

SoCal cinephiles this month can choose among restored classics at AFI Fest, movies from contemporary Chinese master Jia Zhangke, iconic Jean Harlow films and more.

**RESTORED CLASSICS BY FEMALE FILMMAKERS AT AFI FEST |**

*6925 Hollywood Blvd.*

One of the most pleasing developments at AFI Fest these past few years has been its increased focus on the Cinema's Legacy program. Last year, for example, brought a generous tribute to American iconoclast Robert Altman, featuring 35mm presentations of many of his lesser known films. This year's retrospective, presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, digs even deeper: From Nov. 10 to 15, the festival will present new restorations (four to be shown on DCP; two on 16mm) of six underseen classics of independent cinema by female filmmakers. Moving chronologically, the program (which will take place at the TCL Chinese and Egyptian theaters) will include the late Chantal Akerman's beautiful and enigmatic masterpiece from 1978, *Meetings of Anna* (Nov. 15); the recently rediscovered 1980 debut by *Losing Ground* director Kathleen Collins, *The Cruz Brothers and Miss Malloy* (Nov. 12); Nietzchka Keene's 1990 feature *The Juniper Tree*, a bold treatment of the Brothers Grimm story, starring Bjork as one of two daughters of a murdered witch (Nov. 10); Nina Menkes' metaphysical mystery from 1991, *Queen of Diamonds* (Nov. 10); Barbara Hammer's 1992 documentary *Nitrate Kisses*, groundbreaking in its depiction of the LGBT community (Nov. 11, 16mm); and Cauleen Smith's 1998 film *Drylongso*, a penetrating portrait of the African-American experience presented in the guise of a serial-killer thriller (Nov. 14, 16mm).

**BARBARA HAMMER AT THE BILLY WILDER | 10899 Wilshire Blvd.**

Taken by *Nitrate Kisses* and anxious for more Barbara Hammer? You're in luck: Hammer will also be spotlighted this month at the Billy Wilder Theater, as the UCLA Film and Television Archive welcomes her to present an additional selection of new restorations overseen by the

artist herself. For over a half-century, Hammer, an icon of both feminist and queer cinema, has pioneered a unique brand of personal, diaristic filmmaking, working largely in 16mm, with the odd foray into early analog video. The series, titled “Barbara Hammer: Superdyke,” begins Nov. 9 with a program of some of the artist’s most indelible shorts — stretching from the early classic *Dyketactics*, through 1987’s computer-generated *No No Nooky T.V.*, all the way to her latest work, *Evidentiary Bodies* — and continues in similarly associative fashion through mid-December. Other November screenings include a Nov. 10 program of personal-poetic works highlighted by the 1995 autobiographical feature *Tender Fictions*, and a Nov. 17 evening of Hammer’s early experiments with nonfiction that will include both the film (*Superdyke*) that lends the series its title as well as 1983’s medium-length *Audience*, which turns the camera back on the viewer for an illuminatingly reflexive dialogue.

## **POVERTY ROW FILMS AT RALEIGH STUDIOS | 5300 Melrose Ave.**

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Already underway at Raleigh Studios and running through early December is “Down & Dirty in Gower Gulch,” another highlight of the UCLA Film and Television Archive’s winter season. Comprising so-called “Poverty Row” pictures from the 1930s — B-movies made by independent production houses (most located off Gower Street in Hollywood) that traditionally played opposite prestige fare from major studios on the back end of double bills — the series features a half-dozen digital restorations of films that pioneered some of the era’s strangest subgenres. The November screenings alone cover an impressive amount of ground: Nov. 3 brings 1933’s *The Sin of Nora Moran*, a classic of pre-code cinema that tracks a cursed woman’s fall from grace through a dizzying array of early narrative tricks; followed on Nov. 10 by 1932’s *False Faces*, in which director Lowell Sherman directs himself as a sociopath posing as surgeon for the rich and famous; and on Nov. 17, the great Edgar G. Ulmer’s first American film, *Damaged Lives*, a kind of allegorical morality play that carries the distinct honor of being the first movie to ever take venereal disease as a subject.

## **JIA ZHANGKE AT THE CHINA ONSCREEN BIENNIAL | 10899**

*Wilshire Blvd.*

One of the highlights of this year's China Onscreen Biennial, a two-month survey of the best of contemporary Chinese cinema, is a sidebar program of films by Sixth Generation master Jia Zhangke, whose latest feature, *Ash Is Purest White*, will screen as part of the festivities Nov. 10. With screenings split between the Billy Wilder and James Bridges Theater (located on UCLA's campus), the series will cover the entirety of Jia's career, from his student film *Xiaoshan Going Home* and first independently produced feature, *Xiao Wu* (screening together on 16mm on Nov. 3), to his recent streak of subversive, state-approved films, exemplified by the incendiary genre triptych *A Touch of Sin* (Nov. 9). Rounding out the retrospective are, for this humble correspondent at least, Jia's three greatest films: the 2000 post-revolution epic *Platform* (Nov. 5, screening on 35mm); 2004's exquisite and pointed globalist allegory *The World* and 2006's beguiling meditation on China's endangered Three Gorges Dam, *Still Life* — the latter two screening as a 35mm double feature on Nov. 7. Note: Tickets to all of these screenings are free of charge, and Jia will appear in person at select shows.

## **MORGAN FISHER AT REDCAT | 631 W. Second St.**

In conjunction with its recently unveiled exhibition "Morgan Fisher / Passing Time," an overdue survey of the Los Angeles veteran's work in photography, painting, and video art, REDCAT will welcome Fisher this month for a special screening of his groundbreaking 16mm film work. The program, set for the afternoon of Nov. 4, will pair two of Fisher's early conceptual shorts (1970's *Production Stills* and 1976's *Projection Instructions*, quasi-companion pieces that turn the cinematic apparatus into a subject for thought and engagement) with 1984's landmark *Standard Gauge*, an indexical reflection on celluloid and the history of Hollywood and one of the great films ever made about Los Angeles, and the local premiere of his latest (and first film in 15 years), *Another Movie*, a simultaneous tribute to composer Ottorino Respighi and a provocative rejoinder to Bruce Conner's iconic 1958 short *A Movie*.

## **JEAN HARLOW AT LACMA | 5905 Wilshire Blvd.**

Beloved American screen actress Jean Harlow is the subject of this month's Tuesday Matinee program at LACMA. An early signee of Hollywood magnate Howard Hughes, Harlow, with her famous blonde locks and femme fatale persona, quickly become an icon of early sound cinema, and the four films featured in LACMA's series (all showing on 35mm) provide a handy overview of her charms. Beginning Nov. 6 with Hughes' aviation epic *Hell's Angels*, the series moves chronologically through Harlow's early career. Following on consecutive weeks is Frank Capra's pre-code comedy *Platinum Blonde* (Nov. 13), featuring Harlow as a rich heiress who impulsively marries a workday reporter; Victor Fleming's *Red Dust* (Nov. 20), a French Indochina-set love triangle that pairs Harlow with her most frequent leading man, Clark Gable; and, finally, on Nov. 27, a second Fleming film, *Bombshell*, in which Harlow, playing a shamed, burned out movie star, seeks a new life away from fame only to find that her reputation is frustratingly difficult to outrun.

-Jordan Cronk, "The Hollywood Reporter", 11-1-2018