PROGRAM LET'S DOC. DOCUMENTARY IDEAS LAB

CATALOGUE OF
DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS
FOR YOUNG AUDIENCE.
FORUM 2023.

CENTRUM KULTURY FILMOWEJ
im. Andrzeja Wajdy

[ckf.waw.pl]

PROGRAM LET'S DOC. DOCUMENTARY IDEAS LAB

LET'S DOC program is an educational experiment aimed at creative people who intend to create documentaries and have an idea for a story about the world of children or young people. The program results from the need to create media that will help us talk to children and young people, especially during crises.

In countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and the Nordic countries, documentaries for young audiences are in demand at festivals, in education and on television. We want it to look similar in Poland, which is why since 2020 we have been running LET'S DOC development program and annual meetings in the form of the Forum of Documentary Film for Young Audiences.

Each edition of the program lasts about a year. During this time, filmmakers, children and tutors are working on the development of ideas for documentaries that we present to the Polish and international film industry in order to jointly create conditions for the production, financing and distribution of documentaries for children in Poland.

Dear Friends,

We are happy and proud to present fresh documentary film projects for young viewers, developed during the third edition of LET'S DOC. DOCUMENTARY IDEAS LAB organized by Andrzej Wajda Centre For Film Culture. We would like to invite you to the Documentary Film Forum for Young Audiences happening in the framework of Millenium Docs Against Gravity on May 15th where the projects will be pitched to the representatives of the international film industry and festival audience.

Our aim is to encourage parents, educators and teachers to use non-fiction and documentary content as a useful tool for education and emotional development of children and teenagers. We also want to inspire filmmakers and financiers to support and produce such films. Let's build together a conscious audience of tomorrow and inspire each other to a good life based on empathy, respect for other beings and faith in our ability to overcome crises.

Katarzyna Ślesicka –
vice-director of the Andrzej
Wajda Centre For Film Culture,
film producer

CENTER FOR FILM CULTURE

WHAT HAVE WE DONE AND WHAT ARE WE GOING FOR?

So far, three editions of LET'S DOC development program have been held. Some of the ideas we worked on during our workshops are already in production, and one of them, "Girl's Stories" by Aga Borzym, will even have its premiere at the 20th Millennium Docs Against Gravity. We are in constant contact with initiatives supporting documentary cinema for young audiences in Europe, in particular with the IDFA festival, Kinder Docs in Athens, Ket&Doc in Belgium. We host representatives of these initiatives at the 4th Forum of Documentary Film for Young Audiences.

The Forum is the finale of the 3rd edition of LET'S DOC program. It is held with the support of partners, including the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. All this to gradually build a support network and an ecosystem for the creation of Polish documentary films for young viewers.

We have a dream that in Polish cinemas, on TV, in educational programs there will be Polish documentaries for children about young people whom viewers can meet at school, in the yard, developing their interests. For this to happen, we need to produce documentaries for children in Poland, and the institutions and organizations that can support this process must see the potential in it and also perceive this as their mission.

Karolina Śmigiel i Diana Gaik –
authors and program coordinators
of LET'S DOC program and Forum of
Documentary Film for Young Audiences

3. EDITION OF LET'S DOC PROGRAM MEANS:

- 8 documentary projects for a young audience in the development phase
- 8 workshop meetings with tutors: directors Katarzyna Lesisz and Maciej Cuske
- consultations with Polish and international experts: Meike Statema (Talents Development IDFA), Astrid Bussink (director of "Listen"), Ulla Haestrup (Danish expert on documentaries for young audiences), Eef Hilgers (director of "From that Moment on, Everything Changed"), Lidia Duda, Patrycja Rzepecka, Małgorzata Świderska, Katarzyna Ślesicka, Anna Wydra, Karolina Śmigiel, Jarosław Wszędybył
- 5 joint workshops for filmmakers and young experts, pitching in the front of young viewers (March 2023)
- 4th Forum of Documentary Film for Young Audiences

DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS LET'S DOC

3rd edition

ENGLISH TITLE: "CASTING FOR A PARENT"
ORIGINAL TITLE: „CASTING NA RODZICA"

Directed by Monika Bysina
Director's e-mail: mbysina@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 505 393 372

Production stage: development

Total budget: 25 000 EURO
Requirements: 25 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: December 2024

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, tv broadcaster

MONIKA BYSINA

Graduate of the Cinema and Audiovisual School of Catalonia with a specialisation in directing documentary films. For the last 10 years, a reporter and director in reality show programs on TVN, half of it done with children. Also a photographer, camerawoman, and when needed, an editor.

CASTING FOR A PARENT

dir. Monika Bysina

CHILDREN RAISED IN FOSTER CARE, WHILE SHARING THEIR TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES, ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT AN IDEAL PARENT AND COMPILE A LIST OF FEATURES THAT AN ADOPTIVE GUARDIAN FOR ONE OF THEM SHOULD HAVE.

Nikola, Milena, Wiktoria, Angelika and Filip are an extraordinary set of siblings. They are 8 to 15 years old and they have only known each other for a relatively short time since being placed in foster care with Auntie Gosia. Previously, the children lived in dysfunctional families with alcoholism and various psychological and social problems. Each one has different dreams and plans for the future. Despite the incredible work done by Gosia, each of them still carries painful memories of their previous life. Angelika is the only one who expressed a desire to be adopted after her parents had their parental rights taken away. However, she has some requirements that her future guardians would have to meet. These include having chocolate flakes for breakfast, pizza on Sundays, her own scooter, sleepovers with the foster family and keeping in touch with her biological siblings who still live in a nearby children's home. And of course, everything else should be just like it is with her Auntie! In the film, we see the daily life of this group of children with conversations in which they talk about what they imagine an ideal parent to be like. Perhaps there will be someone who can meet these requirements and then Angelika will say goodbye to everyone and start a new life?

ENGLISH TITLE: ”#FRANC527”
ORIGINAL TITLE: „#FRANC527”

Directed by Mateusz Pawełczyk
Director’s e-mail:
mateusz.denis.pawelczyk@gmail.com
Director’s phone number:
+48 609 508 514

Production stage: development

Total budget: 22 000 EURO
Requirements: 22 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: November 2024

Estimated duration: 15-20 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, tv broadcaster

MATEUSZ PAWEŁCZYK

Author of short films, publications and educational projects about the culture and history of Silesia. Cameraman in online lectures and advertisements. A graduate of Krzysztof Kieślowski Film School at the University of Silesia and Social Projects at the University of Wrocław.

#FRANC527

dir. Mateusz Pawełczyk

11-YEAR-OLD FRANEK IS AN AVID SPEEDWAY RIDER. HE WANTS TO BECOME A CHAMPION AND... HAVE FUN. APART FROM BEATING RIVALS, HE HAS TO DEAL WITH SCHOOL AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES. FORTUNATELY, HE HAS THE MOST LOYAL SUPPORTER AND MENTOR – HIS FATHER.

A rutted meadow with a detached house in the background. In the courtyard in front of the garage, Franky is playing basketball. There is a note on the door with the name “Franc” and some number. The father and the son are trying to ride a unicycle, but they are unable to keep the balance. We see the family browsing old photographs together, with young Marek as a speedway rider, now recalling those moments - some plans fulfilled, some not. In the garage father is cleaning the motorcycle with the help of the boy. Clearly it is not the first time they are doing it together. Time and again father reproaches Franky for using Polish words and not Silesian ones. They talk about problems at school, mom’s return from an interview and the threat of being banned from riding a motorcycle. Franky talks about his plans, new season and preparations for the races. We can see the father tired after work but still preparing the motorcycle and attending training session, where, like many other fathers, he acts as the boy’s mechanic. We can glimpse the true face of the sport, also the dangerous one, with an ambulance always parked nearby. We follow the reactions to defeats or potential accidents. Franky fights for the opportunity to develop his passion – which sometimes clashes with school duties, as well as family’s financial abilities. At the end of the film, we can see the race, the most important of the season. Marek tries to motivate his son. It is clearly visible that the father attempts to hand down not only his passion, but also his language and values. The son is eager to follow, but with a pinch of rebellion and Marek has no problem admitting that sometimes Franky is right.

ENGLISH TITLE: "SOMETIMES IT JUST HAS TO BE LIKE THIS"
ORIGINAL TITLE: „CZASEM TAK MUSI BYĆ"

Directed by Laura Sonik
Assistant director: Piotr Szatyłowicz
Director's e-mail:
laura.sonik@icloud.com
Director's phone number:
+48 506 849 208

Production stage: development

Total budget: 20 000-25 000 EURO
Requirements: 20 000-25 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: October 2024

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, broadcaster

LAURA SONIK

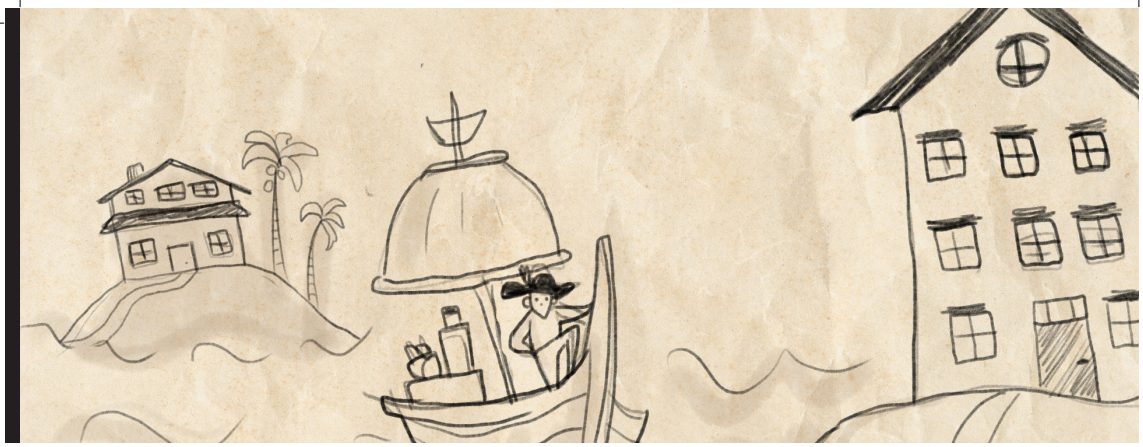
Director, graduate of the Stanisław Wyspiański Academy of Theatre Arts. She received an award for the Best Diploma in 2017 and was a laureate of the award at the 5th Young Directing Forum in 2015. She is involved in projects in urban space, social activities and new technologies (VR).

SOMETIMES IT JUST HAS TO BE LIKE THIS

dir. Laura Sonik

WHEN LEON CAN NO LONGER MEET HIS FATHER EVERY DAY, HE TRIES TO UNDERSTAND THE NEW SITUATION. TOGETHER WITH HIS DAD, HE DISCOVERS THE VALUE OF SHARED MOMENTS, LEARNING WHAT LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE MEAN AFTER HIS PARENTS' SEPARATION.

Leon is a 9-year-old who is in the third grade. He doesn't understand why adults split up. Why isn't his dad with mom anymore? Asking his father questions during their shared moments, he tries to understand dad's motivation. He wants to know why people stop loving each other. And what is love? Why does it end? The falcons nesting under the Palace of Culture's spire, watched together with father, provide a metaphor for different models of love and relationships. Through frequent conversations with his dad, Leon is becoming increasingly confident in his personal reflections. One day he asks a question to which his father hesitates to answer for a long time: "Why aren't you with mom anymore? Did you not want to or could you not?" The protagonist gradually accepts and understands that "sometimes it is like that, sometimes it has to be." Their meetings are irregular and Leon has to learn that this is how his contact with father looks now. Leon and Piotr enjoy brief moments of forgetfulness and peace that always end with a farewell. Long conversations at Leon's mother's door become their common ritual. Peeking through the peephole, jokes through the door, endless waving. Leon tries to stay with his dad a bit longer, to soak up his presence. In this way, he can ease the sadness of separation, feel safe and accept that he will not see him for a few days. For both protagonists, it is a shared journey in which Leon and Peter have to face new circumstances.



ENGLISH TITLE: "PATCHWORK"
ORIGINAL TITLE: „PATCHWORK"

Directed by Piotr Wołodźko
Director's e-mail: wolodzko@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 534 982 105

Production stage: early development

Total budget: 40 000 EURO
Requirements: 40 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: June 2024

Estimated duration: 15 minutes

We are looking for: producer, funding, broadcasters

PIOTR WOŁODŹKO

Piotr grew up in New Zealand. He has a master's degree in journalism and studied film directing at Gdynia Film School. For 4 years he co-produced the narrative podcast "Stories from the Eastern West" for the online magazine Culture.pl. Piotr is fascinated by the potential of animated documentaries.

PATCHWORK

dir. Piotr Wołodźko

IN THIS ANIMATED DOCUMENTARY WE JOIN THREE CHILDREN ON A STORYBOOK ADVENTURE, FILLED WITH PIRATES, JUNGLE CATS, AND GIANT MOON CRATERS, AS THEY EACH TRY TO ADJUST TO THEIR NEW LIVES – SPLIT BETWEEN TWO PARENTS AND TWO DIFFERENT HOMES.

Is it possible to make sense of life, when it has been split between two parents and two different homes? In the animated documentary “Patchwork” we follow three children, 7-year-old Leon, 9-year-old Julia, and 11-year-old Stasiek, as they try to adjust to their new lives with new schedules, new family members, and new hopes and fears. Their real voices and experiences will be illustrated with pencil and paper as the protagonists find themselves in storybook lands filled with pirates, wild jungles and giant moon craters. As the story progresses - switching between the protagonists - we will see them face and overcome difficult situations (seeing their parents fight) and emotions (sadness, fear, missing an absent parent), but this will be presented in a way that is accessible and entertaining for children between the ages of seven and twelve, through the use of child-like fantasy and humour. With animation there are also endless possibilities in terms of the worlds that can be created on screen. For example, Julia can play with the cat that she dreams of having, and release him into a jungle that is right outside her apartment block, Leon can watch a fierce pirate ship battle on the sea between his parents’ houses, and Stasiek can travel back to the time of the dinosaurs. Each of the protagonists has their own unique story and situation - for example Leon has mostly adjusted to a new life with his father and new partner, while Stasiek has found it challenging to live with his step brothers and sisters. In each case I want to show the strength and resilience that children in patchwork families have, to show how they overcame problems, and what helped them to do it. In this way, I hope to leave young viewers of the film with an optimistic tone and make them feel that the story can indeed have a happy ending.

ENGLISH TITLE: "HOW NICE IT WOULD BE"
ORIGINAL TITLE: „JAKBY TO BYŁO MIŁO"

Directed by Krystyna Dobrzańska
Director's e-mail:
krydobrzanska@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 798 691 866

Production stage: early development

Total budget: 26 000-30 000 EURO
Requirements: 26 000-30 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: January 2025

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer, funding

KRYSTYNA DOBRZAŃSKA

A graduate of film studies at the Academy of Art in Szczecin and production organisation at the Film School in Katowice. Her documentary "Everything About Going Abroad" was screened at the Młodzi i Film and Short Waves festivals. Winner of the Młode Wilki with the documentary "Body Map".

HOW NICE IT WOULD BE

dir. Krystyna Dobrzańska

MOVING OUT OF HOME IS A BOUNDARY POINT – SAYING GOODBYE TO THE PAST THAT HAS SHAPED US. IT WAS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR NATALIA; ORPHANAGE, REFORMATORY, TRAUMAS. WILL HAVING AT LAST A PLACE OF HER OWN ALLOW NATALIA TO DEAL WITH THE PAST?

At the age of 17, Natalia has gone through more than many adults have. Orphanage, reformatory and recovery from addictions. For a year now she has been learning to live a stable life and attends part time high school. She talks for hours with her boyfriend, Kamil. In the midst of teenage antics and confidences, concerns about their future together emerge. The present is not easy, as Natalia regularly argues with her mother. She would like to know Natalia's plans and is preparing for the day her daughter leaves the nest to make room for her new partner. The main dramatic axis of the film will be the young couple's move to live together. We will look at whether the realisation of Natalia's biggest dream is possible and whether it will give the awaited sense of fulfilment. Shopping at IKEA, fixing shelves, facing domestic chores - this will be the backbone of a film full of flashbacks. The memorabilia being unpacked in the new flat and the young people's daily interactions will lead to a story about Natalia's difficult past and the transformation she is going through as she enters adulthood. Among the events initiating the flashbacks will be the reading of Natalia's diary from her time in the reformatory. The inevitable conflicts between the couple will refer us back to previously recorded events. Dialogue about the necessary purchases will allow us to move back in time to Natalia's argument with her mother about the sanitary pads hidden from her new partner. Conversations about a possible future job will lead to the first attempts at employment at a local shop. Retrospective materials will consist of archival footage from Natalia's childhood, videos recorded with her phone and scenes showing everyday life just after she left the reformatory.


ENGLISH TITLE: "A DAY IN MY LIFE..."
ORIGINAL TITLE: „DZIEŃ ZE MNĄ..."

Directed by Kasia Prus
Director's e-mail: dcd.prus@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 572 982 728

Production stage: early development

Total budget: 20 000-25 000 EURO
Requirements: 20 000-25 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: December 2024

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, broadcaster

KASIA PRUS

Screenwriter and director. Her short films were screened at international festivals, including those dedicated to feminist films. She works as an intimacy coordinator and choreographer. Kasia is actively involved in initiatives promoting the presence of women in audiovisual culture.

A DAY IN MY LIFE...

dir. Kasia Prus

TWO TEENS WITH ADHD TALK ABOUT THEMSELVES THROUGH VLOGS. THEIR LIVES ARE VERY DIFFERENT, BUT THEY SHARE A SENSE OF ALIENATION AND OTHERNESS. DESPITE THE PHYSICAL DISTANCE, THE CHARACTERS BEGIN TO BUILD A FRIENDSHIP IN A WORLD THAT IS ALIEN TO THEM.

"A Day in My Life…" is a documentary with experimental elements. Two ADHD teens, who live in the cities more than 400 km apart, talk about themselves through vlogs. Julita and Amelia's daily lives are very different, but they share a sense of loneliness and alienation. Julita has been expelled from school and is homeschooled. Amelia is an aspiring ballerina and her day is filled with extracurricular activities. Both are looking for ways to cope with the problems of adolescence. Often unruly and unapologetic, they get into conflicts with their peers. The characters talk about their everyday lives and, invited by the director, engage in a kind of long-distance dialogue that forms the narrative of the film. The girls talk about difficulties of interacting with their peers and about loneliness. The two tales of growing up and alienation intertwine, showing what unites such different persons. Julita and Amelia use the recordings to introduce themselves and open up to each other. In an intimate setting, they talk about the problems of modern teenagers seeking friendship and understanding. This is the language of a generation that often establishes relationships online. Julita and Amelia address each other in the form of vlogs, showing worlds that are emotionally very similar despite their differences. In the creative part of the film, where the characters focus on their emotions, the visual and auditory layers are meant to show the viewers in a sensory way how the brain of a person with ADHD works. The end of the film will be a presentation of the vlogs and a recording of the girls' reactions. The film draws the viewer's attention to the universal problem of loneliness and the need to talk about emotions.

ENGLISH TITLE: "MUDDLED MIND"
ORIGINAL TITLE: „KASZA W GŁOWIE"

Directed by Tomasz Porębski
Director's e-mail:
tomasz.porebski1996@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 668 366 156

Production stage: development

Total budget: 20 000-25 000 EURO
Requirements: 20 000-25 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: December 2024

Estimated duration: 20-25 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, broadcaster

TOMASZ PORĘBSKI

A graduate of Film and Television Production studies at the Kieślowski Film School of the University of Silesia. Author of short television documentaries shown at festivals, e.g. at the Optimistic Film Festival "Happy End" in Rzeszów and the Sensitive Festival in Gdynia.

MUDDLED MIND

dir. Tomasz Porębski

LIZA, 12, FLED UKRAINE FOR POLAND JUST AFTER THE WAR BROKE OUT IN FEBRUARY 2022. DESPITE ITS EVIL, THE WAR IN ONE RESPECT TURNED OUT TO BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LIZA – SHE CAN LIVE AWAY FROM HER FATHER, WITH WHOM SHE WAS NOT HAPPY IN ODESSA.

12-year-old Liza and her mother Tatiana leave Odessa after the outbreak of war in Ukraine. They are staying in Gliwice. The teenager, who is only just beginning the process of self-discovery, must additionally find herself in new circumstances. Although she clearly feels nostalgic for her previous life, Liza sees her exile as an opportunity. She recalls that in Ukraine her dad treated mum like a servant, he was not helping around the house and not earning any money. The teenager cares a lot about her mother's happiness. On the other hand, she also has positive memories associated with her father. She says of him: "nice colleague, funny... but a lousy parent". In the midst of everyday life situations, the viewer will receive small signals indicating that Liza's relationship with her dad is not good. For example, the girl is reluctant to respond to the suggestion of a phone call to her father, and treats simple household chores as a punishment. In another scene, Tatiana tells her neighbour that she feels free for the first time. Only in the final scenes will Liza's struggles be fully revealed. An important element is to be a frank conversation (by phone or instant messenger) between the main character and her dad. In addition, the film aims to familiarise the viewer with Liza: to show her passion for painting, the nature of a loner in search of herself. "Muddled mind" will tell the story of Liza's choices and her rift: between mum and dad, Poland and Ukraine.

ENGLISH TITLE: ”JULIAN”
ORIGINAL TITLE: „JULIAN”

Directed by Laura Sonik
Assistant director: Piotr Szatyłowicz
Director’s e-mail:
laura.sonik@icloud.com
Director’s phone number:
+48 506 849 208

Production stage: development

Total budget: 120 000 EURO
Requirements: 120 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: May 2025

Estimated duration: 70 minutes

We are looking for: co-producer, funding, broadcaster

LAURA SONIK

Director, graduate of the Stanisław Wyspiański Academy of Theatre Arts. She received an award for the Best Diploma in 2017 and was a laureate of the award at the 5th Young Directing Forum in 2015. She is involved in projects in urban space, social activities and new technologies (VR).

JULIAN

dir. Laura Sonik

JULIAN WAS BORN IN THE COUNTRYSIDE INTO A RELIGIOUS FAMILY WITH A TRANSPHOBIC FATHER. WANTING TO TAKE HIS FIRST SHOT OF TESTOSTERONE, HE HAD TO MOVE OUT. ONCE HIS BODY WILL CHANGE, HE WILL BE READY TO MEET FATHER. HE STILL LONGS FOR HIS ACCEPTANCE.

Julian is 20 years old. He decided to come to Warsaw from a small village. He left the family home, fearing how his father might react to his secret. He still has the name “Julia” written in his identity card. In the language of trans people, it is his dead name. What he fears most is the disapproval of his father - a respected neighbour, an extremely conservative church organist who does not accept people like him. His father’s abusive language, comments and opinions about LGBTQ+ people have already led Julian into long-term depression. Julian’s mother knows about his identity and is supportive of him, but she herself is also afraid of her husband’s reaction. In Warsaw, there is a watershed moment for Julian when he starts taking testosterone injections. He knows there is no turning back and is proud of his decision. He can finally be himself. Julian’s body changes, facial hair appears, his voice becomes lower. Something inside him changes as well. He starts life anew and feels much more confident. He meets a lecturer at the Polytechnic, 60-year-old Patrycja – a trans person who discovered her identity while having a wife and two sons. Her coming out was exceptionally difficult. Because of her experiences, Patrycja helps Julian in his preparations for revealing the truth to his father, as well as in the difficult journey of completing the transition. She becomes Julian’s guide, taking on the parental role. For her, this help is also a substitute for what she herself could not achieve because her age no longer allowed her to have the operation. The most important and difficult moment for Julian will be revealing the truth in a conversation with his father, after which he will decide what to do next.

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CENTRUM KULTURY FILMOWEJ im. Andrzeja Wajdy

projekt współfinansuje miasto stołeczne Warszawa

PARTNERZY:

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