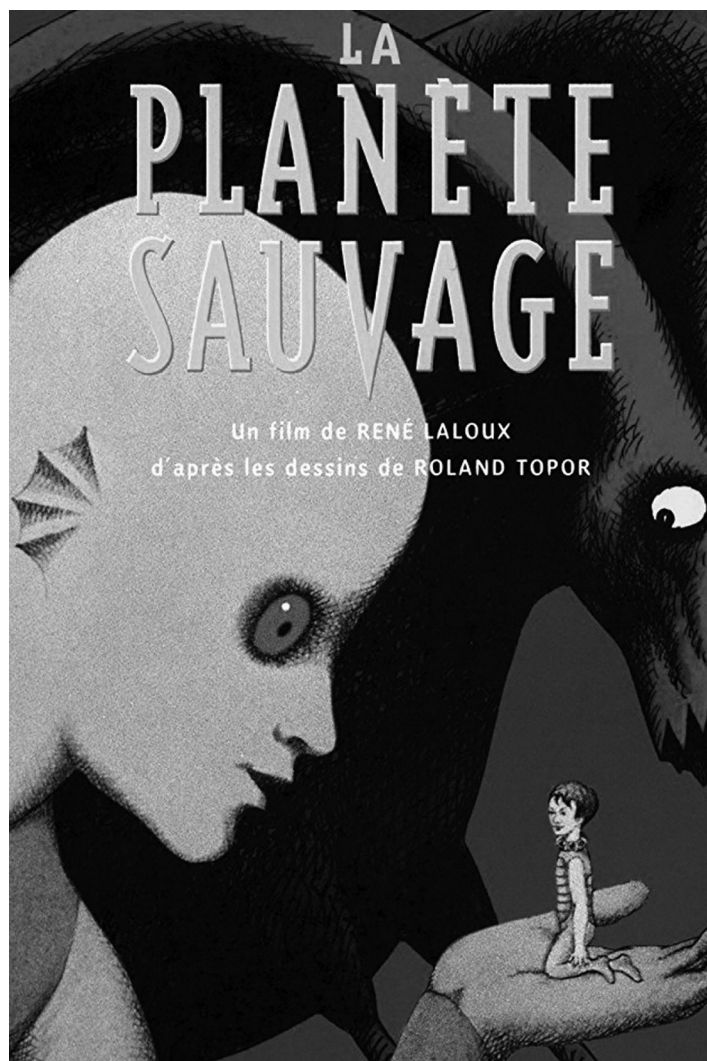
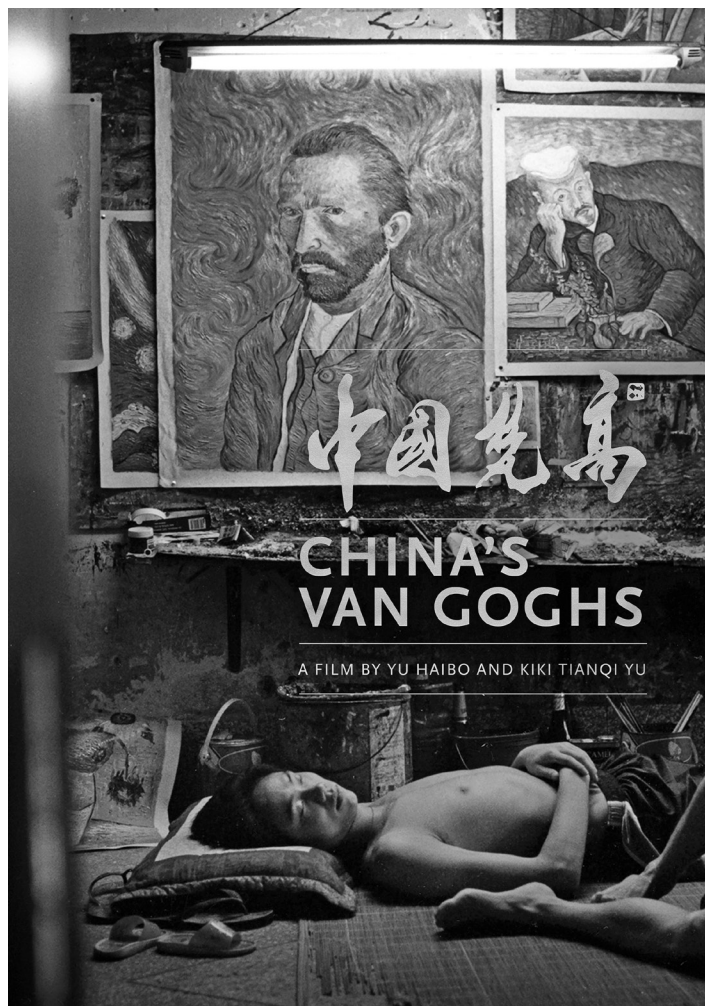




CLOSE UP

AUCKLAND FILM SOCIETY Vol 73 March – October 2018





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Our 2018 season is a richly eclectic programme of special screenings, classic features, documentaries and contemporary cinema from around the world.

Auckland Film Society is a non-profit incorporated society and a registered charitable organisation. AFS is run by volunteers elected at our AGM (next AGM is 23 April 2018). Visit us at aucklandfilmsociety.org.nz.

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AFS Committee members are Alison Ashton, Simon Erceg, Andrew Lockett, Natasha Loh, Gorjan Markovski, Jane McKenzie, Craig Ranapia and Marjorie Sprecher. Special thanks to Michael McDonnell at the New Zealand Federation of Film Societies, nzfilmsociety.org.nz

DATES AND TIMES

Most screenings are at the Academy Cinemas, 44 Lorne St, Auckland, Mondays at 6:30 pm.

No screenings on public holidays. We screen on the following Tuesdays.

Tuesday 3 April at 6:30 pm Wild

Tuesday 5 June at 6:30 pm Of Horses and Men

Tuesday 23 October at 6:30 pm China's Van Goghs

This issue of *Close Up* was edited by Alison Ashton, Andrew Lockett, Jane McKenzie and Craig Ranapia. Picture research by Michael McDonnell and Jane McKenzie

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Rita!

Celebrating the centenary of the birth of a Hollywood Legend Rita Hayworth, 1918–1987

With the possible exception of Betty Grable – and her fabled legs – no single Hollywood star was more popular with American troops during World War II than the actress and dancer Rita Hayworth. Thanks to a photo made by Bob Landry that ran in LIFE magazine in August 1941, months before the US officially entered the war, Hayworth (born Margarita Carmen Cansino in Brooklyn on October 17, 1918) was the face and the lingerie-clad body of arguably the single most famous and most frequently reproduced American pinup image ever...

The star of films as varied as *Pal Joey*, *Strawberry Blonde*, Orson Welles's *Lady From Shanghai* and the 1946 noir classic, *Gilda* – in which she played one of moviedom's most devastatingly sexy femmes fatale, Hayworth could play comedy, was stellar in dramatic roles and danced well enough that none other than Fred Astaire, with whom she starred in two hits for Columbia Pictures in the early 1940s, asserted that she was as talented a partner as any he'd ever had.

Hayworth's offscreen life, meanwhile, was frequently tough. She married five times; she struggled with alcoholism; and for the last years of her life she suffered from a disease that was only diagnosed (and given a name) a few years before she died: Alzheimer's.

For countless Americans of a certain age, however, and for movie fans around the world, Rita Hayworth remains one of those rarest of creatures: a bona fide movie star from a classic era – the Hollywood of the 1940s and '50s – that will never come again. – Ben Cosgrove, *Time.com*

"The way the studio sold me, you'd think I popped out of some package, ready made. My father's family were all dancers. I was trained as a dancer since I was four years old. Honey, they had me dancing as soon as they could get me on my feet. It was a family tradition but the reason I had to do it professionally was that we were broke. Very broke. NOTHING." ...

"When I was dancing with my father in Agua Caliente, I'd have a tutor between shows. I did four shows a day; at noon and at 2pm. After that I went back to school for three hours in Santa Monica. Then I'd drive back to the club, which was about three hours away and do the ten o'clock and half eleven shows. By the time that was over it was 12:30. We'd get home around 3am and then I'd have to get up and rehearse. That was the routine. I'd also be having to take lessons with my father between rehearsals in the morning and the next show. It was quite a heavy schedule." ...

"Maybe I had a talent for dancing. But they didn't use me much as a dancer in those early films. They put me under one of those stock contracts. It wasn't very much money. I just thought I was learning a trade... It didn't happen over night. It took a long, long time.

"When I was doing *Blood and Sand*, and before that *Only Angels Have Wings*, I was prepared for them because I'd been working the whole time. Then somebody wrote a critique in *Time* magazine, or somewhere, and they noticed you. So others noticed you...

"I was always busy and when I wasn't busy I was sitting in my dressing room. Growing up takes a lot of time, a lot of care. Discipline from the age of five. People think you just come on and that's all there is to it. It's all work." Rita Hayworth, interviewed in August 1973 in *Rita Hayworth: Portrait of a Love Goddess*, by John Kobal

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QUIET PLEASE!

Please be considerate of others in the audience during film screenings.



Monday 12 March at 6:30 pm

AFS thanks Time Out Bookstore

The Brand New Testament Le tout nouveau testament Belgium/France 2015

Director: Jaco Van Dormael
Producers: Jaco Van Dormael, Olivier Rausin, Daniel Marquet
Production co: Terra Incognita Films, Climax Films
Screenplay: Jaco Van Dormael, Thomas Gunzig
Photography: Christophe Beaucarne
Editor: Hervé De Luze
Music: An Pierlé

With: Pili Groyne (Éa), Benoît Poelvoorde (God), Catherine Deneuve (Martine), François Damiens (François), Yolande Moreau (God's wife), Laura Verlinden (Aurélië), Serge Larivière (Marc), Didier De Neck (Jean-Claude), Romain Gelin (Willy), Marco Lorenzini (Victor)

114 mins, DCP. M nudity, offensive language, sexual content
In French with English subtitles

God is real and is a mean bastard who never gets off his computer. You already know about his son, now let's hear about his daughter. This new film from Belgian director Jaco Van Dormael won't exactly win favour with the ultra-faithful, but for those who like their Bible stories with a thick coat of satire, *The Brand New Testament* is a peppy, original and (importantly) very sweet story. Jordan Hoffman, *The Guardian*

One could envisage [Van Dormael's] gleefully, gently blasphemous conceit – God as a capricious boor, undone by his own feckless cruelty, his rebellious daughter Ea and a human race forced to reckon with its mortality – played as apocalyptic Bergmanesque tragedy or ferocious takedown of sacred cows. Instead, Van Dormael opts for something lighter, more allusive: global catastrophe as individual, spiritual reckonings...

The Brand New Testament's Creator is decidedly "Old Testament"... From a dingy Brussels office with walls of towering filing cabinets, God torments mankind with tyrannies petty (toast always falling jam-side up) and severe (plane crashes). In effect, He is antagonist not only to young heroine Ea (a winning Pili Groyne, Marion Cotillard's daughter in *Two Days, One Night*) but also to Van Dormael's whole filmmaking ethos: rather than bureaucratic, autocratic directives from on high, this is free-floating, creative expression imbued with diversity and generosity.

Instead of trying to nail down the specific new doctrine suggested by the film's title, Van Dormael and co-writer Thomas Gunzig delight in comic meanderings and visual flights of fancy. Giraffes strut through deserted streets, a disembodied hand pirouettes to Handel, and random daredevil Kevin defies his distant death date (the pre-destined dates of everyone's demise having been leaked from God's computer) with increasingly outlandish stunts. However, Van Dormael's mutability gradually reveals his *idée fixe*. The film's exploratory energy is explicitly guided by the female perspective at its centre: that of Ea and, latterly, her mother. It's the filmmaker's corrective to centuries of oppressive patriarchal dogma

In pure storyline terms, this can frustrate. When Ea decides to write her "brand new testament", she goes in search of six apostles, and their sequential tales engender a stop-start approach that occasionally interrupts the film's overall trajectory. And the incessant quirkiness sometimes jars with bleaker issues such as sex addiction or domestic abuse... Overall, though, in an age dominated by religious-appropriated intolerance and violence, Van Dormael's inquisitive, playful optimism might just offer audiences attuned to his wavelenght something quietly and genuinely radical. – Leigh Singer, *Sight and Sound*



Monday 19 March at 6:30 pm

The Lady from Shanghai USA 1947

Director/Producer: Orson Welles
Production co: Columbia
Screenplay: Orson Welles. Based on a novel by Sherwood King
Photography: Charles Lawton Jr
Editor: Viola Lawrence
Music: Heinz Roemheld

With: Rita Hayworth (Elsa Bannister), Orson Welles (Michael O'Hara), Everett Sloane (Arthur Bannister), Glenn Anders (George Grisby), Ted De Corsia (Sidney Broome), Erskine Sanford (judge), Gus Schilling (Goldie), Carl Frank (DA Galloway), Louis Merrill (Jake Bjornsen), Evelyn Ellis (Bessie), Harry Shannon (cab driver)

87 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG violence

Made in 1947, during the heyday of film noir, *The Lady from Shanghai* is famous for a plot so complex that it's virtually unintelligible, and for its virtuoso climax in a fairground's hall of mirrors. But it is also sometimes dismissed as a bit throwaway, a little too tongue-in-cheek, as if Welles were to be faulted for having a sense of humour. That feels unfair to me: one of the marvellous things about the movie is that it works very effectively both as a traditional if faintly baroque film noir – it has the requisite loser (Welles) falling for the requisite femme fatale (his then wife Rita Hayworth, giving one of her finest dramatic performances) and tumbling fatalistically into the requisite maelstrom of greed, twisted desire and deadly intrigue – and as a sly, witty commentary on noir conventions.

Like all his best work, it's notable for how Welles simply packs so much more into any scene than we've come to expect and accept from other directors; at one given moment, due to the sheer density of the image and the soundtrack and to the subtlety of their relationship to one another, there's so much more to take in and think about. Watching a Welles film, one is constantly aware of his deep love of his medium, but with *Lady* it feels as if he's completely intoxicated by his passion for cinema and its enormous expressive potential; he's high on being in love with a hugely popular and still young and developing artform that allows him to work whatever magic and indulge in whatever mischievous trickery he likes. And that love is wickedly contagious. See the film – repeatedly, if you can – and I think you'll see what I mean. – Geoff Andrew, *Sight and Sound*

Welles plays Mike O'Hara, a wry, self-impressed Irish sailor who's seen the world and concluded that he's just about the smartest guy in it. He fought in the Spanish Civil War and killed one of Franco's spies; he thinks that someday he'll maybe write a novel. One night in Central Park, he saves a woman from three robbers. "These men were not professionals," he says in voice-over, in Welles's really pretty dreadful Irish brogue, "and that's maybe the reason why I start out in this story a little bit like a..." [sardonic pause] "...hero."

Welles and Hayworth have a compellingly strange chemistry. He is physically gigantic, kinetic, self-consciously suave (this, you can't help but think, is both a function of playing Mike and a function of being himself); at times he seems to want to overwhelm her with rough charm. But she has a way of vanishing into herself that leaves him clutching at air. He can arch his eyebrows, smirk, and tower over her, but she knows how to sidestep without moving: Poor Michael, you really know nothing of the world. Like his friend Hemingway, Welles loved bullfighting; here, he's a man who thinks he's the matador and finds out too late that he's the bull." – Brian Phillips, *Grantland*



Monday 26 March at 6:30 pm

The Innocents Les innocentes

France/Poland 2016

Director: Anne Fontaine
Producers: Eric Altmayer, Nicolas Altmayer
Production co: Mandarin Cinéma, Aeroplan Film, Mars Film, France 2 Cinéma, Scope Pictures
Screenplay: Sabrina B Karine, Alice Vial, Anne Fontaine, Pascal Bonitzer, Philippe Maynial
Photography: Caroline Champetier
Editor: Annette Dutertre
Music: Grégoire Hetzel

With: Lou de Laâge (Mathilde), Agata Buzek (Sister Maria), Agata Kulesza (Mother Abbess), Vincent Macaigne (Samuel), Joanna Kulig (Irena), Eliza Rycembel (Teresa), Anna Prochniak (Zofia), Katarzyna Dabrowska (Anna), Helena Sujecka (Ludwika), Dorota Kuduk (Wanda), Klara Bielawka (Joanna), Mira Maludzinska (Bibiana), Pascal Elso (Colonel), Thomas Coumans (Gaspard), Leon Natan-Paszek (Wlodek), Joanna Fertacz (Zofia's aunt)

115 mins, Blu-ray. M sexual violence, suicide, content that may disturb
In French, Polish and Russian, with English subtitles

Hope and horror are commingled to quietly moving effect in *The Innocents*, a restrained but cumulatively powerful French–Polish drama about the various crises of faith that emerge when a house of God is ravaged by war. Based on the little-known case of the French Red Cross doctor Madeleine Pauliac and the convent to which she ministered following the end of WWII, director Anne Fontaine's finest film in years is notable for the tact, intelligence and fine-grained character detail with which it examines every moral crevice of an unthinkable scenario. ...

On initial glance, it would seem that this place, with its enclosed courtyard and unadorned white walls, has stood as a refuge from the terrors of the German occupation. But the painful truth emerges slowly as French doctor Mathilde (Lou de Laage), a fictionalized stand-in for Pauliac, reluctantly agrees to a nun's plea that she visit the convent on an urgent matter. When she arrives, she finds one of the younger sisters in labor and promptly delivers the baby via C-section.

The silence that attends this harrowing scene – with no one offering an explanation for the extraordinary circumstances – is so profound that you may wonder, if only for a moment, whether the child was immaculately conceived. The terrible truth of the situation could hardly be less divine... Now that Mathilde knows their secret, most of the nuns are hoping she will stay...so as to prevent the convent's great shame from coming to light...

Forging an unexpected alliance with Mathilde is Sister Maria, in many ways the wisest and most stable figure in the convent. Tellingly, her own relatively worldly past... has equipped her to deal with the trauma better than the other nuns. By contrast, Rev Mother icily regards the secular young doctor as a necessary evil, especially when Mathilde brings along a more experienced male colleague, Samuel... and insists on maintaining appearances at all costs. Stubborn, judgmental and short-sighted though she may be, the elder nun is clearly aware that a public scandal of this magnitude would destroy what little respect or authority the Church still commands, making *The Innocents* very much a movie about the weakening grip of religious institutions in turbulent times and amid changing regimes.

Justin Chang, *Variety*



Tuesday 03 April at 6:30 pm

Wild

Germany 2016

Director/Screenplay: Nicolette Krebitz
Producer: Bettina Brokemper
Production co: Heimatfilm
Photography: Reinhold Vorschneider
Editor: Bettina Böhler
Music: Terranova

With: Lilith Stangenberg (Ania), Georg Friedrich (Boris), Silke Bodenbender (Kim), Saskia Rosendahl (Jenny), Kotti Yun, Laurie Young, Joy Bai (factory girls)

98 mins, Blu-ray. R16 sex scenes, offensive language, content that may disturb
In German with English subtitles

Actor-turned-filmmaker Nicolette Krebitz's thornily sensual third feature deserves to be sold on more than just its raciest novelties. Galvanized by Lilith Stangenberg's high-risk performance as a young office drone lured inexorably from notional civilization following a chance encounter of the lupine kind, Krebitz's film questions the behavioral standards we take as given with quiet daring and disquieting sangfroid. *Wild* won't be easily domesticated.

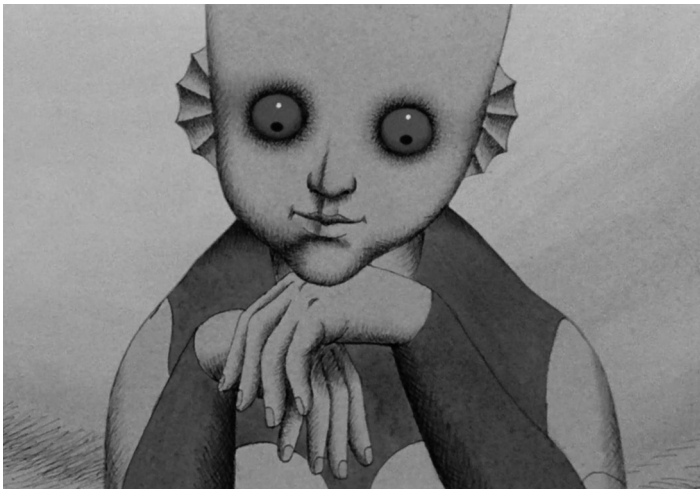
There's a pleasing lack of emphatic moral definition to a film that a crass distributor could easily retitle *Feral Attraction*: in contrast with many return-to-nature tales, the great outdoors is presented neither as a kind of essential soul purifier, nor as a destructive leveler in the *Lord of the Flies* vein. Rather, it's a parallel universe with its own virtues and pitfalls of pleasure: While eschewing obvious internal commentary, Krebitz's narrative simply posits that this world might be a more sympathetic fit for Ania (Stangenberg), an intelligent, sensitive 20-something who nonetheless never seems wholly in her element among fellow humans.

Romantically unattached, she lives alone in an identikit high-rise unit previously shared with her terminally ill grandfather, to whose hospital deathbed she makes regular, dutiful visits. Her married sister Jenny (Saskia Rosendahl) communicates via Skype to coax her into regular human interaction, perhaps somewhat unhealthily. The significantly older man to whom she acts as a PA makes stilted advances... he routinely summons her to his office by throwing a ball in her direction, as if she were a dog playing fetch.

It's a metaphor that turns out to be wryly off-base in light of subsequent developments: While walking to work through a neighborhood park one morning, Ania locks eyes with a wandering wolf... and is immediately transfixed. Whether this is a one-sided fascination or a case of interspecies love at first sight is for viewers to determine; either way, she can't let sleeping wolves lie, as she eventually lures the beast to her apartment, initiating a more drastic retreat from the outside world.

What transpires between woman and beast is surely better seen than described, though Krebitz frames their ambiguous, slow-building relationship in a manner as tender as it transgressive...

Viewers will either leap with the protagonist into the void or fail to invest in Krebitz's hard-edged whimsy. Those who take the former course will identify a note of catharsis even in the film's chilliest extremities. Reinhold Vorschneider's lensing, immaculately composed even at its most intentionally drab, progressively lets more light into the frame with each stage of self-realization; the marvelous, house-inflected score by German band Terranova likewise transitions from spare metallic percussion to lush sonic textures. Guy Lodge, *Variety*



Monday 09 April at 6:30 pm

Fantastic Planet La planète sauvage France 1973

Director: René Laloux
Producer: Anatole Dauman
Production co: L'Institut National de L'Audiovisuel, Československý Filmexport
Screenplay: Roland Topor, René Laloux. Based on the novel *Oms en série* by Stefan Wul
Photography: Boris Baromykin, Lubomir Rejthar
Editors: Hélène Arnal, Marta Latálová
Graphic designer: Roland Topor
Music: Alain Goraguer

Voices: Jennifer Drake (Tiwa), Sylvie Lenoir (young Terr), Jean Topart (Master Sinh), Jean Valmont (narrator)

72 mins, Blu-ray. M
In French with English subtitles

Produced during the tail end of the Panic Movement, an art collective formed in the 1960s... that sought to steal back surrealist art from the mainstream, the Topor-designed *Fantastic Planet* could easily have been staged on the same land that held Salvador Dali's melting clocks. In actuality, it takes place on the planet of Ygam, whose desert-like topography contains illogical outgrowths such as gleaming crystal succulents, multi-limbed and seemingly sentient foliage, and hilly outcroppings with vacuum-like mouths. The inhabitants that call this landscape home are no less quizzical: enormous cyan humanoids with lidless crimson eyes and flappy scales for ears, and who go by the cryptically Norse-sounding designation of Draag.

Topor's out-there designs are buttressed by the stabilizing presence of Oms, an inferior species on Ygam that look, sound, and move like ordinary men and women, but must live in constant subordination to their towering masters. Directed by Frenchman René Laloux and written by Topor, *Fantastic Planet* is a storybook parable in which these Oms stage a last-ditch revolt against an impending De-Omization (read: genocide) at the hands of the Draag, who've grown apprehensive of their subservient race's "terrifyingly fast reproduction". One of the Oms possesses the knowledge needed to outwit the Draag attack. But will he be able to convince the untrusting indigenous Oms that he's not a collaborator? – Carson Lund, *Slant Magazine*

Production for the film started in 1968 in Prague's Jirí Trnka Studios. However, due to financing problems in Czechoslovakia, the filmmakers were forced to procure French financing.... The film faced another obstacle in August of that initial year when Soviet tanks steamrolled into Prague and occupied the city... The film's production was prolonged for four years and it was not released until 1973. In many ways, the film symbolically represents these events. The Communist occupation of not only Czechoslovakia but of other Eastern European countries is directly reminiscent of the Traags' convenient enslavement of the Oms. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the word used to label the victims has the same pronunciation as the French word for man, "homme"... – Chris Justice, *Senses of Cinema*

Fantastic Planet isn't primarily remembered for its trenchant sociopolitical commentary, however. It's Topor's flights of fancy that linger in the memory, and many of them have little or nothing to do with the film's skeletal narrative... These oddities are all rendered in a more elegant (but still low-budget) version of the cutout animation style that had been made particularly famous by Terry Gilliam on *Monty Python's Flying Circus*. Along with Alain Goraguer's prog-rock-ish score, that should make *Fantastic Planet* seem extremely dated, yet it's ultimately too singular to feel beholden to a particular era. – Mike D'Angelo, *AV Club*



Monday 16 April at 6:30 pm

AFS thanks The Surrey Hotel

The Adventures of Prince Achmed Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed Germany 1926

Director/Producer/Screenplay: Lotte Reiniger
Producer/Photography: Carl Koch
Production co: Comenius-Film GmbH

66 mins, Blu-ray, silent, tinted. PG

Animation as a film genre has expanded dramatically in recent decades with *The Lego Movie* and *Frozen* both examples of its domination of mainstream cinema. But while it has lost none of its ability to communicate fantastical and mythological tales, simplicity of storytelling has given way to highly rendered digital 3D effects.

Considered to be the oldest surviving feature-length animated film, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* was created by German film-maker Lotte Reiniger, who pioneered the technique of silhouette animation – using intricate cut-out shadow puppets shot frame-by-frame against thin sheets of lead – a method she used to create over 40 fairy-tale films.

It weaves together several different storylines from *One Thousand and One Nights*, and the resulting narrative is delightfully chaotic. Over five acts it tells a story of good versus evil played out between Prince Achmed and the ugly African magician, involving a magical flying horse, Princess Dinarsade, the demons of Wak Wak and the Princess Pari Banu, Aladdin, and a witch.

The film is littered with traces of its own physicality: variations in colour, specks of dust, and flickering light. The bold silhouettes have simplified movements, and the simple power of positive and negative space creates a flatness that transports scenes of celebration and ritual into compelling abstract patterns. The technique of metamorphosis – in which one shape transforms seamlessly into another – plays out beautifully in a battle between the magician and the witch when they morph magically into animals. Anna Madeleine, *The Guardian*

Like many silent films, *Prince Achmed* breaks neatly into its five acts, and there are times when it seems like it might have originally been conceived as a serial. This makes for an action-packed film that seems bigger than the 65 minutes it runs at 24 frames per second, since every segment is packed with enough story and action to survive on its own. The writing is not always perfect. Reiniger makes up for that in making her characters surprisingly expressive, considering the medium. – Jay Seaver, *eFilmCritic.com*

Lotte Reiniger's name remains relatively unknown. Partly, this results from the "great man" tradition in film histories, repeatedly arguing that a few heroic males advanced film as an art form. But an equally important cause for her obscurity is Reiniger's unique relation to the avant-garde. Unlike many of her contemporaries, who rejected traditional narrative form and content, Reiniger chose "conventional" fairy tales as the subject for most of her films. And so, film scholars have typically dismissed her from the avant-garde canon.

Many of Reiniger's colleagues couldn't understand her interest in fairy tales. When Walter Ruttmann, maker of *Berlin, Symphony of a Great City* and animation assistant to *The Adventures of Prince Achmed*, once asked Reiniger why she did not make more political films, she replied, "I believe more in the truth of fairy tales than that found in the newspapers." – Chris Robé, *PopMatters*



Monday 23 April at 6:30 pm

AFS thanks Metropolitan Rentals Ltd

Alphaville Alphaville, une étrange aventure de Lemmy Caution France/Italy 1965

Director/Screenplay: Jean-Luc Godard
Producer: André Michelin
Production co: Chaumiane, Filmstudio
Photography: Raoul Coutard
Editor: Agnès Guillemot
Music: Paul Misraki

With: Eddie Constantine (Lemmy Caution), Anna Karina (Natacha von Braun), Akim Tamirof (Henri Dickson), Howard Vernon (Professor von Braun), Laszlo Szabo (engineer), Jean-André Fieschi (Professor Eckel), Jean-Louis Comolli (Professor Jeckel)

99 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG
In French with English subtitles

When Jean-Luc Godard's *Alphaville* opened the 1965 New York Film Festival, the American Civil Liberties Union Benefit audience seemed genuinely baffled by the abrupt shifts in tone: from satirically tongue-in-cheek futurism, to a parody of private-eye mannerisms, to a wildly romantic allegory depicting a computer-controlled society at war with artists, thinkers, and lovers.

Alphaville is science fiction without special effects. Godard couldn't afford them in 1965 or ever, but he probably wouldn't have wanted them even if he'd had unlimited financing. His whole theme, imagination versus logic, is consistent with his deployment of Paris as it was in the '60s – or at least, those portions of Paris which struck Godard as architectural nightmares of impersonality. Sub-Nabokovian jokes on brand names abound. There is much talk of societies in other galaxies, but their only manifestation is the Ford Galaxy that Eddie Constantine's Lemmy Caution (a low-rent French version of Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe) moves about in. Most of *Alphaville* is nocturnal or claustrophobically indoors. Yet there is an exhilarating release in many of the images and camera movements because of Godard's uncanny ability to evoke privileged moments from many movies of the past.

Alphaville was never meant to shock, depress, or disgust, and thus it seems as decorous and decent now as it did in 1965. And it is the work of one man, one recognizable man, not the work of a cynical, calculating committee. Indeed, the computer-controlled villains in *Alphaville* bear more than a passing resemblance to the bottom-line driven villains in the motion picture industry. To understand and appreciate *Alphaville* is to understand Godard, and vice versa. – Andrew Sarris, *Criterion.com*

All the elements combine beautifully. Raoul Coutard's black-and-white photography turns everyday objects and settings into the props of a convincingly dystopian futureworld whose philosophy is outlined in voiceover by the grating, inhuman tones of Alpha 60, the computer that regulates life in *Alphaville*. (Godard had the lines intoned by an actor who had lost his larynx and spoke through an artificial voice-box.) Paul Misraki's excellent score enhances moments of tension with warning stabs of low brass.

Anna Karina, meanwhile, is at her most darkly luminous as Natacha von Braun, the great leader's daughter. Her programmed responses slowly break down as the hardboiled detective introduces her to the concepts of "conscience" and "love" – words redacted from the dictionary that is the Bible of her father's totalitarian state.

To have seen it in its time... was to have been astonished and delighted. The passage of almost half a century has done nothing to dim its stylishness, blunt its humour or extinguish its piercing message. – Richard Williams, *The Guardian*



Monday 30 April at 6:30 pm

Fukushima, Mon Amour Grüsse aus Fukushima Germany 2016

Director/Screenplay: Doris Dörrie
Producers: Harold Kugler, Molly von Furstenberg
Production co: Olga Film
Photography: Hanno Lentz
Editor: Frank Müller
Music: Ulrike Haage

With: Rosalie Thomass (Marie), Kaori Momoi (Satomi), Nami Kamata (Nami), Moshe Cohen (Moshe), Honsho Hayasaka (Jushoku), Nanoko (Yuki), Aya Irizuki (Toshiko)

107 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. M offensive language, suicide
In English, German and Japanese, with English subtitles

"A radiation vacation" sums up the gallows humor of Doris Dörrie's post-disaster traumedy, shot right in the middle of Fukushima's Exclusion Zone. Lensed in poetic black-and-white with the German helmer-scribe's trademark whimsical fantasy and peppered with absurdist cross-cultural gags, *Fukushima, mon amour* offers a refreshingly quirky perspective on a heavy subject, suggesting that sometimes audiences, and perhaps even victims, need a vacation from misery and pity. Dörrie doesn't presume to understand or verbalize what the living victims of such cataclysmic misfortune feel. Instead, her penchant for drawing awkward misfits allows her to portray both German and Japanese protagonists alike as strangers in a strange land, and to dramatize the survivors' difficulty in comprehending their situation.

Marie goes to Fukushima with the organisation Clowns4Help to cheer up predominantly elderly refugees living in a shelter. Dörrie wryly observes the survivors' bewildered but stoically polite reactions as these outsiders strain to make them feel better, but it's Marie who may need help, as she suffers a panic attack and finds solace in a boozy, chilled-out monk... Capturing First World guilt and its underlying schadenfreude in a nutshell, she blurts out: "I thought I'd feel better if I'm in a place where people have a hard time."

After sneaking crabby old lady Satomi (Kaori Momoi) back to her ruined house in a heavily radiated zone, now dubiously declared safe by the government, Marie decides to move in with her. Here, Dörrie trots out some culture-clash clichés but the droll dialogue will still raise a smile. And Satomi, who claims to be the last geisha in the region, is anything but a Japanese paragon of civility and tact: "You are like an elephant," she tells Marie, often referring to her with other condescendingly bemused terms reserved for pets or livestock.

Marie sees ghosts hover in their yard, including Satomi's beloved apprentice, who died in the tsunami while clinging onto a tree outside her house. Satomi blames Marie for attracting these restless spirits because she's so miserable. However, in a revelatory scene that raises goosebumps, it turns out that Satomi's grief over Yuki's death is more complicated than she lets on.

Marie's eventual confession of her own may come as an anticlimax to some, but it brings to light a new similarity between the two women, and expresses the film's real theme: What if one loses everything that matters, not due to a natural disaster or predestined fate, but through one's own folly? How does one move on and forgive one's own mistakes?

Hanno Lentz's gorgeous black-and-white images of the decimated landscape, blended seamlessly with discreetly chosen news footage, reinforce the surreal, apocalyptic scenario. Ulrike Haage's futuristic score, with its discordant piano notes and droning electronic tune, goes hand-in-hand with Christof Ebhardt's piercing sound mix to create a broad range of moods... – Maggie Lee, *Variety*



Monday 07 May at 6:30pm

Mon Oncle

France/Italy 1958

Director/Producer: Jacques Tati
 Production co: Specta Films, Gray Film, Alter Films, Film del Centauro
 Screenplay: Jacques Tati, Jacques Lagrange, Jean L'Hôte
 Photography: Jean Bourgoïn
 Editor: Suzanne Baron
 Music: Frank Barcellini, Alain Romans

With: Jacques Tati (M Hulot), Jean-Pierre Zola (Charles Arpel), Adrienne Servantie (Mme Arpel), Alain Becourt (M Arpel), Lucien Fregis (M Pichard), Betty Schneider (Betty, landlord's daughter), JF Martial (Walter), Yvonne Arnaud (Georgette, the housekeeper), Adelaide Danieli (Mme Pichard)

116 mins, DCP. G
 In French with English subtitles

Jacques Tati is the great philosophical tinkerer of comedy, taking meticulous care to arrange his films so that they unfold in a series of revelations and effortless delights. They tickle us with their quiet bemusement, they involve us in a conspiracy with Tati to discover serendipity in a world of disappointment. That's especially the case with *Mon Oncle*, which places Hulot in a gimmicky 1950s society of garish materialism.

Hulot is always the same. Tati's character varies as little as Chaplin's tramp, and is often seen in a brown fedora, a tan raincoat, a bow tie, too short pants, striped socks. He is never without his long-stemmed pipe, and at moments of urgency or confusion, he nervously taps it against his heel. He hardly ever says anything, and indeed *Mon Oncle* is halfway a silent film, with the dialogue sounding like an unexpected interruption in a library. The music is repetitive, simple, cheerful, like circus music while we're waiting for the clowns.

Hulot was the hero of *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*, but here he is a lost soul, unemployed, bemused and confused by the modern world. His sister Madame Arpel (Adrienne Servantie) believes she can help him. She lives with her husband Monsieur Arpel (Jean-Pierre Zolla) and their young son Gerard (Alain Becourt) in a futurist architectural monstrosity, and a great deal of the movie's time is spent exploring their cold new world.

The house they live in, a masterpiece of production design by Henri Schmitt, has automatic gates, doors, windows, kitchen appliances and a hideous aluminum fountain made from a fish that spouts water from its mouth. The fish is turned on for company, left off for family, tradesmen and relatives. Two round upstairs windows look like eyeballs, especially when the backlit heads of M and Mme Arpel function as their pupils. The garden has a winding path to the door, allowing a wicked shot where two women effusively greet each other while the path has them walking in opposite directions.

The only person who seems to understand Hulot is his nephew Gerard, who treats life in the modernist house as a bore, and escapes to scamper about town with his prankster playmates. The family dog, a dachshund in a plaid overcoat, also sneaks out to run with the local strays.

Tati was a perfectionist whose precise construction of shots, sets, actions and gags is all the more impressive because he remained within a calm emotional range; Hulot doesn't find himself starving, hanging from clock faces, besotted with romance or in the middle of a war, but simply puttering away at life, genial and courteous, doing what he can to negotiate the hurdles of civilization. Roger Ebert



Monday 14 May at 6:30pm

AFS thanks Retrospace

Akira

Japan 1988

Director/Screenplay/Editor: Otomo Katsuhiro
 Producers: Suzuki Ryohei, Kato Shunzo
 Production co: Akira Committee
 Screenplay: Otomo Katsuhiro, Hashimoto Izo. Based on the manga by Otomo
 Editor: Seyama Takeshi
 Chief animator: Nakamura Takashi
 Music: Yamashiro Shoji

Voices: Iwada Mitsuo (Kaneda), Sasaki Nozumo (Tetsuo), Koyama Mami (Kei), Ishida Taro (colonel), Genda Tessyo (Ryu), Suzuki Mizuho (doctor), Nakamura Tatsuhiko (Takashi, "Number 26"), Kando Kazuhiro (Masaru, "Number 27")

124 mins, DCP. M violence
 In Japanese with English subtitles

For anime, 1988 was an extraordinary year. That April, Studio Ghibli released *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Grave Of The Fireflies*, two films that would soon cement its reputation as one of Japan's finest animation houses. And three months later, writer, artist and director Katsuhiro Otomo would unveil *Akira*.

Based on Otomo's best-selling, voluminous manga... *Akira* is set in a 2019 Neo-Tokyo balanced on a knife-edge. Rival motorcycle gangs fight in the streets. Revolutionaries and religious fanatics clash with the police. Behind the scenes, the military and sneaky politicians tussle for control, while scientists carry out strange experiments on grey-faced children. *Akira*'s multi-strand plot is told primarily from a gang of teen bikers, including the outgoing Kaneda and his downtrodden childhood friend Tetsuo. When a chance encounter with an escaped test subject named Takashi leaves Tetsuo wounded, he's dragged off to a government lab. There, Tetsuo acquires god-like powers that threaten to tear Tokyo apart.

A manga artist and writer for many years before he moved into animation, Otomo was given unprecedented resources to bring *Akira* to the screen... The result remains one of the most technically astounding animated features ever to emerge from Japan. *Akira*'s action moves not just across the screen, but in and out of it. *Akira* is constantly moving. The frame is always alive – nowhere more so than in the exhilarating motorcycle scene through night time Tokyo in the first act. Look, too, at how Otomo and his animators use colour. It's something many modern filmmakers could learn from. Teal and orange is joined by acid greens, purples, impenetrable shadows and blinding lights.

Akira is unusual, in that it features none of the exotically-hair-coloured ladies or outlandish mecha commonly associated with anime. It's nevertheless possibly one of the most brutal animated features ever made. Brutal, that is, in filmmaking terms: every bullet, punch, kick and explosion has weight and impact, imbued through beautifully-drawn animation, editing, and Tsutomu Ohashi's stunning, percussive score. But beneath all this technical brilliance, brutality, political intrigue and violence, there's a human story. Strip everything else away, and you're left with a quite touching tale about young kids trying to find their way into adulthood in a cruel and terrible city. No other science fiction film looks quite so distinctive or detailed as *Akira*, and its depiction of a believable city makes it a clear relation to *Metropolis* and *Blade Runner*, and as artistically important as either. ...

[Thirty] years on, *Akira* still has the power to enthrall and mesmerise. It's telling that Otomo, although still working and producing great work, has never attempted to make anything on its scale again. *Akira* stands alone as a unique piece of animated science fiction. – Ryan Lambie, *Den of Geek!*



Monday 21 May at 6:30 pm

Things to Come

UK 1936

Director: William Cameron Menzies
 Producer: Alexander Korda
 Production co: London Films
 Screenplay: HG Wells. Based on his novel
 Photography: Georges Perinal
 Editors: Charles Crichton, Francis Lyon
 Music: Arthur Bliss

With: Raymond Massey (John Cabal/Oswald Cabal), Edward Chapman (Pippa Passworthy/Raymond Passworthy), Ralph Richardson (the Boss), Margueretta Scott (Roxana/Rowena), Cedric Hardwicke (Theotocopulos), Maurice Braddell (Dr Harding), Sophie Stewart (Mrs Cabal), Derrick de Marney (Richard Gordon), Ann Todd (Mary Gordon)

100 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

From first to last, *Things to Come* was intended to bear the unmistakable stamp of HG Wells's personal vision. Adapted by the legendary science-fiction novelist from his nonfiction book of "future history," both book and film are earnest attempts to foretell the future, extrapolating from current conditions in the 1930s the course of human events over a 100-year period. Divided roughly into movements, and thus analogous to a piece of music, *Things to Come* opens, prophetically enough, with the declaration of war in 1940, a prolonged war of attrition which the film envisions will last for decades. Later, following the outbreak of an epidemic known as the Wandering Sickness, society devolves into a new Dark Ages, in which the ragtag remnants of the old order fall under the sway of vicious warlords. In the final movement, a new utopian order arises, a strangely hieratic hybrid of socialist technocracy and benevolent despotism. In order to buttress his narrative through line, Wells employs the same stock types again and again, sometimes played by the same actors: Raymond Massey turns up on three separate occasions as stentorian superman John Cabal and his descendant Oswald, while Edward Chapman plays two versions of an accommodating every-schlub. – Budd Wilkins, *Slant Magazine*

The film's memorable quality stems most obviously from a visual design that remains mesmerizing and, at times, overwhelming. Drawing freely, as needed, on the stylistic devices of Soviet and German filmmaking, and using every sort of trickery, from models to photographic enlargements to deftly interpolated stock footage, Menzies and his colleagues created a series of indelible scenes: urban mobilisation followed by panic and mass death; postwar tribalism springing up among the ruins of the city; the unforgettable landing of a helmeted Massey incarnating the Man from the Future; the fleet of futuristic airplanes breaking through the clouds; the long, nearly abstract interlude of industrial reconstruction; and, finally, the gleaming subterranean pathways, soaring bridges, and gigantic television screens of the achieved World State. The effect of all these scenes is amplified immeasurably by the imposing sonorities of Arthur Bliss's score.

Things to Come remains HG Wells's movie, an almost unique instance in which a literary figure devoted to visionary and polemical ideas was provided with all the technical support of commercial cinema to get his message directly to the public. To the extent that the film fails to fully convey Wells's vision, it is a judgment on that vision itself. Similarly, if Menzies can be faulted for the rather wooden pacing of some of the dialogue, it is only because he could not find a way to breathe life into language that is often flatly declamatory. By the same token, it is impossible to separate the film's expressive visual and musical power from the intensity of what Wells intended to accomplish. – Geoffrey O'Brien, *Criterion.com*



Monday 28 May at 6:30 pm

Fireworks Wednesday

Iran 2006

Director/Screenplay: Asghar Farhadi
 Producer: Seyed Jamal Sadatian
 Production co: Boshra Film
 Screenplay: Asghar Farhadi, Mani Haghighi
 Photography: Hossein Jafarian
 Editor: Hayedeh Safyari
 Music: Peyman Yazdani

With: Hediye Tehrani (Mozhdeh), Taraneh Alidoosti (Rouhi), Hamid Farrokhneshad (Morteza), Pantea Bahram (Mrs Simi)

102 mins, DCP, M violence, offensive language
 In Farsi with English subtitles

This is a thoroughly engrossing and densely textured drama, showing Farhadi's cool skill in dissecting the Iranian middle classes and the unhappiness of marriage... Mozhdeh is obsessed with the idea that Morteza is cheating on her with the next-door neighbour, beauty-salon owner Simin: she listens at the ventilation duct in her bathroom and at the wall behind the closet, and it is enigmatically unclear if she has actually heard anything incriminating or not... Instantly, instinctively, she has entered the world of little secrets and lies that comes with the territory of marriage, and her open, beautiful face becomes clouded with fear and unease as she guesses what might be in store for her in the married future. – Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*

Few filmmakers working today can turn the psychological screws as expertly as Asghar Farhadi, the Iranian director who won an Academy Award a few years ago for the taut divorce drama *A Separation*. Once again, Farhadi's territory is the marital battlefield: this time a chaotic, psychically charred landscape inside a prosperous couple's apartment in Tehran. That's where house cleaner Rouhi (Taraneh Alidoosti) arrives during the new year's celebration known in Iran as Fireworks Wednesday, when indiscriminate bursts of noise can be heard emanating all day and night from guns, firecrackers and other devices. But no explosion outside comes close to the incendiary emotions crackling between the couple Rouhi has signed on to work for. As they prepare to depart for a family vacation in Dubai the next day, the wife (Hediye Tehrani) nurses a white-hot paranoia having to do with her husband (Hamid Farrokhneshad) and the goings-on in their busy, boisterous apartment building.

Fireworks Wednesday was made more than a decade ago, earning plaudits on the festival circuit but never opening in theaters. On the strength of Farhadi's recent work, it's thankfully seeing the light of day, and for the director's cadre of fans, it will prove just as satisfying – and unsettling – as the movies that have made him a household name (at least in some households). Recalling Hitchcock in his graceful, quietly observant camera work and his uncanny ability to evoke tension within disquieting crescendos and soothing lulls, Farhadi is in full command of his powers throughout... Despite a few jagged, startling edits, its keyed-up portrayal of domestic disturbance fully anticipates the agitated chamber pieces the filmmaker would become famous for.

Fireworks Wednesday benefits enormously from its stellar cast, especially Alidoosti, who played the mysterious title character in Farhadi's 2009 drama *About Elly*. Here, she plays an innocent girl, on the cusp of getting married herself, whose dawning realization about the strains and mistrust of conjugal life plays out across her face like the spectacle the movie is named for. Mournful, enigmatic and compulsively engrossing, *Fireworks Wednesday* gives viewers a chance to watch a master at work. – Ann Hornaday, *Washington Post*



Tuesday 05 June at 6:30 pm

Of Horses and Men Hross í oss Iceland 2013

Director/Screenplay: Benedikt Erlingsson
Producers: Friðrik Þór Friðriksson
Production co: Leiknar Myndir, Gulldregurinn, Mogador Film, Hughrif, Filmhuset Fiction
Photography: Bergsteinn Björgulfsen
Editor: David Alexander Corno
Music: David Þór Jónsson

With: Ingvar E Sigurðsson (Kolbeinn), Charlotte Bøving (Solveig), Steinn Ármann Magnússon (Vernhardur), Helgi Björnsson (Egill), Kristbjörg Kjeld (Hildur), Sigríður María Egilsdóttir (Jóhanna), Juan Camillo Roman Estrada (Juan Camillo)

81 mins, DCP. R13 sex scenes, offensive language, content that may disturb
In Icelandic with English subtitles

When filmmakers are looking for an alien world, they increasingly find it in Iceland. Recent science-fiction blockbusters such as *Prometheus* and *Oblivion*, not to mention the television series *Game of Thrones*, have shot Hollywood-sized stories on that country's snow-streaked, ash-dusted plains. But here, from that same landscape, is something truly and seductively strange. *Of Horses and Men* is a collection of six-or-so interlocking fables about a group of rural Icelanders' relationships with their horses and each other, and which run the gamut from stony-black comedies of sex and death to chilly meditations on the blind cruelty of fate.

Iceland's official entry for the 2014 foreign-language Oscar will be a dream come true for horse-lovers, albeit one that is often... hard to watch. Benedikt Erlingsson, the writer and director, does not shy away from the hardship inflicted on these animals by the Icelandic landscape and occasionally also its people, and even the lightest-hearted sequences can end with a tragic twist.

Every plot strand centres on a different horse, and Sigurdsson begins each one with loving close-ups of the creature, ending on its eye, in which we see a reflection of its owner. The first of which is Kolbeinn (Ingvar E Sigurdsson), one of the valley's more well-to-do residents, who is about to take a newly tamed mare out for a spin. The animal's "flying pace", a step peculiar to the Icelandic breed, makes horse and rider look as if they might be a single creature skimming across the road's surface, and his neighbours peer at him through binoculars, spellbound. They reach a farm where Kolbeinn takes tea with Solveig (Charlotte Bøving), who clearly has her eye on her dignified guest. Her stallion, it turns out, harbours similar feelings for his mount...

In another tale, a local drunk rides his horse out to sea to meet a Russian ship, in the hope that they will sell him some cheap vodka. In a third, a Spanish tourist finds himself stranded in a snowstorm with his horse and, perhaps with a certain early sequence in *The Empire Strikes Back* in mind, does what has to be done to survive.

Each episode is tenderly attuned to the weather and landscape, both of which are captured in you-could-almost-be-there vividness, and underscored by a heady swirl of choral works and primal drumming. Erlingsson, an actor and stage director well known in his home country, has made a heart-swelling and frostily beautiful debut feature that often feels like a kind of fireside storytelling: these tales may be tall, but you ache to believe them.

Robbie Collin, *The Telegraph*



Monday 11 June at 6:30 pm

Gilda USA 1946

Director: Charles Vidor
Producer: Virginia Van Upp
Production co: Columbia
Screenplay: Marion Parsonnet, Jo Eisinger. Based on a story by EA Ellington
Photography: Rudolph Maté
Editor: Charles Nelson

With: Rita Hayworth (Gilda Mundson Farrell), Glenn Ford (Johnny Farrell), George Macready (Ballin Mundson), Joseph Calleia (Detective Maurice Obregon), Steven Geray (Uncle Pio), Joe Sawyer (Casey), Gerald Mohr (Captain Delgado), Robert Scott (Gabe Evans), Ludwig Donath (German cartel member), Don Douglas (Thomas Langford)

110 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

More than ever, Charles Vidor's classic melo-noir *Gilda* looks like the crazy evil twin of Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca*. But *Gilda* has a streak of irrational panic and hysteria alien to Bergman and Bogart. Glenn Ford plays Johnny, a wastrel who fetches up in a quaintly imagined Buenos Aires just before the end of the war. A perennial card-sharp and gambling cheat, he gets a poacher-turned-gamekeeper job in a casino, as indispensable assistant to its hardfaced owner Mundson (George Macready) who has just got married to the head-spinningly beautiful and mercurial Gilda, played by Rita Hayworth. But Gilda got hitched on the rebound from some American guy who broke her heart... and that guy just happened to be Johnny. Their terrible secret festers and itches, and the erotic tension escalates. *Gilda* is satirically woozy with the strange mood of the time: A real 1940s Hollywood treat. – Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*

While French critics were raving about *Gilda*, Bosley Crowther's *New York Times* review sounded utterly baffled: "The details are so mysterious and so foggily laced through the film that they serve no artistic purpose, other than to confuse things still more. He's right. *Gilda* is confusing. In it, hatred is more powerful (and sexier) than love. Gilda's husband of one or two days, confesses, "Hate can be a very exciting emotion. Very exciting. Haven't you noticed that?" Later, Gilda echoes those exact words into Johnny's ear, and her arousal is palpable. *Gilda* is not meant to be clear. It is meant to plunge the audience into an atmosphere so emotionally claustrophobic that even Johnny's voice-over can't provide escape or enlightenment. Most noir voice-overs provide backstory and explanation. Not Johnny's. There are some things that are buried too deep. The only characters in the film who have any perspective are the washroom attendant and the police detective. The leads have none.

Who can say where "movie magic" comes from? Sometimes the most powerful movie magic happens by accident, a film or a performance tapping into the mother lode of fantasy and dream and illusion, something all films strive for but so few achieve. There have been some carefully orchestrated careers, actors making risky choices to play "against type," vehicles chosen to push a specific starlet to the front. However, you could not really set out to do what *Gilda* did for Rita Hayworth. She had a studio and a publicity department behind her, the love of American GIs for her famous pinup, but still... what she brought to *Gilda* was all her own.

In a Turner Classic Movies documentary on Hayworth, a World War II veteran remembers the effect of Hayworth movies on soldiers during the war: "You can't imagine what it is when you're out in them islands, you think you're gonna be dead tomorrow, and you get something like that." That is a profound level of stardom and fan identification that few actors ever achieve. – Sheila O'Malley, *The Long Shadow of Gilda*



Monday 18 June at 6:30 pm

Le Quattro Volte

Italy 2010

Director/Screenplay: Michelangelo Frammartino
Producers: Marta Donzelli, Gregorio Paonessa, Susanne Marian, Philippe Bober, Gabriella Manfrè, Elda Guidinetti, Andres Pfaeffli
Production co: Vivo Film, Essential Filmproduktion, Invisible Film, Ventura Film
Photography: Andrea Locatelli
Editor: Benni Atria, Maurizio Grillo
Music: Paolo Benvenuti

With: Giuseppe Fuda (the shepherd), Bruno Timpano, Nazareno Timpano, Artemio Vallone (coal makers)

88 mins, Blu-ray. G (no dialogue)

Le Quattro Volte is at once casually mystical and doggedly materialist, visually sophisticated and knowingly archaic. It's a homespun Pythagorean meditation on the harmonious nature of the universe and the transmigration of souls shot in rural Calabria – the hilly land where, some 2,500 years ago, the Greek thinker invented mathematics and, according to tradition, preached to the animals. – J Hoberman, *Village Voice*

Le Quattro Volte, the nearly wordless second film from Italian director Michelangelo Frammartino, compresses a year in a mountainous spot in the southern Italian region of Calabria into the length of a short feature. It's a remote location, but Frammartino's canny eye, wry humor, and careful sense of rhythm make it feel like the best possible spot to observe the workings of the world, from ashes to ashes. Literally: The film begins and ends with a group of men creating charcoal, then cycles through a series of connected vignettes filled with images of death and rebirth taken from everyday life in and around a centuries-old village. Split into four sections, *Le Quattro Volte* at first follows an aging goatherd (Giuseppe Fuda) as he goes about the lonely business of tending his flock, aided only by a dog whose vivaciousness contrasts with the goatherd's own failing health. Following a folk custom, Fuda mixes the dust from a church into his drinking water in an attempt to fend off illness. When he succumbs to the inevitable, the film shifts focus to a newborn goat before shifting twice more as it follows a circular path back to where it began.

Frammartino has suggested the concept of reincarnation factored into his conception of the film, but any mysticism here comes from earthy material. Frammartino uses long, carefully observed takes to capture the natural world and the way the same patterns keep erupting from beneath humanity's attempts to impose order upon it. What sounds potentially tedious in bare description proves dynamic on the screen: An architect by training, Frammartino has a painter's sense of how to use every portion of the frame meaningfully. But he also has a comic's sense of how to put a gag together. In the film's most memorable scene, a group of men dressed like Roman centurions arrive late for a reenactment of the Passion. As the procession passes by, a dog barks angrily at soldiers and the Savior alike as a group of goats watch indifferently before getting loose, wandering through town, and becoming a bunch of cloven-hoofed Monsieur Hulots.

Frammartino is so skilled at creating low-key observations of the junctures between human and animal life that the latter portions of *Le Quattro Volte*, which turn their attention elsewhere, can't help but feel a little less spirited by comparison. But as the film rolls to its close and Frammartino casts some doubt as to whether the cycles of village life will roll on or wind down, it feels like a privilege to have visited such a little-traveled part of the world, and to have been shown so much while watching it. – Keith Phipps, *AV Club*



Monday 25 June at 6:30 pm

Daughters of Darkness

Belgium/France/W Germany 1971

Director: Harry Kümel
Producers: Heney Lange, Paul Collet
Production co: Showking Films, Maya Films, Ciné Vog Films, Roxy Film
Screenplay: Pierre Drouot, Jean Ferry, Harry Kümel
Photography: Eduard Van Der Enden
Editors: Denis Donan, Gust Verschieren
Music: François de Roubaix

With: Delphine Seyrig (Countess Bathory), John Karlen (Stefan), Danielle Ouimet (Valerie), Andrea Rau (Ilona Harcy), Paul Esser (hotel clerk), Georges Jamin (retired policeman), Joris Collet (butler), Fons Rademakers (mother)

101 mins, Blu-ray. R16 violence, sex scenes

Existing in some uncomfortable no-man's land between the arthouse and the grindhouse, Harry Kümel's 1971 cult classic *Daughters of Darkness* appeals to that narrow subset of viewers who want their lesbian vampire movies classed up a bit. Considered next to other Eurotrash imports flooding into the States during that newly permissive era, the film likely bored drive-in audiences lusting for a little blood and T&A, while buttoned-up viewers weaned on Ingmar Bergman or Michelangelo Antonioni probably wouldn't acknowledge its artistry. The film actually offers plenty of sustenance for both camps, but it isn't so easily pigeonholed, which is a key reason cultists have kept this curiosity alive all these years. Now lovingly preserved in a two-disc set, the film looks better than ever; this psychologically dense, genuinely erotic vampire thriller lacks fangs, but it has plenty of bite. – Scott Tobias, *AV Club*

Stefan (John Karlen) and Valerie (Danielle Ouimet), a good-looking young couple who have eloped, stay in an out-of-season hotel in rain-swept, depopulated Ostend. They are not exactly on honeymoon, just pausing in this luxurious yet faded interzone before the supposedly British Stefan, who has neither an English name or an English accent, takes his new bride home to his aristocratic mother – who, as we see in a cutaway shot, is a man in a dress (Fons Rademakers). Stefan also takes his belt to his wife during lovemaking, and shows signs of other kinks unusual in the clean-cut leading man of a horror movie – compare young bridegrooms in everything from *The Black Cat* (1934) to *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) for exemplars of straight values. The only other guests in the hotel are the Countess Elisabeth Bathory (Delphine Seyrig) and her pouting, tempting secretary Ilona (Andrea Rau). The aged clerk (Paul Esser) and a retired policeman (Georges Jamin) are certain that the Countess was here before, too many years ago for her apparent age, and is mixed up with unsolved murders that have left blood-drained corpses behind...

Harry Kümel's *Daughters of Darkness* is an unusual horror film, depicting vampirism (and lesbianism) as a reasonable alternative to stifling or perverse male desires. It's cine-literate, casting Seyrig for her association with art cinema from *Last Year at Marienbad* (set in another hotel in limbo) and dressing and coiffing her like 1930s Marlene Dietrich. But it's also creepily, delicately sophisticated, with a witty, evocative score by Francois de Roubaix and an interesting, unusual set of monstrous mannerisms. The Countess shimmers in a silver sheath dress and shows white, white teeth in her red, red mouth and waves a feather boa like the fronds of a poison anemone to attract the young couple into her coils in a distant echo of Dracula's victim-enveloping cloak. Bathory is named for the Hungarian mass murderess (who may have been framed) and recurrent film character, and Seyrig seethes sexually as she recounts the atrocities committed by her supposed ancestress, which excites the sneakily sadistic Stefan. – Kim Newman, *Electric Sheep*



Monday 02 July at 6:30 pm

Only Angels Have Wings

USA 1939

Director: Howard Hawks
 Production co: Columbia
 Screenplay: Jules Furthman
 Photography: Joseph Walker
 Editor: Viola Lawrence
 Music: Dimitri Tiomkin

With: Cary Grant (Geoff Carter), Jean Arthur (Bonnie Lee), Richard Barthelmess (Bat McPherson), Rita Hayworth (Judy McPherson), Thomas Mitchell (Kid Dabb), Allyn Joslyn (Les Peters), Sig Rimmann (Dutchy), Victor Kilian (Sparks), John Carroll (Gent Shelton), Donald Barry (Tex), Noah Beery Jr (Joe Souther), Maciste (the Singer), Milissa Sierra (Lily), Lucio Villegas (doctor), Pat Flaherty (Mike), Pedro Regas (Pancho)

121 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

Cinephiles frequently cite 1939 as Hollywood's greatest year, rattling off an impressive list of widely beloved classics: *Gone With the Wind*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Stagecoach*, *Mr Smith Goes to Washington*, and so forth. Rarely mentioned, however, is Howard Hawks' *Only Angels Have Wings*, a stealth contender for the single greatest Hollywood movie of all time. That this glorious amalgam of romance, adventure, melodrama, and musical doesn't have a loftier reputation is to some degree understandable – even more than most of Hawks' films, it's an ode to pragmatism and professionalism, dismissing almost any powerful display of emotion as a distraction from the task at hand and/or an admission of weakness...

The film's first half-hour alone constitutes a dazzling tour de force of shifting dynamics. Initially, it appears to be an "exotic" variation on the fast-talking romcom, as showgirl Bonnie Lee (Jean Arthur) disembarks a ship in the (fictional) South American port of Barranca and immediately has a couple of mail pilots (Allyn Joslyn and Noah Beery Jr) competing for her affections. When their boss, Geoff Carter (Cary Grant), insists that work come before pleasure, one of them winds up crashing his plane in his eagerness to keep his date with Bonnie, who's subsequently appalled when Geoff and the other men show no outward signs of grief at their friend's death. The movie turns heavy, only to soon lighten up again, as Bonnie talks to some of the locals and begins to understand what purpose this stoic behavior serves. Before long, she's performing a jaunty number on the saloon's piano, and in no particular hurry to get back on her ship, even though Geoff's best friend, Kid (Thomas Mitchell), warns her that she's setting herself up for heartbreak.

That's more than enough for a whole feature, but it barely even scratches the surface of what happens in *Only Angels Have Wings*... One of the movie's best jokes sees Geoff abruptly stop in the middle of a conversation, walk across the room, and throw open a door, causing an eavesdropping Bonnie to fall inside – it's a slapstick moment, but it's also a puckish reminder that wheels are turning outside of the frame at every moment. The film offers genuine intrigue and excitement – including the pilots' climactic, death-defying effort to save the airline by demonstrating that they can reliably deliver the mail even in treacherous weather. But its ultimate power derives largely from its unusual ethos, which celebrates pragmatism at the expense of emotional behavior while simultaneously acknowledging just how profound a pragmatist's emotions can be. In particular, the resolution of Bonnie and Geoff's relationship (which is also the final scene of the movie) eschews romance in a way that, paradoxically, makes the gesture in question achingly romantic. That's par for the course in a film that's built on internal contradictions, repeatedly engineering massive upheavals and then watching the characters blithely pretend that nothing of note has occurred, even as they die inside. – Mike d'Angelo, *AV Club*



Monday 09 July at 6:30 pm

Les Cowboys

France 2015

Director: Thomas Bidegain
 Producer: Alain Attal
 Production co: Les Productions du Trésor, Pathé, France 2 Cinéma, Les Films du Fleuve, Lunanime, VOO, BeTV, RTBF
 Screenplay: Thomas Bidegain, Noé Debré
 Photography: Arnaud Potier
 Editor: Geraldine Mangelot
 Music: Raphael Haroche

With: François Damiens (Alain Balland), Finnegan Oldfield (Georges Balland, "Kid"), Agathe Dronne (Nicole Balland), Ellora Torchia (Shazhana), John C Reilly (the American), Antonia Campbell Hughes (Emma)

104 mins, Blu-ray. M violence, offensive language, drug use
 In English, French and Urdu, with English subtitles

Screenwriter Thomas Bidegain's directorial debut opens in rural France at an American-style hoedown that Alain (comedic actor François Damiens, playing against type) frequents with his family. That same day, amid cowboy hats, muddy boots, and a twangy French rendition of "Tennessee Waltz", Alain's daughter Kelly disappears. Along with his son, Alain goes to great lengths to look for the missing teen, who may have run off with a young jihadist.

Bidegain plays off the tropes and iconography of the American West and brings Ford's *The Searchers* to 21st-century Western Europe, where skirmishes with Indians are replaced by the War on Terror. In the most riveting part of the film, the son (at this point played by Finnegan Oldfield) continues the search for his sister abroad, in the lawless borderlands of Rajasthan. There he's aided by an American smuggler (a rugged but slick John C Reilly) who may have an agenda of his own. – Alejandro Veciana, *Film Comment*

Les Cowboys depicts a particular period, from the 1990s into the next decade, during which both America and Europe – a Europe that in many ways wants to be America – was forced to take stock of a world that was changing unrecognizably around it. The very moment of that change is evoked in one telling sequence. About halfway through *Les Cowboys*, Bidegain lays in a couple of seemingly unmotivated shots of a small, peaceful French town with empty streets. One shot is of the exterior of a café; he then cuts to the interior, where a stunned crowd is watching live TV coverage of the 9/11 attacks. In isolation, those two exteriors are nothing special. In context, we realize they depict the last breath before the world changes forever – although *Les Cowboys* reminds us that it had already been changing by then...

What emerges over and over again is European incomprehension of Islam at a moment when the West has to familiarize itself overnight with a new cultural, political, ideological map of the world (which, as this century has shown so far, it has struggled to do). But the most fascinating aspect of *Les Cowboys* is its depiction of how, in this changing world, everyone is searching for an identity – people of East and West, the secular as much as the religious – and flailing to know who they are. Its principal characters are Europeans who over-identify with America; understandable, then, that their daughter might throw in her lot with European Muslims desperate to find a rooted identity of their own. In Afghanistan, the Reilly character asks Kid: "There's a war going on. What side are you on?" Kid replies: "No one's side." But the 21st century – as *Les Cowboys* pinpoints so astutely – doesn't allow anyone to easily avoid taking sides. And if you're going to be on one side or another, the first thing you have to decide is what role to play – or rather, what hat to wear. – J Romney, *Film Comment*



Monday 13 August at 6:30 pm

L'inhumaine

France 1924

Director: Marcel L'Herbier
Production co: Cinégraphique
Screenplay: Pierre MacOrlan, Georgette Leblanc
Photography: Georges Specht

With: Georgette Leblanc (Claire Lescot), Jaque Catelain (Einar Norsen), Léonid Walter de Malte (Waldimir Kranine), Fred Kellerman (Frank Mahler), Philippe Hériat (Djorah de Nopur), Marcelle Pradot (the simpleton)

122 mins, DCP, B&W, silent, tinted. PG adult themes
French intertitles with English subtitles

What to say about a film that, 90 years on from its release, is still so far ahead of most of what passes for cinema today? *L'inhumaine* was made by Marcel L'Herbier in 1924; no other silent film, perhaps, could match its sheer stylistic and imaginative daring. Since the coming of sound, only a few directors have even attempted what L'Herbier pulled off with such flair: Films whose hypnotic, languorous surface are not just a matter of style but also the very substance of the works themselves.

Of course, *L'inhumaine* must be one of the most absurd Great Movies ever made. The ludicrous plot by L'Herbier and the best-selling author Pierre MacOrlan concerns a femme fatale and her four suitors. A crass American showman wants her to become the world's greatest star. A crazed Russian mystic wants her to inspire a new revolution. A sinister Hindu maharajah wants her to take the throne as his queen. An idealistic young scientist (played by L'Herbier's close friend and protégé Jaque-Catelain) loves her purely and poetically, for herself. None of these relationships is at all convincing, least of all that of the lady and the scientist (which wins out).

Granted that *L'inhumaine* ought not – by any sane standards – to be a great film, our wonder lies in discovering how and why it is one. It is essential that cinema, for L'Herbier and his team, was not about narrative. Writing of L'Herbier and his more famous and bombastic contemporary Abel Gance, Dudley Andrew points out how “their real concern all along was with style, visual tempo, subjective states, delicate textures and private sensibility”. The aim was less to tell a story than to evoke a subjective and profoundly interior world through objective visual means. – David Melville, *Senses of Cinema*

There's little sentiment in this story, but there is great style. Even the intertitles glitter. L'Herbier conceived the film as a “miscellany of modern art” and he collaborated with artists and designers to ensure that *L'inhumaine* was a showcase of contemporary decorative styles. Paul Poiret, René Lalique, Fernand Léger, Robert Mallet-Stevens, Alberto Cavalcanti and Claude Autant-Lara were among the talents brought in to make *L'inhumaine* the jewel that it is. Bold tints and rapid edits combine to create a very cerebral kind of impressionist film-making.

It's a gorgeous artefact, though, and a film that reveals L'Herbier's tendency to high style taken to extremes. If you want to revel in this fantasy of aesthetic perfection, the new restoration by Lobster Films reveals every inch of those highly wrought designs, and gives the tints the punch they deserve...

L'inhumaine is a manifesto for modernity and call for film to be considered as art. Without films like this, cinema would be lost.

Pamela Hutchinson, *Silent London*



Monday 20 August at 6:30 pm

Fidelio: Alice's Journey

Fidelio, l'odyssée d'Alice
France 2014

Director: Lucie Borleteau
Producers: Marine Arrighi De Casanova, Pascal Caucheteux
Production co: Why Not Productions, Apsara Films, Arte France Cinéma
Screenplay: Lucie Borleteau, Clara Bourreau, Mathilde Boisseleau
Photography: Simon Beaufils
Editor: Guy Lecorne
Music: Thomas De Pourquery

With: Ariane Labed (Alice), Melvil Poupaud (Gaël), Anders Danielsen Lie (Felix), Pascal Tagnati (Antoine), Jean-Louis Coulloc'h (Barbureau), Nathanael Maini (Fred), Bogdan Zamfir (Vali), Corneliu Dragomirescu (Constantin), Manuel Ramirez (Felizardo), Thomas Scimeca (Steph)

97 mins, Blu-ray. Censors rating tbc
In French, Romanian, English, Tagalog and Norwegian, with English subtitles

Built four-square around Ariane Labed's engaging turn as eponymous sailor Alice, this feature debut from actress-turned-writer-director Lucie Borleteau strikes a delicate balance between the sensual and the matter-of-fact. Stated baldly, *Fidelio* deals with fidelity: both in terms of individuals' commitment to their partners, and also to their own ideals. Alice seems happily settled with her landlubbing nice guy, Norwegian boyfriend Felix (Anders Danielsen Lie), even though the nature of her job – she's a ship's mechanic – means they are often physically apart for months on end. And while the wonders of Skype provide a measure of consoling “face time”, it soon becomes apparent that Alice operates by the maritime maxim “what happens at sea stays at sea.” Joining the crew of the *Fidelio* to replace the recently deceased Patrick, she's startled to discover that the Captain is dishy old flame Gael (Melvil Poupaud). Romantic and professional complications duly ensue, an extra dimension of psychological intricacy added when Alice happens across Patrick's diaries (read in voiceover by Luc Catania), and contrasts his solitary private life with her own uninhibited explorations of sexuality. Feminist aspects of *Fidelio* are present if unstressed, Borleteau mostly avoiding the clichés of the woman-in-a-man's-world subgenre to explore, in tandem with the ever-game Labed, the universe of her proudly independent, self-confident heroine... The film presents a convincingly detailed panorama of work, rest and play in the artificial, enclosed environment of the merchant marine. – Neil Young, *The Hollywood Reporter*

The highly melodramatic romantic entanglements which permeate the narrative are deftly encapsulated by cinematographer Simon Beaufils, whose atmospheric lens rhythmically pulsates with intense potency through the sexually-charged scenes of carnal desire. Tightly framed close-ups bring an emotional catharsis and deep sensitivity to the physical act of love, which sit in opposition to the expansive and endless seascapes that become threatening spaces of unnerving claustrophobia... To Alice, her personal landscape of sexual pleasure is where she attains liberation and sense of self, the seascape and its vast silences, challenging, taunting and threatening. By charting sexually erotic waters in an uninhibited manner... Borleteau invites reflections upon the nature of relationships and the role sexual pleasure plays in the pursuit of love and commitment. Whether a balance between the body, mind and soul may be achieved through a commitment to one relationship or whether self-enlightenment is dependent upon a deep exploration of all sexual, emotional and professional components of interpersonal relationships is not neatly resolved by Borleteau, but she does however, subscribe to the philosophy that self-gratification is one such pleasurable route to take when trying to figure it all out. – Dee O'Donoghue, *Film Ireland Magazine*



Monday 27 August at 6:30 pm

Young Törless Der junge Törless West Germany 1966

Director: Volker Schlöndorff
Producers: Franz Seitz
Production co: Franz Seitz Filmproduktion, NEF
Screenplay: Volker Schlöndorff. Based on the novel by Robert Musil
Photography: Franz Rath
Editor: Claus von Boro
Music: Hans Werner Henze

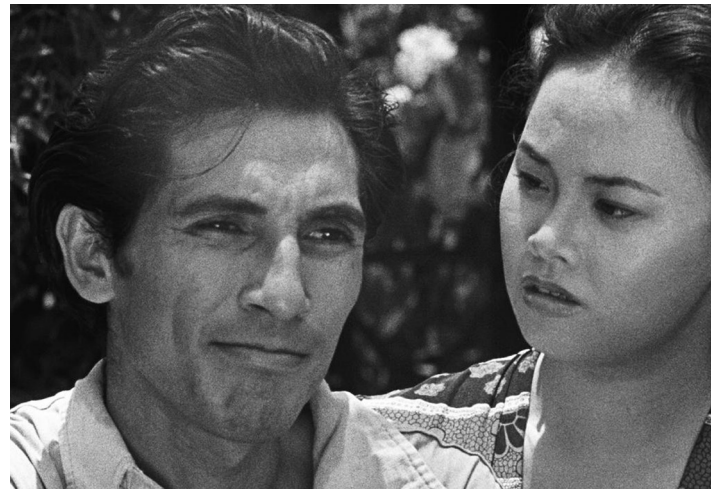
With: Mathieu Carrière (Törless), Marian Seidowsky (Basini), Bernd Tischer (Beineberg), Fred Dietz (Reiting), Lotte Ledl (innkeeper), Jean Laubay (maths teacher), Barbara Steele (Bozena)

86 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. R18
In German with English subtitles

Young Törless, set in a boys' boarding school in turn-of-the-century Germany, is a very austere, very composed and, in a barren sort of way, a quite beautiful movie about the cruelty of man. Volker Schlöndorff has directed it with such understated control of time, place and people, that it has about it a kind of classic purity. Törless (Mathieu Carrière), a sensitive young student, at first watches with detachment as his friends, Beineberg and Reiting, set up increasingly cruel tortures for a fourth classmate, Basini, whom they have caught stealing money. Basini is not really worth much, a braggart and a liar and, basically, something of a masochist. Finally, however, when it is made apparent to Törless that he has become as much of a torturer as his two friends – simply by being a witness – he tries to help the thief... The film is shot in dim, black-and-white twilight tones – when there is sunlight, the sunlight does not create shadows. There is something of the same dimness about Törless himself, as if the director did not want to overplay his melodrama. In spite of its scenes of cruelty, *Young Törless* is not a sensational movie, but – in an almost old-fashioned way – a good and serious one. – Vincent Canby, *The New York Times*

The appearance of *Young Törless* in 1966 signaled not only the debut of Volker Schlöndorff as a major international filmmaker but also the beginnings of what would become known as the New German Cinema, one of the most important film movements of the 20th century. Based on Robert Musil's 1906 novel, Schlöndorff's debut film was also the first of his literary adaptations – which would become his hallmark, including his celebrated film of Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*; the Proust adaptation *Swann in Love* (1983); and a US production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1985). As with Schlöndorff's other adaptations, *Young Törless* is not simply a respectful recreation of a great literary work; rather, it uses the novel as a refractive lens through which to examine contemporary German history and, more exactly, the violence and psychological strain that have linked public and private life in modern Germany.

Although critics of the film sometimes misread Törless's passive and intellectual response to brutality as the message of the film, there is too much dark historical irony in this drama to be denied. Seen from Schlöndorff's perspective in postwar Germany, this prewar tale of the Austrian upper class becomes a chilling anticipation of a culture stifled by authoritarian regimes and attitudes and secreted in the violent obsessions and weaknesses of individuals supporting those regimes. Like other films with similar boarding-school plots, such as Jean Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite* (1933) and Lindsay Anderson's *If...* (1968), *Young Törless* investigates the social rituals that shape and repress adolescents in a rite-of-passage drama. But unlike those other two films, there is no rebellion against the institution in this German drama but instead a frighteningly stoic withdrawal. – Timothy Corrigan, *Criterion.com*



Monday 03 September at 6:30 pm

After the Curfew Lewat djam malam Indonesia 1954

Director/Producer: Usmar Ismail
Production co: Persari, Perfini
Screenplay: Asrul Sani
Photography: Max Tera
Editor: Soemardjono
Music: GRW Sinsu

With: AN Alcaff (Iskander), Netty Herawati (Norma), RD Ismail (Gunawan)

101 mins, DCP, B&W. PG violence
In Indonesian with English subtitles

Iskandar traverses the empty city at night. Perhaps his mind is still far away as he walks towards the lighted window, as he doesn't hear the soldiers yelling at him until they've already begun to give chase. He runs into the mess of knotted alleys and loses them. Ironically, he was a soldier just yesterday, but today he is a civilian. Two of these intense, mysterious encounters with the authorities bookend *After the Curfew*, which tracks one day of Iskandar's life as he returns to his home city of Bandung and tries to reincorporate himself in society. Out in the bush he was the aggressor, but back in the city he is forced to run like a hunted swamp rat, the spotlight swiveling to follow his fevered movements.

He arrives at the house of Norma, his fiancée, who has waited five years for his return. She lives with her brother and father, and Iskandar's sudden appearance causes fresh worries for the family, different than his long absence in the military. He seems abstracted; wandering around the garden, the tall grass reminds him of the places he camped out during combat. But his imagining of the recent past seems incomplete, perhaps by a combination of self-editing and heavily doctored cultural memory. He recalls how people in the countryside seemed to like him and his fellow soldiers, living graciously alongside them, one time even giving them one of their prized roosters – for hungry peasants, no small gift. This is the classic recollection of the so-called liberator. But his memories start to become haunted by the screams of the possibly innocent, and certainly unarmed victims he was dispatched to massacre. We are shown an incident, indirectly, in a grim flashback...

So often in films, we are treated to the tortured guilt of the soldiers. Much scarcer are depictions of the experience that the real victims suffer; what we call drama isn't up to the task. (The massacre occurs but is shown obliquely, with the camera examining the soldier's expression). *After the Curfew*, for what it is, goes a bit beyond illustrating the dissonances of a war vet; it holds its hard light up to the society for which the soldiers thought they were fighting, and with a bracing immediacy. While Iskandar pieces things together over the course of the day, a clearer picture falls into place, how he wasn't inflicting pain and death for the good of the nation, but for furthering the wealth of a few.

And though the film can't rationally fathom the scale of the suffering in which the character was complicit, it at least begins to bring it up, with a realism seldom seen in Indonesia. It contrasts the killing of civilians with the happiness and comfort back home, which, it suggests, is not just enjoyed in spite of, but because of that killing. Upon returning home, the hero immediately sees that the fruit he helped grow is rotten at its core, even before anyone can take a bite out of it. – *Night in the Lens*



Monday 10 September at 6:30 pm

Manila in the Claws of Light Maynila sa mga kuko ng liwanag Philippines 1975

Director: Lino Brocka
Producers: Miguel De Leon, Severino Manotook
Production co: Cinema Artists
Screenplay: Clodualdo Del Mundo. Based on the novel by Edgardo Reyes
Photography: Miguel De Leon
Editors: Edgardo Jarlego, Ike Jarlego
Music: Max Jolson

With: Bembel Roco (Julio Madiaga), Hilda Koronel (Ligaya Paraíso), Lou Salbador Jr (Atong), Tommy Abuel (Pol), Jojo Abella (Bobby), Juling Badabaldo (Misis Cruz)

125 mins, DCP. B&W and colour. Censors rating tbc
In Tagalog and English, with English subtitles

When Lino Brocka died in a car crash in 1991, the Philippines lost its outstanding director – a man who, despite the constraints of a commercial industry and vicious censorship under Marcos, succeeded in making half a dozen films of great power and universal appeal. Often they were produced cheaply and virtually on the run, with Marcos's men instructed to prevent Brocka telling the truth about the dictatorship and the country's poverty. But in the end, Brocka's international reputation saved him.

Manila: In the Claws of Darkness is the most impressive of his films noirs, made with bows to the American cinema, to Italian neo-realism and to his own country's tradition of star-driven melodramas, but with the force of a third-world director determined to say something about his own society. It is the richly romantic but realistic odyssey of a boy named Julio, who arrives in Manila from the country to search for his childhood sweetheart. The darkness of the title refers to the capital itself, which, said Brocka, exerts an invisible force on the lives of its people.

Brocka exposes the exploitation of its construction workers, some of whom were killed when Marcos jerry-built a huge complex to house his annual film festival. The movie also looks at Manila's slum dwellers, whose children pick through huge rubbish dumps for something to sell.

Finally, it casts its eye over the nocturnal underground of the city, where prostitutes ply their trade. Brocka was gay himself and half fascinated, half repelled by the scene that meets the innocent boy as he scours the brothels of the city, only to find that his girl has been enslaved by an elderly Chinese whorehouse owner...

The film has several outstanding sequences, such as when the boy first discovers the fate of his sweetheart and when he decides to take the law into his own hands. But Brocka's painting of life in the corrupt, teeming and polluted city of Manila is the movie's chief glory. It is an unforgettable portrait which invites interpretation as an allegory for the whole of the underdeveloped world. The girl's name means happiness and paradise, the boy's means patience. Ah Tek, the brothel owner, represents money ("atik"), and his recruiter of young girls is Mrs Cruz, a reference to the cross they have to bear. But though deeply romantic, the film never lets go of its central thrust – that no one has a chance in this society unless protected by the authorities or able to pay the price.

Brocka made nearly 50 films, some of which were unashamedly commercial. One of them, *Bayan Ko*, had to be smuggled into France to be shown at Cannes. But even Marcos could not stop him, and he and a few others made the '70s and early '80s a golden age for Tagalog films in a country whose people are still among the most avid filmgoers in the world. – Derek Malcolm, *The Guardian*



Monday 17 September at 6:30 pm

Santi-Vina Thailand 1954

Director/Screenplay: Marut [Thavi Na Bangchang]
Producers: Robert G North, Rak Panyarachun
Production co: Hanuman Productions, Far East Film
Screenplay: Robert G North, Thavi Na Bangchang, Vijit Kunavudhi
Photography: RD Pestonji
Music: Nath Thavorabutr

With: Poonpan Rangkhavorn (Santi), Rayvadi Sriwilai (Vina)

114 mins, DCP. PG violence
In Thai with English subtitles

Thai classic film *Santi-Vina* opens with a telling shot. A little temple with a white stupa sits atop a mountain in the uninhabited wilderness, with the flurry of weeds and wild vegetation visible from the camera's vantage point. The untaintedness of the rural landscape, looking more like Laos in today's terms, seems like a signpost of a Thailand, unfamiliar to many – agrarian, basic and pristine in all senses of the word. This shot is revisited about an hour and a half later into the film, revealing another facet to this particular vision the director has chosen to present, but more importantly, attesting to the wisdom behind the film's narrative.

Santi-Vina tells the tale of a doomed romance between blind boy Santi and his childhood flame Vina, framed in familiar elements of class distinctions and arranged marriages. Santi, due to his blindness, was sent by his father to live with the village abbot who lived in a cave, as the peaceful environment could be more conducive for growing up. Vina, who is a persistent lover, stood by him through these transitions. She smuggled him into the village class, fought the bullies in school and continued to visit him "religiously" through the years as she blossomed into the likeness of 1950s Hollywood vintage star Brenda Marshall. At least the make-up and hair did the work.

With characters speaking in clipped, measured dialogue, perhaps a hallmark of vintage cinema, director Thavi Na Bangchang gives the audience an economical rendition of a Thai version of *Romeo and Juliet*. Told with simplicity and a delicately-curated montage of village rituals against the gawking at nature, graceful fields and majestic limestone cave formations, the film in its meticulously-graded form, is a quiet spectacle to behold.

However, far beyond exuding the appeal of an ornate museum relic, the film packs a subliminal Buddhist wisdom that knocks at the consciousness of the more contemporary minds that were gathered in the cinema watching it today. Running in parallel to the doomed romance between Santi and Vina is Santi's rocky road to religious enlightenment. The film has... woven together seemingly disparate elements to tell a story about karma and destiny...

In telling Santi's story of a religious awakening, director Thavi artfully turns the royal flush he has in his poker deck in a subtle yet beguiling reveal. The film is delicately balanced between scenes that advance the narrative and scenes that enrich the spirituality and recapitulate an overall sense of the beauty in the laws of nature. – Jeremy Sing, *SINDie*



Monday 24 September at 6:30 pm

Seconds

USA 1966

Director: John Frankenheimer
 Producer: Edward Lewis
 Production co: Joel Productions, John Frankenheimer Film, Gibraltar Productions
 Screenplay: Lewis John Carlino. Based on the novel by David Ely
 Photography: James Wong Howe
 Editors: David Newhouse, Ferris Webster
 Music: Jerry Goldsmith

With: Rock Hudson (Antiochus Wilson), Salome Jens (Nora Marcus), John Randolph (Arthur Hamilton), Will Geer (old man), Jeff Corey (Mr Ruby), Richard Anderson (Dr Innes), Murray Hamilton (Charlie), Karl Swenson (Dr Morris), Khigh Dhiagh (Davallo), Frances Reid (Emily Hamilton), Wesley Addy (John), John Lawrence (Texan), Elisabeth Fraser (plump blonde), Dody Heath (Sue Bushman), Robert Brubaker (Mayberry), Dorothy Morris (Mrs Filter), Barbara Werle (secretary)

106 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. M nudity

Almost half a century after its premiere, *Seconds* remains unique – a probing psychological adventure, a merciless assault on social evils, and one of the most startling, spellbinding rides you'll ever take. – David Sterritt, **Criterion Collection**

For at least 20 years I've remembered John Frankenheimer's *Seconds* (1966) with a feeling of clammy dread unique to that film, and recommended it to countless friends without ever quite working up the nerve to rewatch it myself. Sometimes the person I'm recommending it to will already know the movie, and they'll get a wild look in their eyes for a moment and say "Oh my God, *Seconds*." Though its reputation has grown steadily since it bombed at the box office upon release, *Seconds* is one of those movies that has somehow held on to permanent cult status, a talisman passed between passionate enthusiasts, difficult for years to find at all... Now that Criterion has come out with a Blu-Ray edition of *Seconds* loaded with extras, I thought I'd take the opportunity to revisit this utterly sui generis, categorisation-defying film, a horror-tinged thriller (or is it a sci-fi-inflected political parable?) about aging, alienation, and the American belief in starting over...

The early-blooming enfant terrible Frankenheimer, best known for politically astute, wickedly manipulative thrillers like *The Manchurian Candidate* and *Seven Days in May*, is working at the top of his craft in *Seconds*, which critics now sometimes group with those two less intimately scaled thrillers in a so-called "paranoia trilogy." Though it's not concerned with global politics and warfare, *Seconds* is a blistering assessment of the cultural politics of the mid-1960s, equally bleak in its view of the establishment and the counterculture. The existential freedom supposedly afforded by Arthur's reinvention as Tony proves to be little more than hollow solipsism – but was there really anything more substantial about his abandoned marriage, which Arthur's widow describes in a devastating late scene as "a polite, celibate truce?"

Seconds was Frankenheimer's last black-and-white film, and the first one he made with the legendary cinematographer James Wong Howe. Every shot provides fresh evidence of Howe's artistry and intuitiveness as a collaborator: He uses expressionistic high-key lighting, deep focus and innovative camera placements (at times mounting a camera to an actor's back) to create a mood of ineffable cosmic dread that hangs over the movie like a miasma. (The brilliant Saul Bass opening-title sequence, in which human facial features are distorted by trick mirrors to the sound of Jerry Goldsmith's piercing organ chords, perfectly sets the eerie mood.) And the ending, holy smokes, the ending... Go watch the movie – or rewatch it, if it's been 20 years – and the next time we meet we can have a short but evocative conversation. – Dana Stevens, **Slate.com**



Monday 01 October at 6:30 pm

Fill the Void

Lemale et ha'halal

Israel 2012

Director/Screenplay: Rama Burshtein
 Producer: Assaf Amir
 Production co: Norma Productions
 Photography: Asaf Sudry
 Editor: Sharon Elovic
 Music: Yitzhak Azulay

With: Hadas Yaron (Shira), Yiftach Klein (Yochay), Irit Sheleg (Rivka), Chaim Sharir (Aharon), Razia Israeli (Aunt Hanna), Hila Feldman (Frieda), Renana Raz (Esther), Yael Tal (Shifi), Michael David Weigl (Shtreicher), Ido Samuel (Yossi), Neta Moran (Bilha)

90 mins, Blu-ray. M
 In Hebrew with English subtitles

A perfectly pitched performance from Hadas Yaron and ethereal close-quarters cinematography by Asaf Sudry elevate this warm and sympathetic portrait of a young woman's struggle to balance personal fulfilment with family duty into the realms of something very special. Set within the Orthodox Hasidic community of Tel Aviv, and offering an intimate insider's view of a world which remains little seen in mainstream cinema, *Fill the Void* is an intelligent and moving examination of the possibilities of personal freedom within the strict confines of religion and tradition....

Written and directed by Rama Burshtein, whose previous work is described as comprising "films for the orthodox community, some of them for women only", *Fill the Void* gives vibrant voice to characters who often seem to exist within a great silence. Like the protagonists of the Jane Austen novels which Burshtein cites as a primary influence, these women live within a society in which their options are limited by rigidly enforced rules, and yet it's their choices, emotions, conflicts and resolutions which drive and define the narrative. It is the maternal Rivka (Irit Sheleg) whose grief at the loss of a daughter provides the impetus for Shira's dilemma, and who initially conceives the plan which may offer both liberation and/or imprisonment for her family... For Burshtein, the sphere of Shira's experience is absolute; this is not a story in which retreat... from the strictures of her society is an option, any more than it would be for Austen's Emma Woodhouse. Indeed, the omnipresent Hasidic ritual seems to set this story somewhat back in time, away from the modern world, closer to the conventions of the past than the myriad opportunities of the present.

Some audiences may find this worldview alienating; the acceptance of an existence in which all the promises and possibilities of life are bound by the prospect of inevitable marriage brings with it many problems, both personal and political. Yet Burshtein uses the limitations of her story to her advantage, focusing on Shira's unexpected independence, stressing the value of female voices within the community, reiterating the role of choice, even within arranged unions. As for Hadas Yaron, she does a brilliant job of making Shira a fully rounded character, her face a rippling seascape of reactions and responses, at once finely nuanced yet utterly naturalistic. On the evidence of this performance... Yaron is a star in the making – a talented, understated screen presence who draws and holds the camera's attention with ease and grace.

The myriad contradictions of *Fill the Void* are all captured in Yaron's expression in the final shots of the film, which offer a far more ambiguous and open-ended conclusion to this tightly controlled tale than some may care to imagine. Whatever the trajectory of the narrative, Yaron, Burshtein and Asaf Sudry have conspired to leave us with a parting glance as enigmatic and contradictory as the closing back-of-the-bus tableau from *The Graduate*. It's a fine and complex finale to a deceptively enriching film. – Mark Kermode, **The Guardian**



Monday 08 October at 6:30 pm

Neon Bull Neon boi Brazil 2015

Director/Screenplay: Gabriel Mascaro
Producer: Rachel Ellis
Production co: Desiva Filmes
Photography: Diego Garcia
Editor: Fernando Epstein, Eduardo Serrano
Music: Otávio Santos, Cláudio N, Carlos Montenegro

With: Juliano Cazarré (Iremar), Aline Santana (Cacá), Carlos Pessoa (Zé), Maeve Jinkings (Galega), Vinicius de Oliveira (Junior), Josinaldo Alves (Mário), Samya de Lavor (Geise)

101 mins, DCP. R16 nudity, explicit sexual material, offensive language
In Portuguese with English subtitles

Lyricaly involving and deeply sensual, *Neon Bull* showcases a full-bodied artist in command of his form. – Eric Kohn, *IndieWire*

Stately, earthy, graphic, riveting: Gabriel Mascaro's *Neon Bull* is one of those art-house studies that plops the camera down someplace far from us and, in exquisite long takes, examines the lives that almost seem to just be happening there anyway. No matter how rigorously worked out each shot and its action might be, *Neon Bull* always honors the chaotic looseness of everyday living – the way that, unlike in the movies, few of the moments we inhabit seem to be about just one thing.

The characters – a makeshift family that travels northeastern Brazil handling white bulls for the vaquejadas rodeos – spill in and out of the frame as they crab at and ignore one another, each an island whose desires only occasionally overlap with anyone else's. They're revealed to us slowly, in observational scenes: Vaqueiro Iremar (Juliano Cazarré) hustles bulls into their pens but dreams of fashion design, an ambition spurred by the colossal clothing factories that have recently come to dominate his region. He spends the film working on a new striptease get-up for Galega (Maeve Jinkings), who performs in rodeo tents, bathed in flickering red light and wearing a horse-head mask. Galega cares for daughter Cacá (Aline Santana), an adolescent who dreams of one day owning a real horse, a fantasy that hard-bitten Galega dismisses as impossible... Iremar, a dreamer himself, won't rule it out, as he engages in a dopey scheme to jack off a prize stud for its semen.

Without really noticing each other, these characters are mired in a roundelay of yearning and disappointment, of lives shaped by the peddling of animals and people, of the commodification of sex itself. To get a glimpse of the banks of sewing machines inside one of those factories, Iremar arranges a hook-up with a pregnant security guard who has taken a shine to him. The ensuing sex scene is a cinematic rarity: a tender, extended, no-nonsense, single-take coupling, the lovers starting out clothed and flirting and winding up, in real time, spent and sated. Mascaro's camera observes this with the same matter-of-fact frankness it captures the branding of livestock, the tail-tugging arena battles between rodeo riders and Iremar's bulls, or the alien presence of modern factories on this rugged landscape.

The film is almost always beautiful, sometimes dabbled with surrealism: The neon bull of the title is painted by Iremar's crew and goaded into the arena at midnight, a lime-Jell-O streak brought down with brute efficiency by a pair of cowboys. But the central image might be sweaty, shirtless men jouncing in the back of a truck with young Cacá as Galega drives to the next fairgrounds. They're moving through space and through time, but nothing much changes for them, and by the end the film is aching with this question: Is anyone getting anywhere? – Alan Scherstuhl, *Village Voice*



Monday 15 October at 6:30 pm

Cover Girl USA 1944

Director: Charles Vidor
Producer: Arthur Schwartz
Production co: Columbia
Screenplay: Virginia Van Up, Marion Parsonnet, Paul Gangelin. Based on a story by Erwin Gelsey
Photography: Allen M Davey, Rudolph Maté
Editors: Viola Lawrence
Music: Jerome Kern, Ira Gershwin

With: Rita Hayworth (Rusty Parker/Maribelle Hicks), Gene Kelly (Danny McGuire), Lee Boman (Noel Wheaton), Phil Silvers (Genius), Jinx Falkenburg (herself), Leslie Brooks (Maurine Martin), Eve Arden (Cornelia Jackson)

107 mins, Blu-ray. PG

Charles Vidor's Technicolor musical laces wartime escapism with raw sex. Rita Hayworth's bewitching Brooklyn nightclub dancer Rusty finds Broadway and a wealthy husband within her grasp when she wins a modelling contest and becomes the in-demand "cover girl" of the title. The humble pleasures holding her back are Gene Kelly, as Danny the nightclub manager and her devoted paramour, and comedian chum Genius, played by Phil Silvers. The glamour provided by the handsome leads, the wish-fulfilment plot and the gorgeous climactic number are there to add sparkle to the movie's old-fashioned message about the value of friendship and hard work – fine things to remember, no doubt, in the difficult days of 1944.

Kelly, who was on loan from MGM and took on choreography duties with a young Stanley Donen, offers an enchantingly romantic performance, and his dance scenes are, needless to say, sublime, especially when he partners his own superimposed self in Alter-Ego Dance. The songs, most of them delightful if not cast-iron classics, are by Jerome Kern and Ira Gershwin and performed by Hayworth, Kelly and Silvers with disarming gusto. This is one of the wittiest big-studio musicals, and the peerless Eve Arden, as a sardonic fashion journalist, gets all the best, most innuendo-laden lines, followed closely by Silvers.

Pamela Hutchinson, *Sight and Sound*

The auteur theory often ignores directors like Charles Vidor because he didn't "mark" a picture with a certain style. He directed according to the demands of whatever story he was hired to tell, and he did it all: horror films, screwball comedies, crime dramas, musicals... Vidor was especially excellent with actors. He had a simple, clear style, most apparent in dance numbers. Gene Kelly dancing with his reflection in *Cover Girl* (1944) is one of the best examples; watch how that camera moves.

Vidor directed Rita Hayworth in four films. This period also represents Hayworth's breakthrough from ingenue and promising leading lady to spitfire bombshell superstar. Interestingly, cinematographer Rudolph Maté also worked with Hayworth on several films during this time. Both Vidor and Maté knew how to position Hayworth, how to frame her face, how to set her up powerfully in the dance numbers, and how to capture her unique energy...

Hayworth's dancing got her into Hollywood, after a rough childhood as practically an indentured servant of her taskmaster dancer father. Fred Astaire admitted in later life that she was his favorite dance partner. Her dancing was not ethereal or floating... Commonly described as "explosive", Hayworth's style was that of a gypsy hooper who had been dancing since she was three years old. She was hearty, earthy, grounded. Hayworth was both thoroughbred and workhorse. – Sheila O'Malley, *Criterion.com*



Tuesday 23 October at 6:30 pm

China's Van Goghs

China 2016

Directors: Yu Haibo, Yu Tianqi Kiki
 Producer: Yu Tianqi Kiki
 Production co: Century Image Media, Trueworks
 Photography: Yu Haibo
 Editors: Søren Ebbe, Tom Hsinming Lin, Axel Skovdal Roelofs
 Music: Lukas Julian Lentz

With: Zhao Xiaoyong

84 mins, Blu-ray. Exempt
 In Mandarin and English, with English subtitles

One of the most affecting moments in *China's Van Goghs* unfolds in a small art gallery, where the documentary's protagonists and their friends eagerly gather to watch the 1956 Vincent van Gogh biopic *Lust for Life*. Their excitement soon turns to dismay when they take in the Dutch painter's struggles; and by the time director Vincente Minnelli and star Kirk Douglas reach Van Gogh's suicide in the final scenes, there are shaking heads and moist eyes all around.

The poignant part is that the audience is not composed of your average cosmopolitan art film buffs: These are working-class men who earn a living producing copies of Van Gogh's paintings in workshops in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen. A beautifully shot, well-structured and moving story about art, work and the human spirit... *China's Van Goghs* doesn't simply dwell on the differences between these 21st-century Chinese workers and the 19th-century Dutch maestro; its insight is that they are kindred spirits separated merely by time, geography and social class. Veering sharply away from the stereotype of Chinese laborers as a faceless mass seeking a better quality of life, *China's Van Goghs* explores their desire for spiritual fulfilment, too.

True, the beginning of the film could pass for a straightforward account of how these self-learned painters run fairly small family operations that have produced hundreds of thousands of cheap Van Gogh replicas over the past three decades. But slowly, the filmmakers show their protagonists as bona fide artists, struggling like Van Gogh to find their creative voices and realize their vision beyond their own economic and social circumstances... Zhao Xiaoyong is a peasant farmer who arrived in Shenzhen two decades ago and has since overseen the production, by himself and his family crew, of more than 100,000 copies of Van Gogh's iconic works. He's a canny businessman, but he's also good at what he does: He is very knowledgeable about Van Gogh's brushwork and is able to spot flaws in his fellow painters' work that only a specialist could notice.

Other wannabe Van Goghs also figure, such as Zhou Yongjiu, another farmer-turned-painter who claims to have produced a whopping 300,000 replicas during his time in Shenzhen. But Zhao remains the film's beating heart, as he talks about how Van Gogh's emphasis on rural beauty and poverty mirrors his own upbringing. The directors bring the painters' link to the land vividly alive when they accompany Zhao as he visits his ancestral village, where farmers still labor like those in Van Gogh's *The Harvest* and Zhao's crinkled grandmother seems like someone straight out of *Portrait of a Peasant*. In moments like this, *China's Van Goghs* truly does justice to its subject.

While shot on HD, there's nothing TV-like about the images of cramped downtown workshops or rugged rustic landscapes. Nor do the filmmakers ever stoop to cheap sentimentality or melodrama, even during a finale in which Zhao finally realizes his dream and travels to Amsterdam and Arles to look at Van Gogh's works and milieu first-hand. – Clarence Tsui, *Hollywood Reporter*



Monday 29 October at 6:30 pm

Mustang

France/Turkey 2015

Director: Deniz Gamze Ergüven
 Producer: Charles Gillibert
 Production co: CG Cinéma, Vistamar Filmproduktion, Uhland Film, BAM Film
 Screenplay: Deniz Gamze Ergüven, Alice Winocour
 Photography: David Chizallet, Ersin Gök
 Editor: Mathilde Van de Moortel
 Music: Warren Ellis

With: Güneş Nezihe Şensoy (Lale), Doğa Zeynep Doğuşlu (Nur), Elit Işcan (Ece), Tuğba Sunguroğlu (Selma), İlayda Akdoğan (Sonay), Nihal Koldaş (grandmother), Ayberk Pekcan (Erol)

97 mins, DCP. M violence, sexual references
 In Turkish with English subtitles

Mustang, directed by Deniz Gamze Ergüven, could be called a coming-of-age nightmare. It follows five orphaned teenage sisters who live with their grandmother (Nihal Koldaş) and uncle in a remote Turkish village along the Black Sea. An uncontrollable, collective whirlwind of hair and laughter and movement, the girls spend their days playing by the sea, running through the woods, stealing apples from a nearby orchard. Their loyalty to each other is vibrant, and fierce. When their grandmother beats them as punishment for being seen frolicking with boys, they put up a united front of resistance. An offense to one means an offense to all. Even as their house slowly becomes a prison – as walls are heightened and windows barred to keep the girls from running away at night – they retain their free-spiritedness. And Ergüven shoots them like a force of nature, because of course they are.

The film is narrated by Lale (Güneş Şensoy), the youngest of the sisters, but she could easily speak for the whole group. When she slams the “shit-colored” clothes that Grandma makes them wear in order to reassert their modesty around town, we know the girls all feel this way. As the youngest, she also gets to watch in terror as her sisters are married off, one by one. The families of young men around town come by for the traditional proposal, during which the girl in question serves coffee and candy and the male head of one household asks the other to give her away. In Turkish, we call this “asking for the girl,” a phrase that always creeped the hell out of me. To be fair, the ritual has different meanings in different parts of the country; in much of Turkey, it's just a quaint formality, a more elaborate equivalent to a man getting down on one knee. But in the world of *Mustang*, it means something very real and often very dangerous.

The marriages rush along, but there is variation among them: The oldest, Sonay (İlayda Akdoğan), actually gets to marry her high-school sweetheart after she brusquely rejects one suitor; that scorned young man gets Selma (Tuğba Sunguroğlu), the second-oldest, instead, with Grandma exchanging the girls backstage as if they were carpets of slightly differing patterns. (“She's one of a kind,” the matriarch, ever the saleswoman, says to each incoming family as she presents her wares.) Along the way, we get a hint that the older woman is simply reenacting a tragedy that also once happened to her. While preparing to marry off one of the youngest girls, she notes that she was the same age when she wed. “There were special circumstances then,” she says, leaving us to imagine what they were... So much of what's done to these girls is done for what others perceive will be their own good. The debilitating paternalism of this world denies its victims agency in an attempt to coddle and protect and preserve. That's the cold, hard truth at the heart of this beautiful, harrowing film. – Bilge Ebiri, *Vulture.com*

AUCKLAND FILM SOCIETY 2018 SEASON

Academy Cinemas, 44 Lorne St, Auckland Mondays at 6:30 pm (except as noted below)

The 2018 Season is presented with financial assistance from Foundation North and Waitemata Local Board.

Most screenings are members only. Please arrive early – no guaranteed seating.

Programme may change if a film does not arrive. Late changes and full details on our website

aucklandfilmsociety.org.nz

12 March

6:30 pm

THE BRAND NEW TESTAMENT

114 mins, DCP

M nudity, offensive language, sexual content

19 March

6:30 pm

THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI

87 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG violence

26 March

6:30 pm

THE INNOCENTS 115 mins, Blu-ray

M sexual violence, suicide, content that may disturb

03 April

6:30 pm

Tuesday

WILD 98 mins, Blu-ray. R16 sex scenes, offensive

language, content that may disturb

09 April

6:30 pm

FANTASTIC PLANET 72 mins, Blu-ray. M

16 April

6:30 pm

THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED

66 mins, Blu-ray, silent, tinted. PG

23 April

6:30 pm

ALPHAVILLE 99 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

Auckland Film Society AGM follows

30 April

6:30 pm

FUKUSHIMA, MON AMOUR

107 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. M offensive language, suicide

07 May

6:30 pm

MON ONCLE 116 mins, DCP. G

14 May

6:30 pm

AKIRA 124 mins, DCP. M violence

21 May

6:30 pm

THINGS TO COME 100 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

28 May

6:30 pm

FIREWORKS WEDNESDAY

102 mins, DCP. M violence, offensive language

05 June

6:30 pm

Tuesday

OF HORSES AND MEN 81 mins, DCP. R13 sex scenes,
offensive language, content that may disturb

11 June

6:30 pm

GILDA 110 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. PG

18 June

6:30 pm

LE QUATTRO VOLTE 84 mins, Blu-ray. G (no dialogue)

25 June

6:30 pm

DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS

101 mins, Blu-ray. R16 violence, sex scenes

02 July

6:30 pm

ONLY ANGELS HAVE WINGS

121 mins, Blu-ray, B&W PG

09 July

6:30 pm

LES COWBOYS 104 mins, Blu-ray

M violence, offensive language, drug use

19 July–05 August

NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Discounts for AFS Premier Card Members

13 August

6:30 pm

L'INHUMAINE

122 mins, DCP. B&W, silent, tinted. PG adult themes

20 August

6:30 pm

FIDELIO: ALICE'S JOURNEY

97 mins, Blu-ray. Censor rating tbc

27 August

6:30 pm

YOUNG TÖRLESS

86 mins, Blu-ray, B&W. R18

03 September

6:30 pm

AFTER THE CURFEW

101 mins, DCP. PG violence

10 September

6:30 pm

MANILA IN THE CLAWS OF LIGHT

125 mins, DCP. Censors rating tbc

17 September

6:30 pm

SANTI-VINA 114 mins, DCP. PG violence

24 September

6:30 pm

SECONDS 106 mins, Blu-ray. B&W. M nudity

01 October

6:30 pm

FILL THE VOID

90 mins, Blu-ray. M

08 October

6:30 pm

NEON BULL 101 mins, DCP.

R16 nudity, explicit sexual material, offensive language

15 October

6:30 pm

COVER GIRL 107 mins, Blu-ray. PG

23 October

6:30 pm

Tuesday

CHINA'S VAN GOGHS

84 mins, Blu-ray. Exempt

29 October

6:30 pm

MUSTANG 97 mins, DCP. M violence, sexual references