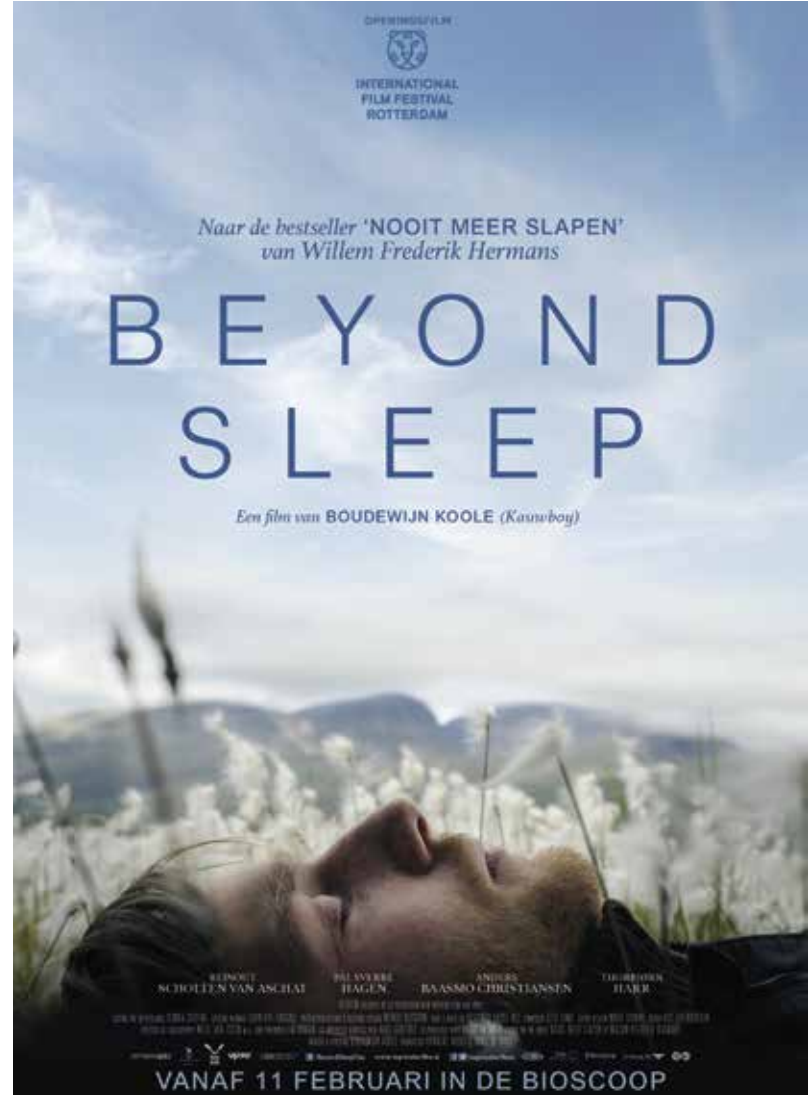
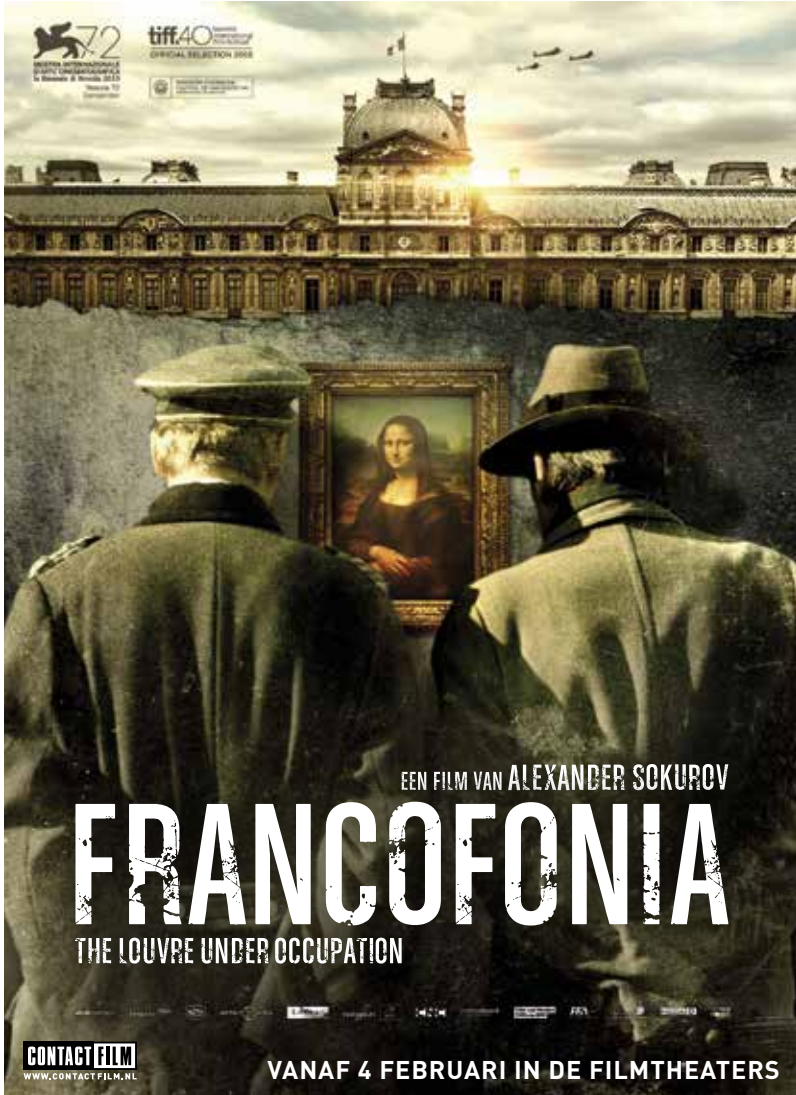




CRITICS' CHOICE
WHOSE CINEMA

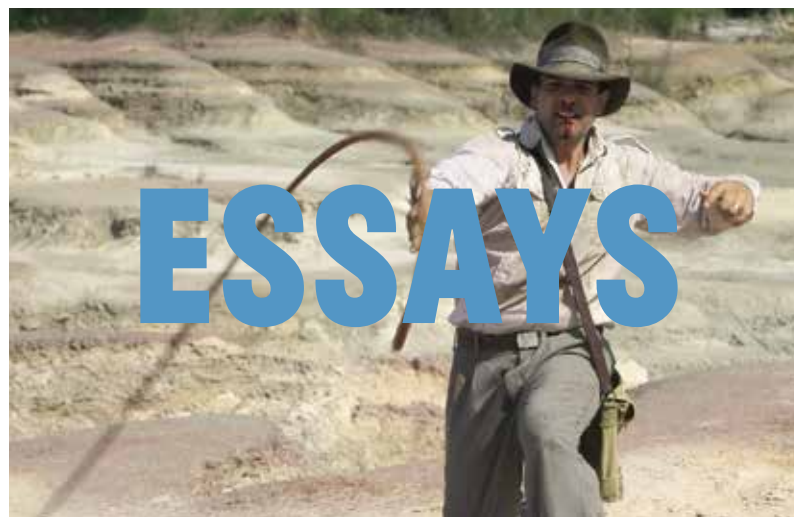






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COPYRIGHT AND OTHER RIGHTS DETERMINE WHICH FILMS ARE AVAILABLE. NOT ONLY FOR YOU FOR CINEMA? DID IT COLLAPSE BEFORE IT WAS EVEN BUILT? ASK JAN PIETER EKK

Xavier Dolan, really, I mean... early January he got himself in the news on social media again, this time because Netflix was supposedly offering his film *Mommy* in the wrong aspect ratio. Extra unfortunate because *Mommy* actually did something very special with the frame format: most of the film it is square, and at a crucial moment, it slides open as a cinema curtain. So you don't want people to tinker with it in order to ensure the screen gets filled on the TV or other screen formats.

It turned out to be a storm in a teacup. "A minor technical hitch," according to the video-on-demand company. Before the Internet could explode with indignation, it was solved. Yet Netflix wasn't doing anything unusual. For years, most films on television were offered using the pan-and-scan method. A classic example of the misunderstandings that can yield: in the cinema, the shark in *Jaws* could be seen seconds earlier than in the pan-and-scan version. Gone was the suspense.

Dolan asked in an open letter to the streaming giant

"whose film" *Mommy* really was, and he did have a point. It's just a question that isn't so easy to answer. Our gut feeling says that Dolan, as maker of the film, has the final say about what happens to his film. But someone who has bought the exploitation rights of the film will probably think differently about that. So who does a film belong to? To the makers? Or to the copyright holders who think that the one who pays decides?

WHOSE CINEMA is also the umbrella theme of the second edition of the Critics' Choice that we have compiled. It is a question that arose out of last year's selection and practice of appropriating images for video essays and the practical, legal and ethical problems we encountered. So, just like last year, it's again a programme with films and video essays, introductions and debates after the screenings. Unlike last year, the programme has been composed much more in consultation with the people doing the introductions. It was a question of making the right match between theme, film and introducer. So no critics and their favourite films, no missed chances

from other festivals; the programme is made up of the four elements of films, critics, video essays and this cahier with additional texts and contemplations and this all will be a meeting place for questions and observations relevant to filmmakers, critics and film lovers.

It's possible to think up more answers to the question WHOSE CINEMA than the two given above. It's a question that – with a tip of the hat to André Bazin's *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* – emerges directly from (The Return of the) Critics' Choice of last year, in which we introduced to a larger festival audience the video essay as a new form of film criticism. Video essays are a relatively new form of film criticism in which critics do not only analyse a film with words, but also with images. Video essays are not only a way to counter the much lamented crisis – the demise of authority and a professional basis for printed film criticism – but by showing them on a large screen in a cinema, we brought film criticism back to where it once started: in the cinema auditorium, among the audience.

CRITICISMS, BUT ALSO FOR FILM LOVERS IN GENERAL. WHERE IS THE LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA AND DANA LINSSEN, CURATORS OF THE 2016 CRITICS' CHOICE WHOSE CINEMA.

You think that the digital revolution would make it easier than ever to get hold of material for those essays, but nothing could be further from the truth. In a traditional review, you can describe a film shot or a scene unhindered and at any length in words, but when using visual material increasingly you are limited by copyright questions and regulations. Fear of piracy results in new films hardly being available at all for critical and analytical purposes. The South Korean director Hong Sang-soo was generous enough to give Kevin B. Lee an editable file of his film *Right Now, Wrong Then* so that Lee could make the video essay with which he introduces the film in this year's Critics' Choice. But the producers of *Raiders!*: *The Story of the Greatest Fan Film Ever Made* on the other hand freely admitted they felt rather "uncomfortable" about the idea of sending a full copy of their film via WeTransfer. And then we're talking about people who themselves put together a complete remake of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* by Steven Spielberg.

And if you have managed to acquire the visual material, other questions emerge. Is it acceptable? To cut

up a film and make your own story, even if it's about that film? Does an artwork have its own integrity? Is the critic bound by ethics? Do you not destroy a work of art if you deconstruct it for analysis? Or does this manner of "material thinking", as video essayist Catherine Grant calls it, but which could maybe better be referred to as "re-mediated thinking", bring you closer to the meanings of a film? How large exactly is that grey area between copyright and other intellectual rights and the artistic and intellectual freedom of the video essayist to appropriate images and thoughts?

We shouldn't forget that the so-called collage film or found-footage film has a long tradition in film history. Even though the Belgian collective *Leo Gabin* does take a step further, with their "filming" of *Harmony Korine's* collage novel *Crackup* at the *Race Riots* that consists entirely of web films. The visual artist *Paula Albuquerque* graduated in January on the use of webcams as a new cinematographic medium and made an apt video essay with *Crackup*: *Live Streaming US*.

Copyright and other rights determine which film images are available. Not only for journalists, but also for film lovers in general. Most films disappear when the distribution rights have lapsed, then most films disappear from the public domain. Where is the Library of Alexandria for cinema? Did it collapse before it was even built?

In our quest for the answer to the question WHOSE CINEMA we found an amalgam of answers.

While the mainstream film world worries about pirates and sharing data, thanks to digitalisation all kinds of creative forms of remix and fan culture are blossoming and audio-visual film criticism is getting a foothold in the academic world. In the films we selected and the critics we invited to introduce our film selection with a video essay, we found many answers, some complex and some conflicting. For us the question WHOSE CINEMA is essential to a vital and free exchange of thoughts, ideas and dreams that keeps every film culture alive.



ETHICS OF AP

CINEPHILIA OF THE INTERNET AGE HAS PRODUCED ITS OWN FORM OF ACT A GENRE THAT COMBINES THE HISTORY OF COMPILATION FILMS, OF FOUN

Appropriation is a varied concept, and it can carry very different meanings. For instance, turning our focus from the film-maker to the film-viewer, appropriation can be a more vivid term for reception and spectatorship in general, especially if we think of the active and interactive role we now tend to assign to the spectator – as viewer, as user, as player – in light of all the different screen activities that are involved in the consumption and apperception of moving images. These include going to the cinema, watching television, using the screens of our laptops and tablets, and acquiring the skills needed to play video games. In short, spectatorship as appropriation acknowledges the active participation of the viewer in the process of the reception of films and the consumption of visual displays and spectacles.

Appropriation and cinephilia

Cinephilia of the Internet age has produced its own form of active and productive appropriation, in the form of the *video essay*: a genre [...] that combines the history of compilation films, of found footage films

and of the essay film: all genres that try to make films reflect on their own conditions of possibility, and that enrich our experience of cinema by creating forms of para-cinema, post-cinema and meta-cinema.

In the cases of cinephilia – as a *gesture of love*, and as *an act of acquiring expertise* – appropriation implicitly includes a claim to ownership, and this in turn can be either legitimate or illegitimate ownership, which is one way in which the question of ethics arises. Ownership may be understood in legal terms, as copyright or intellectual property right. But ownership extends to other modalities as well: ownership as the physical possession of the object “film” – something only possible in relatively recent times, in the form of a DVD or a video file – or the right to do with the object as one pleases: interfere with it, re-edit its scenes and images, or alter it via commentary or soundtrack. But ownership can also manifest itself in the sense of trying to “own” a film’s meaning and interpretation and thus claim a particular kind of power over it. Several of these forms of ownership would seem to shift the question of appropriation from the realm of *reception*

back to an *act of production*, but as we shall see, when it comes to appropriation, *reception can become productive* (as in the video essay), and *production can be a form of reception* (as in found footage films) – and *both come together in the concept of digital cinema generally as post-production*. [...]

What is Found Footage: Love and Theft

When we move to found footage films, the first questions to ask are of course: What is a found footage film? And how can we identify the different variants, genres and sub-genres? Found footage films not only need to be distinguished from compilation films, but also from so-called stock footage, used in television reportage for historical narratives, to illustrate the voice-over commentary, or to accompany the narrative of talking heads, simulating the impression that a camera had been the silent witness to what the person is narrating or commenting on. Known in the U.S. as the Ken Burns method, and in Germany associated with Guido Knopp, stock footage usually comes from a commercial archive, where it is cata-

PROPRIATION

VE AND PRODUCTIVE APPROPRIATION, IN THE FORM OF THE VIDEO ESSAY: D FOOTAGE FILMS AND OF THE ESSAY FILM, ARGUES THOMAS ELSAESSER.

logged and classified according to theme, location, date and setting. But under pressure to find fresh and previously unused images, television has begun to aggressively plunder national and regional film archives, as well as private collections, including home movies, to feed its seemingly insatiable appetite for visual material that makes history “come alive”. [...]

Found footage, both from known and unknown sources often finds itself combined in the so-called essay film, a genre where Chris Marker has been a towering figure, influencing many other essay films, among them not only those of Harun Farocki, but also Jean Luc Godard’s magnum opus *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, in which he edits across and between images, as well as over and within images. Marker’s found footage/essay film masterpieces are *Grin Without a Cat* (1977) and *Sans soleil* (1983). *Grin Without a Cat* is three hours long and takes “the appropriation art form to the next level, culling countless hours of newsreel and documentary footage that he himself did not shoot, into a seamless, haunting global cross-section of war, social upheav-

al and political revolution. Yet, what’s miraculous about Marker’s work is that his cine-essays never fell victim to a dependency on the persuasive argument.” [...].

Found Footage between Obsolescence and Abundance

The technical facility of non-linear editing, and the ready availability of the appropriate software has – depending on one’s point of view – either democratized filmmaking tools and put post-production skills within reach of more people than ever before, or lead to a massive de-professionalization of editing both sound and image, as well as of writing text and commentary in the field of the essay-film, as well as compilation and found-footage films. Examples of the latter can easily be found on the web, where found footage films, whether authentic or fake – especially in connection with horror effects and shock-schlock film – have become (since the success of *The Blair Witch Project* and *Paranormal*) the new indie genre Hollywood is trying to appropriate.

It’s not surprising, therefore, that avant-garde filmmakers and other trained artists have been cautious about using the Internet as their exhibition platform and distribution channel, preferring to align themselves with museums, galleries and art spaces in general, still considered to be the guardians and gatekeepers of recognized standards and secure artistic reputations. Christian Marclay’s *The Clock* is perhaps the most illustrious example of an artist creatively using an art space for an exercise of compilation more commonly associated with the Internet, thereby pushing both the gallery and the mash-up to its limits.

With *The Clock* we encounter another paradox, namely the fact that one of the last public spheres where a cinema of the avant-garde and of *auteurs* can be discussed and debated, and can find a serious public, are the traditionally elite cultural sites of the art world (including) biennials and festivals, rather than the massive reaches of the digital public sphere of the internet and the dedicated sites just mentioned. [...]



Here the video essay tries to break new ground, in order to resolve some of these paradoxes. A practice that has established itself in the refreshingly fluid zone between academic film studies, cinephile essay and fan-based appropriation, the video essay is very much an online phenomenon, even when it is picked up by film journals such as *Sight & Sound* or DVD companies such as the Criterion collection, who think they need a strong online presence in order to survive. Taking advantage of precisely the ease of access to films of all genres and periods, and their abundance online, video essay authors can work on the images and sounds themselves and they allow the film fragments not only to “speak for themselves” but to “think cinema” with their own sounds and images, often concentrating on the stylistic patterns and peculiarities of recognized auteurs, such as Stanley Kubrick or Wes Anderson, Yasujiro Ozu or Brian de Palma, but also such popular directors as Steven Spielberg and Michael Bay. In a short space of time, a substantial body of work in this new genre has emerged, with its own rules, reflections and reigning champions. That the genre is not without its controversial aspects is acknowledged by one of its foremost practitioners, Kevin B. Lee, who writes: “I cannot recall how the term ‘video essay’ came to be the adopted nomenclature for the ever-increasing output of online videos produced over the past few years by an ever-growing range of self-appointed

practitioners (including myself). My own entrance into this field was an organic synthesis of my backgrounds as a film critic and a filmmaker, two modes that had competed with each other in my mind until I started to pursue the possibilities of critically exploring cinema through the medium itself. This practice is readily possible in an age when digital technology enables virtually anyone with a computer (not even a video camera, as images are overly abundant and accessible) to produce media with nearly as much ease as it is to consume it. Does this type of production herald an exciting new era, enacting Alexandre Astruc’s prophecy of cinema becoming our new lingua franca? Or is it just an insidious new form of media consumption? At least that’s how much of what lately is termed ‘video essay’ strikes me: an onslaught of supercuts, list-based montages and fan videos that do less to shed critical insight into their source material than offer a new way for the pop culture snake to eat its long tail.”

Kevin B. Lee, in other words, points out the ambiguous role of the consumer as producer. This brings me back to my opening paragraph about “appropriation” being perhaps the proper name for spectatorship in the digital age, when all production is post-production and consumption has mutated into the excesses and addictions of binge viewing television series like *The Wire*, *Mad Men* or *Breaking Bad*. [...]

Let me come back to what I said about the shift from production to post-production, of which I think the issue of appropriation and its increasingly apparent paradoxes are both a symptom and a consequence.

[...] a film created around postproduction has a different relation to the pro-filmic. Whereas analog filmmaking, centered on production, seeks to “capture” reality in order to “harness” it into a “representation”, digital filmmaking, conceived from postproduction, proceeds by way of “extracting” reality, in order to “harvest” it. Instead of disclosure and revelation (the ontology of film from Jean Epstein to André Bazin, from Siegfried Kracauer to Stanley Cavell), post-production treats the world as data to be processed or mined, as raw materials and resources to be exploited.

In other words: the move from production to post-production as the center of gravity of filmmaking is not primarily defined by a different relation to index and trace, to materiality and indexicality (as claimed by those who miss the index in the digital image). Rather, a mode of image-making, for which post-production becomes the default value, changes more than mere procedure: it changes the cinema’s inner logic and ontology. Images and image-making are no longer based on perception or a matter of representation: post-production’s visuality is of the

order of the vegetal; that is, not only is it comparable to the growing and harvesting of crops, or the extraction of natural resources, but it lines up with the manipulation of genetic or molecular material, in the scientific and industrial processes of biogenetics or micro-engineering. If this is indeed the case, the ethics of appropriation will take on a whole other dimension.

Thomas Elsaesser is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Media and Culture of the University of Amsterdam and a Visiting Professor at Columbia University. Among his recent books are: German Cinema – Terror and Trauma: Cultural Memory Since 1945 (2013) and (with Malte Hagener) Film Theory – An Introduction Through the Senses (2nd edition, 2015).

Lecture at the Amsterdam Film Academy, 26 November 2014, unpublished, fragments published with permission of the author.

WHOSE MOTHER ARE YOU?

WHEN IT COMES TO CINEMA, SAYS FILM DIRECTOR DIETRICH BRÜGGEMANN (KREUZWEG), OWNERSHIP IS RECIPROCAL, LIKE FAMILY. ONE MIGHT SAY THAT SOMEONE IS "HIS OR HER MOTHER", BUT THAT ALSO MEANS THAT YOU ARE "HER CHILD".

I never demand that infamous “A Film By” credit. Even if it might not be plainly wrong (opinions vary), it still feels wrong. Of course you don’t make a film by yourself. It’s not a novel, nor a symphony. But guess what happens? Distributors go and write it on posters, anyway, because they feel the film is like a baby, which needs an identifiable father. So I guess saying “a film by Dietrich Brüggemann” is okay when you think of it like “a child raised by Dietrich Brüggemann”. Similarly, when I talk about a film I made, I say “my film” and don’t feel wrong about it. But of course it doesn’t mean I own the film. I also say “my mother”, which doesn’t mean I own her either. It just means that we’re family – my mum and me, or my film and me. So I’d say cinema is a family that everybody can join. But be warned: You’ll be part of the family, so you’ll have a certain degree of ownership – but the family also owns you, and always will.



Dietrich Brüggemann is a critic, actor and director, known for his films Kreuzweg (2014) and Heil (2015).



BETWEEN MARKETPL

**IF I HAVE TO DEPEND ON THE MARKET TO DETERMINE THE
JONATHAN ROSENBAUM, THEN IT'S HARD TO CONSIDER M**

“Back then [in Hungary in the late 1970s], it was the censorship of the politics, and now we have the censorship of the market. What has changed? The climate is the same. If you are a filmmaker, it is always fucked up.”

Béla Tarr at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2012

“Piracy isn’t a victimless crime”, is what we read at the beginnings of an inordinate number of DVDs and Blu-Rays—to which I’m often tempted to reply that capitalism isn’t always or invariably a victimless crime either, especially when the victim turns out to be the consumer. And the fact that piracy is usually regarded as a crime and capitalism usually isn’t should mark the beginning of any clear-headed discussion of who (or what) cinema should belong to.

If “Whose cinema?” is a question that needs to be answered, we first have to add another question, and an even thornier one – “What cinema (or whose cinema) are we talking about?” – before we can even think about formulating an answer. If the cinema that I make with my iPhone is what we’re talking

about, I think we can safely say that it belongs to me, at least for the time being. But what if the cinema that I make with my iPhone is partially made up of someone else’s cinema? According to current market standards, the moment I start receiving money in exchange for my own cinema that is partially made up of someone else’s cinema, I become a pirate; prior to that, I’m simply a doodler – which in current market terms means that I’m a critic or an analyst or a fanboy or fangirl or a blogger who wants to share a valueless product with others.

So far, it sounds fairly simple. But insofar as Béla



is right, even if you aren’t necessarily a filmmaker, it is still fairly fucked up, because the definition of “value” in these transactions is under the control of the market. And if I have to depend on the market in order to determine the value of what I’m watching or filming or analyzing or simply thinking about – that is, if I have to depend on the market to determine the value of what I’m doing in relation to cinema, then it’s hard to consider myself a free agent, even if I prefer to assume otherwise.

In one way or another, I think that everyone reading these words has to deal with this painful contradiction on a regular basis. The problem is especially acute for filmmakers working with found footage, whether they’re selecting clips to comment on an entire oeuvre (as Mark Rappaport does in *I, Dario* – or *The Rules of the Game*), to create a particular definition of cinema in relation to thoughts and memory (as Thom Andersen does in *The Thoughts That Once We Had*), to illustrate various issues about film theory arising from a meditation on an unseen object (as Ross Lipman does in relation to Alan Sch-

ACE AND COMMUNITY

**VALUE OF WHAT I'M DOING IN RELATION TO CINEMA, OBSERVES
MYSELF A FREE AGENT, EVEN IF I PREFER TO ASSUME OTHERWISE.**



neider and Samuel Beckett's *Film in Lipman's own Notfilm*), or to analyze a particular sequence or film (as any number of Internet bloggers and audiovisual critics and analysts frequently do). It's an activity that by now has become so common and so compulsive that it has already produced its own *reductio ad absurdum* exhibits. (One recent example, culled from yesterday's Facebook: *Of Oz the Wizard*, available at <https://vimeo.com/150423718>, which Phil Solomon has dubbed *Zorn's Dilemma* [or *Frampton Comes Alive*] and which I prefer to categorize as the madness that becomes possible to those with a lot of free time on their hands.)



I would argue that there are two main moral compasses for establishing temporary ownership by consumers when it comes to cinema: one is the marketplace and the other is the community that receives the results of this temporary ownership. Neither should be regarded as absolute. One could argue that downloading a film from the Internet whose value is unrecognized by its legal owner might be doing that owner a favor, even if no payment is involved, by revealing the value of that film. One could also argue that pirating an independent film whose maker depends on royalties is doing that filmmaker a serious injustice and injury. The market-

place communities and the pirate communities are hardly the same, even if their interests occasionally (if paradoxically) might coincide with one another, and each community within each sphere needs to be judged according to its own code of ethics as well as our own. Insofar as there are times when some of us might feel, as cinephiles, that we are owned and operated by a cinema owned and operated by others, we might want to break our chains and then, to mix metaphors and serve dialectics, take those chains home with us, to serve our own purposes.

Jonathan Rosenbaum is a film critic. He was the head film critic for the Chicago Reader from 1987 until 2008. Among his books are Goodbye Cinema, Hello Cinephilia; The Unquiet American; Movie Wars; Abbas Kiarostami (with Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa); Movie Mutations (coedited with Adrian Martin).



HOW FRED OTT SNEEZED ON

WHO OWNS THE FILMS WE WATCH? AND SHOULD THEY BE OWNED TO THE SNEEZE, ONE OF THE FIRST EDISON FILMS AND THE

When Fred Ott sneezed on camera (but not on the camera) in 1894, little could he have guessed that his snuff-induced reflex would usher in more than a century of lawsuits. Ott was an assistant to Thomas Edison when he volunteered to be filmed by W.K.L. Dickson and William Heise, for what was to become a direct precursor to cinema, *Edison Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze*. A day or so later, the photographs – the “film” was printed as a series of photographs and not actually animated through a projector until 1953 – were registered at the Library of Congress and became the first ever copyrighted motion picture. That’s when the trouble began.

Not directly for Mr. Ott, or his sneeze. At least, not yet. But just over two decades later, as detailed in Louis D. Frohlich and Charles Schwartz’s exhaustive 943-page *The Law of Motion Pictures*, published in 1918, “Litigation between the different parties associated with the business has been frequent and has resulted in a large body of case law on the questions peculiar to the industry.” In other words, from practically the moment motion pictures were

copyrighted, someone other than their creator was duping it, pirating it, re-editing it, or laying claim to the income it generated. Benjamin Franklin wrote that the only certainties in life are death and taxes, but we can add “the desire to possess what shouldn’t belong to us” to the list.

In the film world, the most legendary perpetrator of this shibboleth was Raymond Rohauer. “King of the Film Freebooters” was how scholar-collector William K. Everson christened him, though most who came in contact with the man used more colorful language. As early as the 1940s, Rohauer,



an exhibitor and collector, began laying copyright claim to every film that entered his collection – and many that didn’t. He befriended out-of-fashion stars, bought their prints, and asserted ownership, engaging a phalanx of lawyers to bully anyone who dared to screen prints that hadn’t come through his hands, including archives showing reels in their own collections.

Rohauer’s extravagant declarations and acquaintance with an unending gallery of process servers made him more than a nuisance: his pretense to copyright prevented hundreds of films from being screened, and an equal number from undergoing much-needed restoration, since archives were afraid to spend money restoring movies that would invariably trigger a legally groundless yet often effective Rohauer lawsuit. He would re-edit films and claim ownership, or circulate second-rate dupes to deter others from making copies: film lovers like myself knew scores of classics only through lousy prints, always with the “RAYMOND ROHAUER presents” title card in fuzzy Futura typeface.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

**NED? JAY WEISSBERG EXPLORES THAT QUESTION IN RELATION
FIRST COPYRIGHTED MOTION PICTURE IN THE UNITED STATES.**



In 1970, film preservationist David Shepard decided to poke fun by making *RAYMOND ROHAUER presents "The Sneeze"*, a hilarious parody of Rohauer's extravagant assertions via the use of Ott's starring vehicle. Imitating the style of all Rohauer prints, Shepard loaded the first two minutes with long descriptive title cards, including the not-so-unfeasible claim: "Recently, perservering Film Archivist RAYMOND ROHAUER secured the Estate of Thomas A. Edison and so acquired exclusive world rights in perpetuity to all motion picture films produced with sprocket holes." *The Sneeze* itself takes up just eight seconds at the

end, and that includes the anachronistic intertitles "Ahhh—" and "—Choo!!!" Look it up on YouTube.

Like all good jokes, Shepard's parody is rooted in a very serious issue: who owns the films we watch? More to the point, should they be owned? The answer to the latter question is a highly qualified "yes." Culture is a commodity: it exists because someone pays for it, and in most cases, that person or entity wants a return on their investment. Films in public domain, or held hostage by contested rights holders, tend to languish in a multiplicity of third-rate copies because no one will spend the money to restore and release a movie for which they don't have exclusive rights. The big question is how do we make it financially viable for archival films to be properly conserved and then made available to the general public? Who's going to ensure we get access to the best prints, if the print owners (as opposed to rights holders) fear their restoration work will be superseded by someone else's release of the same title?

Ironically, the footage every film historian knows as *Fred Ott's Sneeze* is actually not the full story. In 2014, Dan Streible made the stunning announcement that the 45 frames copyrighted in 1894 at the Library of Congress were just over half the actual number of frames shot: an additional 36 frames had been published in *Harper's Weekly* the year they were taken, which means the complete film is nearly twice the length of the original copyrighted version. Ott sneezed *twice* on camera; good thing the copyright expired.

Jay Weissberg is the director of the Pordenone Silent Film Festival, and a film critic with Variety.



COPYING IN TH

FOR DUTCH ONLINE JOURNALISM PLATFORM DE CORRESPONDENT AND COPYRIGHT; THE GREY AREA BETWEEN INSPIRATION, BOR

When is something a great work of art? This question will most likely never get a definitive answer, but in general people agree that originality is an essential element of great art. If I copy the oeuvre of Picasso, that doesn't make me an equally great artist. Yet the importance of originality in the arts (including film and literature) is regularly overrated. The statement "good artists copy; great artists steal" hits the nail on its head.

As a first-year student of art history, a course entitled "Thieving" taught me that the practice of borrowing, quoting, referring and just plain copying is as old as art itself. For centuries, imitation was the ultimate aim of art: not only imitating nature, but also imitating existing artworks. It was only during the nineteenth century, with the emergence of reproduction techniques such as photography, that the visual artist acquired the status of an artistic genius and the idea of originality became so important.

Yet good thieving continued to be common. Monet painted more than eighty versions of his famous

water lilies. Picasso based whole series on work by his predecessors. And in the mid-twentieth century, precisely thanks to reproduction techniques, there was even a whole stream of artists who did nothing but copy. Take Elaine Sturtevant, who built a career based on copying artworks by pop-artist friends such as Andy Warhol. Or Sherri Levine, who plagiarised existing photos by taking a photograph of them and presenting herself as the author of this newly created work of art. Thanks to the worldwide circulation of images on the Internet these practices, collected under the title "appropriation art", are still very



topical. That becomes clear in the practical work of Richard Prince, who got into trouble as early as the 1970s for consciously copying pictures by other photographers. He is still making waves, now by using other people's Instagram photos and selling them for huge sums as legitimate works by Richard Prince.

Yet, as an artist, this approach doesn't always go unpunished. Copyright exists with good reason: It protects the rights of makers who would not otherwise be able to earn money with their work. But the grey area between inspiration, borrowing and plagiarism has traditionally been very murky in the arts. Where exactly is the boundary? You regularly read news reports about artists who sue each other because they steal or their ideas get stolen. These conflicts especially emerge when there's a lot of money at stake. The best-known artists of our era, from Andy Warhol to Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst, have all been accused of plagiarism at some stage. A topical question is that of the Belgian painter Luc Tuymans, who was found guilty after he made a painting based on a photograph. But if

THE VISUAL ARTS

MARIAN COUSIJN ORGANIZED THE ARTFEST TALK SHOW DEVOTED TO ART ROWING AND PLAGIARISM HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN VERY MURKY.



work of Marlene Dumas, who often paints from news photos, may well be a breach of copyright. Just like the work of Picasso, Rembrandt and Da Vinci. Or an artist who was once regarded as one of the most original: Vincent van Gogh. He made dozens of paintings literally based on works by Delacroix, Rembrandt and Millet. Does that make him any less great as an artist? Can the law really decide about art? It remains a fascinating field. One thing is clear: where there are rules, there will always be artists to break them. And it's precisely that which can yield the very greatest art.

Marian Cousijn writes about the visual arts for De Correspondent. She also presents Artfest, the art talk show without an urge for evidence. The January 28 edition was about art and copyright. Her articles on this subject can be found on decorrespondent.nl/mariancousijn.

that really is plagiarism, then the verdict has huge consequences for the visual arts. It means that the



PROPAGANDA FILMS MADE IN NAZI GERMANY ARE SAFELY STORED PRESENCE OF AN EXPERT, NOTES BEATRICE BEHN, YET THEY CİR

We Germans have given a brilliantly euphemistic name to what is the biggest of our film-historical tender spots: the restricted Nazi propaganda films. We call them “Vorbehaltsfilme”, which loosely translates as “retained film”. But Vorbehalt actually has two meanings. One states the polite, fairly mild notion of having reservations towards these films (among which are Veit Harlan’s *Jud süß*, Hans Steinhoff’s *Hitlerjunge Quex* and Wolfgang Liebeneiner’s *Ich klage an*) due to their content. The other indicates that they therefore need to be held back. And so they were kept out of sight of the German post-war public, only allowed to be screened under highly restricted circumstances and always in combination with some kind of re-educational event.

The *conditio humana* has always had a very specific reaction to prohibition of any kind. Forbidden fruit always tastes better than that which is readily available. The approximately 40 films that still remain under Vorbehalt today have thus attained an aura of pure evil, labelled so toxic to the mind and so redolent of their inherent ideology that anyone who partakes of

these devilish fruits is likely to turn into a Nazi. However, this collection of 40 films once counted a full 300, with many films once deemed to be “too Nazi” having been re-cut and reintegrated into the canon of German cinema over the decades. This was not because they had been wrongfully accused, but rather because of key economic interests, mostly driven by the nostalgia of the war generation but also, as time passed, by their growing aura of being part of the restricted canon.

When the renowned Berlin Zeughauskino screened *Der alte und der junge König*, a historical film about Prussian King Friedrich II produced in 1935, more



than twice as many people wanted to see it than there were seats in the auditorium. The film was not a Vorbehaltsfilm anymore and had been deemed acceptable by democratic standards, despite the fact that every frame oozes Führer ideology. One of the most mind-boggling things about the Vorbehaltsfilme is that the ones still on the list are those that hide their agenda the least and show no shame in what they are: pure propaganda. Yet the films deemed to have been decontaminated by re-cuts intended to strip them of their obvious historic and rabble-rousing content still include a subtly toxic ideological sting. And that is far more dangerous, as it is concealed in suggestive narratives, seemingly trivial moments and a quietly seductive visual language capable of undermining awareness and therefore also critical thinking. The fact that some of these films are screened (many of them have been part of German TV schedules for decades) and others are still under Vorbehalt has prevented any broad public discussion of this issue, with any such discourse being relegated to smaller scholarly circles without ever really penetrating the majority of the German population.

AWAY ONLY TO BE SCREENED IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN IN ALL KINDS OF CUT-UP VERSIONS.



Today, as I am writing this text, the copyright of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* has expired, with the end of the 70-year ban on the book leading to a new edition being reissued that is available in stores right now. Before that, you could easily download a copy on the Internet. Today, as I am writing this text, many of the Vorbehaltsfilme are alive and well on YouTube, uploaded and subtitled from dubious sources in terrible quality. But they are there and they always have been, appropriated by Neo-Nazi and other fascist groups all over the world, passed on from person to person, surviving thanks to their aura of being almost mythologically evil and forbidden. There is no



discourse conducted around these films, they receive no historical contextualization, and there is no input from survivors and witnesses as to their reception. They simply exist; they cannot be locked away or controlled. Where there is an interested audience, there is always a way.

The reissue of *Mein Kampf* is almost twice as long as the original due to the extensive notes it contains. It goes without saying that people interested in the ideology it imparts will ignore any such accompanying comments. But others will educate themselves. And both groups can then start to discuss what they have read.

And both will find a book full of long-winded military strategies and self-pitying rants that is more boring than evil. In Felix Moeller's documentary *Verbotene Filme*, a Neo-Nazi explains how his group screens *Der ewige Jude* to recruit new people but notes that it hardly helps and that even he and other sympathizers of the cause like him cannot take the film seriously due to the indignant exaggerations it contains. When you finally break through the aura of these evil films, you often find badly aged, hugely boring works, replete with over-acting. It is high time to stop the practice of Vorbehaltsfilme, given that it has been rendered pointless by the Internet. They need instead to be made public, they need to be shown for what they are without any accompanying mythological nimbus of evil, they need to be re-appropriated by society, accompanied by excellent historical contextualization and discourse, which, in the light of the rise of neo-fascist ideas, Germany desperately needs, now more than ever.

Beatrice Behn is the editor-in-chief of kino-zeit.de. She holds a degree in film studies, is a lecturer at Freie Universität Berlin and film critic for a number of other outlets.

WHOSE MULTINATIONAL CINE

**FILMS WITH MORE THAN ONE NATIONAL LINEAGE SHOULD BE
AND FURTHERMORE WE SHOULD INVESTIGATE HOW THESE**

Critics are quite comfortable discussing national cinemas: their cultural backgrounds, political sensibilities, defining masters and latest trends. French cinema, American cinema, Dutch cinema. Romanian, Philippine, Nigerian cinema. We do it all the time.

But what about the increasing number of international coproductions? Do we simply assign one of these nationalities to them? Do we ignore the subject? Or, could it be that something more interesting is happening? Do these nationalities – sometimes, always – actually add up? Could there exist something like, for example, a French-Polish cinema?

Let's call this cinema, with more than one national lineage, Multinational Cinema. It is an important development, considering that national cinema is one of the mirrors in which a culture reflects itself. Which means something quite fundamental is changing when more and more of these 'national' films are actually multinational.

Take Holland. As the Dutch film magazine *de Filmkrant* reported, in roughly five years time, the percentage of films supported by the *Netherlands Film Fund that are coproductions* has grown from 20 to 70. More and more, Dutch cinema is hyphenated. Dutch-Belgian cinema. Dutch-Danish cinema. Et cetera.

Now, I'm not too concerned here with financing or politics. My question concerns art. When you have a consistent coproduction system with two or more participating countries, and with casts and crews getting used to working together, will you see a cultural interaction develop? Could, in Multinational Cinema, 1 plus 1 equal 3?

It's not such a strange question. We regularly treat individual filmmakers this way. For example, Hany Abu-Assad sees himself as a Dutch-Palestinian filmmaker, with his 25 years spent in Holland shaping, as he says, both his sense of humour and a kind of pessimistic realism. In his films, he combines this with a Palestinian sense of unconditional optimism

– without which life in Palestine, let alone making movies, would become impossible.

The Netherlands usually coproduce his movies – as with *The Idol*, shown at this year's IFFR – so yes, I think you could argue that there exists, at least in Abu-Assad's work, something like a Dutch-Palestinian Multinational Cinema. And that in this case, 1 and 1 does indeed equal 3.

Dutch critics also quite easily point out, for example, the Dutch aspects of Paul Verhoeven's Hollywood movies. There's no Dutch funding involved in *Basic Instinct* or *RoboCop* of course, but could we take these movies, together with those of Jan de Bont and others, and critically consider them as Dutch-American cinema? I don't see why not.

In a sense, we're already doing something similar when we talk about regional cinemas. We don't just discuss European versus American cinema, but also South-East Asian cinema, Balkan cinema, or Scandinavian cinema. In many cases, this will

MA IS IT? AND DOES IT EXIST?

**CALLED "MULTINATIONAL CINEMA" PROPOSES KEES DRIESSEN,
CULTURAL INFLUENCES AND NATIONAL OWNERSHIPS ADD UP.**

include movies with regional funding and mixed cast and crew.

To be fair, critics did create a specific term for European coproductions – the dreaded ‘Europudding’. Putting these different nationalities together, seemingly only for the sake of getting the greatest amount of funding possible, was considered artistically doomed.

But globalisation doesn’t stop. The increase of European coproductions won’t stop. So let’s explore these new critical pathways. Let’s see if Dutch-Belgian arthouse coproductions indeed combine, for example, Dutch stylistic rigour with Belgian social consciousness. And if so, let’s critically assess this, so we can encourage the most interesting trends. Let’s see coproductions not only as economical and technical constructs, with the final Dutch-Belgian product usually being labelled either ‘Dutch’ or ‘Belgian’, but as artistic avenues to explore.

I do not have the answers yet. That would require



systematic exploration by more than just one critic. I do see new, interesting questions. The first one, considering this year’s Critics’ Choice main theme, is: whose multinational cinema is it? The almost Pavlovian need to compare European coproductions to Europudding seems to have nationalistic underpinnings. National critics tend to claim national movies. The growth of Multinational Cinema means we’ll have to share.

Some other questions. Did Yugoslavian cinema ever really exist, artistically speaking, or was it always multinational? If it did exist, did it end when the

country was torn apart by war? What about Czechoslovakian cinema? Soviet cinema?

Spanish-Italian cinema has given us spaghetti-western and sword-and-sandal pics – where does it stand today? Can we trace back Ukrainian cinema through the Soviet era, or would that be motivated more by political than artistic considerations?

What about the United States? It’s a big country. Shouldn’t we be discussing Texan, Floridan and Pennsylvanian cinema? And, assuming it exists, things like Arizonan-Ohioan Multi-State Cinema?

I think we could. Because my answer to the question that heads this article – ‘Whose Multinational Cinema is it?’ – is: ours. The critics.

Kees Driessen is a Dutch film journalist, currently writing mostly for Vrij Nederland and de Filmkrant.



**"CRITICS ARE THE VANGUARD OF SPECTATORS", WRITES ADRIAN
THE SPECTATOR'S PERSPECTIVE. "THEY TAKE THE FILM AND**

Many artists, in all media, say it, and some even mean it: once the work is finished, once it's out in the world, it is no longer attached, proprietorially, to its creator. Its meanings, its uses, cannot be fixed or legislated or ranked in any hierarchy. David Bowie said that of his music, and Abbas Kiarostami says it of his films.

The two great, conflicting tendencies in cinema are control (mastery) and loss of control (randomness, chance, letting the cards fall where they may). Some filmmakers are too anxious about maintaining mastery; while some critics are not anxious enough about it – they can't see things from the filmmaker's side, only from a spectator's position. But it is the spectator's side that we will take here.

When in doubt, consult the Surrealists. Or rather, when in certainty, consult the Surrealists. Because film culture has for too long been too certain that films belong solely to their directors. Or even to a more collective, collaborative 'author'. Both amount to the same thing.

In 1949, Jacques Brunius scoffed at the very notion. "It is precisely owing to its richness and versatility that the cinema makes it difficult for one man to keep entire control of the images, words and gestures. Often enough a film leaves the head of its creator and the hands of its colleagues like a ship after a storm, as best it may, loaded not only with what they meant to say, but also with other things that no one wished to imply. But how fascinating is the part played by chance in this clash of wills!"

In the 1950s and '60s, in his masterpiece *Le sur-réalisme au cinéma*, Ado Kyrou went further, much further, into the eye of this storm. "The artwork lives independently of the artist", he declared, following Picasso's assertion: "A painting lives only because of the person viewing it." Filmmaking, indeed, is far less controllable than painting: "The slightest movement, the smallest tilt, an unpredictable burst of light are enough for an image to take on an unexpected or ridiculous meaning, in any case quite contrary to the original intention." Ultimately, for Kyrou, any film was akin to a Surrealist *exquisite*

corpse game involving "director, writer, producer, dialogue provider, sound technician, light, time, the camera, accidents of projection, actors, the producer, censorship, publicity, and even the public."

Kyrou believed in the power of what Marcel Proust described and Walter Benjamin theorised: *involuntary memory*. Something happens in the present which brings back something from the past, but that past is only now understood in light of the present... He offered his own example: watching some banal, "absolutely ridiculous, completely insignificant" movie about "lost girls and nice boys in a café, with sentimental songs", suddenly "a tram crossed the screen, and suddenly I was transported in time and space inside another tram, rather similar to the one on screen, in which I had lived certain moments whose meaning had escaped me until this very projection." It was wild: "Things revealed themselves, people explained themselves, I grasped essential emotions – and the film continued rolling along *for me alone*, in an especially strange atmosphere. I saw an *absolutely different* film from everyone else in the

STORM

MARTIN IN AN EXPLORATION OF THE QUESTION WHOSE CINEMA FROM THEY MAKE IT, REMAKE IT – AND MAKE IT KNOWN TO OTHERS."

theatre; I witnessed a film that, by chance, had been made for me and only me."

Kyrou realised that, in order for such adventures to unfold, spectators needed to be encouraged, even *trained* to fantasise, dream, project before a film ... techniques trained, preferably, in a School of Surrealism! (And certainly not according to the laws of Hollywood, or the capitalist marketplace.) And so, Surrealist or not, we need to attend to this culture of technical training – which is the place where the special sensibilities of spectators are today moulded, shaped and formed.

Watching Kent Jones' documentary *Hitchcock/Truffaut* last year – a film that aims, consciously and explicitly, to put filmmakers in direct contact and dialogue with their peers and their idols, i.e., their equals, thus cutting out all 'middle wo/men' such as curators, programmers, historians, and the like – a certain refrain kept hitting my ear. It was "transference of guilt" as a plot and theme mechanism – doubtless a deeply Hitchcockian business. But Sir

Alfred himself never expressed his interests in this precise way. Transference of guilt is an invention of critics! – notably of Éric Rohmer and Claude Chabrol in 1957, before they became filmmakers.

Critics, in this sense, are the vanguard of spectators. They take the film and they make it, remake it – and make it known to others. They create a culture in which receptive spectators are primed before viewing a movie – and are filled with a certain spirit and sensibility when they re-watch, program, write or teach about that movie themselves. Some of these spectators, naturally, will become filmmakers too.

Last year in Rotterdam I saw a beautiful film about the Portuguese critic-programmer João Bénard da Costa: Manuel Mozos' *Others Will Love the Things I Loved*. Is there any finer formula for the process of *transmission* – of sweet education – that cinephilia, at its best, promises? There is a superb webpage (<http://www.apaladewalsh.com/2014/06/joao-benard-da-costas-johnny-guitar-play-it-again-in-nine-tongues/>) devoted to many different language

translations of a single, short text on *Johnny Guitar*. Luís Mendonça introduces it like this:

"I will start by stating a disagreement of mine. Bénard da Costa says the movie was directed by Nicholas Ray, when he was 42. I disagree: even in the distant year of 1954, *Johnny Guitar* belonged to Bénard, when he was 19. For all those who witnessed, whether directly or indirectly, his love for each image, each setting, each corner, each line of dialogue, each look, each pistol, each explosion of colour and emotion, each chord of *Johnny Guitar*, there can be no doubt – even if we risk contradicting the father of our cinephilia – that Nicholas Ray directed the film but João Bénard da Costa directed it in our memory and in our hearts."

Adrian Martin is a film critic and audiovisual essayist based in Vilassar de Mar (Spain), and co-editor of LOLA magazine (www.lolajournal.com)



WHOSE FRAME?

NO FILM REALLY HAS A RIGHT TO EXIST, CONTEMPLATES GABE KLINGER. A FILM MUST CARVE OUT ITS OWN EXISTENCE, AND TODAY THE ONLY WAY TO DO THAT IS TO CREATE A STRONG AUTHORIAL VOICE THROUGH IMAGE.

Jim Jarmusch told me, when signing up to help produce my new film: “Fuck the auteur theory.” Likely Jean-Luc Godard would wince at such a statement. I remain ambivalent about the question of artistic ownership, after directing two movies and starting a third. It’s a question I tackled implicitly in the documentary I directed in 2013, *Double Play*, about two artists who are opposed and alike: the individualist James Benning, who has always chosen to work alone, and the collectivist Richard Linklater, who not only works with big teams but frequently reemploys many of the same cast and crew. In my case, and put quite reductively, I am not talented enough to “own” my frame entirely. My work has always improved exponentially when I’ve brought in others to give in the process of image creation. On the other hand, I can’t help but think that my films, at their very core – and I think Jarmusch knows this about his own work –, all have a deeply inscribed signature, and as I begin to produce more and more, that signature begins to rise to the surface unmistakably. Looking back, creation always seems to happen from scratch, and arises from the necessity to *say* something. “Otherwise

we wouldn’t bother”, my friend Mati Diop recently said to me, “because it’s too fucking hard.” Even satisfying entertainments like *The Martian*, from an ultimate journeyman like Ridley Scott, probably can be parsed to reveal certain visual signatures (I haven’t seen enough of Scott’s films to know for sure, so perhaps I can be proven wrong here).

At the risk of sounding convoluted, I’d like to say no film really has a right to exist, or no film really should exist, at least not more than the next film. No filmmaker should feel entitled to accolades, festival slots, or good reviews just because she has put herself through the incredibly difficult process of making a film. A film must carve out its own existence, and today the only way to do that is to create a strong authorial voice through images, to know what you’re talking about when you’re creating those images. This is why I do not understand producer meddling or any type of process that likens films to products. When dealing with art house films, the only thing that counts is the integrity of the director’s voice, and the most important place for

this is on a set. There were two films from the last year in which the directors’ autonomy and authorial visions amazed me in both positive and negative ways: Miguel Gomes’ *Arabian Nights* in the former way and Quentin Tarantino’s *The Hateful Eight* in the latter way. With the Gomes, there is an argument for complete authorial independence, because it’s generous and searching and is frequently smart enough to know when it doesn’t know what it’s trying to say. In the Tarantino, there is a bad script and no one brave enough to say anything, and so the images suffer. At the end of the day, freedom is not always an asset. But a free image, a frame that is liberated, is always thrilling, no matter.

Gabe Klinger is a filmmaker, writer, teacher, and programmer living between France and the U.S.

CINEPHILIA AS S&M

ACCORDING TO MARK COUSINS CINEPHILIA IN THE DIGITAL AGE IS A FORM OF S&M: WE CAN BE MASTERS AND SLAVES TO THE IMAGE.

Until the digital age, cinema felt behind bars. Hollywood and Bollywood went to extraordinary creative and marketing efforts to get films inside our heads, yet insisted that ownership of, say, the image of Darth Vader or Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca* was 100% theirs. They colonised our subconscious but then said *hands off, noli me tangere*. Those images and feelings that you have in your heads are ours. Talk about missionary zeal. It didn't help that, as one of the youngest art forms, a higher proportion of films than – say – music or paintings, were still in copyright. And, of course, pre-digital and videotape, it was almost impossible to get your hands on a film. Even if you wanted to own one, or steal one, you couldn't.

Scarcity, control, ownership: these things made our consumption desperate. We were supplicants. Submissives. Cinema was something done to us when it wanted to do it, and how.

Now we can be *dom* as well as *sub*. Cinephilia in the digital age is S&M. We can carry a film in our



pockets, play it when we want, pause it until we are ready to continue watching it, and copy it at will. This caters for more tastes, more desires. Many of us still want to submit, to be tied down for two hours and made to watch. As I've made various films using film clips – *The Story of Film*, *A Story of Children and Film*, *Cinema Iran*, etc. – I've come to love taking control of the image as well as giving control too it. Of course the copyright of the full artwork still lies with the producers, but individual scenes and frames can, now, due to various legal precedents, be used to make meanings for which they weren't necessarily intended. If Hollywood was great at seduction, we

can now use fragments of its output (scenes of films) to show how that seduction works. I realise that I enjoy being master as well as servant. I like tying a film down and stripping it bare, as well as it doing the same to me. Karl Marx understood ownership and control well, but so did Sigmund Freud.

Mark Cousins is a writer, occasional film critic and film director. Among his works are The Story of Film: An Odyssey (2011), A Story of Children and Film (2013), Life May Be (co-director, co-writer, with Mania Akbari, 2014), Atomic, Living in Dread and Promise (2015) and I Am Belfast (2015).



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A black and white photograph of a man in a hat and jacket, swinging a whip, with large red and blue text overlaid. The man is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt and a dark hat. He is holding a whip in his right hand, which is raised and swinging. The background shows a landscape with trees and hills. The text "CRITICS' CHOICE" is in red and "WHOSE CINEMA" is in blue.

CRITICS' CHOICE
WHOSE CINEMA



BRAND NEW-U

“There’s a better life waiting for us. Someone else. Somewhere else.” That is the motto of the company Brand New-U, which offers clients an opportunity to lead a better life by taking over the life of one of their ‘Identicals’. That sounds sunny, but twentysomething Slater discovers the darker side of this practice when his girlfriend Nadia is kidnapped during a failed life takeover. Hoping to find her again, he surrenders himself to Brand New-U’s reforms. But how can he be sure that the one he finds really will be Nadia? And how sure is he about who he really is himself?

Simon Pummell remixes elements of sci-fi films and thrillers in a story full of repetition and echoes that gradually slips into a dream logic. The result is an allegory which investigates the extreme consequences of the malleability of identity that characterises online life and the alienation it evokes.

Simon Pummell, 2015, 100 min.

fr 29-1 19:00 Pathé 5, we 3-2 12:00 Pathé 2

Introduced by a video essay by Joost Broeren.



A CRACKUP AT THE RACE RIOTS

A Crackup at the Race Riots by Belgian artist trio Leo Gabin is inspired by Harmony Korine’s book of the same name. Taking Florida as their location of choice, the directors have put together a collage of images found on YouTube, consisting mainly of home movies that depict the internalisation of MTV culture, for instance, or drug abuse and natural disasters. By appropriating such material, Leo Gabin offer us imagery associated with negative yet realistic depictions of the so-called American Dream, an interpretation of a social and political reality built along the lines of Korine’s novel, which in turn collects story snippets with alleged documentary value, seemingly at random. When asked about the implications of using footage produced by others, Leo Gabin reply: “That’s the beauty of appropriation art, using elements normally not considered art or having a non-art function to create a new work.” In other words: borrowing from culture produces culture, despite claims of authorship.

Leo Gabin, 2015, 60 min.

sa 30-1 16:45 Cinerama 5, tu 2-2 22:00 Cinerama 6

Introduced by a video essay by Paula Albuquerque.



THE DYING OF THE LIGHT

The projectionist is the last link in the long chain of filmmaking – the operator in the booth was also involved with such everyday things as sticky tape and a toothbrush to clean the sprockets. The hand that not long ago turned the focus wheel is now as invisible as the Wizard of Oz: “Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain.”

The craft of projectionist, which remained virtually the same for a hundred years, actually no longer exists since the recent digitalisation. The projectionists who speak up in this affectionate documentary think back on rewinding the miles of film as it slid through their fingers in the projection booth – a place that was for many of them home. Many projectionists were also surreptitious collectors; every film was very briefly in the possession of the projectionist until he passed it on to us.

Peter Flynn, 2015, 94 min.

mo 1-2 19:45 Cinerama 3, tu 2-2 12:15 Pathé 6, th 4-2 22:15 LantarenVenster 2

Introduced by a video essay by Mariska Graveland.



FRANCOFONIA

“Without me, there was nothing here”, says Napoleon somewhere halfway through *Francofonia* to Marianne, the French symbol for freedom and reason. And of course he meant the art treasures in the Louvre, which is the backdrop throughout the film for reflections about the relationship between art and power. Against the background of the exciting plot that was conceived during the occupation of Paris in the Second World War by Count Wolff Metternich and director Jacques Jaujard in order to safeguard the heritage in the museum, Alexander Sokurov takes us along in a detective essay about the history of the museum and the museology. He not only wonders what art is, but also uses a variety of photos, paintings and archive images to illustrate his story about both men and in doing so he gets artistry on his side. Challenging and humorous key film in the Critics’ Choice programme Whose Cinema.

Alexander Sokurov, 2015, 87 min.

th 28-1 18:00 LantarenVenster 1, fr 29-1 09:30 Pathé 4, we 3-2 15:45 Pathé 5

Introduced by a video essay by Jan Pieter Ekker and Dana Linssen.





HELMUT BERGER, ACTOR

“Maybe the best motion picture of the year is also the worst? One-time dreamboat movie star and lover of Visconti, Helmut Berger, now seventy-one and sometimes looking like Marguerite Duras, rants and raves in his ramshackle apartment while the maid dishes the dirt about his sad life. The rules of documentary access are permanently fractured here when our featured attraction takes off all his clothes on camera, masturbates, and actually ejaculates. The Damned, indeed,” says cult director John Waters.

Is this a thumbs up or down? Once a sex symbol and art film icon, now an emblem of faded glory, his walls covered with photos of yesteryear. Who is the star when time and age take ownership of his face? Is he still in charge of his appearance? And what is this oddly eroticised, even sexually loaded entanglement between director and protagonist? Whose film is this, anyway? And at what point do we take our own responsibility?

Andreas Horvath, 2015, 90 min.

tu 2-2 16:45 Cinerama 3, we 3-2 22:15 Cinerama 2

Introduced by a video essay by Hugo Emmerzael.



RAIDERS!: THE STORY OF THE GREATEST FAN FILM EVER MADE

“It’s amazing that Steven Spielberg needed \$20 million to make *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and my dad only had his allowance”, says the son of one of three Mississippi teenagers who created in the 1980s a shot-for-shot remake of Spielberg’s film. It all started as a fan project, but became a Spielberg-plot itself: about coming-of-age, friendship and family, and above all that old American Dream: anything is possible.

The almost-finished project became cult fare after Eli Roth got his hands on a VHS copy in 2002 and brought it to Rotten Tomatoes founder Harry Knowles, who showed it at Butt-Numb-A-Thon, his 24-hour ‘geekstravaganza’. In 2014, the now-adult fans rekindled the dream to complete their remake. Apparently director Jeremy Coon and producer Scott Rudin are considering a fiction remake of this real life story, which proves that truth is always stranger than fiction.

Jeremy Coon / Tim Skousen, 2015, 104 min.

mo 1-2 15:30 Cinerama 1, th 4-2 21:45 LantarenVenster 1

Introduced by a video essay by Juan Daniel F. Molero.



RIGHT NOW, WRONG THEN

When is then and when is now? And what is right and what is wrong? These are essential questions in *Right Now, Wrong Then*, the dryly humorous story, told twice, about the filmmaker Ham Cheonsoo, who travels to Suwon for a Q&A. There he meets the young female painter Yoon Heejuong. They stroll, talk, eat sushi and drink much too much soju. Maybe this is the beginning of a romance. Hong's films have often been compared with *Groundhog Day*; here too, stories that repeat themselves and characters who find themselves in a time loop. But *Right Now, Wrong Then* is also about looking and about how we remember having seen something. You only have to move the camera a little, to add a voice-over, to allow a scene to run a little longer, and you have a very different film. A beautiful puzzle about how we can never step twice into the same river twice.

Hong Sangsoo, 2015, 121 min.

su 31-1 15:30 Oude Luxor, mo 1-2 21:45 Pathé 3, fr 5-2 13:00 Cinerama 1,

sa 6-2 15:45 Doelen Willem Burger

Introduced by a video essay by Kevin B. Lee.



THE THAW

Russians have long delighted in American TV series, and now they are making their own. But a Russian *Mad Men*? Isn't that as contradictory as it gets? How can consumer advertising in 1960s New York be compared to the anti-capitalism of the USSR? Or is that a one-sided perspective?

Just as *Mad Men*'s creator Matthew Weiner was inspired by his dad's life as an advertising agent, *The Thaw*'s director Valery Todorovskiy situated his series in a milieu he knew well: the Moscow film world during the "Khrushchev Thaw", a relatively relaxed time when censorship was loosened and new forms of entertainment arose on the emerging medium of national TV. *The Thaw (Ottopel)* circles around a talented filmmaker who has difficulties getting a film off the ground. A fine example of the new wave of Russian TV, that despite bold references to repression, censorship and state-controlled media aired on the main Russian TV channels.

Valery Todorovskiy, 2013, 127 min.

sa 30-1 19:00 Cinerama 5, sa 6-2 09:45 Pathé 5

Introduced by a video essay by *Mad Men* expert Matt Zoller Seitz.





BIGGER THAN THE SHINING

Some films feel made for each other. It's as if they are thinking the same thoughts. Would Nick Ray and Stanley Kubrick have seen eye-to-eye? This experiment hints at a connection.

Wednesday February 3 15:30 Cinerama 1

Idea: Mark Cousins. Editor: Timo Langer

TEA & TALK

WHOSE CINEMA panel discussion with Paula Albuquerque, Matt Zoller Seitz, Kevin B. Lee, Joost Broeren and Juan Daniel Molero.

Sunday January 31 13:30 De Doelen Van Cappellen Zaal

**“The search
for the Holy Grail.**

**That was
my real fascination
with the Nazis...**

FACE VALUE

What was Lars von Trier up to during his notorious press conference in Cannes in may 2013? And David Bowie when he flirted with fascism? And Kanye West with his megalomania? Tony Cokes turns existing texts into simple graphic images for his conceptual music videos. Magnifying them radically makes them even more confrontational.

Daily 16:40 – 17:10 and 18:00 – 18:30 Videowall Schouwburg.

VIDEO ESSAYISTS

PAULA ALBUQUERQUE recently completed her PhD in Artistic Research at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis. She currently teaches at the Amsterdam University College, the University of Amsterdam and the Gerrit Rietveld Academy for the Arts. She is presently an artistic adviser at the Amsterdam Art Fund and Dutch Delegate of CAMIRA.

JOOST BROEREN is a film critic for Het Parool and de Filmkrant. His video essays have been published on filmkrant.nl. He is author at eenbordvolcinema.nl, a cinephile and culinary experience, and member of this year's FIPRESCI jury at the IFFR.

MARK COUSINS is a film director and occasional presenter/critic on film. He is best known for his 15-hour 2011 documentary *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*. Amongst his recent films are: *Life May Be* (co-director, co-writer, with Mania Akbari, 2014), *Atomic, Living in Dread and Promise* (2015), *I Am Belfast* (director, writer, 2015).

HUGO EMMERZAEI is a film critic from the Netherlands. He is part of the editorial team of de Filmkrant, is a music critic for Gonzo (circus), works as a programmer for Pluk de Nacht, hosts a monthly screening in art cinema 't Hoogt in Utrecht and will launch radio show Stranded Cinema in 2016.

JAN PIETER EKKER is chief of the art section of Dutch newspaper Het Parool. He also writes for de Filmkrant, as well as designing logos, brochures, newspapers and books. He is also the creator and organizer of the Cinema.nl Poster Award.

MARISKA GRAVELAND is part of the editorial team of de Filmkrant and editor of Filmjaarboek. Other book publications include *Film3* (kyu-bik-film) (2004), *mm2 - Experimentele film in Nederland na 1960* (2004). Before she started to write about films she worked as a projectionist at film theater Kriterion and De Melkweg in Amsterdam.

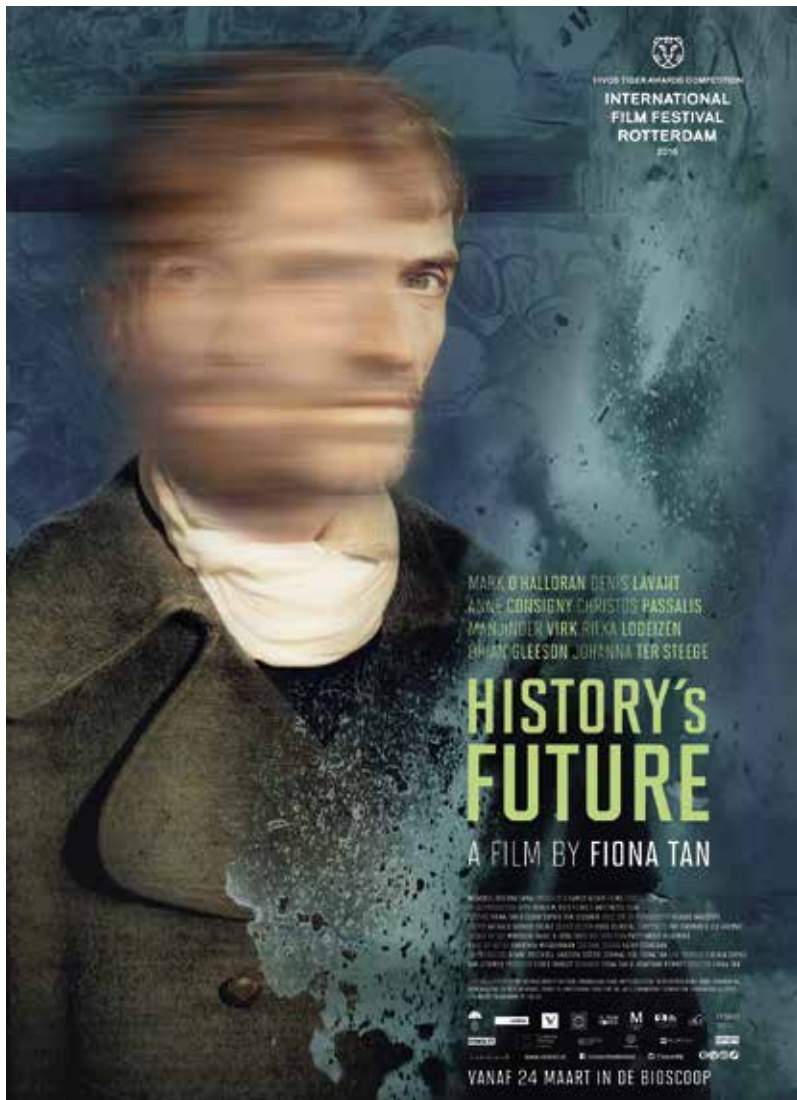
KEVIN B. LEE is chief video essayist at Fandor. His award-winning *Transformers: The Premake* was named one of the best documentaries of 2014 by Sight & Sound magazine. He was supervising producer at Roger Ebert Presents At the Movies, and has written for The New York Times, Sight & Sound, Slate and Indiewire.

DANA LINSSEN is editor in chief of independent film magazine de Filmkrant, a long term critic for daily newspaper NRC Handelsblad and the founder of the Slow Criticism Project, a series of events and publications as a counterbalance against the commodification of film criticism.

JUAN DANIEL F. MOLERO is both alumnus of IFFR Trainee Project for Young Film Critics 2010 and a IFFR Tiger Winner 2015 with his second feature film *Videophilia (and Other Viral Syndromes)*. His first feature film *Reminiscencias* (2010) premiered in the "Break Even Store" of the IFFR in 2010.

MATT ZOLLER SEITZ is the Editor-in-Chief of RogerEbert.com. He is also the TV critic for New York Magazine & Vulture.com, and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism. He has published two books about Wes Anderson. His *Mad Men Carousel: The Complete Critical Companion* was published in november 2015.





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van Metahaven / Lighthouse, The Space



COLOPHON

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Dana Linssen

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Paula Albuquerque
Joost Broeren
Mark Cousins
Jan Pieter Ekker & Dana Linssen
Hugo Emmerzael
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INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM



... 'Leyla Bouzid's impressive debut' ... *Variety*

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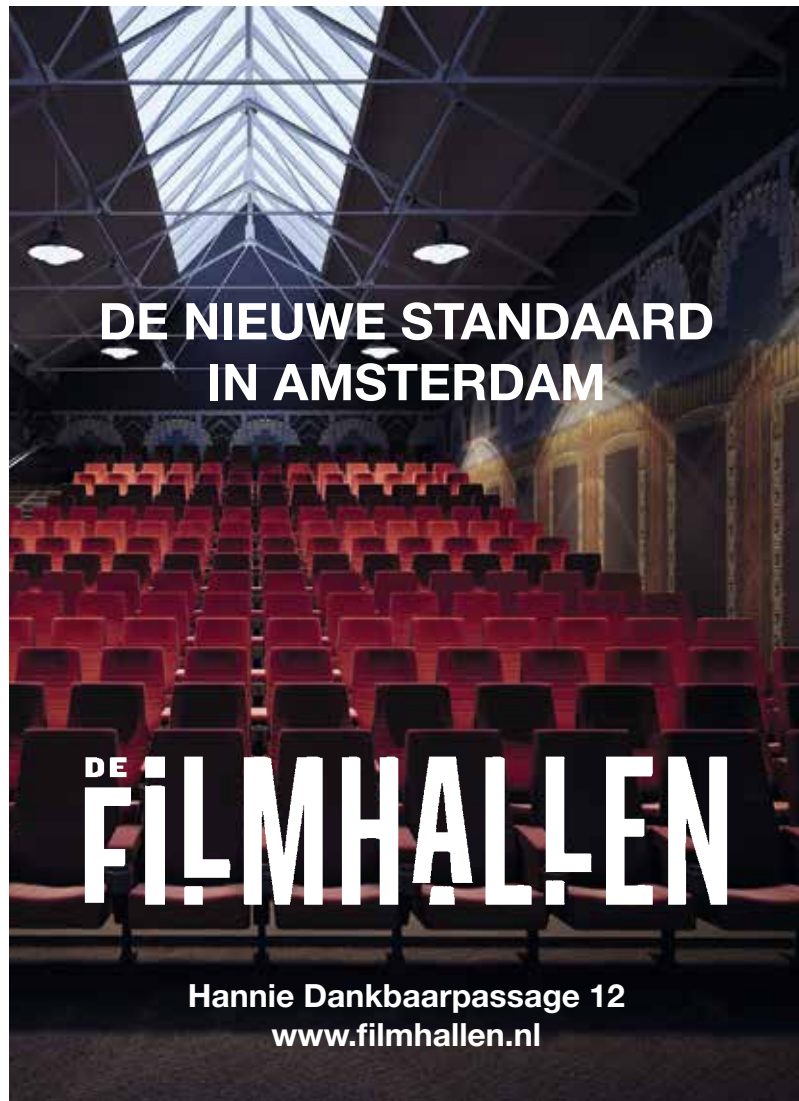
VOORDEFILM

Filmbesprekingen, video-essay's en mashups

Op het filmplatform VoorDeFilm bespreekt een vaste groep filmkenners oude en nieuwe films, van arthouse tot blockbuster. Ze zetten uiteen waar de films over gaan, hoe ze tot stand kwamen en waarom ze het kijken waard zijn. De video-essay's gaan dieper in op specifieke onderwerpen of bepaalde filmmakers.

VOORDEFILM

WWW.VOORDEFILM.NL



FRANCOFONIA ALEXANDER SOKUROV, 2015, 87 MIN.

TH 28-1 18:00 LAN/VEN 1, FR 29-1 09:30 PATHÉ 4, WE 3-2 15:45 PATHÉ 5 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY JAN PIETER EKKER AND DANA LINSSEN

BRAND NEW-U SIMON PUMMELL, 2015, 100 MIN.

FR 29-1 19:00 PATHÉ 5, WE 3-2 12:00 PATHÉ 2 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY JOOST BROEREN

A CRACKUP AT THE RACE RIOTS LEO GABIN, 2015, 60 MIN.

SA 30-1 16:45 CINERAMA 5, TU 2-2 22:00 CINERAMA 6 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY PAULA ALBUQUERQUE

THE THAW VALERY TODOROVSKY, 2013, 127 MIN.

SA 30-1 19:00 CINERAMA 5, SA 6-2 09:45 PATHÉ 5 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY MAD MEN EXPERT MATT ZOLLER SEITZ

TEA & TALK WITH PAULA ALBUQUERQUE, MATT ZOLLER SEITZ, KEVIN B. LEE, JOOST BROEREN AND JUAN DANIEL MOLERO

SU 31-1 13:30 DE DOELEN VAN CAPPELLEN ZAAL

RIGHT NOW, WRONG THEN HONG SANGSOO, 2015, 121 MIN.

SU 31-1 15:30 OUDE LUXOR, MO 1-2 21:45 PATHÉ 3, FR 5-2 13:00 CINERAMA 1, SA 6-2 15:45 DOELEN INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY KEVIN B. LEE

RAIDERS!: THE STORY OF THE GREATEST FAN FILM EVER MADE JEREMY COON & TIM SKOUSEN, 2015, 104 MIN.

MO 1-2 15:30 CINERAMA 1, TH 4-2 21:45 LANTARENVENSTER 1 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY JUAN DANIEL F. MOLERO

THE DYING OF THE LIGHT PETER FLYNN, 2015, 94 MIN.

MO 1-2 19:45 CINERAMA 3, TU 2-2 12:15 PATHÉ 6, TH 4-2 22:15 LANTARENVENSTER 2 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY MARIŠKA GRAVELAND

HELMUT BERGER, ACTOR ANDREAS HORVATH, 2015, 90 MIN.

TU 2-2 16:45 CINERAMA 3, WE 3-2 22:15 CINERAMA 2 INTRODUCED BY A VIDEO ESSAY BY HUGO EMMERZAEEL

BIGGER THAN THE SHINING MARK COUSINS, 2016, 90 MIN.

WE 3-2 15:30 CINERAMA 1

FACE VALUE TONY COKES, 2015, 30 MIN.

DAILY 16:40 - 17:10, 18:00 - 18:30 VIDEO WALL SCHOUWBURG