

PAGEANT
THEATER
FEBRUARY 22 - 28

3 Oscar Nominations
Best Director
Best Foreign Film
Best Cinematography

COLD WAR

FRI - SAT: 4pm and 7pm / SUN: 1pm and 4pm
MON - THU: 4pm and 7pm

T H E
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REEL WORLD

'Mad love'

**A beautiful, dark
love story set in
post-WWII Poland**



Cold War, the bleakly stylish drama from Poland that is one of the more prominent Oscar nominees for Best Foreign Language Film, is a strangely fascinating mixture of love story and historical epic. And there's a provocative strangeness in that mixture's key ingredients—the love story is crazed, grim, erratic and bafflingly passionate, while the sprawl of Cold War history lurches along in the background, seemingly somewhere between theater of the absurd and the world of paranoid thrillers.

by
**Juan-Carlos
Selznick**



Cold War
Opens Friday, Feb. 22. Starring Joanna Kulig and Tomasz Kot. Directed by Pawel Pawlikowski. Pageant Theatre. Rated R.

be a government-sponsored touring group performing traditional music of the common folk.

Wiktor has his eye on Zula right from the start, and singles her out for inclusion on the tour, as much for her blonde beauty and bold demeanor as for any musical talent. Soon, they are romantically involved, and soon after that their romance is running hot and cold as their lives, together and separately, take on several abrupt changes of direction.

Writer-director Pawel Pawlikowski takes the story through a series of shifts of time and place. The couple plan to defect while on tour in East Berlin, but Zula changes her mind at the last moment and Wiktor cross-

es over alone. He finds work in Paris, and she returns to Poland and marries a party official. Both have moderately successful careers as musical performers, and they reunite briefly in Paris a few years later, and subsequently there will be further brief (but increasingly fraught) reunions in Yugoslavia and back in Poland, despite the legal risks to Wiktor as a defector.

What emerges in all this, at least in part, is a kind of smoldering allegory in which a wildly irrational tale of *amour fou* ("mad love") plays out against a backdrop of massive oppression and stifling conformity. And that may shake out a little too easily as a sweeping protest against the Cold War era as system-wide freeze-out of individual passion and identity. But there's also the possibility that these odd, inexplicably devoted lovers have their indifference to the norms of the Cold War era as their only real, desperately irresistible bond.

Kulig gives the film's standout performance. Her Zula might be a *film noir femme fatale*, but she also exudes the ambiguous resourcefulness of a born survivor. The character and the actor both demand our attention while also refusing to be categorized.

Kot is something of a cipher as Wiktor, but with just enough gravitas and "presence" to consistently claim our attention as well. In the Paris sequences, actor/singer Jeanne Balibar and actor/director Cédric Kahn have some strong moments in secondary roles. □



Poor



Fair



Good



Very Good



Excellent

CHICO PERFORMANCES Upcoming Events



FEBRUARY

23 | **PAT HULL & HANNAH JANE KILE** *Chico Voices*

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6 | **PETER GROS**
Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom

12 | **KEN WALDMAN**
Alaska's Fiddler Poet

13 | **ALL THEY WILL CALL YOU**
Tim Hernandez, Book In Common Lecture

24 | **MINETTI QUARTETT**

27 | **FILIPE DEANDRADE**
"UNTAMED"
National Geographic Live

29 | **DUSTBOWL REVIVAL & HOT CLUB OF COWTOWN**

30 | **HAPPY HOUR**
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APRIL

4 | **DELFEAYO MARSALIS & THE UPTOWN JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

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MAY

2 | **STORM LARGE & LE BOHNEUR**

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