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All programs curated by Haden Guest and David Pendleton, and film synopses written by Brittany Gravely, Haden Guest, David Pendleton and Jeremy Rossen unless otherwise noted.

On the cover: The couple are either escaping or returning to this mysterious island in Guy Maddin's *The Forbidden Room* p. 21

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH, OR THE FILMMAKER'S NIGHTMARE

SEPTEMBER 4 – OCTOBER 31



DENNIS HOPPER *THE LAST MOVIE*

Some years ago, I started thinking about joining the small and relatively under-sung genre of behind-the-scenes films. This may have come about through reflection on my own practice as a filmmaker, questioning certain ideas about the urge to create worlds and the obsessiveness that can cause disregard of other aspects of life when, as a filmmaker, you feel, as Herzog once said, that “my films are my life.” I feel no differently: they consume my time, and my whole life revolves around thinking about them, travelling to make them, editing for months in dark rooms, working on soundtracks, and then travelling to show my films. It makes sense to me that, at some point, I would want to directly make a film about this construction.

For my film *The Sky Trembles and the Earth is Afraid and the Two Eyes Are Not Brothers*, I wanted to move among different realms of reality—storytelling, songs, observation of a film being made, fiction—so that, in the end, the viewer is uncertain about where the fiction begins and ends. The films in this series fall generally into two camps: one, the observational documentary; the other, a fictional recreation of a film set or filmmaker. What ties them all together is that they each show the darker side of filmmaking and its repercussions. I'm interested in the question of why filmmakers want to expose the dark side of filmmaking. There is something perversely compelling about seeing someone who is a mirror version of yourself being taken down a road of obsession and disaster, finding what at the end?

The documentaries in this series show actual film productions that are falling apart at the seams, as in *Hearts of Darkness* and *Demon Lover Diary*. Like the latter, the eerily beautiful *Cuadecuc, vampir* shows the making of a low-budget horror film, but keeps the nightmare to a general sense of unexplained unease.

Troubled film production also comes in the form of fiction in *The State of Things*, *The Last Movie* and *The Stunt Man*, with extremely varied results. *Arrebato* looks into the supernatural side of filmmaking, while *Peeping Tom*, a tale of madness and murder behind the camera, is a classic of psychological horror. *Sunset Boulevard* and *Mulholland Drive* focus attention on actors struggling to hold their minds together as their dreams fall apart. And maybe this is what the season comes down to—hopeful, silvery dreams crumbling into a nightmare abyss. – Ben Rivers

An acclaimed filmmaker who frequently shows new work at the Harvard Film Archive, Ben Rivers is currently a fellow at Radcliffe and the Film Study Center, Harvard.

Film descriptions by Liz Coffey, Brittany Gravely, Haden Guest, David Pendleton and Jeremy Rossen.

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GEORGE CUKOR *A STAR IS BORN*

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 4 AT 7PM

THE DAY OF THE LOCUST

Nathanael West drew upon his time as a Hollywood screenwriter in the 1930s to pen his classic novel, which John Schlesinger translates to the silver screen, wielding a more generous amount of degeneration and deformity. Depicted through Conrad Hall's deceptively glamorous lens, the vivid menagerie of Hollywood's depressed rejects parade through an equally variegated array of paroxysms, made all the more harrowing by the effects of the Depression. Schlesinger packs the picture with complex performances, including Donald Sutherland's frighteningly repressed Midwesterner, Homer Simpson; Karen Black's Faye, vapid, talentless and forever lost in the hall of mirrors; and Burgess Meredith as her father whose vaudeville act has disintegrated into door-to-door sales. Creating and then destroying empty dreams and repressed desires, Schlesinger's Hollywood gives birth to a grotesque, artificial spectacle imploding and feeding upon itself to horrifically apocalyptic ends.

Directed by John Schlesinger. With Donald Sutherland, Karen Black, William Atherton
US 1975, 35mm, color, 144 min

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6 AT 7PM

A STAR IS BORN

High in the Hollywood firmament, a cruel cosmology dictates that one star's rise is another one's fall. In Cukor's late studio masterpiece *A Star is Born*, Judy Garland's quivering, ruby-lipped Esther is zealously raised as an icon of Hollywood chutzpah, while her bourbon-soaked mentor, has-been thespian Norman Maine (James Mason), slurs his lines and tumbles from the stage, *schadenfreude* grist for the gossip mill. Gothic shadows haunt the edges of Cukor's Cinemascope cautionary tale, which lurches with mesmerizing intensity from dazzling and, at times, self-consciously baroque song-and-dance numbers to dark meditations on the Stygian death drive fueling the fragile lives and loves of Hollywood's beautiful and damned. Screening here is a rare, original IB Technicolor release print of the 154-minute version, unblemished by the later, Frankenstein-esque "restoration," which awkwardly added extra scenes using publicity stills in place of the missing original footage.

Directed by George Cukor. With Judy Garland, James Mason, Jack Carson
US 1954, color, 35mm, 154 min

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12 AT 7PM

SUNSET BOULEVARD

An iconic exposé of the dark dementia lurking just beneath Hollywood's silver screen, *Sunset Boulevard* is an endless hall of ironic mirrors, obscuring the lines be-

tween onscreen and offscreen, fiction and fantasy. Gloria Swanson portrays Norma Desmond, the aging silent movie star afflicted with famously bizarre delusions. Erich von Stroheim, who once directed Swanson in *Queen Kelly*, here plays—in a not-so-distant depiction of his actual descent—Max von Mayerling, a once-esteemed silent film director who is now the butler of the actress he used to direct. His dour, empathetic von Mayerling labors at preserving Norma Desmond's dream that she is still a much-loved, sought-after star while coolly observing her psychological entrapment of young Joe Gillis (William Holden), a hack writer who stumbles unwittingly into her macabre lair and a disorienting, decadent dream world that is not so far removed from the cruel beauty of Hollywood's studio system.

Directed by Billy Wilder. With Gloria Swanson, William Holden, Erich von Stroheim
US 1950, 35mm, b/w, 110 min

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12 AT 9:30PM

PEEPING TOM

Michael Powell, well known and beloved in the UK for his Technicolor masterpieces *Black Narcissus*, *The Red Shoes* and *Tales of Hoffman* (all of which he co-directed with Emeric Pressburger), effectively ended his promising career with 1960's *Peeping Tom*. Although also a Technicolor delight, the storyline of *Peeping Tom* disgusted the British press and proved to be so controversial that the film was re-edited to the point of nonsense for its US release in 1962, leaving Powell's reputation in ruins. Not until 1979, through the efforts of cinephile Martin Scorsese, was the American movie-going public able to see the film in its entirety.

A beautiful and unsettling psychological horror film, *Peeping Tom* follows an unassuming young man who works as a focus puller in a movie studio. Shooting his own 16mm film at home, he records death and horror for his own perverse enjoyment. Voyeurism, sexual perversion, and extreme violence move the plot, and the act of watching implicates the film's audience, which perhaps explains the dramatic reaction by the press in 1960 (several months before the release of the far tamer *Psycho*). Full of satisfyingly accurate details of both professional and amateur filmmaking, the film includes Powell himself, playing the role of the antihero's father.

Directed by Michael Powell. With Karlheinz Böhm, Anna Massey, Moira Shearer
UK 1960, 35mm, color, 101 min

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19 AT 7PM

MULHOLLAND DRIVE

Like Billy Wilder's film named after another iconic Hollywood street, *Mulholland Drive* tells a sordid tale of the industry of illusion and its boulevards of broken dreams—but for Lynch, these dreams fold into dreams within dreams within dreams. Originally intended as a pilot for a television series, Lynch's Möbius riddle was rejected by TV executives. In restructuring it for the silver screen, Lynch crafted one of his finest masterworks. When the perky, wholesome Betty Elms lands in Hollywood for what could be her big break, she meets "Rita," an ostensible femme fatale who is rendered identity-less because of amnesia from a car accident. Lynch's (and Hollywood's) dazzling dream factory sets to work with mysterious objects, startling visions, amusing detours and revelatory alterations in acting styles and character identities. The noir cracks open and gives way to a multi-toned, terrifyingly beautiful hallucination that is as much a complex reflection on Hollywood as it is an endlessly transforming psychological puzzle. Cinematic archetypes—including all versions of the female presented or rejected by Hollywood—double, reflect and regenerate into uncanny metaphors in Lynch's subconscious minefield where the fluid layers of identity, nostalgia, desire, deception and projection could be in the minds of the characters, the audience, or a complete fabrication by dark, unknown forces behind the scenes... or well beyond.

Directed by David Lynch. With Naomi Watts, Laura Harring, Justin Theroux
US 2001, 35mm, color, 147 min

PRECEDED BY

I, AN ACTRESS

Directed by George Kuchar. With Barbara Lapsley, George Kuchar
US 1977, 16mm, b/w, 10 min

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3 AT 9PM

THE STUNT MAN

This suspenseful tale of a manipulative director at work is also a darkly comic look at the daemonic power that cinema grants to filmmakers. In *The Stunt Man*, actors and crew alike find themselves in thrall to, and enthralled by, a director who may be God—or Lucifer—given his ability to create a world in which he seems to have power over life and death. ("Lucifer," after all, means "bringer of light.") Willing to risk anything for his art, he sets up a faked car crash that may turn fatal. This little-seen American independent film was championed by Pauline Kael



JOHN SCHLESINGER *THE DAY OF THE LOCUST*

and has since acquired a cult of admirers. It also features one of Peter O'Toole's greatest performances as the director.

Directed by Richard Rush. With Peter O'Toole, Steve Railsback, Barbara Hershey
US 1980, 35mm, color, 131 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

BEN RIVERS IN PERSON

FRIDAY OCTOBER 9 AT 7PM

THE SKY TREMBLES AND THE EARTH IS AFRAID AND THE TWO EYES ARE NOT BROTHERS

Ben Rivers' latest feature is a diptych film that brings together, but does not necessarily join, its two halves—the first a lyrical documentary of a Moroccan film shoot and the second a dark, minimal adaptation of Paul Bowles' nightmare fable *A Distant Episode*. Galician director Oliver Laxe becomes the bridge between the film's two worlds when he wanders, in seeming exasperation, away from his production and into the dangerous, unmeasured desert. Although Rivers avowed fascination with Paul Bowles inspired his first foray into pure fiction, his film remains firmly rooted in the daydreaming realism for which he is best known, exploring as much the slow mysteries of place as the iconic cultural specificities and myths of the desert.

Directed by Ben Rivers. With Oliver Laxe
UK 2015, 35mm, color, 98 min. Arabic, Spanish and French with English subtitles

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10 AT 9:15PM

RAPTURE (ARREBATO)

Despite his short filmography, Iván Zulueta was a central figure in the Spanish cinema of the late 20th century. His taste for pop art, avant-garde film and underground culture heavily influenced the filmmakers of the "movida madrileña" (especially the young Pedro Almodóvar) following Franco's death in 1975. Zulueta's own early work was mostly in music films (modeled after Richard Lester's work with the Beatles) and Super 8 experiments—the same kind of experiments conducted by *Rapture's* protagonist, a director collaborating on a project with a horror filmmaker and an actress. As the project engulfs the *ménage à trois*, *Rapture* bridges the gap between *Peeping Tom* and *Videodrome*, positing cinema as a kind of drug and filmmaking as a kind of addiction and submission to cinema.

Directed by Iván Zulueta. With Eusebio Poncela, Cecilia Roth, Will More
Spain 1979, 35mm, color, 105 min. Spanish with English subtitles

PRECEDED BY

THE BLACK TOWER

Directed by John Smith
UK 1985-87, 16mm, color, 24 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 16 AT 7PM

HEARTS OF DARKNESS: A FILMMAKER'S APOCALYPSE

Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse documents the sensational events that unfolded during the making of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. Featuring several hours of Eleanor Coppola's documentary footage of the Philippines production—complete with secret audio recordings she made of her husband—the film details the director's self-financed creation, teetering on the brink of complete collapse. Amid intense flooding, battles with the Filipino government over helicopters, Martin Sheen's heart attack, rampant drug use among both cast and crew, and Marlon Brando's prima donna antics, Coppola likens the experience of filming to his own personal Vietnam. The covert recordings reveal the direc-



BEN RIVERS *THE SKY TREMBLES AND THE EARTH IS AFRAID AND THE TWO EYES ARE NOT BROTHERS*

tor's serious self-doubt and fear of failure in cahoots with a maniacal ego driving him to continue on at any cost—even bankruptcy—to bring Joseph Conrad's legendary novel to the big screen for the first time. Both *Apocalypse Now* and *Hearts of Darkness* ultimately succeed in spite of themselves as triumphs of single-minded vision and will, ultimately illustrating the heart of Conrad's novel from both the war's front and behind the scenes.

Directed by Fax Bahr, George Hickenlooper, Eleanor Coppola. With Francis Ford Coppola, Eleanor Coppola, Dennis Hopper
US 1971, 35mm, color, 96 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 23 AT 9PM

CONFESSIONS AMONG ACTRESSES (KOKUHAKUTEKI JOYÛRON)

In the wake of his "anti-melodramas" of the 1960s, Kiju Yoshida here applies his radical vision to a Bergmanesque art film, casting three important Japanese actresses in this exploration of the links among performance, trauma and cinema. Yoshida designs a dizzying vertigo out of the shifting realities created by using actresses famous for playing modern, liberated characters to play three women who have been damaged by the men around them, and who are in turn gathered to make a film that will test them. As flashbacks alternate with moments of confession and confrontation, Yoshida contrasts classical framing and editing with his typical angular, New-Wave style, complete with jump cuts, zooms and eccentric framing that often confines the action to a small part of the frame



BILLY WILDER *SUNSET BOULEVARD*

surrounded by negative space.

Directed by Yoshishige Yoshida. With Mariko Okada, Ruriko Asaoka, Ineko Arima
Japan 1971, 35mm, color, 124 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 AT 8:30PM

THE LAST MOVIE

Made the same year as Peter Bogdanovich's *The Last Picture Show*, *The Last Movie* was only possible after the grand success of Dennis Hopper's low-budget countercultural phenomenon *Easy Rider*. Given the green light to set up in a remote village in Peru, the anarchic production helmed by one of Hollywood's loosest cannons ultimately achieved its infamy for reveling in psychedelic, decadent danger more wild and wanton than the Old West that Sam Fuller recreates in Hopper's film. With the lines between document and fantasy blurring behind and on screen, Hopper plays a stuntman who stays behind after a film wraps in Peru. Sometimes looking for love or gold, he watches the native villagers as they incorporate the rituals and iconography of both cinema and the West into their lives, using real bullets. In taking Hollywood's money and fleeing into the heart of darkness, Hopper also earnestly points an inverted mirror toward his own benefactors, who had to witness their investment beautifully implode into a fragmented, feverish, funny nightmare—including startlingly disruptive cuts, character personality changes and nonlinearity within nonlinearity—that ultimately out-counters the counterculture.

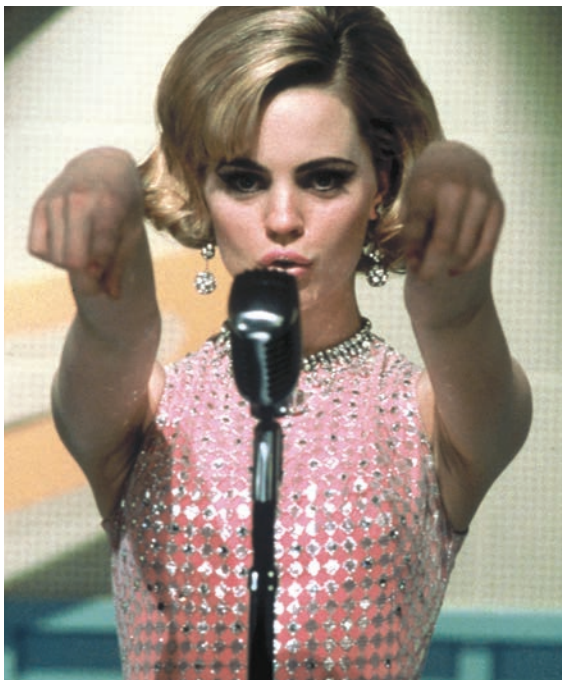
Directed by Dennis Hopper. With Dennis Hopper, Stella Garcia, Julie Adams
US 1971, 35mm, color, 108 min. English and Spanish with English subtitles

FRIDAY OCTOBER 30 AT 7PM

BEWARE OF A HOLY WHORE (WARNUNG VOR EINER HEILIGEN NUTTE)

The cast and crew of an international co-production find themselves stranded at a seaside Spanish resort awaiting the arrival of their director and their salaries. They while away the time drinking at the hotel bar and engaging in various couplings and uncouplings. These souls in Purgatory treat each other with the kind of cruelty one might expect from a Fassbinder film, and things only worsen with the arrival of the filmmaker, a tyrannical *wunderkind*. If the violence here is not as visceral as in other films in this series, Fassbinder seems to be arguing that sometimes the soul can be killed while the body still lives.

Directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder. With Eddie Constantine, Lou Castel, Marquard Böhm
Germany 1970, 35mm, color, 104 min. German with English subtitles



DAVID LYNCH *MULHOLLAND DRIVE*

FRIDAY OCTOBER 30 AT 9PM

THE STATE OF THINGS
(*DER STAND DER DINGE*)

Fresh from the tangled dramas of two temporarily halted film productions—including his collaboration with Coppola—Wenders used the cinematic quagmires as fodder for a film about filmmaking. Patrick Bauchau, a Wenders-like German arthouse director, is in the midst of making a black-and-white existential science-fiction feature called *The Survivors* in Portugal when his funding from a US studio is suddenly cut. The lull in production allows the cast and crew—which features Viva, Robert Kramer and Samuel Fuller—to ponder their relationships to the

film and indulge in philosophical rambles and wandering detours, biding their time as needs, both creative and practical, float to the surface. Austerely zooming in and out of narrative focus, with an eye on both Hollywood noir and European arthouse, *The State of Things* meditatively and wryly captures little truths of cinema's strange dimension. As Fuller's cinematographer states, "Life is in color, but black and white is more realistic."

Directed by Wim Wenders. With Patrick Bauchau, Samuel Fuller, Isabelle Weingarten
US/West Germany/Portugal 1982, 35mm, b/w, 121 min. English and French with English subtitles

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 AT 7PM

DEMON LOVER DIARY

Demon Lover Diary is an enthralling account of a low-budget shoot that goes dreadfully awry. In 1975, filmmaker Joel DeMott follows her partner (in life and filmmaking) Jeff Kreines from Cambridge to the Michigan shooting location of an exploitation film entitled *The Demon Lover*, for which Kreines is acting as cinematographer. DeMott—who, with Kreines, was a student of Richard Leacock and Ed Pincus at MIT—sets about documenting the making of the film. What we see includes the usual on-location hookups and eccentrics, but also increasingly tense standoffs as relations deteriorate between the documentarians and the exploitation filmmakers.

Directed by Joel DeMott. With Joel DeMott, Jeff Kreines, Mark Rance
US 1980, 16mm, color, 90 min

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 AT 9PM

CUADECUC, VAMPIR

Like Zulueta, Pere Portabella is another major figure of Spanish cinema whose contributions have taken place at irregular intervals and in a variety of roles, including as the director of a number of films from the 1960s and 1970s that blend experimental filmmaking with documentary and fiction. Filmed on the set of Jess Franco's



MICHAEL POWELL *PEEPING TOM*

Count Dracula, Cuadecuc, vampir mixes making-of footage with an investigation of the figure of the vampire. Both playful and deadly serious, with high-contrast black-and-white cinematography and an electronic soundtrack, the film asks us to consider the undead as a stand-in for both Generalissimo Franco, the bloodthirsty avatar of a fascism that won't die, and cinema, the art that reanimates the dead.

Directed by Pere Portabella. With Christopher Lee, Herbert Lom, Soledad Miranda
Spain 1971, 35mm, b/w, 70 min

PRECEDED BY

A DISTANT EPISODE

Directed by Ben Rivers
UK 2015, 16mm, b/w, 19 min

HEIST NIGHT

SEPTEMBER 5 – SEPTEMBER 6

The Harvard Film Archive's annual all-night movie marathon celebrates the heist film with an international line-up of suspenseful classics of the genre, ranging from Jean-Pierre Melville's *sang froid* robbery adventure, *Le cercle rouge* to Jules Dassin's caper romp *Topkapi*. Including hard-boiled gems from Phil Karlson, John Woo and Sidney Lumet, as well as Mario Monicelli's beloved comedy, *Big Deal on Madonna Street*, Heist Night travels around the world in six exciting variations of unlikely crime and likely punishment, following a daring trail of safe-crackers, jewel thieves and bank robbers from Kansas City to Hong Kong.



JULES DASSIN *TOPKAPI*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5 AT 7PM

BIG DEAL ON MADONNA STREET (*I SOLITI IGNOTI*)

Directed by Mario Monicelli. With Vittorio Gassman, Marcello Mastroianni, Renato Salvatori
Italy 1958, 35mm, b/w, 106 min. Italian with English subtitles

LE CERCLE ROUGE

Directed by Jean-Pierre Melville. With Alain Delon, Andre Bourvil, Gian Maria Volonte
France 1970, 35mm, color, 140 min. French with English subtitles

TOPKAPI

Directed by Jules Dassin. With Melina Mercouri, Peter Ustinov, Maximilian Schell
US 1964, 35mm, b/w, 119 min

ONCE A THIEF (*ZONG HENG SI HAI*)

Directed by John Woo. With Leslie Cheung, Chow Yun Fat, Cherie Chung
Hong Kong 1991, 35mm, color, 108 min. Cantonese with English subtitles

KANSAS CITY CONFIDENTIAL

Directed by Phil Karlson. With John Payne, Preston Foster, Lee Van Cleef
US 1952, 35mm, b/w, 98 min

THE ANDERSON TAPES

Directed by Sidney Lumet. With Sean Connery, Dyan Cannon, Martin Balsam
US 1971, 35mm, color, 99 min

FURIOUS AND FURIOUSER

SEPTEMBER 7 – NOVEMBER 30

“*F*or me, Hollywood no longer exists. It's past history.”

That was Sam Peckinpah's announcement to a journalist in 1974. As it happens, he was referring specifically to the shooting of *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia*, then underway in Mexico, with an all-Mexican crew: far, far away from studio execs and craft unions alike. But an introduction needs a metaphor, and that's the one we're going to use. Peckinpah's movies were pure Furious Cinema. Emotionally violent even before the bullets start flying. Renegade. Fading heroes who lash out in a violent spasm at the system that has crushed them.

The 1970s is paradoxically considered the artistic acme of Hollywood cinema and also the decade in which Hollywood was blown to pieces with a train car full of dynamite. For roughly a decade (until they died in a hail of slow-motion gunfire? May have lost control of the metaphor here), filmmakers worldwide seized control of the means of production, and the so-called mainstream, and created an utterly unique body of utterly maverick cinema. Looking for a common mission statement from these multinational anarchists is, frankly, a sucker's game. What they shared was this: they knew what a “proper genre film” was supposed to be, and they knew that they weren't gonna go down like that; if they went down, they were gonna go down fighting.

But what do these films—from France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan, the USSR, and from both Highest and Lowest Hollywood itself—actually have in common with one another? Not much. Just that they are all fucking amazing; they were all unapologetically iconoclastic; they were made in the same ten-year resistant parenthesis of human history, the only one in recent memory; and they were all too furious to let the future fuck them before they fucked it first.—*Athina Rachel Tsangari, Radcliffe-Harvard Film Study Center Fellow/David & Roberta Logie Fellow and Guest Programmer*

Film descriptions by A.S. Hamrah, film critic, n+1

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7 AT 7PM

BLUE COLLAR

“*Turn it off? Are you kiddin' baby? Took me three years to pay for that muthafucka. We gonna watch everything they show on it. All the shit they show. Even the snow when the muthafucka go off, I'm gonna sit here and watch that.*”

Schrader's rarely screened directorial debut thrust him to the front ranks of the New Hollywood as one of the most politically astute and precocious of the young Turks who seized the studio reins. Centered on a trio of frustrated auto factory workers who rob their union office in an act of desperate rebellion, *Blue Collar* is structured on the type of genre-derived narrative—here, that of the caper film—that recurs throughout Schrader's work. *Blue Collar* is, however, far more interested in place than in its cops-and-robbers story, focusing on the rich details of a working-class community and the type of alienation that unites its inhabitants in a constant and ultimately futile struggle.

Directed by Paul Schrader. With Richard Pryor, Harvey Keitel, Yaphet Kotto
US 1978, 35mm, color, 114 min

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21 AT 7PM

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

“*No, Tony. You can't fuck the future. The future fucks you.*”

With electric energy, drive and humor, John Travolta's star-making performance, as Bay Ridge, Brooklyn's disco prince, Tony Manero, recalls great American actors of 1930s cinema. He's Paul Muni and James Cagney reincarnated, with something all his own. *Saturday Night Fever*, remembered for its hit Bee Gees songs, has in common with Warner Brothers movies of the 1930s a strong, realistic evocation of urban working-class life, setting its protagonist adrift once he realizes he can't achieve his dreams in the confines of the neighborhood where he was born.

Badham's film is crass and ballsy, with no time for sentiment in its celebration of minor victories. Travolta's family is shown as mean, small-minded, and as unconcerned with his future as he is concerned with his hair. In one scene at the 2001 Odyssey nightclub, a young Fran Drescher proves she can hold her own with Travolta on the dance floor just by standing there chewing gum.

Directed by John Badham. With John Travolta, Karen Lynn Gorney, Barry Miller
US 1977, 35mm, color, 118 min



JOHN BADHAM SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 28 AT 7PM

THE ASCENT (VOSKHOZHDENIYE)

“*There are things more important than one's own hide.*”

This action-filled and poetic war movie, set in Nazi-occupied Belarus in the bleak winter of 1942, switches gears twice. *The Ascent* follows two anti-Nazi partisans through a snowy landscape into a prison camp, analyzing how one of them, a man of action, is manipulated and dismantled, while his weaker-seeming comrade comes to understand his one remaining role: martyr. Tarkovsky's favorite actor, Anatoli Solonitsyn, plays the cynical torturer whose job it is to break their will.

Larisa Shepitko, a student of Dovzhenko's, died in a car accident while scouting locations for her next film. Elem Klimov, her husband, completed that film, *Farewell* (1983), made a documentary about Shepitko, and then directed *Come and See* (1985), the definitive Soviet film on the brutality of the Great Patriotic War and perhaps the most horrifying war movie ever made. Based on his own experiences as a child in Belarus under the Nazis, it was also made under the spell of Shepitko's *Ascent*.

Directed by Larisa Shepitko. With Boris Plotnikov, Vladimir Gostyukhin, Anatoli Solonitsyn
Soviet Union 1977, 35mm, b/w, 111 min. Russian and German with English subtitles

MONDAY OCTOBER 5 AT 7PM

THE DEVIL, PROBABLY (LE DIABLE PROBABLEMENT)

“*Who is it that is making a mockery of humanity?*”

The environment is doubly poisoned in Bresson's *The Devil, Probably*. First there is the environment we all share, of contaminated rivers, deforestation and endangered fauna. Then there is the poisoned atmosphere of Paris, where young upper-class intellectuals and street bohemians “want to know everything and end up doing nothing.” These urban fauna, bent on self-destruction in a world of auto-destruction, move through the city dazed and uncertain, idling with sex, drugs and books, staring at each other blankly as the world around them accelerates into stupidity.

Bresson's oblique framing of these adolescents, refugees from a Garrel or Rohmer film, emphasizes their disconnection from each other and from a world they can't change. The film opens with its ending, telegraphing the sullen protagonist's quest for spiritual meaning in a cemetery. “In the future,” wrote Fassbinder, “this film will be more important than all the rubbish which is now considered important but which never really goes deep enough.”

Directed by Robert Bresson. With Antoine Monnier, Tina Irissari, Henri de Maublanc
France 1977, 35mm, color, 95 min. French with English subtitles

MONDAY OCTOBER 12 AT 7PM

THE CONVERSATION

"I would be perfectly happy to have all my personal things burn up in a fire. Because I don't have anything personal."

The post-revolutionary paranoia of the early 1970s suffuses *The Conversation*. Even so, Coppola depoliticizes this thriller, removing action, character and history by going over the same tape again and again, in an aural, Watergate-era version of *Blow-Up*. Gene Hackman, as a professional wire tapper, plays a self-consciously anonymous man at the top of a clandestine profession in which no moment between human beings cannot be recorded. He becomes unglued once he takes an interest in the story beyond its audio quality.

Made between *The Godfather* (1972) and *The Godfather Part II* (1974), Coppola's *Palme d'Or*-winning *Conversation* applies the eeriness and quiet of San Francisco to the murk of the corporate thriller. The doomed quality of the talented cast of character actors deepens the atmosphere of mistrust and conspiracy that's on display in this hesitant masterpiece of Murchian sound design.

Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. With Gene Hackman, John Cazale, Allen Garfield

US 1974, 35mm, color, 113 min



FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA *THE CONVERSATION*

MONDAY OCTOBER 19 AT 7PM

WR: MYSTERIES OF THE ORGANISM (W.R. – MISTERIJI ORGANIZMA)

"Between socialism and physical love there can be no conflict!"

An experimental documentary even by the experimental-documentary standards of 1971 and also a parody of socialist-realist Eastern Bloc filmmaking, Makavejev's *WR* uses the imprisoned psychologist Wilhelm Reich's theory of orgasmic liberation to deconstruct both capitalist and communist militarism, which Makavejev exposes as sexual oppression.

In addition to extraordinary interviews with sex psychologists and residents of Rangeley, Maine, who recall Reich's time at his Institute there, Makavejev, unseen and unheard, also interviews the Warhol transgender superstar Jackie Curtis and masturbation painter Betty Dodson. We learn how plaster-caster Nancy Godfrey made her penises and witness the Fugs' Tuli Kupferberg stalking Midtown Manhattan with a fake machine gun in a way that would probably get him killed today. It ends violently back in Yugoslavia, after Dravic, a Serbo-Croatian Goldie



ROBERT BRESSON *THE DEVIL, PROBABLY*

Hawn, is hijacked in her quest for sexual freedom by her attraction to Stalinist entertainment.

Directed by Dusan Makavejev. With Milena Dravic, Jagoda Kaloper, Ivica Vidovic

Yugoslavia/West Germany 1971, 35mm, color & b/w, 84 min. Serbo-Croatian, English, Russian and German with English subtitles.

MONDAY OCTOBER 26 AT 7PM

SALÒ, OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM (SALÒ O LE 120 GIORNATE DI SODOMA)

"My sister knew a gentleman, an official in a bureau, a little pig-like man . . ."

Pasolini's much-banned, notoriously disgusting, sexually violent and scatological X-rated film opens, in the credits, with an "essential bibliography" citing not the Marquis de Sade novel on which the film is based, but the works of French cultural theorists and commentators on Sade, including Roland Barthes, Maurice Blanchot, Simone de Beauvoir and Pierre Klossowski. From there, Pasolini takes us to an "antechamber of hell" in the winter of 1944, where teenage boys and girls, some of them anti-Nazi partisans, are tortured and killed for the sexual delectation of a few aristocrats sheltered in a castle after the fall of Mussolini. There, aging prostitutes recite erotic stories as the men brutalize, rape and murder their captives.

Filmed mostly in long shot, this series of anti-erotic and anti-fascist tableaux analyzes the sickness and excess of power as it gives way to a series of nauseating fetishes—shit-eating, anality, bridal gowns. Its question is timely: what would it be like if the men who commissioned torture performed it themselves?

Directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini. With Aldo Valletti, Hélène Surgère, Paolo Bonacelli
Italy and France 1975, 35mm, color, 116 min. Italian, French and German with English subtitles

MONDAY NOVEMBER 2 AT 7PM

VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS (VALERIA A TÝDEN DIVU)

"Are you playing with your earring, child?"

Valerie's screenwriter and production designer, Ester Krumbachová, secret auteur of the Czechoslovak New Wave, must be given equal credit with director Jaromil Jires for this lush, decadent fairytale. A colorful (mostly purple) extravaganza set in the 18th century (or is it the 19th?) amid festivities in a small village filled with witches and vampires, this was the national film movement's last gasp after the Soviet crackdown in 1968.

The tale of a 13-year-old girl's sexual awakening against a Freudianized *Alice in Wonderland*, *Wizard of Oz* or *Brothers Grimm* backdrop, except more evil—more like one of Angela Carter's feminist reworkings—*Valerie* sets up a series of magical battles for its tween protagonist's future happiness, which is linked to her erotic longing. *Valerie* is excessively creepy and painfully beautiful, a unique work stocked with pearls, wine and green apples, its scenes often glimpsed through keyholes. Easy to see how it confused bureaucrats, the film escaped censure. It could not be made in any country today.

Directed by Jaromil Jires. With Jaroslava Schallerová, Helena Anýzová, Jirí Prýmek
Czechoslovakia 1970, 35mm, color, 73 min. Czech with English subtitles

MONDAY NOVEMBER 9 AT 7PM

MARTIN

"It's been a long time for me. A long time full of crazy people."

Set in Braddock, Pennsylvania, a poverty-stricken mill town where most of the steel plants have been shuttered, Romero's revisionist vampire movie works as a semi-documentary on the place where the edges of suburbia meet the ghetto. Half Eastern-European, half African-American, half closed-down, Braddock becomes in *Martin* a graveyard setting for fake vampirism, confused adolescent sexuality and generational conflict, the latter being one of the main themes of 70s cinema.

Martin claims to be an 84-year-old Romanian but looks like an average, pimply American teenager. His uncle, who runs a Braddock butcher shop and is pathologically attached to Old World superstitions, moves *Martin* into his house to keep him out of trouble and gives him a job delivering meat. Once in daily contact with suburban housewives, *Martin's* self-image begins to crumble even as his bloodlust remains.

Directed by George A. Romero. With John Amplas, Lincoln Maazel, Christine Forrest
US 1977, 35mm, color & b/w, 95 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI IN PERSON
MONDAY NOVEMBER 16 AT 7PM

HOUSE (HAUSU)

Also part of the series Almost Like a Horror Film. The Cinema of Nobuhiko Obayashi. *See film description on page 27.*



CLAUDIA WEILL *GIRLFRIENDS*

MONDAY NOVEMBER 23 AT 7PM

GREASER'S PALACE

"If you feel, you heal."

Less frenetic than Downey's bizarre attack on the New York advertising world, *Putney Swope* (1969), the laconic peyote western *Greaser's Palace* is even weirder. A Christ parable that peters out, the film is set in a one-building town in the New Mexico desert controlled by a man named Seaweedhead Greaser (Henderson). Neither exactly deconstructionist or revisionist in its approach to genre, the film is a hippie send-up akin to *Blazing Saddles* (1974), but without the punch lines.

With the look and feel of something taking place in a commune, maybe it's closer to an Ishmael Reed novel: as wild and inclusive as Reed's fiction, it makes room for Indian maidens, Mexican midgets and cross-dressing old coots. Jabs at patriarchy American-style are scatological and trippy; Seaweedhead is constipated, and he can only learn to let go through his confrontation with the mystical hipster Jesse (Arbus), a zoot-suited Jesus, surrealistically out of place in the Old West, who walks on water and dances to boogie-woogie.

Directed by Robert Downey Sr. With Allan Arbus, Albert Henderson, Luana Anders
US 1972, 35mm, color, 91 min

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30 AT 7PM

GIRLFRIENDS

"I'm gonna be old before I get to do what I want, and then I'll have forgotten what it was."

Melanie Mayron's performance in *Girlfriends* as Susan, a young woman living on the Upper West Side of Manhattan and pursuing a career as a photographer, arrived on the screen right before cookie-cutter casting decimated the ranks of individualistic, nonconformist American actresses of the 1970s. Claudia Weill's discursive film about a young woman negotiating her independence from roommates and boyfriends is poised on the border between the gritty, grimy New York films of the 1970s and the pop indies of the 1980s, and Mayron is worlds away from the bland female leads who came to populate Hollywood rom-coms.

Girlfriends, which came out the same year as Paul Mazursky's *An Unmarried Woman*, explores the same terrain of pre-gentrified Manhattan as that film did—Soho art galleries, apartment dinner parties, meetings in offices. But *Girlfriends* is more raw, its emotions closer to the surface. The stakes feel higher—yet, thanks to Mayron, the film feels lighter. Bob Balaban and Christopher Guest, subordinated to the female leads, round out the cast.

Directed by Claudia Weill. With Melanie Mayron, Jane Anderson, Anita Skinner
US 1978, 35mm, color, 86 min



GEORGE ROMERO *MARTIN*



SAUL LEVINE *NOTES OF AN EARLY FALL*

SAUL LEVINE, PART 1: 1966-77

SEPTEMBER 11 – SEPTEMBER 14

“I tried to film what was going on around me and value it as much as the heroics of the big screen.”—Saul Levine

With a monumental filmography that dates back almost fifty years and seems to grow monthly (if not weekly), Saul Levine (b. 1943) long ago established himself as a central figure in American experimental cinema. He is also a key member of the filmmaking community in Boston and Cambridge, not only because of his own work but also for his passionate, tireless and inspiring roles as both a professor at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design and the programmer of the MassArt Film Society, one of the foremost venues for experimental cinema in the area. The Harvard Film Archive is extremely excited to present the first in a number of programs designed to help local audiences acquaint, or reacquaint, themselves with Levine’s impressive body of work, from the beginnings to the present day.

This initial program covers the first dozen or so years of Levine’s prolific filmmaking career, which began in 1965 in his hometown of New Haven, Connecticut. Levine quickly gravitated to 8mm and Super 8 as formats in which he could work easily and inexpensively, shooting the world he saw around him: colleagues, collaborators, lovers, political actions and demonstrations, the city and landscapes of New England and Chicago. Like other filmmakers who emerged on the experimental scene in the mid- to late 1960s, including Warren Sonbert and Robert Beavers, Levine’s work embraces the structuralist impulse to foreground cinema’s formal elements while celebrating the camera’s ability to capture the beauty and texture of everyday experience.

Helpfully, for one as prolific as he, Levine organizes many of his films into series, indicated by the title of the individual films. Although the series continues to this day, the “Notes” cycle encompasses much of his work from the 1960s and 1970s. By labeling these films “notes,” many addressed to friends, Levine foregrounds their brevity and intimate nature. The label also helps give the works a casual quality, something off-the-cuff, rather than a grand statement.

Almost all of Levine’s work is based in montage, and the splice becomes a recurring visual event, especially in the films shot on 8mm and Super 8. While the splice—the joining of two pieces of film by tape or glue—is typically invisible by the time a film is projected, Levine foregrounds his splices, partly by necessity but also as a gesture that brings together the body of the film and the mind of the filmmaker, as well as the hand of the filmmaker and the spirit of cinema.

Besides the “Notes” and other similarly diaristic films, this program also includes the found-footage work *A Big Stick/An Old Reel*, which highlights the political charge of Chaplin’s Little Tramp, and *Star Film*—an abstract exploration and exploitation of the iconic five-point star—which could have been inspired by Jasper Johns.

Smitten, melancholic or tender, what Levine’s films have in common is a heartfelt quality—the films always seem completely honest and direct. To experience them is to understand what has made Levine such a profound influence, especially on such former students as Luther Price, Anne Charlotte Robertson and Jonathan Schwartz. – DP

All films directed by Saul Levine

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
SAUL LEVINE IN PERSON

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11 AT 7PM

The films in this program, and their juxtaposition, show the ways in which Levine’s work interweaves the personal and the political, combining intimacy with public activism.

SAUL’S SCARF

US 1966-67, 16mm, color, silent, 20 min

LOST NOTE

US 1968-69, 16mm, color & b/w, silent, 10 min

THE BIG STICK/AN OLD REEL

US 1967-73, 16mm, b/w, silent, 10 min

NEW LEFT NOTE

US 1968-82, 16mm, color & b/w, silent, 28 min



SAUL LEVINE NEW LEFT NOTE

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
SAUL LEVINE IN CONVERSATION WITH ED HALTER
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13 AT 7PM

This program foregrounds Levine’s use of movement, color and light, as well as his attention to landscape and the cycle of the seasons.

NOTE TO ERIK

US 1966-68, 16mm, color, silent, 4 min

NOTE TO PATI

US 1969, 16mm, color, silent, 7 min

STAR FILM

US 1967-69, 16mm, color, silent, 15 min

NEARSIGHT

US 1978, 16mm, color, silent, 2 min

ON THE SPOT

US 1973, digital video, color, silent, 29 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
SAUL LEVINE IN PERSON

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14 AT 7PM

The mid-1970s found Levine incorporating sound into his work, beginning a new series of “Portrayals” and confronting the loss of his teaching job at SUNY Binghamton, owing at least partly to his political activities.

NOTE TO COLLEEN

US 1974, 16mm, color, silent, 4 min

RAMBLING NOTES

US 1976-77, 16mm, color, silent, 19 min

TWILIGHT PORTRAYAL

US 1977-78, 16mm, color, silent, 3 min

NOTES OF AN EARLY FALL


US 1976, Super 8, color, 33 min



SAUL LEVINE NOTE TO ERIK



SAUL LEVINE NOTE TO COLLEEN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		01	02	03	04 7PM THE DAY OF THE LOCUST P. 3	05 7PM HEIST NIGHT - ALL-NIGHT MOVIE MARATHON P. 5
06 7PM A STAR IS BORN P. 3	07 7PM BLUE COLLAR P. 6	08	09	10	11 7PM SAUL LEVINE, PART 1: 1966-77, PROGRAM ONE P. 9 SAUL LEVINE IN PERSON	12 7PM SUNSET BOULEVARD P. 3 9:30PM PEEPING TOM P. 3
13 4:30PM THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE P. 13 7PM SAUL LEVINE, PART 1: 1966-77, PROGRAM TWO P. 9 SAUL LEVINE IN PERSON	14 7PM SAUL LEVINE, PART 1: 1966-77, PROGRAM THREE P. 9 SAUL LEVINE IN PERSON	15	16	17	18 7PM NAKED CHILDHOOD P. 15 9PM WE WON'T GROW OLD TOGETHER P. 15	19 7PM I, AN ACTRESS P. 3 MULHOLLAND DRIVE P. 3
20 5PM THE LOCKET P. 13 7PM UNDER THE SUN OF SATAN P. 15	21 7PM SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER P. 6	22	23	24	25 7PM THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD P. 19 9:30PM DRACULA: PAGES FROM A VIRGIN'S DIARY P. 19	26 7PM BRAND UPON THE BRAIN! P. 19
27 5PM WHEN STRANGERS MARRY P. 13 7PM INESCAPABLE ANXIETY - THE FILMS OF PAUL SHARITS, PROGRAM 1 P. 23	28 7PM THE ASCENT P. 6	29	30			
			RICHARD RUSH <i>THE STUNT MAN</i> P. 3			

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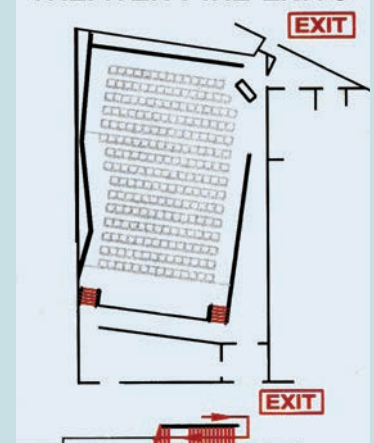
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THEATER FIRE EXITS



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				01	02 7PM TALES FROM THE GIMLI HOSPITAL P. 19 9:30PM ARCHANGEL P. 20	03 7PM KEYHOLE P. 20 9PM THE STUNT MAN P. 3
04 5PM T-MEN P. 13 7PM NANA P. 24 VALÉRIE MASSADIAN IN PERSON	05 7PM THE DEVIL, PROBABLY P. 6	06	07	08	09 7PM THE SKY TREMBLES AND THE EARTH IS AFRAID AND THE TWO EYES ARE NOT BROTHERS P. 4 BEN RIVERS IN PERSON	10 7PM CAREFUL P. 20 9:15PM THE BLACK TOWER P. 4 RAPTURE P. 4
11 4:30PM THE LADY IN THE LAKE P. 13 7PM LOS ANGELES PLAYS ITSELF. P. 25	12 7PM THE CONVERSATION P. 7	13	14	15	16 7PM HEARTS OF DARKNESS: A FILMMAKER'S APOCALYPSE P. 4 9PM COWARDS BEND THE KNEE P. 20	17 7PM INESCAPABLE ANXIETY - THE FILMS OF PAUL SHARITS, PROGRAM 2 P. 23
18 5PM PHANTOM LADY P. 13 7PM SNAKESKIN. P. 28 DANIEL HUI IN PERSON	19 7PM WR: MYSTERIES OF THE ORGANISM P. 7	20	21	22	23 7PM JUKE P. 25 THE BLOOD OF JESUS P. 25 9PM CONFESSIONS AMONG ACTRESSES P. 5	24 7PM ----- P. 25 GET OUT OF THE CAR P. 25 THE TONY LONGO TRILOGY P. 25 8:30PM THE LAST MOVIE P. 4
25 5PM THE RECKLESS MOMENT P. 13 7PM INESCAPABLE ANXIETY - THE FILMS OF PAUL SHARITS, PROGRAM 3 P. 23	26 7PM SALÓ, OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM P. 7	27	28	29	30 7PM BEWARE A HOLY WHORE P. 4 9PM THE STATE OF THINGS P. 5	31 7PM DEMON LOVER DIARY P. 5 9PM A DISTANT EPISODE P. 5 CUADECUC, VAMPIR P. 5

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
01 5PM TRY AND GET ME P. 13 7PM RED HOLLYWOOD P. 25	02 7PM VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS P. 7	03	04	05	06 7PM EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE, ZOOPTAXOGRAPHER P. 26 THOM ANDERSEN IN PERSON	07 7PM THE THOUGHTS THAT ONCE WE HAD P. 26 THOM ANDERSEN IN PERSON
08 5PM ACT OF VIOLENCE P. 14 7PM RECONVERSÃO P. 26 THOM ANDERSEN IN PERSON	09 7PM MARTIN P. 7	10	11	12	13 7PM MY WINNIPEG P. 20 GUY MADDIN IN PERSON	14 7PM THE FORBIDDEN ROOM P. 21 GUY MADDIN IN PERSON
15 5PM ANGEL FACE P. 14 7PM BOUND FOR THE FIELDS, THE MOUNTAINS, AND THE SEACOAST P. 27 NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI IN PERSON	16 7PM HOUSE P. 27 NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI IN PERSON	17	18	19	20 7PM TO THOSE WE LOVE P. 16 9PM GRADUATE FIRST P. 16	21 7PM LOULOU P. 16 9PM THE MOUTH AGAPE P. 16
22 5PM BIG COMBO P. 14 7PM POLICE P. 16	23 7PM GREASER'S PALACE P. 8	24	25	26	27 7PM VAN GOGH P. 17	28 4PM THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS P. 17
29 5PM THE BURGLAR P. 14 7PM THE SON OF... P. 17	30 7PM GIRLFRIENDS P. 8					



WILLIAM CASTLE *WHEN STRANGERS MARRY*

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FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW

SEPTEMBER 13 – NOVEMBER 29

This fall, a dark shadow will be cast across Sunday afternoons by a series of film noir matinees tracing a crooked path through the cycle of fatalistic crime films that flourished in Hollywood during the Forties and Fifties. Sharing the bleak and violent worldview so central to the noir cycle, the twelve films assembled here are largely lesser-known expressions of film noir that nevertheless exemplify the new cinematographic and narrative complexity that noir introduced into the American cinema. Whether in the work of celebrated auteurs such as John Brahm, Anthony Mann, Max Ophüls and Otto Preminger, or lesser-known American filmmakers such as Cy Endfield, Joseph H. Lewis and Paul Wendkos, these films noirs balance their bleak pessimism with a formal daring that remains far ahead of their time.

Special thanks: Todd Wiener, Steve Hill—UCLA Film and Television Archive



TAY GARNETT *THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE*

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13 AT 4:30PM

THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE

It took years before Hollywood was brave enough to adapt James M. Cain's swift and sordid fable of adultery and murderous deceit, and Lucino Visconti was there first with his path-breaking *Ossessione* (1943). No less important, however, is Tay Garnett's polished rendition, which gives an Edward Hopper sheen and ominous shadows to the roadside diner, an overdetermined and iconic symbol of Cain's dark vision of desire and capitalism. John Garfield is the quintessential noir antihero, brimming with raw masculinity yet reduced to trembling flesh by the siren call, and rolling lipstick, of Lana Turner's doe-eyed femme fatale.

Directed by Tay Garnett. With Lana Turner, John Garfield, Cecil Kellaway
US 1946, 35mm, b/w, 113 min

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20 AT 5PM

THE LOCKET

Gothic auteur John Brahm crafted one of the most intricate flashback structures in noir history in this feverish vision of masochistic amour fou. Robert Mitchum is just one of the sacrificial victims strewn along the crooked path toward madness cut by the bewitching and almost childlike Laraine Day. *The Locket* is an important expression of the current of pop psychoanalysis that runs through post-WWII Hollywood.

Directed by John Brahm. With Laraine Day, Robert Mitchum, Brian Aherne
US 1946, 35mm, b/w, 85 min

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27 AT 5PM

WHEN STRANGERS MARRY

Orson Welles was an avowed fan of William Castle's B-noir classic, which packs careful suspense and shocking surprise into its taut sixty-seven minute story of a new bride united with the man she may, or may not, have married. *When Strangers Marry* offered an early role for a radiantly young Kim Hunter, whose wanderings through a haunted city of beckoning signs and darkened rooms

suggest a kind of noir "Alice in Underworld."

Directed by William Castle. With Robert Mitchum, Kim Hunter, Dean Jagger
US 1944, 16mm, b/w, 67 min

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 AT 5PM

T-MEN

Anthony Mann was a master of the grim and shockingly creative violence that abounds in his police-procedural thriller *T-Men*. Part of the cycle of "semi-documentary" films that flourished in the late 1940s and early 1950s, *T-Men* is curiously split between its detached observation of a federal investigation into an international counterfeit ring and its subjectively intense point of view of the Treasury agents playing a deadly, duplicitous game to crack the criminal organization.

Directed by Anthony Mann. With Dennis O'Keefe, Wallace Ford, Alfred Ryder
US 1947, 35mm, b/w, 92 min

SUNDAY OCTOBER 11 AT 4:30PM

THE LADY IN THE LAKE

The only film directed by Hollywood star Robert Montgomery was this highly unusual, ahead-of-its-time adaptation of Raymond Chandler's eponymous detective thriller. Pushing to a radical extreme film noir's interest in heightened states of subjectivity, *The Lady in the Lake* is told entirely from a "first person" camera perspective that adopts and steadily holds the point of view of Philip Marlowe, "played" by Montgomery. Frequently mentioned for its technical innovation, *The Lady in the Lake* is rarely recognized for its taut and richly suspenseful storytelling, which uses Montgomery's agile camera to carefully exploit the darker shadows of offscreen space.

Directed by Robert Montgomery. With Robert Montgomery, Audrey Totter, Lloyd Nolan
US 1947, 35mm, b/w, 105 min

SUNDAY OCTOBER 18 AT 5PM

PHANTOM LADY

The masterpiece of film noir's consummate artist Robert Siodmak is *Phantom Lady*, a trance film that launches



ANTHONY MANN *T-MEN*



ROBERT MONTGOMERY *THE LADY IN THE LAKE*

an oneiric voyage into the underworld led by a resolute (and lovestruck) secretary's determination to clear the name of her boss who has been framed for murder. The haunting, chiseled beauty of Ella Raines, in the lead role, is only part of the lasting mystery cast by the film and its brilliant use of extreme lighting to render near-empty bars and night streets as the sites of sudden, ominous encounters.

Directed by Robert Siodmak. With Franchot Tone, Ella Raines, Alan Curtis
US 1944, 35mm, b/w, 87 min

SUNDAY OCTOBER 25 AT 5PM

THE RECKLESS MOMENT

One of two film noirs directed by Austrian émigré Max Ophüls during his brief stay in Hollywood, *The Reckless Moment* was ostensibly a "woman's picture," a fable of a mother's desperate attempt to shield her daughter from a dangerous Lothario. In Ophüls' hands, however, the story gives way to a multidimensional portrait of domestic America during the war years and a tender evocation of the loneliness and confusion of the home front. Joan Bennett brings a chipped dignity to the fluttering role of the chain-smoking mother pulled into the dark quicksand by James Mason's darkly sympathetic blackmailer.

Directed by Max Ophüls. With James Mason, Joan Bennett, Geraldine Brooks
US 1949, 35mm, b/w, 82 min

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1 AT 5PM

TRY AND GET ME

Like Fritz Lang's *Fury*, *Try and Get Me* is a potent vision of an America ruled by mob mentality. Unemployed WWII veteran Howard Tyler, desperate to feed his family, falls in with Lloyd Bridges' coldblooded criminal, but their spree of robberies soon turns to murder. The direction of young Communist Cy Endfield reveals a cool, clear rage at the economic and social injustices that are the nightmare behind the American dream. Shortly after this film, Endfield was blacklisted and spent the rest of his career

in England. Bridges' later career as a television star has obscured what a fine actor he was; here he is believably chilling as both predator and victim.

Directed by Cy Endfield. With Lloyd Bridges, Frank Lovejoy, Adele Jergens
US 1950, 35mm, b/w, 85 min

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8 AT 5PM

ACT OF VIOLENCE

Robert Ryan is a dark, avenging angel hiding his clipped wings and pistol in his grimy trench coat in Fred Zinnemann's fable of sunshine and noir set in a Los Angeles divided between bright new suburban developments and dingy, flophouse downtown. Van Heflin is the target of Ryan's vengeful mission, a stammering real estate developer who hides a dark secret beneath his proud boosting of progress and prosperity. A little-known early work in Zinnemann's career, *Act of Violence* offers a revealing critique of the sudden changes transforming and uprooting postwar USA.

Directed by Fred Zinnemann. With Van Heflin, Robert Ryan, Janet Leigh
US 1948, 35mm, b/w, 82 min

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15 AT 5PM

ANGEL FACE

Equally a fairy tale and a film noir, Otto Preminger's *Angel Face* finds world-weary ambulance driver Robert Mitchum falling dangerously for Jean Simmons' raven-haired princess high on a hill in a Beverly Hills castle. The young woman's treacherous designs are clear to everyone, including Mitchum, who nevertheless seems powerless to break the spell. Herbert Marshall, as the exiled, wounded patriarch, is a figure of Old World aristocracy that Austrian exile Preminger seems to both cherish and caustically dismiss.

Directed by Otto Preminger. With Robert Mitchum, Jean Simmons, Mona Freeman
US 1953, 35mm, b/w, 91 min



ROBERT SIODMAK *PHANTOM LADY*

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22 AT 5PM

THE BIG COMBO

One of the last great films of B-maestro Joseph H. Lewis (*My Name is Julia Ross*, *Gun Crazy*) and cinematographic genius John Alton, *The Big Combo* is a visually dazzling black-and-white fantasy of desire and vengeance, starring Cornel Wilde as a police detective hopelessly in love with the ice-blond moll of Richard Conte's deadly gang leader. *The Big Combo* is equally Alton's film as he paints with light and shadow to render Lewis' minimal sets as Expressionist dreamscapes, using his creative lighting and camerawork to stage a brilliant and iconoclastic re-invention of *Casablanca*'s closing airport sequence.

Directed by Joseph H. Lewis. With Cornel Wilde, Richard Conte, Brian Donlevy
US 1955, 35mm, b/w, 84 min

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29 AT 5PM

THE BURGLAR

Fifties sex goddess Jayne Mansfield is the unwieldy object of desire, and deceit, in Paul Wendkos' unusual and Orson Welles-inspired adaptation of hardboiled crime writer David Goodis' eponymous thriller. Dan Duryea trembles with sweaty intensity as *The Burglar*, designing his most elaborate heist to rob a spiritualist of her famed jewels. A late, baroque film noir, *The Burglar* was the only film realized with an original screenplay by cult writer Goodis, who set the film firmly in the same Philadelphia neighborhoods from which he rarely wandered.

Directed by Paul Wendkos. With Dan Duryea, Jayne Mansfield, Martha Vickers
US 1957, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

NOT GROWING OLD – MAURICE PIALAT'S CINEMA OF IMMEDIACY

SEPTEMBER 18 – NOVEMBER 29



ON THE SET OF *LOULOU*

Hidden in plain sight, the films of Maurice Pialat (1925 – 2003) may have eluded the international fame bestowed upon the works of his *Nouvelle Vague* or neorealist contemporaries, yet his particular form of emotional realism continues to ring timelessly throughout cinema—so much so that he bears more in common with some independent filmmakers today than those of his time. Like the man himself—who was outspoken, passionate and sometimes antagonistic both on and off set—his films followed no distinct movement or style. Incorporating both documentary and narrative aspects, his uncompromising visions followed their own organic rules as productions unfolded. With intense psychological force, disconcertingly disjunctive editing and an uncomfortable focus on the economic, social and psychological margins, Pialat's films look their audiences straight in the eye with a fearless, respectful challenge. Indeed, he developed quite a fractious relationship with fellow French filmmakers and filmgoers, which culminated in the infamous Cannes incident in 1987. Receiving the coveted *Palme d'or* for *Under the Sun of Satan* to a jeering chorus, Pialat raised his fist in victory and quipped “if you do not like me, I can say that I do not like you either.” The prickly ambivalence was mutual; despite his less-than-iconic status, French filmgoers attended more of his films than those of all the New Wave directors combined, his films received regular critical accolades, and today he is one of the most frequently cited influences among French filmmakers.

Pialat's relatively limited output may not have bolstered his legacy; yet, perhaps, a director so complexly immersed in his work could not survive that many painfully personal films over the course of a single lifetime. Pialat seemed to be perpetually replaying his life and exorcising his own demons through his films (with the exception of his late 80s feature *Police*). If the script were not already autobiographical, it became so over the course of a production through impromptu revisions and improvisations. And beyond merely telling the story of his family and love relationships, Pialat relived them through the difficult, familial bonds he either formed on the set or brought into the productions by frequently involving former and current romantic partners in his work. For Pialat, the act of filmmaking was inherently personal, and his close and often difficult relationships with cast and crew seemed to ignite and stoke his creative flames. By bringing actors' offscreen lives into the narrative, ceasing to film actors who no longer interested him, and airing his resentments toward his collaborators via the script, Pialat steeped his films in a bracingly honest emotional truth. Notorious for his sadistic treatment of actors, collaborators and himself, Pialat orchestrated the eruption of emotionally spontaneous moments where the actors were prodded into accessing much deeper emotions and triggering the startling naturalism that seems to reach his viewers intravenously.

Born in the provinces to middle-class, financially troubled parents who left him for long periods of time with his grandparents, Pialat accused them of abandoning him at an early age (the origins of his first feature *Naked Childhood*). As a young man, he turned to art, yet struggled to make a living as a painter and, after a period of deep depression, took sales positions. His first films, in fact, were comic shorts for a company party at Olivetti. Noticed by the producer Pierre Braunberger, he received financing and encouragement to make the short documentary *L'Amour existe*, which won many awards and eventually enabled him—after years of television shorts and government film work—to secure the funds to complete *Naked Childhood* at the age of forty-four.

With the startling *Naked Childhood*, he introduced many recurring elements: the autobiographical aspect, the provincial setting, the mix of professional actors with non-actors within an ambiguously semi-documentarian realm, the sense of eternal loss and displacement expressed both through the story and the structure, and the breakdown of the family, the patriarchy, history and tradition. Without judgment or fanfare, his lost souls fight irrevocable forces often through unpredictable, paradoxical, self-destructive behavior that itself seems uncontrollable. Betrayed, resentful figures who cannot quite articulate their feelings nor change them—like Suzanne and her father in *To Those We Love* or the couple in *We Will Not Grow Old Together*—they connect most deeply just as they push away.

Forgoing the common buttresses of narrative storytelling—establishing shots, suspense, mood music, transitions, backstory, reaction shots, special effects, gratuitous violence or sex—Pialat's cinema simply shows what needs to be shown without feeling cool or underdressed. Grounded in the vitality and transience of the present moment, the true drama of life does not need underscoring or any assistance and, in fact, may suddenly transform into poetic rhapsody despite itself. From this place, his films seem to move within their own time, a time that always feels palpably present—regardless of the era in which the film is set—and wrenchingly emotional. With no distinct arc or center to grasp onto, and the audience is placed in the same confusing, chaotic, abandoned space as the characters, having to sometimes feel their way through a scene as if they too are players in Pialat's parallel reality. With the gaps that naturally occur in Pialat's translation of time, there is a sense of occasionally missing out, of having to deduce who someone is or what they are talking about from other clues or, finally, realizing it does not matter, because to Pialat—whose characters often talk over each other, mumble or use heavy slang—it is that fleeting, complex expression or silent gesture that communicates the unaffected, inarticulate depths. In his words, Pialat's ideal cinema is one “where time would no longer exist, where you would go deeply into what you had to say and really say it.”

Even when working with a script, Pialat operated in an open, instinctive way toward his productions, charting a brave new path each time. Always prepared for necessary changes and thriving on obstacle, limitation and accident, Pialat had to have been as electrically present as his cinema. His films do not seem to age because, for him, it was a living cinema, one locked in an endless, emotional present, alive with a freshness and vitality, and captured as if still in motion by his exacting eye. Pialat agreed with film critic François Chevassu's comment that his cinema creates and records its own life: “Realism, after all, is filming the scene that we are in the act of living.”

The Harvard Film Archive proudly presents all of Pialat's features with a selection of short films for a rare retrospective of this uniquely masterful force of cinema and life. – BG

This retrospective is presented in association with the the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the Institut Français.

Special thanks: David Schwartz, Aliza Ma—Museum of the Moving Image, New York; Amélie Garin-Davet—Film Department, Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York; Eric Jausseran, Emmanuelle Marchand—Consulate of France, Boston.



MAURICE PIALAT *NAKED CHILDHOOD*

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18 AT 7PM

NAKED CHILDHOOD (L'ENFANCE NUE)

In certain ways resembling *The 400 Blows* by François Truffaut, who helped finance Pialat's first picture, *Naked Childhood* departs from its predecessor in the fragmented, documentary approach toward a mischievous orphan as he is shuffled from one foster home to the next. Preternaturally portrayed by Michel Tarrazon, the boy remains contradictory and puzzling, committing as many bafflingly perverse acts as sensitive, sweet ones. Pialat quietly challenges assumption and expectation, populating the story with characters who elude easy empathy or quick criticism, whose actions are neither explained nor judged. Featuring scenes that allow many of his non-actors to spontaneously and poignantly tell their stories onscreen, Pialat creates the sensation of reality unfolding, capturing moments that feel unrehearsed and

unacted, sacred in their ordinariness and authenticity. In between, he places narrative gaps that are only apparent during suddenly jarring scenes, exposing the fact that the viewer is not seeing everything. Of course, the viewer is never seeing everything, yet Pialat does not pretend or overdramatize; he lays bare a raw view of humanity and its natural, if painful, lyricism.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Michel Tarrazon, Marie-Louise Thierry, René Thierry
France 1969, 35mm, color, 82 min. French with English subtitles

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18 AT 9PM

WE WON'T GROW OLD TOGETHER (NOUS NE VIEILLIRONS PAS ENSEMBLE)

Based on his own autobiographical novel, Pialat paints an unflattering portrait of himself in Jean Yanne's insecure, abusive, overbearing lover who maintains a platonically partnership with his wife while carrying on a torturous

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affair with a younger woman. Boiling the relationship down to its splintered skeleton, Pialat presents the couple within transitory, confined spaces such as the car, the hotel, the doorstep—perpetually on the verge of departure. Falling into a painful rhythm, their repetition of the act of breaking up almost imperceptibly switches the seat of power in the relationship and eventually erodes the fragile union. Always breaking up also means they are always reuniting—as if constantly attempting to recreate the moment when they were first in love—and exposing the near-primal, simultaneous push and pull toward and away from one another. Despite the dissonance of Pialat's waves, his couple's water treading resonated deeply with modern audiences who flocked to what would be the director's greatest popular success.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Marlène Jobert, Jean Yanne, Macha Méril
France 1972, 35mm, color, 107 min. French with English subtitles

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20 AT 7PM

UNDER THE SUN OF SATAN (SOUS LE SOLEIL DE SATAN)

Boldly taking on the first novel by Georges Bernanos, writer of the Bresson-adapted novels *Mouchette* and *The Diary of a Country Priest*, Pialat enters into a bit of *terra incognita* with dense, lyrical prose and a story steeped in the spiritual and supernatural. Though Pialat does rise to the occasion with striking, otherworldly light and swirling theological debates, his metaphysics remain rooted in a seamless, subtle realism so that the supernatural does not astonish: it uncannily surfaces within the ordinary. A startlingly vulnerable Depardieu earnestly fills the role of the priest Donissan, who is tormented by miraculous powers and their questionable source. When the story of



MAURICE PIALAT *TO THOSE WE LOVE*

Sandrine Bonnaire's possessed, fiery Mouchette violently ruptures the narrative and Donissan's anguished hold on his faith, Pialat's masterful traversing of time and space enters into another dimension altogether. The filmmaker pulls his finely textured rug out from under the audience with uncanny sleight-of-hand and hypnotic force. Also playing Donissan's superior with complex shades, the secular Pialat crafts a potent tale of the soul that crawls beneath the flesh and bone while firmly inhabiting it.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Gérard Depardieu, Sandrine Bonnaire, Maurice Pialat
France 1987, 35mm, color, 113 min. French with English subtitles

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20 AT 7PM

TO THOSE WE LOVE (*À NOS AMOURS*)

Overlaid and intertwined with aspects of Pialat's personal life, Arlette Langmann's original autobiographical script was moved from the 60s to the 80s and narrowed to focus on the character of Suzanne. The striking debut of fifteen-year-old Sandrine Bonnaire, *To Those We Love* also features Pialat himself in the role of her father, who abruptly abandons the family and sets the beautifully constructed narrative violently drifting and bobbing, leaving behind large cavities and open lacerations. On the surface, Suzanne seems the epitome of youthful beauty and carefree independence, yet hidden behind her sexual escapades and disarming smile are confusion, loss and opposing drives—exposed most discernibly through Pialat's discordant storytelling, jarring editing and agitated camera. The breath of every inexpressibly compassionate moment—most often between father and daughter—seems continually threatened by its emotional adversary, most viciously manifested in the dinner scene in which Pialat decides to both settle personal scores with actors and catch them off guard by suddenly appearing on the set to capture the stunned reactions of those he may actually love.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Sandrine Bonnaire, Dominique Besnehard, Maurice Pialat
France 1983, 35mm, color, 102 min. French with English subtitles

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 20 AT 9PM

GRADUATE FIRST (*PASSE TON BAC D'ABORD...*)

After two false starts and a large part of the budget spent, Pialat reworked the concept and the script for the third time, assembling a few professional teenage actors and filling in the rest of the cast with amateurs culled from Lens, the same province of *Naked Childhood*. While much of the wandering narrative was scripted as they shot—often from the teenagers' actual conversations of the day before—at other times the actors would just be hanging out and not realize they were being filmed. *Graduate First* follows no single character or primary focus, as if, like its confused subjects teetering on the edge of maturity and responsibility, it is experimenting with various paths without knowing quite where any of them will lead. The most comic entry in Pialat's oeuvre, the film follows the group's antics in school, at home and on holiday, and at the only hot spot, the town's actual café. With limited options at a time of shifting traditions and economies, they engage in fleeting couplings, contradictory opinions, vague dreams and their own false starts. Presciently inscribed by the hand of Pialat, their lives remain a series of question marks ... awkwardly, ambivalently, precisely rendered question marks.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Sabine Haudepin, Philippe Marlaud, Annick Alane
France 1979, 35mm, color, 85 min. French with English subtitles

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 AT 7PM

LOULOU

Like the enigmatic, unexpected behavior of its characters, the nonchalant unfolding of *Loulou* nearly cloaks its dense understorey of class difference, deep insecurities and irreconcilable wounds. Arlette Langmann—who also makes an appearance in the film—based the script on the affair she had that ended her relationship with Pialat. Isabelle Huppert plays her counterpart, Nelly, who suddenly leaves her bourgeois husband and life for Depardieu's hulking Loulou, an independent rogue and occasional thief who skirts the edges of civility and responsibility. Their very physical, headlong romance reveals a



MAURICE PIALAT *LOULOU*



MAURICE PIALAT *THE MOUTH AGAPE*

convincing bond mixed with confusion and distrust as Nelly adjusts to the darker vagaries of Loulou's life. In the midst of intentionally overlapping conversations, inaudible dialogue and disjunctive cutting, Pialat's camera keeps rolling when Depardieu accidentally breaks the bed frame, as well as when an older woman walks onto the set to scold Loulou and André for fighting—she is not an actor and did not realize it was a film. In Pialat's ambiguous spaces of voluntary and involuntary naturalism, his audience and collaborators frequently find themselves in that position as well.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Isabelle Huppert, Gérard Depardieu, Guy Marchand
France 1980, 35mm, color, 110 min. French with English subtitles

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 AT 9PM

THE MOUTH AGAPE (*LA GUEULE OUVERTE*)

Pialat places the horror and sadness of a dying parent within a placid palette and the natural light of Auvergne, only barely softening the edges of the uneasy struggle between eros and thanatos. Based on his own marriage and mother's death, Pialat's film portrays not simply the grueling physicality of one death, but a family of deeply wounded people who all seem to be waiting for some kind of release from the interminable emotional violence of their lives. Pialat's equivalent in the film, Philippe and his parents are forced into a reunion of sorts within Philippe's childhood home, where his mother must retreat after an unspecified, terminal diagnosis. Like his father, Philippe responds to his existential despair through sexual liaisons, continuing to hurt his wife as she wounds him verbally. The expressionless, open eyes and mouth of the dying woman communicate a larger, unarticulated sadness and anger that no one is able to directly acknowledge or repair. Pialat's deep silences, precisely placed sounds, and patient camerawork—including a few striking, intense long takes that are as uncomfortable as they are tender—culminate in a surprising final shot that is moving, in both senses of the word, and, as with much of Pialat, derives its intense emotional complexity from an overwhelming, aching simplicity.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Hubert Deschamps, Monique Mélinand, Philippe Léotard
France 1974, 35mm, color, 85 min. French with English subtitles

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22 AT 7PM

POLICE

Pialat originally hired Catherine Breillat to adapt an American detective novel (the French-translated title of which would be placed on a completely different film, *À nos amours*), yet differences between the two led to a dramatic fallout. What remains of Breillat's contribution is her thorough research into the world of French undercover police. She maintains that all of the officers'

dialogue is taken verbatim from actual conversations and interrogations. Only Gérard Depardieu's character Mangin is a complete creation; the rest of the cast is either based on or played by actual police officers and gangsters. Thus, despite Pialat taking on an impersonal genre picture along with the star power of Depardieu and Sophie Marceau, *Police* remains a Pialat film in its patient half-documentary realism, its dislocating sense of time, its aversion toward narrative convention and its incestuous "family" of police, lawyers and criminals—many of whom work both sides and seem morally confused about their fluid identities and loyalties. When an unexpected love story erupts from this commingling, it creates a momentarily liberating space—disconcerting to both officer and "criminal," who are used to role playing—and leads to a decision by Mangin to jeopardize himself professionally with unpredictable, quietly stated results that run defiantly and tenderly against the violent expectations of the noir and the *polar*.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Gérard Depardieu, Sophie Marceau, Richard Anconina
France 1985, 35mm, color, 113 min. French with English subtitles



MAURICE PIALAT *VAN GOGH*



MAURICE PIALAT *UNDER THE SUN OF SATAN*

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 27 AT 7PM

VAN GOGH

Pialat's portrait of the famously impassioned painter dials back both the visionary genius and crazed madman portrayals to render a more lucid, lower-key artist who internalizes his brooding except for the occasional violent outburst. Former French pop singer Jacques Dutronc plays Van Gogh with a depressive, disgruntled charm during the last, prolific months of the artist's life spent primarily in Auvers with Dr. Gachet and his family. Depicted as neither hero nor martyr, his truculence here is somewhat justified by the hypocritical, inconsistent treatment he receives at the hands of Gachet, his brother Théo and the wealthy, trendy art patrons. Pialat illuminates his portrait with both banality and brightness: highlighting how the less-poetic components of classism, sexism and economics figure into the canon of art and artistic creation while naturalistically recreating scenes of landscapes, picnics, drinking and dancing made famous by his contemporary Renoir. Pialat also develops a sweet, turbulent and most likely fictive romance between Van Gogh and Gachet's young daughter Marguerite, one of three women in the film who provide affection and even adoration to the neglected, difficult artist whose fame would reach exorbitant heights many decades after his death.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Jacques Dutronc, Alexandra London, Gérard Sétý
France 1991, 35mm, color, 158 min. French with English subtitles

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 28 AT 4PM

THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS (*LA MAISON DES BOIS*)

In a commission for French television Pialat was given the time to fully stretch his wings over the course of six hours. The director's emotional meticulousness and astonishing naturalism is fully explored through many disrupted lives in the French countryside during World War I. Focusing on Hervé—one of a few children sent to the provinces from a war-torn Paris to stay with a rural couple on their farm—the series is child-centric; the toll of the war is expressed through the antics and reactions of its youth, including Michel Tarrazon from *Naked Childhood*. The immersive details of the opening builds the foundation from which a freer, more improvisational and even fanciful Pialat takes flight, where—as Joel Magny from *Cahiers du Cinéma* notes—"hidden or manifested suffering alternates with an astonishing happiness to be alive."

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Pierre Doris, Jacqueline Dufranne, Agathe Natanson
France 1970-71, digital video, color, (7 episodes, 52 min ea.). French with English subtitles

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29 AT 7PM

THE SON OF... (*LE GARÇU*)

With his four-year-old son, Antoine, the crux of the film and his wife the co-writer, *The Son of...* brings the autobiographical simulacra of Pialat's work to uneasy closure. Filming in his own home and surrounds, the director employs his most recurrent actor, Gérard Depardieu, to play the Pialat counterpart as well as perhaps a bit of Depardieu (he is named Gérard and Depardieu's wife at the time, Elizabeth, plays Gérard's ex-wife, who is named Micheline, the name of Pialat's ex-wife). At the center of the troubled, yet tenacious, web of connections within Pialat's imperceptibly time-shifting mirror world lies the painfully complicated father-son relationship within which Gérard's affections are by turns grandiose, jealous, unpredictable and controlling; his primary obstacle to maintaining a bond with his wife and son remains himself. The title actually refers not to Antoine, but to Gérard's father, to whom his wife Sophie, rather than he, has formed an affectionate attachment. Amid the shards of Pialat's wounded creating more wounds, a new, stable household for Antoine may actually be forming, which is a first in Pialat's cinematic family album.

Directed by Maurice Pialat. With Gérard Depardieu, Géraldine Pailhas, Antoine Pialat
France 1995, 35mm, color, 102 min. French with English subtitles



MAURICE PIALAT *GRADUATE FIRST*

THE SHARP AMNESIAS OF GUY MADDIN

SEPTEMBER 25 – NOVEMBER 14



GUY MADDIN *THE FORBIDDEN ROOM*

Amnnesia: the process by which certain memories prior to a defining trauma become compromised or, in some cases, irretrievable. Has there ever been a filmmaker who more completely invokes this peculiar malady cinematically than Guy Maddin? It is hard to think of a Maddin film that doesn't feature at least one amnesiac amongst its colorful ensemble, or at least one character with an undiagnosed pattern of forgetfulness. As a viewer, it is hard not to feel like an amnesiac just days or even hours after encountering one of his films, so convoluted and dreamlike are the sequences of events that comprise their unstable plots. And as a body of work, Maddin's films comprise an attempt to formalize what amnesia might mean in a film-historical sense: the cinematic medium as a fluid form offering peculiar eccentricities from decade to decade, but one whose time-stamped specificities cannot be adequately appropriated by subsequent generations of practitioners without some fundamental shift in the DNA of the work. Once-fashionable stylistic approaches may prevail, and stories might be recycled in clumsy fashion, but deterioration—of materials, of styles and of collective memory of those approaches—nonetheless lies at the heart of this young art form.

By affectionately breathing life back into old mannerisms of the medium, Maddin's eleven features to date attempt to work against this truth. At the same time, they affirm it by proving that, through cinema, memories thought lost to amnesia can be retrievable, but only in warped, degraded form. At one point in his 2002 film *Cowards Bend the Knee*, there's a silent-film intertitle with the words "What sharp amnesias!"—a paradox, of course, but one that gets right to the heart of the impulse behind Maddin's work. His films are sharp amnesias: fetishistically detailed, meticulously pantomimed recreations of forgotten films, films that never existed, films that existed only in Maddin's mind, in his dreams, or perhaps in the dreams of motion picture audiences. These hypothetical films are modeled after real films, but they've emerged from the vagaries of time, memory and trauma as something else, their components tweaked, twisted, stretched and bruised beyond recognition, though still bound closely in spirit to the original creations.

Born in 1956, Maddin grew up in the harsh, wintry environs of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and many of his artistic fixations, which can't be reduced to just cinema, can be traced back to this upbringing. Per an interview with *The Dissolve* critic Scott Tobias, Maddin "can't even remember the source of half of the stuff" that wound up in *My Winnipeg*, his "ecstatic truth" ode to his city of birth, but the many explicitly autobiographical details in his films suggest otherwise. Despite playing like a mind-numbing parody of a bad zombie film, Maddin's debut short, *The Dead Father* (1985), is clearly a reflection on the loss of his dad at age twenty-one, a void that partially explains the many absent or ineffectual patriarchs in his body of work. Similarly, the commissioned installation short *Only Dream Things* (2012) explores another family death: the suicide of his older brother in 1963. Meanwhile, Maddin's three most blatantly self-referential features—*Cowards Bend the Knee*, *Brand Upon the Brain!* and *My Winnipeg*—all portray characters named "Guy Maddin" as timid geeks with severe angst amidst the opposite sex, nagging Oedipal complexes, and a tendency to displace these issues with peripheral fixations: hockey, work, or, most significantly, prolonged exposure to the flickering glow of a television set at odd hours of the night. As the operatic expressiveness of his filmmaking suggests, these representations are clearly the products of self-mythology, but they are not fabrications. To the extent that the childhood Maddin represents in his films is based in fact, it is one marked by inertia, loneliness, grief and escapist fantasies—the kind of emotional spectrum that might induce something like trauma.

Maddin's movies, then—from the rickety folk-tale creepiness of *Tales from the Gimli Hospital* in 1988 to his latest and most ambitious regurgitation of bygone melodrama, *The Forbidden Room* (a world premiere at Sundance 2015)—offer records of his will as an artist to exorcise and glorify the memories of his fractious youth, spun through the hodgepodge of televisual, phonographic and cinematic styles he witnessed as respite from those uncertain times: stiff sitcoms from the 40s and 50s, sensational radio programs, hardboiled but technically crude B movies, lavish Technicolor spectacles and many other, older oddities that might have happened across his TV screen in the far reaches of cable access. *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs* cannibalizes Kenneth Anger and William Shakespeare, *Careful* riffs on the nebulous strain of "the mountain film," *Brand Upon the Brain!* sporadically evokes French experimental and impressionist cinema of the 10s and 20s, *Archangel* echoes Soviet war propaganda films, *Keyhole* touches on detective fiction and pulp noir à la Raymond Chandler, and so on and so forth.

What ties these waywardly cinephilic visions together is a constant return to the same narrative and thematic logic (part of this consistency must surely be indebted to George Toles, Maddin's co-writer since *Archangel*), as well as a contradictory predilection to interrupt this logic with bizarre detours and non sequiturs. Many of Maddin's films take off from preposterous speculations—What if a part of Russia was not informed that the Great War ended? What if the sun never set over a village? What if Dracula seduced his female victims with elegant ballet chops?—before finding ways, however tenuous, of circling back to his pet themes: memory loss, sexual awakening, heartache, nature vs. nurture. Structurally, Maddin's narratives often invoke P. Adams Sitney's notion, as outlined in his volume *Visionary Film: The American Avant Garde*, of "trance films"—that is, films loosely following a single protagonist/audience surrogate "undertak[ing] an interior quest" wherein he or she encounters "erotic and irrational imagery" that "evokes the raw quality of [a] dream itself." But unlike the characters in the works of the trance film's most cited specialists—avant-garde narrative filmmakers like Maya Deren, Gregory Markopoulos and Kenneth Anger—Maddin's somnambulist heroes restlessly intervene in their own mystifying dreamscapes, all this despite so often being beset by injuries, diseases, or just chronic forgetfulness and psychological confusion.

Maddin's body of work might best be digested in one marathon-like jumble—an opportunity this retrospective doubtless affords the adventurous viewer—because, on their own, his films can be deliriously nonsensical. Taken together, their obsessive repetitions and parallels become unmistakable, and the collision of all their film-historical touch points starts to usher the viewer closer to what Maddin's own mind must be like: a inexorable mental factory with an impossibly vivid sense of visual and sonic memory but precious little regard for psychological and narrative continuity or neatness. That this seemingly disorderly brain also belongs to a truly prolific high-concept showman—Maddin's eclectic working life has constituted everything from ballet choreography and live performance orchestration to peep show installation and film journalism—is one of the great delights to follow in modern cinema. Assuming the forces of amnesia have whipped his oeuvre into a muddle of amorphous hallucinations for even the most enthusiastic of Maddin acolytes, the release of the sprawling and entrancing *The Forgotten Room* gives audiences a chance to acquaint themselves anew with this most idiosyncratic auteur. — Carson Lund

The Harvard Film Archive is pleased to welcome Guy Maddin to both the cinematheque for a few evenings of screenings and conversation and to Harvard's VES Department; he will be gracing the halls and classrooms of the Carpenter Center this year as a Visiting Lecturer.

Film descriptions by Carson Lund, shorts descriptions by Jeremy Rossen



GUY MADDIN *THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD*

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25 AT 7PM
THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD

In Depression-era Winnipeg, a legless beer baroness, played by Isabella Rossellini in a performance that evokes Sternberg's glamorously melancholy starlets, announces a contest inviting practitioners of the saddest music from around the world to the global capital of depression to compete for a prize of \$25,000. In an expressionistic theater seemingly cobbled together with leftover flats from the production of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, international teams of musicians offer up their most dejected numbers to hordes of drunken audience members, competitions ultimately decided by the bellowing of a horn and Rossellini's conclusive thumb. Parody of capitalist infiltration in Canada abounds, though lumps in the throat routinely follow laughs; *The Saddest Music in the World* mines nothing less than crippling depression and alcoholism for absurdist delirium. Maria De Medeiros (joining Maddin's ever-growing collection of amnesiacs and lost objects of desire), Mark McKinney (doing a great burlesque of a Yankee theater producer) and Ross McMillan (playing a Serbian bearing insurmountable Great War guilt) round out the colorful ensemble.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Isabella Rossellini, Mark McKinney, Maria de Medeiros
Canada 2003, 35mm, b/w & color, 100 min

PRECEDED BY

SEND ME TO THE 'LECTRIC CHAIR

Initially conceived as a chapter in Maddin's film *Keyhole*, here he channels early Thomas Edison films along with a nod to Renée Falconetti. Isabella Rossellini is tied to a wooden 'lectric chair as sparks and smoke fill the room, her desires and flashbacks increasing with every zap in the chair.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Isabella Rossellini, Darcy Fehr, Brent Neale
Canada 2009, digital video, b/w, 7 min

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25 AT 9:30PM
DRACULA: PAGES FROM A VIRGIN'S DIARY

Reframing the classic tale of Dracula's reign of terror in nineteenth-century England and Dr. Van Helsing's efforts to stop it, *Dracula: Pages from a Virgin's Diary* provides one of Maddin's most immediately legible and coherent narratives, one almost entirely unimpeded by his usual episodic diversions. Scored in grand orchestral fashion and performed by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the film often evokes refined spectacles of theatrical dance such as *The Nutcracker*, but Maddin's intentionally crude monochromatic lighting, his selective coloring effects, and the smeared patina of his grainy 16mm images perversely root the film in traditions outside high stage art, celebrating amateurishness instead. Feverish jump cuts and uninhibited camera movement replace the typical long, sweeping takes expected in filmed ballet, while a surplus of fog effects obscures whatever sparkle the sets and costumes may have offered in a more conventional production. The result is a malfunctioning ballet film, one that tries to infuse the director's familiar gamut of onscreen action—awkward courting, impassioned lovemaking, petty fighting—into dance and succeeds in its utter Mad-dinness.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Wei-Qiang Zhang, Tara Birtwhistle, David Moroni
Canada 2002, 35mm, b/w, 73 min

PRECEDED BY

THE HEART OF THE WORLD

The first of many collaborations with Deco Dawson, including Maddin's next film *Dracula*, this short incorporates Soviet propaganda-style films and extremely rapid jump cuts to tell the story of two brothers in love with the same woman. When she discovers that the world is dying of heart failure and only has one more day remaining, drastic action is needed and taken in this intense thriller.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Leslie Bais, Caelum Vatnsdal, Shaun Balbar
Canada 2000, digital video, b/w, 6 min

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 AT 7PM
BRAND UPON THE BRAIN!

In a few special cases during its premiere run in 2007, *Brand Upon the Brain!* was exhibited as the kind of grand spectacle common to regal movie palaces in the silent era: an entire orchestra performed Jason Staczek's screeching and clashing score, a crew of Foley artists were on hand to provide sound effects, and guest celebrities served up on-the-spot narration. Shorn of these live accoutrements, it is hard to gauge the extent to which Maddin's most elaborate act of cinematic self-mythology preserves its live impact, but what does remain is so overripe with emotion and intrigue that it would be trifling to deem it a letdown. Crowded with sensationalistic intertitles that evoke vintage movie advertising language and organized in twelve chapters (each one more mired in dream logic than the last), Maddin's film focuses on a fictionalized version of himself returning after three decades to an abandoned island home in frigid Canadian waters, the site of traumatic childhood memories that are then revived, no thanks to the incantatory narration of Isabella Rossellini, during his troubling sojourn at the house. Consider *Brand Upon the Brain!* the skeleton key to Maddin's oeuvre: it is so steeped in pubescent angst, Freudian peculiarities and ghostly allusions to the spirits of cinema past that the filmmaking—hazy, fragmentary, jump-cut to oblivion—feverishly scrambles to keep up.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Gretchen Krich, Sullivan Brown, Maya Lawson
Canada/US 2006, digital video, b/w, 95 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 2 AT 7PM
TALES FROM THE GIMLI HOSPITAL

In his debut, Maddin's unparalleled ability to conjure vintage dreamscapes with limited resources was already fully evident, even if many of his stylistic and storytelling signatures were not yet developed. Without making any readily discernible references to film history, *Tales from the Gimli Hospital* suggests a pastoral Griffith melodrama crossed with Dreyer's *Vampyr* and discharged as some kind of blood-spattered, low-budget bromance



GUY MADDIN *DRACULA: PAGES FROM A VIRGIN'S DIARY*

with traces of both the awkward early sound era and the color-tinted silent cinema of the 1910s. After a quick prologue in a hospital in Gimli, Manitoba (an amusing glimpse of a 7-Eleven “Big Gulp” situates us in the modern era, though the rickety jazz music emitting from an old radio complicates that timeline), the film goes on to visualize a series of tales told by a creepy nurse to a pair of young siblings. In a Gimli long past, two Icelandic settlers, visibly sweating under hot production lights, suffer both lovesickness and smallpox infection and ultimately become enmeshed in a battle for the affections of a trio of lovely nurses (among other vengeful romantic entanglements). The film’s at times formal slackness and static staging is an odd balance Maddin would perfect as his career progressed, while the fascination with extravagantly imaginary alternate histories reveals the director in pure embryonic form.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Kyle McCulloch, Michael Gottli, Angela Heck
Canada 1988, 35mm, b/w, 72 min

PRECEDED BY

THE DEAD FATHER

A striking and powerful first film from Guy Maddin, inspired by his own recurrent and haunting dreams following the death of his father, it follows a resentful son tormented by periodic visits from the recently deceased patriarch.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With D.P. Snidal, Margaret Anne MacLeod, John Harvie
Canada 1985, digital video, b/w, 26 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 2 AT 9:30PM

ARCHANGEL

“I am Lieutenant John Boles, in Archangel, fighting a war, and trying to find the woman I love!” This is how the protagonist, played by a deer-in-the-headlights Kyle McCulloch, summarizes in voiceover the basic plot of *Archangel*, but of course it is hardly so simple. For one, the war he is referring to is World War I, but as declared by an explanatory title early on, this war was officially over before *Archangel* begins; it’s just that authorities have failed to notify certain arctic regions of northern Russia. Also, the name of this lost love for whom Boles pines keeps changing in his memory between Iris and Veronkha, and she keeps subtly shape-shifting throughout the course of the narrative. Maddin’s overheated send-up of a Bolshevik Revolution combat film is more accurately an exaggerated PTSD narrative riddled more with romantic and paternal distress than large-scale battles. Utilizing intertitles in addition to dubbed, deadpan dialogue, *Archangel* burlesques an awkward transitional period in the medium’s history to reflect the concurrent postwar discontent of the Twenties.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Michael Gottli, David Falkenburg, Michael O’Sullivan
Canada 1990, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3 AT 7PM

KEYHOLE

The first film of Maddin’s career to have been shot wholly on digital video, *Keyhole* emerged in 2012 without the director’s usual smudgy vignette. But the film’s rare offering of visual clarity belies a no-less-obscured plot: at a three-story mansion populated by spectral noir types wandering around with crisscrossing motivations, one man must circumnavigate the house’s forbidding alcoves and hallways to reunite with his wife on the top floor. This plot, however, gradually dissolves into nonsense, leaving in its wake a smattering of highly sexualized vignettes and a fetishistic repetition of motifs from detective seri-



GUY MADDIN ARCHANGEL

als and cut-rate horror movies. The main character’s obsession with unlocking the various doors of the house, for instance, is a consistently maddening refrain. Relatively speaking, *Keyhole* is Maddin’s most star-studded feature, boasting the presences of Jason Patric, Isabella Rossellini, Udo Kier and Kevin McDonald. All are tasked with reading lines like “that penis is getting dusty” under a spell of droning, arrhythmic speech.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Jason Patric, Isabella Rossellini, Udo Kier
Canada 2012, 35mm, b/w, 94 min

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10 AT 7PM

CAREFUL

Maddin’s third film opens with a hilariously absurd, blood-tinted PSA by an ominously lit old man warning children to exercise caution in their environment, a prologue that both establishes the loony conceit of the film (in the remote mountain region of Tolzbad, people must repress all expression so as to not incite avalanches) and functions as a sustained, unswerving mockery of restrictive societies that place unfair pressure on their people. In its two-part story of fatefully interconnected dysfunctional families, *Careful* ultimately posits that the result of this kind of oppressive social conditioning is a particularly strange brew of psychosomatic malnourishment: profound sexual timidity, deeply offbeat interpersonal skills and incestuous hang-ups all play a key part in *Careful*’s narrative. Maddin’s keen understanding of the ways in which impressionable minds find unlikely respites from these toxic environments manifests itself in Tolzbad’s labyrinthine geography, within which doomed lovers find cavernous hideaways from their all-seeing parents. Scored by portentous ascending and descending melo-



GUY MADDIN MY WINNIPEG

dies that suggest children’s lullabies torqued into minor keys, *Careful* navigates these vertiginous landscapes and fragile emotions with the verve of an early German expressionist artifact.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Kyle McCulloch, Gosia Dobrowolska, Sarah Neville
Canada 1992, 35mm, color, 100 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 16 AT 9PM

COWARDS BEND THE KNEE

Cowards Bend the Knee takes place inside a drop of sperm, and there is no double entendre to be read into that: the movie begins with a scientist releasing a specimen of ejaculate under a microscope and peering inside, whereupon the sample proves a kind of microcinema beaming out a fragmented and perverted retelling of Maddin’s own youthful sexual angst. A histrionic autobiography that could serve as a loose companion piece to his later *My Winnipeg*, Maddin’s film explores in narrative form the same frazzled ambivalence toward his own roots that he tackled directly in quasi-documentary shape later on. Darcy Fehr plays Guy as the standout player on the Winnipeg Maroons (the cartoonish glories of hockey being shown for the first time by the director as a formative experience), though his idyllic role in the community starts to crumble when he becomes entangled with a Chinese beauty named Meta—a mad fixation that leads him to the macabre office of a hairdresser-cum-abortionist. Divided into ten mischievously titled chapters, Maddin’s ludicrously eroticized tale of fear and desire rings hilarity and strange pathos out of the alarming adolescent realization that the body can take control over the mind.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Darcy Fehr, Melissa Dionisio, Amy Stewart
Canada 2003, 35mm, b/w, 60 min

PRECEDED BY

SISSY-BOY SLAP-PARTY

Made to promote *The Saddest Music in the World*, this short was inspired by Jack Smith and a favorite slapping game enjoyed by actor Caelum Vatnsdal. The sailor Sissy Boys take great pleasure in their island paradise while Maddin’s rhythmic editing builds to ecstatic levels.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Noam Gonick, Caelum Vatnsdal, Simon Hughes
Canada 2004, digital video, b/w, 6 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

GUY MADDIN IN PERSON

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 13 AT 7PM

MY WINNIPEG

Found footage, Super 8 and shoddy digital video collide in *My Winnipeg*, a film made for Canada’s Documentary Channel that has little-to-no interest in a straightfor-

ward presentation of factual information. Narrated like esoteric beat poetry throughout by Maddin himself, the film creates a potent dream space that reflects on his upbringing in Manitoba's cold, dreary capital through a funhouse collage of styles recycled from the kind of late-night television Maddin ingested as a child while staving off subzero temperatures. Rites of passage at the local hockey arena, sitcoms of domestic dissatisfaction, surreal accounts of Winnipegian rituals and festivities, reflections on the quasi-maternal geography of the city with its winding rivers and shadowy alleyways—all are folded into the dense sprawl of *My Winnipeg*, which takes larger form as Maddin's alleged attempt to "film his way out" of the city. Cinematic autobiographies do not get more eccentric or singular than this.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Darcy Fehr, Ann Savage, Louis Negin
Canada 2007, 35mm, color & b/w, 80 min

PRECEDED BY

NUDE CABOOSE

An extremely happy shirtless man attempts, and succeeds, in getting the party started as he leads a group of dancers in a joyful caboose frolic.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Darren Anderson, Jim Bell, Mike Bell
Canada 2006, digital video, color, 3 min

SPANKY: TO THE PIER AND BACK

Inspired by the stories of W.G. Sebald and Oskar Fischinger's film *Walking From Munich to Berlin*, Maddin takes his then-girlfriend's dog Spanky (co-star in *My Winnipeg*) out to the pier in what turns out to be their last walk together in this endearing portrait.

Directed by Guy Maddin. With Spanky
Canada 2008, video, b/w, 4 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

GUY MADDIN IN PERSON

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14 AT 7 PM

THE FORBIDDEN ROOM

Teaming up with a co-director for the first time in fellow Winnipegian visual effects artist Evan Johnson, Maddin bursts forth with *The Forbidden Room* into unexplored aesthetic and structural territory even as he arrives ultimately at the rawest, most poetically Maddinesque object in a career already brimming with unfiltered discharges from the id: a film with an increasingly decaying memory of itself. Longtime Maddin regular Louis Negin materializes onscreen to hold a sermon on bathing rituals, the bubbles in the tub segue into deep ocean waters, and a nervous crew of underwater explorers idles under tons of marine pressure until suddenly a bearded jungle man emerges from a vent to divulge his story of indoctrination into a wolf-human clan—and that is only the first fifteen minutes of the movie. *The Forbidden Room* continues down a radioactive live wire of narrative convolution, rarely surfacing for air from its starting point, a perverse game of exquisite corpse that alternately evokes frantic channel hopping and the subterranean logic of the human subconscious. Transitions grow more and more deranged (at one point, we enter the daydream of a slain man's moustache), protagonists swap out every few minutes, and the same actors reappear in as many as five ludicrous iterations. Most remarkably, Maddin and Johnson have cooked up a truly one-of-a-kind hybrid of high-definition digital and organic analog filmmaking, an aggressive fusion that makes their epileptic montage appear as though the surface of a boiling broth.

Directed by Guy Maddin and Evan Johnson. With Roy Dupuis, Clara Furey, Louis Negin
Canada 2015, DCP, color, 128 min



GUY MADDIN CAREFUL

PRECEDED BY

ELMS

Guy Maddin, along with collaborator Evan Johnson, repurposes found footage to explore different themes related to Winnipeg, which in this eerie segment centers on the dying elm tree as symbol for both the rise and fall of the city.

Directed by Guy Maddin and Evan Johnson
Canada 2014, digital video, color, 3 min

LOUIS RIEL FOR DINNER

An animated collaboration, narrated by Maddin, of a story he allegedly found outside his elementary school as a kid, this short is a tribute to the Canadian folk hero Riel, who is portrayed as an inedible duck in this surreal adaptation.

Directed by Drew Christie. With Guy Maddin
Canada 2014, video, b/w, 3 min

There will be a theatrical run of The Forbidden Room at the HFA this December.

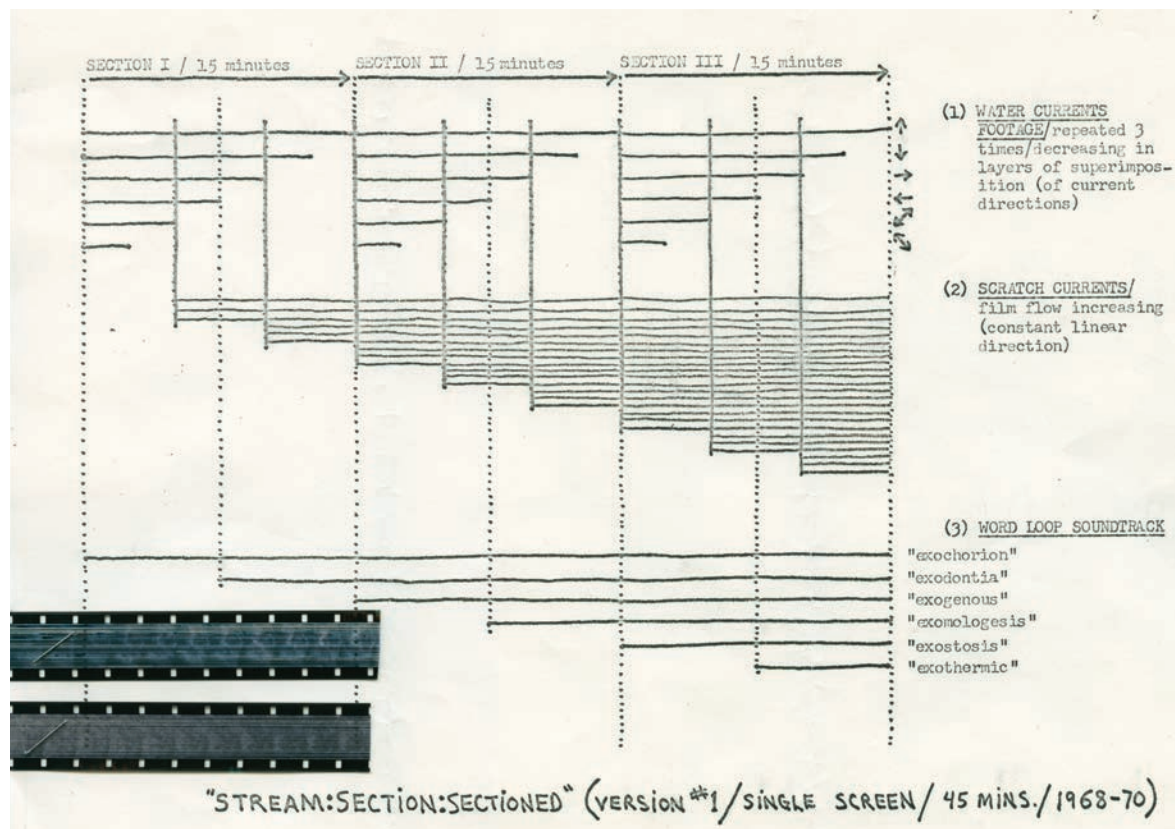
HOLLYWOOD EXPRESS 1987 - 2015

As we exit the era of video rental, the last video store in Cambridge—the landmark Hollywood Express—finally closed its remaining Porter Square location. Its knowledgeable, gregarious and generous owner George Lewis donated hundreds of videotapes and DVDs to the Harvard Film Archive, including many strange, rare and hard-to-find selections for which the shop was famous. Long a stronghold of the independent and adventurous video rental stores, Hollywood Express and its unique, friendly, non-digital staff will be greatly missed.



INESCAPABLE ANXIETY – THE FILMS OF PAUL SHARITS

SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 25



"I wish to abandon imitation and illusion and enter Directly into the higher drama of: celluloid, two-dimensional strips; individual rectangular frames; the nature of sprockets and emulsion; projector operations; the three-dimensional light beam; environmental illumination; the two-dimensional reflective screen surface; the retinal screen, optic nerve and individual psycho-physical subjectivities of consciousness." – Paul Sharits, 1967

The radical and highly stylized work of American filmmaker Paul Jeffrey Sharits (1943-1993) forever changed the landscape of filmmaking and art, and continues to reverberate within the history of cinema. Driven by what he described as "inescapable anxiety," Sharits was extremely prolific throughout the 60s and 70s. His films exploded the conventions of both narrative and experimental cinema at the time and were a complete departure from what other "structural" filmmakers, such as Peter Kubelka and Tony Conrad, were making at that time. Perhaps some of the most powerful films ever made, Sharits' mandala films of the 60s—such as the highly charged *Piece Mandala/End War*, *T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G* and *Razor Blades*—all used the flicker technique to violently alternate between pure color film frames with sexually explicit and sometimes crude still images. Trained as a painter and graphic designer, "drew" his films first with colored ink on graph paper, as blueprints for the completed films, and then proceeded to meticulously compose them frame-by-frame like musical notes. Strip-

ping the elements of narrative cinema—illusion and imitation—from his work, Sharits instead highlights the materiality of film while focusing on a complete exploration of the film frame. A goal of Sharits' films was to obliterate the viewer's perceptions by using flickering light, stark imagery and repetitive sound to deeply penetrate the "retinal screens" and psyches of the audience members, creating a powerful, profoundly visceral and participatory experience.

Paul Sharits grew up in Denver and attended the same high school that filmmakers Larry Jordan and Stan Brakhage did ten years prior. He eventually enrolled at the University of Denver to study painting, drawing and sculpture. Becoming close friends with Brakhage, Sharits founded two student cinema clubs, screening work by filmmakers like Maya Deren and Kenneth Anger. Echoing the New American Cinema ethos, the films Sharits made during this time were narrative driven with actors and featured themes exploring sexuality, alienation and isolation.

Sharits' mother committed suicide in 1965, forever altering his life and film work. This was also around the time his son Christopher was born, and both events marked a distinct turning point in his ideological way of working. From that moment forward, Sharits attempted to burn all of his early narrative-style works, mistakenly missing one film, *Wintercourse*, which fortunately survives as the sole example from that period. Also central to Sharits' ideological shift in filmmaking was Kandinsky's 1911 book, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, which helped guide and shape Sharits' ideas of the "psychic effect" of using colors and the call for a "spiritual revolution" of artists to express their own inner lives abstractly.

In the early 1970s, Sharits was invited by Gerald O'Grady to teach film at the Media Study of Buffalo, a position he would hold for twenty years within a dynamic community of filmmakers that included Hollis Frampton and Tony Conrad. During this period, Sharits began working on gallery installations or, as he called them, "locations." The extremely intricate and detailed locational works primarily featured multiple 16mm projectors of looped films, highlighting and showcasing the projector like a sculpture in the middle of the gallery. This allowed Sharits to explore and expand the durational aspects of his work in ways not possible theatrically, the loops extending the length of the films to durations Sharits could previously only imagine. Concurrently, Sharits worked on his *Frozen Film Frames*, a series of works in which strips of film are "frozen" in time and place, suspended between panes of Plexiglas and hung in the gallery to be studied like a painting.

For Sharits, the 1980s began with the death of his brother Greg; he was killed charging the police with a gun in his hand. Already battling the effects of severe bipolar disorder, Paul was devastated and never fully recovered from the tragedy. Throughout the decade, Sharits would complete several films and locational works, but spent the majority of his time painting, a preferred medium he had temporarily abandoned. Indicative of his tortured mental state at the time, his paintings concentrated on medical pathology, disease and decay. Sharits' interest in the themes of his painting manifested themselves internally as well, as his body began to break down owing to a series of bizarre incidents that included being stabbed in the back and shot in the stomach.

In 1987, Sharits would make his first and only completed video and his final motion picture, entitled *Rapture*, a quasi music video employing early video technology, complete with scenes of Sharits writhing on the ground in a hospital gown. Six years later, on the weekend of his favorite holiday, the Fourth of July, Paul Sharits ended his life. His work lives on and in many ways is more popular than ever through the efforts of Christopher Sharits and the Paul Sharits Estate, as well as the ongoing work of Anthology Film Archives, whose staff is in the process of preserving his entire filmography, making it available to future generations. – JR

Special thanks: John Klacsman, Andrew Lampert—Anthology Film Archives, NY; Christopher Sharits—Paul Sharits Estate; Antonella Bonfanti—Canyon Cinema; Filmmakers Co-Operative.

A very special thanks to Vera Alemani and Susanna Callegari of the Greene Naftali Gallery for the loan of Paul Sharits' Untitled (Frozen Film Frame), c. 1971-1976, which will be on display at the Harvard Film Archive through October.

WARNING: Though designed to produce an effect of internal peace, please be advised that the flickering effects used in these films may cause headaches, nausea, dizziness and (in a small number of light-sensitive people) seizures.

Program curated by Jeremy Rossen. All films directed by Paul Sharits.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27 AT 7PM

WINTERCOURSE

The earliest and only surviving work in Paul Sharits' filmography after a fairly successful attempt by Sharits to destroy all of his early efforts at filmmaking in "a rage of non-narrative commitment," *Wintercourse* was fortunately rediscovered in 1985. Made while the filmmaker was a painting student at the University of Denver and close friends with Stan Brakhage, *Wintercourse* is heavily influenced by Brakhage's *Wedlock House: An Intercourse* (1959). Both films document the trials and tribulations of their previous marriages. With a light, lyrical style that stands in shocking contrast to later work, *Wintercourse* documents a relationship that is seemingly carefree yet full of apprehensions. *Print courtesy of Canyon Cinema from a recent preservation by Anthology Film Archives, NY.*

US 1962, 16mm, b/w, silent, 12 min

PIECE MANDALA/END WAR

Originally made to be included in a program of antiwar films, *Piece Mandala/End War* occurs within Paul Sharits' period of what he referred to as his "mandala films," which are flicker films containing very rapidly shifting color frames intercut with black-and-white representational images. In this instance, still images of a lovemaking couple, flipping from left to right on the screen, create an erotic tension with the color frames in order to form "a meditational-visionary experience." In many ways, *Piece Mandala/End War* is very much a film of its time, of the Love Generation, with Sharits again making a film as a hopeful offering to humanity and his wife in what was a turbulent time in their marriage. *Print courtesy of Anthology Film Archives, NY.*

US 1966, 16mm, color & b/w, silent, 5 min

T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G

Made in collaboration with poet David Franks, *T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G* uses flickering of pure color frames juxtaposed with positive and negative still images of Franks threatening to cut off his tongue with glitter-covered scissors and being scratched across the face by fingernails that leave a sparkling trail. Other rapidly alternating still images of eye surgery and a couple in the midst of intercourse are used to heighten the underlying violent, erotic and psychological undertones of the film and are recurrent themes that Sharits would repeatedly pursue in many of his films. The soundtrack is a continuous looped recording of Franks speaking the word "destroy" over the entire length of the film, which eventually becomes unrecognizable as it mutates in the viewer's ear into other words or phrases. The first of Sharits' mandala films to utilize sound in a powerful way, *T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G* was an attempt by the filmmaker to reconnect and come to terms with both his mother's suicide and the birth of his son, events that would have a profound impact on his future films as well. *Print courtesy of Canyon Cinema*

US 1968, 16mm, color, 12 min

RAZOR BLADES

A dual 16mm projection of side-by-side projected images, *Razor Blades* was the last work completed in Paul Sharits' mandala cycle of flicker films, an exploration of many of his recurrent fixations on the elements of the cosmos, birth, life, sexuality, suicide, death and rebirth. A rapid staccato siege of flickering still images, influenced by Sharits' involvement in Fluxus along with elements of Pop Art, appear and alternate in split-second succession. Fourteen loops are projected against each other on both projectors, with only the first and last loops repeating, thus ideally creating an infinite loop where "metric time

is destroyed." A powerful and hypnotizing cacophony of competing sounds and images is unleashed, with occasional moments of synchronization. Referencing the tools used by filmmakers to edit their films, *Razor Blades* also reflects the trauma of the act on Sharits, who referred to the editing process and its effects as "love wounds."

US 1966, 16mm, color, 25 min



PAUL SHARITS *T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G*

SATURDAY OCTOBER 17 AT 7PM

S:TREAM:S:S:ECTION:S:SECTION:S:S:ECTIONED

S:TREAM:S:S:ECTION:S:SECTION:S:S:ECTIONED signifies a fairly abrupt shift and departure from Sharits' previous mandala films; this was his first work in many years that did not employ the flicker technique and used moving images. Paul Sharits' epic and groundbreaking work is composed of three repeated, fourteen-minute sections of a river current. Each repetition consists of six dissolving layers of a river flowing in a myriad of directions, broken up by horizontal tape splices acting as dams. Deep and precisely executed emulsion scratches—created by custom tools Sharits made—eventually appear in continuous sets of threes throughout the film until the entire screen is nearly covered. The resulting effects represent, in the words of P. Adams Sitney, a "powerful and beautiful act of vandalism." Sharits emphasizes the scratches to draw attention to the constant motion of the filmstrip running through the projector, while simultaneously exposing the viewer to the materiality and hidden depth within each frame. Sharits describes the film as "[a] conceptual lap dissolve from 'water currents' to 'film strip current.'" Meanwhile, a dynamic soundtrack consisting of alternating and repeated phrases of an imaginary word heard by Sharits in his sleep are combined with a series of beeps that add to the complexity of the sound and image relations. *Print courtesy of the Film-Maker's Cooperative*

US 1968-71, 16mm, color, 42 min

COLOR SOUND FRAMES

Beginning in the early 1970s, Paul Sharits turned his attention from the mandala flicker films of the 1960s to concentrate his energies on investigating the film frame and film strip. An economical filmmaker owing to a continual lack of funding, Paul Sharits was the great recycler,

constantly using and reusing the same strips of film and frames by repurposing them into countless new films. In *Color Sound Frames*, Paul Sharits rephotographs film strips from his film *Analytical Studies III*, varies the speeds of the strips and reverses the direction and motion, superimposes sections to produce unique color sequences, and, in the process, creates an exhilarating abstraction of movements. The visible sprocket holes in the frame create the accompanying soundtrack of synchronous sound and add the repetitious sound of sprocket holes in this thorough examination of the film frame. *Print courtesy of Anthology Film Archives, NY*

US 1974, 16mm, color, 22 min

SUNDAY OCTOBER 25 AT 7PM

DECLARATIVE MODE

Created in the bicentennial year, *Declarative Mode* was conceived in a similar revolutionary spirit and functioned as Paul Sharits' own "declaration of independence from the tyranny of preconception of working from an overall structure of logic." Sharits created eighteen scores on giant graph paper that were color-coded to map out the entire film—every frame, fade-in, fade-out and sequence—like a music composition. Intending to transform the daily routine of life into a diary of consciousness, Sharits translates his experiences into hypnotic color rhythms. *Declarative Mode* is a dual 16mm projection of two identical film prints with one image projected onto another image that is slightly zoomed in and slightly smaller, creating an image within an image. The inner frame pulses with flickering frames of light, and, when combined with the outer frame, the bleeding of hues creates unique sequences of vibrating colors, the complex effects reminiscent of an Albers or Rothko painting. *Print courtesy of Anthology Film Archives, NY*

US 1976, 16mm, color, silent, 39 min

TAILS

After a several-year hiatus, Sharits returned to representational imagery with *Tails*. Featuring a series of the tail ends of shots dissolving into light flares and appearing to run right through the film projector into eternity, *Tails* is a play on language and form, beginning with the title: "tails" is a term that may indicate the end of an entire film, one reel or a single shot. Rephotographed and edited together by Sharits, the result is a rather striking work of simplicity that taps into the psychological, ephemeral and nostalgic elements inherent in all endings. *Print courtesy of the Film-Maker's Cooperative*

US 1976, 16mm, color, silent, 4 min

RAPTURE

Ignored by curators, rarely screened and frequently omitted from many retrospectives of his work, *Rapture* remains significant as the only video work Paul Sharits completed during his lifetime and his last moving image piece before he committed suicide on July 8, 1993. Sharits uses an Ampex Digital Optics (ADO) computer and early video editing techniques to make a quasi music video with a soundtrack by his friend's band, appropriately named Hemorrhage. The result a fascinating mess, *Rapture* is, in Sharits words "an exploration of the similarity between 'religious' and 'visionary' ecstasy and psychotic states" and includes scenes of him writhing around on the floor in a hospital gown. Battling a life-long bipolar disorder, his body broken down from several near-tragic incidents, and in the midst of a rather self-destructive streak, Sharits finds himself literally at a dead end in this final work.

US 1987, digital video, color, 17 min

NANA BY VALÉRIE MASSADIAN

OCTOBER 4



VALÉRIE MASSADIAN *NANA*

The feature film debut of current and remarkably accomplished Radcliffe-Harvard Film Study Center Fellow Valérie Massadian is a visually ravishing and enigmatically disquieting fable of a young child's self-reliance and precocious discovery of the brooding shadow world of adulthood. Shot in rural France, *Nana* centers with resolute fixity upon its titular heroine, a four-year-old girl portrayed by non-actor Kelyna Lecomte, and her slowly unwinding daily life on her grandfather's pig farm. Massadian's wonderfully elliptical film opens deep mysteries as the adults each disappear from the film and frame, a brute fact accepted with stoic solemnity by the child. Other mysteries linger within Massadian's assured long-takes and within the brute adult phrases spoken in fractured monologue by Nana herself. Massadian's artistic career began not in cinema but in still photography, where she worked as assistant to the legendary Nan Goldin, an experience that clearly grounds her careful framing and depth of imagery. Inspired by a revelatory experience with the films of Pedro Costa, Massadian ambitiously and successfully embraces a rigorous ethics of realism, launching an infinitely promising filmmaking career. — HG

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

VALÉRIE MASSADIAN IN PERSON

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 AT 7PM

NANA

Directed by Valérie Massadian. With Kelyna Lecomte, Marie Delmas, Alain Sabras
France 2011, DCP, color, 68 min. French with English subtitles

PRECEDED BY

AMERICA

Directed by Valérie Massadian. With Solomon Calvert-Adera
France/US 2013, DCP, color, 7 min. French with English subtitles

THOM ANDERSEN, FILM ESSAYIST

OCTOBER 11– NOVEMBER 8

Thom Andersen (b. 1943) is an American filmmaker celebrated for his erudite, penetrating and refreshingly offbeat essay films. A patient historian and fervent cinephile, Andersen mined an unpredictable termite path deep into film history with two impressively researched and revelatory documentaries, *Red Hollywood* (co-directed with Noël Burch) and *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, which together embody the resolute yet subtle mode of politically engaged cinema that he has defined across his larger oeuvre. Both *Red Hollywood* and *Los Angeles Plays Itself* are compilation films, dense mosaics of scenes and shots culled from Hollywood films and transformed by voiceover narratives, written but not spoken by Andersen, detailing the suppressed histories of the American cinema decipherable within the moving images. The two films make clear Andersen's profound understanding of popular cinema as both a dangerously amnesic form of cultural memory—an ideological filter that willfully distorts the world it purports to represent—and a uniquely insightful lens through which to critically engage written, and unwritten, history.

The politics of architecture and urban space is a major concern underlying *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, which explores the cinema as a potent archaeological and navigational tool uniquely able to map those hybrid streets and spaces—partially true, partially invented—chartered by the cinematic and popular imagination. Like Henri Lefebvre, the French theorist of the everyday, Andersen's keen understanding of the actual and imaginary city was partially honed by a brief but indelible stint as a taxi driver that granted an in-the-streets perspective that informs both his ardent critique of Hollywood's deliberately partial representation of urban space and a larger project across key films to trace the evolving image of those minorities and working classes systemically underrepresented in American cinema. Related here is Andersen's latest work, an insightful study of still little-known African American filmmaker Spencer Williams, commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art. Andersen's deep knowledge of modern and contemporary architecture, meanwhile, gave way to the recent *Reconversão*, a formally rigorous study of Portuguese architect Eduardo Souto de Moura.

An important complement to Andersen's work as a filmmaker is his long career as a writer, occasional critic and curator and, above all, an instructor at CalArts, where he has been an anchor of the legendary film school for almost thirty years. Indeed, the subjects and pedagogical thrust of both *Los Angeles Plays Itself* and Andersen's most recent feature, *The Thoughts That Once We Had*, were partially inspired by lectures given in his CalArts seminars. A reflection on the influential ideas about cinema of French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, *The Thoughts That Once We Had* offers Andersen's most personal film, a lyrical and purely cinematic work that, despite its lack of spoken narrative, fully embodies the nuanced tones of his inimitable voice: at turns wry, impassioned, mournful and fiercely critical.

The Harvard Film Archive is proud to welcome Thom Andersen for a career retrospective that looks back from his most recent works to his early structuralist-inspired films, newly restored by the Academy Film Archive and the UCLA Film and Television Archive. Also featured are the new versions of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* and *Red Hollywood*, each remastered and slightly re-edited by Andersen himself. — HG

This program, a co-presentation with Harvard's Film Study Center, is supported by the Provostial Fund Committee for the Arts and Humanities, Harvard University.

Special thanks: Sam Ratcliffe—Hamon Arts Library, Southern Methodist University



THOM ANDERSEN *LOS ANGELES PLAYS ITSELF*

SUNDAY OCTOBER 11 AT 7PM

LOS ANGELES PLAYS ITSELF

A touchstone of early 21st century cinema, Andersen's magnum opus *Los Angeles Plays Itself* is an epic and purposefully meandering essay film that distills a bracingly polemic film history from its expansive critical survey of uses and abuses of the City of Angels by an impressively wide range of films—Hollywood blockbusters, low-budget genre pictures, independent, experimental and even pornographic films. Andersen's rigorous mapping of scene after scene onto the actual and imaginary Los Angeles is aided by frequent returns to the "scenes of the crime" of former film locations, via contemporary footage shot by Deborah Stratman. The film's arresting rhythm comes from Andersen's deft and mordant commentary (spoken by filmmaker Encke King), which remains almost conversational yet always imperious in its careful unveiling of those larger historical, cultural and ideological forces that render the cinematic city such a vivid palimpsest for ever-changing ideas of narrative and community. More than a corrective of cinema's faulty sense of place and history, however, *Los Angeles Plays Itself* powerfully uses rare counterexamples—such as Kent MacKenzie's *The Exiles* (1961) and Billy Woodbury's *Bless Their Little Hearts* (1984)—to argue that the indignities and false myths so frequently imposed upon Los Angeles by the cinema are direct expressions of actual injustice suffered by so many of its displaced, disenfranchised and, on the silver screen, silent inhabitants. With *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, Andersen defined a distinct conception of film analysis: both a guerrilla repurposing of Hollywood films and a personally invested, politically charged yet equanimous mode of close reading that is able to decode an unruly multitude of major and minor films. The enduring cult status of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* was confirmed by the great excitement and acclaim that greeted its first official release in 2014, more than ten years after its Toronto premiere.

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2003, 35mm, color, 169 min

FRIDAY OCTOBER 23 AT 7PM

JUKE: PASSAGES FROM THE FILMS OF SPENCER WILLIAMS

Commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art to make a work about pioneering African-American director, producer and occasional actor Spencer Williams (1893-1963), Andersen turned to Williams' films as director, assembling major and minor moments into a portrait of the everyday in Black America of the 1940s. "I am not trying to make some new meaning from these films; I am striving to bring out the meanings that are there but obscured by the plot lines: the dignity of black life and the creation of dynamic culture in the segregated society in small-town north Texas. I regard my movie as akin to Walker Evans' photographs of sharecroppers' home in 1930s and George Orwell's essays on English working class interiors."

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2015, digital video, b/w, 30 min

THE BLOOD OF JESUS

The directorial debut of Spencer Williams was also the major, most influential film of his entire career, *The Blood of Jesus*. A Biblical fantasy about a dead woman's soul caught between Heaven and Hell, *The Blood of Jesus* is also a fascinating document about faith and the everyday struggles of African-Americans during the WWII era. Despite its shoestring budget and cast of mostly nonprofessional actors, this independent production of Williams'



THOM ANDERSEN JUKE...

own company Amnegro was a huge commercial success and one of the most popular race films of the period.

Directed by Spencer Williams. With Cathryn Caviness, Spencer Williams, Juanita Riley
US 1941, 35mm, b/w, 57 min

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24 AT 7PM

This program of short(er) films begins with two very early works from Andersen's career. *Act Without Words* is, indeed, Andersen's first extant work as a filmmaker, made as group project while he was a film student at the University of Southern California. A spirited adaptation of Beckett's eponymous mimed play, efficiently compressed to the 300 foot (16mm) class requirement, *Act Without Words* boasts an uncredited Lester Young soundtrack that points towards Andersen's interest in American musical traditions. --- ----- is a structuralist film made in collaboration with biophysicist Malcolm Brodwick that fused a radical montage concept with a densely constructed soundtrack. Andersen wrote the following, "Vertically --- ----- is completely structured; horizontally it is completely random. A pastiche of cinematography, a parody of montage."

The two recent works are both inspired by, and in dialogue with, *Los Angeles Plays Itself*. *Get Out of the Car* is an archaeological city symphony that marries images of decaying billboards, vernacular signs and resonant historic sites across Los Angeles, "collected" by Andersen on 16mm in Walker Evans fashion, with a dynamic soundtrack of songs, sound and spoken word. With neither subtitles nor explanatory texts to "explain" its evocative sounds and images, *Get Out of the Car* richly conjures the kind of syncretic daydream experience of driving open-eyed, and radio tuned, through this city so overcrowded with garrulous and imaginative signage, a reverie state that the film's imperative title (taken from a song by Los Angeles legend Richard Berry) contradicts—for this film is also a work of radical history that seeks a way to evoke and describe the half-erased texture of Los Angeles' still largely unwritten local history, offering the bricolage soundtrack of local rhythm and blues and *música norteño* as legends of sorts to the micro-histories of the unmarked sites and uncanonized music forgotten and gathered associatively by Andersen.

The Tony Longo Trilogy is a deliberately minor and playful film that welds together three earlier shorts to erect a homage to the titular late character actor featured in many 90s action films, but most indelibly in David Lynch's Los Angeles masterpiece *Mulholland Drive* (2001).

ACT WITHOUT WORDS

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 1964, 16mm, b/w, 5 min

--- ----- (AKA THE ROCK 'N' ROLL MOVIE)

Directed by Thom Andersen and Malcolm Brodwick
US 1967, 16mm, color, 11 min

GET OUT OF THE CAR

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2010, 16mm, color, 34 min. In English and Spanish

THE TONY LONGO TRILOGY

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2014, digital video, color 14 min

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1 AT 7PM

RED HOLLYWOOD

Andersen teamed with film theorist, experimental filmmaker and former Ohio State University colleague Noël Burch to craft a meticulously powerful revisionist history of Communist artists working in Hollywood during the height of the studio era. The video *Red Hollywood* was inspired by an eponymous article written by Andersen a decade earlier to challenge calcified preconceptions about those artists who were unjustly purged and black-listed from Hollywood for their leftist sympathies, and who further suffered the general indifference of scholars and historians to their pioneering work. While featuring extensive and riveting interviews with members of the legendary Hollywood Ten, including great turns by a still-defiant Abraham Polonsky, *Red Hollywood* makes its sharpest points by carefully unspooling thematically organized scenes from over fifty features, with a resonant voiceover (spoken by Andersen's CalArts colleague and fellow filmmaker Billy Woodbury) discussing and dissecting their latent and overt meanings, and making clear how these dedicated artists saw cinema as a vital tool in the ideological and actual battles raging during the years from the Great Depression through the Red Scare. The political dimensions of Hollywood moviemaking have rarely been scrutinized with such precision and passion.

Directed by Thom Andersen and Noël Burch
US 1995, digital video, color, 114 min



THOM ANDERSEN RED HOLLYWOOD



THOM ANDERSEN *RECONVERSÃO*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
THOM ANDERSEN IN PERSON
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6 AT 7PM

Completed as thesis for his UCLA Master's degree, *Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer* was Andersen's breakthrough feature, the first work to express his unique melding of avant-garde cinema and careful historical archaeology. As a work of historical research, Andersen's film helped spur the rediscovery of Muybridge that was just beginning in the period, pointing new attention in particular to his then relatively unknown landscape photography. Equally striking, however, was the film's meticulous reanimation of thousands of Muybridge images to firmly establish the photographer's pioneering work as a taproot of the cinematic imagination. With its focus on the origins and essence of the motion picture, *Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer* is an important precedent to Andersen's latest exploration of Gilles Deleuze. Crisply edited together with fellow Angelo and filmmaker Morgan Fisher, the film's insightful narrative is spoken by actor (and occasional experimental filmmaker) Dean Stockwell.

In 1996, Jonathan Rosenbaum authoritatively praised the film, which he declared "remains one of the best works of film history ever committed to film—an admirably economical and ingenious documentary exploring the philosophical, sociological, scientific, aesthetic, optical, technical, and theoretical implications of Muybridge's motion studies without belaboring any of them."

Also included in the program are two early short films that place Andersen clearly within the vibrant avant-garde scene flourishing in Los Angeles in the Sixties. The playfully unequivocal *Melting*, for example, anticipates the work of fellow Angelo and friend Morgan Fisher, while *Olivia's Place* is a tender monument to a local-culture establishment, a Santa Monica café, and an expression of the interest in street vernacular embraced by such Los Angeles artists as Ed Ruscha and Judy Fiskin.

MELTING

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 1965, 16mm, color, 6 min

OLIVIA'S PLACE

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 1966/1974, 16mm, color, 6 min

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE, ZOOPRAXOGRAPHER

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 1975, 35mm, color, 59 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
THOM ANDERSEN IN CONVERSATION WITH
TOM CONLEY

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7 AT 7PM

THE THOUGHTS THAT ONCE WE HAD

Described in an opening text as a "personal history of cinema, partially inspired by Gilles Deleuze," *The Thoughts That Once We Had* is a richly digressive exploration of key concepts central to the French philosopher's influential, two-volume historical theorization of cinema. A found-footage film composed entirely of unidentified, yet often recognizable, film clips and concise intertitles written by Andersen, *The Thoughts That Once We Had* leaps associatively, like Deleuze, across a vast territory spanning from Griffith to Godard, using dynamically cinematic images and sequences not to explain, but to embody Deleuzian ideas in all their rich ambiguity and nuance. Andersen strikingly avoids his now signature voiceover, instead assembling synoptic flash frames and lengthy sequences into a rhythmic and meditative experience designed to engage a thinking and emotional viewer, one not necessarily versed in Deleuzian theory. Indeed, some of the most powerful moments in *The Thoughts That Once We Had* are personal intertitle statements that break from clearly Deleuzian themes, most strikingly to give lasting emotional resonance to images of war and destruction, North Korea, and Hiroshima, with Andersen at one point interrogating and expanding upon *Hiroshima Mon Amour*. These are moments that ask the viewer to reconsider the historic tragedies of the



THOM ANDERSEN *THE THOUGHTS THAT ONCE WE HAD*

age of cinema as "moving images" in all senses of the term. Like Deleuze, Andersen's infectious cinephilia is a love for cinema—a life in cinema—and is grounded in an ethical and philosophical understanding of film that describes a clear trajectory across all of his major films.

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2014, digital video, color, 108 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
THOM ANDERSEN IN PERSON
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8 AT 7PM

RECONVERSÃO (RECONVERSION)

Commissioned by the Curtas Vila do Conde Film Festival to direct a film in Northern Portugal, Andersen turned to the work of master architect Eduardo Souto de Moura (b. 1952) whose visionary ideas about structure, ruin and landscape have earned him a renown and international following that extends far beyond the Porto area where he has realized the majority of his projects. As if in response to the frustration voiced in *Los Angeles Plays Itself* over the inadequate and dismissive representation of architecture in popular cinema, Andersen ambitiously sought a cinematic form able to understand the full dimensionalities of singular architectural forms. For *Reconversão*, Andersen turned back once more, ingeniously, to Muybridge, working with cinematographer Peter Bo Rappmund to devise a stop-motion technique for shooting Souto de Moura's architecture at a rate of one and two images per second, reanimated to ignite a quivering pulse and quality within building and landscape alike. Poised sculpturally between still and moving image, *Reconversão* unfolds at a contemplative rhythm as it explores seventeen built and unbuilt works accompanied by a voiceover (once again spoken by Encke King) reading passages from the architect's own writings and punctuated by Andersen's careful interjections. As in the work of Heinz Emigholz, Andersen's film reaches beyond simply an appreciative meditation on the vision of a great architect to set in a motion a nimble dialogue between cinema and architecture as arts of framing and reinterpreting the existing world. This dialogue is deepened by Souto de Moura's abiding and avowed fascination with those ruins often incorporated organically into his buildings—a process not unlike the archaeological approach to found-footage cinema embodied by Andersen's essay films. Roughly translated as "reconversion," the Portuguese word *Reconversão* implies far more: a hybrid process of conversation and transformation that speaks to the complex dynamic found within the work of both architect and filmmaker.

Directed by Thom Andersen
US 2012, digital video, color, 68 min

ALMOST LIKE A HORROR FILM. THE CINEMA OF NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI

NOVEMBER 15 – NOVEMBER 16

A legend in Japan, cult filmmaker Nobuhiko Obayashi (b. 1938) launched his career in cinema with a series of avant-garde, small-gauge films whose daring visual style and free structure would inform his feature films. A friend and contemporary of luminary filmmaker Shuji Terayama, Obayashi shared his fellow radical's distrust of the dominant culture, which he willfully subverted in his playful and indelible films. Obayashi made his feature debut with one of his greatest works, the truly unclassifiable *Hausu*, which could be called a slapstick horror comedy, a psychedelic coming-of-age story, a trance melodrama; with its recent US theatrical release, it has been confirmed as a cult masterpiece. The Harvard Film Archive is proud to welcome Nobuhiko Obayashi for a rare US visit.

Special thanks: Aaron Gerow—Yale University.



NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI *HOUSE*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI IN PERSON

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15 AT 7PM

**BOUND FOR THE FIELDS, THE MOUNTAINS,
AND THE SEACOAST (NO YUKI YAMA YUKI
UMIBE YUKI)**

Obayashi captures the erratic and turbulent but sincere energy of youth with this story of a group of rebellious boys who form an uneasy alliance to save a local girl from being sold into prostitution. The film breaks with the somber and tortured critiques of wartime Japan by previous generations to present a positive and anarchic vision of resistance. Shot in one of the busiest phases of his career and chock-full of Obayashi's silent film-inspired bursts of cinematic imagination, it is also one of the final films produced by the legendary Art Theatre Guild (ATG). Obayashi went on a creative and commercial roll in the mid-1980s, capturing large audiences with filmic experiments that combined arthouse sensibility, avant-garde techniques and pop-cultural cool—used here to explore a dark period of Japanese history. — *Alexander Zahlten, East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard*

Directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi. With Saburo Boya, Sen Hara, Yasufumi Hayashi
Japan 1986, color, 35mm, 135 min. Japanese with English subtitles

PRECEDED BY

COMPLEXE

Directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi
Japan 1964, 16mm, color, 14 min

might appeal to a new generation of moviegoers bored with the Toho *kaiju* ("monster") movies that had become too childish. They succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

Filed using every trick in the pre-digital book, *House* looks like it takes place in a series of candy-colored doll-houses or, perhaps, the commercials for them. Animations, superimpositions, rainbows, artificial sunsets, faked home movies, see-through floors and reverse action compete with a metronome-timed theme song in a spooky mansion where schoolgirls on vacation are attacked by items that may or may not represent the domestic futures they are supposed to desire. The girls, typed and named according to personality (Gorgeous, Sweet, Kung Fu), die in ways geared toward their characters in this cartoonishly sadistic *Pee-wee's Playhouse*.

Directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi. With Kimiko Ikegami, Miki Jinbo, Kimiko Ohba
Japan 1977, 35mm, color, 88 min. Japanese with English subtitles

PRECEDED BY

EMOTION

Directed by Nobuhiko Obayashi
Japan 1966, 16mm, color, 38 min

Also screening as part of the Furious and Furiouser program, see page 7.

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI IN PERSON

MONDAY NOVEMBER 16 AT 7PM

HOUSE (HAUSU)

House was a conscious attempt by Toho studios, the home of Godzilla and Mothra, to make a crazy horror movie. The hope was that a certain kind of randomness



NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI *HOUSE*



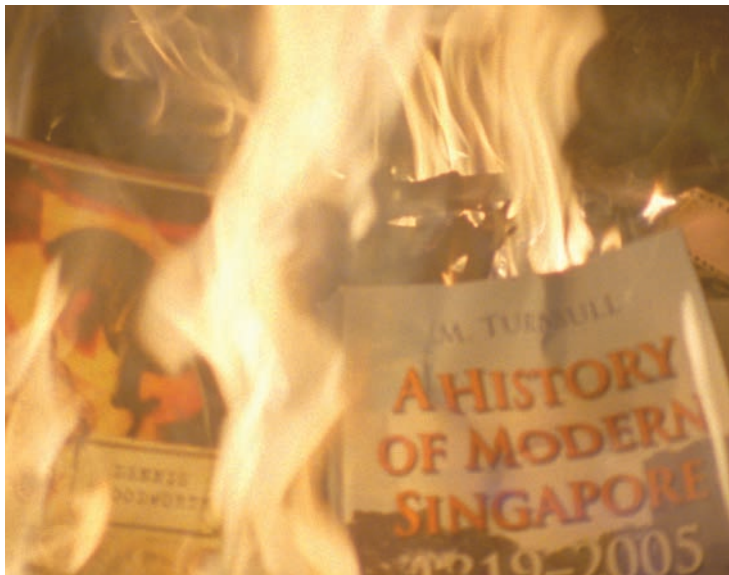
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DANIEL HUI'S SNAKESKIN

OCTOBER 18

A Singaporean filmmaker and film writer, Daniel Hui made a dramatic impression as soon as his first remarkable feature, *Eclipses*, was released in 2011. Garnering comparisons to filmmakers—like Chris Marker, Lav Diaz and Matt Porterfield—who meditatively work within the realm of the docu-fictional hybrid, Hui studies Singapore through what appears to be limitless mirrors, reflecting the many facets of truth told by myth, memory and recorded history. Actively and successfully fostering the unique voice of a new Singaporean cinema, Hui also founded the independent film collective 13 Little Pictures which produced his second, immediately acclaimed feature *Snakeskin*. We are excited to welcome Daniel Hui here for an evening to screen and discuss his free-associative revision of history by way of both non-fiction and science fiction.



DANIEL HUI SNAKESKIN

This screening is co-presented by Crows and Sparrows, a new Boston-based initiative that seeks to create and enhance opportunities for independent media exchange between North America and East/Southeast Asia through regular curation and visiting filmmaker programs. More information is available at crowsandsparrows.com.

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
 DANIEL HUI IN PERSON
 SUNDAY OCTOBER 18 AT 7PM

SNAKESKIN

A striking *vérité* snapshot of present-day Singapore that doubles as a semi-mystical cinematic incantation conjuring ghosts from the country's history, Daniel Hui's *Snakeskin* ingeniously compresses past, present, and future. In 2066, the lone survivor of a cult projects footage shot by his divine leader, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Stamford Raffles, the British statesman who founded Singapore. Both living and dead subjects candidly reminisce about love, race, revolution, and the Malay film industry as muted images from 2014 of the city-state's streets and harbors—key locations of the cult's future founding—flash by. — *Film Society of Lincoln Center*

Directed by Daniel Hui
 Singapore/Portugal 2014, DCP, color, 105 min

IN PERSON

SAUL LEVINE SEPT 11, 12 & 14
 VALÉRIE MASSADIAN OCT 4
 BEN RIVERS OCT 9
 DANIEL HUI OCT 18
 THOM ANDERSEN NOV 6 - 8
 GUY MADDIN NOV 13 - 14
 NOBUHIKO OBAYASHI NOV 15 - 16

COMING SOON

THE FILMS OF JEAN EPSTEIN
 THE FILMS OF MARLEN KHUTSIEV
 ORSON WELLES, PART TWO
 MIGUEL GOMES' *ARABIAN NIGHTS*

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.

CROWS
 &
 SPARROWS