

**FALL SEASON KICKS OFF WITH MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE ON ROMAN POLANSKI  
AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

***Roman Polanski***

September 7–30, 2011

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

**New York, August 10, 2011**—The Museum of Modern Art recognizes the achievements of Roman Polanski with a complete retrospective of the filmmaker's works, September 7–30, 2011, in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters. Over the course of a half century, Polanski has become widely recognized as one of the premier international filmmakers, directing films in Poland, England, the U.S., Italy, and France and working with distinguished actors such as Jack Nicholson, Adrien Brody, Catherine Deneuve, Mia Farrow, Ben Kingsley, and Nastassja Kinski. Polanski's films have garnered eight Academy Awards and over 25 nominations, among many other accolades. The retrospective will include all of Polanski's 18 feature films and a collection of his early student short films. This exhibition is organized by Charles Silver, Curator, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art.

Born in Paris, Polanski moved to Poland, the homeland of his parents, shortly before the start of World War II. Losing his mother in a concentration camp, Polanski lived in hiding as a Jewish fugitive in Nazi-occupied Poland. After the war ended, Polanski reunited with his father and shortly thereafter enrolled at the National Film School in Lodz, where he directed a number of short films including *A Murderer* (1957), *Two Men and a Wardrobe* (1958), and *When Angels Fall* (1959), all of which will be shown as part of the Polanski's Student Films program in this exhibition. In 1962, Polanski directed his first feature film, *Nóż w wodzie* (*Knife in the Water*), as his thesis for film school. Nominated for an Academy Award, the dark film follows a wealthy couple who pick up a mysterious hitchhiker while embarking on a weekend boating excursion.

Polanski continued his career in England, directing three films: *Repulsion* (1965), a critically acclaimed horror film that follows a young woman, played by Catherine Deneuve, as she slowly transforms into something demonic; *Cul-de-Sac* (1966), a dark comedy in which a pair of gangsters hold a couple hostage in a castle; and *The Fearless Vampire Killers, or: Pardon Me, but Your Fangs Are in My Neck* (1967), Polanski's parody of vampire movies and horror classics. In 1968, Polanski directed *Rosemary's Baby*, his first American film. Polanski's nightmarish vision of evil on Manhattan's Upper West Side received numerous awards, including an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress (Ruth Gordon), and is listed in the top 10 of the American Film Institute's list of the 100 best thrillers.

Throughout the next four decades, Polanski continued to make films internationally. Notable films include *Chinatown* (1974), which received 11 Academy Award nominations, including Best Actor for Jack Nicholson's portrayal of a private investigator; *Tess* (1979), the Academy

Award-nominated story of a young peasant girl who becomes the object of affection of two men; *Pirates* (1986), Polanski's homage to childhood favorite Errol Flynn; *Death and the Maiden* (1994), based on the play by Ariel Dorfman, about a former political prisoner who crosses paths with her captor years after the fall of his regime; *Oliver Twist* (2005), Polanski's recreation of the novel by Charles Dickens, which reflects his experiences as a child in Nazi-occupied Poland; and *The Ghost Writer* (2010), Polanski's latest award-winning film about a ghostwriter who uncovers a life-threatening secret while writing the memoirs of a former British prime minister.

The retrospective opens with Polanski's Academy Award-winning film *The Pianist* (2002), on September 7. The biographical film tells the story of Jewish musician Wladyslaw Szpilman as he struggles to survive in Warsaw during World War II. The film won three Academy Awards, including Best Picture; the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or; BAFTA Awards for Best Picture and direction; and seven French Césars, including Best Picture, director, and actor. Adrien Brody, who received the Academy Award for Best Actor for this portrayal of Szpilman, will be in attendance to introduce the film.

### **Screening Schedule**

#### ***Roman Polanski***

September 7-30, 2011

#### **Wednesday, September 7**

7:00            **The Pianist.** 2002. France/ Germany/Poland/Great Britain. Screenplay by Ronald Harwood, based on the book by Wladyslaw Szpilman. With Adrien Brody, Emilia Fox, Thomas Kretschmann, Frank Finlay, Maureen Lipman. Polanski's devastating portrayal of the Holocaust draws in part on his own efforts to survive in occupied Poland. The film won Academy Awards for Best Director, Best Actor, and Best Adapted Screenplay. 148 min. Introduction with Adrien Brody.

#### **Thursday, September 8**

4:30            **Polanski's Student Films.** 1957–62. Poland. Program includes *A Murderer* (1957), *A Toothful Smile* (1957), *Break Up the Dance* (1957), *Two Men and a Wardrobe* (1958), *When Angels Fall* (1959), *The Lamp* (1959), *The Fat and the Lean* (1961), *Mammals* (1962). In Polish; English subtitles. Program approx. 80 min.

8:00            **Nóż w wodzie (Knife in the Water).** 1962. Poland. With Leon Niemczyk, Jolanta Umecka, Zygmunt Malanowicz. Polanski's remarkable first feature, presented as his thesis at the film school in Lodz, announced to the world that a major new talent had arrived. In Polish; English subtitles. 94 min.

#### **Friday, September 9**

4:30            **Repulsion.** 1965. Great Britain. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. With Catherine Deneuve, Ian Hendry, John Fraser, Patrick Wymark. Polanski's first English-language film is one of the great horror chillers of all time. The ravishing young Deneuve, heroine of Jacques Demy's ultra-romantic *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, is transformed into something as demonic as anything this side of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*. 105 min.

8:00           **Cul-de-Sac.** 1966. Great Britain. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. With Donald Pleasance, Françoise Dorléac, Lionel Stander, Jack MacGowran. In one of the blackest of dark comedies, Polanski's take on the then-fashionable Theater of the Absurd meshes with his overriding theme of menace. 111 min.

#### **Saturday, September 10**

2:00           **The Fearless Vampire Killers or: Pardon Me, but Your Teeth Are in My Neck.** 1967. Great Britain. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. With Jack MacGowran, Polanski, Sharon Tate, Alfie Bass. This hilarious spoof of Universal horror classics and F. W. Murnau's great *Nosferatu* brought Polanski to Hollywood. 107 min.

5:00           **Rosemary's Baby.** 1968. USA. Screenplay by Polanski, based on the novel by Ira Levin. With Mia Farrow, John Cassavetes, Ruth Gordon, Sidney Blackmer, Maurice Evans, Ralph Bellamy. Polanski's nightmarish vision of evil on Manhattan's Upper West Side caused a sensation. Gordon won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress. 136 min.

8:00           **Macbeth.** 1971. Great Britain. Screenplay by Polanski, Kenneth Tynan, based on the play by William Shakespeare. With Jon Finch, Francesca Annis, Martin Shaw, Nicholas Selby, John Stride. In his first attempt, Polanski mastered the art of adapting a classic literary work (in his third language). Brilliant and unflinching, the film does full cinematic justice to one of the greatest plays in English.

#### **Sunday, September 11**

2:30           **Che? (What?).** 1973. Italy. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. With Marcello Mastroianni, Sydne Rome, Hugh Griffith, Romola Valli. Polanski was apparently in a lighter mood when he made this absurdist sex comedy. 112 min.

5:30           **Chinatown.** 1974. USA. Screenplay by Robert Towne. With Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, John Huston, Perry Lopez, Polanski. Towne's Oscarwinning screenplay, Polanski's spectacular return to onscreen menace and biting critique of American decadence, and signature roles for the leading actors combine in a classic of American cinema. 131 min.

#### **Monday, September 12**

4:30           **Le Locataire (The Tenant).** 1976. France/USA. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. Cinematography by Sven Nykvist. With Polanski, Isabelle Adjani, Melvyn Douglas, Jo Van Fleet, Shelley Winters. Polanski stars in a semi-autobiographical film that oscillates between Kafkaesque horror and surreal humor. 125 min.

8:00           **Pirates.** 1986. France/Tunisia. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. With Walter Matthau, Cris Campion, Damien Thomas, Charlotte Lewis, Olu Jacobs. Polanski's most cheerful movie is a widescreen epic reminiscent of Raoul Walsh and Errol Flynn. 124 min. **Introduction by cinematographer Witold Sobocinski.**

#### **Wednesday, September 14**

4:30           **Pokolenie (A Generation).** 1955. Poland. Directed by Andrzej Wajda. With Tadeusz Lomnicki, Urszula Modrzyńska, Zbigniew Cybulski, Polanski. Wajda's debut film is interesting for its understandably uncritical stance toward Poland's Soviet occupiers (in dramatic contrast to his *Katyn*, made a half century later).

The film is also notable for the small roles of Polanski and Cybulski, two young rebels who would soon go on to bigger things. In Polish; English subtitles. 85 min.

- 7:00      **Tess.** 1979. France/Great Britain. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach, John Brownjohn, based on the novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy. Cinematography by Geoffrey Unsworth, Ghislain Cloquet. With Nastassja Kinski, Peter Firth, Leigh Lawson. The winner of several Oscars, *Tess* remains faithful to the spirit of Hardy's novel while being, in the words of critic Carrie Rickey, "a gentle epic, devastatingly beautiful and analytic." Polanski's painstakingly detailed exercise in Victoriana is touchingly dedicated to his late wife, Sharon Tate. 170 min.

#### **Thursday, September 15**

- 4:30      **Frantic.** 1988. France/USA. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach. Music by Ennio Morricone. With Harrison Ford, Emmanuelle Seigner, Betty Buckley, John Mahoney. This intense Hitchcockian thriller, held together by Ford's star power, showcases Polanski's skills as a masterful technician. *Frantic* was the film debut of Seigner, the future Mrs. Polanski. 120 min. **Introduction by cinematographer Witold Sobocinski.**
- 7:30      **Bitter Moon.** 1992. France/United Kingdom. Screenplay by Polanski, Gérard Brach, John Brownjohn, based on the novel by Pascal Bruckner. With Peter Coyote, Emmanuelle Seigner, Hugh Grant, Kristin Scott Thomas. In a way, this is a companion piece to both *What?* and *Knife in the Water*. A sex comedy that has provoked wildly varying responses from different audiences, *Bitter Moon* was deemed by critic Jonathan Rosenbaum Polanski's most emotionally complex and personal film. 139 min.

#### **Friday, September 16**

- 4:30      **Death and the Maiden.** 1994. France/Great Britain. Screenplay by Rafael Yglesias, Ariel Dorfman, based on Dorfman's play. With Sigourney Weaver, Ben Kingsley, Stuart Wilson. Shooting in sequence and limiting himself to three characters (as in *Knife in the Water*), Polanski creates a claustrophobic yet surprisingly cinematic rendition of Dorfman's intimate revenge drama. 103 min.
- 8:00      **The Ninth Gate.** 1999. France/Spain/USA. Screenplay by Polanski, Enrique Urbizu, John Brownjohn, based on the novel *The Club Dumas* by Arturo Pérez-Reverte. With Johnny Depp, Frank Langella, Lena Olin, Emmanuelle Seigner, Barbara Jefford. Back in *Rosemary's Baby* territory (in what a *Variety* critic called "a shaggy devil story"), Polanski follows literary sleuth Depp's search for a rare demonic text. The quest takes Depp all over Western Europe and includes many delightful (and a few creepy) surprises. 133 min.

#### **Saturday, September 17**

- 2:00      **Oliver Twist.** 2005. Great Britain/France/Czech Republic/Italy. Screenplay by Ronald Harwood, based on the novel by Charles Dickens. With Ben Kingsley, Barney Clark, Jamie Foreman, Leanne Rowe, Mark Strong. Polanski—whose desperate childhood is echoed by that of the novel's young hero—created a superbly realistic adaptation of Dickens's first great masterpiece that rivals the David Lean version of a half century earlier. 130 min.
- 5:00      **The Pianist** (See Wednesday, September 7, 7:00).

8:30            **The Ghost Writer.** 2010. Great Britain/France/Germany. Screenplay by Polanski, Robert Harris, based on Harris's novel *The Ghost*. With Ewan McGregor, Pierce Brosnan, Olivia Williams, Tom Wilkinson, Eli Wallach. Overlooked by the Oscars but a winner of virtually every European film award, Polanski's consummate thriller was arguably the best film of the year. After more than a half century of filmmaking, Polanski once again demonstrated why he remains one of our cinematic treasures. 128 min.

#### **Sunday, September 18**

1:30            **Tess** (See Wednesday, September 14, 7:00).

5:30            **Oliver Twist** (See Saturday, September 17, 2:00).

#### **Monday, September 19**

4:00            **Zemsta (The Revenge).** 2002. Poland. Directed by Andrzej Wajda. Screenplay by Wajda, Aleksander Fredro, based on Fredro's play. With Roman Polanski, Janusz Gajos, Andrzej Seweryn. Fredro's Molière-like play was a success in Poland, and Polanski (who had played in Wajda's *A Generation* back in 1955) plays his comic role—a devious courtier caught up in aristocratic intrigues—to the hilt. Cinematographer Pawel Edelman was nominated for an Oscar for *The Pianist* and went on to shoot Polanski's *Oliver Twist* and *The Ghost Writer*. In Polish; English subtitles. 100 min.

7:00            **Polanski's Student Films** (See Thursday, September 8, 4:30).

#### **Wednesday, September 21**

4:30            **The Ghost Writer** (See Saturday, September 17).

#### **Thursday, September 22**

4:00            **Nóż w wodzie (Knife in the Water)** (See Thursday, September 8, 8:00).

7:00            **Repulsion** (See Friday, September 9, 4:30).

#### **Friday, September 23**

4:00            **Cul-de-Sac** (See Friday, September 9, 8:00).

7:00            **The Fearless Vampire Killers or: Pardon Me, but Your Teeth Are in My Neck** (See Saturday, September 10, 2:00).

#### **Saturday, September 24**

1:30            **Rosemary's Baby** (See Saturday, September 10, 5:00).

2:30            **Che? (What?)** (See Sunday, September 11, 2:30).

4:15            **Macbeth** (See Saturday, September 10, 8:00).

**Sunday, September 25**

- 2:00            **Chinatown** (See Sunday, September 11, 5:30).  
5:00            **Le Locataire (The Tenant)** (See Monday, September 12, 4:30).

**Monday, September 26**

- 4:00            **Pirates** (See Monday, September 12, 8:00).  
7:00            **Frantic** (See Thursday, September 15, 4:30).

**Wednesday, September 28**

- 4:00            **Bitter Moon** (See Thursday, September 15, 7:30).  
7:30            **Death and the Maiden** (See Friday, September 16, 4:30).

**Thursday, September 29**

- 4:00            **The Ninth Gate** (See Friday, September 16, 8:00).

**Friday, September 30**

- 4:00            **Pokolenie (A Generation)** (See Wednesday, September 14, 4:30).  
7:30            **Zemsta (The Revenge)** (See Monday, September 19, 4:00).

**No. 53**

**Press Contact:**    Sarah Jarvis, 212-708-9757, [sarah\\_jarvis@moma.org](mailto:sarah_jarvis@moma.org)  
Margaret Doyle, 212-408-6400, [Margaret\\_doyle@moma.org](mailto:Margaret_doyle@moma.org)

**For downloadable high-resolution images, register at the [MoMA Press Image Center](#).**

**Hours:**                Films are screened Wednesday-Monday. For screening schedules, please visit our [Film Exhibitions](#).

**Film Admission as of September 1:**

\$12 adults; \$10 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D. \$8 full-time students with current I.D. (for admittance to film programs only.) The price of a film ticket may be applied toward the price of a Museum admission ticket when a film ticket stub is presented at the Lobby Information Desk within 30 days of the date on the stub (does not apply during Target Free Friday Nights, 4:00–8:00 p.m.). Admission is free for Museum members and for Museum ticketholders.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Public Information:**

**The Museum of Modern Art**, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400

[MOMA.org](http://MOMA.org)  
[InsideOut: A MoMA/MoMA PS1 Blog](#)  
[MoMA on Facebook](#)  
[MoMA on Twitter](#)  
[MoMA on YouTube](#)  
[MoMA on Flickr](#)

**Hours:** Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Closed Tuesdays.