

REVOLT, SHE SAID

women and Film after '68



CDFesto

May '68 in France expressed a fundamental version of freedom: not freedom to succeed, but freedom to revolt. Political revolutions ultimately betray revolt because they cease to question themselves. Revolt, as I understand it – psychic revolt, analytic revolt, artistic revolt – refers to a permanent state of questioning, of transformations, an endless probing of appearances.

– Julia Kristeva

Revolt, She Said (2002)

These films come from A PLACE OF RAGE – and DAISIES. We want roses too, after all, or: SHE WANTED GREEN LAWNS and a revolution she could dance to. ONE SINGS, THE OTHER DOESN'T but both know new answers to the RIDDLES OF THE SPHINX.

This is not about a Strong Female Protagonist, it is about NICE COLORED GIRLS acting in concert. How could we CARRY GREENHAM HOME otherwise? THE GIRLS gather with MAEVE to shout SAUTE MA VILLE!

THE CAT HAS NINE LIVES, and so does feminism: it was alive long BEFORE STONEWALL and long after. Its spark to take action and make change may start with a HAIRPIECE or A QUESTION OF CHOICE – and it creates a TAPP UND TASTKINO, a Touch and Taste Cinema, that we bring, across the decades, to you.

Read more about these films in our programme – there are taster quotes throughout the zine from the amazing new essays we've commissioned, which can all be found on (and shared from) our website.

It's important to say that an alternate REVOLT, SHE SAID film programme also lives in CDF's collective imagination – films that we'd love to have included in our tour but where the materials were too challenging, too complicated, or too expensive to obtain. Club des Femmes call for the archiving, restoration and digitisation of radical films by women, especially those from the Global South, so that a full film history can finally be achieved.

– CDF, 2018
clubdesfemmes.com



Still: *The Girls* (1968), courtesy SF Studios

A history lesson

1959:
Cuban Revolution.

1955-1975:
Vietnam War.

1961-1974:
Angolan War of Independence.

1966:
DAISIES

Dir: Vera Chytilová, Czech Republic
'What does a call to female revolt look like when not announced under a mass-mobilising banner? Chytilová directed her greatest masterpiece of rebellion *Daisies* (1966) during the Prague Spring – a brief window of creative freedom that the Soviets soon cracked down upon. With irreverent energy it tears apart a stifling patriarchal order in a mischievous riot of destruction; its focus upon clearing the ground, rather than organising what may come after.'
– Carmen Gray, film critic, programmer
@carmen_gray

1968:

Czech Republic: Prague Spring.

USA: Martin Luther King assassinated.

Germany: Rudi Dutschke shot.

France: Student & workers' revolt.

Northern Ireland: First civil rights march, Coalisland to Dungannon.

Sweden: Founding of Grupp 8.

THE CAT HAS NINE LIVES

Dir: Ula Stöckl, Germany

'Ula Stöckl's stunningly accomplished debut feature *The Cat Has Nine Lives* aligns itself both with the New German Cinema and the feminist cinema of Varda, Akerman and Chytilová to present five determinedly emancipated women navigating a decidedly unemancipated world. This lovingly restored gem delivers a multi-layered essay on women's place in society while beguiling us with pretty pictures and deceptively frivolous exchanges.'
– Kanchi Wichmann, writer-director

THE GIRLS

Dir: Mai Zetterling, Sweden

'It is, indeed, an unruly and disobedient work of art and it must be experienced as such. *Flickorna* [*The Girls*] is a film that functions as a blowtorch on lazy, priapic

narratives; it lampoons the perennial expectation of women to be kind, nurturing and soft; it positions women as active, willful, defiant and wise in the face of men who continue to act like tyrannical toddlers and make increasingly ludicrous demands.'

– Dr Anna Backman Rogers, senior lecturer, co-founder of MAI
@MAI_Journal

TAPP und TASTKINO
Dir: VALIE EXPORT, Austria

SAUTE MA VILLE
Dir: Chantal Akerman, Belgium/France
'Akerman cast herself in this scathing parody of the domestic compressed into three scenes. Truffaut's *400 Blows* is decimated in one manic hum; she dances, she laughs, she revolts, she reflects in the mirror and then: BANG. Chantal Akerman changed the way I saw cinema, she showed me a way out. My favourite moment is when she bats her eyelashes at the camera.'

– Selina Robertson, CDF co-curator
@clubdesfemmes

1969
USA: Stonewall Riots.

MY NAME IS OONA
Dir: Gunvor Nelson, USA/Sweden

1970:
UK: Gay Liberation Front founded.
France: Monique Wittig's *Pour un mouvement de libération des femmes*.
USA: Angela Davis arrested, tried and sentenced; released June 1972.
France: *Movement de liberation des femmes* (MLF).

1972:
UK: Women's Event, Edinburgh Film Festival.

1975:
France: Veil Law liberalizes abortion.

1977:
RIDDLES OF THE SPHINX
Dirs: Laura Mulvey & Peter Wollen, UK
'Among the riddles posed by this Sphinx of a film are quotations from poet Gertrude Stein and artist Mary Kelly, along with questions about the lack of affordable childcare and the possibility of lesbian romance. Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's visionary film unwraps

dreamy mother-daughter voice-overs,
a mythic lecture by Mulvey, and
hypnotic sequences of neon-printed
female acrobats. Achieving feminist
lift-off, this is – above all – a film
that listens to women.'

– So Mayer, writer, CDF co-curator
@troublemayer

ONE SINGS, THE OTHER DOESN'T

Dir: Agnès Varda, France

'If one sings and the other doesn't,
how do we women correspond? Through
symbiotic equivalence resulting from
devoted connection? Through intimacy
maintained even when we are separated
by geography and time? Here is the
ultimate love letter to Varda's
ultimate love song, sent to a friend,
a mother and newly found daughter.'

– Jemma Desai, writer, curator, *I am Dora*
@dorabyjemma

1979:

UK: Election of Margaret Thatcher.

UK: Cinema of Women is founded.

UK: Circles is founded.

1981:

UK: Women for Life on Earth arrive at
Greenham Common.

MAEVE

Dir: Pat Murphy, Ireland

'Pat Murphy is quiet, observant, and
the most considerate person I have met
in my life: she never says a word –
a sentence – without deeply considering
it beforehand. Her passion and compassion
are profound, as is her bravery –
approaching subjects as a feminist
early on, as in *Maeve*. Pat has always
championed women overlooked by history.
She has been, as well – it's time for
her groundbreaking work to be
recognized.' – Lizzie Borden, filmmaker

1982:

A QUESTION OF CHOICE

Dir: Sheffield Film Co-op, UK

HAIR PIECE A FILM FOR NAPPY HEADED PEOPLE

Dir: Ayoka Chenzira, USA

1983:

CARRY GREENHAM HOME

Dirs: Beeban Kidron/Amanda Richardson, UK

'*Carry Greenham Home* celebrates the
joyfully fierce defiance of the protestors
against systems that don't care for
human lives, let alone the future of
the planet, and explores the necessary
work that comes with creating new ways
of living. They are gentle angry
people, singing for their lives.'

– Sophie Brown, critic, programmer

@SBrown400

1984:

UK: Women against Pit Closures formed.

BEFORE STONEWALL

Dir: Greta Schiller, USA

'*Before Stonewall* slaps you round the chops and shouts "Hey you! You are the custodian of queer now. It is both precious and precarious. So what are you doing to make things better for the next generation?"'

– Jason Barker, programmer, writer, filmmaker

1986:

UK: Women against violence against women national demonstrations organised by Network of Women.

1987:

USA/UK: ACT UP founded.

1988:

UK: Section 28 introduced.

Australia: Aboriginal activists protest Bicentenary celebrations.

Poland: Solidarnosc strikes.

1989:

Germany: Berlin Wall falls

SHE WANTED GREEN LAWNS

Dir: Sarah Turner, UK

1990:

NICE COLORED GIRLS

Dir: Tracey Moffatt, Australia

'With visual ferocity and a full-bellied roar, *Nice Colored Girls* shakes Australian history and its visual storytelling right to its rotten core. Refusing the black and white broad-brush strokes of settler history and leaving the victim narrative behind, Moffatt puts survival front and centre, in full and dazzling colour.'

– Tara Judah, cinema producer, Watershed
@midnightmovies

1991:

USA: Anita Hill testifies against Clarence Thomas.

A PLACE OF RAGE

Dir: Pratibha Parmar, USA

'We are all, every day now, witnessing or experiencing the sort of brutality that, to paraphrase June Jordan,

is hardening us in a place of rage.
Pratibha's film is important not
just because it is a record of what
came before but because it offers
us a blueprint for action now.
Also, I remind you that you have
not lived until you have seen
Angela Davis playing squash.'
— Nazmia Jamal, dyke to watch out for
@houseoflabrys

1992:

USA: Rebecca Walker names feminism's
'third wave' in an article for *Ms.*
magazine.

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