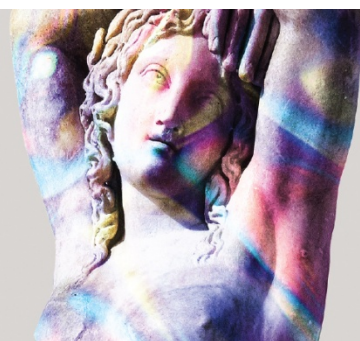


# ΦΕΣΤΙΒΑΛ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ ΕΠΙΔΑΥΡΟΥ

30.5 - 10.8



2019



ΤΑΙΝΙΟΘΗΚΗ  
ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ  
> ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ  
ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΟΥ

## PRESS RELEASE

### TRIBUTE

CINEMA AND THE CITY  
(PART A')

THE SILENT ERA

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY  
29-30 JUNE

GREEK FILM ARCHIVE, ATHENS FESTIVAL

OPEN AIR CINEMA 'LAIS'

Entrance: 5 euros

Start time: 21:00

The **Greek Film Archive** continues its successful collaboration with the **Athens Festival**, offering us a summer flavour of cinephilia with its tribute: ***Cinema and the City - The Silent Era***, which will take place on the **Weekend of 29 and 30th of June** at the ***Lais open air cinema*** (iera odos 48 and megalou alexandrou 134-136). **Start time: 21:00**. This two-day tribute on silent cinema will showcase three early 20th century films, filmed in Athens and Berlin (***The Adventures of Villar***, ***People on Sunday*** and ***Social Decay***) and consists of the first part of a broader tribute titled 'Cinema and the City' that will be concluded in September (12-18/9) during a one-week screening of iconic sound films, filmed in important metropolises around the world (from Athens and Paris, to Tokyo and Venice).

**(Caution: It had been announced that the complete tribute will take place on 27/6 - 3/7, however, due to national elections, the tribute will now be 'split' into two parts. The first one, with the three silent films from Athens and Berlin, will be held on 29-30 June in collaboration with the Athens Festival, and the second part, with the sound films, will be held on September, 12-18/9, by the Greek Film Archive).**

## **CINEMA AND THE CITY - THE SILENT ERA**

At Iera Odos and the historical cinema Lais, the Film Archive accepts the challenge/invitation of the Athens Festival, to attract old and new friends of cinema to a **cinematic 'promenade' in Athens and Berlin, of the early 20th century.**

**Three silent films**, reveal invaluable images of the two metropolises from the 1920-1930s that no longer exist. An almost unrecognisable Athens, stars in two films with its neo-classical buildings that have now been demolished, whilst Berlin is revealed to us as it was before the bombings.

\*On **Saturday 29 June** two films will be screened:

In the comic ***Adventures of Villar* (1924)** by Joseph Help, Villar seeks out his love throughout Athens. This is the earliest surviving Greek narrative-fiction film, and is an invaluable portrait of Athens in the 1920s.

In the film ***People on Sunday* (1929-30)**, we follow five bourgeois's on a Sunday getaway in the city of Berlin: a lighthearted glimpse at the interwar summer metropolis, in a moment of collective prosperity before the rise of Hitler. The screenplay is by Billy Wilder and the direction by Robert Siodmack, Edgar Ulmer and Rochus Gliese.

Both film screenings will be **accompanied by live music** from the composer **Minas I. Alexiadis**.

\*On **Sunday 30 June**, the silent film, ***Social Decay* (1932)** by Stelios Tatasopoulos filmed in Athens, will be screened; the first greek film of social commentary and a precursor of Greek neo-realism. It is the first narrative-fiction film which dealt with the plight of the unemployed and poor working populaces of the urban centres, whilst at the same it depicted the struggles for the organisation of

industrial work in trade unions. Its first distribution in theatres was accompanied by police interventions and cancellation of screenings. The film will be screened with an original score by **Konstantinovs Vita**.

**All films will be screened in newly restored copies, accompanied by the wonderful music of Minas I. Alexiadis (live performance) and K. Vita.**

## **THE FILMS IN DETAIL**

### **\*The Adventures of Villar**

Fiction, Greece, 1924, 26'

DCP, b/w, silent

Direction: **Joseph Hepp**

Screenplay: Sfakianos Nikolaos

Production: Pallas Film

Talent: Sfakianos Nikolaos, Filosofofou Nitsa

Source/Restoration: Greek Film Archive

In the earliest surviving greek narrative-fiction film, the popular-folk comic actor Nikolaos Sfakianos, in the role of Villar, finds a job at a dry-cleaners, but falling in love, he pursues his candid love throughout Athens — from the neo-classical buildings of Panepistimiou, the Temple of Olympian Zeus and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus to the seaside suburbs of Faliro. Hepp with Sfakianos adopt Mack Sennett's slapstick style of comedy and adapt it to the Athenian scene, whilst authoring an invaluable exhibit, of the Greek capital in the 20s.

### **Joseph Hepp (1887-1968)**

Born in Budapest. A close collaborator of Dimos Vratsanas, in 1920 he collaborated with Nikolaos Sfakianos in their first successful comedy 'Villar at the women's bathhouse in Faliro'. He worked as director of photography in many successful films, such as 'The Germans are coming back...' (1947) and 'The Drunkard' (1950). He also worked as official cameraman of the greek army in the military operations in Thrace and Asia minor. These documents, as well as the filming of the Greco-Italian and Greek Civil War, are invaluable historical exhibits.

## **\*People on Sunday**

### **Menschen am Sonntag**

Fiction, Germany, 1929-30, 67'

DCP, b/w, silent

Direction: **Robert Siodmak, Edgar G. Ulmer, Rochus Gliese**

Screenplay: **Billy Wilder** (based on the reportage by Kurt Siodmak)

Cinematography: Eugen Schüfftan, Fred Zinnemann (uncredited)

Production: Filmstudio Berlin

Talent: Erwin Splettstößer, Brigitte Borchert, Wolfgang von Waltershausen, Christl Ehlers, Annie Schreyer

Source/Restoration: Deutsche Kinematek, Praesens-Film AG

'A film without actors' according to the intro credits of the directorial debut by Siodmak and Ulmer and the screenwriting debut of Billy Wilder. Producer of the film, who belonged to the so called artistic movement of New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit), was the Austrian-American director Edgar G. Ulmer, who also collaborated in the direction of the film, whilst authorship behind the camera was held by the Austrian Fred Zinnemann and the German Eugen Schüfftan, known for the special effects in Fritz Lang's 'Metropolis' just two years prior. A low budget production with big stars, shortly before they escaped from Hitler's German, to leave their lasting impression in Hollywood.

The film captures a team of five bourgeois's, all amateur actors, in a Sunday getaway to the city. A lighthearted glimpse at the interwar summer metropolis, with scenery of Weimar Berlin, in a moment of collective prosperity before the rise of Hitler.

### **Robert Siodmak (1900 – 1973)**

German director. With the rise of National Socialism he left for Paris and then settled in Hollywood in 1939 where he directed many films.

### **Edgar Ulmer (1904 – 1972)**

Born in the Czech Republic and raised in Vienna, he worked as an actor and production designer.

## **Rochus Gliese (1891 – 1978)**

German director and actor. He is remembered in the United States for his work as artistic director in F.W. Murnau's masterpiece 'Sunrise' (1927).

### **\*Social Decay**

Greece, 1932, 42'

DCP, b/w, silent

Direction – Screenplay: **Stelios Tatasopoulos**

Cinematography: M. Gaziadis

Soundtrack: K. Vita

Production: Fizio Film

Talent: S. Tatasopoulos, D. Grizou, J. Garbi, K. Spathopoulos, K. Logariastakis

Source & restoration of copy: Greek Film Archive

The restoration plan was realised in collaboration with Documenta 14: Learning from Athens.

Collaborator: CINEMATEK. Co-Producer: COSMOTE TV. With the support of the Greek Film Centre.

A student leaves his studies due to financial difficulties and finds work in a theatre company. Disappointed by his love with the female protagonist, he then becomes a tobacco worker. He is confronted with the exploitation of the workers and leads the struggle for social justice. This is the first greek film of 'social reflection'. Its first distribution in theatres was accompanied by police interventions and cancellation of screenings. It was considered lost until the mid-80s, when surviving material was discovered that lead to its restoration in 1989. With the new digital restoration plan of 2017, the existing material was improved on. It was digitalised in 2K resolution, allowing for the restoration of part of the original frame. The inverted scenes were corrected, film adhesion was eliminated, the tonal gradient was improved and the original frame rate was updated.

## **Stelios Tatasopoulos (1908-2000)**

Greek director, born in Constantinople, with a degree in acting from Paris. He directed 27 films, among which his first two films 'Social Decay' and 'Black Earth' are distinguished for their social commentary.

***This tribute is realised with the support of the [Goethe Institut Athen](#)***

**Programme collaborator:** [projectitling](#)

## INFO

**General entry:** 5 euro.

### Greek Film Archive, Open Air Cinema Lais

Iera Odos 48 and Megalou Alexandrou, metro station Keramikos, T: 210 3612046

**Pre-sale:** At the Greek Film Archive's cashier, at the Athens Festival cashiers (Panepistimiou 39), as the websites [greekfestival.gr](http://greekfestival.gr) και [ticketmaster.gr](http://ticketmaster.gr), at [viva.gr](http://viva.gr) (<http://bit.do/CinemaandtheCity-VIVA>) as well as at the stores of Public and Ianos.

### Evanna Venardou

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#### GREEK FILM ARCHIVE

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#### ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ

Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού  
και Αθλητισμού



#### EUROPA CINEMAS

CREATIVE EUROPE - MEDIA SUB-PROGRAMME

#### ΧΟΡΗΓΟΙ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ



#### ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΥΠΟΣΤΗΡΙΞΗ



ΣΤΑΘΕΡΕΣ ΣΥΓΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΕΣ Α.Ε.



ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΚΟ  
ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΙΑΚΟ  
ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ  
**ΑΤΤΙΚΗΣ**



**Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης**

The tribute «Cinema and the City-The Silent Era» is organised by the Greek Film Archive in the framework of the act «Cinephilia in the New Age II» which is funded by the European Union - European Regional Development Fund and is included in the Operational Programme ROP ΑΤΤΙΚΙ of NSRF 2014-2020.