

# BENEK

Poland

## Robert Glinski

Director and screenwriter. Majored in directing at the Łódź Film School and in architecture in Warsaw. One of the best Polish directors. His last movie, *Hi, Tereska*, was very successful and won many international and domestic festivals.

Born in 1952 in Warsaw.

### Filmography

*Czesc, Tereska / Hi, Tereska*, 2001

Special Jury Prize and FIPRESCI Prize and Don Kichote Prize at the Karlovy Vary IFF; Jury Mention at the Chicago IFF; The Krzysztof Kiesłowski Award for the Best European Film at the Denver IFF; Grand Prix of the Wiesbaden IFF; The Grand Prix Golden Lions for the Best Film at Polish Film Festival in Gdynia, Poland; "Eagles" Polish Film Award for the Best Film and Best Direction

*Kochaji Rob Co Chcesz / Love and Do What You Want*, 1998

The Grand Prix Golden Lions for the Best Film at the Polish Feature Film Festival in Gdynia; The Press Award at the Polish Feature Film Festival in Gdynia

*Matka Swojej Matki / One Daughter, Two Mothers*, 1996

*Superwizja / Supervision*, 1990

*Labeledzi Spiew / Swan Song*, 1988

Silver Lions for the Best Direction at the Polish Film Festival in Gdynia

*Niedzielne Igraszki / Sunday Pranks*, 1983

Gold Ducat and FIPRESCI Award at the Mannheim Film Festival

<b>Production Company :</b>	Apple Film Production (Poland)	<b>Shooting format:</b>	35mm
<b>Category:</b>	Fiction	<b>Locations:</b>	Silesia, Poland
<b>Length:</b>	100'	<b>Technicians:</b>	Bartek Prokopowicz – DoP Krzysztof Szpetmanski - editing
<b>Language:</b>	Polish		
<b>Shooting dates:</b>	July / August 2005		

### Introduction

A story on one of many miners from a closing down coal-mine, who after unsuccessfully undertaking any kind of work, from butcher to male companion, makes a hit opening a nursery school for miners' children and child's orchestra.

### Synopsis

A story about a miner that signed a miner's severance package and hence became blacklisted for work at Polish mines. A story of longing for the mine, the incapability to adapt to surface life, the inability to find work and love. This is also the story of centuries of tradition dissipating from Silesia and the attempts to preserve its last vestiges. This is also a story about human nature: listless pit miner, a bungler, the Polish Forrest Gump leaves his mine and has no idea where to go. In his mind his world has collapsed. Timid and shameful he learns to live on the surface – looks for work, fights back fear, learns to speak in full sentences, learns how to mingle with people, women. He needs to put order in his life: find work and start a family – in accordance with Silesian tradition. He abides by this tradition, which helps him find the initiative, overcome inertia and take care not only of himself but also of others who have found themselves discarded by the mine. This is also the story of the hero's brother's family. The brother is also a miner deeply in love with the pits and has no intention of leaving. Nevertheless, fate forces him to go. That in turn leads to the disintegration of his family. *Benek* tells the story of how the main character's love was born. Supported and transformed by his romantic feelings, he is reborn. He discovers a coal field where, together with his friends, he sets up a private coal business. Despite life's hardships and adversities, Benek succeeds; he finds a meaning in his life. Benek's story is a symbol of hope for Silesia's revival.

**Director's statement:****CONVENTION AND STYLE**

In my previous film, *Hi, Tereska*, I used the technique of para-documentary production, long distance peep shots of the characters with 100% real sound and minimum lighting. My film included a large proportion of documentary shots. *Hi, Tereska* was strikingly truthful. The viewers had the impression that they were exposed to the characters' real lives.

I want to achieve a similar effect in *Benek*. The camera will be focused on the characters. Although some of the actors are not professionals, they are all real miners from Silesia. A minimal use of scene-setting such as lighting, crane shots and visual effects. Filming will consist of a large amount of documentary, authentic, real-life scenes. The camera will often be hand-held, which will give the illusion of natural rhythm, to be combined with 100% real sound.

This para-documentary style will also serve one more purpose. I would like the film to have comic overtones. The characters, dialogues and scenes will often present viewers with impressions of a warm, self-ironic comedy. The self-ironic stance is very characteristic to the people of Silesia – miners and metal workers. I would like to highlight this aspect in the movie.

**VISUAL CONCEPTS**

The visual aspects of the film will be predetermined by its para-documentary nature. Peep shots, depth of focus and shots centered on the characters will all add to a real-life experience for the viewers. Furthermore, the long panning shots will additionally enhance the illusion of real-life.

The colors in the film will be subdued, while contrasts will be sharp, in order to mirror the colors of Silesia today. Sometimes in this grey, dark world there is a glimpse of color, which will appear all the more illuminating surrounded by the contrasting backdrop.

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<b>Production company:</b>	Apple Film Production (Poland)
<b>Budget:</b>	1.3 million euros
<b>Financing in place:</b>	60%
<b>Partners attached:</b>	EPO Film (Austria), F.&M.E. (United Kingdom), Media Programme

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**Company Profile**

Apple Film Production is one of the first independent production companies in Poland was founded in 1990 by Dariusz Jablonski - graduate of the Directing Department at the Film Academy in Lodz, film director and producer. To date the company has produced 11 feature films (*Street Games, Sekal Has to Die, The Auricle. I'm Looking at You Mary, Sucker Season, Bellissima, My Fried Chicken, The Spring to Come*). Apple Film has also produced many tele-plays, 21 documentaries and 2 TV series. All of these productions have been at a high artistic level, confirmed by many awards at domestic and international festivals and competitions.

Internationally, the best known production of Apple Film is the documentary *Photographer* by Dariusz Jablonski, awarded many prizes including the Prix Europa for Best Non-fiction TV Program of 1998; the Grand Prix VPRO Joris Ivens Award at IDFA in Amsterdam 98; Best Documentary in Banff '99; Grimme Prize '00 in Germany; Grand Prix FIPA D'OR, Prix Planete in Biarritz 99; Best Documentary at Double Take, Durham; Bavarian Tv Prize '99 and many others.

Apple's high level of quality has been reflected in the esteem which the company has received from independent producers and TV stations. Most of the Apple Film projects have been produced in co-production with Polish Television, Canal+, HBO, MDR, ARTE, WDR and independent companies from Germany, UK, Austria and the Czech Republic.

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**Goals at Paris Project :** Finding Pre sale, co-producer, sales agent, distributor

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**People attending Paris Project:** Dariusz Jablonski (producer), Robert Glinski (director)

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