FILMFEST DC
1991
MAY 1 TO MAY 12
THE FIFTH ANNUAL
WASHINGTON, DC
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE WASHINGTON D.C. INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL.

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FROM THE MAYOR

As Mayor of the District of Columbia, I am pleased to send warm greetings to all those gathered for the Fifth Annual Washington, D.C. International Film Festival.

To the creators of Filmfest D.C., I want to offer my special congratulations for presenting the best in world cinema to the Nation's Capital. Through the festival, we can all share in the creativity and beauty of this unique form of artistic expression: film. Since, its very first year, the festival has offered a forum for important works of cinematic art. It has attracted filmmakers and critics from around the world and throughout the country. To its credit, it has earned a loyal following of people such as yourselves. I applaud you for coming out in support of the festival.

I believe that by supporting the art form of film, we are reaffirming the central role that it plays in our lives as individuals and in our experiences as a people.

On behalf of the residents of the District of Columbia, I wish you an enjoyable and memorable festival.

SHARON PRATT DIXON
MAYOR
DISTRICT OF COLOMBIA

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Working with Filmfest DC is a gift. Creating this year's festival began the day after last year's festival ended. It is a 12-month unpredictable voyage filled with adventure, breakdowns, and excitement, culminating in a celebration of the best in new international cinema. Now, as the filmmakers arrive in Washington from all over the world with their wonderful films, it is our pleasure to present to you the 1991 Washington, DC International Film Festival.

At five years old, Filmfest has moved from infancy to increased awareness and sophistication. Fortunately, we still maintain some of our idealistic youthfulness. Over the years, Filmfest has introduced hundreds of films to the Washington area. The flavor and tone of each year's programming is unique and we are especially proud of several of this year's events.

Filmfest has been recognized for its commitment to showcase the cinemas of emerging nations. The Maghreb: The New Cinema of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia will spotlight the exciting new work being done by North African filmmakers, many of whom will be joining us in Washington. The world premiere presentation of the newly restored print of Carmen along with live orchestral accompaniment will bring together opera as well as movie buffs. We have added a small reprise selection of films to give the film fan another (and often final) opportunity to see that rare foreign or independent title that they missed the first time around—and our community-based Filmfest DC for Kids and Cinema for Seniors are back by popular demand.

The African Americans Working in Hollywood Teleconference is this year's major breakthrough. Given their hectic schedules, it has been difficult to attract West Coast film personalities to Washington to participate in Filmfest. An innovation for all film festivals, our teleconference allows Filmfest to create a dialogue with some of the top people in the movie industry, both talent and administrators. Teleconference technology allows us to extend this dialogue nationwide. Support from the Mayor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development and Warner Brothers Studios made this teleconference possible. It is the first of what will become an annual feature of Filmfest DC.

Each year I can only marvel at the outpouring of support for the festival. Filmfest's success is illustrative of the groundswell of interest in international cinema in the Washington area. It is only through contributions from our sponsors, patrons, numerous volunteers, local businesses, and the diplomatic community that the festival can be sustained. I want you to know how deeply we appreciate your participation.

Each successive year, our programming becomes more comprehensive and sophisticated. Yet, we consciously design Filmfest to serve Washington's cultural plurality. Filmfest is for you, our audience. Festivals like our own are often the only opportunity you will have to see many of these remarkable films. So, please join us, with a spirit of discovery, on this 12-day adventure throughout the world of international cinema.

Tony Gittens
A PAPER WEDDING
Les noces de papier

Post-screening party ($525 includes film, food & dancing) at Union Station's East Hall

Michel Brauill
Canada, 1989, 95 minutes, color

Both present and touching, Paper Wedding is the absorbing story of a love that shouldn’t exist but does—after the rockiest of starts. Geneviève Bujold is Claire, a quiet intellectual leading a quiet life. Her sister Anne (Dorothée Berryman) is an immigration lawyer whose most pressing case involves the soon-to-expire visitor’s permit of Pablo (Manuel Aragoníz), a Chilean political refugee who is convinced that he is marked for death in his native country. Anne approaches Claire with an obvious solution, and to everyone’s great surprise Claire agrees to marry Pablo out of what she at first considers pity—or possibly mercy. But as the two get to know one another, Claire is coaxed out of a shell she hadn’t been aware she was in. Paper Wedding is a film that rejects immediate trends in favor of emotional truths, telling that timeless story of a man and a woman from different cultures who discover that love knows no borders. A great deal of the film’s emotional impact arises from the quiet dignity and strength of Geneviève Bujold’s enthralling performance. Much quieter and certainly more straightforward than her recent work for Alan Rudolph, her Claire is a return to the fragile yet resilient beauty of her memorable work in Le guerre est finie, King of Hearts, Anne of the Thousand Days, Kampion, and Obsession.

Filmfest DC is proud as can be to welcome Geneviève Bujold to the American premiere of Paper Wedding.

Eddie Cockrell

In French with English subtitles


U.S. Premiere
Wed., May 1, 8:00pm, AMC Union Station 9, AAMC/PW ($525 includes post-screening party)

Special thanks to The Embassy of Canada, AMC Union Station 9, Chaddsford Winery and Superior Beverages.

EVERYBODY’S FINE
Stanno tutti bene

Followed by a party at CITIES
$15 ticket includes film & party

Giuseppe Tornatore
Italy, 1990, 120 minutes, color

From the director of Cinema Paradiso, winner of the 1989 Academy Award for best foreign-language film, comes the delightful new film, Everybody’s Fine. Matteo (Marcellio Mastroianni), an ever-optimistic, retired civil servant living in Sicily, travels throughout Italy to visit each of his five sons and daughters, hoping to once again gather them all around one table. But he is entirely unprepared for what he finds—-a world that exists outside his own quiet circle, the confusion of modern Italy’s sentiments and anxieties, and the reality of the children he thought he knew.

Tornatore reveals the length and breadth of the Italian peninsula: Sicily, Naples, Rome, Florence, Rimini, Milan, Bologna, and Torino are featured locations, each beautifully shot and true to its own individual atmosphere. Everybody’s Fine imparts a sensitive yet acute vision of Italian life in all its variety. “It’s a modern tale of what my country has become,” says Tornatore, “its difficulties, chaos, political scene, peoples, and the fascination we all have for this beautiful land.”

In Italian with English subtitles


Sun., May 12, 4:30 pm, Cineplex Odeon Emery, AIMA/EF

Special thanks to Cineplex Odeon Theatres and CITIES.
**SCHEDULE**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 1**
8:00 PM OPENING NIGHT GALA: A Paper Wedding
AMC Union Station 9

**THURSDAY, MAY 2**
10:00 AM FIlmFest DC for Kids: Program Three
Anacostia Museum
4:00 PM FIlmFest DC for Kids: Vincent & Me
Cineplex Odeon MackArthur
6:30 PM Halfaunise with reception
Key Theatre
6:30 PM Impromptu
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:30 PM Primitive Movers & Strange Ditties
Hirshhorn Museum
3:15 PM Journey of Hope
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
American Film Institute
9:00 PM The Far

**FRIDAY, MAY 3**
6:30 PM Cross My Heart
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:30 PM Love Without Pity
AMC Union Station 9
6:30 PM Desert Rose
AMC Union Station 9
3:00 PM African American Teleconference
American Film Institute
7:30 PM Voice of the Moon
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
Hirshhorn Museum
8:00 PM Primitive Movers & Strange Ditties
American Film Institute
8:25 PM Maghreb Panel I: Style and Themes in Maghreb Cinema includes: The Trace
AMC Union Station 9
8:30 PM Margarit and Margarita
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
8:45 PM December Bride
American Film Institute
10:00 PM Saurara

**SATURDAY, MAY 4**
1:00 PM Rescued Program I
American Film Institute
1:00 PM FIlmFest DC for Kids: Program Three
Shepherd Park Library
2:30 PM An Angel at My Table
UDC Auditorium
2:30 PM Camera Arabe
UDC Bldg. 41, Room A03
4:30 PM Black Women Filmmakers shown with Ores with Attitude
American Film Institute
5:30 PM Halfaunise
UDC Auditorium
6:00 PM Rescued Program II
UDC Bldg. 41, Room A03
7:30 PM Latina Bar
UDC Auditorium
7:30 PM The Killer
UDC Auditorium
9:15 PM Saurara

**SUNDAY, MAY 5**
1:00 PM FIlmFest DC for Kids: George's Island
AMC Union Station 9
2:00 PM Bedis
AMC Union Station 9
3:00 PM Small Time
AMC Union Station 9
3:30 PM Maghreb Panel II: Historia, Economic and Social Realities in the production of Maghreb Cinema includes: The Drop
UDC Auditorium
4:30 PM Nicholas Brothers Tribute (SOLD OUT)
Hirshhorn Museum
4:45 PM The Walls
AMC Union Station 9
5:15 PM Saurara
6:00 PM Tatie Danielie
American Film Institute
7:00 PM Circus Boys
AMC Union Station 9
7:00 PM Rapted/Dovey with panel discussion
American Film Institute
9:30 PM Hangin' with the Homboys
American Film Institute

**MONDAY, MAY 6**
1:00 PM Cinema for Seniors (SOLD OUT)
American Film Institute
2:00 PM FIlmFest DC for Kids: Program Two
Francis Grey slippery
3:00 PM Margarita and Margarita
AMC Union Station 9
6:30 PM Door to the Sky
American Film Institute
8:00 PM Carmen
Lizier Auditorium
8:30 PM Circus Boys
AMC Union Station 9
8:30 PM The Noob of the Women of Mt. Chenova
American Film Institute

**TUESDAY, MAY 7**
1:00 PM Cinema for Seniors (SOLD OUT)
American Film Institute
1:00 PM FilmFest DC for Kids: Program One
Mt. Pleasant Library
1:30 PM Polonaise with reception
Cineplex Odeon Wisconsin
3:00 PM Dave's Last Necklace
American Film Institute
4:00 PM Television: A Window on Washington*
American Film Institute
4:15 PM The Far
5:30 PM The Kill Off

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 8**
4:00 PM FilmFest DC for Kids: Program Two*
Shepherd Park Library
5:15 PM An Angel at My Table
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:30 PM Time of the Servants
American Film Institute
6:45 PM Bedis
AMC Union Station 9
6:30 PM Latina Bar
AMC Union Station 9
8:45 PM Rapted/Dovey
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
9:15 PM No, or the Vein Glory of Command
American Film Institute

**THURSDAY, MAY 9**
12:00 PM Television: A Window on Washington*
American Film Institute
4:00 PM FilmFest DC for Kids: Program One*
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
5:30 PM The Dave's Last Necklace
American Film Institute
5:30 PM Active Imagination
American Film Institute
4:45 PM Open Doors
4:45 PM Desert Rose
American Film Institute
8:30 PM I'm Sittin on a Branch and I Feel Happy
American Film Institute
8:45 PM Polonaise

**FRIDAY, MAY 10**
6:30 PM December Bride
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:30 PM Time of the Servants
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:45 PM Ava and Gabriel
American Film Institute
4:45 PM Identity Crisis
AMC Union Station 9
7:00 PM Origins of Film*
Hirshorn Museum
8:30 PM Caboza de Vara
American Film Institute
8:45 PM Inventory
AMC Union Station 9
9:00 PM Cross My Heart

**SATURDAY, MAY 11**
12:30 PM Under African Skies
American Film Institute
3:00 PM Inventory
American Film Institute
4:00 PM Ne, or the Vein Glory of Command
AMC Union Station 9
4:00 PM Close Up
AMC Union Station 9
6:00 PM Door to the Sky
American Film Institute
6:00 PM The Hook with Hollywood with panel discussion
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
6:30 PM Caboza de Vara
American Film Institute
8:00 PM The Kill Off
American Film Institute
8:30 PM Resident Alien
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
8:45 PM Ava and Gabriel
American Film Institute
10:00 PM Step Across The Border
American Film Institute

**SUNDAY, MAY 12**
12:30 PM Small Time
Cineplex Odeon Jennifer
1:00 PM Rescued Program III
American Film Institute
2:30 PM Resident Alien
Key Theatre
6:00 PM Rescued Program IV
American Film Institute
4:30 PM CLOSING NIGHT: Everybody's Fine
American Film Institute
6:30 PM POST-SCREENING PARTY
CITIES

All programs are subject to change. Please consult FilmFest DC’s daily schedule announcements in the Washington Post.

All tickets $6.50. FREE events marked with an asterisk (*). Advance tickets available from TicketCenter locations, including all Hiecht stores (service charge is included). No TicketCenter sales day of the show. To order tickets, call (202) 432-0200. Order by event code. Free events are on a first-come basis, no tickets required. For additional FilmFest DC information call (202) 727-2396.
The World Premiere of the Newly Restored Print of
CARMEN

Presented with live orchestral accompaniment,
conducted for Filmfest by
Gillian Anderson

Cecil B. DeMille
Music by Georges Bizet, arranged by Hugo Riesenfeld
USA, 1915, 55 minutes (at 20.53 fps), black and white

Geraldine Farrar (1882-1967), the American-born opera star who stars in DeMille's Carmen, was one of the finest sopranos of her time, known both for the mellowness and maturity of her voice as well as for the breadth of her vocal range. She was famous in both Europe and America for her interpretations of Puccini, her Carmen, and many other major opera roles. Her popularity with the younger opera-goers in New York earned them the nickname "Gerry-Fappers." Pioneer producer Jesse Lasky recalled Farrar fondly in his autobiography, I Blow My Own Horn, as "...the most charming, gracious actress I ever brought to Hollywood, ...completely devoid of temperament, contrary to the tradition of prima donnas."

Her performance of Carmen on November 19, 1914, at the Metropolitan Opera under the baton of Arturo Toscanini, earned the following comments by W. J. Henderson in Opera Magazine:

Perhaps there is too much learned comment on the interpretation of the role of Carmen. She belongs to a type of woman which an astonishingly large number of men have never met, and about which they know nothing whatever. Equally a vast majority of the more adorable sex has no acquaintance with this type. Carmen is not merely a gross sensualist, gratifying a passing desire. That phase of her actions is but incidental. She is the woman who loves the lure. She eagerly wishes to see men in the throes of the passion which she swiftly excites, and while this first ecstasy is alive, it begins in her a desire to be loved, but it is abnormally subjective. Its object is itself. When it has spent itself, there must be another.

That she may be hopelessly vulgar goes without saying. That she may just as well be comparatively free from vulgarities is quite as likely. The one thing she must not be is a commonplace, prosy working girl. There are certain tragic depths in such a nature as hers, and these are sounded in the third act of the opera.

Mess Farrar's Carmen was not too high-bred. There was here and there a hint of vulgarity, but there was nothing offensive. The laugh in the first act was that of a street woman. The imitation of the beggar in the second was in the tone of a common scold. And there were other touches of a similar character. But the chief point to be noted is that the prima donna succeeded in making her Carmen alluring to the eye. She was sensuously attractive, and at the necessary points she depicted with unusual theatrical cunning the existence of the strong nature of the woman.

Geraldine Farrar's screen version of Carmen employs many of the same insights and details of characterization that she used in the stage version. This celebrated role quickly established her as an accomplished screen actress and pantomimist and led to roles in a number of silent films. In a 1964 interview in Ken Browning's The Paradise's Gone By..., she reminisced Cecil B. DeMille, with whom she made several films after Carmen, as "a genius." Discussing her enjoyment of her film career, she noted, "The pantomime fascinated me particularly; we used our faces, our eyes, and projected ourselves... These pictures were spontaneous. All the elements combined with enthusiasm, that was the secret of their success." On our pictures, there was a great feeling of life.

Choreographer Agnes deMille, daughter of Carmen's screenwriter, remembers:

"Uncle Cecil brought Farrar to Hollywood to play Carmen and I had my first model to aspire to... Grand Opera meant far more in those days than it does now or possibly ever will again. It represented the ultimate in theatrical grandeur, honor, permanence and splendor and Farrar was among its most dazzling names... She visited... first on a Sunday morning and we were all on hand, the executives and their families... I was enthralled... The electricians, the carpenters, the cowboys also adored her. Everyone at the studio from executive to assistant prop-boy, spoke of her as 'Our Gerry'."

Once every summer she came to dinner at our house. I was not permitted, of course, to eat with her, but very nearly ran a temperature at the prospect of having her under our roof.

After dinner there was music. Farrar played the piano... brilliantly, improvising as she went, talking and laughing... The sound of the music and the laughter woke my sister and me and we crept in our nightgowns to the stairs and sat there with faces pressed against the balustrade, shivering at the glory below."

Hildi Riesenfeld (1879-1958) was born in Vienna, Austria, and was a music director and composer. In the United States he was perhaps the most prominent of the musicians who worked with silent films. Before becoming the musical director of the Rialto, Rivoli, and Criterion Movie Theaters in New York, he had been a violinist in the Vienna Opera Orchestra and concertmaster for the Manhattan Opera House Orchestra. The American Organist labeled his movie music productions "photoplays deluxe." An estimated five million people a year attended his performances, and his orchestras achieved a distinction that, according to Riesenfeld's assessment, equaled that of the New York Philharmonic.


Mon., May 4, 8:30pm, Lisa's Auditorium, AIDS/CA.
JOURNEY OF HOPE

Reise der Hoffnung

Xavier Koller

Haydar and Meryem, a Turkish couple, and their 7 year-old son Mehmet Ali, begin their JOURNEY OF HOPE from a small village in the mountains of Southeast Turkey. The trip is meant to take them from their poor country into luxurious Switzerland. The family sold their land and their sheep in order to finance the journey.

The first stop is Istanbul, where they stowaway on a freighter to Naples. In Italy they meet Swiss truckdriver Ramser, who promises to bring them into what is supposed to be "Paradise". But they are stopped at the Swiss border and are sent back to Milan.

Smugglers take them, with other refugees, to the high mountains. Despite the dangerous weather, they are forced on their illegal path toward Switzerland. Their Journey of Hope turns into a desperate fight for survival.

In Turkish with English subtitles


Sponsors: Print Sources: Gender Productions/USA, 1808 Century Park East, Suite 1900, Los Angeles, CA 90067, Tel: 213 827-3444, Fax: 213 294-2390. Metropole Film, Senneshuis 37, 8011 Zürich, Switzerland, Tel: (411) 271-8958, Fax: (411) 271-3350.

Thurs., May 2, 8:45 pm, Cinplex Odeon Jonler, AJNB/JH

Proud to be a sponsor of the 1991 FilmFest D.C.

AT&T

The right choice.
THE MAGHREB: THE NEW CINEMA OF ALGERIA, MOROCCO AND TUNISIA

Each year Filmfest devotes a portion of its programming to the dynamics of filmmaking in one area of the world, presenting films of striking beauty and originality as well as examining the social, economic, and political dynamics involved in bringing forth such works. In past years, the festival has spotlighted filmmaking in Brazil, Sweden, France, the Pacific Rim, Africa, and Israel. This year we present The Maghreb: The New Cinema of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

The term “the Maghreb” designates five North African countries: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania. (As there is little or no film production in Libya and Mauritania, these countries are not represented in the series.) The Maghreb’s identity is clearly rooted in the crossroads cultures of the region, extending as it does between Europe and Black Africa, between the Islamic and the Mediterranean—but also between city, countryside, and desert, between Moslems, Jews, and Christians; between Arabs and Berbers; between a colonial past and a nominally independent present. It is this diversity, with all its polarities and contradictions, that cinema is singularly capable of expressing.

For most of the near-century of the history of film, North Africa, like Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Indian subcontinent, has mainly served to provide subjects, settings, and markers for the film industries of Europe and the United States. For this reason, Arab cinema, like others in the Third World, is both the product and the expression of a long and still unresolved struggle for the control of the image, for the power to define identity. Culture and entertainment leaders in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia have seen a common Maghreb market as the only immediate hope. Panelists will discuss efforts to maximize North African film production. The short film, The Drop, will be shown.

Sun., May 3, 3:30 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

SCHEDULE OF FILMS

BADIS
Mohamed Abderahman Tazi
Maroc, 1999, 90 minutes, color

Seen, May 5, 2:00 pm, American Film Institute
Wed., May 6, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station

CARRERA ARABIA: TWENTY YEARS OF ARAB CINEMA
Nabil Ayed
Tunisie/Arabie, 1987, 60 minutes, black and white
Set, May 4, 8:30 pm, AMC Union Station

DESERT ROSE
Mohamed Rachid Behja
Algeria, 1995, 90 minutes, color
Fri., May 3, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute
Thurs., May 2, 5:30 pm, AMC Union Station

A DOOR TO THE SKY
Farida Jereissati
Lebanon, 1993, 85 minutes, color
Set, May 17, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute

THE DOVE’S LOST MIGRACE
Hassan Ben HMouna
France/Tunisia, 1990, 90 minutes, color
Tues., May 7, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute
Thurs., May 2, 6:30 pm, AMC Union Station

THE DROP
Rebours, Boukheyle
Algeria, 1992/1999, 26 minutes, color
shown with MAGHREB PANEL II

HALIFACINE
Nabil Ayed
Tunisie/France, 1993, 90 minutes, color
Thurs., May 2, 6:30 pm, Key Theatre

THE HOUSE OF THE WOMEN OF MOUNT CHEMMOUA
Abdelkader
Algeria, 1978, 110, color
Set, May 4, 7:15 pm, AMC Union Station

THE TRANCE
Hassan Ben HMouna
Tunisia/Arabie, 1999, 23 minutes, color
shown with MAGHREB PANEL I

THE MAGHREB PANEL I

Styles and Themes in Maghreb Cinema

Themes found in Maghreb films are derivative of social realities. They include the role of women in cultures steeped in tradition, but striving for participation in the modern world. Other themes are the impact of Western media upon North African culture, and the struggle of the Arabs to define themselves in relation to Western culture. Filmmakers, producers, and panelists will discuss these topics. The short film, The Trance, will be shown.

Fri., May 3, 8:25 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

THE MAGHREB PANEL II

Historic, Economic and Social Realities in the Production of Maghreb Cinema

North Africa, like Latin America, Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Indian subcontinent, has mainly served to provide subjects, settings, and markers for the film industries of Europe and the United States. For this reason, the Arab cinema, like others in the Third World, are both the product and the expression of a long and unresolved struggle for the control of the image, for the power to define identity. Culture and entertainment leaders in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia have seen a common Maghreb market as the only immediate hope. Panelists will discuss efforts to maximize North African film production. The short film, The Drop, will be shown.

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Tunisia/Arabie, 1999, 23 minutes, color
shown with MAGHREB PANEL I
AFRICAN AMERICANS WORKING IN HOLLYWOOD: A TELECONFERENCE

The African Americans Working in Hollywood Teleconference will touch on some of the major issues surrounding today's "Black Hollywood." Although the highly visible success of such stars as Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, and Spike Lee are exciting, few people of color hold behind-the-scenes decision-making positions, and new opportunities for minority involvement are rare.

In this live, interactive telecommunications event, we will explore some of the myths and realities of African Americans working in the motion picture/television industry. We will define where we've come from, where we are, and where we are going as a major ethnic group operating within the motion picture/television industry. Participants will include some of the nation's most accomplished stars and studio administrators.

PANELS

Moderator: Dr. Albert Johnson, Professor, University of California at Berkeley

The Image

(45 minutes)

African Americans in television and film discuss their work as professionals, with perspectives on the changing roles and opportunities for Blacks in front of the camera.

Panelists:
Ruby Dee, actress, star of Do the Right Thing and Back and the Preacher
Marla Gibbs, actress, Star of television's "227" and The Jeffersons
Denise Nicholas, actress, star of Ghost Dad, Let's Do It Again, and A Piece of the Action, and television's Room 222
Michael Schultz, director of Cooley High, Car Wash, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, Krush Groove, and Rawhide's Last Dragon
Wesley Snipes, actor, Star of New Jack City and No Better Than Me
Marla Van Peebles, writer, director and star of New Jack City

Behind the Scenes

(25 minutes)

While the general public experiences only the finished product, decisions setting the direction of a production are made in studio administrative offices and board rooms. In this segment, African Americans who are working behind the camera will share their thoughts on ways to break into the system.

Panelists:
Gus Blackman, Vice President of Story and Vocational Administration, Warner Bros. Studios
Tom Draper, Senior Vice President, Time/Warner, Inc.
Dennis Greene, President, Jones Greene Films
Debra Langford, Director of Current Programming, Warner Bros. Television
Michelle Moore, Theatrical Attorney, Warner Bros. Studios
Valerie Sconce, Director of Feature Development, Warner Bros. Studios

What is a Teleconference?

A teleconference is a live, interactive video program transmitted via satellite to remote viewing locations. At these remote sites, audiences get to see and hear expert panelists just as they would at a traditional conference and can call in questions to panelists "on-air."

Additional Sponsors

Filmfest DC, The Fifth Annual Washington, D.C., International Film Festival
The Mayor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development

African Americans Working in Hollywood is also made possible in part by support from the University of the District of Columbia, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

May 3, 7:00 PM, University of the District of Columbia, Van Ness Campus, 4200 Connecticut Ave, NW, Building 41, Room A03, FREE
This Teleconference will be carried live on DC Cable Channel 16

In Celebration of Washington, D.C.'s Bicentennial, Filmfest DC Presents...

TELEVISION: A WINDOW ON WASHINGTON

This DC Bicentennial program presents rare and fascinating clips from local television programming, beginning with the dawn of the medium in the late 1940s. Although the majority of programs from early television have not been preserved, fragments and a few complete shows survive in the National Archives and Library of Congress, the archives of the stations themselves, and in the hands of private collectors.

A Window on Washington will offer an entertaining and novel look at a wide variety of program types from more than three decades of fondly remembered shows. Children of the '50s, '60s, and '70s will enjoy an opportunity to revisit such old friends as Pick Temple, Ranger Hal, Captain 20, and Milt Grant, the host of Washington's original teen dance show. Several local programs served as springboards for those who later went on to national prominence, including Jimmy Dean with Towne and Country Time and the late Jim Henson with Sam and Friends.

We will also see an excerpt of a 1961 broadcast of It's Academic, a program that will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year. Other "firsts" to be presented will be the inaugural program of WETA (Channel 26) in 1961 and the opening of the new Wisconsin avenue studios of WTG (Channel 5) in 1964. Among other highlights will be a tour of "a state of the art" television facility in 1952, a 1949 broadcast by young David Brinkley, and a compilation of local news stories selected by the staff of WRC-TV.

Bill Blakefield
Film Programmer, the National Archives

Tues., May 7, 7:00 pm, National Archives, FREE
Thurs., May 9, 12:00 pm, National Archives, FREE

Program Host: Mac McGary from J's Academic
ACTIVE IMAGINATION: CONTEMPORARY EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO

A diverse sampling of recent work by three experimental film/video artists. Filmmaker Su Friedrich will be present to discuss her latest film, SINK or SWIM.

THEY ARE LOST TO VISION ALTOGETHER

Tom Kalin
Color, 15 minutes

A visionary critique of compulsory heterosexuality, described by Kalin as “an erotic retaliation against the Homos Amendment—the U.S. government’s refusal to fund explicit AIDS prevention information for gay men, lesbians, and i.e. drug users.”

UNIVERSAL HOTEL

Peter Thompson
Black and white, 24 minutes

Working with only twelve photographs, filmmaker Peter Thompson meditates on the elusive nature of physical evidence as he reconstructs the experiences of a particular Dachau inmate at the hands of Nazi physicians in 1942. Thompson resists what is expected of him as a documentarian; instead, he fakes sound source and incorporates many, usually repressed, elements of nonfiction work—dreams, oversights, speculation, doubts, false starts—to give us an account of this dark actuality that is more devastating and whole as a result.

SINK OR SWIM

Su Friedrich
Black and white, 26 minutes

The latest film by one of the most inventive and engaging filmmakers working today. Ernest Larson writes, “I can think of no more corrosively moving refutation of ‘the law of the father’ than Su Friedrich’s extraordinarily precise SINK or SWIM. Summoning her nerve, Friedrich rather fearlessly refines her previous researches into unexplored areas of memory, dream, and desire.”

Jude Palais
Thurs., May 9, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, AA1/RX

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE

Jane Campion
New Zealand, 1990, 150 minutes, color

Based on the autobiographies of Janet Frame, New Zealand’s most celebrated novelist. An Angel at My Table is a project that director Jane Campion worked on for several years and began production on immediately after finishing Sweetie. Although it couldn’t be more different in its style, the project seems perfectly suited for Campion’s interest in the eccentricities of sexually and emotionally complex characters. Janet Frame was a charming and precocious child whose life was marked by tragedy. As a young woman, she made a disastrous career choice and wound up in a mental home for eight years of shock treatments, escaping lobotomy only because a book of her poems was published. Far from the painful and harrowing film that this might have been, Campion has turned this story into a celebration of the world of an eccentric but talented woman. With her quirky insights and idiosyncratic humor, she has infused the film with the same intelligent compassion that marks her other work. In contrast to Sweetie, Campion calls this film “gentler, kinder—a humanist piece.” Its beautiful but bizarre visual style mirrors her approach. Made as a three-part TV mini-series, the film is structured somewhat elliptically, skipping over large portions of Frame’s life while keeping the narrative lucid. At almost three hours, the film is touching, memorable, and totally absorbing.

Jane Campion
15th Toronto Festival of Festivals, 1990

Production Company: Willow Films Ltd./The New Zealand Film Commission/TeleVision New Zealand Ltd./The Australian Broadcasting Commission/Channel 4/Producer: Bridget Ids Co-Producer: John Maynard Screenplay: Laura Jones, from the writings of Janet Frame; Cinematography: Stuart Dryburgh. Editor: Veronique Masselot; Music: Dave Holmström, Principal Cast: Kerry Fox, Alison Rose, Karen Ferguson, Iris Grace, Print Source: FilmLine Features, 275 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10010. Telephone: (212) 339-8888. Fax: (212) 339-9104.

Sat., May 4, 2:30 pm, UDC Auditorium, AA1A/AA
Wed., May 8, 6:15 pm, Complex Odeon Junction, AA1/RX

AVA & GABRIEL, A LOVE STORY FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Ava de Rooy
The Netherlands, 1990, 100 minutes, color

After his critically acclaimed Abucaria di Desola, Felix de Rooy is back with another story set in the late forties in his native Curacao. Upon the request of Father Filelius, Surinam painter Gabriel returns to Curacao to paint a mural of the Virgin Mary for St. Anna’s church. Gabriel, black but educated in The Hague, decides to use the beautiful Ava (who is of mixed origin and engaged to the white police chief Carlos Zurin) as his model but this causes intrigues and consternation in the petty social life of the colony. Inevitably, Gabriel and Ava fall in love but their love is impossible to fulfill and their story ends tragically as Gabriel is sacrificed to intolerance. With sophisticated and great visual flair Felix de Rooy captures the culture of Curacao in all its complexity, and the film is both a tribute to his native land and a searching commentary on the impact of Dutch colonialism.

Nora Bosch
34th London Film Festival, 1990

In Dutch and Subtitles in English Subtitles


BADIS

Mohamed Abderrahmane Tazi
Morocco, 1989, 90 minutes, color

A film, to this day a Spanish encore on Moroccan territory, provides the setting and the metaphor for a modern-day tragedy. The story takes place in 1974, when the fortress of Badis still served as a prison for Generalissimo Franco’s political opponents. In its shadow, a tiny fishing village that is no less a prison for its inhabitants. Among them are the Fisherman’s daughter, whose “crime” is to have fallen in love with a Spanish soldier from the garrison, and the schoolteacher’s wife, who has somehow aroused her husband’s jealousy. The friendship of the two women is as inevitable as the desire for freedom that it feeds.

There are few sounds, few words in Badis. It is the images that speak, that cry out the violation of innocence. Nor is it an accident that Mohamed Tazi tells his tale in this way. Trained as a cameraman at the French Film Institute (IDHEC), he has had a long career as cinematographer, along with his own feature, The Big Trip (1981). He has also served as technical advisor or director of production for foreign directors working in Morocco, notably Robert Wise, John Huston, and Francis Ford Coppola.

Mikael Rosas
In Arabic and English with English subtitles


Sun., May 5, 2:00 pm, American Film Institute, AA1/RX
Wed., May 8, 6:15 pm, AMC Union Station 9, AA1/RX

including its own feature, The Big Trip (1981). He has also served as technical advisor or director of production for foreign directors working in Morocco, notably Robert Wise, John Huston, and Francis Ford Coppola.

Mikael Rosas
In Arabic and Spanish with English subtitles

A MATH LESSON SO INSPIRING, THEY MADE IT INTO A SERIES.

These are scenes from one of the hottest new television shows this fall, *Futures*.

Hosted by famed math teacher, Jaime Escalante, *Futures* is bringing excitement to the study of math and science by showing students how these subjects can lead to interesting and rewarding careers.

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Because when it comes to inspiring our country's students, you've clearly found the right formula.

ARCO ☀️
BLACK WOMEN FILMMAKERS: EXPERIMENTAL JOURNEYS WITH ZINABU IRENE DAVIS

In this contemporary overview of the works of Black women filmmakers, independent film and video maker Zinabu Irene Davis will focus on recent developments in experimental narrative. Her illustrated discussion will begin with the work of Barbara McCullough, whose 1980 film Water Ritual #1, a poetic film exploring the use of ritual as a means of exercising societal frustrations, was one of the first experimental films by a Black woman (4 minutes, black and white, 16mm). An excerpt of McCullough’s experimental documentary Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space (1981, color, video) will be shown. An examination of how artists in different media use ritual in their work, will also be shown. This part of the discussion will include Sandra Sharp’s Pickling Tribes (1988, 7 minutes, color, 16mm), a young girl's semi-animated investigation of identity. Davis’ own work bridges the discussion to the present. She will show her award-winning film Cyclists, an experimental and spiritual, black and white journey into anticipation in which light and texture as much as words and music detail the ceremony of Rasheed Allen’s (Stephanie Ingram) cleaning while waiting for her period to begin. Like Davis’ other work, Cyclists manipulates and shapes the medium to reflect specific space, sensuality, and physical language of the African American woman. A deliberate and often dryly humorous film, Cyclists has won awards from the Black Programming Consortium and Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. In addition, Davis will show her latest film, A Period Piece (1990, 3 minutes), as well as excerpts from an upcoming work, A Powerful Wang (1991, 10 minutes, video) and an earlier work, Crocodile Conspiracy.

Door With Attitude will be screened immediately following this program.

Sat., May 4, 4:30 pm, UDC Bldg., 41, Room A-03, AUD/JP

CABEZA DE VACA
Nicolas Echevarria
Mexico, 1989, 112 minutes, color

Echevarria made documentaries about the culture and history of the Mexican Indians and about shamanism... "Enough," he says emphatically, "This film, my first feature, is a fantasy document. It's my escape from the documentaries—I'm not trying to be faithful to anything. The foundation is historical, but everything else is creative work from everybody—the costume designer, the art director, and all the others.

Guillermo Sheridan and Echevarria base their screenplay on the famous 16th-century travel book Naufragios (Shipwrecks) by Abar Nalies Cabeza de Vaca. Cabeza de Vaca accompanied Captain Narvaz on his explorations of Florida and other parts of the New World as treasurer of the expedition. As an historical figure he is known as one of the first white men to explore the area from Florida to present-day Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and up to the west coast of Mexico. He was also one of the first ethnographers, and his book provides the first and most accurate information about many of the Indian tribes that were subsequently wiped out by the Spaniards or later by the Americans. But Cabeza de Vaca was also a mystic, and this is what Echevarria concentrates on in his film, which ends with an extraneous image of Indians carrying a huge cross, presumably to a temple they have been forced to build for the Spaniards. But they go off on their own free will, marching to the accompaniment of a single drum.

"The film says something about the relation between the powerful and the weak. Our very wealth has sometimes been a burden," comments Echevarria. "We were raped by the Spanish for the gold, and now it's happening with the oil. But I stress that I didn't want it all to be too clear. I wanted the spectator to have the feeling of someone who goes to a foreign country and doesn't know what's going on. Those explorers went through an uncharted country, they were the first. And for Cabeza de Vaca, it was also like an exploration into his own inner self.

Stephen Locke
41st Berlin International Film Festival, 1991

In Spanish with English subtitles

Production Company: Instituto Mexicano de Cine (Spanish Television/First Century Sara Saura/Ansambl Playa/Phalena Theatrical Films)/Alhambra/José Benavides Consorcio/Channel Four Television. Screenplay: Guillermo Sheridan, Nicolas Echevarria. Based on the book Naufragios by Abar Nalies Cabeza de Vaca. Cinematography: Guillermo Norena. Editor: Rafael Llanos. Music: Nolvis Llanos. Principal Cast: Jan Dupr, Abar Nalies Cabeza de Vaca, Xavier Garcia, Miguel Delgado, Carlos Cabeza de Vaca, Carlos Cabeza de Vaca, Guillermo Norena, Piedad Garcia, Guadalupe Sosa, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca, Carmen de la Cabeza de Vaca.

Fri., May 10, 8:30 pm, Campus Olson Justine, AJ/BJ/CV
Sat., May 11, 6:30 pm, Campus Olson Justine, AJ/BJ/CV

CAMERA ARABE: TWENTY YEARS OF ARAB CINEMA

al-Sinima al-arabiyya al-fatiyya

Ferid Boughedir
Tunis/France, 1987, 60 minutes, black and white

Through film clips, archival footage, and photographs, Camera Arabe offers a concise survey of the evolution of the Arab cinema from the heyday of “Hollywood on the Nile” to the new wave of post-1960s filmmakers. This lively and much-acclaimed documentary, made by one of the most respected

in Arab and French with English voice-over and subtitles


Sat., May 4, 2:30 pm, UDC Bldg., 41, Room A-03, AUD/CD

CINEMA FOR SENIORS

GREAT AMERICAN ENTERTAINERS, PART 2

S negative was the response to our Great American Entertainers presentation of May 1990 that decided to organize a film review along similar lines for this year’s Cinema for Seniors series. We are proud to present Great American Entertainers, Part 2, a program that begins where last year’s left off.

The show opens with a nostalgic look at three of our nation’s greatest big band leaders, Gene Krupa, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington. The Jimmy Lunnford big band will be featured at the event, and this clip shows why. The Big Band is featured in a performance of their original themes song, the one they used before "One O’Clock Jump," "Mood Swing," and the Ellington sequence features his superb vocalist, Joe Henderson.

The program focuses next on five great vocal stylists: Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughan, (seen in a rare television appearance from 1950), Joe Turner, Cab Calloway, and Ella Fitzgerald, who does a delightful rendition of Count Basie’s other theme song, “One O’Clock Jump,” accompanied by the great man himself on the piano.

A highlight of last year’s presentation was the thrilling survey of tap dancers and dance teams, and we pay tribute once again to that remarkable American tradition with an array of new tap routines. Featured are the great two-man comedy dance team of Cook and Brown doing their celebrated "Old Man Time" routine, in addition to the Nicholas Brothers, Buck and Bubbles, and the team of Goles and Tahir in an affectionate tribute to Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. Rounding out the dance segments are Bunny Briggs, the Berry Brothers, Gregory Fields, and, of course, the master himself, Bill Robinson, joined in this performance by the irresistible Thomas "Fats" Waller.

The D.C. Rhythm Ensemble, Artistic Director Chris Bellou, will present a tap dance to the Nicholas Brothers following the film program.

Michael Chertok

DF Rhythm Ensemble
"Not as good as his first or third, but better than his last." "It worked for me on several levels."
"Even the symbolism was symbolic." "It came DHL." Some of the more popular things said during this year's festival. DHL, Official carrier of the Washington, D.C. International Film Festival.

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CIRCUS BOYS

Nama-ye Nazdiq
Abbas Kiarostami
Iran, 1990, 100 minutes, color
Based on real events, Close-Up tells the story of Ali Sabizan, an unemployed young man who casually presents himself to a well-to-do lady on the bus as Mohsen Mahdibaf, the celebrated real-life filmmaker [The Peddler, The Cyclist]. Under the pretense of working on a new film and looking for interesting locations, Ali-Mohsen enters the life of this woman's family. Through a series of moving tragicomic events, the father of the family, who has been suspicious of the young man's identity from the beginning, starts investigating. Within a few days, the impostor is exposed and arrested. At this point, filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami and his real crew enter the story to film Ali Sabizan's trial. In this second part of the film, events leading up to the young man's arrest are reconstructed, with the real protagonists of the case playing themselves. Kiarostami's use of this structural documentary device adds a revealing and witty perspective to the proceedings, while allowing him to explore the nature of truth and reality and the extent to which adults and children alike exist in a perpetual state of naivete.

Nasjional, Jakarta
15th Toronto Festival of Festivals, 1990

CLOSE-UP

La Fracture du Myocarde
Jacques Fansten
France, 1990, 100 minutes, color
Young Martin hasn't been himself for a couple of days, and friends in his fifth grade provincial school class take immediate notice. Since he refuses to speak about it, they follow him home and discover that his working mother has passed away and the fatherless boy is petrified of being seen as an orphan. "I hear there are some good ones in America," somebody offers helpfully. The group is sympathetic to his plight, and they agree to help maintain the illusion that Martin's mother is still alive. Thus begins one of the most remarkable films about death in recent memory, a quietly powerful yet oddly charming work that shows just how strong friendships can be in the face of adversity. Given the difficulty of keeping up the masquerade facade for almost two full hours, you are astonished at how delicately director Jacques Fansten has navigated these difficult waters: never in the course of the film are the circumstances played for cheap laughs, and never do the exemplary ensemble cast of children strike anything less than a perfect balance of dignity and humor.

Fansten's hitbitterest insight is clear from the title, which is what one of Martin's friends diagnoses Martin's mother as having died from and is an ironic commentary on both commitment and a sense of loss. Easily one of the best films with and about children since François Truffaut's The Four Hundred Blows, Cross My Heart unerringly captures the sense of wonder they bring to a world full of grown-ups and grown-up issues.

Eddie Cockrell

DECEMBER BRIDE

Thadeus O'Sullivan
Ireland, 1990, 90 minutes, color
If you've followed the struggles of the Irish film industry over the last few years, you know that a name that surfaces again and again when the world's best cinematographers are discussed is Thaddeus O'Sullivan. Director of photography for such distinctive films as Rosencrantz on the Black Hill, Traveller, and Ladder of Sacraments (the latter two have been seen locally at the AFI's annual European Community Festival), O'Sullivan has also directed the feature-length experimental film On a Faring Stone Mounted and the remarkable dramatic short The Woman Who Married Clark Gable (starring Bob Hoskins).

One of the most eagerly awaited new Irish films, December Bride is the moving tale of a domestic at the turn of the century who becomes involved with two brothers following the death of the family patriarch. Bucking the overwhelmingly conservative Protestant atmosphere of their small town in Northern Ireland, the three live together in an enigmatic magic-ritual for almost two decades until her daughter by one of the men demands that she marry. A shrewd examination of Irish ways, December Bride is greatly enhanced by the enthralling performance of English stage actress Saskia Reeves as a woman determined to live her own life her own way.

Eddie Cockrell

Production Company: Little Red Productions, Executive Producer: James Mitchell, Producer: Jonathan Connolly, Screenplay: Roddie Rubert, from the novel by Sarah Beneting, Cinematography: Bruno de Keyzer, Editor: Roddie Rubert, Music: Jorgen Young, Principal Cast: David McCormick, Saskia Reeves, Carmen Heane, Patrick Mahon, Brenda Brause, Brian, Screenwriter: Film Four International, 60 Cheapside Street, London W1F 3DQ, United Kingdom, Telephone: 071 631 6444 Fax: 071 898 2022, Label: SRGII.

Fri., May 3, 8:45 pm, Glasgow Odense Jennifer, AABN/DB
Fri., May 10, 6:30 pm, Glasgow Odense Jennifer, AABN/DZ

No film information provided for these events.
The Dove’s Lost Necklace

Le collier perdu de la colombe

Nacer Khemir
France/Tunisia, 1990, 90 minutes, color

Hasan’s greatest desire is to know what love is. He studies poetry at the mosque and learns the art of calligraphy from his master, but he is more interested in the master’s youngest daughter whom he secretly observes in the courtyard garden. He enlists the aid of 8-year-old Zin, a messenger for young lovers in the city who is purported to be the son of a jinn, but Zin is more fascinated by a monkey he thinks is a prince. A fragment of a rare, partly burnt manuscript of a love poem falls into Hasan’s hands, and he has no peace until he finds the original work—even though he knows that some sort of curse lies over the book. These are the ingredients that make up Nacer Khemir’s The Dove’s Lost Necklace, a delightful Tunisian fairy tale that looks like it is straight out of “1001 Nights.” This is no accident: Khemir appeared at the Théâtre National de Chaillot in 1982 reciting tales from the Arabian Nights before making his first film, Les balifouers du désert (1984), which was also inspired by the famous folk tales. That film won the Grand Prize at the Festival des Trois Continents in Nantes and again at Venice, which no doubt helped to inspire the well-known producer Tarek Ben Ammar to finance The Dove’s Lost Necklace, a technically excellent production.

Stephen Locke
41st Berlin International Film Festival

In French with English subtitles

Production Company: RFT (France/Tunisia), Complaise Sàrl, France 3, Radio France 3
Cinematography: Georges Bokaty
Editor: Xavier Turati
Production design: Jean-Claude Debout
Costume design: Ines Hani
Sound: Jean-Claude Debout, Marceau Debost
Musical score: Jean-Claude Debout

Droop by drop the sweat rolls off the backs of workers who spend their lives and energy building other people’s houses. Drop by drop the jar fills up until, as everyone knows, it overflows. This stickering parable about Algeria’s housing shortage, produced by the state-run television in the early 1980s, was censored until its 1989 release yet retains its actuality and power.

Mirem Rusen

In Arabic and English translation


U.S. Premiere
Sun., May 5, 3:30 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

The DROP

In Arabic with English subtitles


U.S. Premiere
Sun., May 5, 3:30 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

THE DROP

Shown with Maghreb Panel II: Historic, Economic and Social Realities in the production of Maghreb Cinema.

Desert Rose is inspired by the life of Bouabaker Belarussi, who plays the role of Moussa. However, unlike his fictional counterpart, Belarussi completed his education and has gone on to law school. Thus, Benhadj insists, the story of Belarussi is really only a point of departure: The desert rose, he explains, “is a symbol of Algeria, of the Third World in general, formed by rigid beliefs and isolation, but now having to redefine itself as all the alibis on which its place in the world has so far depended—ed out above—all begins to fall away.”

In Arabic and English subtitles


Desert Rose

Mohamed Rachid Benhadj
Algeria, 1989, 90 minutes, color

“I am the dialect of the region where Desert Rose was filmed,” explains director Mohamed Rachid Benhadj, “the word is formed entirely from the natural elements of the desert—wind, sand, and humidity. It is not a plant, but a crystal, and it takes centuries to form. In that sense it is like the people of the region.”

In his feature-length film, the character that Benhadj places at the center of his setting, his story, and his allegorical intentions is a young man named Moussa, who, like the other inhabitants of his sleepy oasis town in southern Algeria, craves love, community, and escape from the monotony of daily life. But unlike them, Moussa is physically handicapped—armless, hunchbacked, and lame. Even so, he is shown not as a victim but as a fighter, and the real handicaps he has to overcome are much the same as those that confront the other oasis-dwellers: The weight of tradition, the illusion of modernity, and the fear of assuming responsibility.

A DOOR TO THE SKY

Bob sama’i maftouh

Farida Ben Layzid
Morocco, 1988, 90 minutes, color

Islam: The word itself is already charged with meaning, and all the more so where women are concerned. But in this intriguing first film, Moroccan director Farida Ben Layzid offers an original vision of what a woman’s Islam might be.

Like a modern-day mystical tale, A Door to the Sky traces what is, in effect, the enlightenment of a young, westernized Moroccan woman caught between an alien modernity and patriarchal tradition. Returning from France after the death of her father, Nadia encounters a woman from who introduces her to the mystical path. After a bitter inheritance struggle with her brother, she succeeds in gaining possession of the family home and turns it into a Sufi hospice for women. Through the return to this “other” Islam, she finds community, identity, and love.

For Ben Layzid (co-screenwriter of Mohamed Talal’s Badis, also screened at this year’s Filmfest), A Door to the Sky is “above all, the expression of this double culture that, in one way or another, confronts everyone in our era, that represents a whole generation in the process of change.” Born in what was then the international city of Tangiers, she herself went to Paris to study filmmaking, and since such diverse cinematic mentors as Ozu, Kurosawa, Yasujiro Ozu, and Helma Sanders-Brahms. She first gained recognition in the Moroccan film community as the scenarist of Jilali Ferhat’s Rend Dolli (1981), which she adapted from her own short story about a young widow.

More recently, she co-screened Mohamed Abderrahmane Talal’s Badis (1989), and is now preparing her second feature.

Mirem Rusen

In Arabic and French with English subtitles


Mon., May 6, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, AFI/FK/Sat., May 11, 6:00 pm, AMC Union Station 9, AAMC/DY

THE EAR

Udo

Karel Kachyna
Czechoslovakia, 1969 (released 1990), 93 minutes, black and white

“Trut, But Verity” went a Communist slogan, and there is no better illustration of that warped...
HALFAOUINE—CHILD OF THE TERRACES

Asfour al-Stah Halfaouine— L’enfant des Terrasses

Faciule Boughred
Tunisia/France, 1990, 90 minutes, color

Through this child’s-eye view of Halfaouine, the working-class neighborhood of old Tunis where he grew up, Boughred provides an amusing and touching—but unsentimental—understanding of coming of age in Arab society.

Tweleve-year-old Noura (played by the director’s nephew, Selim Boughred) is growing up quickly, although not yet growing tall, amid Halfaouine’s sometimes protective, sometimes enticing jumble of narrow streets, cul-de-sacs, and courtyards. To compensate for the indignity of his small size, Noura is allowed to accompany his mother to the Hammam—the women’s baths—long after the sight of the unclothed women has been forbidden to other boys. But Noura’s awareness of the female form is no longer childish, and so he must leave the voyeuristic pleasures of the hammam for the more complicated, hypocritical world of men.

“As a time when clichés about the Arab world seem to me to be more arbitrary than ever,” comments Boughred, “I like the idea of going beyond received wisdom to talk about an exuberant and losing Mediterranean society, where there is always a place for humor and eroticism, and tolerance as well…”

Since its premiere at the Directors Fortnight in Cannes last year, Halfaouine has been showered with public and critical acclaim: After drawing more than 100,000 viewers in Paris, it broke all box-office records in Tunisia, and won festival prizes at Valencia, Bastia, and Carthage.

About Halfaouine, Boughred says: “My ambition is to make a film that gives pleasure, emotion, and knowledge to the viewer and that does this through the infinite possibilities of cinema. Yes, the cinema is capable of everything—it can liberate, it can free. It can do the impossible, including allowing me to relive these moments from my childhood…”

Miriam Rosen
In Arabic with English subtitles

Production Company: Fasilek Films, Badel/Scalier Films (Paris)/La 399 (Paris); Screenplay: Driss Boughred; Adaptation: Morce (Jean-Guerric, Jean Boudet, Bouheran: Sussa Adult, Cinematography: Georges Vanssay, Editor: Reinhard Tuff; Music: Assam Brothers, Principal Cast: Selim Boughred, Noura Mach, Kabir Badallah, Mohamed Dibi, Haima Cottares, Film Sources: Scalier Films, 50 Boulevard Montparnasse, 75015 Paris, France, Television: 230 (1) 45 48 18 16 Fax: 230 (1) 45 48 19 56

THURS., MAY 2, 6:30 p.m., Key Film & director reception 5:10 (ticket) XTRA/H7
SAT., MAY 4, 5:30 p.m., PDC Auditorium, AUDA/H7
A meet-the-producer reception, hosted by the Arab American Cultural Foundation, will take place at the AAF Gallery, 1204 31st Street, NW, following the May 2nd screening.

HANGIN’ WITH THE HOMEBOYS

Joseph B. Vasquez
USA, 1991, 88 minutes, color

Fridays night is hang-out night in the South Bronx, and on this particular August afternoon the perpetually unemployed Willie (Doug E. Doug) is gathering his pals for a night on the town. There’s Fernando (Nostro), a clawless, loochoing Lohranthor who dreams of being Italian instead of Puerto Rican, and thus insists that everybody call him Vinnie; Johnny (John Leguizamo), a moody and meek supermarket clerk whose thoughts turn often to doom and gloom; and Tom (Marco Jover), an aspiring actor who likes to perform “Ghetto Theater” in the subway and is one of the only ones of a car.

Mean Streets without the angst-ridden agenda and Diner without a fixed table, Hangin’ with the Homeboys is one of those rare and magical coming-of-age movies in which everything gets: The script is sold as a rock, the four leads use that foundation to bounce off of each other with undiagnosed improvisational glee, and writer-director Joseph B. Vasquez—who based the boys on his childhood pals—has instructed his Romanian-born director of photography, Angel DeCeco, to keep the camera swirling around in the action in a giddy,没心没肺. Last you ladies feel short-changed, Mary B. Ward has a show-stopping turn in the later reels as an assueme free spirit who turns Johnny’s life around. Lurking just beneath the surface of this urban joyride is wry commentary on preconceptions and ambition: Each of these men is, in an effort to be something else, lose sight of the value of who they are. Vasquez, only the independently-produced Bronco War to his credit, has arrived in style: Hangin’ with the Homeboys is one from the urban heart.

Eddie Cockrell
In Cred with English subtitles

Production Company: Jena Fox Inc., Screenplay: Joseph B. Vasquez; Cinematography: Angel DeCeco; Editor: Michael Schutzler; Principal Cast: Doug E. Doug, Manu Gaviria, John Leguizamo, Marco Jover; Print Source: New Line Cinema, 257 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10010; Telephone: (212) 239-8800; Fax: (212) 239-9314

SUN., MAY 5, 9:35 p.m., American Film Institute, AA/F/H9

THE HECK WITH HOLLYWOOD

Doug Block
USA, 1990, 57 minutes, color

Followed by a panel discussion including director Doug Block and distributor Fran Spelman (Circle Releasing)

As a 1987, 166 films were screened at the Independent Film Market. Only a handful achieved theatrical release. According to John Pierson, a leading producer’s representative (She’s Gotta Have It, Roger and Me), only about one in ten independent films break even and only one in a hundred achieve some kind of breakaway success. The Spike Lees and Steven Soderbergs are the rare exceptions. Yet, despite the statistics, more and more movies are made on spec every year. Who would sell a house, quit a steady job, or plunge the savings of a lifetime to follow the dream of making a movie?

A movie that might never be seen by anyone. The Heck With Hollywood! explores the lure and fascination of films for three people who risk everything to make one of their own. Jennifer Fox (Brecht: The Last Home Movie), Ted Lichtenheld (Personal Fool), and Gerry Cook (Only a Buck) are talented first-timers who used Bonnie and Clyde daring to get their movies made, sold, and seen. Heck chronicles the high personal struggles of its main characters over a four-year period, with the audience along for their promotions and other poignant adventures and misadventures in the movie business.

“The Heck With Hollywood! is, on the surface, the story of these filmmakers and their extraordinary efforts to make and sell their first features. As such, it’s a story of grit, passion, and resilience,” comments Doug Block. “On a deeper level, Heck is about an attitude, a quality of character, that compels certain people to go for broke, damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead. Why do some people live life without a safety net while most of us live with excuses and regrets?”

The Heck With Hollywood!, itself the work of a first-time director, is a hitwise/serial chronicle of the realities of independent movie-making, about struggling art and commerce while chasing dreams.

It features Ted Lichtenheld, Jennifer Fox, Gerry Cook, Charlie Schmidt, Don Moulton, Barbara Simon, Fran Spelman, Jerry Silva, Irwin Young, Stefan Desol, Sam Kint, Janet Grillo, Linda Jastuz, Jonathan Duna, Ben Barenboim, Michael Spielberg, and Derek Hill.

Producer: Doug Block, in association with WGBH, Boston. Associate Producers: Margaret Brown, Sazerd Girard. Writers: Doug Block, Debbie Kraemer. Cinematography: Doug Block; Editor: Independence, Consulting Editor: Donna Harris; Sound: Jody Key, Bill Holy, Original Music: James River, Dick Saldinger, Print Source: Hallelujah!, 704 399, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10019; Telephone: (212) 777-0310; Fax: (212) 777-0301

SAT., MAY 11, 6:30 p.m., American Film Institute, AA/F/H9
I'M SITTING ON A BRANCH AND I FEEL HAPPY

Sedim na konari a je mi dobre
Juraj Jakubisko
Czechoslovakia, 1989, 108 minutes, color

One of the unsung geniuses of Slovak cinema, Juraj Jakubisko began a promising filmmaking career in the mid-1960s, only to fall victim to a brutal censorship that silenced his unique voice virtually throughout the subsequent decade. His film since returning to feature filmmaking, Branch, continues Jakubisko’s preoccupation with history as curiosity and was one of the most talked about films in the competition section of the 1989 Venice festival. (The film also was Czechoslovakia’s official entry in the European Oscar race.) Popular actor-mime Boleslav Polačka and Ondrej Palko star as a circus performer recently released from a concentration camp and a soldier returned from Italy, who partake of a fortune found in a bicycle into a prosperous baking business in a small-town villa. Their sometimes comic, sometimes poignant adventures are enriched by Jakubisko’s fertile imagination, which is capable at any moment of presenting eras of American gunslingers falling from the sky, flying angels, leaves of bread in the shape of Joe Stalin’s head, and a young girl dressed up as Spatnik (complete with sparklers on her head). Polačka’s performance is genuinely appealing, and stage actress Beata Borovičová (Jakubisko’s wife) is memorable as the comically vengeful Party boss who has our heroes thrown into prison.

Edzie Crockell
in Slovak with English subtitles

Production Companies: Slovensko Filmové Trziste/Tatofilm
Thurs., May 9, 8:30 pm, American Film Institute, AAIF/SL

IDENTITY CRISIS

Melvin Van Peebles
USA, 1999, 90 minutes, color

On a certain day, at a certain moment, in New York city, a white fashion designer dies suddenly of poisoning and a black rapper falls from a ledge. When Chilly D (Mario Van Peebles), the rapper, awakens, his body is being occupied by the spirit of Yves Malmaison (Richard Chaves) the fashion designer. The resulting fast-paced comedy is the bloodbath of Identity Crisis, a recent film by legendary black independent filmmaker Melvin Van Peebles and his actor-director son Mario.

Malmaison and his son, Sebastian (Ilan Mitchell-Smith), try to avenge Malmaison’s murder and block a take-over of the House of Malmaison while having to contend with the inconstant personality of Chilly D’s own personality and each time the rapper inadvertently hits his head. This identity tug-of-war is slightly complicated by Malmaison’s penchant for gay bars and the like and Chilly D’s inclination more toward women’s mud wrestling.

Muset, Bernadette Peters as Marie d’Agoult, mistress to composer Franz Liszt, and Julian Sands as Liszt himself.

Despite its period setting, Identity Crisis often has the feel of a modern romance: Sand is portrayed as an outspoken, successful woman criticized for refusing to conform to typical behavior or dress. She is the unabashed agnostic in pursuit of a very subdued man, much to the chagrin of the public, and even her own friends. And as both a man and a devoted artist, Chopin has great doubts about losing a well-known woman with a “reputation” who he often finds overhearing and rude. “What attracted me to this,” said Lapine, “is that it’s a wonderful story which is entertaining and sexy, deeply romantic, and highly amusing—all at the same time.” —Impromptu was premiered earlier this year by The Smithsonisn Resident Associate Program.

Special thanks to Gomexl Odeon Theatres.

Thurs., May 9, 6:30 pm, Gomexl Odeon Jerusalem, AAI/IM

INVENTORY

Stan posiadania
Krystof Zanussi
Poland, 1989, 115 minutes, color

A film of stunning emotional power, Inventory is at once a return to the claustrophobic intimacy of Zanussi’s early masterpieces and an unflinchingly honest and bleak allegory of contemporary Polish society. Former censor Julia (Krystyna Janda, winner of last year’s Best Actress award at Cannes for the previously banned Interrigation) is on the verge of a nervous breakdown. She is befriended by the geography student Tomek, a much younger man who takes pity on her plight. When she loses her apartment, Tomek realizes that he loves her and so brings her to live in the small flat he shares with his mother (Maja Bommeswrogska). In quick succession, Julia’s mental state continues to decline, Tomek’s mother becomes increasingly hostile towards her, and Tomek must leave for Berlin to earn hard currency. Virtually a three-character drama, Inventory assesses the current quality of life in Poland and finds it wanting indeed. Zanussi’s achievement is to present this tragedy with a very human face, as three people who are trying to keep their heads above the water of dignity are slowly crushed by the merciless weight of the troubles that arise when personal needs meet practical realities in an uncertain society.

Edzie Crockell
in Polish with English subtitles

Fri., May 10, 8:45 pm, American Film Institute, AAIF/IN
Sat., May 11, 3:00 pm, American Film Institute, AAI/I2
THE KILL-OFF
Maggie Greenwald
USA, 1989, 92 minutes, color

This gleefully gruesome adaptation of Jim Thompson’s novel can hold its own in the rafted company of Stephen Frears’ The Grifters.
In a faded resort town somewhere on the New Jersey shore, the telephone is the weapon of choice for Luane, a self-proclaimed invalid whose idea of a good time is to track out and hurt someone with malicious glee. She is aided and abetted for a time by her dim-witted husband Ralph, a significantly younger man who cooks her eggs every morning, seduces drunken teenage girls most evenings, and gives full reports to his intended wife. Ralph goes to work for Pete, owner of the local dive, after Pete fires Bobbie for stealing drugs out of the basement and fooling around with his panting daughter Myra. Luane starts a few choice rumors about Bobbie at about the time Danny Lee comes to strip for Pete and fails for Ralph—setting in motion a chain of events that end rather badly for all concerned.

Welcome to the bleak, convoluted world of Thompson, whose novel has been brilliantly reconstructed and interpreted by filmmaker Maggie Greenwald (who cut her teeth assisting Walter Hill on Streets of Fire and Crossroads). This astonishingly assured second feature—one of the best independently produced contemporary examples of film noir in quite some time—sports a brilliant cast of unknowns and the evoke meniscus cinematography of promising young Irish cinematographer Declan Quinn. The Kill-Off premiered previously at the AFII.

Klaudia Codrell

Production Company: Filmworld International Productions, Executive Producers: Alexander W. Rogers, Jr., Barry Sake

Screws, May 7, 9:30 pm, Checkels Divorces and Affairs, AMB/KO
Sat., May 7, 8:00 pm, American Film Institute, AMC/KZ

THE KILLER
Die xe vang xiong
John Woo
Hong Kong, 1989, 110 minutes, color

John Woo’s hyperkinetic action classic is an extraordinary mixture of balletic, brilliantly-orchestrated mayhem (a la Peckinpah). Sicilian melodrama, and code-of-honor mythology torn from the gangster/cowboy ethos of Sergio Leone. John Hoberman of The Village Voice called it “one of the Ten Best Films of the Year”; Kevin Thomas of the LA Times called it “highly addictive, go-for-broke cinema,” with the “carnage of ‘The Wild Bunch’ and the kinetic fury of ‘The French Connection’.” Woo has told interviewers that he intended the film as an homage to, among others, Martin Scorcese (a debt most obvious in the climactic siege on the church, complete with fluttering white doves and an exploding Madonna.) But the real beneficiary of this celluloid valentine is the moviegoing public. “The Killer” is a deliciously exciting, over-the-top, outrageous film experience.

George Palomares
In Chinese with English subtitles


Sat., May 6, 9:15 pm, UDC Auditorium, AUDIA/KT

LATINO BAR
Paul Leduc
Spain, 1991, 80 minutes, color

With Frida (1985) and Barocco (1989), Mexican-born director Paul Leduc has begun a unique cinematic experiment: visually sumptuous and aurally complex, these films tell their stories with absolutely no dialogue—gracefully yet relentlessly cooing mythical shards of meaning out of each movement of the restless camera and the smallest gesture of the otherwise mute principals. This bold form of storytelling has reached its steamy apogee with Latino Bar, an absorbing tale of passion among the lower class in an unnamed waterfront dive. Leduc’s stylistic gamble succeeds primarily on the strength of the exceedingly sexy Maracaba, Venezuela, location and the lazily lurching, loping performances of Dolores Pedro as the distant bar girl who allows herself to become slowly embroiled in an affair with one of the joint’s more attractive regulars (Roberto Soza, who was also in Barocco). A student of architecture and theater as well as director of numerous documentaries on ethnographic and historical issues relating to Latin America, Leduc proves with Latino Bar that he is not only one of the most important Mexican directors currently at work, but the Mexican cinema’s leading poetic visionary as well.

Edith Codrell


U.S. Program: Wed., May 6, 7:30 pm, UDC Auditorium, AUDIA/LB
Wed., May 6, 8:30 pm, AMC Union Station 9, AAMC/LZ

LOVE WITHOUT PITY
Eric Rochant
France, 1990, 84 minutes, color

Set in an utterly contemporary Paris, Love Without Pity tells the story of ‘Hippolyte’ (Girardot), a perpetual drop-out whose sole interest is sleeping late, chain smoking, and prowling the streets of Paris in search of new girlfriends. Given his limited goals, he succeeds admirably, amassing a vast array of female companions and getting by on his considerable charm. Then, one day, he meets “Nathalie” (Pierret), a brassy and beautiful individual who is as focussed as he is flighty, and who collects graduate degrees the way Hippo collects parking tickets. Inevitably, the two fall in love.

In a freewheeling, lyrical style that recaptures the fervor of the French New Wave, Rochant beautifully evokes the touching, tentative stabs at romance in this endearing and somewhat naive pair—a human case than the ultimate go-getter and the quintessential go-nowhere. Dealing with the timeless question of freedom versus commitment, and restlessness versus responsibility, Rochant flintly translates the age-old conflict between man and woman into the language of today.

Winner of two Césars (the French Oscar), including the prize for “Best First Film,” Love Without Pity has also won the prestigious Prix Louis Delluc and the Critics Prize for “Best First Film” at the Venice Film Festival, among other European accolades. It also establishes 29-year-old newcomer Rochant as a prodigiously gifted filmmaker who is already making his mark with a truly original film.

In French with English subtitles


Fri., May 3, 6:30 pm, AMC Union Station 9, AAMC/LP
A TRIBUTE TO 
THE NICHOLAS BROTHERS 

The two greatest whirling dervishes of jazz dancing, certainly one of the most beloved dance teams in the history of entertainment, are Fayard and Harold Nicholas—the famous Nicholas Brothers. When social historians talk about “flash acts” in the history of jazz dance, their name always springs into the conversation. The Nicholas Brothers exemplify dedication to the world of entertainment. They are timeless exponents of American dance.

The Nicholas Brothers grew up in Philadelphia, the sons of musicians who played in their own band at the Old Standard Theater. From the age of three, Fayard always watched from the front row while his parents worked, and by the time he was ten, he had seen most of the great Black vaudeville acts, including such notables as Alice Whitman, Willie Bryant, and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. Young Fayard was especially fascinated by these great dancers, and he eagerly imitated their acrobatics and clowning for the kids in his neighborhood. Harold, six years younger, watched and imitated Fayard until he learned to dance, too, then he worked on his own dance ideas as well as his talent for mimicry.

The Nicholas Brothers’ abundant charm and obvious talent made them immediately successful. Word soon spread about their unique dancing abilities. They were hired first by a radio program, the Horn and Hardart Kiddie Hour, then by local theaters, such as the Standard and the Pearl. While they were appearing at the Pearl, the manager of the famous New York vaudeville showcase, the Lafayette, saw them and, overwhelmed by what he had seen, he immediately signed the young performers to come to New York.

The sophisticated Harlem audiences shrieked with delight at the sight of the precocious fourteen-year-old Fayard and eight-year-old Harold, both immaculately turned out in top hat and tails. Their routines, a bit of every sort of dance merged with zest and elegance, won the hearts of everyone in the theater.

After their appearance at the Lafayette, the Nicholas Brothers opened at the Cotton Club in 1932 and equally astounded their white audiences there, as they slipped adroitly into their acrobatic series of spins, twists, flips, and tap dancing to the martial jazz tempo of "Bogey Call Rag." Sometimes, for encore, Harold would sing another song, while Fayard, still dancing, would mockingly conduct the orchestra in comic pantomime.

Harold, an admirable mimic, often incorporated imitations of Cab Calloway and Louis Armstrong into their routines. They stayed at the Cotton Club for two years, working with the celebrated orchestras of Lucky Millinder, Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, and Jimmy Lunceford—and it was during their first year there that the Nicholas Brothers made their first movie short, Pie Pie Blackbird, with Eddie Blake and his band.

From the Cotton Club, they made their first trip to Hollywood in 1934, appearing with Eddie Cantor in Red Skelton, produced by Samuel Goldwyn. Then it was back to the Cotton Club, and again out to Hollywood for another picture. This one, The Big Broadcast of 1936, cast them as a dance team called Dot and Dash, in keeping with an insane plot in which George Burns and Gracie Allen were the inventors of something called "the Radio Eye." Television. Their second short film, Black Network (1936), was made soon after.

The Nicholas Brothers made their Broadway debut in The Ziegfeld Follies of 1935, with such stars as Fannie Brice, Bob Hope, Eve Arden, and Josephine Baker, directed by Vincente Minnelli. Even amidst the lavish scenery and costumes and choreography by George Balanchine—the two dancers stood out with their direct, knockout dancing.

While touring England with a production of Blackbirds, the Nicholas Brothers had the crucial opportunity to see several of the great European ballet companies. Thoroughly impressed, they absorbed many techniques and began to incorporate certain ballet movements into their jazz dance patterns. In a short film that they made in London during this period, Calling All Stars (1937), this addition to their style is especially noticeable and fascinating to see.

The impression that Fayard and Harold Nicholas had made upon Balanchine was so unforgettable that he invited them to appear in the Rodgers and Hart musical, Babies in Arms, in the 1937 Broadway season. This panned to youthful exuberance caused the New York Times theater critic to single out the Nicholas Brothers as "two dancing fools who clutter across the stage with rhythmic frenzy that only the Negroes can conjure out of a Broadway night," which, in translation, means that, once again, the brothers stopped the show each time they came on stage. For themselves, the Nicholas Brothers considered Babies in Arms a high point in their career because it gave them the opportunity to work with Balanchine, the great choreographer and ballet master, and to learn new ballet techniques—in fact, many in their audience already assumed that the Nicholas Brothers were trained ballet dancers.

During the 1940s, they returned to Hollywood to do what would be a long and brilliant association, notably in a succession of marvelous dance sequences in 20th Century Fox musicals. In Down Argentine Way (1940), the Nicholas Brothers worked with dancer-choreographer Nick Castle, who thought up one of their most difficult stunts: He had them take a long run, climb a wall for two steps, then backflip—no hands—into a split, bouncing up from the split on the beat of the music. When audiences saw this miracle, it’s safe to say that they momentarily forgot even that Betty Grable was the star of the picture.

After that notable beginning, the brothers’ energy and creativity on film continued to delight audiences. In The Great American Broadcast (1941), they danced on Invisible cars while the Ink Spots dressed as redcaps, sang “Alabama Bound,” then they leapt through the window of a moving train as the song ended, turning around to wave goodbye. Saw Valley Serenade (1941) featured the Nicholas Brothers and Dorothy Dandridge performing “Chattanooga Choo Choo” on and off the platform of a Pullman car. Orchestra Wives (1942) offered one of their freshest routines, set to Glenn Miller’s music, and Stormy Weather (1943), the famous all-black musical with Bill Robinson, Fats Waller, and Lena Horne, exhibited the Nicholas Brothers in an amazing, leapfrog staircase number. At Columbia Studios, Carolina Blues (1944) had them dancing and swinging out with singer June Richmond in “Mister Boogie.”

Then, in 1948, they were reunited with director Vincente Minnelli at MGM in The Pirate, a breathtakingly exciting acrobatic dance with Gene Kelly.

During the 1940s, the Nicholas Brothers also continued on the nightclub and concert circuit, and there were long tours of South America, Africa, and Europe. In 1946, the Broadway musical St. Louis Woman (directed by Bronson Lonam) gave Harold Nicholas a chance to expand his career to acting. As Little Augie, a carefree jockey of the 1890s, he exhibited a flair for insouciant heriocis. Fayard was around for dancing to the Harold Arlen score, too, but somehow the show never caught fire—except for them and a young singer named Pearl Bailey.

Their talents are enduring, and the Nicholas Brothers, now residents of California, continue to be involved in show business. In the 1960s, they played Las Vegas, made many television appearances, and entertained U.S. troops overseas. In 1975, they participated in the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame’s posthumous tribute to Duke Ellington.

In 1976, the Nicholas Brothers were themselves inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, and thereafter launched a continuously active career again. They appeared in MGM’s 1984 compilation film, That’s Dancing, after a memorable appearance on the Academy Awards show. Other appearances include the BBC television program, The Cotton Club Comes To The Ritz, the Apollo Theater’s Hall of Fame, a two-day tribute at the Film Forum in New York, and a Time-Life Achievement Award show for ABC-TV. Harold Nicholas also appeared in the motion picture Tap, with Sammy Davis, Jr., and other famous tap-dancers of the past and present, including Gregory Hines. The 1988-90 Broadway season was heightened by Fayard Nicholas’ choreography in the revue Black and Blue, for which he won a Tony Award. An all-star extravaganza at the London Palladium in 1989 was soon followed by their appearance at the tribute to their career at the National Film Theatre, London.

Most recently, they were acclaimed at the International Dance Festival in Lyons, France, opening the eyes of a new European audience and evoking still more rounds of cheers. The magic is still there, in every movement, as it always will be—the Nicholas Brothers really are the greatest flash of ad for them all.

Albert Johnson
University of California, Berkeley

Sponsored by the Office of Public Service, Smithsonian Institution and Superior Beverage
MARGARIT AND MARGARITA
Margaret I Margaretta
Nikolai Volev
Bulgaria, 1989, 90 minutes, color

Completed only a year before the reforms that ousted the old regime in Bulgaria, Margarit and Margarita has been garnering splendid notices at festivals around the world. Two young lovers in trouble at home and at school, Margarit and Margarita finally find freedom from constraints of teachers and parents by moving in together, but quickly realize that their newfound liberty is not as easy to deal with as they might have thought. As the problems of the real world they now have to face filter in, the couple endure a series of dead-end jobs until Margarita gets a brief glimpse of hope after meeting the director of a dance company. The classic eternal triangle ensues with the usual complex outcome prevailing. Selected in the Director’s Fortnight section at Cannes last year, director Nikolai Volev, a graduate of the London Film School, won an award at the 1986 Karlovy Vary Film Festival for his last feature, All For Love.

Blair Downey
34th London Film Festival, 1991

in Bulgarian with English subtitles


Mon., May 3, 8:30 pm, AMC Union Station 9, A/NJ/NJ
Mon., May 6, 6:30 pm, AMC Union Station 9, A/NJ/NJ

NO, OR THE VAIN GLORY OF COMMAND
Nao ou a vá gloria de mandar
Manuel de Oliveira
Portugal, 1990, 100 minutes, color

A

aimers of Manuel de Oliveira will be pleased to learn that his most expensive picture to date is as quirky and perverse as ever. Dr Oliveira has summed it up as follows: “Using the last Portuguese colonial war, a contemporary war, as backdrop, the film is narrated by a lieutenant to his soldier companions during a patrol in the African bush. It depicts the epic story of his country, an epic built on crushing defeats. His account begins with the dawn of the Iron Age in 500 B.C. and ends on the day of the Portuguese revolution, April 25, 1975. After that, a change occurred in people’s mentality. This gave me the idea of describing the way in which everything completely changed direction.” During the narrator’s long discourse, we cut to visualizations of various key moments in Portuguese history, like the battle against the Moors or Vasco da Gama’s voyages—thus allowing de Oliveira to stage quite large battles or home in on some small event, often joyful or sad. The final sequence is notably well-staged. Else Roque’s magnificent color camera produces many startling and beautiful images.

John Gillett
34th London Film Festival, 1990

in Portuguese with English subtitles


Sat., May 11, 4:00 pm, Cinplex Ocean Jenner, A/NJ/NJ

THE NOUBA OF THE WOMEN OF MOUNT CHENOUA
La Nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua
Assia Djebar
Algeria, 1978, 110 minutes, color

“T

speak, I speak, I speak,” are the first words of this first woman’s film from North Africa. The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua is both fiction and documentary. It combines a dramatic narrative about a young Algerian architect returning to her village 15 years after independence from France, with the testimonials of aging village women from the filmmaker’s own region of Mount Chenoua who recall their experiences during the Algerian War of Independence. A meditation on history and memory, the film weaves the women’s speech and their stories into five movements patterned on the Andalusian musical composition called a noudar, which is also the Arabic word for stories of women’s daily life.

Assia Djebar has long been recognized as one of the outstanding French-language writers of North Africa. But it was precisely because of the difficulties of addressing an Algerian public in French that she turned to cinema with The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua. Made for Algerian television in hopes of reaching a wider audience—especially women—the film proved quite controversial, because of its experimental form as well as its women’s focus, and it was never released commercially in Algeria or abroad. However, through numerous screenings at festivals, conferences, universities, and cinémathèques, it has become a classic of women’s cinema throughout North Africa and Europe.

in Arabic and English subtitles


U.S. Premiere
Sat., May 4, 7:15 pm, LCSC Min. 41, Room A-G, A/JR/AB
Mon., May 6, 8:30 pm, American Film Institute, A/NJ/NJ

OPEN DOORS
Parte aperte
Gianmi Amelio
Italy, 1990, 108 minutes, color

Nominated for this year’s academy Award for best foreign film, Open Doors, set in Fascist Italy in 1937, is about a humanitarian judge presiding over a murder case. Although the defendant is unquestionably guilty, the judge argues that the defendant is mentally deranged so as to prevent a legal ruling of capital punishment. In the judge’s eye this is a man who, embittered and frustrated, was driven to violent action. The film tackles much wider issues than those of the case itself with subtlety and depth. [Director Gianmi] Amelio excels superb performances from [Gian Maria] Volonté as the judge and [Ennio] Fantastichini as the defendant, a young actor with a kind of passion reminiscent of the young Volonté. Amelio has made a film that is in its visual style and psychological depth, stands in the filmmaking tradition that has given us auteurs like Visconti and Bertolucci.

in Italian with English subtitles


Thurs., May 9, 6:45 pm, Cinplex Ocean Jenner, A/JR/OD

John Francis Lave
Screen International

in Italian and English subtitles

OREOS WITH ATTITUDE

Larry Cary
USA, 1990, 30 minutes, color

ANO (Jackie Roberts) and Richard Grayson (Keith Smith) opt for adoption after calculating the high risk of having a dark-skinned baby. In an effort to “promote racial harmony,” they decide to adopt a white child. However, their idea of racial harmony has more to do with country clubs and boardrooms than world peace. Larry Cary’s Oreo with Attitude, an irreverent and outrageous satire, takes the Graysons through the obstacle course of Manhattan’s upper crust and explodes the pretensions of “Buppies,” Black upwardly mobile professionals.

Jocelyn Jones

THE ORIGINS OF FILM

A slide and lecture presentation, “The Origins of Film” illustrates the early history of the moving image, from 11th century Chinese shadow puppets to the birth of Hollywood. The program will begin with the seminal 19th century discoveries of Plateau, Reynaud, Muybridge, and Muyrux that made the invention of movies possible. The innovations of Edison, Lumière, Méliès, Pathé, and Gaumont will also be highlighted in this tribute to the period preceding World War I, which formed the foundations for Hollywood production. Slide-lecture material will be drawn from the collection of the Cinémathèque Française’s museum of film in Paris.

The program also examines Émile Reynaud’s praxinoscope and cartoon projections with his théâtre optique, which attracted a half million spectators in Paris between 1892 and 1900, as well as the Lumière brothers’ invention: the cinématographe (a combination movie camera, contact printer, and projector), the 75mm film projector for the 1900 World’s Fair, photograms (360-degree still photos), and autochromes (the first workable color photography process).

Following the slide-lecture will be the screening of a six-minute, 55mm color print of Reynaud’s Autour d’une cabine (1894) and 15 minutes of 55mm footage taken by Lumière cameramen in 1896 of New York, Chicago, Boston, and Washington, D.C.

“The Origins of Film” will be presented by Glenn Myret, a lecturer at the Musée du Cinéma Henri Langlois, the Cinémathèque Française in Paris. He is co-author of the award-winning biography of film historian and conservator Henri Langlois.

This special program is made possible by a generous grant from the D.C. Community Humanities Council.

Fri., May 10, 7:00 pm, Hirschhorn, FREE

POLONAISE

Leedvermeek

Frans Weisz
The Netherlands, 1989, 90 minutes, color

A kind of Dutch spin on Robert Altman’s A Wedding—but with a more finely-tuned social conscience—Polonaise was adapted by noted Dutch director Frans Weisz and his long-time collaborator Judith Herzberg from the latter’s play, which won the quarterly Charlotte Kohler prize in 1988 and earned praise from that body’s jury as the best Dutch stage work of the postwar period.

A well-to-do Jewish couple is hosting the lavish wedding of their daughter and a doctor of some renown. As the festivities progress, the inevitable occurs: Past liaisons surface, allegiances shift, and the abundance of food and alcohol influence people’s behavior. What isn’t expected also comes to pass, as disturbing links to the Holocaust emerge and some ugly truths are uncovered. Like a bored and restless guest (perhaps a distant relative without an emotional stake in the proceedings), Govert Giltay’s busy, fluid camerawanders throughout the spacious house and grounds, skaking up the drama. Ultimately, however, the success of Polonaise rests with the cast, which is drawn almost exclusively from the prominent Dutch repertory company Toneelgroep Amsterdam.

Elda Cordwell

In Dutch with English subtitles


A meet-the-director reception, hosted by the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the D.C. Jewish Community Center will follow the May 7th screening.

U.S. Premiere
Tues., May 7, 8:30 pm, Clarendon Odeon Whc, Ave. (Film & director reception $10 ticket, ACGW/PO Thurs., May 9, 8:45 pm, Clarendon Odeon Jailor, AINR/72

Co-sponsored by The Royal Netherlands Embassy and the D.C. Jewish Community Center.
Resident Alien

Jonathan Nossiter
USA, 1990, 85 minutes, color

While Quentin Crisp's cameo in Fatal Attraction ended up on the cutting room floor, the experience did serve to bring him together with director Adrian Lyne's assistant Jonathan Nossiter. A Washington native who spent his childhood in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and India, Nossiter knew Crisp's reputation as a gay icon from John Hurt's portrayal of the English expatriate in the British television drama The Naked Civil Servant. When Crisp came to America nearly a decade ago at the age of 53, it was to settle a restlessness within himself: "I was born, of course, an alien," he told Time Out magazine recently. "I left England because I've always been an American in my heart, ever since I saw the movies, and knew that I would find that everyone was beautiful and rich. I came to America because my fare was paid. That's the story of my life. I go where my fare is paid."

Through interviews with the prominent personalities listed below (including fellow emigre Sting, whose song "Englishman in New York" inspired the film's title), Nossiter paints a vivid picture of a man he calls "an ultimate New Yorker, a kind of 'King of the Bohemians.'" Certainly the highlight of the film is a reunion at which Crisp and Hurt watch The Naked Civil Servant a continent and almost a decade removed from its controversial birth.

Eddie Gaddell

Sat., May 11, 8:30 pm, AMC Union Station 9, AAMC/RA

Small Time

Norman Lofits
USA, 1990, 88 minutes, black and white

A few years ago, scholars, politicians, and the media coined the term "the underclass," meaning the part of our society that exists on the margins, often with no visible means of support. More often than not, the underclass is dominated by black men who work outside the system, dealing drugs or hustling streets and women — even women, once they lose their edge, end up on the streets, in jail, or dead. Norman Lofits opens up this world with Small Time, possibly the first film to explore candidly and unsentimentally the life of a petty criminal in today's black ghetto.

Small Time opens with the bare and brutal reality of the life of Vince Williams (Richard Barbour) — poverty. Yet the film immediately establishes Vince's humanity, the one element that is often ignored in other portraits of crime and criminals, and the quality with which

The Wolf people of Senegal, like other ethnic groups in Africa and around the world, imagine a Utopia or El Dorado, a paradise on earth free of the chaos and misery of daily life. The credo of this other place, "Zaaraba," is celebrated in numerous oral narratives and by a famous song performed in this film by two grizzled on the traditional kora and n'jali, and then by a modern band. Amadou Saalim Seck, a young Senegalese director, uses this traditional concept of Zaaraba as a cultural metaphor, simultaneously affirming it, subverting it, and, in the end, transforming it. A pattern of hope and disappointment, belief and cynicism, myth and reality, underlies the quest of each of the characters in the film. Out of this dialectic emerges Zaaraba's particular hope and vision for a future Senegal: He has reinterpreted the traditional concept of Zaaraba for his own time — not as the dream of a Utopian future or an idealized past — but as a reality rooted in the here and now, built out of personal commitment and compassion.

Hiya Chan
In Wolof and French with English subtitles


Fri., May 3, 8:00 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/SA

Sun., May 5, 5:15 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/ST

RasPad/Decay

Mikhail Belkov
USA/Ukraine, 1990, 95 minutes, color and black and white

F ilmed on location at the Chernobyl power plant and the nearby workers' town of Pripyat, this powerful drama about the monstrous nuclear disaster is built around a very human story. Russian journalist Zharudes returns home to Pripyat from an assignment in Greece and soon inspects his wife of having an ongoing affair with a Party official. This personal problem so consumes him that he is blind to the danger signals coming from the reactor. He's not alone — even after he senses that all is not as it should be, his editor is so preoccupied with the irane bicycle race glimpsed on state-run television throughout the film that Zharudes isn't allowed to pursue the story. It is only after an inept evacuation begins that the scale of the tragedy becomes apparent.

A co-production of the Ukraine and two San Francisco-based concerns, RasPad is the newest film by Ukrainian filmmaker Mikhail Belkov, First Secretary of the Ukrainian Filmmakers Union and a People's Deputy to the National Congress of Deputies. It is a unique achievement among the current field of Soviet films.

Eddie Gaddell
In Russian with English subtitles


Sun., May 5, 7:00 pm, American Film Institute, with panel discussion, AAF/RW

Wed., May 8, 8:45 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/RP
THE FIRST ANNUAL ROSEBUD AWARDS

As the Rosebud Awards competition is produced by a new independent group formed to promote local film and video talent. Over two days, more than 34 hours of nominee films and videos will be screened. From local history to the inner struggles of artists and immigrants, new four one new twist on Cinderella, Filmmakers DC audiences will be treated to a view of the diversity of outstanding talent in our community.

Highlights of our program range from black comedies, historical claymation, dramatic themes of friendship and vengeance to portraits of people from Brazil, Czechoslovakia, and surreal subjects from the 19th century—each with a cast of characters as diverse as Tiny Tim, Rooster T. Washington, and a millionaire.

The 1991 competition was open to all film and video works produced or released in the Washington area within the last five years. From 150 entries, 35 were nominated in 7 categories by independent panels of judges. The categories include: Narrative Short, Narrative Feature, Documentary Short, Documentary Feature, Art/Experimental, Music Video, and Animation. Nominations were limited to 5 works per category. The judges chose to give special mention to three additional works that will not be screened.

Rosebud wishes to especially thank its sponsors: Zalman Fishman and the nightclub Fifth Column, who has generously underwritten the entire competition.

A special thanks to all the nominating judges: Pat Aufderheide, Amy Ballard, Jace Blanchard, Ron Bowman, Junior Bridge, Kimberly Camp, Pat Clark, Pat Dowell, Ginny Dunn, Sharon Farmer, Sal Fiorito, Sherman Fleming, Robert Gould, Mark Hall, Jef Hyde, Pamela G. Holt, Pam Jackson, Bebe Jackson, Mike Jecic, Rocky Jones, Kathleen Karr, Tom Brancovic, Tahlia Mohlauer, Andrew Nellen, John Mundenhal, John Moore, William Murphy, Jon Paige, Peggy Parsons, Deno Seider, Kay Shaw, Nick Spetter, Mark Troccoli, Bill Werrell, Kevin Wetherby, and Hank Zangara.

The First Annual Rosebud Awards are presented in conjunction with the 1991 Filmmakers DC Festival.

ROSEBUD: Director, Brian Tate; Co-directors, Jeff Consiglio, Natasha Beutig; Associate Directors, Chris Aldridge, Will Cotton, Patricia Raine, Bovkie Dempsey, Zalman Bishman, Jacque Jones, Jeff Krulik, Robin Lear, Wardell Parker, Alan Rubin, Sara Solna, Minu Tahmassebi, Joyce Walker.

Films have not been listed due to space limitations. Call (202) 797-9981 to receive a list of all film sources or write to: Rosebud, P.O. Box 23890, Washington, DC 20009.

ROSEBUD PROGRAM I
Sat., May 4, 1:00 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/R2

Part One
RELEASE 1.0
Dov Jacobson, 1000. Video, Animation
Less brings freedom.

DON'T DANCE WITH ME
Zaza Pddio, Creative Strategies, 4:00. Music Video
Tiny Tim encounters a battered woman played by "Laugh-tin" veteran Judy Carne. Performing the title song in a surrealistic concert hall filled with women and children. Tiny Tim exhorts victims of domestic violence to escape from their oppressive environments.

CLOWNING AROUND
Martin Barrett, 5:20, Video, Art/Experimental
Two clowns attend a showing of the German art film, The Clown Is Dead. When they laugh at the film's pretensions, an offended clown in the audience retaliates.

EXPOSING HIDDEN WINDOWS
D. Michael Cheers, 29:45, Video, Documentary Short
Exposes the trials, tribulations, and contributions of African-American photographers as they have come through a project entitled, "Souls of My People.

UP FROM SLAVERY
J.A. Dumas and Charles Dumas, Dumas Enterprises, 60:00, Video, Narrative Feature
A biographical play based on the life of Booker T. Washington, famous African-American educator who began life as a slave.

Part Two
BEARING WITNESS: HOMEMADE TAPES FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL FRONT
Karen Hirsch and A.C. Warden, 26:00, Video, Documentary Short
America's Scariest Home Videos: from midnight accidents at chemical plants shot by a Texas housewife to images of dolphins drowned by tuna fishermen shot by an undercover activist, we see people using video in their fight to save the environment.

SONNY AND CORINNE LATT
Kathi Ash and Kerry Gallagaher, 30:00, Video, Narrative Short
When Harry's wife dies, Sonny tries to bide his time. But Harry is far from cooperative, and what ensues is a sensitive, and sometimes, violent story of one man's struggle to convince another that life is precious.

TWO DOLLARS AND A DREAM
Stanley Nelson, 55:16, 16mm, Documentary Feature
The world's first self-made millionaires—a Black woman. Two dollars and a dream.

1 hour, 45 minutes total running time for Part Two

4 hours, 44 minutes total running time—
including break

ROSEBUD PROGRAM II
Sat., May 5, 6:00 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/R2

Part One
STARTING TOMORROW
John Collins, 4:30, Music Video
When attempting to turn over a new leaf, time is not necessarily on your side.

FLYING HORSES
Virginia Leshada, VQ Productions, 6:14, Video, Art/Experimental
Historic carousels are 1-3d mobile art forms combining painting, music, and sculpture. The treatment is both abstract and surreal, creating the wonder of a carousel's gentle ride to nowhere.

SOUTHWEST REMEMBERED: A STORY OF URBAN RENEWAL
Doyle Smith, Lanmont Productions, Inc., 55:00, 16mm, Documentary Feature
Looks at community values and change in a Washington, D.C. neighborhood that was part of the urban renewal that swept the country in the 1950s.

Part Two
ASHPET: AN AMERICAN CINDERELLA
Tom and Mimi Davenport, 45:00, 16mm, Narrative Feature
Set in the rural South in the early years of World War II, this is a humorously touching version of Cinderella, the world's most popular folk tale. The step-family gets its comeuppance, and the independent Ashpet gets her man and the house, too.

1 hour, 51 minutes total running time for Part One

15 MINUTE BREAK

Part Two
STONE COLD HUSTLER II
Jesse E. Vaughn, Jr., 4:30, Music Video
An anti-drug music video to produce for encouragement area youth to stop the violence and drug use in our community.

THE LUNCH CLUB
Mitchell J. Pezer and John F. Beaver, 6:30, 16mm, Documentary Short
A light-hearted look at first graders and their insights about lunch and other subjects.

THE MILLION HEIRS
Pamela Kray, 20:00, 16mm, Narrative Short
Both ice blue and warm sepia tones lend atmosphere to this story of inheritance, legacy, and loss.

THE IMAGEMAKER
Marvin and Hal Weiner, 93:00, 35mm, Narrative Feature
Things aren't what they seem to a politically imagemaker.

2 hours, 5 minutes total running time for Part Two

4 hours, 11 minutes total program running time—
including break

ROSEBUD PROGRAM III
Sun., May 17, 1:00 pm, American Film Institute, AAF/R2

Part One
WHEN INNOCENT IS GUILTY
Olaniyi Akin, 12:00, 16mm, Narrative Short
A surrealistic film about a man convicted of a crime he did not commit.

ANIMATED HISTORY OF ALEXANDRIA
Brian McCall, 14:47, Video, Animation/Documentary Short
A comical and informative history of Alexandria, Va., as told by historians and local Virginians rendered in clay.

FREEDOM BAGS
Stanley Nelson and E.C. Lewis, 35:00, Video,
Documentary Feature
Chronics African-American women who migrated to the Washington, D.C., area to work as domestic servants during the years 1900-1940.

COMING BROTHER WE GO TO AMERICA
Gary Hecht Griffin, 4:00, Video, Documentary Feature
Two generations of artists struggle for freedom of expression, one in communist Czechoslovakia and the other in America.

1 hour, 45 minutes total running time for Part One
15 MINUTE BREAK

Part Two

ARTISTIC INTERRUPTIONS
Andrea Bailey, 4:45, Video, Art/Experimental
An experimental look at a young girl frustrated with her love one's artistic views.

HARD TIME
Steven D. Murphy, 5:15, Music/Video
The original song "Hard Time" performed by the band Bruno Loves Danger.

WALK IN
Jim Lante, 5:22, Video, Art/Experimental
A story of responsibility, deception, and the chaos that hovers at the edge of order. Blending style and suspense to create a story about a double murder that forced the closing of an elementary school in rural Virginia.

BLOODY MAGNUS
Brian Armstrong and Walt O'Hara, 6:00, Video, Narrative Feature
The murderous leader of a group of blood-sucking zombies sets out to avenge the death of her lover whose head she carries around in a box.

1 hour 43 minutes total running time for Part Two
3 hours, 45 minutes total program running time—
including break

ROSEBUD PROGRAM IV
Sun., May 17, 6:00 pm, American Film Institute, ABFI/DC
Part One

RISE BLACKMAKIN RISE
Steve Harris and Jimmy Gasior, Jr., 5:39, Music/Video
Howard University's Defiant Giants perform the title song in D.C. and Japan. Intercut with TV images on issues of African-American struggles and successes.

EVERYDAY
Sean Yates, 8:40, Video, Narrative Short
Semi-autobiographical examination of defiling oneself through a job, the effects of the city, and people's sheep-like behavior.

THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD
Paul Rosher, 15:00, Video, Art/Experimental
Clips from the Marx Brothers' Duck Soup, juxtaposed with scenes from the White House during December, 1990.

SUZIE REDHAM (OUT OF TUNE)
Ms. Suwita Redhamallesh Vaidyanathan, 21:00, Video, Narrative Short
Chronicles the inner conflicts of a young Asian Indian man in America who struggles to determine his own values despite the pressures of the American lifestyle.

ETERNAL BLESSING
Sara L. Cashing, 4:30, 16mm, Animation
Magic carpets, a mystical adobe house, and a solitary red "hii" paint this story of exchangings old dreams for new.

ASYLEUM
Sarah Mondale and Sarah Pattison, Stone Lantern Films, 5:34, 16mm, Documentary Feature
The story of society's struggle to find a humane and effective means of caring for the mentally ill. Features rare archival footage and interviews from St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C.

1 hour, 49 minutes total running time for Part One
15 MINUTE BREAK

Part Two

BLACK WATER
Charlotte Gerf and Allen Moore, 28:00, 16mm, Documentary Short
For generations the people of Sao Bráz, a traditional fishing village in Brazil, lived and worked in harmony with the environment until pollution from a nearby paper mill threatened their way of life.

OF FLESH AND BLOOD
Jeff Meniges, 90:00, 16mm, Narrative Feature
A story of extremes that takes a cynical venture into the rating underbelly of society, focusing on three groups of desperate characters. The backast of the comedies with the feel of the exploitation films of the '50s and '60s.

1 hour, 58 minutes total running time for Part Two
4 hours, 2 minutes total program running time—
including break

Special Mensiones are: Life Seeds by C. Monique Berry, Narrative Short; The Silver Needle by Rebecca
Crombie, Salon Productions, Documentary Short; and Children of Fire by Joan V. Chambers, Documentary Feature.

STEP ACROSS THE BORDER
Nicholas Humbert, Werner Penzel
Federal Republic of Germany/Switzerland, 1990, 90 minutes, black and white

A
n American critic once wrote that the music of Fred Frith "makes your jaw drop, your feet dance, and your neighbors shudder." This astonishingly indescribable music is captured in this "celluloid improvisation" by German filmmakers Nicholas Humbert and Werner Penzel (both graduates of the Munich Film School). From Zurich to London to Leipzig to Tokyo to New York, the filmmakers are there as Frith and his international gagggle of fellow musicians and hangers-on capture the musical moment—including a memorable scene in which Frith plays his guitar over a kitchen sink: At the 15th Toronto Festival of Festivals in 1990, Dimitri Epsilides noted, "The film embraces Frith's music so completely that it becomes indistinguishable from its visual counterpart. The exquisite black and white photography is so suited to the subject that there are moments when the soundtrack stops and the images continue a mute melody of visual rhythms all on their own."

In English and German with subtitles


Set., May 17, 11:00 pm, Biography, ABIO/5X

TATIE DANIELLE
Etiene Chartiez, France, 1990, 113 minutes, color

North American audiences who swoon over Miss Daisy and her driver, or chuckle lovingly over those wonderful old folks in Cocoon, will be chewed up and spit out by dear Tatie Danielle. She's in her "golden years" (impecably played by 71-year-old stage actress Trilla Chehon), and she's really very sweet looking, but she's also one mean old bitch. And that is the heart of this fine comedy. Tatie delights in torturing her maid and sicking her dog on the mailman. When her servant dies, Tatie Danielle is taken in by her leathery nephew and his silly family in Paris. Then Tatie really flowers—like deadly nightshade. Screenwriter Florence Quentin and director Etienne Chartiez go even further and surround Danielle with the juiciest prey: the French middle-class with all their pretensions and hypocrises. Of course that's what makes the film a romp; you can't help siding with and being delighted by the old croc. We might try further interpretations to get a sociological reading on contemporary France, but we know that Tatie would spit us on.

David Overley

Sun., May 17, 6:00 pm, Complex Other Festival, AIBD/7D

25
TIME OF THE SERVANTS
Cas sluha
Irena Pavličkova
Czechoslovakia, 1989, 115 minutes, color

Two years in the making, The Time of the Servants is a drivel, self-assured first feature in which you’ll swear the ghosts of Beppe Sansi and Joan Crawford have combined to play the conniving lead. Dana (Oana Chilovska) is a beautiful, performance of unrestricted bitterness is a timid medical student who gets thrown over by her callous boyfriend. In an all-out attempt to make

Edward Goddard
In Czech with English subtitles


UNDER AFRICAN SKIES
Mark Kidel
United Kingdom, 1990, 120 minutes (3x60), color

Two-hour-long tapes profiling the latest trends and trendsetters in African music. Under African Skies is filled with interviews and performances from the most prominent musicians of Mali and Algeria. Kassoumaye Diabaté is Mali’s most high-profile “jali,” one of a professional musician’s caste that are the community historians, guardians of local customs and morals, and performers at community events such as weddings, baptisms, and other important occasions. Kassoumaye is the living embodiment of the breadth of Malian music today, the elders of his village, Koyela, can trace their heritage back to the 15th century, but the performer is equally at ease in the state-of-the-art 24-track Paris recording studio where he blends traditional songs and rhythms with samba, jazz and other African-American influences. Also included in the tape is the Raal Band (which plays traditional music on modern instruments), Tita Bambou Kountate (a “jali” like Kassoumaye and one of Mali’s leading praise-singers), balafon player Keleltini Diabaté, and Ouasousooudou singer Sali Sibdé. 

Philippe Cachet
In French with English subtitles


THE WALLS
Matthiukal
Adoor Gopalakrishnan
India, 1990, 117 minutes, color

Adoor Gopalakrishnan’s The Walls was the outstanding new Indian film presented at the Calcutta Festival (1990). Taken from the pen of Basu, one of Kerala’s greatest writers, the protagonist is the author himself, imprisoned for sedition during the last days of the Raj. He is encouraged to write by a sympathetic prison officer and falls in love with a woman from the adjoining compartment whom neither he nor we ever see. That is where the walls have come in. He draws scarce provisions over them to her, heSignals their arrival by throwing a twig into the air. The film is beautifully structured and precisely paced to illustrate the way Basker creates for himself a little world within the empty one he inhabits. Humor, warmth, and a deep understanding of human nature illuminate the film, together with a superb performance from Manmooty, a popular star in easily his most challenging part. 

Derek Malcolm
24th London Film Festival, 1990

In Malayalam with English subtitles


THE TRANCE
Shawn with Megheb Panel B: Styles and Themes in Megheb Cinema.
al-Hadhra

Muncef Douib
Tunisia, 1989, 21 minutes, color

I am husband fails to find the beauty spot painted on his bride’s body for their wedding night, her body is considered to have been profaned. The only way to fix it is through the ceremony know as al-Hadhra: the Trance.

Deborah Young
Variety

In Italian with English subtitles


THE VOICE OF THE MOON
La voce della luna
Federico Fellini
Italy/France, 1990, 120 minutes, color

The Voice of the Moon will be cherished in a special way by Federico Fellini fans, being almost a summation of the themes, characters, and obsessions that have haunted his films since 8 1/2. For the first time, Fellini has based his film on a novel, but actors and crew worked more from a skeleton outline than a shooting script, inventing scenes at Rome’s Pontifical Studios. The loosely structured adventures of demoted dreamers in a small Flemish town soon turn into a circus parody of Fellini’s Immacolati film. The film follows Salvi, the immensely popular Italian comic actor who appeared in Jim Jarmusch’s “Down By Law,” poet, dreamer, and visionary, who is obviously hypnotized by the moon. He makes a midnight call to see beautiful Alinda (Nadia Ozvani) asleep. For Salvi, Alinda is the moon incarnate—and cinematographer Tonino Delli Colli’s superb lighting makes us almost believe her round, glowing, silver face is that of a moonwoman. Bewitched by Alinda, he steals her sparkling slipper, which he will later try on several females and discover, to his delight, it fits them all. The film is one long dream in which thought and poetry continually dissolve into modern chaos. Fellini is horrified by this brave new world, seen as mindless teens bopping to dancing disco, and an invasion of Japanese tourists. Then the day’s noisy chaos becomes the strange, empty sensuality of the night. The message is silence—listen to the voices, and try to understand something. 

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VINCENT AND ME
Michael Rubbo, Canada, 100 minutes
Recommended for ages 7-12
Young artist Jo Tetley is a great admirer of Vincent Van Gogh. Vincent's spirit seems to guide her not only at the Montreal Art School, but also in Amsterdam, where she and her friends set out to solve a mysterious art theft involving one of Jo's own drawings.
Free—no ticket required
Thursday, May 2, 4:00 pm, Cineplex Odeon MacArthur, 4939 MacArthur Blvd., NW
Co-sponsored by the New Horizons Program, Children's National Medical Center, Special thanks to Michael Anderson and Diane Lambert.

ASHPET: AN AMERICAN CINDERELLA
Tom Davenport, USA, 45 minutes
In this clever adaptation of the classic tale, a black "conjure-woman" is the fairy godmother, and the handsome prince is a young soldier just leaving to serve in World War II.
Free—no ticket required
Tuesday, May 7, 4:00 pm, Mt. Pleasant Branch, D.C. Public Library, 18th and Lomax Streets, NW
Thursday, May 9, 4:00 pm, Anacostia Branch, D.C. Public Library, Good Hope Rd. and 18th St., SE

GEORGE'S ISLAND
Paul Donovan, Canada, 90 minutes
Recommended for ages 8-12
On Halloween night, a little boy, his friend, and his grandpa are visited by ghosts who reveal the location of Captain Kidd's treasure buried on George's Island. Inspired by the traditional ghost and pirate tale of Nova Scotia.
Free—no ticket required
Sunday, May 5, 1:00 pm, AMC Union Station 9, 50 Massachusetts Ave., NE

Program Two:
Recommended for ages 7-12

ASHPET: AN AMERICAN CINDERELLA
Tom Davenport, USA, 45 minutes
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SOLE MANI!
Horst Schier, USA, 4 minutes
Trivia questions for the tiny orchestra, temperamental

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Free—no ticket required
Sunday, May 5, 1:00 pm, AMC Union Station 9, 50 Massachusetts Ave., NE

Program One:
Recommended for ages 7-12
A charming collection of live-action and animated short films that will delight young viewers.

FROOTIE TOOTIE BANANA HIPPO PLAYS HIDE AND SEEK
Sara and Simon Bor, England, 5 minutes
When you're a big yellow hippo, it isn't easy to hide from your friends—but Banana Hippo finally finds a way.

THE RED SHOES
Michael Sporn, USA, 25 minutes
Lisa and Jenny are poor, but have each other—until Lisa's family wins the lottery and she forgets all about Jenny.

Program Three:
Recommended for ages 7-12
There are many kinds of magic to be found in both the real and the imaginary worlds...

WHO AM I?
Faith Hubley, USA, 4 minutes
An animated exploration of the five senses as a child curiously discovers the world.

THE BIG WISH
Ehson Storm, Australia, 48 minutes
This hilarious and creative adventure features fairies, goblins, seven wishes, young love, and even a music video!

SADAKO AND THE THOUSAND PAPER CRANES
George Loosemore, USA, 30 minutes
Set in post-World War II Hiroshima, this is a story of the power of legend. Young Sadako must fold 1,000 paper cranes to cure herself of "anom bomb disease."
Free—no ticket required
Thursday, May 2, 10:00 am, Anacostia Museum, 1101 Fort Place, SE
Saturday, May 4, 1:30 pm, Shepherd Park Branch, D.C. Public Library, 7420 Georgia Ave., NW

EARLY WORM
Jonathan Lynn, USA, 4 minutes
The early bird gets the worm—until the worms discover his secret.

EAGER PREY
Tamara Willney and Inge Allbrecht, Germany, 4 minutes
Out for a day of fishing, a lazy angler picnics and dozes until he's awakened by a big tug on his line.

STANLEY AND THE DINOSAURS
John Matthews, USA, 16 minutes
Disgusted by his quality of life as a caveman, Stanley invents manners, music, art, and finally manages to civilize his fellow humans.

TWILIGHT
Scott Alberts, USA, 4 minutes
Walking home from school, two boys explore the fascinating natural world around them, unaware that the rocks and trees are watching them.

THE AIR GLOBES
Patricia Cordova, USA/Brasil, 12 minutes
A little girl sends her Christmas with heavenly ball, but, just the same, she convinces to make sure she gets the gifts she wants.

HIDDEN SIGNS
Micki Zinkovich, USA, 21 minutes
Amy's relationship with her deaf parents is strained when she transfers to a new school.

Free—no ticket required
Monday, May 6, 6:00 pm, Francis A. Gregory Branch, D.C. Public Library, 3660 Alabama Ave., SE
Wednesday, May 8, 6:00 pm, Shepherd Park Branch, D.C. Public Library, 7420 Georgia Ave., NW

Conductor, and choir, each player just a "simple-handed" creation of the filmmaker.

Free—no ticket required
Tuesday, May 7, 4:00 pm, Mt. Pleasant Branch, D.C. Public Library, 18th and Lomax Streets, NW
Thursday, May 9, 4:00 pm, Anacostia Branch, D.C. Public Library, Good Hope Rd. and 18th St., SE

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STANLEY AND THE DINOSAURS
John Matthews, USA, 16 minutes
Disgusted by his quality of life as a caveman, Stanley invents manners, music, art, and finally manages to civilize his fellow humans.

TWILIGHT
Scott Alberts, USA, 4 minutes
Walking home from school, two boys explore the fascinating natural world around them, unaware that the rocks and trees are watching them.

THE AIR GLOBES
Patricia Cordova, USA/Brasil, 12 minutes
A little girl sends her Christmas with heavenly ball, but, just the same, she convinces to make sure she gets the gifts she wants.

HIDDEN SIGNS
Micki Zinkovich, USA, 21 minutes
Amy's relationship with her deaf parents is strained when she transfers to a new school.

Free—no ticket required
Monday, May 6, 6:00 pm, Francis A. Gregory Branch, D.C. Public Library, 3660 Alabama Ave., SE
Wednesday, May 8, 6:00 pm, Shepherd Park Branch, D.C. Public Library, 7420 Georgia Ave., NW

Conductor, and choir, each player just a "simple-handed" creation of the filmmaker.

Free—no ticket required
Tuesday, May 7, 4:00 pm, Mt. Pleasant Branch, D.C. Public Library, 18th and Lomax Streets, NW
Thursday, May 9, 4:00 pm, Anacostia Branch, D.C. Public Library, Good Hope Rd. and 18th St., SE

EARLY WORM
Jonathan Lynn, USA, 4 minutes
The early bird gets the worm—until the worms discover his secret.

EAGER PREY
Tamara Willney and Inge Allbrecht, Germany, 4 minutes
Out for a day of fishing, a lazy angler picnics and dozes until he's awakened by a big tug on his line.

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UDC roots go back to 1851 with its founding as Myrtilla Miner "school for colored girls". Teaching was the respectable option for coeds in Mrs. Allen's generation. Career choices for women were hardly greater for Kimberly's mother. Both made their mark as educators.

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For Kimberly, whose generation of women recognizes few limitations on professional dreams, UDC was the smart choice, just as it was for her mother and her grandmother. Every year at UDC, husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, sisters and brothers, grandmothers and grandchildren graduate in the same class. Like the Allen women, they've established a family tradition at UDC.

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New and Transfer Students Advising and Registration: August 14 and August 15
General Registration Continuing Students: August 19 thru August 21
Registration for Readmit and Special Students: August 22 and August 23
Late Registration & Add/Drop: August 26 thru August 30
Classes Begin August 26
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