

Polish Film Festival from 1



Polish Ambassador to the United States Janusz Reiter presented the Officer's Cross of the order of Merit to Wlodek Juskiewicz



Edyta Jungowska Star of "I Am"



L. - Consul General Krystyna Tokarska Biernacki First Lady Maria Kaczyńska and Consul Paulina Kapuścińska

Amicus Poloniae (Friend of Poland Award) was presented by Ambassador Janusz Reiter to writer and film director David Lynch, thanking Lynch for his influence in the American-Polish partnership in the Film Industry. David Lynch's Film "Inland Empire" was filmed in Los Angeles and in the City of Łódź, Poland, with American and Polish Actors: Laura Dern, Jeremy Irons, Justin Theroux, Harry Dean Stanton, Peter Lucas, Karolina Gruszka, Krzysztof Majchrzak, Jan Hench and Leon Niemczyk. (David Lynch is an American Filmmaker, painter, video artist, and performance artist. Lynch has received three Academy Awards for Best Director nominations - 1980 for Elephant Man, 1987 for Blue Velvet, 2002 for Mulholland Drive. A 1992 Time Magazine article named Lynch "The Most Influential Filmmaker.")

This year Wlodek Juskiewicz invited the audience to view several World and West Coast premieres of the most progressive vision and voices of contemporary Polish filmmakers. They let us explore many new areas of struggling. They explored truthful colors of life in Poland, social tragedies, betrayals, abandonment and loneliness; at the same time hoping and dreaming of a better life.

Highlights included: Agnieszka Holland's latest film, "A Girl Like Me," The West Coast premiere of, "Karol. The Pope, the Man" (dir Giacomo Battiato) starring Piotr Adamczyk, world premiere of "Reverend Father Tischner and His Highlanders' Philosophy" by Artur Wiecek, "Baron" Polish-Chinese co-production "The Lovers of The Year of The Tiger" (Jacek Bromski), and films "I Am by Dorota Kedzierzewska, Palimsest" by Konrad Niewolski, "Retrival" by Sławomir Fabicki, "We are all Christ" by Marek Koterski, "What Sun Has Seen" by Michał Rosa and "Who Never Lived" by Andrzej Seweryn.

Anna Ferens presented her very well done documentary film "Where Do Wild Strawberries Grow?" about a recently researched graveyard for some 30 thousand people killed by the Soviets between 1937 and 1941 outside the city of Kiev, in a forest. Among them were thousand of Poles.

After every film there was a photo opportunity and time for participating in discussions with film directors and actors who specifically arrived from Poland for the Festival.

First Lady Maria Kaczyńska extended warmest greetings to all the guests of the 8th Annual Film Festival in Los Angeles, saying that she was happy that she had the opportunity to watch the films of Polish filmmakers with us. The First Lady said that this important Polish Cultural Event promotes the achievements of Polish cinematography and a good opportunity also for young, talented artists to show their work to the public.

"I wish to stress my great personal satisfaction that the annual review of Polish Films has become a well-known and recognized event in the U.S.A. film making community.

The ability to reach ever-growing audiences is the great success of the organizers of the Festival. It is also a sign that Polish art receives more and more attention in the USA," said the First Lady of Poland.

Mrs. Maria Kaczyńska officially opened the Polish Film Festival in Los Angeles.

"Inland Empire" by David Lynch was screened at the Opening Night Gala. For the first time, I saw a film and could not predict the next move or the next scene. Strange! I am not sure if I were concentrating well enough to follow the story of David Lynch's film, "Inland Empire" or if I were still excited, instead of focusing on the film, I was processing in my mind the ceremony and visit of Maria Kaczyńska and Hollywood's and Poland's filmmakers, directors, actors, producers, along with more guests than could be seated in the Theater. It wasn't until the next day that my mind revealed to me the understanding of the many symbols that David Lynch used in his work. Through great cinematography, he created unusual effects and scenes jumping in time for one's mind to explore. Lynch's work reminded me of Pablo Picasso and the distortion of life that Picasso felt and expressed in his art. If David Lynch planned for the audience to experience, through his creation, deep emotional movement and disturbance, he was very successful by taking viewers of his film on the journey through the exploration of the fantasizing and wondering mind. It was strange as could be, and yet very well done; unique film in its own category.

"Each year our audience grows", said Wlodek Juskiewicz, "and we hope the interest in Polish cinema continues to grow as well, so Polish films will be screened and distributed beyond the Polish-speaking community."

The Festival Program contains many letters from very important American and Polish people and is so very informative and helpful in learning about the films and invited film directors, actors, writers and producers.

In the end, all I can say is that it was great, I mean a great and huge event, very well organized by Wlodek Juskiewicz, laureate of Cavalier Cross, and now additionally honored in April 2007 with an Officer Cross presented to him by the First Lady on the behalf of the President of Poland, Lech Kaczyński.

Lukasz Będkowski (Representative of the Film Festival in Poland), Witold Szmanda the host of the Beverly Hills-Pola Negri Red Carpet Party, Stanley and Helena Kołodziej-hosted the Modjeska Art and Culture Club's reception, and the entire Organizing Committee all greatly helped Wlodek Juskiewicz and made for all of us a wonderful one-week-long event of Polish Film Hollywood Days.

Jadwiga Inglis International Correspondent VIP High Life from Hollywood, California □



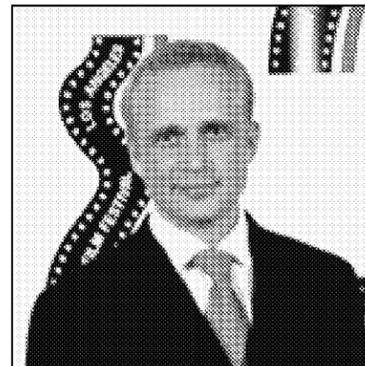
Peter Lucas, David Lynch and Karolina Gruszka



Mireck Kullitt Director of "Beyond the Quest" with friends and cast members



Alicja Bahleda Curus



Piotr Adamczyk (Cardinal Wojtyła)

Film Festival photos by Jacek Nowaczyński

Conservative Groups Meet in Poland

In an article by Associated Press writer David Crary, he writes about many prominent U.S. conservative groups are shifting their attention overseas this week, organizing a conference in Poland that will decry Europe's liberal social policies and portray the host nation as a valiant holdout bucking those trends.

The World Congress of Families is expected to draw more than 2,500 people from dozens of countries to Warsaw's Palace of Culture and Science from Friday through Sunday.

The chief organizer is a Rockford, Ill. based conservative think tank, the Howard Center. Co-sponsors include more than 20 other U.S. groups allied in opposition to abortion, gay marriage and other policies they blame for weakening traditional families in Western Europe.

"Europe is almost lost — to demographic winter and to the secularists," says a planning document for the congress. "If Europe goes, much of the world will go with it. Almost alone, Poland has maintained strong faith and strong families."

Polish President Lech Kaczyński, who will address the congress, heads a conservative government that has tangled frequently with European Union officials over such issues as gay rights and his nation's tough abortion laws. Last month, after Polish officials proposed firing teachers who promote homosexuality, the EU parliament asked its anti-racism center to examine "the emerging climate of racist, xenophobic and homophobic intolerance in Poland."

Allan Carlson, president of the Howard Center and founder of the World Congress of Families movement, acknowledges that social trends in Western Europe give conservatives little reason for optimism. Spain last year joined Belgium and the Netherlands in legalizing gay marriage; heavily Roman Catholic Portugal, one of few holdouts banning abortion, last month legalized the procedure up to the 10th week of pregnancy.

"There are some nations that are resisting the trends," said Carlson, citing Croatia, Slovakia and Latvia.

"But with the exception of Poland, they are all small countries, so that makes Poland all the more important," he said. "They're resisting pressure from the EU to get in lockstep with the Swedish model - the secularist, post-family order."

Two long-term trends will be highlighted at the congress - Western Europe's declining birth rates and dwindling church attendance. Carlson expressed hope for spiritual renewal among European youth, but said it was unrealistic to expect institutionalized religion on the continent to return to its historical prominence.

Birth rates are low across Europe, including Poland - where the population is expected to shrink by several million in the next two decades. Kaczyński's government is preparing legislation to encourage larger families.

The congress, even in its planning stages, has been derided by liberal groups.

"It's a jamboree for people who very often find themselves outside the mainstream," said Jon O'Brien, president of Catholics for a Free Choice. "They're living the fantasy for a couple of days of what the world would be like if their ideas prevailed."

O'Brien, a native of Ireland now based in Washington, D.C., said Poland's conservative bent is at odds with most of the continent.

"American conservative groups don't find much succor in Europe," he said. "It's moved on, toward tolerance and respect for how people live their lives, for people who are gay, single parents, different forms of family."

Scheduled speakers at the congress include a Vatican representative, Monsignor Grzegorz Kaszak of the Pontifical Polish Institute of Rome, and Ellen Sauerbrey, assistant U.S. secretary of state for population, refugees and migration.

Questioning Sauerbrey's involvement, 19 European Parliament members said in an open letter that her attendance would signal

Conservative Groups to page 15

**The News of Polonia
welcomes articles about your
Polish organization**