Celebrating film heritage across Europe

A Season of Classic Films 2024
Celebrating film heritage across Europe

Programme catalogue
Edited by Paulina Reizi
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Foreword

European film heritage institutions deeply value the unwavering support and advocacy provided by the European Commission, enabling them to delve into their collections and showcase the societal values that have shaped our history. Through the coordinated efforts of film archives and the European Commission, we strive both to ensure preservation of classic films and to enhance their accessibility, enriching the European audiovisual market with diverse content for all. A Season of Classic Films serves as an ideal platform for fostering these synergies between archives, cinemas or other exhibition venues, and audiences.

Allow me to share my perspective, rooted in my experience in film heritage, and with profound respect for those dedicated to its preservation. There are two key points I believe all film viewers should keep in mind:

Firstly, cinema has always been transnational. While the country of a film's production remains a significant aspect, cinema has consistently crossed boundaries, resonating with diverse audiences across national, gender, political, and social identities. This not only highlights the richness of our cultural heritage, but also presents unique challenges, particularly in restoration efforts. Addressing the existence of various film versions and contextual information is fundamental in this regard, underscoring the importance of collaboration in actively preserving classic films and researching their meanings and relevance. Restorers recognise that exploring different versions is integral to their work. Moreover, we should view this challenge as another dimension of "old" films: audiences can appreciate the diversity of versions and see how their favourite and lesser-known films have travelled through time. Film, inherently unstable due to its materiality and obsolescence, offers a continuous journey of exploration. Each restoration has the potential to deepen our understanding of history, reminding us that the process of discovery is endless.

Secondly, the concept of "classic" changes over time. Unlike literature and other traditional art forms, we are fortunate not to be bound by a fixed cinematic canon. As the "classic" label extends to an ever-increasing number of films, we have boundless territory to explore. While film programming may have its limitations, film heritage institutions play a crucial role in highlighting and giving access to the treasure troves they preserve. These encompass silent films and black and white classics, often referenced but rarely watched in their entirety. All these films deserve attention across various platforms, from cinemas to broadcast and online channels.

The return of A Season of Classic Films offers a treat for all cinephiles. Our ACE members continue to offer an increasing number of new restorations, adeptly balancing contemporary technical standards while honouring the audiovisual aesthetics of the respective eras in which these films were made. I sincerely hope viewers will engage with the carefully curated titles from across Europe, amid the myriad entertainment options available.

As my last note I want to continue to draw attention to the case of the Dovzhenko Centre, which was mentioned in the opening words of the previous two Seasons. This institution, which fulfils the role of the national film archive of Ukraine, is still under threat — not only because of the ongoing war but also as a result of opaque and seemingly unnecessary power dynamics. Just as Europe is rallying to aid Ukraine in its time of need, it’s imperative to lend our support to the Dovzhenko Centre to ensure that we don’t lose a significant piece of classic European cinema.

Michal Bregant
President of ACE - Association des Cinémathèques Européennes / Director of Národní filmový archiv, Prague
As ACE celebrates the 5th edition of *A Season of Classic Films*, it is a good opportunity to reflect on the programme’s contributions to preserving and restoring the European film heritage, while raising awareness of the work of European film archives, particularly among younger audiences. So far, 34 film institutions from 26 European countries have participated in *A Season of Classic Films*, with new institutions joining each year. Since its inception, the programme has supported the restoration and distribution of more than 170 films. After premiering at free-admission events, the restored films become available for loan among ACE and FIAF member archives and continue to circulate at several film festivals in Europe and beyond. The catalogues of *A Season of Classic Films* offer an extraordinary opportunity to reflect on the programme’s inception, the 20th-century history of Europe through the lenses and voices of the people who lived in each and every part of the continent.

This year’s programme is curated by 24 European film heritage institutions and includes films ranging from early silent classics to amateur and experimental shorts, as well as works that foster reflection on humanity, slavery and domination, authoritarian regimes, and memory. Highlights include silent cinema discoveries such as *Inngmarsarvet / The Ingmar Inheritance* (1925), a cinematic adaptation of the outstanding literary work by Selma Lagerlöf, the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, and *Dagfin* (1926), co-authored by Jane Bess, a significant yet overlooked female voice in Weimar cinema. The programme also features two sci-fi movies, each with its own stylistic approach and narrative complexity: the Hungarian *Sziriusz / Sirius* (1942), which takes audiences on a fantastical journey with its whimsical flying time machine, and the visually striking Danish *Manden der tankte ting / The Man Who Thought Life* (1969), which blurs the line between reality and illusion. Visual poetry emerges from unexpected places, as seen in the *Meditative Shorts by Aleksandar F. Stasenko* (1977-1985), portraying resolute individuals often surrounded by unforgiving landscapes, and the mesmerising *Värvilised unenäöd / Colourful Dreams* (1974), a perfect blend of unconventional storytelling with the unique sound design of Estonian master Arvo Pärt.

For the third consecutive year, *A Season of Classic Films* awards a special grant to support transnational collaboration between film institutions, funding a restoration project undertaken by at least three European film archives. This year’s grant is shared between Vulo Radev’s humanist film *Kradetzat na praskovi / The Peach Thief* (1964) and a compilation of spectacular stencil-coloured shorts titled *Fantastic Flowers* (1906-1920). Adapted from Emiliyan Stanev’s timeless novel, *The Peach Thief* is a touching story in which love defies the barriers of nationality and conflict and stands up against the irrationality of war. The second award will facilitate the restoration of lavishly stencil-coloured films with a thematic focus on flowers, aiming to recreate the viewing experience of early 20th-century cinemagoers.

With ACE and its members presenting a rich selection of newly restored films each year, *A Season of Classic Films* has significantly enhanced its exposure and recognition. The winners of the past two Joint Restoration Grants were honoured to premiere at, respectively, the 2023 Venice International Film Festival and the 2024 Festival de la Cinémathèque in Paris. Moreover, curated extracts from restored films of the programme were showcased with live music by the European Union Youth Orchestra at the 2023 European Heritage Awards organised by Europa Nostra, highlighting heritage excellence and best practice in European cinema culture. Last but not least, the continuous collaboration between ACE and ARTE for ArteKino Classics enables broader audience-reach by making films from this catalogue available online in 32 European countries, with subtitles in multiple languages.

*A Season of Classic Films* is financially supported by the Creative Europe MEDIA programme of the European Union. For more information about the programme and event dates, please visit the ACE website (ace-film.eu/projects/season-of-classics).

We hope this catalogue will once again inspire collaborations between film archives and film programmers worldwide and provide long-term visibility for these restored films, promoting interest in our shared film culture and its history.

**Paulina Reizi**
*Project Coordinator of A Season of Classic Films*
Participating institutions

• Eye Filmmuseum, Amsterdam
• Ταινιοθήκη της Ελλάδος / Greek Film Archive, Athens
• Filmoteca de Catalunya, Barcelona
• Jugoslovenska Kinoteka / Yugoslav Film Archive, Belgrade
• Centre national du cinéma et de l’image animée - Direction du patrimoine cinématographique, Bois d’Arcy
• Fondazione Cineteca di Bologna
• Cinémathèque royale de Belgique / Koninklijk Belgisch Filmmuseum, Brussels
• National Film Institute Hungary - Film Archive, Budapest
• Det Danske Filminstitut / Danish Film Institute, Copenhagen
• Irish Film Institute, Dublin
• DFF - Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, Frankfurt
• Cinemateca Portuguesa-Museu do Cinema, Lisbon
• Filmoteca Española, Madrid
• Crnogorska Kinoteka / Montenegrin Cinematheque, Podgorica
• Fondazione Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia (CSC) - Cineteca Nazionale, Rome
• Кинотека на Република Северна Македонија / Cinematheque of the Republic of North Macedonia, Skopje
• Българска национална филмотека / Bulgarian National Film Archive, Sofia
• Svenska Filminstitutet / Swedish Film Institute, Stockholm
• Film Archive of the National Archives of Estonia, Tallinn
• Arkivi Qendror Shtetëror i Filmit / Albanian National Film Archive, Tirana
• La Cinémathèque de Toulouse
• Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Turin
• Filmarchiv Austria, Vienna
• Hrvatski državni arhiv - Hrvatska kinoteka / Croatian state archive - Croatian cinemateque, Zagreb
Films and compilation programmes
THE PEACH THIEF  
FICTION / BULGARIA / 1964

Director: Vulo Radev.  
Producer: Studiya za Igralni Filmi, Sofia.  
With: Nevena Kokanova, Rade Marković, Mikhail Mikhaylov, Naum Shopov, Vasil Vachev, Georgi Georgiev, Ivan Bratanov, Stefan Gadularov, Ivan Manev, Theodor Yurukov.  
Screenplay: Vulo Radev, based on Emilyan Stanev’s eponymous novel.  
Cinematography: Todor Stoyanov.  
Music: Simeon Pironkov.  
Editing: Ana Manolova.  
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, 83’, B&W, sound, Bulgarian, Serbian, French.  
Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration. 4K, DCP, 83’, Bulgarian, Serbian, French.  
Subtitles: English, French, Serbian.  
Copyright: Filmautor, Bulgaria.  
To programme this film: please contact Ms Ksenija Zelenović, ksenija.zelenovic@kinoteka.org.rs.
Filmed exactly 60 years ago, *The Peach Thief* marked the first collaboration between Bulgarian and Yugoslav cinema. Thanks to international collaboration between the Jugoslovenska Kinoteka, the Bulgarian National Film Archive, and the Montenegrin Cinematheque, this piece of film history with its powerful, universal, humanist message of understanding and brotherhood is being presented in a new 4K restoration as part of *A Season of Classic Films*, with the support of the EU Creative Europe MEDIA programme.

The film recounts a tender human relationship born in a harsh, hostile world. At the tail of World War I, prisoners of war are brought into a Bulgarian town while memorial services are held regularly to honour the Bulgarians who died on the front. Serbian prisoner Ivo slips out of the camp to find food. Lisa, the wife of a Bulgarian colonel, catches Ivo stealing peaches from her family’s garden. The garden becomes the stage for a clandestine connection that defies the barriers of nationality and conflict.

The film bravely delves into the deep scars left by the tumultuous early 20th-century wars, weaving an impossible love story against the background of pivotal historical events of European and world history. Its narrative echoes the complexities of Balkan relations, maintaining its relevance even today.

Adapted from Emiliyan Stanev’s timeless novel, a cornerstone of Bulgarian literary tradition, the film masterfully examines themes of compassion and love in a poetic and visually captivating manner. Shot on location in Veliko Tarnovo, it features an exceptional cast led by Neneva Kokanova, known as the “first lady of Bulgarian cinema”, and Rade Marković, one of the most distinguished actors in Yugoslav cinema. The film garnered numerous national awards and was presented at the 1964 Venice Film Festival.

The partner institutions are meticulously restoring the film from negative elements preserved by the Bulgarian National Film Archive and positive reference copies conserved by each of the contributing archives. Image restoration is being carried out in-house at the Yugoslav Film Archive and the sound restoration at the Montenegrin Cinematheque. Digital copies of the restored film are being deposited at each of the partner archives to enable better accessibility and preservation.
Fantastic Flowers
FICTION & NON-FICTION / VARIOUS COUNTRIES / 1906-1920

Thanks to the Joint Restoration Grant of A Season of Classic Films, an international collaborative effort between the Royal Film Archive of Belgium, Eye Filmmuseum, and Filmarchiv Austria has undertaken the restoration of lavishly coloured, stencilled films from the early 20th century.

Directors: Various, including Alice Guy-Blaché, Segundo de Chómon, Gaston Velle.
Producers: Various, mostly Pathé and Gaumont.
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, stencil coloured, silent.
Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration. 2K, DCP, ca. 60’, OV intertitles.
Subtitles: English.
Copyright: public domain.
To programme this film: please contact archivalloans@eyefilm.nl, access@cinematek.be, and s.rocca@filmarchiv.at.

Fantastic Flowers is a compilation of short silent films produced between 1906 and 1920, displaying a profusion of colours that were applied to each frame using the Pathécolor process or similar stencilling techniques. Current digital restoration technologies allow processing each colour individually within the frame to reproduce the vibrancy of the coloured original nitrate elements. These remarkable coloured films not only showcase the aesthetics of early cinema but can also provide a historical context to the colourisation debate, which surged as a result of the new possibilities offered by present-day digital technologies, particularly the emergence of AI.

The films of this compilation were curated on the theme of “flowers”, ranging from their cultivation to their various uses in floral parks, urban landscaping, and in flower parades. Colourful flowers are also essential elements of the very popular trick films of early cinema, exemplified in films where actresses dressed as flowers appear and disappear from the screen. Certain films within the compilation provide an insight into the working conditions in the flower industry, while others portray the daily lives of Japanese and North African women in their colourful gardens.

In comparing their copies of the same films, the partner film archives of this restoration programme gain a deeper understanding of the variety and intensity of the colours applied to the original film elements and share their knowledge and expertise. Presenting this programme of spectacular colour images is an attempt to recreate for today’s audiences the experience of cinemagoers of more than a century ago.
Kracht
VIGOUR
FICTION / THE NETHERLANDS / 1990

Rural drama about a female artist from the city who seeks refuge with a widowed farmer.

Kracht is a tragic love story between a farmer who has recently lost his wife and a female artist. They meet during an agricultural exhibition in Amsterdam and spend the night together. A couple of weeks later, the farmer goes back to his hometown in the rural south of the Netherlands, and she follows him. They try to work out their relationship, to no avail. The farmer is still too trapped in the traditional way of life; the artist loses herself in the search for identity.

The film is set in the rural area of the Dutch region of Limburg and illustrates the differences between the countryside and the city, not as a clash between societies or cultures but as personified by the two protagonists. Although they try to come together, they fail because they are too stuck in their own habits and way of life.

The film has earned numerous accolades, including the Gouden Kalf (Dutch national film prize) for Best Director in 1990, making Frouke Fokkema the first female director to receive it. The film also won the Best Cinematography award for Theo Bierkens at the Chicago International Film Festival 1991 and Best Film at the Créteil International Women’s Film Festival in the same year.

From a contemporary perspective, when the differences between city and countryside have almost become a political controversy resulting in a major electoral landslide in The Netherlands, this film is relevant as it explores the contrasts of cultural traditions and the need for mutual respect.
**Happy Day**
FICTION / GREECE / 1976

**Director:** Pantelis Voulgaris.
**Producer:** Greek Film Centre.
**With:** Georges Sarri, Giorgos Moschidis, Stavros Kalaroglou, Nikos Bousdoukos, Konstantinos Tzouras.
**Screenplay:** Pantelis Voulgaris, based on the novel *The Plague* by Andreas Frangias.
**Cinematography:** Giorgos Panousopoulos.
**Music:** Dionysis Savvopoulos.
**Editing:** Aristeidis Karydis Fuchs.

**Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films:** World premiere restoration, 4K, DCP, 100’, Greek.
**Subtitles:** English, French.
**Copyright owner:** Greek Film Centre.

To programme this film: please contact Ms Phaedra Papadopoulou, phaedrapap@tainiothiki.gr, Ms Electra Venaki, ivenaki@lab.tainiothiki.gr, and Ms Ioanna Pipides, ioannap@lab.tainiothiki.gr.

**Physical characteristics of first release:** 35mm, 100’, 1.66:1, colour, mono sound, Greek.

Life (and death) in exile on a sun-scorched Greek island.

The exiled political prisoners in a concentration camp on a windswept island await the visit of the “great mother”, in whose honour they have prepared a celebration. One of the prisoners, who steadfastly refuses to renounce his beliefs, disappears, and is proclaimed dead by the camp’s authorities who claim he has committed suicide. However, on the day of the official visit and during the festivities, the “dead man” reappears.

The film *Happy Day* conveys a timeless message about the absurdity of authoritarian regimes and subjecting people to meaningless tasks in order to crush them mentally. It won Best Film, Best Director, and Best Music at the 1976 Thessaloniki International Film Festival. Director Pantelis Voulgaris, one of the most celebrated contemporary Greek filmmakers, regards this as his most accomplished film.
During the interwar years, filmmaking techniques were evolving and the cinematic language was in the process of consolidation. Nonetheless, amateurs undoubtedly played a crucial role in shaping the early stages of documentary, experimental, educational, anthropological, scientific and industrial cinema. What began as a pastime for the affluent elite, heralded in Pathé Baby advertisements as a “victory over time”, soon evolved into a pivotal cinematographic movement in Catalonia, to the point of being considered the country’s first film school. Amateur filmmakers captured reality through myriad lenses, enabling elements of a fragmented and contradictory world to converge in their recordings.


Physical characteristics of first release: 9.5mm, black & white, silent, Catalan and Spanish intertitles.

Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration with newly composed jazz music, 2K, DCP, 50', Catalan and Spanish intertitles.

Subtitles: English.

Copyright owner: Filmoteca de Catalunya.

To programme this film: please contact Ms Rosa Saz, rsaz@gencat.cat.

The film compilation includes the titles:

**UN TERRAT**
* A Roof | Llorenç Llobet Gràcia, 1928, 4’30”.
A family film that unwittingly points to the advent of amateur cinema.

**ELECCIONS**
* Elections | Josep Arola, 1936, 3’30”.
Amateur newsreel showing the elections of February 1936, the last elections of the young and democratic Spanish Republic.

**BAIX LLOBREGAT**
* Amadeu Real Vallès, 1935, 11’.
A bucolic route along the banks of the Llobregat River, the natural boundary of the city of Barcelona.

**VOL DE GAVINA**
* Flight of the Seagull | Manuel Amat Rosés, 1934, 12’50”.
Images of the port of Barcelona, with a poetic view, great aesthetic quality and anthropological interest.

**PLUJA SALMERÓN**
* Raining at Salmerón Street | Rossend Torras, ca. 1935, 1’30”.
The beauty of the street movement on a rainy day.

**LA POSADA DEL TERROR**
* The Inn of Terror | Adolfo Gaisser Foix, 1935, 12’45”.
Animation that appropriates the character of Betty Boop to confront her with monsters in a haunted mansion.
Tragovi Crne Devojke
TRACES OF A BLACK HAIRIED GIRL
FICTION / YUGOSLAVIA / 1972

**Director:** Zdravko Randić.  
**Producer:** Centar FRZ – Beograd.  
**With:** Boris Dvornik, Neda Spasojević, Ružica Sokić, Pavle Vuisić, Velimir “Bata” Živojinović, Marija Milutinović.  
**Screenplay:** Dragoljub Ivkov and Živojin Pavlović, based on literary works of Aleksandar Tišma.  
**Cinematography:** Milorad Jakšić-Fanđo.  
**Music:** Miodrag Petrović Šarlo.  
**Editing:** Olga Skrigin.

**Physical characteristics of first release:**  
35mm, 92’ (2530 metres), 2.35:1, colour, sound, Serbian.

**Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films:**  
World premiere restoration, 2K, DCP, 93’, Serbian.

**Subtitles:** English.

**Copyright owner:** Centar Film, Beograd.

To programme this film: please contact Mr Dubravko Badalić, dubravko.badalic@kinoteka.org.rs.

**A fatal journey through love, loss, and longing.**

Jova, a naive railway worker from the countryside, finds himself transferred to the bustling central train station of Belgrade. There, he meets Paja, a streetwise companion, and two intriguing women, Slavica and Kača, who dabble in the world of prostitution. Drawn to Slavica’s charm, Jova embarks on a passionate romance with her, dreaming of a future together. However, Slavica’s restless spirit leads her to abandon Jova abruptly, leaving him heartbroken and adrift. Struggling to cope with his newfound loneliness, Jova tries desperately to win her back.

This film stands out as a significant representation of the transitional period in Yugoslav cinema, situated between the so-called “black” and “white” waves. During this time, the regime of Josip Broz (commonly known as Tito) marginalised works by prominent directors like Pavlović, Makavejev, Petrović, and Žilnik. However, films depicting the hardships of the working class were not entirely banned. Unlike their predecessors, though, such films lacked ideological fervour and instead focused on portraying societal conditions and personal struggles.

Directed by Zdravko Randić, *Traces of a Black Haired Girl* presents a typical naturalistic narrative set in a working-class milieu of the patriarchal society and illustrates vividly life in Belgrade’s suburbs. Co-written with Živojin Pavlović, the film delves into the fateful woes and misfortunes of characters doomed to be losers. Unlike Pavlović’s black wave films, *Traces of a Black Haired Girl* steers clear of ideological criticism and political undertones, concentrating instead on the individual’s fatal journey.

The performances of acclaimed actors Boris Dvornik, Neda Spasojević (winner of the Silver Arena for Best Actress at the Pula Film Festival), Bata Živojinović (recipient of the same event’s Golden Arena for Best Actor), Ružica Sokić, and Pavle Vuisić add depth and authenticity to the portrayal of working-class characters and their struggles.
In his blindness, a Chinese poet finds solace in the belief that the world is filled with goodness. However, when his sight is suddenly restored, he is confronted with the harshness of reality. Overwhelmed by despair, the poet yearns to retreat back into the darkness.

Georges Clemenceau was fascinated by China, about which he had read extensively but never visited. When Louis Aubert decided to adapt Clemenceau’s play for the screen, he naturally turned to Édouard-Émile Violet, who shared his passion for China and had previously helmed two Chinese-inspired films, Li-Hang le cruel (1920) and L’épingle rouge (1921). While these earlier works predominantly featured Western actors, Violet opted to cast solely non-professionals from the Chinese community for this project, adding a significant layer of authenticity.

Art nouveau artist Manuel Orazi, recognised for his work on Feyder’s L’Atlantide (1921), was tasked with crafting the film’s sets, showcasing his remarkable talent.

Upon its release, the film received praise from both critics and audiences. Despite being deemed lost in France, photographs and press articles preserved its legendary status. Fortunately, an incomplete nitrate print with Dutch intertitles was preserved at the Eye Filmmuseum. With the film approaching its centenary (its first release was 21 September 1923), the CNC borrowed the surviving copy and undertook its restoration, meticulously recreating French intertitles using translations of existing Dutch ones, the text of Clemenceau’s original play, and excerpts from Le Film complet magazine (no 55, 9 December 1923). The restored version, accompanied by a new musical recording, will be made available to audiences as part of A Season of Classic Films.

The ever-lasting choice between reality and illusion.

In his blindness, a Chinese poet finds solace in the belief that the world is filled with goodness. However, when his sight is suddenly restored, he is confronted with the harshness of reality. Overwhelmed by despair, the poet yearns to retreat back into the darkness.

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The ever-lasting choice between reality and illusion.
For his directorial debut, Luca Guadagnino convinced Tilda Swinton – Derek Jarman’s muse and an already acclaimed European actress, largely thanks to her exceptional performance in Sally Potter’s Orlando – to take on the main role.

Set in late 1990s London, this faux experimental documentary seeks to reconstruct the motiveless murder of a waiter. On screen, a London that no longer exists today sets the background for a narrative exploring memory and the staging of the past.

The Protagonists provides contemporary audiences with a perfect example of Guadagnino’s talent and audacity, one particularly remarkable given that he was just 26 years old at the time it was made.
In 21:12 Piano Bar, Florence’s death intertwines with Nathalie’s exploration of desire and fantasy. Nathalie, a pianist at the bar where news of Florence’s murder surfaces, embarks on an investigation into Florence’s past, discovering her fascination with pain. Each encounter with Florence’s acquaintances leads Nathalie on a journey both physical and emotional, blurring the boundaries between curiosity and desire. The film portrays an eroticism rooted in the characters’ inner worlds, with images veiled in darkness and fragmented storytelling. Time in the film is not a linear progression but a construct of individual emotions, marked by resistance or fascination. Darkened visuals and manipulated sound enhance the film’s introspective atmosphere, emphasising the intertwining themes of desire and mortality. The aesthetic choices, from framing to sound design, contribute to the film’s exploration of the imaginary and the visceral. 21:12 Piano Bar invites viewers to confront their own complexities and emotions, ultimately immersing them in a world where desire and death converge in the realm of the subconscious.

Nathalie seeks out individuals intimately acquainted with Florence to uncover the motivations behind her self-destructive tendencies.

Director: Mary Jimenez.
Producer: Carole Courtoy.
With: Lucinda Childs, Carole Courtoy, Anne Guerin, Philippe Marannes, Alain Marchall, Jean-Marc Turine, Claude Zaccai.
Cinematography: Michel Houssiau.
Music: Ramon de Herrera, Alain Marchal.
Editing: Patricia Canino.
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, 102’, 1.66:1, colour, sound, French.
Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration, 2K, DCP 102’, French.
Subtitles: English, Dutch.
Copyright owner: Les Productions de la Phalène.
To programme this film: please contact Ms Mary Jimenez, foudesoleil@gmail.com, and access@cinematek.be.
Considered the first Hungarian science fiction film, Szíriusz introduces a revolutionary machine capable of flying faster than the earth’s rotation, enabling its passengers to travel back in time. Its inventor, Professor Sergius, persuades the adventurous Count Ákos Tibor to test it, and travel back in time for a night. As they embark on the Zeppelin-like airship, the Count chooses to spend his evening in the 18th-century Kingdom of Hungary, while the Professor ventures further into the past. They agree to meet by dawn to return to their present time.

Based on the 1894 novel by Ferenc Herczeg, one of the most popular Hungarian writers of the era and nominated thrice for the Nobel Prize in Literature, the film premiered at the Venice Film Festival to great acclaim. Predating HG Wells’s The Time Machine by a year, this romantic adventure explores the concept of time travel, anticipating some of the motifs of later futuristic movies, such as anachronistic jokes and a system of rules about how to behave in the past worlds. Directed by Ákos D. Hamza, one of Hungary’s most successful and prolific directors in the 1940s, it marked his third adaptation of Herczeg’s work.

In the lead female role is Katalin Karády, who fell into obscurity during the communist era, but Péter Bacsó’s 2001 film Hamvadó cigarettavég (Smouldering Cigarette) paid tribute to her memory, highlighting her courageous acts of saving Jewish children during World War II.
Mr Steinmetz has unlocked a remarkable power: the ability to manifest not just objects but also living beings through sheer thought. Yet, unable to sustain these creations, he seeks assistance from a renowned brain surgeon. When the surgeon declines to help him, Steinmetz resorts to a drastic solution: he conjures a doppelganger of the surgeon, who gradually usurps his identity. Soon, reality blurs with imagination, leaving everyone questioning what is truly real.

Director Jens Ravn’s debut feature film takes inspiration from a forgotten novel by Valdemar Holst (written 1928, published 1938), shifting its plot from Paris to contemporary Copenhagen. Visually striking, the film employs black-and-white CinemaScope imagery to create a clinically pure backdrop for its characters, enhancing its eerie ambiance.

On its premiere, the film received widespread acclaim, both domestically and internationally, earning it a spot as Denmark’s entry to the Cannes Film Festival that year. Today, it enjoys a cult status among cinephiles.
**Focus on Flora Kerrigan**

**FICTION / IRELAND / 1960-1965**

Director-Producer: Flora Kerrigan.

Physical characteristics of first release: 8mm, 51’, colour and B&W, silent.

Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration with a newly commissioned score, 2K, DCP, 51’.

Copyright owner: Frances Kerrigan.

To programme this film: please contact Ms Sunniva O’Flynn, soflyn@irishfilm.ie.

Flora Kerrigan, an Irish amateur filmmaker of the 1950s and 1960s, created a distinctive body of work characterised by creativity and innovation. Growing up in 1940s Cork in a highly conservative society, she attended Crawford Art School, immersing herself in a vibrant artistic community that fuelled her creativity. Over eight years, she crafted animation and live-action shorts that earned accolades and aired on RTE, Ireland’s national television and radio broadcaster. After she relocated to the UK in the late 1960s, her work faded into obscurity.

Kerrigan’s films are marked by their despairing, disturbing, political, yet often darkly humorous narratives, influenced by surrealism, absurdism, and European animation techniques. They explore themes of death, destruction, and desire, employing wit, and are humorous and haunting in equal measure.

While her animations set her apart as a filmmaker, her live-action films are equally engaging, blending joy with sensuality. In addition to giving a voice to a youthful commentary on the adult world, there is also a taboo eroticism and a concern with representing female sexuality and desire, which was highly unusual for this time period in Ireland.

Recently rediscovered through a collaboration between the Irish Film Institute and Maynooth University, Kerrigan’s work resonates anew with its timeless themes, filmmaking sensibility, and technical prowess. IFI will introduce her films to new audiences through A Season of Classic Films, restoring them and commissioning a new musical accompaniment.

**Rediscovered experimental films by Irish filmmaker Flora Kerrigan.**

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**The film compilation includes the titles:**

- **EARLY ANIMATIONS 4’50”**
- **DEAD END 2’**
- **A HARD DAY’S KNIGHT 6’37”**
- **OFF BEAT 3’25”**
- **THE SEVENTH DAY 4’42”**
- **THE WORMS ARE HAVING FUN 4’2”**
- **DISCORD 5’45”, dir. Cormac Langford, editing Flora Kerrigan**
- **COLD FEET 4’28”**
- **MOONSHINE 4’18”**
- **DREAM MAKER 4’32”**
- **EPITAPH 6’”**
Lydia Boysen seeks refuge in a Swiss winter resort, after separating from her husband Axel. In the invigorating alpine landscape, she finds solace and love in the young Swedish ski instructor Dagfin Holberg, but their bliss is cut short when Axel arrives unexpectedly, accompanied by the infamous, wealthy Turkish general Sabi Bey.

Directed by Joe May, an eminent figure in early German cinema – also credited with launching Fritz Lang’s career – this film weaves a gripping tale of suspense and intrigue. Adapted from Werner Scheff’s novel of the same name, the film stars renowned actors Paul Wegener and Marcella Albani, icons of 1920s European cinema. Eugen Schüfftan’s innovative special effects, using mirrors to integrate actors into miniature sets (a technique now known as the “Schüfftan process”), add depth to the narrative and accentuate its daring pacifist stance and its critique of the Armenian genocide.

Notably, the screenplay was co-authored by Jane Bess, a prolific female voice in Weimar cinema. Forced to flee to the Netherlands in 1933, Bess tragically perished in Auschwitz in 1944, leaving behind a fascinating legacy that until recently was overlooked in German film history. Bringing attention to her contributions aligns with contemporary efforts to highlight marginalised perspectives within the industry.

As part of A Season of Classic Films, DFF - Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum will premiere the film in a restored version accompanied by a new music score. The reconstruction of the original version with German intertitles is based on three surviving foreign distribution prints – Swedish preserved at DFF, French at La Cinémathèque de Toulouse, and Russian at Bundesarchiv.
Glória

FICTION / PORTUGAL, FRANCE, SPAIN / 1999

Director: Manuela Viegas.
Producer: Amándio Coroado.
Screenplay: Manuela Viegas, Joaquim Sapinho.
Scenography: Ana Louro.
Sound: Nuno Carvalho.
Production company: Rosa Filmes.
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, 110’, colour, sound, Portuguese.
Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration, 4K, DCP, 110’, Portuguese.
Subtitles: English, French, Spanish.
Copyright owner: Manuela Viegas.

Glória marks Manuela Viegas’s directorial debut, following her distinguished work as an editor for directors such as João César Monteiro, Pedro Costa, and Joaquim Sapinho. Premiering at the 1999 Berlinale, it earned the distinction of being the first Portuguese film selected for the festival’s competition section.

Set against the backdrop of rural Portugal, Glória depicts the gradual erosion of traditional life in the face of modernisation. In the frontier town of Santiago, now on the brink of abandonment due to a new highway, thirteen-year-old Glória and her friend Ivan navigate a changing landscape. Their world is further disrupted by the arrival of Mauro, recently released from prison. As Glória grapples with newfound desires and loyalties, the film delves into the intricate complexities of adolescence.

Through its winding narrative, Glória offers a poignant reflection on the blurred journey from childhood to adulthood.

The film has been restored thanks to NextGenEU and it will premiere as part of A Season of Classic Films.
Known as “the bloodiest of the Euro-Westerns”, Condenados a vivir stands as a highpoint in the career of Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent, a prominent figure in European western cinema. In 1971, he directed, co-wrote, and produced this film, driven by a desire to film a western in snowy landscapes. The plot revolves around an army sergeant who has to take his daughter and a group of dangerous criminals across a mountain range in the most horrendous conditions. Marked by its stark violence and nihilistic tone, Condenados a vivir blends elements of western and horror genres, earning it a cult following. The film’s impact is heightened by the notable cinematography of Luis Cuadrado and the breathtaking landscapes of the Pyrenees in the province of Huesca, northern Spain.

Condenados a vivir, like many films of its era, was released in two versions: one tailored for the Spanish market and another for international distribution. Research conducted by Filmoteca Española on the preserved film materials revealed significant additions to the international version, intensifying the violence in certain scenes. These supplementary frames were filmed separately, at times featuring different actors. Filmoteca Española will present the restoration of the internationally distributed version as part of this year’s A Season of Classic Films.

Director: Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent.
Producer: Films Triunfo.
With: Robert Hundar, Emma Cohen, Alberto Dalbés, Antonio Iranzo, Manuel Tejada.
Screenplay: Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent.
Cinematography: Luis Cuadrado.
Music: Carmelo Bernaola.
Editing: Mercedes Alonso.
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, 90’, colour, sound, Spanish and English-dubbed versions.
Subtitles: Spanish.
Copyright owner: José Frade PC.
To programme this film: please contact Ms Raquel Cacho, raquel.cacho@cultura.gob.es, and Mr Carlos Reviriego, carlos.reviriego@cultura.gob.es.

A violent, gory ’70s film, cited as the inspiration for Quentin Tarantino’s The Hateful Eight.
A captivating Italian noir film, in the footsteps of Jean-Pierre Melville’s classics, yet standing alone in its novelty.

Based on short stories by the crime fiction writer Giorgio Scerbanenco, Milano Calibro 9 pays tribute to the French noir cinema of Jean-Pierre Melville while carving out its own unique identity. Despite its half-century age, the film maintains a contemporary edge, thanks to its frenetic editing rhythm and the music score composed by Oscar-winner Luis Bacalov, performed by the progressive rock band Osanna. Its timeless appeal lies in its stylish presentation and the nuanced portrayal of morality, where lines between good and bad blur until a surprising epilogue.

At the centre of the story is Ugo Piazza, portrayed by Gastone Moschin, a mysterious and emblematic gangster entangled in an unsolved robbery case. Against the backdrop of a foggy, polluted Milan, resembling a hyperrealistic painting, the film unfolds as a tangled web of conflict involving all kinds of criminals.

The 4K restoration by Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia - Cineteca Nazionale in collaboration with Minerva Pictures is based on the original negative materials and a positive copy, conserved at the Cineteca, with original superimposed captions that were absent from many distribution copies. This restored version allows audiences to experience the film as originally designed by the director. With support from A Season of Classic Films, the restoration includes new audio description and subtitles for international distribution.
During the decline of the Ottoman Empire, two missionaries are kidnapped by rebels, sparking “America's first modern hostage crisis”.

As the Ottoman Empire wanes at the turn of the 20th century, ethnic groups fight for their independence, while foreign Christian missions vie for influence in its declining borders. American Protestant missionary Ellen Stone and her Bulgarian colleague, Katerina Cilka, journey across the Pirin Mountains. However, their trip takes a harrowing turn when they are abducted by rebels seeking ransom to fund their resistance against Ottoman rule. During her captivity, Stone questions her beliefs as she tries to alter the rebels’ course of action.

Inspired by true events, the film chronicles the “Miss Stone Affair”, often dubbed “America’s first modern hostage crisis”. In 1901, Stone and Cilka were captured by revolutionary forces led by Yane Sandanski, now hailed as a national hero in both Bulgaria and North Macedonia. Their captors sought to bolster the finances of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO). Following protracted negotiations, the affair concluded with a ransom raised through public donations in the USA. Stone recounted her experiences in the publication Six Months Among Brigands (SS McClure Company, 1902). The film provides an authentic portrayal of the period, exemplified by its remarkable costume design and consultation with a military colonel for the accuracy of combat scenes. Starring Olga Spiridonović and Petre Prlicko, both lauded for their performances, the film garnered acclaim at the Pula Film Festival, with Spiridonović winning the Golden Arena for Best Actress and Prlicko receiving the award for Best Actor.
A chance encounter between a woman and a man unfolds on the beach. She hails from the West, burdened by her nuclear physicist father’s battle with cancer, while he is a Bulgarian, the son of the resort’s architect. Their carefree beach activities take a profound turn when they stumble upon an ancient amphora in the sea, sparking a dialogue on timeless human dilemmas. As she grapples with the threat of nuclear war, he embraces technological progress with pragmatism. Can love and life triumph over the shadows of despair?

The film garnered acclaim at the 1962 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, where it received the FIPRESCI Prize, and swept the Golden Rose Bulgarian Feature Film Festival, earning accolades for Best Director, Best Music, and Best Screenplay.
When the ancestors seem to appear in the clouds during a storm of biblical proportions, young Ingmar (Lars Hanson) decides to give up his career as the village teacher and to reclaim the land and farm of his fathers. The same stormy night, a charismatic preacher with miraculous powers (Conrad Veidt) arrives in the village to spread the word about the promises of the Holy Land, which turns parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, against each other. Ingmar is torn between his love for the headmaster’s daughter (Mona Mårtenson) who is under the preacher’s spell, and the prospects of marrying the judge’s daughter (Jenny Hasselquist) to secure the future of the farm.

Ingmarsarvet is a cinematic adaptation of the renowned literary work by Selma Lagerlöf, the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature and to be granted membership of the Swedish Academy. Based on the first part of her Jerusalem novels, the film is on par with the more famous Swedish silent cinema classics, boasting a substantial budget and mainly shot on location, where the raw power of nature becomes an integral part in the unfolding drama.

The film is digitally restored, with recreated colours and intertitles sourced from preservation elements at the Swedish Film Institute, supplemented by sections from a preservation copy held by the Danish Film Institute.
**Värvilised unenäod**

**COLOURFUL DREAMS**

FICTION / USSR, ESTONIA / 1974

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**A mesmerising view of life through the adventures of five-year-old Kati.**

*Colourful Dreams* offers a captivating perspective on the world, following moments in the life of little Kati. In her world, the village boys and the vast countryside become her companions – from animals and flowers to the wind and stones. With Kati, the sun becomes a tangible creation, as she effortlessly floats above fields of flowers and the entire universe. Life itself takes on a magical quality through her adventures, where dreams seamlessly blend with reality. The film’s improvised dialogue and unique sound design evoke a sense of spontaneity, as if the audience is furtively eavesdropping on children at play in the countryside.

Estonian filmmakers Aruoja and Tooming employ unconventional storytelling techniques, complemented by dynamic fish-eye cinematography, to create a sophisticated cinematic narrative. Arvo Pärt’s evocative score further enriches the film, guiding audiences into Kati’s imaginative realm. Through its visually and conceptually stunning approach, *Colourful Dreams* invites viewers to experience the universal essence of humanity from Kati’s perspective. Yet, amidst the enchantment, the distinction between dream and reality remains tantalisingly ambiguous, leaving viewers to ponder whose dreams they are truly witnessing.

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**Directors:** Virve Aruoja, Jaan Tooming.

**Producer:** Veronika Bobossova, Tallinnfilm.

**With:** Katrin Zilinska, Meelis Küttim, Laur Pihel, Raine Loo, Jaan Tooming, Helene Pihel.

**Screenplay:** Ivar Kosenkranius.

**Cinematography:** Rein Maran.

**Music:** Arvo Pärt.

**Editing:** Leili Karpa, Eevi Säde.

**Physical characteristics of first release:** 35mm, 62’, 1.37:1, colour, sound, Estonian.

**Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films:** new restoration, 4K, DCP, 62’, Estonian.

**Subtitles:** English.

**Copyright owner:** Estonian Film Institute.

**To programme this film:** please contact Mr Rain Põdra, rain@filmi.ee.
Kapedanî

THE CAPTAIN
FICTION / ALBANIA / 1972

Directors: Fehmi Hoshafi, Muharrem Fejzo.
Producer: Kinostudio “Shqipëria e Re”.
Screenplay: Skënder Plasari.
Cinematography: Ilia Terpini
Music: Tahsim Hoshafi.
Editing: Marika Vila.
Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, 96’, 1:1.85, B&W, sound, Albanian.
Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: World premiere restoration, 4K, DCP, 96’, Albanian.
Subtitles: English.
Copyright owner: AQSHF for the restored version and the authors.

To programme this film: please contact Ms Eriona Vyshka, eriona.vyshka@aqshf.gov.al.

A satirical comedy about women’s role and societal changes in 1970s Albania.

Kapedanî follows the journey of Sulo, a white-moustached veteran, as he leaves his village for the Albanian capital to voice his grievances about women’s rights. From its opening sequence, audiences are thrust into Sulo’s fervent macho fantasies, where he envisions facing off against Albania’s historical foes, including Nazis and Ottomans, all on a single battlefield.

A staple of Albanian television, Kapedanî endures as one of the nation’s cherished comedies, distinguished by its departure from the prevailing stylistic and thematic conventions of its era, particularly during the Hoxha regime. Directed by Muharrem Fejzo and Fehmi Hoshafi, this satirical film offers commentary on the social complexities of contemporary Albania and the enduring influence of patriarchal traditions.

The release of a newly restored and properly subtitled version of Kapedanî as part of A Season of Classic Films aims to introduce this film to international audiences.
Based on Herman Melville’s 1855 eponymous novella, *Benito Cereno* dramatises a 1799 slave revolt on a Spanish ship.

In the bay of the sparsely inhabited Santa María island off the coast of Chile, a three-masted Spanish slave ship, the Santo Domingo, approaches. It seems to be handled so strangely and to be in such a bad shape that Amasa Delano, the captain of an American ship at anchor, decides to escort the vessel into the bay or at least give assistance to its passengers by offering water. Once aboard, he is told that the sailors have been decimated by scurvy; bad weather has done the rest, putting the slave ship in danger. The Santo Domingo’s captain Benito Cereno is very sick but apparently still alive thanks to the constant care of his devoted servant Atimbo. As certain details are not as Amasa Delano would expect, he tries to grasp what is going on aboard this mysterious ship.

Beyond a sea adventure, this film touches upon prevailing attitudes towards black people and slavery. It fosters reflection about the subjects of domination, humanity, and memory. To recreate a realistic setting, Serge Roullet shot the film on location with a reconstructed full-size, three-masted, 45-metre vessel. In addition to stirring discussions on slavery, the film reminds audiences of the critically acclaimed work of Herman Melville, best known for his 1851 novel *Moby-Dick*.

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In a long flashback, doctor De Paoli recalls some important episodes from his youth: his medical studies at university, cherished friendships, first loves, and the tragic backdrop of the First World War.

The digital restoration presents a unique opportunity for historians, aspiring film scholars, and cinephiles to discover an Italian silent film that has never been released in cinemas.

According to research, the production company was established specifically for this film, yet the film never made it to the silver screen. The restoration is a collaborative endeavour between the Museo Nazionale del Cinema, which carried out the technical restoration, the AIRSC – Associazione Italiana per le Ricerche della Storia del Cinema, which owns the copy, and Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografico – Cineteca Nazionale, where the surviving nitrate copy and film-related elements are being preserved.
Aleksandar F. Stasenko (1933-1990) was a filmmaker who truly made a point of avoiding the mainstream. Preferring to remain in his coastal hometown of Split and never venturing into feature films, his body of work is marked by a distinctively idiosyncratic artistic vision, both in style and subject matter. Transitioning from amateur to professional cinema, Stasenko remained focused on portraying solitary, resolute individuals labouring in silence, often surrounded by unforgiving landscapes. Deriving visual poetry from harsh realism, his films can be considered paeans to human perseverance, permeated with nostalgia for the disappearing Mediterranean of old.

Director: Aleksandar F. Stasenko.
Producers: Adria Film (Put, Sve godine u jednoj noći), Autorski Studio Split (Poslije potopa).
With: Kaja Cvitić, Tonka Dominiković, Josip Genda, Mira Marinović, Dino Vidan (Sve godine u jednoj noći).
Screenplay: Aleksandar F. Stasenko.
Cinematography: Andrija Pivčević (Put), Srđan Segarić (Sve godine u jednoj noći), Nikša Blajić (Poslije potopa).
Editing: Aleksandar F. Stasenko.

Physical characteristics of first release: 35mm, Academy ratio (Put, Poslije potopa), 1.66:1 (Sve godine u jednoj noći), colour, optical sound, Croatian.

Film copy screened during A Season of Classic Films: New digitisation and world premiere restoration, 2K, DCP, 63’, Croatian.

Subtitles: English.
Copyright owner: Croatian State Archive – Croatian Cinematheque.

To programme this film: please contact Mr Dinko Majcen, dinko@arhiv.hr.

Meditative Shorts by Aleksandar F. Stasenko
DOCUMENTARY & FICTION / YUGOSLAVIA / 1977 - 1985

A glimpse into Aleksandar Stasenko’s poetic and contemplative cinematic oeuvre.

The compilation includes the titles:
PUT The Road | 1977, 17’, documentary.
Members of the Rodić family dedicate seven years to constructing a stone road leading to a mountain hamlet where their elders lived.

SVE GODINE U JEDNOJ NOĆI All the Years in One Night | 1980, 29’, fiction.
Passing away, an old lighthouse keeper recollects the key events of her life, with the past and the present converging at her deathbed.

POSLIJE POTOPA After the Inundation | 1985, 17’, documentary.
After their village was flooded because of the dam construction, some of its inhabitants refused to leave. They are spending their final days by the reservoir.
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