



***LitFilm: A BPL International Film Festival About Writers***  
**Showcases the Private Lives and Artistic Process of the**  
**World's Most Recognized Writers and Literary Figures**

**Brooklyn Public Library's Annual Festival Features Virtual Screenings,  
Director Talkbacks and Panel Discussions**

**October 5 – 11, 2020**

**BROOKLYN, September 24, 2020** – Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) today unveiled the line-up for *LitFilm: A BPL Film Festival About Writers*, the Library's third annual week-long festival showcasing films from around the world that provide a behind-the-scenes look at the private lives, artistic processes, and political struggles of some of the world's most celebrated writers and literary figures from **Toni Morrison** and **Orhan Pamuk**, to **N. Scott Momaday**, **Noam Chomsky**, and **André Leon Tally**. The free festival, which will be virtual this year, is a staple of BPL Presents' innovative cultural and civic programming.

This fall will feature 12 films, and talkbacks with Elena Ferrante's translator **Ann Goldstein**; American Masters Executive Producer **Michael Kantor**; Editor in Chief of Europa Editions **Michael Reynolds**; directors **Timothy Greenfield-Sanders** and **Jeffrey Palmer**. *LitFilm* launches online Monday, October 5 and will continue through Sunday, October 11.

*LitFilm* invites bibliophiles and cinephiles from throughout Brooklyn and across the country to engage with literary figures across time and place through the medium of film. The program celebrates the achievements of leading documentary filmmakers who have used the medium to tell stories that have expertly captured the essence of some of the leading writers of our time.

Highlights include a **special advance preview** of *The Capote Tapes*, a new film by **Ebs Burnough** that investigates the author's final uncompleted novel *Answered Prayers* through newly discovered interviews; and, a virtual talk-back with Grammy, NAACP Image Award and Women's Image Network Award-winning documentary filmmaker and photographer Timothy Greenfield-Sanders about his moving documentary on the luminary Toni Morrison.

This year's festival will also explore the lives of Chilean novelist **Roberto Bolaño**, American feminist writer **Ursula K. Le Guin**, French thinker **Simone de Beauvoir**, American poet **Langston Hughes**, and Native American writer **N. Scott Momaday**, among others.

"Through new and reconceived programs like *Cinema Ephemera* and *LitFilm*, we are using film to inspire the imaginations of our patrons with dynamic opportunities to connect with groundbreaking creatives from across the globe," said BPL's **Vice President of Arts & Culture László Jakab Orsós**. "The selection of films being screened this year, which explore subjects

ranging from Toni Morrison's lauded life and vision to Roberto Bolaño's illustrious career, can be viewed from home, and are a true testament to the vibrancy of human experience."

An extension of the Library's ongoing commitment to provide opportunities for the cultural enrichment of its patrons, past *LitFilm*'s have included talkbacks with Jonathan Alter; John Block and Steve McCarthy, directors of HBO's *Breslin and Hamill: Deadline Artists*; Rebecca Miller, director and daughter of playwright Arthur Miller; Griffin Dunne, actor, director and nephew of Joan Didion, among others.

BPL, one of the nation's largest library systems, provides nearly 60,000 free programs for the more than 2.7 million individuals who call Brooklyn home. While BPL's physical services are adjusted to best serve public health needs, BPL Presents' cultural programming including *LitFilm*, Bill T. Jones's BPL-commissioned *Message from the Library*, a conversation with Jill Lepore, and the 2020 Kahn Humanities Lecture with Susan Herman, will all be presented virtually. A full calendar of *LitFilm* screenings and discussions follow below. For more information on events and ticketing, please visit: <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/LitFilm>

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

**7 p.m.**

***Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am***

Documentary, dir. by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

US, 2019, 120 mins

*Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am* is an uplifting documentary on the life of Toni Morrison, the legendary storyteller and Nobel prize-winner. From her childhood in Lorain, OH to '70s-era book tours with Muhammad Ali, from the front lines with Angela Davis to her riverfront writing room, Toni Morrison reflected on race, America, and the human condition as seen through the prism of her work. The film includes appearances by Hilton Als, Angela Davis, Fran Lebowitz, Walter Mosley, Sonia Sanchez and Oprah Winfrey.

The screening will be followed by a talk-back with director Timothy Greenfield-Sanders.

### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

**7:15 p.m.**

***Roberto Bolaño: el último maldito***

Documentary, dir. by José Luis López-Linares

Spain, 2010, 57 mins

*Spanish, with English subtitles courtesy of Brooklyn Public Library*

Roberto Bolaño's work is among the most influential in Latin American literature, but his life and reality were those of a struggling writer. *Roberto Bolaño: el último maldito* focuses on the years that the Chilean author spent in Spain, and through discussions with his comrades, including fellow

writers like Mario Vargas Llosa, it captures Bolaño's obsessions, his ability to adapt to complicated environments, and the making of the Bolaño legend.

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

**4 p.m.**

### ***Innocence of Memories: Orhan Pamuk's Museum & Istanbul***

Documentary, dir. Grant Gee

UK, 2012, 93 mins

In 2012, British film-maker Grant Gee and author and screenwriter Orhan Pamuk started collaborating on a documentary about Istanbul and Pamuk's world. The result is a poetic documentary that was received by critics with intense praise at its premiere at the 72<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Venice Film Festival.

**6 p.m.**

### ***The Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin***

Documentary, dir. by Arwen Curry

US, 2018, 53 mins

*Worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin* is a breathtaking journey through the life of the late feminist writer Ursula K. Le Guin (1929-2018), who forever transformed American literature by bringing science fiction into the literary mainstream (*The Earthsea Cycle*, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, *The Dispossessed*). Produced with Le Guin's participation over ten years, the film features stunning animation and reflections by literary luminaries Margaret Atwood, Neil Gaiman, David Mitchell and Michael Chabon to capture her worlds, both real and fantastic.

**7:15p.m.**

### **Sneak Preview: *The Capote Tapes***

Documentary, dir. by Ebs Burnough

US, 2019, 91 mins

BPL Presents will screen a sneak preview of *The Capote Tapes* before the film appears in theaters. Newly discovered interviews with friends of Truman Capote made by *The Paris Review*'s co-founder George Plimpton blends with Capote's notorious television appearances in this fascinating documentary on the author (and socialite) behind *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *In Cold Blood*. The film dwells strongly on Capote's final uncompleted novel, *Answered Prayers*, which set out to expose Manhattan's social aristocracy after he befriended them. *The Capote Tapes* will be preceded by a short film, "My First Time: Vivian Gornick" in which Gornick discusses her first book, *In Search of Ali Mahmoud: An American Woman in Egypt*, as part of *The Paris Review*'s "My First Time" series.

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

**5 p.m.**

***The Gospel According to André***

Documentary, dir. by Kate Novak

US, 2017, 84 mins

American journalist André Leon Tally is one of the most influential tastemakers and fashion curators of our times. Weaving together a wealth of archival footage with Tally's reflections on life and career, the film takes viewers on an emotional journey from his childhood in segregated Jim Crow South to his iconic, barrier-breaking work at *Women's Wear Daily*, *W* and *Vogue*.

**7 p.m.**

***Mack the Knife: Brecht's Threepenny Film***

Feature film, dir. by Joachim A. Lang

Germany, 2018, 129 min

Provocative, outrageously colorful and merging fact with fiction, *Mack the Knife* is about a film which was never made. Asked by the film industry to direct his phenomenally successful *Threepenny Opera*, German playwright Bertolt Brecht refuses to play by the rules. He makes a socialist critique of capitalism, staged as a conflict between Mack the Knife, a London gangster and Peachum, the head of the beggars' mafia – and takes the producers to court to prove that the moneyed interests are prevailing over his right as an author and the right of the audience.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9**

**5 p.m.**

***Is the Man Who Is Tall Happy? An Animated Conversation with Noam Chomsky***

Animation/documentary, dir. by Michel Gondry

France, 2013, 88 mins

Innovative director Michael Gondry (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*) uses brilliant, lively animations to illustrate a series of conversations with philosopher, linguistic and activist Noam Chomsky as he holds court on his life and work.

**6:30 p.m.**

***The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger***

Documentary, dir. by Bartek Dziadosz, Colin MacCabe, Christopher Roth & Tilda Swinton

US, 2016, 90 mins

In 1973, philosopher, storyteller, artist, and radical humanist John Berger (*Ways of Seeing*, *G.*) moved from urban London to the French Alpine village of Quincy. Starring Tilda Swinton, this four-part film weaves ideas and motifs from the writer's work with the texture and history of his mountain home to create a vivid, multifaceted and multilayered portrait.

**8:15 p.m. *Gore Vidal: The United States of Amnesia***

Documentary, dir. by Nicholas D. Wrathall

US, 2013, 89 mins

A controversial, fascinating and wholly entertaining portrait of Gore Vidal (1925-2012), the last lion of the age of American liberalism and one of the most fearless critics of our times. Blending candid vérité footage of the writer in his final years, commentaries by those who knew him best (including Christopher Hitchens), and clips from his legendary on-air career, the film is an overview of his enduring global impact on art, politics and everything in between.

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10**

**8 p.m.**

***N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear***

Documentary, dir. by Jeffrey Palmer

US, 2019, 85 mins

A spiritual journey into the enigmatic life and mind of the Native America's most celebrated author, whose Pulitzer Prize-winning *The House Made of Dawn* led to the Native American Renaissance. Using a fresh approach to biographical storytelling, indigenous filmmaker Jeffrey Palmer visually captures Momaday's creative core through original animation, historical photos and aerial landscapes, and interviews with Robert Redford, Jeff Bridges, Beau Bridges, James Earl Jones and Joy Harjo.

The screening will be followed by a talkback with director Jeffrey Palmer and American Masters Executive Producer Michael Kantor.

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11**

**7:30 p.m.**

***Ferrante Fever***

Documentary, dir. by Giacomo Durzi

US, 2017, 74 mins

With over 10 million copies of her Neapolitan novels sold in over 50 countries, Elena Ferrante is a global literary sensation. A journey between New York City's cultural hub and Ferrante's native Italy, the film explores how an anonymous author's visceral tales of love and friendship gained such an enthusiastic following. Hillary Clinton, Roberto Saviano, Jonathan Franzen weigh-in on what makes her work and mysterious persona so uniquely captivating.

The screening will be followed by a Q&A with Ann Goldstein, Ferrante's translator, and Michael Reynolds, Editor in Chief of Europa Editions, Ferrante's US publisher.

*LitFilm: A BPL Film Festival about Writers* is made possible with support from WarnerMedia.

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## **ABOUT BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

[Brooklyn Public Library](#) is one of the nation's largest library systems and among New York City's most democratic institutions. As a leader in developing modern 21st century libraries, we provide resources to support personal advancement, foster civic literacy, and strengthen the fabric of community among the more than 2.7 million individuals who call Brooklyn home. We provide

nearly 60,000 free programs a year with writers, thinkers, artists, and educators—from around the corner and around the world. And we give patrons millions of opportunities to enjoy one of life's greatest satisfactions: the joy of a good book.

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