



29TH
INTERNATIONAL BREMEN
FILM CONFERENCE

NETWORK AGNÈS VARDA

ESSAYISMS FEMINISMS
MODERNISMS

7–10 MAY 2025

CITY 46



Universität
Bremen



arsenal on location

Dear readers,

for almost three decades, the International Bremen Film Conference has been providing an outstanding public forum for appreciation and analysis of film. The 29th edition of the Conference will be taking place from 7 to 10 May 2025. This longstanding collaboration between CITY 46 / Kommunalkino Bremen and the University of Bremen/ ZeMKI's Film Studies and Media Aesthetics Workgroup enriches Bremen's cultural scene by promoting interdisciplinary exchange and an interest in aesthetic experimentation.

The latest edition of the Conference is dedicated to the work of the French director, photographer and installation artist Agnès Varda (1928–2019). In 2000, Varda was awarded the Bremen Film Prize, with the judges describing her style as oscillating 'between documentary realism and poetic fiction'. Under the intriguing title 'Network Agnès Varda: Essayisms, Feminisms, Modernisms', the 2025 Conference with a series of screenings and talks will be paying tribute to her work.

This theme lends itself to a festival format that strikes a finely judged balance between entertainment and research, with the aim of appealing to curious cinemagoers and academic experts alike. I would like to thank the organising team for their hard work and wealth of ideas – and wish all those attending an enriching and stimulating experience.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Bovenschulte', written in a cursive style.

Warmest regards

Dr. Andreas Bovenschulte

Mayor of Bremen, President of the Senate,
Senator for Culture

NETWORK AGNÈS VARDA: ESSAYISMS, FEMINISMS, MODERNISMS

Agnès Varda (1928–2019) was an exceptionally creative and productive individual, whose work in film, photography and installation art spanned more than six decades. A pioneer of modern film, she spent many years pushing the boundaries of cinematic expression, before enthusiastically taking up small digital cameras and beginning a third career as an installation artist when she was already in her 70s. It was during this stage of her career that Varda received the second Bremen Film Prize for her outstanding contribution to European film (see next page). According to the judges,

‘As the inventor of “cinécriture” – a form of cinematic writing that relies on encounters, chance events, desires, needs, possible digressions – Agnès Varda created a style that oscillates between documentary realism and poetic fiction. [...] It is the oeuvre of a collector, a vagabond.’

25 years later, the Bremen Film Conference is revisiting this artist, with a particular emphasis on the collaborations and relationships that shaped her work. The aim of ‘Network Agnès Varda’ is to look beyond the auteur and her oeuvre, and consider her social network, the discourses and practices associated with it and the ways her work influenced and was influenced by that of other artists. Different perspectives will be brought together to show the diversity of her output, trace the intertextual and inter-medial references that she makes and situate her work within a wider artistic context.

The Conference will focus on the themes of essayisms, feminisms and modernisms. After her breakthrough with **Cléo de 5 à 7** (F/I 1961) it became clear how closely Varda’s modernist affinities were bound up with her feminist goals and essayistic approaches. This has made her an inexhaustible source of inspiration for artists, scholars and ordinary cinemagoers to this day.

Nils Gloistein, Birgit Kohler, Winfried Pauleit

The University of Bremen in collaboration with
CITY 46 / Kommunalkino Bremen e.V. and
Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art, Berlin

Bilder aus Rhyt

Agnès Varda ist die französische Universal-Künstlerin

Bremen. „Kinomachen ist sehr wunderbar und sehr schwierig – man braucht viel Geduld und viel Leidenschaft“, sagt Agnès Varda halb nachdenklich, halb amüsiert. „Aber auf keinen Fall möchte ich als ‚die ernsthafte alte Dame des Kinos‘ angesehen werden.“ Doch dazu funkeln die dunklen runden Augen der Agnès Varda zu pfiffig, zu temperamentvoll. Gestern ist die 71-Jährige im Bremer Rathaus mit dem zweiten Bremer Filmpreis in Höhe von 15 000 Mark ausgezeichnet worden, zum Auftakt des „5. Internationalen Symposium zum Film“.

Eine unwirkliche Situation sei es, sagt Agnès Varda, als sie gefragt wird, wie sie sich denn so fühle, hier in Bremen. Eigentlich kenne sie die Hansestadt nur aus Brechts „Mutter Courage“ und wegen der merkwürdigen Tiere, die aufeinanderstehen. Verwirrend, da Katzen doch eigentlich viel zu wild seien, um einen Hahn auf ihrem Rücken zu dulden.



Zum Auftakt des 5. Internationalen Bremer Symposiums

Zum Filmpreis gibt

Im Rahmen des 5. Internationalen Bremer Symposium zum Film wird morgen der zweite Bremer Filmpreis an die französische Regisseurin Agnès Varda verliehen. Mit der Grande Dame des französischen Kinos sprach Corinna Laubach.

DIE WELT: Waren Sie überrascht, den Bremer Filmpreis zu bekommen?

Agnès Varda: Ja, ich war sehr überrascht. Aber ich



Press reports 19–29 January 2000
(selection)

hmus und Kraft

erin – Sie hat den Bremer Filmpreis bekommen

Sie habe schön das Gefühl gehabt, dass ihre Inspiration langsam verlösche und sich aufgemacht, um Menschen zu begegnen, um deren Blickwinkel auf die Welt mit dem eigenen auf einen künstlerischen Nenner zu bringen.

Es sind nicht nur die Großen der Schauspielkunst – eine Deneuve, Moreau, ein Piccoli, Noiret oder Depardieu, die Darsteller ihrer Geschichten – es sind auch Laien, mit denen sie Texte fürs Drehbuch erarbeitet, sie improvisieren lässt, ihren Bewegungs- und Sprechrhythmus aufnimmt. „Kreativität kommt für mich vor der Technik“, äußert Varda rigoros. „Ich will das körperlich Wahrhaftige spürbar machen.“

Es war die Malerei, die die Wahrnehmung der jungen Fotografin, die mit 25 das erste Mal ein Kino besuchte, veränderte. Die Energie der Bilder packte sie, drängte sie zu eigener kraftvoller Ausdrucksform und zum ersten Film 1954 „La Pointe Courte“. Varda: „Ich bewerte nie das moralische Verhalten meiner Figuren. Was zählt, ist die unverwechselbare Präsenz des Augenblicks.“

Filmpreis an Agnes Varda

Zum zweiten Mal wurde am 21. Januar der von der Kunst- und Kulturstiftung der Sparkasse Bremen gestiftete Bremer Filmpreis vergeben. Der Preis würdigt eine herausragende langjährige Leistung im europäischen Film. Die Wahl der Jury fiel auf die französische Fil-



Preisträgerin Agnes Varda und Sparkassen-Vorstand Jürgen Oltmann.

zum Film erhält Agnès Varda am Freitag den Bremer Filmpreis

es noch eine Filmtüte

finde es wunderbar, denn ich kenne Bremen nicht, aber die Stadt kennt mich. Ich empfinde einen solchen Preis als Anerkennung, als Belohnung für meine Arbeit. Es zeigt mir, dass es Menschen gibt, die meine Filme kennen und mögen. Das ist ein echtes Geschenk für mich.

DIE WELT: Sie sind ursprünglich Fotografin. Was hat Sie dazu bewogen, Filme zu drehen?

Varda: Das stimmt, aber ich habe 1960 aufgehört, als Fotografin zu arbeiten. Ich bin zu 100 Prozent eine wahre Cineastin. Ich glaube nicht, dass die Fotografie meine Arbeit als Regisseurin beeinflusst.

Varda: Ich schreibe alle meine Filme selber und ich führe auch Regie. Aber ich produziere sie nicht alle. Meinen ersten Film „La Pointe Courte“ habe ich 1954 produziert. Ich habe Angst, die Lust und die Inspiration zu verlieren, wenn ich abwarten muss, einen Produzenten zu finden. Also produziere ich selber. Ich kümmere mich wirklich um alles, von der Pressearbeit bis zum Plakat. Ich mag das Handwerk. Man muss merken, dass der Film per Hand gemacht worden ist. Für die Autorenfilme muss man ein wirklicher Autor sein, da kann man nicht schummeln. Wenn ein Film nicht funktioniert, dann ist es meine Schuld. Man muss die Dinge mit viel Geduld und Leidenschaft angehen.



WELCOME

WED MAY 7 / 6 PM

OPENING LECTURE // CHRISTA BLÜMLINGER (PARIS)

WED MAY 7 / 6.30 PM

SUBLIMINAL SEEING IN THE IN-BETWEEN REALM OF THE ARTS

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

La Pointe-Courte (F 1954) features unconventional perspectives that emphasise surfaces and forms. In the mid-1950s, André Bazin saw in Varda's first film a 'paradoxical embrace of stylised realism'. Right through to her later work, Varda's studies of everyday life frequently focus attention on the gaze itself. Based on an analysis of her first feature films, this lecture investigates how forms of abstraction that make perception itself visible emerge within her realistic mode of seeing. In several of Varda's essay films, we can see the special role that photography and painting played in the filmmaker's work. By examining an installation that refers back to a photograph from the 1950s and the strategies of image composition in **Cléo de 5 à 7** (F/I 1961) and **Le Bonheur** (F 1964), the lecture explores the subliminal presence of other arts.



© Les plages d'Agnès – Ciné-Tamaris

FILM

WED MAY 7 / 8 PM

LES PLAGES D'AGNÈS

The Beaches of Agnès, F 2008, dir. Agnès Varda, 112 mins, 35 mm, OV with German subtitles

* With introduction by Birgit Kohler

Towards the end of her career, Agnès Varda reflects on her life and work – while also deconstructing the autobiographic mode of storytelling. Her retrospective gaze is like the maze of mirrors that she and her film crew set up at the start of the film along one of the beaches from her life. These eponymous beaches structure Varda's essayistic self-portrait as nodes in an associative network of memory. **Les Plages d'Agnès** is neither deathly serious nor overly intellectual, but rather takes a playful approach to memories, media and narrative forms. For all its focus on Varda herself, the film always finds space to show the interest and openness she displayed towards other people.

arsenal on location

Arsenal on Location is a film tour taking place in 2025. For the project, Arsenal has teamed up with cultural institutions and arthouse/communal cinemas in Berlin and throughout Germany, as well as with the Goethe-Institut and partners in other countries around the world, to organise film series and programmes, including the Bremen Film Conference being hosted at CITY 46. Although the project spans a wide range of themes, there is one unifying question: what is the social significance of cinema today – and what will it be in future?

www.onlocation.arsenal-berlin.de



© L'Opéra-mouffe – Ciné-Tamaris

LECTURE / LINDA WAACK (ZURICH)

THU MAY 8 / 9.30 AM

AGNÈS VARDA'S USE OF LEFTOVERS

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

This lecture analyses a shot from **Les Glaneurs et la Glaneuse / The Gleaners and I** (F 2000) known as 'The Dance of the Lens Cap' in order to unpack modern understandings of 'gleaning' – with a specific focus on the small camera held in one hand, its lens cap, its swinging motion and the stability Varda restores to it in the context of her film.

LECTURE / BETTINA HENZLER (COLOGNE)

THU MAY 8 / 10.30 AM

PLAYFUL GESTURES: AGNÈS VARDA AND AUTHORSHIP

Agnès Varda's films contain many scenes of characters playing, which simultaneously refer to various aspects of filmmaking. This lecture asks how the notion of play can help us to understand the aesthetic of Varda's films and to what extent she herself can be seen as playing within those films. It is argued that Varda's playful gestures interrogate and undermine (male-dominated) ideas of authorship.



© Margaret Tait – LUX Scotland

SHORT FILM PROGRAMME

THU MAY 8 / 8.30 PM

IN THE HOOD — OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

* Curated and presented by Christine Rüffert (Bremen)

Varda's aesthetic is always rooted in her personal interest in people, places and their stories. The thematic commonalities between two of her early short films and works by other contemporary directors bring Varda's distinctive style into sharper relief.

Orchard Street by Ken Jacobs depicts the eponymous shopping street at the heart of the Jewish neighbourhood in New York's Lower East Side. On the other side of the Atlantic, Varda's **L'Opéra-mouffe** subjectively documents the bustling market on Rue Mouffetard, located in a similar district in Paris.

In **A Portrait of Ga**, Margaret Tait, who lived on the remote Scottish Orkney Islands, presents a portrait of her grandmother, while in **Oncle Yanco** Varda travels to San Francisco to film her uncle in exuberant colour and reflect on her family history.

Orchard Street // Ken Jacobs, USA 1955/2014, 27 mins, no dialogue

L'Opéra-mouffe // Agnès Varda, F 1958, 16 mins,

OV with English subtitles

A Portrait of Ga // Margaret Tait, GB 1952, 4 mins, OV

Oncle Yanco // Agnès Varda, F/USA 1967, 22 mins, OV with English subtitles



© Sans toit ni loi – Ciné-Tamaris

LECTURE / DENNIS GÖTTEL (BERLIN)

THU MAY 8 / 11.30 AM

VARDA'S CRITIQUE OF 'VALUE DIREMPTION' IN WEST GERMAN TELEVISION

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

Two WDR reports on the filming of **L'une chante, l'autre pas / One Sings, the Other Doesn't** (F/B/VEN 1977) lend support to Varda's critique of the separation of the productive and reproductive spheres. This lecture elucidates that critique by reference to the notion of 'value diremption' (Wertabspaltung) and the visual culture of early post-Fordism.

VORTRAG / KELLEY CONWAY (MADISON)

THU MAY 8 / 2 PM

VARDA'S MODE OF PRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZING FEMINIST FILMMAKING IN 1980S FRANCE

Agnès Varda's scripting, casting, funding, shooting, and distribution strategies depended heavily on unorthodox actions and collaborations. Drawing on archival material and recent interviews, this presentation investigates Varda's mode of production in the making of **Sans toit ni loi** (F 1985) in comparison with that of Celine Serreau's **Trois hommes et un couffin** (F 1985) and Chantal Akerman's **Golden Eighties** (B/F/CH 1986).



© Sans toit ni loi – Ciné-Tamaris

FILM

THU MAY 8 / 3 PM

SANS TOIT NI LOI

Vagabond, F 1985, dir. Agnès Varda, with Sandrine Bonnaire, Macha Méril and Yolande Moreau, 105 mins, OV with English subtitles

* With introduction by Birgit Kohler

The vagabond Mona wanders aimlessly through the bleak winter landscape of southern France. She experiences freedom, but also feelings of envy and incomprehension – and acts of patriarchal violence. The film opens with her death and – inspired by **Citizen Kane** – tells her story through the recollections and impressions of her fleeting acquaintances, which are all she has left behind.

The red clothes Mona wears are the only reminder of the post-1968 feminist liberation struggles, to which Varda turned her attention amidst the conservative turn of the 1980s. In the film, the red tones increasingly mingle with the blues of the vineyard, signifying both Mona's own personal stagnation and that of the women's movement. The film was awarded the Golden Lion in 1985.

'A drifter who shares little about herself, a blank canvas the people she encounters project their own thoughts onto. In interviews, the people she fleetingly met try to tell us something about her, but end up only telling us about themselves. [...] Following a female character who doesn't explain herself, and that the film doesn't try to explain either, is, I think, something special even today' (Maren Ade, 2023).

Content Note: Depictions of animal skinning and drug/alcohol use, implied references to sexual assault



© Les plages d'Agnès – Ciné-Tamaris

IN CONVERSATION //

THU MAY 8 / 5.30 PM

LEARNING FROM VARDA: FILM PRODUCTION AS CRAFTING

With Eva Knopf and Dennis Göttel

Chaired by: Birgit Kohler

* Please note that this discussion will take place in German.

In 1954, Agnès Varda founded the production company Ciné-Tamaris for her first film. From that point on, her filmmaking was marked both by her network of artist friends and by an entrepreneurship that allowed Varda utmost artistic freedom and control over production processes. This approach came with considerable financial risks, but also established many friendly working relationships and left a legacy of distinctively female authorship in the male-dominated world of film.

Looking back on Varda's production methods offers an opportunity to discuss modes and modalities of filmmaking, both past and present. We talk with filmmaker Eva Knopf about the aspect of 'craft' in her current production and with Dennis Göttel from FU Berlin. The discussion will be chaired by Birgit Kohler from Arsenal Berlin.

Afterwards, there will be welcoming addresses from Carmen Emigholz (Bremen Senator for Culture), Petra Schleuning (nordmedia) and Michal Kucera (Vice-President of Research and Transfer, University of Bremen) and a reception (by invitation only).



© Movie Kintsugi – Eva Knopf

Eva Knopf is a filmmaker (*Majubs Reise / Majub's Journey*) who is teaching on artistic/aesthetic practice in photography, film and video at the University of Bremen. Her current film project on kintsugi, the Japanese art of repairing ceramics, reflects among other things on how to deal with gaps in film archives.

Dennis Göttel is a professor of film studies at FU Berlin, whose research interests include historical production practices. He is principal investigator of the German Research Foundation project 'The Early History of the Making of Film: Cinematic Production Cultures in West German Television Shooting Reports'.

Birgit Kohler is joint head of programming at Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art in Berlin. As a curator, she specialises in exploring artistic standpoints in contemporary international cinema and documentary-making.

SCHEDULE

WED MAY 7

- 6 PM WELCOME
- 6.30 PM **OPENING LECTURE** P. 6
CHRISTA BLÜMLINGER
**SUBLIMINAL SEEING IN THE IN-BETWEEN
REALM OF THE ARTS**
- 8 PM **FILM** LES PLAGES D'AGNÈS P. 7



THU MAY 8

- 9.30 AM **LECTURE** LINDA WAACK P. 8
AGNÈS VARDA'S USE OF LEFTOVERS
- 10.30 AM **LECTURE** BETTINA HENZLER P. 8
**PLAYFUL GESTURES: AGNÈS VARDA
AND AUTHORSHIP**
- 11.30 AM **LECTURE** DENNIS GÖTTEL P. 10
**VARDA'S CRITIQUE OF 'VALUE DIREMPTION'
IN WEST GERMAN TELEVISION**
- 2 PM **LECTURE** KELLEY CONWAY P. 10
**VARDA'S MODE OF PRODUCTION: CON-
TEXTUALIZING FEMINIST FILMMAKING (...)**
- 3 PM **FILM** SANS TOIT NI LOI P. 11
- 5.30 PM **IN CONVERSATION** P. 12-13
**LEARNING FROM VARDA:
FILM PRODUCTION AS CRAFTING**
FOLLOWED BY SPEECHES AND RECEPTION
- 8.30 PM **SHORT FILM PROGRAMME** P. 9
**IN THE HOOD –
OF PEOPLE AND PLACES**



FRI MAY 9

- 9.30 AM **LECTURE** SAHAR DARYAB
THE ETERNAL FEMININE (...) P. 16
- 10.30 AM **LECTURE** FRIEDRIKE HORSTMANN
AGNÈS'S SELF-PORTRAITS P. 16
- 11.30 AM **LECTURE** SHIRLEY JORDAN
IMAGINING AGEING WITH
AGNÈS VARDA (...) P. 18
- 2 PM **LECTURE** COLLEEN KENNEDY-KARPAT
NEGOTIATING MOTHERHOOD P. 18
- 3 PM **FILM** CLÉO DE 5 À 7 P. 17
- 5 PM **LECTURE** STEFAN DREES
BETWEEN STRUCTURAL FUNCTION
AND MEMORY WORK (...) P. 19
- 7.30 PM **SILENT FILM WITH LIVE MUSIC**
MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG P. 20–21
- 9.15 PM **DOUBLE BILL**
SALUT LES CUBAINS / CEREAL P. 23



SAT 10.5.

- 09.30 **LECTURE** LARS NOWAK
LIVELY RHYTHMS (...) P. 22
- 10.30 **LECTURE** MARTA MUÑOZ-AUNIÓN
SALUT LES CUBAINS.
AGNÈS VARDA IN CUBA (...) P. 22
- 11.30 **LECTURE** MATHIAS BARKHAUSEN
LA VIE POUR L'ART ODER
L'ART POUR LA VIE? (...) P. 24
- 14.00 **LECTURE** BERNHARD GROB
INTERVIEWS WITH INTERVIEWERS (...) P. 24
- 15.00 **FILM** DOCUMENTEUR P. 25





© Cléo de 5 à 7 – Ciné-Tamaris

LECTURE // SAHAR DARYAB (BAMBERG)

FRI MAY 9 / 9.30 AM

THE ETERNAL FEMININE: A VISUAL INVERSION IN AGNÈS VARDA'S *CLÉO DE 5 À 7* (1961)

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

In *Cléo de 5 à 7*, Agnès Varda mounts a visual challenge to centuries-old patriarchal ideas about womanhood. She forces the logic of the eternal feminine to its limits by translating the archetypal feminine ideal into a realistic, nuanced portrait. This lecture shows how Varda brought the inversion of the illusory ideal of womanhood to the screen and so inaugurated a distinctively feminine film language within cinematic history.

LECTURE // FRIEDERIKE HORSTMANN (BERLIN)

FRI MAY 9 / 10.30 AM

AGNÈS'S SELF-PORTRAITS

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

This lecture analyses the various forms and functions of self-portraits in Varda's work. Given how numerous these portraits are, it cannot hope to give an exhaustive account, but instead surveys a few individual examples and the processes of mediatisation they involve.



FILM

FRI MAY 9 / 3 PM

CLÉO DE 5 À 7

Cléo from 5 to 7, F/I 1961, dir. Agnès Varda, with Corinne Marchand, Anna Karina and Jean-Luc Godard, 90 mins, OV with English subtitles

* With introduction by Birgit Kohler

Chanson singer Cléo has to wait two agonising hours for the results of her biopsy. She makes a break with her old life, dresses in black and goes by her real name, Florence. She starts wandering aimlessly round Paris, seeing her surroundings differently than before.

In this minimalist film about beauty, death and the inexorability of time, Varda reinterprets the master from Diderot's **Jacques the Fatalist** as a self-liberating modern woman at a turning point in her life. Cléo marked Varda's international breakthrough and the start of her cinematic reflections on feminist solidarity.

Agnès Varda (2005): *'So beauty does not protect her, neither from mirrors nor the gazes of others? Baldung Grien's paintings, beautiful and terrifying, very quickly became the film's meaning and driving force: one sees women, beautiful in their white flesh, embraced by a skeleton who mistreats or frightens them.'*

Kindly supported by Institut Français Deutschland

Content Note: Depictions of catcalling, mention of suicidal thoughts



LECTURE // SHIRLEY JORDAN (NEWCASTLE)

FRI MAY 9 / 11.30 AM

IMAGINING AGEING WITH AGNÈS VARDA: FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON LATE LIFE AND CARE

This talk explores Agnès Varda's investigation of ageing as feminist practice. Taking examples from across her work, especially from her late autobiographical experiments, it shows how Varda encourages us to resist ageism and to imagine ageing through a prism of care.

LECTURE // COLLEEN KENNEDY-KARPAT (ANKARA)

NEGOTIATING MOTHERHOOD

FRI MAY 9 / 2 PM

In Varda's films, motherhood is a crucial part of many women's lives. This presentation will consider how mothers negotiate this private and public role in Varda's mid-career fiction films **L'une chante, l'autre pas** (F 1977), **Documenteur** (F/USA 1981) and **Kung-Fu Master!** (F 1988).



© Les plages d'Agnès - Ciné-Tamaris

LECTURE // STEFAN DREES (BERLIN)

FRI MAY 9 / 5 PM

BETWEEN STRUCTURAL FUNCTION AND MEMORY WORK: ON THE USE OF MUSIC IN AGNÈS VARDA'S FILMS

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

Based on selected examples from Agnès Varda's films and previous studies, this talk will highlight key aspects of Varda's use of music.

PREVIEW // 30TH INTERNATIONAL BREMEN FILM SYMPOSIUM

FILM WORK – CINEMATOGRAPHIC PRODUCTION CONDITIONS

Different spheres of film production – from the studio system to independent and experimental cinema – give rise not just to different films but to different understandings of film work. And filmmakers are not the only ones who work with film: museums, cinemas, schools and universities show and teach about films, private individuals and archives collect and restore films, critics and academics analyse and reflect on them. The 30th Bremen Film Symposium will explore the history of film work and the production conditions that have shaped it.



© Menschen am Sonntag – Deutsche Kinemathek

SILENT FILM WITH LIVE MUSIC

FRI MAY 9 / 7.30 PM

MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG

People on Sunday, D 1930, dir. Robert Siodmak and Edgar G. Ulmer, with Brigitte Borchert, Valeska Gert and Heinrich Gretler, 74 mins,

German intertitles with English subtitles

* **With introduction by Winfried Pauleit**

* **Live music: Eunice Martins**

A group of working-class friends meet for a Sunday outing. Even without a soundtrack, the film is full of music: the friends play a portable gramophone at the start and end of their trip to the lake. The film brings a series of moving portraits to the screen that are bound up with a culture of listening to music and taking photographs outdoors. On the one hand, the sound of the gramophone records has the power to set bodies in motion; on the other, the act of photography captures a moment of moving life as a static pose.

Based on a screenplay by Billy Wilder, this late work of the New Objectivity movement depicts the life of young working-class Berliners in the late 1920s. The filmmakers labelled it as a work of 'reportage', while the press spoke of an 'experimental film'.

Subject to massive editings and then lost shortly after its release, the film was reconstructed from a range of sources in Amsterdam in 1998, digitised in 2K in 2010 and then remastered in 2014 under the supervision of the Deutsche Kinemathek.

Content Note: Implied reference to sexual assault



© Menschen am Sonntag – Deutsche Kinemathek

This classic of German avant-garde cinema shares with Varda's work the qualities of documentary realism and poetic fiction. In **Les plages d'Agnès**, Varda describes the manual gramophone in her parents' home: her mother would listen to Schubert, while her father would play pop songs on Sundays. Meanwhile, in **Salut les Cubains**, which is being shown after this film (see p. 23), there is an episode that answers the question: what do Cubans do on Sundays? Winfried Pauleit explores these lines of connection in his introduction.

'Many documentary images of Wannsee reveal even more clearly than has previously been realised that the staged sequences were artistic products. Menschen am Sonntag is precisely NOT the fortuitous result of pure improvisation that film history, familiar with later developments such as neorealism and the French New Wave, saw it as. Over the six to eight-week shoot, the ambitious young filmmakers [...] had enough time to perfectly orchestrate the movements of people and the camera work'

(Daniel Kothenschulte, 2018)



Eunice Martins is a composer and pianist, who composes for ensembles, films, VR and sound design projects. She regularly performs at international festivals, theatres and film archives. Since 2000, she has been the resident pianist at Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art. www.eunicemartins.eu



LECTURE // LARS NOWAK (ERLANGEN-NUREMBERG) SAT MAY 10 / 9.30 AM

LIVELY RHYTHMS: RELATING AGNÈS VARDA'S PHOTOMONTAGE FILM *SALUT LES CUBAINS* TO THE WORKS OF ALAIN RESNAIS AND CHRIS MARKER

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

This lecture explores the intermedial references of Varda's essay film *Salut les Cubains* (F 1963) to photography and its intertextual references to Alain Resnais's *Les statues meurent aussi* (F 1953) and Chris Marker's *La jetée* (F 1962).

LECTURE // MARTA MUÑOZ-AUNIÓN (FRANKFURT A.M.) SAT MAY 10 / 10.30 AM

***SALUT LES CUBAINS* (1963): AGNÈS VARDA IN CUBA – THREE WEEKS OF REVOLUTION IN THE CARIBBEAN**

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

This talk examines Agnès Varda's relationship to early 1960s Cuba and her documentary *Salut les Cubains*. The film, which Varda herself described as 'Cuba-fixe', was intended as a tribute to the Cubans' revolutionary spirit, since 'in Europe [...] people know what is happening, but only imprecisely' (Varda).

Kindly supported by Instituto Cervantes Bremen



© CEREAL – Anna Spanlang

DOUBLE BILL

FRI MAY 9 / 9.15 PM

SALUT LES CUBAINS & CEREAL / SOY CLAUDIA, SOY ESTHER Y SOY TERESA. SOY INGRID, SOY FABIOLA Y SOY VALERIA.

F 1963, dir. Agnès Varda, with Michel Piccoli and Sara Gómez, 29 mins,
OV with English subtitles

A 2022, dir. Anna Spanlang, 35 mins, OV with English subtitles

* With introduction by Birgit Kohler

‘I was in Cuba ...’ With those words, Varda begins her photographic exploration of the Cuban Revolution in **Salut les Cubains**. The film focuses on the people of Cuba, including director Sara Gómez, who is seen as the face of Cuban cinema’s female future. A photomontage film is created out of travel photos and Cuban music culture, recombining the documentary tropes of the Kulturfilm in new ways.

The film is brought into dialogue with the smartphone film **CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria**. by Anna Spanlang, an avid collector of images and master of the rapid montage. An explosion of travel photos and pop culture references is intercut with images of queer* feminist protests from around the world and a ‘community that attaches utmost importance to friendship, women’s solidarity and artistic creation’ (Christiane Erharter).

Kindly supported by Instituto Cervantes Bremen

Content note for CEREAL: Brief depictions of blood



© Documenteur – Janus Films

LECTURE // MATHIAS BARKHAUSEN (BERLIN)

SAT MAY 10 / 11.30 AM

LA VIE POUR L'ART ODER L'ART POUR LA VIE? FILMMAKING AS LIFE PRINCIPLE

In **Jacquot de Nantes** (F 1991), Agnès Varda turned her attention to the life and filmmaking of her partner Jacques Demy. **Les plages d'Agnès** (F 2008) then looked at her own life and work. This lecture compares the two films' documentary and fictionalising approaches to the relationship between art and life, and shows how Varda's work can be understood as a poetological programme.

LECTURE // BERNHARD GROß (JENA)

SAT MAY 10 / 2 PM

INTERVIEWS WITH INTERVIEWERS: ON THE REFLEXIVITY OF A DOCUMENTARY FORM IN THE FILMS OF VARDA AND PASOLINI

* Please note that this lecture will be given in German.

Agnès Varda's laconic interviews with fellow artists combine enigmatic wit with fundamental questions about art and film. This lecture compares the interview films of Varda and Pier Paolo Pasolini to explore the aesthetic potential of the interview, a journalistic form, for essay films.



FILM

SAT MAY 10 / 3 PM

DOCUMENTEUR

F/USA 1981, dir. Agnès Varda, with Sabine Mamou and Mathieu Demy, 65 mins, OV with English subtitles

* With introduction by Colleen Kennedy-Karpat

Emilie lives with her son Martin in Los Angeles. The film follows them around the grey, rainy city. Amidst all the people that make up the urban mosaic, Emilie feels lonely and unsettled. **Documenteur** is a thinly fictionalised self-portrait of the director, who paints a highly fragmented picture of Emilie and Martin's existence. Rather than an overarching narrative arc, Varda presents scattered episodes in which her fictional protagonists merge with the real-world shooting locations and extras. A lyrical voiceover provides emotional cohesion. The title of the film, which was made in parallel to **Mur Murs** (F/USA 1981), signals a blurring of the lines between documentary and fiction: menteur is French for 'liar'.

„[N]owhere does the director seem more nakedly on display than in a film in which she doesn't appear at all: Documenteur (1981), a wrenching fictionalized account of her temporary separation from her husband, Jacques Demy, which Varda punningly refers to as „an emotion picture.“ (Melissa Anderson, 2015)



© Johannes Eichwede

THE CONFERENCE—A LONGSTANDING COLLABORATION

The International Bremen Film Symposium was launched in 1995 by CITY 46 / Kommunalkino Bremen and the University of Bremen's Film Studies Workgroup as part of the UNESCO project '100 Years of Cinema'. Combining film scholarship and film culture, it is aimed at both academic researchers and members of the filmgoing public. The conference owes its international reputation, public profile and decades of productive work to this close partnership and to the constant support it has received from the media funding body **nordmedia – Film- und Mediengesellschaft Niedersachsen/Bremen mbH**.

University of Bremen // Film Studies

The Film Studies and Media Aesthetics Workgroup, based in the University of Bremen's Institute for Art History, Film Studies and Art Education, conducts teaching and research on the aesthetics, theory and history of film. As the Film, Media Art and Popular Culture Lab, the workgroup is also part of ZeMKI (one of the University of Bremen's central research units) and cooperates with the Audio-Visual Media and Historiography Lab.

CITY 46 // Kommunalkino Bremen

In 1974, a group of Bremen film fans came up with the idea of founding a community cinema. They believed cinemas shouldn't just be a place to watch films, but also somewhere to meet and swap ideas with fellow film enthusiasts. CITY 46 // Kommunalkino Bremen hosts talks by directors, puts on themed series of films old and new and organises workshops to kindle enthusiasm for film and cinema culture. Collaborations with the city's other cultural and educational organisations are central to its work. The symposium is the largest of the community cinema's projects.

PROJECT COORDINATORS

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VENUE

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PRICES

Single ticket: €9 / €5.50 concessions / €4 members

Silent film: €10 / €7.50 concessions / €4 members

Conference pass: €35 / €25 concessions / €15 members

Free admission to all lectures and forums.

ORGANISERS

CITY 46 / Kommunalkino Bremen e.V.

Film Studies / Faculty 9 Cultural Studies

Latin American History / Faculty 8 Social Studies

ZeMKI / University of Bremen

Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art, Berlin



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