

September/October 2023

# 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](http://thecinematheque.ca) or during screening hours at our box office.

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

#### Support

The Cinematheque is a not-for-profit society incorporated in the province of British Columbia and a registered Canadian charity. We rely on financial support from public and private sources. Donations are gratefully accepted. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$50 or more. [support@thecinematheque.ca](mailto:support@thecinematheque.ca)

#### Venue Rental

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

The Cinematheque gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following agencies:



Cover image: *Ceddo*, Ousmane Sembène, 1976  
Contents image: *The Virgin Suicides*, Sofia Coppola, 1999

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1131 Howe Street, Vancouver  
[thecinematheque.ca](http://thecinematheque.ca)

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Thea Loo, Sam Mason

Programming Associate  
Michael Scoular

Learning & Outreach Intern  
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Special thanks to our spare volunteers!

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The Cinematheque's program guide is published six times a year with a bi-monthly circulation of 8,000-10,000.

Program notes: Shaun Inouye, Michael Scoular, Chelsea Birks

DIM Cinema notes: Michèle Smith

Frames of Mind notes: Caroline Coutts

Our Stories to Tell notes: Akira lahtail

Additional program notes by 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

#### Ticket Rates

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

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

Film Club, our family matinée series, has the reduced admission rate of \$6 for ages 13 and under.

200-1131 Howe Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia V6Z 2L7  
604 688 8202  
[info@thecinematheque.ca](mailto:info@thecinematheque.ca)

[instagram@thecinematheque](https://www.instagram.com/thecinematheque)  
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## The Cinematheque has a blog!

In case you missed the news, The Cinematheque has a new blog called *Intertitles*. We launched this past March with news of our washroom renovations. (If you haven't yet enjoyed our new digs then have a look at our before-and-after photos in the "News from the Executive Director" post.) You'll also find perennial content such as the "Ask AI" column, which will answer all of your burning projectionist questions (send us a question or two!), and monthly volunteer spotlights (because we have the best volunteers). Cinematheque archival documents and ephemera will pop up on the regular in our "Tales from the Silo" column, and we'll even share some insights into film editing in our "Trailers, Tips & Tools" column. Alongside these fun outtakes will be regular messages from our executive director, updates and events from our Learning & Outreach department, and the occasional listicle to get you thinking about your next movie marathon.

Find *Intertitles* on our website listed below the calendar in the menu link.



# Georgian Cinema: Dreaming at the Crossroads

Co-presented with the  
Georgian National Film Center

September  
18–26

For such a small country (current population under four million), Georgia has certainly more than made its mark on world cinema. Yet a decade ago, this rich history was not well remembered in the West. That began to change in 2014, when a major touring retrospective was mounted by the Berkeley Art Museum's Pacific Film Archive and MoMA (unfortunately it didn't come to Vancouver). The following few years saw a continuing creative flowering, so that by 2018, Canadian academic Jerry White began his "Report from Tbilisi" with this: "Georgian cinema might not be at the centre of cinephile attention in the same way perennial film festival favourites Iranian or Romanian cinema have been, but it should be. Its comparably low post-independence profile is rapidly changing." Since then, a few Georgian films have seen breakout success beyond the festival circuit, including the gay-themed *And Then We Danced* and Alexandre Koberidze's genial, uncategorizable fable *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?* (the latter included in this series).

I've had an interest in Georgian cinema since the 1970s, when I worked as a programmer at The Cinematheque. More recently, I've become interested in Georgia itself and its long, complex, often tragic history as a small, mostly divided nation in the crossroads of empires (Persian, Ottoman, and Russian, to name the most recent). I finally spent a highly enjoyable few weeks in the country last summer. So I jumped at the opportunity to guest-curate this series of ten programs, which starts at the end of the silent era and culminates with two 2022 releases. Apart from *What Do We See*, none of the contemporary cinema selections have previously screened theatrically in Vancouver, and none of the classics have been seen here for several decades.

Since there's no way to properly represent the breadth of Georgian cinema in just ten programs, my approach has been to focus on narrative cinema, and search out those works that spoke to me most strongly—films that stand as distinctive, compelling

cinematic statements and also say interesting things about the particularities of Georgian society and culture, as well as its artistic traditions, both visual and literary (with a nod to its wonderful polyphonic vocal music as well).

Films from the "golden age" of Georgian Soviet cinema (late 1950s to 1980s) often spoke in symbols, metaphors, or allegory to avoid suppression (many were banned anyway). Recent cinema has been forthright about social issues while adopting narrative approaches that extend realism into more ambiguous, imagistic, and provocative areas. Each of these films repays close attention and demonstrates an enviable level of technical and artistic achievement.

Several short films have been chosen to enrich some of the programs where time allows. We've also organized Zoom Q&As and video introductions, as well as a free panel discussion on the theme of post-colonial Georgian culture, whose participants will include director Alexandre Koberidze.

Tony Reif  
Series Curator



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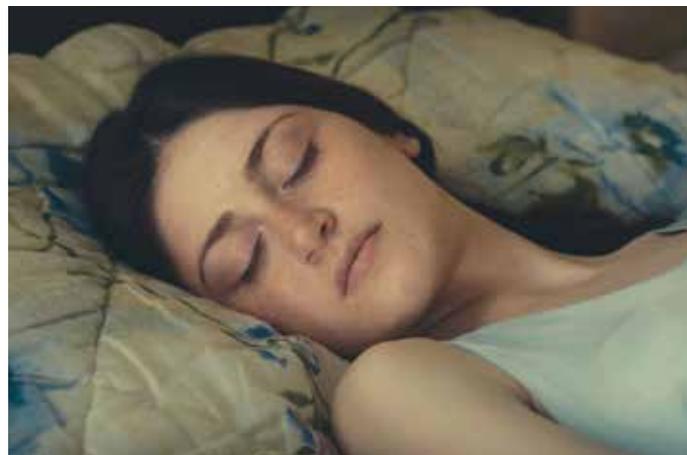
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Acknowledgements: The Cinematheque and Tony Reif are grateful to David Vashadze, Peter Steen, and Levan Lomjaria of the Georgian National Film Center for their assistance in making this series possible.

Film notes written by Tony Reif

September 18 (Monday)  
September 23 (Saturday)

7:00 pm  
2:00 pm



## What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?

რას ვხედავთ როდესაც ცას ვუყურებთ?

Georgia/Germany 2021

Alexandre Koberidze

151 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

Even if you feel you got Koberidze's breakthrough film on first viewing, maybe give it another look. In *Sight and Sound*, VIFF's own Tom Charity calls it "a masterpiece of Georgian movie magic" and cites similarities with Bresson, Eugène Green's contemporary fairy tales, city symphonies *People on Sunday* and *In the City of Sylvia*, and the "sensuality and lustre" of Dorsky and Brakhage. And that's just for starters. "A wry, offbeat fairy-tale about tricks of vision, chance encounters, and the transformative properties of the camera's eye, the film portrays the ancient city of Kutaisi as a sentient, watchful place of hidden wonders and perils, as a pharmacist and footballer are left lovelorn after their first encounter when a spell makes them unable to recognize one another again... Koberidze is one of several directors today drawing on Georgia's rich legacy of cinema... while often challenging the nation's deep-rooted patriarchal traditions and opening up space for the imagination through innovative visual poetry" (Carmen Gray, BFI).

Followed by a Zoom Q&A with Alexandre Koberidze moderated by Tom Charity (September 18 only)

Tom Charity is the year-round programmer at the VIFF Centre and a freelance film critic. His books include *John Cassavetes: Lifeworks* and *The Right Stuff* (BFI Modern Classics).

"Great films often feel like a secret you've been told, and that's how it is with Alexandre Koberidze's [film], a gorgeous modern fairy tale about ill-starred love, mysticism, soccer, and street dogs... Perhaps the most bewitching love letter to a hometown that I've ever seen."

Jessica Kiang, *New York Times*

September 21 (Thursday) **Opening Night**

7:00 pm



## My Grandmother

ჩემი ბებია

USSR 1929

Kote Mikaberidze

67 min. DCP

Silent. Georgian intertitles with English subtitles

New Restoration

Unlike any film made in Georgia before or after, with a style radically different from other Georgian silents, *My Grandmother* is an exhilarating and irreverent satire on Soviet bureaucracy gone mad. Director Mikaberidze's stated aim was to liberate film from the influence of theatre and literature; the contributions of avant-garde set designer Irakli Gamrekeli are key. A lazy, incompetent paper-pusher—apparently modelled after Harold Lloyd's comedy persona—is fired and desperately searches for a "grandmother" (an upper-rung benefactor) to help him get his job back. The film unites modernist trends such as German expressionism, the French avant-garde, and Russian constructivism with stunts and slapstick. Although by no means anti-Soviet in its ideology—the only positive role models, indeed the only characters treated realistically, are an upright worker and a Komsomol member—the film was banned for over thirty-five years. We're screening the definitive restoration, with live keyboard accompaniment by Vancouver jazz musician and film composer Chris Gestrin.

preceded by

## Life in Three Voices

USA 2020

Marina Kaganova

38 min. DCP

In English and Georgian with English subtitles

Georgia's beautiful polyphonic folk songs and chants inspire deep devotion among performers. This intimate documentary follows the young male group Ensemble Adlei as they tour the US with the Changeliani Sisters from Svaneti. A film about discovery, community, and friendship.

*My Grandmother* will include a video introduction by critic and archivist Nino Dzandava

Opening night sponsor



Siradze Selections is a one-woman-show wine import agency specializing in Georgian wines. It focuses on natural, organic, and biodynamic wines made from the indigenous grapes of Georgia's 8,000-year-old unbroken wine history.

**“It is the same all over the world. Only centres of political or religious power and cultural influence can be centres of artistic production. Georgia is one of those centres that radiates artistic influence.”**

Thomas Tode, director and Soviet avant-garde film scholar

September 22 (Friday)

6:30 pm



## Once Upon a Time There Was a Singing Blackbird

aka Lived Once a Song-Thrush  
იყო შაშვი მგალობელი

USSR 1971

Otar Iosseliani

85 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

New Restoration

Among prominent Georgian directors of the golden age, Iosseliani is the one who chose self-exile. After his third feature *Pastorale* (1976) was shelved, he moved to France, where he made 11 features between 1984 and 2015, refining a distinctive comedy-drama style—absurdist, wryly poetic, and often quite melancholic. You can see its roots in *Blackbird*, which takes a more freewheeling, observational visual and narrative approach. Iosseliani never comes right out and tells you what he thinks of his orchestra-percussionist protagonist Gia or of the various social demands Gia attempts to surf in one hectic 36-hour period of his thirtysomething life. But as Zach Lewis points out, “The weight of Iosseliani’s films comes through his Jacques Tati-esque curiosity of the shapeshifting society around him, and no film of his better exemplifies this” (*In Review Online*).

**“[A] charming, wry comedy... The [film’s] rich soundscape of Tbilisi’s streets and cafés, and a musical sweep from Georgian folk to classical Bach, make *Blackbird* as much a pleasure for the ears as the eyes.”**

Carmen Gray, BFI

September 22 (Friday)

8:20 pm



## A Room of My Own

ჩემი ოთახი

Georgia/Germany 2022

Ioseb “Soso” Bliadze

107 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

**“A charming, affecting drama.”**

Anna Smith, *Deadline*

This perceptive, uncompromising character study of two very different millennials in contemporary Tbilisi plays as if authentically conceived from the inside rather than observed from the outside. Taki Mumladze, who plays naïve, uncertain Tina to Mariam Khundadze’s party-girl influencer Megi, co-wrote the film with director Bliadze. *A Room of My Own* tracks the warming relationship between two twentysomething roommates as they begin acknowledging the inadequacies of their lives and their unsatisfactory interactions with men. Little by little a loving friendship develops. The film was shot during the pandemic in the small flatshare the two leads were living in. DP Dimitri Dakanosidze’s attentive handheld camera is always in the right place at the right time, its point of view embracing the emotional and physical intimacy at the heart of the narrative. “[A] story of tentative, interior emancipation described in the tiniest arcs of change: the width of a smile, the warmth of an embrace, the directness of a gaze” (Jessica Kiang, *Variety*).

Best Actress (jointly awarded to Mumladze and Khundadze)

Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2022

Followed by a Zoom Q&A with Ioseb “Soso” Bliadze and Taki Mumladze

September 23 (Saturday)

6:00 pm



## Beginning

დასაწყისი

Georgia 2020

Dea Kulumbegashvili

125 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

Kulumbegashvili’s widely acclaimed first feature starts off as something like a feminist critique of patriarchal Georgian society and religion, but its disturbing narrative develops in unpredictable and even inexplicable ways. Yana (Ia Sukhitashvili) lives with her minister-husband and young son in a small town where their close-knit Jehovah’s Witness community faces extreme prejudice from the Orthodox majority. Their meeting hall is firebombed during a service, and subsequent traumas force Yana to re-evaluate her religion, social role, marriage, family—her very place in the world. Her resistance to the oppression she suffers is deeply compelling—comparisons have been made to Haneke and the Romanian New Wave. The film is gorgeously shot in 35mm by Arseni Khachatryan, adopting a subtle colour palette. “Kulumbegashvili’s long takes and precisely focused storytelling point of view, rather than give the film a dryness in its austerity, subtly lends a fantastical and spiritual side to Yana’s story” (Daniel Kasman, *MUBI Notebook*).

Advisory: *Beginning* contains scenes of sexual violence.

Best Film, Director, Actress, Screenplay  
San Sebastián Film Festival 2020

September 23 (Saturday)

8:35 pm



## The Drummer

დრამერი

Georgia 2022

Kote Kalandadze

84 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

Vancouver Premiere

**“A gritty, heartfelt portrait of creativity and desperation on the margins of modern Georgian society.”**

Klassiki

Niko, the drummer of the title, is young and poor. The band he plays in has a modest following but certainly isn't going to make anyone rich. He also has a no-hope factory job and a sympathetic girlfriend, and material dreams he can't fulfill. Then, one day, the drug trade beckons, with predictably chaotic results. A rock drummer who has led several bands, Kalandadze skirts clichés by depicting them through the quiet yet stubborn gaze of his protagonist. Lead actor Lasha Tskvitinidze, a director himself, turns in an excellent performance.

preceded by

## Fishing

თევზაობა

Georgia/France 2017

Tornike Bziava

18 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

Set just after the Christmas season, Bziava's formally ambitious short is built on long, slow-zoom sequence shots of a Tbilisi bridge where people are fishing and workers are taking down holiday lights. This peaceful scene doesn't last long... "Resolutely poetic and political... One of the most original works of East European cinema" (Mathieu Lericq, *Format Court*).

Video introduction by Kote Kalandadze and actor/composer Gogi Dzodzuashvili

# Panel Discussion

September 24 (Sunday)

11:00 am



## Georgia Post-Colonial: National Culture in the Shadow of the Russian and Soviet Empires

Free Admission

This wide-ranging discussion on Georgian cinema past and present will be framed around the topic of post-colonial Georgian culture. Our panelists on Zoom will be director Alexandre Koberidze (*What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?*) and film critic Ani Kiladze (her online platform is [esariskino.ge](http://esariskino.ge)). Dr. Florian Gassner, associate professor of teaching in UBC's Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies, will moderate. The discussion will be informal and audience participation is encouraged.

Sponsored by the UBC Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Department of Central, Eastern & Northern European Studies  
(CENES)

September 24 (Sunday)  
September 26 (Tuesday)

6:00 pm  
6:00 pm



## Pirosmani

ფიროსმანი

USSR 1969  
Giorgi Shengelaia  
86 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

New Restoration

**“[One] can’t help but be captivated by the film’s intense atmosphere and harrowing imagery.”**

Peter Rollberg, *Discovering Georgian Cinema*

Shengelaia’s austere imagining of the life, times, and places of Georgia’s most famous painter is far from a conventional biopic. It communicates its quasi-ethnographic vision of turn-of-the-century Georgian society in a series of beautifully realized tableaux—some set in the Tbilisi restaurants and taverns that Niko Pirosmani (here played by nonactor Avtandil Varazi) frequented and painted for in exchange for food, drink, and the most basic lodging (he died an impoverished, starving alcoholic in 1918). The head-on perspective and figural grouping of the tableaux imitates compositions favoured by the painter. “It’s a work suffused with a pervasive melancholy—Avtandil Varazi’s stubbornly uncompromised Pirosmani gradually grays and stoops while everyone else around him seems to stay the same age” (Nick Pinkerton, *Artforum*). Varazi, himself a painter, is co-credited with the film’s production design and art direction.

preceded by

## Arabesques on the Theme of Pirosmani

არაბესკები ფიროსმანის თემაზე

USSR 1985  
Sergei Parajanov  
21 min. DCP

No dialogue

New Restoration

Parajanov’s short develops a number of visual themes across a close viewing of Pirosmani’s paintings, emphasizing their tonal contrasts and creating an engaging and mysterious portrait of a bygone Georgia.

September 24 (Sunday)  
September 25 (Monday)

8:15 pm  
6:00 pm



## The Plea

ვედრება

USSR 1967  
Tengiz Abuladze  
77 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

New Restoration

Tengiz Abuladze is undoubtedly one of Georgia’s greatest directors. He is remembered in Russia as well as Georgia for his anti-Stalin satire *Repentance* (1987), part of a loose trilogy that also includes *The Plea*. Set in the early 20th century, *The Plea*’s ruminative narration is taken from epic poems by Vazha-Pshavela—in place of exchanges of dialogue, the characters soliloquize their thoughts. This elliptical semi-allegory pits ancient codes of hospitality and revenge against each other, evoking themes of betrayal, (in)justice, ritualized intercommunal violence, Christian faith, and the nature of evil. In the mountains of Khevsureti and Kakheti, a warrior defies tribal law by not cutting off the hand of his slain Muslim enemy and is eventually cast out by the elders. The orchestral score is by classical composer Nodar Gabunia. “A masterpiece and one of the most strikingly original and beautiful films ever made” (Brian Baxter, London Film Festival).

preceded by

## The First Foot

მეკვლე

USSR 1981  
Goderdzi Chokheli  
15 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

New Restoration

Chokheli was a novelist and short-story writer as well as director. This early short overlays New Year’s Days past and present in one village in the Caucasus. *Mekvle* (“first-foot”) is the Georgian name for the first guest to enter the house in the new year. It is believed that the upcoming year will be similar to the fortune, joy, and luck that *mekvle* brings.



## House of Others

სხვისი სახლი

Georgia/Russia/Spain/Croatia 2016  
Rusudan Glurjidge  
103 min. DCP

In Georgian and Russian with English subtitles

Abkhazia, in Georgia's far northwest, was once an autonomous region within Soviet Georgia. Simmering ethnic tensions between the Abkhaz, the area's original inhabitants, and Georgians, the largest ethnic group at that time, led to war in 1992. Georgia lost control over most of Abkhazia, and roughly 250,000 Georgians were forced to flee their homes. *House of Others*, Rusudan Glurjidge's semi-autobiographical first feature, is set in an abandoned village in the aftermath of war as an Abkhazian family is being relocated to a Georgian home. But real peace is hard to come by. "An exquisite, evocative, and elusive tale of abandonment and the psychological scars of war... Glurjidge's formal boldness yields an effect that is subtle, strange, and silvery... Thematically, and sometimes visually too, it recalls Bergman or Tarkovsky, but it is also its own quiet thing" (Jessica Kiang, *Variety*). Spanish cinematographer Gorka Gómez Andreu won an ASC Spotlight Award for his work here.

East of West Award  
Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2016

preceded by

## 12 K. Marx Street

მარქსის ქუჩა 12

Georgia 2020  
Irine Jordania  
15 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

In the disputed region of South Ossetia, Russian forces have maintained an occupation since the beginning of the 2008 war. Many thousands of Georgians have been displaced. In *12 K. Marx Street*, one of them sits down at a breakfast table every day and dials the same number, without answer.

Followed by a Zoom Q&A with Rusudan Glurjidge



## The 19th Century Georgian Chronicle

XIX საუკუნის ქართული ქრონიკა

USSR 1979  
Aleksandre Rekhviashvili  
67 min. DCP

In Georgian with English subtitles

New Restoration

"[As] in Tarkovsky's films, conspicuous anachronisms and highly symbolic spaces imply that this is *not* just a chronicle of 19th-century Georgia."

Karen Rosenberg, *Index on Censorship*

Sometime in the second half of the 19th century, Niko, a young student from St. Petersburg, returns to his native village in Georgia. From there, he travels to the district capital to confront the local officials of the Tsarist administration with a demand that the village's forest lands, where they have buried their dead, be protected from the designs of foreign industrialists. In a Kafkaesque process, he learns that the fate of the forest and his village may depend on the signature of a single official. Little-known outside of Georgia, Rekhviashvili completed only four narrative features, all made between 1979 and 1989. He limns his historical parable of lonely but determined resistance at a gentle pace, in a minimalist, visually poetic style that reinforces the contrast between country and city.

preceded by

## Colophon

Germany 2015  
Alexandre Koberidze  
20 min. DCP

In English

A young man, a gorgeous summer day, a barge slowly floating down the river, and a story involving a beautiful, strangely reluctant young female passenger who cries geometric tears. This student film is an early take on the sorts of magical shifts and fairy-tale conceits that captivated viewers of *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?*.

Video introduction by Alexandre Koberidze, a friend and mentee of the late Rekhviashvili

# Sembène 100

October 12–24

The groundbreaking films of Senegalese writer and director Ousmane Sembène (1923–2007) form a body of work that stands in grand opposition to conformity, unafraid of contradictions, censors, or the scandals of colonialism.

Born in Casamance in French-colonized Senegal, Sembène was drafted and served with the tirailleurs in WWII. After the war, he worked for Citroën, then moved to Marseilles, where he was employed as a unionized dockworker. While recovering from a serious worksite injury, Sembène availed himself of the union's library, reading the novels of Richard Wright and Jack London.

Many years later, Sembène spoke of novels as his first love, rooted still in this formative experience that proved it was possible, necessary even, to teach oneself to see the world through artistic encounters. *God's Bits of Wood* (1960), his breakthrough novel about the Dakar–Niger Railway strike, came to be taught in classrooms, and was considered a significant work by supporters Jean-Paul Sartre, Paul Éluard, and Simone de Beauvoir. But it wasn't enough: to be published required writing in French, and despite that language's official status in Senegal, it was not the language of the people, many of them illiterate. Wolof, the region's majority spoken language, would, after his French-produced feature debut *Black Girl*, become a crucial part of his cinema.

This project of decolonization was never simply theoretical for Sembène. After each of his films was released, he would set up screening tours across the country. This was his own version of a night school for the people, not to merely test their effectiveness with an audience, but to plunge into connections between the politics and artistry of everyday life. It is largely for this reason that Sembène was dismissive of home video, and prized the theatrical experience—by no means a guarantee in Senegal, where major French-established exhibitors continued to control cinema real estate post-independence.

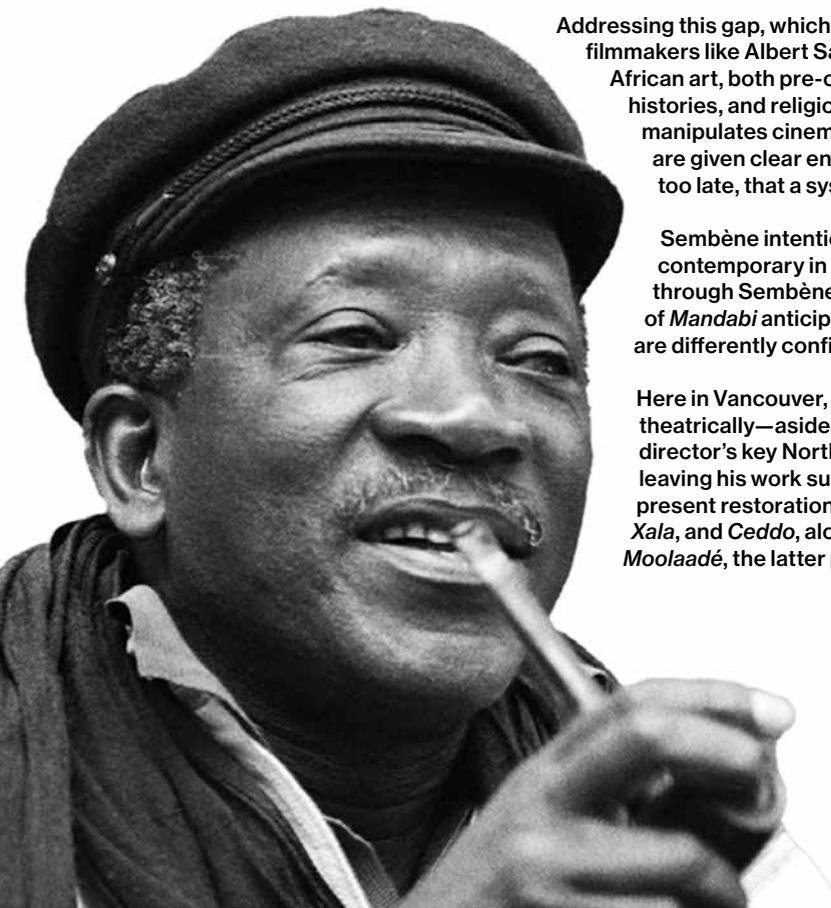
Sembène first took up filmmaking at the age of 40, though he'd been thinking in images before then. ("Striking brutally through the cloud curtain, like the beam from some celestial projector, a single ray of light lashed at the Koulouba, the governor's residence," goes an opening passage of *God's Bits of Wood*.) Until Senegalese independence in 1960, moving-image-making by West Africans had been stymied by the Laval Decree, which explicitly banned colonized peoples from filming themselves.

Addressing this gap, which extends between him and the early African cinema of filmmakers like Albert Samama Chikly, Sembène reinscribes the origins of West African art, both pre-colonial and post-, in a way that allows for archetypes, oral histories, and religious figures to feature prominently in his work. He also freely manipulates cinematic time. The tension in many of his films derives from how we are given clear entry-points, deadlines, and historical markers, only to find out, too late, that a system of external pressure has been imposing itself.

Sembène intentionally alternated between the urban and rural, historical and contemporary in his work, and many of the pleasures and surprises of moving through Sembène's array of films comes from seeing how the central characters of *Mandabi* anticipate the ones in *Xala*, or how decisions made in a state of crisis are differently configured in *Emitaï*, *Ceddo*, and *Moolaadé*.

Here in Vancouver, this will be the first chance to see Sembène's feature films theatrically—aside from *Black Girl*, restored in 2016—in many years. The director's key North American distributor, New Yorker Films, shuttered in 2009, leaving his work subsequently unavailable. The Cinematheque is proud to present restorations of six key works, including brand-new restorations of *Emitaï*, *Xala*, and *Ceddo*, along with his stirring late-career achievements *Guelwaar* and *Moolaadé*, the latter presented from an imported 35mm print.

Acknowledgements: This retrospective would not have been possible without the assistance of Brian Belovarac (Janus Films). The Cinematheque is grateful to Jamie Mendonça (Curzon Film) for making the Vancouver presentation of *Moolaadé* on 35mm possible.



“[Sembène’s films] had an incredible impact on me... They opened my eyes to a reality that I’d only read about in the newspaper or seen depicted in benign terms in Hollywood pictures: what it’s like to live in a colonial society when you’re the one whose country has been colonized... A powerful experience.”

Martin Scorsese

October 12 (Thursday) **Opening Night**  
October 15 (Sunday)  
October 23 (Monday)

6:30 pm  
8:40 pm  
6:30 pm



## Black Girl

(La noire de...)

Senegal/France 1966

Ousmane Sembène

59 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

“Sembène’s perfect short story is unlike anything in the film library: translucent and no tricks, amazingly pure... The whole movie holds an even, equilibrated, spiritual tone.”

Manny Farber, *Artforum’s* Ten Best Films of the Year (#1)

Ousmane Sembène’s first feature is also his most acclaimed, its restoration in 2016 paving the way to a spot on *Sight and Sound’s* greatest films of all time poll. Set mostly in France, *Black Girl* is an outlier in Sembène’s career, a work of both disillusionment and indomitable inspiration made in response to that country’s prestige and promise; after its completion, the filmmaker returned home to Senegal, from that point on his permanent artistic base. Diouana (Mbissine Thérèse Diop) leaves for Antibes in the employ of a French couple. She is to be their young son’s nanny, but once received at their home, Diouana finds herself ensnared in their colonial way of life. Edited to just under an hour to qualify for French funding as a short (France’s national film board, the CNC, would not recognize Sembène’s film training as qualification for a feature), the film went on to win the Prix Jean Vigo, the highest honour for a young director.



preceded by

## Borom sarret

(The Wagoner)

Senegal/France 1963

Ousmane Sembène

18 min. DCP

In French with English subtitles

In this compact survey of post-independence Dakar, a cart driver taxis passengers—the unemployed, the mourning, the upwardly mobile—from the markets of Medina to the colonial architecture of the Plateau. Sembène himself performs the voiceover of the protagonist, and lays out many of the social patterns and unspoken rules he would re-evaluate and break in the course of his career.

“A powerful piece of filmmaking.”

Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*

The October 12 screening of *Black Girl* will be introduced by Titilope Onolaja

Titilope Onolaja is an artist, art historian, and art curator. She co-curated the exhibition *Sankofa: African Routes, Canadian Roots* at the Museum of Anthropology (2021-22), and is currently conducting her PhD research in the history of Nigerian and Senegalese museums at the University of British Columbia.

“Sembène represents the heritage of political [filmmaking] still possessed of a faith in social change, a faith not in film for profit’s sake or even film’s sake, but for people’s sake.”

Michael Atkinson, *Film Comment*

October 12 (Thursday)  
October 14 (Saturday)

8:40 pm  
6:30 pm



## Mandabi

(The Money Order)

Senegal 1968  
Ousmane Sembène  
91 min. DCP

In Wolof and French with English subtitles

“A crucial work by a master director... Its clear-sighted urgency remains undimmed today.”

Kaleem Aftab, *Sight and Sound*

Marking his bold entrance as a truly public artist, Sembène’s follow-up to *Black Girl* was the first film produced in Wolof (the majority spoken language in Senegal). An acerbic, wry tale of greed, corruption, and human folly, *Mandabi* centres on Ibrahim Dieng (Makhourédia Guèye), an unemployed father of seven and husband of two living in Dakar. When he receives an unexpected money order from a nephew in Paris, news of his impending (and exaggerated) fortune summons villagers to his door to solicit loans and repayments. But attempts at cashing the order are frustrated by a stream of bureaucratic red tape, with each rapacious step sinking Dieng further into debt and desperation. Adapted from Sembène’s own novella, this darkly comic satire is exemplary of the master’s incisive, Indigenous perspective on postcolonial Senegalese society and the legacies of oppression.

October 13 (Friday)  
October 23 (Monday)

6:00 pm  
8:30 pm



## Ceddo

Senegal 1976  
Ousmane Sembène  
117 min. DCP

In Wolof with English subtitles

New Restoration

*Ceddo* (sometimes translated as *Outsiders*, or more precisely, “the people of refusal”) might be Ousmane Sembène’s masterpiece. It exemplifies Sembène’s vision of the artist—“a contemporary being who connects the past with the future”—by fearlessly weaving together two narrative strands: a drama of Indigenous governance invaded by an imam’s campaign of forced religious conversion, and a tale of heroic exile (a kidnapped princess and a thief) where action set pieces are scored by the haunted diasporic sounds of Black spirituals and funk. Sembène, born into a Muslim family, saw his film labelled as anti-Islamic and banned in Senegal, but the film’s resonant and political power lies not in any division, but in how it fully realizes Sembène’s interest in cultural roots. The film’s uncanny sense of time grants us a full-circle image of both a pre-colonial society where the bond of words is sacred, and a post-colonial catharsis in response to the moment when the bond was broken.

“[Sembène’s] most beautiful film... More dialectical than filmmakers such as Leone or Kurosawa, [he] knits together two stories without ever confusing them; he maintains the distance between the description of resistance and the fiction of liberation, between the people and its heroes, the collective and the individual.”

Serge Daney, *Cahiers du cinéma*

October 16 (Monday)  
October 22 (Sunday)

6:30 pm  
8:30 pm



## Emitaï

(God of Thunder)

Senegal 1971  
Ousmane Sembène  
91 min. DCP

In Diola and French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“The spirit of *Emitaï* is cool, proportionate, affectionate but unillusioned... Sembène does not grab you; he engages you.”

Roger Greenspun, *The New York Times*

Set during WWII in Ousmane Sembène’s home region of Casamance in Senegal, *Emitaï* is a powerfully ambiguous portrayal of the fragile bonds of a collective: the women harvesters of the small village of Effok, the village’s young men violently forced into enlistment, and a palavering group of powerless elders clinging to tradition. When Maréchal Pétain ordered the repopulation of European battlefields with West African men, Sembène himself was made a soldier at the age of 15. The ensuing resistance that inspired *Emitaï*, led by women like Aline Sitoë Diatta (today a national hero), was the continuation of the region’s three-century-long refusal of colonial rule. Sembène doesn’t merely vilify the French (who banned the film); he provocatively contrasts the life-saving strategies of the women with the spectacle-hungry procrastination of their religious leaders. Sembène later depicts the end of the war in his unsparing epic, *Camp de Thiaroye*.

Advisory: *Emitaï* contains scenes of ceremonial animal slaughter.

October 16 (Monday)  
October 19 (Thursday)

8:45 pm  
6:00 pm



## Xala

Senegal 1974  
Ousmane Sembène  
123 min. DCP  
In Wolof and French with English subtitles

New Restoration

“Sembène’s scorching, riotous satire of spiralling governmental and institutional corruption in post-independence Senegal has lost none of its jagged currency or hilarious venom in nearly fifty years. It remains virtually unmatched as a portrait of an African nation negotiating a new path between tradition and rotten western influence.”

Guy Lodge, *Sight and Sound*

The films of Ousmane Sembène emerged from a broader context of Senegalese art, which perhaps bears most heavily on *Xala*, his most specific and incendiary satire of the country’s ruling class. El Hadji (Thierno Leye) is one of the elites, meaning, for Sembène, one of the alienated. As he evades questions from his daughter, responsibility for his three wives, and any duty to his fellow citizen, his problems coalesce in the form of the *xala*, or curse of impotence. As in works by Buñuel or Pasolini, the film’s crude implications work in concert with a comedically motivated vision of the world’s imbalance. *Xala*’s coded opening, of a reconstituted congress bankrolled by the French, targets Léopold Senghor, then-president of the country and co-founder of the Négritude arts movement, which Sembène disregarded as essentialist and disposed to “mystification.” Senghor retaliated by censoring nearly a dozen scenes in the film, all intact in this restoration.

October 22 (Sunday)  
October 24 (Tuesday)

6:00 pm  
8:30 pm



## Guelwaar

Senegal 1992  
Ousmane Sembène  
114 min. DCP  
In Wolof and French with English subtitles

Ousmane Sembène’s collaborators have suggested that *Guelwaar* is the film the director was most proud of; for a time, having considered retirement, it was to have stood as his final statement. Through the absence left by the recently deceased activist Pierre Henri Thioune (given the title of *Guelwaar*, or “noble one”), Sembène examines Senegal’s fault lines of religions, generations, genders, and incompatible dreams of the country’s future. The film begins as a tragicomedy—*Guelwaar*’s body has disappeared, through either bureaucratic malfeasance or the morgue’s honest mistake. This local error becomes a microcosmic religious battle over land and law, and culminates in scenes that resemble Sembène’s preferred form of public engagement: a face-to-face confrontation in which titles and trappings slip away to reveal a common human cause. Though Sembène claimed his starting point for *Guelwaar* was, like *Black Girl*, a minor news item, the film points to the legacy of Thomas Sankara, the revolutionary leader of Burkina Faso who was assassinated in 1987.

“A masterpiece of African cinema, a trenchant cultural document, and a wonderful, healing comic drama... That he takes a touchy subject like conflicts between Muslims and Christians and treats it with humour and wisdom is a measure of Sembène’s artistic stature... His wit is sublime.”

Michael Wilmington, *Chicago Tribune*

October 21 (Saturday)

6:30 pm



## Moolaadé <sup>14+</sup> (Protection)

Senegal/Burkina Faso 2004  
Ousmane Sembène  
124 min. 35mm  
In Jula and French with English subtitles

Imported 35mm Print

“*Moolaadé* is the kind of film that can only be made by a director whose heart is in harmony with his mind... It is a film of politics and anger, and also a film of beauty, humour, and a deep affection for human nature.”

Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*

Ousmane Sembène’s final film is a stunning work that channels the passion and intelligence of everyday heroism. It still holds the mantle as the most-awarded African film of the past two decades—a prize-winner at Cannes and a fixture on critics’ year-end lists—but *Moolaadé*’s finest achievement is as the culminating expression of Sembène’s cinema: a symbolic bookend to complement *Black Girl*, an expansion of *Ceddo*’s Indigenous resistance, and an expression of *Mandabi*’s final promise. This contemporary parable, shot in the remote village of Djerisso, Burkina Faso, centres on Collé (Fatoumata Coulibaly), the mother of a young woman promised in marriage to the village chief’s son. That ceremony’s progress becomes endangered when she defends four frightened girls who have escaped from their own, more controversial, rite of passage—female genital mutilation. Sembène’s expert hand turns the troubling social-issue subject into a moving portrayal of how women’s rights begin as children’s rights.

# Small-File Media Retrospective

September 18  
–October 19

Small-file media began as a practice of raising awareness about the high-carbon footprint of streaming media and has since become an entirely new art form. This radical aesthetic practice challenges the prevailing desire for high-definition media and cinematic grandeur; it also explores the unknown, pixel by pixel, and propels the formation of imaginary realities and alternate cosmic outlooks.

A prelude to the upcoming 2023 Small-File Media Festival, this retrospective explores the affective power of experimental ecomedia through a curated selection of green and artful small films. Programs will run 15 minutes before the first regular evening screening each night, admission is included.

Abede Mohammadi, curator



Canada Council  
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September 18 (Monday)  
October 9 (Monday)

## Poetics of Liveliness

A visual meditation on the world's poetic forces—the entanglement and interconnectedness of all things. Through these works, pixels render themselves into a state of moldability and dynamism, imitating the wandering intuitions of poetry and echoing the liveliness of the natural world.

### Weeping Ocean

Canada 2020 | Mansoor Behnam | 1 min. 1 MB  
An experimental moving image poem, capturing a sense of melancholy intertwined with the immanence and sublimity of the ocean.

### Orchids

Canada 2014 | Eldritch Priest | 3 min. 5.7 MB  
Through a microscopic gaze, this film renders the orchid's refined beauty into rough imagery—a distinctive take on the enchanting nature of flowers.

### Glints 3: A Ravine

Iran/Canada 2021 | Somayeh Khakshoor | 2 min. 4.3 MB  
This third installment in Khakshoor's *Glints* series begins with a poetic invocation: "Look at the water." It is soon followed by a spectral and unfathomable aqueous landscape.

### Mountain Soul-Assemblages: Zbój [bandit]

Poland/Éire 2020 | Radek Przedpełski | 1 min. 4.3 MB  
A poetic encounter with the quietude and wordlessness of stones. This work is part of two site-specific installations, which engage in a dynamic interplay with local narratives, contextual surroundings, ecologies, and locally-sourced materials.

### Series #4: Single Atmosphere Suit

Canada 2021 | Charlie Cooper | 2 min. 8.1 MB  
An aesthetically enticing voyage through weather cameras, this small film immerses us in a sea of vivid hues, where duality dissolves and tangible entities entwine into abstract echoes.

### Landscape Study IV

Canada 2019 | Jordyn Stewart | 3 min. 22 MB  
A picturesque skyline morphs into a silhouette of mountains as the ocean, sky, and clouds seamlessly merge into one another.

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September 20 (Wednesday)  
October 11 (Wednesday)

## Being There

An exploration of the raw honesty of shared vulnerabilities within the vast cosmos. These subtly gripping works oscillate between wanting to sever all ties and a longing for connection.

### The Finally Frontier

Canada 2019 | Lauren Prousky | 3 min. 3.2 MB  
Mars One's colonialist marketing campaign has been transformed into a playful work of art that captures our lingering desire to leave everything behind.

### Yellow

Canada 2022 | Criss Wang | 2 min. 5 MB  
Infused with a poetic quality and vivid colors, *Yellow* captures a newcomer's emotional journey through Vancouver—from feeling lost and facing language barriers to taking refuge in the city's bird's-eye views and pink skies.

### Moththth

USA 2020 | Weihan Zhou | 3 min. 3.9 MB  
Via a low-res, motion-activated camera, the filmmaker, far away from his home, witnesses a ghostly moth flutter erratically into his New York bedroom. As the film unfolds, the initial hatred for the moth turns into empathy.

### Trace

Canada 2021 | Xinyue Liu | 4 min. 5 MB  
A daycare worker begins a heartfelt conversation about the invisible traces of caring, guided by the hopeful eyes of a newborn. A disarmingly affecting portrayal of the labour of care.

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September 22 (Friday)  
October 13 (Friday)

## Diasporic Intimacy

Drawing on the evocative power of archival footage, these works grapple with the ephemerality of memory and the in-betweenness of the diasporic experience within ever-shifting landscapes.

### Once Upon a Time

Canada 2020 | Hân Phạm | 5 min. 5.67 MB  
In a quiet bedroom, a backward journey unfolds through affective digital manipulation, where the artist's room transforms into an altered landscape that presents lingering images of the past.

### Diaspora

Canada 2021 | Noor Abouchehade | 2 min. 3.9 MB  
A nested portrayal of the ever-present desire to track old landscapes while exploring the uncharted territory of the new.



### Rostig Födelsedag

USA 2020 | Niklas Vollmer | 2 min. 4.2 MB

Looking at vintage black-and-white home movies from Sweden, we hear Vollmer playfully coaxing his grandmother to play a melody on the accordion.

### Back Home

Canada 2021 | Homa Khosravi | 2 min. 2.84 MB

Amid layered images, a dancer's movement entwines with a blooming flower, interlaced with the sound of a Persian news report.

September 23 (Saturday)

October 14 (Saturday)

## Radical Sensuality

These films explore the boundless possibilities and unknown promises of the body and invite us to embrace its vitalism and untapped creative power.

Advisory: Contains sexually explicit images.

### Melt

Canada/Japan 2019 | Leanne Dunic | 2 min. 2 MB

Infused with fervent longing, *Melt* portrays the intimate connection between a woman and the wilderness — or, if we take in the humour of the piece, maybe we find ourselves watching a woman attempt to seduce an aloof and cool-hearted crush.

### I Missed You

USA 2020 | Paul Clay, Sarah Kantrowitz | 1 min. 2 MB

A playful twist on romantic gestures that subverts hand-centric norms through a foot's tender touch with flowers.

### Then, Now, and Then

Canada 2021 | Pierre Leichner | 3 min. 4.3 MB

Drawing upon the symbolic resonance of the *Venus of Willendorf*, this film illustrates the transformation of a Venus figurine as it emerges from dark liquid matter.

### Starling of the Haunting Wolves

Canada 2020 | Jujube | 4 min. 4.3 MB

An evocative fusion of ethereal beauty and unsettling undertones. Drawing on visuals from pop culture and cinema, *Starling* explores the interplay between nature, culture, and the subconscious through a female lens.

### The Shore

Greece 2020 | Eirini Tampasouli | 3 min. 5.3 MB

A portrayal of a woman's solitary sojourn along the water's edge, where stones, sticks, and soil are used to craft a sculpture that becomes an earthly companion. Tampasouli transports viewers into a world where the ancient bond between body and earth is rekindled.

September 24 (Sunday)

October 15 (Sunday)

## Existential Drizzles

Like the enduring fascination that cinema holds for existential themes, these melancholic works of whimsy share a fondness for exploring the absurdity of being.



### O'Hara Lane

Canada 2020 | Colin Williscroft | 3 min. 2.75 MB

A cat goes through an existential abyss. Shot in the filmmaker's backyard and basement, *O'Hara Lane* uses playfulness and ingenuity to explore themes of solitude, boredom, and the transition to adulthood.

### JellyFun

Canada 2022 | Yuyan Song | 2 min. 5 MB

A humorous and ingenious take on the cyborg experience. While observing dancing jellyfish, an optimistic bionic gizmo has a philosophical chat about beauty, life, consciousness, and death with a pessimistic counterpart.

### Cling

South Africa/Canada 2021 | Ockert Greeff | 2 min. 4.3 MB

From a train window, amidst a passing industrial landscape, raindrops cling to the glass as we follow the story of a lost soul.

### It's raining but I don't believe it's raining

USA 2020 | Eric Butler | 4 min. 1.2 MB

Through transfixing visual degradation, a low-resolution self-portrait metamorphoses into a surface of glitch and digital decay, leaving a haunting image of self.

September 25 (Monday)

October 16 (Monday)

## It's Not Easy Being Green

Already eco-friendly and environmentally conscious entities, even these small files can't escape the grip of eco-anxiety.

### why wonder

Canada 2021 | Christopher Carruth | 2 min. 4.6 MB

By buffering a YouTube playback of Kermit the Frog's "It's Not Easy Being Green," this film challenges the typical streaming interface, while also invoking the spirit of "greenness" and environmental consciousness inherent in small files.

### Doomer 1, 2, 3

Canada 2022 | Amber Morrison Fox, Matthew Fox | 1 min. 5 MB

A haunting small-file trilogy immersed in a foreboding atmosphere, *Doomer* pivots between deceased and decaying animals. The film evokes an unsettling feeling of environmental decline.

### It Is Going to Be a Hot Summer

Canada 2022 | Sophia English | 2 min. 5 MB

While spring is not over yet, the looming thought of a hot summer keeps the film's protagonist indoors, even on a rainy day. A pixelated indication of our bitter awareness of global warming.

### Pocket Theatre: In the Beginning; Next of Days; Planet B

Canada 2020–2021 | Monique Motut-Firth, prOphecy sun | 3 min. 2.31 MB

These hectic mashups of mechanically generated illustrations hold a whimsical undertone that playfully hints at our impending doom.



### Cone Worms Near Burrard Inlet

Canada 2021 | Sunny Nestler | 2 min. 18.8 MB

An imaginative twist on non-organic materials. In a utopian future, traffic cones have evolved beyond their plastic ancestors, transforming into living organisms that roam freely.

September 26 (Tuesday)

October 18 (Wednesday)

## Mirage Odysseys

A surreal odyssey into the territory of our dreams that teeters on the threshold between reverie and reality.

### Electrical Storm

Canada 2022 | Dag Davidge | 3 min. 5 MB

With its nod to Lynchian visuals, *Electrical Storm*'s title aptly captures the film's blend of a life-threatening event and atmospheric intensity.

### You Know the One

Canada 2020 | Sony Cody | 2 min. 1.5 MB

An introspective small film that invites us into a moment of wakefulness between two dreams and explores the elusive nature of thoughts in this liminal state of consciousness.

### Data Dreaming

Canada 2022 | Monique Motut-Firth | 3 min. 5 MB

Starting with a structured realm of lines and angles, then morphing into a fluid world of spirals, *Data Dreaming* is a hypnotic display of graphical data.

### The Frontiersman

Canada 2020 | Joseph Ku | 3 min. 4.93 MB

This intricately crafted small file takes us on an adventure led by an explorer as he crosses the frontiers of time and space.

September 27 (Wednesday)

October 19 (Thursday)

## "Embracing aging technology is like loving an old pet"

By immersing us in the tactile beauty of analogue recordings, these films invite us to revisit obsolete filming technologies and explore their creative potential.

### Hauntology at 576 Lines (and some at 480 lines)

Australia 2020 | Matt Warren | 5 min. 4.9 MB

While revisiting his artistic past on a VHS tape, Warren is haunted by the immanent presence of analogue noise's flickering entities.

### Convalescing Camcorder and Two Cats

USA 2021 | Rachel Stuckey | 5 min. 4.7 MB

A video diary recorded on VHS turns into a musing on obsolete technologies and our feline companions. Through the artful use of low-angle shots of adopted elderly cats, *Convalescing Camcorder* offers a unique vantage point where seeing becomes a gateway to touching.

# Vancouver Latin American Film Festival September 8-17

# September

Sunday

17

Film Club  
11:00 am  
The Bear 

Monday

18

Georgian Cinema  
7:00 pm  
What Do We See When  
We Look at the Sky?  


Tuesday

19



Wednesday

20

Frames of Mind  
7:00 pm  
Millie Lies Low  


Thursday

21

Georgian Cinema  
Opening Night  
7:00 pm  
My Grandmother  
+ Life in Three Voices  


Friday

22

Georgian Cinema  
6:30 pm  
Once Upon a Time  
There Was a Singing  
Blackbird  
8:20 pm  
A Room of My Own  


Saturday

23

Georgian Cinema  
2:00 pm  
What Do We See When  
We Look at the Sky?  
6:00 pm  
Beginning  
8:35 pm  
The Drummer  
+ Fishing

24

Georgian Cinema  
11:00 am  
Panel Discussion:  
Georgia Post-Colonial  
  
6:00 pm  
Pirosmani  
+ Arabesques on the  
Theme of Pirosmani  
8:15 pm  
The Plea  
+ The First Foot

25

Georgian Cinema  
6:00 pm  
The Plea  
+ The First Foot  
8:00 pm  
House of Others  
+ 12 K. Marx Street  


26

Georgian Cinema  
6:00 pm  
Pirosmani  
+ Arabesques on the  
Theme of Pirosmani  
8:15 pm  
The 19th Century  
Georgian Chronicle  
+ Colophon

27

DIM Cinema  
7:00 pm  
CROP + Dreamaway

28

Vancouver International Film Festival  
September 28 – October 8

29

8

New Restorations  
6:30 pm  
The Virgin Suicides   
8:40 pm  
The Elephant Man 

9

New Restorations  
6:30 pm  
The Virgin Suicides   
8:40 pm  
The Elephant Man 

10



11

Our Stories to Tell  
7:00 pm  
Kimmapijipitssini:  
The Meaning of  
Empathy  
 

12

Sembène 100  
Opening Night  
6:30 pm  
Black Girl  
+ Borom sarret  
 8:40 pm  
Mandabi

13

Sembène 100  
6:00 pm  
Ceddo  
New Restoration  
8:30 pm  
The Virgin Suicides 

14

Sembène 100  
6:30 pm  
Mandabi  
New Restoration  
8:30 pm  
The Elephant Man 

# October



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

**15**  
 New Restoration  
 6:30 pm  
 The Virgin Suicides **TV**  
 Sembène 100  
 8:40 pm  
 Black Girl  
 + Borom sarret



**16**  
 Sembène 100  
 6:30 pm  
 Emitai  
 8:45 pm  
 Xala

**18**  
 Frames of Mind  
 7:00 pm  
 All My Puny Sorrows **PG**  
**Guests**

**19**  
 Sembène 100  
 6:00 pm  
 Xala  
 New Restoration  
 8:30 pm  
 The Elephant Man **PG**

**20**  
 Small-File Media  
 Festival 2023  
 Opening Night  
 7:00 pm  
 Series 1  
**Live Music**

**21**  
 Small-File Media  
 Festival 2023  
 10:00 am  
 Series 2 + Talk  
 12:30 pm  
 Series 3  
 2:30 pm  
 Series 4  
 4:15 pm  
 Awards Ceremony **Free**  
 Sembène 100  
 6:30 pm  
 Moolaadé **TV**  
 New Restoration  
 9:00 pm  
 The Virgin Suicides **TV**

**22**  
 Film Club  
 11:00 am  
 Dragonslayer **PG**  
 Sembène 100  
 6:00 pm  
 Guelwaar  
 8:30 pm  
 Emitai

**23**  
 Sembène 100  
 6:30 pm  
 Black Girl  
 + Borom sarret  
 8:30 pm  
 Ceddo

**24**  
 New Restoration  
 6:00 pm  
 The Elephant Man **PG**  
 Sembène 100  
 8:30 pm  
 Guelwaar

**25**  
 DIM Cinema  
 7:00 pm  
 Demi Monde: Short  
 Films by Caroline  
 Monnet

**26**  
 King of Kaiju  
 Opening Night  
 6:30 pm  
 Godzilla  
**Guest**  
 8:45 pm  
 Godzilla Raids Again

**27**  
 King of Kaiju  
 6:30 pm  
 King Kong vs. Godzilla  
 8:30 pm  
 Mothra vs. Godzilla

**28**  
 King of Kaiju  
 5:00 pm  
 Ghidorah,  
 the Three-Headed  
 Monster  
 7:00 pm  
 Invasion of  
 Astro-Monster  
 9:00 pm  
 Ebirah, Horror of  
 the Deep

**29**  
 King of Kaiju  
 11:30 am  
 Godzilla Stop-Motion  
 Contest  
**Free**  
 2:00 pm  
 Destroy All Monsters  
 4:00 pm  
 Godzilla vs. Hedorah  
 6:00 pm  
 Godzilla vs. Gigan  
 8:00 pm  
 Godzilla vs. Megalon

**30**  
 King of Kaiju  
 6:30 pm  
 Godzilla vs.  
 Mechagodzilla  
 8:30 pm  
 Terror of  
 Mechagodzilla

**31**  
 King of Kaiju  
 6:30 pm  
 Godzilla  
 + Bambi Meets Godzilla  
 8:40 pm  
 Shin Godzilla **PG**



# The Cinematheque

Images from top to bottom: *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?*, 2021; *Millie Lies Low*, 2021; *My Grandmother*, 1929; *Kimmapiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy*, 2021; *The Elephant Man*, 1980; *Xala*, 1974; *All My Puny Sorrows*, 2021; *Godzilla*, 1954; *Shin Godzilla*, 2016.



Scan the QR code to see our calendar online, read more about the films, and purchase tickets.

# Small-File Media Festival 2023

The Small-File Media Festival returns for its fourth iteration! We are delighted to partner with The Cinematheque to present over sixty jewel-like works from across the globe. These movies are small in file size, but huge in impact: by embracing the aesthetics of compression and low resolution (glitchiness, noise, pixelation), they lay the groundwork for a new experimental film movement in the digital age. This year, six lovingly curated programs traverse brooding pixelated landscapes, textural paradises, and crystalline infinities.

Why small files? Because streaming media is killing the planet! Streaming comprises a significant chunk of the world's digital carbon footprint. Information and communication technologies as a whole cause 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions—that's the same as the airline industry—and are rising fast. Watching small-file media together on a big screen brings the democratic potential of cinema into the digital age by showcasing artworks made with eco-friendly practices, affordable equipment, and minimal processing time (all without sacrificing artistry or immersion).

How small is a small-file movie? No more than 1.44 megabytes per minute, the storage size of a floppy disk. (TikTok is positively bloated in comparison, at 70 megabytes per minute.) Small-file creators use ingenious techniques to make these tiny movies beautiful and effective. We invite you to lean in, open your eyes and attune your ears, and prepare to experience a new cinematic avant-garde.

Small-file ecomedia are not just good for the planet, but essential for people living with intermittent electricity and low bandwidth—so long to the 4K, 5G dystopia of bandwidth imperialism! This year we're especially proud to collaborate with filmmaker and researcher Mehvish Rather, who will share her research on how small-file media can be utilized for political sustainability in the face of state suppression that takes the form of internet blockade and restriction.

Join us Friday, October 20 for the opening-night program followed by a drinks reception in the lobby and a dance party in the cinema, featuring music by Vancouver electronic artist SAN. We'll announce the winner of the coveted Small-File Golden Mini Bear during Saturday's award ceremony! As always, the festival will stream online at [smallfile.ca](http://smallfile.ca) after the live events.

We're most grateful to our future-forward friends:



Cosmically healthy, community-building, and punk AF, small-file ecomedia will heal the world, one pixel at a time.

## October 20–21

October 20 (Friday) **Opening Night**

7:00 pm

### SFMF Series 1

Lo Rez Skylines / Solarpunk Futures | 52 min.

"Lo Rez Skylines / Solarpunk Futures" lives beyond the barriers of digital perfection. These works seep through blockchained spheres of surveillant media to drip neon pixels into the eye of the 4K panopticon.

The opening-night program will be followed by a drinks reception in the lobby and an in-cinema dance party featuring a performance by Vancouver electronic music artist SAN. SAN's compositions, performances, and installations turn emergent artifacts of failing technology into aesthetic sonic objects, inspired by retro sci-fi, anime, and the glitches in the Matrix.

### Another World

Germany 2023 | Matthias Grotkopp | 3 min. 3.1 MB

### until, I'm All Ears-eld

Egypt 2023 | Islam Allam | 1 min. 913 KB

### program/sleep/stop/cry/shutdown

USA 2021 | Chelsea Coon | 1 min. 1.5 MB

### Who?

USA 2023 | Frances Horwitz | 5 min. 7 MB

### Just the Story

USA 2023 | Joseph Chaney | 16 min. 23 MB

### the impossibility of doing nothing for a minute

Canada 2023 | Pierre Leichner | 1 min. 944 KB

### I'm Watching You

Lebanon 2022 | Miled Antoine Morkos | 4 min. 5.7 MB

### Automatic Breakfast

USA 2023 | Nathaniel Hendrickson | 1 min. 1.3 MB

### ARCMAPS

Canada 2023 | Stefan Nazarevich | 19 min. 25 MB

### Glitter Loop

Canada 2023 | Inanna Cusi | 1 min. 1.2 MB

October 21 (Saturday)

10:00 am

### SFMF Series 2

Tiger Tiger | 28 min.

A sense of foreboding arises across brooding landscapes, embracing you in a susurating murmur and a seductive pixel caress. The ingenuity of small-file aesthetics glimmers darkly in these velvet-pawed, sharp-clawed experimental works. —Laura U. Marks

### CUNTST

Germany/Canada 2023 | Kimberly Cleroux | 5 min. 6.8 MB

### Sinking Under the River, a Family Is Waiting

Canada 2020 | Hue Nguyen | 2 min. 2.34 MB

### the cost of the cloud

Ireland 2023 | Adrian O'Connell | 3 min. 4.1 MB

### The Hollowed Stone

Canada 2023 | Ockert Greeff | 2 min. 3.2 MB

### Nightfall

Croatia 2020 | Erik Loncar | 4 min. 5.80 MB

### Night Tender

Canada 2023 | Dag Davidge, Bernice Chau | 12 min. 17.2 MB

—Intermission—

### Small-File Filmmaking Workshop Showcase

11 min.

In May 2023, The Cinematheque's Learning & Outreach team hosted a two-day workshop on small-file filmmaking practices. All levels of experience were welcome, and participants went through the entire process, from storyboarding to shooting to editing to compressing, in one weekend. —Chelsea Birks

### City in Bloom

Canada 2023 | Anastasia Samkova, Sunoj Subhagan, Heller, Jay Parnell | 2 min. 2.48 MB

### When Were We Going?

Canada 2023 | Samuel Albert, Winona Gillera, Ningzi Xu, Weijun Zhu, Mickey Semera | 3 min. 2.57 MB

### Present Connections

Canada 2023 | Anker Vanderkuip, Chelsea McNamara, Maddie Wahl, Robb Cannon | 2 min. 1.86 MB

### Standoff

Canada 2023 | Lucy Layton, Emilie Paco, Josiah Belchior | 4 min. 3.85 MB

—Intermission—

### Small-File Filmmaking, Political Sustainability, and Resistance

Guest talk by filmmaker and researcher Mehvish Rather

Governments and repressive regimes that wish to limit communication in their regions often restrict internet access. Rather than cutting the internet off entirely, they sometimes provide only 2G bandwidth internet access, which makes communication incredibly difficult, if not impossible. Low-resolution artwork has the potential to provide an outlet for expression and resistance in conflict zones where the state implements internet restriction as a form of political suppression. This talk by documentary filmmaker and researcher Mehvish Rather (Queen's University) will outline her research and fieldwork to explore the viability of small-file filmmaking in internet-suppressed regions. The primary message of small-file media is environmental sustainability; however, as Rather's efforts demonstrate, it also holds major potential for political sustainability and resistance.

October 21 (Saturday)

12:30pm

### SFMF Series 3

A Certain Feeling for the Universe | 36 min.

A poetics of longing, this program comprises textual films that open our vision through dense abstraction and deep meditations on nostalgic objects, diffused by sojourns both meaningful and pointless. To grasp just one piece of the universe is to draw nearer to the infinite than if you were trying to hang on to the whole thing. —Yani Kong

### WORDS

Canada 2023 | Liz Oakley | 1 min. 3.21 MB

### Abandoned Patterns

Iran 2022 | Golnaz Moghaddam | 1 min. 1.24 MB

### Patient Object

USA 2022 | Terry Cole | 3 min. 4.6 MB

### Twenty Seven

Canada 2023 | Niloufar Samed | 4 min. 6 MB

### Only for the First Time

USA 2023 | Amber Pjongluck | 3 min. 15.8 MB

### YAN

USA 2020 | Vesper Guo | 12 min. 19.7 MB

### Infinite

China 2023 | Yi Yang Gao | 3 min. 3.6 MB

### Transitions\_machines of desire

Greece 2023 | Valentina Farantouri | 1 min. 1.44 MB

### Villa d'Este

Canada 2023 | Wendy DesChene, Jeff Schmuki | 4 min. 4.3 MB

### About Satin

France 2023 | Anabela Costa | 1 min. 1.5 MB

### Circle Falls

Canada 2023 | Peggy Fussell | 3 min. 3.6 MB

—Intermission—

### Rings of Saturn

42 min.

At the threshold between cosmic and commonplace, this playful selection wields speculation and spectacle to nudge the viewer toward new off-world imaginaries. —Joni Schinkel

### The Voyage That Came to Be

Canada 2023 | Kofi Oduro (Illestpreacha) | 3 min. 4 MB

### Sunset Melt; melting mmeeeellttt. ing, fire inferno fourth ring. Demons in my....

Canada 2023 | Dizzy Freehan | 1 min. 952 KB

### Powers of Ten (at 16px x 16px)

USA 2022 | Chris Collins | 4 min. 1 MB

### Jupiter's Ghost

USA 2023 | Andrew Roach | 21 min. 5.3 MB

### A Simple Machine for Living

Canada 2023 | Monique Motut-Firth | 5 min. 5.1 MB

### The Process of Rotting

Canada 2023 | Sophia Biedka | 7 min. 7.3 MB

October 21 (Saturday)

2:30pm

### SFMF Series 4

Shards of Crystalism | 28 min.

Paying homage to a group of Sudanese conceptualists, who in 1976 published their visionary "Crystalist Manifesto" in Khartoum's *Al-Ayyam* newspaper, this program strings together movies that contain "a crystal that extends endlessly within." Lingering over surfaces—looking at and through the crystal—and alternating between semblance and essence, the films create a layer between the finite and the infinite. In the words of the Crystalist school, "We painted the crystal, we thought about the crystal, and so the Crystalist vision came to be." —Radek Przedpetsyki

### BLOOM

Netherlands 2019 | Simone Niquille | 1 min. 189 KB

### Portal

USA 2013 | Kevin Obsatz | 1 min. 968 KB

### Venus Play

Canada 2023 | Anastasia Shatska | 1 min. 1.7 MB

### A Crack So Big the Pillar Collapsed

Canada 2023 | B.G-Osborne | 2 min. 2.1 MB

### memory of a green world

Kazakhstan 2016 | Nicole Baker Peterson | 3 min. 4 MB

### unreachable seven days

China 2023 | Qishuo 其 殊 Xiang 向 | 8 min. 11.2 MB

### WOUND

China 2023 | Kailu Chen | 4 min. 5.2 MB

### Pigments of Earth Magic

Canada 2023 | Clementine Lesley | 8 min. 9.9 MB

—Intermission—

### Silent Running

55 min.

These small-file movies give a shout-out to their beloved ancestor, early cinema. Sallying forth into a new-old medium, they experiment as though for the first time with fantastical narratives, faux-naïf performance, the poetry of intertitles, and a dark glint of the gothic. —Laura U. Marks

### Autumn in the City

Canada 2022 | Inanna Cusi | 3 min. 4.2 MB

### Ag Cónascadh

Ireland 2023 | Ella Garvey | 1 min. 1.3 MB

### Dissociative Blue

Canada 2023 | Tyler Nykiichyk | 2 min. 2.1 MB

### SHIP 2.2

Canada 2021 | June Yeo | 6 min. 6.4 MB

### Leonie

USA 1996 | Zoe Beloff | 2 min. 2 MB

### Cabbages

United Kingdom 2023 | Holly Isard | 4 min. 4.1 MB

### 致忆\_Tracing Memories

China 2023 | Xinran Cao | 5 min. 6.8 MB

### dr vicious' trip to the moon on the sunny afternoon of april 19th, bicycle day (and other businesses of his) – a small film

Canada 2023 | Tadeo Rios Davila | 3 min. 2.1 MB

### Paresthesia

Canada 2023 | Yousif Kairee | 5 min. 3 MB

### A Project for You

USA 2023 | Eric Butler | 24 min. 25.5 MB

October 21 (Saturday)

4:15pm

### Awards Ceremony

Free Admission

All attendees, filmmakers, and guests of the Small-File Media Festival are invited to our final celebration where we will award the coveted Small-File Golden Mini Bear and other bespoke prizes!

# New Restorations

October 9 (Monday) 6:30 pm  
October 13 (Friday) 8:30 pm  
October 15 (Sunday) 6:30 pm  
October 21 (Saturday) 9:00 pm



## The Virgin Suicides TV 14

USA 1999  
Sofia Coppola  
97 min. DCP

A mystery wrapped in the wistful reveries of youth, Sofia Coppola's bewitching feature debut heralded an artist already in command of her voice and singular aesthetic sensibilities. Adapted from Jeffrey Eugenides's acclaimed first novel, *The Virgin Suicides* starts with a troubling question: in suburban Michigan circa 1975, why did the Lisbon girls, a sisterhood of five Catholic teenagers, kill themselves? It is an enigma still haunting the men who frame Coppola's delicate film; their memories, clouded with longing and regret, conjure stories of adolescence when, as classmates, they infatuated over the unattainable daughters. Kirsten Dunst, ethereal in her first collaboration with Coppola, leads an ensemble that also includes Josh Hartnett, James Woods, and Kathleen Turner. French duo Air contributes the original score; famed DP Edward Lachman provides the dreamy cinematography. Initially drawing comparison to Peter Weir's spellbinding *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, Coppola's film is now its own indelible coming-of-age classic.

**"[An] extremely assured directorial debut... Coppola casts quite a spell."**

Tom Charity, *Time Out*

October 9 (Monday) 8:40 pm  
October 14 (Saturday) 8:30 pm  
October 19 (Thursday) 8:30 pm  
October 24 (Tuesday) 6:00 pm



## The Elephant Man PG

United Kingdom/USA 1980  
David Lynch  
124 min. DCP

**"Lynch's powerful depiction of Merrick... moves a viewer from revulsion and fear to empathy and tenderness. That's the very movement of the story itself."**

Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

Following his brilliant DIY 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. Screening here in its director-approved restoration, Lynch's surefooted film is a carefully crafted study of human dignity in the face of industrialized cruelty.

Restored DCP courtesy of StudioCanal



# Good King of October 26-

“Creating the template that would spawn dozens of sequels and countless other *kaiju* knock-offs, Godzilla truly is the King of the Monsters.”

Matthew Thrift, BFI

# Godzilla of Kaiju

31

When the producers behind the Americanized version of Japan's 1954 blockbuster *Gojira* decided to christen their new creature-feature *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!*, they couldn't have fathomed just how on the money they were. (“Godzilla,” notably, was the English-market name submitted by Toho, its Japanese studio.) Born of the atomic age and the spectre of horror left by nuclear devastation and natural disaster in Japan, Godzilla remains the undisputed heavyweight champion of the *kaiju eiga* (monster movie) and one of the country's most enduring pop-culture exports. Long before the westward migration of Japanese media made Totoro, Pikachu, Sailor Moon, and Transformers household names in North America, Godzilla was the be-all ambassador of Japanese entertainment abroad. With 36 films under its belt since first laying waste to Tokyo almost seventy years ago (and that's excluding yet-to-be-released or in-production entries, as well as localized cuts of the Toho originals), the big, irritable, radioactive reptile arguably holds the title for the longest-running franchise in cinema history—inarguably, if the Guinness World Records, which inducted the series in 2015, is worth its salt!

This Halloween season, The Cinematheque salutes the epic reign of the *kaiju* king with a monster-sized, all-ages Godzilla marathon drawn from the earliest and most influential chapter of the indomitable (and delightfully eccentric) movie franchise. Over six days, 13 Showa-era Godzilla films will screen in chronological order—from the original 1954 trailblazer to 1975's sci-fi spectacular *Terror of Mechagodzilla*, minus a couple titles cut for time and quality-control considerations (sorry, Minilla). With the exception of the Universal Pictures edit of *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (1963), all are the original Japanese-language releases (with English subtitles). Save for *Godzilla*, each film plays one time only.

For Halloween proper (October 31), we couldn't resist pairing the canonized classic with *Evangelion* architect Anno Hideaki's astonishing Reiwa-era reboot *Shin Godzilla* (2016), which resituates the creature as a stand-in for contemporary crises (most patently, 2011's Tohoku tsunami and Fukushima nuclear meltdown). Animator Marv Newland's micro-masterpiece *Bambi Meets Godzilla* (1969) makes a cameo too!

Susan Sontag has proposed that science-fiction films aren't really about science, “they are about disaster.” No science-run-amok monster has made a bigger mess than Godzilla. Tremble before the king.

Think you've got the gusto to watch *all* Godzilla films in the series? Achieve this feat and win a copy of Criterion's colossal “Godzilla: The Showa-Era Films” Blu-ray box set! (In the event of a tie, a draw will determine the winner.) Track your progress on our “King of Kaiju” stamp card, which, even if you aren't competing for GOAT status, still features prizes when you reach a particular film count.

“King of Kaiju” stamp cards will be available at our box office during the run of the series. One stamp per person, per screening.

“Godzilla: King of Kaiju” is generously supported by The Japan Foundation, Toronto



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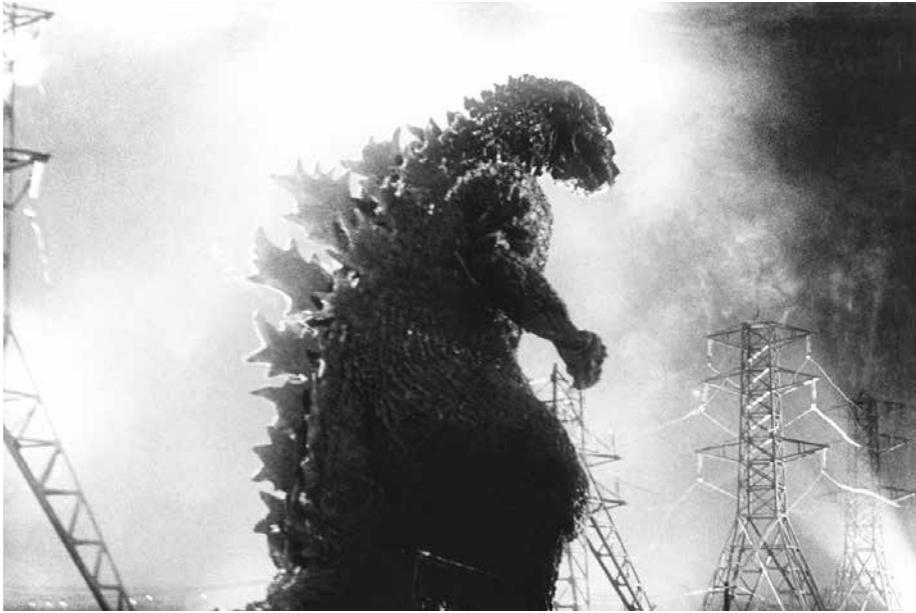


powell street festival society  
パウエル祭協会

Note: All-ages classifications for this series are forthcoming. Please visit our website for updated information.

October 26 (Thursday) **Opening Night**  
October 31 (Tuesday)

6:30 pm  
6:30 pm



## Godzilla

ゴジラ

Japan 1954  
Honda Ishiro  
96 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

New Restoration

**“Groundbreaking... One of cinema’s most lasting allegories on nuclear war and science gone wrong.”**

Chris Shields, *Film Comment*

Ground zero for the franchise and the wave of *kaiju* mania to come, Toho’s groundbreaking original remains the unequivocal *ichiban* of the series. Made less than a decade after the war-ending destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *Godzilla* (or *Gojira* in the direct romaji) is the ultimate monster-as-metaphor movie, “whose DNA is soaked with fear and reflection on how the nuclear age had devastated Japan” (Graham Skipper, *Godzilla: The Official Guide to the King of Monsters*). Honda Ishiro, a Kurosawa Akira collaborator and director of several more Godzilla installments, renders the allegory as an earnest what-if disaster drama, in which Japan must contend with a prehistoric sea monster awakened and mutated by H-bomb testing in the Pacific. (Anxieties around nuclear fallout reached a fever pitch in 1954 after a Japanese fishing crew suffered radiation poisoning, an incident adapted into the film.) The practical-effects wizardry is by Tsuburaya Eiji, while the iconic score, and Godzilla’s signature roar, is by Ifukube Akira.

The October 26 screening of *Godzilla* will be introduced by Janice Matsumura

Janice Matsumura is an associate professor in the Department of History at Simon Fraser University. She is a specialist in 20th-century Japanese history and the author of *More Than a Momentary Nightmare: The Yokohama Incident and Wartime Japan*.

preceded by (October 31 only)

## Bambi Meets Godzilla

USA/Canada 1969  
Marv Newland  
2 min. DCP

A 90-second cult classic by Vancouver animator Marv Newland, founder of International Rocketship Limited. The title says it all.

October 26 (Thursday)

8:45 pm



## Godzilla Raids Again

ゴジラの逆襲

Japan 1955  
Oda Motoyoshi  
81 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Hurried into production after the smash success of the original, the first of many Godzilla sequels boasts the earliest and most consequential addition to the *kaiju eiga* playbook: the monster-versus-monster showdown, henceforth a fixture of the genre. Kurosawa regular Shimura Takashi returns as paleontologist Yamane, last seen cautioning humanity that if nuclear testing continues, “another Godzilla may appear.” (Note, there are Godzillas!) Hubris prevails and now, in addition to the titular atomic breather, a radioactive Ankylosaurus, “Anguirus,” turns up to give Godzilla a run for the throne. Here, it is Osaka reduced to rubble in the ensuing chaos, with the Japanese Air Force serving as the last line of defence. Toho in-house director Oda Motoyoshi brings a flair for set pieces and choreographed destruction. (Honda, who helmed the original, was already committed to a Toho melodrama.) Anguirus would become a recurring series character, oscillating between nemesis and ally.

**“An underrated standout among the Showa Godzilla films.”**

Janus Films

“Honda’s *Godzilla* has lost little of its power—it remains a thrillingly stark intimation of nature’s ability to rise up against our careless and relentless pursuit of modernization. It’s a reminder, and a warning, with teeth.”

Matthew Thrift, BFI

October 27 (Friday)

6:30 pm



## King Kong vs. Godzilla

Japan/USA 1963

Honda Ishiro, Thomas Montgomery

91 min. DCP

English dub

“In a scene reminiscent of two gigantic TV wrestlers grappling for holds, the prehistoric beasts grunt, puff, and ham it up for all the world like Gorgeous George and Man Mountain Dean. It’s a peculiar kind of humor, but it does play.”

James Powers, *The Hollywood Reporter*

After a seven-year hiatus, *Godzilla* was resurrected to do battle with its Hollywood counterpart in this East-meets-West grudge match for the ages. Originally conceived by *King Kong* stop-motion animator Willis O’Brien as a project pitting Kong against a supersized Frankenstein’s monster, the film morphed into a *Godzilla* production when Toho, searching for a splashy way to commemorate its 30th anniversary, saw potential in a clash-of-titans crossover. The story, related in this Americanized version by a broadcast live from UN headquarters, sees King Kong captured by a publicity-crazed pharmaceutical company and *Godzilla* unleashed by an errant American nuclear submarine. When the ape busts free, a collision course is fated for the prehistoric giants atop Mount Fuji. The film, the first in colour for each of its stars, was a box-office behemoth both in Japan and the States. Its goofier tone signaled a family-friendlier shift in the franchise.

October 27 (Friday)

8:30 pm



## Mothra vs. Godzilla

モスラ対ゴジラ

Japan 1964

Honda Ishiro

89 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

When *Mothra* (1961), Toho’s other *kaiju* property, proved wildly popular with moviegoers, a mashup between the studio’s top-billed monsters was a foregone conclusion, especially after the runaway success of previous “versus” crossover *King Kong vs. Godzilla*. Reuniting *Mothra* with A-list director Honda Ishiro, helmer of the original *Godzilla*, this effervescent entry in the franchise again finds *Godzilla* on the rampage and Japan sans battle plan. Hope rests instead on the benevolence of insect deity *Mothra*, protector of Infant Island and its pair of tiny twins, who summon the beast with song. Comeuppance for commodifying nature is central to the story, so too the haunting lessons of nuclear warfare. Tsuburaya Eiji’s parade of hand-built special effects, along with Ifukube Akira’s dueling leitmotifs, helps raise this *kaiju* classic into the ranks of all-time greats. *Godzilla*, hereafter, would hang up its villainous persona and become a defender of Earth—collateral damage notwithstanding.

“A creative high point in the *Godzilla* series.”

Janus Films

October 28 (Saturday)

5:00 pm



## Ghidorah, the Three-Headed Monster

三大怪獣 地球最大の決戦

Japan 1964

Honda Ishiro

93 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“Embodies much of what the popular monster films have come to be known for over the years...It’s through [its] simple morality play that *Ghidorah* accrues much of its charm—not to mention its delirious wrestling match antics.”

Rob Humanick, *Slant Magazine*

The *kaiju* king assumes the role of reluctant hero in this second *Godzilla* installment of 1964 (*Mothra vs. Godzilla* being the other), which starts the sci-fi series down a far spacier path than before. Upping the ante on the Toho formula, *Ghidorah* brings together three of the studio’s biggest bruisers—*Godzilla*, *Mothra*, and new recruit *Rodan* (star of a 1956 standalone film)—to begrudgingly join forces against the Earth-annihilating threat of King *Ghidorah*, the triple-headed space dragon. The alien’s arrival is foretold by an asylum-seeking princess, who, after a botched attempt on her life, possesses the soul of a Venusian prophet. Developed last-minute to replace a delayed Toho release (that being Kurosawa’s *Red Beard*), *Ghidorah* belies its hastened production thanks to the elevated craftsmanship of the core *Godzilla* company. Its ringleader, director Honda Ishiro, here showcases his talent for balancing *kaiju*-clashing spectacle with compelling human drama.

# Godzilla Stop-Motion Contest

October 28 (Saturday)

7:00 pm



## Invasion of Astro-Monster

怪獣大戦争

Japan/USA 1965

Honda Ishiro

94 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Godzilla goes off-world in this delectably high-concept space opera, a co-production with American animation company UPA. In the year 196X (a perplexing timestamp that suggest the series occurs in a deliberately alternate present), two astronauts touch down on the mysterious Planet X and there encounter its inhabitants: the Xiliens, a computer-controlled race driven underground by Monster Zero (aka King Ghidorah, the world destroyer of the last installment). Their plea: in exchange for borrowing Godzilla and Rodan to help defeat the three-headed terror, they'll provide humankind with a cure for cancer. But can the Xiliens be trusted? (They can't.) A retro, Roddenberry-esque romp of a creature feature, *Astro-Monster* ushered the series into full-blown cosmic territory, granting license for screenwriter Sekizawa Shinichi (already a veteran of the franchise) to let his imagination run wild. Hollywood actor Nick Adams co-stars as a spaceman in love with an Xilien in disguise.

**“Stands as a high point in the Showa Godzilla series.”**

Janus Films

October 28 (Saturday)

9:00 pm



## Ebirah, Horror of the Deep

ゴジラ・エビラ・モスラ 南海の大決闘

Japan 1966

Fukuda Jun

86 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

**“Fast-paced and light in tone, and builds to a riveting race-against-time finale.”**

Janus Films

A creative changeup and tightening of studio purse strings makes this seventh Godzilla entry something of an inflection point in the series. Originally destined to be a vehicle for King Kong (still under license from RKO), the movie ended up in the Godzilla department with a crew carried over from that aborted project. At the helm was Fukuda Jun, a reliable, resourceful genre director who would go on to make four additional entries in the series. *Ebirah*, set on the made-up island of Letchi (a cost-saving measure that eliminated model cities), sees Godzilla and Mothra electro-shocked out of slumber by a group of castaways, who enlist the *kaiju* to do battle with a giant crustacean and a terrorist organization harvesting atomic warfare. The music, a one-eighty from Ifukube's iconic score, features '60s surf rock and electric-guitar riffs. Godzilla's evolution into a more human-resembling hero reaches maturity here.

October 29 (Sunday) 11:30 am–1:30 pm

Free Admission

Unleash a *kaiju* of your own creation and use the magic of stop-motion to record it wreaking havoc! Join our Learning & Outreach team for a hands-on filmmaking activity and contest inspired by the “Godzilla: King of Kaiju” Halloween series. This all-ages activity runs on a drop-in basis from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Want more guidance and the chance to use our filmmaking equipment? Show up early and get step-by-step instructions from our experienced facilitators and the opportunity to complete your entire film on-site. Confident you can pull this off independently with a few guidelines and your own smartphone? Arrive anytime within the drop-in period to pick up your prompts and instructions. Either way, submit your finished film for a chance to win Godzilla-themed prizes!

Limited equipment, props, and animation supplies will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants may want to bring their own smartphone or tablet with the free Stop Motion Studio app for Apple or Android installed, as well as any monster-movie-appropriate props and materials they have on hand.

Animations submitted to learn@thecinematheque.ca by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, October 31 will be eligible for the grand prize pack, including the chance for your masterpiece to screen ahead of our monthly Film Club series. Entries must meet eligibility requirements, which will be shared during the drop-in period.

All ages and levels of experience are welcome!

“The Showa-era films are wildly variable in quality but surprisingly consistent in their evolution of tone ... Through it all, one can see how a brutal metaphor for unfathomable destruction became one of Japan’s most enduring cinematic contributions, as much an affirmation of the country’s place in global culture as a symbol of what the nation had to overcome to reassert itself.”

Jake Cole, *Slant Magazine*

October 29 (Sunday)

2:00 pm



## Destroy All Monsters

怪獣総進撃

Japan 1968  
Honda Ishiro  
89 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

With its popularity waning and child-catering direction proving iffy at best (see *Son of Godzilla*, tellingly absent from our lineup), the once-invincible Godzilla franchise was in desperate need of rescue. The plan: bring back the original team for a battle royal blowout, which, even if too late to resuscitate the flatlining series, would still be a *kaiju eiga* extravaganza for the books. In the far-flung future of 1999 (imagine!), humanity has colonized the moon and eliminated the threat of creature-caused destruction by confining Earth’s monsters to Monsterland. When an alien race takes mind-control of the monster squad, then unleashes King Ghidorah as a fail-safe, a *kaiju* rumble of epic proportions sets off. A tour de force of special effects ingenuity combining costumed actors, puppetry, pyrotechnics, miniatures, and much else besides, *Destroy All Monsters* brought Godzilla back from extinction and endures as a high-water mark and fan favourite of the franchise.

“My favourite of all Godzilla movies as a child is still my favourite as an adult ... No single Showa-era Godzilla film crystallizes all of the manifold complexities of these films as well as *Destroy All Monsters* ... It’s a masterpiece.”

Walter Chaw, *RogerEbert.com*

October 29 (Sunday)

4:00 pm



## Godzilla vs. Hedorah

ゴジラ対ヘドラ

Japan 1971  
Banno Yoshimitsu  
85 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“A creative high point in the franchise ... This cinematic and influential experiment has enjoyed a seismic turnaround with fans and critics.”

Paul Lê, *Bloody Disgusting*

Godzilla got an improbable psychedelic makeover thanks to one-off director Banno Yoshimitsu’s cult-adored film. A stylistic outlier that includes animated sequences, musical numbers, and an inexplicably airborne Godzilla, *Godzilla vs. Hedorah* was the franchise’s strongest stab at environmental messaging, a response to the alarming levels of pollution in postwar Japan. The story pits our radioactive hero against an alien life form feeding on industrial waste. When Godzilla loses and thousands perish in the sludge monster’s ensuing raids, Japan’s youth congregate at the base of Mount Fuji to celebrate one last night on Earth. One part eco-horror, two parts mushroom trip, this exceptionally original Godzilla entry—divisive to say the least—unsurprisingly irked some Toho suits with its off-brand bohemian sensibilities. Banno’s plans for a sequel were scrapped (as was the director) and the next installment saw a return to basics.

October 29 (Sunday)

6:00 pm



## Godzilla vs. Gigan

地球攻撃命令 ゴジラ対ガイガン

Japan 1972  
Fukuda Jun  
89 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

After the youthquake novelty of *Godzilla vs. Hedorah*, Toho tightened the reins on its flagship franchise and brought back *Ebirah* director Fukuda Jun to recalibrate the series. This go-around, Godzilla and Anguirus must protect the planet from body-snatching cockroach aliens, whose artillery includes King Ghidorah and Gigan, a giant (what else!) cyborg with scythe-like claws and a buzzsaw belly. (*Weekly Shonen Magazine* mangaka Mizuki Takayoshi designed the new monster.) The movie’s flashiest set piece, an amusement park run by the “flesh-suited” insectoids, boasts a Godzilla-replica tower that doubles as a laser cannon! A return to Toho’s tried-and-true formula of *kaiju-on-kaiju* mayhem, this film would be the last to feature Nakajima Haruo as Godzilla. The suit actor and stunt person, who brought athleticism and *noh* influence to the role, had been the exclusive Godzilla performer since the monster’s debut.

“Does have a certain lumbering charm. So does the script ... If you’re in the right silly mood, kind of fun.”

Scott Meek, *Time Out*

“[The Showa era of Godzilla films] is largely defined by a tone of whimsical fun, with huge monster battles and outlandish sci-fi and fantasy subplots. They’re fun for the whole family, and are some of the most iconic examples of Godzilla and what these films represent to so many.”

Graham Skipper, *Godzilla: The Official Guide*

October 29 (Sunday)

8:00 pm



## Godzilla vs. Megalon

ゴジラ対メガロ

Japan 1973  
Fukuda Jun  
81 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

Beloved for its campy, Saturday-morning sensibilities, *Godzilla vs. Megalon* was a bald-faced appeal to Japan’s TV-hooked children, more enchanted by serial superheroes than cinema’s king of monsters. Case in point: Toho conducted a nationwide contest for grade-schoolers to pitch a new *kaiju*. The winning design, to no one’s surprise, looked an awful lot like Ultraman, whose stock had never been higher. “Nuclear testing unleashes mayhem on the undersea kingdom of Seatopia, causing a series of environmental disasters that nearly wipes out Rokuro, the schoolboy protagonist at the centre of this film. To exact revenge, Seatopia unleashes Megalon, a gigantic beetle with the ability to fire ray beams and napalm bombs. Meanwhile, Rokuro’s brother creates Jet Jaguar, a flying robot with a built-in moral compass. The inevitable matchup of Godzilla and Jet Jaguar versus Megalon and Gigan decides the world’s fate” (Janus Films).

“Brilliantly eccentric... This is a wonderfully and (importantly) deliberately silly movie... [It] demonstrates how varied and therefore rich the Showa era was.”

Christopher Stewardson, *Little White Lies*

October 30 (Monday)

6:30 pm



## Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla

ゴジラ対メカゴジラ

Japan 1974  
Fukuda Jun  
84 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“One of the most beloved films in the entire franchise... [Fukuda] ended his tenure with the *kaiju* on a high note.”

Graham Skipper, *Godzilla: The Official Guide*

To mark the franchise’s 20th anniversary, Toho delivered this brash (and uncharacteristically bloody) *kaiju* cage match, which pits Godzilla against a *mecha* doppelgänger and a race of black-hole aliens hell-bent on world domination. “Godzilla’s evil twin Mechagodzilla first reared its head in this Fukuda Jun-directed film. A robot designed by aliens to conquer Earth, the enduringly popular villain has since been resurrected by Toho Studios several times. With the help of earnest direction, spectacular pyrotechnics, and guest appearances by veteran genre actors, this film recaptures the feel of the sixties Godzilla movies” (Janus Films). *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla* would be Fukuda’s farewell film of the franchise, leaving the door open for original helmer Honda Ishiro—who, until Miyazaki Hayao, was responsible for more internationally distributed pictures than any other Japanese director—to return for one last hurrah.

October 30 (Monday)

8:30 pm



## Terror of Mechagodzilla

メカゴジラの逆襲

Japan 1975  
Honda Ishiro  
83 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

“In Godzilla’s last gasp of the Showa era, aliens retrieve Mechagodzilla’s remains and rebuild it with the aid of an unhinged biologist (a scenery-chewing Hirata Akihiko), in hopes of defeating Godzilla for possession of planet Earth. This film marked the return of director Honda Ishiro, who had retired years earlier, disheartened by the increasingly kid-friendly approach of the series. For this final entry, Honda steers the King of the Monsters back into grim territory, interweaving an alien-invasion plot with a tale of tragic romance” (Janus Films). Despite strong notices and an enthusiastic response to Honda’s homecoming, *Terror of Mechagodzilla* was a flop, substantiating Toho’s fears that the *kaiju eiga* had fallen out of vogue. The series was put on hiatus and laid dormant for nearly a decade. Honda, meanwhile, reunited with friend and former collaborator Kurosawa Akira to work on the auteur’s final suite of films.

“[A] return to [Honda’s] more serious horror roots, crafting one of the franchise’s darkest entries to date... Honda instills a real sense of dread and danger into every frame of *Terror of Mechagodzilla*.”

Graham Skipper, *Godzilla: The Official Guide*

## Ongoing Series

# Our Stories to Tell

Our Stories to Tell is a new 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 lahtail, 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 Stellat'en First Nation.

October 31 (Tuesday)

8:40 pm



## Shin Godzilla PG

シン・ゴジラ

Japan 2016

Anno Hideaki, Higuchi Shinji

120 min. DCP

In Japanese with English subtitles

**“The King of the Monsters roars back to life in his weirdest movie ever... A critical and compelling addition to the *kaiju* canon.”**

David Ehrlich, *IndieWire*

Determined not to be outdone by Hollywood's 2014 reboot, Toho recruited Anno Hideaki and Higuchi Shinji, masterminds behind anime phenomenon *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, to breathe new life into the Godzilla franchise at home. The outcome: a critical and commercial triumph that earned a bevy of Japanese Academy prizes (including for best picture and director) and inaugurated a wave of “Shin”-branded reimaginings of other popular *tokusatsu* (or effects-driven) properties. *Shin Godzilla*, more interested in the bedlam of disaster (mis)management than the wrath of Godzilla itself, updates Honda's original premise to engage with Japan's cataclysmic 2011 earthquake and the ensuing Fukushima Daiichi crisis. The monster, here reconceived as a rapidly evolving doomsday beast, is nothing short of awesome. Ushering in an inspired new era for the *kaiju* king, Anno and Higuchi's series-resetting blockbuster re-establishes Godzilla as an allegory of real-world tragedy for a nation once again threatened with nuclear ruin.

October 11 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



## Kímmapiiyipitssini: The Meaning of Empathy

Canada 2021

Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers

124 min. DCP

In English and Blackfoot with English subtitles

Free Admission

The inaugural film in the Our Stories to Tell series is a beautiful documentary by acclaimed Blackfoot/Sámi filmmaker and actor Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (co-star and co-director of 2019's *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open*). *Kímmapiiyipitssini*, shot over five years, focuses on Tailfeathers's Kainai Nation community and the impacts of the opioid crisis on its members, first responders, and health professionals. Exemplifying how empathy and harm reduction can work hand-in-hand to support folks with addiction, the film does a remarkable job of showing various perspectives in order to raise awareness and amplify voices. Tailfeathers's second full-length documentary (after 2017's *casna?am, the city before the city*) won awards at Hot Docs and DOXA, and was named Best Feature Length Documentary at the 2022 Canadian Screen Awards.

Post-screening discussion with series advisor Lyana Patrick, a documentary filmmaker and educator on Indigenous community health.

**“Tailfeathers takes a gentle but informative approach to a complex, heartbreaking, infuriating situation... *Kímmapiiyipitssini* is a necessary documentary that looks at substance use without judgment.”**

Gail Johnson, *Stir*

# Ongoing Series

# Frames of Mind

A mental health film series.

## Thank you, Caroline Coutts

With her decision to accept a full-time position with the National Film Board of Canada, Caroline Coutts is reluctantly stepping back from her role as programmer of Frames of Mind. It's a role that she has performed with passion, diligence, and an uncompromising set of standards since the series began—now more than twenty years ago. From day one, her unique set of talents were evident: impeccable curatorial abilities enhanced by her own gifts as a filmmaker; a sophisticated psychological mindset; and a compassion for those with the lived experience of mental illness. Caroline, I know it's been a labour of love for you and that you have valued using powerful films and their ensuing discussion to help fight the stigma and discrimination that still clings to a mental illness diagnosis. You will be greatly missed—by myself, by Cinematheque staff and volunteers, and by those who attend Frames of Mind screenings. Good luck with your exciting transition!

Harry Karlinsky, Series Director

Frames of Mind is delighted to welcome Selina Crammond, former director of programming of DOXA Documentary Film Festival, as incoming series programmer. Selina will assume the role for our next programming cycle (November–December).

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

Series directed by Dr. Harry Karlinsky, Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia

Programmed by Caroline Coutts, film curator, filmmaker, and programmer of Frames of Mind since its inception in September 2002

September 20 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



### Millie Lies Low

New Zealand 2021  
Michelle Savill  
100 min. DCP

Vancouver Premiere

A festival favourite at Berlin, Edinburgh, and SXSW, *Millie Lies Low* is an exemplary feature debut from Michelle Savill, a comedy/drama with enough heart and chutzpah to rival the best of her Kiwi compatriot Taika Waititi. Played by the magnetic Māori actor Ana Scotney, Millie is a young architecture student recently awarded a coveted internship with a prestigious firm in New York City. On departure day, she experiences a panic attack right before take off and demands to be let off the plane. Too embarrassed to come clean to her friends and family, Millie makes the fateful decision to hide out in Wellington while trying to raise the funds for a replacement ticket, all the while posting to social media about her exciting new life in America. Of course, it all has to come crashing down eventually.

Before the screening, please join us in raising a glass to Caroline Coutts, who is retiring as series programmer after 21 years in the role. Complimentary sparkling wine will be served.

Post-screening discussion with Mark Antczak and Judith Law

Moderated by Dr. Harry Karlinsky

Co-sponsored by Anxiety Canada



October 18 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



### All My Puny Sorrows PG

Canada 2021  
Michael McGowan  
103 min. DCP

Based on the novel by preeminent Canadian author Miriam Toews, *All My Puny Sorrows* is a family drama about two sisters leading very different lives. Yoli (Alison Pill), a struggling writer, and Elf (Sarah Gadon), a successful concert pianist, are each uniquely impacted by the suicide of their father, a Mennonite patriarch. Their collective trauma reaches a critical point when Elf is hospitalized for a suicide attempt of her own. While Yoli challenges her sister's wish to die, a sense of profound empathy, mutual respect, and deep love for one another shines through their joyful banter full of literary references and wry humour. Drawing on Toews's real-life experience, the film raises the important and contentious issue—soon to be legal in Canada—of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) for individuals whose sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness.

Welcoming remarks by Dr. Lakshmi N. Yatham

Post-screening discussion facilitated by Dr. Alison Freeland, MD, FRCPC, DFCPA

Moderated by Dr. Harry Karlinsky

Co-sponsored by the Canadian Psychiatric Association



# Ongoing Series

## DIM Cinema

Moving-image art in dialogue with cinema.  
Curated by Michèle Smith

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." DIM Cinema has been curated by Michèle Smith since 2014.

September 27 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



### CROP

Egypt/Germany 2013  
Johanna Domke, Marouan  
Omara  
49 min. DCP

### Dreamaway

Egypt/Germany 2018  
Johanna Domke, Marouan  
Omara  
86 min. DCP

Interweaving pure documentary with semi-scripted sequences, Johanna Domke and Marouan Omara's *Dreamaway* follows the absurd days and fantastical nights of a group of young Egyptian workers lured from home by the promise of jobs and a freer lifestyle in Sharm El Sheikh, a popular resort town on the edge of the Red Sea. Recent terror attacks have driven the local tourism industry into the ground, yet its young workers ritualistically carry on with their jobs in the nearly deserted hotels, despite the lack of guests. Between work, they wander the empty environs dreaming of alternative lives. Preceded by *CROP*, Domke and Omara's reflection on the power of images, set in the offices of Egypt's state newspaper *Al-Ahram* and told from the perspective of a fictional photojournalist who missed the 2011 revolution due to a hospital stay.

**"Brilliantly bizarre... There's a universal message here about the unseen hopes of workers in precarious jobs and a sharp indictment of how western tourism moulds foreign resort workers before abandoning them."**

Charlie Phillips, *The Observer*, on *Dreamaway*

Note: This DIM program was originally scheduled for October 2021, but was postponed due to technical issues beyond our control. We are pleased to offer this rescheduled presentation.

October 25 (Wednesday)

7:00 pm



### Demi Monde: Short Films by Caroline Monnet

Program runtime: approx. 90 min.

DIM Cinema is thrilled to present a program of experimental short films by multidisciplinary Anishinaabe/French artist Caroline Monnet. A self-taught filmmaker (with a background in sociology and communication), Monnet discovered cinema as a "tool to express myself, gain self-confidence, and reclaim my culture." Since premiering her first film, *Ikwe*, at TIFF 2009, she has not looked back, determinedly moving forward in her exploration of Indigenous thematics in an increasing multitude of forms. The films in this program penetrate the gray zones "between borders, states of mind, and stages of life" (Monnet), enmeshing the viewer in personal journeys and Indigenous presence while crossing a stunning array of filmic genres and influences—verité and surrealism, fiction and documentary, horror and comedy—with exquisite economy, artistry, and sensitivity.

Advisory: A film in this program includes a scene of residential school violence.

# Ongoing Series Film Club



Film Club is a movie matinée series for kids and their families, an early introduction to cinema as a public artform, and a way to connect young artists and art appreciators to a century-plus tradition of grappling with the power of the imagination. By way of carefully selected titles, balancing classics and new works, our programming team extends a welcome to the next generation of cinemagoers—and anyone who wants to revisit a treasured favourite.

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

September 17 (Sunday)

11:00 am



## The Bear G

(L'ours)

France 1988

Jean-Jacques Annaud

96 min. Blu-ray

In English

**“A nature movie like no other... Enthralling for both children and adults, *The Bear* weaves its spell with a sophisticated array of images and sounds.”**

Brian D. Johnson, *Maclean's*

What is it like to be a bear? For French director Jean-Jacques Annaud, this was a question that required a re-thinking of animal-film conventions, resulting in a unique hybrid between special effects and documentary. *The Bear* is a family melodrama of sympathy and suspense, following a young grizzly bear, left alone in the world, as he evades hunters and meets a new parental figure in a wounded Kodiak bear. It's also a film of immersive nature photography, with long dialogue-free stretches of discovery and shocking wildlife survival sequences. (Yes, these non-talking bears are omnivores, which means they eat honey and berries, but also hunt other living animals.) Annaud found his inspiration in the British Columbia described in James Oliver Curwood's novels. The film is set here in 1885, with Italy's Dolomite Alps standing in for this province's vistas. The Jim Henson Company's bear animatronics act as seamless stand-ins for the film's more intense action stunts.

October 22 (Sunday)

11:00 am



## Dragonslayer PG

USA 1981

Matthew Robbins

109 min. Blu-ray

Intelligent, awe-inspiring, and the source of one of the most foreboding stop-motion creations of all time, *Dragonslayer* is the pinnacle of '80s fantasy filmmaking. Director Matthew Robbins was inspired by the “Sorcerer's Apprentice” sequence in Disney's *Fantasia*, as well as the legend of *St. George and the Dragon*. The screenwriter for Spielberg's *The Sugarland Express* and del Toro's *Pinocchio*, Robbins wanted to make a film far away from Hollywood clichés—instead of knights in shining armour, everyday people are the ones with the power to see through the mysteries of this world. Nearly every scene gives us a chance to discover, piece by piece, the arcane laws, rituals, customs, magical powers, and dangers of this distant time and place. The action emanates from the threat of Vermithrax, a dragon who commands the fear of a king and all his subjects. Valerian (Caitlin Clarke), undaunted, seeks the wisdom of a sorcerer and his apprentice to undo Vermithrax's reign of terror.

**“[A] landmark... Almost nobody can overcome *Dragonslayer*... Vermithrax is perhaps one of the most perfect creature designs ever made.”**

Guillermo del Toro

Vancouver's  
**fresh**  
 online arts  
 magazine.

createastir.ca



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