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Washington Premieres, Unique Ciné-Concerts, Special Appearances and Performances, Film Sequences, Documentary Screenings, Mid-Century Silent Portraits, and Digital Restorations Highlight the National Gallery of Art Film Offerings for Spring 2016



Still from *Don't Blink – Robert Frank* by Laura Israel, 2015, to be shown on Sunday, June 19, at 4:00 p.m. at the National Gallery of Art, East Building Auditorium. Image courtesy Assemblage Films.

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art's film program provides many opportunities throughout the year to view classic and contemporary cinema from around the world. Through screenings, scholarly notes, filmmaker discussions, and unique introductions by critics and academics, the program encourages viewers to learn more about the history of cinema and the role of media in society. Innovative retrospectives, restored works of historical value, silent films with live musical accompaniment, new documentaries, and experimental media by noted video artists are just some of the programs offered year-round.

The Gallery's film series this spring includes special film events, Washington premieres, new portraits of artists, unique ciné-concerts, several series hailing acclaimed auteurs, and special appearances by artists and performers. Documentary screenings present the works and lives of such disparate artists as John James Audubon, James McNeill Whistler, Samuel Beckett, Yvonne Rainer, and contemporary painter Rackstraw Downes. Two film series—*Chantal Akerman: A Traveler's Tale* and *The Vision of Ousmane Sembene*—feature recent documentaries on these masters alongside key works from their enduring filmographies, including the Washington premiere of Belgian director Akerman's last work, *No Home Movie*, and a digital restoration of Senegalese director Sembene's 1966 debut feature, *La Noire de . . . (Black Girl)*, the first film by an African filmmaker to be seen widely in the west.

Other film series include *Bernard Herrmann: Stage, Screen, and Radio*, an investigation into the contributions of the American composer and conductor produced in association with PostClassical Ensemble, and *The Cinema I: Mangolte Film*, a three-part highlighting the original films of influential French-American cinematographer Babette Mangolte.

Three ciné-concerts bring to life two classics: *Faust* (with a score by contemporary Swiss composer Daniel Schnyder) and *Die Nibelungen* (accompanied by Dennis James on organ), as well as *Kannapolis: A Moving Portrait*, a set of mid-century silent portraits of everyday people filmed by depression-era itinerant filmmaker H. Lee Waters and accompanied by folksong and field sounds arranged by Jenny Scheinman.

Special Events: Washington Premieres, Screenings and Appearances

[Notfilm followed by Film](#) (featuring Buster Keaton)

Washington premiere

April 24 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[Ciné-concert: Faust](#)

Daniel Schnyder, David Taylor, and Kenny Drew Jr. in performance

April 30 at 2:30

East Building Auditorium

[*Louise Bourgeois: The Spider, the Mistress, and the Tangerine*](#)

Amei Wallach in person

May 1 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Paris Belongs to Us: Recalling Rivette*](#)

May 7 at 2:30

East Building Auditorium

[*Ciné-concert: Die Nibelungen, Parts I and II*](#)

Dennis James in performance

May 14 at 1:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Rackstraw Downes: A Painter*](#)

Rackstraw Downes and curator Harry Cooper in discussion

Washington premiere

May 21 at 2:30

East Building Auditorium

[*Ciné-concert: Kannapolis: A Moving Portrait*](#)

Jenny Scheinman, Robbie Fulks, Robbie Gjersoe in performance

May 22 at 4:30

East Building Auditorium

Depression-era itinerant filmmaker H. Lee Waters documented more than a hundred towns in the Carolinas, Virginia, and Tennessee from 1936 to 1942 in his series *Movies of Local People*. He recorded people going about their lives in the small-town South, and then worked with musicians to mix folksongs, fiddle music, and field sounds. The full slate of Waters's movies are now housed at Duke University's Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Commissioned by Duke Performances. (H. Lee Waters, compiled by Finn Taylor and Jenny Scheinman, 1936 – 2015, 60 minutes)

[*Art on Film Dialogue: James McNeill Whistler and the Case for Beauty*](#)

Karen Thomas in person

May 29 at 2:00

East Building Auditorium

[*I Don't Belong Anywhere: The Cinema of Chantal Akerman*](#)

Washington premiere

June 4 at 2:00

[*La Noire de . . . \(Black Girl\) preceded by Borom Sarret*](#)

Washington premiere of the restorations

June 5 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Don't Blink – Robert Frank*](#)

Washington premiere

June 19 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Film About a Woman Who . . .*](#)

June 25 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Feelings are Facts: Yvonne Rainer*](#)

June 26 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[*Bernard Herrmann: Stage, Screen, and Radio*](#)

Through April 23

A towering figure in 20th-century American music, Bernard Herrmann (1911–1975) has long been regarded as only a Hollywood composer. Although he is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest American composers for film, his concert output remains virtually unknown. Working closely with the

young Orson Welles and later with radio and screenwriter Norman Corwin, Herrmann was also America's foremost radio composer and the conductor of a radio orchestra — William Paley's visionary CBS Symphony — that boldly promoted new music. This series is the first ever to celebrate Herrmann "in the round," including work for film, television, radio, and the concert hall in a varied selection of screenings and performances. Some of Herrmann's memorable films to be screened include *The Wrong Man*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Vertigo*.

Produced by PostClassical Ensemble in collaboration with the National Gallery of Art, AFI Silver Theatre, and Georgetown University. With thanks for generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Art Mentor Lucerne, WAMU, and the Estate of Norman Corwin. For screenings at the AFI Silver Theatre, see www.afi.com/silver. For a comprehensive list of all events, including concerts, visit www.postclassical.com.

[Vertigo](#)

April 23 at 2:30

East Building Auditorium

[The Vision of Ousmane Sembène](#)

May 8–June 5

Before becoming a filmmaker in midlife, acclaimed Senegalese novelist Ousmane Sembène (1923–2007) had worked as a laborer, dockworker, tradesman, and union activist — roles that assured him a unique perspective as a creative artist. His eloquently crafted films deftly deploy parable, irony, satire, comedy, ritual, and melodrama in their pursuit of the recurring problems he felt were crushing Africa's soul and suppressing its cultural legacies. With very few resources, Sembène managed to forge a film industry at a time when colonial sub-Saharan Africans were banned from making movies. This series includes the Washington premiere of *Sembène!*, a new documentary about this influential artist, as well as his recently restored first feature *La noire de . . . (Black Girl)* and the brilliant, riotous *Xala*.

[Sembène!](#)

Washington premiere

May 8 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[Xala](#)

May 15 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[La Noire de . . . \(Black Girl\) preceded by Borom Sarret](#)

Washington premiere of the restorations

June 5 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[Chantal Akerman: A Traveler's Tale](#)

June 4–12

Brussels-born Chantal Akerman (1950–2015) referred to herself as a nomad, a wanderer who never remained, physically or mentally, in one spot. Her restiveness is reflected in her pioneering experiments with fiction, essay, documentary, abstraction, literary adaptation, and other forms (even musical), as she constantly probes themes of family, gender, performance, and history with her characteristic penchant for minimal budgets and small crews, and her distinctive gift for dramaturgy. The program begins with the Washington premiere of a new documentary on her remarkable career.

[I Don't Belong Anywhere: The Cinema of Chantal Akerman](#)

Washington premiere

June 4 at 2:00

East Building Auditorium

[News from Home](#)

June 4 at 3:30

East Building Auditorium

[Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles](#)

June 11 at 2:00

East Building Auditorium

[No Home Movie](#)

June 12 at 4:00

East Building Auditorium

[The Cinema I: Mangolte Film](#)

June 18–25

Emigrating from France to New York City in 1970, Babette Mangolte (b. 1941) defined the "look" of many seminal avant-garde films when she collaborated with Chantal Akerman, Yvonne Rainer, Michael Snow, and Richard Foreman, among other artists. Her collaborations in the conceptual art, dance, theatre, and film worlds have led to many astonishing works of clarity, directness, and feeling, thanks to her cinematographic skills. While Mangolte continues to work as the director of photography on others' projects, she has also produced her own experimental films. Three programs celebrate Mangolte as maker, over the last four decades, of her own works in which (serving as cinematographer and director) she distills her inquiry into vision and meaning via the camera. With thanks to Filmmakers' Cooperative, Broadway 1602, and to Babette Mangolte.

[I. Portraiture](#)

June 18 at 1:00

East Building Auditorium

[II. Performance](#)

June 18 at 3:30

East Building Auditorium

[III. Space](#)

June 25 at 1:15

East Building Auditorium

Film programs are free of charge, and are screened in original formats whenever possible. Doors open approximately 30 minutes before each screening; seating is on a first-come, first-seated basis unless noted otherwise. Programs are subject to change.

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General Information

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Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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