

What is a vegan attitude to the screen? Can you devour cinema ethically? The film review *Party's Over*, presented at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, is devoted to the relationship between cinema and food.

Curator
Michał Matuszewski
Curatorial collaboration
Michalina Augusiak
Coordination
Aleksandra Jeglińska

Film and culinary culture share a very close relationship. It's about more than just eating popcorn during screenings, or the increasingly popular food movie reviews. The daily practice of consumption is also connected to cinematography through visual pleasure, and shortages of

food or its excess – are one of the more significant topics of modern documentary cinema.

In November, audiences at the *U–jzdowski* cinema will have the opportunity to watch experimental films by Martha Rosler, Chantal Akerman, Agnès

Varda, Krystyna Gryczelowska, Michael Snow, Jan Švankmajer, Joyce Wieland and Ken Paul Rosenthal, as well as documentaries by Jumana Manna, Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel, that view the subject of food in different ways. In them, food becomes a lens that focuses on contemporary social and economic tensions. The films presented as part of the programme of *Party's Over* look at the links between culinary culture and gender divisions or hunger in the context of global conflicts.

Party's Over will also include meetings and lectures on the tangibility of film and food. The programme will include workshops on organic film processing led by Dagie Brundert. We will have a chance to hear the British film critic Anat Pick talking about vegan cinema. A new work by visual artist Karolina Brzuzan, author of *Starvation Cookbook*, will also be presented. The review will end with discussion about food politics, hunger and cinema.

20/11/2019 7:00 p.m.

Film

Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles

directed by Chantal Akerman, France 1975, 201'

Called a feminist masterpiece, the avant-garde film from director Chantal Akerman is a more than three-hour-long observation of a lonely widow, Jeanne Dielman, during which she carries out her routine household chores. The front-facing camera shows a woman cooking and washing dishes, for whom even sex work has become part of her mundane everyday life. Soon, her household routine begins to unravel: she overcooks the potatoes that she's preparing for dinner, drops a newly washed spoon; the hierarchy is breaking down.

22/10/2019 7:00 p.m.

Talk + film

Vegan Cinema: Looking, Eating, Letting Be

Talk with Anat Pick

Anat Pick

Reader in Film at Queen Mary, University of London. She is author of *Creaturely Poetics: Animality and Vulnerability in Literature and Film* (2011) and coeditor of *Screening Nature: Cinema Beyond the Human* (2013). She has published widely on the place of creatureliness and vulnerability in animal ethics, and is currently working on a book on the philosopher and mystic Simone Weil and cinema.

Behind and in front of the camera, cinema devours its objects. Since the 1970s, the medium's predatory tendencies have been highlighted by feminist theorists contesting the "male gaze", and more recently by the painful revelations of #MeToo. But cinema is not solely a ravenous machine that consumes, digests, and expunges its objects. In this talk, Anat Pick will argue for cinema's capacity to both consume and let be what it captures, frames, and records—a mode of looking that refrains from devouring the objects of sight. This non-devouring gaze is conservationist insofar as it acknowledges the autonomous existence of beings and things, and allows them to be. The gaze that "lets be" offers a corrective to the predatory conceptions of cinema, and contributes to an ecocentric theory of film at a time of environmental collapse.



Wendy and Lucy

directed by Kelly Reichardt, USA 2008, 80'

23/11/2019 6:00 p.m.

A set of experimental films

The (non)digestibility of the camera

Breakfast

(*Table Top Dolly*)

directed by Michael Snow, Canada 1976, 15'

The camera slowly advances across an overlaid breakfast table, knocking objects out of shot. The film, shot in 1972, but edited four years later, is a kind of self-parody, referring back to Michael Snow's earlier film, *Wavelength For Those Who Don't Have the Time*.

Food

[*Jidlo*], directed by Jan Švankmajer, Czech Republic/Great Britain 1993, 17'

Breakfast, lunch and dinner with a master of surreal stop motion animation. Švankmajer's obsessions return – food, macabre, dark humour – and the film can be read as a metaphor for any devouring system, both communism and capitalism.

Cat Food

directed by Joyce Wieland, Canada 1967, 14'

The mechanics of a movie projector – devouring the film tape roll by roll – are compared here with the methodical mechanics of a cat eating fish after fish..

Spring Flavor

directed by Ken Paul Rosenthal, USA 1996, 3'



The alchemy and texture of film is celebrated with images of sun-splintered reeds that have been re-photographed, hand-processed, buried beside a pond, and soaked in cooked wild berries.

24/11/2019 6:00 p.m.

Film

Wild Relatives

directed by Jumana Manna, Germany/Norway/Lebanon 2018, 70'

In the event of a disaster, Global Seed Bank stores seeds from around the world in a vault buried deep under Norway's permafrost. In 2012, the media spread the news that the gene bank in Aleppo had to abandon its collections and move to Lebanon as a result of the civil war. Then, for the first time, seeds from the Norwegian bank were used. The film tracks the path they had to travel between Norway and Lebanon, revealing the complex dependencies and relationships between humans and non-humans. In the Middle East, the greatest threat is drought and global agricultural corporations, but above the Arctic Circle – where the seeds were supposed to be able to survive anything – the rise in temperature and the melting of the glacier are now becoming apparent threats. The film combines various biographies and narratives, creating a space for discussions on biodiversity, survival, global justice as well as climate change. It portrays the man-made disaster and rather ambivalent ways of overcoming it.

27/11/2019 7:00 p.m.

Talk + film

Caniba

directed by Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel, France/USA 2017, 90'

An experimental documentary made by the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard University. Referring to the story of Issei Sagawa from Japan, who murdered and partially consumed his friend Renée Hartevelt, the creators do not try to present a coherent picture of the crime or offer a credible explanation – but rather, they use film to reflect Sagawa's overwhelming need to devour, thus creating an unusual, radical cinema, annihilating traditional expectations and viewers' habits. In this way, they pose important questions about the ethical aspect of consuming film images and the ambiguous involvement of audiences as witnesses-consumers of monstrous events.

Aleksander Kmak will give a talk before the show.

The main topic will be what is most noticeable in *Caniba* – a unique, demanding visual language, trying to speak in images about the hero's forbidden cannibalism. The special, painfully close relationship in which the viewer enters with the film will serve as a starting point for asking questions, about the sense of (un)pleasantness in cinema, about what it means to consume film screenings, and about the theoretical consequences of attempting to create a film so engaging that it devours the viewer. *Caniba* can be located in the wider context of what is defined as the poetics of cinematic disgust, exemplified by the contemporary cinema of discomfort, deliberately throwing the viewer off balance, hindering the film experience or even demanding the viewer to look away from images too painful to watch.

28/11/2019 7:00 p.m.

Talk + screening of short films

Kitchens of the revolution: cinema and social reproduction

Talk by Michalina Augusiak

The talk by Michalina Augusiak will deal with classic and contemporary approaches to social reproduction, i.e. all forms (usually feminised) of work responsible for maintaining and renewing human bodies, living spaces and productive forces. The reproductive sphere can be regarded as a particularly favourable plane for revealing the dependencies inscribed into a capitalist organisation of work, as well as a potential space for radical interventions. By referring visual representations to theoretical recognitions and political demands (from early socialist feminism, through the "Wages for Housework" campaign, to the latest reinterpretations), we will ask whether the dominant images of cooking and nourishing bodies can be effectively captured and used for anti-capitalist, feminist, and queer resistance practices.

Semiotics of the Kitchen

directed by Martha Rosler, USA 1975, 6'

Inspired by cooking shows, Rosler's work belongs to the American canon of feminist visual art. The artist's repeated, stopped and scaled movements are the result of the deconstruction of a bodily regime that mystifies reproduction as a spectacle of precision.

Blow Up My Town

[*Saute ma Ville*], directed by Chantal Akerman, Belgium 1968, 13'

The 13-minute debut from Chantal Akerman contains many motifs, that are often repeated in the films of this Belgian director: the kitchen, the preparation of a meal alone, the act of destruction. Everyday gestures performed by female bodies are at the same time a source of unbearable discipline and an image that bursts out of its visual frames with full power.

The 24 Hours of Jadwiga L.

[*24 godziny Jadwigi L.*] directed by Krystyna Gryczelowska, Poland 1967, 14'



Every evening, Jadwiga L. leaves home for a night shift at the factory. Her days are filled with sleep, housework, and childcare. Illustrating the historical and sociological thesis about the "double load", Gryczelowska's documentary is an important element of the narrative on the subject of women's work in a socialist state.

Diary of a Pregnant Woman

[*L'Opera-Mouffe*], directed by Agnès Varda, France 1958, 16'

In impressions from a Parisian market on Rue Mouffetard, Varda juxtaposes images of the female body and food products – primarily metaphorically, poetically. A swollen belly looks like a ripe pumpkin. However, the film can also be read as a story about the material effort of living, the toil that the body must pass to provide itself and others with resources to survive.

Housewives Making Drugs. Open Source Estrogen

directed by Mary Maggic, Mango Chijo Tree and The Jayder, USA 2015, 10'

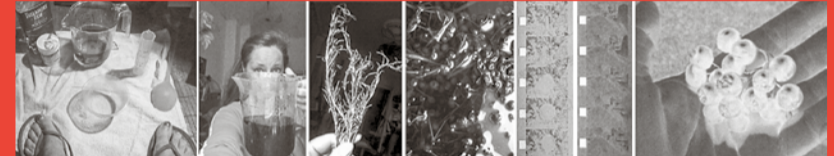


The *Housewives Making Drugs* project, created by Mary Maggic, uses the convention taken by Martha Rosler of the TV programme to intercept the means of reproduction. This ten-minute video gives simple instructions on how to make oestrogen at home. Many non-binary as well as transwomen have difficult access to oestrogen due to institutional and economic obstacles.

30/11/2019 11:00 a.m.

Organic film processing workshop with Dagie Brundert

Coffee grounds cinema



The workshops will take place in the Activity Room behind the cinema. There is a maximum of 6 participants. Prior knowledge and experience are not required. The event will be held in English. The cost of participation is 80 zł. It includes all the materials.

30/11/2019 6:30 p.m.

Admission free

Screening of Dagie Brundert's films

After the organic film processing workshop, we warmly invite you to an open screening of Dagie Brundert's films. This German artist, who fell in love with the Super 8mm camera and tape, has for years been working with analogue tape, the oldest and simplest methods of analogue photography, and is experimenting with home-based, organic film processing methods.

01/12/2019 5:00 p.m.

Artistic action + film

Soylent Green + artistic action by Karolina Brzuzan

For the grande finale of the *Party's Over* project, we cordially invite you to a screening of the film *Soylent Green*, as well as snacks prepared by Karolina Brzuzan.

Karolina Brzuzan

visual artist. She studied sculpture in the studios of Miroslaw Bałka, Jan Berdyszak, and Erwin Wurm. She is the author of the *Starvation Cookbook* project, a collection of recipes created and used in extreme food shortages. The purpose of the work is to look at the current economic and political causes of famine, and the starting point is what a vast part of humanity puts on their plate every day. By reconstructing the flavours and smells that people feel when they experience hunger daily, the artist attempts to find the answer to questions about the reasons for drawing up such a particular menu. Although we are able to produce enough food to meet the needs of the world's population, as a result of many political decisions (sometimes seemingly unrelated to nutrition), one-third of humanity suffers from malnutrition, and another one-third from hunger. It seems, therefore, that the fate of entire nations depends on their culinary creativity, as well as mutually shared knowledge on how to prepare meals from products seemingly unfit for consumption.

Soylent Green

directed by Richard Fleischer, USA 1973, 97'

A classic of the eco-apocalyptic science fiction cinema of the 1970s, with the infamous culinary twist that delights and frightens to this day. We are in the near future – a gloomy and terribly overcrowded world reminiscent of a rusty can. Natural reserves of food have long been depleted, so humanity has become accustomed to a synthetic green wafer-like food product. The mass-manufactured synthetic cubes, however, contain a very particular secret... *Soylent Green* is a film after which the word recycling takes on a new taste!

01/12/2019 7:00 p.m.

Discussion

Hunger, cinema, politics

After the screening of *Soylent Green* and the artistic action by Karolina Brzuzan, we invite you to a discussion with the artist and invited guests

We will be talking about the politics of food and its symbolic significance for communities as well as individuals. How do you talk about it in such a way as to overcome naïve statements? Culinary cinema has been an almost separate genre or branch of the film industry for several years. There are film food reviews (including some Polish ones), and the largest international festivals have sections dedicated to culinary arts. These films, although very different, are often guided by the spirit of *slow food*, the joy of life as well as the celebration of bodily pleasures, but also in praise of family and community. Looking at this phenomenon through the prism of the social and economic context, one can ask, where the apotheosis of pleasure ends, and vanity and hedonism begin? To what extent can the culture built around food be a tool for building a middle-class position, and what role do films, reviews and festivals play in this, seeing as they are often combined with tastings, and positioning participants in the world of culinary entertainment shows. The topic of food is also a topic about the lack of food – completely outside the hedonistic slow food narratives.

Partnerzy [Partners]



Partnerzy medialni [Media partners]



Ujazdowski Castle
Centre for Contemporary Art

Jazdów 2, Warszawa
www.u-jzdowski.pl/kino