

# Film Review – You Say You Want A Revolution? Let's Gdansk

☒ Polish Roulette – Sztoś 2

Comedy

Polish with English sub-titles.

Cert 15. 105 mins

Together with rationing it is an even colder and slushier Advent in Poland 1981 as the Solidarity movement, simmering in the Gdansk shipyards, provokes the imposition of martial law. But guys still have to make a buck somehow, and dodgy deals in foreign currencies, where the Dollar reigns supreme, is a thriving business – and a very dangerous one – where the Secret Police are involved.

Meanwhile, for rough-diamond conmen/card-sharps, Sonny (Cezary Pazura) and Janek (Borys Szyc) their sleight of hand trickery remains profitable – as long as they remain alive. Conning half your money back from the Militia just after you've bribed them certainly compromises that intention.

Roulette -Sztoś 2 is a hustle and scam grifter-buddy road movie with a morality-tale denouement sting. There are plenty of engagingly vulgar comedy set-pieces, such as Sonny and Janek entertaining two ladies of profession affection. In the giddy throes of priapic consummation, the ladies' partner, on seeking purchase on the spinning turntable, inadvertently discovers scratch/mixing years before the bros in d'hood had a clue.

Meanwhile, as ominous tank-tracks rumble outside, Sonny

rumbles something very unexpected inside Victoria's underwear. The later 'lock-in' buddy booze-up scene and subsequent karaoke carnage is well-flagged, gauche in its contrivance and all the more entertaining for it.

Whilst allowing for generous slapstick comic license, Roulette/Szetos 2 sustains a pithy, non-self reverential, satirical swipe at totalitarianism's bungling, but nonetheless, brutal suffocation set against Everyman's struggle against the odds.

The context of Solidarity remains in the background, although one might do well to keep it in mind at journey's end. The film's ethos posits the theory that, more than anything, Solidarity's eventual overthrow of Communism was not predicated on the struggle to escape the shackles of oppression. More, that eating pickled cabbage, morning, noon and night and wearing those hideous polyester flares and delta-wing rayon shirt collars was the ultimate catalyst for the Velvet (not crushed, one hopes) Revolution.

The plot, such as it is, climaxes with the guys 'stinging' the Secret Police out of their shady currency stash, the MO being to get them stoned on a jar of hallucinogenic canapés and hash-cakes; which they do with ambiguous success following a highly diverting Hippy-Kitsch psychedelic freak-out tableau.

Amusingly engaging with a cunning plan. Recommended.

Showing at [Cineworld – Edinburgh](#) Fountain Park, 130/3 Dundee Street.

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