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PROVINCIAL ACTORS

Directed by.....Agnieszka Holland
Screenplay by.....Agnieszka Holland and Witold Zatorski
Director of photography.....Jacek Petrycki
Music by.....Andrzej Zarycki
Art Director.....Bogdan Sölle
Production manager.....Michał Szczerbiec
Produced by the Polish Corporation for Film Production, "Zespoly
Filmowe," X Unit.

CAST

Krzysztof.....Tadeusz Huk
Anka.....Halina Łabonarska
The director.....Tomasz Zygadło
Krystyna.....Ewa Dałkowska
and Iwona Biernacka, Sława Kwaśniewska, Jerzy Stuhr, Kazimiera
Nogajówna, Janina Ordezanka, Krystyna Wachelko-Zaleska, and others

Poland. 1979.

In Polish with English subtitles.

Running time: 121 min.

A NEW YORKER FILMS RELEASE

Synopsis:

PROVINCIAL ACTORS is centered around two correlative axes: the married life of Krzysztof and Anka Malewski, both 32-years-old, begins to disintegrate just at the time when rehearsals begin for a production of Stanisław Wyspiański's "Liberation," one of the most important plays in Polish dramatic art. The production of this great national drama by a provincial theatre, in which Krzysztof is the only accomplished professional actor, seems to be a venture beyond the troupe's abilities.

With this drama, written in 1902 and first performed one year later, Wyspiański was hailed as the fourth great national poet of Poland who followed in the steps of his predecessors, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasiński. The liberation of Poland from political bondage, the liberation of a nation from spiritual lethargy, and the liberation of art from illusion -- these are the three main ideas of the drama. In the production of this play, the leading hero can fulfill his mission only if the actor who portrays him succeeds in making the audience aware that art is not an illusion but that it conveys truth.

For Krzysztof, who plays the leading role, this production of "Liberation" is of paramount importance: this is his one chance to become famous, to get better engagements, in larger cities. However, the director of the play, an actor from a Warsaw theatre, does not understand the text of "Liberation" and arbitrarily cuts out all the references to the national problems of Poland. Dressed in gaudy costumes, the actors are to perform a play about art without any national or social motivations.

Krzysztof is the only person who opposes the director for the sake of Wyspiański's play and its meaning and for the sake of his professional dignity. His conflict at the theatre is soon echoed at home. After Anka meets one of her girlfriends, who is much wealthier, she rebels against her life with Krzysztof, who never cares where or how he lives, who submits himself totally to his profession, to his "mission." After a period of open hostility, Anka leaves home.

Left alone both in his personal and his professional life, listening to his director, who tries to persuade him that people generally accept a middle course of action although they may not even be aware of it, disillusioned with "art," Krzysztof takes his rifle off the mantel but does not commit suicide. He puts it back and decides to win his wife back.

Agnieszka Holland

Agnieszka Holland, the model for the Krystyna Janda character in both MAN OF MARBLE and MAN OF IRON, was born in Poland in 1948. In 1971, she graduated from the Prague Film School. Her first job in film was as Krzysztof Zanussi's assistant on ILLUMINATION. Since then, Ms. Holland has directed for television, film, and the theatre. Her first feature film was THE GIRL AND AQUARIUS (1974) followed by THE CAMERA TEST (1977). In 1977, she also co-wrote Andrzej Wajda's WITHOUT ANESTHESIA. PROVINCIAL ACTORS was Ms. Holland's third feature film. She recently completed A LONELY WOMAN, in 1982.