

**wexner center**  
for the arts

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**WEXNER CENTER SHOWCASES FILMS OF AKI KAURISMÄKI**

**“The filmmaking style of Aki Kaurismäki—gentle, charming, quirky, and utterly unique...”—Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian (U.K.)***

This February, the Wexner Center showcases the films of Finland’s most distinctive and darkly comic filmmaker, **Aki Kaurismäki**. Kaurismäki is a director of international renown, even if his films have always been outside the mainstream. The 16-film retrospective begins February 5 and runs through February 19.

Since the 1980s Kaurismäki has been creating masterpieces in miniature and has amassed a most distinguished body of work. Like his kindred spirit, Jim Jarmusch, Kaurismäki combines the gravity of Robert Bresson and the nicotine- and whiskey-drenched cool of Tom Waits with a deadpan comedic style. Recently, Kaurismäki’s pictures have been exploring the struggle to maintain dignity in an increasingly cynical and embittered world.

Tickets for each evening’s screenings are \$6 for the general public, \$4 for Wexner Center members, students, and senior citizens. All screenings take place in the Wexner Center Film/Video Theater, 1871 N. High St. Call 614-292-3535 for advance tickets.

**KAURISMÄKI RETROSPECTIVE SCHEDULE:**

**Thursday, February 5 / 7 pm**

***Leningrad Cowboys Go America* (1989)**

***Juha* (1999)**

Preceded by ***Those Were the Days* (1992)**

The cult favorite that introduced Kaurismäki to the U.S., *Leningrad Cowboys Go America* (78 mins.) tracks the Leningrad Cowboys, a Siberian rock band, as they travel across America. Kaurismäki’s most stylistically daring film, *Juha* (78 mins.) affectionately recreates a lost era of silent cinema in a classic tale of a tragic love

triangle. The Leningrad Cowboys also appear in and provide the music for the short *Those Were the Days* (6 mins.).

**Friday, February 6 / 7 pm**

***The Man Without a Past*** (2002)

***Aki Kaurismäki*** (Guy Girard, 2001)

*The Man without a Past* (97 mins.), Kaurismäki's most warmly received film, follows an amnesiac as he attempts to rebuild his life. Kaurismäki regular Kati Outinen won the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival for her droll portrayal of a Salvation Army worker. An episode of the French series *Cinema of our Time, Aki Kaurismäki* (53 mins.) offers an insightful look at Kaurismäki's habits, home, and well-stocked bar.

**Saturday, February 7 / 7 pm**

***Drifting Clouds*** (1996)

***Take Care of Your Scarf, Tatjana*** (1994)

Preceded by ***These Boots*** (1992)

Voted one of the three best films of the 1990s by a collection of film critics and curators, *Drifting Clouds* (96 mins.) shows the indefatigable beauty of a married couple's bond as they weather unemployment and other setbacks. The humorous and understated *Take Care of Your Scarf, Tatjana* (62 mins.) observes the taciturn dating habits of two Finnish couples. *These Boots* (5 mins.) offers a tour through Finnish history set to the Leningrad Cowboys covering Nancy Sinatra.

**Thursday, February 12 / 7 pm**

***The Match Factory Girl*** (1989)

***Calamari Union*** (1984)

Preceded by ***Thru the Wire*** (1986)

A factory worker who is mistreated in nearly every aspect of her life plots her revenge in the acclaimed *The Match Factory Girl* (70 mins). Eighteen men—all but one of whom are named Frank—try to traverse Helsinki while the film references fly fast and furious in *Calamari Union* (80 mins.). The short *Thru the Wire* (6 mins.) redoes Bresson's *A Man Escaped* as a satire of America.

**Wednesday, February 18 / 7 pm**

***Ariel*** (1988)

***Shadows in Paradise*** (1986)

Preceded by ***Rocky VI*** (1986)

The minimalist road movie *Ariel* (74 mins.) established Kaurismäki's reputation on the international film scene and was voted the Best Foreign Film of the Year by the National Society of Film Critics. *Shadows of Paradise* (76 mins.), the first film in the "proletarian trilogy" that also includes *Ariel* and *The Match Factory Girl*, is a tragicomedy about a wary romance between a garbage truck driver and supermarket cashier. *Rocky VI* (9 mins.) mocks everything Stallone-related.

**Thursday, February 19 / 7 pm**

***Hamlet Goes Business*** (1987)

***I Hired a Contract Killer*** (1990)

Kaurismäki liberally updates Shakespeare to the money-hungry Helsinki of the late 1980s for *Hamlet Goes Business* (86 mins.), where the young prince must foil his uncle's plans to monopolize the world's rubber duck market. *I Hired a Contract Killer* (80 mins.), Kaurismäki's only English-language film, takes place in a noirish, stylized London and pays tribute to Michael Powell, Ealing comedies, The Clash, Jean-Pierre Melville, and Carl Theodor Dreyer, among others.

**EVENT SUPPORT**

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**WEXNER CENTER**

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.