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All programs curated by Haden Guest and David Pendleton. Film synopses written by Haden Guest (HG), David Pendleton (DP) and Brittany Gravely (BG) unless otherwise noted.

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.

**On the cover:** All creatures are held captive by the divine powers of Barbara Stanwyck in Frank Capra's *The Miracle Woman* (p. 7)

## CORNELIU PORUMBOIU, ADJECTIVE

APRIL 4 – APRIL 13

Though its affiliates may be reluctant to acknowledge its existence, the sudden appearance of a Romanian New Wave took the film world by surprise around Cannes, 2005 and has not relented—drawing critical attention to a complex well of creativity within a country often cinematically overshadowed in the twentieth century by its Czech and Polish neighbors. Joined by directors Cristi Puiu (*The Death of Mr. Lazarescu*, *Aurora*), Cristian Mungiu (*4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*), Cristian Nemescu (*California Dreamin'*) and Catalin Mitulescu (*Way I spent the End of the World*), Romanian filmmaker Corneliu Porumboiu (b. 1975) shares his compatriots' reflective opposition to the oppressive twenty-four-year communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu—both its “Golden Age” fantasies and lies, as well as the cautious filmmaking during that period which avoided censorship through still more mythmaking and metaphor. Often slyly humorous and meditatively hypnotic, the films shy away from overt or forced melodrama and action—leaning more toward a mode of observational documentary in which dramas of details, shadows and subtleties develop in masterful long takes. Porumboiu's cinema, in particular, is quietly emotional, offering patient descriptions of the lives of non-heroic, nondescript, lonely people whose private dramas are non-didactically linked to Romania's public ones.

A teenager when the Ceausescu dictatorship quickly and bloodily fell, Porumboiu studied management at the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest, yet was quickly taken in by the local repertory theater's offerings—Charlie Chaplin, Michelangelo Antonioni, the French New Wave, Polish cinema—and began studying film at the I.L. Carnegie University in Bucharest. After receiving international acclaim at festivals for his short films, he won the *Caméra d'Or* at Cannes for his debut feature, *12:08 East of Bucharest*—a comic rejoinder to the whole concept of a Romanian revolution. The prizes and praises intensified for his follow-up, *Police, Adjective*—an even more understated, incisive analysis of the individual's impossible movement within a defective system. His two latest—*When Evening Falls on Bucharest* or *Metabolism* and *The Second Game*—reduce his explorations of meaning down to the elements of filmmaking itself and the mediated image's relationship to reality.

Porumboiu's films keep a certain distance, not too close nor too faraway—just enough for critical surveillance of characters moving around one another in environments not always tailored to their needs, in a dislocated time and space. Never fully reoriented after the regime and its fall, Porumboiu's characters are in transition, their lives irresolute and alienated seeking strength and security through—often outdated or meaningless—grammar, laws and beliefs. With a modest wink, Porumboiu surreptitiously strings together the absurdities, frustration, wasted time, fruitless struggles and “non-events” of daily existence into his own unexpectedly revelatory cinematic language.

We are excited to glean further insights when we welcome Corneliu Porumboiu to the Harvard Film Archive for two evenings of film and conversation. – BG, DP



CORNELIU PORUMBOIU *THE SECOND GAME*

### THE SECOND GAME (*AL DOILEA JOC*)

FRIDAY APRIL 4 AT 7PM

Porumboiu's talent for shaving extraneous cinematic elements away to expose a surprisingly rich understatement is taken to a mildly ironic extreme in his first documentary. With simply a snowy soccer match from 1988 playing on the screen, he discusses the game with his father who was the referee—with no cuts, in real time. The winter before Ceausescu fell, Steaua, the army's team plays Dinamo, the police's. While wistfully admiring Romania's top players, his father's commentary alternates between criticism and nostalgia—how things have changed in football and in Romania. Amid technical remarks, he blithely describes the frightening pressures applied to referees who were often also international informers. He also notes what is not being seen: “In the Communist era, you couldn't show bad sportsmanship.” Subtle layers of silenced poetry and painterly beauty develop over the course of the snowy game replayed now in the analog haze of VHS.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu  
Romania 2014, digital video, color, 97 min. Romanian with English subtitles

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CORNELIU PORUMBOIU *WHEN EVENING FALLS IN BUCHAREST OR METABOLISM*

## CORNELIU PORUMBOIU SHORT FILMS

FRIDAY APRIL 4 AT 9PM

### GONE WITH THE WINE (*PE ARIPILE VINULUI*)

The first of a series of Porumboiu's short films populated by characters demoralized and thwarted by a toxic—if comic and bittersweet—atmosphere; in this case a ubiquitous alcoholism. Choosing life on an oil rig over life in his village, the young student finds that even if he has never had a drink, he is still under the influence.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Constantin Dita, Ion Sabdaru, Pusa Darie  
Romania 2002, digital video, color, 9 min. Romanian with English subtitles

### A TRIP TO THE CITY (*CALATORIE LA ORAS*)

Constantin Dita's quiet consternation once again inhabits Porumboiu's second short and is once more joined by the more carefree antics of Ion Sapadaru. It is not just old world meeting new as the young teacher's vain attempts to merely purchase a computer lead to unnecessary delays, political favors, bureaucratic conundrums, criminal activity and unexpected camaraderie. As as in his feature films to come, Porumboiu fills the screen with so much life and so many stories—while his characters still wait for something to happen.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Constantin Dita, Ion Sapadaru  
Romania 2003, 35mm, color, 19 min. Romanian with English subtitles

### LIVIU'S DREAM (*VISUL LUI LIVIU*)

The darkest and most complex of Porumboiu's short films, *Liviu's Dream* unfolds into more of a stifled nightmare which Liviu has come to bitterly tolerate. Born into a corrupt, disenchanted world, he makes a living by stealing and finds love by cheating on his best friend. Want-



CORNELIU PORUMBOIU *12:08 EAST OF BUCHAREST*

ing to do things differently from his parents, Liviu blindly navigates through densely populated underworlds of waking and sleeping to finally reach that new world, the unknown.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Dragos Bucur, Luiza Cocora, Constatin Dita  
Romania 2003, 35mm, color, 39 min. Romanian with English subtitles

### 12:08 EAST OF BUCHAREST (*A FOST SAU N-A FOST?*)

FRIDAY APRIL 11 AT 9:30PM

Porumboiu's fastidious camera hangs back for the first part of the film, as if it is an interloper peeking into the middle of specific domestic scenes within the Romanian town of Vaslui—the director's hometown. The three main characters amble in and out of small apartments, debt, hatred, ridicule and fidelity until they all finally coalesce on a low-budget TV talk show around the theme of whether or not there really was a revolution in Vaslui in 1989. Jderescu, the host, persists on earnestly pursuing this question with his two “experts”—a troublesome alcoholic and an erstwhile Santa Claus—while managing irate callers and a young cameraman who can barely keep everyone in frame. Over the course of the program, mismatched memories of the revolution reveal more cowardice, fear, resentment and degeneracy—all of the personal debris left out of mythic history. By the end, Jderescu finally receives from his amateur cinematographer, “a close-up, for once.”

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Mircea Andreescu, Teodor Corban, Ion Sapadaru  
Romania 2006, 35mm, color, 89 min. Romanian with English subtitles

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
CORNELIU PORUMBOIU IN PERSON

### WHEN EVENING FALLS ON BUCHAREST OR METABOLISM (*CÂND SE LASA SEARA PESTE BUCURESTI SAU METABOLISM*)

SATURDAY APRIL 12 AT 7PM

In the self-reflexive tradition of *Beware a Holy Whore*, *Day for Night* or *The Stunt Man*, Porumboiu's third feature foregrounds the games people play with each other on and around the set during the making of a movie. Here, the emphasis is on the relationship between actor and director as the private rehearsals between filmmaker Paul and actress Alina slide toward what seems to be seduction, although the motives and stakes for each person remain elusive. *When Evening Falls on Bucharest* is meant to be as oblique as a real person, and as opaque as its characters, with Porumboiu masterfully wielding the frame, the long take and the use of offscreen space to set up a game between what we know and what we think we

know, what we see and what we realize we want to see.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Diana Avramut, Bogdan Dumitrache, Mihaela Sirbu  
Romania/France 2013, 35mm, color, 89 min. Romanian with English subtitles

*This screening is also part of Process: In Medias Res, The Inaugural Graduate Student Conference of Harvard's PhD program in Film and Visual Studies. Running April 10 – 12th, Carpenter Center Room B-04. Open to the public, see website for more information: [www.bit.do/process](http://www.bit.do/process)*



CORNELIU PORUMBOIU *POLICE, ADJECTIVE*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
CORNELIU PORUMBOIU IN PERSON

### POLICE, ADJECTIVE (*POLITIST, ADJECTIV*)

SUNDAY APRIL 13 AT 7PM

The drama and suspense within Porumboiu's tense policier relies not on chase scenes, interrogations, murder victims or perpetrators finally brought to justice, but instead derives from the very elements which structure civilization: time, space, ethics, language. Cristi, the detective in Porumboiu's existential crosshairs spends his days surveilling a group of teenagers smoking pot after school. He watches, he waits, he follows, he writes dry, meticulous reports. Upon these minor incriminations of youth hinge enormous, hardly verbalized crises which are discovered through the same close observation carried out by Cristi day after day. Moving through isolating spaces, using “objective” language, following procedures, Cristi bides his time trying to discover a circumstantial loophole through which his conscience can find solace. The festering disconnections between meaning, actions and words leads to a riveting climax as outlandish as it is perfunctory—with the fate of all resting upon a dictionary.

Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu. With Dragos Bucur, Vlad Ivanov, Irina Saulescu  
Romania 2009, 35mm, color, 113 min. Romanian with English subtitles

# YERVANT GIANIKIAN AND ANGELA RICCI LUCCHI X 2

APRIL 5

Italian filmmakers Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi have over the past twenty-five years proven themselves to be masters of the assemblage of found footage film, returning over and over again to images from the first decades of the twentieth century, with a special attention to images of war and colonialism. Since their visit to the HFA five years ago, the duo has released a major new work: *Pays barbare* (*Barbaric Land*), a montage of images from Mussolini's brutal occupation of Ethiopia in the mid-1930s. This work is paired with an earlier film that also wrings from amateur footage a jaundiced look at cinema's complicity with the colonial gaze.

Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi's method consists of poring over these images, studying the interactions among the onscreen figures and between these figures and the camera, looking for telling glances and revealing gestures, which are then slowed down and isolated.

Both films feature soundtracks composed by famed Italian singer-songwriter and ethnomusicologist Giovanna Marini, who sings texts by Henri Michaux and Mircea Eliade with a spare piano accompaniment. – DP

*Special thanks: Giuliana Minghelli—Harvard University.*

*These screenings are presented in conjunction with the 7th De Bosis Colloquium in Italian Studies at Harvard University University and with the opening on April 4th in Pusey Library of the exhibit: In Africa it is Another Story. Looking Back at Italian Colonialism. The colloquium will feature a conversation (via Skype) between Prof. Giuliana Minghelli and filmmakers Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi at 5pm on Monday, April 7 in Boylston Hall, Room 403.*



YERVANT GIANIKIAN & ANGELA RICCI LUCCHI *PAYS BARBARE*

## PAYS BARBARE (BARBARIC LAND)

SATURDAY APRIL 5 AT 7:15PM

We pore over material relating to Italian colonial Ethiopia (Abyssinia), recently unearthed in a private film archive. We scour those individual film frames of colonialism, studying them with a magnifying glass, and transcribe the captions. The material was intended for private home viewing, in silence. In these filmic fragments, examined by hand, without a projector, are indications of who owned the films, those sequences to which they returned over and over. Ours is a dual reading, that of the images themselves and the way in which they were consumed. An Ethiopian woman on her knees wearing a top that leaves her breasts bare, a bearded soldier who washes her head symbolically: certain words recur in the captions, such as barbaric, primitive, pillager, bigamy. Among the films we find a number of military sequences showing the violence of the Italian venture to conquer Ethiopia and the phrase: 'Civilization now dawns in this primitive and barbaric country.' These constitute an image of Mussolini in Africa. – *Yervant Gianikian & Angela Ricci Lucchi*

Directed by Yervant Gianikian & Angela Ricci Lucchi  
France/Italy 2013, digital video, color and b/w, 65 min

## IMAGES D'ORIENT – TOURISME VANDALE (IMAGES OF THE ORIENT – VANDAL TOURISM)

SATURDAY APRIL 5 AT 8:45 PM

This precursor to *Pays barbare* is similarly taken from privately shot footage, this time by European travelers to India at the end of the 1920s. Although this period was a time of gathering anti-colonial fervor, such events remain offscreen. Instead, the "vandalistic tourism" decried by the film's title includes images of festivals and processions, parades and cremations; as Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi would have it, the camera's touristic gaze amounts to a kind of desecration. Especially striking is the contrast between the poverty witnessed in the streets and the opulence of a ruling-class garden party.

Directed by Yervant Gianikian & Angela Ricci Lucchi  
France/Italy 2001, digital video, color and b/w, 62 min

# A GREGORY MARKOPOULOS PRELUDE

APRIL 6 – 7

Gregory Markopoulos (1928-1992) was one of the true visionaries of the post-WWII American avant garde. Across his exquisitely stylized, oneiric early films and through his dazzling master works of the late Sixties and Seventies, Markopoulos defined a unique film language of incomparable formal rigor, visual beauty and haunting lyricism. A tireless perfectionist, Markopoulos crafted a unique mode of art cinema with an astonishingly minimum of funding and resources—often editing his negatives by hand with only razor blade and magnifying glass and perfecting in-camera editing techniques that brought a poetic density to his films. Evident throughout his first major films is a fascination with myth and ritual which would carry across Markopoulos' later work and would, eventually, call him back to his ancestral Greece. The heady mythopoesis of key early films such as *Swain* and *Twice a Man* is also charged with a bold exploration of sexual and homosexual desire that was, in every way, far ahead of its time.

Although he was central to the rich exploration of the trance film by postwar American artists such as Maya Deren and Curtis Harrington, from the start of his career Markopoulos was driven by the ambition to define a mode of cinema uniquely in dialogue with the other arts—painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, poetry—an idea frequently explored in his prolific writings. After founding the ambitious New American Cinema movement—together with Shirley Clarke and Jonas Mekas—Markopoulos broke away from the factionalized American scene, departing in 1967 for Europe, together with his creative and life partner, filmmaker Robert Beavers, never to live again in the US. Disenchanted with the limited and contentious venues for experimental cinema, Markopolous withdrew his films from circulation, keeping them virtually unseen even as he contin-



GREGORY MARKOPOULOS

ued to produce major new work. The last years of Markopoulos' tragically foreshortened life were increasingly dedicated to his ambitious final work, *Eniaios* an epic reworking of his entire oeuvre into a sweeping and entirely silent eighty-hour cycle, designed to be screened in a specially consecrated plein-air theater, named the Temenos, in rural Arcadia, Greece.

After Markopoulos' death Robert Beavers began to realize the dream of *Eniaios*, founding the Temenos Association as a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and screening of Markopoulos' epic cycle, and presenting screenings every four years at the Temenos site, beginning in 2004. The Temenos events have inspired a gradual rediscovery of Gregory Markopoulos' cinema, with retrospectives and screenings of individual works taking place at select venues in the US and Europe. Later this fall, Mark Webber will publish the very first collection of Markopoulos writings which are certain to spark further interest and understanding of Markopoulos as an important thinker and theorist about the cinema. As a prelude to a major Markopoulos retrospective to be presented in conjunction with the book's release in the fall of 2014, the Harvard Film Archive is pleased to present a showcase of Markopoulos' early work, films all made before his departure for Europe and accompanied here by a selection of relevant and revelatory writings excerpted from the eagerly awaited volume, *Film as Film: The Collected Writings of Gregory J. Markopoulos*. For more information about *Film as Film* please visit [www.thevisiblepress.com](http://www.thevisiblepress.com) – HG

Special thanks: Robert Beavers, Mark Webber

SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS \$12  
ROBERT BEAVERS IN PERSON  
SUNDAY APRIL 6 AT 7PM

### SWAIN

Writing on the cinema Virginia Woolf has said,

'We should see violent changes of emotion produced by their collision. The most fantastic contrasts could be flashed before us with a speed which the writer can only toil after in vain ...' [from *The Captain's Death Bed And Other Essays*]

It was after such a joyous collision between Robert C. Freeman, Jr., and myself in 1950 that the motion picture *Swain* took shape. In the beginning, as I will reveal to you presently, *Swain* was anything but *Swain*. It was only later that *Swain* became *Swain*. Only with the discovery of Nathaniel Hawthorne's first work did the outline of *Swain* become apparent. And as always in the tradition of the filmmaker's most important personal revelation, it gathered its content through the filmmaker's very soul and visual powers after and beyond the tale by Hawthorne. [...]

*Fanshawe* was published by Marsh and Capen, 362 Washington Street, at the press of Putnam and Hunt. The opening pages of the book reveal in great detail, 'the present state of Harley College ...' However, as I recall, this is not what intrigued me, rather it was the following passage which is a description of one of the characters in the book referred to as the Stranger. The Stranger was like, 'a ruler in a world of his own and independent of the beings that surrounded him.' It was thus this character of the Stranger blended in my own imagination with the figure of young Fanshawe that gave immediate birth among those mysteries which are creativity to Swain, the hero of the film. And as in Hawthorne's quote from Southey at the beginning of the book, 'Wilt thou go on with me?' – I proceeded with fantastic speed.

– Gregory J. Markopoulos, From Fanshawe to Swain – Excerpt of a lecture delivered at the Tom Chomont Film Society, Odd Fellows Hall, Boston, 25th of March, 1966

Directed by Gregory Markopoulos. With Gregory Markopoulos, Mary Zelles  
US 1950, 16mm, color, 24 min

### TWICE A MAN

The motion picture *Twice a Man* adapts the Hippolytus legend to modern experience, and is designed to enhance the survival of classical patterns and classical learning as a vital factor of our present-day culture. I am deeply convinced that film as a creative product is as essential as the documentation and scientific investigation carried on through filmic means. Moreover, I believe that the United States is obliged, especially in this era of cultural exchange, to make an extra effort to maintain the prestige of its filmmaking in the face of the great prestige recently won in this country by creative films from abroad. [...]

I wish to demonstrate [...] a new narrative form which is

based on very brief film-phrases used in clusters to evoke thought through imagery. What I call the 'thought image' thus holds both psychological and aesthetic charges. It intensifies and builds up the visual theme while dialogue and music are worked in as heightening elements. Since ultimately the vigour of the content depends, I believe, on the adequacy and unity of the form, I have striven toward a synthesis having great economy.

This attempt to summarize turning points and climaxes with decisive effect is evident in my previous works: In *Psyche*, at the end, brief 'clips' from previous scenes reintegrate the whole; *Swain* was marked by the same device. In my most recently completed work, *Serenity*, the urgent climax provided in this way is parallel with the stream-of-consciousness in literature. My current project being more elaborate, the same device is used in saturation and modulates the whole narrative.

– Gregory J. Markopoulos, Statement on Twice a Man – Written for a screening at the Astor Place Playhouse, New York City, July 1965

Directed by Gregory Markopoulos. With Paul Kilb, Olympia Dukakis, Vilet Roditi  
US 1963, 16mm, color, 49 min

### MING GREEN

I sincerely believe that the filmmaker must become enamoured of the odour of celluloid, splicing cement, projection exhalations; he must feel the exhilaration through the pores of his skin. With each 100' reel that he projects he must learn to discard all excess footage. Later he will realize that what he has been discarding is the clue to his particular film form. He must continue filming; he must continue working. He must never be obsessed with any formula save that always tentative formula which in time will become his style. He must seek neither Fantasy nor Reality. Such a filmmaker must miraculously approach himself, and recognize the single world myth within him: the eternal fire that in destroying unites man. He must



GREGORY MARKOPOULOS THE ILLIAC PASSION

abhor Psychological and Sociological implications. What he contains of the passions of humankind will become apparent soon enough as he maintains the normal pace of his native creative needs. The blossom that he imparts from himself to his spectators will be his work and will embrace, naturally, the deepest relation to those few of his spectators who will grasp the total work. Those few will understand, they will recognise the very terrible, daily encounter of the filmmaker's Sight and Sound. Others will barely perceive the intent of a particular work. Still others will vault a beautiful work, jealous and fearful of its beauty.

– Gregory J. Markopoulos, Inherent Limitations – Excerpt of a lecture delivered at the New York University Christian Foundation Film Society, 29th of October 1965

Directed by Gregory Markopoulos. US 1966, 16mm, color, 7 min

SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS \$12  
ROBERT BEAVERS IN PERSON  
MONDAY APRIL 7 AT 7PM  
THE ILLIAC PASSION

Metamorphosis of the filmmaker. Passions of the filmmaker. Out of his breast the free flowing blood of the creation of a motion picture which depicts the passions of mankind and of everyman in general. The filmmaker selecting and offering to his actors the inheritance of themselves, transforming them through themselves, their own life's scenario, onto the motion picture screen. A screen in which everything is both transfixed and changed. Not only the filmmaker undergoes changes, i.e. the creative endeavour, but his actors or non-actors, and everyone who associates himself with the very moments during which the filmmaker is working. In this case the greatest alteration taking place towards the film spectator. The new film spectator of the new cinema. [...]

Set afire, the soul of the film spectator and the mythic characters or real personalities of *The Illiac Passion* commence to alternate, sometimes obliterate and then return to a moment passed or forgotten. That moment taking on greater meaning (upon its return, second return or reference in the film – via single frames, clusters of frames, and the classic principles of film editing), the symbols, the individual psychology united in a single structure, i.e. *The Illiac Passion*. All revealing the same story, but in variation, all united, all invoking the passions, and all seen through the vibrant passion of the hero, Mr Richard Beauvais as the apotheosis of a Prometheus who is not to bound to a rock, but bound to his own passions; i.e. his own life's scenario. And, all the various myths which the filmmaker uses in this development in *The Illiac Passion* become involved in that time development known as eternity.

– Gregory J. Markopoulos, The Illiac Passion – Excerpt of an essay published in *Koan Vol. 1 No. 2 (Spring 1967)*

Directed by Gregory Markopoulos. With Richard Beauvais, David Beauvais, Robert Alvarez  
US 1964-67, 16mm, color, 92 min

# THE CAPRA TOUCH

APRIL 11 – JUNE 2

By the mid-1930s, Frank Capra was the most powerful director in Hollywood, eclipsing even the mighty Ernst Lubitsch and Charlie Chaplin. All three of these filmmakers earned their celebrity by making audiences laugh. But while Chaplin was stymied by the arrival of sound cinema, Capra and Lubitsch both displayed a skill at smoothly integrating plenty of dialogue into their films without slowing the seamless flow that comedy requires.

Ultimately, Capra surpassed Lubitsch by perfecting what was often called his “common touch”: his celebration of everyday pluck and high spirits in the face of the Great Depression. His 1930s films celebrated the spunk of the underdog while thumbing their noses at the high and mighty. If this emphasis on homespun decency sometimes veered close to sentimentality, especially in his later work, the films that made him famous not only helped establish screwball comedy as a genre, they also tackled miscegenation, religious hypocrisy and political corruption.

The first half of Capra’s biography reads like a classic “American Dream” story: the son of impoverished Sicilian immigrants living in Los Angeles manages to get into the California Institute of Technology despite working full-time while in high school. Although he had hopes of making a living as a scientist or engineer, he worked a variety of menial jobs before eventually finding work in the lower rungs of the film industry, first in San Francisco and then in Los Angeles. From the beginning, he specialized in comedy, working on short films for Hal Roach and then Mack Sennett. When comedian Harry Langdon wanted to begin making features, he hired Capra as his writer and director. After making six films with Langdon in 1926 and 1927, including his first two directorial credits, Capra struck off on his own. After an unsuccessful third feature, Capra found work as a director at the struggling Columbia Pictures.

He would work there from 1928 to 1939, during which time he rose to fame, helping to establish Columbia as an important studio along the way. After making a handful of silent films, Capra finally hit his stride with a string of brisk pre-Code early talkies. Many of these were melodramas starring Barbara Stanwyck, but they also included such topical films as *The Miracle Woman*, inspired by evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson, and *American Madness*, about bank failures at the depth of the Depression. Perhaps Capra’s most daring film is *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*, a love story between a Chinese warlord and the American evangelist he’s holding captive.

The warm reception given *Platinum Blonde* and *Lady for a Day* cemented Capra’s reputation as a master of comedy and paved the way for the pinnacle of his success with 1934’s *It Happened One Night*. This triumph was repeated with *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, which introduced the Everyman protagonist who would feature prominently in Capra’s films for the next decade.

The troubled production of the ambitious *Lost Horizon*, with which Capra had hoped to forge a new direction for his work, was the first major setback in the filmmaker’s career and began the rift with Columbia that grew despite the success of *You Can’t Take It With You*. Capra’s vision of his Everyman hero in the U.S. Senate, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, excited considerable controversy with its populist vision of a corrupt federal government, but it also generated enough acclaim to convince Capra to leave Columbia and become an independent.

*Mr. Smith* also introduced a darker tone to Capra’s work that grew with *Meet John Doe*, a troubled and troubling film replete with demagogues, an irresponsible press and crowds that are easily turned into angry mobs. The film’s climax represented a narrative and ideological impasse for the director’s mix of populism and individualism. The experience ended the partnership between Capra and Robert Riskin, the screenwriter who had been his most important collaborator since 1931.

It is fair to say that Capra never really recovered from the breaks with Columbia and with Riskin, although he maintained his importance during World War II. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, he enlisted in the Army and was swiftly given a special appointment in charge of producing “war information” films designed to motivate U.S. forces headed for combat. Although the *Why We Fight* films were scripted and edited by many, and drew on footage from numerous sources, Capra oversaw all aspects of their production.

Burned out, by his own admission, at the end of the war, Capra was yet to endure years of suspicion during the anti-Communist hysteria of the late 1940s, during which he narrowly escaped being blacklisted. Although he would make six more films, success was elusive, as Capra struggled to find a place for himself within a rapidly changing industry and society.

Although history has been kind to one of these postwar films, *It’s a Wonderful Life*, which was seen as old-fashioned compared to the contemporaneous *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) but eventually gained a following on television, the rest of Capra’s later pictures remain to be rediscovered. What remains undeniable is the scope of Capra’s considerable achievements in the 1930s, which would influence subsequent generations of American filmmakers from Preston Sturges to Robert Altman and Martin Scorsese to the Coen brothers.

The following program notes are drawn from Capra’s autobiography, *Name Above the Title* (1971). While he was not always a reliable critic of his own work, even his distortions are quite revealing about movie- and myth-making. – DP

Special thanks: Michael Horne—Sony; Tom Capra—Frank Capra Productions; Todd Weiner, Steven Hill—UCLA Film and Television Archive; Lynanne Schweiger—Library of Congress

## MEET JOHN DOE

FRIDAY APRIL 11 AT 7PM

So I can truthfully say that it was the box-office customers who made Frank Capra whatever he was or is. [...] And yet, and yet – an ego like mine needed – nay, required – the plaudits of sophisticated criticism. Childlike, creativity thirsts for the heady wine of the connoisseur’s acclaim. The ‘Capra-corn’ barbs had pierced the outer blubber.

And so, *Meet John Doe*, my first completely independent film venture, was aimed at winning critical praises. [...] Riskin and I would astonish the critics with contemporary realities: the ugly face of hate; the power of uniformed bigots in red, white, and blue shirts; the agony of disillusionment, and the wild dark passions of mobs [...].

We had abandoned our usual formula—a sane, honest ‘man of the people,’ thrust into a confrontation with the forces of evil, wins out with his innate goodness. This time our hero was a bindle stiff, a drifting piece of human flotsam as devoid of ideals as he was of change in his pocket. When the forces of evil tempt him—fine; no skin off his nose if they call him



FRANK CAPRA



FRANK CAPRA MEET JOHN DOE

John Doe, the ‘Messiah of goodness,’ in exchange for steaks and fancy clothes. But—discovering he is being used to delude and defraud thousands of innocent people, he rebels. When he tries to tell the deluded people that he had been a fraud, but now believes as they do, the people turn on him, try to tear him limb from limb. So far so good. But now, what happens to John Doe? [...] In desperation—setting some kind of a pointless record—I was to photograph five different endings, and then try them out on theater audiences [...].

35mm restored print courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck, Edward Arnold  
US 1941, 35mm, b/w, 125 min

## THE MIRACLE WOMAN

SUNDAY APRIL 13 AT 5PM

My next picture would deal with the most controversial idea I could think of—religion! I asked Harry Cohn to buy me *Bless You Sister*, a satirical play inspired by Aimee Semple McPherson, and written by Robert Riskin, the brightest of the ‘young Turks’ Cohn had imported from New York. [...]

*Miracle Woman*, the film version, had a most powerful opening sequence—a promise of greatness. A stiff-necked country congregation had replaced their aging, old-fashioned pastor with an up-an-coming ‘modernist.’ Sunday morning the villagers gather to yawn through the old man’s last sermon. Instead, his daughter comes out, eyes flashing with hate. She mounts the pulpit. In a nutshell, this is what she says: ‘My father is not able to preach his last sermon. He just died in my arms. And you killed him. For thirty years he tried to touch your stony hearts with the mercies of God—and failed! Why? Because you don’t want God. And you’re right! There is no God [...].’

Directed by Frank Capra. With Barbara Stanwyck, David Manners, Sam Hardy  
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

## A HOLE IN THE HEAD

SATURDAY APRIL 19 AT 9PM

*A Hole in the Head* was the answer to this personal question: Could I evoke heart and humor out of a ‘sex and



FRANK CAPRA *IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT*

violence’ entry, a story with no hero, no Mr. Deeds or Mr. Smith; a story about hard, unpleasant characters? Bitter ‘realism’ was the trend. Could I leap a seven-year hiatus, dive into the pool of cynicism, and come up with laughs? Or, was my courage too worn and my legs too stiff to run with the times? [...]

The leading man was a grandstanding, dame-chasing wastrel; rearing a ten-year-old son in an atmosphere both sinful and phony. Could I fit such non-heroes into my own style of warm human comedy? If I couldn’t, I might as well hang up my kind of laughs.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Frank Sinatra, Edward G. Robinson, Eleanor Parker  
US 1959, 35mm, color, 120 min

## LADIES OF LEISURE

SUNDAY APRIL 20 AT 5PM

I had assembled a fine cast for *Ladies of Leisure*. Ralph Graves, Marie Prevost, Lowell Sherman, George Fawcett, and the stage star Nance O’Neill. All we needed was a leading lady to play the ‘party’ girl. I wanted a certain actress, but Harry Cohn dragged his feet about signing her. He asked me to talk to an ex-chorus girl who had made a hit in the stage play *Burlesque*. [...]

Thus began my long personal and professional association with Barbara Stanwyck. Underneath her sullen shyness smoldered the emotional fires of a young Duse, or a Bernhardt. Naïve, unsophisticated, caring nothing about make-up, clothes, or hair-dos, this chorus girl could grab your heart and tear it to pieces. She knew nothing about camera tricks: how to ‘cheat’ her looks so her face could be seen, how to restrict her body movements in close shots. She just turned it on—and everything else on the stage stopped.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Barbara Stanwyck, Ralph Graves, Lowell Sherman  
US 1930, 35mm, b/w, 102 min

## IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT

SUNDAY APRIL 20 AT 7PM

SUNDAY MAY 4 AT 7PM

Relieved from the onus of studio ‘expectations,’ we slammed through the film clowning, laughing, ad-libbing. [...] But two ‘happenings’ during the shooting of *It Happened One Night* may be worth noting. One: Colbert

fretted, pouted, and argued about her part; challenged my slap-happy way of shooting scenes; fussed constantly [...]. But all her little tantrums—motivated by her antipathy toward me—were rehearsals for the picture. All she had to do was bug Gable on camera as she bugged me off camera. And she was wonderful in the part [...].

And, two: The metamorphosis of Clark Gable, the ‘bad boy’ exiled to Siberia. [...] I believe it was the only picture in which Gable was ever allowed to play himself: the fun-loving, boyish, attractive, he-man rogue that was the real Gable.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert, Walter Connolly  
US 1934, 35mm, b/w, 105 min

## AMERICAN MADNESS

MONDAY APRIL 21 AT 7PM

Was there some film ‘hay’ to be made out of the Depression? Of course—the ‘sob’ angle: wealth versus ‘ideals’; Big Money against little people. Opportunistic as Hearst reporters, Riskin and I concocted a wild story about a bank president (Walter Huston) who is filled with youthful optimism and a cheerful trust in men. He is bitterly opposed by both his own directors and other banks for his ‘unsound’ and ‘dangerous’ practices of making loans on faith. Riskin wrote the screenplay, marking the beginning of a Capra-Riskin collaboration that was to last for years. [...]

In truth, it was one of the first Hollywood films to grapple directly and openly with the Depression’s fears and panic. [...] *American Madness* was a shocker to the public. It created controversy among critics and bitter contention in financial circles. Some called it ‘New Dealish’ [...] ‘impractical star-gazing’ [...] ‘fuzzy thinking.’ Others said the thinking was no fuzzier than the ‘thinking’ of financiers which created the boom and the crash.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Walter Huston, Pat O’Brien, Kay Johnson  
US 1932, 35mm, b/w, 75 min

## YOU CAN’T TAKE IT WITH YOU

SATURDAY APRIL 26 AT 9PM

Why this mania to film Kaufman and Hart’s play? Because it was a laugh riot? A Pulitzer Prize play? Of course. But I also saw something deeper, something greater. Hidden in *You Can’t Take It With You* was a golden opportunity to dramatize Love Thy Neighbor in living drama. What the world’s churches were preaching to apathetic congregations, my universal language of film might say more entertainingly to movie audiences [...].



FRANK CAPRA *A HOLE IN THE HEAD*



FRANK CAPRA *AMERICAN MADNESS*



FRANK CAPRA *FORBIDDEN*

The conflict: devour thy neighbor versus love thy neighbor. The weapons: a bankful of money against a houseful of love. The stakes: the future happiness of two young people, a Kirby son and a Vanderhof granddaughter; and more important, the viability of a lamb when confronted by a lion.

But, you may ask, can a defenseless lamb cope with a lion armed with fangs and claws and a willingness to use them? He can. And how he does was, for me, a new dramatic format that I used in practically all my future films.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Jean Arthur, Lionel Barrymore, James Stewart  
US 1938, 35mm, b/w, 127 min



FRANK CAPRA *MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON*

### FORBIDDEN

SUNDAY APRIL 27 AT 5PM

I had yet to learn that drama is not really just actors weeping and suffering all over the place. It isn't drama unless the audiences are emotionally moved. Actors' crocodile tears alone can't touch their hearts. But courage, faith, love, and sacrifices for others will—if believable.

In spite of scriptwriter Jo Swerling's valiant efforts to write in some 'bones,' *Forbidden* ended up as two hours of soggy, 99.44% pure soap opera. Some critics moistened their reviews with tears, most burned them with acid. *Forbidden* was saved from the 'loss' column by one or two directorial 'gems' (sic), and the fine believable performances of Barbara Stanwyck, Adolphe Menjou, and Ralph Bellamy (one of his earliest films).

Directed by Frank Capra. With Barbara Stanwyck, Adolphe Menjou, Ralph Bellamy  
US 1932, 35mm, b/w, 87 min

### MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON

SUNDAY APRIL 27 AT 7PM

And here was I, in the process of making a satire about government officials; a comedy about a callow, hayseed Senator who comes to Washington carrying a crate of homing pigeons—to send messages back to Ma—and disrupts important Senate deliberations with a filibuster. The cancerous tumor of war was growing the body politic, but our reform-happy hero wanted to call the world's attention to the pimple of graft on its nose. Wasn't this the most untimely time for me to make a film about Washington? [...]

I left the Lincoln Memorial with this growing conviction about our film: The more uncertain are the people of the world, the more their hard-won freedoms are scattered and lost in the winds of chance, the more they need a ringing statement of America's democratic ideals. The soul of our film would be anchored in Lincoln. Our Jefferson Smith would be a young Abe Lincoln, tailored to the rail-splitter's simplicity, compassion, ideals, humor, and unswerving moral courage under pressure. And back we went to Hollywood to get to work on *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. The panic was over. It is never untimely to yank the rope of freedom's bell.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Claude Rains  
US 1939, 35mm, b/w, 125 min

### THE YOUNGER GENERATION

MONDAY APRIL 28 AT 7PM

With a fine cast: Jean Hersholt, Ricardo Cortez, Lena Basquette, and Rosa Rosanova, we made Fannie Hurst's play—*It Is to Laugh*—about a social-climbing super-Jew who denied his parents—into a half-talkie film. We called it *The Younger Generation*. The first half we shot silent at Columbia, the second half in sound at a 'sound stage'"on Santa Monica Boulevard, somewhere. While many big shots mulled about sound, or tried exorcising it with incantations of 'fad!' 'won't sell!' some sharpie wangled priorities in sound equipment, hung horse blankets on the walls of a 'barn,' and had himself a rental sound stage with customers waiting in line.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Jean Hersholt, Lina Basquette, Ricardo Cortez  
US 1929, 35mm, b/w, 75 min

### THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA

SUNDAY MAY 4 AT 5PM

[The] *Why We Fight* films ... were to revolutionize not only documentary filmmaking throughout the world, but also the horse-and-buggy method of indoctrinating and informing troops with the truth. [...]

By an order from Winston Churchill all were shown to the British public in theaters. The Russians showed *Battle of Russia* throughout all their theaters. And in the chaotic months of occupation after the war, American Embassies played the *Why We Fight* series in enemy countries [...].

Thus, the *Why We Fight* series became our official, definitive answer to: What was government policy during the dire decade 1931-41? For whenever State, the White House, or Congress was unable, or unwilling, to tell us what our government's policy had been (and this happened often) I followed General Marshall's advice: 'In those cases make your own best estimate, and see if they don't agree with you later.' [...]

Thus, it can be truly said that the *Why We Fight* films not only stated, but in many instances, actually created and nailed down American and world pre-war policy. No,



FRANK CAPRA *PLATINUM BLONDE*





FRANK CAPRA *THE BITTER TEA OF GENERAL YEN*

I won't say it. Yes, I will say it. I was the first 'Voice of America.'

35mm restored print courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive

Directed by Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak  
US 1943, 35mm, b/w, 83 min

### STATE OF THE UNION

MONDAY MAY 5 AT 7PM

To me, films were novels filled with living people. I cast actors that I believed could be those living people [...].

Tracy, the actor, had never manufactured even a hairpin, yet mentally, physically, and psychologically he was the very rich American industrialist who wanted to put his know-how and ideals about democracy into the service of better government. And Hepburn, the actress, was the very-much-in-love wife who saw the ideals and hopes of her strong, decent, patriotic husband being twisted, warped, and compromised into cheap vote-getting tricks by a gang of hungry politicians too long away from the patronage trough.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, Van Johnson  
US 1948, 35mm, b/w, 124 min

### IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

FRIDAY MAY 9 AT 7PM

I didn't give a film-clip whether critics hailed or hooted *Wonderful Life*. I thought it was the greatest film I had ever made. Better yet, I thought it was the greatest film anybody ever made. It wasn't made for the oh-so-bored critics, or the oh-so-jaded literati. It was my kind of film for my kind of people; the motion picture I had wanted to make since I first peered into a movie camera's eyepiece in that San Francisco Jewish gymnasium.

A film to tell the weary, the disheartened, and the disillusioned; the wino, the junkie, the prostitute; those behind prison walls and those behind Iron Curtains, that no man is a failure!

To show those born slow of foot or slow of mind, those oldest sisters condemned to spinsterhood, and those oldest sons condemned to unschooled toil, that each man's life touches so many other lives [...].

A film that expressed its love for the homeless and the loveless; for her whose cross is heavy and him whose touch is ashes ... I wanted to shout, 'You are the salt of the earth. And *It's a Wonderful Life* is my memorial to you!'

Directed by Frank Capra. With James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore  
US 1947, 35mm, b/w, 130 min

### PLATINUM BLONDE

FRIDAY MAY 9 AT 9:30PM

I played it safe with an out-an-out comedy—*Platinum Blonde*. For a story, Jo Swerling and I stole a column from *Front Page*, a big hit play. As a back-up I asked Robert Riskin to write the dialogue. We loaded the picture with gags and a great cast: Loretta Young, Bobby Williams (a new comedy sensation), and—for sex—we added Jean Harlow, the reigning Love Goddess. How could I miss? I didn't. And Harlow's breastworks burst their silken confines on magazine covers and pin-up walls.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Loretta Young, Robert Williams, Jean Harlow  
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

### THE BITTER TEA OF GENERAL YEN

SATURDAY MAY 10 AT 7PM

Walter Wanger happened to be preparing a Columbia picture from Grace Zaring Stone's novel *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*. It was a strangely poetic romance between a Chinese warlord and an American missionary. Representatives of two cultures as far apart as the poles, clash and fall in love. To me it was Art with a capital A. [...]

There were three major roles in *Bitter Tea*: a young American missionary woman, a powerful Chinese warlord—General Yen, and his diabolically clever American financial adviser. [...] The missionary was a well-bred, straightlaced New England young lady, externally frigid



FRANK CAPRA *ARSENIC AND OLD LACE*

but internally burning with her 'call.' Casting this part was easy—Barbara Stanwyck [...].

In 1932 miscegenation was far, far out. So far out, the British Empire banned it, making it my only other Columbia film that lost money.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Barbara Stanwyck, Nils Asther, Toshia Mori  
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 87 min

### ARSENIC AND OLD LACE

SATURDAY MAY 10 AT 9PM

To the already imposing cast of Cary Grant, Josephine Hull, Jean Adair, and John Alexander we added these high-powered performers: Raymond Massey, to play the maniacal killer (played by Boris Karloff on the stage); Peter Lorre, to play Massey's partner-in-murder (a shy, idio surgeon); Priscilla Lane, for Grant's new bride; Jack Carson, for the dumb cop who writes plays; and my favorite character actor, Jimmy Gleason, for the tough-detective role. And to round out an all-star cast of scene stealers, we engaged Edward Everett Horton to play the huffy keeper of the 'rest home' who comes to pick up the 'girls,' but instead picks up 'just a pinch' of arsenic in his elderberry wine [...].



FRANK CAPRA *POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES*



FRANK CAPRA *YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU*

And I couldn't have been happier. No great social document 'to save the world,' no worries about whether John Doe should or should not jump; just good old-fashioned theater—an anything goes, rip-roaring comedy about murder. I let the scene stealers run wild; for the actors it was a mugger's ball.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Raymond Massey  
US 1944, 35mm, b/w, 118 min

### LADY FOR A DAY

SUNDAY MAY 11 AT 5PM

In six weeks we banged out a script; hopefully, a warm, funny 'saga' about Apple Annie: a filthy, drunken, apple-selling harridan who bossed the beggars of Times Square. Hidden in the deepest recess of her tatters, Annie nursed a secret of secrets—cabalistically shared only with fellow panhandlers who swore the beggar's blood oath—Apple Annie had an illegitimate daughter! Sh-h-h! A daughter she had been secretly educating (since infan-



FRANK CAPRA *STATE OF THE UNION*

cy) in a convent in far-off Spain by extorting 'taxes' from the lame, the halt, and the blind who worked her 'territory'; in return, she knighted them 'godfathers.'

A letter came from Spain. Her daughter (now seventeen) has fallen in love with a Spanish nobleman's son. The count wishes to meet her family before consenting to the marriage [...].

Directed by Frank Capra. With Warren William, May Robson, Guy Kibbee  
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 93 min

### POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES

SUNDAY MAY 11 AT 7PM

United Artists agreed to finance and distribute *Pocketful of Miracles*, if—Frank Capra Productions could sign up one incandescent superstar, or two workaday stars that could twinkle but not dazzle. So FCP bought the remake rights to *Lady for a Day* [...] and searched Hollywood's heaven for a super-nova or two prosaic novas to scintillate in the starring roles.

The two biggest parts were, of course, Dave the Dude, tough, cocky, but superstitious midtown bootlegger who is feuding with the mob for control of the Manhattan territory, and Apple Annie, the ruthless ruler of the Times Square panhandlers, who gets in a jam by living a lie to her illegitimate daughter. [...]

The first indication that Lady Luck had deserted me—after a forty-year honeymoon—occurred after the third day of shooting: That night the headaches returned. [...] How could the filming of *Pocketful*, torn with discord and loathings, directed by a walking zombie, stumble through to completion—within its budget and schedule? By occupational pride that transcends hazards. Amateurs play for fun in fair weather. Professionals play to win in the teeth of torments. Despite Bette Davis's hatred for Ford, for her part, and for me; despite Glenn Ford's tying a knot in my guts every time he bounced into a scene like a musical comedy funny-man; despite my unfocused state between sleeping and waking [...] I kept plugging away [...].

Peter Falk was my joy, my anchor to reality. Introducing

that remarkable talent to the techniques of comedy made me forget pains, tired blood, and maniacal hankerings to murder Glenn Ford. Thank you, Peter Falk.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Glenn Ford, Bette Davis, Hope Lange  
US 1961, 35mm, color, 136 min

### LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

#### THE WAY OF THE STRONG

MONDAY MAY 12 AT 7PM

In my next two pictures for Columbia *Say It with Sables* and *Way of the Strong*, again I experimented—soft-pedaling comedy and pulling out all stops on heavy drama. I knew my experiment with drama was dismal. I was too inexperienced to handle the delicate nuances or the sustained moods of dramatic conflict. But, in the elementary school of trial and error—where I was both student and teacher—I had to experiment if I were ever to master this new, universal language of film that was revolutionizing the mores of the world.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Mitchell Lewis, Alice Day, Margaret Livingston  
US 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 61 min

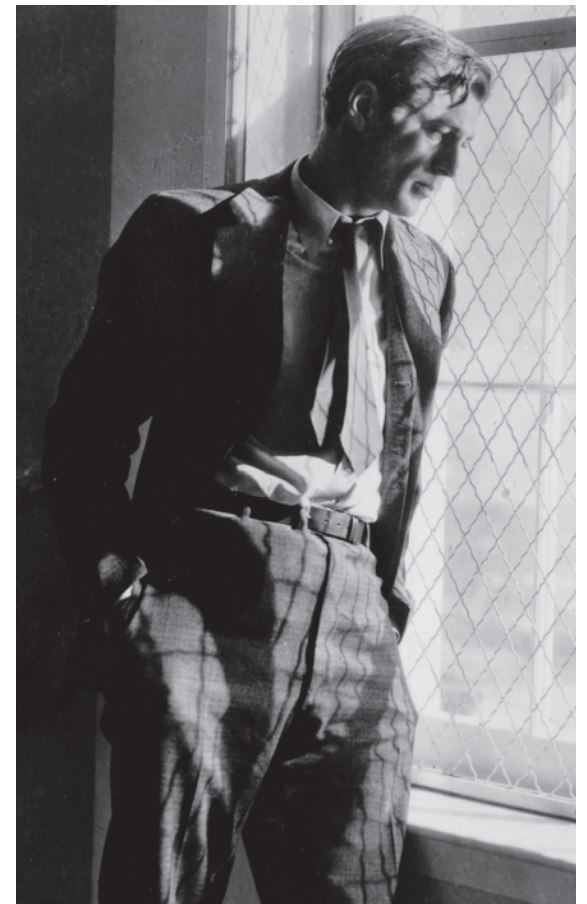
### LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

#### THE MATINEE IDOL

SATURDAY MAY 24 AT 7PM

In quick succession, six weeks for each picture (two weeks for writing, two for shooting, two for editing), I made two more films: *So This Is Love* [...] and *Matinee Idol*, a tent-show comedy with Johnny Walker [sic] and Bessie Love. In them I tried mixing in another so-called sure-fire ingredient with comedy—a little love story. It seemed to work. Besides which, I 'discovered' another directing trick: Don't let the ponderous behind-the-scenes machinery distract from the heroine's fluttering eyelid. People pay to hear Heifetz's violin, not to marvel at his fingers.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Bessie Love, Johnnie Walker, Lionel Belmore  
US 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 165 min



FRANK CAPRA *MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN*



FRANK CAPRA *BROADWAY BILL*

### MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN

SATURDAY MAY 24 AT 9PM

And what was the great 'message' of *Mr. Deeds*? Nothing earth-shaking. Just this: A simple honest man, driven into a corner by predatory sophisticates, can, if he will, reach deep down into his God-given resources and come up with the necessary handfuls of courage, wit, and love to triumph over his environment. That theme prevailed in all—except two—of my future films. It was the rebellious cry of the individual against being trampled to an ort by massiveness—mass production, mass thought, mass education, mass politics, mass wealth, mass conformity. [...]

Longfellow Deeds was not just a funny man cavorting in frothy situations. He was the living symbol of the deep rebellion in every human heart—a growing resentment against being compartmentalized. And when Mr. Deeds routed the mass predators, using only his simple weapons of honesty, wit, and courage—audiences not only laughed, they cheered!

Directed by Frank Capra. With Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur, George Bancroft  
US 1936, 35mm, b/w, 115 min

### BROADWAY BILL

FRIDAY MAY 30 AT 7PM

Directed by Frank Capra. With Warner Baxter, Myrna Loy, Walter Connolly  
US 1934, 35mm, b/w, 103 min

### RIDING HIGH

FRIDAY MAY 30 AT 9PM

Directed by Frank Capra. With Bing Crosby, Coleen Gray, Charles Bickford  
US 1950, 35mm, b/w, 112 min

Preserved by the Library of Congress

Only weeks after I had finished *It Happened One Night* in early 1933 (and months before it copped the five major Oscars in the Academy sweepstakes), I had made an entertaining film out of Mark Hellinger's short story about a man, a maid, and a Cinderella racehorse named 'Broadway Bill.' The man was Warner Baxter, the maid Myrna Loy, and Broadway Bill was a tame, tired plug because Warner Baxter was deathly afraid of horses—especially of those with their tails up. As a result, many warm scenes I had in mind between the man and his horse I could not do, and those I did photograph were disappointing because Baxter was terrified of being bitten or kicked. I

vowed that some day I would do *Broadway Bill* over again with a man who loved horses.

Well, a man who loved and owned horses (they never won), and who was one of our biggest stars, had a dressing room right around the corner from my Paramount office. Der Bingle! Bing Crosby, a horse, and a maid—a natural! [...]

The relaxed, easy-going behavior on our sets was partly due to the fact that *Riding High* was my first picture in years that did not deal with a social issue. But mostly it was due to Crosby's gaiety and whole-hearted cooperation.

### LOST HORIZON

MONDAY JUNE 2 AT 7PM

Browsing in the Union Station's newsstand for something to read on the train, I saw a book [...] *Lost Horizon*, written by the English writer James Hilton. I read it; not only read it, but dreamed about it all night. [...]

The High Lama said he saw all nations strengthening—not in wisdom but in vulgar passions and the will to destroy. He saw their machine power multiplying until a single-weaponed man might match a whole army... Anticipating the holocaust, Shangri-La had, for nearly two centuries, been accumulating the treasure of the mind and the wisdom of the ages. [...]

Had the High Lama been able to scour the whole world for a man to carry on his vision of Shangri-La, he would have selected Ronald Colman. Beautiful of face and soul, sensitive to the fragile and gentle, responsive both to poetic visions and hard intellect—cultured actor Ronald Colman was born to play the kidnapped foreign secretary

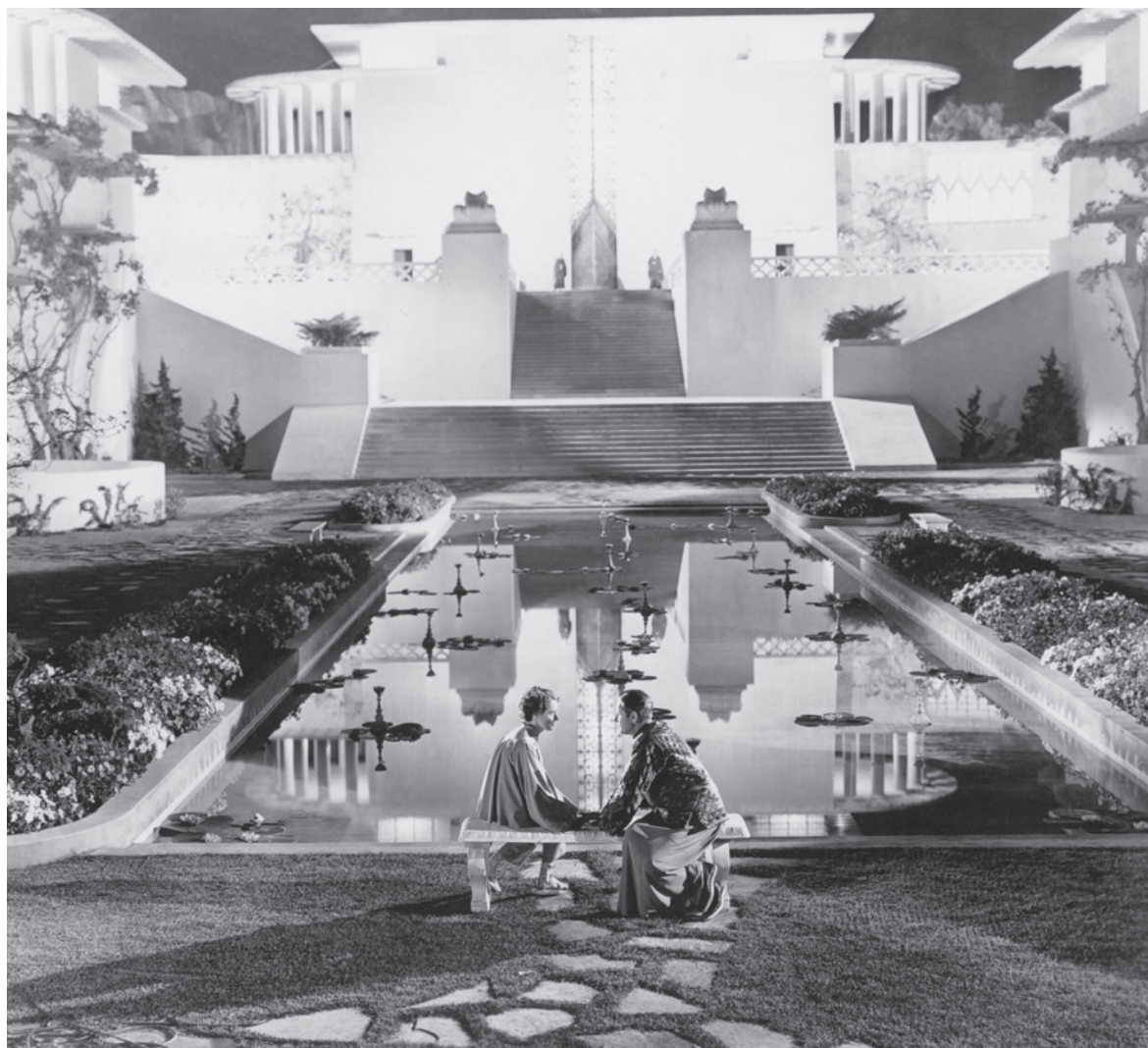


FRANK CAPRA *IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE*

who 'understood' his kidnapping. [...]

With wind machines, snow machines, and back-projection machines we conjured up the Arctic rigors of the Himalayas. The snow the actors crunched through was snow; the fluted outcroppings of glacial ice shimmered real because they were real. The breath-showing puzzle—ludicrously 'solved' once by dry ice in actor's mouths—was cracked by an ice house. The key to misty breath, red noses, and frosty eyebrows was so obvious it had been overlooked—lower the temperature, fool.

Directed by Frank Capra. With Ronald Colman, Jane Wyatt, Edward Everett Horton  
US 1937, 35mm, b/w, 132 min



FRANK CAPRA *LOST HORIZON*

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		01	02 VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES DEPT SCREENINGS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC	03	04 7PM THE SECOND GAME P. 2 9PM GONE WITH THE WINE P. 3 A TRIP TO THE CITY P. 3 LIVIU'S DREAM P. 3	05 7PM PAYS BARBARE P. 4 9PM IMAGES D'ORIENT – TORISME VANDALE P. 4
06 7PM A GREGORY MARKOPOULOS PRELUDE - PART I P. 5 ROBERT BEAVERS IN PERSON	07 7PM A GREGORY MARKOPOULOS PRELUDE - PART II P. 5 ROBERT BEAVERS IN PERSON	08	09 7PM IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE (2000)	10	11 7PM MEET JOHN DOE P. 6 9:30PM 12:08 EAST OF BUCHAREST P. 3	12 7PM WHEN EVENING FALLS ON BUCHAREST OR METABOLISM P. 3 CORNELIU PORUMBOIU IN PERSON
13 5PM THE MIRACLE WOMAN P. 7 7PM POLICE, ADJECTIVE P. 3 CORNELIU PORUMBOIU IN PERSON	14 7PM ARRAIANOS P. 24 ELOY ENCISO IN PERSON	15	16 7PM THE MATRIX (1999)	17	18 7PM BASTARDS P. 15	19 7PM ORATORIO FOR PRAGUE P. 16 REPORT ON THE PARTY AND THE GUESTS P. 15 9PM A HOLE IN THE HEAD P. 7
20 5PM LADIES OF LEISURE P. 7 7PM IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT P. 7	21 7PM AMERICAN MADNESS P. 7	22	23	24	25 7PM A LOAF OF BREAD P. 16 DIAMONDS OF THE NIGHT P. 16 8:30PM MARTYRS OF LOVE P. 16	26 7PM PEARLS OF THE DEEP P. 16 9PM YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU P. 7
27 5PM FORBIDDEN P. 8 7PM MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON P. 8	28 7PM THE YOUNGER GENERATION P. 8	29	30			

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				01	02	03
04 5PM THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA P. 8 7PM IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT P. 7	05 7PM STATE OF THE UNION P. 9	06	07	08	09 7PM IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE P. 9 9:30PM PLATINUM BLONDE P. 9	10 7PM THE BITTER TEA OF GENERAL YEN P. 9 9PM ARSENIC AND OLD LACE P. 9
11 5PM LADY FOR A DAY P. 10 7PM POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES P. 10	12 7PM THE WAY OF THE STRONG P. 10 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT	13	14	15	16 7PM UGETSU P. 17 9PM SONG OF HOME P. 17 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT	17 7PM SISTERS OF THE GION P. 17 9PM OYUKI THE VIRGIN P. 18
18 5PM UGETSU P. 17 7PM STREET OF SHAME P. 18	19 7PM UTAMARO AND HIS FIVE WOMEN P. 18	20	21	22	23 7PM SANSHO THE BAILIFF P. 18 9:30PM HOMETOWN P. 18	24 7PM THE MATINEE IDOL P. 10 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT 9PM MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN P. 11
25 4PM SANSHO THE BAILIFF P. 18 7PM THE STORY OF THE LAST CHRYSANTHEMUMS P. 19	26 7PM WHITE THREADS OF THE WATERFALL P. 19 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT	27	28	29	30 7PM BROADWAY BILL P. 11 9PM RIDING HIGH P. 11	31 7PM THE LIFE OF OHARU P. 19 9:30PM MIYAMOTO MUSASHI P. 19

### Harvard Film Archive

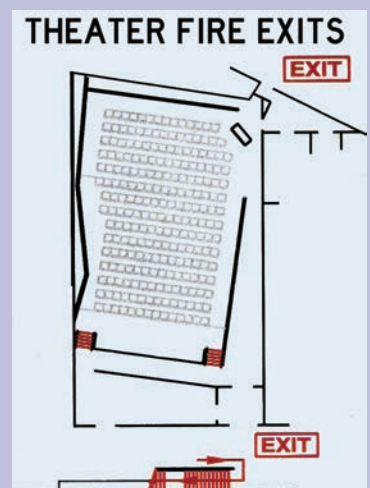
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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>01</b> 7PM WOMEN OF THE NIGHT P. 19 9PM STRAITS OF LOVE AND HATE P. 19	<b>02</b> 7PM LOST HORIZON P. 11	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b> 7PM OSAKA ELEGY P. 19 9PM THE DOWNFALL OF OSEN P. 19	<b>07</b> 7PM A GEISHA P. 20 9PM POPPY P. 20
<b>08</b> 5PM OSAKA ELEGY P. 19 7PM PORTRAIT OF MADAME YUKI P. 20	<b>09</b> 7PM THE LIFE OF OHARU P. 19	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7PM MISS OYU P. 20 9PM MY LOVE BURNS P. 20	<b>14</b> 7PM THE 47 RONIN, PARTS I & II P. 20
<b>15</b> 5PM THE LADY OF MUSASHINO P. 20 7PM THE CRUCIFIED LOVERS P. 21	<b>16</b> 7PM TALES OF THE TAIRA CLAN P. 21	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 7PM JE T'AIME, JE T'AIME P. 22 9PM VICTORY OF WOMEN P. 21	<b>21</b> 7PM PRINCESS YANG KWEI-FEI P. 21 9PM THE FAMOUS SWORD BIJOMARU P. 21
<b>22</b> 5PM THE LOVE OF SUMAKO, THE ACTRESS P. 21 7PM THE WAR IS OVER P. 22	<b>23</b> 7PM THE WOMAN OF THE RUMOR P. 21	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 7PM LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD P. 22 9PM WILD GRASS P. 23	<b>28</b> 7PM MURIEL P. 23 9:30PM JE T'AIME, JE T'AIME P. 22
<b>29</b> 5PM JE T'AIME, JE T'AIME P. 22 7PM MY AMERICAN UNCLE P. 23	<b>30</b> 7PM PROVIDENCE P. 23					



ALAIN RESNAIS *PROVIDENCE* P. 23



GREGORY MARKOPOULOS *THE ILLIAC PASSION* P. 5

# CLAIRE DENIS' *BASTARDS*

APRIL 18

Harvard's Film Study Center recently announced a new award: the Robert Gardner Fellowship, named in honor of the FSC's founder. The 2013-14 Gardner Fellows are Claire Denis and Spanish filmmaker Eloy Enciso Cachafeiro (see p. 24).

## *BASTARDS (LES SALUDS)*

FRIDAY APRIL 18 AT 7PM

Claire Denis' latest work is among her darkest, angriest and tautest to date, a disquieting film noir partially inspired by William Faulkner and the malevolent figure of Dominique Strauss-Kahn. Pitched in shades of darkest night painted by master cinematographer Agnes Godard, *Bastards* transforms Paris into a rain-slicked, stygian shadow world whose unsettling mysteries are laconically revealed with masterful restraint, only gradually revealing its harrowing fable of incestuous sexual abuse, with power as the most pathological, vicious form of aphrodisiac. Called to land by the mysterious suicide of his brother-in-law and the savage sexual assault of his young niece, Denis regular Vincent Lindon returns as a taciturn sea captain whose silent distance from the crimes so close to his heart give the film a haunting and deeply compelling opacity, a depth of mystery and loneliness almost unmatched in Denis' cinema.

Directed by Claire Denis. With Vincent Lindon, Chiara Mastroianni, Julie Bataille  
France 2012, 35mm, color, 100 min. French with English subtitles



CLAIRE DENIS *BASTARDS*

# JAN NEMEC AND THE CINEMA OF THE GOLDEN SIXTIES

APRIL 19 – APRIL 26

The films of Jan Nemeč (b. 1936) occupy a special place in the cinema of the Czechoslovak New Wave, the film movement that began in the early 1960s during a period of new freedom in the State-controlled Czechoslovak film industry. Central to the movement, Nemeč's films have a toughness all their own. More clear-eyed, less wistful, and weirder than the films of his compatriots, their sense of freedom amid repression and hope within darkness now appears to have sealed Nemeč's fate as much as any overt political provocation did. Poised between the anarchic confrontations of Vera Chytilová and the humanist whimsies of Milos Forman, Nemeč's films are terse and absurd, snatched from real life in a country that no longer exists but whose problems Nemeč presented as universal. Recent events in Ukraine show they are timely today.

Nemeč graduated from FAMU, the State film school, after making the remarkable short *A Loaf of Bread* in 1960, a precursor in theme and subject to his debut feature, *Diamonds of the Night*, filmed a year later. The Czechoslovak New Wave coalesced around him, along with Jiri Menzel, who directed *Closely Watched Trains* (1967), Milos Forman, who quickly made a series of films including *Black Peter* (1964) and *Loves of a Blonde* (1965), and Ester Krumbachová, a costume designer, screenwriter, and muse figure to the entire movement, whom Nemeč married. Their films, produced at the Barrandov Studios in Prague, won awards at European festivals, including Venice, and were championed in France. They played in the US and won foreign film Oscars in Hollywood, where several key figures, including Nemeč, eventually relocated after the Soviet crackdown following the Prague Spring in 1968.

Nemeč's body of work from the "Golden Sixties" consists of two shorts, a sketch for an omnibus film, three short features, and a newsreel smuggled out of Czechoslovakia after the Soviet invasion. Their total running time is not much longer than *Andrei Rublev* but they reveal a talent as distinct as any that emerged from Eastern Europe in the 1960s. After *Diamonds of the Night* established Nemeč at the forefront of the New Wave, his follow-up feature, *A Report on the Party and the Guests*, was banned "forever" by the State, one of a handful of Czechoslovak films accorded that honor. Nemeč and Krumbachová made *Martyrs of Love* the same year, a surreal depiction of thwarted love under bureaucratic control, but the ban on their previous film and the Soviet invasion effectively ended Nemeč's career as a Czechoslovak filmmaker, cutting him short in his early thirties.



JAN NEMEC *A REPORT ON THE PARTY AND THE GUESTS*

He left Czechoslovakia soon after, and continued to make films in Europe, mostly outside official film industries. Unlike Forman, Nemeč was not able to gain a foothold in Hollywood. He worked in the US and elsewhere as a professional wedding videographer, and since the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1989, has made features and documentaries in the Czech Republic. Nemeč's enforced silence and marginalization under both communism and capitalism highlight the problems of an artist caught between two worlds, a situation that mirrors his country's at the time of the New Wave he created and shaped into being. – A. S. Hamrah, *film editor and film critic*, N1FR, *n+1's film review*

The screenings presented by Harvard Film Archive are part of a touring retrospective of Jan Nemeč films *INDEPENDENT OF REALITY: The Films of Jan Nemeč in North America*, premiered by BAMcinémathèque in New York. The retrospective is produced by Comeback Company, curated by Irena Kovarova, and organized in partnership with the National Film Archive, Prague, Aerofilms and Jan Nemeč-Film.

## *A REPORT ON THE PARTY AND THE GUESTS (O SLAVNOSTI A HOSTECH)*

SATURDAY APRIL 19 AT 7PM

The film the Czechoslovak authorities banned forever combines the pressure of authority with a picnic on the grass. A group of day-trippers are confronted by a smug man in tweed knickerbockers who begins to casually harass them. When they resist, the man calls on a phalanx of thugs to rough them up. Another man appears, reveals himself as their leader, and stops the beating, politely insisting the picnickers accompany him to a banquet in the woods. The story

echoes Nemeč's previous feature, but in reverse. Instead of running through the woods from their captors, these prisoners are politely led to a party in their honor. Soon they begin to jockey for position and favor. When it was released in the US, Renata Adler called *A Report on the Party and the Guests* one of the ten best films of the year, noting its "peculiar combination of humor and a chill."

Directed by Jan Nemeč. With Ivan Vyskocil, Jan Klusák, Evald Schorm  
Czechoslovakia 1966, 35mm, b/w, 70 min. Czech with English subtitles

PRECEDED BY

### ORATORIO FOR PRAGUE

Nemeč shot this newsreel during the Prague Spring of mid-1968 and captured on film the Soviet invasion that August. Smuggled out of Czechoslovakia and shown to the world, this is the primary filmed record of those events. French filmmaker Claude Berri produced this version, narrated in the Bronx-accented tones of Gene Moskowitz, *Variety's* Paris correspondent. What begins as a hopeful report on the flower children of Prague as they peacefully demonstrate in public squares, paint their faces and gather in churches and synagogues to hold vigils and speak to the People, turns bloody when Soviet troops arrive to occupy Prague and shut down Alexander Dubček's government. The film ends in death and funerals. Before that, Nemeč takes us to a mod fashion show and a dance party, as Czechoslovakia freely participates in the swinging '60s for the first and last time.

Directed by Jan Nemeč  
Czechoslovakia 1968, digital video, b/w, 29 min. In English



JAN NEMEČ MARTYRS OF LOVE

### DIAMONDS OF THE NIGHT (DÉMANTY NOCI)

FRIDAY APRIL 25 AT 7PM

A driving forward motion propels Nemeč's debut feature, an almost wordless film that jumps between silence and bursts of gunfire, close-ups and long shots, the present and a time that may be past or future, real or dreamed. As in *A Loaf of Bread*, two young men flee a train taking them to a prison camp. They search for food in the countryside while trying to remain unseen, resorting to violence in their desperation. Caught by a militia made up of doddering old men, they face a firing squad, where perhaps freedom and youth are the actual targets. *Diamonds in the Night* is a startling, accomplished debut, unconcerned with exposition, favoring raw depictions over plot, with glimpses of city life and surreal vignettes that imitate and equal early Buñuel and Vigo.

Directed by Jan Nemeč. With Antonín Kumbera, Ladislav Jáněsky, Irma Bischofova  
Czechoslovakia 1964, 35mm, b/w, 64 min. Czech with English subtitles



JAN NEMEČ DIAMONDS OF THE NIGHT

©NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE, PRAGUE

PRECEDED BY

### A LOAF OF BREAD (SOUSTO)

In this swift short made as his FAMU graduation film, Nemeč encapsulated what was to become his first feature. Based on a story by Arnost Lustig, a writer who had escaped from the Theresienstadt concentration camp, this tense film studies a pair of starving young prisoners as they attempt to steal food from a Nazi supply train. Nemeč has noted the influence Robert Bresson's *A Man Escaped* (1956) had on his early work—revealed here in his precise framing as well as the concentration on details of hands and faces. Nemeč's mastery of form and his close attention to the desperation brought on by war previewed the haphazard barbarity he would reveal in *Diamonds of the Night*.

Directed by Jan Nemeč  
Czechoslovakia 1960, 35mm, b/w, 11 min. Czech with English subtitles

### MARTYRS OF LOVE (MUCEDÍCI LÁSKY)

FRIDAY APRIL 25 AT 8:30PM

Three stories examine the search for love in a society ruled by schedules and teased along to a jazz beat. Reminiscent of the work of Pierre Étaix in France during the same period, this near wordless sketch retreats from the intensity of Nemeč's previous two features. Allegorizing sexual frustration under an authoritarian regime, he and Krumbachová emphasize a Magritte-like surrealism within a documentary style, or what Nemeč called his "dream realism." Glimpses of city life underscore loneliness and lack of connection: grates slam down, manholes are covered, a too-big hose sprays water. With a cameo appearance by the two Maries from Chytilová's *Daisies*, *Martyrs of Love* seems on the brink of breaking into true anarchy, but something holds it back. Figures walk alone through empty parks as party guests sleep off revels they may have only dreamed.

Directed by Jan Nemeč. With Marta Kubišová, Hana Kuberova, Jan Klusák  
Czechoslovakia 1967, digital video, b/w, 71 min. Czech with English subtitles

### PEARLS OF THE DEEP (PERLICKY NA DNE)

SATURDAY APRIL 26 AT 7PM

Nemeč and Jiri Menzel convinced the Barrandov Studios that a film made up of stories by the Czech writer Bohumil Hrabal, an underground novelist who had recently been allowed to publish after years of censorship and

neglect, would be a commercial enterprise. They enlisted five other filmmakers to participate in what became a calling card of the Czechoslovak New Wave. Vera Chytilová, Jaromil Jires, Evald Schorm, Menzel and Nemeč each chose a story and directed a segment. Nemeč's, "The Imposters," set in a hospital room inhabited by two sick old men, is even quicker and more to-the-point than his other work, concentrating on the stories the men tell each other about their younger selves. While their stories are revealed to be Hrabalian fabrications, Nemeč shuffles them off the stage with such dispatch that their fibs become poignant for the brief moment before oblivion swallows them up.

Directed by Jan Nemeč, Vera Chytilová, Jaromil Jires, Jiri Menzel, Evald Schorm. With Milos Ctrnacty, František Havel  
Czechoslovakia 1966, 35mm, color & b/w, 107 min. Czech with English subtitles



JAN NEMEČ, ET. AL. PEARLS OF THE DEEP



# THE TALES AND TRAGEDIES OF KENJI MIZOGUCHI

MAY 16 – JUNE 23

Kenji Mizoguchi (1898-1958) was a foundational figure of the Japanese cinema and one of its uncontestedly supreme artists. Mizoguchi remains best known today for his late masterworks of the 1950s and especially *The Life of Oharu*, *Ugetsu* and *Sansho the Bailiff*, haunting visions of feudal Japan tragically shaped by the suffering heroines and inexorable tracking shots often declared the pillars of Mizoguchi's cinema. Exalted by Godard, Rivette, Rohmer, the slow unspooling of time and space in Mizoguchi's late films was celebrated as a sublime realization of the stylized realism preached by the spiritual father of the *nouvelle vague*, André Bazin. With their obsessively detailed attention to period costume, architecture and the traditional Japanese arts and literature from which they drew deep inspiration, Mizoguchi's late films also branded him, internationally, as the most quintessentially Japanese filmmaker, an epithet still active, although also extended these days to Yasujiro Ozu. While indisputably a pinnacle of Mizoguchi's cinema, the late films offer, however, only a partial portrait of a filmmaker whose larger career was notably volatile and defined by a mercurial, even impulsive, imagination that frequently pulled him in contradictory directions.

This complete retrospective of Mizoguchi's extant feature films reveals the different paths pursued throughout his long career which zigzagged between distinct genres and, unlike many of his contemporaries, between different studios, both established major and precariously minor production companies. While most of the silent films directed during Mizoguchi's prolific first years as a director have been lost, the broad range of their subject and genres—from adaptations of Eugene O'Neil and Tolstoy to Expressionist imitations of Caligari—make clear the broad range of his interests while also contextualizing *The 47 Ronin* and his other (almost) all male anti-action films made during the Second World War and under the close supervision of government censors. Most importantly, this retrospective offers an especially useful corrective for understanding the central role of women in Mizoguchi's cinema which is often sweepingly celebrated as proto-feminist, thanks to the outspoken, fiery critique of cruel misogynist patriarchy in such powerful films as *Osaka Elegy*, *Women of the Night* and *Street of Shame*. Without dulling the sharp-edged social critique honed by many of Mizoguchi's greatest films, the recurrent figure of the suffering woman must also be seen as just one expression of a romantic fatalism which increasingly pervades Mizoguchi's cinema as a kind of omnipotent gravitational force controlling both the steady downward spiral of his characters and the inexorable movement of his camera whose controlled distance and dispassionate avoidance of close-ups lends a certain coldness to Mizoguchi's visions of a fallen world.

Writings on Mizoguchi's cinema have tended to fetishistically recall the same incidents of his life as evidence of his cinema's autobiographical roots: his father's failed business venture and the consequent financial ruin of Mizoguchi's family when he was a young boy, then the sale of his beloved older sister Suzuko to a geisha house which followed not long afterward. Deeper study of Mizoguchi's life offers equally resonant material: his disastrous love affair with a prostitute which ended when she almost fatally stabbed him in the back, and the sudden descent into madness of his first wife who Mizoguchi committed to an asylum, and then began to live with her younger sister and her young children. While traces of these episodes echo across Mizoguchi's films, any autobiographical reading of his cinema must also heed the deep imprint left upon the artist's imagination by Mizoguchi's birth and upbringing in the Meiji Era, a period of intense social, political and cultural upheaval that marked his country's rapid transition during this period from a feudalist isolationism to a modern nation-state with increasingly bellicose expansionist ambitions. Indeed, one of the central ideas of Mizoguchi's cinema lies in his equal interest in contemporary and pre-modern Japan and, moreover his insistence on a clear continuity across the two periods in terms of the atavistically rigid social and sexist hierarchy that his films trace from the seventeenth-century Kyoto of *The Life of Oharu* to the Thirties' Osaka of *Naniwa Elegy* and the Fifties' Tokyo of *Street of Shame*.

Mizoguchi was notorious as a tyrannical martinet who tirelessly pushed actors, screenwriters, set designers and cinematographers alike to realize the ever-shifting images and ideas driving his films. Indeed, the naturalist performance which remains one of the keys of Mizoguchi's cinema was legendarily derived from his uncompromising striving for the flickering essence of each scene, gesture and line of dialogue and his ability to ask a performer to repeat a line endlessly until it came out just right. Equally perfectionist was his insistence that his sets be built with an unprecedented historical and architectural fidelity—using exact blueprints and filled not with props but with genuine antiques. Mizoguchi nevertheless inspired an incredible loyalty among his principal collaborators, chief among them the great cinematographer Kazuo Miyagawa, screenwriter Yoshitaka Yoda and actress Kinuyo Tanaka who was Mizoguchi's main star for a full seventeen years. Indeed, for the emotional depth and power of the films they made together, Kinuyo-Mizoguchi stand as one of the great actress-director couples, together with Dietrich-Von Sternberg, Vitti-Antonioni, Hara-Ozu. – HG, DP

Special thanks: David Schwartz, Aliza Ma—Museum of the Moving Image, New York; Kanako Shirasaki—the Japan Foundation, New York; National Film Centre, Tokyo; the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; Kadokawa Pictures, Nikkatsu Studios and Shochiku Company Limited—Japan.



## UGETSU (UGETSU MONOGOTARI)

FRIDAY MAY 16 AT 7PM

SUNDAY MAY 18 AT 5PM

Not only does *Ugetsu* remain Mizoguchi's best-known work in this country, it was instrumental (with *Rashomon*) in introducing Japanese cinema to American audiences. The film is an excellent entryway into the master's films, with its parallel stories of women confounded by social mores and the greed and ambition of the men they love. Just as the screenplay adds a bit of Guy de Maupassant to the source material (a collection of stories by Ueda Akinari published in 1771), so the film introduces a note of the fantastic into its tales of lives cast into turmoil by civil war in sixteenth-century Japan.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Masayuki Mori, Kinuyo Tanaka, Machiko Kyo  
Japan 1953, 35mm, b/w, 96 min. Japanese with English subtitles

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

## SONG OF HOME (FURUSATO NO UTA)

FRIDAY MAY 16 AT 9PM

A commission from the Ministry of Education for an educational film about rural youth, Mizoguchi's earliest extant feature observes the tensions that erupt among a group of village children when two privileged youth

return from Tokyo where they have been studying in a private school. *Song of Home* offers a very different approach to the rigid Japanese caste system explored in so many of Mizoguchi's later films, here by focusing upon the difficult decisions faced by a young village boy when forced to choose between schooling in Tokyo and upholding his family tradition as a farmer. Stylistically *Song of Home* is also strikingly different from Mizoguchi's iconic films, most notably for its use of Soviet-style montage and extreme close-ups and the total absence of the long-takes of expressionist camera movement that would become one of the director's signatures.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Shigeru Kido, Sueko Ito, Shiro Kato, Kentaro Kawamata  
Japan 1925, 35mm, b/w, silent, 45 min. Japanese titles with English subtitles

## SISTERS OF THE GION (GION NO SHIMAI)

SATURDAY MAY 17 AT 7PM

Mizoguchi's first-hand knowledge of Kyoto's legendary Gion district, which he regularly patronized during his many years in the city, is apparent in *Sisters of the Gion*'s scrupulous, almost documentary, attention to the nuanced details which reveal the stark reality of the modern-day geisha's grueling work and life. Izumu Yamada



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *SANSHO THE BAILIFF*

bristles with steely determination as a outspokenly modern geisha who views the world through a jaundiced and always questioning eye yet still struggles desperately to help her beloved sister avoid the same pattern of abuse and degradation which Mizoguchi's angry and sobering film makes clear is the lot of too many Japanese women. Mizoguchi's only work to win the coveted Kinema Junpo Best Film of the Year Award, *Sisters of the Gion* ignited a fierce debate about the place of the geisha within modern Japan. An early expression of Mizoguchi's expressive camera, here extended tracking shots are used to poetically reveal women's ultimate marginality in a world always drifting away from them.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Isuzu Yamada, Yoko Umemura  
Japan 1936, 35mm, b/w, 96 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### OYUKI THE VIRGIN (*MARIA NO OYUKI*)

SATURDAY MAY 17 AT 9PM

Among Mizoguchi's earliest sound films was this partial adaptation of Guy de Maupassant's "Boule de suif" (also the inspiration for John Ford's *Stagecoach*) which centers around the arresting figure of Oyuki, a spirited small town geisha traveling with one of her kind, and brought together by fate and strange fortune in a stagecoach with an uppity aristocratic family and a shopkeeper and his wife. By its title alone the film (whose literal Japanese title is Oyuki, "the Virgin Mary") makes clear Mizoguchi's deep sympathy for the geisha as an emblem of the working class and a lens through which to observe the hypocrisy and venality of the Japanese bourgeoisie. Isuzu Yamada, best known for her work with Kurosawa—and especially her mesmerizing Lady Macbeth in *Throne of Blood*—brings a tender vulnerability to the young geisha who remains a gentle innocent in the callous, mercenary world described by Mizoguchi's film. An important stylistic milestone for Mizoguchi, *Oyuki the Virgin* finds the young director experimenting with longer shots and complexly expressionist deep focus mise-en-scene which clearly shows the influence of Von Sternberg who Mizo-

guchi had recently met during the American director's 1936 visit to Japan.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Isuzu Yamada, Komako Hara  
Japan 1935, 35mm, b/w, 78 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### STREET OF SHAME (*AKASEN CHITAI*)

SUNDAY MAY 18 AT 7PM

Released just months before his premature death by leukemia, Mizoguchi's final film interweaves portraits of five prostitutes working in "Dreamland," a brothel in Tokyo's notorious and then historic Yoshiwara red-light district. *Street of Shame* is unsparing and forcefully direct in its refusal to romanticize the life or figure of the prostitute by unflinchingly revealing the full sordid dimensions of her tawdry, tattered world. Released after months of extended debate about an anti-prostitution law which is even discussed within the film, *Street of Shame* is claimed to have given the final impetus to the ban's final establishment. Yoshikata Yoda, feeling unsatisfied with his last script about prostitutes, *Women of the Night*, declined his last chance to work with Mizoguchi who turned to Masashige Narusawa (*Princess Yang Kwei-fei*, *Tales of the Taira Clan*).

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Machiko Kyo, Aiko Mimasu, Ayako Wakao  
Japan 1956, 35mm, b/w, 87 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### UTAMARO AND HIS FIVE WOMEN (*UTAMARO O MEGURU GONIN NO ONNA*)

MONDAY MAY 19 AT 7PM

Yoshikata Yoda would later admit basing his vision of legendary seventeenth-century artist Kitagawa Utamaro on Mizoguchi, channeling into his mesmerizing portrait the filmmaker's reverential worship of the gentle sex, and his troubled, often tumultuous relationship with women, and geisha in particular. Among Mizoguchi's most erotic works, *Utamaro and His Five Women* brings a raw sensuality into its masterful study of the creative process which makes vivid both the unbridled elation and darkest frus-



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *UGETSU*

trations which buoyed and unsettled the famed master of the *bijin-ga*, *ukiyo-e* woodblock portraits of beautiful women. Despite the great scrutiny given to period films by the US Occupational Force, who were determined to dampen any nationalist imagery or ideals in the cinema, Mizoguchi was given carte blanche for his ambitious and richly detailed recreation of Utamaro's world.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Minosuke Bando, Kinuyo Tanaka, Kotaro Bando  
Japan 1946, 35mm, b/w, 95 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### SANSHO THE BAILIFF (*SANSHO DAYU*)

FRIDAY MAY 23 AT 7PM

SUNDAY MAY 25 AT 4PM

*Sansho the Bailiff* is both one of Mizoguchi's most accessible works and one of his most sublime, a highpoint among postwar Japan's *jidai-geki* films set in the medieval past. The narrative impassively follows two families caught up in sweeping cycles of rise and fall, betrayal and resignation, as Mizoguchi's tracking shots both entrance with their majesty and shock with surprise. "Perhaps more than anything, this is a film about memory, and a film in which forgetting is the original sin. Working with master cameraman Kazuo Miyagawa (who also shot *Rashomon* and *Floating Weeds*), Mizoguchi creates an aestheticized world and a cosmic order which exists beyond the characters (and often in opposition to the suffering they undergo)." – *Tom Gunning*

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Yoshiaki Hanayagi, Kyoko Kagawa  
Japan 1954, 35mm, b/w, 124 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### HOMETOWN

#### (*FUJIWARA YOSHIE NO FURUSATO*)

FRIDAY MAY 23 AT 9:30PM

Mizoguchi's first foray into sound was a first as well for the Japanese cinema, comparable to *The Jazz Singer* as a historic and technological milestone while similarly compensating for its part-talkie limitations by offering a series of over-determined song numbers which emerge as the emotional heart of the film. *Hometown* justified its technological gambit with a melodramatic story of a singer's Mephistophelean pact with fame, tested by the devotion of a loyal woman standing by his side. Casting popular tenor Yoshie Fujiwara in the main role was a costly gamble by Nikkatsu studio which offered clear evidence of Mizoguchi's privileged stature within the Japanese film industry.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Yoshie Fujiwara, Fujiko Hamaguchi, Shizue Natsukawa  
Japan 1930, 35mm, b/w, 75 min. Japanese with English subtitles



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *UTAMARO AND HIS FIVE WOMEN*

## THE STORY OF THE LAST CHRYSANTHEMUMS (ZANGIKU MONOGATARI)

SUNDAY MAY 25 AT 7PM

Mizoguchi's fabled about the doomed love between a Kabuki actor and a young servant girl willing to sacrifice everything for the young man's career is often cited as a milestone in his career, the work in which his mature style finds its first full flowering. One of the great films about the stage, *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums* painstakingly renders the grinding schedule and hardships endured by the actor while lyrically paralleling them with the roles the ennobled maid is forced to play. A luminous theatricality is cast on both on- and off-stage scenes by the film's beautifully rendered Von Sternberg-style chiaroscuro lighting and painterly shadows.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Shotaro Hanayagi, Kokichi Takada, Gonjuro Kwarazaki  
Japan 1939, 35mm, b/w, 143 min. Japanese with English subtitles

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

## WHITE THREADS OF THE WATERFALL (TAKI NO SHIRAITO)

MONDAY MAY 26 AT 7PM

Considered by many as the most accomplished of Mizoguchi's extant silent films, *White Threads of the Waterfall* offers his earliest exploration of the suffering heroine as emblem of tragic fatalism, here in the figure of a talented and ravishingly beautiful "water artist" who sacrifices her youth and career for the man she loves. Based on the stage version of a popular *shinpa* novel by Kyoka Izumi whose melodramatic imagination and frequently cutting depiction of Meiji-era Japan exerted a huge influence on Mizoguchi, *White Threads of the Waterfall* was the favorite film of the legendary benshi Midori Sawato (1925-87) who used the film to pass her art on to a new generation of *katsuben*.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Takako Irie, Tokihiko Okada  
Japan 1933, 16mm, b/w, silent, 75 min. Japanese titles with English subtitles

## THE LIFE OF OHARU (SAIKAKU ICHIDAI ONNA)

SATURDAY MAY 31 AT 7PM

MONDAY JUNE 9 AT 7PM

Mizoguchi's personal favorite of all his films, *The Life of Oharu* is in many ways a summary work, the crystalliza-



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *THE WOMAN OF THE RUMOR*

tion of his vision of woman martyred by social injustice and the Meiji-era as the dark caldron of the repressive, misogynistic and feudalistic spirits that linger, atavistically, in his contemporary films. Kinuyo Tanaka reveals her incredible range in her depiction of a courtesan's vertiginous fall from grace, a trajectory whose gleaming sharp edge revealingly eviscerates the seedy underbelly of Meiji social institutions and mores. The expressive camera movement so celebrated in Mizoguchi's cinema is given a sublime showcase by *The Life of Oharu*, with almost operatically soaring movements comparable to the films of Ophüls and Murnau. By garnering the Grand Prize at the 1951 Venice Film Festival *The Life of Oharu* brought Mizoguchi to international attention and, by coming the year after *Rashomon* captured the same honors, helped propel Japanese cinema onto the world stage.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Toshiro Mifune  
Japan 1952, 35mm, b/w, 136 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## MIYAMOTO MUSASHI

SATURDAY MAY 31 AT 9:30PM

For his follow-up to *The 47 Ronin* Mizoguchi offered another adaptation of Japanese military legend that subtly, and stylishly, avoided the bellicose patriotism encouraged by government-pressured film studios. While centered around the eponymous swordsman, ronin and philosopher of war, *Miyamoto Musashi* carefully limits and contains its laconic action sequences, especially the climactic duels, to instead emphasize Musashi's temperate side—revealed through his patient teaching of a vengeful young disciple, and his intimate rapport with the lush Japanese countryside and forests. Among the few Mizoguchi's films in which women appear only in minor, secondary roles *Miyamoto Musashi* is among the director's most rarely screened works.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Chojuro Kwarazaki, Kinuyo Tanaka, Kigoro Ikushima  
Japan 1944, 16mm, b/w, 55 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## WOMEN OF THE NIGHT (YORU NO ONNATACHI)

SUNDAY JUNE 1 AT 5PM

Osaka's Shinsekai district, the seedy headquarters of the yakuza underworld, comes alive in Mizoguchi's searing indictment of prostitution as a stark injustice to woman and an emblem of a dark malaise at the heart of postwar Japan. For its stylistic rawness and anger *Women of the Night* is distinguished from Mizoguchi's other collaborations with screenwriter Yoshitaka Yoda, most especially for its hard-edged use of Osaka street dialect, scenes of savage violence, and the Italian neo-realist inspired war-scarred locations that mirror the deep instability of social institutions described so powerfully by the film's dark melodrama of victimized women.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Tomie Tsunoda, Sanae Takasugi  
Japan 1948, 35mm, b/w, 75 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## STRAITS OF LOVE AND HATE (AIEN KYO)

SUNDAY JUNE 1 AT 7PM

Long unavailable in any form, *Straits of Love and Hate* is one of Mizoguchi's key Thirties' films, among the first to offer the theater as a critical expression of the performative, sexist and constricting roles enforced by Japanese society and almost vengefully upon women. In his third collaboration with Yoshitaka Yoda, Mizoguchi loosely adapted Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, a recurrent source of Japanese silent films, into a story of a servant girl whose life is upturned by her doomed love for a spineless young man. Breaking from other similarly patterned Mizoguchi films, the heroine of *Straits of Love and Hate* openly



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *MIYAMOTO MUSASHI*

rebels against the downfall that she nevertheless cannot prevent, lashing out at the men and society who have taken such cruel advantage of her.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Fumiko Yamaji, Masao Shimizu  
Japan 1937, 35mm, b/w, 108 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## OSAKA ELEGY (NANIWA EREJI)

FRIDAY JUNE 6 AT 7PM

SUNDAY JUNE 8 AT 5PM

Mizoguchi's first collaboration with screenwriter Yoshitaka Yoda was a harshly realist critique of Thirties' Japan as a soullessly capitalist society where human and mercantile values are savagely equated, and everything is ultimately reduced to a form of moneyed transaction. Mizoguchi would later claim his own despised father to be the inspiration for the miserly old man whose selfishness causes the ruin of his family and the degradation of his daughters. Mizoguchi and Yoda's devastating indictment of Japanese patriarchy remained controversial and, in fact, was banned in 1940 by the Japanese military government.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Isuzu Yamada, Seiichi Takegawa, Chiyoko Okura  
Japan 1936, 35mm, b/w, 90 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## THE DOWNFALL OF OSEN (ORIZURU OSEN)

FRIDAY JUNE 6 AT 9PM

The year before his artistic and critical breakthrough with *Sisters of the Gion* and *Osaka Elegy*, Mizoguchi embraced radically different stylistic means to explore the world of the fallen woman that would emerge as the central realm of his cinema. *The Downfall of Osen* uses a sophisticated flashback structure to tell its story of a young woman pulled out of the criminal underworld by a love that, ironically, destroys her. The great Isuzu Yamada gives a soulful world-weariness to Osen as she recounts her sad fate and offers her memories with a wistful melancholic fondness for those few moments of fleeting happiness she savored long ago.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Isuzu Yamada, Daijuro Natsukawa  
Japan 1935, 35mm, b/w, 87 min. Japanese with English subtitles

## A GEISHA (GION BAYASHI)

SATURDAY JUNE 7 AT 7PM

Closely focused on the apprenticeship and coming of age of a teenage geisha in post-war Kyoto, Mizoguchi's



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *A GEISHA*

lesser known late masterwork offers a more lyrical and sympathetic vision of Japan's ritualized "floating world" as a fragile safe haven where unmarried women can find a degree of freedom, and even dignity, not possible in the outside world. Yet, although *A Geisha's* young heroine struggles to define geishadom in her own terms, Mizoguchi's heart-rendering story makes clear the difficult struggle for geisha, and Japanese women in general, to achieve stability in a mercenary and machismo world.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Michiyo Kogure, Ayako Wakao  
Japan 1953, 35mm, b/w, 84 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### POPPY (*GUBIJINSO*)

SATURDAY JUNE 7 AT 9PM

Mizoguchi was given his one of his biggest budgets to date for his adaptation of an early novel by Natsume Soseki, the story of an aristocratic woman whose careful plans for life and love are suddenly derailed by her unexpected love for her young English tutor. Using the woman's troubled affair as a means to detail and critique the isolated social rituals and milieu of the privileged, *Poppy* builds suspense around the lover's duplicitous role-playing. While Mizoguchi's lavish spending on *Poppy's* set design and costumes brought a sharp realism to its evocation of the Meiji-era upper class, it did nothing to help the film find the audience so desperate sought by the failing, and soon after failed, Daiichi studio.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Ichiro Tsukida, Kuniko Miyake, Daijiro Natsukawa  
Japan 1935, 16mm, b/w, 72 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### PORTRAIT OF MADAME YUKI (*YUKI FUJIN EZU*)

SUNDAY JUNE 8 AT 7PM

Mizoguchi's oeuvre took an unexpected turn with this psycho-sexually charged portrait of an upper-class woman fully aware that her strange, unalterable attraction to a man she openly despises will lead to the tragic ending announced from the film's very beginning. Hinting at the unearthly, supernatural forces that emerge in *Ugetsu* and Mizoguchi's other works made after he converted to Buddhism, the destructive *amour fou* at the dark heart of

*Portrait of Madame Yuki* takes on an almost religious tone as a kind of extreme passion willingly suffered for causes that remain always obscure. The role of an innocent servant girl as observer to her beloved employee's recklessly impulsive erotic life opens a new sexually charged voyeuristic dimension to Mizoguchi's cinema which points towards the work of New Wave directors such as Yoshida and Oshima.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Michiyo Kogure, Yoshiko Kuga, Ken Uehara  
Japan 1950, 35mm, b/w, 88 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### MISS OYU (*OYU-SAMA*)

FRIDAY JUNE 13 AT 7PM

Mizoguchi's adaptation uses Junichiro Tanizaki's tormented novel about repression and forbidden love as yet another means to explore the hypocrisy and incestuous isolation of the postwar Japanese upper-class family, here refracted through the steamy glass of two sisters' love for the same man. The tortured soul of the older, widowed sister is poignantly captured by Kinuyo Tanaka in this rarely screened late film. *Miss Oyu* is formally quite extraordinary, with Mizoguchi carefully choreographing the lines of the frustrated long triangle as its stretches and recedes, often in march with the characters' gaze at



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *THE CRUCIFIED LOVERS*

one another, across the film's ritualized and succinctly described interior spaces.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Nobuko Otowa, Yuji Hori  
Japan 1951, 35mm, b/w, 95 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### MY LOVE BURNS (*WAGA KOI WA MOENU*)

FRIDAY JUNE 13 AT 9PM

Loosely based on the life of Furuka Eiko, one of the few important female activists of the Meiji period "People's Rights" movement, *My Love Burns* is considered the final work in Mizoguchi's so-called "woman's liberation trilogy" formed by *Victory of Women* and *The Love of Sumako, the Actress*. The film's grappling with the stakes and possibilities of democracy in postwar Japan make obvious its origins as an assignment focused upon Mizoguchi by the US occupation government. And yet, *My Love Burns* remains an important work for signaling the ratcheting up of the emotional charge and intensity of Mizoguchi's postwar films and for its flashes of sudden optimism that Japanese women may one day forge a more just place for themselves. The mark of Kaneto Shindo, who had earlier apprenticed in art direction for Mizoguchi, as co-screenwriter is apparent in the film's brutal yet expressive violence.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Ichiro Sugai, Mitsuko Mito  
Japan 1949, 35mm, b/w, 96 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### THE 47 RONIN, PARTS I & II (*GENROKU CHUSHINGURA*)

SATURDAY JUNE 14 AT 7PM

Among Mizoguchi's most enigmatic and formally brilliant films, *The 47 Ronin* is an austere and bracing adaptation of the legendary—and, for the Japanese military government, talismanic—tale of the retainers to an eighteenth-century lord who patiently wait for years to avenge a impetuous breach in protocol that forces their master to commit *seppuku* and transforms them into drifting ronin destined to die by their own swords after their final task is done. Despite the obvious pressures placed on the myth of *bushido*, or the samurai code, during the war years, Mizoguchi's contribution to the *chusingura* (as the long tradition of retelling the ronin's tale is known) is notably sober and restrained, with Mizoguchi largely avoiding violence or battle scenes to focus instead on the ronin's extreme patience, using the epic length of the film's three-and-a-half hours to make real the tense waiting time which the group endures in order to fulfill their duty. With its careful avoidance of close-ups and its precision choreography action within Mizoguchi's meticulously accurate period sets, *The 47 Ronin* radically abstracts the imperturbable warriors as figures held at bay by the film's rigorous long shots. A box office failure in Japan, where its first part was released shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the ideology of Mizoguchi's brilliant formalist distillation of the ronins' tale is still the subject of active debate.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Chojuro Kwarasaki, Yoshizaburo Arashi, Utaemon Ichikawa  
Japan 1941, 35mm, b/w, 241 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### THE LADY OF MUSASHINO (*MUSASHINO FUJIN*)

SUNDAY JUNE 15 AT 5PM

Mizoguchi offered a unflattering portrait of postwar Japan as a festering den of immorality and deceit in this dark melodrama about a woman trapped in a loveless marriage to a burnt out university professor and lecherous womanizer. Kinuyo Tanaka burns with a growing anger as the eponymous *The Lady of Musashino* who ob-

serves the corrosive decay of her relationship mirrored in her extended family and the incestuous love triangles that gradually emerge. Each sordid twist of Mizoguchi and Yoda's, fascinating narrative cries out with anger against the moral depravity of a shell-shocked and dis-oriented society.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Masayuki Mori, Yukiko Todoroki  
Japan 1951, 35mm, b/w, 88 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### THE CRUCIFIED LOVERS (CHIKAMATSU MONOGATARI)

SUNDAY JUNE 15 AT 7PM

Treated like chattel by her wealthy, loutish merchant husband, a young woman from an impoverished family falls in love with one of his apprentices, and their desperate affair provides a fascinating contrast with the similarly ill-fated lovers in Mizoguchi's subsequent work, *Princess Yang Kwei Fei*. Where that film presents a seemingly Buddhist detachment towards the impermanence of human happiness, *The Crucified Lovers* maintains an intensity that has been compared to film noir. The film remains one of Mizoguchi's lesser-known masterpieces in this country, but following its presentation at Cannes, *The Crucified Lovers* was immediately championed by such French observers as Jean-Luc Godard and Georges Sadoul.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kazuo Hasegawa, Kyoko Kagawa  
Japan 1954, 35mm, b/w, 102 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### TALES OF THE TAIRA CLAN (SHIN HEIKE MONOGATARI)

MONDAY JUNE 16 AT 7PM

This historical epic remains overshadowed by Mizoguchi's other late films. While many of those are masterpieces of female suffering, *Tales of the Taira Clan* is a samurai film, which follows the rise of a warrior during a twelfth-century power struggle between the imperial court and a powerful monastic order. In fact, Mizoguchi imbues the young man's struggle with something of the emotional power of his great melodramas. The film's burnished colors exist in ironic contrast to the depiction of medieval Kyoto as a brutal and frenzied place. More recently, critics have pointed to the film's portrait of a

Japan striving to turn from chaos, elitism and corruption to peace and democracy

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Ichijiro Oya, Raizo Ichikawa  
Japan 1955, 16mm, b/w, 108 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### VICTORY OF WOMEN (JOSEI NO SHORI)

FRIDAY JUNE 20 AT 9PM

Mizoguchi's most politically outspoken film is clearly branded as a product of the US occupation by its insistent, ardent call for democratic reform and, most especially, for the empowerment of women. Mizoguchi's only work with Ozu screenwriter Kogo Noda, *Victory of Women* features Kinuyo Tanaka as the embodiment of the possible new order, a lawyer fighting doggedly for a more just legal system and trying to rid Japan of its draconian penal system.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Michiko Kuwano, Mitsuko Miura  
Japan 1946, 35mm, color, 84 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### PRINCESS YANG KWEI-FEI (YOKIHI)

SATURDAY JUNE 21 AT 7PM

This fascinating co-production between the Japanese studio Daiei and the Shaw Brothers, the fabled producers based in Hong Kong, had its origins in Daiei's hope for a bigger international audience and the Shaw Brothers' hopes of benefitting from the cultural cachet of Mizoguchi's name. Yet upon its completion, *Princess Yang Kwei-fei* was considered a failure, with the Chinese setting alienating Mizoguchi's followers in Japan and abroad, and the film's emphasis on poetry over spectacle disappointing the Shaw Brothers. While it falls short of the sublimity of much of Mizoguchi's previous work, *Princess Yang Kwei-fei* has nevertheless come to be championed by critics and audiences for its exquisitely moving tale of the ill-fated love affair between the eighth-century emperor Xuanzong and the beautiful serving girl he makes his concubine.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, So Yamamura  
Japan 1955, 35mm, color, 98 min. Japanese with English subtitles



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *THE WOMAN OF THE RUMOR*

### THE FAMOUS SWORD BIJOMARU (MEITO BIJOMARU)

SATURDAY JUNE 21 AT 9PM

A fascinating propaganda piece made at the very end of the Second World War, *The Famous Sword Bijomaru* is a supernatural fantasy about swordsmiths whose devotion to the Emperor gives a magical gleam and power to their weapons. The high point of Mizoguchi's short film is an extended sword fight between the vengeful spirit of an aristocratic woman and the samurai who betrayed her.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Isuzu Yamada, Shotaro Hanayagi, Ichijiro Oya  
Japan 1945, 35mm, b/w, 65 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### THE LOVE OF SUMAKO, THE ACTRESS (JOYU SUMAKO NO KOI)

SUNDAY JUNE 22 AT 5PM

In response to the call by the US Occupation heads for films exploring democratic ideals, Mizoguchi offered a spirited bio-pic of the pioneering actress Sumako Matsui, famous for her championing of Western style acting techniques and the scandalous love affair that troubled her career. The trio of Mizoguchi, Tanaka and Yoda once again sculpted the figure of a fascinating and strong-willed woman struggling to make her voice heard yet pulled by dark fate and doomed love. *The Love of Sumako, the Actress* nevertheless sounds a note of cautious optimism, by declaring a certain victory won by the determined actresses whose modern approach to acting Tanaka literally and so powerfully embodies.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, So Yamamura  
Japan 1947, 16mm, b/w, 95 min. Japanese with English subtitles

### THE WOMAN OF THE RUMOR (UWASA NO ONNA)

MONDAY JUNE 23 AT 7PM

Released the same year as both *Sansho* and *Crucified Lovers*, the lesser known *Woman of the Rumor* uses melodrama with equal power and invention, once again starring Kinuyo Tanaka who is simply dazzling as a Kyoto madame trying to bring up her daughter who falls for a young doctor who is also her mother's lover. Mizoguchi brilliantly intertwines the perspectives of mother and daughter to make vividly real the quotidian rhythms of the modern-day geisha house. His passionate and famously obsessive attention to architecture and set design is expressed in the intricate and expressive *okiya*, or boarding house for geisha, where much of the film takes place.

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi. With Kinuyo Tanaka, Yoshiko Kuga, Tomoemon Otani  
Japan 1954, 35mm, b/w, 83 min. Japanese with English subtitles



KENJI MIZOGUCHI *TALES OF THE TAIRA CLAN*

# A TRIBUTE TO ALAIN RESNAIS

JUNE 20 – JUNE 30

In a career spanning over sixty years, Alain Resnais (1922-2014) proved an inexhaustible explorer of the complex relationships between time and memory, truth and the subjectivity of the human mind. Intellectually rigorous, his films nonetheless remain immensely watchable, buoyed by a lightness of touch and a sheer beauty that effortlessly communicates the dreamlike interior of the mind.

Resnais began his film career immediately after World War II, directing innovative and wide-ranging documentaries and film essays before transitioning to narrative features at the end of the 1950s. His earliest feature films often reflect the impact of the Cold War and anti-colonial period on French society, but his initial success, *Last Year at Marienbad*, points the direction that much of his later work would take: experimental narratives that disrupt the smooth linearity of classical cinema and, in so doing, explore cinema's ability to portray the flickering, unstable nature of the life of the mind and of the heart.

This tribute brings together a selection of Resnais' work from the 1960s to the 2000s, including three screenings of a recent addition to the HFA's collection: a new 35mm print of the too little-seen 1968 masterpiece *Je t'aime, je t'aime*. – DP



ALAIN RESNAIS *JE T'AIME, JE T'AIME*

## *JE T'AIME, JE T'AIME*

FRIDAY JUNE 20 AT 7PM

SATURDAY JUNE 28 AT 9:30PM

SUNDAY JUNE 29 AT 5PM

In Resnais' only science fiction film, a suicidal man is recruited by a team of scientists to test their time machine, which has previously only been tried on mice. A malfunction in the machine traps him in his past, where



ALAIN RESNAIS *THE WAR IS OVER*

he is forced to relive fragmentary pieces of his memories in no discernible order. From the disorienting imagery, a narrative revolving around a girlfriend whose death he may or may not have caused gradually emerges. A poetic exploration of the role of destiny, memory and time, *Je t'aime* explores the instinct of one man to cling to his past even as he watches it dissolve.

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Claude Rich, Olga Georges-Picot, Anouk Ferjac  
France 1968, 35mm, color, 91 min. French with English subtitles

## *THE WAR IS OVER (LA GUERRE EST FINIE)*

SUNDAY JUNE 22 AT 7PM

Yves Montand plays Diego, an aging Spanish revolutionary based in Paris who begins to question his beliefs, his group's tactics and their effectiveness in Resnais' landmark film. Using flashforwards, fantasies and imaginings to illustrate the constant unease of Diego's mind, Resnais persuasively crafts the tale of one man's commitment to a cause and the effect years of duplicity and mistrust have had on his psyche and his relationships. Montand's world-weary charm lends a touching poignancy to his portrayal of Diego as an eternal outsider, a man without a country—or a fixed identity.

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Yves Montand, Geneviève Bujold, Ingrid Thulin  
France 1966, 35mm, b/w, 121 min. French with English subtitles

## *LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD (L'ANNÉE DERNIÈRE À MARIENBAD)*

FRIDAY JUNE 27 AT 7PM

Resnais' groundbreaking collaboration with Alain Robbe-Grillet is a hypnotic and haunting exploration of the subjectivity and mutability of memory, itself a dominant theme in Resnais' work. The film's dreamlike structure circles back on itself repeatedly, with the repetition of words and images evoking the intimacy and unreliability of memory as a man, known only as X, pursues a woman, A, through an upscale resort, insisting that they had an affair the year before and arranged to meet again, while she claims no memory of him. Resisting any easy interpretations, Resnais encourages uncertainty, dissolving



ALAIN RESNAIS *MURIEL*



ALAIN RESNAIS *PROVIDENCE*

the distinction between reality and fantasy, memory and fiction, while A and X, frozen in an endless loop, explore the infinite variations of their enigmatic interactions.

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Delphine Seyrig, Giorgio Albertazzi, Sacha Pitoeff  
France 1961, 35mm, b/w, 93 min. French with English subtitles

### WILD GRASS

FRIDAY JUNE 27 AT 9PM

After filming screenplays by such writers as Marguerite Duras, Alain Robbe-Grillet and Jorge Semprun, Resnais brings a novel to the screen for the first time with this tale of a man and a woman thrown together by coincidence. *Wild Grass* joins *Last Year at Marienbad*, *Muriel* and Resnais' Alan Ayckbourn adaptations in his canon of works about ambiguous relationships whose status and whose very existence seems to oscillate before our eyes, as the film blends comedy, romance and thriller. The mute presence of a movie theater and the eruption on the soundtrack of the 20th Century Fox fanfare remind us of Resnais' belief in cinema as the perfect medium for what Proust called "the heart's intermittences."

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Sabine Azéma, André Dussollier, Anne Consigny  
France/Italy 2009, 35mm, color, 104 min. French with English subtitles

### MURIEL, OR THE TIME OF RETURN (*MURIEL OU LE TEMPS D'UN RETOUR*)

SATURDAY JUNE 28 AT 7PM

*Muriel* marks a return for Resnais to themes from earlier films – the unreliability of memory and, as in *Hiroshima mon amour*, the juxtaposition of the horrors of war, in this case torture, with a romantic relationship. As the title suggests, *Muriel* is deeply concerned with the past, focusing on characters who threaten to be consumed by their histories, which have indelibly shaped their lives and left them incapable of functioning in the present. Bernard, recently returned from the Algerian war, is haunted by his experiences there, while his stepmother returns to an old lover, less to reunite with him than to obsessively examine their past love. One of Resnais' most politically engaged films, *Muriel* explores the devastating aftermath of war and the lasting trauma it inflicts.

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Delphine Seyrig, Jean-Pierre Kérien, Jean-Baptiste Thierrée  
France 1963, 35mm, color, 116 min. French with English subtitles

### MY AMERICAN UNCLE (*MON ONCLE D'AMÉRIQUE*)

SUNDAY JUNE 29 AT 7PM

Tracing three disparate characters as they navigate their personal and professional lives, *My American Uncle* defies traditional narrative structure by introducing a fourth figure, a behavioral scientist whose theories on human nature act as commentaries on the actions of the protagonists. The result is a fusion of fiction and documentary techniques, complicated by the film's complex structure,

with its three separate storylines, shifts back and forth in time and extensive voiceover narrative. Nowhere is the film more complex, however, than in its relationship to its three protagonists, who at first appear to be presented as case studies, a relationship Resnais ingeniously subverts by contrasting their emotional pain and fear with the coldly analytical voiceover of their "motivations" as explained by the scientist.

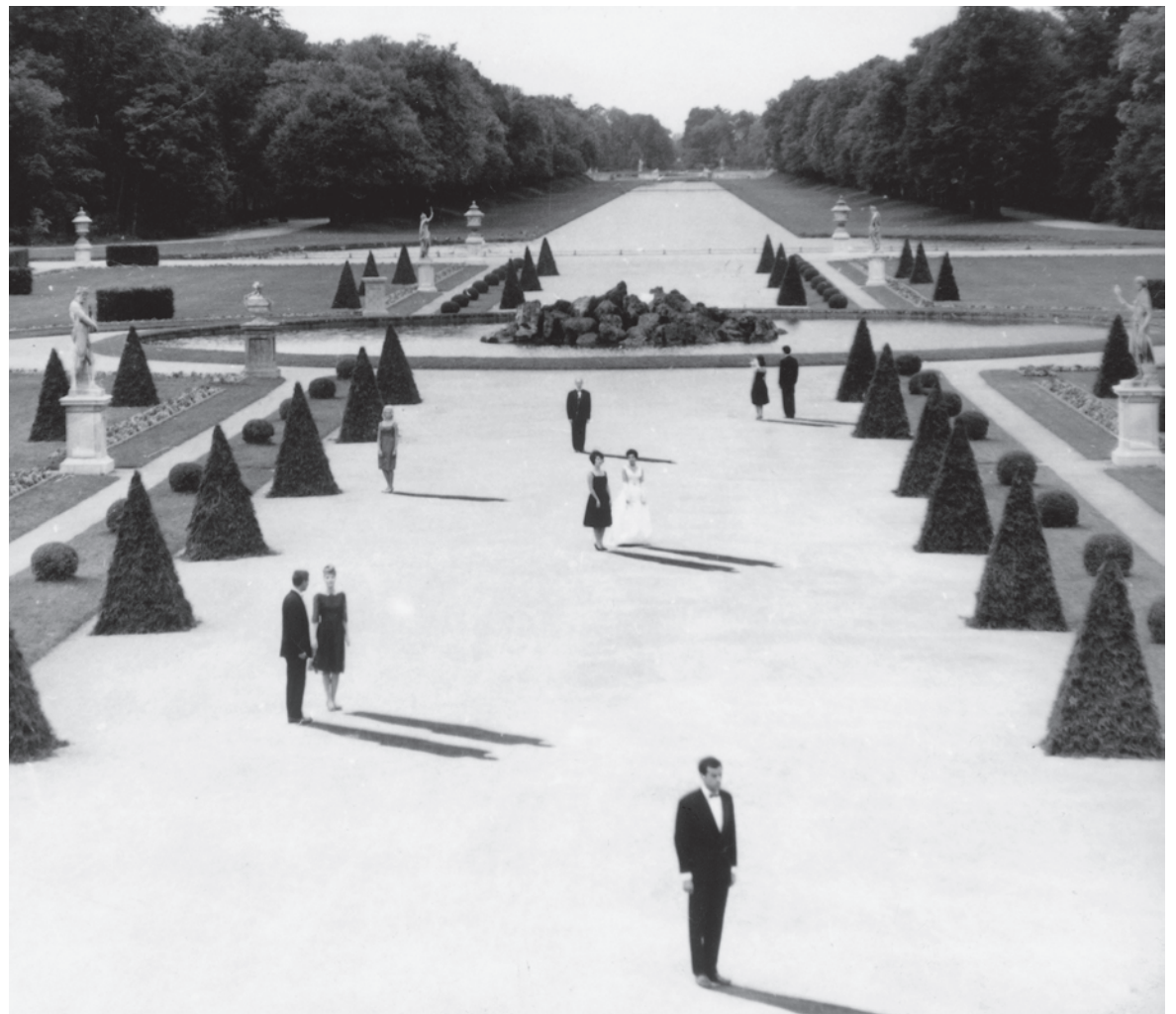
Directed by Alain Resnais. With Gérard Depardieu, Nicole Garcia, Roger Pierre  
France 1980, 35mm, color, 125 min. French with English subtitles

### PROVIDENCE

MONDAY JUNE 30 AT 7PM

Resnais' first film in English, this portrait of a writer's last days, both autumnal and nightmarish, finds him surrounded by his family but also retreating into his imagination, with his final work reflecting his ambivalence towards his children and the women in his life. As in so much of Resnais' work, the borders between history, memory and fantasy prove to be more permeable than solid, which Resnais brilliantly represents by giving the film's locations a geographic fluidity – the spaces on-screen seem to oscillate between the real and the imaginary. The primary setting is an English country house that seems as haunted as the resort in *Last Year at Marienbad*.

Directed by Alain Resnais. With John Gielgud, Dirk Bogarde, Ellen Burstyn  
France 1977, 35mm, color, 110 min. In English



ALAIN RESNAIS *LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD*



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## AN EVENING WITH ELOY ENCISO CACHAFEIRO

APRIL 14



ELOY ENCISO CACHAFEIRO *ARRAIANOS*

Harvard's Film Study Center recently announced a new award: the Robert Gardner Fellowship, named in honor of the FSC's founder. The 2013-14 Gardner Fellows are Claire Denis (see p. 15) and Spanish filmmaker Eloy Enciso Cachafeiro. Born in Galicia in 1975, Cachafeiro studied filmmaking in Cuba before making his feature debut with *Pic Nic* in 2007. His second feature film, *Arraianos*, locates him in that vein of cinema, from Robert Gardner to the current work coming from Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab, that seeks not so much to explain other cultures as to provide an immersive experience of them—be it the Benares of Gardner's *Forest of Bliss* (1986) or the Nepalese cable car in *Manakamana* (2013) by Stephanie Spray and Pacho Velez. — DP

*This program is presented in partnership with the Film Study Center, Harvard. Special thanks: Lucien Castaing-Taylor, Cozette Russell, Ernst Karel—Film Study Center, Harvard; Sally Berger—Museum of Modern Art.*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
 ELOY ENCISO IN PERSON

### ARRAIANOS

MONDAY APRIL 14 AT 7PM

*Arraianos* is a village in Galicia, the northwestern corner of Spain directly above Portugal. Enciso's quietly evocative portrait of this place and its inhabitants echoes such recent cinematic descriptions of seemingly pre-modern ways of life as Frammentino's *Le Quattro Volte* (2010) or *Sweetgrass* (2009) by Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Ilisa Barbash. But the episodes of the everyday—cutting wood and tending to livestock—are interspersed with excerpts from *The Forest*, a play from the 1960s by Galician dramatist Jenaro Marinhas del Valle, in which villagers recite snippets of existentialist dialogue. Mixing Flaherty with Straub and Huillet, this combination of documentary and ritual highlights the film's roots in another strain of contemporary filmmaking often found in Spain and Portugal—the poetic intertwining of fact and fiction in the work of Pedro Costa, José Luis Guerín, and António Reis and Margarida Cordeiro. The film's fiery climax leads to an epilogue bathed in autumnal light, which may be announcing nothing less than the end of *Arraianos* itself and, with it, a vestige of the archaic.

Directed by Eloy Enciso Cachafeiro  
 Spain 2012, digital video, color, 69 min. Galician with English subtitles

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