

**Introduction and editing by Wojciech Świdziński**

Andrzej Włast was one of the most active creators of popular culture in the interwar Poland. To this day he is remembered as the author of lyrics to songs such as *Tango Milonga*, *Autumn Roses* [*Jesiennie Róże*], or *Rebeka*, and as the enterprising director of the Warsaw revue theatre Morskie Oko and a number of other metropolitan cabaret and operetta scenes. It is worth to complete this portrait by an account of his film journalism cultivated in his youth. During the period of 1923–1924, he wrote a column *The Tenth Muse (Impressions)* for a specialist magazine “Screen and Stage” [“Ekran i Scena”].

In his texts he documented the daily film life of the capital, he argued for the recognition of the cinema as a fully-fledged art form, he campaigned against mediocrity of Polish film production, and he took part in the conflict of cinema owners with the magistrates. His writing style was characterised by energy, intelligence and polemic wit, but above all by passion of a cinephile, with which he tried to infect his readers. Perhaps it was his youthful impetuosity and decisiveness in the proclamation of opinion that led to the closing of his column in a journal dependent on advertisers and interest groups associated with the world of cinema. Still, Włast’s texts can serve as a valuable resource for research on history of Polish film and cinema, and they offer a unique portrait of Warsaw in the early 1920s. They are also an interesting reflection of the state of consciousness of a developing artist, just before his decision to dedicate his life entirely to the entertainment industry.

The book *The Tenth Muse (Impressions). Essays on Film, 1923–1924* presents all of Andrzej Włast’s articles on film. The volume also contains an introduction on historical, social and organizational background necessary to fully understand the meaning and the role of the articles in the contemporary cultural life of the recently reborn Polish Republic. A lot of space is also devoted to the portrait of their author – a character known largely from numerous anecdotes from later years, but whose real life remains relatively unknown. Particular attention is paid to the role of film and cinema in his life and art – especially in poetry and song lyrics, much cited in the book. The volume is enriched by specially developed indexes of film titles and filmmakers mentioned by Włast, which help the readers to identify them and find their way around the rich and complex cinematic life of the time.