

THE WEDDING
(Wesele)

DOGWOOF
THE POLISH CONNECTION

presents

THE WEDDING
(Wesele)

a film by

Wojciech Smarzowski

Runtime: 109 mins / Certificate: TBC

DOGWOOF – THE POLISH CONNECTION

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SYNOPSIS

The happiest day of their lives turns into a nightmare for newlyweds Kaska and Janusz in this chaotic black comedy about love, corruption and barrels of vodka.

Father of the bride Wiesław Wojnar has one goal: to give his daughter the most memorable wedding in the village. Unfortunately, the Audi he gives his son-in-law as an inducement to marry the pregnant Kaska turns out to be stolen, her lover arrives uninvited, the band demands more money, and the police, the notary and the priest all have to be bribed before the night is over.

Not to mention that the catering is awful, the guests almost drown in vodka, the bride's grandfather locks himself in the loo and dies of a heart attack, the bride's mother runs off with her husband's best friend, a hit man cuts off Wieslaw's finger and someone else steals all his money.

'The Wedding' is a fast-paced, laugh-out-loud which took the Polish box-office by storm.

CAST LIST

Marian Dziędziel	Wiesław Wojnar
Iwona Bielska	Eluśka, his wife
Tamara Arciuch	Kaska, the bride
Maciej Stuhr	Cameraman
Bartłomiej Topa	Janusz, the bridegroom
Paweł Wilczak	Priest's brother-in-law
Arkadiusz Jakubik	Notary Public
Jerzy Rogalski	Edmund
Elżbieta Jarosik	Hostess
Lech Dyblik	Ed Wąs
Tomasz Sapryk	Sarge Styś

CREW LIST

Writer & Director	Wojtek Smarzowski
Producers	Anna Iwaszkiewicz Dariusz Pietrykowski Bartłomiej Topa
Director of Photography	Andrzej Szulkowski
Art Director	Barbara Ostapowicz
Costume Design	Magdalena Maciejewska
Music	Ryszard Tymon Tymański
Editor	Paweł Laskowski
Sound	Jacek Hamela
Executive Producers	GRUPA FILMOWA

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Marian Dziędziel (Wojnar)

Appeared in the highly popular *Stawka większa niż życie* serial, and starred alongside Grażyna Szapołowska in *Grzeszny żywot Franciszka Buły*. Since 1971 has been appearing regularly in films by **Kazimierz Kutz**. Other memorable roles include that of Bernard Grab in *Pogranicze w ogniu* and Kuna in *Gry uliczne*. Magnificent performance as Mróz in *Sezon na leszcza*.

Marian Dziędziel was born in 1947. He graduated from the Acting Academy in Cracow and in 1969 joined the Słowacki Theatre in Cracow.

Iwona Bielska-Grabowska (Eluśka, Wojnar's wife)

Actress boasting an impressive track record in feature films, serials and theater. She is best remembered for her role in Poland's first horror movie, *Wilczyca*. Notable among her countless leading and supporting roles are those in *Ćma*, *Pułkownik Kwiatkowski*, *Bajland* and the popular series *Adam i Ewa*.

Iwona Bielska was born in Łódź in 1952. She graduated from the Acting Academy in Cracow and went on to appear in the Stary and STU theatres. In 2000 she received the Golden Mask award and a prize at the 40th Kalisz Theater Festival for her role of Queen Elizabeth in *Królowa i Szekspir*.

Tamara Arciuch (Kaska, the bride)

Appeared in **Jarosław Żamojda's** *Młode wilki*, and *Tygrysy Europy* directed by **Jerzy Gruza**. A familiar face to fans of the serials *Na dobre i złe* and *Camera café*. **David Blair** recently cast her in his *Anna Karenina*. Tamara Arciuch was born in 1975 and is with the Wybrzeże Theater in Gdynia. In 2001 she graduated from the Acting Academy in Cracow.

Maciek Stuhr (Cameraman)

Appeared in **Krzysztof Kieślowski's** *Decalogue* when just 13 years old. He was given roles in the best Polish comedy films by **Olaf Lubaszenko**: *Chłopaki nie płaczą* and *Poranek kojota*. In 2002 he played Hipolit Wielosławski in **Filip Bajon's** *Przedwiośnie*, based on the classic novel by Stefan Żeromski. He also appeared in several non-Polish-language films, including *Les enfants de la guerre* and **Agnieszka Holland's** *Julia Walking Home*.

Maciej Stuhr was born in 1975. He studied psychology at the Jagiellonian University and acting at the Acting School in Cracow, and is among the creators of the comedy troupe Po Żarcie.

Bartłomiej Topa (Janusz, the bridegroom)

His first role was Matlak in **Teresa Kotlarczyk's** movie *Zakład*. He appeared in **Krzysztof Kieslowski's** *Three Colours: White*, and then in **Krzysztof Lang's** *Prowokator*, **Władysław Pasikowski's** *Demony wojny wg. Goi* and **Wojtek Smarzowski's** *Kuracja*. Television viewers see him in the characteristic role of Zenek Pereszczako in the *Złotopolscy* serial.

Bartłomiej Topa was born in 1967 and is a graduate of the Faculty of Acting of the Łódź Film School. He was named best actor at the Plovdiv 2002 International Television Productions Festival, and received the Grand Prize at the "Two Theaters" Festival of Polish Radio and Television Theater (Sopot 2002) for his role of doctor Majer in the TV theater production of *Kuracja*.

Paweł Wilczak (Priest's brother-in-law)

The man on the run in **Filip Zylber's** *Pożegnanie z Marią*. He shot to fame with his striking performance as the pimp in **Krzysztof Krauze's** *Gry uliczne*. Appeared also in **Juliusz Machulski's** *Kilerów 2-óch* as well as in the television serials *Sfora* and *Kasia i Tomek*.

Paweł Wilczak was born in 1965 in Poznań. A graduate of the Łódź Film School.

Arkadiusz Jakubik (Notary public)

Actor, director, author of musicals and radio shows. Directed numerous theater plays, notably *Cyrk Monty Pythona*, *Pokolenie porno* and *Kalina*, and wrote the musical *Jeździec burzy (Rider on the Storm)* based on the life of Jim Morrison. He appeared in **Wiktor Grodecki's** film *Nienasycenie* and **Przemek Angerman's** *Jak to się robi z dziewczynami*.

Arkadiusz Jakubik was born in 1969. He graduated from the Acting Academy in Wrocław. His radio show *Hospites* was awarded the top prize at the National Radio Shows Competition in Poland.

Jerzy Rogalski (Edmund)

Theater and film actor. He appeared in scores of theater performances, to mention but *Operetka*, *Maria Stuart*, *The Glass Menagerie* and *Cherry Orchard*. The memorable lieutenant Waldemar Juszczak in the tremendously popular crime serial *07 zgłoś się*. A comedy actor best known for his role in *Galimatias, czyli kogel-mogel II*, he also appears in serials (*Plebania*). His most recent film role was in **Andrzej Jakimowski's** *Zmruż oczy*.

Jerzy Rogalski is a graduate of the Acting Academy in Warsaw. Once with the Dramatyczny Theater in Szczecin, he is currently employed at the Osterwa Theater in Lublin. He has more than 60 supporting roles to his credit.

Elżbieta Jarosik (Hostess)

Appeared in the famous movie *Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie* directed by **Wojciech Has**, as well as in **Janek Hryniak's** *Przystań*, **Marek Brodzki's** *Wiedźmin*, and **Filip Bajon's** *Przedwiośnie*. She makes guest appearances in the popular Polish serials *M jak miłość*, *Na dobre i na złe* and *Samo życie*. Elżbieta Jarosik was born in 1948. A graduate of the Łódź Film School, she is also a mezzo-soprano singer.

Lech Dyblik (Ed Wąs)

Appeared in most of **Władysław Pasikowski's** films, including *Kroll* and *Psy 2*. He was the neighbor in **Krzysztof Zanussi's** *Cwał* and the chips seller in **Paweł Łoziński's** *Kratka*. Television viewers had a chance to admire his talent in the *Boża podszewka* serial, while cinema goers could see him in several Polish superproductions: **Jerzy Hoffman's** *Ogniem i mieczem*, **Marek Brodzki's** *Wiedźmin* and **Andrzej Wajda's** *Zemsta*.

Lech Dyblik was born in 1958. After graduating from the Acting Academy in Cracow, he joined the Narodowy Theater.

Tomasz Sapryk (Serge Styś)

Popular film and television actor, appearing in numerous serials, including *Złotopolscy*, *Policjanci*, *Na dobre i na złe* and *Sfora*. He landed roles in films such as **Jacek Bromski's** *Kariera Nikosia Dyzmy*, **Krzysztof Zanussi's** *Dusza śpiewa* (the *Opowieści weekendowe* cycle), **Olaf Lubaszenko's** *Poranek Kojota*, **Marek Brodzki's** *Wiedźmin*, **Piotr Wereśniak's** *Stacja*, and **Marek Koterski's** *Dzień świra*.

Tomasz Sapryk was born in 1966. He graduated from the Acting Academy in Warsaw, and is attached to the Powszechny Theater in Warsaw.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

Wojtek Smarzowski (film director and script writer)

He began his career with music videos. The clip of *To nie był film* of the band Myslovitz won him the Fryderyk prize and a nomination for the Machinery awards. His first feature, *Małżowina* (1998), brought him the Special Prize of the Young Jury at the Koszalin film festival and a prize for scenography at the 23rd Polish Feature Films Festival in Gdynia. His next project, the TV theater production of *Kuracja* again won accolades, including the prize for best director (Laur Konrada) at the Interpretations 2002 Festival of Directors Art in Katowice, the Grand Prize at the 2nd "Two Theaters" National Festival of Polish Radio and Polish Television Theater (Sopot 2002), and a Special Prize at Plovdiv 2002 International Television Productions Festival. Wojtek Smarzowski was born in 1963 in Korczyn. He studied film science at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, and graduated from the Faculty of Film Photography at the Łódź Film School.

Anna Iwaszkiewicz (producer)

President of the Grupa Filmowa and of the Association of Advertising Film Producers in Poland. From 1993 to 2002 she served as President of ITI Film Studio. Earlier, from 1987 to 1989, she was involved in making feature films by Jerzy Skolimowski, Dieter Meier and Edward Bennet, and also produced around 60 TV theater shows. She holds a degree from the Economics Faculty of Warsaw University, and from 1982 to 1985 she was a research worker at the Institute of Economic Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Dariusz Pietrykowski (producer)

President and co-founder (in 2002) of Film it. After working for Pleograf and having spent nine years at Polish public television TVP, in 1998 he became Head of Production at ITI Film Studio and held this position till 2002. He produced more than 20 feature films and TV series. His experience in feature films dates back to 1981, and his track record includes work for Stanisław Bareja, Alejandro Jorodowsky, Robert Enrico and Moshe Mizrahi. He is a graduate of the Domestic Trade Faculty of the Chief School of Planning and Statistics (since renamed the Warsaw School of Commerce).

Bartłomiej Topa (producer)

Co-founder of Film it. From 1997 to 2002 he worked for ITI Film Studio and produced several dozen advertising films. A graduate of the Faculty of Acting of the Łódź Film School.

Andrzej Szulkowski (director of photography)

DOP with experience in documentary and television productions, including documentaries and TV theater productions. He shot documentaries about writer Ryszard Kapuściński and primitive painter Nikifor, among others, and also worked with feature film directors Filip Bajon and Filip Zylber. Andrzej Szulkowski was born in 1962. A graduate of the Łódź Film School, he works for both film and television.

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Barbara Ostapowicz (art director)

Art director and set designer, she was involved in dozens of theater and film productions in Poland and abroad. She was set designer for Filip Bajon's *Magnat*, and cooperated regularly with Teresa Kotlarczyk, among other things in making her features *Zakład*, *Prymas* (a story about Cardinal Wyszyński), and *Odwiedz mnie we śnie*. She designed sets for several serials, including *Ekstradycja* and *Samo życie*, and was recently art director and set designer for the comedy *Ciało* by Tomasz Konecki and Andrzej Saramonowicz.

In 2000 Barbara Ostapowicz was nominated for the "Eagle" Polish Film Prize for her work for *Prymas*.

Paweł Laskowski (editor)

Film editor of numerous feature films, including the celebrated *Dług* by Krzysztof Krauze, *Weiser* by Wojciech Marczewski, and Piotr Wereśniak's comedy *Zróbmy sobie wnuka*, and co-editor of several TV serials, to mention but *Na dobre i na złe*, *Drogówka* and documentaries of the *Polska znana i nieznana* series. Together with Wojtek Smarzowski, he edited *Kuracja*. Paweł Laskowski is studying at the Faculty of Film Photography at the Łódź Film School. He worked for the Features and Documentary Films Studio (WFDiF) in Warsaw, public television TVP, and was involved in the production of numerous music videos for UNIVERSAL and Pomaton EMI.

Ryszard Tymon Tymański (composer)

Versatile musician, composer, poet and prose writer. He set up the jazz group Miłość which was voted best band of the year four times during the 1990s by readers of the *Jazz Forum* magazine. He went on to create the bands Kury, Poganie and The Users. The 11 CDs he recorded as band leader won several Fryderyk and Machinery awards. In 2001 he received the Paszport award from the *Polityka* weekly for outstanding achievements in music, and in 2002 was voted Personality of the Year. Ryszard Tymon Tymański was born in 1968. In addition to music, he is the author of poetically absurd television programs, including *Brzóska Show* and *Dzyndzyryndzy*, and of the post-modernistic novel *Chłopi 3*. He also writes film music and runs his own label Biodro Records, which brought out a CD of the Pogodno band, among others.

Magdalena Maciejewska (costume designer)

Theater art director and costume designer, responsible for costumes for two productions by Agnieszka Glińska *Barbarzyńcy* and *Bambini di Praga*. At the 2000 Polish Classics theater festival in Opole she won a prize for her work for Jarzyna's *Magnetyzm serca* production. Magdalena Maciejewska came to film in 1991, as a set designer for Filip Zylber's *Pożegnanie z Marią*. She worked with Mariusz Treliński designing costumes for his *Łagodna*, and with Andrzej Żuławski as art director and set designer for *Szamanka*. She also works for the theater department of Polish public television TVP.

Magdalena Maciejewska graduated from the Scenography Faculty of the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts.

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Jacek Hamela (sound)

Sound recording director for Andrzej Konic's serial *Pogranicze w ogniu*. Worked several times with directors Magda Łazarkiewicz and Jerzy Łukaszewicz, recorded sound for Olaf Lubaszenko's features *Chłopaki nie płaczą*, *Poranek Kojota* and *E = MC2*, and compiled the music soundtrack for Krzysztof Zanussi's *Skarby ukryte* and *Życie jako śmiertelna choroba przenoszona drogą płciową*. He worked with Lech Majewski on his *Angelus*, with Tomasz Konecki and Andrzej Saramonowicz and with Filip Bajon's *Przedwiośnie*, he recorded sound for Jan Jakub Kolski's *Pornografia*. Jacek Hamela was born in 1964 in Opole, and graduated from the Faculty of Sound Recording of the Warsaw Academy of Music. At the 2003 Polish Feature Films Festival in Gdynia he won the Best Sound of the Year prize for *Pornografia*, with this film also winning the Eagle Polish Film Prize. In 2002 he was nominated for the Eagle prize for the feature *Pół serio*.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Wedding is a tangibly realistic tragicomedy, a story of love and money and a cautionary tale of sorts. It is a simple and very Polish story which refuses to follow the American pattern of filmmaking.

There are several layers to the film. The basic one addresses the wider mass audience who come to see the film for amusement. Its plot is logically structured with a sufficient enough amount of suspense to keep the viewer firmly in his seat. It has a lively narrative, humor and horror, clearly motivated characters, and amusing dialog lines. Its message is blissfully straightforward: Money won't buy you happiness and the sly fox loses twice as much. It is never so bad that it cannot get worse.

There are further layers in the film for more sophisticated viewers who are weaned on art movies fare. These layers contain allusions, quotes, associations, and a plethora of observations of manners, mores, and local color. Most of the characters wear their scars on their faces, graduates from the school of hard knocks that they are. This is what makes them more interesting to me. What's most important, however, is the vision we share of the movies. Each and every one of us in our own, unique way looks for the cinematic truth. The key to the truth in *The Wedding* is it's naturalistic approach.

- Wojtek Smarzowski

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

In times when values are in crisis, it is extremely important to be broadcasting clear signals about the reality we live in — signals that would help us decide where to go from here. Cinema had always been pointing out good choices. The problem for film makers is to create true-to-life and emotionally stimulating visions of our world. *The Wedding* — or rather our work with Wojtek Smarzowski — made me realize for the umpteenth time that the role of film producer is to assist and serve. A moving work with significance for all may be created only when we respect what the artist has to say to us. I think we did well this time.

- Anna Iwaszkiewicz

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE WEDDING

The Role of Video Recording at the Wedding

It is impossible to imagine a wedding nowadays without its video recording. The short statements the cameraman Mateusz shoots will help highlight certain scenes, and, juggled skillfully by the editor, may have a substantial bearing on the rhythm of the narrative.

The Structure of the Script

Division into Acts, Turning Points, and Focussing Points

The script has been made in accordance with the generally accepted rules counting on the perception, concentration, and attention of the viewer. So the plot starts with a wedding ceremony, where most characters come out plus the Audi. One of the opening sentences is a fragment from the Romans (Priest's lines), and the EXPOSITION ends in front of the firehouse when the viewer learns that Wojnar has not fulfilled all the conditions of the deal and Janusz carries his bride across the doorstep of the firehouse. FIRST TURNING POINT is the exposing of Mateusz and the bogus in-law's threat as he shoots off Wojnar's finger. The second act has two focussing points: The first is Grandpa's death and the second when Wojnar learns that the Audi was stolen. SECOND TURNING POINT comes when Wojnar is told how valuable the strip of land is and now it is all clear that Janusz has married the car rather than Kate. Now follows the third act which FINALLY CULMINATES with Wojnar's quarrel with his wife, the rest of his savings is stolen, and the moment when Kate batters the Audi with a spade.

The Rhythm

The Poles are reputed to have a hollow leg, especially at weddings. So I divided the special wedding drinking into four consecutive stages. Their beginnings and ends overlap with the essential points of the plot. Although the division is arbitrary, it affects the rhythm of the film nonetheless.

1. The Numbness, which means the initial tentative glasses when everybody is ill at ease. This stage lingers throughout the whole first act until the turning point when Wojnar has his finger shot off and Kate has Mateusz thrashed. The rhythm at this stage is at a slow tempo. The takes are relatively long and correct and the plot gradually thickens.
2. The Happy Euphoric Stage – lots of positive vibrations, meeting new people coupled with wholehearted attempts to keep up appearances. This stage starts along with the first turning point and lingers till the middle of the second act when the capping ceremony takes place and the bogus deed is signed (the mid-point). The takes are shorter, the grounds are narrower. The camera works more dynamically (steadycam), and the pace of the film definitely picks up.
3. The Drinking Proper – kidding is over now. What comes up is arguments and quarrels, hidden passions wake up, and inhibitions are no longer suppressed.

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The very mid-point of the film starts this particular stage, which is terminated with the second focussing point when Wojnar learns that the Audi was stolen. Static takes do not belong here any more. The frames seem congested. The camera is often hand-held and nervous. This marks a higher degree of the pace acceleration.

4. The Serious Boozing – down the table, a stage for the tough guys, that is. The wimps fall behind or are eliminated from the race, fall asleep, and puke. This begins with the second focussing point when Wojnar learns how valuable the strip of land is and Kate finds out why exactly Janusz has married her. This is a chaotic stage. Although still dynamic, the camera work here is not as important as the editing's interference with the narrative. The related stories, scenes, and subplots come unstuck. The characters mostly draw a blank.
5. The Slaughter – the stage where you drink your last, fall asleep or sober up. This stage starts at the end of the second turning point and lingers throughout the whole third act. This is where all the subplots are straightened up to feature more prominently. This catharsis of sorts calms the viewer down.

The Wedding stories

There is this already famous scene in the movie where the bride attacks the latest Audi TT with a spade. We had just one of these on the set, so we knew there could be no second takes. I screwed up my courage by first walloping the garage wall a few times with the spade, and then I approached the roadster. I swung the spade with all my might, and CRASH — the rear window shattered nicely. I go for the windscreen — nothing! I slam the side windows — nothing. I hit the car body — not a dent. I stood there, quite helpless. However, that same evening my wrists hurt so bad that I had to be taken to an emergency ward. The doctor asked me what I had been doing with my hands, and you should see his jaw sag when I told him: “I was wrecking an Audi TT with a spade”! (**Tamara Arciuch**)

Wojtek, our director, fell in love with a field of oats growing just outside the village we were shooting in. He decided to use it in the night scene where the bride runs off after quarreling with her father. We were filming at night, and had to postpone the shoot till the next night when dawn broke. When we came back the next day, the field was empty, harvested bare. (**Marian Dziędziel**)

I don't recall much from the set of *The Wedding*. Actually, I don't remember anything — I spent the entire shoot asleep in my caravan. When the others were having hilarious fun — especially as part of the VTS, or Vitriolic Tongues Society, that appeared spontaneously on the set, I was slumbering sweetly. I do recall one situation, though. Someone must have chased me out of my bed that one time. I see female members of the VTS sitting at a table beneath a huge umbrella, in the company of Marcin Świetlicki and Tymon Tymański. They all started talking about “the things you refuse as a professional in these times of ours”. Someone told about how he or she refused a part in a soap opera. Marcin Świetlicki upped the ante by describing how he refused a scholarship in the US. Then Tymon went ahead by saying he refused to be in the jury of *The Idol*. Krysia Rutkowska, sitting there quietly, suddenly declares in a perfectly offhand manner that she too has been doing a lot

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refusing lately: “I keep refusing to go to bed without first saying a prayer”. This bombshell knocked everybody off their chairs. Myself included. (**Arkadiusz Jakubik**)

I've never worn such elaborate make-up in my career, ever. The character I'm playing shows up at the wedding party and doesn't want to be recognized, so we had to really try hard to somehow obliterate this well-know Stuhr face. On top of that, I spend half the film walking about with spectacular wounds on my body, which the screenwriters often inflict upon me to elicit commiseration from cinemagoers. So there I am, disguised and massacred, pottering about the set of *The Wedding*. Tymon Tymański, with whom I've been hanging out and playing the guitar a lot in the past, comes up and gives me a real shock. He says: “Hey buddy, if you feel like strumming my guitar, you should first ask nicely and I would give it to you. You can't just stroll over and pick it up, just like that!” I was really taken aback. Just half an hour earlier he had no objections to my using his instrument. Well, come to think of it — he was right. It was only later that evening when he asked me what this Maciek Stuhr fellow looks like in a wig, that I realized he had taken me for someone else — some bloke trying to wreck the guitar he was trying to make a living with. That's when I really came to appreciate what the make-up people were doing for us. (**Maciek Stuhr**)