



September 20

IKIRU

(Japan, Kurosawa, 1952)

For all of Akira Kurosawa's legendary samurai action films, this stirring Tolstoy-inspired drama is considered by many to be his true masterpiece. For decades, Mr. Watanabe has been nothing more than a single cog in the hopelessly overcomplicated machinery of the municipal government. Only the sudden diagnosis of gastric cancer – giving him less than a year to live – makes him realize how lonely and empty his life has been, and pushes him to search for some meaning in his final days. Kurosawa casts a harsh critical eye on both the ineffectual Japanese bureaucracy and the gaudy sleaze of the occupying American culture. "I have seen *Ikiru* every five years or so, and . . . the older I get, the less Watanabe seems like a pathetic old man, and the more he seems like every one of us," writes Roger Ebert, who named it a Great Movie in 1996.



October 18

PICKPOCKET

(France, Bresson, 1959)

Robert Bresson, one of the great French precursors of the New Wave, made films that managed to reach the spiritual through a rigorous anchoring in the material world. The hypnotic recurrence of objects, gestures, sounds and "models" (his term for actors) fills Bresson's films, a resolutely modern world shorn of traditional cultural moorings, leaving characters adrift yet searching. Adapted from Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, *Pickpocket* transforms the meticulous criminal craft into visual ballet, a startling appreciation of the beauty of manual work.

Speaker: Maggie Smith is a quantitative criminologist with the Institute for Criminal Justice Ethics at John Jay College who teaches courses in statistics and philosophy. Her ongoing major projects include the analysis of the sexual abuse of minors by adults in the context of social institutions and the function of identification in the structure of human agency.



November 8

LEVIATHAN

(France/UK/USA, Castaing-Taylor and Paravel, 2012)

The film records the sounds and images of a commercial fishing boat off the coast of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Without a word of commentary, with virtually no audible dialogue, smothered under the unceasing roar of the machinery and the sea, the filmmakers shared the multiple lightweight cameras with the crew, capturing the intense sensorial experience of the work on the boat. Not only does the film withhold judgment on the activity of the boat and crew, but the filmmakers specifically wanted to allow no privileged status to the humans: "In typical cinema fiction or non-fiction humans occupy the pride of place. . . . In our films I guess we always try to relativise the human and to make them be as, I think in reality we are, part of a much larger sphere of nature." (Lucien Castaing-Taylor) "Visually ravishing, *Leviathan* is in every way sensational." (J. Hoberman)



December 13

SERAPHINE

(France/Belgium, Provost, 2008)

A poignant and visually intriguing exploration of the mysteries of art-making, the film is based on the true story of outsider artist Séraphine Louis, aka Séraphine de Senlis (1864-1942), who began to paint at age 41, while working as a housecleaner and laundress. Disdained by her employers and living in a rented room, Séraphine spent her free time assembling her palette from animal blood, herbs, wildflowers and grasses, and painting by candlelight. When a prominent German art critic saw her work, he recognized and supported her genius. The narrative continues with unexpected twists and turns. In the words of the director, "She was a free woman above all." The film won four French Academy awards (Césars), including Best Film of 2008.

Special Screening
Saturday, January 25
Noon



MILDRED PIERCE

(USA, Haynes, 2011)

This Emmy-award-winning HBO series is not a remake of the 1945 Joan Crawford vehicle, but a faithful, leisurely adaptation of the original 1941 James M. Cain (*The Postman Always Rings Twice, Double Indemnity*) novel. In depression era California, Mildred has thrown her husband out and must support herself and her daughters. Beginning with a home-based business baking pies and then taking a job as waitress in a busy diner, Mildred displays a talent for business. She loves her daughter Veda obsessively, without comprehending Veda's desire to efface the source of the family wealth and join the feckless upper class. Their relationship becomes a cauldron of ambition, social climbing, and love. Todd Haynes pays careful attention to the green and gold of the California landscape and every detail of the houses, cars and costumes of the period as he creates "a nightmare as American as Mom and apple pie." (J. Hoberman)

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY 2013-2014

LABOR GOES TO THE MOVIES

WORK

PSC Union Hall
61 Broadway, 16th Fl.
Manhattan

Screenings take place
on Friday evenings at
6:00 pm*

*except Sat., Jan. 25 which is at
Noon

\$2 suggested donation
Space is limited!

Light refreshments served
before each screening

1, R to Rector;
2,3, 4,5 to Wall Street;
J, Z to Broad Street and A,C
at Fulton Street

Near the PATH train & buses

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**PSC FILM
SERIES**

One of the first films ever made was the single shot of "Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory" (1895), made by one of the owners of the factory (of photographic equipment). Ever since, the cinema has not ceased to show working people, even if the medium has not always shown people

working. This year's series offers a panorama of "work" found in films from a broad range of national cultures, historical epochs, formal representation, and conceptual frames: fictional, documentary, manual, mechanized, intellectual, agricultural, industrial, silent, sound, racialized, gendered.



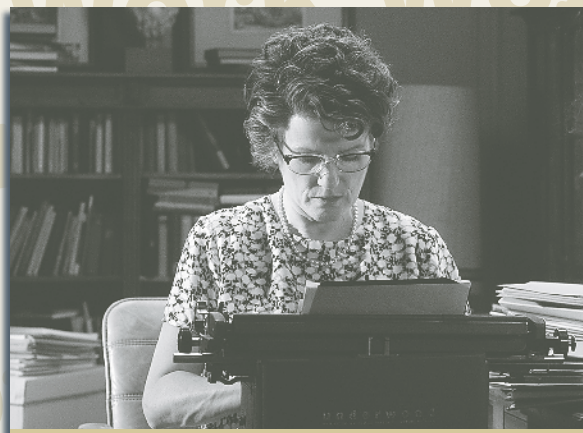
February 14

GLORY

(USA, Zwick, 1989)

The film relates the story of the legendary 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, the first black Union Army regiment, organized and commissioned in 1863 at the insistence of Frederick Douglass and other Black abolitionists, and 'sponsored' by the free Black communities of the North. With powerful performances by Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman, the film dramatizes the regiment's fight for freedom – within the Union Army itself, as well as against confederate forces, culminating in the assault on Fort Wagner, South Carolina, in which half the regiment was lost. Winner of three Academy Awards.

Speaker: Clarence Taylor, Professor of History, Baruch College and the CUNY Graduate Center, has written widely on the modern civil rights and black power movements, African-American religion, and the modern history of New York City. His latest book is *Reds at the Blackboard: Communism, Civil Rights and the New York City Teachers Union*. (Columbia University Press, 2011)



March 14

HANNAH ARENDT

(Germany, von Trotta, 2012)

Director Margarethe von Trotta is joined again by Barbara Sukowa (now of Brooklyn) – they collaborated earlier on *Rosa Luxemburg* (1986) – in a narrative feature about the German Jewish philosopher's work. The focus is on Arendt's witnessing and writing about the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann (including documentary footage of the trial) and the *furor* surrounding her book about the trial – famously subtitled "The Banality of Evil." Featuring an award-winning performance by Sukowa as Arendt, the film thrillingly dramatizes the 'life of the mind,' bringing the philosophical issues into sharp relief and revealing their political import today. It is indeed "an action movie, though of a more than usually dialectical type. Its climax... provides a stirring reminder that the labor of figuring out the world is necessary, difficult and sometimes genuinely heroic." (A. O. Scott, *NYTimes*)



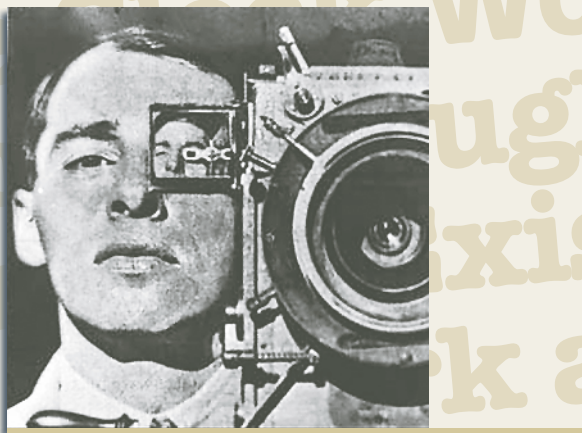
April 11

VIDAS SECAS

(Brazil, Pereira dos Santos, 1963)

Cinema Novo, the 1960s Latin American film movement focusing on the economic and political conditions of the poor, began in Brazil in opposition to the commercial Brazilian cinema of tropical musicals and Hollywood-style epics. In *Vidas Secas*, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, the "humanist architect" of the movement, begins the creation of "an instrument of inquiry and political activism [by] contemplating a people's acceptance of its own oppression." (Fernando F. Croce) The film shows the desperate struggle for life of skilled but landless peasants in the drought-ridden northeast of Brazil. After trudging through a sere landscape, the father is hired as a cowhand, and the family dreams of more, but they suffer exploitation at the hands of the landowner and the law.

Speaker: Prof. Matilde Zimmerman teaches Latin American history at Sarah Lawrence College. She is the author of *Sandinista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution*. (Duke, 2000)



May 9

MAN WITH THE MOVIE CAMERA

(Soviet Union, Vertov, 1929)

ILLUSIONS

(USA, Dash, 1982)

A double bill on filmmaking, but in both cases films which place filmmaking at the intersection of art and social struggle. *Man with the Movie Camera*, made by a Futurist sound creator and radical Soviet filmmaker – he attacked Eisenstein as a "cine-Menshevik" – shows the filmmaker at the center of daily life in the young Soviet Union, but also demonstrates how the filmmaker can present society through the magic of filmmaking in an entirely, new, Soviet way. In *Illusions*, the young Julie Dash (before *Daughters of the Dust*) tells the story of a black executive assistant passing as white in Hollywood during World War II, who



hires a black singer, to be unseen on screen in the film being produced, to provide the voice to the lip-synched white performer on screen. A brilliant examination of race, class and gender in the workplace of the Dream Factory and of ventriloquist representation on the silver screen.