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Film Canon – Film History – Film Education: Remarks on the Polish Film Museum's Anniversary Poll

In 2015, the Film Museum in Lodz, the Department of History and Theory of Film at the University of Lodz and the Polish Filmmakers Association worked together on a project "12 films for 120 years of cinema". Filmmakers and people professionally involved in film culture were asked to compile their 12 best films ever and their 12 best Polish films. It was the second project of this kind in Poland – the previous one, although done on a smaller scale, was initiated by *Kwartalnik Filmowy* [Film Quarterly] in 1995 (Gazda, 1996). The participants received the following instructions:

> for the purpose of our project, your personal point of view is the most important; we are not asking you to identify the most important films in film history. We would rather know which films are the greatest in your opinion. It would be perfect if you could erase all the existing "top 10s"and academic classifications from your memory. We are curious to what extent the established canons are still valid and to what extent they need to be modified.

The organisers received 279 responses, which mentioned 1,348 films in total. After analysing the results, the list of best films (including a separate list of best Polish films) was published together with variant lists according to the respondents' profession and age.

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In the second part of the article, we will analyse the results of the poll, highlighting shortcomings of the project when compared to similar polls conducted in the past. It is worth emphasising that such polls or rankings are a good opportunity for metatheoretical reflection – they raise important questions regarding axiology (as far as aesthetic values and culture-based text hierarchies are concerned) and social communication (what the sources of choice are when we seek information on which films are worth our attention). Therefore, as an introduction, we shall summarise one of the major debates which has dominated the world humanities over the last twenty years, which concerns the question of a canon: what is a canon, who establishes it and for what purpose?

The Classics and the Canon

According to the most general dictionary definition, a canon is a group of works which other cultural transmissions attribute special importance to. By "other transmissions" we understand all institutional ways of transmitting knowledge, including different artistic forms (via intertextuality: quotations, allusions and parodies, as understanding these requires familiarity with the "original" text). If the canon were to be presented in graphic form, it could be a map where the outlines of different countries would be hardly visible, and marked only by the capital cities, and where mountain ranges would be marked only by the highest mountains. Or, perhaps, it would be better to use the metaphor of an endlessly expanding palace, where different floors stand for the hierarchy of texts and authors, whereas the corridors meandering between them allow one to wander between slightly forgotten chambers and a never-ending construction site. Regardless of the metaphor, canonical works constitute important reference points for other works, language or even civilisation itself.

Are canons just social constructs, as the prevailing trend in contemporary humanities presents them? Roger Lundin claims that canons are subject to various fluctuations (aesthetic, political, and also demographic), whereas immanent features of art decide that "classics remain classics" (1998, p. 24); a work of art becomes "a classic" when it embodies historical styles or tendencies to the fullest possible extent. Therefore, a canon would appear in a situation when the masterpiece status of a particular work was justified by its contemporary reception. In other words, canonical works should "speak to us", i.e. refer to universal matters, going beyond the immediate contexts which are significant at the moment of their creation.

The concept of a canon has many advocates – the most ardent of whom is Harold Bloom, the author of the thesis (1994) that there exists a fixed canon of universal works (a substantial number of which, by the way, were British). The advocates of canons do not present a whole array of arguments but they are firm in their conviction: canons are needed because they sustain the common universe of representations, they establish a context which is necessary to achieve an under-

standing in a world constantly bombarded by unordered information. Hence, the role of a canon is to overcome chaos and facilitate communication.

The concept of a canon also has its opponents; they see each act of proclaiming a hierarchy as symbolic violence. According to this view, an obligatory and officially "decreed" canon constitutes a bit of usurpation. One could add – a usurpation that is to the advantage of those privileged groups who create artistic hierarchies utilising aesthetic arguments, while concealing their true intent: which is to maintain the cultural and economic supremacy of old elites while, at the same time, suppressing new artistic phenomena and the ambitions of marginalised social groups. These are clearly arguments originating from the Marxist way of perceiving culture, which were later adopted by feminist or postcolonial discourses (the infamous "class – race – gender" triad). Therefore, it is postulated that canons should not be eschewed completely, but rather, according to principles of political correctness and affirmative policy, the works of authors from allegedly marginalised groups should be included in the canons (the class marker, once so popular in the People's Republics in the Soviet Bloc, has been replaced in the West by other criteria).

Opponents of such affirmative practices (which, in fact, are of a stigmatising and excluding nature) are right to argue that products of culture, including works of art (in whatever way art is understood), cannot be assessed by only taking into consideration the characteristics of the author. For example, the evaluation should not depend on whether he or she has certain sexual preferences, comes from a culturally marginalised region or that the author might happen to be a tall blonde of Aryan race. Each of the abovementioned circumstances, however, may be a reason why a certain phenomenon becomes interesting or worth critical analysis. Canons, therefore, are an area of cultural conflict or substantial dispute over values at the time when contemporary culture no longer nurtures traditional hierarchies, constantly deconstructs them, and promotes the blurring of aesthetic criteria.

Film Canons and Listomania

Canons sometimes take the form of authoritative registers of works, such as a compulsory reading lists at school (such lists regularly encourage students to seek ways to fake familiarity with a text which they have in fact not read) or academic curricula which require that students read a determined set of works.

When it comes to film culture, however, compilations devoted to film history play a special role in the inclusion of a particular film into a canon (or, better yet, making it a part of cultural canons). In this respect the work by Maurice Bardèche and Robert Brasillach (1935) – translated into English and published in the USA by Iris Barry, who was responsible for the MoMA film archive – is of tremendous importance; though it was treated with disdain after the war, mostly due to po-

litical choices the authors made during the conflict. The heyday of monographies devoted to film history – usually focusing on identifying landmark productions – started immediately after WWII. In Western Europe the works by Georges Sadoul (six volumes of *Histoire générale du cinéma*, 1946–1952) had a major impact on shaping the canon of cinematic masterpieces. A similar project was undertaken a few years later by Jerzy Toeplitz; his monographies also had significant impact in Germany (both in FRG and GDR).

At roughly the same time, the institution of film libraries came into being, and the first state film schools began to appear, where not only practical skills were taught, but also film history. The New Wave brought about not only the concept of auteur theory (according to which even the poorest film by The Author is better than the best film by A Craftsman) but, most of all, a change in the role of film critics, who sometimes themselves became directors. Finally, the 1960s was the time when a new academic discipline – film studies – emerged (only to be thoroughly transformed in the following decade). According to university requirements, the new discipline needed to establish its own curricula for didactic purposes. Financial matters were of key significance during this process – in the times before VHS technology, costs of screenings were so high that, in order to minimise costs, universities refused to show less popular films (this was the role of film festivals, which, however, had no university affiliation).

All these initiatives functioned within a "cinema-centric" definition of film culture (at least until the mid-80s) – one could argue that television was initially the medium not compatible with cinephilia – at least until the appearance of channels dedicated to classic movies (Turner Network Television launched in 1988). In fact, cinephiles interested in film history had a chance to watch older productions only during rare retrospectives. This situation changed thanks to VHS technology and later through the digital revolution. Indeed, audiovisual culture became inundated with innumerable "junk films". Nevertheless, at the same time, many valuable productions previously stored in film libraries and available to a few buffs could now be viewed on TV screens.

Today, hierarchies of culture-based texts are often established via different recommendation lists. Such guides are obviously not the only nor the most reliable guarantee of quality; nevertheless, they seem to provide better guidance than the extremely popular rankings from the myriad of online services. The latter tend to rely on box-office results, and are often infested with anonymous "trolls" who are more eager to mislead the readers than to direct them to more challenging and, hence, less frequented paths.

Film canons are also shaped by distribution mechanisms, especially with regard to secondary markets. Such is the function of those DVD series which are bundled with different newspapers and magazines or the function of TV series (the very frequency with which a particular film is shown on TV has an impact on its transformation into "a classic"). We should not forget about the educational projects ini-

tiated by public institutions which also make lists of important film productions. A few such initiatives have appeared in Poland in the last few years – Filmoteka Szkolna (a collection of Polish films on DVD, meant to be used in schools) and Akademia Filmu Polskiego (cinema screenings of Polish films in the largest Polish cities) were both co-financed by the Polish Film Institute.

At the present time, it is easy to get the impression that all films which have ever been made in any part of the world are now close at hand, or more likely available at the touch of a button. This belief – which, by the way, is true only as far as certain types of films are concerned – is the reverse side of another phenomenon: audiovisual overproduction. This "embarrassment of riches" is the reason that so many "top lists" recently flourished. The nature of "listomania" is not really connected with aesthetic issues, but rather with psychology. On the one hand, top lists and rankings are an egocentric (and sometimes snobbish) way of declaring personal impressions. On the other hand, they help to order and classify (not necessarily in the meaning of hierarchy-building), since – as Paul Schrader put it bluntly in his seminal *Cannon Fodder* (2006): "there are too many films". Canons help us to "manage time", as each participant of contemporary culture has little time to spare and is successfully lured by the offers of an increasing number of screens.

It is worth asking whether the "top lists mania", which intends to resurrect a communal experience and restore hierarchies in a world which has gradually discarded them, does not actually lead to further atomisation of tastes and, simultaneously, inflation of those works which it "arranges into top lists". The strive to overcome informational noise actually leads to its intensification. In other words, an activity aiming at ordering chaos, to a certain degree contributes to its multiplication.

This is not a new phenomenon, as the first rankings of greatest films come from 1952. It is interesting that the medium of film was only fifty years old when this form of summary of filmmakers' achievements was proposed. This poll was organised during Festival Mondial du Film et des Beaux Arts in Brussels – with one hundred representatives of the film industry, mostly directors, participating in the survey (Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* won 1st place). A few months later, a poll was organised by *Sight and Sound* with 63 film critics voting. The best picture turned out to be *Bicycle Thieves* [*Ladri di Biciclette*, 1948, dir. Vittorio De Sica], a film made just a few years earlier. Since then, De Sica's production has never made it into the top 10 of *S&S* Critics' Poll. All the following editions, repeated every ten years, have been won by *Citizen Kane* [1941, dir. Orson Welles] – with the exception of the most recent poll in 2012. Here, in the critics' poll, *Vertigo* [1958, dir. Alfred Hitchcock] climbed to 1st place, whereas in the directors' choice Welles's film has been ousted by *Tokyo Story* [*Tokyo monogatari*, 1953, dir. Yasujiro Ozu].

Sight and Sound Top 50 Greatest Films of All Time is considered to be the most serious enterprise of this kind (due to the patronage of the British Film Institute,

among other reasons). The number of participants is constantly growing (145 critics and 108 directors in 2002; in 2012 – 846 critics and 358 directors). Despite the project boasting its international character, it needs to be clearly said that in the case of the last poll, 42% of films included in the poll came from the USA, whereas some other countries provided few respondents (22 from France, 7 from Japan, 5 from Italy…). The esteem of the poll by *S&S* is not just a matter of numbers, but of the specific "social networking culture" that has developed around it. On the Internet, we can even find charts showing "profits" and "losses" of particular films. Some of these debates could even be classified as clinical case studies of "top lists maniacal psychopathology". Others, though, constitute interesting discussions on the role of a canon and the ways of establishing it. Communities interested in the history of *Sight and Sound* polls follow such debates and adopt the most interesting standpoints as their own. For example, "Robin Wood's rule" says: "The list should not include any film which was made in the period of the last ten years". "Kristin Thompson's principle", on the other hand, is quite revolutionary and, thus, rejected by many. It says: top lists should be compiled from films which have not appeared on top ten lists during any of the previous editions. In other words: according to Thompson, a canon is made by substituting films which were recognised as masterpieces in the past with new productions.

Polls and best films lists, obviously, differ. To start with, we have individual rankings. *Sight and Sound* proudly presents lists combined by Woody Allen, Francis Ford Coppola, Quentin Tarantino or Martin Scorsese (in the last case, his "top twelve" includes *Ashes and Diamond* [*Popiół i diament*, 1958, dir. Andrzej Wajda]). If we consider older rankings, the ones compiled by Carl Dreyer or Ingmar Bergman are also available. The early "Kubrick list" (dated 1963) has gained cult status. Obviously, critics are also happy to share their top 10 lists (or even much longer ones – hence the index of 1,000 titles in Jonathan Rosenbaum's *Essential Cinema: On the Necessity of Film Canons* [2004]). Roger Ebert was a famous propagator of this idea in the USA – his first "top ten list" was published in 1967. In Poland, for example, Michał Oleszczyk, an admirer of Ebert's work, has shared his *best of the year* lists for many years. And isn't *Kino, wehikuł magiczny* (Adam Garbicz 1981 – and subsequent volumes) – a book series popular among Polish film studies graduates – a kind of a canon, since the hierarchy of best films from different years is reflected by font size in the contents?

There are also polls made by the public – such rankings were once conducted by magazines. In Poland, the last project of this kind was the poll organized by *Polityka* magazine in 1999, to which almost 5,000 readers responded (Pietrasik, 1999). Today, rankings are compiled based on the votes of the users of on-line services (or perhaps it is through fake accounts or bots infesting the net?). At the top of the list presented by Imdb.com we have *Shawshank Redemption* [1994, dir. Frank Darabont], and the same film wins the poll of Filmweb.pl, one of the most popular sites on Polish internet (amongst Polish films, *The Pianist* [*Pianista*, 2002, dir. Roman Polański] and *Interrogation* [Przesłuchanie, 1982, dir. Ryszard

Bugajski] received the highest scores. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Internet is littered with hundreds of different lists (for example we have categories like *20 films in which the protagonist dyes his or her hair to escape from persecutors,* which reflect the obsessions present in early Peter Greenaway films). Some websites (for example Tasteofcinema.com) are filled with such extravaganza to even greater extent (Mubi.com features more than 5,000 diverse lists of that kind).

Finally, film magazines all over the world (including *Cahiers du Cinéma*) regularly publish rankings of the best films of the year (in Poland: *Kino* [Cinema] and *Ekrany* [Screens]). Hence, there are quite a number of meritocratic rankings – compiled according to the opinions of professionals – which, however, are not of a personal character. Apart from annual top lists, lists of best films sometimes appear (worldwide or in a particular country) which are initiated by art magazines or societies, meaning that they have an institutional affiliation. The famous "Vatican list" (which consists of 45 films, divided into three categories: religious, moral and artistic values) can also be included in this group.

There are many other examples. In 1998, the American Film Institute compiled a list of the best American films, based on the votes of 1,500 film industry representatives (including experts in film history and critics), however, they could only choose from among 400 preselected titles. We were unable to discover who was responsible for the preselection. One year later, the British Film Institute conducted a survey among 1,000 professionals working in British film and television. Based on the results, a list of the top 100 greatest "culturally British" films was prepared (*The Third Man* [1949, dir. Carol Reed] got the most votes). In 2011, a similar survey organized by *Time Out* (although with a smaller number of respondents – 150) received great attention (here *Don't Look Now* [1973, dir. Nicolas Roeg] triumphed). A slightly curious formula was used in the poll initiated by *Empire* in 2008: approximately ten thousand readers voted, as well as 150 Hollywood artists and 50 critics (a facetious remark could be made that designating the last two groups as separate panels of judges implied that they did not read the magazine).

There are also individual lists of "best films in the history of mankind" combined by acclaimed critics. A list of the 100 titles (those made after 1923, i.e. the year when *Time* magazine commissioning the ranking was first issued) was prepared by Richard Corliss and Richrd Schickel. In his brilliantly-written article, the former revealed how this list was created. Each of the critics independently prepared a main list (the criteria included: acting and… music score); these were supplemented by three separate lists: "Guilty Pleasures" (trash cinema), "Great Performances" (acting) and "Top Scores" (soundtrack). As Corliss revealed later, out of the list of 100 films which he compiled, only about 30 were repeated on the list prepared by Schickel. This shows how much we differ in our opinions and how difficult it is to reach an agreement in matters of taste. "We were the co-captains of a lifeboat, with some of our favourites clinging to the sides, and we had to determine whose stiff fingers to pry off, which noble films to send into the sea of anonymity" – revealed the authors (Corliss, 2011).

It is clear, therefore, that lists of greatest films vary, either when it comes to the choice of interviewees (juries in the case of meritocratic projects and respondents in the case of *vox populi* polls), the principles of data collection from individual interviewees (the question of how many votes a given panelist or respondent has is of key importance), or compiling collective rankings – the way of constructing them (depending on whether the principle of "one film – one vote" was adopted) and presenting them (is the number of points published? How are tied scores presented?). This is of particular importance when we stumble upon "aggregated" rankings or "lists of all lists", which combine the results of polls conducted among professionals and *vox populi* rankings (for example: on Greatestfilm.com the first non-English-language film – De Sica's *The Bicycle Thieves* – entered at 24th place).

Interpretation of different polls and rankings brings with it a certain risk – that of getting carried away by a gambler's emotions and the rhetoric typical of sports commentators. Therefore, the language of accompanying analysis needs to be very selective, so that expressions such as: "Fellini sped ahead and leads Kubrick by three laps" or: "Has kept his podium position in spite of Koterski's surprising leap to join the leaders" are to be avoided. Such comments will not contribute to our understanding of the results, although it is impossible to avoid remarks on who "climbed and who went down". Before we analyse the results of our poll, however, we will present the methodology of our project in more detail.

"12 Films for the 120th Anniversary": Rules of the Game

It was our intention from the very beginning that nobody who is connected with film culture and who expresses interest in our project should be excluded. This is why the invitations were sent via institutional mailing lists (The Film School, The Polish Filmmakers Association, The Polish Society for Film and Media Studies). Next, by way of individual contact, we asked specific people to complete the survey. We adopted a broad concept of film. The lists could include films regardless of the used technique (live action/animated films), genre (feature films/documentaries), length (short/medium/full length films), carrier (film copy, TV film), distribution (multiplexes, festivals, galleries), style (mainstream cinema/ artistic cinema), production date (silent films and sound films, black-and-white or colour films) or the target group (children, adults). We only excluded the so-called *home-movies* from our project, i.e. productions made for private purposes only, or strictly TV-related (such as TV-series) or interactive phenomena.

Each of the two lists (greatest films ever and greatest Polish films) could include a maximum of 12 titles. Sometimes the lists were shorter and a few lists included more (in which case we considered only the first 12 titles listed). Each respondent could indicate one film which he or she valued the most (not all participants did this) and we asked for the remaining titles to be listed in any sequence (e.g. in alphabetic order or according to production year). When preparing the compiled list, we adopted the following principle: the film ranked

as most important received three points, with all the remaining titles on the list receiving one point each. The list of greatest films ever could include Polish productions and the list of greatest Polish films could include co-productions or films made by Polish directors abroad (if they covered topics related to Poland or were film adaptations of works by Polish authors). The only restriction concerned artists who were asked not to include films which they helped to produce in their lists (if such a title was indicated, it was not taken into account during our compilation of the final lists).

We received 132 responses from filmmakers and 147 from other people connected with film culture (whom we labelled "popularisers"). As far as the first group is concerned, the biggest number of respondents, i.e. 45 people, were film directors. When it comes to popularisers, the largest group comprised academics in the area of film studies (54 people); in addition to these two groups votes from film critics, cinema owners and film educators were gathered. Altogether all questionnaires listed 903 titles of foreign films and 445 titles of Polish productions; roughly 50% of these titles were indicated by one person only. Presentation of the results does, however, require some explanation. In the case of both main lists (greatest films ever and greatest Polish films), the 12 first places were highlighted, and all films which received more than 12 votes were made public. There are about 60–70 such titles on each of the lists. Moreover, lists according to the profession or age of the respondents were prepared. Furthermore, individual votes of particular respondents have been published on the website Kinomuzeum.pl – they will most likely create an opportunity for interesting comparisons – and maybe also offer guidance for those who would like to familiarise themselves with personal preferences of esteemed artists, critics and lecturers.

What do we notice at the very first glance without analysing the two main lists more closely? What is most apparent is the absence of documentaries (the only non-fiction film that appeared on the list was *Man with the Movie Camera* [*Chelovek s kinoapparatom,* 1929, reż. Dziga Vertov]) and animated films (Rybczynski's *Tango* – not necessarily an animated film in the strict sense of the term – was included in the "Polish list"). Such films were of course mentioned by project participants, but none of them received 12 votes. It needs to be said here, however, that as far as the omission of documentaries and animated films is concerned, our lists do not differ significantly from the abovementioned rankings compiled in the USA or in the UK.

Let us look at the list of 12 greatest films ever [**Tab. 1**]. What is the common feature of those films which received the highest score? It is not easy to answer. Perhaps we might suggest: sharply-drawn protagonists played by outstanding actors? This criterion would not fit *2001: Space Odyssey* [1968, dir. Stanley Kubrick], unless we accept that the computer HAL is a "sharply-drawn protagonist". In the case of several of the leading films (although not so much in the case of *Citizen Kane*), music plays an important role – not only Nino Rota's musical scores, but also stage performances: e.g. the Yardbirds performance in Antonioni's *Blow Up* or Marilyn Monroe singing in *Some Like it Hot.*

If we compare our list to the *Sight and Sound* poll from 2012, it is noticeable that the British magazine's top 10 included five titles which did not receive 12 points from our voters; *Tokyo Story*, *Rules of the Game*, *Sunrise* [1927, dir. Friedrich W. Murnau], *The Searchers* [1956, dir. John Ford] and *The Passion of Joan of Arc* [*La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*, 1928, dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer]. Some films from our list, on the other hand, did appear on the list of the British magazine, but in lower positions *Some like it hot* [1959, dir. Billy Wilder] and *Pulp Fiction* [1994, dir. Quentin Tarantino], in several cases – even outside of the best 100 (*Blow Up* [1966, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni], *Once Upon a Time in America* [1984, dir. Sergio Leone]). *The Sight and Sound* poll does not list *Amadeus* [1984, dir. Miloš Forman] at all – which is particularly striking in comparison with the Polish Film Museum poll. The list "12 for 120" also differs considerably from the poll organised by *Kwartalnik Filmowy* in 1995. Only eight titles from the *Kwartalnik* list are repeated in the top 20 of our poll: *8 1/2* [1963, dir. Federico Fellini], *Citizen Kane*, *Blow Up*, *One flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* [1975, dir. Miloš Forman], *Cabaret* [1972, dir. Bob Fosse], *Andriei Rublov* [1966, dir. Andriej Tarkowski], *The Wild Strawberries* [*Smultronstället*, 1957, dir. Ingmar Bergman] and *Rashomon* [*Rashōmon*, 1950, dir. Akira Kurosawa].

Generally speaking, the top films on our list might appear to be clearly "non-European" (though seven films were made by directors from the continent), as it includes eight American films (and ten English-speaking, since *Blow Up* and *2001: Space Odyssey* are considered British). Interestingly, three directors – Fellini, Forman and Coppola – are mentioned twice on this short list, however, in the case of two of them, it is their American films which made it to the top. However, if we consider all the films from the main list, the conclusion that American productions predominate needs to be verified; the list includes 68 titles, the majority of which (36 titles) were made outside the USA, mostly in Europe. To continue with this analytical perspective, another observation may be made: out of 12 titles from among the leading films, three were made by Italians and three more by directors of Italian origin (Coppola and Tarantino). Such an observation might be seen as casuistry, however, even the extended ranking confirms the special position of Italian cinema. For example, four of Fellini's films received more than 12 points (*8 1/2*, *Amarcord*, *La Dolce Vita* [1960] and *La Strada* [1954]), and three films by Antonioni (*L'Avventura*, *Blow Up* and *The Passenger* [1975]). Italian Neorealism, though, is hardly represented and has also gradually lost its prominence in *Sight and Sound* polls.

The American and Italian dominance is especially visible against the modest representation of Asian cinema; there are only four Asian films on the list: *In the Mood for Love* (*Hua yang nian hua*, [2000, dir. Wong Kar-Wai]) and three films directed by Kurosawa. Thus, he entered the exclusive group of filmmakers with several films on the main list. We gave up on the idea of compiling a list of best

directors (How should the directors be ordered? Should their position depend on the number of titles on the list or on how the films were ranked?). A quick look at the list of best films is enough to notice that it includes quite a few films directed by Bergman, Kubrick, Tarkovsky and Hitchcock. If we take into consideration the titles which received less than 12 points, the most frequently mentioned film-makers would be: when it comes to European directors (in alphabetical order) – Bernardo Bertolucci, Robert Bresson, Luis Buñuel, Miloš Forman, Jean-Luc Godard, Michael Haneke, Werner Herzog, Roman Polański, François Truffaut, Lars von Trier and Luchino Visconti; in the case of American directors: Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese, Robert Altman, Charlie Chaplin, the Coen brothers, John Ford, David Lynch, Steven Spielberg (as well as Ridley Scott and Peter Weir – Hollywood directors who come from, respectively, Great Britain and Australia).

While it should not be surprising that most titles on the list belong to the "golden age" of the 1960s and 1970s, the paucity of older films is striking. The complete list of films which received more than 12 points in our poll includes only five silent films: two by Chaplin (*Gold Rush* [1925] and *City Lights* [1931]), two Soviet films (*Man with a Movie Camera* and *Battleship Potemkin* [*Bronienosiec Potiomkin*, 1925, dir. Siergiej Eisenstein])*, and one German production – *Metropolis* [1927, dir. Fritz Lang]). The situation is not that different on the list of films which received less than 12 points. This extremely long list includes a mere eight silent films (among others, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, which ranked very highly in the poll organized by *Kwartalnik Filmowy* twenty years ago).

Even though in the case of the international list there was a slight difference in the number of votes for *8½* and *Citizen Kane*, the gap between *The Promised Land* and *The Saragossa Manuscript* on the Polish list [**Tab. 2**] was huge; Andrzej Wajda's masterpiece was mentioned by the vast majority of voters, usually holding the top spot. It is not hard to tell what connects both films – they are epic stories on a monumental scale (in each of the films, however, the epic dimension serves different purposes: *The Promised Land* depicts the places and the characters that inhabit them in a naturalistic way, whereas *The Saragossa Manuscript* drifts towards onirism). Despite these two films being unquestionably monumental, this distinctive feature cannot be extended to the remaining films in the top 12, as the list includes very intimate, if not introspective, pictures – this description applies to films as diverse as: *Knife in the Water* [*Nóż w wodzie*, 1961, dir. Roman Polański], *Night Train* [*Pociąg*, 1959, dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz], *Day of the Wacko* [*Dzień świra*, 2002, dir. Marek Koterski] and, last but not least, *Ida* [2013, dir. Paweł Pawlikowski].

What else is quite striking when analysing the ranking of the greatest Polish films? Definitely the presence of comedies – a genre which the Polish film industry was (unfortunately, it is necessary to use the past tense here) famous for. The top lists created from the surveys of *vox populi*, mentioned earlier, confirm it, as such rankings also include numerous comedies, especially Bareja's films, and they sometimes make it into the top three. As far as our poll is concerned, *Teddy Bear* [*Miś*, 1981, dir. Stanisław Bareja] – a film characterised by a very complex and carefully

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planned plot – ranked 24th. Piwowski's *The Cruise* (1970)*,* on the other hand, made it into the top 12, which shows that the director's past cooperation with the secret services, revealed in 2007, did not have a negative influence on the film's standing.

Mocny człowiek (*Strong Man,* 1929, dir. Henryk Szaro) is the only film produced before WWII which more than one person included in their list. The oldest Polish films from the main list were made in 1957: *Kanal* (*Kanał,* 1956, dir. Andrzej Wajda) and *Man on the Tracks* (*Człowiek na torze,* 1956, dir. Andrzej Munk). The top 12 includes two films by Wajda, Jerzy Kawalerowicz and Wojciech Has. If we look at the complete main list, however, eight films by Wajda are included (which confirms his unique position in the Polish film industry), five films by Kieślowski and Has, four by Kawalerowicz, three films by Tadeusz Konwicki and three by… Wojciech Smarzowski, who, apparently, has already gained the status of a master. It is quite striking that very few votes were given to Jerzy Skolimowski, who is by far the most important representative of Polish New Wave cinema.

Preferences of Professional Groups and Generations

When analysing the results from the point of view of the respondents' profession, it was the organisers' intention that the project should provide an insight into the preferences of a range of professional groups involved in filmmaking and film studies. In practice, this objective was difficult to achieve, mainly due to the fact that many professional groups had limited representation. Below, we will try to discuss the differences between the poll results from two groups: film directors and academics specialising in film studies.

The most interesting observation resulting from the aforementioned differentiation is the success of *8½* among film directors [**Tab. 3**], and *Blow Up* [**Tab. 4**] on the list of academics [26 "points" given by film scholars and only 9 among directors). *Amarcord* turned out to be "a directors' film", as it did not appear at all on the academics' list. Sixth position on the directors' list is occupied by two Tarkovsky films *Andrei Rublov* and *The Mirror* (1975)*,* and *The Sacrifice* by the same director also made it into the top 10. It is not surprising, though, that the academics' poll includes more productions from film history (four silent films). This list is also a little more "French" (academics were the only voters who mentioned *Breathless À bout de soufflé* (1960, dir. Jean-Luc Godard) and *Last Year in Marienbad* (*L'Année dernière à Marienbad,* 1961, dir. Alain Resnais). There are also minor discrepancies between the lists of best Polish films. The film directors' poll [**Tab. 5**] omits *Day of the Wacko*. Academics, on the other hand [**Tab. 6**], voted for *Camera Buff* (*Amator*, 1979, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski) and *Knife in the Water* more often than directors.

Lists compiled according to the profession of the respondents do not allow us to draw the conclusion that there are major differences between various professional groups. Such significant, not to say radical, discrepancies are, however,

visible if we compare lists compiled on the basis of age of the respondents. This turned out to be the most important, although not unexpected, result of the comparison of the polls.

If we take a look at the top 12 compiled according to the tastes of the group of respondents aged 60 or over [**Tab. 7**], 28 titles are listed, only half of which appear on the list compiled for respondents aged under 40 [**Tab. 8**]. This does not signify, however, that the latter list is "more American", as one might expect. Let us just say that it is "American in a different way". Indeed, it omits a few popular titles, such as *Once upon a Time in America* or *12 Angry Men* (1957, dir. Sidney Lumet)*, Some Like it Hot, Casablanca* (1942, dir. Michael Curtiz) and *High Noon* (1952, dir. Fred Zinnemann); it would not be far-fetched to say that these two films evoke nostalgic memories of long-gone youth among older respondents. Younger respondents, on the other hand, voted for *Fight Club* (1999, dir. David Fincher)*, or Forrest Gump* (1994, dir. Robert Zemeckis) and *There Will Be Blood* (2007, dir. Paul Thomas Anderson)*.* It is probably not a surprise that older respondents generally did not mention films made in the last two decades, whereas five such films are on the list compiled for respondents under 40. The latter, on the other hand, includes *Metropolis* – as the only film made before the war; apparently, Giorgio Moroder's soundtrack and Queen's *Radio Ga-Ga* videoclip have helped Lang's film to achieve cult status among younger generations.

If the main poll had only been conducted among people under 40, the top 10 would be completely different, as *Pulp Fiction* would be the clear winner. This production, however, does not appear on the list compiled according to the votes of respondents over 60, whose list, by the way, does not include the sixth-placed film from the list of respondents under 40: *The Clockwork Orange* (1971, dir. Stanley Kubrick), nor *The Great Beauty* (*La grande bellezza*, 2013, dir. Paolo Sorrentino). The younger generation did not vote for any of Bergman's films, which were so highly appreciated by their parents or grandparents.

Similar disparities appear when we compare the lists of Polish films. The top 12 of those over 60 includes 17 titles, only seven of which [**Tab. 9**], appear on the list of respondents under 40 [**Tab. 10**]. Younger respondents rated *Night Train* and *Day of the Wacko* much higher; the older generation mentioned *Eroica* (1958, dir. Andrzej Munk) and *The Hourglass Sanatorium* (*Sanatorium pod klepsydrą,* 1973, dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has) more frequently. These two films do not appear at all on the list compiled according to the votes of the respondents under 40 – just like *Kanal, Mother Joan of Angels* (*Matka Joanna od Aniołów,* 1961, dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz), *Bad Luck* (*Zezowate szczęście,* 1960, dir. Andrzej Munk)*, Man of Marble* (*Człowiek z marmuru*, 1976, dir. Andrzej Wajda), *The Deluge* (*Potop,* 1974, dir. Jerzy Hoffman) and *The Wedding* (*Wesele,* 1972) dir. Andrzej Wajda*,* which might lead to the conclusion that historical subjects, at least as presented by Polish masters, do not appeal to this group. Curiously enough, younger respondents also mentioned *The Wedding* – not Wajda's, however, but Smarzowski's. It is interesting to note that the list compiled according to the votes of younger project participants

includes more films by Kieślowski; *Blind Chance* (*Przypadek*, 1981) and *Camera Buff* were less often mentioned by respondents over 60. The poll of respondents over 60 included only one Polish film made after 1989 – *Ida*.

Conclusion

The "12 for 120" project had a few complementary objectives. The first one was exploratory and resulted from the proposed methodology. Naturally, enquiring about tastes is one way that a film audience may be surveyed (in the case of filmmakers – it is a variant of pursuing the so-called sociology of creativity, in the case of academics – a variant of the sociology of knowledge). In other words, the provided answers allow one to gain an insight into the world of ideas and values which social actors do not always verbalise in their own texts or interviews. It has already been mentioned that the initial idea of presenting the results divided by the category of the respondents' profession proved fruitless. The sample group was too small. Moreover, it is a frequent phenomenon in the film industry that a film director is often a screenwriter, or that a cinematographer becomes a director, etc. However, we could well imagine another way of constructing statistical summaries, for example according to the place of residence or completion of university studies. Are aesthetic tastes similar, as a result of common experiences, e.g. participation in film history classes at a particular university? There is no guarantee that the results of such an analysis would be interesting. Due to the constraints of the project budget, it was impossible to fully utilise the potential of the digital presentation of the poll results on the Internet, e.g. by developing a social network. Although it is possible to see the lists created by individual voters, searching by titles is not, which makes it impossible to ascertain which respondents voted for a particular film.

The educational dimension of the project was far more important, though, with a twofold meaning. First of all, this was connected with the previously discussed question regarding the mechanisms of the establishment of acculturation and canon. In practice, this objective was pursued only by the public presentations made by project coordinators (including this article). During the next edition, however, we should definitely consider more diverse forms of transmission, which would allow us to better emphasise the meta-critical dimension of the project. This would also be important due to the fact that while the media (both print and electronic) were quite eager to disseminate the poll results, the predominant tone was: "specialists chose the best films". Another educational advantage was connected with the poll results themselves. The poll results may actually serve as a compass facilitating navigation through the infinite ocean of films, especially for those who are less knowledgeable in the area of cinematic heritage. This objective could have been better pursued if some accompanying educational micro-projects had been developed – especially for adolescents (such as a contest for the best film review or video-essay). Let's hope that when the project is repeated (in 2025), we shall avoid similar shortcomings.

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Tab. 1

The Greatest Movies of all Time According to the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *8½*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1963
2. *Citizen Kane*, dir. Orson Welles, 1941
3. *Apocalypse Now*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1979
4. *Blow-Up*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
5. *The Godfather*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1972
6. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1975
7. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1968
8. *Pulp Fiction*, dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994
9. *Some Like It Hot*, dir. Billy Wilder, 1959
10. *Amadeus*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1984
11. *Once Upon a Time in America*, dir. Sergio Leone, 1984
12. *Amarcord*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1973
13. *Cabaret*, dir. Bob Fosse, 1972
14. *Chinatown*, dir. Roman Polański, 1974
    Taxi Driver, dir. Martin Scorsese, 1976
15. *Andriej Rublow* (*Andrey Rublev*), dir. Andriej Tarkovski, 1966/1969
    The Shining, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1980
    A Clockwork Orange, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971
16. *12 Angry Men*, dir. Sidney Lumet, 1957
17. *Seven Samurai* (*Shichinin no samurai*), dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1954
    La dolce vita, dir. Federico Fellini, 1960
    Wild Strawberries (*Smultronstället*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1957
18. *Rosemary's Baby*, dir. Roman Polański, 1968
    Forrest Gump, dir. Robert Zemeckis, 1994
19. *Fanny and Alexander* (*Fanny och Alexander*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1982
    Rashomon (*Rashômon*), dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1950
20. *Blade Runner*, dir. Ridley Scott, 1982
    The Promised Land (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
21. *Persona*, dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1966
    The Conversation, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1974
22. *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronienosiec Potiomkin*), dir. Siergiej Eisenstein, 1925
    Death in Venice (*Morte a Venezia*), dir. Luchino Visconti, 1971
23. *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, dir. Peter Weir, 1975
24. *Casablanca*, dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942
    Breathless (*À bout de souffle*), dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1960
    Closely Watched Trains (*Ostře sledované vlaky*), dir. Jiří Menzel, 1966
    Gone with the Wind, dir. Victor Fleming, 1939
    Stalker, dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1979
25. *The Gold Rush*, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1925
    La strada, dir. Federico Fellini, 1954
    The Seventh Seal (*Det sjunde inseglet*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1957
26. *Cinema Paradiso* (*Nuovo Cinema Paradiso*), dir. Giuseppe Tornatore, 1988

Rear Window, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954
The Great Beauty (*La grande bellezza*), dir. Paolo Sorrentino, 2013
The Damned (*La caduta degli dei*), dir. Luchino Visconti, 1969

27. *The Piano*, dir. Jane Campion, 1993

28. *The White Ribbon* (*Das weiße Band – Eine deutsche Kindergeschichte*), dir. Michael Haneke, 2009
Come and See (*Idi i smotri*), dir. Elem Klimow, 1985
Schindler's List, dir. Steven Spielberg, 1993
Amour, dir. Michael Haneke, 2012
L'avventura, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960
Psycho, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1960
Lost Highway, dir. David Lynch, 1997
The Passenger (*Professione: reporter*), dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1975

29. *There Will Be Blood*, dir. Paul Thomas Anderson, 2007
Barry Lyndon, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1975
Man with a Movie Camera (*Człowiek s kinoapparatom*), dir. Dziga Wiertow, 1929
Fight Club, dir. David Fincher, 1999
The Saragossa Manuscript (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965
Cries and Whispers (*Viskningar och rop*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1972
City Lights, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1931
Vertigo, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1958

30. *Annie Hall*, dir. Woody Allen, 1977
Leon: the Professional (*Léon*), dir. Luc Besson, 1994
Metropolis, dir. Fritz Lang, 1927
In the Mood for Love (*Fa yeung nin wa*), dir. Wong Kar Wai, 2000
Throne of Blood (*Kumonosu-jô*), dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1957
The Mirror (*Zierkało*), dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1975

Tab. 2

The Greatest Polish Movies of all Time According the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
2. *The Saragossa Manuscript* (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965
3. *Ashes and Diamonds* (*Popiół i diament*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1958
4. *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*), dir. Roman Polański, 1962
5. *The Hourglass Sanatorium* (*Sanatorium pod klepsydrą*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1973
6. *Night Train* (*Pociąg*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1959
7. *Blind Chance* (*Przypadek*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1981/1987
8. *Day of the Wacko* (*Dzień świra*), dir. Marek Koterski, 2002
9. *Mother Joan of the Angels* (*Matka Joanna od Aniołów*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1961
10. *Ida*, dir. Paweł Pawlikowski, 2013
11. *Bad Luck* (*Zezowate szczęście*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1960
12. *The Cruise* (*Rejs*), dir. Marek Piwowski, 1970
13. *Eroica*, dir. Andrzej Munk, 1958
14. *Man of Marble* (*Człowiek z marmuru*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1977
15. *Camera Buff* (*Amator*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1979

16. *Interrogation* (*Przesłuchanie*), dir. Ryszard Bugajski, 1982/1989

17. *Sexmission* (*Seksmisja*), dir. Juliusz Machulski, 1984

18. *Camouflage* (*Barwy ochronne*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi, 1977

19. *The Debt* (*Dług*), dir. Krzysztof Krauze, 1999

20. *Pharao* (*Faraon*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1966
    Canal (*Kanał*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1957

21. *The Deluge* (*Potop*), dir. Jerzy Hoffman, 1974
    The Dark House (*Dom zły*), dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2009
    The Pianist (*Pianista*), dir. Roman Polański, 2002

22. *Nights and Days* (*Noce i dnie*), dir. Jerzy Antczak, 1975

23. *Illumination* (*Iluminacja*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi, 1973
    How to be loved (*Jak być kochaną*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1963
    Rose (*Róża*), dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2012
    The Wedding (*Wesele*), dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2004

24. *Teddy Bear* (*Miś*), dir. Stanisław Bareja, 1981

25. *A Short Film About Killing* (*Krótki film o zabijaniu*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1988

25. *Pigs* (*Psy*), dir. Władysław Pasikowski, 1992

26. *The Wedding* (*Wesele*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1973

27. *Inside out / Through and through* (*Na wylot*), dir. Grzegorz Królikiewicz, 1973

28. *Escape from the 'Liberty' Cinema* (*Ucieczka z kina Wolność*), dir. Wojciech Marczewski, 1990

29. *Jump* (*Salto*), dir. Tadeusz Konwicki, 1965
    Matthew's Days (*Żywot Mateusza*), dir. Witold Leszczyński, 1968

30. *Gods* (*Bogowie*), dir. Łukasz Palkowski, 2014
    Va Banque (*Vabank*), dir. Juliusz Machulski, 1982
    Hotel Pacific (*Zaklęte rewiry*), dir. Janusz Majewski, 1975

31. *Farewells* (*Pożegnania*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1958
    Identification Marks: None (*Rysopis*), dir. Jerzy Skolimowski, 1965

32. *Good Bye, Till Tomorrow* (*Do widzenia, do jutra…*), dir. Janusz Morgenstern, 1960
    The Noose (*Pętla*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1958
    Our Folks (*Sami swoi*), dir. Sylwester Chęciński, 1967
    Salt of the Black Earth (*Sól ziemi czarnej*), dir. Kazimierz Kutz, 1970

33. *The Maids of Wilko* (*Panny z Wilka*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1979

34. *How Far, How Near* (*Jak daleko stąd, jak blisko*), dir. Tadeusz Konwicki, 1972
    A Lonely Woman (*Kobieta samotna*), dir. Agnieszka Holland, 1981/1987
    Saviour Square (*Plac Zbawiciela*), dir. Joanna Kos-Krauze, Krzysztof Krauze, 2006

35. *The Passenger* (*Pasażerka*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1963

36. *Three Colors: Blue* (*Trzy kolory: niebieski*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1993
    Everything for Sale (*Wszystko na sprzedaż*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1969

37. *The Last Day of Summer* (*Ostatni dzień lata*), dir. Tadeusz Konwicki, 1958
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38. *Innocent Sorcerers* (*Niewinni czarodzieje*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1960
    Nobody's Calling (*Nikt nie woła*), dir. Kazimierz Kutz, 1960

39. *Shivers* (*Dreszcze*), dir. Wojciech Marczewski, 1981
    Tango, dir. Zbigniew Rybczyński, 1980

40. *The Inn* (*Austeria*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1983
    Man on the Tracks (*Człowiek na torze*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1957

Tab. 3

Best Movies – Director's Choice According to the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *8½*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1963
2. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1968
3. *Citizen Kane*, dir. Orson Welles, 1941
4. *The Godfather*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1972
5. *Amarcord*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1973
6. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1975
7. *Blow-Up*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
8. *Some Like It Hot*, dir. Billy Wilder, 1959
9. *La dolce vita*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1960
10. *Andrei Rublev* (*Andrey Rublyov*), dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1969
11. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
12. *The Mirror* (*Zierkało*), dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1975
13. *Apocalypse Now*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1979
14. *Pulp Fiction,* dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994
15. *Once Upon a Time in America*, dir. Sergio Leone, 1984
16. *Fanny and Alexander* (*Fanny och Alexander*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1982
17. *Cabaret*, dir. Bob Fosse, 1972
18. *A Clockwork Orange*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971
19. *The White Ribbon* (*Das weiße Band – Eine deutsche Kindergeschichte*), dir. Michael Haneke, 2009)
20. *12 Angry Men*, dir. Sidney Lumet, 1957
21. *Death in Venice* (*Morte a Venezia*), dir. Luchino Visconti, 1971
22. *Taxi Driver*, dir. Martin Scorsese, 1976
23. *Barry Lyndon*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1975
24. *Chinatown*, dir. Roman Polański, 1974
25. *The Great Dictator*, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1940
26. *Rosemary's Baby*, dir. Roman Polański, 1968
27. *The Gold Rush*, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1925
28. *Come and See* (*Idi i smotri*), dir. Elem Klimow, 1985
29. *The Sacrifice* (*Offret*), dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1986
30. *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, dir. Peter Weir, 1975
31. *Closely Watched Trains* (*Ostře sledované vlaky*), dir. Jiří Menzel, 1966
32. *L'avventura*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960
33. *The Conversation*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1974
34. The Seventh Seal (*Det sjunde inseglet*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1957
35. *Cries and Whispers* (*Viskningar och rop*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1972

Tab. 4

Best Movies – Film Scholar's Choice According to the "12 for na 120" Poll

1. *Blow-Up*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
2. *8½*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1963
3. *Citizen Kane*, dir. Orson Welles, 1941
4. *Apocalypse Now*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1979
5. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1968
6. *Man with a Movie Camera* (*Człowiek s kinoapparatom*), dir. Dziga Vertov, 1929
7. *Death in Venice* (*Morte a Venezia*), dir. Luchino Visconti, 1971
8. *Chinatown*, dir. Roman Polański, 1974
9. *The Gold Rush*, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1925
10. *A Clockwork Orange*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971
11. *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (*La passion de Jeanne d'Arc*), dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1928
12. *The Godfather*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1972
13. *Rear Window*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954
14. *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronienosiec Potiomkin*), dir. Siergiej Eisenstein, 1925
15. *Pulp Fiction*, dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994
16. *The Third Man*, dir. Carol Reed, 1949
17. *There Will Be Blood*, dir. Paul Thomas Anderson, 2007
18. *Barry Lyndon*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1975
19. *Once Upon a Time in America*, dir. Sergio Leone, 1984
20. *The Shining*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1980
21. *Persona*, dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1966
22. *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, dir. Peter Weir, 1975
23. *Psycho*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1960
24. *La dolce vita*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1960
25. *Stalker*, dir. Andrei Tarkovski, 1979
26. *Last Year at Marienbad* (*L'année dernière à Marienbad*), dir. Alain Resnais, 1961
27. *Amadeus*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1984
28. *Breathless* (*À bout de soufflé*), dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1960
29. *Fanny and Alexander* (*Fanny och Alexander*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1982
30. *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, dir. Chantal Akerman, 1975
31. *La strada*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1954
32. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1975
33. *The Remains of the Day*, dir. James Ivory, 1993
34. *Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid*, dir. Sam Peckinpah, 1973
35. *Vertigo*, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1958

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Tab. 5

Best Polish Movies – Director's Choice According to the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
2. *The Saragossa Manuscript* (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965
3. *Ashes and Diamonds* (*Popiół i diament*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1958;
   The Hourglass Sanatorium (*Sanatorium pod klepsydrą*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1973
4. *Bad Luck* (*Zezowate szczęście*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1960
5. *Blind Chance* (*Przypadek*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1981/1987
6. *Eroica*, dir. Andrzej Munk, 1958
7. *Mother Joan of the Angels* (*Matka Joanna od Aniołów*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1961
   Knife in the Water (*Nóż w wodzie*), dir. Roman Polański, 1962
8. *How to be loved* (*Jak być kochaną*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1963
9. *Illumination* (*Iluminacja*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi, 1973
   Night Train (*Pociąg*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1959
10. *The Wedding* (*Wesele*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1973

Tab. 6

Best Polish Movies – Film Scholar's Choice According to the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
2. *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*), dir. Roman Polański, 1962
3. *Ashes and Diamonds* (*Popiół i diament*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1958;
4. *The Saragossa Manuscript* (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965
5. *Mother Joan of the Angels* (*Matka Joanna od Aniołów*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1961
6. *Camouflage* (*Barwy ochronne*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi, 1977
7. *Man of Marble* (*Człowiek z marmuru*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1977
8. *Day of the Wacko* (*Dzień świra*), dir. Marek Koterski, 2002
9. *The Hourglass Sanatorium* (*Sanatorium pod klepsydrą*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1973
10. *Bad Luck* (*Zezowate szczęście*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1960
11. *Rose* (*Róża*), (dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2012)
12. *Identification Marks: None* (*Rysopis*), dir. Jerzy Skolimowski, 1965
13. *Camera Buff* (*Amator*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1979
14. *Eroica*, dir. Andrzej Munk, 1958
15. *Night Train* (*Pociąg*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1959

Tab. 7

Best Movies – As Voted by Respondents Aged over 60 in the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *8½*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1963
2. *Citizen Kane*, dir. Orson Welles, 1941
3. *The Godfather*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1972
4. *Blow-Up*, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
5. *Amarcord*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1973
6. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1975
7. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1968
8. *Apocalypse Now*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1979
9. *Cabaret*, dir. Bob Fosse, 1972
10. *Andriej Rublow* (*Andrey Rublev*), dir. Andriej Tarkowski, 1966/1969
11. *Some Like It Hot*, dir. Billy Wilder, 1959
12. *The Damned* (*La caduta degli dei*), dir. Luchino Visconti, 1969
13. *Chinatown*, dir. Roman Polański, 1974
14. *Once Upon a Time in America*, dir. Sergio Leone, 1984
15. *Casablanca*, dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942
16. *12 Angry Men*, dir. Sidney Lumet, 1957
17. *Fanny and Alexander* (*Fanny och Alexander*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1982
18. *The Gold Rush*, dir. Charles Chaplin, 1925
19. The *Seventh Seal* (*Det sjunde inseglet*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1957
20. *Taxi Driver*, dir. Martin Scorsese, 1976
21. *Amadeus*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1984
22. *La strada*, dir. Federico Fellini, 1954
23. *Closely Watched Trains* (*Ostře sledované vlaky*), dir. Jiří Menzel, 1966
24. *High Noon*, dir. Fred Zinnemann, 1952
25. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975

Tab. 8

Best Movies – As Voted by Respondents Aged Under 40 in the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *Pulp Fiction*, dir. Quentin Tarantino, 1994
2. *The Godfather*, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1972
   Blow-Up, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966
3. *Apocalypse* Now, dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1979
4. *2001: A Space Odyssey*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1968
5. *Citizen Kane*, dir. Orson Welles, 1941
   8½, dir. Federico Fellini, 1963

6. *A Clockwork Orange*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971
    Taxi Driver, dir. Martin Scorsese, 1976
    The Great Beauty (*La grande bellezza*), dir. Paolo Sorrentino, 2013

7. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1975

8. *Amadeus*, dir. Miloš Forman, 1984
    Chinatown, dir. Roman Polański, 1974

9. *There Will Be Blood*, dir. Paul Thomas Anderson, 2007
    Forrest Gump, dir. Robert Zemeckis, 1994
    Fight Club, dir. David Fincher, 1999
    Wild Strawberries (*Smultronstället*), dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1957
    Lost Highway, dir. David Lynch, 1997

10. *The Shining*, dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1980
    Blade Runner, dir. Ridley Scott, 1982
    Rear Window, dir. Alfred Hitchcock, 1954

11. *Rosemary's Baby*, dir. Roman Polański, 1968
    The Piano, dir. Jane Campion, 1993
    Stalker, dir. Andriej Tarkovski, 1979

12. *Annie Hall*, dir. Woody Allen, 1977
    The White Ribbon (*Das weiße Band – Eine deutsche Kindergeschichte*), dir. Michael Haneke, 2009
    Breathless (*À bout de souffle*), dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1960
    Cabaret, dir. Bob Fosse, 1972
    Metropolis, dir. Fritz Lang, 1927
    Persona, dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1966
    Rashomon (*Rashômon*), dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1950

Tab. 9

Best Polish Movies – As Voted by Respondents Aged over 60 in the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975

2. *The Saragossa Manuscript* (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965

3. *Ashes and Diamonds* (*Popiół i diament*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1958

4. *The Hourglass Sanatorium* (*Sanatorium pod klepsydrą*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1973

5. *Eroica*, dir. Andrzej Munk, 1958

6. *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*), dir. Roman Polański, 1962

7. *Mother Joan of the Angels* (*Matka Joanna od Aniołów*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1961

8. *Bad Luck* (*Zezowate szczęście*), dir. Andrzej Munk, 1960

9. *Man of Marble* (*Człowiek z marmuru*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1977

10. *The Deluge* (*Potop*), dir. Jerzy Hoffman, 1974

11. *The Cruise* (*Rejs*), dir. Marek Piwowski, 1970

12. *The Wedding* (*Wesele*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1973

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Tab. 10

Best Polish Movies – As Voted by Respondents Aged Under 40 in the "12 for 120" Poll

1. *The Promised Land* (*Ziemia obiecana*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1975
2. *Knife in the Water* (*Nóż w wodzie*), dir. Roman Polański, 1962
3. *Ashes and Diamonds* (*Popiół i diament*), dir. Andrzej Wajda, 1958
4. *Night Train* (*Pociąg*), dir. Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1959
5. *Day of the Wacko* (*Dzień świra*), dir. Marek Koterski, 2002
6. *Blind Chance* (*Przypadek*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1981/1987
   The Saragossa Manuscript (*Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie*), dir. Wojciech Jerzy Has, 1965
7. *Camera Buff* (*Amator*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1979
8. *Pigs* (*Psy*), dir. Władysław Pasikowski, 1992
9. *The Debt* (*Dług*), dir. Krzysztof Krauze, 1999
   The Wedding (*Wesele*), dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2004
10. *Camouflage* (*Barwy ochronne*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi, 1977
    Ida, dir. Paweł Pawlikowski, 2013
11. *The Cruise* (*Rejs*), dir. Marek Piwowski, 1970
    Rose (*Róża*), dir. Wojciech Smarzowski, 2012
12. *Interrogation* (*Przesłuchanie*), dir. Ryszard Bugajski, 1982/1989

Summary

In 2015, the Film Museum in Lodz, Department of History and Theory of Film at the University of Lodz and the Polish Filmmakers Association worked together on a project "12 films for 120 years of cinema". Filmmakers and people professionally involved in film culture were asked to compile their 12 best films ever and their 12 best Polish films. The organisers received 279 responses which mentioned 1,348 films in total. After analysing the results, the lists of best movies were published as well as variant lists according to the respondents' profession and age. The first part of the paper raises questions regarding aesthetic axiology (as far as culture-based text hierarchies are concerned) and social communication (which concerns the question of a canon: who establishes it and for what purpose?). In the second part of the article, the authors discuss the results of the poll, highlighting shortcomings of the project when compared to similar polls in the past.