

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



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ADVANCE PRESS SCREENINGS: April 21, 24, 25, 28, 29
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NOTE: Public screenings at new times

"BELGIUM TODAY: RECENT FILMS AND REDISCOVERIES" OPENS AT MOMA ON MAY 1, 1980

A survey of Belgian films (fiction, documentary, animation and avant-garde) will be screened in BELGIUM TODAY: RECENT FILMS AND REDISCOVERIES opening at The Museum of Modern Art on Thursday, May 1 and running through May 12, 1980. Most of the films will be shown in either Flemish or French with English subtitles.

The rediscovered films are by CHARLES DEKEUKELEIRE and HENRI STORCK. Storck is already acknowledged to be a pioneer of the avant-garde, but Dekeukeleire has been virtually unknown outside a small circle in Europe. Rediscovery of this master's work signals a revision in American histories of avant-garde cinema. His extraordinary films remain fresh and remarkable.

BELGIUM TODAY: RECENT FILMS AND REDISCOVERIES opens on Thursday, May 1 at 2 p.m. with two silent works Impatience (1928) and Histoire de Detective (1929) by Dekeukeleire. Another Dekeukeleire, Het Kwade Oog (The Evil Eye), a sound film from 1937 concerning satanic forces in a rural hamlet, will follow at 4 p.m.

Du Bout des Levres (Tip of the Tongue), Jean-Marie Degesves' first film, a tender story of an adolescent coming of age in a small provincial Belgian village, will be screened at 6 p.m. André Delvaux's Een Vrouw Tussen Hond en Wolf (Woman in a Twilight Garden) will be screened at 8 p.m. Delvaux has fashioned his most masterful tale in this film, brilliantly shot and edited. Marie-Christine Barrault, who starred in Cousin, Cousine, portrays a Nazi SS volunteer's

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wife who falls in love with a French Resistance fighter. Delvaux's earlier film, Rendezvous at Bray, achieved a certain stature from festival screenings several years ago.

Among the recent films are two by CHANTAL AKERMAN, one of Belgium's most original filmmakers and one of the most important to emerge in the 70s. Je, Tu, Il, Elle (I, You, He, She), an American premiere, deals with a young woman's isolation whether in her room or "on the road" and her relationship with a truck driver and another woman. Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles, chronicles three days in the well-regulated life of a bourgeois widow (played by Delphine Seyrig) and her teenage son. This much celebrated film ends with a surprise.

Other contemporary feature narrative filmmakers represented are PATRICK LEDOUX, THIERRY ZENO, BENOIT LAMY, JAN GRUYAERT, JAN DECORTE, HARRY KUMEL, HENRI XHONNEUX and GUIDO HENDERICKX.

An 80-minute program, 10 Years of Belgian Animation, 1970-79, features three films by RAOUL SERVAIS, including his most recent work, Harpya, already regarded as a dark and sinister classic. Servais will introduce the program at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 2 and the program will be repeated on Saturday, May 3 at 2 p.m. Other animators represented in the program are GERALD FRYDMAN, DANIEL SCHELFTHOUT, PAUL DEMEYER, KAREL VAN ISAKER and LOUIS VAN MAELDER.

Among the documentaries are three episodes from Henri Storck's 13-part work, High Days and Holidays in Belgium (1972); Boris Lehman's "absurdist" Magnum Begynasium Bruxellense, an award-winning film about a certain neighborhood in Brussels; Des Morts, a disturbing and provocative non-narrative on death rituals in various cultures filmed in the USA, Mexico, Belgium and Southeast Asia by Dominique Garny, Jean-Pol Ferbus and Thierry Zeno; and Henri Xhonneux's

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feature-length narrative, Souvenir of Gibraltar, based on the filmmaker's brother, who is a boxer.

BELGIUM TODAY: RECENT FILMS AND REDISCOVERIES is prepared by The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film with the assistance of the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique and in collaboration with the Ministries of Dutch and French communities.

The exhibition is part of BELGIUM TODAY, a nation-wide US commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of Belgian independence, sponsored by The Belgian-American Educational Foundation (New York City), Smithsonian Resident Associate Program (Washington D.C.), and The World Affairs Council of Northern California (San Francisco), and made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts with the cooperation of the Government of Belgium.

Film schedule is attached.

March 1980

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