

Eastern European Films

at Ames Public Library



***Another Way* (DVD FOREIGN ANO)** In Hungarian with English captions. 103 min. 1982. Livia, the beautiful wife of an army officer, is a reporter at the Budapest newspaper where Eve, an outspoken lesbian journalist, comes to work after two years of politically motivated unemployment. The two women engage in an intense flirtation that leads to tragic consequences.

***Ashes and Diamonds - #3* (DVD FOREIGN ASH)** In Polish with English captions. 98 min. 1958. World-class director Andrzej Wajda's trilogy, *A Generation*, *Kanal*, and *Ashes and Diamonds* is one of the finest achievements of Eastern European cinema. *Ashes and Diamonds* is set in rural Poland, on the last days of World War II. The Nazis have surrendered, and the Red Army has crisscrossed the country. A new struggle emerges against the communists. A group of Polish patriots set out to assassinate a mid-level communist-party functionary. Macick is the trigger man, but when he spots a blonde, his priorities change.

***Beauty in Trouble* (DVD FOREIGN BEA)** In Czech with English captions. 109 min. 2005. A married woman meets a wealthy, educated man, who causes her to question her path in life.

***Before the Rain* (DVD FOREIGN BEF)** In Macedonian, English, or Albanian, with English captions. 113 min. 1994. A mysterious incident in the Macedonian mountains blows out of proportion, eventually threatening a full-blown civil war. A silent young monk in a Macedonian monastery must abandon his vows of silence to protect an Albanian girl who is suspected of murder. In London, a photojournalist, pregnant and torn between a loveless marriage and an affair with a war photographer, finds fate dictates a choice she could not make on her own. And in Yugoslavia, a prize-winning Macedonian photographer, back from Bosnia, returns to a nation divided by religious hatred and violence. His efforts to salvage a portion of peace will have an impact no one could have foreseen and will bring all three stories full circle.

***The Big Animal* (DVD FOREIGN BIG)** In Polish with English captions. 72 min. 2000. A bank clerk in a Polish town discovers a camel outside his window. He and his wife bond with the animal and the neighbors become increasingly jealous. A lesson about tolerance, love, and sacrifice is learned by all.

***Black Peter* (DVD FOREIGN BLA)** In Czech with English captions. 85 min. 2004. A delightful coming-of-age comedy, *Black Peter* finds its humor in the keenly observed details of youthful romance, teenage dissatisfaction, and the small moments of life.

***Closely Watched Trains* (DVD FOREIGN CLO)** In Czech with English captions. 93 min. 1966. In this comedy-drama, a young trainmaster, employed in a tiny station during World War II, becomes involved in a plot to blow up a German ammunition train. When the plan backfires, he is forced to commit the ultimate act of courage.

***Conspirators of Pleasure* (DVD FOREIGN CON)** In Czech with English captions. 97 min. 1999. In the first episode, modern-day Prague is the setting for this story of six ordinary if somewhat seedy individuals who, with almost no dialogue, obsessively and painstakingly prepare their sexual "feasts." The second episode offers a surreal and humorous look at breakfast, lunch, and dinner.



***The Country Teacher* (DVD FOREIGN COU)** In Czech with English captions. 115 min. 2008. Petr travels from Prague to teach natural sciences at a grammar school in the country. Here he meets a woman and her troubled 17-year old son. When the teacher's ex-boyfriend comes to visit, he realizes that nobody in the village knows that the teacher is gay and harbors a secret affection for the teenage boy.--Container. The companion movie, "Petr and Ben," is a "touchy and quirky story of how two dropouts find friendship in a hostile world."

***Death of Mr. Lazarescu* (DVD FOREIGN DEA)** In Romanian with English captions. 153 min. 2005. A sixty-ish widower, living alone with his cats, feels sick enough to call an ambulance. This is the beginning of his Dantesque odyssey deep into the bowels of a big city's medical establishment.

***The Decalogue* (DVD FOREIGN DEC)** In Polish with English captions. 584 min. 2003. This film has won several awards, including the Cannes special jury prize. Disc 1. I.: I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt not have other gods before me; II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; III. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy; Disc 2. IV.: Honor thy father and thy mother; V. Thou shalt not kill; VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery; VII. Thou shalt not steal; Disc 3. VIII.: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor; IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

***Divided We Fall* (DVD FOREIGN DIV)** In Czech and German, with English captions. 122 min. 2000. During World War II and the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, Josef and Marie hide a young Jewish neighbor in their apartment. They get visits from their neighbor, Horst, who is a German sympathizer with his eye on Marie. When Marie rejects his advances, he seeks revenge by trying to move a Nazi clerk into their home, forcing the couple to tell a lie that will change their lives.

***The Double Life of Veronique* (DVD FOREIGN DOU)** In Polish and French, with English captions. 97 min. 1991. Weronika is a Polish choir soprano, and her double, Véronique, is a French music teacher. Though they are unknown to each other, the two women share an enigmatic, purely emotional bond.

***Elevator* (DVD FOREIGN ELE)** In Romanian with English captions. 85 min. 2009. A boy and a girl, both high school teens, decide to get away from the world and be alone for the afternoon, hiding in an abandoned factory on the outskirts of town. While there, they get stuck in a cargo elevator. Tensions rise when they realize that their world has been reduced to a small metal box, especially after a failed escape attempt.

***Fateless* (DVD FOREIGN FAT)** In Hungarian with English captions. 140 min. 2004. A teenage Jewish boy from Budapest is sent to the concentration camps in 1944, which proves to be a more complicated emotional experience than he ever could have imagined.

***Firemen's Ball* (DVD FOREIGN FIR)** In Czech with English captions. 73 min. 1967. In a small provincial town, the arrangements and events surrounding the firemen's annual ball, honoring a retiring fire chief, go wrong at every turn.

***4 Months, 3 Weeks, & 2 Days* (DVD FOREIGN FOU)** In Romanian with English captions. 113 min. 2007. Two college roommates have 24 hours to make the ultimate choice as they finalize arrangements for a black market abortion.

***Grbavica: The Land of My Dreams* (DVD FOREIGN GRB)** In Serbo-Croatian with English captions. 90 min. 2007. In a beautiful and tender story, a single mother lives with her 12-year-old daughter in the Grbavica district of Sarajevo, an area once used as an internment camp during the Yugoslav wars.



I Served the King of England (DVD FOREIGN I) In Czech with English or French captions. 119 min. 2009. A young restaurant worker does whatever it takes to become a millionaire, only to realize that by accomplishing his goal, he has wound up in prison.

If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle (DVD FOREIGN IF) In Romanian with English captions. 93 min. 2010. Silviu has two weeks left before his release from a juvenile detention center. When his mother, who abandoned him, returns to take his younger brother away – a brother Silviu raised – those two weeks become an eternity. While his cries for help fall on deaf ears, he is introduced to a beautiful social worker. Wild with desperation, Silviu is driven to a surprising act of defiance as he makes a last grasp for freedom.

Just Sex and Nothing Else (DVD FOREIGN JUS) In Hungarian with English captions. 95 min. 2008. Dora, an educated, sophisticated woman who works in theater, is fed up with men after discovering her fiancé is already married. She has a series of sexual encounters in order to get pregnant and to raise the child alone.

Kanal - #2 (DVD FOREIGN KAN) In Polish with English captions. 92 min. 1957. Beginning with the 56th day of the Warsaw Uprising against the Nazis during World War II, ragtag Resistance fighters hold the front line. They try to live a relatively normal life and even find time to play the piano. They achieve small victories, but must retreat into the sewers to survive. World-class director Andrzej Wajda's trilogy, *A Generation*, *Kanal*, and *Ashes and Diamonds* remains one of the finest achievements of Eastern European cinema.

Katyn (DVD FOREIGN KAT) In Polish with English captions. 121 min. 2007. 20,000 people are massacred (interned Polish officers and civilians accused of treason by the Soviets) by the Soviet secret police at Katyń in spring 1940, followed by a cover-up. Four families are separated from one another in the confusion of September 1939, when the Soviets and Germans invade Poland, through the 1945 Soviet occupation when the truth of the massacre is suppressed.

Kolya (DVD FOREIGN KOL) In Czech with English captions. 101 min. 1997. A confirmed bachelor is in for the surprise of his life when a get-rich-quick scheme backfires, setting off a wild set of circumstances and leaving him with a pint-sized new roommate.

Loves of a Blond (DVD FOREIGN LOV) In Czech with English captions. 85 min. 1965. A young woman, like her friends, is very concerned with men and love. A reserve army group comes into town and she falls in love with a pianist, who after swearing eternal love, leaves for his home.

Man of Marble (DVD FOREIGN MAN) In Polish with English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish captions. 156 min. 1976. In 1976, a young woman in Krakow is making her diploma film, looking behind the scenes at the life of a 1950s bricklayer, Birkut. She studies his stint as a proletariat hero, how that heroism was created, and what became of him.

No Man's Land (DVD FOREIGN NO) In Serbo-Croatian with English, French, or Spanish captions. 97 min. 2001. During a foggy night of the Bosnian War in 1993, Bosnian soldiers advance on Serb territory. At daybreak the fog lifts and the Serbs open fire. The only Bosnian survivor watches Serbian soldiers use one Bosnian body to bait a land mine. He fires on them, kills one, and takes the second prisoner. Equally armed, the two share a wary trust as they try to attract help from either side.

Police, Adjective (DVD FOREIGN POL) In Romanian with English captions. 115 min. 2011. Cristi is a young undercover cop who undergoes a crisis of conscience when he is pressured to arrest a teenager who offers hash to classmates. Not wanting to ruin the life of a young man he considers merely irresponsible, Cristi must either arrest him or face censure by his superior, for whom the word 'conscience' has a different meaning.



***Satantango* (DVD FOREIGN SAT)** In Hungarian with English captions. 435 min. 1994. The story revolves around an abandoned agricultural collective, where a handful of lost and lonely characters eke out a living until a charismatic con man arrives to shake things up.

***The Shop on Main Street* (DVD FOREIGN SHO)** In Czech/Slovak with English captions. 125 min. 1965. In 1942, Tono and his wife are struggling because of his antipathy towards the fascist regime. His brother-in-law, the local fuhrer, chooses Tono to oversee a button shop owned by a sweet, harmless Jewish widow, Mrs. Lautman. Unable to explain his position to Mrs. Lautman, Tono gradually accepts her belief that he is her assistant. When the Jews are ordered deported, the well-meaning Tono decides to shield her from the Nazis.

***A Short Film about Love* (DVD FOREIGN SHO)** In Polish with English captions. 83 min. 1988. A postal worker falls in love with an older woman who lives in the flat opposite his. She tells him that “love” is nothing more than biological impulses. As a reaction to his voyeurism, she draws him into a game that neither can win.

***Since Otar Left* (DVD FOREIGN SIN)** In Georgian, French, and Russian with English captions. 99 min. 2003. This story portrays three generations of Georgian women in the city of Tbilisi. Eka obsesses over her physician son Otar while the other two women deal with Eka’s desire to see him.

***Something like Happiness* (DVD FOREIGN SOM)** In Czech with English captions. 107 min. 2005. A trio of friends living in a Czech housing project finds happiness in unexpected places. As a large chemical factory looms over their bleak suburb, Monika, Tonik, and Dasha hope for a brighter future in another place. While supermarket employee Monika hopes that she will venture to America to be with her boyfriend, Tonik secretly pines for Monika, and single mother Dasha finds comfort in the arms of a married man while slowly drifting from reality. As Tonik flees his conservative parents to live on the farm of his eccentric aunt, Dasha's grip on reality finally slips — leaving her two young children in the care of Tonik and Monika. As things begin to look up for the willing but inexperienced new parents, a lifetime of happiness is finally within their reach.

***Strike* (DVD FOREIGN STR)** In English, German, or Polish, with English captions. 104 min. 2006. An illiterate single mother, Agnieszka works long hours as a shipyard welder – until her superiors deny compensation to the widows of 21 workers killed in an industrial disaster. Risking everything to defy the bureaucracy, she inspires the largest labor strike in history, becoming a national hero.

***12:08 East of Bucharest* (DVD FOREIGN TWE)** In Romanian with English or Spanish captions. 89 min. 2006. On the 16th year after the fall of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, a local anchorman invites two men to share their moments of revolutionary glory on his talk show. One is an impish retiree who sometimes poses as Santa Claus, the other is a henpecked, hard-drinking teacher. They recall the day when they stormed their town hall calling "down with Ceausescu." Or did they?

***Up and Down* (DVD FOREIGN UP)** In Czech with English captions. 112 min. 2004. The discovery of an abandoned child by two smugglers kicks into gear a series of tragi-comic events.

***The Way I Spent the End of the World* (DVD FOREIGN WAY)** In Romanian with English captions. 106 min. 2006. In 1989, Eva, her little brother Lalalilu, and their parents live on the outskirts of Bucharest. Seven-year-old Lalalilu adores his 17-year-old sister. She and her boyfriend Alexandru accidentally break Ceausescu's statue while kissing in school. When caught, Eva refuses to apologize, is expelled, and transfers to technical school. There she meets Andrei, and they plan to escape from Romania. Learning of her plan, Lalalilu and his loyal, rebellious friends plot to exact revenge on the dictator Ceausescu for driving his sister away.

***Werckmeister Harmonies* (DVD FOREIGN WER)** In Hungarian with English captions. 145 min. 2000. In a frostbitten, fogbound provincial town lives a young postman, Janos Valushka. One day a traveling circus comes to town, displaying the stuffed body of the largest whale in the world in a corrugated metal trailer. Their arrival in the midst of a terminal frost prompts bizarre rumors which quickly run rife, alluding to a shadowy figure, dubbed the Prince, who supposedly accompanies the circus. Within a short time, the gathering tensions ignite, and an apocalyptic unrest is unleashed, the madness sweeping across the frigid, foggy community, and forever changing Janos' life. Hungarian director Bela Tarr twists reality into impressionism in this adaptation from László Krasznahorkai's novel, while regarding the characters with intensity through long, uninterrupted takes.

***When Father Was Away on Business* (DVD FOREIGN WHE)** In Serbo-Croatian with English captions. 135 min. 1985. A six-year-old boy tells his version of why Daddy could not stay with his family in post-World War II Yugoslavia. In reality, the child's father has gone to prison for romancing the lover of a high-ranking party member, but the boy thinks his father is away working.

***Witnesses* (DVD FOREIGN WIT)** In Croatian with English captions. 88 min. 2003. A collection of interrelated stories center on ethnic conflicts and moral ambiguities in a small Balkan town.

***A Year of the Quiet Sun* (DVD FOREIGN YEA)** In Polish with English captions. 106 min. 1985. An American war crimes investigator finds love with a Polish widow in the days just after the war's end, despite the fact that neither speaks the other's language.

***Zelary* (DVD FOREIGN ZEL)** In Czech with English or French captions. 147 min. 2003. During World War II, nurse Eliska is part of a resistance movement with her lover, surgeon Richard. When he is discovered, she leaves the hospital to hide from the Nazis. A colleague sends her with a patient to the Moravian mountain village of Zelary. The patient agrees to hide her as his wife. They live in a cabin for two years, waiting for an end to the Nazi occupation. Despite their differences, they form a bond.

***Zurek* (DVD FOREIGN ZUR)** In Polish with English captions. 72 min. 2003. Halina, a young widow, tramps around a Polish border town in search of her grandchild's father. Her impaired teenage daughter refuses to name the father, which causes a problem with the infant's upcoming baptism.

