

16-19 November 2017

# PHOTOFILM: Sampling the Archives

CONFERENCE AND FILM SERIES

**Organized by** the Concrete Narrative Society e.V.,  
Verzio International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival  
and Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives (Blinken OSA)  
**Curated by** Gusztáv Hámos, Katja Pratschke and Thomas Tode

**V14** **verzio** International  
Human Rights  
Documentary  
Film Festival

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Photofilm: Sampling the Archives is organized within the frame of the 14th Verzio Film Festival. It aims to explore the fascinating field of photofilm and to discuss new ways of "thinking film".

Photofilm deconstructs cinema into single frames, language, sound, music – and treats its elements as independent components. Using these "building blocks", photofilm is consciously assembled in a playful way to become a projected reality. Chris Marker's photofilm, "La Jétee" (France, 1962), was the first to vividly demonstrate that what is typical of the film medium is not exhausted by the presentation of movement, but can be further developed in the structuring and processing of time. The "handling" of non-moving and moving images has been fundamentally reshaped over the last decade by digital devices.

Reinterpretation work within an archive is based on the experience of memory; we can reach the origin of a fact or circumstance by means of "documents". An encounter with the archaic is also an archaeological activity — recollection work that involves the personal unearthing of various materials at a place endowed with authority (the search for a lost time). It is concerned with the personal, subversive reinterpretation of official documents from the archeion (ancient Greek for the building in which the magistrates' archives were stored), and questions the official writing of history. It also examines the emergence of memories that result from the programmatic processing of photographic archival material, the archaeological excavation of previously stored 'impressions', and the personal decoding of registering and reading records and documents: the communicating and processing of archives. It is exactly this, processing of the archives, that permits us to produce a connection with the filmic; films can be viewed as an archive and archives can be considered in a cinematographic context thanks to digital media.

The program consists of three blocks of short films, a conference, and additional screenings of feature-length films. Filmmakers, media artists and theorists will discuss the exciting new developments in audio-visual media. Specifically, they will look at the fusion of the image-creating apparatuses, tablets, smartphones and internet cross-media, which demand a conscious decision about whether to use photo or film, and the influence this has on how the artist works today.

CONFERENCE

Photofilm: Sampling the Archives

Saturday, 18 November 2017, 10:00 a.m. – 05:00 p.m.  
Venue: Blinken OSA  
Address: Arany János u. 32., 1051 Budapest  
The conference is free, but due to a limited number of seats, registration is required; please send an email to [info@verzio.org](mailto:info@verzio.org) and write "Photofilm Conference" in the subject line.  
The venue, Blinken OSA, is a repository of important collections, primarily related to the history of the Cold War and grave international human rights violations, as well as a laboratory of archival experiments on new ways of assessing, contextualizing, presenting, and making use of archival documents

FILM SCREENED AT THE CONFERENCE:  
**Confessions to the Mirror**  
*Sarah Pucill / Great Britain / 2016 / 68' / English*  
Confessions to the Mirror is the second part of a diptych of films re-enacting photographs by the Surrealist artist Claude Cahun (1894–1954), as tableaux vivants accompanied by spoken text from Cahun's writing. These re-enactments run alongside stagings from Cahun's writing that narrate the anti-Nazi resistance activity the artist and her partner, Suzanne Malherbe, undertook on the Jersey Island, and their subsequent imprisonment.

10:00 a.m.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
10:15 a.m.	Stefanie Diekmann (Professor of media studies and chair of the Media and Theater Studies Department at Hildesheim University, Germany): The Scattered Archive: Henri-François Imbert, NO PASARÂN - ALBUM SOUVENIR
11:15 a.m.	COFFEE BREAK
11:30 a.m.	Miranda Pennell (artist filmmaker, London): The life and times of an image
12:30 P.M.	LUNCH BREAK
01:30 p.m.	Wolfgang Ernst (Media theorist, chair of media theories at Humboldt-University Berlin): Archival sampling, its provocation by signal recording, and final synthesis as digital signal processing. "Photofilm" in a media-epistemological perspective
02:30 p.m.	COFFEE BREAK
02:45 p.m.	FILM SCREENING: Confessions to the Mirror <i>Sarah Pucill / Great Britain / 2016 / 68' / English</i>
04:00 p.m.	Sarah Pucill (Artist, Reader in Fine Art at University of Westminster, living in London): The provocation of intermediality in the tableaux vivants in Magic Mirror and Confessions to the Mirror
05:00 p.m.	CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

BLOCKS

BLOCK 1  
INVESTIGATION / TRACE

Thursday, 16 November, Toldi Cinema, Small Hall, 04:15 p.m.  
The photofilms compiled here are based on family pictures, photo albums, travel and war photographs. The process of perusing photographs in film by means of investigative reconstructions, questioning the non-moving image and examining details serves not only to secure the evidence, but also as an appeal to convict the perpetrator.

Remains / Maki Satake / Japan / 2010 / 6' / no dialogue  
Why Colonel Bunny was Killed  
Miranda Pennell / Great Britain / 2010 / 28' / English  
Arbor / Janie Geiser / USA / 2012 / 7' / no dialogue  
Everyday Life of Gestapo Officer Schmidt  
Jerzy Ziarnik / Poland / 1964 / 10' / Polish  
Fiasco / Gusztáv Hámos, Katja Pratschke, Janet Riedel  
Germany / 2010 / 32' / German

BLOCK 2  
FLYER

Friday, 17 November, Toldi Cinema, Small Hall, 03:30 p.m.  
A flyer combines movement (flying) with something fixed (the handbill), and is thus simultaneously moving and stationary. The Flyer film program intends to intervene politically, become involved, to inform and scandalize – all in short format. It is a political statement and a medial form of battle.

Now! / Santiago Álvarez / Cuba / 1965 / 6' / no dialogue  
Comparing Now and Then / Nina Wiesnagrotzki / Germany  
2012 / 6' / no dialogue  
Ciné-tracts / anonymous / France / 1968 / 9' / French  
The Revolution Hunter Margarida Rêgo / Portugal, Great Britain  
2014 / 11' / Portugese  
Pinocchio / Martin Reinhart, Katarina Matiassek / Austria  
1995/2001 / 1' / no dialogue  
Friendly Fire / Martha Colburn / USA / 2006 / 3' / English  
Aphasia / Lily Chen / USA / 2013 / 10' / English  
Capitalism: Slavery / Ken Jacobs / USA / 2006 / 3' / no dialogue  
Capitalism: Child Labor / Ken Jacobs / USA / 2006 / 14' / no dialogue  
The Diary of Yunbogi Boy / Nagisa Oshima / Japan / 1965 / 24' / Japanese

BLOCK 3  
COLLECTING & RECYCLING

Sunday, 19 November, Toldi Cinema, Small Hall, 02:15 p.m.  
These films take photographic material as their starting point: photos from public and private collections and archives, old negatives rescued from a recycling plant, or from the thousands of images stored on internet platforms and databases. The authors of these films explore the photographic material by developing filmic methods and strategies for appropriating, accessing and scrutinizing them, thereby returning them to the surface of visibility.

A Place I Have Never Been  
Adrian Flury / Switzerland / 2014 / 5' / no dialogue  
200.000 Phantoms  
Jean-Gabriel Périot / France / 2007 / 10' / English  
Ashes / Micael Espinha / Portugal / 2014 / 10' / Portuguese  
Calling Mr. Smith / Stefan & Franciszka Themerson  
Great Britain / 1943 / 10' / English  
Photograph of Jesus / Laurie Hill / Great Britain / 2008 / 7' / English  
Very Nice, Very Nice / Arthur Lipsett / Canada / 1961 / 7' / English  
(If I can sing a song about) Ligatures  
Abigail Child / USA / 2009 / 6' / English  
Recycled / Lei Lei, Thomas Sauvin / China / 2013 / 6' / no dialogue  
Vestige of Life / Maki Satake / Japan / 2009 / 12' / Japanese  
Program curators will give an introduction to the film blocks before the screenings.Please notice that films with dialogue will be screened in their original language with English subtitles. Films with English dialogue will not be subtitled.

ADDITIONAL SCREENINGS

The Host / Miranda Pennell / United Kingdom / 2015 / 60' / English  
A filmmaker becomes a forensic detective as she pieces together hundreds of photographs in search of what she believes to be a buried history, only to find herself inside the story she is researching. The film investigates the activities of British Petroleum (BP) in Iran; it is a tale of power, imperial hubris and catastrophe.  
Friday, 17 November 2017, 06:30 p.m.  
Venue: French Institute in Budapest , Fő u. 17, 1011 – Budapest

Magic Mirror / Sarah Pucill / United Kingdom / 2013 / 75' / English  
Magic Mirror is the first part of a diptych of films that re-enact photographs by the Surrealist artist Claude Cahun (1894–1954) as tableaux vivants, accompanied by spoken text from Cahun's writing. Out of these intermedial interactions, media, authorship, and the question of when interpretation becomes a creative act are made uncertain.  
Friday, 17 November 2017, 08:30 p.m.  
Venue: French Institute in Budapest, Fő u. 17, 1011 – Budapest

Own Death  
Péter Forgács / Hungary / 2007 / 118' / Hungarian / English subtitles  
Dying is a tough job, especially when one must urgently finish some galley proofs. Péter Nádas has evocated this brilliantly in his short novel, Own Death. And it now has an equally brilliant equivalent in the imagery Péter Forgács has designed for it. Not since Marguerite Duras' India Song has a collaboration between the literary and the cinematic been as successful as in Forgács' film of the Nádas story. (Peter Delpaut)  
Saturday, 18 November 2017, 07:00 p.m.  
Venue: Cirko - Gejzír Cinema, Balassi Bálint u. 15–17, 1055 Budapest