

Winter Series

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Khadak

Manufactured Landscapes

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The Open Road—England
in the 1920s

Quay Brothers: The Piano
Tuner of Earthquakes

The Rape of Europa

The Spirit of Places

Women and Film—A Legacy
in Print

January

5 Fri

12:00 Filming Othello: Laurence Olivier's
Othello

3:00 Filming Othello: Orson Welles' *Othello*

6 Sat

12:30 Filming Othello: Laurence Olivier's
Othello

3:30 Filming Othello: Orson Welles' *Othello*

7 Sun

4:30 Event: Norman McLaren Restored

12 Fri

1:00 Jacques Rivette: *Celine and Julie Go
Boating*

13 Sat

2:30 Filming Othello: *O*

14 Sun

4:30 Jacques Rivette: *Celine and Julie Go
Boating*



The Spirit of Places (Films en Vue)

20 Sat

2:00 Jacques Rivette: *La Belle Noiseuse*

21 Sun

5:00 Event: Premiere: *Absolute Wilson*

26 Fri

1:00 Jacques Rivette: *Paris Belongs to Us*

27 Sat

2:30 Jacques Rivette: *L'Amour fou*

28 Sun

4:30 Jacques Rivette: *Paris Belongs to Us*

February

3 Sat

2:00 Jacques Rivette: *Out One: Spectre*

4 Sun

4:00 Jacques Rivette: *Duelle*

9 Fri

12:30 Event: How to Survive the 1940s

10 Sat

1:00 Event: How to Survive the 1940s

3:00 Jacques Rivette: *Jacques Rivette, The
Night Watchman; Jean Renoir, le patron*

11 Sun

4:00 Jacques Rivette: *Wuthering Heights*

17 Sat

12:00 Event: *The Open Road—England in the
1920s*

2:00 Jacques Rivette: *The Gang of Four*

18 Sun

4:30 Event: *The Open Road—England in the
1920s*

24 Sat

3:30 Jacques Rivette: *The Story of Marie and
Julien*

25 Sun

4:00 Event: Quay Brothers: *The Piano Tuner of
Earthquakes*

March

3 Sat

2:30 Event: Women and Film—A Legacy
in Print

4 Sun

4:30 Event: *The Rape of Europa*

10 Sat

2:00 Event: Jasper Johns: A Compilation

11 Sun

4:30 Cinedance in America: Reaching Beyond
the Stage

17 Sat

12:30 Cinedance in America: 1894–1938:
First Steps and New Directions

3:00 Event: *Manufactured Landscapes;
The Spirit of Places*

18 Sun

4:00 Béla Tarr: *Damnation*

24 Sat

1:00 Music and Film: John Cage and
Elliott Carter

4:30 Event: *Khadak*

25 Sun

4:00 Béla Tarr: *Werckmeister Harmonies*

31 Sat

1:00 Cinedance in America: 1939–1962:
Classic Works of Avant-Garde Cinedance

2:30 Cinedance in America: 1965–2002:
The Postmodernist Explosion

Films are shown in original format in the
auditorium of the National Gallery's East
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Permit # 9712

Film Program Winter 2007

Art Films and Events

Norman McLaren Restored

Premiere of new 35 mm prints

January 7 at 4:30

Brilliant Scottish-born Canadian animator Norman McLaren (1914–1987) perfected many of the techniques that became the standard of animation art. Often imitated, McLaren's work during the 1930s and 1940s for the National Film Board of Canada and Britain's GPO film unit was legendary. Eleven of his classic short films—including *Begone Dull Care* (1949), *Neighbours* (1952), *A Chairy Tale* (1957), *Pas de deux* (1968), *Synchromy* (1971), *Blinkity Blank* (1955), and *Hen Hop* (1942)—have now been restored by the National Film Board of Canada to their original 35 mm format. Viewed in these spectacular new prints, McLaren's films demonstrate cinema's close affinity with painting and music—a concept that was one of this artist's main preoccupations. (total running time 85 minutes)

Absolute Wilson

Washington premiere

Filmmaker Katharina Otto-Bernstein

in person

January 21 at 5:00

The Washington premiere of a new documentary on the life, times, and uncommon career of theatrical genius Robert Wilson is introduced and discussed by director Katharina Otto-Bernstein. Wilson's mammoth opera *Einstein on the Beach* (a celebrated 1970s collaboration with Philip Glass) and his visually stunning *Deafman Glance* were among the legendary avant-garde theatrical works of the twentieth century. Wilson collaborators from Jessye Norman to David Byrne, critics and friends such as Susan Sontag, and members of his family participate in the project. Wilson himself noted, "I've never talked so much about my personal life." (Katharina Otto-Bernstein, 2006, 35 mm, 90 minutes)

How to Survive the 1940s

February 9 at 12:30, February 10 at 1:00

British postwar public-information films—short government-sponsored works intended to "put a war-weary nation back on its feet"—are prized today more for their unintended humor and clever handling of content than for their obvious historical value. From the singular comedy of the treasury-sponsored *Pool of Contentment* (1946) to the flashback structure of *Another Case of Poisoning* (1949) to the inventive mix of live action and animation in *Your Children's Meals* (1947), this compilation of six films offers a rare chance to see beautifully crafted "industrial shorts" from the pre-television era. (National Film and Television Archive, British Film Institute, 1946–1950, 35 mm, 85 minutes)

The Open Road—England in the 1920s

February 17 at 12:00, February 18 at 4:30

A unique color portrait of Britain in the 1920s, *The Open Road* was shot by Claude Friese-Greene, a leading European cinematographer who experimented with an early color process to record his journeys through out-of-the-way

and middle-of-the-road destinations, including South Devon, Cardiff, Plymouth, London, Blackpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and John o' Groats, among others. The result is a series of twenty-six "color postcards," all of which were screened weekly in Britain's neighborhood cinemas during the 1920s. (Claude Friese-Greene, 1926, 35 mm, 65 minutes)

The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes

also *The Street of Crocodiles*

Washington premiere

February 25 at 4:00

The bizarre mind's eye of twin brothers Timothy and Stephen Quay churned out this curious nineteenth-century tale of a mad doctor named Droz, his beautiful opera singer prisoner, and a naïve piano tuner who lands on the doctor's odd island retreat ostensibly to mend a collection of automated music machines—incredible stop-motion creations housed in huge boxes. With its remarkable color tableaux and exotic, ethereal imagery, *The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes*—the second feature from the American-born brothers who in the 1980s revived the tradition of surrealist Eastern European animation—was inspired by Jules Verne's *The Carpathian Castle*. (Stephen and Timothy Quay, 2005, 35 mm, 99 minutes)

A new 35mm print of the Quay Brothers' early animated short *The Street of Crocodiles*, filled with their trademark visual poetry, precedes the feature. (1986, 35 mm, 20 minutes)

Women and Film—A Legacy in Print

Lecture and screening

March 3 at 2:30

Red Velvet Seat: Women's Writings on the First Fifty Years of Cinema is a new compendium of women's writings assembled from journals, newspapers, and other ephemera. Contributors range from Virginia Woolf to Colette to Lillian Gish to assorted poets, activists, and social reformers. *Red Velvet Seat's* editor, film historian Antonia Lant, will discuss these writings, providing both context and perspective. Following the discussion, three films showing an extraordinary range of female talent will be screened in preserved 35 mm prints: Alice Guy-Blaché's *Matrimony's Speed Limit* (1913, 14 minutes); *Unmasked* (1917, 11 minutes), featuring Grace Cunard, the multitalented queen of the serials; and *Dirty Gertie from Harlem USA* (1946, 65 minutes), an independent feature based on Somerset Maugham's *Rain* starring Francine Everett, the pioneering African American actor who refused to play stereotypical roles. An informal book signing follows the program. (total running time 110 minutes)

The Rape of Europa

Lynn Nicholas and Robert M. Edsel in person

March 4 at 4:30

Author Lynn Nicholas introduces this screening of the new high-definition film based on her book *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*, which chronicles the calculated theft and destruction—and miraculous survival—of countless important works of art. With a "cast" that includes Adolf Hitler and Hermann Goering on the one hand and Gertrude Stein and Marc Chagall on the other, *The Rape of Europa* cuts a mesmeric path through this horrific period. (Bonni Cohen and Richard Berge, high definition video, 2005, 120 minutes)

Discussion with *The Rape of Europa* author Lynn Nicholas and co-producer of the film and *Rescuing Da Vinci* author Robert M. Edsel follows the screening.

Jasper Johns: A Compilation

March 10 at 2:00

In conjunction with the exhibition *Jasper Johns: An Allegory of Painting, 1955–1965*, this diverse collection of short works has two parallel themes. The first includes documentary footage of Jasper Johns working with friends and collaborators John Cage and Merce Cunningham, and the second features experimental shorts by Stan Brakhage and Alfred Leslie, contemporaries of Johns who shared many of his artistic concerns. The program includes *Crises*, with members of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company (Helen Priest Rogers, 1961, 16 mm silent, 22 minutes); *Walkaround Time* (Charles Atlas, James Klosty, and Michael Norborg, produced by the Cunningham Dance Foundation, 1968–1973, 16 mm, 67 minutes); *Marcel Duchamp and John Cage* (John Cage and Shigeko Kubota with Marcel Duchamp, 1972, Beta SP, 28 minutes); *Last Clean Shirt* (Alfred Leslie, dialogue by Frank O'Hara, 1964, 16 mm, 39 minutes); and *Anticipation of the Night* (Stan Brakhage, 1958, 16 mm, 40 minutes).

Manufactured Landscapes

also *The Spirit of Places (L'Esprit des lieux)*

Washington premieres

March 17 at 3:00

The beautiful yet frightening large-format photographs of Edward Burtynsky comprise a catalogue of manmade horrors: strip mines, oil tankers, dumps, factories, and massive piles of post-industrial debris. *Manufactured Landscapes* follows the Toronto-based Burtynsky to China, where he travels around the country documenting its economic boom. The artist visits factory floors over a half-mile long, colossal urban renewal sites, and the notorious Three Gorges Dam, a project that displaced over a million people. The film not only illustrates this environmental devastation in a deliberately discomfiting way, but it also challenges viewers, who find themselves both captivated by the beauty of the photographs and unnerved by their subject matter. (Jennifer Baichwal, 2006, 35 mm, 90 minutes)

Québécois filmmaker Catherine Martin's *The Spirit of Places* embraces a noble concept: thirty-five years after Hungarian-born photographer Gabor Szilasi first documented the Charlevoix region of Quebec, he returned to this rural society to again photograph the same people and places. Martin accompanies him on this journey as he reminisces with his subjects. What she finds is refreshing, surprising, and sad. The people of the region have managed to hang on to their rural lifestyle and connection to the land even as they acknowledge that their way of life is doomed. Gabor's new set of photographs closely resembles the old—an irony that would not exist in much of North America. (Catherine Martin, 2006, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 84 minutes) *Shown in association with the Environmental Film Festival*

Khadak

Washington premiere
March 24 at 4:30

A family of nomadic herders on the hard-frozen steppes of Mongolia is forced by the government to relocate to a town. An epic tale of one nomad whose fate is to become the local shaman, *Khadak* reveals its mysteries slowly and blends fact and fiction seamlessly. Mongolia's radiant beauty shines not only through the landscape, but also through its textiles, poetry, and native sounds. "Motivating the film," said director Jessica Woodworth, "are the economic and political manifestations of the transition from socialism to capitalism—but also the more evasive and intangible spiritual ones." (Jessica Woodworth and Peter Brosens, 2006, 35 mm, Mongolian with subtitles, 104 minutes) Shown in association with the Environmental Film Festival

Filming Othello

Sir Laurence Olivier's portrayal of Othello is the first of three distinctly different and diverging interpretations of Shakespeare's troubled and tragic Moor. The series is presented in conjunction with the exhibition *The Artist's Vision: Romantic Traditions in Britain*, which includes Dante Gabriel Rossetti's drawing *Desdemona's Death-Song*.

Othello

January 5 at 12:00, January 6 at 12:30

Reveled by American critics in the racially tense 1960s, Laurence Olivier's blackface portrayal of the Moor of Venice was audacious, openly theatrical, and a replication of his performance on the London stage—even the film's sets and props had been recycled from that production. As critics today generally allow, this *Othello* is true to the soul of Shakespeare's problematic play. All of the performances—Frank Finlay's rash Iago, Maggie Smith's edgy Desdemona, and

Derek Jacobi's charged Cassio—are among the most eloquent ever filmed. (Stuart Burge, 1965, 165 minutes)

Othello

also **Filming Othello** (January 6 only)
January 5 at 3:00, January 6 at 3:30

Orson Welles' poetic *Othello* spins the play into a probing study of the Moor's demise, focusing on the interaction between Othello (Welles) and Iago (Michéal MacLiammoir). With deft editing, the film lays bare their twisted emotions. Filming mostly outdoors with pounding winds and screeching gulls as backdrop, "Welles never made a more coherent or beautiful film," wrote Charles Hingham in his study of the director. "The lucid, vibrant style was seldom so perfectly wedded to its subject." (Orson Welles, 1948–1952, 35 mm, 91 minutes)

In *Filming Othello*, Welles himself relates the history of his protracted project, which he began in 1948 with no money or crew. Seven cities, three Desdemonas, four Iagos, three Cassios, and four years later, *Othello* won the Golden Palm at the Cannes Film Festival. (Orson Welles, 1977, 80 minutes) Unconfirmed

O

January 13 at 2:30

Tim Blake Nelson and screenwriter Brad Kaaya move Othello's action to the locker room of an American high-school gym as Othello becomes Odin (Mekhi Phifer), a superstar basketball player and the school's only African American, and Iago becomes teammate Hugo (Josh Hartnett), naturally jealous of Odin's fame. When Hugo concocts a scheme that forces Odin to mistrust girlfriend Desi (Julia Stiles), the plot thickens. Although hampered on initial release by the sad similarities to school tragedies of the day, *O* succeeds in capturing the spirit of Shakespeare's play. (Tim Blake Nelson, 2001, 35 mm, 95 minutes)



Othello (Photofest)

Jacques Rivette on the Streets of Paris

One of the founders of the French New Wave—arguably the most influential film movement of the mid-twentieth century—Parisian Jacques Rivette (b. 1928) has remained a believer in that movement's ideal: spontaneity with a soupçon of élan. The fact that Rivette's actors often improvise their own dialogue gives his films freshness and vitality—a real feat considering that most of them are three or more hours in length. Perhaps Rivette's innovation, however, was discovering a way to blur the boundaries between reality and illusion—a Pirandellian theatrical touch that continues to enchant. Besides his brilliant *L'Histoire de Marie et Julien*, a 2003 film never officially released in America, the series consists mainly of important early works that established his reputation, including new 35 mm prints of two masterpieces: *Celine and Julie Go Boating* (1974) and *Paris Belongs to Us* (1961). The program is presented through the cooperation of the British Film Institute, the Museum of the Moving Image, New York, and La Maison Francaise, Washington, DC, where three additional works by Rivette will be shown in late February.

Celine and Julie Go Boating (*Céline et Julie vont en bateau*)

January 12 at 1:00, January 14 at 4:30

With a nod to Lewis Carroll, Jorge Luis Borge, and Georges Méliès, Jacques Rivette spins an intricate yarn that makes abundant use of magic, memory, reverie, and romps through the pleasant neighborhoods of Paris. Seemingly about an accidental encounter between two young women, a nightclub magician (Juliet Berto), and a librarian (Dominique Labourier), the film's labyrinthine plot is as entertaining as it is packed with ideas—provocative, expansive, and profound. A new 35 mm print restores the film's original color and quality. (1974, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 195 minutes)

La Belle Noiseuse

January 20 at 2:00

An aging painter (Michel Piccoli) whose career is withering finds a new muse (Emmanuelle Beart) to pose for him. Rivette's film is essentially an exploration of the creative process, documenting not only the relationship between model and artist, but also the development of preliminary sketches, charcoals, and watercolor washes as they evolve into a final work. At times the filmmaker simply peers over the artist's shoulder and gazes with extended camera takes—a delicate feat that only the most confident would attempt. Loosely based on Honoré de Balzac's *The Hidden Masterpiece*, *La Belle Noiseuse* is itself a masterpiece, four hours in duration. (1991, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 240 minutes with intermission)

Paris Belongs to Us (*Paris nous appartient*) preceded by *Fool's Mate* (*Le coup du berger*)

January 26 at 1:00, January 28 at 4:30

A student in late 1950s Paris is ensnared in sinister events as a result of a production of Shakespeare's *Pericles*. When Rivette and his crew completed this first foray into feature



L'Amour fou (Photofest)

filmmaking, the director said, “If I try to sum up *Paris nous appartient* in a word, I can’t use any other term than ‘adventure’—inconclusive and futile perhaps, but isn’t this a risk implied in ‘adventure’ itself?” Fellow French filmmakers of the day collectively called it “a fusion of poetic vision and realist expression,” while the British journal *Sight and Sound* noted its Kafkaesque qualities. “Not since Louis Feuillade with his *Les vampires* of 1915 has anyone made such inspired and inventive use of Paris.”—Judy Bloch. (1958–1960, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 142 minutes)

Fool’s Mate, an early short subject, consists of four characters and a fur coat, François Couperin’s music, and commentary comparing the characters’ actions to chessboard moves. (1956, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 28 minutes)

L’Amour fou

January 27 at 2:30

The fragility of human relationships captures the spotlight in *L’Amour fou*. Ongoing rehearsals for a stage performance of Racine’s *Andromache*—and the shooting of documentary television footage of the play—form a backdrop to the marital problems taking place between the theater’s director (Jean-Pierre Kalfon) and his actress wife (Bulle Ogier). “The field is thus cleared for confrontations between husband and wife, between ordered passion and mad love, between theater and TV, and even between 16 mm and 35 mm film footage....” —Tony Rayns. (1968, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 252 minutes)

Out One: Spectre

February 3 at 2:00

Rivette was encouraged to adapt Honoré de Balzac’s *Histoire des Treize* for a contemporary audience. The result is one of his more audacious works, a commentary on storytelling and the human tendency to create meaning from even the most confusing jumble. “Four hours of improvisation,” wrote Jonathan Rosenbaum, “with the best New Wave actors... and edited and arranged so that sometimes it’s a mystery story and the rest of the time it’s a naturalistic story about the same people.” “Rivette puts his

ear to the impulses and the imagination of his actors,” said Raphael Bassan, “each of whom is responsible for the coherence of his or her own microcosm, while the filmmaker simply plays the role of mediator.” (1972, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 255 minutes with intermission)

Duelle

February 4 at 4:00

From Rivette’s four-part series *Scènes de la Vie Parallèle*, *Duelle* is set during carnival season, the only time goddesses will appear on earth for commerce with mortals. A ghost goddess (Juliet Berto) and a fairy goddess (Bulle Ogier) compete for possession of a diamond that permits them to remain longer than the usual forty days. “With a nonexistent word (the feminine form of a masculine noun) for a title and an imaginary myth for a starting point,” writes Jonathan Rosenbaum, “*Duelle* deliberately defines itself through contradictions and clashes, maintaining a disequilibrium that flirts with, and refuses, the comforting balances of classic narrative. One can interpret the film as yet another critique of the film-going process—the mortals (viewers) take over the lives of goddesses (stars) and vice versa, through the means of a transcendental diamond that fulfills every wish.” (1975, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 120 minutes)

Jacques Rivette, The Night Watchman (Jacques Rivette, le veilleur)

also **Jean Renoir, le patron**

February 10 at 3:00

Early in her career, French filmmaker Claire Denis worked as Rivette’s assistant. His influence was so substantial that Denis later made this television documentary for the popular series *Cinéma, de notre temps*. *Cahiers du cinéma* editor Serge Daney interviews Rivette while accompanying him on his wanderings across the city of Paris—visiting cafés, riding the Métro, and walking the streets as their conversation ranges from art to ethics to the French New Wave. “Between Claire Denis and her two brilliant, loquacious subjects, there

are three very fine minds on display.”—Film Society of Lincoln Center. (Claire Denis, 1990, Beta SP, French with subtitles, 123 minutes)

Jean Renoir, le patron (Jean Renoir, the Boss) is a short documentary Rivette made for French television in the late 1960s. (1967, Beta SP, 30 minutes)

Wuthering Heights (Hurlevent)

February 11 at 4:00

Rivette moved Emily Brontë’s classic tale (adapted for the screen by Pascal Bonitzer, Suzanne Schiffman, and Rivette) to the stony, stark Cévennes region in the south of France. The period is the early 1930s, the heroine’s name remains Catherine, and Heathcliff becomes Roch. “A tale of tenuous boundaries between classes, between reality and dream, between viewer and viewed,” wrote Juliet Clark. As in the original novel, the two protagonists are one with their surroundings until Catherine is “seduced by civilization, and awakens as a wife in a pastel dream of affluence, triggering the nightmare that is Roch’s revenge. Through it all, the camera keeps its distance, watching and listening to performances that are less expressions of impetuous passion than choreographed movements in space.” (1985, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 130 minutes)

The Gang of Four (La Band des quatre)

February 17 at 2:00

Four aspiring young actresses and their seasoned coach (Bulle Ogier) are pulled into one of Rivette’s fantasy-realm plots that this time involves national terrorism. While most of the film’s three-hour narrative quietly observes the quartet’s daily lives, the action comes close to that of the works of Marivaux—which the actresses are rehearsing. Typically for Rivette, essential truths are revealed through metaphor as the four women learn the rules essential to their adult life. (1988, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 160 minutes)

The Story of Marie and Julien (Histoire de Marie et Julien)

February 24 at 3:30

“A fantasy film for grown-ups and incurable romantics, *The Story of Marie and Julien* follows the haunted love affair of two isolated Parisians, but its ghosts and phantoms extend far beyond the screen. Taking its cues from Cocteau’s poetic fantasies and Poe’s uneasy tremors, this not-so-straightforward narrative is alternately told from the point of view of the solid Julien and the ethereal Marie, his obscure object of desire. Their romantic beginnings give way to a strange mysteriousness, as if certain things have been told before. Anchored by the earthy performances of Jerzy Radziwilowicz and Emmanuelle Béart as the star-crossed couple, Rivette’s ephemeral tale suggests all affairs are haunted by earlier loves.”—Jason Sanders. (2003, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 152 minutes)

Cinedance in America

The representation of dance on film is uniquely different from the experience of live dance on the stage. As the earliest motion picture footage of dancer Annabelle Moore at the Edison Studio makes clear, the art of cinedance requires an imaginative approach to capturing form and movement. From the early twentieth century on, American film-

makers and dancers who undertook this challenge created a host of interesting collaborations, abstract syntheses of shape and motion that were radically different from mere recorded dance performance. A century's worth of invention is revealed in this four-part survey of American trends from early experimentation, Hollywood productions, the avant-garde, and beyond. Film historian Bruce Posner made the selections, many of which have been culled from *Unseen Cinema: Early American Avant-Garde Film 1894–1941*, with additional material from Anthology Film Archives, Film-Makers Cooperative, The Museum of Modern Art, Dance Film Archive, and private collections.

Reaching Beyond the Stage

March 11 at 4:30

In the opening program, film historian Bruce Posner discusses the history of American cinedance with a selection of shorts and excerpts from dances by Adolph Bolm, Ruth Page, Anna Pavlova, Agnes de Mille, Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, Amy Greenfield, Andy Warhol, and others. Among those included are *Danse Macabre* by Dudley Murphy (1922); *Nine Dances* by Pavlova (1924); "Pas de Deux" *Loney Lens* (1925); *Ballet Lesson* [Agnes de Mille] (1929); "Skyline Dance" *Manhattan Cocktail* (1928); *Hände: The Life and Loves of the Gentler Sex* (1927–1928); *Night Journey* (1961); *Dancer's World* by Peter Glushanik (1958); *Antigone: Rites of Passion* (1990); and Warhol's *EPI* [Exploding Plastic Inevitable] (1968). (total running time 80 minutes)

1894–1938: First Steps and New Directions

March 17 at 12:30

Short films and excerpts from *Annabelle Dances and Dances* [nine films 1894–1897] (2005); *Early Superimpositions* (1898–1903); *Dance of the Ages* by Ted Shawn (1913); *Soul of the Cypress* by Dudley Murphy (1920); "Artist's Ball" *So This is Paris* (1926); *Miss Tilly Losch in Her Dance of the Hands* (c. 1930–1933); *On the Shore* (1934); *Poem 8* (1932); *Le Joie de vivre* (1934); *Air for the G String* [1928] (1934); "By a Waterfall," *Footlight Parade* (1934); *An Optical Poem* (1938). (total running time 84 minutes)

1939–1962: Classic Works of Avant-Garde Cinedance

March 31 at 1:00

Short films and excerpts from *Spook Sport* (1939–1940); *Introspection* (1941/1946); *A Study in Choreography for Camera* (1944); *Clinic of Stumble* (1947); *Meditation on Violence* (1948); *Four in the Afternoon* (1951); *Bullfight* (1955); *Thanatopsis* (1962); *Death & Transfiguration* (1961). (total running time 83 minutes)

1965–2002: The Postmodernist Explosion

March 31 at 2:30

Short films and excerpts from *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (1966); *Trio A* [1965] (1978); *Water Motor* [1971] (1978); *Tides* (1982); *Sticks on the Move* (1983); *Central Park in the Dark* (1985); *Wake Up Call* (1989); *Little Lieutenant* (1994); *Wild Fire* (2002). (total running time 81 minutes)

Béla Tarr

Hungarian director Béla Tarr (b. 1955) has completed only one new film since his monumental seven-hour *Sátántangó* (screened at the National Gallery in 2000) was first released in the mid-1990s. The extraordinary critical response to *Sátántangó*—hailed as a landmark for its uncompromisingly bleak yet poetic depiction of rural life in Central Europe after communism's fall—propelled Tarr into the top ranks of European cineasts. This two-part series presents his most recent film, *Werckmeister Harmonies*, and *Damnation*, which preceded *Sátántangó*. Although Tarr likes to tease viewers with radical formal challenges, long takes, and stark black-and-white compositions, his real interest is always in getting close to his actors, in penetrating everyday life. "My films are comedies... like Chekhov. They look at the real world, and human life must inevitably be regarded as funny."

Damnation

March 18 at 4:00

"The landscape, the elements, nature, a unique world in which nothing remains," were the director's musings when describing the film that won the highest of accolades from critic Susan Sontag: she listed it among her favorite cinematic works of all time. Arguably Tarr's darkest depiction of humanity, *Damnation*'s "decaying villages, poverty, and depressive behavior," wrote another critic, "are observed from a point of view that stalks silently and patiently through the ruins." The simple storyline—a recluse falls hopelessly in love with a cabaret singer and gets her husband involved in a smuggling scheme—"seems almost secondary to its formal beauty," wrote Jonathan Rosenbaum. "The near miracle is that something so compulsively watchable can be made from a setting and society that are so petrified." (1988, 35 mm, Hungarian with subtitles, 119 minutes)

Werckmeister Harmonies

March 25 at 4:00

A bravura performance by Lars Rudolph as a village eccentric (Tarr's evocation of the Eastern literary tradition of the "holy fool") anchors the stunning black-and-white panorama of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, Tarr's most recent film. The title refers to the seventeenth-

century organist Andreas Werckmeister, a musical theorist who is credited with dividing the octave into twelve equal tones to create a system of major and minor notes. (Since order and harmony can be viewed as delusion, however, the film introduces a villager who seeks to correct Werckmeister's mistake.) In the end, wrote critic Sam Adams, "the film it most recalls is Andrei Tarkovsky's bleak *Sacrifice*, although it is less philosophical. Like *Sacrifice*, *Werckmeister Harmonies* could pass for science fiction, although there is nothing futuristic about it—rather, it is set in a world that seems to have once been our own, and to have taken an abrupt turn." (2000, 35 mm, Hungarian with subtitles, 145 minutes)

Music and Film: John Cage and Elliott Carter

American composers John Cage and Elliott Carter, two of modernism's musical geniuses, are the subjects of extraordinary documentaries from Dutch documentarian Frank Scheffer. Scheffer, who has produced over twenty films since the 1980s, presents rousing portraits of the men, their methods, and their music.

From Zero: John Cage also A Labyrinth of Time

March 24 at 1:00

Conceptual artist John Cage (1912–1992) astonished both avant-garde and art public alike in the early 1950s, when his piano piece 4' 33"—famously performed without playing a single note—premiered. In this landmark documentary, he discusses at length his favorite subjects and recalls friends, anecdotes, and sundry influences from Marcel Duchamp to Zen Buddhism. Andrew Culver, who over the years worked with both John Cage and Merce Cunningham, collaborated with Scheffer on the film. (Frank Scheffer and Andrew Culver, 1995, 80 minutes)

In *A Labyrinth of Time*, the filmmaker considers New Yorker Elliott Carter (born 1908), arguably the world's greatest living composer. In addition to capturing the artist's place in the modernist tradition, the film portrays New York City as a lively metaphor for Carter's compositions. Interviews with Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim, and Charles Rosen, among others, round out the portrait. (Frank Scheffer, 2004, 90 minutes)



Martha Graham and Andy Warhol with Warhol lithograph of Graham, photograph by David McGough (DMI/Photofest)