

# BAMcinématek presents *Varda in California*, a six-film series highlighting the avant-garde auteur's time in California, May 31–Jun 13

The Wall Street Journal is the title sponsor for BAMcinématek and BAM Rose Cinemas.

**April 28, 2017/Brooklyn, NY**—From Wednesday, May 31 to Tuesday, June 13, BAMcinématek presents *Varda in California*, a six-film series commemorating Agnes Varda's brief relocations in the late-1960s, and 80s to California. Long noted as a distinctive female voice in the French New Wave, as well as renowned photographer and artist, Varda has often derived inspiration from her surroundings. Soaking in the people, landscapes, and politics of Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay area, Varda created films that reflect life in America as only an outsider (she) could see it. Eschewing the ever-present specter of Hollywood, Varda instead became fascinated by the political and social movements roiling the state's sunny demeanor.

Following the success of *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, Varda and husband, director Jacques Demy, set off to California so he could begin production on his first and only American film, *Model Shop* (1969). The film is a down-and-out love story of longing and broken dreams with Los Angeles' sprawling motorways and persistent traffic taking center stage, starring Demy regular Anouk Aimée and Gary Lockwood. While Demy was consumed with his feature, Varda was training her camera far from the Hollywood sign. Her five California films fluctuate from the political to the personal, at times blurring documentary and fiction.

In Varda's first stateside short *Uncle Yanco* (1967), she digs into her own family history, traveling to Sausalito to connect with a long-lost bohemian relative. *Uncle Yanco* screens with *Documenteur* (1981) a work of autobiographical fiction following a young woman and her son's search for home amidst the alienation of Los Angeles. The series includes a second, more fantastical work of fiction by Varda, *Lions Love (...and Lies)* (1969). Starring Viva, a familiar face of Warhol's Factory and Gerome Ragni and James Ralo, the authors of *Hair*, it's a wild take on the hippy-era oddity of Los Angeles' counter-culture as seen by Varda. In *Mur Murs* (1980) and *Black Panthers* (1968), screening together in the series, Varda captures the history and turmoil of California from north to south. *Black Panthers* documents an Oakland demonstration against the imprisonment of Black Panthers cofounder Huey P. Newton, while *Mur Murs* captures and celebrates the vibrant murals decorating Los Angeles' urban landscapes.

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## **Varda in California Schedule**

### **Wed, May 31**

4:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

7pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

9:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

### **Thu, Jun 1**

4:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

7pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

9:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

### **Fri, Jun 2**

2pm: *Model Shop*

4:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

7pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

9:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

### **Sat, Jun 3**

2pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

4:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

7pm: *Model Shop*

9:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

### **Sun, Jun 4**

2pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

4:30pm: *Model Shop*

7pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

9:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

### **Mon, Jun 5**

4:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

7pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

9:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

### **Tue, Jun 6**

4:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

### **Wed, Jun 7**

4:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

7pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

9:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

### **Thu, Jun 8**

4:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

7pm: *Model Shop*

9:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*

### **Fri, Jun 9**

4:30pm: *Model Shop*

7pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

9:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

### **Sat, Jun 10**

7pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*  
9:30pm: *Model Shop*

### **Sun, Jun 11**

2pm: *Model Shop*  
4:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*  
7pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*  
9:30pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*

### **Mon, Jun 12**

8pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

### **Tue, Jun 13**

4:30pm: *Documenteur + Uncle Yanco*  
7pm: *Lions Love (...and Lies)*  
9:30pm: *Mur Murs + Black Panthers*

## **Film Descriptions**

*\*All films play multiple times throughout the series.*

*\*All films directed by Agnès Varda unless otherwise noted.*

**BLACK PANTHERS** (1968) An unapologetically radical dispatch from the front lines of the Black Power movement: Varda profiles members of the Black Panther Party as they fight for the freedom of imprisoned activist Huey P. Newton. *DCP. 30min.*

**DOCUMENTEUR** (1981) *With Sabine Mamou, Mathieu Demy, Tom Taplin.* This moving work of autobiographical fiction follows a young French woman in Los Angeles as she copes with a recent breakup and wanders the city in search of a home for her and her son. Aptly subtitled “An Emotion Picture,” the mysterious, serenely melancholic *Documenteur* captures Varda’s ambivalent feelings about America. *DCP. 65min.*

**LIONS LOVE (. . . AND LIES)** (1969) *With Viva, James Rado, Gerome Ragni.* This irresistibly kooky time capsule takes a bevy of 60s counterculture luminaries—Warhol superstar Viva, the creators of Hair, and filmmaker Shirley Clarke—and throws them together in a luxe Hollywood home. Madness ensues, as they make prank calls, “try out” parenting with a bunch of borrowed children, and revel in the joys of free love. It’s a wildly funny perspective on the hippy-dippy oddity of LA as seen by Varda. *DCP. 90min.*

**MODEL SHOP** (1969) *Dir. Jacques Demy. With Anouk Aimée, Gary Lockwood, Alexandra Hay.* Jacques Demy, along with his wife Varda, ventured to Hollywood for the one and only time in his career to make this tender, quintessentially LA movie about the brief but momentous encounter between a failed architect (Lockwood) and a French erotica model (Aimée). It’s a gorgeous, pastel love letter to the “real” LA—its sprawling freeways, parking lots, and seedy margins—far removed from the Dream Factory fantasy. *DCP. 97min.*

**MUR MURS** (1980) Varda takes her camera through the streets of late-70s Los Angeles to document the vibrant murals that cover the walls of the city and the artists who made them. *Mur Murs* is both an essential record of LA’s street art and a lively celebration of the city’s diversity. *DCP. 80min.*

**UNCLE YANCO** (1967) Varda’s first American film—in which she journeys to meet a long lost bohemian relative living in Sausalito—is a freewheeling family affair that grooves on the good vibes of sun-kissed 60s California. *DCP. 18min.*

## **About BAMcinématek**

The four-screen BAM Rose Cinemas (BRC) opened in 1998 to offer Brooklyn audiences alternative and independent films that might not play in the borough otherwise, making BAM the only performing arts center in the country with two mainstage theaters and a multiplex cinema. In July 1999, beginning with a series celebrating the work of Spike Lee, BAMcinématek was born as Brooklyn's only daily, year-round repertory film program. BAMcinématek presents new and rarely seen contemporary films, classics, work by local artists, and festivals of films from around the world, often with special appearances by directors, actors, and other guests. BAMcinématek has not only presented major retrospectives by major filmmakers such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Manoel de Oliveira, Shohei Imamura, Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics' Circle Award prize for the retrospective), Kaneto Shindo, Luchino Visconti, and William Friedkin, but it has also introduced New York audiences to contemporary artists such as Pedro Costa and Apichatpong Weerasethakul. In addition, BAMcinématek programmed the first US retrospectives of directors Arnaud Desplechin, Nicolas Winding Refn, Hong Sang-soo, and Andrzej Zulawski. From 2006 to 2008, BAMcinématek partnered with the Sundance Institute and in June 2009 launched BAMcinemaFest, a 16-day festival of new independent films and repertory favorites with 15 NY feature film premieres; the ninth annual BAMcinema Fest runs from June 14—25, 2017.

## **Credits**

*The Wall Street Journal* is the title sponsor of BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinématek.

Steinberg Screen at the BAM Harvey Theater is made possible by The Joseph S. and Diane H. Steinberg Charitable Trust.

Delta is the Official Airline of BAM. Pepsi is the official beverage of BAM.

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## **General Information**

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers a bar menu and dinner entrées prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of spoken word and live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a bar menu available starting at 6pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater); D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue

Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center

Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

Car: Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.