



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

Diary for My Father and Mother

'Why do we have to lie?' Juli asks friends in Moscow. Initially prevented from returning to Budapest during the 1956 uprising, she urgently wants to connect with those she loves.

Márta Mészáros' camera observes ordinary people becoming victims of circumstance; in particular, caught between family and politics, János (Jan Nowicki) shows the fragility of survival. Watch out for the outstanding New Year party scene full of artifice, denial and hope.

bfi.org.uk

Diary for My Father and Mother is particularly striking for its full-blown assault on the Soviet Union (albeit from a historical perspective) in a way that would previously have been unthinkable in anything from a Warsaw Pact country.

How did Mészáros get away with it? The Gorbachev thaw helped, but so too did her own past. 'In socialist Hungary it was very beneficial for me to have graduated in Moscow, as Hungarians were afraid of Russians and they didn't know who I was connected to and what I did in Russia. So they weren't sure of the Soviet stance on my films, and just let me do my thing. They assumed that the Soviets would accept my films regardless, so I could get away with a lot. The most important thing was to be able not only to speak Russian but also to think ahead, to know what the Soviets would allow, and to know what subjects would definitely be rejected. But there were subjects that the Soviets didn't understand, and that's why they accepted it. Filmmaking is easy in that sense; you just have to know who you're working with, and who you'll face, and what they understand from what you're telling them.'

Michael Brooke, bfi.org.uk, 2 July 2021

The *Diary for My Father and Mother* – and perhaps the entire autobiographical trilogy, Mészáros means to suggest – has served its purpose, for the collective and individual mourning, always in some sense interminable, must turn one again outward, toward the future.

Mészáros' *Diary* trilogy, spanning two decades of Hungary's transition from the post-Stalinist state to post-communist nation is for everyone: children, lovers, father and mother. As such it serves to commemorate and remember those who had, and continue to have, the courage to speak the truth in the face of certain death, punishment and deprivation. The trilogy's innovative autobiographical structure, its remarkable uses of documentary materials and personal journals, continue to suggest new possibilities for filmmaking in an era of global migration and reconfiguration of Europe.

Catherine Portuges, *Hungarian Cinema of Márta Mészáros – Screen Memories* (Indiana University Press, 1993) quoted in: Eszter Fazekas, *Restored Films of Márta Mészáros*, National Film Institute Hungary – Film Archive

**DIARY FOR MY FATHER AND MOTHER
(NAPLÓ APÁMNAK, ANYÁMNAK)**

Director: Márta Mészáros

Production Companies: Budapest Film Studio, Budapest Hungarofilm

Producer: Gábor Hanák

Production Manager: Ferenc Szohár

Studio Head: Gábor Hanák

Screenplay: Márta Mészáros, Éva Pataki

Cinematographers: Nyika Jancsó, Loránd Mertz

Camera Operators: Árpád Tóth, Rudolf Grátzer

Assistant Director: Margit Torzsa

Editor: Éva Kármentő

Art Director: Éva Martin

Costume Designer: Fanny Kemenes

Composer: Zsolt Döme

Sound: István Sipos

Cast

Zsuzsa Czinkóczi (*Juli*)

Jan Nowicki (*János*)

Mari Töröcsik (*Vera*)

Ildikó Bánsági (*Ildi*)

Anna Polony (*Magda*)

Irina Kuberszkaja (*Anna Pavlovna*)

Tamás Tóth (*András*)

Lajos Balázsovits

Hungary 1990

115 mins

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

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

Nine Months (Kilenc hónap)

Sun 25 Jul 12:30

The Two of Them/Two Women (Ők ketten)

Mon 26 Jul 18:10

The Heiresses (Örökség)

Tue 27 Jul 20:30

Diary for My Children (Napló gyermekeimnek)

Wed 28 Jul 17:50

Diary for My Loves (Napló szerelmeimnek)

Sat 31 Jul 20:30

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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