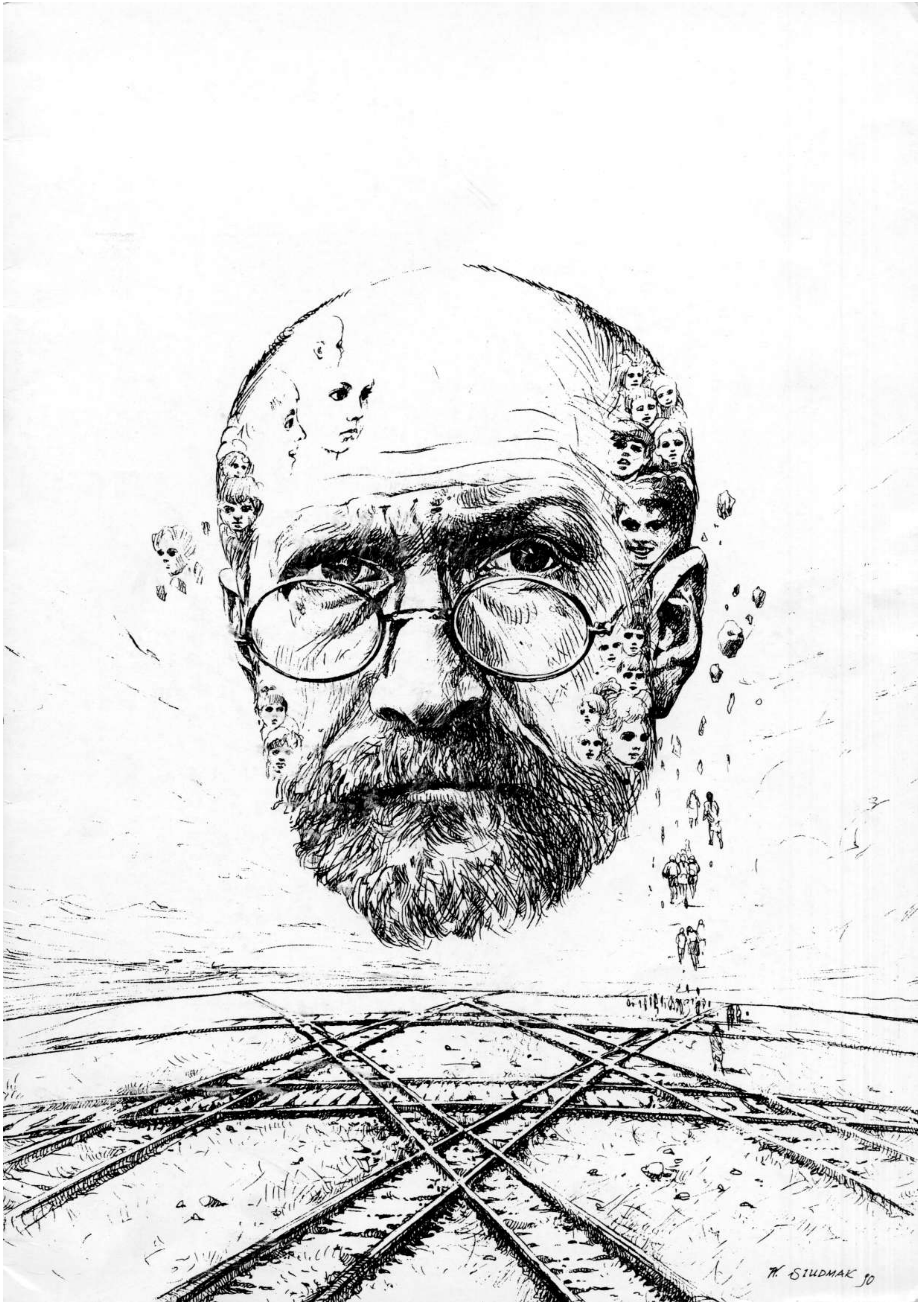


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FILMSTUDIO "PERSPEKTYWA"
REGINA ZIEGLER FILMPRODUKTION
TELMAR FILM INTERNATIONAL
ERATO FILMS
ZDF
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present

An ANDRZEJ WAJDA Film

KORCZAK

Written by
AGNIESZKA HOLLAND

with

WOJTEK PSZONIAK
as Dr. Korczak

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STEFA EWA DALKOWSKA
HENIEK PIOTR KOZLOWSKI
ESTERA MARZENA TRYBALA
SZLOMA WOJCIEH KLATA
ABRAMEK ADAM SIEMION
NATKA KAROLINA CZERNICKA
EWKA AGNIESZKA KRUK

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Produced by REGINA ZIEGLER
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DANIEL TOSCAN DU PLANTIER
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MAGDALENA DIPONT
Camera Operator JAKUB WDOWICKI
Sound Engineer JANUSZ ROSOL
Make-up Artists EWA SYMKO-MARCZEWSKA
JOLANTA PUSZYNSKA
Costumes WIESLAWA STARSKA
MALGORZATA STEFANIAK
Uniforms and Military Props JAN RUTKIEWICZ

Music played by
The Polish Radio-Television Symphony Orchestra of Katowice
and conducted by ANTONI WIT
Jewish Song : Arrangement by
WOJCIECH KALETA - Sung by NINA GAJEWSKA



All photographs herein by RENATA PAJCHEL

"Great lives are just like legends - difficult but beautiful",
wrote Polish Jewish doctor, writer and educator Janusz Korczak.
On August 6, 1942, his life became a legend.

On that day, the S.S. forced him to gather the two hundred orphans
he was tending in the Warsaw ghetto.

Refusing to save his life, he defiantly led "his" children,
behind the Star of David flag,
to the train that was to take them to Treblinka.

He died there with them.

HENRYK GOLDSZMIT

better known as

JANUSZ KORCZAK

Dr. Janusz Korczak is regarded as a national hero by the Poles. This admiration should be shared by the rest of the world : at the turn of the century, Dr. Korczak made a simple, but essential discovery - childhood.

Before him, children had been ignored by science and medicine. Childhood's only merit was to be a transitional stage towards adulthood. It did not exist *per se*. And even Freud, who was Korczak's contemporary and emphasized the importance of childhood in the constitution of the adult's psyche, was not interested in childhood as such. He would pay attention to his patients' childhood as *remembered and told by themselves*. Dr. Korczak decided to simply observe children. And he was the first actual paediatrician ever.

"It is one of the most malicious mistakes," he wrote, "to believe that pedagogy is a sci-

"He who says that he sacrifices himself for somebody else is a liar. This man likes to play cards, that man likes women, another never misses a horse race. I like children. I do not sacrifice myself. I do not do it for them, but for myself. I need it. You should not believe speeches on sacrifice. They are untrue or hypocritical."

ence of the child, and not of man. There are no children - there are people." Man and child can only be distinguished because they have "a different scale of notions, a different store of experience", and therefore "different impulses and a different play of feelings."

As feelings were the central element in his research, Korczak distrusted theories and preferred practice : "Thanks to theory, I know. Thanks to practice, I feel. Theory enriches intellect ; practice colours feeling, strengthens the will. 'I know' does not mean 'I act according to what I know'."

He did not know much, anyway, when he decided to become a paediatrician and educator : he was still a small child when he told his grandmother of his intention to do something that would bring happiness to children.

Henryk Goldszmit was born on July 22 1878 (or 1879), in Warsaw. His family, although Jewish, had been well assimilated into Polish society : his grandfather was a well-known physician, his father a successful lawyer.

But in 1889, his father went insane. When he died, seven years later, the family was left without any resources. Henryk supported his mother by tutoring other youngsters.

He started to study medicine at the Warsaw University in 1899. (Faithful to his childhood's commitment, he once introduced himself as the future "Karl Marx of children.") The same

year, he took part in a literary contest with a drama entitled *Ktoredy?* ("Which way?") under the pseudonym of Janusz Korczak - a name he borrowed from a XIXth Century historical novel. He wanted to keep this nom de plume only as a nom de plume, sticking to Henryk Goldszmit for his professional activities and scientific publications. But the success of his fiction was such that he soon became Janusz Korczak, Dr. Janusz Korczak, everywhere.

Korczak's novels for children were a direct continuation of Goldszmit's research, anyway. Korczak was as close to Goldszmit as the child is close to man. That is clearly pointed out by Bruno Bettelheim in his introduction to *King Matt the First* : "In 1923, Korczak published *King Matt the First*, surely one of his best books. King Matt is no other than Korczak himself, re-created as a child, bravely doing battle against the injustices of the world, but most of all against those inflicted on children. Like King Matt in the story, Korczak had created, in the re-

ality of his orphans' home, a children's society in which they largely governed themselves.

Long before Hollywood screenwriters tried all possible variations on the age-shift theme, Korczak imagined a story, entitled *When I Am Little Again*, where he told the case of an adult offered the privilege

of - but was it a privilege ? - to start his childhood all over again.

For various reasons, Korczak never got married. He thought that "a slave's children" didn't have any future - Poland was still oppressed by Russian Czars before the first World War. He was also afraid that his father's mental illness might be hereditary. "I must be abnormal," he once said. But he immediately added that he wanted to be *above* normality. And that's how he became "the Father of Orphans".

Having obtained his diploma in medicine in 1905, he systematically looked for assignments connected with children. In the Far East, where he had to go with the Russian army, he studied the school system. Back in Warsaw, he went to a Jewish, then to a Catholic summer camp as an educator. In 1909, he joined the Orphans' Aid Society. He soon became a chairman of the board and initiated the creation of a model orphanage.

Leaving the hospital where he had been working for seven years, he became Director of the Orphan's Home - the new building was solemnly inaugurated on February 23, 1913. He lived in a small attic room, over the children's bedrooms.

When the war broke out, he had to go to the front to take care of the soldiers, but his assistant, Stefania Wilczynska, who was to

stay with him until the end, continued his educational policy. Korczak had changed the orphanage into a true children's society, obeying principles of justice, fraternity, equality. Each child was at the same time "master of the house, worker and leader".

Many students in pedagogy would come to the Home to work with the children on a three-hour-a day basis. This training system was maintained until 1937.

In 1926, Korczak realized an old project of his - a magazine written by and for children, *Maly Przegląd* ("Little Review") published as a weekly supplement to *Nasz Przegląd* ("Our Review"), a newspaper representing part of the Jewish community.

In 1929, he published *Prawo Dziecka do Szacunku* (*The Right of the Child to Respect*). Many years later, the ideas expressed in this book would be the basis for the Declaration of the Child's Rights.

In 1934, Korczak was a very famous anonymous man: on the radio, he is "The Old Doctor" (the authorities would not let his name be pronounced on the radio to conceal the fact that he was Jewish). In this regular broadcast, he told stories, answered requests, discussed educational problems, examining the point of view of the Youngsters, the Parents, and the Educators. But the show was cancelled in 1936: the war was not far away.

For a while, he considered to leave Poland to settle in Palestine, where he had been a couple of times, but he eventually decided to remain with his children.

In October 1940, the Nazis created the Jewish ghetto. Korczak had to transfer his orphanage to an old school building, totally inadequate for his 150 children.

In 1941, the territory of the ghetto having been reduced, he has to move again. And again, the building is much too small for the children (200 of them by now).

Sick and exhausted, Korczak supervises yet another orphanage, where he finds 600 children abused by a demoralized and corrupt staff.



On August 1942, Korczak, Stefania Wilczyńska, the educators and the two hundreds orphans were led by the Nazis to the "Assembly Point", where they were locked in a train that took them to Treblinka.

"Reformers come to a bad end," Janusz Korczak wrote in his book *King Matt the First*. "Only after their death do people see that they were right and erect monuments in their memory."

DIRECTOR

ANDRZEJ WAJDA

Andrzej Wajda was born on March 6, 1926 at Suwalki, in the North East of Poland. Before the war, Suwalki was a garrison town and Wajda's father was a cavalry officer. Family snap shots often feature young Andrzej and his brother, both of them jokingly wearing shako hats.

At the onset of the war, Wajda's father was called to the German border. He was never to return. Wajda had to interrupt his studies and find various jobs for a living. He worked as a locksmith's apprentice, and took care of the illuminating of the local church in his spare time.

In 1942, he joined the A.K., i.e. the Home Army, which was commanded by the Polish Government in exile in London: "My function," he explains, "was that of a liaison officer."

"Today there is no film for everyone, and the film for the chosen, for some people only, is for me something unacceptable, a great failure and total defeat."

He resumed his studies after the war: "In 1946, I became a first-year student, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow." He didn't stay long: "One thing I knew for sure: I had done poorly at the Academy."

So it was "quite by accident" that he enrolled at the National Film School in Lodz in 1949. "The years spent in the school were hell for me. I felt I was wasting my time. Years later I learnt that I had studied 'at the best film school in the world.'"

However, Wajda admits that the Lodz school gave him "the invaluable opportunity of a practical encounter with film". Having directed three shorts, he graduated in 1953 and became assistant to director Aleksander Ford (who once had a Korczak project too).

Wajda directed his first feature. *A Generation*, in 1954. "It was certainly my greatest film adventure. On the screen, however, *A Generation* was major disappointment to me. It could have been a much more beautiful, a richer film. I came to the conclusion I should not make any more films."

This is the kind of decision that explains why Wajda once declared: "The greatest difficulties I have are with myself." Fortunately, he did not stick to his conclusion and has since directed about thirty films, among which *Ashes and Diamonds*, *Siberian Lady Macbeth*, *Landscape After the Battle*, *The Wedding*, *Land of Promise*, *Rough Treatment*, *The Conductor* and *Danton*.

One reason Wajda did not like the Lodz school was that film was taught there as a

much too literary medium, but one should not forget he is as much a stage director as a film director. "I am often asked why I bother myself with the theatre, whose works disappear with time and are so easily forgotten, since I can make films which last forever, always having a chance to move and entertain future generations. It is precisely this ephemeral and transitory nature that truly and profoundly binds me to the theatre, for it is not only the need of immortality and the wish to live on that constitute the natural human need - it is also the awareness of nothingness and death that attracts us, and with age even more so."

Elected chairman of Film Unit X - a production branch of Film Polski meant to encourage young filmmakers - in 1972, and President of the Polish Filmmakers Union in 1979, Wajda had to resign these two functions in 1981 because of the political situation in Poland. In

1989, after directing several films outside Poland, he was elected Senator of the Polish People's Republic. He is said to have declared that, because of his political responsibilities, and because of his fatigue, *Korczak* would be his last film. His friends do not believe him.

ABOUT KORCZAK

"Right from the beginning, I was aware that my work as director of *Korczak* would only be a part, a fragment of what the complete film would be. Without a script containing the powerful and expressive scenes that the subject required, without an actor with a strong and generous personality, I had no chance to show on the screen the exceptional man that Korczak was.

Now that the film is completed and comes alive on the screen, I have to say this would have never happened without screenwriter Agnieszka Holland and actor Wojtek Pszoniak. As a director, I simply tried to rediscover the simplicity and honesty of my early, black-and-white films. Over the last three decades, European cinema has stunningly renewed its language, improved its technique, but it has lost its naïve faith in the audience's desire for beautiful and simple stories. We are now used to a lot of contrived clichés and show off devices utilized by directors to frighten, surprise or entertain their audience. But, because of its very subject, such temptations were out of place in *Korczak*.

Many great film artists have tried to represent a saint on the screen, and many have failed. Evil has so many faces. It is so excitingly rich and inventive. Good is defenseless, naïve, dull. Hence the very idea of a film



about Dr. Korczak seemed pointless. But sainthood derives from human weakness, and man's fight against his own weakness has always been art's main motif.

And there was the background - the ghetto, the extermination of millions of human beings, and the exploitation of this by the cinema.

As Jewish themes had been banned from art by Polish censorship for twenty years, the

witnesses of these events had to use the foreign word *Holocaust* for what they had seen with their own eyes.

Maybe the time has finally come in my country when those for whom the wound is still open can see truthful reports. And whether this truth appears in a film or in any other medium is immaterial."

Andrzej Wajda
Warsaw, 20 April 1990.

FILMOGRAPHIE

1950 *Zły Chłopiec (The Bad Boy)
*Kiedy ty Spisz (While You Sleep)
Ceramika Ilzecka (Pottery at Ilza) (Doc.)
1955 *Ide ku Słońcu (Towards the Sun)
Pokolenie (A Generation)
1957 Kanał
1958 Popioły i Diamanty (Ashes and Diamonds)
1959 Lotna
1960 Niewinni Czarodzieje (Innocent Sorcerers)
1961 Samson
1962 Powiatowa Lady Makbet
(The Siberian Lady Macbeth,
US: Fury is a woman)
L'Amour à vingt ans
(Love at Twenty)
1965 Popioły (Ashes)
1967 Gates to Paradise
1968 *Roly-Poly (TV)
Wszystko na Sprzedaż (Everything for Sale)
1969 Polowanie na Muchy (Hunting Flies)
1970 Krajobraz po Bitwie (Landscape After Battle)
1971 Brzezina (The Birch Wood)

1972 Wesele (The Wedding)
1973 Pilatus und Andere (Pilate and Others)
1974 Ziemia Obiecana (GB: Land of Promise,
US: Promised Land)
1976 Smuga Cienia (The Shadow Line)
1977 Człowiek z Marmuru (Man of Marble)
1978 Bez Zwieczulenia (Rough Treatment)
The Deal Class (TV)
1979 Panxiy z Wilko (The Young Girls of Wilko)
Noc Listopadowa (November Night) (TV)
1980 Dyrygent (The Conductor)
1981 Człowiek z Żelaza (Man of Iron)
1982 Danton
1983 Ein Liebe In Deutschland (Love In Germany)
1985 Kronika Wypadków Miłosnych
(Chronicle Of Amorous Accidents)
1987 Les Possédés (Biesy)
Schulde und Sühne
(Crime And Punishment) (TV)
1990 Korczak

* Short films

PRODUCER

REGINA ZIEGLER

Born in Quedlinburg on March 8, 1944, Regina Ziegler became a television production assistant in 1964. She supervised documentaries, religious programs, football coverage, shows for children and teleplays for nine years.

In 1973 she founded her own independent company REGINA ZIEGLER FILMPRODUKTION. Her first venture was Wolf Gremm's first feature film *I Had a Feeling I was Dead*. Since then, she has helmed about 120 television and cinema productions.

Three years ago, she produced the film version of Andrzej Wajda's *Schuld und Sühne*, a play based upon Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment* and presented at the Schaubühne Theatre in Berlin.

This association went so well that it led to the making of *Signed: Andrzej Wajda*, a documentary about the influence of visual arts on Wajda's films, [directed by Wajda's close friend Andrzej Brzozowski].

Regina Ziegler then asked Wajda if he had any projects, and Wajda immediately mentioned a script written by Agnieszka Holland in 1981, *Korczak*. Despite numerous efforts, he had not been able to find financial backing to make the film so far. This did not deter Regina Ziegler.

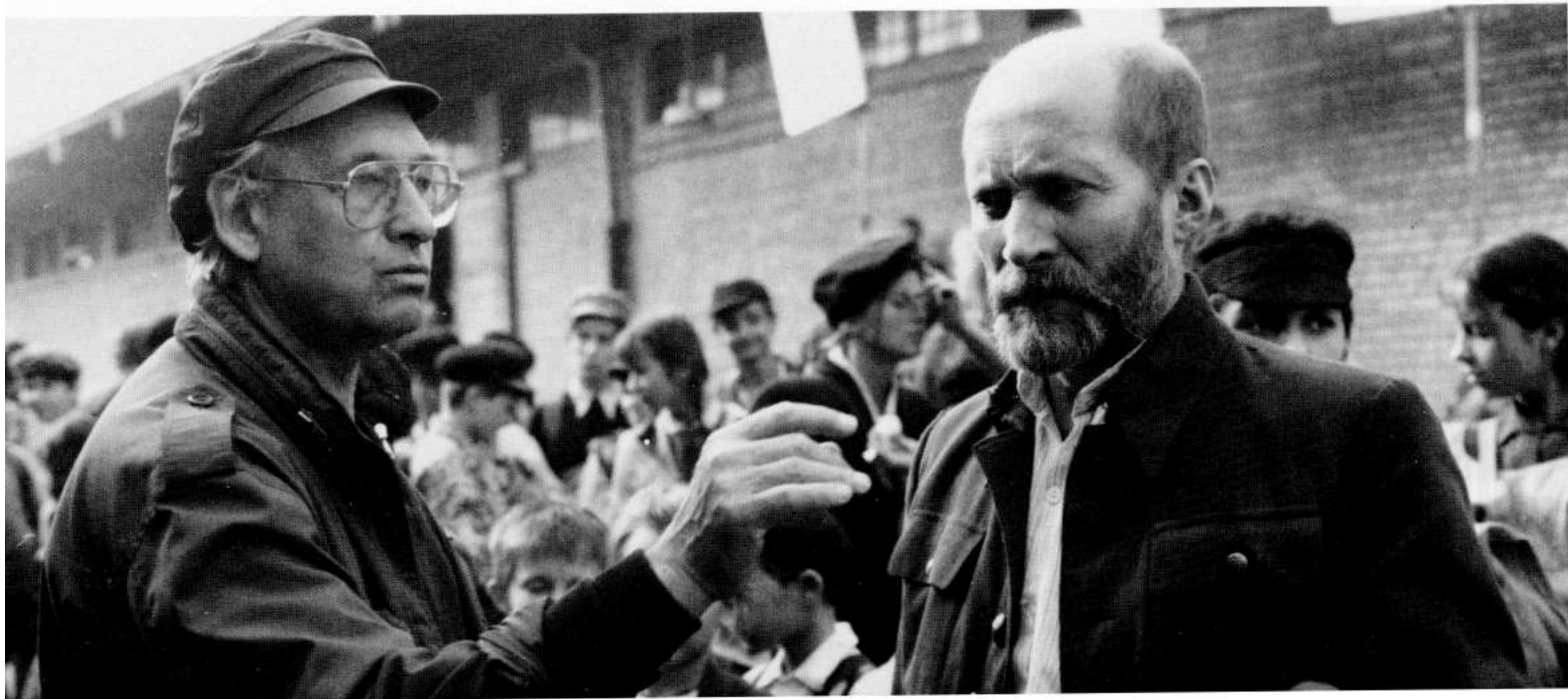
With much difficulty, she managed to buy the rights to Agnieszka Holland's script from a reluctant English producer, only to discover the existence of a second, very different, *Korczak* script! She eventually acquired an option to both.

Once it was clear that Ms Ziegler had the rights, potential co-producers flocked in. But the *Korczak* they wanted was not the *Korczak* Ziegler and Wajda envisaged. Some of them, for instance, wanted a Hollywood star to play Korczak. Because of the subject, Wajda wanted to make a Polish film, shot in Polish - didn't he once say that the introduction of the Polish language to the world cinema was "one of the most important cultural facts to have occurred after World War II"? And he wanted a Polish actor, Wojtek Pszoniak, in the title role. Although a film shot in black and white would seem more commercially restricting for the international market, Andrzej Wajda and Regina Ziegler decided that *Korczak* would be entirely shot in black and white. Eventually, support came from Filmstudio Perspektywa, Telmar Film International, Erato Films, the ZDF and the BBC. And the concept of the film was never betrayed.

"We have," says producer Regina Ziegler, "made *Korczak* our way."

FILMOGRAPHIE

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1975 | Marriage Bliss
(Marianne Lüdcke and Ingo Kratisch) | 1986 | A documentation on Ariane Mnouchkine
Otello (Peter Stein) |
| | Summer Folk (Peter Stein) | 1987 | Token Times Telling Tales
(Krzysztof Zanussi) |
| 1978 | Fabian (Wolf Gremm) | | Winterbeach (Wolf Gremm) |
| 1980 | Malou (Jeanine Moerapfel) | 1988 | Phaedra (Peter Stein) |
| 1982 | The Unapproachable (Krzysztof Zanussi) | | Crime and Punishment (Andrzej Wajda) |
| | Kamikaze 1989 (Wolf Gremm) | | Fast Buck (Peter Keglevic and Klaus Pohl) |
| 1983 | Class Enemy (Peter Stein) | 1989 | Signed: Andrzej Wajda
(Andrzej Drzozowski) |
| | Erendira (Ruy Guerra) | | Inventory (Krzysztof Zanussi) |
| 1984 | A Year of the Quiet Sun
(Krzysztof Zanussi) | | Falstaff (Peter Stein) |
| 1985 | German Dreams (Lienhard Wawrzyn) | | Korczak (Andrzej Wajda) |
| 1986 | The Journey (Markus Imhoff) | | |



JANUSZ KORCZAK

WOJTEK PSZONIAK

"I choose my roles very carefully," explains Wojtek Pszoniak. "There are so many roles with which you can't do anything. What is exciting is to remain oneself and create an entirely different character. There lies the essence of acting."

Defined by French film historian Jean Tulard as "maybe one of the greatest actors of his time", Pszoniak has been one of Wajda's most regular regulars. He started his film career with him in *Pilate and Others* in 1972 and has also often worked with him on the stage.

Born in Lvov (Poland) in 1942, Wojtek Pszoniak studied drama at the Cracow-National Drama School. In addition to his work as an actor, he teaches stage direction at the Warsaw-National Drama School, but he has been living in France for nine years.

ABOUT KORCZAK

"I have met quite a few interesting and extraordinary people since I have been an actor. I don't mean directors, actors, writers or technicians. I mean characters to whom, as an actor, I gave my gestures, my emotions, my voice, respecting their very essence. Understanding this essence, approaching the truth, or even the mystery of a character can only be achieved by finding similar problems within myself, by touching my own unhappiness, what hurts or moves me.

By "extraordinary people", I mean people torn inside, driven by diabolical, often tragic or ludicrous contradictions - Verkhovensky in *Les Possédés*, Robespierre in *Danton*, Max in *Les Années Sandwiches*, Parolès in *All Is Well That Ends Well*, Norman in *The Dresser*. I have become familiar with all of them, whether they actually existed or were born in a writer's imagination.

I had never met with such a man as Korczak. I had known for years that Wajda had been toying with a Korczak project. But it seemed so difficult, so impossible to make... Is there anything spectacular, *cinematic*, in Korczak's life? He was a physician, a pedagogue, a writer; he was in charge of orphans. But what made him a myth was the fact that he stayed with

them, died with them, while he could have saved his life. And can you put a myth on the screen? Especially when some people who knew him are



still alive, each of them with his own memories, his own image of Korczak. In fact, as a boy, I used to read his books for children. I knew the story of his life and death.

I was surprised when I was offered to play him. I read the script, books by and on Korczak,

particularly his *Ghetto Diary* - miraculously saved. I was fascinated. But, as an actor, I still felt lost...

Would I be able to convey what I had seen in that man, his depth, his solitude and his suffering, his modesty and his strength, and above all his love for children? Could I undertake such a task? I grew a beard. It turned out that I looked like him. It was simple... so far.

I gently got into Korczak's world. After a few months, I saw not one Korczak, but two: one in the adult world, a demanding, difficult man, and the other, completely different, the Korczak of children, understanding and loving children with a love I would call metaphysical. Not a maternal love. Not a paternal love. A love of its own kind.

He obviously identified with children. In each child he found himself. He thought that *sacrifice* was an improper word. He *meant* to take care of children. It was a kind of vocation.

Since he could not save them, he wanted to be with them when they most needed him. He wanted to protect them from fear and terror, defend their dignity.

The shooting of *Korczak* was completed some months ago, and I am now working on another part. But Korczak is still there, inside me. I learnt a lot from him. And I am grateful to Wajda for making that possible."

Wojtek Pszoniak
April 1990

WOJTEK PSZONIAK'S FILMOGRAPHY

CINEMA

(Selective filmography)

- 1972 Pilatus und Andere
(Pilate and Others)
Andrzej Wajda
- 1973 Wesele (The Wedding)
Andrzej Wajda
The Devil
Andrzej Zulawski
- 1974 Mieszko I
J. Rybbovski
- 1975 Ziemia Obiecana
(Land of Promise/Promised Land)
Andrzej Wajda
- 1979 The Tin Drum
Volker Schlöndorff
- 1981 Austeria
Jerzy Kawalerowicz
Austro-Daimler
Filip Bajon
- 1982 Danton
Andrzej Wajda
- 1983 Le Spectacle est permanent
(La Présence)
Gilles Chevalier
La Diagonale du fou
Richard Dembo
- 1984 Angry Harvest
Agnieszka Holland
- 1986 Le Testament d'un poète juif assassiné
Frank Cassenti
Je hais les acteurs
Gérard Krawczyk
- 1987 Les Années-Sandwiches
Pierre Boutron
To Kill a Priest
Agnieszka Holland

- 1988 Coupe franche
Jean-Pierre Saune
Deux
Claude Zidi
Notturmo
Fritz Lehner
Rouge Venise
Etienne Périer
- 1989 Monsieur
Jean-Philippe Toussaint
- 1990 Korczak
Andrzej Wajda

TELEVISION

- Sentiments n° 2 (Caméléon)
Joyce Buñuel
- 1983 Les Cerfs-volants
Pierre Badel
- 1984 Les Lendemain qui chantent
Jacques Fansten
Espionne et tais-toi
Claude Boissol
- 1985 Music-hall
Marcel Bluwal
Stradivarius
Yannick Andrei
- 1986 Le Buvard à l'envers
Pierre Boutron
- 1988 Sueurs froides
(Louis-Charles mon amour)
Régis Wargnier

On the stage, Wojtek Pszoniak has played Shakespeare, Ionesco, Durrenmatt, Schiller, Camus, Osborne, Gogol, Wasserman, Handke, Molière, Harwood... He is currently playing on stage in Switzerland Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

WRITTEN BY

AGNIESZKA HOLLAND

There is a short portrait of Agnieszka Holland in Wajda's book *Double vision*: "Her willpower is exceptional (only a woman can be so strong-willed)."

Agnieszka Holland is ambivalent about this portrait: "Since I have known him, I have always seen Wajda surrounded by strong-willed women. But, as far as I am concerned, I am afraid that my willpower may have been damaged by all the fighting I had to do to survive."

One of the films Agnieszka Holland wrote for Wajda was called *Rough Treatment*. Ever since she was a child, she has been the victim of many rough treatments.

She was born in Warsaw in 1948. Her father, a writer, a philosopher and a sincere communist, had spent the war in the Soviet Union. But he was sceptical about destalinization, and he said what he thought. "Too loudly, perhaps," explains Agnieszka Holland. "He died in mysterious circumstances."

She had felt the desire to become a filmmaker very early. But, declared *persona non grata* after her father's death in 1961, she left Poland and went to study film at the Prague Film School. "Prague is a beautiful city. It was an exciting period. Milos Forman, Ivan Passer and Jan Nemec were shooting their first films, and Czech cinema was, I think, if not better, more vivid and original than the French Nouvelle Vague."

After the fall of Dubcek in 1968, Agnieszka Holland was allowed to remain a student at the Film School although subjected to continuous surveillance. She was even arrested in 1970 and placed in solitary confinement many weeks. She discovered she was not afraid of solitude.

She went back to Poland in 1971. The situation was hardly better. She had to wait for seven years before being allowed to travel to the West. "Every year I would apply for a passport, and each time it was refused with the following note: 'You will obtain a passport if it is for Israel.' I refused, because I knew it meant a one-way ticket."

For some years, she made a living mainly by shooting commercials and films for television. Then she joined Wajda's Film Unit X, a group of young filmmakers for whom Wajda was both a producer and an artistic advisor, and she directed her first feature, *Provincial Actors*, in 1978.

She became one of Wajda's closest collaborators, writing for him, credited or uncredited, scripts or scenes for *Rough Treatment*, *Man of Marble*, *The Conductor*, *Man of Iron*. Later on in Paris, she helped him finalize the script for *Danton*.

The script for *Korczak* is also a result of this association. "An English producer who had read an article on Korczak in a magazine wanted Wajda to direct a film which would tell Korczak's life," Agnieszka Holland remembers. An English writer was hired to write a script, but Wajda didn't like his work.

"It's hard to write a script about Korczak that is not static, as Korczak did not make history," comments Agnieszka Holland. She discovered that when Wajda asked her to have a shot at a Korczak script. "It was an assignment - but I was thrilled to be given such an assignment, as I had known about Korczak since I was a child. My father, as a boy, had contributed to the *Little Review*, and I had been familiar with Korczak's life and work - and all his books for children, which are so original."

Wajda was pleased with Agnieszka Holland's work when she handed in her script, but the English producer was not. "It was too dark for him. He would have liked something funnier! That's Hollywood!"

Also, the project had difficulty getting off the ground because, logically enough, it required a Polish co-producer - out of the question in the early eighties, when Wajda and Holland did not officially exist.

Agnieszka Holland was in Sweden doing promotion for *Provincial Actors* in December 1981 when the Polish government declared martial law. "I was much too nervous to stay in such a quiet country as Sweden. I decided to go to Paris, because many friends from Solidarnosc were there."

Agnieszka Holland says that, after all she has been through, she has learned "not to think in definitive terms." Although she has been able to return to Poland, if only to shoot her latest film, *Europa Europa*, she believes she has settled in France for good. "I have invested so much effort, affection and time to understand the French *mores*..." So much so that she plans to soon direct a French film that would not just be a French-produced film, like *To Kill A Priest* was. "It's going to be a French French film."

Wajda's *Korczak*, which, surprisingly enough, was shot while she was shooting *Europa Europa* in Poland, is very faithful to Agnieszka Holland's original script, but some scenes had to be left out to avoid a three hour film: "I think, and I am not the only one to think that my first draft was the best one. But I know so many things about Korczak that, to me, *any* film would be too short! I know that film is a medium that demands such a compromise."



"The script was an assignment - but I was thrilled to be given such an assignment, as I had known about Korczak since I was a child. My father, as a boy, had contributed to the Little Review, and I had been familiar with Korczak's life and work - and all his books for children, which are so original."

Agnieszka Holland

AGNIESZKA HOLLAND'S FILMOGRAPHY

1976 Film Tests
 1978 Provincial Actors
 1980 Fever
 (Best Film award at the Gdansk Festival in 1981 and Silver Bear at the Berlin Festival)
 1981 Woman Alone/A Lonely Woman/
 Woman On Her Own (Television)
 (Best Film Award at the Montreal Festival in 1987)
 1985 Bittere Ernte (Angry Harvest)
 (Nominated for the Oscars in 1985)

1987 To Kill A Priest
 1990 Europa Europa

Agnieszka Holland wrote the scripts of Andrzej Wajda's *Rough Treatment* and Yuret Bocayevicz's *Anna*. She co-wrote *Man of Marble*, *Man of Iron*, *The Conductor*, *Danton*, and *Liebe in Deutschland*.

On the stage, she has directed various plays among which Alfred de Musset's *Lorenzaccio*, Kafka's *The Trial* and Buckner's *Woycek*.

Director of photography Robby Muller is famous for his close association with Wim Wenders, which started in 1969 with *Alabama*. This first film was followed by *Summer in the City*, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, *The Scarlet Letter* (TV), *Alice in the Cities*, *Wrong Move*, *Kings of the Road*, *The American Friend*, *Paris, Texas* and *Wings of Desire*. Right now Robby Muller is shooting Wenders' new film, *Till the End of the World*.

Born in 1940 in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, Muller studied film at the Neerlandse Filmakademie in Amsterdam. He worked first for the most important directors of the "Young German Cinema", but, since 1979, he has an international career. He worked on

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROBBY MULLER

Jerry Schatzberg's *Honeysuckle Rose*, on Peter Bogdanovich's *Saint Jack* and *They All Laughed*, Alex Cox' *Repo Man*, William Friedkin's *To Live and Die in L.A.*, Barbet Schroeder's *Tricheurs* and *Barfly*, and Jim Jarmusch's *Down by Law*.

A master of black and white, he was called in by Wajda when it was decided that *Korczak* would include original footage shot by the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto.

Right from the beginning, Muller was enthusiastic about working with Wajda: "Many people would work with him for free!"



"First of all I want to take advantage of this opportunity to say that I respect the opinion of those who think that the best film music is the one you do not hear while watching the film." Such is the coda of the noted Polish composer Wojciech Kilar, a regular collaborator on Wajda's films.

"In fact, my recipe for film music is very simple: to compose a good film score, I need a good film. Call it megalomania or modesty - I am just speaking from professional experience.

If the music for *Promised Land*, *A Chronicle of Amorous Accidents* or *The Shadow Line* could be listened to without too much displeasure and did not prevent the audience from watching the film, I don't feel I deserve any special praise. And, on the basis of the "good film makes good score" recipe, I should have written the ultimate film score for *Korczak*.

COMPOSER WOJCIECH KILAR

Things did not turn out that way, as the composer is almost out of place in this film. Musically speaking, only the finale is really important. But this small assignment was one of the greatest responsibilities I ever assumed since I have been working for the film medium.

Wajda knew my oratorio *Exodus* which I wrote when Solidarity was created, drawing my inspiration from the Old Testament and Israel's search for the Promised Land. Conversations with Wajda led me to compose the *Korczak* finale as an *Exodus II* - a music that takes Israel's children to the gas chambers. And, as a counterpoint to the death march, the Ascension."



"The appearance of the district changes from day to day : a prison - a plagued spot -

IN SEARCH OF A GHETTO

"I cannot make a *Dr. Zhivago* or a *Holocaust*," says Wajda. Hollywood productions of that kind are unnatural fictions. I'm striving for authenticity."

The film mainly covers the last years of Korczak, those he spent in the ghetto, but the actual Warsaw ghetto has gone, replaced by a modern housing estate. The first thing the Nazis did after the uprising was to destroy the Jewish quarter, and when a Jewish survivor returned home in 1946, he found that in this wasteland of "battered bricks and twisted iron bars only the sky had remained unchanged."

However, contrary to what may have been said or printed outside Poland, Wajda did *not* rebuild a whole section of the ghetto to use as his main set.

Sadly enough, he found the "reconstruction" he needed just across the Vistula, in Praga, a miserable slum of old buildings inhabited by desperate and heavy-drinking *robols*, the lowest class of workers in Poland.

To make his ghetto, Wajda simply built walls across two streets, strung up barbed wire, and installed a sentry-box.

After visiting this set, a journalist wrote : "Even when you know that these extras are paid 7,000 zlotys per day, even when you see the make-up girl adding a touch of grey on a cheek or a neck under the sunlights, your heart stops at such a harrowing sight."

WARSAW AND THE WARSAW GHETTO

Just before the war, there were about 1,250,000 inhabitants in Warsaw. The town was declared "open city" in 1939, but was bombed right from the

outbreak of the war (Sept. 1, 1939), and was soon under siege, from Sept. 8 till Sept. 27. It resisted heroically before surrendering to the Germans.



a lunatic asylum - a casino. Monaco. The wager - a head." (Janusz Korczac, Ghetto Diary)

Mass executions and deportations to concentration camps and work camps were immediately organized, and as early as 1941, the Germans created the "ghetto", a quarter where thousands of Jews were forced to live. Just as the Romans during the siege of Jerusalem had built a wall around that city, so the Germans built a wall around the Warsaw ghetto

In an area meant for 50,000 people, as many as 450,000 Jews were enclosed. An official German document of 1941 offers the following information on the ghetto: "The population density equals 1,108 persons per hectare of built-up territory, or 110,800 per square kilometre. The corresponding figures for the city of Warsaw as a whole are 14,000 persons per square kilometre of the total metropolitan district and 38,000 persons per square kilometre of built-up and inhabitable space... The average occupancy [in the Jewish quarter] can be put at 15 persons per apartment and 6 to 7 persons per room."

Jews were herded - "stored" - there until shipped to the gas chambers of Treblinka, Belzen, Maidanek, Auschwitz.

There were 40,000 Jews left, in the ghetto in January 1943, and only 7,000 could bear arms, when the first armed resistance took place. The Jews themselves did not expect to hold out more than a week, and Goebbels noted in his diary: "The fun won't last long." But the uprising lasted six full weeks.

Having eventually stopped the uprising, the Nazis methodically tore down the whole district, exterminating the population. The few survivors were deported to Treblinka and Maidanek.

As the Soviet troops were nearing the Vistula, the major force of Polish resistance - the Home Army - launched the second Warsaw insurrection (August 1st, 1944). Unable to get reinforcements from the Soviets, they had to surrender on October 2nd.

When Warsaw was eventually liberated - on Jan. 17, 1945 - by the Soviet army, 87 % of the buildings had been destroyed, and the population did not exceed 120,000.

ASSOCIATIONS IN 25 COUNTRIES

During the last fifteen years, Janusz Korczak associations have been created in more than 25 countries. Their aim is to spread the knowledge of the life, work and thought of Janusz Korczak.

In close cooperation with other people who defend the cause of children, they continue the philosophy of the "Old Doctor", which remain original, fertile and up-to-date for ever.

For further details, contact your nearest association.

The most important written information can be obtained from the Polish, French and German Associations.

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