



Presents

WAŁĘSA.
Man of Hope

Production Notes

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OFFICIAL SELECTION 2013



**MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
la Biennale di Venezia 2013**
Venezia 70 – Out of Competition

127'
Poland 2013
DCP, 35mm

Cast:

LECH WAŁĘSA - ROBERT WIĘCKIEWICZ
DANUTA WAŁĘSA - AGNIESZKA GROCHOWSKA
NAWIŚLAK - ZBIGNIEW ZAMACHOWSKI
MAJCHRZAK - CEZARY KOSIŃSKI
ORIANA FALLACI – MARIA ROSARIA OMAGGIO
DIRECTOR OF THE SHIPYARD 1980 - MIROSŁAW BAKA
PRIEST – MACIEJ STUHR
and others

Credits:

director - Andrzej Wajda
screenplay - Janusz Głowacki
director of photography - Paweł Edelman psc
creative support and cast - Ewa Brodzka
sound - Jacek Hamela
makeup - Waldemar Pokromski, Tomasz Matraszek
costume designer - Magdalena Biedrzycka
production designer - Magdalena Dipont
editing - Grażyna Gradoń psm, Milenia Fiedler psm
music – Paweł Mykietyn
production manager - Paweł Gabryś
executive producer - Katarzyna Fukacz - Cebula, Małgorzata Fogel - Gabryś
producer - Michał Kwieciński

PRODUCTION

AKSON STUDIO

CO-PRODUCTION:

ORANGE

TVP – TELEWIZJA POLSKA S.A.

NCK – NATIONAL CENTER FOR CULTURE

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shot on 35mm

Web site: <http://www.walesafilm.pl/>

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About the Film

How was it possible for a single person to change the world so dramatically? It is as much a political as a psychological question. Wajda, intruding into a private, even intimate sphere of Lech Wałęsa – the Polish “Solidarity” Trade Union’s leader, attempts to capture a phenomenon of this incredible metamorphosis: from a simple worker into a charismatic leader. Wałęsa’s controversial persona, fostering heated discussions that last till this very day, helped millions of people in releasing the suppressed dreams of freedom, setting the stage for the political transformations beyond anyone’s imagination at the time.

And yet, Wałęsa’s story does not only have this one psychological or local dimension. With time, it become embedded in the context of international politics. The life of a simple electrician, at first fighting for his fellow workers’ rights, echoed only some remote events until it was Wałęsa himself and millions of his fellow countrywomen and men that made the world news for several crucial years of the 1980s leading to the collapse of the Iron Curtain order.

This historical perspective, combined with a dynamic story of a daily life in the Polish People’s Republic, should help comprehend a phenomenon of these transformations. The film is addressed to the young audiences, at the same time constituting a reminder of an outstanding filmmaker: Sometimes you must fight for freedom, sometimes you must defend it, there are, however, no circumstances which could excuse you from contemplating it.

Now, 30 years after the events that overturned the political, post-WW2 order of Europe, the world experiences a next wave of modern revolutions. The Green Movement in Iran, similarly as the Solidarity did, employs and re-defines traditional religious symbols for conveying the political message of freedom; people in Egypt launch massive protests and manifestations of the citizen disagreement not only on the Tahrir square, but across the country, facing brutality of the police and paramilitary forces. Burma’s semi-free elections, bloodshed during protests, charismatic leader of the opposition – Myanmar interned by the government, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize seems to follow a comparable scenario. Additionally, the recent citizen massive protests in Turkey and Brazil prove that the new revolutionary wave is not restricted to the Arab Spring and has a potential of reaching deeper into the foundations of the world order. It strongly resonates with Lech Wałęsa’s words at the US Congress that conclude the film: *Now others jump fences and tear down the walls. They do it because freedom is a human right.*

Synopsis

The New Europe has its beginnings in Gdansk! “Wałęsa. Man of Hope” is a story of a contemporary hero – Lech Wałęsa (Robert Więckiewicz). The movie begins with Oriana Fallaci (Maria Rosaria Omaggio) appearing at the Wałęsas’ flat in an apartment block to interview the future Nobel Prize winner. The emotion-packed conversation with one of the world most famous journalists constitutes a fabric of the movie narrative. Fallaci poses questions no one else ever wanted or dared to ask the legendary leader of the “Solidarity” movement. By doing so, she unveils the truth of a man gifted with charisma and amazing political intuition.

The actual biographical story begins in 1970: Soon after the communist authorities have bloodily suppressed the workers’ protests, Wałęsa is forced to sign an obligation to collaborate with the Security Services. The following scenes showing hero’s path to political maturity are interwoven with the Wałęsas’ family life. The relationship between Lech and Danuta (Agnieszka Grochowska), their

house full of kids and daily problems are as important as politics – they thought they were to live regular lives in their Gdansk apartment, but instead they were surrounded by momentous, political events, calling for taking a stand. Behind the strong man there is – as it turns out – a much stronger woman, his wife.

Sometimes freedom needs to be fought for and your homeland needs to be protected. Politics and love, fear and sense of security, necessity of subordination and a will to rebel – the film, just as Lech Wałęsa's life, is full of contrast. His sense of duty towards the nation intertwines with that towards the family; the love of his wife and children with the love of his country. Is Lech making the right choices? What is the price he needs to pay?

Long Synopsis

The New Europe has its beginnings in Gdansk! "Wałęsa. Man of Hope" is a story of a contemporary hero – Lech Wałęsa (Robert Więckiewicz). The movie begins with Oriana Fallaci (Maria Rosaria Omaggio) appearing at the Wałęsas' flat in an apartment block to interview the future Nobel Prize winner. The emotion-packed conversation with one of the world most famous journalists constitutes a fabric of the movie narrative. Fallaci poses questions no one else ever wanted or dared to ask the legendary leader of the "Solidarity" movement. By doing so, she unveils the truth of a man gifted with charisma and amazing political intuition.

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According to the real events, the scene when Lech is arrested together with his several months' old daughter, in whose pram he's smuggling illegal fliers, alternates with another scene showing Danuta having to face Security Services operatives once again rummaging through their flat full of children. Lech's speech at the Shipyard on the 9th anniversary of the December 1970 massacre is the moment when, for the first time, Wałęsa demonstrates his leadership skills and his ability to enchant the crowds. Half a year later, in August 1980, he leads a strike at the Shipyard in Gdansk, becoming the "Solidarity" movement's leader, the symbol of opposition, and the struggle for democracy.

When the martial law is introduced in 1981, Lech is taken from his flat in Gdansk. His year-long internment proves to be a time of trial: Wałęsa – although cut off from any contact with the opposition activists – does not give up and does not agree to cooperate with the communist authorities, even though the offer is made several times. Lech Wałęsa getting a warm welcome in Gdansk after his return from internment as well as him being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize are two signs of victory that is to be finally won in 1989 at the Round Table. The consequent first partly free, democratic elections in the Communist Block, result in turn in the following change of the political system. In the final scene of the movie Lech Wałęsa makes his speech to the US Congress, opening with the words: *We, the People...*

Lech Wałęsa – Biography

Lech Wałęsa, was born on September 29, 1943 in Popowo (Poland). Co-founder and a first leader of the Solidarity ("Solidarność") trade union movement. In August 1980 he led the Gdansk shipyard strike. As a result of the strike, the communist authorities capitulated and agreed to sign Gdansk Agreement (August 31, 1980). He was fighting for a right of a working people to associate and for the dignity of human labour. During the martial law, which was introduced in December 1981, he was interned and isolated.

Lech Wałęsa, a charismatic leader of the Polish opposition, has eight children with his beloved wife Danuta (married in 1969). When he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983, it was she, who went to Oslo and read the acceptance speech: *We desire peace - and that is why we have never resorted to physical force. We crave for justice - and that is why we are so persistent in the struggle for our rights. We seek freedom of convictions - and that is why we have never attempted to enslave man's conscience nor shall we ever attempt to do so.* During the following transformation process, he played a key role in talks between the communist party and the opposition. Wałęsa was elected as the President of Poland in 1990.

1970

In December 1970 Lech Wałęsa is one of the leaders of the Gdańsk Shipyard strike and becomes a member of the Strike Committee.

1978

In 1978 he starts collaboration with the Free Trade Unions of the Coast and distributes opposition's press. He then becomes a co-worker of the Workers' Defence Committee and joins the editorial staff of the independent biweekly "Robotnik Wybrzeża" ("Worker of the Coast").

1980

In August 1980 he is one of the organizers, alongside e.g. Bogdan Borusewicz of the Gdańsk Shipyard strike and becomes its leader. After other protesting groups join in, he proclaims it a "solidarity strike."

1981

December 13th, 1981 he is detained, transferred to Warsaw, then interned in government facilities in Chylce, Otwock Wielki and, finally, in Arłamów. When the decision of his internment is overturned in November 1982, Lech Wałęsa goes back to Gdańsk, where he is welcomed by crowds of people.

1983

On October 5th 1983, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announces its decision to award Lech Wałęsa with the Nobel Peace Prize. His wife, Danuta Wałęsa, collects the prize on his behalf.

1989

During the Roundtable Talks in Warsaw Wałęsa is a head of the "Solidarity" delegation. He also participates in confidential meetings at the Ministry of the Interior Affairs facility in Magdalenka, which are decisive in concluding the agreement. As a result, parliamentary elections are held in June 1989.

1990

After two rounds of elections in November and December of 1990, he is elected President of the Republic of Poland. On December 22nd he is sworn in as the first president elected in the popular elections. Wałęsa remains in office until December 22nd, 1995. During his time in office the Soviet Army leaves the Polish territory.

History Time-Line

1968

The Prague Spring, ensuing attempts at liberalization of the communist regime by the reformist First Secretary Alexander Dubček, witnesses rising protests of students and intellectuals calling for freedom of the media, speech and travel. They are followed by the massive student and intelligentsia protests in Poland, known as March 1968, when the communist government forcibly crushes manifestations taking control over the universities. The consequent military intervention of the Soviet Block in the then Czechoslovakia, violently surpasses the growing popular opposition against the communist government.

December 1970

Polish 1970 massive workers protest, known as December 70, lasts 5 days. 42 people are killed and more than 1000 wounded by the state militia. Protests begin after sudden increase of a food prices. In a result of the mass riots, Edward Gierek becomes new secretary of the communist party. Prices come back to their previous levels (as an effect of the party actions in the state-regulated economy).

June 1976

The government announces a plan of a drastic increase of prices. In response, the workers of Radom and Ursus factories start to protest. Militia pacifies the crowds - over 150 people are killed. Under a pressure of Moscow, the governmental plan is however backed off. Many workers lose their job and are repressed. The opposition founds the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) to fight with the injustice. KOR is an example of the successful social self-organization dealing with the issues of a daily life. It becomes a precursor and inspiration for the Solidarity trade union few years later.

October 1978

Cardinal Karol Wojtyła is elected a new pope. John Paul II future pilgrimages attract millions of Poles, strongly influencing people's minds. The political role of the Catholic Church in Poland rises.

August 1980

Meat prices increase. General economic situation in the country is very poor. Workers in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk begin a strike. On August 16th the strike is called back, but at night the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) lists 21 demands, including also the political postulates. The following talks between the opposition supported by intellectuals, and the government result in the Gdansk Agreement that is signed on August 31st. The main point for the workers is the establishment of a trade union, independent of the communist party control, and gaining a legal right to strike.

October

Trade union "Solidarność" (Solidarity) is officially registered. With this, many similar associations, like the Independent Students Union, are also legalized.

January 1981

Mass protests in the whole country. People start to speak openly about their needs.

December

Martial law is imposed. Many of the Solidarity's leaders, including Wałęsa, are imprisoned.

July 1983

Martial law is lifted. During the martial law thousands of opposition activists are interned without charge, and as many as 100 people are killed. Many of the political prisoners are not released until the general amnesty in 1986.

1985 -1988

Mikhail Gorbachev as the first secretary of the USSR communist party introduces the glasnosts and perestroika program of reforms of the communist political system. Economic situation in Poland is terrible.

February – April 1989

The round-table talks between Solidarity, the Communists and the Catholic Church. The following partially free parliamentary elections see the overwhelming success of the Solidarity, who now co-forms the coalition government.

March

The free parliamentary elections are allowed in Hungary, and the border between Hungary and Austria is opened.

June

Mikhail Gorbachev refuses to intervene in Hungary and Poland.

Fall 1989

10th November brings the Fall of the Berlin Wall. The communist governments in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania fall one after another.

June 1991

Croatia and Slovenia declare independence starting the dissolution of Yugoslavia, that after the ensuing 10 year long bloody civil war, splits into Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the region of Kosovo.

August

Military coup in Moscow – Mikhail Gorbachev is put into a house arrest, Boris Yeltsin defies the takeover of power by occupying the Parliament building.

December

Dissolution of the Soviet Union. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan declare independence and form their own states.

Andrzej Wajda **Director's Statement**

I am well aware "Wałęsa" is the most difficult subject I have ever dealt with in the 55 years of my film career, but I just don't see any other director making a movie about Lech that I would find satisfying. I have no other choice. The screenplay by Janusz Głowacki is the first and the only one, though some parts have been altered, but that's a natural process and there is no other way when you make a movie whose subject, in this case Lech Wałęsa, is getting so much response from the future audiences. I admired Wałęsa from the very first moment I met him – during the talks between Solidarity and the Government Committee. This movie will reflect all that. Movie is addressed to everyone, but I'd especially like to reach the younger audiences, as Lech is a good example to convince them that they should participate in our political life.

About the Filmmakers

ANDRZEJ WAJDA – Director

Film and theatrical director; born March 6th 1926 in Suwałki, Poland; Education: Academy of Fine Arts, Krakow; Film School Łódź; Film Director 1954; Theater Dir. Teatr Stary, Cracow 1962-1998; Man. Dir. Teatr Powszechny Warsaw 1989-90; Hon. mem. Union Polish Artist and Designers (ZPAP) 1977; President Polish Film Assoc. 1978-83; "Solidarity" Lech Wałęsa Council 1981-89; Senator of the Republic of Poland 1989-91; Presidential Council for Culture 1992-94; Founder: Center of Japanese Art and Technology, Krakow 1994;

Dr. h. c.: American University Washington 1981; University Bologna 1988; Jagiellonian University Krakow 1989; University Lyon 1995; University Libre Bruxelles 1995; Gdańsk University 2004; University of Warsaw 2005; Membre Institut de France 1997;

Prizes:

- State First Class Prize 1974;
- Order of the Banner of Labor (second class) 1975;
- Konrad Swinarski Prize 1976;
- Premio David di Donatello Luchino Visconti, Italy 1978;
- Officer's Cross of Order of Polonia Restituta;
- Order of Kirill and Methodus (first class), Bulgaria 1978;
- BAFTA Fellowship 1982;
- Onassis Prize, Greece 1982;
- Officier, Legion d`honneur 1982 France;
- Cesar Award, France 1983;
- Pirandello Artistic Award, Italy 1986;
- Kyoto Prize, Japan 1987;
- Felix European Film Awards – Lifetime Achievement Award 1990;
- Order of Rising Sun, Japan 1995; Premium Imperiale, Japan 1997;
- Golden Lion Life Achievement Award, Venice, 1998;
- OSCAR® American Film Academy - Lifetime Achievement Award 2000;
- Commandeur, Legion d`honneur France 2001;
- Golden Bear Life Achievement Award, IFF Berlin 2006;
- European Film Award Prix FIPRESCI 2009.

Films:

- *Pokolenie (Generation)* 1954 (Polish State Prize);
- *Idę do Słońca (I'm Going to the Sun)* 1955;
- *Kanał (Canal)* 1957 (Jury Special Award – Silver Palm, Cannes IFF 1957);
- *Popiół i diament (Ashes and Diamond)* 1957 (FIPRESCI Prize Venice IFF 1959, D. O. Selznick`s Silver Laurel Award 1962);
- *Lotna* 1959;
- *Niewinni czarodzieje (Innocent Sorcerers)* 1960;
- *Samson* 1961;
- *Syberyjska Ledi Makbet (Siberian Lady Macbeth)* 1962;
- *L`amour a Vingt Ans (Love at Twenty)* 1962;
- *Popioły (Ashes)* 1965;
- *Gates to Paradise* 1968;
- *Wszystko na sprzedaż (Everything for Sale)* 1969;
- *Polowanie na muchy (Hunting Flies)* 1969;
- *Krajobraz po bitwie (Landscape After the Battle)* 1970 (Golden Globe Milan 1971);
- *Brzezina (The Birch Wood)* 1970 (FIPRESCI Milan IFF 1970, Golden Medal Moscow IFF 1971);
- *Wesele (The Wedding)* 1973 (Silver Shell San Sebastian IFF 1973);
- *Ziemia obiecana (The Promised Land)* 1975 (Gdańsk FF Golden Lions 1975, Golden Medal Moscow IFF 1975, Oscar® Award Nomination 1976);
- *Człowiek z marmuru (Man of Marble)* 1977 (FIPRESCI Prize, Cannes IFF 1978, Jury Special Prize, Cartagena IFF 1980);
- *Bez znieczulenia (Without Anesthesia)* 1978 (OCIC Prize, Cannes IFF 1979);
- *Panny z Wilka (The Maids of Wilko)* 1979 (Oscar® Award Nomination 1980);
- *Dyrygent (The Conductor)* 1980;
- *Człowiek z żelaza (Man of Iron)* 1981 (Palme d`Or - Golden Palm Cannes IFF 1981, Oscar® Award Nomination 1982);
- *Danton* 1982 (Prix Luis Delluc 1982) ;
- *Eine Liebe in Deutschland (A Love in Germany)* 1983;
- *Kronika wypadków miłosnych (Chronicle of Love Affairs)* 1986;
- *Les Possedes (The Possessed)* 1987;
- *Korczak* 1990;
- *Pierścionek z orłem w koronie (The Crowned-Eagle Ring)* 1992;
- *Nastasya* 1994;
- *Wielki Tydzień (The Holy Week)* 1995 (Silver Bear, Berlin IFF 1996);
- *Panna Nikt (Miss Nobody)* 1996;
- *Pan Tadeusz (Mr Tadeusz)* 1999;
- *Zemsta (The Revenge)* 2002;
- *Katyń (Katyn)* (2007), (Eagle Prize - Polish Film Academy Award, Best Film 2007; Oscar® Award Nomination 2008, European Film Academy Prix d'Excellence 2008);
- *Tatarak (Sweet Rush)* (2009), (Alfred Bauer Prize for the Innovativeness – Berlin IFF 2009, European Film Academy Prix FIPRESCI 2009)

TV: *Przekładaniec (Roly-Poly)* 1968; *Makbeth* 1969; *Pilatus und Andere* (from Bulhakow's *Master and Margarita*) 1971 German TV ZDF (Bambi Award 1972); *Noc listopadowa (November Night)* 1975; *Z biegiem lat z biegiem dni (Gone with the Years, Gone with the Days)* 1978-79; *Zbrodnia i kara (Crime and Punishment)* 1985; *Wieczernik (The Last Supper)* 1985; *Hamlet IV* 1989; *Silniejsza (The Stronger One)* 1990; *Mishima* 1995; *Bigda* 1999; *Wyrok na Franciszka Kłosa (The Condemnation of Franciszek Klos)* 2000; *Jan Nowak Jeziorański 60 lat później (Jan Nowak Jeziorański 60 years later)* 2004;

Plays: *Hatful of Rain* 1959; *Hamlet* 1960, 1980, 1989; *Two on the Seesaw* 1960, 1990; *Demons* 1963; *Wesele (The Wedding)* 1962, 1991, (1992 Salzburg Festival); *Play Strindberg* 1970; *Biesy (The Possessed)* 1971, (1974 Yale Repertory); *Sticks and Bones* 1972 (Moscow); *Noc listopadowa (November Night)* 1974; *Sprawa Dantona (The Danton Case)* 1975, (1978 Sofia), 1980, (1982 Trieste); *Kiedy rozum śpi (When Reason is Asleep)* 1976; *Emigranci (Émigrés)* 1976; *Nastasya Filipowna* (improvisation based on Dostoyewsky`s *Idiot*) 1977; *Rozmowy z katem (Conversation with the Executioner)* 1997; *White Marriage* 1977 Yale Repertory; *Z biegiem lat z biegiem dni..(Gone with the Years, Gone with the Days)* 1978; *Antygone* 1984; *Zbrodnia i kara (Crime and Punishment)* 1984, (1986 Schaubuhne, Berlin); *Wieczernik (The Last Supper)* 1985; *Zemsta (Revenge)* 1986; *Panna Julia (Miss Julie)* 1988; *Dybuk / The Dybbuk* 1988, (Tel Aviv 1988); *Lekcja polskiego (Lesson of Polish Language)* 1988; *Nastasya* (based on Dostoyewsky`s *Idiot*) Tokyo 1989; *Romeo and Juliet* 1990; *The Ghost Sonata* 1994, Stockholm; *Mishima* 1994; *Klątwa (The Curse)* 1997; *Słomkowy kapelusz (The Straw Hat)* 1998; *Macbeth* 2004, Moscow;

Publications: *Cinema mon amour* 1986 (France); *My Life in Film* 1989; *Double Vision* 1998 (UK, USA); *Kino i reszta świata (Cinema and the Rest of the World)* 2000 (Poland);

PAWEŁ EDELMAN – Cinematography

Director of Photography. He was born on June 26th, 1958 in Lodz, Poland. He is graduate of the Cultural Studies Department of the University of Lodz where he majored in film studies. He also studied cinematography at the State Higher School of Film, Television and Theatre in Lodz, from where he graduated in 1988.

He worked, among others, with the following directors: Yurek Bogajewicz, Taylor Hacword, Lukasz Karwowski, Władysław Pasikowski, Roman Polanski, Jerzy Stuhr, Andrzej Wajda, Leszek Wosiewicz, Steven Zagillian, Janusz Zaorski.

Film Awards:

2008 – *Katyn* – Eagle Prize, (Polish Film Academy Award) Best Cinematography
2005 – *Ray* – American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Prize – Nomination
2003 – *The Pianist* – Oscar® – Nomination in the Best Photography category
2003 – *The Pianist* – Eagle Prize, (Polish Film Academy Award) – Best Photography
2003 – *The Pianist* – American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Prize – Nomination
2003 – *The Pianist* – Cesar – Best Photography Prize
2003 – *The Pianist* – BAFTA – Nomination for the Best Photography Prize
2002 – *Edges of the Lord* – Eagle Prize (Polish Film Academy Award) – Nomination
2002 – *The Pianist* – European Film Academy Prize – Best Photography
2001 – *The Big Animal* – Eagle Prize (Polish Film Academy Award) – Nomination
2000 – *Mr Tadeusz* – Eagle Prize (Polish Film Academy Award) – Best Photography
1999 – *Demons of War* – Eagle Prize (Polish Film Academy Award) – Nomination
1999 – *The Family Events* – Eagle Prize (Polish Film Academy Award) – Nomination
1997 – *The Family Events* – Bronze Frog Prize - Best Photography Camerimage IFF
1997 – *The Family Events* – Best Cinematography Prize at the Gdynia PFF
1991 – *Kroll* – Best Cinematography Prize at the Gdynia PFF

JANUSZ GŁOWACKI - Screenplay

Born September 13th, 1938, a writer, a playwright and a scriptwriter of, among others: *Hunting Flies* by Andrzej Wajda, *We Have to Kill This Love* by Janusz Morgenstern or *A Trip Down the River* by Marek Piwowski. In August 1980, during the strike, he came to the Gdańsk Shipyard, and soon afterwards he wrote a book *Moc truchleje / Give Us This Day*, based on the events he witnessed,

showing the strike through eyes of a simple worker. The novel was withheld by the censorship, but came out in the underground in 1981 and later in Europe and America. It was acclaimed as "the best report on the Polish August." His theatre plays: *Cinders*, *Fortinbras Gets Drunk*, *Hunting Cockroaches*, *Antigone in New York*, and *The Fourth Sister*, were staged by the major world scenes, a.o. the Royal Court Theatre in London, Manhattan Theatre Club, Public Theatre and Roundabout Theatre in NY, the National Theatre in Taipei, theaters in Belgrade, Frankfurt, Seoul, Buenos Aires, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Sarajevo, London, Los Angeles, Yale Repertory, Atlanta, New York (Vineyard Theatre), Mexico City, Croatia, Lithuania, Paris, Sydney, Toronto, Marseilles, Lyon, Geneva, Brussels, and many others, and brought him numerous prestigious awards, a.o. the Moliere Award for the Best Production of 1986, the Joseph Kesselring Award 1987, the Hollywood Drama League Critics Award 1987, Le Balladine Award for the Best Play of 1997, and the Grand Prize at the 2001 International Theatre Festival in Dubrovnik.

MICHAŁ KWIECIŃSKI – Producer

Producer and director, founder of the Akson Studio, the Poland's biggest independent production company. Graduate of the Theatre Academy in Warsaw. He is one of the most renowned and experienced producers in Poland, having the credit in the major and most popular feature films and TV series (by the directors like Jan Jakub Kolski, and the upcoming talents like Anna Kazejak, Jan Komasa, Maciej Migas – *Ode to Joy*). He has received a number of prestigious awards for his two well known films *Extras* (feature, 2006) and *Let's Go to the Movies Tomorrow* (TV, 2007). Kwieciński's long lasting cooperation with Andrzej Wajda resulted in creation of such films as *Katyń*, *Sweet Rush* and *Wałęsa. Man of Hope*.

About the Cast

ROBERT WIĘCKIEWICZ (Lech Wałęsa)

Born in 1967, renowned Polish theatre and film actor Robert Więckiewicz is a graduate of Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Teatralna (Academy of Dramatic Arts) in Wrocław, Poland (1993). Mr. Więckiewicz made his film debut in Jerzy Skolimowski's *Ferdynand* in 1993. He has starred in numerous films including Feliks Falk's *Samowolka (A.W.O.L.)*; Filip Bajon's *Poznań '56 (Poznan '56)* and *Fundacja (Association)*; Andrzej Saramonowicz and Tomasz Konecki's *Pół serio (Some Like It Cold)*, *Ciało (The Body)*, and *Lejdis*; Juliusz Machulski's *Pieniądze to nie wszystko (Money Is Not Everything)*, *Superproducja (Superproduction)*, *Vinci, Ile waży koń Trojański (How Much does The Trojan Horse Weigh?)* and *Kołysanka (Lullaby)*; Vlado Balko's *Pokoj v duši (Soul at Peace)*; Paweł Borowski's *Zero*; Wojciech Smarzowski's *Dom zły (The Dark House)*; Jan Kidawa-Błoński's *Różyczka (Little Rose)*; Jan Hryniak's *Trick*; Tadeusz Król's *Zwerbowana miłość (Recruited love)*; Greg Zglinski's *Wymyk (Courage)*; Marek Koterski's *Baby są jakieś inne (Man, Chicks Are Just Different)* and Agnieszka Holland's *W Ciemności (In Darkness)*. Mr. Więckiewicz has also appeared on the stages of Teatr Polski in Poznań, Rozmaitości Theatre in Warsaw, the National Theatre, Montownia Theatre, and Laboratorium Dramatu (Drama Laboratory).

His award-winning performances include roles in Machulski's *Vinci* (2004) and Tomasz Wiszniewski's *Wszystko będzie dobrze (All will be well)* (2007) for which he received the 2007 Best Actor Award at the Polish Film Festival in Gdynia as well as the "Orzeł" (The Eagle), The Polish Film Academy Award as well as the Best Actor Award on Troia Film Festival (Portugal 2008). In 2009, the Polish Academy awarded Więckiewicz with another Eagle for The Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his performance in Juliusz Machulski's *Ile waży koń trojański (How Much does The Trojan Horse Weigh?)*. He was also nominated for Best Actor in a Supporting Role in 2010 for his performance in *Dom Zły (The Dark House)*. 2011 saw Więckiewicz win his third Eagle for Actor in a Leading Role for Jan Kidawa-Blonski's *Little Rose*. In 2012 *In Darkness* by Agnieszka Holland, where he played main role, was nominated to Oscars®.

AGNIESZKA GROCHOWSKA (Danuta Wałęsa)

Agnieszka Grochowska is one of the most talented Polish actresses of the young generation. In 2002 she graduated from the Acting Department at the Theatre Academy in Warsaw. She had her debut in 2001 in a Television Theatre play *Beatryks Cenci*, where she played the main role. Right after graduation, she played in a TV series *Missing Ursula*. She soon got a contract in Warsaw's 'Studio' Theatre, where she played, among others, with Krystyna Janda and Zbigniew Zapasiewicz. It was during her work in the Studio that she was nominated for the Felix Award for her roles in *Mewa* and *Amadeus*. Her cinema debut took place in 2002. She played in *AlaRm* by Dariusz Gajewski, her future husband. A year later they both filmed a popular drama – *Warsaw* – where Agnieszka played Klara, a naïve and friendly girl. Her part in *The Welts* by Magdalena Piekorz, where she played alongside Michał Żebrowski, was a real breakthrough. For this role she was nominated for the Polish Film Award, the European Film Award and Zbyszek Cybulski Award. Agnieszka Grochowska often played in productions that received many prizes. Some of the most popular ones were: *Upperdog* by Sara Johnsen (Norway, 2009) and *Beyond the Steppes* by Vanja d'Alcantara (Belgium, 2010). The latter role earned her good reviews in the international press, among others in *The Hollywood Reporter*.

MARIA ROSARIA OMAGGIO (Oriana Fallaci)

Maria Rosaria Omaggio was born in 1957 in Rome, Italy. She is a popular Italian film, theatre and television actress. In Andrzej Wajda's film she plays a famous, Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci. Omaggio has made a lot of preparations for the role. She asked Fallaci's nephew to lend her his aunt's mink, a cameo and a tape recorder used by the famous journalist during her interviews. She even managed to get some Fallaci's favourite cigarettes, which have not been available for sale for years. The actress studied thoroughly facial expressions and gestures by Fallaci. *It's a great honour for me. I don't want to disappoint Oriana and Andrzej Wajda* – said Maria Rosaria.

She played in many productions, among them most famous recent are *To Rome With Love* by Woody Allen (USA, Spain, Italy, 2012), *Donne di mafia Women in Mafia* by Giuseppe Ferrara (Italy, 2001). She is also famous for such productions as *Incubo sulla città contaminata (Nightmare City)* by Umberto Lenzi (Italy, 1980), *Roma a Mano Armata (Rome With a Gun In Your Hand)* by Umberto Lenzi (Italy, 1976) and *Squadra antiscippo (Anti-theft Squadron)* by Bruno Corbucci (Italy, 1976).

ZBIGNIEW ZAMACHOWSKI (Nawiślak)

Zbigniew Zamachowski was born in 1961 in Brzeziny. In 1985 he graduated from the Acting Dept. at the PWSFIT (National Higher School of Film, Television and Theatre) in Łódź. He made his film debut as Rysiek in *Wielka majówka | The Big Picnic* by Krzysztof Reguński (1981). Between 1985 - 97 he performed at the Studio Theatre (Teatr Studio). Since 1997 he has been an actor at the National Theatre in Warsaw. He has appeared in many films by Kazimierz Kutz including *Pułkownik Kwiatkowski | Colonel Kwiatkowski*, *Zawrócony | The Turned Back*, *Sława i chwała | Fame and Glory* and by Krzysztof Kieślowski: *Dekalog 10 | Decalogue X*, *Trzy kolory: Biały | Three Colours: White* and *Trzy kolory: Niebieski | Three Colours: Blue*. He created great roles in films by Andrzej Wajda, Jacek Borowski, Maciej Wojtyszko, Filip Bajon and Wojciech Marczewski. The roles in *Żurek | Zhoorek* by Ryszard Brylski, *Zmruż oczy | Squint Your Eyes* by Andrzej Jakimowski and *Cześć Tereska | Hi, Tereska* by Robert Gliński brought him a lot of awards. He won the Wiktor prize in 1993 and 1996, The Golden Duck Award in 1993 and Alexander Bardini Award in 1997. In Andrzej Wajda's film he plays Nawiślak, the captain of the Polish internal intelligence agency.

MIROSLAW BAKA (Director of the Shipyard)

Born in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, Poland. He graduated from The National Theatre School in Wrocław. In 1985, while still a student, he appeared alongside Jerzy Schejbal in a television sport film *Daleki dystans / A Long Distance* by Mirosław Bork. The huge success came with the leading role of a young murderer who kills a taxi driver in *Krótki film o zabijaniu / A Short Film About Killing* (1987) by Krzysztof Kieślowski. It brought him the Award of the Head of Cinematography (Nagroda Szefa Kinematografii) and the Award of the Gdańsk Society of Friends of Arts (Nagroda Artystyczna Gdańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Sztuki). Mirosław Baka appeared in many films including *Demony wojny wg Goi / Demons of War by Goya* by Władysław Pasikowski, *Chłopaki nie płaczą / Boys Don't Cry* by Olaf Lubaszenko and *Wróżby kumaka / The Call of The Toad* by Robert Gliniski. Baka has also starred in several television series such as *Ballada o Januszku / A Ballad on Januszek*, *Miasteczko / The Town*, *Fala zbrodni / Crime Wave* and *Czas honoru / Days of Honor*. He has also won acclaim for his stage acting. He won an award for the title role in the performance of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* directed by Monika Pęcikiewicz at the Teatr Wybrzeże in Gdańsk during the National Competition for Theatrical reenactment of the Historical Works of European Literature.

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AKSON STUDIO

Akson Studio is one of the leading production companies in Poland. Its founder and CEO is Michał Kwieciński. We have been operating on the market for 20 years and we have produced over 30 feature films for the cinema and television, 35 TV series – 3200 episodes altogether, 130 plays for the Television Theatre, as well as documentaries, TV programmes, entertainment shows, educational programmes and commercials. We have received around 200 awards worldwide!

Akson Studio has been cooperating with such outstanding filmmakers as: Andrzej Wajda, Roman Polański, Márta Mészáros, Paweł Edelman, Jan Jakub Kolski, Feliks Falk, Grzegorz Kuczeriszka, Jan Komasa and many others. The movie *Katyn*, which we produced, directed by Andrzej Wajda, was nominated for the Oscar® in the category of the best foreign language film. Akson Studio has also produced such TV series hits as: *Przepis na życie (Recipe for Life)*, *Magda M.*, *Hotel 52*, *Czas honoru (Days of Honour)*, *Teraz albo nigdy (Now or Never)*.

Currently, Akson Studio is involved in the production of three big movies, long-awaited by the audience: *Wałęsa. Man of Hope.* by Andrzej Wajda, *Maria Skłodowska* by Márta Mészáros and *Miasto '44 (Warsaw '44)* – a super-production on the Warsaw Uprising 1944 – the film is directed by Jan Komasa (*Suicide Room*).

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