

**THE POLISH CLUB OF
SAN FRANCISCO**

Presents... Krzysztof Kieślowski's

CAMERA BUFF (Amator) & THE OFFICE (Urząd)

"Camera Buff" (1979) brought Krzysztof Kieślowski his first international acclaim, taking the top prize at the Moscow film fest. It concerns a proud dad (Jerzy Stuhr) who buys an 8mm camera with which to film his newborn. The factory worker becomes obsessed with film, losing his old life to his new calling. When his wife announces she is leaving, the camera buff only can frame her departing figure with his fingers. Action! Some elements came from Kieślowski's life as a film student, his biographer Annette Insdorf reports in a brief but informative interview in the extras. The color images (full frame, enhanced) and sound are adequate. Subtitles are clear. This is one of four recent additions to Kino's Kieślowski collection -- along with "No End," "The Scar" and "Blind Chance" -- all of which show that the Polish master's writing and directing skills arrived almost fully formed when he turned to feature films. Each of the films benefits from a powerful central performance. They are products of the 1970s and '80s, a time of vast sociopolitical changes in Poland, but are not timepieces or attacks on the communists.

"The Office" is a 1966 short film produced while Kieślowski was a student at the Łódź Film school. The film's runtime of 5 minutes consists entirely of interactions at a government office service window, with a clerk handling various requests by people seeking state aid. The film portrays the intense bureaucracy that existed in Polish government services at the time, with people being turned away for various procedural violations. One request is denied because the applicant brought too many identifying documents and was told to secure an official nullification of one of the redundant papers. Another man encounters difficulty because a document was stamped with a square, rather than a round seal.

Introduction by media art historian

Erica Levin

Organized by Joasia Szupinska

Wednesday, April 27th, 2011 -- 8:00pm

Polish Club, 3040 22nd Street in San Francisco

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Maureen Mroczek Morris



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