

APALAZZOGALLERY

JONAS MEKAS

Jonas Mekas was born in 1922 in the farming village of Semeniškiai, Lithuania. Currently living and working in New York City, he is an artist, poet and filmmaker whose movies are a cornerstone of independent cinema worldwide.

In 1944, Jonas and his brother Adolfas were deported by the Nazis to a forced labour camp in Elmshorn, Germany. At the end of 1949 the UN Refugee Organization brought both men to New York City, where they settled down in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Thanks to the friendship with his compatriot George Maciunas, immediately Mekas became active in the Fluxus group. It is well known, for instance, that he filmed "Bed-In" (1969) and "Up Your Legs Forever" (1970), two major performances by Yoko Ono, who, more recently in February 2015, has awarded him with the Lennon Courage Awards for the Arts at the MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In 1949, two months after his arrival in New York, the artist bought his first Bolex camera. He soon got deeply involved in the American Avant-Garde film movement, at first curating screenings for the non-profit organization Film Forum and the Carl Fischer Auditorium. In 1954 he founded Film Culture magazine, which soon became the most important film publication in the US. In 1958 he began his legendary *Movie Journal* column in *The Village Voice*. At the end of 1960 he signed the New American Cinema Manifesto, which is representative of an entire generation of independent filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage, Jack Smith and Kenneth Anger among others. Developing the ideas expressed in the manifesto, in 1962 Mekas founded the Film-Makers' Cooperative and in 1964 the Film-Makers' Cinematheque, which eventually grew into the Anthology Film Archives, one of the world's largest and most important repositories of avant-garde cinema.

Jonas Mekas is largely credited for progressing diaristic forms of cinema. His second film, *The Brig*, was awarded the Grand Prize at the Venice Film Festival in 1963. His filmography includes masterpieces such as *Walden* (1969), *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* (1972), *Lost Lost Lost* (1975), *As I was Moving Ahead I saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty* (2000), *A Letter from Greenpoint* (2005), *Sleepless Nights Stories* (2011) and *Out-takes from the Life of a Happy Man* (2012). In 2007 Jonas Mekas completed a series of 365 short films released on his website - one film every day - and since then has continued to share new works online as a way to experiment with cinema in the Internet era. This part of his production was the topic of *The Internet Saga*, an exhibition that has been presented at Palazzo Foscari Contarini on the occasion of the 56th Venice Biennale of Visual Arts.

It is difficult to find an avant-garde filmmaker who has not been influenced by Jonas Mekas: from Andy Warhol's feature-films to Michael Snow's structural cinema, to Stan Brakhage's expressionist cinema, to Stan VanDerBeek's expanded cinema. Many Confirmed artists of the late twentieth century recognized his fundamental role, almost preparatory, for their career: Joan Jonas, Carolee Schneemann, Chantal Akerman, Douglas Gordon, Harmony Korine to name a few.

Jonas Mekas' work has been celebrated over the years in the most relevant contemporary art events in the world: from Documenta XI and XIV to La Biennale di Venezia (*Utopia Station* in 2003 and *Lithuanian Pavilion* in 2005). More recent are the retrospective exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery in London (2012), the Centre Pompidou in Paris (2012), MUAC in Mexico City (2013), the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (2013), MMCA in Seoul (2017).

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 1962** Grand Prize awarded to GUNS OF THE TREES at the Porretta Terme Film Festival
- 1964** Grand Prize (Documentary) awarded to THE BRIG at the Venice Film Festival
- 1966** Gold Medal, Philadelphia College of Art, "for the devotion, passion, and selfless dedication to the rediscovery of the newest art"
- 1977** Guggenheim Fellowship
- 1989** Creative Arts Award, Brandeis University
- 1992** Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Ministry of Culture, France
Mel Novikoff Award, San Francisco Film Festival
- 1995** Lithuanian National Award
- 1996** Special Tribute, New York Film Critics Circle Award
Doctor of Fine Arts, Honoris Causa, Kansas City Art Institute

APALAZZOGALLERY

- 1997** Pier Paolo Pasolini Award, Paris
International Documentary Film Association Award, Los Angeles
Governors Award, Skohegan School of Painting and Sculpture
Doctor of Fine Arts, Honoris Causa, Universitatis Vytauti Magni, Lithuania
- 2000** Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Ministry of Culture, France
- 2006** REMINISCENCES OF A JOURNEY TO LITHUANIA added to the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress
Directors Guild of America Award
- 2007** Los Angeles Film Critics Association awards special citation for "contribution to film art"
Special Award from the Roswitha Haftmann Foundation, Zürich
- 2008** Baltic Cultural Achievement Award
Austrian Decoration of Honor for Science and Art (Österreichische Ehrenzeichen für Wissenschaft und Kunst)
- 2010** Life Achievement Award at the second annual Rob Pruitt's Art Awards
- 2011** George Eastman Honorary Scholar Award
- 2012** 'Carry Your Light and Believe' Award, Ministry of Culture, Lithuania
- 2013** Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, Ministry of Culture, France
Francis J. Greenburger Award
Elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- 2015** Yoko Ono Courage Award

LIST OF EXHIBITIONS

- 1968** Walden (Diaries, notes, sketches), Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo
- 1972** Reason over passion. New forms in film, The Solomon R.Guggenheim Museum, New York
- 1973** The Diary Film, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1983** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
- 1992** Galerie National du Jeu de Paume, Paris
agnès b. Galerie du Jour, Paris
Still Gallery, Edinburgh
Luarence Miller, New York
Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo
agnès b. Galerie du Jour, Paris
- 1997** Madrid Art Fair
Museum of Contemporary Art, Vilnius
- 1998** "Le Printemps de Cahors," Musée de Cahors Henri-Martin
Gandy Gallery, Prague
- 1999** Susan Inglett Gallery, New York
Pupelis Gallery, Obeliai, Lithuania
agnès b. Galerie du Jour, Paris
- 2000** "La Beauté" festival, Avignon. Films and installation
"Laboratorium," Antwerp
"Voilà," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris
agnès b Galerie du jour, FIAC art fair, Paris
- 2002** Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris
Documenta XI, Kassel
- 2003** "Jonas Mekas: A Camera for Jonas," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris

APALAZZOGALLERY

- Utopia Station, 50th Venice Biennale
"Dedication to Fernand Léger," Museum of Contemporary Art, Vilnius
Sideshow Gallery, Williamsburg, Brooklyn
Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris
"Fables de l'Identité," Centre National de la Photographie, Paris
- 2005** "Farewell to Soho," Moderna Museet, Stockholm
"Fragments of Paradise," Maya Stendhal Gallery, New York
"As I Was Moving Ahead," Pavilion of Lithuania at the 51st edition of the Venice Biennale
- 2006** "Destruction Quartet," Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney
"Onestar Stop," Galerie Erna Hécey, Brussels
"The Expanded Eye," Kusthalle Zürich
Baltic Art Center, Visby
Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C.
"To New York with Love," Gallery Toki no Wasuremono, Tokyo
"He Stands in the Desert Counting the Seconds of his Life," Tamayo Contemporary Art Museum, Mexico City
"The Diary Film," Göteborgs Konsthall, Sweden
"It All Comes Back Now in Glimpses," Sketch Gallery, London
"Brief Glimpses of Beauty," Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Center, UK.
Centrum Sztuki Współczesnej Zamek Ujazdowski, Warsaw
- 2007** "Recent Work," Maya Stendhal Gallery, New York
Serpentine Gallery, London
The Film Gallery, FIAC art fair, Paris
"Jonas Mekas: The Beauty of Friends being Together," MoMA/P.S.1
Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Center, Vilnius
"My Night Life" (with Auguste Varkalis), The Film Gallery, Paris
- 2008** Fondazione Ragghianti, Lucca
Museum Ludwig, Cologne
- 2009** "1968," Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Germany
"A Few Things I Want to Share with You, My Paris Friends," agnès b. Galerie du jour, Paris
"The Beast," FIAC art fair, The Film Gallery, Paris
"Destruction Quartet," James Fuentes Gallery, New York
"1989", Kunsthalle Wien
"Jonas Mekas", Gallery Toki no Wasuremono, Tokyo
"To New York with Love", Bas Fisher Invitational, Miami
"Destruction Quartet", Kings County Biennial, Brooklyn
- 2010** "Cassis", James Fuentes Gallery, New York Armory Show
The Brucennial, New York
"To New York with Love". James Fuentes Gallery, New York
- 2011** "Musique Plastique", agnès b. Galerie du jour, Paris
agnès b. Howard Street boutique, New York
"This Side of Paradise", agnès b. Rue du Jour boutique, Paris
- 2012** "Portraits: Jonas Mekas and Robert Polidori", Edwynn Houk Gallery, New York
"Musique Plastique", agnès b. Howard Street boutique, New York
"The 365 Day Project", 2B Gallery, Budapest
"Reminiszenzen aus Deutschland", Stadtmuseum, Wiesbaden
"Prisiminimai iš Vokietijos", Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Center, Vilnius

APALAZZOGALLERY

- "Images out of Darkness", James Fuentes Gallery, New York
Serpentine Gallery, London
"The 365 Day Project", Centre Pompidou, Paris
- 2013** DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague
MUAC, Mexico City
"I Lift My Glass of Wine to You, My Vienna Friends!", Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna
Paris Photo L.A., Deborah Colton Gallery, Los Angeles
"Outlaw: New Works", Microscope Gallery, Brooklyn
agnès b. Marseille
"The Sixties Quartet", KIASMA, Helsinki
"Let Me Introduce Myself, My Russian Friends!" State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg
"Jonas Mekas: In Praise of the Ordinary", The Phi Centre, Montreal
"Jonas Mekas / The Fluxus Wall", Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
"Life Goes On... I Keep Singing", Deborah Colton Gallery, Houston
- 2014** "Jonas Mekas: One Man Show", Cēsis Arts Festival, Latvia
"365 Day Project", ZKM, Karlsruhe
- 2015** "All These Images, These Sounds, APALAZZOGALLERY, Brescia, Italy
"The Internet Saga", Palazzo Foscari Contarini, collateral event in conjunction with the 56th Venice Biennale
- 2016** "Let Me Introduce Myself," Nina Johnson Gallery, Miami
Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel
- 2017** "I Sing I Celebrate," La Neomudéjar, Madrid
Boo-Hooray Summer Rental, Montauk

FILMOGRAPHY

- Cup/Saucer/Two Dancers/Radio (1965/1983), 23 min.
Guns of the Trees (1962), 75 min.
Film Magazine of the Arts (Summer, 1963), 20 min.
The Brig (1964), 68 min.
Award Presentation to Andy Warhol (1964), 12 min.
Report from Millbrook (1965/ 1966), 12 min.
Walden (Diaries, Notes, and Sketches), (filmed 1964-1968, edited 1968-69), 3 hrs.
Hare Krishna (1966), 4 min.
Notes on the Circus (1966), 12 min.
Cassis (1966), 4 min.
The Italian Notebook (1967), 15 min.
Time and Fortune Vietnam Newsreel (1968), 4 min.
Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania (1971-1972), 82 min.
Lost Lost Lost (1976), 2 hrs. 58 min.
In Between: 1964-8 (1978), 52 min.
Notes for Jerome (1978), 45 min.
Paradise Not Yet Lost (aka Oona's Third year) (1979), 96 min.
Self-Portrait (1980), 20 min., video.
Street Songs (1966/1983) 10 min.
Erik Hawkins: Excerpts from "Here and Now with Watchers"/Lucia Dlugoszewski Performs (1963/1983), 6 min.
He Stands in a Desert Counting the Seconds of His Life (1969/1985), 2 hrs. 30 min.
Scenes from the Life of Andy Warhol (1990), 35 min.
A Walk (1990), 58 min., video.
Mob of Angels: Baptism (1990), 61 min., video.
Mob of Angels at St. Ann (1991), 60 min, video.
Dr. Carl G. Jung or Lapis Philosophorum (1991), 29 min.

APALAZZOGALLERY

Quartet Number One (1991) 8 min.
Zefiro Torna or Scenes from the Life of George Maciunas (1992), 34 min.
The Education of Sebastian or Egypt Regained (1992), 6 hrs. video.
Imperfect 3-Image films (1995), 6 min.
On My Way to Fujiyama (1995), 25 min.
Happy Birthday to John (1996), 24 min.
Cinema is Not 100 Years Old (1996), 4 min., video.
Memories of Frankenstein (1996), 95 min.
Letters to Friends (1997), 1 hr. 28 min., video.
Birth of a Nation (1997), 85 min.
Symphony of Joy (1997), 1 hr. 15 min.
Scenes from Allen's Last Three Days on Earth as a Spirit (April 1997), 67 min., video.
Letter from Nowhere -- *Laiškai iš niekur* N.1 (1997), 75 min., video.
Song of Avignon (1998), 5 min.
Laboratorium Anthology (1999), 63 min., video.
This Side of Paradise (1999) 35 min., 16 mm.
Notes on the Factory (1999) 64 min., video.
Notes on Film-Maker's Cooperative (1999), 40 min., video.
Autobiography of a Man Who Carried his Memory in his Eyes (2000) 53 min., video.
As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty (2000) 4 hrs. 48 min.
Mozart & Wien and Elvis (2000) 3 min.
Silence, Please (2000), 6 min., video.
Requiem for a Manual Typewriter (2000) 19 min., video.
Remedy for Melancholy (2000) 20 min., video.
Letter to Penny Arcade (2001), 14 min. 33 sec., video.
Ein Märchen (2001) 6 min., video.
Ar Buvo Karas? (2002), 2 hrs. 28 min.
Mysteries (1966/2002) 34 min.
Williamsburg, Brooklyn (1949/2002) 15 min.
Travel Songs 1967-1981 (2003) 28 min.
Letter from Greenpoint (2004) 80 min., video.
Notes on Utopia (2003-5) 55 min., video.
Father and Daughter (2005), 4 min. 30 sec., video.
Notes on an American Film Director at Work: Martin Scorsese (2005), 1hr 20 min.
Scenes from the Life of Hermann Nitsch (2005), 58 min., film and video.
First Forty (2006). Forty short films, using materials from earlier films, re-edited specially for the Internet.
365 Day Project (2007). 365 short films, one for each calendar day of the year 2007.
Lithuania and the Collapse of the USSR (2008), 4 hrs. 49 min., video.
I Leave Chelsea Hotel (2009), 4 min.
Sleepless Nights Stories (2011), 114 min.
My Paris Movie (2011), 2 hrs. 39 min.
My Bars Bar Movie (2011), 86 min.
Correspondences: José Luis Guerin and Jonas Mekas (2011), 99 min.
Re: George Maciunas and Fluxus (2011), 87 min.
Mont Ventoux (2011), 3 min.
Happy Easter Ride (2012), 18 min.
Reminiszenzen aus Deutschland (2012), 25 min.
Out-takes from the Life of a Happy Man (2012), 68 min.

WRITINGS BY JONAS MEKAS

Knyga Apie Karalius ir Žmones, Tübingen, 1947 [in Lithuanian].
Movie Journal, Macmillan, 1972; Japanese edition, 1975. Spanish edition, 1976; French edition, 1992.
Three Friends: John Lennon, Yoko Ono, and George Maciunas, Tokyo, 1990 [in Japanese]; Lithuanian edition, Vilnius, 1998.
Laiškai iš niekur, Vilnius, 1997 [in Lithuanian].
Just Like A Shadow, text by Jerome Sans, frozen film frames by Jonas Mekas, Steidl, Göttingen, 2000.

APALAZZOGALLERY

Declarations de Paris, Editions Paris Expérimental, 2001 [in French and English].
As I Was Moving Ahead..., Editions Kinoshita, Tokyo, 2002 [in Japanese]. Text and narration from the film.
Fluxfriends (French edition of *Three Friends: John Lennon, Yoko Ono, and George Maciunas*), Centre Georges Pompidou, 2002.
Artist Book, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 2002.
Entretiens avec Jonas Mekas, Editions Paris Expérimental, 2006.
Anecdotes, translated by Jean-Luc Mengus, SCALI, Paris, 2007 [in French].
To Petrarca, Editions Dis Voir, Paris, 2009 [in both French and English editions]
Articles on cinema in *Film Culture*, *Sight & Sound*, *Bianco e Nero*, *The New York Times*, *Cahiers du Cinema*, *Isskustvo Kino*, etc.

POETRY

Semeniškių Idilės, Lithuanian edition, Žvilgsniai, Kassel, 1948; Japanese edition, Tokyo, 1996; enlarged Lithuanian edition, Vilnius, Baltos Lankos 1997.
Gėlių Kalbėjimas, Chicago, 1961 [in Lithuanian].
Pavieniai Žodžiai, Lithuanian edition, Chicago, 1967; Japanese edition, Tokyo, 1996.
Poezija, Vilnius, Vaga, 1971 [in Lithuanian].
Reminiscensijos, New York, Fluxus, 1972 [in Lithuanian].
Dienoraščiai, New York, Žvilgsniai, 1985 [in Lithuanian].
There is No Ithaca (English edition of *Semeniškių Idilės* and *Reminiscensijos*), translated by Vyt Bakaitis, Black Thistle Press, New York, 1996.
Dienų Raštai, Vilnius, 1998 [in Lithuanian].
Žmogus Be Vietos (Lithuanian edition of *I Had Nowhere to Go*), Baltos Lankos, 2000.
Poezija, Lietuvos Rašytojų Sąjungos Leidykla, Vilnius, 2002 [in Lithuanian].
Daybooks 1970-1972 (bilingual edition of *Dienų Raštai*), translated by Vyt Bakaitis, Portable Press, Brooklyn, 2003.
Žodžiai ir Raidės, Baltos Lankos, Vilnius, 2007 [in Lithuanian].
Idylls of Semeniškiai (bilingual edition), translated by Adolfas Mekas, Hallelujah Editions, 2007.

DIARIES

I Had Nowhere to Go: Diaries, 1944-1954, Black Thistle Press, New York, 1991.
Zefiro Torna or Scenes From the Life of George Maciunas, Arthouse, New York, 1998.
Žmogus Be Vietos (Lithuanian edition of *I Had Nowhere to Go*), Baltos Lankos, 2000.
Lettres de nulle part (French edition of *Laiškai iš niekur*, translated by Marielle Vitureau), Paris Expérimental, 2003.
Je n'avais nulle part où aller (French edition of *I Had Nowhere to Go*), P.O.L, Paris, 2004.
My Night Life (English, Italian, Lithuanian, and French editions), illustrated by Auguste Varkalis, Baltos Lankos, Vilnius, 2006.
Ningún lugar adonde ir (Spanish edition of *I Had Nowhere to Go*, translated by Leonel Livchits), Caja Negra, Buenos Aires, 2008.

CATALOGS

Jonas Mekas, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, 1983.
Jonas Mekas, Galerie nationale du Jeu de paume, Paris, 1992.
Jonas Mekas: Films immobiles, une celebration, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 1996.
Jonas Mekas: Frozen Film Frames, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 1996 [in Japanese].
Sustabdytos akimirkos, Contemporary Art Museum, Vilnius, 1997.
Jonas Mekas: This Side of Paradise, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 1999.
Jonas Mekas: Conversations, Letters, Notes, Misc. Pieces, edited by Liutauras Psibilskis, published by the Lithuanian Art Museum on the occasion of the Venice Biennale, 2005.
The Diary Film/Dagboksfilmen, edited by Liutauras Psibilskis, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 2005.
The Avante-garde from Futurism to Fluxus, Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Center, Vilnius, 2007 [in English and

APALAZZOGALLERY

Lithuanian editions].

Jonas Mekas, Fondazione Ragghianti, Lucca, Italy, 2008 [in Italian].

Jonas Mekas, published by Koenig Books, on the occasion of the exhibition "Jonas Mekas" at the Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2008 [in English and German].

A Few Things I Want to Share with You, My Paris Friends, Galerie du Jour, Paris, 2009.

EXTENDED ESSAYS AND INTERVIEWS

Alan Levy, "Voice of the Underground Cinema," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 19, 1965.

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