

# Chris Marker: Guillaume-en-Égypte

Screening schedule (Reference Gallery)

*La jetée*, 1962

35 mm transferred to Blu-Ray

27 min.

Courtesy Argos Films

Daily screening 12:15 PM

Marker's sci-fi masterpiece *La jetée* is composed almost entirely of still images taken with a commercial Pentax camera. The film chronicles the time-travel experiments conducted on a prisoner with exceptional memory capabilities in the aftermath of a fictional World War III. The prisoner is "marked by an image from his childhood," one that revolves around a scene on the observation platform of the Orly airport.

*Sij'avais quatre dromadaires* (If I Had Four Camels), 1966

35 mm transferred to DVD

49 min.

Courtesy ISKRA

Daily screening 1:00 PM

In *Sij'avais quatre dromadaires*, a photographer and two of his friends sift through a decade's worth of his travel photographs "taken just about everywhere in the world." The images—in fact taken by Marker between 1956 and 1966—are portraits, landscapes, and architecture he photographed during travels in twenty-six countries including the Soviet Union, Cuba, China, North Korea, Japan, and Israel. Like *La jetée* (1962) and *Remembrance of Things to Come* (2001), *Sij'avais quatre dromadaires* is composed almost entirely of still photographs edited together on film. The film's three narrators debate the role of photography and images in constructing collective cultural memory, reflecting that "there is life and there is its double, and the photograph is part of the world of the double."

*A bientôt j'espère* (Be Seeing You), 1968

16 mm transferred to DVD

39 min.

Courtesy Icarus Films

Daily screening 2:00 PM

In March of 1967, Marker was invited by René Berchoud, a member of the organization CCPPO (Centre Culturel Populaire de Palentes-les-Orchamps), to observe the workers' strike and occupation at the Rhodiacéta textile factory in Besançon, France. When a second strike was called in December 1967 in support of workers from another Rhodia factory in Lyon,

Marker, at the suggestion of the strikers, began working on a film about their struggle, which became *A bientôt j'espère* (Be Seeing You). Interviews with workers and their wives reveal the brutality of the conflict, their search for better working conditions and job security, and a class for whom jobs lead not only to an experience of alienation, but aspirations toward the collective transformation of the very structures of industrial society.

*Le Tombeau d'Alexandre* (The Last Bolshevik), 1993

Hi 8 transferred to DVD

120 min.

Courtesy Icarus Films

Daily screening 2:45 PM

As Marker's posthumous portrait of filmmaker and friend Alexander Medvedkine, *Le Tombeau d'Alexandre* (The Last Bolshevik) surveys the cultural history of the Soviet Union through the lens of the Russian filmmaker's life. Born in 1900, Medvedkine lived until 1989, "on the crest of *perestroika*." Incorporating digitally manipulated archival materials, the film documents the director's life in the context of significant twentieth-century events in Russia and the Soviet Union. Employing an epistolary style akin to *Sans Soleil* (Sunless, 1982) and *Lettre de Sibérie* (Letter from Siberia, 1958), Marker structures *Le Tombeau d'Alexandre* around six posthumous letters he addresses to Medvedkine. In the late 1960s Marker had encouraged the formation of Groupe Medvedkine, a worker's filmmaking collective. The group was modeled on Medvedkine's ciné-train, a mobile production unit in which Medvedkine traveled across the USSR to shoot, edit, and screen films by and for workers.

*The Case of the Grinning Cat*, 2006

DVD

58 min.

Courtesy Icarus Films

Daily screening 5:00 PM

In November of 2001, Marker became intrigued, as did many other Parisians, by the sudden appearance of numerous painted images of grinning yellow cats on buildings, Métro walls, and other public surfaces. The mysterious cats show up amidst banners and signs during the strikes, demonstrations, and memorials in Paris against issues such as the Iraq War and China's occupation of Tibet following 9/11. Marker's commentary throughout *The Case of the Grinning Cat* ponders the origin of the cat and communicates his reaction to French and international politics, art, and culture at the start of the new millennium.

*Une journée d'Andrei Arsenevich* (One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich), 1999

Video transferred to DVD

55 min.

Courtesy Icarus Films

Screening Thursdays 6:00 PM

*Une Journée d'Andrei Arsenevich* (One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich) is an homage to Russian filmmaker Andrey Tarkovsky, one of the most celebrated filmmakers in the history of cinema. Originally titled *Tarkovsky* and made at the time of the director's death in 1986, the film was expanded and re-released as *Une journée d'Andrei Arsenevich*, the new title an allusion to Alexander Solzhenitsyn's 1962 novel *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, which describes the day of an ordinary prisoner in a Soviet labor camp. Constructed using sequences from Tarkovsky's films as well as Marker's footage of the director, the film interprets Tarkovsky's oeuvre through the director's biography, finding commonalities and unexpected linkages between the director's films and his life.

*Classe de lutte* (Class of Struggle), 1969

16 mm transferred to DVD

37 min.

Courtesy Icarus Films

Screening Thursdays 7:15 PM

In the late 1960s, Marker encouraged the formation of Groupe Medvedkine, a worker's filmmaking collective that included a group of militant workers at the Rhodiacéta textile factory in Besançon, France. *Classe de lutte*, the collective's first film, traces the evolution of Suzanne Zedet, a young worker at the Yema watch factory in Besançon, from worker to union leader and portrays her as emblematic of larger changes in class-consciousness at the time. The film's title is a reversal of the phrase "lutte de classe" (class struggle), implying both the worker's plight and a pedagogy of struggle. The collective offered that "cinema is not magic; it is a technique and a science, a technique born from science and put in service of a will: the will of the workers to liberate themselves."

A retrospective of films will be presented concurrently at the Harvard Film Archive. Please inquire at front desk for screening schedule.

