

13th Arsenal Summer School

August 17–19, 2022, at Arsenal cinema and silent green

THE UNIQUE OBJECT IN AN ERA OF UBIQUITY

Once again this August the Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art is putting on its Summer School. Over three days, 25 participants, Arsenal staff, and invited guests will tackle themes at the intersections of theory and practice.

The Arsenal Archive contains more than 10,000 analog film prints from the history of independent cinema worldwide. It arose out of the living practice of cinema and festivals and is therefore a reflection of international connections in film culture. If there is anything that links the films, then it is a practice of resistance, aesthetically, culturally, politically. At the same time, each film is singular, also in view of its layers of production of reception. What if a copy turns out to be the only one? And that at a time in which the digital availability of a film is what provides it with its place in the public consciousness in the first place? As part of the 13th Summer School we will watch, research, and discuss these unique prints: What is their relevance in the present, and what need for action arises from this? In order to make the experience of a first collective viewing more useful, the titles of three of these unique copies will not be revealed before the screenings. In the evening program we will be showing films that have already been made available again through digital restoration.

With Marina Carvalho, Gesa Knolle, Kornelia Kugler, Annette Lingg, Petna Ndaliko Katondolo, Bert Rebhandl, Markus Ruff, Lena Siebertz, Shelly Silver, Stefanie Schulte Strathaus.

Some of the events will take place in German language, others in English.

All those interested can register at summerschool@arsenal-berlin.de

The number of participants is limited.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, August 17

9:30 a.m., silent green
Arrival and welcome

10:00–12:00 a.m., silent green
The Archive: When Films get together
Stefanie Schulte Strathaus, Markus Ruff (Arsenal)
Guests: Kornelia Kugler and Lena Siebertz

To open and introduce the theme of the School, we will provide a look into the archival spaces, but also into the practice of an archival work that is influenced by new discoveries and realizations as well as the research and decision processes that result from these. Two examples will be highlighted in particular: NOW! (Santiago Álvarez, Cuba 1965, 6 min) and MONANGAMBEEE (Sarah Maldoror, Algeria 1969, 15 min). Monangambeee! is a cry that activists in the anti-colonial liberation struggles in Angola used to convene village assemblies. MONANGAMBEEE is also a short film by Sarah Maldoror, who thematizes Portuguese ignorance of Angolan culture and the indignities made by colonial powers, as well as a film about solidarity and resistance. A print of the film remained in the collection at the Arsenal after being premiered in the Forum in 1971.

As part of the project Living Archive – Archive Work as a Contemporary Artistic and Curatorial Practice (2011-2013), the artist, filmmaker, and theorist Hito Steyerl, along with students from her class at the UdK Berlin, developed works for the exhibition "NOW! (Extended)." The focus was on the film NOW! (1965) by the Cuban director Santiago Álvarez, a montage film about discrimination against blacks in the USA made up a still photographs, rhythmically edited according to the song by the same name. The exhibition posed the question of the contemporary relevance of film in the digital age, in which images and sounds are increasingly mobile and appropriation and piracy have become ordinary means of communication. The works in the exhibition revolve around the journey of the images and sounds used in NOW! and project their way into the future.

Former UdK graduates Kornelia Kugler and Lena Siebertz will speak about the project that they created in this context.

12:00 p.m., silent green
Lunch at Restaurant Mars

2:00–4:30 p.m., Arsenal cinema
ARSENAL by Alexander Dowzhenko: A Film of Revolution between Universalism and Partiotism
Lecture by Bert Rebhandl and film screening: ARSENAL (Alexander Dovzhenko, USSR 1928, 92 min.)
Discussion following

ARSENAL by Alexander Dowzhenko is certainly not a unique print in the Arsenal archive, and yet the film holds a unique place there, since it gives the Arsenal its name. Bert Rebhandl takes a new look at the film here: "The film ARSENAL delivers a contradiction in the cinema of the Soviet Revolution, which has once again broken out in 2022 due to the Russian imperial war in Ukraine: notes on the current timeliness of a classic."

Bert Rebhandl, born in Austria, lives in Berlin as an independent journalist, writer, and translator. Texts for FAZ, tipBerlin, Der Standard, and many others. Co-editor of CARGO Film Medien Kultur (www.cargo-film.de).
Webseite: www.BRO198.net

5:00–7:00 p.m., silent green
There's a Strong Wind: Exile in the Arsenal Film Archive
Gesa Knolle and Annette Lingg (Arsenal)

A film archive is not only a place to store film prints, it is a place for narratives and counternarratives, a cultural memory. And it can be much more than that: a safe haven, a sanctuary, even a "homeland" for films that meet there from all over the world. Of the more than 10,000 prints that have entered and were collected in the Arsenal Archive since the '60s, more than a few have taken winding paths to reach us. For some of the prints the Arsenal Archive became a veritable sanctuary, because the films could not be publicly screened in their countries of production, were forbidden, or would jeopardize the well-being of their directors. We will present some of these films in a brochure created as part of "Archive außer sich" and we will screen a selection of them at the cinema.

Film screening: THERE'S A STRONG WIND IN BEIJING (Ju Anqi, People's Republic of China 2000, 50 min)
Spring 1999 in Beijing, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China is just around the corner. Along with two crew members and a 16mm camera, Ju Anqi's debut film turns directly to the inhabitants of

Beijing, asking them the simple question of wind conditions there. The answers he gets are as whimsical as they are telling. The 50-minute film shows everything that was filmed, in its entirety, without omissions. It had its world premiere in 2000 at the International Forum of Young Film and is a symbol in its directness for a new, experimental Chinese film production from that time.

7:30 p.m., silent green

Dinner together at Restaurant Mars (included in price)

Thursday, August 18

10:00–11:30 a.m., Arsenal cinema

Screening and discussion: KUMBUKA

Director: Petna Ndaliko Katondolo (USA, Netherlands, Democratic Republic of Congo 2021, 59 min.)

KUMBUKA is a multilayered film engaging with the history and legacy of the colonial view to Africa. It tells of two aspiring African filmmakers and their difficulties re-editing a highly praised, but controversial Dutch film that deals with themselves. As the main characters of this film, they had publicly criticized it for its Eurocentric perspective, which, according to them, distorted their stories. After the film's production company offered them the original material to use, they are simultaneously confronted with the chance to begin their own nascent film careers as well as with the still current questions of power posed by film representations of Africa. Their efforts to rework the film are interwoven with two contradictory collections of archival material, which formulate a metacritique of both the colonial project as well as the Afrofuturist movement, which is growing in the Congo in the wake of Petna Katondolo's continuing project RECORDING AESTHETICS.

12:00–1:30 p.m., Arsenal cinema

Screening: Unknown unique print (1)

Respondent: Petna Ndaliko Katondolo

Petna Ndaliko Katondolo currently lives in Goma and Chapel Hill and works as a filmmaker, activist, and teacher. In 2000 he founded Yole!Africa and in 2005 the Salaam Kivu International Film Festival.

2:30–4:00 p.m.

Lunch break

4:00–6:30 p.m., Arsenal cinema

Screening: Unknown unique print (2)

Respondent: Marina Carvalho

Marina Carvalho is a creative producer, researcher and film programmer currently living in São Paulo. In 2021/2022 she received the German Chancellor Fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Her research at Arsenal focused on curatorial practices, leading to the program "Brazilian Mythscape" presented at Arsenal cinema in August 2022.

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Dinner

8:00 p.m., Arsenal cinema

Film screening: LA EXPROPIACIÓN (The Expropriation, Raúl Ruiz, Chile 1974, 60 min.)

This film treatment of the land reform by the Unidad Popular thematizes the collision of political ideologies and the reality-contradictions that emerge from generalizations. The story about a landowner who wants to transfer his properties to his workers even before the agrarian reform is told at different levels and is constantly interrupted. Sympathy about the ideas and the optimism of politics is mixed in with derision. Shot in Chile in 1971, the work on LA EXPROPIACIÓN was interrupted by Ruiz's exile. After the coup of 1973 he went first to West Germany and later to Paris, where the film was finished and premiered in 1974.

Friday August 19

10:00–11:30 a.m., Arsenal cinema

Screening: Unknown unique print (3)

Respondents: Participants in this year's Summer School

12:15 p.m., silent green

Lunch at Restaurant Mars

1:15–2:15 p.m., silent green

Participant group work

Found materials related to the unique print 3 will be made available.

2:30–3:30 p.m., silent green

Presentation of results

3:30–4:30 p.m., silent green

Closing discussion

4:45–5:30 p.m., silent green

Vinegar Surprises

Presentation by Shelly Silver

The cause for the disintegration of acetate film material is "vinegar syndrome," a chemical process of decomposition that, once begun, cannot be halted. Since affected prints are "contagious," they are isolated and pulled from distribution. There are several film prints in quarantine in the Arsenal's archive as well. Shelly Silver's films "This Film" and "Turn" are currently being exposed to a controlled vinegar syndrome infestation as part of the Stoffwechsel project.

Shelly Silver is a New York artist working with the still and moving image. Her work explores contested territories between public and private, narrative and documentary, and the watcher and the watched.

5:30 p.m., silent green

Drinks

Registration

The number of participants is limited to 25 persons. Slots will be allotted according to when the application is received. Participation fee: 145 Euro / 125 Euro (members, students, Berlin-Pass) / 105 Euro (members in the Arsenal Freundeskreis)

Registration deadline: August 5, 2022

Venue

silent green
Gerichtstr. 35
13347 Berlin

&

Arsenal cinema
Potsdamer Str. 2
10785 Berlin

Contact

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