



Agnès Varda - VARDIAN VISION

"In my films, I always wanted to make people see deeply. I don't want to show things, but to give people the desire to see." After studying art history and working briefly as a photojournalist, Agnès Varda turned to filmmaking. Between her first film, made when she was 25, and her most recent, made last year when she was 80, she has created some of the most stimulating and influential films of her era. Whether fictional features such as *CLÉO FROM 5 TO 7* or her "ciné-criture" (film-writings) such as *THE GLEANERS AND I*, her films are marked by their singular sense of composition, careful juxtaposition of sound and image, and fearless confrontation with societal expectation. This ten-film selection features some of the seminal works of Varda, an artist New Yorker critic Pauline Kael termed "A full-fledged visual filmmaker . . . [who] sustains an unsentimental yet subjective tone that is almost unique in the history of movies." Special thanks to Ciné-Tamaris and Janus Films, and series sponsors Alliance Française de Portland and TV5 MONDE, the international French language television network.

JULY 10 AT 6PM

Complimentary Reception in the Andrée Stevens room, prior to the film
Hosted by the Alliance Française de Portland

JULY 10, 11 FRI 7 PM, SAT 7 PM

CLÉO FROM 5 TO 7

FRANCE 1961

"As long as I'm beautiful, I'm alive." Varda's memorable chronicle of two hours in the life of an un-compromised pop chanteuse (Corinne Marchand) as she awaits the results of her cancer test brought a woman's perspective to the mostly male world of

the French New Wave. As she hops and shops across Paris, Cléo's observations turn from the distractions and bright reflections of the external world to the soul within. Shot in fresh "Nouvelle" fashion in the streets in seeming real time, the film features a score by Michel Legrand (THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG), and cameos by Legrand, Jean-Luc Godard and Anna Karina. CLÉO explores one of Varda's favorite themes: "One isn't born a woman, one becomes one." (90 mins.) Preceded by UNCLE YANCO (1967)—While visiting San Francisco, Varda is surprised to meet a relative she had never heard of before—a painter who lives on a boat in Sausalito and happens to love life. (22 mins.) Sponsored by Siren Nation.

JULY 17, 18 FRI 7 PM, SAT 7 PM

LIONS LOVE

FRANCE 1969

"The pressures here in Hollywood are so great—from all the dead people." LIONS LOVE is an imaginative, cinema vérité-like fictional meditation on the banal beauty of Hollywood and the counter-culture of the sexual revolution. Warhol superstar Viva and HAIR creators Jim Rado and Jerry Ragni (all as themselves) play host to legendary underground filmmaker Shirley Clarke (THE COOL WORLD), as they goof off in bed and riff on sex, religion and stardom while RFK's assassination plays on TV. With cameo appearances by Peter Bogdanovich, Jim Morrison and others, Varda's free-love time capsule is "A beautiful, cockeyed movie about a ménage à trois."—Vincent Canby, New York Times. (110 mins.)

JULY 19, 24 SUN 7 PM, FRI 7 PM

MUR MURS

FRANCE 1980

A documentary look at the outdoor murals of Los Angeles—"who paints them, who pays for them, who looks at them, how this city, which is the film capital of the world, reveals itself by its whispering walls." Roaming from Venice Beach to Watts, Varda sees the murals (many now gone) as both backdrop and mirror for the city's many cultures. Along the way we meet the makers of a vibrant wall art that ranges from graffiti to photorealism, and reflects everything from roller disco and gang violence to evangelical Christians and Hare Krishnas. Like the art, Varda's film is rich in illusion and allusion, and like Los Angeles (and the movies), both monumental and ephemeral. (81 mins.)

SINGLE OR DOUBLE FEATURE

JULY 19 & 24 SUN 8:45 PM, FRI 8:45 PM

DOCUMENTEUR (AN
EMOTIONAL PICTURE)

FRANCE 1981

Varda refers to this film as her shadow of MUR MURS, intended to be seen after it. After her lover splits, Emilie (Sabine Mamou, film editor of MUR MURS) tries to rebuild a life with her son Martin (Mathieu Demy) in a harsh Los Angeles hostile to outsiders. "The narrator lives in LA as if it were nowhere. Emilie wanders in the shadows of her emotions, she is obsessed with words, she works in front of the

ocean. Her son is afraid of the beasts of the dark, those which can't be seen. L.A. without sun, fun or puns."—Varda. (65 mins.)

JULY 25, 26 SAT 8:45 PM, SUN 7 PM

VAGABOND

FRANCE 1985

Anchored by Sandrine Bonnaire's unforgettable portrayal of a woman whose refusal to be known or understood pushes her into total detachment from society, VAGABOND was Varda's biggest success after CLÉO FROM 5 TO 7, and like the earlier film it uses the trajectory of its itinerant female protagonist as a structuring device. Shot in a semi-documentary style, the film opens abruptly on the body of Mona, frozen to death in a ditch on the side of the road. The film then intersperses flashbacks of Mona's life as a drifter with reminiscences of the people she met along the way, but in spite of Varda's probing, Mona ultimately remains unknowable, even to herself. She is a cipher, misunderstood by those she has encountered even as they remember her for the camera. (105 mins.)

JULY 29, 31 WED 7 PM, FRI 7:30 PM

KUNG FU MASTER

FRANCE 1987

KUNG FU MASTER stars Jane Birkin as a forty-year-old divorced woman who falls in love with her teenage daughter's video game-obsessed friend. By presenting Birkin's desire without passing judgment, Varda evenhandedly explores a potentially explosive subject with a seriousness not usually granted to female fantasies. Although told as a straightforward narrative, the on-screen relationships are complicated by their off-screen associations: Birkin's object of affection is played by Varda's son, Mathieu, and Birkin's daughters, Charlotte Gainsbourg and Lou Doillon, play her daughters in the film. (78 mins.)

AUG 1, 2 SAT 7 PM, SUN 7 PM

JACQUOT DE NANTES

FRANCE 1990

"He had known what he called 'a happy childhood.'" Varda's warm evocation of husband Jacques Demy's youth in Nantes and passion for cinema was finished the year after his death. Using a combination of reenacted memories, on-screen reminiscences, and clips from his films (LOLA, BAY OF ANGELES, UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG and more), interspersed with intimate close-ups of Demy's fragile body, Varda has fashioned a tender valentine that is one of her most personal and affecting films. (118 mins.)

AUG 5, 7 WED 7 PM, FRI 7 PM

THE GLEANERS AND I

FRANCE 2000

Taking as her inspiration the paintings of 19th-century artists like Millet and Van Gogh of gleaners, peasants practicing the centuries-old tradition of gleaning fields for leftover harvest, Varda embarks on an extraordinary journey across France in

search of the gleaners' contemporary counterparts. Herself a gleaner of images, she finds those who rummage, forage and scavenge, all with their particular stories. Some harvest food for survival, while others are activists whose rejection of consumerism has compelled them to live off "ownerless goods." Still others are artists who recycle found objects. Connecting her discoveries are Varda's own reflections on gathering images and memories—and on waste, the environment, aging and art—woven into a funny, provocative and poetic film-essay. (82 mins.) Sponsored by Leave No Plastic Behind.

AUG 8, 9 SAT 7 PM, SUN 7 PM

THE BEACHES OF AGNÈS

FRANCE 2008

In THE BEACHES OF AGNÈS, which she declares is her last film, Varda turns her camera on herself, returning to the beaches that have played such a significant part in her life and her films. "If you opened people up, you would find landscapes; if you opened me up, you would find beaches. Many old people wish to tell their life. As an old filmmaker, with the enthusiasm and energy of my youth, I tried to find a style and a form to tell my memories, my encounters, and the ups and downs of my life. I shot my film as a kaleidoscope, a collage, a fantasy."—Agnès Varda. (117 mins.) Sponsored by Le Happy.