

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

‘ETERNITY AND HISTORY: THE CINEMA OF THEO ANGELOPOULOS,’ THE FIRST COMPLETE U.S. RETROSPECTIVE IN 25 YEARS

Film series focusing on the director of *Landscape in the Mist*, *The Traveling Players*, and *Eternity and a Day*

July 8–24, 2016 at Museum of the Moving Image

Astoria, Queens, NY, June 23, 2016—Greece’s most prominent film director of the post-1968 era, Theo Angelopoulos (1935–2012) was a master cinema stylist. His investigations into history and politics, tyranny and resistance, and spiritual anomie and emotional devastation place him on equal footing with filmmakers like Andrei Tarkovsky, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Wim Wenders. Today, at a time when Greece has struggled with impending economic collapse, and as the country’s refugee crisis has worsened, with displaced populations fleeing war in the Middle East and massing on its borders, the themes of Angelopoulos’s cinema are pressing once again. Museum of the Moving Image will present [*Eternity and History: The Cinema of Theo Angelopoulos*](#), a complete retrospective of the director’s career—the first in the United States in 25 years—from July 8 through 24, 2016. The retrospective will also be presented at the Harvard Film Archive in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from July 15 through August 22. The presentation of the retrospective at Museum of the Moving Image was made possible with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce.

“As a new generation of Greek filmmakers, including Yorgos Lanthimos and Athina Rachel Tsangari, have reached international prominence, the time is ripe to see Angelopoulos anew, as cinema that reflects on the past while foretelling the turbulent world we are now living in,” said Chief Curator David Schwartz. “We are very pleased to be working with the late director’s wife and daughter, Phoebe Economopoulou-Angelopoulou and Katerina Angelopoulou, on bringing these films to New York.”

The retrospective includes thirteen feature films—all presented in 35mm prints, and all imported from the Greek Film Centre in Athens—and two short works, including his first film *Broadcast* (1968). Although Angelopoulos is widely regarded as one of the masters of world cinema, none of his films are currently in theatrical distribution in the

United States, making this an extremely rare opportunity to see this important body of work.

Among the highlights are Angelopoulos's rarely shown early films, including his trilogy of modern Greek history, comprised of *Days of '36* (1970); *The Traveling Players* (1975), a four-hour epic presented in 80 controlled tableaux shots and which marked the director's launch on the international film festival circuit; and *The Hunters* (1977). The series opens with the film that brought him international success, the stunning and heartbreaking *Landscape in the Mist* (1986), about two young siblings traveling on their own in search of their absent father.

With *The Beekeeper* (1986), which stars Marcello Mastroianni, Angelopoulos began to work with internationally renowned actors of the European and American screen. Mastroianni again features in *The Suspended Step of the Stork* (1991), co-starring with Jeanne Moreau, as a lost soul in a refugee camp who is thought to be a formerly prominent politician, now in hiding. In *Ulysses' Gaze* (1995), which was awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, Harvey Keitel stars as a Greek-American filmmaker on a quest through Eastern Europe searching for lost reels from a mythical 1905 film. Angelopoulos's following feature, *Eternity and a Day* (1998), starring Bruno Ganz as a terminally ill writer, won the coveted Palme D'Or at Cannes—an overdue recognition of his work after three decades of filmmaking. And, his final film, the little seen *The Dust of Time* (2008) stars Willem Dafoe (alongside Ganz, Michel Piccoli, and Irène Jacob) as a film director who stops production to look for his daughter who has gone missing.

The pleasures of Angelopoulos's cinema also owes much to Eleni Karaindrou, who composed the music for all his films since *Voyage to Cythera* (1984). Her soulful melodies and use of traditional Greek instruments are especially memorable in *Eternity and a Day* and in *Ulysses' Gaze*, marrying the director's stunning images with haunting, melancholy chords.

Angelopoulos died in 2012 after he was struck by a motorcycle near the set of his (unfinished) film *The Other Sea*. Among the writers reflecting on the director's work at that time, David Thomson wrote, "He is an artist of sky and distance, horizon and border, who needs to be seen and felt on the biggest screens possible, so that we can be accomplices in his journeys and enquiries."

Eternity and History: The Cinema of Theo Angelopoulos is presented with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce, and with the cooperation of The Greek Film Centre (Athens).

Special thanks to Katerina Angelopoulou, Phoebe Economopoulou-Angelopoulou,

James DeMetro (New York City Greek Film Festival), and Haden Guest and David Pendleton (Harvard Film Archive).

SCHEDULE FOR 'ETERNITY AND HISTORY: THE CINEMA OF THEO ANGELOPOULOS'
JULY 8–24, 2016

All screenings take place at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue in Astoria, New York. Unless otherwise noted, tickets are \$12 adults (\$9 seniors and students / \$7 youth 3–17) and free for Museum members at the Film Lover and Kids Premium levels and above. Advance tickets are available online at movingimage.us. Ticket purchase may be applied toward same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

[The series is posted online here.](#)

All films directed by Theo Angelopoulos, in Greek with English subtitles.

Landscape in the Mist (Topio stin omichli) and The Broadcast (I Ekpompi)

FRIDAY, JULY 8, 7:00 P.M.

1988, 127 mins. 35mm. With Michalis Zeke, Tania Palaiologou, Stratos Tzortzoglou. In this road movie filled with stunning images, an adolescent girl and her little brother flee their small town in search of their absent father, who they believe has emigrated to Germany. Between hopping trains and hitchhiking, they befriend a young man who helps them on their way. Despite moments of awkward tenderness, this harsh film refuses to sentimentalize the experiences of its characters and the conditions of their lives. Preceded by ***The Broadcast*** (1968, 22 mins. 35mm. With Theodoros Katsadramis). Angelopoulos's first film is a subtly absurdist and deadpan satire about a group of television journalists who attempt to find "the ideal man."

Alexander the Great (O Megalexandros)

SATURDAY, JULY 9, 5:00 P.M.

1980, 199 min. 35mm. With Omero Antonutti, Eva Kotamanidou, Grigoris Evangelatos. In *Alexander the Great*, Angelopoulos turns an incident from nineteenth-century Greek history into a fable of absolute power corrupting a village. Alexander is a tribal warlord and former political prisoner who kidnaps British tourists, holding them for ransom until Britain and the Greek puppet government in Athens meet his demand for amnesty for his band of freedom fighters. Angelopoulos asks viewers to see the ruins of Greece not so much as the remnants of a noble past but as the evidence of ongoing pillage, making this the most boldly leftist of his history films.

The Traveling Players (O thiasos)

SATURDAY, JULY 10, 2:00 P.M.

1975, 222 mins. 35mm. With Eva Kotamanidou, Aliko Georgouli, Stratos Pahis. Angelopoulos weaves through time, as the troupe of actors in *The Traveling Players* moves through the landscape of Greek history in the years between 1939 and 1952. Violence and politics infect the players' lives, as their story becomes a doomed *Oresteia* enacted as the Greek left is crushed

during the Second World War and its aftermath under British liberation and then the Marshall Plan. *The Traveling Players* has the scope of a David Lean epic with none of the heroics. The film is an anti-epic, bravura in its camera movements yet micro-concentrated on events in the collective life of the film's central characters.

The Hunters (Oi kynigo)

FRIDAY, JULY 15, 7:00 P.M.

1977, 168 min. 35mm. With Mairi Hronopoulou, Eva Kotamanidou, Aliko Georgouli. After the corpse of a partisan who fought for Greek independence is discovered in the snow, hidden guilt overwhelms the New Year's Eve celebration of a town's bourgeoisie. The absurdity of a present day in which the guilty escape punishment and thrive becomes an absurd spectacle culminating in orgasmic dancing with imaginary rulers and death by firing squad. The great beauty and rigor of Angelopoulos's uncompromising mise-en-scène reaches an apotheosis in *The Hunters*, in which he pulls back the curtain of mid-twentieth-century Greek history to expose who is really running the show.

Days of '36 (Meres tou '36) and Athens, Return to the Acropolis (Athina, epistrofi stin Akropoli)

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2:30 P.M.

1972, 105 mins. 35mm. With Vangelis Kazan, Kostas Pavlou, Petros Zarkadis. Set in 1936 at the end of the Second Hellenic Republic, *Days of '36*, the first film in Angelopoulos's history trilogy, follows a kidnapping and an absurd government crisis to a deadly conclusion. Much of the film was shot in a former Turkish fort in Crete where communist political prisoners and freedom fighters had been tortured and killed in the civil war following the Greek liberation at the end of World War II. As a result, this film of assassinations and executions glints with a harsh Mediterranean light that pins corrupt bureaucrats and ineffectual politicians against a de Chirico backdrop of public squares, trapping them under floodlights in courtyards at night. Preceded by ***Athens, Return to the Acropolis*** (1983, 43 mins. DCP) This film was commissioned as part of a TV series about Europe's major cities. Although much of Angelopoulos's cinema is set among the villages of the northern countryside, he was born and raised in the city, so this film finds the director musing on an Athenian past that is variously ancient, national, and personal, including clips from *The Traveling Players*, *The Hunters*, and *Alexander the Great*.

Reconstruction (Anaparastasi)

SUNDAY, JULY 17, 12:30 P.M.

1970, 97 min. 35mm. With Toula Stathopoulou, Yannis Totsikas, Mihalis Fotopoulos. Under rain clouds and mountains, the disenfranchised inhabitants of a forsaken village reenact Greek tragedy as the economy and the police push them to destruction. This true-crime tale, shot in stark black-and-white by Giorgos Arvanitis, the cinematographer Angelopoulos worked with through the late 1990s, and influenced by the interrogation scenes in Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil* and his version of Kafka's *The Trial*, combines the styles of film noir and neorealism.

The Beekeeper (O melissokomos)

SUNDAY, JULY 17, 3:00 P.M.

1986, 117 mins. 35mm. With Marcello Mastroianni, Nadia Mourouzi, Serge Reggiani. The bleak industrial landscape of northern Greece, dotted with truck stops and lunch counters, dominates this road movie as much Marcello Mastroianni does. The great star of Italian cinema is deglamorized here, as a lonely beekeeper driving a truck across Greece. He becomes involved with a young hitchhiker whose name we never learn. *The Beekeeper* seems inspired by the truck-driver sequence in Chantal Akerman's *Je tu il elle*, an unsavory episode made into a covert incest tragedy by Angelopoulos. It ends in an abandoned cinema, a location that also links the film to Wim Wenders' *Kings of the Road*. Unlike road movies by Wenders, Jarmusch, or Kaurismäki, *The Beekeeper* never resorts to hip or ironic gestures or references, even as it wanders into *Blue Angel* and *Lolita* territory.

The Suspended Step of the Stork (To meteoro vima tou pelargou)

SUNDAY, JULY 17, 6:30 P.M.

1991, 136 mins. 35mm. With Gregory Patrikareas, Marcello Mastroianni, Jeanne Moreau. In the first film of his "trilogy of borders," Angelopoulos captures the hopelessness and confusion of politics in a new video age, even as he hopes for more connection with the world outside Greece and Albania. A TV journalist spots a lost soul (Mastroianni) in a refugee village and becomes convinced he is a politician and intellectual who has willfully disappeared himself from the Greek Parliament. The journalist seeks out the politician's wife (Moreau) to confirm his suspicions and becomes romantically entangled with the man's daughter, who is on the verge of marriage with a young man on the other side of the border. The arbitrariness of borders and the impossibility of finding truth in video images converge across class lines in this murky introduction to the post-communist geopolitical conflicts of Eastern Europe in the 1990s.

Ulysses' Gaze (To vlemma tou Odyssea)

FRIDAY, JULY 22, 7:00 P.M.

1995, 176 min. 35mm. With Harvey Keitel, Erland Josephson, Maia Morgenstern. In English, Greek, Romanian, Albanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Kurdish with English subtitles. Harvey Keitel, playing a controversial Greek-born American filmmaker, finds himself stranded in a country he has not visited for decades and goes on the hunt for reels of undeveloped film shot in 1905 by the Manaki Brothers, Macedonian photographers who made the first motion pictures in the Balkans. Angelopoulos created this epic tour of post-communist Eastern Europe as both a modern *Odyssey* and a study of collapse during wartime. For Angelopoulos, recording and preserving history on film serves as the only redemption in a world where monumental statues of great leaders end up toppled, beheaded, and sold down the river.

Voyage to Cythera (Taxidi sta Kythira)

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 3:00 P.M.

1984, 133 mins. 35mm. With Giulio Brogi, Manos Katrakis, Mairi Hronopoulou. A successful middle-aged filmmaker looks on as his father returns from exile in the Soviet Union to find his village being expropriated not by communists but by capitalists who want to turn it into a ski

resort for Western European tourists. Angelopoulos's first film set entirely in the present is startling and energizing, even as past conflicts haunt the story.

The Weeping Meadow (To livadi pou dakryzei)

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 6:30 P.M.

2004, 163 min. 35mm. With Alexandra Aidini, Nikos Poursanidis, Giorgos Armenis. A painstaking reconstruction of something impermanent, the post-World War I refugee village assembled in *The Weeping Meadow* was built by Angelopoulos to be lost in a flood. The first in his incomplete trilogy on Greek history, this film takes place in 1919, after the newly formed Soviet Union has exiled Greeks from Odessa. A stately formalism marks Angelopoulos's penultimate anti-epic, with every other scene a major pictorial triumph of staging, camera movement, and photography. *The Weeping Meadow* is his *1900* or *Once Upon a Time in America*—without heroics, without the hope of trade unionism or America, which exist here as ideals and dreams in the process of being crushed by world war.

Eternity and a Day (Mia aioniotita kai mia mera)

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 3:00 P.M.

1998, 137 min. 35mm. With Bruno Ganz, Achileas Skevis, Isabelle Renauld. Angelopoulos's death-haunted border trilogy ends with this chilling look at the failure of poetry in the face of human trafficking. Ganz stars as a celebrated writer, a terminally ill widower whose daughter has married a feckless yuppie. His solace in memories of his wife and regrets about the failures in their marriage are interrupted by an odd version of *Death in Venice*. He becomes obsessed with saving a little boy from living on the street or being sold to wealthy Western Europeans who want to adopt children. They travel toward the Greek-Albanian border, despite the child's reluctance, making a final tour of the landscapes that obsess Angelopoulos.

The Dust of Time (I skoni tou hronou)

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 6:30 P.M.

2008, 133 min. 35mm. With Willem Dafoe, Bruno Ganz, Michel Piccoli. In Greek, English, Russian, and German with English subtitles. Angelopoulos's last film reveals a filmmaker uncomfortable with today's Europe, exiled from Greece in order to make a film for the international marketplace rather than for art houses. Willem Dafoe gives a memorable performance as a film director akin to the ones in *Voyage to Cythera* and *Ulysses' Gaze*. An international-intrigue thriller touching on terrorism, body scanning, and homelessness, *The Dust of Time* litters dozens of smashed television sets on the stairs of a luxury hotel. Post-cinema, it is also post-TV.

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Press images are available upon request.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Museum of the Moving Image (movingimage.us) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its stunning facilities—acclaimed for both its accessibility and bold design—the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings of significant works; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, craftspeople, and business leaders; and education programs which serve more than 50,000 students each year. The Museum also houses a significant collection of moving-image artifacts.

Hours: Wednesday–Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday, 10:30 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday–Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$15 adults; \$11 senior citizens (65+) and students (18+) with ID; \$7 youth (3–17). Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Film Screenings: Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Unless otherwise noted, tickets are \$12 adults / \$9 students and seniors / \$6 children 3–12 / free for Museum members at the Film Lover level and above. Advance purchase is available online. Ticket purchase may be applied toward same-day admission to the Museum's galleries.

Location: 36-01 35 Avenue (at 37 Street) in Astoria.

Subway: M (weekdays only) or R to Steinway Street. Q (weekdays only) or N to 36 Avenue.

Program Information: Telephone: 718 777 6888; Website: movingimage.us

Membership: <http://movingimage.us/support/membership> or 718 777 6877

The Museum is housed in a building owned by the City of New York and located on the campus of Kaufman Astoria Studios. Its operations are made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Natural Heritage Trust (administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). The Museum also receives generous support from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals.