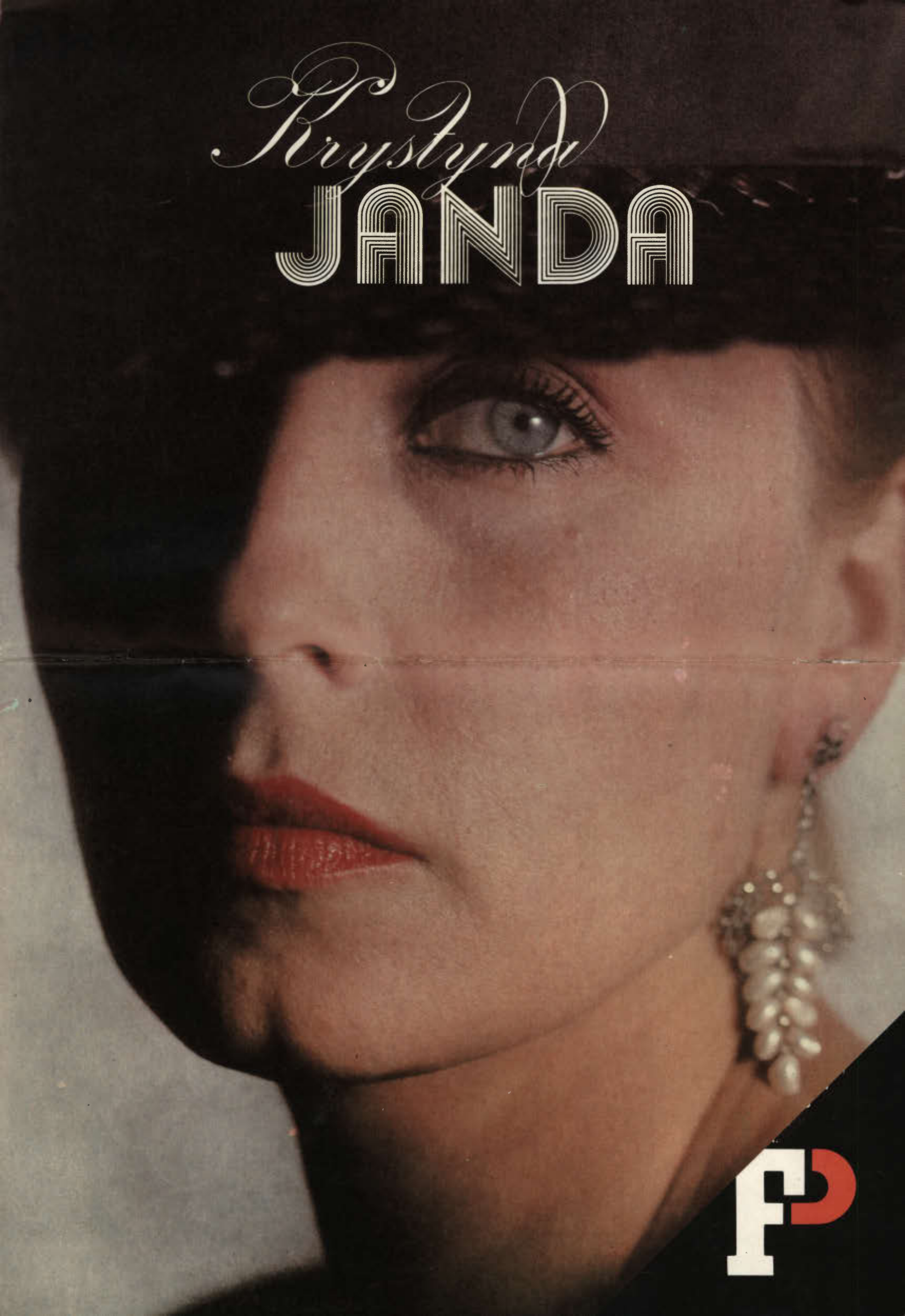


*Krystyna*  
JANDA



KRYSTYNA JANDA was born in Starachowice on Dec. 18, 1952. She was brought up in Warsaw, where she completed a grade medical school, a fine arts high school and the State College of Theatre (PWST), the latter diploma in 1975. Still as a schoolgirl she attended a ballet course of the Polish Operetta House. She rose to world fame on the crest of her main role in Andrzej Wajda's „Man of Marble”. She enjoys the reputation of a leading Polish stage and screen actresses. She is remembered, too, as an excellent heroine of Agnieszka Osiecka's one-actor play „The White Blouse”. She also is a remarkable performer of art songs. She was the Zbigniew Cybulski Award in 1977, the „Golden Grape” for the actress of the year 1978 at Lubuski Film Summer in Łagowo, „Special Golden Grape” for her contribution to actorship at Lubuski Film Summer in 1980 and the prize of the monthly „Teatr” for the best theatrical actress in 1988. International honours: „Silver Asteroid” — 19th International Sci-Fi Film Festival at Trieste for the role of Rozyna in „Golem” and a prize of the IFF Montreal for the role of Margaret in „Laputa”.

Films:

- 1976 — Man of Marble (*Człowiek z marmuru*), dir. Andrzej Wajda
- 1977 — Mme Bovary — that's Me (*Pani Bovary to ja*), dir. Zbigniew Kamiński
- On the Silver Globe (*Na srebrnym globie*), dir. Andrzej Żuławski, film completed in 1988
- The Limit (*Granica*), dir. Jan Rybkowski
- 1978 — Rough Treatment (*Bez znieczulenia*), dir. Andrzej Wajda
- White Harvest (*Bestia*), dir. Jerzy Domaradzki
- The Polaniecki Saga (*Rodzina Połanieckich*), TV series, dir. Jan Rybkowski
- 1979 — Doctor Murek (*Doktor Murek*), TV series, dir. Witold Lesiewicz
- Golem, dir. Piotr Szulkin
- The Conductor (*Dyrygent*), dir. Andrzej Wajda
- Der grüne Vogel (The Green Bird), FRG prod., dir. István Szabó
- Manchmal besucht der Neffe die Tante (Sometimes a Nephew Calls on His Aunt), FRG prod., dir. Jens Ehlers and Michał Ratyński
- 1980 — Uoni, Bulg., prod., dir. Vladislav Ikononov
- Mephisto, Hung.-FRG prod., dir. István Szabó
- In Broad Daylight (*W biały dzień*), dir. Edward Żebrowski
- 1981 — Man of Iron (*Człowiek z żelaza*), dir. Andrzej Wajda
- War of the Worlds. Next Century (*Wojna światów — następne stulecie*), dir. Piotr Szulkin, premiered 1984
- 1981 — He, She, They (*On, ona, oni*), dir. Krzysztof Tchórzewski
- Hocus-pocus (*Fik-Mik*), TV, dir. Marek Nowicki, released 1988
- 1982 — Interrogation (*Przesłuchanie*), dir. Ryszard Bugajski
- Ce fut un bel été, TV, French prod., dir. Jean Chapot
- 1983 — Bella Donna, FRG prod., dir. Peter Keglevic
- Synthesis (*Synteza*), dir. Maciej Wojtyczko
- Inner States (*Stan wewnętrzny*), dir. Krzysztof Tchórzewski, prem. 1989
- It's Only Rock'n Roll (*To tylko rock*), dir. Paweł Karpiński
- Glut, Swiss-FRG prod., dir. Thomas Koerfer

- 1984 — O-bi, O-ba, End of Civilization (*O-bi, o-ba, Koniec cywilizacji*), dir. Piotr Szulkin
- Der Bullo und das Mädchen, FRG-Austria prod., dir. Peter Keglovic
- 1985 — Eine blassblaue Frauenhandschrift, TV series, Austrian prod., dir. Alex Corti
- Vertiges, French, prod., dir. Christine Laurent
- My Mothers' Lovers (*Kochankowie mojej mamy*), dir. Radosław Piwowarski
- 1986 — Laputa, FRG prod., dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms
- Suspended (*W zawieszeniu*), dir. Waldemar Krzystek
- 1987 — A Short Film About Killing (*Krótki film o zabijaniu*), dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski
- 1988 — Decalog Two (*Dekalog Dwa*), TV, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski
- Decalog Five (*Dekalog Pięć*), TV, dir. Krzysztof Kieślowski
- 1989 — Wilden Westen inklusive (Wild West Inclusive), TV series, FRG prod., dir. Dieter Weber
- Modjeska (*Modrzejewska*), TV, series, dir. Jan Łomnicki
- Inventory (*Stan posiadania*), dir. Krzysztof Zanussi



# Krystyna JANDA

## SAYS KRYSZYNA JANDA:

„I am a Polish actress, inextricably married to Polish culture, to a definite period in our history and a definite mental formation. The West took note of me owing to Andrzej Wajda's films. They already hold a worthy place in world culture, and I simply played in them.

„There are many excellent actors in Poland, but they go unnoticed (in the West), because they have never had an opportunity to show themselves on such a scale in that market. The secret of my success? Maybe it is because my tastes are close on average, I mean I really get moved to tears where a normal woman would, and I never take that high-brow view of life or art.”

*Tak i Nie, 1985, no. 10*

„One day I found love. I think it's one of the fundamentals in the life of a woman-actress. You are an actress by selling out your nerves and emotions. It is not true that actorship is purely technical ploy. Just what kind of actress you make is the resultant of many, very many factors which have befallen you in your real life. The theories that it is better to go free than in love, because you reserve all of your resources and emotions for this profession, simply do not work out at all.”

*Kobieta i Życie, 1984, no. 52*

„It is hard to say if my international career is burgeoning. After a fairly long association with the French, I struck up a contact with the Germans. I believe that my manner of expression, reasoning and the entire arsenal of my actorship are far more appealing to the Germans than to the French. The French finesse is not for me, alas!

I never had bad reviews in France. On the contrary. But it seems to me that my personality is more familiar to the German culture. For the French it is apparently all too transparent and not crazy enough.”

*Kurier Polski 1988 no. 50*

„I think I am still at the beginning of my way. That is why I keep liking new roles. Every time I receive a proposition which I perceive as a chance to accomplish something new, something I have not done before, I go into raptures over it and I size up my bearings to see how far I can go in that new direction. I take no interest in stagnation, in copying the same, even the best, pattern over and over again.”

„Building up an actor's craft consists in keeping your entire performance apparatus on red alert all the time. I boils down to open-ended workout and search. When I work like a house on fire, head over heels in that challenge, then notwithstanding my physical fatigue I end up a top dog.”

*Gazeta Robotnicza 1984 no. 52*

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# Krystyna JANDA

„In Poland I am indeed called a star. In a succession of my roles, each of them is sized up with the preconceived notion of what actress and personality I make. I have carved a niche for myself in the actors' community by relying on what I have distinctive, a new type of personality which has made it to the screen. A modern-times, hard-charging, predatory and controversial woman — these are the attributives that I read about me. I am not an actress to be loved at first sight and for good. You cannot call my actorship pandering to popular tastes. Anyway, viewers perceive only torch-bearing parts. Meanwhile I earn each of my memorable parts by first counting in a number of other parts which have gone unnoticed.”

*Film, 1987, no. 17*

„In Poland, an actor is totally alone. Everything he or she achieves, what and how he or she plays, in which theatre and in what film, depends exclusively on him. Just what he becomes is up to his ability to feel the pulse of things around, up to his intelligence. What people he or she chooses as friends, what books to read, how to work, all these are autonomous choices. Nobody takes any responsibility for you, nor even seeks to make money on you. It is not true that theatre directors take care of this, that they see to a proper selection of forthcoming roles to serve the growth of a young actor. Nobody has the time nor the willingness to do it. An actor has to be aware of himself and the objectives he is aspiring to.”

*Teatr, 1989, no. 2*

„I have a yearning for a great classical repertoire for two reasons: First, I think this is the only way to grow and learn something, to embed your actorship in a firm foundation. Anyway, my friends keep telling me that my actorship is half-way amateurish, because, they charge, it bears the markings of everlasting spontaneity, even though I do control it. The second reason is my immodest urge to squeeze my entire personality into great characters, to transfer there all of those experiences and means which I use in dispersion to perform roles of a lesser format. Would emotions, which simpler in me, be enough to fill those great characters? I seek to process all of this classical repertory through my consciousness, my whole body. I am terribly tempted to invest everything what I know about myself and what the audiences know about me into a genuinely great drama just to see how it works out there.”

*Przekrój, 1987, no. 2204*

„A student who enters the college of theatre should be made aware of the fact that the school is not there to teach him profession, but to offer him the premises, map out directions and give him pointers. It is a shopfloor for his independent work. Nobody will teach him how to be an actor, or tell him how to play. You can learn how to make tables and chairs, but not how to be an actor. Everybody has a way of his or her own to pursue this profession, but even the greatest actor or pedagogue cannot convey to you the potentials that they have inside them. This profession is not about how to do it, but what you have inside.”

*Literatura, 1981, no. 21*

„From the financial point of view, any of my appearances in a (Polish) theatre makes no sense. I could as well stay and repose at home until my next trip to the West. But emotions related to work on the Polish stage are so immense! It is hard to say more, because words fail to reflect the essence of it. They are all wrong, inappropriate, artificial. But what others are better? Love for the profession? I have turned into the workoholic of acting. Twelve years without a holiday. Nobody can figure it out, my husband, my daughter, not even myself. A new role comes up and I catch fire again. I could slow down, but I don't do it. What am I after, what criterion, what standard? Every rehearsal in Poland is a new crazy challenge for me.”

*Polityka 1988 no. 11*

„I dream about a role which would enable me to transform the stylistics of movement and the intentions of actor play to the extent of creating a kind of entirely new language of communication. I would want to capitalize on my capacity to use not only face, but entire body, to turn it into a body language. I strive to be a self-aware actress. I mean I watch myself for faults. I strive to act out new roles without a prevarication. Rather, I look for fresh means. It is a sort of perennial „field of experiments”. I guess I know which of the keys have remained still untouched.”

*Dziennik Zachodni, 1978, no. 57*

„There are various ways of arriving at the truth about the character which you enact. In cinema, everything is based on a measure of experience. You draw on what you already can do. You appear on the setting and you have got to be ready to enact a definite role. Meanwhile, in theatre you can spend two to three months looking for the most accurate means of expression. Work on a film cost you more of your nerves and involves a greater risk. Note that I relish taking risks and employing strongly accented means. Sometimes I even press on regardless. I detest playing ambivalently. Once I have opted for a variant, I strive to fill it through and through.”

*Ilustrowany Kurier Polski, 1987, no. 91*

## KRYSZYNA JANDA IN THREE SCENES

She could have made a career in music, fine arts, ballet. But by chance she accompanied her friend during an admission exam for the Warsaw College of Theatre. When the friend did not pass the exam, Janda rushed into the commission's room to bluster out a case against injustice. Flabbergasted by the spectacle, the commission members asked her to try and take the exam herself. After four years she earned her diploma and was signed for one of Warsaw's topflight theatres, the Ateneum. — What roles would you rather not play? — asked the theatre manager politely. — Ophelia, and Aniela from Fredro's play „The Maiden Vows”, she replied. And thus she first appeared on the stage in the part of Aniela, a docile maiden from a gentry manour. She really had a hard time then. Moreover, she was put through camera tests for a few films, but without a success.

That proved a fortunate coincidence for Krystyna Janda, because right then she made a guest appearance in Nowy Theatre, run by her College professor Andrzej Łapicki, in the part of Dorian Gray, a play based on the novel by Oscar Wilde. The premiere was held May 26, 1976. It is an important date for Janda, because the play was seen by Andrzej Wajda who immediately offered her the role of Agnieszka in „Man of Marble”. A dozen or so days later workers in Ursus (tractor) plant in Warsaw and in Radom went on strike. The film was shown to the qualifying board on December 22 and already on February 25, 1977, it was on Polish cinemas, or, to be precise, in one cinema in Warsaw and a few others elsewhere in Poland. That outstanding, socially and politically involved film was spurned by the then communist authorities of Poland as „harmful” and „dangerous”. Rumours were circulating that it would be rapidly withdrawn from the few theatres under the pretext of low box-office returns. Meanwhile, people were queuing for 36 hours to see the film in the Warsaw „Wars” cinema. That was when, better late than never, it dawned on the communists in power that a limited distribution was an excellent publicity for the film. Eventually, they approved its proliferation, though not failing to order the critics who toed the line, be it of conviction or fear, to run exclusively scathing reviews of it.

„Film Unit X presents... Krystyna Janda — the first appearance in the screen”... One can hardly think of a better entry into the world of cinema. And besides, the scene preceding the leading titles in which Agnieszka engages in a turbulent conversation with one of the regime TV decision-makers to slam the door behind her and display a manly „up your ass” sign, revealed the birth of a new brand of actress, one who rejects the beaten tract and alings in the front rank of such talents and legends of Polish cinema as Zbigniew Cybulski or Daniel Olbrychski.

Janda's career as an actress has been going on for 15 years, its course being quite unexpected. Less than ten theatrical roles and a mere ten main roles in Polish full-length and TV films, well, this is not too many at all for an actress quite rightly regarded as one of the most prominent in Poland. A stardom status is practically insignificant in Poland in terms of royalties or audience turnout. To the bargain, she failed to or rather had not been given a chance to become an exponent of the concerns and anger of the young generation coming of age in the 1970s. Add to that her appearances in a long series of B-pictures where her actorship alone proved an asset...

However, Janda apparently knew what she was doing. From the very start she realized that the important thing in her profession was not a fleeting success, but an enduring status. She also realized that her acting manner inspired respect and appreciation, while terribly annoying people, that the heroines she created were not that easy to accept and that she would have to take quite a long time to get audiences accustomed to herself. When, instead of fighting her case with present-day, dressed-to-kill crations and thus win the cognomen „Lady Dynamite”, she settled down for costume-clad submissive wives, a seemingly suicidal tactic. But there was a method in that insanity. On the one hand, Janda continuously refreshed her means of artistic expression and her craft. On the other hand, she convinced everybody that she could handle any part. An last, but not least, she, an actress with a brilliant mind and a high level of self-awareness, avoiding any cliché and easy crap like fire, with a fantastic disposition to become the favourite of the cultural and intellectual elite, has gained an admiration and a following in very broad circles of viewers. That was determined by her showings in three films in succession by Andrzej Wajda: „Rough Treatment” (an unspoken, but how expressive role of a girl student faithfully standing by a journalist fired from his job and deserted by his wife), „The Conductor” (a metaphoric role of a violinist who comes to realize that her husband, a conductor, has no qualifications to handle an orchestra) and „Man of Iron” (Agnieszka — the wife of a Solidarity strike leader in 1980). In those three films Janda could not only render the characters devised by the script writers, but also convey to audiences her personal experiences and ideas. She succeeded in combining an intimate realm of typically feminine emotions and the image of an ardent individual who feels co-responsible for what it going on in the land. She proved that actorship can be not only a profession, but also a kind of social mission. She gained much more than popularity. She gained sympathy, esteem and prestige. Nevertheless, Janda's situation in Poland is not particularly easy. A psychological drama in which she could enact heroines intensely involved in the reality and expanding under the impact of events, self-analytical, holds the best chances for her. Unfortunately, this genre is dying of natural causes in the Polish cinema.

After her mind-boggling role in Ryszard Bugajski's „Interrogation” (an innocent woman imprisoned in Stalinist Poland only to incriminate her acquaintance on false charges), Janda waited as many as three years for the next proposal. In a melodramatic „My Mothers Lovers” she suggestively embodied herself in a demi-monde woman deprived of the right to bring up her son. In turn, a dramatic film „Suspended” put her in a toned down subtle part of a nurse who is hiding her beloved Home Army (AK) officer in her cellar for a few years against the Stalinist communist regime security police.

It is mid 1989. In a few months hence, the long completed films „Interrogation” and „Inner State” (a yachtswoman gives up her plans to circumnavigate the world upon hearing the news of martial law in Poland), and finally Krzysztof Zanussi's new oeuvre „Inventory” — a tragic story of a woman losing her sense of identity, will make it to the screen. Television will be showing Krzysztof Kieślowski's cycle „decalog”, where Janda plays a married woman expecting a baby with her lover. Finishing touches are being applied to a TV series about Poland's greatest thespian Helena Modrzejewska (1840-1909) who emigrated to the United States and scored resounding stage triumphs under a slightly Americanized spelling of her surname — Modjeska. Well, in a few months hence Krystyna Janda will be riding the crest of her fame.

May we not wait toolong for her other roles of similar format.

JACEK TABĘCKI