

Krzysztof Kieślowski retrospective at TIFF 2022

Polish film director and screenwriter Krzysztof Kieślowski is celebrated at the **21st edition of Transilvania International Film Festival** with an ample retrospective occasioned by the commemoration, in 2021, of the filmmaker's 80th birthday. During **17-26 of June**, ten of his most appreciated works will be revisited in the section **Close-up Krzysztof Kieślowski**, part of a special program dedicated to Polish cinematography, as Poland is one of the two countries invited to this year's festival.

Keen observer of human experiences and a master of the so-called “cinema of moral unrest”, Kieślowski was born in 1941 in Warsaw, he graduated from the prestigious film academy of Łódź and started his career as a documentarist. *“Everybody wants to change the world every time they make the effort of doing something. I’ve never believed that the world can literally be changed. I rather felt that it can be described.”*

After a first fiction feature for television, Kieślowski makes ***The Scar*** (1976), deemed to be his real cinema debut, a sample of documentary style social realism, featuring many amateur actors, showing the conflict between people and authorities in a small town threatened by a faulty industrial project. In ***Camera Buff*** (1979), the dark comedy awarded the Grand Prize in Moscow, the director tackles topics such as the role of art in the world, censorship and the price of the freedom to create, following the story of an amateur cameraman who stands against the idea of manipulating reality through image. Censorship directly impacted Kieślowski's work, many of his films were modified or simply banned upon decision of the Polish Government. This happened to ***Blind Chance*** (1981), a film showing three possible consequences of the same trivial event, a man's rush to catch a train, as this production was screened only in 1987 in theatres.

No End (1985) is, essentially, a political minded and controversial film on the processes taking place during the martial law in Poland, and it was criticized both by the government, as well as by the church and the dissidents. It marks the beginning of the collaboration with Krzysztof Piesiewicz (later on Kieślowski would write with him the scenario of one of the most acclaimed TV series of all times) and with composer Zbigniew Preisner. Awarded in Venice and San Sebastián, ***Dekalog*** (1988) includes 10 films inspired of the ten commandments of the Old Testament. Two of the ten episodes were released in cinemas, as well, and will be screened at TIFF: ***A Short Film About Killing*** was named the best film at the European Film Awards and won two other important distinctions in Cannes, while ***A Short Film About Love*** was awarded two prizes in San Sebastián.

Kieślowski's last four feature films (screened at TIFF in restored 4K versions) were the ones enforcing his position on the list of the most appreciated authors of international cinematography. ***The Double Life of Véronique*** (1992), the story of two identical women who don't know each other, but who are connected in a mysterious emotional bond, received four distinctions in Cannes, one of them to the

Swiss actress Irène Jacob, but also two nominations to the 1992 edition of the César Awards. The director's most ambitious project, as well as one of the chef d'oeuvre of modern cinematography, the trilogy ***Three Colors - Blue, White, Red***, inspired by the French flag, representative of the French Revolution, had an exceptional cast including actors such as Juliette Binoche, Julie Delpy or Jean-Louis Trintignant. Film critic Roger Ebert described them as being, each and every one of them, an anti-tragedy, an anti-comedy and an anti-romance. These three films, that also announced the director's intention to withdraw from cinema, received an impressive plethora of international nominations and awards among which the Golden Lion in Venice (***Blue***, 1993), the Silver Bear for Best Director in Berlin (***White***, 1994) and three Academy Awards nominations (***Red***, 1995).

In 1996, the sudden death, at only 56 years old, of the acclaimed director shocked the entire film world, as Kieślowski is considered as one of the most influential European film directors of our time with a unique contribution of over 40 titles to world cinematography.

Close-up Krzysztof Kieślowski includes films tackling difficult topics, moral dilemmas, fundamental and universal truths about the complexity of human experiences, screened at TIFF.21 with the support of the Polish Institute of Bucharest within the special program **Focus Polonia**.