

## 2025 New York Polish Film Festival

### *Film Schedule & Synopses*

#### **Tuesday, May 27**

##### **Kanal (1957)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 1h 31min

During the final days of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, a group of resistance fighters is forced underground into the city's vast sewer system. As they navigate the pitch-black maze, each character is pushed to the brink physically, emotionally, and morally. A haunting meditation on hopelessness, heroism, and the psychological trauma of war.

##### **Under the Volcano / Pod wulkanem (2024)**

Director: Damian Kocur

Runtime: 1h 42min

A blended Ukrainian family—father Roman, his new wife Nastia, teenage daughter Sofia, and young son Fedir—spends the last day of their vacation in Tenerife, Spain. Their plans are upended when Russia's invasion of Ukraine strands them on the island, forcing them to confront their relationships and uncertain future.

#### **Wednesday, May 28**

##### **Ashes and Diamonds / Popiol i diament (1958)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 1h 43min

Set on the final day of World War II, Ashes and Diamonds follows Maciek, a young resistance assassin tasked with eliminating a Communist leader. But after a chance romantic encounter, Maciek begins to question the meaning of his mission and of his life. Caught between the ashes of war and the uncertain promise of peace, he becomes a tragic symbol of Poland's moral and political crossroads.

#### **Thursday, May 29**

##### **Everything for Sale / Wszystko na sprzedaz (1969)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 1h 45min

When a famous actor mysteriously vanishes, a film director begins shooting a movie about his disappearance. Blending documentary-style realism with fictionalized drama, the line

between art and life begins to blur. Friends, lovers, and collaborators grapple with grief and guilt, revealing their own desires and insecurities.

### **The Promised Land / Ziemia obiecana (1975)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 2h 50min

In the ruthless industrial city of Lodz at the turn of the 20th century, three friends—Polish, Jewish, and German—dream of building a factory that will bring them unimaginable wealth. But in chasing success, they are drawn into a world of exploitation, betrayal, and moral decay.

### **Friday, May 30**

#### **Forest / Las (2024)**

Director: Lidia Duda

Runtime: 1h 24min

Deep within the ancient Biaowieza Forest, a handful of families live far from civilization, off-grid, self-reliant, and often invisible to the outside world. With rare access and exquisite intimacy, this documentary captures the rhythms of their daily lives and the psychological toll of isolation.

#### **Katyn (2007)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 2h 1min

Wajda confronts one of Poland's deepest wounds: the 1940 Katyn massacre. Told through the eyes of the victims' families, the film examines the human cost of historical lies and political erasure.

#### **The Girl with the Needle / Dziewczyna z igla (2024)**

Director: Magnus von Horn

Runtime: 2h 3min

In 1920s Copenhagen, a young seamstress uncovers a series of disappearances at a home for unwed mothers. As she pieces together a chilling conspiracy, she must face the limits of her courage and humanity.

### **Saturday, May 31**

#### **Man of Iron / Czlowiek z zelaza (1981)**

Director: Andrzej Wajda

Runtime: 2h 26min

A journalist investigating a striking shipyard worker becomes entangled in the story of Poland's Solidarity movement. Through interviews and flashbacks, he confronts his own complicity and conscience.

**The True Story of Tamara empicka & The Art of Survival (2024)**

Director: Julie Rubio

Runtime: 1h 36min

A dazzling portrait of Tamara empicka, the queen of Art Deco. From exile to artistic fame, her life was a journey of reinvention, survival, and radical self-expression.

**Kulej. All That Glitters Isn't Gold / Kulej. Dwie strony medalu (2024)**

Director: Xawery Zuawski

Runtime: 2h 28min

The dramatic rise and fall of Jerzy Kulej, Poland's legendary Olympic boxer. A raw biopic exploring both his athletic triumphs and the battles he fought outside the ring.