

October 5 - 19

## ANGRY HARVEST: THE FILMS OF AGNIESZKA HOLLAND

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**7:00 - EUROPA EUROPA**

Agnieszka Holland (1990) 112 mins M

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**9:05 - PROVINCIAL ACTORS**

Agnieszka Holland (1979) 108 mins

### October 12

**7:00 - OLIVIER, OLIVIER**

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**9:00 - A LONELY WOMAN**

Agnieszka Holland (1981) 110 mins

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**7:00 - FEVER**

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**9:00 - SCREEN TESTS**

*Jerzy Domaradzki, Agnieszka Holland & Pawel Kedzierski (1977) 99 mins*

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## ANGRY HARVEST: THE FILMS OF AGNIESZKA HOLLAND



Agnieszka Holland (1948-) was born to Jewish & Catholic heritage in the year that Stalinism seized the political reins in Poland. Her mixed cultural heritage has affected a fearless honesty in Holland's beliefs & has provided much of the political force behind her filmmaking. Denounced by some as an anti-Semite but also honoured by Jewish associations, Holland's dissidence suggests a struggle with morality that most certainly stemmed from her parents: her mother, a Catholic, fought in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising & her father served in the Soviet Union's Red Army. Graduating from the Prague film academy in the early 1970s, she worked as an assistant director for Krzysztof Zanussi and Andrzej Wajda before starting her own directing career in the mid-'70s. Her intimate, committed & often critical work focused on both the world of art (filmmaking, theatre) & the daily grind of people in contemporary Poland. In 1981, after 2 of her key films were banned in her own country (*Fever* & *A Lonely Woman*), Holland escaped the political turmoil in Poland & went into exile in France, where she was able to continue making bold films with her trademark dark humour. Her often-gentle observations of the human condition & relationships are powerfully contrasted with an unapologetic desire to present everything as she sees it, without hesitation.

This season of 35mm prints showcases films from Holland's early years in Poland. It also includes the 2 films that have become the defining works of her career: the fascinatingly ambiguous portrait of malleable identity in the Nazi era, *Europa Europa* & the haunting *Olivier, Olivier*. This carefully curated program includes some of her lesser known films, & profiles her life as a storyteller before her acceptance into Hollywood &, more recently, her involvement in HBO's *The Wire* & *Treme*.

October 5

7:00 - EUROPA EUROPA

*Agnieszka Holland (1990) 112 mins M*

Holland's enthralling, darkly ironic masterpiece is based on the remarkable, actual wartime experiences of a young German Jewish adolescent, Salomon "Solly" Perel, & melds the absurd with the devastatingly tragic without feeling sensational or emotionally manipulative. Solly is 13 in 1938 when Nazi soldiers burst into his home, scattering the family & setting him on his singular march for survival. Intelligent & resourceful, the chameleon-like Solly masquerades as a communist orphan, a Nazi Soldier & finally a member of the elite Nazi Youth in order to hide his Jewish identity. An unsettling rumination on origins, guilt & the insanity of oppression. With Julie Delpy.



**9:05 - PROVINCIAL ACTORS**

*Agnieszka Holland (1979) 108 mins*

Holland's powerful, claustrophobic study of the tensions & conflicts amongst the members of a minor theatrical troupe in a small town near Warsaw - producing a Polish classic with modern trimmings - won her early recognition & reflects her love of theatre, abhorrence of censorship, ambiguity towards relationships, & mischievous sense of humour. Avoiding the clichés of the backstage genre, Holland uses Brechtian distancing devices to intensify the film's sense of atmosphere & searingly explore her characters' predicaments.

*35mm print courtesy of Filmoteka Narodowa.*



**October 12**

**7:00 - OLIVIER, OLIVIER**

*Agnieszka Holland (1992) 110 mins M*

A young boy disappears without a trace &, mysteriously, is reunited with his family years later as an adolescent (Grégoire Colin). Holland's film, beautifully shot in Paris & rural France by cinematographer Bernard Zitzermann, is an enthralling picture of a family struggling to overcome strained relationships. Holland continues with her penchant for real-life stories of youth, & her delicate treatment of complex relationships makes this an intriguing & affecting feature. One of the director's biggest international successes it features a haunting score by Zbigniew Preisner.

*35mm print courtesy of The National Film and Sound Archive of Australia.*



**9:00 - A LONELY WOMAN**

*Agnieszka Holland (1981) 92 mins*

Banned in Poland, this was the last film made by Holland in her homeland before seeking exile in France. A thinly veiled critique of the communist totalitarian system, it is a powerful portrait of a woman (a wonderfully complex performance by Maria Chwalibóg) struggling to raise her son with little support in a small town. This finely crafted & nuanced film is a quietly startling vision of communist bureaucracy, its stifling impact upon community & human action, & the daily grind it blindly creates.

**October 19**

**7:00 - FEVER**

*Agnieszka Holland (1981) 120 mins*

Set in 1905, Holland's politically & emotionally powerful film depicts a group of Polish anarchists & their tension-laden bomb-making activities to resist the incoming Russian Tsarist oppression. Amongst other awards, the film garnered lead actress Barbara Grabowska the Silver Bear for Best Actress at the 1981 Berlin International Film Festival. But this international success didn't stop the film from being banned in Poland when martial law was declared later that year. The second last film Holland made in her home country before being exiled to France.

*35mm print courtesy of Filmoteka Narodowa.*

**9:10 - SCREEN TESTS**

*Jerzy Domaradzki, Agnieszka Holland & Pawel Kedzierski (1977) 99 mins*

Teen angst & romantic performativity form the basis of this bittersweet movie about lovemaking & filmmaking. Holland's first role as a feature director was collaborative &

in 3 parts. Although combining the work of 3 quite distinctive directors, the 3 parts complement each other both formally & intellectually. The first 2 follow the emotional journeys of 2 aspiring film stars, Pavel & Anka, through to their meeting in part 3 for the screen test where art & life are chaotically intertwined.

*35mm print courtesy of Filмотека Narodowa.*

**Backdrop 1:**  
AGNIESZKA HOLLAND  
**Backdrop 2:**  
EUROPA EUROPA  
**Backdrop 3:**  
CINEMA CINEMA

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