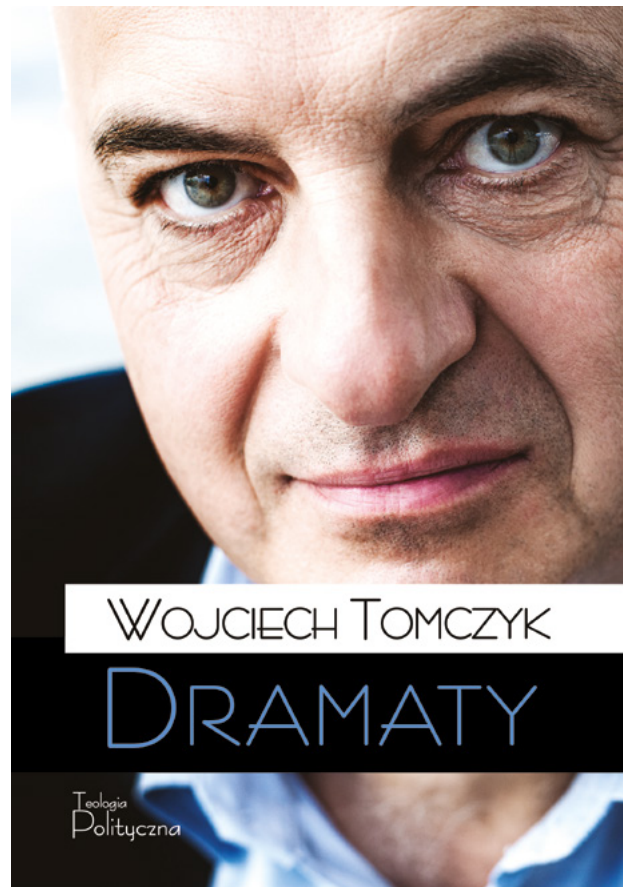


Plays



Tomczyk draws from Polish history, but always bears in mind the problems of today

Wojciech Tomczyk (b. 1960) is the most important and at the same time, the most popular contemporary playwright in Poland. His plays, which have been staged for many years on *Television Theatre*, attract millions of viewers. The author of *Interregnum* successfully continues the tradition in the Polish theatre signified by the names of Sławomir Mrożek and Janusz Głowacki. As in the texts of these well-known authors, the characteristic feature of his style is realism, tinged with absurdity and the grotesque. Tomczyk uses dramatic irony masterfully. In his plays he introduces characters whose motives are ambiguous, intentions suspect, and declared views contradictory to their beliefs. Among the liars who feign honesty, fools who are convinced of their wisdom, and conformists who pretend to be non-conformists, there are also authentic, internally consistent, and ethical people. The presence of these bright figures only deepens the bitter disappointment with the world, dominating in Tomczyk's dramas.

The volume includes Tomczyk's most interesting plays, from the debut *Vampire*, through the most famous *Nuremberg*, to *The Marshal*, which premiered last year and was created in relation to the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence. Tomczyk today is the only Polish theatrical author who seriously, though without unnecessary pathos, poses questions about the collective ethos of Poles. Thus, he goes against the current of contemporary drama, which mostly deals with the problems of indistinguishable inhabitants of the liberal anthill. His characters are people of power: officers, presidents, prime ministers, as well as people considered to be authorities: writers and journalists. Tomczyk draws from Polish history, but always bears in mind the problems of today, and the plays he writes have the dimension of a political debate. This ironic and sometimes satirical observer of Poles sets the bar very high for them: intelligence, integrity, and responsibility for the community.

Jacek Kopciński, translated by Katarzyna Popowicz

HANKA
Forgive me, I'm sure you have plenty of fascinating stories. But despite all that I'm more interested in the colonel.

COLONEL
He was a colonel, I was a colonel. He served, I served. Isn't it all the same thing?
(...)

COLONEL
So, in 1953 I broke my conspiratorial oath to save my own life. I betrayed my friends and homeland. I began working for a foreign power, and a criminal and homicidal regime. Am I boring you?

HANKA
What are you getting at?

COLONEL
It was the spring of 1953. Just after the Korean War, after the murders, after millions of Ukrainians had been starved to death. After the deportation and murder of Home Army soldiers. Of course, I knew who pulled the trigger in Katyń. Everybody did. The Soviets already had the hydrogen bomb. And I'd been of age for several months. I couldn't have any illusions – the Soviets were bent on destroying my country, and in global terms meant to conquer the whole world. Actually, they never concealed that. They always talked openly about a global revolution, of freeing the toiling masses. By “revolution” they had in mind the abolition of social classes and nations – which means genocide. The liberation of the toiling masses, of course, in their language meant universal slave labour – did you ever hear about Cambodia? Or the Gulag Archipelago?

HANKA
What are you getting at?
(...)

COLONEL
Can't you guess? It's obvious.

HANKA
Maybe an undercover agent can guess. A journalist has to find it out. What do you want?

COLONEL
I want a repeat of the Nuremberg Trials. I won't insult you by asking if you know what the Nuremberg Trials were.

HANKA
You want the Nuremberg Trials for the communists? Is that all? How do you intend to achieve that?

COLONEL
A repeat of the Nuremberg Trials for the communists

doesn't sound bad. But at my age a chap stops setting himself such ambitious goals. In any case, I disdain the communists.

HANKA
What is it you want, colonel?

COLONEL
I want a Nuremberg for myself. I want to be tried.

Excerpt translated by David French



Dramaty [Plays by Wojciech Tomczyk]

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Plays staged (theatre & TV)

Wampir, premiere: 2003

Zaręczyny, 2003

Norymberga, 2006

Inka 1946, 2006

Komedia romantyczna, 2012

Zaręczyny, 2015

Breakout, 2016

Marszałek, 2017

Wojciech Tomczyk is also a successful screenwriter and film producer.

Foreign language adaptations

UK, Germany, Bulgaria, Russia, Belarus, Estonia

Selected awards

Grand Prix, International Independent Theatre Festival in Belarus (2008/2009)

Grand Prix, Two Theatres Festival in Sopot (2007)

Ministry of Culture Award (2007)

Best European TV film, Festival La Rochelle (2010) – nomination

Best European Historical TV series, INPUT, Seul (2011)

Grand Prix, Representation of Reality Contemporary Drama

Festival in Zabrze (2003)