

## Document Citation

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|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Title         | <b>Golem</b>                |
| Author(s)     | Hy Hollinger                |
| Source        | <i>Variety</i>              |
| Date          | 1990 Oct 01                 |
| Type          | review                      |
| Language      | English                     |
| Pagination    |                             |
| No. of Pages  | 1                           |
| Subjects      |                             |
| Film Subjects | Golem, Szulkin, Piotr, 1979 |

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**Golem** Oct. 1  
(POLISH-COLOR) 1980

Gdansk, Sept. 10.

A Film Polski production. Perspektywa Film Unit. Warsaw; world rights. Film Polski. Warsaw. Features entire cast. Directed by Piotr Szulkin. Screenplay, Szulkin. Tadeusz Sobolewski, based on and inspired by motifs in the legend and novel by Gustav Meyrink. Camera (color), Zygmunt Samosiuk; sets, Zbigniew Warpechowski. Janusz Wlasow; production manager, J. Leszek Sobczyk. Reviewed at Gdansk Film Festival, Sept. 10, '80. Running time: 92 MINS.

Cast: Marek Walczewski (Pernat), Krystyna Janda (Rozyna), Joanna Zolkowska (Miriam), Krzysztof Majchrzak (Student), Mariusz Dmochowski (Holtrum), Wieslaw Drzewica (Miriam's father), Henryk Bak, Wojciech Pszoniak, Jan Nowicki, Ryszard Pietruski, Andrzej Seweryn, Marian Opania, Boguslaw Sobczuk.

Piotr Szulkin has made a solid reputation for himself at the short-film fests in Oberhausen, Mannheim, and Cracow; his best known shorts are "A Girl with a Devil" (1976) (Grand Prix at Mannheim and FIPRESCI Critics' Award at Cracow), "Copyright" (1977), and "Working Women" (1978) (Grand Prix at Oberhausen). Now he has turned his experimental talents to the feature film, choosing the legend of the Golem as a starting point for another philosophical reflection on the state of man in the age of technology.

"Golem" doesn't work as a feature film, but might have as a short feature in view of the well-known Golem legend and its application to the future — it's a kind of "Golem in 1984." We are placed in a terrorizing world of the future in which technology commands the movements of individuals, supervised by doctors who are carrying out a program for the improvement of the human race. Thus, instead of doctors creating a monster, the monsters are already there as the normal species of the future — but one of them is suspected by the doctors of being a human being, that is a Golem in reverse.

"Golem" has echoes of Jan Lenica's animated horror cartoon, "Labyrinth" (1962) and Kantor's pessimistic play, "The Dead Class," both of which draw on the ruins of Poland and the horrors of Auschwitz for effect. The twist in Szulkin's pic is that mass media is presently the evil everyone should fear and distrust: in our age of com-

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puters he feels that "information" can mold "reality" to its own image.

In any case, our Golem wanders through a future urban jungle in sepia tones and, occasionally, color in search of a way out of "programmed madness." Nothing much happens, however, in the way of a narrative line, but it's intriguing to puzzle over the meanings of signs and symbols. A treat for avant-garde fans, but without off-shore chances. —Holl.