

Harvard Film Archive

Jonas Mekas

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

On the cover: Frames from *Walden* (1969) by Jonas Mekas.
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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.

VINTAGE HOLIDAY SHOW

DECEMBER 4

Christmas comes a little early with the Eighth Annual Vintage Holiday Show, a family-friendly afternoon of holiday and winter-related short films from the vaults of the Harvard Film Archive. This year, all of the films are from a recent addition to our catalogue, the Boston Public Library's Circulating Collection. Today you can borrow a DVD from your local library, but in an earlier time, you could borrow a 16mm print, a screen and a projector! These films were shown mainly at public libraries in the Boston area, but were also available to the public. – *Liz Coffey, Film Conservator*



MICHAEL SPORN *MAX'S CHRISTMAS*

FREE ADMISSION

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4 AT 4:30PM

THE GREAT TOY ROBBERY

An animated Christmas Western that has become a Holiday Show staple.

Directed by Jeff Hale
Canada 1963, 35mm, color, 6 min

SIX PENGUINS

Told nonverbally with puppets, this delightful adventure story about six penguins teaches the value of helping others.

Directed by Asporoah Panov
Bulgaria 1973, 16mm, color, 5 min

MAX'S CHRISTMAS

This animated version of the book by Rosemary Wells illustrates Ruby's futile attempts to put her little brother to bed on Christmas Eve.

Directed by Michael Sporn
US 1988, 16mm, color, 5 min

THE COP AND THE ANTHEM

This O. Henry adaptation features Soapy, an affable bum in 19th-century New York City, who starts thinking about going to his "winter home" on Blackwell's Island. To set his plan into motion, all he has to do is break the law.

Directed by Peter Mark Schifter. With Robert Morse, Ralph Drischell
US 1982, 16mm, color, 20 min

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THE CHERRY TREE CAROL

This traditional Christmas carol is performed by choreographer Agnes de Mille's Appalachian dance troupe.

Directed by Gardner Compton
US 1968, 16mm, color, 10 min

A FIGGY DUFF CHRISTMAS

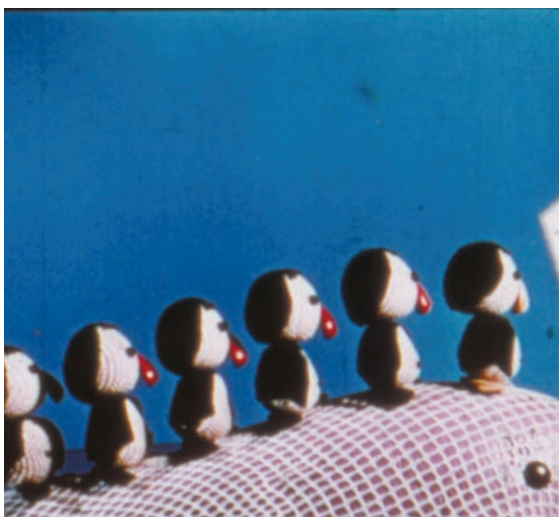
A musical group, named after the Newfoundland Christmas dessert, plays and sings the old songs while donning strange costumes in the Mummer tradition.

Directed by William Gough
Canada 1978, 16mm, color, 10 min

ANIMAL'S BEST FRIEND

Animated felt figures tell the story of a barnyard full of animals and their faithful watchdog.

Directed by Hermína Týrlová
Czechoslovakia 1973, 16mm, color, 10 min



ASPOROAH PANOV SIX PENGUINS

A CHARLES DICKENS CHRISTMAS: FROM THE PICKWICK PAPERS

The Christmas visit of Mr. Pickwick and his friends to Dingley Dell Farm—with dancing, games and a substantial supper—is dramatized in this enchanting film.

Directed by John Barnes. With Roddy Hughes
US 1958, 16mm, color, 22 min

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

This charming film uses puppet animation to present the famous Christmas poem from 1823.

Directed by John Wilson
US 1968, 16mm, color, 8 min

A VIDEO CHRISTMAS WITH GEORGE & KAREN

DECEMBER 4

Many of us have friends we visit with every year at the holidays. In the annual holiday videos recorded by cult and avant-garde film star George Kuchar, he always visits with friends. Fellow artist and charming character Karen Redgreen frequently makes it into the holiday video offerings. She also appears in many of George's other video diaries and occasionally turns up in his narrative pictures. Both San Francisco artists who make videos and love cats, they are hilarious in their own unique ways, and Karen is my favorite of George's many video stars. For this year's holiday visit with Kuchar, let's take an hour to appreciate Karen and our own quirky friends. — *Liz Coffey, Film Conservator*

Videos courtesy Video Data Bank.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4 AT 7PM

HOLIDAZE

The season sweeps through in a blur of glitches, gulps and sweetened goo, as chimes wring out the old and ring in the new. — *George Kuchar*

Directed by George Kuchar
US 1994, digital video, color, 11 min

HOLIDAY XMAS VIDEO OF 1991

Amid the greenery of what should be a White Christmas, there sits the blackness close to my heart; and beyond that there bellows a legion of behemoths who know not shame nor guilt. A homeless herd of heaven on earth that smell of fish and exotic ports of call. A call I fail to heed. — GK

From the barking of seals at the San Francisco waterfront to the unexpected juxtapositions of racist and naughty cartoons with friendly faces, to the subtitles given Danish friends, George's video is rife with questionable choices, yet we must take the good with the bad, and there is plenty of good to go around in this video celebration of Christmas twenty-five years ago. Karen pops in to wish everyone Happy Holidays.

Directed by George Kuchar
US 1991, digital video, color, 21 min



DINGLEBERRY JINGLES

Christmas is here again in this diary of glittering gifts, furry friends, underground movie making, and grotesque greetings. A veneer of good cheer coats the surface like thin ice, so proceed with caution! — GK

Directed by George Kuchar
US 1994, digital video, color, 21 min

MURMURS OF THE HEARTH

Another holiday season rolls into the Northern California coast along with the breakers that roil and foam in mimicry of a "white Christmas." Men, women and felines frolic and fret amid the tinkle of holiday revelers as the short days fade into a melancholy medley of digestive sounds and crackling firewood. Music to the ears and candy to

the eyes makes this annual holiday tape a tradition to treasure in this world of terror and tarnish. Come splash in the buoyant pleasures of pacific vistas and sample the crummy crust of California fruitcakes. And by the way, HAPPY NEW YEAR too! — GK

Directed by George Kuchar
US 2001, digital video, color, 12 min

FILL THY CRACK WITH WHITENESS

A music-filled tour of Christmas good cheer overtakes this gastronomically oriented excursion through the winter season of discontent and yuletide yearnings craving ignition. — GK

Directed by George Kuchar
US 1989, digital video, color, 11 min

BUSBY BERKELEY BABYLON

DECEMBER 9 – JANUARY 23

The alliterative, musical name Busby Berkeley (1895 – 1976) is now so synonymous with a particular method of staging and filming elaborate dance numbers that—like his people-as-patterns routines—the man and his work have collapsed into a single gestalt. The Berkeley effect extended well beyond the musical and impacted all of cinema. In addition to liberating the camera, Berkeley ingeniously combined all of the extravagant, wondrous elements of the Broadway spectacular with cinema’s magical transcendence of time and space to create transportive worlds-within-worlds.

Given the names of both his parents and godparents, Busby Berkeley William Enos was born Nov. 29, 1895 to nomadic theater actors, one of whom died early; the other, his devoted mother, was loathe for her son to follow in their vaudeville footsteps. After attending a military academy, he proceeded to move up and up in the shoe business in Athol, Massachusetts. He also played semi-pro baseball, opened a dance studio, occasionally performed on stage, and crafted short theatrical numbers featuring soldiers marching in formation. The day before World War I was declared, Berkeley enlisted in the Army and quickly made a name for himself for orchestrating complex and elegant marching formations. Also working in the aerial unit for a while, he was assigned to producing entertainment for the soldiers in postwar France and, even on his trip back to the US, put on a different revue each night for the ship’s passengers.

Berkeley returned to the stage as soon as he stepped foot back in the States, at first with the Somerville Theater Stock Company as a director in the Boston area and then appearing both behind and on stage in multiple cities. After saving a fledgling theater and its failing production by staging a scandalous scene containing brief nudity, Berkeley moved as close to Broadway as possible. His first big success was as the dance director of *A Connecticut Yankee*, an adaptation of the Mark Twain novel to the stage. A review at the time describes one of the dance numbers as “a conglomeration of steps which combines jazz with individuality, a Charleston effect with acrobatic leaps. It is a rushing, twirling affair with a tom-tom beat, leaving the chorus breathless and the audience applauding.” As the budgets for his dance numbers grew, so did their complexity and variety of dance styles. Like James Cagney’s frantic, ingenious character in *Footlight Parade*, Berkeley became known as “Doctor Buzz, the Show Fixer,” working steadily on and off Broadway while still taking the occasional acting role. With 1929’s *The Street Singer*, he was the first to both direct and produce an entire show while designing the dance numbers—which were splashy, intricate and risqué.

Unimpressed with Hollywood musicals, Berkeley was finally urged by Eddie Cantor to direct the dances in the film version of *Whoopie!*, originally a Ziegfeld Broadway spectacular that bombed after the stock market crash. Once presented with the basic tools of the trade, Berkeley immediately transformed the way dance was filmed. He used just one camera with multiple angles rather than several shooting simultaneously and, in this early work, he also “introduced the big close-ups of beautiful girls”—who at that point were usually seen as legs on a stage to a theater audience—which alternated with overhead, kaleidoscopic views. *Whoopie!* also features a satisfying flourish that would reappear several times: the tracking shot between a row of dancers’ parted legs.

Whoopie! kicked off a string of Sam Goldwyn-produced Eddie Cantor vehicles while Berkeley bounced around the studios—as a dance director, *not* a choreographer—and experimented with cinematic possibilities until his extraordinary breakthrough, *42nd Street*. Despite Depression losses sinking in at the studios, Darryl Zanuck and Warner Brothers were sold on the idea of “a new kind of musical” that would draw in crowds needing to escape bleak reality. At last, Berkeley was trusted with a virtually unlimited budget, and during this ambitious, audacious, fertile phase he even applied for patents for two inventions: his system of tiered, rotating platforms and his “monorail,” a rigging that smoothed and simplified camera movement.

In addition to the freedoms of Pre-Code cinema, Berkeley also benefitted from the popular device of the “backstage structure,” which let the musical numbers exist entirely outside of the film’s narrative, allowing Berkeley to create his own utopias, liberated from the constraints of plot or even physical reality. Whereas the plot often revolved around Broadway actors trying to make ends meet, the staged musical sequences detailed unbelievably ornate, erotic, dreamy, luxurious scenes within unreal contexts that frequently veered into pure design.

Berkeley’s dancing camera, dramatic angles and clever editing led his audience unwittingly through the highs and lows of comedy, drama and romance, while moving up and down from expansive, breathtaking views to intimate, commonplace vignettes. He tickled the senses with distorted, ever-changing perspective and scale; inconceivable repetition into infinity; and outrageous costumes—usually on beautiful women. Above all, he mesmerized with the synchronized, precision dancing essential to any Berkeley number. Inherited from both the military and the chorus line, these exquisitely coordinated configurations seemed a fitting expression of the dawn of both mass production and fascist standardization, representing the individual within the machine and order within a chaotic world. Finally, his camera would sweep above to view these arrangements from the heavens as abstract, hypnogogic patterns.

With each shot out-spectacularizing the preceding one, a Berkeley sequence builds up to a startling crescendo of pleasure. When this visual amazement and hypnosis mixes with a catchy song and sweet romance, the effect is beyond exhilarating. Meanwhile, Berkeley brings in his returning cast of loveable contract players like Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler, Ginger Rogers, Guy Kibbee, Ruth Donnelly, Hugh Herbert and Frank McHugh, often reappearing in similar roles—a reassuring familiarity grounding the fantastic and unearthly. Usually capped with a feel-good patriotic message, this cinema provided a satisfying release and the ultimate escape.

By the mid-thirties, Berkeley was directing full features of both the musical and non-musical variety, and if he were in any way attached to a project, his name would easily overshadow the actual director’s. His superstar status earned him a permanent place in the society pages, whether for his highly publicized system of auditioning leggy ladies for his films, his multiple marriages and their attached dramas, his extreme mother devotion or his excessive relationship with the bottle. It was at this moment—Berkeley’s most creative and most popular—that tragedy struck. One evening after a cocktail party and a tire blow-out, Berkeley crashed his car, killing three people. The whole dubious incident cost him a couple of Academy Awards for *Gold Diggers of 1935* and a credit on *The Singing Kid* (1936), but after a year of trials he was eventually acquitted, and the studios worked strenuously to sweep the affair under the red carpet.



BUSBY BERKELEY AND DANCERS ON THE SET OF *42ND STREET*

The subsequent change in Berkeley as well as the public's perception of him coincided with the inevitable transformation of the musical into the more "naturalistic" format, with songs being incorporated into the narrative rather than compartmentalized. Still busily directing comedies, dramas and musicals—in part or in full—a more muted Berkeley had emerged from the wreckage. During this personally and culturally transitory time, he was originally slated to handle all the dance numbers in *Wizard of Oz*, yet he only directed the "If I Only Had a Brain" sequence—and even that was greatly edited down. Finally, MGM and producer Arthur Freed teamed up Berkeley with wholesome adolescent stars Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland, returning the director to his beloved backstage format, updated a bit with more narrative coherence. After directing a handful of delightful dance numbers in films like *Ziegfeld Girl* and *Lady Be Good*, he was removed from *Girl Crazy* (1943) due to his purported overspending and clashes with Garland. He then travelled over to Fox to direct his magnum opus of sorts, *The Gang's All Here*, which allowed him to scale back plot and engage in pure visual delight. He was even inspired to construct a mirrored, kaleidoscopic contraption that sent the film's outrageous finale into a hypnotic wonderland. This would be his last fully Berkeleysque spectacular.

As problems with alcoholism, illness, temperament and the unpredictable whims of Hollywood mounted, Berkeley was facing diminishing offers and mounting debt. The devastating loss of his mother was the final straw leading to Berkeley's unsuccessful suicide attempt and subsequent stay in a sanatorium. He emerged from the darkness to helm *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* and would direct swimming star Esther Williams in a series of aquatic films, yet *Take Me Out* would be the last one for which he was the sole director. By the 60s, aside from directing a few numbers in the mixed-up circus picture *Jumbo*, Berkeley had essentially retired from Hollywood. Toward the end of his life, he enjoyed a return to the limelight at many ceremonies and tributes during the rediscovery and appreciation of 1930s musicals.

Today's cinema owes much to Berkeley's many innovations and overall synthesis of the Broadway showstopper with the powers of the motion picture. He flourished in the musical—a particularly capricious genre that allows for unexplained, unnatural deviations from realism—and was at his height during a time when American audiences wanted to be delighted, astonished and thrilled. Transcending period and place, Berkeley's classic numbers have acquired a universal appeal; they are epic, giddy, erotic, intimate, soaring—much like being in love.

The Harvard Film Archive presents an extensive retrospective that delves deeply into the audacious Babylon of Busby Berkeley. – BG

Quotes from Buzz: The Life and Art of Busby Berkeley by Jeffrey Spivak (University Press of Kentucky, 2011)

Special thanks: Bruce Goldstein, Elspeth Carroll—Film Forum, New York; Lynanne Schweighofer—the Library of Congress; Hannah Prouse, Rod Rhule—British Film Institute; Peter Bagrov—Gosfilmofond; Cassie Blake, May Haduong, Mike Pogorzelski—the Academy Film Archive; Todd Wiener, Steven Hill—UCLA Film and Television Archive; Kyle Westphal—Criterion Pictures; Barbara Crandall—20th Century Fox; Julian Antos—Northwest Chicago Film Society; Amélie Garin-Davet, Mathieu Fournet—Cultural Services of the French Embassy, New York.

Film descriptions by Brittany Gravely, Carson Lund and Haden Guest.



LLOYD BACON *42ND STREET*



BUSBY BERKELEY *BABES ON BROADWAY*

A disturbing aspect of Berkeley's cinema and other Broadway/Hollywood fare throughout the 20th century is the recurrent reliance upon blackface numbers and other racial stereotyping by white actors. Expressions of appreciation, prejudice and guilt, these demeaning imitations jolt contemporary audiences out of dreamland. They now serve as historical reminders of a society out of balance, an indicator of the inequality and injustice festering just offscreen.

Rather than not screen certain works and pretend such phenomena did not happen, the HFA encourages analyses and discussion of troubling racist or sexist events in cinema and in this case, will offer speakers and introductions to provide historical context and initiate thoughtful, productive conversation.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 9 AT 7PM (DCP)

FRIDAY JANUARY 6 AT 9PM (35MM)

42ND STREET

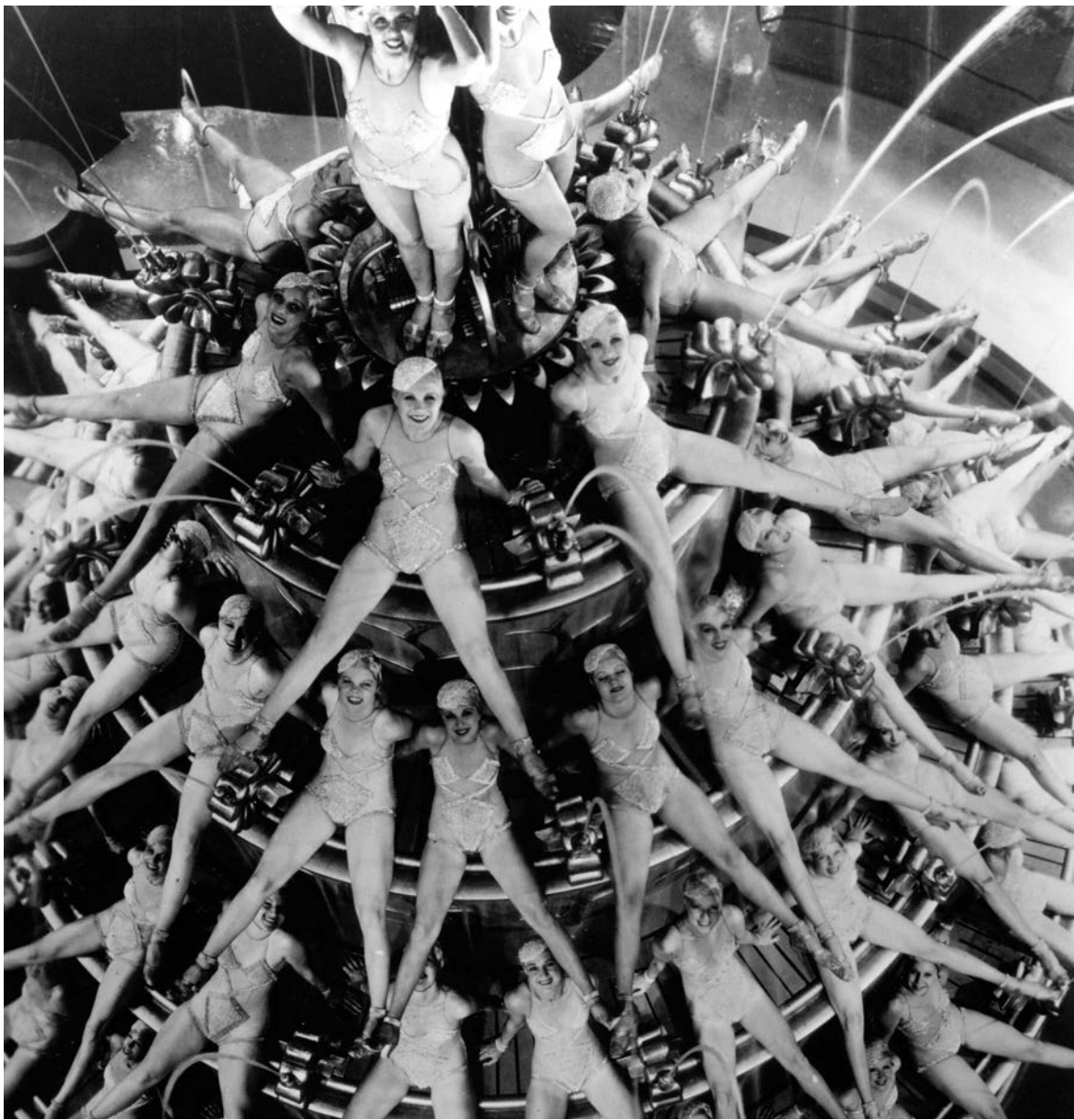
Lightly based on the much racier backstage potboiler by former vaudeville dancer Bradford Ropes, *42nd Street* was intended to marry the dark, urban gangster picture with the spectacular, exhilarating musical—a genre that was waning after its initial explosion following the introduction of sound. The experiment proved groundbreaking for Berkeley, inaugurating his golden Warner Brothers streak of blank-check extravagance. Meant to be a tyrannical Florenz Ziegfeld character but also reminiscent of Berkeley himself, Warner Baxter plays stage director Julian Marsh with feverish, Depression-era desperation. Navigating gangsters, lecherous funders, broken limbs and all manner of schemes and affairs in order to realize his production, Marsh is unscrupulous in his dedication to the exciting, thankless stage. Given the chance-of-a-lifetime to save the show, neophyte Peggy Sawyer is portrayed by real-life hopeful Ruby Keeler, whose career was launched by this film. She and a galaxy of dancers synchronistically careen through the grand finale of suggestive Berkeley showstoppers, culminating in the phenomenal title number where space, scale and perspective constantly reconfigure and readapt to the syncopated visual rhythm of the city's commonplace, violent, surreal, magnificent drama... only to return to Marsh's anticlimactic reality as he listens to the catty comments of theatergoers as they exit. *35mm print preserved by the Library of Congress.*

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With Warner Baxter, Bebe Daniels, George Brent
US 1933, DCP/35mm, b/w, 89 min

FRIDAY DECEMBER 9 AT 9PM

THE GANG'S ALL HERE

Employing large props, walls of water, sweeping crane shots, reverse motion and neon with new special effects, the title *The Gang's All Here* might as well refer to the contents of Berkeley's bag of tricks, which sends this sentimental wartime love story soaring into



LLOYD BACON FOOTLIGHT PARADE

outer space. Happily uniting the otherworldly and exotic with the home front in the form of Carmen Miranda, the dizzying opening sequence also introduces the main elements of Berkeley's world: disorienting surrealism, spatial deception, hyper-color and sheer, unfettered spectacle. Led by music that giddily vacillates between lyrical inanity and somber melodrama, the theatricality and obvious artificiality of Berkeley's narrative space becomes confused with the purely spectacular and, eventually, overwhelmed by it. Miranda's showpiece "The Lady in the Tutti Frutti Hat"—an erotic, hypnotic fruit-filled fantasy with a tropical twist—needs no reason to exist, nor does the astonishing, hallucinatory finale "The Polka Dot Polka." From a bird's-eye view of Benny Goodman and his orchestra to a surprisingly sleek sci-fi sequence with neon hoops, the sensory extravaganza is finally crushed into total abstraction through a kaleidoscopic lens. By the end, the actors' disembodied heads are each singing in a sea of pure color. The mundane, ubiquitous polka dots have become stars, existing not just in the sky but everywhere on Planet Berkeley.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, Phil Baker
US 1943, 35mm, color, 103 min

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10 AT 7PM
FOOTLIGHT PARADE

Uncannily similar to Berkeley's initial claim-to-fame as an ingenious "show doctor," James Cagney reveals his vaudeville background as dancer/producer Chester Kent,

who devises a money-making plan to create elaborate, inventive prologues—theatrical shows that were performed live before a movie—to be farmed out to multiple cinemas. Like its predecessor *42nd Street*, Bacon's furious and funny storylines, revolving around love and money and backstage shenanigans, work again, and the comic plot finally explodes in a frenzy of breathtaking Berkeley marvels in motion, from overhead, abstract kaleidoscopes to flipbook animation and every dizzying formation in between. The naughty, innuendo-laden "Honeymoon Hotel"—scandalously featuring Ruby Keeler and Dick Powell under the covers together—is followed by the deliciously decadent "By a Waterfall," with each aquatic wonder supplanted by an even more outrageous, hypnogogic arrangement, as well as a sublime ending worthy of David Lynch. The closing number playfully epitomizes the FDR-supporting Warner Brothers' "New Deal in Entertainment," pulling patriotism into the mix of illogical, irrepressible, impossible theater pieces and far, far away from the economic reality just offscreen.

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With James Cagney, Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 104 min

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10 AT 9PM
THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL

Another opportunity for Berkeley to flex his non-musical muscles, *They Made Me a Criminal* brings the director together with cinematographer James Wong Howe and a perfectly cast John Garfield in his first starring role.

Based on Archie Mayo's tragic *The Life of Jimmy Dolan* (1933), Berkeley's post-Code version adds quite a bit more sentimentality and redemption to the story of a prizewinning New York boxer who gets mixed up in a murder and is forced into hiding. Johnnie's/Jack's sanctuary happens to be an Arizona date farm where a lovely Gloria Dickson is attempting to reform a gang of comical Brooklyn delinquents played by the Dead End Kids, who had recently gained popularity after their appearance in *Angels With Dirty Faces* (1938). While juggling the noir, comedy, romance and suspense just as smoothly as his dance numbers, Berkeley also appears to accentuate the dark, personal parallels to his own recent trials by featuring a flawed man wrongly accused of murder whose double-crossers are killed in a car accident caused by a blown-out tire.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With John Garfield, Claude Rains, Gloria Dickson
US 1939, 35mm, b/w, 92 min

SUNDAY DECEMBER 11 AT 5PM
CINÉASTES DE NOTRE TEMPS (FILMMAKERS OF OUR TIME): BUSBY BERKELEY

Part of the series on French television devoted to in-depth interviews with filmmakers, this episode was made in conjunction with the first Busby Berkeley retrospective in France held at the Cinematheque Française. Accompanied by excerpts of dance numbers from his peak Warner Brothers period, Berkeley provides amusing behind-the-scenes commentary and describes the logistical challenges of specific shots.

Directed by Hubert Knapp and André S. Labarthe
France 1971, digital video, color, 60 min. French and English with English subtitles

SUNDAY DECEMBER 11 AT 7PM
KING OF JAZZ

Among the more exciting rediscoveries in recent film preservation history is *King of Jazz*, a lavish, two-strip Technicolor extravaganza celebrating the hugely popular, and allegedly regal, bandleader Paul Whiteman. A hugely expensive production, *King of Jazz* was an unusual "prestige picture" for Universal and a pet project of Carl Laemmle, Jr., who, as head of studio production, shepherded some of the Depression era's most fascinating films. This is certainly true of *King of Jazz*, which has an unstoppable, almost overwhelming energy, unfolding Arabian Nights-style, one eye-popping performance after another shaded all the while in shimmering emerald green and candy-apple red. The show must and does go on, and on, but it is well worth the price of admission, which includes performances by a young Bing Crosby and the Rhythm Boys as well as George Gershwin himself. While offering a vibrant document of American popular music, *King of Jazz* also proposes a novel, and rather troubling, "history" of jazz that is as bizarre as many of the eccentrically staged numbers themselves. Broadway director and onetime filmmaker John Murray Anderson stages many pre-Busby Berkeley moments, most pointedly in his spectacular Art Deco rendition of that infectious classic "Happy Feet."

Directed by John Murray Anderson. With Paul Whiteman, John Boles, Laura La Plante
US 1930, DCP, color, 98 min

FRIDAY DECEMBER 16 AT 7PM
GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933

Just rounding the corner of *42nd Street*, *Gold Diggers of 1933* opens with dancers-as-coins in the catchy song-and-dance routine "We're in the Money," a playful number that is ironically cut short due to the arrival of debt col-

lectors. An apt introduction to the preoccupations in Berkeley's Warner Brothers pictures, this aborted snippet extravagantly conflates sex and money and confusingly mingles opulent fantasy with dire circumstance. In reality, the down-and-out victims of the Depression were not giving up film-going, and particularly not these stories of sweet success drizzled in comedy, Berkeley's hypnotic magic and behind-the-scenes theatrics. Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler return as an adorable couple with Warren William and Joan Blondell forming the more complicated, duplicitous pair. All are comically caught up in one case of mistaken identity after another, with both real and pretend gold diggers teasing the confused men while a secret savior lurks in the mix. For his part, Berkeley literally strips away at least one illusion: Powell and Keeler's wholesome façade evaporates with the marvelously provocative "Petting in the Park" dance sequence. Meanwhile, he continues to overwhelm the plot with "Shadow Waltz," first by captivating the senses with descending layers of twirling, spiraling dresses and then electrifying them with a neon violin routine. The final emotional twist is Berkeley's reverent social statement featuring the line "Remember my forgotten man/You put a rifle in his hand." Rows of bedraggled, wounded soldiers transform into soup-line patrons, and the giddiness is finally brought back to Earth with Metropolis-esque arcs of silhouetted, endlessly marching men, underpinning the dream machine. *Preserved by the Library of Congress.*

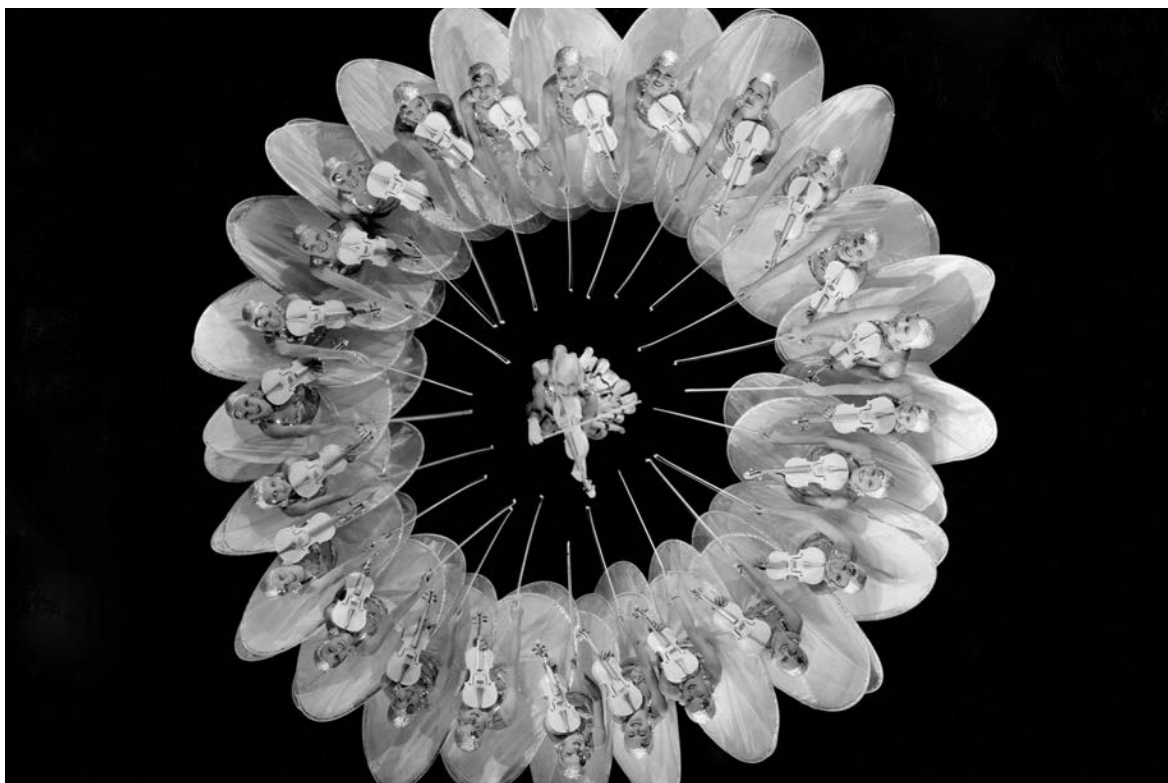
Directed by Mervyn LeRoy. With Warren William, Joan Blondell, Aline MacMahon
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 98 min

FRIDAY DECEMBER 16 AT 9PM
DAMES

A feisty rebuke to the then-recently inaugurated Production Code measures, *Dames* follows a tenacious crew of Broadway radicals, led by Dick Powell and Joan Blondell, as they develop an enormous production called "Sweet and Hot" to the great dismay of a legion of prissy moralists working tooth and nail to halt its realization. Viewed today, it is easy to wonder how the thin narrative, so transparently a flimsy decoy for the film's metatextual arguments, was able to hoodwink censors. Berkeley's musical numbers in this film are some of his most inspired. "The Girl at the Ironing Board" is a silly, riotous vision of laundresses lusting after semi-animate long johns, with the subtext of "clean" women embracing "dirty" imaginations mined for maximum erotic innuendo. "I Only



RAY ENRIGHT *DAMES*



MERVYN LEROY *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933*

"Have Eyes For You" envisions the face of Ruby Keeler magnifying and multiplying in the mind of Powell, a bit that transforms sexual desire into something dizzying and delirious. Even more provocative is the titular number, an id explosion about as blunt in its exaltation of female form and sexuality as ever conceived in Hollywood. *Preserved by the Library of Congress.*

Directed by Ray Enright. With Joan Blondell, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler
US 1934, 35mm, b/w, 90 min

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 AT 7PM
ROMAN SCANDALS

Surprisingly the most expensive musical produced at the time, *Roman Scandals* appears to actually predate films like *42nd Street* and *Footlight Parade*, though it was made after those films as the final obligation in Berkeley's contract with Sam Goldwyn and Eddie Cantor. All of the musical numbers take place in Eddie's dream space when he is forced out of West Rome, Oklahoma by corrupt landowners. He is mentally transported to ancient Rome, where intentionally anachronistic shenanigans and more nefarious schemes unfold, such as a slave auction that gives rise to the Berkeley sequence "No More Love." Famous for the chained "Goldwyn Girls"—including a young Lucille Ball—wearing nothing but long, golden wigs around a tiered cake-like structure, the scene is filmed less spectacularly and the dance is more frenzied, sadistic and melodramatic than in iconic Berkeley, actually accentuating the composed control and complex synchronization of his Warners Brothers' tableaux. A bit more dazzle is unleashed when a preposterously blackfaced Cantor pretends to be an "Ethiopian beauty specialist" in a foggy bathhouse of spinning doors surrounded by scantily clad, singing beauties, who he advises to "keep young and beautiful, if you wanna be loved."

Directed by Frank Tuttle. With Eddie Cantor, Gloria Stuart, Edward Arnold
US 1933, 35mm, b/w, 92 min

SATURDAY DECEMBER 17 AT 9PM
FASHIONS OF 1934

Most notable for mischievously riding the edge of the Production Code, *Fashions of 1934* features a lot of naugh-

tinness and a trio of lovably unethical lead characters. William Powell plays Sherwood Nash, a charming shyster who ropes Bette Davis' amateur dress designer into a scheme for bootlegging top Parisian fashions for high prices. In fact, the Berkeley dance number comes as somewhat of a surprise, but when it does appear as an elaborate cog in Nash's complex ostrich-feather racket, "Spin a Little Web of Dreams" twists into delectable Berkeley decadence, with dancers wearing feather fans, playing living harps and sailing atop an undulating, glistening faux sea. His most astonishing flourish: overhead shots of the plumed dancers forming a beautiful, feathery flower, which opens and closes as if photographed in time-lapse. *Preserved by the Library of Congress.*

Directed by William Dieterle. With William Powell, Bette Davis, Frank McHugh
US 1934, 35mm, b/w, 80 min

SUNDAY DECEMBER 18 AT 4:30PM
LADY BE GOOD

Told through a series of flashbacks at a divorce trial, *Lady Be Good* takes Berkeley's ever-popular backstage structure and applies it to songwriting. As a successful composing duo, played by Ann Sothorn and Robert Young, somersault through a medley of marital oscillations with comic assistance from characters like Red Skelton and Virginia O'Brien, their catchy tunes fill the air and receive a thorough treatment—the soundtrack features many different versions of only a few songs by a variety of performers. Though less sweeping and grandiose in this film, Berkeley's dance numbers add just the right amount of zing and wow. Accompanied by the fast-stepping acrobatics of the three Berry Brothers, tap queen Eleanor Powell takes center stage, first in a charming living room dance with her dog and then in the beguiling "Fascinating Rhythm," where, in a suit and top hat, she glides around pianos and dozens of tuxedoed male dancers courtesy Berkeley's moving platforms and magically transforming spaces.

Directed by Norman Z. McLeod. With Eleanor Powell, Ann Sothorn, Robert Young
US 1941, 35mm, b/w, 110 min

SUNDAY DECEMBER 18 AT 7PM

ZIEGFELD GIRL

MGM's promotion of *Ziegfeld Girl* fixated on scale—"10 Hit Songs," "20 Big Stars," "200 Glorified Girls"—yet its most explosive moments compress all attention on Judy Garland, who turns in an irresistible performance as one of three ingénues (Hedy Lamarr and Lana Turner play the others) hoping to hit it big with the iconic Ziegfeld Follies. While Lamarr and Turner get tangled up in melodramatic subplots of romantic conflict and alcoholism, Garland, dressed in a lavish array of glittering gowns designed by prolific costume specialist Adrian, sings half of the film's ten numbers and rarely strays far from Berkeley and director Robert Z. Leonard's swooping camera. Beholden to star power and glitzy sets that drip money, *Ziegfeld Girl* is relatively short on Berkeley's usual pictorial innovations and provocations. Instead, it finds the director working in an almost incantatory mode, with the procession of glamorous women slowly descending enormous spiral staircases taking on the quality of hypnosis.

Directed by Robert Z. Leonard. With James Stewart, Judy Garland, Hedy Lamarr
US 1941, 35mm, color, 132 min

FRIDAY JANUARY 6 AT 7PM

GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935

Busby Berkeley throws a little bit of everything into his first foray at directing an entire musical. For the first time, he integrates two songs into the narrative without the accompanying dance spectaculars while retaining the backstage drama and showstopper ending of the Bacon and LeRoy collaborations. The opening of the lavish Wentworth Plaza hotel for the summer provides Berkeley with inventive staging options against a backdrop of extreme extravagance and eccentric guests. Once again, money and love are twisted up together, and even the film's central romance is sparked by a socioeconomic imperative: Dick Powell's affable hotel clerk is hired as a platonic escort for the wealthy Ann Prentiss—played by Gloria Stuart—who is already betrothed to the spacey author of a monograph on snuff boxes. Under these circuitously



BUSBY BERKELEY *THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL*

comic and blissfully capricious circumstances, the big show of the season is particularly startling. The fourteen-minute non sequitur "Lullaby of Broadway" opens with a tantalizing, minimalist ode to the avant-garde—even recreating the Man Ray photograph *Woman Smoking a Cigarette*—and carries on in an outrageously cinematic fashion. The "stage show" pretense is completely forgotten within the seductive folds of a dreamy city nocturne, which meets a dark, mysterious end.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Dick Powell, Adolphe Menjou, Gloria Stuart
US 1935, 35mm, b/w, 95 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 7 AT 7PM

BABES IN ARMS

Originally a Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart Broadway musical, *Babes in Arms* was the first of Berkeley's string of Arthur Freed-produced MGM pictures with Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. They play Mickey and Patsy,

just two of many talented offspring of aging vaudeville entertainers who happen to populate an entire town. Their parents' questionable lifestyles have incited a group of citizens—led by Margaret Hamilton, still in character from the *Wizard of Oz*, which had just wrapped up production—to urge the court to send these proto-vaudevillians off to a work farm. This inspires Berkeley's surreal sequence worthy of Henry Darger, the titular "Babes in Arms," which tracks from the air a mob of otherwise wholesome children in the streets at night, jumping fences, burning their childish things and dancing in rings around dark playgrounds. Usually adorned by even smaller children playing violins or pretending to be adults, Rooney and Garland have an undeniable ease with one another, she playing the stalwart angel to his histrionic budding director. Eventually, they manage to stage an outdoor minstrel show in blackface, which comes to a thankfully abrupt end with a storm. Berkeley follows this up with the children's Broadway debut: "God's Country," a patriotic finale featuring a whitewashed, multiethnic representation that renders the sweet narrative naïve, contradictory and somewhat forced, trying to feign innocence as the world falls under a dark shadow.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Charles Winninger
US 1939, 35mm, b/w, 93 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 7 AT 9PM

BABES ON BROADWAY

The third and ultimately final entry, following *Babes in Arms* and *Strike Up the Band!*, in MGM's short run of "backyard musicals," *Babes on Broadway* generated skepticism upon release around the casting of Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland, who in 1941 were starting to strain credibility in the roles of fresh-faced musical theater hopefuls. But the film struck a chord with audiences anyway, in large part because of Rooney and Garland's maturing chemistry, with the latter's effortless charm counterbalancing her costar's scenery-chewing hamminess. The plot concerns the pair's mission to independently produce a show that will shock the Broadway establishment, a familiar setup that Berkeley furnishes with numerous lengthy song-and-dance vignettes, from the heartfelt apartment-set "How About You?" to a group rehearsal scene no less elaborate or sensational than the more polished finales in the *Gold Diggers* series. Especially striking is the digressive multi-song sequence conceived as a salute to bygone Broadway stars, which is



BUSBY BERKELEY *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935*

staged in a defunct vaudeville theater and guest-directed, in crane movements every bit as dynamic as Berkeley's, by an upstart Vincente Minnelli

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, Fay Bainter
US 1942, 35mm, b/w, 121 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 8 AT 5PM
PALMY DAYS

After the success of *Whoopie!*, Sam Goldwyn reteamed Eddie Cantor and Busby Berkeley for another musical comedy. Caught up in fraudulent fortune-telling schemes, Cantor is mistaken for an "efficiency expert" hired to improve business at Clark's Bakery. Though the bakery's motto is "Glorifying the American Doughnut," the real product appears to be the famous Goldwyn Girls and friends clad in extremely Pre-Code backless uniforms. Flaunting an all-female staff making doughnuts factory-style in unison with pseudo-military affect, the stage is set for Berkeley to take over with such numbers as the exercise-promoting "Bend Down Sister"—in which the dancers form elaborate, mesmerizing patterns with sticks—and Cantor's popular tune "Yes, Yes! (My Baby Said Yes)," which ends with chorines using placards to transform into a bus that carries away the film's couple. Not directed by Berkeley but by Mervin LeRoy, Cantor's blackface number was added at the last minute in an effort to increase the music and reduce the plot, which had received a lukewarm response from preview audiences.

Directed by Edward Sutherland. With Eddie Cantor, Charlotte Greenwood, Barbara Weeks
US 1931, 35mm, b/w, 80 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 8 AT 7PM
GOLD DIGGERS IN PARIS

Warner Brothers' concluding entry in their nearly two-decade-long *Gold Diggers* series attempted to ward off the waning popularity of the films by introducing an exotic Gallic location and the burlesque talents of a comedy group known as The Schnickelfritz Band, branded as "America's Most Unsophisticated Band!" Replacing mainstays like Dick Powell and Joan Blondell were Rudy Vallee and Rosemary Lane, who embody the brains and beauty of a makeshift ballet troupe serendipitously sent from New York to Paris to compete in an international festival. Once in France, however, Vallee and Lane are practically upstaged by the emphatic ensemble: dozens upon dozens of boisterous ham actors approximating beret-wearing Parisian types, as well as a throng of real-life dancers. In choreographing this chaos, Berkeley suppresses some of his more baroque manipulations to spotlight the athleticism and grace of these expert performers, but still indulges the occasional compositional novelty: Dutch tilts, for instance, that orient a long line of tap-dancers across the furthest corners of the Academy frame.

Directed by Ray Enright. With Rudy Vallee, Rosemary Lane, Hugh Hebert
US 1938, 16mm, b/w, 97 min

MONDAY JANUARY 9 AT 7PM
WONDER BAR

A hearty amount of controversy and salaciousness is squeezed into *Wonder Bar's* lightly treated, oddly assorted melodrama featuring Dolores del Rio as a desirable dancer trapped in a love triangle. With many of its scenes simply set-ups for Al Jolson's comedy routines, *Wonder Bar* delivers some of its greatest pleasures in its defiance of the recently instated Production Code. Among a celebratory gay moment between two men and a dance with a blatantly sadomasochistic edge, Bacon



HOBART HENLEY NIGHT WORLD

packs in racy dialogue, male and female gold digging, adultery and murder—all treated with an equal amount of nonchalance. Ingeniously tapping into the nightclub's reflection of the cinema and its escapist fantasies, Berkeley's dreamy dance number explodes beyond its physical reality into an infinite mirrored realm, seamlessly and invisibly staged with giant, revolving mirrors and crowned by an overhead shot of the dancers moving in camera aperture formations. Unfortunately, Berkeley's other elaborate number is certainly why the film is rarely shown. Populated by dancers all in blackface, the piece's spectacular staging—including a scene of Jolson's riding a mule into heaven with uncanny echoes of *Wizard of Oz* (1939)—is understandably overlooked today.

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With Al Jolson, Kay Francis, Dolores del Rio
US 1934, digital video, b/w, 85 min

FRIDAY JANUARY 13 AT 7PM
NIGHT WORLD

Pursued by Boris Karloff in his breakout role as Frankenstein's monster the previous year, Mae Clarke plays one of his nightclub's more charming showgirls in this



NORMAN Z. MCLEOD LADY BE GOOD

frugal, pre-Code curiosity. Still a Hollywood neophyte at this point without a luxurious budget, Berkeley works his magic in the film's primary dance number, including a wanton traveling shot through a tunnel of legs. Rife with infidelity, debauchery and intrigue as well as the stark, awkward charms of early sound films, the Prohibition-era atmosphere is full of funny plot twists and other surprising quirks, such as a young George Raft as one of Clark's slimy suitors and Clarence Muse as the doorman, an unusually prominent, developed role for a black actor at the time.

Directed by Hobart Henley. With Lew Ayres, Mae Clarke, Boris Karloff
US 1932, 35mm, b/w, 58 min

FAST AND FURIOUS

With a beauty pageant as the pretext for intrigue, the spectacle expectations are a bit of a tease in this Busby Berkeley feature with neither music nor dance. Directed between Berkeley's string of Mickey Rooney/Judy Garland pictures, *Fast and Furious* is a comic, airy murder mystery featuring a sleuthing married couple, one of three MGM-produced movies capitalizing on the popularity of the *Thin Man* films. Amid much cattiness and banter, Franchot Tone and Ann Sothorn dodge deadly elevator shafts, gangsters and even circus lions in their efforts to uncover the killer amid all of the bathing beauties.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Franchot Tone, Ann Sothorn, Ruth Hussey
US 1939, 16mm, b/w, 73 min

FRIDAY JANUARY 13 AT 9:30PM

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

Vaudeville performance and baseball may seem like altogether unconnected worlds, but around the turn of the century it was not so uncommon for them to crisscross. *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* centers on this tonal collision in its tale of professional sluggers who spend their offseason gigging under the spotlight and cruising for ladies. Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra star as the prized middle infielders of the Sarasota Wolves, a team destined for a pennant if its players can keep their eyes on the diamond. Esther Williams' presence as the club's new owner naturally throws the boys off their game, sending the story tailspinning into romantic entanglements and conflicts of interest, but the real subject of the film (confirmed by a fourth-wall-breaking epilogue) is the dance of erotic energy between the leads. Yielding choreography duties to Kelly and Stanley Donen, Berkeley's musical sequences take on an unfussy directness, whether in a

Celtic-tinged tap-dance at a moonlit clambake, a team sing-along of a whimsical ditty called “Yes, Indeedy,” or an expositional one-on-one between Sinatra and a love interest staged unglamorously on a set of bleachers.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Frank Sinatra, Esther Williams, Gene Kelly
US 1949, 35mm, color, 93 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 14 AT 7PM

STRIKE UP THE BAND

The second Rooney-Garland musical produced under Arthur Freed at MGM, *Strike Up the Band* veers from *Babes in Arms*' Broadway focus to capitalize on the then-growing craze of big band jazz. In the wafer-thin plot, the stars play high school students dreaming of a shot at jazz fame, which eventually comes in the form of a Chicago competition organized by real-life bandleader Paul Whiteman. Newly anointed as the box-office champion of the era, Rooney draws the brunt of the camera's attention and proves a dexterous showman on a drum kit and a xylophone, while Garland is the shimmying singer carrying a torch for Rooney's oblivious go-getter. In extensive set pieces such as “La Conga” and “Our Love Affair,” Berkeley works in long, floating takes that find order in disorder, turning the blaring trumpeters on stage and the havoc set in motion on the dance floor into synchronous ballets of cheery movement.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, June Preisser
US 1940, 35mm, b/w, 120 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 14 AT 9:30PM

CALL ME MISTER

Reunited with Warner Bros. collaborator Lloyd Bacon and Betty Grable, an uncredited showgirl in three of his 30s movies, Berkeley adds some visual verve to the dance numbers in this highly altered rendering of a successful Broadway musical. After a cheery, glossed-over depiction of the Japanese surrender and post-war camaraderie—including an odd, offhand musical number with Grable as a geisha—the film drowns its conscience in a comic Technicolor-wash focused less on the war and Japan than

on the less weighty aspects of romance, show business and military protocol. Grable's sunshiney Kay—part of the Civilian Actress Technicians Service, or C.A.T.S.—attempts to put on a lavish stage show for the remaining troops while avoiding her estranged, philandering husband, who happens to be in the lead. Though key Berkeley set pieces, such as revolving, elevating floors and break-away sets, do add drama, the spectacle is pared down to a few bodies and carefully blocked light and color. Effervescent tap-dancing is the frosting on the cake here, and an uncredited performance by Bobby Short singing “Going Home Train” injects a little soul into all the sugar.

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With Betty Grable, Dan Dailey, Danny Thomas
US 1951, 35mm, color, 96 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 15 AT 4:30PM

MILLION DOLLAR MERMAID

Reunited with *Gold Diggers of 1933*'s Mervyn LeRoy, Berkeley contributes two ebullient dance numbers to MGM's wildly successful aquatic frolic starring Esther Williams. Based on the life of Australian swimming sensation Annette Kellerman, whose fascinating achievements in ladies' swimwear, water-based spectacle and cinema directly paved the way for Williams, who sparkles most brightly in Berkeley's numbers—their exciting set design, surprising camera angles, multiple bodies and sheer grandeur standing out sharply from any other sequence. However, the imaginative wizard put Williams to the test by requiring she perform a high dive in a stunning, yet cumbersome, costume. Ironically mirroring a tragic event in the film, the star broke three vertebrae in her neck as a result, but would risk working with Berkeley once more in the following year's *Easy to Love*. *Print courtesy Academy Film Archive.*

Directed by Mervyn LeRoy. With Esther Williams, Victor Mature, Walter Pidgeon
US 1952, 16mm, color, 115 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 15 AT 7PM

HOLLYWOOD HOTEL

Without a characteristically delirious Berkeley number, 1937's *Hollywood Hotel* instead leans heavily on the



BUSBY BERKELEY *STRIKE UP THE BAND*

razzle-dazzle of legendary clarinetist Benny Goodman and his band, playing themselves in a series of virtuosic uncut performances—the centerpiece of which, titled “Sing, Sing, Sing,” affords each soloist a lengthy spotlight. Dick Powell plays the band's fictional saxophonist, who is whisked away early in the plot by the calls of Hollywood, glorified here as a swanky wonderland where everyone's a beatific performer at all hours of the day. When larger-than-life star Mona Marshall (Lola Lane) goads her studio by refusing to attend a lavish premiere, Powell gets picked as the escort for her doppelganger, little-known actress Virginia Stanton (Rosemary Lane). Every bit as bug-eyed at the allures of Movieland as his characters, Berkeley frames the action under the glittering lights of downtown, with Hollywood's famous landmarks ecstatically superimposed in an early montage. The self-congratulatory schmaltz peaks in the “Hooray for Hollywood” finale, in which Powell croons what would become an anthem for the entertainment industry's transformative power during the Depression. *Preserved by the Library of Congress.*

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Dick Powell, Rosemary Lane, Lola Lane
US 1938, 35mm, b/w, 109 min

MONDAY JANUARY 16 AT 7PM

IN CALIENTE

An example, like *Gold Diggers in Paris*, of Berkeley's flair for exotic locations, *In Caliente* blooms with a touristic vigor in its expression of the sights and sounds of its titular Mexican resort, where motormouthed journalist Larry MacArthur (Pat O'Brien) attempts to flee an unwanted marriage proposal back home. So often energized by the possibilities presented by new props and set decorations, Berkeley here works wonders with matching mariachi bands and oversized sombreros, with which he arranges dazzling patterns in the film's several courtyard extravaganzas. It's all a backdrop for the screwball courtship of Larry and Rita Gómez (Dolores del Rio), an elegant dancer once scathingly reviewed by the vacationing Yankee. Eventually, Glenda Farrell, as Larry's nagging



MERVYN LEROY *MILLION DOLLAR MERMAID*

pursuer from Brooklyn, arrives to disrupt the central romance, but not before the plot has cycled through Wild West shootouts, spirited tavern waltzes, and a showpiece for then-renowned burlesque stars The Dancing De Marcos. *Preserved by the Library of Congress.*

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With Dolores del Rio, Pat O'Brien, Leo Carrillo
US 1935, 35mm, b/w, 84 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 21 AT 7PM

WHOOPEE!

Kicking off Berkeley's Hollywood career, *Whoopie!* cuts to the chase with an opening number that fills the screen with cowgirls—including an uncredited Betty Grable—dancing in formation, a synchronized ripple of legs and hats. Only moments in, the now-iconic overhead shot appears, and individuals become a single abstract, undulating, circular form. In the painted pastel palette of two-strip Technicolor, the star-crossed-lover narrative of the film is lightly taken within a jokey revue format that mixes Old Western style with modern, New York accents and Eddie Cantor doing his proto Woody Allen schtick as the neurotic outcast. A complicated melting pot of racial stereotypes and sexual innuendo—particularly between men—the film now reads as a rich Freudian playground where repressed colonizers exploit the natives for their revealing outerwear. Despite this, the dance numbers directed by the ambitious, imaginative newcomer surge with a beauty and energy otherwise lacking from the more conventionally staged action.

Directed by Thornton Freeland. With Eddie Cantor, Ethel Shutta, Paul Gregory
US 1930, 35mm, b/w, 85 min

SATURDAY JANUARY 21 AT 9PM

VARSITY SHOW

It takes a full five minutes for the nonmusical dialogue to start in this peppy, wholesome collegiate romp featuring Berkeley standby Dick Powell playing a successful Broadway producer quenching a dry spell by returning to his alma mater to help them stage their annual varsity



WILLIAM KEIGHLEY VARSITY SHOW



BUSBY BERKELEY TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

show. Fred Waring, a popular bandleader and radio host, makes a rare film appearance as the anxious students' empathetic professor, and appearing as multitalented janitors are "Buck and Bubbles," or Ford Lee Washington and John W. Sublett, vaudeville stars whose innovations in tap effortlessly steal scenes. The effusive school spirit reaches its apex with an Oscar-nominated Berkeley salute to the top colleges, universities and academies. Hundreds of dancers miraculously form the institutional letters and insignia via a smooth reverse-motion trick, melting the allegiant hearts of the police who come to shut down the show.

Directed by William Keighley. With Dick Powell, Fred Waring, Priscilla Lane
US 1937, 35mm, b/w, 120 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 22 AT 7PM

GOLD DIGGERS OF 1937

Essentially an eighty-minute preamble to an extensive baroque set piece, *Gold Diggers of 1937* mounts a convoluted plot around a shady life insurance deal orchestrated by a pair of theater producers to capitalize on the failing health of their show manager. As the schemers find ways to hurry along their colleague's demise so as to fund one of their most elaborate productions yet, the naïve insurance salesman (Dick Powell) falls for the strategic charms of a former chorus girl (Joan Blondell) in on the ruse, but everyone's plans have to be adjusted when the producer just won't drop dead. Director Lloyd Bacon keeps the musical numbers to a minimum so as to spotlight the biting black comedy of Warren Duff's screenplay, which burlesques Depression-era desperation in often startlingly direct ways, but it's all just foreplay for the final show, in which Berkeley unleashes his choreographic fireworks for a provocative act called "All's Fair in Love and War." Featuring anachronistic simulations of trench warfare between the male and female dancers, as well as such astonishing sights as that of a dozen white flags twirling in perfect sync, the robust visual display is only further energized by its staging against a reflective black floor.

Directed by Lloyd Bacon. With Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Glenda Farrell
US 1936, 35mm, b/w, 101 min

MONDAY JANUARY 23 AT 7PM

FOR ME AND MY GAL

Gene Kelly's screen debut came alongside celebrated starlet Judy Garland in this rousing WWI period piece produced as enlistment propaganda in the throes of the American involvement in WWII. *For Me and My Gal's* narrative hinges on an act of cowardice privately undertaken by Kelly's character in an effort to bypass the draft and resume his burgeoning vaudeville career alongside his radiant singing girlfriend, but the resulting string of misfortunes that befall him pave the way for an education on the front lines and an inevitable lovers' reunion. Berkeley's disinterest in the nationalistic schmaltz of the war montages, which mainly become vehicles for experiments in superimposition, and in the disproportionately lengthy emphasis on Garland and Kelly's awe-inspiring chemistry, whether in blissful dance or tender banter. Of particular note is the sublime titular number, in which Berkeley's camera, steadied on a crane for several minutes without a cut, raptly observes the harmonious movements of the stars' bodies and voices.

Directed by Busby Berkeley. With Judy Garland, George Murphy, Gene Kelly
US 1942, 35mm, b/w, 104 min



BUSBY BERKELEY FOR ME AND MY GAL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
04 4:30PM VINTAGE HOLIDAY SHOW P. 2 FREE ADMISSION 7PM A VIDEO CHRISTMAS WITH GEORGE & KAREN P. 3	05 7PM FIRE AT SEA P. 24	06	07	08	09 7PM 42ND STREET P. 5 9PM THE GANG'S ALL HERE P. 5	10 7PM FOOTLIGHT PARADE P. 6 9PM THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL P. 6
11 5PM CINÉASTES DE NOTRE TEMPS: BUSBY BERKELEY P. 6 7PM KING OF JAZZ P. 6	12 7PM FIRE AT SEA P. 24	13	14	15	16 7PM GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933 P. 6 9PM DAMES P. 7	17 7PM ROMAN SCANDALS P. 7 9PM FASHIONS OF 1934 P. 7
18 4:30PM LADY BE GOOD P. 7 7PM ZIEGFELD GIRL P. 8						

MERVYN LEROY *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933* P. 6

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
01	02	03	04	05	06 7PM GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935 P. 8 9PM 42ND STREET P. 5	07 7PM BABES IN ARMS P. 8 9PM BABES ON BROADWAY P. 8
08 5PM PALMY DAYS P. 9 7PM GOLD DIGGERS IN PARIS P. 9	09 7PM WONDER BAR P. 9	10	11	12	13 7PM NIGHT WORLD P. 9 FAST AND FURIOUS P. 9 9:30PM TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME P. 9	14 7PM STRIKE UP THE BAND P. 10 9:30PM CALL ME MISTER P. 10
15 4:30PM MILLION DOLLAR MERMAID P. 10 7PM HOLLYWOOD HOTEL P. 10	16 7PM IN CALIENTE P. 10	17	18	19	20 7PM LOST LOST LOST P. 16	21 7PM WHOOPEE! P. 11 9PM VARSITY SHOW P. 11
22 5PM THE BRIG P. 16 7PM GOLD DIGGERS OF 1937 P. 11	23 7PM FOR ME AND MY GAL P. 11	24	25	26	27 7PM PARAGUAYAN HAMMOCK P. 18 PAZ ENCINA IN PERSON	28 7PM MEMORY EXERCISES P. 18 PAZ ENCINA IN PERSON
29 5PM GOING HOME P. 16 7PM SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ANDY WARHOL P. 16 HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JOHN P. 16 ZEFIRO TORNA... P. 16	30 7PM SLEEPLESS NIGHTS STORIES P. 16	31				



RAY ENRIGHT *DAMES* P. 7



MERVYN LEROY *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933* P. 6

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			01	02	03 7PM THE POLLEN OF FLOWERS P. 20 9PM WOMAN OF FIRE P. 20	04 7PM MARCH OF FOOLS P. 20 9:30PM YEONG-JA'S HEYDAYS P. 20
05 5PM REMINISCENCES OF A JOURNEY TO LITHUANIA P. 17 7PM I HAD NOWHERE TO GO P. 17	06 7PM NIGHT JOURNEY P. 21	07	08	09	10 7PM WALDEN: DIARIES, NOTES, AND SKETCHES P. 17 JONAS MEKAS IN PERSON	11 7PM 365 DAY PROJECT P. 17 OUT-TAKES FROM THE LIFE OF A HAPPY MAN P. 17 JONAS MEKAS IN PERSON
12 4:30PM FLAME P. 21 7PM VOW OF CHASTITY P. 21	13 7PM A SPLENDID OUTING P. 21	14	15	16	17 7PM THE ASCENSION OF HAN-NE P. 21 9:15PM I-EO ISLAND P. 22	18 6PM AS I WAS MOVING AHEAD OCCASIONALLY I SAW BRIEF GLIMPSSES OF BEAUTY P. 17
19 4:30PM THE POLLEN OF FLOWERS P. 20 7PM HEAVENLY HOMECOMING TO STARS P. 22	20 7PM I AM LOOKING FOR A BRIDE P. 22	21	22	23	24 7PM TOUCHING THE SKIN OF EERINESS P. 23 RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI IN PERSON	25 3PM INTIMACIES P. 23 RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI IN PERSON
26 4PM THE DEPTHS P. 23 7PM HEAVENLY HOMECOMING TO STARS 2 P. 22	27 7PM BYONGTAE AND YOUNGJA P. 22	28				

LLOYD BACON 42ND STREET P. 5

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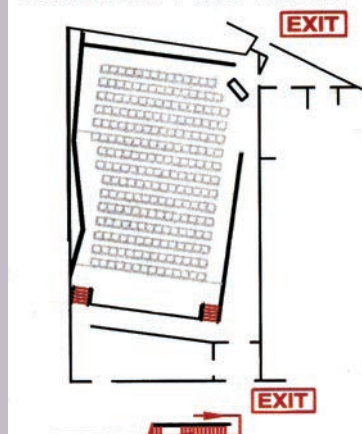
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The Harvard Film Archive is just east of the Harvard Square Red Line T stop and next to the Harvard Art Museums. The HFA is one block north of Massachusetts Avenue between Broadway and Harvard Streets on the Harvard University campus.

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THEATER FIRE EXITS



SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF A HAPPY MAN... THE FILMS OF JONAS MEKAS

JANUARY 20 – FEBRUARY 18

“I want to celebrate the small forms of cinema, the lyrical forms, the poem, the watercolour, etude, sketch, postcard, arabesque, bagatelle and little 8mm songs.

I am standing in the middle of the information highway and laughing, because a butterfly on a little flower somewhere just fluttered its wings, and I know that the whole course of history will drastically change because of that flutter. A super-8 camera just made a little soft buzz somewhere, on New York's Lower East Side, and the world will never be the same.” – Jonas Mekas

“Jonas is a true hero of the underground and a radical of the first degree – a shape-shifter and time-fucker... he sees things that others can't... his cinema is a cinema of memory and soul and air and fire. There is no one else like him. His films will live forever.” – Harmony Korine

Filmmaker, writer, poet, artist and “godfather” of American avant-garde cinema—or “New American Cinema” as he coined it in the late 1950s—Jonas Mekas (b. 1922) remains an impressive force within film. After six decades of filmmaking and writing poetry, Mekas remains devoted to creating new moving-image work amid many current book publications. He is the living embodiment of self-determination, perseverance and dedication. While cofounding *Film Culture* magazine with his brother Adolfas in 1958, he also wrote the influential “Movie Journal” column in *The Village Voice* (1958-77) and, with Shirley Clarke, started the Film-Makers' Cooperative, which he helped transform into Anthology Film Archives in the early 70s. Along with endless championing of poetic cinema, artists and filmmakers, Mekas has meticulously shaped the public image of avant-garde filmmaking in America and profoundly influenced its self-identity through his own film work.

He was born on Christmas Eve in the small farming village of Semeniškiai, Lithuania, a place, Mekas says, “where nothing happened, then suddenly everything happened.” Namely, the Soviet Army moved into Lithuania in 1941, and Mekas joined the resistance, later fleeing the country with his brother. Arrested en route, they were taken to a Nazi labor camp near Hamburg and then were transferred to various displaced persons' camps for another two years after the war ended. Mekas remained in Germany until 1948, studying philosophy and other subjects in Mainz before leaving for New York with Adolfas in 1949.

Two weeks after his arrival in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Mekas borrowed the money to buy his first Bolex 16mm camera and began to film moments of his life. Shortly after discovering avant-garde film at venues such as Amos Vogel's Cinema 16, Mekas began curating his own screenings. At the epicenter of a cultural and artistic revolution at that time in New York, Mekas encountered a burgeoning bohemian underground culture of artists, writers, musicians, photographers and filmmakers, and regularly crossed paths with artists like Maya Deren, Jack Smith, Andy Warhol, Allen Ginsberg, Yoko Ono, John Lennon, Stan Brakhage and fellow Lithuanian George Maciunas, many of whom came to his Manhattan loft for regular film evenings.

In 1958, Jonas introduced film criticism to *The Village Voice*. His “Movie Journal” column became the de facto place to find out about underground cinema and a space for Mekas to rail against the establishment, censorship and its enforcers. Nevertheless, he stated bluntly in 1968, “I am not a critic. I don't criticize. I am a cold, objective, ‘piercing’ eye that watches things and sees where they are and where they are going and I'm bringing all these facts to your attention.”

Mekas created the New American Cinema Group in 1959 as a new model of distribution and exhibition for avant-garde film. Inspired by, but completely different from, Amos Vogel's Cinema 16, Mekas championed the right for all films to be shown. The collective became the Film-Makers' Cooperative in 1962, and soon after, similar groups came together in San Francisco (Canyon Cinema) and London (London Film-Makers' Co-operative), based on the Coop model. Combining the Coop with the Filmmakers' Cinematheque, both ventures were the foundation for what would ultimately become the Anthology Film Archives in 1970, dedicated to preserving and screening avant-garde films. “Virtually everything I created or helped create was done out of necessity,” says Mekas.

In 1964, Mekas was arrested on obscenity charges for showing Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* (1963) and Jean Genet's *Un Chant d'Amour* (1950). In his column “Movie Times” he battled against the draconian laws governing censorship and launched a campaign against the censorship board, eventually going to jail several times for screening “pornography.”

Concurrently working as a filmmaker, Mekas' own output began with his early 16mm films on exile, military domination and poetic freedom, such as his landmark *The Brig*, based on a harrowing stage play of the same name about a day inside a military prison. Though featuring actors and scripted scenes, the film was so realistic it won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary in Venice in 1964.

In the mid to late 1960s, Mekas developed and pioneered the “film-diary” style for which he is now most well known. Recording his day-to-day activities as well as those of his artist and filmmaking friends and family, Mekas preferred to document what he calls “the small, intimate moments that describe daily reality without being poetic.” In 1967 Mekas was encouraged by filmmaker and scholar Gerald O'Grady to exhibit at the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, where Mekas edited his first diary film *Diaries, Notes, Sketches, or Walden*. Cycling through the seasons of the year over six reels, *Walden* is a celebration of Mekas' many close friendships and the vibrancy of the cinema community. His technique of single-frame shooting, a handheld camera and “amateur” style was far from amateur and has since been recognized for its revolutionary impact on filmmaking and cinema.

Throughout his life Mekas has downplayed notions of being labeled as an artist or filmmaker, instead calling himself a “filmer,” saying “It is important to know that what I do is not artistic. I am just a film-maker. I live how I live and I do what I do, which is recording moments of my life as I move ahead. And I do it because I am compelled to. Necessity, not artistry, is the true line you can follow in my life and work.”

Jonas and Adolfas' return home to Lithuania after twenty-seven years resulted in two tender films of family gatherings, Jonas' *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* in 1971–1972 and Adolfas' rarely screened yet equally powerful *Going Home*. Filmed before *Walden*, *Lost Lost Lost* was edited and released four years later, retracing his arrival in New York and his interactions with celebrated figures like the Velvet Underground, LeRoi Jones and singer Tiny Tim.

In the 1990s Mekas frequently returned to his past—remembering those friends who had passed on—with a number of tender film portraits, most notably what he refers to as his “1960's Quartet,” which includes the films *Zefiro Torna or Scenes From the Life of George Maciunas*, *Happy Birthday to John*, *Scenes From the Life of Andy Warhol*, and *This Side of Paradise* (1999) about his long friendship with Jackie Onassis and the Kennedy family. Of particular note is *Zefiro Torna*, his heartfelt tribute to fellow Lithuanian, friend and Fluxus compatriot George Maciunas, lovingly depicted in full vigor at various events and happenings.



JONAS MEKAS REMINISCENCES OF A JOURNEY TO LITHUANIA

This century Mekas released what may be one of his most imaginative and structured diary films, *As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty*. A magnum opus in many ways, including its near five-hour length, the film is a loving portrait of Mekas' early family life and a contemplative goodbye to the end of an era. Even more recently, Mekas completed his revelatory reflection *Out-Takes from the Life of a Happy Man*, ultimately one of his strongest films, in which he digs through fragments and scraps from his many completed works while working late into the night.

Beyond filmmaking, the engaged, energetic Mekas has also published more than twenty books of poetry and prose that have been translated into over a dozen languages—his Lithuanian poetry entering the pantheon of that country's classic literature. Since 2000, Mekas has also expanded into the area of film installations, exhibiting frozen film frames and stills from his films at art galleries and museums around the world. In 2007 he embarked on one of his most ambitious endeavors to date, the *365 Day Project*, in which he makes a film every day of the year and posts it online. This project continues to this day, with Mekas adding videos and material almost daily.

As Mekas says, "It's the essence of those normal moments that I am exploring, the intensity of feeling in them. That is what I have been trying to do for all these years. Really, I am an anthropologist of the small meaningful moment."

Long live the cinema!

Long live Jonas Mekas!

The Harvard Film Archive is honored to present a selection of films by Jonas Mekas—including one work by his brother Adolfas Mekas (1925-2011). Mekas will be in person for two special evenings, returning to the Harvard Film Archive for the first time since 1974. — JR

Special thanks: Anthology Film Archives, Sebastian Mekas and Charity Coleman.

Film descriptions by Nick Pinkerton and Jeremy Rossen.



JONAS MEKAS *LOST LOST LOST*

FRIDAY JANUARY 20 AT 7PM
LOST LOST LOST

Before Mekas had gangwayed right into the heart of the New York arts scene, he and his younger brother, Adolfas, were two of thousands of Lithuanian *dypukai* (displaced persons) set adrift from their homeland in the aftermath of World War II, living by their wits in an upended world. With Mekas newly arrived to the Lithuanian enclave of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, a tight-knit émigré community centered around the Church of the Annunciation, the autobiographical home movie-diary *Lost Lost Lost* begins in 1949—documented with the 16mm Bolex that was among his first purchases in the New World—and ends in 1963 in the rural Vermont setting where Adolfas filmed his *Hallelujah the Hills*. Throughout, Mekas describes his slow slipping away from a Lithuanian past towards an American future, as the perspective of his camera eye changes from the observational to the wheeling, dizzy, ecstatic mode of his later work. The story of an immigrant's reinvention is a familiar one, but what sets Me-

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kas' telling apart is the powerful melancholy—the sense of things lost in the fire.

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1976, 16mm, color & b/w, 178 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 22 AT 5PM

THE BRIG

Jonas Mekas caught Judith Malina and Julian Beck's production of Kenneth H. Brown's play *The Brig* at the Living Theatre on its closing night and was so overwhelmed that the next night he filmed the whole performance straight through with three 16mm Auricon cameras, having made no extensive blocking or shooting strategy. The approach of total, immediate and punishing physical immersion happens to perfectly suit Brown's depiction of everyday brutality inside a Marine Corps military prison, while Mekas had certain theoretical interests of his own. "One of the ideas that I was pursuing—or getting out of my system—was the application of the so-called cinéma vérité techniques to a stage event," Mekas later wrote in *The Village Voice*. "In a sense, *The Brig* became an essay in film criticism... My approach wasn't too kind to Kenneth Brown's play: I was a parasite sucking on his blood."

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1964, 16mm, b/w, 65 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 29 AT 5PM

GOING HOME

Created at the same time as *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania*—and frequently overshadowed by his brother's film—*Going Home* was made by both Adolfas Mekas and his wife Pola Chapelle about the Mekas brothers' return to Lithuania after a twenty-seven-year absence. A moving portrait emerges with feasts, family, friends and "flowers for the dead and for the living in this film; it is full of flowers and songs."

Directed by Adolfas Mekas
US 1972, 16mm, color, 61 min

SUNDAY JANUARY 29 AT 7PM

A program of short portrait films illustrating the human throughline of Mekas' career—his interest and investment in people and their return of the favor. Andy Warhol shot Jonas for a screen test, and Jonas cobbled together footage of Andy taken from 1965 to 1982, concluding with Mass being read at his funeral in St. Patrick's Cathedral. *Happy Birthday to John* captures an exhibition of John Lennon and Yoko Ono's work at the Syracuse Museum of Art; a subsequent birthday celebration, includ-



JONAS MEKAS WALDEN: *DIARIES, NOTES, AND SKETCHES*

ing a jam session with John, Yoko and Ringo; and other fascinating ephemera from Mekas' files. The organizer of the John/Yoko exhibition was Lithuanian-American artist George Maciunas, author of the proto-punky, officially art-destabilizing *Fluxus Manifesto*, a vital influence on Mekas, and the subject of his *Zefiro Torna*, a capering elegy sewn together from footage taken between 1952 and 1978 and set to the strains of Monteverdi and Mekas' readings from Maciunas' diaries, in which he records his aggressive struggle with pancreatic cancer. Also included is footage of his "Fluxwedding" marriage to the poet Billie Hutching three months before his death, an act of defiant affirmation.

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ANDY WARHOL

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1990, 16mm, color, 35 min

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JOHN

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1997, 16mm, color, 24 min

ZEFIRO TORNA OR SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF GEORGE MACIUNAS

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1992, 16mm, color, 35 min

MONDAY JANUARY 30 AT 7PM

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS STORIES

Bedeiled by insomnia, Mekas turns to the company of friends to get him through long, dark nights of the soul—his loose model here is *One Thousand and One Nights*, with good, convivial conversation seen as more than a pleasure, but a lifeline. The "guests" include a bevy of figures across a wide range of artistic disciplines: Marina

Abramovic pines semi-seriously for a housewife's life; the architect Raimund Abraham calls for the abolition of the word "artist;" and, in a radically telescoped sequence, Harmony Korine is seen in a flash before and after marriage and fatherhood. There are old friends (Yoko Ono, Patti Smith), friends who will never be old (Amy Winehouse, seen on a studio visit), and departed friends recalled from out of the past (Antonin Artaud, Jack Kerouac). It is an artfully artless movie, its roughshod style typical of Mekas' work after transitioning to digital video, and a melancholy one, though punctuated by fits of joy, lifted wine glasses, and homemade intertitles proclaiming "Praise Allah."

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 2001, digital video, color, 114 min

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5 AT 5PM

REMINISCENCES OF A JOURNEY TO LITHUANIA

A cofounder of New York's Anthology Film Archives and a tireless documenter of his own perambulations, the preservative archival impulse is an essential aspect of Mekas' creative project, a fact never more explicit than in the conclusion of *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania*, which ends with the counterpoised images of monastery libraries and a fire devouring the old fruit market in Vienna—the glories of preservation, the horrors of destruction. After early scenes of street life in Lithuanian Williamsburg, familiar from *Lost Lost Lost*, Mekas leaps into a homecoming montage showing his hometown Semenikiai twenty-five years after he left it, a pied flutter of wildflowers, washstands, wells, dray carts, dappled groves, potato pancakes, a largely intact premodern rural life, and Mamma—each shot held only about as long as it takes to adjust the f-stop. A number of relations work for the communal farm—an ex-classmate operates the combine. Some subjects are self-conscious of how they will seem to Americans, but life under the Communist SSR is only incidentally the subject of this sentimental journey: "You would like to know something about the social reality... but what do I know about it?"

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1971-72, 16mm, color, 82 min

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5 AT 7PM

I HAD NOWHERE TO GO

In creating a film portrait of the 93-year-old Mekas, Turner Prize-winning artist Douglas Gordon (*24 Hour Psycho*, *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*) lets his subject's voice—the lilt and descending delivery familiar from so many of his own films—lead the way. Much of the film eschews images while Mekas is heard reading from his eponymous memoir, recounting his imprisonment in a Nazi forced labor camp at age twenty-two, his Displaced Persons designation, and his eventual arrival in New



JONAS MEKAS *HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JOHN*

York. The sensory deprivation is sporadically interrupted by a scattering of sonic sideswipes and images, which are lent an additional potency by their scarcity (caged zoo animals, footsteps in the snow, Mekas playing his accordion), but Douglas is content to give the last word to his subject: "You're welcome to read this as fiction. The subject, the plot, is my life. The villain? The villain is the 20th century."

Directed by Douglas Gordon
Germany 2016, DCP, color, 97 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

JONAS MEKAS IN PERSON

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 10 AT 7PM

WALDEN: DIARIES, NOTES, AND SKETCHES

Four years (1964-68) seen through the lens of Mekas' Bolex, in which the filmmaker-flaneur records dinners, weddings and four full cycles of the seasons as seen from Stan Brakhage's compound in the Rocky Mountains, as well as the malevolent industrial badlands of North Jersey and the lunch counters of slush-pit winter New York. The soundtrack alternates Chopin and subway clatter, and the cast is a game of "spot the counterculture personality": the Velvet Underground at their inaugural show, an "Uptown Party" at Stephen Shore's place and numberless other walk-ons and cutaways. In the three-hour torrent of footage, one encounters puzzling asides (the intertitle "Black Power" introduces a black demolition crew at work) and beauty-flecked soporific drone. Mekas' voice presides over the caroming madness and offers something like a personal manifesto in a parody of Cartesian tautology: "I make home movies, therefore I live. I live, therefore I make home movies."

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 1969, 16mm, color, 180 min

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

JONAS MEKAS IN PERSON

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 11 AT 7PM

OUT-TAKES FROM THE LIFE OF A HAPPY MAN

In his autobiographical epics of the 1970s Mekas speaks at length of the pain of rootlessness, creative self-doubt and the impulse to capture and preserve precious fragments of onrushing life, but these films are also marked by a certain reserve, an instinct for privacy that differentiates them from, say, the work of Stan Brakhage. This began to change with *As I Was Moving Ahead...* and *Out-Takes from the Life of a Happy Man*, made of cutting-room-floor scraps from his 1960-2000 filmed diaries, shows another, intimate side to Mekas, here seen nearing his 90th birthday, still indefatigably poring over years of foot-

age in his studio, still unable to get a good night's sleep. Surveying the scope of his life with sad satisfaction, he returns to certain scenes in particular: years spent in his sunny SoHo loft with his then-young children, and with their mother and his now-ex-wife, Hollis Melton. The soundtrack is dominated by choral works recorded at their wedding in 1974, as well as Mekas' customary voiceover. A blissy, sun-kissed affirmation, streaked with the suspicion that even sweet contentment carries an undertone of failure.

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 2012, digital video, b/w & color, 68 min

PRECEDED BY

365 DAY PROJECT (EXCERPT)

In 2007 Jonas Mekas began releasing one film every day of the year on his website, and the practice continues to this day. Throughout the winter and spring calendars, the HFA will screen a selection of this diaristic project before certain programs, so HFA audience can enjoy more from this inventive series.

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 2007, digital video, color, 10 min

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 18 AT 6PM

AS I WAS MOVING AHEAD OCCASIONALLY I SAW BRIEF GLIMPSES OF BEAUTY

Something like the apotheosis of Mekas' work to date, the footloose, nearly five-hour *As I Was Moving Ahead...* is an epic of the everyday in twelve chapters, a quotidian opus from an early proselytizer for the poetics of the home movie, which progresses with a beguiling stagger-step rhythm as it shifts between New York, Europe and such exotic locales as Madison, Wisconsin. Mekas, whose close-mic'd editing suite-recorded commentary accompanies Lithuanian artist Auguste Varkalis' piano score, promises "a sort of masterpiece of nothing. Personal little celebrations and joy" and delivers a rapturous, groaning bounty. Foregrounded here are Mekas' blood relations, particularly his children, Oona and Sebastian, as well as his extended family of like-minded creatives, including teacher and critic P. Adams Sitney, and filmmakers Stan Brakhage, Hollis Frampton and Ken Jacobs. Thirty years of accumulated images shot on tactile 16mm color-reversal released at the fin-de-millennium, it feels like a goodbye to the analog 20th century and is all the more moving for that.

Directed by Jonas Mekas
US 2000, 16mm, color, 285 min



JONAS MEKAS *AS I WAS MOVING AHEAD...*



JONAS MEKAS *WALDEN: DIARIES, NOTES, AND SKETCHES*

MEMORY AND HOPE: THE PARAGUAYAN CINEMA OF PAZ ENCINA

JANUARY 27 – JANUARY 28



PAZ ENCINA *MEMORY EXERCISES*

Landlocked and sparsely populated, Paraguay is a small country with a small national cinema. Hemmed in by Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil, the nation's geographic isolation has been aggravated by almost two centuries of authoritarian rule, culminating in the Alfredo Stroessner dictatorship that lasted from 1954 to 1989.

This isolation in time and space is the context out of which, and against which, filmmaker Paz Encina works. Encina (b. 1971) began her career as an editor for Paraguayan television and studying cinema in Cuba, Argentina and Paraguay. Her debut feature, *Paraguayan Hammock* (2006), a hypnotic tour de force of "slow cinema," was the first Paraguayan film made in 35mm since the 1970s. Its international success similarly marked a historic moment for Paraguayan cinema.

Over the past few years, Encina has been working with the "Archives of Terror" left behind by the national police of the Stroessner regime. This research has culminated in Encina's haunting second feature, *Memory Exercises* (2016), documenting the disappearance of a 1970s dissident and the subsequent effect on his children. The disjuncture between sound and image that characterized *Paraguayan Hammock* now informs juxtapositions of the mug shots of political prisoners with recordings of police interrogations. Taken together, Encina's feature films describe a two-sided, Janus-faced consciousness that both remembers the horrors of the past but also looks forward with hope and just a bit of humor.

Paz Encina is the University of California Regents' Lecturer of 2017. Her visit is made possible with support from UC Berkeley's Regents' Lectureship Program, with thanks to the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. – DP

Co-presented with the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS), Harvard. Special thanks: Kathy Geritz—Pacific Film Archive; Natalia Brizuela, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at UC Berkeley; Paola Ibarra—DRCLAS.



DAVID ROCKEFELLER CENTER
FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
PAZ ENCINA IN PERSON
FRIDAY JANUARY 27 AT 7PM
PARAGUAYAN HAMMOCK
(HAMACA PARAGUAYA)

A slice of life from the autumn of 1935: an aging married couple hopes for rain while waiting for their soldier son to return home. The war is the Chaco War, a territorial dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay won by the latter country in what proved to be a Pyrrhic victory: historians now see the war as the start of a series of economic and political disruptions that culminated in the Stroessner dictatorship twenty years later. The film's vision of a rural couple isolated in space and suspended in time becomes a potent metaphor for a landlocked and impoverished 20th century Paraguay. The twin senses of isolation and suspension are conveyed by the film's use of long takes with a static camera and dislocating disconnections between image and soundtrack. But the film also reveals sly moments of humor and despairing hope that are positively Beckettian.

Directed by Paz Encina. With Ramón del Río, Georgina Genes
Paraguay 2006, 35mm, color, 78 min. Guaraní with English subtitles

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS
PAZ ENCINA IN PERSON
SATURDAY JANUARY 28 AT 7PM
MEMORY EXERCISES (EJERCICIOS DE MEMORIA)

Memory Exercises is a poetic mix of documentary and eulogy, commemorating the life and disappearance of Agustín Goiburú, one of the most radical and determined political opponents to the Stroessner regime. He disappeared in 1976 in the province of Entre Ríos, Argentina, where he was living in exile, near the Parana River that separates the two countries and plays a major role in Encina's film. Shots that resemble still lives filmed in furnished but abandoned rooms combine with archival photos and recordings, so that the film acts as both a record of history and an intimate memoir of Goiburú's family, using the memories of his children, refracted in turn through words and images of a still-younger generation. The juxtapositions of generations, of voices, and of facts and fictions conjure up indelible loss and implacable resistance combined with a sense of lives remembered and continuing.

Directed by Paz Encina
Paraguay/Argentina 2016, DCP, color, 70 min. Spanish with English subtitles



PAZ ENCINA *PARAGUAYAN HAMMOCK*

PRECEDED BY

SORROWS OF THE STRUGGLE
(TRISTEZAS DE LA LUCHA)

This fictional short film contrasts the relative privilege of a young dissident under house arrest with the poverty of the soldier guarding him. Encina's distinctive disjuncture of sound and image here draws evocatively on the white noise of radio interference and on the filmmaker's research within Stroessner's state police archives.

Directed by Paz Encina
Paraguay 2016, digital video, color, 7 min. Spanish with English subtitles

HA GIL-JONG AND THE REVITALIZATION OF THE KOREAN CINEMA

FEBRUARY 3 – FEBRUARY 27

“*Like all forms of art, the film that does not recognize people or human endeavor is completely false. It is the same with government.*” – Ha Gil-Jong

Ha Gil-Jong (1941-1979) was one of the major Korean artists of the 1970s, a dark, brutally oppressive yet absolutely formative period in South Korean cultural and intellectual history. Equally gifted as a poet and writer as he was as a filmmaker, Ha introduced a new sensibility and sophistication into Korean cinema at a moment when the Chungmuro (the Seoul home to the major production companies) industry seemed, to many, to have utterly stagnated. Ha's distinct artistic vision was strikingly announced by his first feature, *The Pollen of Flowers*, which drew openly and unexpectedly from traditions of the European art film, surrealism, symbolist poetry and popular Korean film genres. While Pasolini's *Teorema* (1968) clearly echoes throughout *The Pollen of Flowers'* feverish *huis-clos* narrative about a handsome wraithlike stranger systematically bewitching each member of an incestuous household, Ha's film also creatively engages the mode of “grotesque melodrama” pioneered by his maverick elder Kim Ki-Young. A savage study of sexual deviancy and sadomasochism, *The Pollen of Flowers* ignited a firestorm of controversy, simultaneously announcing Ha as a radical visionary, an icon for critics and young audiences alike, and a dangerous subversive to be viciously policed by government censors. All of Ha's films would, indeed, suffer extreme censorship and be severely altered from his intended final versions. Ha's bitter struggles to maintain artistic freedom are legible in the deep scars that wound, yet never fully compromise, his seven completed films, poignantly embodying the imperiled status of the artist and intellectual in Korea during the repressive Park Chung-Hee dictatorship.

Orphaned as a child by the early death of both parents, Ha was driven by a fierce sense of self-reliance and a close bond with his siblings, especially his younger brother Ha Myung-Joong, who would later become a prominent actor and star in Ha Gil-Jong's first films. The winding path that ultimately led Ha to cinema began with his undergraduate studies in French Literature at the prestigious Seoul National University, an important meeting place for many of the artists and intellectuals who would become South Korea's most outspoken dissident voices. Ha's love of poetry grew only more ardent as he discovered the works of Rimbaud, Baudelaire and Apollinaire, poets he would cherish and frequently reference throughout his films. A year into his studies Ha was swept into the April Revolution, the civilian and student-led protest movement that successfully overthrew the anti-Communist strongman Rhee Syngman, giving way to Korea's first and only parliamentary government, which in turn was swiftly overthrown, a mere eight months later, by a military coup led by Park Chung-Hee. The exhilarating yet tragic experience of the April Revolution would profoundly shape the political consciousness and imagination of Ha and his generation, resonating deeply within Ha's films in the recurrent figure of a helpless and defeated antihero.

While increasingly dedicating himself to poetry—self-publishing the now-classic volume *A Past Principle for the Womb*—Ha also forged plans to leave Korea, securing a job at Air France in order to move briefly to Paris at a time when it was difficult for average South Koreans to travel abroad. From France, Ha set out for the US and found his way to the Film Studies program at the University of California, Los Angeles, receiving an MA for his thesis “An Essay on the Poetic Tendency in Documentary Film,” a project influenced by his time as teaching assistant to legendary British documentarian Basil Wright. Ha stayed on at UCLA to complete an MFA in film, studying alongside classmates Francis Ford Coppola and Jim Morrison, and making a name for himself with a series of avant-garde shorts. His thesis film *The Ritual of a Soldier* won him a coveted award and job offer from MGM, which Ha refused. Unhappy in a country where he experienced frequent racism, Ha returned to Korea and immediately rejoined the now-expanded circle formed by his artist and intellectual friends.

Upon his return Ha joined forces with likeminded critics and filmmakers including Lee Jang-Ho and Kim Ho-Seon to found the Young Sang Sidae (Visual Era) group, a collective centered around a short-lived and eponymous publication (1975-78) dedicated to critically reviewing and engaging contemporary films. Led by Ha, the collective of writers and directors also regularly screened and discussed avant-garde cinema and dedicated itself to inventing creative new ways to give authentic cinematic voice to their generation, despite the pressure to compromise exerted by the motion picture industry and censorship authorities. Inspired by the Nouvelle Vague and the New American Cinema, Ha championed an auteurist idea of art cinema unheard of in Korea's commercially orientated film industry. Ha, moreover, argued for a mode of cinema urgently engaged with its contemporary moment and set in opposition to the stagnant mainstream, not simply through subject matter, but through film language itself, which he felt needed to be constantly reinvented. The purest expression of the collective's spirit is found in the early films of Ha, Lee and Kim Ho-Seon and their similar embrace of experimental techniques to inject a new urgency into their explorations of contemporary youth and urban life. An especially vivid expression of the Young Sang Sidae spirit is Ha's best-known film *March of Fools*, a critical-yet-affectionate portrait of drifting university students that unexpectedly became Ha's first commercial hit.

Unfortunately the success of *March of Fools* raised the stakes dangerously for Ha, with his next two films, the daring folktale *The Ascension of Han-Ne* and his romantic comedy *I am Looking for a Bride* meeting fierce resistance from the censors and a puzzled reception by critics and industry producers who demanded youth-oriented films and refused to green-light any future projects. Desperate for work, Ha accepted the entreaties of veteran producer Hwang Gil-Song to direct a sequel to Lee Jang-Ho's popular *Heavenly Homecoming to Stars*, finding consolation in Hwang's hiring of the source novel's writer, and Ha's friend, Choi In-Ho, in addition to famed cinematographer Chung Il-Sung. After the tremendous success of *Heavenly Homecoming to Stars 2*, Hwang pressured Ha to direct an additional sequel, this time to his own *March of Fools*, and Ha reluctantly signed on, making what would be his last work, *Byung-Tae and Young-Ja*. Already a hard drinker, Ha drowned his frustrations in alcohol, triggering the brain aneurysm which that would take his life at the early age of thirty-eight, just as the censored version of *Byung-Tae and Young-Ja* was opening to great acclaim in Seoul theaters. Just before he died, Ha recalled attending a public screening of his last film and bursting into tears as he recognized his own lost youth in his stubbornly innocent characters.

Ha has been remembered and revered by many as a tragic figure, a Jean Vigo of the Korean cinema, a youthful artist who emerged sui generis to shatter taboos and invent bold, poetically inspired cinematographic forms before his sudden death. Yet the mythologization of Ha as a romantic figure risks undercutting his deeply principled and political mode of filmmaking and the ways his films strategically engaged in a clear yet complex dialogue with their contemporary moment. In this way, for example, Ha's first two films—*The Pollen of Flowers* and *Vow of Chastity, AKA Her Fidelity*—can be taken as a richly ambiguous allegorical diptych, each a portrait of a closed community ruled by a tyrannical male who treats with special cruelty the women he reduces to sexualized objects to be abused and discarded. One can, and should, read in these films strong critiques not only of the Park Chung-Hee dictatorship but also of Korea's troubled and deep history of systematic misogyny. Such pointed yet symbolically nuanced interventions recur throughout all of Ha's films as expressions of the politically astute art cinema that remains his greatest legacy, resonating in Korean cinema today, in the work of such directors as Lee Chang-Dong and Bong Joon-Ho.



HA GIL-JONG VOW OF CHASTITY AKA HER FIDELITY

While offering the first US retrospective of the films of Ha Gil-Jong, this program also contextualizes Ha's work within a larger series of films by his contemporaries, both fellow April Generation filmmakers such as Lee Jang-Ho and Kim Ho-Seon, as well as older directors including Ha's idols Kim Ki-Young and Yoo Hyeon-Mok. Seen together, these films trace profound shifts across Korean cinema of the 1970s, revealing the emergence of a new political and aesthetic consciousness in Korean filmmakers as they began to reinvent genre and narrative traditions, led by the singular vision and example of Ha Gil-Jong. – HG

Special thanks: Jung Min-Hwa—Korean Film Archive; Sun Joo Kim, Susan Laurence and Gina Kim—Korea Institute, Harvard; Soon-Mi Yoo

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3 AT 7PM

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 19 AT 4:30PM

THE POLLEN OF FLOWERS (*HWABOON*)

Ha's taboo-defying first feature boldly announced his subversive intention with its feverishly stylized and symbolically overripe story of a corrupt bisexual businessman smitten by his young male secretary but also blindly devoted to his pampered mistress, who he keeps in a luxurious suburban hideaway together with her comely younger sister and a strangely inquisitive maid. The businessman's fateful decision to bring his handsome protégée into his mistress' nest triggers a frenzied psychosexual cyclone of jealousy and self-immolating desire that threatens to destroy everything in its wake. Ha's inventive dialogue with Pasolini's *Teorema* drew the ire of critics who simplistically accused him of plagiarism while somehow missing Ha's pointed homage to Kim Ki-Young's Freudian horror psychodramas (clearly signaled by the figure of the rat-wielding jealous maid, played by venerable character actress Yeo Woon-Kye). While frequently cited as the first Korean film to openly feature a homosexual relationship, *The Pollen of Flowers* must also be recognized as a lethal attack on the Park Chung-Hee regime, not-so-subtly evoked by the mistress' mansion, which shares the same "Blue House" moniker as the official South Korean presidential residence. The role of the bewitching young secretary is given haunting authenticity by Ha's talented brother, Ha Myung-Joong, who also rescued the struggling production by mortgaging his own home. The moody score by psychedelic rock legend Shin Joong-Hyun evokes the fever-dream trance sustained throughout Ha's dark allegory of abusive power and frustrated desire.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Ha Myung-Joong, Nam Goong-Won, Choi Ji-Hee
South Korea 1972, DCP, color, 89 min. Korean with English subtitles



KIM KI-YOUNG *WOMAN OF FIRE*

who hires a young country girl as maid and chaperone for her composer husband, who she suspects of infidelity. When the girl falls victim to the urbanite composer's advances, the dark forces smoldering beneath the flimsy façade of bourgeois domesticity are unleashed to devastating effect. *Woman of Fire* perversely embodies the politicized mode of "grotesque melodrama" invented by Kim Ki-Young, who carefully intensifies and transforms his twisted tale of murder and raw desire into a fable of seething class inequity. A Godardian rhythm of vivid reds and blues punctuates the film together with aggressive Pop-style photomontages that creatively evoke brutal violence while nimbly avoiding censorship.

Directed by Kim Ki-Young. With Nam Goong-Won, Jeon Gye-Hyeon, Yoon Yeo-Jeong
South Korea 1971, DCP, color, 98 min. Korean with English subtitles

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 AT 7PM

MARCH OF FOOLS (*BABODEUL-UI HAENGJIN*)

A beloved classic of Seventies Korean cinema, *March of Fools* offers a poignant yet cutting portrait of wayward university students and a vivid document of youth culture during the final years of the Park Chung-Hee dictatorship. Based on a popular serialized novel by Choi In-Ho, *March of Fools* shifts gently between picaresque comedy and melancholy lyricism as it follows two college friends' frustrated search for love and meaning in a world that seems to have no place for them. Ha's extensive research in classrooms and Shinchon college bars results in a rich, detailed authenticity: the bell-bottom jeans, draft beer, electric guitars and Western-style ballads that were icons of Seventies Korean youth and its seemingly futile resistance to the dominant regime. Central to Ha's direct appeal to youth audiences was his striking use of contemporary music throughout the film, including now-classic songs composed for the film by folk singer Song

Chang-Sik and promptly excised and banned outright by the censors. Defying the censorship of a full thirty minutes from his final cut, Ha reinserted the removed footage in a clandestine screening unfortunately raided by the authorities, who seized the print and destroyed the controversial footage.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Yun Mun-Seop, Ha Jae-Young, Lee Young-Ok
South Korea 1975, 35mm, color, 117 min. Korean with English subtitles

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 AT 9:30PM

YEONG-JA'S HEYDAYS

(*YEONGJA-UI JEONSEONGSIDAE*)

The remarkable debut film of Ha's friend and fellow Young Sang Sidae founder Kim Ho-Seon (b. 1941) is a striking feminist intervention that carefully transformed its seemingly template story of a young woman's "fall" into an urgent plea for desperate Korean women pulled into predatory and exploitative traps. Adapting a best-selling book by Cho Seon-Jak, a writer especially sensitive to women's stories, Kim Ho-Seon gave further sociological and sympathetic dimensions to the original story of a young woman's struggles to fend off the men who prey upon her innocence. Emotionally searing yet never exploitative, *Yeong-Ja's Heydays* is emblematic of the Young Sang Sidae Group's desire to use popular cinema to raise consciousness and advance more avant-garde modes of art cinema. The film's startlingly vérité-style opening featuring a back alley police raid of scantily clad prostitutes summarizes Kim Ho-Seon's signature brand of distantly raw sexuality and visual shock tactics, an avant-garde edge honed while working as assistant director for firebrand veteran Yoo Hyeon-Mok. The tremendous box office success of *Yeong-Ja's Heydays* unfortunately gave birth to a wave of less progressive and crassly titillating "hostess melodramas" that continued to be made into



HA GIL-JONG *MARCH OF FOOLS*

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3 AT 9PM

WOMAN OF FIRE (*HWANYEO*)

The second part of Kim Ki-Young's so-called "Housemaid Trilogy," *Woman of Fire* is a lurid, frightening and audaciously stylized reimagining of his 1960 cult classic, a reconfiguration and sharpening of the razor edges of *The Housemaid's* vicious love triangle, now relocated to an industrialized chicken farm run by a controlling wife

the 1980s and with which Kim Ho-Seon's film is often mistakenly grouped.

Directed by Kim Ho-Seon. With Yeom Bok-Soon, Song Jae-Ho, Choi Bool-Am
South Korea 1975, 35mm, color, 103 min. Korean with English subtitles

MONDAY FEBRUARY 6 AT 7PM
NIGHT JOURNEY (YAHAENG)

One of the most vital and haunting visions of everyday life under the Park Chung-Hee dictatorship, *Night Journey* is a portrait of soul-crushing conformism and psychosexual repression centered upon two unmarried bank employees who live together yet are forced by social pressures to conceal their "unofficial" relationship from their office. Kim Su-Yong succinctly diagnoses a malignant moral and cultural decay in the embittered couple, whose drunken quarrels are their only release from their daily grind of mind-numbing money counting, humiliating sexist innuendo, and the rigidly enforced ritual of after-work drinking. A stylish and effective adaptation of Kim Seung-Ok's (b. 1941) eponymous novel, *Night Journey* offers the figure of the restless wife, given poignant intensity by Yoon Jeong-Hee, as a cautionary emblem of the frustrated dreams shared by a generation unable to escape or even express their true anguish. Completed in 1974, *Night Journey* was rejected outright by censors who decried its bleak pessimism and only released the film in a truncated version four years later. A kindred spirit to the Young Sang Sidae group, Kim Su-Yong was mentor to Kim Ho-Seon, who worked as an assistant director on *Night Journey*.

Directed by Kim Su-Yong. With Yoon Jeong-Hee, Shin Seong-Il, Ju Jeung-Ryu
South Korea 1977, DCP, color, 76 min. Korean with English subtitles

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 12 AT 4:30PM
FLAME (BOOLKKOT)

One of the pioneering figures of modern Korean cinema, Yoo Hyeon-Mok (b. 1925) anticipated and complimented the search of the Young Sang Sidae directors for a wholly new film language with his radical breakthrough film *Aimless Bullet* (1961) and late career masterworks such as *Flame*, which earned Yoo a coveted Daejoong Film Award, South Korea's equivalent of the Oscar. In *Flame*, Yoo makes daring use of jagged first-person flashbacks to reanimate 20th century Korea's traumatic history of colonial subjugation through the dark paranoia and confused past of a mysterious, unidentified soldier wandering through a barren mountainscape and struggling to understand the violence and betrayal that made him a fugitive.

Directed by Yoo Hyeon-Mok. With Ha Myung-Joong, Kim Jin-Kyu, Ko Eun-Ah
South Korea 1975, 35mm, color, 95 min. Korean with English subtitles

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 12 AT 7PM
VOW OF CHASTITY, AKA HER FIDELITY (SUJEOL)

The lesser known of Ha Gil-Jong's early masterworks is *Vow of Chastity*, a dark revenge saga set during the ancient Three Kingdom Period (220-280 AD) yet pointedly contemporary in its harsh critique of military authority and brutality towards women. Recalling the earlier "acid Westerns" of Monte Hellman and the New American Cinema Ha discovered in Los Angeles and championed as a film critic, *Vow of Chastity* refashions recognizable genre tropes—here from Hong Kong and Taiwanese martial arts films—into incendiary political metaphor, giving powerful yet ambiguously allegorical valence to its story of a returned soldier's discovery that his family and village have been ravaged by a cruel warlord. Ha's



KIM SU-YONG NIGHT JOURNEY

younger brother Ha Myung-Joong again defies dominant screen stereotypes as the embittered and ghostly soldier who embodies the crushing defeat that remains the major theme of Ha's films. So brutal and disturbing were extended scenes of pillaging and rape by unfettered soldiers that twenty minutes were cut by government censors, who were unable to pinpoint the film's subversive attack on the oppressive Park Chung-Hee regime. The central role of music in Ha's mood-driven cinema is showcased by a starkly emotive and historically accurate soundtrack that he commissioned from *gayageum* legend Hwang Byungki and famed *pansori* singer Kim So-Hee.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Ha Myung-Joong, Park Ji-Yeong, Lee Young-Ok
South Korea 1973, 35mm, color, 96 min. Korean with English subtitles

MONDAY FEBRUARY 13 AT 7PM
A SPLENDID OUTING (HWARYEOHAN OECHOO)

The deep affinities of veteran filmmaker Kim Su-Yong (b. 1929-) to the Young Sang Sidae movement are apparent in his sharply feminist and hallucinatory late Seventies fable of an overworked female executive haunted by

strange dreams, one of which compels her to a remote fishing village where she is inexplicably kidnapped to a remote South Sea island and sold to a peasant farmer. The return of the primitive repressed, which recurs insistently throughout 1970s Korean cinema, takes on jarring new dimensions in *A Splendid Outing*, whose stark contrast between the archaic rural and the overdeveloped urban ambiguously signals the dangers of South Korea's accelerated development and its blindness to the extreme stratifications reconfiguring the postwar nation. The role of the beleaguered executive is sensitively played by famed actress Yoon Jeong-Hee—best known in the US for her award-winning lead performance in Lee Chang-Dong's *Poetry* (2010).

Directed by Kim Su-Yong. With Yoon Jeong-Hee, Lee Dae-Keun, Lee Young-Ha
South Korea 1978, 35mm, b/w, 90 min. Korean with English subtitles

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 17 AT 7PM
THE ASCENSION OF HAN-NE (HANNE-UI SEUNGCHON)

Ha's personal favorite among his own films was *The Ascension of Han-Ne*, which he brashly declared to be the greatest Korean film of the 1970s, together with Kim Ki-Young's masterpiece *I-Eodo*, released the same year. In *The Ascension of Han-Ne*, Ha embraced Kim's (and Shohei Imamura's) abiding fascination with the "primitive" past as an insightfully distorting mirror of the present, delving deep into the folkloric and mythological imagination of 19th century Joseon Korea and cutting right to the bone of the patriarchal Confucianism undergirding Korean society and politics to this very day. As in *Vow of Chastity*, Ha's evocation of the distant past is purposefully minimalist and sharply pointed to the present with its story of an innocent young man who rescues a young maiden from suicide only to discover that they both are caught in a viciously incestuous trap of deceit and betrayal controlled by a corrupt shaman. *The Ascension of Han-Ne* makes clear Ha's belief in popular cinema's radical power to awaken consciousness in its transformation of genre formulas—here the ghost story and horror film—into profound questions about the legacy of Korea's most deeply seated cultural traditions.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Hah Myung-Joong, Hwang Hae, Jeon Young-Sun
South Korea 1977, 35mm, color, 110 min. Korean with English subtitles



YOO HYEON-MOK FLAME



KIM KI-YOUNG *I-EO ISLAND*

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 17 AT 9:15PM
I-EO ISLAND (I-EODO)

"When you autopsy human nature, black blood will flow out. That is what we call human desire." – Kim Ki-Young

Kim Ki-Young's visionary cinema surged to a delirious peak with the greatest of his 1970s films, *I-echo*, a remarkable study of primal desire and the death drive that was revered as a "transcendent" masterpiece by Ha Gil-Jong. Kim Ki-Young's penchant for crazed, almost absurdist, narratives is given full range in *I-echo*, which follows the unthinkable consequences of a zealous hotel developer's misguided decision to name his Jeju Island resort after the mythical I-echo Island, which legend claims to be visible only by the dead. Accused of murder, the developer can only clear his name by traveling to the sinisterly beckoning island ruled, he discovers, by a mysterious female shaman. Garishly stylized, *I-echo* intensifies its desperate, searching energy through the distorting cinematography of Kim Ki-Young regular Jung Il-Sung, making dazzling use of bright color gels and violent close-ups, and, through its jagged flashback narrative, pulled ever backwards by a series of sharp, traumatic memories. Although the film's astonishing penultimate scene was, quite predictably, removed by government censors, an uncensored print survived in Japan and provided the source for the restored print screening tonight. Featuring Housemaid star Lee Hwa-Shi, *I-echo* affirms Kim Ki-Young's status as himself a kind of cinematic shaman, able to conjure and reanimate the darkest primal forces from Korean history and culture.

Directed by Kim Ki-Young. With Lee Hwa-Shi, Kim Jeong-Cheol, Choi Yun-Seok
 South Korea 1977, 35mm, color, 110 min. Korean with English subtitles

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 19 AT 7PM
HEAVENLY HOMECOMING TO STARS
(BYEOLDEUL-UI GOHYANG)

The remarkable debut film by Young Sang Sidae member Lee Jang-Ho (b. 1945) is among 1970s Korean cinema's most stylistically radical films—using dizzying flashbacks, extreme camera angles, avant-garde montage and an often distorted soundtrack to render vivid the intense emotions and circumstances of its now-iconic main characters, the beautiful and long-suffering Gyeong-A and the moody painter Mun-Oh, the latter the seemingly one sympathetic soul in a cold universe. Revered

in Korea, *Heavenly Homecoming to Stars* is, together with *March of Fools*, a key expression of the emergent youth culture that, like Ha Gil-Jong's classic, clearly shares its characters' strong distrust of tradition and authority.

Directed by Lee Jang-Ho. With Ahn In-Sook, Shin Seong-Il, Yoon Il-Bong
 South Korea 1974, DCP, color, 105 min. Korean with English subtitles

MONDAY FEBRUARY 20 AT 7PM
I AM LOOKING FOR A BRIDE
(YEJALEUL CHAJSEUBNIDA)

The surprise commercial success of *March of Fools* encouraged Ha to deliberately attempt a popular genre film, a romantic comedy about a naïve young country bumpkin who travels to Seoul in a hopelessly idealized search for a sophisticated urban bride. After confusing and unsuccessful encounters with several attractive Seoulites, the young hick meets but instinctually resists a country girl, accelerating Ha's satire of Korea's industrial urbanization and the unyielding class stratification that was its most lasting result. Unjustly forgotten, *I Am Looking for a Bride* is a fascinating minor work that exemplifies the new pressures placed on popular genre formulas by Korea's first generation of self-declared auteurs. The film's opening sequence is stunning, a lyrical documentary sequence shot on and around the campus of Ehwa Woman's University that reveals Ha's deep interest in the kind of docu-fiction pioneered by the Italian neo-realists he so revered.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Ha Jae-Young, Yoon Mi-Ra, Seo Na-Mi
 South Korea 1976, 35mm, color, 100 min. Korean with English subtitles

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26 AT 7PM
HEAVENLY HOMECOMING TO STARS 2
(SOK BYEOLDEUL-UI GOHYANG)

After the poor reception of *I Am Looking for a Bride* and *The Ascension of Han-Ne*, Ha Gil-Jong became persona non grata to the Chungmuro studios and was forced by his circumstances to accept the offer to direct a sequel to Lee Chang-Ho's popular *Heavenly Homecoming to Stars*. Despite the compromised situation, Ha was reunited

with novelist Choi In-Ho (*March of Fools*) and singer-songwriter Song Chang-Shik, who composed the film's plaintive theme song. Reviving the ill-fated painter from the original film, Choi and Ha craft a dark melodrama about his love with a troubled young woman just released from a mental hospital. Ha provocatively included open quotes from art films he revered, including a famous moment from David Lean's *Ryan's Daughter* (1970) and a scene in the mental hospital of patients playing volleyball Antonioni-style, without a ball.

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Shin Sung-Il, Jang Mi-Hie, Yun Il-Bong
 South Korea 1978, 35mm, color, 120 min. Korean with English subtitles

MONDAY FEBRUARY 27 AT 7PM
BYONGTAE AND YOUNGJA
(BYEONGTAE-WA YEONGJA)

Ha's final film predicted a possible new direction, a deliberate melding of commercial genre and art cinema that, in fact, many of his Young Sang Sidae colleagues would later follow. A sequel to *March of Fools* centered around the lovers united then separated in that film's iconic ending, *Byongtae and Youngja* uses the wavering course of their unsteady romance to explore the extreme social pressures placed upon college graduates. A philosophy graduate unable to find work or meaning as a professional, Byongtae instead channels his energies into his love for Youngja with a blind determination that results in the extended cliffhanger ending, a race against a rival lover to the "engagement hall" where the bride-to-be awaits. Although directed with a gentler touch than Ha's other films, *Byongtae and Youngja* affirms his deep sympathy for those resigned and almost certainly defeated heroes who represent the struggle of Korea's new generation. Ha once again quoted provocatively, and with pointed irony, from iconic art cinema: here, Mike Nichols' *The Graduate* (1967).

Directed by Ha Gil-Jong. With Sohn Jeong-Hwan, Lee Young-Ok, Han Jin-Hui
 South Korea 1979, 35mm, color, 115 min. Korean with English subtitles



HA GIL-JONG *HEAVENLY HOMECOMING TO STARS 2*

THREE FILMS BY RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI

FEBRUARY 24 – FEBRUARY 26



RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI *TOUCHING THE SKIN OF EERINESS*

The Harvard Film Archive welcomes back *Happy Hour* director Ryusuke Hamaguchi (b. 1978) for a screening of three earlier works that showcase the filmmaker's fascination with the performative and theatrical dimensions of cinema and everyday life. In Hamaguchi's hands, the figures of the photographer's model, stage actor and dancer central to *The Depths*, *Intimacies* and *Touching the Skin of Eeriness* each offer alternate perspectives onto that subtle intertwining of performance and presence that is the mysterious quintessence of screen acting. Whether working with professional actors such as Hoshi Ishida or the first-time actresses and students in *Happy Hour* and *Intimacies*, Hamaguchi similarly achieves a gentle understatement of tone and meaning that gives rich nuance to his subtle yet deeply emotional screen dramas.

Co-presented with the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard. Special thanks: Theodore C. Bestor, Reischauer Institute Professor of Social Anthropology and Stacie Matsumoto, Assistant Director—Reischauer Institute; Becca Voelcker—Film and Visual Studies Program, Harvard.



RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI *THE DEPTHS*

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI IN CONVERSATION WITH ALEXANDER ZAHLTEN

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 24 AT 7PM

TOUCHING THE SKIN OF EERINESS

(*BUKIMI NA MONO NO HADA NI SAWARU*)

A haunting study of loneliness gradually gives way to dark mystery in Hamaguchi's unusual and beautifully acted *Touching the Skin of Eeriness*. After his father's death, the reclusive Chihiro goes to live with his older half-brother and channels his unspoken feelings into his one passion, modern dancing. Chihiro's relationship with his dance partner grows increasingly strange, mirroring the dances invented by their intense teacher, played by renowned dancer and choreographer Osamu Jareo.

Directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi. With Hoshi Ishida, Aoba Kawai, Ayumi Mizukoshi
Japan 2013, DCP, color, 54 min. Japanese with English subtitles

\$12 SPECIAL EVENT TICKETS

RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI IN PERSON

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 25 AT 3PM

INTIMACIES (*SHINMITSUSA*)

Hamaguchi's first exploration of extreme duration is a fascinating three-part epic following the difficult production and realization of a stage play. Conceived while Hamaguchi was teaching at the ENBU film and theater school, and featuring an ensemble cast of ENBU students and colleagues, *Intimacies* blends fiction and documentary, the cinematic and theatrical, in its observational chronicle of the challenging tensions that animate yet also threaten to upend the production.

Directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi. With Rei Hirano, Ryo Sato, Mikio Tayama
Japan 2012, DCP, color, 255 min. Japanese with English subtitles

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26 AT 4PM

THE DEPTHS

A famous Korean fashion photographer on assignment in Japan discovers a new kind of friendship with a mysterious male escort in Hamaguchi's delicate character study. Anticipating his masterful epic of love and friendship, *Happy Hour*, *The Depths* reveals Hamaguchi's fascination with the unspoken and often indescribable bonds that create real intimacy. A Korean-Japanese coproduction, *The Depths* gives a new dimension to Hamaguchi's oeuvre with its study of homosexual desire and the therapeutic potential of art making.

Directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi. With Kim Min-Jun, Hoshi Ishida, Soji Arai
Japan/South Korea 2010, DCP, color, 121 min. Japanese, Korean and English with English subtitles



RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI *INTIMACIES*



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GIANFRANCO ROSI'S *FIRE AT SEA*

DECEMBER 5 & DECEMBER 12



GIANFRANCO ROSI *FIRE AT SEA*

IN PERSON

PAZ ENCINA JAN 27 – 28

JONAS MEKAS FEB 10 – 11

RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI FEB 24 – 25

COMING SOON

JEM COHEN IN PERSON

TERENCE DAVIES IN PERSON

LAV DIAZ IN PERSON

CHRISTOPHE HONORÉ IN PERSON

ICHIRO KATAOKA BENSHI IN PERSON

ARTURO RIPSTEIN & PAZ ALICIA

GARCÍADIEGO IN PERSON

JOÃO PEDRO RODRIGUES IN PERSON

ANOCHA SUWICHAKORNPONG

IN PERSON

Gianfranco Rosi (b. 1964) is an Italian documentary maker whose thought-provoking films have generated a growing amount of attention internationally for revealing worlds hiding in plain sight, whether a community of dropouts in the California desert (*Below Sea Level* [2008]) or a Mexican hit man calmly recounting his crimes in a motel room (*El Sicario, Room 164* [2010]). A daring, riveting work requiring both his and the viewer's deep participation, his latest film returns him to Italy, where he attempts to take the measure of a crisis that is everywhere in the media but hard to see clearly, even at its front lines: the migration of refugees from Africa and the Middle East across the Mediterranean Sea. – DP

MONDAY DECEMBER 5 AT 7PM

MONDAY DECEMBER 12 AT 7PM

FIRE AT SEA (*FUOCOAMMARE*)

Rosi filmed *Fire at Sea* on the Sicilian island of Lampedusa, the southernmost part of Italy and the goal of many trying to escape poverty or violence by emigrating to Europe. As Rosi's patient eye observes in intensive detail the Italian Coast Guard intercepting ships overloaded with people, his absorbing film reveals the human side to this crisis, yet the director does not pretend to be able to fully convey the experience of the refugee. Meanwhile, the Italian authorities do what they can to sequester the grim reality from the daily life of Lampedusa. Hence, the director elects two Sicilian characters to guide viewers through the harrowing crisis. One is the only doctor on Lampedusa, who is therefore charged with examining every rescued migrant; the other is Samuele, the nine-year-old son of a fisherman. Though sheltered from the crisis, he nevertheless senses the anguish of what is happening just offshore.

Directed by Gianfranco Rosi
 Italy 2016, DCP, color, 110 min. Italian with English subtitles