



## OUTSIDERS AND EXILES: THE FILMS OF JERZY SKOLIMOWSKI

# 11 Minutes

### 11 Minutes (11 minut)

*Director:* Jerzy Skolimowski

*Production Companies:* Skopia Film,  
Element Pictures

*Executive Producers:* Ed Guiney, Andrew Lowe,  
Eileen Tasca, Jeremy Thomas, Marek Zydowicz

*Producers:* Ewa Piaskowska, Jerzy Skolimowski  
*Casting:* Paweł Czajor

*Screenplay:* Jerzy Skolimowski

*Director of Photography:* Mikolaj Lebkowski

*Editor:* Agnieszka Głinska

*Production Design:* Joanna Kaczynska,  
Wojciech Zogala

*Costume Designer:* Kalina Lach

*Music:* Paweł Mykietyn

*Sound Recordist:* Alan Scully

*Cast:*

Richard Dormer (*Director Richard Martin*)

Paulina Chapko (*Anna Hellman*)

Wojciech Mecwaldowski (*Anna's husband*)

Andrzej Chyra (*hot-dog vendor*)

Dawid Ogrodnik (*courier*)

Agata Buzek, Piotr Glowacki (*climbers*)

Jan Nowicki (*painter*)

Mateusz Kosciukiewicz (*ex-boyfriend*)

Anna Maria Buczek (*Doctor Ewa Król*)

Lukasz Sikora (*boy*)

Ili Ude (*girl with a dog*)

Grazyna Blecka-Kolska (*pregnant woman*)

Janusz Chabior (*dying man*)

Poland-Ireland 2015

81 mins

Skolimowski's formidable conceptual and technical skills get their most intensive workout here, as initially unconnected stories (an attempted seduction, a crime, a chase, a painting in progress) gradually and then emphatically come together. The film is so formally virtuosic that serious themes about surveillance and technology play second fiddle to the sensuous pleasure of watching a master filmmaker at work.

### '11 Minutes' reviewed at the Gdynia Film Festival

It's notable that the most inventive and challenging film in the main competition was directed by a septuagenarian veteran of the Polish New Wave: Skolimowski's *11 Minutes*. Its 'Special Jury Award for an original artistic concept' seemed a grudging tribute to a film that left many viewers nonplussed, but this characteristically high-concept puzzle film functions as a celebration and critique of mainstream film narrative. Each intersecting narrative chronicles a crucial 11 minutes in the lives of protagonists whose schemes go perilously awry. A lascivious American producer's attempt to seduce an actress auditioning for a role proves futile – especially since her possessive husband looms in the background. This parody of a casting-couch scenario is a catalyst for a string of inept ruses and capers: a paedophile hot-dog vendor plies his trade and catches the interest of decidedly impious-seeming nuns; several varieties of ineptitude are captured in the frustrated escapades of a student trying to pull off a robbery and a drug courier whose hedonistic exploits nearly hand him his comeuppance. In a facetious version of one of Griffith's last-minute chase-and-rescue sequences, a team of paramedics must fend off a violent psychotic before coming to the rescue of a pregnant woman and a man in the throes of death.

While some critics denounced the film as either 'nihilistic' or a maze of shaggy dog stories, *11 Minutes* can be viewed as an exuberant distillation of a zany assortment of stock movie climaxes – a canny evisceration of the soothing virtues of 'narrative closure' in cinema. It's also a gleeful riposte to the grating 'We Are the World' sensibility of portmanteau narratives such as Iñárritu's *Babel* and Paul Haggis's *Crash*. Only a filmmaker with a masterful grasp of storytelling could demolish the rudiments of cinematic technique with such panache.

Richard Porton, *Sight and Sound*, December 2015

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