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HARVARD FILM ARCHIVE

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NIGHT OF THE VAMPIRE

SEPTEMBER 2 – SEPTEMBER 3

Tony Scott *THE HUNGER*

The latest annual movie marathon offers thoughtful self-reflection for those unnaturally wedded to all-night lifestyles. A stylistically diverse journey through cinematic and historic time, this series of innovative films follows creatures of the night as they emerge sophisticatedly from the campier mists of myth and move cautiously into the modern day, with all of its technological advances, style, alienation and—by the late 80s—deep-seated ennui and postmodern disillusion sucks out some of the glamour and invites in the more philosophic and mundane aspects of eternal living. Squeamish or scrupled vampires arise, as well as those whose plights may be masking a fear of intimacy. Some things do remain—vampirism always converges either physically or metaphorically with sex—yet by the precarious crack of dawn, Park Chan-Wook's thirsty vampires wreak inexplicable, gory havoc on Bram Stoker's rules and on this ancient genre.

$12 special event tickets
saturday september 2 at 7pm
DRACULA'S DAUGHTER
Directed by Lambert Hillyer. With Otto Kruger, Gloria Holden, Marguerite Churchill
US 1936, 35mm, b/w, 72 min

HORROR OF DRACULA
Directed by Terence Fisher. With Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Michael Gough
UK 1958, 35mm, color, 82 min

THE HUNGER
Directed by Tony Scott. With Catherine Deneuve, David Bowie, Susan Sarandon
US 1983, 35mm, color, 97 min

NEAR DARK
Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. With Adrian Pasdar, Jenny Wright, Lance Henriksen
US 1987, 35mm, color, 95 min

NADJA
Directed by Michael Almereyda. With Elina Löwensohn, Peter Fonda, Suzy Amis
US 1995, 35mm, b/w, 92 min

TROUBLE EVERY DAY
Directed by Claire Denis. With Vincent Gallo, Tricia Vessey, Béatrice Dalle
France/Germany/Japan 2001, 35mm, color, 101 min. French & English with English subtitles

THIRST (*BAKJWI*)
Directed by Park Chan-Wook. With Song Kang-Ho, Kim Ok-Bin, Kim Hae-Suk
South Korea 2009, 35mm, color, 133 min. Korean, English & French with English subtitles

All text written by Brittany Gravely, Haden Guest, David Pendleton and Jeremy Rossen, unless otherwise noted.

On the cover: "Don't grant Freedom to the Enemies of Freedom!" urges Shuji Terayama in his transgressive and form-defying cri de guerre* Throw Away Your Books, Rally in the Streets.** ***p. 31

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BREATHING THROUGH CINEMA
THE FILMS OF CHANTAL AKERMAN

SEPTEMBER 8 – OCTOBER 22

Chantal Akerman

"Nothing is simple, and whenever I say anything, I want to say the opposite as well." That statement, spoken by Chantal Akerman in a 2011 interview with film theorist Nicole Brenez, functions neatly as an off-the-cuff summary of one particular, prevalent conception of an artist's purpose, one that assumes dialectical thought—as opposed to Platonic conceptual purity—to be a precondition for dynamically and meaningfully engaging with the world. For Akerman to profess this was not for her to be intentionally provocative or evasive; if anything, the legendary filmmaker's interviews, like her films, were always marked by a striving for the ideal means with which to express complicated ideas, as if oversharing were the only route to truth. Rather, it's more likely that in this casual instance of self-analysis, she happened to stumble across her entire philosophy and practice as a filmmaker.

Akerman's inclination toward scrutinizing her own impulses, ideas and expressions, which is evident everywhere from her crossing of seemingly incompatible modes (avant-garde minimalism and the musical, for instance) to the dissonances she often creates between sound and image, sprang from her upbringing. As a restlessly curious teenager in Paris in the late sixties, she attended classes at a Jewish learning center where, under the tutelage of philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, she "learn[ed] the art of questioning and negation," a skill no doubt reinforced by her experiences eavesdropping on Jacques Lacan and Gilles Deleuze lectures at the University of Paris. Together with her trips to Anthology Film Archives in early 1970s New York, where she persisted for several years on odd jobs and independent initiative, these miscellaneous educational whims substituted for a traditional college education, which Akerman ditched in her hometown of Brussels after less than a year of unfulfilling degree work.

These formative years may appear to paint Akerman as an inheritor of privilege, hopscotching around the world's cultural capitols without much in the way of practical resistance, but in fact the opposite was true. The director's parents were exiled Polish Jews who were forced to scrape together an impoverished existence in Brussels, and, as Akerman recalled, "I understood right away that my parents had nothing, that I couldn't have anything or ask for anything." Of particular significance was her mother's years of hardship in concentration camps, a devastating fact that essentially provides one of the tectonic plates of Akerman's entire oeuvre. As much as Akerman would go on to value the role of questioning, it was in the primordial history of her parents that she would be acclimatized to the absolute limits of questioning in the face of real trauma. Her heightened awareness of her mother's trials—coupled with her inability to ever know the exact nature of them—produced an acute sense of identity crisis, so that even when Akerman was eventually traveling the world making films, covering such far-flung material as border relations in the southwestern United States or the goings-on in a cheap motel in Manhattan, the work always, implicitly or not, circled back homeward to questions of belonging.

The films produced in the first decade of Akerman's career—many of which were self-financed, limited to a few locations, and made with only the slimmest of cast and crew—bear out the development of formal strategies analogous to her humble beginnings. Though it was Jean-Luc Godard's madcap *Pierrot le Fou* that allegedly spurred Akerman's cinematic bug, it was the structuralist and minimalist avant-gardes in vogue in New York in the seventies—which encompassed such filmmakers as Yvonne Rainer, Michael Snow and Andy Warhol—that were really instrumental in empowering her sensibilities. To an individual already predisposed to thinking within her means, the stationary long take and the avoidance of overtly dramatic spectacle or music cues were natural and cost-effective inheritances, while a fast-evolving fixation on the routine and the mundane stood out quickly as her distinguishing feature. In films such as *Je tu il elle, Hotel Monterey*, and *News From Home,* the inexorable fact of time and space provided drama enough for Akerman, who happily dispensed with plot and characterization in favor of confronting the viewer with the physical world's presence at supreme length.

Longest of all is *Jeanne Dielman*, an over-three-hour catalogue of crushingly banal domesticity featuring Akerman's first star subject in Delphine Seyrig, and a film that now holds secure footing as a watershed moment in structuralist cinema and feminist expression alike. The film, which dedicates untold spans of time to recording Seyrig as she silently and fastidiously performs the round-the-clock labors of a stay-at-home mother in between covert prostitution gigs, became a cause célèbre in art-film circles in the decade after its completion and continues to be synonymous with Akerman's legacy, for better and for worse. While the film represents the most ambitious and rewarding synthesis of the director's touchstones as an artist (her real-time experimentation, her focus on the quotidian, her elevation of women's underrepresented struggles), its centrality in her body of work also tends to attach her to the labels—"minimalist," "feminist"—that she was always so vigilant in rejecting, and which the many obituaries produced in the wake of her recent death prove are still operative.

A more holistic survey of Akerman's career reveals just how early and often she branched off from this foundation, and indeed how frequently her work complicated it. If *Jeanne Dielman*'s asceticism posed the possibility of a director with limited range, then disparate accomplishments such as *Toute une Nuit* (a hyper-eventful mosaic of romantic vignettes), *Golden Eighties* (an eccentric musical set inside a shopping mall), and *La Captive* (an elegant Hitchcockian adaptation of notoriously "unadaptable" Marcel Proust) refuted any such suspicions. And where *Jeanne*

Chantal Akerman *JEANNE DIELMAN, 23 QUAI DU COMMERCE, 1080 BRUXELLES*

Dielman showed an artist with a near-obsessive interest in the mini-universe of a single apartment, later documentaries like *D'Est* (about the migration of Europeans after the fall of the Iron Curtain), *Sud* (about a hate crime committed in Texas), and *La Bas* (which evokes tensions between Israel and Palestine by observing the hum of street life beyond the windows of a Tel Aviv hotel room) revealed a human with a profoundly global consciousness and a sensitivity to injustices well outside her immediate purview. "After Stalin and the camps," she said to Brenez, "you know for sure that an ideology leads to the worst." Thus, in place of ideology, Akerman had empathy.

Much as her humanism and historical mindfulness marked her as an artist worthy of international acclaim, however, it is Akerman's contributions to film style that have proved most unshakeable to cinema culture at large. Few directors have ever been as invested in the primacy and power of the image, as opposed to other tools such as montage or performance, as the real concentration of forces around which a film gathers meaning. Akerman's frontal, horizontally arranged style of composition, which finds no use for exotic perspectives such as the low-angle or the bird's-eye view, places the viewer in direct proximity to the material world and holds them there for long enough that a physical space's more elusive or unseen dimensions—its quality of light, for instance, or perhaps traces of the past—elevate in a spectator's hierarchy of attention from discarded background detail to foregrounded information pregnant with implications. When this same approach is applied to human subjects, as in the sustained studies of Aurore Clément in repose that pepper *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna* or the entrancing close-up of Stanislas Merhar that concludes *Almayer's Folly,* it treats the audience to a degree of facial detail and psychological nuance that commercial narrative cinema rarely has the time for, in addition to illuminating Akerman's remarkable faith in her actors.

This directorial ethic of imposing a fixed composition on an environment but also allowing a degree of spontaneity within that mediated space can be traced to a larger dialectic of disorder and order that often governs Akerman's films, most famously in the shocking denouement of *Jeanne Dielman*, which exposes the anxiety and frustration lurking beneath quotidian ritual. This longstanding motif can, and has, been probed along a multitude of interpretive lines, from the analysis of labor as an internalization of Jewish trauma to the exploration of how Akerman's films present a world in perpetual resistance to patriarchal norms. While such avenues are fruitful and no doubt substantiated in large part by the films themselves, the cumulative impact of Akerman's cinema is thornier and more deeply felt than any master reading accounts for. Of her rigorously spare *Hotel Monterey,* she once remarked that "it was my breathing that decided the length of my shots." Whether that's true or just a case of Akerman's youthful self-mythologization is a moot point. It may just be the best way to understand her films: despite their grace and poise, they're more physiological compulsions than cerebral realizations. – *Carson Lund*

Special thanks: Arianna Turci—Cinémathèque Royale, Brussels.

Chantal Akerman *FROM THE EAST* *Courtesy Icarus Films*

friday september 8 at 7pm
JEANNE DIELMAN, 23 QUAI DU COMMERCE, 1080 BRUXELLES

A chamber drama; a revenge film; a structuralist experiment; a feminist deflation of the male-dominated sphere of narrative cinema; a daring test of viewer patience and the limits of a 35mm film roll; a canny exercise in the most rudimentary tenets of filmic suspense; a catalogue of the patterns and textures of 1970s Brussels; a thorough spatial study of a single apartment within that city; a touching tribute to the domestic labors of a mother; and an incidental step-by-step instructional video on home-cooking essentials—the inexhaustibility of Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman* is such that no cursory categorization of it suffices. Belatedly released in the United States on the currents of growing countercultural hype, the film, which charts several days in the life of a stay-at-home matriarch played by Delphine Seyrig, was positioned by *Village Voice* critic J. Hoberman at the time as an artistic apex within the structuralist strand of the avant-garde. Now, it can be seen as even more monumental in its film-historical significance; its formal rigor, while deeply indebted to the artisanal filmmaking that preceded it, also sends ripples across the history of international arthouse cinema, having affected artists as disparate as Béla Tarr and Jiayin Liu.

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Delphine Seyrig, Jan Decorte, Henri Storck
France/Belgium 1975, 35mm, color, 200 min. French with English subtitles

friday september 15 at 7pm
NEWS FROM HOME

The vast gulf posed between public spaces and private emotions, long a thematic preoccupation for Akerman, received its most potent, distilled form with *News From Home*, a nakedly simple, remarkably affecting diary film made during Akerman's first tenure in New York. Juxtaposing documentary images of Manhattan streets with narrated letters addressed to Akerman by her mother overseas, the film creates an immediate dissonance between sound and image that goes unabated from beginning to end. The scenes captured at length by Akerman's 16mm camera describe a long-lost Big Apple of roads where trash blows like tumbleweed, of depopulated convenience stores and laundromats, and of imposing concrete slabs untainted by modern branding, forging an impression of both enveloping gloominess and endearing urban character. Akerman's complex relationship to the city is one of fascination and repulsion—further complicated by her evident nostalgia for home, which shows through even as the missives she impassively recites turn gradually from loving to hectoring. It's all capped by one of the director's greatest parting shots, a farewell to the city skyline that is simultaneously relieving and ominous.

Directed by Chantal Akerman
France/Belgium/West Germany 1976, DCP, color, 89 min. French with English subtitles

friday september 15 at 9:30pm
I… YOU… HE… SHE… (*JE TU IL ELLE*)

Akerman's debut feature, undertaken at the precocious age of twenty-three, casually and confidently subverts a number of cinematic conventions, from the three-act structure and the idea of confessional storytelling to even the most basic relationships between sound and image. The film's first act stays confined to a nondescript studio apartment where Akerman herself, playing a character presumably representing the titular "Je," lopes around in fixed long takes, her heart broken from the recent fallout of a relationship. The action is limited to her writing and rewriting of letters to her female lover (which Akerman reads in voiceover), her grief-binging on powdered sugar and her obsessive repositioning of the few pieces of furniture in her hovel, all of which poses an immediate challenge to any viewers with a low tolerance for visual and dramatic monotony. Finally, in step with the character's impatience, the film takes to the streets of Brussels, where she first hitchhikes with an unpleasant, sexually deprived trucker and subsequently finds her way to her ex-lover's apartment, where she then persists in coaxing a lovemaking session that's shown in lengthy real-time. The journey suggests an erotic picaresque, but

Chantal Akerman *I... YOU... HE... SHE...*

one shorn by Akerman's compositional distance and chiaroscuro lighting of any vicarious pleasure in the heroine's escapades.

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Chantal Akerman, Niels Arestrup, Claire Wauthion
France/Belgium 1974, DCP, b/w, 90 min. French with English subtitles

sunday september 17 at 5pm
CHANTAL AKERMAN PAR CHANTAL AKERMAN

The tradition of André Labarthe and Janine Bazin's television series *Cinéastes de notres temps* was always to employ one renowned filmmaker to document and appraise the working life of another. When asked to contribute to this tradition, Akerman facetiously offered herself as a subject and was surprised to find her proprietors obliging. The resulting program does not flow like a standard educational rundown of an artist's accomplishments and working methods; rather, it offers a window into Akerman's particular mindset in 1996, which is elucidated in the lengthy monologue from the director herself that opens the film. Speaking candidly from her apartment, Akerman elaborates on her life and work, saving few kind words for the bureaucratic processes inherent in producing motion pictures, and generally avoiding any in-depth explication of the meaning of her films. Eventually, the hour-long program segues to an associative montage of moments from Akerman's ouevre, in the process teasing out echoes and dissonances across her body of shorts, features and documentaries. Functioning as both a primer for the uninitiated and a possible skeleton key for the devoted auteurist, *Chantal Akerman par Chantal Akerman* gives rare access to its maker's headspace.

Directed by Chantal Akerman
France 1996, digital video, color, 64 min. French with English subtitles

Chantal Akerman *GOLDEN EIGHTIES*

friday september 22 at 9pm
ALL NIGHT LONG (*TOUTE UNE NUIT*)

Time is a trudging inevitability in Akerman's early films, but in *Toute Une Nuit*, time will not move slow enough. The would-be lovers that comprise the film's dramatic personae—a cast of dozens, each receiving no more than a few minutes of screen time—are constantly coming up short of their moments of bliss within the compressed dusk-to-dawn structure, which takes inventory, in a series of short vignettes, of an evening of dalliances in summertime Brussels. Radically unhinged from any overarching dramatic through line, the film becomes an austere, nearly dialogue-free collage of romantic courtship and companionship in which yearning and frustration are the default emotions. Ecstasy, if and when it's attained, is impulsive and fleeting, and staged by Akerman via melodramatic MGM-like embraces that are stripped of surrounding audiovisual bombast. Lovers grip each other as if for the last time in darkened alleyways, stark apartment lobbies or seedy diners, but the camera offers no kinetic embellishments, only a stoical gaze from afar. The severe, flavorless surfaces of Brussels are the subject of *Toute Une Nuit;* the characters are just the tragicomic figurines passing by.

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Aurore Clément, Tchéky Karyo, Jan Decorte
France/Belgium/Netherlands/Canada 1982, 35mm, color, 90 min. French & English with English subtitles

saturday september 23 at 9pm
GOLDEN EIGHTIES

If the musical genre held latent sway on previous Akerman films like *Toute une Nuit* and *One Day Pina Asked…*, it is fully embraced in *Golden Eighties,* the director's first truly commercially viable feature. Starring Delphine Seyrig alongside a handful of female co-stars as shopkeepers and retail workers in the *Toison D'Or* mall, the film offers a burst of collective girlish energy almost as buoyant and unrestrained as in a Jacques Demy picture, though Akerman is sure to pepper her ensemble narrative with intimations of past trauma (the Holocaust lingers in characters' backstories) and contemporary economic anxieties. The men in the story are either remote or, in the case of Jeanne's past lover who materializes in the mall after a decade of postwar estrangement, filled with empty promises—all the better to focus attention on the jubilantly choreographed song-and-dance bits, which play like budget versions of Busby Berkeley numbers recorded by an especially exacting camera. Meanwhile, the transparently chintzy shopping mall itself, initially a space of glittering promise, gradually becomes as impersonal as a train station in *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna*.

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Myriam Boyer, John Berry, Delphine Seyrig
France/Belgium/Switzerland 1986, DCP, color, 96 min. French with English subtitles

friday september 29 at 9pm
FROM THE EAST (*D'EST*)

One of Akerman's most formidable documentaries, *D'Est* charts the filmmaker's personal odyssey across Western Europe shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union. As a travelogue conducted without commentary, it is one of Akerman's most visually arresting films, communicating conflicting, ambivalent ideas about the collision between tradition and modernity entirely through layered tableaux. There's an aleatory choreography of people, vehicles and environments in these shots—some static, some moving—that could almost be mistaken for Jacques Tati's were it not for the sobering tone. Over the course of her trip, which passes from East Germany all the way to the heart of Moscow, Akerman photographs sleepy rural scenes, overcrowded urban spaces, sedate domestic interiors and a seemingly endless procession of train station and bus queues where uprooted civilians, draped in heavy winter attire and luggage, await whatever comes next. Beginning in sunny quietude and ending in fierce snow squalls, the film seems to anticipate hardship for the future, but is nonetheless possessed of an unstoppable life force—one written on the weathered faces of the subjects and in the restless lateral movement of Akerman's dollying camera.

Directed by Chantal Akerman
France/Belgium/Portugal 1993, digital video, color, 110 min. French with English subtitles

Chantal Akerman *HOTEL MONTEREY*

sunday october 1 at 7pm
ALMAYER'S FOLLY (*LA FOLIE ALMAYER*)

Akerman's penultimate film was her final brush with narrative and only her second literary adaptation. After taking on the elasticity of Proust with *The Captive,* the director turned to the trenchant political prose of Joseph Conrad for *Almayer's Folly*, finding in the author's eponymous antihero a man acutely and tragically cognizant of the passing of time and the long-term effects of his own misjudged actions. Never one to limit her focus, however, Akerman pays equal attention to the white colonialist's mixed-race daughter, who finally attempts to escape her loving but controlling patriarch in one of the film's several sublime examples of long-take choreography. In migrating the tale from Conrad's 19th century French Indochina to 1950s Malaysia, Akerman is able to tie one man's gradual recognition of his own greed to the larger collapse of European empire, while also gaining richly atmospheric environments in which to film, from the clammy, neon-lit underbelly of riverfront port city Phnom Penh to the overgrown jungle where Almayer holes up in anticipation of riches. Dean Martin songs and Mozart movements waft through this thick, humid atmosphere, providing a fitting sense of cultural displacement to this dark, pitiless meditation on the existential dead end of imperialism.

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Stanislas Merhar, Marc Barbé, Aurora Marion
Belgium/France 2011, 35mm, color, 127 min. French, English and Khmer with English subtitles

Chantal Akerman *ALMAYER'S FOLLY*

friday october 6 at 7pm
MEETINGS WITH ANNA
(*LES RENDEZ-VOUS D'ANNA*)

Set largely in train stations, hotels and taxicabs, *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna* is a film locked in a spatiotemporal limbo, a pointed departure from the fixed domesticity of *Jeanne Dielman*. The story's rootlessness is inspired by Akerman's own as a filmmaker enjoying relative international renown in the mid seventies. Her titular heroine, a taciturn director on a border-crossing trip to Cologne to attend a screening of her work. That Anna's most emotionally charged *rendez-vous*, among a handful of less fulfilling interactions dramatized over the course of the film, occurs with her mother during a brief stopover in her hometown of Brussels, makes the connection especially palpable and lends the film its harrowing interplay between Anna's inchoate longing for independence and her equally persuasive need for familial comforts. At once a damning exploration of collective European existential malaise post-WWII, a quietly wrenching coming-out drama, and a haunting purgatorial tour of anonymous metropolitan spaces (each photographed with breathtaking formal precision by Jean Penzer), *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna* is Akerman's confident first step into more conventional narrative territory.

Chantal Akerman *MEETINGS WITH ANNA*

Directed by Chantal Akerman. With Aurore Clément, Helmut Griem, Magali Noël
France/Belgium/West Germany 1978, DCP, color, 127 min. French with English subtitles

saturday october 7 at 9pm
ONE DAY PINA ASKED…
(*UN JOUR PINA A DEMANDÉ*)

Early on in *One Day Pina Asked…*, one of the performers in experimental German choreographer Pina Bausch's troupe has a candid moment with the camera in which he demonstrates his knowledge of sign language by translating a George Gershwin ballad in real time, a skill that so moved his instructor, she later integrated it into an act. Akerman's fiercely unconventional "documentary" on Bausch's work, which only fleetingly records the maverick herself, illustrates her essence through such instances when her unseen guidance unlocks the potential of her disciples. In long, transfixing episodes uninterrupted by cuts, Akerman documents the rehearsals and performances conducted under Bausch's tutelage, which suggest expressionistic burlesques of everyday behavior that transform ritual into carnal outbursts or surreal repetitions. If Bausch's work represents a concerted effort to find roiling undercurrents of human passion beneath numbing quotidian horror (like Akerman's mother, she was a child of the war years), it's a mission aligned with that of the filmmaker influenced by her, who at one point appears onscreen to note, with an appreciative ambiguity, the "moments in which I felt I had to defend myself from what was being expressed."

Directed by Chantal Akerman
France/Belgium 1983, digital video, color, 57 min. French with English subtitles

sunday october 22 at 4:30pm
HOTEL MONTEREY

In her first substantial experiment in duration, Akerman and cinematographer Babette Mangolte set about gradually ascending the floors of a fleabag motel in Manhattan over the course of a single day, pausing throughout to scrutinize the building's nether regions in intense, uninterrupted takes. The result, a silent visual poem running a fleet but dense 65 minutes, excavates a looming current of sadness and dread in musty lobbies, creaky elevators and poorly lit hallways, the frozen camera only incidentally happening upon patrons, many of whom appear to be literally stuck in place. As it rises toward an eventual release from the interior space, Akerman breaks the stasis for a ghostly slow-motion slide down a top-floor hallway toward a window and back—a dolly move that's then reprised multiple times in a row under various lighting conditions. Such a maneuver invokes Akerman's affinity with structuralist practitioners like Ernie Gehr and Michael Snow (artists whose work she was encountering for the first time while living in New York), and yet *Hotel Monterey* belies any sense of intellectualized calculation, maintaining instead an eerie, precarious balance between trance and sheer mundanity.

Directed by Chantal Akerman
Belgium/US 1972, DCP, color, silent, 63 min

Chantal Akerman *ONE DAY PINA ASKED...* *Courtesy Icarus Films*

SATURDAY MATINEE

SEPTEMBER 9 – NOVEMBER 18

On Saturday afternoons the Harvard Film Archive presents monthly screenings of family-friendly features and shorts for children, teenagers and their families. Whether drawn from the HFA collection, fellow film archives, or from international cutting-edge festivals, these classic and contemporary films are screened in their original formats and are guaranteed to expand young and older minds alike. The special admission fee for these daytime screenings is only $5 and the rewards of regular attendance are immeasurable. – *Karin Kolb*

Special thanks: Robert Diestelrath and Karin Oehlenschläger—Goethe-Institut and Matt Pierson.

$5 SPECIAL ADMISSION

saturday september 9 at 3pm

AT EYE LEVEL (*AUF AUGENHÖHE*)

Goldbrunner's and Dollhopf's feature film debut is a testament to the remarkable relationships that are only possible when perspectives are broadened and individuals embrace each other's differences. Eleven-year-old Michi lives in a group home. His dream of finding his unknown father seems to come true after he discovers an unsent letter from his late mother. But Michi is surprised to find out that he and his long lost dad are the same height, and soon discovers they have even more in common than other sons and fathers. Their blossoming relationship is eventually put to the test. Filled with witty dialogue and shot by one of the Germany's great cinematographers, Jürgen Jürges, *At Eye Level* won audience awards at numerous film festivals as well as the German Film Critics' Award for Best Children's Film of the Year. *Supported by the Goethe-Institut Boston.*

Age recommendation 12+ *(Content Advisory: coarse language, derogatory language and actions, and some sexual references)*

Directed by Joachim Dollhopf and Evi Goldbrunner. With Luis Vorbach, Jordan Prentice, Ella Frey
Germany 2016, DCP, color, 98 min. German with English subtitles

Joachim Dollhopf & Evi Goldbrunner *AT EYE LEVEL*

Tim Burton *FRANKENWEENIE*

$5 SPECIAL ADMISSION

saturday october 28 at 3pm

FRANKENWEENIE

Frankenweenie is Tim Burton's sweetly macabre homage to gothic horror and an expanded revision of his 1984 stop-motion animated short. High costs initially prohibited completion of Burton's feature film about a young boy who brings his beloved pet dog back to life with a Frankensteinian science experiment. After winning two Academy Awards for *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), the then twelfth highest-earning film of all time, Burton's standing radically changed. Eighteen years later, using his original 1984 drawings, the director was able to complete the full-length film, produced by the same studio that would not release the earlier short, considering it too morbid.

Age recommendation: 10+ *(Content Advisory: thematic elements, scary images and action)*

Directed by Tim Burton. With Charlie Tahan, Martin Short, Catherine O'Hara
US 2012, 35mm, b/w, 97 min

$5 SPECIAL ADMISSION

saturday november 18 at 3pm

GOOD-BYE, MY LADY

[*My Lady*] is a Basenji dog (sometimes said to be able to "laugh and cry, but not bark"), one of the most memorable canine performers in the history of film. The title relates to the touching and real relationship between the young orphan boy and the dog… It's the kind of relationship that most films miss or fake; here everything is concrete, emotions as well as the vision of nature, the swamp, the forest.

The film, one of the finest in Wellman's oeuvre and the kind of pastoral masterpiece that every great American director was due to sign at some time or other, is about an old man and a boy, both excellent as played by Walter Brennan (one of the greatest roles of that actor so dear to all of us) and Brandon de Wilde, in a relationship where both change as human beings. That is the film's beautifully-conveyed leitmotif.

It's Americana at the root level, as basic as the purest Hemingway short stories or moments that Flaherty captured on film. Like the more famous *The Yearling* (Clarence Brown) but with all the Hollywood characteristics wiped away, running underneath it all is a sense of sad tenderness, the knowledge that every age, and becoming an adult and being accepted as a true member of a community, requires something and sometimes almost too much. – *Peter von Bagh*

Age recommendation: 10+

Directed by William Wellman. With Walter Brennan, Brandon de Wilde, Sidney Poitier
US 1956, 35mm, b/w, 95 min

William Wellman *GOOD-BYE, MY LADY*

AN ETHICS OF OBSERVATION. FOUR FILMS BY WANG BING

SEPTEMBER 9 – SEPTEMBER 30

Over the course of the last fifteen years, Wang Bing (b. 1967) has established himself as one of the few truly vital, original and urgent voices in contemporary documentary cinema, unparalleled in both his native China and elsewhere in the world. Extending the resolute legacy of cinema verité powerhouse Frederick Wiseman, Wang has defined a willfully unruly yet deeply empathetic humanism, guided by a tireless, soulfully compassionate camera that patiently chronicles the everyday lives of peasants, workers and drifters while skillfully setting them off against the vast and impossible landscapes of 21st century China. The films of Wang Bing categorically refuse the folksy and saccharine "character-driven stories" and bumper-sticker sloganism stoking the engorged market for easily streamable and digestible nonfiction cinema in today's so-called Golden Age of Documentary. With brave candor and humility, Wang has dedicated himself to a mode of observational cinema that effaces its maker by insisting on the irreducible specificity of the unique lives ever-unfolding within his films and never forcing any individual figure or story to simply serve as emblem or microcosm of a larger condition. Wang's recent films allow unfettered access to some of China's most unsettling problems: draconian socioeconomic injustice and disparity; a surging population of displaced and unemployed men and women; adults and children drifting in the squalid margins of society in desperate search of steady work. Yet the revelations and enlightenment that comes from experiencing a Wang Bing film derive also from the raw beauty, tenderness and stark brutality of his imagery. The hard but deeply rewarding labor of witnessing, and therefore participating in, Wang Bing's cinema elevates it to another level seldom achieved by documentary today. – HG

Wang Bing *THREE SISTERS* *Courtesy Icarus Films*

saturday september 9 at 7pm
saturday september 30 at 4pm
THREE SISTERS (*SAN ZIMEI*)

High in the remote Yunnan Mountains live three sisters, ages ten, six and four, abandoned by their mother and left largely alone by a father who must travel vast distances in search of work. This heart-wrenching portrait of family and fidelity is grounded in the remarkable intimacy of camera and subject that is Wang's extraordinary gift, allowing us to not only observe but to seemingly be a part of the daily rituals and rhythms of the girls, who miraculously never appear to struggle against their plight, instead abiding almost entirely within the everyday. *Three Sisters* is one of Wang's most stark, elemental and beautiful films; a raw, unconventional beauty derives from the truth and subtlety of the unstated but everywhere palpable bonds connecting the children and their father, despite the distances and hardships that threaten to tear them asunder.

Directed by Wang Bing
France/Hong Kong 2016, DCP, color, 153 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

sunday september 10 at 7pm
BITTER MONEY (*KU QIAN*)

A restless energy drives *Bitter Money*'s portrayal of the difficult lives of migrant garment workers who travel from rural Yunnan to the eastern city of Huzhou in search of scarce jobs and security. Like its uprooted subjects, *Bitter Money* seems to be ceaselessly searching for a center, a point of stability in a world set adrift by sleepless sweatshops and the crowds of slave laborers who fuel the world's insatiable appetite for cheap and disposable goods. *Bitter Money* is arguably Wang's most abstract film, the work that moves toward yet ultimately denies a socioeconomic vantage point able to survey a larger terrain. Instead Wang is drawn, again and again, to the individual lives unraveling slowly before his camera, trapped in a desperate cycle of endless work and impossible debt, an existential condition rarely rendered with such sadness and truth than in Wang's uncompromised cinema.

Directed by Wang Bing
China/France 2017, DCP, color, 152 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

saturday september 16 at 7pm
'TIL MADNESS DO US PART (*FENG AI*)

'Til Madness Do Us Part announced Wang Bing as the authentic heir to Frederick Wiseman with its gripping, shape-shifting portrait of an isolated "asylum" whose exact mission remains troublingly unclear throughout the film's almost four-hour length. Simultaneously prison, hospital and refuge, the unnamed institution is peopled by a sprawling community of patients/inmates who range from the clearly insane to incarcerated petty criminals to others who have been simply deposited by families unable to care for their weakest or eldest members. Shot over the course of two-and-a-half months, *'Til Madness Do Us Part* takes place almost entirely within a single all-male floor of the asylum, resulting in a film that restores the true meaning of the term immersive now used too frequently to superficially describe contemporary moving image art. Following Wang's restless, gliding camera, the viewer drifts through the asylum, gently observing but never privileging any of the men who drift, tranquilized, stunned, sleepless, lost. Never settling upon a single figure, *'Til Madness Do Us Part* is instead a choral and decentered film that tests our roles as privileged viewers and as extensions of the cinema's surveillance apparatus. So engrossed, so immersed are we that a sudden burst of freedom becomes disorienting, unnatural, as we realize that we have become accustomed to the fluid enclosure of the asylum, where night is day and day is night.

Directed by Wang Bing
Japan/France/Hong Kong 2016, DCP, color, 238 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

monday september 18 at 7pm
TA'ANG

With *Ta'ang,* Wang offers invaluable and deeply moving cinematic testimony to the terrible plight of refugees victimized by the intractable conflicts that enflame so much of today's world yet rarely receive the attention or solutions they so urgently demand. *Ta'ang* is named for the Burmese ethnic minorities driven from Myanmar by the still-raging war between the Burmese Army and a strong insurgent movement that includes troops of the Ta'ang National Liberation Army. Wang's haunting film inhabits the fragile camps and shelters of the refugees squatting in the border nether-zone, fleeing from the imminent threat of violence embodied in the quickening sound of bombs that recurs throughout the film's second half. At the heart of *Ta'ang* are the whispering groups that huddle quietly around the firesides at night, telling stories, sharing cold comforts and creating a vital yet fleeting community trapped in an anxious waiting, bravely resolute despite the imminent threat of extinction.

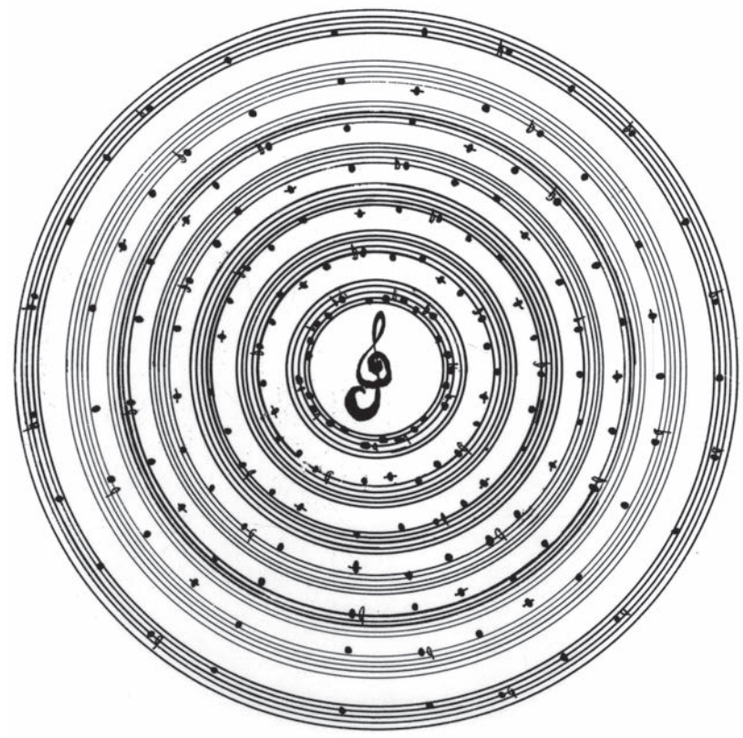
Directed by Wang Bing
Hong Kong/France 2017, DCP, color, 148 min. Burmese & Mandarin with English subtitles

Wang Bing *BITTER MONEY* *Courtesy Icarus Films*

SYNAESTHETIC CINEMA: MINIMALIST MUSIC AND FILM

SEPTEMBER 11 – SEPTEMBER 30

In his book *Expanded Cinema*—a landmark of psychedelic cinema studies—Gene Youngblood writes that synaesthesis is "the harmony of different or opposing influences produced by a work of art," and that synaesthetic cinema is "the only aesthetic language suited to contemporary life." For Youngblood, synaesthetic cinema meant the end of narrative: a time when film becomes purely a language of light, space and sound. Watching some of the films that influenced his utopian pronouncements, one can understand his outlook. With few exceptions, the films in this program are not only without narrative, they are also without dialogue. All of them use what is now called minimalist music, combined with lush visuals, in an attempt to guide viewers toward hypnotic states. In Youngblood's taxonomy, "synaesthesia" and "psychedelic" are synonymous.



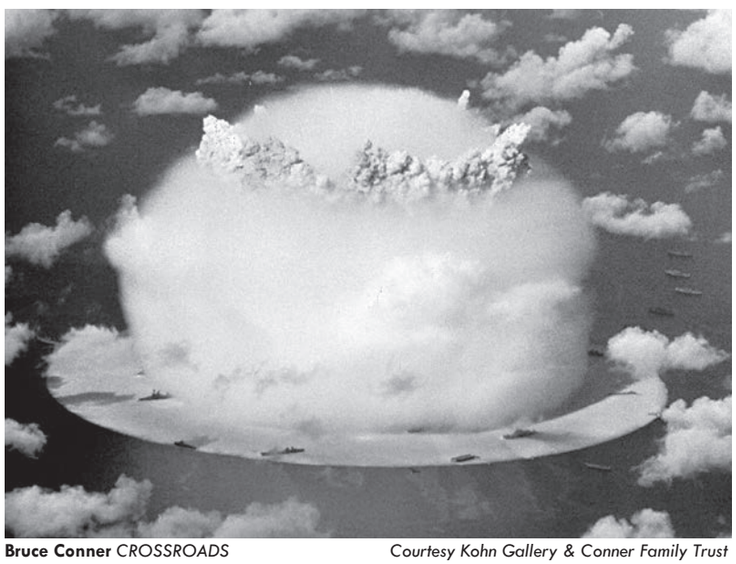
Terry Riley's score for 'In C'

Like many art forms that originated in the avant-garde, minimalist music has come to seem almost hackneyed, the sonic background to Hollywood blockbusters and television advertisements. But the early years of minimalist composition saw quite a different reality, with current cultural icons like Philip Glass and Steve Reich being vilified in print and even attacked onstage. In fact, the music of Glass and Reich, as well as their counterparts La Monte Young and Terry Riley, originated in a heady mix of underground activity in the cinema, music, painting and sculpture in California and New York in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Young, the least known of the four major minimalist composers, is now generally thought to have launched the movement with his long tone compositions while a graduate student in Berkeley. Riley and Reich worked with Young at Berkeley and later, after Young had decamped to New York, with composers Morton Subotnick and Pauline Oliveros at the San Francisco Tape Center. Influenced by the drone tones they heard in Indian and North African music, as well as reacting to the teleological bent of western classical music, Young, Riley and Reich, each in their different ways, built the foundations of musical minimalism. Glass arrived at a similar place through different means. He was at Juilliard when Young, Reich, and Riley's early performances were happening in New York, before leaving to study in Paris for the last years of the Sixties. There he encountered Indian music through Ravi Shankar and other non-Western music during an epic journey on foot from Istanbul to India.

Minimalist composition can be roughly divided into composers that work with long-held tones and stasis—the drone—and composers that use repeating patterns of a small number of notes and limited dynamics. Young is the foremost composer of the drone. After moving to New York, he teamed up with his life partner Marian Zazeela, a Welsh violist named John Cale, the somewhat mysterious poet and drummer Angus MacLise, and musician and filmmaker Tony Conrad (Harvard College '62) to form the Theatre of Eternal Music. This group specialized in long drone-based performances. Those familiar with The Velvet Underground will recognize the sounds, as both Cale and MacLise were original members of that band. Riley's music had a lighter touch, and while it stayed aligned to the drone, it developed more cyclical patterns on top, where a small set of notes were repeated for a great length of time. (Reich did drone-based soundtrack work in the sixties for Robert Nelson, whose films were shown at the HFA this past spring.)

Both the drone-based and heavily repetitive styles melded well with the experimental cinema being produced in the US underground at the time. The non-narrative, exuberant swirl of bodies and colors in *Chumlum* and *The Invasion of Thunderbolt Pagoda* is heightened by the incessant droning repetition of the MacLise and Conrad soundtracks. Likewise, the slowed-down action of the three Bruce Conner films harmonizes with the cyclical repetitions of Riley's music.

The film that brought minimalist scoring to a wider audience is Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi*, a surprise art house hit in 1983. Glass' exuberant score brought in many of the same elements heard in the underground films, although the increased texture and variety of the score sometimes feel more maximal than minimal. The film points both backward—Allen Ginsberg, Peter Orlovsky and Jonas Mekas are all thanked in the credits—and forward toward a future where a minimalist toolkit would be applied by all manner of composers to all manner of film and video.



Bruce Conner *CROSSROADS* *Courtesy Kohn Gallery & Conner Family Trust*

Some of the rich veins of experimental music are still being explored. Scottish artist Luke Fowler brings the series into the present with his subjective documentary on the lesser-known composer Martin Bartlett, who, though he studied with Riley, Pran Nath, and Oliveros, left behind few commercial recordings prior to his death in 1993. Fowler's work collages footage of Bartlett performances, along with letters and other material from his archive to create a dreamlike portrait of an artist worth (re)discovery. – *Reed Lowrie, Manager, Reference and Information Services, Cabot Lamont and Widener Libraries*

Curated by Reed Lowrie.

Special thanks: Michelle Silva.

monday september 11 at 7pm

Godfrey Reggio spent his teenage years and much of his twenties in a monastery in Louisiana. When he made *Koyaanisqatsi*, not only had he never made a film, he had seen very few films. He sought out Philip Glass to score the film despite Glass only having done film music for an obscure documentary in the seventies. From this meeting a long partnership was born. While the music in *Koyaanisqatsi* is more varied than that in the previous programs, the repetition and drive of Riley, and the drone of Young, can

both be heard at various points in the film. The combination of sped-up footage of assembly lines and city crowds with the propulsive Glass music reaches again toward the hypnotic.

In *Koyaanisqatsi*, Reggio is acutely concerned with technology and its effect on human relations to the natural world. Technology, in fact the dissemination of moving images themselves, is the subject of the short film *Evidence*, which captures children watching television in a hypnotized state, as the film's audience is similarly hypnotized by Glass' score.

EVIDENCE
Directed by Godfrey Reggio
US 1995, 35mm, color, 8 min

KOYAANISQATSI
Directed by Godfrey Reggio
US 1982, 35mm, color, 87 min

Godfrey Reggio *KOYAANISQATSI*

sunday september 24 at 7pm

Chumlum and *The Invasion of Thunderbolt Pagoda* are two of the more purely psychedelic films of the sixties. *Chumlum* was filmed during breaks in the production of Jack Smith's *Normal Love* and captures a who's who of the downtown underground, including Smith, Francis Francine, Beverly Grant (later married to Tony Conrad), and Warhol associates Gerard Malanga and Mario Montez. Smith appears again in *Invasion*, where the swirling colors, shapes and textures of *Chumlum* are sent into overdrive, blasting toward a psychedelic and synaesthetic space; MacLise's soundtracks work with the overpowering visuals to drive the viewer toward an hypnotic state.

Conrad attempts a similar experience using film itself as the medium. *Straight and Narrow* is an example of the minimalism of the art and music worlds being taken into the cinema. A gentler strobe film than his infamous *The Flicker,* the percussive soundtrack and alternating bars of light push the receptive viewer toward a trancelike state.

In Between the Notes is a short documentary on the Hindustani singer Pandit Pran Nath, who was extremely influential on both Young and Riley. The roots of MacLise's music, and many other minimalist composers, can be found in Pran Nath's work.

Tony & Beverly Conrad *STRAIGHT AND NARROW*
Courtesy Anthology Film Archives

CHUMLUM
Directed by Ron Rice. Soundtrack by Angus MacLise and Tony Conrad
US 1964, 16mm, color, 23 min

STRAIGHT AND NARROW
Directed by Tony and Beverly Conrad. Soundtrack by John Cale and Terry Riley
US 1970, 16mm, b/w, 10 min

THE INVASION OF THUNDERBOLT PAGODA
Directed by Ira Cohen. Soundtrack by Angus MacLise
US 1968, digital video, color, 22 min

IN BETWEEN THE NOTES
Directed by William Farley
US 1986, digital video, color, 28 min

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
MUSICAL PERFORMANCE BY ERNST KAREL
monday september 25 at 7pm

Electro-Pythagoras is a meditation on Martin Bartlett, a lesser-known composer who studied with both Terry Riley and Pandit Pran Nath. Using footage and papers from Bartlett's archive—Bartlett died of AIDS in 1993—Luke Fowler's film plays with sound and image to create a dreamlike portrait of Bartlett's final years. The film will be followed by a live performance of sound artist Ernst Karel performing *Glyphs*, a piece based on tapes from Bartlett's archive.

Luke Fowler *ELECTRO-PYTHAGORAS*

ELECTRO-PYTHAGORAS
(A PORTRAIT OF MARTIN BARTLETT)
Directed by Luke Fowler
UK 2016, 35mm, color, 45 min

GLYPHS
Live performance by Ernst Karel, 45 min

saturday september 30 at 7pm

While both La Monte Young and Terry Riley were originally from the American west, Young's move to New York and work with the Theatre of Eternal Music found him in contact with some of the darker strains of the Sixties counterculture. Riley's music, while only marginally less rigorous than Young's (no one is more rigorous than La Monte Young), maintained a lightness that can be seen in all the works here. Bruce Conner was a Californian and spent most of his life in the Golden State. One of his sojourns outside of it was to Mexico, where, in 1963, he searched the countryside with Timothy Leary for psychedelic mushrooms. This experience in captured in *Looking for Mushrooms*, with the soundtrack Riley's "Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band" (an earlier version used The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows"). *Easter Morning* is accompanied by the epic "In C", often errantly described as the first minimalist composition. "In C" is a circular score that can be played by any number of performers on any number of instruments; in this case, the music is played on traditional Chinese instruments.

Ron Rice *CHUMLUM* *Courtesy Anthology Film Archives*

We end with one of Gene Youngblood's favorites, *Music with Balls*, a "fabulously rich mantra of color, sound and motion…. The composition builds from placid serenity to chaotic cacophony to bubbly melodiousness with a mad yet purposive grace."

LOOKING FOR MUSHROOMS
Directed by Bruce Conner
US 1967/1996, 16mm, color, 14 min

CROSSROADS
Directed by Bruce Conner
US 1976, 16mm, b/w, 36 min

EASTER MORNING
Directed by Bruce Conner
US 1966/2008, DCP, color, 10 min

MUSIC WITH BALLS
Directed by Terry Riley
US 1968, digital video, color, 24 min

CINEMA OF RESISTANCE

SEPTEMBER 17 – NOVEMBER 13

At a time when so many feel called to resist the White House's attacks on numerous fronts, we at the HFA feel compelled to do our part. Cinema has always been a method of examining the world as it is, with the possibility of raising understanding, inspiring change, and imagining other possibilities. *Cinema of Resistance* is a monthly series of films that embraces these alternate possibilities, animated by the spirit of protest and designed to call out oppression and demand justice. These screenings will be designed to spark discussion, beginning in our theater directly after the screening. – DP

El mar la mar *is presented in partnership with the Film Study Center, Harvard.*

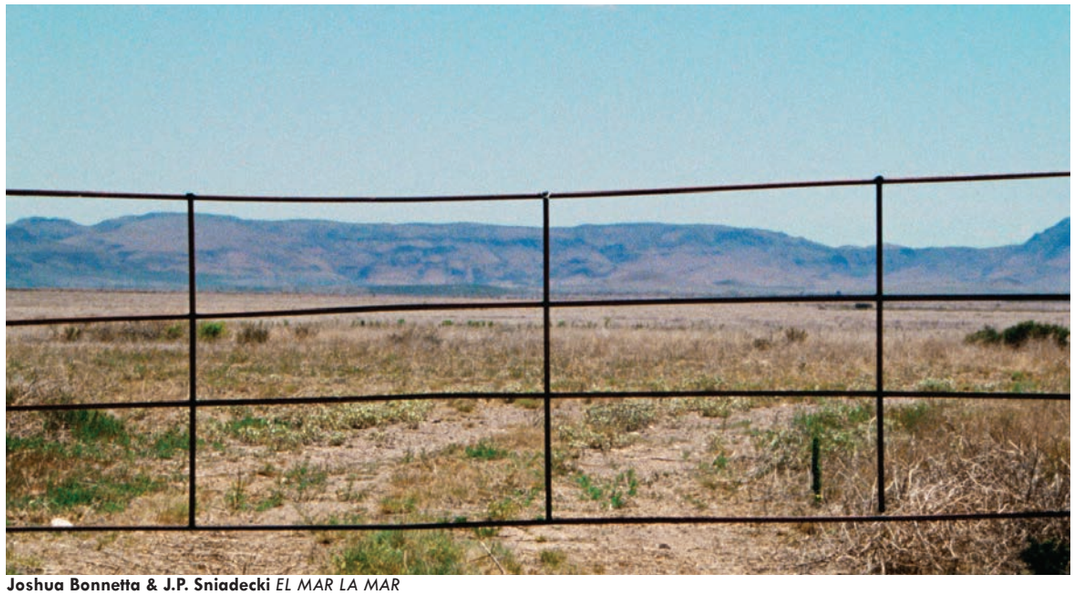
JOSHUA BONNETTA & J.P. SNIADECKI IN PERSON

sunday september 17 at 7pm

EL MAR LA MAR

Shot over several years in the Sonoran Desert near the US/Mexico border, Joshua Bonnetta and J.P. Sniadecki's intensely complex and transcendent El mar la mar weaves together oral histories of desert border stories with hand-processed, grainy 16mm images of the flora, fauna and those who trespass the mysterious terrain, riddled with items its travelers have left behind. A sonically rich soundtrack adds another, sometimes eerie, dimension; the call of birds and other nocturnal noises invisibly populate the austere landscape. Over a black screen, people speak of their intense, mythic experiences in the desert: A man tells of a fifteen-foot-tall monster said to haunt the region, while a border patrolman spins a similarly bizarre tale of man versus beast. The majority of *El mar la mar* occurs in darkness—often with only traces of light outlining the figures moving in the night—leaving exposed the sharp edges of a fatally inscribed line. Emerging from the ethos of Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab, Sniadecki's attentive documentary approach conspires supernaturally with Bonnetta's meditations on the materiality of film. Their stunning collaboration is a mystical, folktale-like atmosphere dense with the remains of desire, memories and ghosts.

Directed by Joshua Bonnetta and J.P. Sniadecki
US 2017, DCP, color, 94 min. English and Spanish with English subtitles



Joshua Bonnetta & J.P. Sniadecki *EL MAR LA MAR*

monday october 9 at 7pm

STORM OVER ASIA *AKA* THE HEIR OF GENGHIS KHAN (*POTOMOK CHINGIS-KHAN*)

See description in Cinema That Shook the World *program notes page 20.*

Directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin. With Valerie Inkizhinov, A.P. Chistiakov, A. Dedintzyev
USSR 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 120 min. Russian intertitles with English subtitles

monday november 13 at 7pm

THROW AWAY YOUR BOOKS, RALLY IN THE STREETS (*SHO O SUTEYO MACHI E DEYOU*)

See description in Shuji Terayama program notes page 31.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Hideaki Sasaki, Masaharu Saito, Yukiko Kobayashi
Japan 1971, 35mm, color & b/w, 137 min. Japanese with English subtitles

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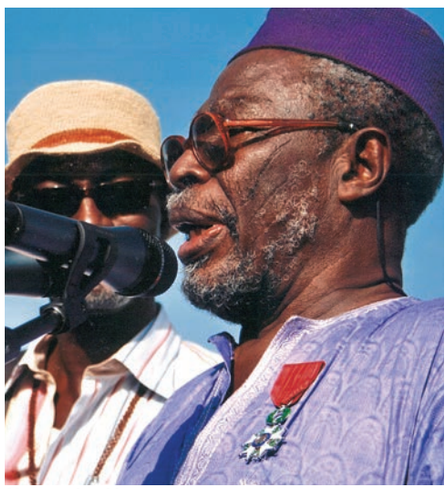
THE MCMILLAN-STEWART FELLOWSHIP: A TRIBUTE TO MOUSTAPHA ALASSANE

SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 1



Moustapha Alassane

It is no exaggeration to declare Moustapha Alassane (1942-2015) a truly foundational figure in African cinema. As a young boy growing up in the small town of Ayorou in Niger, he dreamed of moving images and invented his own form of shadow puppets. By the late 1950s, he was an illustrator associated with the Niamey Museum, where he met Jean Rouch, who recognized the young man's talent and urged him to turn toward cinema.

Like so many newly independent nations in Africa in the third quarter of the twentieth century, Niger took pride in its nascent national cinema, although the level of state support was weak there compared to Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, for example. Two years after Niger became independent in 1960, Alassane made the first Nigerien film, *Aoure*, a narrative short, while beginning to experiment with animation. After travels to France and Canada, Alassane returned to Niger to make his most ambitious film yet, *The Return of an Adventurer*. Deeply influential in western Africa and indeed across the continent, it announced the arrival of a new kind of African filmmaking: one that was aware of cinema elsewhere but maintained its aesthetic independence.

Alassane went on to make two feature films, *F.V.V.A.* and *Toula*, that each, in very different ways, sought to acknowledge the emergence of a modern Niger and its difficult negotiation of traditional ways in a world dominated by consumer capitalism. In these films and in his animated shorts, Alassane continued a subtle and sly critique of the political and economic powers that be in contemporary Africa, but, as the initial wave of enthusiasm and resources supporting Nigerien cinema waned, so did his output.

Alassane became a distributor and an exhibitor by the end of the 1970s, eventually establishing his own animation studio in Niger, where he experimented with animation software and stop-motion filmmaking until the end of his life.

The jury for the McMillan-Stewart Fellowship had decided to award him the 2016 fellowship when his death was announced. Now that the Institut Français has assembled a near-complete retrospective of his films, the HFA, Harvard's Film Study Center and the McMillan-Stewart Foundation can present this tribute to Alassane as part of the fellowship's mission to promote awareness and research about his work. We hope to be able to add copies of his work to the McMillan-Stewart collection at the Archive and to support future preservation and restoration of Alassane's legacy. – DP

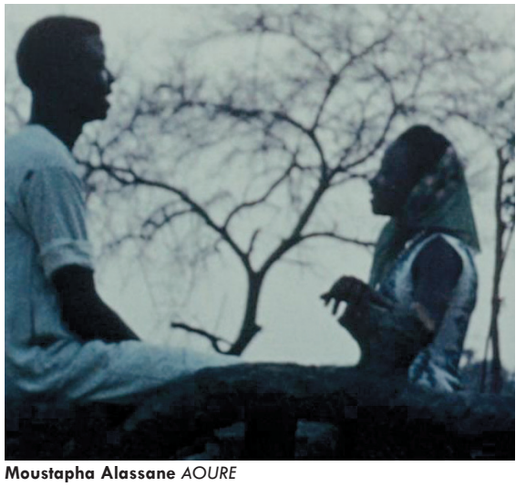
Original program organized by Josh Siegel (Museum of Modern Art, New York) and Amélie Garin-Davret (Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York).

Special thanks: Mati Diop; Lucien Castaing-Taylor—Film Study Center, Harvard; Mathieu Fournet—Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York; Véronique Joo'Aisenberg—Institut Français.

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS

FRENCH EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES

HIGHER EDUCATION, ARTS, FRENCH LANGUAGE



Moustapha Alassane *AOURE*

friday september 22 at 7pm

THE RETURN OF AN ADVENTURER

(*LE RETOUR D'UN AVENTURIER*)

This audacious film captures the exuberance of youth with the tale of a young man who returns to his small Nigerien home town from a trip to the US bearing a suitcase full of costumes fit for a Western. In no time, he and his friends are using both town and countryside as the set for their own Wild West adventure, but as their destructive abandon grows, the village elders take an increasingly dim view of their romps. The syncretism between tradition and modernity, Africa and beyond, implicitly proposed by Alassane proved to be influential to other African filmmakers, including Djibril Diop Mambety; this film would be a major inspiration on *Touki Bouki*.

Directed by Moustapha Alassane. With Ibrahim Yacouba, Zalika Souley, Abdou Nani
Niger 1966, 16mm, color, 34 min. French and Hausa with English subtitles

AOURE

Poles away from the rambunctiousness of *The Return of an Adventurer* is the evocative gentleness of *Aoure*, the elegantly simple tale of the courtship and marriage of a young couple in a Djerma village on the banks of the Niger. Alassane stages his narrative through episodes of everyday life as well as traditional Muslim celebrations.

Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 1962, 16mm, color, 30 min. French and Hausa with English subtitles

ALL THE COWBOYS ARE BLACK

(*TOUS LES COWBOYS SONT NOIRS*)

This making-of companion to *The Return of an Adventurer* revels in the high spirits that accompanied the creative chaos onscreen. It was directed by Serge Moati, one of Alassane's compatriots in the early days of Nigerien cinema.

Directed by Serge Moati
France 1966, 16mm, color, 16 min. French and Hausa with English subtitles

saturday september 23 at 7pm

TOULA (*TOULA OU LE GENIE DES EAUX*)

In the second of Alassane's two mid-1970s feature films, he gives one of his beloved legends a broad canvas on which to play. When drought strikes a village, all pray to a mysterious and enormous serpent that promises to bring rain—if the king's niece will be sacrificed to it. This mythic narrative serves as an allegorical cover for Alassane's concerns about a Niger whose political class had grown increasingly cautious, passive and corrupt. The tale provides the filmmaker ample room to explore the landscape of a country he clearly loves.

Directed by Moustapha Alassane. With Sotigui Kouyate, Damouré Zika, Solange Delanne
Niger 1973, digital video, color, 76 min. In French and Hausa with English subtitles

Preceded by

SHAKI

Shaki is a region of Niger where traditional systems of governance and belief have survived centuries of migration and colonization. Though more recent religions such as Islam and Protestantism thrive there, they must make way for far older rites and beliefs. This film is Alassane's ethnographic portrait of the region on the occasion of the coronation of a new tribal leader.

Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 1973, 16mm, color, 25 min. French and Hausa with English subtitles

Moustapha Alassane *BON VOYAGE SIM*

sunday september 24 at 5pm

TALL TALES AND SHORT FILMS

This program focusing on Alassane's animation begins the charming *Bon Voyage Sim*, an early and brief example of cel animation about a kingdom for frogs that nevertheless has a word of warning for political leaders. Next is an early live-action short, *The Ring of King Koda*, that reveals Alassane's love for the traditional tales of the region. The program concludes with two stop-motion animated films that were among Alassane's last. *Samba le Grand* is another legendary tale of love and adventure, while

Moustapha Alassane *KOKOA*

Moustapha Alassane *TOULA*

Kokoa is Alassane's hearty tribute to traditional wrestling.

BON VOYAGE SIM
Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 1966, 16mmm, b/w, 5 min

THE RING OF KING KODA (*LA BAGUE DU ROI KODA*)
Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 1962, 16mmm, color, 24 min. French with English subtitles

SAMBA LE GRAND
Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 1977, 16mm, color, 14 min. French with English subtitles

KOKOA
Directed by Moustapha Alassane
Niger 2001, 35mm, color, 14 min. French with English subtitles

friday september 29 at 7pm

F.V.V.A.

"F.V.V.A." stands for *femme, voiture, villa, argent,* or "wife, car, house, money," the attributes necessary to show you've got it made in Niger's nascent professional class circa 1972. The film begins as a touching portrait of a pair of urban newlyweds (perhaps the city cousins to the rural young lovers of *Aoure*) before switching into cautionary mode, as the two are caught between Niger's persistent underdevelopment and the inflated expectations of modern consumerism. Alassane's retreat from feature filmmaking after *F.V.V.A.* and *Toula* signaled also a retreat from social critique at a time when his prominent status could have made such gestures dangerous.

Directed by Moustapha Alassane. With Zalika Souley, Djingareye Maiga, Sotigui Kouyate
Niger 1972, 16mm, color, 73 min. French and Hausa with English subtitles

sunday october 1 at 4:30pm

MOUSTAPHA ALASSANE, CINEASTE OF THE POSSIBLE (*MOUSTAPHA ALASSANE, CINEASTE DU POSSIBLE*)

This portrait of Moustapha Alassane's life and work dates from near the end of his life. It includes his and his contemporaries' reminiscences and clips from all his work. It also includes precious footage of Alassane in his studio, long after his filmic output had slowed to a trickle, which shows him experimenting with new technology and hoping to continue his legacy by teaching new generations. It is not hard to see how the trajectory of Alassane's career parallels with African cinema as a whole: a triumphant early period followed by long years of defiant subsistence.

Directed by Christian Lelong and Maria Silvia Bazzoli
France 2008, digital video, color, 93 min. French with English subtitles

Moustapha Alassane *F.V.V.A.*

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SEPTEMBER 2017

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					01 **7PM** GRAND ILLUSION **9:30PM** CLUNY BROWN ***listings in the june - august 2017 calendar***	**02** **7PM** NIGHT OF THE VAMPIRE **P.2** **all-night movie marathon**
03	**04**	**05**	**06**	**07**	**08** **7PM** JEANNE DIELMAN, 23 QUAI DU COMMERCE, 1080 BRUXELLES **P. 4**	**09** **3PM** AT EYE LEVEL **P. 7** **special $5 admission** **7PM** THREE SISTERS **P. 8**
10 **7PM** BITTER MONEY **P. 8**	**11** **7PM** EVIDENCE **P. 9** KOYAANISQATSI **P. 9**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15** **7PM** NEWS FROM HOME **P. 4** **9:30PM** I... YOU... HE... SHE... **P. 4**	**16** **7PM** 'TIL MADNESS DO US PART **P. 8**
17 **5PM** CHANTAL AKERMAN PAR CHANTAL AKERMAN **P. 5** **7PM** EL MAR LA MAR **P. 11** **joshua bonnetta & j.p. sniadecki in person**	**18** **7PM** TA'ANG **P. 8**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22** **7PM** THE RETURN OF AN ADVENTURER AOURE ALL THE COWBOYS ARE BLACK **P. 12** **9PM** ALL NIGHT LONG **P. 5**	**23** **7PM** SHAKI TOULA **P. 12** **9PM** GOLDEN EIGHTIES **P. 5**
24 **5PM** TALL TALES AND SHORT FILMS **P. 12** **7PM** CHUMLUM THE INVASION OF THE THUNDERBOLT PAGODA IN BETWEEN THE NOTES **P. 10**	**25** **7PM** ELECTRO-PYTHORGAS GLYPHS **P. 10** **live perfomance by ernst karel**	**26**	**27**	**28** **7PM** AN EVENING WITH LAURIE SIMMONS **laurie simmons in person - free admission** ***see ccva website for details***	**29** **7PM** F.V.V.A. **P. 13** **9PM** FROM THE EAST **P. 5**	**30** **4PM** THREE SISTERS **P. 8** **7PM** LOOKING FOR MUSHROOMS CROSSROADS EASTER MORNING MUSIC WITH BALLS **P. 10**

Wang Bing *'TIL MADNESS DO US PART* **P. 8**

OCTOBER 2017

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
01 **4:30PM** MOUSTAPHA ALASSANE, CINEASTE OF THE POSSIBLE **P. 13** **7PM** ALMAYER'S FOLLY **P. 6**	**02** **7PM** IN THE STONE HOUSE NEW SHORES **P. 17** **8:30PM** WORDS OF MERCURY **P. 17** MARGINALIA **P. 18**	**03**	**04**	**05**	**06** **7PM** MEETINGS WITH ANNA **P. 6**	**07** **7PM** MOTHER **P. 20** **live musical accompaniment** **9PM** ONE DAY PINA ASKED... **P. 6**
08 **4:30PM** HOURS FOR JEROME LOVE'S REFRAIN **P. 19** **7PM** DEAR MARK EL OTRO LADO **P. 21**	**09** **7PM** STORM OVER ASIA **P. 20** **live musical accompaniment**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13** **5PM** METAPHORS ON VISION BOOK TALK **P. 23** **ed halter in person - free - ccva bookstore** **7PM** THE LYRIC LENS **P. 23** **introduction by nathaniel dorsky & jerome hiler**	**14** **7PM** CINEMA BEFORE 1300 **P. 18** **jerome hiler in person**
15 **7PM** ELOHIM ABATON CODA ODE **P. 19** **nathaniel dorsky in person**	**16** **7PM** LOST LANDSCAPES OF LOS ANGELES **P. 24** **rick prelinger in person**	**17** **7PM** EFFACEMENTS IN THE REPOSITORY: DO PHYSICAL OBJECTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXIST? **P. 25** **rick prelinger in person - FREE - lamont library**	**18**	**19**	**20** **7PM** THE CONSTITUTION **P. 32** **rajko grlic in person**	**21** **7PM** SOC. SCI. 127 **P. 21** LITTLE BOY **P. 21** **danny lyon in person**
22 **4:30PM** HOTEL MONTEREY **P. 6** **7PM** WILLIE **P. 22** **danny lyon in person**	**23** **7PM** REDS **P. 20**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27** **7PM** BEGGARS OF LIFE **P. 25** **live musical accompaniment** **9PM** NIGHT NURSE **P. 25**	**28** **3PM** FRANKENWEENIE **P. 7** **special $5 admission** **7PM** BARBARELLA **P. 29** **9PM** MONKEY ON MY BACK **P. 29**
29 **5PM** THE PUBLIC ENEMY **P. 26** **7PM** LOS NIÑOS ABANDONADOS LLANITO **P. 22**	**30** **7PM** THE OX-BOW INCIDENT **P. 26**	**31**				

William Wellman *THE STAR WITNESS* **P. 27**

William Wellman *NOTHING SACRED* **P. 26**

NOVEMBER 2017

M	T	W	T	F	S	
		01	02	03 **7PM** BUTTERFLY DRESS PLEDGE THE LABYRINTH TALE EMPEROR TOMATO KETCHUP **P. 30** **8:30PM** PASTORAL HIDE AND SEEK **P. 30**	04 **7PM** FRUITS OF PASSION **P. 30** **9PM** A TALE OF SMALLPOX GRASS LABYRINTH **P. 30**	
05 **5PM** NOTHING SACRED **P. 26** **7PM** BEAU GESTE **P. 26**	06 **7PM** FAREWELL TO THE ARK **P. 30**	07	08	09	10 **7PM** WINGS **P. 26**	11 **7PM** THE BOOK OF WONDERS **P. 23** **intro by mark mcelhatten** **9:15PM** LUMINOSTIY ECSTASY TRAUMA **P. 24** **intro by mark mcelhatten**
12 **5PM** OTHER MEN'S WOMEN **P. 27** **7PM** THE BOXER **P. 31**	13 **7PM** THROW AWAY YOUR BOOKS, RALLY IN THE STREETS **P. 31**	14	15	16	17 **7PM** SHUJI TERAYAMA SHORT FILMS **P. 31** **followed by a roundtable discussion**	18 **3PM** GOOD-BYE, MY LADY **P. 7** **special $5 admission** **7PM** SHUJI TERAYAMA SHORT FILMS **P. 31** **live performance by henrikku morisaki**
19 **5PM** SAFE IN HELL **P. 27** **7PM** HEROES FOR SALE **P. 27**	20 **7PM** WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD THE STAR WITNESS **P. 27**	21	22	23	24 **7PM** A STAR IS BORN **P. 27** **9:30PM** YELLOW SKY **P. 28**	25 **7PM** TRACK OF THE CAT **P. 28** **9PM** WESTWARD THE WOMEN **P. 28**
26 **5PM** MIDNIGHT MARY **P. 28** **7PM** FRISCO JENNY **P. 28**	27 **7PM** VIDEO LETTER **P. 31**	28	29	30		

The Archive is extremely grateful to June Yip, AB '85, and David Wong, AB '85, for their generous support of the Harvard Film Archive's ongoing visiting filmmaker program. Thanks to their generosity the Archive is able to continue inviting filmmakers, artists and scholars to present their work at the HFA and interact with the Harvard film community.

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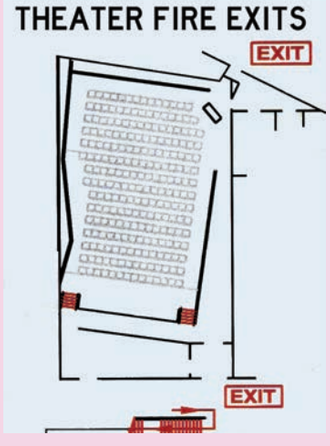
The Harvard Film Archive is just east of the Harvard Square Red Line T stop and next to the Harvard Art Museums. The HFA is one block north of Massachusetts Avenue between Broadway and Harvard Streets on the Harvard University campus.

There is limited metered parking in Harvard Square, which is free after 8pm and all day o Sundays. Parking is also available at several public lots in Harvard Square.



LUMINOSITY – THE FILMS OF JEROME HILER

OCTOBER 2 – OCTOBER 14

Since the early seventies, Jerome Hiler (b.1943) has refined a uniquely multimedia artistic practice dedicated to the creation of meticulously crafted works of 16mm cinema, painting and stained glass. A trio of roughly contemporary, fortuitous events were crucial inspirations to Hiler's singular vocation: his time as assistant to Gregory Markopoulos, his discovery of Stan Brakhage's early films and, most importantly, his meeting of lifelong partner and fellow independent filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky at the screening of Dorsky's debut film, Ingreen. Hiler and Dorsky joined one another on a creative path as fellow 16mm artists, collaborators and indelible influences on each other's work. After a spell in New York City, they took a break from urban life, retreating to Lake Owassa in New Jersey, to an idyllic cottage featured prominently in both Hiler's recently completed film *Into The Stone House* and in Dorsky's celebrated *Hours for Jerome*.

After relocating to San Francisco with Dorsky in 1972, Hiler began to withdraw his films from the public eye, only screening camera originals to an inner circle of friends at his home. Nevertheless, Hiler remained extremely active during this time, shooting his own work and assisting other filmmakers in a variety of roles. Soon after, Hiler began to work in stained glass, an art and craft that combined his love of painting, luminous color and projected light. It was not until the late nineties that Hiler's films began to be more widely seen, with screenings at cinematheques and museums throughout the world, capped by a major New York Film Festival retrospective and a prominent place in the 2012 Whitney Biennial.

Formally and visually astonishing, Hiler's films were for years notorious for being more talked about than seen. The recent rediscovery of Hiler's work finds him, often together with Dorsky, lavished with much-deserved accolades and recognition as a dedicated craftsman and poet of his chosen media, able to capture the rarest essence, beauty and magic of light and daily life in each of his exquisite films. In today's world of endless distraction, Hiler's patient and rapturous films seem to offer an unusual and ultimately invigorating oasis, a place where vision can be renewed. Hiler's films also clearly resonate with a new generation of filmmakers during a time of great shifts and uncertainty, not unlike the period when Hiler first chose his artistic path.

The HFA is pleased to welcome Jerome Hiler to share his unique vision of cinema. In addition to co-presenting an evening of Stan Brakhage's films co-curated with Nathaniel Dorsky, Hiler will also deliver an illuminating, illustrated and interactive talk on stained glass.

Presented in partnership with the Film Study Center, Harvard.

Special thanks: Antonella Bonfanti and Seth Mitter—Canyon Cinema.

Jerome Hiler *IN THE STONE HOUSE*

monday october 2 at 7pm

IN THE STONE HOUSE

In the Stone House chronicles the life-changing four years Hiler spent in retreat from urban life with Nathaniel Dorsky in rural New Jersey. Disillusioned with the New York film scene, Hiler and Dorsky searched for a simpler, more spiritual way of life focused on art-making and proximity to nature. Far from a monastic seclusion, however, the filmmakers' idyll was frequently interrupted by welcome city friends escaping to their house, dissolving the boundaries between the two poles.

Following the course of three seasons, Hiler records everyday events in the country, along with trips to Manhattan and Queens to visit with family and friends. Although *In the Stone House* was shot at the same time Dorsky was filming *Hours for Jerome*, Hiler edited his film many years later. Similar to *New Shores,* Hiler was able to reconstruct *a temps perdu* and capture the magical poignancy of memory, delicately paced by pauses of black leader which offer thoughtful breaths between each vibrant scene.

Directed by Jerome Hiler
US 2012, 16mm, b/w & color, silent, 35 min

NEW SHORES

A companion work of sorts to *In the Stone House, New Shores* is partially a record of Hiler and Nathaniel Dorsky's 1972 move to the West Coast. Blending a rich variety of styles and techniques with masterful editing, Hiler juxtaposes intimate scenes—moments and portraits from his life with Dorsky and friendship with poet Anne Waldman in particular—with meditative landscapes, seascapes and intimations of the changing seasons. An extended static shot of a plume of smoke rising from a shipping boat counts among Hiler's most beautiful, rapturous images. New Shores fathoms the deep joy of discovery, the excitement and fear of life changes, and the bittersweetness of returning to the past, realizing one can never go home again. Hiler takes the title of the film from his idol Douglas Sirk's 1937 German film *Zu neuen Ufern,* or *To New Shores*. Hiler: "That film also deals with displacement, chasing pleasures to escape the overall atmosphere of imprisonment and a final capitulation."

Directed by Jerome Hiler
US 1971-87/2014, 16mm, color, silent, 35 min

monday october 2 at 8:30pm

WORDS OF MERCURY

Hiler's now best known work was immediately hailed as a revelatory masterwork when it premiered in 2011, as a camera original reversal print, at the influential and now sorely missed "Views from the Avant-Garde" section of the New York Film Festival. Offered by Hiler as a poignant yet celebratory farewell to the recently discontinued color reversal 16mm film stock, *Words of Mercury* makes remarkable use of lyrical superimposition to give dazzling life to the rich range of colors, textures and rhythms that animate the film. Although *Words of Mercury*'s interweaving of quadruple layers of image and color often seems to be precisely timed and structured, Hiler, quite remarkably, edited his film in camera, trusting in his intuition, never knowing the exact outcome, but certain that it would remain true to his singular vision. Mirroring the saturated colors of Hiler's stained glass work, imagery in *Words of Mercury* is transformed by the reverberant overlapping of colors and shapes, with the flow of layered and superimposed images periodically interrupted by the relative calm of more direct, "single-layer" scene.

Hiler described his film as, "the film takes a journey from darkness and a bare world through the seasonal spreading of seeds to a place almost choked and repugnant with color—a place that invites death. The final couplet from Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* speaking of the place of death, supplies me with my title."

Directed by Jerome Hiler
US 2011, 16mm, color, silent, 25 min

MARGINALIA

Marginalia is a contemplation in shades of grey and periodic color on the state and place of society in a quickly changing environment. It could be seen as a view from the margins. Or, as its title suggests, it might be expostulatory comments on the page-edge of our shared circumstances. Its air is filled with things slipping away to make way for an as yet unknown birth... The forebodings in this film have a kind of antidote in the way ideas and skills can be passed along to young generations outside the margins of the main arena of digital entertainment. As educators discuss dropping cursive writing from the syllabus of future grade schools, my interest in all things handmade becomes acute. Scribblings course their way across the screen as scratches: the margins invade center stage.... – *Jerome Hiler*

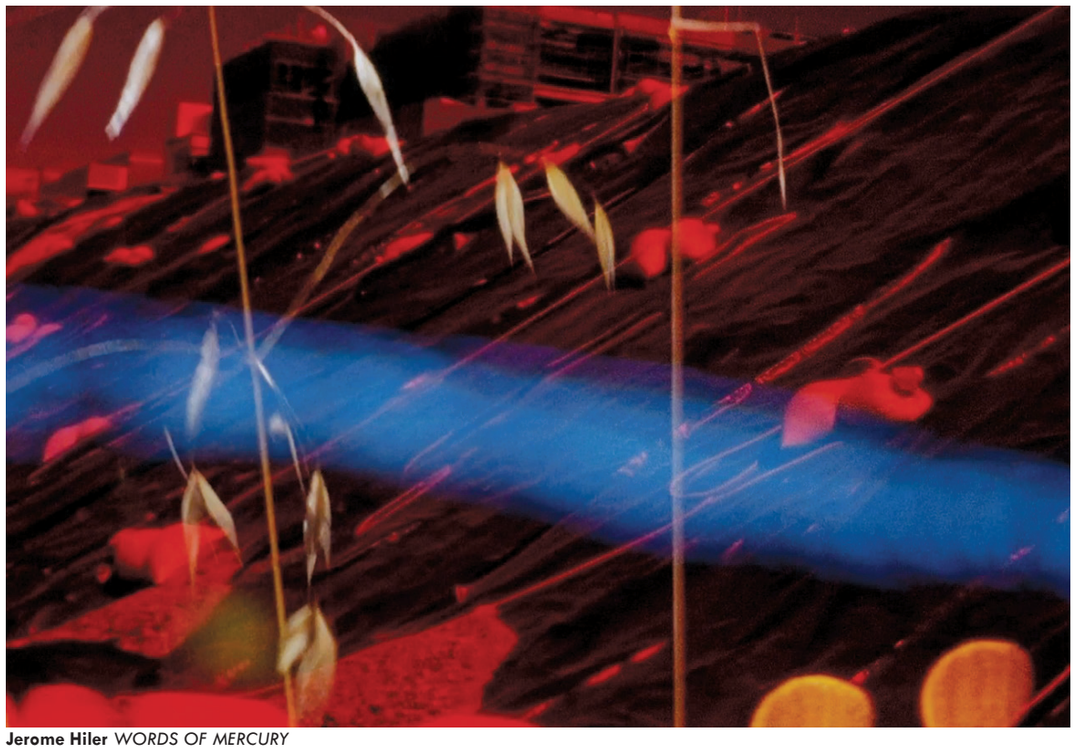
Directed by Jerome Hiler
US 2015, 16mm, color, silent, 23 min

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
JEROME HILER IN PERSON
saturday october 14 at 7pm

CINEMA BEFORE 1300

Over 800 years ago, a confluence of technological, philosophical and financial upswellings converged to create the most advanced form of mass media the world had known: stained glass.

Built en masse across France, Spain, England and Germany, great cathedrals were designed to display giant windows that told stories through light, color and form. Every day, thousands of viewers arrived to marvel at the glorious colors and hear stories recounted beneath their realization in light. Modern visitors to a cathedral would probably not suspect how many activities took place in the building during medieval times. It was truly a community center, and community members had the right to be there because they all took a great part in the construction of the building. Tonight's program will take a look at the first 100 years (or so) of stained glass' magnificent birth and culmination. It was during this fortuitous time frame that the most care, effort and expense were applied to the new art. By a sad irony, technological innovations making glass more uniform and the tasks of the craft easier destroyed visual interest and soon degenerated the art altogether.



Jerome Hiler *WORDS OF MERCURY*

In our time, we have seen cinema rise and fall in a comparable period. Also, technological developments that have replaced film, to my eyes, have appreciably downgraded visual interest. I am still a filmmaker. I shoot film out of love for film. I am loyal to my loves. Not only to film, but to the light of the projector—and the soft, reflective light of the screen. This is hardly a match for the glorious starlight that flows through glass, but it echoes the reflected light of the moon, that first of all films and most beloved of all revivals.

I also work in stained glass. Though, in recent years, I have put more of my efforts into filmmaking, I've found myself transferring physical techniques, such as painting and abrading, to my film work. But from my earliest film efforts over fifty years ago, I drew inspiration from the idea that my films were to be like stained glass glowing in a space of sacred darkness. I knew that both my film work and stained glass itself were based on a discontinuity given an illusory wholeness by the blessings of light. I will conclude the evening's program with a short film of my own. – *Jerome Hiler*

NATHANIEL DORSKY, SONGS AND SEASONS

OCTOBER 8 – OCTOBER 15

Nathaniel Dorsky *HOURS FOR JEROME*

"If we do relinquish control, we suddenly see a hidden world, one that has existed all along right in front of us. In a flash, the uncanny presence of the poetic and vibrant world, ripe with mystery, stands before us." – Nathaniel Dorsky, *Devotional Cinema,* 2003

For over five decades, Nathaniel Dorsky (b.1943) has been crafting work of arresting beauty: silent 16mm films exploring life, light and movement. Dorsky's supreme artistry of 16mm cinematography and rhythmic montage has given way to a distinctive mode of meditative cinema largely filmed in the streets, always without sound, and grounded in a penetrating understanding of film form. A professional and much sought after film editor, Dorsky is also a passionate and dedicated cinephile whose unique understanding of cinematic process is wonderfully captured in his published essay *Devotional Cinema*. The Harvard Film Archive is proud to screen two pristine prints from the HFA collection as part of Nathaniel Dorsky's visit, and honored to host the world premiere of his four latest films. – JR

Presented in partnership with the Film Study Center, Harvard.

For more about the work of Nathaniel Dorsky, please visit nathanieldorsky.net.

sunday october 8 at 4:30pm

HOURS FOR JEROME

The footage was shot and edited from 1966 to 1970 and edited to completion over a two-year period ending in July 1982. *Hours for Jerome* (as in a Book of Hours) is an arrangement of images, energies, and illuminations from daily life. These fragments of light revolve around the four seasons. *Part One* is spring through summer; *Part Two* is fall and winter. – *Nathaniel Dorsky*

Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 1966-70/82, 16mm, color, silent, 45 min

LOVE'S REFRAIN

Perhaps the most delicately tactile in this series, *Love's Refrain* rests moment to moment on its own surface. It is a coda in twilight, a soft-spoken conclusion to a set of four cinematic songs. The devotional doesn't require the embodiment of religious form... Devotional art subverts temporal compulsion. It's there to inspire the verticality of one's psyche. It breaks the absorption in the relative, allowing the mind of devotion to selflessly rest on phenomena. From a Buddhist's point of view, the idea of trying to resolve yourself within the relative world is considered futile... This is not a new idea. When we view Egyptian pieces, they disrupt verticality. Art at its wildest best is so vertical that it suggests that death is as present as life. Metaphorically, this could be like seeing a film in a dark room, or seeing the world out of our own darkness. – ND

Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 2001, 16mm, color, silent, 22 min

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
NATHANIEL DORSKY IN PERSON
sunday october 15 at 7pm

For the last two decades, my filmmaking has explored the language or the continuity of the various. A montage, bringing together associations and subject matter through a variety of moods and energies and juxtapositions, is what propelled and inspired these ongoing cinematic investigations. The goal was always unity. The varied atmosphere of the films followed the more intimate needs of my psyche.

Within this polyvalent or open montage, there are often small sequences made up of the same subject matter suspended within the stepping stones of the various. Over recent years, these sequences began to take on more major roles in the storytelling, at times with an almost rebellious determination to free themselves of the restrictions of polyvalence.

For the past several years, California has experienced an extreme drought: several winter rainy seasons with barely any rainfall. But, this past winter, good fortune brought a bountiful amount of storms and liquid refreshment. The spring that followed took on magical and celebratory qualities of energy, joy, fullness and rebirth.

In walking distance from my apartment is San Francisco's Arboretum, located in Golden Gate Park. I decided that I would make an entire film on a single subject and that subject would be the light, not the objects, but the sacredness of the light itself in this splendid garden. What I did not know is that the great beauty of this magnificent spring would bring forth not one, but four films, each one immediately following the previous. I began the second week of February to photograph and finished the editing of the fourth film during the first days of August.

These four films spontaneously manifested as four stages of life: childhood, youth, maturity and old age. *Elohim* was photographed in early spring, the week of the Lunar New Year, the very spirit of Creation. *Abaton* was photographed a few weeks later in the full ripeness of spring, the very purity and passion of the Garden. *Coda* was photographed in late spring, in the aftermath of this purity, the first shades of mortality and Knowledge appearing. And finally, *Ode*, photographed in early summer, is a soft, textured song of the Fallen, the dissonant reds of death, seeds and rebirth. – ND

ELOHIM
Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 2017, 16mm, color, silent, 31 min

ABATON
Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 2017, 16mm, color, silent, 19 min

CODA
Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 2017, 16mm, color, silent, 16 min

ODE
Directed by Nathaniel Dorsky
US 2017, 16mm, color, silent, 20 min

Nathaniel Dorsky *ABATON*

CINEMA THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

OCTOBER 7 – OCTOBER 23

"Of all the arts, for us cinema is the most important." – *V.I. Lenin*

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 changed the history of the world and of the 20th century in monumental ways that are the subject of no less than three exhibits at Harvard University this fall. The HFA pays tribute to the ways that the USSR has been portrayed on screen by presenting three screenings in conjunction with these exhibits. We will be featuring two-thirds of Vsevolod Pudovkin's so-called "Bolshevik" trilogy: *Mother* and *Storm Over Asia*. (The third film, *The End of St. Petersburg,* will be presented digitally by the Davis Center; see details below.) And in honor of Harvard's most famous alum to witness the revolution directly, we present Hollywood's John Reed biopic *Reds*. – DP

Houghton Library will be presenting ***The Russian Revolution: Actors and Witnesses in Harvard Library Collections*** *September 6 – December 21 in the Lowell Room, Houghton Library. From September 7 – October 20,* ***Romance and Reality: Posters from the Russian Revolution*** *will be on display at the Harvard Ed Portal (224 Western Avenue, Allston).* ***John Reed: Reporting the Russian Revolution,*** *on exhibit at the Fisher Family Commons October 2-November 13, 2017, presents a selection of material from Houghton Library, including photographs and personal items, that showcase his passion and dedication as a writer and political activist.*

This program is presented in collaboration with Houghton Library, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and the Slavic Division at Widener Library, Harvard.

Film descriptions by David Pendleton and Carson Lund.

Vsevolod Pudovkin *MOTHER*

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

saturday october 7 at 7pm

MOTHER (*MAT*)

In the wake of the unsuccessful 1905 revolution in Russia, Maxim Gorky wrote *The Mother,* detailing the radicalization of a proletariat woman as her son becomes politically active. This adaptation of that novel is the first film in Pudovkin's "Bolshevik trilogy," and it became the second Soviet film, after *Potemkin*, to receive international acclaim. Pudovkin realized the importance of editing for making meaning in cinema as surely as Eisenstein did. But since he was also intensely interested in acting, Pudovkin tailors his editing to bring out the nuances of the performances. *Mother* remains a powerful example of melodrama yoked to ideological didacticism.

Directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin. With Vera Baranovskaya, Nicolai Batalov, A.P. Chistiakov
USSR 1926, 35mm, b/w, silent, 90 min. Russian intertitles with English subtitles

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

monday october 9 at 7pm

STORM OVER ASIA, AKA THE HEIR OF GENGHIS KHAN (*POTOMOK CHINGIS-KHANA*)

After *The End of St. Petersburg, Storm Over Asia* is the third and final part of Pudovkin's loose "Bolshevik trilogy," the films on which his reputation as one of the leading Soviet filmmakers rests. The character of the film's Russian title, the "heir of Genghis Khan," is a Mongolian fur trapper and trader who rises from obscurity to claim the status as a hero of the Revolution due to his resistance to British troops occupying Mongolia during the Russian civil war that followed. Like Dziga Vertov's *A Sixth Part of the World,* Pudovkin's *Storm Over Asia* is a celebration of the Soviet Union as a multicultural nation. If the political thrust of Vertov's film is a critique of capitalism, Pudovkin's target is colonialism. And if much of *Mother* plays like a melodrama, *Storm Over Asia* remains an exemplary anti-colonial adventure film.

Directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin. With Valerie Inkizhinov, A.P. Chistiakov, A. Dedintzyev
USSR 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 120 min. Russian intertitles with English subtitles

INTRODUCTION BY THOMAS HYRY, FLORENCE FEARRINGTON LIBRARIAN AND DIRECTOR, HOUGHTON LIBRARY

monday october 23 at 7pm

REDS

Popular Hollywood conservative Ronald Reagan was elected as president of the United States in November of 1980, and Warren Beatty's big-budget epic of the Russian Revolution, which offers a sympathetic face for communist idealism in the form of the director-star's American journalist John Reed, was released only a year later. That such an entertainment emerged amidst widespread anti-Soviet Union sentiment in America is a near-radical feat; that it's proudly old-fashioned in style and structure only augments the unique place it holds within its era. Swerving between a handsomely mounted romantic saga of John Reed and his progressive-minded girlfriend Louise Bryant and a talking-head documentary showcasing actual participants in 1917's upheavals, *Reds* offers a heady Wellesian mix of real testimony and fiction, with the Hollywood recreation dramatizing the words of the witnesses and the witnesses complicating the Hollywood recreation. Photographed by Vittorio Storaro in rich shades of sepia and amber and lent an overwhelming sweep by Stephen Sondheim's score, the film is a commanding act of resistance against the political tide of its time.

Warren Beatty *REDS*

Directed by Warren Beatty. With Warren Beatty, Diane Keaton, Edward Herrmann
US 1981, 35mm, color, 195 min. English, Russian, German, French, Finnish & Italian with English subtitles

The exhibit The Russian Revolution: Actors and Witnesses in Harvard Library Collections will be open for a special viewing on Monday October 23 from 5:45 to 6:45 in Houghton Library.

There will be three additional ***free screenings*** *presented by the Davis Center at Harvard's Tsai Auditorium (CGIS South, Room S010, 1730 Cambridge St.)*

thursday september 21 at 7pm

OCTOBER: TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD (OKTYABR)

Directed by Sergei Eisenstein
USSR 1927, digital video, b/w, silent, 100 min. Russian intertitles with English subtitles

thursday october 12 at 7pm

THE END OF ST. PETERSBURG (*KONETS SANKT-PETERBURGA*)

Directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin and Mikhail Doller
USSR 1927, digital video, b/w, silent, 87 min. Russian intertitles with English subtitles

wednesday november 1 at 7pm

A SLAVE OF LOVE (*RABA LYUBVI*)

Directed by Nikita Mikhalkov
USSR 1976, digital video, color, 94 min. Russian with English subtitles

IT'S MY LIFE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT! THE FILMS OF DANNY LYON

OCTOBER 8 – OCTOBER 29

Danny Lyon (b. 1942) is better known as a photographer, an associate of the Magnum Photos cooperative and official cameraman for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during the civil rights movement. Last year, expansive solo shows at the De Young Museum and the Whitney finally reinserted his name into the art world, but Lyon has been at work making images continuously since the 1960s, spending 1969 living and working with Robert Frank in New York City. Since then, he has been traveling the world to join and document communities and movements of people from Chinese coal miners to Occupy protestors. Arguably as important, though less widely known, are his sixteen non-fiction films, humble and intensely personal works overswept by a sense of the depth and durability of the human spirit as observed during long moments that accrue and become years, in a practice constituting more than a style, but rather a whole system of ethics, a *verité* approach not to the cinematic act alone but to human beings themselves and the stories they tell, whether with their words or with the way they stand, the way they look into the camera. Much of the work included in this program is concerned with the status of illegal immigrants and other marginalized peoples, and it is with the consequences of adopting an official policy of hate and insecurity about identity and otherness in mind that the Harvard Film Archive is honored to welcome Danny Lyon in person on two nights to present and discuss this selection of beautiful and urgent cinema. – *Will VanKoughnett*

Presented in partnership with the Film Study Center, Harvard.

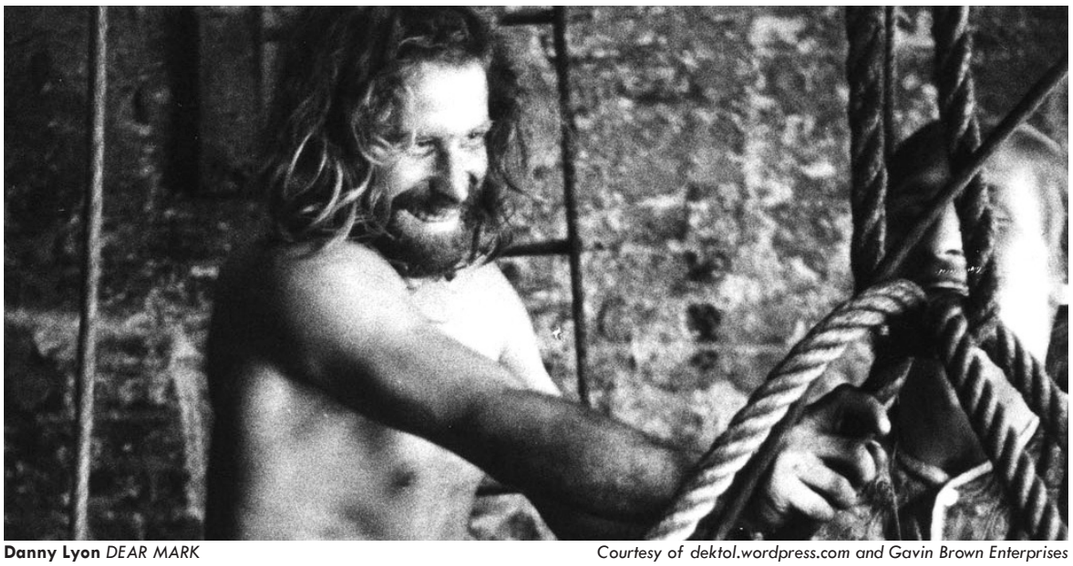
Film descriptions by Will VanKoughnett and Haden Guest.

sunday october 8 at 7pm

DEAR MARK

In the tone and tenor of a loving note folded over and slipped beneath a door, *Dear Mark* shows celebrated sculptor and Lyon's close friend Mark di Suvero, in footage shot in 1965 Stony Point, New York and 1975 Chalon-sur-Saône, France, at work (and play) on his sculptures: climbing on, standing before, swinging from, surveying, assessing, outlining, cutting, welding, hammering... Much of the film plays through a multiple exposure, one view close up on the shirtless, bearded sculptor, the other tracing the beams of his imposing steel combinations, a third expanding to reveal the imposing structures in their full scale. Not entirely playful, the film touches on questions of immigration and national identity (di Suvero himself was born in Shanghai to Italian parents and emigrated to California at the outbreak of World War II) through the soundtrack, which incorporates samples of a crackling Gene-Autry-cowboys-versus-illegal-immigrants radio play.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US/France 1981, digital video, color & b/w, 15 min



Danny Lyon *DEAR MARK* *Courtesy of dektol.wordpress.com and Gavin Brown Enterprises*

EL OTRO LADO (THE OTHER SIDE)

In the mountains of New Mexico, Lyon befriended Eddie Marquez Rivera, an undocumented Mexican house builder who traveled frequently between Mexico and the United States. Over the course of several border crossings in Rivera's company, Lyon discovered the subjects of his subsequent work, including the migrant fruit pickers who appear in *El Otro Lado*. The title refers to a Mexican designation for the US, where Don Bernabe Garay and his sons travel annually with their neighbors from an agrarian "ejido" 1,300 miles south of the border to pick oranges and lemons in the orchards of Arizona. The heart of the film lies, as in all Lyon's best work, in his camera's panoramic sensitivity to the beauty of the land and the men working it, the hard, elemental realities of the work itself, and the wider set of historical meanings leavened by the intense specificity of extended, unsubtitled human observation narrated by humor, stories, card-playing and song. Beset by the camera's insistence on them as men to be seen and celebrated instead of as labor to be exploited, the Garays and their friends vacillate between awkward self-consciousness and disarming self-realization as they alternately trudge or skip, like anyone else, off to work, at times merging with—and then suddenly erupting again from–brilliant periwinkle and salmon skies.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US/Mexico 1978, digital video, color, 60 min. Spanish with English subtitles

$12 SPECIAL EVENT SCREENING
DANNY LYON IN PERSON

saturday october 21 at 7pm

SOC. SCI. 127

It is with the same tousled logic that occupies the tenuous edges of the film itself that Danny Lyon describes *Soc. Sci. 127*, his first motion picture, as a comedy. A less careful spectator might be quick to label Bill Sanders, the Houston tattoo artist at the center of this brief, ecstatic portrait, as more tragic clown than comic hero, but a sustained inspection rewards us with a startling community between cameraman and performer. Shot entirely within the confines of Sanders' cramped, boudoir-like studio, the film is a study in the intimacy of performance and of image-making: Polaroid collages of past clients, many of them nude women alone or in pairs, cover the walls; a woman seeking a consultation undresses proudly for Sanders and camera; Sanders himself drinks, smokes, and snatches at a matted worldview stitched together from haphazard opinions on everything from the telling etymology of "fellatio" to his own motivations for making a documentary film. Fluid elisions between sequences of color and monochrome, connected only by the continuity of space, foreground the sense of depth of these rooms, and the tendency of stories to entangle, the film presenting itself as a collection of the loose ends of much longer narrative strands buried in the backgrounds of the photographs or languishing on the cutting-room floor. And throughout this patchwork wellspring of intimacy, performance, delusion and discovery, Lyon manages to decentralize both subject and self: Sanders' lonely drunk qua artist-philosopher and his own burdensome cinema verité auteur mantle, flattening the normal power relation on a bedrock of humility, a kind of utopian stage where the two men can coexist in a resonant, if not always straightforward, creative harmony.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US 1969, digital video, color & b/w, 21 min

LITTLE BOY

The Little Boy bomb dropped on the people of Hiroshima was designed and tested in New Mexico, not far from Bernalillo, a small, mostly Chicano town north of Albuquerque where Danny Lyon constructed an adobe house for his family in the early 1970s. A protracted interview airing a man's wildest hopes and concerns about nuclear energy, played out in double exposure with scenes of the nearby National Atomic Museum—where a pair of tourists takes snapshots by a model warhead, a crew of airmen attends to a taxiing bomber, an American flag ripples, and a lanky, shock-blonde boy eats a bright red apple—form the core of a film with the same name; but its flesh takes the form of another little boy, Willie Jaramillo, a friend of Lyon's who previously appeared in his 1971 film *Llanito*. At age eighteen, he has just been released from prison for a series of minor offenses. As Lyon pounds his beat around town, asking friends and neighbors about Willie or about themselves, the film jumps back in time to scenes from Willie's childhood, now idyllic next to his current troubles, and the history of one man's life emerges as a fact of greater significance than the atom bomb itself.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US 1977, digital video, color, 54 min

Danny Lyon *SOC. SCI 127* *Courtesy of dektol.wordpress.com and Gavin Brown Enterprises*

$12 SPECIAL EVENT SCREENING
DANNY LYON IN PERSON
sunday october 22 at 7pm

WILLIE

Lyon's third film shot in Bernalillo, New Mexico and the final film with Willie Jaramillo. More explicitly concerned with the fate of his friend here than in either *Little Boy* or *Llanito*, Lyon enters the prisons and precincts where Willie or his childhood friends have served time, observing and interviewing him, his brothers, his fellow inmates, wardens, and anyone else in his circle of acquaintance, as if there might be a clue somewhere to the trouble that seems to endlessly and ruthlessly seek Willie out and take a hold of his fate.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US 1985, 16mm, color & b/w, 82 min

sunday october 29 at 7pm

LOS NIÑOS ABANDONADOS

In 1974 Danny Lyon traveled to Colombia and made an unblinking yet lyrical film dedicated to the surging population of homeless children living on the streets, abandoned by family and ignored by Church and State alike. Guided by his deft photographer's eye, Lyon captures the stark paradoxes of an adult society that sidesteps the forgotten children who embody precisely that poverty and desolation that the adults deny and fear most. Brutally thrust into an uncaring world and prematurely aged into a stunted adulthood, *los niños abandonados* are refugees of the shattered myth and lie of the State as a nurturing family.

Danny Lyon *LOS NIÑOS ABANDONADOS*
Courtesy of dektol.wordpress.com and Gavin Brown Enterprises

Directed by Danny Lyon
Colombia 1975, 16mm, color, 63 min

LLANITO

Llanito is the first of Lyon's trio of films shot in and around Bernalillo, New Mexico, and it is also the screen debut of Willie Jaramillo. The twelve-year-old boy acts as a guiding force for Lyon and his audience, reading out the names on gravestones and relating the stories of the people buried there. He is the focal point of a group of mostly young men with whom Lyon would remain friends and continue to document for the next several decades. The film meanders through the town and among its inhabitants, passing between groups of people at times with the keen instinct of a desert eagle and at others in a drunken stupor, stumbling from one scene into the next with the visceral and irrational inevitability of a gravitational pull.

Directed by Danny Lyon
US 1971, digital video, b/w, 54 min

STAN BRAKHAGE'S METAPHORS ON VISION

OCTOBER 13 – NOVEMBER 11

Stan Brakhage *THE GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS*

Imagine an eye unruled by man-made laws of perspective, an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything but which must know each object encountered in life through an adventure of perception. How many colors are there in a field of grass to the crawling baby unaware of "Green"? How many rainbows can light create for the untutored eye? How aware of variations in heat waves can that eye be? Imagine a world alive with incomprehensible objects and shimmering with an endless variety of movement and innumerable gradations of color. Imagine a world before the "beginning was the word."

So begins Stan Brakhage's classic *Metaphors on Vision*. First published in 1963 by Jonas Mekas as a special issue of *Film Culture,* it stands as the major theoretical statement by one of avant-garde cinema's most influential figures, a treatise on mythopoeia and the nature of visual experience written in a style as idiosyncratic as his art. By turns lyrical, technical, and philosophical, this is a collection to be shelved alongside the commentaries of Robert Bresson and Maya Deren, Sergei Eisenstein and Nagisa Oshima. Yet despite its historical importance and undeniable influence, the complete *Metaphors* has remained out of print in the US for over forty years.

In conjunction with the republication of a new, definitive edition *Metaphors on Vision* by Anthology Film Archives and Light Industry, the Harvard Film Archive joins an ongoing series of Brakhage screenings that will take place at cinemas, festivals, and museums across the globe from September 2017 to February 2018.

Here is *Metaphors on Vision*: it is a collection of writings on the film and, in particular, on the film as Stan Brakhage sees and makes it. Yet more significantly it is a testament of what makes mythopoeic art. Mythopoeia is the often attempted and seldom achieved result of making a myth new or making a new myth.

When Brakhage began to write *Metaphors*, he had made some fifteen films. Most of them (from *Interim* in 1952 to *Flesh of Morning* in 1956) were in the part-neo-realist-and-part-dream-vision "psycho-dramatical" genre. Since then they have become classics to young film-makers continuing that tradition; but by 1958 (the year of his marriage) Brakhage had begun to move toward mythopoeia. He was feeling the limitations of dramatic form and sensing that film could do more than reveal the personality of an actor/subject. Simultaneous to this was the making of *Anticipation of the Night*, the first American film about and structured by the nature of the seeing experience; how one encounters a sight, how it is recalled, how it affects later vision, and where it leads the visionary. By making the film he came upon a simple but startling discovery which is central to his aesthetic: if vision is the highest value of film, then the camera (and its man) must allow visions to occur rather than force them (by script) upon subjects. The depth of his

conviction in regard to this principle and the rejection of *Anticipation* by many avant-garde artists and critics previously well-disposed towards his work inspired Brakhage to formulate an Apologia by way of *Metaphors on Vision*.

In the three or four years of composing the five initial chapters Brakhage's writing grew from polemics to a method of clarifying his discoveries in film-making and freeing himself "thru writing" to make new ones. About fifteen more films were made during the making of *Metaphors on Vision*. Among them were the *Prelude* and Part I of his magnum opus *Dog Star Man*.

In the period between finishing the first five chapters and writing "Margin Alien" Brakhage had made himself, and thus his work, open to incorporate the literary traditions referred to in that latter chapter. In so doing without ever letting allusion interfere with vision he made *Dog Star Man* a truly mythopoeic film. During this time he came to accept and rejoice in the humble position of the artist as Plato sees him in *Ion*; that is, as one link in a chain connecting the Muse and the final audience. Brakhage became a mentor to young film-makers and a co-inspiring contemporary to artists in his own and other media. Just as his personality and work inspired a freeing process, and indeed works, in others, he was able to further his own development in answer to their letters and talks. Thus "Respond Dance, " an amalgam of recent letters of his edited to be read as a single run-on statement, represents his stage of creative development and the state of his mythopoeia at the time *Metaphors* was finished. – *P. Adams Sitney, 1998*

The Harvard Film Archive presents the first of two programs celebrating the reissue of Stan Brakhage's visionary manifesto and meditation on cinema *Metaphors on Vision*. Both will feature prominent filmmakers and curators who had important relationships with Brakhage, and who have been invited to curate their own individual evenings of works from the filmmaker's dauntingly vast oeuvre. This season we welcome evenings programmed and presented by filmmakers Nathaniel Dorsky and Jerome Hiler as well as celebrated curator Mark McElhatten. The celebration will be launched with **a conversation on Friday October 13 at 5pm with Ed Halter at the CCVA bookstore,** which will have the new edition available for sale.

The Loom *and* The Riddle of Lumen *preserved by the Academy Film Archive.*

Special thanks: Marilyn Brakhage, Fred Camper, and the Academy Film Archive.

All photos courtesy the Estate of Stan Brakhage and Fred Camper (www.fredcamper.com).

ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION BY NATHANIEL DORSKY & JEROME HILER

friday october 13 at 7pm

THE LYRIC LENS

When Stan Brakhage was twenty-four years old, having already completed ten 16mm films in the relatively conventional avant-garde style of psychodrama and pursuit, he embarked on a filmic adventure that brought him close to his own suicide and upended the basic syntactical rules of cinema as they were known to the world. All that was wrong or inadmissible became the very fabric of his expression. Jump cuts, out of focus scenes, shaky hand-held shots, flare outs, intimate personal subject matters, underexposures, overexposures, repetitive motifs, rhythms based on the movement of the eye, surface scratchings, visible splice lines, and, topping off all that, no sound whatsoever. The camera itself became the explorer, the protagonist. The filmmaker was released from being a recorder of dramatic representation and permitted to find and promote the pure energy of cinema itself as poetic mind. In short, *Anticipation of the Night* must be considered one of the greatest revolutionary acts in cinema's short history. Filmmaking before and after became a different thing. The individual could now be cinema itself. The very body or muscle of the maker could be expressed and felt.

The second set of two films we are showing tonight were made thirty years later. Stan met his first wife, Jane Collom, while making *Anticipation of the Night*. Three decades and hundreds of films later, Stan's marriage was dissolving and he was entering into a new relationship with Marilyn Jull, soon to become his second wife. It was during their courtship that they planned a number of car trips around the United States. With great exuberance and joy, Stan entered into the making of the four-part *Visions in Meditation*. This evening we will screen parts two and three, the second of which is a sound film made to accompany the music of Rick Corrigan. In these films we can witness the full maturity of Stan's camera as investigator and emotional measure. The complete union of subject matter and form is manifest. This wholeness of expression, where form is the meaning and meaning is the form, is a great joy to behold. One additional background note worth mentioning: P. Adams Sitney has pointed out, in part two of *Visions in Meditation*, that the haunting qualities of the abandoned Mesa Verde cliff dwelling parallel Stan's own abandonment of his family.
– *Nathaniel Dorsky*

Stan Brakhage *VISIONS IN MEDITATION #3*

All films by Stan Brakhage.

ANTICIPATION OF THE NIGHT
US 1958, 16mm, color, silent, 40 min

VISIONS IN MEDITATION #2: MESA VERDE
US 1989, 16mm, color, silent, 17 min

VISIONS IN MEDITATION #3: PLATO'S CAVE
US 1990, 16mm, color, 18 min

INTRODUCTION BY MARK MCELHATTEN

saturday november 11 at 7pm

THE BOOK OF WONDERS

Seemingly poles apart, Stan Brakhage (1933-2003) and Georges Méliès (1861-1938) were two independent spirits, explorers of multiplicity, dissection, starry realms, panoramas of the interior, metamorphosis and decay. In vastly different ways, they composed for a radiant screen, abandoning the usual notions of accepted perspectival space. Elevated vision playing along the optical fault lines where we trick ourselves into seeing things that don't exist, exist but "are not there" or habitually blinding ourselves from the full range of possible human vision. Exploring the mythic and the everyday, both filmmakers touched the boundaries between life and death, plumbing the depths of the subconscious, evoking terrors and natural splendors that summon childhood perceptions. Brakhage admired Méliès' films for their rhythmic integrity, and as investigations into semblance and actuality—revealing the nature of our unstable apparitional reality, life in flux. – *Mark McElhatten*

All films by Stan Brakhage, unless otherwise noted.

THE DEAD
US 1960, 16mm, color, silent, 11 min

BARON MUNCHAUSEN'S DREAM (*LES HALLUCINATIONS DU BARON DE MÜNCHAUSEN*) - *EXCERPT*
Directed by Georges Méliès
France 1911, 16mm, b/w, silent, 5 min

COMMINGLED CONTAINERS
US 1997, 16mm, color, silent, 2.5 min

THE GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS
US 1981, 35mm, color, silent, 1.5 min

THE KINGDOM OF THE FAIRIES (*LE ROYAUME DES FÉES*)
With its highly developed use of superimpositions, dissolves, multi-plane cinematography and hand coloring, this fairy tale is one of Méliès' most elaborate and exquisite creations.

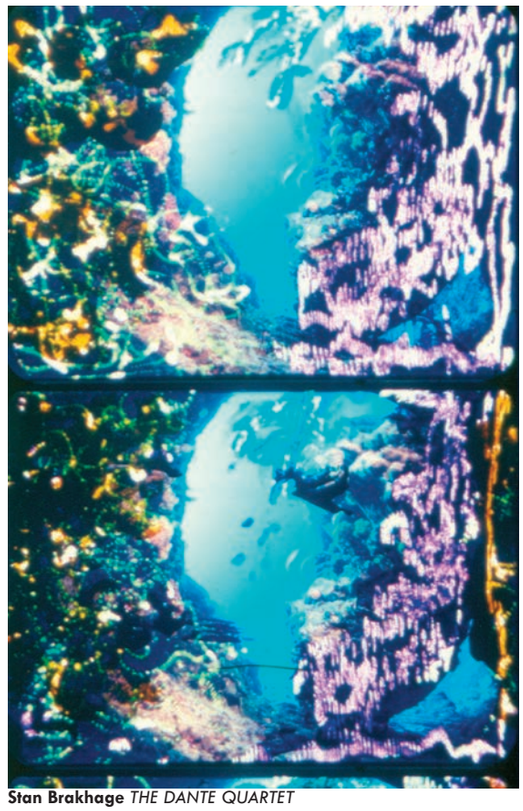
Directed by Georges Méliès
France 1903, 35mm, tinted b/w, silent, 16.5 min

THE LOOM
Dedicated to Robert Kelly. A multiple-superimposition hand-painted visual symphony of animal life of earth. *The Loom* might be compared to musical quartet-form (as there are almost always four superimposed pictures); but the complexity of texture, multiplicity of tone, and the variety of interrelated rhythm, suggest symphonic dimensions. The film is very inspired by Georges Méliès: the animals exist (in Jane's enclosure) as on a stage, their interrelationships edited to the disciplines of dance, so therefore one might say this hardly represents "animal life on earth"; but I would argue that this work at least epitomizes theatrical Nature, magical Creature, and is the outside limit, to date, of my art in that respect. – *Stan Brakhage*

US 1986, 16mm, color, silent, 43.5 min

INTRODUCTION BY MARK MCELHATTEN
saturday november 11 at 9:15pm
LUMINOSITY ECSTASY TRAUMA
Brakhage's films address and celebrate the materials of film speaking through emulsion, light, intermittency, color, texture, the cut, silence and the primacy of vision. Robert Kelly reminds us if Brakhage—a great in-person anecdotal storyteller—forbids story and plot in his film, he essentially includes a kind of narrative as a field or condition that allows multiple forms of identification and expression.

The Weir-Falcon Saga and *Murder Psalm* show, to some degree, vulnerable children under siege riddled with medical and psychological dilemmas subject to counseling authority. *The Weir-Falcon Saga* explores a child's spirit of play and relative sense of self invaded by fever. *Murder Psalm*, one of Brakhage's most unique films, is strong medicine. Sprung from a dream of matricide, it blisters with the electricity of transgressive energies. A beautifully orchestrated crazy quilt composed from scientific and educational films, processed television and cartoons, this negative regenerative myth is a dark and ferocious Dostoevskian version of the found footage collage film. Brakhage again explores the jagged strata of identity, the structuring of memory and myth, the sieges waged by an asphyxiating dominant culture against individual consciousness, and the undreamt of betrayals that lead to transformative affliction and saving exodus.


Stan Brakhage *THE DANTE QUARTET*

Made by hand painting on IMAX film, *The Dante Quartet* expresses the anguish of separation, the dissipation of a marriage and a vision of Hell, Purgatory and Heaven informed by Dante and Rilke. – *Mark McElhatten*

All films by Stan Brakhage, unless otherwise noted.

FIRELOOP
US 1986, 16mm, color, 3 min. Soundtrack by Joel Haertling

LOUD VISUAL NOISES
US 1987, 16mm, color, 3.5 min. Soundtrack by Joel Haertling

AGNUS DEI KINDER SYNAPSE
US 1991, 16mm, color, silent, 4 min

THE WEIR-FALCON SAGA
US 1970, 16mm, color, silent, 29 min

MURDER PSALM
US 1980, 16mm, color, silent, 18 min

ZONE MOMENT
US 1956, 16mm, color, silent, 3 min

CHRIST MASS SEX DANCE
US 1991, 16mm, color, 4 min. Soundtrack by James Tenney

THE RIDDLE OF LUMEN
US 1972, 16mm, color, silent, 13 min

THE DANTE QUARTET
US 1987, 35mm, color, silent, 6 min

RICK PRELINGER'S LOST LANDSCAPES OF LOS ANGELES

OCTOBER 16 – OCTOBER 17

Rick Prelinger *LOST LANDSCAPES OF LOS ANGELES*

Lost Landscapes of Los Angeles is an experimental documentary tracing the changing city of Los Angeles (1920s-1960s), showing how its landscape expresses an almost infinite collection of mythologies. Made from home movies and studio-produced "process plates"—background images of the city shot by studio cinematographers for rear projection in feature films—*Lost Landscapes* depicts places, people, work and daily life during a period of rapid urban development and showing the life and growth of the United States' preeminent Western metropolis as the sum of countless individual acts.

Lost Landscapes of Los Angeles is the latest of Rick Prelinger's "urban history film events," featuring rediscovered and largely unseen archival film footage arranged into feature-length programs. Unlike most screenings, the audience makes the soundtrack — viewers are encouraged to identify places, people and events; ask questions; and engage with fellow audience members. While the films show Los Angeles as it was, the event encourages viewers to think about—and share—their ideas for the city's future. What kind of a city do we want to live in?

Rick Prelinger is an archivist, filmmaker, and educator. He is Professor of Film & Digital Media at UC Santa Cruz and is a board member of Internet Archive. His films made from archival material have played at festivals, museums, theaters and educational institutions around the world. *Lost Landscapes of San Francisco* (11 episodes, 2006-2016) plays every autumn in San Francisco. He has also made urban history films in Oakland and Detroit, and is currently producing a New York film for a late-autumn premiere.

For one special evening, Rick Prelinger will take the HFA audience on interactive journey through cinema's most infamous city. And join him again the following day as he gives Houghton Library's bi-annual George Parker Winship Lecture.

Presented in partnership with Houghton Library.

Special thanks: Thomas Hyry, Florence Fearrington Librarian of Houghton Library and Director, Houghton Library; Ann-Marie Eze, Director of Scholarly and Public Programs, Houghton Library.

Rick Prelinger *LOST LANDSCAPES OF LOS ANGELES*

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
RICK PRELINGER IN PERSON
monday october 16 at 7pm
LOST LANDSCAPES OF LOS ANGELES
Directed by Rick Prelinger
US 2017, digital video, b/w & color, 83 min

FREE ADMISSION – LAMONT LIBRARY'S FORUM ROOM
RICK PRELINGER IN PERSON
tuesday october 17 at 5:30pm
EFFACEMENTS IN THE REPOSITORY: DO PHYSICAL OBJECTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXIST?
A reception at Houghton Library in the Edison and Newman Room will follow.

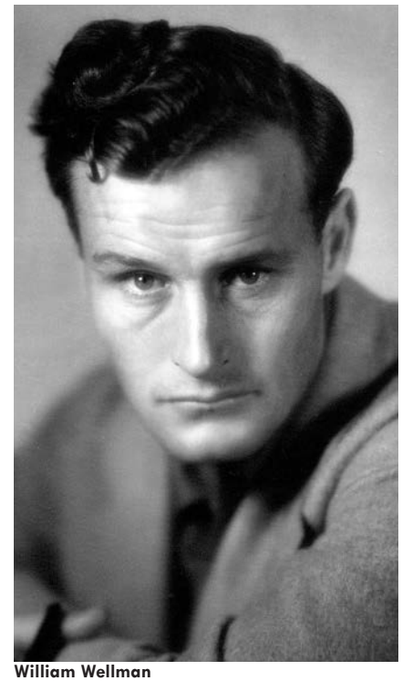
THE LEGENDS OF WILLIAM WELLMAN

OCTOBER 27 – NOVEMBER 26

"When the legend becomes fact, print the legend," famously declared the enlightened journalist at the end of John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. Like Valance, Ford's contemporary William Wellman (1896 - 1975) has been etched into Hollywood lore as a mythic figure, a boisterous, bravura maverick and bold woodblock of a quintessentially 20th century American artist quickly recognized but little known. Remembered principally today as a director of popular action epics and crime films such as *Wings* and *The Public Enemy,* Wellman is only rarely accorded *auteur* status and more typically categorized as a talented studio journeyman, despite clear evidence to the contrary. The larger-than-life personality and colorful offscreen exploits of the two-fisted, tempestuous "Wild Bill" Wellman cemented his reputation as a director's director and vital pioneer from Hollywood's frontier days, a member of the rough-riding fraternity that included Raoul Walsh, Allan Dwan, Merian C. Cooper and Ford. Wellman's improbable life story certainly seemed written for the silver screen: a juvenile delinquent and teenage hockey star who went from failed actor to daring aviator and WWI pilot before quickly working his way up the studio ladder from messenger boy to director of *Wings*, one of the most popular films of 1927 and one of the last great epics of the silent era. Yet a subtler and less-considered side of Wellman is openly revealed in his other box office smash, *A Star is Born*, a penetrating study of the Hollywood dream factory that frankly acknowledges the cutthroat careerism, cruel gossip-mongering and pound-of-flesh deals fueling movie stardom and success. In truth, many of Wellman's less-acknowledged great films are colored by similar introspective, even self-reflective, qualities that complicate his image as a rowdy, untamed buccaneer. Consider, for example, the series of hard-hitting yet startlingly intimate social problem films he directed during the early thirties, including neglected classics such as *Wild Boys of the Road* and *Heroes For Sale*. Or the frank portraits of working-class struggles in labor and love offered by unheralded gems such as *Other Men's Women* and *Midnight Mary* that inhabit worlds equally ruled by headstrong women as by men. A further corrective can be found in Wellman's ruminative late Westerns, *Yellow Sky, Westward the Women* and, especially, *Track of the Cat*, with its psychosexually fraught portrait of strained masculinity. This retrospective gathers together a series of Wellman's lesser-known films, balanced by his recognized classics, to sketch a composite portrait of a studio filmmaker equally adept at bold action-driven narrative and a kind of subtler, understated emotion and meaning. – HG

Film descriptions by Brittany Gravely, Haden Guest and David Pendleton, unless otherwise noted.

Special thanks: Todd Wiener, Steven Hill—UCLA Film and Television Archive; Lynanne Schweighofer—Library of Congress.



William Wellman

William Wellman *BEGGARS OF LIFE*

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT
friday october 27 at 7pm
BEGGARS OF LIFE
A gruesome discovery followed by a sordid tale of sexual abuse—recounted through an ingenious double-exposed montage sequence—introduces Richard Arlen's hungry tramp to Louise Brooks' fugitive disguised as a boy. From that dramatic opener, the couple steals off into a blue-tinted night and reluctantly joins a band of vagabonds. Immediately, the presence of a woman in the midst of a group of desperate men adds an unsettling disturbance to the film and to their tenuous coalition. Wellman steadily maintains this air of horror and humor as the motley, volatile crew travels from land to train with the lord of the hoboes, Wallace Beery's unpredictable Oklahoma Red, who revels in intimidation as a means of entertainment—even holding an absurdly elaborate "kangaroo court" to decide the fate of the interlopers. In this hardscrabble atmosphere, the appearance of love is so unusual that it acts as a kind of deus ex machina, stunning the plot and sending it off and away down Wellman's mysterious, dark tracks.

Directed by William Wellman. With Wallace Beery, Louise Brooks, Richard Arlen
US 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 91 min

friday october 27 at 9pm
NIGHT NURSE
The first of five films Wellman made with Barbara Stanwyck, *Night Nurse* wastes little time unmasking the darkness behind the hospital's saviors in white. Already wise to violence, alcoholism, drug addiction and ongoing sexual harassment, Stanwyck and Joan Blondell's tough, hardworking nurses uncover a

William Wellman *NIGHT NURSE*

shady scheme at the mansion where they care for two ailing children. In addition to a lot of Stanwyck's skin, Wellman exposes the grey areas in each individual's malleable "code of ethics." With most of the characters spending the film inebriated or otherwise morally compromised, Nurse Hart's cries and protests are to no avail; the police never even make an appearance. In the era of Prohibition and the Depression, it is a bootlegger whose illegal actions provide some of the most helpful counters to the mansion's evil mastermind—and chauffeur—unpredictably portrayed by a menacing Clark Gable.

Directed by William Wellman. With Barbara Stanwyck, Ben Lyon, Joan Blondell
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 72 min

sunday october 29 at 5pm
THE PUBLIC ENEMY

Even more than *Little Caesar* or Howard Hawks' *Scarface,* this searing example of the pre-Code gangster film helped make the genre one of the mainstays of world cinema to this day. Its violent telling of the rise and fall of a Chicago bootlegger had profound effects on the Hollywood of its time. For one thing, it cemented Wellman's reputation as a director of violent films, and it definitively established James Cagney's star image as that of a tough guy, despite his background in musical theater. The film's success also pushed Warner Brothers to produce more hard-hitting realist fare and, finally, its lack of a clear moral center nudged Hollywood toward the Production Code.

Directed by William Wellman. With James Cagney, Jean Harlow, Edward Woods
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 83 min

William Wellman *THE PUBLIC ENEMY*

monday october 30 at 7pm
THE OX-BOW INCIDENT

A Western precursor to *12 Angry Men,* also starring Henry Fonda, who takes a more decentralized and observational role here, *The Ox-Bow Incident* became another passionate crusade for Wellman as soon as he read the Walter Van Tilburg Clark novel. The film eloquently and starkly details the results of "frontier justice," as three men accused of murder and theft are rounded up by a riled-up, sheriffless town posse. Made during World War II, the film's message is urgent, but one nobody wanted to hear. Wellman's somber, shocking labor of love was a tough sell to studios and the public; even the film's remnant of a love story is a virtual red herring, teasing audiences with the kind of escapist confectionery they expected but that Wellman adamantly withheld. His low-budget Wild West resists complacency or reassurance. In stark black-and-white, it is dialogue, not action, that dominates and fuels the tension, and the sole female in the group—who is not the strangely top-billed Mary Beth Hughes—is a rough-and-tumble bloodthirsty rancher. Wellman gingerly doles out some of the characters' personal stories, making the cowboys more complex and present while harshly demonstrating how emotional wounds color judgment in this lawless court.

Directed by William Wellman. With Henry Fonda, Dana Andrews, Mary Beth Hughes
US 1943, 35mm, b/w, 75 min

sunday november 5 at 5pm
NOTHING SACRED

Shortly after excoriating Hollywood in his stirring melodrama *A Star Is Born,* Wellman moved on to the American press, but this time with a comedy navigated by the incomparably airy luminescence of Carole Lombard. Her Hazel Flagg essentially pretends to be dying of radium poisoning to escape an airless Vermont town, and Fredric March's enterprising reporter Wallace is only too happy to believe the story in order to sell papers and foster a feeding frenzy around her tragic tale. Along with the epic glamour of New York and the charms of Wally, Hazel must endure a constant stream of inanity—as everyone falls over one another to exploit the exploiter during her supposed last days in the fickle spotlight. Wellman keeps his screwball—apparently the first in Technicolor—lodged happily in a cynical, satiric, irreverent corner, where no one is innocent and the central love affair—born of deception and self-interest—is consummated by a spirited tussle during which each knocks the other out.

Directed by William Wellman. With Carole Lombard, Fredric March, Charles Winninger
US 1937, 35mm, b/w, 77 min

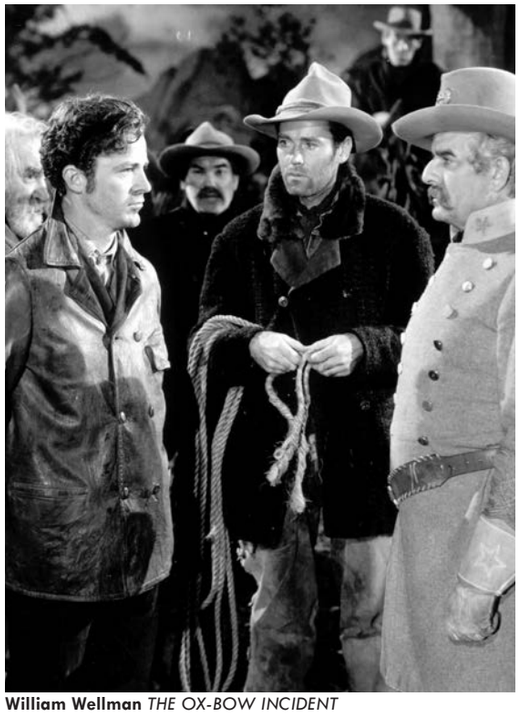
sunday november 5 at 7pm
BEAU GESTE

Wellman's *Beau Geste* is the remake of a wildly popular 1926 silent film adapted from the novel of the same name. This colonialist adventure is the story of three brothers who join the French Foreign Legion, battling to save each other, their family honor and their beleaguered north African outpost, although the film's largely faceless Arab hordes take a second place in villainy to the sadistic sergeant to whom the brothers report. While the critics of the day professed to prefer the silent version, Wellman's film has become one of the classics that made 1939 Hollywood's *annus mirabilis,* thanks in no small part to the remarkable star power of its cast.

Directed by William Wellman. With Gary Cooper, Ray Milland, Robert Preston
US 1939, 35mm, b/w, 120 min

friday november 10 at 7pm
WINGS

When chosen to direct *Wings*—in part due to his experience at the front—Wellman was still relatively unknown, yet undaunted and unrestrained in executing his bold vision: from recreating French battlefields and villages in San Antonio, to enlisting the military and the most skilled aerial stuntmen, to color tinting every burst of fire on the film prints. Wings tells the story of romantic rivals Jack and David, who enlist in the Army Air Corps when World War I



William Wellman *THE OX-BOW INCIDENT*

breaks out. Added into the wartime mix is the film's one superstar, "*It* Girl" Clara Bow, as the ambulance-driving Mary, who is secretly in love with Jack. The war alters their relationships as drama unfolds both on the ground and—most spectacularly—in the air. Wellman created unbelievably realistic and daring aerial battle scenes, insisting upon attaching cameras to the planes and actors actually piloting them. Premiering three months after Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight, *Wings* won the first Best Picture Oscar and inaugurated the entire airplane movie genre. The HFA will be screening the 2012 restoration with the reconstructed original score, including sound effects.

Directed by William Wellman. With Clara Bow, Charles Rogers, Richard Arlen
US 1927, DCP, b/w, silent with soundtrack, 136 min

sunday november 12 at 5pm
OTHER MEN'S WOMEN
Barreling through the stark landscape, the train takes on a life of its own in Wellman's romantic and comic tragedy. The characters' lives are structured around its regularity and impassive power, while remaining less predictable and more vulnerable. Assisted by the early appearances of an electric James Cagney and snappy Joan Blondell, Grant Withers' Bill, an engineer and irresponsible playboy, is generously taken in by his best friend Jack, who has a little country home and a very charming wife, played by a good-natured Mary Astor. With his special brand of eccentric naturalism, Wellman luxuriates in both the gritty train yard and the country oasis, detailing his characters' flaws and their concealment as they take carefree pleasure in camaraderie and everyday tasks. Once a forbidden love switches the plot's gears, the cruelties of life begin to mount one on top of another until one of the friends makes a dramatic sacrifice to recover some kind of happy homeostasis.

Directed by William Wellman. With Grant Withers, Mary Astor, Regis Toomey
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 71 min

saturday november 18 at 3pm
GOOD-BYE, MY LADY
See description in the Saturday Matinee *series p. 7.*

Directed by William Wellman. With Walter Brennan, Brandon de Wilde, Sidney Poitier
US 1956, 35mm, b/w, 95 min

sunday november 19 at 5pm
SAFE IN HELL
Safe in Hell is a shockingly lurid pre-Code cautionary tale that follows a fallen woman's dark journey as she escapes from a murder charge in New Orleans, smuggled by her sailor boyfriend to a remote tropical island ominously named Tortuga. Left alone on the sweltering isle by the sailor, the woman finds herself encircled by a menacing gang of lecherous fugitives and lowlifes. Despite the long distance from New Orleans, the woman's criminal past follows to deliver a fate that led exhibitors to label *Safe in Hell* with the rarely used "Not for Children" warning. Wellman's imperiled heroine is given resolve and dignity by the comely Dorothy Mackaill, a popular actress of the silent era largely forgotten today.

Directed by William Wellman. With Dorothy Mackaill, Donald Cook, Ralf Harolde
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 65 min

William Wellman *HEROES FOR SALE*

sunday november 19 at 7pm
HEROES FOR SALE
Wellman's pre-Code letter to a Depressed America contains critiques of both Capitalism and Communism, yet ultimately points its finger at the inhumanity within all ideologies and systems. The director looks everyone directly in the eye with an empathetic and cynical scrutiny. Remarkable for Hollywood at this time, the film fails to denounce the drug addict and even casts a compassionate eye on the human in a Nazi uniform. When Richard Barthelmess' wartime hero Tom is left for dead on the battlefield, his heroic efforts are claimed by another man, who then forsakes him once Tom develops an addiction to the morphine he is prescribed for chronic pain. The portrait of egoless, kind perseverance, Tom finds love, success and friends—including Aline MacMahon's steadfast Mary, who is his unglamorous female counterpart—yet cannot compete with larger forces: the desperate masses and the Machine Age. Peppered with actual hoboes and laborers, Wellman's endeavor is as earnest and heartfelt as the causes of his protagonist. With echoes of "My Forgotten Man" in *Gold Diggers of 1933*, the film may end with a message direct from FDR—apparently a studio directive—but Wellman has the final, wry word.

Directed by William Wellman. With Richard Barthelmess, Aline MacMahon, Loretta Young
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 73 min

William Wellman *A STAR IS BORN*

monday november 20 at 7pm
WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD
Impoverished by the Depression, teenage buddies Tom and Ed take off to fend for themselves and lighten their unemployed parents' load. Far from home, the boys' romantic dreams of newfound freedom and idyllic odyssey are shattered by the brutal lessons of the dog-eat-dog nature of life on the ragged fringes of society. Wellman brings a vivid ferocity to this hard-edged road movie with clear-eyed, unflinching depictions of poverty, lawlessnessand the victimization of youth that would soon become rare in Hollywood.

Directed by William Wellman. With Frankie Darro, Edwin Phillips, Rochelle Hudson
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 66 min

THE STAR WITNESS
Wellman's flair for unexpected, often awkwardly physical, action and comedy is showcased in *The Star Witness,* an unusual crime exposé and multigenerational portrait of the American family centered around an unruly paterfamilias, the outspoken Civil War veteran grandfather played by celebrated vaudevillian turned screen actor Charles "Chic" Sale. When a family witnesses a brutal gangster shooting just outside their home, they are immediately torn between the rousing entreaties of Walter Huston's crusading district attorney and the violent threats of the underworld henchmen against their lives. Only the oldest and youngest members of the family muster the courage to fight, leading to an improbable standoff and dramatic courtroom finale.

Directed by William Wellman. With Walter Huston, Frances Starr, Grant Mitchell
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 68 min

friday november 24 at 7pm
A STAR IS BORN
Glowing in the particular hues of early Technicolor, Wellman's gimlet-eyed melodrama about the Hollywood movie colony traces the rise of Janet Gaynor's aspiring actress to the heights of fame and fortune, while charting the obverse trajectory of her matinée idol husband, played by Fredric March. Witnessing victims of the dream factory falling left and right around him, Wellman based his story on numer-

ous actual incidents and cast many "real life" stars whose shine had long faded. Nominated for numerous Academy Awards—including one for Gaynor's subtle, sympathetic lead performance when, ironically, she was at the end of her career—*A Star is Born* became the biggest box-office hit of the year and delivered one of the most memorable closing lines in movie history.

Directed by William Wellman. With Janet Gaynor, Fredric March, Adolphe Menjou
US 1937, 35mm, b/w, 111 min

friday november 24 at 9:30pm
YELLOW SKY

Wellman continues his late-1940s experiments in fusing the Western and film noir with this tale of a band of bank robbers fleeing into a forbidding desert only to take refuge in a ghost town. Tensions in the gang are exacerbated, however, by the discovery that the ruins are inhabited by an elderly gold prospector and his spirited daughter. Wellman trades the claustrophobia of *The Ox-Bow Incident* for wide-open vistas that he proceeds to stylize with hints of expressionist disorientation using extreme close-ups and canted camera angles.

Directed by William Wellman. With Gregory Peck, Anne Baxter, Richard Widmark
US 1948, 35mm, b/w, 99 min

William Wellman *MIDNIGHT MARY*

saturday november 25 at 7pm
TRACK OF THE CAT

In his late career Wellman bravely pushed himself in new directions, especially with Westerns that boldly revisited the themes of family and masculine authority that were constants of his earliest films. *Track of the Cat* is perhaps the most extreme of these departures—a visually stark and unsettling film alternately set within a claustrophobic mountain home infested with a Freudian brand of cabin fever and the snow-blinded rugged landscape outside, where a lethal panther lurks. Warned of the panther's return by an ancient Native American wise man—improbably played by *The Little Rascals'* Alfafa, Carl Switzer, rival brothers Robert Mitchum and Tab Hunter set out to track their deadly prey, an extended hunt menaced by unspoken fratricidal threats. Mitchum delivers one of his most sinister and understated performances, exuding an absolute and frightening hate with almost casual ease. Also strong are Teresa

William Wellman *TRACK OF THE CAT*

Wright as his embittered sister staring with dishpan hands down a bottomless well of regret, and the underappreciated Tab Hunter as the emblem of Fifties youth culture thrown suddenly back into a Lewtonesque fable of fate and bad blood. The film's strangely muted color palette is deliberate, carefully designed by Wellman and celebrated cinematographer William Clothier (*Cheyenne Autumn, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*), who set out to create a new kind of black-and-white, reserving bright hues only as expressionist punctuation against a stark field of whites, blacks and greys.

Directed by William Wellman. With Robert Mitchum, Teresa Wright, Diana Lynn
US 1954, 35mm, color, 102 min

saturday november 25 at 9pm
WESTWARD THE WOMEN

A female trek, even though it is led by Robert Taylor, more or less reenacts the story of *Red River*. The narrative is less deep than Hawks' masterpiece, and in some sense it is harsher, more realistic about the difficulties and facts of loss. Another great contemporary film, Ford's *Wagon Master*, is somehow romantic by comparison. Wellman was a tough guy who could create an amazing combination of tenderness and cruelty. … This is a central element of Wellman's charm: total unpredictability. As we know, and this film verifies it fully, Wellman's true basic element was rain, here complemented with dust, storm, thunder, images of horses stuck in the sand, or more generally everything breathing the fight to survive. But there are contrary forces at work as well. The harsh circumstances—a vision of blood, sweat, tears—could easily make the perspective of the promised land look like a hallucinatory dream, bound to vanish—but it does not. That is why he gives us a scene of a baby being born, with the art to create the feeling of a collective birth event. Maybe this is why the film is less well known than it should be: with no female stars pushed to the foreground, it is authentically about a collective. It's about those who "died nameless but achieved immortality." – *Peter von Bagh*

William Wellman *FRISCO JENNY*

Directed by William Wellman. With Beverly Dennis, Renata Vanni, John McIntire
US 1952, 35mm, b/w, 116 min

sunday november 26 at 5pm
MIDNIGHT MARY

One of a number of Wellman films centered on the scandalous survival tactics of a desperate woman, *Midnight Mary* stars Loretta Young in an unusual "bad girl" role. While waiting for the jury's decision at her murder trial, she reviews her life through a series of flashbacks, which reveal that her "badness" is the result of a series of unfortunate and unfair circumstances. Filled with startlingly racy scenes, even for pre-Code, that detail Mary's life in and out of crime and prison, Wellman's tale is one of a woman whose existence becomes determined and defined by male desire. He describes the fine tightrope women walk, with one missed step spelling certain doom. Between Mary's colorful gangster coterie and her charming courtship with Franchot Tone's upper-class Tom, Wellman depicts a whirlwind world of funny antics, quick thrills and deep, dark sacrifices, encased in beautiful cinematography by James Van Trees—who elegantly crops and abstracts crucial moments—and the dynamic technique of scenes "sliding" into frame, like panels of a graphic novel.

Directed by William Wellman. With Loretta Young, Ricardo Cortez, Franchot Tone
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 76 min

sunday november 26 at 7pm
FRISCO JENNY

Ruth Chatterton offers an indelible performance as a headstrong woman who rises from the ashes of the San Francisco earthquake that killed her father before her eyes to become the madam of a successful bordello and an influential player in the underworld. Wellman injects a powerful element of Greek tragedy into his underappreciated pre-Code classic, erecting Chatterton's Jenny as an emblem of maternal power and sacrifice. Recently rediscovered, *Frisco Jenny* has drawn comparisons to early Bresson and Hitchcock for its lucid vision of fate and human vulnerability.

Directed by William Wellman. With Ruth Chatterton, Louis Calhern, Helen Jerome Eddy
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 70 min

HOUGHTON AT 75 – ALTERED STATES

OCTOBER 28

As the final piece in the HFA's tribute to Harvard's Houghton Library on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of its founding, we present two very special films that typify the spirit of one of Harvard's most unusual special collections: the Ludlow-Santo Domingo (LSD) Library, which collects books, manuscripts and images about psychoactive drugs and the many cultural and countercultural products inspired by the altered states of mind such drugs produce, with major holdings of erotica and underground comix. – DP

An exhibit highlighting the LSD Library, entitled "Altered States: Sex, Drugs, and Transcendence in the Ludlow-Santo Domingo Library" is on display at Houghton from September 5 through December 16. The exhibition will be open for a special viewing on Saturday, October 28 from 5:45 to 6:45, as well as the normal hours of 9am to 5pm.

Film descriptions by Brittany Gravely and Haden Guest.

INTRODUCTION BY LESLIE A. MORRIS, CURATOR OF MODERN BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS, HOUGHTON LIBRARY

saturday october 28 at 7pm

BARBARELLA

Based on Jean-Claude Forest's adult French comic, *Barbarella* giddily imagines a pop, flower-powered space age where sexuality isn't considered prurient or even provocative. Campy and over-the-top in every respect—from the catchy, loungey TV-era theme song to its surreal and oversexed imagery reminiscent of Italian Gothic horror films, *Barbarella* is both an idealistic and cynical view of modern culture, but does not take itself very seriously. Director Vadim emphasized that star Jane Fonda would not "be a science fiction character, nor will she play Barbarella tongue in cheek. She is just a lovely, average girl with a terrific space record and a lovely body." Barbarella remains incorruptible even as she awakens to her primary power—sex—and the concept of evil. She is flexible though, sometimes fighting fire with fire, but does so with a positive resourcefulness as she encounters all manner of attempts on her life: marching robots, animatronic vampire dolls, a highly stimulating electric organ, a transparent bubble filled with pretty—and lethal—parakeets, and the lava-lamp-like liquid "Mathmos" that surrounds and sustains the dystopian Sogo, the city of night.

Directed by Roger Vadim. With Jane Fonda, John Phillip Law, Anita Pallenberg
US 1968, 35mm, color, 98 min

Roger Vadim *BARBARELLA*

saturday october 28 at 9pm

MONKEY ON MY BACK

Andre De Toth's gripping character study was among the first Hollywood films to realistically depict drug addition, a topic considered taboo by the studios since the imposition of the Production Code. Based on the real-life struggle of former Marine and boxing champion Barney Ross and his descent into addiction after being treated with morphine as a wounded soldier, *Monkey on my Back* offers its story not as an aberrant story of lurid vice but as a cautionary tale that could happen to even the most outstanding citizen. The feverish exploration of the back alleys and seedy clubs where drugs and addicts were forced into hiding gives rich dimension to the dark underworld setting central to De Toth's cinema. In the lead role—rumored to have been offered to Marlon Brando—Cameron Mitchell brings pathos and raw vulnerability to the suffering ex-fighter forced into another and more punishing kind of ring.

Directed by Andre De Toth. With Cameron Mitchell, Dianne Foster, Paul Richards
US 1957, 35mm, b/w, 94 min

SHUJI TERAYAMA, EMPEROR OF THE UNDERGROUND

NOVEMBER 3 – NOVEMBER 27

Shuji Terayama *PASTORAL HIDE AND SEEK*

Poet, playwright, novelist, photographer, sports critic, filmmaker and cultural agent provocateur Shuji Terayama (1935-1983) was among the most broadly influential and innovative figures active in the post-WWII Japanese avant-garde. Throughout his all-too-brief but astonishingly prolific and multifaceted career, Terayama deliberately confused boundaries between high and low, between history and myth, while working inventively across different media. Terayama's intermingling of theater, film and photography was an especially important inspiration for his visionary art practice. Beginning with his precocious and often controversial engagement with traditional *tanka* poetry as a mere teen, Terayama held tight to his belief that genuine artistic creativity was rooted in the act of shattering molds in order to cast them anew. Cinema was a source of fascination for Terayama ever since the childhood days and nights spent in his uncle's cinema in remote Aomori Prefecture. *Casablanca* remained a talismanic favorite, cryptically cited throughout his poetry and multimedia practice, appropriated and reinvented in a similar manner as the work of Jean Cocteau and Luis Buñuel. The early death of Terayama's father would cast a long shadow across his films, art and writing, which are haunted by absent or ambiguous figures of authority. By extension, the questioning of masculine authority that informs so much of Terayama's art found especially rich expression in his films and their frequently radical destabilization of meaning. Among Terayama's best known film is *Emperor Tomato Ketchup*, a mesmerizing fever dream that follows the strange adventures of a child king wandering through his anarchic kingdom and encountering costumed women who worship and, most controversially, erotically frolic with their boy-ruler. Often compared to Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* (1963), Terayama's film showcases the kind of transgressive performance central both to his cinema and his work as founder of the radical Tenjo Sajiki theater troupe, while also making clear the call for dissent and even revolution that resounds across all of Terayama's films, perhaps most explicitly in his play, later adapted into a celebrated feature, *Throw Away Your Books, Rally in the Streets*.

Difficult to summarize, the many different facets and strands of Terayama's remarkable career are best appreciated in the films that are today finally receiving the wider recognition they deserve, thanks in part to the preservation work of the National Film Center in Tokyo as well as a wave of important new scholarship exploring his cinema and career. This retrospective gathers and presents, for the first time in the US, all of Terayama's pioneering short films together with his feature films, while also inviting Terayama collaborator and expert Henrikku Morisaki to enact two of Terayama's cinema performance pieces. – HG

Film descriptions by Haden Guest and Becca Voelcker.

Presented in partnership with Anthology Film Archives; National Film Center, Tokyo; and the George Eastman Museum with the generous support oF the Kinoshita Group. Special thanks: Theodore C. Bestor and Stacie Matsumoto—Reischauer Institute, Harvard; Hisashi Okajima, Akira Tochigi and Chizuru Usui—National Film Center; the Japan Foundation; Jed Rapfogel—Anthology Film Archives; Julian Ross; Go Hirasawa.

Shuji Terayama *EMPEROR TOMATO KETCHUP*

friday november 3 at 7pm

This program of early and mid-career works includes Terayama's first film, *The Cage*, which makes clear the deep hold of Surrealism upon the young filmmaker. The opening film, *Butterfly Dress Pledge,* offers a striking introduction into the theatrical trance world inhabited by so many of Terayama's films, while also showcasing his interests in breaking through the screen itself.

BUTTERFLY DRESS PLEDGE (*CHOFUKUKI*)
Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1974, 35mm, color, 12 min

THE CAGE (ORI)
Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1964, 16mm, color, 11 min

THE LABYRINTH TALE (*MEIKYUTAN*)
Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1975, 16mm, color, 17 min

EMPEROR TOMATO KETCHUP (*TOMATO KECCHAPPU KOTEI*)
Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Keiko Niitaka, Salvador Tari, Taro Apollo
Japan 1971/1996, 16mm, tinted b/w, 27 min. Japanese with English subtitles

friday november 3 at 8:30pm
PASTORAL HIDE AND SEEK (*DENEN NI SHISU*)
Terayama's autobiographically inspired feature is an avant-garde cine-memoire and the fullest expression of the mythopoesis of childhood, family and history that recurs throughout his films and writings. Set in the rural North where Terayama spent his formative years, the visually dazzling *Pastoral Hide and Seek* glides seamlessly between past and present, oneiric theater and cinematic kaleidoscope in a cascade of collaging and overripe symbols that are simultaneously offered as critical and emotional reflections upon Terayama's past and the traumatic history of post-WWII Japan.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Kaoru Yachigusa, Keiko Niitaka, Masumi Harukawa
Japan 1974, 35mm, color, 104 min. Japanese with English subtitles

Preceded by

FATHER (*CHICHI*)
Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 3 min

saturday november 4 at 7pm
FRUITS OF PASSION (*LES FRUITS DE LA PASSION*)
A heady admixture of sexual and anti-imperialist fantasy, *Fruits of Passion* is a loose adaptation of Pauline Réage's sequel to her erotic classic *The Story of O* and stars Klaus Kinski as a lecherous and wealthy wastrel. Although operating in a more lush and theatrical vein than Oshima or Koji Wakamatsu, Terayama shares his contemporaries' fascination with the possibilities and limits of the intermingling of sexual and political revolution.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Klaus Kinski, Isabelle Illiers, Arielle Dombasle
France/Japan 1981, 35mm, color, 90 min. French, Japanese, English & Cantonese with English subtitles

saturday november 4 at 9pm

These two longer form works reveal different but related sides of Terayama's cinema: the performance-based corporeal work showcased in *A Tale of Smallpox* and the narrative reimagination of childhood and memory in *Grass Labyrinth*.

A TALE OF SMALLPOX (*HOSOTAN*)
Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Keiko Niitaka, Yoko Ran, Takeshi Wakamatsu
Japan 1975, 16mm, color, 34 min

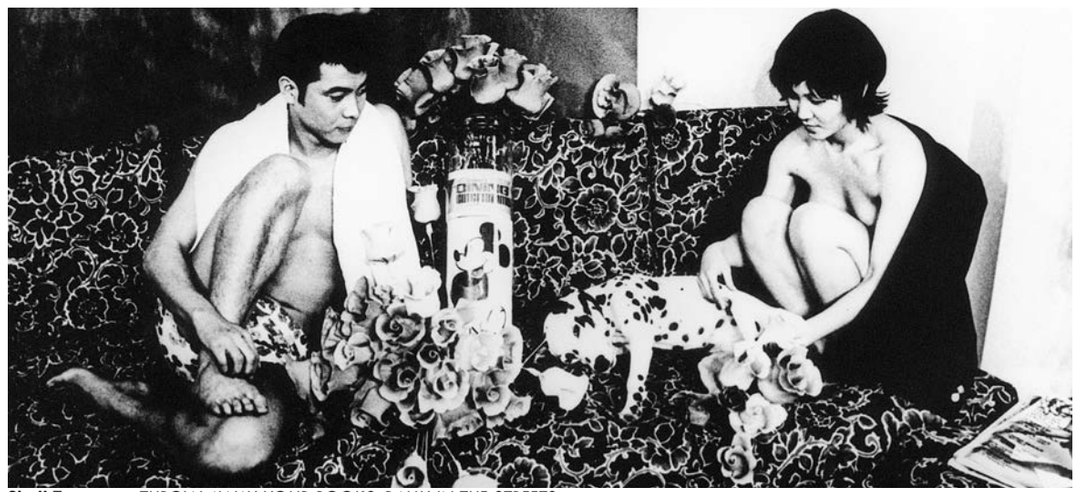
GRASS LABYRINTH (*KUSA-MEIKYU*)
Macabre and sexualized, *Grass Labyrinth* plunges into the subconscious of Akira, a teenager haunted by the desire to remember the lyrics of a song his absent mother once sung. Akira's mother is framed yet inaccessible—withdrawing into water, paper screens, a tune that has lost its lyrics, and the mists and shadows of memory. The mother spins and works a loom, and binds her son with rope. Later, Akira is

Shuji Terayama *GRASS LABYRINTH*

otherwise entangled with a nymphomaniac and a prostitute. Abandoned by his own mother, Terayama imbues the film with the phantasmagoria of his childhood, including the ghost tales of Aomori—recalled by a chorus in whiteface—and the experience of growing up in a house adjoining a cinema. His expressionistic projections are further amplified by composer J. A. Seazer's portentous birdsong, wind chimes and operatic crescendos. Once writing that all dead people become words, Terayama wrestles with language and loss through this labyrinthine search for lyrics and the lost mother they represent.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Takeshi Wakamatsu, Hiroshi Mikami, Juzo Itami
Japan/France 1979, 16mm, color, 40 min. Japanese with English subtitles

monday november 6 at 7pm
FAREWELL TO THE ARK (*SARABA HAKOBUNE*)
Inspired by Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Terayama's final and most elaborate feature film takes place on a remote Okinawan island ruled by a kind of mythical time that gives shifting shape to memory, fantasy and even death. Released shortly after his premature demise at the age of forty-seven and premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, *Farewell to the Ark* seems to point towards a new direction in Terayama's cinema, closer



Shuji Terayama *THROW AWAY YOUR BOOKS, RALLY IN THE STREETS*

to the international art film with its casting of major stars and slightly more legible narrative structure, here the intergenerational struggles of a dynastic family. Nevertheless, the film brims over with classic Terayama tropes of surreal violence, frustrated sexuality and oneiric, ghostly imagery.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Tsutomu Yamazaki, Mayumi Ogawa, Yoshio Harada
Japan 1984, 35mm, color & b/w, 127 min. Japanese with English subtitles

sunday november 12 at 7pm

THE BOXER (*BOKUSA*)

Terayama's most traditional film, *The Boxer* reveals his passion for pugilism as a pure form of theater, improvisatory and unabashedly violent. *The Boxer* tells the story of a scrappy adolescent who spends his last monies to travel to the city and enroll in boxing school. Forging a difficult bond with his eccentric and at first reluctant coach, the young boxer suffers the tumults and pains of life in the ring before being thrust onto the largest stage of them all. Terayama brings a documentary verve to the film, casting celebrated Japanese boxers in bold cameos.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Bunta Sugawara, Kentaro Shimizu, Masumi Harukawa
Japan 1977, 35mm, color, 94 min. Japanese with English subtitles

monday november 13 at 7pm

THROW AWAY YOUR BOOKS, RALLY IN THE STREETS (*SHO O SUTEYO MACHI E DEYOU*)

Combining raw discomfort and unexpected beauty, Terayama's first feature follows socioeconomically marginalized Eimei, who rages against conservative, "efficient," and unjust systems that bar him from following his dreams. The subsequent rallies read as documents of an anarchist moment in Japanese history—seen through poetically placed colored gels and jaunty camera angles with graffitied literary references littering the streets. Meanwhile, if Eimei's prospects seem bleak, those for women are worse. Terayama closes in on the catastrophic gulf between male projections of female experience and women's actual experience through sexualized and violent images—which may or may not operate by the same logic they critique.

Opening with darkness and a whirring that could be either a camera or a projector, the film inserts us between its production and its consumption. Eimei confronts us in this darkness: "What the hell are you doing?" Later, he asks for the studio lights to be switched on. Images of the cast without costume scroll instead of credits. Challenging audience passivity through such reflexivity, Terayama relates the film to its book and theatrical versions, and his concurrent experiments in expanded cinema. *Throw Away Your Books* ends with Eimei bidding farewell to film—"Sayonara eiga!"—but Terayama's images stay with us.

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Hideaki Sasaki, Masahiro Saito, Yukiko Kobayashi
Japan 1971, 35mm, color & b/w, 137 min. Japanese with English subtitles

INTRODUCTION BY JULIAN ROSS & CHIZURU USUI

friday november 17 at 7pm

The screening will be followed by a conversation between curator and scholar Julian Ross; Chizuru Usui, Assistant Curator, National Film Center, Tokyo; longtime Terayama collaborator and Tenjo Sajiki member Henrikku Morisaki and Alexander Zahlten, Associate Professor, East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard.

YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO CINEMA (*SEISHONEN NO TAMENO EIGANYUMON*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Henrikku Morisaki, Masahiro Saito, Sueshi Sasada
Japan 1974, 16mm, color, 3 min

THE READING MACHINE (*SHOKENKI*)

In this Borgesian satire on knowledge and technology, bibliophilic desire leads to the construction of a pedal-powered reading machine. Resembling a combination of gymnastic contraption, printing press and early cinematic apparatus, the machine's purpose remains ambiguous. And like this machine, Terayama's film connects his work in poetry, motion picture and graphic design by weaving together printed and projected, still and moving images. Alphabetic characters are shuffled across a board game, and costumed characters shuffle through a cityscape to the tune of J. A. Seazer's imaginative soundtrack. The camera lingers on an image of a man crawling through a screen—a premonitory illustration of Terayama's interest in rupturing façades, illusion and identity. The final book we see is blank, and the film ends in a funeral dance. Such ambivalence articulates Terayama's interrogation of written and cinematic language, evident elsewhere in inky strikethroughs (*Video Letter*) and Brechtian transgressions (*Laura*).

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Toshihiko Hino, Keiko Niitaka, Takeshi Wakamatsu
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 22 min. Japanese with English subtitles

Shuji Terayama *PASTORAL HIDE AND SEEK*

LES CHANTS DE MALDOROR (*MARUDORORU NO UTA*)

A "reading film" of delirious image and text, *Les chants de Maldoror* takes its title and inspiration from Comte de Lautréamont's 1869 proto-Surrealist poetic novel which, for instance, describes beauty as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table. In the novel's six cantos, a young misanthrope indulges in depraved and destructive acts. Unexpected encounters abound, with turtles and birds joining Terayama's regular cast of snails and dogs to wander over books and bare torsos. Feverish video processing posterizes, inverts and overlays images that are further colored by sound—pushing the limits of his literary adaptation. Terayama wrote that the only tombstone he wanted was his words, but, as *Les chants de Maldoror* demonstrates, words need not be confined to carved monuments or bound hardcopies.

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 27 min. Japanese with English subtitles

AN ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE THE MEASURE OF MAN (*ISSUNBOSHI WO KIJUTSUSURU KOKOROMI*)

Using bluescreen video techniques, Terayama playfully—and with a silent film theatricality—posits a series of postmodern vignettes featuring realities-within-realities as his protagonist attempts some kind of relationship with a nude woman on the screen-within-the-screen. In his struggles to "free" her, he exposes the absurd flimsiness, deceptiveness and mutability of both the cinema experience and our human dimension.

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 19 min. Japanese with English subtitles

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS PRESENTATION & PERFORMANCE BY HENRIKKU MORISAKI

saturday november 18 at 7pm

Featuring some of Terayama's most dazzling and truly experimental films, this program includes his haunting meditation on shadow and/as cinema, *Shadow Film,* as well as his celebrated *The Eraser*, which gives rough texture and violence to the intertwined acts of memory and forgetting. Henrikku Morisaki will introduce the program and enact Terayama's important film performances, *Laura* and *The Trial,* the latter a radically interactive film that invites the audience to join in a symbolic desecration and reinvention of the movie screen.

SHADOW FILM: THE WOMAN WITH TWO HEADS (*KAGE NO EIGA: NITO ONNA*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 16 min

THE ERASER (*KESHIGOMU*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1977, 16mm, color, 20 min

THE WAR OF JAN-KEN PON (*JANKEN SENSO*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1971, 16mm, b/w, 12 min

LAURA (*ROORA*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama
Japan 1974, 16mm, color, 9 min. Japanese with English subtitles

THE TRIAL (*SHINPAN*)

Directed by Shuji Terayama. With Keiko Niitaka, Yoko Ran, Sueshi Sasada
Japan 1974, 16mm, color, 34 min

monday november 27 at 7pm

VIDEO LETTER

Pensive yet playful, *Video Letter* is a meditation on identity, death, and the limits of language. Made in collaboration with friend and poet Tanikawa Shuntaro (who also experimented with video and sound technology), it draws inspiration from *renga* poetry, a traditional form in which two poets correspond in alternating verses. They each film themselves alone, sifting through possessions, unpacking nesting boxes, and leafing through poetry and photos (as in so many of his films, Terayama is haunted by images of his mother). They share a phone call, and use intertitles and voiceovers as missives. Words are repeated and relished, obliterated with a marker pen, and swallowed in a wink and half-smile for the camera. The addressee of Tanikawa's final intertitle is left blank, and *Video Letter* closes with the scrolling electrocardiogram that Tanikawa took from Terayama's bedside. It traces Terayama's final moments in a cursive verse that underlines a life's work.

Directed by Shuntaro Tanikawa and Shuji Terayama
Japan 1983, digital video, color, 74 min. Japanese with English subtitles

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THE CONSTITUTION BY RAJKO GRLIC

OCTOBER 20

Rajko Grlic *THE CONSTITUTION*

$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
RAJKO GRLIC IN PERSON
friday october 20 at 7pm

THE CONSTITUTION

The leading filmmaker in Croatian cinema for decades, Rajko Grlic examines the state of Croatian society in his latest film, *The Constitution*. The film's allegorical narrative grows out of the intersections of the lives of four neighbors in a Zagreb apartment building. After aging teacher Vjeko is beaten for being gay, he is cared for by the nurse living next door, Maja, who also helps Vjeko care for his aged father, who was a high-ranking official in the Ustasha, the fascist nationalist movement that ruled Croatia during World War II. As thanks for her help, Vjeko reads Croatia's constitution to Maja's Serbian husband, a dyslexic police officer studying for a civil service exam. Grlic has likened the film to a mosaic, one in which the intricacies of the delicate arrangements among this quartet add up to a comment on present-day Croatia, which has seen a resurgence of right-wing intolerance, like so much of the rest of Europe and the United States. – DP

This event has been organized by the Harvard College South Slavic Society with the support of Harvard Film Archive, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies. Special thanks: Aida Vidan—Center for European Studies.

in person

JOSHUA BONNETTA & J.P. SNIADECKI **sept 17**
ERNST KAREL **sept 25**
LAURIE SIMMONS **sept 28**
ED HALTER **oct 13**
NATHANIEL DORSKY & JEROME HILER **oct 13 - 15**
RICK PRELINGER **oct 16 - 17**
RAJKO GRLIC **oct 20**
DANNY LYON **oct 21 - 22**
MARK MCELHATTEN **nov 11**
HENRIKKU MORISAKI **nov 18**

coming soon

BASMA ALSHARIF **in person**
KEVIN JEROME EVERSON **in person**
THE FILMS OF LUCHINO VISCONTI
AGNES VARDA **in person**
WIM WENDERS **in person**
FREDERICK WISEMAN **in person**