

# Alternative CINEMA

SPRING 2019

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM • Golden Auditorium • 105 Little Hall • Colgate University • Free Admission • Open to the Public

January 29

## Children of Men

Alfonso Cuarón, 2006, 114 min

In a violently partisan country, a nationalist government criminalizes and interns refugees, while the threat of a global environmental catastrophe lingers. Sound familiar? Cuarón's 2006 film is timely sci-fi thriller set in the near future after women across the world have become infertile. Global chaos spares only one country—England. Theo, a cynical ex-activist turned bureaucrat is suddenly charged with helping Kee, an African refugee who is miraculously pregnant, through a maze of competing political factions bent on using the child to their own advantage. Realized with a perceptive attention to detail, this treatise on how people might behave if there were no longer a future to believe in, postulates the effects of unchecked capitalism and environmental destruction.

February 5

## Pillow Talk

Michael Gordon, 1959, 102 min

A blockbuster hit in 1959, this genre-defining romantic comedy has become the ur-text for mid-century American attitudes towards gender and sexuality. Womanizing playboy Brad Allen (Rock Hudson) shares a phone line with interior decorator Jan Morrow (Doris Day) and sets out to win her over by embodying the role of a naïve Texas rancher. Brimming with campy double-entendres, eyebrow raising sexism, and scenes of Hudson's own gay masquerade (a gay man, pretending to be a straight man, pretending to be a gay man), *Pillow Talk* is both good fun and a reminder of the repressive roles promulgated by mainstream Hollywood cinema. Featuring scene-stealing supporting performances from Thelma Ritter and Tony Randall.

February 12

## Brick

Rian Johnson, 2005, 119 min

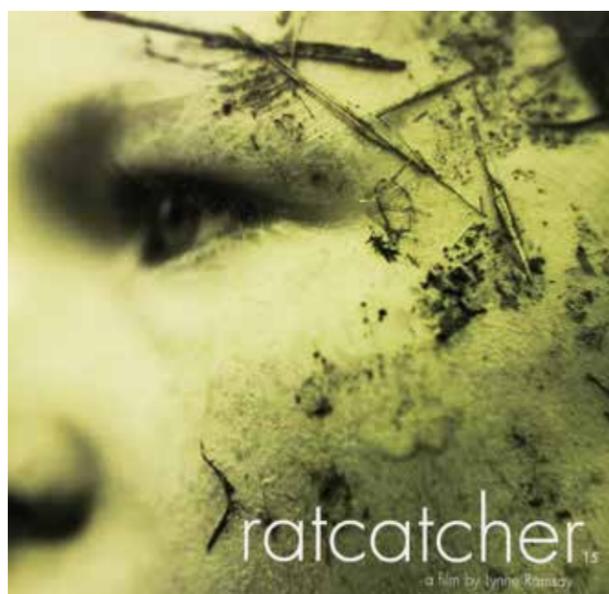
Reconstituting a hard-boiled detective film-noir in a high school setting, Rian Johnson's directorial debut offers a remarkable hybridity of genres. A film observing the similarities between the heartthrob and the femme fatale, the hallway bully and gangster heavy, the anti-hero and school outcast, *Brick* is a remarkable case study in transmuted archetypes. A Sundance hit and an indie-blockbuster that propelled Joseph Gordon Levitt into stardom, *Brick* contravenes generic categorization with delectably entertaining comic insight.

February 19

## Blue Velvet

David Lynch, 1986, 120 min

During a 1987 screening of *Blue Velvet* in Chicago—a man fainted. After his pacemaker was checked, he walked back into the theater to see the ending. One of the most debated films of the 1980s, *Blue Velvet* was received with equal parts exhilaration and repulsion. Beginning as a campy coming of age story in a naïve small town, the film evolves into a hallucinatory encounter with a pathological monster named Frank



(Dennis Hopper). Peppered with quotable dialogue, startling sequences of repressed sexuality and explosive violence, the film's strange allure forever altered the landscape of cinema. Featuring David Lynch favorites Kyle MacLachlan, Laura Dern, and Isabela Rossellini.

February 26

## Ratcatcher

Lynne Ramsay, 1999, 94 min

Lynne Ramsay's directorial debut reinvigorated British social realism with a poetic style, striking intimacy, and grimly beautiful cinematography. Set during a garbage strike in 1970s Glasgow (a city with some of the poorest housing conditions in Western Europe), the film unravels through the eyes of children who aimlessly wander a poor council estate as they navigate (and are shaped by) the harsh conditions surrounding them. Envisaged through the subjectivity of the main character, a pre-adolescent boy named James, the estate vibrates with desperation and a haunting beauty. A bleak but stunning coming-of-age film, *Ratcatcher* announced one of the major new voices in cinema.

March 5

## Abounaddara: The Right to the Image

Short screening and presentation with scholar Jason Fox in person!

This presentation offers a critical exploration of the groundbreaking videos and activism of Abounaddara, the anonymous Syrian film collective, framing the ethical, political, and aesthetic insights of their work within the transformative effects of new digital technologies in war reporting and social justice campaigns. Emerging alongside the Syrian revolution in 2011 and fueled by the political aspirations of the Arab spring throughout the Middle East, Abounaddara's "emergency cinema" critiques and revises mainstream war reporting through their impressionistic videos that make use of the wide reach and anonymity afforded by online video platforms. Scholar Jason Fox considers the collective's videos alongside their demand for the "right to the dignified image," a transnational civil protection to augment the notion of "dignity" as described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Through the lens of Abounaddara's emergency cinema and rights campaign, Fox argues that the "right to the dignified image" offers a new frame to chart the potentials and consequences for digital (self) representations in human rights and social justice movements in Syria and beyond, including in the work of Black Lives Matter and Idle No More. Co-sponsored by PCON and MIST.

March 26

## 1999

Samara Chadwick, 2017, 94 min

Samara Chadwick in Person!

Sixteen years after a wave of teen suicides traumatized a small New Brunswick community, former classmates attempt to piece together their long-silenced memories and shared grief in the hopes of finally healing. Within dusty boxes of diaries, photos, and VHS tapes, this elegiac documentary weaves together multiple voices in a collective essay on how grief is internalized—and how, as children, we so painfully learn to articulate our desire to stay alive.

April 2

## The Sea in Their Blood

Peter Greenaway, 1983, 27 min

Preceded by:

350 MYA

Terra Long, 2016, 5 min

Territory

Eleanor Mortimer, 2015, 17 min

Place and geography are examined in these three documentaries, which probe the oppositions between the present and deep time, urbanization and the undomesticated vestiges living alongside it, and the desire to know all in a world filled with contingency and chaos. Terra Long's exquisite *350 MYA* observes the long disappeared Rhenish Ocean through the sand dunes of Morocco's Sahara Desert. Eleanor Mortimer presents a tragicomic portrait of Macaque monkeys wreaking havoc across the streets of Gibraltar in *Territory*. In Peter Greenaway's rarely screened gem,

*The Sea in Their Blood*, the relationship between the English and the water surrounding them is detailed by a narrator who at first appears to be a fastidious well of knowledge, but who may not be reliable.

April 9

## The Films of Mary Helena Clark Mary Helena Clark in person!

In her exquisite short films, Mary Helena Clark calibrates images and sequences into deeply resonant proximity. A collagist of film fragments with a singular cinematic signature, Clark's films parse performance, elegy, cinematic history, and beyond. A former Colgate professor and artist featured at the 2017 Whitney Biennial, Clark will share five recent short films, which venture into new territories of cinematic form.



April 23

## Sorry to Bother You

Boots Riley, 2018, 112 min

Boots Riley's directorial debut presents an absurd and stinging indictment of late-stage capitalism and casual racism. After lengthy unemployment, down-and-out Cassius Green (Lakeith Stanfield) is hired by a telemarketing company selling "Worry Free," a thinly veiled slave labour broker exchanging indentured servitude for free room and board. But when Cassius's success as a morally bankrupt "powercaller" is at odds with the politics of his radical girlfriend Detroit (Tessa Thompson), he must assess the virtues and limitations of success at all costs. A surreal comic parable, *Sorry to Bother You* may be the funniest and most incisive diagnosis of 2018.

