

German Film Institute XIV (2015)

“The Futures of the Past: German Cinema and Its Media”

Description

The 2015 edition of the GFI will approach German film history through the perspectives of current media archaeology. We will examine the historical dimensions of key theoretical concepts, such as archive, intermediality, and expanded cinema and we will analyze exemplary films in light of theoretical discourses. We will also ask how today's wealth of archival knowledge might be made productive for new historically informed readings of films. Our assumption is that the recent shift to digital media has sensitized us to the historicity of cinema which, a hundred years ago, was itself a “new medium,” every bit as much talked about, hyped, and maligned at that time as our own new media are today. Because the archive contains not only what was said but also many things that *could* be said, it follows that the early writings about film appear to us as an inexhaustible archive of cinema's possible futures. Access to and familiarity with the rich variety of archival sources will help us to situate German films within a larger and ongoing history of the media and facilitate a sharper look at the properties of the medium itself, i. e., what film is, was, and (still) could be.

Objectives

The seminar seeks

--to probe the current interest in media archaeology with a special (but not exclusive) emphasis on German contributions (ranging from German historicism, Benjamin, Warburg, and Kracauer to contemporary Medienwissenschaft and Medientheorie);

--to approach film theory not as a fixed body of canonical texts, but as a dynamic set of reflections on the very *idea* of cinema and the possibilities and hopes associated with it;

--to trace the different ways in which German films have incorporated, remediated, and interacted with a variety of media (from writing and print to the telegraph and the telephone, the phonograph, radio, television, and digital media);

--to reflect on the various activities (e. g., excavating, collecting, and curating) that archival work in the media entails and to make it productive in the close textual analysis of individual films (new historicism, critique génétique, immanente Kritik);

--to foster a dynamically intermedial and multidisciplinary understanding of film, which means, for instance, comprehending its presence and function within convergence culture, screen studies, expanded cinema, and various manifestations of the new media;

--to scrutinize the importance of the film archive as a site for collective cultural memory (from cinémathèques to museums, galleries, and installations) as well for found-footage films using the “archive effect” (Baron);

--to promote original research (based on primary sources) and to explore various ways of utilizing the plethora of new online resources in our classroom presentations of German film (see the inventory of digital archives and databases on the GFI website).

German Film Institute 2015

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Schedule of Sessions and Screenings

Sunday, May 31

6pm Opening Reception

8pm *Mobilisierung der Träume/ Dreams Rewired* (Austria/FRG/UK 2015, dir. Manu Luksch, Martin Reinhart, and Thomas Tode) DCP, 85 min. EST.

Monday, June 1

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: Media Archaeology and the Archive**

2pm *Der Andere* (Germany 1913, dir. Max Mack) 35mm, ca. 50 min.

Der Student von Prag (Germany 1913, dir. Stellan Rye) 35mm restored version, 85 min.

Rübezahls Hochzeit (Germany 1916, dir. Paul Wegener) DVD, 35 min.

8pm: *Von morgens bis mitternachts* (Germany 1920, dir. Karlheinz Martin) Blu-Ray, 73 min.

Algol. Tragödie der Nacht (Germany 1920, dir. Hans Werckmeister) 35mm restored version, ca. 111 min.

Tuesday, June 2

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: The Promise of Cinema I**

2pm Excerpts from the Absolute Film Matinee 1925: *Rhythmus 21* (Germany 1923, dir. Hans Richter) DVD, 3 min.; *Opus II and III* (Germany 1921-23, dir. Walter Ruttmann) DVD, 8 min.

Advertising and Publicity Films by Julius Pinschewer: *Young Siegfried* (War Bond film, 1918) DVD, 2 min.; *KIPHO-Film* (Kino- und Photo-Ausstellung, 1925) DVD, 5 min.; *Die Chinesische Nachtigall* (Tri-Ergon, 1929) DVD, 8 min.; *Der Arm* (Grosse Polizei-Ausstellung, 1926) DVD, 7 min.; *Im Filmatelier*, (Aspirin, 1932) DVD, 5 min.

Advertising Films by Walter Ruttmann: *Der Sieger* (Germany 1922) DVD, 3 min.;
Spiel der Wellen (Germany 1926) DVD, 3 min.

Rebus-Film I (Germany 1925, dir. Paul Leni) DVD, 15 min.

Lichtspiel Schwarz Weiss Grau (Germany 1930, dir. László Moholy-Nagy) DVD, 5 min.

München-Berlin Wanderung (Germany 1927, dir. Oskar Fischinger) DVD, 4 min.

Vom Blitz zum Fernsehbild (Netherlands 1936, dir. Hans Richter) DVD, 30 min.

Wenn die Filmkleberin gebummelt hat (Germany 1925, dir. O. F. Mauer) DVD, 16 min.

Wochenmarkt auf dem Wittenbergplatz (Germany 1929, dir. Wilfried Basse) DVD, 15 min.

Melodie der Welt, I. Akt (Germany 1929, dir. Walter Ruttmann) DVD, 17 min.

8pm *Middle of the Moment* (FRG/Switzerland 1995, dir. Nicolas Humbert/Werner Penzel) DVD, 76 min. EST.

Die Parallelstraße (FRG 1962, dir. Ferdinand Khittel) DVD, 83 min. EST.

Wednesday, June 3

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: The Promise of Cinema II**

2pm *Großstadtmelodie* (Germany 1943, dir. Wolfgang Liebeneiner) DVD, 95 min. EST.

Ich will mich nicht künstlich aufregen (FRG 2014, dir. Max Linz) Blu-Ray, 83 min. EST.

8pm *Spione* (Germany 1928, dir. Fritz Lang) Blu-Ray, 145 min. EST.

Thursday, June 4

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: Media Cultures**

2pm *Die Welt ohne Maske* (Germany 1934, dir. Harry Piel) 35mm, 100 min.

Der Westen leuchtet! (FRG 1981, dir. Niklaus Schilling) DVD, 100 min.

8pm *Kommunikation – Technik der Verständigung* (FRG 1961, dir. Edgar Reitz) DVD, 11 min.

Die 1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse (FRG/Italy/France 1960, dir. Fritz Lang) DVD, 99

min. EST.

Friday, June 5

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: Television/Video/Surveillance**

2pm *Der Angriff der Gegenwart auf die übrige Zeit* (FRG 1985, Alexander Kluge) DVD, 106 min. EST

Ernste Spiele (FRG 2010, dir. Harun Farocki) DVD, ca. 30 min. English-language version.

8pm *Wozu denn über diese Leute einen Film?* (GDR 1980, dir. Thomas Heise) DVD, 33 min. EST.

Der Buschmann spricht in den Phonographen (1908) DVD, 4 min.

The Halfmoon Files (FRG 2007, dir. Phillip Scheffner) DVD, 86 min. EST.

Saturday, June 6

9:30-12:30 **Seminar: The Oldness and the Newness of the Media**

2pm *Der Tag des Spatzens* (FRG 2010, Phillip Scheffner) DVD, 100 min. EST.

Venus Talking (FRG 2000, dir. Rudolf Thome) DVD, 93 min. EST.

6pm Final Party and Dinner