January 29
Children of Men
Alfonso Cuarón, 2006, 114 min

In a violently partitioned country, a nationalist government criminalizes and interns refugees, while the threat of a global environmental catastrophe looms. Sound familiar? Cuarón’s 2006 film is timely sci-fi thriller set in the near future after women across the world have become infertile. Earth’s chaos spares only one country—England. Then, 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 and a tragicomic portrait of Macaque monkeys wreaking havoc across the sand dunes of Morocco’s Sahara Desert. Eleanor Mortimer presents the major new voices in cinema.

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. Enveloped 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 charming coming-of-age film, Ratcatcher announced one of the most debated films of the 1980s, Blue Velvet was

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 to stardom, Brick contemplates generic categorization with devastatingly entertaining comic insight.

February 19
Blue Velvet
David Lynch, 1986, 125 min

During a 1987 screening of Blue Velvet in Chicago—a man fainted. After his paramedic 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 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 American cinema. Featuring David Lynch favorites Kyle MacLachlan, Laura Dern, and Isabella Rossellini.

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 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 MST.

March 26
The Sea in Their Blood
Lynne Ramsay, 1999, 94 min

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

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 collage 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 in person!

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.