

ANNA DYMNA



**ANNA DYMNA** born July 20, 1951 in Legnica. Brought up in Kraków (Cracow). As a schoolgirl she performed in an amateur „Koci” (Cat) Theatre run by Jan Niewiński. She made her screen debut under her maiden surname Dziadyk. In 1973 she graduated from the Cracow College of Theatre and signed on the Helena Modrzejewska Stary Theatre in that city where she has been a performer ever since. For years she has ranked as one of the most popular Polish actresses.

Honours — „Golden Grape” Award — 1984 Lubuskie Film Summer for Star of the Season.

— 2nd Degree Prize from Minister of Culture in 1983

— prizes at theatre festivals.

#### Films

- 1971 — 5 ½ of Pale Joe (*Pięć i pół Białego Józka*), dir. Henryk Kluba, not distributed  
 — So Far — So Near (*Jak daleko stąd, jak blisko*), dir. Tadeusz Konwicki  
 — Rajah's Diamond (*Diamant radży*), TV, dir. Sylwester Chęciński  
 — Have a Good Ride (*Szerokiej drogi, kochanie*), dir. Andrzej Piotrowski  
 — At 150 km per Hour (*150 na godzinę*), dir. Wanda Jakubowska
- 1972 — Die Schlüssel (*Keys*), dir. Egon Günther, GDR
- 1973 — The Secret (*Sekret*), dir. Roman Załuski  
 — Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts (Good-For-Nothing), dir. Celino Bleiweiss, GDR  
 — Yanosik (*Janosik*), TV series, cinema release, dir. Jerzy Passendorfer  
 — The Road (*Droga*), TV series, dir. Sylwester Chęciński
- 1974 — Take it Easy (*Nie ma mocnych*), dir. Sylwester Chęciński  
 — Merry-Go-Round (*Karuzela*), TV episode — cycle „The Most Important Day in Life”, dir. Ryszard Ber
- 1976 — Leper (*Trędowata*), dir. Jerzy Hoffman
- 1977 — A Livelong Week (*Okrągły tydzień*), dir. Tadeusz Kijański  
 — Passion (*Pasja*), dir. Stanisław Różewicz  
 — Big Deal (*Kochaj albo rzuć*), dir. Sylwester Chęciński  
 — Anton der Zauberer (The Con Man), dir. Egon Günther, GDR
- 1978 — Broken Wedding (*Wesela nie będzie*), dir. Waldemar Podgórski  
 — Magyar rapszódia (Hungarian Rhapsody), dir. Miklós Jancsó, Hungarian prod.  
 — To the Last Drop of Blood (*Do krwi ostatniej*), cinema release and TV series, dir. Jerzy Hoffman
- 1980 — Queen Bona (*Królowa Bona*), TV series, dir. Janusz Majewski  
 — Yvonne, TV, dir. Ingrid Sander, GDR
- 1981 — The Quack (*Znachor*), dir. Jerzy Hoffman
- 1982 — The Issa Valley (*Dolina Issy*), dir. Tadeusz Konwicki  
 — An Epitaph for Barbara Radziwiłł (*Epitafium dla Barbary Radziwiłłówny*), dir. Janusz Majewski  
 — Edge on Edge (*Ostrze na ostrze*), dir. Tadeusz Junak
- 1983 — To the Relief of Vienna (*Na odsiecz Wiedniowi*), TV, dir. Lucyna Smolińska and Mieczysław Sroka  
 — According to Your Decrees (*Freiwild*), dir. Jerzy Hoffman, Poland-FRG prod.  
 — Destiny (*Przeznaczenie*) dir. Jacek Koprowicz
- 1984 — Knights and Robbers (*Rycerze i rabusie*), TV series, dir. Tadeusz Junak
- 1985 — The Memoirs of a Sinner (*Osobisty pamiętnik grzesznika*), dir. Wojciech Has
- 1988 — Upstairs (*Schodami w górę, schodami w dół*), dir. Andrzej Domalik  
 — No Man's Land (*Pole niczyje*), TV series, dir. Jan Błeszyński
- 1989 — Master and Margaret (*Mistrz i Małgorzata*), TV series, dir. Maciej Wojtytzko



Can you believe it! Anna Dymna has been an actress for 21 years already. It is true. She was barely 17 when she was admitted to Cracow's College of Theatre. She made her stage debut as a first-year student and her name became known to cinema buffs in Poland quite paradoxically before the films that starred her appeared in movie repertoires. That was because of the film director Henryk Kluba who cast her in the main part in the film „5 ½ of Pale Joe”. Dymna enacted the leaderess of a motorcycle ring on the prowl in the Polish town of Płock at the time when a huge oil refinery was being built there. The „Pale Joe” has remained shelved until this day, but photo-reports from the film set were so attractive as to immediately rivet the movie fans' attention to the young starlet.

Dymna rapidly rode the crest of popularity. Right after her graduation she was signed on by the troupe of the Stary Theatre in Cracow where she was entrusted responsible parts by such master stage-directors as Konrad Swinarski, Jerzy Grzegorzewski, Jerzy Jarczyk, Andrzej Wajda, Henryk Tomaszewski, Lidia Zamkow. Concurrently, she was shooting one film after another and though many of them were just mediocre, people did not miss them just to see her. Maybe parallels and comparisons are pointless, but one at least is self-evident: Dymna in Poland became the star of a format of Ornella Muti in Western Europe.

She did not yearn for stardom. She biked all over Cracow and the populace swapped legends about how plain-behaved, natural and modest she was. She was dubbed the prettiest Polish actress. But maybe because she was not a perfect beauty — with her slightly retouched nose and her slightly slanting eyes (reportedly after her Tartar grandfather), she did not look like a high society girl. She focused audiences' daydreams, stirred up their yearnings. Throughout the 1970s decade she symbolized graceful youth and fresh girliness. At that time she was given roles in three foremost b.o. blockbusters in the Polish cinema history (each having an audience of 9 million to 34 million total population) — „The Leper” dir. by Hoffman, „Take it Easy” and „Big Deal” dir. by Chęciński. No matter that the latter two reserved for her an apparently quite unbefitting role of a rustic lass. She scored a resounding success. Both the film directors and the viewers wished to see her as a „man-eater” in the traditional sense of the term.

I use the past tense here, because that stage in Anna Dymna's career is definitely closed. The other roles which kept her high in orbit were — the daughter part in another box office smash hit „The Quack” and the title part in a historical drama „An Epitaph for Barbara Radziwiłł”. But there she had already appeared as a full-blown woman. Next came a dashing series of tours de force in TV Theatre — Lavinia in O'Neill's „Mourning Becomes Electra”, Milena in „Letters to Milena” based on Kafka, Bertha in Joyce's „Exiles” and Claudia Chauchat in the „Great Peeperkorn” based on Thomas Mann's „Magic Mountain”. With these roles she has clinched her current reputation as a masterful artiste. She still ranks among the most attractive and appealing actress in Poland and for the past few years also among the most rewarding stage and screen personalities. Her latest great success is her impersonation of Margaret in the TV series „Master and Margaret” based on Mikhail Bulgakov's novel. Dymna's creation radiates warmth, charm, mystery and ambivalence. Maybe it is with this role that she would conquer Europe?

JACEK TABECKI

# ANN

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behind.  
„Another won  
work with stage  
born in an atmost  
the ubiquitous eleme  
every role. I love my pro  
work throughout my life o  
new people whom I imperso  
about myself. What do you nee  
guess it takes a good deal of kno  
be a cross between a philosopher,  
an art historian. One has to be op  
world. But first of all to be a good actor  
an honest human being.”

## FILM HEROINES CREATED BY ANNA DYMNA

### SO FAR, SO NEAR

The Beautiful Stranger whom Andrzej, a ripe-ager recaptulating his life, sees as a symbol of the young generation from which he is separated by the gulf of memories and experience.

### SECRET

The student Ursula who rents a room from a professor's widow and helps the old lady to weather dramatic moments.

### YANOSIK

Countess Clarissa von Berger, the niece of rich landlord-oppressor of peasants, secretly helping the ring-leader of mountain rebels, Yanosik.

### TAKE IT EASY

Anna Pawlak, a rustic girl, who fails to pass through a college admission exam and to the joy of her grandparents settles down to take over the family farm along with her husband.

### MERRY-GO-ROUND

Iwona, a town girl, fails to meet the expectations of a rural boy. Disappointed Franek returns to his first love in the country.

### LEPER

Countess Melanie Barska who banks on marrying the handsome heir-in-tail Michorowski. But he falls in love with a girl of plain stock and opts for a misalliance.

### PASSION

Magdalena Kaszycka, a liaison girl, who dies in action during the Revolution of 1848.

### BIG DEAL

Anna Pawlak and her grandfolks visit a family in the United States.

### BROKEN WEDDING

Margaret, a town girl, yields in to an ambitious rural lad and becomes his fiancée. But their wedding will not be finalized.

### TO THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD

Anna Gawlin, a communist paramedic in the Polish Army formed in the USSR. Meanwhile her beloved is about to leave the Soviet territory in the ranks of the Anders Army backed by the Polish government-in-exile.

### YVONNE

A German antifascist remembers a French journalist Yvonne Grangiel, his great love and companion in the resistance movement.

### QUEEN BONA / AN EPITAPH FOR BARBARA RADZIWIŁŁ

A Lithuanian aristocrat, Barbara Radziwiłł, the great love of the Polish king Zygmunt August, becomes the monarch's wife against the opposition from the magnates. Shortly after her coronation as queen she dies.

### THE QUACK

A poor orphan, Mary Wilczur, turns out to be the daughter of the famous surgeon who, following an accident, fell into amnesia and became a great quack doctor under a different surname. The girl cannot marry a young aristocrat who loves her madly.

### THE ISSA VALLEY

Magdalena, in love with a Catholic priest, commits suicide to find tranquillity and happiness after death.

### EDGE ON EDGE / KNIGHTS AND ROBBERS

A rich landlord is out to take possession of the estate of the family Zgurski and questions their noble status. A handsome Starost stands up in defence of Constance and her brothers.

### TO THE RELIEF OF VIENNA

Queen Mary, who persuades King John Sobieski to set out for the victorious battle against the Turks at Vienna.

### ACCORDING TO YOUR DECREES

Jewess Rachel dies her hair blond and becomes secretary to a fascist official. She dies in defence of her niece.

### DESTINY

A highland girl Hanna — one of the lovers of the prominent Modernist poet, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer.

### UPSTAIRS...

Baroness Szygiel, a muse of Zakopane Bohemians in 1930s, commits suicide in 1939 which is acclaimed „an end of the epoch”.

### MASTER AND MARGARET

Margaret, beloved by the master, will reunite with him forever, owing to Woland.

### FILM CRITICS ABOUT ANNA DYMNA

„... She was assigned to the Thespian emploi of a belle and that key governed her role assignments in the theatre and cinema. Her main traits were beauty and girlish looks. The style of her beauty best fitted to subtle, romantic and sensitive heroines. Someone said she would make a perfect dame from a 19th century miniature.

„In fact, Anna Dymna carries with her none of the brutality imposed on us by everyday life. She shuns an emphatic, blaring expression which today has become a mannerism to many actresses or even a norm of behaviour. This definitely is not her style or nature. She imbues all of her heroines, even contemporary characters, with inner warmth and sensitivity. They are fragile like china, but strong in their feelings. That's one of the secrets of her craft.”

*Rita Gołębiewska, Tygodnik Kulturalny, 1984 no. 12*

„There can be no doubt that Anna Dymna as a Thespian personality — natural, girlish and captivating looks, inborn shyness all combine with her authentic warmth and inevitably lead to a definite style of acting. That exposes her to a restriction on her dramatic expression. In other words, some prominent directors appear do develop a mechanical belief about her sugary and girlish looks and hence other directors either cannot or do not want to free her from the stereotype impersonations carried to perfection. That is why, her talent is bereft of vent and thus denied full expression. It is being held in check by the habits of the directors who rest complacent with the aura of her personal charm and make no real effort to reveal her true face.

„It is only through films and TV plays that the versatile span of interpretations of the lines and dramatic craft of that full-grown, though still spring-young artiste has come to the fore. To boot, she is endowed with absolutely fantastic photo- and tele-geny and proves out in every genre.”

*Jerzy Bober, Gazeta Krakowska, 1983 no. 190*

# A DYMNA



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**SAYS ANNA DYMNA**

„Theatre is the only place where I feel happy. Not only because friends surround me there, but also because actorship is a profession enabling you to stay in different worlds all the time. Every day I switch to a different world for two hours, leaving the reality behind.

„Another wonderful thing for me are the rehearsals, work with stage managers. The final shape of a play is born in an atmosphere of tension, understatement, the ubiquitous element of the mysterious involved in every role. I love my profession, because owing to it I work throughout my life on new things, I have to meet new people whom I impersonate and I also learn a lot about myself. What do you need to be a good actor? I guess it takes a good deal of knowledge. One has to be a cross between a philosopher, a psychologist and an art historian. One has to be open wide to the world. But first of all to be a good actor one has to be an honest human being.”

*Kobieta | Życie weekly, 1979 no. 40*

„A normal family life is what enables me to go ahead with my profession. My home is my castle, an escape from cameras, spotlights, audiences, applause, tensions and stress. I rejoice to transform myself into a regular housewife — I cook, clean up, sew, grow flowers, talk to my dog, sometimes I paint a wall. I know am needed there because there is my little, quite helpless son waiting for me. With my little son around, I forget about all my roles, successes, setbacks. An I never feel fatigued by these duties because I take a break from them by appearing on the stage, before the camera lens, into another, magic world. The two halves of my life are complementary, well balanced, and one is a cure for the other. They help me to be a normal, happy human being.”

*Gazeta Poznańska 1986 nr. 300*

„Every actor sometimes would like to playact against his psyche and natural endowments. I believe that when you enact characters fitting in with your psychophysical endowments, you develop less. If I have trouble with a role, the effect is all the more interesting. I would like to impersonate dramatic roles, roles of women in the grip of passion, women who change,

transform, mature (...) The hardest thing in this job is that you have to fight against yourself all the time. This profession calls for continuing psychological exposure and I cannot overcome the barrier of this kind of exhibitionism. Sometimes I even think I do not want to and I should not to.”

*Scena journal 1985 no. 3*

„My first husband, Wiesław Dymny, had shaped my psychology and attitude to actorship for the rest of my life. Owing to him I never envied anybody a success and I did not yearn for being a „luxury woman” who says to herself — „I have made 50 film and the world owes something to me”. He always used to say — „You are a normal human being, who has a pair of able hands. Clean up and cook”. I have been doing this ever since. I do not know why everybody finds it so surprising? I have never desired to dazzle. I best like to stow away in a corner and watch others. That is why I am not a woman about town.”

*TIM weekly, 1989 no. 21*