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Film at Lincoln Center and The Museum of Modern Art announce the complete lineup for the 49th annual New Directors/New Films, March 25 – April 5

Opening Night—Amanda McBaine and Jesse Moss’s Boys State

Closing Night—Maite Alberdi’s The Mole Agent

Featuring 27 feature films and 10 short films from 35 countries with 13 North American Premieres and 4 U.S. Premieres, 15 films directed or co-directed by women, and 14 works by first-time feature filmmakers

New York, NY (February 20, 2020) – Film at Lincoln Center and The Museum of Modern Art announce the complete lineup for the 49th annual New Directors/New Films (ND/NF), March 25–April 5. Throughout its rich, nearly half-century history, the festival has celebrated filmmakers who represent the present and anticipate the future of cinema, daring artists whose work pushes the envelope in unexpected ways. This year’s festival will introduce 27 features and 10 short films to New York audiences.

The Opening and Closing Night selections are the New York premieres of two Sundance-lauded documentaries. Opening the festival is Amanda McBaine and Jesse Moss’s Boys State, which won the U.S. Grand Jury Prize for documentary and provides intriguing insight into the electoral process as Texas high school students participate in an elaborate mock election to build their own state government. ND/NF will close with Maite Alberdi’s The Mole Agent, a noirish observational documentary that follows an octogenarian on his comedic first stint as an undercover spy at a Chilean nursing home. Speaking to the opening and closing night selections, La Frances Hui, Associate Curator of Film, The Museum of Modern Art and 2020
New Directors/New Films Co-Chair explains, “Boys State encapsulates precisely the state of politics in the United States today. The idealistic, pragmatic, witty, and combative teenage subjects are uncanny reflections of their adult counterparts; The Mole Agent is a surprising spy thriller concealed within a heart-warming documentary about life in a retirement home. Suave and dapper, the elderly agent at the center of the film will likely become your favorite spy on screen.”

The 2020 lineup boasts numerous standouts from the international film festival circuit, showcasing top award-winners from Rotterdam, Locarno, Venice, and Sundance. Highlights from Rotterdam include Zheng Lu Xinyuan’s debut feature The Cloud In Her Room, an autobiographical portrait of a young woman confronting her past (winner of this year’s IFFR Tiger Award); Janis Rafa’s Kala azar (IFFR Circle of Dutch Filmjournalists KNF Award), which provides a poignant vision of the relationship between humans and animals in its portrayal of a couple operating a crematorium service; and Arun Karthick’s Nasić (IFFR Netpac Award for Best Asian Feature Film), an observational drama enveloped in looming violence that follows a Muslim man struggling to support his family. At the Venice Film Festival, the Orizzonti Prize was awarded to Valentyn Vasyanovych’s remarkable debut, Atlantis, which captures a distressed ex-Ukrainian soldier as he navigates uninhabitable land in a near dystopian future. From Locarno, Maya Da-Rin’s FIPRESCI Prize-winning debut feature The Fever is a heartrending look at the daily hardships of a father and daughter from Brazil’s indigenous Desana tribe, and Senegalese filmmaker Mamadou Dia was awarded two Golden Leopards, including Best First Feature, for Nafi’s Father, a tragic tale about two brothers facing an increasing political and moral crisis. Two prizewinners from Sundance will be featured in ND/NF: Fernanda Valadez’s Identifying Features, which follows a worried mother on a dangerous journey to find her son after he disappears on his trip across the Mexico-U.S. border, won the World Cinema Dramatic Audience Award and Best Screenplay Award, and Aneil Karia’s debut Surge, a snapshot of a young man’s increasingly vengeful mental breakdown, received the World Cinema Dramatic Best Actor Award for Ben Whishaw.

Other feature directorial debuts in this year’s lineup include Shannon Murphy’s Babyteeth, a captivating and tersely funny drama that captures the oscillating moods of a teenage girl who doesn’t have long to live; Carlos Lenin’s The Dove and the Wolf, chronicling the struggles of a couple dealing with trauma; Chinese filmmaker Gu Xiaogang’s Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains, which evokes a year in the life of a provincial family as the seasons change; Nadège Trebal’s Twelve Thousand, which portrays a couple’s economic misfortunes as they struggle to keep their relationship equal; Two of Us, Filippo Meneghetti’s story of a decades-old secret romance between two middle-aged women; Uruguayan poet and filmmaker Alex Piperno’s Window Boy Would Also Like to Have a Submarine, which intertwines tales from seemingly unconnected worlds in a magical fantasy; and Robert Machoian’s The Killing of Two Lovers, which details a man’s emotional breakdown as a husband and wife confront a trial separation.

Additional highlights of the festival include Kazik Radwanski’s Anne at 13,000 Ft., starring Deragh Campbell as a woman on the verge of a quarter-life crisis; Romanian filmmaker Alexander Nanau’s Collective, the astonishing true story of a 2015 Bucharest nightclub fire and
its shocking aftermath; Camilo Restrepo’s *Los conductos*, the story of a former criminal and cult member as he slowly reenters society; Teboho Edkins’s documentary *Days of Cannibalism*, which juxtaposes African workers in Guangzhou with Chinese migrants in Lesotho in a gripping exploration of competitive global trade relationships; Anna Sofie Hartmann’s *Giraffe*, an unexpected and spare love story relayed within the guise of ecological documentary; Catarina Vasconcelos’s impressionistic documentary *The Metamorphosis of Birds*, which intertwines the cycles of life and nature while documenting the ancestry of the filmmaker; Lois Patiño’s transfixing *Red Moon Tide*, a haunting story of a missing diver and the seaside community mourning his absence; Ivan Ostrochovsky’s tense morality tale *Servants*, capturing the inner conflict of Catholic seminary students as they contend with Communist Party orders to turn informant; Pushpendra Singh’s *The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs*, a comedic feminist tale of a woman tied to old traditions while yearning to evolve; and Sandra Wollner’s *The Trouble with Being Born*, a mysterious science-fiction tale involving a middle-aged man and his seemingly adolescent daughter that takes unexpected turns.

Rounding out the lineup are two short film programs comprising 10 films, featuring Sonia K. Hadad’s Sundance Jury Prize-winner *Exam*, Rajee Samarasinghe’s *The Eyes of Summer*, Steffen Goldkamp’s *After Two Hours, Ten Minutes Had Passed*, Simon Liu’s *Happy Valley*, Agustina Comedí’s *Playback*, Arda Çiltlepe’s Locarno-winning *Black Sun*, Keisha Rae Witherspoon’s *T*, Dorian Jespers’s *Sun Dog* (winner of the IFFR Tiger Award for Short Film), Wong Ping’s *Wong Ping’s Fables 2*, and Agustina San Martin’s *Monster God*, which received a Special Mention at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

“The New Directors/New Films selection is always international in scope, but I’m particularly struck by the sheer breadth of this year’s lineup,” said Film at Lincoln Center Director of Programming Dennis Lim. “We have everything from speculative war films to intimate dramas, unnerving works of science fiction to political documentaries, hailing from countries often represented on screen as well as some less commonly seen ones. Collectively these films speak to the continued vibrancy and daring of world cinema in an age of political uncertainty and cultural sameness. They prove that cinema still has what it takes to reflect and enhance the moment we live in.”

Press screenings will be held at FLC and MoMA in mid-March—a complete schedule will be announced in the coming weeks.

The New Directors/New Films selection committee is made up of members from both presenting organizations. The 2020 feature committee was comprised of Dennis Lim (Co-Chair, FLC), La Frances Hui (Co-Chair, MoMA), Florence Almozini (FLC), Rajendra Roy (MoMA), Dan Sullivan (FLC), and Sophie Cavoulacos (MoMA), and the shorts were programmed by Tyler Wilson (FLC) and Brittany Shaw (MoMA).

Tickets go on sale to the general public on Thursday, March 12 at noon. Film at Lincoln Center and MoMA members receive an early access purchasing period starting on Monday, March 9 at noon. To become a member of Film at Lincoln Center or MoMA, please visit filmlinc.org or
MoMA.org, respectively. See 3+ films and save with discounted festival pricing. Plus, continuing last year's popular offerings, student rates and a $50 Student Pass (excludes Opening, Centerpiece, Closing) will be available. A limited number of VIP All-Access Passes will also be available.

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**FILMS & DESCRIPTIONS**

*All films are digitally projected unless otherwise noted*

**Opening Night**
**Boys State**
Jesse Moss and Amanda McBaine, USA, 2020, 109m

**New York Premiere**
The sensational winner of the Grand Jury Prize for documentary at this year’s Sundance Film Festival is a wildly entertaining and continually revealing immersion into a week-long annual program in which a thousand Texas high school seniors gather for an elaborate mock exercise: building their own state government. Filmmakers Jesse Moss and Amanda McBaine closely track the escalating tensions that arise within a particularly riveting gubernatorial race, training their cameras on unforgettable teenagers like Ben, a Reagan-loving arch-conservative who brims with confidence despite personal setbacks, and Steven, a progressive-minded child of Mexican immigrants who stands by his convictions amidst the sea of red. In the process, they have created a complex portrait of contemporary American masculinity, as well as a microcosm of our often dispiriting national political divisions that nevertheless manages to plant seeds of hope. An Apple release.

**Closing Night**
**The Mole Agent**
Maite Alberdi, Chile, 2020, 90m
Spanish with English subtitles

New York Premiere

This clever, entirely unexpected delight weds a spy movie conceit to an observational documentary framework: Sergio is a dapper widower in his early eighties who gets hired by a private detective to go undercover in a nursing home to investigate whether a woman who lives there is being abused and robbed. Initially, Sergio, with his spy glasses and lack of tech savvy, cuts a conspicuous and amusing figure as he reports back to his no-nonsense boss. But like any great detective story, the solution to the mystery isn’t as important as what’s learned along the way, and Sergio forges poignant, sometimes heartbreaking bonds with an array of fascinating elderly women. Director Maite Alberdi’s camera captures interactions with remarkable intimacy and compassion, resulting in a warm, funny work of nonfiction with an emotional power that sneaks up on you.

Anne at 13,000 Ft.
Kazik Radwanski, Canada, 2019, 75m

New York Premiere

Actress Deragh Campbell has been building a repertoire of idiosyncratic, lived-in performances (including last year’s ND/NF selection MS Slavic 7), but her rattling, interiorized portrait of a young woman in free-fall in Anne at 13,000 Feet sets new heights for her—as well as for its director, Kazik Radwanski (whose also tightly focused Tower was an ND/NF highlight in 2013).

Here, the nimble Canadian filmmaker forces viewers to dive headlong into the daily struggles of Anne, a young daycare worker in Toronto whose seemingly steady life gives way to increasing anxiety and recklessness, her unpredictable behavior coinciding with a burgeoning romance with a well-meaning guy (Matt Johnson) wholly unprepared for her quarter-life crisis. Like John Cassavetes, Radwanski risks putting us in close proximity with a character we may bristle at, but the result is a cleansing emotional experience that coaxes our compassion. A Cinema Guild release.

Atlantis
Valentyn Vasyanovych, Ukraine, 2019, 106m

Ukrainian with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

A debut of remarkable formal precision, Valentyn Vasyanovych’s Atlantis is an urgent yet highly controlled dispatch from the wartorn Donbass in Eastern Ukraine. Set five years into the future, this all-too-real dystopia uses a series of distanced, compositionally rigorous frames to follow Sergey, a Ukrainian soldier suffering from PTSD as he tries to restart his life amidst these scourged, uninhabitable lands. Rather than foreground the in-the-moment battle between Russia and Ukraine, Vasyanovych instead powerfully depicts the inevitable aftermath, marked by economic and ecological degradation. Yet somehow, through a new volunteer job exhuming the dead, Sergey finds an unexpected path back to humanity.

Babyteeth
Shannon Murphy, Australia, 2019, 117m

New York Premiere
In a poignant and tersely funny domestic drama that moves to its own special rhythms, first-time feature filmmaker Shannon Murphy achieves an impressive tonal balancing act, distinctively capturing the wild ups and intense downs in the life of a teenage girl who knows she doesn't have long to live. Eliza Scanlen—so memorable as Beth in Greta Gerwig's Little Women—embodies both steely self-awareness and fragility as Milla, whose new romance with a troubled twenty-something (Toby Wallace) cast out of his family disturbs her supportive but confused parents (Essie Davis and Ben Mendelsohn, unpredictable marvels from scene to scene), who are going through their own emotional difficulties. A film of delicate hairpin turns, Babyteeth refuses to feed its viewers bromides about family life, allowing its characters to reveal all their contradictory complexities. An IFC Films release.

The Cloud in Her Room
Zheng Lu Xinyuan, China, 2020, 101m
Mandarin with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere
Winner of the top prize at this year's International Film Festival Rotterdam, this mesmerizing debut feature from Chinese filmmaker Zheng Lu Xinyuan is an autobiographically tinged portrait of 22-year-old Muzi (Jin Jing), a young woman drifting through her days and nights after returning to her hometown to celebrate the New Year with her parents, and unable to let go of her past. With gorgeously monochrome photography, the director finds seemingly endless new ways to capture the dawns and twilights, the familiar pleasures and urban estrangement of the city of Hangzhou, where the director is from. Alternating between realist conversations between Muzi, family, and lovers; dreamlike interludes; and intermittent documentary sequences with local young people who are floating through their own discombobulating twenties, The Cloud in Her Room is an expressive depiction of the feeling of being transitory in one's time and place.

Collective
Alexander Nanau, Romania, 2019, 109m
Romanian with English subtitles
New York Premiere
What begins as a seeming exposé into a tragic accident gradually turns into something deeper and more shocking in this heartrending and revelatory documentary about state neglect and corruption. In October 2015, a devastating fire broke out at the Bucharest nightclub Colectiv, killing 27 people that night; in the following weeks, while the country was still reeling, nearly 40 more people who had suffered burns and other injuries died in hospital. As the film begins, newspaper journalists are investigating the suspicious reasons how this could possibly have happened—the beginning of a search for truth that uncovers an increasing litany of misappropriations, malfeasance, and lies, from medical officials to corrupt pharmaceutical company owners. With astonishing access, director Alexander Nanau follows the trail of evidence along with the film's journalists and the newly installed Minister of Health, creating a universally relatable nonfiction thriller that uncovers the depths of governmental rot. A Magnolia Pictures release.

Los conductos
Camilo Restrepo, France/Colombia/Brazil, 2020, 70m
Spanish with English subtitles
North American Premiere
A former criminal and cult member living under cloak of night in the crevices and corners of the Colombian city of Medellín makes his way back into civilization, yet is gripped by a shadowy past, in this fragmented first feature from Camilo Restrepo. After his memorable shorts Cilaos and La bouche, the director proves his mastery at economical yet expansive storytelling here, taking a complex narrative about the possibility of regeneration within a society all too willing to discard its outcasts and boiling it down to a series of precise shots, sounds, and gestures of off-handed beauty.

Days of Cannibalism
Teboho Edkins, France/South Africa/Netherlands, 2020, 78m
English, Sesotho, Fujianese, and Mandarin with English subtitles
North American Premiere TK
South Africa-raised filmmaker Teboho Edkins’s remarkable documentary begins in the Chinese port city of Guangzhou, following the daily movements of a young African man trying to make a living working in a hotel; soon the film moves to Lesotho, a mountainous, landlocked region in the middle of South Africa, where a group of Chinese migrants have recently settled seeking their own economic stability and are living uneasily beside the rural community’s cattle ranchers. Edkins situates his subjects as though in a fictional narrative, privileging us to bear witness to their lives and minute interactions even as they become players in a story of an emerging and competitive global trade relationship. This expansive and immersive work of nonfiction redefines the rules of the “western” genre.

The Dove and the Wolf
Carlos Lenin, Mexico, 2019, 106m
Spanish with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere TK
The terrors of the past haunt the present in the astonishing debut feature from Mexican filmmaker Carlos Lenin, in which trauma lurks beneath every meticulously composed shot. Factory workers Paloma (Paloma Petra) and Lobo (Armando Hernandez) share a tender, loving relationship, though as their story unfolds it grows ever clearer that something from long ago is obstructing their happiness, and that for their romance to survive they must confront it. Setting the memory of unspeakable violence against hushed tones and deceptively placid imagery, Lenin gradually reveals the source of their pain, constructing an essential drama of the people who become collateral to the rampant gang and cartel violence in contemporary Mexican society.

Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains
Gu Xiaogang, China, 2019, 150m
Mandarin (in Fuyang dialect) with English subtitles
New York Premiere
Taking its title from a renowned 14th Chinese scroll painting by Huang Gongwang, this debut feature from Gu Xiaogang is a panoramic evocation of one year in the life of a provincial family. In tribute to its artistic inspiration, the film often presents its action from a quiet distance, the camera lyrically moving across the frame as its central characters—the members of the sprawling Yu family, overseen by an aging matriarch (Du Hongjun), whose birthday celebration opens the film—deal with business and romantic entanglements, financial debts and work struggles. All the while the seasons inexorably change. *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* was shot over the course of two years, and is the first in a declared trilogy of films about life along the Yangtze River—a first-time filmmaker’s labor of love that’s as accomplished as it is ambitious.

**The Fever**  
*Maya Da-Rin, Brazil, 2019, 98m*  
*Portuguese with English subtitles*  
*New York Premiere*  
In her spellbinding first feature, Brazilian director Maya Da-Rin takes a delicate, metaphorical look at the fragile political state of her country from a perspective most moviegoers haven’t seen. Da-Rin centers on the working and home lives of a father and daughter of indigenous Desana descent—middle-aged Justinio (a splendid, quietly expressive Regis Myrupu, who won Best Actor at the Locarno Film Festival) and Vanessa (Rosa Peixoto)—who have moved from their community to the northwestern city of Manaus. There, he works as a security guard in a massive warehouse; she has a position in a hospital and has recently been accepted to study medicine in Brasilia University. Trying to support his family, all the while dreaming of a soul-sustaining return to the Amazonian rainforest, Justinio must contend with encroaching obstacles, including casual racism, reports of a wild animal on the loose, and a mysterious malaria-like illness. Da-Rin keeps the film at once realist and mythic, modern and spiritual, leading to a symbolic, emotional conclusion.

**Giraffe**  
*Anna Sofie Hartmann, Germany/Denmark, 2019, 87m*  
*English, Norwegian, Danish, German, and Polish with English subtitles*  
*New York Premiere*  
A finely observed burgeoning romance is set against a rapidly changing landscape in Anna Sofie Hartmann’s spare and humane portrait of the dissolving boundaries of our ever more globalized world. *Giraffe* follows an ethnologist in her late thirties (Lisa Loven Kongsli) who has come to the remote island of Lolland in the south of Denmark. She’s here to study its inhabitants and record their traditions and objects before their homes are demolished to make way for a tunnel linking to Germany. Unexpectedly, she meets an attractive younger man (Jakub Gierszal), a laborer who’s been hired from Poland. Their beautifully etched love affair functions as the fictional centerpiece of an otherwise documentary-like exploration of belonging, memory, and work, featuring the island’s real inhabitants, whose way of life is about to change forever.

**Identifying Features**  
*Fernanda Valadez, Mexico/Spain, 2020, 94m*
Spanish with English subtitles
New York Premiere
Middle-aged Magdalena (Mercedes Hernandez) has lost contact with her son after he took off with a friend from their town of Guanajuato to cross the border into the U.S., hopeful to find work. Desperate to find out what happened to him—and to know whether or not he’s even alive—she embarks on an ever-expanding and increasingly dangerous journey to discover the truth. At the same time, a young man named Miguel (David Illescas) has returned to Mexico after being deported from the U.S., and eventually his path converges with Magdalena’s. From this simple but urgent premise, director Fernanda Valadez has crafted a lyrical, suspenseful slow burn, equally constructed of moments of beauty and horror, and which leads to a startling, shattering conclusion. Winner of the World Cinema Dramatic Audience and Screenplay Awards at this year’s Sundance Film Festival. A Kino Lorber release.

Kala azar
Janis Rafa, Netherlands/Greece, 2020, 91m
Greek with English subtitles
North American Premiere
Appropriately for a film about the unspoken connection between humans and animals, Kala azar seems to invent a new cinematic language. Set in a desolate, perhaps post-apocalyptic landscape in which people and their dogs, cats, and fish live together in a kind of liminal state, Greek director Janis Rafa’s first film, a top prizewinner at this year’s Rotterdam International Film Festival, surveys the grim but matter-of-fact day-to-day lives of a young, unfettered couple who work for a crematorium service. As they pay house calls to people who have lost their pets, helping to give their animals respectful send-offs, their own relationship begins to fracture. Rafa focuses on tactile surfaces and bodies rather than conventional narrative beats; her film is a sobering, poignant vision of the cohabitation of different species on our endangered planet.

The Killing of Two Lovers
Robert Machoian, USA, 2020, 84m
New York Premiere
After a startling opening image of extreme tension, first-time solo director Robert Machoian’s stark, slow-burn drama never quite goes where you expect. An evocative and atmospheric transmission from wintry Utah, The Killing of Two Lovers is a compact, economical portrait of a husband and father trying to keep it together while seething with rage during a trial separation from his wife. An interior drama set mostly outside, on the vast, lonely street where David (a knockout Clayne Crawford) stays with his ailing father just a few doors up from his wife Niki (Sepideh Moafi) and their four kids, Machoian’s film compassionately depicts a family in crisis, while moving at the ominous pace of a thriller. A complex, brooding soundscape from Peter Albrechtsen that seems to emanate directly from the head of its disturbed protagonist, and a claustrophobic aspect ratio contribute to the powerful emotional register of this impressive new work of American independent cinema.

The Metamorphosis of Birds
Catarina Vasconcelos, Portugal, 2020, 101m
Portuguese with English subtitles
New York Premiere
A highly unorthodox documentary that has the feel of a precious heirloom, this impressionistic yet emotionally rich film finds Portuguese filmmaker Catarina Vasconcelos sifting through the memories and dreams of her ancestors. In prismatic images, richly shot on 16mm film, we get the sense of a family’s entire lineage, starting with her naval officer grandfather, Henrique, who married her grandmother, Beatriz, on her 21st birthday; he then spent extended periods at sea, leaving her with an expanding brood of children. This is the beginning of a generational saga, told in shards of memory and voiceover. *The Metamorphosis of Birds* achingly evokes the natural world—the changing seasons, the play of sunlight, the ever-flowing tides, and the plant and animal life—that counterbalances and nurtures human life cycles.

Nafi’s Father
Mamadou Dia, Senegal, 2019, 109m
Fula with English subtitles
North American Premiere
A personal conflict between brothers escalates into a political, religious, and moral crisis in the gripping debut from Senegalese filmmaker Mamadou Dia, winner of the Best First Feature award at the Locarno Film Festival. When Tierno (Alassane Sy), the acting imam of a small town, discovers that his daughter, Nafi (Aïcha Talla), has agreed to marry the son of his older brother, Ousmane (Saïkou Lo), he becomes desperate to find a way to stop the wedding, without getting in the way of his daughter’s independence. The source of his alarm is Ousmane’s growing affiliation with a fundamentalist form of Islam that believes in employing any means to prevail, even violence. As Ousmane’s power in the town strengthens, his relationship with his more moderate brother becomes ever more fractured. Dia’s compellingly told tragic drama brims with detail and is an eye-opening portrayal of a man trying to hold fast to his principles in a world of intolerance and greed.

Nasir
Arun Karthick, India, 2020, 80m
Tamil with English subtitles
North American Premiere
A day-in-the-life portrait expands into something else entirely in this patient yet ultimately startling sophomore breakthrough from Tamil filmmaker Arun Karthick. Based on a short story by Dilip Kumar, *Nasir* takes place in Coimbatore, a town in Tamil Nadu, where a small Muslim community lives alongside the Hindu population. Nasir (Koumarane Valavane) is a Muslim family man struggling to make ends meet for his wife and their mentally challenged nephew who lives with them. He makes a small wage working at a Hindu sari shop, and is also a poetry lover whose verses we hear in lyrical passages. With placid, beautiful imagery of the everyday, Karthick brings us fully into Nasir’s mundane world, but off-screen news reports and casual conversations remind us of the violence that hangs in the peripheries.

Red Moon Tide
Lois Patiño, Spain, 2020, 84m
Spanish with English subtitles
North American Premiere
As he proved in his previous works, including Coast of Death and Night Without Distance, films that take place on borders between countries, or between life and death, Spanish filmmaker Lois Patiño is singularly brilliant at creating transfixing, ghostly images of enormous power. With Red Moon Tide, he has made his most haunting film yet, a journey into a phantom world, set on Spain’s Galician coast, where Rubio, a diver who retrieved bodies from shipwrecks, has gone missing. The small seaside community, made up of both the living and the long deceased, mourn his absence, in a series of exquisitely composed tableaux that turn images of everyday lives into the mythical.

Servants
Ivan Ostrochovský, Slovakia/Romania/Czech Republic/Ireland, 2020, 80m
Slovak with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere
Slovak filmmaker Ivan Ostrochovský turns a politically fraught moment in his nation’s history into a spare, tense morality tale that moves like a thriller. Set in totalitarian Czechoslovakia in 1980, Servants takes place at a Catholic seminary that is being put under increasing pressure by the ruling Communist party to fall in line and for its students to essentially act as informants for any nonconformist behavior; meanwhile its head priest has become an easy target for blackmail. Ostrochovský tells his story of mounting anxiety through the eyes of two conflicted novitiates just arrived at school, Michal (Samuel Polakovic) and Juraj (Samuel Skyva), and shoots in a pristine, high-contrast black-and-white that gives his film the sense of a constant waking nightmare.

The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs
Pushpendra Singh, India, 2020, 98m
Gujari and Hindi with English subtitles
North American Premiere TK
A visually entrancing fable with a core of steel, Pushpendra Singh’s The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs centers on the unforgettable Laila, a ferociously independent young Bakarwal woman from the politically fraught Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. She moves with her new husband, the shepherd Tanvir, to a home in the forest, where her beauty and strength make her the obsession of a befuddled local police officer and the forest guard Mushtaq, whose attention she constantly, cleverly thwarts. All the while she tries to figure out her own, new identity. Structured around a series of local folk songs and poetic interludes, which function as Laila’s interior monologues, this humorous and meditative feminist tale observes a woman who wants to be free to make her own decisions in a modernizing world, despite her connection to age-old traditions.

Surge
Aneil Karia, UK, 2020, 99m
New York Premiere
Ben Whishaw commands the center of every frame in the propulsive feature debut of British filmmaker Aneil Karia, a drama about a young man's mental breakdown that takes off as if from a slingshot and never lets up. Joseph is an airport security worker who's increasingly affected by the daily pressures of his high-stress job and seems disconnected from everyone around him, including his parents. Finally, something inside him seems to snap, and, over the course of one day, Joseph devolves into anarchy, rebelling against his surroundings, and lashing out at all propriety and social codes. Karia captures Whishaw's intense dissolution/liberation with a visceral visual approach that speaks to a deeper contemporary rage.

The Trouble with Being Born
Sandra Wollner, Austria/Germany, 2020, 94m
German with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere
This eerily placid work of science fiction begins as though a summer idyll in an isolated house in the forest between a middle-aged man (Dominik Warta) and what appears to be his adolescent daughter (Lena Watson). As the languorous days wear on, instances of a stranger, more intimate relationship between the two emerge, and we discover not all is what it seems in this otherworldly yet earthy environment. The film then takes a turn when the girl drifts away into the woods. Austrian director Sandra Wollner's disturbing, unsentimental vision of the fracturing effects of technology on human life and memory is both compassionate and unsparing, and vivid in its hard-to-shake imagery.

Twelve Thousand
Nadège Trebal, France, 2019, 111m
French with English subtitles
North American Premiere
In her fiction debut, which she also wrote and co-stars in, French documentary filmmaker Nadège Trebal masters a series of radical tonal shifts for a wildly entertaining, sexually unapologetic portrait of a couple contending with economic instability and the fight to maintain equality in their relationship. In a star-is-born performance, the magnetic Arieh Worthalter is down-on-his-luck charmer Frank, who, after being fired from his black-market scrapyard job, enters into an agreement with his partner, Maroussia (Trebal), to earn exactly 12,000 euros, the amount that would equal her annual income. Throughout Frank's journey, which is occasionally absurdist and fraught with perilous seductions, both financial and sexual, Trebal never loses sight of the very real pressures that capital puts on contemporary lives.

Two of Us
Filippo Meneghetti, France/Luxembourg/Belgium, 2019, 95m
French with English subtitles
New York Premiere
In his intensely moving middle-aged queer romance, first-time feature filmmaker Filippo Meneghetti casts Martine Chevallier and the legendary Barbara Sukowa as Madeleine and Nina, two women who live in the same apartment building and have been carrying on a love affair in secret for decades. Now that Madeleine's husband has died, Nina encourages her to
tell the truth about their relationship to her meddlesome, selfish grown children, hoping they can move to Rome together. As in any great melodrama (Sukowa’s work with Fassbinder is here never far out of mind), the cruel vicissitudes of society and fate get in the way; yet as their romantic dreams become more distant, their desperate love grows ever stronger. A Magnolia Pictures release.

Window Boy Would Also Like to Have a Submarine
Alex Piperno, Uruguay/Argentina/Brazil/Netherlands/Philippines, 2019, 85m
Spanish and Tuwali with English subtitles
North American Premiere
Enter a world of the unexpected in this exceptional surrealist debut from Uruguayan poet and filmmaker Alex Piperno in which doors never lead to where they’re supposed to and the world is a lot smaller than it appears. Melding together two inexplicably interconnected stories from wildly different settings, Piperno’s vividly drawn dream movie initially follows a group of rural farmers in a Filipino village who come to believe a shack that has mysteriously appeared in a valley clearing contains evil properties they must exorcise; at the same time, a young janitor working on a bougie cruise ship discovers a portal that opens to somewhere else entirely. Touching upon ideas of global connectivity and economic inequality with a lightly fantastical touch, Piperno has made a delightful fantasia for our moment.

SHORTS PROGRAMS
Program 1

Exam
Sonia K. Hadad, Iran, 2019, 15m
Persian with English subtitles
New York Premiere
This precisely calibrated nail-biter from Iranian filmmaker Sonia Hadad follows a teenage girl who reluctantly transports her father’s cocaine on a school day. Enlivened by a gripping performance by Sadaf Asgari (who picked up the Special Jury Award for Acting at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival), Exam delivers genre thrills and serious social commentary.

Monster God
Agustina San Martin, Argentina, 2019, 10m
Spanish with English subtitles
New York Premiere
Glowing red, an all-seeing power plant looms above a foggy town and seems to anticipate an unknown cataclysm while a punk teen longs to escape.

Wong Ping’s Fables 2
Wong Ping, Hong Kong, 2019, 14m
Cantonese with English subtitles
New York Premiere
Hong Kong animator Wong Ping renders social dynamics and economic anxieties through intersecting moral tales of an anthropomorphized cow and three sibling rabbits. Something like Memphis Design as envisioned through a video game, this candy-colored continuation of the award-winning *Wong Ping’s Fables 1* builds upon the self-taught animator’s bizarrely funny observations of contemporary society.

**The Eyes of Summer**  
*Rajee Samarasinghe, Sri Lanka/USA, 2020, 15m*  
**New York Premiere**  
A young girl communes with the spirit world around her in the aftermath of the Sri Lankan Civil War in this dialogue-free movie about ghosts and the pain of memory.

**Sun Dog**  
*Dorian Jespers, Belgium/Russia, 2020, 21m*  
**English and Russian with English subtitles**  
**North American Premiere**  
“The everlasting night is unbearable,” laments the client of a young locksmith in a frozen city in northern Russia. He stumbles through the inky darkness, captured by a floating, roving camera evoking the delirium of deep winter. Will the sun ever rise?

**Program 2**

**Playback**  
*Agustina Comedí, Argentina, 2019, 14m*  
**Spanish with English subtitles**  
**North American Premiere**  
This fiction-documentary hybrid is a tenderly crafted love letter to a group of Argentine drag queens and trans women as they lose their community to AIDS against the backdrop of an oppressive regime.

**After Two Hours, Ten Minutes Had Passed**  
*Steffen Goldkamp, Germany, 2019, 19m*  
**German with English subtitles**  
**North American Premiere**  
Anonymous male inmates go about their daily routines in Germany’s Hahnöfersand juvenile detention center. Questions of time, identity, and the realities of space convene in this quietly devastating documentary from Steffen Goldkamp, who captures a simultaneous sense of inertia and restless longing as it permeates the prison.

**Happy Valley**  
*Simon Liu, Hong Kong/USA, 2020, 13m*  
**World Premiere**  
In Hong Kong, echoes of resistance and turmoil are sensitively captured on 16mm in this poetic rumination of public spaces and everyday life in a metropolis in upheaval.
Black Sun
Arda Çiltepe, Turkey/Germany, 2019, 20m
Turkish with English subtitles
New York Premiere
A death in the family occasions a man’s return to an Aegean Turkish island, where an impending storm puts his trip on a circuitous route. Winner of the Locarno Film Festival’s Pardino d’Oro for Best International Short Film, Arda Çiltepe’s Black Sun is a laconic, 16mm-shot road movie where fleeting encounters and the indefinite hold of grief take shape in vivid sensory detail.

T
Keisha Rae Witherspoon, USA, 2019, 14m
New York Premiere
Keisha Rae Witherspoon’s sui generis quasi-fiction follows three grieving participants of Miami’s annual T Ball, a fabricated event where community members honor their dead by modeling wildly imaginative R.I.P. t-shirts. Combining elements of Afrofuturism and cinéma vérité, T is a powerful examination of mourning through the seen and unseen forces that influence our will to live.

FILM AT LINCOLN CENTER
Film at Lincoln Center is dedicated to supporting the art and elevating the craft of cinema and enriching film culture.

Film at Lincoln Center fulfills its mission through the programming of festivals, series, retrospectives, and new releases; the publication of Film Comment; the presentation of podcasts, talks, and special events; the creation and implementation of Artist Initiatives; and our Film in Education curriculum and screenings. Since its founding in 1969, this nonprofit organization has brought the celebration of American and international film to the world-renowned arts complex Lincoln Center, making the discussion and appreciation of cinema accessible to a broad audience, and ensuring that it remains an essential art form for years to come.

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
The Museum of Modern Art’s Department of Film marked its 80th anniversary in 2015. Originally founded in 1935 as the Film Library, the Department of Film is a dedicated champion of cinema past, present, and future. With one of the strongest international collections of motion pictures in
the world—totaling more than 30,000 films between the permanent and study collections—the Department of Film is a leader in film preservation and a discoverer of emerging talent. Through The Celeste Bartos Film Preservation Center, a state-of-the-art storage facility in Hamlin, Pennsylvania, MoMA restores and preserves films that are shown across the world and in many of the Museum’s diverse programs, most notably in To Save and Project: The Annual MoMA International Festival of Film Preservation. The Department of Film engages with current cinema by honoring films and filmmakers that will have a lasting historical significance through its annual Film Benefit, which raises funds for the continued maintenance and growth of the collection, and The Contenders series, an annual series of the year’s best movies, as selected by MoMA Film curators from major studio releases and top film festivals. Always looking to the future, the Department of Film is constantly unearthing emerging talent and providing a venue for young filmmakers through programs such as New Directors/New Films and Documentary Fortnight. Playing an essential role in MoMA’s mission to collect, preserve, and exhibit modern and contemporary art, the department was awarded an Honorary Academy Award in 1978 “for the contribution it has made to the public’s perception of movies as an art form.”

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