



18th Polish Film Festival in America

November 4-19, 2006

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PRESS RELEASE

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**Golden Ciupaga Award to be presented to Richard Pena
18th Polish Film Festival in America Opening Night
7:30 pm., Saturday, November 4, 2006**

The Polish Film Festival in America (PFFA) will award Richard Pena the inaugural Golden Ciupaga Award for his contribution to a promotion of Polish film in the United States. The award presentation will take place during the Opening Night Gala on Saturday, November 4, 2006 in Gateway Movie Theatre at the Copernicus Center (5216 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago). The gala will feature a cocktail reception with live entertainment starting at 5:30 pm. at the Society for Arts, (1112 N. Milwaukee Ave.), followed by the award presentation, mini-concert and film screening at 7:30 pm.

Richard Pena is a celebrated film curator and programmer. As he admits himself, he was an "obsessive film buff" even as a kid. A son of Spanish and Puerto Rican parents, born in 1954, began attending Spanish language film with his grandparents at the Elgin Theater in Chelsea. He received his master's degree in film and video from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Then he taught film history and theory at several universities, including Harvard, MIT, University of California (Berkeley) and City University of New York before joining the Film Center at the Art Institute of Chicago, eventually being named its director. In 1988 Mr. Pena came to Lincoln Center where he is currently the program director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the New York Film Festival director, as well as an associate professor at Columbia University School of the Arts, Film Division. In years Richard has become one of the foremost experts in international cinema, organizing retrospectives of Michelangelo Antonioni, Abbas Kiarostami, Robert Aldrich and Yasujiro Ozu, to mention just a few of them.

Film transcends culture and borders, Mr. Pena says. With film, you're seeing images, confronting situations as if you were walking down the street. You discover certain universality as opposed to differences, among people.

A very special place in work of Richard Pena has been given to Polish cinema. In addition to regular selection of films by Polish directors in the program of the New York Film Festival and New Directors/New Films series he organized and curated a number of Polish cinema showcases: Revelation and Camouflage: Polish Cinema 1930-1996 with a sidebar on Andrzej Wajda, Wojciech Has retrospective, Jerzy Kawalerowicz retrospective, Andrzej Munk retrospective, Contemporary Polish Cinema with sidebar on Jan Jakub Kolski, Krzysztof Kieslowski retrospective. His efforts in promoting Polish films created a splendid opportunity for movie audiences in the United States to learn firsthand the best Polish cinema has to offer.

Admission is \$60 per person to attend the reception and screening or \$20 per person for the screening alone. Tickets may be purchased daily from noon to 6:00 pm. at the PFFA Main Box Office, the locations listed on the PFFA website, c/o The Society for Arts (1112 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622), or charged by phone at (866) 466-Arts and online at www.pffamerica.com. Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover are accepted and all charges are subject to a nominal handling fee. For up-to-date detailed Festival information, visit www.pffamerica.com or call (773) 486-9612.

Presented by the Society for Arts, the PFFA is a non-for-profit 501 (c) (3) organization that depends on contributions from individuals, businesses and government to make the program possible.