Filmfest DC 1992
The Sixth Annual Washington, DC International Film Festival • April 29 to May 10
GREETINGS
SIXTH ANNUAL WASHINGTON, D.C. INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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

In 1979, when Hal Ashby decided to shoot the Academy Award winning film, “Being There”, on location in the District of Columbia, many industry observers saw it as the beginning of a trend. In 1987, when Tony Gittens decided to host an international film festival in the Nation’s Capital, many film critics and film aficionados thought it a perfect locale for such an event.

They were correct! Over the past few years, the Nation’s Capital has developed into a major production center that has boosted related local industry businesses and pumped millions of dollars into the local economy. And Filmfest DC, though still viewed by many as the “younger sibling” to the major US and foreign film festivals, is maturing fast. It is becoming a major venue for showcasing cinematic art.

To the creators of Filmfest DC, I commend you for presenting the best in world cinema to local audiences and raising public profile of the entertainment industry in the District. Through the festival, we can all share in the creativity and beauty of this unique form of artistic expression — film. 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 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 much success with this year’s festival.

Sharon Pratt Kelly
Mayor, District of Columbia

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

All that the University of the District of Columbia can be—and is—attacked me to Washington last year. After assuming the leadership of UDC last August, I was gratified to learn that what I had imagined—and much, much more—was happening at the University.

Not least of what pleased me was the manner in which the institution extends itself to serve residents of the District of Columbia. UDC’s tradition of providing a cornucopia of special events to help nourish the city’s reputation as a cultural mecca is one of the more visibly attractive aspects of the institution’s public service commitment.

Filmfest DC has emerged from that tradition as a transcendent cultural force touching every segment of the city. It has succeeded, in large part, because of the determination and vision of UDC faculty and staff, who nurtured the seed of an idea until it blossomed into what Filmfest DC is today—a coveted venue for the display of international cinema.

Through the offerings of Filmfest DC, residents are exposed to the cultures of other peoples of the world, thereby enlarging our understanding of the universality of mankind. Filmfest DC is one of the best examples available in Washington of public/private sector cooperation to bridge the arbitrary divisions rending our community.

I am proud that UDC has been a major force in establishing and sustaining Filmfest DC. I congratulate everyone who has given time and effort to making Filmfest DC a District of Columbia success story. On behalf of the university, I thank you, and I encourage the producers of this first-class event to continue this good work that benefits all of us.

Sincerely,

Tilden J. LeMelle
President

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It has become more difficult than ever for the unusual, unconventional, or even the thoughtul film to find its way onto our screens. Commercial considerations are driven by the blockbuster release with its broadbase appeal. Festivals, on the other hand, are a focal point for filmmaking excellence. Their programming is often beyond genre classifications. By showing such a great variety of films, the international film festival makes an indispensable contribution to our appreciation of this art form.

Since its inception in 1987, Filmfest DC has played a significant role in providing a crucial opportunity for filmmakers from around the world to present their works to enthusiastic Washington audiences. Literally hundreds of new films have been made available that otherwise might have gone unnoticed. The festival has become a setting for the acknowledgment and appreciation of the creativity of directors, producers, actors, and technicians from many different countries. The images projected onto the screen bring us closer to other peoples and other cultures. Once again, Filmfest programmers have gathered an impressive collection of exciting new work to captivate the imagination. Filmfest programming is audience-oriented, and your participation is the barometer for our success.

Each year, Filmfest focuses on one country or area of the world. This year we highlight developments in the former Soviet Union with Far From Moscow: The Cinemas of Georgia and Central Asia. Ironically, Filmfest staff conceived of this series in June of last year, soon after our 1991 festival and months before the upheaval in the Soviet Union. Global Rhythms is a series especially close to my heart: From our special presentation of the restored classic Lucky Star (1925) with live musical accompaniment, to our screening of At the Max, the Rolling Stones’ concert film, this series will be a treat for music fans and film fans alike.

World View is an international showcase for the best new work the medium has to offer, and our popular Filmfest DC for KIDS and Cinema for Seniors have returned. We have more American premieres than ever, once again we will be screening works by local Rosebud Award winners, and our Cyberscience programs are absolutely on the cutting edge.

Each year I can only marvel at the outpouring of support for the festival. Filmfest greatly appreciates the generous contributions of our sponsors, patrons, numerous volunteers, government agencies, local businesses, and diplomatic community. Their support has been the key to all our endeavors. We are grateful for their conviction that Filmfest continues to make an important contribution to the vitality of our city.

Over the years Filmfest has garnered a loyal and ever-growing following of filmmakers and film fans. Washingtonians have exhibited an unwavering faith in and enthusiasm for film—it is the stuff of dreams, and it is our intention that audiences be delighted, challenged, and of course entertained by the films selected this year. So, my friends, it’s time to get down to the serious business of watching movies. I like to think of film as life written across the screen, the story of the world unfolding right before our eyes, available for all to enjoy.

Tony Gittens
Filmfest DC 1992
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Becoming a Film Insider
Was Never Easier

We can’t promise screen tests or power lunches with studio heads. But Filmfest DC can tell you the quickest way in town to become a film insider—by joining the new Washington Film Society.

For the past five years, the Washington DC International Film Festival has sponsored American premieres, unveiled discoveries, and offered the first look at hits that Washington loved.

Each spring, movie fans have made our annual celebration of the world’s best cinema an eagerly awaited and enthusiastically supported event.

Now we can invite you to share in the excitement of Filmfest DC throughout the year by becoming a charter member of The Washington Film Society.

For an annual membership fee of $20.00 per person you’ll receive • invitations to special film activities • discounts on selected Filmfest DC events • and a quarterly newsletter keeping you informed of film activities around the city, Filmfest DC plans, and more film-related news.

We have great plans for Filmfest DC and The Washington Film Society, and we’d like you to be a part of them. To become a film insider, just return the form below and your fee for each membership.

THE WASHINGTON FILM SOCIETY

Mail to Filmfest DC, PO Box 21396, Washington, DC 20009
YES! We would like to join The Washington Film Society, A $20 fee for each membership is enclosed.
Make checks payable to Filmfest DC • For information call (202) 727-2396.

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The Washington Film Society acknowledges the support of the Mayor’s Office of Motion Picture and Television Development
Festival MultiPass-10 Coupon Book

Ten admissions for $50.00 ($45.00 for Washington, DC Film Society members). Good for regular $10.00 screenings only. Available only at festival box offices (not from TICKETMASTER). Coupons can be exchanged for tickets at the box office starting one hour before show time.

**SCHEDULE**

**Wednesday, April 29**
8:00 PM Opening Night Gala: Cineplex Odeon Jenifer Saturday, Opening Night & Sunday, with special guest director Lina Wertmüller

**Thursday, April 30**
6:30 PM Elementary School Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
6:30 PM Happy Birthday and New German Cinema Panel American Film Institute
6:45 PM Turnover AMC Union Station 9
7:30 PM Winckelmann's Travels Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:00 PM *Gas Food Lodging* Hirshorn Museum
8:45 PM Young Soul Rebels Cineplex Odeon Jenifer

**Friday, May 1**
10:00 AM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program One* Anacostia Museum
6:00 PM Winckelmann's Travels American Film Institute
6:30 PM Hairdresser's Husband Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
6:45 PM Legend of Suram Fortress AMC Union Station 9
7:00 PM Once Upon a Time in China Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
7:00 PM To Render a Life National Archives
8:00 PM *Gas Food Lodging* Hirshorn Museum
8:45 PM Young Girls of Rochefort American Film Institute
8:45 PM Golden Braid AMC Union Station 9
9:00 PM Papi, Lucy, Bom, and Other Girls All Like Mom Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
11:00 PM *Tetsuo: The Iron Man shown with Neo Tokyo* Biograph Theater

**Saturday, May 2**
11:00 AM *Cinema for Seniors: Great American Entertainers* Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Center
1:30 PM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program Three* Shepherd Park Library
2:00 PM Once Upon a Cinema shown with UDC, Blgd. 41, Room A03
2:45 PM *Sergei Paradjanov, A Portrait* American Film Institute
3:00 PM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program One* Parklands Community Center
4:00 PM Findings Christa shown with UDC, Blgd. 41, Room A03
4:45 PM In Search of Our Fathers UDC Auditorium
3:30 PM Happy Birthday UDC Auditorium
4:00 PM *Traberg* American Film Institute
6:00 PM Go Traberg Go UDC, Blgd. 41, Room A03
6:00 PM What Happened to Santiago? UDC Auditorium
8:00 PM Eric Dolphy: Last Date shown with UDC, Blgd. 41, Room A03
8:15 PM *This Land Is Ours* American Film Institute
8:45 PM Once Upon a Time in China UDC Auditorium
11:00 PM *Tetsuo II: The Body Hammer* Biograph Theater

**Sunday, May 3**
2:00 PM Blue Mountain American Film Institute
2:45 PM Last Act AMC Union Station 9
3:45 PM *Far From Moscow Panel I: Historic, Cultural and Social Realities in Russian Cinema* American Film Institute
5:45 PM Golden Braid National Gallery of Art, East Building
6:00 PM *Lucky Star* National Gallery of Art, East Building
7:00 PM Peace, Happiness, Headsaches American Film Institute
7:00 PM Mediterranean Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:30 PM *Cyberwiki Panel I & Video* American Film Institute
9:00 PM Pepi, Lucy, Bom, and Other Girls All Like Mom Cineplex Odeon Jenifer

**Monday, May 4**
1:00 PM *Cinema for Seniors: Great American Entertainers* American Film Institute
6:30 PM *Ben Webster: The Brute and the Beautiful with party* Key Theater
6:45 PM Turnover AMC Union Station 9
7:30 PM *Grand Isle with Kelly McGillis* Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:30 PM Blue Mountain American Film Institute
8:45 PM Startime AMC Union Station 9
10:00 PM *Tetsuo II: The Body Hammer* Cineplex Odeon Jenifer

**Tuesday, May 5**
1:00 PM *Cinema for Seniors: Amazing Grace* American Film Institute

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**AT THE MAX tickets sold in advance ONLY through TICKETMASTER and festival box offices at AMC Union Station 9 and Cineplex Odeon Jenifer: $13.00. Absolutely no tickets sold at the door.**

For additional information please call (202) 727-2396.

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**Wednesday, May 6**
4:00 PM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program One* Francis Gregory Library
6:30 PM Revenge with reception Cineplex Odeon Wisconsin Ave.
6:30 PM *God's Step Children followed by Early Black Movie Pioneers Panel* American Film Institute
6:30 PM By Nightfall Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
6:45 PM Last Act AMC Union Station 9
7:00 PM Zentropa Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:00 PM Get Thee Out! Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
9:00 PM Go Trab Go American Film Institute

**Thursday, May 7**
9:30 AM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program Two* Patricia Hams Elementary School
6:30 PM High Lonesome American Film Institute
6:45 PM What Happened to Santiago? AMC Union Station 9
6:45 PM Nouvelle Vague Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
7:30 PM Shurro with reception Hirshorn Museum
7:30 PM Zentropa Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:00 PM *Finding Christa shown with Once Upon a Time* Hirshorn Museum
8:45 PM Cheb AMC Union Station 9
8:45 PM By Nightfall Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
9:15 PM The Gulf War shown with Cairo as Seen Through the Eyes of Youssef Chahine American Film Institute

**Friday, May 8**
6:30 PM Suspended Step of the Stork Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
6:30 PM Traberg American Film Institute
6:45 PM The Station AMC Union Station 9
7:00 PM Confessions to Laura Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:00 PM At the Max Langley Auditorium
8:00 PM *Finding Christa shown with Once Upon a Time* Hirshorn Museum
8:45 PM Startime AMC Union Station 9
8:45 PM Cearns, Island of Flowers, Kiss, and A Year Along the Abandoned Road American Film Institute
10:00 PM At the Max Langley Auditorium
10:15 PM The Gulf War shown with Cairo as Seen Through the Eyes of Youssef Chahine American Film Institute

**Saturday, May 9**
11:00 AM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program Three* MLK Memorial Library
1:00 PM Cearns, Island of Flowers, Kiss, and A Year Along the Abandoned Road American Film Institute
2:30 PM Last Date: Eric Dolphy American Film Institute
4:30 PM *Hisitage du Cinema* Embassy of France
4:30 PM Ben Webster: The Brute and the Beautiful American Film Institute
6:30 PM Lost Language of Cranes American Film Institute
6:30 PM Nouvelle Vague Embassy of France
6:30 PM Confessions to Laura Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
6:45 PM The Station AMC Union Station 9
7:30 PM Time Will Tell: Bob Marley Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:15 PM Peace, Happiness, Headsaches American Film Institute
8:30 PM *Hisitage du Cinema* Embassy of France
8:30 PM Suspended Step of the Stork Cineplex Odeon Jenifer
8:45 PM Revenge AMC Union Station 9
10:00 PM Shurro American Film Institute

**Sunday, May 10**
2:00 PM *Filmfest DC for KIDS: Program One* Hirshorn Museum
3:30 PM Winckelmann's Travels American Film Institute
4:30 PM Closing Night: Waterdance Cineplex Odeon Wisconsin Ave.
6:30 PM Closing Night Party American Film Institute

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*All programs are subject to change. Please consult Filmfest DC's daily schedule announcements in the Washington Post.*
Linai Wertmüller’s reputation was based on her energetic, kinetic films detailing the war of the sexes, including Love and Anarchy, Swept Away, and Seven Beauties. Her new film, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, is in many ways the antithesis of her previous work—contemplative and reflective, far more serene and relaxed than her early films, and centered on a traditional Italian family.

The setting is Pozzolico, a village near Naples, in the 1930s. Rosa (Sophia Loren) and Peppino (Luca de Filippo), married for 30 years, have three grown children and live a settled, harmonious life. One day Peppino notices that Rosa’s behavior has changed; she has become distracted and distant. He comes to believe that there can be only one reason for this sudden change—another man. Peppino is certain that his rival is Professor Janniello, a man who gives sensuous gifts to Rosa in the form of culinary delicacies. What better guise for his real intentions, the worried husband thinks. Peppino’s jealousy and suspicions intensify when Rosa invites Janniello and his wife to spend the weekend with them. Wertmüller’s subtle but firm directing details the conflicting feelings of love and jealousy that are aroused over this weekend as simple misunderstandings turn into little dramas. Loren is superb at the center of the film, using all her considerable powers to convey the dilemma of a woman caught in a web of suspicion and love, while Wertmüller’s direction captures the ebb and flow of emotions with compassion and understanding.

Lina Wertmüller was born in Rome, Italy, in 1928. After graduating from the Rome Theatre Academy, she worked as a director’s assistant and stage designer. In 1963, she was Fellini’s assistant director on 8 1/2. Encouraged and supported by Fellini, she made her directorial debut, I Bastardi, in 1963. Her feature films include Let’s Talk About Men (1965), The Seduction of Mimi (1972), Love and Anarchy (1973), All Serviced Up (1974), Swept Away By an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August (1974), Seven Beauties (1976), The End of the World in Our Usual Bed in a Night Full of Rain (1978), Blind Flead (1980), A Joke of Destiny (1983), Camera (1986), Summer Night with Greek Profile, Almond Eyes and Scout of Batal (1986), and Saturday, Sunday, and Monday (1990).

16th Toronto International Film Festival, 1991
In Italian with English subtitles

Production Companies: Farfelat’70 Televisio/De Cataluna Productions, Producer, Alex Ponti, Screenplay: Rafellet La Capria, Paolo Viti, Lina Wertmüller, from a play by Eduardo de Filippo, Cinematography: Carlo Tabacin, Editor: Faraglì Leonardi, Art Director: Enrico Joss, Principal Cast: Sophia Loren, Luca de Filippo, Lucia de Santis, Alessandro Musi, Palma La Capria, Luca Greco, Paola Magni, Print Source: Silvio Bertocci Communications, Via Amore Antica 42, Rome, Italy 00185, Telephone: (39) 06-4939-19, Fax: (39) 06-4939-1998.

Wed., April 29, 8:00 pm, C.O. Jenifer, Film and Post-Screening Party, $20.00, Code: JAO249E
Special Presentations

A special presentation by the Washington, DC Film Society.
Special Thanks to TNT Network.

American Premiere

A TRIBUTE TO CICELY TYSON

After graduating from New York's Charles Evans Hughes High School, Cicely Tyson worked as a secretary for the Red Cross until she decided one day that she'd had it. She pushed her desk aside and announced for all to hear, "I'm sure God didn't intend me to sit at a typewriter." Thereafter she worked as a model, studied acting, and appeared in New York theatre productions: Juley's Progress (1959), Dark of the Moon (1960), Coal World (1960), The Blacks (1961, for which she won the Vernon Rice Award for her performance as Virtue), and later Tiger Tiger Burning Bright (1962) and Carry Me Back to Morningside Heights (1968).

In the 1960s, Tyson was a fresh face (one of the few black ones, too) in guest shots on such well remembered television series as "Slattery's People" (1965), "I Spy" (1965), "Medical Center" (1969), "The Courtship of Eddy's Father" (1969), and "Here Come the Brides" (1969). But it was her continuing role (from 1963 to 1965) as George C. Scott's secretary on the series "East Side/West Side" that brought her attention. Like Dorothy Dandridge, Tyson had immediate audience rapport. There has not been another black film actress with quite the startling looks and presence of either of these so different stars, each of whom became a true cultural icon. As one of the first black women to wear an Afro on American television, Tyson was a striking figure: slender and intense with near perfect bone structure, magnificent smooth skin, dark penetrating eyes, and a regal air that made her seem a woman of convictions and commitment. At a time when audiences still didn't always know Tyson's name, on "East Side/West Side" they sensed nonetheless her power and range, knowing that this young woman was bigger and better than the roles she had been playing. Watching Tyson in her early roles, one often has the feeling that, through the turn of a line or a look or gesture, at any moment something extraordinary could happen.

The very early '70s—the period of blaxploitation films—were tough years for Tyson, who flatly refused work she felt was demeaning. At one point, she was even ready to forsake her career until such friends as Sammy Davis, Jr., and Sidney Poitier prevailed upon her to stick it out. Four years had passed without a major film role until Sounder (1972) arrived. Her character, a finely etched and shaded, with attention paid to the most minute details, was a delicate portrait of a strong, enduring black woman who's also somehow somehow larger than life. Nominated for a Best Actress Oscar, Tyson followed her Sounder triumph with another: the lead role in the TV movie "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman" (1974), for which she won an Emmy as Best Actress in a Special. After that, Cicely Tyson was a household name, her face gracing the covers of People, Ms, Essence, Ebony, Jet. Critics praised her as a major dramatic actress—perhaps the first such black actress of this type since Ethel Waters.

Tyson has continued to seek equally challenging roles but—as is the case for so many fine actors and actresses—with varying degrees of success, turning more to television as a venue to diverse material. She cannot really play an ordinary woman, or at least she cannot play an ordinary woman in an ordinary fashion. So there is often a tension between the actress and available TV roles. In "The Marva Collins Story" (1981), for example, she summoned up her old convictions and injected spirit into what was essentially a formula film. Then, in the feature Butter's Loose (1981) with Richard Pryor, her endearing and sweety romantic character (a true departure from previous work) seemed to be overlooked by critics. Still, even when Tyson appears in standard TV fare, it is always interesting and oddly compelling to watch her invest such material with intelligence and dramatic flair. Although the film and television industries have rarely provided her with the support system (and acting plums) accorded white stars, Cicely Tyson remains a major American dramatic actress.

Tyson's other TV credits include: "Mission: Impossible" (1970), "Gunsmoke" (1970); "Emergency" (1972); "Just an Old Sweet Song" (1976); "Roots" (1977); "Wilma" (1977); "A Woman Called Moses" (1978); "King" (1978); "Ben's Place" (1982); and "Playing with Fire" (1985). She also appeared on the daytime soap "The Guiding Light" in 1967.

Among her film credits: Odds Against Tomorrow (1959); The Last Angry Man (1959); A Man Called Adam (1966); The Comedians (1967); The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter (1968); The River Niger (1976); The Bluebird (1976); A Hero Ain't Nothin but a Sandwhich (1978); The Concorde: Airport 79; and Fried Green Tomatoes (1992).

Donald Bogie
Blocks in American Films and Television: An Encyclopedia

Sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education and Public Service
Special Presentations

Winner of Jury Prize
at Cannes Film Festival 1991

ZENTROPA
Europa
Lars von Trier
Denmark/FRANCE/Germany/Sweden, 1991, 114 minutes, black and white (with color sequences), CinemaScope

A technical tour-de-force... Using black-and-white wide-screen with surreal injections of color, and making disconcerting use of front-projection, von Trier creates a nightmare world of guilt and suspicion.

Philp French
35th London Film Festival, 1991

Set in 1945, Zentropa follows Leo Kessler, a young American of German heritage, who arrives in postwar Germany. Leo gets a job as night conductor with the Zentropa railway company and, on his first trip, meets Katharina, daughter of the company’s managing director. As he is increasingly drawn into the family, he is further emblazoned in a web of intrigue involving the Allies and Katharina, who was deeply involved with Nazi activities. Leo will discover too late the extent of his naiveté.

Zentropa completes von Trier’s trilogy, begun with Element of Crime (1984) and Epidemic (1987), and he has already begun his new film, Dimension, which is scheduled to premiere on April 30, 2024. A thriller with documentary elements, Dimension will be a monument to the future, shot in three-minute segments—one every year—on different locations by the Zentropa team. Von Trier, who will be 68 in 2024, has already named a successor should he be unable to complete the film, while the actors have all given him sealed envelopes containing names of their own replacements...

Jens Rossing Jensen
Moving Pictures International

AT THE MAX

Julien Temple, Roman Kroitor, David Douglas, Noel Archambault
Canada/USA, 1991, 65 minutes (plus 10-minute intermission), color, IMAX/70mm/Stereophonic

In 1989, the Rolling Stones began the “Steel Wheels” tour, one of the most elaborate concert tours imaginable. Needing a cinematic equivalent that would best enhance the bigger-than-life quality of that tour, the Stones explored the amazing vivid, high-tech IMAX system. For a band that has done everything, anything less would have been wasted effort.

Known for its exhilarating nature and science films that bring the viewer into the film, IMAX would take the genre of concert film one level higher. Choosing the system was a risk, however: Not only are two-thirds of all IMAX theaters found in public museums, but new technology was also needed in order to film for longer than three minutes at a time.

To say that At the Max is “bigger than life” is an understatement: What appears on the four-story-tall screen is a magical moment shared by artists and audience—a reminder of the time when a movie could also be called an event, and the promise that it still can. Using seven IMAX cameras (more than half in existence, and the most ever used for one project) during five European concerts, At the Max is a no-nonsense rock’n’roll extravagana that is not only the best thing to be shown at the show, it’s the best new thing to be a Rolling Stone: Towering over the audience with Mick Jagger during “Sympathy For The Devil”, hearing walkie-talkies from places unknown; keeping track of the time on Ron Woods’ watch; sharing a few cigarettes with Keith Richards; becoming a Charlie Watts drumstick; helping Shil Kristman hide behind anything he can put in front of him; hearing Mick and the back-up singers clap from across a loud and crowded stage—and then, of course, the music, 50 times bigger than life: “Start Me Up”, “Ruby Tuesday”, a sing-along “You Can’t Always Get What You Want”, “Brown Sugar”, a devastating “Paint it Black”, and that venerable warhorse, “ Satisfaction”, are some of the 15 gems spotlighted in the mesmerizing 89 minutes of At the Max.

This is an all-enveloping, in-your-face, down-your-throat, out-your-ears, mind-bending experience of sight and sound that will shame concert films for decades to come.

C.W. Paterson


AT THE MAX tickets sold in advance ONLY through TICKETMASTER and festival box offices at AMC Union Station 9 and Cineplex Odeon Jenifer: $13.00. Absolutely no tickets sold at the door.

Fri., May 6, 8:00 pm, Art & Space Museum, $13.00, Code: A90508E
Fri., May 8, 10:00 pm, Art & Space Museum, $13.00, Code: A90508L

MEDITERRANEO

Gabriele Salvatores
Italy, 1991, 105 minutes, color

Mediterraneo is a keenly intelligent comedy about eight Italian soldiers who are sent to garrison a remote, strategically unimportant Greek island during World War II. When their ship sinks and their radio breaks down, they are stranded and virtually lost. The war is a long way off, and it seems that everyone has forgotten them. But the extraordinarily beautiful island turns out to be inhabited, and a small Italian-Greek community begins to form. Assuming that they have been abandoned, the Italians gradually forget that they are soldiers and lose themselves in the sultry rhythms of their new home. Little by little, they resolve their personal problems, and some of them even fulfill private dreams. One soldier mourns his beloved donkey, two brothers and a shepherdess have a settled sharing—a trio, and the local outcast and prostitute begin a gentle courtship. Eventually the soldiers change so much that they have absolutely no desire to return to the front or even to Italy. Then, one day, a small plane lands on the island with news that the enemy has now become their ally.

The men must return to Italy and once again assume their proper roles in society.

Set in a seductive location and filled with upbeat introspection, Mediterraneo begins as a film about war and then turns into a bittersweet comedy about a generation’s desire to escape a society that has both betrayed and abandoned them. The soldiers may have lost, but they don’t want to sell out to those who won.

Gabriele Salvatores is a remarkably gifted director of actors, and the ensemble performance is part of this film’s winning charm.

Helga Stephenson
16th Toronto International Film Festival, 1991


Thurs., April 30, 7:30 pm, C.D. Jenifer, Code: JAS043OE
Sun., May 3, 7:30 pm, C.D. Jenifer, Code: JAS050E
Far From Moscow

Sponsored by the D.C. Community Humanities Council

Far From Moscow: The Cinemas of Georgia and Central Asia

The reorganization of filmmaking in the former USSR promises to be a long and delicate process. This year, Filmfest DC's Far From Moscow series demonstrates the pluses and minuses of the old system in the republic of Georgia, the lone holdout from the new Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and in the vast Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kirghizistan, Tadjikistan, and Kazakhstan. The necessity of economic overtures toward other regions means that reshaping the film industry in these dynamic republics is inevitable. Although current film production is necessarily somewhat limited by economic and social realities, prospects for the future of film there are more than promising, as showcased by the range of fine works in this year's Filmfest DC.

Filmmaking in Georgia has a character all its own. During the Brezhnev era, the Georgian cinema was the only one in the former USSR that gave the slightest inkling of possible cracks in the Soviet system. One Upon a Time There Was a Singing Merlin (1970) and Postroki (1976), two major films by Otar Iosseliani, showed a Georgian way of life full of charm and quality, contrary to our usual idea of life in the Eastern bloc. The Georgian anti-Stalin satire, Repontence (made between 1984 and 1987 by Tenghiz Alabazde, with the support of the then-General Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, Edward Shevardnadze) showed just how far the Gorbachev administration hoped to push its reforms.

Georgian films' distinctiveness comes from the richness and originality of this crossroads region, which has been defending its land and culture against outside aggression for centuries, but which also has always enriched itself through contact with many other civilizations. In its long history, Georgia has fought invasions by the Turks, the Persians, the Mongols—and most recently, the Russians—but, by the beginning of this century, Tbilisi was one of the most dynamic capitals of Greater Europe. Located at the crossroads of ancient caravan routes from the East, the city was no less attuned to the modernity of the West—the Lumiere brothers' Cinematographie reached Tbilisi only one year after the first projections in Paris, and such European companies as Pathé sent representatives to Georgia to shoot documentaries and train operators on the spot. In the 1910s, many Georgians made the reverse journey to Paris, London, or Rome to meet principal figures of the Dada and Surrealist movements. In such an artistic climate, film was an obvious vehicle of modernity, but also, interestingly enough, one well suited to existing forms of Georgian artistic expression. From the time of the silent era, the harmony of image and space inherent in the film medium responded to the Georgians' love of their land and merged with the beauty and complexity of their traditional songs celebrating work and family rituals.

Theater director Kote Mardzhanishvili, a former student of Stanislavski, returned from Moscow in the early 1920s to make the first truly Georgian films. Soon after, the Bolshevik government reorganized film production, transforming Georgia's independent studios into state organizations. The first important film of the Georgian cinema was Ivan Perestiani's The Red Devil (1923), which featured a cast of circus performers and, quite remarkably for the time, a young black actor. A year later, with Three Lices, Perestiani revealed himself to be one of the most original talents among Soviet directors. Thus, the silent era gave rise to the first Golden Age of Georgian cinema, which was closely linked to the literature of the nineteenth century but also to the latest developments in the visual arts.

Georgian films of the 1930s, essentially popular satires in the mediocre vein of contemporary Russian comedies, showed less forcefulness and originality. Critiques of the rural nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the intelligentsia remained very provincial and understated. Nonetheless, it was in this context that Michael Tkhaiureli, former sculptor and future hagiographer of Stalin (The Fall of Berlin, 1949), would get his start before launching into such skillfully made propaganda films as The Oath (1946).

While dozens of Georgian intellectuals were to be eliminated by the Stalin regime (even though Stalin himself came from Georgia), no filmmakers were ever executed. Stalin was well aware of the power of the medium and preferred instead to use psychological intimidation to shape the directors' work—to the point of meeting with them privately to explain how they should proceed and what themes they should treat. Thus, the Georgian cinema of the 1940s followed orders. Bombastic films incited the people to participate in the war effort and forge regional differences. With the end of the war, the struggle was redirected against the supposed enemy within; according to Stalinist thinking, popular sentiments were to be kept in line and any possible awakening of social demands avoided.

After Stalin's death in 1953 and the beginnings of de-Stalinization at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, the revival of the Georgian cinema began. Its manifesto was Bagrady's Donkey (1955), a hymn to nature and the magic of childhood co-directed by Rezo Chikheidze and Tenghiz Alabazde. In spite of outright harassment from Georgian studio heads, the film took the 1956 Cannes Film Festival by surprise. It was to serve as a model for films by younger directors who sought their themes in the nineteenth century literary heritage but were also committed to depicting day-to-day reality in a way that clearly paralleled the Italian Neo-Realists.

Then, with his first feature, The Fall of the Leaves (1966), Otar Iosseliani established himself as a true auteur, with films full of irony that easily move from the most trivial reality into the world of magic. Similarly, the humanitarian poet Merab Kokochashvili described his passion for his land in The Great Green Valley (1967), while Rezo Chikheidze's The Soldier's Father (1964), an antiwar film, and Tenghiz Alabazde's Supplication (1967) and The Witching Tree (1976), presented the realities and aspirations of Georgians with impassioned lyricism.

Most Georgian films of the 1960s and 1970s relied on the parable, inherited from Eastern literary tradition, to transmit a message and a moral as well as to get around the constraints of censorship. The symbolic world of the characters, the conventions associated with them, and the juxtaposition of lyricism and irony gave depth and universality to their narratives. The call for tolerance and respect for the individual dream is at the heart of most of these films—especially in The Witching Tree, which does not hesitate to turn village traditions upside down. With Repontence (1984), the emblematic film of the Gorbachev era, Alabazde sought to mobilize the younger generation that knew only the mystifying silence that surrounded historical reality. "It was the first example of a film made in the USSR and in Georgia without the approval of Moscow," Alabazde explained in 1987. "Edward Shevardnadze did his best to help us finance the film, and finally Georgian television produced it. We'd telegraphed Moscow that it dealt with a political and moral theme. They didn't look into it any further..."

Women directors' talents have overcome the very real obstacles they face everywhere in the film industry, to the point where women filmmakers are now more numerous in Georgia than anywhere else in the former USSR. Lana Gogobidze's Some Interview or Personal Questions (1976) marked a positive change in the whole of Soviet cinema with a meticulous portrait of a forty-year-old woman journalist confronting various problems of professional and family life in the USSR. With Robinwood, or My British Grandad (Cannes Golden Camera, 1987), Nana Djordjadze presented an original treatment of her country's history, at once romantic and humorous and representative of the mix of nostalgia and resignation in Georgian humor.

In the wake of recent political events and the resulting shortfalls and power struggles in the studios, Georgian film production has slowed down. Otar Iosseliani continues to work abroad with the support of French and German producers. Blue Mountains director Eldar Shengelaya (the current president of the Georgian Filmmakers Union), Lana Gogobidze, and Irakli Kvirikadze prefer joint ventures with American capital (through Lales Arts) that provide such luxuries as Kodak or Fuji film and Dolby sound equipment.

It was the Georgian cinema, too, that aided the late director Sergei Paradjanov in bringing his all-too-short career to a magisterial conclusion. Through the intervention of Edward Shevardnadze, Paradjanov, who had been persecuted by the Soviet government as a "nonconformist," received permission to film The Legend of Sarem Fortress, which amply demonstrates his attachment to the rich diversity of Caucasian culture. Also, in his very last film, Avkh Korish (1988), Paradjanov transformed a Persian folklore recounted by a Russian author into a vibrant tribute to the mixing of cultures and peoples.

This openness of spirit and quality of life (similar in its irony and refinement to the Czech New Wave of the '60s), this attachment to the light and the land define the Georgian cinema. Yet, for all the poetry and a certain spiritual rigor, the Georgian cinema today faces many problems. After these last three years of upheaval, the challenge is above all to the human spirit in finding new sources of optimism, but it is also economic: Where to find the necessary financing for regular production of fourteen features and fifty documentaries and animated films a year?

In Central Asia, by contrast, the future of the cinema may well outstrip its past. Since 1926, when Daiga Vertov came to the region to shoot his amazing "film-poem," A Sixth of the World, most of the great Soviet filmmakers have profited from his example, especially during the Second World War, when the Moscow studios were transferred to the capitals of these distant republics. Domskoi, Eisenstein (for Ivan the Terrible, Part I), Kuleshov, Batur, Pulovkin, and, recently, Sokhurov—all took advantage of the incomparable Central Asian landscapes and the efficient infrastructures in the cities of Tashkent and Alma-Ata. Until 1988, Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, was the site of a major Third World film festival that provided a showcase—and an active film market—for films from North Africa, India, Egypt, Iran, and Syria (countries that have also co-produced popular dramas and musical comedies with the Central Asian Republics).

The character of the poet is often present in Central Asian films, symbolizing the heritage of a culture, the strength of ancestral ties, and the protection that wisdom offers to those worthy of it. Central Asian films have infused the form of their often epic and lyrical stories with the magic of the great poetic texts of their culture. The Turkmen filmmaker Bular Manurov, for example, acknowledges the influence of the Persian poets Saadi and Nizami. Several of the works of the medieval Tadzik poet Rudaki and the writer Ani have been adapted for films, and contemporary Kirghiz writer Chingiz Atamov has not only provided literary material for adaptation but, as secretary of the Kirghiz Filmmakers Union during the Brezhnev era, has also helped to maintain the morale of an entire generation of filmmakers.

While production in the smaller studios of Kirghizistan, Tadjikistan, and Turkmenistan has never exceeded five films a year, those of Uzbekistan (Tashkent) and Kazakhstan (Alma-Ata) maintained, until 1989, an average of twelve features a year. In
these two republics, conventional treatments of literary adaptations, civil war dramas, sentimental melodramas, and depictions of life on collective farms began to give way in the early 1980s to more political works. With the beginning of perestroika, filmmakers were prompted to denounce corruption, drug trafficking, local gangsters’ intrigues, and the brutal treatment of women. This positive thematic development is also reflected aesthetically, and some critics have begun to speak of a “Kazakh and Uzbek New Wave.”

The filmmakers of this generation on the rise share certain characteristics and convictions. No more than thirty-five years old, they often have a history of tumultuous studies at the VGIK in Moscow, followed by international festival prizes for their first films, which were sometimes censored at home. Their films show their affinity for such independents as Godard, Wenders, and Jarmon, as well as for the spirit of the road movie. To guarantee semi-independent production of their films, they have invested their own money, sought the support of local business, and broken with the usual distribution networks.

Kazakh filmmaker Rachid Nourmagomedov is the undisputed leader of this movement. His first feature, The Needle (1988), set off considerable debate when it was released. A self-styled manifesto that featured well-known Russian rock star Viktor Tsoi in the lead role, the film omitted none of the problems faced by today’s youth (drugs, pollution, marginality), and, in retrospect, offered striking predictions of things to come in the CIS. In A Little Fish in Late (1989), another Kazakh film by Abai Karpov, we follow the hero in discovering not only the modernity of the capital city of Almaty, but also a whole underground culture with marked affinities for the Far East. Trin, by Aleksandr Baranov and Bakhyt Kaliabiev, is another ironic portrait of these new dropouts, who are continually looking for ideals but also for just a bite to eat.

The studios of Tadjikistan, Turkmistan, and Kirghistan, isolated rural republics with a total population of only 13 million people, have more limited technical and financial means. Regular feature-film production dates back only to 1955 (four films for each studio in 1990, less than thirty short years), with films often purchased or co-produced by countries in the Middle East. It is in the short films of the younger generation that potential change, both thematic and qualitative, may be seen. Hard Heads (1990), by the young Turkmen director Ailenamurdov Shikmurad, for example, is a modern folk tale of filial devotion, Oriental pride, and rural life. Similarly, the first film efforts of the Tadjik poet Gulbakhir Shirzoda are very promising. And, in a clear sign of the times, Tadjik director Davit Kallandzev was elected by the Soviet Filmakers Union as its First Secretary in 1990.

The current economic crisis in the CIS obviously relegates film production to the background throughout the Commonwealth. Nonetheless, it is likely that the steps required to get beyond this impasse will also lead to fruitful contacts with Europe and the Far East. The younger generation of filmmakers in Georgia and Central Asia know that they must take the initiative to sell their projects abroad, but after the decades of submission that they and their predecessors have undergone, they are ready and willing to make the change.

Patrick Cazals
(Translated by Miriam Rosen)

Panel I
Historic, Cultural and Social Realities in Georgian Cinema
Sun., May 3rd, 3:45 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

Panel II
Historic, Cultural and Social Realities in Central Asian Cinema
Tues., May 5th, 8:10 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

THE LEGEND OF SURAAM FORTRESS
Legenda o Suramskoy kreposki
Sergei Paradjanov, Dodo Abashidze
Georgia, 1985, 89 minutes, color

The Georgian film director Sergei Paradjanov wasn’t the artist the Soviets were most proud of. When he was sent to prison, where he spent most of the 1970s, the charges ranged from trafficking in illegal art objects and manipulating currencies to engaging in homosexual practices and “incitement to suicide.” His reputation in this country is based on two films, Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors, which came out in 1964, and The Color of Pomegranates, which was made in 1969 but didn’t reach these shores until it was smuggled out eight years later. Both established him in the top rank of international filmmakers. But after his release from jail in 1978, he was imprisoned in 1982 (for attempted bribery) and his career as a director, most thought, was finished. That his last film (Paradjanov died in 1988), the first he had made in 15 years, reached this country only a year after its completion is a remarkable achievement in itself...

It’s impossible to watch even a few feet of film by Paradjanov without acknowledging his mastery of the medium and the originality of his vision. Essentially, he has a painter’s eye, expressed in a fondness for exotic damasks in rich purple and school-bus-yellow, in still-life tableaux with peacock feathers, animal hooves, bruised fruit, and brassy samovars...you revel in the visual textures and the just-slightly-skewed formal symmetries...in the legend [of] a monarch’s mostly failed attempts to rebuild the crumbling Suram fortress and protect his empire. With its cast of tightrope walkers, jugglers, and fortune-tellers, the movie plays like folk performance art—a mixture of primitive and postmodern impulses.

Haï Hinson
The Washington Post

In Georgian with English subtitles


Fri., May 1, 8:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: UB0501A

MANKURTS
Hodzhakhuli Nariliev
Turkmenia, 1990, 96 minutes, color

From the former Soviet Central Asian republic of Turkmenia comes a powerful cautionary parable that, while set in ancient times, rings with startling clarity today.

In the midst of preparations for the wedding of the young warrior Yoloman, a messenger arrives warning that an aggressive enemy tribe is swiftly advancing and planning to attack. The attacking tribe is especially feared for its brutal treatment of prisoners, a prolonged torture that destroys their memory and turns courageous warriors into docile, servile workers (mankurts). Yoloman’s tribe immediately flees to a mountain refuge, but a bloody battle ensues, and he is captured. The young warrior survives the torture, but loses all memory of himself, his native land, and his tribe, and he becomes a slave. Several years later, his grief-stricken mother sets out alone to search for...
American Premieres

ONCE UPON A CINEMA: RECENT GEORGIAN FILMMAKING
Il est un cinéma enchanteur

Patrick Cazals
France, 1990, 30 minutes, black and white

Through interviews with several generations of leading Georgian filmmakers and visits to the Kartuli Filmi studios and the Cinema Museum in Tbilisi, this unique documentary explores the nature of film production in Georgia—one of the world’s most original cinemas.

As Western audiences are discovering through the works of Otar Iosseliani (Once Upon a Time There Was a Singing Mermaid), Tenghis Avazuladze (Repentance), and Eldar Shengelaya (Blue Mountains), among others, Georgian cinema is often of astounding quality. In retrospect, it’s easy to see that its rebellious tone long ago began to predict change in the (former) Soviet Union.

In Georgian, Russian, and French, with French voice-over and English subtitles

Showed with SERGEI PARADJANOV, A PORTRAIT
Sergei Paradjanov, a portrait

Patrick Cazals
France, 1988, 26 minutes, color

Poet, painter, set and costume designer, Sergei Paradjanov (1924-1990) was above all a filmmaker, and perhaps one of the greatest of our time. An Armenian born in Georgia, he left his mark on Soviet cinema with an oeuvre rich in the cultural traditions of the Caucasus. His amazing Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors (1964), made during his period at the Kiev studios in Ukraine, captured public and critics alike. But after another cult film, Sayat Nova, or The Color of Pomergranates (1968), years of forced silence (prison, blacklisting) intervened, it was only in 1985 that he was able to film again, completing two more of his visionary works, The Legend of Sarama Fortress (1985) and Ashik Kerib (1988), before his death. Filmed in the living museum that was Paradjanov’s home and workshop in Tbilisi, as well as on the set of Ashik Kerib, this tender portrait of a battered but thoroughly free spirit is the only documentary on Paradjanov by a Western film crew.

In Georgian and Russian with English subtitles

REVENGE
Myest
Kazakhstan, 1989, 110 minutes, color

Conflicting ideals are established in a prologue set in ancient Korea, where the emperor’s son is trained to be a great warrior as his best friend becomes a poet who disdains violence. The story abruptly shifts to 1915, when a teacher in a small village brutally murders a young girl. The girl’s father, Tsai (Maxim Munnuk, who played the Siberian hunter Deni Uzala for Akira Kurosawa in the 1975 film, Vows to get revenge. After ten years of searching, he finds the murderer in China, but is incapable of killing him. On his deathbed, the aged man bequeaths his young son to complete his revenge.

Rather than tell a simple, straightforward tale of revenge, director Shirinbayev presents several interleaved stories about the murderer, the murderer’s wife, and Tsai’s son, who comes of age while searching for the killer. The tale unfolds in seven chapters, and the latter episodes gradually become more dreamlike, filled with stunning visual imagery. The film evokes into a gentle but thoroughly engaging philosophical inquiry into revenge and violence as the enemies of poetry and beauty. Splendidly crafted and photographed, Myest is a rare reflection of the rich oriental culture of the (former) Soviet Union and a timeless, universal exploration of mankind’s highest and lowest ambitions.

Farrell S. Ciesiak
In Russian with English subtitles

Showed with TUNOVER
Oromtriali

Lana Gogoberidze
Georgia, 1986, 90 minutes, color

Set in contemporary Tbilisi, this story of a chance meeting of two friends after several years of separation results in many unexpected events. The friends confront crucial decisions and emotional attachments in a casual, yet fateful manner.

Lana Gogoberidze has said of her previous film, Interviews on Personal Problems (1979), “...if a person’s life is confined to the present, it cannot be a full life. It can be a full life only if it is ground- ed in the past—and not only one’s personal past, but that of one’s nation and indeed the whole of civilization.” This could apply equally to the lives of the characters in Tunnur. Manana, once a popular actress but no more in demand, is confronted with the various demands of private life, her artist daughter, and a restless, elderly aunt, all vying for her attention. Rusudan, a successful but lonely scientist, wants to adopt the daughter of a single woman who has recently died. The fates of these women and of those around them and the decisions they must make illuminate their past and enable them to look to the future with a sense of mutual support and understanding.


Thurs., April 30, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US043A
Mon., May 4, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US050A

Farrell S. Ciesiak
In Russian with English subtitles

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Celia Cruz, and its producers have graciously allowed Filmfest DC to present its American premiere. One of Cuba's greatest popular singers, Celia Cruz has recently gained wide attention with her appearance in The Mambos Kings. Her many long-time fans, however, know her as The Queen of Salsa.

The collaboration of music and film is a true joy, each enhancing the other. As my father taught me a long time ago, it is not easy to be a musician or an artist of any kind. You have to be committed, driven, and love it. I like to think that the personal passion and drive exhibited by my father lives in the hearts of all the artists presented in this year's Global Rhythms series.

Tony Gittens, Director Filmfest DC

American Premiere

BOB MARLEY: TIME WILL TELL
Declan Lowney
United Kingdom, 1991, 90 minutes, color

Time Will Tell is the musical biography of the Third World's first international superstar, a 90-minute film celebrating the life and music of Bob Marley. From the ghetto of Trenchtown, Jamaica, to the stadium of the world, Bob Marley's message of peace and freedom made him one of the most challenging and charismatic artists of our time.

It is a ten years since Marley's death yet his music, created over nearly two decades, remains timeless and universal. Time Will Tell, using only Bob's words and music, is the first comprehensive portrait of his enduring talents. Using interviews, concert performances and rehearsal footage—much of it previously unseen—mixed with his backing tracks, Bob tells his own story. The film presents a unique insight into Bob Marley the musician and shows how his political and spiritual stance has a continuing power and relevance.


Special guest: Neville Garrick, Director of the Bob Marley Foundation.

Sat., May 9, 7:30 pm, C.O. Jennifer. Code: JA0505A

HIGH LONESOME: THE STORY OF BLUEGRASS MUSIC
Rachel Liebling
USA, 1991, 96 minutes, color and black and white

Some folks swear by bluegrass music and some swear at it, but make no mistake: High Lonesome is so full of musical riches that anyone with an interest in the development of regional American music can't afford to miss it. With a pilgrimage by famed bluegrass performer Bill Monroe to the remains of his childhood home in the Kentucky hills at the center of its narrative, the film traces the origins of the music from the 19th century to the present. Director Rachel Liebling then embalishes the storyline with fascinating concert, interview, and spontaneous performance footage. Monroe's remembrances and period photographs and footage illustrate the influences of the church and social change on the development of this musical form: Slaves brought into the region by economic change introduced fiddles and syncoped rhythms to contempor-
Global Rhythms

Eddie Cockrell

Production Company: Nordic Film, Screenplay: Rachel Liublina, Cinematography: Buddo Squires, Editor: Todd Sherman. Principal Cast: Bill MacRae and the Bluegrass Boys, Ralph Stanley, Nils Wiman, Jimmy Martin, the Osborne Brothers, Jim and Jesse, the Seldom Sons, Sam Bush, Alxen, Krisas, the Northside Bluegrass Boys, Print Source: Nordic Film, 187 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211, Telephone: (718) 384-3528.

Special guests Rachel Liublina, director; Lee Michael Densmore, radio host of blue grass and folk music; John Duffy, musician.

Thurs., May 7, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AFS050A

LAST DATE: ERIC DOLPHY

De Laatste sessie: Eric Dolphy

Hans Nytkema

The Netherlands, 1991, 92 minutes, color

Reckless in his music but straight as an arrow in his personal life ("He looked like a CPA," remembers bandleader Roy Porter of their first meeting), bass clarinetist/flautist/ alto saxophonist Eric Dolphy was a study in contradictions. He was a perfectionist driven by artistic ambition from his birthplace in Los Angeles to '50s New York and then to the jazz frontier of early '60s Europe, and his tragic death in Berlin at the age of 36 robbed the jazz world of a genuine musical genius.

This fascinating, reverent documentary reconstructs Dolphy's final European tour with the Misha Mengelberg trio in 1964. By chance, an impromptu jam on the final night of the Dutch leg of the tour was recorded on tape and released as the album "Last Date." Each of these six compositions is used in the Last Date as a chapter to explore the different facets of Dolphy's career and the last months of his life, which he spent in Europe (with Paris as his home base) after leaving the Charles Mingus group to remain on the continent. ("I’ll miss you, asshole… Mingus tells Dolphy during a gig included in the film.) "We all played in a very awkward, dopey fashion," remembers drummer Han Bennink, one of the members of the Mengelberg trio reunited in the same Amsterdam studio 26 years later to reminisce about the tour. Dolphy didn’t drink and didn’t smoke, yet he was left to remain in the diabetic coma that overcame him in Berlin because authorities thought he was on drugs—precisely the kind of racial stereotyping that Dolphy had gone to Europe to escape.

Co-scenarist Thierry Brunelle (himself and Dolphy biographer) traveled to Los Angeles and New York to trace Dolphy’s early years; the film also includes archival footage from gigs in Oslo (1964) and Stockholm (Mingus’ jazz workshop in 1964). One of the finest jazz documentaries in recent memory, Last Date will appeal to musical neophytes and committed jazz fans alike.

Eddie Cockrell

In English, French, and Dutch with English subtitles


Showed with May 2 Screening

MY NAME IS CELIA CRUZ

Anthony Wall

United Kingdom, 1999, 44 minutes, color, videotape

The BBC’s “Rhythms of the World” series presents the Queen of Salsa teamed up with the “King” Tito Puente, in a spectacular performance filmed at the Apollo Theater in New York. Combining Cuban rhythms, glamour, verve, and sass, the dynamic voice of Celia Cruz has thrilled audiences all over the world for decades.


Sat., May 2, 8:00 pm, UDC, bldg. 41, Room A-03, Code: DADA02E

Sat., May 9, 2:30 pm, Eric Dolphy only American Film Institute, Code: AFS050D

Special thanks to the Royal Netherlands Embassy and The George Eastman House

FREE

LUCY STAR

Frank Borgez

USA, 1929, 90 minutes, black and white

It’s amazing to think that when Lucy Star opened in the major U.S. markets in the summer of 1929 it had some sound. The last reel featured dialogue (pl限制ive tones from Janet Gaynor, strident ones from co-star Charles Farrell), a few sound effects, and a slick Hollywood orchestra synchronized to the film’s backwater Fireman’s Hall band. So much luckier were those who saw the silent version of this movie, the one released in Europe and in smaller American cities, and the one that now—thanks to the preservation work of the Nederlands Film Museum Archives—we, too, can see for the first time in 60 years. Sound added to such a delicately sentimented film—a story of burgeoning love between Mary, a poor country girl, and Tim, an electrical lineman disabled by World War I—might all but destroy the film’s power. Expressive, in fact, are the performances and the art direction that at times the intertitles seem superfluous. Surely director Frank Borgez must have known that this would be his last chance to direct a silent film, and he milked the potential of the medium for all it was worth.

Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell were in many ways the perfect screen couple, and Borgez could extract their magic like no other director. Twentieth Century-Fox recognized the box office potential of this pair and teamed them in Seventh Heaven (1927) and Street Angel (1928), both hugely successful films. (Gaynor received the first Best Actress Oscar for these two films and F.W. Murnau’s Sunrise.) Lucy Star may, in fact, have been little more than the studio’s effort to prolong this successful chemistry.

When the restored Lucy Star premiered at the 1991 Perdeneé Silent Film Festival, British composer and multi-instrumentalist Adrian Johnston was commissioned to compose and perform an original score. His music, at once lyrical and intensely modern, is the perfect companion to the film and a virtuoso performance in itself. Filmfest DC is delighted that Mr. Johnston will once again accompany the film at this special presentation.

Peggy Parsons

Silent with intertitles


Sun., May 3, 6:00pm, National Gallery of Art, East Building, FREE

THE YOUNG GIRLS OF ROCHEFORT

De demoiselles de Rochefort

Jacques Demy

France, 1967, 126 minutes, color

Although roundly panned on its initial release—it was, after all, the first film by director Jacques Demy following the magical The Umbrellas of Cherbourg—The Young Girls of Rochefort is an exhilarating wide-screen musical experience, resoundingly reconfirming Demy as the most imaginative and successful European filmmaker of the Hollywood musical style of the ’50s. (Watch for Gene Kelly in a supporting role here.) With its ’60s dress and decor and the friskiness of Gholain Cloquet’s restless yet supremely confident camera, the film nearly bursts with exhilaration and style.

Real-life sisters Catherine Deneuve and Françoise Dorléac play musical siblings who yearn to go to Paris and make something of themselves. George Chakiris (West Side Story) and Grover Dale are traveling pleasure-boat sailors in town for a trade fair/carnival held in the town square (the film was shot on location in Rochefort-sur-Mer). Adjacent to the square, the sisters’ mother (Danielle Darrieux) runs a coffee shop and dreams of being united with her former lover, Monsieur Darte (Michel Piccoli), who unknowingly to her runs a music shop just around the corner. Although nobody ends up paired with your first guess, everybody ends up happy.

Eddie Cockrell

In French with English subtitles


Fri., May 1, 8:45 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AFS001E

FREE
T

he term "cyberpunk" was first used in the mid-1980s to refer to the sci-fi literary dispatches of a small group of writers including William Gibson (Neuromancer, 1984), Bruce Sterling (Schismatrix, 1985), and Lewis Shiner (Frontier, 1984). These writers created a collective body of work that tore open the naive utopian veneer of golden age sci-fi. Bruce Sterling, in his preface to Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology (1986), points out that "certain themes spring up repeatedly in cyberpunk. The theme of body invasion: prosthetic limbs, implanted circuitry, cosmetic surgery, genetic alteration. The even more powerful theme of mind invasion: brain-computer interfaces, artificial intelligence, neurochemistry—techniques radically redefining the nature of humanity, the nature of the self." The cyberpunk aesthetic, fully realized in these literary works, was prefigured in other art of the period such as the films Bladerunner and Videodrome and in such industrial art as Survival Research Laboratories' mechanized performances and Thrashing Griswold’s experiments in art noise and self-mutilation.

While cyberpunk literature has been repeatedly pronounced dead and its seminal architects have tried to divorce themselves from the label, cyberpunk continues to have a tremendous influence on a burgeoning cyberart and cyberculture movement. Renegade computer hackers, industrial and techno musicians, and even researchers into virtual reality, artificial life, and other technologies designed to imitate or enhance the biological world, find the cyberpunk aesthetic to be fertile ground for their explorations of human and machine co-evolution. All of these cybervanguardists (the original cyberpunk authors included) have recognized the problems inherent in rendering the hyper-aesthetics of cyberpunk on the flat surface of the written word. For all its originality of vision, literary cyberpunk could only evoke the phenomenological intensity of other media. University of Iowa professor Brooks Landon, in his essay, “Bet On It: Cyber/Video/Punk/Performance,” notes the irony of this self-limitation: “...cyberpunk writing, the new realism of postmodern culture, almost demands a reassertion of the status of writing in that culture. In so far as cyberpunk writing directs our attention to MTV, Max Headroom, and computer-generated graphics which are rapidly becoming indistinguishable from ‘real’ images of our referential world, it compels us to question the nature of representation in our world—and our traditional assumptions about the nature of fiction and narrative.”

Many of today’s cyberartists, working in a variety of electronic media, reflect the aesthetics of cyberpunk literature that mapped the interface where high technologies and information economies meet the street. These artists use readily available technology and the cast-off artifacts of our post-industrial age as their principal art materials. While cyberpunk struggles to find expression beyond its original medium, as Landon notes, it "remains a significant term, a useful handle for creative and destructive acts across a range of media.”

A VIDEO EXHIBITION AND PANEL DISCUSSION

This program will focus on a selection of “creative and destructive acts” that can be viewed as antecedents or tributaries of the cyberpunk literary aesthetic. The video portion of the program will present vastly different methodologies and production values, yet themes mentioned in the essay above are central to these various video/computer/performative strategies.

The cybervideo program includes video documentation of two performance groups, Survival Research Laboratories (SRL) and COMFORT/CONTROL. SRL defines itself as an “organiza-

tion of creative technicians dedicated to re-directing the techniques, tools, and tenets of industry and science away from their typical manifestations of practicality or product.” SRL performances employ giant, often self-destructing, robotics. COMFORT/CONTROL produces large-scale, interactive mechanical spectacles that use unconventional machines with human passen-
gers, high-intensity lighting and large alpha-numeric information displays. Also featured in the program are computer-generated representations of “cyberspace,” industrial music video, excerpts of video based on the writings of William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, and examples of advanced computer imaging.

While many believe that the developing technology of Virtual Reality may prove to be the ultimate visionary technology on our horizon, the current expense of high-end VR places it far beyond the reach of the individual artists. This program, therefore, will be geared more toward the capabilities of less costly versions of computer imaging, video, and robotics.

Julia Pellesi
Programming Coordinator, Filmfest DC

Sun., May 3, 8:30 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

PANELISTS:

Mark Dery is a cultural critic whose writings have appeared in The New York Times, Elle, Interview, Rolling Stone, Keyboard, Semiotext(e), and MONDO 2000. He is currently at work on Cyberculture: Road Warriors, Console Cowboys and the Silicon Underground, a survey of cybercultures. His essay "Cyberculture" will appear in the Summer ‘92 issue of The Sank Atlantic Quarterly.

Judith Milton—online St. Jude—first made it into print in Steven Levy’s book Hackers, as a self-taught techie with revolutionary dreams. Her career as an anarcho-antisocialist went nowhere until she signed on as an original crew member at Reality Hackers. She now is senior editor of the cyberpunk dream machine, MONDO 2000 magazine.

Mark Pauline is founder and director of Survival Research Laboratories. Since 1979, SRL has staged 35 mechanized presentations in the US and Europe. Each performance consists of a unique set of ritualized interactions between machines, robots, and special-effects devices employed in developing themes of socio-political satire. At this writing, Mr. Pauline’s participation is tentative.

D.A. Therrien is founder of two Phoenix-based organizations, CRASHarts, a performance and exhibition space, and A.T.A.C. (Artist Technology Access Center). Along with collaborators Timothy North and Eric Holland, Therrien’s project COMPACT/CONTROL has performed in the US and Europe since 1983, including in CYBERarts International.

The panel discussion will be moderated by Gareth Branwyn, local contributing editor to MONDO 2000, associate editor of JOING JOING, and co-creator of Beyond Cyberpunk, a hypermedia computer book about cybermedia and cyberculture.

This program would not have been possible without the help of the following people, who were exceptionally generous with their time and expertise: Mark Dery, William Bard, Sally Roseenthal, Gareth Branwyn, St. Jude Milton, David Nuel, Rob Nuel, Senan Kehagi, Kip Joo, Mark Pauline, D.A. Therrien, Jochi Ito, Jerry Beck, Bruce Sterling, Leslie Gladys, Hiroshi Aikura, Eric Groule, Rob Campannel, Thom June, Bruce Kızı, Peter Von Brandenburg, Chris Langton, Felix Ecker, Words, Alan Hines, Scott Bukatan, Makoto Iihmatsu, Brooks Landon, Larry Hill, Steven Bode, Brian Langer, Tom Dennison, Alan Rubin, George Tsyh, and Tania Robinson.


TETSUO: THE IRON MAN

Shinya Tsukamoto

Japan, 1989, 63 minutes, black and white

A film, Tetsuo: The Iron Man is unforgettable. As narrative, however, it’s close to unsayable. A “metal fetishist” (as one set of film notes describes him)—first seen prowling through a derelict factory, slicing open his leg and inserting some cable into the wound—is struck by an automobile driven by an ordinary “salary-man.” The fetishist is not so seriously injured but his metal mania seems to be contagious. The next morning, the salary-man discovers a metallic shard spewing out of his face. Later, a bespectacled young woman who sits beside him on the subway undergoes a bizarre transformation. Mutating into a robot monster who, thrashing and twitching, pursues the terrified salary-man through the train station, she’s pulled forward by the inexorable will of her newly developed claw, an appendage at once mechanical and organic...

As demented as Iron Man is, it’s difficult to consider it an exploitation film. For one thing, the movie is too eccentric (and even too poetic) to pander to its audience. For another, the crazed fetishism of the narrative is complemented by the austere precision of Tsukamoto’s visuals. Iron Man has a hyper-reality clarity—its grotesque effects are rendered in pristine black and white, with every bead of sweat in ultrasharp focus. Indeed, the movie is basically an assemblage of textures. There is almost no dialogue*: the non-stop action is punctuated by a steady stream of surreal grunts and sound effects and accompanied by an industrial music score.

J. Haberman

Premiere Magazine

*The first time of dialogue (which will not be subtitled), are not used in comprehension.


Shown with

NEO-TOKYO

Rin Taro, Yoshiaki Kawajiri, Katsumi Otomo

Japan, 1987, 30 minutes, color

Glam rock and roll, anger, the drive for youth, the belief in the power of youth and in the future... NEO-TOKYO is an animated film compilation. Running Man, features the “Death Circles,” a grim, super-mechanized 21st century racetrack where the drivers are cybernetically linked to their cars. The Order to Stop Construction, made by the animator of Akira, is a black comedy about a multi-conglomerate’s efforts to use a network of robots to build a city in a tropical nation.

In Japanese with English subtitles

Print Source: Streamline Pictures, Telephone: (312) 657-7667.

Fri., May 1, 11:50 pm, Biograph Theatre, Code: BS0050L
**Rosebud Awards**

**THE SECOND ANNUAL ROSEBUD AWARDS**

Filmfest DC is proud to host the Rosebud Awards Showcase again this year. Rosebud offers nominated artists from D.C., Maryland, and Virginia new opportunities for public and professional exposure through its annual competition and showcases.

This year, the showcase features the seven category winners, including the film selected as "Best of Show." These winning works bring to the screen stories as diverse as the Mt. Pleasant riots, a romantic nightmare, the threat of censorship, the rhythm of rap, and the sheer force of human curiosity. From a $500 budget to big budget, from the whimsical efforts of a group of high school students to the sophisticated renderings of a seasoned documentarian, the breadth of independent creative vision is spanned.

Over 130 entries were received, 20 works were nominated, and seven selected as winners in the following categories: narrative feature, documentary short, music video, animation, art/experimental, documentary feature, and narrative short. This year's competition was open to works produced or released between January 1, 1990, and December 15, 1991.

Winning works were selected by independent panels of judges, whom we gratefully thank: Olanji Areke, Pat Aufderheide, Amy Ballard, Tracy Baungardner, Richard Calkins, Kimberly Camp, Myke Cham, Pat Dowell, Sharon Farmer, Bonnie Fitzgerald, Alana Goertz, Bobby Hill, Arthur Johnson, Jeff Krulik, Evelyn Marren, Kahi McCampbell-Vance, Glen Peary, Scott Perkins, Joel E. Siegel, Melinda Smith, David Valone, and A.C. Warden.

Rosebud is an independent group of volunteer film and video professionals and enthusiasts dedicated to encouraging support for the growth and development of the film and video industry in the Washington area. Rosebud 1992: Brian Tate, Chair; Natasha Reagin and Jeff Consigliole, Co-Chairs; Rosie Dempsey, Executive Director; Associates: Cheryl Adams, James Beardon, Paula Coffey, Willy Coffey, B.J. Hargrove, Kathleen Johnson, Willis Baxter Johnson, Jacqueline Jones, Gill Karp, Holly Moskerintz, Lisa Oleszak, Alan Rubin, Kay Shaw, Stacy Seryl, Minu Tahmassebi, Adele Thayer, Luis Vasquez-Ahumane, and Adrien Zubrin.

Rosebud is supported by Zalman Fishman and the Nightclub Fifth Colvmn; and funded in part by the D.C. Commission on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Mayor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development of Washington D.C. In-kind supporters include: the American Film Institute, the Biograph Theatre, Black Film Review, Capital Video Communications, CoE Island, D.C. Post, Filmfest DC, In Motion magazine, the Maryland Film Commission, the National Association of Broadcasters, Roland House, and the Virginia Film Office.

If you'd like to know more about Rosebud, please contact us at (202) 797-9081 or P.O. Box 21109, Washington, D.C. 20009. Rosebud is a project of First Shot Productions, Inc., a nonprofit arts promotion organization.

Thank you, and enjoy the show!

ROSEBUD 1992 WINNERS SHOWCASE

**S**at., May 2, 2:45 p.m., American Film Institute, Code: AF0502D

**Narrative Feature**

**SOAP OPERA**

Perry Schwartz, 53 minutes, video

In a series of monologues, what appears to be an uncomplicated love triangle of two women and a man is revealed to be an intriguing and tragic relationship.

**Documentary Short**

**DISTRICT OF CHAOS (Distrito del Quilombo)**

Fazini A. Illich and Miguel Moreno, 15:58 minutes, video

This provocative video documents last spring's riots in Mt. Pleasant, Washington's most explosive incident of civil unrest since the late '60s. On-the-street interviews and images are combined with a haunting sound track to reveal the disturbing reality of what lies just beneath the surface of the community. (Subtitled in English.)

**Music Video**

**BRAINCHILD**

Jeff Williams, 5:23 minutes, video

Set in the streets, this well edited, relevant, and challenging music video features the socially conscious rap group Black Oriented Soul Searchers (B.O.S.S.) in a song about racism and responsibility.

**Animation**

**L.D. STORIES**

Ruth Schwartz and Students, 7 minutes, video

This story explores the fantasies and feelings of a group of high school students at the Lab School of Washington. The world of those with learning disabilities ("L.D.") is revealed through an amusing blend of claymation and animation.

**Art/Experimental**

**4706 GRINDON AVENUE**

Gina Gilbert, 8:30 minutes, 16mm

We meet a real character, Chuck, who holds forth with a megaphone from his porch in Hamilton, a Baltimore neighborhood. Opinions and the opinionated, censorship and self-censorship are the issues here.

**Documentary Feature**

**THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION**

Sandra W. Bradley, 58 minutes, 16mm

An investigation of the many means people use to change their concept of reality—from obsession and addiction to transcendence and recovery. In this film of gentle surprises, the force of human curiosity is eloquently celebrated.

**Narrative Short and Best of Show**

**WISH YOU WERE HERE**

Adam Rogers, 17:50 minutes, 16mm

This comic tale of romantic nightmare follows Ben, a college student whose weekend trip to visit his long-distance girlfriend turns out to be less (and more) than he expected.

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**TETSUO II: THE BODY HAMMER**

Shinya Tsukamoto

Japan, 1991, 87 minutes, color

Tetsuji Tomo is an unassuming family man living in Tokyo with his wife Kana and his son Minori. Because he was adopted as a youth, Tetsuji's own past is something of a mystery. Disoriented visions of this little-understood past keep interrupting his otherwise normal life.

Things take a drastic turn for the worse, however, when young Minori is abducted by two members of a mysterious gang during a family shopping jaunt. Tetsuji explodes with rage as Minori's captors elude him. This fit of anger touches off a bizarre mutation in the anguished father. Later, he is caught and taken to a secret location where scores of gang members are undergoing violent physical training. He is forced to undergo medical experiments overseen by their leader, known only as "The Guy" (played by director Shinya Tsukamoto). During the experiments, overstimulation of Tetsuji's brain intensifies his mutation. Part of his body is transformed into a lethal "cyber-gun" that involuntarily fires, enabling him to escape. The perpetrators then abduct his wife to lure Tetsuji back to their headquarters but this time, his cyber-gun mutation complete, Tetsuji unleashes his vengeance.

Like his first feature film, **Tetsuji: The Iron Man**, which was, in the words of J. Hoberman, "a dark study of sex and metal," **Tetsuji II: The Body Hammer** draws heavily on such elements of Japanese pop culture as sci-fi manga comics and Godzilla movies. Often hailed as Japan's answer to Sam Raimi, David Cronenberg, and David Lynch, Tsukamoto began directing Super-8 films at 14. Five years later, he set up a number of mobile cinemas in and around Tokyo. Tsukamoto also runs a fringe theater group, Kajiya Theater, and Tetsuji's lead actor, Tomoroh Taguchi, heads up the Tokyo-based band Hachikaguri.

Julia Pelosi

In Japanese with English Subtitles


**Shown with May 2 screening**

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER**

Gus Van Zant

USA, 1991, 3 minutes, black and white

William S. Burroughs says a deadpan grace as director Gus Van Zant (**Drugstore Cowboy, My Own Private Idaho**) engages in matchless flag-burning—drawn straight from the television network sign-off genre.

Sat., May 2, 11:00 a.m., Biograph Theatre, Code: B0502L

Mon., May 4, 10:00 p.m., C.D. Jennifer, Code: B0504L
New German Cinema

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Doris Dörrie; Germany, 1991, 110 minutes, color

Hailed as director Doris Dörrie’s best film since Men...her 1985 art-house smash hit, Happy Birthday is a solid yet sandy surprise that does exquisite justice to the delicate genre.

Life is tough for Frankfurt-based private eye Karel Kayanaka. He can’t even speak a word of Turkish—he was raised by German foster parents—yet he must endure the daily indignities of ethnic slurs and abuse that include the swatting of “Camel” over Karel on his office nameplate. When he is hired by a beautiful and mysterious Turkish woman to investigate her husband’s accidental death and the whereabouts of her estranged, well-heeled husband, Kayanaka is soon up to his neck in scandal, intrigue, and corpses.

The issue of gastarbeiter (guest workers) has long been a volatile one in German society and cinema (treated, for example, in Fassbinder’s All: Fear Eats the Soul and Katzelmacher), and there was undoubtedly an element of risk involved in approaching the subject head-on. Yet thanks to a breezy, self-mocking performance by Hans Czyzynska as the hapless Kayanaka and Dörrie’s superb storytelling skills, Happy Birthday is at once a sly, slick tribute to the private eye genre and a deeply felt meditation on race and class struggles in contemporary Germany. By turns macho and mellow, a saint and a slob, Kayanaka is a contemporary anti-hero in the classic mold—and that’s one endorsement that needs no translation.

Eddie Cockrell
In German and Turkish with English subtitles


Thurs., April 30, 6:30 pm, with panel of German directors, American Film Institute, Code: AF0450A
Sat., May 2, 4:00 pm, UDC Auditorium, Code: UA0502A

WINCKELMANN’S TRAVELS
Winckelmann Reisen
Jan Schütte; Germany, 1990, 80 minutes, black and white

Ernst Winckelmann is an enigma. A salesman for Pohl Products, he travels throughout Schleswig-Holstein selling—or, more precisely, trying to sell—Swiss-made “Biological Shampoo.” Unfortunately, Winckelmann is not very good at his job. Meanwhile, in the Barnekhe district of Hamburg, his young girlfriend Aline, frustrated at his inattention, practices self-help language instructions for a job in Belgium and pulls beers at her father’s bar while he dreams of a better life in Miami Beach. Winckelmann finds it impossible to commit to Aline (the seems to carry a torch for her ex-wife Hilde, an East German), but he doesn’t contradict his overbearing boss when Aline is mistaken for Hilde at a joyless company gathering—which infuriates the fragile yet determined young woman. When Hilde’s new husband dumps their daughter on Winckelmann’s doorstep and Aline decides to take a stand, each of them discovers something new about the other.

“Winckelmann’s Travels is a comedy of errors about the sadness of missed opportunities,” says director Jan Schutte. “This is a film about ordinary people whose lives seldom arouse any great interest. During the shooting of the film our stance towards those portrayed could best be summed up as ‘affectionate irony.’ Yet there is great dignity and beauty in the film, as well, the evocative black-and-white photography and the mellow, often rakish jazz score lend a sobriety and warmth to what Schütte insists is a “completely unspectacular” story.

Eddie Cockrell
In German with English subtitles


Fri., May 1, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0501A
Sat., May 10, 3:30 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0501B
CHRISTOPHER KUHL

IMAGES OF MOROCCO
Recent paintings and Works on Paper

May 5- June 6, 1992
Reception: Thursday, May 5 (6-8pm)
Gallery Talk: Saturday, May 9 (3-5pm)
Slide lecture with the artist: Thursday, June 4 (7-8pm)

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Set during the social upheavals of the mid-'70s, By Nightfall tells the story of a middle-aged communist university professor (Marcello Mastroianni, now firmly established as the grandfather of Italian cinema), who would rather putter in his garden in an upper-class Roman neighborhood than involve himself with the dissenting students and their political struggles. His sheltered life is disrupted by the arrival of his son’s five-year-old daughter and his girlfriend (Sandrine Bonnaire), a working-class woman who is torn between her anti-bourgeois principles and her yearning for old-fashioned family affection. With unpretentious visuals from first-time cinematographer Paolo Carena and disarming performances, in particular by Bonnaire, the film has a freshness and lightness of touch that is a further indication of Archibuigi’s firm directorial skills.

John Francis Lane
35th London Film Festival, 1991

In Italian with English subtitles


Wed., May 6, 8:30 pm, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0505A
Thurs., May 7, 8:45 pm, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0507E

A selection of short films from 5 talented new filmmakers

CARNE
Gaspar Noe
France, 1991, 40 minutes, color

C arne lasts only 40 minutes, but Gaspar Noe’s immense talent explodes across every frame. The plot itself is strange enough: A butcher in old Paris spends his days slaughtering horses and his nights caring for his bizarre and mute teenage daughter. He is ready to act out his impulsive hatreds. Even before things go mad, however, Noe’s black humor slices into reality and out runs cold blood—the film is full of references to cinema traditions of blood, butchery, and obsession. Godard’s influence is also there, and Noe uses print texts in an outrageous manner.

David Overy
16th Toronto International Festival of Festivals, 1991

ISLAND OF FLOWERS
Jorge Furtado; Brazil, 1989, 12 minutes, color

B einginin, innocently enough, as a parody of an instructional film following a lone tomato from planting to harvest, from transport to supermarket. Island of Flowers widens in scope to reveal the social and political underpinnings of such seemingly mundane transactions.

KISS
Chris Newby; Great Britain, 1991, 8 minutes, color

K is is both a celebration and an explanation of this universal, indispensable, yet still somewhat puzzling, act of love.

PHOTOCOPY CHA CHA
Chel White; USA, 1991, 4 minutes, color

T rue art in the age of mechanical reproduction—a rhythmic celebration of a photocopier’s cinematic potential.

A YEAR ALONG THE ABANDONED ROAD
Morten Skallerud; Norway, 1991, 12 minutes, color

A portrait of a deserted fisherman’s village consisting of a single shot that encompasses the sights and sounds of an entire year.

Sponsored by the Arab American Cultural Foundation

CHEB
Rachid Bouchareb
France/Algeria, 1991, 92 minutes, color

Cheb is the Arabic word for young, and in his film of the same name Rachid Bouchareb charts a young man’s journey through an alien culture that is supposed to be his own.

Merwan is a 19-year-old Algerian who has lived in France since he was one year old. Deported by the French government on grounds of a misdemeanour, he finds himself in a country whose language and customs he doesn’t understand. From the moment of his arrival, he feels unwelcome, an outsider, practically an outcast. These feelings only intensify when the Algerian authorities deprive him of his passport and ship him off to do military service in the southern Algerian desert. The isolation is unbearable, and with the help of Malika, a young girl as rootless as himself, Merwan decides to return to the only homeland he has ever known: France.

Technically, Cheb is almost a road movie. The experience of traveling, moving, and observing is insistently camera travels alongside Merwan as he passes through Algeria by foot, plane, bus, truck, car, helicopter. Bouchareb, an Algerian citizen who was born and lives in France, took a penetrating journey through the landscape of the American dream in his first feature film, Batou Rouge. In Cheb, his itinerary shifts to confront “the myth of homecoming with the reality of daily life in Algeria.” The dialogue is sparse and the landscape of town, village, and desert, accompanied by the music of Algerian composer Sufi Bouqel, articulates instead the double culture inherent in the life of the “Beurs”—the Arabs who have come to France.

Melissa Dier
41st Berlin International Film Festival, 1991

In Arabic and French with English subtitles


Reception following May 4 screening at Alif Gallery, 1204 31st Street, NW
Mon., May 4, 6:30 pm, Key Theatre (film and reception $10.00), Code: KI0504A
Thurs., May 7, 8:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: BI0507E
World View

Jaime Osorio Gomez describes in his film debut.

Santiago and Josefina, who lead a marriage stiffened by politeness, are each affected differently by the events. While Santiago is honestly worried, Josefina concentrates on baking a birthday cake for her friend, Laura, who lives across the street. Santiago has to take the cake to Laura, but can’t return home because snipers are shooting at anything that moves in the street. Both begin talking about the frustration in their lives. Suddenly, the reality that all three have tried to ignore begins to interfere with their comfortable existence.

42nd Berlin International Film Festival, 1992
In Spanish with English subtitles

Fri., May 8, 7:00 PM, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0008E
Sat., May 9, 6:30 PM, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0009A

American Premiere
THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Obecna skola
Jan Sverak
Czechoslovakia, 1991, 97 minutes, color

A
ttersweet, slice-of-life comedy in the best Czechoslovak tradi-
tion, this delightful first feature follows 10-year-old Eda as she begins to sort out life’s mysterious ways and the idiosyncracies of virtually every adult around her.

The setting is the Prague suburbs immediately after World War II, and Eda is at that age where he is making key choices about the values he learns from authority figures in his life. (It doesn’t help that the current marching orders call for the creation of a model socialist state.) His father is dependable but unremarkable, holding down a routine job at the local power plant; on the other side of the coin is the prickly Igor Hinzdo, the flambouyant new teacher hired to peruse Eda’s rowdy all-boy class. It is only when both men are put to a test during a school outing that Eda learns what real heroism is—and which man possesses it.

Featuring small but distinctive turns by beloved comic Boleslav Polivka (as a neighborhood convinced that his wife is about to drive him into the grave and so dresses appropriately at all times in his best suit), Irena Pavlskova (so memorable in “Time of the Sor-

袒s”), and directors Karel Kachyn and Jan Menzel, “The Element-
ary School” was written by and stars Zdenek Sverak and directed by Sverak’s son Jan (who directed the memorable Oscar-winning short, “Bipast”). At this writing the film is one of the Final Five in the race for the Best Foreign Film Oscar, proving once again that the benevolent nonpolitical satire of the Czech and Slovak cinema has survived the transition from socialism to free-market economy with its grace, wisdom, and wit fully intact.

Fernando and Katiina Cockrell
In Czech with English subtitles

Thr., April 30, 6:30 PM, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0430A

FINDING CHRISTA
Camille Billops, James Hatch
USA, 1991, 55 minutes, color

In 1962, Camille Billops made the painful decision to put her four-year-old daughter, Christa, up for adoption. She surren-
dered her child in desperation, knowing that in all probability she would never see Christa again. In 1980, 22-year-old Christa locat-
ed her mother, and together they begin to search for each other—psychologically and emotionally—after nearly 20 years of separa-
tion. This unusual film combines the most personal subject matter with documentary conventions and docu-drama techniques. The openness of the personal revelation is inspiring, and, despite painful memories for everyone in the family, that openness has produced a high-energy and high-spirited testimonial to the strength and joy that can come from taking such an enormous personal risk.

Key Art
16th Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals, 1991

Sponsored by the Black Film Institute of the University of the District of Columbia
Sat., May 2, 4:00 PM, UDC, Bigl, 41, Room A-03. Shown with in Search of Our Fathers. Special guest Christa Victoria. Code: DA0502A
Thr., May 7, 8:00 PM, Hirshorn Museum, FREE
Fri., May 8, 8:00 PM, Hirshorn Museum, FREE

GAS, FOOD, AND LODGING
Allison Anders
USA, 1991, 100 minutes, color

The story of Nora (Brooke Adams), Pull Off Plaza Truck Stop waitress, and the growing pains of her two teenage daughters may sound like yet another single-mom martyr movie—“Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore meets Mermaids”—but there’s more here: About the costs of infatuations, the longing for romance, the value of men as husbands, lovers, and fathers, and the meaning of “family.”

Trudi (Ione Sky) already has a reputation but isn’t as cynical as she likes to seem. Little sister Shado (Fairuz Balk) dotes on re-

runs of Mexican melodramas and plots to find Mom a man. Bril-
liant Pebbles in desert caves, Xanada in Laramie, New Mexico, and Donovan Leitch (but not as himself) add sparkle to their warmth.

Based on Richard Peck’s novel Don’t Look and It Won’t Hurt

and enlightened by the sensibilities acquired from her work on Paris, Texas and Border Radio, Allison Anders’ polished first solo feature was a sensation at the Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals.

Kelly Gordon
Producers: Daniel Hassel, Seth M. Witterman, William Evett. Screenplay: Allison Anders. Cinematogra-

American Premiere
GET THEE OUT! (GO AWAY)
Dimitry Astrakhan
Russia, 1991, 90 minutes, color and black and white

His deeply affecting new Lenfilm production communicates the plight of Russian Jews who found themselves vulnerable to persecution in turn-of-the-century pogroms. Powerful chapters in Russian history come to cinematic light in Get Tree Out, which signals a compelling talent in first-time director Dimitry Astrakhan.

Enterprise trader Morl Rabinovich (O. Merevobilaksev) has brought his family comforts a step above those of his neigh-

bors in his close-knit Ukrainian village. He’s a generous host to all,

including long-staying relatives and a foolish, hard-drinking

Gentile neighbor who’s always bemoaning his sorrows. Morl is
GOLDEN BRAID
Paul Cox
Australia, 1990, 91 minutes, color
The latest film from Australia's most interesting auteur, Paul Cox, is one of his best and encompasses the themes and obsessions of his earlier work (which include Lonely Hearts and Man of Pleasure) in an intriguing and sometimes provocative package loosely based on a Guy de Maupassant short story.

Cox has often dealt with obsession in his work, and his protagonist here, Bernard (Chris Haywood), fits well and truly into this pattern. The story of a clockmaker and antique collector who finds a perfectly preserved braid of hair in a cabinet's secret com-

BLACK FILM PIONEERS: OSCAR MICHEAUX AND THE LINCOLN MOTION PICTURE COMPANY
As a result of Jim Crow in the South and de facto segregation in the North over one hundred film companies were formed to supply the nation's ghetto theaters, which had appeared. By the late 1920s, these theaters numbered some seven hundred. Films produced for these theaters and their all-black audiences typically followed simple, formulistic storylines and set no technical or dramatic standards in the burgeoning American cinema. Yet, it was only in these films that the African American community saw itself reflected on the screen without the condescension and malice characteristic of mainstream film from D.W. Griffith's notorious Birth of a Nation (1915) onward.

Among the first of these black film companies was the Lincoln Motion Picture Company. Incorporated in 1916, the Lincoln Motion Picture Company produced ten films, beginning with The Realization of a Negro's Ambition, a two-reel, rag-to-riches melodrama. The hero, a Tuskegee Institute graduate, was played by Noble Johnson, the driving force behind Lincoln. It was Johnson, a popular actor of the times often referred to as "the race's daredevil movie star," along with his brother George, who conceived and formed the company. However, after only three Lincoln pictures, Universal forced Noble Johnson to decide between a career in Hollywood films and the meager existence offered by a life supported by race movies. Universal claimed that the success of the Lincoln movies was based on Johnson's build-up in Universal serials and complained that Lincoln pictures were outperforming those serials in black theaters. Noble Johnson chose Hollywood and resigned not only as Lincoln's principal attraction but also as president of the company.

In 1918, Clarence Brooks replaced Johnson as Lincoln's star but, at the time, was too inexperienced to affect the box office in the way his predecessor had. He started in only two Lincoln pictures. Still, Lincoln continued to make films until 1923, when the combination of a flu epidemic, increasing interest in the development of expensive sound technology, and a declining economy drove all but one of the race movie producers out of business.

The one who survived was Oscar Micheaux. Because of his industry and tenacity as well as a shroud of mystery surrounding his background, Micheaux remains the most compelling figure in the history of African American filmmaking. Though many of the details of his life and enterprise are not known, it is certain that, in all, he produced at least 34 films between 1918 and 1948. American Film has described him as a combination of "Samuel Goldwyn and Samuel Goldwyn." Micheaux began his career as a novelist, incorporating the popular self-determinist sentiments of Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington not only into his novel's themes but in their marketing as well. Micheaux often promoted his books door-to-door and in gatherings sponsored by black churches, social groups, and professionals. His self-styled entrepreneurship gained him a wide-spread reputation—so much so that soon after the creation of the Lincoln Motion Picture Company, the Johnson brothers made a bid to turn one of Micheaux's novels, The Homesteader, into a film. Micheaux rejected the proposal because Lincoln refused to allow him to direct the film himself. Already bewitched by film, Micheaux produced The Homesteader himself in 1918, with financing from a group of Oklahoma farmers.

Over the next nearly thirty years, Micheaux's films introduced a legion of black actors and actresses to the American public, including Lena Horne, Lorenzo Tucker, Ethel Mose, and Spencer Williams, who went on to star as Andy in the television version of "Amos & Andy" as well as to produce his own films. The vast majority of Micheaux's films were closely modeled on contemporary Hollywood B-movies—western, gangster movies, and the like. In an effort to counteract Hollywood images of the time, Micheaux's characters usually stayed as far away from the ghetto as possible. Consequently, Micheaux's more serious films, such as God's Step Children (1917), centered on the black bourgeoisie and such dilemmas as passing.

As film historian Donald Bogle concluded, "He created a fantasy world where blacks were just as affluent, just as educated, just as 'cultured,' just as well-mannered—in short, just as white—as America. Though Micheaux's films—with their shameless promotion of the world of hair-straighteners and skin-lighteners—might embarrass people today, they represent an important part of black film and social history."

Jacque Jones
Followed by a Panel
Participants:
Pearl Bower is an archivist, producer, programmer, and expert on African and African American film. She is a founder of African Diaspora Images, a collection of historic and contemporary black films, and is co-director of Midnight Rambles, a forthcoming documentary on the history of American race movies.

Jane Gaines is the director of the Program in Film and Video at Duke University. She is the author of Shape of Shame, a book on black silent film.

Clyde Taylor is a professor of literature and film studies at Tufts University, author of numerous articles on international black film, and screenwriter of Midnight Rambles.

Jacque Jones is Editor of Black Film Review.

God's Step Children
Oscar Micheaux
USA, 1937, 65 minutes, black and white
Black director Oscar Micheaux's deliciously enjoyable soap opera is all about Naomi, a sweet-faced, little high-yellow girl deserted by her mother and then cared for by a kindly Negro woman (played by Micheaux's wife, Alice B. Russell). Naomi's got problems, though, when she's sent to an all-colored school. This little mulatto is weary of her race and anxious to cross the color line. When she sets the school into a tizzy because of a scandalous rumor she spreads about a teacher, Naomi's promptly packed off to a convent, only to return home some twelve years later. She marries a dark-skinned black man, has a child whom she dumps, falls for her stepbrother, and finally gets her wish when, indeed, she is temporarily able to pass for white.

Shot on a shoestring budget with minimal resources at hand, independent director/producer Micheaux succeeds in raising several social issues in God's Step Children. Micheaux shot several scenes on location, but when funds ran out, he filmed some sections of his movie at the homes of friends. The result was a stark reality in the film which a Hollywood studio could never recreate.

Film critics have exhausted themselves studying and discussing the cultural and sociological undertones of God's Step Children. Perhaps, Micheaux just wanted his viewers to sit back and enjoy his film.

Donald Bogle
Production Company: Micheaux Pictures Corporation. Scrutinize: Oscar Micheaux. Prin-
cipal Cast: Jacqueline Lewis, Ethel Moss, Carmen Northwest, Gloria Press, Alice B. Russell.

Wed., May 6, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, FREE
World View

American Premiere

HISTOIRE(S) DU CINÉMA
Chapter 1a: Toutes les Histoires (for Mary Meerson)
Chapter 1b: Une Histoire Seule (for John Cassavetes)

Jean-Luc Godard

France, 1990, 100 minutes, color and black and white, videotape

To show that the history of film is, first of all, not history but consisting of histories—and then show that all histories are intertwined with the history of the 20th century. Film history is the only visible part of the history, and, from this point of view, it is the history of the world that belongs to film history. Not showing a chronological order, names, or dates, but a gust of wind—starting from the basic idea that the entire 20th century was the stage for a merciless fight between images and sound (the newborn) and words (the grown-up, the government).

Jean-Luc Godard

Histories du cinéma’s approach to the history of film examines the determination of the limits of what filmmakers have the right to show—from La Bite Humaine to West Side Story—in an effort to establish what the cinema’s responsibilities really are. Histories du cinéma emphasizes the influence that film exercises on viewers: the impact of an image, the different realities that it presents, and the various frames of mind it engendered. Godard’s film offers a unique way of looking at a unique art form.

40th Berlin International Film Festival, 1990

In French with English subtitles

Production Companies: JLG Films/Vega Film. Producer: Jean-Luc Godard. Screenplay: Jean-Luc Godard. Editor: Jean-Luc Godard.

Sat., May 9, 4:30 pm, Embassy of France, Code: FE0509A
Sat., May 9, 9:30 pm, Embassy of France, Code: FE0509E

NOUVELLE VAGUE

Jean-Luc Godard

Switzerland/France, 1990, 90 minutes, color

At the age of 60, Jean-Luc Godard remains le grand provocateur, presenting a work that matches in its cinematic mastery his first film, Breathless, and the celebrated Nouvelle Vague (“New Wave”) it helped to launch. His latest film is a meditation on beauty, silence, and the inadequacy of language to register the richness of experience.

The plot, as usual from Godard, is slim. A rich, beautiful businesswoman (Dominica Giordano) accidentally injures a hitchhiker (Alain Delon) and takes him home to her vast country estate. They enter into a complex relationship, fueled by sexual desire and divided by gender antagonism and class differences. Godard does not ignore the paradox that the seamless beauty of this wсход world is won at the expense of the many: His achronistic soundtrack imagines a utopian future in which these social customs will vanish—when the gulf between rich and poor will be only a quaint memory. For Godard there is a timeless world apart from politics—the lush, random montage that comprises the material world. From breathtaking images and odd juxtapositions of sound and silence he creates an obscure, yet luminously beautiful film.

34th San Francisco International Film Festival, 1991

In French with English subtitles


Sat., May 7, 6:45 pm, C.O. Jenner, Code: AF0507A
Sat., May 9, 8:30 pm, Embassy of France, Code: FX0509A

THE GULF WAR...AND AFTER

Harb Al-Khalig...Wa ba’da

Bohane Alouie, Nouri Bouzid, Mustapha Darkaoui, Nejia Ben Mabrouk, Elia Suleiman

Tunisia, 1991, approximately 100 minutes, color, Video

Sponsored by Arab American Cultural Foundation

At the 1991 Rotterdam Film Festival, the Gulf War raged, eight filmmakers representing Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, and Tunisia decided that each would make a short film offering their Arab interpretation of events. To date five of the films have been completed: Bohane Alouie’s Black Night Eidilise is about a Lebanese filmmaker who frets over the thematic approach to a film about the war that he has been commissioned to make from his base in Paris; Nouri Bouzid’s It’s Sheherezade They’re Killing tells of an Arab family gathering in Tunis during Ramadan, torn apart over discussion about the heroes and victims of the war; Mustapha Darkaoui’s The Silence follows a film and theatre production group as they are increasingly distracted from their current project by the desire to revisit Iraq and film the changes wrought in the decade since their last trip. Nejia Ben Mabrouk’s Research of Shama follows the filmmaker as she travels to Baghdad in search of a girl whose face she has seen on television, only to find the inevitable personal tragedy caused by the destruction of war; and Elia Suleiman’s Homage by Assassination, in which a Palestinian screenwriter attempting to finish a script in New York City becomes increasingly distraught over news of the war. Bold and thought-provoking, these films mark honest and impassioned efforts by their makers to grapple with the grim realities of war and the often conflicting loyalties that spring from any conflict.

Eddie Cockrell

In Arabic with English subtitles


Showed with CAIRO AS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUSSEF CHAHINE

Al-Qahira Minawara Bi Ahla

Youssef Chahine

Egypt, 1991, 23 minutes, color

Sponsored by Arab American Cultural Foundation

Cairo imaginatively recreates the escalating everyday tensions of contemporary Egyptians. An exquisite précis by the Arab world’s greatest director, Youssef Chahine.

In Arabic and French with English subtitles

Thurs., May 7, 9:15 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0507E
Fri., May 8, 10:15 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0508L
**THE HAIRDRESSER’S HUSBAND**

*Le Mari de la Coiffeuse*

Patrice Leconte

France, 1990, 85 minutes, color

The incomparably droll Jean Rochefort triumphs in this gently absurdist fable about Antoine, a man who since his youth has been enchanted with having his hair cut (“the shampoo was the first delight... he intones in the deadpan but sincere narration with which he remembers his story). Far from tonsorial madness, this impulse has the soothing yet tingly effect on him that opera or classical music has on others, and the equation of scissors and sex becomes as natural in his world as wine and cheese.

Although his announcement at a tender age that his goal in life is to marry a hairdresser is not well-received (“Tell me why I did that?” moans his well-meaning father after impulsively beholding him on hearing this news), Antoine knows what he wants and does just that over 30 years later: The film is the story of his conquest of and life with Mathilde (the luminous Anna Galéria), who runs the sun-drenched Isidore Caiffière. The contemporary scenes of him watching her work in the shop are intercut with Antoine’s childhood memories of Luc-sur-Mer, that gives shape and meaning to his demeanor in the present. The patrons who move through the shop offer a charming look at life’s passing show, and throughout Antoine entertains his wife by dancing to the Arabic music he blasts on the tape deck (the songs are by Rahah, Raheb Alame, and Fairuz).

Patrice Leconte’s subtly erotic follow-up to *Mon mari Heureux* confirms his talent as a storyteller of comic wisdom and blessed faith in human foibles—trains of endurance which are strong enough to weather the inevitable climactic tragedy and reaffirm the power of love. Moviemakers who indulge in The Hairdresser’s Husband will never again approach a beauty salon or barber shop without their own tingle—how you handle the sensation is your business.

_Eddie Cockrell_

*In French with English subtitles*


_Print Source:
Tristar Pictures, 9000 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Telephone: (213) 975-7775 Fax: (213) 275-7450.

_Showed with_

**THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BREASTS IN THE WORLD**

**THE LAST ACT**

Parde-Ye Akhar

Varuzh Karim-Mashi

Iran, 1991, 105 minutes, color

The outstanding event at the Ninth Fair International Festival last year in Tehran was the phenomenal success of Varuzh Karim-Mashi, whose first feature film, *The Last Act*, had even the most sceptical critics saying that he had soared beyond all expectations.

_The Last Act_ is set in Tehran during the years before the outbreak of World War II. A middle-aged dramatist and his older sister—the only survivors of a rich family related to the extinct Qajar dynasty—scheme to deprive their sister-in-law of the family inheritance bequeathed to her by deceased husband. The brother prepares a devilish plan in the form of a play that he enacts with a group of itinerant performers—lodged in the house as servants—in order to drive the young heiress to madness and suicidal or accidental death. After the intervention of the police, and a change of heart on the part of the dramatist, the last act is changed to a happy end.

Much of the plot is staged in an old mansion with a cellared haunted by the spectres of bygone generations. Karim-Mashi effectively intertwines his intricate plot into this Gothic ambience, and with his controlled use of lighting, camera movement, and editing, creates a tense, suspenseful atmosphere in the depth as well as on the surface of the picturals. *The Last Act* is a happy event in Iranian cinema and could easily be compared with the better technical and artistic achievements in world cinema.

Muhammad H. Amin

*Cinema: The Asian Film Magazine*

In Farsi with English subtitles


_Sun_, May 3, 2:45 pm, AMC Union Station, **Code: U80501D**

_Wed., May 6, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station, **Code: U80506A**_

_Wed., May 2, 4:00 pm, **UCC, Bldg. 41, Room A-03. Shown following Finding Christa. Special guest Varuzh Williams. Code: DA0502A_

**THE LOST LANGUAGE OF CRANES**

Nigel Finch

United Kingdom, 1991, 87 minutes, color, videotape

We are introduced to two gay men: Philip (Brian Cox), young and personalable, embarking on what he hopes will become a permanent relationship, and Owen (Angus Macfadyen), middle-aged and cloistered, slipping away from his family once a week to visit a gay porno cinema. Suddenly it is revealed that the two men are father and son—and when Philip decides to come out to his parents, he unwittingly precipitates an irrevocable upheaval within the family. Confronted with the truth about his son’s life, Owen sees that he cannot continue to live a lie, and, despite his...
love for his wife and the comfort of his heterosexual life, he sets out on the difficult but rewarding journey toward acceptance of his gay identity. In taking over the familiar conventions of television drama about middle-class family life, The Last Language of Cranes explores its gay themes with great sensitivity and impeccable dramatic skill.

Andrew Britton
25th London Film Festival, 1991


Shown with May 5 screening
THE DISCO YEARS
Robert Lee King
USA, 1991, 20 minutes, color
A coming out story set in the decade of macramé and Dance Fever.

SHALL WE DANCE
Brian Sloan
USA, 1992, 15 minutes, color
A young cadet finds his homosexuality going up in smoke.

Tues., May 5, 9:30 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0508E
Sat., May 9, 6:30 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AX909A

ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA
Wong Fei Hung
Tsu Hark
Hong Kong, 1991, 121 minutes, color, CinemaScope

After a lull of three decades, this film is number 99 about Wong Fei Hung, one of the greatest martial artists of Southern China—and hang on to your seats, kung fu fans, because the one and only Tsui Hark (Peking Opera Blues) has outdone himself this time with a sumptuous costume drama that has it all.

In the final quarter of the last century, Master Wong (former mainland action star Li Liang-chi and Jet Li, who now lives in America) runs the best kung fu clinic in town. Yet he is continuously challenged on all sides. On one hand, the evil Shaobo Gang (led by the ruthless Big Brother) is running an illegal slave ring under the guise of an immigration service and generally giving Wong and his fervent disciples a hard time. On the other hand, kung fu legend "Iron Robe" Yim has decided to open a clinic of his own and aims to run Wong's operation out of town. Wong also has to look after his dithering distant relative Aunt Ye and try to stay out of the path of the bumbling gua dao (literally, "devils")—in this case the assertive yet ineffectual provincial forces from Britain and the U.S.—and the opium trade.

Forget all that, however, as fans of the genre gladly sacrifice subtlety of plot for non-stop action, and this Hark delivers on a grand scale. Highlights include the reluctantly westernized Wong's ingenious uses for his new bumbusts in a pang rumble and his final showdown with Iron Robe, an intricately choreographed martial arts delight set in a warehouse full of cotton bales and rickety wooden ladders. "What's the point of being a kung fu expert? Can't make a living at it," whines Iron Robe to Wong before attempting to kick the stuffing out of him, but audiences can live it up at this year's Filmfest with a glowing example of a genre that, sadly, has all but disappeared from Washington screens.

Eddie Cockrell
In Mandarin and English with English subtitles

Fri., May 1, 7:00 pm, C.O. Jennifer, Code: A0501E
Sat., May 2, 8:45 pm, UDC Auditorium, Code: UA050E

PEPI, LUCY, BOM, AND OTHER GIRLS ALL LIKE MOM
Pedro Almodóvar
Spain, 1980, 80 minutes, color

After making a half-dozen shorts on super 8 and a 16mm film, Pedro Almodóvar graduated to 35mm with the raunchy, sur-

many of the cults are mainly interested in power and money. The reason for the cult phenomenon is that the Jewish nation has lost its religion in the last few years. The state of Israel itself was an ideal, and people who need some sort of ideal are drawn to these cults."

Judy Stone
San Francisco Chronicle
In Hebrew with English subtitles

Thurs., May 7, 7:00 pm, C.O. Wisconsin (film and meet the director reception $10.00), Code: WA0507E
Sat., May 9, 10:00 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0509L

SHUROO
Savi Gabizon
Israel, 1990, 83 minutes, color
Co-sponsored by the Embassy of Israel and the DC Jewish Community Center

For Israelis who are tired of films about war and the Palestinian problem, the hit of the year is Shuroo, which just won the Wolgin award for best film of the year at the Jerusalem Film Festival. It's the story of a schlemiel who becomes a kind of guru when he writes a book advising people to feel more and think less. Soon, he's surrounded by a group of middle-class Tel Aviv groupies with all the angst of contemporary urban life and flaky enough to have kept audiences laughing through their gas masks during the Gulf War. Shuroo was awarded six out of ten prizes by the newly formed Israeli Academy of Cinema.

The idea for Shuroo came to writer-director Savi Gabizon when he found that relationships with two friends deteriorated after they joined cult groups and were unable to talk about their new affiliation with any humor, and he wrote the first script while still a film student. "It was more like a speech against joining cults than a script," Gabizon admits. He took it to Jonathan Asher, a professor who encouraged him to develop the script for a feature film and who eventually became its producer. Gabizon added a lot of jokes, and soon Shuroo was less a film about ideas and more about people.

"For many years we haven't had a successful comedy which isn't lowbrow," Asher notes. "At first, the government-supported Israeli Fund for the Promotion of Quality Films found it difficult to accept a film not perceived to be about an important subject. It's a comedy, but sometimes it's hard to see the meaning hidden behind the story." Gabizon adds, noting the high Jewish membership in many cult groups throughout the world, "There are many little messages that fit what I think about people and life. [I believe]
World View

the street and rip into him. Almodóvar described the film as being amoral, aggressive, and disagreeable, but it is a fascinating study of how our private values—in this case, a policeman’s—can become contaminated by our professional lives. Revealing in caricatures and inspired by a comic madness, the film is a catalogue of the concerns that would surface in Almodóvar’s later work.

Piers Handling
12th Toronto Festival of Festivals, 1987

In Spanish with English subtitles


Fri., May 1, 9:00 pm, C.O. Jenifer, Code: JB0501E
Sun., May 3, 9:00 pm, C.O. Jenifer, Code: JB0503E

STAR TIME
Alexander Cassini
USA, 1991, 87 minutes, color

While it may be old news that television can be a damaging influence on those easily seduced by the illusion of fame, one of the most revelatory and memorable American independent feature films presented in January at the Sundance Film Festival was this provocative and multilayered allegorical drama. First-time director Alexander Cassini (a former Directing Fellow at the American Film Institute) casts the problem in an intriguing new light...

Henry Pinkle (Michael St. Gerard of Hairpray) is a loner whose desperate yearning for normalcy is revealed only haltingly in sessions with his therapist, Wendy (Maureen Teefy). When Pinkle is saved from suicide by suave TV personality Sam Bones (John P. Ryan), his luck begins to change. Bones exhorts him to action—"Be a winner," he says—maintaining that Henry is a special man with a special purpose. But as Bones’ mission for Henry becomes clearer, the boy’s grasp of reality becomes less and less—after all, what led him to despair to begin with was the cancelation of his favorite television program, "The Robertson Family."

Much of a director’s craft involves the envelopment of the audience into the world of a film, and on that level Star Time is an unqualified success. Fernando Arguelles’ atmospheric photography cloaks the action in a shadowy industrial neverland, and Blake Leyh’s nervously assertive music propels the narrative while wryly commenting on the proceedings. But it is director Cassini’s commendation of the media’s influence on the individual that makes Star Time such powerful stuff. Pinkle’s progress, he argues, is our fate, too, as we as a culture are lulled into believing that broadcasting speaks personally to the consumer instead of remembering that it manipulates the individual on behalf of the cold-hearted business that support it. Henry Pinkle’s metaphorical seduction is a chilling reminder that the global village isn’t without its underworld of misfits, easily deluded by the promise of fleeting fame.

Eddie Cockrell


Mon., May 4, 8:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US0504E
Fri., May 8, 8:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US0508E

THE SUSPENDED STEP OF THE STORK
To meetroo vina tou pelargou/Le pas suspendu de la cigogne
Theo Angelopoulos
France/Greece/Switzerland/Italy, 1991, 122 minutes, color

A recent poll of international critics places Theo Angelopoulos among the top ten directors currently at work. In the newest film from the director of Landscape in the Mist (presented at Filmfest DC in 1990), Marcello Mastroianni plays an elderly refugee in a Greek border town who becomes the subject of an investigation by a television journalist convinced that the old man is a politician who mysteriously disappeared several years before. The director happened upon the central image of the film while researching a proposed documentary on the border. “I came across a most extraordinary color,” he remembers. “We were at a very isolated crossing on a partially destroyed, snow-covered bridge. A blue line indicated where Greece ended, a white one was no-man’s land, and a red one showed where Turkey began. The colored placed his foot on the blue line and said: ‘If I take one step I am somewhere else—or I die.’”

THE STATION
La Stazione
Sergio Rubini
Italy, 1990, 92 minutes, color

Sergio Rubini’s fresh and youthful approach to this film is responsible for much of its charm and originality. The story, based on a play by Umberto Marinos, takes place almost entirely within the confines of a small railway station somewhere in the south of Italy. Domenico (played by the director) is a station manager whose uneventful existence is suddenly brightened one night by the arrival of Flavia, a beautiful young woman who has fled from a glitzy restaurant near her. She wants to get away as quickly as possible, but the earliest train doesn’t leave until six the next morning. When her arrogant fiancé, Danilo, arrives on the scene, she refuses to accompany him back to the party. He storms back alone, leaving Domenico and Flavia to gradually get to know each other. Shortly after, Danilo reappears, visibly drunk and annoyed. He begins to assault Flavia, but Domenico is able to barricade Flavia and himself in his office. Slowly, Domenico realizes that he has fallen in love.

Rubini’s touching and tender portrayal of Domenico as a sympathetic and lonely young man gives a truly human perspective to the story. Laced with humor and poignant observations, The Station is an entertaining study of the nature of relationships between contrasting personalities.

Dimitri Eipides
16th Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals, 1991

In Italian with English subtitles


Fri., May 8, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US0508A
Sat., May 9, 6:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: US0509A

THIS LAND IS OURS
Kasarmu ce
Saddik Balewa
United Kingdom/Nigeria, 1991, 84 minutes, color

This debut feature from the son of the first Prime Minister of Nigeria is a graduation film produced by the British-based National Film and Television School. This Land Is Ours is a detailed and atmospheric document of communal living and a culture on the verge of a transition that will bring drastic and long-
These Films Were Shot in 16mm and Super 16mm* and Released Theatrically in 35mm.

A Night In Havana: Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba
by John Holland
VPI Ltd., distributor

The Big Dis
by Gordon Eriksen and John O'Brien
First Run Features, distributor

84 Charlie Mopic*
by Patrick Duncan
New Century Vista, distributor

For All Mankind
by Al Reinert
Circle Releasing, distributor

From Hollywood to Deadwood*
by Ria Pickrell
Island Pictures, distributor

The Imported Bridegroom
by Pamela Berger
ASA Communications, distributor

Metropolitan*
by Whit Stillman
New Line Cinema, distributor

Nobody Listened
by Nester Almendros and Jorge Ulla
Direct Cinema, distributor

Roger & Me
by Michael Moore
Warner Brothers, distributor

Severance
by David Steinberg
Fox/Corber Associates Inc., distributor

The Suitors
by Ghasem Ebrahimian
First Run Features, distributor

Thelonious Monk
by Charlotte Zwein
Warner Brothers, distributor

Voices of Sarafina*
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ranging effects. In an Islamic community in northern Nigeria, a group of poor villagers, oblivious to the huge mineral wealth under their feet, fight a powerless enemy to protect their land.

Speaking to *West Africa* magazine about his decision to shoot the film in Hausa—one of the native languages in Nigeria—Balewa said, "I think we have to get away from this kind of aberration where stories and characters are set in a specific linguistic and geographical context are articulated in a language totally alien from their reality. I think it is eccentric. The language is an integral part of the story. There is no way you could have made *This Land is Ours in English* and make it work properly. On top of that, I know from my experience in the Nigerian theater that it is always a struggle for Nigerian actors working in English. They find it very difficult, but as soon as you get them to act in their own language, they expand, become natural. That was a critical factor, I needed that immediacy."  

Eddie Cockrell

In *Hausa* with English subtitles


Sat., May 2, 8:15 pm, American Film Institute, Code: AF0502E

**TO RENDER A LIFE: LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN AND THE DOCUMENTARY VISION**

Ross Spears

USA, 1992, 88 minutes, color

Co-sponsored by the National Archives

In 1936 the writer James Agee and photographer Walker Evans travelled to Hale County, Alabama, to document the lives of three families of desperately poor cotton farmers. The result of their work was published in 1941 as *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*—a book that became an American classic.

Initially, fewer than 600 copies of the book were sold. Both critics and readers were baffled by the book's unique, intensely subjective style. Reissued in 1960, however, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* achieved instant critical acclaim and became one of the most often read books of the civil rights movement, inspiring many writers, photographers, artists, and historians.

*To Render a Life* is the first feature film to be made about this landmark book. Central to the film is a portrait of a contemporary poor, rural family living in the same conditions as the cotton sharecroppers of the Depression. Ross Spears and writer Silvia Kervassie spent more than three years filming with a family living near the edge of survival in one of the richest counties in America. The result is a detailed and moving portrait of a family seen through the eyes of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Rural and white, these are truly the invisible poor—people whose story is rarely handled in depth by the mass media.

*To Render a Life* is also a film about the making of documentary art and, thus, the filmmakers carefully explore some of the issues involved in representing the lives of others. Some of the most important writers and documentarists of our time are featured, including Robert Coles, Frederick Wiseman, Jonathan Yardley, and Jonathan Kozol. *To Render a Life* reminds us that the ethical and artistic tensions of the documentary process are central questions in the media-dominated environment in which we live.

Bill Blakefeld

Film Programmer, National Archives


Fri., May 1, 7:00 pm, National Archives, FREE

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**WHAT HAPPENED TO SANTIAGO?**

Lo Que Pasó a Santiago

Jacobo Morales

Puerto Rico, 1989, 105 minutes, color

*What Happened to Santiago* is a charming story of love after 60, by the brilliant Puerto Rican director Jacobo Morales. Morales has brought his considerable talent for constructing crystal-clear yet humorous narrative to the story of Santiago Rodriguez (Tommy Muniz), a cantankerous, newly widowed, and recently retired accountant. A stinker for precision, Santiago is quite unprepared for a chance meeting with the mysterious and much younger Angelina, who shares his quiet joys of strolling through the parks and plazas of Old San Juan. She is elusive and reluctant to share her past with him, scheduling meetings at odd hours and refusing to give him her phone number or even tell him her last name. While the relationship brings new meaning to Santiago's life, the enigma leads him to hire a private investigator to discover the truth about Angelina. The dialogue is consistently fresh and unsentimental; and, just when the film begins to edge into melodrama, Morales imposes a stunning directorial will to conjure a seductive Caribbean magic-realist where dream and waking states collide.
World View

From the moment Morales first met Tommy Munitz, directing him in the Puerto Rican stage version of "The Sunshine Boys," he set about writing a script especially for the popular actor. Munitz has responded with a masterful performance, full of subtlety and warmth, in this film that received an Academy Award nomination for best foreign film. Morales' most ambitious and most finely crafted work to date, *What Happened to Santiago* offers a mature, perceptive look at the progress of love, Puerto Rican style.

Helga Stephenson
15th Toronto International Film Festival, 1990

In Spanish with English subtitles

**Production Company:** Desi Los Cos, Inc.  **Executive Producer:** Blanca Silva En.  **Producer:** Pedro Munitz  **Screenplay:** Jacoby Morales  **Cinematography:** Agustin Cabestany  **Editor:** Alonso Berbel  **Art Director:** Anita Huchtman  **Sound:** Antonio Betancourt  **Music:** Pedro Rivero  **Principal Cast:** Tommy Munitz, Gladys Rodriguez, Jacobo Morales, Johanna Rosay, Roberto Vigneses  **Print Source:** Telony Productions, Inc., 111 West 57th Street, Suite 1401, New York, NY 10109. Telephone: (212) 917-1700. Fax: (212) 917-9306. Tele: 476192

Sat., May 3, 6:30 pm, UDC Auditorium, Code: UK503A  
Thurs., May 7, 8:45 pm, AMC Union Station, Code: UB507A

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**Young Soul Rebels**

**Isaac Julien**

**United Kingdom, 1991, 103 minutes, color**

 Bursting with the explosive self-affirmation of those on the musical, sexual, and racial margins, *Young Soul Rebels* is a richly entertaining and passionate drama of friendship, murder, and cultural warfare. It’s London, June 1977—a high point of both emergent punk music/fashion and British nationalism. Chris and Cat are buddies, black disc jockeys who run a pirate radio station. When a gay friend is murdered while cruising in a park, racial and sexual tensions begin to surface around and between them.

Best Film in the 1991 Critics' Week at Cannes, *Young Soul Rebels* signals the emergence into feature film of the boldest talents in British black underground filmmaking. Recreating what now seems long ago with expert precision, the film balances insightful depiction of the social milieu against a strongly characterized story of male relationships. *Young Soul Rebels* is perhaps most remarkable for its emotionally authentic and politically aware presentation of a range of characters (black, white, straight, gay, male, female) without tokenism, stereotypes, or elimination of differences.

Amron Buchbinder

**Greater Vancouver International Film Festival, 1991**

**Production Companies:** British Film Institute Film, Film Four International, Sparks Film and Video, La Peep/Vertigo
**Executive Producers:** Ben Gibson, Malea Chadwick  **Producer:** Nadine Marsh-Edwards  **Screenplay:** Paul Hallam, Derrick Leacock  **Cinematography:** Nina Kajigua  **Editor:** John Wilson  **Music:** Simon Boweld, the Soundboys, K-Man, Furtada, the 72 Jazz  **Principal Cast:** Valentino Noyola, Mo Speas, Danzo Heath, Frances Barber, Sophie Okonedo  **Print Source:** Miramax Films, 135 Greenwich Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10013. Telephone: (212) 941-3800. Fax: (212) 941-2496

**Thurs., April 30, 8:45 pm, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0430E**

**Tues., May 5, 9:00 pm, C.O. Jennifer, Code: JB0505E**

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FILMFEST DC FOR KIDS

Program One
Recommended for all ages

HE AIN'T HEAVY
Milan Cheylov, Canada, 6 minutes
A live action funk fable about brotherly love set in a downtown Toronto boxing club.

AFRICAN STORY MAGIC
Peter Thurling and Susan Saltz, USA, 35 minutes
In this beautifully costumed and photographed film, a young boy learns to overcome his fears and gains a new sense of pride and self-esteem when, transported into the world of his imagination, he is introduced to the fables of his African ancestors.

FOOL OF THE WORLD AND THE FLYING SHIP
Francis Vose, England, 54 minutes
Pyotr donates his share of a woodcutter's savings to his selfish brothers, who use the funds to build a ship that flies. This Russian folklore is told using beautiful stop-action puppet animation.
Total running time: 95 minutes
Fri., May 1, 10:00 am, Anacostia Museum, FREE
Sat., May 2, 3:00 pm, Parklands Community Center, FREE
Wed., May 6, 4:00 pm, Francis Gregory Library, FREE
Sun., May 10, 10:00 am, Hiramshorn Museum, FREE

Program Two
Recommended for ages 6 and up

ORAL HYGIENE
David B. Fain, USA, 3 minutes
This funny reggae extravaganza brings us animated dancing skulls and singing skeletons.

ADAGIO
Giancarlo Gemin, England, 22 minutes
Kevin loves operatic music although he has never seen an opera. At home, he retreats into his Walkman to avoid hearing the angry arguments of his mother, sister, and step-father. Soon, unexpected incidents force Kevin out of his isolation and into the world of live opera.

RALPH S. MOUSE
Thomas G. Smith, USA, 40 minutes
The further adventures of the mouse on a motorcycle at the Mountain View Inn.
Total running time: 65 minutes
Tue., May 5, 4:00 pm, Anacostia Museum, FREE
Thurs., May 7, 9:30 am, Patricia Harris Elementary School, FREE

Program Three
Recommended for ages 6 and up

COYOTE MOUNTAIN
Jeffrey Mueller, USA, 27 minutes
The story of a girl's journey into the world of Navajo spirituality leads to the understanding that modern society and traditional cultures have something to offer each other.

CAPITAL P
Stephen Barnes, Canada, 4 minutes
A little boy has to go "P" in this hilarious (and tasteful) animated film.

FLIPBOOK MOVIE
Patrick Jenkins, Canada, 5 minutes
Three colorful flipbooks come to life.

ELEPHANT DIARY
Robert Nixon, USA, 12 minutes
Amazing shots of Kenya's wildlife highlight the story of a boy's love of elephants.

AMAZONIA
Faith Hubley, USA, 10 minutes
Three South American myths from the tropical rain forest are presented in this animated film.
Total running time: 58 minutes
Sat., May 2, 1:30 pm, Shepherd Park Library, FREE
Sat., May 9, 11:00 am, MLK Memorial Library, FREE

SENIORS

AMAZING GRACE WITH BILL MOYERS
Elena Mannes
USA, 1990, 80 minutes, color
Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found; was blind, but now I see." First penned by former slave trader John Newton in the 18th century, the song "Amazing Grace" has had a remarkable effect on both contemporary American society—the civil rights movement of the '60s is unimaginable without it—and a wide range of performers.
This unique documentary, part performance film and part biography of Newton and his times, took Bill Moyers throughout the United States and Europe and Canada. He returns to Filmmore this year with a tribute to Hollywood and early television, featuring remarkable performers from the world of music and dance. Featured singers include Ella Fitzgerald, the young Sarah Vaughan, Jimmy Rushing (Mister Five by Five himself), Nat "King" Cole and his trio, Dinah Washington, Helen Humes, and the incomparable Billie Holiday. The program then segues into the immortals of jazz dance, featuring performances by Tap, Tap & Toe (and the sensational slide technique of Raymond Winfield), Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, the comedy dance of Stump and Stumpy, the Nicholas Brothers, Peg Leg Bates, John Bubbles, and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. The show's climax is a review of performers who mix music and humor: Fats Waller, Louis Jordan, Martha Davis, Cab Calloway, and the one and only Louis Armstrong.

Print Source: Cherish Associates, 1 South Franklin St, New York, NY 10006. Telephone: (212) 628-8802.
Sat., May 2, 11:00 am, Senior Citizens Counseling and Delivery Center, FREE
Mon., May 4, 1:00 pm, American Film Institute, FREE

GREAT AMERICAN ENTERTAINERS
Michael Chertok has presented archival film programs throughout the U.S. and in Europe and Canada. He returns to Filmmore this year with a tribute to Hollywood and early television, featuring remarkable performers from the world of music and dance. Featured singers include Ella Fitzgerald, the young Sarah Vaughan, Jimmy Rushing (Mister Five by Five himself), Nat "King" Cole and his trio, Dinah Washington, Helen Humes, and the incomparable Billie Holiday. The program then segues into the immortals of jazz dance, featuring performances by Tap, Tap & Toe (and the sensational slide technique of Raymond Winfield), Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, the comedy dance of Stump and Stumpy, the Nicholas Brothers, Peg Leg Bates, John Bubbles, and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. The show's climax is a review of performers who mix music and humor: Fats Waller, Louis Jordan, Martha Davis, Cab Calloway, and the one and only Louis Armstrong.
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