

November / December 2024



The Cinemathèque

The Cinematheque, founded in 1972, is a film institute and media education centre devoted to celebrating the art and history of Canadian and international cinema and understanding the impact of moving images and screen-based media in our lives. Our public activities include a year-round calendar of curated film exhibitions devoted to important classic and contemporary films and filmmakers and an array of community outreach programs offering interactive learning opportunities in film appreciation, filmmaking, digital literacy, and critical thinking. We value cinema as a communal and transformative experience; believe in the importance of inclusivity and diversity in programming; and are committed to showcasing the finest achievements of local and national artists along with the best in world cinema.

Buying Tickets

The Cinematheque box office opens 30 minutes prior to the first screening of the day. Tickets can be purchased in advance online at thecinematheque.ca or during screening hours at our box office.

By purchasing a ticket to a screening at The Cinematheque, you automatically become a member of the Pacific Cinémathèque Pacifique Society.

Support

The Cinematheque is a not-for-profit society incorporated in the province of British Columbia and a registered Canadian charity. We rely on financial support from public and private sources. Donations are gratefully accepted. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$60 or more. support@thecinematheque.ca

Venue Rental

The Cinematheque theatre is available for rental. We offer simple, all-inclusive rental terms and top-quality service, and are equipped for the projection of a wide range of film, video, and digital formats. Whether you are looking for somewhere to host a private screening, film premiere, community event, conference, or work function, our theatre is the ideal venue.

theatre@thecinematheque.ca

Advertising

The Cinematheque offers advertising opportunities in this program guide, on-screen in our theatre, and digitally in our weekly e-blast. advertise@thecinematheque.ca

The Cinematheque's program guide is published six times a year with a bi-monthly circulation of 10,000.

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Cover image: *Equinox Flower*, Ozu Yasujiro, 1958

Contents image: *My Dad Is a Sausage*, Anouk Fortuinier, 2021

The Cinematheque is situated on the unceded, ancestral homelands of the x̱məθḵw̱áy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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Special thanks to our spare volunteers!

Program notes: Shaun Inouye,
Michael Scoular, Chelsea Birks

Frames of Mind notes: Selina Crammond
Our Stories to Tell notes: Akira lahtail
Additional program notes: Jim Sinclair

Design and layout: Gerilee McBride

Classification Information

Screenings are restricted to 18+ unless the film has been classified by Consumer Protection BC. This is indicated in our program guide and/or on our website by the inclusion of one of the following ratings:

- Suitable for all ages
- Parental discretion is advised
- Viewers under 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult
- Viewers under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult
- Restricted to viewers 18 years of age and over

Ticket Rates

\$14 General (18+), \$12 Senior (65+), \$10 Student

Multi-film ticket packs are available for purchase at a discounted rate from our gift shop. Ticket rates may vary for special events.

Film Club, our family matinee series, has the reduced admission rate of \$6 for ages 13 and under, and \$16 when combined with an adult ticket.

Free admission for Indigenous Peoples.

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As 2024 draws to a close, the staff and board wish to express how deeply grateful we are for the continued support of our incredible patrons, program participants, and volunteers, who make every screening, workshop, and event at The Cinematheque a special experience. We look forward to sharing more unforgettable films and learning programs with you in 2025.

Kate Ladyshevsky
Executive Director



New Restorations

November 1 (Friday)	6:00 pm
November 3 (Sunday)	8:30 pm
November 8 (Friday)	6:30 pm
November 10 (Sunday)	8:20 pm
November 11 (Monday)	4:00 pm



The Straight Story G

USA 1999
David Lynch
112 min. DCP

“A great, haunting film; it affects us in ways we’re not used to, or maybe not accustomed to as much as we should be...Capable of both lifting our hearts and chilling us to the bone.”

Michael Wilmington, Chicago Tribune

A pure distillation of David Lynch’s love for the sturdiness and uncanniness of people and things shaped by the American Midwest, *The Straight Story* is a film of single-minded purpose. Alvin Straight (Richard Farnsworth) feels compelled to visit his brother, and will travel over 300 kilometers by riding mower to do so. In something of a coup, editor, co-writer, and producer Mary Sweeney assembled the core Lynch team of production designer Jack Fisk, cinematographer Freddie Francis, and composer Angelo Badalamenti, among others, and got Walt Disney Pictures to pay for it all. The strange and entrancing qualities of the film emerge unexpectedly: this is a Lynch film where instead of melodramatic intensity, action flows with the easy impermanence of a comic picaresque—albeit a strongly elegiac one. Along with *The Elephant Man*, it’s a vision of Lynch as a studio director: a bit more approachable, but still possessed by a wandering spirit of intensely moving poetry.

November 29 (Friday)	6:30 pm
December 1 (Sunday)	8:50 pm
December 9 (Monday)	6:30 pm



Toute une nuit

aka All Night Long

Belgium/France 1982
Chantal Akerman
90 min. DCP

In French and English with English subtitles

The stillness of an Edward Hopper painting and the mounting progression of a structural film are married in Chantal Akerman’s *Toute une nuit*, a secret masterwork in which people meet, part, and reunite over a single hushed evening. In films like *News from Home* and *Je tu il elle*, Akerman’s status as a peerless poet of first-person loneliness is readily apparent. With *Toute une nuit*, that singular quality is reoriented across a cast of dozens. Released the same year that Akerman followed German dancer and choreographer Pina Bausch on tour, the film presents, in careful sequence, one pas de deux after another, as if to test the limits of experience—the “all” of the title within its single-night framework. The evening provides cover for figures that, given the film’s near-total silence, we might infer have been together for seconds, hours, years... *Toute une nuit*’s total concentration on the ephemeral casts an unbroken spell of romance—its mysteries and maladies.

“One of her very best films... The yearning for romance and for the romance of the ordinary is a central ingredient of [Akerman’s] work ... Emblematic in this regard is *Toute une nuit*, an insomniac’s movie about insomniacs.”

Jonathan Rosenbaum, Chicago Reader

November 30 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
 December 6 (Friday) 6:30 pm
 December 8 (Sunday) 8:30 pm



Far From Home

در غربت

Iran/West Germany 1975

Sohrab Shahid Saless

91 min. DCP

In Turkish and German with English subtitles

“No other film has depicted the painful repetitiveness of an immigrant’s life in such candid detail.”

Ehsan Khoshbakht, *Il Cinema Ritrovato* 2022

One of the most exciting developments in recent film restoration is the newly available work of Sohrab Shahid Saless, a filmmaker whose transnational status—neither a careerlong member of the New Iranian or New German Cinemas—has often made him an overlooked figure in film history. Perhaps no director has explored with greater rigour and sensitivity the routines of daily existence, the way work imposes itself on life, and the way these daily cycles only retrospectively look like “events.” *Far From Home*, one of three early films Saless co-wrote with Helga Houzer, his partner at the time, portrays a household of Turkish gastarbeiter (or guest workers) in West Germany. As Saless’s opening title card promises, it is a film that contains the misery of isolation—the limits of language and social graces and racist exclusion. It’s also a film of surprising beauty, whether through subtly inventive camera set-ups, shades of the colour green, or brief, unmelodramatic gestures of warmth.

November 30 (Saturday) 8:30 pm
 December 1 (Sunday) 6:00 pm
 December 4 (Wednesday) 7:00 pm
 December 6 (Friday) 8:30 pm



The Stranger and the Fog

غریبه و مه

Iran 1974

Bahram Beyzaie

146 min. DCP

In Farsi with English subtitles

After the success of his debut *Downpour*, Bahram Beyzaie returned to its classical premise (“a stranger comes to town”) and made it genuinely strange for his follow-up—a film for an audience unafraid to go one step further than the comfortable norm, the playwright and director later said. An unusually grand and mythic entry in the Iranian New Wave, *The Stranger and the Fog* is a film with the scale to match period epics by Kurosawa or Bergman. Its on-location earthiness is in service to a tale rooted in medieval Persian texts, part of Beyzaie’s interest in Iran’s supposedly distant cultural origins. The stranger is Ayat; the place is the northern coast in an indeterminate century. The custom, he’s told, is to integrate with the people by marriage, or be banished. Parvaneh Massoumi plays Rana, whose acceptance or rejection of Ayat’s proposal carries the power of Sophoclean tragedy.

“Dripping with haunting imagery and violent interruptions, the film is based on Beyzaie’s own nightmares... Can [be] easily associated with the films of Kurosawa and Tarkovsky—and perhaps also Robin Hardy’s *The Wicker Man*.”

Julia Gunnison, *Screen Slate*

New Cinema

November 1 (Friday) 8:20 pm
November 5 (Tuesday) 7:00 pm
November 11 (Monday) 8:30 pm



Eureka

Argentina/France/Portugal/Germany/Mexico 2023

Lisandro Alonso

147 min. DCP

In English, Lakota, and Portuguese with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

“Eureka is not just an anti-Western, but a decolonized Western, putting Indigeneity front and centre, and forging a new, liberated form that transcends genre.”

Tom Charity, *Sight and Sound*

The dilating effects of colonial violence in the Americas are artfully explored in this ambitious new work from Argentine auteur Lisandro Alonso. *Jauja*, Alonso’s beguiling preceding feature, starred Viggo Mortensen as a frontiersman in search of his daughter. *Eureka* slyly picks up that thread for the first of its tripartite narration, in which a gunslinger (Mortensen) tracks his abducted daughter to a depraved US-Mexico border town. From there (in ways best left undisclosed here), the film shapeshifts into two mesmeric, metaphysically tethered tales of Indigenous life. One follows a police officer and her tenderhearted niece in present-day South Dakota’s impoverished Pine Ridge Reservation. The other sets down in the Brazilian rainforest of the 1970s to witness a tribe of dream readers contend with bloodshed and exploitation. Despite its abstract structure and formal variations (each segment is marked by a distinctive aesthetic design), *Eureka* delivers a cogent, disquieting meditation on the spectre of colonialism and its instruments of oppression.

The November 5 screening will be introduced by The Cinematheque’s Learning & Outreach Director Chelsea Birks, who has published on Lisandro Alonso’s work.

November 29 (Friday) 8:30 pm
December 8 (Sunday) 6:00 pm



Samsara

Spain 2023

Lois Patiño

114 min. DCP

In Swahili and Lao with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

Samsara is a sui generis cinematic experience, a hyper-immersive, transportative work whose baffling lack of North American distribution hasn’t dissuaded arthouses—in New York, Toronto, and elsewhere—from ensuring it still finds a path to audiences. Its concept is simple; its effects, profound: a gentle, observational tale of Buddhist reincarnation, beginning in a Laos temple and ending on a Zanzibar beach, is cleaved by a radical, 15-minute sequence of sensorial immersion that invites the viewer to close their eyes—not to deprive sight, but to see differently. Galician filmmaker Lois Patiño, whose practice shuttles between gallery installation and festival exhibition, achieves something truly transcendental with this alchemy of “slow cinema,” the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and avant-garde strategies inspired, in part, by hypnagogic hallucinations. As suggestive of Apichatpong Weerasethakul or Michelangelo Frammartino as it is of James Turrell or Tony Conrad, *Samsara* is an unmissable appointment with expanded, out-of-body cinema.

“Part film, part guided meditation, it’s unlike anything else you can experience in the cinema...A strikingly original and profound artwork.”

Wendy Ide, *The Guardian*

New Canadian Cinema

November 2 (Saturday)

6:30 pm



Anne at 13,000 ft PG

Canada/USA 2019

Kazik Radwanski

75 min. DCP

“One of the best films of the year, full stop...It boasts a singularly astonishing performance by Deragh Campbell.”

Guy Lodge, *The Guardian*

Anchored by a roundly praised, powder-keg performance from Deragh Campbell, Kazik Radwanski's triumphant third feature stands as a high point in Anglo-Canada's noise-making new wave. This penetrating, close-range character study concerns 27-year-old live-wire Anne (Campbell, VFCC Best Actress), a Toronto daycare worker more absorbed in make-believing with the kids than supervising them. Trying, and failing, to get her adult-life shit together, Anne fumbles through a romance with a sweet, funny guy (Matt Johnson) while assuaging her anxieties by plummeting from airplanes. Redolent of Cassavetes's *A Woman Under the Influence* in its flitting, handheld vernacular and tender but unsparing depiction of a tempestuous soul, the film earned widespread acclaim but, owing to a cinema-shuttering pandemic, was denied a theatrical run in Vancouver. (We ultimately offered it online in 2021.) We are pleased to finally screen *Anne* at The Cinematheque, in a bill with Radwanski's superb new movie *Matt and Mara*.

November 2 (Saturday)

November 4 (Monday)

November 8 (Friday)

November 10 (Sunday)

8:15 pm

6:30 pm

8:50 pm

6:30 pm



Matt and Mara

Canada 2024

Kazik Radwanski

80 min. DCP

Canadian writer-director Kazik Radwanski follows up his breakthrough feature *Anne at 13,000 ft* with this piercing and disarmingly playful will-they-won't-they drama, selected for Berlin's excellent (and regrettably short-lived) Encounters platform. Reuniting Deragh Campbell and Matt Johnson, whose easy chemistry in *Anne* carries over to this similarly Toronto-set picture, Radwanski's naturalistic two-hander observes the collision of formerly inseparable university friends whose paths have diverged since graduating. Mara (Campbell) is a creative-writing professor and married mom settling into life sans literary success. Matt (Johnson) is an "edgy" author whose modest slice of celebrity has delivered him to New York. When Matt parachutes into Mara's orbit unannounced, the closeness between them resumes with intoxicating ease—then threatens to cross a line. Though marked by a looser, more comic register for Radwanski, the film is anything but flippant about its characters' emotions, in which jealousies of the heart and trade entangle in awkwardly truthful ways.

“Perceptive, abrasive, and frequently acerbically funny... One of those films in which very little concrete happens, but the tingling possibility that something might makes it compelling.”

Wendy Ide, *Screen International*

JLG Forever Continued from October

Throughout 2024, The Cinematheque has paid tribute to Jean-Luc Godard (1930–2022), perhaps cinema's preeminent auteur, with a retrospective traversing the gamut of his voluminous, endlessly explorable corpus.

In December, our exhibition concludes with a pair of pinnacle works that have come to signify an end and rebirth in the great Godard's career: 1967's fiery "fin de cinéma" *Weekend*, considered the last film of his iconic nouvelle vague period; and 1980's "second first film" *Every Man for Himself*, which marked his return to commercial filmmaking and the start of a prolonged "late period" that only ceased when a "posthumous" one began.

What this egregiously skips over, then, are Godard's important intervening years, during which he abandoned the industry to form (with Jean-Pierre Gorin) Groupe Dziga Vertov, a leftist collective resolved to "making political films politically," followed by his experiments in analogue video under Sonimage, a production house created with partner-collaborator Anne-Marie Miéville.

Key works from this period will be presented in 2025 as a postscript to "JLG Forever."

Presented with the support of the Consulate General of France in Vancouver and the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver



November 3 (Sunday)	6:30 pm
November 9 (Saturday)	8:30 pm
November 11 (Monday)	6:30 pm



La Chinoise ^G

France 1967
Jean-Luc Godard
96 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

"The movie is like a speed-freak's anticipatory vision of the political horrors to come; it's amazing."

Pauline Kael, *The New Yorker*

"Godard's best film by far since *Breathless*" (Renata Adler, *The New York Times*), *La Chinoise* offers a spectacularly colourful pop-art portrait of five student radicals, members of a Maoist cell, who spend a summer in a Paris apartment chanting from Mao's *Little Red Book* and plotting an assassination. Anne Wiazemsky (who married the director the same year), nouvelle vague icon Jean-Pierre Léaud, and future Rivette mainstay Juliet Berto head the cast. The film was released nine months before the radical events of May '68. Godard is at the height of his own revolutionary powers here, and his meta-narrative, aesthetically scattershot approach is exhilarating: *La Chinoise* is intercut with slogans, old photos, revolutionary posters, American comic book figures, and paintings, plus the obligatory Godardian catalogue of cinematic and literary references (including *Johnny Guitar* and Jean-Paul Sartre). As in his earlier *Pierrot le fou*, Godard also offers a comic re-enactment of the Vietnam War.

“If any artist can be said to have left traces of his own presence in his art, it’s Godard... His movies feel more necessary and alive than ever.”

Martin Scorsese

November 4 (Monday) 8:20 pm
November 9 (Saturday) 6:30 pm



Passion PG

France/Switzerland 1982
Jean-Luc Godard
88 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Godard’s masterpiece of the 1980s” (Colin McCabe) is a visually sumptuous, bursting-with-ideas rumination on art and commerce (and, of course, filmmaking), featuring Jerzy Radziwilowicz as a Polish director trying to make a film called *Passion*, a series of tableaux vivants based on masterpieces by Rembrandt, Goya, and Delacroix. Hanna Schygulla (of many of Fassbinder’s key films) is the owner of the French motel where the film’s cast and crew are staying. Michel Piccoli is her husband, a factory owner facing a strike. Isabelle Huppert is the strike organizer. Politics, polemics, adultery, and classical music are all a pungent part of the mix. *Passion* resumes the extraordinary collaboration between Godard and master nouvelle vague cinematographer Raoul Coutard (celebrating his centenary this year) for the first time in a decade and a half.

“Offering sounds and images that astonish the senses and tease the mind... For the ’60s generation, Godard effectively reinvented cinema... *Passion* brought a chance to (re)discover what all the fuss was about.”

Martyn Auty, *Time Out*

December 2 (Monday) 6:30 pm
December 7 (Saturday) 8:45 pm
December 13 (Friday) 6:30 pm



Every Man for Himself 18+

Sauve qui peut (la vie)

France/Switzerland 1980
Jean-Luc Godard
87 min. 35mm

In French with English subtitles

35mm Print

“Magnificent (and mandatory!)... A pantheon work... Jaggedly witty and woundingly beautiful.”

James Quandt, *TIFF*

Described by Godard as “my second first film,” *Every Man for Himself* marked the director’s glorious return to “mainstream” cinema after years of video experimentation. Set in Switzerland, the film has French pop star Jacques Dutronc as a dislikeable filmmaker named Godard, Nathalie Baye (in a César-winning performance) as the girlfriend trying to leave him, and Isabelle Huppert as a sex worker earning her independence in the city. Godard offers up a characteristically self-reflexive and corrosive comic account of emotional confusion, the problems of filmmaking, the metaphysics of survival, and the connection between sexual and economic exploitation. Critics were agog—Godard was back and still mattered! This blunt, cynical, playful, witty, and surprisingly pastoral film points the way from Godard’s celebrated work of the ’60s to his remarkable late-period output.

December 2 (Monday) 8:30 pm
December 7 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
December 15 (Sunday) 8:45 pm



Weekend 18+

France 1967
Jean-Luc Godard
104 min. DCP

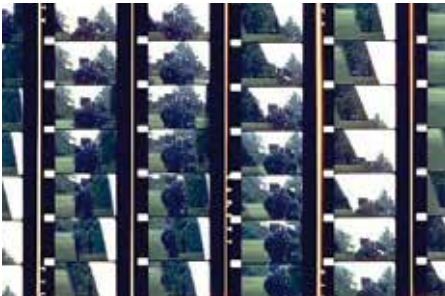
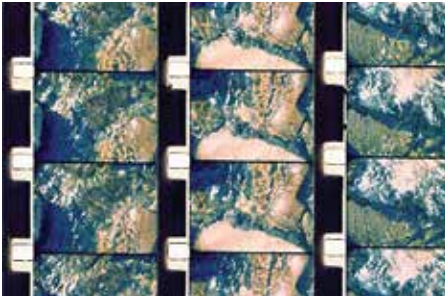
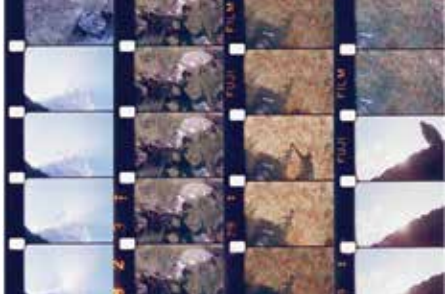
In French with English subtitles

Godard’s astonishing 15th feature, one of his pinnacle achievements, closed the book on the New Wave stage of his career. A self-described “film found on the scrapheap,” *Weekend* offers a savagely funny and surreal satire of our car-crash culture hurtling towards its apocalypse. Godard channels Buñuel, and consumer capitalism runs amok, as a murderous middle-class couple (played by Mireille Darc and Jean Yanne) sets out for a Sunday drive, encountering a series of increasingly elaborate, increasingly gruesome auto accidents. Only by merrily maiming and pillaging as they go can the unpleasant pair make their way safely through the hilarious, horrifying, hallucinatory wreckage of Western civilization. In the meantime, a group of Maoist cannibalistic hippie revolutionaries takes to the woods. The film’s stunning centrepiece—“one of the great sequences in all cinema” (James Monaco)—is a single-take, ten-minute tracking shot along a monumental traffic jam.

“Extraordinary... Godard’s vision of Hell and it ranks with the greatest.”

Pauline Kael, *The New Yorker*

Chris Welsby



A paramount figure in the field of landscape filmmaking and a pioneer of moving-image installation in his native England, Chris Welsby has, for over half a century, developed rigorous and much-revered strategies for narrowing the distance between science, nature, and the experimental arts. His 16mm works of the 1970s, made as a member of the seminal London Filmmakers' Co-operative, evinced a fascination with natural phenomena and the instruments used to measure them. Take, for instance, his *Windmill* diptych (1973–74), in which variations in wind dictate the rotation (speed, direction) of mirrored windmill blades placed in front of the camera, recording—literally by turns—either the process of its own making or the landscape beyond. Or the masterful *Seven Days* (1974), “a tour de force unlike anything cinema had yet seen” (Fred Camper, *Chicago Reader*), in which a camera, affixed to an equatorial mount calibrated to the Earth's axis, captures images triggered by atmospheric change: of the sky when overcast; of the ground when cloudless. In these and much of Welsby's work to follow, authorial control is surrendered to the elements and the relationship between artist and environment is redrawn.

In the late 1980s, Welsby moved to Canada to teach at Simon Fraser University. This West Coast chapter of his practice was marked by a transition to the burgeoning digital-video realm. With installations like the multichannel *At Sea* (2003) or live-weather-controlled *Trees in Winter* (2006), Welsby demonstrated new methods of merging technology and art. Now a professor emeritus and resident of Gabriola Island, he continues to produce captivating, formally disciplined work animated by the landscapes around him.

The Cinematheque and Cineworks Independent Filmmaking Society are pleased to welcome Chris Welsby for an evening devoted to his exceptional work. Welsby will introduce both halves of the program and participate in conversation about his career and creative processes.

Transmissions from the Natural World



“Welsby's extraordinary originality lies in the way that he harnesses these natural effects to those of the cinema, allowing both to enhance each other.”

Laura Mulvey, BFI

“Welsby’s work makes it possible to envisage a different kind of relationship between science and art, in which observation is separated from surveillance and technology from domination.”

Peter Wollen, *Millennium Film Journal*

November 7 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



Program runtime: 102 min.

Seven Days (20 min. 1974)

Stream Line (8 min. 1976)

Windmill #3 (10 min. 1974)

Sky Light (26 min. 1988)

—intermission—

At Sea (3 min. 2004)

Trees in Winter (5 min. 2006)

Desert Spring (10 min. 2017)

Oxygen (12 min. 2021)

Nightfall (8 min. 2024)

All works presented in digital formats.



Virtual Small File Filmmaking Workshop

November 7–December 5

Cost: Free

Ages: 18+



Interested in filmmaking but intimidated by expensive equipment and fancy software? Want to create an original film project from the comfort of your own home? Learn the hyper-creative, environmentally friendly, punk-chic practice of small file filmmaking! The Cinematheque has once again teamed up with the Small File Media Festival to offer this workshop on making films with tiny carbon footprints and huge creative impact.

This is a virtual workshop hosted remotely via Zoom. Templates, instructional videos, and other online resources will be provided. Live sessions will be held 5:30 pm–7:00 pm on Thursdays from November 7 to 28, with a final-cut deadline of December 5. Participants will need a smartphone with a working camera and a computer capable of downloading simple video-editing software. (The Cinematheque will help you access a suitable free editing program). If access to a computer or smartphone is a barrier, please get in touch with us at learn@thecinematheque.ca. All films produced during this workshop will be eligible for submission to the 2025 Small File Media Festival hosted by The Cinematheque next October.

Cost: Free

Please note that spots in our filmmaking workshops are very limited and in demand. Generous support from the Canada Council for the Arts and the BC Arts Council makes it possible for us to waive our usual registration fee.

See full schedule online at thecinematheque.ca/learn

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the BC Arts Council.



Europe without the jet lag!

2024

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 14–28

 **Online: December 1–15**

Sample the latest in Europe's cinematic achievements at the annual European Union Film Festival, celebrating its 27th edition at The Cinematheque this fall. Proudly presented in partnership with the Canadian Film Institute (Ottawa) and the European Union Film Festival – Toronto, along with the member states of the European Union and the Delegation of the European Union to Canada, this year's festival features in-theatre offerings from all 27 EU members. A selection of films will also be available to rent online at euffonline.ca following the conclusion of our in-person festival.

Since the 2022 escalation of war in Ukraine, EUFF has concluded with a fundraiser screening organized in partnership with the Embassy of Ukraine to Canada. Proceeds from this year's film, the crowdsourced documentary *The Hardest Hour*, will benefit the Ukraine Harmony Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about Ukraine both in Canada and globally.

Be it your first or, heck, 27th EUFF, this eclectic showcase of contemporary European cinema promises a movie or two (or many) suited to your personal cinephilic palate. Enjoy.

Please note: Tickets to in-person screenings do not include access to online EUFF offerings, nor vice versa. See euffonline.ca for further details on the virtual festival.

Acknowledgements: For assistance in making Vancouver's European Union Film Festival possible, The Cinematheque is grateful to Diodora Bucur, press officer, Delegation of the European Union to Canada (Ottawa); Tom McSorley, executive director, Canadian Film Institute (Ottawa); Jérémie Abessira, executive director, European Union Film Festival – Toronto; and the embassies and consulates of all European Union member states. Program subject to change.

Film notes written by Tom McSorley

Opening Night

Hungary

November 14 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



Some Birds

Valami madarak

Hungary 2023

Dániel Hevér

93 min. DCP

In Hungarian with English subtitles

Elderly but defiant, Béla (László Szacsavay) has been placed in a care facility by his son, who believes Béla is incapable of living independently. Béla doesn't like it at all, so he rebels against the care workers and schemes to escape. At this same facility he also meets Zoé (Lilla Kizlinger, *Semmelweis*, EUFF 2023), a troubled young woman who has been assigned to work there as part of her juvenile delinquent rehabilitation process. Both outsiders, they soon develop a friendship, so much so that Zoé decides to help Béla in his outlandish plans to escape. But it's very risky for both, and will it work? Director Dániel Hevér's promising debut feature film is an uplifting story of friendship and boasts winning performances by Szacsavay and Kizlinger.

Opening night sponsored by the Hungarian Vice Consulate in Vancouver

"A quiet, endlessly kind, and at the same time heartbreaking first film."

Zsóka Polák, *Filmtett*



The Cinematheque



“An entertaining celebration of the diversity, creativity, and accomplishments of contemporary European filmmaking.”

Shawn Conner, *Vancouver Sun*

Italy

November 15 (Friday)



6:30 pm



A Hundred Sundays

Cento domeniche

Italy 2023

Antonio Albanese

94 min. DCP

In Italian with English subtitles

“A small, well-calibrated film that denounces and makes universal one of the thorniest aspects of the ‘spirit of our time.’”

Camillo De Marco, *Cineuropa*

A former shipyard worker, Antonio leads a quiet life: he plays bocce with friends, looks after his elderly mother, has an ex-wife with whom he is on excellent terms, and is close with his beloved daughter Emilia. When Emilia announces her engagement, Antonio is overjoyed; finally, he can make her dream come true by giving her the wedding they’ve always fantasized about and that he’s saved a lifetime for. But things are not so simple. His long-time regular bank seems to be hiding something: the staff is evasive, and the bank’s management team keeps changing. What is happening to Antonio’s savings? The task of paying for his daughter’s wedding will prove increasingly difficult, as Antonio discovers as he fights to make his—and Emilia’s—dream come true.

France

November 15 (Friday)



8:30 pm



Boléro

France/Belgium 2024

Anne Fontaine

120 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

Paris, les années folles. Iconoclastic and acclaimed Russian choreographer Ida Rubinstein chooses Maurice Ravel to compose the music for her next ballet. She wants something bold, something sensual. Well known and established, Ravel nonetheless finds himself unable to write anything. Reliving his life’s memories, facing his old loves and personal failures, the composer will eventually give birth to his greatest composition, *Boléro* (1928). This sumptuous biographical drama directed by Anne Fontaine (*Coco avant Chanel*, *The Innocents*) captures the troubled composer in the process of devising one of the most famous pieces of music ever written. Raphaël Personnaz stars as Ravel, while the legendary Jeanne Balibar, a collaborator of Assayas, Desplechin, and Rivette, as well as a featured cast member of *Lost Illusions* (EUFF 2022), appears as Rubinstein.

“Elegant... Fontaine’s drama captures the composer’s life with passion, intelligence and wit.”

Ian Haydn Smith, *IFF Rotterdam 2024*

Finland

November 16 (Saturday)



6:30 pm



Light Light Light

Valoa valoa valoa

Finland 2023

Inari Niemi

91 min. DCP

In Finnish with English subtitles

“Expertly crafted... Hanna Kuirinlahti’s editing [transcends] coming-of-age film expectations.”

Joshua Polanski, *The Bay Area Reporter*

In the spring of 1986, the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl explodes, spreading fear and radioactive clouds across Europe. At the same time, teenaged Mariia (Rebekka Baer) falls for Mimi (Anni Iikkanen), who has just moved to her small village in Finland. As this strange and dangerous time unfolds, they experience their first passionate summer of love together, despite relentlessly ominous messages on the radio about the faraway disaster. When Mariia returns to her hometown 20 years later to care for her ailing mother, complex memories of that fateful summer with Mimi keep rising to the surface. Alternating between past and present, Finnish director Inari Niemi (*Wonderland*, EUFF 2018) delivers a sensitive, moving coming-of-age story, skillfully navigating between Mariia’s sunny, hopeful youth and her sombre, challenging present.

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Spain

November 16 (Saturday)

8:30 pm



Un amor

Spain 2023

Isabel Coixet

129 min. DCP

In Spanish with English subtitles

After leaving her overwhelming life in the city, 30-year-old Natalia (Laia Costa) seeks refuge in the small rural village of La Escapa. Settling into a rustic house, she aims to rebuild and find renewal. It won't be easy, as she must deal with the hostility of her landlord and the distrust of the local villagers. Amid all this uncertainty, Nat also finds herself strangely attracted to a rather bold sexual proposal from her neighbour Andreas (Hovik Keuchkerian, winner of Best Supporting Performance at San Sebastián for the role). This peculiar encounter sparks an obsessive passion that will start to consume Nat, forcing her to reconsider her identity, if not her entire life. Directed by the internationally acclaimed Isabel Coixet (*The Bookshop*, *My Life Without Me*, *The Secret Life of Words*, EUFF 2011), this adaptation of the novel by Sara Mesa is a powerful, unsettling psychosexual drama.

“Making no cozy compromises in its portrayal of a young woman socially and sexually exploited by rural patriarchy, *Un amor* is a tricky balancing act that mostly works, thanks to a crackling lead performance by Laia Costa.”

Guy Lodge, *Variety*

Belgium

November 17 (Sunday)

6:30 pm



My Dad Is a Sausage

Mijn vader is een saucisse

Belgium/Netherlands 2021

Anouk Fortunier

80 min. DCP

In Flemish with English subtitles

“*My Dad Is a Sausage* [offers] a modern fairytale about burnout that is both poetic and rooted in reality, and aimed at an audience of children and young teens that are taken seriously.”

Aurore Engelen, *Cineuropa*

Much to the horror of his family, Paul (Johan Heldenbergh, *The Broken Circle Breakdown*) leaves his boring but secure and well-paying job at the bank to finally fulfill his dream of becoming an actor. Although no one is quite sure if it's a case of professional burnout or a full-fledged midlife crisis, Paul's youngest daughter Zoë (Savannah Vandendriessche) has made up her mind: she thinks it's a great idea! She is the only one who supports him and the only one who also believes he has actual acting talent waiting to be discovered by the world. Paul's quixotic quest seems doomed to failure, but it soon will end up in an entirely different and unexpected place for the whole family.

Netherlands

November 17 (Sunday)

8:20 pm



Fathers & Sons

Vaders & Zonen

Netherlands 2022

Jörgen Scholtens

80 min. DCP

In Dutch with English subtitles

In this absurdist tale of arrested development, you'll meet a decidedly oddball family. Loet (Fedja van Huêt, *Speak No Evil*) is over forty years old and still lives with his younger brother Winnie at the home of their dominant father Baltus. The two have lived their entire life under their father's thumb. His pension also pays their bills. One day, Baltus dies in front of the TV. Now what? The brothers are in a state of helpless confusion, given they have never travelled further afield than the local supermarket! To keep living on their father's pension, they'll have to find a living replacement to play his role while concealing the death of not-so-dear old dad. Reminiscent in style and tone to the Coen brothers, *Fathers & Sons* is a deliciously dark and droll comedy.

“A dark comedy with a mind of its own.”

Ruby Dijk, *Filmtotaal*

Lithuania

November 18 (Monday)

6:30 pm

**Rowing Across the Atlantic**

Irklaiss per Atlanta

Lithuania/Latvia/USA/Spain 2024

Aurimas Valujavičius

100 min. DCP

In Lithuanian with English subtitles

This riveting documentary chronicles the incredible-but-true story of Aurimas Valujavičius, who embarked on one of the greatest challenges of his (or anyone's) life: an 8500 kilometer solo journey across the Atlantic in his specially adapted rowboat "Lituanica." An immersive film, it captures all of Aurimas's loneliness and euphoria, pain and joy, anxiety and hope as he traverses the mighty, fearsome Atlantic Ocean. His watery travels will take him from continental Europe to North America, where he intends to arrive on the shores of Miami, Florida. After two years of intensive preparation, he starts his journey early on Christmas morning. Astonishing.

Poland

November 18 (Monday)

8:40 pm

**Scarborn**

Kos

Poland 2023

Paweł Maślona

120 min. DCP

In Polish with English subtitles

Spring 1794: General Tadeusz Kosciuszko (Jacek Braciak, *Leave No Traces*, EUFF 2023) returns to Poland to plan an uprising against the occupying Russians. "Kos" is being tracked by merciless Russian cavalry captain Dunin (Robert Wieckiewicz, *In Darkness*), who wants to capture the general before he sparks a national revolt. Meanwhile Ignac (Bartosz Bielenia, *Corpus Christi*), illegitimate son of a nobleman, dreams of inheriting his father's estate. When his father dies, Ignac's half-brother refuses to fulfill their father's wishes; Ignac steals the will and has two days to present it to the court to prove his noble title. During his escape, however, he encounters Kosciuszko and soon must choose between his dreams of nobility and joining in the fight for a greater cause. A captivating historical drama, *Scarborn* triumphed at the 2024 Polish Film Awards, winning six awards including Best Directing, Screenplay, and Sound.

"[*Scarborn's*] iconoclasm suggests the [late] works of Tarantino... tonally dark period films that use the clichés of genre and exploitation films to explore the representation of divisive moments in history."

Darragh O'Donoghue, *Cineaste*

Greece

November 19 (Tuesday)

7:00 pm

**Dodo**

Greece/France/Belgium 2022

Panos H. Koutras

132 min. DCP

In Greek with English subtitles

"An enjoyably chaotic farce."Allan Hunter, *Screen International*

In their luxurious villa near Athens, Mariella (Smaragda Karydi) and Pavlos (Akis Sakellariou), a couple on the brink of financial ruin, are about to celebrate the long-awaited wedding of their daughter Sofia (Natasa Exintaveloni) to a wealthy heir. Then, an unusual development: a dodo appears at the villa and exerts a strange influence on everyone involved. Wedding preparations are disrupted, to say the least, and the line between sanity and madness begins to fray. An absurdist film influenced by the work of Yorgos Lanthimos and other members of the "Greek Weird Wave," *Dodo* is independent writer-director Panos H. Koutras's fifth feature. The film had its world premiere in Cannes's Premiere section in 2022 on the way to earning 15 Hellenic Film Academy Award nominations—including Best Picture—and winning one, for the dodo (by way of the Special Effects category)!

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Croatia

November 20 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm



A Blue Flower

Plavi cvijet

Croatia/Serbia 2021

Zrinko Ogresta

85 min. DCP

In Croatian with English subtitles

Mirjana (Vanja Čirić) is showing signs that she's having a midlife crisis. She's stuck in both a largely unrewarding job and an ongoing affair with her married boss. Divorced, she also has a challenging, contentious relationship with her daughter, and, on the horizon, Mirjana is also dreading a visit from her emotionally distant mother. All this, plus her 20-year work anniversary celebration is approaching, an anniversary she never wanted to reach. Pondering her past, present, and possible futures, Mirjana is ready to do something. But what? Based on *A play about Mirjana and those around her* by award-winning playwright Ivor Martinić, *A Blue Flower* is a revealing exploration of the relationships between three generations of women. It won Best Film, Lead Actress, and Director awards at the Pula Film Festival in Croatia.

"Delicate ... Ogresta's precise approach leaves no room for error: every frame is composed, shot, and cut at exactly the right place."

Marko Stojiljković, *Cineuropa*

Germany

November 20 (Wednesday)

8:30 pm



A Million Minutes

Eine Million Minuten

Germany 2024

Christopher Doll

125 min. DCP

In German with English subtitles

"Sensitively acted ... This bestseller adaptation works, if only because of [how] enjoyable it is to watch Herfurth and Schilling interact."

Andreas Köhnemann, *Kino-Zeit*

Vera and Wolf Küper live in Berlin with their five-year-old daughter Nina and one-year-old son Simon. Vera (Karoline Herfurth, *Passion*) takes care of the household and has a part-time job, while Wolf (Tom Schilling, *Never Look Away*) works as an advisor to the UN, trying to raise awareness about the global climate crisis. This stressful, not exactly family-friendly schedule puts increasing strain on the Küpers. When Nina is diagnosed with a fine motor and coordination disorder, the family is suddenly shaken from its routine. Bravely deciding to change their lives, Vera and Wolf embark on an exploration of the planet to show their children—and themselves—why life is worth living. This directorial debut from longtime producer Christopher Doll is a touching, amusing, profound, and unforgettable journey.

Malta

November 21 (Thursday)

6:30 pm



Cats of Malta

Malta 2023

Sarah Jayne

68 min. DCP

In English

This documentary offers a fascinating, diverting portrait of the famous stray cats who live on the sunny island of Malta. Sarah Jayne's winning blend of candid interviews with local cat feeders, artists, and volunteers shows the care that surrounds the local feline population. The scope of the film is wide, as the camera journeys through colourful cat colonies, cat cafes, and special cat parks and streets that have come to help define the island. More than just a film about cats, it's also about the power of community and the peculiar strength found within the human-cat connection, as well as its curious effects on Maltese life and culture. Amusing, entertaining, and, yes, very, very cute.

"Wants to do for Malta what *Kedi* did for Istanbul ... The film is soft, fuzzy, and purr-inducing."

Leslie Felperin, *The Guardian*

Sweden

November 21 (Thursday)

8:10 pm



Hilma

Sweden 2022
Lasse Hallström
120 min. DCP
In English

“Hallström mostly strikes a nice balance between approachability and mystique, between the definitive and the abstract, getting a huge amount of help from his daughter Tora’s open and warm performance in her first leading role.”

Tomris Laffly, *Variety*

Renowned director Lasse Hallström (*My Life as a Dog*, *Chocolat*) tells the extraordinary life story of Hilma af Klint, a Swedish artist who can now be seen as a revolutionary modernist—one of the first purely abstract painters—but who went largely unrecognized in her lifetime. This handsome biographical drama (starring Tora Hallström and Lena Olin as Hilma, in youth then maturity) follows the artist from her early life through her rising artistic career, with special attention given to her interest in spiritualism after the loss of her beloved younger sister. *Hilma* also explores af Klint’s love life and the philosophical impetus behind her work. In life and art, Hilma af Klint was indeed a woman well ahead of her time.

Romania

November 22 (Friday)

6:30 pm



Freedom

Libertate

Romania/Hungary 2023
Tudor Giurgiu
109 min. DCP

In Romanian with English subtitles

Tudor Giurgiu’s powerful historical drama is set in the provincial town of Sibiu, Romania, during the 1989 revolution. The story unfolds in a world emerging from a dictator’s iron grip. As news of President Nicolae Ceaușescu’s fall filters in from Bucharest, shots ring out in the town; distinguishing between old enemies and friends is now a potentially life-threatening challenge. In a desperate attempt to escape the chaos, police captain Viorel (Alex Calangiu) and his fellow officers are captured by the army and thrown in the makeshift prison of an empty swimming pool. In their fight for survival, who’s really in charge? Giurgiu’s film masterfully captures an atmosphere of pervasive paranoia and delivers an intense collective drama that poses the question: who will emerge victorious in this historic duel that appears to have no rules?

“Giurgiu paints a realistic picture of revolutionary chaos and turmoil, questions the established narratives and, most importantly, makes a thrilling film.”

Marko Stojiljković, *Cineuropa*

Estonia

November 22 (Friday)

8:50 pm



The Invisible Fight

Nähtamatu võitlus

Estonia/Greece/Latvia/Finland 2023
Rainer Sarnet
115 min. DCP

In Estonian with English subtitles

“[In] Sarnet’s goofy riff on *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin*, the film’s heart is in the sincere moments ... Here, balancing vodka shots on your toes is easy—what’s hard is the daily practice of sacrifice and love.”

Amy Nicholson, *The New York Times*

After the Soviet soldier Rafael (Ursel Tilk) is the only survivor of a Cold War kung fu assassin attack along the China-USSR border, he has an epiphany: he must also become a kung fu warrior! His search for martial arts mentorship leads him to the most unlikely of places: an Eastern Orthodox monastery, where black-clad monks will train him. Struggling against a rival monk, and joined by a budding love interest, Rafael embarks on a long, winding, utterly zany journey. *The Invisible Fight*, the long-awaited follow-up to director Rainer Sarnet’s freak-folk breakout *November* (2017), is the strangest fun you will have in a cinema this year!

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Ireland November 23 (Saturday) 6:30 pm	Slovenia November 23 (Saturday) 8:40 pm	Luxembourg November 24 (Sunday) 4:00 pm
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Verdigris

Ireland 2023
Patricia Kelly
95 min. DCP
In English

Writer-director Patricia Kelly's debut feature revolves around an unlikely friendship between two very different women. Recently retired and rather lonely, middle-aged Marian (Geraldine McAlinden) takes a temporary job as a census enumerator. While out collecting information, she meets a feisty teenager named Jewel (Maya O'Shea) who has been living as a sex worker after being abandoned by her mother. Gradually, they develop an unlikely bond, as both are outsiders in their different ways. With this unexpected ally at her side, Marian soon realizes she can forge a new and empowering future, maybe for both of them. Witty and endearing, *Verdigris* was winner of Best Independent Film at the 2023 Galway Film Fleadh.

"Deeply humane... Lovely performances from Geraldine McAlinden, as an unsatisfied middle-aged lady, and Maya O'Shea, as the dogged older teenager she befriends."

Donald Clarke, *The Irish Times*



Family Therapy

Slovenia/Italy/Norway/Croatia/Serbia 2024
Sonja Prosenc
122 min. DCP
In Slovene, French, and English with English subtitles

"A fantastic, hilarious play on the premise of Pasolini's *Teorema* ... The film features wonderful performances, especially from Marko Mandic as the patriarch and Aliocha Schneider as the young interloper."

Jason Gutierrez, *Tribeca Festival 2024*

Family Therapy is a sharp, satirical, and trenchant examination of a complacent, rather crass Slovenian nouveau riche family from talented writer-director Sonja Prosenc (*The Tree*, EUFF 2015). Happily ensconced in their luxurious glass home, the seemingly orderly and predictable lives of a family of three—father Aleksander, mother Olivia, and daughter Agata—are disrupted by the arrival of a young stranger. The stranger's presence soon causes the family to splinter into dysfunction as Olivia's overprotectiveness, Aleksander's escapist tendencies, and Agata's secrecy are unmasked. A sly, humorous reworking of Pier Paolo Pasolini's classic *Teorema*, Prosenc combines dark comedy with plenty of cinematic style in this incisive critique of contemporary society.



Icarus and the Minotaur

Icare
Luxembourg/France/Belgium 2022
Carlo Vogele
76 min. DCP
In English

Carlo Vogele got his start in the industry as a character animator for Pixar (*Toy Story 3*, *Brave*). For his first feature as a director, Vogele, having returned to his homebase in Europe, delivers an entertaining film that reimagines the myth of Icarus as the story of a daydreaming little boy. One day, young Icarus discovers and befriends Asterion, also known as the Minotaur. When Minos, the king of Crete, asks Daedalus, Icarus's father and a famous inventor, to work on a secret project that involves a dark labyrinth, Icarus realizes his new friend might be in grave danger. Can Icarus save the Minotaur and change the course of a fateful story written by the gods?

"Retells the origins of the legend with elegant, dreamy, and poetic animation."

Annecey Festival 2023

Denmark

November 24 (Sunday)

6:00 pm

**Hygge!**

Denmark/Iceland 2023

Dagur Kári

100 min. DCP

In Danish with English subtitles

“A funny skewering of conflict-shy Danes.”Alexander Barfred Bajer, *Filmmagasinet Ekko*

Hygge is a Danish term for the idea of creating joy and contentment in one's everyday life. This comedy from director Dagur Kári (*Nói albinói*) revolves around that concept in both humorous and revealing ways. When a group of seven friends gather for an extravagant dinner at a summer cottage, things start out harmoniously enough. For fun, they start a party game where everyone must share something from their phones, private or otherwise. Before too long, things spill out that threaten to ruin what they are there for, the most important thing of all: the “hygge.” Beneath the happy surface of this group of friends, time bombs of secrets and intrigues lurk, and, as the evening progresses, the picture-perfect facade cracks. Amusing and incisive, *Hygge!* offers still more evidence in favour of just turning those infernal mobile phones off.

Portugal

November 24 (Sunday)

8:20 pm

**Salgueiro Maia:
The Implicated**

Salgueiro Maia – O Implicado

Portugal 2022

Sérgio Graciano

115 min. DCP

In Portuguese with English subtitles

A key figure in 20th-century Portuguese history, Salgueiro Maia was an army captain who commanded military actions during the tumultuous period that saw the overthrow of the Salazar regime in April 1974, in what came to be called the Carnation Revolution. This powerful biographical drama tells the story of Maia's coming of age as a young man who proudly enlisted in the military, only to then realize that he must battle the systemic injustices of his nation's military and political elites. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution. *The Implicated* is an inspiring chronicle of one of that revolutionary moment's national heroes.

“Simple and effective... Maia is seen, simultaneously, as a hero and an anti-hero, the one who faced, eye to eye, the weapons of the dictatorship, and the one who was left behind by the country he saved.”

Manuel Halpern, *Visão*

Austria

November 25 (Monday)

6:30 pm

**Mermaids Don't Cry**

Austria 2022

Franziska Pflaum

92 min. DCP

In German with English subtitles

“Dazzling... Pflaum creates characters that are recognizable as comedic archetypes without being stereotypical.”

Bianca Jasmina Rauch, *Kino-Zeit*

This fanciful, imaginative comedy revolves around Annika (Stefanie Reinsperger), a supermarket worker who dreams of the perfect synthetic mermaid fin. She's convinced that finding that fin will bring glamour into her drab life. But as if her job isn't bad enough, one day her father appears at her door asking to move in. Her friend Karo is engrossed in her latest romantic affair and asks Annika to look after her two children. And after hooking up with Marc, she learns that he too doesn't have an apartment of his own. To make matters worse, staff cutbacks are coming at the supermarket. But none of this matters: Annika just has to have that fin! But how will she ever get it? Offbeat fun!

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

The Cinematheque

Images from top to bottom: Eureka; The Stranger and the Fog, 1974; The Road Forward, 2017; Floating Weeds, 1959.

3 JLG Forever 6:30 pm La Chinoise New Restoration 8:30 pm The Straight Story	4 New Canadian Cinema 6:30 pm Matt and Mara JLG Forever 8:20 pm Passion	5 New Cinema 7:00 pm Eureka	6 Our Stories to Tell 7:00 pm Teachings for the noke', wahkohtowin, and ts'iyanne	7 Chris Welsby 7:00 pm Transmissions from the Natural World	1 New Restoration 6:00 pm The Straight Story New Cinema 8:20 pm Eureka	2 New Canadian Cinema 6:30 pm Anne at 13,000 ft 8:15 pm Matt and Mara
10 New Canadian Cinema 6:30 pm Matt and Mara New Restoration 8:20 pm The Straight Story	11 New Restoration 4:00 pm The Straight Story JLG Forever 6:30 pm La Chinoise New Cinema 8:30 pm Eureka	12 	13 Frames of Mind 7:00 pm The Stimming Pool	14 EU Film Festival Hungary 7:00 pm Some Birds	8 New Restoration 6:30 pm The Straight Story New Canadian Cinema 8:50 pm Matt and Mara	9 JLG Forever 6:30 pm Passion 8:30 pm La Chinoise
17 Film Club 10:30 am Frédéric Back 100 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm My Dad Is a Sausage 8:20 pm Fathers & Sons	18 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Rowing Across the Atlantic 8:40 pm Scarborn	19 EU Film Festival 7:00 pm Dodo	20 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm A Blue Flower 8:30 pm A Million Minutes	21 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Cats of Malta 8:10 pm Hilma	22 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Freedom 8:50 pm The Invisible Fight	23 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Verdigris 8:40 pm Family Therapy
24 EU Film Festival 4:00 pm Icarus and the Minotaur 6:00 pm Hygge! 8:20 pm Salgueiro Maia: The Implicated	25 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Mermaids Don't Cry 8:30 pm A Postcard from Rome	26 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Because I Love Bad Weather 8:40 pm #annaismissing	27 EU Film Festival 6:30 pm Never Say Never 8:45 pm .dog	28 EU Film Festival 7:00 pm The Hardest Hour	29 New Restoration 6:30 pm Toute une nuit New Cinema 8:30 pm Samsara	30 New Restorations 6:30 pm Far from Home 8:30 pm The Stranger and the Fog
December						

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

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Saturday

1	New Restorations 6:00 pm The Stranger and the Fog 8:50 pm Toute une nuit	2	JLG Forever 6:30 pm Every Man for Himself  8:30 pm Weekend 	3		4	New Restoration 7:00 pm The Stranger and the Fog	5	PELAN Presents 7:00 pm Alborz, We Climb Mountains 	6	New Restorations 6:30 pm Far from Home 8:30 pm The Stranger and the Fog	7	JLG Forever 6:30 pm Weekend  8:45 pm Every Man for Himself 
8	New Cinema 6:00 pm Samsara New Restoration 8:30 pm Far from Home	9	New Restoration 6:30 pm Toute une nuit Dorsky & Hiller 8:30 pm Bagatelle I & II + Hours for Jerome	10		11	Our Stories to Tell 7:00 pm The Road Forward 	12	Ozu 121 Opening Night 6:30 pm Record of a Tenement Gentleman 8:20 pm Late Spring	13	JLG Forever 6:30 pm Every Man for Himself  Ozu 121 8:30 pm A Hen in the Wind	14	Ozu 121 6:30 pm Late Spring 8:50 pm The Munekata Sisters
15	Film Club 10:30 am Little Women  Ozu 121 6:00 pm Tokyo Story  JLG Forever 8:45 pm Weekend 	16	Dorsky & Hiller 6:30 pm In the Stone House + 17 Reasons Why + Song and Solitude Ozu 121 8:15 pm Record of a Tenement Gentleman	17	Ozu 121 6:30 pm A Hen in the Wind 8:20 pm Early Spring	18	Frames of Mind 6:30 pm Great Absence 	19	Essential Big Screen 6:30 pm Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors 8:40 pm Army of Shadows	20	Ozu 121 6:30 pm Good Morning Essential Big Screen 8:30 pm Mon oncle 	21	Essential Big Screen 3:30 pm Thelma & Louise  6:30 pm The Umbrellas of Cherbourg  8:30 pm Phantom Thread 
22	Ozu 121 3:00 pm Early Spring 6:00 pm The Munekata Sisters Essential Big Screen 8:30 pm 3 Women 	23	Essential Big Screen 3:30 pm Army of Shadows 6:30 pm Three Wishes for Cinderella Ozu 121 8:30 pm Equinox Flower	24		25		26	Essential Big Screen 3:00 pm Phantom Thread  Ozu 121 6:00 pm Tokyo Story  8:45 pm Good Morning	27	Essential Big Screen 4:00 pm The Umbrellas of Cherbourg  6:00 pm Thelma & Louise  8:40 pm Three Wishes for Cinderella	28	Essential Big Screen 3:30 pm Mon oncle  6:30 pm 3 Women  9:00 pm Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors
29	Ozu 121 4:00 pm Good Morning 6:00 pm Equinox Flower 8:30 pm Late Spring	30	Ozu 121 3:00 pm Tokyo Story  Essential Big Screen 6:00 pm Phantom Thread  8:40 pm The Umbrellas of Cherbourg 	31		1		2	Ozu 121 6:30 pm Floating Weeds Essential Big Screen 9:00 pm Thelma & Louise 	3	Essential Big Screen 6:30 pm Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors 8:30 pm 3 Women 	4	Ozu 121 6:30 pm The End of Summer  Essential Big Screen 8:40 pm Army of Shadows
5	Essential Big Screen 6:30 pm Three Wishes for Cinderella 8:20 pm Mon oncle 	6	Ozu 121 6:30 pm The End of Summer  8:40 pm Floating Weeds					 Scan the QR code to see our calendar online, read more about the films, and purchase tickets.					

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Latvia

November 25 (Monday)

8:30 pm



A Postcard from Rome

Pastkarte no Romas

Latvia 2024

Elza Gauja

88 min. DCP

In Latvian and Italian with English subtitles

In this gentle love story, longtime postal workers and loving couple Ernests and Alvine have figured out how to take advantage of a lottery scheme to fulfill their lifelong dream of travelling to Rome. They excitedly embark on their international holiday, however it becomes painfully apparent to Ernests that his beloved Alvine's Alzheimer's condition is rapidly worsening—an unfortunate reality that neither of them is ready to face. The couple's decades-long devotion to each other will soon be put to the test on the streets of the Eternal City. This sensitive, moving cinematic gem was named Best Feature at the Latvian National Film Awards earlier this year.

"A funny and tender drama... Gauja handles her film's heavy subject matter with a light touch, focusing on the conspiratorial banter and bickering of the central couple, whose relationship is defined by decades-long devotion."

Sydney Film Festival 2024

Bulgaria

November 26 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm



Because I Love Bad Weather

Защото обичам лошото време

Bulgaria 2024

Yana Lekarska

100 min. DCP

In Bulgarian with English subtitles

"A breath of fresh air... The chemistry between Neda Spasova and Vladimir Mihailov is undeniable... An enviable achievement."

Anita Dimitrova, *Now / Cera*

One spring day, Irina (Neda Spasova) decides to escape the complicated tensions of her life by returning to the seaside town where she used to spend idyllic summer holidays as a child. To her surprise, once there she meets Boris (Vladimir Mihailov), a childhood friend she hasn't seen in 20 years. Now adults, the two of them will rediscover the secrets of their shared past, a past that may well change the course of their futures. An absorbing tale of friendship, time passing, and second chances, writer-director Yana Lekarska's debut feature film premiered earlier this year in competition at the Sofia International Film Festival, where it captured the audience award.

Czech Republic

November 26 (Tuesday)

8:40 pm



#annaismissing

Czech Republic/Slovakia 2023

Pavel Soukup

108 min. DCP

In Czech with English subtitles

Anna (Viktorie Vítová) is a popular Czech influencer best known for her provocative online content. Without warning or explanation, she suddenly and mysteriously goes silent on her social media profiles. Totally silent. When 15-year-old Nina (Alexandra Vostrejzová) finds a half-naked photo of Anna on her father's phone, she decides to track down the missing influencer by any means necessary. What happened to Anna, and are Nina's parents involved? The shocking events that follow will change not only Nina's life but also her family's.

"A fast-paced procedural... Stands out as a dynamic, plot-driven, young-adult thriller."

Martin Kudláč, *Cineuropa*

Slovakia

November 27 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm

**Never Say Never**

Nikdy neříkej nikdy

Slovakia/Czech Republic 2023

Braňo Mišík

104 min. DCP

In Slovak and Czech with English subtitles

**“One of the top Slovak films of 2023...
[Part of] a vibrant national cinema scene.”**

Martin Kudláč, *Cineuropa*

This engaging romantic comedy revolves around Nadia (Tereza Kostková) and Peter (Tomáš Mašťalir, *The Line*, EUFF 2017), whose paths accidentally cross—by way of a chance car collision—while both are struggling in failing marriages. Peter’s marriage has cooled due to his wife Lenka’s lengthy work missions in Africa, while Nadia’s husband Viktor has found a new love. Nadia, a teacher who also leads yoga classes, volunteers to help Peter, who’s grappling with health issues that yoga might improve. As their connection deepens, their children and ex-partners begin to complicate an already complex situation. This will set the stage for a chaotic journey for both them and their loved ones.

Cyprus

November 27 (Wednesday)

8:45 pm

**.dog**

Cyprus/Greece 2021

Yianna Americanou

97 min. DCP

In Greek with English subtitles

Young Dimitris (Dimitris Kitsos), on the verge of manhood but in many ways still a child, has always romanticized his absent father. When his father is released from prison, Dimitris’s dream of happiness is more intense than ever, but the reality of the reunion will turn out to be much different from his expectations. When the two reunite, their relationship is anything but healthy. Behind his father’s ideas about how to connect with his son is a plot that verges on exploitation, as Dimitris is involved in some very dodgy and dubious activities on the Turkish side of Nicosia. Trapped between an unreliable, suspicious father and a family that says they want to adopt him, Dimitris faces a profound and difficult dilemma. What will he choose?

Best Cypriot Film

Cyprus Film Days 2022

Ukraine

November 28 (Thursday)

7:00 pm

**The Hardest Hour**

Довга доба

Ukraine 2024

Alan Badoev

122 min. DCP

In Ukrainian with English subtitles

The EUFF continues to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and their fight for self-determination. That struggle is chronicled in *The Hardest Hour*, a documentary consisting entirely of cellphone footage taken by Ukrainians on the ground. Culled from 200 hours of video recordings—of Ukrainians before and during wartime—the film is a collective testament to a nation’s courage and resilience. “Listen to the voices of Ukrainians ... We have put them together for you in a time capsule. While watching this film, remember this is exactly what the battle for life, for freedom, for the future looks like. The war goes on, and so does our hardest hour” (director Alan Badoev).

Proceeds from this screening will benefit the Ukraine Harmony Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about Ukraine both in Canada and globally.

Seven Reasons Why

Hours for Jerome, Nathaniel Dorsky, 1982

Nathaniel Dorsky and Jerome Hiler

“A body of work not stinting in passionate grace.”

Warren Sonbert, filmmaker
(*Carriage Trade*, *Friendly Witness*)

The work of San Francisco-based filmmakers Nathaniel Dorsky and Jerome Hiler is inextricably bound up in their lives. The two met after a screening of Dorsky's first film, *Ingreen* (1964), after which Hiler, a painter with a longtime interest in film, made his first single-reel work as a gift to Dorsky. For many years, films by both artists, soon to be partners in art and life, could be understood as an ongoing exchange of intimate gifts: screened in private, or at home for friends and neighbours, and never fixed in place.

Untitled and open to evolution, each silent Bolex-shot reel—of greenery, home life, and city symphony abstraction—could find itself in a new alternating order each screening. The immediacy of avant-garde inspiration and the long, patient study of editing with no preconceived outcome meant that Dorsky and Hiler, each of them carrying a streak of autodidacticism, would only settle once they found a film language they could call their own.

Rigorous with each others' work, the two filmmakers didn't arrive at a satisfying form for over a decade. Dorsky's longest and arguably greatest film, *Hours for Jerome*, made of footage shot beginning in 1966, was not completed until 1982. It was a breakthrough for Dorsky, one that came together on the other side of a long depression. “I was almost afraid of the footage,” he later wrote, “because it seemed that it came from the simplicity of my heart, from a simple attempt to show very sincere things.” Hiler's films would enter circulation for public screenings even later, the large part of his work emerging in the 2010s.

The filtered, coloured light and compressed formal significance of stained glass is emblematic of Hiler; the vigorous Kodachrome glow applied to natural life is Dorsky's signature. But the two are not overly precious about what they've captured. The beauty of their work is contained by a formal system of complex yet intuitive order. The films in this program create associational links between what Dorsky terms “grandparent shots” (that is, not shots that are back-to-back, but at a remove of one or more). Films like *Hours for Jerome* reward attentive viewing by creating film-specific variations on the idea of slant rhyme, which summon the kind of half-memory or surge of emotion that inspired the works in the first place.

Dorsky's work was last exhibited at The Cinematheque in a program in 2010. Hiler's films have never before screened in Vancouver. We are excited to offer a rare opportunity to see these 16mm films, which will be projected, as intended, at the silent speed of 18 frames per second.

Acknowledgements to Jonathan Marlow, PARACME, whose curation of Dorsky and Hiler's films at NWFF earlier this year inspired the selections in this program. Thanks also to Brett Kashmere, Canyon Cinema, and Ron Lacheur, VIFF, for making this program possible.

December 9 & 16

December 9 (Monday)

8:30 pm



Dorsky & Hiler: Program One

Program runtime: 74 min.

"Hours for Jerome is simply the most beautifully photographed film that I've ever seen... After exposure to such dense filmic possibilities pretty much the rest of casual moviegoing resounds as hopelessly poverty-stricken."

Warren Sonbert

Hours for Jerome, likely Nathaniel Dorsky's best-known yet too rarely-seen work, screens as the centrepiece of this first of two nights of analogue film by Dorsky and his creative partner Jerome Hiler. The title refers to the "book of hours," a common medieval devotional text. While Dorsky has stated that this isn't where the true meaning of the film lies—that would be its polyvalent editing technique, which reaches full flower here—the overwhelming richness of *Hours* is rooted in a time of transformation in Dorsky and Hiler's life together, a natural flow of suspended moments captured in luminous Kodachrome. Tender beauty and meticulous, deliberately patterned structure operate in concert at every stage of the film's four-seasons sequence. As Dorsky puts it, "I wanted to have my cake and eat it too, and I think I did." Hiler's enthralling *Bagatelle* diptych, the second of which contains images spanning five decades of his work as a film artist, bookends the program.

Bagatelle I
USA 2016
Jerome Hiler
16 min. 16mm

Hours for Jerome I & II
USA 1982
Nathaniel Dorsky
42 min. 16mm

Bagatelle II
USA 2016
Jerome Hiler
16 min. 16mm

December 16 (Monday)

6:30 pm



Dorsky & Hiler: Program Two

Program runtime: 75 min.

The formal parameters of silent-speed poetic cinema, for Nathaniel Dorsky and Jerome Hiler, often have less to do with personality and more to do with the actual camera mechanism. This principle is on display in three works, each employing a starkly different method to arrive at the astonishing beauty found across their respective films. Black leader separates the painterly shots of *In the Stone House*, Hiler's retrospective accumulation of layered in-camera superimpositions, filmed in the late '60s and edited to completion in 2012. Dorsky's dazzling *17 Reasons Why* is the product of consumer-grade Regular 8 printed unsplit onto 16mm, creating a grid of four moving images. As Dorsky recommends, our eyes can "bounce, ricochet, investigate, and compare" across the film's magical, rhythmic variation. *Song and Solitude* shows Dorsky working with shadow and underexposure, in the process revealing some of the most intensely captivating images in all his work.

"Breathtaking... In the Stone House is a work of many tiny miracles."
Maximilien Luc Proctor, *Ultra Dogme*

In the Stone House
USA 2012
Jerome Hiler
35 min. 16mm

17 Reasons Why
USA 1987
Nathaniel Dorsky
19 min. 16mm

Song and Solitude
USA 2006
Nathaniel Dorsky
21 min. 16mm



Ozu 121

December 12 –January 6

In 2023, retrospectives marking the 120th anniversary of Japanese director Ozu Yasujiro's birth—and the 60th anniversary of his death—were held at film institutes across the globe. The Cinematheque, with the exception of commemorative screenings of *An Autumn Afternoon* (1962), his exquisite farewell film, didn't partake in the milestone celebration—though the pangs of ensuing regret foretold the inevitability of an Ozu series here soon.

The delay, in a roundabout way, paid off. Earlier this year, Hasumi Shiguéhiko's 1983 monograph *Directed by Yasujiro Ozu*, routinely praised as one of the seminal Japanese texts on cinema, was at long last published in English, reframing a scholarship on Ozu in the West that has, in large part, been dominated by Anglo critics and a whiff of Orientalism. (Yoshida Kiju's *Ozu's Anti-Cinema* being a notable exception.) Reigning Japanese auteur Hamaguchi Ryusuke (*Drive My Car*) has enthused that the book is a veritable Ozu-esque work unto itself, and should be greeted with greater urgency than the digital remastering of the director's oeuvre. It's not hyperbole: the departure in Hasumi's line of thought from the default reading of Ozu as a minimalist—as an artist of austerity, stillness, and subtraction—is as radical as it is, upon reflection, obvious. Ozu, he argues, is “dogged by rhetoric framed in negative,” by discourse preoccupied with what the director *doesn't* do (camera movement or conventional spatial continuity, for instance). What Hasumi wants to liberate is an Ozu of abundance, whose formal and thematic (and thoroughly modernist) designs yield a cinema overflowing with variation, motion, and incongruity. It is excess, not absence, that defines Ozu.

“Ozu 121” invites you to experience Ozu anew. Our last major Ozu retrospective occurred in 2013, occasioned by his 110th anniversary and featuring 35mm distribution prints, some worse for wear. This 2024 series, which likewise commences on December 12 (Ozu's birth and death date), takes its curatorial cues from Hasumi's newly translated book and a string of high-profile restorations—both of which focus on the auteur's postwar period. In addition to pantheonic works like *Late Spring* (1949) and *Tokyo Story* (1953), this collection of ten Ozu pictures includes his ravishing colour debut *Equinox Flower* (1958), his charming suburban satire *Good Morning* (1959), a 35mm presentation of his penultimate film *The End of Summer* (1961), and alleged outliers undergoing reappraisal, such as the savage melodrama *A Hen in the Wind* (1948), which productively problematize the uniformity of an Ozu style.

“Ozu 121” is generously supported by The Japan Foundation, Toronto



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“One of the great artists of the 20th century in any medium and any country.”

British Film Institute

December 12 (Thursday) **Opening Night**
December 16 (Monday)

6:30 pm
8:15 pm



Record of a Tenement Gentleman

長屋紳士録

Japan 1947
Ozu Yasujiro
72 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Ozu in optimistic mode, which is not to say that loss and resignation don’t figure in large part (no filmmaker has ever had a surer grasp of the melancholy of everyday things), just that here the generosity of spirit seems irresistible—and irresistibly comic.”

Tom Charity, *Time Out*

Bittersweet, comedic, and fable-like, *Record of a Tenement Gentleman* is Ozu’s first postwar picture and his final collaboration with screenwriter Ikeda Tadao. A boy found wandering the streets of bombed-out Tokyo is foisted upon Otane (Iida Choko), a cantankerous aging widow with an aversion to children. She gradually grows to love the stoic waif—lice and bed wetting notwithstanding. In master Ozu’s sure hands, this seemingly sentimental story idea is given a decidedly unsentimental and often humorous treatment. Ozu mainstay Ryu Chishu is memorable as the singing fortune teller who sets the tale in motion. The film marked Ozu’s return to studio filmmaking after being conscripted to shoot propaganda in Singapore during WWII. (What footage was shot, Ozu burned.) Its light comic touch belies a starkly contemporaneous portrait of an impoverished but humanity-clinging community trying to rebuild itself with the nation. This gorgeous new restoration premiered at Cannes Classics in 2023.

The December 12 screening will include “Ozu 121” opening-night remarks by The Cinematheque’s Artistic Director Shaun Inouye.

December 12 (Thursday) **Opening Night**
December 14 (Saturday)
December 29 (Sunday)

8:20 pm
6:30 pm
8:30 pm



Late Spring

晩春

Japan 1949
Ozu Yasujiro
108 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Late Spring is one of Ozu’s finest achievements and a personal favourite of the director. Ryu Chishu portrays a widowed father worried that his adult daughter (Hara Setsuko, in her first of six collaborations with Ozu) is spurning marriage in order to continue keeping him company. Determined that she should leave the nest and have a life of her own, he lets on that he is planning to remarry, something he has absolutely no intention of doing. *Late Spring* is generally cited as Ozu’s first late-period masterpiece; it topped the *Kinema Junpo* poll as the best Japanese film of 1949. It also marked Ozu’s first collaboration in 14 years with screenwriter Noda Kogo, who would go on to co-write all his subsequent films. Japanese critic Hasumi Shiguéhiko, determined to dispel clichés of the director as a play-it-safe traditionalist, argues the film deals unequivocally in matters of sex—and taboo desires of the Oedipal variety.

“The most beautiful Ozu movie I know.”

Roger Greenspun, *The New York Times*

“If there was something like a sacred treasure of the cinema, then for me that would have to be the work of Ozu Yasujiro.”

Wim Wenders

December 13 (Friday)
December 17 (Tuesday)

8:30 pm
6:30 pm

December 14 (Saturday)
December 22 (Sunday)

8:50 pm
6:00 pm



A Hen in the Wind

風の中の牝鶏

Japan 1948
Ozu Yasujiro
84 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“A pointed moral indictment of Japan’s postwar society, this is also one of Ozu’s most emotionally charged movies.”

Reece Pendleton, *Chicago Reader*

Tanaka Kinuyo, star of many a Mizoguchi masterpiece, was an Ozu favourite as well. (She was also a gifted filmmaker in her own right, demonstrated in our 2022 retrospective.) Tanaka is commanding in this poignant postwar melodrama, which visits Mizoguchi territory with its tale of female suffering and sex work. While awaiting the demobilization of her soldier husband, a young woman is forced to spend one night as a brothel worker in order to pay the medical expenses for their ailing son. When her husband finally returns, she confesses her indiscretion and must deal with his outrage, culminating in a shocking act of domestic violence that ruptures the placidity of the Ozu brand. Dismissed as a minor work—owing, one presumes, to its irreconcilable deviations and Ozu’s own misgivings about the film—*A Hen in the Wind* reveals a crucial, darker shade of the great director, made all the more discernable in this 2022 restoration.



The Munekata Sisters

宗方姉妹

Japan 1950
Ozu Yasujiro
112 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

Ozu’s first film produced outside of Shochiku is this rarely screened gem of a shoshimin-eiga (middle-class drama) about two sisters on opposite sides of the generational divide. Setsuko (Tanaka Kinuyo), the elder sibling, is a traditional, kimono-clad wife to an abusive husband. Her sister Mariko (Naruse muse Takamine Hideko) is a free-spirited, western-attired twentysomething, hip to the latest trends and hostile to the idea of marriage. When Setsuko’s old flame reappears, Mariko makes a play at reuniting the former sweethearts. The sisters’ ailing father (Ryu Chishu), meanwhile, resigns himself to his approaching fate. Made at Shintoho and adapted from a serialized novel (both firsts for Ozu), *The Munekata Sisters* has been uncharacteristically overlooked in the West, a casualty, critic Hasumi Shiguéhiko would suggest, of its Ozu “impurities”—dolly shots, surges of violence, a more melodramatic register. This 2023 restoration serves to counteract that reductive assessment.

“A central work in this disassembly [of the traditional Japanese family]... Ozu was trying to show how a couple can be violent, something you never saw in movies in those days.”

Kurosawa Kiyoshi (*Cure*)

“Sooner or later, everyone who loves movies comes to Ozu... When you see his films, you feel in the arms of a serenely confident and caring master.”

Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*

December 15 (Sunday) 6:00 pm
December 26 (Thursday) 6:00 pm
December 30 (Monday) 3:00 pm



Tokyo Story PG

東京物語

Japan 1953
Ozu Yasujiro
137 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“One of the cinema’s most profound and moving studies of married love, aging, and the relations between parents and children. It is flawless and rewards numerous viewings.”

Philip French, *The Observer*

“One of the manifest miracles of the cinema” (Penelope Gilliatt, *The New Yorker*), *Tokyo Story* is usually cited as Ozu’s supreme masterpiece, and is widely considered one of the greatest films ever made. (In the most recent edition of *Sight and Sound*’s decennial poll, it ranked fourth.) A melancholic tale of generational conflict, told in the consummate Ozu style, the film concerns an aging couple (Ryu Chishu and Higashiyama Chieko) who journey to Tokyo to visit their married son and daughter, only to find that their presence seems to be an imposition on their rather insensitive and apparently too-busy offspring. Hara Setsuko is the couple’s widowed daughter-in-law, the sole family member devoting time and attention to them. Much has been made of the film’s expression of *mono no aware*—a Japanese idiom signifying a sad but serene resignation to life as it is—but critic Hasumi Shiguéhiko rejects this Western-espoused reading, arguing that it undermines the transformative tensions in Ozu’s cinema.

December 17 (Tuesday) 8:20 pm
December 22 (Sunday) 3:00 pm



Early Spring

早春

Japan 1956
Ozu Yasujiro
145 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

Ozu’s first-rate follow-up to 1953’s *Tokyo Story*, his acknowledged masterpiece, finds the director returning to a favourite milieu of his earlier, silent work: the workaday world of salaried office men. A discontented young white-collar worker, bored with his wife and his job, has a brief affair with a flirtatious coworker and imperils his marriage. “I wanted to show the life of a man with such a job—his happiness over graduation and finally becoming a member of society, his hopes for the future gradually dissolving, his realizing that, even though he has worked for years, he has accomplished nothing ... I wanted to bring out what you might call the pathos of such a life” (Ozu). The youth-focused picture, which eschews the generational discord found in much of the director’s late-period work, makes beguiling use of narrative ellipses and sparingly employed tracking shots. Its title is emblematic of budding adulthood.

“Impeccably acted... Ozu’s magnificent *Early Spring* seems utterly fresh and contemporary. This modest classic also conveys the claustrophobia of office life better than any other film I’ve seen.”

Nora Sayre, *The New York Times*

“Ozu is one of the greatest masters of world film... He is unrivalled in his capacity to show us our ordinary bliss and everyday tragedy.”

David Thomson, *The Guardian*

December 20 (Friday) 6:30 pm
December 26 (Thursday) 8:45 pm
December 29 (Sunday) 4:00 pm



Good Morning

お早よう

Japan 1959
Ozu Yasujiro
93 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“One of the most charming, eccentric, and fleet-footed of all Ozu’s works.”

Lloyd Hughes, *The Rough Guide to Film*

Ozu’s 50th film, and his second in colour, is a masterful comedy of manners about small talk and social niceties, set against 1950s suburbia and featuring flatulence as a major motif! Back in 1932, Ozu made a silent comedy, *I Was Born, But...*, in which two young boys stage a hunger strike in protest against adult phoniness. The delightful *Good Morning* reworks that premise with its tale of two pint-sized rebels who take a vow of silence after their father (Ryu Chishu) refuses to buy them a television. (TV, dad asserts, “will produce 100 million idiots.”) The boys’ refusal to engage in even the customary morning greeting—“ohayo”—soon sparks a neighbourhood quarrel. The fart gags, Ozu claimed, were to show that he hadn’t gotten all serious after recently winning two of Japan’s highest distinctions. The linear geometry of the director’s compositions have rarely been pushed to such hyperbolic extremes.

December 23 (Monday) 8:30 pm
December 29 (Sunday) 6:00 pm



Equinox Flower

彼岸花

Japan 1958
Ozu Yasujiro
118 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

A gorgeously rendered work of great formal precision, *Equinox Flower* is Ozu’s first film in colour, a demand made by Shochiku to accentuate the beauty of star Yamamoto Fujiko, on loan from rival studio Daiei. When a modern young woman (Arima Ineko) wishes to marry the man of her choice, her mother (Tanaka Kinuyo) understands, but her obstinate father (Saburi Shin) objects, primarily because she did not seek his permission before becoming engaged. Yamamoto plays the daughter’s wily friend, intent on outmaneuvering the patriarch. Ozu’s treatment of the generational conflict is characteristically even-handed, though he later confessed to being more sympathetic to the parents in this instance. Like the handful of other colour movies he made near the end of his career, the film displays Ozu’s particular fondness for the expressive qualities of reds. Hasumi Shiguéhiko finds the film exemplary of Ozu’s sartorial storytelling, where the act of changing clothes signals dynamic shifts in narrative.

“Uncharacteristically buoyant... [The father] is as charming a character as Ozu has ever given us... The performers are flawless.”

Vincent Canby, *The New York Times*

“It’s no longer controversial to assert that Ozu Yasujiro is one of the greatest filmmakers ever ...possibly the greatest of those who’ve focused on family life.”

Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*

January 2 (Thursday)
January 6 (Monday)

6:30 pm
8:40 pm



Floating Weeds

浮草

Japan 1959
Ozu Yasujiro
119 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“The most physically beautiful of all of Ozu’s pictures.”

Donald Richie, *Ozu*

Though Shochiku was Ozu’s home, he still managed to find rare opportunities to work at other studios. *Floating Weeds*, a colour remake of his silent picture *A Story of Floating Weeds*, was produced for Daiei Film and made exceptional use of its stable of talent, most notably Mizoguchi cinematographer Miyagawa Kazuo (*Ugetsu*) in his only collaboration with Ozu. The story, like its predecessor, concerns a travelling theatre troupe returning to a remote town to perform after several years. Its arrival sets the stage for an anxious reunion between the company’s aging lead actor (Nakamura Ganjiro) and his illegitimate adult son, who believes him to be his uncle. The film’s resplendent visual design was, in part, fueled by the director’s contrarian spirit: Ozu was allergic to the rising popularity of CinemaScope and its long take, long shot formula—“I wanted to have nothing to do with it”—so he intentionally shortened shots and increased close-ups.

January 4 (Saturday)
January 6 (Monday)

6:30 pm
6:30 pm



The End of Summer 6

小早川家の秋

Japan 1961
Ozu Yasujiro
103 min. 35mm

In Japanese with English subtitles

Imported 35mm Print

Ozu’s penultimate film, made at Toho and boasting many of that studio’s contract players, is a rich, ensemble family drama that follows a delicate trajectory from comedy to tragedy. Its plentiful cast of characters, each granted their own narrative stakes and romantic entanglements, revolves around the head of a family-operated sake brewery (Nakamura Ganjiro, of *Floating Weeds*). He is busy trying to marry off his widowed daughter-in-law (Hara Setsuko, in her final Ozu performance) while keeping his dalliance with an old mistress secret. When the sisterhood gets wind of their father’s impropriety, a heated quarrel portends an end to the aging, impish patriarch. Or does it? One of Ozu’s most lush and modulated efforts, *The End of Summer* is also among his most poignant—a film, as the title suggests, about conclusions, but not necessarily closure. Its tender staging of two sisters-in-law crouched in unison by the water’s edge is nothing short of sublime.

“The best, the most subtle, the most ambitious, and the most successful in achieving the blend of comic insight and tragic vision that informs this director’s cinema ... It has a quality of luminous intelligence exceptional even in a career for which such intelligence was generally the controlling point of view.”

Roger Greenspun, *The New York Times*

35mm print courtesy of The Japan Foundation

December 19 –January 5

Essential Big Screen



3 Women, Robert Altman, 1977

Our “Be Essential” fundraising campaign in August was a goal-exceeding success!

Among the perks for those who contributed (thank you!) was an invitation to suggest a film for our upcoming slate of programming. The deluge of recommendations we received was nothing short of inspired—and, in the case of Tim Y.’s pick (*Seven Samurai*), already en route to our screen! For this year’s edition of “Essential Big Screen,” we have plucked four titles from the patrons’ pool to feature prominently in our annual year-end program. Kudos to Michael M. and Colby P. (*Phantom Thread*), Kyle R. (*Army of Shadows*), Heather K. (*Thelma & Louise*), and James N. (*Mon oncle*) for making our jobs that much easier. Rounding out the series are repertory classics by Sergei Parajanov, Jacques Demy, Robert Altman, and Václav Vorlíček, each of which demands immersion of the indispensable, cinematic sort.

To anyone who enjoyed a movie at The Cinematheque in 2024, thank you for supporting us and the work we do. Happy holidays and even happier film viewing.

December 19 (Thursday)
December 28 (Saturday)
January 3 (Friday)

6:30 pm
9:00 pm
6:30 pm



Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors

Тіні забутих предків

USSR 1965

Sergei Parajanov

97 min. DCP

In Hutsul with English subtitles

New Restoration

“One of the supreme works of the Soviet sound cinema.”

Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*

Before Sergei Parajanov filtered desire and poetry through the symbolic tableaux of *The Colour of Pomegranates*, he made this equally stunning work of dynamic, mythic romantic fate. Parajanov called *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* his true first film, the one where he found his themes—ethnography, god, love, and tragedy—and also found the form to suit them. Ivan and Marichka are star-crossed lovers: there’s a blood feud between their families, and the forest in which they find a secluded space to share is also a bewitched environ that might spell their doom. Commissioned on the occasion of Ukrainian writer Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky’s centenary, Parajanov’s film is an imagined recreation of a folk tradition that had largely moved on when he set out to film the tale’s villages and mountains—seeing asphalt encroaching on the Carpathian wilderness, he said, “I was not exactly gripped by enchantment.” The film’s frenetic, shocking sense of wild beauty imagines otherwise.

“Of the themes with which the director deals so superbly—disguised emotion, organization, trust, quiet courage, betrayal and grief—the most important is that of loyalty (and its price).”

Wally Hammond, *Time Out*, on *Army of Shadows*

December 19 (Thursday) 8:40 pm
December 23 (Monday) 3:30 pm
January 4 (Saturday) 8:40 pm



Army of Shadows

L'armée des ombres

France/Italy 1969
Jean-Pierre Melville
145 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

Jean-Pierre Grumbach became “Melville” to his comrades as a member of the French Resistance. It took nearly thirty years for the director to translate his experiences into a film. *Army of Shadows*, the most personal picture of his career, is an episodic epic of tragic, conflicted responsibility—whether to save others, survive, or perhaps to simply stick to a code. Lino Ventura (*Elevator to the Gallows*) is Philippe Gerbier, the no-nonsense lead. Melville tracks his journey from internment camp to the open, wintry air of occupied France with characteristic aplomb and narrative deception: the strategic plans in this film aren’t signposted; rather, they come to light in the moment of action. Gerbier joins up with such characters as “Le masque,” “Le bison,” and first-rate organizer Mathilde (Simone Signoret), though his most significant collaborator is Luc Jardie, whom the director modelled after Jean Cavallès, the Resistance fighter and philosopher of mathematics—two equally important métiers to Melville.

“Rarely has a film shown so truly that place in the heart where hope lives with fatalism.”

Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*

December 20 (Friday) 8:30 pm
December 28 (Saturday) 3:30 pm
January 5 (Sunday) 8:20 pm



Mon oncle G

France/Italy 1958

Jacques Tati
116 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

“Slapstick heaven.”

Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*

A marvellous satire in the spirit of Chaplin’s *Modern Times*, *Mon oncle*, Jacques Tati’s first colour film, won both a Special Jury Prize at Cannes and the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film—although we hasten to add that there is little spoken dialogue, foreign or otherwise, in this ingenious, visually inventive comic work. Made with the painstaking perfectionism for which the director is legendary, *Mon oncle* has Tati’s accident-prone Monsieur Hulot tangling with modern life while visiting the minimalist, modernist home of his sister, brother-in-law, and nephew. The family’s haute abode is filled with hilarious labour-saving gizmos and gadgets, allowing Tati some of his best gags. Originally shot in both French and English, each edited in slightly different ways, this longer, better-known French version hasn’t screened at The Cinematheque since 2008!

December 21 (Saturday) 3:30 pm
December 27 (Friday) 6:00 pm
January 2 (Thursday) 9:00 pm



Thelma & Louise 14+

USA 1991

Ridley Scott
130 min. DCP

New Restoration

It begins like a 1940s women’s picture, runs through a patch of noir territory, and increasingly picks up the attributes of an Americana crime movie, but *Thelma & Louise* is first and foremost a dialogue. When Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon’s characters plan a road trip, they aim to talk to one another, and in Callie Khouri’s Academy Award-winning screenplay, there’s ample time for all kinds of talk—of men, supposed happiness, and real violence. There’s also, most tellingly, the pop-philosophical question: “Are you up to this?” *Thelma & Louise* charts the limits of what can be said, dreamt, and felt in a studio-filmmaking model of society, and the distance by which its duo can outpace those limits. The film also measures the shifts between commercial Hollywood in the ’90s, of which scene-setter Ridley Scott is an exemplar, and the New Hollywood of the ’70s, from which the film gets its rebel spirit. This restoration premiered as part of Cannes Classics 2023.

“The movie becomes mythical—mutates into a sort of classic before one’s eyes.”

Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*

“[Demy’s] fascination with ‘normal’ life is emotionally and philosophically complex—both idealized and ironic, bitterly tragic and stringently comic.”

Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*, on *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*

December 21 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
December 27 (Friday) 4:00 pm
December 30 (Monday) 8:40 pm



The Umbrellas of Cherbourg G

Les parapluies de Cherbourg

France/West Germany 1964

Jacques Demy

92 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Sublime ... A gloriously innovative tribute to both the Hollywood musical and to Marcel Pagnol’s melodramas.”

Kate Stables, *Sight and Sound*

Jacques Demy’s romantic musical is almost surely the first thing that comes to mind if you read the words “French musical in colour.” How could it not? So totalizing are the effects of *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*’s palette of pink and midnight blue, which set the stage for Demy’s reinvention of the musical. No longer in the director’s universe is it necessary to segment the use of music into numbers, or exposit plot through dialogue. Instead every vowel and consonant is part of a song—of affection, admonishment, fear, and desire. Catherine Deneuve and Nino Castelnuovo play the couple, a hopeful shopgirl and a mechanic who smells of gasoline—“a perfume like any other.” They decide to marry. The rest becomes matters of fate and poetry, innocence and knowledge, deliberate artificiality and emotional realism. Michel Legrand’s unforgettable score and Jean Rabier’s mobile cinematography also star. This anniversary restoration premiered as part of Cannes Classics in May.

December 22 (Sunday) 8:30 pm
December 28 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
January 3 (Friday) 8:30 pm



3 Women PG

USA 1977

Robert Altman

124 min. DCP

The magnetic screen presence of Shelley Duvall, who died in July, is like none other. Her ability to shift from floating imaginative play to grounded psychological realism (and all the gradations in between) was exceptional, whether in a musical, a horror film, or an episode of *Faerie Tale Theatre*. In her Cannes-awarded turn for Robert Altman’s *3 Women*, all of these possible ways of acting shimmer in the California sun. Millie (Duvall), Pinky (Sissy Spacek), and Willie (Janice Rule) are the mythic trinity of the title. Millie works at a health centre for the elderly, where she meets her new coworker Pinky Rose, whom she adopts as a roommate. Willie, less prominent in the plot but just as important to its unfolding, is a muralist. Altman often used painting metaphors to describe his films, with actors as the living pigment necessary to realize the work. Here, the three principals drift around each other, meet, and combine in ways that still seem like a singular feat of haunting, stirring magic.

“Shelley Duvall gives a brilliant performance that captures the reality, absurdity, and poignance of the character in a way that has never been done before.”

Marsha Kinder, *Film Quarterly*

December 23 (Monday) 6:30 pm
December 27 (Friday) 8:40 pm
January 5 (Sunday) 6:30 pm



Three Wishes for Cinderella

Tři oříšky pro Popelku

Czechoslovakia/East Germany 1973

Václav Vorlíček

82 min. DCP

In Czech with English subtitles

“A joy ... [The] film that set the template for strong-minded, boisterous, independent fairy-tale heroines more than fifty years ago.”

Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight and Sound*

Few fairy tale adaptations capture the renewable wonder of the many-times-told fable like the Czech yuletide classic *Three Wishes for Cinderella*. Božena Němcová’s version of the story—the basis for this adaptation—carefully rearranges the conditions of Cinderella’s transformation, and positions the character as an active hero in the narrative. The film, from its enchanting, freeze-framed opening credits sequence, is buoyant, though not purely light as air. *Three Wishes* grounds the cruelty of Cinderella’s stepmother and the composure of the Prince’s monarch parents in the same deterministic view of marriage as a means to maintain power. Cinderella’s wishes, realized with breathtaking simplicity, propel the plot while redefining those terms. In Libuše Šafránková’s iconic lead performance, she’s Robin Hood and Maid Marian in one, outsmarting elders and outperforming rivals, and doing so through subterfuge, wit, and with the aid of sublime costumes by Theodor Pistek (*Amadeus*).

December 21 (Saturday) 8:30 pm
December 26 (Thursday) 3:00 pm
December 30 (Monday) 6:00 pm



Phantom Thread PG

USA 2017
Paul Thomas Anderson
130 min. DCP

A prestige period piece set in the high-end fashion world of 1950s London gradually gives way to a delectably perverse portrait of marriage in Paul Thomas Anderson's masterful 2017 film, among the high points of American cinema in the last decade. Daniel Day-Lewis, Oscar winner for his previous PTA collaboration *There Will Be Blood*, is predictably captivating as the fastidious Reynolds Woodcock, greying king of the haute couture and serial bachelor on account of a must-not-disturb routine. Vicky Krieps, in her breakout role, is Alma, the lowly waitress with ideal proportions who enters into a muse-like relationship with Woodcock, then holds her own in a twisted game of one-upmanship and lovers' cuisine. The film's dark horse, however, is the dressmaker's icy sister (Lesley Manville), whose protectiveness over her brother, still stunted by the death of their mother, is slowly usurped by the crafty interloper. Nominated for multiple Oscars, including the first for composer Jonny Greenwood.

"[The director's] most ambitious and surprising film yet... The tension between Anderson's wicked sense of humour and his immaculate craftsmanship...is potent stuff."

Adam Nayman, *Sight and Sound*

Ongoing Series PELAN Presents

A bimonthly series organized in partnership with PELAN, a nonprofit and nonpartisan media organization spotlighting independent documentaries by Iranian and non-Iranian directors about Iranian people.

December 5 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



Alborz, We Climb Mountains

البرز که می‌رفتیم

Iran 2023
Maryam Sepehri
84 min. DCP

In Farsi with English subtitles

In Person: Maryam Sepehri

Alborz, We Climb Mountains explores the history of Tehran's legendary Alborz High School, a prestigious institution that has shaped generations of Iran's brightest minds. Founded in 1873 as an American missionary school and later transitioned into an Iranian-led private high school, it flourished under the leadership of the renowned Mohammad Ali Mojtahedi, becoming a powerhouse of modern education. Among its graduates is Vancouver-based architect Hossein Amanat, whose iconic design of the Shahyad Tower in Tehran (renamed Azadi Tower after the 1979 revolution) became a symbol of modern Iran. Directed by Maryam Sepehri, the documentary weaves together archival material and interviews, reflecting on the school's profound influence throughout Iran's turbulent modern history. By underscoring the importance of academic communities while critically examining the past, Sepehri's film prompts reflection, pride, regret, and nostalgia as it explores the impact of Alborz graduates on Iran and its diasporas.

Post-screening Q&A with director Maryam Sepehri, moderated by PELAN.

Ongoing Series

Our Stories to Tell

Indigenous storytelling.

Our Stories to Tell is a monthly series dedicated to showcasing the new wave of inspired Indigenous storytelling in film, as well as spotlighting up-and-coming Indigenous artists across Turtle Island and beyond. Programmed and hosted by Akira Iahtail, film curator and filmmaker of Cree and Swampy Cree descent.

Series advisor: Lyana Patrick, filmmaker, assistant professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University, and member of the Stel't'en First Nation.

November 6 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Teachings for the noke', wahkohtowin, and ts'iyanne

Program runtime: 54 min.

In anticipation of National Child Day on November 20, Our Stories to Tell presents this program of three stop-motion animation shorts imparting teachings for the heart (noke'), family (wahkohtowin), and community (ts'iyanne). *Māca*, co-directed by Ryan Haché and Ritchie Hemphill (Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw), tells the 'Nakwax'daxw legend of the mink with narration by late elder Ida Smith. *Wapos Bay: They Dance at Night*, by Dennis Jackson (Cree), explores what happens to family and community when tradition goes unhonoured. *Spirit Bear: Fishing for Knowledge, Catching Dreams* is Métis director Amanda Strong's adaptation of the Cindy Blackstock book of the same name, which teaches about traditional knowledge, the history of the residential school system, and today's First Nations schools. Experience the evolution of Indigenous stop-motion for youth, filled with teachings that everyone can enjoy!

Māca
Canada 2022
Ryan Haché, Ritchie Hemphill
8 min. DCP
In Bak'wam'kala with English subtitles

Wapos Bay: They Dance at Night
Canada 2006
Dennis Jackson
24 min. DCP

Spirit Bear: Fishing for Knowledge, Catching Dreams
Canada 2022
Amanda Strong
22 min. DCP

December 11 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



The Road Forward

Canada 2017
Marie Clements
101 min. DCP

"A powerful celebration of song and spirit... Simultaneously a piece of BC First Nations history, a call for revolution and resolve, and a portrait of a people who have retained their power and identity through community and activism."

Dorothy Woodend, DOXA

The Road Forward is a genre-blending musical documentary by award-winning Métis and Dene writer, director, playwright, and producer Marie Clements. Clements breaks boundaries by combining interviews with blues, rock, and traditional musical sequences that raise awareness about Indigenous history and experiences. Explore the roots of the Native Brotherhood and Native Sisterhood of British Columbia and the creation of the *Native Voice* newspaper, which united First Nations peoples across British Columbia and beyond through its Indigenous perspective. Journey from the 1930s movement of Indigenous rights to today's land and rights defenders as Clements calls out oppressions of the past and present to posit a future that values Indigenous voices.

After the screening, there will be a Q&A and discussion with Lyana Patrick, series advisor and former reporter for the *Native Voice*.

Ongoing Series

Frames of Mind

A mental health film series.

The Cinematheque is pleased to join with the Institute of Mental Health, UBC Department of Psychiatry, in presenting Frames of Mind, a monthly event utilizing film to promote professional and community education on issues pertaining to mental health and illness. Screenings are accompanied by presentations and audience discussions.

Series directed by Dr. Harry Karlinsky, clinical professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia. Panel discussions moderated by Dr. Harry Karlinsky.

Programmed by Selina Crammond, a film curator and cultural worker based in Vancouver on the unceded xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) territories.

Programmer emeritus: Caroline Coutts, film curator, filmmaker, and programmer of Frames of Mind from its inception in September 2002 to September 2023.

November 13 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



The Stimming Pool

United Kingdom 2024

The Neurocultures Collective, Steven Eastwood

67 min. DCP

Inspired by the concept of an “autistic camera,” *The Stimming Pool* is a brilliant exercise in collaborative filmmaking in which the lived experiences of several neurodiverse artists reign supreme. A film curator of a B-movie film club shares his fascination with underground horror with an engaged audience; a woman takes an eye-tracking biomarker test; a worker tries to settle into a busy office full of overwhelming background noises; an illustration book tells the story of a Border Collie turned superhero who watches over people with disabilities. Influenced by the visual landscape of Jacques Tati's *Playtime* and the magical realism of Apichatpong Weerasethakul, *The Stimming Pool* is rhizomatic in its approach, offering a medley of scenes that are associative rather than linear. Recurring patterns, documentary vérité footage, and fantastical performances and animation result in a deeply immersive film wherein a plurality of perspectives collide to provide a uniquely sensorial viewing experience for neurodiverse and neurotypical audiences alike.

“A revelatory and empathetic film that explores neurodiversity in an innovative way, culminating in an ecstatic and cathartic conclusion.”

Kristina Rothstein, DOXA

Post-screening discussion with Javier Herrera and Kenzie Curby, both neurodiverse individuals and advocates.

Co-sponsored by ACT – Autism Community Training

December 18 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm



Great Absence

大いなる不在

Japan 2023

Chika-ura Kei

133 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

“Beguiling ... One of the finest Japanese independent films of the past few years.”

Patrick Brzeski, *The Hollywood Reporter*

After 71-year-old Yohji, a retired professor with a mysterious past, is diagnosed with dementia, his son Takashi is forced to reconcile not only with his father's newly intensified illness, but also with the nuances of their fractured relationship. Estranged from his father for nearly twenty-five years after the divorce of his parents, Takashi has built a career as an actor in Tokyo—a path that seemingly disappoints his overly critical father. After Yohji is sent to live in a care home, his second wife Naomi is nowhere to be found. In a fog of distorted memories and paranoia, he tells his son that she committed suicide, leading Takashi on a quest for the truth of what happened. Intercut with flashbacks and set against the lush landscape of Omuto in southern Japan, Chika-ura's sophomore feature offers carefully composed cinematography and measured performances to deliver a suspenseful yet contemplative family drama.

Post-screening discussion with Dr. Takashi Inoue, a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist from Japan.

Due to the runtime of *Great Absence*, this screening will start at 6:30 pm.

Ongoing Series Film Club



Film Club is a family-friendly movie matinee series held at The Cinematheque on the third Sunday of each month. By way of carefully selected all-ages titles, balancing classics and new favourites, our programming team extends a welcome to the next generation of cinemagoers—and anyone who wants to revisit a treasured film.

Free popcorn and Film Club badge for junior cinephiles (ages 13 and under). Discounted ticket price (\$6) too!

New for 2024

Special discounted ticket price for parent/guardian and child under 13 (\$16), plus free coffee and tea! We've also nudged our start time a half-hour earlier in response to feedback to our recent Film Club survey.

November 17 (Sunday)

10:30 am



Frédéric Back 100

Program runtime: 68 min.

The films of Frédéric Back (1924–2013) are tales of creation and destruction, rendering the epic and the eternal in gentle, impressionist pencil strokes. Back knew the beauty of the world was the most important gift to children, and the most fragile. As a child in France, he and his schoolmates helped to dig people out of rubble after waves of bombings during WWII, saying later, “It was an important experience to know how ugly people can be to each other.” After moving to Canada in his 20s at the urging of his pen pal Ghylaine Paquin (the two married a year later), Back found work at Radio-Canada at a time when its animation department was thriving. The films he made, which continually find new ways to depict the vitality of motion, tradition, and thought, influenced countless animators. A stunned Miyazaki Hayao, after a viewing of *Crac*, remarked to Takahata Isao, “I guess we’re failures, aren’t we?”

Best Animated Short Film
Academy Awards 1982, 1988, for *Crac* and *The Man Who Planted Trees*

Illusion

Canada 1975
12 min. DCP

Tout rien aka All Nothing

Canada 1978
11 min. DCP

Crac

Canada 1980
15 min. DCP

The Man Who Planted Trees

L'homme qui
plantait des arbres
Canada 1987
30 min. DCP
English narration version

“Frédéric Back is my master, my mentor in life, as well as in my animation work.”

Takahata Isao, director (*Pom Poko*, *The Tale of the Princess Kaguya*)

December 15 (Sunday)

10:30 am



Little Women G

USA 1994

Gillian Armstrong
118 min. DCP

“Armstrong maneuvers Alcott’s prose with sympathy and a cool head ... She likes to prick at convention, especially when it comes to the crossroads of femininity and feminism; it’s what makes her a particularly good contemporary match for the book.”

Manohla Dargis, *LA Weekly*

More than any other version of *Little Women*, this film, directed by Gillian Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*) and shot around British Columbia, emphasizes the adolescence of the March sisters as not so much a sequence of events, but a rich association of emotionally potent memories. Starring a zeitgeist-worthy cast of talent—including Winona Ryder (Jo), Kirsten Dunst (Amy), Claire Danes (Beth), Christian Bale (Laurie), and Susan Sarandon (Marmee)—this portrait of a family across four years is intimate, lively, and full of inventive staging. You can see this in the first meeting of the March family and Laurie, the slightly forlorn boy next door; Jo’s theatrical rehearsals; or the social gatherings that reveal new aspects of each young woman’s character. *Little Women*’s telling of the bittersweet process of partings, reunions, and artistic maturation marks its 30th anniversary this year, a distance that perhaps only deepens the film’s skillful evocation of passing time.

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