Screen/Society
March / April 2022

Thursday March 17th, 7PM
2022 Cinematic Arts Student Film Showcase
Join us for a celebration of some of the finest moving image work produced in recent Duke Cinematic Arts courses.

Friday March 18th, 7PM
Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy
(Ryusuke Hamaguchi, 2021, 121 min, Japan, Japanese w/ English subtitles, DCP)
Director Ryusuke Hamaguchi’s Drive My Car is making a surprise run for this year’s Best Picture Oscar, but it’s his other 2021 film that may provide the perfect entry point to the filmmaker’s mesmerizing films. Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy is composed of three taut stories set in Tokyo about the mysteries and depths of women’s desires - a lively and intricately woven work showcasing some sparkling performances, ingenious camera placements, and quietly overwhelming storytelling.

Saturday March 19th, 7PM
Mothra
(Ishiro Honda, 1961, 101 min, Japan, Japanese w/ English subtitles, 35mm)
An expedition to an irradiated island encounters a ‘primitive’ native culture. When one sensationalist entrepreneur tries to exploit the islanders by kidnapping two ‘primitive’ native women, the ancient deity arises in retaliation and wreaks havoc on Tokyo. Directed by Ishiro Honda (of Godzilla fame), Toho’s sci-fi fantasy Mothra (Mothra), introduces the titular character who would become Toho’s second most popular kaiju (giant monster) after Godzilla, as they appear in eleven Godzilla films and her own trilogy in the 1990s.

Q&A to follow with Mothra scholar Bill Tsutsui (Ottawa University).

All screenings are free and open to the public, and are coordinated and sponsored by Duke University’s Cinematic Arts Program. Screenings take place in the Rubenstein Arts Center’s Film Theater (2020 Campus Drive, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708).

Thursday March 24th, 7PM
Ben Gurion, Epilogue
(dir. Yariv Mozer, editor/co-producer Yael Perlov, 2016, 70 min, Israel, English & Hebrew w/ English subtitles, Color, DCP)
The film brings to life a lost interview with one of the modern history’s greatest leaders, David Ben-Gurion. It is 1968, he is 82 and lives in the desert. Ben-Gurion’s introspective soul-searching provides a surprising vision for crucial decisions Israel needs to make today. At the time of the global leadership crisis, the film also brings thought-provoking insights about the role of leaders in today’s complex world.

Q&A to follow with Producer/Editor Yael Perlov (2022 Israeli Institute visiting artist at Duke University).

Friends and Strangers
(James Vaughn, 2021, 82 min, Australia, DCP)
Part screwball/tinged comedy, part deep-seated satire of white Australia as experienced by the young and affluent, Friends and Strangers follows twenty-somethings Ray and Alice as they navigate a series of increasingly awkward and comedic situations, from lmp romantic encounters to bungled opportunities for professional growth. This ever-intriguing debut feature by James Vaughan destabilizes narrative expectations from the outset, as major characters drop out of the film, just because. A surface-level casualness beles Vaughan’s deft handling of youthful ambivalence and historical amnesia.

In the Desert: A Documentary Diptych

Monday March 28, 7PM
Omar’s Dream (115 min)

Wednesday March 30, 7pm
Avidan’s Dream (105 min)

(Avner Faingulernt, 2018, Israel/Canada, Hebrew & Arabic w/English subtitles, DCP)
In The Desert is a diptych documentary about two realities, two families in one land. Both parts have a dialectic relationship to each other, an inherent tension that exists by their very juxtaposition: Omar’s Dream is about a Palestinian family; Avidan’s Dream is about a Jewish one. Both families live in an area of the West Bank that is governed by the Palestinian Authority but controlled by the Israeli Army – which officially prohibits anyone from settling there. The two families live on opposite hills, but never meet. Both men discover their lives are determined by a personal struggle to define who they really are rather than by a political conflict.

Director Avner Faingulernt in attendance at both screenings.

The 2022 Duke MFA|EDA thesis season comes to a close with this special encore presentation of transporting new films by Emily MacDiarmid and Taoyuan Jin. Jin’s film, sequence, propels us along an abstract journey through the barycentric and beauty of American landscapes; MacDiarmid’s film, Approved for Release, follows a psycic traveler to unseen worlds under the direction of US Defense Intelligence Agency scientists.

MFA|EDA Thesis Show Encore Screening
Thursday April 7th, 7PM
What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?
(Alexandre Koberidze, 2021, 150 min, Georgia, Georgian with English subtitles, DCP)
Among contemporary cinema’s most distinctive new voices, Georgian director Alexandre Kobrize has created an intimate city symphony like no other with his latest film. Beginning as an off-kilter romance in which footbballer Giorgi and pharmacist Lisa are brought together on the streets of Kutaisi by chance, only to have their dreams complicated when they become victims of an age-old curse, What Do We See When We Look at the Sky? continues to radically and pleasurably shape-shift into one of the most unusual feel-good movies of the year.

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