

The Museum of Modern Art

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"LOOKING AT FILM" SERIES ENTERS THIRD YEAR

Ranging from the popular humor of the great screen comedians to the modernist irony of Marcel Duchamp, from Hollywood's red-baiting in the 1950s to today's revolutionary Third World cinema, The Museum of Modern Art's LOOKING AT FILM series will again this season present a program of courses that explores various aspects of the motion picture medium.

Harold D. Weaver, well-known authority on African film, considers the work of filmmakers from the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America in the current series, "Third World Cinema," which runs through November 22. Weaver explores this cinema's reflections of both social and political realities as well as the literary and visual arts of the cultures from which particular cinemas derive. He pays special attention to the role of women, both in front of and behind the camera in the films under consideration.

Author and critic Nora Sayre takes a look at a side of the 1950s nostalgia buffs may forget in "Hollywood and the Cold War," beginning in January. Ms. Sayre sees two modes in the films of the McCarthy era--an initial red-baiting period, followed by a retreat from politics and renewed emphasis on the supposed verities or seeming absurdities of American life. Also, Ms. Sayre notes that this period saw the phenomenon of the science fiction film obsessed with "alien" invaders, a sublimation of the culture's political fears and hysterias.

Though not well-known to the wider public, the cinema created by modern artists and filmmakers has been significant in the history of today's visual culture. In "Film and the Modern Arts," critic and scholar P. Adams Sitney

will consider films made by Marcel Duchamp, Dziga Vertov, the young Luis Buñuel, the Italian and Russian Futurists, and, after World War II, Stan Brakhage and Michael Snow.

Finally, Leonard Maltin, whose latest book was inspired by his work as guest programmer for the Museum's Bicentennial Salute to American film comedy, will give a course next summer entitled "Remembered Laughter: The Great Screen Comics." He will emphasize how different performers, directors and writers have developed individual approaches to similar ideas with reference to such topics as "Women in Comedy," "The Comic Personality," and "The Parody."

Now entering its third season, LOOKING AT FILM was established in 1976 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Museum of Modern Art was the first NEH Learning Museum recognized under this program, aimed at enabling individuals of any age, with or without educational background in film, to pursue the study of the medium.

The registration fee for each course is \$25, and each course generally includes eight evening lectures, featuring full-length screenings as well as relevant clips, and personal appearances by film creators as well as scholars, critics and historians.

Stephen Harvey, LOOKING AT FILM's coordinator, notes that this year's program "continues the diversity of approaches and the many different areas of film interest that have characterized the program from its inception. Once again, it's going to be an exciting year."

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