

Spring Series

Alain Resnais and Fanny Ardant

Czech Modernism
1920–1940

In Praise of Independents:
The Flaherty

Parisian Panorama
1920–1930

Art Films and Events

Amateur Photographer

Belle Toujours

Blockade

Crimson Gold

Days of Autumn

Lonesome with Alloy
Orchestra

Paul Mellon: In His Own
Words

Rouben Mamoulian

Sergei Paradjanov, The Rebel

Seventh Heaven

Winslow Homer: Society
and Solitude

April

1 Sun

4:30 The Flaherty: *Czech Dream* and
The Angelmakers

7 Sat

2:00 The Flaherty: *The Gaze Back* and *It Works*;
Patty Chang Videoworks

8 Sun

4:30 The Flaherty: *The Sky Turns*

14 Sat

12:30 Parisian Panorama: *Etudes sur Paris* and
Paris Cinema

15 Sun

4:30 Parisian Panorama: *The Tower; Paris qui
dort; Under the Roofs of Paris*

21 Sat

1:00 Parisian Panorama: *Paris Express* and
Paris la nuit

3:00 Alain Resnais and Fanny Ardant: *Mélo*



André Kertész, *Courbevoie*, 1926, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation

22 Sun

5:00 Event: *Lonesome* with Alloy Orchestra

29 Sun

4:30 Alain Resnais and Fanny Ardant: *Life is a
Bed of Roses*

May

5 Sat

4:00 Event: *Seventh Heaven* with organist
Dennis James

6 Sun

4:30 Event: *Days of Autumn*

12 Sat

2:00 Event: *Sergei Paradjanov, The Rebel*;
Rouben Mamoulian

4:30 Czech Modernism: *Faithless Marijka*

13 Sun

4:30 Czech Modernism: *From Saturday to
Sunday*

20 Sun

4:30 Event: *Crimson Gold*

26 Sat

2:00 Czech Modernism: *On the Sunny Side*

27 Sun

2:00 Art Film: *Winslow Homer: Society and
Solitude*

5:00 Czech Modernism: *The River*

June

2 Sat

2:00 Czech Modernism: *Virginity*
4:00 Event: *Belle Toujours*

3 Sun

2:00 Czech Modernism: Lecture by Michal
Bregant
4:00 Czech Modernism: *The Kreutzer Sonata*
and *Such is Life*

9 Sat

1:00 Event: *Paul Mellon: In His Own Words*
4:00 Czech Modernism: *Tonka of the Gallows*

10 Sun

5:00 Event: *Paul Mellon: In His Own Words*

15 Fri

12:30 Event: *Amateur Photographer* and
Blockade

16 Sat

12:30 Event: *Amateur Photographer* and
Blockade
2:30 Czech Modernism: *The Strike* and *Crisis*

17 Sun

4:00 Czech Modernism: *The Distant Journey*

Films are shown in original format in the auditorium of the National Gallery's East Building at 4th Street and Constitution Avenue NW. Seating is on a first-come basis. To ensure a seat, please plan to arrive at least ten minutes before showtime.

Programs are subject to change.

For current information, visit our Web site:
www.nga.gov/programs/film.htm or call
(202) 842-6799.

EB



Film Program Spring 2007
National Gallery of Art, Washington

National Gallery of Art
Fourth Street and
Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

Mailing address
2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785

www.nga.gov

Films are shown in the
East Building Auditorium

Cover image from *Lonesome*
(Photofest)

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Washington, DC
Permit # 9712

Film Program Spring 2007

Lonesome with Alloy Orchestra

April 22 at 5:00

Boston's Alloy Orchestra returns to the National Gallery to perform its original score for a new restoration of the exquisite and rarely seen romantic silent *Lonesome* by Hungarian director Pál Fejös. Released in the late 1920s, when most theaters in America were adopting the new sound technology, *Lonesome* had last-minute additions of several dialogue sequences. Viewed as silent film pantomime, however, *Lonesome* is one of the most beautiful and sophisticated films of all time—just the footage on Coney Island alone, when the two young lovers have lost one another, is on par with the greatest modernist masterpieces. (Pál Fejös, 1928, 35 mm, 70 minutes)

Alain Resnais and Fanny Ardant: *Mélo*

April 21 at 3:00

An adaptation of Henri Bernstein's popular 1929 French melodrama of a doomed ménage à trois (and the first of two presentations celebrating the collaboration of director Alain Resnais and actress Fanny Ardant), *Mélo* is both an homage to Parisian boulevard drama and a testament to the extraordinary power of human memory. "Resnais's real triumph," noted one critic, "was to bring the pleasures of the theater to film in a lithe, almost dreamy theatricality under a painted sky in an unreal world using the musical structure he found so fascinating in Bernstein's play." *Mélo*'s superb cast (Fanny Ardant, Sabine Azéma, Pierre Arditi, André Dussollier) serve up their exaggerated passion and pain with extraordinary French aplomb. (Alain Resnais, 1986, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 112 minutes)

Alain Resnais and Fanny Ardant:

Life Is a Bed of Roses (*La Vie est un roman*)

April 29 at 4:30

Resnais's charming musing on the utopian idea that human life can somehow be improved is composed of three fused and fanciful narratives. Traveling back in time to 1914, the first tale of *La Vie est un roman* (starring Ruggero Raimondi and Fanny Ardant) focuses on a wealthy and visionary count who opens a temple of happiness. In the second, more contemporary tale, a group of education reformers has taken over the temple (now a progressive school) for a seminar on "educating the imagination." A third tale provides counterpoint as evidence that the objectives of the other two were, in fact, unattainable. "For those who enjoy a little ambiguity and mystery in their fantasies," writes critic Judy Stone, "*La Vie est un roman* is extraordinary fun." (Alain Resnais, 1983, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 110 minutes)

Seventh Heaven

World premiere of new musical score

Dennis James in person

May 5 at 4:00

The world premiere of a new musical score for Frank Borzage's enchanting *Seventh Heaven* will be performed by composer and celebrated organist Dennis James. In one of the great romantic tales of the 1920s, actors Charles Farrell and Janet Gaynor play a poor Parisian couple sharing a Montmartre garret on the eve of World War I. The film, selected to the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress, is shown in association with the exhibition *Paris in Transition*. (Frank Borzage, 1927, 35 mm, silent with live organ score, 110 minutes)



Seventh Heaven (Photofest)

Days of Autumn (*Días de Otoño*)

Washington premiere of the restored print

May 6 at 4:30

Gabriel Figueroa's stunning cinematography grants graceful form to this magical tale of young Luisa, a pastry chef whose seemingly fanciful stories about her romance with the man who rescues her shoe all but rival her pâtisserie's embellished confections. Based on a B. Traven story and adapted for the screen by Emilio Carballido, Julio Alexander, and the exceptional Roberto Gavaldón (the most respected Mexican director of the period apart from Buñuel), *Days of Autumn* is an expressive vehicle for actress Pina Pellicer who brings to the role of Luisa "a limitless world of feelings, sensations, moods," wrote Justino Fernandez. "Her duel between reality and imagination affects us deeply." (Roberto Gavaldón, 1962, Spanish with subtitles, 92 minutes)

Sergei Paradjanov, *The Rebel*

also Rouben Mamoulian

Patrick Cazals in person

May 12 at 2:00

A new documentary on the beloved Georgian-Armenian filmmaker from Tbilissi who made the uncommonly beautiful collage films *Sayat Nova* (1968) and *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (1967) is introduced by its director, French filmmaker Patrick Cazals. Once blacklisted by Soviet authorities, Sergei Paradjanov was celebrated as a hero and adorned his Yerevan home (now enshrined as a museum) with his paintings, sculpture, and furniture, in

addition to artifacts related to his cinema. (Patrick Cazals, 2004, BetaSP, Armenian and French with subtitles, 52 minutes)

Rouben Mamoulian details the life of another pioneering Georgian-Armenian filmmaker from Tbilissi, who in the 1920s and 1930s became a huge success in Hollywood with the first ever three-strip Technicolor film, *Becky Sharp*, and the Garbo vehicle, *Queen Christina*. The documentary covers his life in Tbilissi, New York, Rochester, Los Angeles, and Paris and contains interview footage with Mamoulian recorded shortly before his death. (Patrick Cazals, 2006, BetaSP, English, French, and Armenian with subtitles, 63 minutes)

Crimson Gold

Hamid Dabashi in person

May 20 at 4:30

The cinema of Iran has been garnering international acclaim for over two decades. Despite its outwardly melodramatic form, Jafar Panahi's recent *Crimson Gold* reflects on the minutiae of everyday life in Iran with meticulousness and measured poetry. After the screening, Hamid Dabashi, professor of Iranian studies and comparative literature at Columbia University and author of a new book on the history of Iranian cinema, will discuss the film and Panahi's position within the pantheon. (Jafar Panahi, 2003, 35 mm, Farsi with subtitles, 95 minutes)

Winslow Homer: Society and Solitude

Washington premiere
Steven John Ross in person
May 27 at 2:00

Winslow Homer, unique in American art history for his documentary and poetic portrayals of pre- and post-Civil War life as well as illustrations for *Harper's Weekly*, has until now never been the subject of a feature documentary. Steven Ross's new work carefully chronicles both Homer's distinctive biography and his artistic evolution through abundant location footage and interview sequences with artists and Homer scholars including Gallery curator Franklin Kelly. (Steven John Ross, 2007, digital beta, 110 minutes)

Belle Toujours

June 2 at 4:00

Finding inspiration in the cinematic past, namely Luis Buñuel's *Belle de jour*, Manoel de Oliveira creates a playful and poignant present-day sequel to Buñuel's film (and an implicit homage to a mentor) in *Belle Toujours*. Critic Diana Sanchez wrote, "*Belle Toujours* reunites the two main characters of Buñuel's *Belle de jour* thirty-eight years later in Paris. Michel Piccoli is again cast as the acrimonious Henri, the keeper of the one secret that Séverine is desperate to discover.... Now, Henri is disgusted when Séverine tells him she wishes to retreat to a convent. Further referencing Buñuel and screenwriter Jean-Claude Carrière, Oliveira casts Bulle Ogier to play in Catherine Deneuve's unforgettable role (her blonde wig providing a hilarious touch)." (Manoel de Oliveira, 2006, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 70 minutes)

Paul Mellon: In His Own Words

June 9 at 1:00, June 10 at 5:00

A new biographical film celebrates the spirit, life, and philosophy of Paul Mellon. The narration draws from interviews, speeches, and a variety of writings in which Mellon describes his passions, pursuits, and interests, such as family, art, collecting, horses, and racing. This screening is part of a public celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Paul Mellon's birth on June 10, 1907. (Joseph Krakora for the National Gallery of Art, 2007, high definition, 60 minutes)

Blockade

also *Amateur Photographer*

June 15 and 16 at 12:30

"The Siege of Leningrad during World War II lasted 900 days, leaving more than 600,000 dead from starvation, bombings, disease, or cold. *Blockade*, a compilation film based on silent footage found in Moscow's archives (to which the filmmaker has added reconstructed sound), is an extraordinary account of life and death in a great city experiencing unprecedented hardship. As the Russian winter eventually takes hold and snow falls relentlessly, people forage for food and step over shrouded corpses lying in the streets. Beautiful street sculpture, bridges, palaces, and lampposts are the backdrop for coffins pulled on sleds on frozen walkways." —New York Film Forum. (Sergei Loznitsa, 2005, digital beta, no dialogue, natural sounds, 52 minutes)

Preceding the film, *Amateur Photographer* compiles the recollections of a German private serving on the Eastern front, based on his diaries and photographs. (Irina Gedrovich, 2004, BetaSP, German with subtitles, 26 minutes)

In Praise of Independents: The Flaherty

For the sixth year, the National Gallery salutes the annual independent seminar and showcase known as *The Flaherty*, the prestigious American venue designed for the critical study and viewing of experimental, documentary, and overlooked works of fiction that takes place annually at Vassar College. A forum of artists, academics, filmmakers, writers, and critics assembles for the weeklong event named after American pioneer filmmaker Robert Flaherty. Special thanks to Linda Lilienfeld, Mary Baron, and Mary Kerr.

Czech Dream

preceded by *The Angelmakers*

April 1 at 4:30

In the last decade, foreign investors have erected over a hundred big-box markets in the Czech Republic. Would-be shoppers immediately scurried inside. Embraced as a social concept with a passion unsurpassed elsewhere in Europe, these stores lure families who often spend entire days. "Part human comedy, part consumer critique, but mostly exploitation art prank, *Czech Dream* documents—with support from government grants and complicit assistance from several sponsors—the phony marketing and gala opening of the completely fictitious and slyly named 'Czech Dream Hypermarket'—in reality, only a storefront banner erected in a huge and empty field near Prague. The social fallout from the project is fascinating, especially as it coincided with the Czech government's own enormous campaign to promote the dream of joining the European Union." —Steven Mockus. (Vít Klusák and Filip Remunda, 2005, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 87 minutes)

Deep in rural Hungary, the village of Nagyrev was the unsettling scene for a bizarre rash of arsenic murders in the 1920s. *The Angelmakers* documents the events that occurred after a group of village women were held responsible for poisoning their husbands. Unable to discuss this history for many years, descendants recall tales of life, death, and the unending universal battle between the sexes. In a related sequence, present-day echoes emerge as members of an all-female dance club fight for the right to leave home and pursue their own interests. (Astrid Bussink, 2005, BetaSP, Hungarian and English with subtitles, 30 minutes)

The Gaze Back (Volver la Vista)

also *It Works*

also *Patty Chang Videoworks*

Fridolin Schönwiese in person

April 7 at 2:00

Austrian filmmaker Fridolin Schönwiese describes his unusual documentary in this way: "*Volver la vista* moves the viewer into the perspective of a foreigner, namely Mexicans who live in Austria and Austrians who spend most of their lives in Mexico. Through a unique blend of cliché and yearning, immigrants create a picture—part real, part imaginary—of their homeland and, through establishing their actual location, attempt to define their identities. The participants in the film are accompanied by two cinematographers who also have gone to a foreign place—one of the cinematographers is Mexican, the other Austrian, and each is filming the other country. Thus, as they shoot, their perspective is compatible with that of the narrators and narratives of the 'other.'" (Fridolin Schönwiese, 2005, 35 mm, Spanish and German with subtitles, 90 minutes)

Preceding the feature is *It Works*, Fridolin Schönwiese's short documentary about four handicapped children who accomplish enor-



Eugène Atget, *Notre Dame*, 1922, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Patrons' Permanent Fund

mous feats of strength—for each child, a critical achievement—in the few minutes that each is on camera. “Without attempting to force the film in a direction dictated by particular pedagogic, sociological, or aesthetic dogma, *It Works* concentrates on the work process itself. Human achievement and film as an instrument of perception stand opposite one another.” —Fridolin Schönwiese. (1998, 35 mm, German with subtitles, 21 minutes)

Installation video artist Patty Chang is known for her ingenious digital video, including the two works in this program, *Untitled (Eels)* and *Moving Earth*. Chang confounds spectators with one-person performances she describes as “catalysts for specific situations.” In both of the above pieces, for example, she regards the camera with obvious anxiety and challenges the audience to determine the source of her distress. A regular on New York’s gallery and performance circuit, Chang has been building an international reputation in the field of new media art. (Patty Chang, 1996–2006, digital video and BetaSP, 65 minutes)

The Sky Turns (*El cielo gira*)

April 8 at 4:30

At the time of filming, there were fourteen remaining inhabitants of Aldealseñor, a village in the barren uplands of Soria (Castilla, Spain). After over a thousand years of uninterrupted vitality in the village, these residents represent the last generation. For the moment, things proceed as normal. Soon, however, and without any outward fanfare, life will come to an end there. The neighbors of this village and the painter Pello Azketa share something in common: for them, things are already disappearing before their eyes. The narrator returns to her origins to make the film as she tries to reclaim her past while she can. (Mercedes Alvarez, 2005, 35 mm, Spanish with subtitles, 110 minutes) *unconfirmed*

Parisian Panorama 1920–1930

In conjunction with the exhibition *Paris in Transition*, a cinematic homage to 1920s Paris is presented in three parts. Neighborhoods, parks, street life, dance halls, theatre, and views of the city at all hours were recorded by many renowned avant-garde filmmakers and cinematographers of the day. One program features the work of René Clair, whose studio-produced *Sous les toits de Paris* is an ode to the simple pleasures of the city. Special thanks to Linda Lilienfeld, Mary Baron, and Jennifer Ormson for their assistance and to Forum des Images, Gaumont-Pathé, CNC, and Cinémathèque Française.

Etudes sur Paris also Paris Cinema

April 14 at 12:30

The five studies of *Etudes sur Paris* make the rounds of Parisian districts in the 1920s, poetically documenting street life, workers, cafés, even traffic—a city symphony of the French capital “worthy of the admiration,” according to one reviewer, “of Jean Vigo and Jean Renoir.” (André Sauvage, 1928, 35 mm, silent, French intertitles translated, 75 minutes)

Pierre Chenal, a fascinating yet little-known filmmaker in 1920s Paris, was a talented designer close to the surrealists. He conceived his *Paris Cinema* as a documentary view of the city, entwined with the technology of photography and filmmaking, as seen through the eyes of a cameraman. Besides filming streets, stations, and monuments, he recorded the apparatus of the camera itself with behind-the-scenes visits to film factories and studios. (Pierre Chenal, 1929, 35 mm, silent, 32 minutes)

The Tower (*La Tour*) also Paris qui dort and Under the Roofs of Paris (*Sous les toits de Paris*)

April 15 at 4:30

René Clair’s short homage to the Eiffel Tower was lyrically hailed by contemporary critics as “a poem in iron filigree... serving up a sense of losing yourself in lace swollen a thousand times [with] the sky, the river and the grounds of Paris, clouds, the eye of René Clair.... *La Tour* must be seen, it is a great lesson of humility, of conscience, of poetry.” —Alexandre Arnoux, *Pour Vous*, 1928. (René Clair, 1927, 35 mm, silent, 10 minutes)

In Clair’s earlier and more whimsical *Paris qui dort*, the tower’s night watchman awakens one day to a city where time has stopped—nothing moves. Looking down on the frozen photographic tableaux below him, he finds a group of air travelers who are, like himself, stranded in time and space. “It was because I was interested in the movement produced by the cinematographic machine that I tried to demonstrate the absurd... that is, to paralyze Paris in order to emphasize how different Paris was, both animated and alive...” —René Clair. (René Clair, 1923, 35 mm, silent, French with translation, 34 minutes)

Under the Roofs of Paris was Clair’s first sound film, a poetic treatise on love and friendship moving back and forth through Parisian streets and bistros with a young street singer (Albert Préjean) who falls for a charming shop girl (Pola Illery). “A delightful experiment with sound, in which music plays a much more important role than conversation.” —R. C. Dale. (René Clair, 1930, 35 mm, French with translation, 82 minutes)

Paris Express also Paris la nuit

April 21 at 1:00

Paris Express provides a beguiling gaze at the city in 1928—its boulevards, shops, monuments, and amusements. Completed in black and white by filmmakers Pierre and Jacques Prévert, Marcel Duhamel, and Alberto Cavalcanti at the time of production, the film later received a few color sequences filmed in the same locations. (Pierre and Jacques Prévert, 1928, French with translation, 35 minutes)

The young, innocent countess Rita of *Paris la nuit* wants to visit the poorer neighborhoods of the city. When someone arranges a trip for her, it proves to be a rather amusing mistake for all concerned. (Henri Diamant-Berger, 1930, 35 mm, French dialogue, 64 minutes)

Czech Modernism 1920 – 1940

The commitment to the avant-garde demonstrated by early twentieth-century Czech filmmakers played a key role in sustaining the vibrant film culture of Central Europe following World War I. This program examines the forms and figures of Czech film from the mid-1920s through the mid-1940s in a retrospective of twelve works that also anticipate the renowned new wave of the 1950s and 1960s. Two films by the prominent director Gustav Machatý and a selection of social-problem films, such as *The Strike* and *The Distant Journey*, are among the highlights. The series was organized by Irena Kovárová and is presented through the cooperation of the Czech Center, New York, the National Film Archive in Prague, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, with special thanks also to Adrienne Mancina and Sonja Simonyi.

Faithless Marijka (*Marijka nevěrnice*)

May 12 at 4:30

A mountain woodcutter heads to the wilderness, leaving his wife alone with another man. *Faithless Marijka*, a delicate portrait of social isolation in the Carpathian Ukraine, makes excellent use of the region’s local inhabitants, particularly their diverse languages and dialects. The film’s treatment by novelist and communist sympathizer Ivan Olbracht, the avant-garde montage, and a musical score by Martinů (recorded with the orchestra of the Czechoslovak National Theater) provide a rich backdrop. (Vladislav Vančura, 1934, 35 mm, Ruthenian, Slovak, Yiddish, Czech with subtitles, 76 minutes)

From Saturday to Sunday (*Ze soboty na neděli*)

May 13 at 4:30

In Gustav Machatý’s first talking picture, a young woman attracted to the glamour of the chic cocktail crowd learns to accept the much simpler joys of a working-class life. Art direction by Alexandr Hackenschmied, a score by jazz composer Jaroslav Ježek, and a script cowritten by surrealist poet Vítězslav Nezval lend *From Saturday to Sunday* a tender romanticism that prompted one critic to call it a masterpiece of early sound cinema—“the tale might be trivial but its recounting is refined.” (Gustav Machatý, 1931, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 71 minutes)

On the Sunny Side (*Na sluneční straně*)

May 26 at 2:00

Adapting a modernist scenario by the Linguistic Circle of Prague (including Roman Jakobson, Miloslav Dismán, and surrealist poet Vítězslav Nezval), director Vladislav Vančura used odd *mise-en-scène* and camera angles to interpret the fate of children assigned to an experimental reform school. “His characters exist as symbols, frozen in mannered isolation: the camera looks down on them, like specimens in a social laboratory.... With an obvious debt to Soviet montage, the narrative emerges from stunning vignettes—a maniacal puppet show, a Hitchcockian tango on top of St. Vitus Cathedral.... A visual and sound syntax that compares favorably to the work of later avant-garde practitioners from Buñuel to Bausch.” —Pacific Film Archive. (Vladislav Vančura, 1933, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 76 minutes)



On the Sunny Side (National Film Archive, Prague)

The River (Řeka)

May 27 at 5:00

With a tempo as unhurried as the meandering flow of a river, the film tells the lyrical story of a village magistrate's son whose affection for his sweetheart eventually spawns a furious wrestle with a river pike. Cloaked in gentle melodrama and cinematographer Jan Stallich's beautiful pastoral locations, the tale is told with a mix of actors and non-actors—"believable country folk possessed of a natural charm," wrote one reviewer. (Josef Rovenský, 1934, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 88 minutes)

Virginity (Panenství)

June 2 at 2:00

Evoking a sophisticated romanticism suggestive of Frank Borzage, with fluid camera style and gleaming cinematography, *Virginity* tells the tale of an innocent beauty who attracts many suitors but ends up sacrificing herself to help her dying lover. Marie Majerová's modernist novel was adapted for the screen by Otakar Vávra, a pioneer in Czech cinema who is still directing at the age of ninety-six. (Otakar Vávra, 1937, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 84 minutes)

Lecture: Modernism in Central European Life, Art, and Cinema

June 3 at 2:00

The advent of modernism in Central Europe as seen in the cinema and in the modernization of life through art are the subjects of a lecture by Michal Bregant, noted authority on Central and Eastern European film and dean of FAMU, the prestigious film and media school of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. (approximately 50 minutes)

The Kreutzer Sonata (Kreutzerova sonáta)

Donald Sosin on piano with violin accompaniment

also *Such is Life (Takový je život)*

June 3 at 4:00

The celebrated master of early Czech cinema Gustav Machatý is now largely remembered for two sensational works: *Ecstasy* (1933) and *Erotikon* (1929). In his rarely seen earlier *Kreutzer Sonata*, Machatý updated Tolstoy's once scandalous 1889 story about a wealthy landowner consumed with jealousy after his beautiful wife becomes involved with a violinist. (Gustav Machatý, 1926, 35 mm, Czech intertitles translated live, silent with piano and violin accompaniment, 95 minutes)

Such is Life, anticipating the Czech naturalistic tradition of the 1960s (as in Milos Forman's celebrated oeuvre), portrays the trials and tribulations of a washerwoman (Vera Baranovskaya) who at first endures her fate with grace, but ultimately dies and leaves behind a hapless husband and disgraced daughter. German director Karl Junghans uses Prague locations and Soviet montage to weave fragile visual poetry from his characters' deep deprivations. "*Neue Sachlichkeit*," wrote one reviewer, "with montage-based punch." (Karl Junghans, 1929, 35 mm, silent with live piano accompaniment by Donald Sosin, 73 minutes)

Tonka of the Gallows (Tonka Šibenice)

June 9 at 4:00

Tonka of the Gallows finds a former country waif now hustling as a city hooker. When she volunteers to spend a night in prison with a poor condemned man, her transforming encounter is later viewed as a bad omen and disgraces her even more. Adapted from a novel by Prague journalist Egon Erwin Kisch (and inspired by a newspaper story), this first Czech talking picture features strong performances from the young Yugoslav actress Ita Rina and celebrated Soviet Vera Baranovskaya. (Karel Anton, 1930, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 84 minutes)

The Strike (Siréna)

also *Crisis (Krise)*

June 16 at 2:30

Based loosely on the historical events following an 1899 worker's uprising, *The Strike* chronicles the Hudec family and their dilemma, providing a microcosm of the Czech social crisis at that period. The film's socialist realist style (the author of the original novel was an important Communist party member in the postwar period) is offset by Juroslav Tuzar's modernist cinematography and music of the brilliant E. F. Burian. The film was awarded top honors at the 1947 Venice Mostra, coincidentally the first and last award for the Czech cinema at any Venice festival. (Karel Steklý, 1947, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 83 minutes)

For *Crisis*, photographer Alexandr Hackenschmied, producer Hans Burger, and American director Herbert Kline joined forces to make a cogent exposé on the rising fascist threat in Czechoslovakia during the 1930s. Remarkably, *Crisis*—which also includes avant-garde performances by the famous comedy team of Jiri Voskovec and Jan Werich—premiered in New York City just two days before the complete German occupation of Czechoslovakia. (Herbert Kline, 1938, 35 mm, English narration, 71 minutes)

The Distant Journey (Daleká cesta)

June 17 at 4:00

One of the first film adaptations of a Holocaust story (written by Mojmir Drvota and Alfred Radok from Erik Kolár's text), *The Distant Journey* remains, notes critic J. Hoberman, "among the most original... a stylized *danse macabre*, audacious and grotesque, looking back to *Caligari* and forward to the unsettling puppet animations of Jan Svankmajer." Experiences in the Terezín ghetto, where director Alfred Radok's father died, are expressed in a chilling stylistic formalism with newsreels flashing beneath, and scenes of mass movement staged by a camera moving rhythmically in, up, and back. "Radok's Terezín scenes," writes Hoberman, "are charged with a sense of claustrophobic unreality and controlled hysteria... the most compelling moments are based on actual events." (Alfred Radok, 1948, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 100 minutes)

Upcoming Series

Modernity and Tradition: Film in Interwar Central Europe

Opening June 24, 2007, to be included in the summer calendar

From Vault to Screen: New Preservation from American and European Collections

Opening June 30, 2007, to be included in the summer calendar