The ICA, in partnership with the Polish Cultural Institute in London, is delighted to mark the 25th anniversary of Krzysztof Kieślowski's 1989 masterpiece *The Decalogue* (*Dekalog*) with a complete retrospective (27 November – 9 December 2014). *The Decalogue* is a renowned Polish television drama series directed by Krzysztof Kieślowski and co-written by Kieślowski with Krzysztof Piesiewicz, with music by Zbigniew Preisner. It consists of ten one-hour films, inspired by the Ten Commandments.

Kieślowski's works are meditative, often melancholic in tone, expressionist in technique, and tackle themes of identity and what it means to be at once connected and isolated. *The Decalogue* is a work that reflects the instability and ongoing transformation of an individual's life. It's an examination of the emotions upon which life itself is built: emotions which are the driving force behind all our decisions, choices, mistakes and sins.
This retrospective will not only be a journey through *The Decalogue* series but will also present some of Kieślowski’s first documentaries and earlier features.

I vividly recall when ‘The Decalogue’ was first shown on Polish TV in 1990. The whole country was glued to their screens following every episode, almost religiously. Interestingly, the Polish film critics of the time didn’t see the value of the series claiming it was artificial, extreme and absurd. However, audiences around the world revealed its influence as the ‘The Decalogue’ went on to screen in 75 countries, moving people with its universal stories, inspiring new generations of filmmakers and placing Poland on the global cinematic map after the fall of the communism. I am truly delighted that ‘The Decalogue’ will be screened at the ICA this December offering new audiences a chance to marvel at its genius form and subversive message.

- Anna Godlewska, Director of the Polish Cultural Institute in London

‘The Decalogue’ is a true masterpiece and one that feels completely at home at the ICA. This is a wonderful opportunity to savour this magnificent work on the big screen while also discovering the breath of Kieślowski’s talent with screenings of other films and documentaries. It is undeniable that twenty five years on ‘The Decalogue’’s power, vision and influence still resonates.

- Gregor Muir, Executive Director ICA

Krzysztof Kieślowski (born in Warsaw in 1941) was an influential Polish film director and screenwriter known internationally for *The Decalogue* (1989), *The Double Life of Véronique* (1991), and *The Three Colors Trilogy* (1993–1994). Kieślowski received numerous awards throughout his career, including the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize (1988), FIPRESCI Prize (1988, 1991), and Prize of the Ecumenical Jury (1991); the Venice Film Festival FIPRESCI Prize (1989), Golden Lion (1993), and OCIC Award (1993); and the Berlin International Film Festival Silver Bear (1994). In 1995 he received Academy Award nominations for Best Director and Best Writing.

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**Listings information:**
Krzysztof Kieślowski: The Decalogue 25th Anniversary Retrospective
Thursday 27 November – Tuesday 9 December 2014
Cinema prices £11 / £8 Concessions / £7 ICA Members. Prices vary for special events.
Matinee cinema prices £8 / £6 Concessions / £5 ICA Members
Tuesday cinema prices £6 / £5 ICA Members
Multi-buy offer:
£8 tickets when you buy tickets for between 3 and 6 screenings
£7 tickets when you buy tickets for between 7 and 13 screenings
Special discounts also available for student groups

Booking fees for non ICA Members: £1 per ticket or maximum charge per transaction £2.80.
Book online at www.ica.org.uk Call Box Office 020 7930 3647 Textphone 020 7839 0737

**Social media:**
Follow and tag updates on twitter using #Decalogue25

**Programme:**

Thu 27 Nov
Cinema 1
7.30pm
The Decalogue 1 & 2 (1989, 57 mins + 57 mins) + Panel discussion Guest Speakers TBC
Originally made for Polish television, Krzysztof Kieślowski’s acclaimed work The Decalogue is a ten-part series in which each episode offers a contemporary dramatic meditation on one of the Ten Commandments. In The Decalogue 1 a tragedy occurs when a man places too much faith in a computer model that forecasts the weather. Faith and reason, although apparently in conflict, are nothing more than different aspects of the human need to dominate life and to find answers to the unknown. The Decalogue 2 takes on a dying man and his wife's extra-marital pregnancy, an episode in which life and death play an infinite game and where silence plays a pivotal role.

Fri 28 Nov
Cinema 1
6.30pm
The Decalogue 3 & 4 (1989, 57 mins + 57 mins)
The Decalogue 3 sees a taxi driver help an ex-girlfriend on Christmas Eve. This episode tells the desperate story of a woman, Ewa, who wants to ruin the sacred holiday of her former lover and his family. The Decalogue 4 has a young woman discovering that the man she always believed to be her father is not in fact biologically related to her. This episode is a journey through the unstable and ambiguous nature of love.

Sat 29 Nov
Cinema 1
6.30pm
Personnel (Personel 1976, 72 mins) + Q&A with Personnel’s director of photography Witold Stok
Personnel was Krzysztof Kieślowski’s debut feature film for Polish television after working in the documentary field for years during and after his years at Lodz film school. The story of Romek (played by future Polish director Juliusz Machulski) and his fascination with art leads him to becoming a tailor at his local theater for their opera performances. While specifically involving the theater company within the story Kieślowski is also examining the hierarchical system of on set filmmaking and a phenomenon directly related to feature filmmaking.

Sun 30 Nov
Cinema 1
6.30pm
The Scar (Blizna 1976, 112 mins)
The Scar is set in the 1970s and follows political party man Bednarz (Franciszek Pieczka) who is made responsible for the construction of a massive chemical factory in the small town where he previously lived. However, building the factory conflicts with the desires of the local people, who become increasingly concerned with what can be done for them in the here and now.

Tue 2 Dec
Cinema 1
6.30pm
Camera Buff (Amator 1979, 117 mins) + Q&A with Camera Buff’s director of photography Jacek Petrycki
Camera Buff is Kieślowski’s most autobiographical film. It follows Filip (Jerzy Stuhr) a factory worker who has recently acquired an 8mm camera which he uses to film his newborn daughter. After Filip films some celebrations at the factory, as requested by his boss, he begins to see how his hobby can be turned into art, and perhaps change his life. This superb feature film is a masterclass in form and stylistic language. Filming a reality that we struggle to fully understand, the protagonist records his own life in an attempt to find answers about himself. It’s drama-documentary at its best.
Wed 3 Dec
Cinema 1
6.30pm
The Calm (Spokój 1976, 70 mins)
Based on a story by Lech Borski and a screenplay by Kieślowski and Jerzy Stuhr, The Calm is about a young man who leaves prison after a three-year sentence, seeking to start a new life. His dreams of a better path are shattered, however, when he is forced into a conflict between a corrupt construction company boss and his fellow workers who decide to strike.

Thu 4 Dec
Cinema 1
8.15pm
No End (Bez końca 1984, 109 mins)
The first film that Kieślowski made after the declaration of martial law in Poland in December 1981, No End avoids easy, generic classification. It contains elements of psychological drama, ghost stories, romance and courtroom drama, as well as political and metaphysical elements. This film has a unique narrative, consisting solely of very ambiguous images, premonitions and interactions between the characters. This is rumoured to be the last film where the Polish director chose to focus on politics, after No End he consciously devoted his work as a filmmaker towards the investigation of the precarious human condition.

Fri 5 Dec
Cinema 1
7.45pm
Documentaries and short subjects + Discussion TBC
Kieślowski’s documentaries tend to construct an implicit critique of official reality in a cumulative fashion. As film scholar Paul Coates puts it, “Kieślowski’s most frequent solution was the serial alignment of voices expressing the same, or cognate feelings, individual instances massing into the statistically significant proportion that validates generalization.” Many of his films are highly-edited montages collating people and ideas in provocative ways.

Sat 6 Dec
Cinema 1
6.30pm
The Decalogue 5 & 6 (1989, 57 mins + 57 mins)
The Decalogue 5 follows what unfolds when a young man murders a taxi driver. An expanded cinema version of The Decalogue 5 was also released under the title A Short Film About Killing (screening 5 December 2014). This episode is designed to challenge our sense of being estranged to evil. The Decalogue 6 is an engaging psychological love story about Tomek, a shy young man who is in love with Magda, an older woman who lives in the building opposite his. This has been hailed as the episode which perfectly synthesizes Kieślowski’s paradoxical view that everything can be simultaneously beautiful and ugly, or reassuring and awkward, in regards to human interactions and emotions.

Sat 6 Dec
Cinema 1
8.45pm
Blind Chance (Przypadek 1981, 123 min)
Twenty-something Witek is desperately trying to catch a train. Employing a narrative style later adopted by many other filmmakers, the three divergent outcomes of his run for the platform result in
three different stories of his life: as an oppositionist, an activist in a socialist organisation, and a physician shunning politics. As a result of it being completely non-partisan and critical of both political parties of the time, *Blind Chance* was heavily censored by Polish authorities and banned until 1987.

Sun 7 Dec  
Cinema 1  
2pm  
*A Short Film About Killing* (*Krótki film o zabijaniu*, 1987, 86 min)  
The paths of three men—a cabbie, a lawyer, and a killer—cross on a somber March day in this psychological study of murder that launched Kieślowski’s international career. This film was instrumental in the abolition of the death penalty in Poland.

Sun 7 Dec  
Cinema 1  
6.30pm  
*The Decalogue 7 & 8* (1989, 57 mins + 57 mins)  
*The Decalogue 7* (which plays brilliantly on “Thou shalt not steal”) tells the story of Majka, who kidnaps her daughter Ania from her own mother, who is herself extremely attached to her granddaughter. An extremely surreal episode, especially in terms of the visual frames that often interplay with the glances of the child. The plot relies on the extreme tension between the two mothers Ewa and Majka, while little Ania is the victim of them both. *The Decalogue 8* is about a Jewish woman, Elżbieta, who comes back to Warsaw after many years to question the philosophy professor who refused to give her shelter during World War II. This episode touches in such a poetic yet dramatic way one of the main themes of *The Decalogue*: the existence of moral and ethical contradictions that are out of the control of even well intentioned individuals.

Tue 9 Dec  
Cinema 1  
7.45pm  
*The Decalogue 9 & 10* (1989, 57 mins + 57 mins) + Final Discussion or Intro (TBC)  
*The Decalogue 9* is an Hitchcockian tale of a man who gives his wife the freedom to sleep with whomever she wishes after finding out that he is impotent, all to her angry dismissal. Later, he discovers that she actually has been cheating on him with another man. This episode reflects the formal, impartial style of all Kieślowski’s subsequent films. *The Decalogue 10* is the lightest and most ironic chapter in the series; while funny on the surface, it is stained by dark tones. Two brothers inherit a priceless stamp collection from their father, but lose one of the finest stamps to a cunning collector who is ready to give back the rare prize if he gets one kidney from either of the brothers in return.

**Editor’s Notes:**

The Polish Cultural Institute in London is a diplomatic mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. Based in London, the Institute is dedicated to nurturing and promoting cultural ties between the United Kingdom and Poland, both through British exposure to Poland’s cultural achievements, and through exposure of Polish artists and scholars to British trends, institutions, and professional counterparts. The function of the Polish Cultural Institute is to showcase contemporary Polish culture for Britain’s multicultural audience, particularly in London as it is truly the leading global cultural capital. Our programme covers the visual art, film, fashion, design, architecture, theatre, dance, music, and literature. [www.PolishCulture.org.uk](http://www.PolishCulture.org.uk) / [@PLInst_London](https://twitter.com/PLInst_London) / [www.facebook.com/polishinstitutelondon](http://www.facebook.com/polishinstitutelondon)