



Àngoli - International Art Festival presents
SAVE ME FROM TEARS
curated by **Francesco Urbano Ragazzi**

[BARI. Teatro Kursaal Santalucia](#)

28 December, 2024, h 10.30 am - 10.30 pm.

29 December, 2024, h 10:30 am - 07:30 pm.

USER MANUAL

Do-it-yourself. Do it yourself! Do it! Do it for yourself! Do it with yourself! Just do it. Do yourself. Be yourself. Find yourself. Remember who you are. Remember to do it yourself. Do what you want. Do as you please. Do alone. Do with nothing. Do as it comes. Do with what you find. Do with everything. Do with what you love. Do with whom you love. Do it again.

PRESS RELEASE

Spazio Murat continues its multidisciplinary research and promotional activities in Bari by presenting the second edition of **Àngoli - International Art Festival** from December 27 to 29, 2024, at its headquarters and the Kursaal Santalucia cinema hall. Under the artistic direction of **Massimo Torrigiani**, the festival invites audiences to repopulate the cinematic space with the sights and sounds of artist cinema. It does so with *SAVE ME FROM TEARS*, a Christmas-themed program dedicated to fluidity and bodily fluids, curated by **Francesco Urbano Ragazzi**, a duo renowned for their long-time exploration of the intersection between independent cinema, visual arts, and digital media.

Hosted in the majestic Kursaal Santalucia theater, recently reopened to the public, the lineup establishes a new end-of-year tradition for experiencing moving images. Notable guests of the program include New York artist **Cheryl Donegan**, a pioneer of post-digital feminist cinema and painting since the early 1990s; two pillars of Berlin's trans-identitarian art scene, **Annette Frick** and **CHEAP Collective**; and the Italian artist duo **Invernomuto**, known for pushing anthropological research into territories of sonic and multimedia experimentation.

Their works will be showcased on December 28 and 29 through a series of screenings in the cinema hall, accompanied by three live conversations.

Alongside the works of Donegan, CHEAP, Frick, and Invernomuto, three contemporary masterpieces will be shown in Bari for the first time. Originating from vastly different geographical and cultural contexts, these works share a common thread: the ability to bring to light underground rituals and forms of life that, navigating the political, the ecological, and the fantastical, redefine human matter and transcend it. The featured works are *Dance to the End of Love* by Lebanese archival artist and filmmaker **Akram Zaatari**, *Green in the*

Grooves by Canadian sculptor and filmmaker **Tamara Henderson**, and *On Venus* by British artist and director **P. Staff**.

Two films that made the history of cinema serve as guiding lights for the program, embodying the spirit of a flaming Christmas: *Fireworks* (1947) by **Kenneth Anger** and *Christmas on Earth* (1963) by **Barbara Rubin**. These works subvert traditional imagery, unleashing on-screen the overwhelming and liberating power of sexual desire. Anger (1927–2023) and Rubin (1954–1980) do more than depict the upheaval of domestic order driven by lust; they lay the groundwork for a new poetic language, where images are infused with rhythm and musicality. Shot by *enfants prodiges* who were not even of age at the time, both films played a pivotal role in shaping queer and feminist aesthetics, establishing themselves as programmatic manifestos of a new, visionary, and independent cinema.

Fireworks and *Christmas on Earth* respond to the stereotypical sentiments of commercial cinema by asserting deeper impulses that relate to life in its unpredictable fragmentation. For this reason, they are the films that inspired *SAVE ME FROM TEARS*, but they are also essential cornerstones of the New American Cinema, a movement for the liberation and expansion of cinema led in the 1960s by a Lithuanian poet and director who had relocated to New York as a refugee: Jonas Mekas (1922–2019). The scope of the revolutions led by Mekas, Rubin, and Anger, alongside Warhol, the Velvet Underground, Yoko Ono, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Smith, and many others, will be explored through the screening of two documentaries, shown for the first time in Bari. The first is *Fragments of Paradise* by **K.D. Davison**, a feature film dedicated to Mekas' remarkable biography, which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival in 2022. The second is *Barbara Rubin & the Exploding NY Underground* by **Chuck Smith**, awarded in 2019 at the DART Film Festival in Barcelona for its unprecedented portrait of the director and her influence on American avant-garde movements.

SAVE ME FROM TEARS traces a subtle yet profound continuity across generations, historical, geographical, and social contexts, highlighting a shared sense of community. The curatorial duo Francesco Urbano Ragazzi comments on the selection: "Like the filmmakers of the New American Cinema, also Cheryl Donegan, CHEAP Collective, Annette Frick, Akram Zaatari, Tamara Henderson, P. Staff, and Invernomuto are advocates of a do-it-yourself cinema that affirms its inalienable vitality. These artists spare themselves and the audience the pathos of complacent representations, choosing instead to inhabit screens, theaters, and bodies as spaces of desire and transformation."

The audience is invited to participate in this transformative process not as spectators or learners, but rather as bearers of questions, experiences, and new perspectives. For this reason, *Àngoli* has joined forces with two other festivals that have made overcoming identity barriers their hallmark: the **Bari International Gender Festival** and the queer culture festival **Sherocco**. Alongside them, *Àngoli* 2024 will be enriched by the participation of another notable local institution: the **Accademia del Cinema Ragazzi**, a pioneering school that has been working for nearly twenty years to use moving image education as a strategy for social regeneration. For the full festival program: www.spaziomurat.it

FOCUS ON THE PROGRAM SECTIONS

1. Christmas on Fire:

Kenneth Anger, Barbara Rubin, K.D. Davison, Chuck Smith.

Fireworks by Kenneth Anger and *Christmas on Earth* by Barbara Rubin are the two films that inspired the entire program. Both films break the rules of narrative cinema, inventing a visual language where the images are permeated by a rhythmic and musical component. Filmed by a very young Kenneth Anger while his parents were away for the weekend, *Fireworks* combines the solemn sounds of a blockbuster with erotic fantasies of submission. This unusual pairing gives the film's dreamlike atmosphere a dramatic tension, replacing the romantic Hollywood plots with the fiery bursts of an ardor that flares up.

The film will be introduced by Francesco Urbano Ragazzi on December 28 at 11:00 AM. Following the screening, *Fragments of Paradise* by K.D. Davison will be presented in regional première. Awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival in 2022, the feature film recounts the biography of Jonas Mekas, who was the first ardent promoter of both Anger and Rubin. Davison's documentary chronicles the life of this legendary filmmaker through his diary-films, capturing the spirit of the avant-garde embodied by his life as a refugee. A Lithuanian poet who arrived as an exile in New York in 1949, Mekas reinvented the cinematic medium and its institutions, placing the needs of artists at the center of the production system. A prolific author, Mekas also founded some of the vital organs of independent cinema: *Film Culture* magazine, the *New American Cinema Group*, the *Film-Makers' Cooperative*, and the *Anthology Film Archives*. K.D. Davison's movie tells the story of this hero of cinematic art through Mekas' unreleased footage and testimonies from his friends, including Martin Scorsese, Marina Abramović, and John Waters.

The second work inspiring the program, *Christmas on Earth* by Barbara Rubin, will be screened on December 28 at 5:00 PM. It will be preceded by a conversation with the curators, along with the founders of the Bari International Gender Festival and the queer culture festival Sherocco. Based on Rubin's example, the participants will seek to assess the evolution of queer languages in Italy.

The legend of Barbara Rubin is that of an eighteen-year-old who, with a group of friends and a camera, invented a new way of making and seeing cinema. In what was both her debut and final film, she portrayed an orgiastic ritual where human coupling multiplies into infinite possibilities, ultimately reaching abstraction. For the first time in the history of cinema, genitalia are featured in a non-pornographic film, which was also directed by a woman. This revolution of perspective is accomplished through a continuous layering of images that produces the dizzying effect of a dance. In its original form, *Christmas on Earth* consisted of two simultaneous projections. The film is thus considered a milestone in the history of Expanded Cinema.

The screening of *Christmas on Earth* will be followed by the documentary *Barbara Rubin & the Exploding NY Underground*, directed by Chuck Smith with the invaluable collaboration of Jonas Mekas. Awarded in 2019 at the DART Film Festival in Barcelona, the film offers an unprecedented portrait, tracing the network of relationships that Rubin was able to weave, acting as a link between the Beat Generation, Andy Warhol's Factory, the New American Cinema, and the New York music scene.

2. Otherworldly Earth:

Akram Zaatari, Tamara Henderson, P. Staff, Annette Frick

On December 28 the festival continues at 4:00 PM with four films that, in recent years and from different perspectives, embrace the legacy of avant-garde cinema and project it into today's media landscape.

Dance to the End of Love by Lebanese artist Akram Zaatari opens the session, plunging into the surrealist unconscious of the web. This ballad, composed of YouTube clips from the MENA region, portrays a playful, acrobatic, at times sci-fi, and intensely romantic masculinity. The video seems to narrate an alternative story to the scenes of destruction that have defined the region in recent years.

The program continues with *Green in the Grooves* by Canadian artist Tamara Henderson, who captures the alchemy of her creative process through the camera lens. Delving into the dark depths of the earth through casting, digging, and composting, lively totemic sculptures resurface into the sunlight.

The relationship between humans, nature, and technology is further explored in *On Venus* by P. Staff, a video first presented as an installation at the 2022 Venice Biennale and now shown on the big screen. Set in a post-human scenario that Staff places on the planet Venus, the work depicts the disintegration of matter and its unstoppable transformation. Closing the cycle is the masterful *Cosmic Elements* by Annette Frick. Like Man Ray's famous rayographs, this is a film made without a camera. The patterns imprinted on the film are created by the interplay of plants and seminal fluids exposed to light.

3. Cheryl Donegan's Retrospective.

The artist will be present.

The festival continues with an extensive retrospective dedicated to its first guest, whose work has emerged at the intersection of American independent cinema and the digital revolution. Cheryl Donegan finally returns to Italy after presenting her video-manifesto *Head* at the legendary Venice Biennale in 1993.

Extending her painting practice on screen, the American artist uses the audiovisual medium to circulate a feminist imagery that reclaims the aesthetics of consumerism. In Donegan's works, signs and forms of little value are recycled into new compositions with high emotional capital. The artist implements a radical ecology of the image that anticipates and dismantles the mechanisms of production and transmission of content in the digital age. An essential source of inspiration for many artists of the post-internet generation, Donegan's practice will be examined through the viewing of nine striking video works. From her early productions, where performance and painting merge in an irreverent revision of modernist canons, to her appropriations of formats such as commercials, trailers, slideshows, and music videos, up to works entirely created on social media without the use of a camera. The retrospective dedicated to Cheryl Donegan will take place on December 28 at 8:00 PM and will be followed by a conversation with the artist and Francesco Urbano Ragazzi.

4. Choose Mutation:

Italian Première. Susanne Sachsse and CHEAP collective.

At 12:00 PM on December 29, a special screening will spotlight CHEAP, a Berlin-based collective that embraces mutation as its core element. Not only does the collective's

members change over time, but their identities are themselves fluid and transformative. Among the founders of this dynamic group are translator Daniel Hendrickson, artist and actress Susanne Sachsse, and academic Marc Siegel, joined by numerous collaborators such as performer Vaginal Davis, the band Xiu Xiu, and filmmaker Bruce LaBruce. The event will focus particularly on Susanne Sachsse and her recent collaboration with photographer Annette Frick for an exhibition held at Accelerator in Stockholm this past spring. This exhibition and Sachsse's creative partnership with Frick will be explored in a discussion between Francesco Urbano Ragazzi and Clarissa Tempestini, gallerist at ChertLüdde in Berlin. The conversation will serve as an introduction to the screening of *Choose Mutation*, directed by Sachsse and co-authored by the CHEAP Collective. Premiering on the big screen, this work is a sophisticated audiovisual experience where language becomes rhythm, code, and matter. The video takes the audience on a journey through cyberpunk aesthetics, post-pandemic dystopias, concrete poetry, and darkwave. The soundtrack enriches the visual experience, layering texts by Sachsse and Marc Siegel, quotes from trans-feminist philosopher Paul B. Preciado, found recordings, and original music by Xiu Xiu.

5. Invernomuto Retrospective.

The artists will be present.

At 6:30 PM on December 29, a retrospective of Invernomuto's film and video production will conclude these intense two days of screenings and discussions. Composed of Simone Bertuzzi and Simone Trabucchi, the duo will attend the festival to engage in a conversation with Francesco Urbano Ragazzi and the audience, distilling two decades of their career into one evening.

Invernomuto explores the archetypes of popular culture, uncovering surprising genealogies that reframe global processes within localized contexts. At the core of their practice, sonic and audiovisual research takes the form of a counter-ethnography, blurring the lines between mass culture, folk traditions, and subcultures.

For the first time in Bari, audiences will have the opportunity to journey back through time to view key moments in the duo's career: from recent video installations such as *Mangrovia*—shot in Martinique in collaboration with electronic composer Low Jack—to their earliest videotape works like *Catch Me When I Fall*. With a style that ranges from poetic to paradoxical, encompassing trailers, music videos, and documentaries, Invernomuto's diverse audiovisual production offers access to a spatial and sensory dimension that warmly embraces communal fusion.

SAVE ME FROM TEARS

December 28-29 | Teatro Kursaal Santalucia, Bari

December 28th

10:30 Institutional greetings by Giusy Ottonelli, Massimo Torrigiani, Francesco Urbano Ragazzi

11:00 Introduction to the screening program by Francesco Urbano Ragazzi

11:30 *Fireworks* by Kenneth Anger

11:45 – 13:30 *Fragments of Paradise* by K.D. Davison

16:00 *Dance to the End of Love* by Akram Zaatari, *Green in the Grooves* by Tamara Henderson, *On Venus* by P. Staff, *Cosmic Elements* by Annette Frick

17:00 Introduction to Barbara Rubin by Francesco Urbano Ragazzi with BiG and Sherocco

17:30 *Christmas on Earth* by Barbara Rubin

18:00 – 19:15 *Barbara Rubin & The Exploding NY Underground* by Chuck Smith

20:00 Retrospective dedicated to Cheryl Donegan: *Head* (1993); *Practisse* (1994); *Alive! Artist! Model! Pleasure!* (1998); *Whoa Whoa Studio (for Courbet)* (2000); *Flushing* (2004); *Old, Temporary* (2005); *Refuses* (2006); *I Still Want to Drown* (2010); *Blood Sugar* (2012); *Vine* (2016)

21:00 Conversation between Cheryl Donegan and Francesco Urbano Ragazzi

December 29th

10:00 *Fireworks* by Kenneth Anger, *Christmas on Earth* by Barbara Rubin, *Dance to the End of Love* by Akram Zaatari, *On Venus* by P. Staff, *Green in the Grooves* by Tamara Henderson, *Cosmic Elements* by Annette Frick

12:00 Conversation between Francesco Urbano Ragazzi and Clarissa Tempestini on Annette Frick and CHEAP Collective

12:30 – 13:30 *Choose Mutation* by CHEAP Collective

16:00 – 17:30 *Fragments of Paradise* by K.D. Davison

17:30 Retrospective dedicated to Invernomuto: *Mangrovia* (2024); *GRITO – Las Brisas de Febrero* (2021); *Duma – Lionsblood* (2020); *Bones - Atlanta* (2015); *NEGUS - Lee Scratch Perry* (2014); *Wishes of a G* (2014); *Boomeria* (2011); *Dungeons & Dregs* (2010); *B.O.B. – trailers* (2010); *Catch Me When I Fall 2* (2004)

18:30 Conversation between Invernomuto and Francesco Urbano Ragazzi

Evento promosso
e organizzato da

