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Our Contra/Banned series declares: get your censorship off our cinema (pg 5-7)

Conversation at the Edge season begins (pg 14-15)

The Chicago International Film Festival returns to the Film Center (pg 19)
We’re often musing about the “life” of a film—from where it premieres to how it performs, from how long it will stay on our screens to what place it will hold in the career of the director or in cinema history. The life of a film takes on a different significance when the title is deemed (often by individuals who have never even seen it) “dangerous” and censored or pulled from cinemas entirely. Suddenly, considerations of box office take a back seat, and filmmakers and exhibitors find themselves quite seriously fighting for a film’s very existence. We’re living in a time when banning artistic perspective has become routine, even celebrated. In response, our Contra/Banned series (pg 5-7) explores films that have weathered the storm of censorship, showcasing titles that have faced categorizations of indecency and artists who have faced arrest and ostracization. This program, alongside our One and Done (pg 12-13) series, a slate of the best new releases of the fall, conversations (at the edge, and otherwise!) with visiting artists, and programs with our partners including the Chicago International Film Festival, Video Data Bank, the Chicago Underground Film Festival, and more make it quite clear: at the Film Center, cinematic freedom reigns.

Rebecca Fons
Director of Programming
ABOUT THE FILM CENTER

The Gene Siskel Film Center is Chicago’s premier art house cinema in the heart of the theater district, bringing film lovers together for an unparalleled movie-going experience. We present a curated collection of eclectic international, independent, and classic cinema with festivals and year-round programming while striving to provide a welcoming space reflective of Chicago's diverse community. As a public program of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Film Center fosters dialogue that sets films in historical and cultural context through panels, lectures, and filmmaker conversations.

164 North State Street Chicago, IL 60601
siskelfilmcenter.org

VISIT US

ACCESSIBILITY
The Gene Siskel Film Center strives to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals to engage fully. To request reasonable accommodations or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact filmcenter@saic.edu or call (312) 846-2600 at your earliest convenience.
siskelfilmcenter.org/accessibility

CONTENT CONSIDERATIONS
Based on lived experiences, the films we present may affect our individual audiences in different ways. When possible, we include a content consideration on films that may include potentially harmful content or themes.

CODE OF CONDUCT
The Gene Siskel Film Center is dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all guests. Everyone has the right to enjoy our programs and activities free of harassment, threats, mistreatment, or discrimination. We reserve the right to revoke access to any of our activities for anyone who does not adhere to the organization’s code of conduct.

GETTING HERE
Parking
Validated parking is available at the InterPark Self-Park at 20 E. Randolph for $20. Please obtain a validation from our box office staff.

Public Transportation
The Film Center is conveniently located near all major CTA train lines and several bus lines.

Biking to the Film Center
The Film Center is located near the Chicago Lakefront Trail and Divvy bike sharing stations.

OUR TEAM

Suzy Baran, Office Coordinator; Rebecca Fons, Director of Programming; Caroline Garske, Digital Communications Manager; Lily Goodman, Development Assistant; Jada-Amina Harvey, Black Harvest Film Festival Lead Curator; Lori Hile, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications; Nick Leffel, Black Harvest Film Festival Programming Coordinator; Emily Long, Executive Director; Brennan McMahon, Department Assistant; Dan Stolley, Operations Manager; Michael Wawzenek, Assistant Director of Media Technology; Projectionists: Esteban Alarcon, Lyra Hill, Ursula Rigber Wagner, Blair St George Wright; Front of House Leads: Amelia Bodenhorst Grand, Nico Valdez; Front of House Assistants: Ellie Beam, Dylan Benjamin, Aidan Ciuperca, Yeju Kang, Eunjin Lee, Emily Maloney, Emma Rzepczynski, Natia Ser. Gazette descriptions and synopses written by Rebecca Fons, unless otherwise noted. Gazette designed by Kaitlin Martin.
NEW RELEASES & RESTORATIONS
Opening dates subject to change; additional titles may be added. siskelfilmcenter.org

OPENS AUGUST 25
THE ETERNAL MEMORY
2023, dir. Maite Alberdi, Chile, 85 min. In Spanish with English subtitles / Format: Digital
Oscar-nominated Alberdi (THE MOLE AGENT) gracefully and empathetically documents the love story of Augusto and Paulina, who have been together for 25 years. Augusto, one of Chile’s most popular TV journalists for decades, is now eight years into an Alzheimer’s diagnosis, and relies on Paulina as his primary caretaker. As Augusto slowly forgets their lives together, and even Paulina, her love is steadfast. Winner of the Grand Jury Prize for documentary at the Sundance Film Festival, Alberdi’s film is a brilliant portrait of enduring love. Film Center exclusive.

OPENS SEPTEMBER 1
OUR FATHER, THE DEVIL (MON PÈRE, LE DIABLE)
2022, dir. Ellie Foumbi, USA, France, 108 min. In French with English subtitles / Format: Digital
African refugee Marie Cissé works as the head chef at a retirement home in a sleepy mountain town in the south of France. Her satisfying life is upended by the arrival of Father Patrick, an African priest who she recognizes as the warlord who slaughtered her family. A daring exploration of trauma and revenge, Foumbi’s feature debut is a fearless and explosive modern-day thriller, winner of top awards at the American Black Film Festival and the Tribeca Film Festival, and an Official Selection of our 2022 Black Harvest Film Festival. Film Center exclusive.

OPENS SEPTEMBER 1
2023 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL SHORT FILM TOUR
The 2023 Sundance Film Festival Short Film Tour presents seven short films curated from the festival, including two award-winning titles. Throughout its almost 40-year history, Sundance has supported short films, providing a platform for both established and new filmmakers to connect with audiences. The 2023 Short Film Tour program is a sampling of Sundance offerings and a testament to the unique storytelling potential that the format holds. Program: HELP ME UNDERSTAND (2023, dir. Aemilia Scott, USA, 14 min.), INGLORIOUS LIAISONS (2022, dirs. Chloé Alliez, Violette Delvoye, France, Belgium, 11 min.), PARKER (2023, dirs. Catherine Hoffman, Sharon Liese, USA, 13 min.), PRO POOL (2022, dir. Alec Pronovost, Canada, 8 min.), REST STOP (2022, dir. Crystal Kayiza, USA, 12 min.), TAKE ME HOME (pictured, 2023, dir. Liz Sargent, USA, 15 min.), and WHEN YOU LEFT ME ON THAT BOULEVARD (2023, dir. Kayla Abuda Galang, USA, 13 min.) Film Center exclusive.

OPENS SEPTEMBER 8
WERCKMEISTER HARMONIES
2000, dirs. Béla Tarr, Agnes Hranitzky, Hungary, Italy, Germany, France, 145 min. In Hungarian and Slovak with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
One of the major achievements of 21st-century cinema thus far, this mesmeric parable of societal collapse is an enigma of transcendent visual, philosophical, and mystical resonance. Adapted from a novel by the celebrated writer and frequent Tarr collaborator László Krasznahorkai, WERCKMEISTER HARMONIES unfolds in an unknown era in an unnamed village, where, one day, a mysterious circus—complete with an enormous stuffed whale and a shadowy, demagogue-like figure known as the Prince—arrives and appears to awaken a kind of madness in the citizens, which builds inexorably toward violence and destruction. In 39 of his signature long takes, engraved in ghostly black and white, Tarr conjures an apocalyptic vision of dreamlike dread and fathomless beauty. (Janus) Film Center exclusive.
OPENS SEPTEMBER 15
OUR BODY (NOTRE CORPS)
2023, dir. Claire Simon, France, 168 min.
In English and French and Spanish with English subtitles / Format: Digital
Documentary titan Simon (RÉCRÉATIONS, MIMI) observes the everyday operations of the gynecological ward in a public hospital in Paris. With a clear-eyed and thoughtful lens, Simon explores what it means to live in a woman’s body, filming the diversity, singularity, and beauty of patients in all stages of life. Through these many encounters, the specific fears, desires, and struggles of these individuals become the health challenges we all face, even the filmmaker herself. Brimming with compassion, and with a pace and tone that recalls the work of Frederick Wiseman, OUR BODY is a remarkable examination of life. Film Center exclusive.

OPENS SEPTEMBER 22
INVISIBLE BEAUTY
2023, dirs. Bethann Hardison, Frédéric Tcheng, USA, 115 min. In English and Spanish with English subtitles / Format: Digital
In this absorbing record, fashion revolutionary Bethann Hardison looks back on her journey as a pioneering Black model, modeling agent, and activist, shining a light on an untold chapter in the fight for racial diversity. From walking runway shows alongside Iman to discovering and mentoring models like Naomi Campbell, Hardison has been at the epicenter of major representational shifts in fashion. Catalyzing change requires continuous championing, and as the next generation takes the reins, Hardison reflects on her personal journey and the cost of being a pioneer. Film Center exclusive.

WAITING FOR THE LIGHT TO CHANGE
2023, dir. Linh Tran, USA, 89 min. In English / Format: Digital
Two high school best friends reunite for a week-long getaway at a Michigan lake house after years apart. As the week rolls on, and with little to do in early spring in the small lakeside town, they start to realize that their once-solid friendship is now on fragile ground, as both are growing into their 20-something selves. Local filmmaker Tran (MFA DePaul University) won the Slamdance Film Festival’s Grand Jury Prize for Best Narrative Film for her stunning debut. Film Center exclusive. Post-screening Q&As with director Tran: Saturday, September 23, 6:00PM; Sunday, September 24, 3:00PM.

FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE (BA WANG BIE JI)
1993, dir. Chen Kaige, China, Hong Kong, 170 min.
In Mandarin with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
Kaige’s acclaimed, long-out-of-print masterpiece chronicles the rise of two young stars of the Beijing Opera House, their turbulent relationship, and ultimate downfalls. Beginning in 1924 and spanning nearly half a century, FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE’s sumptuous narrative is interwoven with moments from some of the most troublesome times in modern Chinese history, including Japan’s 1937 invasion, through to the Chinese Cultural Revolution and its aftermath. A new 30th anniversary 4K restoration of the film’s original cut, this Palme d’Or winner and two-time Academy Award–nominated epic features incredible lead performances from international stars Leslie Cheung, Fengyi Zhang, and Gong Li. (Kino Lorber) Film Center exclusive.
OPENS SEPTEMBER 29
MAMI WATA
In West African Pidgin with English subtitles / Format: Digital

In Obasi’s modern fable—rendered in vivid monochromatic black-and-white—in the oceanside village of Iyi, the beloved Mama Efe acts as a mediator between the people and the powerful water deity Mami Wata. After a young boy in the community dies and a mysterious rebel deserter named Jasper arrives in the village, a conflict erupts, leading to a violent clash of ideologies and a crisis of faith for the people of Iyi. Visually sumptuous, MAMI WATA is a hypnotic, gripping folk tale that must be seen on the big screen. Opens exclusively at the Film Center.

OPENS OCTOBER 6
VERMEER – THE GREATEST EXHIBITION
2023, dir. David Bickerstaff, UK, 90 min. In English / Format: Digital

In the spring of 2023, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam opened its doors to the largest Vermeer exhibition in history. With loans from around the world, this major retrospective brings together Vermeer’s most famous masterpieces including Girl with a Pearl Earring, The Geographer, The Milkmaid, The Little Street, Lady Writing a Letter with her Maid, and Woman Holding a Balance—in all, 28 of his surviving 35 works. The Amsterdam show sold out within days of going on sale. With VERMEER – THE GREATEST EXHIBITION, you have a VIP ticket and privileged view of the exhibition, accompanied by the director of the Rijksmuseum and the curators of the show. Film Center exclusive. Post-screening Q&As with executive producer Phil Grabsky Friday, October 6, 6:30PM, Saturday, October 7, 12:00PM.

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Interested in theater rentals? Visit: siskelfilmcenter.org/rentals

Theater rentals available during non-programming hours.
As a disturbing wave of bans—on books, on bodies, on identities—continues to sweep across the United States, the Film Center declares: get your censorship off our cinema. With Contra/Banned, we present 10 films that have experienced, in varying absurd degrees, their own bans and outrages, their own protests and regulations. The films of Contra/Banned are at times subversive, controversial, taboo, provocative, and shocking. Sounds like a good time at the movies to us.
siskelfilmcenter.org/contrabanned

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 6:00PM & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1:30PM
L'AMORE
1948, dir. Roberto Rossellini, Italy, 69 min. In Italian with English subtitles / Format: Digital
Made in the same decade as Rossellini’s remarkable “war trilogy” (ROME, OPEN CITY; PAISAN; and GERMANY, YEAR ZERO), L'AMORE is made up of two distinct short films, both starring the Italian powerhouse Anna Magnani. In THE HUMAN VOICE, an unnamed woman has a fraught conversation over the phone with her lover, and in THE MIRACLE the devoutly religious Nannina believes she has been impregnated by Saint Joseph. It was this second film that sparked outrage in the United States, and it was yanked from its New York premiere and condemned by the National Legion of Decency and Catholic authorities for indecency. When the New York Board of Regents revoked the film’s license entirely, distributor Joseph Burstyn took the battle all the way to the Supreme Court, who, in a unanimous 1952 ruling, decided that film was a form of artistic expression, and therefore free-speech protected by the First Amendment. Grazie mille, Rossellini.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 8:00PM & MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 6:00PM
ROBOCOP: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT
1987, dir. Paul Verhoeven, USA, 102 min. In English / Format: 4K Digital
Set in 2029 in a destitute, near post-apocalyptic Detroit, after cop Alex Murphy is brutally murdered in the line of duty, he is reborn as RoboCop, an unstoppable, crime-fighting cyborg. Threatened with an X rating—box office poison—from the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), Verhoeven was forced to reedit his sci-fi satire multiple times to remove the more outrageous carnage. His original vision, presented in this series, was intended to be near-comical in its displays of violence, but the MPAA's required edits muffled the surreal quality of the film. As Verhoeven noted in 2014, “It was very unusual that people would tell me how to shoot my movie. But the distributor said they wanted an R, not an X, and I understood that. So we went back to edit it. And each of those eight times we had to cut off a little more violence here, violence there. It was give and take, but I’m not sure if it was working with the MPAA, or working against them. They were very adamant.”

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 3:00PM & WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 6:00PM
ECSTASY (EKSTASE)
1933, dir. Gustav Machatý, Czechoslovakia, 82 min. In Czech and German with English subtitles / Format: Digital
Machatý’s dreamy, minimalist drama stars a young Hedy Lamarr (then billed as Hedy Kiesler), as Eva, who, unhappy in her sexless marriage with her husband Emil, begins a passionate affair with the virile construction worker Adam. Denounced by Pope Pius XI and banned in Germany, ECSTASY was the first film to be blocked by the United States Customs Service from entering the country after being deemed obscene and immoral, denounced as “dangerously indecent” because (brace yourself, dear audience) it contains the first on-screen instance of a woman experiencing an orgasm. Perhaps more scandalous: ECSTASY is a film decidedly focused on one woman’s search for emotional and physical pleasure.

Complimentary beer—while supplies last!—for ticket holders to L'AMORE and ROBOCOP on September 1, courtesy our friends at Revolution Brewery! Must be 21+ to redeem.
Also, join us for opening weekend, and receive a limited-edition “I watch banned movies” sticker with ticket! While supplies last.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 5:00PM & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1:30PM
THE GIRL ON THE MOTORCYCLE (LA MOTOCYCLETTE)
1968, dir. Jack Cardiff, UK, France, 91 min. In English / Format: Digital

Famed cinematographer Cardiff (THE RED SHOES, THE AFRICAN QUEEN) directs this hypnotic and oh-so-60s road trip on two wheels that stars Marianne Faithfull as the titular girl, Rebecca. After waking up next to her impotent husband Raymond, Rebecca, bored and dreaming of her former lover Daniel (Alain Delon), dons a black leather catsuit (and nothing else) and jumps on her motorbike to reunite with him. As she rides, she indulges in erotic, psychedelic reveries about her relationship with the two men and the power she feels as a desirable woman. THE GIRL ON THE MOTORCYCLE holds the distinction of being the first film to receive an X rating from the MPAA, and was released in the United States under the far more evocative and suggestive title, NAKED UNDER LEATHER. Considered soft porn by some (though the film is, even by 1968 standards, decidedly tame), and exploitation cinema by others, the film is a hazy, sexually liberated joyride.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 7:30PM & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 3:30PM
THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST
1988, dir. Martin Scorsese, USA, Canada, 164 min. In English / Format: 35mm

With its screenplay by Paul Schrader (TAXI DRIVER), Scorsese’s ambitious and personal examination of faith stars an outstanding Willem Dafoe as Jesus Christ struggling with his religious and political convictions. Upon its release, the film received as much intense hostility as it did critical acclaim, with boycotts organized by Christian groups who condemned the film’s departure from gospel narratives, including a sex scene between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Protests were staged at Universal Studios, and the studio responded with an open letter in newspapers across the country reiterating that it was the First Amendment right of Americans to see the film. Nevertheless, the film was banned in New Orleans, Oklahoma City, and Savannah; theater chains pulled the title from their lineups for fear of retribution and picketers; and, according to Roger Ebert, Scorsese received death threats from evangelical zealots, many of whom—of course—had not seen the film.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 3:00PM & FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 6:00PM
PROMISES! PROMISES!
1963, dir. King Donovan, USA, 90 min. (approximately) In English / Format: 35mm + Digital supplements

An otherwise unremarkable comic romp about two pregnant wives and paternity confusion, PROMISES! PROMISES! made history as the first major Hollywood release to feature nudity by a mainstream star, Jayne Mansfield. Released in the dying days of the Hays Code and before the MPAA established their ratings system, Mansfield’s breasts shocked the nation. Behind-the-scenes photos were published in Playboy, prompting Hugh Hefner to be arrested in Chicago on obscenity charges. The film was banned in numerous cities, and—as we learned when sourcing it for this series—an original version of the film fit for big-screen exhibition is elusive. To that end, we will present the first titillating seven minutes of the film digitally, before switching to the edited 35mm print provided by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences. Scenes that dreamily flash back to Mansfield’s nudity have been cut from the print, and jarring edits indicate where censors have gotten their hands on the celluloid.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 5:15PM & FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 8:30PM
BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS
1970, dir. Russ Meyer, USA, 109 min. In English / Format: Digital

Having made a name for himself as the “King of the Nudies,” sexploitation master Russ Meyer was given a substantial budget by Twentieth Century-Fox to direct a sequel to one of their biggest hits: Mark Robson’s 1967 VALLEY OF THE DOLLS. With a script written by Roger Ebert, Meyer’s film is a satirical, psychedelic cautionary tale about three young female musicians who head to Hollywood determined to make it big, but are instead pulled into a sleazy world of sex and drugs. BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS was given an X rating by the MPAA (reclassified as NC-17 in 1990) and Grace Kelly, who was a member of Fox’s board of directors, lobbied to have Meyer’s contract to the studio terminated. Critics branded Meyers a “pornographer” and Jacqueline Susann, author of Valley of the Dolls sued Fox—and posthumously won—for damaging her reputation with the film because it “employs total nudity and is scandalous of content.” Disney purchased Fox and their entire library of films in 2019, but has yet to make BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS available on Disney+.
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 6:00PM & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 3:45PM
SCARFACE
1932, dir. Howard Hawks, USA, 93 min. In English / Format: 4K Digital restoration
This seminal gangster film, loosely based on Chicago’s own Al Capone (who was rumored to have liked the film so much that he obtained a copy), SCARFACE was produced and filmed during the pre-Code era, when regulations on film content were scant, and released at the outset of the enforcement of the Motion Picture Production Code (also known as the Hays Code). Concerned with the film’s grisly violence and sympathetic portrayal of mobsters, the release of SCARFACE was delayed, and Hawks was required to make substantial edits, including deleting scenes deemed overly sexual. Screenwriter Howard Hughes was even forced to write an alternate ending that condemned gang violence. Retitled as SCARFACE: THE SHAME OF THE NATION (subtle!), the film’s release was further stymied when it was rejected by the Chicago Film Review Board, a department of the Chicago Police Department. This 4K restoration of the original, unaltered theatrical cut is followed by footage that was shot to appease censor boards.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 8:00PM & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 7:00PM
PINK FLAMINGOS
1972, dir. John Waters, USA, 93 min. In English / Format: 35mm
Waters’s subversive counterculture shocker stars the iconic Divine as Babs Johnson, a wanted criminal deemed by tabloids to be the “Filthiest Person Alive.” When her title is challenged by two sociopaths, a foul fight, where no taboo is off limits, begins. Featuring pig heads, cannibalism, and feces—oh my!—the film was given an NC-17 rating by the MPAA for its “wide range of perversions in explicit details” and banned in Australia, Norway, and—allegedly still to this day—Hicksville, New York. Beloved by late night and grindhouse audiences from the start, PINK FLAMINGOS celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022 with a Criterion Collection release (the disc comes with a barf bag) and, in a comforting case of the establishment embracing the indecent, a place in the National Film Registry, a division of the federal government.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 8:30PM
FLAMING CREATURES
1963, dir. Jack Smith, USA, 43 min. In English / Format: 16mm
Promptly after the premiere of FLAMING CREATURES—Smith’s orgiastic, messy tangle of bodies, lipstick, and vampires—at the Bleeker Street Cinema in New York City, police arrived at the theater and seized the print, and the film was banned across the country and internationally. Filmmaker Jonas Mekas, who was charged with violating New York’s obscenity laws for screening the film in 1964, wrote in Film Comment of his arrest, “It is my duty as an artist and as a man to show the best work of my contemporaries to the people. It is my duty to bring to your attention the ridiculousness and illegality of the licensing and obscenity laws. The duty of the artist is to ignore bad laws and fight them every moment of his life. All works of art, all expressions of man’s spirit must be permitted, must be available to the people. In what times do we live, when works of art are identified with the workings of crime? What a beautiful insanity!”

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17
SOJOURNER TRUTH
This program of shorts, which includes films from Ayoka Chenzira, Carol Munday Lawrence, and Madeline Anderson, is kid-tested, parent-approved! For this special Kid Flix presentation, movielovers age 12 and under get in free, and tickets for those 13 and up are just $5. Even better: everyone gets a free popcorn! Program runs approximately 70 min, appropriate for ages 8+

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28 & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29
FANTASIA
1940, dirs. James Algar, Samuel Armstrong, Ford Beebe Jr., USA, 125 min. In English / Format: Digital
A landmark achievement in animation, Walt Disney’s timeless masterpiece is an ambitious extravaganza of sight and sound that is even more spectacular on the big screen. From “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” to “Night on Bald Mountain,” FANTASIA is a marvel. Appropriate for ages 6+

siskelfilmcenter.org/kidflix

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For more information: siskelfilmcenter.org/sojourner

Photo of Monica Freeman by Edie Lynch; design by Michael W. Phillips, Jr.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 3:15PM
BLACK GIRL (LA NOIRE DE...), PRECEDED BY BOROM SARRET & NIAYE
1966, Senegal, France, 59 min. In French with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
With the brilliant BLACK GIRL, Sembène transforms a deceptively simple plot—about a Senegalese woman who moves to France to work for a wealthy white couple and finds that life in their apartment becomes a figurative and literal prison—into a layered critique on the lingering colonialist mindset of a supposedly postcolonial world. BLACK GIRL, one of the essential films of the 1960s, is a harrowing human drama as well as a radical political statement. Preceded by BOROM SARRET (1963, 20 min.) and NIAYE (1964, 35 min.)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1:00PM
MANDABI
1968, Senegal, France, 91 min. In Wolof and French with English subtitles / Format: Digital
In first movie ever made in the Wolof language—a major step toward the realization of Sembène’s dream of creating a cinema by, about, and for Africans—after Ibrahima receives 25,000 francs, news of his windfall quickly spreads among his neighbors, who flock to him for loans. MANDABI—an adaptation of a novella by the director himself—is a bitterly ironic depiction of a society scarred by colonialism and plagued by corruption, greed, and poverty.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 6:00PM
EMITAI
1971, Senegal, France, 91 min. In Wolof and French with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
EMITAI envisions both the cruelties of oppression and the revolutionary potential of the oppressed. During World War II, French forces and their African lackeys comb the Senegalese countryside, conscripting young men into service and seizing rice stores for soldiers back in Europe. With unflinching realism, Sembène explores the strains that colonialism places upon cultural traditions and discovers a people’s hidden reserves of rebellion and dignity.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 6:00PM
XALA
1975, Senegal, 123 min. In Wolof and French with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
On the night of his wedding to a third bride, a government official is rendered impotent. After suspecting that one of his other wives has placed a curse (xala) on him, and after enlisting a local marabout for a cure, he must face the possibility that he deserves the infliction for his part in the embezzlement of public funds and for helping to keep Senegal in French hands. Combining elements from African folklore and popular cinema, XALA indicts the immoral hubris of entitled male authority figures and Senegalese sellouts.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 8:30PM
CEDDO
1977, Senegal, France, 117 min. In English and Wolof, Arabic and Dyula with English subtitles / Format: 4K Digital restoration
In precolonial Senegal, members of the Ceddo (“outsiders”) kidnap Princess Dior Yacine after her father pledges loyalty to an Islamic faction that plans to convert the entire clan to its faith. Attempts to recapture her fail, provoking further division and eventual war between the animistic Ceddo and the fundamentalist Muslims, with Christian missionaries and slave traders from Europe caught in the middle. Banned in Sembène’s native Senegal upon its original release, CEDDO is an ambitious epic that explores the combustible interstices among ancient tradition, religious colonization, political opportunism, and individual freedom.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 6:00PM
GUELWAAR
1992, Senegal, France, Germany, USA, 114 min. In Wolof and French with English subtitles / Format: Digital
“Guelwaar” is the nickname of a political radical and agitator whose criticism of Senegal’s reliance on foreign aid ruffles the feathers of the powers-that-be. His suspicious death is followed by a farcical mix-up when his corpse is mistaken for that of another man and accidentally interred in an Islamic cemetery. At once a tragicomic study of social atomization and a hopeful vision of Pan-African solidarity and independence, GUELWAAR is Sembène’s masterclass in interweaving complex storylines and merging disparate stylistic tones.
Our fall Lecture Series celebrates 30 years of essential contributions to moving-image culture that alums from the Department of Film, Video, New Media, and Animation at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago have produced. Central to the development of highly influential positions in the field of independent and experimental media, the international character of the department has been singularly essential to those positions, as the cultural diversity of the community produced the necessity for expanding practices beyond specific conditions, languages, or customs, driving many working procedures toward expansive trans-cultural practices. This series will frame specific issues relating to nonfiction moving-image practice such as the multiple valences of the archive, the question of the document, the recuperation of repressed histories, the poetics of subjective perspectives within communal experience, and technological adaptation. These topics will frame conversations with our alums who have extended these themes over the last decades in their own work and practice. (Daniel Eisenberg)

Runs through December 12. Lecturer: Daniel Eisenberg, SAIC Professor of Film, Video, New Media, and Animation. See website for full program and exhibition formats.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 6:00PM
THE ARCHIVE AND THE IMAGE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 6:00PM
SHORT FILMS OF APICHATPONG WEERASETHAKUL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 6:00PM
NICARAGUA HERE-SAY / SEE-HEAR AND THE UNIMAGINED LIVES OF OUR NEIGHBORS
1986, 2019, dir. Jeffrey Sholler, USA
Former SAIC Professor Sholler has been making, researching, and writing about film since the mid-1970s. His 2015 book Shadows, Specters, Shards: Making History in Avant-Garde Film explored the relationship of subjective, experimental film practice to historical experience, engaging some of the most significant social and intellectual debates of the last three decades. NICARAGUA HERE-SAY / SEE-HEAR (50 min.) is a prescient film is made with a hand-cranked Bolex in Nicaragua, and THE UNIMAGINED LIVES OF OUR NEIGHBORS (pictured, 2019, USA, 27 min.), is a first-person remembrance of Joseph Fischer, one of the first US sailors on the ground in post-atomic Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 6:00PM
DISPLACED PERSON AND COOPERATION OF PARTS
1981, 1987, dir. Daniel Eisenberg, USA
With the first two films of his POSTWAR trilogy—DISPLACED PERSON (pictured, 10 min.) and COOPERATION OF PARTS (40 min.)—Eisenberg explores two different traumatic histories, using film form to express what could not be expressed through language alone. As David Schwartz of Museum of the Moving Image noted, both films “deal with European uprooting, and through a distilled reshaping of images and narrated texts, raise questions about how knowledge and consciousness are transmitted.” Sholler in attendance, in conversation with Daniel Eisenberg.
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 6:00PM
THE ART OF MEMORY

Rea Tajiri’s HISTORY AND MEMORY (1991, USA, 32 min.) interweaves interviews, memorabilia, and the story of her father, who had been drafted pre-Pearl Harbor and returned to find his family’s house removed from its site. Throughout, she surveys the memories of the living and spirits of the dead. Cecilia Cornejo’s I WONDER WHAT YOU WILL REMEMBER OF SEPTEMBER (2004, USA, 27 min.) presents a haunting personal response to the events of September 11, 2001. With evocative imagery from both past and present, Cornejo weaves together her own fading childhood memories, her parents vivid recollections of the September 11, 1973 coup in Chile and post-9/11 conversations with her own young daughter, exploring how personal and collective histories intersect, as well as how trauma is lived and passed from one generation to the next. With THE WORLD (pictured, 2021, USA, 18 min.) Peixuan Ouyang produces a personal essay about connection and disconnection, in and through different realities: diverse representations of real and imagined spaces and manufactured projections of personal and national identity. Ouyang and Cornejo in attendance.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 6:00PM
PERSISTENCE

1997, dir. Daniel Eisenberg, USA, 86 min. In English / Format: 16mm

Third in the POSTWAR film trilogy, after DISPLACED PERSON and COOPERATION OF PARTS (screening September 26), PERSISTENCE is a meditation on the time just after a great historical event, about what is common to moments such as these, about the continuous and discontinuous threads of history. PERSISTENCE does away with conventional thinking about linear time and reconfigures our relationship to historical and durational experience. Using archival materials as well as film shot for some future archive, the prevailing consciousness of ‘history’—its multiple narratives and appearances—is always close at hand.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 6:00PM
THE SHORT FILMS OF BEATRIZ SANTIAGO MUÑOZ

Muñoz (MFA 1997) is an artist whose expanded moving-image work is entangled with Boalian theater, experimental ethnography, and feminist thought. She tends to work with non-actors and incorporates improvisation into her process. Her recent work is on the sensorial unconscious of anti-colonial movements, feminist experiments with form, and everyday poetic work in the Caribbean. Her work actively extends essayist form and confirms a unique poetic sensibility. Program: EL CUERVO, LA FOSA Y LA YEGUA (2021, Puerto Rico, USA, 16 min.), EL OMBLIGO DEL SUEÑO/LAJAS (2022, Puerto Rico, USA, 6 min), EL OMBLIGO DEL SUENO/CANTERA (2022, Puerto Rico, USA, 6 min), MARCHE SALOMON (pictured, 2015, Puerto Rico, USA, 16 min.), NOCTURNE (2014, Puerto Rico, USA, 31 min), and LAUREL SABINO Y JAGUILLA (2019, Puerto Rico, USA, 11 min.) Muñoz in attendance.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 6:00PM
THE SHORT FILMS OF STEFFANI JEMISON

Steffani Jemison (MFA 2009) lives and works in New York. She attends to the seam between conceptual precepts and embodied knowledge. Her multidisciplinary approach spans time-based, sculptural, and discursive mediums, informed by deep research into movement practices, literature, ethnomusicology, and the history of cinema. A 2020 recipient of a Creative Capital Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship, among other honors, her recent work examines the liberatory potential of opacity and quiet. Jemison in attendance.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 6:00PM
EVERYDAY LIFE

Pedagogy, performance, simulation, repetition... how we learn to do what we do, to be social, to be a citizen, all figure into this program of films. Informed by Baudrillard’s theory of the simulacra, Harun Farocki’s HOW TO LIVE IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY (pictured, 1990, Germany, 79 min.) stands outside his large oeuvre for its playfulness and humor, as we see the passage of knowledge performed before our eyes. Lori Felker’s PATIENCE (2023, USA, 19 min.) and Peng Zuqiang’s ACCORDION CLASS (2016, People’s Republic of China, 19 min.) trace more contemporary models, each a revelation of social construction. Felker in attendance, in conversation with Peng via Zoom.
Consider your favorite filmmaker—you’ve probably seen all of their work, right? You’ve watched their filmography forward and backward, defended their “lesser” films, and chosen your favorites. Film appreciation often involves considering an entire filmography, comparing early work, tracking evolutions of style, and appreciating late-career reinventions. But what of the filmmaker who made just one feature film? Artists who provide audiences with no other title to compare and contrast, and whose feature work is by design, by disappointment, or by death—singular? In One and Done we consider the work of gifted filmmakers who, for myriad reasons, never directed another feature film again, and invite audiences to appreciate the rarity while imagining what might have been. siskelfilmcenter.org/oneanddone

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 8:45PM & THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 8:30PM
TRUE STORIES
1986, dir. David Byrne, USA, 89 min. In English / Format: 35mm
When Byrne directed TRUE STORIES, he was already a huge star as the frontman for Talking Heads. He’s gone on to direct music videos, short films, and documentaries, but TRUE STORIES stands out not just as the only feature narrative he’s ever directed, but also as a delightfully strange film that feels possible only with Byrne at the helm. Byrne stars as a cowboy-hat-wearing narrator who journeys through a series of vignettes “about a bunch of people in Virgil Texas,” including lovesick singer Louis Fyne (John Goodman) and the bedridden Miss Rollings (Swoosie Kurtz), all preparing for the 150th anniversary of Texas, deemed the “Celebration of Specialness.” A musical patchwork of good natured weirdness, TRUE STORIES, while not a commercial success at the time of its release, was embraced by critics, including Roger Ebert, who called the film “a bold attempt to paint a bizarre American landscape.” That Byrne attempted no other feature narrative film seems fitting, TRUE STORIES is a perfect, particular chapter in his boundless career.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 5:30PM & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 3:00PM
JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T.
1992, dir. Leslie Harris, USA, 92 min. In English / Format: Digital
With its United States premiere at the Sundance Film Festival, JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T. introduced audiences to the trailblazing writer-director Harris, who took home a special jury prize for her debut. The story—about Chantal, a Black teenager living in Brooklyn, determined to realize her dreams of going to college and getting out of the projects—was, as Harris states in the end credits, “A Film Hollywood Dared Not Do.” After its release, Harris’s screenplay pitches, focused on stories of pioneering Black women, including female hip-hop artists and the first African American female pilot, found no traction. Similar to the career of Julie Dash, who struggled to find funding after her acclaimed 1991 film DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST, Harris has voiced her frustration, “It’s still rare to have a Black director, writer, and producer making a film with a Black lead female character. I tend to write films that deal with one Black woman’s story...that’s where it becomes a little tricky in the film industry.”

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 7:45PM & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 6:00PM
PHASE IV
1974, dir. Saul Bass, UK, USA, 84 min. In English / Format: Digital
An acclaimed graphic designer who created original logos for United Airlines, Warner Bros., and AT&T and designed the title sequences for THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN ARM, THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH, and PSYCHO, Bass also served as storyboard artist and visual consultant for Stanley Kubrick and Alfred Hitchcock, among others. It is no wonder that his solo directorial effort is visually striking, a film the trailer declared as “a new kind of film experience.” Inspired by H. G. Wells’s 1905 short story “Empire of the Ants” (myrmecophobics, you’ve been warned), PHASE IV is set in an Arizona farm town, where sentient ants have waged war on humans. A man vs. nature oddity, Bass used macro photographic footage of real ants, psychedelic montages, and intense close-ups to tell the surreal story, leading critics to deride the effort as all style, no substance, with the New York Times writing, “PHASE IV cries for a PHASE V of fuller explanations.” Ironically marketed without a Bass designed poster, PHASE IV eventually gained cult status, though it marked the end of Bass’s directorial career.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 5:30PM & THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 8:30PM
THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER
1955, dir. Charles Laughton, USA, 92 min. In English / Format: 35mm
A revered actor of the stage and screen, Laughton won an Academy Award for THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII and generated accolades for his versatility in roles like Captain Bligh in MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY and Quasimodo in THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME. In THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER, Robert Mitchum plays arguably one of the most terrifying on-screen villains, Reverend Harry Powell, a murdering grifter who marries a widow in order to rob her. Now considered an expressionist film noir masterpiece, the film was a critical and financial failure upon its release, with the UK Times declaring, “Mr. Laughton is a highly intelligent man, nothing that he does is without interest. THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER is indeed none the less interesting for being a failure.” Laughton was devastated by the reception and never directed another film again.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 6:00PM & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2:00PM
L’ATALANTE
1934, dir. Jean Vigo, France, 89 min. In French and Russian with English subtitles / Format: Digital
A heartbreaking inclusion in this series, Vigo—who passed away due to complications from tuberculosis at age 29—immeasurably influenced both the poetic realism and French New Wave movements. A pioneering and political artist (his short film ZERO FOR CONDUCT was deemed “anti-French” and banned by Parisian authorities), Vigo employed new techniques to tell a story, including an inspired “underwater” sequence that elevate L’ATALANTE’s relatively simple plot about the stormy start to a young couple’s marriage to lyrical and dreamily erotic heights. Regularly included in Sight & Sound’s Greatest Films of All Time poll (coming in 34th in 2022), Vigo’s only feature-length film was called “one of the supreme achievements in the history of cinema” by Jonathan Rosenbaum, and is impossible to watch without mourning the tragically short life of Vigo, whose entire filmography can be watched in fewer than three hours.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 8:00PM & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 4:00PM
WANDA
1970, dir. Barbara Loden, USA, 102 min. In English / Format: Digital
In Loden’s remarkable, verité-style portrait of womanhood, the titular Wanda (played by Loden) is an unhappy housewife who drifts through rural coal mining country after leaving her husband and children. A woman unmoored, Wanda wanders from man to man—a one-night stand, a criminal, a stranger—their abusive and dismissive treatment of her a reflection of the tyranny of misogyny in America. Made at a time when few women were behind the camera, WANDA shook the foundations of independent cinema and unwaveringly presented a flawed female protagonist still rarely seen on screen, even more than 50 years later. Though critically lauded—the film premiered at the Venice Film Festival, the only film from America that year—WANDA never received distribution and was criminally underseen. Loden turned her creative attention to the stage and tragically died in 1980.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 8:30PM & TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 6:30PM
CARNIVAL OF SOULS
1962, dir. Herk Harvey, USA, 78 min. In English / Format: Digital
Now considered a B-movie classic about the sole survivor of a fatal car accident whose visions of a demonic character draw her to a deserted carnival on the outskirts of town, Harvey’s CARNIVAL OF SOULS went relatively unnoticed after its inauspicious premiere in Lawrence, Kansas, where it was largely filmed. After nearly a decade successfully directing educational short films (with titles like WHY STUDY HOME ECONOMICS?) Harvey shot CARNIVAL OF SOULS in three weeks and on a shoe-string budget, saving time and money employing many of the camera techniques he had learned at his day job. A truly independent production, Harvey funded the film with $500 investments from Kansas businessmen, used mirrors to achieve special effects, and collaborated with a local organist on the score. Later gaining a cult following, Harvey’s solo feature is a macabre masterpiece, which George Romero and David Lynch have credited as an influence.
conversations at the edge

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 6:00PM
SU FRIEDRICH: SINK OR SWIM AND RULES OF THE ROAD
1990–93, USA, 79 min. In English / Format: 16mm and digital

For nearly a half-century, Su Friedrich has played a pivotal role in American queer cinema and autobiographical film, with her rich and often unflinching explorations of family, kinship, and society. Her landmark featurette SINK OR SWIM (pictured, 1990) is a wrenching portrait of a girl’s fraught relationship with her father, unspooling in a series of 26 evocative and interlocking vignettes. Screening with her wry breakup short RULES OF THE ROAD (1993).

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 8:30PM
SU FRIEDRICH: TODAY
2022, USA, 57 min. In English / Format: Digital

Su Friedrich’s latest is a luminous personal essay on beauty, love, and loss. Endeavoring to live by and also question the maxim to “live in the moment,” Friedrich turns her camera to the world immediately in front of her: a neighborhood barbecue, a bucolic landscape, and the devastating losses of loved ones.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 6:00PM
SOJOURNER TRUTH FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS: INTERIOR LIVES
1981–2020, USA, 84 min. In English / Format: 16mm and digital video

In 1976, an extraordinary group of Black feminist artists organized the first-ever Black women’s film festival: the Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts. Four decades later, a new generation of artists, curators, and scholars have revived the festival. Foregrounding Black women’s interiority, this program kicks off four days of screenings and discussions, commemorating the original event and celebrating the rich legacy of Black feminist filmmaking that continues today. Pictured: SPIN CYCLE (dir. Aarin Burch, 1991). For more on the Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts, see page 8.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 6:00PM
ŽELIMIR ŽILNIK: SHORT FILMS
1971–77, Yugoslavia, West Germany, 71 min. Multiple languages with English subtitles / Multiple formats

For more than 50 years, renowned Serbian director Želimir Žilnik has produced a body of trailblazing and politically committed films. A key member of Yugoslavia’s rebellious Black Wave film movement of the 1960s and a pioneer of docufiction, Žilnik’s perspective was shaped by Nazi atrocity, Yugoslavia’s turbulent history, and periods of exile. This program brings together four of Žilnik’s most powerful and innovative shorts, including BLACK FILM (1971), UPRISING IN JAZAK (1973), INVENTORY (pictured, 1975), and MARKET PEOPLE (1977).
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 6:00PM
ŽELIMIR ŽILNIK: MARBLE ASS
1995, FR Yugoslavia, 87 min.
In Serbian with English subtitles / Format:
Beta video transferred to 35mm
Winner of the Teddy for best feature at the 1995 Berlin Film Festival, MARBLE ASS is Žilnik’s breakthrough celebration of queer life in former Yugoslavia shot during the Balkans War. Starring the late Merlinka as a version of herself, the film follows the lives of Merlin and Sanela—two trans women who turn to sex work as a means of financial security and an act of political resistance against the militant machismo of wartime culture.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1:00PM
ŽELIMIR ŽILNIK: LOGBOOK SERBISTAN
2015, Serbia, 94 min.
In multiple languages with English subtitles / Format: Digital
Over the last two decades, Žilnik has produced a startlingly original body of work on the struggles of undocumented immigrants and refugees. In the award-winning LOGBOOK SERBISTAN, he casts Middle Eastern and African refugees fleeing war and poverty in stories based on their experiences seeking asylum.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 6:00PM
LAWRENCE ANDREWS: MYTHICPOTENTIALITIES
2019, USA, 60 min. In English / Format: Digital, sound-only
In the genre-defying imageless video mythicPotentialities (2021), artist Lawrence Andrews examines the murder of Emmett Till, the trial that followed, and the ways these events have been portrayed in mass media and popular culture. Presented in partnership with Video Data Bank.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 6:00PM
BEATRIZ SANTIAGO MUÑOZ: ORIANA AND GOSILA
2018–23, Puerto Rico, 88 min. In Spanish with English subtitles / Format: Digital
In Beatriz Santiago Muñoz’s ORIANA (pictured), a band of feminist warriors takes refuge in a verdant Puerto Rican landscape. Inspired by French writer and theorist Monique Wittig’s radical 1969 novel Les Guérillères, the film visualizes possibilities for a new world. Screening with Muñoz’s exquisite short GOSILA (2018), about sense making in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Screenings, performances, and talks by groundbreaking media artists. Free for SAIC students. Visit siskelfilmcenter.org/conversations-edge for full schedule and program details. CATE is a collaboration between the Film Center, the Video Data Bank, and SAIC’s Department of Film, Video, New Media and Animation, organized by Amy Beste, Director of Public Programs, SAIC.

All CATE events are presented with real-time captions (CART). For additional accessibility requests, please visit saic.edu/access or write cate@saic.edu.
SPECIAL EVENTS
& PARTNER PROGRAMS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 6:30PM RECEPTION / 7:30PM SCREENING
CUFF OPENING NIGHT: HELLO DANKNESS
2023, dir. Soda Jerk, Australia, 70 min. In English / Format: Digital

The 30th annual Chicago Underground Film Festival kicks off at the Film Center with an opening reception followed by a 7:30PM presentation of Soda Jerk’s award-winning HELLO DANKNESS. Composed entirely of hundreds of pirated film samples, HELLO DANKNESS is a bent suburban musical that bears witness to the psychotropic cultural spectacle of the period 2016 to 2021. Set in the American suburbs, the film follows a neighborhood through these years as consensus reality disintegrates into conspiracies and other political contagions. Part political satire, zombie stoner film, and Greek tragedy, the work is also informed by the encrypted memetics of contemporary internet culture. (CUFF) Post-screening Q&A with director Soda Jerk. Learn more and get tickets at cuff.org

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 6:00PM
AFTER ANTARCTICA
2021, dir. Tasha Van Zandt, USA, 105 min. In English / Format: Digital

Join Colossal, an international platform for contemporary art and visual expression, and the Design Museum of Chicago for this special screening of Van Zandt’s award-winning feature-length documentary that follows renowned polar explorer Will Steger’s life journey as an eyewitness to the greatest changes in the polar regions of our planet. Thirty years after his historic expedition across the coldest continent on Earth, Steger is not only known for being the first in history to complete this historic feat—he is also the last. Post-screening discussion hosted by Colossal.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 7:00PM
CHICAGO FILM SOCIETY PRESENTS: CELLULOID NOW

The Chicago Film Society (CFS) returns with another edition of Celluloid Now, four days of screenings and workshops celebrating contemporary analog film exhibition and artist filmmaking, projected entirely on film. Join CFS at the Gene Siskel Film Center for a special, jumbo-sized program of 35mm shorts, featuring brand new prints and other surprises! Program runs approximately 120 min. Additional Celluloid Now programs will be presented at Constellation (September 21) and the Chicago Cultural Center (September 23 & 24). Learn more at celluloidnow.org; tickets at siskelfilmcenter.org

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 3:00PM
JOFFREY: MAVERICKS OF AMERICAN DANCE
2012, dir. Bob Hercules, USA, 82 min. In English / Format: Digital

Featuring rare excerpts from seminal Joffrey works, JOFFREY: MAVERICKS OF AMERICAN DANCE tells the story of this groundbreaking cultural treasure, known as the first truly American dance company. Narrated by Mandy Patinkin and directed by Hercules (BILL T. JONES: A GOOD MAN), this vivid portrait documents how the Joffrey Ballet revolutionized American ballet by daringly combining modern dance with traditional ballet technique, combining art with social statement, and setting ballets to pop and rock music scores. Produced by Una Jackman, Jay Alix, Erica Mann Ramis, and the late Harold Ramis. Post-screening discussion with director Hercules; former Joffrey dancer and Arpino Foundation board member Michael Anderson; and additional Joffrey dancers to be announced.
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 6:30PM RECEPTION / 7:30PM SCREENING
MIDWEST FILM FESTIVAL
Experience the best of Midwest’s advertising scene at The Midwest Film Festival’s 9th Annual Advertising Community Night, presented by AICP. A must-attend event for industry professionals to come together and witness the magic of creative storytelling, the night will start with a networking reception at 6:30PM, followed by a screening and filmmaker Q&A at 7:30PM.

Showcasing a lineup of short films created by working professionals from the advertising sector, including story-driven commercials, passion projects, and music videos, don’t miss this opportunity to be part of a memorable evening filled with creativity and inspiration! Learn more at midwestfilm.com; tickets at siskelfilmcenter.org

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 6:00PM
VIDEO DATA BANK PRESENTS: ROUNDBOUGHT VIDEO DATA BANK (VDB), a special collection of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, presents Roundabout, a new screening series in which the Chicago video art distributor invites fellow moving image archives and distributors to collaborate on a conversational program of short experimental works, prompted to respond to a selection of works from VDB’s collection with a selection from their own. The first participant, Electronic Arts Intermix, is a New York City-based nonprofit arts organization that is a leading international resource for video and media art, and whose core program is the distribution and preservation of a major collection of more than 4,000 new and historical video works by artists. (VBD) Pictured: WORK IN PROGRESS, 1990, dir. Luis Valdovino.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 6:30PM
SAFETY LAST!
1923, dirs. Fred C. Newmeyer, Sam Taylor, USA, 74 min. Silent / Format: 35mm
Celebrate National Silent Film Day and the centennial anniversary of SAFETY LAST!—starring comic genius Harold Lloyd as a bumbling country boy determined to make it in the big city—with piano accompaniment by the Film Center’s favorite pianist, David Drazin.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1:00PM & SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1:00PM
THE UNSTABLE OBJECT II
2022, dir. Daniel Eisenberg, USA, Germany, France, Turkey, 204 min. / Format: Digital
Three factories. Three radically different modes of production. One of the world’s largest prosthetics factory, far removed in the mountains of Germany; a small haute-couture glove atelier in southern France, where each glove is made by hand; and a distressed jeans factory in central Turkey, where about 2000 pairs of jeans are produced daily, reveal paradigms of contemporary production, organization, and labor. Using techniques of durational observation, THE UNSTABLE OBJECT II reveals the deeper meanings of these objects and sites, and in our world where the nature of work is radically changing, allows us the time and space to consider our own place in the order of things. Post-screening discussion with director Eisenberg.
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 4:00PM & MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 6:00PM
UNSEEN
2023, dir. Set Hernandez Rongkilyo, USA, 88 min.
In English and Spanish with English subtitles / Format: Digital

Most people dream of a better future. Pedro, an aspiring social worker, is no different. But as a blind, undocumented immigrant, Pedro faces political restrictions to obtain his college degree, secure a job in his field, and support his family. As he finally graduates, uncertainty looms over Pedro. What starts as a journey to provide mental health care for his community ultimately transforms into Pedro’s path toward his own healing. Through experimental cinematography and sound, UNSEEN reimagines the accessibility of cinema, while exploring the intersections of immigration, disability, and mental health. Presented with open captions; CART-captioned post-screening discussion with director Rongkilyo.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 6:00PM & 8:30PM
MEMBER APPRECIATION NIGHT

Calling all Gene Siskel Film Center members! Join us for two special screenings of...films selected by you! Members, be on the lookout for an email in early October that will invite you to choose the films we screen, then meet your fellow members at the Film Center to enjoy complimentary snacks as we reveal the winning titles as the lights go down. Sign up or renew before October 1 to cast your vote! siskelfilmcenter.org/membership

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 6:00PM
NIGHTINGALE PROJECTS: AN EVENING WITH SAIF ALSAEGH

Join Nightingale Projects for an evening of short experimental films by Saif Alsaegh. Alsaegh is a United States–based filmmaker from Baghdad. Much of his work deals with the contrast between the landscape of his youth in Baghdad growing up as part of the Indigenous Chaldean minority in the 90s and early 2000s, and the US landscape where he currently lives. His films have screened in festivals including Cinéma du Réel, Kurzfilm Hamburg, Kassel Dokfest, Aesthetica Short Film Festival, and in galleries and museums including the Wisconsin Triennial at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art and the Rochester Contemporary Art Center. He received his master of fine arts in film from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Programmed by Drew Durepos. Post-screening discussion with Alsaegh.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 8:00PM
BOTTLE CONDITIONED
2023, dir. Jerry Franck, USA, 82 min.
In English and French and Flemish with English subtitles / Format: Digital

Academy Award–nominated filmmaker Jerry Franck (CHAU, BEYOND THE LINES) explores the small ecosystem of Belgian brewers who specialize in lambic beer. Learning the history, tradition, and process behind this rare and revered brew, Franck documents the rise of lambic around the world and how its brewers navigate the demand of their popular creation. Tickets include a post-screening lobby lambic tasting hosted by Hopleaf! Must be 21+ to attend tasting; tickets without tasting also available.
59th Chicago International Film Festival

October 11-22, 2023

The Festival returns to the Gene Siskel Film Center
October 13-21.

Full details:
chicagofilmfestival.com/festival
@chicagofilmfestival @chifilmfest @chifilmfest
What brought you to the Gene Siskel Film Center?
My former mentor actually introduced me to the Film Center! As a young filmmaker, most of these entry-level years have been spent trying to find and create industry spaces where equity for marginalized creatives is prioritized, while using my own voice to contribute. Over the years, standout Film Center programming of unsung and diverse work has allowed me as a filmmaker and a programmer to tell the unsung and uniquely cultural narratives I’ve always wanted to tell. In 2022, I had the gracious opportunity of assisting the programming for the 28th Annual Black Harvest Film Festival, and I’m over the moon to be working as Festival Coordinator for this year’s 29th Annual Black Harvest Film Festival.

What excites you most as you view film submissions for the 29th Annual Black Harvest Film Festival?
We’ve been saying since day one that all of our submissions have shown unmatched genuine talent across so many forms that it’s a shame we can’t screen every single one. These creators, from all walks of life, are actively pushing the boundaries and definitions of Black cinema to new endeavors. It’s such an honor to be amplifying and celebrating new Black artistry in the making.

What can audiences expect to experience at this year’s Black Harvest?
Everything from legendary retrospectives to emerging voices in Chicago, national, and international cinema, this festival is going to be one for the books. We’ve been collaborating with new community partners and organizing exciting things to come for an expansive off-screen festival experience as well. This festival will be a mix of new experiences while continuing the vision of our late co-Founder, Sergio Mims.

What film has had the greatest impact on you and why?
We’d be here for weeks on end if I could list them all, and that’s on me because I have a new favorite every other day. Jessica Beshir’s FAYA DAYI has been living in my head for the past couple years because it has a really ethereally dreamlike perspective to accurately present the documentary as if you were living the lives of the subjects. I relate to it through my own Islamic and Ethiopian roots and am impressed by its use of unspoken political commentary.

What’s a fun fact or hidden talent you’d like audiences to know about you?
In my free time, I like to pick up and speak different languages as a hobby. I speak Russian and English fluently plus proficient French as I was actually born in the South Asian part of Russia, grew up in the United States, and studied French in school. I’m slowly working on Arabic, Spanish, and Farsi, but all of these languages are super difficult so we’ll have to really work on it.

“All of our submissions have shown unmatched genuine talent across so many forms that it’s a shame we can’t screen every single one.”

MEET NICK LEFFEL
FESTIVAL COORDINATOR OF THE 29TH ANNUAL BLACK HARVEST FILM FESTIVAL

SISKELFILMCENTER.ORG/BLACKHARVEST
November 3 - 16
Revolutionary Visions
29th Annual Festival
Festival lineup coming soon
Festival passes on sale:
Sept. 12
Members
| Sept. 19
General Public
20 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023
November 3 – 16

29th Annual Festival
Revolutionary Visions

Festival lineup coming soon

Festival passes on sale:
Sept. 12 Members | Sept. 19 General Public

SISKELFILMCENTER.ORG/BLACKHARVEST
You are both a director of and
the subject of INVISIBLE BEAUTY. What did you learn about
yourself, or what discoveries
did you have, in the process of
making the film?

I discovered that I had to learn
to get out of my own way. Just
let it be, just let things happen. If
you’re trying to achieve anything
in life—sometimes we’re stuck in
our own heads, or we don’t think
we deserve it, or we don’t know
how to get there—it is important
to step out of the way and let it
happen.

INVISIBLE BEAUTY is your first
directing credit. What advice
would you give to emerging/
new filmmakers?

Most important: get a really good
producer, and definitely a good
bookkeeper. You want to get the
right people who can help to make
things easier. If they have experi-
ence, and they are good, it’s like
a blessing. I look at my producer,
and I’m always in awe. They will
really help keep the ball moving,
and they can have vision.

SAIC has a highly respected
Department of Fashion Design. What is something you hope
young designers and individ-
uals emerging in the fashion
industry take away from INVIS-
IBLE BEAUTY?

I would tell every young person
that aspires: go be an apprentice.
Learn. It’s very important to learn
everything you can about every-
thing that surrounds you, so when
it’s time for you to do you, you
can do everything from sweep the
floor to make a great garment.

What is a memorable moviego-
ing experience you’ve had?

I’ve had a few! From a younger
part of my life was BAMBI (1942),
after it was released, the second—
from another time of my life—was
SPARTACUS (1960), and the most
recent moment was DUNE (2021),
because of the score. There was no
way to see that film but in a good
theater with good sound. I’m very
blessed that INVISIBLE BEAUTY
is getting the opportunity to have
a theatrical release. All I said from
the time we were making it was,
“I need the film to be on the silver
screen.” It means everything: it
gives you the opportunity to get
the essence of the film, when you
can see it in the right setting and
with people. Everyone who helps
to make a film has contributed to
something that really belongs in a
movie theater.

What film do you watch again
and again?

I’m someone who once I’ve seen a
film, I’m done. The only film that
I felt I could see more than once
was MISS SLOAN (2016), with
Jessica Chastain. I discovered it
on a plane, and then I went back
and saw it again, and then when
I met Jessica, I told her, and she
said “My god—I think you’re one
of six people who’ve seen that
film!” There’s a lot of good films
out there, but I don’t have time to
go back and watch things over and
over again. To repeat things is not
my style.

See INVISIBLE BEAUTY
exclusively at the Film
Center starting September
22 (p. 3)
Consider making a tax-deductible donation of any amount to the Gene Siskel Film Center today.

To make your donation online, visit siskelfilmcenter.org/supportus

Memberships start at $50. Your Film Center membership helps support our year-round programming and entitles you to an exciting array of perks, including:

- Discounted admission
- Complementary, mailed subscription to our bi-monthly Gazette
- $10 discount on an Art Institute of Chicago membership
- Sneak preview passes to major motion pictures

Purchase a membership at siskelfilmcenter.org/membership

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### September

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* denotes filmmaker(s) and/or special guests in attendance

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**denotes 35mm or 16mm**
### Tickets

Film Center Members: $6.50  
Students with valid ID: $8  
General Admission: $13  

Unless otherwise noted

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**SUNDAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Film</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE (One and Done), p. 17</td>
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<td>5:30</td>
<td>THE UNSTABLE OBJECT II</td>
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**MONDAY**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>L’ATALANTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>WANDA</td>
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<td>9:30</td>
<td>VERMEER – THE GREATEST EXHIBITION</td>
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**TUESDAY**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>THE ART OF MEMORY (Lecture)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>CARNIVAL OF SOULS (One and Done), p. 13</td>
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**WEDNESDAY**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>ŽELIMIR ŽILNIK (CATE), p. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>TRUE STORIES (One and Done), p. 12</td>
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**THURSDAY**

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**FRIDAY**

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<td>BEATRIZ SANTIAGO MUÑOZ (CATE), p. 15</td>
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<td>8:30</td>
<td>EVERYDAY LIFE (Lecture), p. 11</td>
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**SATURDAY**

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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>FANTASIA (Kid Flix), p. 7</td>
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**OCTOBER**

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<td>VERMEER – THE GREATEST EXHIBITION</td>
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**TICKETS**

Expect additional titles and programs to be added to our screens! Due to popular demand, new release film runs may be extended.

Visit siskelfilmcenter.org for the most up-to-date information about what’s playing, guest appearances, and confirmed showtimes.

Tickets are available 24 hours a day at siskelfilmcenter.org. Our box office opens 30 minutes prior to the first showtime of the day and closes 15 minutes after the last show of the day begins. All sales are final.

No late entry allowed 20 minutes after listed showtimes.
SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER: CELEBRATE OUR 29TH BLACK HARVEST FILM FESTIVAL, NOVEMBER 3–16

DECEMBER: THE SOUNDS OF RYUICHI SAKAMOTO, INCLUDING MERRY CHRISTMAS MR. LAWRENCE AND THE SHELTERING SKY

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