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MARCH APRIL MAY 2016



# OCCUPATION OF THE INTERIOR – THE FILMS OF NADAV LAPID

MARCH 6 – MARCH 7

In J. Hoberman's estimation, Nadav Lapid (b. 1975) is "the most internationally acclaimed Israeli filmmaker in recent memory... and perhaps ever," which is quite a distinction for a young director with only two feature films under his belt. Born and raised in Tel Aviv under the influence of film—his father a scriptwriter, his mother an editor—Lapid initially studied philosophy at the University of Tel Aviv and later attended the Sam Spiegel Film & Television School in Jerusalem. He has had stints as a journalist, a television critic and a documentary cinematographer as well as a fiction writer; he published a collection of novellas in Israel and France.

Without traditional emotional and narrative guides, including background music, Lapid's stories austere, philosophically maneuver through lives fraught with disquieting, deep contradictions. Unpredictably discomforting and quietly humorous, the drama and suspense may not immediately register except for the emotionally electric buzz activating every scene. Often uncomfortably bound or cropped by the camera frame, his Israeli protagonists are trapped, in one way or another, between opposing realities.

Victims and perpetrators are not only indistinguishable but virtually beside the point in Lapid's existential quandaries, which home in on an unspoken insularity and identity particular to Israel, with wider implications for all of civilization. With stories that are palpably shaped by, but barely mention, Palestine, Lapid's cinema astutely lacerates the political negative space left in the wake of victim/hero duality. "The Palestinians at least know they are under occupation," states a member of the ultra-left faction in *Policeman*. Lapid's films present, with complicated lucidity, the internal conflicts both within the community and the individual soul that ongoing violence and wars externalize.

Much to the surprise of Lapid and others, moments before the release of *Policeman*—which depicts a group of Jewish anti-capitalist terrorists—unprecedented social justice protests broke out in Israel in 2011. Though nonviolent, the similarities to his film were eerie to a director who thought he was simply constructing a semi-realistic *fantasy*. "I felt as though people were taking the film out of my hands and screening it in real time."

Perhaps Lapid's phenomenal critical acclaim stems in part from this extrasensory sensitivity. The Harvard Film Archive is excited to welcome Nadav Lapid to discuss the reverberations of such incisive work. – BG



NADAV LAPID *THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER*

**On the cover:** Hitman "Phoenix Tetsu" must choose between love and loyalty to a corrupted yakuza creed in Seijun Suzuki's delirious masterpiece *Tokyo Drifter*. p. 25

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

- 2 OCCUPATION OF THE INTERIOR –  
THE FILMS OF NADAV LAPID  
MARCH 6 – MARCH 7
- 3 GUY MADDIN PRESENTS...  
MARCH 11 – MAY 7
- 7 POINTS OF DEPARTURE... ALFRED GUZZETTI  
MARCH 20 – APRIL 10
- 8 WAKE (*SUBIC*) BY JOHN GIANVITO  
MARCH 13
- 9 NEW WORKS BY ERNIE GEHR  
MARCH 28
- PHIL COLLINS: A LEARNING SITE  
MARCH 24 – APRIL 8
- 11 THREE HAMLETS  
MARCH 21 – APRIL 24

## CALENDAR

- 12 MARCH
- 13 APRIL
- 14 MAY
- 15 AND WHEN I DIE, I WON'T STAY DEAD  
BY BILLY WOODBERRY  
MARCH 27
- ODES TO LAND AND LABORS OF LOVE.  
THE FILMS OF PHILIP TREVELYAN  
APRIL 3 – MAY 15
- 17 THE ANIMATED COSMOS OF KAREN AQUA  
APRIL 9
- 18 THE GENEVIÈVE McMILLAN - REBA STEWART  
FELLOWSHIP: HASSEN FERHANI  
APRIL 11
- XIE JIN, BEFORE AND AFTER THE  
CULTURAL REVOLUTION  
APRIL 15 – MAY 1
- 20 WHEN THE EYE QUAKES.  
THE CINEMA OF PAOLO GIOLI.  
APRIL 16 – MAY 9
- 22 FEDERICO VEIROJ, EPIPHANY AND ELLIPSIS  
APRIL 25 – MAY 2
- 23 CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES  
MAY 6 – MAY 9
- 24 TIME AND PLACE ARE NONSENSE!  
THE CINEMA ACCORDING TO SEIJUN SUZUKI  
MAY 13 – JUNE 2
- 28 ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI'S *CHEVALIER*  
MARCH 25

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NADAV LAPID *POLICEMAN*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
NADAV LAPID IN PERSON  
SUNDAY MARCH 6 AT 7PM

**POLICEMAN (HA-SHOTER)**

In his feature debut, Lapid presents the internal workings of two different urban Tel Aviv tribes whose respective insularity and narcissism prevents one from understanding or even crossing paths with the other—a fact that Lapid reflects in the narrative's split structure. On one end is a band of athletic, macho buddies within Israel's

antiterrorism police unit. Their very masculine, physical and nationalistic drive seems at odds with the leftist activists' romantic, philosophic, anarchic mission. However, both are on similarly confused searches for meaning and purpose while masking deeper conflicts beneath a confident, gun-wielding, communal egotism. The police unit's tight, brotherly bonds must be secured by the sacrifice of one of its members, while the glue holding together the radicals consists of a love triangle and a bond between father and son. Lapid's steady, precise gaze lingers on indirectly telling moments, as if the harder truths always approach as asides. Neither his audience nor his characters may be prepared to see the Other when looking in the mirror.

Directed by Nadav Lapid. With Yiftach Klein, Yaara Pelzig, Michael Moshonov  
Israel 2011, DCP, color, 105 min. Hebrew with English subtitles

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
NADAV LAPID IN PERSON

MONDAY MARCH 7 AT 7PM

**THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER (HAGANENET)**

The discovery of a preternaturally erudite poet in her kindergarten class opens a complex door for Nira, the unsettled character of the title. It seems all who encounter young Yoav experience the phenomenon in a different way, and no one except for Nira seems to recognize the depth of his strange gift. Holding him in a sometimes uncomfortably exalted regard, Nira wants to foster his poetry without corrupting its purity, yet even she is not

immune to taking advantage of his seemingly effortless lyricism for her own, unresolved ends. With Lapid's uniquely quiet strains of humor, pathos and suspense, the film darkly ponders what to do with transcendence, with authentic expression, with elusive, baffling beauty and truth. In the midst of a world burdened by so much surface noise, Nira attempts to realize her own radical poem through one direct, impossible action.

Directed by Nadav Lapid. With Sarit Lary, Avi Shnaidman, Lior Raz  
Israel/France 2014, DCP, color, 119 min. Hebrew with English subtitles



NADAV LAPID *POLICEMAN*

## GUY MADDIN PRESENTS...

MARCH 11 – MAY 7

Movies have meant the world to me since earliest childhood, when they helped me make sense of the universe in which I lived. Well, Heaven help the kid who relies on cinema to tell him how the world works—films can be as unreliable, bigoted, lazy, crazy, gender-biased, politically cockeyed and boring as any parental role model, but they can also be charismatic, thrilling, oneiric and intoxicating, as addictive as a Jolly Rancher-Xanax blend—if such a hybrid exists!—and any normal kid could end up fiending on them, almost to the exclusion of living his or her own real life away from the screen.

My earliest kino highs, I realize in retrospect, have been further heightened by false memory. For example, I misremember a toddler-era TV viewing of *Fourteen Hours*, a 1951 picture featuring Richard Basehart out on a high-rise window ledge threatening suicide for its entire running time. That part I recollect correctly, but I remember Basehart's mother being played by my own mother, and I remember the movie as a daily TV show. Every day the same suicidal man talked back into safety by my mother!

I misremember the lead role in *Gilda* (1946) being played not by Rita Hayworth, but by—Google image search helped me out here—Cobra Woman herself, Maria Montez! And the Glenn Ford character being played by Buddy Ebsen of the *Beverly Hillbillies*. And a teenage Sandra Dee shoved into the proceedings as a romantic rival for Montez. I'm not sure what film I really saw during that grindhouse Sunday matinee, but I guarantee it's every bit as great as the real *Gilda*, which I've actually never seen.

Films are moving myths, I've concluded, chimerical and ever-mutating artifacts of intense delight and arousal, role modeling, cautionary warning, Utopian reverie and social wrath. For this carte blanche I've decided to sort through my most formative movie-viewing experiences, titles seen decades ago and not glimpsed since. They are an addled array of sensations that dripped a succession of intoxications into my soft and spongy brain. They won't trigger the same responses in a 2016 audience, but if only I could measure, in a controlled experiment, how these powerful dream-inducers perform now! *Pink Narcissus*, which I saw in 2005, is the only film I've seen as recently as thirty-five years ago, but that roseate spectacular is maybe the most beautifully tripped-out viewing experience of all my chosen titles. I'm not even sure I saw it!!! – Guy Maddin, artist, writer, filmmaker and Visiting Lecturer in the Visual and Environmental Studies Department, Harvard. His latest feature, *The Forbidden Room*, screened at the HFA in December 2015.

Special thanks: Emilie Cauquy—Cinémathèque Française; Todd Wiener, Steven Hill—UCLA Film & Television Archive.



HERBERT BRENON *LAUGH, CLOWN, LAUGH*





JACK GARFEIN *SOMETHING WILD*

FRIDAY MARCH 11 AT 7PM

### SOMETHING WILD

Jack Garfein is a Holocaust survivor who was liberated by British soldiers from the Bergen-Belsen camp at war's end. A longtime theater director and teacher at the Actors' Studio, he made just two feature films, both startlingly modern and controversial for their era, and still startling to this day. *The Strange One* (1957), a story about sadistic hazing rituals and sexual bullying at a military academy, was cast and crewed entirely by Actors' Studio members, most notably the young Ben Gazzara. Then came *Something Wild*, starring Garfein's wife Carroll Baker as a rape survivor spiraling into depression. She accepts timely help from a mechanic (Meeker), only to find herself in a new species of nightmare. The candor and sensitivity with which Garfein and Baker tell this story had never been seen in American film before, while the psychology of Baker's character is honest, uncomfortable—and controversial. Aaron Copland supplies the score, Saul Bass the opening credits—not bad for an indie filmmaker's second outing! Final outing, it turns out: Garfein was considered meat too strong by the American film industry, and he returned to work in theater. At 85 years of age, he continues to teach acting at the Studio Jack Garfein in Paris.

Directed by Jack Garfein. With Carroll Baker, Ralph Meeker, Mildred Dunnock  
US 1961, 35mm, color, 112 min

FRIDAY MARCH 11 AT 9:15PM

### SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS (TINI ZABUTYKH PREDKIV)

Parajanov, the Georgian-born, ethnically Armenian filmmaker who shot film in the Ukraine, created extremely decorative, suspiciously queer, robustly mythic films so out of sync with Soviet realism that he found himself the target of almost-constant state persecution, resulting in frequent imprisonments and long periods of enforced inactivity. Nonetheless, he got enough pictures out against all this resistance to ensure a place for himself among the all-time great visionaries of cinema. This legendary tale of Carpathian romance and violent family feuds, shot using some strange, pulsing Soviet color stock with extremely unstable emulsions, feels like a story told in a passing parade of peeling gilt icons, but it's so musically driven one also feels the whole thing to be an ancient song, or epic poem, intoned across countless Ukrainian Hutsul generations clinging to their fierce mountain lives. So much mad, unsanctioned energy in this film—

enough to knit Leonid Brezhnev's eyebrows into a tapestry!

Directed by Sergei Parajanov. With Ivan Mikolaitchouk, Larisa Kadochnikova, Tatyana Bestayeva  
Soviet Union 1965, 35mm, color, 97 min. Ukrainian with English subtitles

SATURDAY MARCH 12 AT 7PM

### ON DANGEROUS GROUND

I think this is the only noir set half in the familiar greasy, nocturnal cityscape and half in the broad daylight of a snowy countryside. The sudden departure from the precincts of the former produces a dreamy free-fall into the cool open breezes of the latter, and the film achieves an airborne exhilaration rarely produced by cop pictures—trust Nick Ray to pull off the one-time stunt! Starring Robert Ryan at his most tremulously contained borderline-psychopathic best, playing a cop with anger issues banished to the sticks till he calms down. There he teams up with the father of a just-murdered girl to chase down her killer. The father (Ward Bond), equipped in full Elmer Fudd hunting fatigues and shotgun, has an itchy trigger finger and understandable anger issues of his own. All this anger is madly driven by perhaps the best Bernard Herrmann score outside of *Vertigo*. Ida Lupino, herself a no-nonsense director of seven hardboiled features, here plays the blind woman at the tender center of this furious and sleety emotional maelstrom.

Directed by Nicholas Ray. With Ida Lupino, Robert Ryan, Ward Bond  
US 1952, 35mm, b/w, 82 min

SATURDAY MARCH 12 AT 9PM

### HELL DRIVERS

This frenzied anti-capitalist lorry actioner is directed by American Cy Endfield, who spent the 50s working pseudonymously in the UK to circumvent his status on the McCarthy blacklist back home. The story involves truck drivers pitted by their boss against each other in furious, ultra-dangerous, high-speed races along perilously narrow roads to see who can deliver the most loads of ballast gravel per day. This was a breakout role for star Stanley Baker, who just four years later turned down the part of James Bond in the franchise's first film, *Dr. No*, because he balked at signing a three-picture deal. Ironically, eventual Bond Sean Connery appears in this film as a backgrounded driver. Ever-seething, ever-wrathful Patrick McGeehan's violent rival to Baker supplies the bile and dread that propel this insanely pumped-up picture,



NICOLAS RAY *ON DANGEROUS GROUND*



VICTOR SJÖSTRÖM *THE WIND*

with *Gun Crazy's* Peggy Cummins the vortex of a romantic clash fuel-injected into the combustible admixture of romance, sabotage and revenge. Seriously cranked up!

Directed by Cy Endfield. With Stanley Baker, Herbert Lom, Peggy Cummins  
UK 1957, 35mm, b/w, 91 min

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY MARTIN MARKS  
MONDAY MARCH 14 AT 7PM

### THE WIND

*The Wind* strikes me as the perfect, if more dynamic and gusty, companion piece to Polanski's *Repulsion*. Both films are bravura examples of interiority masterfully expressed in a film's putative, and gorgeously realized, external world. In the case of Sjöström, the world is Sweetwater, a lonely outpost in the American West where the wind never stops blowing soil upon the spotless person and mind of perennially chaste Lillian Gish, whose virginal Letty from Virginia finds herself sexually vexed by the thoughts these filthy gales occasion. Once in a while, a cyclone arrives to interrupt the routine of the constant blasts, and a romance for terrified Letty is brutally etched out of the frank landscape, where settlers are put up to mating in much the same fashion as livestock, and where the housewives of Sweetwater handle the organ meats of their beef carcasses with grim, workaday dispatch. Sjöström's visuals are, by turns, pitch-perfect gothic and stunningly, even hilariously, hyperbolic. *The Wind* is a singular psychosexual addition to the West's big fat books of myths, and for once it is fear, not the Native American, that is fought while America defines itself. One of the last silent films made in Hollywood, and maybe the greatest.

Directed by Victor Sjöström. With Lillian Gish, Lars Hanson, Montagu Love  
US 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 95 min

FRIDAY MARCH 18 AT 7PM

### MOONRISE

Borzage started helming pictures in Hollywood way back in 1912, so masterful *Moonrise* is definitely a third-act wonder from this legendary studio-system filmmaker. The studio in question on this project is Republic Pictures, always a budget-conscious concern, so the usually lush'n'luminous Borzage's work here is much leaner than usual, almost noir-like in its economics of shadows—darkness is the cheapest of all set dressings!—and the leanness is matched by the dark intensity of the story and its leading man, brooding Dane Clark. Clark plays Danny Hawkins, a small-town hothead haunted since childhood by the hanging of his convicted-murderer father. Sullen young Hawkins' worst fears are realized when he himself suddenly commits a murder. Tortured

by fear and guilt, and obeying the nightmarish imperatives of noir romance, Hawkins attempts to develop a relationship with the girlfriend of his victim, but this movie is no mere crime film, no simple genre picture. Borzage, more concerned with the murderer's heart and how it can be reconciled to its painful past, concocts a remarkable denouement that makes me wonder out loud: Hey, what if Robert Bresson were a script doctor over at Republic! 35mm preservation print courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Directed by Frank Borzage. With Dane Clark, Gail Russell, Ethel Barrymore  
US 1948, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

FRIDAY MARCH 18 AT 9PM

### MAN'S CASTLE

Frank Borzage made a smooth transition from his late-20s run of mystically romantic silent masterpieces starring Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell—*7th Heaven* (1927); *Street Angel* (1928), *Lucky Star* (1929)—to this luminous Depression-era talkie, along with *Moonrise*, his most sophisticated narrative. Martin Scorsese has famously observed that Borzage's films unfold in "lovers' time," a storytelling rhythm that gives two people together lots of space to do the little things that people falling for each other do, and this pre-code picture about a young homeless woman (Young) taken in by a lover (Tracy) unwilling to commit to her, even in the face of her pregnancy, examines at length the love-besotted couple in their shared Hooverville shanty during periods of playful tenderness, panicked possessiveness and bitter recrimination. Tracy is shown kidding and teasing his soulmate in ways one never sees in film, and the viewer feels with sinking heart his altered attitude toward her as power shifts between the two. It is one of the great portrayals of the human heart at war with itself.

Directed by Frank Borzage. With Spencer Tracy, Loretta Young, Marjorie Rambeau  
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 75 min

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY  
ROBERT HUMPHREVILLE

SATURDAY MARCH 19 AT 7PM

### NEW YEAR'S EVE

#### (SYLVESTER: TRAGÖDIE EINER NACHT)

This idiosyncratic rarity is the gem of the whole *carte blanche* as far as I'm concerned! A *kammerspiele*, or middle-class chamber drama, *Sylvester* is the simple story—I think it's a comedy, but who knows?—of a man beleaguered by tensions between his mother and his wife during the final hours of a single New Year's Eve. The domestic action unfolds, elegantly eschewing intertitles, with an extremely mannered expressionism that bizarrely slows itself down to near tableau-like immobility at times. The performances, often brisk, can just as often be so slow, and the actors' poses held so long, as to be exciting, electrifying even! The closer the three strange thespians come to stock-stillness, the more they somehow approach the uninhibited language of dance, and one doesn't even care if the intended result is comedy or tragedy—it's somehow both in this oddball ellipses-drunk film. Director Pick is a startling revelation, a true eccentric with a singular filmic voice. This forgotten actor/filmmaker, I aver, was as great as kino immortal F.W. Murnau, his comrade in virtuosic German camera movement, tonal innovation and untimely death—they died separately but four days apart in 1931. What couldn't they have achieved if granted just another ten years each! Eugen Klöpfer essays the husband role wearing, it seems, the body of someone else, someone that doesn't quite fit his skin or gait; he is the epitome of bodily and marital



FRANK BORZAGE MOONRISE

discomforts. Edith Posca, Pick's wife and frequent collaborator, plays the young frau, while Frida Richard takes on the role of the most memorable mother-in-law in film history.

Directed by Lupu Pick. With Eugen Klöpfer, Edith Posca, Frida Richard  
Germany 1924, 35mm, b/w, silent, 66 min

SATURDAY MARCH 19 AT 8:30PM

### THE BIG HOUSE

This pre-code prison picture—I know, you feel like you've already seen every prison picture already, but this one is directed with so much visual assurance, charm and bracing characterization!—is fresh as the day it came out of the lab. The great Frances Marion, longtime writer for Mary Pickford, won the first of her two best-screenplay Oscars for this wonderfully plotted crime melodrama. Coen brothers fetish-object Wallace Beery nabbed the lead role of Butch when the already-signed Lon Chaney came down with his deadly throat cancer—and a loveable superstar was born! But the truly arresting performance of the movie belongs to Robert Montgomery as a cowardly young inmate who just can't cut the prison code and turns instead to snitching. Montgomery possesses such a vast vocabulary of facial expressions for dread, shame, guilt, fear, skulking, sketchiness, horror and worthless pigeonheartedness that when I first saw *The Big House* I found myself standing up and pointing with horrified self-identification at this astonishing man's mug! You're watching the English language version here, but the film was simultaneously shot in German, French and Spanish versions as well; the German was directed by Pál Fejös and starred Gustav Diessl.

Directed by George Hill. With Chester Morris, Wallace Beery, Lewis Stone  
US 1930, 35mm, b/w, 87 min

SUNDAY MARCH 20 AT 5PM

### REMEMBER LAST NIGHT?

Man, to be James Whale in the early 30s! Mise-en-scène monuments *Frankenstein*, *The Old Dark House*, *The Invisible Man*! And, right after *Bride of Frankenstein*, Whale confected this sparkling, boozed-up whodunit with a question mark in the title! Adam Hobhouse's novel *The Hangover Murders* told the story of partying prohibition-age bon vivants so sloshed none of them can remember anything of the night before, when one of their number was murdered. The Production Code forbade use of the word "hangover" in the title, but could not keep the yummy sea of Sidecars, Manhattans and Gimlets out of Whale's picture. Nor could Hollywood keep the openly gay Whale in any closet. He had style by the platinum ton. And even though there are no gay characters in this

ensemble picture, the decor, elegance and élan are pure pre-war queer fantasy, a highly polished world of oversized swinging doors in lacquer, joyously abused tuxedos, and balustrades hung with sozzled socialites half out of their slinky gowns. There is one sobering scene, involving a great American embarrassment, which one might need a few drinks to forget. I myself had forgotten it, I'm ashamed to say, until a Google image search proved its presence in this film beyond reasonable doubt. I hope it's historically instructive, and not just unpleasant or hurtful, to face what must not be forgotten.

Directed by James Whale. With Edward Arnold, Robert Young, Constance Cummings  
US 1935, 35mm, b/w, 81 min

SUNDAY MARCH 27 AT 5PM

### DISHONORED

The third picture in the most effulgent streak of brilliance in Hollywood history—seven features between 1930 and 1935 created by collaborators Marlene Dietrich and Josef von Sternberg—*Dishonored* is perhaps the best introduction to this mother lode running from *Blue Angel* to *Devil is a Woman*, packed as it is with the most beautiful painting-with-light b&w photography of the studio era, weirdo formally mannered performances cooked up between director and leading lady for their worlds, the unsuspected moral seriousness of their proto-kitschy projects, and novel end-around tonal tricks from a playbook more eccentric than any other in the business. Dietrich plays an Austrian prostitute recruited to use her body to spy for her country, all Mata Hari-like, and since it's wartime, she does her dangerous duty courageously. But she's human and falls for one of her enemy dupes, Victor McLaglen, the future star of John Ford's *The Informer*. But this is not Ford country, and McLaglen, like everyone else in the film, from Warner Oland to Gustav von Seyffertitz, speaks in those Sternbergian cadences suggesting irony-laden freight trains slowly gathering steam. A wonder the director so confidently adopted such an aggressively strange dialogue style the instant that films learned to speak. The alchemically romantic admixture of Dietrich, Liszt, pussycat and firing squad at the end is an especial wonderment. See this and have fun trying to iron your gooseflesh flat afterward!

Directed by Josef von Sternberg. With Marlene Dietrich, Victor McLaglen, Gustav von Seyffertitz  
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 91 min

FRIDAY APRIL 1 AT 7PM

### CHILDREN OF MONTMARTRE (LA MATERNELLE)

After writing scripts for her brother Jean Epstein (*Coeur fidèle*, *Le double amour*, *Six et demi onze*), Marie Epstein launched into a sixteen-picture collaboration with Jean



Benoît-Lévy, including the co-direction of this incredibly moving story of a destitute young woman working at a daycare in poverty-stricken Montmartre. Epstein worked in what might be called the style of poetic realism, with a concern for challenges faced by women in her contemporary France, but she often employed avant-garde micro-montage and multiple exposures to achieve emotional effects, an inspiring and liberating hybrid of approaches. The print I once saw of this film had English subtitles charmingly jammed into the frame where they would best suit the composition, sometimes above the characters, sometimes beside them, not just along the bottom. It seemed like Epstein had something to do with that odd graphic gesture, so assuredly did I feel her hand in the making of this little masterpiece.

Directed by Marie Epstein and Jean Benoît-Lévy. With Madeleine Renaud, Alice Tissot, Paulette Élambert  
France 1933, 35mm, b/w, 83 min. French with English subtitles

FRIDAY APRIL 1 AT 9PM

### THE FACE BEHIND THE MASK

My favorite Peter Lorre movie, and that's saying a lot. (And he's the star too!) It's brisk and unpredictable, always zigzagging from genre to genre. The tale starts out like Kafka's *Amerika*, with a wide-eyed immigrant, our Lorre, on a liner cruising past the Statue of Liberty, on his way to unforeseeable opportunities in the west. Lorre plays the new American with a succession of acting styles that permute as rapidly as the film's careening genres, which freely shift the storytelling cadences from coming-of-age narrative to crime film, romantic melodrama, fairytale and even revenge legend, all while defining a nation. It's a B-movie wonder!

Directed by Robert Florey. With Peter Lorre, Evelyn Keyes, Don Beddoe  
US 1941, 35mm, b/w, 69 min



ROBERT FLOREY *THE FACE BEHIND THE MASK*

SATURDAY APRIL 2 AT 9PM

### THE THREAT

This noir is so hilariously mean, raw-boned and brawny it's absolutely delightful. B-movie uber-alpha Charles McGraw is Kluger, a murderer who breaks outta Folsom Prison to keep his promise—the titular threat—to exact revenge on the detective and judge who put him behind bars. Within minutes (Kluger and this sixty-six-minute movie are in a hurry) both threatened men are kidnapped, as is Kluger's snitch girlfriend, just for hat-trick fun. Kluger briskly embarks with his henchmen and hostages on some cockamamie scheme involving—/think?—a car hidden in a moving van, some ham radios and a peephole. Whatever! Frisky-for-payback Kluger is as ruthless as the brief running time needs him to be. How



JOSEPH VON STERNBERG *DISHONORED*

often is a movie character so clearly defined by budgetary tightness? So satisfying! McGraw burst into movies as one of the hitmen who snuff out Burt Lancaster in the opening minutes of *The Killers*, and he didn't waste much time in the roles that followed, striding with purposeful dispatch across all sorts of bottom lines—*The Narrow Margin*, *Armored Car Robbery*, *Spartacus* and even *The Birds*. Watch what this gentleman does with a chair!

Directed by Felix E. Feist. With Michael O'Shea, Virginia Grey, Charles McGraw  
US 1949, 16mm, b/w, 66 min

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY MARTIN MARKS

SUNDAY APRIL 3 AT 5PM

### LAUGH, CLOWN, LAUGH

One of the oddest love triangles in film history: a world-famous clown who can't stop crying, his adopted daughter, and a playboy who can't stop laughing! Such is the allegory of pathology we have here, something one might expect to find in the pages of neurologist-fabulist Oliver Sacks, but this is a silent circus psychodrama in the hands of Herbert Brenon, who directed a fantastically charming *Peter Pan* in 1924, and in whose hands here a potentially repellent incest storyline is engaged with a sensitive mytho-Freudian touch. After raising an orphan girl as his own daughter, Lon Chaney's Tito the Clown suddenly, and most agonizingly, realizes he has developed romantic feelings for the freshly pubescent youngster (Loretta Young). In the best roles of his amazing career Chaney played villains for whom one could feel some species of empathy. His conflicted feelings for the equally conflicted and loving daughter, combined with the knowledge she loves his beloved best friend (Nils Asther), the oddly laughter-plagued womanizer with whom he shares a shrink, push him to the brink of an insanity for which Brenon contrives a climactic visual euphemism impossible to top!

Directed by Herbert Brenon. With Lon Chaney, Bernard Siegel, Loretta Young  
US 1928, 35mm, b/w, silent, 65 min

SUNDAY APRIL 10 AT 5PM

### WICKED WOMAN

The role for which B-movie actress and cheesecake model Beverly Michaels will be forever remembered. Her movie is as lurid and low budget as *Detour* (Edgar G. Ulmer, 1945) and the closest thing to a companion piece for that Poverty Row paragon, but with one difference: the protagonist here is a woman, and in the hands of director and soon-to-be-husband Russell Rouse, Michaels is a woman who does bad things, but does them for understandable reasons. She lives in a world of flophouse creeps and leering drunks, and makes a break for freedom from all this patriarchal crap the only way she knows how—and we find ourselves pulling for her. She's an

amazing presence, the towering Michaels, who contrived for this *el cheapo* movie miracle a gliding, super-sensual gait not unlike the scudding of a just-surfaced submarine. With Cary Grant having already copyrighted the deep chin dimple, leading man Richard Egan ingeniously moved his own skin divot to a place of prominence right between the eyes, and the gambit paid off in a handsome career closer to the margins of mainstream movies and television, where he worked for decades. Long-divorced from Michaels, director Rouse closed out his career helming his gloriously rancid *The Oscar* (1966)! Wicked!

Directed by Russell Rouse. With Beverly Michaels, Richard Egan, Percy Helton  
US 1953, 35mm, b/w, 77 min

SATURDAY MAY 7 AT 9PM

### PINK NARCISSUS

Director Bidgood was a portrait photographer, window dresser, costume designer and drag queen living in New York when he shot, painstakingly, between 1963 and 1970, this handmade, riotously color-saturated fantasia on sets built in his tiny apartment. He picked up and made a star out of teenage runaway Bobby Kendall, the hunk o' beefcake with whom he lived amid the ever-flowing profusion of lumber, tinsel, props, costumes and other magical matter of movie artifice in never-ending transformations of jerrybuilt enchantment that was their home. Inspired by MGM Technicolor musicals and their kitsch goddesses, Bidgood refashioned Kendall and the Narcissus myth to his own hue-added homoerotic purposes in this dialogue-free, music-driven singularity. The early scenes, presumably shot first, deploy the discreet, underground queer film codes of the early 60s to trace across a fake empyrean only the slightest hint of a narrative trajectory for the film's dreamboat protagonist. Subsequent scenes introduce slightly more sexual explicitness as the project progresses through the increasingly permissive decade. A description of Bidgood might remind one of the contemporaneous New York spellcaster and fellow Maria Montez-worshipper, Jack Smith, but where Smith's legendary work glories in a shrieking, unfocused derangement, every one of Bidgood's frames is drop-dead gorgeous, mythic, restrained! Bidgood removed his name from the credits in a disagreement with some moneymen who came late to the project, which was finally completed and released to indifference in 1971, just as *Boys in the Sand* launched the Golden Age of Mainstream Porn, pushing the sumptuous suggestiveness of Bidgood into the oblivion of forgotten boners. Bidgood's masterpiece was finally rereleased in 2004.

Directed by James Bidgood. With Bobby Kendall, Charles Ludlam, Don Brooks  
US 1971, 35mm, color, 71 min



FELIX E. FEIST *THE THREAT*

# POINTS OF DEPARTURE... ALFRED GUZZETTI

MARCH 20 – APRIL 10

To trace Alfred Guzzetti's career in film and video is to follow a trail through the intersections of motion picture media and form. Just as other, early interests—including still photography, music composition and English literature—fold elegantly into the structure of his moving image work, his films and videos likewise encompass a diversity of forms while always seeking a rigorous understanding of the specificity of those particular forms. He operates dexterously among avant-garde film, video and installation, as well as a variety of documentary genres: autobiographical, ethnographic, and film essay. In addition to many years teaching film at Harvard, he is also the author of numerous essays on film, as well as the innovative investigation *Two or Three Things I Know about Her: Analysis of a Film By Godard* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

In 1960s Cambridge during the awakening of the 16mm verité explosion, Guzzetti—who already had some youthful film experience—took the first film class at Harvard taught by Robert Gardner; after graduating, he began teaching a new media course at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He made a few short films and a double-projected documentary, *Notes on the Harvard Strike* (1969). This led to his first significant film, *Air*, a dense “film opera” that was heavily influenced by both his musical background and his frequent trips to MIT's Film Society, a screening series that featured the films of complex sound-and-image composers like Peter Kubelka and Bruce Baillie.

Having been exposed to a range of personal and ethnographic documentary by the early 70s, Guzzetti sought to pursue his own path using a subject he knew well by expanding backwards in time and deeper into the present. The result was *Family Portrait Sitings*, which opens an autobiographical door onto the vast landscape connecting his family to the history of immigration in America. He continued making personal ethnographies and then joined filmmaker Richard P. Rogers and photographer Susan Meiselas on his first works abroad, *Living at Risk: The Story of a Nicaraguan Family* (1985) and *Pictures from a Revolution* (1991), which covered the Nicaraguan revolution from alternative points of view. He also collaborated with Ákos Östör and Lina Fruzzetti on the ethnographies *Seed and Earth* (1994) and *Khalfan and Zanzibar* (1999), depicting life in rural Bengal and Zanzibar, respectively.

Impressed with the audio quality of video as opposed to 16mm film's mono soundtrack, Guzzetti also began creating poetic, short video works in the early 90s, meant for gallery display. Working with audio and visual montage in addition to scrolling text—often detailing his own dream narratives—Guzzetti again imparts a musical sense of composition and rhythm, drifting in and out of dream, memory, mediated reality and a never-existent present. Whether at home, in a foreign land or in an unlocatable mental space, Guzzetti questions perception and representation while deeply observing the mysterious forces that shape existence. His rhythmic approach translated well to his many collaborations with composers via multi-screen installations or video pieces made for live orchestral performances.

Scott MacDonald compares Guzzetti's editing technique to Nathaniel Dorsky's “polyvalent montage,” wherein “each shot subtly refers backward and forward, each cut reveals both change and continuity within a complex, evolving montage structure.” Perhaps also relevant is the musical concept of counterpoint, in which independent musical lines harmonize and melodically interact. Guzzetti's montages are of parallel modern realities—the connected and the alienated, the everyday and the exotic, nature and city, motion and stillness, the mirror and what it reflects, the film and what it represents—and their occasional, revelatory points of intersection.

Alfred Guzzetti will join us for two evenings to discuss these multivalent intersections and interactions within his evolving oeuvre. – BG

Film descriptions by Brittany Gravely, David Pendleton and Jeremy Rossen. All films directed by Alfred Guzzetti.



ALFRED GUZZETTI *FAMILY PORTRAIT SITINGS*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
ALFRED GUZZETTI IN PERSON  
SUNDAY MARCH 20 AT 7PM

## FAMILY PORTRAIT SITINGS

Using photographs, interviews, home movies, and footage shot in Philadelphia and abroad, *Family Portrait Sitings* lays out the history of the filmmaker's family, including grandparents, parents and other relatives. Divided into three sections and proceeding chronologically—from the Guzzettis' origins in Italy to their life in the United States—the film not only chronicles the family's intimate events but also inserts them into the history of 20th century America. Guzzetti carefully includes the recounting of customs that document a shift from immigrant community to assimilation into a less communal, contemporary America.

US 1975, 16mm, b/w, 103 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
ALFRED GUZZETTI IN PERSON  
SATURDAY MARCH 26 AT 7PM

## A TROPICAL STORY

Taking its title from the conjectured subject of a film in a dream, *A Tropical Story* ventures into foreign lands both internal and external, discovering where they intersect and where they diverge. Moving between life's stations of transition, Guzzetti's existential tour contemplates the transience of all life, the mutability of all perception.

US 1998, digital video, color, 10 min

## THE TOWER OF INDUSTRIAL LIFE

Resembling a glimpse inside the DNA of modern existence, Guzzetti's breathtaking composition seems to harness all the visible and invisible forces that connect and disconnect humanity. The various natural, political, violent, serene, exhilarating and alienating powers comprise a mediated complex through which the focal point of mortality appears both ever-present and faraway. Guzzetti pinpoints this surreal tension by recognizing its inherent blindness.

US 2000, digital video, color & b/w, 16 min

## CALCUTTA INTERSECTION

A busy three-way intersection in Calcutta flows with the pulsing synergy of daytime life and movement, while the news headlines of the day scroll along the bottom of the frame in this observational, single-shot work.

US 2003, digital video, color, 10 min

## STILL POINT

Façades, cityscapes, landscapes—a series of images shot with a still camera—Guzzetti shifts his video work from that often made to be seen on a monitor in a gallery to that meant to be experienced large-scale, in widescreen. The images themselves are visually simple,

but also stunningly beautiful and emotionally complex. There is a surface tension to the work, so that seemingly placid shots can seem ominous, or at least portentous. The work's title and a final dissolve between two images seem to indicate that Guzzetti is exploring the relationship between the moment and its division by past and future.

US 2009, digital video, color & b/w, 15 min

## TIME PRESENT

Guzzetti uses HD video to explore street scenes, portraits, seascapes and skyscapes in slow motion and with startlingly vivid detail, as the camera seems to move more quickly than the mostly static pedestrians it captures. As in the films of Jean Epstein, the slow motion serves to render the moment more potent, as it makes the spectator more aware of the passing of time, as does the evocative use of sound and the score by Kurt Stallmann.

US 2013, DCP, color, 17 min



ALFRED GUZZETTI *STILL POINT*



SATURDAY APRIL 2 AT 7PM

### FRENCH GESTURES (GESTES)

When Laurence Wylie, Harvard's renowned scholar of France, sought to make a film to accompany his book *Beaux Gestes: A Guide to French Body Talk*, he turned to Guzzetti. The resulting documentation of dozens of gestures and their meanings finds Guzzetti's fascination with language at its most explicit application. Surprisingly engrossing, this straightforward educational film is a fascinating sidelight on Guzzetti's interest in fusing language and image.

US 1974, 16mm, b/w, 27 min

### SCENES FROM CHILDHOOD

Straightforwardly and sympathetically, Guzzetti films children at seemingly unsupervised and unselfconscious play, with parents very rarely in evidence, and usually only as offscreen voices, at that. We watch as a small group of children (Guzzetti's own and those of friends) interact, in various times, places and combinations, revealing in the process their developing mastery of language, technology and their imaginations. This merging of the impulses behind documentary, ethnography and home movies comes to life through Guzzetti's patient, precise aim of the camera.

US 1980, digital video, color, 78 min

SUNDAY APRIL 10 AT 7PM

### AIR

Guzzetti takes the pulse of a certain cross-section of the American left in the early 1970s and comes up with a complex portrait of a time that Scott MacDonald has described as "both exhilarating and frightening." For example, calm, elegant pans are accompanied by radio reports on political torture. The elaborate soundtrack often juxtaposes two voices, one in each channel, while a collage of documentary footage shot on the streets of Cambridge and Boston alternates with staged moments

and with tender portraits of Guzzetti's friends.

US 1971, digital video, color & b/w, 18 min

### EVIDENCE

If *Air* is the portrait of a group of people in a specific place, *Evidence* expands to include the whole US. During a cross-country road trip with Richard Rogers, Guzzetti mounted a camera facing out the windshield. He paired the resulting footage with music and recordings from the car radio to provide a snapshot of the nation in the turbulent early 1970s.

US 1972, 16mm, color, 16 min

### ROSETTA STONE

The first in Guzzetti's "Language Lessons" video cycle, *Rosetta Stone* may provide a kind of key to the others, including *The Curve of the World*, if only through its scrolling mantra, "Within a short time, all knowledge and consciousness of this form of writing was lost." New screens materialize inside the central screen; they may be windows or mirrors or both. Guzzetti's multiple dialects



ALFRED GUZZETTI ROSETTA STONE

intersect yet do not appear to actually touch, while all things solid seem held together by motion and the vacillations of memory and interpretation.

US 1993/2001, digital video, color, 10 min

### THE CURVE OF THE WORLD

The moving image allows Guzzetti to follow simultaneous, separate paths—some through the cryptic metaphor of dream, some through ordinary reality, others purely emotional and abstract. The paths are also territorial demarcations: flags, borders, the Berlin Wall, the edge of the earth, the work of art. These may be precise boundaries yet they are sometimes invisible, often ephemeral. They mark the difference between inside and outside, synthetic and natural, past and present, experience and memory.

US 1994/99, digital video, color, 6 min

### UNDER THE RAIN

An elliptical journey through China, but which China, whose China? The China of the imagination, of memory, of dream, of mediated culture? Serene rural landscapes alternate with the clang of city life as Guzzetti's rippling, rhythmic structure displaces and disorients while holding onto certain constants, such as movement, change and the moon.

US 1997, digital video, color, 11 min

### TIME EXPOSURE

A return to Guzzetti family history grows out of photographs taken by the filmmaker's father, and one street scene in particular. This film/video essay about the tension between still photography and the passage of time revisits not only the 1930s but also the 1970s, during the making of *Family Portrait Settings*. Ultimately, Guzzetti's musings spiral out from one photograph to a moving consideration of the mysteries of existence.

US 2012, digital video, b/w, 11 min

## WAKE (SUBIC) BY JOHN GIANVITO

MARCH 13



JOHN GIANVITO WAKE (SUBIC)

*Wake (Subic)* is the second part of Gianvito's documentary diptych entitled *For Example, the Philippines*, coming after *Vapor Trail (Clark)*, which screened at the HFA in 2010. That film detailed the violence and destruction wrought in the Philippines by focusing on the environmental damage left after the closing of Clark Air Base, where toxic waste has contributed to elevated rates of birth defects and fatal diseases. As the diptych's title explains, the Philippines serves here as but one example among many of the ruinous and corrosive impacts of American foreign policy—and unchecked militarism more generally—that Gianvito could have chosen, the proper history of which remains still largely ignored today. Gianvito's work is a furious strike against that ignorance. — DP

SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS \$12

JOHN GIANVITO IN PERSON

SUNDAY MARCH 13 AT 3PM

### WAKE (SUBIC)

An epic about the wages of US colonialism and militarism, this film is at once a captivating historical essay and an impassioned work of witnessing. Gianvito focuses this time on the suffering caused by environmental military waste after the Philippines' Subic Bay naval base was closed in 1992. As in *Vapor Trail (Clark)*, Gianvito chronicles in depth the experiences of Filipinos contending with birth defects because of this waste. But he also amps up the history this time, uncovering a

fascinating and disconcerting backlog of injustice and violence, illustrated with revealing, seldom-seen archival material.

Over the past several years, Gianvito has emerged as one of this country's most impassioned political filmmakers, yet his passion emerges in equal parts anger, informed reason and compassion, and never as hysteria or hectoring. Here, besides recounting the shameful history and witnessing the lives of those affected, he also spends time with community activists and other locals. Above all, his intense commitment emerges cinematically: in the image, in the use of time and editing, in giving the audience information but also, crucially, time for empathy.

Directed by John Gianvito  
Philippines/US 2015, DCP, color, 277 min. English and Tagalog with English subtitles



# NEW WORKS BY ERNIE GEHR

MARCH 28

Ernie Gehr (b. 1941) returns to the Harvard Film Archive with three new works that reaffirm his status as one of the great masters of the postwar American experimental cinema. Although still best known for his iconic Structuralist film *Serene Velocity*, the larger arc of Gehr's long career as a profound innovator and, moreover, as an important thinker about film form and history is at last being recognized. For, equally important to the formalist rigor of Gehr's cinema is its long engagement with the deeper and still largely uncharted technological, philosophical and sociocultural histories underlying the moving image in all of its complexities. While *Eureka* (1974) was Gehr's first work to openly turn to early cinema with its bold reanimation of a 1906 travelogue film, in truth, all of his films—including his first work, *Morning* (1968)—can be seen as critical reinventions of earlier modes of the moving image. After shifting from 16mm film to digital video, Gehr began increasingly to explore the world of the moving image before and beyond cinema, in works such as *Glider* (2001), shot entirely within a camera obscura. Just as Gehr and fellow Structuralist filmmakers—such as Ken Jacobs and scholar-filmmaker Noël Burch—clearly anticipated the discovery of early and so-called “primitive” cinema by film scholars, so too can Gehr's work since the turn of millennium be seen as an anticipation of the recently emergent field of Media Archaeology. Rather than simply returning to a “pre-cinema” locked into an assumed and false teleology with today's cinematic practices, Gehr's digital work suggests a different history and possible future for cinema.

The three recent works gathered for this program thus turn to the worlds of the magic lantern, amateur photography and the train as alternate sites for a rich and wholly different kind of moving image production. In *New York Lantern* and *Photographic Phantoms*, a new narrative lyricism and political outspokenness enters Gehr's cinema, haunted now by ghosts, from long-ago travels and struggles, that are gifted with an uncanny voice and presence. The invisible train heard insistently throughout *Photographic Phantoms* becomes a form of camera in the marvelous *A Commuter's Life (What a Life!)*, which gives sculptural dimension and kaleidoscopic novelty to footage shot by Gehr during his commutes from his native New York to Harvard, where he was teaching a seminar on the history of phantasmagoria, of cinema before cinema. – HG

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

ERNIE GEHR IN PERSON

MONDAY MARCH 28 AT 7PM

**NEW YORK LANTERN**

Directed by Ernie Gehr

US 2008, digital video, color & b/w, 15 min

**PHOTOGRAPHIC PHANTOMS**

Directed by Ernie Gehr

US 2014, digital video, color & b/w, 26 min

**A COMMUTER'S LIFE**

**(WHAT A LIFE!)**

Directed by Ernie Gehr

US 2015, digital video, color & b/w, 19 min



ERNIE GEHR *PHOTOGRAPHIC PHANTOMS*



ERNIE GEHR *A COMMUTER'S LIFE (WHAT A LIFE!)*

# PHIL COLLINS: A LEARNING SITE

MARCH 24 – APRIL 8



PHIL COLLINS *THE WORLD WON'T LISTEN*

Phil Collins is a British-born filmmaker, visual artist, cultural organizer, and educator based in Berlin and Wuppertal. His diverse practice is characterized by close engagements with place and communities, which over the years have included, amongst others, disco-dancing Palestinians, fans of The Smiths across three continents, Kosovan-Albanian refugees, the youth of Baghdad, antifascist skinheads in Malaysia, the homeless population of Cologne, and teachers of Marxism-Leninism from the former German Democratic Republic. Rather than static portraits, the works resulting from these collaborations articulate the nuances of relations embedded in the aesthetic regimes and economies that define everyday existence, from news and politics to entertainment and shopping. Throughout, Collins upholds a commitment to myriad forms of experience across the social spectrum, and an interest in the contradictory impulses of intimacy and desire within the public sphere.

*Phil Collins: A Learning Site* is organized by James Voorhies, the John R. and Barbara Robinson Family Director, and features a series of public seminars, screenings at the HFA and a video installation, concluding with a weeklong residency and public talk. Organized in conjunction with a course on contemporary art and curatorial practice in Visual and Environmental Studies, *Phil Collins: A Learning Site* combines the public sphere of the exhibition with the intimacy and critical reflection of an academic seminar to focus on and think through, as a community, the impact of this singular artist within the context of recent art history and contemporary culture. For more information please visit: [ccva.fas.harvard.edu](http://ccva.fas.harvard.edu).

*Viewable in the Sert Gallery from March 2 through April 17, the meaning of style (2011) explores the ways in which subcultures circulate and translate among different historical, ethnic and social contexts. The film features a group of anti-fascist Malay skinheads who appear to move between the imaginative and literal spaces of cinema. They co-opt the style of this typically British subculture and, bridging time and space, restore it to its original, progressive and antiracist meaning united by community, fashion and music within their post-colonial South Asian context.*



FREE ADMISSION

THURSDAY MARCH 24 AT 5:30PM

### THE WORLD WON'T LISTEN

(DUNIA TAK AKAN MENDENGAR)

In his three-part video project, Collins compiles original footage of music fans in Colombia, Turkey and Indonesia performing karaoke to the 1987 album *The World Won't Listen* by celebrated British indie rock band The Smiths. The musical soundtrack, part of a fully functioning karaoke machine built especially for this project, was recorded in Bogotá in 2004 when the artist collaborated with local musicians to reproduce The Smiths' music note-for-note with uncanny precision. He then invited fans from all over the city to sing their favorite tracks in front of his camera. Subsequent iterations of the project took place in Istanbul in 2005 and were featured in the 9th Istanbul Biennial, while the final edition—screened here—was produced in 2007 in Jakarta and Bandung.

Directed by Phil Collins  
Indonesia 2007, digital video, color, 56 min

Followed by Open Seminar: Phil Collins in Context  
(Part 1) 7 pm, Sert Gallery, Level 3

FREE ADMISSION

THURSDAY MARCH 31 AT 6PM

### THIS UNFORTUNATE THING BETWEEN US

*This Unfortunate Thing Between Us* adopts the aesthetics and language of a televised shopping network, with repeated sales pitches, viewer phone-ins, network personalities, telephone operators, and product information scrolling across the screen. But instead of selling jewelry, bakeware, and treadmills, a crew of actors, porn workers and musicians host a program called TUTBU TV, which offers real-life experiences. For a promotional price of only €9.99, home viewers were able to call in and interview for an opportunity to be questioned in a Stasi-style interrogation scene, act in a Victorian-era porno or stage their final dramatic hours in a hospital. Presented in a Berlin theater and broadcast live over two consecutive nights, *This Unfortunate Thing Between Us* reflects on our ingrained and ultimately unrequited desire to connect as mediated by the omnipresent technology of the screen.

Directed by Phil Collins  
Germany 2011, digital video, color, 120 min

FREE ADMISSION

PHIL COLLINS IN PERSON

THURSDAY APRIL 7 AT 6 PM

### TOMORROW IS ALWAYS TOO LONG

Documentary musical or musical documentary? The feature-length film *Tomorrow Is Always Too Long* has been described as a “modern day city symphony.” A paean to Glasgow, Scotland's largest urban center, it effortlessly interweaves genres and visual styles to present a range of voices from institutions and communities that define the complex character of the city. The film's diverse but unified character mirrors inhabitants of Glasgow and captures ordinary aspects of life when they take on singular and cinematic proportions.

Directed by Phil Collins  
UK 2014, DCP, color & b/w, 82 min

THURSDAY APRIL 21 AT 6PM

Open Seminar: Phil Collins in Context (Part 2)

Sert Gallery, Level 3

### HOW TO RULE OTHERS

Drawing on the breadth of the Harvard Film Archive's collection, two film programs put together by Phil Collins and Sinisa Mitrovic offer another opportunity to engage with Collins' varied practice. Collins and Mitrovic first met in 1999 in Belgrade, soon after the NATO bombing of Serbia. In the past decade they have closely collaborated on the production and realization of Collins' projects. In 2010 they organized *Auto-Kino!*, an extensive exhibition of feature films and artists' film and video, presented as a drive-in cinema in the center of Berlin. In 2015 the project appeared in a new iteration as *Cinema Sayyara!* in Ramallah, Palestine, as part of Riwaq Biennale. “How to bring a drive-in to the Carpenter Center without the cars?” asks Collins. “Of course it's impossible. But we had at our fingertips one of the best film archives in the world, and wanted to connect it to some of our interests in film, politics and popular media—even without cheap beer, greasy popcorn, and the chance to winch down the passenger seat to an almost prone position. You can, after all, pop out to Quincy Street and do that yourself in the interval.”

The first program is loosely related to the Yugoslav Black Wave, a cinema movement from the 60s and 70s that produced some of the most original and daring titles of this period worldwide. Causing controversy at the time of their release, the Black Wave films depicted and critiqued “real existing socialism” from a Marxist perspective, often by examining the shortfall between life as it was lived and its representation through Socialist Realism officially sanctioned by the state. Even though it was made in 1993, after the breakup of former Yugoslavia, *Tito Among the Serbs For the Second Time* by Zelimir Zilnik is as probing in its consideration of the social, emotional and subjective responses to the structures of power as his earlier works.

The Harvard Film Archive holds one of the most complete collections of Vlatko Gilic's experimental documentary shorts. *Power* from 1973 plunges the viewer into an engrossing and increasingly ominous act of group hypnosis performed by Slobodan Cirkovic Roko (who also memorably appears in Dusan Makavejev's *Man Is Not a Bird* (1965), another Black Wave classic). Both films enact an understanding of political power as performative and mediated, while rooted in a deeply affective realm.

Did television kill the Internet? The jury is still out not on the apparent decline of television but how its myriad forms and rhythms have successfully migrated to shape our reception of the Internet. Television was the dominant medium of the second half of the twentieth century, and both the political influence of mass-produced entertainment and our intimate relationship with broadcast culture are still being unpacked. The social and aesthetic implications of TV production have been one of Collins' longstanding interests. The films in this evening's second half look back at the heyday of the mythological box that used to take pride of place in every living room. They include a parrot announcing the end of the world in 1977 in a live action/animation hybrid from the renowned Visual and Environmental Studies animation department at Harvard University; a 1981 documentary about the impact of television on American society on the cusp of the Reagan era; a 1965 nuclear war docudrama first produced and then swiftly banned by the BBC and the British government; and a lyrical view of the hypnotic pull exercised by the screen's spectral presence, as today so in 1995. — Phil Collins and Sinisa Mitrovic

INTRODUCTION BY PHIL COLLINS AND  
SINISA MITROVIC

FRIDAY APRIL 8 AT 7PM

### TITO AMONG THE SERBS FOR THE SECOND TIME (TITO PO DRUGI PUT MEDJU SRBIMA)

Directed by Zelimir Zilnik  
Yugoslavia 1994, video, color, 45 min. Serbo-Croatian with English subtitles

### POWER (MOC)

Directed by Vlatko Gilic  
Yugoslavia 1973, 16mm, color, 34 min

FRIDAY APRIL 8 AT 9PM

### THE PSYCHIC PARROT

Directed by Derek Lamb  
US 1977, 16mm, color, 20 min

### TELEVISION: THE ENCHANTED MIRROR

Directed by Julene Bair and George Csicsery  
US 1981, 16mm, color, 28 min

### THE WAR GAME

Directed by Peter Watkins  
UK 1966, 16mm, b/w, 49 min

### EVIDENCE

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



PETER WATKINS THE WAR GAME



# THREE HAMLETS

MARCH 21 – APRIL 24

Joining the Houghton Library in honor of the quatercentenary of Shakespeare's death, the Harvard Film Archive offers three of the most innovative screen adaptations of the Bard's most endearing play, *Hamlet*, with text composed by Argentine filmmaker Matías Piñeiro, himself one of today's great and most active screen adapters of Shakespeare in films such as *Viola* (2013) and *The Princess of France* (2014), which showed recently at the Harvard Film Archive.

Shakespeare: His Collected Works will be on exhibit in the Edison and Newman Room of Harvard's Houghton Library from January 19 through April 23. On view will be important early editions, including the iconic First Folio owned by Harry Elkins Widener; creative respondents to Shakespeare from his eighteenth-century editor and critic Samuel Johnson through the modernist poet e.e. cummings; theatrical memorabilia highlighting the careers of great Shakespearean actors and actresses; and an arresting array of visual materials that trace the development of Shakespearean stagecraft over four centuries. For more information, visit [hcl.harvard.edu/info/exhibitions](http://hcl.harvard.edu/info/exhibitions).

Special thanks: Laura Argento—Cineteca Nazionale (Rome). Film descriptions by Matías Piñeiro.



CARMELO BENE *ONE HAMLET LESS*

MONDAY MARCH 21 AT 7PM

## HAMLET

Here stands the quintessential film version of this play. For many people the image of Shakespeare in film is inseparable from Laurence Olivier's performance in this "Two Cities" post-World War II production. But this canonical positioning shouldn't blind us to the risky decisions that Olivier proudly made as the director of this film. His love for theater prevented him from hiding the origins of his material. He actually enhanced the imminent presence of the stage, the strange feeling of watching a play through cinema.



LAURENCE OLIVIER *HAMLET*

The freedom with which Olivier edited the text—cutting many verses while maintaining others, as well as the complete disposing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's characters—introduced a new idea of fidelity in film adaptations. It is the oppressive presence of the décor, the beautiful echoing of the verses, the extension of the shots and the ghostly camera movements that make Olivier's version so original and so far removed from the weakened, conventional TV-drama *mise-en-scène* of Shakespeare films to follow.

Directed by Laurence Olivier. With Laurence Olivier, Eileen Herlie, Basil Sydney  
UK 1948, 35mm, b/w, 153 min

MONDAY APRIL 18 AT 7PM

## HAMLET (*GAMLET*)

Kozintsev bears the burden of carrying Olivier's version on his back. Instead of avoiding that pressure, he faces the fact and produces a series of inversions and new winnings that recuperate some aspects of Shakespeare's text while introducing further innovations. The strongest decision in this adaptation is its turn toward nature, with the sun, the sea and the wind affecting the performances, as they perhaps would have under Elizabethan-era conditions, yet reinforcing a distinctly Romantic tone. Jonas Gričius' low camera angles and lighting effects accentuate this dominant mood that Dmitri Shostakovich then counterpoints with his modernist score. Crowds take part in the action and, most importantly, politics re-enters. The State of Denmark is rotting, and the story of Hamlet is a symptom of that decadence. But the greatest provocation in this version relies on its linguistic aspect: Shakespeare's English is translated into Russian. With this transformation, Kozintsev seems to say, "This text also belongs to us." The different accentuations and sounds provide a new perspective in the spectator's appreciation of the text. For non-Russian speakers, subtitles make the words visible, while the emphasis on the

text's musicality adds an unusual layer of abstraction to the Shakespearean adaptation.

Directed by Grigori Kozintsev. With Innokenty Smoktunovsky, Mikhail Nazvanov, Elza Radzinya  
1964 Soviet Union, 35mm, b/w, 140 min. Russian with English subtitles

SUNDAY APRIL 24 AT 5PM

## ONE HAMLET LESS (*UN AMLETO DI MENO*)

The very title of the film liberates it from any responsibility to the original text. Bene assumes that we all know *Hamlet's* story, so he feels no need to repeat it to us. Preferring to violate expectations by producing a neo-cubic collage of the figures and phantoms from the play that haunt him, Bene renders an illuminating version of Shakespeare's most famous play through psychoanalysis, nudity, anachronistic cultural references, experimental theater and colored, multilayer montage. His kaleidoscopic *mise-en-scène* returns to Olivier's in its theatricality and to Kozintsev's in its concern with politics, but this film is filtered through a highly disturbed conscience. Bene aims to subvert *Hamlet* in an anti-naturalist detour until there is not much left of the original. Condensing and rewriting the five acts into an hour-long, Italian-speaking featurette, he expands the Oedipus conflict and heightens the acting style. For further provocation, he transforms the famous "To be or not to be" monologue into a brief "To have or not to have" line. Adaptation in Bene's world is ultimately a vital device for Bacchanalian destruction. *Print courtesy of CSC-Cineteca Nazionale.*

Directed by Carmelo Bene. With Carmelo Bene, Lydia Mancinelli, Alfiero Vincenti  
Italy 1973, 35mm, color, 68 min. Italian with English subtitles

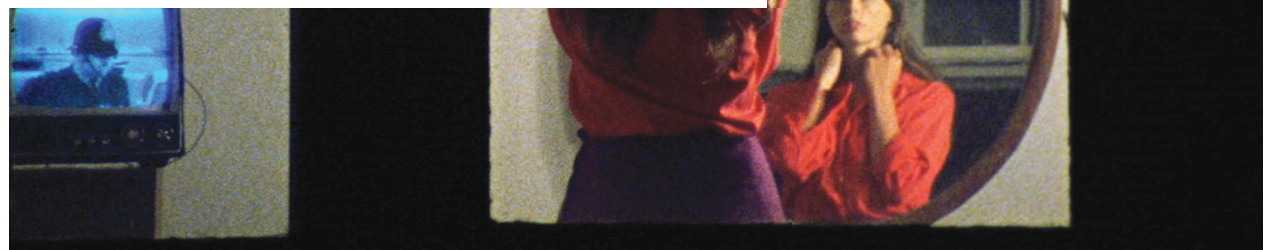


GRIGORI KOZINTSEV *HAMLET*



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>06</b> 4:30PM THREE COINS IN THE FOUNTAIN (DEC - FEB CALENDAR) 7PM POLICEMAN P. 3 NADAV LAPID IN PERSON	<b>07</b> 7PM THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER P. 3 NADAV LAPID IN PERSON	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 7PM SOMETHING WILD (1961) P. 4 9:15PM SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS P. 4	<b>12</b> 7PM ON DANGEROUS GROUND P. 4 9PM HELL DRIVERS P. 4
<b>13</b> 3PM WAKE P. 8 JOHN GIANVITO IN PERSON	<b>14</b> 7PM THE WIND P. 4 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 7PM MOONRISE P. 4 9PM MAN'S CASTLE P. 5	<b>19</b> 7PM NEW YEAR'S EVE P. 5 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT 8:30PM THE BIG HOUSE P. 5
<b>20</b> 5PM REMEMBER LAST NIGHT? P. 5 7PM FAMILY PORTRAIT SITTINGS P. 7 ALFRED GUZZETTI IN PERSON	<b>21</b> 7PM HAMLET P. 11	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 5:30PM THE WORLD WON'T LISTEN P. 10 FREE ADMISSION	<b>25</b> 7PM CHEVALIER P. 28 ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI IN PERSON	<b>26</b> 7PM THE TOWER OF INDUSTRIAL LIFE P. 7 STILL POINT P. 7 TIME PRESENT P. 7 ALFRED GUZZETTI IN PERSON
<b>27</b> 5PM DISHONORED P. 6 7PM AND WHEN I DIE, I WON'T STAY DEAD P. 15 BILLY WOODBERRY IN PERSON	<b>28</b> 7PM NEW YORK LANTERN P. 9 PHOTOGRAPHIC PHANTOMS P. 9 A COMMUTER'S LIFE P. 9 ERNIE GEHR IN PERSON	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 6PM THIS UNFORTUNATE THING BETWEEN US P. 10 FREE ADMISSION		

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.



ALFRED GUZZETTI AIR P. 8

### Harvard Film Archive

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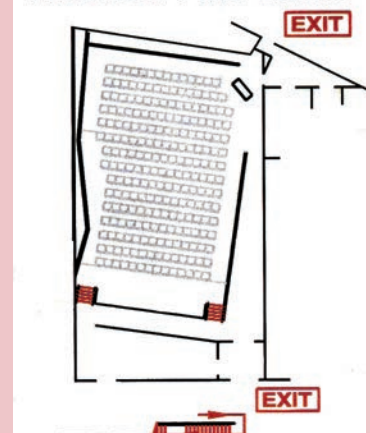
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Tickets are available 45 minutes before show time  
 All programs are subject to change  
 No late seating

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

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

### THEATER FIRE EXITS





S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					<b>01</b> <b>7PM</b> CHILDREN OF MONTMARTRE P. 6 <b>9PM</b> THE FACE BEHIND THE MASK P. 6	<b>02</b> <b>7PM</b> FRENCH GESTURES P. 8 SCENES FROM CHILDHOOD P. 8 <b>9PM</b> THE THREAT P. 6
<b>03</b> <b>5PM</b> LAUGH, CLOWN, LAUGH P. 6 LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT <b>7PM</b> THE MOON AND THE SLEDGEHAMMER P. 16 PHILIP TREVELYAN IN PERSON	<b>04</b> <b>7PM</b> LAMBING P. 16 THE SHIP HOTEL – TYNE MAIN P. 16 PHILIP TREVELYAN IN PERSON	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b> <b>6PM</b> TOMORROW IS ALWAYS TOO LONG P. 10 FREE ADMISSION - PHIL COLLINS IN PERSON	<b>08</b> <b>7PM</b> HOW TO RULE OTHERS - PART ONE P. 10 PHIL COLLINS & SINISA MITROVIC INTRODUCE <b>9PM</b> HOW TO RULE OTHERS - PART TWO P. 10	<b>09</b> <b>7PM</b> SACRED GROUND & PERPETUAL MOTION – THE ANIMATED COSMOS OF KAREN AQUA P. 17 KEN FIELD & JANEANN DILL INTRODUCE
<b>10</b> <b>5PM</b> WICKED WOMAN P. 6 <b>7PM</b> AIR P. 8 EVIDENCE P. 8 UNDER THE RAIN P. 8 TIME EXPOSURE P. 8	<b>11</b> <b>7PM</b> ROUNDABOUT IN MY HEAD P. 18 HASSEN FERHANI IN PERSON	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>7PM</b> THE RED DETACHMENT OF WOMEN P. 19 CHRIS BERRY INTRODUCES <b>9:30PM</b> BIG LI, LITTLE LI AND OLD LI P. 19	<b>16</b> <b>7PM</b> WHEN THE EYE QUAKES. THE CINEMA OF PAOLO GIOLI – PROGRAM 1 P. 21 PAOLO GIOLI IN PERSON
<b>17</b> <b>4PM</b> LAND'S RED P. 21 <b>ROOM B-04</b> PAOLO GIOLI IN PERSON <b>7PM</b> THE CINEMA OF PAOLO GIOLI – PROGRAM 3 P. 22 PAOLO GIOLI IN PERSON	<b>18</b> <b>7PM</b> HAMLET (GAMLET) P. 11	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <b>7PM</b> STAGE SISTERS P. 19 RICHARD PEÑA INTRODUCES <b>9:30PM</b> THE HERDSMAN P. 19	<b>23</b> <b>7PM</b> HIBISCUS TOWN P. 19
<b>24</b> <b>5PM</b> ONE HAMLET LESS P. 11 <b>7PM</b> WOMAN BASKETBALL PLAYER NO. 5 P. 19	<b>25</b> <b>7PM</b> ACNE P. 22	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

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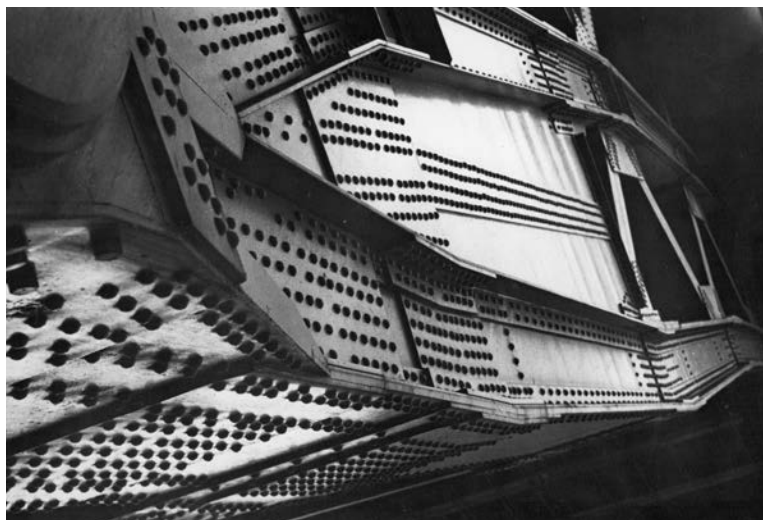
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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p><b>01</b></p> <p>4PM LEGEND OF TIANYUN MOUNTAIN P. 20</p> <p>7PM A USEFUL LIFE P. 22 FEDERICO VEIROJ IN PERSON</p>	<p><b>02</b></p> <p>7PM THE APOSTATE P. 23 FEDERICO VEIROJ IN PERSON</p>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<p><b>06</b></p> <p>7PM CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES - PROGRAM ONE P. 24</p>	<p><b>07</b></p> <p>7PM CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES - PROGRAM TWO P. 24</p> <p>9PM PINK NARCISSUS P. 6</p>
<p><b>08</b></p> <p>5PM BIG WARE P. 16 K. 491 IN PREPARATION P. 16</p> <p>7PM CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES - PROGRAM THREE P. 24</p>	<p><b>09</b></p> <p>7PM WHEN THE EYE QUAKES. THE CINEMA OF PAOLO GIOLI – PROGRAM 4 P. 22</p> <p>8PM CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES - PROGRAM FOUR P. 24</p>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>7PM TOKYO DRIFTER P. 25</p> <p>9PM PASSPORT TO DARKNESS P. 26</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>7PM GATE OF FLESH P. 26</p> <p>9PM THE CALL OF BLOOD P. 26</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>5PM BASIL BUNTING P. 16</p> <p>7PM BRANDED TO KILL P. 26</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>7PM SMASHING THE O-LINE P. 26</p>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>7PM CARMEN FROM KAWACHI P. 26</p> <p>9PM THE SLEEPING BEAST WITHIN P. 26</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>7PM PISTOL OPERA P. 27</p> <p>9:30PM A TALE OF SORROW AND SADNESS P. 27</p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>5PM GATE OF FLESH P. 26</p> <p>7PM CAPONE CRIES A LOT P. 27</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>7PM YOUTH OF THE BEAST P. 26</p>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>7PM KAGERO-ZA P. 27</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>7PM STORY OF A PROSTITUTE P. 27</p> <p>9PM CARMEN FROM KAWACHI P. 26</p>
<p><b>29</b></p> <p>5PM FIGHTING ELEGY P. 27</p> <p>7PM YUMEJI P. 27</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>7PM KANTO WANDERER P. 26</p>	<b>31</b>	<div style="border: 2px dashed red; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Yes! I would like to become a Member of the Harvard Film Archive</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior \$35</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership \$55</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dual Membership \$100</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Plus \$125</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dual Plus \$200</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Silver Screen \$300</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Directors Circle \$500</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the Archive \$750</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Telephone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>Make checks payable to <i>Harvard Film Archive</i> and mail to: Brittany Gravely, Harvard Film Archive, 24 Quincy St, Cambridge MA 02138</p> </div>			



PHILIP TREVELYAN *THE SHIP HOTEL* – TYNE MAIN P. 16



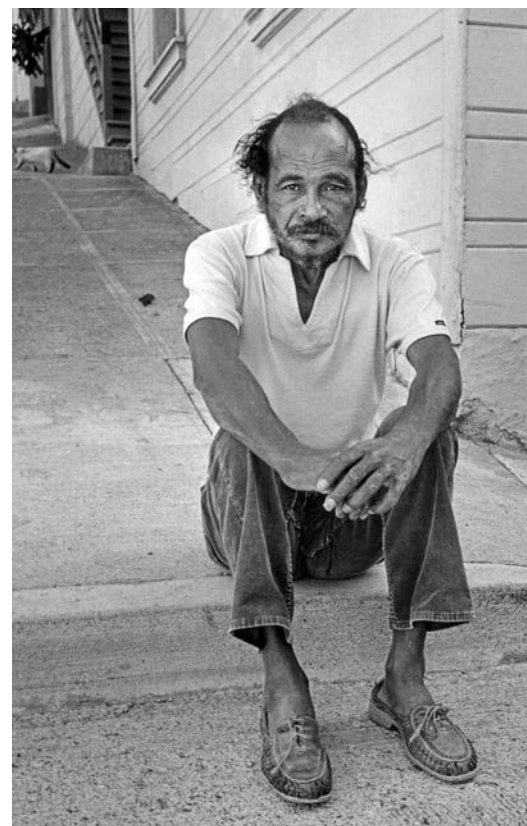
# AND WHEN I DIE, I WON'T STAY DEAD BY BILLY WOODBERRY

MARCH 27

All those ships that never sailed  
The ones with their seacocks open  
That were scuttled in their stalls...  
Today I bring them back  
Huge and transitory  
And let them sail  
Forever.

— from *All Those Ships That Never Sailed* (1973)

The long-awaited second feature film by Billy Woodberry recovers the legend, legacy and ultimately tragic life of Beat-poet Bob Kaufman (1925-1986), skillfully melding recitations of his verse together with rare archival photographs and interviews to offer a moving homage to the artist often called the “American Rimbaud.” Like *Bless Their Little Hearts* (1984), Woodberry’s celebrated neo-realist debut film, *And When I Die, I Won’t Stay Dead* chronicles with great sensitivity an unwritten chapter in the history of marginalized America, shedding new light on Kaufman’s still underappreciated poetry and the difficult struggles of the half-black, half-Jewish and fervently left-wing poet. A poet of the oral tradition, Kaufman’s verse was neither written nor recorded and threatened to disappear entirely if not for the valiant efforts of his second wife to publish her husband’s work. Equally fleeting was the figure of Kaufman himself, who once declared that his “ambition is to be completely forgotten” and who, at the height of his creative powers, took a self-imposed and apparently unbroken ten-year vow of silence in haunting lament for the assassinated John F. Kennedy. Woodberry, whose own thirty-one-year break from filmmaking is subtly acknowledged by his film, reasserts Kaufman’s fleeting yet vivid figure into the art and poetry scenes transforming Greenwich Village and San Francisco’s North Beach, offering first-hand accounts of Kaufman by fellow poets such as Jack Hirschman, as well as extraordinary photographs of the Happenings and haunts animated by Kaufman’s indelible presence. Especially resonant is Woodberry’s careful use of Kaufman’s own words, released like birds throughout the film, together with the understated fragments of the jazz and conga drums that so inspired the unique cadence and visionary language of Kaufman’s extraordinary poems. — HG



BILLY WOODBERRY AND WHEN I DIE, I WON'T STAY DEAD

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

BILLY WOODBERRY IN PERSON

SUNDAY MARCH 27 AT 7PM

**AND WHEN I DIE, I WON'T STAY DEAD**

Directed by Billy Woodberry. US/Portugal 2015, DCP, color, 89 min

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## ODES TO LAND AND LABORS OF LOVE. THE FILMS OF PHILIP TREVELYAN.

APRIL 3 – MAY 15

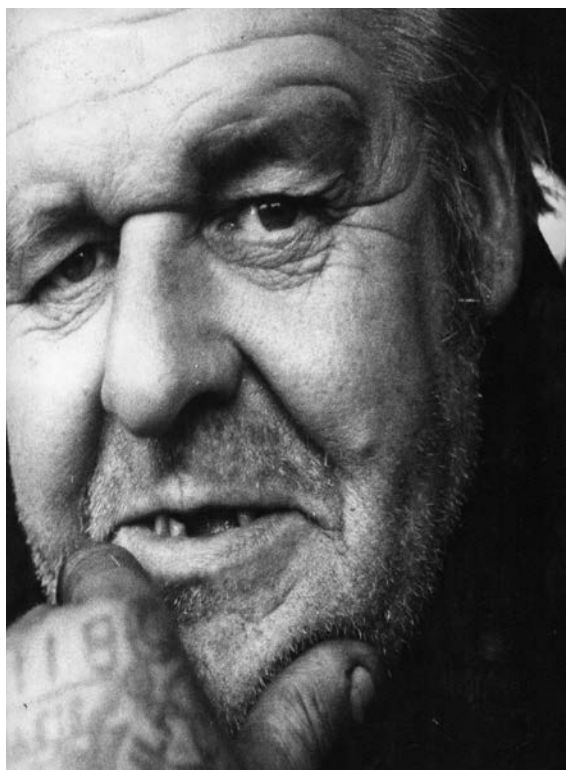
Philip Trevelyan (b. 1943) is a legendary yet sorely unheralded British filmmaker rooted in the rich tradition of poetic documentary that flourished in England during the Thirties. His lyrical films offer portraits of resolutely local communities seemingly fixed in time and people who live in intimate communion with the land. *The Ship Hotel – Tyne Main* is the name, subject and location of his arguably most exemplary film, a moving portrait of a Tyneside pub that captures the melancholic utopia of a Sunday gathering of singers, domino-players and lovers, joined briefly in drinks, garrulous affection and rousing song. Completed as his degree film at the Royal College of Art, *The Ship Hotel – Tyne Main* reveals the equally anthropological and poetic gaze that gives Trevelyan’s filmmaking such a rare sensitivity to the subtlest nuances of place and gesture. Trevelyan masterfully interweaves the distinct voices and lived experiences embodied by the pub-goers into a composite portrait tracing the deeper history of heavy industry in Northern England with the unspoken dreams of young and old gathered around the pub’s flickering hearth fire. Equally impressive as Trevelyan’s camerawork is his close attention to sound and the musicality of the human voice, a love of rhythmic cadence that would culminate, years later, in a moving tribute to poet Basil Bunting.

While Trevelyan himself openly embraces his close allegiance to British documentarians such as John Grierson and Basil Wright, his singular artistic sensibility should also be traced hereditarily to his father, the celebrated painter Julian Trevelyan, and his mother, the influential potter Ursula Mommens. For, guided by his parents’ example, Trevelyan pursues cinema less as a profession than a vocation, a higher calling, a labor of love. This same attitude is expressed by the devotion to their craft of the poets, potters, farmers, musicians and inventors who inhabit Trevelyan’s films and by the patient intimacy that gently connects his camera and subjects. Yet the abiding interest of Trevelyan’s films in the distinct local and rural life unique to England must also be tied to his remarkable dual career as a pioneering organic farmer who brought new innovation to chemical-free agriculture through his design of award-winning tools for weeding without pesticides. *Big Ware*, a portrait of an aging potter still working tirelessly, delights as both a documentary of a dying art and an ode of sorts to English soil, the clay-veined terroir transformed into moon-shaped vessels.

Largely underappreciated, even in his native land, Trevelyan found a sudden new fame with the recent rerelease on DVD of his now best-known film *The Moon and the Sledgehammer*, a portrait of an eccentric family living willfully off the grid of modern life in a ramshackle compound dedicated to steam engines and dreams of other times. An unexpected lament for the end of the Industrial Age, *The Moon and the Sledgehammer* is both a strong critique of the hectic, unthinking pace of modern life and a poignant wish for a woefully lost connection to the land. Many have seen the strong connections between Trevelyan’s cult film and the work of younger British filmmakers such as Ben Rivers and Luke Fowler.

The first retrospective dedicated to Philip Trevelyan, this program brings together films spanning his entire career, with Trevelyan present to introduce and discuss his work. Also joining the program is producer Katy MacMillan and Chris Killip, VES Professor and celebrated photographer, whose own pioneering early work also explored the Tyneside region. — HG

Film descriptions by Philip Trevelyan.



PHILIP TREVELYAN *THE SHIP HOTEL - TYNE MAIN*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
PHILIP TREVELYAN IN PERSON  
SUNDAY APRIL 3 AT 7PM

### THE MOON AND THE SLEDGEHAMMER

This film is a brief encounter with an unusual, complex family who retreated to the woods, working primarily as agricultural contractors and engineers. In the summer months they also provided steam and electrical power for the circus; the family's father, Mr. Page—affectionately known as “Oily Page”—even became a stand-in performer in the ring. Influenced by the book of Revelations, the family was suspicious of society and progress. The development of modern agriculture in Britain's postwar drive for cheaper food removed people from the land. For Mr. Page, this social tragedy and waste was exemplified by the idea of sending people to the moon, which was about to happen when the film was recorded. However, alongside the suspicion and unhappiness that grew out of the family's retreat from society, they never let go of a simple, infectious enjoyment of life. This is captured by the grown-up children's re-enactments of happy times or by the youngest son when he describes the sound of steam engines, climbs trees, or tells us that he has observed the moon through a homemade telescope.

Directed by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1971, DCP, color, 65 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
PHILIP TREVELYAN IN CONVERSATION WITH  
VES PROFESSOR CHRIS KILLIP  
MONDAY APRIL 4 AT 7PM

### LAMBING

This is a film about a traditional Sussex shepherd who we follow from morning to night, through snow and wind, as he works alone with his flock. This was my first proper journey into filmmaking, and my subject was a person I had worked for and admired as a boy. The film is constructed from carefully edited moments in the shepherd's routine work. His passing comments about how to deliver or feed lambs are our only guide. He sometimes reflects on the difficulties he encounters, such as the deaths of lambs or the bitterly cold snowfall. On the whole, we learn that he loves his work and that he is happy when resting in his chair by the fire, making

a cup of tea or warming milk for the orphan lambs. If the film has a climax, it is captured in the struggle of a ewe giving birth to its lamb. The film ends as the evening turns to night and the shepherd returns to his chair by a warm fire: he pulls a blanket over himself and quietly sings himself to sleep.

Directed by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1965, 16mm, b/w, 23 min

### THE SHIP HOTEL – TYNE MAIN

Initially, I took still photographs and wrote notes on my visits to a special and intimate riverside pub, used by engineers, ex-coal miners, factory workers and their families. The beer was cheap and well kept, singing was encouraged and the people were close friends. There were several tales about the pub being a meeting place for lovers; I decided to include three local friends who re-enact this element within the documentary material.

We see the regular customers arriving, people at the darts board, the pub gradually filling. Suddenly we meet two retired coal miners competing at dominoes. Old Tina watches the fire and enjoys a dance. The film reaches a climax when the pub is full, the mouth organ is playing, and the singing and dancing reaches its height. It calms down when the landlord and his wife sing their love song. Before this, we have observed Dicky, the tattooed “rag and bone” collector, who lives alone and uses a horse and cart for his work: he is a legendary figure, partly because he once swam the river Tyne in winter, for a bet. He walks out of the pub towards his home and stops for a moment, to silence a small example of the technology that interferes with the world that he knows. Well warmed by the drink, he wanders into the uncertainty of a foggy night....

Directed by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1967, 16mm, b/w, 35 min

SUNDAY MAY 8 AT 5PM

### BIG WARE

This is a record of the last pottery in England that made the everyday pots that households and businesses have used for centuries. The potter, Mr. George Curtis, remembers that, in his youth, he helped fill whole railway-goods carriages with earthenware pottery. The last man to be continuing the tradition, Mr. Curtis digs his own clay, prepares it, throws it, fettles it and fires it in his kiln. George's modest claim to fame is his throwing speed, which kept him in work throughout his life. His enthusiasm and knowledge are infectious, while the craft itself is fascinating. The film follows him while he talks us through the various tasks. Toward the end of the film, he taps the fired pots as they come out of the kiln: “You

can always tell a good pot by the sound of it.” All that he shows us rings true.

Directed by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1975, 16mm, color, 40 min

### K. 491 IN PREPARATION

The treatment for this experimental production was based on the idea that before a musical performance, principal players work on their parts and that their private practice allows them a deep exploration of the music. As an amateur bassoon player, my own practice suggested that this was often true. Could this interior feeling be conveyed on film? There were three conditions imposed on the production: every note of the musical score was to be played, there were to be no words, and the programme (which was commissioned by television) had to be an hour long.

Everything takes place in and around the venue for the concert, which is an imposing 18th century house. I knew that the pianist would be practising on the piano in the house and that, because the orchestral members were staying in the same house, it seemed likely that they might also practice, albeit in separate rooms. My idea was to join together the pianist's solo work with the string and wind players' practice in a sequence of continuous musical coincidence. Meanwhile, I noticed that farmers and shepherds were also busy with their work outside. It felt to me that these two worlds could be shown to coexist, and that collisions between the inside and outside activity might add an extra dimension.

Directed by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1983, 16mm, color, 55 min

SUNDAY MAY 15 AT 5PM

### BASIL BUNTING

A lot of this production had been beautifully shot by members of the Amber film co-op, when I was asked to shape and edit the material. The film is based on Basil Bunting's magnificent recording of his autobiographical poem “Briggflats.” He believed strongly that the sound of poetry being read aloud was far more informative than extracting meaning from the page. The poem refers to the rhythm and sound of Scarlatti's music: it takes us on journeys through aspects of Bunting's extraordinary life: his life as a Quaker and as a conscientious objector (1918), as a sailor or in Italy with Ezra Pound, and in Persia where he was an Intelligence officer, *Times* correspondent and assistant to the consul. But above all, the poem constantly returns to his adolescent love for a young girl in the North of England, where the heart of the poem resides.

Directed by Peter Bell. Edited by Philip Trevelyan  
UK 1982, 16mm, color, 60 min



PHILIP TREVELYAN *LAMBING*



# SACRED GROUND & PERPETUAL MOTION – THE ANIMATED COSMOS OF KAREN AQUA

APRIL 9

**D**rawn to art and fashion design at an early age, Karen Aqua (1954 – 2011) was a student of illustration in the 70s at the Rhode Island School of Design when she was bewitched during a presentation by visiting animator Frank Mouris. Upon witnessing drawings coming to life, Aqua immediately immersed herself in the peculiarly magical, labor-intensive world of film animation. Her thesis film, *Penetralia*, features a figure whose eye-opening, transformative journey through cosmic innerspace and back beautifully encapsulates what would become a lifelong, creative journey through the individual and universal consciousness.

Swept along with her into film, life and love, Ken Field—a student at the time at neighboring Brown University—would become her husband as well as a constant collaborator. An accomplished and acclaimed musician, Field created or produced most of the soundtracks for Aqua’s films and collaborated extensively with her on the abstract, visual music piece *Sensorium*. At twenty-four frames a second, they exuberantly explored the sounds and visions discovered within curious, creative lives.

Through animation she was able to craft her lively mythologies with total control over the creative process, yet—as in nature—she remained open to discovery and serendipity along the way. In her films, she acknowledges the funny duality of a life in art and of hers in particular. The part that entailed many solitary hours absorbed in tedious, detailed work was fed by her other adventurous, nature-loving, traveling self—a concept she covered lightheartedly in films like *Vis-à-Vis*. She selects from what grew into an abundant palette—colored pencil, paint, pastels, collage, objects animated by stop-motion and even pixelated live action—to consciously illuminate all kinds of multi-dimensional realities.

Shown at venues and festivals internationally, Aqua’s films celebrate a universal legibility. Nonverbal, elemental and animalistic, her work delves into a mystical realm of symbol, ritual and ceremony that is both earthly and otherworldly. The flowing, androgynous everyhuman figures of her early films evolve into dancing tribal characters who often become one with their patterned, moving landscapes. Drawing inspiration from many different cultures and places—including favorite sites like New Orleans and the petroglyphs of the American Southwest—Aqua allows her influences to meet, unite and continually transform into new hybrid beings or realities. Aqua could have been talking about her own works when she explained the power of ancient petroglyphs to “touch upon something timeless and enduring which lies deep within the human spirit, linking us all.”

Whether it is confronting her own mortality or humanity’s ancient origins, Aqua’s concerns seem always focused on the kaleidoscopic dance of life. In the rhythmic pulse of *Kakania*, it is as if she is attempting to enthrall the rest of the working world into a life filled with color, dance and unfettered joy. The patterns and beats inherent in the vibrations of the universe take over so that submission and oppression become impossible states of being. In *Heavenly Bodies* flowing drawings express cosmic love while mixed media of many dimensions illustrate the complexity of time in *Perpetual Motion* where time as depicted by Aqua is yet another rhythm in which all of humanity participates one way or another. And rather than categorize or objectify as the title might suggest, Aqua’s last film *Taxonomy* lushly visualizes the relationship of art and architecture to their counterparts in the natural world—all creations linked by an ingenious DNA. Toward the darker ends of life’s spectrum, Aqua braves facing her own serious illness in her films and confronts the nuclear desecration of sacred land in *Ground Zero / Sacred Ground* with the same open-minded eloquence.

Dedicated to a life of artistic freedom, she was a tireless and successful grant-writer while spending time at artist residencies all over the world. In Boston, Aqua was part of a community of animators and other filmmakers who congregated at former arts organizations like Off the Wall, an alternative theater in Cambridge, and the Boston Film and Video Foundation. While promoting and encouraging emerging animators, Aqua occasionally taught—including classes at Emerson and Boston College—and both she and Field held numerous community workshops with children around the country during which they would produce finished animations. Most famously, Aqua created over twenty short animations for the ever-popular children’s program on public television *Sesame Street*—a relationship that provided income without compromising her art or independence.

With a colorful catalogue of festivals and awards from New York to Iran to Hiroshima and everywhere in between, Aqua completed her last film *Taxonomy* just weeks before she died of ovarian cancer in 2011. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of Ken Field, the Harvard Film Archive is now home to over 300 film and video elements from Karen Aqua’s concentrated output. We are thrilled to welcome Field and Janeann Dill—filmmaker, film professor and friend of Aqua’s—to the HFA to present a lively selection of films from Karen Aqua’s incantatory cosmos. – BG

All films directed by Karen Aqua unless otherwise noted. Special thanks to Ken Field.



KAREN AQUA *KAKANIA*

INTRODUCTION BY KEN FIELD AND JANEANN DILL  
SATURDAY APRIL 9 AT 7PM

**VIS-À-VIS**  
US 1981, 16mm, color, 12 min

**PERPETUAL MOTION**  
US 1992, 16mm, color, 5 min

**GROUND ZERO / SACRED GROUND**  
US 1997, 35mm, color, 9 min

## ROSWELL: NOT JUST ALIENS

Directed by Karen Aqua, Ken Field and 3rd & 5th grade students at El Capitan and Military Heights Elementary Schools, Roswell, NM  
US 2008, digital video, color, 5 min

## UNTITLED SCRATCH FILM

US unknown date, digital video, color, 2 min

## IN THE SHADOWS OF MONADNOCK

Directed by Karen Aqua, Ken Field and the 7th grade at Mountain Shadows School, Dublin, NH  
US 2007, digital video, color, 6 min

## HEAVENLY BODIES

US 1980, 16mm, color, 3 min

## KAKANIA

US 1989, 16mm, color, 4 min

## SESAME STREET FILMS

US 1991 – 2004, digital video, color, TRT: 4 min

## PENETRALIA

US 1976, 16mm, color, 4 min

## SENSORIUM

Directed by Karen Aqua and Ken Field  
US 2007, digital video, color, 5 min

## TAXONOMY

US 2011, digital video, color, 4 min



KAREN AQUA & KEN FIELD *SENSORIUM*

## SYMPATHETIC MAGIC

US 1992, 16mm, color, 8 min

## NIGHT VISION

US 1982, digital video, b/w, 2.5 min

## INSOMNIA

US 1978, digital video, b/w, 1 min

## SYNCOPIATION

US 1975, digital video, color, 2 min

# THE GENEVIÈVE McMILLAN-REBA STEWART FELLOWSHIP: HASSEN FERHANI

APRIL 11

The McMillan-Stewart Fellowship in Distinguished Filmmaking was established at Harvard's Film Study Center in 1997 with a generous gift from Geneviève McMillan in memory of her late friend, Reba Stewart, to support outstanding Francophone directors from Africa or of African descent. While past awardees have included such founding figures of African cinema as Med Hondo and Ousmane Sembène, fellowships have often been given to recognize such emerging talents as Tariq Teguia and Mati Diop.

Such is the case of the most recent fellow, Hassen Ferhani. Born in Algiers in 1986, Ferhani became active in the cinema while still a teenager by working with the cine-club of the Algerian arts organization Association Chrystalide. His short films *Les Baies d'Alger* (2006) and *Tarzan, Don Quixote and Us* (2013) were exhibited internationally. His debut feature film, *Roundabout in My Head*, has won acclaim at festivals in Marseille, Carthage and Turin. – DP

Special thanks: Rachael Rakes, Dennis Lim—Film Society of Lincoln Center.

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
HASSEN FERHANI IN PERSON  
MONDAY APRIL 11 AT 7PM

ROUNABOUT IN MY HEAD  
(FI RASSI ROND-POINT)

The men employed in the slaughterhouses of Algiers are a cross section of Algeria's working class. Young and old, some are natives of the capital, but most come from the countryside. Hassen Ferhani spent two months filming the workers in one such slaughterhouse to fashion a picture of contemporary Algeria. *Roundabout in My Head* is not an observational portrait of people at work; there is little gore or viscera on-screen. Rather, Ferhani watches and listens as the men talk to each other and to his camera about their lives, their prospects for the future, and their thoughts about Algeria today. The film's power lies in Ferhani's keen eye for striking images that neither beautify nor objectify and in his seemingly effortless ability to reveal his subjects as a group of fascinating individuals whose hopes and fears the director locates precisely at the intersection of the local and the universal.

Directed by Hassen Ferhani  
France/Algeria 2015, DCP, 100 min. Arabic with English subtitles



HASSEN FERHANI *ROUNABOUT IN MY HEAD*

## XIE JIN, BEFORE AND AFTER THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

APRIL 15 – MAY 1

A celebrated filmmaker who rose to prominence in the 1950s, fell out of favor at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, rehabilitated himself during the same period and then returned to fame and popularity, in China and abroad in the 1980s, Xie Jin (1923-2008) is one of the most remarkable artists in the history of the cinema of mainland China and, arguably, its most significant director. Yet he remains little known in the US, his earlier films unseen in this country because of the Cold War and his later films overshadowed here by the works of newer directors who, for the most part, rejected his influence.

As a young man in the 1930s, Xie studied and worked in theater, trying his hand at acting and writing. The latter skill made him a standout as a director who often wrote or co-wrote the original screenplays he filmed at a time when Chinese cinema was dominated by literary adaptations. Xie's initial success stemmed from his ability to mix melodrama and socialist content, making his films popular both with audiences and with the Communist Party. His work could thus be said to fulfill the hopes of the progressive filmmakers in China's prerevolutionary cinema, who had dreamed of combining the powerful popularity of Hollywood with the intellectual and political force of Soviet cinema.

His films of the 1950s and early 60s were primarily "women's films," focusing on female protagonists who liberated themselves from feudal oppression through revolutionary struggle on the battlefield, in the factory or on the basketball court. Whether they are sweeping epics or contemporary comedies, Xie's films from this period reveal his eye for vivid, pictorial images, a quality that he shares with such contemporaries as King Hu, Vincente Minnelli and Luchino Visconti, all of whom combined realistically detailed mise-en-scène, fluid camera movement and striking composition within the frame.

Xie's acclaim seemed set to reach a pinnacle with the epic *Stage Sisters*, but the emergence of the Cultural Revolution, during which the Communist Party sought to enforce a rigid ideological purity in all sectors of Chinese society and culture, led to the film's being banned and to Xie being denounced for lack of rigor. He suffered a period of house arrest, during which time he was paraded to factories and schools for public denunciation, culminating in the suicide of his parents. After all filmmaking in China had been suspended for several years, the only films to be produced in the early 1970s were formulaic adaptations of revolutionary operas and a handful of other films rigidly devoted to the ideological strictures of the so-called "Gang of Four" who controlled the state during the Cultural Revolution. Xie resumed work during this time, becoming one of the preferred filmmakers of Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, who oversaw all film production at the time.

Shortly after Mao's death in 1976, the Cultural Revolution collapsed, and by the end of the decade, Xie was back to working with some measure of autonomy. In the early 1980s, he sought to rehabilitate himself at home and abroad by making films critical of the Cultural Revolution, while returning to his familiar mix of melodrama and socialist politics. His visual style remained more or less the same as well, although he was now more likely to shoot on location than on the soundstage and although his color palate and camera movement were both toned down in favor of a somewhat soberer realism.

He soon found his prominence challenged by the younger directors of the so-called "Fifth Generation," including Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou, who replaced melodrama with ambiguity and ellipsis and whose work was either more harshly critical of the Maoist past or else eschewed politics altogether. Nevertheless, in his later years, Xie directed what is now



considered one of his masterpieces (*Hibiscus Town*), became the first mainland Chinese member of both the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Director's Guild of America, and continued to work into his seventies.

Since his death, his place in film history has been recognized by such contemporary filmmakers as Jia Zhangke and assured by the China Film Archive's circulation of his work worldwide. The Harvard Film Archive is pleased to present this collection of Xie's most important films, with 35mm prints from the China Film Archive and a presentation of the "digital restoration" of *Stage Sisters* by the Shanghai International Film Festival. — DP

*This program is presented in collaboration with the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and coincides with "The Cultural Revolution and Cinema: An International Symposium" taking place on Saturday, April 16 from 9:30am to 5:30pm in Room CGIS-5020 at Harvard, 1730 Cambridge Street..*

*Special thanks: Richard Peña; Jie Li; Yanrong Tan—China Film Archive; Wu Jueren—Shanghai International Film Festival.*

INTRODUCTION BY FILM SCHOLAR CHRIS BERRY

FRIDAY APRIL 15 AT 7PM

**THE RED DETACHMENT OF WOMEN**  
(*HONG SE NIANG ZI JUN*)

Xie Jin's powerful and colorful film tells the story of a young woman who escapes indentured servitude on Hainan Island in the 1930s to become a soldier fighting for revolution on the battlefield. A rousing potboiler that quickly became a classic, the film derives from a novel indirectly inspired by an actual women's battalion. The success of this version gave birth first to a 1964 ballet that was one of the eight so-called "model operas" and a film of the ballet made during the Cultural Revolution in 1971 (but not directed by Xie). It may well have been the success of this film that led to Xie's rehabilitation by Jiang Qing. Despite—or perhaps because of—its revolutionary fervor, the film also reveals Xie to be a "poet of the libido," in Tony Rayns' phrase; the critic calls *Red Detachment* a "sexy tropical-gothic," like the Powell-Pressburger *Black Narcissus* (1947).

Directed by Xie Jin. With Chen Qiang, Zhu Xijuan, Wang Xingang  
China 1961, 35mm, color, 115 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

FRIDAY APRIL 15 AT 9:30PM

**BIG LI, LITTLE LI AND OLD LI**  
(*DA LI, XIAO LI, HE LAO LI*)

The gap between Xie's melodramas and the robust slapstick of *Big Li, Little Li and Old Li* demonstrates the director's astonishing versatility. This screwball comedy casts an affectionate but farcical eye on the difficulties



XIE JIN *BIG LI, LITTLE LI AND OLD LI*



XIE JIN *THE LEGEND OF TIANYUN MOUNTAIN*

of three workers with the same name as they adjust to the new physical culture regimen at their factory, meant to increase health, productivity and efficiency. The film's ideological brilliance lies in its translation of the difficulty of assimilating revolutionary change into the bodily awkwardness of its title characters. The film also finds Xie at his most exuberant, from its animated credit sequence to the sight gags that recall Frank Tashlin.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Liu Xiasheng, Fan Haha, Guan Hongda  
China 1962, 35mm, b/w, 86 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

INTRODUCTION BY VES VISITING PROFESSOR

RICHARD PEÑA

FRIDAY APRIL 22 AT 7PM

**STAGE SISTERS AKA TWO STAGE SISTERS**  
(*WU TAI JIE MEI*)

One of the last films made in Shanghai before the Cultural Revolution, Xie Jin's most celebrated work tells a story of female solidarity and the awakening of political consciousness through the lives of two young opera performers whose success takes them from their rural beginnings to 1940s Shanghai, then occupied by Japan. There, one discovers capitalist modernity while the other, angered by the injustices around her, joins the Communist Party. Released just as the Cultural Revolution broke, the film was subject to ruthless ideological critique and quickly vanished from screens for fifteen years. When it resurfaced in 1979, it was received as a classic, and is today widely considered the crowning achievement of Chinese cinema before the emergence of the Fifth Generation in the 1980s. In its historical narration of the birth of a nation, it recalls not just Griffith but also Visconti.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Xie Fang, Cao Yindi, Deng Nan  
China 1964, DCP, color, 112 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

FRIDAY APRIL 22 AT 9:30PM

**THE HERDSMAN (MU MA REN)**

After the success of *Legend of Tianyun Mountain* made him the foremost director whose work was explicitly critical of Maoist excesses, Xie turns again to this stance, this

time using the genre of male melodrama. The film's conflict revolves around the ambivalences of an estranged father and son to China and to each other. The father returns to Beijing from San Francisco thirty years after fleeing the defeat of the Nationalists. Meanwhile, his son has both suffered through the Cultural Revolution and found happiness raising horses in Inner Mongolia. Attuned as ever to shifting social currents in China, Xie avoided the controversy his previous film had attracted by bringing Chinese patriotism to the fore in order to resolve *The Herdsman's* generational and ideological conflicts, just as the Communist Party was turning, under Deng Xiaoping, from Maoism to Nationalism.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Shimao Zhu, Cong Shan, Liu Qiong  
China 1982, 35mm, color, 98 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

SATURDAY APRIL 23 AT 7PM

**HIBISCUS TOWN (FU RONG ZHEN)**

The critical look at China's recent past in Xie Jin's films from the 1980s finds its apotheosis in this epic melodrama about the rise and fall of a female restaurant owner. When the film was originally released, some critics compared it unfavorably to what was seen as more nuanced work by younger Chinese filmmakers about the Cultural Revolution, such as Wu Tianming's *River Without Buoys* (1983) and Chen Kaige's *King of the Children* (1987). Thirty years later, such criticism seems to miss the sophistication in Xie's Dickensian ability to mix satire, critique and sentiment, and the film has been compared to Borzage's tales of love surviving society-wide turmoil and violence.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Jiang Wen, Liu Linian, Liu Xiaoping  
China 1986, 35mm, color, 163 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

SUNDAY APRIL 24 AT 7PM

**WOMAN BASKETBALL PLAYER NO. 5**  
(*NU LAN WU HAO*)

In Xie's third film, he perfected the combination of melodrama and socialist realism that would bring him fame. The film opens in the pre-revolutionary past with a youth-



XIE JIN *STAGE SISTERS*

ful love affair between an athlete and the daughter of his team's owner. When their passion ends unhappily, the athlete goes on to become a coach, while his lover is forced into an arranged marriage. Xie uses basketball as a metaphor for sociopolitical action, with segments of daily practice used as an occasion to extol the ethics of

collectivity. At the same time, the film's emphasis on the intense echoes of past happiness has earned it comparisons to Max Ophüls.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Liu Qiong, Cao Qiwei, Qin Yi  
China 1957, 35mm, color, 89 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

SUNDAY MAY 1 AT 4PM

**LEGEND OF TIANYUN MOUNTAIN**  
*(TIAN YUN SHAN CHUAN QI)*

Xie Jin traces the vicissitudes of political upheaval in the People's Republic from the 1950s to the end of the 1970s by mapping them onto the shifting relations between two friends from college and the man they both fall for. Rather than schematic allegory, Xie fashions a moving, intimate look at lives ruined by purges and ideological revision. *Legend of Tianyun Mountain* was among the first films to depict the injustices of the anti-Rightist campaign of the late 1950s, thus placing the Cultural Revolution in a historical context and commencing a practice of looking back at the past critically that would be taken up by the Fifth Generation filmmakers. This stance by Xie was brave but also practical, since it allowed him to separate himself from the now-disgraced Gang of Four with whom he had become identified.

Directed by Xie Jin. With Shi Jianlan, Wang Fuli, Shi Weijian  
China 1980, 35mm, color, 127 min. Mandarin with English subtitles

## WHEN THE EYE QUAKES. THE CINEMA OF PAOLO GIOLI.

APRIL 16 – MAY 9

One of the last of the generation of filmmakers to emerge from the period of the neo-avant-gardes of the 1960s—when the Italian underground flourished, briefly, in dialogue with developments in North America—Gioli's work represents a continuation of avant-garde investigations of the aesthetic and technological materials of the medium. The avant-garde legacy is clearly signified, throughout Gioli's filmography, in his frequent quotations from Duchamp, Vertov, Eisenstein, Richter and Buñuel. Across four decades and nearly forty films, Gioli inherits and reworks the legacies of the surrealist avant-gardes as well as that of the New American Cinema he first encountered in New York City in the late 1960s.

Born in 1942 in the city of Rovigo, Gioli originally studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice. It was not long until Gioli's experience of European and American avant-garde film would lead to the purchase of his first 16mm camera. Though Gioli has eloquently described how he used it the way the first Lumiere cameramen did in the late 1800s—for both shooting film and as an optical printer—his first film, *Traces of Traces*, was made without a camera, applying pigments to clear leader, using his fingers, hands, arms and other body parts, as well as paintbrushes and rubber stamps. *Traces of Traces* is a record of the impressions made by the artist's body, including the texture of skin and contours of the flesh—and we should not forget that the Italian word for film is *pellicola* (from *pelle*: skin). Gioli made his first film-*pellicola* as an analogue of skin, conceived as the interface between the human being and the outside world. It is a film that announces one of the central concerns of all of Gioli's work to follow: the human body, desire, and the physical and psychological processes involved in sense perception.

While continuing to work in film, he also began experimenting with photography—making photographs with what he called “stenoopic” devices (from the Greek *stenos opaios*, narrow aperture). He built many different sorts of pinhole cameras from very unusual materials, including boxes of various dimensions, shipping tubes and containers, seashells, loaves of bread, walnuts, saltine crackers, perforated soup ladles, buttons, traffic cones, cheese graters, salt shakers and the human hand. He also experimented with large-format pinhole cameras using large sheets of Polaroid positive film and pioneered the technique of Polaroid transfers.

Gioli has made many pinhole motion pictures since the early 1970s, including *Pinhole Film (Man without a Movie Camera)*, as well as his very recent film *Natura obscura*. With these devices, Gioli says, he “explores” what is in front of him, recording the world without the interference of optical lenses, and without the interference of optical lenses and without the imposition of a single, stable perspective. The exposures on the film strip merge together in diffused lap-dissolves of very simple images of windows, bodies, household objects, tree and plants, which are remarkable for their auroral beauty. The irregular dimensions of the apertures, the slight variations in the distance between apertures and in the length of exposure all combine to lend Gioli's images their fragile intensity.

Ultimately Gioli's investigations center on the physical and psychological processes of perception and cognition. For Gioli, the film camera locates—in the mysterious, apertured interior of the *camera obscura*—an analogous encounter with the earth as it registers itself onto light-sensitive materials. And this analogy between the camera and the human body—the body with its apertures and orifices, with its skin—will be the dominant leitmotif of all his films, beginning with his first gesture of pressing his pigmented body to clear celluloid and culminating in his meditations on the erotic dimensions of the cinematic apparatus, as seen in *When Bodies Touch*.



PAOLO GIOLI *WHEN THE EYE QUAKES*



Gioli's interest in film as a surface upon which the earth imprints its image leads to his subsequent meditations on motion and the historical development of motion pictures out of the camera obscuras of the Renaissance and various other optical devices and retinal toys of the 19th century. However, Gioli's cinema takes us even further back towards the birthplace of photographic images, the first positive heliographic image of a window in Joseph Niepce's studio. (Niepce's image, as well as similar photographs by Fox Talbot, are in fact reprised in the opening section of *Pinhole Film*.) And it is at that moment of photographic invention, it seems, that Gioli locates the splitting of nature between the earth and its representation, between reality and its picture, as cinema's primordial wound, to which the history of its development can be seen to respond. In Gioli's often frantically cut films, the procedures of editing and montage seem ever to repeat the splitting away of human consciousness from nature, with each cut reenacting the animating wound of the alienated modern(ist) artist. However, in a perhaps paradoxical fashion, Gioli's pinhole cameras, with their filmstrips immediately exposed to the world, express the artist's regressive desire for a clearing away of alienating consciousness and a return to an *energeia* of nature—to an experience of conceptually unbound phenomena—that tempts the artist with the promise of knowledge—though at the cost of oblivion.

Ever refusing to divorce poetics from ideology—and stubbornly insisting on a “do it yourself” creative autonomy that is exemplary in its resistance to any fetishization of technology—Gioli makes art in which aesthetic experimentation might be a prelude to psychological and ideological renovation. To that extent, each of his films—though none more than his pinhole films—express a desire for a new beginning, a fresh start, both for filmmaking and for sense perception. And perhaps this, most of all, is the task of avant-garde and experimental film artists from Futurism to today: to make films that take spectators to very edge of human understanding, to the very limits of their own selves, where they can open their eyes, perhaps, and see what is there. — adapted from “Free Film Made Freely: Paolo Gioli and Experimental Filmmaking in Italy,” by Patrick Rumble, *CineAction*, no. 78 (2009)

On April 16 and 17 Paolo Gioli will be joined in conversation with David Bordwell, Jacques Ledoux Professor of Film Studies, Department of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Patrick Rumble, professor of Italian, European Studies, and Visual Culture Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will also introduce the program on April 17.

All films directed by Paolo Gioli.

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

PAOLO GIOLI IN CONVERSATION WITH DAVID BORDWELL  
SATURDAY APRIL 16 AT 7PM

**COMMUTATIONS WITH MUTATION**  
*(COMMUTAZIONI CON MUTAZIONE)*

Composed using three different formats that have been made to coexist: super-8, 16mm and 35mm on a single 16mm support, clear leader. The variations in size caused the original framelines to overlap, subjecting them—and with them their images—to a singular diabolical rhythm.

— Paolo Gioli

Italy 1969, 16mm, b/w & color, silent, 7 min

**ACCORDING TO MY GLASS EYE**  
*(SECONDO IL MIO OCCHIO DI VETRO)*

The semi-scientific character of this work is in some degree due to the stereo-stroboscopic visual mechanism employed in its making. The careful and paradoxical loading up of profiles alternating between negative and positive is aligned along the axis of a soundtrack of super-synchronized percussions, giving rise to a complexity which can be deciphered only by an attentiveness of the degree required for a visual psychological test.

— PG  
Italy 1971, 16mm, b/w, 11 min



PAOLO GIOLI IMAGES DISTURBED BY AN INTENSE PARASITE

**PINHOLE-FILM (THE MAN WITHOUT A MOVIE CAMERA)** [*FILM STENOPEICO (L'UOMO SENZA MACCHINA DA PRESA)*]

This film, as the Vertovian title indicates, was made without a movie camera, more precisely with a device custom-made to restore to images freedom from optics and mechanics. The act of substituting my device for a traditional movie camera is part of a project I have continued from that moment on towards weaning myself from a consumer technology, a toxin to pure creativity. This strange movie camera is a simple little hollow tube, one centimeter thick, two centimeters wide... with two reels to hold 16mm film pulled manually causing alternations of time and space. The images enter simultaneous through 150 holes distributed along one side in proximity to each frame, that come to make up 150 tiny pinhole cameras, also called *steno*peic from the Greek *stenos* = narrow and from the stem *op-* from *oráo* = to see.

— PG  
Italy 1973/1981/1989, 16mm, b/w & color, silent, 13 min

**WHEN THE EYE QUAKES**  
*(QUANDO L'OCCHIO TREMA)*

It all started with the notorious Buñuelian sliced eyeball that surprises us every time! The anxiety of the incision

is transformed into a saccadic, uncontrolled anxiety precisely of the eye and its pupil. — PG

Italy 1991, 16mm, b/w, silent, 11 min

**THE PERFORATED CAMERAMAN**  
*(L'OPERATORE PERFORATO)*

Italy 1979, 16mm, b/w, silent, 9 min

**FILMARILYN**

This brief film, it seems to me to exist, finally, as if it I had found it somewhere completely forgotten, as if it had been some unsuccessful pre-cinematic experiment.

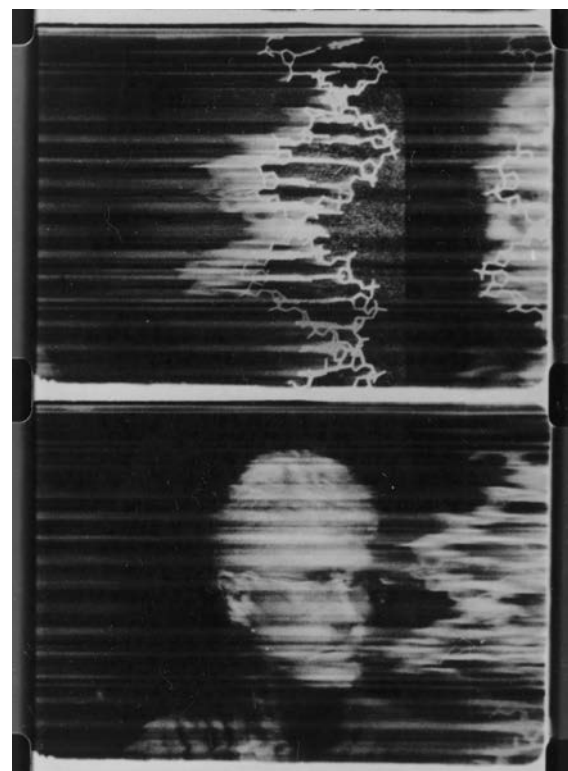
— PG  
Italy 1992, 16mm, b/w, silent, 9 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

PAOLO GIOLI IN PERSON  
SUNDAY APRIL 17 AT 4PM — CCVA ROOM Bo4

**LAND'S RED**

Paolo Gioli will conduct a live experiment and demonstration, “a cinematic verification of Edwin H. Land's experiment in color perception.” Using two 16mm projectors Gioli will explore the pioneering work of Land to understand how colors are created and perceived.



PAOLO GIOLI SLIT-SCAN FIGURES



PAOLO GIOLI CHILDREN

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
INTRODUCTION BY PATRICK RUMBLE  
PAOLO GIOLI IN CONVERSATION WITH DAVID BORDWELL  
SUNDAY APRIL 17 AT 7PM

### NATURA OBSCURA

With 45 pinholes distributed along a 50 centimeter long hollow tube, I made this film. The purpose was to shoot the seasons... I always shot in the crepuscular half-light of dawn and dusk, since there was too much light during the day. – PG

Italy 2013, 16mm, color, silent, 8 min

### ANONYMATOGRAPH (ANONIMATOGRARO)

This film was shot one frame at a time using laborious extreme optical close-ups. *Animatograph*: the reanimated image of an unknown amateur filmmaker at the beginning of the century who become conventional as he settles down, movie camera in hand, indoors and outdoors surrounded by war and by his sisters. – PG

Italy 1972, 16mm, b/w, 26 min

### SLIT-SCAN FIGURES (IL FINISH DELLE FIGURE)

Extracted from rolls of 35mm film on which I had made exposures using the photofinish technique. That is, images intended as photography, and therefore as still images. – PG

Italy 2009, 16mm, b/w, silent, 9 min

### CHILDREN

I have always been interested in the sequencing of images in books, where the possibility exists of imposing movement onto still images. – PG

Italy 2008, 16mm, b/w, silent, 6 min

### WHEN BODIES TOUCH (QUANDO I CORPI SI TÒCCANO)

A reflection on the material basis of film. Fragments of figures wander, flutter in the swirling kinetic rhythms imposed on them. – PG

Italy 2012, 16mm, b/w, silent, 3 min

MONDAY MAY 9 AT 7PM

### IMAGES DISTURBED BY AN INTENSE PARASITE (IMMAGINI DISTURBATE DA UN INTENSO PARASSITA)

This film, completely shot off a television, is the most complex and labor-intensive work I have completed on video images. Its divisions are marked by poetic titles and by structural-visual allocutions: it has four protagonists, the geometric givens furnished directly by the square and other plastic forms deriving from the square. – PG

Italy 1970, 16mm, b/w, 36 min

### LITTLE DECOMPOSED FILM (PICCOLO FILM DECOMPOSTO)

This extremely short film is dedicated to chronophotography... excavated from books and catalogues, that is, from typographic ink. I tried, in a certain sense, to reanimate the inanimatable, as does the photographer Duane Michals... – PG

Italy 1986, 16mm, b/w, silent, 15 min

## FEDERICO VEIROJ, EPHIPHANY AND ELLIPSIS

APRIL 25 – MAY 2

The most fruitful branches of narrative cinema are those with roots in the nourishing soil of the everyday. Although Hollywood seems to have forgotten this, contemporary Latin American cinema certainly has not. A film-programmer-turned-director, Federico Veiroj (born in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1976) is one of a cohort whose work renews the possibilities for, and varieties of, realism in filmmaking today, alongside Lisandro Alonso's enigmatic and uncanny slices-of-life, Nicolás Pereda's absurdist neorealism, and the variations in magic realism from Martín Rejtman and Lucrecia Martel.

Veiroj's films fit somewhere alongside Fernando Eimbcke's coming-of-age novellas, on the one hand, and, on the other, Matias Piñeiro's poetic tales of love and art. Each of Veiroj's three feature films to date tell apparently simple stories about men, from adolescence to middle age, trying to find their place in the world. But each film introduces ripples that disturb their seeming straightforwardness, in the form of unresolved tensions, mysterious narrative gaps, or ambiguities that may indicate shifts to fantasy. If he seems drawn to stories that usually lead toward a climactic epiphany, as in the films of Eric Rohmer, Veiroj typically complicates the forward motion by raising questions about the social context his protagonists inhabit and how, why and whether they can accommodate it.

At the same time, these films exhibit a great tenderness towards their characters and a belief that cinema's reflections of the world can provide solace and meaning even in the face of commodification and hypocrisy. – DP

This retrospective is cosponsored by the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS).

Special thanks: Paola Ibarra – DRCLAS.



FEDERICO VEIROJ ACNE

MONDAY APRIL 25 AT 7PM

### ACNE (ACNÉ)

*Acne* centers on thirteen-year-old Rafael on the eve of his bar mitzvah in contemporary Montevideo. The American coming-of-age film often centers on tragicomic attempts to lose one's virginity, but for Rafael, that is easily accomplished by a trip to the brothel. What he finds more complicated is making his peace with a highly imperfect, even corrupt, family, and with an invisible but seemingly

undeniable set of constricting expectations about gender and relations between the sexes. That *Acne*, Veiroj's feature debut, is also his most conventional film is not so surprising, but it does hint at the limitations of its genre. Where Hollywood places its emphasis on the integration of the adolescent into society, Veiroj suggests a more modern question ("Is it the individual who should change, or society?") with the lightest of humor and the gentlest of touches.

Directed by Federico Veiroj. With Alejandro Tocar, Ana Julia Catalá, Gustavo Melnik  
Uruguay 2008, 35mm, color, 87 min. Spanish with English subtitles

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

FEDERICO VEIROJ IN PERSON

SUNDAY MAY 1 AT 7PM

### A USEFUL LIFE (LA VIDA ÚTIL)

A deceptively straightforward parable lies at the heart of this tender and delicate film about the triangular relationship among the moviegoer, daily life and the cinema. Cinephiles curious about the day-to-day tasks of a film programmer will be fascinated by *A Useful Life*'s behind-the-scenes look at the Uruguayan Cinematheque as it strives to keep its doors open. Ultimately the film comes to focus on the struggle of a middle-aged curator to define himself outside of the office—meaning, in this case, outside the movie theater. Veiroj's composition of the frame and his use of editing and mise-en-scène recall

the filmmaking of the mid-twentieth century, somewhere between prewar classical style and the revolutions of the New Waves, a period that retained a touching curiosity about the world and a robust faith in cinema's ability to explore everyday reality.

Directed by Federico Veiroj. With Jorge Jellinek, Manuel Martínez Carril, Paola Venditto  
Uruguay 2010, 35mm, b/w, 67 min. Spanish with English subtitles



FEDERICO VEIROJ A USEFUL LIFE



\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
FEDERICO VEIROJ IN PERSON  
MONDAY MAY 2 AT 7PM

### THE APOSTATE (*EL APÓSTATA*)

Veiroj's most recent feature film balances comedy, fantasy and drama to illustrate the crisis of a young man struggling to become an adult in the face of a social landscape strewn with outmoded ideas and oppressive institutions. The film's protagonist, a young Spaniard named Gonzalo, is an apostate in the most literal sense, as he devotes considerable time and energy to having his name removed from the baptismal records of a church that means nothing to him. This struggle, however, is clearly a cover for Gonzalo's real crisis: an encroaching adulthood that will require him to clarify not his standing with the Church but his relations with his family and neighbors. The film's combination of subtle, witty critique and sometimes-otherworldly flights of fancy is reminiscent, and worthy, of Buñuel.

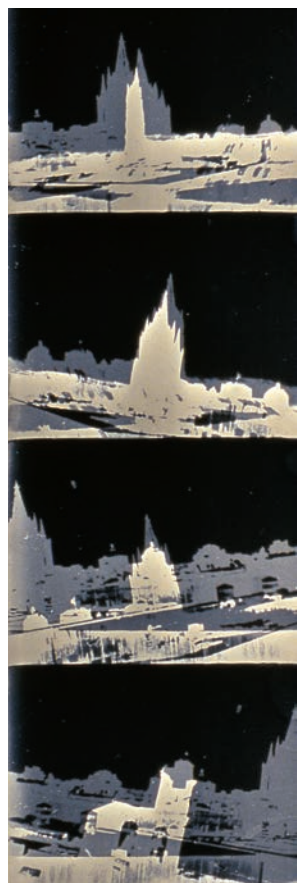
Directed by Federico Veiroj. With Álvaro Ogalla, Marta Larralde, Vicky Peña  
Spain/France/Uruguay 2015, DCP, color, 80 min. Spanish with English subtitles



FEDERICO VEIROJ *THE APOSTATE*

## CHICK STRAND, SEÑORA CON FLORES

MAY 6 – MAY 9



CHICK STRAND *WATERFALL*

*E*thnographic films can and should be works of art, symphonies about the fabric of a people, celebrations of the tenacity and uniqueness of the human spirit. — Chick Strand, *Wide Angle*, 1978

Chick Strand (1931-2009) was a trailblazing free spirit and West Coast filmmaking pioneer who lyrically combined elements of documentary, ethnographic and experimental techniques to create a distinctly unique body of work. Strand played a vital role in the 1960s Bay Area filmmaking community both through her work and her involvement in the cofounding of Canyon Cinema—which would become the San Francisco Cinematheque—with friend Bruce Baillie in 1961. Strand also taught film for twenty-five years at Occidental College in Los Angeles, influencing a generation of filmmakers. Meanwhile, she made frequent summer trips to Mexico, where she shot many of her films over a thirty-year career.

The Harvard Film Archive is proud to present a near complete retrospective of Chick Strand's groundbreaking filmography, which includes her first film—made with her son Eric Strand, *Eric and the Monsters*—to her masterpiece *Soft Fiction*, and up through to her last film (edited posthumously) *Señora con flores / Woman with Flowers*. Underappreciated by critics and at times overshadowed by various male contemporary filmmakers, Strand's work is now enjoying renewed interest and critical appreciation, due in no small part to recent film restorations by both the Academy and Pacific Film Archives.

In the early 1960s, Canyon Cinema organized screenings throughout the Bay Area in a variety of makeshift venues. By providing a communal space for documentary and experimental filmmakers who previously had no audience, Canyon helped usher in a new era of independent cinema. However, upon receiving her degree in anthropology from UC Berkeley, Strand left cinema exhibition behind. She was determined to make her own films and enrolled in the ethnographic film program at UCLA. There she fortuitously met filmmaker Pat O'Neill, whose instruction on optical printing and solarization techniques would heavily influence Strand's early films. *Waterfall* masterfully incorporates these styles along with found footage and Japanese koto music to create a dense, lyrical abstraction. Made during Strand's time at UCLA, *Mosori Monika* is an ethnographic film shot in Venezuela's Orinoco River Delta that examines and documents the complex relationship between the Warao Indians and the missionaries through Strand's caressing close-up camerawork and a series of voiceover interviews with women presented in a point/counterpoint succession.

Moving from the 1960s through the 1980s, Strand's work often focused on filming portraits of people while traveling in and around the area of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato Mexico. Strand loved the “psychedelia and freedom, the sounds and textures” of Mexico and would make numerous summer trips during teaching breaks with her longtime partner, artist Neon Park, shooting and gathering material, sometimes over extended periods of time, for her films. *Fake Fruit Factory* powerfully documents young women as they gossip while making colorful papier-mâché fruit and vegetables in a small factory, and *Artificial Paradise* successfully captures what Strand referred to as “the anthropologist's most human desire: the ultimate contact with the informant.” Strand spent over twenty years documenting her friend Anselmo Aguascalientes' life, eventually creating a stunning trilogy of films—*Anselmo*, *Cosas de mi vida*, and *Anselmo and the Women*—tender portraits that are also glimpses into poverty, resourcefulness, perseverance and patriarchy.

Strand's films primarily concentrate on women and women's stories; she did not try to make statements or address feminist issues of the time, but attempted to deeply and personally connect with people in ways that both ethnography and experimental cinema often failed at accomplishing. Strand's style of filmmaking would eventually evolve from the solarization and optical effects of the early films to what became known as her signature style: filming subjects in motion primarily with handheld camerawork and extreme close-ups that flattened distances—both focal and literal—over long takes. Strand sought to break down the barriers between herself and her subjects while filming and capturing fleeting fragments of movement. She layered nonsynchronous sound over the images in her films to create complex meanings through juxtapositions of audio and picture.

An exquisite culmination of Strand's filmmaking techniques, *Soft Fiction* is an innovative collaboration among five women, blending their intimate stories into an intricate personal documentary. Strand's only film shot with a tripod and her longest completed work, *Soft Fiction* attempts to depict how memory changes over time and “becomes soft around the edges.” With its open reference to softcore erotic fiction, *Soft Fiction* recounts the women's personal stories of sexuality in a direct manner fairly uncommon at the time. Strand's sensuous, unique and poetic work has been recently restored and is finally receiving the critical acclaim it deserves.

Made at around the same time, Strand's film *Kristallnacht* is a shatteringly powerful work featuring black-and-white solarized images of women swimming in a glistening pool of reflective water and concludes with Strand's moving dedication to “Anne Frank and the power of tenacity and the human spirit.”

The power and tenacity of the human spirit and a life lived on one's own terms are the recurrent threads at the heart of every film she made. We offer this program of films as a tribute to Chick Strand's life and the profound impact she made on the history of cinema. — Jeremy Rossen

Curated by Jeremy Rossen. Presented in partnership with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Special thanks: Mark Toscano, May Haduong—Academy Film Archive; Antonella Bonfanti—Canyon Cinema; Eric Strand and Irina Leimbacher.



ACADEMY  
OF MOTION PICTURE  
ARTS AND SCIENCES

FRIDAY MAY 6 AT 7PM

**WATERFALL**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1967, 16mm, b/w, 3 min

**ANGEL BLUE SWEET WINGS**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1966, 16mm, color, 4 min



CHICK STRAND ANGEL BLUE SWEET WINGS

**MOSORI MONIKA**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1970, 16mm, color, 20 min

**FEVER DREAM**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1979, 16mm, b/w, 7 min



CHICK STRAND SOFT FICTION

**CARTOON LE MOUSSE**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1979, 16mm, b/w, 15 min

**BY THE LAKE**

US 1986, 16mm, color, 10 min

**KRISTALLNACHT**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1979, 16mm, b/w, 7 min

SATURDAY MAY 7 AT 7PM

**ELASTICITY**

US 1976, 16mm, color & b/w, 25 min

**SOFT FICTION**

Restored in 2015 by the Academy Film Archive, with restoration funding provided by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the Film Foundation.

US 1979, 16mm, black & white, 54 min

SUNDAY MAY 8 AT 7PM

**ANSELMO**

US/Mexico 1967, 16mm, color, 4 min

**GUACAMOLE**

US/Mexico 1976, 16mm, color, 10 min

**FAKE FRUIT FACTORY**

US/Mexico 1986, 16mm, color, 22 min

**ARTIFICIAL PARADISE**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US/Mexico 1986, 16mm, color, 12 min

**COSAS DE MI VIDA**

US/Mexico 1976, color, 25 min



CHICK STRAND WOMAN WITH FLOWERS

MONDAY MAY 9 AT 8PM

**ERIC AND THE MONSTERS**

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and the Pacific Film Archive with support from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

US 1964, 16mm, b/w, 6 min

**LOOSE ENDS**

US 1979, 16mm, b/w, 25 min

**ANSELMO AND THE WOMEN**

US/Mexico 1986, 16mm, color, 35 min

**WOMAN WITH FLOWERS  
(SEÑORA CON FLORES)**

US/Mexico 1995/2011, 16mm, color, 15 min

# TIME AND PLACE ARE NONSENSE! THE CINEMA ACCORDING TO SEIJUN SUZUKI

MAY 13 – JUNE 2



SEIJUN SUZUKI THE SLEEPING BEAST WITHIN

Struck by an Allied aircraft during the Asia-Pacific War and disinvested of any remaining macho illusions of combat, Seijun Suzuki, then Pvt. Seitaro Suzuki, was reportedly rescued in the ocean somewhere outside the Philippines during the waning days of battle in the mid-1940s. It is said that he floated for days before being found, though his next destination—the hollowed-out wreckage of postwar Japan—would hardly be more hospitable. Desperate for work and vaguely recalling inspiring pre-war viewings of the early Lillian Harvey-starring German musical *Congress Dances* (1931) and the Japanese period film *The Last Days of Edo* (1941), Suzuki took the advice of a friend and applied to the Kamakura Academy, a feeder institution for major studios like Shochiku and Nikkatsu.

There may be more mysterious origin stories to be found within the history of world cinema, but likely few that seem so strangely indicative of the career that followed. Suzuki's biography is that of a vagrant, a man who moved from one temporary settlement to another, seemingly always on the brink of isolation. His films, in turn, pop with a vitality that suggests an awareness of that fundamental impermanence, as though his consciousness of time's passing and life's precariousness naturally produced a compulsion to make the most of any given limitation. And as a B-director working within the rigidly hierarchical mainstream industry of Japan, Suzuki knew a lot about limitations.



After a short stint at Shochiku, where he assisted on a number of melodramas, Suzuki migrated along with Shohei Imamura to Nikkatsu, then rebranding, after a ten-year hiatus, as an ostensibly edgy genre outfit with an eye toward the youth market. His first gigs were as an apprentice to veteran Hiroshi Noguchi, whose eventual helming of a script written by Suzuki gave the studio's executives the confidence to audition their fledgling talent in the director's chair—though only on lower-budgeted program pictures that would play alongside A-films. Most of these early efforts, which seldom ran over an hour, have been forgotten, and none are available on home video, though their titles alone, fortuitously or not, suggest a sensibility in training. *Satan's Town* (1956), for instance, might be the jokey name for the kill-or-be-killed alternate universe in which all Suzuki movies take place, while *Pure Emotions of the Sea* (1956) seems a premonition of a memorable instance of oceanic rear projection in 1964's extravagant melodrama *The Call of Blood*.

Whatever their merits, these projects paved the way for Suzuki's stable position in the Nikkatsu Rolodex, which he maintained for a decade at a pace of three or four films a year. ("No-name directors like me had zero time, so I had no choice but to stay up all night and never go home," reflects Suzuki on the job requirements.) It was in this role that he developed the reputation he most popularly holds today—that is, as a purveyor of generically plotted yakuza films marked by an ever-increasing stylistic lunacy. Nikkatsu's stock-in-trade at the time was *mukokuseki akushon* ("no-nationality action," or "borderless action"), a subgenre that sought to downplay cultural, geographic and temporal specificity in order to better target global audiences, and in many ways Suzuki proved an ideal chameleon for the job. His yakuza films pull as much from American movie lore as they do from sources within his own country's cultural legacy, staging chain-smoking hired killers and saucy femme fatales within Kabuki-like tableaux and familiar Japanese storytelling contexts, meanwhile setting it all to fizzy pop tunes. This fluency with the new Westernized market hit its zenith in 1966's *Tokyo Drifter*, a hip slice of gangland warfare that treats urban Japan like neon-soaked Las Vegas, not to mention a cult object whose peculiar glow can be felt strongly in the work of Suzuki disciples Jim Jarmusch and Quentin Tarantino.

Suzuki recaps the order of business at Nikkatsu thusly: "The studio came to me with a script and asked me to make it. But whatever I cooked up after that was up to me." For him, the role of the B-director was a double-edged sword: limited resources meant both less on-set supervision and more compromise. Like any shrewd workman, though, Suzuki was at his best when turning his limitations into strengths. Crowded shooting schedules encouraged impromptu technical experimentation, such as the in-camera superimpositions that became a unique Suzukian flourish when depicting internal states. Meanwhile, with the assistance of longtime production design collaborator Takeo Kimura, tawdry studio-built sets were embraced for their flimsiness, and it became a trend for Suzuki to disassemble them in the climaxes of his films so that his characters were suddenly adrift in two-dimensional color fields. In repeatedly calling attention to the artificiality of the medium and the construction of the narrative world, Suzuki's form began to mirror his governing conception of society as a set of meaningless codes whose flimsy sense of order could easily be thrown into chaos.

This worldview infused all of Suzuki's output, which included not just crime films but war melodramas, absurdist comedies and *seishun eiga* (youth pictures), and it reached its most powerful expression in his "Flesh Trilogy" (1964's *Gate of Flesh*, 1965's *Story of a Prostitute*, and 1966's *Carmen from Kawachi*), a series of button-pushing adaptations of popular Taijiro Tamura novels that together constitute the filmmaker's crowning achievement at Nikkatsu. Despite their tricky gender politics, frank depictions of sex work, and subversive attitudes toward the Japanese military, however, these films were not the ones that finally broke the studio's patience. That honor went to *Branded to Kill*, a surreal noir sketch starring the director's jumbo-cheeked alter ego Jo Shishido that took Suzuki's often-palpable disinterest in his pulp material to new extremes. The film stimulated a firing that was the culmination of a string of warnings handed down to Suzuki by Nikkatsu president Kyusaku Hori since 1963's *Youth of the Beast*, and it so inflamed Hori in its "unintelligible" excesses that he suspended a thirty-seven-film retrospective in development at the time. Suzuki would later win a court settlement against Hori's actions and regain some of his dignity, though by that point his contract potential was more or less dead in the water.

Ten years of television features and corporate commissions followed before Suzuki was welcomed back into the theatrical film business with a smattering of works for smaller production companies, most of which satiated certain appetites left unfulfilled by his day job years earlier. It was in films like 1980's *Zigeunerweisen*, 1981's *Kagero-za*, and 1991's *Yumeji*, for instance, that he was finally able to indulge a longtime fascination with the uncanny, while 2001's *Pistol Opera*, billed as a spiritual sequel to *Branded to Kill*, afforded him an unprecedented opportunity to push his action filmmaking eccentricities into overdrive on the dime of a sympathetic backer.

But to imply that Suzuki was finally self-actualized as an artist once liberated from the clutches of the commercially safe Nikkatsu would be a patent mistruth. Not only did the eternally pragmatic and humble director embrace his responsibilities as an entertainer-for-hire ("I didn't feel like rebelling against the system...I was just trying to grind out program pictures," he submits), but it might also be argued that the industrial context within which Suzuki worked provided the walls he needed to push against in developing his filmmaking voice. A restless, tinkering innovator at heart who'd jumped from one lackluster or hostile environment to another during his youth, Suzuki was overdue for a sturdy support system to give shape to his talents, and it's thanks to Nikkatsu's leap of faith that a Japanese cinema seeking a new identity after the war was energized by one of its zaniest visionaries.

— Carson Lund

Film descriptions by Carson Lund and Tom Vick, author of *Time and Place Are Nonsense – The Films of Seijun Suzuki* (University of Washington Press, 2015).

Special thanks to: Tom Vick—Freer and Sackler Galleries, Smithsonian Institute; Ned Hinkle—Brattle Theatre.

Part of the Suzuki retrospective is taking place at The Brattle Theatre in Harvard Square. For more information on their shows, please visit [www.brattlefilm.org](http://www.brattlefilm.org).



SEIJUN SUZUKI YUMEJI



SEIJUN SUZUKI TOKYO DRIFTER

FRIDAY MAY 13 AT 7PM

THURSDAY MAY 19 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**TOKYO DRIFTER (TOKYO NAGAREMONO)**

Tasked with making a vehicle for actor/singer Tetsuya Watari to croon the title song, Suzuki concocted this crazy yarn about a reformed yakuza on the run from his former comrades. The film is mainly an excuse to stage an escalating series of goofy musical numbers and over-the-top fight scenes. Popping with garish colors, self-parodic style, and avant-garde visual design, *Tokyo Drifter* embodies a late-1960s zeitgeist in which trash and art joyfully coningle. "With influences that range from Pop Art to 1950s Hollywood musicals, and from farce and absurdist comedy to surrealism, Suzuki shows off his formal acrobatics in a film that is clearly meant to mock rather than celebrate the yakuza film genre" (Nikolaos Vryzidis, *Directory of World Cinema: Japan*).

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Tetsuya Watari, Chieko Matsubara, Tsuyoshi Yoshida  
Japan 1966, DCP, b/w & color, 82 min. Japanese with English subtitles

FRIDAY MAY 13 AT 9PM  
TUESDAY MAY 24 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**PASSPORT TO DARKNESS**  
**(ANKOKU NO RYOKEN)**

In this stylish film noir, a trombonist goes on an all-night bender after his wife disappears during their honeymoon. When he returns home to find her corpse in their apartment, he sets off on a frantic quest to find her killer by piecing together a night he can't remember. Suzuki used this classic noir material to play with genre tropes and make expressive use of darkness and light.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Ryoji Hayama, Chako van Leeuwen, Masumi Okada  
Japan 1959, 35mm, b/w, 88 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SATURDAY MAY 14 AT 7PM  
SUNDAY MAY 22 AT 5PM

**GATE OF FLESH (NIKUTAI NO MON)**

In *Gate of Flesh*, occupied midcentury Japan is an icky, sweat-soaked cesspool of sex and violence where principles have dipped so profoundly that medieval torture has become standard operating procedure within a strictly governed sorority of prostitutes. Much like Mizoguchi's *Women of the Night* nearly two decades prior, the film's scathing view of mercenary postwar life sees sex work rising from the bombed-out vestiges of inner city Japan, but while Mizoguchi gazed directly into the despair by shooting on location, Suzuki erects his overcrowded harbor shantytown from scratch on a Nikkatsu backlot. The artificial framework affords him some of the most strikingly conceptual spaces in his body of work: a foggy subterranean ruin where color-coded hookers powwow in between assignments, a "church" interior that looks more like a painted Powell & Pressburger vista, and a series of cramped port-city alleyways teeming with multidirectional movement. Within this amoral playground, Suzuki crafts one of his most evocative narratives of personal desire colliding with pack mentality.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Jo Shishido, Satoko Kasai, Yumiko Nogawa  
Japan 1964, 35mm, color, 90 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SATURDAY MAY 14 AT 9PM

**THE CALL OF BLOOD**  
**(ORETACHI NO CHI GA YURUSANAI)**

Though Suzuki created it in the midst of his stylistic breakthrough, *The Call of Blood* has never received the same amount of attention as other films he made around the same time. Nikkatsu icons Hideki Takahashi and Akira Kobayashi star as brothers—one a gangster, the other an ad man—who unite to avenge their yakuza father's death eighteen years before. The film features a bold use of color, an absurdist concluding gunfight, and, in one memorable scene, an impressively illogical use of rear projection as the brothers argue in a car while ocean waves rage around them.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Akira Kobayashi, Hideki Takahashi, Chikako Hosokawa  
Japan 1964, 35mm, color, 97 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SUNDAY MAY 15 AT 7PM

THURSDAY JUNE 2 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**BRANDED TO KILL (KOROSHI NO RAKUIN)**

This fractured film noir is the final provocation that got Suzuki fired from Nikkatsu Studios, simultaneously making him a counterculture hero and putting him out of work for a decade. An anarchic send-up of B movie clichés, it stars Jo Shishido as an assassin who gets turned on by the smell of cooking rice, and whose failed attempt to kill a victim (a butterfly lands on his gun) turns him into a target himself. Perhaps Suzuki's most famous film,

it has been cited as an influence by filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino, Jim Jarmusch, Park Chan-wook, and John Woo, as well as the composer John Zorn, who called it "a cinematic masterpiece that transcends its genre."

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Jo Shishido, Mariko Ogawa, Annu Mari  
Japan 1967, DCP, b/w, 91 min. Japanese with English subtitles

MONDAY MAY 16 AT 7PM

WEDNESDAY MAY 25 AT 9PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**SMASHING THE O-LINE**

This crime thriller features one of the most nihilistic characters in Suzuki's early films: Katiri, a reporter so ambitiously amoral that he'll sell out anyone—including his partner and the drug dealer he's sleeping with—to get a scoop. But what happens when an even more ruthless female gang boss kidnaps his sister? With its jazzy musical score and sordid milieu of drug smuggling and human trafficking, *Smashing the O-Line* is one of Suzuki's darkest urban tales.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Hiroyuki Nagato, Kazuko Yoshiyuki, Soichi Ozawa  
Japan 1960, 35mm, b/w, 83 min. Japanese with English subtitles



SEIJUN SUZUKI *PASSPORT TO DARKNESS*

WEDNESDAY MAY 18 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

MONDAY MAY 23 AT 7PM

**YOUTH OF THE BEAST (YAJU NO SEISHUN)**

The densely plotted *Youth of the Beast* takes off from a familiar arrangement of yakuza tropes—a hard-ass outsider with a hidden agenda ingratiates himself with a mob honcho—and quickly turns madcap, hurling at the screen an unfurling network of cops-turned-criminals and violent sociopaths, vengeful kingpins and their suspicious molls. Eventually, when the distinctions become more-or-less null, the brashness of Suzuki's developing style takes precedent. Often cited as the occasion when the director's growing impatience with Nikkatsu's genre dictates hit an explosive breaking point, the film treats its pulp material as pretext for formal experimentation. Widescreen frames are loaded with almost too much detail to absorb, jagged splices of hard bop keep the film hurrying along like a Charlie Parker backing band, and sets call conspicuous attention to their own construction, especially one in which a wall in a yakuza lair is animated by a projection of a scene from another gangster movie.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Jo Shishido, Tamio Kawaji, Misako Watanabe  
Japan 1963, 35mm, color, 92 min. Japanese with English subtitles

THURSDAY MAY 19 AT 9PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

MONDAY MAY 30 AT 7PM

**KANTO WANDERER (KANTO MUSHUKU)**

Alongside Suzuki's more feral late 60s action films, *Kanto Wanderer* at first bears the resemblance of a work steeped in more classical traditions. The film marked Suzuki's first outing in *giri-ninjo*, a traditional mode of Japanese storytelling that focuses on the thematic clash between duty and compassion. But while the sliding doors, kimonos and tatami mats conjure a bygone Japan, and the ground-level framings of domestic activity suggest old master Yasujiro Ozu, Suzuki quickly reveals his hand. Juxtaposed against the traditional betting parlor where modest gambler Katsuta falls for a seductive scam-artist while negotiating his loyalty to the established yakuza code is a more frantic, exuberant depiction of urban Kanto, where a trio of gum-chewing schoolgirls vie for the affections of various *chinpira*. As is often the case, Suzuki's critique of outmoded behavioral expectations comes across largely through formal disruptions to the composure of classical *mise-en-scène*: spontaneous lighting changes within scenes, serrated jump cuts that radically reconfigure space, and a climax in which the surfaces of the set fall away to yield pure chromatic expressionism.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Akira Kobayashi, Hiroko Ito, Chieko Matsubara  
Japan 1963, 35mm, color, 93 min. Japanese with English subtitles

FRIDAY MAY 20 AT 7PM

SATURDAY MAY 28 AT 9PM

**CARMEN FROM KAWACHI (KAWACHI KARUMEN)**

Breezing along on suites of flamenco guitar and light surf rock, Suzuki's female-centered bildungsroman affects a happy-go-lucky atmosphere if only to mask a narrative that is as critical of the machinations of modern Japanese society as any of his bloodier yakuza films. The title refers to *Carmen*, Georges Bizet's four-act opera of *amour fou*, but Suzuki and screenwriter Katsumi Miki tailor the story to the formative years of Tsuyuko, a fresh-faced runaway seeking new opportunities in Osaka but continually brushing up against casually exploitative men. Suzuki structures the film around each of Tsuyuko's prolonged affairs and even indulges her subjective reveries and nightmares, though destabilizing ellipses keep her psychological development at arm's length—all the better to distill the impact of her eventual epiphany, as well as the act of vengeance that follows. A complex snapshot of the pornography industry in 60s Japan and a virtuoso use of widescreen tableaux make this an eccentric finale to Suzuki's "Flesh Trilogy."

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Yumiko Nogawa, Ruriko Ito, Chikako Miyagi  
Japan 1966, 35mm, b/w, 89 min. Japanese with English subtitles

FRIDAY MAY 20 AT 9PM

**THE SLEEPING BEAST WITHIN AKA THE SLEEP OF THE BEAST (KEMONO NO NEMURI)**

A businessman vanishes upon his return from an overseas trip, and his daughter hires a reporter to help find him. When the father reappears, the reporter becomes suspicious and starts digging deeper, uncovering a secret world of heroin smuggling and murder—all tied up with a mysterious Sun God cult. This proto-*Breaking Bad* moves to an energetic pulp fiction beat all the way to its spectacular conflagration of an ending.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Hiroyuki Nagato, Shinsuke Ashida, Hisano Yamaoka  
Japan 1960, 35mm, b/w, 86 min. Japanese with English subtitles





SEIJUN SUZUKI *FIGHTING ELEGY*

SATURDAY MAY 21 AT 7PM

THURSDAY JUNE 2 AT 9PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**PISTOL OPERA (PISUTORU OPERA)**

When producer Satoru Ogura suggested Suzuki make a sequel to his most notorious film, *Branded to Kill*, the result was this eye-popping action extravaganza, which is less a sequel than a compact retrospective of Suzuki's style and themes, updated with CGI effects and infused with the metaphysical concerns of the Taisho Trilogy. Makiko Esumi plays Stray Cat, the number three killer in her assassins' guild. She battles her way to the top against characters such as Painless Surgeon, a cowboy who can feel no pain, and the mysterious number one killer Hundred Eyes. Along the way, Stray Cat detours into the land of the dead, where her victims lurk, and into the "Atrocity Exhibition," where she battles foes amid grotesque paintings from throughout art history. *Pistol Opera* proves that, even in his seventies, Suzuki's creativity was still firing on all cylinders.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Makiko Esumi, Sayoko Yamaguchi, Kirin Kiki  
Japan 2001, 35mm, color, 112 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SATURDAY MAY 21 AT 9:30PM

WEDNESDAY JUNE 1 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**A TALE OF SORROW AND SADNESS (HISHU MONOGATARI)**

Nearly a decade after being fired by Nikkatsu Studios, Suzuki returned to the director's chair with this titillating tale of a model who is groomed to become a professional golfer as a publicity stunt. When she turns out to be good at the sport, her success leads a deranged fan to hatch a blackmail scheme. "Riddled with the director's wildly non-conformist use of non-contiguous edits, unhinged shot composition, and violent splashes of colour, crazed and chaotic and for too long buried in the sand bunkers of obscurity, this long-overlooked work simply cries out for revival!" (Jasper Sharp, *Midnight Eye*).

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Yoko Shiraki, Yoshio Harada, Masumi Okada  
Japan 1977, 35mm, color, 91 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SUNDAY MAY 22 AT 7PM

**CAPONE CRIES A LOT**

**(KAIEMON/KAPONE OI NI NAKU)**

In this surreal comic confection, a traditional *naniwa-bushi* singer moves to Prohibition-era San Francisco. In search of Al Capone—whom he mistakenly believes is

president—he hopes to impress the gangster with his singing and popularize the art form in the States. Filmed mostly in an abandoned amusement park in Japan, Suzuki's vision of 1920s America is an anarchic collage of pop culture images, from cowboys to Charlie Chaplin. One reason *Capone* is so rarely seen is that it reflects the racial attitudes of the time in which it is set by including, for example, a minstrel band in blackface. Such discomfiting images are balanced by scenes featuring an actual African American jazz ensemble that joins the film's hero in jam sessions mixing blues, jazz and *naniwa-bushi*.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Kenichi Hagiwara, Yuko Tanaka, Kenji Sawada  
Japan 1985, 35mm, color, 130 min. Japanese with English subtitles

TUESDAY MAY 24 AT 9PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**EIGHT HOURS OF FEAR**

WEDNESDAY MAY 25 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

SUNDAY MAY 29 AT 5PM

**FIGHTING ELEGY (KENKA EREJII)**

One of Suzuki's most outwardly farcical efforts, *Fighting Elogy* subjects the histrionics of military training to an approach both cerebrally ironic and unabashedly slapstick—a sort of hybrid of *Dr. Strangelove* and Jerry Lewis. In the years leading up to World War II, Kiroku (Hideki Takahashi) is an Okayama middle-school student torn between lust for the daughter of his Catholic foster parents and a clashing impulse toward gang warfare and rogue militarization. That the two are perceived as mutually exclusive by Kiroku and the bullish crowd he acquaints himself with offers Suzuki his rich satirical terrain, where phallic military instruments and procedures exist alongside actual unwanted erections. Among the film's many pleasures are its hyperbolic hand-to-hand combat sound effects, its jarring shifts between poised choreography and bumbling fight scenes, and the manic uncertainty of Takahashi's performance.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Hideki Takahashi, Junko Asano, Yusuke Kawatsu  
Japan 1966, 35mm, b/w, 86 min. Japanese with English subtitles

THURSDAY MAY 26 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**ZIGEUNERWEISEN**

FRIDAY MAY 27 AT 7PM

**KAGERO-ZA**

According to film critic Tony Rayns, *Kagero-za* "may well be Suzuki's finest achievement outside the constraints of genre filmmaking." In this hallucinatory adaptation of work by the Taisho era writer Kyoka Izumi, a mysterious woman named Shinako invites Matsuzaki, a playwright, to the city of Kanazawa for a romantic rendezvous. While Matsuzaki is on his way, his patron Tamawaki appears on the train, claiming to be en route to witness a love suicide between a married woman and her lover. Matsuzaki suspects Shinako is Tamawaki's wife, and the trip to Kanazawa may spell his doom. As in *Zigeunerweisen*, reality, fantasy, life, and afterlife blend together—most spectacularly in the grand finale, in which Matsuzaki finds his life morphing into a deranged theatrical extravaganza.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Yusaku Matsuda, Michiyo Ogosu, Katsuo Nakamura  
Japan 1981, 35mm, color, 139 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SATURDAY MAY 28 AT 7PM

**STORY OF A PROSTITUTE (SHUNPU DEN)**

Pouty-faced Yumiko Nogawa, who lent intense pathos as *Gate of Flesh's* tragic heroine, reteamed with Suzuki to play an even more emotionally unguarded figure in the following year's *Story of a Prostitute*, which again concerns itself with libidos, machismo and forbidden

romance in a military milieu. Adapting the popular Taijiro Tamura novel *Shunpu den*, itself previously brought to the screen in 1950 as *Desertion at Dawn*, Suzuki only further stresses the antiwar ethos that met controversy from Occupation censors at the time of the earlier film's release.

Nogawa plays one of many "comfort women" shipped to the frontlines of the Sino-Japanese War to gratify deprived soldiers, but a developing affection for her assigned commander's aide jeopardizes her job performance. A doomed love scenario develops in the shadowy backrooms of the Japanese post, then intensifies when Chinese forces capture the lovers in the middle of an exploding battlefield. Unleashing an arsenal of dynamic tracking shots, chiaroscuro lighting and agonized freeze-frames, Suzuki gradually pushes *Story of a Prostitute* to the hot-blooded extremes of melodrama.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Tamio Kawachi, Yumiko Nogawa, Kayo Matsuo  
Japan 1965, 35mm, b/w, 96 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SUNDAY MAY 29 AT 7PM

**YUMEJI**

Made ten years after its predecessor, the final film in the Taisho Trilogy spins a fantastical tale from the life of a historical figure. Takehisa Yumeji (1884–1934) was an artist known as much for his paintings of beautiful women as for his bohemian lifestyle. As played by rock star Kenji Sawada, the Yumeji of Suzuki's film is a serial seducer haunted by thoughts of his own death while pursuing ideals of beauty in his art. Traveling to Kanazawa to meet his lover, he instead falls for a widow whose murdered husband inconveniently returns from the dead. Love, desire, life, and death collapse into one another as Yumeji's art takes on an uncanny existence of its own.

Directed by Seijun Suzuki. With Kenji Sawada, Tomoko Mariya, Tamasaburo Bando  
Japan 1991, 35mm, color, 128 min. Japanese with English subtitles

TUESDAY MAY 31 AT 7PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**A TATTOOED LIFE**

WEDNESDAY JUNE 1 AT 9PM – BRATTLE THEATRE

**PRINCESS RACCOON**



SEIJUN SUZUKI *STORY OF A PROSTITUTE*



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## ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI'S *CHEVALIER*

MARCH 25



ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI *CHEVALIER*

While a 2015-2016 Radcliffe-Harvard Film Study Center Fellow and a David and Roberta Logie Fellow, Athina Rachel Tsangari has been virtually in residence at the HFA over the past two years. While teaching classes in our theater as a VES Department Visiting Professor, she also curated two series of radical Seventies' cinema and screened a program of her work. We are pleased to welcome her back to present her latest film and join us in a lively conversation afterwards.

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS  
 ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI IN PERSON  
 FRIDAY MARCH 25 AT 7PM

### **CHEVALIER**

Pitched somewhere between high-concept art cinema and sociology research, Athina Rachel Tsangari's latest precisely detailed miniature focuses on a group of yachters who embark on a nebulous game of macho one-upmanship for which the only reward is the crude victory ring that gives the film its title. The terms of the game are loose and provisional, and revolve around a point system assigned to whatever's considered "the best" or "manliest" at any given moment by the middle-aged men aboard the vacation boat. But despite its crowd of bumbling dudes and its sublime body comedy, the film hardly has any particular aspirations to gender-specific diagnosis. Instead, Tsangari mines the ridiculous scenario for deadpan behavioral comedy, with her probing camera (a wavy handheld to contrast *Attenberg's* static reserve) hypersensitive to the developing thought processes of her characters, to their slip-ups in composure and improvised rationalizations. Floating along with the serene calm of the Aegean Sea until finally resolving on an inconclusive ellipsis, *Chevalier* adds another tantalizing riddle to Tsangari's evolving stream of collaborative dramatic experimentation. — *Carson Lund*

Directed by Athina Rachel Tsangari. With Yiorgos Kendros, Panos Koronis, Vangelis Mourikis  
 Greece 2015, DCP, color, 99 min. Greek with English subtitles

### IN PERSON

- NADAV LAPID MAR 6 - 7
- JOHN GIANVITO MAR 13
- ALFRED GUZZETTI MAR 20 & 26
- ATHINA RACHEL TSANGARI MAR 25
- BILLY WOODBERRY MAR 27
- ERNIE GEHR MAR 28
- PHILIP TREVELYAN APR 3 & 4
- PHIL COLLINS & SINISA MITROVIC  
 APR 7 & 8
- JANEANN DILL & KEN FIELD APR 9
- HASSEN FERHANI APR 11
- PAOLO GIOLI APR 16 & 17
- FEDERICO VEIROJ MAY 1 & 2