



# CINEMA REBORN 2022

**27 April – 1 May 2022**





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Cover photo: *Mr. Klein*, courtesy StudioCanal  
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# CINEMA REBORN

## A message from the Organising Committee

The 2022 edition of Cinema Reborn once again focuses attention on the world-wide activity of film preservation and restoration. More however it celebrates this work by presenting pristine remastered copies of cinema classics in a living, breathing theatre in the manner that has thrived for over a century and a quarter.

The experience of going to the movies remains one of life's simple pleasures and given the nature of the business seems likely to endure. Those involved in making films want them seen on public screens with live audiences. Many squirm at the prospect of their work going straight to a streaming service or TV feed. The major venues of our day, the big festivals like Cannes and such institutions as the American Academy are fighting to keep the best movies in theatres for at least the primary viewing.

Cinema Reborn would like to think it is helping. Our program screens only in a cinema. On a big screen. With an appreciative audience. In a venue dedicated to the highest standards of presentation and which, as it undergoes a major renovation, seeks to recreate the exhilarating experience.

Our 2022 program introduces restored classics from mainstream production in Hollywood, Japan and France. We will also present films from nations such as Iran, the Philippines and China. They are films made by acknowledged masters and unknowns.

The Cinema Reborn Organising Committee, an organisation comprised entirely of volunteers and supported by a wonderful local network of donors, presenters and writers, is particularly proud to have again collaborated with the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia to present a program of remastered films from the 50s made by one of the most exuberant film-making teams of the day, the Waterside Workers Federation Film Unit. That program will be complemented by two other Australian titles restored with loving care by the film-makers themselves, bringing back to life remarkable but overlooked work.

We have expanded the number of titles we are screening and the number of sessions at which they will be shown.

We welcome you to this exploration of a rich and varied snapshot of film history.

# Batch '81

## Mike De Leon

Mike De Leon was born on May 24, 1947, in Manila, Philippines as Miguel Pamintuan De Leon. He is a film director, producer, cinematographer, and screenwriter. His best known works are *Kisapmata* (1981), *Batch '81* (1982), *Sister Stella L.* (1984) and *Bayaning 3rd World* (1999). The former two served as his Cannes debut in 1982 where they were part of the selection at the Directors' Fortnight. His most recent film, *Citizen Jake*, was released in 2018.

## The Film

Call it his fascist masterpiece. Mike De Leon's *Batch '81* is an allegorical treatise on the nature of fascism, specifically that of the Marcos Administration, in a film that makes its argument (I submit) largely through fascist means.

De Leon's reputation as a control freak is legendary and, to be honest, not entirely unfounded. Here he tells the story of one Sid Lucero, aspiring to enter the frat Alpha Kappa Omega: through Sid's eyes we see the initiation process, through his ears we hear the rules and philosophy of the fraternity, through his thoughts (done in voiceover) we learn of his reaction to the frat's unfolding nature. Oh, Sid spends onscreen time with his fellow pledges, who function as distinct supporting players (strangely the frat masters remain mostly undifferentiated walking ciphers), but it's only Sid's thoughts we hear, only Sid's consciousness that absorbs the film's narrative, even the corollary narratives of his brothers.

De Leon has rarely been shy about his admiration for legendary filmmaker Stanley Kubrick; if anything you can see Kubrick's influence on De Leon's geometrically meticulous visual style, his distant emotional tone, his tendency to subject characters to forces beyond their control. If *Kisapmata* is De Leon's tribute to Kubrick's *The Shining* (the former in my opinion being the superior film), *Batch '81* would arguably be De Leon's *Clockwork Orange*, and not merely because of an overt *Clockwork*-style rock-music number, where a mannequin is eviscerated onscreen: specific events are mirrored (a head dunked in a tank of filthy water; a man strapped to a chair; one film beginning with a gang rumble, the other ending with same), crucial themes echoed ('*Anong desisyon mo?*' (What's your decision?) recalling *Clockwork*'s onscreen query: 'What's it going to be then, eh?' – both films focusing on the primacy and degradation of free will).

If there's a difference between the two I'd say it's one borne of circumstance: Kubrick was a well-funded filmmaker, with a healthy commercial relationship tangential if not completely dependent on mainstream Hollywood. De Leon is not without resources (he is the grandson of film matriarch Narcisa De Leon, of LVN Pictures) but his budgets, if not starvation poor, are modest, and he scales his ambitions accordingly. Where Kubrick's films are elaborately constructed and obsessively detailed mindscapes, the extravagant sets used eccentrically (the vast hotel in *The Shining*, the unending



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ship in *2001*, the decadent mansions in *Paths of Glory*, *Lolita*, *Barry Lyndon*, and *Eyes Wide Shut*) De Leon goes the other direction, employing naturalistic environments (a family home, a frat house basement) expressionistically, transforming them into psychic traps where his characters gnaw desperately at each other and at themselves, seeking escape.

Hence the frat house in *Batch '81*, where much of the action takes place. As designed by longtime De Leon collaborator Cesar Hernando the rooms are claustrophobic spaces where people can scream freely unheard, too small for those confined (seven freshly hatched pledges) to avoid notice, too narrow for them to do anything other than ask 'more please!' The rooms eliminate any notion of freedom, any possible lifestyle alternative (a frat-free college career, for one), any thoughts outside of the moment: you are in a world of pain, and endurance of that pain is the sum total meaning of your life (past and future – other than your pending membership – having been beaten out of your skull).

De Leon's cinematography has always been functional almost to the point of unimpressive at least on first viewing, though they do have a crispness of image and precision of effect few other filmmakers, Filipino or otherwise, can touch. For this production De Leon (with cinematographer Rody Lacap) lights the sets with brutal frankness, the sole source of light often apparently being an incandescent bulb or two. Kubrick employs similar lighting in several of his films (the prison stage show in *Clockwork*; the lunar excavation in *2001*), but where Kubrick uses the harsh glare to herald a

spectacular revelation – the results of a mind experiment, the climax of an alien civilization's patient manipulations – De Leon employs them for a more quotidian reason: to illuminate the truth without flinching, without evasion. To show physical and psychological violence unadorned.

Need to mention one of De Leon's most important collaborators – don't usually like to discuss acting as I subscribe to Robert Bresson's theory on the subject (no actors, no parts, no staging; *being* as opposed to *seeming*) but even I have to admit much of the force of the film is due to the performance of the late great Mark Gil as Sid. If Al Pacino does volatile like no other actor, and Robert De Niro intense interiority, Gil seems to do both well, flipping effortlessly from one (yelling as his friend is being killed before him) to the other (meditating on his batchmates' faithlessness). And where De Niro practiced Method to the point of eating his way to obesity for *Raging Bull*, I doubt if even he is capable of enduring what Gil endures in one particularly harrowing scene, involving surgical clamps. No CGI, no apparent prosthetics – prosthetics do not gradually turn red onscreen.

Finally, the script, by industry veterans Clodualdo del Mundo, Jr., Raquel Villavicencio, and De Leon himself: a clean, linear storyline that traces Sid's transformation from trembling neophyte to full frat brother. Aphorisms (presumably recorded by the writers from actual frat language) are constantly flung about during the rituals: '*Ang simula at wakas ay kapatiran*' (Brotherhood is the beginning and the end) – a statement that *sounds* profound but is essentially meaningless, the kind of exciting, easy-





to-remember slogan extolling unity and obedience the Soviet Union used to crank out by the thousands. Sid repeats many of these himself, with less and less conviction as adversity raises doubt in the pledges' minds – a condition that the frat eventually addresses, in the film's key scene.

An elaborately designed electric chair straps and all with a remote button is introduced, and the pledges are literally pushed to their physical and mental limits. A frat master (actor Chito Ponce Enrile, brother of Marcos' Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile) explains: 'Trust your frat. *Hindi naman hinihingi ng frat ang hindi n'yo kaya* (The frat doesn't ask for more than you can give)...*ang importante ay makapagdesisyon kayo. Kailangan makipagdesisyon ang bawat isa sa inyo...*(...what's important is that you decide. Each of you need to decide for yourself...).' The frat makes its case to the pledges in a reasonable, measured (but nevertheless authoritative) voice, not demanding but *asking* them to willingly put their faith in the group, put their faith

in something bigger than themselves. As Anthony Burgess in his novel repeatedly asks to the reader (the repetitiveness – and urgency, in my view – markedly reduced in Kubrick's film): '*What's it going to be then, eh?*' It's I submit the hook with which a fascist organization or government wins undying loyalty from its followers: the carefully presented moment when a man is asked, pen poised in hand, to sign away above the dotted line.

But that's the plea; what seals the deal is sacrifice, preferably involving blood. We see hints of that in the contusions covering one pledge's chest, as he reveals he was coerced into participating in the electric-chair stunt; we see it more prominently later on when another pledge is killed by a rival gang and a full-fledged rumble takes place, literally an orgy of gore. Any breath or whisper of skepticism, of protest, of defiance is silenced – now and forever – once blood has been spilled; there's nothing like the (as Burgess put it) 'red red krovvy on tap' to validate an idea beyond any possible doubt.

De Leon ends the film the way Kubrick



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ended his *2001*, with the Star Child gazing straight through the screen at us, only where the Star Child radiates an air of serene transcendence, Sid Lucero's face – head slightly lowered, eyes level and direct – seems utterly drained of emotion, his lips mouthing the frat's principles with mechanized fluency ('*Ang simula at wakas ay kapatiran!*'). He is cured all right – of all reason, all intelligent thought, all sign or taint of humanity. He has evolved in opposite direction from the Star Child, towards total obedience, and has done so of his own free will.

Kubrick ends *Clockwork* on a joyous note, but it's a cynical joy, a passive despairing acceptance of the way things are – in effect, terrible. I much prefer Burgess' original novel, where an additional unfilmed chapter whispered the hint of a bizarre and bitter redemption, of the possibility of change. De Leon despite being (I suspect) every bit as misanthropic as Kubrick doesn't end his film the same way; that final shot of soulless Sid is his way of asking us to contemplate the entire trajectory of the man's character, from God-made fruit capable of sweetness to clockwork automaton, giving us a moment – on confronting this monstrous thing with the swinging paddle and mechanical moving lips – to mourn the irreplaceable, irrevocable loss.

### Notes by Noel Vera (republished by permission of the author)

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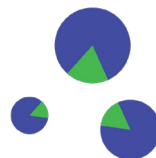
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## The Restoration

Restoration by the Asian Film Archives (AFA), Singapore, using the 35mm original camera negative, a positive print and the original sound negative held in the AFA collection. The negative was affected by vinegar syndrome, haloes and mould, and contained dominant green-hued defects on the emulsion. As a result, parts were unusable and had to be integrated with shots from the positive print. The film elements were scanned and digitally restored at 4K resolution by L'Immagine Ritrovata in 2016. Director Mike De Leon and cinematographer Rody Lacap supervised the colour grading.

Director: Mike DE LEON; Production Companies: LVN Pictures, MVP Pictures, Sampaguita Pictures; Producers: Marichu MACEDA, Chona VERA-PEREZ; Script: Clodualdo DE MUNDO Jr, Raqual N. VILLAVICENCIO, DE LEON; Director of Photography: Rody LACAP; Editor: Jess NAVARRO; Production Design: César HERNANDO; Sound: Ramon REYES; Music: Lorrie ILUSTRE // Cast: Mark GIL (Sid Lucero); Sandy ANDOLONG; (Tina); Ward LUARCA (Pecoy Lesdesma); Noel TRINIDAD (Santi Santillan); Ricky SANDICO (Ronnie Roxas Jr.)

Philippines | 1982 | 100 mins | 4K DCP (orig.35mm) | Colour | 1.85:1 | Mono Sound | English, Tagalog with Eng. Subtitles | Classification: U/C18+



ASIAN FILM ARCHIVE





## 2 or 3 Things I Know About Mike De Leon

He has competition from a few dead masters – Gerardo de Leon, Lino Brocka, Mario O’Hara and Ishmael Bernal head the list – but I suspect Mike De Leon is the foremost of all Filipino filmmakers. He’s an intensely private man: he has always shied away from interviews and self-promotion, but at the time of writing he is putting the finishing touches to an autobiographical scrapbook called *Last Look Back*. It may be out by the time you read this. He invited me to write the preface for it, so I had the chance to read an early draft of the text. He frames it as mini-essays or commentaries on a series of evocative photos, film stills and other images. I learned a lot from his draft text.

Of course, I already knew the basic biography. He was born in 1947, read humanities at the Ateneo de Manila, studied art history at the University of Heidelberg and got involved with cinema only when he returned to the Philippines. But he came from a filmmaking family: his grandmother Narcisa (known as Doña Sisang) had founded the major studio LVN in 1938, and his father Manuel ran the company until it ended regular production in 1961. LVN continued as a facilities house for other producers, and Mike took over running it in 1970, devoting his attention to its processing lab from 1972. In 1975 he founded the company Cinema Artists, made his experimental short *Monologue*, and produced and photographed Brocka’s *Manila, in the Claws of Light*. He directed his debut

feature *The Rites of May* (*Itim*, literally ‘Black’) the following year. Since then, sometimes with long gaps between films, he has made eight more features (one shot on video for TV), plus an episode for a portmanteau film; he also photographed Eddie Romero’s epic *Aguila* (1980) and took a steering role in the agit-prop short *Omens* (*Signos*, 1984), made to protest the assassination of Benigno Aquino, signed by eight members of the Concerned Artists group. He has very recently released the tiny short *Babuyan* (2021), which shows that he would like his great 1981 feature about coercive control *Kisapmata* to be read politically, and warns that cronies of the late corrupt dictator Marcos are staging their come-back.

The bare facts tell little of the real story. The first thing to note is that he came into filmmaking with no grounding in – and little interest in – the traditional, generic Filipino film culture. An interest in European art cinema picked up during his time in Germany, combined with an innate technical perfectionism, gave him an ‘outsider’ perspective on film language and visual style. From the start, his films didn’t follow the ‘rules’ of Pinoy melodrama: his storytelling and sense of micro and macro structures were different. Even on the two occasions he tried for commercial success with romantic melodramas, in 1977 and 1985, his emphases were unusual. He has never been a ‘mainstream’ director in Filipino film culture.

Second, his impulse to attack the ruthless and immoral patriarchy was already obvious in his debut feature, but it took him a few years to acknowledge that these attacks were fundamentally political. *Kisapmata* and *Batch '81*, made in rapid succession in 1981/82 and screened side by side in the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes, both identified the patriarchy as essentially fascist. Two subsequent collaborations with the left-wing writer Jose 'Pete' Lacaba – on *Omens* and the feature *Sister Stella L* – confirmed a newly political orientation, pointing towards the popular uprising that overthrew Marcos. His latest feature *Citizen Jake* (2019; I'd say his masterpiece) continues this line of attack while reflecting ruefully on the compromises and limitations of politicised art.

Third, he has become the Philippines' answer to Martin Scorsese in his latter-day dedication to film preservation and restoration. He started down this road when he supervised the restoration of *Manila, In the Claws of Light* for Scorsese's World Cinema Foundation, published on Blu-ray by Criterion in the US and the BFI in Britain. He's been vocally critical of the failure to preserve the LVN back-catalogue, much of which is lost, and he took a very active role in restoring and rereleasing his late father's prestige production of *Nick Joaquin's Portrait of the Artist as Filipino* (1965, directed by Lamberto Avellana). In the last few years, while battling health issues, he has supervised restorations and new hi-res scans of his own key works. They will be published

on Blu-ray by Carlotta Films in Paris during 2022, and it seems safe to assume that discriminating labels in the English-speaking world will follow suit.

In 2015, Mike De Leon published his first book, a handsome monograph on the restoration of *Nick Joaquin's Portrait of the Artist as Filipino*, which doubles as a pictorial history of LVN Pictures. He wrote a foreword for the book, which ends with these words:

'This commemorative book – my first as a publisher – contains images and recollections from half a century ago and brings back many memories of my father and the world he lived in, and the world he brought to the movies. One of those memories is of my father telling me many times before he died: 'Mike, whatever I leave you, do not spend it making movies.'

Well, he didn't say anything about making books, or about restoring his movies.'

Since then, the Asian Film Archive in Singapore has published an equally handsome monograph on the restoration of *Batch '81* (like the *Portrait* book, designed by De Leon's close collaborator, the late production designer Cesar Hernando), which contains a detailed history of the production, the original script and information about scenes deleted from the final cut. As we noted in our first paragraph, Mike De Leon's second volume as publisher, *Last Look Back*, is due out this year.

**Tony Rayns**

# Beau Travail

## Claire Denis

Claire Denis (born 1946) graduated from the French film school IDHEC (today FÉMIS) in 1971, and became a valued assistant director to (among others) Jacques Rivette, Wim Wenders and Dušan Makavejev. Her powerfully ambivalent childhood experience of being raised in parts of Africa under French colonial rule has been a strong inspiration for her own work as director, beginning with *Chocolat* in 1988; ‘multi-racial’ casts are standard in her projects. Writing steadily (often with collaborator Jean-Pol Fargeau) and filming quickly, she has managed to create 15 features (and numerous shorts) in the past 34 years, with *The Stars at Noon*, a ‘romantic thriller’ set during the Nicaraguan Revolution, coming next.

Celebrated by critics and regularly studied by scholars, Denis’ audiovisual treatment of story material is intensely lyrical and often deliberately enigmatic; she pays special attention, in editing, to scrambling the conventional bases of comprehension and multiplying the potential interpretive points-of-view. A devoted cinephile, Denis references many genres in her projects – thriller, action, musical (the dance scenes in her films are indelible), romance, sci-fi – yet always lands beyond the reassuring, straitjacketed conventions of any single generic template.

Regularly challenging puritanical morality and comfortably liberal political stances, Denis is unafraid of breaking taboos and confronting her audiences with violent and sexually provocative material, as in

*Les Salauds* (*Bastards*, 2013) and *High Life* (2018). Her career highlights so far include *J’ai pas sommeil* (*I Can’t Sleep*, 1994), *Trouble Every Day* (2001), *L’intrus* (*The Intruder*, 2004), *35 rhums* (2008), and the first of her collaborations with Juliette Binoche, *Un beau soleil intérieur* (*Let the Sunshine In*, 2017).

## The Film

*Beau Travail* (‘fine work’) is among the freest, the most lyrical and inventive of films. Denis follows the example set by the *Nouvelle Vague* in the 60s, but across fiction and documentary work she has evolved her own, distinctive style and world-view.

It is a completely poetic piece, characterised by an unusual combination of images and music (classical and pop music alike), a minimal dependence on plot, and an approach to bodily gesture and movement that is much closer to dance than naturalistic drama – in fact, Denis collaborated with a choreographer, Bernardo Montet, on the staging of the action, especially its scenes of military exercise.

The film’s premise is simple: nominally a portrait of the French Foreign Legion stationed in Djibouti at some point in the late 20th century. It may seem an odd or anachronistic idea – and that is exactly the feeling Denis wanted to create, of a colonial power hanging around and messing things up long past the supposed ‘glory days’ of the Foreign Legion mythologised in movies and popular culture. (In 2003, observing this region’s role in a newer war, she ruefully



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commented: 'I thought I was filming the end of something, not the beginning'.)

Denis' military men are mere figures in a landscape, detached from any reality but their own. Their codes of honour and rituals of masculinity are given a highly surreal air. Discipline, training, body-building – all these cyclical, daily activities of the Legionnaires are shown with an amused but also fascinated gaze. The film's scenario is loosely based on Herman Melville's unfinished 1891 novella *Billy Budd* (extracts from the score of Benjamin Britten's operatic adaptation are included on the soundtrack), but the atmosphere has more in common with Samuel Beckett.

*Beau Travail* shows the interaction of two starkly different worlds: the Legionnaires in their strange, ascetic bubble, and the African society all around them, sensual and vibrant. The soldiers seem forever separate from a forbidding, dry landscape; Denis shows this also as a clash between a world of men and a world of women. The women dance and laugh, providing an ironic perspective on the ingrown world of the men.

Within this microcosmic male world, however, things are stirring and seething. The core of the story, sketched in a very economical, almost diagrammatic way, is the mysteriously homoerotic triangle that forms between the head of this outfit, Bruno (Michel Subor), a new recruit, Sentain (Gregoire Colin) and the small, intense guy who runs the show from day to day, Galoup – played by the remarkable Denis Lavant, familiar from five Leos Carax movies (including *Holy Motors*, 2012).

Much of the film is told through the memories of the disgraced Galoup as he struggles uneasily to fit back into civilian life in Marseilles. Yet Galoup brings no particular hindsight or wisdom to his account. Instead, we enter into the intense world of his jealous fantasies and passions, his love for Bruno deforming any natural personal or professional relation he might ever have had with the unfortunate scapegoat, Sentain. (Denis and Fargeau were surely remembering René Girard's influential theory of triangular 'mimetic desire', which literally became the inspiration and basis for Facebook: the obsessive fix of a thwarted, rejected or repressed lover on the 'third party' or object that the loved one likes.) These interpersonal tangles build to a level of tension and dread, of true drama and catharsis, which is unique in world cinema.

At the time of its commercial release in Australia, most mainstream reviewers went on the defensive about *Beau Travail*, seeming to apologise to potential viewers for its careful pacing, its reliance on pure images and sounds over old-fashioned dialogue, and its modern approach to storytelling. But this is a film that, thanks to Denis' masterful execution of a complex idea, compellingly creates its own frame of reference, taking you into its vivid world and commanding your full sensory and emotional attention.

*Beau Travail* is a masterpiece (most fans regard it as Denis' best so far), a film whose rich inner life only becomes more absorbing and intricate with repeated viewings. Oh, and have I mentioned the dance scenes? The film opens, stunningly, with a club crowd dancing to the Turkish hit by Tarkan, 'Şımarık'





(better known to Australians as ‘Kiss Kiss’, Holly Valance’s cover version), and ends, immortally, with one of cinema’s most extraordinary and oft-referenced spectacles: Lavant dancing his soul out to Corona’s 1993 ‘The Rhythm of the Night’. After seeing and hearing that, don’t let anyone tell you that disco is dead.

**Notes © Adrian Martin March 2001 / February 2022**

### The restoration

New 4K digital restoration, supervised by Director of Photography Agnès Godard and approved by director Claire Denis. The restoration used a linear PCM stereo track in the original French with some Italian, Russian and Arabic languages. It is a significant advancement in the film’s audio and score.

Director: Claire DENIS; Production Companies: La Sept-Arte, Pathé Télévision, S.M. Films, Tanaïs Productions; Producer: Patrick

GRANDPERRET; Script: Jean-Pol FARGEAU, DENIS, from Herman Melville’s novella Billy Budd, Sailor | Director of Photography: Agnès GODARD; Editor: Nelly QUETTIER; Production Design: Arnaud DE MOLERON; Sound Recording: Jean-Paul MUGEL, Dominique GABORIEAU, Alexis LEVERVE; Sound Editing: Christophe WINDING; Sound Engineering: André CAPPELLO, Nathalie VIDAL; Music: Charles Henri de PIERREFEU, Eran TZUR; Costumes: Judy SHREWSBURY; Special Visual Effects: Ronan BROUDIN, Gilbert KINER, Laurent TREHERNE, Laurent ULLMAN // Cast: Denis LAVANT (Galoup); Grégoire COLIN (Gilles Sentain); Michael SUBOR (Commander Bruno FORESTIER); Nicolas DUVAUCHELLE (Legionnaire); Richard COURCET (Legionnaire); Dan HERZERG (Legionnaire).

France | 1999 | 93 mins | 4K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour | 1.66:1 | Dolby Surround Sound | French, Italian, Russian, Somali with Eng. Subtitles | Classification: M

# The Deer

## Masoud Kimiai

By the time you read this, the 82-year-old director Masoud Kimiai will have finished his 31st feature, a political crime drama in the spirit of Warner gangster films (Kimiai assisted former Warner director Jean Negulesco during the making of one of his 1960s films shot in Iran). Typical of his productions, the film has already been controversial: being pulled from the official film festival in Tehran in protest at the presence of a certain juror. 'Defiant' can hardly describe Kimiai who, unlike other figures of Iranian cinema in the 70s, never cared about Antonioni or film schools, gaining his education instead at Tehran's second run cinemas, idolising figures like Raoul Walsh and Vincent Sherman.

Kimiai entered the film industry as an assistant director to Samuel Khachikian, a master of crime and noir, and made his debut in 1968. It was his second film, however, that changed the course of Iranian cinema. *Gheysar* (1969), a rape-revenge drama, was both an ode to American cinema and an uncompromising political statement about the meaning of justice and individualism. Kimiai's hard-boiled cinema and its revolutionary temperament used generic formulas to protest and provoke. The film also turned Behrouz Vossoughi into a superstar and cemented a symbiotic relationship with Kimiai, resulting in five more films.

After the revolution, he was appointed as the head of Channel Two public television but within a few weeks the new regime recognised that the rebel director

was untameable. Kimiai resigned and his film *The Red Line* (1982) was banned indefinitely. After a hiatus, he returned to filmmaking in 1987 and continued making features as the most revered cult director in the history of Iranian cinema.

## The film

*The Deer*, Masoud Kimiai's seventh feature, accomplished what he set out to achieve in film after film, with its impeccable combination of humour and pathos. It also made its political message explicit. It is hard to believe the sheer bravery that went into making this militant 'buddy movie', which makes all the 'political' films of the new Iranian cinema look pale and vapid in comparison. Here, the familiar hero of Iranian popular cinema – down-to-earth and easy-going but essentially apolitical – is prompted into social action; far beyond the usual romantic conquests assigned to a versatile method actor like Behrouz Vossoughi.

There is a sense of imminent revolution in this story of a former champ turned junkie (played by Vossoughi) who reunites with his leftist classmate (Faramarz Gharibian, a childhood friend of the director) and is redeemed by revolutionary anger. Picking up where the anti-hero of *Gheysar* (1969) left off in his quest for personal revenge, the ravaged Seyyed is encouraged by his old friend Ghodrat to fight back as he once did – finally rising from the ashes of addiction for one last tragic demonstration of his dignity and humanity.



Premiered at the Tehran International Film Festival in November 1974, the film was an instant sensation and Vossoughi's magnificent performance as Seyyed won him the Best Actor prize. Shortly afterwards, however, Kimiai was arrested during a violent raid by SAVAK, the Iranian secret service. A few days later, the film was banned.

The censor, who insisted on turning Gharibian's urban guerrilla Ghodrat into a bank robber, forced Kimiai to recut the

film. The changes also involved shooting an entirely different ending, which Kimiai did with all the self-conscious absurdity that an artist with a gun pointed at his head would adopt. The film was finally screened to Iranian audiences in 1976 but being aware of the original ending, many viewers repeatedly made a ritual of watching the film right up until the start of the final sequence and then rising from their seats and quietly leaving the cinema in silent protest.





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Despite the censorship, every sequence of this moving political manifesto resonated with millions of Iranians and the film stayed in circulation for a long time – with some screenings adding more tragic undertones to the film. At the peak of the revolution, the Shah's army opened fire on a crowd of protestors outside Cinema Nahid, which was screening the film at the time (the event is remembered today as 'Black Friday'). Only a few weeks before, a group of Islamists had burned down Cinema Rex in southwest Iran while people were inside watching *The Deer*, which led to the tragic death of more than 300 people.

*The Deer* still enjoys enormous popularity and influence in Iran, which might make us forget how personal and intimate it actually is – a drama about two friends holed up in a shabby room with a view onto a derelict courtyard with its downtrodden inhabitants. But in no other film have I seen society's wounds and pains magnified so much, as they are here, seen through only a tiny window.

### The restoration

While I can imagine the majority of the films shown at Cinema Reborn are beautifully restored copies, one should note that this format inevitably brings some limitations: a great number of restored films are those which (often rightly but not always) have passed through the filters of national and cultural significance defined by big institutions and companies, with the idea of contributing to a cultural agenda and whenever possible bringing in some revenue. But what if a film is not endorsed by the institutions and people

who have control over it, such as national archives and ministries of culture? What if a film is completely repressed, denied and locked away? That is the case with *The Deer*, of which it is believed there are no key elements (such as a camera negative) remaining. It is a film that, owing to the cultural totalitarianism of the current regime, cannot be shown – let alone salvaged.

The version presented at this festival – the result of the sheer enthusiasm of various individuals – is a scan of the director's rather battered positive print. Its multiple missing and damaged scenes are completed from other copies. The National Film Archive of Iran provided some of the missing elements, as well as the censored ending of the film, which will be screened right after the original ending. The result of this home-made 'reconstruction' should enable you to see a film whose images are so charged with passion that any imperfections of the copy will immediately move to the background. Even as you notice the faults, every scene of this charmingly scratchy copy will leave a scratch on your soul.

### Notes by Ehsan Khoshbakht

Director: Masoud KIMIAI; Production Company: Misaghie Studio; Producer: Mehdi MISSAGIEH; Script: KIMIAI Director of Photography: Nemat HAHIGHI; Editor: Abbas GANJAVI; Music: Esfandiar MONFAREDZADEH; Special Visual Effects: Mohammad PIRASTEH // Cast: Behrouz VOSSOUGHJI (Seyed Rasool); Faramarz GHARIBIAN (Ghodrat); Nosrat PARTOVI (Fati); Garshasb RAOUFI (Drug Dealer); Parviz FANIZADEH (Mohammad)

Iran | 1974 | 126 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | Farsi with Eng. subtitles | Classification: U/C15+







# The Goddess 神女

**This program is presented with the generous support of David and Leith Bruce-Steer**

## Wu Yonggang

Hailed as one of the greatest films of Early Chinese Silent Cinema era, *The Goddess* was the debut feature for writer-director Wu Yonggang who started his career as a set and costume designer with one of three major film production companies in the 1920s, Dazhonghua Baihe, which later was co-opted into Lianhua Film Company, the production house for *The Goddess*.

During his early years at Dazhonghua Baihe, Wu observed the increasing proliferation of prostitutes in the city (at the time, around 13% of the Shanghai's women turned to prostitution as a means of making a living) and this experience left an indelible impression on the young man. From this latent image, the script and eventually, the film, *The Goddess* emerged. Wu took special care in recreating the world such a woman inhabited, from the symbolic and spartan set design, to the Deleuzian affection-image close-ups of the goddess. This film launched both Wu and its titular actress, the inimitable Ruan Lingyu, into renown and stardom respectively.

Born in 1907, Wu, a Shanghai native was considered to be one of the most prolific directors of the second generation (film directors). Wu had a strong leftist-leaning and was involved with the China Film Cultural Society, which in 1933 sought to convey Marxist ideals to the masses through films. The idea of using cinema as a means to convey social issues in

order to stimulate the public conscience and debate was clearly present in *The Goddess*, as well as in Wu's later films.

It is evident that *The Goddess* foregrounded Wu's own ambivalent experience of Chinese modernity. Although his leftist credentials were an asset in the lead up to the Communist Revolution in 1949, his challenge of the Party's restrictions on filmmakers in 1957 saw him banned from film making until 1962. Wu directed 24 films throughout his career. His last film, *Night Rain at Bashan* (1980), a meditation on the struggle of the Chinese people during the Gang of Four years, won Best Picture in the inaugural Golden Rooster Awards. The title took a line from a Tang Dynasty poem *Written on a Rainy Night – A Letter to the North* by Li Shangyin.

Wu died in 1980 at the age of 75.

## The Film

*The Goddess'* allegorical take on a geopolitical Chinese modernity is teased out in the film's play on duality: a double life and a double meaning; at once contradictory and ambivalent. The notion that things are not what they seem, that meanings elude their confines. Wu's elliptical direction takes us into the invisible night of the flesh, and uncharted, these actions are reborn again within the body of the mythical mother, and we see both – her soul and its incarnation in earthly form.

In the opening title sequence of the film, a bas-relief sculpture depicting a mother, stripped bare with hands bound behind her back, is crouched over her naked





infant; her body his shelter against the world. The title of the film *The Goddess* is projected onto this relief rendering this very earthly image into a seance with the divine. The faces on this relief were featureless, signifying the ubiquitous nature of the world we are about to enter, where the mother is unnamed, and her son, who is fatherless, cannot bear a name in the societal terms. Together, they drift in a world where other characters were only known by their generic descriptives, of a class, or a type: 'The Boss', 'The Principal' – these roles epitomising either end of the social spectrum.

The film's title: *The Goddess*, or simply *Goddess* (my preference) or *Shennu* in Pinyin (神女) signifies a duality. In Chinese the word 'shennu' describes a female divinity with supernatural powers often associated with the higher realms of spirituality. The word 'shennu' is also slang for a streetwalker.

The narrative follows the life of a young mother, the goddess, who raises her infant alone in the city, turning to streetwalking as her only means of survival. One night, having landed in a thug's quarters whilst fleeing from the police, she becomes his possession. Despite her misfortunes, this loving mother finds a way to send her son to a prestigious school, in the belief that a good education would equip him with a better future. Her son thrives at school and all seems to be well until gossip about her surfaces. ...

Whilst the story reads like a typical melodrama, Wu's direction evoked a tonal splitting of the goddess as mother, streetwalker, and deity. There is little

sensuality in Ruan's goddess. In fact, the eye of the camera draws her space as that of domesticity, where the crib is placed in the centre of the room. We are introduced to this space through vignettes around the room, a dressing table full of powders and creams, a table with an assortment of tins and a doll; the camera then tilts up from the crib to her dress and continues to travel upwards to reveal a mother rocking her infant to sleep. As the young mother gets ready for her night of work, she was practical; her mannerisms of donning lipstick and fixing her hair were well rehearsed; it was only when she returns the next morning to soothe her crying child that we were treated with the first close-up of her. In this close-up, the goddess' eyes were distant, but her face is as open as the night. Whilst her gaze eluded ours, as spectators, we were drawn to her as a 'complex entity', as a Deleuzian affect-image: in that each look is singular and resists being blended into the indifference of the world.

And yet, these same close-ups contributed to the commodification of Ruan. Her gaze beyond the frame projected us beyond the spatio-temporal confines of the film – imagined or hyper-extended by the audience. This close-up of Ruan is mesmerising because of our collective cinematic memory at work, recalling the glamour shots of Hollywood stars of the time, think Marlene Dietrich, Lillian Gish or Greta Garbo; the lighting, framing and angle, the slight tilt of the head, the finely-drawn eyebrows, all culminated in the objectification of her image – in a single close-up, a star was born.

But of course, the film is more than that. As a launch vehicle to stardom,





it is a tragic one, for Ruan's star status was short lived and ruinous. Instead, the repetition of close-ups throughout the film can be read in juxtaposition against that of the recurring shots of disembodied feet that walk across the frame, commensurate with the erasure of identity for the goddess herself. The first time we see her pick up a client, she deliberately looked down at her feet; and another time, Wu's camera focused on two pairs of feet, first facing each other, and then walking off together. These shots articulate the pervasive anonymity of modern urban spaces, which are only synonymous with the transitory nature of the feet that walk through its landscape. These empty spaces cannot be defined by faces, especially not that of the close-up – which, especially for the goddess and Ruan, is the revelation of identity, individualism and dreams.

The finely modulated directorial style of Wu provides visual cues that signal a more complex layer of social critique at work. Take the first time the thug enters

the goddess' domestic space. He is caught as a reflection in her mirror. The second time, she saw his hat first before she sees him, indicating a symbolic order at work. In the opening sequence we see a lit window, where the frame of the window precurse the bars of the goddess' jail cell. Vertical partitioning as metaphor for class divide: the large gates outside the school where she is often seen approaching, but never entering; or the top-down POV of her neighbour to the group of children below, intersected by three electrical wires, condemning the son as a 'bastard' and of the underclass. So too, the citizen-surveillance carried out by the goddess' first neighbour (through a key-hole) and more overtly by her second neighbour, provides commentary on the ideological crack-down of the KMT government.

The famous shot of The Boss' legs forming a dominating A-frame, between which the crouched figures of mother and son can be seen, is often interpreted as Wu making the viewer complicit to the male gaze. But does it? Unlike the trial scene



where high-angle shots were used to show the three male judges pronouncing her sentence, in this frame, the goddess' eyeline is upwards and out of frame. And we, as spectators find ourselves on the ground, on the same aspect level as she is. It would be fair to say that Wu, in fact, wanted his audience to empathise with the predicament of the goddess, rather than judge her. Where there was a social point to be made, Wu uses direct address, such as the goddess' impassioned plea to the principal, made direct to camera, and later, as the film builds to its climax, the goddess' incensed blow is one directed at her spectators. As the bottle shatters against the camera lens, the real erupts into our consciousness.

Wu's camera and elliptical editing worked together to complicate the goddess' private world and public life. From a scene of domesticity, we see in her two goddesses, the loving mother who cradles and rocks her infant to sleep is also a woman clad head to toe in a *cheongsam*; and the very act of buttoning up the high collar of her dress (which can be likened to a priest's collar) further conceals her femininity – she becomes divine – she had donned her virtuous armour before heading into the night. The 'night' in question was also not the night locatable within the city streets of Shanghai, but was, in fact, the moral character of the city. Her nocturnal intrusions were framed by neon lights, gambling dens, fortune tellers. When finally we see her standing outside a pawn shop: the goddess' commodification is complete – and a further doubling in the commercialisation of Ruan's image. Her goddess, our inverse Madonna.

### Ruan Lingyu

It is beyond a doubt that Ruan Lingyu's performance in *The Goddess* propelled the success of this film and cemented its place in the filmic canon. Ruan was only 24-years-old when she starred in the titular role, and with 27 films already behind her. Most of her films, barring six, have all been lost.

Born Ruan Fenggen to a working-class family in 1910, she spent her early life navigating the tumultuous consequences of the 1911 Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen. After losing her father when she was six years old, her mother worked as a housekeeper for the wealthy Zhang family, whose fourth son, Zhang Damin, would later shape Ruan's destiny.

At 15, Ruan replied to an ad at the Mingxing Film Company to become an actress. Within a year she landed a starring role in *A Married Couple in Name Only* (1927), and adopted Ruan Lingyu as her stage name; the director Bu Wancang paid special attention to the sense of maturity and elegance in her. Three years later, Ruan signed with the Lianhua Film Company (United Photoplay Service) and quickly made a name for herself, working with many of the best directors of the time, including Fei Mu, and Cai Chusheng.

Ruan's versatility and range, particularly her ability to convey very finely nuanced emotions in close-ups gave her freedom to lose herself in the filmic art form within the silent cinema era. She was hailed as the Garbo of the Orient.

From very early on, Ruan was attracted to men who were ultimately too manipulative for her fragile heart. Her first love, Zhang Damin, was a gambler





and the liar who eventually blackmailed her. Her love affair with Tang Jishan, a rich tea merchant was no better, he was a notorious womaniser. It was often observed that Ruan's personal life imitated some of her more difficult on-screen roles.

On March 7th 1935, Ruan attended a banquet organised by Li Minwei (nicknamed the Father of Hong Kong Cinema) where she was seen to be in good spirits. But that night after a fierce argument with Tang, she asked her mother to make her some congee, which she consumed in the early hours of March 8th alongside the contents from two bottles of sleeping pills. She wrote two suicide notes before waking Tang. His hesitation in taking her to a well-equipped hospital ultimately caused her death. Ruan never regained consciousness and passed away that evening at 6:28 pm.

Her two suicide notes were accusatory of the two men in her life and did not contain the much cited phrase 'gossip is a fearful thing'. That note was in fact forged and circulated by Tang in an effort to save his own reputation.

It is not ironic that Ruan's second last film was called *New Women* 新女性 (1935), an interrogation into the consequences of patriarchal system dressed up as a melodrama. The film was based upon the life of Ai Xia, the first Chinese actress to commit suicide in the same manner just a year prior to Ruan.

On March 14th, 300,000 people attended Ruan Lingyu's funeral procession that spanned over 3 miles (4.8 km). The *New York Times* reported it as 'the most spectacular funeral of the century'. What a pity they were paying tribute to her death.

Perhaps it is apt that we can now readily remember Ruan, her fragility and strength as well as her struggles, with the anniversary of her death falling on International Women's Day (coined in the 70s) March 8th.

### The Restoration

The digital restoration of *The Goddess* was made possible courtesy of the China Film Archive in 2014 and funded by SAPPRFT, in association with the K T Wong Foundation and the BFI. The premiere screening showcased a new score by Zou Ye, commissioned by the K T Wong Foundation. It drew on aesthetical elements from both Eastern and Western culture – a reimagining of the ambience of a Shanghai/Paris of the 1930s. It was performed live by the English Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Chalme for the London Film Festival, October 14th 2014 at Queen Elizabeth Hall.

### Notes by Janice Tong

Director: WÚ Yonggang 吳永剛; Production Company: Lianhua Film Company (United Photoplay); Producers: TIAN Minwei; Screenplay: WÚ Yonggang; Production Supervision: LO Ming-Yau 羅明佑; Director of Photography: HONG Weilie 洪偉烈; Editor: unnamed but thought to be WÚ Yonggang; Art & Set Design: WÚ Yonggang; Music: ZOU Ye 邹野 (from the 2014 restoration) // Cast: RUAN Lingyu or YEUN Lily, 阮玲玉 (The Goddess), ZHANG Zhi-Zhi 章志直 (The Boss), LI Keng 黎铿 (The Son), LI Junpan 李君磐 (The Principal)

Note: Surnames have been listed first.

China | 1934 | 85 mins | B&W | Aspect Ratio: 1.37:1 | Silent film with written Chinese intertitles, English subtitles | PG



# The Lady From Shanghai

## Orson Welles

Fate was not looking kindly upon Orson Welles when his 155 minute rough cut of *The Magnificent Ambersons* was rejected by a new, hostile management at RKO in 1942. A substantial recut to 131 minutes was made by Welles working with house director Robert Wise to reduce the picture to a more commercially friendly length which finally ended up out of Welles' hands at a modest 88 minutes on release. A further ignominy was the removal of almost all of Bernard Herrmann's score for the picture, obliging the composer to remove his name from the credits.

Three years later, in a hideous recapitulation of this affair, Welles was experiencing another one of his career purgatories, the turkey that became *Around the World in 80 Days*. He had previously acted in and silently directed part of a tight RKO 'B' thriller, *Journey into Fear* in 1943. The picture was successful enough to keep Welles in RKO's good books to direct another post war Nazi undercover 'A' picture, *The Stranger* in 1945 with Welles in the eponymous role playing a Nazi escapee, supported by a solid cast including Loretta Young – surprisingly restrained under Welles' direction – and Edward G. Robinson. But with the total flop of his mega roadshow junket, *Around the World* . . . in 1945 he was broke and in major debt to several contributors including Cole Porter whose score, it has to be said, might be the worst thing he ever wrote.

It wasn't actually Welles himself later in 1945 who first pitched the deal to Harry

Cohn to make *The Lady from Shanghai* at Columbia, but in fact William Castle, a pal of Welles, a young hotshot doing the rounds of the writing desks at various studios, most lately Cohn's where he had sniffed out Sherwood King's original novel and won over Cohn who agreed to take on Welles as star and director.

As Welles' best biographer, Simon Callow says, he was a perpetual flirt – men, women – and he could charm the pants off a rhino, including one as tough as Harry Cohn. So he did just that securing a \$2 million dollar budget for *The Lady from Shanghai*, as a vehicle for Columbia's biggest star, Rita Hayworth whom in another unbelievable stroke of fate, Welles had married two years earlier but from whom he was now in the process of a protracted but amicable separation and divorce.

With no acrimony between them to muddy the waters, a Hayworth picture with a budget like this was something Welles couldn't pass up. And his bold conception for the screenplay was in many ways a rebirthing of the doomed *Around the World* idea from 1945 in which the globe, or at least the North American part of it is encircled by a boat called 'Zaca' – no less than Errol Flynn's own yacht on loan to travel from New York south to Mexico and Acapulco, then along the West to San Francisco and Sausalito where the picture ends.

Already bitten by a life-long travel bug, Welles savored the flavours of location shooting with newly improved faster film stock and wide angle lenses for quick filming and a nascent kind of



post-war open air 'realism', a direction he was largely pioneering at this point in American movies in 1946.

Contrary to so much false mythology about Welles' 'profligacy' he began shooting *The Lady from Shanghai* in mid 1946 and delivered the finished picture late that year in its 155 minute rough cut – the same duration as his earlier rough cut of *Ambersons*. He had come in within time and under the \$2 million budget. Then the fireworks began and fate again drew storm clouds over another Welles project.

### The Film

Harry Cohn hated the rough cut and fought Welles on a number of things, among them Welles' preference for long takes over the big studio glamour close-ups and comprehensive editing, anathema for Welles' dislike of high volume cutting and montage. Like Ford, his 'guru', Welles favoured travelling shots and movement against concentrated editing, and also like Ford, he used character introductions in vignette form to get the narrative and things like 'plot' running without lengthy expositions which, again like Ford, he hated. His great, long open air takes were the first things to succumb to editor Viola Lawrence's scissors when Cohn ordered her to turn it into a playable 90 minutes. To cover so much missing material Welles was then obliged to take on an expensive post-production overrun and bring back actors for reshoots staged with routine over-the-shoulder reverse/shots for dialogue with the location backgrounds previously filmed now laid onto matte process shots via very costly lab work. The costs for this alone blew the final budget out by 10%.

They also fought over the music score. Cohn insisted on a tepid theme song for the credits, 'Please Don't Kiss Me' and bog common monothematic cue scoring from Columbia's regular composer, Heinz Roemheld. This was recorded as Rita's only musical number on the boat before they land in Acapulco, and as usual her voice double, Anita Ellis sings it. Mercifully the finished cut trims it to a lone verse, less than a minute, and Welles, having to address Cohn's insistence on the big glamour close ups of Rita throughout, subverts and parodies the whole trope of Hollywood 'Star' moments by staging and lighting it in the style of an Eisensteinian Potemkin-style montage, cutting to supersized overhead close ups of Rita at a diagonal against the wide shots of the three men on deck, each positioned in asymmetrical visual relation to each other, staring obliquely beyond the frame into god knows what mystery. So the sequence itself becomes both a routine studio 'Stop for the music' point for Rita's fans, and a wicked satire on the apparatus of star technique. It works brilliantly both as satire and in final context, just as everything else in the film works so well, even in the final Viola Lawrence 88 minutes cut, once again, thanks to the furies, which is exactly the same duration as the final edited time of the release print of *Ambersons*.

Welles had planned some adventurous, diegetic native music scoring and jungle soundscape for the Brazilian sequences and some of that remains in the slow rhumba rhythm for the dusk bayside scene in which the three men drunkenly exchange aphorisms about such Wellesian conceits as scorpions and frogs in place





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of routine transitional dialogue. What becomes clear from this and many other sequences, even after the episode was reduced from over 30 minutes to ten, is the totally corrupt character of these awful people with whom Michael O'Hara has now found himself trapped as a plaything.

Viola Lawrence cut yet more long tracking shots of O'Hara and Grisby walking up the hill at Acapulco in magic hour (only the beginning of one of these shots still survives) during which George Grisby discloses his nuclear war paranoia and unfolds a convoluted escape plan to the guileless Michael. Grisby is played by the astonishing Glenn Anders – some may remember him from Harry d'Abbie d'Arrast's early talkie, *Laughter* (1931) – who reads his lines in a voice that seems to cross Howard Keel's baritone with Franklin Pangborn's vocal mince. His character, frankly everyone's character in this movie, is up for grabs. Anders' performance is literally indescribable, brave, mad and completely off the boards.

It's clear by now Welles has landed us in a post-war atmosphere of entropy and the brilliance of *The Lady from Shanghai*, against all odds, is to play off this small tragedy of a likeable fall guy in a world out of his or anyone's moral compass using the sharpest forms of satire through characterization and extreme stylization. Welles' very dark humour is always there, untouchable, even finally by Cohn and his editor.

A completely brilliant pre-trial scene is played at the Golden Gate Park Aquarium, when Michael secretly meets Elsa. She unveils another plot to double

cross Grisby's own plot, and they are observed initially by a rowdy group of children out on an excursion. Welles goes for broke with the lab work again and pulls in the big close up mechanics, again to extremis, moving the furtive lovers away from the others, deeper into super-sized close-ups to the point where only bits of their faces in almost full shadow can barely be contained by the sides of the frame. In the space between them we can now only see the aquatic creatures in a series of astonishing process zoom shots which with each cut keep enlarging the fish and eels finally to monstrous dimensions engulfing Elsa and Michael and the frame itself. Thus a completely throwaway transitional scene in the screenplay becomes a bravura visual correlative for the Acapulco prediction of prehistoric life taking over the earth.

Welles serves up a last act of unrestrained expressionism with the climactic awakening and shoot out in the 'fun house', a deserted fair on San Francisco's North Beach following an earlier bobby dazzler of a sequence shot in that city's Chinatown Mandarin Theatre near Portsmouth Square during a full blown live Chinese Opera performance. The fun house material took a big slab of Welles' budget and time to build and shoot. It too became a casualty of Viola Lawrence's shears although it still plays superbly in the current length. The fun house opens with Michael still in a semi-narcotic stupor after his courtroom escape, leading him into a series of nightmarishly terrifying fair rides which clearly salute the Weimar cinema of *Dr. Caligari*. For the next ten minutes – originally more than 20 – Welles constructed a series of oversized







phantasmagorical rides and traps and halls of mirrors, more than half of which were removed from the long cut. But this sequence resonates with terrific power, and it remains surely a testament to Welles' ability to make every shot of the longer movie he originally filmed so organically connected to every other shot in the film that remains today so it still makes sense. Even a massive studio hatchet job like Columbia's still can't damage the final coherence or integrity of the movie or its *mise-en-scène*.

The trial as Welles shot it is almost completely intact, with a few obvious post-production cutaways for the Chinese pressroom staff back room with painted flats for office window views that look like Pacific Heights in the absence of even more expensive lab shots for the Court of Justice location. The trial is populated by an obviously dumbly wilful judge, and an audience of Hogarthian spectators who cheer on Bannister's stunts to land a murder on Michael which he didn't commit. Bannister the mastermind, it should be mentioned

at this point is played with perhaps the cinema's greatest stage limp by Welles' Mercury Theater alumnus, Everett Sloane, with exemplary malevolence. The crowd and the feckless judge are so out of control it's almost like a recapitulation of the menacing wildlife in the jungle accompanying the travellers on their first Mexican stop. Such is Welles' view of a world beginning its dystopian descent. In any case, it's really impossible to imagine what sort of pacing, mood, tone, and impact a much longer version would have really played.

As it stands I think *The Lady from Shanghai* remains a Welles masterpiece, despite every ignominy visited upon it by a studio system with which he had so much trouble, but one thanks to which he produced so much of genius.

The next picture Welles would make in 1948 was a superb adaptation of *Macbeth* for Republic Pictures, with a tight budget, even for that resourceful outfit, of \$700,000 and a 23 day shoot, all on a sound stage using existing props, flats and bits of sets and discarded



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costumes from Republic western serials. The movie is an outstanding work of filmed Shakespeare and a central Welles picture. Amongst all the niceties and all the fine dramatic strokes Welles applies to Shakespeare's text, one that usually goes unnoticed, is the addition of a silent character who doesn't even exist in the play at all. He's a 'Holy Father' played with strong clear overhead lighting by Alan Napier who takes his marks during the action without ever intervening in it, like a mute witness to appeal to some vague possibility of good in a world that otherwise seems to have gone to hell.

### The Restoration

The film was restored in 4K at Colorworks at Sony Pictures. The original nitrate negative was scanned at 4K at Deluxe in Hollywood. Digital image restoration to correct for damage was completed at MTI Film in Los Angeles, and audio restoration at Chace Audio by Deluxe. Color correction and DCP completed at Colorworks.

## Notes by David Hare

### Credits

Director: Orson WELLES (uncredited);  
 Production Company: Mercury Productions, Columbia Pictures; Producer: WELLES;  
 Script: WELLES, (William CASTLE, Charles LEDERER, Fletcher MARKLE, uncredited);  
 from Sherwood King's novel *If I Die Before I Wake*; Director of Photography: Charles LAWTON Jr. (Rudolph MATÉ, Joseph WALKER, uncredited); Editor: Viola LAWRENCE; Art Direction: Sturges CARNE, Stephen GOOSSÓN; Sound: Lodge CUNNINGHAM; Music: Heinz ROEMHELD; Costumes: Jean LOUIS // Cast: Rita HAYWORTH (Elsa Bannister); Orson WELLES (Michael O'Hara); Everett SLOANE (Arthur Bannister); Glenn ANDERS (George Grisby); Ted DE CORSA (Sidney Broome); Erskine SANFORD (Judge); Errol FLYNN (Man Outside of Cantina, uncredited)

USA | 1947 | 87 mins | 4K DCP (orig. 35mm)  
 | B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | English, Cantonese | Classification: PG

## Mirror

### Andrei Tarkovsky

*'My discovery of Tarkovsky's first film was like a miracle. Suddenly I found myself standing at the door of a room the keys of which had until then, never been given to me... Tarkovsky is for me the greatest, the one who invented a new language, true to the nature of film, as it captures life as a reflection, life as a dream.'*

Ingmar Bergman

Born in 1932 in Zavrazhye, 300 kms from Moscow, Andrei Tarkovsky's father was the poet and translator

Arseny Tarkovsky and his mother Maria Vishnyakova, a graduate of the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute. He was only five-years-old when his father left the family, volunteering for the army during World War II and being awarded the Red Star. During the war, Andrei Tarkovsky moved to Moscow with his mother and sister where Maria worked as an editor and proofreader.

After high school, he studied Arabic at the Oriental Institute in Moscow, but dropped out to work as a prospector





for the Academy of Science Institute for Non-Ferrous Metals and Gold, spending a year living in the Siberian *taiga* in the Krasnoyarsk Province.

He was accepted into the directing program at Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK), making several short films and at least one television docudrama. Collaborating on a script with fellow classmate Andrei Konchalovsky, *The Steamroller and the Violin* (1960) became his graduation film and won First Prize at the New York Student Film Festival in 1961.

His first feature, *Ivan's Childhood* (1962), centred around an orphan who becomes a scout for the Soviet army during World War II, brought Tarkovsky to international attention, winning the Golden Lion at the 1962 Venice Film Festival. Problems with Soviet authorities

and several different versions of his second feature *Andrei Rublev* (1966), a historical epic based around the Russian icon painter, meant the film did not appear at Cannes until 1969 where it won the FIPRESCI prize. Soviet authorities had insisted it be screened Out of Competition.

The near three-hour science fiction drama *Solaris* (1972), adapted from the novel by Stanislaw Lem and described as 'a *sci-fi masterpiece*' by Salman Rushdie won the Grand Prix Spécial du Jury at the 1972 Cannes Film Festival.

*Mirror* (1975) was not well liked by Soviet authorities and suffered severely limited distribution in the USSR in third-class cinemas and workers' clubs. It was, however, heralded in the West and its reputation has continued to grow significantly over the past 45 years.



His last film in the Soviet Union was *Stalker* (1979), a philosophical and theological science fiction drama following three men journeying to a mysterious 'Zone'. It won the Ecumenical Jury Prize at Cannes.

Some sources report *The First Day* (1979), a script by Tarkovsky and Andrei Konchalovsky set during the reign of Peter the Great in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Russia, was stopped half way through production when it was learnt the film differed from the script submitted to Soviet censors. Tarkovsky was reported to have destroyed most of what was filmed.

In Italy, he made the documentary *Voyage in Time* (1983) with Tonino Guerra and again, with Guerra, started production on *Nostalghia* (1983), a film set in Italy about a Russian writer who is stricken with homesickness while researching an ex-pat Russian composer. At Cannes, it won the Ecumenical and FIPRESCI prizes and shared a specially created prize 'Grand Prix du cinema de creation' with Robert Bresson (for *L'argent*).

In 1985, he was processed as a Soviet defector in an Italian refugee camp.

His last film was the spiritually apocalyptic *The Sacrifice* (1986) made in Sweden and winner of the Grand Prix Spécial du Jury and the Ecumenical and FIPRESCI prizes at Cannes. He could not attend the festival to accept the awards and died of cancer on 29 December 1986.

### The Film

There's an oft-quoted story from Tarkovsky, who always bristled at the suggestion *Mirror* was 'difficult':

'One day, during a public debate organized after a screening [of *Mirror*] the discussion dragged on and on. After midnight, a cleaning woman arrived to clean the screening room, wanting to throw us out. She had seen the film earlier and she didn't understand why we were arguing for such a long time about *Mirror*. She told us 'Everything is quite simple; someone fell ill and was afraid of dying. He remembered, all of a sudden, all the pain he'd inflicted on others, and he wanted to atone for it, to ask to be pardoned'... The many film critics present hadn't understood a thing, as usual. The more they talk, the less they understand... This simple woman had understood it all, she had grasped the repentance in the film.'

In 2012, *Mirror* was ranked as the ninth greatest film in cinema history by the *Sight and Sound* directors' poll, a survey the magazine only takes once every decade.

Written and re-written many times between 1964 and 1974 – under at least seven different titles – Tarkovsky's non-linear and poetically-driven autobiographical film certainly bypasses most narrative structures of conventional cinema.

All the director's films have a spiritual realm that enters and disrupts the laws of cinematic convention, but *Mirror* is in a class of its own. Spiritual crises and obsession with art, particularly painting also recurs in his films and here Bruegel's *Hunters in the Snow* inspires some shots and there's a lengthy leafing through a book on Leonardo da Vinci showing many of the artist's religious works as well as the *Portrait of Ginevra de'Benci*.

Tarkovsky once said: 'A book read by 1000 different people is a thousand different books' and, arguably, *Mirror* doesn't have a single meaning, relying instead on its multi-layered, visionary world to deliver individual interpretations to members of its audience.

The film crisscrosses between time periods using dreams, memories, fantasies, fictional recreations, bracing documentary footage and recited poetry, weaving a personal, emotive history of the Soviet Union during the 1930s, 1940s and 1970s.

Moving backwards and forwards between these time periods, it is narrated by the dying Alexei, a protagonist we hear but never see. Tarkovsky's innovations in this film also stretched to casting – the same actress plays both Alexei's mother Maroussia and Alexei's former wife Natalia; and the same actor plays both the young Alexei and Alexei's son Ignat. Tarkovsky's mother plays Alexei's mother in old age; Tarkovsky's second wife plays a doctor's wife; and his father Arseny, reads his own lyrical poetry as a counter-point to Alexei's voice-over throughout the film.

On release, reviews in the Soviet Union were mixed, the worst of them damning it an '*unfocussed failure*' and the USSR State Committee of Cinematography refused an invitation to enter the film in the Cannes Film Festival.

In 1986, the year of his death at the age of 54, Tarkovsky spelled out his artistic process in his book 'Sculpting in Time': '*The dominant, all-powerful factor of the film image is rhythm, expressing the course of time within the frame.*'

During a lecture in Italy in 1982, when

Tarkovsky was working on *Nostalghia*, he observed: '*To me cinema is unique in its dimension of time. This doesn't mean it develops in time – so do music, theatre, ballet. I mean time in the literal sense. What is a frame, the interval between 'action' and 'cut'? Film fixes reality in a sense of time – it's a way of conserving time. No other art form can fix and stop time like this. Film is a mosaic made up of time.*'

Applying his ideas of cinematic time to his autobiographical non-linear *Mirror* was clearly taxing:

'[During the editing] there were some twenty or more variants. I don't just mean changes in the order of certain shots, but major alterations in the actual structure...at moments it looked like the film could not be edited...the film didn't hold together, it wouldn't stand up, it fell apart as one watched, it had no unity, no necessary inner connection, no logic...then one fine day...the material came to life; the parts started to function reciprocally, as if linked by a bloodstream...the film was born before our very eyes...Time itself, running through the shots, had met and linked together.'

Some scenes were even confusing for Tarkovsky:

'It was very important for me to have my mother in some scenes. There is one episode in the film in which the boy Ignat...is sitting when we hear the doorbell, he opens the door. This is my mother. And she is the grandmother of this boy who opens the door for her. But why doesn't she recognize him, why doesn't the grandson recognize her...one has completely no idea...even for me this is unclear.'



## Cinema Reborn

Tarkovsky uses a vortex of dreams, recreations, memories and newsreels for Alexei's struggle with the seemingly preordained problems of his life.

His childhood is shown with all the regrets, mistakes, pains, disappointments, abandonment and fixations of a young child and, later as an adolescent, confronting the harsh realities of the adult world. As an adult, we hear his flawed and regretful relations with his ex-wife; the confusing confluences in his mind between his mother and his ex-wife and between his young self and his son Ignat; his longing for his absent father and his spiritual search through the history of his country.

For this great director, *Mirror* is an acknowledgment, a recognition, a praise and an act of grace for all those who shaped his life.

Audacious, unique cinema.

## The Story

Spoiler alert. There has always been much confusion as to what occurs in *Mirror*. Plot synopses are often inconsistent. What follows is believed to be an accurate account of most of the events in the film and is provided for reference by viewers.

Alexei's adolescent son Ignat watches television: a physician is performing hypnosis on a teenage boy to cure a vocal stammer. In the 1930s, Alexei's mother Maroussia talks with a doctor near Alexei's grandfather's country house. A young Alexei with his mother and sister then watch as a neighbour's barn burns down. A dream-like sequence takes place as Alexei's father drips water onto Maroussia's head as she washes her hair. At the end of the sequence, Maroussia sees herself in a mirror as an old Maroussia. (Tarkovsky's own mother appears several times playing the old Maroussia). In post-war times,





in a Moscow apartment, Alexei is heard talking on the phone with his mother. Back in the 1930s, Maroussia rushes to her work at a printing press to correct a proofreading mistake (Tarkovsky's mother was a proofreader). Her colleague Lisa turns on Maroussia blaming her for her husband's desertion and predicting Maroussia will make her children miserable. In post-war times, the adult Alexei fights with his ex-wife Natalia who has left him and now lives with their adolescent son Ignat. Spanish neighbours in the Moscow apartment building, discuss bull fighting followed by newsreel footage from the Spanish Civil War and the 1937 launch of a balloon in the USSR. In the apartment, Ignat meets a mysterious woman, reads a letter by Pushkin at her request, then talks to his father by phone. Back during WWII, a young Alexei is seen at rifle training, followed by newsreel footage of the war: Soviet troops crossing Lake Sivash; the fall of Berlin; atom bomb explosions at Hiroshima and Bikini Island; the Sino-Soviet conflict and the Maoist revolution. At war's end, we catch a brief glimpse of Alexei's father in uniform returning to his wife and reuniting with his adolescent children. In post-war times, Alexei and Natalia discuss custody of Ignat (whom Alexei considers a 'failure' and a 'booby'); Natalia looks at photos of Alexei's mother and discusses her own possible marriage to a writer. With his mother Maroussia, the adolescent Alexei visits a country property once owned by the doctor and meets his wife and her baby son. Maroussia intends to sell the doctor's wife some

earrings. The woman invites them to dinner, but asks Maroussia to kill a rooster. This is followed by a dream sequence at the country house including a glimpse of Alexei's father stroking a levitating Maroussia. In the post-war period, Alexei lies in bed (face unseen), apparently terminally ill. We then briefly see Alexei's father in pre-war times lying on grass next to Maroussia and asking her if she wants to have a boy or a girl. In the final sequence, the old Maroussia reappears and, watched by the young Maroussia, walks through a field with the young Alexei and his sister. They reach a dirt road. Alexei stops and screams.

### Notes by Rod Bishop

#### The Restoration

Restored by Mosfilm from a 2K scan of the original negative.

Director: Andrei TARKOVSKY; Production Company: Mosfilm; Producer: Erik WAISBERG; Script: Aleksandr MISHARIN, TARKOVSKY; Director of Photography: Georgy RERBERG; Editor: Lyudmila FEYGINOVA; Production Design: Nikolay DVIGUBSKIY; Sound: A. MERKULOV; Music: Eduard ARTEMYEV; Costumes: Nelli FOMINA; Special Visual Effects: Yuri POTAPOV // Cast: Margarita TEREKHOVA (Natalya, Maria, The Mother); Oleg YANKOVSKIY (The Father); Filipp YANOVSKIY (Aleksei at five years old); Ignat DANILTSEV (Ignat, Aleksei at 12 years old); Nikolay GRINKO (Printing Works Director); Yurly NAZAROV (Shooting Instructor); Innoketiy SMOKTUNOVSKIY (Adult Aleksei, Narrator); Maria VISHNYAKOVA (Old Maria); Arseny TARKOVSKY (Father)

USSR | 1975 | 106 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour, B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | Russian, Spanish, with Eng. subtitles | Classification: PG



# The Moon Has Risen

## Tanaka Kinoyu

*There was nothing but directing for me if I eventually wanted to do something a little new as a woman.* Tanaka Kinoyu.<sup>1</sup>

Tanaka ‘executes tonal shifts that astonish with bursts of intense feeling and stretches out tension (especially sexual tension) like pulled sugar, firm but still delicate.’<sup>2</sup>

The director of six remarkable features, Tanaka Kinoyu has often been referred to as someone who always came second, never first: as the second Japanese female film director after Sakane Tazuko (1904–1975) but not the first Japanese woman to have a career with a significant body of features; as a highly successful actress in an acting career lasting over 50 years in more than 250 films but seldom as a successful director; as Mizoguchi Kenji’s muse but not the creator and keeper of her own life. If her directing career is mentioned at all, and it’s only fairly recently that this has been recognised and appreciated, she tends to be dismissed for working in mainstream rather than arthouse cinema or, as in the case of *The Moon Has Risen* (1955), discussed in terms of its debt to the great male director, Ozu Yasujirō. There is an undoubted tendency among English-speaking and Japanese film academics, critics and film-lovers to focus on Tanaka’s acting career and to belittle her directorial place in Japanese film history.

But as academics Irene González-López and Michael Smith argue persuasively, Tanaka ‘is genuinely remarkable in her own right.’ She deserves recognition not only as a highly intelligent and talented filmmaker but also for being ‘the first

woman in Japan to build a career as a commercial feature filmmaker, directing six films between 1953 and 1962, a time period in which very little filmmaking activity was carried out by women, not only in Japan, but across the world.’<sup>3</sup>

Tanaka was born in 1909 in Shimonoseki, a city at the south-western tip of Japan’s largest island, far away from the nation’s filmmaking centre in Tokyo. In socio-political terms, this was a time when, while ostensibly aiming for legal and social modernity, Japan’s 1898 Civil Code had formally dispossessed women of most of their economic rights and personal freedoms. This dual and contradictory approach to gender and modernity, would prove a recurring theme throughout Tanaka’s life and films both in front and behind the camera.

Her mother came from a wealthy family with the traditional, conservative values of the upper social classes. Her father, however, was a modern, liberal man who espoused the new. Her father died when she was 18 months old and following some financial malpractice by a family retainer, the family slid into poverty. With little formal education after she was nine, Tanaka demonstrated talent on the *biwa* (a lute-like instrument) and by the age of 12 was a local star in a music troupe able to support her family. This she would do for the rest of her life.

Upon seeing her first film at around this age, Tanaka determined to become a film actress. With luck on her side (one of her brothers who worked as a clerk for the Shochiku studios pulled some strings), Tanaka entered the film industry in 1924.





She rapidly became a star and shot to superstardom when cast in the leading role in Japan's first technologically successful sound talkie, *The Neighbour's Wife and Mine/Madamu to nyōbō* (Gosho Heinosuke 1931).

Tanaka was a big film star. So big, that in the 1930s her name appeared in the titles of several films in which she starred. At this time, the Shochiku studios led the way in developing a narrative style which told women's stories from a modern perspective. Tanaka was usually cast in roles of the conservative, chaste woman but the narratives often questioned traditional values and negotiated modernity. These films were directed by young 'modernists' who would become the great masters of Japanese cinema, including Naruse Mikio, Gosho Heinosuke, Ozu Yasujirō, Shimazu Yasujirō, Shimizu Hiroshi and, above all, Mizoguchi Kenji who cast her in 15 of his films, most notably *The Life of Oharu/Saikaku ichidai onna* (1952), *Ugetsu/Ugetsu monogatari* (1953) and *Sansho the Bailiff/Sanshō Dayū*, (1954).

During the Asia-Pacific War (1941–1945) Tanaka acted in propaganda films: she had little option if she was to be employed at all. She gained notoriety, however, with her performance in Kinoshita Keisuke's *The Army/Rikugun* (1944). This film greatly upset the censors largely because of Tanaka's gut-wrenching performance as a mother whose distress is palpable when her son is sent to war. As Japanese cinephile Donald Richie notes, mothers were supposed to smile proudly as their sons were sent off to battle.<sup>4</sup>

After the war and during the US occupation (1945–1952), what became known as the Golden Age of Japanese studio cinema began to emerge. Tanaka achieved even greater acclaim for her performances in films by leading directors who explored the main issues confronting women at this time: the impact of the urban shift on the family, war widows, the changing role of women as wives and daughters, access to education, the legality and morality of abortion, prostitution, divorce and



adultery. But Tanaka had a wider vision: she demonstrated her independence by walking away from her contract with Shochiku to claim the right to choose where and for whom she worked and what films she would act in, and she decided she wanted to direct.

Becoming a director wasn't easy for Tanaka – or for any woman, for that matter. Few women had made a career in commercial cinema as Tanaka would for ten years. After her first and only feature, *New Clothing/Hatsu sugat* (1936), Sakane (1904–1975) was not allowed to make more features and had mostly lived and worked in Manchukuo (the Japanese puppet state in Northeast China and Inner Mongolia) making educational non-fiction films. Elsewhere, Ida Lupino in the US (who directed eight films including one for which she was uncredited before pursuing a highly successful television career) and Jacqueline Audry in France

(who directed 16 features) were two exceptions.<sup>5</sup> In Japan, it was not until the 1990s that Tanaka's output was surpassed by another woman director, Kawase Naomi; unlike Tanaka, however, Kawase worked predominantly in the independent sector rather than the mainstream.

Inevitably, there was malevolent, sexist gossip that Tanaka gained promotion to the rank of director only because of her close – it was implied intimate – relationship with Mizoguchi. In reality, Mizoguchi offered no help at all. Famously, he opposed Tanaka's application to the Directors' Guild of Japan and was rumoured to have said: 'Kinoyu does not have enough brains to be a film director.' Creating a female muse can cause problems for a man when his muse starts to show independence of mind, spirit and possible competition. Tanaka commented only that she and Mizoguchi





were ‘married in front of the camera, but not behind it.’ On this acrimonious note, the friendship and working relationship between them ended.

Happily for us and for the legacy she left the Japanese film industry and culture, Mizoguchi was overruled and Tanaka was employed by Nikkatsu, the reputedly ‘modern’ studio that, after re-opening in 1954, was known to welcome rebels, outsiders, and assistants looking for a chance.

While she hadn’t demonstrated any great interest in feminist politics, the experience of femininity became the focus of Tanaka’s six features over the next ten years (1953–1962). Her films covered a range of genres – war, period, melodrama, romantic comedy – and she took bold decisions regarding narrative content. Two decades before the second wave of feminism gained traction in Japan, the issues she addressed included breast cancer and mastectomy (very much a taboo topic in Japan as elsewhere in the world in the 1950s), prostitution, lesbianism, interracial relationships – at times with an intensity unusual for Japanese cinema and well before most other filmmakers elsewhere in the world. A recurrent narrative theme of hers was the fate of women mistreated by family, lovers and society.

Throughout and after her ten years of directing, Tanaka continued to act, reaching the apex of international acclaim when she won Best Actress award at Berlin for her performance as an aged prostitute in Kumai Kei’s *Sandakan N° 8* (1974). Tanaka died of a brain tumour two years later. Slowly she gained recognition, culminating in 2021

when all six of her films were screened theatrically in digitally remastered versions at the Cannes Film Festival and the Lyon Film Festival.

### The Film

In *The Moon Has Risen*, her second feature as director, Tanaka renewed her relationship with Ozu who co-scripted it with Saitō Ryōsuke. All three had previously worked together on *A Hen in the Wind/Kaze no naka no mendori* (1948). Ozu had originally intended to direct it himself but after numerous delays and a complicated political wrangle with the main commercial studios, he gifted the script to Tanaka to be produced by the smaller and more adventurous Nikkatsu studio.

The film is a genre hybrid: a ‘home drama’ fused with romance, comedy and some elements of the coming-of-age genre (although the young person who comes of age is the 21-year old Setsuko, Mie Kitahara plays her as an emotionally labile adolescent). It tells the story of a middle class family who after the war moved from Tokyo to live in a converted temple in the quiet city of Nara. The family comprises the gently teasing widower patriarch, Mokichi (Ozu favourite, Ryū Chishū), and his three daughters: the recently widowed Chizuru (Hisako Yamane), the shy middle daughter, Ayoko (Yōko Sugi); and Setsuko, the ebullient, strong-willed, often infuriating, chatterbox, youngest sister played by the effervescent Mie Kitahara.

While contemptuous of the traditional role of the formal matchmaker, Setsuko determines to matchmake between her middle sister, Ayoko, and the handsome



Amamiya (Mishima Kô) who are both too shy to declare their love for each other. In a comedy that every so often verges on – even tips into – the screwball, Setsuke gets the family servant (in a lovely performance by Takane) to engineer a moonlit meeting between the two would-be lovers. Through a series of emotional machinations involving deceptions on all sides, moonlit trysts and secret coded telegrams, Setsuke argues furiously with Shôji (Yasui Shôji), her matchmaking accomplice, only to realise that she is in love with him. By the end, Ayoko says she's going to Tokyo to tell an aunt that she has no intention of accepting the suitor proposed by the traditional matchmaker and goes to Amamiya's waiting arms, Setsuke and Shôji reconcile and go to Tokyo together, and the eldest sister sheds a quiet tear when she realises that her father understands she would like to marry again ('this time, one who lives'). And all's well that ends well.

Because of Ozu's involvement, the film – then and now – is often referred to as his film. Tanaka was not afraid to invoke his name; she, after all, was a newbie director and he was a recognised Master of film art. A star of Tanaka's calibre and experience knew the value of publicity. It's certainly not overtly feminist and, of all Tanaka's films, its treatment of the changing attitudes towards and acceptable behaviour of women is perhaps the most subtle. Nevertheless, there are many notes that would come to be associated with Tanaka's authorial presence. As film buff Jake Savage writes: 'Ozu's fingerprints are all over the narrative and indeed, some of the stylistic choices but Tanaka brings an

energy to the film that is unmatched.... She has undone some of the threads woven by Ozu in a film like *Late Spring*, the father here is in the background, and our focus becomes squarely on the daughters. As Ryû fades into the background, Kitahara and Sugi (the youngest and middle sisters) emerge to the front. Their sibling conflict seems flimsy and light, but Tanaka grants it a value and respect... Ozu made the quotidian dramas between generations both palpable and poignant, Tanaka has done the same for a drama within one generation.<sup>6</sup>

Yes, we see several of Ozu's famed static shots, composed frames and camera levels, but Tanaka takes her film (and it is very much hers) beyond homage to the master. After the early slow staccato and often static shots filmed in the style of Ozu's celebrated 'pillow shots', the pace quickens and Tanaka gives us frontal compositions containing large expanses between foreground and background that are not at all Ozu in style. Richie points to Tanaka's 'careful delineation of character usually associated with her films' as well as her equally careful exploration of the tension that emerges at the junction of tradition and modernity.

At one point a character asks if the coded telegram messages that reference an 8th century poetry anthology is traditional or modern. 'Both' is the unhesitating – and very modern – response. Another tone that Tanaka makes her own is how she foregrounds the women, thereby upstaging and pushing Ryû towards the back of the frame. For those who know his omniscient presence in Ozu's oeuvre,



this feels disconcertingly un-Ozu (although not always in the lead, he appeared in 52 of Ozu's 54 films). Above all, although the women are eager to follow and even be subservient to the men they love, these men are their choice and it is their desire, their sexual desire, no less, that drives the narrative.

There is a lovely joke that is obviously devised by Tanaka, a joke that assumes and teases the audience's knowledge of Tanaka's star persona. In a cameo role as a servant, she is ordered by the imperious Setsuko to impersonate her middle sister on the phone. As if at an audition, Setsuko sits in front of the nervous servant and leads her through her lines. After a few fluffs, all goes well. 'You're a natural,' Setsuko says. As Kelley Dong writes: "The encounter itself, between a legendary actress and Nikkatsu Studio's up-and-coming it girl [Kitahara], playfully extends Tanaka's examination of generational differences among women to the realm of cinema."<sup>7</sup>

While offering a tribute to Ozu, this is very much a Tanaka Kinuyo film. As in her other films, she employs a conventional melodrama narrative in order to subvert it. It is, perhaps, no accident, however, that her next three films were all written by women and that her final film, although with a male writer, had women producers. On a first viewing, *The Moon Has Risen* may seem a light, frothy affair lacking in feminist politics. But looking more deeply into the frame and beyond the tributes to Ozu, one finds a film that defies the history of critical belittlement that has unfairly attended Tanaka's reputation as a filmmaker.

## The Restoration

4K restoration from the original 35mm positive conserved by the Nikkatsu Corporation, undertaken by the Nikkatsu Corporation and the Japan Foundation at the laboratory of Imagic Entertainment Media Services, Inc.

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3. Irene González-López *et al.*
4. Donald Richie, *The Japanese Movie* (Revised Edition), Kodansha, 1982.
5. Ida Lupino directed eight films including one for which she was uncredited before pursuing a highly successful television career; Jacqueline Audry directed sixteen features.
6. [cinemataalk.wordpress.com/2015/12/28/tsuki-wa-noborinu-the-moon-has-risen-1955/](https://cinemataalk.wordpress.com/2015/12/28/tsuki-wa-noborinu-the-moon-has-risen-1955/)
7. Kelley Dong

## Notes by Jane Mills

Director: TANAKA Kinuyo; Production Company: Nikkatsu; Producer KOI Hideo; Script: OZU Yasujiro, SAITO Ryosuke; Director of Photography: MINE Shigeyoshi; Editor: KONDŌ Mitsuo; Art Direction: KIMURA Takeo; Music: SAITŌ Takanoju // Cast: RYŪ Chishū (Asai Maokichi); SANO Shūji (Takasu Shunsuke); YAMANE Hisako (Chizuru, First Daughter); SUGI Yōko (Ayako, Second Daughter); KITAHARA Mie (Setsuko, Third Daughter), TANAKA Kinuyo ('Yoneya')

Japan | 1955 | 102 mins | 4K DCP | B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | Japanese with English subtitles | Classification: U/C15+



# Mr. Klein

## Joseph Losey

Born in Wisconsin in 1909, by 1953 Losey had directed twelve plays on Broadway, made educational films, made three government documentaries and directed five films in Hollywood. After finishing *The Big Night* (1951), Losey was told by his attorney that he had been 'named' as a Communist. Three days later he left the USA for Europe to direct a film in Italy. After completing the film *Imbarco a Mezzanotte/Stranger on the Prowl* (1952), after some perambulations around Europe he arrived in London, broke and desperate.

'I was petrified. I had physical attacks. I thought I was going to die...it was just sheer absolute panic, because I had nothing. I had no family: my wife had left me, my child was living in the United States in a boarding school, I had no lover, I had no money, I had no work.'

It took Losey a decade to advance his filmmaking career to the point where it had left off in the USA. Not until *The Servant* (1963) was he again able to work on a subject of his own choosing. It was his first collaboration with Harold Pinter and they worked together on two more of his finest films *Accident* (1967) and *The Go-Between* (1971).

Late in his life Losey relocated to France and made four films there. Losey read Franco Solinas's script for *Mr. Klein* in 1975. In the book 'Conversations with Losey' (Michel Ciment, 1985) Losey described how he came to make the film:

'Pure chance. I was supposed to do 'A la Recherche du Temps Perdu' when

the project was again put off. I went to Italy for a rest. Two people who had originally worked with Costa-Gavras on the project told me about the screenplay and said that Delon was interested in it. I like the idea of working with Alain, and phoned him. I asked if he was interested and he replied 'Yes, if you are.' So I read the screenplay and instantly liked it. I knew that for one reason or another it was my kind of film. What it was that precisely attracted me, I couldn't say. I don't think in those terms. I just knew it was a subject I could build on, that it said things I wanted to say and that Delon was right for the part.'

*Mr. Klein* premiered in competition at the 1976 Cannes Film Festival. In 1976 it won French Césars for Best Film, Best Director and Best Production Design (Alexandre Trauner). Alain Delon, Director of Photography Gerry Fisher, and Editors Henri Lanoë and Jean Labussière were nominated for Césars.

## The Film

*Mr. Klein* may well be the most serious subject which Joseph Losey addressed as a director, whether in his birthplace in the United States or in self-imposed exile in England and Europe.

The political record of Jacques Chirac, former President of France, is marred by a few odd and odious decisions. Nonetheless, Chirac deserves credit for insisting that the French people confront – and commemorate – the forced deportation and murder of Parisian Jews in 1942. In effect, Chirac rubbed France's collective nose in the complicity



which enabled 'those days of tears and shame' and the 'insult to our past and our traditions'. France, not merely the collaborationist Vichy regime or its lackeys in the police, had 'delivered those under its protection to their executioners.'

Paris' old winter velodrome, the Vel d'Hiver, is now the site of the bleakly ugly Australian Embassy to France. Before Chirac's speech in 1995, the historical associations had been submerged, under willed amnesia as much as under poured concrete. Losey's film was made in 1975, mid-way between the deportation and Chirac's commemoration. More importantly, *Mr. Klein* appeared seven years after Marcel Ophüls' poignant, pioneering attempt to make the French watch, acknowledge and learn from what they did during the war. *Le Chagrin et la Pitié* is a more powerful, compelling

film than *Mr. Klein*, but Losey opens up more of the queasy, edgy moral terrain which Ophüls exposed. Another eleven years would pass before Louis Malle's heartbreaking, miniaturist study of collaboration, *Au Revoir les Enfants*.

Near the beginning of *Mr. Klein*, Alain Delon appears in a gold, silk dressing gown, leaving a lover lolling on his bed to buy a painting cheap in a forced sale. He resembles a smug, glib noble from an Italian villa. At the end, Delon is wearing a shabby overcoat, shuffled off to his death like Sidney Carton in 'A Tale of Two Cities'. Intriguingly, the plot which connects those scenes is not really about collaboration, collusion or conspiracy. Delon certainly purchases artworks at cut prices from Jews obliged to sell. He does not, however, betray those clients by passing on their names or pilfering





## Cinema Reborn

the rest of their collections. In a society consumed by guilt, Mr. Klein's peculiar task is to prove he is not a guilty partner.

In Delon's career, he has not often played a victim of the legal system. In *Borsalino* (1970), ably assisted by Jean-Paul Belmondo, he could hold his own against the forces of law and order. In the same year, starring in *Le Cercle Rouge*, Delon held out against both his criminal accomplices and pursuing police until the last scene. *Zorro* (1975) and *The Black Tulip* (1964) offered Delon more chances, in worse films, to defend his honour.

By contrast, the Delon in *Mr. Klein* often looks baffled, blank, vacant or confused. 'Klein' means 'small' in German, but that is surely too obvious a reference for Losey. In her cameo role, Jeanne Moreau tags Klein as a vulture rather than a falcon. Both bird models, though, seem too dramatic; here we often see a rather affected and desiccated version of Delon.

A case of mistaken identity is the prop of the plot in *Mr. Klein*. A sense of dread, even of impending doom, is sketched in only lightly and slowly. A newspaper is dropped on Klein's doorstep, a seemingly innocuous mistake which turns out to be equivalent to finding a horse's head among your sheets. A committee meeting convenes, functionaries install signage on some grandstands, quiet flash black limousines careen to and fro along Paris' streets. None of those moves, all of which foreshadow the climax, is explained at the time. An air of mystery and menace seeps in, much as it does in another French film comparable in some ways, Clouzot's *Le Corbeau* (1943).

Instead of figures in a landscape, to borrow the title of a 1970 Losey film,

Delon turns into a figure in a labyrinth. Rather than being pursued by a black helicopter, as are the two escapees in the earlier film, Delon is harried and haunted more by his own incompetence than by the Vichy police. Those police officers remain merely querulous and sceptical for so long that a more vigorous search for documents, a train ride to safety or a judicious bribe could have kept them off the track.

Losey rightly insists at the start of his film that 'the facts are a matter of history'. Nonetheless, he approaches that history from a quite particular tangent. Guilty of extortion bordering on larceny, but not worse than that, Klein notes unapologetically that his is 'just a job'. There the echo seems pointed, with Wehrmacht soldiers maintaining they were 'just following orders'.

In a way, the film deals with what Hannah Arendt began to call 'the banality of evil'. In this film that expression would refer to bureaucrats filling out forms, policemen dutifully working through a checklist, suspects lacking the imagination or energy to set themselves free, and evil committed collectively, under orders, at someone else's command. The most graphic and gruesome scene opens the movie. A doctor dispassionately and intrusively examines a naked woman to determine whether she is Jewish, as though that were a normal and acceptable procedure to follow.

The sharp cutting edge of that first scene is not sustained. Jeanne Moreau appears briefly, for a couple of inconsequential exchanges in a chateau, then disappears overseas. Klein himself disappears down various rabbit holes – out to an







armaments factory, into a morgue, onto a train, off to Strasbourg.

Another treatment of a man defying institutions, orthodoxy and the threat of terrible punishment is Losey's adaptation of Brecht's play, *Galileo* (1975). A better point of reference lies elsewhere: imagine a gifted, thoughtful detective like Maigret investigating Mr Klein. He would have sucked his pipe, taken his time, deployed his troops, then found the truth and exposed Klein's persecutor. No such luck for Robert Klein.

### Notes by Mark Pierce

#### The Restoration

The restoration was undertaken by Hiventy with the support of CNC (Centre Nationale du Cinéma). The team decided to make a 4K scan from the original 35mm negative because they noticed that there was a recurring flaw that appeared every 20 images, on the first quarter to the left, likely due to the process of grain reduction during the printing process.

The 4K color grading was made in a digital projection room, in a DaVinci Resolve V15 workstation, aiming to achieve the colour result similar to the 35mm projections. To achieve that, a 35mm operating copy was used as a reference during the entire process.

The audio restoration, also made from the 35mm sound negative, took place in a room with properly calibrated equipment, for a movie theatre quality standard.

The restoration team paid particular attention to respect the original image texture and grain, resulting in a faithful restoration work to the original film negative.

#### Credits

Director: Joseph LOSEY; Production Companies: Adel Productions, Lira Films, Mondial Televisione Film, Nova Films; Producer: Alain DELON; Script: Franco SOLINAS, Fernando MORANDI, (Costa-GAVRAS, uncredited); Director of Photography: Gerry FISHER; Editors: Marie CASTRO-VASQUEZ, Henri LANOË, Michèle NENY; Art Direction: Alexandre TRAUNER; Sound: Maurice DAONNEAU, Jean LABUSSIÈRE, Alex PRONT, Federico SAVINA; Music: Egisto MACCHI, Pierre PORTE; Costumes: Colette BAUDOT, Annalisa NASLLI-ROCCA; Special Visual Effects: George IACONNELLI // Cast: Alain DELON (Robert Klein); Jeanne MOREAU (Florence Klein); Francine BERGÉ (Nicole); Michael LONSDALE (Pierre); Michel AUMONT (The Prefecture Civil Servant); Massimo GIROTTI (Charles)

France, Italy | 1976 | 123 mins | 4K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour | 1.66:1 | Mono Sound | French with Eng. subtitles | Classification: M

## Nightmare Alley

### Edmund Goulding

London-born Edmund Goulding had been a successful actor, playwright, stage director and songwriter (*Mam'zelle*; *Love, Your Magic Spell is Everywhere*) before emigrating to the U.S. in 1921. Hired as a

screenwriter/director by MGM in 1925, he won a reputation for tasteful, cultured dramas and drawing-room comedies. After directing Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford and John Barrymore in *Grand Hotel*, he moved to Warner Bros, where





## Cinema Reborn

he worked with Bette Davis on *Dark Victory*, *The Old Maid* and *Of Human Bondage*, then to Twentieth Century-Fox, for whom he directed Charles Boyer and Joan Fontaine in *The Constant Nymph* and Tyrone Power in *The Razor's Edge* and *Nightmare Alley*.

Goulding's films typified the elegance and refinement Hollywood associated with London theatre. He played up to his reputation with meticulous craftsmanship. The classic 'hands-on' director, he performed, according to his biographer, 'multiple functions on each set... co-wrote many scripts, composed incidental music, produced, even consulted on makeup, costumes, and hair styling.' His habit of miming performances for his stars before the cameras rolled annoyed such sticklers for motivation as Boyer but won Academy Awards and box office success for them and for their films, though Goulding would never win the Oscar for Best Director which he coveted and, most agreed, richly deserved.

### The Film

In the dark days before DVDs, *Nightmare Alley* was one of those films mentioned in lowered voices, a guilty secret, to be screened at midnight behind closed doors. Even today, it remains astonishing that a major studio, Twentieth Century-Fox, at a time when censors were determined to root out anything abnormal, should have featured a major star in a film of such Sartreian bleakness.

But Tyrone Power, then at the peak of his fame as a romantic hero, hungered for significance. He bullied studio boss Darryl Zanuck into buying William Lindsay Gresham's novel and assigning

one of his most trusted directors, Edmund Goulding. Zanuck, loathing the result, insisted on a sort-of-happy ending but did his best to suppress the film entirely, while Power's early death ensured that it spent decades in obscurity.

The alley of the title is the midway of a cheap travelling carnival, a jumble of sideshows that strive to astonish, dismay and delude the public into paying to peek behind their tattered curtains. For fortune-teller Zeena (Joan Blondell) and her husband and partner Pete (Ian Keith), this is the end of the line. The only job lower in prestige is that of The Geek, a freak who lives in a pit and, sustained by cheap booze, both entertains and horrifies punters by biting the heads off live chickens.

'How could anyone sink so low?' muses roustabout Stan Carlisle (Power), a narrative promissory note to be redeemed in due course, and at compound interest.

In professional terms, *Nightmare Alley* was somewhere between *salon des refusés* and scrap-yard. The career of producer George Jessel, a former vaudeville comic turned doyen of Hollywood's club, roast, benefit and banquet scene, never recovered after he declined the role in *The Jazz Singer* that launched talking pictures and made Al Jolson a star.

Screenwriter Jules Furthman and cinematographer Lee Garmes were renegades, rebels against the prevailing factory style, often brought in on contentious projects as an excuse for the studio to disavow the result if they disliked it. Furthman worked frequently with notoriously difficult director Josef von Sternberg, notably on *Shanghai*





*Express*, a film also lit by Garmes, who won an Oscar for his work.

Joan Blondell, as the blowsy, knowing Zeena, had just turned 40, and made no effort to disguise the fact, while Ian Keith was winding up a long career spent on Broadway and in films opposite such stars as Gloria Swanson and Greta Garbo.

Goulding skilfully offers us hints of the couple's former celebrity. For Zeena's first appearance, he poses Blondell statuesquely in the quasi-antique robes of her act, her dignity belying the cheap painted backdrop against which she leans.

Keith's moment comes as Pete recalls for Stan, with a whisky bottle as his crystal

ball, the spiel that once held audiences spellbound: ('They sat through six acts just to see us.') Leaning towards the light, he falls into character. 'Is it some quality of the crystal itself?' he murmurs. 'Or does the gazer use the crystal to gaze... inwards? Who knows? But visions come...'

Stan uses his emerging skills to bamboozle a redneck sheriff (James Burke) intent on shutting down the show, distracting the lawman with the apparition of a near-naked Molly, seated in an electric chair, weaving ropes of high voltage between her hands like a skein of wool. Dazed by the sight, he's easily mesmerised by Stan's rambling monologue of pious clichés.



For Stan, raised in institutions, the carnival is the only secure community he has ever known, but he soon chafes at its restrictions. Eager for advancement, he wheedles from Zeena the word code that was the secret of their act. He also steals Molly (Colleen Gray), the not-very-bright girlfriend of strongman Mike Mazurki, and, with her as his assistant, becomes The Great Stanton, a suave operator in tails, dazzling patrons of a sleek city cabaret – called, improbably, The Spode Room.

In fashionable psychoanalyst Lilith Ritter (Helen Walker), Stan recognises a fellow trickster, and uses her to con Ezra Grindle (Taylor Holmes), a millionaire haunted by memories of a childhood love who died young; (during an abortion, the novel reveals, a detail dropped from the film.)

The lighting of *Nightmare Alley* is a tour de force of film noir atmospherics. Hardly a scene takes place in daylight. The carnival lives in darkness, as does Stan. A creature of the night, he strolls in from the hazy, ill-defined outer world to move easily among the tents and caravans, pausing briefly, face bisected by a razor-sharp shadow, before fading again into the dark.

He's ill at ease in the rigid precision of Lilith Ritter's world. For a scene in her office, Garmes employs a technique learned from von Sternberg on *Morocco*, illuminating Power from above in slatted light that imprisons him in bars of shadow. He's more at home in the moon-lit garden where an apparition in Edwardian costume emerges from the shadows, with wide hat and parasol, to delude his victim into cringing contrition for an ancient sin.

Gresham was as much a loner and outcast as Stan Carlisle. Like his contemporary, Dashiell Hammett, he wrote for the pulp crime magazines, was politically far to the left, as well as being an alcoholic and sufferer from then-incurable tuberculosis. He died at 53, a suicide, in the New York hotel where he wrote the only one of his four books to show a profit. Police searching his body found some business cards. Under his name, they announced 'No Address. No Phone. No Business. No Money. Retired.'

### Notes by John Baxter

#### The Restoration

Restored in 4K in 2020 by The Walt Disney Studios at Cineric, Audio Mechanics and Endpoint Audio Labs laboratories from a 35mm nitrate fine grain, 35mm safety print, 35mm safety dupe negative preserved at The Walt Disney Studios Film Archive and the UCLA Film and Television Archive

Director: Edmund GOLDING; Production Company: 20th Century Fox; Producer: George JESSEL; Script: Jules FURTHMAN, from William Lindsay Gresham's novel; Director of Photography: Lee GARMES; Editor: Barbara MCLEAN; Art Direction: J. Russell SPENCER, Lyle R. WHEELER; Sound: Roger HERMAN, E. Clayton WARD; Music: Cyril J. MOCKRIDGE; Costumes: Bonnie CASHIN; Special Visual Effects: Fred SERSEN // Cast: Tyrone POWER (Stan Carlisle); Joan BLONDELL (Zeena Krumbein); Coleen GRAY (Molly Carlisle); Helen WALKER (Lilith Ritter); Mike MAZURKI (Bruno); Ian KEITH (Pete Krumbein)

USA | 1947 | 110 mins | 4K DCP (orig. 35mm)  
| B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | English |  
Classification: U/C15+

# Once Upon a Time in the West

**This program is presented with the generous support of the Italian Institute of Culture, Sydney**

## Sergio Leone

Sergio Leone (1929–1989) was born into the cinema. The son of a prominent silent-era director and actress – Roberto Roberti (Vincenzo Leone) and Bice Valerian – Leone was destined to make movies. He entered the postwar Italian cinema in the late 1940s while still a teenager and, for over ten years, worked as an assistant or second unit director on at least 30 films. These included many undistinguished and generic movies – an equally important training ground for the budding director – as well as significant works of postwar Italian cinema and Hollywood offshore co-production. In one of his first assignments when still a teenager he worked as assistant director to Vittorio De Sica on *Bicycle Thieves* (1948), but he was also sought after on large-scale productions such as *Quo Vadis* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1951), *Helen of Troy* (Robert Wise, 1956), *The Nun's Story* (Fred Zinnemann, 1959), *Ben-Hur* (William Wyler, 1959) and *Sodom and Gomorrah* (Robert Aldrich, 1962). This experience allowed Leone to learn from major directors of both neorealism and Hollywood genre cinema – particularly the western – and this emphasis on realistic detail and larger-than-life archetypes would go on to define his work as a filmmaker.

Although he contributed to several more productions as an assistant and second unit director, Leone's breakthrough

came on *The Last of Days of Pompeii* (1959). When the film's director, Mario Bonnard, became ill, both he and fellow assistant Sergio Corbucci took over directorial duties. Leone had also started to contribute to screenplays within the vastly popular sword-and-sandal (peplum) cycle or genre, and it was inevitable that his first film as director would be within this familiar though increasingly exhausted form: *The Colossus of Rhodes* (1961). Although a relatively distinguished and stylish example of its type, going on to make a profit in Italy and the United States, it merely helped pave the way for Leone's true calling as a commercial filmmaker who would bring together the traditions, forms and archetypes of American and Italian cinema through his baroque and often hyperbolic take on the western. His second film and first western, *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), was initially released to an underwhelming critical response, but it would go on to become one of the most financially successful films ever released in Italy (it was also extremely popular in France and Germany). Although it was preceded by other, nascent examples of what came to be called the 'spaghetti western', Leone's sophomore effort proved massively influential. Its emphasis upon and combination of gesture, the wide closeup, archetypes, black humour, aphoristic dialogue, violence, desolate landscapes and ramshackle buildings, Eisensteinian typologies, lived-in, macrocosmic faces, and Ennio Morricone's dynamic, idiosyncratically distinctive, *musique concrète*-like soundscapes setting the

tone and style for the spaghetti western boom of the next ten years. By the time of its wider international release by United Artists in early 1967 – after copyright issues around its borrowings from Akira Kurosawa’s *Yojimbo* (1961) were “resolved” – it had already been joined by two ill-defined sequels, *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966), in what came to be called the “Man with No Name” trilogy, each starring Clint Eastwood. It was with the release of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* that Leone became a truly prominent international filmmaker who could draw upon significant support for his outsized, highly Europeanised reimagining of Hollywood genre cinema.

After such a productive and successful start as a feature director, Leone would

go on to complete only three further films over the next 20 years as the scope of his productions increased in scale and he moved between Europe and the United States. Both *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968) and *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984) are often regarded as definitive, summary works of their particular genres, while *Duck, You Sucker!* (aka, *A Fistful of Dynamite*, 1971) remains Leone’s most underrated work, an extraordinarily playful and sometimes devastating take on the Mexican revolution. In the last 15 years of his career, Leone often thought big, worked as a producer and occasional “assistant” or “fixer” on productions that needed his particular genius, made advertisements, and tried to summon large-scale films out of an increasingly straitened and hard-headed filmmaking environment. His last film, the truly large-budget *Once*



*Upon a Time in America*, was a project he had been trying to get up since the mid-1960s. Its mixed critical response – a fair amount of which focused on Leone’s questionable gender politics, an overall limitation of his work – and significant financial failure – the first of Leone’s career – making future productions of that scale increasingly difficult. Leone, of course, forged on, reportedly securing almost half of the vast \$100 million budget for the planned *Leningrad: The 900 Days* before dying of a heart attack in late April 1989. Despite his small but still outsized filmography, Leone, a man of immense vision and voracious appetites, remains one of the great and most influential revisionists of international genre cinema, as well as one of its truly distinctive stylists.

### The Film

*Once Upon a Time in the West* is now widely regarded as Leone’s masterpiece and a crucial gateway between the American and European western. Although deeply indebted to the history of the genre – it includes multiple direct references to such celebrated, auteur-driven westerns as *The Searchers* (John Ford, 1956), *Run of the Arrow* (Samuel Fuller, 1957), *Western Union* (Fritz Lang, 1941), *High Noon* (Fred Zinnemann, 1952), *Man of the West* (Anthony Mann, 1958), *The Iron Horse* (John Ford, 1924), *Johnny Guitar* (Nicholas Ray, 1954) – most extensively – and many others, it is as much an inventor or re-shaper of forms as it is a work of dutiful homage. Both Jean Baudrillard and Umberto Eco celebrated its postmodern assemblage of archetypes, conventions and intertextuality, seeing its overwhelming summation or pastiche of the genre as its

great contribution. This common view of Leone’s film sees it as an overwhelming “hall of mirrors” whose only point of reference is other westerns. Filmmaker John Boorman, meanwhile, saw Leone’s film as a kind of endpoint, “making the texture and detail [of the genre] real, but ruthlessly shearing away the recent accretions of the ‘real’ West and its psychological motivations”. Boorman placed the film within the context of the genre’s wider fate in the late 1960s as an often exhausted and trail-sore form that was struggling to survive its endless television, international and revisionist variations: “In *Once Upon a Time in the West*, the Western reaches its apotheosis. Leone’s title is a declaration of intent and also his gift to America of its lost fairy stories. This is the kind of masterpiece that can occur outside trends and fashion. It is both the greatest and the last Western”!<sup>1</sup> Although it is most definitely not the “last Western” – Sam Peckinpah would pick up many of the leads opened up by Leone – *Once Upon a Time in the West* certainly has a sense of the end of things. It stages an epic battle between core archetypes of the old West – as well as actors well associated with their previous roles across the genre – in a manner that is both epic, or god-like and that emphasises that the world around them has moved on. For example, the final showdown between Fonda’s Frank and Bronson’s Harmonica is staged to the side of a large homestead and suffers the complete indifference of the multitude of busy workers who are building a railway through the property.

Many commentators have claimed that Leone’s film continues the cynical, highly revisionist and deeply critical

preoccupations of his earlier trilogy and of the broader spaghetti cycle, but it is equally a direct homage and celebration of the key works and themes of the wider genre. It also draws deeply on such revisionist Hollywood westerns as John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962), Robert Aldrich's *Vera Cruz* (1954; where Bronson first plays a harmonical), and Howard Hawks' *Rio Bravo* (1959). Its central place in the history of the western is based on this movement between critique and homage, comedy and drama, its drawing together of footage shot in the Almeria region of Spain (predominantly in the Tabernas Desert), Cinecittà in Rome and Ford's beloved Monument Valley on the Utah-Arizona border. It is obviously a film preoccupied with the history and the politics of the West – elements highlighted in the extended treatment initially completed by Leone and the more radical cineastes Dario Argento and Bernardo Bertolucci – but its true heart lies in how this history intertwines with its popular narrativisation in the cinema. *Once Upon a Time in the West* references well-worn narrative tropes, character types, and even roles played by the actors it uses – this ranges across dominant perceptions of Fonda's upstanding star persona and how it is used and upended, as well as Cardinale's earlier role in Luchino Visconti's *The Leopard* (1963) – but Leone's film remains utterly unique.

As mentioned earlier, the massive international success of the “Dollars trilogy” granted Leone significant access to international finance and stars. Paramount allowed Leone significant largesse in his choice of subject, and

helped provide a budget that was three or four times higher than his previous film. Although Leone would go on to be remembered as a profligate filmmaker during the making of *Once Upon a Time in America*, his other films are remarkable for the scale and detail they achieve on relatively modest budgets. A significant proportion of the budget on *Once Upon a Time in America* was taken up by the hiring prominent actors and stars like Fonda, Jason Robards, Cardinale and Bronson, but the epic economy of Leone's approach can be seen in the careful movement between footage shot in the various locations as well as the way that Morricone's extraordinary score is used to connect and bridge together the sometimes disparate set-piece sequences. *Once Upon a Time in the West* is commonly considered a financial failure due to its lack of audience support in the United States – where it only returned about \$1,000,000 – and the relative decline in attendances in Italy in comparison to the three previous Leone films. In actuality, it appears to have been a much more divisive work – the critical response was generally negative in Italy, but the film was celebrated by figures such as Andrew Sarris and Graham Greene – that did amass significant support in particular countries. For example, it still stands as one of the top ten films of all-time at the box office in Germany and France, where its returns dwarfed that of Leone's previous westerns. The mixed critical response to *Once Upon a Time in the West* also marks the point at which Leone fully emerges as an auteur completely self-aware of his own style and how it is perceived.





*Once Upon a Time in the West* presents a relatively coherent narrative that is driven by themes of revenge, the march of progress, the indifference of capitalism and the playing out of archetypes who no longer have a place in a changing world. As Robards' fatally wounded Cheyenne proclaims towards the end of the film, it also "has something to do with death" (Robards is wonderful but gives little sense of his character's supposed Mexican heritage it should be noted). There is nothing particularly startling or novel about the film's focus

on the end of the "old West", a theme that dates back to the very early renditions of the western genre formed in the years before Frederick Jackson Turner would proclaim the "closing of the frontier" – during a paper delivered at 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The greatness of Leone's film lies in its sense of scale. Not just of the extraordinary towns and sets built for the production and overseen by Carlo Simi – just look at the uneven surface, grain and expanse of the wood in the justly famous opening shoot-out sequence – but the geography

of the bodies and faces it puts on display (Simi's choice of costumes are also extraordinary). It is almost impossible – now – to see a widescreen closeup of a pair of eyes and not think of Leone. But it is the combination of minimalism and maximalism that best signifies the extraordinary contribution of both Leone *and* Morricone. The vast but simple opening sequence combines these qualities in their most refined iteration. Morricone, at one point, claimed that his greatest “score” was the combination of the isolated, concrete sounds of squeaking windmills, train whistles, harmonicas and buzzing flies – amongst many others – that provides the rhythm to this sequence. The combination of tension, space, brief, decisive action and elongated, epic time also prepares us for the “otherworldly” film that will follow. Leone played recordings of the score on set to help establish a particular mood and rhythm and grant a sense of operatic drama to the performances and amplified actions. Most commentators only discuss *Once Upon a Time in the West* and Leone's other westerns in relation to their dominant genre, but they are also beholden to the ensemble forms of opera, *commedia dell'arte*, epic theatre and neorealism. In the end – and this is a film all about endings and one new beginning (Cardinale's earth mother Jill carrying water to the railroad workers in the final moments) – this fusion of the modern and the ancient, the United States and Europe, the western and other forms, helped to redefine the genre. The mythic, almost fairy tale-like *Once Upon a Time in the West* is a truly landmark work that divides the genre.

## References

- 1 Boorman quoted in Christopher Frayling, 'Sergio Leone: Something to Do with Death' (London and New York: Faber and Faber, 2000): 299.

## Notes by Adrian Danks

### The Restoration

The original version by the director was 166 minutes when it was first released in Italy on December 21st 1968. This version was shown in European cinemas. For the US and subsequently other nations, including Australia in 1969, *Once Upon a Time in the West* was edited down to 145 minutes by Paramount. Restored 4K 166 minute version produced by Cineteca Bologna in 2018, with improved colours and image quality.

Director: Sergio LEONE; Production Companies: Rafran Cinematografica, San Marco, Paramount Pictures| Producer: Fulvio MORSELLA; Script: Dario ARGENTO & Bernardo BERTOLUCCI, Sergio DONATI & LEONE; Director of Photography: Tonino DELLI COLLI; Editor: Nino BARAGLI; Art Direction: Carlo SIMI; Sound: Fausto ANCILLAI, Luciano ANZILOTTI, Italo CAMERACANNA, Claudio MAILELLI, Elio PACELLA; Music: Ennio MORRICONE; Costumes: SIMI // Cast: Claudia CARDINALE (Jill McBain); Henry FONDA (Frank); Jason ROBARDS (Cheyenne Gutiérrez); Charles BRONSON (Harmonica"); Gabriele FERZETTI (Morton); Paolo STOPPA (Sam); Frank WOLFF (Brett McBain); Woody STRODE (Stony); Jack ELAM (Snaky); Keenan WYNN (Sherriff); Lionel STANDER (Cantina Barman).

Italy, USA | 1968 | 166 mins | 4K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour | 2.35:1 | Mono Sound | English version | Classification: M



## Sergio Leone, Ennio Morricone – Sounds and Silence

A movie often teaches an audience how to view it. *Once Upon a Time in the West* does this during its almost wordless first fifteen minutes. The relative silence, the tight close-ups, and the frequent looks off-screen urge us to be attentive while we wait for something to transpire. For the most part, mood dominates as we are asked to appreciate the texture of faces and the random walk of a fly. The trajectory of a train ticket tossed in the air seems magically guided as it floats through space. In its deliberate slowness *Once Upon a Time in the West* offers us the experience of silent cinema. It must be significant that the father of the film's director, Sergio Leone, directed silent films and his mother acted in them.

Part of the silent film experience is the conscious internal dialogue we carry on with ourselves as we watch, trying to guess the significance of what we see. Consider Jill's (Claudia Cardinale) arrival by train in Flagstone. Not knowing who she is or how she fits into the story, we watch as she first appears, smiling, in a close-up in the passenger car's doorway, then follow her through the milling crowd as her look grows increasingly concerned. The only speech we hear comes from the chatter of people nearby. A lengthy close-up of her face registers her deepest concern. Our internal dialogue fills in her thoughts and feelings.

The next shot is a momentarily jarring jump cut from the close-up of her face as she stands in the bustling crowd near the station's entrance to a long shot of her standing near the unloaded freight, alone except for the man at a distance with her bags. Jill walks back to the station's entrance. Rather than follow her inside, the camera tracks to a nearby window through which we see but do not hear her speak with the Station Master. Their conversation is left for us to imagine. The gist of what we think they say is enough for us to know. It should not be surprising, then, that the script for this nearly three hour long film contains only fifteen pages of dialogue.

The film's music is also quite remarkable. In consultation with the director, Ennio Morricone composed the entire score before any of the film was shot. Each of the main characters was assigned a unique motif which blends with the others as relationships develop between the characters. The appropriate section of the score was played during the shooting of the scene it was designed to accompany. During editing Leone cut the film to match the score.

*Once Upon a Time in the West* is a compendium of references to the Hollywood Western a richly dense film that repays viewing.

**Marshall Deutelbaum**



# Return Home

## Ray Argall

*Scott Murray writes:* In 1973 at Brinsley Road, an experimental annex of Camberwell High School, there was a Friday-afternoon film class. I recall that the first movie screened there was a 16mm print of John Ford's *The Searchers*, though the projectionist (14-year-old Richard Lowenstein) thinks it could have been *Intolerance*, which I apparently 'insisted it be played at 18 frames per second, which we managed to achieve, even though it made it go on for hours.'

Among the teenagers lying tolerantly on the beanbags and floor were several more future filmmakers, including Ray Argall, Ned Lander, Daniel Scharf, Sharon Connolly, Trevor Graham, Tarni James and Lisa Roberts.

When not teaching mathematics and Formal Logic, I was the film teacher. I had no idea so many would become significant creative figures, and I had nothing to do with it, but every success they had, and continue to have, gives me great joy.

As for Ray Argall, after he left Brinsley Road he went to the Australian Film, Radio and Television School (AFTRS):

'I was there for three years and made one film, *Dog Food*, which I really like. It is one of the few films where I felt I'd achieved what I set out to do. It was probably quite influenced by the fact [producer] John Cruthers and I used to watch a lot of Bresson and Ozu films.'

On graduating from AFTRS, Ray returned to Melbourne and worked as a sound editor, before entering the emerging field of music videos:

'There were quite a few independent filmmakers around, and they tended to slip in and out doing them. There was Richard Lowenstein, Andrew de Groot, John Hillcoat, Paul Goldman and Evan English, all out of the Swinburne Film and Television School.'

Ray also began shooting other people's features, including by Ian Pringle (*Wronsky*, *The Plains of Heaven*, *Wrong World* and *The Prisoner of St Petersburg*), Mary Callaghan (*Tender Hooks*) and Philip Brophy (*Salt, Saliva, Sperm and Sweat*).

With Andrew de Groot, Mandy Walker and Sally Bongers, Ray headed a new wave of Australian cinematographers, but his interests lay wider than that. He also edited other people's films, including three features (*The Plains of Heaven*, *Wrong World* and Brian McKenzie's *With Love to the Person Next to Me*, which Argall also shot).

In 1989, Ray wrote and directed his first feature, *Return Home*, one of the finest Australian films made in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Two years later, he made his second feature, *Eight Ball*, which, like *Return Home*, was shot by Mandy Walker.

Soon after, Ray would shoot McKenzie's *Stan and George's New Life*, Brophy's *Body Melt* and Sarah Watt's *Look Both Ways*.

Ray's most recent film is the 2018 feature documentary *Midnight Oil: 1984*, incorporating some of the music videos that helped forge his now 48-year career. His production company, Piccolo Films, has also notably branched out into film restoration.



In 2019, Ray was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant services to film and television as a director and cinematographer.

### The Film

‘When I first wrote it, the characters were even older. Maybe that came from observing a lot of people in that age group who had reached the point of not knowing where to go with their lives. I felt I was in the middle, between the young petrol-head apprentice and the two older brothers.

‘Progress has a momentum that cannot be stopped. In the years to come, people will probably look back and say, ‘Gee, I miss that little garage that used to be on the corner. Those people were really nice to me.’ *Ray Argall*

*Return Home* is the story of one man’s coming to terms with the past, and the responsibility and rewards of family love.

Noel (Dennis Coard) is in his late thirties, a successful insurance broker in Melbourne who one summer heads home to the Adelaide suburb of his childhood. He stays with his elder brother, Steve (Frankie J. Holden), Steve’s wife Judy (Micki Camilleri) and their two children.

Steve runs a garage opposite a small shopping strip that is going backwards financially in the age of American franchises and a dearth of customer service. He is a gifted mechanic with a real love of his job, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Both he and his ideals appear to be on borrowed time.

Ray sets up his tale – of the negative forces of progress held tentatively at bay by one man’s inherent goodness – as a metaphor of Australian society. Values are changing in the face of altering



consumer demand: local shopping strips are being replaced by impersonal supermarkets and a wasteland of drive-in food and video marts. Generations of Australian consumerism and service are linked with generations of family.

Ray begins *Return Home* with a brief scene of Noel, Judy and Steve in their late teens, when the local paperboy was an impish boy named Gary. Gary is now an apprentice mechanic (Ben Mendelsohn), when not away and fretting about his stalling relationship with Rachel Rains' Wendy. Steve is his struggling boss and Noel the émigré who left family and home.

But Noel soon senses within himself emotional changes set off by the economic and social changes around him, and, when he returns to his Melbourne office, a once seemingly unimportant family snapshot is now resonantly imbued with meaning. One senses a stand is about to be made.

The film is simply but masterfully directed (Argall only tracks when he really needs to), with a subtle and affecting screenplay, and an understated level of performance that is rare in Australian film.

As soon as I saw it, I put it in my Top 10 Australian Films.

It is still there.

**Notes by Scott Murray** (drawn in part from 'Ray Argall: *Return Home*: Report and Interview', *Cinema Papers*, No. 78, March 1990).

### The Restoration

*Ray Argall writes:* The *Return Home* restoration has been a labour of love,

it was one of the first films I started to restore over ten years ago. Since then there has been so much change and evolution in the digital environment that the restoration work has been reinvented several times. We scanned the camera original negative, then matched the A&B rolls which required a lot of stabilisation on the cement splices, then did a shot by shot grade and a painful amount of dust busting. For the soundtrack we digitised the original 3 track 35mm magnetic mix into separate DME (Dialogue Music Effects) tracks. We then replaced all the music with digital stereo versions of the original music stems and created a 5.1 digital sound master. Greg P Fitzgerald did the remix from mono and stereo stems to the new digital 5.1 master. Our original restoration master was in 2K and presented at MIFF 2019. Last year I went back to the original scans and restored the picture to a 4K master, which is having its first public screening at Cinema Reborn.

Director: Ray ARGALL; Production Company: Musical Films; Producer: Cristana POZZAN; Script: ARGALL; Director of Photography: Mandy WALKER; Editor: Ken SALLOWS; Production Design: Kerith HOLMES; Sound: Bronwyn MURPHY; Music: Philip JUDD; Costumes: Lucinda Clutterbuck // Cast: Dennis COAD (Noel); Frankie J. HOLDEN (Steve); Ben MENDELSON (Gary); Micki CAMILLERI (Judy); Rachel RAINS (Wendy); Alan FLETCHER (Barry); Joe CAMILLERI (Busker)

Australia | 1990 | 87 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 35mm release from 16mm camera original) | Colour | 1.85:1 | Mono Sound | English | Classification: M

# Sambizanga

**This program is presented with the generous support of Adrienne Davidson.**

Note: This biographical information are the opening paragraphs from a longer essay on Sarah Maldoror by Pamela Hutchinson which first appeared in the online journal *Little White Lies*.

## Sarah Maldoror

The films of Sarah Maldoror, who died last spring at the age of 90, were as politically revolutionary as they were radically beautiful. She was inspired at all turns in her career by poetry and art, and motivated by the fight to liberate oppressed people. In cinema she found the perfect form of self-expression, and the right medium for her message: a cry for freedom that deserved a wide audience. Her sad death from Coronavirus complications has prompted a new wave of interest in her work, and an in-depth retrospective at this year's IndieLisboa was surely one of the richest seams in the festival's programme.

Maldoror made 42 films, including features, shorts and documentaries, many latterly for French TV. Though some of her work (such as her contribution to Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*) went uncredited, and some of her films have been lost (including 1970s *Guns for Banta*, which was confiscated by the authorities) her authorial voice is captivating.

Maldoror was born in Condom in the southwest of France in 1929. Her father was from Guadeloupe and her Black identity was reflected throughout her

work which was rooted in Africa and the Caribbean, centring themes of immigration and especially the evils of colonialism. She chose her own name, from the narrative poem 'Les Chants de Maldoror' by the Uruguay-born French writer Isidore Lucien Ducasse. After drama school in Paris she founded Les Griots, a radical Black theatre company. But in the '60s, after encountering Soviet cinema, particularly Battleship Potemkin, Maldoror travelled to Moscow to study film, where Ousmane Sembène was one of her contemporaries.

Maldoror moved to Algeria with her husband, the writer and activist Mário Pinto de Andrade, where she worked as assistant director on films including *The Battle of Algiers* and the kaleidoscopic, urgent *Festival panafricain d'Alger*. Maldoror's first film was the short drama *Monangambee* (1968), set in Angola, in which a snooping officer ignorantly misunderstands a conversation between a prisoner and his wife, with terrible consequences. It's a sharp jolt of a film, with an avant-garde soundtrack from The Art Ensemble of Chicago and a chilling message. There's only one professional actor in the cast; the rest were mostly activists in Angola's fight for independence from Portugal. *Sambizanga* was made in 1972.

## The film

A masterpiece of Third Cinema *Sambizanga* (1972) was the first feature film directed by a woman in Africa. Told from a women's perspective by one of cinema's truly revolutionary artists, Sarah Maldoror passionately examines

the cruelty of the colonial order and the strength of will demanded to topple it.

Set in 1961 in pre-independent Angola. The film is based on the political novella 'The Real Life of Domingos Xavier' written by the Portuguese Angolan writer, Jose Luandino Viera. The story is based on Viera's own experiences. Having completed his book only days before he was arrested and taken prisoner by the Portuguese authorities. He was incarcerated for his links to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and for the group's recent strikes on prisons and police stations.

The title for the film adaptation takes its name from the neighbourhood Sambizanga, a black working-class district and the location of the notorious Portuguese prison in Luanda, the capital of Angola. A prison brutally employed by the colonial secret political police to forcibly hold, and routinely torture Angolan activists.

The film script was co-written by Sarah Maldoror, French novelist and short story writer Maurice Pons, and Maldoror's husband, Mário Coelho Pinto de Andrade an Angolan poet, liberation activist, and founder of the (MPLA).

As the film could not be made in Angola it was shot in the outskirts of Congo Brazzaville, over a seven-week period. The film was co-funded by the Congolese government, a Marxist-Leninist state at that time, and the French Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation and France's National Centre for Cinema. The film crew was predominately French working with a cast of non-professional actors. The cast consisted of mainly freedom fighters, sympathetic to the anti-

imperialist movements of the MPLA and the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC).

*Sambizanga* is the story of the sacrifice of Domingos Xavier, (played by Domingos Oliveira, an Angolan exile living in the People's Republic of Congo). Xavier is a handsome and strong, tractor driver working in a remote coastal village. He harbours nationalist sympathies and is secretly active in the underground political resistance. He is a 'good family man' with a loving gentle character as Maldoror in an earlier scene skilfully presents.

In a significant departure from the novella, Maldoror structures the film's narrative around Domingos Xavier's wife, Maria (played by economist Elisa Andrade from Cape Verdean), when Domingos is kidnapped by the colonial police on suspicion of revolutionary activity. Domingos, is forcibly taken to a jail in Luanda where he is interrogated and brutally treated for not betraying his fellow dissidents. Chief amongst those his white contact.

Comforted by the local women in the village, Maria ties Bastiao, their newborn son, to her back and sets out on foot on a long trek in the hot sun in a desperate search to find her husband. In carrying their son, Maldoror, metaphorically cast's, Maria, as the central character in the film. Maria's struggle is sorrowful, lonely, and protracted. Slowly tramping through the tall grass of the Angola bush, resolute in her duty she typifies and evokes the collective ideal. A symbol of change carrying the weight and hope of future Angolan generations.

It is this ideal of the individual as an intrinsic part of the community that





Maldoror brings to the fore. A powerful combative film, Maldoror interweaves three narrative threads that thematically tie together, synthesising traditional African values of family with communal values of class solidarity. These are; The martyrdom of Domingos, Maria's symbolic rite of passage, and the revolutionary network's efforts to identify and reassure the captive.

Understanding that the camera is a kind of weapon to instil political awareness, Maldoror unflinchingly presents the fate of freedom fighters who are made to 'disappear' by the state. The camera follows his wife Maria as she makes the arduous march from the slums of their small village to the outskirts of the capital, to plead for his release. She is kept in the dark. Desperately searching from one prison to another, trying to discover the whereabouts of her husband only to be stonewalled by the colonial authorities and told they have no record of him.

Increasingly hardened and unaware of Domingos fate, and with little means of defending this injustice,

Maria nevertheless, with strength and resilience persists in vain. Navigating an increasingly cruel and coldly bureaucratic system centuries old, of colonial male domination in the dark, and without hope. In *Sambizanga*, Maldoror portrays the double oppression of women by both the sexism and inhumanity of the Portuguese rule. Maldoror also depicts the courage of ordinary African men and women in Angola who are made to suffer this injustice with dignity.

A milestone of African Cinema, the film ends with an upbeat party for all the members of the underground movement to celebrate Angolan identity. Urban Angolan music and dance are vital to Sambizanga and its locals helping to preserve Angolan culture, promote Angolan sovereignty and raise the Angolan's hope for freedom.

The sound of the energetic song, 'Mama Uelele,' envelops the scene. The party stands in a circle. It is both a moment of mourning and celebration. A celebration of life as much in collective suffering as in communal song. For as Mussunda, one of



the leaders of the liberation movement, reminds us, 'Domingos has begun his real life, at the heart of the Angolan people'. In this one line of dialogue, the very essence of *Sambizanga* can be encapsulated. The necessity for a mass marshalling and collective action by the oppressed.

A humanist dramatisation, the plight of the film's protagonist acts as a parable for the emerging consciousness of a long-colonised people. Maria's exhausting journey and her growing awareness are symbolic of the materialising consciousness of the Angolan liberation struggle and of a community on the precipice of transformation.

The film recounts the failure of the colonial regime and the events igniting the insurgency to follow. The final scene, a conversation amongst the rebels planning to storm Luanda prison, the much-hated symbol of colonial repression with the date set as February 4, the start of the armed struggle for national liberation.

Before closing with the final shot of muddy waves breaking onto the river bank whilst a raging current, surges past. Maldoror poetically bookends the opening and closing moments of *Sambizanga* with this reoccurring motif summoning up the turmoil of the revolutionary struggle that is representative of the collective. Uneducated labourers, villages, children, old men, and women of the slums. As the waves crash onto the rocks more behind them will rise up and follow.

Unapologetically partisan, *Sambizanga* is not an overtly political film. In recreating the past Maldoror creates a gripping neorealist drama that is both instructive and propagandist. The film is restrained

yet it directly confronts the complexity and violence of the past. Set amongst the working class living in poverty in Angola, Maldoror deals realistically with the events leading up to the insurgency. Powerful and poetic in emphasising the repression of the poor by the rich. *Sambizanga* offers a class testimony and an indictment of a system of rule that perpetuates poverty.

A decolonial filmmaker, Maldoror explores counter imaging and counter-history through a feminist lens, creating a radical archetypal narrative by employing the camera as a type of weapon for national self-determination and cultural emancipation. The camera serves as an educational and rallying instrument to show and explain the colonial exploitation taking place in Angola and to give recognition to the women for their participation in this struggle.

The narrative structure of the film follows the rich traditional tapestry of African oral storytelling. One of the major functions of oral storytelling is to teach suggestively through allusion and assist people in educating the young and transmitting important lessons about history, experience, and life.

A personal and touching film, Maldoror, is committed to highlighting and underscoring the significant role of women in the revolutionary struggle. In Maldoror's adaptation, Maria assumes a heroic role. She must remain strong for the sake of their son. Tending to Bastiao's growth signifies the hope and longing for the rebirth of Angola, free from Portuguese colonial injustice.

Maldoror's directional style is understated and intimate, and not at all melodramatic



despite the violence communicated on screen. She integrates the visual political, sonic, and dramatic elements of the film so effectively that the form and the content of the work are elegantly balanced.

*Sambizanga* is a radiant and alluring motion picture. Beautifully shot by Claude Agostini on 35mm film using a warm colour palette of glistening soft light to compliment the landscape of thick grassy hills, dusty roads, and Maria's vibrant rural dress. The compositions are frequently absorbing, demonstrating Maldoror's strong artistic sensibility in particular during the film protagonist's aching arduous journey to the capital. Filmed in wide shot enveloped by a golden haze, a telephoto lens was used in this sequence to compress the background behind the character, the effect of which makes Maria's, slow and frustrating journey on foot seem even more protracted. By enhancing the theme of decolonisation aesthetically, Maldoror step by step builds an unavoidable support for the liberation struggle.

Maldoror ingeniously intercuts between many of the action sequences in the film to juxtapose the historically unjust cause of oppression with the just cause of liberation. As shown in the scenes of the break-up of the family with the kidnapping of Domingos. Taken away in the Land Rover, tied up like a slave, alone and separated from Maria and Bastiao who are being comforted by the women in their village. The rhythm of this parallel editing technique cleverly pits the theme of the will to self-determination against the exploitation of colonisation. Establishing the ideal of emancipation for which the activists are fighting.

The soundscape and musical composition of the film beautifully enriches and reinforces these very themes. Maldoror lyrically utilises the repetition of music to galvanise the narrative. From the very beginning, with the stirring song 'Monanagambée' which can be heard in the opening credits of the film. 'Monangambee' was employed by activists during the revolution to rally the villages together.

Likewise, an exquisite mourning ballet of searing tenderness escorts Maria on her quest to find her husband and melds with the textures and colours of the visuals. This song is heard again during her bus ride to Luanda reinforcing her gradual awakening to the liberation movement. Similarly, the scene where Domingos, is brought back to his prison cell, with the other inmates who sing a liberation ballad over his body, 'Let us never forget him' while tenderly bathing blood from his wounds.

Maldoror's observational style of filmmaking is a radical act of will. Grounded in visual detail her propensity to pay close attention to the generally ignored, ordinary activities and details of everyday life becomes a revolutionary act of politically interventionist cinema. The film's unhurried pace is intentional, allowing the viewer who may not be familiar with Angolan society to inhabit the world of the film.

The subtlety with which the characters and themes are woven together is understated yet effective. The liberation struggle is suggested in a relatable and just way. The brutality grows and the picture becomes clearer allowing the interpretation of the film to be left to the spectator.





## Cinema Reborn

The street scenes, filmed with a fluid, camera movement provide meaningful footage of everyday existence that imbues the film with a contemplative quality. Simply by noticing through the act of listening the lives of the community of Angolan characters become significant for the spectator. Sequences unravel in almost real-time prompting thought and enabling reflection. Allowing the characters to grow and the spectator to grow in understanding.

Maldoror's emphasis on pace, duration, and rhythm is tantamount to a rejection of colonial temporality. The time it takes to walk anywhere, or the difficulty experienced in obtaining a message, preparing a meal, or even cutting cloth in a tailor's shop creates a canvas of a society and is portrayed didactically as a political tool for social change.

Maldoror delicately subverts the inhumanity of colonial authority by insisting on demonstrations of intimate tenderness and caring, thus enabling a poetics of relation. Maldoror's sensitivity, her ability to see and listen with care and capture how mutual care shapes communal relations through often unrecorded small acts of solidarity provides a powerful and deep critique. In order to replace the prevailing colonial civil order which limits and often destroys individual prospects, there is a sincere need for care and repair in nation-building.

Banned by the Angolan government, *Sambizanga* was eventually released in Portugal in 1974 after the Portuguese dictatorship under Zazazar, was overthrown by the armed forces movement. Viera's novella written in 1961 was also finally published by Mário Coelho

Pinto de Andrade, and Viera having served fourteen years in prison, was released.

As a consequence of the Carnation Revolution, the Portuguese fascist regime immediately withdrew from colonised Angola. The Portuguese colonial rule that had lasted for almost five hundred years, had at long last come to an abrupt end.

Politically significant, this militant film presents an invaluable opportunity to reassess how the Portuguese colonisation of Africa violated the histories of native Angolans. In this work, Maldoror makes a momentous contribution. Reimagining through the medium of the moving image an anti-colonial vision from the point of view of an African woman.

An unforgettable treasure of world cinema. This newly and beautifully restored print offers audiences the opportunity to encounter this rarely seen, groundbreaking masterpiece as it was meant to be experienced. Maldoror's, *Sambizanga* is not to be missed!

### Notes by Helen Goritsas

#### Restoration

*Sambizanga*, newly and exquisitely restored by the Cineteca di Bologna and Martin Scorsese's Film Foundation. Restored in 4K at L'Image Retrouvée (Paris) from the 35mm original negatives in association with Éditions René Chateau and the family of Sarah Maldoror. Funding provided by Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation. This restoration is part of the African Film Heritage Project, an initiative created by The Film Foundation's World Cinema Project, the Pan African Federation of Filmmakers, and UNESCO – in collaboration with Cineteca di Bologna – to help locate, restore, and disseminate African cinema.





Dir: Sarah MALDOROR | Production Company: Isabelle Films | Producer: Jacques POITRENAUD (uncredited) | Script: Mário Pinto DE ANDRADE, Maurice PONS, MALDOROR, from José Luandino Vieira novella, 'A vida verdadeira de Domingos Xavier' | Director of Photography: Claude AGOSTINI | Editor: Georges KLOTZ | Music: Ensemble Les Ombres // Cast: Elisa ANDRADE (Maria);

Domingos DE OLIVERIA (Domingos); Jean M'VONDO (Petelo); Adelino NELUMBA (Zitoi); Benoit MOUTSILA (Chico); TALA NGONGO (Miguel); Lopes RODRIGUES (Mussunda)

Angola, France, Republic of Congo-Brazzaville | 1972 | 102 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 35mm) | Colour | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | Kimbundu, Lingala, Portuguese with Eng. subtitles | Classification: U/C15+.

*Sambizanga* has a sensual aesthetic, conveyed through scenes of everyday life: the couple Maria and Domingos, Maria's long journeys on foot along dusty tracks, with the mist rising up from the ground, and Maria's relationship with the child she carries on her back, who is cared for by other women when she stays with friends. The beauty of the images, and of Elisa Andrade in the role of Maria, drew adverse comments from critics. Sarah Maldoror always stood her ground against such criticism, and its implied clichés about African people (that they are poor, ignorant and starving). 'I'm not interested in showing poverty,' she stated, adding, 'I prefer to try and find the poetry.' Most of the film's characters are played by militants of the MPLA (the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and they all speak in their native Portuguese, Lingala or Kimbundu. A rather bold choice, which contributes to the film's realism: the sewing course that is a lesson in politics, the relaying of messages even in prison, the mobilisation of militants and youngsters to identify Domingos, and the meetings held in the middle of dances. This film is also the story of Maria and her political awakening. Her continual displacement is also Sarah's, and it defines women in the African diaspora. The complexity of Sarah's own situation and her relationship with

her partner, Mário de Andrade, led to his recurrent and at times prolonged absences from the family home. He was in hiding for a long time from Interpol, and he took on the presidency of the MPLA political movement and the CONCP (Conferences of Nationalist Organisations of the Portuguese Colonies).

In a way, it could be said that the character of Maria becomes intertwined with Sarah's personal life. Their political awareness; their solitary struggle with their children (Maria journeys with her child on her back, just as my sister Henda and I went everywhere with our mother, Sarah, while the children of the other leaders, Cabral and Boal, were in boarding schools in Moscow or Bucharest); the death of their partner for political reasons; and above all else, their perseverance, despite the obstacles, always forging ahead... The surge of hope in the film's final scene will remain with us: 'Be strong, comrade, he was our friend, our brother, he disappeared in the night, and we will never forget him.'

### Annouchka De Andrade

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# Tiga

## Lucinda Clutterbuck

Lucinda has made over 20 short animations, including music videos for Australian artists such as INXS, Flotsam Jetsam and Jo Camilleri and the Black Sorrows. Her animation for The Machination's *Pressure Sway* remains an iconic Australian music video.

Lucinda wrote and directed the short film *Tiga* (1990) about the fate of the Tasmanian Tiger which continues to be included in Australian animation collections. She created the award winning ABC TV series *The Web* which was produced with Fiona Eagger and the SBS commissioned *Walnut and Honeysuckle*. She was awarded a Filmmakers Fellowship in 2005 by the Australian Film Commission in recognition of her skills and significant body of work.

Lucinda has also worked as a lecturer at Sydney College of the Arts, Deakin University, Victorian College of the Arts and the University of Technology Sydney. She has designed short courses in experimental film and animation and has run workshops for teachers of media, theatre companies, schools and special needs groups.

Lucinda has worked as an executive producer on a number of projects, consulting with and mentoring emerging filmmakers. Most recently she has been developing an animated web series called *BUDs* with her son Lewis Argall and Nik Malbasic who are both graduates of The Academy of Interactive Entertainment.

Apart from her extensive experience in the film industry, Lucinda is also a

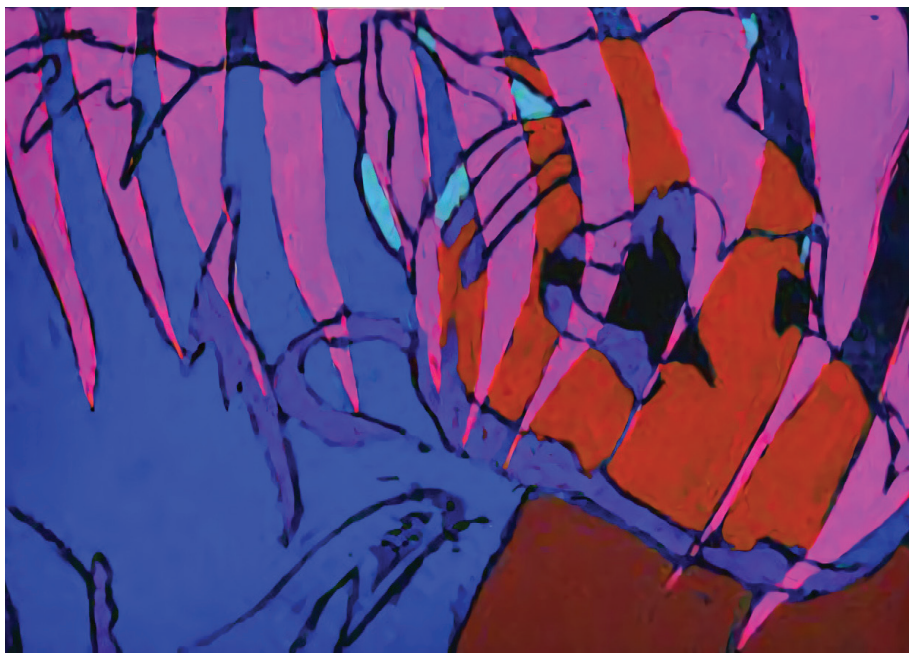
fine artist working in a wide range of media. In 2011 Lucinda worked with La Menagerie in collaboration with La Mairie de Tournefeuille in Toulouse, France to create a public art project in various spaces around the city. Since then she has completed a variety of installation works with the agar dish artists' collective at 107 Projects, Intersect Arts and Articulate Project Space. In 2015 she and Lewis Argall participated in Forward/Story, a global collaboration led by Lance Weiler and Christy Dena and hosted in Costa Rica.

## The Film

Based on documentary footage shot in Hobart, Tasmania in the 1930s (see *Tasmanian Tiger Footage*, 1932), *Tiga* is an animated eulogy to the now extinct Tasmanian Tiger. It utilises a voice-over of various people recalling sightings of the animal and background music by Paul Schultz.

Made prior to the advent of computer animation, it is a prime example of 2D animation using mixed media on cel and paper, utilising paint markers, a reprographic camera and rotoscoping (where photographs are traced by the animator and hand coloured).

*Tiga* won the Asia Pacific Award for Best Animation and was nominated in 1990 for Dendy and AFI Awards for Best Animation. It has screened at international festivals and was purchased by Canal+, France. In 2003, it was included in a compilation entitled *Les Contes des Animaux*, which had a cinema release at the Centre Georges Pompidou,



Paris and was screened in 25 cinemas across France in 2004.

Notes from an essay by Marian Quigley first published on Australian Screen

### The restoration

The film was scanned from the original rostrum camera negative, and restored to 4K in both its full frame format 137:1 and cinema format 185:1. Lucinda had always done the artwork of the animation to work in both. The sound track was originally mono, and was re-

versioned from the master stereo music by Paul Schutz and the DME for dialogue and FX to 5.1 for the Animation film *Les Contes Des Animaux* (released in France 2004)

Director: Lucinda CLUTTERBUCK; Production Companies: Piccolo Films, Australian Film Commission; Producer: CLUTTERBUCK; Script: CLUTTERBUCK; Animation: Elisa ARGENZIO, CLUTTERBUCK

Australia | 1987 | 10 mins | Colour | DCP (orig. 16mm) | Mono Sound | English | Classification: M

## Trouble in Paradise

### Ernst Lubitsch

Lubitsch (1892–1947) began in the film industry as an actor and then worked as a director from his early twenties. In Germany he had made more than 50

silent films including the international hit costume dramas *Madame Dubarry*, *Carmen*, *Anna Boleyn* and *Sumurun*. By 1921 he was in Dave Kehr's words 'the most acclaimed director in Europe'





and he accepted an invitation from ‘the most popular actress in America, Mary Pickford’ to come to the States to direct her in *Rosita* in 1922. In America he made 27 films (and in 1934 spent a year as head of production at Paramount) before dying of a heart attack at the age of 55.

Much has been made of the so-called ‘Lubitsch touch’ and many definitions of the director’s unique storytelling skills. One such is by one of his many biographers Scott Eyman who writes: ‘What came to preoccupy this anomalous artist was the comedy of manners and the society in which it transpired, a world of delicate sangfroid, where a breach of sexual or social propriety and the appropriate response are ritualized, but in unexpected ways, where the basest things are discussed in elegant whispers; of the rapier, never the broadsword’.

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Of the films made in America at least a handful are easily given the imprimatur of greatness, films of timeless charm and sensibility. For mine that handful includes *The Smiling Lieutenant* (1931), *Angel* (1937), *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940), *To Be or not to Be* (1942) and... greatest of all... *Trouble in Paradise* (1932).

### The Film

The pedigree is typically Lubitsch. An unknown play by an unknown European writer, the 1931 play *The Honest Finder* (*A Becsületes Megtaláló*) by Hungarian playwright László Aladár, But here it is given over to writer Samson Raphaelson and became one of the nine films on which Raphaelson and Lubitsch combined their talents.

Venice. A robbery. Two would-be lovers Gaston and Lily (Herbert Marshall and Miriam Hopkins) meet. She arrives by



gondola. 'I want to see that moon in the champagne' Gaston tells the waiter 'And I don't want to see you at all.' Two thieves. 'You know when I first saw you I thought you were an American.' They eat dinner then fall into an embrace. Fully clothed, he in a dinner suit she in a sleek, silvery gown designed by Travis Banton, they slide into a near-horizontal clutch on a nearby couch.

The scheming starts. ...

Paris. The heiress Madam Mariette Colet (Kay Francis). A night at the opera with her two suitors the Major (Charlie Ruggles) and François (Edward Everett Horton). A stolen handbag. The lovers have fetched up in the city of light and hatch a scheme. Another romance. But jealousy rises...

You have to remember the time and the conditions of production, that brief moment when Hollywood was able to ignore the rigid strictures on morality

and behaviour that would be imposed by the Production Code in 1934. *Trouble in Paradise* is indeed in David Thomson's simple words 'truly amoral' and in Andrew Sarris's words 'The movie seemed to have everything: the grace and elegance of the twenties, the egalitarian conscience of the thirties, the visual wit of the silent cinema and the verbal wit of the talkies.'

*Trouble in Paradise* presents a series of delightfully comic contests. The first between Gaston and Lily is placed side by side with that of the two comic suitors, the Major (Charlie Ruggles) and François (Edward Everett Horton) veteran Hollywood comics with impeccable timing and then, the heart of the matter, and the reason for their top billing, the competition between Lily and Mariette for the affections of Gaston. That's mostly what the second half of the movie revolves around.

So much elegance, so much grace, so much snaky manoeuvring.





## Cinema Reborn

Gloriously delicate comedy played out in Paramount's unique versions of expensive Venetian hotel rooms and Parisian art deco mansions by people in dinner suits and lamé frocks. The hilarity arising from the trouble is endlessly entertaining, truly a paradise.

### Notes by Geoff Gardner

#### The Restoration

After its initial release, and following the introduction of the Production Code, *Trouble in Paradise* fell out of circulation for decades. It has since been restored by the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Los Angeles. Restoration supported by the George Lucas Foundation. A digital transfer was created from a 35mm preservation fine-grain. The soundtrack

was mastered at 24-bit from an optical track positive.

Director: Ernst LUBITSCH; Production Company: Paramount Publix Corp.; Producer: LUBITSCH; Script: Samson RAPHEALSON, Grover JONES, from Aladar Laszlo's play; Director of Photography: Victor MILNER; Art Direction: (Hans DREIER, uncredited); Sound: (M.M. PAGGI, uncredited); Music: W. Franke HARLING, Leo ROBIN // Cast: Miriam HOPKINS (Lily); Kay FRANCIS (Mariette Colet); Herbert MARSHALL (Gaston Monescu); Charles RUGGLES (The Major); Edward Everett HORTON (François Filiba); C. Aubrey SMITH (Adolph J. Giron)

USA | 1932 | 83 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 35mm) | B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | English | Classification: G

# The Waterside Workers' Federation Film Unit 1953–1958

In the 1950s the Sydney branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) had a flourishing cultural program under an enlightened leadership. Sixteen different groups were active, including a choir, art classes, children's groups and sports carnivals. The union held the view that 'Man does not work for bread alone' and that 'social and educational activities should be a normal part of every person's life.' The WWF hall in Sussex Street was close to the wharf and to where many wharfies and their families lived. At lunchtime waterside workers would walk up to the canteen and sit down in the hall to watch a concert, a recital, a dance performance or hear a talk. There was a reading room and a Screening Unit

who showed 16mm documentary and drama films, often international titles from Quality Films or the Realist Film Association.

The union was strong having overturned the notorious bull labour system of the 1930s, where workers had to walk the waterfront's 'Hungry Mile' each day to get work, only to be pitted against each other in a system that favoured the strongest workers or 'bulls'. Having won the right to hire labour the union set up a roster system that gave everyone an even chance. It meant that in post-war Sydney the waterfront became a place where unemployed artists, actors, musicians and writers could pick up a shift and participate in cultural activities.

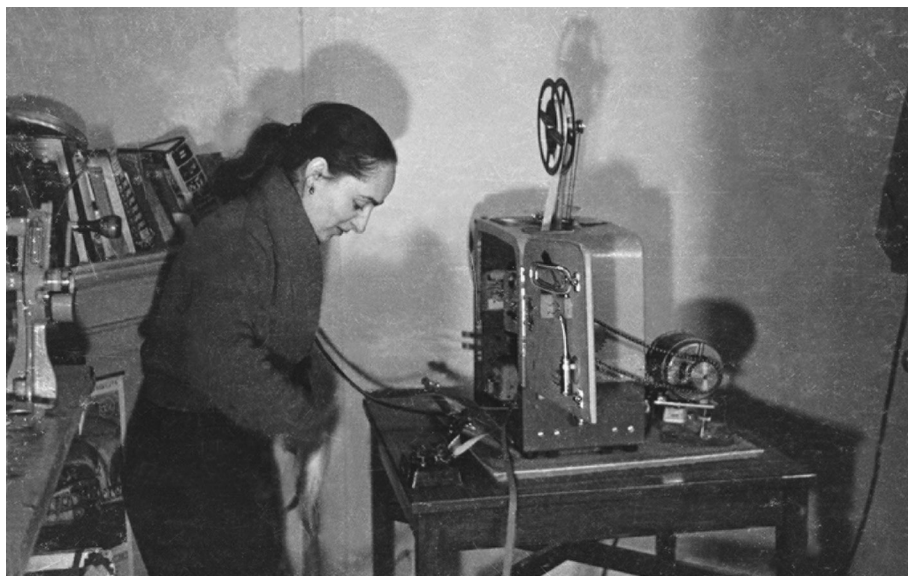




Two young wharfies, Keith Gow and Jock Levy, came to the attention of the union secretary, Tom Nelson. They were both active in Sydney's New Theatre, and had set up a drama group on the waterfront – a Maritime Industries Theatre. Their first production was an anti-war play by Ewan McColl *The Travellers* (1953). Jock directed wharfie actors and volunteer actors from New Theatre, Keith designed and built the sets and Norma Disher, who was also a member of New Theatre, did costumes and music. To advertise the play, Keith, who had experience in film, shot a trailer on a 16mm Bolex borrowed from Bob Matthews from the Realist Film Group. It was screened in the Sussex Street hall at lunchtimes and Tom Nelson heard about it. The union leadership was in the middle of a campaign to set up a pension fund for aging waterside workers and Nelson saw an opportunity and asked Keith and Jock if they would make a film

to support the campaign. It was the end of the Maritime Workers Theatre Group and the beginning of the Waterside Workers Federation Film Unit (WWFFU).

*Pensions for Veterans* (1953) employed a visual style inspired by the great Russian filmmakers, Eisenstein and Pudovkin, whose films Keith had studied closely. Soviet montage techniques of fast cutting, dynamic editing and the use of extreme camera angles depicted workers as heroic in their struggles for justice and improved conditions. The filmmakers had no equipment of their own at this stage, so they borrowed Matthews' Bolex again and made do. They had no synchronous sound and had to build the soundtrack in the editing room. Norma had been the music librarian at Radio 2SM from 1941–1948 and music was her great love. At this time Norma was working as a clerk at the Trade Union Club and she jumped at the chance to work with the Unit. They



wrote the narration together and Norma sourced music to support the images.

In order to raise money to complete the film, they had to show it to the executive committee. They screened the edited work print on a projector, but had to record a rough sound mix on a reel-to-reel tape recorder to play with it. They worked all night with Keith directing as Jock recorded the narration live to picture, watching for cues marked on the work print. Norma brought the music on waxed disks and juggled the music cues, switching between two turntables. If anyone made a mistake, they had to stop and go back to the beginning. It was primitive, but it worked and the screening was a great success. A new sound mix was done at the lab and prints were made. The film premiered at Sydney's Leichhardt Boxing Stadium in November 1953 to an audience of thousands of wharfies. Stop-work meetings were often held at the Stadium and it became a popular venue for exhibiting the Unit films.

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Buoyed by the success of *Pensions for Veterans*, the WWF asked the Unit to make a film about the union's industrial conflicts on the waterfront. A Bolex camera was purchased along with a tripod and a light metre. Norma, who was making costumes at New Theatre, sewed a light-proof black bag for changing the film reels and also calico bags for the film trim bins in the editing room. Inspired by a pamphlet called 'The Hungry Mile' by Tom Nelson, which contained recollections from wharfies of the tough days of the Great Depression, they called it *The Hungry Miles*. It was the Unit's second film.

*The Hungry Miles* (1955) put the WWF's current industrial conflicts in an historical context through dramatic reconstructions of scenes from the 1930s Great Depression. It showed workers walking the 'Hungry Mile' and the bull labour system, where the last few tickets were thrown up in the air and workers had to fight each other for a shift.



Hundreds of wharfies, who had never acted in a film before, put their hands up to be extras. Many had lived through the Great Depression and knew exactly what it had been like. They not only looked the part, they had lived it. The film won a gold medal at the Warsaw Film Festival, winning praise from jury member Joris Ivens.

*The Hungry Miles*, with its vivid and unforgettable images, stands today as an acknowledged classic of Australian documentary. Its crisp black and white re-enactments are so visually persuasive that they have frequently been used ever since, standing in for archival actuality footage of Australia's Depression years.

*November Victory* (1955) depicts the struggle against the Menzies government's proposed amendments to the Stevedoring Act that challenged the authority of the WWF's right to hire labour. Made in a newsreel style it shows the solidarity of the women's committee and how the trade union movement as whole came out in support of a nationwide strike that led to victory.

*Four's a Crowd* (1957) is a short slapstick comedy starring Jock Levy playing four different types of 'problem' workers on the waterfront. It showed Jock's considerable comic skills and is still a great favourite for many people.

From 1953 to 1958, the Unit produced over ten films, including campaign films for other unions, like the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU), about the crisis in affordable housing and safety in the workplace. When they made *Hewers of Coal* (1958), for the Miners Federation, Jock and Keith worked in the mine while developing

the script. The film uses both black and white and colour footage to show how workers experienced the transition from the black and white world below the surface to the vivid colour above ground. The film advocated nationalisation of the mines, so that coal would be in the hands of the Australian people, not big business. It was made before the dangers of burning fossil fuels were well known and was made to honour the working lives of the miners.

Norma, Jock and Keith were all members of New Theatre, and briefly engaged variously with the Communist Party. They saw their film work as political activism and always worked collaboratively swapping roles as required without taking individual credits. They were passionate about social justice and made the films to counter what the union saw as misinformation and anti-worker propaganda in the mainstream media. They made films about working class lives that were seen by working class audiences. Prints were sent to all the WWF branches and were screened on worksites around the country, to community groups and in private homes. The WWF bought a production Kombi van for the Unit, which was later customised with rear projection so they could screen films in the streets of Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst and Surry Hills and later interstate. The Sydney Film Festival, after some internal controversy, screened *The Hungry Miles* in 1955.

John Hughes' *Film-Work*, (1981, 43 mins) recalled the Unit's work for new generations. All three members of the Unit, Keith, Jock and Norma, were interviewed and the film is intercut with scenes from the films and discussions with the filmmakers about the films.





## Cinema Reborn

Keith Gow (1921–1987) had a distinguished career in film with credits in over 90 Australian films, Jock Levy (1916–2016) was acknowledged with an Order of Australia in 2010 for his work in the theatre and with the Unit. In 2021 the University of New South Wales honoured Norma Disher (née Hawkins) with an Honorary Fellowship in recognition of her services to the arts, to social justice and to the UNSW. The Glebe Society also planted a tree to honour her services to the community and the environment. In 1993 the WWF joined with the Seamen's Union to form the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA).

Norma, who will turn 100 in October, will introduce the program, which celebrates both the restoration of the WWFFU films by the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and her birthday, acknowledging it as an important anniversary for Australian film history and culture. 2022 is also the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MUA.

### THE FILMS

#### ***The Hungry Miles* 1955 (25 minutes)**

Using dramatic recreations of the 1930s Depression along with observational footage from the 1950s, *The Hungry Miles* chronicles the historical experiences and industrial struggles of Sydney waterside workers under the leadership of a powerful union. Cinematic and often poetic, the film offers an eloquent response to the demonising of workers and their unions common to the mainstream press in the Cold War years.

#### ***November Victory* 1955 (22 minutes)**

A partly dramatized, newsreel-style film depicting the Waterside Workers' strike

of November 1954 against amendments to the Stevedoring Act, which sought to take the right to hire labour away from the union and place it in the hands of the shipowners. It documents the unions appeal to the broader labour movement for help and the overwhelmingly positive response resulting in victory.

#### ***Four's a Crowd* 1957 (14 minutes)**

A light-hearted approach to the serious topics of health and safety, and discipline at work. This short comedy gives Unit member Jock Levy an opportunity to showcase his skills as a comic performer. He plays four different characters in a series of skits that send up stereotypes used in the mainstream press to denigrate working people on the Sydney wharfs.

#### ***Film-Work* 1981 (43 minutes)**

During the 1970s when the 'art & working life' movement was fostering collaborations between artists and the trade union movement, *Film-Work* was made to remind independent filmmakers, and the labour movement, of the achievements of the 'wharfies' films. Made in collaboration with the filmmakers Norma Disher, Keith Gow and Jock Levy, *Film-Work* explores how and why the films were made. It examines scenes from four of the films and examines their cultural and historical importance.

### The Restoration

The films of the Waterside Workers' Federation Film Unit and *Film-Work* have been re-mastered by the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA). The NFSA drew on the best quality original materials available from the collection. This included original





A&B roll picture negatives, inter-negatives and inter-positives. Sound came from a variety of sources ranging from optical prints to magnetic sound. The films are presented on 2K and the DCPs were made by the NFSA.

### Thanks and Acknowledgements

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Special thanks to Jamie McMechan of the Maritime Union of Australia for his and the union's support of this restoration project and the Cinema Reborn screening.

### Notes by Margot Nash

#### Further Reading

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## Cinema Reborn

### 3 FILMS BY THE WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION FILM UNIT + FILM-WORK

Australia | 1953-1958, 1984 | Total running time:  
109 mins | 2K DCP (orig. 16mm) | B&W | Mono  
Sound | Classification: E

#### Pensions for Veterans

Producers, Script, Editors, Sound: Norma  
DISHER, Jerome LEVY, Keith GOW; Music:  
(Dick HACKETT) // Cast: (Jerome LEVY,  
Narrator)

Australia | 1953 | 19 mins | DCP (orig. 16mm) |  
B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound | Classification: E

#### The Hungry Miles

Producers, Script, Editors, Sound: Norma  
DISHER, Jerome LEVY, Keith GOW // Cast:  
Leonard TEALE, narrator

Australia | 1955 | 25 mins | 2K DCP (orig.  
16mm) | B&W | 1.37:1 | Mono Sound |  
Classification: E

### Four's a Crowd

Producers, Script, Editors, Sound: Norma  
DISHER, Jerome LEVY, Keith GOW ; Script  
assistance: Hugh MASON ; Animations: Harry  
Reide // Cast: Jerome LEVY (Glass-arm Harry,  
Tiddly Pete, Nick-away Ned, Ron the Roaster ;  
Leonard TEALE (narrator)

Australia | 1955 | 25 mins | B&W | DCP (orig.  
16mm) | Mono Sound | Classification: E

#### Film-Work

Director: John HUGHES; Producer: HUGHES;  
Director of Photography: Margot NASH, Glenys  
PAGE; Editors: John WHITTERON, Chris  
WARNER, Viv CARROLL; Sound: WHITTERON,  
Tony STEVENS; Music: Andrew Duffield;  
Animation: Lisa PARRISH, Ray ARGALL

Australia | 1981 | 44 mins | 2K DCP (originally  
16mm) | Colour, B&W | Mono Sound | English |  
Classification: E

Source: The National Film and Sound Archive  
of Australia.



## Contributors

**Annouchka De Andrade** is an independent curator, screenwriter, producer and distributor. Previously Artistic Director of the Amiens International Film Festival, she has also worked with the French diplomatic service as Cultural Attaché, as director of the Institut Français in Seville, Spain, and as Regional Audiovisual Attaché for the Andean nations in Colombia. Over the past ten years, Annouchka worked

closely with her mother Sarah Maldoror. Alongside her sister Henda Ducados, Annouchka continues to develop projects which aim to value, preserve and restore the work of her parents, Sarah Maldoror and Mário de Andrade, a couple whose artistic and political commitment marked the 20th century.

**John Baxter** is an Australian-born writer, scholar, critic and film-maker who has lived in Paris since 1989. The







many books he has written include the first ever critical volume devoted to the Australian cinema as well as studies of Ken Russell, Josef von Sternberg, Stanley Kubrick, Woody Allen, Federico Fellini, George Lucas, Robert De Niro, Luis Bunuel and a number of studies of Paris. His most recent book is a biography of Charles Boyer.

**Rod Bishop** has worked as an educator, film critic, film maker and film producer. He co-wrote and produced *Body Melt* (Philip Brophy), was Director of the Australian Film Television and Radio School from 1996 to 2003 and a member of the committee that set up NITV. He is a foundation member of the Cinema Reborn Organising Committee.

**Adrian Danks** is Associate Professor, School of Media & Communication, RMIT University and Co-curator of the Melbourne Cinémathèque.

**Marshall Deutelbaum** is Professor Emeritus in English at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. He has published extensively on the films of Hong Sangsoo and on Alfred Hitchcock. His current research is focused on widescreen cinema.

**Geoff Gardner** appeared in the films *Brake Fluid*, *Beyond Fuller* and *Bonjour Balwyn*. He is Chair of the Organising Committee of Cinema Reborn

**Dr Helen Goritsas** holds a PhD in Visual Arts, from the Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney. She is the Course Coordinator of the Bachelor of Interactive Media program (2D/3D Animation, Film & Video and Game Design) and Senior lecturer of Film Studies and Film Production at the

Academy of Information Technology. Helen has served as President of Women in Film and Television NSW, Program Manager for the Media Mentorship for Women, Screen Composers initiatives with APRA-AMCOS, and Director of the Greek Film Festival of Australia. Helen is a filmmaker, film critic and radio presenter. She has published on film studies, film authorship and the cinemas of Satyajit Ray, Jane Campion and George Miller.

**Pamela Hutchinson** is the Weekly Film Bulletin Editor for Sight & Sound and a freelance writer, critic, film historian and programmer. Her publications include the BFI Film Classic on *Pandora's Box* and *30-Second Cinema* as well as essays in several edited collections. She is a Jury Member for the annual DVD Awards at Il Cinema Ritrovato and indulges her passion for silent cinema at [SilentLondon.co.uk](http://SilentLondon.co.uk)

**Ehsan Khoshbakht** is the co-director of Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna. He also makes documentaries. His debut feature *Filmfarsi* (2019) is still playing at festival circuit and his latest short, *Duke Ellington in Isfahan* (2021) was recently premiered at Telluride Film Festival.

**Adrian Martin** is an Australian-born film critic based in Spain. His most recent book is *Mysteries of Cinema* (University of Western Australia Publishing, 2020) and his website gathering over 40 years of writing is [www.filmcritic.com.au](http://www.filmcritic.com.au).

**Jane Mills** is an Associate Professor in Film Studies at the University of NSW. She has a production background in journalism, television and documentary, and has written and broadcast widely



on cinema, media, screen literacy, censorship, feminism, sociolinguistics and human rights. She's the Series Editor of *Australian Screen Classics*, a member of the Sydney Film Festival Advisory Panel, a Programmer for Antenna Documentary Festival and a Member of the NSW Education Standards Authority Advisory Group for Visual Arts. Her books include: *The Money Shot: Cinema Sin and Censorship*; *Loving and Hating Hollywood: Reframing Global and Local Cinemas*; and *Jedda*.

**Scott Murray** is an Australian filmmaker and author. He was one of the founders of *Cinema Papers*, which he edited for much of the next 30 years. Scott has also written, edited or contributed to 12 books and monographs on the cinema, as well as co-editing the online *Senses of Cinema*. In the early 1970s, he wrote and directed three short films (*Paola*, *Denial* and *Summer Shadows*) and co-directed a documentary about student unrest, *Beginnings*, before later making the feature film *Devil in the Flesh*, which was selected for Critics Week at Cannes in 1986. While continuing to write weekly on film for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*, he is readying for publication a 4-volume illustrated bibliography of the Arsène Lupin novels and short stories.

**Margot Nash** is a filmmaker and a Visiting Fellow in Communications at the University of Technology Sydney. Her collaborative documentary credits include the experimental short *Take* (2019 Victoria Hunt, Margot Nash) and the feature documentary *For Love Or Money* (1983 Megan McMurchy, Margot Nash, Margot Oliver, Jeni Thornley).

In 2021 her remastered feature drama *Vacant Possession* (1994) screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival and her remastered short *Shadow Panic* (1989) screened at Cinema Reborn. Her personal essay documentary *The Silences* (2015) screened nationally and internationally and in 2016 she won an Australian Writers' Guild AWGIE Award for the screenplay.

**Mark Pierce** is a Canberra writer who lived in France for several years and has a particular interest in the period of the German Occupation.

**Tony Rayns** is a British film critic, commentator, festival programmer and screenwriter. He recently recorded interviews and commentaries for the eight film boxset *Collaborations: The Cinema Of Zhang Yimou and Gong li* issued by the Australian DVD publisher Imprint.

**Janice Tong** is a cinephile and one-time film scholar. By day she runs a digital brand agency, by night she enjoys watching films and good Brit and Nordic crime dramas. She is particularly interested in the intersection of film, philosophy and literature, the cinema of Wong Kar-wai, as well as French and German cinemas. You can check out her film blog at: [nightfirehorse.wordpress.com/](http://nightfirehorse.wordpress.com/)

**Noel Vera** writes film criticism for Businessworld. He has written for *Cahiers du Cinema Espana*, *Rogue Magazine* Philippines, and Chris Fujiwara's *The Little Black Book of Movies*, among others. He is the author of *Critic After Dark: A Review of Philippine Cinema* and maintains a blog [criticafterdark.blogspot.com/](http://criticafterdark.blogspot.com/)

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Cinema Reborn would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Bidjigal people and Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, on whose land we meet. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all nations of this land.

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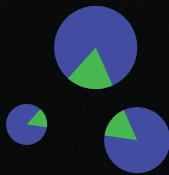
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