

ICA



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Essay Film Festival 18 – 24 March 2016



Kidlat Tahimik, *Balikbayan # 1 - Memories of Overdevelopment Redux III*, 2015.
Courtesy of Kidlat Tahimik and Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art.

From 18 to 24 March 2016 the ICA will take part in the second edition of Birkbeck's **Essay Film Festival**. UK premiere screenings from Filipino filmmaker and performance artist, **Kidlat Tahimik**, and the late Portuguese film director, **Manoel de Oliveira**, will headline this festival which celebrates some of the most outstanding contemporary essay filmmakers from the UK. The programme will also feature new work by acclaimed video essayist **Mark Rappaport**.

Running over eight days, the annual festival brings together the most striking, innovative examples of this dynamic documentary form – both contemporary and historical – from around the world, framed by a series of masterclasses and in-depth discussions with invited special guests.

Kidlat Tahimik will be present for a Q&A following *Why Is Yellow the Middle of the Rainbow?* on Tuesday 22 March and will attend the UK premiere of his most recent film *Balikbayan #1 Memories of Overdevelopment Redux III*, on Thursday 24 March. The film – which tells the story of Enrique of Malacca, the slave of famous navigator Magellan – will be the climax of a Kidlat Tahimik retrospective

running throughout the festival, during which he will give a masterclass and participate in discussions with critics, scholars and filmmakers about his work.

On Friday 18 March, the festival will present the UK premiere of Manoel de Oliveira's posthumously released 1982 essay film *Visit, or Memories and Confessions*, a highly personal meditation on the intersection of life and cinema in the guise of a tour of what was then the director's home in Porto. The Portuguese filmmaker, who died last year at the age of 106, is widely held as one of the greatest directors in the history of cinema.

The festival will also feature a UK premiere of Bani Khoshnoudi's *The Silent Majority Speaks*, a vibrant political essay film about the Iranian "Green Movement" of 2009. The filmmaker will be present at the screening to discuss this important political documentary with the audience.

The Essay Film Festival will also present the work of two outstanding contemporary essay filmmakers from the UK, **Miranda Pennell** and **Sarah Wood**.

Drawing extensively on previously unseen archive footage and various other materials, Miranda Pennell (*Why Colonel Bunny Was Killed*, 2010) will present an in-depth exploration of the genesis of her latest essay film *The Host*, on Wednesday 23 March. An extraordinary interweaving of personal memories and familial and colonial histories, *The Host* has been constructed from archive images of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (BP).

On Saturday 19 March, Sarah Wood will discuss her career to date with film scholar Catherine Grant, and screen several of her recent films, including *I Am a Spy* (2014), a stunning essay on the themes of freedom of movement and freedom of thought in the age of mass technological surveillance.

The festival will also host screenings and workshops devoted to:

- Exploring the recent explosion of video essays online and their impact on the practice of film criticism and academic teaching of film
- The latest in experimental found footage films from the "Festival of (in)Appropriation"
- Richard Misek's *Rohmer in Paris* (2013), a profoundly engaging exploration of the pleasures of cinephilia
- A selection of the remarkable series of ground-breaking essayistic documentaries made in the UK under the aegis of the Arts Council, including *A Sign Is a Fine Investment* (1984), directed by Judith Williamson

Beginning at [Birkbeck](#) on Thursday 17 March the festival will include several recent short works from highly regarded essay filmmaker [Mark Rappaport](#) which will be screened for the first time in the UK, including *The Vanity Tables of Douglas Sirk* (2014), *Our Stars* (2015), and *I, Dalio, or The Rules of the Game* (2015). The American underground film director will attend the special event to participate in a discussion about his career with film scholar Michael Witt.

Further related day-time events are scheduled at Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image and details can be found on the festival website: essayfilmfestival.com

The Essay Film Festival, was launched in 2015 as a partnership between Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image (BIMI) and the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA). During the eight-day festival, events will be held at the ICA, Birkbeck Cinema and Goethe-Institut.

ICA Programme:

UK premiere: Visit or Memories and Confessions (Visita ou Memórias e Confissões)

introduced by José Manuel Costa

18 March, 8.30pm

Portugal, 1982. Dir. Manoel de Oliveira. 73 minutes. 35mm in DCP, Mono. Portuguese with English subtitles.

Directed by the late Portuguese filmmaker Manoel de Oliveira, this intimate and unexpected film, released only posthumously following the filmmaker's own instructions, is a heartfelt expression of the director's feelings towards his wife and family, and to the house where they lived for over forty years.

This screening is introduced by José Manuel Costa, Director of the Cinemateca Portuguesa – Museu do Cinema.

Sarah Wood: Lost Film Found Film followed by Q&A with director Sarah Wood

19 March, 8.30pm

Three Minute Warning, UK, 2012. Dir. Sarah Wood. 3 minutes. Digital video.

Murmuration x 10, UK, 2015. Dir. Sarah Wood, text: Helen Macdonald. 21 minutes. Digital video.

For Cultural Purposes Only, UK, 2009. Dir. Sarah Wood. 8 minutes. Digital video.

I Am a Spy, Dir. Sarah Wood, UK, 2014. 23 minutes. Digital video.

A survey of recent films by director Sarah Wood questioning not only our relationship to the documentary archival but also twenty-first-century viewing conditions – of being observed while observing – ultimately asking how this influences the narration of history and memory.

Sarah Wood will be in conversation with Catherine Grant (University of Sussex, Film Studies for Free) following the screening.

Perfumed Nightmare (Mababangong Bangungot)

20 March, 6.30pm

Philippines, 1977. Dir. Kidlat Tahimik. 94 minutes. 16mm, Colour. Tagalog with English subtitles.

With dreams of becoming an astronaut and making it big in the United States, jitney driver Kidlat Tahimik's wild imagination takes him as far as Europe and to a series of events that will show to him that his idealisation of what Western and European culture has to offer is far from real.

UK premiere: The Silent Majority Speaks followed by Q&A with director Bani Khoshnoudi

20 March, 8.30pm

Iran, 2010/2014. Dir. Bani Khoshnoudi. 94 minutes. Digital. Farsi with English subtitles.

An important exploration of Iran's silenced, but definitely not quiet, history. Made in Iran during and after the "Green Movement" of 2009, the film investigates a century's imagery of revolution and struggle in Iran to build a picture of resistance in film and in social and political life.

Why Is Yellow the Middle of the Rainbow? (Bakit Dilaw Ang Kulay ng Bahaghari) followed by Q&A with director Kidlat Tahimik

22 March, 7.30pm

Philippines, 1980-94. Dir. Kidlat Tahimik. 175 minutes. 16mm, Colour. English and Tagalog with English subtitles.

Kidlat Tahimik has often referred to film-making as the equivalent of a long trip. In *Why Is Yellow the Middle of the Rainbow?* that conception is fully developed as Kidlat and his son travel through almost two decades of political turmoil and natural catastrophes that have ravaged the Philippines.

The Host presented by director Miranda Pennell

23 March, 5pm

United Kingdom, 2015. Dir. Miranda Pennell. 59 minutes 11 seconds. DCP, Colour/B&W, 16:9, Stereo.

Interweaving stories taken from both personal memory and the records of an grand history, *The Host* sets out to decipher signs from the fragmented images buried in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (BP).

UK premiere: Balikbayan #1 – Memories of Overdevelopment Redux III followed by Q&A with director Kidlat Tahimik

24 March, 8pm

Philippines, 2015. Dir. Kidlat Tahimik. 150 minutes. DCP (16:9), Colour. English, Tagalog, Spanish with English subtitles.

The ultimate home-movie historical epic and the conclusion of Kidlat Tahimik's long-cherished dream of making a film about the real history of Enrique of Malacca, who became a slave of Ferdinand Magellan, and who might well have been the first man to circumnavigate the world in 1519-1521.

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Listings information:

Essay Film Festival

18 – 24 March 2016 at the ICA

17 – 26 March 2016 full programme

Ticket prices:

Cinema prices £11 / £8 Concessions / £7 ICA Members. Prices vary for special events.

Booking fees for non ICA Members: £1 per ticket or maximum charge per transaction £2.80

Book online at ica.org.uk Call Box Office 020 7930 3647 Textphone 020 7839 0737

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Multi-buy offer:

If you purchase tickets for 3-4 screenings:

£9 Full price per ticket (rather than £11)

£7 Concession price per ticket (rather than £8)

£6 Members price per ticket (rather than £7)

If you purchase tickets for 5-7 screenings:

£8 Full price per ticket (rather than £11)

£6 Concession price per ticket (rather than £8)

£5 Members price per ticket (rather than £7)

Social media:

Follow and tag updates on twitter using #EssayFilm

Editor's Notes:**About Kidlat Tahimik**

Born in 1942, Kidlat Tahimik is a towering figure in contemporary cinema, but too little known in the UK. His debut film, *Perfumed Nightmare* (1977), became an instant essay-film classic through its beguiling, utterly unique mixing of humour, imaginative play and sharp political critique.

Kidlat Tahimik followed up *Perfumed Nightmare* with a fiercely independent and ambitious series of feature-length essay films, such as *Who Invented the Yo-Yo? Who Invented the Moon Buggy?* (1982) and *Why Is Yellow the Middle of the Rainbow?* (1994), which are similarly disarming, uncategorisable and formally audacious works that profoundly engage with the fate of the Phillipines' indigenous peoples and their traditional communities in the globalised, postcolonial era.

His latest film, *Balikbayan #1 Memories of Overdevelopment Redux III*, which gets its UK premiere at the Essay Film Festival 2016, was first shown at the Berlin Film Festival last year and selected by several international film critics as the best film of 2015.

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