CCA Cinema News
Paul Barnes’s Weekly Update on What’s Happening

By Paul Barnes, CCA Cinemas General Manager

This week is Women’s Club week at CCA!

First up, a brand-new comedy from Britain starring three of our finest actors – Maggie Smith, Kathy Bates, and Laura Linney – playing Irish women who belong to The Miracle Club. Their hope is to win a church lottery so they can visit the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes and find “miraculous” cures for the troubles in their own lives.

And the CCA audience continues to be captivated by Past Lives. Everyone has told me how much they love this film and that they have told their friends to come to CCA to see it. So, I’m going to hold this film over for another week!

A big Santa Fe welcome to acting royalty!

The Miracle Club is a bit of a miracle itself! For almost 20 years, the filmmakers struggled to make their heartwarming film about four riotous working-class Irish women. They never succeeded in making it happen – despite having a committed star in Dame Maggie Smith, whose awards include Oscars, Emmys and Baftas. The screenplay was not quite right, and funding always fell short – but Dame Maggie never lost faith in the project.

Finally, a leading British producer, Chris Curling, managed to get The Miracle Club into production two years ago. He was first approached to finance The Miracle Club about 18 years ago, but
was already committed to other films at the time. He explained, “It was going to be made by HBO and then that fell through. Then other people have been trying to get it made ever since. But Maggie Smith has always been very keen from the beginning.”

**The Miracle Club** is directed by the Emmy-nominated Irish filmmaker Thaddeus O’Sullivan, whose previous productions include the television crime drama series *Silent Witness*.

Set in 1960s Ireland, it tells the story of three “funny, messy, vocal and flawed” working-class women who have never left their homes in the suburbs of Dublin. With “benevolent interference” from their local priest, they escape their daily struggles when they win the prize of a lifetime – a church talent competition that takes them to a place of miracles, the sacred French town of Lourdes.

“What really enthralled me about the story is how three strong characters confront one another and then, by embracing truth, they understand that the miracle they have all been looking for is right in front of them – in the strength of their friendships and unshakeable togetherness,” producer Chris Curling said. “What we have achieved together is to make an emotional movie that is truly joyous, uplifting, and aspirational.”

When it premiered at the most recent Tribeca Film Festival, critic Jarod Neece wrote, “**The Miracle Club** is a hilarious film that celebrates the power of friendship, love, and laughter with stunning performances and a poignant message. The stories of these women remind us that we are only as strong as the friends and family who stand by us.”

**Past Lives – everyone’s new favorite film!**

And CCA just won’t let *Past Lives* go. Every once in a while a film touches people so deeply they come back again and again to see it and tell all their friends to go. All the folks I’ve talked to coming out of the CCA Cinema have been unanimous in their praise. *Past Lives*, like *Living* at the end of last year, is one of those films. And so, week three of *Past Lives* is happening! This is director Celine Song’s first film. It seems she has made one of the most memorable debut films in the history of movies!
A CCA women’s club?

And you know I’ve just begun to notice a trend in my film programming.

For how long has there been an outcry from Santa Fe audiences to be able to see more films made with a woman’s voice? Have you noticed that I’ve been selecting quite a lot of films directed by women for the CCA Cinemas?

I didn’t really plan it that way, but the recent schedule has been dominated by female directors – *Showing Up*, *Other People’s Children*, *Chile ’76*, *Beyond The Visible: Hilma af Klint*, *Desperate Souls*, *Dark City and the Legend of Midnight Cowboy*, and Celine Song’s *Past Lives*. Also on the list – *The Eight Mountains*, which was co-directed by a woman. So, in total, we’ve shown seven features made by women from all over the world since the CCA Cinemas reopened!

A Closer Look at a cinema master

Don’t forget on Thursday, July 13 at 6pm, CCA is presenting another in our popular *Closer Looks* series. Justin Rhody has selected one of his favorite films, John Cassavetes’ *Love Streams*, starring Cassavetes himself and his wife and muse Gena Rowlands as a brother and sister who are closely bound, emotionally wounded souls who reunite after years apart.

This is the last personal, independent film that Cassavetes directed before his death in 1989. I’ve always been fascinated by the films major directors make before the end of their lives. A lifetime of experience and wisdom go into them, and as if in a rush to communicate their last thoughts on the human condition before they leave this earth, sometimes the niceties of film form is overlooked in the rush to convey the raw, vital truth of their last emotional stories. They feel compelled to get out what they need to convey. Justin says this last film of Cassavetes is all about love. And it is.

Come see *Love Streams* and honor the man who should justly be called the Father of American Independent film. Cassavetes was always an iconoclastic maverick, although *The New Yorker*

Tickets on sale at https://ccasantafe.org/
suggested in 2013 that he "may be the most influential American of the last half century."

He was a Hollywood movie star and yet he often hated the mediocre films he was cast in. He felt Hollywood films weren't about real life – they were just about fake emotion and commerce. His first film, *Shadows*, broke all the rules of narrative films and is more of a poetic experimental film dealing with character and emotion. He continued in that vein with his international breakthrough film, *Faces* made in his own home, financed largely through his own money and credit cards, shot like a documentary and cast with actor friends whom he felt never really got a chance to show what they were capable of as actors, including his wife, Gena Rowlands.

*Faces* was a surprise arthouse hit, earned three Oscar nominations, and cemented Cassavetes' reputation as a unique and major filmmaker. So I encourage you to come and see *Love Streams*, this great filmmaker’s final film.

**The Cowboy is leaving town**

And my weekly reminder, if you wanted to see the new 4K restoration of *Midnight Cowboy* and the documentary about the people who made it and why, *Desperate Souls, Dark City* – you only have TWO DAYS left – Wednesday and Thursday – to catch them.

**Art exhibit + Oppenheimer (all in one trip to CCA)!**

And one final happy announcement! Along with screening of Christopher Nolan’s *Oppenheimer* on 35mm film – the way Nolan wants you to see it – CCA has secured permission to show a large portion of Santa Fe artist Meridel Rubenstein's masterpiece *Critical Mass*.

*Critical Mass* is a major multi-media artwork that Meridel created between 1989 and 1993 with collaborators Ellen Zweig and Steina and Woody Vasulka. It’s a resonant, poetic, thought-provoking, and deeply moving work that examines the many ways the Manhattan Project affected the scientists who created it,
the nearby Los Alamos residents, the nearby San Ildefonso pueblo residents, and humanity itself – as everyone faced the horror unleashed by this hideous weapon.

**Critical Mass** created a sensation in the art world when it first opened, and went on to tour throughout the United States. Unfortunately, we can’t exhibit this remarkable piece in its entirety, but this exhibition at CCA will be the **first time in decades** that so much of **Critical Mass** will be on public view.

We are honored to display it in two locations here at CCA – in the large Munoz/Waxman Gallery space where Chatter now does its weekly concerts, and in the Cinema Gallery adjacent to CCA’s main cinema where **Oppenheimer** will be shown.

**Critical Mass** will be a **Limited Time Only** exhibition at CCA. For three weeks, **Critical Mass** will be on display from Friday, July 21 (the day **Oppenheimer** opens) through August 10, the last day CCA will show **Oppenheimer**.

Because our opening event on July 21 SOLD OUT so fast, we are planning a second public event to honor Meridel Rubenstein and celebrate the opening of **Critical Mass** on Saturday, July 29 from 4:30 to 6:30 followed by the 7pm screening of **Oppenheimer**.

Since the first event SOLD OUT so fast, be sure to get your tickets for the 7pm film on the CCA website right away!

But even if you can’t make it that night, you’ll have plenty of opportunity to see the **Critical Mass** exhibition! On the days we are screening **Oppenheimer** between July 21 and August 10 (three weeks!), you will be able to view **Critical Mass** in the Gallery space by **Appointment Only**. We will have the Gallery staffed between the film screening times, so you can experience both the new **Oppenheimer** film in 35mm and Meridel Rubenstein’s extraordinary work of art!

We think this Art + Film opportunity will be one of Santa Fe’s **Must-See** summer events!

We are still working out the exact timing and how we will schedule appointments, but I’ll let you know how it all works by the time of my next Newsletter.

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**See Rubenstein’s Edith with Fatman in the Critical Mass exhibition July 21-Aug 10 at CCA**

**Tickets on sale at https://ccasantafe.org/**

**Edith’s House, part of the Critical Mass exhibition by Meridel Rubenstein on view at CCA July 21-Aug 10**
Just make sure to plan some extra time to see *Critical Mass* on the day you buy your ticket to see *Oppenheimer* in 35mm.

My gratitude goes out to Meridel Rubenstein for agreeing to let CCA put up this extraordinary show, to the TIA Collection for loaning two of the major *Critical Mass* pieces, and to all the folks at Chatter – especially Tony Zancanella – for allowing us to hang the majority of this extraordinary art work in the Munoz/Waxman Gallery space.

The grace of Chatter’s music will only enhance the power of Meridel’s work.

All the best,

Paul Barnes
General Manager, CCA Cinemas

Film tickets on sale at [https://ccasantafe.org/](https://ccasantafe.org/)

Details about times and arrangements to see *Critical Mass* to be announced