

# FILMGRENSER

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# FILMBORDERS

HØSTSEMESTER 2010

AUTUMN TERM 2010



## FILMGRENSER

I en hverdag preget av stadig økende globalisering er det lett å henfalle til tanken om at verden er blitt 'grenseløs'. Likevel er grenser overalt og setter sine preg på våre liv. **FILMGRENSER** er en serie visninger ved Cinemateket i Tromsø som undersøker hvordan forskjellige typer grenser påvirker vår hverdag. Fra geopolitiske grenser til kroppens grenser, fra grenseposter til grensekryssninger, fra estetiske grenser til diskursens grenser – filmene som er ført sammen her illustrerer, utfordrer og legger opp til debatt om hvordan grenser skaper og regulerer våre liv.

**FILMGRENSER** er resultat av samarbeidet mellom *Verdensteatret Cinematek* og *Grenseestetikk-prosjektet* ved Institutt for Kultur og Litteratur (IKL/UiT) (<http://uit.no/hsl/borderaesthetics>). Visningene er delvis finansiert av Norges Forskningsråds KULVER-programm og finner sted på mandager 1830 ved Verdensteatret utover høsten. Alle filmene blir innledet av etablerte forskere innen feltet og det blir tid til diskusjon etter filmene.

Studenter og ansatte ved Universitetet i Tromsø har fri adgang til **FILMGRENSER** visningene. Bare vis frem studentbevis eller ansattkort og ta ut billetten ved inngangen.

## FILMBORDERS

Borders are everywhere. In spite of repeatedly issued claims regarding the final advent of a 'borderless world', it must be acknowledged that borders today still regulate, limit, and order public and private lives in various manners. **FILMBORDERS** is a series of screenings that sets out to investigate the diverse ways in which different kinds of borders intersect and interact with everyday practice. From geopolitical borders to the borders of the body, from concrete border posts to practices of crossing, from the borders of the aesthetic object to the limits of discourse, the films brought together here illustrate, question, challenge, and put to debate the borders of our contemporary world and their consequences.

**FILMBORDERS** is the result of a cooperation between *Verdensteatret Cinematek* and the *Border Aesthetics* project at the Dept. of Culture and Literature (<http://uit.no/hsl/borderaesthetics>) at Tromsø University. The screenings are partly financed by the Norwegian Research Council's KULVER programme. They take place on Mondays at 1830 and are introduced by established scholars in the field. After the screenings there will be time for questions and debate.

UiT students and staff have free admission to all **FILMBORDERS** screenings. Just show your student ID or employee card and take out a ticket at the entrance.

Holger Pöttsch  
IKL/UiT

## FILMBORDERS

Autumn term 2010 (Mondays 1830 at VT)

### September 13:

ELINA - SOM OMJAG INTE FANNS (Sweden 2003, English subtitles)

Presented by Anne Heith, UiT

### September 27:

WELCOME EUROPA (France 2006, English subtitles)

Presented by Henk van Houtum, Univ. of Nijmegen

### October 11:

KUKUSHKA (Russia 2002, English subtitles)

Presented by Gerd Bjørhovde, UiT

### October 25:

RAJA 1918 (Finland 2007, English subtitles)

Presented by Mari Ristolainen, Univ. of Eastern Finland

### November 1:

IMJULI (Germany 2000, English subtitles)

Presented by Johan Schimanski, UiT

### November 8:

ALL ABOUT EVE (USA 1950, Norwegian subtitles)

Presented by Stephen Wolfe, UiT

### November 22:

HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR (France/Japan 1959, English subtitles)

Presented by Timothy Saunders, UiT

### November 29:

ANONYMA - EINE FRAU IN BERLIN (Germany 2008, English subtitles)

Presented by Holger Pöttsch, UiT

September 13: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

ELINA – SOM OM JAG INTE FANNS (Sweden 2003, English subtitles)

Directed by Klaus Härö. With Natalie Minnevik, Bibi Andersson, Marjaana Maijala, Henrik Rafaelsen.

Den svensk-finska filmen *Elina – som om jag inte fanns* från 2003 är den finlandssvenske regissören Klaus Härös långfilmsdebut. Manuset, av Kjell Sundstedt, bygger på barn- och ungdomsboken *Som om jag inte fanns* av den norrländska författaren Kerstin Johansson i Backe. Handlingen utspelas i gränsområdet mellan Sverige och Finland i Tornedalen på den svenska sidan av gränsen. Då gränsen skapades 1809 i samband med fredsfördraget mellan Sverige och Ryssland splittrades den finskspråkiga befolkningen i Tornedalen. Invånarna på västra sidan av Torne älv fortfor att vara svenska medborgare medan de som bodde öster om älven blev invånare i det ryska storfurstendömet Finland. Detta är den historiska bakgrunden till att tornedalingarna blev en etnisk och språklig minoritet i Sverige.

Filmens handling utspelas på 1950-talet då de finskspråkiga tornedalingarna utsattes för en assimileringpolitik som syftade till att göra dem till "riktiga svenskar". Detta tema blir belyst genom att man får följa den tornedalsfinska flickan Elinas konflikt med den rikssvenska lärarinnan i skolan. Elina, spelad av Natalie Minnevik, utsätts för grova kränkningar av lärarinnan, spelad av Bibi Andersson, på grund av sina bristande kunskaper i det svenska språket, men också för att hon kommer från en fattig familj med en hårt arbetande ensamstående mamma som kämpar för att få ihop till livets nödtrött för sin familj.



I filmen aktualiseras flera olika gränsteman, t.ex. gränsdragningar mellan etniska grupper, majoritet och minoritet och samhällsklasser med olika status. Utifrån det svenska majoritetessamhällets perspektiv tillhör Elina och hennes familj en perifer minoritet i utkanten av det svenska moderna välfärdssamhälle som håller på att växa fram efter andra världskriget. Målsättningen för

assimileringspolitiken var att de "avvikande" minoriteterna skulle anpassa sig till majoriteteskulturen genom att avstå från det egna språket, kulturen och traditionerna. Filmens lärarinna Tora Holm fungerar som en personifiering av en förtryckande etnisk majoritet som inte accepterar språklig mångfald och som saknar respekt för minoritetskulturer. Trots att Tora Holm försöker straffa Elina genom att låtsas som om hon inte finns, låter sig Elina inte kväsa. Så tillvida är filmen en riktig må-bra-film om den lilla människans framgångsrika kamp mot övermakten. Till detta bidrar också filmens romantiska intrigelement och det lyckliga slutet då kärleken blommar och Elina har fått upprättelse. Filmen blev en betydande internationell framgång, bl.a. vann den två priser vid Berlin International Film Festival.

Anne Heith  
IKL/UiT

September 27: 1820 Verdensteatret Cinematek

WELCOME EUROPA (France 2006, English subtitles)

Directed by Bruno Ulmer.

An artful masterpiece. Moroccan and Romanian young men migrate to Europe for a better life only to face the harsh realities and the laws of survival on the streets of a foreign land. The daily reality of the external border policy as well as the internal urban borders of life in Europe is shown in this prize-winning documentary.

The film is introduced by Prof dr Henk van Houtum, head of the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, University of Nijmegen and Research professor Geopolitics of the University of Bergamo. After the film there will be a discussion on the borders and identity of Europe.



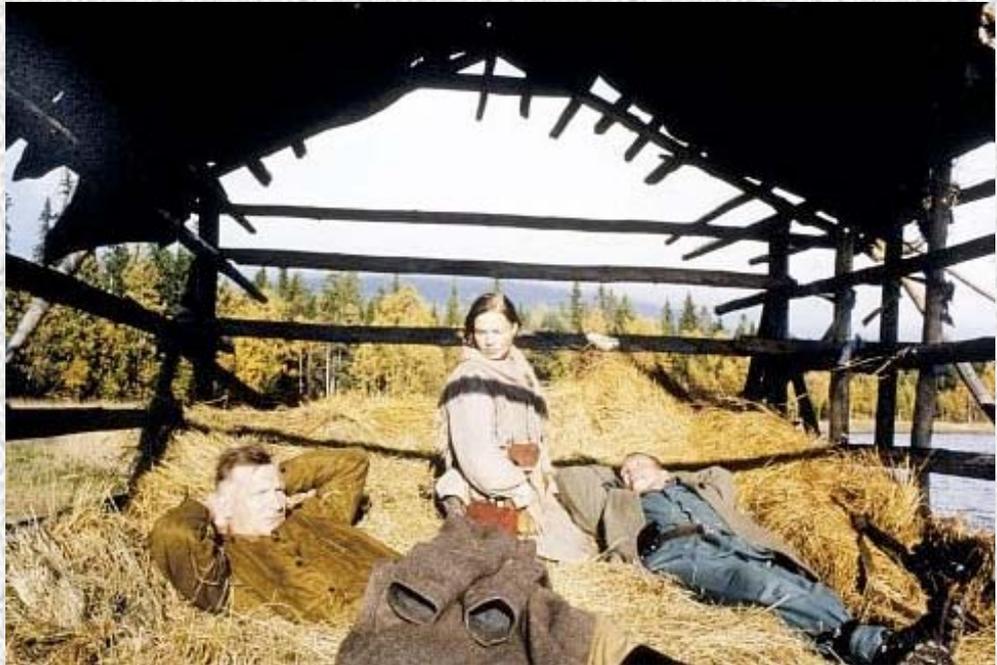
Henk van Houtum  
Univ. of Nijmegen

October 11: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

**KUKUSHKA** (Russia 2002, English subtitles)

Directed by Aleksandr Rogozhkin. With Anni-Kristiina Juuso, Ville Haapasalo, Viktor Bychkov.

September 1944, a few days before Finland decided to opt out of its participation on the German side in the Second World War. Three characters are presented: Veikko, a Finnish soldier who refuses to continue fighting, has been chained to a rock by Germans before they leave. Ivan, a captain of the Soviet Army, has been arrested by the Front Secret Police 'Smersh', but manages to escape. They are soldiers of the two enemy armies. Anni, a Sami woman who lives nearby and who hasn't seen her husband since the beginning of the war, gives shelter to both of them at her farm. And then the complications start! Since they speak different languages - Finnish, Russian and Sami, they do not understand each other, which leads to many complications and misunderstandings - some of them dangerous, others very funny.



This is a very different war movie - a comedy with many surrealistic elements. Being set in a border country in the North, it is also a highly relevant border film.

Gerd Bjørhovde  
IKL/UiT

October 25: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

THE BORDER 1918 (Finland 2007, English subtitles)

Directed by Lauri Töhrönen. With Martin Bahne, Minna Haapkylä, Tommi Korpela, Leonid Mozgovoy.



How to set the borders of a new country? *The Border 1918* (original title *Raja 1918*, 2007) is a story about the first years of independence in post-civil war Finland. A young Finnish officer, captain von Munck is sent to establish a border between the newly independent Finland and Russia under Bolshevik revolution. While the task seems clear he finds himself in a difficult place. There is a river that marks the border. There are us and them. But where is the border? Where is the line between us and them? And who can cross this line? *Raja 1918* is a historical drama, but also a story of love and survival, where many borders are crossed – between states, political views, social classes, men and women, legal and illegal, moral and unmoral. This film is a Finnish-Russian co-production and it has been partly financed by Finnish Film Foundation and Federal Agency of Culture and Cinematography of Russian Federation. *Raja 1918* is directed by the renowned Finnish director Lauri Töhrönen.

Mari Ristolainen  
Univ. of Eastern Finland

November 1: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

IMJULY (Germany 2000, English subtitles)

Directed by Fatih Akin. With Moritz Bleibtreu, Christiane Paul, Mehmet Kurtulus, Idil Üner.

Fatih Akin's *In July* (original title *Im Juli*) is a light summer romantic comedy and road movie about the coming-of-age of Daniel, a young maths teacher from Hamburg, played by the indispensable Moritz Bleibtrau. Daniel sets off to



find his true love at the Bosphorus in Istanbul, crossing national and personal borders on every step of the way through a sun-baked Europe. Scenes in this film on German and Turkish, Western and Eastern identities prove that illegal border crossings can be funny and romantic - in spite of the threat of state violence. How can border crossings be comic? Do we today need border-crossing comedy? Are comedies always about some form of border-crossing? Included in the introduction are comparisons with earlier comic treatments of border-crossing - a 1938 novel by Erich Kästner (filmed in 1943), a phrase in a 1964 poem by Ingeborg Bachmann, a 1987 film on the Mexican-USA border by comedian Cheech Marin - and with Akin's main source of inspiration, Shakespeare's comedies. *In July* won the audience award at the Tromsø International Film Festival in 2001.

Johan Schimanski  
IKL/UiT

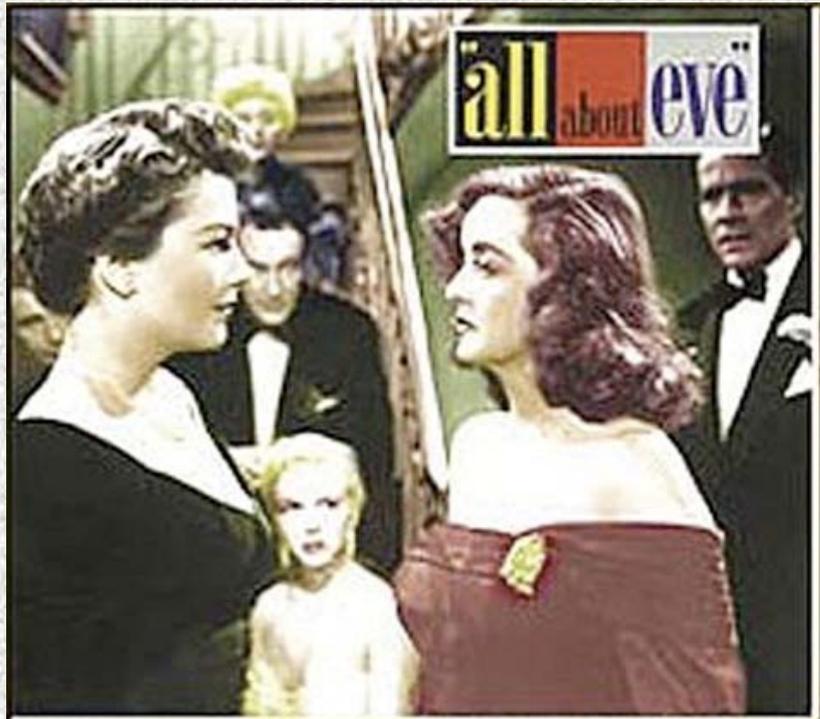
November 8: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

ALL ABOUT EVE (USA 1950, Norwegian subtitles)

Directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz. With Bette Davis, Anne Baxter, George Sanders.

*All About Eve* made in 1950 has been called one of the “most enjoyable films ever made, and also one of the wittiest”. While the story is complicated the action is simple: A young aspiring actress, Eve Harrington (Anne Baxter), intrigues to take the place of an aging star, Margo Channing (Bette Davis), on stage and in bed, and the battle is fought with tooth, claw, and sophisticated comic wit unusual for Hollywood. Joseph Mankiewicz's cynical script is too busy being sharp-tongued than to preach at the audience; however, the film does present a view of self-serving bad taste, exhibited with style, which is more fun than careful, mousy, dehydrated good taste could ever be.

We will examine the ways in which borders are presented in the film: between New York and the “provinces”, Broadway and Hollywood, stage and screen, men and women, past and present, success and failure. Then we will examine these same borders through some of the techniques the film uses to make representations of the same issues. For example, look carefully at how the film uses ceremonies as scripted dramas, or how entrances and exits are filmed, or how in the final scene Eve's successor bows to countless self-images in a mirror.



You might also want to watch how faces are filmed: how identity is presented with and on the body. Or how and where characters stand or sit when conversing with each other and where they are in the visual field of the camera. Or how so many of the lines of the films have become iconic expressions, but might seem undercut by a sad, melancholy, and overstated comic desperation. Finally we might discuss two recent readings of the film that concentrate on the borders shaped by the social constructions of gender in the film leading to the homoerotic suggestions in the acting and script, or in the way new media such as television, commercial films, and advertisements play a role in the film.

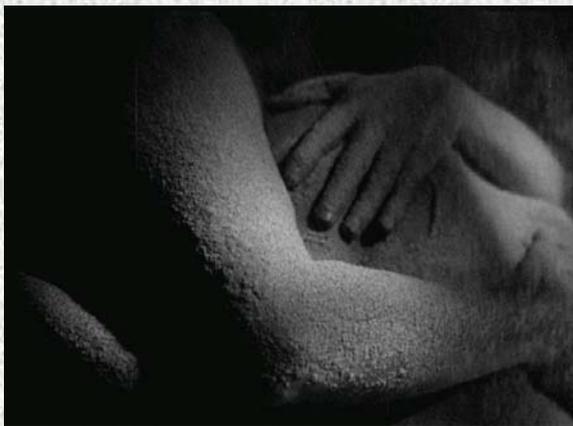
Stephen Wolfe  
IKL/UiT

November 22: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR (France, Japan 1959, English subtitles)

Directed by Alain Resnais. With Emanuelle Riva, Eiji Okada.

Alain Resnais' celebrated film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (*Hiroshima My Love*) from 1959 is set in the city of that name more than a decade after it was struck by an atomic bomb. The film touches upon the trauma of that event, and meditates upon both public and private strategies for remembering and responding to it, by following the final 36 hours of a brief affair between a Japanese architect and a French actress who has come to Hiroshima to record a film about peace. By repeatedly gesturing towards, though seldom asserting, this potential parallelism between the personal histories, memories and traumas of its individual protagonists on the one hand and those of the city and its society on the other, the film duly requires of us that we choose either to act as border guards or as border crossers: it asks us, in other words, if we are willing to accept this parallelism and to allow for a meaningful transfer between the public and the private in this instance; or if we reject this suggestion outright and refuse to permit the losses, sorrows and desires of these particular lovers to speak to the losses, sorrows and desires of this particular city and its people as it and they live on in the aftermath of that nuclear attack.



Borders are fundamental to the aesthetic of the film in other ways as well. Its encounter between a Japanese man and a French woman is, after all, one that must negotiate differences of culture, language, gender, geography and history (amongst others). In addition, the intensity of their affair, and of the conversations, memories and traumas their meeting sets in motion, is itself triggered by the fact that their time together is limited: she has a plane to catch, and both acknowledge that they must shortly return to the normal patterns and settings of their daily lives.

Alain Resnais won international acclaim for his innovative use of miniature flashbacks in this film and his persistent use of cutting between times and places further inscribes the quality of a border aesthetics within this work. The screenplay, meanwhile, is by Marguerite Duras, whose other writings and films are similarly celebrated for their use of suggestion and indirection, as well as for the many cross cultural encounters that they stage.

Timothy Saunders  
IKL/UiT

November 29: 1830 Verdensteatret Cinematek

*ANONYMA - A WOMAN IN BERLIN* (Germany 2008, English subtitles)

Directed by Max Färberböck. With Nina Hoss, Evgeny Sidikhin, Irm Hermann, Rüdiger Vogler.

*Anonyma - A Woman in Berlin* (original title: *Anonyma - Eine Frau in Berlin*) sets out to tell a story that only rarely surfaces in war films; the story of civilians, and more precisely, of female civilians, in war. Max Färberböck's film is based on the diary of an anonymous German woman who survived the Russian occupation of Berlin in the spring of 1945. It tells a shattering story of suffering, humiliation, violence, repeated rape, and death, but also about an unbendable will to survive, adapt, cope, and go on. When the diary was first published in German language by a small publishing house based in Switzerland in 1959 it immediately created a major row. Contemporary critiques almost solemnly condemned the confession of the *Anonyma* as inauthentic, revisionist, and above all "a shame for the German woman". The harsh reactions were a shock to the author who decided that no further publication should be allowed until after her death, and illustrated well the veil of silence and neglect that covered the issue of mass rape in post-war Germany. A renewed publication in 2003, however, triggered tremendous public and scholarly interest and the subsequent years saw the production of Färberböck's film, a documentary movie, and the publication of several historical studies covering the issue.



In his film, Färberböck sets out on an almost impossible endeavor. With his attempt to visualize the horrific experiences of the *Anonyma* he entered a political, historical, ethical, and aesthetic minefield. How to represent the mass rape of German women by Russian troops in occupied Berlin without succumbing to voyeurism, demonization, or objectification? Through a deliberate soberness in style and the outstanding acting of among others Nina Hoss (as *Anonyma*) and Evgeny Sidikhin (as Major Andreij Rybkin), Färberböck's film manages to maneuver through difficult terrain and avoid simple generic shock effects, voyeuristic - and as Susan Sontag reminds us ultimately pacifying - dwelling shots on the pain of others, as well as a simple demonization of the perpetrators. The movie interconnects the fates of traumatized individuals trapped in an impossible situation characterized by an extreme imbalance of power and an almost complete absence of rules regulating mutual conduct. Each move brings one further from humanity's ideals and closer to physical and moral destruction, and the aim of mere survival necessitates acts unthinkable under normal conditions. In revealing the systemic, rather than individual, nature of evil inherent in war, Färberböck's *Anonyma* is an important and timely anti-war movie that deserves to be seen, debated, and discussed.

Rape in war and warlike situations is still a widespread phenomenon that does not receive the public attention it deserves. Closely connected to issues of honour, shame, and assumed treason the issue is often excluded from debate as the victims are hidden away and their stories suppressed. The long silenced voice of the *Anonyma* remorselessly reminds us of that fact, and it deserves to be heard.

Holger Pötzsch  
IKL/UiT