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Author(s)	Louise B. Sweeney
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# A flowing film from Kadar

By Louise Sweeney

Think of yourself as a leaf floating on the river, and you catch the quality that permeates Jan Kadar's new film, "Adrift."

In it the Czechoslovakian filmmaker ("The Shop on Main Street" and "The Angel Levine") captures the feeling of water in motion better than any director since Jean Renoir's "The River." Kadar gives us long, brooding shots of the Danube as it swirls, ripples, eddies through the lives of the fishing family on its banks.

The hero, Janos, is a fisherman who has lived happily with his wife ("We were always like the bird and the wind") until Anada.

She is the beautiful and mysterious girl whom Janos fishes from the river, nearly drowned, and revives. Anada is taken in by the family, drives a wedge between Janos and his ailing wife and soon becomes an erotic obsession with him.

Kadar as artist-filmmaker shows us Janos caught in this current, being pulled further and further down. He has been caught literally and figuratively, nearly drowning himself in trying to save Anada from a suicidal plunge in the river; he tells his story in flashbacks to the rivermen who have rescued him and who judge him like a Greek chorus.

## Whirlpool

Paradoxically, "Adrift" is both a highly sensual and curiously moral film. There are explicit sexual scenes in which the camera circles like a whirlpool around the characters, but they are in sharp contrast with Janos's guilty anguish over the affair with Anada, and the murderous infidelity to which she's driven him.

"Adrift" flows as a film—sometimes too slowly, as if in a dream. Its script—by Imre Gyongyossy, with Kadar and Elmar Klos, from Lajos Zilahy's novel—is sometimes too austere and too stiff. But there are some interesting lines. On Anada: "Where is she to go when even the river will not claim her?"

The minimal dialogue is offset by Vladimir Novotny's eloquent and beautiful photography on location near Bratislava. One shot that Kadar repeats like a line of poetry is of a lacy white riverboat drifting down the smoke blue water, the shot framed in overhanging leaves. Zdenek Liska's score is a match for the photography—lovely and limpid, with almost a feeling of Smetana's "Moldau."

## Control

"The Angel Levine," Kadar's American film, got away from him about a third of the way through and churned off into melodrama. In "Adrift" he is in cool control, particularly of his actors: Rade Markovic gives a complex, Mastroianni-like performance as Janos; Milena Dravic is convincing as his loving, troubled wife and American model Paula Pritchett stunning as Anada, moving through Janos's life like some seductive version of fate in a Greek tragedy.

Sharing the bill with "Adrift" in New York is a delightful short called "First Class," in which French mime Marcel Marceau plays most of the passengers and crew on a luxury liner. Director Chester Fox has captured Marceau at his wittiest and backed him up with some droll Moog music by Charles Fox.