The film’s formalism belies at times “a spiritual kinship to American literature,” according to Vittorio, and his use of Italian medieval and Renaissance painting in his work. “What I see in my mind . . . ” said Pasolini, “are the frescoes of Giotto and Masaccio. I cannot conceive any [film] image, landscape, or composition outside the time-honored status (Hans Pool and Maaik Krijgsman, 2007, 55 minutes).”

On Saturday April 11, Elsken Gray—in an interview to a blaggy looks at the career of this innovative and influential twentieth-century designer (Jean Bergeron, 2007, 52 minutes), and Jimmy Rosenberg, the Father, the Son, and the Talent follows the life of the virtuoso guitarist known as “the new Django Reinhardt” (Jeroen Berkvens, 2006, 78 minutes).

Bruce Conner: a tribute to Bruce Conner, who has come into its own as one of the great black com-siders of the twentieth century. “As savagely funny as anything since Ben Jonson’s Volpone” —Gerald Mast. (Charles Chaplin, 1947, 35 mm, 124 minutes)

Erasmus Award recipient Peter Forsgas’ latest film interprets the lives of ordi-

inary Hungarians who arrived in the United States in the early twentieth century. Reconstructing their history from evocative reels of home-movie footage and forgotten audio recordings, Forsgas creates poetry from these implausible sources. Following the screening, he will discuss his film. Presented in association with the Hungarian Cultural Center and Extremely Hungary, a celebration of the country’s contemporary arts and their impact on American culture. (Peter Forsgas, 2009, HD-Cam, 75 minutes)

With its neorealist details, colorful lowlife characters, Bach’s Puccini and the Girl (Puccini e la fanciulla) re-creates a little-known episode from Giacomo Puccini’s La fanciulla del west. (Paolo Benvenuti and Paola Baron, 2008, 35 mm, Italian with subtitles, 84 minutes)

A formerly well-off French banker resorts to finding wealthy women to marry and then murders them for their money. At first mocked by critics and movie-goers alike, Monsieur Verdoux has come into its own as one of the great black com-
siders of the twentieth century. “As savagely funny as anything since Ben Jonson’s Volpone” —Gerald Mast. (Charles Chaplin, 1947, 35 mm, 124 minutes)

New Masters of European Cinema:
Hunky Blues — The American Dream
Peter Forsgas in person Washington premiere Sunday May 10 at 4:30

Erectus Award recipient Peter Forsgas’ latest film interprets the lives of ordi-

16 mm shorts, Bruce Conner (1933 – 2008) left a legacy that inspired the inter-

120 minutes) looking for an Icon, an hour-long look at M. C. Escher and number theorist Hendrik Lenstra (Jean Bergeron, 2007, 52 minutes), Andy Warhol: Denied, a look at the inner workings of the Warhol Art Authentication Board (Chris Rodley, 2006, 52 minutes), and Knowing for an icon, on photographs that attain time-honored status (Hans Pool and Maaik Krijgsman, 2007, 55 minutes).

Lecture and screening from Giotto to Pasolini: Narrative in Fresco and Film followed by Accattone.
Sunday April 5 at 4:00

Art historian David Gariff discusses the life of Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922  – 1975) and his use of Italian medieval and Renaissance painting in his work. “What I see in my mind . . . ” said Pasolini, “are the frescoes of Giotto and Massacio. I cannot conceive any [film] image, landscape, or composition outside the time-honored status (Hans Pool and Maaik Krijgsman, 2007, 55 minutes).”

With its neorealist details, colorful lowlife characters, Bach's St. Matthew Passion on the music track, and Franco Citti's unadorned performance as the Father, the Son, and the Talent follows the life of the virtuoso guitarist known as “the new Django Reinhardt” (Jeroen Berkvens, 2006, 78 minutes).

Bruce Conner: a tribute is destined to be his final film in the handmade 16 mm format.

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Bruce Conner: a tribute is destined to be his final film in the handmade 16 mm format.
By and About Robert Frank

In association with the exhibition Looking In: Robert Frank’s “The Americans,” this series brings together a variety of moving image works. It includes eight of Robert Frank’s recent films, three documentaries on the artist completed at different points in his career, and a program entitled “For Robert,” consisting of works inspired by Frank’s films and photography.

Fire in the East: A Portrait of Robert Frank
Wednesday April 1 at 12:30
Thursday April 2 at 12:30
Friday April 3 at 12:30

One of the earliest films to document Robert Frank’s career, Fire in the East includes interviews with Allen Ginsberg, Emile de Antonio, Jonas Mekas, Rudy Wolaritz, June Lefko, and John Szarkowski, among others. (Philip Broomkin and Amy Brodman, 28 minutes, 2008)

Robert Frank: Recent Films
Saturday April 16 at 1:00
Saturday April 25 at 1:00


Leaving Home, Coming Home: Robert Frank
Gerald Fox in person
Sunday April 19 at 4:30

Frank’s straightforward reflections on the course of his own path-breaking career as photographer and filmmaker form the core of the only feature-length documentary ever completed on his life. British director and producer Gerald Fox will discuss the film following the screening. (Gerald Fox, 2005, HD-Cam, 85 minutes)

An American Journey
Thursday April 22 at 12:30
Thursday April 23 at 12:30
Friday April 24 at 12:30

Following Robert Frank’s footsteps fifty years after The Americans, French filmmaker Philippe Séclier retraces Frank’s trip around the United States in 1955 and becomes a singer in a rock band — but not necessarily in that order. “A nostalgic look at the American dream, this film is a dialogue between two distinct eras and two cultures,” according to the director. (Philippe Séclier, 2008, digital beta, 60 minutes)

For Robert
Saturday April 25 at 3:30

A selection of poetic avant-garde works by various artists, chosen for this program by independent curator Michael Sharbinger in honor of Robert Frank’s photography and films: Junkopia (Chris Marker, 6 minutes), NYC Weight and Measures (Jim Cohen, 6 minutes), p.r. bucol (Michael ShambARGER, 7 minutes), Notes onoland (Melody Owen, 5 minutes), After Writing (Marya Helena Clark, 4 minutes), Monsanto (Paula Garcia, 22 minutes), Nocturne (Avenue A, no title) (Ziel Schlamowitz, 3 minutes), Ah Liberty! (Ben Rivers, 19 minutes), Summer Cannibals (Robert Frank, 4 minutes), Run (Robert Frank, 4 minutes), Playback (Feré PorteBalle, 8 minutes). (99 minutes total)

In Praise of Independents: The Flaherty

The Flaherty Seminar, an annual forum for critics, students, academicians, and filmmakers focusing each year on a particular topic and held in upstate New York, is unique in American film culture. Screenings and discussions occur over an intense six days. Named for American maverick filmmaker Robert Flaherty and now in its fifty-fourth year, the most recent Flaherty was devoted to “The Age of Migration.” The National Gallery salutes this unique program with a selection of films from the latest seminar.

Spriggle
Followed by Lekosia and Border
Saturday May 2 at 2:00

An affecting view of traditional art and architecture in Andrah Pradesh, India, among the founders. Now known around the world for its collections of other filmmakers. Anthology’s recent restorations — this sampling includes An American Journey (Lawrence Jordan, 1965, 16 mm), Notes on the Circus (Jonas Mekas, 1966, 16 mm, preserved with support from The National Film Preservation Foundation, 12 minutes), Film Number 11: Mirror Animations (Harry Smith, 1926, 16 mm to 35 mm, 5 minutes), Eyesaw (1957, 16 mm to 35 mm, 3 minutes), Eyesaw (different edit, 1957, 16 mm to 35 mm, 3 minutes), Fat Fight (1964, 16 mm to 35 mm, 9 minutes), Double Targets (1966, 16 mm to 35 mm, 5 minutes), Drip (1969, 16 mm to 35 mm, 4.5 minutes), 70/70 (1970, 16 mm to 35 mm, 5 minutes), Fuji (1975, 16 mm to 35 mm, 9 minutes), 77/77 (1977, 16 mm to 35 mm, 6.5 minutes), Save Army Knife with Flat and Pijon (1981, 16 mm to 35 mm, 6.5 minutes) (52 minutes total)

A Mixed Bag
Saturday April 18 at 3:30

The four-decade-long career of American animator Robert Breer has managed to encompass painting, sculpture, and filmmaking while finding new ways to combine perspective, color, and motion. Revising a childlike spontaneity and humor in hundreds of handmade animations, Breer has inspired generations of other filmmakers. Anthology’s recent restorations — this sampling includes A Town called Tempest (Larry Leibowitz and his cousin from Hawaii, Zelda Kaiser, 1972, 8 mm to 16 mm, 33 minutes)

In Chaired Elopess Hopkins Walker Donne menges under his annual November Breakdown, impermanently a cap, has an affair with his mother, goes to heaven, and becomes a singer in a rock band — but not necessarily in that order. “A commercial success that raised the flag of the underground scene, shot with a 35 mm still camera and processed at Walgreens,” Jennifer Alleyn (Robert Donwy Sr., 1966, 35 mm, 57 minutes)

Robert Breer: Reinventing Drawing
Sunday April 12 at 4:30

Three of Robert Frank’s recent films, twelve films — vividly recapture his early oeuvre: Recreation (1958, 16 mm to 35 mm, 11.5 minutes), Jametison Balloons (1957, 16 mm to 35 mm, 6 minutes), Eyesaw (1957, 16 mm to 35 mm, 3 minutes), Eyesaw (different edit, 1959, 16 mm to 35 mm, 3 minutes), Blows (1961, 16 mm to 35 mm, 1 minute), Fat Fight (1964, 16 mm to 35 mm, 9 minutes), Double Targets (1966, 16 mm to 35 mm, 5 minutes), Drip (1969, 16 mm to 35 mm, 4.5 minutes), 70/70 (1970, 16 mm to 35 mm, 5 minutes), Fuji (1975, 16 mm to 35 mm, 9 minutes), 77/77 (1977, 16 mm to 35 mm, 6.5 minutes), Save Army Knife with Flat and Pijon (1981, 16 mm to 35 mm, 6.5 minutes) (52 minutes total)
Half Moon
Saturday May 2 at 3:30

In Bahman Ghobadi’s compelling portrayal of a Kurdish musician and his band traveling through the Iran-Iraq border regions as they attempt to stage a concert, the comic amassing of absurdities and the “music of incredible power” (Peter Sellars) outweighs even the film’s rousing storyline to craft a graceful testimony to the spirit. (Bahman Ghobadi, 2003, 35 mm, Kurdish and Persian with subtitles, 110 minutes)

Colossal Youth
Sunday May 3 at 4:00

Tired but proud Cape Verdean laborer Ventura makes an odyssey through the tic neighborhood where he has relocated. As he pursues family and finds only memories, the film blurs the boundaries between fiction, documentary, and experimentation. “Scenes are united by his search, and by astonishing lighting and framing of decaying walls and rugged visages ‘as if invoking Vermeer,’ said Manoña Dargatz”—Jason Sanders. (Pedro Costa, 2006, 35 mm, Portuguese with subtitles, 115 minutes)

In the sequel to L’approche, the director of the documentary department at Prague’s legendary FAMU—one of the most original bodies of work in the history of Czech cinema—returns to film in the wake of the Velvet revolution and proceeded to produce this enormous four-part kaleidoscope of the Czech Republic, post-freedom. Special thanks to Irena Kovarova.

The Beaches of Agnès
(Les Plages d’Agnès)
Washington premiere
Sunday May 24 at 4:30

With their profound but whimsical storytelling, Agnès Varda’s films remain a stirring summation of her life and career. Recollections of long-ago family outings to seaside towns become the various entry points into her extraordinary past. (Agnès Varda, 2008, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 110 minutes)

The French Farm
Magnum photographer and distinguished photojournalist Raymond Depardon (b. 1942) spent a decade documenting rural life in France’s Rhone region near Villefranche-sur-Salaye. A native of the area, Depardon was familiar with its history and folkways. His resulting trilogy reflects an urge for simplicity and natural beauty even as older farms turn into estates and agriculture turns into enterprise. The European Union’s rules, while uprooting its complicated etiquette. “I make a film in strokes. It’s not a case of taking on a single issue. For me, there is no message”—Raymond Depardon. (Raymond Depardon, 2005, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 80 minutes)

In the sequel to L’approche, subjects of the earlier film return to reveal what has happened after the passing of several years. Depardon’s camera remains detached, and it becomes clear that his subjects could not survive an urban setting with its complicated etiquette. “I make a film in strokes. It’s not a case of taking on a single issue. For me, there is no message”—Raymond Depardon. (Raymond Depardon, 2005, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 80 minutes)

La vie moderne
Sunday May 17 at 4:30

Depardon’s latest film and final entry in his cycle Profils paysans is more pensive than sad as it chronicles, plainly and poetically, the disappearing French rural culture. Those who still inhabit the Cévennes in the South of France seem cursed by many who wish to retain a traditional life. (Raymond Depardon, 2008, 35 mm, French with subtitles, 88 minutes)

The Film Memoir

Three recent examples of film as personal narrative illustrate the vitality of this genre. At the heart of each work is a hint of a common human experience. “Every man has within him the entire human condi-
tion”—Michel de Montaigne.

L’aimée
Premiere screening
Saturday May 3 at 2:00

In the midst of the capricious craziness of Guy Maddin’s latest memoir, the filmmaker’s much maligned Canadian hometown becomes a city of mystery and a vehicle for his own ruminations on a variety of themes, including family members and virtually all his past movies. “For Guy Maddin, the whole world is Winnipeg”—J. Hoberman. (Guy Maddin, 2007, 35 mm, 80 minutes)

My Winnipeg
Washington premiere
Saturday May 30 at 2:00 and 4:00

In the midst of the capricious craziness of Guy Maddin’s latest memoir, the filmmaker’s much maligned Canadian hometown becomes a city of mystery and a vehicle for his own ruminations on a variety of themes, including family members and virtually all his past movies. “For Guy Maddin, the whole world is Winnipeg”—J. Hoberman. (Guy Maddin, 2007, 35 mm, 80 minutes)

The Film Novels

The director of the documentary department at Prague’s legendary FAMU—film school of the Academy of Performing Arts—Karel Vachek has created one of the most original bodies of work in the history of Czech cinema. His film novels—enormous in scope, ambition, and duration—are impres-sional and intuitive but also highly structured and philosophical. Hand- held camera relentlessly probes, eavesdropping on politicians at ribbon-cuttings and plunging headlong into heated discussions. They record the absurdities at ceremonies even as the voluble director acts as agent provocateur in his own interviews with seers, pundits, crackpots, and passerby. Following twenty years of manual labor from 1988 on, Vachek returned to film in the wake of the Velvet Revolution and proceeded to produce this enormous four-part kaleidoscope of the Czech Republic, post-freedom. Special thanks to Irena Kovarova.

The Beaches of Agnès
(Les Plages d’Agnès)
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New Hygiene or Liberty: Equality, Fraternity
Saturday June 6 at 1:30

On the eve of Czechoslovakia’s first free parliamentary elections and a papal visit, party leaders, actors, heads of state, philosophers, and union bosses look forward and back, as Professor Slávek Hálek relates the story of how the left offers—a portrait of the new Czech Republic post the Soviet split. (1996, 35 mm, Czech, English, French with subtitles, 207 minutes with intermission)

What to Be Done? (A Journey from Prague to Časký Krumlov, or How I Formed a New Government)
Saturday June 13 at 1:30

Vachek visits an ailing Ivan Sviták, then takes two busloads of talkative, opinionated artists and scholars on a trek to the newly designated UNESCO World Heritage Site, Čeký Krumlov. They view a golden coach in a church, night pages on torch-lit river raft, and a variety of party leaders—a portrait of the most widespread process for color-film production during the 1930s and 1940s. Because the company generally preferred the controlled conditions of the studio, the huge camera and crew required for plein-air cinematography left location shooting as the exception, not the rule. Filmmakers often ventured out-of-doors, however, and the following films show a range of attempts to provide views of nature in support of an overall aesthetic, culminating in a sophisticated melding of color, design, music, sound, and performance by master filmmaker Michael Powell.

Follow Thru
Sunday June 14 at 3:00

Of all the color movies produced during the earliest years of sound technology, this adaptation of the Broadway play includes the best combination of actor Nancy Carroll and Buddy Rogers, music (the DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson hit Button Up Your Overcoat), and pure folly. Preserved by the UCLA Film and Television Archive from the original two-color Technicolor negative held by the Library of Congress. Lloyd Corrigan and Buddy Schwab, 1930, 35 mm, 92 minutes

The Path of the Lonesome Pine
Sunday June 14 at 5:00

The very first use of Technicolor in outdoor locations was for this saga of two feuding families, set in the Appalachians and based on a popular romantic novel by John Fox. The stellar cast includes Sylvia Sidney, Fred MacMurray, and Henry Fonda. (Henry Hathaway, 1936, 35 mm, 102 minutes)

Service with a Smile
Supplied by, Service with a Smile supplies a side-splitting romp with ex-Ziegfeld star Leon Errol, owner of a gas station with one petrol pump. (Roy Mack, 1934, 35 mm, 17 minutes)

Can’t Help Singing
Passed by: La Cucaracha
Introduction by David Pierce
Sunday June 21 at 2:00

Rich senator’s daughter Deanna Durbin, determined to catch California-bound Naval officer David Bruce, caprice card shark Robert Paige to carry her west in his wagon. Bolstered by Jerome Kern’s music, dramatic location shooting in Utah, and a glorious Technicolor palette, Can’t Help Singing was the only color vehicle for the hugely popular Durbin. (Frank Ryan, 1944, 35 mm, print from UCLA Film and Television Archive, 90 minutes)

The characters of La Cucaracha, the first live-action short in three-strip Technicolor, are every bit as intense as the film’s hues. From UCLA with preservation funded by The Film Foundation. (Lloyd Corrigan, 1934, 35 mm, 21 minutes)

Gone to Earth
Sunday June 28 at 4:00

A newly seen gem from the team of Powell and Pressburger. Gone to Earth was filmed on location in rural Shropshire, England. Colorful stock characters and a sophisticated melding of color, design, music, and sound make an extraordinary experience. This restored print of the original version represents one of the British cinema’s major achievements. (Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, 1950, 35 mm, 110 minutes)
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| April  | Sun     | 4:30  | Event: Robert Frank: Recent Films 
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| May    | Sat     | 2:00  | In Praise of Independents: The Flaherty Squiggle; Lefkosia; Border |
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| May    | Sat     | 2:00  | Event: Maitre Verdon |
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| May    | Sun     | 2:00  | Event: My Winnipeg: The Beaches of Agnès |
| June   | Sat     | 1:30  | Film Novels of Karel Vachek: New Hyperion |
| June   | Sun     | 2:00  | A Short History of Color: Film Color before 1928 |
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| June   | Sun     | 2:00  | A Short History of Color: Technicolor on Location |
| June   | Sun     | 3:00  | A Short History of Color: Follow Thru |
| June   | Sun     | 5:00  | A Short History of Color: Trail of the Lonesome Pine; Service with a Smile |
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| June   | Sun     | 2:00  | A Short History of Color: Can’t Help Singing; La Cucaracha |
| June   | Sun     | 4:30  | Event: The Idealist: My Father’s Studio |
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| June   | Sun     | 4:00  | A Short History of Color: Gone to Earth |