


FILM



SUMMER 2012 National Gallery of Art



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Films are screened in the Gallery's East Building Auditorium, Fourth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Works are presented in original formats and seating is on a first-come, first-seated basis. Doors open thirty minutes before each show and programs are subject to change. For more information, visit www.nga.gov/programs/film, e-mail film_department@nga.gov, or call (202) 842-6799.

From American premieres to restored silent cinema with live music, the Gallery's summer season celebrates the best in world film culture from the early twentieth century to the present. Film scholar Annette Insdorf speaks on the work of American stylist Philip Kaufman; independent filmmakers Mark Street and Liza Johnson discuss their work in the ongoing series American Originals Now; well-known pianists Ben Model, Andrew Simpson, and Philip Carli accompany restorations of important work from the silent era in a popular program of ciné-concerts; and international film scholar Michal Bregant from the Czech Republic speaks on Miloš Forman, followed by an overview of Forman's work on the occasion of the filmmaker's eightieth birthday. Two works by the English avant-gardist Peter Greenaway focus on his ideas with respect to Rembrandt, and on July 14, two radically different fiction films using Paris as a backdrop are screened in honor of Fête Nationale. Russian filmmaker Aleksei Guerman, considered one of the most important stylists in European cinema of the last fifty years but whose work is rarely shown outside Europe, is featured in a complete retrospective—his latest film will be released this year. To observe the centenary of Michelangelo Antonioni's birth, the Gallery joins the American Film Institute in a presentation of his critical early works.

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Art Films and Events

Jul 1– Sep 15

UMBRELLAS
United States premiere of director's cut

Sun Jul 1 (4:30)

A dramatic but ill-fated experiment, *Umbrellas* was Christo and Jeanne-Claude's 1991 project to simultaneously open huge blue and yellow umbrellas positioned in the landscapes of Japan and Southern California. *Umbrellas* drew thousands of viewers but ultimately high winds toppled one of the California works, causing injuries and a death, and immediately closed both sites. This well-known documentary—one of the most ambitious to chronicle a Christo installation—is shown in a new director's cut and all-new digital print. (Albert Maysles, Henry Corra, 1994, HD-Cam, 81 minutes)

MIRÓ: THE PHOSPHORESCENT TRAILS OF SNAILS

Thu Jul 12, Fri Jul 13 (12:30)

Thu Jul 19, Fri Jul 20 (12:30)

Cesc Mulet's essay poetically combines documentary and fiction elements to explore color, symbol, and form in Joan Miró's paintings, drawing inspiration from Yvon Taillandier's *Je travaille comme un jardinier*. (Cesc Mulet, Televisió de Mallorca, 2009, 54 minutes.)

CELINE AND JULIE GO BOATING

Sat Jul 14 (12:30)

A new 35 mm print of Rivette's fantastical adventure celebrates Paris with a meandering tale of two young women's dramatic encounters in a mysterious mansion. *Céline et Julie vont en bateau*, filmed throughout Paris' 18th arrondissement, stars Juliet Berto and Dominique Labourier as friends who first meet in Montmartre and end up under the spell of two older women (Bulle Ogier and Marie-France Pisier)—who may, in fact, be figments of their imagination.



“A continuing sense of wonder becomes the basic emotion” — British Film Institute. (Jacques Rivette, 1974, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 193 minutes)

SOUVENIR

Sat Jul 14 (4:30)

“*Souvenir* was written in Paris where, as a displaced person, I absorbed the influences of the familiar and the foreign, the architecture, and the European cinema...” — Michael Shamberg. Filmed throughout the city — the 6th, 9th, and 19th arrondissements; Les Halles; Le Parc des Buttes Chamont; the Latin Quarter; an old bordello near Pigalle — *Souvenir* relates an interval in the life of Orlando (Stanton Miranda), an American sports writer consumed by the loss of her younger brother (in one sequence, she uses her brother’s old “smell-o-vision” software, designed by French filmmaker Chris Marker). “Stream-of-consciousness editing integrates an imagined conversation with her brother (voiced by Christina Ricci and Adam Hann-Byrd) with reflections on family, Paris, the impact of leaving home, and the gap between dreaming and reality...saying something about the persistence of memory that feels awfully true” — Tony Rayns. (Michael Shamberg, 1999, 35 mm, 74 minutes)

ON THE BOWERY

preceded by BROADWAY BY DAY and ASTOR PLACE

Sun Jul 22 (4:30)

Lionel Rogosin (1924–2000) is remembered as the founder of Manhattan’s famed Bleecker Street Cinema, postwar America’s most influential art house. *On the Bowery* was his first effort at filmmaking, a convincing quasi-fictional portrait of life on skid row. It chronicles a few drunken days in the life of railroad worker Ray as he barhops beneath the EL with Bowery residents — an evocation of long-ago life in a now-fashionable urban neighborhood. (Lionel Rogosin, 1956, 35 mm, 65 minutes)

Preceding the feature are two shorts — a Fox Movietone city symphony from the 1930s, *Broadway by Day* (n.d., 16 mm, 28 minutes), and Eve Heller’s *Astor Place*, capturing passersby through a restaurant window, “the unscripted choreography of the street.” (1997, 16 mm, silent, 10 minutes)

PHILIP KAUFMAN: AMERICAN STYLIST

Discussion by Annette Insdorf

followed by THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING

Sun Jul 29 (4:30)

Annette Insdorf, author of *Philip Kaufman* (2011) and director of film studies at Columbia University School of the Arts, introduces the work of one of America’s most European-influenced directors, whose latest film, *Hemingway & Gellhorn*, opens later this year.

Following Insdorf’s discussion, the Gallery will screen Kaufman’s *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* — his landmark film set during the Prague Spring of 1968, based on the novel by Czech writer Milan Kundera — through the courtesy of the Academy Film Archive and The Saul Zaentz Company. Daniel Day-Lewis plays a handsome, philandering surgeon maintaining two competing romantic relationships — one with the devoted and delicate Tereza (Juliette Binoche), the other with the independent-minded and sensuous Sabina (Lena Olin). (1988, 35 mm, 171 minutes)

WAYS OF SEEING: FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Discussion by Jonathan Conlin

Sat Aug 4 (2:30)

Forty years have passed since the fabled 1972 BBC John Berger series *Ways of Seeing* made its television debut. As one reviewer quipped about this iconoclastic and ultimately trendsetting project, “it plays like a Marxist comeback to Kenneth Clark’s *Civilisation*.” Historian Jonathan Conlin of the University of Southampton discusses the four half-hour programs that opened up the social history of Western art to new areas of cultural study. (John Berger, 1972, approximately 90 minutes)

EL VELADOR

Washington premiere

Sat Sep 8 (2:00)

Near the town of Culiacan, Mexico, is a cemetery containing the majestic mausoleums of the drug lords, its silences suppressing the brutal truths about the bodies beneath. Acclaimed Mexican filmmaker Natalia Almada’s documentary unfolds through the daily rhythms of the *velador* (caretaker) who sees it all — the hearses, the families, the

politics, the deeply rooted class conflicts. Observational filmmaking at its most artistic, developed through long takes and careful sound recording, *El Velador* is serene and deferential, “an acknowledgment of the chasm between our lives and theirs” — Elise Nakhnikian. (Natalia Almada, 2011, DCP, Spanish with subtitles, 72 minutes)

CINÉ-CONCERT: GUSTAV MACHATÝ'S *EROTIKON*

Ben Model, piano

Introduction by Andrea Rousova

Sat Sep 15 (2:00)

The seduction of a rural stationmaster's daughter (Ita Rina) by a handsome lothario (Olaf Fjord) is painted in the understated details of Václav Vích's photography and Alexander Hammid's art direction, with a hint of avant-garde élan. Surrealist writer Vítězslav Nezval contributed to the screenplay which, despite a few melodramatic moments (the young woman marries another man, then encounters her seducer years later), is deftly rendered. Andrea Rousova is a curator from the National Gallery, Prague. (Gustav Machatý, 1929, silent with intertitles, 85 minutes)

New American Architecture and Design: Saluting Checkerboard Film Foundation

Jul 6–7

Edgar Howard founded Checkerboard Film Foundation in 1979, a nonprofit producer of films on the American arts for both public exhibition and archival aims. In documenting artists' processes, the Foundation hopes to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the arts. Howard's first film on Brice Marden was completed in 1977. Since then, the Foundation has created nearly fifty works. The competition to rebuild the World Trade Center, coupled with Frank Gehry's popular Bilbao Guggenheim Museum, has recently

generated a renewal of public interest in architecture — new museums, concert halls, and other unique projects have gone up during the first decade of this century. Checkerboard documented many of these recent projects and their latest film, *Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Reimagining Lincoln Center and the High Line*, receives its Washington premiere at the Gallery.

LANDMARKS IN TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY AMERICAN

ARCHITECTURE I

Fri Jul 6 (12:30)

An important American art historian, the design and construction of an art museum in Denver, “green” residential housing in Pennsylvania, an eighty-two-story apartment tower in Chicago, and the history of the New York City apartment house are subjects for this program — *Vincent Scully: An Art Historian Among Architects*; *Daniel Libeskind: Denver Art Museum, Frederic C. Hamilton Building*; *Kieran Timberlake: Loblolly House (2007), Cellophane House (2008)*; *Studio Gang Architects: Aqua Tower*; *Robert A. M. Stern: 15 Central Park West and the History of the New York Apartment House*. (Total running time approximately 158 minutes, with intermission)

LANDMARKS IN TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY AMERICAN

ARCHITECTURE II

Sat Jul 7 (12:30)

The reimagining of Lincoln Center, a football stadium in Phoenix, a museum in Kansas City, Missouri, a U.S. federal office building in San Francisco, and rammed-earth residential construction in Tucson, are topics in this program — *Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Reimagining Lincoln Center and the High Line*; *Peter Eisenman: University of Phoenix Stadium for the Arizona Cardinals*; *Steven Holl: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Bloch Building*; *Thom Mayne: U.S. Federal Office Building, San Francisco*; *Rick Joy: Interludes*. (Total running time approximately 169 minutes, with intermission)

Peter Greenaway on Painting

Jul 7–8

Though Peter Greenaway (born 1942, Wales) is one of Europe's most cerebral and eccentric filmmakers, he was trained as a painter. Finding correlations between painting and filmmaking in his own practice, Greenaway believes that cinema should move away from "the text" (or script) as its time-honored underpinning and instead be based solely on images. Residing now in Holland, he has embarked on a series of idiosyncratic works about Dutch art. His latest, *Goltzius and the Pelican Company* (about the sixteenth-century Dutch painter and printmaker Hendrik Goltzius), will be released this year. The two films in this program had their origins, in part, through a long-established relationship with the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. With thanks to John Ewing.

REMBRANDT'S J'ACCUSE

Sat Jul 7 (4:00)

Rembrandt's "J'Accuse" is Greenaway's essaylike documentary, tightly focused yet encompassing technique and biography, "a melodrama, a revisionist history lesson, as well as a take-off on *CSI* crime shows...and a frontal attack on the 'visual illiteracy' that Greenaway sees as a defining feature of the modern world" —David Sterritt. While his interpretation of *The Night Watch* derives from his own detective work (as well as a lifelong fascination with puzzles), it remains at odds with conventional views of the painting — making for an even more fascinating film. (2008, 35 mm, 86 minutes)

NIGHTWATCHING

Sun Jul 8 (4:30)

Greenaway's biographical fiction—bold, theatrical, and unconventional—originated as part of a larger project about *The Night Watch*

made for Holland's 2006 celebration of Rembrandt's four-hundredth birthday. (The project also derives from his series of art installations called *Nine Classical Paintings Revisited*, an experimental reinterpretation of nine masterpieces). British actor Martin Freeman is cast as Rembrandt van Rijn, Saskia van Uylenburgh is played by Eva Birthistle, and Jodhi May is Hendrickje Stoeffels. While Greenaway is engrossed in what he considers the hidden meanings of the painting, he portrays the painter as a flesh-and-blood person "in all his obsessive, joyful, bawdy, self-analyzing ways, prey to passions and capable of love." (2007, 35 mm, 134 minutes)

From Vault to Screen: Recent Preservation

Jul 15–Aug 18

The National Gallery's summer preservation series this year features work from EYE Film Institute, Amsterdam; the British Film Institute, London; Park Circus, London; Rialto Pictures, New York; Columbia Pictures/Sony; and Gaumont Pathé Archives, Paris. With thanks to Agnès Bertola, Nick Varley, Marleen Labijt, Laura Argento, the Italian Cultural Institute, and Leenke Ripmeester.

CINÉ-CONCERT: LA DANSEUSE ORCHIDÉE

Philip Carli, piano

Sun Jul 15 (4:30)

The prolific Léonce Perret left a distinctive mark on 1920s cinema. "His aesthetic discoveries and priceless refinements were legacies to the art form," wrote Cinémathèque Française founder Henri Langlois. A new restoration from Gaumont Pathé provides a taste of Perret's technical prowess and a sense of his opulent melodramas that defined the modern through costume, dance, and decor. Louise Lagrange stars opposite American actor Ricardo Cortez in a tale of intrigue about an exotic dancer known only as "the Orchid." (Léonce Perret, 1928, 35 mm, 120 minutes).

WHISTLE DOWN THE WIND
preceded by MACKESON STOUT COMMERCIALS

Sat Jul 28 (1:30)

In the midst of his acting and screenwriting career, Bryan Forbes (born 1926, who this year received the award for life achievement from the British Film Institute) made his debut as director with *Whistle Down the Wind*, a tender portrayal of childhood in rural Lancashire. Hayley Mills, Alan Barnes, and Diane Holgate stumble on a drifter asleep in their barn and imagine that he's Christ reincarnated. For his part, the drifter (Alan Bates) is grateful for their odd delusion, a welcome reprieve from the authorities hot on his trail. Often associated with the British new wave of the 1950s and 1960s, Forbes was a popular "actor's director." (Bryan Forbes, 1961, 35 mm, 100 minutes)

Preceding the feature are two puppet-animation commercials for Mackeson Stout produced by the Dutch company Joop Geesink's Dollywood. Appearing on British television in the mid-1950s, they were made for Mackeson's Brewery in the United Kingdom. (3 minutes)

THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS

Sat Jul 28 (4:00)

July 2012 is the fiftieth anniversary of Algeria's independence from France in 1962. Italian filmmaker Gillo Pontecorvo crafted a recap of the historic conflict between the French colonials and Algerian rebels as an edgy guerrilla-like exposé — handheld cameras, location shooting, and native nonprofessional actors in a sobering mise-en-scène. While some critics called it simply "a masterwork of propaganda," Pauline Kael remarked, "it's probably the only film that ever made middle-class audiences believe in the necessity of bombing innocent people." On the occasion of this landmark anniversary, Rialto Pictures has released a new 35 mm print from original negative. (*La battaglia di Algeri*, Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966, French, Italian, Arabic with subtitles, 121 minutes)





CINÉ-CONCERT: THE SPANISH DANCER
followed by SHOES
Andrew Simpson, piano

Sun Aug 5 (4:30)

A restoration from EYE Film Institute, Amsterdam, *The Spanish Dancer* stars Pola Negri as gypsy entertainer Maritana, entangled in court intrigues with poor nobleman Don César de Bazan (Antonio Moreno) and other hapless hearts (including Wallace Beery and Adolphe Menjou). Negri's role, according to a 1923 review, was intended for Rudolph Valentino as *The Spanish Cavalier*, "but when Valentino stepped over the traces, the producers decided to make it a vehicle for a feminine star, and so they submitted to Negri's big eyes and inky hair." (Herbert Brenon, 1923, 35 mm, 56 minutes)

Gifted actress and director Lois Weber (1882–1939) created scenarios around sensitive social issues affecting the lives of working-class women—poverty, wages, crime, even abortion. In *Shoes*, a poor shopgirl is embarrassed when her only pair of shoes wears out. She craves some new boots but cannot afford them. "Woven throughout the film are moments when we understand what it means to work hard, to feel ashamed...and to long for one potent symbol of escape"—Shelley Stamp. (Lois Weber, 1916, 35 mm, 57 minutes)

BONJOUR TRISTESSE
followed by BREATHLESS

Sat Aug 18 (2:00)

Ingenuie Jean Seberg—Otto Preminger's discovery from his *Joan of Arc*—was roundly dismissed by American critics for "not inhabiting her parts." French critics, on the other hand, embraced Seberg. Writing in *Cahiers du cinéma*, François Truffaut was complimentary and Jean-Luc Godard made her an icon in *Breathless*. In this restoration from Columbia, not only does Seberg shine as the restive Cécile, who alternately adores or endures her playboy dad (David Niven), but the entire film—from the Côte d'Azur to the Shepperton Studios—seems to sparkle. (Otto Preminger, 1958, 35 mm, 94 minutes)

Writing in *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1960, Luc Moullet called Godard an intuitive creator "who follows the logic of his instinct." Shot in four weeks (between August 17 and September 15, 1959) on location in Paris and Marseille with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo,

Breathless was the kind of film, said Godard, “where anything goes....I wanted to give the feeling that the techniques of filmmaking had just been discovered or experienced for the first time.” (*À bout de souffle*, Jean-Luc Godard, 1960, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 87 minutes)

American Originals Now: Mark Street

Jul 21

Over the past twenty-five years, Mark Street has developed a peripatetic filmography of experimental and genre-bending films and videos — some abstract and some that combine scripted and improvised action. Individual characters are developed alongside sequences of crowded urban environments, bringing a distinctive take on the classic essayistic films of Chris Marker, Jean Rouch, and others concerned with chronicling the unexpected in the everyday. An assistant professor of film in the visual art department at Fordham University Lincoln Center, Street has shown his films at international venues such as Tribeca, Rotterdam, London, Sarajevo, and the New York Underground film festivals. Screenings of his work are shown in conjunction with *I Spy: Photography and the Theater of the Street, 1938–2010*.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT and other shorts

Mark Street in person

Sat Jul 21 (2:00)

A program of short films utilizing public streets as stages includes *Hidden in Plain Sight* (2008), inspired by the tradition of cinematic city symphonies and using footage from Santiago de Chile, Hanoi, Dakar, and Marseille. Other titles include the experimental 16 mm film *Sweep* (1998) and *Happy?* (2000), a hybrid of documentary and anthropological film, part time capsule, part taped performance piece. (Total running time approximately 90 minutes)



HASTA NUNCA (SEE YOU NEVER)

preceded by **BUENOS AIRES BALCONY**

Mark Street in person

Sat Jul 21 (4:00)

In *Hasta Nunca* (2012), a work in progress, Montevideo disc jockey Mario Ligetti produces the underground call-in radio show “Secrets and Stories.” Callers’ voices provide an acoustic counterpoint for an observational investigation of this ramshackle port town that retains its colonial architectural vestiges.

Buenos Aires Balcony (2011) is an outsider’s meditation on the capital of Argentina. From high above and down on the street, the film considers the city’s obsession with psychoanalysis, European culture, and Eva Perón. (Total running time approximately 102 minutes)

Michelangelo Antonioni Centenary

Aug 11– Sep 3

September 29 is the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Italian master filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni (1912–2007), arguably the most influential director of the postwar era. The National Gallery of Art joins the American Film Institute (AFI) in a retrospective of his most distinguished works. The early Italian films, including several shorts and documentaries — loaned through the courtesy of Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia–Cineteca Nazionale— are screened at the National Gallery during August and early September, while the English-language classics are shown at the AFI Silver Theatre in September. *Fare un film per me è vivere* (1996), a documentary that Enrica Antonioni made while her husband was on the set of *Beyond the Clouds*, screens at the Italian Cultural Institute in September.



STORY OF A LOVE AFFAIR

Sat Aug 11 (2:00)

Former working-class girl Lucia Bosè's rich husband (costume designer Ferdinando Sarmi) hires a detective to confirm his fears that Lucia's penniless old flame, Massimo Girotti, has returned. Are the husband's suspicions simply pushing the former lovers together? Antonioni's first feature, broodingly reminiscent of Luchino Visconti's (and James M. Cain's) *Ossessione*, makes interesting use of spare empty spaces to convey emotion, foreshadowing the later Antonioni. (*Cronaca di un amore*, 1950, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 98 minutes)

I VINTI

Sat Aug 11 (4:30)

Three morality tales, Antonioni-style: shy Jean-Pierre Mocky flashes a roll of francs to win acceptance but finds more than he bargained for, with a bitterly ironic twist; on-the-lam cigarette smuggler Franco Interlenghi meets with a different sort of trouble; and poet Peter Reynolds stops at nothing to get his name in the news. This French/Italian/British trio of stories of "unbalanced postwar youth," shot in original language in three countries, ran into censorship difficulties and imposed rewrites. (1952, 35 mm, 110 minutes)

LADY WITHOUT CAMELIAS**preceded by LIES OF LOVE**

Sun Aug 12 (4:30)

Milanese shopgirl Lucia Bosè vaults to movie stardom, but teeters between ceding to the demands of "art" films or descending to low-budget spear-and-sandal epics, while oscillating in her personal life between a domineering producer and a suave diplomat. Antonioni's use of long takes approaches a one shot per scene treatment and provides an intriguing backstage look at Italian commercial filmmaking. (*La Signora senza camellie*, 1953, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 106 minutes)

The short *Lies of Love* about the "stars" of the *fumetti*—photographed comic strips popular in postwar Italy—precedes the feature. (*L'Amorosa menzogna*, 1949, 35 mm, no subtitles, 10 minutes)

LE AMICHE**preceded by SUPERSTITIONS**

Sat Aug 25 (2:30)

Returning to her native Turin to open a salon on the heels of her Roman success, fashion stylist Eleanora Rossi-Drago painfully tries to bond with the local *au courant* crowd. Antonioni's loose adaptation of a Cesare Pavese story artfully charts realigning relationships amid class conflicts (the experimental highlight is a beach expedition, with camera weaving among wandering figures regrouping). Antonioni's first critical triumph won the Silver Lion at that year's Venice Film Festival. (1955, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 100 minutes)

Preceding the film is *Superstitions*, a catalogue of unusual rural customs. (*Superstizione*, 1949, 35 mm, no subtitles, 9 minutes)

L'AVVENTURA**preceded by NETEZZA URBANA**

Sun Aug 26 (4:30)

A woman (Lea Massari) disappears along a rocky stretch of beach and her friend (Monica Vitti) and lover (Gabriele Ferzetti) try to find her. This simple stratagem is the premise for Antonioni's chic and existential breakthrough, a film that challenges all expectations for clarification or resolution, with every frame an exercise in modernist composition. When asked what really happened to Massari's character, Antonioni replied, "I don't know. Someone told me she committed suicide, but I don't believe it." (1960, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 145 minutes)

Netezza Urbana, chronicling the working-class street cleaners of Rome, precedes the film. (1948, 35 mm, 9 minutes)

LA NOTTE

Sat Sep 1 (2:30)

A day and night in the life of a modern marriage, set against the soulless architecture of Milan, find the couple (Marcello Mastroianni and Jeanne Moreau) visiting a dying friend, a nightclub, and a protracted party, until their evening ends in a tormented dawn encounter in a deserted golf course. Perhaps Antonioni's most compassionate

examination of the emptiness of the lives of the rich and the difficulties of contemporary relationships, *La Notte* is fabled for its tour-de-force set piece, Moreau's lone walk through the Milan streetscape. (1961, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 120 minutes)

L'ECLISSE

Sun Sep 2 (2:00)

Monica Vitti finishes an affair with Francisco Rabal but then drifts into another with her mother's stockbroker (Alain Delon). Perhaps Antonioni's most intense focus on a single individual and his most impressionistic work, with every event placed for its impingement on Vitti, *L'Eclisse* maintains the director's characteristic detachment. A collection of sense impressions—a trip to the provincial airport, the sound of wind in the chain-link fence, the volcanic scenes in the stock market interrupted by a moment of silence, and most celebrated of all, the seven-minute coda in which no character appears—this film is the least celebrated of Antonioni's "trilogy" but arguably his greatest work. (1962, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 125 minutes)

RED DESERT

**preceded by NOTO, MANDORLI, VULCANO,
STROMBOLI, CARNEVALE**

Mon Sep 3 (2:30)

"There is something terrible about reality and I don't know what it is." Monica Vitti plays a wife and mother struggling with her own neuroses and a futile affair with an engineer (Richard Harris) amid a nightmarish industrial landscape. Antonioni's first color film—he experimented with hue as boldly as he had with narrative—designs a scheme that suggests Vitti's state of mind throughout. A final, wistfully enigmatic parable poetically relates why birds won't fly into poisonous yellow smoke. (1964, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 120 minutes)

Noto, Mandorli, Vulcano, Stromboli, Carnevale is a compilation of unstructured footage—flowers in bloom, overhead views of a volcano, a party in progress. (1993, 35 mm, 8 minutes)

American Originals Now: Liza Johnson

Aug 19

Artist, filmmaker, curator, and teacher Liza Johnson has exhibited her work at the Museum of Modern Art, the Walker Art Center, the Wexner Center for the Arts, Centre Pompidou, and at major European festival venues such as the Berlinale, Cannes, and Rotterdam. *Return*, her first feature, was selected for the 2011 Festival de Cannes, and her short *South of Ten* was screened on the opening night of the 2006 New York Film Festival. She has been a fellow of the DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm and the Sundance Institute, and is professor of art at Williams College.

KARRABING! LOW TIDE TURNING

preceded by SOUTH OF TEN and IN THE AIR

Sun Aug 19 (4:00)

Three short works by Liza Johnson: *Karrabing! Low Tide Turning*, a portrait of life in the Northern Territory of Australia, written and performed by the Karrabing Indigenous Corporation with Liza Johnson and Elizabeth A. Povinelli (2012, HD-Cam, 14 minutes); *South of Ten*, filmed in post-Katrina Mississippi, "a small gem of a film that opens our eyes to the possibilities of other images and other meanings in that American tragedy"—Jonathan Kahana (2006, 35 mm, 10 minutes); and *In the Air*, shot with students in a local circus school in the ex-steel center of Portsmouth, Ohio, the filmmaker's hometown. (2009, HD-Cam, 22 minutes).

RETURN

Washington premiere

Liza Johnson in person

Sun Aug 19 (5:00)

Returning to her Ohio hometown following a military tour of duty,

a National Guard soldier (Linda Cardellini) anxiously tries to reenter her former life as wife and mother. Liza Johnson purposely chose a deindustrialized township in America's midsection, she states, "to test the limits of empathy when someone has been in an extreme situation and [her husband] has been immersed in a banal American way of life." Shown last year in the Festival de Cannes Director's Fortnight (the only American film selected for the program), *Return* balances a quietly devastating drama with "an unflinchingly honest and well-nuanced performance by Linda Cardellini" — Avi Offer. (2011, 35 mm, 97 minutes)

Aleksei Guerman: War and Remembrance

Sep 2 - 22

That Aleksei Guerman has completed only a few films merely adds to the mystery surrounding this filmmaker who, though not well known in the West, enjoys a unique reputation in Russia. His fixation on moments of historical consequence for the Soviet Union, coupled with his unconventional approach, has given his work a particular weight. Guerman was born in 1938 in Leningrad to Soviet cultural elite: his father was the distinguished writer Yuri Guerman, and the younger Guerman studied theater and then cinema under Grigory Kozintsev. In spite of recurring problems with authorities, Guerman managed production delays, losses of funding, and the collapse of the Soviet Union to fashion one of the most richly cinematic bodies of work in contemporary culture. His latest, an adaptation of Arkady and Boris Sturgatsky's sci-fi novel *Hard to Be a God*, will be released this year. This first North American retrospective of Guerman's work is presented in association with Seagull Films and the Film Society of Lincoln Center, with thanks to Lenfilm Studios, Alla Verlotsky, Paul Richer, Scott Foundas, and George Gund III.



KHRUSTALYOV, MY CAR!

Sun Sep 2 (4:30)

A whirling evocation of Joseph Stalin's final days, *Khrustalyov, My Car!* is set in a bleak Moscow in the winter of 1953. Consistent with his indirect portrayal of events, Guerman constructs the narrative around a surgeon whose life is ruined by the so-called "doctors' plot," in which predominantly Jewish Moscow doctors were accused of conspiring to assassinate Soviet leaders. "An astounding visual and aural rendering of the charged atmosphere, in which no point of view is ever fixed, no shadow devoid of possible danger, nor any stray remark free from potentially lethal consequences"—Seagull Films. (*Khrustalyov, mashinu!*, 1998, 35 mm, Russian with subtitles, 137 minutes)

TRIAL ON THE ROAD

Sat Sep 8 (4:30)

This story of a Red Army sergeant who has defected to the Nazis and, as the film begins, changes sides one more time, was inspired by a true-life case. As the soldier's loyalties are questioned, he is forced to prove his patriotism through a series of increasingly perilous missions. For daring to question accepted orthodoxy that the war was a heroic struggle free of ambiguities, the film was shelved by the Soviets for fifteen years. (*Proverka na dorogakh*, 1971, 35 mm, Russian and German with subtitles, 96 minutes)

MY FRIEND IVAN LAPSHIN

Sun Sep 9 (4:30)

A nostalgic return to Stalin's Russia before the Great Purge of 1937–1938, *My Friend Ivan Lapshin* is Guerman's best-known work internationally. Detailing a love triangle that develops in a small town between a police detective, his widowed friend, and an actress, the story is told by a narrator (seen occasionally in the only color sequences in the director's work) recalling what he witnessed as a boy. Peripheral incidents allow Guerman to indulge his taste for weaving together narrative strands, as villagers express their pride, unaware of the grim future lurking offscreen. (*Moy drug Ivan Lapshin*, 1984, 35 mm, Russian with subtitles, 100 minutes)



TWENTY DAYS WITHOUT WAR

Sat Sep 15 (4:00)

In Guerman's second film about World War II, the war itself remains offscreen. In the winter of 1942, Soviet army major Lopatin (Yuri Nikulin, a celebrated comic actor and circus performer) is on furlough, delivering the belongings of a fallen comrade to the man's wife in his own hometown of Tashkent. While there, he reunites briefly with his ex-wife and begins a tentative courtship with a lonely seamstress. A work of surprising tenderness (based on the semiautobiographical writings of acclaimed war poet Konstantin Simonov), *Twenty Days without War* is Guerman's plaintive tribute to those who remained on the homefront. (*Dvadstat dney bez voyny*, 1976, 35 mm, Russian with subtitles, 101 minutes)

THE FALL OF OTRAR

Sun Sep 16 (4:00)

Aleksei Guerman was writer and producer (with his wife and frequent collaborator, Svetlana Karmalita) on this fabled epic portraying the ruthless intrigues that led to Genghis Khan's destruction of the Central Asian civilization of Otrar. Directed by Kazakh filmmaker Ardak Amirkulov, *The Fall of Otrar* is visually resplendent, fiercely energetic, and packed with dazzling detail traversing an endless variety of parched landscapes and ornate palaces. A cherished classic, *The Fall of Otrar* has been compared to Andrei Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev*, yet betrays an awareness of Akira Kurosawa and Sergio Leone. The film inspired a new wave of Kazakh cinema during the 1990s. (*Gibel Otrara*, Ardak Amirkulov, 1991, 35 mm, Kazakh, Mongolian, and Mandarin with subtitles, 176 minutes)

THE SEVENTH COMPANION

Sat Sep 22 (2:00)

Another instance of the circuitous approach to Soviet history that characterizes Guerman's work, *The Seventh Companion* is based on a novella by Boris Lavrenev and unfolds during the civil war that followed the Bolshevik Revolution. A general in the czar's army, arrested by the secret police, is released into the brave new world of the Soviet Union. With his former apartment now a commune, and

having nowhere else to go, the soldier begins a campaign to return to the battlefield. (*Sedmoy sputnik*, 1967, 35 mm, Russian with subtitles, 89 minutes)

Miloš Forman: Lives of an Artist

Sep 22–30

Distinguished leader of the Czech new wave and celebrated Hollywood director Miloš Forman (born 1932) turned eighty years old this year. From any perspective, his life has had more than its share of dramatic situations. His parents died in concentration camps, his earliest work was challenged by the authorities, and he was denied admission to drama school, yet managed to graduate from the FAMU film academy and work for Czech television in the 1950s. When barely thirty, during the early days of cultural liberalization known as the Prague Spring, he launched his experimental approach to filmmaking under the watch of the communist regime. Yet as the brief but pivotal Prague Spring drew to a close in 1968, Forman was forced to leave for the United States where, somewhat tentatively, he resumed his filmmaking career. This cycle of Forman's work is presented in association with the Czech Film Archive and the Embassy of the Czech Republic, with thanks to Barbara Karpetova, Mary Fetzco, and Michal Bregant.

ORIGINS OF THE CZECH NEW WAVE

Illustrated lecture by Michal Bregant

Sat Sep 22 (4:00)

Film historian, critic, curator, and director of the Czech Film Archive in Prague, Michal Bregant discusses the career of Miloš Forman and his relationship with the Czech new wave, the artistic movement of the late 1950s and 1960s that profoundly affected the course of European cinema. (Approximately 50 minutes)

AUDITION**followed by TAKING OFF**

Sunday Sep 23 (4:30)

With his first 16 mm camera Forman made *Audition*, an account of tryouts for a musical play at Prague's famous Semafor Theatre, combining documentary and fiction. A satirical portrait of the young women who flock there merely to show off mediocre talents, the film's imaginative soundtrack is a mix of Czech pop, folk, and classical music. (*Konkurs*, 1963, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 47 minutes)

In the aftermath of his exile, Forman's American debut was *Taking Off*, another tale that begins with a talent competition. Although it borrows motifs from *Audition*, the story takes a different turn, focusing on the American suburbanite parents of a runaway daughter who find themselves adrift in the "flower power" counterculture of the era, as they try to locate their girl. Chosen as the official American entry in the 1971 Festival de Cannes, the film — which includes a performance by Ike and Tina Turner — was awarded the jury prize. (1971, 35 mm, 93 minutes)

THE FIREMAN'S BALL**Introduction by Michal Bregant**

Sat Sep 29 (1:00)

A provincial fire department's annual ball erupts in mayhem — raffle prizes are pilfered, the beauty pageant goes awry, the contestants' carousing fathers drink too much — and outside in the town, a house burns down. For a humorously unassuming political allegory, *The Fireman's Ball* suffered one of the most unusual fates in film history. Not only was the president of Czechoslovakia outraged by its satirical tone, but thousands of volunteer firemen threatened to strike after it opened. Ultimately, the film was banned. (*Horí, má panenka*, 1967, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 71 minutes)

BLACK PETER**followed by LOVES OF A BLONDE**

Sat Sep 29 (3:00)

Forman's first full feature was filmed in a small town with a nonprofessional cast who improvised much of their dialogue. Inspired by the *vérité* approach of Italian neorealism, *Black Peter* centers on a shy but sympathetic young store clerk who, assigned to apprehend shoplifters, lacks the nerve to confront anyone. Its warmth, ironic humor, and realism were a hit with viewers and, though criticized by the regime, the film was selected as the best picture of 1963 by Czech film critics. (*Cerný Petr*, 1963, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 85 minutes)

Another critical success for Forman was *Loves of a Blonde*, a tender story of a naive factory worker who has a one-night stand with a musician from Prague and then follows him home. "Forman's humor comes from the fact that his characters peer out at the world like timid nocturnal animals, always prepared to defend themselves against attack but constantly having the ground cut from under their feet by the discovery that people are never quite what they seem" — Tom Milne. (*Lásky jedné plavovlásky*, 1965, 35 mm, Czech with subtitles, 83 minutes)

AMADEUS**Director's cut**

Sun Sep 30 (4:00)

Sweeping nearly all major categories in the 1984 Oscars, Forman's adaptation of Peter Shaffer's drama about a brash Mozart and his beleaguered rival Salieri was not without its detractors. Pauline Kael wrote, "The insensitivity to what Mozart might have been like is so flagrant that for the first hour you almost think it's a joke." Returning to Prague for the filming, Miroslav Ondříček's cinematography captured opulent baroque spaces, while Forman played these period settings as counterpoint to his eccentric characterizations, curiously validating the whole effect. The director's cut of the film is loaned through the courtesy of the Academy Film Archive and Saul Zaentz. (1984, 35 mm, 180 minutes)

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