

**Film
Fall 2014**



Film

Fall 2014

National Gallery of Art

with

American University School of Communication

American Film Institute

Goethe-Institut, Washington

National Archives

National Portrait Gallery



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During the fall of 2014, with the ongoing renovations in the East Building, a number of National Gallery of Art screenings are moving to various sites in Washington, DC; please note the temporary locations on the following pages. We are grateful this season for the cooperation of many other institutions, including the National Portrait Gallery, National Archives, American University, Goethe-Institut Washington, and American Film Institute. The season opens with a tribute to the influential Italian screenwriter Suso Cecchi d'Amico on her one-hundredth birthday. During subsequent weeks there are other opportunities to view the rich legacy of Italian cinema, including a retrospective devoted to Marco Bellocchio. *Viewing China*, a program of non-fiction work from mainland China, relates aspects of rural and urban life and contrasts recent indie cinema with films made by the state-owned Central Newsreel and Documentary Studio. In December there is an opportunity to view the important oeuvre of Taiwanese filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien during a major retrospective taking place at the Freer Gallery, the American Film Institute, and the Goethe-Institut, in partnership with the National Gallery of Art. The popular program *American Originals Now* continues with the handmade 16 mm films of Jodie Mack, attended by the artist herself. Special events include the world premiere of the restoration of *James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket* on the occasion of Baldwin's ninetieth birthday this year. Ciné-concerts, lectures, and revivals of rediscovered classics are also on the agenda. The year ends with *Athens Today*, films from the recent wave of creativity in Greece.

Seating for all events is on a first-come, first-seated basis unless otherwise noted. Doors open thirty minutes before show time. While the East Building is undergoing renovations, screenings take place in the following locations and the venue for each film is noted. For more information, visit www.nga.gov/film, e-mail film_department@nga.gov, or call (202) 842-6799.

WB National Gallery of Art, West Building Lecture Hall

AU American University School of Communication, Malsi Doyle and Michael Forman Theater, McKinley Building

AFI American Film Institute, Silver Theater, 8633 Colesville Rd, Silver Spring, MD

GI Goethe-Institut, 812 7th St NW

NA National Archives, McGowan Theater, 7th St and Constitution Ave NW

PG National Portrait Gallery, McEvoy Auditorium, 8th and F Streets NW

October

4	Sat	2:00	Suso Cecchi d'Amico: Angelina p15 PG
		4:30	Suso Cecchi d'Amico: Bellissima p16 PG
5	Sun	4:30	Italy's New Realism: La mia classe; TIR p11 AU
11	Sat	4:00	Suso Cecchi d'Amico: Conversation Piece p16 PG
12	Sun	2:00	Saving the James Baldwin Film p11 WB
		4:00	James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket p12 WB
17	Fri	7:00	Viewing China: Moon Over Home Village; When My Child Is Born p19 AU
18	Sat	2:30	On Approval p12 NA
19	Sun	4:30	Viewing China: Oxhide p20 AU
24	Fri	7:00	Viewing China: Ghost Town p20 AU
25	Sat	2:00	Viewing China: Bumming in Beijing; Piano Dream p20 WB
26	Sun	4:00	Viewing China: Sun Mingjing Shorts; A Great Master Recaptured p21 WB
31	Fri	3:00	Viewing China: The Way of Taichi; Please Vote for Me p21 WB

November

1	Sat	2:30	Jodie Mack: Fabriflicks p22 WB
		4:30	Marco Bellocchio: Fists in the Pocket p25 PG
2	Sun	4:00	Jodie Mack: Let Your Light Shine p23 WB
7	Fri	7:00	The Play's the Thing: The Uninvited Guest; Every Young Man p29 AU
9	Sun	4:30	The Play's the Thing: The Mist; A Report on the Party and the Guests p29 AU
14	Fri	12:30	International Festival of Films on Art, program 1 p12 WB
		7:00	The Play's the Thing: Leaving p29 AU
15	Sat	2:00	International Festival of Films on Art, program 2 p12 WB
16	Sun	4:30	The Play's the Thing: And the Beggar's Opera Again; The Heart above the Castle p30 AU
22	Sat	2:00	Marco Bellocchio: China is Near; Let's Discuss p25 PG
		5:00	Marco Bellocchio: The Conviction p25 PG
23	Sun	4:00	Ciné-Concert: The Epic of Everest p14 AFI
29	Sat	2:30	Marco Bellocchio: Vacation in Val Trebbia p26 PG
		4:00	Marco Bellocchio: Sorelle Mai p26 PG

December

4	Thur	6:30	Hou Hsiao-hsien: City of Sadness p31 GI
5	Fri	7:00	Athens Today: September p32 AU
6	Sat	2:00	Hou Hsiao-hsien: Cute Girl; Cheerful Wind p31 GI
7	Sun	2:00	New York's Cinema 16 Film Society p14 WB
		4:30	Athens Today: Standing Aside, Watching p34 AU
12	Fri	7:00	Athens Today: Wild Duck p34 AU
13	Sat	2:00	Hou Hsiao-hsien: Good Men, Good Women p32 GI
		2:30	Marco Bellocchio: Victory March p26 PG
		5:00	Marco Bellocchio: The Seagull p27 PG
14	Sun	4:30	Athens Today: At Home p34 WB
20	Sat	2:30	Marco Bellocchio: The Prince of Homburg p27 PG
		4:30	Marco Bellocchio: The Butterfly's Dream p27 PG
21	Sun	4:30	Athens Today: The Eternal Return of Antonis Paraskevas p35 WB
27	Sat	2:30	Marco Bellocchio: The Eyes, the Mouth p28 PG
28	Sun	4:30	Athens Today: The Daughter p35 WB



From Grain to Painting p12

Special Events

Italy's New Realism: *La mia classe*

FOLLOWED BY *TIR*

SHOWING Sun Oct 5 (4:30)

VENUE American University

Actor Valerio Mastandrea plays an Italian language teacher whose class is attended by recent immigrants playing themselves. The quasi-experimental form of *La mia classe* blurs the border between fact and fiction, as the émigré students begin to share real-life anecdotes, even as they turn into actors in their own narrative. (Daniele Gaglianone, 2013, Italian with subtitles, 92 minutes)

Ex-teacher Branko (Croatian actor Branko Zavrzan) drives a *TIR* (tractor trailer) all over Europe for an Italian shipping company. Though often homesick and harassed by his bosses, he cannot afford to give up his truck driver's salary. Filmmaker Alberto Fasulo operated the camera himself while sitting inside the truck's cabin next to Zavrzan—again resulting in an interesting hybrid of reality and fiction. (Alberto Fasulo, 2013, Italian with subtitles, 83 minutes)

Lecture: Saving the James Baldwin Film

IN PERSON Karen Thorsen and Douglas Dempsey

SHOWING Sun Oct 12 (2:00)

VENUE West Building

Karen Thorsen, director of *James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket*, and cowriter Douglas Dempsey discuss the making of their award-winning documentary, the challenges of restoring the original 16 mm film elements, and the necessity of ensuring access to this powerful film in its original format during the digital age. (Approximately 60 minutes)

James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket

SHOWING Sun Oct 12 (4:00)

VENUE West Building

Produced in association with Maysles Films and PBS/American Masters, *The Price of the Ticket* premiered at Sundance and later went on to win many awards. An emotional portrait, a social critique, and a plea for human equality, its vérité footage allows Baldwin to tell his story: exploring what it means to be born black, impoverished, gay, and gifted in a world that has yet to understand that "all men are brothers." "On-camera witnesses" include the late Maya Angelou, Amiri Baraka, David Leeming, Bobby Short, and William Styron. Now a classic, the film has been restored with the help of the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts for Baldwin's ninetieth birthday. (Karen Thorsen, 1990, 87 minutes) *Premiere of the restoration*

On Approval

SHOWING Sat Oct 18 (2:30)

VENUE National Archives

Directed by and starring Clive Brook and featuring Beatrice Lillie and Googie Withers, *On Approval's* outrageously caustic swing at English mores is based on a bizarre premise: two wealthy women will agree to tie the knot with two penniless noblemen only after spending a celibate trial month together. The cast clearly has fun, and this seldom seen British gem (based on a West End farce) is ripe for revival. (Clive Brook, 1944, 80 minutes) *Note: To reserve a seat for this event, go to www.archivesfoundation.org/events or call 202-357-6814*

International Festival of Films on Art

SHOWINGS Fri Nov 14 (12:30), Sat Nov 15 (2:00)

VENUE West Building

Award winners from the 2014 edition of the International Festival of Films on Art, a unique event of international scope held annually in Montreal, now in its thirty-third year, are screened in two separate events with intermissions.

On November 14, the program includes *From Grain to Painting* (Branko Ištvančić, 2013, 75 minutes), *Off Ground* (Boudewijn



Eaux d'artifice (New York's Cinema 16) p14

Koole, 2013, 12 minutes), and *The Day Carl Sandburg Died* (Paul Bonesteel, 2012, 87 minutes).

On November 15, the films are *Vivian Maier: Who Took Nanny's Pictures?* (Jill Nicholls, 2013, 70 minutes), *Arena: aka Norman Parkinson* (Nicola Roberts, 2013, 60 minutes), *Lucien Hervé, Photographe malgré lui* (Gerrit Messiaen, 2013, 55 minutes), and *Beat Generation — Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs* (Xavier Villetard, 2013, 55 minutes)

Ciné-Concert: The Epic of Everest

IN PERFORMANCE Stephen Horne

SHOWING Sun Nov 23 (4:00)

VENUE American Film Institute

The official footage of Mallory and Irvine's tragic 1924 expedition, recorded by Captain John Noel under extreme conditions using a hand-cranked camera, was preserved in the British Film Institute's National Archive. Working with Noel's daughter Sandra, the BFI last year restored *The Epic of Everest*, repairing damaged footage and bringing back the dramatic tints and tones of the first release. Stephen Horne is a composer and one of the United Kingdom's leading silent film accompanists. (John Noel, 1924, 85 minutes)

New York's Cinema 16 Film Society:

Programming for a Divided World

SHOWING Dec 7 (2:00)

VENUE West Building

Film historian Scott MacDonald, author of *Cinema 16: Documents Toward a History of the Film Society*, discusses this well-known ciné-club, the most influential film society in American history. From the fall of 1947 until the spring of 1963, Cinema 16 invigorated New York's cultural scene by offering monthly events of great diversity and considerable intellectual challenge. Established by Amos and Marcia Vogel, Cinema 16 boasted at its height a membership of 8,000, including many of the country's cultural movers and shakers.

Following the talk: *A Divided World* (1948), a nature film by Swedish filmmaker Arne Sucksdorff; *Fireworks* (1946), a psycho-drama by the seventeen-year-old artist Kenneth Anger; George

Franju's *The Blood of the Beasts* (1949), a surreal, controversial expose of urban life; *Weegee's New York* (1948), a city symphony; *Eaux d'artifice* (1953), Kenneth Anger's portrait of the Villa d'Este gardens; and Norman McLaren's *Begone Dull Care* (1949), a hand-painted film accompaniment for an original jazz composition by Oscar Peterson. (Approximately 115 minutes)

Suso Cecchi d'Amico:

Homage at 100

Oct 4 – 11

In the history of cinema, Suso Cecchi d'Amico (1914 – 2010) remains the most memorable of all Italian screenwriters. Collaborating with the postwar directors Antonioni, De Sica, Monicelli, Rosi, and Visconti, among others, she was a master of the elegant screenplay and left her mark on many iconic classics, from *Bicycle Thieves* (1948) to *The Leopard* (1963). She consulted with Hollywood as well, even adding her touch to *Roman Holiday*. Two films Cecchi d'Amico created for actress Anna Magnani and her friend Luchino Visconti's underappreciated masterpiece *Conversation Piece* honor Suso Cecchi d'Amico on her one-hundredth birthday. Films are in Italian with subtitles. With special thanks to Luce Cinecittà, the Embassy of Italy, and Caterina d'Amico who is present to discuss her mother's work on October 4.

Angelina

INTRODUCED BY Caterina Cecchi d'Amico

SHOWING Sat Oct 4 (2:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

Director Luigi Zampa and close friends Suso Cecchi d'Amico and Piero Tellini collaborated on a spirited script for force-of-nature actress Anna Magnani. Inspired by a simple newspaper

item — “poor working-class woman with five children leads angry protest against speculators and black marketeers” — *Angelina* makes a compelling moral statement about Italian society during the postwar period, blending comedy and melodrama with neo-realistic touches. (Luigi Zampa, 1947, 92 minutes)

Bellissima

INTRODUCED BY Caterina Cecchi d'Amico

SHOWING Sat Oct 4 (4:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

The ersatz glamour of the Italian movie industry is contrasted with the life of a working-class tenement in Visconti's *Bellissima*, another powerful vehicle for the operatic Anna Magnani, scripted by Cecchi d'Amico and Visconti from a story by Cesare Zavattini. Magnani, as an overly ambitious stage mother, enrolls her young daughter in a Cinecittà talent competition — pinning all her maternal hopes on this one chance to fulfill her own vanished dreams. (Luchino Visconti, 1952, 115 minutes)

Conversation Piece

SHOWING Sat Oct 11 (4:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

One of the last screenplays Cecchi d'Amico cowrote for Luchino Visconti is an intriguing character study, inspired in part by friend Mario Praz's survey of the group portrait in art. A cultured, aging professor (Burt Lancaster), living alone in his Roman apartment surrounded by his collections, is forced to confront a chic and self-indulgent marchesa (Silvana Mangano) who, with her family and younger lover, rents his upstairs flat and literally wreaks havoc on his life of quiet contemplation. (*Gruppo di famiglia in un interno*, Luchino Visconti, 1974, 126 minutes)



Bellissima p16



Moon Over Home Village p19

Viewing China

Oct 17–31

In collaboration with the American University School of Communication, a sequence of recent non-fiction films from mainland China contrasts traditional and modern ways of life, while informing the discourse between works from the state-owned Central Newsreel and Documentary Studio Group (China Central Television or CCTV) and independently-made productions. Examples of early *actualités* by Sun Mingjing, a pioneer of cinematography who established China's strong educational film tradition, are also featured. Films are in Mandarin and local dialects with subtitles. With thanks to Icarus Film, Day Zero Film, China Film Archive, and China Central Newsreel and Documentary Studio Group.

Nostalgia—The Ballade of Village (Season One) Episode One—Moon over Home Village: Going Home for Spring Festival

FOLLOWED BY *When My Child Is Born*

SHOWING Fri Oct 17 (7:00)

VENUE American University

"If you understand China's villages, you understand China." The opening program in a new multi-part series produced for CCTV starts with commuters on a crowded Beijing railway platform embarking for their hometowns for the annual Spring Festival. In Wulaojia Village, a family celebration is already underway, but the festivities will soon end and the workers will depart, leaving behind only the elderly and the children. (Han Junqian, 2014, 50 minutes)

The difficulties posed by a young academic couple's unexpected pregnancy—adjusting their demanding schedules, accommodating parents who only want to help, negotiating the brave new world of parenthood—are delineated in *When My Child Is Born*. (Guo Jing and Ke Dingding, 2011, 75 minutes)

Oxhide

SHOWING Sun Oct 19 (4:30)

VENUE American University

While still a student at Beijing Film Academy, Liu Jiayin crafted this hybrid of narrative and documentary using a small digital camera and tight shots, casting herself and her working-class parents as themselves (her father is a leather bag vendor). *Oxhide* manages to convey a moving portrait of familial relationships in a series of spare shots inside the family's claustrophobic fifty-square-meter apartment, "taking the language of 'realism' to an entirely new dimension" — Tony Rayns. (Liu Jiayin, 2005, 110 minutes)

Ghost Town

SHOWING Fri Oct 24 (7:00)

VENUE American University

In the nearly empty streets of Zhiziluo, Zhao Dayong creates a rich, contemplative epic of everyday village life with the few souls who remain. A poetic, authoritative example of observational filmmaking, it is "as if every vignette or incident, every character encountered for a few moments, contains the germ of an unwritten novel. Its author might be a modern Chinese counterpart to Thomas Hardy, whose intensively observed dramas of rural life have a similar tone of beguiling, melancholy strangeness" — A. O. Scott. (Zhao Dayong, 2008, 169 minutes)

Bumming in Beijing

FOLLOWED BY *Piano Dream*

SHOWING Sat Oct 25 (2:00)

VENUE West Building

Bumming in Beijing (the film that initiated a surge of independent non-fiction filmmaking in the late 1980s and 1990s) follows five young artists — a writer, photographer, theater director, and two painters — describing their resistance to the modern consumer-oriented society and their struggles to achieve recognition as artists. Filming with a cheap camcorder, Wu Wenguang financed the project himself and purposefully avoided the emotional trappings of traditional filmmaking. (Wu Wenguang, 1988–1990, 70 minutes)

Growing up in the 1960s, Yin Hong and her husband were denied access to any artistic expression during the Cultural Revolution. Now, with a musically talented son, Yin gives up her job to accompany the boy to Beijing for the complicated enrollment at the Central Music Conservatory. Filmed over three years, *Piano Dream* also hints that the mother's dream might become the son's nightmare. (Han Junqian, 2002, 99 minutes)

Sun Mingjing Shorts

FOLLOWED BY *A Great Master Recaptured*

SHOWING Sun Oct 26 (4:00)

VENUE West Building

One of the key historical figures in the development of Chinese documentary practice was Sun Mingjing (1911–1992), whose travelogues and educational shorts on topics from agriculture to science to folklore were seen widely in the 1930s and 1940s. Neglected by scholars, Sun's 16 mm prints were rediscovered in 2000 at the China Film Archive. This program includes four works: *Scenes of Nanjing* (1936), *Female Physical Education* (1936), *Coal Mining* (1937), and *Children's Day in Chengdu in 1939* (1939). (Total running time 40 minutes)

Mei Lanfang (1894–1961), historically the most renowned Peking opera artist, created unforgettable characters and established the Mei style of acting. *A Great Master Recaptured* includes significant archival footage from the CCTV archive, and merges Mei's story with the history of Peking Opera — the most globally prominent art form in modern Chinese history. (Lan Bing and Ye Jing, 2006, 80 minutes)

The Way of Taichi

FOLLOWED BY *Please Vote for Me*

SHOWING Fri Oct 31 (3:00)

VENUE West Building

Produced by the state-owned CCTV, *The Way of Taichi* is a distinctive hybrid of fiction and documentary. Two young women (one raised in Canada, the other an *erhu* musician from Beijing) meet at a remote center in the Wudan Mountains to learn Taoist practice, philosophy, and culture. (Liang Bibo, 2010, 82 minutes)

It is election time in primary school in the newly-prosperous city of Wuhan. Three candidates, third-grade students running for class monitor, are battling it out while their parents see what can be done behind the scenes. *Please Vote for Me* was shortlisted for an Oscar for best documentary feature. (Chen Weijun, 2007, 58 minutes)

American Originals Now:

Jodie Mack

Nov 1–2

Jodie Mack's handmade 16 mm films use collage to explore the relationship between graphic cinema and storytelling and the tension between form and meaning. Her short, vibrant animations share a sensibility with the groundbreaking works of Len Lye and Oskar Fischinger, but with a feminist edge. Mack teaches both the history and production of experimental animation at Dartmouth College.

Fabriflicks

INTRODUCED BY Jodie Mack

SHOWING Sat Nov 1 (2:30)

VENUE West Building

Using domestic and recycled materials, the program illuminates formal and cursory elements shared between fine-art abstraction and mass-produced graphic design. Questioning the role of decoration in daily life, the works unleash the kinetic energy of overlooked and wasted objects. Includes *Posthaste Perennial Pattern* (2010) and *Point de Gaze* (2012) among others. (Approximately 60 minutes)

Let Your Light Shine

INTRODUCED BY Jodie Mack

SHOWING Sun Nov 2 (4:00)

VENUE West Building

Five short works question the role of abstract animation in a post-psychedelic climate, including *Dusty Stacks of Mom: The Poster Project* (2013), which features a live vocal performance by Mack. *New Fancy Foils*, *Undertone Overture*, *Glistening Thrills*, and *Let Your Light Shine*, all from 2013, are also screened. (Approximately 75 minutes)

Morality and Beauty:

Marco Bellocchio

Nov 1–Dec 27

Marco Bellocchio (b. 1939) is probably best known in North America for his singular early works like *Fists in the Pocket (I pugni in tasca)*, a 1965 film that heralded the student rebellions of the late 1960s. As an artist, Bellocchio embraces polarizing themes of politics and philosophy, death and psychoanalysis, but his true forte has always been his critiques of society's entrenched institutions from the church to the military, and political systems of every stripe. Films are in Italian with subtitles. The series is presented through the cooperation of Luce Cinecittà, Rome, and in association with the American Film Institute Silver Theatre and the National Portrait Gallery. For a complete list of films shown at both locations go to www.nga.gov/film.



Fists in the Pocket p25

Fists in the Pocket

INTRODUCED BY Frank Tomasulo

SHOWING Sat Nov 1 (4:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

Fifty years on, Bellocchio's provocative, low-budget, first feature remains one of the great, if grotesque, domestic dramas of cinema. *Fists in the Pocket* is set in the claustrophobic household of a blind widow and her four grown children (three are epileptics). The family negotiates their life together in picturesque seclusion, until one son (Lou Castel) decides he must save his "normal" brother from the rest of the family. "The style dictated itself as I was shooting, and I simply wanted to convey my own love-hate feelings about life as effectively as I could." (1965, 105 minutes)

China is Near

PRECEDED BY *Let's Discuss*

SHOWING Sat Nov 22 (2:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

China is Near, a beautiful black-and-white follow-up to *Fists in the Pocket*, is both a biting satire of the bourgeoisie and leftist politics and a clever comedy of manners, as a pair of working-class lovers schemes to marry into the same rich family. "It's possible that *La Cina è vicina* ... is still Bellocchio's best film" — Jonathan Rosenbaum. (1967, 110 minutes) (*unconfirmed*)

In *Let's Discuss* (*Discutiamo, discutiamo*, an episode from the anthology film *Amore e rabbia*), a group of students invades a classroom spouting Maoist slogans. Bellocchio himself, as the professor, urges the police to beat up the rebels. (1969, 24 minutes)

The Conviction

SHOWING Sat Nov 22 (5:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

An architect and his student, seemingly trapped in a gallery after hours, are aroused by the art that surrounds them. "It is no accident that they look at *Apollo and Daphne*," wrote Bellocchio. At the trial that follows (the student accuses the architect of rape), a complex psychodrama unfolds involving the protagonists and the

prosecutor. Bellocchi's psychiatrist, Massimo Fagioli, contributed to the script and his theories of desire inform the film's dialogue. (*La condanna*, 1991, 90 minutes)

Vacation in Val Trebbia

SHOWING Sat Nov 29 (2:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

A simulated home movie featuring the extended Bellocchio family in their native province of Piacenza provides an interesting glimpse into the Italian director's private life. (1980, 52 minutes)

Sorelle Mai

SHOWING Sat Nov 29 (4:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

Shooting on his home turf (the village of Bobbio in the province of Piacenza) over the course of ten years, Bellocchio composes a family saga in a diary-like fashion, casting several family members, including his daughter, wife, and son. "*Sorelle Mai* is a demanding film, with an experimental edge, and it's full of quirks and fascinating digressions, all delivered in a visual style that looks 'home movie' and deceptively simple, but is actually a supreme example of cinematic sophistication and personal filmmaking" — Peter Galvin. (2011, 110 minutes)

Victory March

SHOWING Sat Dec 13 (2:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

Taking on the revered institution of the army and Italy's compulsory military service, *Victory March* contrasts unwilling, young draftee Paolo with the model military man, Captain Ascitto, who sees Paolo as a guinea pig for his own obtrusive tactics. The unexpected upshot is the forging of a bond of friendship between the two men. "Bellocchio doesn't take the side of any protagonist, but looks at them from the inside, considering his characters part of a debate about society" — Giovanni Grazzini. (*Marcia trionfale*, 1976, 120 minutes)

The Seagull

SHOWING Sat Dec 13 (5:00)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

This rarely seen adaptation of Chekhov's 1895 play was produced for Italian television in the 1970s. Bellocchio's typically unconventional approach and careful staging earned kudos from press and public, and managed to transcend normal limitations of filmed theater as it dramatized the conflicts among four of Chekhov's most intriguing characters — writer Trigorin, the ingénue Nina, fading actress Irina Arkadina, and her son, the playwright Konstantin. (*Il gabbiano*, 1977, 132 minutes)

The Prince of Homburg

SHOWING Sat Dec 20 (2:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

In Bellocchio's adaptation of Heinrich von Kleist's 1809 *The Prince of Homburg*, a Prussian officer is tricked during the course of a complex dream on the night before a key battle, causing him to misjudge the timing of his attack. Even so, all is not lost. "The prince's struggle between his love of life and the military codes of heroism is gorgeously expressed through Kleist's rich language and Bellocchio's ability to hold us at the threshold between dream and reality" — Museum of Modern Art. (*Il Principe di Homburg*, 1997, 85 minutes)

The Butterfly's Dream

SHOWING Sat Dec 20 (4:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

Massimo, a young classical actor, will speak only when performing on stage. His family speculates that his motive for this vow of silence in private life must be Massimo's rebellion against his mother, a writer. One day a director spots Massimo in *The Prince of Homburg* and decides to offer him a part, but the only way he can do that is to convince the mother to write a play about Massimo's life. (*Il sogno della farfalla*, 1994, 112 minutes)

The Eyes, the Mouth

SHOWING Sat Dec 27 (2:30)

VENUE National Portrait Gallery

“Seventeen years after *Fists in the Pocket*, Bellocchio reunited with his first lead actor Lou Castel, for a follow-up study of class and family relations. Castel plays an actor, a fading icon of the 1960s, who returns to his provincial hometown to attend the funeral of his twin brother. He finds himself drawn to his dead brother’s fiancée (Angela Molina), a working-class immigrant from Latin America, even as he blames her for his brother’s death” —Museum of Modern Art (1982, 101 minutes)

The Play’s the Thing:

Václav Havel, Art and Politics

Nov 7 – 16

Václav Havel (1936–2011), the dissident dramatist who went on to become a world-renowned statesman as first president of the Czech Republic, changed the course of twentieth-century history by mixing theater with politics and peacefully ending communism. Coinciding with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, the program is based on the places and people that Havel knew, from his early career at Theatre on the Balustrade, to his friendships with filmmakers of the Czech New Wave, to his political ascendancy. Films are in Czech with subtitles. Special thanks to the National Film Archive Prague, Václav Havel Library, American University, and Embassy of the Czech Republic.

The Uninvited Guest

FOLLOWED BY *Every Young Man*

SHOWING Fri Nov 7 (7:00)

VENUE American University

When a boorish official enters and makes himself at home in a young couple’s flat, it’s soon apparent that all the flats in the building face the same dilemma — each has its own private intruder. (Vlastimil Venclik, 1969, 22 minutes)

A soldier’s life under socialism is the focus of *Every Young Man*, Pavel Juráček’s absurdist drama in two parts. The first part follows a young recruit and his corporal on an outing into town to find a doctor (Václav Havel has a role as a patient awaiting treatment), while the second is set in an army camp, as young soldiers tackle their daily routines. (Pavel Juráček, 1966, 83 minutes)

A Report on the Party and the Guests

PRECEDED BY *The Mist*

SHOWING Sun Nov 9 (4:30)

VENUE American University

In the early 1960s, Prague’s celebrated Theatre on the Balustrade was a center for experimentation, mime, and theater of the absurd. It’s the place where Václav Havel began as a dramaturg and stagehand, and where his plays were later produced. *The Mist* poetically captures this famous theater from different perspectives. (Radúz Činčera, 1966, 28 minutes)

In *A Report on the Party and the Guests*, a pleasant afternoon outing is cut short when a few pushy intruders force a group of friends to play a round of ridiculous party games. Jan Němec’s absurdist parable on the behavior of authority figures is a landmark of the Czech New Wave of the brief Prague Spring. (Jan Němec, 1966, 68 minutes)

Leaving

SHOWING Fri Nov 14 (7:00)

VENUE American University

In 2008, Havel returned to the theater with his new play *Leaving*, in which an ex-government official tries to reenter his former life. (This film version premiered shortly before his death in December

2011). As the action unfolds on a rural estate, parallels to Havel's own life become clear: "Before the 1989 Revolution, I had an idea for a character like King Lear, who loses power. It might have been the influence of the 1968 generation — the people who had been party members. After '68 they were thrown out and started to live ordinary lives, and pretended they didn't mind, but they did." (Václav Havel, 2011, 94 minutes)

And the Beggar's Opera Again

FOLLOWED BY The Heart above the Castle

SHOWING Sun Nov 16 (4:30)

VENUE American University

Through Olga Sommerová's creatively intercut film, two productions of Václav Havel's *Beggar's Opera* reveal the political dynamics of the former Czechoslovakia before and after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. (Olga Sommerová, 1996, 60 minutes)

In *The Heart above the Castle* Havel takes director Jan Němec behind the scenes of the 2002 NATO Summit in Prague. Traveling into areas normally inaccessible and interviewing people normally unreachable (heads of state, for example), the footage shows a surprisingly "human side" of top politicians and brings the formal world of politics and the grandeur of NATO into the realm of the everyday. (Jan Němec, 2007, 48 minutes)

Also Like Life:

Hou Hsiao-hsien

Dec 4 – 13

Hou Hsiao-hsien's richly-nuanced dramas depicting ordinary lives against a panorama of contemporary Taiwanese history are critical works of current world cinema. Hou (b. 1947 on mainland China) was a major architect of the New Taiwan Cinema of the 1980s. For younger audiences especially,

Taiwanese cinema has special status, comparable with that of the French New Wave for an earlier generation. These four films (in Mandarin with subtitles, unless otherwise noted) are shown as part of an international retrospective organized by Richard Suchenski in collaboration with Amber Wu and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Sites for the retrospective are the Freer Gallery of Art, American Film Institute, and Goethe-Institut Washington.

City of Sadness

SHOWING Thur Dec 4 (6:30)

VENUE Goethe-Institut

Hou's great gift is crafting grand epics from simple quotidian realities and private memories. *City of Sadness*, a portrait of the post-war transitional period in Taiwan, is ingeniously told through episodes in the life of the provincial Lin family. "As always, the human dimension is paramount — this is no history lesson — but it's clear that he's reaching for a sense of Taiwanese identity... a masterpiece of small gestures and massive resonance" — Tony Rayns. (1989, various languages with subtitles, 158 minutes)

Cute Girl

FOLLOWED BY *Cheerful Wind*

INTRODUCED BY Richard Suchenski

SHOWING Sat Dec 6 (2:00)

VENUE Goethe-Institut

Hou's first feature (he learned his craft in the popular cinema) is a rich-girl-meets-poor-boy melodrama, a bright, youthful picture with a happy ending. Wen helps her father with his business and studies French to prepare for European travel with her acceptable fiancé. Falling in love with penniless student Da-gang, Wen triggers a major family feud. (1980, 90 minutes)

Another popular romantic comedy, *Cheerful Wind* follows a film crew from the city as they set up to shoot a commercial in a picturesque seaside town. Photographer Hsing-hui ambles through the village and finds a colorful throwback, a flute player riding an oxcart along the shore. The young man, she later discovers, is blind. (1981, 90 minutes)

Good Men, Good Women

SHOWING Sat Dec 13 (2:00)

VENUE Goethe-Institut

Moving among narrative strands in the past and present while blending the personal with the political, *Good Men, Good Women* tells the story of Liang Ching, an actress preparing for a role in a movie (also titled *Good Men, Good Women*) about the real-life heroes Chung Hao-tung and Chiang Bi-yu, figures in the Resistance of the 1940s and 1950s. “Haunted with memories, and the joys and pains of love, it soon becomes clear this is some sort of masterpiece” — Geoff Andrew. (1995, various languages with subtitles, 108 minutes) *New 35 mm print courtesy Center for Moving Image Arts at Bard College*

Athens Today

Dec 5 – 28

A group of young filmmakers in Greece has been revitalizing the cinema, creating allegorical narratives out of the tough times and colorful conduct of people in economic crisis. These six films — produced with small budgets and exceptional technical finesse — represent some of the best new writing and directing coming from an artistic surge that also bonds with a deeper tradition of Hellenic humanism. Films are in Greek with subtitles. With special thanks to the Greek Film Center and the Embassy of Greece, and to The James and Theodore Pedas Family Foundation.

September

SHOWING Fri Dec 5 (7:00)

VENUE American University

Ana lives alone with her dog in a small apartment. When the dog suddenly falls ill, Ana begins to form a bond with a neighboring



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family. A fragile tale of solitude and solidarity, “the delicate simplicity of the storytelling sets the film apart. Panayotopoulou foregoes complex plotting and heightened emotion, crafting an organic, earthbound drama” — Dimitri Eipides. (Penny Panayotopoulou, 2013, 105 minutes)

Standing Aside, Watching

SHOWING Sun Dec 7 (4:30)

VENUE American University

Returning to her hometown after living in Athens, Antigone attempts to resume old relationships and rebuild a life, but intractable local problems still fester and her resolve disappears. “Using Sophocles’s heroine — an eternal emblem of female rebellion, director Servetas blends a gritty character study with elements of the traditional western.... Antigone is a force of nature coming home to wreak havoc on the dismal status quo” — Cameron Bailey. (Yorgos Servetas, 2013, 98 minutes)

Wild Duck

SHOWING Fri Dec 12 (7:00)

VENUE American University

Prompted by a recent Athenian wiretapping scandal, Yannis Sakaridis constructs an intricate character study in *Wild Duck* revolving around a telecom contractor and his accidental involvement in a human tragedy in an Athenian apartment block. “A vision of Greece seemingly in dialogue with the sea breeze which, for all the country’s recent ills, drifts through the film like a restorative force” — Dimitri Eipides. (Yannis Sakaridis, 2013, 88 minutes)

At Home

SHOWING Sun Dec 14 (4:30)

VENUE West Building

A visually resonant and restrained story of a Georgian-born au pair whose relationship with her affluent Greek employer is jeopardized when she develops a rare disorder, *At Home*’s subtext — the chasm between rich and poor — is handled with rare delicacy and perception. The film’s muted palette beautifully offsets its

complex emotions, while once again the sea, eternal source of calm, remains along the periphery. (Athanasios Karanikolas, 2014, 103 minutes)

The Eternal Return of Antonis Paraskevas

SHOWING Sun Dec 21 (4:30)

VENUE West Building

Antonis Paraskevas is a popular morning TV host. One day, after twenty successful years, he suddenly disappears. “It couldn’t have gone better if Antonis had planned it himself — which, of course, he did. Holed up in an empty luxury hotel, he bides his time, teaches himself molecular gastronomy, and even manages to orchestrate a series of fake interactions with his so-called abductors” — Cameron Bailey. (Elina Psykou, 2013, 88 minutes)

The Daughter

SHOWING Sun Dec 28 (4:30)

VENUE West Building

Myrto, a bright and serious teenager on the verge of womanhood, tries to take charge of her own life when her father suddenly disappears. For no apparent reason she kidnaps Angelos, the young son of her father’s business partner. Gradually, a picture emerges of a family undone by the recent economic crisis, as tensions start to intensify. (Thanos Anastopoulos, 2012, 87 minutes)

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