

MoMA CELEBRATES GERMAN FILMMAKER WIM WENDERS WITH A MAJOR CAREER RETROSPECTIVE

Wenders to Present the First Week of Screenings in a Retrospective that Brings Together More Than 20 Newly Restored and Rarely Seen Films

Wim Wenders

March 2–17, 2015

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

NEW YORK, January 27, 2015—Nearly a half-century after his second feature film, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* (1971), was screened at The Museum of Modern Art as part of the annual New Directors/New Films festival, MoMA celebrates German filmmaker Wim Wenders with a major career retrospective, March 2 through 17, 2015. The exhibition, which includes 20 fiction and nonfiction films and numerous shorts, features the North American premieres of new digital restorations overseen by Wenders, as well as works that haven't been shown theatrically in New York in years. The retrospective captures the breadth of Wenders' career, from his 16mm experimental works of the late 1960s to his most recent nonfiction work, *The Salt of The Earth* (2014), a profile of the Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado which is nominated for a 2015 Academy Award for Best Documentary, won the Un Certain Regard special jury prize at the 2014 Cannes International Film Festival, and will be released theatrically by Sony Pictures Classics on March 27. Wenders, who will be awarded an Honorary Golden Bear for lifetime achievement and is the subject of the *Homage* program at the 65th Berlin International Film Festival in mid-February, will introduce a dozen screenings during the first week of the retrospective. On March 4 he will also join with his longtime collaborator Peter Handke—the Austrian author who coscripted 3 *American LPs* (1969), *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* (1971), *Wrong Move* (1975), and *Wings of Desire* (1987)—in an onstage conversation moderated by the writer Ian Buruma. *Wim Wenders* is organized by Joshua Siegel, Curator, Department of Film, with Rajendra Roy, The Celeste Bartos Chief Curator of Film, MoMA; and Thomas Beard, independent curator. The exhibition is presented in collaboration with the Berlin International Film Festival and with Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen, and the Wim Wenders Stiftung, a Foundation.

Wenders has collaborated with an idiosyncratic array of writers (Sam Shepard, Peter Carey, Peter Handke); composers (Laurie Anderson, Bono and U2, Nick Cave, Ry Cooder, Jürgen Knieper, Lou Reed); cinematographers (Robby Müller, Henri Alekan, Edward Lachman); and actors (Nastassja Kinski, Dennis Hopper, Hanna Schygulla, Rüdiger Vogler, Bruno Ganz, Peter Falk). He has experimented with storytelling in its many forms and genres (essay, travelogue, road movie, science fiction, crime melodrama, love story, slapstick); and with the language of cinema at its

most classical (handcranked 35mm cameras and widescreen black-and-white celluloid) and its most venturesome (intimate portraiture and dance in digital 3-D).

MoMA film curator Joshua Siegel observes, "While rooted in a particular place at a precipitous historical moment—the closing of the American West at century's end, the frontier between East and West Germany before and after unification, a Congolese village in the aftermath of war—Wenders' films are inhabited by nomadic dreamers who discover the limitations of their way of seeing and connecting with the world, and who grope for moments of epiphany even as they remain strangers to each other and to themselves. Like his many abiding passions—the films of Yasujiro Ozu and John Ford, the paintings of Edward Hopper, the photographs of Walker Evans, the blues of the Mississippi Delta, and the choreography of Pina Bausch—Wenders' films are precise and unadorned, open-ended and mysterious."

MoMA's retrospective opens on March 2 with the New York premiere of a new digital restoration of the 1984 Cannes International Film Festival Palme d'Or winner, *Paris, Texas*. The film is a meditation on the American West and a road movie like no other, with stark, spare dialogue written by Sam Shepard, a haunting slide-guitar score by Ry Cooder, and cinematography by Robby Müller that recalls the paintings of Edward Hopper and the 1970s New Topographics photography of Robert Adams and Lewis Baltz. Harry Dean Stanton plays a distant stranger trying to make right as he travels across the unforgiving Texas desert to reconnect in Los Angeles with a son he hasn't seen in years, and then on to Houston in search of his estranged wife. The film culminates in a set of iconic monologues between the erstwhile lovers that take place on either side of a peepshow booth. Also presented on March 2 is Wenders' *The American Friend* (1977), starring Dennis Hopper, Bruno Ganz, Nicholas Ray, and Samuel Fuller. The misanthropic thrillers of Patricia Highsmith have proven irresistible to Alfred Hitchcock, Claude Chabrol, René Clément, Anthony Minghella, and a great many other filmmakers. Wenders' own take on *Ripley's Game*—presented in a stunning new 4K digital restoration—is among the best of these adaptations, finding complexity, and even a hint of compassion, in Highsmith's favorite gambit of the shifty but sensitive con man who lures an innocent into a life of crime.

Over the course of the first week, Wenders will also present the North American premieres of new digital restorations of *Alice in the Cities* (1974), *The Left-Handed Woman* (directed by Peter Handke and produced by Wenders, 1978), *Tokyo-Ga* (1985), and *Notebook on Cities and Clothes* (1989), as well as his rarely screened director's cut of *Until the End of the World* (1991/94).

The retrospective culminates with Wenders' vibrant documentaries about music, dance, and filmmaking. In *Nick's Film: Lightning over Water* (1980), Wenders collaborated with Nicholas Ray (*Rebel without a Cause*, *In a Lonely Place*) on a film about the final weeks of Ray's life. Suffering tremendously from terminal cancer but defiant to the end, Ray lectures to college students about *The Lusty Men* and previews his latest film, the experimental *We Can't Go Home Again*, in his Soho loft. *Lightning over Water* testifies to an enduring and unsentimental friendship,

transcending mere portraiture to confront, in the starkest way imaginable, the uneasy ethical question of how to represent the dying.

Buena Vista Social Club (1999) features the musicians of Buena Vista Social Club—Ibrahim Ferrer, Compay Segundo, Rubén González, and Elíades Ochoa—who achieved universal adoration and success after Ry Cooder brought them together to record an album of traditional Cuban *son* and perform live in Amsterdam and at Carnegie Hall. Rarely has a film about music captivated millions of people worldwide; 15 years later, with the recent thawing of relations between Cuba and the United States, this film attains renewed relevance.

Nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the 84th Academy Awards, *Pina* (2011) is a tribute to the German choreographer, Pina Bausch, who revolutionized *tanztheater* (“dance theater”) with her brash, raw, and often absurdist stagings of human emotion and gesture. The film is a tribute of dazzling variety and valence, interweaving archival footage of Bausch with live performances of some of her most legendary and intimate dance pieces. Frustrated by traditional cinema’s failure to capture the kinetic intricacy of dance, Wenders used 3-D to astonishing effect, capturing the full range of Bausch’s elaborate somatic vocabulary while also venturing beyond the proscenium arch to film members of Bausch’s ensemble dancing on the banks of a river, in a factory, and with transit commuters in the company’s home town of Wuppertal.

The retrospective will also include rarely seen films, beginning with Wenders' experimental 16mm works of the late 1960s, *Same Player Shoots Again* (1967) and *Silver City Revisited* (1968). *Same Player Shoots Again* comprises a three-minute shot repeated five times, like the five balls in a pinball machine. It was shot in black and white, then for each successive shot dyed in a different color. *Silver City Revisited* was inspired by the views from the student apartments that Wenders lived in as a student in Munich. After finding a collection of old 78 shellac records, he recorded them directly onto the audio track with the 16mm projector at the film school. Other early shorts include *Polizeifilm* (1968), a nearly slapstick, black-and-white film about the Munich police and their psychological approach to handling the student riots of 1968, and *Alabama (2000 Light Years)* (1969), which marks the first time Wenders worked with 35mm, the widescreen format, and a real cinematographer.

Special thanks to Janus Films, Sony Pictures Classics, the Berlinale, the Munich Film Museum, and Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen. IFC Center and Janus Films will present a selection of Wenders' work in theatrical runs in fall 2015.

No. 3

Press Contact:

Meg Montgoris, (212) 708-9757, meg_montgoris@moma.org

For downloadable high-resolution images, register at MoMA.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400, MoMA.org.

Hours: Saturday through Thursday, 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$25 adults; \$18 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$14 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs). Free admission during Uniqlo Free Friday Nights: Fridays, 4:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

MoMA.org: No service charge for tickets ordered on MoMA.org. Tickets purchased online may be printed out and presented at the Museum without waiting in line. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs).

Film and After Hours Program Admission: \$12 adults; \$10 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$8 full-time students with current I.D. The price of an After Hours Program Admission ticket may be applied toward the price of a Museum admission ticket or MoMA Membership within 30 days.

[MoMA/MoMA PS1 Blog](#), [MoMA on Facebook](#), [MoMA on Twitter](#), [MoMA on YouTube](#), [MoMA on Flickr](#)