
KIEŚLOWSKI
TVP
POLISH PUBLIC
TELEVISION



# KIEŚLOWSKI

1941–1996



Krzysztof Kieślowski. Documentary and feature film director. Graduate of the Łódź Film School. Winner of numerous Polish and international awards for his films including the Oscar nomination, Cesar, Felix and many others. Honorary member of the British Film Insitute and a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Oscars).

His most famous films: *The Decalogue* (1988), *La double vie de Veronique* (1991) and *Trois Couleurs. Bleu. Blanc. Rouge* (1993-1994).

TVP has just completed a digital reconstruction of an outstanding movie series by Krzysztof Kieślowski. It is one more project of TVP aimed at restoring the cultural heritage of Poland. The Decalogue is a series of ten movies based on the 10 Amendments. Each movie is a separate entity and tells a different story with particular plots of the characters intertwining. The very best Polish actors took part in the production, among others: Grażyna Szapołowska, Olaf Lubaszenko, Krystyna Janda, Maja Komorowska, Krzysztof Globisz, Joanna Szczepkowska and Artur Barciś. The whole technological process of restoring The Decalogue took place at the Documentation and Programming Library Department of TVP. It required a laborious professional work. The specialists working on the restoration had to go through as many as 842 125 frames (566 minutes) of material and remove all distortions visible on the screen - scratches, chips, graininess, lack of frame stability and background image flickering. The people responsible for the reconstruction were supervised by the most renowned cinematographers such as Sławomir Idziak - Academy Award Nomination for Black Hawk Down, director of photography for Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (The Decalogue, Five), Wiesław Zdort (The Decalogue, One), Jerzy Zieliński (The Decalogue, Two and The Decalogue, Seven), Witold Sobociński (The Decalogue, Three and The Decalogue, Nine), Krzysztof Pakulski (The Decalogue, Four), Witold Adamek (The Decalogue, Seven), Andrzej Jaroszewicz (The Decalogue, Eight) and Jacek Bławut (The Decalogue, Ten).

After the restoration the set of movies is available in a number of different formats: HD Cam, HD Cam ST (HDTV 16:9 - 1920 x1080i) as well as Beta Digital (SD TV - 720x576). Apart from the above, there are files in DPX format available.

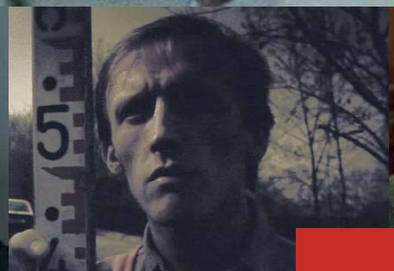
The restoration was done with the use of the following software and devices:

- scanning of the movie material – 4K 16 bit scan on Lasergraphic -Director 4K/2K scanner
- tone-colour correction as well as re-sizing to 16:9 using Nucoda software
- image stabilization using Phoenix Finish and da Vinci Revival
- image de-graining using Dark Energy software
- sound re-mastering using ProTools software



The digitalization of The Decalogue was fully funded by TVP and resulted in a great success both in terms of the final outcome as well as the timing – just before Kieślowski's death anniversary.





















# The Decalogue, One

'So who is he?'

*Dekalog, Jeden*

11-year-old Paweł is brought up by his single father. His mother lives far away, in Australia. Aunt Irena helps to raise her nephew introducing him into the world of faith. The boy asks his father and aunt questions regarding death, the meaning of life and God. When Paweł is given in advance his Christmas gift – a dreamed pair of ice skates – his father in order to ensure the safety of his son calculates on his computer that the ice covering the lake in the neighbourhood is sufficiently thick to hold him. Going to skate finishes tragically for Paweł and Marek. The story, simple and dramatic, was inspired by an authentic experience of the co-author of the screenplay, Krzysztof Piesiewicz, whose son did not come back home on time one day. Not many authors writing about Kieślowski's works notice that the first part of Decalogue is almost entirely a flashback, even doubled: the first character of the movie is a silent man played by Artur Barciś, sitting by a fire near the lake. An intense look of the witness of the accident gazing straight into the viewers' eyes is very important. His teardrop, ambiguous, as it happens in Kieślowski's films, is an answer for another teardrop: Irena's, moved in front of the TV screen, on which her nephew shown in the reportage filmed in his school can be seen. The symmetry of teardrops also appears in the final scene of the film, when the boy's death causes his father-agnostic to rebel (against whom?) and enter a provisional church – and also the sympathy of the Black Madonna whose face is covered with melted wax 'teardrops' dripping down the candle. The story about Paweł is the flashback of his aunt that finishes with the boy's face disappearing from the screen. Artur Barciś closes this story of the Decalogue – and its next nine parts – in his look.

**53', HD, 1988**

# The Decalogue, Two

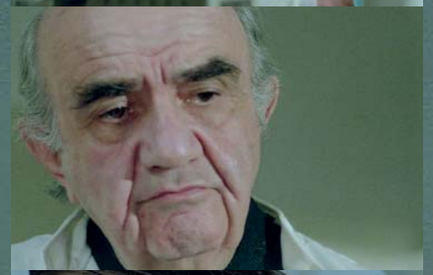
'I love you very much'

*Dekalog, Dwa*

'Swear to it!' – in this demand directed to a hard-faced doctor by pregnant Dorota, torn apart between love to her dying husband, another love to her lover living across the ocean and the desire to become a mother, which was impossible until then, the second commandment of the Decalogue echoes. At first the doctor refuses to tell her his uncertain prognosis but he realizes that the unborn child's life is at stake. In his memories he recalls his drama experienced by him during the war, when he lost all his family. All that has left is a photo of his family and crippled faith in God who, as he believes, is not Almighty, but merely a private divinity. Yet a hardly noticeable by anyone orderly in the hospital, played by Artur Barciś, recalls the Reality that is not the subject of human predictions and limitations. The final part of the second film of The Decalogue consists of two moving sequences: the first is a masterful utopia travelling taking the viewers from the solitude of the characters closed in the micro-worlds of their experiences and feelings to a hospital room, where in a glass of compote a bee is fighting for life, symbolically promising victory over death. The final scene has a clearly religious character: during a night conversation with the doctor Andrzej, who looks similar to dead Christ shown in a Renaissance painting by Andrea Mantegna, confesses that he 'came back from beyond'. The ambiguity of the end – perhaps the talk with Andrzej is only a dream? – finds its explanation in the fifth and eighth parts of the cycle; nevertheless, it does not dispel some doubts.

**58', HD, 1988**




























# The Decalogue, Three

'Are you going out again?'

*Dekalog, Trzy*

'Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy'. Do you also have to remember the night, even if it is the Christmas' Eve night? The single father known from The Decalogue, One is looking at the window of his neighbours living on the first floor, sitting around the table and waiting for Christmas presents. A happy idyllic picture of a loving family shatters when Janusz goes out provoked by his ex-lover Ewa. They drive around the deserted city under the pretext to find her missing husband. In the morning the old feelings seem to explode again but little Christmas carol singers ring the doorbell singing about the birth of Jesus at the early hours. Before the dawn Ewa reveals to Janusz that she made a dangerous bet with herself as she did not want to spend the Christmas Eve's night alone. The other woman, Janusz's wife, has been waiting for him all night long suspecting what was the true reason of his disappearance. 'Was it Ewa? – Ewa…' This episode referring to the third commandment shows a comprehensive understanding of the Decalogue: breaking only one commandment leads to a violation of the remaining ones. Janusz leaves his family; he lusts, drives recklessly putting his and others' lives at risk, whereas Ewa balances on the edge of adultery, thinking of suicide; they both lie. Kieślowski watches their weaknesses and confused lives with sympathy; he lets them find the way out. The character played by Artur Barciś, driving a tram into which direction Janusz speeds becomes a symbol: you should keep to the right way. The final scene showing Janusz's confession and his wife's silent forgiveness also brings hope.

**55', HD, 1988**

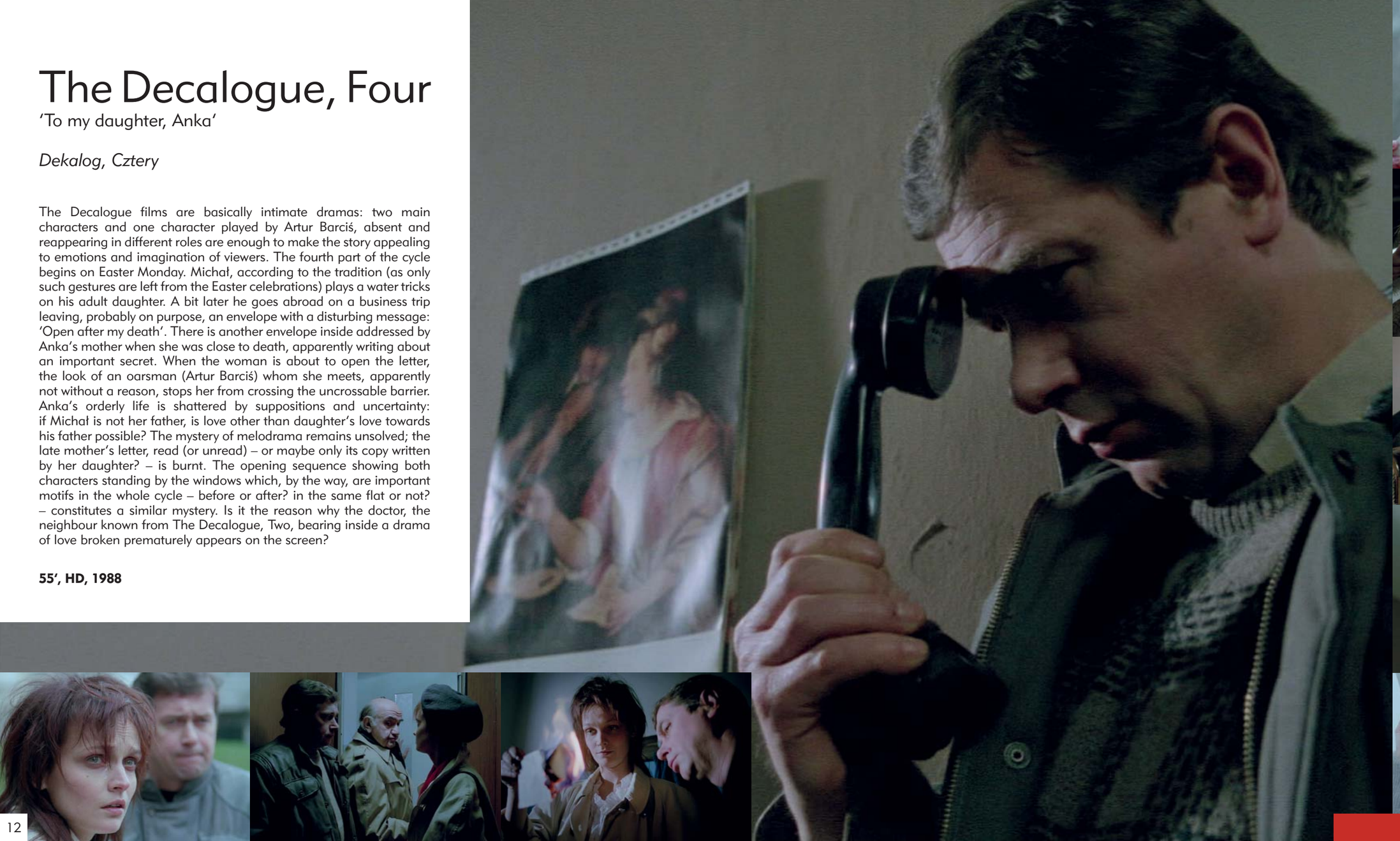
# The Decalogue, Four

'To my daughter, Anka'

*Dekalog, Cztery*

The Decalogue films are basically intimate dramas: two main characters and one character played by Artur Barciś, absent and reappearing in different roles are enough to make the story appealing to emotions and imagination of viewers. The fourth part of the cycle begins on Easter Monday. Michał, according to the tradition (as only such gestures are left from the Easter celebrations) plays a water tricks on his adult daughter. A bit later he goes abroad on a business trip leaving, probably on purpose, an envelope with a disturbing message: 'Open after my death'. There is another envelope inside addressed by Anka's mother when she was close to death, apparently writing about an important secret. When the woman is about to open the letter, the look of an oarsman (Artur Barciś) whom she meets, apparently not without a reason, stops her from crossing the uncrossable barrier. Anka's orderly life is shattered by suppositions and uncertainty: if Michał is not her father, is love other than daughter's love towards his father possible? The mystery of melodrama remains unsolved; the late mother's letter, read (or unread) – or maybe only its copy written by her daughter? – is burnt. The opening sequence showing both characters standing by the windows which, by the way, are important motifs in the whole cycle – before or after? in the same flat or not? – constitutes a similar mystery. Is it the reason why the doctor, the neighbour known from The Decalogue, Two, bearing inside a drama of love broken prematurely appears on the screen?

**55', HD, 1988**

























# The Decalogue, Five

'Not until you called me...'

*Dekalog, Pięć*

Three alternately shown characters whose ways cross on March 16, 1985 in Warsaw filmed in a gruesome way: a young attorney who is about to take the bar exam; Jacek, a young man from the countryside, lost in a big city and a rude taxi driver with a little devil. Piotr, an opponent of the death penalty, tells the examiners with great conviction that his job would give him the chance to meet people he otherwise had no chance to meet. But he does not notice Jacek preparing for murder in the bar in Krakowskie Przedmieście Street. If he had noticed him and talked to him, he might have stopped the young man who, as Tadeusz Lubelski wrote, 'was living with his false image like with an unexploded bullet which had to explode one day', carrying the burden of responsibility for his sister's accidental death. But he notices – and ignores – a road worker (Artur Barciś) pointing at the symbolic number 5.

The action takes place on three days, almost one year apart: the crime, the lost court case, and the execution performed in March one year later. Tragically, only then – and too late – we can hear Jacek recounting the story of his life. Kieślowski returns to the theme shown already in his earlier film, Blind Chance. The victim was accidental, the taxi passenger was accidental: if the taxi driver had not ignored the couple known from The Decalogue, Two that wanted to take his cab, he could have been alive. However, the relationships are not incidental: in the movie opposing the death penalty the director demands to recognize Jacek's dignity regardless of the crime he committed. Piotr dreaming about justice that cannot be revenge on a criminal reminds it asking: 'For whom does law avenge?'.

**57', HD, 1988**

# The Decalogue, Six

'There's no such thing. – There is.'

*Dekalog, Sześć*

The opening sequence presents both characters setting the scene for a drama that would take place between them: a window glass that separates them, they are of different ages and social status; all that they can do is watching and being watched. In a precise structure of the sixth film of The Decalogue three parts, almost of the same length, can be distinguished: in the first the woman is seen from Tomek's viewpoint, separated by window glasses and the lens of a telescope, only seemingly coming closer. The middle part consists of their meetings: a love-struck young man confesses to his spying on her, tells her he loves her but he expects nothing. The third part is shown from the point of view of the woman: now she starts to search for the young man and discovers that love which is not equal only to physiological satisfaction exists.
The film, if watched carelessly, may seem to be just a story about a peeper: however, it is worth to notice how Tomek does not look at his attractive neighbour. Only a few minutes before the end we learn her name: Magda (Magdalene), referring to the established culturally stereotype of a sinful woman. In the Gospel she became a reformed woman that changed due to the meeting with Christ; in Kieślowski's film the transformation of Magda takes place thanks to Tomek and his unselfish love. The film emphasises it using the symbols taken from the Gospel: a price paid by Tomek for Magda's liberation is climbing the Golgotha with a company of a man wearing a white coat (Artur Barciś). A Short Film About Love, a feature version of the Decalogue, Six is even more obvious and finishes more optimistically.

**58', HD, 1988**


























# The Decalogue, Seven

'Haven't I got a mother?'

*Dekalog, Siedem*

'Is it possible to steal a man?' – it turns out it is. Majka, a student, runs away from home abducting her 6-year-old daughter Ania, the fruit of her romance with her former teacher. To avoid the scandal, the girl was adopted by her grandmother who deprived Majka from her right to be a parent. Too impossible to be true? Not really. In Krzysztof Piesiewicz's legal practice he saw an even more dramatic case as it was connected with incest. A child asking whether she still has a mother becomes a victim of a long-term misunderstanding, inability to love, growing grievance and hate, like other children in Kieślowski's cycle. Somewhere in the background there are fathers – Majka's and Ania's, as guilty as the others, but silent and absent, running away from responsibility.
In the seventh part of the cycle even a man played by Artur Barciś is helpless. In the earlier episodes he influences the main characters looking at them in crucial moments. Here he impersonates a man leaning on crutches at the railway station in Józefów on Sunday morning, who gets out of the train to which Majka jumps into running away from her parents and leaving confused Ania. Does a man with crutches seen from a distance arrive too late to reduce aggression between two women that has been lasting for years? Kieślowski consistently lets his characters appear in different episodes: in The Decalogue, Nine Ania plays alone at the playground and is watched from the window by the doctor considering with his wife an adoption of a child. Inside, behind another window, one of many similar windows in the same block of flats, another drama unfolds.

**55', HD, 1988**














# The Decalogue, Eight

'One can know, without doubts, without using the words'

*Dekalog, Osiem*

An unexpected meeting of two women: Elżbieta, a Jew of Polish origin living in the USA, studying the stories of the people that survived the Holocaust and an elderly ethics professor. They have met long time ago but only now Zofia recognizes her as the girl she refused to help during the Nazi occupation in order to save the resistance movement put to risk of exposure. The reason for her refusal remembered by Elżbieta was that she could not bring herself to lie to Him she believes in. Zofia has been living with the sense of guilt for the death of an innocent child, and Elżbieta – with the sense of rejection for decades. The film, probably inspired by Hanna Krall ('I sometime told Kieślowski about the girl I know very well – the one from The Decalogue, Eight') is one of the first stories referring to the Holocaust as well as to the Polish and Jews relations in the Polish cinematography. The director indicates the guilt and an unsolvable dilemma at the same time, eventually standing by the child's side. The story from The Decalogue, Two told by Zofia in the auditorium and its conclusion ('the child's life is the most important factor') recalls the memories of Elżbieta (and is followed by a look of an invisible student with an already familiar face). Kieślowski, however, does not lock himself in the past but shows the solution. It consists of revealing hurting lies, finding the truth about the reasons for actions and forgiveness without which the future is going to be bitter. The eighth film, for the first time since The Decalogue, One poses the question regarding God: in the night conversation of the two women His name known from the Old and the New Testaments is recalled.

**54', HD, 1988**















# The Decalogue, Nine

'God… you are.'

*Dekalog, Dziewięć*

Two unsuccessful suicide attempts and Artur Barciś looking at hem open and close the episode, in which the main character, a cardiologist, cannot accept the fact that his friend, a sexologist diagnosed him with permanent incurable impotency. Roman's wife convinces him that love does not mean only sex, but he suggests that she should feel released from her marriage fidelity oath. The crisis begins when Roman discovers that Hanka has had an affair with Mariusz, a much younger lover for a long time. The reference to the commandments of the Decalogue, so unambiguous in Kieślowski's films is shown here in a surprising way: Hanka is an object of desire of her husband and Mariusz. The test the couple's love is put to leads finally to its purification.
The last but one episode reveals also the working method of Kieślowski and Piesiewicz who allow the ideas to mature: individual films, being closed narrative units are linked and refer to each other. Roman features in the sixth part of Kieślowski's cycle: Tomek delivering milk in the morning meets him in the gate of the block of flats – they both experienced difficult love. For a moment we can see Ania from the seventh part. A musical theme introduced by a young singer waiting for cardiac surgery reminding the character from The Double Life of Veronique (1991) is very interesting. It was her who inspires Roman to listen to and enjoy the music of Van den Budenmayer, whose composition (Nymphea) opens subsequent parts of The Decalogue. A Dutch composer, a fictitious character (the music was composed by Zbigniew Preisner) returns in The Double Life of Veronique and Three Colours.

**58', HD, 1988**

# The Decalogue, Ten

'It's all that has left.'

*Dekalog, Dziesięć*

Jerzy and Artur meet at the funeral of their father, a stamp collector devoted entirely to his passion (he appears in The Decalogue, Eight with his stamp Polarfahrt). Their father had not had a good relationship with them and only after he passed away they find out that the collection he had gathered for many years is very valuable. The inherited wealth begins to spoil their relations: Jerzy decides to donate his kidney in exchange for one stamp missing for an incomplete series. Unfortunately, during his operation their father's flat is broken into and burglarized. The brothers become suspicious of former friends of his father but also of each other.
The last film of the cycle differs from earlier parts of The Decalogue in almost all aspects: it is a black comedy, not a drama. This time Artur Barciś who accompanies main characters in crucial moments does not appear. Maybe because his role was taken over by Tomek from the sixth episode who serves the brothers at the post office and sells them ordinary stamps? The beginning of the film is also different: Artur stands on the stage and shouts the lyrics: 'Kill, kill, and kill! Commit adultery, covet things all the week!' The call for breaking the commandments to which importance Kieślowski's cycle is devoted turns out to be heavy irony. The Decalogue, Ten being a masterful summary shows a violation of almost all commandments: not only coveting things, the 'disease' contracted by the sons from their deceased father, but also theft, adultery, an indifferent attitude towards family, and disrespect of God. In the final humiliation of the characters watched by the director with pity, there is still hope.

**57', HD, 1988**













# Underpass

*Przejście podziemne*

One of the early movies of Krzysztof Kieślowski. A young teacher from a small town comes to Warsaw with a school trip. In one of the underpasses the man runs into his wife, who left him some time ago in order to start a new life in the capital. The abandoned husband sees this as an opportunity to reunite with the woman and revive the past he shared with his wife. Unfortunately to no avail, the woman does not want to go back. She has irreversibly crossed the line and went to the other side, the side of metropolis with its cynicism and lack of feelings. The main character is feeling lost in the big city, wandering around the labyrinth of corridors and underpasses looking for a normal human contact. In the production, the director used his earlier experiences as a documentary maker which can be seen in the way the movie is composed: hand-held camera shots, unique narration and Kieślowski's characteristic editing. Thanks to these aspects the movie seems to reflect a chaotic, ephemeral reality, thus making the story of the two main characters even more plausible and deeper rooted in real life.

**30', SD, 1973**
**PSYCHOLOGICAL DRAMA**







# A Short Working Day

*Krótki dzień pracy*

The film is based on authentic events surrounding a workers' protest in Poland in 1976. Price hikes sets off a strike in a large provincial town. As protestors gather outside the Party Headquarters, the Party Secretary must find a way to defuse the situation. Unfortunately his calls to the capital were met with indifference, and meanwhile the protest becomes more and more violent. When protestors began to set fire to the building, the Party Secretary is forced to vacate the premises. Ironically, he is portrayed as a rather decent man trying his best to do his job and not a faceless monster. The protestors, on the other hand, are not all innocent victims. Living under a corrupt system, everyone is forced to become corrupt.

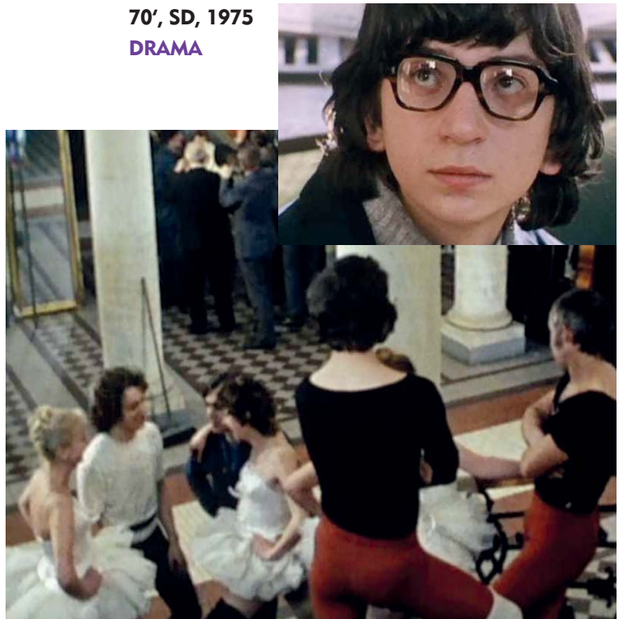
**73', SD, 1981**
**DRAMA**

# Staff

*Personel*

The world of anonymous workers – theatrical tailors, painters, model makers. They perform vital functions enabling any theatre to function, yet they are not the ones who get credit for the final results which is a theatrical performance. The ones who are still praised, despite the declining meaning of a theatrical actor in general, are the performers. They consider themselves higher than the rest of the common staff. In the movie we meet Romek a young student who lands his first job at a theatrical tailor's studio. He starts work with head full of ideas about his job at the theatre, however, soon he discovers that the reality is nothing like what he thought it would be. The theatrical unions are trying to bring him into conflict with his more experienced colleague who dared to argue with a spoilt and pretentious actor…

**70', SD, 1975**
**DRAMA**





# Peace and Quiet

*Spokój*

The production is said to be the forerunner of moral concern cinema. Critics praised the movie for its innovation and the way the story was presented. The main character is Antoni Gralak – a physical worker with a criminal past. When the man leaves prison, there is nobody there waiting for him. There is no place for him in his family, even his girlfriend is no longer interested in him. In order to make a new start he lands a job at a local construction site. Soon after Antoni starts a relationship with a girl who had showed interest in his affairs while he was in prison. They fall in love and have a baby together. When everything starts going his way and he reaches some kind of stability with a family and a steady job, there is a theft at the construction site. The corrupted foreman starts accusing the man as well as other workers. Soon afterwards a strike breaks out, Antoni's colleagues are mistrustful of the man, they suspect that he is reporting on them to the foreman.

**82', HD, 1976**
**DRAMA**

# First Love

*Pierwsza miłość*

A contemporary story of love between two young people who are expecting a baby. The movie revolves around a couple of teenagers who are about to face the world of adulthood and responsibility. At first the girl is considering an abortion, however, in the end the couple decide to have the baby, even though they are not married, don't have a place to stay or a steady job for that matter. The two start they endless journey from one office to another in order to gain their dreamed independence. The pregnancy of the girl does not go unnoticed at school or at her family house, straining her relations both with the teachers and with her father. This first naïve and reckless love of the two characters is about to be put to even more tests. All that happens with Kieślowski's camera by their side, yet the director does not brutally interfere in their affairs. He is rather an observer who is trying to show the image of love between two people that is maturing and strengthening in face of the obstacles on the way.

**52', SD, 1974**
**PEOPLE**









# The Photograph

*Zdjęcie*

The first documentary film of Krzysztof Kieślowski made for Polish Public Television. The camera follows the crew in search of two boys from a wartime photograph in which they are smiling and holding rifles. Kieślowski talks to the residents of Warsaw hoping that somebody will recognize the mysterious characters immortalized in the picture. Besides the ongoing search, the director also interviews Tadeusz and Jerzy, two brothers who try to recall the events from the past and who talk about their present lives.The sound and picture of the film were meticulously restored by TVP .

**32', SD, 1968**
**WAR, PEOPLE**

# Kieślowski and His Camera Buff

*Kieślowski i jego Amator*

*Camera Buff* (Polish: *Amator*, meaning 'amateur') one of the greatest films of so called cinema of moral concern has been arousing keen interest since its release till today. At the end of the 70s, Krzysztof Kieślowski targeted the film to the unrest generation of the contemporary thirties, but the issues that the film raises - the limits of responsibility and courage, the place and role of art in human life, have retained their validity till today.
The document talks about the making of and behind the scene of *Camera Buff* by Krzysztof Kieślowski. Film producers ponder on the question of how many personal themes of people involved in the production of this film appeared in the work. They also wonder what impact Kieślowski had on his associates and actors, as well as on a group of amateur filmmakers from which he took the realities for the scenario. Directors Andrzej Jurga and Krzysztof Zanussi along with the lead actor, Jerzy Stuhr, talk about the *Camera Buff*. In the film, the producers used the archival interviews with Krzysztof Kieślowski.

**Directed by: Krzysztof Wierzbicki**
**25', SD, 1999**
**PEOPLE**







# Kieślowski Meets Wenders

*Kieślowski spotyka Wendersa*

Accounts from the meeting of Krzysztof Kieślowski and Wim Wenders with the audiance at Polish Cultural Institute in Berlin. The document consists of screenings of excerpts of films made by these directors over the course of their careers, such as *The Office*, *Concert of Requests*, *Three Colors*. *Blue* by Krzysztof Kieślowski and *Alabama*, *Paris*, *Texas* by Wim Wenders. In between the screenings, the directors discuss their different creative fates conditioned by political and cultural diversity in which they have lived and made their movies.

**Directed by: Natalia Koryncka-Gruz**
**30', SD, 1994**
**PEOPLE**



# Still Alive

*Still Alive*

The documentary is an attempt to portray one of the major creators of Polish cinema. Krzysztof Kieślowski gained international acclaim and recognition for his outstanding works among others: the Decaloge cycle, Three colours or The Double Life of Veronique. The author of the documentary tried to present Kieślowski through the people that talk about him, his movies and achievements. This outstanding director started his career as a documentary maker, he was an insightful critic and observer of reality. He used this kind of experience in his later movies where he dealt with universal problems and issues that have been forever bothering people. Kieślowski made movies about people who stood against the general society, authorities, family and even themselves. He presented the man entangled in contradictions, confronted with the inner yearning for freedom, equality and justice.

**Directed by: Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz**
**81', SD, 2005**
**BIOGRAPHY, PEOPLE**





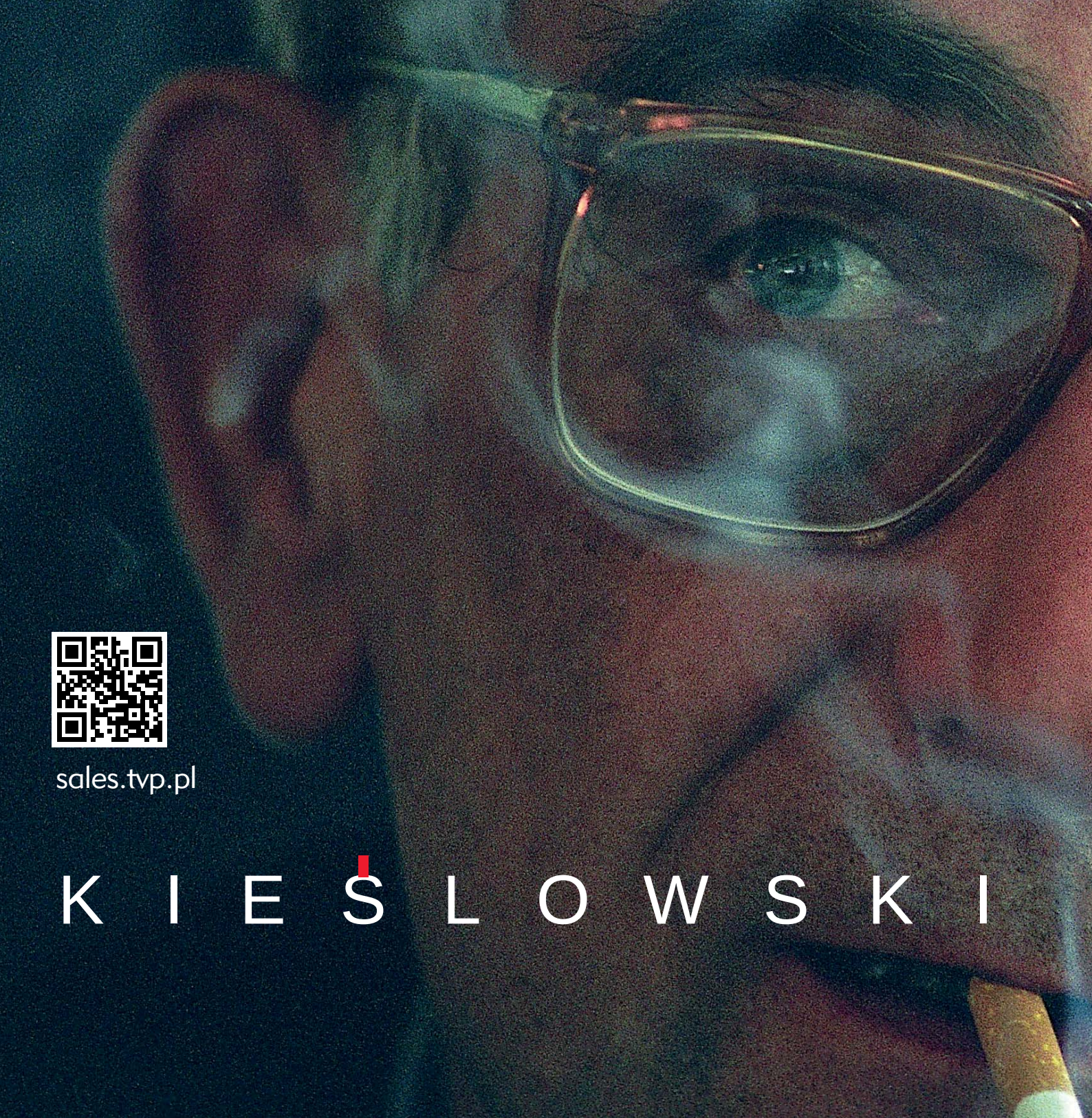


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