MFAH Films
JULY – AUGUST 2024

RECORDED FILM INFORMATION LINE
713-639-7515

MFAH CALL CENTER
713-639-7771

Go to mfah.org/film for updated schedules and additional details.

fb.com/mfahfilms
twitter.com/mfahfilms
instagram.com/mfahouston

MFAH The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
P. O. Box 6826
Houston, Texas 77265-6826

MFAH STAFF
Gary Tinterow, Director,
The Margaret Alkek Williams Chair
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Marian Luntz, Curator, Film
Tracy Stephenson, Coordinator and Assistant Programmer, Film
Albert Rodriguez, Administrative and Production Coordinator, Film
Tish Stringer, Lead Projectionist
Kirston Otis, Baird Campbell, Rob Arcos, and Joel Parker, Projectionists
Ayla Davis, 2023-24 Camfield Fellow,
Rice University

Museum members, students with ID, and seniors (65+) receive a $2 discount.

FILM BUFFS
Eligible for a discount on the annual dues.

Additional generous support is provided by:
Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas), Anne and Albert Tenaris, The June Leaf and Robert Frank Foundation, and the Vaughn Foundation.

The exhibition catalogue is made possible with funds provided by The E. Rhodes and Leona B.  Dr. Ritsuko Komaki.

Japanese Cinema
Spotlight on 2023 Ottawa International Animation Festival
Best of the 2023 Ottawa International Animation Festival

French Noir

Japanese Cinema

Projectionist's Choice

Brown Auditorium Theater
Lynn Wyatt Theater

Use the 5500 Main Street entrance or the MFAH parking garages to access tunnels to both theaters.
Hi everyone,

We’ve made it to another hot Texas summer! I hope our diverse selection of movies over the next two months lures you into the dark, cool environs of the Museum’s theaters. It’s a great time to become a member of Film Buffs, the Museum’s loyalty group for movie lovers, and enjoy the significant benefits of membership while supporting the film department.

If you’re wondering about the intriguing cover image for this issue: it’s from Russian auteur Andrei Tarkovsky’s mystical and melancholic *Nostalghia.* This cult favorite has been a repertory hit at art houses across the U.S. recently, and we’re proud to bring it to Houston in a new digital restoration.

Japanese cinema is sampled in a selection ranging from the Oscar-winning Studio Ghibli anime feature *The Boy and the Heron* to Akira Kurosawa’s iconic *Seven Samurai,* screening in a new digital restoration for its 70th anniversary. Kon Ichikawa’s melodrama *The Makioka Sisters,* presented on 35mm, responds to the period addressed in the Museum’s not-to-be-missed exhibition *Meiji Modern: Fifty Years of New Japan,* on view July 7-September 15, 2024.

Responding to our audience’s appetite for shorts, we are bringing back the touring series *Best of the Ottawa International Animation Festival.* This bold and edgy compilation is the award winners from the 2023 edition of one of the world’s most respected animation fests.

The multitalented members of Jim Jarmusch’s band Squrl have composed a haunting soundtrack for *Man Ray: Return to Reason,* a compilation of experimental silent shorts shown in August by Surrealist artist Man Ray. “We feel very proud to be Man Ray’s backup band,” Jarmusch said in an interview. “I think ultimately what we’re trying to do, and what May Ray did, was create a place that exists in a little space between consciousness and unconsciousness, between dream and wakefulness, and between reality and the surreal world.”

Marian Luntz
Curator, Film and Video
## JULY 2024

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The screening schedule is subject to change. Please follow MFAH Films on social media. All films are presented in their original languages with English subtitles, except where noted.

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Museum Call Center: 713-639-7771
Updates: mfah.org/film
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Follow us on Twitter: @mfahfilms
Follow us on Instagram: @mfahouston

Please note the location of each film:
Brown Auditorium Theater: BROWN
Lynn Wyatt Theater: WYATT

SPOTLIGHT ON JAPANESE CINEMA
In conjunction with the exhibition Meji Modern: Fifty Years of New Japan, on view at the Museum July 7–September 15, 2024, MFAH Films showcases a selection of new and classic Japanese films.

SHÔGUN: A DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE
EPISODE 8: THE ABYSS OF LIFE
Directed by Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour, Jr. (USA, 2024, 60 min., in Japanese and English with English subtitles)
Sunday, July 14, 2:00 p.m. BROWN
Q&A with filmmaker Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour, Jr. moderated by filmmaker Bassam Tariq
Free tickets available at mfah.org/calendar/shogun.

The 2024 FX series Shōgun is based on the James Clavell novel. MFAH Films presents Episode 8: The Abyss of Life, directed by Houston Ghanaian-American filmmaker Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour, who introduces the screening and participates in a post-film Q&A moderated by filmmaker Bassam Tariq.

Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour, Jr., is a writer/director who worked for a decade in Japan. He made his feature debut writing and directing Black Box for Blumhouse and Amazon as part of the Welcome to the Blumhouse collection. Other credits include The Midnight Club, The Recruit, and Star Trek Discovery.

Community partners: Japan-America Society of Houston and Ghanaian Urban Movement

THE MAKIOKA SISTERS (SASAME-YUKI)
Directed by Kon Ichikawa
(Japan, 1983, 140 min., in Japanese with English subtitles, 35mm)
Sundays, July 28 & August 4, 5:00 p.m. BROWN
Adapted from the 1948 literary classic by Jun’ichirō Tanizaki. The Makioka Sisters follows the lives of four siblings who have taken on their family’s kimono manufacturing business in the years leading up to the Pacific War. The two oldest have been married for some time, but according to tradition, the rebellious youngest sister cannot wed until the third (conservative and terribly shy) finds a husband. Film scholar James Quandt observed that veteran filmmaker Kon Ichikawa created “an exercise in traditionalism, intended to affirm Japanese identity at a time when Japan was reemerging as a major commercial and industrial power.”

EVIL DOES NOT EXIST
(AKU WA SONZAI SHINAI)
Directed by Ryûsuke Hamaguchi
(Japan, 2023, 106 min., in Japanese with English subtitles, digital)
Thursday–Saturday, August 1–3, 7:00 p.m. WYATT
Wideower Takumi and his daughter Hana live in Mizubiki Village, a place of bucolic serenity nestled in the mountains that is threatened by urban developers planning a glamping site. Ryûsuke Hamaguchi’s follow-up to his Oscar-winning Drive My Car is a foreboding fable on humanity’s mysterious, mystical relationship with nature. As sinister gunshots echo from the forest, both the locals and representatives confront the life choices and the haunting consequences they have.

FRENCH NOIR
Immerse yourself in a French spin on film noir with new digital restorations of two genre classics.

SEVEN SAMURAI (SHICHININ NO SAMURAI)
Directed by Akira Kurosawa
(Japan, 1954, 207 min., in Japanese with English subtitles, digital restoration)
Saturday, August 10, 5:00 p.m. BROWN
Sunday, August 11, 2:00 p.m. BROWN
70th Anniversary!

One of the most thrilling movie epics of all time, Seven Samurai tells the story of a 16th-century village whose desperate inhabitants hire the eponymous warriors to protect them from invading bandits. This adventure features legendary actors Toshirô Mifune and Takashi Shimura, and seamlessly weaves philosophy and entertainment, delicate human emotions, and relentless action into a rich, evocative, and unforgettable tale of courage and hope.

Community partner: Friends of River Oaks Theatre

CLASSÉ TOUTS RISQUES
Directed by Claude Sautet
(France, 1980, 109 min., in French with English subtitles, digital restoration)
Saturday, July 13, 7:00 p.m. BROWN
Sunday, July 14, 6:00 p.m. BROWN

Claude Sautet’s first major feature stars Lino Ventura as Abel Davos, a wanted man in Italy, who stages a robbery in order to get money to relocate his family. As the losses mount and the noose tightens, Davos must decide when to call it quits. Also starring 26-year-old Jean-Paul Belmondo (straight from Breathless) and Sandra Milo. “A masterpiece of the French gangster genre ... A tough and touching exploration of honor and friendship among thieves.” — The New York Times

PROJECTIONIST’S CHOICE
This new film series features members of the Museum’s projectionists team emerging from the booth to present a favorite film.

DIVINE INTERVENTION (YADON ILAHEYYA)
Directed by Elia Suleiman
(France/Morocco/Germany/Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2002, 92 min., in Arabic, English, and Hebrew with English subtitles, digital)
Friday, July 19, 7:00 p.m. BROWN

Writer/director Elia Suleiman stars in this collection of cinematic vignettes capturing the absurdity of everyday life under occupation. A dark comedy in the style of Jacques Tati or Buster Keaton, Suleiman pokes fun at tragic situations and encourages us to do the same in ironic, imaginative scenes about garbage, neighbors, and dating. The surreal logic highlighted in the film played out in real time during its release more than 20 years ago as Divine Intervention seemed poised to secure an Oscar nomination after winning the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes, but was rejected by the Motion Picture Academy because entries must be nominated by their nation of origin, and Palestine was not recognized as a nation. — Dr. Tish Stringer
CHICKEN FOR LINDA!
(LINDA VEUT DU POULET!)
Directed by Sébastien Laudenbach and Chiara Malta
(France, 2023, 73 min., in French with English subtitles, digital)
Friday–Saturday, July 26–27, 7:00 p.m. BROWN

Paulette feels guilty after unjustly punishing her daughter Linda and would do anything to make it up to her. Linda immediately asks for a meal of chicken with peppers, which reminds her of her father. But with a general strike closing stores all across town, this innocent request quickly leads to an outrageous series of events that spirals out of control, as Paulette does everything she can to keep her promise! This very French animated feature is a unique visual marvel of hand-painted animation with bright, color-blocked characters and a story that is an intoxicating blend of slapstick comedy, musical, and family drama.

PICTURES OF GHOSTS
(RETRATOS FANTASMAS)
Directed by Kleber Mendonça Filho
(Brazil, 2023, 93 min., in Portuguese with English subtitles, digital)
Friday, August 9, 7:00 p.m. BROWN

The latest from celebrated director Kleber Mendonça Filho (Bacurau) delves into the coastal city of Recife’s historical and human fabric, focusing on its iconic movie theaters that once served as hubs of social interaction during the 20th century. The film reflects profound shifts in societal norms and practices through a blend of archival documentary, mystery, film excerpts, and personal recollections. Pictures of Ghosts crafts a compelling map of a city through the lens of cinema.

GREEN BORDER (ZIELONA GRANICA)
Directed by Agnieszka Holland
(Poland/USA/France/Czech Republic/Belgium/Germany/Turkey, 2023, 147 min., in Polish, Arabic, English, and French with English subtitles, digital)
Sundays, August 18 & 25, 2:00 p.m. BROWN

Along the treacherous forests (“green border”) between Belarus and Poland, refugees from the Middle East and Africa are lured by government propaganda promising easy passage to the European Union. Instead, they find themselves trapped in an escalating geopolitical standoff. Polish filmmaker Agnieszka Holland indelibly captures the migrant crisis in stark black-and-white, from multiple perspectives: a Syrian family fleeing ISIS, young guards instructed to brutalize and reject the migrants; and activists who aid the refugees at great personal risk. Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the 2023 Venice Film Festival.

MAN RAY: RETURN TO REASON
Directed by Man Ray
(France, 1923–29, 70 min., digital)
Friday–Saturday, August 16–17, 7:00 p.m. BROWN

Directed between 1923 and 1929, artist Man Ray’s Le Retour à la raison, Emak-Bakia, L’Étoile de mer, and Les Mystères du Château du Dé represent a high watermark of early European avant-garde cinema, a seminal nexus of experimental technique, surrealist narrative, and playful abstraction suffused with dark eroticism. In celebration of the 100th anniversary of Le Retour à la raison, Squrl, the Jim Jarmusch-Carter Logan combo, presents Man Ray: Return to Reason, with a newly recorded drone-rock soundtrack for all four films. The band’s cosmic sounds complement Ray’s work by conjuring the beautiful, ineffable, haunting, and sublime.

AURORA PICTURE SHOW SUMMER FILMMAKING CAMP WORLD PREMIERES
Various directors
(USA, 2024, approximately 100 min., digital)
Saturday, August 17, 1:00 p.m. BROWN
Free admission

Walk the red carpet for Aurora’s annual Summer Filmmaking Camp World Premieres event, where young filmmakers’ visions come to life on the screen! This free screening showcases a wide range of creative short films made by Houston kids and teens (ages 7–15) through Aurora’s summer youth education program.

BEST OF THE 2023 OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL
Various directors
(Various countries, 2023, 71 min., in original languages with English subtitles, digital)
Friday–Saturday, August 23–24, 7:00 p.m. BROWN
For adult audiences

The annual Ottawa International Animation Festival curates a selection of short films, both award winners and audience favorites, for the touring Best of Ottawa Program. The lineup of 10 short films highlights cutting-edge achievements in the art of animation, representing the myriad styles, techniques, and perspectives that animation is uniquely capable of realizing. Visit mfa.org/film for the full list of shorts in the program.

NOSTALGHIA
Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky
(USSR/Italy, 1983, 126 min., in Italian and Russian with English subtitles, 4K digital restoration)
Friday–Saturday, August 30–31, 7:00 p.m. BROWN

Andrei Tarkovsky (1932–1986) explained that in Russian the word nostalghia conveys “the love for your homeland and the melancholy that arises from being far away,” Andrei, a Russian intellectual doing research in Italy, becomes obsessed with the Botticelli-like beauty of his translator, as well as with the apocalyptic ramblings of a self-destructive wanderer (Erland Josephson). Written with frequent Michelangelo Antonioni–collaborator Tonino Guerra (L’Avventura) and newly restored in 4K from the original camera negative, this cult favorite is a mystical and mysterious collision of East and West, shot with the tactile beauty that only Tarkovsky can provide. Film critic J. Hoberman observed that “Nostalghia is not so much a movie as a place to inhabit for two hours.”