

# THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

a **Solidarity** story

Press Kit





## Short Synopsis

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM: A SOLIDARITY STORY focuses on the birth of the Solidarity movement across Poland and my father's Krzysztof Bialo's involvement in the anti communist campaign. The film follows the history of Poland from World War II up until the first free elections in the late 80's. Interweaved with the historical aspect is Krys' personal journey starting with his childhood, acceptance as a member of Solidarity, his arrest after the declaration of Martial Law and eventually our family's emigration to Canada.



## Full Synopsis

The Solidarity movement in Poland was a peaceful one, resulting in a revolution that didn't involve civil war or bloodshed. Although there were casualties and outbreaks, the majority of the battles were won with the mind. The movement in Poland led to the fall of many oppressive communist regimes across Europe and was overshadowed by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the separation of Russia.

The Price of Freedom starts by showing Poland after World War II, establishing the political situation in place at the time of my father's birth. The country suffered from oppression of religion, fixed elections, food and wage limitations and more. Although most people accepted the skewed idea of freedom that the communists offered, the younger generation including my father realized that something was wrong.

The film continues to examine as the political tension heats up and the most important protests occur – Poznan 1956, Gdansk 1970 and Radom 1976. Krys' political story begins as he goes to university in Krakow. It is there that he is introduced to other student activists keen on bringing down the communist government in Poland. While attending university, one of his acquaintances Stanyslaw Pyjas is murdered by the secret police, and this dramatic moment leads to the formation of the SKS (Student Solidarity Committee).

The next phase of the film examines the significance of the Gdansk Shipyard Strikes in 1980. This event results in the formation of Solidarity as a legal trade union with Lech Walesa leading the negotiations. It was during this time that the church and Pope John Paul II played an enormous role in motivating the people and helping Solidarity gain momentum.

It was also during this time that Krys gets married and starts his family. Soon, he is elected as the Vice President of the Solidarity Union in Czesochowa. Suddenly things take a turn for the worse with the declaration of Martial Law in 1981. Solidarity is declared an illegal organization and most of its members are arrested including my father. Krys is sentenced to four and a half years in jail but ends up only serving sixteen months because of the Amnesty in 1983.

After his release, life is difficult for Krys as he struggles to find work and is constantly watched and questioned by the secret police. Krys and Danuta decide to emigrate and are accepted as political refugees to Canada. The final part of the film focuses on the mid 80's as the communists begin to lose their power and fall apart as Krys watches from across the ocean.

In closing, the characters discuss their opinions of how Poland benefited from the Solidarity movement and the present condition of the country. The final scene shows as Krys is awarded the Knights Cross of Honor at the Polish Consulate in Toronto in 2009. In his concluding speech, Krys reflects on his life as an activist and the effects of Solidarity on Poland, which is finally a free country.





## Cast of Characters



**Krzysztof Bialo** – As a child, my father noticed that the situation in Poland wasn't normal and that freedom didn't truly exist. After being introduced to the underground movement while studying at the University of Krakow, Krys became politically active. He was elected as the Vice-President of the Solidarity Union in Czestochowa and worked as an activist up to his imprisonment in 1981. After his release in 1983 he was constantly watched and unable to find work as a teacher because of his past. He decided with his wife Danuta that the best option for the family was to leave, and they were accepted to Canada as political refugees.



**Aleksy Sczypior** – Krys' father-in-law and my grandfather, Aleksy was a custom tailor for most of his life. Offering the perspective of the elder, he watched the rise of the communist regime after World War II. After his daughter Danuta met Krys, he supported Krys' decisions to actively participate in Solidarity. In the film, he also reflects on the turbulent times in Czestochowa and Poland when Martial Law was declared and Krys was arrested.



**Dionizy Bialo** – Krys' older brother and my uncle, Dionizy still works as a university professor in Warsaw and writes articles based on his research for various publications. Offering the perspective of the older brother, Dionizy watched Krys grow from a little boy in Skarzysko to a political refugee in Canada. In the film, he reflects on how Krys was meant to be in politics and the effects of having a political activist in the family.



## Cast of Characters



**Marek Dziubek** – While studying in Krakow Marek met Krys through Danuta's sister Nina. They immediately became friends and Marek followed in Krys' footsteps as an activist. They worked together in Czestochowa and Krakow helping spread the word of Solidarity to the masses. While Krys and his family decided to move to Canada, Marek remained in Poland. After the first free elections in 1990, Marek was voted into Parliament and worked in the Porozumienie Centrum which was a political group and prototype of the present party PiS (Law & Justice).



**Mirosław Chojecki** – The son of former Polish Underground Army soldiers, Mirosław was one of the founding members of KOR (Committee for Workers Defense). During his participation in KOR and later the Solidarity movement, he was arrested over forty four times. After the declaration of Martial Law he escaped to Paris where he organized support for Solidarity. Upon his return to Poland in 1990 he established a film company and continued his work in documentary filmmaking.



**Mieczysław Gil** – Started working after college as a worker in the Lenin Steel Mill. In 1977 he became the editor of "Głos Nowej Huty" (The New Steel Mill Voice) and started organizing union activities. After the introduction of Martial Law he organized strikes in the region and was arrested in January 1982 and sentenced to four years in jail. After the first free elections, Mieczysław was chosen to represent New Steel Mill in Parliament as an official member of Solidarity.



## About the Filmmaker

ADAM BIALO was born in Czestochowa, Poland on December 20th 1981. It was a week after Martial Law had been declared and his father had been arrested. The situation and events surrounding his birth had a profound impact on Adam for the rest of his life, and eventually led to him making this film.

After moving to Canada, Adam and his family settled north of Toronto in the city of Barrie. Adam got his first video camera when he was sixteen and fell in love with filmmaking. A few years later he was accepted into Sheridan's Media Arts program where he began to focus on writing and directing.

After graduating with honors Adam moved to Toronto and started his own production company, Kontakt Films. He started producing and directing videos and commercials for various clients and businesses including Napoleon Fireplaces, West 49, Scotties and Spark Innovations. His work has been shown across North America on stations such as HGTV, MTV, MuchMusic, Global and more.

While developing Kontakt, Adam has pursued his own filmmaking dreams - first with the indie feature film FUEL and now with the release of THE PRICE OF FREEDOM: A SOLIDARITY STORY. This documentary was a labour of love that has taken almost four years to finish.

*"The PRICE OF FREEDOM is very important to me because it is a part of my past and the reason why I am here today. If it wasn't for the sacrifices my parents made for me, life would be completely different. I hope this documentary brings light to Poland's peaceful revolution which led to and is often overshadowed by the fall of the Berlin Wall."*

- Adam Bialo

## About the Musicians

ALEX DE LINT - Alex has pursued his passion for music over the years and has recently started working on film soundtracks including Adam's first feature film FUEL. Classically trained, his orchestral songs vary in pace, style and emotion and are a perfect fit for the dramatic moments of THE PRICE OF FREEDOM: A SOLIDARITY STORY.

JASON DUFRANE - A natural guitar player and musician, Jason started playing guitar at a very early age and continued over the years. Jason and Adam met in film school and started recording songs when they lived together in Toronto. They have recorded many songs used for Kontakt projects, and Jason's acoustic medley's help drive the story of THE PRICE OF FREEDOM: A SOLIDARITY STORY forward.





## Gallery



Protest 1



Protest 2



Vote June 4th - "So tomorrow the kids will be proud of us!"



Krys is voted into the Czestochowa Chapter of Solidarity



Solidarity Museum in Gdansk



Adam shooting in Warsaw at Priest Popieluszko's grave



# Contact

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