



**ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES  
THE CINEMA OF MÁRTA MÉSZÁROS**

# Binding Sentiments

**SPOILER WARNING** The following notes give away some of the plot.

From the opening 'Scope tracking shot across the airfield it's clear that this is a film about observation. Kati Kovács plays the fiancée sent to control her future mother-in-law, but whose moral compass ultimately subverts patriarchal intentions. Mészáros' recurring themes exploring the generation gap and traditional family structures sit at the centre of this often humorous game of cat-and-mouse.

**bfi.org.uk**

Although she favours the squarish Academy frame, in her second feature *Binding Sentiments* (1969) Márta Mészáros used anamorphic widescreen to tell a story initially set in claustrophobic interiors. The recently bereaved Edit (Mari Töröcsik, one of Hungary's biggest stars) pays lip-service to social convention while making it clear to anyone prepared to pick up on numerous unmistakable (albeit often non-verbal) signals that she never particularly liked her husband and would much rather cut herself loose from the past, whatever her son István might prefer.

**Michael Brooke, *Sight & Sound*, Summer 2021**

Edit, a simple peasant girl who became the wife of a politician, suddenly becomes a widow as a result of an accident. She never loved her husband. She lives a wealthy and lonely life amidst false friends, facing one of the last alternatives of her life, i.e. having to face her past in the hope of an independent new beginning. Her sons do not even try to understand her. István, who is of the opposite political conviction than his father used to be but has the same autocratic personality, blames her intention to give up her life-insurance and luxurious apartment on hysteria. He has her watched by Kati, his fiancée, at their summer resort at Lake Balaton in order to prevent her from violating his father's authority and destroying appearances.

'It is clear in Mészáros's films, that there are no women, who don't pay, whether salaried or not. The heroine of *Binding Sentiments*, unusual among Mészáros's heroines for not being a factory worker, is an older woman suddenly confronted with the implications of her life when her husband, a respected intellectual, dies. Her efforts to shed her role as a grieving but affluent widow are fought by her son, who literally holds her prisoner in an attempt to make her "see reason", that is, to behave as a woman ought in patriarchal terms. The son's girlfriend goes along with his plans until she becomes sickened by the role of jailer and leaves, and the film ends on an ambivalent note as we see a ring of young boys encircling, trapping two little girls, closing them in.'

**Barbara Halpen Martineau, 'The Films of Márta Mészáros or, The Importance of Being Banal', *Film Quarterly*, 1980 quoted in Eszter Fazekas, *Restored Films of Márta Mészáros*, National Film Institute Hungary – Film Archive**

## BINDING SENTIMENTS (HOLDUDVAR)

*Director:* Márta Mészáros  
*Chief Production Manager:* Ottó Föld  
*Production Manager:* József Bajusz  
*Head of Studio:* Szilárd Újhelyi  
*Assistant Director:* János Újhelyi  
*Screenplay:* Márta Mészáros  
*Story Editor:* Yvette Bíró  
*Cinematographer:* János Kende  
*Assistant Cinematographer:* Béla Langmár  
*Editor:* Zoltán Farkas  
*Art Director:* Tamás Banovich  
*Costume:* Erzsébet Újhelyi  
*Music:* Levente Szörényi  
*Sound Director:* György Pintér

## Cast

Mari Töröcsik (*Edit Balassa*)  
Lajos Balázsovits (*István Balassa*)  
Gáspár Jancsó (*Gáspár Balassa*)  
Kati Kovács (*Kati*)  
Ági Mészáros, (*Aunt Margit*)  
Mari Szemes (*Manci*)  
István Avar (*Director Apor*)  
Gyöngyi Bürös (*Böksi*)  
László Szabó (*vineyard's owner*)  
Rudolf Somogyvári (*Gyuri*)  
Gábor Mádi Szabó (*Hardface*)  
Gáborné Jakab (*old woman*)  
Teri Földi, Ilona Gurnik, Magda Horváth (*Edit's female friends*)  
István Bujtor, Zoltán Gera, István Zsugán (*Balassa's friends*)

Hungary 1969  
82 mins

## ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES THE CINEMA OF MÁRTA MÉSZÁROS

### The Girl (Eltávozott nap)

Mon 5 Jul (preceded by 'Introducing Márta Mészáros' talk);  
Fri 16 Jul 20:50

### Binding Sentiments (Holdudvar)

Tue 6 Jul 20:50; Sat 17 Jul 15:20

### Don't Cry, Pretty Girls! (Szép lányok, ne sírjatok!)

Wed 7 Jul 17:40; Sun 18 Jul 18:40

### Woman With a Movie Camera Presents: the World Restoration

#### Premiere of Riddance (Szabad lélegzet)

Sat 10 Jul 17:30 (+ pre-recorded extended intro by Márta Mészáros);  
Wed 21 Jul 21:00

#### Adoption (Örökbefogadás)

Mon 12 Jul 18:00 (pre-recorded intro by Selina Robertson,  
Club des Femmes); Thu 22 Jul 20:30

#### Nine Months (Kilenc hónap)

Tue 13 Jul 17:40; Sun 25 Jul 12:30

#### The Two of Them/Two Women (Ök ketten)

Wed 14 Jul 20:50; Mon 26 Jul 18:10

#### The Heiresses (Örökség)

Sun 18 Jul 15:20; Tue 27 Jul 20:30

#### Diary for My Children (Napló gyermekeimnek)

Sat 24 Jul 14:10 (+ pre-recorded extended intro by Márta Mészáros);  
Wed 28 Jul 17:50

#### Diary for My Loves (Napló szerelmeimnek)

Sat 24 Jul 17:30; Sat 31 Jul 20:30

#### Diary for My Father and Mother (Napló apámnak, anyámnak)

Sat 24 Jul 20:45; Sat 31 Jul 14:40

The restorations in this season were made from the original camera negatives, original magnetic tape sounds and positive prints, supervised and presented by the National Film Institute Hungary – Film Archive. The restorations were carried out at the NFI Film Archive and Filmlab.

## T A P E PRESENTS: BUT WHERE ARE YOU REALLY FROM?

### Eyimofe (This Is My Desire)

Thu 1 Jul 20:30; Fri 9 Jul 17:40

### Black Girl (La noire de...)

Sat 3 Jul 11:40; Mon 12 Jul 18:20

### Burning an Illusion

Sat 3 Jul 14:20; Thu 8 Jul 17:45

### While We Live (Medan vi lever)

Sat 3 Jul 17:30; Tue 20 Jul 20:30

### Binti

Sun 4 Jul 18:20; Mon 19 Jul 20:40

### Pinky

Sat 10 Jul 20:50; Sat 24 Jul 11:40

### Head-On (Gegen die Wand)

Sun 11 Jul 18:30; Tue 27 Jul 20:40

### The Namesake

Wed 14 Jul 17:40 (+ live spoken-word performance); Wed 21 Jul 20:40

### What Will People Say (Hva vil folk si)

Fri 16 Jul 20:30; Sat 31 Jul 17:30

### In Conversation with Nikesh Shukla

Fri 23 Jul 18:20

### Lilting

Sat 24 Jul 17:20; Fri 30 Jul 20:40

### Shoot the Messenger + Q&A with director Ngozi Onwurah, hosted by T A P E's Angela Moneke

Thu 29 Jul 17:45

### Culture Shock: Short Film Programme + Q&A with UNDR LNDN

Fri 30 Jul 17:40



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