

# MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## PAGAN RITUALS IN THE UKRAINE AND RUSSIA AMONG THE THEMES OF THE TENTH ANNUAL RURAL ROUTE FILM FESTIVAL

Highlights include 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary screening of Sergei Paradjanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, world premiere of Daniel Peddle's *Sunset Edge*, newly restored director's cut of *The Wicker Man*, Josephine Decker's *Butter on the Latch*, live music, and more

August 8–10, 2014

Astoria, New York, July 21, 2014—The Rural Route Film Festival, celebrating its tenth anniversary, returns to Museum of the Moving Image from August 8 through 10, 2014, with its showcase of international films that take the road less traveled, transporting viewers to places far outside of the city. One of the themes of this year's festival is a focus on the ancient pagan cultures of Eastern Europe, with an opening night screening and reception to celebrate the 50th anniversary of **Sergei Paradjanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors***, set in the Ukraine's Carpathian Mountains. At the Museum, the Festival will present sixteen films— including five features and eleven shorts—from the Ukraine, Russia, Slovenia, Hungary, Somaliland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Filmmaker appearances and live music will accompany select screenings at the Museum.

Other highlights of the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Rural Route Film Festival include:

- World premiere of renowned fashion casting director **Daniel Peddle's *Sunset Edge***, a fictional drama set in an abandoned North Carolina trailer park; with the director and cast in person
- North American premiere of **Dmytro Sukholytkyy-Sobchuk's *Krasna Malanka***, an intimate portrait of a Ukrainian village during an important pagan holiday, from the same Carpathian Mountain heritage depicted in the Paradjanov film
- American indie star **Josephine Decker and actress Sarah Small** in person with ***Butter on the Latch***, about the psycho-sexual encounters of a New York artist at a folk music camp in the Mendocino Woodlands of California (showing with *Krasna Malanka*)
- director **Matjaz Ivanisin's *Karpotrotter***, a road movie that incorporates 8mm footage from the "Black Wave" filmmaker Karpo Godina's trek through the hinterlands of the former Yugoslavia
- a two-short tribute to the legendary ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax: **a rare 16mm**

print of *Oss Oss Wee Oss* (1953), the infamous document of May Day celebrations in Cornwall, and *Lomax* (2013), a dramatic reimagining of Lomax's encounter with a reclusive bluesman during his 1941 journey through the American South (shown with *Karpotrotter*)

- **Aleksei Fedorchenko's *Celestial Wives of the Meadow Mari***, a one-of-a-kind film about a modern-day pagan society among the people of the autonomous Mari El region of central Russia
- the new DCP restoration of the director's cut of *The Wicker Man* (1973), Robin Hardy's cult-classic pagan thriller set on a remote Scottish isle, and starring Christopher Lee, Edward Woodward, Ingrid Pitt, and Britt Ekland
- short animated, experimental, and documentary films (and one music video) from Hungary, Somaliland, Ukraine, U.K., and the U.S. will accompany the programs above.

In addition to the film programs, the Festival will present live performances of world music in its courtyard by:

- the Brooklyn-based **Iona Scottish Session Players** traditional/psychedelic Scottish fusion featuring fiddle, guitar, and boarder pipes (small bagpipes). **Saturday, August 9, 4:00 and 6:45 p.m.**
- the experimental folk harmonies of **Hydra**, a three-woman group who sing songs in Alabanian, Macedonian, Spanish, English, and "HydraGibberish." The group features Yula Be'eri, Rima Fand, and Sarah Small, lead actress from *Butter on the Latch*. **Sunday, August 10, 4:30 p.m.**

The Rural Route Film Festival is organized by Alan Webber, an Astoria-based filmmaker who grew up in Elkader, Iowa. Through 2008–2009, he traveled to all seven continents presenting the Rural Route Film Festival. Webber said, "I'm so proud the festival has been going this long. Our tenth annual is not what I would've originally expected, with a wild sort of pagan theme, but the content is even better, and so much fun that I can't wait to take it in myself."

David Schwartz, the Museum's Chief Curator said, "Alan Webber has put together a truly dazzling and spectacular program of films for the tenth edition of the Rural Route Film Festival. The selection of new and classic films and music will truly transport the audience."

Tickets for each program at the Museum are \$10 public and free for Museum members. A Rural Route Festival pass for all screenings at the Museum is available for \$27. Advance tickets and passes are available online at [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us) or by phone at 718 777 6800. For more information about membership, visit [movingimage.us/support/membership](http://movingimage.us/support/membership).

The Festival's closing night program takes place at the Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm on Northern Boulevard, just a few blocks from the Museum. Please visit

ruralroutefilms.com for more information. (Note: The Rural Route Festival pass does not include admission to the closing night program.)

**Press contacts:**

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[Preview screeners are available for many of the films.]

**SCREENING SCHEDULE FOR '10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RURAL ROUTE FILM FESTIVAL,'  
AUGUST 8–10, 2014**

All screenings listed below take place at Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35 Avenue, Astoria, NY. Tickets for each program at the Museum are \$10 public and free for Museum members. A Rural Route Festival pass for all screenings at the Museum is available for \$27. Advance tickets and passes are available online at [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us) or by phone at 718-777-6800. For more information about membership, visit [movingimage.us/support/membership](http://movingimage.us/support/membership).

***Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors***

**Followed by vodka reception**

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

Ukraine. Dir. Sergei Paradjanov. 1964, 98 mins. **New 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 35mm restoration** courtesy of Kino Lorber. With Ivan Mikolajchuk, Larysa Kadochnikova. *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* is a boldly conceived and astonishingly photographed blend of enchanting mythology, hypnotic religious iconography, and pagan magic. Deep in the Carpathian Mountains of nineteenth-century Ukraine, love, hate, life, and death among the Hutsul people are as they have been since time began. While young Ivan's mother mourns her husband's brutal murder, Ivan is irresistibly drawn to Marichka, the beautiful young daughter of the man who killed his father. But fate tragically decrees that the two lovers will remain apart. Unhappily married to another woman and cursed by a sorcerer, Ivan's obsession with his lost love lures him ever closer to the edge. In regional Hutsul dialect with English subtitles.

Preceded by ***Carpathian Rap***. Ukraine. Dir. Sashko Danylenko, 2011, 5 mins. This animated music video for the Ukrainian "ethnic chaos" band Dakha Brakha was created at the Kiev Center of Contemporary Art.

***Karpotrotter***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 2:30 P.M.

Slovenia. Dir. Matjaž Ivanišin. 2014, 50 mins. In 1971, at the peak of the Yugoslavian "Black Wave," filmmaker Karpo Godina traveled through the flat hinterland of Vojvodina, submerging himself in local culture from village to village, capturing the multi-ethnic region in an unusual road movie that is mostly lost today. In *Karpotrotter*, a young filmmaker retraces the journey through Serbia, coming up with an all-together original film that incorporates Godina's 8mm footage, along with a startling ending that feels relevant both then and now. *Karpotrotter* was a highlight of this year's International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Preceded by ***Oss Oss Wee Oss***. United Kingdom. Dirs. Alan Lomax, George Pickow, Peter

Kennedy. 1953, 18 mins. **Archival 16mm print from Indiana University Libraries Moving Image Archive.** This obscure, infamous folklorist documentary co-directed by Alan Lomax captured pagan May Day celebrations in the sleepy fishing village of Cornwall before it began to draw the thousands of visitors that it does today. **Lomax.** United States. Dir. Jesse Kreitzer. 2013, 12 mins. In this narrative short, the famed ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax encounters Bill Henley, a 73-year-old recluse living in the Mississippi Delta, during his 1941 journey to record an oral history of the blues.

### ***The Wicker Man***

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 4:45 P.M.

United Kingdom. Dir. Robin Hardy. 1973, 92 mins. **New DCP restoration.** With Christopher Lee, Edward Woodward. This is it: the new, beautifully restored, critically acclaimed cult classic, re-cut to the director's final approval. *The Wicker Man* is the tale of a pious (virgin) police sergeant who travels to a remote Scottish Isle in search of a missing girl and discovers an entire community that has embraced a sexually uninhibited pagan lifestyle, centered around the worship of nature.

Preceded by ***Symphony No. 42.*** Hungary. Dir. Réka Bucsi. 2013, 10 mins. This animated short features 47 observations about the irrational connections between humans and nature. ***County Fair.*** United States. Dir. Michael Mercil. 2012, 3 mins. This brief glimpse of the 4-H livestock competition at the 2011 Wayne County Fair in Ohio, featuring music by Bill Frisell, is made of outtakes from Mercil's longer piece, *Covenant*, exploring the relationship between humans and animals. ***Burn out the Day.*** United States. Dir. Sasha Waters Freyer. 2014, 4 mins. 16mm. The pleasures and terrors of rural domestic comfort.

### ***Sunset Edge***

**World premiere with director Daniel Peddle and cast members in person**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 7:30 P.M.

United States. Dir. Daniel Peddle, 2014, 87 mins. With Haley Ann McKnight, William Dickerson, Blaine Edward Pugh. Well-known fashion casting director Daniel Peddle delivers a smart, beautiful, gritty, and stylish first narrative feature that fits right into the "Dirty South" canon of films like *George Washington* and *Gummo*. *Sunset Edge* is a real-life abandoned trailer park in North Carolina; in this place of ghostly remnants, four apathetic teens find themselves in harrowing circumstances as daylight fades and a mysterious man comes out of the shadows. Peddle plays with horror and thriller genre conventions, repeatedly undermining expectations within a narrative puzzle.

Preceded by ***White Earth.*** United States. Dir. J. Christian Jensen. 2013, 9 mins. A visually stunning portrait of the North Dakota oil boom, from a young boy's perspective. ***Godka Cirka (A Hole in the Sky).*** Somaliland. Dirs. Àlex Lora, Antonio Tibaldi. 2013, 10 mins. Young Alifa looks up at the Somali sky and thinks about her daily life as a shepherdess.

### ***Celestial Wives of the Meadow Mari***

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 2:30 P.M.

Russia. Dir. Alexsei Fedorchenko, 2012, 106 mins. Fedorchenko conjures a one-of-a-kind film of folklore-based tales rooted in the autonomous Mari El region of central Russia—an area filled

with lakes, forests, and long-standing traditions. The Mari are one of world's last remaining nature-based pagan societies. In *Meadow Mari*, sexual maturation, fertility, love, and marriage intermingle with rituals and nature. Here you will find a woman cursed by a jealous tree, another disappearing as she becomes the "lover of the wind," and a voluptuous aunt rubbing her flat-chested niece down with her towel in order to pass along some femininity.

Preceded by ***Prospect***. United States. Dirs. Zeek Earl & Chris Caldwell. 2013, 13 mins. A teenage girl and her father hunt for precious materials on a toxic alien planet, but roving bandits want the same thing.

### ***Butter on the Latch***

**With director Josephine Decker and actress Sarah Small in person**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 5:00 P.M.

United States. Dir. Josephine Decker, 2013, 63 mins. With Isolde Chae-Lawrence, Sarah Small. After a personal breakdown, a Brooklyn performance artist and her friend head to California to become immersed in a rustic camp atmosphere and to learn folk music and dance. But the intended escape devolves into a psychosexual drama that pushes their friendship—and sanity—to the edge. Decker's impressionistic approach to storytelling allows dreams and reality to come crashing together in an indistinguishable visual tumult of dance, environmental imagery, and wild-eyed fervor.

Preceded by ***Krasna Malanka. With Skype introduction by director Dmytro Sukholytkyy-Sobchuk***. Ukraine. Dir. Dmytro Sukholytkyy-Sobchuk. 2013, 45 mins. The Warden, the Bear, the Gypsy, the Devil, Grandpas and Grandmas, and Kings and Queens take over the village of Krasna in continued celebration of the pagan/Christian-hybrid, mid-winter Malanka holiday. Up-and-coming director Sukholytkyy-Sobchuk weaves together beautifully crafted animation and live-action footage in this up-close-and-personal portrait of a community and their rituals, founded on the inseparable bond between nature and human beings. (The traditions on view come from the same Ukrainian/Romanian Carpathian Mountain heritage depicted in Paradjanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*).

### **MUSEUM INFORMATION**

Museum of the Moving Image ([movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us)) advances the understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of the art, history, technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media. In its expanded and renovated 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.

**Film Screenings:** Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, and as scheduled. Tickets for regular film screenings are included with paid Museum admission and free for members.

**Museum Admission:** \$12.00 for adults; \$9.00 for persons over 65 and for students with ID; \$6.00 for children ages 3-12. Children under 3 and Museum members are admitted free. Admission to the galleries is free on Fridays, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. Tickets for special screenings and events may be purchased in advance by phone at 718 777 6800 or online.

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](http://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. For more information, please visit [movingimage.us](http://movingimage.us).

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