (Dekalog) 1988, television
The Double Life of Veronique (La Double Vie de Veronique) 1991, feature
Blue (Bleu) 1993, feature
White (Blanc) 1993, feature
Red (Rouge) 1994, feature

For more detailed information on the films of Krzysztof Kieslowski, see:

<http://www-personal.engin.umich.edu/~zbigniew/Kieslowski/kieslowski.html>

Uncovering The Big Animal Script A Memoir from Elzbieta Scotti

Every year in May, the medieval town of Krakow, Poland's former capital, becomes a meeting place for young directors whose films are being shown at the Short Film Festival, and for film enthusiasts eager to discover promising talents among the newcomers. During the 1970s when political opposition among Poland's youth was taking shape this film festival not only allowed the public to see and evaluate new Polish films but it also became a forum in which the young people of Poland could cry out for change.

In 1974, the short film *First Love* directed by Krzysztof Kieslowski received the main prize. This was my first encounter with this great personality. At that time I was quite familiar with Polish film, having worked with Film Polski (a film export company) for ten years distributing Polish films in German-language companies. Over the years I had made friends with directors such as Wajda, Kawalerowicz, Has, Kutz, and Bossak.

When I first met Kieslowski at the 1974 Short Film Festival, his film impressed me, but he did not. To me, he was just one of those young, idealistic filmmakers who believed they could change the world. He was tall, skinny, nervous, and always seemed to be in a hurry. We took a long walk through the park that surrounds the center of Krakow while Kieslowski eagerly explained to me the essence of his film. He explained that it was a semi-documentary film about a young boy and girl, both still in school, who fall in love with each other and decide to get married despite their age and the opposition they face from their parents, their teachers, and social environment in general. Kieslowski was eager to know if his film had a chance on German television, but I tried to explain that dramatic, lyrical stories with impressive, colorful shots had better chances to be shown than his charmingly unconventional, yet very modest film. He lit a new cigarette, gave me an angry, passionate glance, and reminded me that his film *First Love* had won the European Film Prize. On this day in May of 1974, he said to me, "I promise you, some day you shall speak about my films with the same enthusiasm you show when you speak now about Wajda or Has. My films are different – they show our reality and are searching for the real values in our lives."

Fifteen years later in Berlin, the Felix statuette in his hand, Kieslowski gave me a knowing glance, as if to say, "I told you so." Over the years I helped Kieslowski complete his Ten Commandments

series by finding a German co-producer who would support this unique film. Though he was openly disliked by the authorities and constantly under strict surveillance, Kieslowski had obtained permission to participate in Germany's International Mannheim Film Festival in 1975 for his first full-length feature film *Personnel*. Though they had no viable reason to exclude him, authorities decided to ban *Personnel*. Instead of scandalously removing the film from the festival, they said that the print was not delivered in time to be shown. Yet, oppression awakes opposition. Micky, a gray-haired gentleman in Public Relations at Film Polski, whose passions included film and bourbon, picked up the print and brought it by hand to Mannheim half an hour before its scheduled projection time. The film won first prize. This was the first time Kieslowski gained international recognition. After the festival he spent a few days as my guest in the town where I lived and I introduced him to several people from German television. We spoke about his further endeavors and the possibility of co-producing some of his pieces with German TV.

After his return to Poland in October 1975 we would meet every time I was in Poland. We constantly discussed films he wanted to make. All of his stories had one theme in common: the search for pure values in our everyday life by exceptional heroes.

The German ZDF television channel had a program slot for half-hour feature films, and I was able to give thirty of those slots to Polish directors who would produce features based on famous world literature or original scripts. Kieslowski had a few proposals, but they were too long for these slots. At that time, he had started working with Krzysztof Piesiewicz, a lawyer and scriptwriter, who became Kieslowski's alter ego when working on deep, philosophical projects like *The Decalogue*. Among subjects for his shorter films was a story entitled *The Big Animal*, which he never got to make. I kept the original storyboards and my German adaptation of the screenplay in my files. While I was entangled in my work and Kieslowski was heading towards world fame, shooting one film after another, concentrating all his energy on his eternal search for value in human life, we both forgot all about *The Big Animal*.

His early death was a shock, but I suppose his life required a dramatic end. Kieslowski always stood out in the crowd, and the script of his life did not follow any structured format.

Three years ago, when I came across the file with *The Big Animal* in it, I decided that I must go back to Poland to give this script to Kieslowski's widow. When Polish director Janusz Morgenstern visited me, I asked him to take the original outlines back to Warsaw with him. Mr. Morgenstern decided to produce the film in homage to Krzysztof Kieslowski.

The story of the film is simple and does not fit into any established film genre. It tells the story of a simple, average bank clerk who stands out from his community when he decides to take in an animal that is no ordinary house pet. It's a big animal. A camel. Because of the camel, the clerk's friendly, comfortable world grows extremely hostile, and everyone around him is full of animosity, envy and suspicion. After the camel mysteriously disappears, the clerk's life returns to normal.

This film is about uniformity and difference, dullness and eccentricity. It is a film about *intolerance*, a subject D.W. Griffith dealt with in the early years of cinematography, which has now been revived by Krzysztof Kieslowski.

Excerpts from a Krzysztof Kieslowski Interview on his *Three Colors* Trilogy

Q: So what interests you is life. Is this why you left your first job as a designer to go to school in Lodz and specialize in documentaries?

KK: I wanted to describe the world, and at the same time, through image, express what I felt. It was the time of the great documentary filmmakers: Richard Leacock, Joris Ivens. Today, television has put an end to this type of filmmaking. The television industry doesn't like to see the complexity of the world. It prefers simple reporting, with simple ideas: this is white, that's black; this is good, that's bad...

Q: So you turned to fiction — yet you stick very close to real life.

KK: I think life is more intelligent than literature. And working so long in documentaries became both a blessing and an obstacle in my work. In a documentary, the script is just to point you in a certain direction. One never knows how a story is going to unfold. And during the shoot, the point is to get as much material as possible. It's in the editing that a documentary takes place. Today, I think I still work in the same way. What I shoot isn't really the story — the footage just contains the elements that will make up the story. While shooting, details, which weren't in the script, are often thrown in. And during the editing process a lot is cut out.

Q: If you took this way of thinking far enough, don't you think you might end up using scripts merely as pretexts?

KK: No, not at all. Absolutely not. For me the script is key because it's the means to communicating with the people I work with. It may be the skeleton, but it is the indispensable foundation. Later, many things can be changed: Certain ideas may be eliminated, the end may become the beginning, but what's between the lines, all the ideas — that stays the same.

Q: What is it you're trying to capture?

KK: Perhaps the soul. In any case, a truth which I myself haven't found. Maybe time that flees and can never be caught.

Q: "The Decalogue" was full of chance meetings — some of them failures and some successful. And in "Three Colors", from one film to another, people seem to run into each other.

KK: I like chance meetings — life is full of them. Everyday, without realizing it, I pass people whom I should know. At this moment, in this cafe, we're sitting next to strangers. Everyone will get up, leave, and go on their own way. And they'll never meet again. And if they do, they won't realize that it's not for the first time.

KK: To tell you the truth, in my work, love is always in opposition to the elements. It creates dilemmas. It brings in suffering. We can't live with it, and we can't live without it. You'll rarely find a happy ending in my work.

Q: Do you feel European?

KK: No. I feel Polish. More specifically, I feel like I'm from the tiny village in the Northeast of Poland where I have a house and where I love to spend time. But I don't work there. I cut wood.

Reprinted from http://www.musicolog.com/kieslowski_interview.asp

Pawel Edelman: Cinematographer



Academy Award® nominated cinematographer Pawel Edelman was born in the Polish city of Lodz on June 26, 1958. Edelman attended the University of Lodz, where he concentrated in modern culture. He later attended the celebrated Lodz National Film, Television and Theater School (where Kieslowski's film career also began). It was at the Lodz School where Edelman learned from great filmmakers such as Mieczyslaw Jahoda, Jerzy Wojcik, and Witold Sobocinski. During his time at the Lodz School, he worked on many professional and student-run projects.

After graduating in 1990, Pawel Edelman burst onto the scene as one of Poland's top independent cinematographers with Piotr Mikucki's *Prank Call (Gluchy Telefon)*. Over the years he has worked consistently with notable directors such as Wladyslaw Pasikowski, Andrzej Wajda, and more recently, Jerzy Sturh. Edelman's name is synonymous with simple, richly beautiful camera work.

In 1997, Edelman won the Camerimage Bronze Frog Award and the Polish Film Festival Award for Best Cinematography for his work on *Kroniki Domowe*. Recently, Edelman gained international acclaim, including the reception of numerous awards worldwide, for his work on Roman Polanski's *The Pianist*. This included a European Film Award, a Cesar Award, and nominations for the BAFTA Film Award along with the Oscar®.

Pawel Edelman: Filmography

Amaranta [Dir: Ricardo Torres Ramirez] 1984
Cwiczenie czarno – biale [Dir: Pawel Edelman] 1984
Z galerii [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1984
Film bez tytułu [Film without Title] [Dir: Jacek Marczewski] 1984
Concerto barocco [Dir: Piotr Perz] 1985
Kartkowanie do tyłu [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1985
Materiały [Dir: Pawel Edelman & Jacek Marczewski] 1985
Metna woda [Dir: José Luis Perez Morales] 1986
Szklanna [Dir: Katarzyna Remin] 1986
Swiatla [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1986
Wielkie solo Wilhelma T./Orkiestra [Dir: Piotr Perz] 1986
Wlosy. Post scriptum do 'Infantki' [Dir: Jolanta Dylewska] 1986
Zaproszenie na egzekucje [Dir: Piotr Perz] 1987
Cordelia [Dir: Ricardo Torres Ramirez] 1987
From Poland [Dir: Maria Oberman] 1987
Jak kochac zycie [Dir: Józef Luszpinski] 1987
Lot Antoniego T./Antoni T. [Dir: Andrzej Gajewski] 1987

Motory [Dir: Pawel Edelman] 1987
Palaestra [Dir: Jolanta Dylewska] 1987
Podróż [Dir: Gerhard Thiell] 1987
Powrót z wyspy torcello [Dir: Jaroslaw Falinski] 1987
Romeo I Julia/Truskawkowe pole [Dir: Ricardo Torres Ramirez] 1987
Zen [Dir: Stefan Chazbijewicz] 1987
Zły [Dir: Pawel Edelman] 1987
Jest spokojnie [Dir: Andrzej Kraszewski] 1988
Matylda [Dir: Jolanta Dylewska] 1988
Nocne czuwanie [Dir: Piotr Perz] 1988
Polowanie [Dir: Józef Luszpinski] 1988
Stasiék [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1988
Szklana góra [Dir: Jolanta Dylewska] 1988
Wstęga Möbiusa [Dir: Lukasz Karwowski] 1988
Z życia marionetek [Dir: Andrzej Kraszewski] 1988
Kwk – wujek [Dir: Andrzej Gajewski] 1989
Ilinx [Dir: Andrzej Kraszewski] 1989
Gluchy telefon/Crossed Lines [Dir: Piotr Mikucki] 1989
Maria [Dir: Lukasz Karwowski] 1989
Sal [Dir: Lukasz Karwowski] 1990
Kroll [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1991
Listopad/November [Dir: Lukasz Karwowski] 1992
Psy/Pigs [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1992
Tarant thriller [Dir: Miroslaw Dembinski] 1993
Nastazja [Dir: Andrzej Wajda] 1994
Psy 2: Ostatnia krew/Pigs 2 [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1994
L'aube à l'envers [Dir: Sophie Marceau] 1995
Slodko gorzki [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1995
Historie milosnel/Love Stories [Dir: Jerzy Stuhr] 1997
Szczesliwego Nowego Jorku/Happy New York [Dir: Janusz Zaorski] 1997
Kroniki domowe [Dir: Leszek Wosiewicz] 1997
Demony wojny wedlug goi [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1997
Operacja samum [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 1998
Pan Tadeusz [Dir: Andrzej Wajda] 1999
Prawo ojca [Dir: Marek Kondrat] 1999
Reich [Dir: Wladyslaw Pasikowski] 2000
Duże zwierze/Big Animal [Dir: Jerzy Stuhr] 2000
Edges of the Lord [Dir: Yurek Bogayevicz] 2000
The Pianist/Pianista [Roman Polanski] 2001
Zemsta/The Revenge [Andrzej Wajda] 2002
Ray [Taylor Hackford] 2003
Hamlet [Lukasz Barczyk] 2004, TV
Oliver Twist [Roman Polanski] 2005
All the King's Men [Steven Zaillian] 2006

Anna Dymna (July 20, 1951-) Actress



Anna Dymna was born in Legnica, Poland in 1951. In the late 1960s, Dymna ventured to the Wyższa State University for Theatrical Studies in the Polish capital of Krakow. She first took to the stage as a theater student in 1969 in Wyspianski's *The Weeding*. After finishing her studies and graduating in 1973, she stayed in Krakow where she has continued as a permanent member of the cast at the Old Theater.

In 1971 Dymna started working as an actress on television and film. Her first films were Checinski's *Radza's Diament* and Konwicki's *How Far from Here, How Near*. She has also acted in many famous series and plays made for television. These new mediums gave her the opportunity to become well known throughout Poland. Today, Dymna is been acclaimed as a leading Polish cinema star. She is extremely popular on a national level and has worked with many of the most famous Polish filmmakers and stars.

This remarkable actress does not seem to have any boundaries, as she flawlessly shifts between comedy and drama. Because of her talents both on screen and on stage, Anna Dymna has won many awards, including the Best Actress award at the Golden Melpomena Mask Awards, an annual award show organized by the Krakow Foundation for Theater Artists. Anna Dymna continues to make films for the theater and television, and frequently appears on the Krakow stage. She has also made an effort to share her knowledge and talent with a new generation by teaching and lecturing at the State Theatrical University in Krakow.

Anna Dymna: Filmography

Janosik 1973
Nie ma mocnych 1974
Tredowata 1976
Kochaj albo rzuc 1978
Anton, Der Zauberer 1978
The Quack 1981
Znachor 1981
Dolina Issy 1982
An Epitaph for Barbara Radziwill 1983
Freiwild 1984
Schodami W Gore, Schodami W Dol 1988
Mistrz i Malgorzata 1989
Pestka 1995
Erotic Tales II 1995
The Big Animal Duze zwierze 2000
Wiedzmin 2002
Bez konca 2003
Stara basn. Kiedy slonce bylo bogiem 2003
Skazany na bluesa 2005

About the Camel (*Wielblad*)



The main character in *The Big Animal*, a Bactrian camel (*Camelus bactrianus*) named Rubio, is not native to Poland, or, as the film suggests, to Arabia. In fact, this species originated in North America as one of many members of the camelid family. Thousands of years ago, Bactrian camels migrated west to their current home in the dry Gobi desert and steppes of northern Asia and Mongolia. These animals were originally domesticated up to 4,500 years ago near present-day Iran, but their use as pack animals spread rapidly into China as the premier mode of transportation on the original Silk Road around 300 B.C.

Their presence was extremely important in the transport of goods in this region of the world, since Bactrian camels are well equipped for carrying heavy loads quickly over long distances in places where most animals would not be able to survive. These animals were so important to Asian trade because they are extremely durable creatures that are able to bear the harsh conditions of their native climate, whose temperatures can range from 40° below freezing in winter to 140° F in summer. Bactrian camels live an average of 30 years, and can grow to be up to eight feet tall and weigh over two thousand pounds. Against common belief, camels are generally well tempered, though they can be rather rowdy and occasionally spit when provoked.

Many adaptations have helped the Bactrian camel survive in almost any climate. Their thick shaggy brown coats that keep them warm all winter are shed quickly in the summer to prevent overheating. Camels' humps also help them to survive in the desert. The humps are masses of fat that nourish them when food is scarce. They store about 80 pounds of fat in their humps, but as the camels use up the fat, their humps shrink. The two humps store enough fat for the camel to stay nourished and hydrated over the long periods of time when the water, leaves, and grasses they depend on are not available. Their broad, plate-like feet allow for easy passage over large expanses of sand. Bactrian camels have also developed sealable nostrils and long eyelashes, which prevent them from ingesting too much dust during the frequent sandstorms in their native homes.

Even when water is available at wells and water holes, camels drink only if necessary. If they are very dehydrated, they can gulp down as much as 30 gallons of water in just 10 minutes. That would be like drinking 480 cups of water. Camels don't need to drink water as often as other animals because they can conserve water better than most animals. A camel doesn't carry water in its hump. Instead, it has a number of ways to limit the amount of water its body uses. Camels have ways to keep from sweating too much. During the hottest part of the year, a camel can go for a week or more without taking a drink because they can conserve water so well. And during the cooler months, they sometimes go for six months without drinking.

Today, though there are over 2 million domesticated Bactrian camels, of which fewer than 1000 exist in the wild. The population density of wild Bactrian camels is calculated to be only five animals per 100 square kilometers. Thus, they have been listed on the endangered species list since 1996.

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Polish Culture and Cinema:

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Milestone Film & Video

Milestone enters its sixteenth year of operation with a reputation for releasing classic cinema masterpieces, new foreign films, groundbreaking documentaries and American independent features. Thanks to the company's rediscovery, restoration and distribution of such important films as Mikhail Kalatozov's *I am Cuba*, Marcel Ophuls' *The Sorrow and the Pity*, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Bon Voyage* and *Aventure Malgache*, the company has long occupied a position as one of the most influential independent distributors in the industry. In 1995 Milestone received a Special Archival Award from the National Society of Film Critics for its restoration and release of *I am Cuba*. *L.A. Weekly* chose Milestone as the 1999 "Indie Distributor of the Year." On January 2, 2004, the National Society of Film Critics awarded Milestone Film & Video their prestigious Film Heritage award. In December 2004, the International Film Seminars awarded Milestone its prestigious Leo Award, named for indie distribution pioneer Leo Dratfield and the New York Film Critics Circle voted a Special Award "in honor of 15 years of restoring classic films.

When Amy Heller and Dennis Doros first started Milestone in 1990 their goals were to find and release the best films of the past and the present. The company's US premieres have included such remarkable new films as Manoel de Oliveira's *I'm Going Home*, Bae Yong-kyun's *Why Has Bodhi-Dharma Left for the East?*, Hirokazu Kore-eda's *Maborosi*, Yoichi Higashi's *Village of Dreams*, Takeshi Kitano's *Fireworks (Hana-Bi)*, Tareque Masud's *The Clay Bird*, and Jerzy Stuhr's *The Big Animal*.

Milestone has released a wide range of classics in sparkling restorations, including: Luchino Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers*, F.W. Murnau's *Tabu*, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack's *Grass and Chang*, Henri-Georges Clouzot's *The Mystery of Picasso*, Frank Hurley's *South: Ernest Shackleton and the Endurance Expedition*, Kevin Brownlow's *It Happened Here and Winstanley*, Lotte Reiniger's animation masterpiece, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed*, Michael Powell's *The Edge of the World*, Jane Campion's *Two Friends*, Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Wide Blue Road*, Conrad Rooks' *Siddhartha*, Anthony Howarth's *People of the Wind*, and Rolando Klein's *Chac*. Milestone is also working with the Mary Pickford Foundation on a long-term project to preserve, re-score and release the best films of the legendary silent screen star. The company premiered a new restoration of E.A. Dupont's *Piccadilly* — starring the bewitching Anna May Wong — at the 2003 New York Film Festival and two years later, Rudolph Valentino and Gloria Swanson in *Beyond the Rocks*. Such stellar contemporary filmmakers as Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, Woody Allen, Jonathan Demme and Dustin Hoffman have co-presented important Milestone restorations.

Milestone has established strong working relationships with some of the world's great film archives, including the British Film Institute, UCLA Film & Television Archive, George Eastman House, Library of Congress, Nederlands Filmmuseum and Norsk Filminstitut. In 2000, Milestone's 10th Anniversary Retrospective was shown in venues nationwide and Milestone raised and donated \$20,000 from these screenings to four archives in the United States and England.

In addition to the company's strong presence in art-house film distribution, Milestone has built a highly praised video/DVD collection. Most of these DVDs have been released on Image Entertainment's "The Milestone Collection" label and have earned the company new accolades. Milestone's video-only releases have included such important silent restorations as: *Eternal Love*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Blot*, *La Terre*, *It*, *Simba*, *The Chess Player*, *Silent Shakespeare*, *Mad Love: The Films of Evgenii Bauer*, *Early Russian Cinema* (a 10-volume compilation), and *The Cook & Other Treasures*.

Milestone also released on DVD four great animation collections: *John Canemaker: Marching to a Different Toon*, *Cut-Up: The Films of Grant Munro*, *Norman McLaren: The Collector's Edition*, and

Winsor McCay: The Master Edition. Other video premieres have explored the stories of four remarkable American women: *Millay at Steepletop*, *Captured on Film: The True Story of Marion Davies*, *Without Lying Down* (about screenwriter Frances Marion) and *Mary Pickford: A Life on Film*. Some of the company's other classic films on video include *With Byrd at the South Pole*, *The Bat Whispers*, *Tonight or Never*, *The Gay Desperado*, and *Night Tide*. Milestone's independent docs on video include *A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China*, *Shackleton's Boat Journey*, and Alan Berliner's documentary trilogy, *Family Album*, *Nobody's Business* and *Intimate Stranger*.

In 2005, Milestone launched its second company, *Milliarium Zero*, dedicated to releasing socially important films including *Winter Soldier*. In 2006, the company started its own DVD label with *The Milestone Cinematheque*. The lineup already includes Gloria Swanson and Rudolph Valentino's *Beyond the Rocks*, Marcel Ophuls' *The Troubles We've Seen*, *Electric Edwardians: The Films of Mitchell & Kenyon*, *The Dragon Painter* (starring Sessue Hayakawa and Tsuru Aoki), *Cut to the Chase: The Charley Chase Classic Comedy Collection*, *The Harold Lloyd Collection*, *The Crossing* (directed by Yoichi Higashi), *The Animation of Lotte Reiniger*, *The Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack Collection* with *In Search of Kong* (directed by Serge Viallet) and newly remastered versions of *Grass* and *Chang*. The films of Charles Burnett including *Killer of Sheep* and *My Brother's Wedding*, *Nosferatu* (directed by F.W. Murnau with a score by James Bernard), *The Olive Thomas Collection*, *Uttara* (directed by Buddhadeb Dasgupta) and *Oporto of My Childhood* (directed by Manoel de Oliveira). Milestone will be also releasing to theatres Margot Benacerraf's *Araya* and Kent Mackenzie's *The Exiles*.

The Library of Congress has selected eight Milestone films for its prestigious National Film Registry: Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep* (to be released in 2005), *Tabu*, Edward S. Curtis' *In the Land of the War Canoes*, Mary Pickford's *Poor Little Rich Girl*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *It*, Winsor McCay's *Gertie the Dinosaur*, and *Grass*.

In 2003, Nadja Tennstedt joined the company as director of acquisitions and international sales.

"Since its birth the Milestone Film & Video Co. has steadily become the industry's foremost boutique distributor of classic and art films — and probably the only distributor in America whose name is actually a guarantee of some quality."
— William Arnold, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

"Milestone Film & Video is an art-film distributor that has released some of the most distinguished new movies (along with seldom-seen vintage movie classics) of the past decade"
— Stephen Holden, *New York Times*

Film notes by Sarah Lipkin
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