



Film

Summer 2016
National Gallery of Art

Summer 2016

9 Special Events

14 Recovered Treasure:
UCLA Festival of Preservation

18 The Grandest Spaces: Picturing Museums

24 Black Maria at Thirty-Five:
Selections from the Festival

25 The Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie

28 Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment:
1908–1921

31 Synchronized Pantomimes / Early Animations

J. L. Anderson

Spring Night, Summer Night, 1967

p16



Cinematic rarities and restorations fill the summer film season at the National Gallery of Art, starting with the series *Recovered Treasure: UCLA Festival of Preservation*. To celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 1616, the Gallery presents *Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: 1908–1921*, a unique opportunity to witness the earliest attempts to transfer Shakespearean performance from stage to screen. *The Grandest Spaces: Picturing Museums* includes a number of recent feature documentaries and essays about museums from a vast range of perspectives. The series has been organized to coincide with the Gallery's seventy-fifth anniversary. Once again, the Gallery welcomes the opportunity to screen award-winning new shorts from the Black Maria Film Festival, one of the world's premier showcases for the short form. *The Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie* looks at this artist's groundbreaking avant-garde works from the 1960s and 1970s. *Synchronized Pantomimes / Early Animations* is a unique program focusing on the importance of pantomime and music in the earliest years of cinema. Special events this season include the Washington premieres of José Luis Guerín's *The Academy of Muses* and *Le Saphir de Saint-Louis*, Thom Andersen's *The Thoughts That Once We Had*, *The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger*, and a number of unusual ciné-concerts, including *Menschen am Sonntag*, early animations by Catalan artist Segundo de Chomón, and D.W. Griffith's *Broken Blossoms* accompanied by re-creations of Griffith's own special effects and a ten-piece ensemble conducted by Gillian B. Anderson.

Films are shown in the East Building Auditorium in original formats whenever possible. Seating for all events is on a first-come, first-seated basis unless otherwise noted. Doors open thirty minutes before show time. For more information, visit www.nga.gov/film, e-mail film-department@nga.gov, or call (202) 842-6799.

July

2	Sat	2:00	UCLA: The Big Broadcast; Me and the Boys p14
		4:00	UCLA: Her Sister's Secret p16
3	Sun	4:00	UCLA: Spring Night, Summer Night p16
9	Sat	2:30	UCLA: The First Legion p17
10	Sun	4:00	UCLA: White Zombie; The Crime of Dr. Crespi p17
16	Sat	1:00	The Grandest Spaces: Hieronymus Bosch— Touched by the Devil p18
		3:00	The Grandest Spaces: Sagrada: The Mystery of Creation p21
17	Sun	4:00	The Academy of Muses; Le Saphir de Saint-Louis p9
23	Sat	2:00	The Grandest Spaces: National Gallery p21
24	Sun	4:00	The First Line p9
30	Sat	1:00	The Grandest Spaces: The New Rijksmuseum p21
31	Sun	4:30	Ciné-concert: People on Sunday p10

August

6	Sat	1:00	Black Maria Program One p24
		3:30	Black Maria Program Two p25
7	Sun	4:00	The Grandest Spaces: Francofonia; Hubert Robert—A Fortunate Life p22
13	Sat	2:30	Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie: Why Take Up the Camera? p26
14	Sun	4:00	Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie: Searching for Heroes p26
20	Sat	2:00	The Grandest Spaces: The Great Museum p23
		4:00	The Grandest Spaces: James Benning's Natural History p23
21	Sun	4:00	Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie: The Sky, the Land, the In-Between p28
27	Sat	3:00	Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: Ciné-concert: Richard III p29
28	Sun	4:00	The Grandest Spaces: Russian Ark p23

September

3	Sat	2:00	Synchronized Pantomimes: Broken Blossoms; A Modern Garrick; Taming of the Shrew p32
4	Sun	2:00	Synchronized Pantomimes: Lecture—Pantomime's Influence on Moving Pictures p34
		3:30	Synchronized Pantomimes: Ciné-concert: Early Animation of Segundo de Chomón p34
10	Sat	2:30	Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: Ciné-concert: Asta Nielsen Hamlet (German version) p29
11	Sun	4:00	The Thoughts That Once We Had p10
17	Sat	2:30	Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: Ciné-concert: Asta Nielsen Hamlet (American version) p30
18	Sun	4:00	The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger p13
24	Sat	2:30	Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: Vitagraph Shakespeare Cycle (1908–1912) p31
25	Sun	4:00	Béla Tarr's Macbeth; The Day Before the End p13



Special Events

Jul 17 – Sep 25

The Academy of Muses

preceded by *Le Saphir de Saint-Louis*

Sun Jul 17 (4:00)

Catalan director José Luis Guerin (*In the City of Sylvia*) appealingly combines narrative and nonfiction in new ways, creating evocative works that both enlighten and entice. For his latest film, the fictional documentary *The Academy of Muses*, Guerin collaborated with Barcelona literature professor Raffaele Pinto and a group of actresses (playing Pinto's students) to stage a class in literary criticism. Together, they debate the role of the muse. The plot develops, the professor slowly becomes part of the women's lives, and, at random moments, cut-away segments tell personal tales and fanciful fables. Guerin has said: "Cinema is my writing." (José Luis Guerin, 2015, subtitles, 92 minutes)

An ex-voto painting in the Cathédrale Saint Louis in La Rochelle, France, memorializes the tragedy of the slave ship *Le Saphir*, which ran aground in 1741 in tropical waters with three hundred passengers on board. Guerin bases his *Le Saphir de Saint-Louis* on this humble folk painting. (José Luis Guerin, 2015, subtitles, 35 minutes)

The First Line

Filmmakers Coerte and John Voorhees in person

Introduced by Eleftherios Ikonomou

Sun Jul 24 (4:00)

On the two-hundredth anniversary of the British government's acquisition of the Parthenon sculptures, this new fiction feature—a legal drama set in Athens and London—sheds light on one of the most prominent issues of cultural heritage today. Two Greek lawyers, romantically intertwined, sue the British Museum for the return of the sculptures to Greece.

The film's title alludes to the frontlines of soldiers who

protected democracy in ancient Athens under the patronage of the goddess Athena, symbol of wisdom, justice, democracy, and heroic struggle. (Coerte and John Voorhees, 2015, DCP, 86 minutes)

Ciné-concert: People on Sunday (Menschen am Sonntag)

Matthew Nolan and Rachel Grimes in performance

Sun Jul 31 (4:30)

One of the great modernist portrayals of urban working-class reality, *Menschen am Sonntag* was produced by a cooperative that included Edgar G. Ulmer, Billy Wilder, Robert and Curt Siodmak, Eugen Schüfftan, and Fred Zinnemann, as well as theorist Béla Bálasz, who provided the idea for the script. The story frames twenty-four hours in the lives of a few young Berliners—friends embarking on a Sunday outing. It is filmed with a breezy naturalism that was new to cinema at the time and is cast with nonprofessionals who (more or less) play themselves. “The new score is based on a creative response to that which we don’t see. This compositional strategy allows us to echo internal psychological and narrative meanings behind and beyond the images. For us, there is a haunting duality to this vision of 1930s Berlin, and the new score reflects a sense of social or even political turbulence”—Matthew Nolan and Rachel Grimes. (1929, 35mm, 70 minutes) *Special thanks to Culture Ireland for their support of Matthew Nolan*

The Thoughts That Once We Had

Washington premiere

Sun Sep 11 (4:00)

Ciné-essays by acclaimed teacher and filmmaker Thom Andersen have been landmarks of the film essay genre. His *Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer* (1975), for example, offered new evidence on the experiments of the fabled cinematographic pioneer, and his compelling *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (2003) destabilized Hollywood’s complacent representations of that American city. Andersen’s latest compilation, *The Thoughts That Once We Had*, is an inspired exposé of French philosopher Gilles Deleuze’s theories of the cinema, expressed through a unique montage of texts and

Edgar G. Ulmer, Billy Wilder, Robert and Curt Siodmak, Eugen Schüfftan, Fred Zinnemann, and Béla Bálasz

People on Sunday, 1929

p10



Colin MacCabe, Christopher Roth,
Bartek Dziadosz, and Tilda Swinton
*The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits
of John Berger*, 2015
p13



found-footage clips, “encompassing D. W. Griffith and Dziga Vertov, Laurel and Hardy and the Marx Brothers, Hitler and Patty Hearst, Maria Montez and Debra Paget, Hank Ballard and Chubby Checker, and much, much more” — Anthology Film Archives. (Thom Andersen, 2015, DCP, 108 minutes)

The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger

Washington premiere

Sun Sep 18 (4:00)

John Berger calls himself “a storyteller,” and his longtime friend Tilda Swinton calls him “a radical humanist.” The famously straight-talking English intellectual is, in fact, a polymath: a painter, art critic, historian, Booker Prize-winning novelist, BBC television host (*Ways of Seeing*), screenwriter (*La Salamandre*), essayist, poet, Marxist, philosopher, and self-styled peasant. “These four ruminative essays — produced by London’s Derek Jarman Lab and directed by four different filmmakers — are set in the French Alps, where Berger has lived for decades. As Tilda Swinton peels apples and Berger draws her portrait, they consider the effect of their fathers’ war experiences on their childhoods. The film is punctuated with excerpts from Berger’s television appearances, but this casual talk in and around his rustic kitchen allows us to be guests in his home and on intimate terms with his intellect” — Film Forum. (Colin MacCabe, Christopher Roth, Bartek Dziadosz, and Tilda Swinton, 2015, DCP, 90 minutes)

Béla Tarr’s Macbeth

followed by *The Day Before the End*

Sun Sep 25 (4:00)

Béla Tarr’s television play, a rarely revived tour de force of staging and bold mise en scène, was filmed in color inside a Budapest castle — a cavernous edifice used metaphorically to suggest the interior of Macbeth’s (György Cserhalmi) mind. The entire play was filmed in a single take. Radical use of the facial close-up distinguishes the work from any other *Macbeth* in the history of the cinema and dramatizes the play’s theme of the duality of human nature. (Béla Tarr, 1982, video, 70 minutes)

In *The Day Before the End* (*Ang a raw bago ang wakas*), a new work from celebrated Filipino independent Lav Diaz, the Philippines is bracing for the fiercest rain storm ever to strike the country. The year is 2050. As wind and water begin to rage, young would-be bards take to the streets, mumbling passages from Shakespeare long committed to memory. (Lav Diaz, 2016, 16 minutes)

Recovered Treasure: UCLA Festival of Preservation

July 2 – 10

UCLA Film & Television Archive, established in 1965, is the second largest moving image archive in the United States (first place belongs to the Library of Congress) and the largest university collection in the world. It comprises three hundred thousand motion pictures and television programs and twenty-seven million feet of news-reel footage. A selection of restored and rarely screened American cinema from the most recent UCLA Festival of Preservation is presented in Washington at the National Gallery of Art and the AFI Silver Theatre. Special thanks to Shannon Kelley, Todd Weiner, and Steven K. Hill of the archive.

The Big Broadcast

preceded by *Me and the Boys*

Sat Jul 2 (2:00)

All-star musical revues were all the rage by the early 1930s. *The Big Broadcast*, riding this wave with dazzling style, assembled a line-up that includes Bing Crosby (in his first major movie role), Burns and Allen, Kate Smith, the Mills Brothers, the Boswell Sisters, Vincent Lopez, Cab Calloway, and many more. "Radio was in its golden age, and Hollywood

Frank Tuttle

The Big Broadcast, 1932

p14



found ways to capitalize on that popularity” — Jennifer Rhee. For Paramount Pictures, this format was so profitable that they released three more Big Broadcast films before 1940. (Frank Tuttle, 1932, 35mm, 80 minutes) *Preservation funded by The Packard Humanities Institute and Universal Pictures*

Me and the Boys is an early “soundie” featuring a crooning Estelle Brody and the hot jazz sound of Chicago’s Ben Pollack Band, whose members included a twenty-something Benny Goodman. (Victor Saville, 1929, 35mm, 7 minutes) *Preservation funded by Dudley Heer, Frank Buxton and Cynthia Sears, Hugh Hefner, and Mark Cantor*

Her Sister’s Secret

Sat Jul 2 (4:00)

A falling-out between an unwed mother and her married, childless sister is portrayed with wistful sensitivity in this evocative wartime melodrama directed by Edgar G. Ulmer. Ulmer cuts loose here “with a wild creativity that yoked his theatrical imagination to a keen view of the traumatic times” — Richard Brody. German dramatist Bertolt Brecht, living in the United States when the film was released, adapted the plot for his play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Franz Planer’s smooth camera moves, especially during the opening Mardi Gras sequences, and German émigré Hans Sommer’s mellow score helped position *Her Sister’s Secret* as the ultimate women’s film of the forties. (Edgar G. Ulmer, 1946, 35mm, 86 minutes) *Preservation funded by The Film Foundation and The Franco-American Cultural Fund*

Spring Night, Summer Night

Sun Jul 3 (4:00)

Director J. L. Anderson and writer-producer Franklin Miller spent time getting to know the counties of rural southeastern Ohio where they set their tale — an account of illicit love in a hardscrabble corner of midcentury America. An inspired instance of American neorealism, *Spring Night, Summer Night* was dropped from the 1968 New York Film Festival roster to make room for John Cassavete’s *Faces* and subsequently endured an ill-fated distribution history. Now restored, this is the director’s original cut, “finally ready to take its place

in the pantheon of American independent cinema” — Paul Malcolm. (J. L. Anderson, 1967, 35mm, 82 minutes) *Preservation funded by The Packard Humanities Institute*

The First Legion

Sat Jul 9 (2:30)

The first film Douglas Sirk independently produced and directed after emigrating from Germany (trumpeting his new American moniker), *The First Legion* is set within the boundaries of a Jesuit seminary. Interestingly, the location is The Mission Inn in Riverside, California, a 1903 mission-revival-style hotel that still operates today. The impressive cast of conservative older priests (Charles Boyer, William Demarest, Lyle Bettger, and Leo G. Carroll) is suddenly confronted by resistance from younger initiates who feel stifled by outdated views. Unexpectedly, an apparent miracle revitalizes the community while prompting even more uncertainties. (Douglas Sirk, 1951, 35mm, 86 minutes) *Preservation funded by Louis B. Mayer Foundation and The Carl David Memorial Fund for Film Preservation*

White Zombie

followed by *The Crime of Dr. Crespi*

Sun Jul 10 (4:00)

In a now-treasured work of the nascent Hollywood horror genre of the 1930s, a young woman (Madge Bellamy) is yanked from her wedding feast and relegated to the ranks of the Haitian undead by a voodoo master (Béla Lugosi). “Quickly produced on the cheap to exploit the post-Dracula horror cycle, *White Zombie* is a fairy tale in mufti, pegged to a jazz-age voodoo vogue popularized by William Seabrook’s occult writings [*The Magic Island*, 1929]. It was sneered at for decades before its rehabilitation in the 1960s” — Scott MacQueen. (Victor Halperin, 1932, 35mm, 68 minutes)

For *The Crime of Dr. Crespi*, Hungarian émigré filmmaker John H. Auer summoned Austrian émigré Erich von Stroheim to New York to portray a tormented mad scientist who has lost his wife to another man. Plotting his revenge, Crespi invents a serum that causes unconsciousness and permits him to bury his enemies alive. Inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s

The Premature Burial, *The Crime of Dr. Crespi* was the first film to be released under the new Republic Pictures banner. (John H. Auer, 1935, 35mm, 63 minutes) *Preservation funded by The Packard Humanities Institute*

The Grandest Spaces: Picturing Museums

Jul 16 – Aug 28

Recently, a number of new feature-length documentaries and ciné-essays have focused on museum culture, from their architecture to their collections, exhibitions, renovations, behind-the-scenes politics, and public controversies. Representing a variety of styles from docudrama to experimental, *The Grandest Spaces* includes recent films on museums in London, Vienna, Paris, Amsterdam, Saint Petersburg, Madrid, and other cities. The series is organized on the occasion of the National Gallery of Art's seventy-fifth anniversary.

Hieronymus Bosch — Touched by the Devil

Sat Jul 16 (1:00)

Visiting the Prado, Noordbrabants Museum in Den Bosch (where Bosch spent most of his life), Rotterdam's Boijmans Van Beuningen, Vienna's Albertina, the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the National Gallery of Art, *Hieronymus Bosch — Touched by the Devil* constructs a portrait of this painter and his world through conversations recorded over the course of a decade with conservators, Bosch specialists, and museum personnel. The film focuses on preparations for honoring the five-hundredth anniversary of Bosch's death in August 1516. (Pieter van Huystee, 2015, subtitles, DCP, 80 minutes)

Pieter van Huystee

*Hieronymus Bosch — Touched
by the Devil*, 2015

p18





Sagrada: The Mystery of Creation

Sat Jul 16 (3:00)

Sagrada Família, Barcelona's basilica of the holy family, was conceived by a nineteenth-century bookseller and eventually became the passion project of Catalan visionary artist Antoni Gaudí. The fascinating story is retold by Swiss filmmaker Stefan Haupt and a team of architects, historians, artists, and others, who ponder this strange and still unfinished Gothic masterwork. Though technically not a museum, the church has become an art and culture mecca for thousands, and is one of the grandest, most mysterious spaces in the world. (Stefan Haupt, 2012, DCP, 95 minutes)

National Gallery

Sat Jul 23 (2:00)

Documentarian Frederick Wiseman has been recording the inner workings of various social institutions ever since his first film, *Titicut Follies*, exposed the lives of patient-inmates at Bridgewater State Hospital for the criminally insane. In *National Gallery*, he visually probes the public and private spaces of London's venerable art museum searching for what makes this place tick. He favors its public face—the camera often serving as the eye and ear of the visitor in the galleries—though there are revealing moments among administrators, curators, educators, conservators, and other staff. “In effect, *National Gallery* is about the effort to cut through the essential institutional qualities of the institution—qualities without which no museum can survive—in order to approach the transcendent sublimity of the art that it contains”—Richard Brody. (Frederick Wiseman, 2014, DCP, 181 minutes)

The New Rijksmuseum

Sat Jul 30 (1:00)

After ten years of complicated politics, colossal effort, and considerable cost, Amsterdam's fabled and now restored Rijksmuseum reopened to glowing reviews and a deluge of eager visitors from around the world. *The New Rijksmuseum* follows the drawn-out and contentious renovation process, exploring issues from slow-moving government entities to the well-organized lobby of Dutch bicyclists, who considered

the new main entrance a menace. Following debates among supporters, curators, administrators, and marketers, this is the unabridged version of the film that, according to one commentator, “depicts nuances of character and situation as finely as the finest novel or creative nonfiction.” (Oeke Hoogendijk, 2013, DCP, subtitles, 228 minutes with intermission)

Francofonia

preceded by *Hubert Robert—A Fortunate Life*

Sun Aug 7 (4:00)

Russian auteur Alexander Sokurov’s films occupy a unique niche in the panorama of contemporary cinema. Inquiring, contemplative, and demanding, his varied oeuvre explores art and its relationship to the human soul. In his recent *Francofonia*, Sokurov turns his attention to the Louvre, but not simply as a museum. Instead, he uses that institution to launch a meditation on sovereignty, past values, and culture. He focuses on the alliance between Louvre director Jacques Jaujard (1895–1967) and German officer and art historian Count Franz von Wolff-Metternich (1893–1978), who together tried to save the Louvre’s treasures during the German occupation. This experimental ciné-essay expands to become a reverie of Paris, French civilization (told in part through spirits inhabiting the Louvre), and the documentation of history itself. (Alexander Sokurov, 2015, DCP, subtitles, 90 minutes)

In *Hubert Robert: A Fortunate Life*, Sokurov contemplates the contact between Europe and other cultures, particularly Russia. “The film starts with the frozen masks of a Noh theater somewhere in Japan. From the very outset, we are in the realm of the frozen image, an image that remembers its own self-identification with a death mask, with ruination, the blindness of the gaze, the empty eye sockets of the masks, of the blind movie camera, and death. The camera then moves on to close-ups of Robert’s paintings, as the narrator tells us that they traveled a long way from Europe into the ‘cold rooms of Russian castles and palaces’” —Dragan Kujundžić. (Alexander Sokurov, 1996, video, 26 minutes)

The Great Museum

Sat Aug 20 (2:00)

Commissioned by Emperor Franz Joseph I to house the Habsburgs’ encyclopedic collections, Vienna’s Kunsthistorisches Museum is one of the most awe-inspiring institutions in the world. To produce his film, Johannes Holzhausen and his crew spent nearly three years gathering material, including footage of the reinstallation of the exotic Hapsburg treasury known as the *Kunstammer*. The often amusing exchanges among the staff provide unparalleled glimpses of the day-to-day operations of this formidable institution. (Johannes Holzhausen, 2014, DCP, subtitles, 94 minutes)

James Benning’s Natural History

Sat Aug 20 (4:00)

American minimalist (and mathematician) James Benning portrays Vienna’s Museum of Natural History in fifty-four shots of non-public areas. Benning’s vision, which avoids the convivial clamor of most public museums, suggests the stillness of an earlier era, when museums were places for quiet musings. “*Natural History* began about five years ago when the director of the Museum of Natural History Vienna, Christian Koeberl, invited me to lunch. He wanted to talk about his second passion, film. Myself not liking film that much I immediately changed the subject to meteorites, his first passion. Over a schnitzel and the better part of a rather good bottle of red wine I received about two years of university credit on the subject. Then with a boyhood grin, Christian asked if I’d like to see the storage rooms. We spent another few hours looking at the stuff stored and at the underground architecture itself. I told Christian I think I’d like to make a film there, a landscape film, and without hesitation he said yes. I had complete access to the building for thirteen straight days. The editing is based on the first twenty-seven digits of π ” —James Benning. (James Benning, 2014, HD digital, 77 minutes)

Russian Ark

Sun Aug 28 (4:00)

A directorial and cinematographic tour de force filmed within the Hermitage—the ark in which Russian identity is

held—*Russian Ark* was filmed in one seamless Steadicam take, the lengthiest sustained shot in the history of film. As the viewer glides through corridors, ballrooms, and galleries, a vast ensemble of actors and performers in full historic costume reenact episodes from Russia's imperial past, from the seventeenth century to the pre-Revolutionary twentieth century. "A ghost story, a magnificent conjuring act, an eerie historical mirage evoked in a single sweeping wave of the hand by Sokurov"—Stephen Holden. (Alexander Sokurov, 2002, DCP, 100 minutes)

Black Maria at Thirty-Five: Selections from the Festival Aug 6

For thirty-five years, the Black Maria Film Festival has been celebrating and preserving the diversity, invention, and vitality of the short film. The festival takes place at New Jersey City University and is named after Thomas Edison's original West Orange film studio, called "Black Maria" because of its resemblance to the black-box police paddy wagon of the same name. Black Maria Film Festival is an annual juried competition of new shorts in all genres, open to anyone. Selections from the most recent competition are screened at the Gallery in two programs, each introduced by Black Maria's executive director, Jane Steuerwald.

Black Maria Program One Sat Aug 6 (1:00)

The opening program includes, among others, *Notes for My Homeland*, Ed Kashi and Julie Winokur's chronicle of a Syrian-American composer responding to the tragedies of civil war; Kristine Stolakis's *The Typist*, the story of a Korean War veteran reflecting on his time as a clerk tasked with

writing the discharges of outed gay sailors; James Everett's *Dreaming of Peggy Lee*; Paul Zinder's *Signwriter*; Theresa Moerman Ib's *The Third Dad*; Randy Yang's *Video*, in which two African American girls capture a woman's racist remarks on tape; Moon Molson's *The Bravest, the Boldest*, relating a time when two casualty notification officers arrive at a Harlem home to deliver some news; plus the animations *Daybreak/L'aube* by George Ungar, *The Lost Mariner* by Tess Martin, and *Nighthawks* by Fang Ji. (Total running time 122 minutes)

Black Maria Program Two Sat Aug 6 (3:30)

The second half of the program includes *Seeing Siem Reap*, S. Smith Patrick's chronicle of Cambodian children from difficult homes learning to express themselves through art; Lynne Sachs and Sean Hanley's *Starfish Aorta Colossus*, on the New York poet Paolo Javier; Jim Hollenbaugh's *Nuthouse Drawings*, a portrait of Baltimore artist Susan Lowe (former John Waters actress) with her drawings from a time when she was hospitalized; Lauren Knapp's *Lockdown*, on America's schools' responses to violence; and Reid Davenport's *On Beat*, Karen Vazquez Guadarrama and Oost-Vlaanderen's *Flower of a Thousand Colours*, Tom Brown and Daniel Gray's animated *Teeth*, and more. (Total running time 92 minutes)

The Inner Landscapes of Bruce Baillie Aug 13–21

A founding member of independent film distributor Canyon Cinema and cofounder of the San Francisco Cinematheque (with artist Chick Strand, in 1961), Bruce Baillie (b. 1931) is a true pioneer of American avant-garde film. His experiments in sound and image are firmly rooted in the land and the observational, often connecting to a

place, mood, history, and mythos of the American West, while remaining entirely subjective, always evocative, and unabashedly playful. From the very beginning, Baillie stretched the technical limits of his medium with optical printing, superimpositions, and other visual and aural collaging methods. Three programs of his 16mm film work have been chosen for this series from the recent retrospective *All My Life: The Films of Bruce Baillie*. With thanks to curator Garbiñe Ortega and to Antonella Bonfanti, executive director of Canyon Cinema, for the generous loan of these 16mm film prints.

Why Take Up the Camera?

Sat Aug 13 (2:30)

This program of portraits, both of individuals and groups, starts with one of Baillie's very first films: *Mr. Hayashi* (1961, 3 minutes). Baillie said: "Why did I make this film? I wanted to help my friend find a job in Berkeley. It was one of my first attempts to create film as both utilitarian and Art." Other titles include the most narrative driven film of the series, *Have You Thought of Talking to the Director?* (1962, 15 minutes); the intensely mournful *Mass for Dakota Sioux* (1964, 20 minutes); *Valentin de las Sierras* (1971, 10 minutes), reflecting children and song filmed in Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico; *Here I Am* (1962, 11 minutes), an empathetic study created for the East Bay Activity Center in Oakland, a school for mentally disturbed children; and *Little Girl* (1966, 10 minutes), a gentle reverie set to *Trois Gymnopédies* by Erik Satie. (Total running time 69 minutes)

Searching for Heroes

Sun Aug 14 (4:00)

The idea of the quest is brought to the fore with this trilogy, beginning with *Roslyn Romance (Is It Really True?)* (1977, 10 minutes), a film of postcards and impressions of Roslyn, Washington, where Baillie was living at the time. *Roslyn* is followed by *To Parsifal* (1963, 16 minutes), an impressionistic tribute to the legendary knight — "he who becomes slowly

Bruce Baillie

Quixote, 1965 (top)

p28

Bruce Baillie (bottom)



wise” — with deep echoes of Wagner. The program concludes with *Quixote* (1965, 45 minutes), “a kind of summary and conclusion of a number of themes, especially that of the hero...depicting Western orientation as essentially one of conquest” — Garbiñe Ortega. (Total running time 71 minutes)

The Sky, the Land, the In-Between

Sun Aug 21 (4:00)

The final program of five short films by Baillie includes *All My Life, Tung*, and *Still Life* (all from 1966); *Quick Billy* (1971, 56 minutes), filmed near Fort Bragg and the Pacific Ocean; and the iconic *Castro Street* (1966, 10 minutes), selected for preservation in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress in 1992. “As he pours on the color, mixes in the chugs and clangs, evokes the Brothers Lumière and swings between the figurative and the abstract, the line between place and head space dissolves and a portrait of the artist emerges — brilliantly.” — Manohla Dargis (Total running time 77 minutes)

Shakespeare as Cinematic Experiment: 1908 – 1921

Aug 27 – Sep 24

In the pre-sound era, hundreds of short films were produced from Shakespeare’s plays — mostly one-reelers of highlights with actors in costume. These shorts aimed to grant a bit of respectability to moviegoing, while offering familiar, culturally-resonant fare to an increasingly middle-class audience. Certain film companies — Vitagraph, Thanhouser, Pathé’s affiliate Film d’arte Italiana, Cines, Biograph, Kalem, Ambrosio, Gaumont, Eclair, and Nordisk, among others — showed particular interest in these shorts. While many of the films have been lost, a number of archives,

including the Library of Congress and the British Film Institute, hold significant collections of these experiments. Organized to coincide with the quatercentenary of the Bard’s death, this series includes lectures, ciné-concerts, and rarely seen film fragments. Special thanks to Anthony Guneratne, Mike Mashon, Zoran Sinobad, Fleur Buckley, George Watson, the Library of Congress, and the George Eastman Museum.

Ciné-concert: Richard III (1911 and 1912)

Donald Sosin, Joanna Seaton, Christian Simmelink, Stephen Czarkowski, Neil Brown, and David J. Miller in performance
Sat Aug 27 (3:00)

Two versions of the play illustrate a striking transformation in cinema from 1911 to 1913. In the first *Richard III* (Frank Benson, 35mm, 1911, 23 minutes), British actor-manager Benson has recorded highlights from his stage performances at Stratford, clearly anticipating an audience familiar with the tragedy. The American producer known as Shakespeare Film Company, on the other hand, could make no such assumption — patrons were often new immigrants or migrants from the rural heartland. The multireel *Richard III* (James Keane, 1912, 35 mm, 55 minutes) features famed tragedian Frederick Warde in an adaptation based on Shakespeare and on Colley Cibber’s 1699 reworking. Print from the Library of Congress, restored by American Film Institute. Score commissioned by the Westchester Film Festival.

Ciné-concert: The Asta Nielsen Hamlet (German version)

Dennis James, Michael Tsalka, and Madeline Beitel in performance
Sat Sep 10 (2:30)

Released in Germany in 1921, *Hamlet* was the inaugural opus of Danish actress Asta Nielsen’s own company, set up soon after World War I. The film — in which Nielsen performs a gender-bending reworking of the title role — heralded a golden age in German film adaptations of Shakespeare, but for much of its history, only the American version (below) was thought to survive. Then, in 2005, the son of a former

projectionist at a film theater near Mannheim donated a near-complete tinted, toned, and stencil-colored nitrate print with German intertitles. This was restored by the Deutsche Filminstitut in 2006–2007. Comparative analysis with a vintage nitrate print intended for France revealed that both derived from the same camera negative, with shots in the same order and literal translations of intertitles; the coloration differed significantly. Supplementary frames and substitutions for damage were restored to the more vibrant hues of the German print, creating an approximation of the German release of 1921. Restorer Anke Mebold confirms that further variants may have been made and marketed in Europe by the parent company, Art-Film GmbH, as the “Asta Nielsen-Film” *Hamlet*. Dennis James has composed a new score for the restoration, saying: “My compilation scoring is made up solely of excerpted compositions by the sons of Bach performed in a keyboard duo-performers format utilizing three instruments (organ, fortepiano, plus harpsichord) and a guest mezzo-soprano vocalist.” (Svend Gade and Heinz Schall, 1920, 35mm, 110 minutes)

Ciné-concert: The Asta Nielsen Hamlet (American version)

Philip Carli in performance

Sat Sep 17 (2:30)

By the eighteenth century, *Hamlet* had become a bravura role for actresses intent on reversing the Renaissance practice of substituting boys for women. Celebrated female performances include those of Sarah Siddons, Charlotte Cushman, and Sarah Bernhardt. Asta Nielsen was the first actress of comparable renown to achieve a film celebrity not imported from the theater—her performances achieved a naturalism and range surpassing those of other emerging stars. While no production records survive that would confirm that Svend Gade and Heinz Schall used two cameras simultaneously to create two independent negatives of the *Hamlet* filmed at Asta Nielsen’s behest in 1920, the surviving prints appear to confirm this unusual procedure. In this American release of the Nielsen *Hamlet*, from the George Eastman Museum, certain shots that might have provoked the censors have been omitted. In compensation, American audiences were given

more close-ups, alternate shot compositions, and a variety of intertitles not found in the German print. (Svend Gade and Heinz Schall, 1920–1921, 35mm, 110 minutes) *Preservation funded by the National Gallery of Art.*

Vitagraph Shakespeare Cycle (1908–1912)

Screening and discussion with Anthony Guneratne

Sat Sep 24 (2:30)

The Vitagraph Co. of America, a highly successful and influential production company in the earliest decades of the American film industry, started releasing short Shakespeare adaptations in 1908. The previous year, the well-known Georges Méliès had released films that dramatized parts of *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*, and Vitagraph was preparing to expand its European markets. The German release of Vitagraph’s 1909 *King Lear* survives, as do versions of *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Cardinal Wolsey* (a free adaptation of *Henry VIII*), and *As You Like It*. Recent transfers to celluloid by the Library of Congress of the copyright fragments that Vitagraph submitted in the form of paper-print duplications have also made traces of *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard III*, and *Jealousy* (an alternative title for *Othello*) viewable on screens more than a century after their release. Anthony Guneratne, film historian and Shakespeare studies specialist, provides a commentary to accompany these fragile and fleeting works. (Various directors, 1908–1912, approximately 100 minutes)

Synchronized Pantomimes/Early Animations

Sep 3–4

A combination of performance and discussion focuses on the history and importance of pantomime in early cinema. This weekend of exploration includes an illustrated lecture by Gillian B.

Anderson, examples of pantomime in the cinema with an eleven-instrument ensemble, and early animations by renowned Spanish cinéaste Segundo de Chomón. The pantomimes *A Modern Garrick* and *Taming of the Shrew* honor William Shakespeare on the four hundredth anniversary of his death and the restoration work necessitated by the dramatic rediscovery of these two prints at the bottom of a swimming pool in the Yukon. All in all, the program is a unique celebration of the spectacle of early cinema. With special thanks to the Library of Congress, Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino, and the Museum of Modern Art.

Ciné-Concert: Broken Blossoms

preceded by *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Modern Garrick*
Gillian B. Anderson, conducting Cinemusica Viva
Sat Sep 3 (2:00)

Reflecting the spirit of Shakespeare's play and performed by actors from Paris's Odéon, this condensed *Taming of the Shrew* has Baptista's daughter Bianca in love with Lucentio, though her father will not permit a marriage until his willful older daughter Katherine finds a mate. Petruchio, a nobleman friend of Lucentio, resolves to marry Katherine, countering all her tantrums with tantrums of his own until he tames her. A new score, composed by Virginia Guastella for ten-piece ensemble, is conducted by Gillian Anderson. (Eclipse, 1911, 35mm, 15 minutes)

In the burlesque *A Modern Garrick*, a young woman and her fiancé attend a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, with a matinee idol billed as the "Modern Garrick." Infatuated with this actor, the woman acquires a mania for playing Juliet but is cured with the aid of the matinee idol pretending to be a hypnotist. Much of the film is now missing. New score composed by Virginia Guastella for ten-piece ensemble, conducted by Gillian Anderson. (Pathéplay, 1913, 35mm, 5 minutes)

For *Broken Blossoms*, D. W. Griffith adapted a story from *Limehouse Nights* (1916), a collection of tales set in the Chinatown district of London's East End. A Chinese man (Richard Barthelmess) falls for the lovely Lucy Burrows

Segundo de Chomón

La Guerra e il Sogno di Momi, 1917

p34



(Lillian Gish), who lives with her abusive boxer father (Donald Crisp). This screening of *Broken Blossoms* receives special treatment, an attempt to recreate Griffith's own effects when first presenting the film: special lighting at specific moments, a shadow play instead of live pantomime for the musical prelude, and Chinese, Balalaika, and western instruments. The original musical score is by Louis F. Gottschalk. Theatrical effects adapted by Lidia Bagnoli. (D. W. Griffith, 1919, 35mm, 90 minutes)

Synchronized Music: Pantomime's Influence on Moving Pictures

Lecture by Gillian B. Anderson

Sun Sep 4 (2:00)

By focusing on pantomime and cinema music and timing practices, Gillian Anderson challenges the notion that synchronized sound arrived only with the so-called talking picture. She suggests that non-diegetic music is an archeological relic of film music's origins in pantomime. Anderson is a conductor and noted authority on historic film scores. She is the author of *Music for Silent Films 1894–1929: A Guide*. She recently translated into English Ennio Morricone and Sergio Miceli's *Composing for the Cinema: The Theory and Praxis of Music in Film*. (Approximately 50 minutes)

Ciné-Concert: The Early Animation of Segundo de Chomón

Virginia Guastella, pianist

Sun Sep 4 (3:30)

Segundo de Chomón (1871–1929), the brilliant Spanish trickster and filmmaker, is frequently compared to his French contemporary Georges Méliès. (In fact, the two men worked together briefly in Paris while Chomón was producing films for Pathé Frères.) Chomón's fantastic narratives are filled with animation and special effects, surprising twists, and tricks of the eye that amaze and amuse. This program features *Le Spectre Rouge* (1907), *La Guerra e il Sogno di Momi* (1917), and *Lulù* (1923). New scores composed and performed by Virginia Guastella. *Preservation and restoration by Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino and Fondazione Cineteca di Bologna*.

Films

Academy of Muses, The 9
 All My Life 28
 Asta Nielsen Hamlet, The (American version) 30
 Asta Nielsen Hamlet, The (German version) 29
 Béla Tarr's Macbeth 13
 Big Broadcast, The 14
 Bravest, the Boldest, The 25
 Broken Blossoms 32
 Castro Street 28
 Crime of Dr. Crespi, The 17
 Day Before the End, The 13
 Daybreak/L'aube 25
 Dreaming of Peggy Lee 25
 First Legion, The 17
 First Line, The 9
 Flower of a Thousand Colours 25
 Franconia 22
 Great Museum, The 23
 Have You Thought of Talking to the Director? 26
 Here I Am 26
 Her Sister's Secret 16
 Hieronymus Bosch—Touched by the Devil 18
 Hubert Robert—A Fortunate Life 22
 James Benning's Natural History 23
 La Guerra e il Sogno di Momi 34
 Le Saphir de Saint-Louis 9
 Le Spectre Rouge 34
 Little Girl 26
 Lockdown 25
 Lost Mariner, The 25
 Lulù 34
 Mass for Dakota Sioux 26
 Me and the Boys 14
 Modern Garrick, A 32
 Mr. Hayashi 26

National Gallery 21
New Rijksmuseum, The 21
Nighthawks 25
Notes for My Homeland 24
Nuthouse Drawings 25
On Beat 25
People on Sunday (Menschen am Sonntag) 10
Quick Billy 28
Quixote 28
Richard III (1911 and 1912)
29
Roslyn Romance (Is It Really True?) 26
Russian Ark 23
Sagrada: The Mystery of Creation 21
Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger, The 13
Seeing Siem Reap 25
Signwriter 25
Spring Night, Summer Night 16
Starfish Aorta Colossus 25
Still Life 28
Taming of the Shrew, The 32
Teeth 25
Third Dad, The 25
Thoughts That Once We Had, The 10
To Parsifal 26
Tung 28
Typist, The 24
Valentin de las Sierras 26
Video 25
Vitagraph Shakespeare Cycle (1908–1912) 31
White Zombie 17

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Cover: Bruce Baillie, *All My Life*, 1966, p28

A film still showing a wooden fence and red flowers, with a bright light source on the left. The scene is split horizontally by a white line, possibly representing a film strip edge. The top half shows a dark wooden fence with red flowers in the foreground and background. The bottom half shows a similar scene but with a bright, glowing light source on the left side, creating a strong contrast and a blueish tint in the sky area.

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