

PAPUSZA

A film by Joanna Kos-Krauze & Krzysztof Krauze



Poland, 2013, black and white, 131 min, Roma/Polish with English subtitles 1.85

Opens in the UK 1st April 2016

**Grand Jury's Special Mention, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival
Audience Award, Open Horizons, Thessaloniki International Film Festival
Best Director, Youth Jury Prize & Best Actor – Valladolid International Film Festival
Rotterdam International Film Festival
Special Jury Prize, Istanbul Film Festival
London International Film Festival
Opening Night Gala, Kinoteka / Polish Film Festival, London**

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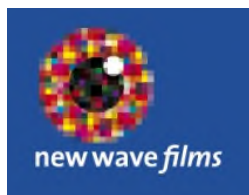
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SYNOPSIS

Papusza is based on the true story of the Roma and Polish poet Bronisława Wajs or Papusza (1908-1987), and the Polish poet Jerzy Ficowski, who discovered her great talent, and translated her work into Polish. Papusza was the first and only Roma woman who put her poems into writing and published them. By doing so, she confronted the female role within her community and, as a result, she and her family were banished for revealing their secrets. The film follows her life from birth to old age, giving insight into the Roma way of life before 1939 that was swept away by World War II and the persecution and slaughter of the Roma in Nazi-occupied Europe, and then the post-war communist regime that forcibly settled the people. Speaking mostly in Roma language, the ensemble of actors includes mostly non-professionals from Roma families.

DIRECTORS

Krzysztof Krauze (1953 - 2014) studied cinematography in Łódź in the 1970s, lived abroad and then worked as a director for both Se-Ma-For, the Irzykowski studios, and TOR (1985-91). His feature debut *New York, 4 AM* (1988) garnered the Bronze Lion at the Gdansk Film Festival, where *Street Games* (1996) later won the Special Jury Prize. Krauze won a series of awards for *The Debt* (1999), and enjoyed international success for *My Nikifor* (2004), co-written with his wife **Joanna Kos-Krauze** (born 1972, Olsztyn), who also co-wrote and co-directed the films *Saviour's Square* (2005) as well as *Papusza* (2013).

FILMOGRAPHY (Feature-length films)

***Papusza* (2013)**

Special Jury Prize, Istanbul Film Festival
Grand Jury's Special Mention, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival
Audience Award, Open Horizons, Thessaloniki International Film Festival
Best Director, Youth Jury Prize & Best Actor – Valladolid International Film Festival
Rotterdam International Film Festival
London International Film Festival

Plac Zbawiciela (Saviour Square) - 2006

Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2007 – Competition
Trieste International Film Festival 2008 – Grand Prix
52. Semana Internacional de Cine de Valladolid 2007 - Espiga de Plata, Best Actress
Polish Film Festival (Gdynia Film Festival) 2006 – Grand Prix Golden Lion, Best Actress
Polish Film Awards 2007 – Best Film, Best Director, Best Actress

Mój Nikifor (My Nikifor) – 2004

Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2005 – Grand Prix Crystal Globe, Best Director, Best Actress
Chicago International Film Festival 2005 – Grand Prix Golden Hugo, Best Actor
Panorama of European Cinema, Athens 2005 - FIPRESCI Prize
Polish Film Festival (Gdynia Film Festival) 2004 - Best Actress, Best Editing, Best Costume Design
Polish Film Awards 2005 – Best Actress, Best Editing, Best Costume Design, Best Cinematography

Dług (Debt) – 1999 (directed by Krzysztof Krauze)

50. Berlin International Film Festival 2000 – Panorama
Philadelphia International Film Festival 2000 – Best Director
Polish Film Festival (Gdynia Film Festival) 2000 - Grand Prix Golden Lion
Polish Film Awards 2000 – Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay

Gry uliczne (Street Games) – 1996 (directed by Krzysztof Krauze)

Nowy Jork, czwarta rano (New York, 4 AM) – 1988 (directed by Krzysztof Krauze)

Directors' Statement

Papusza was a Roma girl, born in a carriage, an autodidact, who in the end was mentioned in the world's encyclopedias and had her work translated into many languages. She was also named as one of the 60 most important women in Polish history. Isn't this an astonishing destiny worthy to be told in an epic film? For us, it was also an opportunity to introduce the world of the Roma and to give it back its dignity.

The culture of the Roma has hardly ever been greeted with interest, evoking fear and aggression instead. With his monograph, Jerzy Ficowski shed a new light on Roma people and contributed to a better understanding of that group. We want to follow Jerzy's steps and show our audience the pure and passionate soul of the Gypsy culture.

Beside the two main characters – Papusza and Jerzy Ficowski – there is a third “collective protagonist”, namely the gypsy world. Reconstructing the Roma way of life, which has been extinguished in its original form from the European landscape, proved to be the biggest challenge during our five years' work on the film. Only after our work was finished, have we realised how daring a task it was to try to reconstruct this world from scratch, i.e. to build the *tabors* as they were and tell 80 years of Roma history until the era of the Communist reign in Poland, which resulted in compulsory Roma settlement. Especially as there is not much documentation available on the subject of the Roma and their extermination, while at the same time there is massive body of research into prewar Jewish culture and the Holocaust.

Our film tells a story of a remarkable woman, who paid a terrible price for transgressing the norms of her community and publishing her poetical works – the price of rejection and solitude. It is also a story about love and a character way beyond her times, who has the courage to stay true to herself until the very end.

It is not a biopic (in a sense that *My Nikifor* was also not a biography). It is not a socio-political film or a work with ethnographic aspirations. It is a film about the courage to create, the suffering and solitude at the peak of popularity, unrequited love and devotion. But also about happiness.

CREW

Directors	Joanna Kos-Krauze, Krzysztof Krauze
Screenplay	Joanna Kos-Krauze, Krzysztof Krauze
Cinematography	Krzysztof Ptak, Wojciech Staroń
Production Design	Anna Wunderlich
Costume Design	Barbara Sikorska-Bouffał
Sound	Mateusz Adamczyk, Jarosław Bajdowski, Sebastian Witkowski
Editing	Krzysztof Szpetmański
Music	Jan Kanty Pawluśkiewicz
Produced by	Lambros Ziotas
Production Companies	Argomedia sp. Z o.o., Telewizja Polska S.A., Canal+ Polska, Studio Filmowe KADR

CAST

Jowita Budnik	Papusza (Bronisława Wajs)
Antoni Pawlicki	Jerzy Ficowski
Zbigniew Waleryś	Dionizy - Papusza's husband
Artur Steranko	Czarnecki

More details on: newwavefilms.co.uk

Photos can be downloaded from <http://www.newwavefilms.co.uk/press.html>

