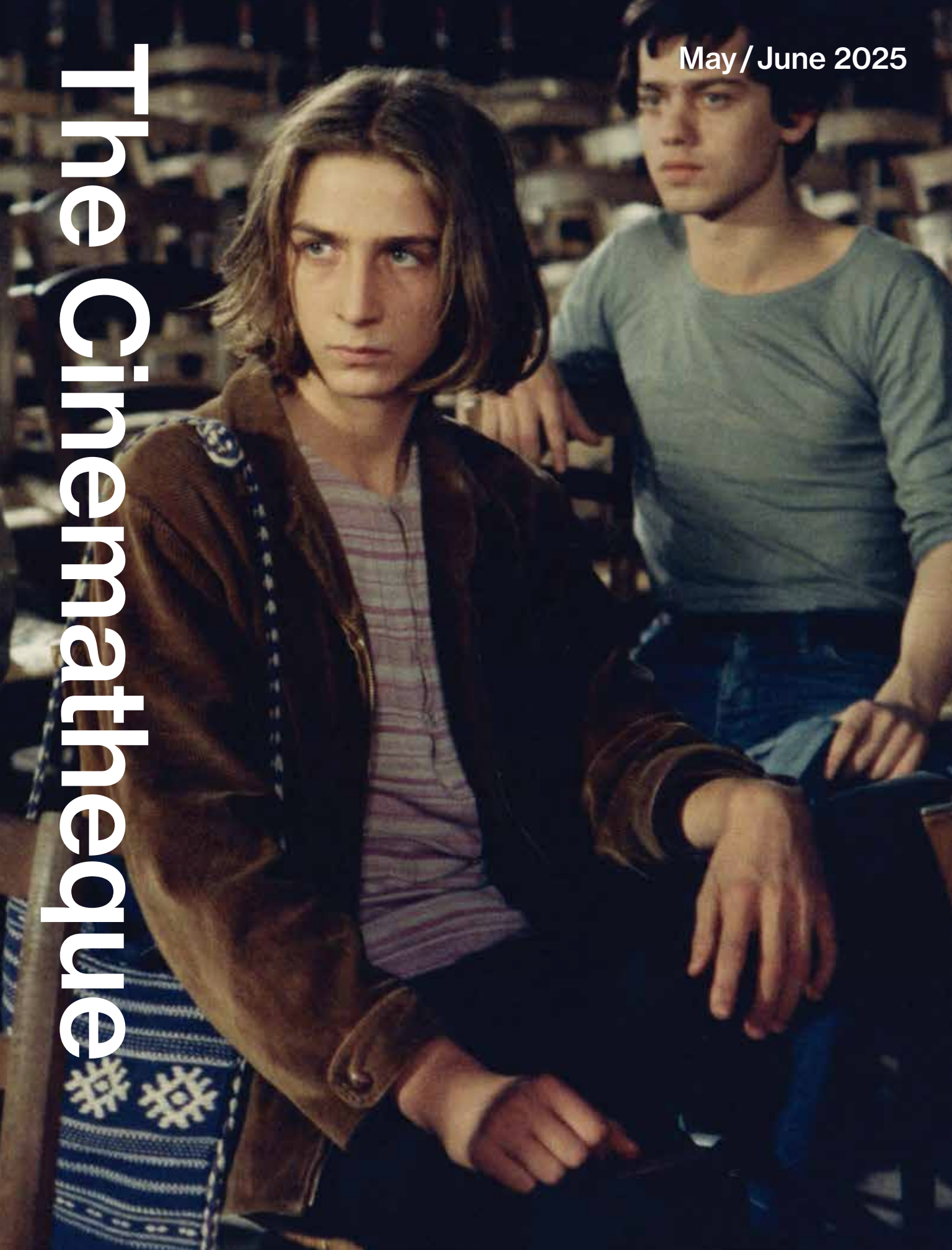


May / June 2025

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 12,000.

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Cover image: *The Devil, Probably*, Robert Bresson, 1977
Contents image: *Erased Etchings*, Linda Fenstermaker, 2017

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

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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

\$15 General (18+), \$13 Senior (65+), \$11 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 \$7 for ages 13 and under, and \$18 when combined with an adult ticket.

Free admission for Indigenous Peoples.

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1131 Howe Street, Vancouver
thecinematheque.ca

May/ June 2025

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DIM Cinema, our monthly engagement with the more avant-garde outposts of film art, was put on hiatus in the autumn of 2024 following the passing of Michèle Smith, beloved curator of the series since 2014. Though DIM was never at threat of being outright retired, the task of finding a successor to Michèle was a formidable one, and my gratitude goes to DIM founding curator Amy Kazymierchuk for her guidance during this transitional phase. I am delighted to share that DIM Cinema will resume this spring under the direction of the newly formed DIM Collective, a cohort of exceptionally talented local curators who will alternate programs each month, now on the designated DIM night of Monday. The Collective comprises Tobin Gibson, the Iris Film Collective, Steff Hui Ci Ling, and Casey Wei, each of whom has collaborated with DIM in the past, and whose names may already be familiar to patrons of the broader visual arts in our city. As a series carrying forward the legacy of experimental artmaking on the West Coast—a legacy intertwined with The Cinematheque's earliest beginnings—the return of DIM marks a homecoming of sorts, a reaffirmation of our commitment to film at its most alternative, exploratory, and artist driven. Welcome back, DIM Cinema!

Shaun Inouye
Artistic Director



Anno Hideaki × 2

May 12 (Monday) 6:30 pm
May 16 (Friday) 8:50 pm
May 19 (Monday) 6:30 pm



The End of Evangelion

新世紀エヴァンゲリオン劇場版 Air/
まごころを、君に

Japan 1997
Anno Hideaki, Tsurumaki Kazuya
87 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Neon Genesis Evangelion, the landmark anime series that spawned a still-flourishing multimedia franchise and a fervent global fanbase, turns 30 this year. *The End of Evangelion* is creator Anno Hideaki's spectacular—and spectacularly bleak—reimagining of the show's polarizing ending, which, when it aired in 1996, stoked the ire of *Eva* stans by eschewing customary narrative closure in favour of hyper-abstraction and philosophical payoffs. Part fan service, part feature-length fuck you, *The End* offers an alternate take on the show's final two episodes. Here, reluctant teen hero Shinji, pilot of a giant mech designed to defend Tokyo-3 from alien attacks, must summon the will to fight (and go on living, generally) when a full-scale assault and veritable Second Coming triggers the advent of singularity for humankind. There's lore and existential angst aplenty, along with some of Anno's most unbridled and visionary work. Advanced viewing of the series (or episodes 1–24, at least) is highly recommended, if not outright mandatory.

“Perhaps one of the most nihilistic, avant-garde, and devastating endings to an anime series ever conceived ... It is the best and worst of everything that is *Evangelion* combined to create a film that is unlike anything that had come before it.”

Toussaint Egan, *Paste*

May 12 (Monday) 8:30 pm
May 16 (Friday) 6:30 pm
May 19 (Monday) 8:30 pm
May 24 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
May 27 (Tuesday) 8:20 pm



Love & Pop

ラブ&ポップ

Japan 1998
Anno Hideaki
110 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Utterly breathless, fluttering from exuberant to devastating to giggly in both form and tone.”

Sarah Fensom, *Screen Slate*

Anime icon Anno Hideaki followed up his big-screen *Neon Genesis Evangelion* do-over (well, before the Rebuild retcon anyway) with *Love & Pop*, his first foray outside of animation. Demonstrating, almost defiantly, that live-action filmmaking needn't curtail imagination, Anno's radical adaptation of a novel by *Audition* author Murakami Ryu brandishes a physics-defying employment of rule-free cinematography—its images an idiosyncratic ping-ponging of DV footage shot from every inconceivable place a digicam can go. The frenetic formal approach serves an introspective story (shades of *Evangelion* existentialism writ large) about four high-school girls who make money “sugar dating” much older men in Shibuya. Anno doesn't shy away from the pedophilic association—and acute dangers—of this Japanese phenomenon, setting teenage protagonist Hiromi down an increasingly debased path when a luxury topaz ring catches her fancy. Practically unseen in North America apart from a long out-of-print DVD, *Love & Pop* has garnered much fanfare with this new restoration and theatrical release.

Advisory: *Love & Pop* includes a scene of sexual violence.

New Cinema

May 14 (Wednesday) 8:20 pm
May 18 (Sunday) 6:30 pm
May 31 (Saturday) 8:40 pm



Blue Sun Palace

USA 2024

Constance Tsang

116 min. DCP

In Mandarin and English with English subtitles

The debut feature of Chinese American writer-director Constance Tsang delivers a delicately wrought portrait of working-class sisterhood in New York's immigrant enclave of Flushing Chinatown. Amy (Wu Ke-Xi), Taiwanese, and Didi (Haipeng Xu), Mainland Chinese, share a closeness that alleviates the drudgery and commonplace abuses of their jobs at a massage parlour. Didi dreams of one day opening a restaurant in Baltimore, where her young daughter resides, and has started seeing lonesome married-man Cheung (Tsai Ming-liang collaborator Lee Kang-sheng), a Taiwanese labourer also dislocated from family. When violence suddenly transpires—cleaving the film into before and after parts—the perspective shifts, darkness sets in, and one character's story subtly substitutes for another's. Sensitively rendered in 16mm by former Vancouverite Norm Li (*Seagrass*, *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open*), this assured and quietly affecting first feature earned Tsang the French Touch Prize at Cannes Critics' Week.

“The more I think about writer-director Constance Tsang's *Blue Sun Palace*, the more it seeps into my muscles and my bones ... This film breathes the slow cinematic air of Tsai Ming-liang ... A soulful and passionate meditation on loss.”

Robert Daniels, *RogerEbert.com*

Essential Cinema

June 6 (Friday) 6:30 pm
June 11 (Wednesday) 9:00 pm
June 23 (Monday) 6:30 pm

May 30 (Friday) 7:00 pm
June 1 (Sunday) 7:00 pm
June 4 (Wednesday) 7:00 pm
June 15 (Sunday) 6:30 pm
July 1 (Tuesday) 3:00 pm

June 2 (Monday) 8:30 pm
June 11 (Wednesday) 6:30 pm
June 29 (Sunday) 6:00 pm



The Ballad of Suzanne Césaire

USA 2024
Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich
75 min. DCP
In English and French with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

“Gorgeously allusive ... [A] lovely, questing, curious art film ... assembled with peculiar, calm exactness.”

Jessica Kiang, *Variety*

The Surrealists gathered and published in Martinique in the 1940s. They partied and wrote manifestos, and their lives and love affairs became art historical events and legends. Visual artist Madeleine Hunt-Ehrlich's first feature film isolates a gap in this history: Suzanne Césaire. It's a familiar tale in that Césaire's work, aside from six children and seven essays, is historically invisible—the untraceable labour of teaching, editing, as well as generating ideas that appear in the criticism and poetry of her husband Aimé Césaire until their separation in 1963. Hunt-Ehrlich's interrogation of this void is maximalist in its tactile method of revisionist restaging. Luxuriant cinematography captures a setting (a tree archive in South Florida) and actors (including Zita Hanrot, a rising star in France) performing in an experiment-friendly, ruminative state. “Is it favourable to love?” they ask. Sifting through rehearsals and paratexts, Hunt-Ehrlich traces the paradox of Suzanne's life.



Ran PG

Japan 1985
Kurosawa Akira
162 min. DCP
In Japanese with English subtitles

The magisterial *Ran*, the great masterpiece of Kurosawa's late period, is both an enthralling piece of epic moviemaking and an inspired reworking of *King Lear*. The film transposes Shakespeare's play to 16th-century Japan, and transforms its three daughters into sons. Kurosawa and Kobayashi regular Nakadai Tatsuya is aging warlord Hidetora, the film's Lear. When he abdicates in favour of his eldest son, it precipitates a fratricidal struggle of cataclysmic proportions. *Ran* is a visually overwhelming work, with exquisite costuming and sets, and dazzling (and horrifying) battle sequences—some rendered in silence but for Takemitsu Toru's haunting score—unfolding over vast landscapes and in extraordinary colour. The title translates from the Japanese as “war” or “conflict,” but Kurosawa emphasizes an older, Chinese meaning of the word: “chaos.” Winner of one Oscar (Costume Design) and nominated for three more (Director, Cinematography, and Art Direction), Kurosawa's final statement on the jidaigeki picture returns for this special 40th anniversary engagement.

“Spectacular ... Among the most thrilling movie experiences a viewer can have.”

Terrence Rafferty, *The New York Times*



India Song

France 1975
Marguerite Duras
119 min. DCP
In French with English subtitles

“Spectral ... *India Song*'s entirely asynchronous soundtrack [looks] forward to something like Wong Kar-wai's *In the Mood for Love*, which likewise draws the viewer into a dispersed atmosphere of lush sorrow, and pushes its story scaffolding to extremes of aural detachment and spatial alienation.”

Lawrence Garcia, *MUBI Notebook*

Marguerite Duras had already established herself as one of the major figures of postwar French literature when she launched an equally fascinating and unclassifiable career in cinema, translating her elliptical, experimental style to the screen through an unprecedented fusion of hypnotic, highly stylized imagery and radically disjunctive sound. Duras's most celebrated work *India Song* is a mesmerizing, almost incantatory experience with few stylistic precedents in the history of cinema. Within the insular walls of a lavish, decaying embassy in 1930s Calcutta, the French ambassador's wife (Delphine Seyrig, *Jeanne Dielman*) staves off ennui through affairs with multiple men—with the overpowering torpor broken only by a startling eruption of madness. Setting her evocatively decadent visuals to a desynchronized chorus of disembodied voices that comment on and counterpoint the action, Duras creates a haunted-house movie unlike any other. —Janus Films

Wojciech Jerzy Has 100

May 22 (Thursday)

6:30 pm



The Saragossa Manuscript

Rękopis znaleziony w Saragossie

Poland 1965

Wojciech Jerzy Has

183 min. DCP

In Polish with English subtitles

“Simultaneously horrific, erotic, and funny... This is one mother of a film,” rhapsodized David Lynch on Wojciech Jerzy Has’s delirious counterculture classic. The American surrealist wasn’t alone in his fandom—Luis Buñuel, Francis Coppola, Martin Scorsese, and the Grateful Dead’s Jerry Garcia all championed *Saragossa* and played a part in hoisting it to international attention. The hallucinatory epic, adapted from Polish nobleman Jan Potocki’s 19th-century novel, relates the adventures of one Alphonse van Worden, a Belgian officer making his way across battle-torn Spain during the Napoleonic Wars. Entranced by a magical manuscript and two beautiful Moorish princesses, he is caught up in a dreamy, supernatural, *Arabian Nights*-like chain of stories within stories. The film’s nesting-box digressions are rendered with sardonic humour, while the stunning anamorphic imagery draws on Spain’s Gothic, Baroque, Kabbalist, and Moorish traditions. Screen legend Zbigniew Cybulski, whose tragic death in 1967 made him the Polish equivalent to James Dean, stars.

Introduction by Pierre Van Cutsem, a PhD candidate in literary studies whose research focuses on Central European weird fiction. 6:00 pm reception sponsored by the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies, University of Alberta.



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Presented with the support of the
Consulate General of the
Republic of Poland in Vancouver
on the occasion of Wojciech
Jerzy Has’s 2025 centenary.

New Restorations

May 14 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm

May 18 (Sunday)

8:50 pm

May 27 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm



Killer of Sheep

USA 1978

Charles Burnett

80 min. DCP

“Charles’s contribution to cinema—to a very particular cinema—has for too long gone understated. A monumental work.”

Barry Jenkins

For decades, Charles Burnett’s astonishing debut feature was an invisible masterpiece of American cinema. Premiering at the Whitney in 1978 but shelved shortly after due to music-licensing impediments—it includes songs by Dinah Washington, Louis Armstrong, and Earth, Wind & Fire—the film was rescued from obscurity in 2007, in part thanks to financial help from Steven Soderbergh. The director’s MFA thesis for UCLA, *Killer of Sheep* relates, with palpable tenderness and neorealist form, the struggles of a Black slaughterhouse worker raising a family in Watts, L.A. Burnett belies the untold limitations of the project (not least a paltry student budget) with photojournalistic discernment, bold, elliptical treatment of story, and an ability to locate poetry within the hardships of inner-city life. Upon wide release, the picture met with a chorus of praise and recognition as a canon-disrupting work of greatness. It now ranks among the top 50 films of all time in *Sight and Sound*’s decennial poll.

May 18 (Sunday)

1:00 pm

June 15 (Sunday)

1:00 pm



Batang West Side

USA/Philippines 2001

Lav Diaz

300 min. DCP

In English and Tagalog with English subtitles

Filipino auteur Lav Diaz employs the strategies of long-form filmmaking to explore story and character on a scale closer to the novel. His international breakthrough, 2013’s sweeping crime epic *Norte, the End of History*, had some critics balking at its four-hour length. But *Norte* was only the latest (and shortest) in a series of tome-sized works dating back to *Batang West Side*, his riveting and, until now, scarcely seen fourth feature. A monumental police procedural set in winter-scourged Jersey City, *Batang* chronicles the murder investigation of a teen (Yul Servo) shot dead in the street. As pavement-pounding detective Juan (Joel Torre) assays the mounting evidence, a portrait emerges of a Filipino diaspora whose alienated youth have turned to drugs and gangsterism. Don’t let the five-hour runtime scare you—this is an expertly crafted, “slow cinema”-bucking policier that trades in big themes and even bigger cumulative rewards.

Note: *Batang West Side* does not include an intermission. Lav Diaz encourages you to take breaks as needed.

“A curiously oblique film that builds almost imperceptibly, Lav Diaz’s five-hour *Batang West Side*—at once deadly serious and howlingly absurd—is a masterpiece. Mesmerizing from first frame to last.”

Ronnie Scheib, *Variety*

June 6 (Friday) 8:15 pm
 June 8 (Sunday) 6:30 pm
 June 17 (Tuesday) 8:30 pm



Compensation

USA 1999
 Zeinabu irene Davis
 92 min. DCP

In English and American Sign Language with subtitles, open captions, and intertitles

“Compensation never forgets what it’s really about, and its focus on love as an education—the greatest of them all—reveals it as a gradual, patient, and sometimes comical process of mutual self-advocacy and communication. Its treatment of interabled relationships ranks among the best I’ve seen.”

Emerson Goo, *Screen Slate*

Though the title comes from Paul Laurence Dunbar’s poem, with its contrast of love’s conditions—compassionate and enduring or inconsistent and vain—Zeinabu irene Davis’s debut feature is a complete original. *Compensation* contains a lot: two timelines, two pairs of lovers, two cinematic styles. It’s also the first film to draw on, without tokenizing, Black Deaf culture, and maybe the most graceful silent-film homage in all of cinema. Michelle A. Banks and John Earl Jelks play both couples, who meet on a Chicago beach at the bookends of the 20th century. Key to their romantic connection—and alienation—is communication, whether it’s through education, silence, or the obstacle of different languages. Davis cast Banks after seeing her perform in a Deaf theatre company’s *Waiting for Godot*. Of the film’s use of Deafness as a formal and thematic principle, she said, “In most cases, no words need be spoken in order to evoke compassion and solidarity.”

June 19 (Thursday) 8:30 pm
 June 22 (Sunday) 8:30 pm
 June 30 (Monday) 6:30 pm



The Sealed Soil

خاک سر به مهر

Iran 1977
 Marva Nabili
 90 min. DCP

In Farsi with English subtitles

The Albert Camus quote that opens Marva Nabili’s astonishing debut *The Sealed Soil*, the earliest surviving feature directed by an Iranian woman, gestures to the project’s philosophical designs. Displaying a remarkable economy of means, the film charts—with Akerman-evoking rigour—the joyless domestic routines of a marriage-scorning Iranian teenager (Flora Shabaviz) whose seething indignation over her perpetual state of bondage is presumed to be the work of demonic possession. Her plight is exacerbated by the state-decreed demolition of her impoverished provincial village, a fate she’s powerless to prevent. Nabili’s spartan approach, which consists of largely locked-off shots partitioning space into discrete sites of labour, achieves rare moments of grace when the pattern is disrupted. (A transcendent scene, impossible in post-revolution Iran, sees the almost wordless protagonist shed her hijab and tunic in the rain.) Imbued with Bressonian austerity and a fermenting sense of rage, *The Sealed Soil* is nothing short of revelatory.

Advisory: *The Sealed Soil* contains a scene of animal cruelty.

“Another unearthed gem of Iranian cinema... A hypnotic and quietly radical portrait of resistance, and a passionate rejection of patriarchy.”

Jason Wood, BFI London Film Festival

June 26 (Thursday) 8:30 pm
 June 28 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
 July 1 (Tuesday) 6:30 pm



The Rubber Gun 18+

Canada 1977
 Allan Moyle
 86 min. DCP

“One of the best films of the 1970s.”

TIFF Canadian Film Encyclopedia

“Huck Finn on coke,” per the director’s own description, Allan Moyle’s quasi-autobiographical debut feature is a loose, largely improvised vérité portrait of a makeshift family of peddlers and addicts in the atrophying counterculture of ’70s Montreal. *Scanners*’s Stephen Lack plays the charismatic ringleader Steve, on whom the commune depends for narcotics to sell and snort—though harder-drug heroin has become the newest fix among some. When Steve flirtatiously befriends a McGill sociology student (Moyle) intrigued by the “upside” of habitual drug use, the outsider enters the fold just as fissures begin to form. Meanwhile, the group’s biggest score sits in a locker in Windsor Station surveilled by cops ready to pounce. Selected for both Locarno and NYC’s New Director/New Films, *The Rubber Gun* became a minor hit at home, earning Genie nominations for Actor and Screenplay. Moyle would later helm the soundtrack-immortalized ’90s teen movies *Pump Up the Volume* and *Empire Records*.

"Life must not be rendered by a photographic reproduction of life, but by the secret laws in the midst of which we can sense models move."
Robert Bresson

French director Robert Bresson (1901–1999), one the 20th century's most important and influential film artists, was master of a spare, rigorous, intensely metaphysical cinema that explores, with rare poetry and purity, the human struggle for grace and redemption.

Bresson made but 13 features in a career spanning four decades; that body of work occupies a rarified space in the pantheon of film history. His singular style—a stripped down, flattened, affectless aesthetic that miraculously turns austerity and asceticism into something approaching the immanent, "the ineffable," he wrote—has been famously described by Paul Schrader and Susan Sontag as transcendental. Bresson didn't trivialize the higher pursuit of his art, insisting that his distinctive methods, a radical departure from those prevailing in narrative film, be designated differently: not cinema, but "cinematograph."

Drama in a Bresson film is internal, spiritual. It derives less from plot, character, or psychology than from an exacting "visible parlance" that renders, in ways both painterly and profound, the mysterious interior battles we wage with freedom, sin, salvation, and truth. One of the defining (and most contentious) characteristics of the Bresson style, apart from his stark distillation of diegetic sound, was his use of actors—or "models," as he preferred to call them. After his first two features, Bresson eschewed the use of professional actors entirely; he didn't want performers performing, actors emoting. Instead, his "models" exist principally as components of the mise-en-scène, as objects of choreographed, automated movement to be manipulated in the service of his severely controlled form—his aim being to remove everything extraneous and leave only what is essential. "One does not create by adding," Bresson said, "but by taking away."

It has been 13 years since our last Bresson retrospective—it is due time for another. Drawing its title from the enigmatic rules governing his filmmaking ethos, "Secret Laws of the Cinematograph" brings together all of Bresson's uncompromising features, many screening in digital restorations marking their Vancouver debuts.

Presented with the support of the Institut français du Canada



May 15 – July 2

Robert Bresson:

May 15 (Thursday) **Opening Night**

6:30 pm

June 13 (Friday)

8:15 pm

July 2 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm



The Devil, Probably

Le diable probablement

France 1977

Robert Bresson

94 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

Bresson's penultimate film was his most controversial: *The Devil, Probably* was prohibited in France to viewers under 18 on the grounds it might incite suicide, and ignited a jury revolt at the Berlinale, where R.W. Fassbinder and British critic Derek Malcolm went public with their anger that it had not won top prize (it was awarded a Special Jury Prize instead). A work of bleak but stirring beauty, the film traces the last six months in the life of a Parisian youth who, horrified by a world of spiritual and physical pollution, rejects the conventional solutions (politics, religion, psychoanalysis) offered by society. "My sickness," he says, "is that I see clearly." Bresson considered *The Devil, Probably* to be his most contemporary work; one of his gravest too: "I hope with all my heart that the young will deploy all the power of their youth against the massive forces of demolition that are ravaging the world."

"By far the most punk movie ever made."

Richard Hell

The opening-night screening of *The Devil, Probably* will be introduced by filmmaker Antoine Bourges (*Concrete Valley, East Hastings Pharmacy*).

Secret Laws of the Cinematograph

May 15 (Thursday) **Opening Night** 8:50 pm
 May 23 (Friday) 8:30 pm
 May 31 (Saturday) 6:30 pm



A Man Escaped

Un condamné à mort s'est échappé

France 1956
 Robert Bresson
 101 min. 35mm
 In French with English subtitles

35mm Print

**"It's probably the best movie ever made.
 Every time I watch it I cry."**

Benny Safdie

Hailed by François Truffaut at the time of its release as "the most important French film of the past ten years," the masterly *A Man Escaped* is cited by many as Bresson's pinnacle achievement. Based on the experiences of French resistance fighter André Devigny, and set to Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor*, the film recounts, in Bresson's singular, spartan style, a condemned man's single-minded efforts to escape a Nazi prison cell in Lyon. Eric Rohmer called the fastidious attention to the tools of the hero's efforts—string, safety pin, spoon—"the miracle of objects." Bresson, who'd been a POW himself, won Best Director honours at Cannes. When asked about the mystical tenor of the film, the director recalled, when as a prisoner, the overwhelming sense of an unseen hand guiding events; *A Man Escaped*'s alternate title, *The Wind Blows Where It Wishes*, references John 3:8.

May 17 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
 May 25 (Sunday) 8:30 pm



Les anges du péché

aka Angels of Sin

France 1943
 Robert Bresson
 86 min. 35mm
 In French with English subtitles

Imported 35mm Print

Bresson's first feature is, like its follow-up *Les dames du Bois de Boulogne*, more elegant and stylized than the sparer masterworks to come but nonetheless boldly announces the central Bressonian themes: isolation, suffering, martyrdom, and the struggle for redemption and grace. It also ranks among the great movies about nuns. A feisty, pampered young woman (Renée Faure) joins a Dominican convent dedicated to the rehabilitation of criminal women and devotes herself—far too single-mindedly, in the eyes of her superiors—to "saving" a bitter, hostile young convict (Jany Holt). Made during the German occupation, *Les anges du péché* was commissioned by Pathé, written with priest Raymond Léopold Bruckberger and playwright Jean Giraudoux, and shot in gorgeous monochrome by Philippe Agostini (who also filmed *Les dames*). Alain Resnais called it "a filmgoer's dream come true." Roland Barthes was also a great admirer.

35mm print courtesy of the Institut français

"One of the most astonishing film debuts ever."

David Thomson, *Time Out*

May 17 (Saturday) 8:30 pm
 May 19 (Monday) 4:00 pm
 May 25 (Sunday) 6:00 pm



Diary of a Country Priest PG

Journal d'un curé de campagne

France 1950
 Robert Bresson
 115 min. DCP
 In French with English subtitles

"Bresson's best film ... Every shot is as true as a handful of earth."

François Truffaut

Perhaps the quintessential Bresson picture, *Diary of a Country Priest* is the work that established the aesthetic austerity and metaphysical intensity of the director's celebrated style. Based on a novel by Georges Bernanos, and featuring a cast of non-professionals (henceforth a Bresson hallmark), the film charts the odyssey of a young parish priest, self-doubting and dying of cancer, whose attempts to minister to the spiritual needs of his flock are met with utter indifference. Critics were awestruck by Bresson's brilliance at filming the apparently unfilmable, at finding a cinematic language for the life of the spirit and for the story of a man's interior development; some cited the work as a stunning return to expressive pictorial values not seen since silent cinema. ("Is *Diary* just a silent film with spoken titles?" posed André Bazin.) *Diary of a Country Priest* truly bespeaks and epitomizes a cinema of grace.

“In four decades, Bresson made only 13 features, works of extraordinary lucidity and profound mystery, of absolute rigor and overwhelming emotion.”

Dennis Lim, *Bookforum*

May 23 (Friday)

6:30 pm



Les dames du Bois de Boulogne

aka The Ladies of the Bois de Boulogne

France 1945

Robert Bresson

85 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

Bresson's second feature is “a landmark in cinema history ... Its influence on subsequent French cinema is far from exhausted” (David Thomson). Made in collaboration with Jean Cocteau, who wrote the dialogue, and deriving much of its dramatic tension from the counterpoint between Cocteau's dense, ornate words and Bresson's natural austerity, *Les dames du Bois de Boulogne* features Maria Casarès (Cocteau's Princess of Death in *Orphée*) in her first starring role. She gives a piercing performance as a jilted woman who takes revenge on her ex-lover by luring him into marriage with a sex worker. The story is freely adapted from an episode in Diderot's 18th-century classic *Jacques the Fatalist* and given a lush, contemporary, Cocteau-like setting filled with flowers, furs, jewels, and shiny automobiles. Antonioni, among others, cited the film as a major influence. Although he received stellar performances here, Bresson would never again work with professional actors.

Restored DCP courtesy of TFI

“A masterpiece. It remains the greatest achievement of its decade in France.”

P. Adams Sitney

May 24 (Saturday)

May 31 (Saturday)

June 13 (Friday)

8:50 pm

4:30 pm

6:30 pm



Pickpocket

France 1959

Robert Bresson

76 min. 35mm

In French with English subtitles

35mm Print

“A film of dazzling originality ... If you deny this film, it is cinema itself as an autonomous art that you call into question.”

Louis Malle

In a body of work full of major achievements, *Pickpocket* definitely ranks as a chef d'oeuvre: legendary critic Richard Roud called it Bresson's masterpiece, *Cahiers du cinéma* voted it the greatest French film of the postwar era, and its influence can be traced across many a disciple's career, not least Paul Schrader's. Loosely inspired by Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and shot on the streets of Paris at the same time Godard was making *Breathless*, *Pickpocket* concerns a compulsive young man (Martin LaSalle) who, having rejected God and convinced himself of his moral superiority to others, takes up the life of a thief—until the love of a young woman offers him the hope of redemption. Bresson's precise depictions of the mechanics of pickpocketing (“ballets of thievery,” said Jean Cocteau) have a real erotic and spiritual charge. Typical of the director's work, the film eschews the conventional psychology that would “explain” its protagonist's actions.

May 29 (Thursday)

June 10 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm

8:20 pm



The Trial of Joan of Arc

Procès de Jeanne d'Arc

France 1962

Robert Bresson

64 min. Blu-ray Disc

In French with English subtitles

Bresson's startling, searing take on one of cinema's most filmed stories is based, like Dreyer's silent masterpiece *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, on the actual transcripts of Joan's trial—here distilled into the very essence of the spare Bressonian aesthetic. Guided by a desire to “make her real, to bring her close,” the director forgoes period costumes and other markers of the medieval world, and also gently modernizes her speech. The film's unsettling focus on the physical torment of the teenage martyr led British critic Gilbert Adair to describe it as “Bresson's essay in sadomasochistic voyeurism.” *The Trial of Joan of Arc* won a Jury Special Prize at Cannes in 1962 (shared with Antonioni's *L'eclisse*) and was much admired by the filmmakers of the French New Wave—and by Tarkovsky, who cited it as a formative influence.

Format note: *The Trial of Joan of Arc* screens from the BFI's 2022 Blu-ray edition.

“Perhaps the ultimate expression of Bresson's unique cinematic voice ... In the austere documenting of Joan's imprisonment and trial, physical objects—chains, stones, walls, windows—become metaphors for her spiritual isolation.”

James Monaco

“What men have accomplished up to now in poetry, in literature, Bresson has done with cinema. You could say that up to this point, the cinema was parasitical; it proceeded from the other arts. And that we have entered, with him, a pure cinema. One that is his alone.”

Marguerite Duras

May 29 (Thursday) 8:10 pm
June 7 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
June 16 (Monday) 6:30 pm



Au hasard Balthazar G

France 1966
Robert Bresson
95 min. DCP
In French with English subtitles

“No film I have ever seen has come so close to convulsing my entire being ... It stands by itself as one of the loftiest pinnacles of artistically realized emotional experience.”
Andrew Sarris, *The New York Observer*

Described by Godard as “the world in an hour and a half” and by Michael Haneke as “the most precious of all cinematic jewels,” this remarkable Christian parable is one of Bresson’s most deeply affecting, lyrical, and accessible works. It centres on the life of an exploited donkey, Balthazar, as he’s coldly passed from owner to owner, bearing witness to the full range of human failings, cruelties, and vices—but also capacities for love. In a parallel and intersecting tale, a young farm girl (Anne Wiazemsky in her debut) is seduced and abused by the leader of a resident motorcycle gang. Together with its follow-up and companion film *Mouchette*, *Balthazar* demonstrates the Bresson style at perhaps its most transcendental, the austerity of form inextricable from the edifying nature of its stark, often severe abasements. In *Sight and Sound*’s 2022 poll, *Balthazar* placed 25th, the highest position for a Bresson film.

June 2 (Monday) 6:30 pm
June 26 (Thursday) 6:30 pm
July 2 (Wednesday) 8:30 pm



L'argent

France 1983
Robert Bresson
84 min. DCP
In French with English subtitles

The awe-inspiring farewell film from one of cinema’s most rigorous masters shared the Best Director prize at Cannes in 1983 with Tarkovsky’s *Nostalghia*, and was selected by many critics and filmmakers as one of the greatest films of the 1980s. Freely adapted from a novella by Tolstoy (*The Forged Coupon*), *L'argent* charts the circulation of a counterfeit bank note and the contagion of evil it spreads as it passes from hand to hand. When an innocent man unwittingly uses it to pay for a meal, he falls into a disastrous downward spiral. As in all Bresson’s major works, the true drama here is internal, spiritual, metaphysical; it derives not from plot or character but emanates from a rigorous austerity and intensity, from a meticulous accumulation of detail. *L'argent* is one of Bresson’s best and most beautiful works.

One of the Ten Greatest Films of All Time
Olivier Assayas, Richard Linklater, Wang Bing,
Sight and Sound 2022 poll

“As a summa and final testament, *L'argent* is magisterial. It makes most other films look puny and inconsequential by comparison.”
James Quandt

June 7 (Saturday) 8:30 pm
June 10 (Tuesday) 6:30 pm



Mouchette G

France 1967
Robert Bresson
81 min. Blu-ray Disc
In French with English subtitles

“Achieves an intense purity of a kind that few directors essay, let alone achieve... The result is an extraordinarily spiritual meditation.”
Tony Rayns, *Time Out*

A work of extraordinary purity and grace, the almost unbearably moving *Mouchette* was Bresson’s second adaptation of a Georges Bernanos novel—*Diary of a Country Priest* was the first—and it serves as something of a companion piece to *Au hasard Balthazar* in its somber but ultimately profound account of earthly suffering. The film chronicles the final 24 hours in the life of 14-year-old Mouchette (Nadine Nortier), a lonely, unloved, and mistreated peasant girl living in Provence with her alcoholic father and dying mother. Bresson charts Mouchette’s torments with a relentlessness that some have found oppressive, even sadistic; others have praised the film for its serious, unsentimental treatments of innocence and childhood. The soundtrack makes sublime use of Monteverdi’s *Magnificat*, while its tour-de-force denouement ranks among cinema’s most affecting. We side with Ingmar Bergman: “Oh, *Mouchette*. I loved it, I loved it!”

One of the Ten Greatest Films of All Time
Tsai Ming-liang, Cristi Puiu, *Sight and Sound* 2022 poll

Format note: *Mouchette* screens from Criterion’s 2020 Blu-ray edition.

May

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

The Cinematheque

Images from top to bottom: *Killer of Sheep*, 1978, *Les dames du Bois de Boulogne*, 1945; *Ran* 1985; 2024; *Doktor Glas*, 1968.

DOXA
Documentary Film
Festival 2025
May 2–11

2

3

9

10

8

7

6

5

4

11

12



14

15

16

17

18

19



21

22

23

24

25

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27

28

29

30

31

June

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Essential Cinema
7:00 pm
Ran 

1

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
L'argent
Essential Cinema
8:30 pm
India Song

2



3

New Restoration
6:30 pm
Compensation
Robert Bresson
8:30 pm
Une femme douce

8

DIM Cinema
7:00 pm
Lily Jue Sheng: very abstract and a little bit harsh
Guest 

9

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
Mouchette 
8:20 pm
The Trial of Joan of Arc

10

Essential Cinema
6:30 pm
India Song
New Cinema
9:00 pm
The Ballad of Suzanne Césaire

11

Mai Zetterling 100
Opening Night
7:00 pm
Loving Couples 
Guest 

12

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
Pickpocket
8:15 pm
The Devil, Probably

13

Mai Zetterling 100
6:30 pm
Doktor Glas
8:20 pm
The Girls + The War Game

14

Film Club
10:30 am
Fyodor Khitruk and Yuri Norstein x 6
New Restoration
1:00 pm
Batang West Side
Essential Cinema
6:30 pm
Ran 

15

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
Au hasard Balthazar 
Mai Zetterling 100
8:30 pm
Amorosa

16

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
Lancelot du lac
New Restoration
8:30 pm
Compensation

17

Frames of Mind
7:00 pm
Inedia
Guest 

18

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
Une femme douce
New Restoration
8:30 pm
The Sealed Soil

19

Mai Zetterling 100
6:30 pm
Night Games 
Robert Bresson
8:45 pm
Four Nights of a Dreamer

20

National Indigenous Peoples Day
7:00 pm
I Am Ishi: The Performance Art Film
Free 

21

Mai Zetterling 100
6:00 pm
Amorosa
New Restoration
8:30 pm
The Sealed Soil

22

New Cinema
6:30 pm
The Ballad of Suzanne Césaire
Mai Zetterling 100
8:15 pm
Doktor Glas

23



24

Our Stories to Tell
7:00 pm
Keepers of the Fire
Guest  Free 

25

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
L'argent
New Restoration
8:30 pm
The Rubber Gun 

26

Mai Zetterling 100
6:30 pm
The Girls + The War Game
Robert Bresson
8:50 pm
Lancelot du lac

27

New Restoration
6:30 pm
The Rubber Gun 
Mai Zetterling 100
8:30 pm
We Have Many Names + Vincent the Dutchman

28

Essential Cinema
6:00 pm
India Song
Robert Bresson
8:30 pm
Lancelot du lac

29

New Restoration
6:30 pm
The Sealed Soil
Mai Zetterling 100
8:30 pm
Loving Couples 

30

Essential Cinema
3:00 pm
Ran 
New Restoration
6:30 pm
The Rubber Gun 
Mai Zetterling 100
8:30 pm
Night Games 

1

Robert Bresson
6:30 pm
The Devil, Probably
8:30 pm
L'argent

2



Scan the QR code to sign up for our weekly newsletter, Cinemail, and stay up-to-date with information about screenings, events, and ticket giveaways!

“To not get Bresson is to not get the idea of motion pictures.”

J. Hoberman, *Village Voice*

June 8 (Sunday) 8:30 pm
June 19 (Thursday) 6:30 pm



Une femme douce

aka A Gentle Woman

France 1969
Robert Bresson
88 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

Based on a story by Dostoevsky (as with Bresson's next film, *Four Nights of a Dreamer*), *Une femme douce* is Bresson's first film in colour and marks the stand-out screen debut of Dominique Sanda, a Bresson non-pro who went on to have a major career in European cinema, including leading roles in Bertolucci's *The Conformist* and *1900*. A disconcerting told-in-flashback tale of the failure of love and the walls that separate us, the film concerns a materialistic Parisian pawnbroker struggling to understand why his free-spirited young wife—the “gentle woman” of the title played by Sanda—committed suicide. (Suicide was an increasingly prevalent theme for Bresson.) The director's use of colour, a palette of almost exclusively blues and greens, is characteristically expert. This haunting, poetic, and mysterious work is often cited as the director's most sensual and secular film.

“An eerie crystalline work, a serious affirmation within a story of suicide.”

Manny Farber, *Artforum*

June 17 (Tuesday) 6:30 pm
June 27 (Friday) 8:50 pm
June 29 (Sunday) 8:30 pm



Lancelot du Lac

France 1974
Robert Bresson
85 min. DCP
In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“It's stunningly beautiful, mesmerising, exhausting, uplifting, amazing—all the things you could possibly expect from a masterpiece.”

Geoff Brown, *Time Out*

Long a pet Bresson project (he had been trying for two decades to bring it to the screen), *Lancelot du Lac* presents a masterfully anti-heroic portrait of Camelot and the Age of Chivalry in decline. In Bresson's severe, startling vision, the heroes of Arthurian legend must face the failure of their impossible quest for the Holy Grail, while Lancelot and Guinevere prove unable to conquer human weakness with the power of love. These dispirited Knights of the Round Table clank noisily about in clumsy armour, reduced to infighting and petty jealousies, and re-enact rituals now debased to mere bloodletting and crude violence. Not unlike his approach in *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, Bresson abstains from period authenticity: “There are horses, knights in armour, a tournament,” he said. “All as anachronistic as possible.”

June 20 (Friday) 8:45 pm



Four Nights of a Dreamer

Quatre nuits d'un rêveur

France 1971
Robert Bresson
82 min. DCP

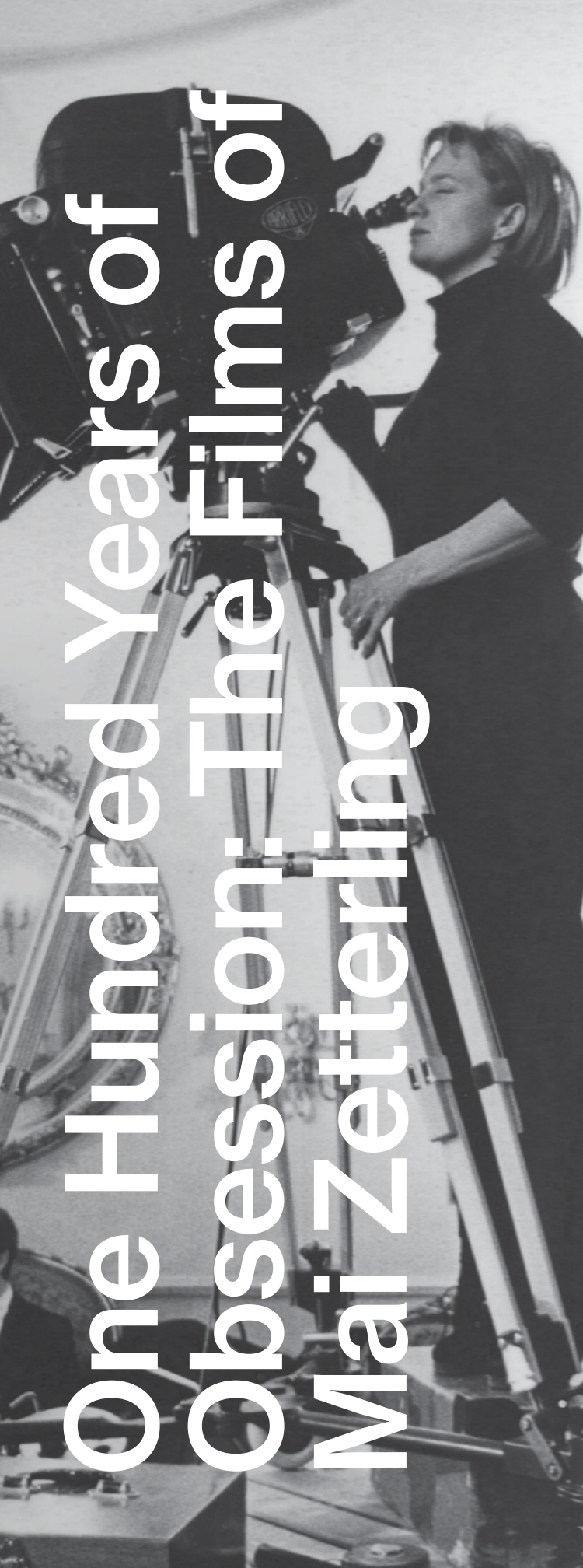
In French with English subtitles

New Restoration

The rarely screened *Four Nights of a Dreamer* is Robert Bresson's great forgotten masterpiece, a stark yet haunting ode to romantic idealism and the capriciousness of love. Adapted from Fyodor Dostoevsky's “White Nights,” *Four Nights* follows Jacques (Guillaume des Forêts), a lonely artist who roams bohemian Paris in search of the girl of his dreams. One night he saves a beautiful young woman, Marthe (Isabelle Weingarten), from plunging into the Seine in despair over her rejection by an avoidant lover (Jean-Maurice Monnoyer). Jacques compassionately attempts to reunite Marthe with her beau, but his feelings for his new friend soon become less than platonic and his investment in her personal drama far from selfless. *Four Nights of a Dreamer* has been called the French master's “loveliest” work: with his signature minimalism, Bresson films the shimmering beauty of nocturnal Paris as it enfolds his characters in endless possibility—subtly capturing the wonder of unexpected connection and the mystery of fate. —Janus Films

“Certainly the rarest of Bresson's films—see it now or never—*Four Nights of a Dreamer* has a dreamy beauty unparalleled in the rest of his work.”

James Quandt, TIFF



One Hundred Years of Obsession: The Films of Mai Zetterling

June 12 – July 1

Poised on the edge of stardom and committed to an American studio contract, Mai Zetterling (1925–1994), an actor born in Västerås, Sweden, and trained in London at the Royal Dramatic Theatre, was decisive: she was dissatisfied, and would reinvent herself. “I consider myself still only a beginner, and I feel that after ten years I have achieved nothing of what I really want, especially in the cinema,” Zetterling wrote in 1951. What followed was an autodidact’s approach to learning filmmaking, the prelude to a directorial career that never fought for acceptance and instead charted a modernist path that earned the praise of supporters as varied as John Waters and Simone de Beauvoir.

“I’m time-ridden, time-obsessed, time-infatuated,” Zetterling wrote in her autobiography, and while she has been categorized as a feminist and a fantasist, her films are most concerned with the way the experiences of modern life—work, sex, art, and their public presentation—might be conveyed through a free-flowing approach to cinematic time. In all of her key works, no location or person exists purely in the present. The imagination travels willfully to rewrite the past, imagine the future, and loop back on itself, so that first love, searing trauma, death, birth, mature self-actualization, and the bruises of societal expectation all exist next to each other.

Her transition from a popular actor to an uncompromising, frequently over-budget director established a combative relationship with the mostly male critical establishment in Sweden, not to mention producers and the public. Except for her ambitious and exemplary debut *Loving Couples*, none of her features found widespread acceptance at home. In North America, her films, like those of her contemporaries Ingmar Bergman and Vilgot Sjöman, were branded as “Swedish Shockers,” censorship-free excavations of sexual neuroses—a reductive but marketing-friendly means by which her films could travel.

Today, her signature can be read in a variety of ways, some contradictory. Zetterling was an artist from a working-class background, but she never sought popular support. Her film *The Girls* inspired Beauvoir to propose a seven-part series adaptation of *The Second Sex*, but the film itself maintains an ironic position regarding the possibility of feminist solidarity. Her mix of audacious, intimate camera direction and satirical distance garnered comparisons to Federico Fellini and Luis Buñuel—filmmakers that Zetterling acknowledged as two of her favourites. But her voice is far too distinct to be merely a relative of those canonical figures.

On the occasion of Zetterling’s centenary, the most relevant conclusion might be that it is long past time to see the films on their own merits. This retrospective, drawing from recent restorations by the Swedish Film Institute, is the first to happen in Vancouver. Near-complete, it spans more than twenty years of her singular career, offering an opportunity to discover the sharp contrasts and exuberant elicitations of her time-obsessed art.

“[Zetterling’s] will to direct made her persist against all odds. Her pitfalls, her successes, and her strategies are well worth reconstructing and, by doing so, we can discover why her position in film history and women’s history is so paradoxical—simultaneously remembered and even revered by some, yet completely forgotten by others.”

Mariah Larsson, *A Cinema of Obsession: The Life and Work of Mai Zetterling*

June 12 (Thursday) **Opening Night**
June 30 (Monday)

7:00 pm
8:30 pm



Loving Couples

Älskande par

Sweden 1964
Mai Zetterling
118 min. DCP

In Swedish with English subtitles

New Restoration

Mai Zetterling’s feature debut is so ambitiously crafted that it earned comparison to *Citizen Kane* upon its release. The film, with its use of actors from Ingmar Bergman’s circle of collaborators (as well as cinematographer Sven Nyqvist), is just as assured. But where *Kane* is motivated by an investigation’s calm rigour, Zetterling’s dazzling multi-protagonist journey into the past splinters then merges two ruling ideas: the certainty of patriarchal entrapment and the unresolvable mysteries of love. Three women are admitted into a maternity ward; each contemplates their pregnancy as an existential question. Their pasts resurface, none of which entirely conform to society’s expectations—to be straight, married, and contentedly resigned to the guidance of physicians and absent male partners. Based on writer Agnes von Krusenstjerna’s *Fröknarna von Pahlen* cycle, *Loving Couples* adventurously fragments its source’s novelistic detail into both reveries and nightmares.

“Bold ... An arresting, serious drama that proves [Zetterling] knows the directorial craft and is a welcome addition to it.”

A.H. Weiler, *The New York Times*

The opening-night screening of *Loving Couples* will be introduced by novelist Anakana Schofield. Schofield is the author of three award-winning novels: *Bina*, *Martin John*, and *Malarky*. Her new novel *The Library of Brothel* will be published in 2026.

June 14 (Saturday)
June 23 (Monday)

6:30 pm
8:15 pm



Doktor Glas

Denmark/Sweden 1968

Mai Zetterling
83 min. DCP

In Swedish and Danish with English subtitles

“A superb and sensitive film ... Zetterling, dealing with the darkest of passions, has achieved a lyricism of tone and a throbbing humanism that will not leave you untouched.”

Judith Crist, *New York Magazine*

Adapted from Hjalmar Söderberg’s acclaimed novel, which projects a moral dilemma into the secret pages of a physician’s diary, *Doktor Glas* is Mai Zetterling’s most stylistically controlled film and a subtle masterwork about the neuroses of domineering men. Both Glas (Per Oscarsson) and Reverend Gregorius (Ulf Palme, *Miss Julie*) are men used to exercising a god-like power in Stockholm. The mannered faces which they turn to the world are quickly unmasked in Zetterling’s treatment. Glas, led with equal parts sympathy and desire, breaks from his conservative medical practice when the reverend’s wife requests his aid: a cure to her husband’s violent “use of God for his own interest and for fulfilling his own wishes,” against her refusal of sex. Zetterling fragments the narrative with a myopic present-tense, overexposed dream scenes, and haunted voiceover. The director gets inside Glas’s head, and also movingly conveys the psychological cost and tension of Mrs. Gregorius’s everyday life.

DCP courtesy Nordisk Film Production A/S

Advisory: *Doktor Glas* includes a scene of sexual violence.

“Zetterling stands somewhere between Ida Lupino and Margarethe von Trotta, not because she was also a versatile actress and writer, but in the sense that she emerged from a scene already ripe with innovations, [only to] push those possibilities even further by uncompromisingly changing the camera’s point of view to a feminine one.”

Ehsan Khoshbakht, *Il Cinema Ritrovato*

June 14 (Saturday)
June 27 (Friday)

8:20 pm
6:30 pm



The Girls

Flickorna

Sweden 1968
Mai Zetterling
100 min. DCP

In Swedish with English subtitles

New Restoration

Rejected by Swedish audiences and critics, *The Girls* shows Mai Zetterling at the height of her provocative powers. Zetterling might have known her audience would be combative; the film anticipates and is powered by acts of refusal. Its plot concerns a touring show of Aristophanes’s *Lysistrata*, a comic satire—as well as an ongoing political reference point—in which a group of women, in response to warfare and male dominance, choose to uncompromisingly reject the act of sex. The protagonists, played by Bibi Andersson, Harriet Andersson, and Gunnel Lindblom, find themselves submerged in the play’s text, which brings their own lives—and their distance from the play’s ideas, or any coherent solidarity—into sharp relief. Zetterling regards their attempts to change their own minds—and their audience’s—with a mixture of suspicion, amusement, and intermittent satisfaction.

“Brilliant and coruscating.”

Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight and Sound*

preceded by

The War Game
United Kingdom 1963
Mai Zetterling
15 min. DCP

After a series of short documentaries, Mai Zetterling completed her autodidact film education with *The War Game*, a dialogue-free narrative in which two boys chase each other through an architectural maze in pursuit of one objective: the chance to pull the trigger on a gun.

“Zetterling’s interest in theatricalities as a heightened metaphor for life can be seen in *The War Game* in an embryonic form.”

Derek Elley, *The World of Women in Film*

June 16 (Monday)
June 22 (Sunday)

8:30 pm
6:00 pm



Amorosa

Sweden 1986
Mai Zetterling
117 min. DCP

In Swedish and Italian with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Stunningly real and strangely haunting ... Ekblad’s sinewy acting talent is just right for Zetterling’s intense dramatic style.”

Keith Keller, *Variety*

For her final feature, Mai Zetterling realized a full-circle project: a biopic of Agnes von Krusenstjerna (Stina Ekblad), the author Zetterling adapted in her first feature *Loving Couples*. *Amorosa* begins in a dreamscape rendering of a mental hospital before flashing into a lush, period-detailed version of reality, one in which the literary aspirant, then success, is surrounded by reminders that her behaviour, state of health, and imagination are, to the mostly male evaluators in her family and social circle, aberrant. It isn’t hard to see Krusenstjerna, who describes romance and family life as depraved institutions, as a foil for Zetterling and her own controversial art. Zetterling said, “I don’t find her morbid or strange or incomprehensible ... I understand her completely.” Both Ekblad and Erland Josephson (*The Sacrifice*), who plays Krusenstjerna’s controlling partner, received acting prizes at Sweden’s Guldbagge Awards.

“A fearless filmmaker whose work is socially and sexually transgressive... [Zetterling’s films] display not just a thematic but a pronounced stylistic unity.”

Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight and Sound*

June 20 (Friday)
July 1 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm
8:30 pm



Night Games

Nattlek

Sweden 1966
Mai Zetterling
105 min. DCP

In Swedish with English subtitles

New Restoration

Mai Zetterling’s second feature, set in a memory-haunted mansion that wields a soul-crushing, incapacitating power over its occupants, was deemed such an extreme provocation that its Venice premiere screenings—and even its poster—were removed from public view. Its coolly casual depiction of childhood trauma is set in relief to a Fellini-esque carnival atmosphere, which earned ecstatically high marks from John Waters. But Zetterling’s most impressive contribution is the film’s confident interplay of past, present, and less easily identified versions of subjective time. Jan (Keve Hjelm) returns to his childhood home with fiancée Irene (Ingrid Thulin) as their wedding approaches. Every door, object, and room holds the potential for a collision with an uncontrollable riot of memory, which Zetterling transitions in and out of with controlled camera moves, sudden cuts, and impossible staging. Jörgen Lindström, the child actor from Bergman’s *Persona*, portrays the younger Jan.

“*Night Games* was my all-time favourite film for many years... Zetterling directs with a ludicrously melodramatic gothic sledgehammer to deal with this story of impotence, child masturbation, cross-dressing, porno flicks, and vomiting... A real masterpiece.”

John Waters

June 28 (Saturday)

8:30 pm



We Have Many Names + Vincent the Dutchman

Program runtime: 109 min.

We Have Many Names

Vi har många namn

Sweden 1976 | Mai Zetterling | 51 min. DCP

In Swedish with English subtitles

Mai Zetterling first became known in Sweden as an actor in films by directors like Ingmar Bergman and Alf Sjöberg, but once she stepped behind the camera she left that practice behind—until *We Have Many Names*. The film’s premise is a theatrical, universal treatment of the destabilizing grief that arrives at the end of a longterm relationship. Zetterling is always dissecting and comparing the snares of love, or “kärlek,” a word that opens this film like an incantation. But here, in the format of an intense chamber drama, Zetterling made arguably her most personal work, an exorcism of her feelings of betrayal and heartbreak after the end of her marriage to David Hughes, whose artistic collaboration supported her directing career from its beginning.

Restored DCP courtesy of the Swedish Film Institute

preceded by

Vincent the Dutchman

United Kingdom 1972 | Mai Zetterling | 58 min. DCP

“This is a film I cherish for its rawness and verve, a long, brave reach for a portrait ... Zetterling asks with frank élan and the help of equally dedicated contemporary artists, ‘How to make art and live a life?’”

Tilda Swinton

Michael Gough plays an actor preparing to play van Gogh—“a man forever stopping and staring at things”—in a film. As he attempts a method approach, his voiceover reflections spiral into a quest for meaning: does artistry demand an extroverted, internalized, or inaccessible kind of performance? Zetterling intertwines Gough’s wanderings with interviews of contemporary artists, unscripted interactions between an in-costume Gough and Dutch locals, and increasingly fictionalized flashes of the despair and violence that colour van Gogh’s life and legend.

Format note: *Vincent the Dutchman* screens from a digitized version of the film’s transfer to broadcast tape.

Advisory: *Vincent the Dutchman* includes scenes of bullfighting.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

June 21 (Saturday) **Free Admission**

7:00 pm



I Am Ishi: The Performance Art Film

Canada 2023

Dana Claxton

111 min. DCP

Vancouver Premiere

Directed by acclaimed visual artist Dana Claxton (Hunkpapa Lakota) and produced by the Ishi Collective, this uncanny, experimental feature-length work serves as both document and expansion of a performance piece by James Luna (Payómkawichum/Ipai/Mexican), whose seminal *Artifact Piece* broke new ground for Indigenous art in the 1980s. The film, like Luna's 2015–17 touring project, draws from the life of Ishi, last survivor of the Yahi people, who became a “living specimen” at a University of California museum following his 1911 appearance in Oroville, California. *I Am Ishi* intercuts and overlays a recording of Luna's live performance with original material conceived by the Collective. In Claxton's most striking filmic device, cycles of superimposed image and sound play in reverse—a suitably destabilizing effect for the subjugation of a man made into an anthropological attraction. Eerie and unsettling, *I Am Ishi* confronts the dehumanizing legacy of colonial institutions and their abhorrent, academic practices.

The Ishi Collective is Dana Claxton, Jeneen Frei Njootli (Vuntut Gwich'in), Heather Haynes, and the late James Luna (1950–2018).

Co-presented with the Vancouver Art Gallery

Vancouver
Artgallery

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day, a celebration of Indigenous Peoples culture and heritage in Canada. Initiated by the Government of Canada in cooperation with Indigenous organizations, this event, occurring annually on the summer solstice, provides an opportunity to recognize, reflect on, and learn about the rich histories, diverse traditions, and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

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.

June 5 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



The Marriage Project

پروژه ازدواج

Iran/France/Qatar 2020

Atieh Attarzadeh, Hesam Eslami

79 min. DCP

In Farsi with English subtitles

“Madness, love, and hope are interwoven in this film, which alternates between anthropological observation and diary, to give us a heartbreaking account of personal relationships.”

Elena López Riera, *Visions du Réel* 2020

This award-winning documentary explores the intersection of love, mental health, and the right to companionship. Directed by Atieh Attarzadeh and Hesam Eslami, *The Marriage Project* offers a close look into the world of individuals dealing with mental health challenges while pursuing one of the most universal human experiences—love. The film explores the controversial efforts of the director and staff of the Ehsan House care facility in Tehran, as they navigate a complex question: can individuals with mental health conditions find happiness and stability through marriage? The challenging ethical dilemmas of such experiments raise questions about consent and happiness in general. The filmmakers capture intimate moments of connection, revealing the profound impact of both environment and personal history. Through their lens, we experience isolation and intimacy, prompting us to reflect on our perceptions of love, relationships, and societal limitations.

Post-screening audience discussion moderated by PELAN.

Ongoing Series

DIM Cinema

Moving-image art in dialogue with cinema.

Curated by the DIM Collective

DIM Cinema is a monthly series that presents Canadian and international moving-image art in dialogue with cinema. The series was initiated in 2008 by local curator Amy Kazymierchyk to draw attention to artists and experimental filmmakers whose practices engage with cinema as a medium, social context, formal structure, or architectural space. The name of the series is inspired by the diffused Vancouver sky, the darkness of the cinema, and a quote from James Broughton's *Making Light of It* (1992): "Movie images are dim reflections of the beauty and ferocity in mankind." From 2014–2024, DIM Cinema was curated by the late Michèle Smith.

The DIM Collective is Tobin Gibson, the Iris Film Collective, Steff Hui Cí Ling, and Casey Wei.

May 26 (Monday)

7:00 pm



Fading Landscapes: The Films of Linda Fenstermaker

Program runtime: 53 min

"At her most powerful, Fenstermaker simply insists on taking quiet, soft things seriously."

Shannon Gormley, *Willamette Week*

Today's world is very loud, almost maliciously overstimulating, with an ever-increasing inclination to separate us sapiens from our bodies and the natural world. To encourage and elevate singular moments of connection, then, may be seen as defiance. While that might not be the first descriptor used for the work of Washington-based filmmaker, curator, and farmer Linda Fenstermaker, we soon recognize in this collection of impressionistic 16mm films that quiet connection is the point—and that the slow persistence of nature is subtly revolutionary. Through her focus on organic food systems and empowered women, Fenstermaker explores interactions and relationships between body and landscape. Iris Film Collective is proud to resurrect this Vancouver screening of "Fading Landscapes," an event originally scheduled for March 2020. However, in a manner reminiscent of the pastoral subjects of Fenstermaker's lens, patience is rewarded by harvest, and in due course we receive the bounty of these films. —Iris Film Collective

Abandoned Generations

USA 2015
Linda Fenstermaker
10 min. Digital

Tri-Alogue #3

USA 2017
Caryn Cline, Linda Fenstermaker, Reed O'Beirne
3 min. Digital

Here I Breathe

USA 2017
Linda Fenstermaker
8 min. Digital

Trahere

USA 2018
Caryn Cline, Linda Fenstermaker
4 min. Digital

Erased Etchings

USA 2017
Linda Fenstermaker
9 min. Digital

Partial

USA 2016
Linda Fenstermaker
7 min. Digital

Sometimes All of Summertime

USA 2019
Linda Fenstermaker
9 min. Digital

Bitch Island

USA 2017
Linda Fenstermaker
3 min. Digital

June 9 (Monday)

7:00 pm



Lily Jue Sheng: very abstract and a little bit harsh

Program runtime: 41 min.

In Person: Lily Jue Sheng

"very abstract and a little bit harsh" traces the political consciousness of Lily Jue Sheng's practice through a decade of their experience around unstable cinema economies. The making of Sheng's *Force Majeure* coincided with a period of optical printing and their occupation as a small-gauge technician cataloguing late filmmaker and projectionist Stom Sogo's life work. His untimely passing in 2012 tasked Sheng with handling Sogo's queer and seminal diary films, which heavily influenced their early artistic process. For the first time, Sheng's work is screening alongside Sogo's *Slow Death*, in a timely combination that speaks to the psychic effects of technology, youth, and capitalist violence. *Heritage Architecture* marks Sheng's shift to landscape cinema following a period of labour organizing. The program will be accompanied by a reading from their upcoming chapbook *Wage Theft*, a mix of poetic and agitprop thinking that draws from class struggles across various fronts and fissures, followed by a Q&A. —Steff Hui Cí Ling

"My films have strong animist sensibilities, but I want to talk about it like a historical materialist."

Lily Jue Sheng

Force Majeure

USA 2015–2017
Lily Jue Sheng
5 min. 16mm

Mercurial Matter

USA 2014–2017
Lily Jue Sheng
6 min. 16mm

Change 变

USA 2016–2017
Lily Jue Sheng
6 min. Digital

Heritage Architecture

建筑遗产
China/Taiwan/USA 2024
Lily Jue Sheng
9 min. Digital

Slow Death

USA 2000
Stom Sogo
15 min. Digital

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 Iahitail, 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 Stelat'en First Nation.

May 28 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Night Raiders PG

Canada/New Zealand 2021

Danis Goulet

101 min. DCP

In Cree and English with English subtitles

In Person: Brooklyn Letexier-Hart

"A thoughtful and invigorating sci-fi thriller quite unlike anything else this country has produced."

Barry Hertz, *The Globe and Mail*

Night Raiders, directed by nêhinaw âpihtawikosisân (Cree/Métis) filmmaker Danis Goulet, takes place in 2043, a dystopian post-war future, and stars Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (Blackfoot/Sámi) and Brooklyn Letexier-Hart (Cree/Métis) as Cree mother and daughter Niska and Waseese. We follow their journey of living on the lam from a state-run institution that is all too familiar. Goulet's feature debut is a sci-fi thriller that exposes the horrors of systematic oppression and genocide. "One of the most important Canadian films in recent memory ... If this story echoes the real forced assimilation of Indigenous children that colonizing powers undertook in Canada, the US, Australia, and beyond, that's no coincidence ... With *Night Raiders*, Goulet transforms the ugly reality of residential schools into remarkable, cinematic world building" (TIFF 2021).

Best Director of a Canadian Film
Vancouver Film Critics Circle 2021

Post-screening Q&A with actor Brooklyn Letexier-Hart.

June 25 (Wednesday) **Free Admission**

7:00 pm



Keepers of the Fire

Program runtime: 63 min.

Filmmakers in Person

Matriarchs have been at the forefront of the fight for Indigenous water, land, culture, and people. That struggle is highlighted within this National Indigenous History Month program. The poetic hybrid documentary *Our Grandmother the Inlet* follows Kayah George (Tulalip and Tsleil-Waututh Nations) and her grandmother Ta7a, the daughter of Chief Dan George, with a focus on their ancestral lineage. Set in the shadow of industry dominance, the film explores the mental health challenges Indigenous youth face, the power of reconnection, and the Tsleil-Waututh teaching of water being the oldest grandmother and birthplace of creation. The documentary *Keepers of the Fire*, directed by Christine Welsh (Métis), follows the lives of Indigenous women storytellers, dreamers, healers, and fighters across Canada. These are the matriarchs at the frontlines of resistance to cultural assimilation, protecting and defending their lands, cultures, and peoples who have been here since time immemorial.

Our Grandmother the Inlet
Canada 2023
Kayah George, Jaime Leigh
Gianopoulos
9 min. DCP

Keepers of the Fire
Canada 1994
Christine Welsh
54 min. DCP

Post-screening discussion with Kayah George and Jaime Leigh
Gianopoulos, directors of *Our Grandmother the Inlet*.

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.

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, film curator and cultural worker.

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

May 21 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Memoir of a Snail

Australia 2024
Adam Elliot
94 min. DCP

Recently nominated for an Academy Award for Best Animated Feature, Adam Elliot's tragicomedy recounts the misfortunes of a misfit named Grace who becomes obsessed with snails. After she is separated from her twin brother Gilbert, traumatic events and failed relationships compound and lead to a myriad of mental health conditions including hoarding, kleptomania, and depression. To cope, a melancholic Grace becomes an ardent collector of romance novels and guinea pigs. Eventually her loneliness is alleviated by an unlikely but sweet friendship with an eccentric elderly woman named Pinky, whose lust for life offers Grace a glimmer of inspiration and hope. A stop-motion feat worthy of the big screen, Elliot's poignant tale features over 200 handmade claymation puppets, rivalling a Tim Burton production. The medium is particularly suited to exploring the imperfections of the human condition, including its most agonizing and beautiful quandaries.

"A weirdly affecting tragicomedy ... *Memoir of a Snail* feels heartfelt and personal, like an exhortation to the downtrodden drawn from hard-won life experience."

Alissa Wilkinson, *The New York Times*

Post-screening discussion with Wolfgang Linden, a professor emeritus in Clinical and Health Psychology at UBC.

June 18 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Inedia

Canada 2024
Liz Cairns
107 min. DCP

"[Cairns] has made an atmospheric debut feature that immerses us in an eerie, unsettling world ... Through its heroine, the film explores themes of desire for escape, pain, and grief, all within a halo of strangeness and ethereal poetry, enhanced by the grain of 16mm film."

Festival du nouveau cinéma 2024

While straining to emotionally connect with those around her, a young woman named Cora experiences debilitating and painful allergic reactions to food. Looking for answers to her medical mystery, Cora discovers Sun Haven, an isolated community practicing breatharianism—the pseudoscientific belief that humans can survive solely on light and air. Set on a Gulf Island in British Columbia, *Inedia* creates, with glistening 16mm cinematography, a trance-like atmosphere mirroring Cora's fragile mental state. After a series of unsettling events, Cora notices cracks of darkness hiding in the corners of her new community, revealing how vulnerability can be exploited under the guise of healing. Cairns's screenplay offers a suspenseful and nuanced portrayal of eating disorders and group manipulation, resulting in one of the most compelling Canadian dramas of the past year.

Post-screening discussion with writer-director Liz Cairns.

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), and free coffee and tea for adults!

Special discounted ticket price for parent/guardian and child under 13 (\$18). Additional child tickets available at \$7.

May 18 (Sunday)

10:30 am



Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water × 4

Program runtime: 100 min.

English dubbed versions

Before *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, Anno Hideaki was tasked with directing the series *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water*, a Paris-set adventure tale that branches out into hidden worlds. The idea wasn't entirely Anno's; the series treatment was actually written by Miyazaki Hayao, and elements of its story eventually appeared in his film *Castle in the Sky*. But Anno's take is distinctly his own. Nadia, a circus acrobat, and Jean, the nephew of an inventor, are both orphans. Nadia doesn't even know where she's from—she doesn't feel at home anywhere. Together, they literally fly away from their problems and embark upon a journey that references, in ways that won't surprise Anno fans, both Jules Verne and the Bible. This program condenses the series' first major arc, which introduces Nadia and Jean's friendship, Captain Nemo and his submarine crew, treasure hunter Grandis Granva, and a nefarious plot, masterminded by the evil Gargoyle, to harness a world-destroying power.

“Enduring charm and emotional validity... The combination of Vernean adventure, Dickensian richness of characterization, and steampunk technology is irresistible.”

Jonathan Clements & Helen McCarthy, *The Anime Encyclopedia*

“The Girl at the Eiffel Tower”
(Episode 1)
Japan 1990
25 min. Blu-ray

“Infiltration of the Secret Base”
(Episode 6)
Japan 1990
25 min. Blu-ray

“Nautilus, the Fantastic Submarine”
(Episode 4)
Japan 1990
25 min. Blu-ray

“Mission to Rescue Nadia”
(Episode 8)
Japan 1990
25 min. Blu-ray

June 15 (Sunday)

10:30 am



Fyodor Khitruk and Yuri Norstein × 6

Program runtime: 74 min.

This Film Club program is presented in Russian with English subtitles. While most of the story in these films can be understood through imagery, it is recommended for audience members who can read independently.

Rarely screened in North America, the classics of the Russian studio Soyuzmultfilm are some of the greatest works of animated art ever made. Yuri Norstein and Fyodor Khitruk, two directors from the studio's best years, were linked in important ways. They co-directed a short and co-founded an animation school, and, in the case of *The Heron and the Crane*, Khitruk fought and maneuvered to ensure Norstein's vision made it to the screen intact. This program combines some of their best all-ages work. Khitruk made what many consider the best adaptation of A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*, in which the honey-craving bear whose head is filled with straw is a poet-philosopher and an inseparable friend of the antsy, balloon-loving Piglet. Norstein, using animated paper-puppet designs devised by his wife Francheska Yarusova, made awe-inspiring modern fairy tales about friendship, fear, home, and hardship. This program marks the 50th anniversary of his great *Hedgehog in the Fog*.

Winnie-the-Pooh
USSR 1969
Fyodor Khitruk
11 min. DCP

Winnie-the-Pooh
Pays a Visit
USSR 1971
Fyodor Khitruk
10 min. DCP

Winnie-the-Pooh
and a Busy Day
USSR 1972
Fyodor Khitruk,
Gennadiy Sokolskiy
20 min. DCP

The Fox and
the Hare
USSR 1973
Yuri Norstein
12 min. DCP

The Heron and
the Crane
USSR 1974
Yuri Norstein
10 min. DCP

Hedgehog in the Fog
USSR 1975
Yuri Norstein
11 min. DCP

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