



# Historical Dictionary of Polish Cinema (Historical Dictionaries of Literature and the Arts)

*Marek Haltof*

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In 1902, scientist and inventor Kazimierz Prószyński made the first Polish narrative film, *The Return of a Merry Fellow* (*Powrót Birbanta*). Since then, the Polish film industry has produced a diverse body of work, ranging from patriotic melodramas and epic adaptations of the national literary canon to Yiddish cinema and films portraying the corrupted side of communism. Poland has produced several internationally known films, including Andrzej Wajda's war trilogy, *A Generation* (1955), *Kanal* (1957), and *Ashes and Diamonds* (1958), Roman Polanski's *Knife in the Water* (1962), and Andrzej Munk's *The Passenger* (1963). Often performing specific political and cultural duties for their nation, Polish filmmakers were well aware of their role as educators, entertainers, social activists, and political leaders.

The *Historical Dictionary of Polish Cinema* fills the gap in film scholarship, presenting an extensive factual survey of Polish film. Through its chronology, introductory essay, appendixes, bibliography, and cross-referenced dictionary entries on films, directors, actors, producers, and film institutions, a balanced picture of the richness of Polish cinema is presented. Readers with professional interest in cinema will welcome this new work, which would be useful for any senior undergraduate or post-graduate courses in film studies.

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