

RECOMMENDED VIEWING **related to specific topics and workshops**

6/19/18: on antecedents & history of GDR artists and intellectuals:

Malik

GDR, 1967, dir. Giovanni Angella, color & b/w, 18 min. doc., ST

Brothers Wieland Herzfelde and John Heartfield tell the story of the Malik publishing house, which had specialized in leftist and avant-garde art and literature and was forced by the Nazis to leave Germany.

6/21/18: portraits of important East German artists

Fritz Cremer, Creator of the Buchenwald Memorial (Fritz Cremer, Schöpfer des Buchenwald-Denkmal) GDR, 1957, b/w, 17 min., doc.

The memorial erected at the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1957 became a rallying cry for antifascism worldwide.

Political Art: Kollwitz, Dix, Nagel (Kämpfende Kunst)

GDR, 1959, dir. Götz Oehlschlägel, b/w, 8 min., doc.

This short documentary on three artists features a score by Hans-Dieter Hosalla.

Otto Nagel 1994-1967

GDR, 1970, dir. Karlheinz Mund, color & b/w, 23 min., doc.

A poetic portrait of the autodidactic painter Otto Nagel directed by Karlheinz Mund, who specialized in artist portraits.

Theo Balden - Zeitzeugen Interview

Germany, 1994, dir. Thomas Grimm, color, 48 min., doc.

A post-Wall interview with Theo Balden in which he discusses: his decision to return to Germany and his move to the east; his relationship as an artist to the East German state and stories about other artists returning from exile; the Formalism debate; and the GDR's understanding of art.

Because Everything Moves, My Friend (Denn alles bewegt sich, mein Freund)

GDR, 1988, dir. Donat Schober, b/w, 30 min., doc.

A film about towering GDR cultural figure Bertolt Brecht with his students.

6/22/18: the Soviet role in saving/stealing paintings at the end of WWII:

GDR Paintings Return (Die Bilder von Dresden)

GDR, 1955, dir. Joachim Hellwig, b/w & color, 19 min., doc.

Artworks taken from Dresden galleries after WWII return from the USSR.

6/25/18: Ties to the East – Political Song and the Bitterfeld Path:

Song International

GDR, 1971, dir. Jürgen Böttcher, color, 45 min., doc.

The Festival of Political Song took place in East Berlin every year from 1970 to 1990. Founded and organized by the East German political music group Oktoberklub, the Festival was conceived as a place for young people from around the world to meet and exchange songs and ideas based on anti-imperialist

internationalism. Participants represented both communist countries and leftwing movements in capitalist countries, including the USA. This film documents the 1971 Festival, whose participants also joined together to demand the release of Angela Davis from prison. The film starts with a performance of *Lyric Song Club* performing “Left March,” by Hanns Eisler and Vladimir Mayakovsky.

Three of Many (Drei von vielen)

GDR, 1960, dir. Jürgen Böttcher, b/w, 33 min., doc., ST

An affectionate portrait of three workers—Peter Herrmann, Peter Graf and Peter Makolies—who took art classes with director and artist Jürgen Böttcher. Another of his students, Ralf Winkler, who later became known as A. R. Penck, also makes an appearance in the film.

Angel Wagenstein: Art Is a Weapon

USA, 2016, dir. Andrea Simon, b/w & color, 75 min., doc., ST

A new documentary on the Bulgarian Jewish filmmaker Angel Wagenstein, who studied filmmaking in Moscow with the GDR’s premiere director—the German Jewish Konrad Wolf—and collaborated with him on three award winning GDR co-productions—a successful example of “international solidarity.” The question raised by his films, with their sharp but strategically coded critiques of communist ideology, is how to engage in what he calls “the great conflict between the artist and the State,” and yet still remain at liberty to create—and resist.

6/26/18: Music, Modernity and Socialist Ideology:

An Artist of the People: John Heartfield (Ein Künstler des Volkes)

GDR, 1959, dir. Wernfried Hübel, b/w, 17 min., doc.

A portrait of the best-known graphic artist of the pre-Nazi Weimar Republic period, with music by renowned GDR composer Hanns Eisler.

6/27/18: Claiming Germany’s Cultural Heritage:

Friedemann Bach. Germany, 1941, dir. Traugott Müller & Gustaf Gründgens, b/w, 102 min., ST

6/28/18: New Trends & Competing with the West:

The Path of Jazz (Vom Lebensweg des Jazz)

GDR, 1956, dir. Wolfgang Bartsch, b/w, 19 min., doc.

This short documentary looks back at the roots of jazz in slavery.

Caterwauling (Katzenmusik)

GDR, 1954, dir. Lothar Barke, color, 6 min., anim.

This first animation film made in East Germany offers an entertaining and satirical look at fans and opponents of “American” music styles that fueled political debate and a generation gap in the GDR.

6/29/18 Pedagogy Workshop on Using Artworks in Teaching (topic Holocaust):

Verdict on Auschwitz: The Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial, 1963-1965. Germany, dirs. Rolf Bickel & Dietrich Wagner, color & b/w. Three-hour original version, 1993; one-hour teaching version, 2005. (Amherst, MA: DEFA Film Library, 2006).

6/29/18: GDR Music and Race:

Monolog for a Taxi Driver (Monolog für ein Taxifahrer)

GDR, 1962, dir. Günter Stahnke, b/w, 37 min., ST

An East Berlin taxi driver's shift on Christmas Eve turns into a reflection on life, society, and his strained relationship with his wife. This short film, written for GDR television by Günter Kunert, was banned for its modernistic style and its negative presentation of socialist ideas. It features a surprisingly modern jazz score by Karl-Ernst Sasse.

400cm³

GDR, 1966, dir. Walter Heynowski, b/w, 5 min.

Giving blood can be so routine that it's easy to forget its impact. But Heynowski links East German blood donors to the Vietnamese people who receive this precious gift in a series of intercut images set to original choral music by Paul Dessau.

Paul Dessau

GDR, 1968, dir. Richard Cohn-Vossen, b/w, 32 min.

A portrait of prominent GDR composer Paul Dessau during rehearsals of his orchestral work entitled *Bach Variations*. He speaks up against the oversimplification of music.

Against Idiocy in Music – Hanns Eisler (Komm ins Offene Freund! oder gegen die Dummheit in der Musik) GDR, 1988, dir. Andrea Ritterbusch, b/w, 23 min.

In this portrait of one of East Germany's most renowned composers, Hanns Eisler speaks about his difficulties with socialist cultural policies, including the ban of his opera.

7/2/18: Artistic Antecedents and Modernism in the GDR:

Kuhle Wampe, or Who Owns the World? (Kuhle Wampe, oder Wem gehört die Welt?)

Germany, 1932, dir. Slatan Dudow, b/w, 69 min., ST

Pirosmani, USSR, 1969/72, dir. Georgi Shengelaya, color, 85-105 min., ST

7/5/18: Artists on Film – Art for Art's Sake?

Ernst Barlach in Güstrow

GDR, 1987, dir. Klaus Schulze, color, 27 min., doc.

A portrait of German Expressionist artist Ernst Barlach (1870-1938) and his years in Güstrow, with a score by GDR composer Peter Gotthardt.

Ernst Barlach: Mystic of Modernity (Ernst Barlach–Mystiker der Moderne)

Germany, 2006, dir. Bernd Boehm, color & b/w, 26 min., doc., ST

This documentary on the life of Barlach weaves together excerpts of his writings into a biographical overview with extensive images of his drawings, paintings and sculptures. Narrated in English.

Goya, or the Hard Way to Enlightenment (Goya oder der arge Weg der Erkenntnis)

GDR/USSR, 1971, dir. Konrad Wolf, color, 129 min., ST

7/5/18: Painting Women – Women Artists in the GDR:

Uschi Brüning

GDR Magazine 1972/25 - #1. GDR, 1972, color, 3 min., doc.

The famous GDR Jazz singer Brüning works on her new records.

Nude Photography – e.g., Gundula Schulze (Aktfotografie – z.B. Gundula Schulze)

GDR, 1983, dir. Helke Misselwitz, b/w, 11 min., doc.

Portrait of photographer Gundula Schulze, who rebelled against traditional ideals of beauty, by one of East Germany's best known women directors.

Painter Heidrun Hegewald (Malerin Heidrun Hegewald)

Germany, 1994, dir. Martin Röntger, color, 42 min., doc.

A retrospective interview with painter Heidrun Hegewald.

Nuría Quevedo: A Berliner from Barcelona (Nuría Quevedo – Eine Berlinerin aus Barcelona)

Germany, 2003, dir. Karlheinz Mund, color, doc., TV

A portrait of the Spanish painter Nuría Quevedo, whose family moved to East Germany in 1952. In her paintings she depicts the themes of exile and rootlessness.

Crop Seeds Must Not Be Ground – Käthe Kollwitz (Saatfrüchte sollen nicht vermahlen werden – Käthe Kollwitz) GDR, 1967, dir. Kurt Tetzlaff, b/w/, 20 min., doc.

Based on the artist's letters and diary, the film tells the story of the creation of Kollwitz's memorial, *Grieving Parents*, which she dedicated to her son who died in WWI. With a score by Peter Rabenalt.

7/6/18: Recognizing Women Artists in the GDR:

Solo Sunny.

GDR, 1980, dir. Konrad Wolf & Wolfgang Kohlhaase, color, 102 min., ST

Three Women Artists in the GDR (Malen in der DDR)

Germany, 1986, color, 23 min., doc.

7/6/18: Mainstream Visual Art and Artists in the GDR:

Painters in the GDR (Maler in der DDR)

Germany, 1980, color, 30 min., doc.

This documentary features the work of mainstream modern artists in the GDR, including Willi Sitte, Werner Tübke, and Uwe Pfeiffer.

Hermann Glöckner: A Short Visit (Kurzer Besuch bei Hermann Glöckner)

GDR, 1984, dir. Jürgen Böttcher, color & b/w, 32 min., doc., ST

This film documents the meeting of two painters – the older artist in front of the camera demonstrates his work to the younger artist behind the camera. Glöckner also speaks of his experiences under the Nazis and his difficulties with Socialist Realism in the 1950s and '60s. His work was a revelation for many American art historians when it was shown in the 2009 LACMA exhibit, *Art of Two Germanys: Cold War Cultures*. This is the only filmic portrait of the artist.

No War, No Peace

Germany, 1985, dirs. Stig Anderson & Bjorn Engvik, color, 53 min., doc.

This film introduces five major GDR painters: Angela Hampel, Hubertus Giebe, Johannes Heisig,

Bernhard Heisig, and Wolfgang Mattheuer.

Battle with a Painting (Schlacht am Bild)

GDR, 1988, dir. Ted Tetzke, color, 21 min., doc.

Painter Werner Tübke and the 360-degree panorama painting at Bad Frankenhausen.

7/10/18: The Alternative Art Scene

Transformations: Potters Bull, Venus after Giorgione, Woman at the Clavichord (Verwandlungen: Potters Stier, Venus nach Giogione, Frau am Klavichord.)

GDR, 1984, dir. Jürgen Böttcher, color, 17 min., 22 min., 17 min.

La Villette

GDR, 1990, dir. Gerd Kroske, color, 53 min., doc., ST

In January 1990, only two months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, almost two hundred controversial East German visual and performance artists—including Jürgen Böttcher, the Autoperforation Artists, Via Lewandowsky, Trak Wendisch, Conny Hege, Klaus Killisch, Helga Paris and Hanns Schimansky—presented works rarely shown in the GDR at Paris' exhibition space in the former La Villette slaughterhouses. The three-day exhibition, *L'autre Allemagne hors les murs (The Other Germany Outside the Walls)*, was curated by East German art historian Christoph Tannert and French journalist Maurice Najman in France.

I Was a Citizen of the GDR (excerpts) (Ich war Bürger der DDR)

That Was the GDR: A History of the Other Germany, Part 1. Germany, 1993, dirs. Gitta Nickel & Wolfgang Schwarze, color & b/w, c. 10 min.

Interviews with glam rock star Tamara Danz and sculptor Inge Hunzinger.

Nana Hagen Band Live – Rockpalast

1978, 57 min., www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdsPft_uNg

Tuba Wa Duo

GDR, 1989, dir. Jörg Foth, color, 12 min., ST

Two men sit on the roof of a building, playing the tuba and calling out absurd messages. The residents are disturbed by the noise and the conflict escalates. The filmmakers understood their absurd, satirical defense of the tuba as a bold parody of official rhetoric and policies. This short film is based on the play *Rüpel drama*, by Hans-Eckardt Wenzel.

7/12/18: Straddling the End of the GDR:

REALfilm

GDR/Germany, 1986/2001, dir. Lutz Dammebeck, b/w, 48 min., doc./animation

A multi-media performance with dancer Fine Kwiatkowski, painter and filmmaker Lutz Dammebeck, and musician Robert Linke, filmed at the *Haus der Volkskunst* in Leipzig on May 14, 1986. This improvisational exploration of body and motion, in a context created by DEFA film footage and filmed and still images, was an unusual project in the East German art scene.