



Farewells (aka Lydia Ate the Apple) Pożegnania

Director: Wojciech Jerzy Has

Production Companies: Zespół Filmowy 'Syrena', Film Polski

Producer: Wilhelm Hollender

Screenplay: Wojciech Jerzy Has, Stanisław Dygat

Based on the novel by: Stanisław Dygat

Editor: Zofia Dwornik

Set Designer: Roman Wołyniec

Sound: Józef Kopronowicz

Cast:

Tadeusz Janczar (*Paweł*)

Maria Wachowiak (*Lidka*)

Gustaw Holoubek (*Mirek*)

Irena Netto (*hotel owner*)

Saturnin Zurawski (*Felix*)

Stanisław Jaworski (*Dr Janowski*)

Stanisław Miński

Zdzisław Mrożewski

Józef Pierski

Irena Starkowna

Helena Sokółowska

Hanna Skarzanka

Jarema Stepowski

Teresa Gawlikowska (*dancer*)

Anna Lubińska (*night club singer*)

Poland 1958

103 mins

Digital (restoration)

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The Long Strange Trips of Wojciech Jerzy Has

Farewells

The title of Wojciech Has's second feature is given in the plural – appropriately, because there are numerous farewells threaded throughout its length. Some farewells are bid between people, others to an undesirable situation that's been put behind them, and still others on a wider national scale; to Poland prior to WWII (the first part of the film is set in 1939) and to the end of Nazi occupation and anticipation of what might come afterwards (the second part is set at the turn of 1944-45).

Tadeusz Janczar plays Paweł, the male lead, having already established himself as a one-man anthem for Polish doomed youth in Andrzej Wajda's *A Generation* (1955) and *Kanał* (1957) – and he was a credible front-runner for the lead in *Ashes and Diamonds* (1958) too, only Wajda decided to gamble on Zbigniew Cybulski instead. Born into an aristocratic family that he heartily despises, Paweł is very clear indeed about what he doesn't want, but rather vaguer about what he does – and his own father (Zdzisław Mrożewski) deftly nails him when he says that he rushes into things only to drop them halfway through. And that observation is made *before* he impulsively abandons a family meal in favour of a trip to a nightclub of dubious repute.

There, he meets Lidka (Maria Wachowiak), a taxi dancer who has only been in the job for three weeks but that's more than enough for her to be able to anticipate every last syllable of a chat-up line or similar cliché – indeed, her initial conversation with Paweł is full of swerves and reversals as she evidently can't decide whether she's as repulsed by him as she is by her usual partners or unexpectedly intrigued. Fiercely intelligent, she can draw blood with a well-aimed tongue; at one point she says to Paweł 'I needed someone like you. Something, but not too much of a thing', and follows this up with 'Sometimes you sound like a poet. Your words make no sense, but they sound nice'. Later, when she runs into Paweł's disapproving father, she responds to his suggestion that he pay her off with an immediate, deeply sarcastic and frankly smartarse 'your son has damaged me to the amount of 2,354 zlotys and 17 groszys'.

But they're intrigued enough by each other to run off together, ending up at the Quo Vadis guesthouse, which Lidka interprets as a sign from Fate. (Her birth name was the fancifully aristocratic Genowefa, which she detested, so she renamed herself Lidia, a modern equivalent of Ligia, heroine of Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel *Quo Vadis*.) But the real world soon intrudes, and the match is declared quite hopeless, leading to their initial farewell.

The film then jumps forward just over five years, and an unshaven Paweł is clearly on his uppers: he joined up to fight in 1939, and spent two years at Auschwitz, an experience that he briefly sums up as 'Humans are blessed with the gift of forgetting. Without it, it would be impossible to keep on living.' (Another recurring theme, not just in *Farewells* but threaded through much of Has's early work, concerns the desirability of bidding farewell to unwanted memories.)

He reluctantly ends up visiting his aunt Waleria (Helena Sokółowska) and finds that his aristocratic relatives are still clinging to the trappings of their pre-war life, complete with dinner-gongs, while trying their best to tune out the signs of German occupation, or other indications that things have turned completely

The Long Strange Trips of Wojciech Jerzy Has

The Saragossa Manuscript + intro

Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie

Tue 1 Apr 18:40

The Moose

Wed 2 Apr 20:00 (+ pre-screening discussion);

Wed 16 Apr 18:15

Farewells (aka Lydia Ate the Apple) Pożegnania

Fri 4 Apr 18:10; Fri 18 Apr 20:40

One Room Tenants Wspólny pokój

Mon 7 Apr 20:45; Fri 18 Apr 18:15

Goodbye to the Past Rozstanie

Fri 11 Apr 20:50 (+ intro); Mon 21 Apr 16:10

The Doll Lalka

Sat 12 Apr 19:50; Sat 19 Apr 12:00

Gold Dreams Złoto

Mon 14 Apr 20:50; Wed 23 Apr 18:00

The Hourglass Sanatorium

Sanatorium pod klepsydrą

Thu 17 Apr 18:00

In Cultural Partnership with



This retrospective is presented in partnership with the ICA, which will also be hosting exclusive screenings of Has' works.



The 23rd Kinoteka Polish Film Festival is part of the UK/Poland Season 2025.



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upside down (Waleria's home is a sanctuary for refugees, judges dig trenches, university professors hawk slices of cake at railway stations). At one point, Waleria asks Paweł if he fought in the very recent Warsaw Uprising, and when he replies that he didn't, she says that that's not good; his male ancestors invariably fought in previous uprisings, as it was a sign of their fundamental respect for their beloved Poland. Of course, with hindsight that the film's original audience would have possessed as well, we know that Paweł's family would fare no better under the Communists.

Gustaw Holoubek, so riveting as the protagonist of Has' debut feature *The Moose*, turns up here as Paweł's cousin Mirek. Annette Insdorf has observed that Paweł and Mirek are practically doubles – 'aimless, elegant, and dissolute, and play the piano impressively. They are drawn to Lidka and little else' – only in this case Mirek has actually married her prior to Paweł's arrival. (Holoubek would later marry Maria Wachowiak in real life.) This complicates matters somewhat, even if their previous relationship had been decidedly chaste, generating a tension that underpins much of the second half. Not least class tension; Lidka is now known as 'the Countess', but Paweł is well aware of her roots.

Farewells was released in Poland just ten days after *Ashes and Diamonds*, with which it shares several supporting actors and tackles similar themes, albeit from a decidedly more ironic angle. Paweł is no Maciej Chelmski (the anti-Communist assassin indelibly played by Zbigniew Cybulski); he's happier to spend days on end lying on a bed in his lodgings just staring at the ceiling, but aloof neutrality is a stance that's impossible to maintain in this environment – either in Poland as a whole, or under Waleria's roof.

Indeed, by this stage in the film Poland hadn't been an independent country for five years, and Has depicts it as a massive transit camp, with many people talking about leaving as quickly as possible – and some eventually do; Paweł's parents have already decamped to London, while Mirek and Lidka are contemplating Vienna. This attitude would persist long after World War II, with Walerian Borowczyk, Roman Polański and Andrzej Żuławski, the three Polish filmmakers who were arguably closest to Has in their quasi-baroque, quasi-surrealist approach, similarly opting to work abroad for most of their careers – whereas Has would remain in Poland, where he was better placed to examine the complex, conflicting tangle of national memories that underpinned so much of his work.

Michael Brooke, season curator