

# FILM FORUM 1



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CALENDAR PROGRAMMED BY KAREN COOPER  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH MIKE MAGGIORE



THE LAST LETTER

JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 11  
2 WEEKS

## The Last Letter

DIRECTED BY FREDERICK WISEMAN

FRANCE/USA 2002 61 MINS.  
IN FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES ZIPPORAH FILMS, INC.

### Jewish Life in Cracow

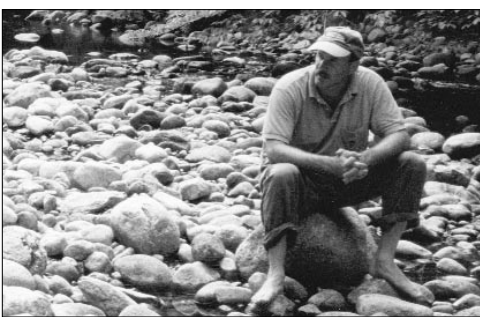
DIRECTED BY YITZHAK GOSKIND

POLAND 1939 11 MINS. IN YIDDISH WITH ENGLISH  
SUBTITLES NATIONAL CENTER FOR JEWISH FILMS

FAMED DOCUMENTARIAN FREDERICK WISEMAN adapts a chapter from Russian novelist Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* in which he imagines a letter written in 1941 by an elderly Jewish woman, a physician living in a small Ukrainian village that has fallen to the Nazis. Catherine Samie, a member of the Comédie-Française, interprets this exquisitely beautiful, heartfelt communication from a mother to her grown son, imbuing the language with delicate nuance and feeling. Leslie Camhi, writing in *The Nation*, calls the film "brilliant" and describes it thus: "Visuals reminiscent of German Expressionist film — the actress's physiognomy and the shadows surrounding her figure — combine with the pure power of language to conjure up the lost world of the ghetto... Using these subtle and minimalist means, Wiseman's film builds to an emotionally devastating conclusion."

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE JOAN S. CONSTANTINER FUND  
FOR JEWISH AND HOLOCAUST FILMS

1:15, 3, 4:45, 6:20, 8, 10



STONE READER

FEBRUARY 12 - 25  
2 WEEKS

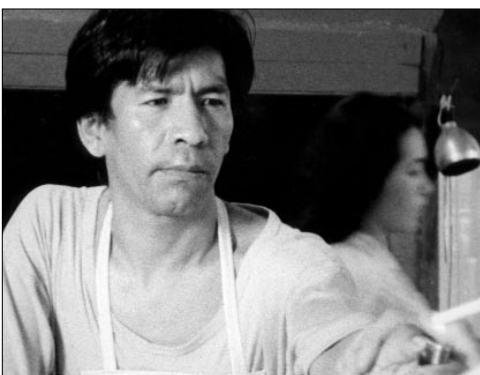
## Stone Reader

PRODUCED, DIRECTED & WRITTEN BY  
MARK MOSKOWITZ

USA 2002 127 MINS.

A LITERARY MYSTERY TALE that begins in 1972 when *The New York Times Book Review* calls Dow Mossman's *The Stones of Summer* a book of "torrential imagination...burning with generational fire." Twenty-five years later, avid reader Mark Moskowitz is bowled over by the complex novel of youth and rebellion and goes online to discover what else Mossman has published, but the trail turns cold: "When I searched for his books or for readers of *The Stones of Summer*, or even copies to give friends, there were none. Nor was there any trace of the writer, the publisher or anyone who had heard of the book, let alone read it. Did Mossman just stop writing or was there something more? Was he even alive?" Undaunted, Moskowitz crisscrosses the country looking for Mossman, trying to understand how a man could write just one extraordinary novel and then disappear. With Robert Gottlieb, editor of "Catch-22," Frank Conroy, head of the Iowa Writers' Workshop and critic Leslie Fiedler. Winner of the Grand Jury Prize, Slamdance Film Festival.

1:10, 3:40, 7:15, 9:45



BOLIVIA

FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 4  
1 WEEK

## Bolivia

DIRECTED BY ADRIAN CAETANO

ARGENTINA 2001 75 MINS. IN SPANISH WITH ENGLISH  
SUBTITLES CINEMA TROPICAL

ARGENTINA IS A NATION IN CRISIS: vast unemployment, bankruptcy, a dramatically shrinking economy, a government that seems to change hands every few months and a middle class that has its teeth on edge. BOLIVIA, a starkly realistic story of an illegal immigrant (from Bolivia) who lands a job with a greasy spoon on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, poignantly limns the racism, xenophobia and casual violence that characterize his newfound reality. This debut feature by one of Argentina's rising stars in its miraculously fecund movie-making community, manages to be both powerful and understated. A multiple prize-winner in French, Spanish, Dutch and British film festivals.

1:15, 3, 4:45, 6:20, 8, 10

MARCH 5 - 18  
2 WEEKS

## 10

DIRECTED AND WRITTEN BY ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

IRAN/FRANCE 2002 94 MINS. IN FARSI WITH ENGLISH  
SUBTITLES ZEITGEIST FILMS

IRAN'S FOREMOST DIRECTOR ABBAS KIAROSTAMI throws together a handful of elements: a beautiful, recently divorced woman behind the wheel of her car; the teeming streets of Tehran; a series of encounters with passengers ranging from her disgruntled 10-year-old son to her sister, an elderly woman on her way to prayer, a prostitute, et alia. What ensues is a fascinating, multi-layered appreciation of the complexity and sophistication of people's lives in contemporary Iran: Our driver never removes her headscarf, but sports fashionable shades and perfect makeup; her son is ferried between computer classes, school and grandma's; the prostitute blithely compares a married woman's situation to her own ("You're the wholesalers; We're the retailers"). Only a filmmaker with intimate knowledge of this sprawling, contradictory society and an assured feeling for character and place could produce this modern mini-masterpiece.

1:15, 3:15, 6, 8, 10



10

MARCH 19 - APRIL 1  
2 WEEKS

## Japòn

PRODUCED, DIRECTED & WRITTEN BY  
CARLOS REYGADAS

MEXICO/SPAIN 2002 122 MINS IN SPANISH WITH ENGLISH  
SUBTITLES VITAGRAPH/AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE

"AN EXISTENTIAL JOURNEY AS SOLEMN AND INTIMATE AS IT IS MAJESTIC AND IMPOSING." — David Rooney, *Variety*. Mexican director Carlos Reygadas points to Werner Herzog's influence when he talks about the rugged, unforgiving landscape (the canyons and villages of Hidalgo, about 150 km north of Mexico City) in which his story of a suicidal middle-aged man is set. It is a powerfully visual journey that touches upon complex philosophical issues: finding meaning in life, the continuum of human strength and vulnerability, the role of sexuality and congeniality versus the pleasures of nature and the need for seclusion and autonomy. Taking its title from the Japanese symbol of the rising sun, Reygadas unapologetically uses widescreen cinema, the most lush of formats, as a backdrop for exploring thorny issues of life and death.

1:15, 4, 7:15, 9:40



JAPON

APRIL 2 - 15  
2 WEEKS

## Fellini I'm A Born Liar

DIRECTED BY DAMIAN PETTIGREW

FRANCE/ITALY 2002 105 MINS IN ITALIAN AND ENGLISH  
WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES FIRST LOOK PICTURES

ACTORS DONALD SUTHERLAND, TERENCE STAMP, ROBERTO BENIGNI AND AUTHOR ITALO CALVINO tell fascinating, often hilarious stories about working with Federico Fellini in this irreverent portrait of the *Maestro*. Sutherland glowers ("it was hell on earth") and Stamp effuses (imitating Fellini's directions: "Ter-en-chino, imagine you go to big party. Whiskey, hashish, cocaine, sex. But really it's not a party, it's like whor-gy! All night! And in the morning somebody put big tab of LSD in your mouth. Now you're here"). But it is Fellini himself who reveals most, discussing women ("the unknown planet"), neurosis ("a treasure trove, guarded by monsters"), cinema ("it can exist in a sensation, an intuition; cinema is a form of painting; it's about objects and how light falls on them"), actors ("puppets"), Mastroianni ("Why do I always work with you?"), memory, marriage, and more.

1, 3:15, 5:45, 7:50, 10



FELLINI: I'M A BORN LIAR



LOVE AND DIANE

APRIL 16 - 29  
2 WEEKS

## Love and Diane

PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY JENNIFER DWORKIN

USA 2002 155 MINS. WOMEN MAKE MOVIES

LOVE IS THE 18-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER OF DIANE, a former crack addict who at one time lost her six children to foster care, but who has since reassembled her family, however fragile the arrangement. Filmmaker Jennifer Dworkin spent five years with these women, riding an emotional roller-coaster, as past resentments inform each one's prospects for stability and happiness. Nathan Lee in the *New York Sun* writes: "It's a major discovery... LOVE AND DIANE is sheer exhilaration, a movie of awesome emotional power and devastating relevance... We are starved for movies so profoundly in contact with the human condition. The best movies sensitize you to the world outside the theater, and LOVE AND DIANE is such a richly humanizing experience... a vital, necessary film."

1:30, 5:45, 8:45



SPELLBOUND

APRIL 30 - MAY 13  
2 WEEKS

## Spellbound

PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY JEFF BLITZ  
PRODUCED BY SEAN WELCH

USA 2002 97 MINS. THINKFILM

EIGHT TEENAGERS PACK THEIR DICTIONARIES AND HIT THE ROAD for Washington, DC to compete in the annual National Spelling Bee. A very funny and moving slice of anachronistic Americana is updated by filmmakers Jeff Blitz and Sean Welch who find out just what kind of kid would obsess over the spelling of *cephalgia*, *tergiversate*, or *logorhea*. We meet them at home, hunched over endless study lists, hovered over (or ignored) by parents who range from Angela's non-English speaking Mexican-born farm couple to Emily's well-heeled New Haven professionals, to three separate families of Indian descent. SPELLBOUND is a movie in love with people, their idiosyncrasies, their remarkable tenacity, their love of language, learning and the American dream.

1:15, 3:15, 6, 8, 10



DRACULA: PAGES FROM A VIRGIN'S DIARY

MAY 14 - 27  
2 WEEKS

## Dracula Pages From A Virgin's Diary

DIRECTED BY GUY MADDIN

CANADA 2002 75 MINS ZEITGEIST FILMS

CULT AUTEUR GUY MADDIN TRANSFORMS THE ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET'S SENSUAL VERSION OF BRAM STOKER'S CLASSIC NOVEL (Mark Godden, choreographer) into a ravishing, erotically charged black-and-white-and-red melodramatic cliffhangers, dark humor and stylized camerawork — set to the music of Gustav Mahler. The critics rave: "Its characters may be undead, but the film itself is crazy, passionately alive" — A.O. Scott, *New York Times*; "Quick-witted and dazzling...Imagine Murnau's NOSFERATU remade by Kenneth Anger, edited by Eisenstein on a cocaine binge, and produced for Masterpiece Theater." — Nathan Lee, *New York Sun*

1:10, 3, 4:45, 6:30, 8:15, 10

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