

Memory, A Season of European Documentaries at Ciné lumière, the Hungarian Cultural Centre & the Italian Cultural Institute

15 – 21 November 2009

To celebrate the wealth and diversity of contemporary documentary films in Europe, selected cultural institutes and embassies in London and the European Commission Representation in the UK have collaborated on 'Memory', a six day festival from the 15 to 21 November. The festival, now in its third year, will showcase the work of new and established directors from across the continent.

Communism and its fall is a strong theme in the festival (*PRL De Luxe*, *Life Stories*, *Children of the Decree*, *Borderline Case*). *Children of the Decree* is a chilling look at the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his enforcement of the infamous Decree 770, which banned birth control and abortion.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, there will be three shorts forming a screening entitled *Close Up! November 1989*, followed by a panel discussion which brings together the key representatives of the November revolutionary forces. The speakers will recall their memories as well as reflect on events from today's perspectives.

Certain directors offer a more personal singular take on this year's theme, by basing their work on family members (*Grandpa and Grandma*; *Bucarest*, *Memory Lost*).

For those seeking a look at the history of feminism the documentary *Et ELLE créa la femme* offers a fascinating insight through the French magazine ELLE.

The season extends beyond Ciné lumière with *The Soviet Story* (Latvia) and *Borderline Case* (Hungary) at the Hungarian Cultural Centre; and *Primo Levi's Journey* (Italy) at the Italian Cultural Institute.

Through visiting the past and revealing often unseen archives, these remarkable works offer a unique opportunity to Londoners to rediscover history that is common to all of us, through various viewpoints.

Memory is the third joint project of the EUNIC London cluster (European Union National Institutes for Culture in London), supported by the European Commission Representation in the UK, which aims to improve and promote cultural diversity and understanding between European societies.

European Documentary Workshop 9 - 13 November

Ten recent graduates of leading European film schools will create five films on the theme of 'The Fall of The Wall'. In collaboration with the London Film School and with the generous support of the European Commission Representation in the UK



www.institut-francais.org.uk/memorydoc

For prices and film times please see overleaf.

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Venues:

Ciné lumière at the Institut français
17 Queensberry Place, London, SW7 2DT
T. 020 7073 1350

www.institut-francais.org.uk

Hungarian Cultural Centre
10, Maiden Lane, Covent Garden
London
WC2E 7NA
020 7240 8448

www.hungary.org.uk

Italian Cultural Institute
39 Belgrave Square
London
SW1X 8NX
020 7235 1461

www.icilondon.esteri.it

Children of the Decree

Romania/Germany | 2004 | col | 68 mins | dir. Florin Iepan & Razvan Georgescu | doc | cert. 15

Children of the Decree looks at the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his enforcement of the infamous Decree 770, which banned birth control and abortion. In his single-minded push to repopulate the nation with millions of little 'new men' destined for greatness, Ceausescu adopted ever more grotesque, Orwellian measures as a failing economy increased the Romanian women's already rooted resistance to having children. Thanks to unseen archive footage and testimonies of a rare intensity, this film uncovers one of the darkest and unknown periods of Communism in Romania.

sun 15 nov | 6.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

Introduced by film critic Adina Bradeanu

With Extreme Cruelty

Bulgaria | 2006 | col | 58 mins | doc | dir. Rosen Elezov | cert. TBC

With Extreme Cruelty presents the sincere and moving confession of the well-known Bulgarian writer Svoboda Buchvarova. It is the story of her trials and tribulations, personal metamorphoses culminating in her catharsis.

sun 15 nov | 8.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

Followed by Q&A

Being Jewish in France

France | 2007 | col | 185 mins | 2 parts with one interval | doc | dir. Yves Jeuland | comments by Mathieu Amalric | cert. 12A

The Jews and the land of 'Liberty, equality, and fraternity' began their love affair in 1791, when France became the first modern country to proclaim Jewish emancipation. But as Yves Jeuland's definitive documentary reveals, the reality has often failed to match the ideals of the enlightenment.

This complex story is told by a rich variety of archive footage, entertaining clips from French films with Jewish themes – from Renoir to Marcel Ophuls, and a formidable line-up of interviews with leading Jewish intellectuals, politicians and artists.

mon 16 nov | 6.30pm | £7, conc. £5 | Ciné lumière

Et ELLE créa la femme

France | 2006 | col | 84 mins | doc | dir. David Teboul | cert. TBC

Et ELLE créa la femme looks back at the history of the magazine, its creation, its shared history with the women's movement since the 60s, and its continued presence throughout fashion history. This film opens the floor up to personalities from the fashion world, social sciences and the history of the magazine to understand 'the seriousness of frivolity, the irony of seriousness' that the founder Hélène Lazareff declared to justify the publication in 1945.

tue 17 nov | 6.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

Grandpa and Grandma

Gyveno Senelis Ir Bobute

Lithuania | 2007 | col | 30 mins | doc | dir. Giedre Beinoriute | cert. TBC

Grandpa and Grandma is a documentary animation film based on the director's own grandparents life story. Exiled to Siberia by the Soviets in 1948, they witnessed a brutal period of Lithuanian history, which is retold here through the eyes of a little girl.

Followed by:

PRL De Luxe

Poland | 2008 | col | 15 mins | doc | dir. Edyta Wroblewska | cert. TBC

Crazy Mike from Krakow organises unusual tours for tourists from the West. He takes them to the Nowa Huta district in a clapped-out old bus, and visit relics of the past – the Stylowa restaurant, the place where Lenin's monument used to stand, steelworks and a typical workers' flat. Along the way he tells the tourists stories about the lure of life in communist Poland and the absurdities of real socialism.

Followed by: **Life Stories**

Life Stories

Estonia | 2007 | col | 28 mins | doc | dir. Rao Heidmets | cert. U

Life Stories brings to the screen the lives of Estonians from the period 1920 – 2004 through a combination of documentary film and animation. The fate of the entire people is reflected in each life story.

tue 17 nov | 8.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

Followed by Q&A with dir. Rao Heidmets & lecturer Allan Sikk

Close Up! November 1989

17th November, 10 mins; Reflections, 10 mins; Ten Days; 16 mins | Czech Republic | 1989 | col

The student procession on the 17th November 1989 crushed by armed police forces shook up the whole nation and led to the collapse of communism in Czechoslovakia. Three original newsreels captured on camera those heady events with iconic images of armed policemen in white helmets and truncheons, students with bare hands as well as heartbreaking testimonies.

Followed by:

Making History

Discussion

To mark the 20th anniversary of Velvet Revolution the key representatives of November revolutionary forces will meet at a panel discussion to recall their memories as well as reflect on events from today's perspectives.

With **Michal Kocáb**, Czech Minister for Human Rights and Minorities and a founding member of the Civic Forum, **Vaclav Bartuska**, one of the student leaders, Czech Ambassador-at-Large for Energy Security and **Jan Machacek**, former dissident, musician and journalist. Chaired by **Edward Lucas**, Deputy Editor and Central and Eastern Europe correspondent for *The Economist*.

Part of the season Velvet @Evolution; 1989 – 2009. See www.czechcentre.org.uk for more details.

wed 18 nov | 7.00pm | £7, conc. £5 | Ciné lumière

Bucarest, Memory Lost

Bucarest, la memoria perdida

Spain | 2008 | col | 80 mins | doc | dir. Albert Solé | cert. PG

What was it like to grow up in anti-Franco clandestine exile in the 60s? Albert Solé, journalist and filmmaker, goes through his own life to look at the subject of 'exile' and in particular his own father's life, Jordi Solé Tura, one of the fathers of the current Spanish constitution and a key figure in politics, before and after democracy.

thu 19 nov | 6.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

Followed by Q&A TBC

Miners' Memories

Cyprus | 2007 | col | 60 mins | doc | dir. Paschalis Papapetrou | cert. TBC

Cyprus's mineral wealth has always attracted the interest of foreign companies. *Miners' Memories* highlights the difficult working conditions of the miners, their merciless exploitation, but also the harsh policy of the foreign companies and the colonial government which gave rise to numerous struggles and historical strikes in the mines of Cyprus.

sat 21 nov | 2.30pm | £5, conc. £3 | Ciné lumière

The Soviet Story

Latvia | 2008 | col | 52 mins | doc | dir. Edvins Snore | cert. TBC

This is a story of an Allied power, which helped the Nazis to fight Jews and which slaughtered its own people on an industrial scale. Assisted by the West, this power triumphed on May 9th, 1945. Its crimes were made taboo, and the complete story of Europe's most murderous regime has never been told. Until now...

fri 20 nov | 6.30pm | free | Hungarian Cultural Centre

PRL De Luxe**Poland | 2008 | col | 15 mins | doc | dir. Edyta Wroblewska | cert. TBC**

Crazy Mike from Krakow organises unusual tours for tourists from the West. He takes them to the Nowa Huta district in a clapped-out old bus, and visit relics of the past – the Stylowa restaurant, the place where Lenin's monument used to stand, steelworks and a typical workers' flat. Along the way he tells the tourists stories about the lure of life in communist Poland and the absurdities of real socialism.

Followed by:

Borderline Case (*The last victim of the Iron Curtain*)**Hungary | 2006 | col | 32 mins | doc | dir. [Péter Szalay](#) | cert. TBC**

August 1989. Kurt-Werner Schulz and Gundula Schafitel and their 6-year-old son head west leaving behind their home in Weimar in the German Democratic Republic. They plan to cross the border illegally but cannot succeed if they stay together.

Meanwhile hundreds of East German citizens cross the Hungarian and Austrian borders on the occasion of the remarkable *Pan-European Picnic* on 19th August 1989.

fri 20 nov | 8.30pm | free | Hungarian Cultural Centre**Followed by Q&A with director [Péter Szalay](#)****Primo Levi's Journey****Italy | 2006 | col | 92 mins | doc | dir. Davide Ferrario | cert. TBC**

On 27th January 1945, Primo Levi, author of the world-famous *If This Is a Man*, was liberated from Auschwitz concentration camp. Travelling for ten months, covering thousands of miles and crossing countless borders Primo Levi returned to his home in Torino. Sixty years later, director Davide Ferrario and writer Marco Belpoliti follow the same itinerary through contemporary, post-communist Europe.

Sat 21 nov | 6.30pm | free | Italian Cultural Institute