



MOBIPICTURES

# Quo Vadis. Love and Faith in Ancient Rome

"If you can dream it, you can do it" – **Anira Wojan, CEO of Polonico**, quotes Walt Disney to explain how was it possible to produce *Quo Vadis*, a seventh adaptation of the iconic love story, within one year.

Although the primary historical setting of the Nobel Prize-winning novel *Quo Vadis* is the rise and martyrdom of the followers of Christ during the time of the infamous despotic emperor Nero, the filmmakers present a broader testament to the Eternal Love that God the Father shares with all humanity. "It does not matter whether you are a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu. Everyone finds something meaningful in this story because God is the Father of each of us," is what viewers expressed after the test screenings of *Quo Vadis*—the full-length 3D animation feature.

The first *Quo Vadis* has already seen the light of day in 1901. The black and white milestone of silent cinema was shown to the public by Lucien Nonguet and Ferdinand Zecca at Pathé Frères Studios in France. Later, the Nobel Prize winning novel by Polish literary superstar **Henryk Sienkiewicz**, was brought to life five more times. (French, Italian, Polish and US movies as well as a UK TV series). To this day, the most famous



Art Director Oliwia Kossakowska of Mobipictures

*Quo Vadis* is the 1951 version directed by Mervyn LeRoy. He conducted a Hollywood mega production, starring Deborah Kerr, Robert Taylor and Peter Ustinov and effectively made a picture worth eight Academy Awards nominations. All previous versions of *Quo Vadis* soared to the top of the box office, creating high expectations for any new adaptation. Fully aware of this challenge, Anira Wojan, determined to convey the timeless message of love to a new generation, was relentless in assembling her dream team. What she couldn't find in Europe—where funding often relies on public sources,





Director and Producer Sukankan Roy of Roy Holdings

making it less competitive in terms of cost and timelines—she built in collaboration with her Indian friend and business partner, **Sukankan Roy**, an animation professional, director, and producer. Together, they established a partnership that aimed to create a global hit — one that would be a financial success and introduce a new format to the global, remote world.

*"When people ask me how it was possible that we produced the epic Quo Vadis in just 12 months, I tell them to add twenty years of experience and ten years of reflection on how to build this industry anew. What pushes and challenges us is no longer Pixar or Disney, but AI - explains **Wojan** - The workflow is a game changer. The best talents can appear ten thousands miles from where you are. So what? Call them. We have created a unique system of work in an international team of people who work remotely in different time zones around the globe. It ensures the film being worked on almost 24/7. This is our know-how and the foundation of our success."*

To bring the vision of a modern animation to life, Barnali Roy of Roy Holdings, a production company, joined forces with Ssoftoons, one of the most prominent animation studios in India, with locations in Mumbai, Kolkata, and Howrah. **Oliwia Kossakowska**, representing the younger generation as **CEO of Mobipictures UK**, was appointed Art & Creative Director. Kossakowska's background in digital graphics at Vilnius University and her work creating visual art for the Lithuanian National Theatre prepared her for this role in an international arena of visual artists, where the boundaries between high and commercial art have all but disappeared. Her task was to develop a contemporary cinematic language for the new style

of animation conceived by the director duo, Wojan and Roy. This unique vision blended elements of gaming, classic film, and VR-style realism for the big screen. As a trendsetter in her field, everything points to Kossakowska having already found success with her debut film.

Within her London-based creative agency, Mobipictures, she has assembled the most promising talents from Central Europe. The team excels in concept art, coloring, editing, graphic design, as well as a comprehensive sound and dubbing services with its state-of-the-art London studio. Rapid turnaround, competitive pricing and friendly atmosphere are what sets them apart from the crowd of emerging creative studios.

*"In Quo Vadis, I checked everything again and again—from antique socks to the color of oleanders in May. Don't be lazy. That's my first professional commandment—I should have hung it on my mirror, but in a project of this scale, there's no time to look in the mirror! – laughs Oliwia Kossakowska - And there's another commandment: don't be a copycat. Discovering the right way to create a new kind of animation that meets modern viewers' expectations is as groundbreaking as the invention of the flipbook."*

Regardless of the talent and determination of the three women leading this project—Wojan, Kossakowska, Roy — success would not have been possible without Sukankan Roy. His role as both director and producer was crucial, and

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Poster of Quo Vadis movie. 1951, directed by Mervyn LeRoy



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FARBE VON  
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**QUO VADIS**

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Quo Vadis has set a high standard by showcasing dozens of his production team members to the international premium market. His future projects are anticipated to continue this trend of excellence.

A film graduate with a background in both Indian and Canadian animation academia, Sukankan Roy has been directing for 25 years. His extensive experience includes several animated series and home entertainment films in English, Hindi, German, Swiss, Russian, and Arabic for various global TV platforms and labels. Of his three feature films, *Sound of Joy* earned him the highest honor from the Government of India at the 62nd National Film Awards, winning both Best Animation Film and Best Director. His notable career accolades include awards at the 20th Cairo International Film Festival for Children (2010), the 6th Rotterdam Arab Film Festival (2010), ICFFI (2015), and NIFF (2014), among others, recognizing his achievements in animated filmmaking.

*"As an avid reader, I was well aware of Quo Vadis even back in Kolkata. The film's sublime portrayal of the nuances of ancient Roman society and the profound subtlety of Christianity could only have been achieved with Anira as my co-director. - admits Roy - Co-producing it, however, was made possible with the support of the Information & Broadcasting Ministry, which plays a crucial role in strengthening the Indo-Polish cultural ties."*

**Vrunda Manohar Desai**, Joint Secretary of I&B Ministry in India says: *"Quo Vadis represents the first official Indo-Polish animation co-production, reflecting the Ministry's commitment*

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*to promoting international collaborations under the signed treaty. This project is a significant achievement, demonstrating the successful implementation of our co-production framework and setting a precedent for future endeavors in the animation sector. Over the past two years, there has been a notable surge in the number of official co-productions, including animation projects. The Ministry has approved over ten official co-productions, reflecting a growing trend towards international collaboration. These partnerships enable the pooling of resources and talent, leading to enhanced quality and broader audience reach for the projects involved."*

Ssoftoons is a pioneering Indian animation studio offering comprehensive services from concept to screen in both 2D and 3D animation. Renowned for its creative excellence and technical mastery, the studio has collaborated with global entertainment leaders such as Disney, Sony, and Viacom. A notable achievement is its Indo-Polish collaboration on the film *Quo Vadis*, which highlights its international reach. With intellectual property rights for over 20 titles and more than 2,000 episodes still airing on the Sony Channel, Ssoftoons exemplifies a blend of innovation, efficiency and consistency.

Ultimately, the most crucial element is the motion picture itself. Visually outstanding and of very high quality, *Quo Vadis* impresses even without American-scale funding. The film's storytelling is a surprising blend of genres, spanning from historical drama to musical, and features a range of original





songs that will satisfy fans of pop, rap, country, and more serious genres like elegy. The epic musical score by French-British composer **Fabien Curtis** evokes the grandeur of classic Hollywood productions such as *Spartacus*, *Ben-Hur*, and *Cleopatra*.

The film offers an immersive journey into the magic of ancient Rome, capturing the essence of cinematic entertainment. Moreover, *Quo Vadis* is a significant family-friendly film for this season's cultural agenda, allowing both parents and children to enjoy meaningful entertainment and leave the cinema with an important message.

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Actor Christian Blundell with Ssoftoons Team after finalising motion capture sessions for *Quo Vadis*