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Julia Kamińska, a real diva from Poland

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Julia Kamińska is one of the brightest stars in the Polish public life. She appears every day in popular serials, or theatre performances. After doing a photo shoot for the CKM, Playboy laid front of her feet.
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It wasn't always like this; she was on her way to be a German teacher in Gdansk when eight years ago Poland discovered her as Ugly Betty. We did the interview in late evening; despite of this she was smiling and she was talkative. Those are the main pillars of her character, plus the high emotional and intellectual intelligence. Julia celebrated her 29th birthday in 13th of November, 2016.

You were playing the main character in Ugly Betty (BrzydUla), which was filmed in Poland after the famous Columbian TV-serial. How hard was for you playing an ugly girl when you are an attractive woman? Was it a challenge for you? Didn't you think it might be risky in a way that film industry would always use you only for such roles?
Thank you for your compliment, but I didn't find it risky. Now, when I am a bit closer to 30, I feel self-conscious and I feel well with myself. Although, it wasn't always like this. When I was a teenager I had a lot of bad feelings about myself. I thought I was not pretty neither interesting, I also wasn't considered as an attractive individual among schoolmates. So it wasn't very far from me to play this kind of role, or to put this character into reality. I knew exactly how it feels.

Can we say that Ugly Betty brought you into popularity in Poland at all?
That is right, before that people didn't know me. Ugly Betty brought me big changes. I had to give myself for it, I had to leave my hometown.

Could we say that your dream come true?
Exactly, but I didn't plan my life like this, I wasn't expecting any career to come like this, at all. Although I was acting long before Ugly Betty, I didn't even have a theatre diploma, and still i don't have. After the secondary school I applied for German linguistic studies. I didn't think about applying to acting school, because I was too scared and I was afraid I wouldn't be successful even if I would have applied. But, as I really wanted to do this, I decided to participate in few workshops in Wybrzeżak Theatre, in Gdansk, where I was born. There, from time to time, appeared someone from the film industry, looking for young people to play small parts in serials which were being shooted in North-Poland. It was cheaper for them to find young actors in Gdańsk, than to bring them all from Warsaw. So, they were organising castings and once I won one of these. After playing this small role, I kept being invited for castings for bigger and bigger parts in several TV-serials. I started going to Warsaw for auditions. And then, after several years came the audition for the Ugly Betty serial.

Although I was already studying German in the University of Gdansk, and despite of that day I had an exam, I decided to go to Warsaw instead. Luckily, I won it and that is why I can actually talk today to a Hungarian journalist (smile). That was the real start of my carrier. Ugly Betty was my first big success. Before that I played mostly smaller roles. Although once I played the daughter of the main character in a serial, I considered it very big by that time. So before getting the first main role in my life, I went through a slow, natural process. I had a lot of time to learn acting.



(Fotó:Mateusz Motyczynski)

After Ugly Betty, in 2013 you had a photoshoot for the Polish CKM that you did for saving money for a baby, who needed an urgent surgery. Was this charity action successful?

Unfortunately the baby died before the operation could have done. The parents of this girl decided to give the raised money for another girl who needed the same operation. And this operation was succeeded.

Did you get bad comments in Poland for undressing yourself in a male magazine?
No, actually it wasn't so bad. Probably because it was a very dressed-up and shy session, as for CKM, it wasn't all that controversial. There were of course negative comments, but mainly from the people on the internet.

On the internet you can find every time negative comments. I get it every day, there is nothing to worry about it. Did you make a photo shooting after that or it was a one-time thing?
Playboy Poland called me lately and they asked if I'm willing to show a bit more. I said no for them. The reason is I don't feel like that it suits for me. It is very stressful to be photographed when you have few clothes on you. Once I played in a movie where I was totally naked and I felt myself very embarrassed, although it was only one scene. Even though the director, Janusz Morgenstern, was really nice and did everything for me to feel comfortable, I decided not to do this anymore. I just feel so weird when I have to be naked front of the camera.

Comparing to this it could've been fun for you when you were on a cover of Polish teen magazine. How was that? Did you try yourself how to be a model?
That is right. It was long time ago; I was around fifteen or sixteen. Once my friend wanted to take part in a contest where a winner could win a possibility to be on a cover of a teen magazine, called *Dziewczyna* (The Girl). She suggested we could go together to feel more self-confident. Later it turned out, that I actually won it. It was absolutely fun in the start, because I was able to go to Warsaw first time in my life. In the photo session they've changed my style and they cut my fringe. I looked awful, but I felt the pressure so I was pretending everything is cool. The minute after leaving the studio I cried. This was my first impression of Warsaw. The city was rainy and my hair was simply bad.

If there is something really fits to you that might be dancing.
I love dancing, although I wouldn't say that it is the thing im very good at. In 2010 I won the Polish version of the Dancing with the Stars show. In my work I keep dancing professionally, for example in musicals, so I may think, I should be good at it. But the truth is, that to be good at it, I always need a professional partner. Do you know the show by Goldie Hawn, Nobody Soes It Like Me? When I try to be professional without a dancer by my side, I feel like the character she created there. For a woman it is always easier to dance, she can be led. Dancing, in general, is not very feministic, mainly the man has the leader role.



Julia Kaminska at the age 1,5

You play in one of the most famous Polish serial, called “Na dobre i na złe” (For Better and for Worse) which is broadcasted in Hungary by TVP Polonia. Did it change your life?
Yes, it did, because people started looking at me not like as Ugly Betty. Interestingly, before I got a chance to appear in this serial I've had a hard period of my life. I cut off everything and I went back to my hometown to finish my studies. There were so much going on, that I felt that I must stop it for a while. I didn't have time to see my family for months, because I had so much work. In some aspects it was great, but on the other hand, I felt kind of weird and lonely. I've wanted to be a regular German student again. I knew that I actually I could do that. I only had to refuse to do everything I was supposed to do. And I did. I came back and graduated. After this break I wanted to return to Warsaw to be an actress again. As I could expect, it wasn’t all that easy. I didn’t have any work for some time. Later got some small roles in theatre and dubbing, the big opportunity came with the For Better and for Worse serial in 2013. This role helped me a lot also because of the character I’m playing there. A totally different person than Ugly Betty. You know, sometimes, after playing a main part, it’s not easy to convince people that you are also able to play something else. ‘*Na dobre I na złe*’ worked out really good for me, but I’m moving on. Right now I am also acting in different serials, Singielka and Na

Wspólnej.

How would you describe your character from For Better and for Worse, Zuzia Krakowiak?
She is crazy and courageous. She is not always nice. My grandmother mentioned me in the first times that she expected something different. In the serial all doctors are good, but I played a bad person who was stealing boyfriend from another woman. Although for now Zuzia Krakowiak changed a bit. She turned out to be a good doctor, quite an aggressive one, but professional. Grandma is happy (smile).

What do you prefer when you are at the stage, negative or positive roles?
I work in a theatre, called Teatr Komedia since eight years. I love playing bad girls. Or bad guys, because I play a male role, as well. To be correct, I'm playing a girl, who is pretending to be a boy. In the other hand I really like to get a feedback from the audience for being a good character, but negative persons usually give more space to work. It's more interesting to work on a role of a mad killer, than on a regular next-door girl. That is how it works. Now I'm working on a musical. My character is a really sweet girl, later turning out to be a total bitch. I love it! And I really enjoy musicals, even though most of them are easy or even stupid.

You were playing in several movies already. Where you had the biggest role?
I think the biggest role of mine was in *Swing* in 2013, which was directed by Abelard Giza. He is the most famous stand-up comedian in Poland. There were bunch of people in this movie as well, who started acting with me in Wybrzeżak Theatre in Gdansk. I played with Ewa Błachnio, Szymone Jachimek and Kacper Rucinski – they are all famous comedians now in Poland.



(Fotó: party.pl)

How did you start scriptwriting?
I firstsly started scriptwriting when I have been working on Ugly Betty, but I only wrote some small

scenes and then didn’t have time to continue. By that time I made friends with the scriptwriters team, they are all really great, talented people. The main scriptwriter, Piotr Jasek, is actually my boyfriend now (smile). As I said before, there was a time, when I didn’t have job as an actress. The scriptwriters team helped me out then. They offered I could try writing again and right now I'm working with them, although i'm still learning. For me it is a hard thing to do, definitely harder than acting. I also think that I don’t have a special talent for scriptwriting. I can write decent dialogues, but creating an interesting dramaturgy is a huge effort and takes a lot of time. I try to do my best. Currently I’m co-writing First Love (Pierwsza Milosc), and Singielka.

Could it happen maybe that you write a script for another popular TV-serial, called “L, as Love” (M jak miłość)
I don’t know, I have never thought of this, but you never know. What I do know, is that acting is not a safe job. Being an actress is a lot of fun, sometimes a lot of money, too. But also, you never know when it ends. Who knows, maybe next year I will not have anything to do. So I feel the pressure to be prepared to do something different. Although my dream is simply being an actress till the end of my life (smile). That’s why I’m always trying to be as good as I can be and learn as much as I can. This makes me feel a bit saver. Extra skills help a lot, for example singing. Earlier I’ve tried singing professionally for the first time in 2008, when the producer of Ugly Betty asked me if I could do that. I sang the opening song of the serial. From that time I sing more often, for example in dubbing or in theatre. Right now I’m taking professional classes. A month ago I went to a studio with Marcin Świetlicki and we recorded two songs for his new album. I plan to make my own album too, but I have only three songs, yet. I will need some more time for this and now I really don’t have it.

When do you have time to rest? Are you able to switch off yourself when you travel?
Usually when I go to abroad I prefer to do sightseeing, to see how people are really living on that place. i like being active in holiday. But when I think of a holiday now, I guess - when I eventually get a free week - It would rather be just lying flat on a beach. I’ve done it last year once already, a typical all-inclusive thing in Greece and it was exactly what I needed. I don’t know what I will visit next time.

Maybe to Hungary?
I’ve been in Hungary two times when we were doing dubbing work for Dreamworks. Interestingly it was Polish dubbing. I loved the Hungarian capital, it is a very pretty place. The buildings were incredibly beautiful. Interesting for me was that further from the center, many of these gratious bulidings seemed to be abandoned. Your food is absolutely fantastic, I didn’t find even one bad restaurant. I’m sure I will come back!

English translation was based on the Hungarian version [4](22.11.2016)

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