

November / December 2025



The Cinematheque

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 non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the understanding and appreciation of cinema as art by bringing the very best in film culture and education to audiences of all ages. We invite you to support The Cinematheque's work by making a gift today. thecinematheque.ca/about/donate

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: *Twin Peaks: The Return*, David Lynch, 2017
Contents image: Chelsea Birks, Learning & Outreach Director

The Cinematheque is situated on the unceded, ancestral homelands of the x̱w̱məθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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Sangeon Yoo

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Programming Associate
Michael Scoular

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Program notes: Shaun Inouye,
Michael Scoular, Chelsea Birks

DIM Cinema notes: DIM Collective
Frames of Mind notes: Selina Crammond
Our Stories to Tell notes: Akira Iahtail
PELAN Presents notes: PELAN
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

\$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.

200–1131 Howe Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6Z 2L7
604 688 8202
info@thecinematheque.ca

[instagram @thecinematheque](https://www.instagram.com/thecinematheque)
vimeo.com/thecinematheque
letterboxd.com/thecinematheque

1131 Howe Street, Vancouver
thecinematheque.ca

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Our Learning & Outreach Director Chelsea Birks made the difficult decision to move on to a new opportunity at UBC in November. Over her five years with The Cinematheque, Chelsea made a tremendous impact, leading Learning & Outreach with creativity, care, and commitment. We are so grateful for all that she brought to the organization and the lasting contributions she leaves behind. Thank you, Chelsea! You will be missed!

Kate Ladyshevsky
Executive Director



Cinema Thinks the World



November 4 (Tuesday) [Free Admission](#)

7:00pm



Eve and the Fire Horse PG

Canada 2005
Julia Kwan
92 min. 35mm

In Person: Julia Kwan

[“An exceptional feature debut... Both a finely wrought period piece and a slice of delicately captured childhood.”](#)

[Ken Eisner, Variety](#)

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of a homegrown classic, this edition of “Cinema Thinks the World” welcomes director Julia Kwan to discuss her stylishly shot charmer. *Eve* is set in a lovingly recreated early-1970s Vancouver and centres on precocious nine-year-old Eve (Phoebe Kut), ominously born in the Year of the Fire Horse—said to produce difficult children! She and older sister Karena (Hollie Lo) let their wild imaginations get the best of them as they fervently embrace Catholicism, Buddhism, and superstition (and sometimes a mixture of all three) in order to cope with several crises in their immigrant Chinese family. The film’s multiple awards include six Leos, a Special Jury Prize at Sundance, Most Popular Canadian Film honours at VIFF, and the Canadian Screen Award for best first feature.

This free screening is presented as part of “Cinema Thinks the World,” a partnership project between The University of British Columbia and The Cinematheque. After the film, there will be a short reception followed by a one-hour panel talk with audience discussion.

Introduced by Julia Kwan

Panelists: Grace Chin, Christine Kim, Natalie Murao, Danielle Wong

New Restoration

November 7 (Friday)
November 9 (Sunday)

7:00 pm
7:00 pm



The Asthenic Syndrome

Астенический синдром

USSR 1989
Kira Muratova
153 min. DCP

In Russian and English with English subtitles

An avant-garde comedy and a strangely linked collection of tragic short stories, Kira Muratova’s *The Asthenic Syndrome* might be the final great work of the Soviet film industry. Her methods, which put her at odds with official culture, are closest to the agitated madness and theatrical despair of Aleksei German (*Hard to Be a God*) and Andrei Zulawski (*Possession*). But what most sets *Syndrome* apart is its jarring use of sound—a collage of classical compositions, Altmanesque overlapping dialogue, pop songs, silence, and harsh transitions—which renders the film a survey of unexpected, joyous phenomena one moment, and apocalyptic chaos the next. The film begins with Natasha (Olga Antonova), newly widowed and violently sick of the unfeeling world. Muratova intimately charts her behaviour, then expands outward to a teacher and his neighbours, boss, and students. As a symbolic and drily humorous comedown, perhaps Muratova’s only modern comparison is Radu Jude’s essayistic dramas.

Special Jury Prize
Berlinale 1990

[“Radical, sprawling... A movie that breaks all the usual rules when it comes to telling a story and clearly distinguishing between fiction and documentary, fantasy and reality, ‘prose’ and ‘poetry,’ anger and detachment.”](#)

[Jonathan Rosenbaum, Chicago Reader](#)

Once Upon a Time in Hong Kong

Continued from October

The popular cinema of Hong Kong has defied limits with cool confidence for generations, never more than in the period of the New Wave to the Handover (1979–1997).

This cycle of new restorations from the catalogue of Golden Princess, one of the key production houses of the era alongside Shaw Brothers and Golden Harvest, includes works by Tsui Hark and Ringo Lam, but largely acts as a mini-retrospective for director John Woo. “In actual life, I hate violence,” he’s said. “But the world is not like I dreamed; there is violence and crime everywhere.” Woo sublimated this fear and awe into films that reinvented action cinema.

This series marks the first time Woo’s films have been presented at The Cinematheque since 2003, and they’re accompanied by *City on Fire* (which similarly stars Woo muse Chow Yun-fat) and *Peking Opera Blues* (from Woo’s mentor Tsui Hark, now screening in restored form following a limited presentation during our summer Tsui retrospective).

More titles in this series will be presented next year.

November 6 (Thursday)
November 29 (Saturday)
December 7 (Sunday)

6:30pm
8:50pm
6:30pm



Peking Opera Blues PG

刀馬旦

Hong Kong 1986

Tsui Hark

106 min. DCP

In Cantonese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Tsui’s masterpiece... Unequaled passages of brilliantly choreographed and witty fast action.”

David Chute, *Film Comment*

Perhaps no other film better displays the blink-and-you-miss-it inventiveness of Tsui Hark than *Peking Opera Blues*. It isn’t just one of the greatest Hong Kong action movies of all time, or merely an exquisite combination of political history and gender-defying performance. Tsui’s enthralling balance of tone, editing patterns, and comedic role-playing means the film is all of these things at warp speed, a dazzling expression of genre multiplicity that shifts between modes moment to moment. This flexibility extends to the cast: three women (Brigitte Lin, Sally Yeh, and Cherie Chung), a spy, an actor, and a musician, are assuming roles to survive the violent end of the Qing Dynasty, aligning themselves with warlords, revolutionaries, seducers, and friends. Each identity opens up traps, expectations, and freedoms. Whether on the stage or in a melee, this is a film that plays out under a ruthless and overwhelming urge to execute the perfect stunt—both for laughs and for something deadly serious.

November 6 (Thursday) 8:45 pm
 November 8 (Saturday) 9:00 pm
 November 29 (Saturday) 6:30 pm
 December 7 (Sunday) 8:45 pm



The Killer 18+

喋血雙雄

Hong Kong 1989

John Woo

111 min. DCP

In Cantonese with English subtitles

New Restoration

After director John Woo and producer Tsui Hark locked horns over *A Better Tomorrow II*, Woo drummed up his own financing to underwrite follow-up *The Killer*, his squib-soaked homage to Melville's *Le samourai* and a bona fide action classic. Here, the honour-bound lone wolf is Ah Jong (Chow Yun-fat), a sartorially suave hitman who accidentally blinds a nightclub singer (Sally Yeh) during a firefight with triads. Guilt compels him to protect her, leading to romance and a lucrative contract—his fateful final job—to pay for her corneal transplant. Their relationship only feigns the film's love story; the true courtship belongs to Ah Jong and detective Li Ying (Danny Lee), two soulmates on opposing sides of the law whose union is consecrated through ultra-violence and shared admiration (maybe more). Christian symbolism, including the director's first scattering of white doves, runs throughout. Woo's 2024 straight-to-streaming remake set in Paris failed to match the original's ferocity or piquant subtext.

[“Starts over the top, then, like some cartoon freak-out, blasts through the roof.”](#)

J. Hoberman, *Village Voice*

November 28 (Friday) 9:00 pm
 December 3 (Wednesday) 6:30 pm
 December 6 (Saturday) 8:40 pm



City on Fire 18+

龍虎風雲

Hong Kong 1987

Ringo Lam

105 min. DCP

In Cantonese with English subtitles

New Restoration

[“The quintessential undercover-cop/heist movie ... A film full of brutal realism, and a career-high performance from star Chow Yun-fat.”](#)

Kim Newman, *Empire Magazine*

One of the seminal works of the heroic bloodshed genre, Ringo Lam's *City on Fire*, released just six months after John Woo's blockbuster *A Better Tomorrow*, cemented Chow Yun-fat as an action superstar and famously afforded Quentin Tarantino the inspiration for *Reservoir Dogs*. Lam's own inspiration—the 1984 heist of the Time Watch Company, which culminated in a police shoot-out—is indicative of the film's more grounded, world-mirroring designs when compared to the almost mythical register of Woo's crime picture. Shot on the neon-canopied streets of Hong Kong and set to a sultry saxophone score, the film follows deep-cover cop Ko Chow (Chow) as he infiltrates a syndicate of jewelry thieves while being hunted by an inspector oblivious to the sting operation. Danny Lee plays the gangster loyal to Chow, an echo of a former associate the informant betrayed. *City on Fire* initiated a cycle of “On Fire” films by Lam exploring the underbelly of Hong Kong society.

Best Director, Actor
 Hong Kong Film Awards 1988

December 5 (Friday) 7:00 pm
 December 12 (Friday) 6:30 pm
 December 21 (Sunday) 4:00 pm



A Better Tomorrow 18+

英雄本色

Hong Kong 1986

John Woo

95 min. DCP

In Cantonese with English subtitles

New Restoration

John Woo's influence as an on-set improviser of peerless action and male melodrama began with *A Better Tomorrow*. “It was the first movie for myself,” the director later said. After 14 features in 10 years, most of them mediocre martial arts or action-comedy releases, it took the encouragement of producer Tsui Hark for Woo to heavily rewrite a script to suit his own previously unexpressed taste in highly stylized violence. Here, gun shots act as both a percussive drumbeat—the rhythm of scenes, shots, and dance-like movement—and the violent expression of sincere emotion. Mark (Chow Yun-fat) is the knight in an Armani trenchcoat. The plot surrounding him has less to do with crime strategy or gang infiltration, more the bonds between Ho (Ti Lung), the friend he's paid to protect, and Ho's brother Kit (Leslie Cheung). The latter's career choice of cop destroys reputations, flips fortunes, and leads to tests of loyalty—in Woo's world, the same thing as love.

Preceding the December 5 screening of *A Better Tomorrow* will be a performance of the film's iconic theme by New Coast Ensemble, blending cinematic power with a live orchestral score. Co-presented with the Chinese Canadian Museum in conjunction with its exhibition *Dream Factory: Cantopop Mandopop 1980s–2000*.

Special ticket price (December 5): \$20



CHINESE
 CANADIAN
 MUSEUM
 華裔博物館

“When I think of a *director*, it’s Ringo Lam, Johnnie To, Tsui Hark—this is such a high level, it’s too far away ... I want to be [like them], sometimes you’d like to do it, but you cannot do it.”

Soi Cheang (*SPL 2, Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In*)

December 12 (Friday) 8:30 pm
December 21 (Sunday) 6:30 pm



A Better Tomorrow II

英雄本色2

Hong Kong 1987

John Woo

105 min. DCP

In Cantonese and English with English subtitles

New Restoration

“The climax of *A Better Tomorrow II*, an all-out assault on a gangster’s mansion, is one of the most incendiary gun battles in cinema ... The most striking feature of [the film] is its display of popular entertainment’s shameless ingenuity.”

David Bordwell, *Planet Hong Kong*

According to director John Woo, “The only thing I consider religious in my movies is my understanding of love.” Even in a film where he lost final cut, and where the confident tone of the first *A Better Tomorrow* is mixed with cross-purpose comedy and an elaborate amnesia plot, this rings true. How else, beyond a director’s divine intervention, to explain the return of Woo’s alter-ego star Chow Yun-fat to the series as Ken, the twin brother(!) of the first movie’s hero Mark, who’s discovered as a hapless line cook somewhere in New York. *A Better Tomorrow II* begins as a policier, with Kit (Leslie Cheung) going undercover only to run into his brother (Ti Lung), paroled and doing his own top-secret work in Hong Kong’s criminal underground. The sequel, uneven though it may be, hits several high marks for the series: iconic moments (a thumbs-up, a stairway shoot-out), ludicrously broad antics (involving food), and moving grace notes (courtesy of Cheung’s performance).

December 18 (Thursday) 9:00 pm
December 27 (Saturday) 6:00 pm
December 29 (Monday) 5:30 pm



Bullet in the Head

喋血街頭

Hong Kong 1990

John Woo

131 min. DCP

In Cantonese, Vietnamese, English, and French with English subtitles

New Restoration

John Woo’s wildest and weightiest action spectacle is also his most personal movie, one that emerged out of his separation from producer Tsui Hark. The two agreed that the final *Better Tomorrow* could be set amidst the war in Vietnam. But when it became clear that Woo couldn’t make the film he wanted—a rags-to-riches epic that, like Cimino’s *The Deer Hunter*, is structured to begin with a wedding and end in mourning—he left the series and told the story with a new cast of to-the-death friends played by Tony Leung, Jacky Cheung, and Waise Lee. Nothing else in Woo’s career compares with the exuberance and emotionality of *Bullet in the Head*’s opening sequences of brawls, romances, and turf wars. But the dreamy, propulsive plot (and its existential nods to Scorsese and Nicholas Ray) soon gives way to a nightmare Vietnam, which echoes the opportunism and violence of not just the war (including, specifically, Eddie Adams’s *Saigon Execution*), but the 1967 Hong Kong riots and Tiananmen Square.

“*Bullet in the Head* is Woo’s single greatest work ... In this fallen world, the values that Woo extols [of] loyalty and charity are betrayed.”

Nick Pinkerton, *Little White Lies*

December 21 (Sunday) 8:45 pm
December 30 (Tuesday) 6:00 pm



A Better Tomorrow III: Love & Death in Saigon

英雄本色3: 夕陽之歌

Hong Kong 1989

Tsui Hark

119 min. DCP

In Cantonese, English, and Vietnamese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“[A] labour of love that presents Tsui’s personality and abilities in a truly unique way ... Perhaps future generations may come to consider *A Better Tomorrow III* as the best installment of the series.”

Park Chanwook (*Oldboy, Decision to Leave*)

Tsui Hark took over the director’s chair for the final action-packed installment of the *Better Tomorrow* series, an origin story that precedes the first film’s events. The plot begins as a matter of immigration “security”: amid the end of the war in Vietnam, Mark (Chow Yun-fat) wants to move his uncle and cousin home to Hong Kong. He is punished for these good intentions until he connects with Kit (Anita Mui), a fearless expert in weapons, border crossing, and counterfeiting—of both documents and emotions. Tsui was born in Saigon, then observed the war unfold while studying cinema in the US. His film’s conflicted story of involvement and exploitation is far from a serious history lesson, though. This is most legibly a classic Tsui love triangle, with cousin Michael (Tony Leung Ka-fai) filling the role of the third wheel alongside Mark and Kit, and the evacuation of Saigon as the deadline for its resolution.

The Collectors

Continued from October

This year, Griffin Art Projects in North Vancouver marks its 10th anniversary with exhibitions celebrating the collections and generous collectors who have been part of Griffin's journey over its first decade.

"The Collectors" film series, presented in collaboration with The Cinematheque, further celebrates, critiques, and reveals the art of collecting through three acclaimed and thought-provoking films: Alexander Sokurov's *Russian Ark*, Jill Magid's *The Proposal*, and Harold Crooks and Judd Tully's *The Melt Goes On Forever: The Art & Times of David Hammons*. Christos Dikeakos's maximalist aesthetic, the question of what it means to hold an archive, and the debates surrounding artistic and cultural practices that query or resist acquisition, all inform this filmic journey.

Lisa Baldissera
Director, Griffin Art Projects



Programming note: *Russian Ark* and *The Proposal* were presented in our September–October cycle.



November 8 (Saturday)

6:00 pm



The Melt Goes On Forever: The Art & Times of David Hammons

Canada/USA 2022
Judd Tully, Harold Crooks
101 min. DCP

In Person: Harold Crooks

The Melt Goes On Forever chronicles the singular career of the elusive Black American art star David Hammons, from Watts rebellion-era '60s L.A. to global art world prominence today. Hammons's category-defying practice—rooted in a deep critique of American society and the elite art world—is in the words of one art critic “an invitation to confront the fissures between races” as the artist seeks to go beyond the dominant culture and his own to a new one for the 21st century. Featuring eminent artists, curators, and critics, a rich trove of archival footage, animation, and an evocative soundscape, *The Melt* is a record of the work of an artist who constantly defies the establishment and remains subversive at every turn. —Official synopsis

Post-screening Q&A with co-director Harold Crooks, moderated by Griffin Art Projects Director Lisa Baldissera.

“A definitive film about Hammons's life and art ... For [those] who have never heard of Hammons, *The Melt Goes on Forever* will be a mindblowing discovery; for those who have, it brings together his expansive output over the decades—one project more insanely inspired than the next—in a way that one gallery show could never contain.”

Janet Smith, *Stir*

Laura Taler

Join Ottawa-based artist and filmmaker Laura Taler for a special 30th anniversary screening of her 1995 dancefilm classic *the village trilogy* accompanied by a genre-defying new work, *Matryoshka Crush*.

In tandem with FORM's 10th anniversary, this program honours the evolution of storytelling through movement on screen across the past three decades.

Taler will also lead a dancefilm masterclass at Cineworks on November 11 (Tuesday) at 10:00 am. For more information and to register, visit newworks.ca.

Presented in collaboration with FORM (Festival of Recorded Movement) and New Works



November 10 (Monday)

7:00 pm



the village trilogy

Canada 1995
Laura Taler
22 min. DCP

In Person: Laura Taler

"For depth of feeling, photographic sensitivity, and movement invention, the central (duet) portion of Laura Taler's 1995 the village trilogy may be the most memorable footage in the [Dance Camera West] festival ... Her mastery of choreography and direction is unquestioned."

Lewis Segal, *Los Angeles Times*

Heralded by *Dance International* as marking the beginning of the dancefilm boom in Canada, *the village trilogy* alludes to the millions of people uprooted through emigration in the past century, while exploring ideas of home and family. Employing the characteristics of early cinema, filmmaker-choreographer Laura Taler and her dancers capture a time and place that is beyond our grasp, but not beyond our memory.

Best Experimental Short Film
Chicago International Film Festival 1996

followed by

Matryoshka Crush

Canada 2025
Laura Taler
47 min. DCP

Poison, exorcism, gender trouble, music, and movement intermingle in this darkly funny and disturbing tale of intense yearning. When a series of adorable monsters reveal themselves near an old tavern, their ordinary acts transform into a chain of micro-disobediences. Told entirely through song, dance, and action, *Matryoshka Crush* straddles dancefilm, contemporary video art, and personal narrative. Like the history of the Matryoshka doll, a symbol of Eastern European culture that can be traced back to the Japanese Fukurama doll, Taler's film magnifies the desire for translation and transformation, a lament to the old world and how we are enmeshed in one another.

Followed by a conversation with Laura Taler, moderated by dance artist Lee Su-Feh.

Europe without the jet lag!

EUFF

2025

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 13–26

 **Online: December 1–15**

The European Union Film Festival, our annual trek across the landscapes of Europe's latest cinema, returns this autumn for a 28th edition at The Cinematheque. Presented in partnership with the Canadian Film Institute (Ottawa) and Toronto's European Union Film Festival, 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.

As with the previous three editions, EUFF 2025 will feature a solidarity screening to benefit Ukraine, organized in partnership with the Embassy of Ukraine to Canada. Proceeds from this year's film, the Oscar-nominated *Porcelain War*, will support the Canada-Ukraine Foundation.

EUFF wayfarers can expect an eclectic range of national (sometimes international) productions—everything from domestic blockbusters to arthouse darlings—with a majority of films receiving their Canadian debuts. Twenty-eight years strong in Vancouver (and a milestone 50 in Ottawa!), the festival remains the premier survey of contemporary European cinema in our country.

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 the CFI, The Cinematheque, and EUFF – Toronto.

Denmark

November 13 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



The Land of Short Sentences

Meter i sekundet

Denmark 2023

Hella Joof

106 min. DCP

In Danish with English subtitles

When Rasmus (Thomas Hwan) gets a teaching post in Jutland, he accepts. But all signs suggest that this is hardest felt by his girlfriend Marie (Sofie Torp), who finds her life in Copenhagen hard to give up. Does the town of Velling have any use for a writer who can't drive, and whose social life doesn't revolve around a family? And is this relationship really worth the complete uprooting of what she knows? Torp, who also starred in *Hygge!*, the Danish title from last year's EUFF, is the centre of the film, playing a woman who feels like every culture-clash joke and relationship conflict could be an incremental step in a plot to ruin her life, unless—through an advice column—she finds a way to carve out a comfortable niche in her picturesque and strange new home.

**"Succeeds in making you laugh out loud...
A film that is completely its own, without
losing the tone of the original book [by
Stine Pilgaard]."**

Nicki Bruun, *Filmmagasinet Ekko*

“A state-of-the-Union celebration of diversity and accomplishment in filmmaking.”

Nancy Lanthier, *Vancouver Sun*

Austria

November 14 (Friday)

6:30 pm



Peacock

Pfau—Bin ich echt?

Austria/Germany 2024

Bernhard Wenger

102 min. DCP

In German with English subtitles

“An auspiciously polished and snappy debut... There's a whisper of formalist Austrian chill in its immaculately composed mise-en-scène.”

Guy Lodge, *Variety*

How can we be ourselves when our lives demand constant performances for others? This biting social commentary follows “rent-a-friend” Matthias (*All Quiet on the Western Front*'s Albrecht Schuch) as he expertly occupies the roles demanded by his clients, whether they be of a present father, cultured boyfriend, or accomplished son. When his girlfriend dumps him for being too inauthentic, Matthias goes on an increasingly absurd journey of self discovery. Inspired by the same real-life agencies as in the buzzy Brendan Fraser feature *Rental Family*, Wenger's debut takes a decidedly more satirical approach in the vein of Ruben Östlund or Maren Ade.

Estonia

November 14 (Friday)

8:40 pm



8 Views of Lake Biwa

Biwa järve 8 nägu

Estonia/Finland 2024

Marko Raat

126 min. DCP

In Estonian with English subtitles

The winner of prizes for direction, acting, cinematography, and four other technical prizes at this year's Estonian Film and Television Awards, Marko Raat's fourth film takes its premise and title from an unusual transposition. The *Views* tradition of serial woodblock painting in Japan includes eight views of Omi, as well as the more widely known *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji* by Hokusai. Raat's film unfolds episodically on Lake Peipus, and each variation presents a tale of star-crossed lovers, all forced to forge a new relationship where the trajectory, from the start, appears to be defined by fate. The chapters unfold in a highly artificial, anachronistic, and ritualistic manner. Theatre actor Tiina Tauraitė's role as Õne, a teacher who meets a fisherman whose secrets are withheld for a decade, is a particular standout.

“Breathtaking imagery... Raat's ensemble piece overwhelms the mind until its stark mysticism slowly begins unfurling.”

Carlos Aguilar, *Variety*

Portugal

November 15 (Saturday)

6:30 pm



Savanna and the Mountain

A Savana e a Montanha

Portugal/Uruguay 2024

Paulo Carneiro

77 min. DCP

In Portuguese with English subtitles

“A winsome, slow-burning charmer ... A celebration of a community finding new ways of coming together.”

Jonathan Holland, *Screen International*

Set in the rugged Portuguese countryside, this striking drama follows the residents of Covas do Barroso, a small village confronted with the arrival of a massive lithium mining project. At first, promises of jobs and prosperity seem to offer hope for renewal, but soon the true cost of “progress” becomes impossible to ignore. Families are torn between the lure of opportunity and the threat of losing their land, their traditions, and their way of life. Selected for the prestigious Directors' Fortnight at Cannes 2024, *Savanna and the Mountain* blends fiction and documentary with urgency and poignancy, offering a stirring reflection on resistance, solidarity, and the price of modernity.

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Sweden

November 15 (Saturday)



8:20 pm



Hammar skjöld

Sweden/Norway/Denmark 2023

Per Fly

114 min. DCP

In English and Swedish with English subtitles

Dag Hammar skjöld, the Swedish diplomat who became Secretary-General of the United Nations, dedicated his life to peace and international cooperation. In this sweeping biographical drama, director Per Fly follows Hammar skjöld's journey from his rise in international politics to his untimely death in a mysterious plane crash in 1961. Along the way, the film portrays the challenges he faced in balancing ideals with the harsh realities of Cold War geopolitics. Anchored by Mikael Persbrandt's compelling performance in the title role, *Hammar skjöld* is a richly detailed portrait of a man whose vision for global peace remains strikingly relevant today.

"There is a crisp elegance to the storytelling... Fly makes accessible the world of politics, betrayals, and vested interests in which Hammar skjöld was operating."

Allan Hunter, *Screen International*

Hungary

November 16 (Sunday)

4:00 pm



I Accidentally Wrote a Book

Véletlenül írtam egy könyvet

Hungary/Netherlands 2024

Nóra Lakos

98 min. DCP

In Hungarian with English subtitles

Hungarian writer-director Nóra Lakos, whose previous feature *Cream* played EUFF 2021, returns to the festival with a whimsical coming-of-age film about a young writer navigating girlhood and personal loss. Twelve-year-old Nina (Villő Demeter) is a storyteller. Under the mentorship of a bohemian novelist next door, she starts to translate her life into prose—the nuisances of a little brother, the pains of growing up, the giddiness of first love. Gradually her writing leads to questions about her family and unresolved emotions around her mother's death long ago. Using flourishes of animation to articulate Nina's effervescent imagination, *I Accidentally Wrote a Book* celebrates the magic of creativity to heal and help discover oneself.

Grand Prix (Best Film)

Montréal International Children's Film Festival 2025

Poland

November 16 (Sunday)



6:30 pm



Breached

Wyrwa

Poland 2023

Bartosz Konopka

95 min. DCP

In Polish with English subtitles

This stylish film revolves around Maciek, a man whose life unravels following a car accident that claims the life of Janina, his wife. Although it appears Janina may have intentionally caused the crash, Maciek is baffled by the accident's location near Mrągowo, as she told him she was heading to Kraków for business. As doubt gnaws at him, Maciek embarks on a relentless, sometimes dangerous quest for answers. His investigation leads him to an actor, Wojnar, who he begins to believe may have been involved romantically with Janina. As the layers of mystery unfold, Maciek faces unsettling revelations, questioning how well he actually knew the woman he loved. Based on a bestselling novel by Wojciech Chmielarz, the film features assured, kinetic direction by Bartosz Konopka, of the brilliant thriller *Fear of Falling* (EUFF 2012).

"A gripping drama-thriller ... Konopka masterfully weaves together elements of psychological drama [and] the intricacies of a thriller, punctuated by nods to the buddy-film genre."

Austin Polish Film Festival

Slovakia

November 16 (Sunday)

8:30 pm

**Réveillon**

A máme, čo sme chceli

Slovakia/Canada 2023

Michal Kunes Kováč

101 min. DCP

In Slovak, Czech, English, French, and German with English subtitles

“Surprisingly mature for a debut... Although the story might end simply, it manages to touch us in some way.”

Tereza Spáčilová, *Skylink TV Magazin*

A family gathers in a small apartment to celebrate the coming of 1993, and with it Slovakia's independence. The mood is light and laughter fills the room. But as the night wears on, tensions and long-hidden grievances begin to surface. What starts as playful banter gradually spirals into heated arguments, accusations, and revelations that no one expected to hear. By the time midnight strikes, the Varchal family will never be the same. Michal Kunes Kováč's sharply observed chamber drama offers both biting humour and emotional depth as it examines the fragile bonds that hold people together.

Netherlands

November 17 (Monday)

6:30 pm

**Memory Lane**

De terugreis

Netherlands/Belgium 2024

Jelle de Jonge

98 min. DCP

In Dutch with English subtitles

Jaap and Maartje have been together for almost five decades. Irascible old Jaap is not very interested in doing much, but Maartje is still keen to embrace everything life has to offer. When the couple receives a letter from an old friend inviting them to southern Europe, Maartje manages to convince her reluctant husband to make the trek. After many years spent at home, the pair get into their old car to go on a journey through a completely changed Europe, bickering all the way but also stirring up old loving memories. During this journey, Jaap slowly recognizes that his beloved Maartje is showing increasing signs of dementia. Realizing that everything is about to change, they rediscover just what it is they love about each other. A beautiful, tender, and very funny love story, *Memory Lane* was the Dutch submission to the Academy Award for International Feature last year.

“A sometimes boisterous, ultimately affirming seriocomedy... De Jonge's movie covers a lot of ground both tonal and geographic without ever seeming hurried, conspicuously touristic, or heavy-handed.”

Dennis Harvey, *Variety*

Cyprus

November 17 (Monday)

8:40 pm

**Smaragda: I Got Thick Skin and I Can't Jump**

Σμαράγδα

Cyprus 2024

Emilios Avraam

99 min. DCP

In Greek with English subtitles

After being fired from her job as a children's television host for having an inadequate social media following, eccentric Smaragda (Niovi Charalambous) moves into her recently deceased mother's house and takes a job at a nearby resort. Emilios Avraam describes his debut as a “midlife coming-of-age film” that avoids characterizing its protagonist in terms of crisis: the brightly coloured production design and dreamy cinematography evoke Smaragda's irrepressible free spirit in a world that's rarely hospitable to it. The film tackles today's thorniest questions—climate change, online performativity, financial pressure—with humour and determination; the title comes from Smaragda's self-comparison to the sturdy, self-confident elephant.

Best Cypriot Film, Best Performance
(Niovi Charalambous)
Cyprus Film Days 2025

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Luxembourg

November 18 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm



The Land in the Shadows

D'Land am Schiet

Luxembourg 2023

Lukas Grevis

73 min. DCP

In Luxembourgish and Portuguese with English subtitles

A tautly constructed, very impressive debut film from writer-director Lukas Grevis, *In the Land of the Shadows* tells the powerful, timely story of growing xenophobia in a village in Luxembourg. Concerned about the international crisis of migration and displacement, idealistic Jos and his girlfriend Sara want to create a centre for refugees. As their plans become more concrete, the community becomes anxious. When the mascot of the village, a wild dog, is mysteriously killed, Jos becomes the prime suspect. Misinformation, lies, rumours, and fear soon begin to turn the village against Jos and his family. Political and regional opportunists use the sentiments in their favour, and what started as an humanist gesture of compassion is thrust into the shadowy realms of mistrust and intolerance.

"A chillingly realistic scenario ... The Land in the Shadows marks an assured [first] step for Grevis."

Savina Petkova, *Cineuropa*

France

November 18 (Tuesday)

8:10 pm



Making Of

France 2023

Cédric Kahn

119 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

"Kahn explores contradictions [through] wry irony ... A droll social comedy that interrogates the cost and chaos of the creative process."

Wendy Ide, *Screen International*

This entry by Cédric Kahn (*Wild Life*, EUFF 2015) in the film-about-filmmaking genre is a high-energy comedic gloss on the snares of industry work, starting with the compromises and hypocrisies of international co-production financing. Simon is making a film about a worker's strike. When his film's production partners abandon the project mid-shoot, the crew considers taking a page out of the fiction they're enacting to solve the real-world indignity they're being subject to. Can Simon truly disagree with their tactical response? Denis Podalydès, last seen starring in Arnaud Desplechin's *Deception*, plays the stressed-out director, while cinematographer Patrick Ghiringhelli (*The Night of the 12*) captures the metafictional madness.

Ireland

November 19 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm



Dreamtown

Ireland 2024

Steven McKenna

97 min. DCP

In English

A rock star that never was is at the heart of Steven McKenna's lived-in character study, which draws inspiration from the orbit of the director's musician father, a member of the Dublin band Shaine whose minor hit "Dreamtown" affords the film its title. Leather-clad barfly Mickey Richards (Anthony Murphy) is an over-the-hill rocker still clinging to his younger self and bygone brushes with near-fame. His adult son Alan (Cian Hyland), meanwhile, has staked out his own career in music, a point of tension in the already tarnished relationship between the two. Desperate for connection but unwilling to cede his dreams to the next generation, Mickey must face up to his failures—as a musician, as a father—if he wants to keep Alan in his life.

"Writer-director Steven McKenna's warm character-driven story is served well by a strong cast and by Jaro Waldeck's skillful cinematography, elevating the film beyond its micro budget."

Irish Film Institute

Bulgaria

November 19 (Wednesday)

8:40 pm



Wedlock

Сватба

Bulgaria 2024

Magdalena Ralcheva

117 min. DCP

In Bulgarian with English subtitles

In the Rhodope Mountains at the turn of the 20th century, the headstrong daughter of a wealthy landowner falls in love with a wild-spirited orphan boy. What starts as a familiar story of forbidden romance takes a series of unexpected turns when Hatte (Ralitsa Stoyanova) tries to elope after her betrothal to an unwanted suitor. Magdalena Ralcheva's sumptuously filmed drama stages intergenerational love triangles and long-simmering familial resentments in an unforgiving landscape, where every character faces impossible choices between love and responsibility, freedom and sacrifice, honour and sin. Sections of the Agushev Konak, a 19th-century castle high in the mountains, were restored specifically for the production.

Best Feature Film (Critics Guild Award)
Golden Rose Bulgarian Feature Film
Festival 2024

Lithuania

November 20 (Thursday)

6:30 pm



Drowning Dry

Sesės

Lithuania/Latvia 2024

Laurynas Bareiša

88 min. DCP

In Lithuanian with English subtitles

Laurynas Bareiša's often startling family drama, rendered in a fragmented narrative reminiscent of Atom Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter*, is a powerful, affecting tale of two families whose summer holiday goes awry. Ernesta and her husband Lukas head to a lakeside country home with their son, accompanied by Ernesta's sister Juste and her husband and daughter. We soon learn that both marriages are facing challenges and that this country holiday is not as idyllic as it first appears. When a sudden accident happens at the lake, their worlds change utterly, but can they recover? Moving back and forth in time, Bareiša's film is an intense, surprising examination of relationship, family, and how trauma is both experienced and processed.

Best Director, Best Performance
(to the ensemble)
Locarno Film Festival 2024

"Part of the joy of the film is watching Bareiša's work [as cinematographer]... *Drowning Dry* holds you at arm's length, but I found it more moving—and unsettling—because of that."

Sheila O'Malley, *RogerEbert.com*

Belgium

November 20 (Thursday)

8:30 pm



Omen

Augure

Belgium/Netherlands/Democratic

Republic of the Congo 2023

Baloji Tshiani

83 min. DCP

In French, English, Lingala, and Swahili with English subtitles

"*Omen* announces its writer-director as an artist of significant formal imagination and daring... [The film's] larger atmospheric payoff lingers."

Guy Lodge, *Variety*

A tour de force of magical realism from Belgian-Congolese rapper-turned-filmmaker Baloji Tshiani, *Omen* uses enigmatic storytelling and stunning imagery to tell the story of a Congolese man's traumatic homecoming. Koffi (Marc Zinga) travels back to Kinshasa to introduce his family to his pregnant European girlfriend, only to be faced with the same accusations of witchcraft that spurred his exile in the first place. Baloji's mesmerising debut is replete with intersecting stories and shifting meanings that evoke heartbreak and horror in equal measure. Baloji collaborated with Elke Hoste on the Central African-inspired costume design, which was featured in an exhibition at the MoMu Fashion Museum Antwerp.

Un Certain Regard New Voice Prize
Cannes 2023

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Latvia

November 21 (Friday)

6:30 pm



Maria's Silence

Marijas klusums

Latvia/Lithuania 2024

Dāvis Simanis Jr.

104 min. DCP

In Latvian, Russian, and German with English subtitles

Dāvis Simanis Jr., writer-director of *Exiled* (EUFF 2016) and *The Year Before the War* (EUFF 2021), here offers a powerful historical drama shot in luminous black and white. The film is based on the true story of Marija Leiko, a famous actor who becomes both a witness to and victim of Stalin's brutal regime. In 1937, the former silent film star travels to Russia after learning of the birth of her granddaughter. Discovering tragic circumstances upon her arrival, she is persuaded by KGB agents to stay, abandoning her film career to join the Latvian State Theatre in Moscow. Increasingly aware that she is being manipulated by the government during its ruthless purges of political enemies, she must choose between family and career, and between her artistic ideals and the policies of Stalinism.

"A story of great intensity... Olga Šepicka's [lead performance] is dignified and enigmatic, a wrenchingly tactile portrayal."

Līga Požarska, *Cineuropa*

Finland

November 21 (Friday)

8:45 pm



The Summer Book

Finland/United Kingdom/USA 2025

Charlie McDowell

95 min. DCP

In English

"This isn't a film in thrall to star power, or indeed any cinematic bells and whistles... Devoted fans of Jansson will be delighted that her delicately personal work hasn't been punched up."

Guy Lodge, *Variety*

Novelist, painter, and children's book writer and illustrator Tove Jansson could hardly have predicted the sub-industry that has sprung up around her work, encompassing major exhibitions, biographical treatments, and now an international co-production of a book she wrote as a personal, intimate, and even reclusive correspondence. Charlie McDowell, the American director of high-concept films like *The One I Love* and *Windfall*, earned the approval of Jansson's niece Sophia to helm the project. Glenn Close plays the sage and inquisitive grandmother, full of flinty appreciation for nature's wisdom, to the film's version of Sophia (Emily Matthews), a child who's given the space to grow over a Nordic island summer. Anders Danielsen Lie (*Bergman Island*, *The Worst Person in the World*) rounds out the cast as Sophia's father.

Romania

November 22 (Saturday)

6:30 pm



Three Kilometres to the End of the World

Trei kilometri până la capătul lumii

Romania 2024

Emanuel Pârnu

105 min. DCP

In Romanian with English subtitles

"Superbly acted... Pârnu is confident enough as a storyteller not to feel the need to show everything."

Wendy Ide, *Screen International*

In a small fishing village along the Danube Delta, a teenager's secret relationship is discovered, setting off a chain of events that will shake his family and community to the core. Adi and his parents, caught between protecting their son and confronting the violence of their neighbours, find themselves at odds with each other as old prejudices come to the surface. Shot with striking naturalism by Silviu Stăvilă (*Stuff and Dough*), this film by Emanuel Pârnu (*Mikado*, EUFF 2023) is an intense and intimate portrait of family bonds tested under pressure. Winner of the Queer Palme at Cannes, *Three Kilometres Until the End of the World* is both deeply moving and unforgettable.

Czech Republic

November 22 (Saturday)

8:45 pm



Franz

Czech Republic/Germany/Poland 2025

Agnieszka Holland

127 min. DCP

In German and Czech with English subtitles

A year after his centenary, Franz Kafka remains an ageless, inexhaustible influence on modern thought and art. Director Agnieszka Holland, as a follow-up to her acclaimed (and highly controversial) *Green Border*, has channelled a variety of impulses and formal approaches into her own version of Kafka. Like the film's title suggests, *Franz* is about the person more than the texts. We see the writer's biography—his family members, illnesses, and literary rivals—and even, in some scenes, his popular image as a merchandised personality in present-day culture. Where, in all of this, can we truly know Franz Kafka? His work has been adapted by directors as different as Orson Welles, Straub-Huillet, and Michael Haneke; likewise his personal life, played by newcomer Idan Weiss, is for Holland something thrillingly enigmatic.

"Holland takes a puckish delight in showing how this introverted, neurasthenic perfectionist has become an icon in modern-day Prague."

Leslie Felperin, *The Hollywood Reporter*

Croatia

November 23 (Sunday)

4:00 pm



Even Pigs Go to Heaven

Nosila je rubac črleni

Croatia/North Macedonia 2022

Goran Dukić

86 min. DCP

In Croatian with English subtitles

A zany musical comedy about the dramas of villagers and their pigs in the Zagorje hills, narrated by Jesus Christ himself! At the outset of the Croatian War in 1991, plucky Anka (Nataša Dorčić) is privy to numerous secrets and scandals in her town. When her beloved sow Bebe expresses a desire to mate for the first time, Anka plays matchmaker with a strapping Serbian boar. But as the conflict spreads and local men begin enlisting to fight against Serbian forces, will Bebe's forbidden romance prevail? The third feature from Goran Dukić (*Wristcutters: A Love Story*) imagines the Croatian landscape with cheery saturated colours and meticulous production design, all infused with good-natured humour and plenty of local flavour.

"Spiced up with emotions, decorated with cutesy animation, and dressed as a period piece, this film manages to keep [its] local taste while telling a universally understandable story."

Marko Stojiljković, *Cineuropa*

Greece

November 23 (Sunday)

6:00 pm



Brando with a Glass Eye

Greece/Australia 2024

Antonis Tsonis

122 min. DCP

In Greek with English subtitles

"A comical, breezy affair... [*Brando with a Glass Eye*] continues the national tradition of strange, off-kilter filmmaking."

Morris Yang, *In Review Online*

If Antonis Tsonis's debut is any indication, the Weird Wave is experiencing a second wind. The first Greek-language film to appear in Slamdance's narrative competition, *Brando with a Glass Eye* takes the country's proclivity for cinematic strangeness into uncharted territories with this metatextual tale of a wannabe actor (Yiannis Niarros) who resorts to crime to finance a trip to New York's famed Actors Studio. When a bystander is shot during a botched heist job, the Brando-obsessive goes method and befriends the victim in an increasingly unhinged bid for personal salvation. Steeped in the influence of New Hollywood cinema, Tsonis's confident, curious debut is a mise en abyme about the movies and the art (and artifice) of performance.

EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

Spain

November 23 (Sunday)

8:30 pm



We Treat Women Too Well

Tratamos demasiado bien a las mujeres

Spain/France 2024

Clara Bilbao

97 min. DCP

In Spanish with English subtitles

Adapted from Raymond Queneau's provocative novel, this dark comedy transposes the Oulipo author's mix of political and sexual warfare from Ireland's Easter Rising to the end of the Spanish Civil War. The action is set over a single day in a remote post office, and pits a disorganized battalion of resistance fighters against the epitome of the Francoist regime in the wedding dress-adorned Remedios (Carmen Machi). Director Clara Bilbao captures the novel's satirical edge with bold style, balancing biting humour with social critique. *We Treat Women Too Well* is daring, entertaining, and unafraid to challenge assumptions, while shining a light on Spain's long tradition of irony and satire.

"Extravagant and surreal... Updates Raymond Queneau's pulp novel pastiche to often potent, bloody effect and puts a 180-degree spin on the established tropes of the Spanish Civil War movie."

Jonathan Holland, *Screen International*

Malta

November 24 (Monday)

6:30 pm



Ciao Ciao

Malta 2025

Keith Albert Tedesco

90 min. DCP

In Maltese and English with English subtitles

"The script is sharp, witty, and downright hilarious."

Giulia Magri, *Times of Malta*

When old friends Charlotte and Jessica run into each other in the street, they are thrilled to catch up and make plans for a dinner party with their husbands. Unfortunately, once the dinner begins, the two men have less in common, with wealthy alpha male Victor sharing his provocative theories and boasting about expensive clothes to Sam, who bristles at his host's pomposity and wishes to leave as soon as possible. At first, small inconveniences like a lost phone and a blocked car keep the foursome reluctantly together, but as they discover deeper hidden connections in their pasts, things quickly begin to unravel. What seemed like a harmless dinner party soon becomes an intense (and quite funny) evening as social graces crumble into chaos.

Germany

November 24 (Monday)

8:30 pm



Beyond the Blue Border

Jenseits der blauen Grenze

Germany 2024

Sarah Neumann

102 min. DCP

In German with English subtitles

Based on a novel by athlete-turned-author Dorit Linke, writer-director Sarah Neumann's feature debut is a gripping, youth-centred historical drama set during the final bulwark of authoritarianism in 1989 East Germany. That summer, twentysomething Hanna (Lena Urzendowsky, *Sound of Falling*), a gifted swimmer with Olympic ambition, elects to abandon her podium dreams when best friend Andreas (Willi Geitmann) is targeted by the secret police for transgressions against the state. Their path to freedom? A treacherous, open-water swim across 50 kilometres of the Baltic Sea, with only a rope tethering them together. Neumann's film was a multiple-prize winner at Saarbrücken's Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis, which celebrates emerging talent in German-language cinema.

Audience Award

Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2024

Slovenia

November 25 (Tuesday)

7:00 pm



Whites Wash at Ninety

Belo se pere na devetdeset

Slovenia/Italy/Croatia/Serbia/
Montenegro/North Macedonia 2025

Marko Naberšnik

142 min. DCP

In Slovene with English subtitles

“Precisely executed... As in his previous works, Marko Naberšnik is capable of pulling off an epic story unfolding over an extended period of time and paying a lot of attention to period details, even when working on a tight budget.”

Marko Stojiljković, *Cineuropa*

Despite her young age, a woman faces a lifetime's worth of personal upheaval in *Whites Wash at Ninety*. Based on Bronja Žakelj's Kresnik Award-winning autobiographical novel, this film from Marko Naberšnik (*Slovenia, Australia, and Tomorrow the World*, EUFF 2018) explores how history leaves its mark on individual lives. Not only does Bronja (Lea Čok Rajčič) experience the death of family members and a battle with personal illness, she does so at a time of historical change, including the fall of the USSR. Moving between humour, tenderness, and regret, Naberšnik's film is both a family saga and a reflection on the time we feel is taken away from us by forces beyond our control.

Italy

November 26 (Wednesday)

6:30 pm



Casanova's Return

Il ritorno di Casanova

Italy 2023

Gabriele Salvatores

94 min. DCP

In Italian with English subtitles

Hugely successful, critically acclaimed filmmaker Leo Bernardi (played with endearing world-weary charm by Toni Servillo) is approaching the end of his career but refuses to accept his slow decline. The film he just finished shooting is inspired by a novel about the legendary ladies' man Casanova, a character Leo realizes is eerily similar to himself. Leo's Casanova has lost his powers of attraction over women, plus he's broke and simply wants to return to Venice. While traveling home, however, this aging Casanova meets a beautiful woman named Marcoline. She reawakens his desire, but his attempts at seduction are now fraught with new, unfamiliar risks. In this entertaining “art imitates life” tale, it is not lost on Leo why he'd want to tell this story at such a pivotal moment in his life. But will his destiny as an old man match that of Casanova's?

“Salvatores admits [that] *Casanova's Return* is his most personal work... A cinematic mise en abyme with dreamlike surreal touches.”

Vittoria Scarpa, *Cineuropa*

Ukraine

November 26 (Wednesday)

8:30 pm



Porcelain War

Порцелянова війна

Ukraine/USA/Australia 2024

Brendan Bellomo, Slava Leontyev

87 min. DCP

In Ukrainian, Russian, and English with English subtitles

“A sublime and stirring documentary... *Porcelain War* understands that great art can act as both a bulwark and beacon.”

Robert Abele, *Los Angeles Times*

Amidst the chaos and destruction of the Russian invasion, three Ukrainian artists defiantly find inspiration and beauty as they defend their culture and country. Despite daily shelling, Anya Stasenko, Andrey Stefanov, and co-director Slava Leontyev elect to stay behind, arming themselves with art, cameras, and, for the first time, guns. Anya finds purpose in ceramic painting, Andrey takes a dangerous journey to get his family to safety abroad, and Slava becomes a weapons instructor for ordinary people who have become unlikely soldiers. As the war intensifies, Anya and Slava channel their idyllic past, uncertain present, and hopes for the future into porcelain figurines. An extraordinary document of an extraordinary time, *Porcelain War* was nominated for an Academy Award and won the Grand Jury Prize for Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival.

Proceeds from this screening will benefit the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, a charitable foundation that develops, organizes, and delivers assistance projects generated by Canadians, directed to Ukraine.

The Cinematheque

November
Saturday

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday



9
New Restoration
7:00 pm
The Asthenic
Syndrome

10
FORM / New Works
7:00 pm
Laura Taler:
the village trilogy
+ Matryoshka Crush
[Guest](#)



12
Frames of Mind
7:00 pm
Crocodile Tears
[Guest](#)

13
EU Film Festival
[Denmark](#)
7:00 pm
The Land of Short
Sentences

14
EU Film Festival
[Austria](#)
6:30 pm
Peacock
[Estonia](#)
8:40 pm
8 Views of Lake Biwa

15
EU Film Festival
[Portugal](#)
6:30 pm
Savanna and the
Mountain
[Sweden](#)
8:20 pm
Hammarskjöld

16
Film Club
10:30 am
Faith & John
Hubley x 7 [G](#)
EU Film Festival
[Hungary](#)
4:00 pm
I Accidentally Wrote a
Book
[Poland](#)
6:30 pm
Breached
[Slovakia](#)
8:30 pm
Réveillon

17
EU Film Festival
[Netherlands](#)
6:30 pm
Memory Lane
[Cyprus](#)
8:40 pm
Smaragda: I Got Thick
Skin and I Can't Jump

18
EU Film Festival
[Luxembourg](#)
6:30 pm
The Land in the
Shadows
[France](#)
8:10 pm
Making Of

19
EU Film Festival
[Ireland](#)
6:30 pm
Dreamtown
[Bulgaria](#)
8:40 pm
Wedlock

20
EU Film Festival
[Lithuania](#)
6:30 pm
Drowning Dry
[Belgium](#)
8:30 pm
Omen

21
EU Film Festival
[Latvia](#)
6:30 pm
Maria's Silence
[Finland](#)
8:45 pm
The Summer Book

22
Learning & Outreach
1:00 pm
30 Years of Learning
& Outreach
EU Film Festival
[Romania](#)
6:30 pm
Three Kilometres to the
End of the World
[Czech Republic](#)
8:45 pm
Franz

23
EU Film Festival
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4:00 pm
Even Pigs Go to Heaven
[Greece](#)
6:00 pm
Brando with a Glass Eye
[Spain](#)
8:30 pm
We Treat Women
Too Well

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EU Film Festival
[Malta](#)
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Ciao Ciao
[Germany](#)
8:30 pm
Beyond the Blue Border

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EU Film Festival
[Slovenia](#)
7:00 pm
Whites Wash at Ninety

26
EU Film Festival
[Italy](#)
6:30 pm
Casanova's Return
[Ukraine](#)
8:30 pm
Porcelain War [Voy](#)

27
[João César Monteiro](#)
[Opening Night](#)
7:00 pm
[Silvestre](#) [PG](#)

28
[João César Monteiro](#)
6:30 pm
Trails
Hong Kong Cinema
9:00 pm
City on Fire [Voy](#)

29
Hong Kong Cinema
6:30 pm
The Killer [Voy](#)
8:50 pm
Peking Opera Blues [PG](#)

Sunday

Monday

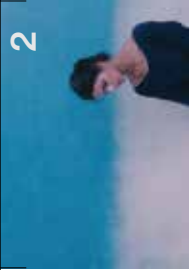
Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

December
Saturday

30 João César Monteiro 6:30 pm The Last Dive 8:30 pm Recollections of the Yellow House ^{TV}	1 João César Monteiro 7:00 pm Hovering Over the Water	2 	3 Hong Kong Cinema 6:30 pm City on Fire ^{TV} João César Monteiro 8:45 pm Trails	4 PELAN Presents 7:00 pm Mother of Snow Cranes	5 Hong Kong Cinema / CCM 7:00 pm A Better Tomorrow ^{TV} Live Music	6 João César Monteiro 6:00 pm Recollections of the Yellow House ^{TV} Hong Kong Cinema 8:40 pm City on Fire ^{TV}
7 João César Monteiro 3:00 pm God's Comedy Hong Kong Cinema 6:30 pm Peking Opera Blues ^{PG} 8:45 pm The Killer ^{TV}	8 João César Monteiro 6:30 pm Silvestre ^{PG} 8:50 pm The Last Dive	9 João César Monteiro 7:00 pm Hovering Over the Water	10 Our Stories to Tell 7:00 pm Levers	11 David Lynch Opening Night 7:00 pm Blue Velvet ^{TV}	12 Hong Kong Cinema 6:30 pm A Better Tomorrow ^{TV} 8:30 pm A Better Tomorrow II ^{TV}	13 David Lynch 5:00 pm Six Shorts by David Lynch 6:30 pm Eraserhead ^{TV} 8:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Pilot
14 David Lynch 6:00 pm The Elephant Man ^{PG} 8:30 pm Dune ^{PG}	15 DIM Cinema 7:00 pm The Fullness of Time	16 	17 Frames of Mind 7:00 pm True Chronicles of the Blida Joinville Psychiatric Hospital	18 David Lynch 6:30 pm Wild at Heart ^{TV} Hong Kong Cinema 9:00 pm Bullet in the Head ^{TV}	19 David Lynch 6:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Pilot 8:40 pm Blue Velvet ^{TV}	20 David Lynch 4:00 pm Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me ^{TV} 7:00 pm Mulholland Dr. ^{TV}
21 Film Club 10:30 am The Snow Queen ^G Hong Kong Cinema 4:00 pm A Better Tomorrow ^{TV} 6:30 pm A Better Tomorrow II ^{TV} 8:45 pm A Better Tomorrow III ^{TV}	22 David Lynch 6:30 pm Eraserhead ^{TV} 8:30 pm Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me ^{TV}	23 David Lynch 6:00 pm The Straight Story ^G 8:20 pm Wild at Heart ^{TV}	24 	25 	26 David Lynch 2:00 pm Inland Empire 5:30 pm Lost Highway ^{TV} 8:20 pm Mulholland Dr. ^{TV}	27 David Lynch 3:00 pm Dune ^{PG} Hong Kong Cinema 6:00 pm Bullet in the Head ^{TV} David Lynch 8:40 pm The Straight Story ^G
28 David Lynch 3:00 pm Mulholland Dr. ^{TV} 6:00 pm Wild at Heart ^{TV} 8:30 pm Lost Highway ^{TV}	29 David Lynch 2:00 pm Inland Empire Hong Kong Cinema 5:30 pm Bullet in the Head ^{TV} David Lynch 8:10 pm The Elephant Man ^{PG}	30 David Lynch 3:00 pm Lost Highway ^{TV} Hong Kong Cinema 6:00 pm A Better Tomorrow III ^{TV} David Lynch 8:30 pm Blue Velvet ^{TV}	31 	1 	2 David Lynch 3:30 pm Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me ^{TV} 6:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 1–3	3 David Lynch 3:00 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 4–6 6:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 7–9
4 David Lynch 3:00 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 10–12 6:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 13–15	5 David Lynch 6:30 pm Twin Peaks: The Return Parts 16–18			Scan the QR code to see our calendar online, read more about the films, and purchase tickets.		

Screening and Showcase 30 Years of Learning & Outreach

Since 1995, The Cinematheque has been helping BC youth create original short films. Our archive of homegrown youth cinema spans every mode and genre of filmmaking, including documentaries about local skateboarders in the early 2000s, funny and fantastical mockumentaries in the 2010s, and sci-fi thrillers about the dangers of A.I. in the 2020s. We are celebrating 30 years of Learning & Outreach (formerly Education) at The Cinematheque by showcasing the best youth-made films from our archive and inviting current and former collaborators to share their experiences. This event is for anyone interested in local filmmaking who wants to be entertained by a wide mix of shorts and hear stories from several generations of Vancouver filmmakers. All donations will fund our Learning & Outreach activities, including new camera equipment and supplies for our programs. Family-friendly reception to follow.



NOVEMBER 22
(SATURDAY)
1:00 PM

*Admission by
Donation*



Folk Tales & Divine Comedies: Films by João César Monteiro



November 27 –December 9

Every film by João César Monteiro (1939–2003) contains several acts of transformation. His work contains a kind of deviant magic, whether in his early career fairytale films or his later mode in which he appears as a libertine named after a saint, who practices a sort of sly, meditative sacrilege. This use of enticing artifice—visual and verbal—acts to unveil and combat the entropy of sickness, poverty, and other threats to life, a move that was motivated by the climate of his early artistic practice. Monteiro's career flourished in the years immediately following the Carnation Revolution, an experience he helped document and never forgot, and near the end of his life he still spoke of cinema as an enriching means by which the dominant social order might be disturbed, even if its total subversion remained elusive.

A poet, film critic, actor, and fiercely committed public intellectual, Monteiro made adventurous and gorgeously photographed films that are widely recognized, within Portuguese cinema as well as the field of post-1968 “new wave” movements across the world, as uncommonly provocative and possessed by a searing sense of humour. His statements and ideas certainly land with iconoclastic emphasis; here you'll find feminist fairytale heroes, dirty old men, ancient parables, and contemporary nightlife, which populate films that move at the pace of, at one moment, the glacial cosmic dance of planetary orbit, the next, a sudden strike between combatants.

It's possible to take Monteiro's cinema at face value, to see his political motivations, painterly compositions, or successfully underplayed comic gags as worthwhile for their own sake. But his slow-burn approach—every action carried out from beginning to end—makes for a seductive mixture of narrative directions. To watch a Monteiro film is to witness the way beauty and perversity, morality and hedonism, brutal violence and elegant wit, modernist

dreams and ordered reality can be seen in oscillation, or even to feed into one another. His heroes—Silvestre, Laura, and João—embody ways of living at odds with their society, whether at the size of a neighbourhood or a city, and Monteiro devises worlds to surround them with an amplification of their desire to see things differently.

While his films proved significant to devoted international followers (the French critic Serge Daney and the American filmmaker Robert Kramer), and his onscreen persona has been compared by turns to everyone from Buster Keaton to Elia Suleiman, Monteiro is most expressly concerned with his own country. Portugal's traditions and landscapes, in the midst of the revolution's transfer of power, could be perhaps reclaimed not by nationalists but by an idiosyncratic artist with little to lose.

The declaration of Monteiro and key collaborators Acácio de Almeida (cinematography), Margarida Gil (actor, director, partner), Joaquim Pinto (sound), and Maria Velho da Costa (co-writer) might be that, to paraphrase a title from the French New Wave, Lisbon belonged to them, and that their radical, uncompromising cinema would be a conduit for its lifeblood—an animating philosophy broad enough to accommodate an artistic spirit still sustained years after the revolution.

After decades without distribution in North America, all of Monteiro's films are now available in restorations by Cinemateca Portuguesa. This retrospective, the first-ever in Vancouver, presents a selection of his greatest works, from his debut feature *Trails* to his wildest international success *God's Comedy*. Speaking about the latter, Monteiro called his film political “in the Greek sense, an intervention in public life.” The Cinematheque is excited to be part of the return of his singular work to the public sphere.

Supported by the Consulate General of Portugal in Vancouver and Camões – Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua



“Next to Manoel de Oliveira, I believe that Monteiro was the leading filmmaker for my generation in Portugal.”

Miguel Gomes (*Grand Tour*, *Tabu*)

Opening Night

November 27 (Thursday) 7:00 pm
December 8 (Monday) 6:30 pm



Silvestre PG

Portugal 1981
João César Monteiro
113 min. DCP
In Portuguese with English subtitles

New Restoration

The surprises in a fairy tale, João César Monteiro has said, are by their nature “total and miraculous.” For his breakthrough feature he built a medieval world, in ways that earned comparison to Rohmer’s *Perceval*, out of unreal materials. (The more unassuming, the better to hold more shock and strange beauty in store.) The interior sets are pure, flat artifice, while exterior landscapes appear via front projection; in *Silvestre* all requires belief, or is not exactly as it seems. This extends to the tale’s heroine. Sílvia (Maria de Medeiros) trusts herself more than her sister, her father’s advice, or the suitors at her door. Navigating pitfalls—domesticity, dragons, and doom-laden objects—she assumes the power of a new identity, the male Silvestre, and protects herself with uncompromising speech. Acácio de Almeida’s tableaux cinematography evokes religious paintings. Monteiro, who cameos as a king, balances the proceedings between deadpan irony and breathtaking spectacle.

The opening-night screening of *Silvestre* will be preceded by an introduction from Programming Associate Michael Scoular.

“This is the film of an heir—with all the insolence that implies—whose freedom allows him to organize the elements of a pictorial, musical, and cinematographic culture to recount the thunderclap of birth, the impatience of the body and desire, and the joy of being in nature.”

Laurence Giavarini, *Cahiers du cinéma*

November 28 (Friday) 6:30 pm
December 3 (Wednesday) 8:45 pm



Trails

Veredas

Portugal 1978
João César Monteiro
120 min. DCP

In Portuguese with English subtitles

New Restoration

“*Trails* summons comparisons to Sergei Parajanov as both an avant-garde picaresque of theatrically staged folktales and a quasi-ethnographic study in storytelling traditions.”

Michael Rowin, *Artforum*

João César Monteiro arrived at his first feature via film criticism. Seeing the work of António Reis and Margarida Cordeiro, which transforms non-fiction shooting methods (namely ethnographic portraits around the rural Trás-os-Montes region) with mysteriously associative montage, Monteiro declared their impact on Portuguese art to be “as fundamental as the grafting of a new heart into an agonized patient.” *Trails*, also shot in Trás-os-Montes, made one key change: it is unabashedly dealing with fiction. As if rewriting a Portuguese epic from beginning to end, the film braids the ancient (voiceover) and contemporary (performance) with ephemeral shifts in magic-hour light cast over centuries of ritual and stories within stories. Pasolini’s baroque, vagrant approach to myth is one comparison, but Monteiro’s methods—burying plot in one location and unearthing poetry a few steps away—wilfully charts its own course. Miguel Gomes’s *Arabian Nights* later continued the tradition.

November 30 (Sunday) 6:30 pm
December 8 (Monday) 8:50 pm



The Last Dive

O Último Mergulho

Portugal/France 1992
João César Monteiro
92 min. DCP

In Portuguese and French with English subtitles

New Restoration

João César Monteiro’s tour through the resonant powers of fairytales, even in fragmented or revised form, landed at the shores of contemporary Lisbon nightlife in *The Last Dive*, a film of immediate, freewheeling pain and pleasure, as well as mirage-like formal maneuvers coded with the early experimentation of silent cinema. Night has fallen upon Samuel, suicidal at the end of a pier. As a sympathetic act, the middle-aged philanderer Eloi distracts him with a many-times-travelled itinerary of the city’s offering—a home, a club, a brothel, a café—to test the certainty of his despair. Fabienne Babe (Cathy in Rivette’s *Wuthering Heights*) plays Eloi’s daughter; like in Hans Christian Andersen’s tragically shaded *The Little Mermaid* she cannot speak, and for good or ill she attracts Samuel’s interest. Monteiro makes a labyrinth out of this straightforward set-up, creating sound-image disjunctions and documenting the independence of the city’s routines beyond any narrative requirements.

“The spirit of Fellini looms over this ribald urban folktale, but its mercurial cinematic inspiration is Monteiro’s own ... [An] ode to mysterious possibility.”

Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

November 30 (Sunday)
December 6 (Saturday)

8:30 pm
6:00 pm

December 1 (Monday)
December 9 (Tuesday)

7:00 pm
7:00 pm

December 7 (Sunday)

3:00 pm



Recollections of the Yellow House

Recordações da Casa Amarela

Portugal 1989
João César Monteiro
122 min. DCP

In Portuguese with English subtitles

New Restoration



Hovering Over the Water

À Flor do Mar

Portugal 1986
João César Monteiro
143 min. DCP

In Portuguese and English with English subtitles

New Restoration



God's Comedy

A Comédia de Deus

Portugal 1995
João César Monteiro
170 min. DCP

In Portuguese and French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“David Lynch could take lessons from the understated surrealism of this oddball Portuguese comedy ... Much of the humour comes from the disjunction between the patiently recorded, outrageously banal gestures of the characters and the ravishing beauty with which they are filmed.”

Dave Kehr, *Chicago Reader*

After three magisterial works of myth and folk tale, which progressed from free fragmentation (*Trails*) to absolute coherence of space and time (*Hovering Over the Water*), João César Monteiro rewrote his own rules in order to make a film that still stands as one of the most acclaimed in all of Portuguese cinema. Monteiro, heretofore a cameo performer in his films, appears as João de Deus, a tenant in a Lisbon apartment building who acts as both a Chaplinesque voyeur suffering from bedbugs and other tramp-like indignities and a refined, vampiric figure like the one played by Erich von Stroheim in his *Foolish Wives*. João dryly dispenses proud maxims and sticks his finger in the eye of bourgeois morality, but his deadpan presence is often delicately poised to enable a variety of dramatic outcomes, whether melancholic tenderness or seriocomic madness.

Preceded by a video introduction from filmmaker Miryam Charles (*Cette maison*).

The serene beauty of the coast-hugging house where Laura Rossellini (Laura Morante) and her extended family gather in *Hovering Over the Water* contains, perhaps, everything you could ask of a movie. Inside, multi-generational wisdom presides, whether over the preparation of a fish or the handling of a life-threatening crisis. The shadow of the past appears in its rooms, in the form of lost loves and strange visitors. And plots encircle its boundaries, both pure fiction—an American seafarer appears out of a dream, or a Hemingway novel—and reality, as the true-to-life assassination of a Palestinian diplomat is transmitted by radio into the film's world. João César Monteiro's third and most romantic feature is the closest he would come to the playfulness of Rivette, both in its sense of staging and conspiratorial entanglement. This film marks his final collaboration with master cinematographer Acácio de Almeida. Pedro Costa received early on-set experience as a member of the crew.

“An immense exercise in freedom for [Monteiro] ... There is great poetic force in his images ... A defining film.”

Filipe Furtado, *Revista Contracampo*

“More than a storyline, what runs between *Yellow House* and its ‘sequel’ is a mood and style: microscopic gags, epic runtimes, erratic plots, perfectly snipped-off long takes, and dreamy sensuality.”

Nick Pinkerton, *Village Voice*

“A film against established order,” in director João César Monteiro's words, *God's Comedy* is a popular movie: its exacting, suspenseful portioning of perversity, normalcy, and voyeuristic beauty is displayed with total awareness of its audience's likely repulsion or acceptance. João de Deus, after the events of *Recollections of the Yellow House*, is now the manager of the Paradise ice cream parlour. From his position of authority he strictly enforces a particular sense of taste, of what he sells and who he hires, and what he (coldly) says and (pleasurably) does in his spare time. One could call him a Captain Ahab figure: as *Moby Dick* is to the sperm whale, so *God's Comedy* is likewise near-encyclopedic regarding the uses and values of ice cream. Variations on Monteiro's João persona would appear in all of his remaining films, but the audaciousness—of gloriously surreal mise-en-scène and moral code shattering—was never more game than in this neighbourhood-scaled epic.

One of the Greatest Portuguese Films of All Time (#6)
filmSPOT Critics Poll (2020)



In Dreams: A David Lynch Retrospective

December 11 –January 5

Few artists can legitimately claim ownership of an aesthetic that shaped not just the contours of an art form but culture at large. David Lynch (1946–2025), who died in January, was one such rarity.

His extraordinary body of work, which captured the collective imagination through film and television but also includes painting, sculpture, music, books, and much else besides, treaded an improbable line between accessibility and pure experimental impulse, between the appetite of an audience and the obstinate belief in one's own vision. That "Lynchian" could enter everyday parlance is proof not only of his ubiquitous influence but the discovery that life was taking on uncanny dimensions à la Lynch. (The term itself conjures more of a feeling than a description, something the famously explanation-averse director would no doubt appreciate.)

An architect of dream worlds on the verge of waking (or vice versa), Lynch is best known for a cycle of features—1977's *Eraserhead* to 2006's *Inland Empire*—and a groundbreaking 1990 television

show, created with Mark Frost, that would thread into his film career and, in 2017, produce what is perhaps his magnum opus. His work—surreal, sometimes nightmarish—deals often with the hidden horrors of American life, the rot under the root, but also with the goodness in people and the power of love. It is, to a large degree, a binaristic universe, governed by virtue and wickedness on a cosmic, metaphysical scale. "Why are there people like Frank?" Kyle MacLachlan's Jeffrey asks of his sadistic foil in *Blue Velvet*. The answer, unspoken, is because there is evil, an abstraction that undergirds the ethics of Lynchland—and particularly the planet of *Twin Peaks*. Doppelgängers are a common motif, as is electricity as a signifier of slippage between worlds, a rupturing of planes. "It's sometimes dangerous, but it's magical," Lynch said of his fascination with the phenomenon. "It's a force."

In his film and TV work, ideas—or the "fish" he catches, as he'd prefer to frame it—found expression through a company of collaborators whose names became synonymous with his own. MacLachlan, Laura Dern, Naomi Watts, Jack Nance, and Harry Dean Stanton are probably the most prominent of his players (though the troupe is vast); behind the curtain, editor Mary Sweeney, casting director Johanna Ray, production designer Jack Fisk, and a trio of cinematographers—Frederick Elmes, Freddie Francis, and Peter Deming—virtually coauthored his career. But it is composer Angelo Badalamenti who emerged as the elemental



Lynch ingredient, scoring *Blue Velvet* through *Mulholland Dr.* before returning to the swelling synthscape of *Twin Peaks*, his most beloved work, for its miraculous 2017 revival. Lynch would direct no major film or television projects after *The Return* (had the pandemic not evaporated a Netflix series, who knows what could have been), preserving a partnership with Badalamenti that endured until their respective deaths—Badalamenti in 2022, Lynch just over two years later.

This December, The Cinematheque invites you to experience the sui generis genius of David Lynch with a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition mounted on a scale unseen in these (or other) parts before. “In Dreams” will present all ten of the director’s feature films—most restored in recent years—as well as a program of formative shorts tracing his early evolution. The added slice of cherry pie: the retrospective will also include the broadcast pilot of *Twin Peaks* and, in its 18-hour entirety, the director’s labyrinthine last testament *Twin Peaks: The Return*.

As far as holiday presents go, we have a definite feeling none will be as wonderful and strange as this.

“In a sense all film is entering into someone else’s dreams. Maybe we can even share the same dreams.”

David Lynch

December 11 (Thursday)	Opening Night	7:00 pm
December 19 (Friday)		8:40 pm
December 30 (Tuesday)		8:30 pm



Blue Velvet

USA 1986
David Lynch
121 min. DCP

David Lynch’s great masterpiece of the 1980s is perhaps the fulcrum of his career—the film that, after the critical and commercial cratering of *Dune*, rehabilitated his name and endeared his dark, distinctive filmmaking to a generation of disturbed moviegoers. A *Hardy Boys* whodunit staged as a psychosexual Freudian nightmare, *Blue Velvet* follows college student Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) as he’s drawn into a hometown mystery that starts with a severed ear and leads to a chanteuse (Isabella Rossellini) under the thumb of a psychotic gangster (Dennis Hopper), one of cinema’s most depraved monsters. The heady mix of golly-gee ’50s Americana with neo-noir violence and sexual perversity incited controversy but nevertheless earned the auteur his second Oscar nomination for directing. Composer Angelo Badalamenti and newcomer Laura Dern, both future pillars of Lynchland, are spellbinding in their debuts for the director, while *Eraserhead* DP Frederick Elmes delivers his most lush and evocative work.

The December 11 screening of *Blue Velvet* will include “In Dreams” opening remarks by Artistic Director Shaun Inouye.

“Still enraptures and confounds ... David Lynch’s *Blue Velvet* has lost none of its power to derange, terrify, and exhilarate.”

Melissa Anderson, *Village Voice*

December 13 (Saturday)

5:00 pm



Six Shorts by David Lynch

Total program: 55 min.

The lightbulb moment in David Lynch's passage from painter to filmmaker almost doesn't need repeating, so ingrained is it in the origin story of the American auteur: the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts student, contemplating one of his paintings, "heard a little wind" and felt the urge for the figure on the canvas to move. From there, a cheap wind-up 16mm camera and the prize-winning animation it produced—*Six Men Getting Sick* (1967), a loop of vomit and tape-recorded sirens—started Lynch down a path that would culminate a decade later with his avant-garde opus *Eraserhead*. Along the way, Lynch developed ideas that would persist across his career: fear of language (*The Alphabet*), domestic horrors (*The Grandmother*), and absurdism wrought from tragedy (*The Amputee*, in two variations). This program collects his formative early works, along with an eerie one-minute short from 1995 commissioned for the centenary of cinema.

Six Men Getting Sick
USA 1967
David Lynch
4 min. DCP

The Grandmother
USA 1970
David Lynch
34 min. DCP

The Amputee:
Versions 1 & 2
USA 1974
David Lynch
9 min. DCP

Premonitions
Following an Evil Deed
USA 1995
David Lynch
1 min. DCP

The Alphabet
USA 1968
David Lynch
4 min. DCP



“Lynch was never less than fully himself ... [He] made an era-defining work for every era in which he was active.”

Dennis Lim, *Film Comment*

December 13 (Saturday)
December 22 (Monday)

6:30 pm
6:30 pm



Eraserhead 🏆

USA 1977
David Lynch
89 min. DCP

David Lynch's hair-hoisting first feature is one of those rare movies that genuinely seems to have spilled directly out of the unconscious mind—unmediated, unadulterated, and “carrying bits of brain tissue with it” (*Film Comment*). Shot on a shoestring, and taking five years to complete, Lynch's grisly comedy is set in a god-awful industrial wasteland where hapless factory worker Henry (Jack Nance) learns from girlfriend Mary (Charlotte Stewart) that he has become a father to a child quite unlike any other. The film serves up a Lynchian nightmare vision of love, sex, parenthood, and the nuclear family, rendered in remarkably textured black-and-white images and startling, unsettling sound. A midnight-movie paragon of the '70s and cult classic ever since, *Eraserhead* marked the emergence of a once-in-a-generation artist who would arguably never again harvest so completely from his inner world.

“The images are so alien and frightening, yet so rapturously beautiful, that you feel as if you're glimpsing the primal id of cinema...It's clearly the work of an original and almost spookily confident talent.”

Chuck Bowen, *Slant Magazine*

December 13 (Saturday)
December 19 (Friday)

8:30 pm
6:30 pm



Twin Peaks: The Pilot

aka “Northwest Passage”

USA 1989
David Lynch
94 min. DCP

“Still about as effective an opening salvo as TV has ever produced ... Outside of other David Lynch movies, there was no obvious pop culture analogue for the show's mix of screwball humour and creeping nightmarishness.”

Noel Murray, *The New York Times*

The TV show that redrew the boundaries of the medium, Mark Frost and David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* became an overnight sensation on the brilliance of its broadcast pilot, seeding the premise that would ensnare viewers the world over: who killed Laura Palmer? (The answer would prove increasingly elusive as the series unfurled.) Lynch, directing this movie-length proof of concept for ABC, arranges the pieces and quirky players with an irresistible combination of soap-opera pageantry, comedy as pathos, and levels of dread and discomfort unprecedented on network television. Unlike the soundstage-shot season that followed, the pilot was filmed entirely on location in the Pacific Northwest, forever equating the lumber town of Twin Peaks with the Snoqualmie Valley, a site of pilgrimage for fans. The ensemble cast, led by Kyle MacLachlan as the affable FBI agent assigned to the murder, is perfect, as is the ethereal theme song by Angelo Badalamenti.

“David Lynch didn’t just expand the idea of cinema: he created a new version of reality, an alternative world that changed our sense of the one we thought we were living in.”

Michael Atkinson, *Sight and Sound*

December 14 (Sunday)
December 29 (Monday)

6:00 pm
8:10 pm

December 14 (Sunday)
December 27 (Saturday)

8:30 pm
3:00 pm



The Elephant Man PG

United Kingdom/USA 1980
David Lynch
124 min. DCP

Following his brilliant DIY feature debut *Eraserhead*, David Lynch fit his eccentricities into the vitrine of a studio drama for this beautifully imagined portrait of Joseph “John” Merrick. In London’s 19th-century East End, freak shows are being shamed out of existence by Victorian reformers, a development to the advantage of the medically curious Dr. Frederick Treves (Anthony Hopkins), who bargains for the right to study Merrick and his bodily abnormalities. (Treves’s writings inform some of the icily mannered script.) Producer Mel Brooks, who kept his name out of the credits lest audiences expect a comedy, protected the film from studio cuts and surrounded Lynch with master collaborators: cinematographer Freddie Francis (*The Innocents*), editor Anne V. Coates (*Lawrence of Arabia*), and, as Merrick, actor John Hurt. Lynch’s surefooted, eight-time Oscar-nominated film is a carefully crafted study of human dignity in the face of industrialized cruelty.

“Pound for pound, one of the most powerful films I had ever seen. It still is...A masterpiece by the master.”

Robert Eggers (*Nosferatu*, *The Lighthouse*)



Dune PG

USA 1984
David Lynch
137 min. DCP

“David Lynch’s oddball adaptation remains a fascination [and] deserves a second chance ... Lynch’s approach to the galactic is the rare sci-fi specimen that feels as alien as its subjects.”

Charles Bramesco, *The Guardian*

After *The Elephant Man* proved David Lynch could calibrate his outré sensibilities into Oscar-nominated prestige, producer Dino De Laurentiis came calling with a project long mired in development limbo—a film adaptation of Frank Herbert’s “unfilmable” *Dune*. Lynch, seduced by the novel’s invention of alien worlds and motif of the sleeper who must awaken, took the job and then lost himself in a three-year, mega-budget sci-fi production rife with compromise and kneecapped by a Universal-controlled final cut. Its failure is legendary, as is its status as an inflection point in a career that, from here out, would never again relinquish vision to studio demand. The years have been forgiving to *Dune*: its grotesqueries, industrial-steampunk aesthetic, handcrafted effects, and introduction of Kyle MacLachlan—not to mention a host of other Lynch players, many of whom would reassemble for *Twin Peaks*—now present as fascinating and at times stridently brilliant artifacts in the evolution of Lynch.

“A singular, visionary dreamer who directed films that felt handmade.”

Steven Spielberg

December 18 (Thursday) 6:30 pm
December 23 (Tuesday) 8:20 pm
December 28 (Sunday) 6:00 pm



Wild at Heart

USA 1990
David Lynch
125 min. Blu-ray

“This whole world is wild at heart and weird on top.” David Lynch drives that sentiment—uttered by a sexed-up, against-type Laura Dern—to its extreme in this savage follow-up to his controversial masterwork *Blue Velvet*. A polarizing Palme d’Or winner at Cannes, and an unforeseen return to literary adaptation following the debacle of *Dune*, Lynch’s feverish rendering of Barry Gifford’s novel sets violent-offender Sailor (an Elvis-cosplaying Nicolas Cage) on a parole-breaking road trip across the Deep South with his bad-girl ingénue sweetheart Lula (Dern). Doggedly determined to keep them apart is Lula’s unhinged mother (Diane Ladd, Dern’s actual mother), the Wicked Witch to Lula’s Dorothy in the film’s postmodern embrace of *The Wizard of Oz*. “A picture about finding love in hell,” said the director, *Wild at Heart* prefigured the dial turn on sex and violence that would become de rigueur in the Tarantino age. Willem Dafoe nearly steals the movie as a nightmarish ghoul in a bolo tie.

“Exhilaratingly unsettling ... Funny, scary, and brilliantly cinematic.”
Geoff Andrew, Time Out

Format note: *Wild at Heart* screens from Shout Factory’s 2018 Blu-ray edition.

December 20 (Saturday) 4:00 pm
December 22 (Monday) 8:30 pm
January 2 (Friday) 3:30 pm



Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me

USA/France 1992
David Lynch
135 min. DCP

“In its own singular, deeply strange way, *Fire Walk With Me* is David Lynch’s masterpiece.”
Calum Marsh, The Village Voice

David Lynch’s feature-length prequel to his and Mark Frost’s seminal ’90s television series must surely rank among the greatest critical about-faces in recent memory. Savaged by reviewers upon release—“It’s not the worst movie ever made; it just seems to be,” snarked *The New York Times*’s Vincent Canby—*Fire Walk with Me* is now considered one of Lynch’s canonical achievements. In retrospect, the hostility can be appreciated: returning to a cast of curio characters left dangling after a cliffhanger series finale, Lynch opted to backtrack then retread what was already solved in the show’s central mystery, swapping humour and soap-opera camp with gutting brutality and adult content. A death-march depiction of the final days in the life of Laura Palmer (Sheryl Lee, in a tour-de-force turn), *Fire Walk with Me* is the director’s brilliant and sobering reminder that, beneath its amusingly off-kilter veneer, *Twin Peaks* was a show about a teenage daughter’s rape and murder.

Advisory: *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* includes scenes of sexual violence.

“Lynch invented a new language. He was a once-in-a-generation talent who absorbed the embers of America’s wildness... He is a treasure. His work will live forever.”

Harmony Korine

December 20 (Saturday) 7:00 pm
December 26 (Friday) 8:20 pm
December 28 (Sunday) 3:00 pm



Mulholland Dr.

USA/France 2001
David Lynch
147 min. DCP

David Lynch’s beguiling mix of Hollywood satire, film noir, and fever dream is now regarded as one of the greatest movies of all time (eighth according to *Sight and Sound*’s latest decennial poll). Naomi Watts, entering the Lynch-verse for the first time, is perky Betty, an aspiring actress from Canada newly arrived in Los Angeles. Laura Harring is “Rita,” a mysterious dark-haired beauty searching for her identity after a near-fatal accident. Justin Theroux is Adam, a hotshot Hollywood director under pressure from thugs to cast an unknown actress in his latest movie. Lynch’s “love story in the city of dreams” was originally shot as a TV pilot for ABC, which passed on picking up the series. (It was, in its earliest iteration, a *Twin Peaks* spinoff centred on Audrey Horne.) *Mulholland Dr.* earned the auteur Best Director at Cannes and his third Oscar nomination for directing.

“[David Lynch’s] crepuscular masterpiece... Still a maddening, freaky, mysterious thing, seductively interpretable but, ultimately, Lynchianly resistant to final readings.”

Michael Atkinson, *Sight and Sound*

December 23 (Tuesday) 6:00 pm
December 27 (Saturday) 8:40 pm



The Straight Story

USA 1999
David Lynch
112 min. DCP

“One of the tenderest, most plangent spiritual odysseys ever filmed.”

Howard Hampton, *Artforum*

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 kilometres by riding mower to do so. 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, for the film. In an unexpected twist, Disney acquired the picture out of Cannes. The strange and entrancing qualities of the work 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.

“The cinema of David Lynch is not for the literal-minded or easily spooked...It’s hard to think of another filmmaker capable of conjuring up such oneiric visions; films as haunted, liminal spaces where the real and surreal merge.”

Leigh Singer, BFI

December 26 (Friday) 2:00 pm
December 29 (Monday) 2:00 pm



Inland Empire

USA/France/Poland 2006
David Lynch
180 min. DCP

“A woman in trouble.” The innocuous tagline to David Lynch’s most avant-garde, undilutedly Lynchian feature since *Eraserhead* gives scant indication of the epic fever dream the American surrealist has in store. A hallucinatory tour of a haunted-funhouse Hollywood, Lynch’s extra-outr   follow-up to *Mulholland Dr.* stars Laura Dern as a past-prime actor offered the lead in a movie rumoured to be cursed. From there, a deluge of strangeness—doppelg  ngers, psycho killers, a rabbit sitcom, “The Loco-Motion”—gushes forth in inscrutable succession. The spiralling, scriptless, nearly non-narrative film was Lynch’s first feature-length foray into digital video; shot handheld by the director (also editor, scorer, and sound designer), the experimental opus has a dirty DIY aesthetic summoning the darkest dimensions of home moviemaking. Excerpts from Lynch’s eerie web series *Rabbits*, featuring a costumed Naomi Watts, are incorporated. Lynch regulars Harry Dean Stanton and Grace Zabriskie appear.

“Extraordinary, savagely uncompromised... One of the few films I’ve seen this year that deserves to be called art.”

Manohla Dargis, *The New York Times*

December 26 (Friday) 5:30 pm
December 28 (Sunday) 8:30 pm
December 30 (Tuesday) 3:00 pm



Lost Highway

USA/France 1997
David Lynch
134 min. DCP

“An elaborate hallucination that could never be mistaken for the work of anyone else ... Constructs an intricate puzzle out of dream logic, lurid eroticism, violence, shifting identities, and fierce intimations of doom.”

Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

“Dick Laurent is dead.” Untangling the mystery behind that cryptic message is just one of the deranged delights of *Lost Highway*, David Lynch’s terrifying, polarizing, M  bius-strip of a horror flick. Its bifurcated story, co-written by Barry Gifford (who penned the source material for Lynch’s *Wild at Heart*), begins straightforwardly enough: Fred (Bill Pullman), a jazz saxophonist who suspects his wife (Patricia Arquette) of infidelity, starts receiving ominous VHS tapes shot from inside the couple’s LA home. The mindfuckery commences when Lynch flips the lid and transforms Fred into a young ’50s-style greaser (Balthazar Getty) in deep with the mob and the mob boss’s wife (Arquette again). Sandwiched between the unfairly derided *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* and the much-exalted *Mulholland Dr.*, *Lost Highway* feels like a delirium of Lynchian extremes: part Black Lodge horror, part neo-noir puzzle box. The zeitgeisty soundtrack was produced by, and features, Trent Reznor.

Twin Peaks: The Return

USA 2017

David Lynch

Go figure that, in an age of media porousness, the cinematic event of the 2010s would be the third season of a TV show. With its first two episodes debuting at Cannes and institutions like *Cahiers du cinéma* and *Sight and Sound* naming it the best (the former) or second-best (the latter) film of the year, David Lynch and Mark Frost's groundbreaking chef-d'oeuvre reignited André Bazin's sage question: Qu'est-ce que le cinéma? Scripted and shot as an 18-hour movie, and aired in hour-long installments on Showtime, the *Twin Peaks* revival picks up 25 years after season two's legendarily WTF cliffhanger—with FBI Special Agent Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) swapped for an evil doppelgänger (MacLachlan again). But its true predecessor is Lynch's once-maligned 1992 prequel film *Fire Walk With Me*, a Rosetta Stone for *The Return's* complex mythology and many obsessed-over mysteries. Cavernously strange, brilliantly nostalgia-averse, and staggering in its scope and singularity, *The Return* is an unshakable triumph of maximal film art.

The Best Film of the 2010s
Cahiers du cinéma



Parts 1–3

“My Log Has a Message for You,” “The Stars Turn and a Time Presents Itself,” “Call for Help”
170 min.

January 2 (Friday) 6:30 pm

Parts 4–6

“... Brings Back Some Memories,” “Case Files,” “Don’t Die”
170 min.

January 3 (Saturday) 3:00 pm

Parts 7–9

“There’s a Body All Right,” “Gotta Light?,” “This Is the Chair”
170 min.

January 3 (Saturday) 6:30 pm

Parts 10–12

“Laura Is the One,” “There’s Fire Where You Are Going,”
“Let’s Rock”
170 min.

January 4 (Sunday) 3:00 pm

Part 13–15

“What Story is That, Charlie?,” “We Are Like the Dreamer,”
“There’s Some Fear in Letting Go”
170 min.

January 4 (Sunday) 6:30 pm

Parts 16–18

“No Knock, No Doorbell,” “The Past Dictates the Future,”
“What Is Your Name?”
170 min.

January 5 (Monday) 6:30 pm

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 4 (Thursday)

7:00 pm



Mother of Snow Cranes

Kurkien äiti

Finland 2024

Iiris Härmä

78 min. DCP

In English, Farsi, and Finnish with English subtitles

Canadian Premiere

“Ellen, why are you staying here?” Iiris Härmä’s film begins with this question before following the remarkable life of Ellen Vuosalo (1931–2025), who was born in Toronto to Finnish immigrants, studied zoology in the United States, and married an Iranian man. Ellen’s situation changed drastically after she decided to travel to Iran to seek custody of her children following her divorce. What started as a personal journey brought her to the wetlands of northern Iran where she stayed for five decades, dedicating her life to studying and protecting the last flocks of the critically endangered Siberian crane. This heartfelt and inspiring documentary captures a lifetime of conservation, blending scientific research with community involvement and challenging cultural and gender norms along the way. It’s a portrait of one woman’s unwavering commitment to wildlife and a reflection on resilience, belonging, and connections across nature, humanity, and cultural borders.

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, a 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.

November 12 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Crocodile Tears

Air Mata Buaya

Indonesia/France/Singapore/Germany 2024

Tumpal Tampubolon

98 min. DCP

In Indonesian with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

“Taut, suspenseful, and thrilling... Tumpal Tampubolon’s slow-burning debut explores the emotional complexities that can exist between mothers and sons, especially with authoritarian parenting, which imposes power in the name of love.”

June Kim, TIFF

Twenty-year-old Johan (Yusuf Mahardika) and his mother (Marissa Anita) live a peculiarly isolated life caring for a derelict crocodile park in the lush terrain of rural West Java. On a rare evening out, Johan meets a young woman named Arumi (Zulfa Maharani) who recently started working at a karaoke bar in a nearby village. Soon the two become romantic, and the uncomfortably close relationship between mother and adult son begins to unravel. Overbearing qualities quickly turn into obsession as the mother’s spiral into madness leads to a bizarre series of events and a chilling conclusion. In his much anticipated feature-length debut, Tumpal Tampubolon expands the motherhood horror subgenre, situating an Indonesian coming-of-age story in a disquieted atmosphere with supernatural overtones.

Post-screening discussion with Dr. Randall F. White, clinical professor and division head of adult psychiatry at UBC.

Co-sponsored by the Social and Cultural Psychiatry Program and the Schizophrenia Program, Adult Division, Department of Psychiatry, UBC

December 17 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



True Chronicles of the Blida Joinville Psychiatric Hospital in the Last Century, when Dr Frantz Fanon Was Head of the Fifth Ward between 1953 and 1956

Chroniques fidèles survenues au siècle dernier à l’hôpital psychiatrique Blida-Joinville, au temps où le Docteur Frantz Fanon était chef de la cinquième division entre 1953 et 1956

Algeria/France 2024

Abdenour Zahzah

91 min. DCP

In French and Arabic with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

Frantz Fanon, one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century, is most celebrated for his postcolonial philosophy. But Fanon was also a trained psychiatrist, an experience that deeply informed his worldview. Set in the 1950s, when Algeria was under French rule, Abdenour Zahzah’s film depicts a young Fanon (Alexandre Desane) recently appointed head physician at the Blida-Joinville Hospital. Witnessing racism and cruelty towards patients, particularly Muslims, Fanon advocates for more humane treatment and sets up a café, a newspaper for patients, and community sports. Outside hospital walls, the Algerian War of Independence develops, highlighting both micro and macro tides of revolutionary change. Shot in crisp monochrome on location at the hospital where Fanon worked in Blida, the film is based on archival records including Fanon’s hospital diaries, providing a singular dramatization of his short time as a practicing physician.

“A compelling study of a rarely portrayed figure, and of the dehumanization inflicted by French colonial psychiatry.”

Puong Le, *The Guardian*

Post-screening discussion with Dr. Harry Karlinsky, series director.

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 Kazymierchuk 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 to 2024, DIM Cinema was curated by the late Michèle Smith.

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

November 3 (Monday)

7:00 pm



Ways of Seeing: short short films by Gordon Payne

Program runtime: 30 min.

"Payne attempts to counter the ordinary attraction that exists between art and its audience. Complex though that attraction may be, it is dominated by the spectator's interest in affirmative content and soothing surfaces."

Bill Jeffries, *Gordon Payne's Painting: 1986–1990*

A quiet pulse moves beneath the flicker as dots dissolve in hypnotic cascades, opening a liminal space where perception sways and shifts. Gordon Payne's three short films, made in the late 1960s and early '70s, unfold as tactile meditations on vision, ritual, and the restless politics of seeing. Formally rigorous yet sensuous, these 16mm works ripple with otherworldly energy—a subtle resistance lodged in light, shadow, and rhythm. Payne moved to Hornby Island and returned to painting shortly after these films were made, carrying forward the spectral rhythms of these celluloid fragments, where memory, myth, and consciousness quietly intertwine. Screening from prints held in The Cinematheque's West Coast Film Archive, with *Negotiating a New Canadian Constitution* generously loaned by the Belkin Gallery, this rare program offers a glimpse into a little-seen yet resonant thread of Canadian experimental film.

—Nisha Platzer, Iris Film Collective

Tantra I
Canada 1969
Gordon Payne
8 min. 16mm

Negotiating a
New Canadian
Constitution
Canada 1973
Gordon Payne
3 min. 16mm

Birth of God
Mandala
Canada 1973
Gordon Payne
4 min. 16mm

Art Island:
Gordon Payne
Canada 2024
Zsofin Sheehy
15 min. Digital

The screening will be followed by a poetry reading by collaborator Lionel Kearns (TBC) and a virtual Q&A with Payne.

December 15 (Monday)

7:00 pm



The Fullness of Time

USA 2008

Cauleen Smith

49 min. DCP

In *The Fullness of Time*, American artist Cauleen Smith repurposes the languages of physicists and astronomers to decode the rage, grief, elation, and hope that surround the post-Katrina reality of New Orleans. This work was created three years after the hurricane and considers environmental and social disaster in relation to intense human influence on our planet. A "sister from another planet" is sent to Earth to explore the terrain and learn our ways. As she wanders the streets of the city, the viewer is left to wonder if this solitary character is indeed an alien, or perhaps just one more person trying to make sense of the passage of time, the enormity of loss, and our tentative future landscapes.

—Tobin Gibson

"Everything I make is just an offering. I think of my work as a contribution to the histories of Black diasporas and our powers of invention, survival and generativity."

Cauleen Smith

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 Stélat'en First Nation.

November 5 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



#skoden

Canada 2025
Damien Eagle Bear
75 mins. DCP

Filmed on location in Lethbridge, Alberta, and the Blood Reserve on traditional Blackfoot Territory, Damien Eagle Bear shares the story of fellow Kainai First Nation member Pernell Bad Arm, the face of an infamous meme. His image was stolen and circulated in racist circles to mock and reinforce stereotypes of Indigenous people, but it was reclaimed by Indigenous people across Turtle Island by adding the now-iconic slang word “skoden,” meaning “let’s go, then.” Following the Blackfoot worldview of compassion and care, *#skoden* uncovers the true story of the photo of Bad Arm and reclaims his humanity and narrative by sharing stories from his friends and family about his life, offering an insider perspective on a national struggle for dignity and respect.

Emerging Canadian Filmmaker Award
Hot Docs 2025

“[\[A\] heartfelt and compassionate documentary.](#)”
imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival 2025

December 10 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



Levers

Canada 2025
Rhayne Vermette
95 min. DCP

In English and French with English and French subtitles

“[Elemental and enigmatic, *Levers* is a singular work by one of Canada’s visionary talents.](#)”
Andréa Picard, TIFF 2025

What would you do if the sun did not rise for a day? Following her award-winning *Ste. Anne*, Métis filmmaker Rhayne Vermette is back with her experimental sophomore feature. In 1982 in the Red River Valley of Manitoba, a crowd comes together for the unveiling of a statue, not knowing that a day of total darkness is upon them. In a series of chapters, the lives of the mysterious sculptor, a security guard, and a civil servant are woven together to explore feelings of instability and mortality. Shot on 16mm film using broken Bolex cameras, *Levers* creates an intimate, dreamlike atmosphere with entrancing sounds, beautiful visuals, and an unsettling storyline that mixes fantasy and reality.

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.

November 16 (Sunday)

10:30 am



Faith & John Hubley × 7 G

Program runtime: 69 min.

As directors of independent animation, Faith and John Hubley pursued what Faith called “the directness and passion of a child’s vision.” Their work was influenced by painting, jazz, and the rewards of listening closely to people, whether musicians like Dizzy Gillespie or their children, who appear in multiple films via direct audio recordings. Each film seeks alignment with what they most wanted to see in the world: a love extended to people as they are, and whatever else could withstand the soul-deadening effects of commercial industry. Faith started out in New York’s theatre scene, while John toiled under Disney before the animation strike of 1941. Together they “used improvisation to liberate animation from itself, to go to watercolours and to paint pastels.” Their influences include such revered artists as Picasso (for John), Paul Klee, and Joan Miró (for Faith), but the work is very simply about, to cite *Adventures of an **, remembering how to play and how to see new things.

*Adventures of an **
USA 1956
10 min. DCP

Windy Day
USA 1967
8 min. DCP

Date with Dizzy
USA 1956
11 min. DCP

The Tender Game
USA 1958
6 min. DCP

Moonbird
USA 1959
10 min. DCP

The Hole
USA 1962
15 min. DCP

Cockaboody
USA 1973
9 min. DCP

“The highly original and straight-from-the-heart films that resulted from their collaboration [made] the Hubleys exemplars for an entire up-and-coming generation of non-traditional animated filmmakers.”

Pat McGilligan, *Film Quarterly*

December 21 (Sunday)

10:30 am



The Snow Queen G

Снежная королева

USSR 1957
Lev Atamanov
65 min. DCP
In Russian with English subtitles

“My destiny and my favourite film ... Had I not one day seen *The Snow Queen* during a film screening hosted by the company labour union [in 1964], I honestly doubt that I would have continued working as an animator.”

Miyazaki Hayao

Based on Hans Christian Andersen’s most ambitiously detailed fairy tale, *The Snow Queen* is a landmark in animated feature filmmaking. Director Lev Atamanov’s team, which includes art director Leonid Shvartsman (*Cheburashka*) and animator Fyodor Khitruk (*Winnie-the-Pooh*), may have been influenced by the Walt Disney of *Bambi* and *Pinocchio*, yet they mastered a variety of approaches to character. The title antagonist is a feat of rotoscope animation based on the model of star actor Maria Babanova, while the tale’s hero, Gerda, is given a style of motion all her own. Gerda’s quest, one that tests her strength, loyalty, and ability to protect those she loves, is for her friend Kai, whose eyes and heart have been afflicted by the Snow Queen’s treacherous ice storm. Her journey, which brings her into contact with royalty, bandits, animal friends, and the harsh elements, became an essential reference point for Miyazaki Hayao, who continued to cite Gerda as recently as *Ponyo*.

This Film Club program is presented in its original language with subtitles. The story in this film can be understood by anyone familiar with Hans Christian Andersen’s fairy tale, but it is recommended for audience members who understand Russian or can read English independently.

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Save the dates

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now

Photo: Wat Mess in TESTO by Lesley Martin



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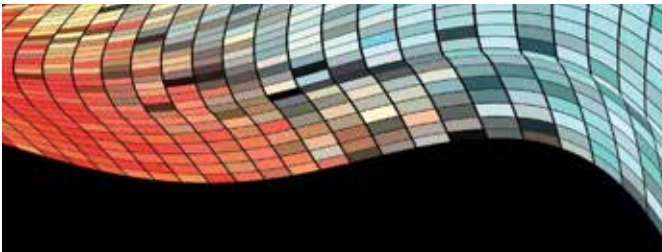
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