



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

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

Music drives this loose narrative of youth culture with a romance at its heart. Searching for their identity, a group of friends explore new ways to live, seeking independence from state and patriarchal family values. What happens when a young woman refuses to be defined by these? A strong sense of female agency drives the camera's point of view and our gaze.

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*Don't Cry, Pretty Girls!* is itself contemporary with the realities of international youth culture and rebellion against the parental world. The oppositional culture of rock music is given its due as a harbinger of social dissatisfaction; Mészáros' masterful use of lyrics and melody itself constitutes the contestatory statement she clearly intends to make.

**Catherine Portuges quoted in Eszter Fazekas, *Restored Films of Márta Mészáros*, National Film Institute Hungary – Film Archive**

The film analyses the gradually loosening social structures in the Beat age within the framework of Mészáros' concerns – women's desire for freedom – while the biggest 1960s Beat bands play in the background. The film is an accurate testimony of the partying/depressive atmosphere pervading Europe in the wake of the suppression of the various 1968 popular movements.

**Márta Mészáros** occupies a unique position in Hungarian and world film history. The director, Kossuth and Prima Prize laureate, winner of awards at Berlinale, Chicago, Cannes and many other international film festivals, is herself a legend. Together with her contemporaries Agnès Varda, Larisa Shepitko and Věra Chytilová, she ranks as one of the most significant female filmmakers in the world. The first Hungarian woman to be awarded a diploma in film directing, her movies depict the lives of women, their identity, deviance, female rebelliousness, erotic intimacy as well as Hungarian Stalinism.

Even as a young orphan child she struggled with hunger and the vicissitudes of history. She was born in Budapest in 1931. Her father, the avant-garde sculptor László Mészáros, in fleeing fascism moved the family to Kirgizia, where on the outbreak of World War II he fell victim to Stalin's purges. Her mother also died. She was placed in a Soviet orphanage and only returned to Hungary after the war. Between 1954 and 1956 she studied at the film academy in Moscow and until 1968 she made Romanian and Hungarian documentaries. These autobiographical motifs inspired her *Diary* series, which met considerable international acclaim.

In 1968, she directed her first full-length film *The Girl*. With her following works *Don't Cry, Pretty Girls!*, *Riddance*, *Adoption*, *Nine Months* and *The Two of Them*, Márta Mészáros depicts – in a non-judgemental and unaffected way – the process where something great and simple happens in the lives and relationships of her self-aware, rebellious female protagonists, forcing them to make decisions.

These films were instant international hits. In 1975, Márta Mészáros won a Golden Bear at the Berlinale for *Adoption*, being awarded to a female director and also Hungarian director for the very first time in the history of the Berlinale. *Nine Months* took an OCIC prize at the Berlinale and a FIPRESCI prize at Cannes in 1977 and this opened the way to international co-productions.

*The Heiresses*, made in a coproduction, reveals a historical background behind remarkable love triangle relationships. Then came the *Diary* tetralogy, of which the first, *Diary for My Children*, won the Grand Prix Speciale du Jury at Cannes in 1984.

In 2004 Mészáros directed *Unburied Man*, a film about Imre Nagy, the leading figure of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Her latest work, *Aurora Borealis* (2017), which has been awarded with several international awards, looks back to the Soviet occupation of Vienna through an unusual mother-daughter fate.

**Eszter Fazekas, *Restored Films of Márta Mészáros*,  
National Film Institute Hungary – Film Archive**

**DON'T CRY, PRETTY GIRLS! (SZÉP LÁNYOK NE SÍRJATOK)**

Director: Márta Mészáros  
Production Company: Mafilm Studio 1  
Chief Production Manager: Ottó Föld  
Production Manager: József Bajusz  
Head of Studio: Szilárd Újhelyi  
Screenplay: Péter Zimre  
Story Editor: Yvette Bíró  
Cinematographer: János Kende  
Assistant Cinematographer: Béla Langmár  
Assistant Directors: Dezső Koza, Mária Luttor  
Editor: Zoltán Farkas  
Art Director: Tamás Banovich  
Composers: Levente Szörényi, János Baksa Soós,  
Zorán Sztevanovity, Károly Frenreisz,  
László Tolcsvay, Miklós Orszáczky  
Sound Directors: György Pintér, György Kovacs

**Cast**

Jarka Schallerová (*Juli Keresztes*)  
Márk Zala (*István Bencsik 'Savanyú'*)  
Lajos Balázsovits (*Géza, musician*)  
Péter Blaskó (*Juli's brother*)  
István Bujtor (*policeman*)  
Ildikó Piros, Ila Schütz (*Juli's friend*)  
Balázs Kosztolányi (*Savanyú's friend*)  
Lajos Vass (*researcher of folklore music*)  
Lajos Tándor (*man in café*)

Hungary 1970  
85 mins

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**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 (Ők 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.



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