

Cold War

Cert 15 Poland 2018 88 mins

Crew

Director	Pawel Pawlikowski
Screenplay	Pawel Pawlikowski & Janusz Glowacki
Cinematographer	Lukasz Zal
Film Editor	Jaroslaw Kaminski
Original music	Marcin Masecki

Cast

Joanna Kulig	Zuzanna "Zula" Lichon
Tomasz Kot	Wiktor Warski
Borys Szyc	Lech Kaczmarek
Agata Kulesza	Irena Bielecka
Jeanne Balibar	Juliette
Cédric Kahn	Michel
Adam Woronowicz	Consul
Adam Ferency	Minister

Synopsis

Poland, the 1950s. In the post-war ruins Wiktor and Zula fall deeply, obsessively and destructively in love. As performing musicians they are forced into the Soviet propaganda machine, but dream of escaping to the creative freedom of the West.

One day they spot their chance to make a break for Paris, and make a split decision that will change their lives forever. But as the years march on in the wake of that moment, Wiktor and Zula watch the world changing around them, always struggling to find their moment in time.



Booking Information

Distributor: Curzon Artificial Eye

DVD bookings:

via BFI Film Distribution
bookings.films@bfi.org.uk
www.bfi.org.uk/distribution

Or from **Troy Films** - see inside front cover

Available: January 2019



Reviews

Pawel Pawlikowski won the best director award at Cannes in May for this sweepingly intimate love story about a star-crossed couple falling together and apart, through the iron curtain of postwar Europe. It is inspired by (and dedicated to) his parents, whom Pawlikowski has described as "the most interesting dramatic characters I've ever come across ... both strong, wonderful people, but as a couple a never-ending disaster".

Yet while screen lovers Wiktor and Zula share names and character traits with the film-maker's mother and father, their individual narratives are fictional and allusive, taking us from the countryside of Poland to the streets of East Berlin, from Paris to Yugoslavia, over 15 turbulent years - crossing boundaries that are musical, geographical, political and ultimately existential. The result is a swooning, searing Polish-British-French co-production that unexpectedly put me in mind of *Casablanca* or *La La Land* as reimagined by Andrzej Wajda or Agnieszka Holland - a reminder of the fundamental things that apply, as time goes by....

Returning to the Academy-ratio black-and-white format of the Oscar-winning *Ida*, Pawlikowski and cinematographer Lukasz Zal's stunning images evolve from the carefully composed static frames of yore to more free-form movements that match the musical shifts of the tale.

...Plaudits, too, to musician Marcin Masecki, a key collaborator who Pawlikowski originally considered for the role of Wiktor, and who is credited with the "jazz and song arrangements". Just as Miles Davis pointed out that "It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you don't play" that matter, *Cold War* is a dark musical full of silences and ellipses. It's up to the audience to fill in the episodic gaps in the narrative, and to divine the true feelings that so often remain unspoken. Appropriately, it left me speechless.

Mark Kermode, *The Observer*, September 2018

.... When the film came to an end, all I wanted was to watch it all over again; *Cold War* is the first really great film of 2018.

Saskia Baron, *The Arts Desk*, August 2018

FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at Cannes Film Festival 2018, where it received an 18 minute standing ovation. It was nominated for the Palme D'Or, and Pawel Pawlikowski won the Best Director prize.
- ☆ It is Poland's submission for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards.
- ☆ Joanna Kulig (Zula) had a supporting role as a singer in Pawlikowski's 2013 film *Ida*; and Agata Kulesza, who plays Irena here, played the title role in *Ida*.