



SFILM

APRIL 14-23 | 2023

BAMPFA



FRIDAY / 4.14**VIGENTA B.****6 PM****Carlos Lechuga**
(Cuba/France/Columbia/Norway/US, 2022)

Set in Cuba, this film follows Vicenta, a gifted clairvoyant who uses her ability to connect to her ancestors to foresee the future. When her beloved son leaves home in search of employment abroad, the heartbreak of their separation drives Vicenta into an identity crisis as she worries about her boy. While she can foretell others' future, her own remains cloudy as she struggles with her ancestors to understand the journey ahead for her son. She rediscovers her connection to the island and recovers her sense of well-being while learning to cope with what she cannot control. (77 MINS)

EARTH MAMA**8 PM****Savanah Leaf (US, 2023)**

A single mother in Oakland navigates the foster care system while making a living at a family portrait studio in this intimate coming-of-age story. Based on lived experiences from SFFILM-supported writer/director Savanah Leaf, the film follows Gia (Tia Nomore), who warily sizes up her surroundings and would-be allies as she prepares for another child. In this drama made by a Bay Area crew, preconceptions of women with children in foster care are carefully examined and discarded, as Leaf presents a tender, textured, and surprisingly funny portrait of motherhood. (97 MINS)

SATURDAY / 4.15**THE TUBA THIEVES****12 PM****Alison O'Daniel (US, 2023)**

It's true that a rash of tuba thefts has plagued Los Angeles high schools, but the mystery behind the loss is not the point in this film, which blends documentary, narrative, and essay forms. Instead, filmmaker Alison O'Daniel creates a visually stunning work that captures life on roads, seas, and mountains, and in forests and skies, and features sound design—including sequences of complete silence—so visceral it almost feels textured. Open captioned and populated by a largely deaf cast, the film invites the audience both to "hear" the world through the experiences of the deaf and hard of hearing and to really listen to the world around us. (91 MINS)

PEAFOWL**2:30 PM****Byun Sung-bin (South Korea, 2022)**

After the death of her father, Myung makes a pilgrimage to her hometown to lead her father's funeral ritual, decades after she left in the face of family and community transphobia. Now a professional waack dancer, Myung seeks to use her promised inheritance to fund her transition. As part of her homecoming, Myung helps her cousin come out and contend with his homophobic parents. A masterfully shot debut feature, *Peafowl* follows Myung as she confronts her relationship with her family and finds her personal style of dancing. (114 MINS)

L'IMMENSITÀ**5:30 PM****Emanuele Crialese (Italy/France, 2022)**

Emanuele Crialese's first film in eleven years is a personal portrait of two outsiders trying to escape the confines of their environment. Clara (Penélope Cruz), an effusive but slightly manic mother raising three kids in 1970s Rome, tries to make family life a party amid a loveless marriage, while her eldest daughter, Adri, experiences gender dysphoria in an era when the term doesn't really exist. Blending intimate scenes of family drama with surreal musical sequences, and anchored by Cruz's multilayered performance, *L'immensità* is a tremendous return from a director whose work SFFILM has championed from the very beginning. (98 MINS)

DALÍLAND**7:45 PM****Mary Harron (UK/US, 2022)**

It's best to depict egomaniacs, even talented ones like Salvador Dalí (Ben Kingsley), through the eyes of someone in their orbit but not their headspace—someone like art-school dropout James (Christopher Briney), who works for a New York gallery in the mid-1970s. He is asked to deliver money to Dalí and his wife, Gala (Barbara Sukowa), and is soon swept into their world of art and parties filled with beautiful people and stimulating substances. Director Mary Harron is perfect for this subject matter, with an unerring eye for period detail and novel ways of looking at real celebrities from various cultural zeitgeists. (93 MINS)

SUNDAY / 4.16**WHAT THESE WALLS WON'T HOLD****2 PM****Adamu Chan (US, 2022)**

Filmed during the coronavirus pandemic, Adamu Chan's *What These Walls Won't Hold* is not about COVID-19 but about the way the crisis brought into focus and catalyzed ongoing organizing efforts at San Quentin State Prison. Chan, who was incarcerated there, chronicles his journey home, interweaving his account with those of loved ones both inside and outside the penitentiary walls. What emerges is a tender picture of a community thriving with relationships built on trust and an indomitable zeal to fight for a brighter and better future for those incarcerated. (42 MINS)

Preceded by **SOL IN THE GARDEN** (Emily Cohen Ibañez, Débora Souza Silva, US, 2023). A formerly incarcerated woman catches the sun as she nourishes a garden with her new community. (21 MINS)

HOW WE GET FREE (Geeta Gandbhir, Samantha Knowles, US, 2023). In Denver, an intrepid activist runs for office with the aim of eliminating cash bail. (31 MINS)

TOTAL RUNNING TIME: 94 MINS**SNOW AND THE BEAR****4:45 PM****Selcen Ergun (Turkey/Germany/Serbia, 2022)**

(*Kar ve ayı*). Asli is a nurse wholly committed to her profession—even when it means relocating to a remote Turkish town with provincial beliefs and subzero temperatures. Though the villagers warn her of bear attacks from the neighboring forest, Asli finds more to fear from some of the men around her. When a citizen disappears, townsfolk point fingers at the bears or Asli. Director Selcen Ergun expertly balances the tension between patriarchal tradition and modernity, crafting a mystery-drama that hones in on the wilderness inside humanity as much as the woods that surround Asli's new home. (93 MINS)

LUXEMBOURG, LUXEMBOURG**7 PM****Antonio Lukich (Ukraine, 2022)**

Director Antonio Lukich tells the story of twin brothers living in central Ukraine. They go on a road trip to find their Yugoslavian father, who is rumored to be in Luxembourg. As with most great road movies, the preamble and the journey are more important than the destination: Kolya and Vasya are shown as troublemaking kids who eventually become, respectively, a bus driver and a cop. When darkly funny circumstances find them both at loose ends, they embark on the search for their dad and hopefully get some answers as to why their lives lack meaning and purpose. (106 MINS)

THURSDAY / 4.20**PERSISTENCE OF VISION AWARD:
MARK COUSINS + THE MARCH ON ROME****7 PM****Mark Cousins (Italy, 2022) IN PERSON**

Documentary filmmaker and writer Mark Cousins has made features about the writer D. H. Lawrence (*6 Desires: DH Lawrence and Sardinia*), his hometown (*My Belfast*), and the bombing of Hiroshima (*Atomic: Living in Dread and Promise*). But it is in his work devoted to cinema that he has made his biggest impact. He is the director of the fifteen-hour documentary *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*; its sequel, *The Story of Film: A New Generation*; *The Eyes of Orson Welles*; *The Storms of Jeremy Thomas*, about the Oscar-winning producer; and many other works that display his vast knowledge of film. Among this year's SFFILM Festival offerings is his witty survey *My Name Is Alfred Hitchcock*. We dedicate this year's POV presentation to the late Tom Luddy, whom Cousins calls "one of the most influential film people of the second half of the twentieth century."

Tonight's POV presentation includes Cousins in conversation, followed by a screening of *The March on Rome. My Name Is Alfred Hitchcock* will screen on April 21.

(*Marcia su Roma*). Aiming for a coup, fascist Black Shirts marched from Naples to Rome in 1922, the demonstration leading to the ascension of

Benito Mussolini as Italy's dictator. Mark Cousins explores this pivotal moment in a commanding documentary that weaves together world and cinema history. Actor Alba Rohrwacher appears as a witness to Il Duce's regime, but most of the film is culled from archival footage. Cousins's centerpiece is Umberto Paradisi's propagandistic record of the march, *A noi!*, which the filmmaker dissects, exposing a foundational myth of Italian fascism and demonstrating the power of lies to alter history. Cousins masterfully connects the past to the present, making manifest the adage that those ignorant of history are doomed to repeat it. (98 MINS)

FRIDAY / 4.21

MY NAME IS ALFRED HITCHCOCK

4 PM

Mark Cousins (UK, 2022)

Mark Cousins dives into the oeuvre of the Master of Suspense in this entrancing film in which the long-dead Alfred Hitchcock delivers a lively lecture on his work from beyond the grave. Actor Alistair McGowan masterfully embodies that famous voice, but it is Cousins's words that really nail the impression. Whether explaining the importance of camera movement, delighting in *Strangers on a Train*'s runaway carousel climax, or taking the measure of James Stewart's desire for Grace Kelly in *Rear Window*, Cousins reveals a work of deep scholarship, yet one that is often humorous and playful. (120 MINS)

MARTÍNEZ

7 PM

Lorena Padilla (Mexico, 2023)

In this satirical take on workplace culture, Human Resources informs elderly employee Martínez (Francisco Reyes Morandé) that it is time for him to retire—but first he must train his replacement. To add to his troubles, his next-door neighbor passes away, bequeathing him her diary, along with other personal items. A Chilean who has lived in Mexico for forty years, Martínez reluctantly befriends the young man taking his job, and as he rummages through his neighbor's things, he is inspired to explore. Reflecting on his life and relationships, Martínez begins to realize that perhaps the end of his career is a new beginning. (93 MINS)

SATURDAY / 4.22

1000% ME: GROWING UP MIXED

12 PM

W. Kamau Bell (US, 2023)

Playful and enormously charming, W. Kamau Bell's latest work profiles the joys and struggles of children growing up mixed-race. Beginning with his own family, Bell speaks with kids and parents throughout the Bay Area as they illuminate the experience of defining themselves in a world that seems to prefer hard lines and neat categories. Tender but never shying away from hard questions, *1000% Me: Growing Up Mixed* is a timely exploration of identity and belonging that challenges our assumptions. (59 MINS)

Preceded by **CREATING THINGS** (Bryan Simpson, Taylor Simpson, US, 2022). Through their father's art and a long-lost interview, two brothers take stock of his legacy. (11 MINS)

SOUTHERN AFTERNOON

(Lan Tian, China, 2022). A Uyghur father suspects his daughter has received a love letter but faces a language barrier. (16 MINS)

TOTAL RUNNING TIME: 86 MINS

MILISUTHANDO

2:30 PM

Milisuthando Bongela (South Africa/Colombia, 2023)

Director Milisuthando Bongela grew up in South Africa during apartheid, unaware that the country's racist segregation policy existed. She was born in Transkei, a state formed for Black people in 1976. When apartheid ended in 1994, Transkei dissolved, leading Bongela to a reckoning with her place in society. Using archival and verité footage, along with personal interviews, Bongela constructs this personal essay about what it meant to grow up in Transkei during apartheid and her continuing process of coming to terms with the aftermath. (128 MINS)

AGAINST THE TIDE

5:30 PM

Sarvnik Kaur (India, 2023)

As the Arabian Sea's fish population dwindles, two fishermen from Mumbai's Koli community endeavor to change their fortunes. United by a shared ambition, their friendship is tested as they employ different methods. While Rakesh adheres to practices handed down through generations of ancestors, Ganesh seeks modern methods that promise a bigger catch in the short-term but damage the ecosystem, dooming both men's long-term prospects. Ultimately powerless against the perilous waters and growing mountains of debt, Rakesh and Ganesh try their best to survive and care for their growing families. (97 MINS)

SOMETHING YOU SAID LAST NIGHT

8:15 PM

Luis De Filippis (Canada/Switzerland, 2022)

Luis De Filippis's story of a family vacation makes a leap forward in the depiction of trans lives on-screen. It also perfectly encapsulates the tensions that can arise from close proximity and overdetermined fun when paired with family dynamics. The film presents a loving and accepting foursome, though Canadian Italian matriarch Mona's boisterous energy exasperates her daughters. Over these seven days, secrets will be aired, tears will be shed, hair will be braided, and hangovers will be endured—small but poignant moments perfectly rendered by De Filippis in her memorable debut. (96 MINS)

SUNDAY / 4.23

RALLY

12 PM

Rooth Tang (US, 2023)

A divisive character who dedicated her life to improving conditions in her community, Rose Pak was San Francisco's atypical kingmaker. An immigrant from China, she started as a journalist and activist but found her greatest success as a controversial power broker who collaborated with Mayors Willie Brown, Gavin Newsom, and Ed Lee. She fought unsuccessfully against the closure of the Embarcadero Freeway, a vital link to Chinatown, but claimed victory in the building of the city's Central Subway. Rooth Tang chronicles the work of a woman who fought to bring Chinese American issues to the forefront of discourse in this patient and probing profile of a Bay Area mover and shaker. (101 MINS)

FREMONT

3 PM

Babak Jalali (US, 2023)

A former translator for the US military, Donya (Anaita Wali Zada) now lives among the Afghan diaspora who call the eponymous Bay Area suburb home and makes a living writing fortune cookie epigrams in Babak Jalali's wry, character-driven drama. Faced with hostility from neighbors who regard her as a traitor and plagued by insomnia, Donya struggles in her new homeland, but she's game for exploration. Newcomer Zada is pitch-perfect and receives excellent support from Gregg Turkington as a Jack London-obsessed psychiatrist and Jeremy Allen White as a sweet-natured mechanic. Shot in luminous black-and-white, *Fremont* presents a delightfully droll slice of one woman's life. (91 MINS)

I HAVE ELECTRIC DREAMS

5:30 PM

Valentina Maurel (Belgium/France/Costa Rica, 2022)

(*Tengo sueños eléctricos*). *I Have Electric Dreams* follows teenage Eva as she grapples with the emotions and realities of her parents' split. She lives with her mother and younger sister but would rather reside with her estranged artist father. After much angst and rebellion, Eva gets her wish, only to be left largely unsupervised by her distant dad. Through her tumultuous interactions with her neglectful parent and a sexual relationship with one of his friends, Eva comes of age. (100 MINS)

ANIMALIA

8 PM

Sofia Alaoui (France/Morocco/Qatar, 2023)

(*Parmi nous*). In this wide-ranging, genre-encompassing debut, mysterious green apparitions above a remote Moroccan lake bring chaos to the world around pregnant Itto. Married into a wealthy family, she feels like an interloper in her in-laws' grand house, but everyone else is away and she is alone when the strange celestial event occurs. As army trucks rush in, Itto—determined to save her unborn child—embarks on a dangerous journey to reunite with her husband. (90 MINS)

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- 1 Earth Mama (4.14)
- 2 Martínez (4.21)
- 3 L'immensità (4.15)
- 4 Sol in the Garden (4.16)
- 5 Snow and the Bear (4.16)
- 6 Peafowl (4.15)
- 7 How We Get Free (4.16)
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- 10 The March on Rome (4.20)
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Alfred Hitchcock (4.21)
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Won't Hold (4.16)
- 15 Milisuthando (4.22)
- 16 Luxembourg, Luxembourg
(4.16)
- 17 Something You Said
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- 18 1000% Me:
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- 19 Southern Afternoon (4.22)
- 20 The Tuba Thieves (4.15)

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S F F I L M
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All films are in their original
language, with English subtitles
when necessary. Program notes
are adapted from SFFILM.

