



FILMMAKER FESTIVAL 2022

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F I L M M A K E R

ENGLISH

*Filmmaker
Festival
2022*

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Chiara Troisi, Frederick Wiseman,
Zelimir Zilnik, Federica Zotti

Filmmaker Festival 2022

18.11 – 28.11

Milano

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Enjoy the Films!

Luca Mosso

November 2022. For the third consecutive time, the invitation to viewing that normally precedes the reading of Filmmaker's catalog takes the form of a balance sheet, as if the films we have chosen could take a back seat to the ratings on the public, the cinema, on the uncertainties that the virus first, the war and the risk of recession now, project onto our existences. Let's be clear, asking what we are doing here is mandatory, but how we are doing it is equally crucial. Acknowledging that the shock induced by the pandemic has led to a reorganization of the audiovisual system, widening the distances between large corporations and independents and reducing the time, space and importance of screening in theaters is the first point of necessary awareness. And even if the festivals, thanks to their speed, lightness and great adaptability suffer less than the cinematographic exercise, we cannot think of retreating into the role of previewing experimental cinema by leveraging the privileged contact we have with the most prepared and curious audiences, the public that pioneers the experiences and then disseminates its evaluations. Filmmaker remains a meeting place for enthusiasts who for 10 days freely decide to find themselves in front of a screen to watch films, meet their authors and talk about them together. That's why film programming remains the most important thing. And this year's is the most extensive, most radical and most unpredictable ever. Just flip through the pages that follow to see that. Enjoy the reading and the viewing!



International Competition

KAMAL ALJAFARI

JAMES BENNING

FRANCESCA BERTIN

SYLVAIN GEORGE

SERGEI LOZNITSA

NARIMANE MARI

JOÃO PEDRO RODRIGUES

VOLKER SATTEL

PHILIP SCHEFFNER

MARIANNA SCHIVARDI

TOTAL REFUSAL

Vertigo and Gamble

Eddie Bertozzi

The 2022 Filmmaker international competition is a picture of times, and not just our times. Glances to the past, glances to the present, glances to the future. Oblique glances, divergent forms, a fluid and complex body of works, a vertigo and a gamble. It's a selection that freely allows itself to reflect and think outside the imposed codes and to dare unthinkable juxtapositions (and, for that reason, genuinely electrifying): from Sylvain George's *Nuit obscure - Feuilles sauvages*, monumental 265-minute black and white epic of migrants in a liminal non-place, the Melilla enclave; to the hypnotic 20 minutes of *Hardly Working* by the Austrian collective Total Refusal, a provocative anti-capitalist pamphlet made within a video game. The selection includes *Tara* by the Italian-German duo Volker Sattel and Francesca Bertin, an intense journey along the banks of the river of the same name on the outskirts of Taranto that becomes a reflection on a territory where myth and myth of progress coexist and collide.

An act of boundless love and an ode to life unfold in the wonder of *On a eu la journée, bonsoir* by Narimane Mari, a tribute to the dead companion, the painter Michel Haas. Reflections are needed on the heavy burden of war watching *Balkanica* by Marianna Schivardi, the reopening of a historical, human and emotional archive, marking a return to the today Sarajevo to solicit a confrontation with the ghosts of the conflict that bloodied it in the 1990s. *Paradiso, XXXI, 108* marks Kamal Aljafari's return to Filmmaker with a magnificent work on archival materials from the Israeli army with which the Palestinian artist continues the exploration of the founding themes of his work: memory, trauma, and the senselessness of the conflict. Archival images appear also in Sergei Loznitsa's *The Natural History of Destruction*, an investigation into History as an indispensable method of understanding the present.

Another excellent return to Filmmaker is that of the structuralist master James Benning, whose *The United States of America* takes us on a journey across the United States designed as a collection of static images, one per State, a mosaic at once abstract and very concrete of America today. Finally, the selection becomes open, expanded, even exuberant, in an open challenge to the concept of documentary in order to redraw, once again, the spectrum of possibility of action. We do so with Philip Scheffner's *Europe*, a powerful political film about immigration and human destinies that moves along the border between visible and invisible, documentary and fiction. And, with *Fogo-Fátuo* by João Pedro Rodrigues, we dare to present an irresistible eccentric object, humor and eros, another image of the real, the reality of our desire.

The Jury



Yuri Ancarani (Ravenna, 1972) is a video artist and filmmaker, his works are born from a continuous mix of documentary cinema and contemporary art and have been featured in national and international exhibitions and museums, including the 55th Venice Biennale, MAXXI in Rome, Hammer Museum in Los Angeles and Guggenheim Museum in New York. With his first films he composes the "Trilogy of work" (*Il capo*, 2010; *Piattaforma Luna*, 2011; *Da Vinci*, 2012). In 2014 he created *Séance* and presented the San Siro installation for Filmmaker Festival at GAM, Galleria d'Arte Moderna in via Palestro.

The Challenge was presented in 2016 at Locarno Film Festival, *Whipping Zombie* (2017) was screened at Cinéma du Réel, Rotterdam International Film Festival and Filmmaker Festival. With *San Vittore* (2018) he returns out of competition at the Locarno Film Festival. *Atlantide* (2021) was premiered at Orizzonti in Venice and opened Filmmaker's last edition. He is a lecturer at NABA.



Gaia Formenti (Milan, 1985) is an author and filmmaker. Together with Marco Piccarreda she made *Città Giardino* (2018), *Creatura dove vai?* (2020) and *La nascita di un regno* (2022), which were awarded and selected in numerous festivals including Mar Del Plata International Film Festival, Torino Film Festival, IFF Rotterdam, FIDMarseille, Visions du Réel. She published *Dove non si tocca* (Et Al Edizioni), *Le vite di Ada* (Topipittori) and *Poesie Criminali* (Stampa 2009, Antonio Fogazzaro Award 2017).

She teaches screenwriting at the Luchino Visconti Civic School, the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, CISA in Locarno and is a tutor at Lab InProgress - Milano Film Network.



Monica Stambri (Mountain View, 1970) graduates in Film School of Milan in 1994 and directs short films. The shortfilm *Sshhh...* wins the Turin Film festival in 1998. In 2002 her first feature film - *Gasoline (Benzina)* - is in competition at the Toronto Film Festival. *Terapia d'urto* is her feature film for the TV series Crimini for RAI2. Her documentary *Electric Chair - the making of the film Me & You* by B. Bertolucci was screened in Venice and Rotterdam Film Festival. In 2015 she cofounds *Le Ragazze Del Porno*, a collective film project of Italian women directors exploring sexuality and porn in film and directs *Queen Kong*, an x-rated short film (2016 - awarded best director and best film in many international festivals). In 2018 she produces and directs the documentaries *Lady Oscar* and *ISVN - Io sono Valentina Nappi*. At the moment she is working on three documentaries.

The Natural History of Destruction

Sergei Loznitsa

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

OPENING FILM



Germany, Lithuania,
Netherlands, 2022
HD, b/w, colour, 110'
O.V. English

Director
Sergei Loznitsa

Screenplay
Sergei Loznitsa from the book of
Winfried Georg Sebald

Editing
Danielius Kokanauskis

Sound
Vladimir Golovniiski

Production
Looksfilm, Atoms & Void

Contacts
offermann@looks.film

The subject of the film by Sergei Loznitsa is announced very plainly from the title, borrowed from the book by Winfried Georg Sebald: here we will talk about “destruction”. The title informs us as well about the approach that the Ukrainian director wanted to have on this topic: a “natural history”. It is indeed with a scientific and aseptic approach that his documentary assembles footage of the Second World War. In black and white, with some rare color sequences, the archive images portray British and German cities, crowds, individuals, planes, political leaders. There are no landmarks available. No introduction, no narrator, no comment, no chronology come to help the viewer in need of a guide. Where is good? Where is evil? Who started? Whose fault is it? All this, for Loznitsa, is a different problem and should possibly be treated separately. The film imposes on the viewer a strange exercise, one of mental hygiene that consists in focusing, for two hours, on the destiny of the populations targeted by military strategy. It is clear that this work resonates in a powerful way since the Russian dictator Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, making extensive use of missiles to hit civilian targets.
— Eugenio Renzi

Biography

Sergei Loznitsa (Baranavicy, 1964) moved with his family from Belarus to Kiev, where he studied mathematics at the Polytechnic Institute. He then graduated at the Gerasimov Film Institute. In 2010, the drama *My Joy* is the first Ukrainian feature film presented in competition at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2014 he made a documentary about the protests of the democratic and pro-European movement in Maidan Square. Clashes with the police of the pro-Russian government of Viktor Yanukovich resulted in the death of at least 100 protesters, but ultimately the movement provokes the fall of the government. Following these events, which went down in history as the Revolution of Dignity, Russia decided to annex the Crimea and support the civil war in Donbass. In 2018, the film *Donbass* opens the Un certain regard section of the Cannes Film Festival and receives the award for Best Film.

The Natural History of Destruction is inspired by the namesake W. G. Sebald’ book, an author who was already behind Austerlitz. It can be said that there is a strong affinity between your looks at the world.

Sebald addresses here a very important question that remains unanswered to this day: is it morally acceptable to strike civilians during a war? One only has to look at today’s reality to see how states and their rulers consider attacks on people, cities, and infrastructure a “normal” practice of warfare. Sebald’s essay was published in 1999, but no real reflection on this issue has ever followed. This has been demonstrated by so many examples over the years, such as the destruction enacted by the Russians in Chechnya or Syria. In the eyes of the rest of the world, however, it all seems distant, as if these were facts that do not concern us. And instead the planet, our planet, is small and everything is connected. What is happening now in Ukraine is terrible and shows us once again how powerless we are.

The war in Ukraine asserts itself in the film. It is amazing how in each of his works he manages to make the present resonate in the archives.

I started working on *The Natural History of Destruction* in 2018, right after *Donbass*. It took three years to finish it, the budget was very high for archival costs. It was a coincidence that I closed it when the war between Ukraine and Russia broke out even though I knew for a long time that it would happen. While shooting *Donbass* it was clear to me that this was not a “local conflict” but the beginning of a great war. The images carry within them something universal; that is what I focus on beyond the context. It is a question of perception: what

happened during the war? How was that experience lived in postwar Germany? Was there an awareness of it? When I make a film I have to find my answers visually, and if we are talking about destruction that is what I focus on excluding of all other elements from the narrative. Here I wanted to show how this principle of attacking people and cities continues to be practiced in history and the archives illuminated the effects.

What were the main sources for your research?

The materials come from about fifteen different archives, mostly German, British, and American including the Imperial War Museum, but also from Pathé and Associated Press. The most striking images are those of the night bombing raids; they were mainly technical shots, used to locate targets to be hit, but they are highly edited. Then there are the surveillance ones, the Allies filmed all of Germany from above in color with beautiful shots, and extreme attention to detail. It is also interesting to see how both sides had constructed their propaganda, the Germans’ style was very different from the British, more classical, more hierarchical. The British, on the other hand, have a more journalistic and even less accurate approach to composition; one could say that even the way they shoot reflects two different worldviews. When I started editing, the images were powerful even without sound; as I watched them, I thought that they alone expressed what I wanted to tell. There was no need for words; those lights and darkness were enough. But inspiring and stimulating the imagination is the greatness of cinema.— Cristina Piccino

Paradiso, XXXI,108

Kamal Aljafari

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

Palestine, Germany, 2022
16mm, HD, colour, 18'
O.V. Hebrew

Director
Kamal Aljafari

Editing
Yannig Willmann

Sound
Attila Favarelli,

Producer
Kamal Aljafari

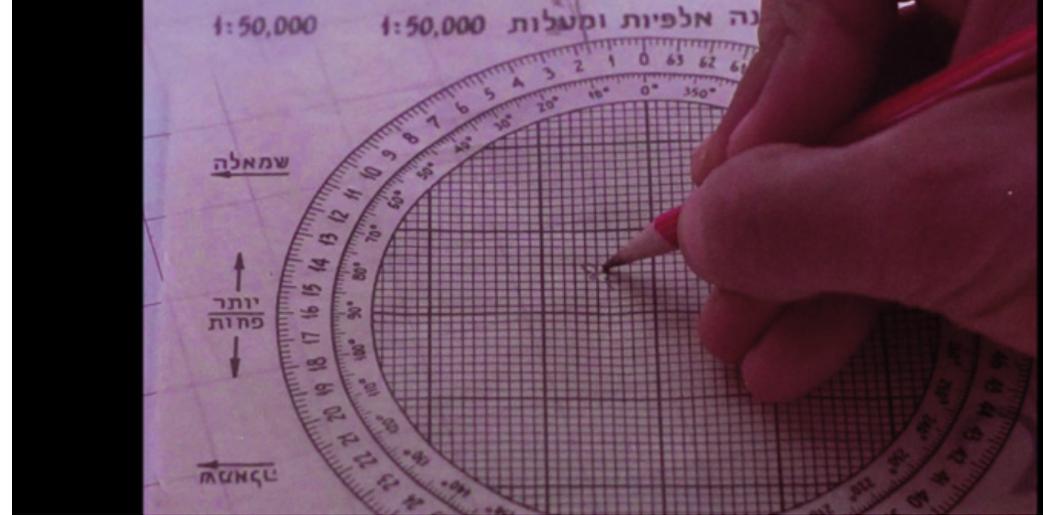
Contacts
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The title refers to Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the most celestial passages. But the images that flow on the screen are about war: Israeli soldiers in the desert during military exercises at different times of the day, night, dawn of fire, evening until rest. Backpacks on, people running, lights flashing in the darkness, signals thrown into the sky. Eyes looking at the horizon, weapons to load. Measure, annotate, aim, shoot: to shoot, another "declination" of cinema. The images of Israeli propaganda of the sixties and seventies are shattered and new meanings appear through irony that the author defines «the film portrait of a man playing war». The literary texts - besides Alighieri, Sebald and Borges - and the music - *Handel* and *Silent Night* - compose the narrative, the archives' reverse shot, in which different genres take shape: war film, adventure, western, masculine complicity, musical. Materials are transformed, in the exasperated repetition of gestures they find a new life, they reveal their nature and their limits. It's the paradox of a constant celebration of war assumed to measure reality.

— Cristina Piccino

Biography

Kamal Aljafari (Ramla, 1972) graduated in visual arts at the Cologne Academy. He made his debut in 2003 with the short film *Visit Iraq*, which won the Sundance Documentary Fund award. His first feature film, *The Roof* (2006), a portrait of his family between Ramla and Jaffa, was presented at Fid Marseille where it won the award for best sound. In Jaffa he also filmed *Port of Memory* (2009), Louis Marcorelles Prize in Cinéma du Reel; the city returns protagonist in *Recollection* (2015) that tells the story through the images of Israeli and American films shot there between the Sixties and the Nineties. *An Unusual Summer* was presented in competition at Filmmaker in 2020 and won the Jury Prize. Aljafari is a lecturer at the Berlin Film and Television Academy.



The title of the film refers to a line of the *Divine Comedy*. Why did you choose it?

I was looking for a title that could be similar to the ones that the armies give to military operations, usually they're either computer generated or combined with human interference. I found it in a book by Borges and I chose it because in the film we're in a constant war and we never see the enemy, as if this place they want to invade does not exist. That's why "Paradiso" was interesting, I didn't know at the beginning that Borges borrowed it from Dante! But then I read the line of the *Divine Comedy*, it says: «So you finally show your face». And it has a link with my work, where I collect and put together images and texts in order to unveil surprising meanings. I like mysterious titles, I think they help when it comes to filmmaking, because images are quite mysterious too.

In your film, war seems to generate the melting of man and machine. Is it an aspect that was important for you?

Absolutely, these shots are from the '60s and the early '70s and we can see the origin of this melting that has developed in time. In the "acting" of war that characterized the propaganda films, a kind of "becoming machine" is very evident in the kind of exercises that soldiers do. They become automatic, an aspect that has inspired the choice of the color grading. In fact the protagonists of the shots are mostly white but as they work in the desert, they have sunburns. I made them all become pink as they were almost puppets. While I

was working at the materials, I didn't have any hatred for those soldiers, but I found them ridiculous. It is something that not everyone can see, because people are so much into this system that they've become blind. Maybe that's why those shots have never been used by anyone, I came across them by chance while searching in archives. We can see that they carry many cinematic techniques, possible only with a big crew; actually they didn't film military exercises, someone wrote a script and they made people act. It was important for the army to create a cinematic self-portrait, where war looks like a lot of fun.

The Israeli violence is a theme that you continue to deepen within your work, what can cinema can do for the Palestinian cause?

It's not a matter of choice that I'm making this kind of films. There's an open wound that is not healing, actually it is becoming deeper and deeper. I express my feelings mostly by reworking images that I find, it's now ten years that I've not been shooting in Palestine. I think that what I do can be defined as "the camera of the dispossessed". As we've lost everything, the possibility of de-composing images to make them work against the original intention is a kind of resistance to this colonial project. It's a hacking of cinema, which I think is important in this time of growing control.

— Lucrezia Ercolani

The United States of America

James Benning

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

USA, 2022
4K, colour, 98'

Director
James Benning

Cinematography
James Benning

Editing
James Benning

Producer
James Benning

Contacts
dylan@neugerriemschneider.com

The United States of America is a title that James Benning chooses for one of his films for the second time, a title that is both simple and ambitious. The first film was shot in 1975. Both have similarities with the road movie as a genre and, more generally, with the theme of the journey from coast to coast, whose prototype, however, is the book of photographs *The Americans* by Robert Frank. *The United States of America* is in a way a book of images. It consists of fifty fixed frames, fifty "views", as are the elements that make up the Union, presented alphabetically and linked with a place, a city, a State. Cinema for James Benning always moves from a structure. His work resembles that of a painter who, before starting to work, sets the relationship between the subject and the space by choosing the canvas. In the case of cinema, of course, time appears as an extra structure and, in the end, what cinema has to show is its bare frame.

In this case there is an ironic aspect, revealed only in the end. Without spoiling it, what we can say is that the author's intention is ultimately political: inviting the viewers to face their own prejudices.

— Eugenio Renzi

Biography

James Benning (Milwaukee, 1942) studied and taught mathematics before making his first film in 1971. Always an independent artist, his work is considered part of the avant-garde and in particular of structural cinema and dialogues, from the beginning, with American folk culture (*One Way Boogie Woogie* 1977). The first films focus on the relationship between the length of the reels of his Bolex 16mm and the temporality of the film that can be imposed by the subject (*RR* 2007, *13 lakes* 2004). His digital production (starting from *Ruhr*, 2009) marks a turning point in his way of working, allowing much freer durations and stimulating the search for new structures on previously filmed works (*Faces*, *Easy Rider*, *United States of America*). James Benning's works and video exhibitions have been supported, acquired and hosted in several festivals, museums and art venues around the world.



How did the idea for the film come about?

I started thinking about it when the first film was scheduled on the Criterion Channel during the pandemic. The response had been very good, and so I said maybe I could do it again. We had filmed *The United States of America* together with Bette Gordon in 1975, we were young, still students, we had a desire to travel, and so we headed to New York during spring break. This time beyond the lockdown I did not want to travel, I would not have had the opportunity to shoot in fifty-two different states. Besides, I have traveled across America and I know it is too vast to give an exhaustive description, if I had taken that route the result would surely have been uninteresting. So I thought of a little game starting with the fact that I know California well. And as I was shooting I felt like I was looking at places I had already filmed, it was like making a film about my previous works. The idea that guided me was to address a question that is unanswered today, and that is to explain what America is at this particular moment in history.

How did you arrange the filming?

Having been to many states and living in California for 30 years, I relied on memory by spending a lot of time on Google Street View to verify that my memories were correct. Then I

also allowed myself some liberties for example in Washington D.C. I put a statue of a farmer in California instead of the president but a worker represents to me the real wealth of the nation.

Music plays a central part in the narrative.

At the time of the first film Saigon was falling, we had used as a soundtrack many materials from the radio, including music and news, to restore the atmosphere of the time. I wanted to keep something here too so I included songs and lyrics by artists I like like Minnie Riperton, her *Lovin' You* was already in the original film. At the beginning of this one I chose (*They Long to Be*) *Close to You* by Karen Carpenter who has a wonderful voice and embodies a tragic American story. In some cases the musical choice is tied to places, such as in Hibbing, Minnesota which is Bob Dylan's hometown, and in Lake Charles, Louisiana, with *Lake Charles* the song by Lucinda Williams about someone who arrived there to commit suicide in the lake in that very polluted industrial area.

— Cristina Piccino

Nuit obscure - Feuillets sauvage

Sylvain George

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



France, Switzerland, 2022
2K, colour, b/w, 256"
OV. Arabic, French, Spanish

Director
Sylvain George

Screenplay
Sylvain George

Cinematography
Sylvain George

Editing
Sylvain George

Sound
Sylvain George

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Melilla, the Spanish enclave in Morocco, is a piece of Europe in the middle of Africa where thousands of migrants seek to enter, hoping of a different future. Most of them are very young, some are just kids, their bet is a constant risk. They play with their life but they do not seem to worry. Time is spent waiting, the daily routine repeats itself, as a ritual of invisibility: figures that slide into the night, hiding during the day among the rocks in front of the sea, they scan the horizon to find any possible crack that might lead elsewhere. Day after day, the spaces shrink, ultimately suffocating the migrants in a city whose signs can be seen as symbols of the present situation: access to European soil denied, clandestinity, illegal trafficking. Nets, walls, controls, army, armed police. You have to be agile, fast, with bright eyes: run, jump, hide, measure, and still run, what are night and day made of? How high is a wall? And how long does it take to get to the ship that will take you to Spain? A broken foot, a broken arm, the police beating, some drugs, loneliness, anger, moments of well-being, sea water, the sun. Is this being 20 in Melilla? Sylvain George composes here a new chapter in his narration of migrants to whom he has dedicated his work from the very beginning, continuing that formal search for a poetic and political image that affirms their existence without victimizing his protagonists or commonplaces. In a reality observed for ten years - the film is the first part of a larger project still in the works - it reinvents a harsh world but not without moments of beauty. And he gives account of the emotions through small gestures, in the fragmented words uttered in front of the camera, in the light reflected on the waves, in the movement of a leaf. A confidence made in tears becomes desire. A cinema capable of listening to the breath of his time. — Cristina Piccino

Biography

Sylvain George (Lyon, 1968), after studying philosophy, law and cinema at the Sorbonne, he devoted himself to directing. In 2006 he made his debut with the first two parts of the series *Contrefeux*, brought together in a documentary entitled *Contrefeux 1 et 2: Comment briser les consciences? Frapper!*, followed by *Contrefeux 3: Europe année 06* (Fragments Ceuta) and *Contrefeux 4: Un homme idéal* (Fragments K). He made the short films *No Border* (2008); *N'entre pas sans violence dans la nuit* (2008). Of 2009 is *L'impossible - Pages arrachées*. In 2010 with *Qu'ils reposent en révolte* (*Des figures de Guerres*) he won the International Filmmaker Competition. In 2011 *Les Éclats* (*ma gueule, ma révolte, mon nom*) was awarded as best international documentary at the Torino Film Festival. In 2013 he shot *Vers Madrid*, and in 2017 *Paris est une fête - Un film en 18 vagues*, winner of the Young Filmmaker Jury.

You continue to work on the issue of migration with a gaze that encompasses the human, public space and nature. What drives you to make films on this issue?

Nuit Obscure is a follow-up to two other works on immigration in Europe that I shot in Calais, *May they rest in revolt* and *Les éclats*. The point for me is to understand the underlying policies through the consequences they lead to in different areas of the Mediterranean. I first visited Melilla in 2005; it is on the border between Spain and Morocco and between Europe and Africa. However, I did not start filming until 2018; filming took about three years. I dislike the word "migrants" because I find that it tends to fixate or "essentialize" those who make the decision to leave their countries. Unfortunately, restrictive policies have a direct effect on their bodies, their living conditions, their self-representation and their ability to react. A documentary is for me a way of presenting reality that involves a de-construction of the way the media, for example, shows that particular situation. This is not to say that I am not very critical of myself as well; I try not to let the spirit of the time run through me and keep an open mind while shooting, in a process that Gilles Deleuze would call "deterritorialization." Sometimes I make connections between the general situation and some small details, which seem unimportant but are important for me, because they are part of the moment and the space. Cinema has to do not only with ideas but also with sensations; only in this way is it possible to construct an aesthetic, playing then with the possibilities of the medium: black and white is one of them.

How was your experience in Melilla? You seem to have built a relationship of trust with the protagonists.

The key word is time, it is essential to introduce yourself, to explain what kind of film you are going to make, the kind of circulation it will have. In Calais there were many journalists, and sometimes it makes me angry to see this exploitation of misery to capture images, the false brotherhood of people ready for anything. However, the situation in Melilla is in some ways worse, it is more difficult for those who are there waiting to get food and clothes because there are fewer organizations operating locally. The testimonies the young people gave me are very strong and I think also very emblematic of the situation of people trying to reach Europe from there. After some time, having understood the point of the project, the young people themselves began to give me suggestions about what I should take back: it became a kind of collaborative work.

A feeling of suspension of time is central in *Nuit Obscure*, did you also experience it while filming?

After you are in a place for a while, you can watch the same situations repeat themselves but with small variations. It's a way to get a deeper understanding of what's going on; it's a bit of an obsessive work. It wasn't easy to film because the kids, besides being young, were often unstable because of the discomfort related to that condition; a circumstance that pushed me to stay longer. – Lucrezia Ercolani

On a eu la journée, bonsoir Narimane Mari

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

France, 2022
HD, colour, 61'
OV. French, English

Director
Narimane Mari

Screenplay
Narimane Mari,
Michel Haas

Cinematography
Narimane Mari,
Nasser Medjkane,
Antonio Boischo

Editing
Narimane Mari

Sound
Narimane Mari,
Antoine Morin,
Benjamin Laurent

Interpreters
Michel Haas

Production
Centrale Électrique

Producers
Narimane Mari,
Olivier Boischo

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How to tell a story of love and loss? How to look at the images of a life together, images of deep complicity and intimacy? He's Michel Haas, artist, she's Narimane Mari, the film director and his partner: «Death is an adventure, the last, and we live it» says the author. What if there's no "end"? Here we are, in the streets of Marseille with the sunlight and the bizarre encounters that speak of dreams. And inside the house that the two share, surrounded by objects of art, the sculptures of the animals created by him, the paper figures. And then there are the confidences, the carefree looks, the walks on the avenues, the words (and the silences) whispered in the days of sickness. Fragments, glimpses, moving bodies: time dilates, twirls, stops, resumes known details of each gesture that accompanies it. The sea appears with its sweetness, a song lightens the heart. The author gently takes us into a poetic and yet ordinary universe that has almost the shape of a fairy tale, following the rhythm of feelings always intertwined with the filmic dimension and the desire to find a narrative to its subject. These segments of a life that gently explode in their vitality are never sad. The author's search is for life and what is left of the bonds with their energy, how they have been transformed. It is in the incessant invention of a being (together) that it expresses its deepest sense. — Cristina Piccino

Biography

Narimane Mari (Algiers, 1969) founded Centrale Électrique to accompany the films of those directors and artists whose imagination and vision of the world try to freely deal with documentary narrative in contemporary history. She works on languages, exploring the forms of the story and the spaces of perception. Her films, *Prologue* (2007), *Loubia Hamra* (*Bloody Beans*, 2013), *Holy Days* (2019), *Le Fort de Fous* (2017) have been presented and awarded at many international festivals. *On a eu la journée, bonsoir* won the Grand Prix of the French competition and the CNAP prize at the FID Marseille 2022. As a producer, she made *Dans ma tête un rond-point* (2015) and *143 rue du désert* (2019) by Hassen Ferhani; *Atlal* (2016) by Djamel Kerkar; *Fragments de rêves* (2017) by Bahia Bencheikh El Fegoun; *The End and the Means* by Pawel Wojtasik (2018). She is developing *Luciole dans le noir du temps* by Djamel Kerkar, *Witch* by Bahia Bencheikh El Fegoun and *Récits d'Elissa* by Aude Fourel.



How was it for you, who experienced the disappearance of your partner Michel Haas, to handle the emotional aspect of the film?

It was a bit of a hell, I started making the film when Michel was about to die. I didn't want to take many pictures of the event, but I recorded the sounds. This is because I told myself that I could have stand the absence of the body - perhaps because we got used to the idea that matter disappears - but instead it's very difficult to accept the fading of sounds: the voice, the noise of the footsteps. The film became our project for the future, even after his death. When I had to assemble the materials, I could do it for a minute or two at the most and then I had to stop and leave the room, take a break and then come back. It went on like this for two years. I didn't want to erase the emotions, it would have meant failing in the honesty of the film and all that had happened between us, but what interested me in the end was to bring to life a present that included joy, creation, death. Even if it's an intimate story, I told myself that it concerns the intimacy of each one, of the desire to be in the world and to be fully exposed to life. Art also responds to the need to create something and belongs to everyone, no matter what their occupation is.

You have chosen unusual forms of expression: the written text that does not correspond to the spoken word, the lyrics of the songs that become central. What kind of reflection did you make about language?

For me, all ways of speaking have their poetic dimension. One thing that makes me angry is the disdain for the current language, I think

that mistakes are not important, on the contrary they often generate beauty. I was keen on the fact that there had to be text but not subtitles, because what needs to be captured is the strength of the image and the emotion it tells. I didn't want to insert punctuation because I think it must be understood by the intonation of the voice, even if it's a language that is not known. It's up to the reader to make the journey towards his or her understanding, which we continually do in life. It's a beautiful gift, when someone talks to me, to be able to observe their face, their expressions and what they say more than words.

Your home and the streets of Marseille are the two most important places for the film. How did you approach shooting outdoors?

The city is the place where human beings are most touching: they're complex, strong, sometimes even violent of course. You get all of this when you walk through the streets. A friend of mine told me that when she's not well, she goes out and walks around the neighborhoods that are full of people. I do the same. I started filming outside a long time ago, with Michel, because we just spent our time there. All his artistic work was inspired by people who were on the street: those who bring meat to the butcher, those who go shopping, those alone and those with children. It's full of information about life. At a certain point in the film I shoot the faces of some people, I just asked them: would you like to look at each other? Then react as you like. There's no one who told me no, the human being is so generous.
— Lucrezia Ercolani

Fogo-Fátuo

João Pedro Rodrigues

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Portugal, French, 2022
4K, colour, 67
OV. Portuguese

Director
João Pedro Rodrigues

Screenplay
João Pedro Rodrigues,
João Rui Guerra da Mata,
Paulo Lopes Graça

Cinematography
Rui Poças

Editing
Mariana Gaivão

Interpreters
Mauro Costa,
André Cabral,
Teresa Vila-Nova

Production
House on Fire,
Terratre Films,
Filmes Fantasma

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The sight of a toy, a Playmobil fire truck, in the hands of his grandson, takes the elderly ruler, now at the end of his life, back to his youth, when he was a boy with blond curls full of revolutionary dreams in spite of his royal affiliation. This quest for elsewhere had brought him to the firehouse, a place that soon opens up the space of his most secret desires. In this “musical fantasy” traversed by humor and eroticism, João Pedro Rodrigues, like a pyromaniac, ignites the images by playing with genres in absolute freedom: melodrama, comedy, musical are intertwined with shameless irreverence in a political allegory of our time that puts history in dialogue with the contemporary. Colonialism, gender, social appearances slip lightly into what is, above all, the story of an amor (fou). Alfredo, the young ruler meets Alfonso: the shy young man with porcelain complexion blends with the ebony muscles of his instructor. Alfredo is tormented by his own role, the obligations that his condition imposes on him, the family dinners of a “public” existence end when taboos have to be addressed in invisible privacy, as in a theatrical backdrop. And the passion of the two guys instead breathes in the air, in the light, in the nature of the woods that welcome them like characters from a fairy tale, in a magic that is that of cinema. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

João Pedro Rodrigues (Lisbon, 1966) abandoned the study of Biology to devote himself to theatre and cinema, and to shoot several short films, including *Parabéns!* (1997). He made his debut in 2000 with *O Fantasma*, in competition at the Venice Film Festival, which immediately became a “cult” film. The young protagonist’s wanderings in the nocturnal streets of Lisbon revealed an offbeat talent for irreverence, humor, and sensuality. In 2005 he made *Odete* - presented at the Cannes Quinzaine - followed by the short film *China China* (2007) - co-directed with João Rui Guerra da Mata; *Morrer Como um Homem* (2009); *Alvorada Vermelha* (co-directed with João Rui Guerra da Mata, 2011) presented at Filmmaker; *Manhã de Santo António* (2012). With *A Última Vez Que Vi Macau* (co-directed by João Rui Guerra da Mata 2012), he returns to Filmmaker in competition. In 2016 he made *O Ornitólogo*, also presented at Filmmaker, and in the same year the Centre Pompidou in Paris dedicated a solo exhibition to him; in that occasion he shot *Où en êtes-vous*, João Pedro Rodrigues?. *Fogo-Fátuo* (2022), was presented at the Cannes Quinzaine. The same year he made *Onde Fica Esta Rua?* (co-directed by João Rui Guerra da Mata). His films have been awarded in numerous international festivals and are part of the permanent collection of MoMa - Museum of Modern Art and the Swiss Cinematheque. About himself João Pedro says that he wanted to become an ornithologist.

With *Fogo-Fátuo* you made a comedy for the first time. Why this choice?

Comedy is perhaps the most difficult genre, which is why I had never dared to venture into it even though I liked it very much. In my other films I have sometimes used the comic register always, however, to a limited extent. I felt this was the right time: I wanted to tackle a serious subject with lightness. I had written the film before Covid, during the lockdown I rewrote it adding the scene with Greta Thunberg’s speech. It was not possible to ignore that experience as many movies do where they pretend it never happened, instead we have to react to what we experienced. And here I do it in an ironic way. The filming was very relaxed, we laughed a lot on the set. For me making this film was liberating. I had been sitting still for two years and when we finally started everything happened very quickly.

What have been your references?

Fogo-Fátuo is about the love between a prince and a boy, it was important that this nontraditional version of a fairy tale be believed. I like to confront genres to turn them upside down and from there create something that belongs to me. This is also why I always try to put aside my previous films, they fully correspond to me at the time I made them, then I need to look towards other directions. This time I felt that comedy, and particularly musical comedy, allowed me to break free from naturalism, to play with all codes, to mix them up and reinvent variations of them. I love musical comedies shot in natural settings, like Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen’s *On the Town* (1949, *Un giorno a New York*). I thought of Jacques Demy’s *Les Demoiselles de Rocherfort*

(1967, *Josephine*), because of its idea that fantasy arises from reality; that’s the direction I wanted to go. I would also mention Vincent Minnelli’s *Brigadoon* (1954), a love story in a magical village that appears and disappears, and then Lubitsch, Billy Wilder. In the opening sequences of *Fogo-Fátuo* there are also references to the cinema of Manuel De Oliveira, with a form of theater of the absurd that does not, however, want to ridicule the characters in any way. I need to love them, it is a fundamental starting point for me, and above all I don’t want to lecture anyone. I like to look at my characters and my audience with love.

The film traverses Portugal’s history, discussing issues such as racism, homophobia, colonialism, slavery but always in mild tones.

That’s why I chose comedy, I was convinced that it allowed me to deal with very serious issues effectively and at the same time lightly. I am not interested in giving messages, what is important for me is to demolish stereotypes, I think that is the only political way forward. Today we tend to expect clear messages, but I don’t care about that. I wanted to venture into the fantastic, make the unbelievable believable, and thus bring out the feeling of our time. We live in a world with an excess of political correctness; the film goes against all that. The game of doors opening and closing when the protagonist’s queen mother does not want to be seen by the audience relates a bit to this staging of self that characterizes the present. – Cristina Piccino

Tara

Volker Sattel, Francesca Bertin

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Germany, Italy, 2022
4K, colour, 86'
OV. Italian

Director
Volker Sattel
Francesca Bertin

Screenplay
Volker Sattel

Cinematography
Volker Sattel
Thilo Schmidt

Editing
Bettina Blickwede

Sound
Filipp Forberg
Tim Elzer
Francesca Bertin

Production
fuffilm

Producer
Volker Sattel

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Sacred and profane are inextricably intertwined on Tara's banks. The small river flows in the proximity of Ilva, a steel plant in the city of Taranto. There, a community meets every day near the water, which is believed to be thaumaturgical. Many stories are told about its powers, but the scientific measurements don't agree: the river is polluted as the whole territory that surrounds the factory. Whom to believe? The empiric experience handed down in time, or the data provided by the environmental organizations? This is only one of the many contrasts that Sattel and Bertin invite us to explore, gradually widening the frame from the epicenter-factory to the city and its popular districts, where a fragile humanity lives. The ancient constructions, the countryside, the new year's rituals bring us to a temporal dimension lost elsewhere, but that survives in Taranto, confronted to the broken dream of modernity, represented by Ilva. There we hear the voices of the ones who try to build a new life after years spent breathing harmful substances, and then we find ourselves along the Tara river again, in contact with a reality that could seem naive, but that represents the tenacious resistance of a possible sense of the world. In this journey, almost an anthropologic investigation, the two directors don't lose the sensitivity for the image, in particular when filming the elements, both natural and artificial. We are taken deep down into the river, trying to catch its powers, then into the womb of the factory, where the production of steel looks like hell on earth. Is a balance between humans and nature still possible? In Taranto it has been denied for a long time, but then something germinates again and again.
— Lucrezia Ercolani

Biographies

Volker Sattel (Speyer am Rhein, 1970) studied at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy. He directed several films, among them *Enterprise Paradise* (2003), *Under control* (2011), *Beyond Metabolism* (2014), presented and awarded in many international festivals (Berlinale, Biennale, Lo schermo dell'arte). He worked as director of cinematography for films by Stephan Genee (*For Free*, 2014), Philip Scheffner (*Europa*, 2021) and the artists Olaf Nicolai e Kerstin Cmelka.

Francesca Bertin (Castelfranco Veneto, 1985) has a M.A. in Film at the Academy of Fine Art di Amburgo and a M. A. in Law at the University of Trento. Her approach to documentary embraces a sensitivity for architecture and art. Among her films, featured and awarded in many international festivals, *L'arteficio* (2020), *Il giardino* (2018) and *Hinter dem Wald* (2015). She's in the selection committee of Dokumentarfilmwoche in Hamburg. *Tara* is the second collaboration between the two directors after *La Cupola* (2016).

How did you get to know the river Tara and what pushed you to make a film about it?

Volker Sattel: The medias in Germany talked a lot about the scandals of the steel work Ilva. I began to read about the pollution, the cooling procedures, the exploitation of the population. I was also very interested in the popular housing that the governments have created in the rural regions of the South of Italy. I was looking for an access point to make a film about all of this, and then Francesca told me about the Tara and the legend of the healing properties of the waters. We went to Taranto and we found that the banks of the river were almost like a parallel world, where nature, social spaces and history came together. We wanted to put at the center those hidden places, whereas usually Ilva is protagonist of the images that depict Taranto.

Francesca Bertin: I was fascinated by the micro-space of the Tara river and by the people that everyday go there to take care of it in an informal way, outside of every institutional frame. In their leisure time they work to make it a place that is livable and nice. This small dimension is in contrast with the massive architecture of the factory.

In fact, there are many contrasts in the film, summarized by Ilva itself: a factory that poisoned the environment but that also gave people the possibility to work. How did you move in these contradictions?

F.B.: The presence of Ilva is so strong that is impossible to avoid it. The contradiction, we could say, is always there. Everyone is aware of the problem and is coping with it, but very little seems to change. Many time I was asking myself where is the truth: is the water polluted or not? Is the area beautiful or not? I think that to sort out of this we have to abandon us to the emotional attachment to what we see.

People are still living there after the scandal, it's a small resistance based on daily life that we tried to follow.

How much time did you spend in those places and how was the interaction with the people that you met?

F.B.: We could build a relationship with people and earn their trust because we visited Taranto many times, with long research periods. I think that the point is to give them something back through the images, through what we built together. We went there with open questions, without ready-made recipes.

V.S.: We also did some interventions, like in the Paolo VI periphery we did a workshop, that is partially visible in the film, with the young people of the area. It was very important for us to be able to share something of our knowledge and experience, and not just taking.

Your approach to filming is nourished by the worlds of art and architecture, how did you bring these sensibility into *Tara*?

F.B.: I shared Volker's interest for industrial architecture, and Ilva is obviously a special object, very cinematographic in itself. Moreover, we found some archive material shot inside the factory in the '60s, those images are very powerful and opened up another level of imagination about something that we couldn't see but that we could show in another way.
— Lucrezia Ercolani

Europe

Philip Scheffner

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Germany, France, 2022
HD, colour, 105'
O.V. French, Arabic

Director
Philip Scheffner

Screenplay
Merle Kröger,
Philip Scheffner

Cinematography
Volker Sattel

Editing
Philip Scheffner

Sound
Tristan Pontécaille

Interpreters
Rhim Ibrir,
Thierry Cantin,
Didier Cuillierier,
Khadra Bekkouche,
Nouria Lakhriissi,
Sadya Bekkouche,
Hassane Ziani,
Zoulikha Ibrir,
Amandine Demuynck

Production
pong film,
Haut les Mains Productions

Producers
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Merle Kröger

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What does “being invisible” mean? Zohra came to France years earlier to treat a severe form of scoliosis. Her operations, so complex that they have become a “case study”, have worked. She still has a few physiotherapy sessions to do in the pool. The young woman is happy with the new life she shares with her sister, her husband, their children, her elderly grandmother, and many others who have arrived from many parts of the world in Chatelleraut, that district of the French province called “Europe”. She plans her future with her beloved husband over long distance calls. But the announced happy ending suddenly takes an unexpected direction: her residence permit is revoked and consequently Zohra has to disappear. Life flows as before, but she is out of the picture, “invisible” to the eyes of relatives, strangers and ultimately even herself. In his first feature “fiction” film, Philip Scheffner - already in competition at Filmmaker with *Havarie* (2016) - works on a form capable of showing the paradoxical violence of a common situation of our time. In one of the first scenes, we can hear the voice of the director asking off-screen to the actress Rhim Ibrir – who eventually will bring her own experiences to the character of Zohra: «What are the similarities between you and the role you are playing?». To which she replies: «The life of Zohra is real and even when the film ends, she lives what she experienced during the shooting». Starting with a simple choice – Zohra’s exit from the frame – this constant and unpredictable passage between staged and lived experience builds a narrative that, through a powerful political vision, confronts the viewer with the emotions and moods of a unique and collective character. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

Philip Scheffner (Homburg/Saar, 1966) is a filmmaker and an artist. He lives and works in Berlin. Between 1990 and 2000 he made several films with Dogfilms, a group of authors active in Berlin. Together with Merle Kröger, Alex Gerbaulet, Caroline Kirberg and Mareike Bernien he founded and works with the production company Pong, among the most vibrant realities in Germany today. In 2007 he made *The Halfmoon Files* – presented at the Berlinale and awarded at many international festivals, from Mar del Plata to Fid Marseille, followed by *The Day of Sparrow* (2010) and *Revision* (2012). In 2016 he signed *Havarie* (2016), in competition at Filmmaker, awarded by German critics’ as best experimental film. In 2016 he also filmed *And-Ek Ghes...* co-directed with Colorado Velcu, presented at the Berlinale in the Forum section. He teaches Documentary at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne.

In which way the film tells the situation of Europe today?

Europe is a huge system, a constellation of countries and beliefs; but when it comes to the film, it is mainly the name of a bus stop, located in the area where the protagonist is living. A bus stop is also a place of arrival and departure, that links the suburb to the main city. When we met Rhim Ibrir - who became after the main actress - we realized that she was living at this neighborhood called “Europe” and we were thrilled because our film tells a story that questions its concept, trying to deal with the official perspective of it which is a violent one, as it decides who is part of Europe and who is not.

The film is inspired by the real life of the protagonist Rhim Ibrir. How did the process of writing develop?

I met Rhim Ibrir for my previous film *Havarie*, via her husband that was living in Algeria. That work was conceived in a documentary form and we recorded some interviews with her. There’s only her voice in *Havarie*, but we were very fascinated by her presence in front of the camera and obviously by her biography and the strength that she had. She had never acted before, I had never directed a fiction film, and so I thought that we could make together something that was new for both of us. After talking with her, together with the main script writer Merle Kröger we developed a storyline, and then we went many times to Châtelleraut to discuss the script with Rhim, trying to create Zohra, a character that would distance her in some way by her personal life. She introduced us to her community, that formed the cast of the

film: almost everyone plays the role that has in real life.

In the director’ notes you wrote that it is a film of “forced fiction”. Could we say that the imaginary world of Zohra becomes the only possible reality to her?

How we filmed and shaped the whole narrative is a result of the analysis of the social and political situation in which Rhim was, and the relation to us. There is a barrier between her and us, and with “us” I mean a white filmmaker with a European passport. When the State decides that someone can no longer stay, you don’t share with this person the same social space. Even if this person decides not to leave, she can’t carry on her life like before. A documentary would have covered up this violent situation, we thought it was more important to analyze with the means of cinema the space that was given to her and to us. Zohra is forced to leave in a fictional space, as the State says: you may be here, but you’re actually not here. It’s also complicated for her to speak openly about the fact that she doesn’t have the papers, as if by saying it, it would become true. After that, we were wondering if that fictitious space could be turned around and be used by her to create a space of resistance. We, as viewers, have a problem: suddenly our urge to have a full narrative is frustrated, as she plays with our expectations.

– Lucrezia Ercolani

Balkanica

Marianna Schivardi

WORLD PREMIÈRE

Italy, 2022
Super8, MiniDV, Hi8, HDV, 4K,
HD, colour, 71'
O.V. Italian, English

Director
Marianna Schivardi

Screenplay
Marianna Schivardi

Cinematography
Sabina Bologna,
Dario Ghezzi

Editing
Marianna Schivardi

Sound
Filippo Restelli

Interpreters
Dejan Tasic
Aleksandar Saša Erdeljanovic
Boris Mitlic
Mirko Maletic
Nihad Kresevljacovic
Nedim Alikadic (Pelda)
Sead Kresevljacovic
Selma Alibalic

Production
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Associazione Garigliano

Producer
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«A revolution». This is how Marianna Schivardi defines the possibility, which emerged at the end of the last century, of capturing images with an ease hitherto unthinkable. A possibility that drove the young filmmaker to leave home and cross the sea, to go where war was a reality, an open wound that demanded attention. Thus begins *Balkanica*, with Schivardi's old unused tapes, soon declaring her current intention: to return to those places, to understand what is left, to get back in touch with the people who had marked that very strong experience. «I liked that you didn't have plans, that you didn't really know what you were looking for»: a friend from that time, now a director, tells her. Slowly, through Schivardi's narrative voice and the words of others, in a back-and-forth between past and present, a picture takes shape. First in Belgrade, then in Sarajevo. There are the buildings gutted by war, the blows that open chasms in the surfaces, and there is the attempt to live with and despite the conflict. The film library, and its mission of memory preservation; the enclave in Kosovo where the "excluded" from the city live, a place the filmmaker deeply cares about. And then, that group of filmmaker friends with whom something important had been shared, moments of levity alongside disaster - their faces then, so unabashedly young, and their faces today: in between a lifetime has passed. But the words still refer to that never healed wound, and to the power of witnessing that only cinema possesses. — Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Marianna Schivardi (Brescia, 1972) is a videoclip and documentary director. Her works include *Il Grande Fardello* (2004), a parody of the reality show *Il Grande Fratello*, shot in San Vittore prison, in Milano, and *69 Bites* (2008), made behind the scenes of a pornographic film. Both films have been selected by several national and international festivals. She is an author for television and professor of Directing at the New Academy Of Fine Arts in Milan (Naba) and of screenwriting at Ied Milan. She also directed *Work Hard, Party Harder*, a series of short movies for Elita Festival; *I Against I* - short movie for Wired; *Always and Never* (2010) video portrait of photographer Ari Marcopolus; *Grandi Opere* (2009), documentary on artist Arnaldo Pomodoro.



What prompted you to return to the Balkans to embark on this journey backwards?

I had first gone there for a UN project to create a traveling cinema in the Serbian enclaves in Kosovo in 2001, when the war in that area had just ended. I had bought my first camera, a MiniDV, but despite my enthusiasm I was faced with the feeling of the uselessness of filming. Mine is the first generation to be confronted with the almost unlimited possibility of producing images, and at that moment I had lost my coordinates, I did not understand the point of accumulating those materials. Watching seemed much stronger to me than filming. So I didn't use those tapes for the next ten years until I went back there. I think all documentary filmmakers are faced with the risk of "vampirizing" their subjects, so that worried me as well, so I tried as much as possible to build real connections. Rather than tell the war directly, I preferred to have people talk about their connection between the conflict, images and memory. The film opens with the mayor of Sarajevo saying, «Citizens film, someday justice will be done», an idea of trust in images that I tested during the work.

The film questions the meaning of filming war in connection with the limitations and technical possibilities of cinema. How do they influence it?

During the siege of Sarajevo, the friends I interviewed had only four tapes on which to film. This involved an inevitable choice about what to keep and what to delete. The idea of being able to accumulate in order to know,

which constitutes the spirit of the time in which we find ourselves, I think is misleading; instead, this act of choice, already in the act of filming, about what would become memory seemed very strong to me. I absolutely don't think we can go back, but perhaps there is an evolution still to be made by those who produce images, also because this total archiving of our lives does not lead to a complete memory. However, I think it is better that way, because there is an interpretation behind the memory that is part of the growth process.

Balkanica is a film about the transformation of places and people, which includes you remaining off-screen. What surprised you about this process?

In my travels during or right after the war, there was a kind of vitality, an energy that ran through the everyday life, not just in the negative. There was a common bond in trying to have fun, even doing normal things like having dinner. Returning after a long time, I felt instead a subtle resignation. War drags with it long periods that are difficult to process, and I think then that piece of the world after a certain amount of attention was somewhat left to itself. However, I chose not to provide a historical reading or even many specific spatio-temporal coordinates, so that the film would speak of the war as a broader dimension.

— Lucrezia Ercolani

Hardly Working Total Refusal

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Austria, 2022
Full HD, colour, 20'
O.V. English

Director
Total Refusal

Screenplay
Total Refusal

Cinematography
Total Refusal

Editing
Total Refusal

Sound
Bernhard Zorzi

Interpreter
Jacob Banigan

Production
Total Refusal

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info@refreshingfilms.com

The first character that in *Hardly Working* is presented to us is the carpenter: a man who spends his days driving nails into the boards of a dock, turning in circles. «There will never be enough nails» comments the voice over that guides us to discover the activities of some Non-Playable-Characters of the video game *Red Dead Redemption 2*. These figures cannot be manipulated by the player, they form the background of the actions in development. The Total Refusal group enjoys inventing possible narratives starting from the everyday life of the characters - the drunken stableman, the laundress, the dustman - while the narrow range of actions that they have to repeat cyclically is viewed with a marked irony. We soon understand that it's not just a game, but rather a staging that, in a simplified way, mimics our days. Are we sure that, if we were observed from the outside, our actions would appear more meaningful, more focused towards a purpose? Aren't we also characters in a great game, that of capitalism, in which the scope «is not to satisfy the demand but to accumulate»? After all, the characters of *Red Dead Redemption 2* have been conceived by human beings; they are, in their own way, "plausible", reduced as they are to the working dimension. The bet *Hardly Working* makes is to present those characters to us in their individuality, and we truly seem to grasp a melancholy in the acceptance of their destiny, repeating prescribed actions over and over again. But the film is not a simple denunciation, it provides a political proposal: that of "collective laziness" that some characters show by remaining still for hours, stubbornly, in the same spot. Can we break the cycle too? Can we stop functioning? – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

The Austrian group Total Refusal (formed by Susanna Flock, Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner, Michael Stumpf) practices strategies for artistic intervention in contemporary computer games. Their films and performances have been presented at the Berlinale, Locarno and MoMA in New York, among others. They received the award for the best Austrian documentary short film at the Diagonale festival in Graz and the award for best director in the Locarno "Pardi di domani" competition dedicated to short films. Among their previous works, *Deconstructing the Bridge* (2022), *How to Disappear* (2020), *Featherfall* (2020).

What does attract you from the world of video games and when did you think that it could be possible to make films out of it?

Video games give the chance to jump into a universe, which may look like the one we're living in or not. It's another world with different rules, it can express dreams or collective anxieties, remodeling our fantasies. We spent a lot of time playing video games but with a kind of love-hate relationship. At a certain point we played a game that was set in New York City that pushed us to search more and more about the architecture model, which included buildings, maps and so on. We had the idea of creating a tour, and to make a short film about it. That's how we became filmmakers, it was not planned at all. From then on we explored other possibilities that this fascinating medium has, telling some stories that matter to us.

The political message is the core of *Hardly Working*, how did you develop it?

We consider ourselves a very political collective, we use the definition of "absurd marxists" and we always bring an analysis of the market's system into our work. With this film it all started with observation of the daily life of Non-Playable-Characters (NPCs), which is very interesting because it's so well done, you could even fall in love with one of those figures. We had hours and hours of protocols about what they do, and they triggered a big debate among ourselves over what these images told us about our world. It's a powerful metaphor that drove us into work theory. Many parts of society are being replaced by digital means, let's think of the use

of algorithms at the workplace, Amazon employees can be fired by one of them. The machines tend to direct and to structure us. The NPCs are a visualization of this development we're facing. For us the most important question is: which politics, which ideology speaks through video games? It's hidden because they want everyone, every player, to accept it so to build a consensus. The market is controlling the development of computer games, the biggest entertainment companies are sending pictures to hundreds of millions of people driven by marketing logics. It's this materialist structure of the game that we're more interested in.

At the end of the film you propose a «collective laziness» linked to the glitch concept. Could you explain it?

NPCs represent normality, they're like the perfect working machine. They never question, they have crazy endurance. But sometimes the algorithm produces something wrong, a glitch; then the characters, who do not have an identity outside their job, suddenly lose their necessity. Those are the moments in which we can relate more to them: it's like they would almost become humans as they're not completely perfect. It's something that we can learn from them, a strategy, as the perfection of how the system works is not something we should aim for. – Lucrezia Ercolani



Prospettive

ALBERTO BARONI

ANDREA DE FUSCO

ALBERTO DIANA

MATTEO DI FIORE

IRENE DORIGOTTI

SAMUELE FASSINA

FEDERICO FREFEL

ELETTRA GALLONE

ANDREA GATOPOULOS

AURA GHEZZI

LUANA GIARDINO

REBECCA GRIGORE

COSIMO IANNUNZIO

MARIJA STEFANIJA LINUZA

GAIA LONGOBARDI

GIULIO MELANI

GIULIA OGLIALORO

GIULIA OLIVIERI

EMMA ONESTI

HEDDA PALJAK

ELSA SOHLBERG

FEDERICA ZOTTI

The Home of Images

Antonio Pezzuto

Prospettive came out of the desire to intercept what has yet to happen. The premise (or promise) that illuminates new generations of directors, their lines of research, formal inventions, narratives. While the experience of the pandemic characterized works of the last two years, today the panorama has taken on more abstract forms, as seen by the frequent choice of using domestic interiors as a form of theatre for a confrontation with the world.

The word “home” was chosen for the title by Rebecca Grigore in her *A casa*, in which family archives of her parents, who immigrated to Italy, intermingle with the voices of the present.

The home is at the centre of Giulia Oliveri’s work *Ctrl+Z*, where the director tries to understand the reasons for the Hikikomori, becoming one herself; her room is the film set, while outside, the world follows her winding roads. A performative element in the spaces of her own home accompanies Aura Ghezzi in *Crossing “One-way street” – Journey around the house of my life*, a “wandering” among the objects and traces of everyday life in her rooms; with Federica Zotti who “plays” with the perception of the spectator in the mischievous *Ahe Geo*, or with Gaia Longobardi, who recounts the rhythm of the day in *Condominio N°IMX172*.

Reality escapes, it becomes fragmented. Alberto Diana realizes *Cartas for Colombia* from afar, while he’s in Italy and his friends are fighting for democracy in Colombia; in *Shambala*, Andrea De Fusco edits the film with images shot by a friend traveling in the Himalayas, telling how distance may still surprise us. A game of mirrors between virtual and real homes and distances characterizes *Ama Osa* by Marija Stefanija Linuza, whose protagonist performs live on the social platform OnlyFans to earn money. From inside her room, she exposes her bare breasts to paying viewers who pay, under the illusion that an encounter through the computer screen can fill a void. Suspended between imagination and memory, the words of poet Milo De Angelis create an echo; De Angelis who, for years, crossed the city of Milan in a tram from Bovisa to the Opera Prison, where he taught. The poet has entrusted his stories to recordings, which served as the basis for four young directors just out of the Milan Civic School, Samuele Fassina, Cosimo Iannunzio, Giulia Oglialoro and Hedda Paljak, to give life to *L’ocean around Milan*, a poetic cartography of the metropolis.

Personal stories that become guides for a collective narrative animate *Happy New Year, Jim*, by Andrea Gatopoulos, in which gamers experience an eccentric digital solitude; and *Tatiana*, a portrait of a Russian artist who lives in Milan, whose experience and works are filmed by Emma Onesti to restore the history of her country. «Home is our corner of the world, our living space». So says Matteo Di Fiore, who, in *Lettere da Borgonuovo*, recounts the desire to escape from the “native wild village” of the Palermo neighbourhood where he grew up. But home can also be the stone that brings back memories apparently lost to the protagonist of *Racconto* by Giulio Melani; or the tropical forest that inhabits the dreams of the three protagonists in *Le Grand rêve* by Irene Dorigotti; or the body on which Elsa Sohlberg in *Dog Bite Horse Kick* shamelessly lingers in search of signs of its past. And then there’s Samir, the protagonist of *Meeting Samir in the evening*, by Elettra Gallone, homeless with four houses: a bench, two small bars and another bench on which he sleeps. Because home, more than a place, is a state of mind, a “discreet corner” where reality manifests itself, without constraints or prejudices.

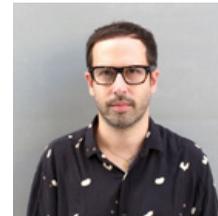
The Jury



Virginia Garra (Milano, 1993) is a visual artist and videomaker based in Milan. She holds an MFA (2021) from HEAD – Haute école d’art et de design, Geneva, Switzerland and BFA (2016) from NABA – Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, Milan, Italy. From 2016 to 2019 she worked as an assistant to Yuri Ancarani in Milan, with whom she still collaborates on different projects. She took part in several group exhibitions and projects, including *The Case Against Reality*, Palai x Capriola, Lecce (2022); *Lemaniana: Reflections on Other Scenes*, Centre d’Art Contemporain, Geneva (2021); film program x Infans, Fondation Pernod Ricard, Paris (2021). The short film *My Sunset Room* (2021) won the *Prospettive’s Jury Prize* at Filmmaker Festival, Milan.



Giancarlo Grossi (Putignano, 1988) is a Postdoc researcher in Media Theory within the ERC project AN-ICON and the Department of Philosophy “Piero Martinetti” of the University of Milan. His studies explore from the perspective of media archaeology the intersection of cinema, mind sciences and visual culture. His publications include the essays *Le regole della convulsione. Archeologia del corpo cinematografico* [The Rules of Convulsion. Archaeology of the Cinematic Body (Meltemi, 2017)] and *La notte dei simulacri. Sogno, cinema, realtà virtuale* [The Night of Simulacra. Dream, cinema, virtual reality. (Johan & Levi, 2021)].



Jacopo Miliani (Firenze, 1979) is a visual artist whose practice addresses performance as an expanded methodology, which aims to investigate the connections between language and the body. He is the founder of an independent publishing project that focuses on sexuality and language: *Self Pleasure Publishing*. He has collaborated with different performers including Jacopo Jenna, Antonio Torres, divaD, Benjamin Milan, Mathieu LaDurée, Eve Stainton. His projects have featured professionals from various disciplines including the filmmaker Dario Argento, the fashion designers Boboutic, and the music producer Jean-Louis Hutha. His work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions at GAMeC, Bergamo - IT (2019); Centro Pecci, Prato (2019); Galeria Rosa Santos, Valencia (2018); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2017); David Roberts Art Foundation, London (2017); Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon (2016); Fondazione Giuliani, Rome (2015); ICA studio, London (2015); Studio Dabbeni, Lugano (2015); Madre Museum, Naples (2011). In 2021 he realized the film *La discoteca*, a project curated by NOS production, winner of the Italian Council (8th edition, 2020). Currently, he lives in Milan.

Shambala

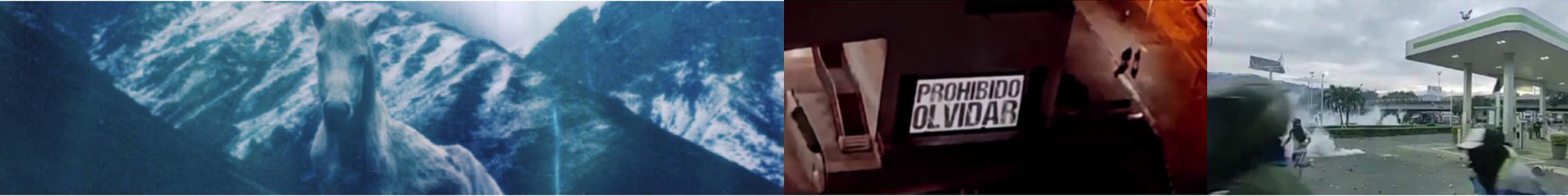
Andrea De Fusco

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

Carta urgente para Colombia

Alberto Diana

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



France, Italy, 2022
4k, colour, 46'
O.V. French

Director
Andrea De Fusco

Screenplay
Andrea De Fusco

Cinematography
Andrea De Fusco,
Pietro Daviddi

Editing
Giulia Olivieri

Sound
Andrea De Fusco,
Pietro Daviddi

Music
Jhon Gorton

Production
AcquaAlta

Producers
Andrea De Fusco,
Christophe Gougeon

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«I traveled by proxy», says the director, explaining that the images in this film, shot in the Himalayas, are the work of his friend Marcus. He sent them to him along with letters, from a long and dense correspondence. They were supposed to embark on the adventure together, but then something kept the director in Venice: a sudden resistance to leaving. Shambala then becomes the montage of materials shot by “someone else” along with the counter field of life in the lagoon-a necessary distance to reflect on the whole status of images. How was travelling to a distant place without knowing its outline, not in order to «find confirmation to images we already know»? How was filming a place for the first time? The vistas of Tibet, the dizzying altitudes, the archaic rituals, the lives of nomadic shepherds flow by. Filming is remembering: you select only the best parts. Meanwhile, Marcus becomes increasingly uncomfortable in his role, as homesickness becomes strong. Do really images “steal the soul” of places? But the “elsewhere”, even endowed with undeniable fascination, isn’t salvific. Shambala represents the failed attempt to get lost, if only because satellite maps have now prevented us from doing so. – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Andrea De Fusco (Roma, 1990), is a filmmaker and visual artist. He graduated first at ESRA in Paris and then from DAMS in Roma 3 University with a thesis on the relationship between image, time and memory in Tarkovsky’s cinema. He continued his studies in New York where he made his first documentaries. Back in Italy he made *In Aquis Fundata*, a film about the relationship between Venice and water through the eyes of some of the last Venetians, with which he took part to several international festivals. He then worked for almost two years alongside Andrei Konchalowsky in the making of *Il Peccato, il furore di Michelangelo*, an Italian-Russian film about Michelangelo Buonarroti, realizing the making-of documentary presented at the Festa Del Cinema di Roma. In August 2018, he made *Omaggio a l’Avventura*, an exhibition of polaroids above Lisca Bianca, the rock where Antonioni shot the famous film in ‘60. He recently presented *Per un’estetica dell’Apocalisse (For an Aesthetics of the Apocalypse)*, a video made with Gianni Garrera, a philologist and translator of *L’Apocalisse*, reflecting on the role of beauty in the end of the world, at the Floating Cinema in Venice.

Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 12'
O.V. Spanish

Director
Alberto Diana

Screenplay
Alberto Diana

Editing
Alberto Diana

Production
Gaetano Crivaro
e Margherita Pisano
(L’Ambulante)

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Which is the relationship between the distance measurable in kilometers and the one concerning feelings and memories? Alberto Diana, author of the film, returned to Italy after a period in Colombia. The country is going through a period of turbulence, with big demonstrations against the Duque government and brutal repression. The resistance is in the public space, in the collective and creative acts occupying the streets, remembering the injustices and the deaths the state is responsible for. Alberto is far away but he’s still in contact with some friends who, in those hectic days, send videos and words; the use of applications and social networks deceives the actual distance. The feeling of being ousted from something important pushes the director to make the film: an attempt to keep that bond alive: what time is it in Colombia? What time is it in Italy? Questions that measure the distance but that still make an exchange in the present possible. — Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Alberto Diana (Iglesias, 1989) after the Degree in Literature at the University of Cagliari, attended the Master in Documental de Creación at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. His documentary short films have been presented in numerous Italian and international festivals. The medium-length film *Fango rosso* premiered at the 37th edition of the Torino Film Festival. He’s developing the screenplay for his first feature *Intra Montes*.

Lettera da Borgo Nuovo

Matteo Di Fiore

WORLD PREMIÈRE

Le grand rêve

Irene Dorigotti

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 40'
O.V. Italian

Director
Matteo Di Fiore

Screenplay
Matteo Di Fiore

Cinematography
Matteo Di Fiore

Editing
Matteo Di Fiore

Sound
Matteo Di Fiore

Production
Experimental Center of
Cinematography - Sicily branch

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matteodifiore339@gmail.com

Borgo Nuovo is a neighborhood on the far outskirts of Palermo that extends to the foot of the Conca d'Oro mountains. Built in the late 1950s, at the beginning with a working-class spirit, it suffered a profound crisis due to both the explosion of social issues and the chronic lack of infrastructure. In this neighborhood moves Mattia Di Fiore, who was born there, and started making his first home movies there. «My home is in Borgo Nuovo. Indeed, Borgo Nuovo is my home - says the director - But since I was a child I always had the feeling of not really belonging to it. Feeling a stranger in the place where one should feel at home is an excruciating pain that does not go away».

Lettera da Borgo Nuovo is a letter full of love and anger for a place to which he feels he belongs with unhappiness; it is a journey into one's own individual memory, which, in fact, becomes a shared memory; it is the search for a new home; it is the attempt of a young director to put a full stop to his story and his memories, to create a space from which to start again. — Antonio Pezzuto

Biography

Matteo Di Fiore (Palermo, 1998) attended the Centro Tau alla Zisa, first as a user and then as a peer educator. After briefly studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Palermo, in 2019 he enrolled in the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia - sede di Sicilia, where he made, in collaboration with the Aamod Foundation, the short film *L'Estraneo*. *Lettera da Borgo Nuovo* is his graduation film.

Italy, 2022
Super8, HD, colour, 9'
O.V. Italian

Director
Irene Dorigotti

Subject
Irene Dorigotti

Cinematography
Irene Dorigotti

Editing
Irene Dorigotti

Music
Bartolomeo Sailer

Narrator
Beatrice Forchini

Production
Start

Contacts
produzione@start.mi.it

A forest, the footsteps of three guys walking through, without ever entering the frame. Their names echo in the narrative voice of Irene, the director. We follow them, imagine their gestures, their being together, their smiles; it seems that we see how they move, how they are dressed. The image is a web of branches, light, sounds, the echo of some animals, the breath of nature: a rhythm which is a continuous flow like their steps. The colors change, the landscape transforms, the woods fade into a tropical forest pervaded by something mysterious. A parrot appears, music comes from the trees, there is a strange restlessness. «What if mushrooms are smarter than humans?» a voice wonders. Bea, Enrico, Irene: where are they? What place is the one where we catch glimpses of the sky among thickening leaves, fragments of stories where time suspends, stops, expands, flows between endless overlays? As summer becomes winter, sunshine, snowflakes disappearing again. In the increasingly labyrinthine gait the sea suddenly appears, the three boys surrender to the flow of the water, to its calmness. Is this real? Are we only in dreamed landscape? On this edge, Irene Dorigotti ventures with her images, following her own personal "dream diary" in search of unexpected correspondences, elusive emotions, the contours of a world becoming a continuous invention. — Cristina Piccino

Biography

Irene Dorigotti (Trento, 1988) is a visual anthropologist with a degree in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology from the University of Bologna and graduated in the Department of Political Science and Cultural Society at the University of Turin. She is involved in film and short stories writing. Her research areas include sensory perception, time, spirituality, urban anthropology, imaginaries and experimental methods, radical aesthetics and ethnographic practice. Her previous works include: *Apnea* (2019); *Herz-Jesu-Feuer* (2020). *Ora sono diventata foresta* (2021) was presented to Filmmaker in the Perspectives competition.

L'oceano intorno a Milano. Conversazioni con Milo De Angelis

Samuele Fassina, Cosimo Iannunzio,
Giulia Oglialoro, Hedda Paljak

WORLD PREMIÈRE

Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 20
O.V. Italian

Director
Samuele Fassina,
Cosimo Iannunzio,
Giulia Oglialoro,
Hedda Paljak

Screenplay
Giulia Oglialoro

Cinematography
Samuele Fassina,
Cosimo Iannunzio,
Giulia Oglialoro,
Hedda Paljak

Editing
Samuele Fassina,
Cosimo Iannunzio,
Giulia Oglialoro,
Hedda Paljak

Sound
Samuele Fassina,
Cosimo Iannunzio,
Giulia Oglialoro,
Hedda Paljak

Music
Jim Base,
Umberto Smerilli

Interpreters
Milo De Angelis
Vladimiro Cislighi
Alessandro Crisafulli

Production
Civica Scuola di Cinema Luchino Visconti

Contacts
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A city where the horizon can never be seen, overlooked by the roofs of houses that touch a dull sky. This is the Milan where Milo De Angelis moves; a poet, writer, literary critic born in 1951, who recounts the bewilderment and love towards a complex, enigmatic and vital, but also dramatic place. "The antithesis of the eternal city." De Angelis' Milan is a Milan that the poet travels through looking out of the windows of a trolleybus, the number 92, taken every morning for twenty years, starting from Bovisasca, where he lives in a house with two windows, to the Opera Prison, the prison where De Angelis taught for many many years, accomplishing a kind of metropolitan Odyssey, watching from the windows a panorama that parades and transforms. Four Civic School students collected the thoughts of Milo De Angelis, entrusted to a tape recorder, and listened to the words of two of his students, former inmates, who exactly in that prison attended his classes, where he taught «the love of life through poetry» by answering his questions and provocations, and showing, in return, their sensitivity and obsessions. We thus witness a journey along the places of memory and thought, and together with the poet, we ask ourselves, «What have we really seen and what have we missed?». And above all, what has driven our steps to where we are. — Antonio Pezzuto

Biographies

Samuele Fassina (Buccinasco, 2001) attended the Documentary course at the Luchino Visconti Cinema's Civic School in Milan. He attends the directing course at the Michelangelo Antonioni Film Institute in Busto Arsizio.

Cosimo Iannunzio (Benevento, 1989) studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Naples. He moved to Milan and graduated in 2016 from the Brera Academy of Fine Arts.

Giulia Oglialoro (Saronno, 1992) studied art history at the University of Bologna and collaborates with online and print media newspapers. She has participated in several group exhibitions, most recently at the Casa degli Artisti in Milan. She lives in Bremen.

Hedda Paljak (Stockholm, 1996) after studying Film History at Stockholm University, began working for various Swedish short film and music video productions in 2017. She lives in Milan since 2020 to study at the Documentary Course at the Luchino Visconti Cinema's Civic School.

Incontrando Samir la sera

Elettra Gallone

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
4K, colour, 61'
O.V. Italian

Director
Elettra Gallone

Cinematography
Elettra Gallone,
Astrid Ardeni

Editing
Astrid Ardeni

Producer
Smaragdus Films,
Elettra Gallone

Contacts
elettragallone@gmail.com

Among the many homeless living on our streets, in 2020, just before the outbreak of the pandemic, Elettra Gallone met Samir, an almost fifty-year-old Albanian who has four houses: a park bench, two bars, and another bench on which he sleeps. He is one of those wandering souls to whom we devote some looks and some thoughts, generally full of compassion. It is difficult to imagine their lives, to imagine their needs and their real relationships. To give Samir a voice, Elettra Gallone put a small camera in his hand, delegating him the choice of images and themes, and thus letting himself be transported into the life of this very wealthy person, in a film that reveals a reality parallel to our own, but of which we have no perception. — Antonio Pezzuto

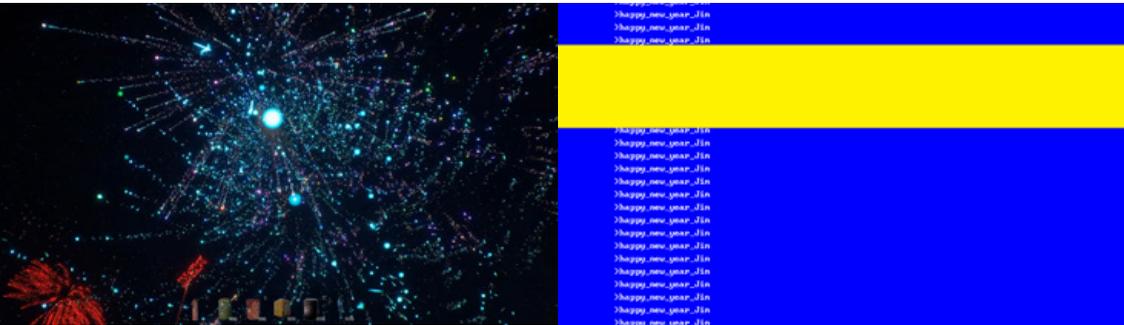
Biography

Elettra Gallone (Milan, 1993) is a director and photographer. She graduated in 2016 in Media Design and Multimedia Arts from NABA in Milan, and obtained a Masters in Social Anthropology from SOAS in London. She worked as an official photographer and filmmaker for Emergenza Sorrisi during the surgical missions in Benin (2016) and Iraq (2017), making her first short film *Il Tempo di una Sguardo*. In October 2021 she participated in the 2nd Film Accelerator with Werner Herzog in Lanzarote, where she made two short films: *La Ira de Guayota* and *Poseidòn*. In 2022, in addition to *Incontrando Samir la sera*, she directed the short *Pilastrò Nero*.

Happy New Year, Jim

Andrea Gatopoulos

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 9'
O.V. English

Director
Andrea Gatopoulos

Screenplay
Andrea Gatopoulos

Editing
Andrea Gatopoulos

Sound
Tommaso Barbaro

Interpreters
Jim Muzungo,
Morten Hakke

Production
Il Varco Cinema

Contacts
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«Tonight is for real gamers only», Jim tells his friend Morten, when they gather in the virtual world on New Year's Eve to share a gaming session. On December 31st everybody makes valuations of their lives in the past year; Morten, however, is in the mood for a deeper reflection, which turns into a testimony of someone who can hardly recognize the line between fiction and reality. It is a vertigo, a chasm before which one can retreat returning to the real world, but it is not the only option. Is virtuality just a surrogate? Or is it a separate universe with its own status of existence? And why there should be a hierarchy?»— Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Andrea Gatopoulos (Pescara, 1994) is a film producer, director and distributor. He founded the production company Il Varco and has produced 16 short films, 3 feature films and the edition of 5 books. He is the artistic director of Il Varco - International Short Film Festival, and also founded the monthly Short Days in Rome, "Nuovo Cinema d'Abruzzo" screenings in Pescara, and Gargantua Film distribution. His film productions have been presented in more than 120 festivals worldwide including Venice SIC@SIC, Camerimage, IFFR Rotterdam, In the Palace, Drama, Cyprus, Rome Film Festival. As a director, he made *Onyricon* in 2015, *Spettri* in 2017, *Materia Celeste* in 2019, and *Polepole* in 2021. In 2020 he worked alongside Werner Herzog on his film *Accelerator* in Leticia, Colombia, where he developed the filmed correspondence *Lettere a Herzog*. He was among the finalists for the 2021/2022 Zavattini Prize.

Attraversando

WORLD PREMIÈRE

“Strada a senso unico”

– Viaggio intorno alla casa della mia vita

Aura Ghezzi



Italy, 2022
Full HD, colour, 15'
O.V. Italian

Director
Aura Ghezzi

Cinematography
Aura Ghezzi

Editing
Aura Ghezzi

Sound
Aura Ghezzi

Producer
Aura Ghezzi

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The confinements due to the pandemic have confronted each of us with loneliness, but being alone does not necessarily mean speaking with one voice. The soliloquy doubles into a dialogue between lovers, blurs into a quote from Walter Benjamin, and blends into the landscape of the empty station. Aura Ghezzi's film lights up with suggestions, small happenings open glimpses of worlds, deposited of the discourses of “outside,” now unattainable. Autobiography is reflected by the domestic space, the core where life is concentrated, but the words push in other directions as in a centrifugal motion. It is a journey in place, standing still encourages digression, reconsideration of what has been, on the painful threshold of a discard. The voice we listen to belongs to the author, of course, but we cannot match it to a face; rather, it is a cry that bounces between the objects, which are also sharers in an exceptional condition, a fracture, an anomalous time that does not, however, want to remain silent at any price. – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Aura Ghezzi (Rome, 1988) starts her artistic research in images, attending the studio of the painter Ruggero Savinio, and with cinema - as a child she was in Tonino De Bernardi's *Piccoli orrori* (1994) and in Pasquale Scimeca's *Passione di Giosuè l'Ebreo* (2005). She is the director of *Scordati* di Progetto Funes, dedicated to her mentor Luciano Emmer, which won a special Jury Mention at the 2009 Turin Film Festival. As an actress, she works in *Stiamo tutti male* by Leo Canali (2019) and *La reliquia* by Paolo Martini (2020). She takes part in *Gli ultimi giorni dell'umanità* by Alessandro Gagliardo and Enrico Ghezzi, out of competition at the 79th Venice Film Festival (2022). She works with the Tapodes Group in *Non so nemmeno se sono felice* by Luca De Bei (2019). In 2021/2022 she is on stage with *Le lacrime amare* di Petra von Kant by Maurizio Lupinelli. Since 2018 she has been working in the Tostacarusa company, which she co-founded.

Acasa

Rebecca Grigore

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 22'
O.V. Romanian, Italian

Director
Rebecca Grigore

Screenplay
Rebecca Grigore

Editing
Rebecca Grigore

Sound
Rebecca Grigore

Narrator
Nicolae Eugen Grigore

Production
RI-PRESE memory keepers

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The film begins with images of a cradle inside a house, the one that will welcome Rebecca Grigore, the director of *Acasa*. Behind the camera her father, Nicolae Eugen Grigore, and behind the images the story of a man who in 1996 decides to leave Romania to seek a better life in Italy. A decision made almost as a joke while sitting at a small table in a bar. The first years are not easy and Nicolae Eugen Grigore have to deal with the fear, anxiety, prejudices, and uncertainties that always accompany such journeys. The images start from the year 2000, from the desire to tell a new life to show it to family members who remained in Romania, so as to stay in touch, share the experience. Rebecca Grigore makes a journey backwards, chasing the memories that the images send back, searching inside this house and in the story of the journey for traces of the indelible experience of those who move away from their native places.

– Antonio Pezzuto

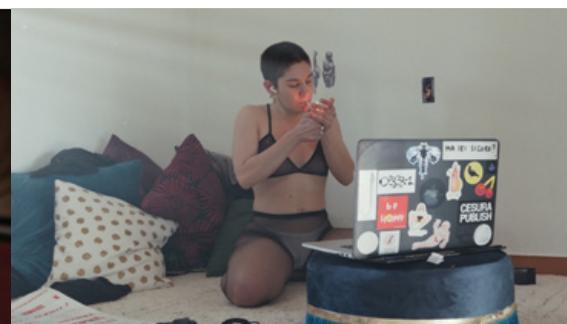
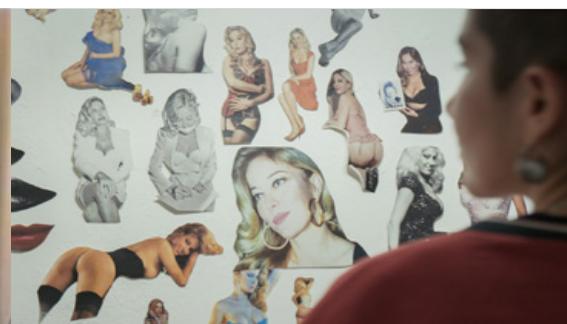
Biography

Rebecca Grigore (Padua, 2000), is attending a three-year degree program in Visual-Multimedia Arts at the IUAV University of Venice. During this course she discovered a passion for videomaking and home movies that led her to make her first short film, *Acasa*, which hybridizes these two interests.

Ama Osa

Marija Stefanija Linuza

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 48'
O.V. Italian

Director
Marija Stefanija Linuza

Cinematography
Margherita Duca

Editing
Leonardo Minati

Sound
Marija Stefanija Linuza

Production
Zelig

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Ama Osa is a film about the gaze. The gaze that we viewers turn towards Nao; the gaze that users of Onlyfans (the social platform on which pornographic material can be shared) turn towards Nao; Nao's gaze towards these users and towards her computer screen. Nao is a cam girl, and that's how she makes money. She shows her naked body to strangers. To some she asks for money; other times, in order to show her breasts, she only asks for the answer to a few general knowledge questions. Nao is an artist who lends her body to the network; who engages in obsessively cutting out images of female and androgynous bodies that she finds online and in magazines; who reflects on her own sexuality; and who discovers Moana Pozzi, a hardcore actress of the '80s and '90s, who was somehow considered one of the symbols of sexual liberation in Italy at the time. *Ama Osa* tells of a woman who frees herself from gender stereotypes («The various expectations that are determined by belonging to one sex. The simplest example boils down to how women are supposed to be pure, while men stoic and protective.»). Who, when walking down the street, with a hood over her head, could be mistaken for a boy. «In my opinion, a girl who decides to eroticize her body for income clashes precisely with society's expectations of what women should be, of how we should behave and how we should use our bodies. This film is a portrait of Nao herself reasoning about her own body, breaking beyond these expectations, not only concerning work, but also in the way in which she uses her body for her artistic research». – Antonio Pezzuto

Biography

Marija Stefanija Linuza (Riga, 1994) graduated in visual communication from the Janis Rozentals Art School in Riga. In 2018 she moved to Italy, where she was selected for the basic directing course at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome. In 2022 she graduated from the ZeLIG documentary school in Bolzano, with *Ama Osa* as her graduation film.

CONDOMINIO N°IMX172 Gaia Longobardi

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 18'
O.V. Italian

Director
Gaia Longobardi

Subject
Gaia Longobardi

Cinematography
Alessandro Ressia

Editing
Matteo Boscolo Gioachina

Sound
Bravagente Sound Agency,
Enrico Della Sala

Music
Anteros Oronzo Marra

Producer
Matteo Boscolo Gioachina

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What is an ecosystem composed of? Repeated gestures, words, and crossings animate the apartment building filmed by Gaia Longobardi. A place on the border between public and private where existences cross each other, a small world that goes on following its own rules. Yet, the director is not interested in the daily functioning of human micro society. The architectural signs, in their stubborn silence, seem more and more to want to say something. Their permanence in the presence of passing time and the lives of perpetually moving tenants, their geometric compositions, occupy space with an attitude unknown to us. In the interstices of what we have created to fulfill the housing function - with what spirit, then, did we build it? Imagining what life? - seems to make its way more and more insistently to another existence, parallel to our own. A different way of being in the world, but no less real; a breath and rhythm that cinema, perhaps because it is too grounded in the inorganic, can attempt to capture. – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Gaia Longobardi (Ravenna, 2000) has always been passionate about photography and chose to attend the Artistic High School for multimedia arts. Her interest in images and stories soon became a love for cinema. So she moved to Milan to attend the Media Design course in NABA, starting to work on short films in the directing department.

Racconto Giulio Melani

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
16mm transferred to digital,
colour, 13'
O.V. Italian

Director
Giulio Melani

Screenplay
Giulio Melani

Cinematography
Giulio Melani

Editing
Giulio Melani

Sound
Cesar Lopopolo

Interpreter
Ian Gualdani

Producer
Giulio Melani

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A boy moves through an abandoned space, looking for something. He finally finds a stone, picks it up, smells it, buries it. What's hidden in this object? And what's behind that young man's gesture similar to a mysterious ritual? Around that building which has lost its original use, vegetation richly explodes in bright colors, it invades the concrete, penetrates the structure until redefines its appearance. Plants have grown uncontrolled in a landscape without recognizable references, suspended in a timelessness that makes it appearing even more creepy. The only human figure is the boy who's almost swallowed up by it, the sounds are unintelligible voices, dry fragments of conversations and ditties also "out of time". We hear: «when love comes...»: where does this come from? Melani's work weaves multiple filters and suggestions, contaminating his own image with physical pictorial substance. Plants – far from Romanticism - suddenly appear grainy, enlarged, dilated; pulp like flesh, ribbing beyond the surface of appearance, in forms referring to anatomy. In this nature's details - and in a condition of suspended humanity - the director looks for traces of memory, something that has been, what is left and its mutations; the untold stories whose presence persists in the matter, smells, stone. And beyond the visible, he plunges the gaze into an unexpected dimension. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

Giulio Melani (Florence, 1995) is a cinematographer and director. After graduating in Painting at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Florence and in Cinema at the Brera's Accademia in Milan, his passion for light led him to work with Cinematography and Cinema to which he applies the chromatic and compositional sensibilities acquired in his painting career. In 2019 he presented *Astronomo* in the Perspectives competition at Filmmaker, and in 2020 *Dafne*.

Ctrl+Z

Giulia Olivieri

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD stereo, colour, 55'
O.V. Italian

Director
Giulia Olivieri

Editing
Giulia Olivieri

Production
La Bête

Producer
Fabrizio Polpettini

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The Hikikomori are people who have chosen to “stay on the sidelines” (this is the literal translation of the word). People who have decided to withdraw from life, to shut themselves up in their own homes, delegating their very few social relationships to the virtual world only. A strange form of psychic distress involving thousands of young people (in Italy it is assumed to be over 150,000), boys and girls between 20 and 35 years of age, who are unable to recognize themselves in any “systematized” malaise. And with the pandemic, this desire to exclude oneself from the world has become even more radicalized. Giulia Olivieri has decided to change her point of view, and has put herself heavily into play, trying to live in this strange dimension, to tell it, but also and above all to tell how easy it is to become one of them: how easy it is to hide, how it is possible that those around us do not even realize the situation. *Ctrl Z* is a personal diary in which one does not wonder why one decides to exclude oneself from the world, but, rather, a film in which we see a woman who has decided to live in this invisible universe inhabited by people who tend towards the invisible. But don't think that the choice to isolate yourself is a cowardly one. On the contrary, «there is a refusal, it's a resounding “no” that silently screams from their rooms, where they lock themselves up because they can't stand the performance anxiety that social standards make us feel, thus demonstrating a sort of “resistance”».

– Antonio Pezzuto

Biography

Giulia Olivieri (Milano, 1990) is an author, filmmaker, video artist and editor who lives and works between Italy and France. She graduated both from the Brera Academy of Fine Arts and from the Civica di Cinema Luchino Visconti. In 2015 she made, with a group of friends, *Morandi 7.1*, released by Discovery, and the short *Yurong*. In 2016 she made the VR documentary *Domani, 2 giugno 1945* as a diploma essay of the Civica, and she exhibited some of her video art works at PAC Milan and the Ex Borsa Valori in Turin. She moved to Paris in 2016 where she started working on *Ctrl + Z* and realized her second project in VR, *Psychopompos*, selected to participate in the Biennale College of Venice. She worked as an editor on Andrea De Fusco's documentary, *Shambala*.

Tatiana

Emma Onesti

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
4K, colour, 16'
O.V. English, Russian, Italian

Director
Emma Onesti

Screenplay
Emma Onesti

Cinematography
Emma Onesti

Editing
Emma Onesti

Sound
Emma Onesti

Interpreter
Tatiana Brodatch

Producer
Emma Onesti

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Collective and personal histories have intermingled in Tatiana Brodatch's life, until she found an outlet in the only possible expression for healing: art. Born in Moscow to a Jewish family, Brodatch began sculpting by accident when she picked up plasticine one “happy day.” Emma Onesti, in her first film, opens a window into the artist's life and inspiration by following the making of a marble statue. This is also a first time for Brodatch; she had never sculpted that material before, and what is more, for a large work. Normally in fact her statues are small and fragile, representing naked figures, completely exposed. The artist projects herself onto those bodies, representing tensions and conflicts but also a continually threatened freedom, to be defended at all costs, «something Westerners cannot understand». Her drawings guide us on this little journey until when we and the author are forced to separate from the statue, letting it go to a faraway place where it will lead its autonomous existence – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Emma Onesti (Salerno, 1999) graduated in Arts, Entertainment and Cultural Events in 2020 at Iulm University in Milan, where she is currently a master's student in Cinema, Television and New Media. *Tatiana* is her first film, born as a university project for the Documentary Cinema workshop held by Andrea Caccia.

Dog Bite, Horse Kick

Elsa Sohlberg

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 2'
O.V. English

Director
Elsa Sohlberg

Cinematography
Elsa Sohlberg

Editing
Elsa Sohlberg

Sound
Elsa Sohlberg,
Robert Kloch

Producer
Elsa Sohlberg

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What is the interval between the word and the image? In this question lies Elsa Sohlberg's film. A mapping of the body through its scars - signs of the friction of happenings, a legacy in itself a-significant that is, however, juxtaposed with words. Words create a parallel series of traces condensing the history of those tissue anomalies. Matter and semiotics. It is a poetic exercise, inheriting the echo of that pain, even small, once suffered, that open to a new composition by positing further meaning. The film ends with a narrative, because each trace drags a memory, a whole that was condensed in that specific point, becoming part of that unique signifying surface that is the body of each of us. - Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Elsa Sohlberg (Ystad, 1993) is a Swedish artist who studied Visual Arts at NABA in Milan. She is currently residing in Malmö, Sweden. In her work she uses a storytelling approach, often with an autobiographical perspective. Although alternating between different mediums, her expression of choice is video and text.

AHE GAO

Federica Zotti

WORLD PREMIÈRE



Italy, 2021
Mini DV, colour, 6'51"
no dialogues

Director
Federica Zotti

Performer
Claude Green

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federicazotti.24@gmail.com

A seven-minute sequence shot, filmed with handheld camera. In front of the camera is a young girl with her tongue out and eyes open. A kind of performer where an originated in manga expression is mimicked and has since become so popular in the cosplayers and it-girls aesthetic that it has even managed to establish its presence in pornographic imagery. *Ahegao* is, in fact, a Japanese term for a facial expression, almost grotesque, that one assumes during sex, at the moment of orgasm: rolling eyes, protruding tongue, flushed face. Federica Zotti, whose artistic practice is always sensitive to the manifestations of sexuality and its narrative, by filming almost motionless with a mini dv this image, dilutes time and annihilates the emotions of the gesture, creating a staging that decontextualizes and displaces the viewer's gaze. - Antonio Pezzuto

Biography

Federica Zotti (Chiari, 1991) studied graphic design and New Technologies of Art at the Brera Academy. Her works have been exhibited in numerous events, including Talent video awards - Careof - Milan; Mulhouse 017, Biennale de la jeune création contemporaine, Mulhouse; Finart - Festival Internacional de Artes Gráficas - São Paulo; Videozero, Milan, Photissima festival / Turin. Since 2019 she collaborates with Phroom Platform and works between Brescia and Milan, where she lives.

Rumore

Luana Giardino

WORLD PREMIÈRE
OUT OF COMPETITION



Italy, 2022
16mm, colour, 8'
No dialogues

Director
Luana Giardino

Cinematography
Luana Giardino

Editing
Luana Giardino

Sound
Luana Giardino

Music
Enrico Malatesta,
Attila Faravelli

Interpreters
Serena Crocco,
Cecilia Banfi,
Chiara Grandini,
Marta Gavazzi,
Silvia Crighenti,
Giacomo Tentori,
Gloria Mantegazza,
Giulio Scaccabarozzi

Production
Luana Giardino

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A group of young people climb in single file up the mountain, the natural landscape and the transformations wrought by human beings unfold on the Magnodeno, in the province of Lecco. The act of listening represents a conflict, which acquires an even deeper meaning where the boys and girls engaged in the exploration are part of the Silence Laboratory, an association composed of deaf and hearing people. Violence finally manifests itself in the quarries, an invasive activity carried on for more than a century for the production of lime. Giardino films this wounding of the mountain, and then the buildings downstream, along the shores of Lake Como. What is the relationship between those houses and the Magnodeno? Must human beings necessarily destroy, in order to defend its safety? The young people poetically traverse this place of contradictions, as if to remind us that in the end there is no synthesis or explanation, only an attempt at coexistence. – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Luana Giardino (Milan, 1988) graduated in Painting at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, later approached the audiovisual language experimenting with videos, installations and short films. She then attended the Documentary course at the Luchino Visconti Civic School of Cinema, and is currently concluding her academic path with a specialization in Cinema and Video. Giardino is a reference videomaker for several theater companies and arts associations. In 2020 she made the short documentary film *O Fantasma*.





*BELA TARR,
L'Outrenoir*

The Adventure of Cinema as Cosmology

Luigi Abiusi

The importance of Bela Tarr's cinema, regardless of the depth of the signs that make up his cinema, the texture of his work, the incisiveness of his writing, it is inscribed both in the history and in the story of the cinephilia of the nineties, in which he left an unmistakable mark and of which he was one of the coryphaei. A director like Gus Van Sant, having assimilated Tarr's lesson precisely in those years, then made a film like *Gerry* (2002) that owes everything, as he declares on a blue background, to the Hungarian director: from the sequence-shots to the slow dollies, to the characters lost in the nothingness of deserts, steppes and marshes. Not to mention such filmmakers as Mundruczó, Ceylan, Lav Diaz, Vasyanovych, the last two surely the best examples of how that "phenomenological" cinema (the phenomenon, trajectories, cinematographic silhouettes showing their flagrancy) is still alive, crawling with astonishing sequence-shots.

In short, it is the affair that in Italy concerns the nocturnal, hyaline, Orphic-like screenings of *Fuori Orario* in which an adventure of the gaze was triggered from time to time, in the shade: reflections, shadow games, beyond the scialitic light of spectacle, of consumerist cinema. Excluded from the theatres, except in special screenings, because of the rough and uncompromising approach of his cinema, not at all attractive for distributions, Bela Tarr was the "cathode king" of the cinephilia of the 1990s, but also one of the major points of reference for an aesthetics of cinema (and a history of cinema, always on the verge of making itself, renewing itself) that, in those years, was enriched by extraordinary contributions: in addition to Tarr, also by an auteur like Sharunas Bartas so similar to Tarr, at least to the height of *Trys Dienos* (1991), i.e., directors in limine, walking on the threshold that separates (assuming it separates and does not unite) the classical from the avant-garde, the rudimentary from the experimental, the narrative from the rhapsodic vision and ultimately imposes a cinematic vision as ontology. In the nineties, when *Sátántangó* (1994) appeared, the impression was, indeed the awareness was, that of being part of – an instrument of – an adventure of the gaze projected beyond the contours of apparent things on the screen, within a pure, autogenous cinematic dimension that arose not beyond the referent of reality, but by an extreme, protracted sedimentation of this referent, of the mimetic datum, as a psychedelic dilation of the detail, of the cinematic sign. It is about the osmosis between the forces of the off-screen, the invisible that fades away in the hyperuranium of potential (of what could be and pushes to be, to materialize on the screen) and the forms that ossify - in that aleatory paste that is the image - curdling transparent thrusts, the movement that overpowers by becoming apparent, semblance.

Perdition (1988), which would be the displuvium between Tarr's first cinematic experience and the following, the definitive result of *The Turin Horse* (2011), highlights this procedure, unfolding the syntagma of the sequence shots and showing its purely aesthetic nature, the flagrant creation of forms within time, because of time, within the dilated time that weaves the grain, the space of vision, subtracting it from consumption and elevating it to an entity, an ontology, a surface of truths (in the plural, in the Nietzschean meaning) rather than of reality: a cinematic syntax related to directors such as Jancsó and Antonioni (the archetype is the final sequence-shot of *The Passenger*) that started from the gaze on reality and then transcended it - by force of fixity, obsessiveness of the eye on the phenomenon - precisely in relation to that gaze, to that sequence-shot.

Before that, there had been the committed, sociological apprenticeship of films made since the late 1970s: use of 16mm, black and white, hand-held camera, functional to the investigation of the condition of Hungary since the post-World War II period, amid unemployment, lack of housing, etc., i.e., a temporariness, an extreme poverty of individuals that would later be one of the hallmarks of Tarr's mature cinema, acquiring, however, a cosmological significance, beyond History: a sort of dissertation on human nature and Nature, the cosmos.

The connection between these phases is probably constituted by a television experience he had in 1982, the transposition of *Macbeth*, when he "discovered" the exceptional consequences of the sequence-shot that was ideal to narrate in a haunting continuity, the dense, asphyxiating environment and the controversies of the Danish court. From there, from the History - however literary, mediated by Shakespeare - Tarr arrives at ahistorical dimensions, even when temporal indications are given, as in *The Turin Horse* (Turin, 1889). Villages, sparse farms, connected by windy roads, immersed in the black-and-white weather in which sudden omens act: a ghostly ringing of bells in *Sátántangó*; the appearance of a circus, of a stuffed whale, of its eye deepening in its dizzying fixity in the case of *Werckmeister Harmonies*.

It is the phenomenal, the flagrancy of the cinematic phenomenon, of figures in motion, within the atmospheric or coincident with the atmospheric, broad allegory of the human, of the tragic human affair. It is the image-elements that declines into image-rain, image-cold, image-wind (synecdoche and, at the same time, metaphor for the human condition), in whose "crystal" it is possible to contemplate a moment of unspeakable humanity: the bony, wrinkled, inert old man, who appears, lives, begins to live and to be when the movement of the sequence-shot discovers him, naked, exhausted, helpless in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, who has the same dignity as the horse of Turin, that, violently lashed by its master, upsets Nietzsche once and for all. Bela Tarr's cinema is this shock, this upheaval in the face of innocence, of humanity abused, raped, where black and white is the rough atmosphere in which this affair takes place: the mud, the dirt, the nasties of the world that appear in rough, primitive light contrasts. Yet it is a cinema that does not annihilate itself, does not pursue an easy cynicism, and that finds reasons for subsistence, a reason for being, in the aesthetic (and not aestheticizing) choices, in the very possibility of filming and indulging in the hypnotic dilation of the sequence-shot. Metaphysical cinema then, whose sense lies in itself, in its own visual matter that fibrillates, that is continuously macerated in the active principle of its own protracted black and white, representing one of the highest points of the making, unmaking of the moving image.



Werckmeister Harmonies

Béla Tarr

Hungary, France, Germany,
Italy 2000
35mm, b/n, 145'
O.V. Hungarian

Director
Béla Tarr

Screenplay
László Krashanhorkai,
Béla Tarr

Cinematography
Patrick de Ranter,
Miklós Gurbán

Editing
Agnes Hranitzky

Music
Mihály Vig

Interpreters
Lars Rudolph,
Peter Fitz,
Hanna Schygulla

Producers
Franz Goëss,
Paul Saadoun,
Miklos Szita,
Joachim von Vientinghoff

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«When I make a film I don't think too much about the meanings that there may be. There is nothing "ideological", a film of mine is not a demonstration on art or philosophy, even if it is the result of very long reasoning and work» (Béla Tarr). This is what runs through *Werckmeister Harmonies*, from the initial sequence shot, about ten minutes long, in which drunk men talk about the planets and the eclipse before the eyes of Janos, an innocent and bewildered young man. The place is an unnamed village in the Hungarian plain from which we will never leave, whose daily life is disrupted by the arrival of a circus. Despite the intense cold, people flock to the streets to see the promised attraction: the carcass of a huge whale. A mysterious man, the Prince, of whom only the shadow is seen, who speaks in an unknown language and predicts destruction, also takes refuge in the truck that transports the animal. Tension builds until it explodes with terrible violence. Each frame is a world, characters inhabit it, there they meet, separate, their destinies cruelly intertwine. Reality vibrates in a harmony of things that does not exist, that may have existed in the distant past. What the eye of the whale (of the camera? Of the viewer?) shows us is the eternal story of the universe. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

Béla Tarr (Pécs, 1955) made his first films at the age of sixteen. He then worked at Balázs Béla Stúdió where he made his first feature film, *Családi tűzfészek* (*Family Nest*, 1977), which was followed by the short film *Hotel Magnezit* (1978). In the same years he studied at the Budapest Academy of Theatre and Film and in 1981 he was among the founders of Társulás Filmstúdió. From 1985, the year the studio closed, he worked as an independent filmmaker. During this period he made *Szabadgyalog* (*The Outsider*, 1981); *Macbeth* (1982); *Panelkapcsolat* (*The Prefab People*, 1982). *Őszi almanach* (*Almanac of Fall*, 1985) is in competition at the Locarno Film Festival. In 1988 *Karhozat* (*Perdition*) - «the story of a betrayal», established him internationally. Between 1989 and 1990 he lived in Berlin as an artist-in-residence at DAAD Berliner-Künstlerprogram, and from 1990 to 2011 he was a lecturer at DFFB - the Berlin School of Film and Television. In 1994 he directs *Satantango* after László Krashanhorkai's novel, the film was presented at the Berlinale Forum where it won the Caligari Award. This was followed by the short *Journey on the Plain* (1995) and *Werckmeister harmóniák* (*Werckmeister Harmonies*, 2000). *A londoni férfi* (*The Man from London*, 2007) was presented in competition at the Cannes Film Festival. With *A torinói ló* (*The Turin Horse*, 2011), Silver Bear at the Berlinale, he announced his retirement from filmmaking. The following year he started the Film Factory in Sarajevo, of which he was director and lecturer until 2016. In 2017 he organized the exhibition *Till the End of the World* at the Eye Filmmuseum in Amsterdam. The installation *Missing People* (2019) presented in Vienna, at Wiener Festwochen, includes performance and images.



Out of Competition

ERIC BAUDELAIRE

MATTIA COLOMBO

MASSIMO D'ANOLFI

MITRA FARAHANI

GIANLUCA MATARRESE

MORGAN MENEGAZZO

MARTINA PARENTI

MARIA CHIARA PERNISA

FREDERICK WISEMAN

When There is No More Music to Write, and Other Roman Stories

Éric Baudelaire

France, Italy, 2022
Super 8 and archival
material, colour, 59'
O.V. English, Italian

Director
Éric Baudelaire

Cinematography
Éric Baudelaire

Editing
Claire Atherton

Original Music
Alvin Curran,
Musica Elettronica Viva

Production
Poulet Malassis Films

Producer
Éric Baudelaire

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Rome, the 1970s, the echo of the streets, the squares resound with voices, footsteps, people running, singing, politics, the struggles of those who still dream and want to imagine a different society and future every day. But there are also the gun shots when the Red Brigades kidnap Aldo Moro marking a very deep caesura in that time and its utopias. Then everything will be different, and nothing will seem possible. There, in a city that was not yet a postcard city, a number of young musicians had met in the previous decade, when they came to Europe mostly from America looking for a space for their own idea of music, which was also a utopia, and which wanted to upset the rules of those who had preceded them. Among them was Alvin Curran, musician, composer, one of the founders of Musica Elettronica Viva, a central figure in contemporary music. He is the narrator of the film and the memory that weaves its threads through a story full of desires, energy, improvisation of life, but also conflict and violence. Those musicians who followed a collective, horizontal principle, with no conductor and no scores, looking for a relationship with the public instead, encapsulate the feeling of time, of a revolution sought in every moment of everyday life. Baudelaire mixes Curran's narrative with other fragments, other "Roman stories": the images of Annabella Miscuglio, filmmaker, feminist, another narrator of the time; the story of the florist who had the stall where Moro was kidnapped. And following the "track" of Curran's sonority, he composes through artistic research the narrative of a contradictory and vital era. — Cristina Piccino

Biography

Éric Baudelaire (Salt Lake City, 1973) is a filmmaker and artist. After studying Political Science, he began a research using different media, cinematography, printmaking, performance and installations. In 2011 he made *L'Anabase de May et Fusako Shigenobu, Masao Adachi et 27 années sans images*, followed by *The Ugly One* (2013); *Lettres à Max* (2014); *Also Known As Jihadi* (2017). *Un film dramatique* (2019) was presented in Filmmaker's international competition. *Un Fleur à la Bouche* (2022), a reinterpretation of Pirandello's text, was presented at the Berlinale Forum. His films have been invited and awarded at numerous international festivals, from Locarno to Toronto, Rotterdam, and New York. His solo shows have been hosted at the Witte de With, Rotterdam, the Fridericianum in Kassel, the Berkeley Art Museum, Bétonsalon, Paris, and in fall 2017 at the Centre Pompidou. His works are, in addition, exhibited in the collections of the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, Macba in Barcelona, MoMA, and the Whitney Museum in New York.



A Liberating Disorientation

— Eugenio Renzi

Alain Tanner argued that «editing [is progressive because] assembles shots according to a critical and dialectical relationship, while *découpage* [is conservative because] it assembles images in a fluid and invisible way to show a world without contradictions». Of course, there is a certain type of editing which, through a skillful use of the junctions chosen in the *découpage* and staging phases, produces a feeling of continuity between the shots. And there is another type of editing which, by juxtaposing shots that don't seem to be guided by a narrative plot, produces the effect of a break. Classic Hollywood cinema reached maturity in the first way, which generally takes the name of "classical form" or "invisible editing", in the second half of the 1930s. As for the second way, it's like a snake that emerges at certain moments, as in the Soviet avant-garde cinema of the 1920s, and then disappears and appears again.

It's this dialectical snake that the French-American filmmaker Éric Baudelaire searches in his film *When There is No More Music to Write*, and the two parts that make it up are a first example of a dialectical montage that the sequences repeat to a lower scale as in a fractal pattern. In the first part, entitled *Four flat tires*, the director manipulates photographs and archive images of the Aldo Moro's kidnapping. These images are partly explained by some captions, in which the director takes up three testimonies of the kidnapping of the president of Democrazia Cristiana: that of the Florist Spiriticchio and that of two members of Brigade Rosse, Anna Laura Braghetti and Barbara Balzerani. This first clash of points of view is already accompanied by the music of Alvin Curran, anticipating the second part which is entirely dedicated to the American composer. Here, Curran's voice recalls some personal experiences in the Rome of the 60s and 70s. Experiences that translate into more general considerations on contemporary music, on the artistic revolution, on the very meaning of art. What do the florist Spiriticchio, Aldo Moro, Brigade Rosse and Curran's music have in common?

When There is No More Music to Write is not the first film in which Éric Baudelaire invites us to consider the link between artistic radicalism and political radicalism (of the 70s). Curran seems to identify this link with a feeling that he himself describes in terms of a liberating disorientation. The disorientation comes from realizing that, from the point of view of classical or narrative art, everything has already been said, written, composed or filmed. There's nothing more to write again. Instead of producing a castrating effect, this acknowledgment is paradoxically liberating: when the classical point of view is abandoned, everything becomes possible. Baudelaire's film is both a declaration and an illustration of this liberation.

Il posto – A Steady Job

Mattia Colombo, Gianluca Matarrese



Italy, France, 2022
4K, colour, 75'
O.V. Italian

Director
Mattia Colombo,
Gianluca Matarrese

Screenplay
Mattia Colombo,
Gianluca Matarrese

Cinematography
Jacopo Loiodice,
Mattia Colombo

Editing
Valentina Cicogna,
Giorgia Villa

Sound
Massimo Mariani

Music
Cantautoma

Production
Altara Films,
Bocalupo Films

Producer
Giovanni Donfrancesco

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Each month hundreds of people leave Southern Italy for the North, with the hope of finding a “permanent job”. They are the commuters for public competitions, people who obstinately chase the possibility of a stable job, a starting point from which to plan a new life and financial security. *A Steady Job* is a road movie that follows the path of aspiring health workers, of future nurses. There are many competitions and very few places available. Eventually, one of these job-seekers, Raffaele, decides to create a small business that provides competitors with a low cost transport service: buses that travel the highways at night, from the province of Campania up to the competition venues. Mattia Colombo and Gianluca Matarrese travel on dozens of these buses, following the journeys and conversations of the competitors, with their worries, fears, dreams and hopes for a different future. With the pandemic, however, everything has changed; the competitions are held according to a new set of procedures and the small transport company is doomed to fail. Raffaele himself then gets on his own bus to participate in a competition with the hope of winning that “permanent job” in a hospital in the North. That permanent job that will finally guarantee some peace of mind. – Antonio Pezzuto

Biographies

Mattia Colombo (Treviglio, 1982) made his debut with the short *Il Vélo*, presented in various international film festivals. In 2014 he made *Alberi che camminano (Trees that walk)*, written together with Erri De Luca. With *Voglio dormire con te (I want to sleep with you, 2015)* he was a finalist in Filmmaker’s In Progress Lab; Premio Solinas; and won the Corso Salani Prize. Subsequently, he made both *Il Passo* (co-directed with Alessandra Locatelli and Francesco Ferri) and *Ritmo Sbilenco*, a documentary about Elio and the Tense Stories, as a special event at the Rome Film Festival. In 2017 he directed *Uninvited*, later followed by *B Heroes* in 2021.

Gianluca Matarrese (Turin, 1980) lives in Paris, where he has worked for French television since 2012. In 2019 he won the Best Documentary Award at the Turin Film Festival with *Fuori Tutto. La dernière séance* had its première at the International Critics’ Week in Venice, where it won the Queer Lion. In 2022 he made *Fashion Babylon*, awarded at the CPH: DOX.

Travelling Towards the Future — Antonio Pezzuto

It was 1961 when Ermanno Olmi directed *Il posto*, the story of the day in the life of a boy who arrives in Milan to participate in a job competition for a large company. A day that will change his life. He will find a job, and also a likely girlfriend, a girl who is herself struggling with the same competition. Olmi’s film is a film that looks to the future, because the perspective the young man aspires to is precisely the construction of a different future.

Sixty years have since passed, and hundreds of people still must win a competition in order to imagine a future. This is the case for the aspiring nurses, a multitude that every month traverse the country from Southern Italy to reach those places where the competitions are held. There are not many available jobs, the candidates are numerous, the hopes of winning are low. It is therefore necessary to find other possibilities, to invent new opportunities. So one of them, who has participated in dozens of these competitions, created a low cost bus service to accompany candidates, leaving in the middle of the night from the Neapolitan province in order to reach the exam sites by dawn.

The current situation compared to that told by Olmi is obviously completely different. We are no longer experiencing the economic boom; Milan and Turin are no longer the Eldorado where anyone could find accommodation; there is the crisis and there has been Covid, which has reduced the number of competitions, and, even more so, has frustrated aspirations and dreams. Mattia Colombo and Gianluca Matarrese got on board these buses, to observe an Italy so well-known but also so forgotten, of which no one speaks in the electoral programs or in the television broadcasts.

It is not the first time that the two directors have tried their hand at stories that tell the drama contained in a moment of passage of existence. From Matarrese we can remember *Fuori Tutto*, the film about the bankruptcy of a family business and the closure of shops, or *La dernière séance* in which he traces the end of a relationship and the birth of a completely different and new one. The ending of a relationship was also the starting point for *Voglio dormire con te*, the documentary by Mattia Colombo on the lives of four couples who represent «a generation excluded from security, from trust in future things, from long-term planning. A generation nourished by the idea of having to cultivate their freedoms and ambitions, but which often clashes with a system that does not allow stable investments in its future». That is the same generation presented in this film. Because even if the world of aspiring nurses may seem very distant to many of us, in reality *Il Posto* «speaks - say the directors - of the generation of years of mobility and flexibility, lost in uncertainty but still eager for stability and a place in the world. A generation that we both know, since we, too, are part of it ». In the film by Matarrese and Colombo we will not see anyone win the competition, we will not see anyone able to build a new future; instead, the buses continue to move back and forth along our highways, the lives of these aspiring nurses remain stationary, motionless, because their future is, perhaps, only this interminable wait.

A day in the Archive of Piero Bottoni

Massimo D'Anolfi, Martina Parenti

Italy, 2022
2K, colour and b/n, 35'
O.V. Italian

Director
Massimo D'Anolfi,
Martina Parenti

Screenplay
Massimo D'Anolfi,
Martina Parenti

Cinematography
Massimo D'Anolfi

Editing
Massimo D'Anolfi,
Martina Parenti

Sound
Martina Parenti

Music
Massimo Mariani

Interpreters
Giancarlo Consonni,
Graziella Tonon

Production
Montmorency Film
in collaboration with Rai
Cinema, with the contribution of
Pic-Regione Lombardia,
Politecnico di Milano,
Archivio Piero Bottoni, thanks to
the support of Cineteca Milano

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The work of the Milanese architect and urban planner Piero Bottoni seen through his archives shows a treasure of photographs and 16mm and 8mm reels, preserved by Giancarlo Consonni and Graziella Tonon. Through their reconstruction, concentrated in the period at the turn of World War II, the figure of Bottoni is gradually defined as that of a professional devoted to the mission of building a decent habitat for working-class people, effectively revolutionizing the Triennale, which until then was focused mostly on the housing needs of the upper middle class. Later on, the war itself would provide the impulse for the construction of the QT8 neighborhood; in the pictures of that period we see the physical effort of the many engaged in the work, the manual labor required for the realization of a concrete improvement. Bottoni, from the top of Mount Stella - a hill built with the rubble that came from the destroyed buildings in the rest of the city - observes the neighborhood together with the painter Fernand Léger, as if to show the inseparable union between the arts, which share an imaginative impulse that, in the architect's case, also became the possibility of a rebirth and hope in a future in which housing was guaranteed for all. – Lucrezia Ercolani

Biographies

Martina Parenti (Milano, 1972) and Massimo D'Anolfi (Pescara, 1974) made their debut in 2007 with *I promessi sposi*. Selected at the Locarno Film Festival, the film won the Festival dei Popoli and Filmmaker. This was followed by *Grandi speranze* (2009) shot between Italy and China, which also entered the Locarno selection, and *Il castello* (2011), set entirely in Malpensa airport, which won numerous awards at various international festivals. *Materia oscura* (2014), presented at Berlinale 63, won the Human Rights Best Film award at Bafici in Buenos Aires and, as best documentary, at Terra di Cinema - Festival de Tremblay-en-France. With *L'infinita fabbrica del Duomo* (2015), presented in competition at Filmmaker, begins their exploration of the elements of nature and the tension toward immortality, culminating in *Spira mirabilis* (2016), in competition at the 73rd Venice Film Festival. *Guerra e pace* (2020), focused on the French Air Force archives, was presented in Orizzonti at the 77th Venice Film Festival and at Filmmaker.



The Miracle Mountain — Lucrezia Ercolani

The construction of a house is deeply linked with a constellation of meanings that concern the life of human beings on the planet: the need for security, the sharing of space, organization in society. It is interesting, however, that the film *Una giornata nell'Archivio Piero Bottoni* starts from the link between body and architectural sign, as if constructing meant outsourcing, replicating an archetypal pattern of an organism. Piero Bottoni had started studying architecture and, at the same time, drawing at the Brera Academy, thus handling a tool that allowed «the imaginative relationship with the world» as Giancarlo Consonni explains - with Graziella Tonon our guide in the Milanese architect's archive.

However Massimo D'Anolfi and Martina Parenti choose to give voice to Bottoni himself, through recordings and excerpts from his book *Una nuova antichissima bellezza*. Through the photos and films that flow before our eyes, the dream of a «Milanese mountain» then arises, a dream that had accompanied the architect since his graduation. The occasion to achieve it is not the happiest: it is the rubble of the war, of the devastated city, that must find a place to «rest». Piero Bottoni, ten days after the liberation from fascism, was in fact appointed extraordinary commissioner of the Triennale and decided to devote its eighth edition entirely to the theme of housing, which he had already been passionate about in the 1930s, when he had begun to show an interest in the living conditions of factory workers. The «dignity of the human being inside the dwelling» is the goal to be achieved, and it was certainly not an easy goal, when you look at the photos of the shacks in Sesto San Giovanni, that show edgy living conditions. This is the city depicted in *Miracolo in Milan*, misery made even harder by the war. But more than miracles there was a need for concrete actions to give a home to the many displaced people, and this is where the design and construction of the QT8 neighborhood fits in.

Something «miraculous,» however, appears: it is Mount Stella, the «little mountain of San Siro». Bottoni had initially thought of an artificial lake to coexist with the large green spaces of the neighborhood, where the architect had also placed some Renaissance statues for his organic conception that included human being, civilization and living space. However, the concavity of the land was not enough to collect the rubble that arrived daily from the narrow-gauge railway built for the occasion. Although already envisioned in the past, the Mount is thus an unexpected event that the architect embraces, and the hill becomes a kind of silent deity watching over the neighborhood, over that newfound dignity that our gaze, conditioned by decades of unrestrained cementification, is invited to recognize. As Bottoni himself states, «If Mount Stella was born, grew, became covered with trees, paths and roads, it is because it was a dream and a poem and because I believed in it. Because dream and poetry move the world, despite appearances».

A vendredi, Robinson Mitra Farahani

France, Switzerland, Iran,
Lebanon, 2022
HD, colour, 96'
O.V. Farsi, French, English

Director
Mitra Farahani

Screenplay
Mitra Farahani

Cinematography
Daniel Zafer,
Mitra Farahani,
Fabrice Aragno

Editing
Mitra Farahani,
Fabrice Aragno,
Yannick Kergoat

Sound
Daniel Zafer,
Fabrice Aragno

Interpreters
Jean-Luc Godard,
Ebrahim Golestan

Production
Ecran noir productions

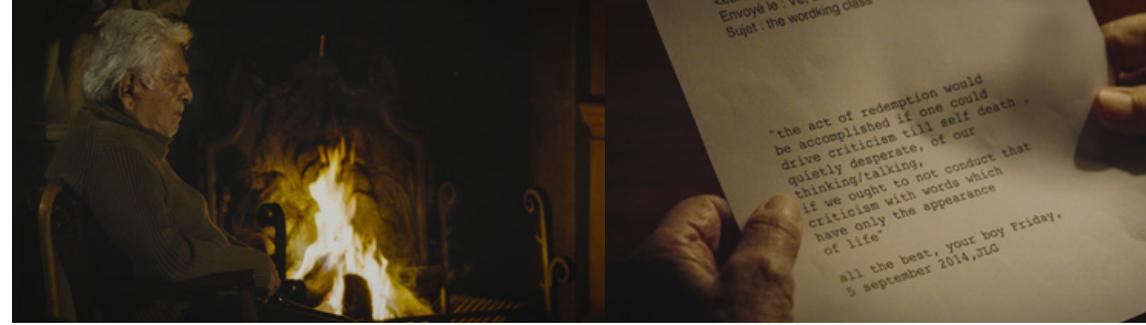
Producer
Mitra Farahani

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Jean-Luc Godard and Ebrahim Golestan never met. For that matter: why would they? What could have united the Swiss filmmaker and the Iranian producer and director? The former, an inspirer of cinematic modernity, known throughout the world; the latter more “secretive”, less well known despite the fact that the birth of auteur filmmaking in Iran in the 1960s and 1970s is due to him. What if the *Nouvelle Vague* is indeed their point of contact? The film’s director, who is Iranian, united to both of them by a relationship of closeness and friendship, is convinced of this. «In the 1960s Godard and Golestan changed the language of cinema» she says. So she creates the opportunity: a long-distance email correspondence. They will write mails every Friday before midnight. The result is an exchange that crosses culture and imagination, revealing opposing views on art: Golestan’s love of clarity on the one hand, Godard’s taste for puns and riddles on the other. In between is Mitra, trying to recompose a seemingly unbridgeable distance. Yet beyond painting, writing and films, the two artists humanly have much in common. Advanced age, and with it the feeling of aging, illness and death. Which Mitra tries to keep away by revealing - in those interiors as antithetical as those who inhabit them - an unexpected intimacy. And now that Godard is gone, this is an even more precious document. — Cristina Piccino

Biography

Mitra Farahani (Tehran, 1975) is an artist, director, and producer. After attending university in Tehran and studying at the School of Art in Paris, she made her first film, *Juste une femme*, a portrait of a young trans woman in the Iranian capital, in 2001. This was followed by *Tabous* (2004), an exploration of sexuality in her society suffocated by theocracy, and *Fifi hurle de joie* (2013), an encounter with Iranian artist Bahman Mohassess, who disappeared into oblivion in his exile in Rome: the film was presented and won awards at numerous international festivals. Producer of Godard’s *Le livre d’image* (2018), Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, with *A vendredi, Robinson* won the Special Jury Prize in the Encounters section of the Berlinale.



Correspondence for a Missed Encounter — Cristina Piccino

What do Jean-Luc Godard and Ebrahim Golestan have in common? Of the former we know a great deal beginning with the fact that he was, with his work, the inspiration of all cinematic modernity. Of the latter a little less even though his figure is equally revolutionary. A director, writer, producer with a central role in Iranian culture, he left Iran for England in the 1970s. His name is linked to a work that has long remained a secret and yet entered myth: *The house is black* (1962) by filmmaker and poet Forough Farrokhzad, who died young in 1967 in a car accident, and whom Bernardo Bertolucci liked to remember as his “Virgilian” guide in Iran - on the set of *La via del petrolio* (1967). Godard and Golestan-both names beginning with “G”-have never met each other; the unexpected opportunity comes from the film’s author - filmmaker, artist, collaborator, and producer of Godard (*Le livre d’image*, 2018) - who decides to recompose the “missing image”.

But what form to give to this encounter? The answer is a digital correspondence from each other’s homes: Golestan’s luxurious mansion in Sussex, and Godard’s simpler home in Rolle. The two will write emails to each other every Friday before midnight, for eight months, according to a “structure” whose reference to Robinson Crusoe declares its literary “staging”: *A vendredi, Robinson* - before being the title of the film - becomes the seal of this exchange that interrogates art, philosophy, images, writing, reality, and its narrative. Puccini, Wittgenstein, Canetti, Goya, Tolstoy, Johnny Guitar, Joyce, Dashiell Hammett, the quotations overlap: Golestan is rational and a lover of clear prose, Godard is more tempted by witticisms, language games. Golestan bewildered by his enigmatic answers, sometimes gets angry - «He’s arrogant» he says. Between them is Mitra who delicately reassembles the “fractures”.

A vendredi, Robinson is not a film “about” Godard and Golestan but a film “together” with them, whose foundation is the relationship that the author has with each of them. It is thanks to this relationship that the encounter destined to remain missed becomes an everyday intimacy. It is the “proximity of two lonelinesses” that brings them together in those different places - Golestan’s luxury, Godard hanging out his socks in the kitchen, but perhaps that too is a *calembour*? A pun about the feeling of old age, of illness and death that she tries to avert, as in a spell, by putting life against work. And with a moving sweetness the film reveals them beyond the public image - Godard, above all, so elusive that he smiles almost childishly at her camera. An emotion that becomes poetry.

L'irriducibile

Morgan Menegazzo

Mariachiara Pernisa

Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 78'
O.V. Italian

Director
Morgan Menegazzo

Screenplay
Morgan Menegazzo
Mariachiara Pernisa

Cinematography
Pietro De Tilla,
Elvio Manuzzi

Editing
Mariachiara Pernisa

Sound
Elisa Piria

Music
Enrico Gabrielli

Interpreters
Vincenzo Vinciguerra,
Aldo Giannulli,
Stefania Limiti,
Guido Salvini,
Gaetano Sinatti

Production
Enece Film,
Hankgefmobility,
Moovie Film Service Company

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«I do not believe, and I am not afraid of being proved wrong, that one should not kill for political-idealist reasons. People kill all the time, even today. Even today, all over the world, killing political enemies is a daily practice». This is what Vincenzo Vinciguerra declared. He is an extreme right-wing militant, formerly affiliated with Ordine Nuovo and Avanguardia Nazionale, confessed guilty of the Peteano attack in which, on May 31st 1972, three carabinieri lost their lives. The only responsible for a massacre not having benefited from penalty discounts, never repenting for his actions, he is still serving a life sentence at the Opera prison, where he continues his struggle in the name of historical truth, this time only with words and not with explosives. A tight face-to-face led by an excellent preacher, the first who wrote his own story (*Ergastolo per la libertà*), capable of establishing a perverse complicity with those in front of him. The one that any director inevitably ends up establishing with his actors. – Matteo Marelli

Biographies

Morgan Menegazzo (Lendinara, 1976) and Mariachiara Pernisa (Lugo, 1981) deal with images. The former is an author and director (after studying Cinematography at D.A.M.S. in Bologna, he obtains a diploma in directing at the New University of Cinema and Television - NUCT - in Cinecittà), the latter is an author and editor (graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, she obtains a specialized diploma in editing and cinematography at the Griffith Academy of Cinema and Television in Rome). Since 2001 they have been making films, documentaries (*Warology – Operazione l'altra guerra*, 2011; *Merci de me répondre*, 2015) and video installations. Their works have been distributed theatrically, screened at the Cineteca Nazionale in Rome, the Hannover Biennial Up and Coming, and MART in Rovereto, broadcast by television channels and satellite networks, Rai, Al Jazeera and Russia Today, and selected by national and international film festivals, including Torino Film Festival, Mostra del Nuovo Cinema di Pesaro, Haverhill Experimental Film festival and Experiments in Cinema.



Face to Face with Gorgon

— Matteo Marelli

In an article published a few years ago, *Cinema e terrorismo – Parole e sangue (Cinema and Terrorism – Words and Blood)*, Emiliano Morreale, analyzing the films that tried to deal with what has long been one of the great removed in Italian history - the so-called “Years of Lead”, the bombings, the massacres - considers that, even today, it is «the “black” side, more slippery, more abysmal, more intertwined with the State and the organized crime» to remain in the shadow. Morgan Menegazzo and Mariachiara Pernisa try not to retreat at the sight of the Gorgon: with *L'irriducibile* they confront one of the protagonists of that season and that side of subversion: Vincenzo Vinciguerra, a former member of Avanguardia Nazionale and Ordine Nuovo, who is serving a life sentence, following his assumption of responsibility, for the killing of three carabinieri on May 31st 1972, the “Peteano massacre”. Vinciguerra considers himself a political soldier, determined to continue his battle, also in custody, to affirm a historical truth. He is not a collaborator of justice. He is not looking for sentence reduction from a State that he does not recognize and holds responsible, for the collusion of some of its deviated apparatuses with NATO and with neo-fascist “stragismo” (the strategy of indiscriminate terrorist massacres of civilians), for the “strategy of tension”, a conditioning plan that responds to the logic of “destabilize to stabilize”: destabilize public order to stabilize political order. Because an anxious and fearful civil society, as one mobilized on the basis of fear, is a society that respect the rules and hopes for “national concord”.

The “Peteano massacre” has been underestimated, marginalized, considered a “minor massacre”, confined to the territory of Gorizia, and Vinciguerra is an atypical figure in the panorama of Italian neo-fascism - in which he does not recognize himself and from which he has been publicly disavowed - capable of dazzling “preaching”, so much so that one may believe that his is the voice of a life free of lies, uncorrupted by History.

Even Sergio Zavoli, who interviewed him in an episode of *La notte della Repubblica* (at the end of which he attributed to him a certain cumbersomeness and obsessive personality), sensed this. And it is from the images of that interview that Menegazzo and Pernisa set off on their journey at the end of the night. They know that they have chosen as Virgil a dark character, capable of exerting on those in front of him (whether director or viewer) an ambiguous symbiosis (it is easy to confuse his programmatically “loser” ideology with the ultimate rebellion against the system). They also know that there is no testimony capable of dispelling the curtain of shadows around reality. But it is a risk that one must accept to take (those who film, those who program it and those who watch it), because, as Giorgio Agamben concluded, the ethical outcome of testimony is not in the accordance between words and actions, but in the guarantee that those words and actions will not be forgotten.



Un couple

Frederick Wiseman

Usa, 2022
4K, colour, 63'
O.V. French

Director
Frederick Wiseman

Screenplay
Frederick Wiseman,
Nathalie Boutefeu

Cinematography
John Davey

Editing
Frederick Wiseman

Sound
Jean-Paul Mugel

Interpreter
Nathalie Boutefeu

Production
Wat Films/Zipporah Films

Producers
Frederick Wiseman,
Karen Konicek

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A woman, a landscape, letters to a husband who is not there. These are the basic elements out of which *Un couple* is composed, Frederick Wiseman's return to the occasionally frequented cinema of fiction. Nathalie Boutefeu, walking along the cliffs of Belle Île in Brittany, makes the words of the letters Sof'ja Tolstaja sent to the famous writer, her own. Indeed she, too, often overshadowed by Lev's fame, loved to write; but here her talent is in the service of reconstructing the pain, deep and prolonged in time, that ran through their relationship. A substantial ambiguity is soon manifested in the film, insinuating between what we see and what we hear: does nature, beautiful and luxuriant, continually shivering, sympathize with Sofia and her speech? Or, on the contrary, is she impassive to human affairs, if not even the cause of them, the cruel nature of which the poet Giacomo Leopardi wrote, calling it a "Stepmother"? At the same time, as we delve into the conflict to which she gives voice, it becomes difficult to establish the boundaries between love and hate, as to define the responsibilities of one and the other. Certainly, in this exchange of accusations of which we can only hear a part, atavistic problems of gender relations emerge, as well as a reflection on the coherence between work and life. It is a poetic word that, beyond intentions, becomes a political question.

– Lucrezia Ercolani

Biography

Frederick Wiseman (Boston, 1930), American film director and producer, is one of the leading exponents of documentary cinema. His vast filmography of more than 40 titles investigates lights and shadows in American society, using the analysis of its institutions, public and private, as a starting point. A lecturer and researcher in law at Boston, Harvard and Brandeis Universities, his film debut was *The Cool World* (1963). The subsequent *Titicut Follies* (1967), set in a mental institution, soon became a cult film and consecrates him to international success..

In 1970 he founded Zipporah Film to distribute his documentaries. After numerous international awards, he was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement by the Venice Film Festival in 2014.

Space and Intimacy in an Individual World — Fulvio Baglivi

For ten years I have been trying to ask Fred Wiseman why the films he makes starting from a literary work, and not from a space or an institution, have always a unique protagonist; likewise, the text is always an intimate, private piece of writing, like a diary or a letter. This curiosity of mine is not just about cinema, it stems from a show staged in Paris in 2012: Emily Dickinson, *La Belle d'Amherst*, a play by William Luce about the life of the Massachusetts poetess. Again a single actress, and the same actress, Nathalie Boutefeu, who is also the protagonist of *Un Couple*. Wiseman has always evaded the question, yet, *La Dernière Lettre/The Last Letter*, first a play at the Comédie-Française in 2000 and later a film, had only one performer, Catherine Samie, in the role of a Jewish doctor writing a letter to her son during the Nazi occupation. Before that there had been *Seraphita's Diary*, which profiles the emotional life of a supermodel through her diary; there the only actress is a model.

Un Couple falls into this small strand of "non-documentary" works in Wiseman's filmography, but in other ways it departs from these by taking a unique position in his oeuvre. There is still the lone actress, Nathalie Boutefeu, the text is taken from diaries and letters kept by Sofia Tolstaja, wife of the great author, a writer who jotted down for years the anxieties and afflictions of their life as a couple, also exchanging letters with her husband. But the film has another protagonist, a constant and changing presence: the space. Whereas in *Seraphita's Diary* and *La Dernière Lettre* Wiseman had "reduced" the space to a (secondary) role, an apartment in the former, an abstract void (in black and white) in the latter, the Breton garden of *Un Couple* constantly interacts with the actress. As in his "reality fictions", Wiseman makes space a central plank, as he did with the offices in *Welfare* or the Fort Knox barracks, attuned to or contrasting with the woman's words and thoughts, but never "apart".

While being a unique chapter in the great novel that Fred Wiseman has been writing for 65 years, *Un Couple* is not a ufo nor a case, it comes at a precise moment in his life and filmography. If *Seraphita's Diary* was born from *Model*, from the need to tell the tormented interiority of the supermodels that surfaced in transparency in that "documentary", while *La Dernière Lettre* played with the "discovery" of the actor in the play at La Comédie-Française, *Un Couple* is the work that comes after *City Hall*. *City Hall* is the first film that Wiseman made in Boston, his birthplace; the title seems to focus on a narrative of the "public" city but the film is full of signs that tell of his private life. *Un Couple* is a further step into interiority, a tale of a beyond that is only on the other side (of the ocean) or a world within the world. Sofia speaks to us from an Adamic earthly paradise, full of splendor and loneliness, oscillating between an inside and an outside, and like all of Wiseman's characters she is forced to mediate between her "nature" and her social role (woman, wife, mother), that couple that is the foundational core of society, suspended between moral duty and the fear and desire to blow it all to hell.



Expanded Theatre

GRETA DE LAZZARIS
JACOPO QUADRI

Siamo qui per provare Greta De Lazzaris, Jacopo Quadri



Italy, 2022
HD, colour, 88'
O.V. Italian

Director
Greta De Lazzaris,
Jacopo Quadri

Cinematography
Greta De Lazzaris

Editing
Jacopo Quadri

Sound
Emanuele Pontecorvo,
Jacopo Quadri

Music
Valerio Vigliar

Interpreters
Daria Deflorian,
Antonio Tagliarini,
Monica Demuru,
Emanuele Valenti,
Francesco Alberici,
Martina Badiluzzi,
Andrea Pizzalis,
Attilio Scarpellini,
Metella Raboni,
Emanuele Pontecorvo,
Giulia Pastore,
Gianni Staropoli,
Cecilia Bertozzi,
Chiara Boitani,
Lorenzo Grilli,
Daniele Torracca

Production
Jacopo Quadri for Ubulibri

Contacts
ubulibrisrl@gmail.com

Siamo qui per provare is a film of emotions, in which De Lazzaris and Quadri become silent observers of the process that, from the first rehearsals, will lead to the debut of the Deflorian/Tagliarini's play *Avremo ancora l'occasione di ballare insieme*. The first part is dedicated to a major change in their lives: the marriage of Daria Deflorian to Attilio Scarpellini and the abandonment of the house they shared with Antonio Tagliarini. The camera follows the ceremony and the move without ever being intrusive, but giving account of the intimacy that binds the people involved. It is perhaps because of this new beginning on a personal level that the artistic couple feels the need to re-tie the threads of their careers with a retrospective show, which aims to put the emphasis back on the movement in order to "rebalance" their roles, reflecting on the power of theatre that has forever marked their lives. The process takes place in the aftermath of the lockdown due to the pandemic, a shock that leaves its marks in the health masks and in a "widespread weariness", as Daria says. We follow the company, in its many souls, from its first steps at Rome's Teatro India to its residency in Toulouse. — Lucrezia Ercolani

Biographies

Jacopo Quadri (Milan, 1964) is an editor, producer, director. As an editor he has worked with Bernardo Bertolucci, Mario Martone, Gianfranco Rosi, Paolo Virzì, Marco Bechis, Zhang Yuan and others. With Antonietta De Lillo and Patrizio Esposito he signed the direction of the documentary *Saharawi, voci distanti dal mare* (1997) and with Mario Martone *La terra trema* (1998) and *Un posto al mondo* (2000). With the Ubulibri publishing house, which he has been directing since 2012, he has produced a number of documentaries for which he is director and editor: on theatre (*La scuola d'estate*, 2014 - Special Nastro d'Argento Award; *Il Paese dove gli alberi volano. Eugenio Barba e i giorni dell'Odin*, 2015, co-directed with Davide Barletti) and on the contemporary peasant world (*Lorello e Brunello*, 2017, presented at the Turin Film Festival; *Ultimina*, 2020 in competition at IDFA Amsterdam and winner of the Corso Salani Prize at the Trieste Film Festival).

Greta De Lazzaris (Marseille, 1975) moved to Rome in 2002 where she worked as an assistant and camera assistant with cinematographer Marco Onorato. She is camera operator and director of cinematography for several documentaries (among others, *L'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio* by Agostino Ferrente, *Nadea e Sveta* by Maura Delpero, *Lorello e Brunello* and *Ultimina* by Jacopo Quadri, *This is not Cricket* by Jacopo de Bertoldi). In 2013, she signs the direction of her first documentary, *Rosarno*, which is presented at the Turin Film Festival. In 2016, she signed the cinematography of Federica di Giacomo's documentary: *Liberami*, winner in Venice of the Lion for Best Film Horizons section.

Dancing in the Vortex of Creation — Lucrezia Ercolani

Siamo qui per provare might seem at first an innocuous film: around Daria Deflorian and Antonio Tagliarini a working group gathers: actors Francesco Alberici and Emanuele Valenti, actresses Monica Demuru and Martina Badiluzzi. Rehearsals begin, opinions are exchanged, training becomes physically intense when it comes to learning tap dance, in the manner of what Marcello Mastroianni and Giulietta Masina did in *Ginger and Fred*. In fact, Fellini's film is the inspiration for the show *Avremo ancora l'occasione di ballare insieme* in its focus on a couple dynamic in which the past is cumbersome, makes itself felt, but the bet is to continue to be there, to dance, to feel alive through art. It is the bet of Deflorian/Tagliarini's work as well. What's the film's bet instead?

It is to open a window into the vortex of creation, the mysterious abyss whereby something organized and meaningful can arise from a repeated series of acts. And it's the difficulty, instead of the glory, that feeds this film. What to do if the full meaning of the show continues to elude us? If the ideas are there, but the complete design is missing? Nervousness begins to creep in, the debut date is approaching but the distance between Daria and Antonio seems to be getting deep. The actors and actresses also become tense, constantly asking for clarification, seeking from the scriptwriters and directors the insight, the word that can remove the anxiety and push for action. It is also a matter of work, of course, but it cannot be just that. The answer, then, can only lie in relying on the support of the group, on experience, self-confidence and the lessons that dance can provide. Elements that the camera closely captures without affecting the naturalness and complexity of the process.

One of the scenes in *Ginger and Fred* that most directly influenced the show is that of the blackout, when the lights in the TV studio go out and the two dancers finally find each other. Mastroianni suggests they leave the little theater, and whispers in Masina's ear: «Who knows what may come of this escape?». In Daria and Antonio's writing, that moment also represents the forced pause due to the pandemic, in which the performers were forced to stop and come to terms with themselves. But for *Siamo qui per provare*, however, it matters perhaps more that the lights then come back on, the escape does not happen, and the dancing continues. Which does not mean locking oneself into a self-referential dimension, where nothing exists outside the performance. Two scenes are significant in this sense: when first Daria Deflorian and then Monica Demuru observe and describe the surrounding reality. It too continues to flow and move forward in its plurality, despite impediments, as does artistic creation - never separable, as this film also shows, from the movement of life.



Thirty Years Later.
Zelimir Zilnik

Marble Ass

Zelimir Zilnik

Jugoslavia 1995
Betacam, colour, 87'
O.V. Serbian, English

Director
Zelimir Zilnik

Screenplay
Zelimir Zilnik

Photography
Miodrag Milosevic

Editing
Vladimir Milenkovic

Sound
Vladimir Stanojevic

Music
Love Hunters,
Zbogom Brus Li,
Dejan Kijevcanin

Interpreters
Vjeran Miladinovic,
Nenad Milenkovic,
Nenad Rackovic,
Lidija Stevanovic

Production
B92, Beograd

Contacts
zilnik@hotmail.com

Merlyn is a trans person who shares an apartment on the outskirts of Belgrade with Sanela, who is a prostitute. Dzoni has just returned from the front lines of the Bosnian war; a little sex is what he needs to overcome the violence and machismo of war. «Merlyn tries to bring peace to the Balkans by playing and joking with many Serbian boys. Merlyn is a lightning rod that protects Belgrade, calming violent night hawks, elegant spendthrifts, sad and lonely men, and horny young studs, absorbing all that energy that would otherwise go out to affect young girls, lonely mothers, and helpless old women. All that energy, along with the use of guns, would inevitably lead to bloodshed. Merlyn cools the boiling blood of the violent Dinarids and fills it with love. Johnny returns back home from the war, back to Belgrade. His intentions are apparently similar; he wants to cool the boiling blood too, but he does so with bullets and knives. This film is an essay on the different ways Merlyn and Johnny use to resolve conflicts» (Zelimir Zilnik). Inspired by the figure of a trans sex worker the director met in Belgrade, the film celebrates the lives of the lgbtq community in Yugoslavia at that time, with the intention of pushing people towards liberation in a very conservative country. Making it during the Balkan War, when international sanctions made it difficult to even find a camera, it was a real gamble. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

Zelimir Zilnik (Nis, 1942) is a director and screenwriter. In a career spanning more than 50 years he has directed about 60 films including shorts and features, fiction and documentaries presented and awarded at major international festivals. His debut, *Early Work* (1969) about the student movement of '68, won the Golden Bear at the Berlinale. He was among the founders of the Yugoslav Black Wave, a group of filmmakers who authored a formally reckless cinema, openly critical of Yugoslav society of the time. In the 1970s, following the problems he had with censorship for *Freedom or Cartoons* (1972) he "exiled" himself to Germany where he produced seven documentaries in addition to *Paradise* (1976). He returned to Yugoslavia in the 1980s, working for television in Belgrade and Novi Sad, and in 1984 made the autobiographical film *Second Generation*, which was followed by *Pretty Woman Walking through the City* (1985) and *The Way Steel was Tempered* (1988). During the 1990s he denounced the violence and political cataclysm sweeping the Balkans in *Tito's Second Time Among the Serbs* (1994) and *Marble Ass* (1995). His more recent works focus on the effects of current capitalism and the plight of refugees and migrants, from *Fortress Europe* (2000) to the *Kenedi* series to *The Most Beautiful Country in the World* (2018).



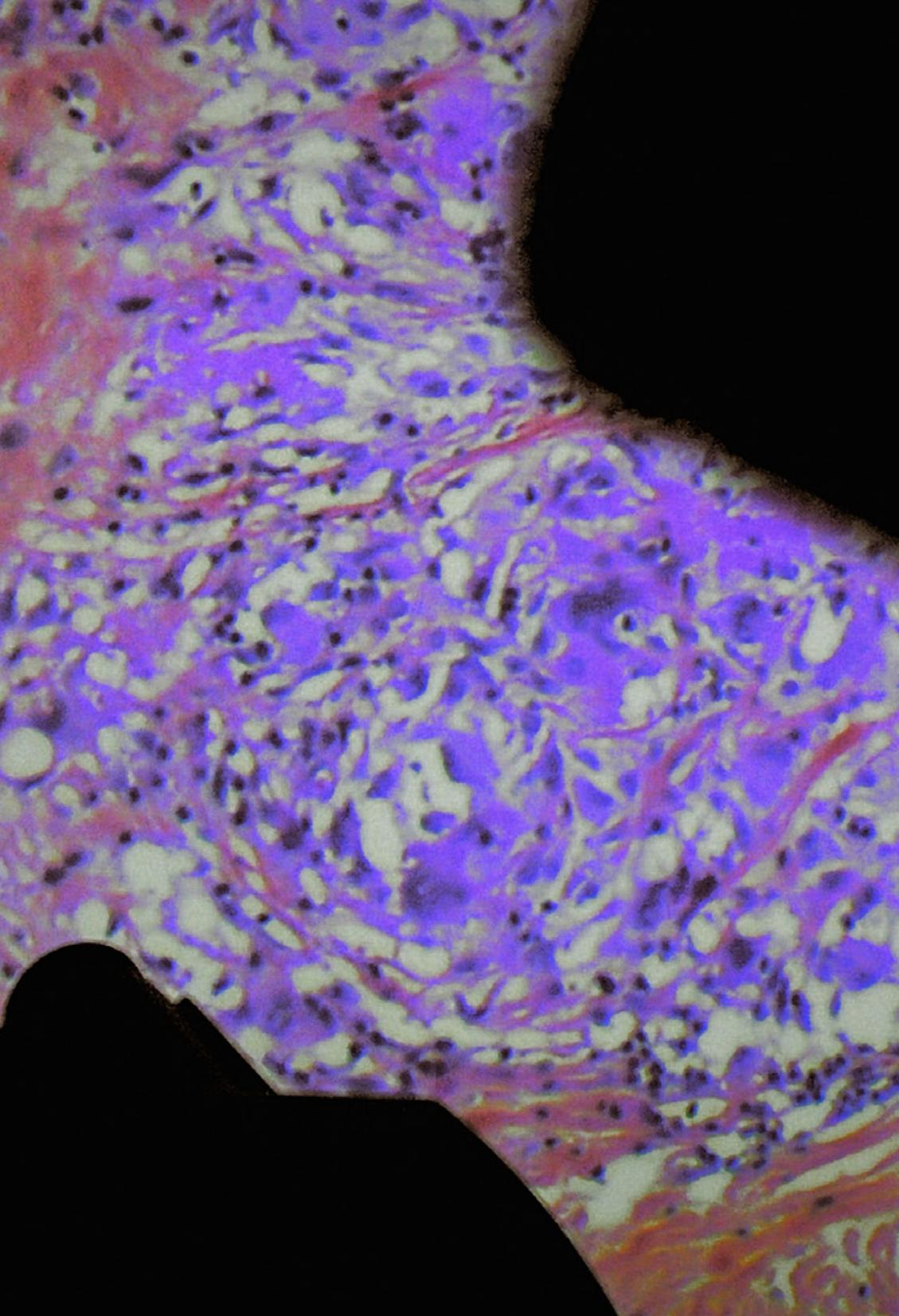
Outsiders

— Fulvio Baglivi

«While Europe is proudly and brashly expanding in line with its sterile, politically correct guidelines on the grounds of an artificial (indeed phoney) and paradoxical concept of “European identity”, invisible and impenetrable walls are shooting up along its borders, spreading like a cancer throughout region beyond the fortress. Just as invisible as those walls are the numerous stories of the peoples left “outside”. Thanks to Zelimir Zilnik, a rare breed of a filmmaker who (still) believes that cinema can (also) act as a weapon of social intervention, certain dark corners of Europe’s backyard are being exposed, certain otherwise invisible stories are being made visible, and, in the case of Zelimir Zilnik, rendered palpable...and even piercing». So wrote Jurij Meden in his essay on the “Kenedi” trilogy (also passed at Filmmaker Festival) in the bilingual book *Zelimir Zilnik - For an idea against the status quo*, released in 2009 in Serbia. That publication, composed by essays by young scholars from different countries of the Former Yugoslavia, is not only an important, researched and accurate reflection on the work and aesthetic practice of one of the iconic filmmakers of the Black Wave, the Yugoslav nouvelle vague, but also marks the passage between generations of a lucid and black vision on contemporary Europe and the Balkan universe, fragmented and cannibalized by war.

Choosing Zilnik as a point of reference to rediscover and make accessible his films, means emphasising an aesthetic position and a precise point of view on man, society, and the exploitation that underlies it. The director’s entire oeuvre since the 1960s thrives on a disruptive force, showing what is kept “outside” our gaze, intentional to try to break down these barriers. In order to break this barriers Zilnik brings together the technique of documentary and that of “fiction”: «Working with a previously written script, it helps to find a certain precision for deciding actions, emotions and relationships with actors; filming a documentary, on the other hand, offers the opportunity to articulate the “facets of life” in a new form.»

Marble Ass, shot in 1995, shortly after the destruction of Yugoslavia, is a strongly representative work of the method and “political” stance that distinguish Zilnik’s cinema. Showing Serbia ravaged by a bloody and infamous conflict, Zilnik chooses the point of view of an “outsider of outsiders”: a transvestite who prostitutes himself on the night streets of Belgrade trying to calm tempers and cope with the pain and wounds brought by the war. In the occupied house Merlyn shares with Sanela, Johnny arrives, back from the front, unable to free himself from the language and rituals of violence. Conflicts, and the different ways in which they can be addressed, are the object of interest for Zilnik, who reveals his point of view without needing to explain or say things, choosing to film and stand alongside the excluded, without the need to fashionable theories and studies or to stand as anyone’s champion. Zilnik has been fighting a widespread guerrilla warfare through film for more than fifty years, knowing that the only way to surprise a much stronger and more organized enemy is to be where you are not expected.



*Filmmaker Expanded:
Immersive Realities
Degrees of Freedom Award*

LUCIEN CASTAING-TAYLOR
EMANUELE DAINOTTI
NOEMI FORTI
CENK GÜZELIS
MATTEO LONARDI
MONICA MAZZITELLI
VERENA PARAVEL
ANNA POMPERMAIER
CRAIG QUINTERO
DAVIDE RAPP
OMAR RASHID
ROSSELLA SCHILLACI
CHIARA TROISI

Immersive Realities

Luca Mosso

Since immersive environments have made their appearance within film festivals - above all the Venice Film Festival which has been exhibiting VR at the Lazzaretto since 2017 - it has become quite evident that many virtual reality creators come from cinema or, at least, that they take into account, even subvert, cinematic devices for reproducing reality. Less known, but maybe even more interesting, is that some experimenters in the documentary environment have internalized the principles and expressive practices of immersivity and have been trying for some time to convey it in a form capable of convincingly evoking it within the frame. It could be said that the desire for another form has been forcing the boundaries of the frame, at well as in 360 experiences the theoretical freedom of the gaze is subject to suggestions and conditioning. The interest represented by this convergence goes beyond the theoretical question and even the taste for hybrid forms, which are always fascinating because of the combination of not fully realized intentions and original residues.

Investigating the quality and quantity of filmmakers' immersive frequentations, the depth of VR creators' film culture, and in general the dynamics of creative and productive exchange between the two disciplines, is the goal of the collaboration between the AN-ICON research group, focused on XR media (University of Milan), and Filmmaker, a festival dedicated to documentary and experimental cinema. Along with the Gradi di libertà (Degrees of Freedom) Award and the first mapping of independent VR production, which Barbara Grespi reports on, is the *Immersive Realities* exhibition project, organized with Meet Digital Culture Center. It juxtaposes the screening of Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor's film *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (2022), presented at the Cannes 2022 Quinzaine, with Craig Quintero's VR experience *All That Remains* (2022), presented at the Venice Film Festival 2022.

The work of the experimental duo from Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab (SEL), which has always been committed to questioning the traditional anthropocentrism of cinema (think *Leviathan*, 2012), this time uses digital diagnostic tools to dive inside the human body in search of visions that a few decades ago were called "hallucinating" (*Viaggio allucinante* is the Italian title of *Fantastic Voyage* by Richard Fleischer, 1966).

The loss of the horizon and the confusion of spatio-temporal reference systems induces the viewer to search new positioning and balance, a strong experience in cinema, and entirely familiar to those accustomed to the VR headset. Conversely, Craig Quintero, in constructing the space of *All That Remain*, revels in placing limits on the 360-degree circularity of VR. The gaze is precisely directed - sometimes with an artifice that could be called "theatrical" - while the selection of shots and plans suggested to the user tends to narrow in spite of the freedom theoretically guaranteed by VR. In the face of these apparent contradictions there is perhaps a need to recompose an evolving theoretical framework, but also - and this is our hope - an opportunity for surprising visions and fruitful comparisons. The day will end with a public discussion with the authors.

AN-ICON (An-Iconology: History, Theory and Practices of Environmental Images) is a five-year research project funded by the European Research Council (ERC Advanced Grant) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. Led by philosopher Prof. Andrea Pinotti, it investigates, from theoretical, historical and operational perspectives, the identity of environmental-images that characterize extended reality media (virtual, augmented and mixed).



De Humani Corporis Fabrica

Verena Paravel,
Lucien Castaing-Taylor



France, USA, Switzerland, 2022
4K, colour, 118'
O.V. French

Director
Verena Paravel,
Lucien Castaing-Taylor

Assistant
Juliette Picollot

Editing
Verena Paravel,
Lucien Castaing-Taylor

Sound
Verena Paravel,
Lucien Castaing-Taylor

Producers
Valentina Novati,
Charles Gillibert,
Pauline Gyax,
Max Karil,
Verena Paravel,
Lucien Castaing-Taylor

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alesort@filmsdulorange.fr

Cinema never became an art of the past for this reason: it has always been able to put itself at the very bottom of the creative chain, behind theater, music or television. *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* is an excellent example of this cinematographic humility. For some years, medicine has been using a variety of cinema gears to observe the body and conduct operations otherwise impossible. Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor enter a hospital in Paris with their cameras. They do not go there with the attitude of who knows how to shoot, but with the learner one. In *The Ethics*, Spinoza states that « No one [...] until now, has known the structure of the body so accurately that he can explain all its functions. » With this phrase in mind, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* dives into the discovery of human flesh interiority. And, doing so, the film states in a way that, if the body is a great stranger, the cinema that discovers it it's simultaneously discovering itself. So the film is structured around a number of types of surgery - cesarean, prostate, brain... - which are at the same time different ways of using audiovisual means in medical field. Images of tissues, organs, cavities strike us a lot. Is it a human body, for real? Or are we looking at sci-fi landscapes? In the final analysis, this question is pushed forward to the set of the shooting: the hospital, with its rooms, its corridors, its circulation of staff, patients, visiting relatives, may as well be an image of organic life. – Eugenio Renzi

Biographies

Lucien Castaing-Taylor (Liverpool, 1966) is a British anthropologist, an artist, a photographer. He studied at Cambridge and Berkle. He made his first ethnographic films with Ilisa Barbash: *In and Out of Africa* (1992), *Made in USA* (1997), *Sweetgrass* (2009). Verena Paravel (Neuchâtel, 1971), studied anthropology in France. His artistic and scientific work began in 2008 with the series « Interface ». Verena Paravel and Lucien Castaing-Taylor collaborate as filmmakers at Harvard University's Sensory Ethnography Laboratory. Their films and installations have been distributed in prestigious festivals and art venues such as AFI, FAFICI, Berlin, Venice, Locarno and New York. Their first collaboration dates back to 2012 and the filming of the observation documentary *Leviathan*, a dive film on a fishing boat in the North Sea that has raised a wide and lively critical debate. *Leviathan* also received the FIPRESCI award at the Locarno International Film Festival. *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* is the fourth film resulting from their collaboration.

All That Remains

Craig Quintero

Taiwan, 2022
VR 360, colour, 12'
O.V. English

Director
Craig Quintero

Screenplay
Craig Quintero

Cinematography
William Chou

Sound
Chin-Lun Kao

Music
Yu-Jun Wang

Lead Developer
Ming-Yuan Chuan

Designers
Craig Quintero
Wen-Tse Chen
Ya-Chi Chen
Ra Thomson

Interpreters
Yu-Hsin Yu
Ollie Huang
Carl Johnson
Chih-Hen Hsu
Hsu-Fang Tung
Jia-Ling Hsu

Voice Over
Anna Wilson
Bea Loesch Crist

Production
Riverbed Theatre
(Su-Ling Yeh)

Contacts
tzuchunkuo@gmail.com



The starting point for *All That Remains* were a number of immersive one-viewer performances - collected under the title *Just for You* - staged by the author at the Riverbed Theatre. Other immersive experiences had originated from these, again for a single viewer, staged this time outside the theatre, in hotels, museums and galleries in Taiwan. However, the idea behind them was the same: a closeness between the performer and the spectator, based on a mutual contact, a sensory involvement that blurs the boundaries between them and creates a feeling of intimacy. *All That Remains* transforms live into virtual encounters, betting to keep the proximity between viewer and performers. Moving on the edge between real and fantastic, Quintero's VR - also designed for a single viewer - creates a 360-degree meditative experience in which, rather than following a narrative, the participants are confronted with their own emotions, with the most secret and elusive states of mind. Gradually they are totally immersed in this virtual universe whose enveloping power is amplified by the sound that builds an additional mental space, a space of discovery and desire.

Biography

Craig Quintero (United States, 1970) is the artistic director of the Riverbed Theatre in Taipei, for which he has written and directed more than fifty performances presented worldwide. He is also a sculptor, photographer, installation creator, and lecturer. His works have been exhibited at the Kobe and Taipei Biennales, the Venice Biennale, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Shanghai.

Degrees of Freedom

Barbara Grespi

“Gradi di libertà” (“Degrees of freedom”) is the expression used to define the range of movements the experiencer can make within a virtual reality experience. Three degrees if he or she can rotate his or her head following the image on each side, above and below, left and right, in front and behind. Six degrees if he or she can move through space, traversing and going through it within predetermined boundaries.

The freedom we are talking about is a comparative measure, that creates a contrast with the rigidity of cinematic viewing, centered on the screen-theater complex. But can it also be a qualitative measure? Do virtual images really create freer worlds by moving the limits of the filmic medium forward, or is it misleading to insist on this genealogy to derive an aesthetics from it?

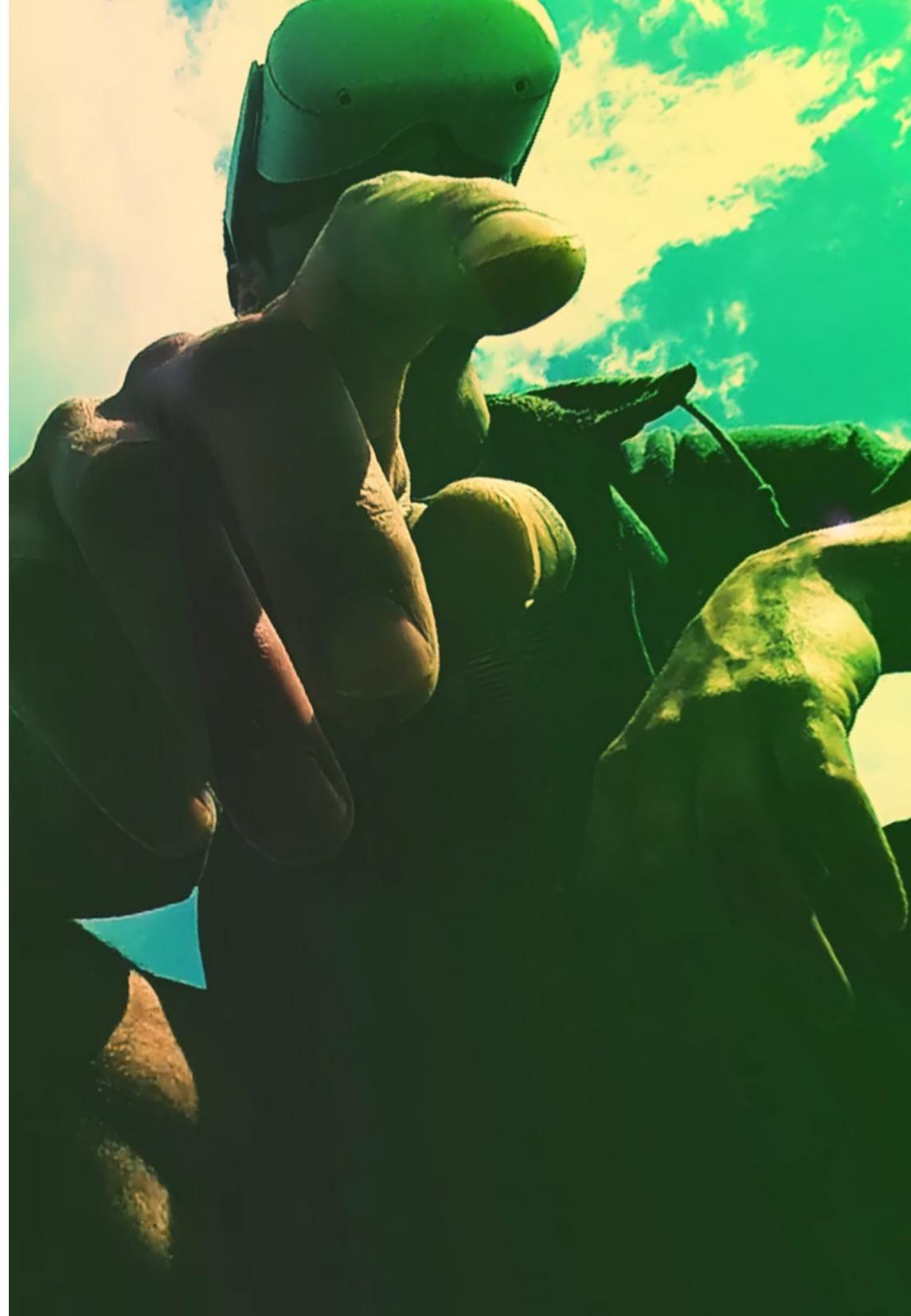
Italian VR (2009-2022), which the *Gradi di libertà* (Degrees of Freedom) program explores with this specific lens, works across the classical boundaries of the image: the user is invested by the fictional characters, and experiences his or her own vulnerability (*Gang dance*, 2021), enters the living room of a lone woman and moves to be next to her, inhabiting her house (*MONO*, 2022), experiences two spaces simultaneously, the simulated real and the virtual fantastic (*Affiorare*, 2021), learning to relate them and see themselves as other (*Becoming-with-Human*, 2002), and finally experiences with the senses the anti-gravitational ground of the moon (*Moondust*, 2019).

All the chosen works represent true interpretations of the medium and are never mere exhibitions of its technical potential. The dose of wonder, the attractive form that the very first VR showed by exploiting the possibility of unprecedented gaze positions and surprising figures of immersion now seem outdated, and authors rather reflect on what it might mean to experience a segment of our time inside the images. Along the lines of cinema, fairly recognizable genres are found: the experimentation of *HYPERCHEMNITZ* (2022) and the archive research of *Montegelato* (the first VR found footage); the cinema of the real that is more direct (*The Italian Baba*, 2020), or more contaminated with other languages (*Affiorare*, 2021); the hypertext narrative of *The Doubt 1, 2* (2020-21), in which minimal forms of interaction are mixed with principles of montage, and the “training trip” in augmented reality (*Becoming-with-human*, 2022). The photographic-based and the computer-graphic image are equally exploited and are used indifferently by authors.

In Italy as abroad, many female filmmakers are attracted to the medium and find in it an ideal expressive tool; thus, VR is not, even in our country, a male-born territory, and in general it seems more resistant to prejudice. Perhaps it is because in a medium hinged on the body and the gaze, it is difficult not to question, even in a broad sense, the matter of the point of view.

With the first samples from the world of Italian VR, the AN-ICON research group of the University of Milan dedicated to extended reality environments, in close collaboration with Filmmaker, begins the monitoring and valorisation of the major creative drives active in that zone on the border between cinema and virtuality, in the firm belief that art, divulgation and research are now three inseparable links in the chain.

The section includes two Awards: the Degrees of Freedom Award for Best Italian VR work, with a prize worth 2,000 euros, and an invitation to a seminar hosted by the University of Milan; the Rai Cinema Channel Award (with a prize worth 1.000 euros in the form of a contract for the acquisition of the copyright for the web for 3 years; the work will be show on raicinema.it, on the partner websites and on the APP Rai Cinema Channel VR.).



Selected Works

– Giancarlo Grossi

HYPERCHEMNITZ

Emanuele Dainotti

A letter addressed to a love ended in 2025 in Chemnitz, Germany, when the Nazis have regained power and forced humanity to take refuge in virtual worlds, draws the outlines of a dystopian future poised between private and public, real and imaginary.

Belgium/Germany, 2022, VR 3DOF, Colour, 4'15"

Montegelato

Davide Rapp

The waterfalls of Montegelato, near Rome, have been the set of hundreds of audiovisual productions. Through the multiplication and superimposition of virtual screens that appear in every direction of the immersive space, the experience reconstructs an imaginary archive linked to the specificity of the landscape, from time to time background of historical, comic, dramatic, erotic and sci-fi adventures.

Italy, 2021, VR 3DOF, Colour, 28'

Gang Dance

Monica Mazzitelli

A dancing performance that surrounds and oppresses denying any way out. A symbolic journey in the universe of social networks, reflecting on the abuse of the body and image between exposure and sharing.

Italy, 2021, VR 3DOF, Colour, 5'20"

Moondust

Noemi Forti

Returning from their first trip to the Moon, the Apollo 11 astronauts face a lockdown period since they are contaminated by potential pathogenic microorganisms present on lunar soil. Filled with memories, dreams, and expectations, the confinement space marks the distance that separates History from the intimate events of its protagonists.

Italy, 2019, VR 3DOF, Colour, 10'

The Italian Baba

Omar Rashid

A journey to India in search of a spiritual guide, inspired by *A piedi nudi sulla terra* by Folco Terzani and accompanied by the narrative voice of Elio Germano. To become fully her/himself, one will have to learn to look through the eyes of the other. Virtual reality becomes the tool to accomplish this journey.

Italy, 2020, VR 3DOF, Colour, 20'

Affiorare

Rossella Schillaci

An immersive documentary about daily life in the penal institutions of Turin, Milan and Venice, where female inmates live together with their children. Prison as seen by children is filled with imaginary phantasmagoria and evocative animations. Waiting to be able to fly away, free into open space.

Italy, 2022, VR 3DOF, Colour, 20'



MONO

Chiara Troisi

Interiority as space, claustrophobic and monochromatic. The fragmenting and imploding of the personal world. A path to healing that passes through the expressive power of virtual reality.

Italy, 2022, VR 6DOF, Colour, 14'

Il dubbio

Matteo Lonardi

What is the secret of artistic creation? Probably the ability to doubt, questioning one's identity and choices. From Leonardo's laboratory to the contemporary painting of Beatrice Wanjiku, *Il dubbio* is an interactive journey through time and history in search of the mysterious power of uncertainty.

Italy, 2021, VR 6DOF, Colour, 21'

Becoming – With – Encounters in an Augmented Garden

Anna Pompermaier
e Cenk Güzelis

A multi-user extended reality experience dedicated to the identity of human after human, an effect of reflections and environments generated by artificial intelligence operating through the fluid and changing process of becoming.

Italy, 2022, XR, Colour, 15'

AN-ICON (An-Iconology: History, Theory and Practices of Environmental Images) is a five-year research project funded by the European Research Council (ERC Advanced Grant) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. Led by philosopher Prof. Andrea Pinotti, it investigates, from theoretical, historical and operational perspectives, the identity of environmental-images that characterize extended reality media (virtual, augmented and mixed).



Fuori Formato

MARK RAPPAPORT

Mark Rappaport: Cinema, incidentally

Tommaso Isabella

The New Yorker Mark Rappaport made a series of unconventional, ironic and visually flamboyant experimental narrative films between the 1970s and 1980s, a production that was seriously underestimated, perhaps because it was too alien to the American scene, resistant to the codes of both the avant-garde and independent cinema, and unfortunately over time interrupted in the face of production obstacles due to the same indifference or incomprehension. But this brief homage, which continues a broader retrospective in collaboration with Sicilia Queer Filmfest and I mille occhi festival, is dedicated to the no longer New Yorker and now (since 2005) Parisian Mark Rappaport, who since the 1990s has begun a second life as a critic, cinephile storyteller, collagist of images appropriated to the classic cinema, always his field of choice of passions and struggles. With his work that began in the days of VHS and continued more recently in a prolific digital filmography, Rappaport can be considered a precursor of what we now call “video-essays”, even if the standardised and tediously academic forms that this phenomenon often takes have little to do with Rappaport’s intuitions and instincts, who has never ceased to be a storyteller, a lover of melodrama and opera, a filmmaker-spectator who decides to make cinema through the cinema of others, repeating old tapes and speaking over and against their narrative, creating another, a kind of narrative criticism or essayistic fiction.

While substantiating his arguments by assembling footage as documentary evidence, Rappaport never renounces the power of invention and transfiguration of the word, the creation of a voice and a mask through which to speak. The form that his biographical video-essays often take is in fact that of false autobiographies, or *(f)au(x)tobiographies*, as the title of a collection of Rappaport’s writings states, combining imaginary and real lives, biographies and filmographies of actresses and actors who tell their stories in the first person. Collage persons, syntheses of history, shots, gossip and critical analysis, these figures are reinterpreted by Rappaport through the mosaic composed over time by the various roles played in their careers, thus delineating experimental bodies on which the film industry inscribes its narrative, with its models and stereotypes, in a more or less contradictory manner: the icon of masculinity built on the homosexual Rock Hudson, the anti-Semitism of the roles affixed to the Jew Marcel Dalio or even the role of the Nazi played countless times by actors who emigrated from Germany because they were Jewish or dissidents, such as Conrad Veidt, subject of *Conrad Veidt - My Life* (2019) or Martin Kosleck and Hans Heinrich von Twardowski, protagonists of the recent *Martin und Hans* (2021).

Rappaport is mainly interested in second-rate figures such as the latter two, characters who are small footnotes, unsold stock in the history of official cinema. A collector of anecdotes and curiosities, relentless in unmasking the illusions, allusions, lapses and cruelties that more or less consciously punctuate the representation of classic cinema, Rappaport’s gaze is always stretched beyond the individual films, traversing them obliquely, tracing coincidences, missed encounters, hints of hypothetical and revisionist history, paradoxes and prejudices of the industry. Rappaport usually opens parentheses (marking them visually in the images) to introduce the frequent deviations that accompany his discourse: for him, parentheses are a way of proceeding, a form of thought and, above all, of editing: They mark the breaches in which each film opens up to a broader and more complex scenario, but in general they inform Rappaport’s rhapsodic and digressive approach, his cultured and playful conversation, as allergic to specialist jargon and abstract analyses as he is determined to investigate the history of classic cinema by going against the grain, disrupting canons, conducting heretical revisions of the classics or bringing back out obsolete and neglected objects.



Nostalgia for times never lived, regret for what cinema could have been or for what it no longer is. But for Rappaport, nostalgia is not an indulgent retreat into the past, out of intolerance or tedium of the present, but a disenchanting and amused return to places of pleasure and corruption, to a past to be reviewed and re-read, criticised and re-imagined. In him, a cinephile memory cultivated in the theatres finds a new form of expression in the tools of home cinema, redeeming them from passive consumption and exploiting them to plumb the relics of popular cinema and the deposits of collective imagination.

Biography

Born in New York in 1942, he is an independent filmmaker and writer. He attended Brooklyn College, where he graduated in 1964. He worked as an editor before devoting himself to his first feature, the experimental film *Casual Relations* (1974). In the 1990s he began working intensively with archival material, making films such as *Rock Hudson's Home Movies* (1992), *Exterior Night* (1993), *From the Journals of Jean Seberg* (1995) and *The Silver Screen: Color Me Lavender* (1997). His interest in the Victorian novel, melodrama and art history can be seen in some of his short films, including *Becoming Anita Ekberg* (2014), *The Vanity Tables of Douglas Sirk* (2014), *Debra Paget, For Example* (2016) and *Sergei/Sir Gay* (2016). He has lived and worked in Paris since 2005. Many of his articles have been published in the French film magazine *Trafic*, founded by Serge Daney, and in *Cinéma*. He has also published collections of his fiction and nonfiction texts in both French - *Le spectateur qui en savait trop* (2008) - and English - *(F)au(x)tobiographies* (2013), *The Secret Life of Moving Shadows* (2014).



ITALIAN PREMIÈRE

USA 1992,
16x9 DV, colour, b/w, 63'
O.V. English

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Cinematography
Mark Daniels

Editing
Mark Rappaport,
Linda Goodheil

Sound
Christopher Argento

Interpreters
Eric Farr,
Rock Hudson

Production
Mark Rappaport/Couch Potato
Productions, Coleen Fitzgibbon

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

Rock Hudson's Home Movies

Rock Hudson's Home Movies is a collage film, in which the “found footage” is the star. It is revisionist film history that reexamines Hudson's films in light of what we now all know about him – namely, that he was gay and died of AIDS. Rock is a unique paradox – the paradigm of screen masculinity who also happens to be gay. The fictional construct that was Rock Hudson becomes the text that can be read and reread in a variety of ways – but all roads lead to Rome. Rock Hudson was a prisoner, as well as a purveyor, of sexual politics and stereotypes. He is a prism through which sexual assumptions, gender-coding, and sexual role-playing in Hollywood movies and, therefore, by extension, America of the 1950s and 1960s can be explored. In a sense, it is Hudson's sexuality that is the real auteur of his movies – just as his closeted-ness was the icon all American was worshipping. – Mark Rappaport

France, 2014
16x9 DV, colour and b/w, 33'
O.V. English

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Editing
Mark Rappaport

Narrator
Tito de Pinho

Production
Mark Rappaport

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

I, Dario – or *The Rules of the Game*

An actor can wear many masks in the course of his career; some of these can be difficult to discard and end up becoming a face, especially if the actor in question has chosen the path of the character actor, as did Frenchman Marcel Dario, born Israel Moshe Blauschild. As in so many of Rappaport's other “(f)au(x)obiographies”, the Dario who here recount himself in the first person is a fictional construct, composed of biographical and stage existence. Dario's Jewish identity remains subtended in the sequence of his incarnations, as either a sophisticated and seductive character or an ambiguous and despicable one: from the anti-Semitic innuendos with which so many characters in his career at home are veined to a more vague European aura attributed to him by Hollywood, when he arrived there to work in exile during the war. The “rules of the game” are not so much those of Renoir's film, which remains one of his most celebrated performances, but those of an industry whose ideological assumptions are subtly inscribed on the bodies of its performers and in the eyes of the beholder.
– Tommaso Isabella



France, 2014
16x9 DV, colour, b/w, 11'
O.V. English

The Vanity Tables of Douglas Sirk

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Editing
Mark Rappaport

Narrator
Tito de Pinho

Production
Mark Rappaport

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

Tracing the cinema of Douglas Sirk through the vanity tables of his heroines, whose mirrors, like cinema itself, expand space and duplicate bodies. If the expression “vanity table” (with ill-concealed misogyny) points to these pieces of furniture as receptacles of narcissism, Rappaport instead notes the variety and ambivalence of meanings they take on in Sirk’s filmmaking, analyzing the situations in which they become a scenic and symbolic fulcrum: imaginary surfaces where gazes cross and tensions condense, where divided identities project themselves in their own reflection, screens of domestic intimacy that trap or allow dreams of a different life. The video essay inaugurates Rappaport’s most recent digital production (after a long hiatus since the late 1990s) and illustrates some of its typical traits: focusing on details, even those that may appear marginal, observing their recurrences and variations, without aspiring to rigorous typologies, but trying to distill the sense of a cinematic emotion that extends beyond the single vision, a secret tale on the surface of images. – Tommaso Isabella

France, 2020
16x9 DV, colour, b/w, 29'
O.V. English, French

L'Année dernière à Dachau

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Editing
Mark Rappaport

Sound
Tito de Pinho

Narrator
Mark Rappaport,
Volker Schlöndorff,
Christine Le Goff,
Tito de Pinho

Production
Mark Rappaport

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

If Rappaport’s video essays are always discourses about cinema that become cinema, *L'Année dernière à Dachau* even calls itself “a film about a film about a film,” offering a mise en abyme, a flight of perspectives to be traveled in anything but a straight line. The hybrid of the title, on the other hand, already anticipates an ideal tracking shot that from the baroque corridors of *Last Year at Marienbad* will lead us to the concentration camps. The third film evoked is in fact a Super8 home movie shot by one of the extras on the set of Alain Resnais’ film, where a visit by the crew to the nearby Dachau camp is recorded. Moving as he is wont to do among portraits, digressions, hypotheses and coincidences, Rappaport traverses a labyrinth of more or less submerged cinephile memories until he opens wide the timeless rarefaction of *Marienbad* to the historical horror of the camps, devoting himself to a scathing examination of their repugnant spectacularization in the cinematic “Shoah-business”. – Tommaso Isabella



France, 2020
16x9 DV, colour b/w, 17'
O.V. English

The Stendhal Syndrome or My Dinner with Turhan Bey

«Where do the close-ups go, if no one can see them?» Idols of yesteryear fading into oblivion, giants of the screen confined to the nooks and crannies of a DVD, icons worshipped by dwindling devotees, who knows how much longer? A confession steeped in nostalgia, eroticism and self-mockery, in which Rappaport talks about his adoration for Turhan Bey's face and his exotic features, which made him the star of so much Orientalist kitsch in the 1940s. A tribute to the Austrian-born actor, one of many obliterated Hollywood gods, and a self-portrait of his admirer (not fan!), the video evokes the ecstatic rapture experienced by Stendhal before the tombs of Santa Croce in Florence to express the sense of an unbearable beauty, a grandeur that comes to find us from afar, suddenly manifesting itself on a screen. A meditation on the poignant fleetingness of an appointment with a ghost: an encounter that is impossible and, perhaps for that very reason, so precious. – Tommaso Isabella

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Editing
Mark Rappaport

Sound
Mark Rappaport

Narrator
Mark Rappaport

Production
Mark Rappaport

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

France 2021
16x9 DV, 17'
O.V. English

Two for the Opera Box

Rappaport's curiosity often bypasses the foreground, along with those who enjoy the privileges of the close-up, focusing on secondary performers and reconstructing their evanescent careers. Here, his gaze goes further, decisively into the background, to bring to light even more unacknowledged existences: those of the props employed again and again in the various productions, movable assets that the old Studios wisely preserved and recycled as needed. The watchful gaze of the compulsive cinephile combines here with Rappaport's extravagant erudition and his passion for the opera to reconstruct the vicissitudes of an opera box set, spotted first in two different films by Vincent Minnelli and then in others. It is an invitation to discover, to quote the title of the essay of which the video is an excerpt, "the secret life of objects": concrete objects, which nevertheless really exist only in front of the camera, only to return to their limbo, to the warehouses of the prop masters. – Tommaso Isabella

Director
Mark Rappaport

Screenplay
Mark Rappaport

Editing
Mark Rappaport

Sound
Tito de Pinho

Narrator
Mark Rappaport

Production
Mark Rappaport

Contacts
marrap@noos.fr

Notes on *Rock Hudson's Home Movies*

Mark Rappaport

I personally like the idea of moviegoing as a contact sport. When I'm not totally engrossed in a watching a film, I find myself talking back to the screen. Pity the friend who accompanies me. Well, maybe it's just in a whisper, maybe it's just in my head, but there are two sound tracks going on all the time. The one from the film and my running commentary on it. Which makes watching films on tv much more democratic. In the privacy of my living room I can speak my mind aloud and at the same decibel level as the film I'm watching. The invention of the VCR turned this active approach to film criticism into an indoor sport. You can gripe about the dialogue, the sets, the angles, the acting, the plotting, at your own pace. If you wanted to (I never did) you could roll back and rewrite your bars until you got it right, until you found the perfect retort, le mot juste. In a sense it's almost the antithesis of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* phenomenon, where the script is Holy Writ. You can be your own Greek chorus commenting on some other filmmaker's tragedy. You, combative viewer, can be the antistrophe.

[...]

Without getting into the details, several years ago I was quite ill. For the period of two and a half years, I was virtually bed bound. I would feel OK for a while, but never really well, and then would relapse and have to spend two or three days in bed. I had been, prior to that time, taping movies on my VCR and had a library of some of my favorite films, as well as, like all libraries, film or book, many items that I had never looked at. It was the only thing I could do during the day—watch films. I couldn't work, I couldn't read, I couldn't write (even sitting up was too strenuous an activity, thinking was impossible). Sometimes I was too sick even to watch TV. Yes, that sick!! Often I would tape whatever junk was on at night and watch part of it the next day. Or sometimes, on a good day, that is, if I felt well enough to walk, I'd go to the nearest video store, just a few blocks away,

come back and collapse with a pile of videos to fill up my days, while waiting to get better. At one point it occurred me—how convenient and coincidental that the invention and widespread dispersal of VCRs and VHSs coincides simultaneously with the worldwide spread of AIDS and other immune system disorders.

[...]

The paranoia of having an illness that had no identifiable source or even, at the beginning, a name made me realize that VCRs had to be invented to becalm an already subdued ever-growing army of weak and debilitated people—but for what purpose? From committing mass suicide? From feebly voicing their discontent with the medical status quo of the way medicine is practiced and diseases treated? A disabled segment of society soothed into further passivity by watching Walt Disney movies, *Die Hard*, *Terminator 2* until the magnetic stock wears off the surface of the vinyl tape.

[...]

Perhaps *Home Alone* is the prophetic movie title of what may one day be called the concurrent age of AIDS and VCRs, a bed-bound population being comforted to the hum of best-selling rental video hits. Even when you can no longer participate in your own life, that shouldn't prevent you from keeping up-to-date with disposable popular culture. It seems clear that religion is not the only opiate of the masses. But although Benjamin might have predicted the uses and applications of the VCR, Marx certainly couldn't have.

I remember, at the time, being incredibly grateful at the time for the invention of the VCR, the electronic babysitter.

[...]

One day I thought it would be interesting to put together a compilation, with some kind of minimal commentary, of scenes about art and artists as they are represented in Hollywood movies, exploring the contradictory and conflicting attitudes in which artists and art

seem to be revered but yet reviled—almost within the same breath/frame. I got excited about the idea and jotted down about two dozen titles which quickly came to mind, from which I could extract scenes.

I also excitedly scribbled down half a dozen other ideas, examining modes of representation in mainstream films, one of which turned out to be *Rock Hudson*. It seemed more urgent to do *Rock Hudson* because it meant dealing with gender issues, role-playing, homosexuality, and AIDS. Also, the idea of an invented, “fictitious” autobiography interested me. It provides a structure on which to hang a variety of different themes and still permits you to keep them cohesive.

At that point in my life, various projects had fallen through, or were in the process of falling through. I had also been quite sick, again, after a relatively long period of fair health, for about two months. I thought, at that time, that there was a strong possibility that I might never be physically capable of working again the way I had in earlier years, that I might never have the strength to do another feature. I thought that this kind of compilation was something that could be done as a mildly low-level work involvement. I could more or less transfer scenes from one VCR to another VCR and then edit them. Simple. It wasn't.

[...]

When I first started doing the video/film (in several countries, it's been released as a film—other places have shown it in its original video format), I don't think I had a specific notion of what I wanted to do. I had written some notes—about 30 pages of loose rambblings, not unsimilar in tone or style to what you're reading now. But when it came time to do the actual editing, I realized that everything I had written was way too long and could never fit in in between or with the clips I wanted to use. I realized, though, that I could, with a microphone, speak into the

second audio channel while keeping the sound from the actual film clips on the first channel.

[...] It was an incredibly liberating realization and experience, writing without letters or a keyboard, writing in a style of seeming spontaneity.

Nor did I want the piece to have an academic flavor. I'm not much of a reader of critical theory (the only times I immersed myself in it was when I was teaching because I felt a nagging need to sound smarter than my students), and I certainly didn't want to use the jargon. [...] I wanted it to be accessible to a wider audience and, above all, entertaining. (As I get older, I realize more and more that there is a great deal to be said for films that can genuinely entertain. So this has become one of my unspoken goals in the creation of new work.)

But, in reality, *Rock Hudson's Home Movies* is a child of 15 or 20 years of critical theory. It may not be indebted to specific articles or theories but it certainly is indebted to theoretical approaches that have subsequently reached deeply into our culture—questions of gender-stereotyping, feminist and gay concerns about modes of representation, what an image means, and the different ways in which an image or words, or an image combined with words can be read. Nor could *Rock Hudson* have been made before the invention of that quintessential surplus capital leisure time appliance, the VCR. [...]

But most of all, when I say that *Rock Hudson* could not have been made even ten years earlier, I mean in the sense that earlier a vocabulary had not been in place to articulate the concerns the piece deals with. Before the days of women's liberation, I remember going to films with my then wife, and we would talk about how women were treated (we most certainly did not use the word “represented”) in Hollywood films of the time as opposed to the films of, say, Ophuls or Mizoguchi. But if you saw something on the

screen that made your skin crawl, even 25 years ago, there was no way to question it in a way that was clear and understandable. Perhaps it bothered you in some kind of nebulous way, perhaps it left a knot in your stomach. [...] But that was before women's lib, it was before multi-culturalism, it was before gay lib. You saw a derogatory or degrading image on the screen and you accepted it or, worse yet, didn't respond to it or even notice it, just as white audiences didn't object or notice racist depictions of blacks or Asians in '30s, '40s and '50s films. [...] Or you would just explain it away as, well, that's the way the world is. There wasn't a vocabulary in place to even object. The words "sexism" and "male chauvinism" hadn't been born yet although the postures they describe were fully in place.

[...]

As important for me in making *Rock Hudson* as the issue of representation, especially in the areas of gender role-playing, masculine/feminine, straight/gay, etc., is actually being able to see the footage you've chosen to deal with. When someone writes an article about representation in film, you have to rely on your dim memories (that is, if you've seen it and if you remember it at all) and on their description of what they were seeing. If they are describing several examples, they are making the connections for the reader. In my format, you bring the source to the spectator. Even if the scene is out of context, the authenticity of what is presented, what is seen and heard is undeniable.

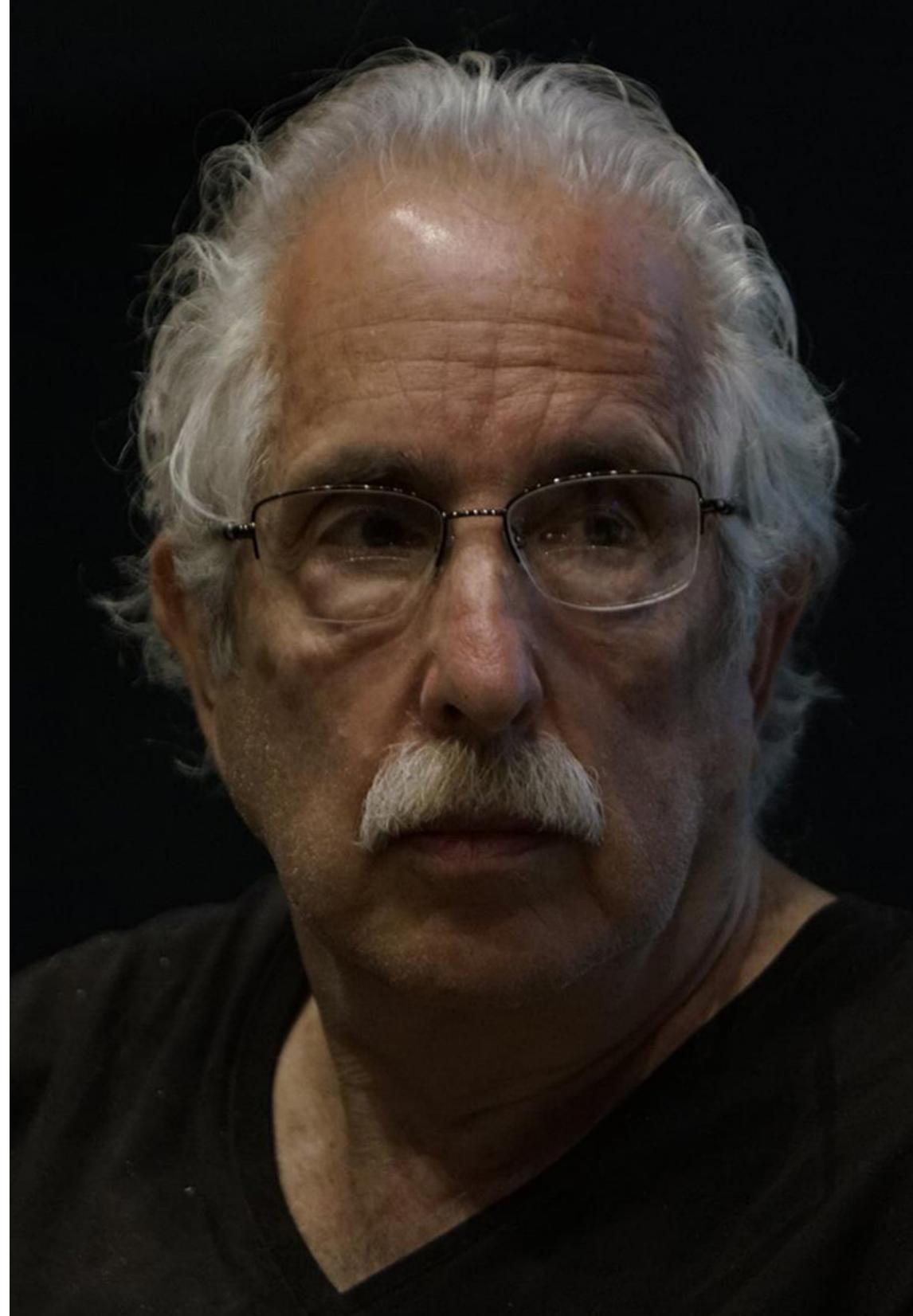
[...]

Also, one of the major issues in appropriation in video or film is clearance of copyrights, a legal issue that I believe will become one of increasing importance in the next decade. Is there a way to critique popular culture without using the images that we all know? [...]

But the only way to confront popular culture in a critique of it is by presenting it in the form which it first presented itself, not by a second-hand description of it.

My excuse would be, in a court of law, is that these images have corrupted us and it's our turn at bat. Images have been presented to us, shaping our perceptions of the way we learn about the world from the time we were very young to the present moment. And will continue until the day we die. To say that films reflect reality has always been a half-truth at best. They reflect some studio head's idea of reality, which is not necessarily the same thing. To take it even a turn further, they reflect an idea

of a reality that a studio head thinks will be palatable enough and familiar enough to a large enough audience that will pay to see it. If the relationship between screen and spectator is an endless hall of mirrors reflecting expectations, received ideas, false myths and the desire to embrace them, in one way or another the cycle must be short-circuited. Rocks must be hurled into this gallery of endlessly reflecting mirrors—the screen, the audience, the audience, the screen...





Filmmaker Moderns

FRANCESCO BALLO
GIANCARLO SOLDI

The White Screen

Lucrezia Ercolani

A blank page, as much as a screen, is generally what comes “before” the story, the surface that needs to be filled, a destiny yet to be written. Not so for Francesco Ballo, who renews his dialogue with Filmmaker by presenting some of the films he has made in the last year. Among the formal experiments and his rediscovered gaze towards Milan, *Tornano i varani* is the most narrative work, and it is here that the blank page or, rather, the empty letters without addressee, become an intercessor to open up to life, in the sudden change of direction, in the sudden appearance of a composition. What should we write to ourselves to go somewhere else? To each letter its knife, to each person its *chance*. As, perhaps, only by leaving space for the unexplained, the un-architected, without knowing the content or the ending, only then one can enter a “story” in all respects, flowing at its own pace.

And what Ballo cares about, is precisely not explaining, leaving the viewer with the task - maybe it would be better to say the fun - to build a sense for images. If the films presented last year were “constrained” within domestic walls, the director returns this time to film his own city. He does so at dusk, in a park, or at night. The skyscrapers look like molochs, but also like funny signs left there, out of spite. It is our experience of observing that is being tested: we may notice the layering of the city, the mad rush towards progress that speaks with the language of architecture; we may think about the contrast between civilization and nature, looking at the buildings through the trees; or we may feel the echo of the feeling of the cool of the morning. And who knows what much more.

In *Milano dall'alto*, what might initially seem like a documentary interest, soon turns into what Ballo never renounces: the attempt inspired by curiosity and play. Like a child who engages differently each time with objects he owns, to see what they can become beyond their pre-established sense, so the director believes deeply in the possibilities of cinema to “animate” a world that some see as inert. In *Muro 1* and *Parete* the exercise is extreme on a pictorial level, challenging the conception of the limit of the visual field. As art belongs not only to human beings, but also to things, to their way of being. A surface suddenly becomes deep, turns into something else, becomes a blank screen, open to interpretation.



Milano dall'alto

Particular view of the changing city from new buildings to large buildings of the past. Panoramic views and rhythmic breaks.

Italy, 2022
4k, 6' 46"
No dialogues

Director
Francesco Ballo

With the assistance of
Astrid Ardeni e Federico Prefel

Production
MÂD

Esperimenti

They are Experiments on the appearance of a new Milan that seems to be getting lost. And the deep research on the cinematographic language that changes from film to film.

Esperimenti Milano 419, 420, 430, 426

Esperimenti 423, 427, 394

Italy, 2022
4k, 10' 48"
No dialogues

Director
Francesco Ballo

With the assistance of
Astrid Ardeni

Production
MÂD



Muro 1

Approaching and detaching from the camera.

Italy, 2021
4k, 1' 29"
No dialogues

Director
Francesco Ballo

With the assistance of
Astrid Ardentì

Production
MÂD



Biography

Francesco Ballo (Milan, 1950) has taught Film and Video History at the Fine Arts Academy of Brera. He is a scholar and filmmaker. His latest books are: Jacques Tourneur. *La trilogia del fantastico*, Falsopiano, Alessandria, 2007 (winner of the 4th edition of the Maurizio Grande award) and *Il cinema di Buster Keaton. Sherlock Jr.*, Falsopiano, Alessandria, 2013.

Over the past twenty years he has directed, among others, the 16 mm feature films: *Quando le ombre si allungano* (1996), *Muri Bianchi* (1998), *Hai chiuso la valigia?* (1999), *Buster Keaton di corsa* (2003), *Guido Ballo. Poesie, with Marina Ballo Charmet* (2004), *Risa* (2007), *Note su Sherlock Jr.*, with Paolo Darra (2009), *La fantastica coppia. Roscoe Arbuckle e Buster Keaton* (2014), *Ghiaccio Rosso* (2016), *Esperimenti* (2015-2016-2017) and *Preferirei di no* (2018). In 2019, he presented *Variazioni di "The Blacksmith" di Buster Keaton e Mal St. Clair* (2018) and *The Blacksmith - Versione Ballo* (2018) at the Pordenone Silent Film Festival and *Pietra* (2019) at Milano Film Festival.

Filmmaker programmed several of his short film collections, including in 2020 *Ballo Files / 20*, an anthology of the «magnificent obsessions» that underpin his visual poetics.

In 2021 he presented at Milano Film Festival *Capodanno 2005-2006*, a journey through the city, between the silence of urban geographies and the explosions of celebrations.

Parete

Film montage of short shots.

Italy, 2021
4k, 1' 29"
No dialogues

Director
Francesco Ballo

With the assistance of
Astrid Ardentì

Production
MÂD



Tornano i Varani

An attractive woman. Seemingly empty envelopes of words. Looking in the car and making walls appear. Casual final meeting.

Italy, 2022
4k, 11'
No dialogues

Director and subject
Francesco Ballo

With
Ilaria Pezone
With the friendly participation of
Federico Frefel

Cinematography
Francesco Ballo, Federico Frefel

Editing
Ilaria Pezone, Francesco Ballo

Assistance
Gabriele Gimmelli, Valentina Guida, Dario Stefanoni

Thanks
Lorenzo Castellini, La casa degli Artisti - Milano

Production
MÂD

Polsi sottili

Giancarlo Soldi



Italy, 1985
16mm, colour, 59'
O.V. Italian

Director
Giancarlo Soldi

Screenplay
Giancarlo Soldi

Cinematography
Charles Rose

Editing
Claudio Cormio

Sound
Tiziano Crotti

Music
Kinky Staff

Interpreters
Stefania Casini,
Mariella Valentini,
Andrea Perrone,
Paolo Ciarchi

Producer
Giancarlo Soldi

Contacts
giancarlosoldi3@gmail.com

Illi is a girl who has the power to change the weather whenever her mood changes. If she gets angry it snows, when she cries it rains, in moments of despair the wind blows - all without her realizing it. Niki is a teenager who enjoys climbing buildings. Vela is a down-to-earth lawyer who, however, never understands what is going on around her. Different stories which, like a mosaic, make up the possible geometries of encounters over the course of a day. A love that lasts an instant. A wallet that passes from hand to hand. The climbing of a palace in order to dream, while Illi continues, unknowingly, to weave the plots with her metereactive powers. A strange dance of chance with people who live their daily lives serenely causing lacerations. In the end, wounds heal, clouds disappear, snow stops suddenly, and thunderstorms are as short-lived as falling in love. What matters is not winning but surviving. The subject of the film was awarded at Filmmaker in 1985, shot in 16 days, and presented at the Berlinale Forum. – Cristina Piccino

Biography

Giancarlo Soldi (Bonemerse, 1954) makes his debut in 1979 with the short film *Paranaia*, shot during his military service. In 1980 he films *No-Future*, the film wins Filmmaker in the same year. Between 1988 and 1991 he shoots *Frammenti d'amore* for RAI, and in 1991 he directs the program *Buzz* for Italia 1. *Nero* (1992), written with Tiziano Scavi, with Sergio Castellitto and Chiara Caselli, is presented at the Venice Film Festival. In 1998 he produces the series *AleX, indagini su mondi segreti*, for Italia 1, and in 2000 he is commissioned to create interactive videos for the exhibition *Il mondo nuovo* at Palazzo Reale in Milan. In 2001 with the documentary *Un angolo di mondo* he wins the first prize for creativity at the Chicago Film Festival. In 2008 he films with Stefania Casini the documentary *Così lontani, così vicini*, a series of portraits set in the Roman suburbs. In 2015 he releases in theatres for Bizet productions and Lo Scrittoio *Nessuno siamo perfetti*, a documentary on Tiziano Scavi, Special Mention at the Nastri d'Argento. *Cercando Valentina. Il mondo di Guido Crepax* (2019) is presented at Venice Days. In 2020 he directs and leads *Little Memo - fumetto history*, eight episodes for Fumettologica.it. In 2021 he produces and conducts the second series of *Little Memo*, also for Fumettologica.it.

The Honesty of the Bodies

Giuseppe Gariazzo

A new generation of Italian filmmakers was born in the mid-1980s, and 1985 was a special year. The Bellaria Anteprima festival for independent Italian cinema focused its third edition on a group of authors who would later go their separate ways, each leaving a particular mark within an Italian panorama in creative ferment. At Bellaria exploded the unreconciled visions of, among others, Giuseppe M. Gaudino, Silvio Soldini, Guido Chiesa, Paolo Rosa, Kiko Stella, and Maria Martinelli. And Giancarlo Soldi who presented his first, short - little less than an hour - feature film, *Polsi sottili*. Thirty-seven years later, the film finds new life thanks to Luce Cinecittà's restoration made from the original 16mm negative. And it is, still to this day, a magnificent vision, a renewed love at first sight, the manifestation of a flagrant and modern gaze, the liberation of bodies and places, a punk and situationist dance through the streets, buildings, cafes, the velodrome of Milan - architectures that welcome the wacky exploits of characters at once isolated and connected.

Filed in sixteen days, between October 23, 1984 and January 9, 1985, *Polsi sottili* describes, with a narrative concentrated in the space of a day, but with an elliptical proceeding that fragments the temporal unity, the "acts" performed by unnamed characters indicated in the credits by the activities they perform: the lawyer (Stefania Casini), robbed of her wallet in the street by three young thieves (one is Soldi) with whom the film's most "Martian" character also has to deal, the metereactive (Mariella Valentini), capable of changing the weather based on her mood (in a film where the seasons can alternate in the space of a few moments), while the climber (Andrea Perrone) is a boy who, with absolute naturalness, climbs the walls of buildings like a light acrobat under the neutral gaze of passersby. Around them, other figures come and go, in scenes as accomplished in themselves as communicating to create an experimental diegetic structure, a flow of situations within which anarchic bodies move through the environments affecting them with their performances generating conflicts, clashes, encounters, desires, above all impulses that lead them to stage actions that become choreographies, pressed by the excellent musical choices and a camera that crystallizes them in the shots.

Soldi said, in the 1985 Bellaria catalog: «In times of total contamination I can only be in favor of collaboration between different sectors. By now there is no filmic specificity to defend: advertising, music videos and cinema snatch ideas from each other. From all sectors come signs of new adventures that serenely manage to reconnect with an imagery that interests us, but above all belongs to us. All we have to defend is freshness and honesty».

Retrospective

RUTH BECKERMANN,
the Image of the Word



The Storytelling's Space

Cristina Piccino

«The Vienna I created for myself existed in literature - Schnitzler, Roth, the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was the world I had created from my parents' readings. In high school I was part of a group of girls who read Sartre and Camus – in a way existentialism and Habsburg history were both guardians of my youth. The encounter with the Left caused a caesura. It happened in 1982, during the war in Lebanon where people were shouting at demonstrations: “Get the Nazis out of Lebanon”. There I realized that my position was not as straightforward as I thought, considering that many people in my group shared an anti-Semitic sentiment. My quest to understand where I came from and who I really am began then» (Ruth Beckermann).

And this need, coupled with a deep desire to invent a form with which to express it, makes Ruth Beckermann's cinema a long journey in which the filmmaker - who is also its protagonist - traverses, standing or moving, history, Judaism, the Holocaust, the diaspora. And the Mediterranean, the intertwining of East and West, the feeling of contemporary time. Each of Beckermann's films gives the viewer the feeling of entering a world or more than one world. Although they may seem distant, they always contain something about us, an experience or a story that we can recognize.

It all began - as she herself has often said - by chance, when, returning from New York, where she attended a school of photography between 1975 and 1976, she joined a collective of filmmakers, the Syndikat der Filmschaffenden. The group included Franz Laden and Jozef Aichholzer, with whom she made her first films; together they started Filmladen. Their goal was to produce and distribute political films to illuminate the conflicts and contradictions of Austrian society at the time. These were the years of *Arena besetzt* (*Arena squatted*, 1977) about the youth movement's occupation of the old city slaughterhouse, which later became a shopping mall; or *Auf amol a Streik* (*Suddenly a Strike*, 1978) and *Der Hammer steht auf der Wies'n da draussen* (*The Steel Hammer out There on the Grass*, 1981), which give voice to workers on strike, condemned to invisibility, and their disillusionment with the unions. The style is dry; rather than “documenting” environments and situations, the filmmakers are interested in listening. The words of their interlocutors pose precise and disturbing questions to Austrian society as a whole. A very young Ruth Beckermann appears in the frame as she records the sound, stopping at the threshold of the personal dimension that would later become her favorite way of questioning reality.

It is with *Wien Retour* (*Return to Vienna*, 1983) that she sets the narrative coordinates for her work to come: a restless movement, never linear, like a dance of the heart, curious, sensitive, always ready to be surprised. The starting point is a simple and at once foundational question: how do personal stories become collective matter? And how a shared memory becomes the fracture of the present, of an imagery, of different narratives? The story of her family, those who survived Nazism, those who were deported, those who fled to Israel: her father, her mother, her grandmother, each with their own baggage of life. In front of them, there is the director's desire to find an image that will hand down their memory by preserving their plurality, the many stories contained therein, even those perhaps cast aside. Such a family genealogy makes her an heir to the Jewish culture of fin-de-siècle Vienna. The city of the Junge-Wien of Arthur Schnitzler, Theodor Herzl, Karl Kraus and Stefan Zweig, with the awareness of not belonging to a familiar place, of sharing an estrangement that makes her a “keep-walking,” constantly searching for her own identity and memory. It is within this narrative that we find Austria in a vision that deconstructs its postwar image of innocence and victimhood in relation to Nazism, forcing it instead to come to terms with its own responsibilities. She will find evidence among those who demonstrate for Waldheim running as president of Austria despite his Nazi past now emerged - the footage from *Die Papierene Brücke* (*Paper Bridge*, 1987) will later be the source of *Waldheims Walzer* (*The Waldheim Waltz*, 2018).

Her neighborhood's streets are suddenly distant, and the literary Vienna fantasized among her parents' books takes new boundaries: between the cafes and the woods - where her grandmother had found refuge - emerges a nomadic cartography of emotions and experiences, traces to be found, voices to be heard. The stories, the story: that space from which to depart to discover reality in its infinite variations, to capture what escapes, what is on the edge of the images or between them.

Wiener Retour is a long conversation with Franz West, militant communist, Jewish, who fled from Vienna to London in 1938 after being arrested for his political struggle. The stylistic choice is simple; there are no “reconstructions” other than archival images that very freely mix found footage, newspapers, photographs, films. Gradually, as we listen to him - facing the camera, the two directors are in front of him - the film takes shape in our eyes, in our heads: it becomes a thriller, an adventure film, it keeps us in suspense as would the heroes of action films. The narrative creates those universes, where every suggestion takes shape, where time finds its own truth. A narrative that Franz himself subtracts from the image of himself when in the end, he suddenly “surrenders” the Holocaust to a recording of his voice: a tape leaves him off-screen and his image is unwilling and unable to sustain this.

Wiener Return together with *Die Papierene Brücke* and *Nach Jerusalem* (*Towards Jerusalem*, 1990) builds a trilogy of memory whose ideal reverse shot becomes *Jenseits des Krieges* (*East of War*, 1996), a film about oblivion made on the occasion of an exhibition about Wehrmacht crimes. Leaving aside the photographs on display, Beckermann questions the visitors, mostly former soldiers, about their memories of the war. So it is in the words that Ruth Beckermann's cinema takes place, words that are always literary whether they refer to someone's story or compare with those of poets - as it does in *Die Geträumten* (*The Dreamed Ones*, 2016), the correspondence between Paul Celan and Ingeborg Bachmann, the love between two young people united by writing. The first person brings back the director where the road home opens towards elsewhere - *Homemad(e)*, 2001 - and the horizon of America is composed in the fragments of new and unexpected encounters (*American Passages*, 2011).

Fin-de-siècle Vienna returns in her latest film, *Mutzenbacher* (2022) inspired by Felix Salten's long-forbidden novel, also unearthed from his parents' shelves when she was a teenager. The memoirs of the young Viennese prostitute, created by the author's imagination and ghosts, are entrusted to be read by a hundred men of different ages. Nothing is shown but, in those words, the masculine is revealed as never before in cinema: the men talk openly about sexuality, taboos, fears, eroticism, taboos, harassment, machismo. And powerfully, in that short-circuit that Ruth releases with delicate irreverence, they give us a glimpse of a world again: our own.

Mutzenbacher

ITALIAN PREMIÈRE



When it appeared, in the turn-of-the-century Vienna - it was 1906, *Josephine Mutzenbacher* had the effect of a deflagration. Indeed, *the memoir* of a Viennese prostitute, who had reached that maturity when one could look back, told the story of a child who was aware from a very young age of her own sexual desire and that of the males around her whom she constantly tried to provoke. The father, the neighbor, the other children, the officer, the aristocrat: every man, young or old becomes in Josephine's life a variation around eroticism and those taboos that collective morality forbids even to whisper. Defiant and above all never a victim in her own narrative, Josephine proudly exhibits a consciousness of her own body, which must always be paid and never given away; for her, those men are abstract and interchangeable geometries, dangerous only in the case that she would fall in love with them.

The novel had been censored remaining a forbidden reading for generations of Austrian girls and boys. Released anonymously it was later attributed to Felix Salten, the Austrian writer of that *Bambi* that inspired Disney's film, becoming in time a literary classic. Ruth Beckermann, also a "clandestine" reader of

the book unearthed from her parents' shelves, makes a choice for the staging that respects its origins: only men will be reading the text written in the first person by a woman who however is the projection of a male author, in a triangulation in which the only female presence is that of the director - also on stage only as a voice that arranges the action. The set is an old, now-closed, factory in Vienna, the protagonists - chosen through a newspaper ad searching for men between 16 and 99 years old - are seated on a time-worn golden pink couch that was found there, whose presence becomes much more significant than a mere coincidence. And besides: had not Freud written his *Three Essays on Sexuality* in the very same years as Salten?

In pairs or alone, in front of the director, the men read passages from the text confronting themselves with a phantasmagorical eroticism and, as such, free of all constraints. Some of them show embarrassment, others have greater fluency, together they give voice to Josephine's "scandalous" universe that becomes the opportunity to talk about themselves, their relationship with the feminine, with sexuality, with desire. On that couch, unexpectedly, they do not shy away. Some admit their distrust of

the new MeToo social norms - according to which you can't even court a girl anymore - some others would never accept Josephine's seduction because they are too shy. One cannot read, and asks the director to do so: «with her voice» that is to say, «with the voice of a woman». Ruth Beckermann "provokes", she provides leads, and through irony she produces a disorientation of the masculine and its representation. Words create a space that allows absolute freedom, nothing is "represented", it is evoked instead, suggested as it is on the written pages, treasuring the ambiguity between fear of the text and curiosity about it. «The film aims to be subversive in a time like the present characterized by a new moralism, political correctness, and linguistic rules. While everything is becoming blurry I felt it was important to establish the differences between reality and fiction; in fantasy everything should be allowed». In the "dark side" of *fin de siècle* Vienna we thus find our contemporary.
- Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2022
4k, colour, 100'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann,
Claus Philipp

Cinematography
Johannes Hammel

Editing
Dieter Pichler

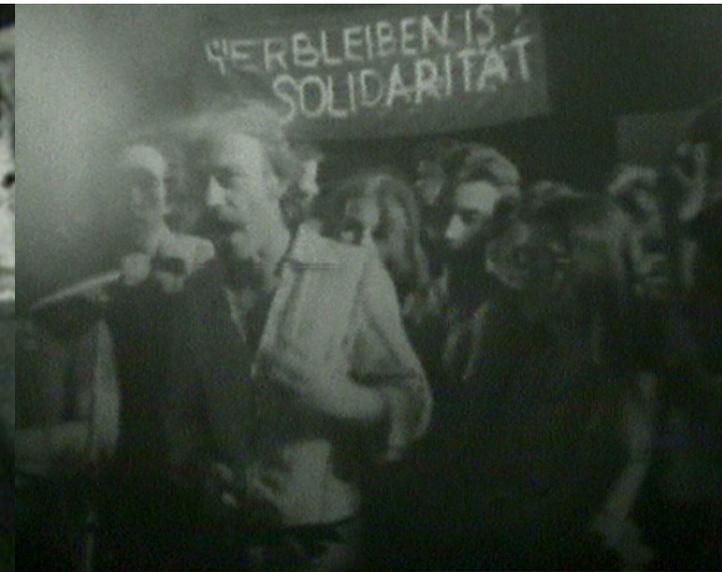
Sound
Andreas Hamza

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

Contacts
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Arena Squatted



Vienna, July 1976: hundreds of people occupy the old city slaughterhouse destined to be torn down to become the center of Schöps textile industry. Day after day the city seems to sympathize with the occupiers and their project, which aims to build a cultural center open to all. They are young, many of them have children, the atmosphere is joyful and those early days become a celebration. Artists, musicians like Leonard Cohen support them, free concerts and performances are organized. With other filmmakers from the Video Group, Beckermann follows for twelve weeks the organization of this public space through a

collective management in which everyone has the right to decide. Tasks and duties are divided, a management committee is created, the Children's House and a café are built. There are events that open the Arena to the city even more, the place becomes a meeting point.... Discussions alternate with festive moments in a dimension of existence that seeks to realize the utopia of a community. As in other similar experiences, there is no shortage of rifts, and even clashes between different political visions that often offer conflicting answers to everyday problems. Meanwhile, attacks on the occupation become harsher and harsher:

disparaging media campaigns, drug charges, violence. Negotiations with city institutions after many fake promises are doomed to failure and the end of the Arena appears inevitable. The film, edited in five months from a footage of more than twelve hours and thousands of photographs reconstructs the moments of that experience and, in its energy, it recounts the Austria of that time against which the wager of a generation was asserted, with its desire for a political practice to be invented in life and outside the parties. – Cristina Piccino

Austria, 1977
Video, U-matic, 16mm, b/n, 77
O.V. German

Director
Video Group Arena
(Jozef Aichholzer,
Ruth Beckermann,
Franz Graf)

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Suddenly, a Strike



Ruth Beckermann and Josef Aichholzer are in a room with some workers from Semperit, a factory that produces tires. The filmmakers represent an eccentric presence in such cultural period: Austrian filmmakers prefer to make documentaries about nature, instead of getting in contact with movements that try to destabilize the rigid rules of industrial society. Beckermann and Aichholzer are there, complicit with their 16mm camera, among the workers that discuss, they analyze what's happening. The microphone captures the discontent, the desire to re-discuss some conditions, the urgency of adjusting salaries to the current situation. And then the criticism of management, the misunderstandings with

the union divided in half between the parties involved. Workers refer to a past that appeared better than the present. Over the years, things have changed. The progressive automation of factories has resulted in less physical effort but greater concentration and precision. And, of course, job cuts. Meanwhile, promises have not been kept. What the owners lost in investments, they want to recover at the expense of the workers. They have earned less, but demand the same profit as if the responsibilities were to fall on the weaker segments. The same story seems to repeat itself cyclically. Therefore, time for a strike has come, the first in Austria since the postwar period. In this short film, Beckermann and Aichholzer intercept a moment in the

political and social Austrian society. The feeling is that the beginning of an end is already contained in that turmoil. A slow albeit unconscious approach to the sunset of an era. This consideration, however, is marginal for the purposes of the film: the two directors follow events in the present, not anticipating them or commenting on them in retrospect. And the viewers can draw their own conclusions. An open and risky mode that faces a reality that, by proceeding in a nonlinear manner, ends as it began, suddenly.
– Mazzino Montinari

Austria, 1978
16mm, b/n, 24'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann,
Josef Aichholzer

Narrator
Ruth Beckermann

Producer
Josef Aichholzer

Production
Filmladen

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The Steel Hammer Out There on the Grass



Three years after *Suddenly, a strike*, Ruth Beckermann and Josef Aichholzer - on this occasion with the addition of Michael Stejskal as director - return to film and to listen to workers' demands. The first images involve ten thousand people marching in the town of Judenburg to protest the gradual dismissal of the steel plant. These are years of international crisis (only a year earlier Margaret Thatcher came to power in the United Kingdom) that inevitably spill over into Austria as well. The workers who have been exploited for decades, and are now deprived of their jobs, are affected. The history of the postwar Austrian steel industry is an example of how the State, by nationalizing factories, produced raw materials

and then resold them cheaply to private companies, favoring them unfairly. A subsidy that now weighs entirely on the shoulders of workers. And so, since 1978, an entire city has been struggling alone against the decline of the industry. A difficult battle to wage because, on the other side, the strategy is clear: dividing the workers' front, pitting the different branches against each other. The film's main protagonist is Horst Scvarza, dubbed "the Lech Walesa of Judenburg". One more time Beckerman and Aichholzer transform the audiovisual product into a kind of public space open to the intervention of a community ready to share its ideals. A seemingly easy job, with interviews and images that define the scene

of the action. In fact, it is a documentary that proves to be complex and dramatic, not only because of the outcomes of the protest, but also because of the fragile nature of a plurality that is always on the edge of an abyss and cannot stay united.

– Mazzino Montinari

Austria, 1981
16mm, colour, b/n, 40'
O.V. German

Director
Josef Aichholzer,
Ruth Beckermann,
Michael Stejskal

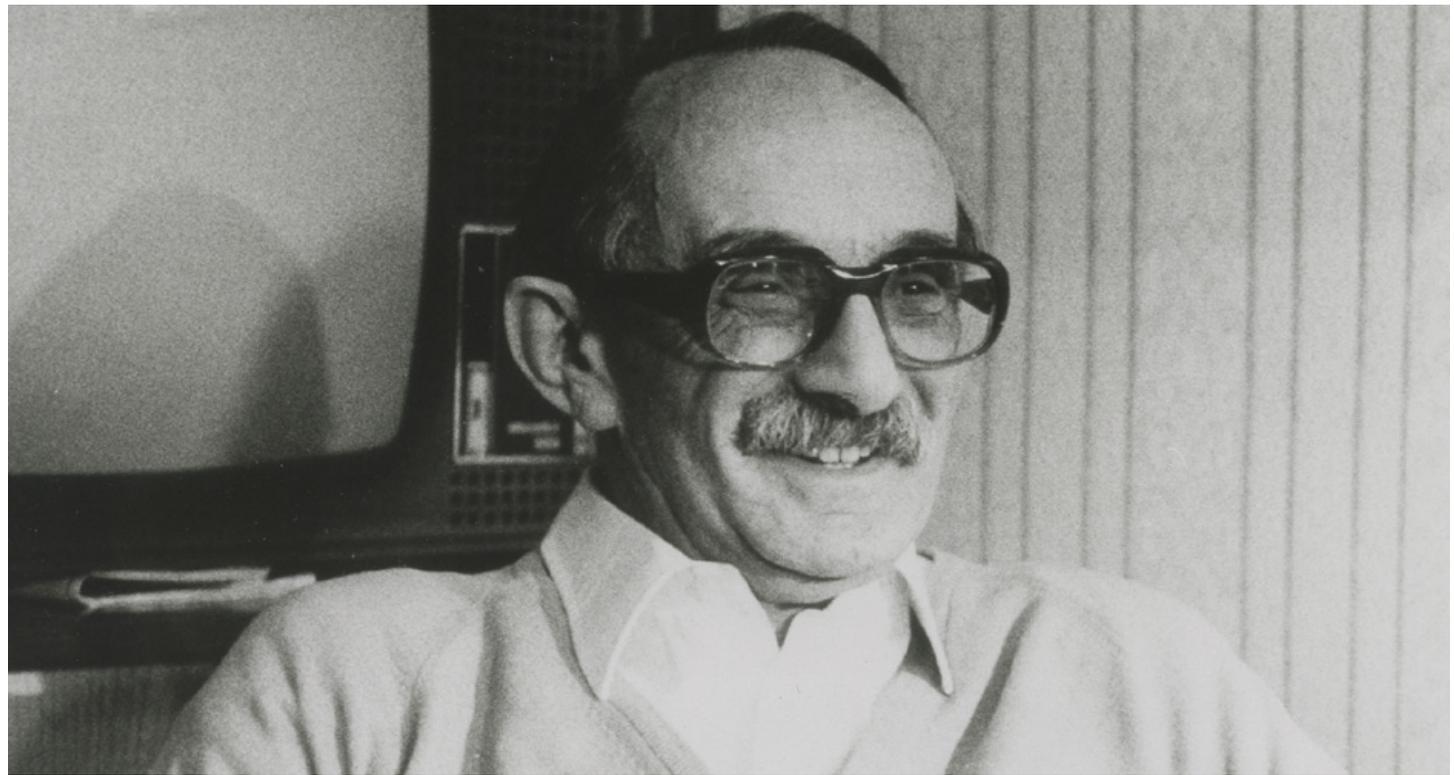
Cinematography
Bernhard Watzek

Editing
Hanja Dirnbacher

Production
Filmladen

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Return to Vienna



The landscape from the train window flows fast, destination Vienna. Archival images take us back in time to Matzo Island, as the city's Jewish quarter was called, where thousands of Jewish families lived after the Great War; among them was that of Franz West, who arrived there in 1924, still a teenager, from Magdeburg suddenly discovering a large community after having experienced, growing up as a Jew, the feeling of exclusion and suspicion. We listen to his voice throughout the film, it is the narration of a life that contains within itself the history of the Twentieth century, and that of Austria between the wars. The two directors, seated behind him, both of them in the frame, remain silent making a simple stylistic choice that relies entirely on the protagonist's voice, punctuating it with found footage, photographs, newspapers, comics, satiric publications, and films of the time. Who is then Franz West? A student and worker - in order to help the fragile family economy - a young militant in the Social Democracy, party that he leaves disappointed when he senses its low fighting potential, to get closer to

the communists, the "Red Vienna" workers' movement. Meanwhile, also because of the economic crisis, the fascists first and then the National Socialists began to impose themselves until they reached the power. Franz became convinced of the need for increasingly radical positions to defend workers, proletarians, and freedom of thought, which was soon obliterated with the closure of every newspaper and opposition space. The May 1st demonstration is violently prevented, and when a general strike is called, the government, now openly fascist, fires cannons at the workers. Franz at the university is attacked and beaten by Nazis because he is a "dirty Jew". The police do not defend him, the university administration expels him, shortly afterwards he is arrested, and in 1938, he flees to London. He always puts militancy at the centre of his narrative, before anti-Semitism, the political choices that would lead him in the post-war period to return to the Communist Party in Austria and then to leave it in opposition to the invasion of Prague. And if the images show us that time visually, his words bring him back to the present with a "truth"

that anticipates questions that will run through Beckermann's later films. The unmasking of a self-representation of Austria as a "victim" of Nazism, at first, while Nazism had instead found deep and convinced adherence in the country and at every level, both institutional and popular. A critique that is affirmed years later in *The Waldeheim Waltz* (2018) in which the protest against Waldheim's presidency begins precisely with the obscuring in his biography of his participation in Nazism. The epilogue delivers us a new reversal: suddenly it is Franz himself who gives the filmmakers a tape, a kind of off-screen memory in which that hitherto missing image takes shape: the Holocaust. It is the memories of the man's affections, relatives, friends, the millions of people exterminated, what had happened after his escape and before his return, in the caesura that has remained in the dark until now. There are no archives for this, but only the word that resonates in its even more powerful sweetness. – Cristina Piccino

Austria, 1983
16mm, colour, b/n, 91'
O.V. German

Director
Josef Aichholzer,
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Tamás Ujlaki,
Bernd Neuburger,
Bernhard Watzek,
Gerd Broser

Editing
Josef Aichholzer,
Ruth Beckermann

Sound
Gerhardt Ordnung

Music
Pierre-Max Dubois
(*Concerto for Alto Saxophone
and String Orchestra*),
Schurli Herrstadt
(*Leopoldstadt*),
Hermann Leopoldi
(*Die Überlandpartie*)

Narrator
Paola Loew

Interpreters
Franz West

Production
Filmladen

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Paper Bridge



What happens when the stories of one's life become "the" History? Ruth Beckermann begins her journey into the memory of her family where the diaspora, Eastern Europe, Israel meet, starting from this question which is the basis of each of her films. An emotional and physical geography that, from Vienna, takes her to Romania, Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic on the traces of Jewish communities, of their presence after the war and before, in the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Until the final stop, Israel, which her mother considers her "home." The streets of Vienna, where Ruth grew up and lives, suddenly seem foreign to her as she thinks of her grandmother, Oma Rosa, who survived Nazi extermination by pretending to be mute and hiding in the woods outside the city, as in the legend about a woman who slowly became invisible because she was violently ostracized by the village. Also. The filmmaker's father, who came from Bukovina, carries with him memories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire when there was no anti-Semitism. Czernowitz, his town, had suddenly changed because of

Hitler's promises of jobs and prosperity. After the war when he had arrived in Vienna he felt a very strong hostility against him because he was Jewish. But he had decided to stay. «How did you keep going?» his daughter asks. «By trying to be enough for myself» he replies, until he became the respected merchant he was. In Romania, where people's temperament has allowed them to escape the system, the remaining Jews are preparing to leave for Israel with the promise to maintain their customs also there. One lady teaches Hebrew to young people, even though she has only two students. The landscape lost in a cold fog looks ancient, it seems to bring back to other eras. The epiphany of reality is the laughter of the man who accompanies Beckermann to a Jewish cemetery, calling her "little girl" as he tells her about the rich Viennese family that after the war no longer supported their community because they were communists. In the Theresienstadt concentration camp, an American movie is being filmed. «What would I have done in the place of a survivor?» the director asks herself.

That feeling of "not belonging" that runs through the first-person narrative interrogates the reality that suddenly seems to respond powerfully: in the images of the demonstrations in Vienna on Waldheim's candidacy for the presidency of Austria - images which later became the core of *Waldheim Waltzer* (2018). A rift in the country between those who are against him because of his (hidden) Nazi past and those who are for him, from which emerges the deep and convinced nationalist anti-Semitism and adherence to Nazism that, in its own post-war portrayal as a "victim", Austria has erased. Like every Beckermann's film, this is also a world: crossing her "Paper Bridge" we cross eras, universes, imaginaries, as if time flows before our eyes, taking us to dimensions that are both familiar and discovered for the first time. Traveler between stories, Beckermann knows how to captivate us, her images are a continuous adventure with which she weaves the plots of a story never told. – Cristina Piccino

Austria 1987
16mm, colour b/n, 95
O.V. German, Hebrew

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Nurith Aviv

Editing
Gerard Luschützky

Sound
Josef Aichholzer,
Reinhold Kaiser,
Heinz Ebner

Music
Arvo Pärt

Narrator
Ruth Beckermann

Production
Filmladen

Producer
Josef Aichholzer

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Towards Jerusalem



Entering a world, willing to get surprised, not knowing what is being filmed, intercepting realities that might have escaped the attention of others. Travelling without a guide and being open to the unexpected. Travelling in Israel, towards Jerusalem, for Ruth Beckermann does not mean ignoring what the media show daily, yesterday (at the time of the film) as today (when some images are dramatically the same as in the past). The director in this road-movie, stop after stop, reverses plans, searches for landscapes, humanity, stories and keeps the war in the background. Making the conflict even more disturbing. There are no stones and bullets, rockets and car bombs, but the viewer can perceive their sound and visual effects. Women, men, children, workers and migrants talk and show themselves before or after mourning. From afar a noise is heard, the smoke from an explosion is glimpsed. Does this vision correspond to the vision the founders of Israel had? Did their dream ever come true? Or over time, behind the hope of building an unprecedented society, did the nightmare of endless bloody confrontation, that produced

death instead of life, injustice instead of justice, inequality rather than equity, take over? «A childhood memory of a blue and white collecting box for a Zionist organization was what inspired this film project. Once a week, I would put the remains of my pocket money in it, contributing to the development – buying land and trees etc. – in my Israel. Now I wanted to go and see what they had done with my pocket money» Beckermann recounts, turning *Towards Jerusalem* into the story of a fairy tale with a maiden who follows the trail of her pennies in order to find her way home. At the beginning the documentary has an unexpected ephemeral tone, a party and a concert. Is it the wonderland? The place the child helped to build with part of her pocket money? Then we move on to alleys, gas stations, markets, newsstands, intersections populated by cars and pedestrians, to more isolated areas and neighborhoods where stores of all kinds proliferate, in short, to the chaos of a theatre-like world from which some actors, distracted by the camera, take leave for a moment by indulging in an impromptu backstage.

Although many things have happened and numerous criminal actions have caused the flow of so much blood, in Beckermann's journey it is still possible to imagine a different outcome from what is known. One can expect a wise choice, a change of course, that is, a story mirroring that original desire to live in a land «without misery, without shame, with people similar to other people», putting aside «the fear of soldiers and neighbors». Unfortunately, it is nothing more than a random disposition of mind toward a past that appears better than the present. In any case, seeing *Towards Jerusalem* thirty years later gives the feeling of having taken a journey through time. Facts, however, cannot be changed, the mournful pacing of Tchaikovsky's *Sérénade mélancolique* is also a reminder of this. In a paradoxical short-circuit, today's spectators momentarily cross paths with yesterday's motorists traveling through the fog towards Jerusalem and still not knowing whether a chasm will open before them. – Mazzino Montinari

Austria, 1991
16mm, colour, 85'
O.V. German, Hebrew, English,
French, Arabic

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Nurith Aviv, Claire Bailly du Bois

Editing
Gertraud Luschützky

Sound
Jochai Mosche,
Othmar Schmderer

Narrator
Niki Kunz

Production
Filmladen

Producer
Josef Aichholzer

Contacts
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East of War



Memory and oblivion, history and personal revisions, shame and emotion, admission of collective responsibility and proclaiming oneself innocent while hiding behind the faults of others. Or the simple and disorienting disbelief, as if documents and testimonies were preferred to acts of faith. It is mainly men who speak, after visiting an exhibition, “Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944” (“War of Annihilation. Crimes of the Wehrmacht 1941 to 1944”). Photos and documents recounting the horror of war, the crimes committed, the offenses that one humanity inflicted on another. Ruth Beckermann, in five weeks, interviewed two hundred people and produces forty-six hours of material. And she makes precise choices. She frames only those who speak, listens to them, sometimes presses them with a request for clarification, often it is the other visitors who intervene, refute, confirm, indignantly complain. Everyone is involved in listening. While the exhibition remains in the background, no caption comes to the rescue, the viewer is forced to remember, to inwardly visualize. «It was perfectly clear to me»

Beckermann said in an interview, «that I would not show the photos from the Wehrmacht exhibition because that would have destroyed my focus on memory. It would have led to a comparison between historical facts and memory, establishing a dichotomy between what is said and what is shown. I wanted the audience to engage with the topic of memory instead, so that various nuances of truth and lie, of what is left unspoken and what is kept secret, could come to the fore». Visitors, therefore, are called to the obligation of testimony and to take a stand, to place themselves in a context in which unequivocally a military force, Germany, with the complicity of Austrian soldiers, has attacked and invaded another country. The veterans remember but not completely, they know up to a point, they agree on some faults to the exclusion of others, they are grateful that they were part of another division, less criminal, less insane in committing inhumane acts. Many argue that invading Russia had been right, also considered the subsequent Cold War, and that executing civilians belonged to the natural order of things. Others evoke the barbaric acts committed against the city of

Dresden. «What else could we do? We were obliged to go to war». Then suddenly a woman bursts in and interrupts the stammering of a former Wehrmacht soldier, stops the hateful attempt to normalize, to camouflage behind justifications and adverse fates: «If you have participated in this war and fought in a foreign country, causing destruction and misery to people who have never harmed you, how can you say, once you come back, “It was nothing but a normal war”? My father, who is about your age and fought in the Caucasus, told me how during the campaign he realized the crimes they were committing. It is so painfully obvious. I believe that if someone has a heart and a feeling for what is happening, at some point they have to realize that they’re committing a crime, even if it is legally authorized. I mean, the whole army took an oath, they took an oath to Hitler, not to Austria or the German Reich, to a person. I mean, wars are always terrible and the reasons for them, especially on the side of who started them, can never be justified».

– Mazzino Montinari

Austria, 1996
35mm (High-8 blow-up),
colour, 117'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Peter Roehsler

Editing
Gertraud Luschützky

Production
Josef Aichholzer Film Production

Producer
Josef Aichholzer

Contacts
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A Fleeting Passage to the Orient



«I would like to cross eras, but I can only film the one in which I live. I can't travel back in time, only to distant places, to foreign lands. Perhaps, though, the past is a foreign land. At first, everything we see is a pleasant experience to capture, to savor. The luxury of observing, the luxury of wasting time. Time is a luxury». Empress Elizabeth's journey, Ruth's journey, two quests, two ways of indulging in the luxury of time. A double game that, in its unfolding, carries with it uncertain identities, those of those on the move and those who, unwittingly, allow themselves to be intercepted by the photographic medium. Apparently, everything is clear. On the one hand the faces caught by the camera, on the other the intentions of whom fixes reality in one or more images. Yet, as the title reports, everything is fleeting, brief, probably confused. Starting with Sissi herself, the myth, the legend depicted everywhere and known to all, who, however, no longer allows

herself to be filmed after turning thirty-one. No portraits, perhaps to preserve eternal youth. Or perhaps not to lose control of herself, to enhance her figure in the missing image. Who is that unknown face we glimpse in a picture at the beginning of the film who has decided to cross the world to the East, from Cairo to Lake Fayum? What is she observing? Is it really her? And what kind of gaze does she possess? Is she a privileged tourist who loves the eccentric or a traveler in search of exotic? Does she feel she is above others? Does she try to blend in? Is it the repurposing in other forms of the wandering Jew? And if it is difficult to unravel the empress's path, it is equally complex to delineate that of the director, the narrative voice, engaged in following a trail, questioning who and why she left it. Ruth, in turn, also crosses seas, cities and deserts, leaving footprints. She films encounters that are also fleeting. She fixes in an instant the

existences of women and men in a bar, in a market, in a square. She throws herself into a dreamlike state, enveloped in sounds and voices that speak an often unknown language. A film that marks a turning point in Beckermann's poetics. «Until *A fleeting passage to the Orient*, I wanted to make films by subtracting images. Only later did I realize that my work had to focus on what happens between the images. It could also have to do with aniconism. I am not a religious person, but the tradition of written culture is deeply rooted in me. I started out as a writer, and literature is all about imagination». From the eighty shootings of *Paper Bridge*, that is, from the idea of working with as few images as possible, the director chose to «throw herself into visual pleasure» and «create images»—Mazzino Montinari

Austria, 1999
35mm (Super-16 blow-up),
colour, 82'
O.V. German, English

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Nurith Aviv,
Sophie Cadet

Editing
Gertraud Luschützky

Music
Bruno Pisek,
Peter Ponger,
Ernst Zettl

Sound
Bruno Pisek

Storyteller
Ruth Beckermann

Production
Josef Aichholzer Film Production

Producer
Josef Aichholzer

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Homemad(e)



«There are many things in my street, it would be impossible to describe everything. But what interests me are the people, the way they argue, how they gesticulate, how they walk ...». Marc Aurel Strasse, where the director lives. Following personal stories, Beckermann moves once again into a collective story, “being-on-the-road” (as defined by Christa Blumlinger) on the edge between belonging to a city and distancing herself from it, Vienna, that runs through her entire oeuvre. The theater of the film is the Salzgries Café - because cafes are a special “window to the world” - the protagonists its regular clients, neighbors, “people” who, like her, become “characters.” Retirees, journalists, architects, actresses, writers, (occasional) waitresses take turns in front of her lens, entrusting her with thoughts, reflections on the world, worries, habits, sorrows, fragments of life; and as she listens to them or asks

questions she declares her being also part of that daily “homemade” - or is it a “house of madness”? As a thread in the fabric of all these voices is the figure of Adolf “Adi” Dorf. A textile merchant now left with few customers, he seems unable to get away from that place. Smiling, always well dressed, strolling here and there, alone or with his grandchildren, he says to the camera: «I am an actor». And if his store mirrors the urban transformation of the city and the street, once the heart of Jewish commerce, now filled with clubs and restaurants, he carries the memory of the century that is ending and that of the city’s Jewish community. Indeed, Dorf is his family’s only survivor of the Nazi extermination and continues to confront a trauma of violence and death that seems unbelievable today. «I will never forgive them» he says. There are also those who do not even find the words to recount that trauma, like a

woman who continues to conceal details from her children, details that are too painful to remember. But the search in Jewish identity is never for Beckermann a mere commemoration. It opens up, instead, to other directions; it carries within it the echo of a central European culture, that of the diaspora, it looks at the present: it talks about integration, it sheds light on the hypocrisies of Austrian society. Meanwhile, from the summer of 1999, when the filmmaker started filming, we land to the spring of 2000, when Haider’s extreme-right-wing entered the government, bringing Austria back to its past, a past with which the country has never come to terms. *Flâneuse* of memory, Beckermann continues to build, over time, a political and poetic dialogue through which she never stops asking questions. – Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2001
35mm, DVCam, colour, 84'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Nurith Aviv,
Ruth Beckermann,
Peter Roehsler

Editing
Gertraud Luschützky,
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Christina Kaindl-Hönig

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

Contacts
sekretariat@ruthbeckermann.com

Zorro's Bar Mitzva



What does it mean to become an adult? The question recurs in the days of Sharon, Thom, Moishy and Sophie, four twelve-year-old kids, preparing their Bar Mitzva and Bat Mitzva respectively. Each one of them is representative of different cultures and ways of approaching religion but the idea that they all share is that entering the adult world must be a big celebration. Between the preparation of the ritual - readings, songs, study of the gesture, the intonation of the voice, the speech to be delivered - parents and children express their expectations of that crucial moment in their existence where the desires of the adults often prevail on those of the kids. The celebration thus becomes the space where staging family stories, the distant roots, the representation of what one wants to be and what one wants to declare with respect to the shared, but different tradition for each one. It is a matter of

identity and also of class, everyone would like a "special party", however financial resources are not the same for everyone. Beside the chief rabbi and the cantor, someone can afford a filmmaker, André Wanne, who films the party and also makes clips in which the kids present themselves as they like best. In the days leading up to the event we listen to the kids, the fathers and the mothers, follow the movement of emotions. There is the Orthodox family, which conforms to rules according to tradition, and that of Sophie whose young father tells his own family history: his mother who had converted by becoming more dogmatic than her father. Another family chooses the "Spanish" style, because they are Sephardic and their son loves the heroic Zorro. The outfits, the décor, the setting, the locations: from Vienna to the Wailing Wall, from elegant to hyper-traditional outfits, from pomp to greater simplicity. In

between there are the voices of those who did not have their Bar Mitzva because they were displaced from Iraq to Israel, or because of the war. «I'm not worried, after all you're together with family and friends, it will be nice» says one of the young boys. Beckermann's camera discreetly enters interiors, lingers on details, in the silences of the young protagonists who seem at times to enclose a distance, as if they had already entered their new role. She looks for cracks, builds counterpoints, humorously explores the Jewish tradition by illuminating its many declensions and memories. And to rituality she links the fantasies of adolescence, which can be the Zorro suit, curls on the head, makeup with mom, romping in dance. A terrain still open to possibilities.

– Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2006
DVcam, 35mm, colour, 90'
O.V. German, English, Hebrew

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Nurith Aviv,
Leena Koppe,
André Wanne

Editing
Dieter Pichler,
Thomas Woschitz

Sound
Günther Tuppinger,
Stefan Holzer

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

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sekretariat@ruthbeckermann.com

Mozart Enigma

Austria, 2006
35mm, DVCam, colour, 1'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Joerg Burger,
Martin Putz

Editing
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Joerg Burger,
Martin Putz

Interpreter
Sonja Holfeld

Production
Wiener Mozart Jahr 2006

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A fortune teller reads the cards, another woman listens to her and occasionally answers her questions. It is about a man whose success has been undermined by the intrigues of others. In the frame the voices, the cards, the flowers, the portrait of the man, the hands of the two protagonists. «Mozart Enigma is an ironic commentary on a pseudo-documentary biography. Is it possible to imagine a person? Isn't it better to go to a fortune teller, take off your wig and have your cards read? For the film we made a collage of photographs. And the main character, although he looks like Mozart, has a new hairstyle and different clothes. We showed the portrait to a fortune teller in Vienna who didn't know what it was about». The film is part of a collective project devised by the 2006 Wiener Mozartjahr, which invited twenty-eight Austrian filmmakers - including Mara Mattuschka, Ulrich Seidl, Jessica Hausner, Peter Tscherkassky, and Michael Glawogger - to make short films about the composer with no format limitation other than the one-minute length - Cristina Piccino



American Passages



Harlem, the night of Barack Obama's victory is a great celebration, African Americans see in that epochal transition - the first black president in the White House - their liberation. Ruth Beckermann's journey across America begins here to draw, stage by stage, through the central and southern States - New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arizona, Nevada - a multifaceted cartography of "Stars and Stripes", populated by unseen figures who encapsulate the country's narrative. The filmmaker gives shape to a landscape that combines the myth, the imagery, the details of a wonderful and, at the same time, terrible American life, in which each individual evokes the moments that marked his or her physiognomy. Slavery, segregation, wars, 9/11, disorientation, small islands of happiness. The star system and its illusions, the adventurers of a lifetime in Las Vegas, like Jerry who has been playing since he was 13 and has become

the memory of those places. The mafia and the icon of Marlon Brando linked forever to *The Godfather*, stories that intertwine. The young German astronomer scans the sky: he does not look into his neighbors' houses but tries to catch the stars. Thus Beckermann's camera lingers on details, the facade of a hotel, a luxurious car in the backyard of tenements, the reflections of lights, faces, and frames without judgment, everyone is part of a collective dimension. The happiness of the woman who managed to get, for a few dollars, the furniture and belongings of someone who lost their home and, with it, what it contained, the baggage of an entire life, isn't it cruel? To Beckermann's remarks she replies that if it were not hers, it would be someone else's, that she is sad and that is why she never tries to look at their photographs. Is it the American Dream or is it just capitalism? Yet that *American Dream* is unique; it exists nowhere else. What does it mean then?

The stories, the history. A man, one-quarter Creek descendant shows the Native American registry established by the U.S. government, the only way to gain access to a set of rights. The experience, the memory of lineage, however, are elsewhere. And what about the little African American girl who at 19 has already three children? Or that boy who ran to Iraq after 9/11 and came back out of his mind? And the African American man who has known racism and explains how, even with Obama, it is not easy, because white people elected him but hate him. In the warped, upside-down dream, between the cracks of *American Passages* the main narrative line of African Americans opens to other tracks: the narrative of a present declined to the future. – Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2011
DVcam, 35mm, colour, 121'
O.V. English

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Antoine Parouty,
Lisa Rinzier

Editing
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Atanas Tcholakov,
Matthew Dennis

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

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Jackson/Marker 4am

Austria, 2012
HD, colour, 3'25"
O.V. no dialogues

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Antoine Parouty

Editing
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Atanas Tcholakov

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

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Jackson, Mississippi, a young African-American man dances in the street, an uninterrupted movement in which he seems to be carried away more by an inner rhythm than by music. Around him cars glide, he clutches a bill in his mouth, passes it over his face, plays with it almost in a trance; illuminated by the lights of the night his red dress shimmers with rhinestones. Is it a boy? Or is it perhaps a girl? It matters little, gender fades between gestures, while time is suspended, in the contours of a landscape whose horizon is represented by lines and the breath of the body. Someone from a car hands him another bill but he does not even notice it. At the beginning a quote from Chris Marker refers back to Pushkin, to the character of a woman, Elena Andreievna, who tells the tale of a flute in South America whose music can be heard only in the head of the person playing it. Mirroring each other, the image interrogates the act of filming, confronting itself with the world, its way of staging what is real. — Cristina Piccino



Those Who Go Those Who Stay



«When I'm making a film I don't like the idea of everything put down on paper, with too little chance for surprises. And I like the kind of feature film where you can sense something is breathing, there's room for unplanned things to happen. I tried to put that into practice this time, and I'm very happy with it. I filmed things without knowing where they would find their place in the film. And I didn't just film new things: I also found things I'd filmed before. I would often wake up with the feeling that this or that belonged in the film, and then I'd set off to search through my not very organized archives. On the one hand, that approach was frightening because it wasn't clear if a film could really grow out of it, but it was incredibly exciting». (Ruth Beckermann)

Those Who Go Those Who Stay perfectly reflects the intentions of its author. It is a journey that, like all her films, takes her

between Europe and the Mediterranean, following several tracks that sometimes meet, sometimes blend into a more general breath in which the history of humanity echoes, its "being on the move" across the planet out of choice, curiosity, love of knowledge or, in many cases, out of obligation and necessity. In this very different plot, which weaves together so many stories and worlds, here is the director's mother, whom we had already met in *Paper Bridge*; illness and old age have made her forget what she experienced, Nazism, the flight to Israel. Her daughter presses her with questions, asks her if she remembers Brindisi where she had embarked, the woman finds the detail of a figure, a little boy, and then replies that no, one cannot remember everything. What if, instead, images resist oblivion, imprint memory that cannot be lost? Rain drops slide on the glass of a fire truck.

A cat with its innumerable offspring. Other encounters, other stories. A musician in Galilee discusses the many shades of music, it is as if each country has its own sound. If there was no Arab culture there would be no European culture either. Neo-fascists in Vienna call for order and security. In front of a reception center in Sicily there is an argument over the distribution of packages. African boys there say they love Italy; one dreams of being a soccer player. In Alexandria, three veiled women cross a traffic-filled street after many attempts. Fragments of the world, fragments of our time that the filmmaker pours out in whispers, without commentary or dogma, powerfully restoring their deep essence.

– Cristina Piccino

Austria 2013
HD, colour, 75'
O.V. German, English, Hebrew,
Italian

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Cinematography
Johannes Hammel,
Peter Roehsler,
Ruth Beckermann

Editing
Ruth Beckermann,
Dieter Pichler

Music
Eleni Karaindrou

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

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The Dreamed Ones



An actress and an actor meet in a recording studio in Vienna to read the letters of Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan, a correspondence between the two writers that crosses their intermittent and inexhaustible bond of love, which united them since the very first time they met, when they were in their early twenties, and lasted until Celan's death in 1971 in Paris. «I should come, look at you, take you out, kiss you and support you so as not to let you slip away. Please believe me, one day I will come, and I will take you with me» - they write, unable to leave each other but neither to stay close. They met in 1948, Celan had dedicated a poem to Bachmann, In *Ägypten*, surrounded as they were by the post-war Europe. He came from a Jewish family in Cernovitz exterminated in concentration camps, she was Austrian, her father had sided with Nazism since the

beginning, she grew up in Carinthia where she didn't experience the violence of the conflict. In their epistolary and poetic writing, love and friendship mean also disagreements, discussions, Celan's increasingly frequent crises, the doubts that make Bachmann say: «Are we the ones only dreamed of?». The "irreducible difference" of the two despite the time of the heart - «Ingeborg, a small pitcher of blue» wrote Celan in a dedication - also reflects different ways of relating to writing and creation: the search for the right word to see each other, the pain that accompanies it, the need for silence in the face of such contradictory feelings and moods. From here Ruth Beckermann creates a "spoken film" that focuses on the language of the two poets, it is through language that the viewer experiences the world. The protagonists - Anja Plaschg,

musician and singer known as Soap and Skin, and Laurence Rupp, actor of the Burgertheater in Vienna - are young and happy to be there. They talk, smoke, talk about their tattoos, about music, they almost seem to court each other. Is the text they read that influences them? Or is it the feeling they feel to help them find the breath that makes one of the most poignant correspondence of the Twentieth century vibrate? In the space created by the literary word - in which the interpreters don't "pretend" to be Bachmann and Celan - the author experiences the narration of a sentiment of love: the intertwining of desire, the melancholy that comes from loss, the turmoil and the disorientation, the possibility of a space of encounter where recognizing each other. – Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2016,
HD, Colour, 89'
O.V. German

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Interpreters
Anja Plaschg,
Laurence Rupp

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann,
Ina Hartwig

Cinematography
Johannes Hammel

Editing
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Georg Misch

Production
Ruth Beckermann
Filmproduktion

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The Waldheim Waltz



«Looking at the materials I shot decades ago, I was shocked. Had I really been able to forget how emotions are manipulated by populists?». 1986, Ruth Beckermann has joined activists contesting Kurt Waldheim's presidential candidacy in Vienna's streets; she documents the events of those days. «No to Waldheim, no to Waldheim» shouted the crowd. What had happened? What had the political race of such a prestigious figure in Austrian and international political life, foreign minister and two-term secretary-general of the United Nations, stumbled upon? The Austrian weekly Profil had exposed Waldheim's hitherto carefully omitted links with Nazism. These revelations had been joined by new allegations made by the World Jewish Congress, which through an investigation carried out with journalists from the *New York Times* had traced his active militancy in the SA, the paramilitary units of

the Nazi party. And to his presence on the Yugoslavian front, and especially in Greece, in Salonika, from where deportations to Auschwitz departed. In his official biography, however, Waldheim - who of course denied everything - had told of being wounded in '42 and never having fought since. Austria is divided between those who reject his candidacy and supporters of his innocence in a clash that reveals cracks in its narrative on Nazism. That image of a country as an innocent victim of the Nazis crumbles in its support for Waldheim, that unveils political class negationism, widespread anti-Semitism - through attacks on those who criticize him - and patriotism, all of which will allow his election. But how not knowing Waldheim's past was even possible? And if this coincided for Austria with a practice of removal, what about the international community? Kohl in Germany had sided with him and so had Reagan -

although America would later ban Waldheim as president. Starting with personal archives, to which international television materials are added, Beckermann - who is also the narrator - constructs a reflection on the collective identity of a nation, Austria, that has removed its responsibilities. And in the alternation of "lie" and "truth" she interrogates at the same time international history and politics, continuing that work of research in the space of memory and among its amnesias that she has ceaselessly practiced. - Cristina Piccino

Austria, 2018
HD, colour, 93'
O.V. German, English, French

Director
Ruth Beckermann

Screenplay
Ruth Beckermann

Editing
Dieter Pichler

Sound
Manuel Grandpierre,
Rudolf Pototschnig

Production
Ruth Beckermann Film
Produktion

Producer
Ruth Beckermann

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sekretariat@ruthbeckermann.com



Biography

Ruth Beckermann (Vienna, 1952) studied journalism and art history between Vienna, Tel Aviv and New York, and worked for several Austrian and Swiss magazines.

In 1977, together with Josef Aichholzer and Franz Grafl, she made *Arena besetzt (Arena Squatted)*, about the occupation of the Arena slaughterhouse in Vienna. In 1978 she co-founded the distribution company Filmladen. She also co-founded the Austrian Association of Documentary and Film Artists.

In 1983 *Wien Retour (Return to Vienna)*, which participated in Cinéma du Réel, kicked off a family trilogy through which the director reflected on the memory and identity of Jewish culture, completed by *Die Papierene Brücke (The Paper Bridge, 1987)* and *Nach Jerusalem (Towards Jerusalem, 1991)*.

This theme she will continue to investigate in *Zorros Bar Mizwa (Zorro's Bar Mitzva, 2006)*.

Die Geträumten (The Dreamed Ones, 2016) inspired by the love correspondence between Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan won Filmmaker 2016. *Waldheims Walzer (The Waldheim Waltz)* was nominated in 2019 for Austria's Oscars for Best International Film. With Mutzenbacher she won the Berlinale 2022 Encounters competition.

