

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
September 1989

FALL/WINTER SEASON OF WHAT'S HAPPENING? BEGINS OCTOBER 5

WHAT'S HAPPENING?, The Museum of Modern Art's ongoing series of independently made films on social and political issues, begins its fall 1989 and winter 1990 season on October 5, 1989. The films are shown on Thursdays at 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. The schedule is as follows:

October 5

Johan van der Keuken

The Eye Above the Well: The Cycle of Life, Death, and Life in Kerala, India (1988)

Holland's leading documentary filmmaker, Johan van der Keuken, looks at life in rural India from a non-Western point of view. The film shows various activities in a village including young girls' initiation by their families into the martial arts and dance, a village inhabitant who collects and invests money, and children learning sacred hymns.

October 12

Lino Brocka

Fight for Us (1989)

According to Amnesty International, reports of killings by vigilante groups and government soldiers have sharply increased in the last two years in the Philippines. Lino Brocka's film focuses on these paramilitary groups who carry out acts of violence against suspected left-wing organizations, often with the backing of the military or the police. The fictional narrative is centered around the killing of a soldier by a government insurgent and is based on terrorist incidents in the Philippines.

October 19

Program I. Documentaries from the Ruhr

Presented in association with Kulturstiftung Ruhr and Goethe House, New York, as part of Ruhrworks, The Arts of the German Region.

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3:00 p.m.

Harry Rag

Titanica (1988)

Set in Rheinhausen, this black-and-white film is a series of images from the workers' fight against the dismantling of a modern steel mill.

Klaus Wildenhahn

Rheinhausen-Fall '88 (1988)

Six months following the fight by the workers to save the Rheinhausen steel mill, filmmaker Klaus Wildenhahn returns to the area and records the mixed reactions about the outcome.

6:00 p.m.

Klaus Wildenhahn

What Are Pina Bausch and Her Dancers Doing in Wuppertal? (1983)

For two months Klaus Wildenhahn followed choreographer Pina Bausch and her group of dancers through their daily activities, rehearsals, and performances which culminated in the creation of the ballet, Waltz. Intertwined are scenes of daily life in the city Wuppertal, and reminiscences of its past. In German, with English subtitles. Klaus Wildenhahn will be present.

October 26

Program II. Documentaries from the Ruhr

Presented in association with Kulturstiftung Ruhr and Goethe House, New York, as part of Ruhrworks, The Arts of the German Region.

Zeppelin III Visits the Rhenish-Westphalian Industrial Area (1909)

This is the earliest extant film on the Ruhr district. Thought to have been made by Guido Seeber, it shows the celebration of "Zeppelin Day," when thousands of spectators cheered the landing of Zeppelin III in the city of Essen.

Hansjürgen Völcker

Steel-Impressions from Heavy Industries (1930)

In 1930, German steel production was the second largest in the world. This film shows the workers in the mill producing white-hot steel.

Walter Ruttmann

German Armories (1940)

Filmmaker Walter Ruttmann shows how the Ruhr area was an immense armory for war weaponry in 1940.

Wilhelm Bittorf

Bring Your Heads with You! (1968)

This film depicts the decline of the Ruhr region after the pit coal era. In German, with English subtitles.

Klaus Helle and Marianne Tampl

Hochfeld Requiem (1989)

This film is a portrait of Hochfeld, a city neighborhood of Duisburg slated for destruction. In color, with music and no dialogue.

November 2

Ignacio Aguero

One Hundred Children Waiting for a Train (1987)

Using interviews and old film clips, filmmaker Ignacio Aguero demonstrates how Alicia Vega turned a neighborhood chapel in a slum in Santiago, Chile, into a film projection room where she conducted a film workshop for children. Vega introduced the children to the principles of filmmaking through activities and lessons, and took them to their first movie.

November 9

Barbara Trent

Coverup: Behind the Iran-Contra Affair (1988)

This startling film charges the Reagan Administration and the CIA with involvement in illegal activities relating to the Iran-Contra affair. Trent

addresses issues which received little attention during the congressional hearings including allegations of a Reagan/Bush arms deal with Iran and evidence of a history of CIA involvement in drug traffic. Portraits of former CIA operatives and United States' top military personnel, relevant to the case, are also included.

November 16

Nestor Almendros and Jorge Ulla

Nobody Listened (1988)

Using archival images and thirty personal testimonials, Nobody Listened explores human rights violations within Fidel Castro's Cuba. This film builds its powerful case through moving eyewitness accounts.

December 7

Mark Gasper

An Empty Bed (1988)

This film depicts a day in the life of Bill Frayne, a gay man in his sixties living in Greenwich Village. Told largely through flashbacks, An Empty Bed deals with aging and being gay in contemporary society.

December 14

Pedro A. Rivera and Susan Zeig

Plena Is Work, Plena Is Song (1989)

Plena, a form of music analogous to African-American blues, stands out as Puerto Rico's most original contribution to the urban musical tradition of the Caribbean. Plena Is Work, Plena Is Song explores the evolving relationship between Puerto Rican working-class experience and musical expression, and how this music is becoming a part of the multinational heritage of the United States.

Lynne Sachs

Sermons and Sacred Pictures: The Life and Work of Reverend L.O. Taylor (1989)

This documentary centers around the life and work of Reverend L.O. Taylor, a black Baptist minister who made a rare photographic record of black life in the 1930s and 1940s in the South before the Civil Rights movement. Lynne Sachs combines Reverend Taylor's 16mm black-and-white films with her own contemporary color images of Memphis neighborhoods and religious gatherings, and threads them together with testimony of the Reverend's widow and acquaintances.

December 21

Lourdes Protillo

La Offrenda (1989)

Filmmaker Lourdes Protillo has created a portrait of the annual and ancient Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead.

December 28

James Ault and Michael Camerini

Born Again: Life in a Fundamentalist Baptist Church (1988)

In the wake of controversial press concerning religious leaders like Jimmy Swaggart, Jim and Tammy Bakker, and Jerry Falwell, Born Again: Life in a Fundamentalist Baptist Church takes a candid look at the foundation of a fundamentalist community in Massachusetts. Despite their powerful impact on society and politics, the motives of these groups are not well known. This film lends insight into the sources and power of the fundamentalist tradition and the "Moral Majority" world view.

WHAT'S HAPPENING is organized by William Sloan, librarian, Circulating Film Library, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art. Tickets are included with Museum admission, which is on a pay-what-you-wish basis after 5:00 p.m. on Thursdays.

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For further information or film stills, contact Sarah Eaton, film press representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.