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# FRANZ

A FILM BY AGNIESZKA HOLLAND

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STARRING IDAN WEISS PETER KURTH JENOVÉFA BOKOVÁ IVAN TROJAN KATHARINA STARK SEBASTIAN SCHNABER SANDRA KORBENIAK ARJON FRIEZE CAROL SCHUELER JOSEF TROJAN AND OF COURSE CARMELA POLAKOVA COSTUME DESIGNER MICHAELA HUBÁČKOVÁ HIRŠKOVÁ PRODUCTION DESIGNER HENRICH BORJAGOS EDITOR MARIEK HART MUSIC MARY KOMASA ANTONI KOMASA LAZARKEWICZ  
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# FRANZ

A FILM BY **AGNIESZKA HOLLAND**

2025 - Czech Republic/Germany/Poland - Biopic/Drama - 127 min

with Idan Weiss, Peter Kurth, Jenováfa Boková, Ivan Trojan, Sandra Korzeniak

## INTERNATIONAL PRESS

### REQUIRED VIEWING

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## INTERNATIONAL SALES

### FILMS BOUTIQUE

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## SYNOPSIS

Award-winning director Agnieszka Holland is embarking on her most ambitious project to date, a biopic of the iconic 20th-century Czech writer Franz Kafka. Conceived as a kaleidoscopic mosaic, the film follows the imprint Kafka left on the world from his birth in 19th-century Prague to his death in post-WW1 Vienna. FRANZ will give the audience a brand new perspective on the life of the man behind the literary giant.



## DIRECTOR'S COMMENT

I discovered Kafka while still in high school, and he soon became one of the key writers who inspired me the most-and then something more. His seemingly monotonous life without adventure, his introverted vision of the world full of black and painful humor, the consistency with which he blended literature and life, and the courage in his almost prophetic view of the world all fed my never-ending fascination. With his triple identity, self-irony and acute sensitivity, Kafka became an admired brother, fragile despite all his strength, who must be looked after.

One of the crucial reasons behind my decision to study in Prague was that it was Kafka's city (*Prague never lets you go, this dear little mother has sharp claws...*), and my first steps there traced his footsteps. At that time, Prague was tourist-free and expressive in appearance; lichen and patina-dirty yellow, ochre-covered the Old Town houses and the synagogues. You can hardly imagine a more mysterious and photogenic film set.



The communists hated Kafka; they couldn't understand or comprehend him, but they felt that his books created a diagnosis that threatened their reality, and his metaphors seemed to mock them. The communist regime blacklisted him for a long time, and the Prague Spring began with a conference that brought Kafka back into Czech literature. The shy, insecure Kafka became a symbol of freedom, and I understood it as the freedom to ask questions with no answers and to share his bold, mercilessly pessimistic outlook on the world. The work of few writers, or artists in general, inspired so much analysis and interpretation. If we collected all the books, articles and doctoral theses on Kafka, we could fill a large library. Public interest in Kafka has not waned over time; on the contrary, it has grown recently and become a global phenomenon. The figure of the writer himself has become an alluring brand. After 1989, the city of Prague quickly realized that this brand could be commercially exploited: several Kafka monuments, a museum, cafés, fast food outlets, and tourist routes with Kafka's name on them sprouted around the city, and thousands of souvenirs are on offer: Kafka's face is on mugs, T-shirts, postcards, magnets or stamps. We also decided to include this aspect in our film-Kafka would be fond of irony and paradoxes.



The need to finally touch upon his mystery in my work made me accept the seemingly impossible challenge of telling the story of Franz Kafka's life, heart, work and vision. In 1981, I produced my adaptation of Kafka's "The Trial" for the Television Theatre with Laco Adamík. It remains one of my most rewarding creative adventures. I was arrogant enough at that time to think I understood Kafka well. Today I'm not so sure. What I do know is that I very much want to search for him and follow his traces. I also know that I can't tell his story in a conventional, linear, classical way; such a narrative would betray the more profound truth about Franz. I want to look for him in shards, riddles, feelings, in a concoction of facts, assumptions and imagination, in his dreams, his literature and his letters; I want to stand next to him in his fierce fight with his father, with the world and the relentless expectations and demands of most of his loved ones, in his longing for love and ordinary, bourgeois life and his fear of it.



## CAST

Idan Weiss  
Peter Kurth  
Jenovéfa Boková  
Ivan Trojan  
Sandra Korzeniak  
Katharina Stark  
Sebastian Schwarz  
Aaron Friesz  
Carol Schuler  
Gesa Schermuly  
Josef Trojan  
Jan Budař

**Franz Kafka**  
**Hermann Kafka**  
**Milena Jesenská**  
**Siegfried Löwy**  
**Julie Kafka**  
**Ottla Kafka**  
**Max Brod**  
**Oskar Baum**  
**Felicie Bauer**  
**Grete Bloch**  
**Jizchak Löwy**  
**The officer in the penal colony**



## CREW

Director  
 Scriptwriter  
 Producers  
 Co-producers

Cinematographer  
 Editor  
 Music by  
 Sound  
 Production Design  
 Costumes  
 Make Up  
 Casting

Assistant Director  
 Production Manager  
 Executive Producers

**Agnieszka Holland**  
**Marek Epstein**  
**Šárka Cimblová, Agnieszka Holland**  
**Uwe Schott, Jorgo Narjes, Marcin Wierchosławski,**  
**Alicja Jagodzińska**  
**Tomasz Naumiuk**  
**Pavel Hrdlička**  
**Mary Komasa, Antoni Komasa Łazarkiewicz**  
**Marek Hart, Michaela Patrikova**  
**Henrich Boráros**  
**Michaela Horácková Hořejší**  
**Gabriela Poláková**  
**Simone Bär, Alexandra Montag, Anna Slater,**  
**Madla Zachariášová**  
**Jan Menšík**  
**Ondřej Nerud, Pavel Voráček**  
**Mike Downey, Kevan Van Thompson,**  
**Daniel Bergmann, Jeff Field, Emir Külal Haznevi**



## BIOGRAPHY

Agnieszka Holland is a Polish film director and scriptwriter, born in Warsaw in 1948. After graduating from FAMU in Prague in 1971 she began her film career working as an assistant director of Krzysztof Zanussi and was mentored by Andrzej Wajda. Throughout her work life the filmmaker was nominated for the Academy Award 3 times - in 1985 for ANGRY HARVEST, in 1990 for EUROPA EUROPA and 2012 for IN DARKNESS. Holland's numerous features include OLIVIER, OLIVIER (1992), THE SECRET GARDEN (1993), TOTALE CLIPSE (1995), JULIE WALKING HOME (2001), SPOOR (2017), MR. JONES (2019), CHARLATAN (2020) and the Venice Jury Prize Winner GREEN BORDER (2023) among others. She also directed episodes of many notable TV series, including TREME and HOUSE OF CARDS.

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