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Newsletter #25 03.11.2009

## Exhibition

Background Action, Krassimir Terziev, 2006-2007. Courtesy the Artist.

### Actors & Extras

until 19.12.2009

The exhibition is based on the contrast between the actor and the extra in the cinema. An actor represents a process of embodiment, vocality and the ability to give direction to an activity. An extra is a voiceless figure in a background crowd: body without embodiment. If the extra, in contrast embodies anything at all, it is a conflict of location. Works that have the figure of the extra as a subject have often been read as social and/or political allegories.

Actors & Extras will include work by Irina Botea, Jeremy Deller & Mike Figgis, Omer Fast, Christian Jankowski, Mark Lewis, Aernout Mik, João Onofre, Julika Rudelius, Krassimir Terziev, Clemens von Wedemeyer, and historical propaganda footage.

**Actors & Extras** is a collaboration of argos and Siemens Arts Program, supported by Mondriaan Foundation and Levis.

Tuesday-Saturday, 12:00-19:00  
Argos, Werfstraat 13 rue du Chantier, 1000 Brussels  
Entrance fee: 3 / 2 euro

[More info](#)

### Publication

#### Actors & Extras

16,8x23,4cm, 168pp, English  
ARGOS Editions and Siemens Arts Program, 2009  
ISBN 9789076855004  
Price: € 25

The publication *Actors & Extras* appears following the exhibition of the same name at Argos. Five authors highlight the theme of characterisation from various angles. Georges Didi-Huberman's contribution *People exposed, People as Extras* explores how cinema represents the masses. Sven Lütticken highlights the performance tradition in the visual arts in relation to the producing of subjectivity. On the basis of the classic cinema, in *Figures of the Extra*, Paul Willemse composes a typology of the extra and subsequently gives attention to the aberrant status of the extra in modern cinema and contemporary art. Thomas Trummer's *Volonté Générale. Extras in Film and Democracy* questions the responsibility of the anonymous individual. With *The Passing Actor. Sketch of a*

*Renaissance* Jean-Louis Comolli analyses how the concept of acting in a documentary has a different interpretation than in a fiction film. The last part of the publication describes the selected works in the exhibition.

Orders can be made through [distribution@argosarts.org](mailto:distribution@argosarts.org)

Events

### **Ecran d'art**

12.11.2009, 21:30

#### **According to Kevin Jerome Everson**

Cinema Arenberg, Koninginnegalerij 26 Galerie de la Reine, 1000 Brussels  
[www.arenberg.be](http://www.arenberg.be)

Entrance fee: 8 / 6, 60 euro

According to Kevin Jerome Everson assembles a series of eleven recent short films and videos by this prolific filmmaker, who since the 1980s has produced over fifty shorts and three feature films. Grounded in historical research and a strong sense of place, Everson (1965) combines documentary and scripted elements with formalism. Archival footages are re-edited and real people perform fictional scenarios based on their own lives: the result is an observations about personal histories, urban myths and social conditions of the afro-american working class. In Company Line, he examines the community's past of the first Black neighborhoods in his hometown Mansfield (Ohio), while in Something Else, where the found footage is the subject matter, Miss Black Roanoke express her thoughts about the upcoming Miss Black Virginia 1971 Pageant. In this sense, without stopping at standard realism, his films are oblique metaphors about art-making and turn daily experiences into theatrical gestures. As Everson once stated: "I like to observe how gestures at work can be considered an artistic gesture and form of expression, how the repetition of gesture becomes second nature".

Full program at [www.argosarts.org](http://www.argosarts.org)

More info

10.12.2009, 21:30

#### **Robert Fenz - Meditations on Revolution**

Cinema Arenberg, Koninginnegalerij 26 Galerie de la Reine, 1000 Brussels  
[www.arenberg.be](http://www.arenberg.be)

Entrance fee: 8 / 6, 60 euro

Robert Fenz (1969), who studied filmmaking with Peter Hutton, explores the border between documentary and primitive cinema and builds his films along predetermined guidelines where contemplation replaces any speech. "My need to think or feel something through film," he notes relating to his experimental cinematic techniques "is not reactionary against video, but a concern for film's disappearance as a material". Silent or presented with recorded natural sound, Meditations on Revolution (1997-2003) is a short cycle in five parts shot in black-and-white 16mm films. Mostly based on his trips, Fenz portraits street scenes in Central and Old Havanas, intertwines everyday events with fragments of Mexican tradition and films Rocinha, the largest brazilian favela, as a metaphor for an abandoned revolution. In this (meta)physical journey, a monologue gives a survey of New York City alienating landscape or a boxer, while trying to transform his own condition, becomes the symbol of the struggle of the individual. At the end, in these films, life is lived forward, but understood backwards.

**Meditations on Revolution Part I : Lonely Planet.** 1997, 16mm, 13', b&w, silent.

**Meditations on Revolution Part II : The Space in Between.** 1997, 16mm, 8, b&w, silent.

**Meditations on Revolution Part III : Soledad.** 2001, 16mm, 15', b&w, silent.

**Meditations on Revolution Part IV : Greenville, MS.** 2001, 16mm, 30', b&w, silent.

**Meditations on Revolution Part V : Foreign City.** 2003, 16mm, 32', b&w, English spoken.

[More info](#)

Ecran d'Art is a monthly screening of artists' film and/or video jointly organised by argos, Beurschouwburg and Cinema Arenberg, in collaboration with La Cambre Academy.

## Lecture

18.11.2009, 19:15

### **Paul Willemesen - Figures of the Extras**

Cinematek, Baron Hortastraat 9 rue Baron Horta, 1000 Brussels

[www.cinematek.be](http://www.cinematek.be)

Entrance fee: 3 / 1 euro

On the basis of a range of carefully selected film fragments, Paul Willemesen, artistic director of Argos, explores the subject of how extras manifest themselves in classic and modern films. To begin with, he sketches a typology of the extra. This necessarily departs from classic cinema rooted in the studio system, in which action is the expression of a reality previously drawn from the film scenario. Facets that apply: physiognomy, camera consciousness, temporal economy, dialectics between foreground and background, and how characterisation is realised through interaction with actors. In the second instance, post-war modern cinema is highlighted. This emanates from the primacy of reality. There is no longer talk of the traditional psychologically coloured and motivated film characters. The identifiable feature of modern cinema is playing on the dual status between the fictive and the real figures, as well as on the individuals – and therefore individual extras and non-professional actors – to get to the forefront. With fragments from films by Eisenstein, Chaplin, Capra, Renoir, Fellini, Pasolini, Watkins, Godard and others.

[More info](#)

Figures of the Extras is a co-production between argos and Cinematek.

## Screening Series

18.11.2009 - 13.12.2009

### **Figures of the Extra : A Screening series at Cinematek**

Cinematek, Baron Hortastraat 9 rue Baron Horta, 1000 Brussels

[www.cinematek.be](http://www.cinematek.be)

Entrance fee: 3 / 1 euro

In a film, attention is almost always focused on the foreground, on those involved in the action. Extras are an exception to this. This human set-filling represents the undirected, the uncontrollable broader backdrop against which all activity is played out. The actor and the extra have a mutually antagonistic relationship. The dividing line between the two is between being articulate and non-articulate, knowing and unknowing. An actor represents a process of embodiment and the ability to give direction to an activity. An extra is a voiceless figure in a background crowd: body without embodiment. If, in contrast to the actor, the extra does embody anything at all, it is a conflict of location. Extras stand apart from a film. They neither participate nor anticipate. Their equivalent in real history is the people, the masses. In recent years, the motif of the extra has been strikingly prominent in the visual arts. At a time when the notion of community has become problematic, this is where social questions on desubjectification and the place and status of the individual are expressed. Nothing is therefore more fitting,

metaphorically, than the cinema's symbolic body (dead or alive) that has always provided the model for a place of shared references; so too the idea of collective consciousness. In the Actors & Extras exhibition, which is on at the Argos arts centre until 19th December, we encounter some varied and surprising positions. In parallel with this exhibition, Cinematek is turning the spotlight on the phenomenon of the extra in film. A number of striking examples from the classic and modern cinema are shown and discussed in a talk by Paul Willemsen, the director of Argos. In contrast to the classic feature film, one of the fundamental characteristics of the modern cinema is the way it plays with the dual status of the fictional and the real figure, as well as bringing individuals – and consequently individual extras and non-professional actors – into the foreground.

**18.11.2009 // 21:00**

**Roberto Rossellini - Stromboli, Terra di Dio**

After the scandalous encounter between Rossellini and Bergman, the volcanic island of Stromboli became a place of cinematic pilgrimage. This drama, which was only completed with great difficulty, exerts an absorbing power.

**20.11.2009 & 21.11.2009 // 18:00 (Part 1) + 21:00 (Part 2)**

**Peter Watkins - La Commune (de Paris 1871)**

An almost six-hour-long immersion in a different age using modern means. The British documentary-maker Peter Watkins (The War Game, Punishment Park) takes plenty of time to retell the story of the Paris Commune. He does it in an old factory with 250 amateur actors who occasionally and anachronistically abandon their role to talk about such contemporary topics as globalisation.

**22.11.2009 // 21:00**

**Robert Altman - Nashville**

An epic mosaic of American life through the eyes of 24 characters involved in a political congress in the capital of Country & Western. Showbiz and politics take the rap. The free form Altman developed for himself here attains perfection.

**23.11.2009 // 21:00**

**Harun Farocki - Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik + Groupe Dziga Vertov - Lutte en Italie**

In this documentary essay, Farocki examines the way workers have been shown leaving factories in the course of film history, from Lumière to Pasolini and the Groupe Dziga Vertov worker-filmmakers' collective, and shows how Paola, a left-wing revolutionary, falls prey to bourgeois ideology.

**25.11.2009 // 21:00**

**Federico Fellini - Satyricon**

The visual brilliance of Italy's best filmmaker freewheeling on themes by the best Latin writer: a complex delirium associated with bisexuality, angst and unbridled lust, for which one may thank the perverse gods even now.

**01.12.2009 // 21:30**

**Jacques Demy - Une chambre en ville**

Here too we see strikes and demonstrations, but Demy's operatic approach displaces any naturalistic clichés. This, Demy's most sombre film, is a tragi-comedy with music by Colombier.

**03.12.2009 // 17:15**

**Mohsen Makhmalbaf - Salaam cinema**

The magic of film attracts 5000 people to a casting session in Teheran. The filmmaker plays himself and in the meantime examines man and society in Iran in a witty yet cynical manner.

**05.12.2009 // 20:00**

**Raymond Depardon - 10e chambre, instants d'audience**

The French documentary-maker and photographer Raymond Depardon set up his camera in the 10th chamber of the corrective court in Paris. Absorbing slices of life packaged as miniature dramas.

**06.12.2009 // 19:00**

**Abbas Kiarostami - Zir-e derakhtan-e zeytun**

In an earthquake-stricken Iran a girl is being sought to play the leading part in a film. Kiarostami's entrancing synthesis of documentary and fiction.

**13.12.2009 // 19:00**

**Andy Warhol - Screen Tests**

A revealing series of silent and virtually motionless portraits of well- and not so well-known visitors to Warhol's Factory. Each screen test is exactly the same length, which is one spool on Warhol's 16 mm Bolex (about 4 minutes).

[More info](#)

Figures of the Extras is a co-production between argos and Cinematek.

### **Extra Muros**

06.11.2009 - 15.11.2009

**CPH:DOX**

Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
[www.cphdox.dk](http://www.cphdox.dk)

CPH:DOX, Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival, is the largest documentary film festival in Scandinavia. Each year the festival fills the Copenhagen cinemas with a selection of more than 180 documentary films from around the world. During the ten festival days, CPH:DOX also presents five whole days of professional seminars and provides an international forum and meeting place with the newly founded DOX:FORUM.

Argos was invited by the festival and has curated 18 works in 5 different series:

#### **PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIES**

**Performing Space.** Erki De Vries, 2004, 3'09", b&w, sound.

**A Necessary Music.** Beatrice Gibson, 2008, 29'09", colour, English spoken.

**Altogether.** Herman Asselberghs, 2008, 15', colour

**Loss.** Hans Op De Beeck, 2004, 11', b&w, sound.

**N12°13.062' / W 001°32.619' Extended.** Vincent Meessen, 2005, 8'25", colour, sound.

**Inch'Allah.** Ria Pacquée, 2005, 18'40", colour, English spoken.

#### **DISEMBODIED VOICES**

**Buildings and Grounds: The Angst Archive.** Ken Kobland, 2003, 44'27", colour, English running text.

**The Blob.** Gert Verhoeven, 2001, 21', colour, English spoken.

**Set .** Peter Downsborough, 2003, 4'19", English running text.

**The Mendi.** Steve Reinke, 2006, 10', colour, English spoken.

**Epilogue.** Michel Lorand, 2005, 8'55", German spoken.

#### **NO PLACE – LIKE HOME**

**Border.** Hans Op De Beeck, , Belgium, 2001, 2'44", colour, English subtitled.

**Capsular.** Herman Asselberghs, 2006, 24', colour, English spoken.

**Südeuropa.** Raphaël Cuomo and Maria Iorio, 2007, 40', colour, Italian spoken, Arabic & English subtitled.

#### **CHARDIGARH – FAILED UTOPIA?**

**Dear Advisor.** Vincent Meessen, 2009, 8', colour, English spoken.

**Otolith II.** The Otolith Group, 2007, 48'11", colour, English spoken.

#### **SHELLY SILVER – NEW YORK STATES OF MIND**

**in complete world.** 2008, 52', colour, English spoken.

**What I'm Looking For.** 2004, 15', colour, English spoken.

[More info](#)

**Nicolas Provost at Festival du Court Métrage de Namur and the 27th Torino Film Festival**

Nicolas Provost is presenting on the Festival du Court Métrage de Namur a programme of six of his own films plus two works by two filmmakers – Jacques Themalque and Jan De Bruin – he founds particularly influential for his own work. In November, Provost is also one of the artists that will show a retrospective of their works at the 27th Torino Film Festival. The works of Nicolas Provost can be seen as cinematic experiences as much as they are poetic audiovisual paintings. They intend to walk on the fine line between dualities and balance between the grotesque and the moving, beauty and cruelty, the emotional and the intellectual, between cinema and fine arts. Time and again his phantasmagorias provoke both recognition and alienation and succeed in catching our expectations into an unravelling game of mystery and abstraction forcing the viewer to reflect on the phenomenon of the audiovisual. With manipulations of time, codes and form, cinematographic and narrative language is analysed, accents are shifted and new stories are told. Apart from the use of film and visual language, sound is also a constant factor in Provost's body of work, as a rhythmical spine or an emotional guideline.

13.11.2009 - 17.11.2009

**Programme Festival du Court Métrage de Namur**

**Exoticore.** 2004, 27' 36", video, colour, English, Norwegian and Burkinabe spoken.

**Induction.** 2006, 7', video, colour, sound.

**Papillon d'amour.** 2003, 3' 30, video, b&w, sound.

**Gravity.** 2007, 6'07", 35 mm, colour, sound.

**Suspension.** 2007, 4'27", 35 mm, b&w, sound.

**Plot Point.** 2007, 13'39", 35 mm, colour, sound.

[www.media10-10.be](http://www.media10-10.be)

21.11.2009

**Programme 27th Torino Film Festival**

**Exoticore.** 2004, 27' 36", video, colour, English, Norwegian and Burkinabe spoken.

**Induction.** 2006, 7', video, colour, sound.

**Papillon d'amour.** 2003, 3' 30, video, b&w, sound.

**Gravity.** 2007, 6' 07", 35 mm, colour, sound.

**Suspension.** 2007, 4' 27", 35 mm, b &w, sound.

**Plot Point.** 2007, 13' 39", 35 mm, colour, sound.

**The Divers.** 2006, 6'40", video, sound

**Need any help?.** 1999, 6' 55, Super 8, colour, English spoken.

**I hate this town.** 2002, 2', video, colour, sound.

**Oh Dear.** 2004, 1', video, colour, sound.

[www.torinofilmfest.org](http://www.torinofilmfest.org)

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