

Newsletter
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The Diamond Couple

Sonja Bertucci's new film is a meditation on the power of memory, and the experience of ageing.

A Song for Cesar

A documentary about the civil rights activist Cesar Chavez and the musicians and artists who supported his cause such as Joan Baez, Carlos Santana and Dr. Maya Angelou.



Photo © Paul Richards

Photo © Karsten Thormaehlen



THE DIAMOND COUPLE

In 2022, inside a Los Angeles apartment, Morrie recounts the final moments of his wife, Betty, who passed away at 103 in 2019. At the age of 108 Morrie harbours only one wish: to recover the memories shared with Betty during their 84-year union.



Sonja Bertucci's film unearths and reanimates these memories, by capturing their daily routine, delving into their past through interviews as well as exploring the historical backdrop of the century they lived through. Morrie, as a keen amateur photographer, and Betty, as a meticulous journal writer, have been building an archive of their lives from early on. As the couple gradually opens up to the camera over the span of eight years of filming, their interactions develop new dynamics. Betty overcomes her natural self-effacement, finds her voice, gains in self-confidence, while Morrie learns how to communicate emotion and affirm love – a word that he resisted using up until the final years of Betty's life. As a meditation on the power of memory, the film offers a vision of ageing that does not emphasize loss, but the capacity to renew an attachment to life with each instant that passes.

directed by **Sonja Bertucci** produced by
**Rétrovisseur Productions & Blue
Crystal** running time **80'** Shot in **HD**



Sonja Bertucci is a Richmond based filmmaker and Assistant Professor in Film Studies at the University of Richmond. She holds an MFA at CalArts and a PhD from UC Berkeley. Her films often thematize grief and loss, ephemerality, the struggle for personal and communal survival and marginalized subjects of cultural life.





A SONG FOR CESAR

American labour leader and civil rights activist Cesar Chavez (1927-1993) co-founded with Dolores Huerta the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) which later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) to become the United Farm Workers (UFW) labour union. Chavez' world view combined leftist politics with Catholic social teachings and an admiration for the peaceful revolution lead by Mahatma Gandhi. Born into a Mexican-American family, Chavez started out as a manual labourer before spending two years in the United States Navy. Running the UFW he helped labourers register to vote, launched an insurance scheme, credit facilities and a newspaper for farm workers.



Cesar Chavez, photo © Paul Espinoza



Dolores Huerta
© Paul Richards

He called legendary strikes to better the fate of exploited farm workers and was instrumental in California passing the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. Farm owners considered him "a communist subversive". He became an icon for organized labour and posthumously received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994.

The American Masters documentary by Abel Sanchez and Andres Alegria presents a unique view of the life and legacy of Cesar Chavez and the farm worker movement. The film tells a previously untold story about the musicians and artists who dedicated their time, creativity and even put their reputation on the line to peacefully advance Cesar Chavez' movement to gain equality and justice for America's suffering farmworkers.

Big Sur Folk Festival, 1970 © Gems/Redferns



Joan Baez, © Bob Fitch



Cheech & Chong, © Michael Ochs



Contributors include Malaquias Montaya, Joan Baez, Carlos Santana, Luis Valdez, Taj Mahal, Dr. Maya Angelou, Dolores Huerta and Abel Sanchez.

"A Song for Cesar" doesn't need to be slick to reveal its beating heart. It's the kind of labour of love that brings recent history into colourful and tuneful focus. And with conditions for farmworkers these days hardly tolerable still, maybe this movie can be absorbed as a song "from" Cesar too."

Los Angeles Times

Produced and directed by
Abel Sanchez & Andres Alegria
running time **85'** Shot in **HD**

Art21 Season 11



Amy Sherald

"If you've ever wondered why ART21 nabbed an impressive Peabody Award, tune in. Every two years, a number of hour-long programmes burrow deep into the artistic process to observe how artists think and work. The only narrators are the artists themselves". Los Angeles Times

Susan Sollins founded ART21 in 1997. "This whole endeavour is about falling in love with art and artists", she once said. Poorhouse International has been mandated to distribute these very special American documentaries nearly from the beginning. Here are the films of Season 11.

Episode 1 EVERYDAY ICONS

Amy Sherald is an African-American painter cultivating a "stylized realism" according to the *NY Times*. In her New Jersey studio she paints portraits that tell a story about American lives. Her face just inches away from a canvas, the artist carefully applies stroke after stroke, building her narrative through paint. "I really have this belief that images can change the world", says Sherald, a belief she acts upon in her compelling paintings, which depict everyday people with dignity and humanity. Following the tradition of American realists like Andrew Wyeth

and Edward Hopper, she uses her paintings to tell stories about America. Amy Sherald was selected by Barack and Michelle Obama to paint the former First Lady's Presidential Portrait, becoming the first Black woman to do so.

Daniel Lind-Ramos looks on in his hometown of Loiza, Puerto Rico. as drums beat the rhythms of bomba music, intricately costumed figures parade up and down the street and community members dance and celebrate together. Inspired by his town's diverse and inventive culture, his work reflects the history and energy of Puerto Rico and



Daniel Lind-Ramos

the Caribbean. The artist combs the beaches and streets of Loiza for palm fronds and other plant life, items that wash up on the shore and discarded everyday materials that speak of the story of the Caribbean. These objects take on a new and multiple meaning within his work. "My intention with this approach, among other things", says Lind-Ramos, "is to remember".

Rose B. Simpson is a mixed media artist, who works in ceramics, metal, fashion, painting, music, performance and installations.



Rose B. Simpson

On a rare snowy day in Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico, she assembles a maquette for a new public sculpture. The three small figures are models for the 12 concrete sculptures that stand nearly 11 feet tall at the Field Farm meadow in Williamstown, Massachusetts. Gazing forward with soft expressions and eyes that are hollowed through the back of their heads, the sculptures embody ancestors watching over the landscape. Simpson's work stems from these moments of observation and connections to the past, emphasizing the process of making and becoming, in which we discover new ways of being and of healing.

Alex Da Corte is an American conceptual artist, who works in painting, sculpture, installation and video. In a dark gallery, he appears projected on the wall in *Slow Graffiti* (2017) as Boris Karloff, performing as both the actor and himself. In his work, the artist never appears as himself, but rather, embodies the larger than-life characters who influence and intrigue him. He remixes, updates and



gives new meaning to each of the components Da Corte integrates into the performance, collaging elements of culture across multiple eras, locations and media.

Episode 2 BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE

The Guerilla Girls are an anonymous group of feminist female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art. Clad in all-black, their faces obscured by oversized gorilla masks, “Frida Kahlo” and “Käthe Kollwitz” take to the streets to engage the public in their decades-long battle against discrimination in the art world. “Kahlo” and “Kollwitz”, pseudonyms adopted by the artists while acting as Guerilla Girls, have been members of the artist-activist collective since its founding in 1985. This film explores the continued relevance and impact of their fight for equality.

Anicka Yi is a South Korean conceptual artist whose work lies in the intersection of fragrance, cuisine and science. She is known



for installations that engage the senses, especially the sense of smell and for her collaboration with biologists and chemists. Her Brooklyn studio operates much like a laboratory, developing hypotheses, testing them in small trials and bringing in experts to help refine her ideas and bringing them to life. To create the aerobes that she released in the Turbine Hall of the Tate Modern in London (2022) Yi consulted software engineers and biologists, referencing ocean life and fungi in her designs and programming each aerobe with a specialized artificial intelligence.

Hank Willis Thomas is an American conceptual artist. He works primarily with themes related to identity, history and popular culture. Reading Roland Barthes' Camera



Lucida, Thomas was struck by the idea of the punctum, the part of an image that impacts and stays with the viewer. Drawing from his background in photography to augment his work with other media, his sculptural works like *Liberty* (2015) isolates this punctum and translates it into three-dimensional space.

San Francisco born Tauba Auerbach is a visual artist working in many disciplines including painting, artist's books, sculpture, weaving and typography. “It seems appropriate to me to work in a lot of different materials, media and processes, because I'm focusing on connectivity and the relationship between lots of different things”, says the artist. As an apprentice at New Bohemia Signs in San Francisco, she learnt to approach painting as a technology, requiring precision and balance to achieve what they call a “sweet spot”.

Episode 3 FRIENDS & STRANGERS

Director, writer, actress Miranda July has the best-selling novel “*The First Bad Man*” to her credit. She is particularly interested in vulnerability and the creative process. In a chance meeting with a cold caller, Richie Jay Benedicto from the Philippines, a transgender

person, she initiated an artistic collaboration that transpired over the following months. She is probing into the deepest layers of a persona.

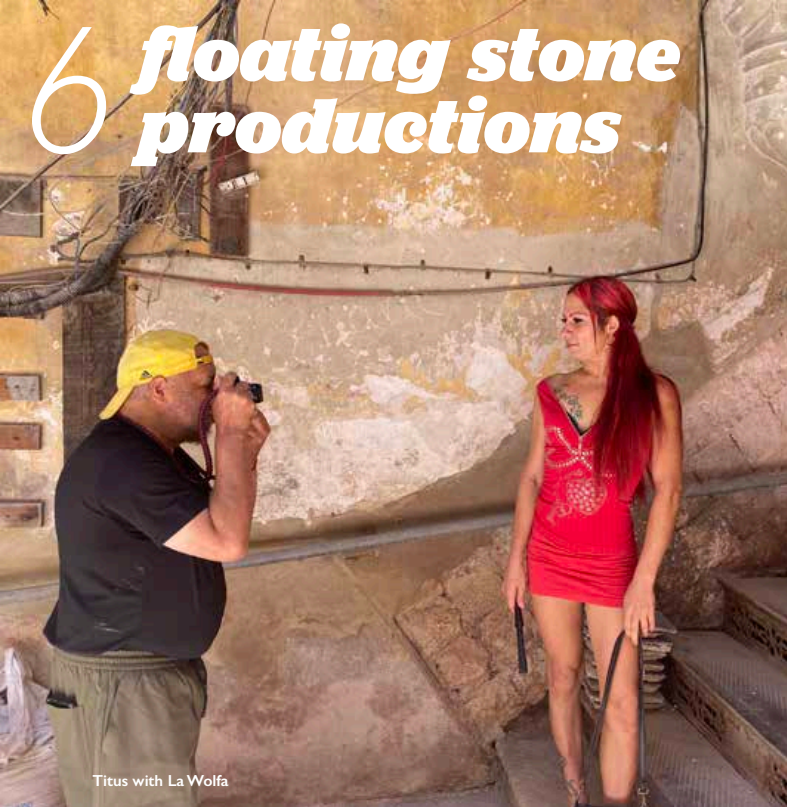
Christine Sun Kim is a deaf born American multidisciplinary artist based in Berlin. Working across drawing, performance, video and large-scale murals Kim explores her relationship to spoken language, to her built and social environments and to the world at large. Her latest exhibition focussed on Edges of the Signs in Space, the amount of space that language can occupy.

Cannupa Hanska Luger is a New Mexico based interdisciplinary artist whose community-oriented artwork addresses environmental justice and gender violence issues. His large-scale installations, social sculptures and performances use video, sound and a range of sculptural material to engage in political activism in order to communicate stories about 21st century indigeneity. In 2022 he was awarded the Guggenheim fellowship in Fine Arts.

Linda Goode Bryant is an African-American documentary filmmaker and activist. Her film “*Flag Wars*” (with Laura Poitras) was nominated for an Emmy and won a Peabody Award. She founded JAM, a gallery to expose art by young black artists of mainly abstract art. Her Active Citizen Project ACP encourages public activism while her Project EATS, founded in 2009, is a living installation transforming vacant lots and rooftops into neighbourhood-based farms supporting farmstands, pantries, prepared food and community progress.



directed by **Ian Forster**
produced by **Tina Kukielski, ART21**
running time **3 x 56' Shot in HD**



Titus with La Wolfa



Ben & Montrece

Titus Brooks Heagins: PORTRAITS

"I am convinced that photography can be redemptive, as images free us to see who we are, outside ourselves".

This documentary explores the work of photographer Titus Brooks Heagins and the challenging questions his photos pose about the systemic and casual exclusions and neglect of society's most vulnerable communities of colour. Humanizing, reverent and confrontational, Titus' photographs document the overlooked people who, usually through some intersection of poverty, race or gender/sexual identity exist as outsiders. *"I photograph to honour a time in my life when I talked with those who tried to talk with me. I photograph today in remembrance of when I needed a camera to capture what their lives and their stories taught me. They gave my life all they had, I know that now"*. He describes his work as *"confronting viewers in their personal spaces*

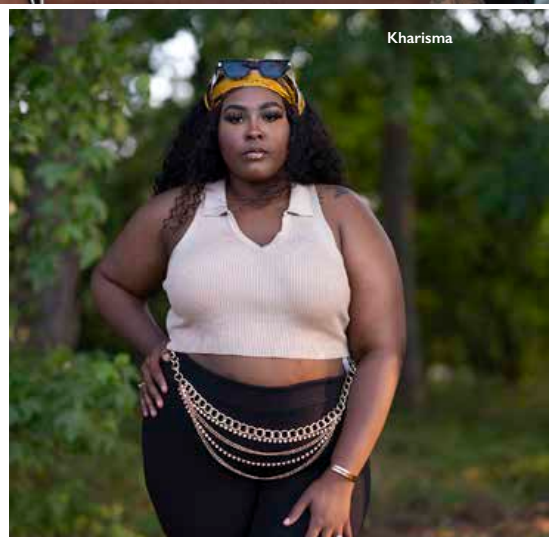
to move the position of "otherness" closer to a normative construction of self". A large part of Titus' work focuses on trans people, whom he photographed in the US and in Cuba since 2016. He remembers: *"My first trip to Cuba in 1997 I lived with a family who supported the Revolution. Portraits of Fidel, Che and José Martí hung prominently in homes I visited and photographed. I had no idea my life was about to forever change. There, I learnt (about) the power of photography to tell the stories of those who are invisible in the lands of their birth. Places*



that were their homelands, but not their homes. For the past seven years I have been invited to photograph a community of trans women in Cuba. Love is love, and that you shouldn't be punished for whom you love, or who you are". As a cisgendered African American man in his 70s, Titus' relationship to these communities is complex and controversial, a topic this



Jean & Gloria



Kharisma

directed by **Olympia Stone** produced by **Floating Stone Productions** running time **56'** Shot in **HD**

documentary examines while drawing parallels to the photographer's childhood, in which he was bullied and othered.

His photos are in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian, Duke University's Nasher Museum and the North Carolina Museum of Arts. Yet today he still seeks to be known in broader circles and, at 72, struggles to get his artwork into public spaces. Through fly on the wall footage, following Titus into the field, and interviews with family, colleagues and mentees, this documentary presents a complex, talented, passionate and compassionate figure, illuminating the fortitude it takes to be an outsider, documenting others. As is necessary at this moment in time, this documentary also probes the question of "who can tell whose story"? It is also a spotlight on an overlooked but richly deserving artist.

Five Times a Stranger

The painter and sculptor Stavros Kotoulas was born in the Greek village of Zerma. During the Civil War (1946-49) his village was flattened by firebombs. At the end of the Civil War the village only counted 52 inhabitants. The rest, including his family, had mainly fled into neighbouring Albania, from where the children were evacuated to Hungary. About 3000 Greek children found temporary homes and got tuition. Kotoulas stood out with his drawing talent and began to design the newspaper for his children's home. Having been accepted at the Fine Arts School his Greek teachers and the headmaster of his secondary school vetoed the decision and wanted him to learn something practical. When the Soviet Army invaded Hungary in 1956 Stavros stowed away and decided to go to neutral Austria. Barracks built by Hitler

served as the camp for many refugees from Hungary. Kotoulas was sent to a commercial school and trained to become a carpenter. At the same time, he took a course for shop window decoration. The idea to work in a factory to a rigid schedule didn't please the freedom loving Greek. Through the Red Cross he had found out that his siblings and his parents had returned from Albania in 1960 and he therefore went back to Greece where he earned a living by restoring frescoes. Soon the Secret Police would try to build a case against him as a Russian spy. In April 1967 the government was toppled by a military coup and when Georgios Papadopoulos came to power Kotoulas was denounced and decided to leave for Sweden with his friend Savvas Tzanetakis. Both took minor jobs and went to the School of Fine Arts in the evenings.

directed by **Vangelis Efthymiou**
produced by **Landart Productions**
running time **75' or 52'** Shot in **4K**

Kotoulas fell in love with a Swedish girl who gave birth to a daughter. He began to paint and got interested in pottery. Eventually he returned to Greece.

Director Vangelis Efthymiou, with many prize-winning documentaries to his credit, takes Stavros Kotoulas together with his daughter on a voyage into the past. They visit all the places in which Kotoulas lived as a stranger, telling the story of his extraordinary life. Looking at today's immigration crisis he concludes that the world hasn't learnt anything from history.





Putin and Dugin

directed by **Christopher Jones**
 produced by **RM Creative**
 running time **52'** Shot in **4K**

The Great Chess Game: Aleksandr Dugin

Do you know this man?
 His name is Dugin,
 Aleksandr Dugin

For many in the West, he is not just controversial, he is dangerous. So dangerous that he has been called 'Putin's Rasputin' by the mainstream press. Banned by the EU, he is accused of influencing the policies of the Russian president and in particular the invasion of Ukraine. For this reason his daughter Darya was assassinated when a bomb destroyed her car.

For others, he is a brilliant geopolitician, the Russian equivalent of Zbigniew Brzezinski (The national Security chief under Jimmy Carter) with whom he had a special relationship. The two men foresaw an almost inevitable reset in international relations: for Brzezinski, it was to be avoided at all costs because it means the end of the American unipolar world. By contrast, Dugin embraces this phenomenon with optimism. To know more, we decided to meet with him (a meeting that was not easy to obtain) and to confront several international experts with his ideas and analysis.

Without any doubt, Dugin is amongst some of the world's most incisive thinkers and among the first to notice tectonic shifts



in geopolitics prior to the war in Ukraine. Today, he describes the new emerging world eschatology as a sort of human manifest destiny. In short, he's saying that countries around the world in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Indian subcontinent are throwing off their colonially imposed façades and are going back to their historical roots by re-embracing their traditional essence and economic independence.

For Dugin, this is the final repudiation of professor Francis Fukuyama's infamous theory that the 'end of history' had arrived with the fall of the Soviet Union. Fukuyama believed that American 'liberalism' would become the final fabric for all humanity. But the new global shift away from the West represents an awakening of the world's oldest cultures, having finally realized that the cult of western liberalism is in fact dead, rejected for the most part by the western powers themselves. Dugin explains: "After its victory over the Soviet Union there was no other player than the global West. This postmodern neoliberal West didn't recognize any other player in this 'Great' chess game. Many years ago, I asked Zbigniew Brzezinski whether he thought that chess is a game for two and he answered no - it is a game for one. Not two players or three, just only one player makes the moves. You turn the chessboard and you move the white or black pieces. You make a move, then you turn the table and you make the other move. Only one player plays this game.

It is interesting that Brzezinski dedicated his book to me with a very important message: "With the wish that Mr Dugin change completely his ideas, to reverse his ideas so he can be part of this chess game" For Brzezinski, my mission would be to help him to move the figures on the chessboard.

"In this scheme of things, there is no place for anybody else in this game. No Macron, no Zelensky, no Scholz. Please move the figures as I have told you, that is your mission," Brzezinski told Dugin. Dugin continues, "Brzezinski was very honest. Otto von Bismarck once wrote that one cannot play chess if 16 of the 64 squares are forbidden from the beginning. But the world has seen the results of this uni-player chess game in Yugoslavia; we saw it again in Syria and the colour revolutions in the Arab world. We saw it again in Iraq and Afghanistan. And that is why 70% of the world backs Russia in its war." "You see, from under the other side of the table appeared Vladimir Putin. The Russian president decided to take part in the in this 'Great' chess game and that is why we have a Special Military operation in Ukraine. We have reappeared on the global stage as a sovereign player." "For sure we have broken the rules, for sure we have broken the rules of the chess - for one - game. It is violent. It is bloody as always but this war is the real end of the unipolar world where all decisions are taken by only one existing center. Now that a second player has appeared, at the same time there is a third player: China, and it has its own Ukraine in Taiwan."



Though some may see Russia as China's junior partner, its massive size, resource wealth and nuclear arsenal will allow it to retain much of its political autonomy. Not all, but enough. And that is a bargain Russia is willing to make. In his book The Grand Chessboard, Brzezinski wrote, "To put it in a terminology that harkens back to the more brutal age of ancient empires, the three grand imperatives of imperial geostrategy are to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together."

Compare China's former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's foreign policy protocol which reigned supreme until now, to Xi Jinping's new guidelines. Deng emphasized calm, hiding capacities, playing for time, keeping a low profile - and never claiming leadership. Published earlier this year, Xi's new foreign policy underscores the importance of being proactive, determined, unified and striving for achievement - all while daring to fight. "Potentially, the most dangerous scenario," continued Brzezinski in The Grand Chessboard, "would be a grand coalition of China, Russia, and perhaps Iran, an 'antihegemonic' coalition united not by ideology but by complementary grievances."

The producers hope, once the positions in this "Great Chess Game" have been made clear, that the invited experts will provide food for thought of how to deal with the end of the unipolar world.



The Adventures of Albert Uderzo

The adventures of Asterix are probably the biggest selling comic books world-wide. They have spawned five live-action movies, ten animated films, a theme parc, video games, have been translated into 117 languages and dialects and 380 million books have sold around the world. The stories have also featured in exhibitions, the latest one to be mounted in the autumn of 2023 at the Museum of Communication in Berlin. Earlier copies of these comic books have become collectors' items. But who are the artists behind this unbelievable success story?

Albert Uderzo, a French man of Italian extraction with an immigrant's background, was the designer and eventual writer of Asterix, after René Goscinny, the original writer, had passed away. Uderzo was born with six fingers on either hand which was later corrected by an operation. His talent for design was first noticed when he was a child at kindergarten. Inspired by Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck he began to sketch people with exaggerated features such as big noses. When he was around eleven years old, he turned to painting with colours and his parents discovered that he was colour blind. From then on Albert Uderzo would use labels to delineate the colours he used.

In 1951 while working as a self-taught designer for French newspapers he met René Goscinny, the son of Polish immigrants, who also had worked as a designer but was

principally the inventor of the underlying stories to be illustrated. The two became as inseparable as Asterix and Obelix were later to be. Together they created comics like *Pitt Pistol*, *Luc Junior*, *Benjamin & Benjamine* and *Oumpah-Pah*.

In 1959 they founded the magazine *Pilote* and struck gold with the adventures of Asterix. The first story entitled *Asterix the Gaul* was serialised and later published as a so-called album by Dargaud. Asterix soon became a household name and each new adventure was eagerly awaited by young and old around the world. Sadly, René Goscinny passed away during a stress test instigated by an ill-informed doctor, and the media proclaimed the end of Asterix. After some hesitation, Uderzo seems to have reacted to this press verdict with pride in his creations, followed by the decision to continue the series in the newly created Editions Albert René, his own publishing company. When Albert Uderzo retired in 2011, having kept Asterix alive single-handedly for 43 years, the adventures were taken over by Jean-Yves Ferri and Didier Conrad. Publishing giant Hachette had acquired the rights in the earlier comic books after a drawn-out legal battle with Dargaud and also took over the majority stake in Editions Albert René. The latest live-action movie featuring Asterix & Obelix saving "The Middle Kingdom" will be released in February 2023.

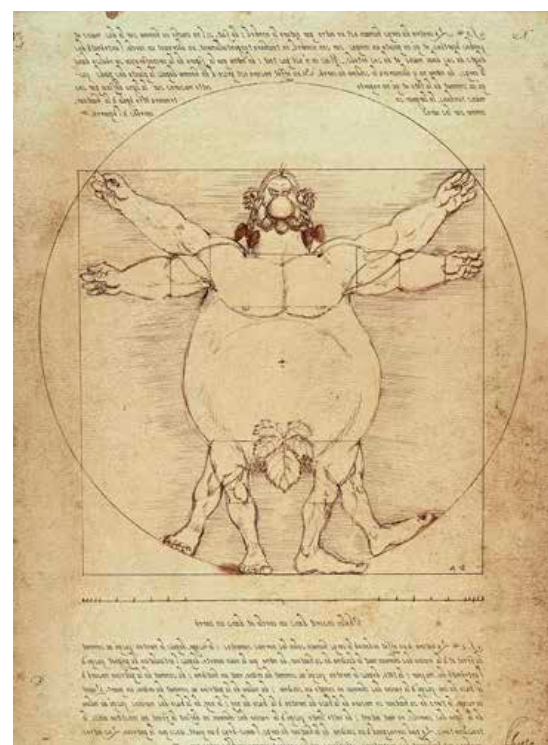
Filmmaker Yannick Sallet will use the street-wise figure of Asterix to illustrate the character of its creator Albert Uderzo. We will recognize the same adventurous spirit, the same stubbornness and determination, the same caustic wit. Sallet has been granted access to never-before seen family footage,

the live-action movies, the animated films, the theme parc and the original plates and designs. We shall meet at first hand witnesses such as Uderzo's widow Ada and their daughter Sylvie as well as René Goscinny's daughter Anne who looks after her father's estate.

Other contributors include Guillaume Canet who directed the latest live-action film as well as comic designers like Boucq and Zep and, of course, Didier Conrad who is now keeping Asterix alive. Commentary, where necessary, and Uderzo's universal message, that resilience, determination and passion are needed to reach one's goal, will be delivered by broadcaster and actor Antoine de Caunes. The old adage may say there are no free lunches in life but a small community, like the Gaulish village of Asterix, loyally sticking together, can go a long way to making things better.

Albert Uderzo was a quiet and modest person but as much in thrall to adventures as he was to his characters, and former Ferrari team chief Jean Todt will tell us about his passion for racing cars and his collection of Ferraris. Uderzo died in 2020 at the age of 93.

In preparation for an English version of the documentary Donoma has shot extensive interviews with comic book and screenwriter as well as film and television producer Geoff Johns who has amongst others *Green Lantern*, *Aquaman* and *Wonder Woman 1984* to his credit and Lloyd Davie, best known for *V for Vendetta*. Broadcaster Antoine de Caunes will do any narration needed in English. He is known for his BBC 2 show *Rapido* and his Channel 4 appearance in *Eurotrash*.



directed by **Yannick Sallet**
produced by **Bernard de Choisy/**
Donoma running time **82'** Shot in **4K**



The Past is the Future A History of Spanish Dance



Spanish dance like the classical ballet has its origins in folk dance, only the influences and roots are different.

Today's Spanish dance as performed by the National Ballet of Spain is a blend of classical ballet, folklore and flamenco. Filmmaker Emilio Belmonte, an aficionado of dance and flamenco in particular, is using the National Ballet and its present director, Rubén Olmo, as the red thread through the history of Spanish Dance, its present presentation and future aspirations. He uses a quote from Antonio Gades, its first director for the structure of his film: "I have all of the past in front of me".

Emilio Belmonte will use Rubén Olmo as a guide to famous past productions such as Merche Esmeralda's *Solea* (Archive) and meeting the dancer at Seville.



Antonio Gades' *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* or *Bodas de Sangre* (Archive) with statements by Gades (Archive) and an appearance of his widow Eugenia Eiriz who looks after the Gades Foundation.

Aida Gomez' *Poeta* (Archive) with staging by La Fura dels Baus

Mariel Gallardo's *Medea* (Archive). She is now professor of dance and will be filmed teaching one of her solos from *Medea* José Antonio Ruiz' *Café de Chinitas* or *Fantasia Galaica* (Archive). He was an early director of the Ballet National and Rubén Olmo appeared in many of his productions.

Emilio Belmonte and his crew will also accompany The National Ballet on tour to Columbia with local reaction to its performances and all the problems such an enterprise will cause. The final part of his film will be devoted to an extract from *La Bella Otero* choreographed by Rubén Olmo.



directed by **Emilio Belmonte**
produced by **Rétroviseur Productions** running time 90'
Shot in 4K

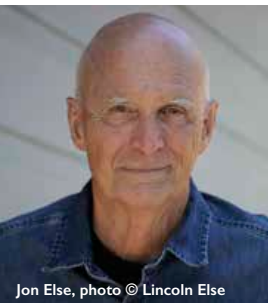


Lorena Feijoo and the dancers rehearse

LAND of GOLD

directed by **Jon Else** produced by **After Image Public Media** running time **82'**
Shot in HD

"Filmmaker Jon Else turns an operatic flop into cinematic gold", headlines Andrew Gilbert's review of Jon Else's fly on the wall documentary about the rehearsals of John Adams' and Peter Sellars' opera *Girls of the Golden West* Commissioned by San Francisco Opera, it tells the stories of various groups



Jon Else, photo © Lincoln Else



Camille Servan, photo © Hau Guo

who joined in the quest for getting rich quickly during the California Gold Rush in the mid-1800s. Peter Sellars, who fashioned the libretto from historical texts, and John Adams

already have previously collaborated on *Nixon in China*, *The Death of Klinghoffer* and *Doctor Atomic*. This new project – "not exactly an opera and not exactly a musical" in John Adams' words - was not well received at its première in 2017, but the film by Jon Else takes a detailed look at the production and rehearsals including interviews with the leading singers, the composer and the director and thereby preserves the best of their joint efforts. As Jon Else put it: "I love filming others struggling to make art". And Andrew Gilbert concurs: "With dozens of hours of rehearsal footage to whittle down and refine ... they created a film that captures the moments of arresting beauty".

Focussing on the development of a few crucial scenes: a spider dance on a massive sequoia stump by San Francisco Ballet star Lorena Feijóo playing Lola Montez and the attempted rape of Mexican barkeeper Josefa Segovia sung by the stunning mezzo soprano J'Nai Bridges the film is far more entertaining than the production itself. Else, on the



John Adams



Julia Bullock

suggestion of John Adams, also "scrambled the order of events in the opera. The central through line is the collision course between Joe and Josefa and the simmering lynch mob". Jon Else is a well-known US director and cinematographer with, amongst others, *Wonders Are Many*, *The Making of Doctor Atomic* and *Sing Faster: The Stage Hands Ring Cycle* to his credit. The main cast also includes Julia Bullock as Dame Shirley and Paul Appleby as Joe Cannon. The edit of *Land of Gold* was delayed during the pandemic and the film has only recently been released.



Julia Bullock



Larry Pech



Paul Appleby, Peter Sellars, J'Nai Bridges



Andrew's studio
photo © Phil Bradshaw

Andrew and Jamie Wyeth A Highly Gifted Family

N. C. Wyeth was an illustrator and painter of some renown. His son Andrew (1917-2009) is the most popular and least understood American artist of the 20th century. Although exhibitions of his work usually break attendance records critics continually assault him. Dubbed a magic realist who painstakingly applied layers and layers of tempera, painting from memory and succeeding to capture a "frozen motion", he was for a long time overshadowed by his abstract expressionist peers. He painted people and places he knew like the Olson House in Cushing, Maine, the location for his iconic *Christina's World* or portraits of Karl J. Kuerner III, and his house, a neighbour and painter. Despite Realism being out of fashion, viewers get attracted by the inherent magic of his paintings.

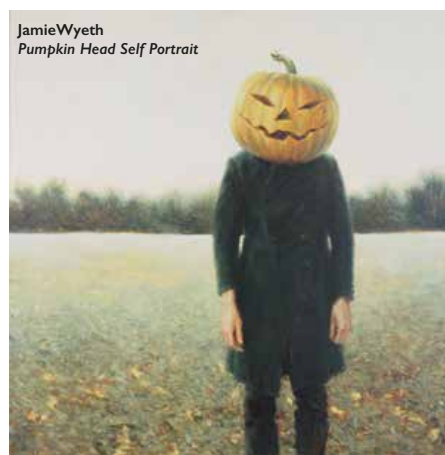


Andrew Wyeth
Christina's World

Filmmaker Glenn Holsten had the good luck to have unprecedented access to Wyeth family members, archive material including a lot of home movies and the entire body of work of the artist. He was able to film at those locations which provided inspiration to Andrew Wyeth during his life time. Glenn Holsten also included the extraordinary story of the painter's muse Helga Testorf whose portraits made it to cover stories in both *Time Magazine* and *News Week* and even got her to talk to camera.

According to his son Jamie, a painter in his own right, Andrew Wyeth was an artist of "painful sensitivity".

Glenn Holsten got to know Jamie during his filming and the two took a liking to each other resulting in *A Portrait of a Painter of Portraits*.



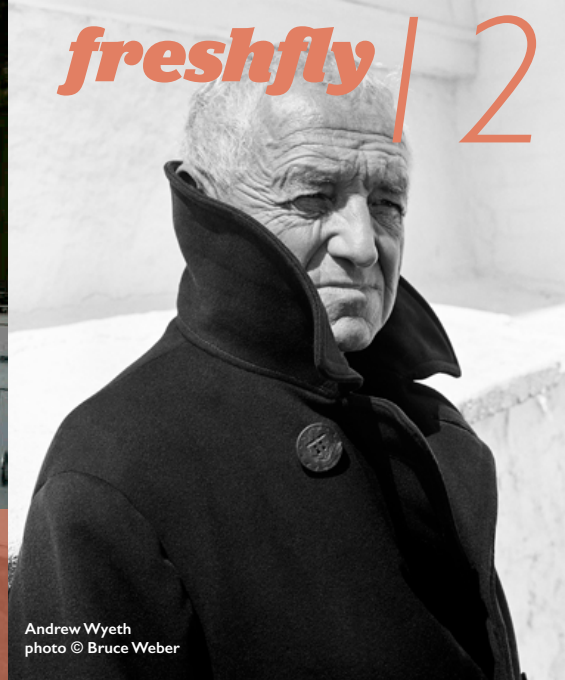
Jamie Wyeth
Pumpkin Head Self Portrait

Jamie Wyeth was brought up in a world of paintings and studios, taught amongst others by his aunt. At the age of 20 he had his first one-man show in New York. Sometimes a court artist he was on the pulse of current events with portraits of political figures like J.F. Kennedy and stars of the entertainment world like Rudolf Nureyev, Andy Warhol and Arnold Schwarzenegger. But at other times he would dwell on local subjects and nature, not unlike his father. "I'm an odd portrait painter", says the elusive 77-year-old painter, "in that I'm not just interested in human faces. I consider almost all of my paintings to be portraits".



Jamie Wyeth at work

freshfly / 2



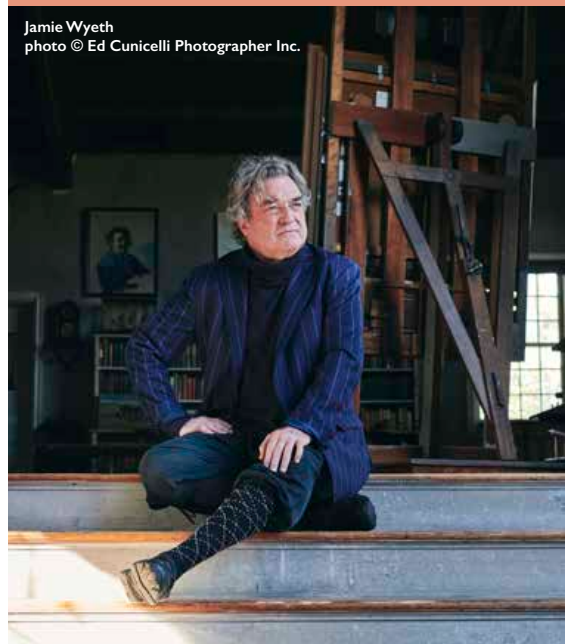
Andrew Wyeth
photo © Bruce Weber

Wyeth

directed by **Glenn Holsten**

produced by **Glennfilms, Freshfly, Thirteen's American Masters**

running time **53' or 81' Shot in HD**



Jamie Wyeth
photo © Ed Cunicelli Photographer Inc.

Jamie Wyeth - A Portrait of a Painter of Portraits

directed by **Glenn Holsten**

produced by **Freshfly**

running time **52' or 81' Shot in HD**



Jamie Wyeth
Portrait of JFK



Above: The Golden Prague Jury, 2023
Reiner Moritz, Agne Biliūnaite, Barbara Seiler,
François Duplat, Ivo Mathé. Photo © Václav Hodina

Below: Reiner at Golden Prague, 1995
in his role as Jury President



in 1968. In 1995 and 2003 I was chairman of the jury and when the 60th edition was under preparation Tomáš Motl asked me if would chair the jury again. I am very grateful for this honour bestowed on me and can only say "each visit to Golden Prague" is rejuvenating for me. Long may it last!

Reiner Moritz



READY FOR DELIVERY

Uderzo and His Asterix Adventure, (French and English versions) 85'

Art21 - Season 11 3 x 56'

The Diamond Couple 80'

The Cleveland Orchestra, John Adams: El Nino (including introduction) 142'

The Cleveland Orchestra, Franz Welser-Möst: Mahler 2 (including introduction) 96'

Five Times a Stranger 52' or 75'

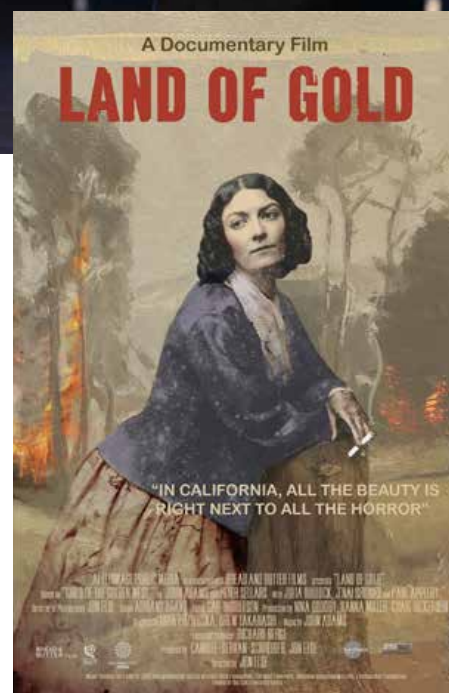
Land of Gold 82'

A Song for Cesar 85'

CELEBRATING THE 60TH EDITION OF GOLDEN PRAGUE

The Golden Prague Festival has become a must attend date for anybody producing, distributing or buying recordings of stage performances, concerts or documentaries with musical content. Over sixty years the festival has mirrored the evolution of Television from entries into the competition by CBS or Granada TV to multiple wins by the BBC and Rhombus. At this year's edition the BBC did not enter a single programme and Rhombus doesn't exist anymore. How times have changed! In 1993 the festival found its present form limiting itself to music and dance and turning into the only competition for this genre of programming world-wide with a Grand Prix worth 10,000 Euros. Although sadly key decision makers aka programme directors do not show up anymore, in-person meetings with television executives and producers make it very worthwhile attending and at the same time the EBU Music Group is holding its annual meeting there as well. Besides the Grand Prix there are three Czech Crystals for the recording of stage performances, concerts and documentaries as well as one special mention. This year's winners were Axel Ramisch for *Orpheus in Love* (Grand Prix), Czech Crystals for an episode of *Musical Journey Through Time*, the recording of Kaija Saariaho's opera *Innocence* and the documentary *Music Under the Swastika - The Maestro and the Cellist of Auschwitz* and a Special Mention for *The Strangest of Angels* by New Zealand director Rebecca Tansley. Congratulation once again to all the winners.

While I was very busy coproducing a long running and very successful children's series entitled *Pan Tau* with Czechoslovak partners in 1964, I received an invitation to attend a new festival in Prague. I decided to attend and have been at most Golden Prague Festivals ever since, including the very critical edition



MIPCOM 2023

During MIPCOM Dr. Reiner Moritz and Heike Connolly will be at the Creative Europe Stand P4.B1 Tel. +33 (0)4 9299 8596 or at the apartment: Armenonville, 9 Rond-Point Duboys d'Angers, Cannes Entrance 3, 7th Floor, Tel. 0033 9 5327 3340 Company mobile: +44 (0)7745 205179

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