

## Poland Youth Group ZOOM Produces Award-Winning Film

The Polish Jewish Youth Organization (ZOOM) recently released a film made by members Ivo Krankowski and Jan Śpiewak. The film, entitled "8 Stories That Haven't Changed The World," promptly won a series of prizes in Poland, including the Audience Award and the Jury's Special Prize at the Warsaw Film Festival; Jury Mention at the Independent Cinema Festival in Wrocław, the Audience Award at the Film Festival in Ostrołęka and the Grand Prize at the Film Festival in Nowa Sól. Soon after, the film was accepted at the prestigious New York Jewish Film Festival held in January 2011. Both Jan and Ivo, together with ZOOM member Magda Grabowska, traveled to New York for the US premiere. They were glad they did: after the January 19<sup>th</sup> showing at the Lincoln Center, the *Forward* newspaper waxed rhapsodic:

*This much too short 35-minute gem of a film interfaces the childhood memories of eight Holocaust survivors, with not a single reference as to where any of them had been during the war, what they had suffered, and whom and what they lost. It is an uplifting, charming, at times, laughter-eliciting journey with a cast of travelers whose world vision is inspiring. . . . Though Yiddish had been a first language for some of the cast members, in grammatically elegant Polish they reflect on their childhoods, early school life, first loves and parents, and, almost salivating, they remember food and its preparation by their mothers. "My parents poisoned me with cholesterol... the food was greasy, pickled," one remembers. "Who cared?!"*

*Hopefully this film will find its way to schools, synagogues and Jewish centers everywhere. It is an uplifting postscript to the Holocaust. Though, as its title proclaims, this little film may not change the world, it will impact on everyone who sees it.*

The inspirational film was shot in the summer of 2009 in Wrocław, Łódź, Cracow and Warsaw. The filmmakers explained their well-executed purpose: "Our aim was to show the childhood of elderly Polish Jews as a part of everyday prewar life in Poland. We wanted to establish and save in the common memory an image of the multicultural Polish state, a longstanding and creative coexistence of Jews and Poles."

No doubt there will be many more screenings of this exceptional film in the US and elsewhere.

*For more information about the film, contact Jan Śpiewak [janekspiewak@gmail.com](mailto:janekspiewak@gmail.com). To learn more about ZOOM, contact Anna Bakula, ZOOM President [ambakula@gmail.com](mailto:ambakula@gmail.com).*