



Xing and Home Movies/Archivio Aperto
present in the frame of
I had nowhere to go. Omaggio a Jonas Mekas

saturday 26 october 9 pm

JONAS MEKAS (LT/USA)
Lost, Lost, Lost
experimental cinema

Raum

Via Ca' Selvatica 4/d Bologna

Saturday 26 october at 9 pm Xing and Home Movies present at Raum ***Lost, Lost, Lost***, the 1976 film by **Jonas Mekas**, six reels of life filmed between 1949, the year of his arrival in New York, as a young poet and refugee originally from Lithuania, and 1963, when Mekas is a leading figure in the New York underground and a reference point for the New American Cinema. The 16mm projection for Archivio Aperto 2019 is part of the project *I had nowhere to go. Dedicated to Jonas Mekas* (screenings, live cinema, installations, readings, meetings).

With the tribute to Jonas Mekas, visionary artist and godfather of the New American Cinema, opens **the XII edition of Archivio Aperto** (Bologna 25 October > 7 December 2019), the annual event that Home Movies dedicates every year to the rediscovery of private film heritage, from family films to experimental and artist films.

Jonas Mekas, poet and filmmaker of Lithuanian origin transplanted to New York, advocate of the *home movie* as a form of art, left us on January 23rd this year, after a long life dedicated to independent and avant-garde cinema. Archivio Aperto celebrates him by choosing an unprecedented point of view, based on his emigrated gaze, when the wound of loss and the weight of loneliness join the desire for discovery and the inexhaustible thirst for knowledge which he himself called "a new Ithaca". ***I had nowhere to go. Tribute to Jonas Mekas*** investigates the creative space between private writing and filmic practice, drawing on the artist's homonymous diary as a central poetic experience from which many of his images spring. The memories of life in the Nazi labor camps and in the "Displaced Person Camps" - refugee camps set up by the Allies at the end of the war - join those of the early years in New York, when Mekas bought his first 16mm Bolex camera, and started filming while he continued to work in a factory: "*if I could film a minute, I would film a minute. If I could film ten seconds, I would film ten seconds. I was filming what I could out of desperation.*"

In ***Lost, Lost, Lost*** (16mm, col/bw, 1976, sound, 176') the images shot in New York between 1949 and 1963 tell an epos of the daily, made of landings and migrants life, pacifist demonstrations, looks on the city and first explorations in the underground cinema. "*The period I am dealing with in these six reels was a period of desperation, of attempts to grow roots into the new ground, to create new memories. In these six painful reels I tried to indicate what it feels to be in exile, how I felt in those years. These reels carry the title Lost Lost Lost, the title of a film myself and my brother wanted to make in 1949, and it indicates the mood we were in, in those years. It describes the mood of a Displaced Person who hasn't yet forgotten the native country but hasn't gained a new one. The sixth reel is a transitional reel where we begin to see some relaxation, where I begin to find moments of happiness. New life begins.*"

Jonas Mekas, poet and filmmaker, born in 1922 in the farming village of Semeniškiai, Lithuania, was based in New York City. In 1944, he and his brother Adolfas were taken by the Nazis to a forced labor camp in Elmshorn, Germany. After the War he studied philosophy at the University of Mainz. At the end of 1949 the UN Refugee Organization brought both brothers to New York City, where they settled down in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Two months after his arrival in New York he borrowed money to buy his first Bolex camera and began to record brief moments of his life. He soon got deeply involved in the American Avant-Garde film movement. In 1954, together with his brother, he started Film Culture magazine, which soon became the most important film publication in the US. In 1958 he began his legendary Movie Journal column in the Village Voice. In 1962 he founded the Film-Makers' Cooperative, and in 1964 the Film-Makers' Cinematheque, which eventually grew into Anthology Film Archives, one of the world's largest and most important repositories of avant-garde cinema, and a screening venue. During all this time he continued writing poetry and making films. To this date he has published more than 20 books of prose and poetry, which have been translated into over a dozen languages. His Lithuanian poetry is now part of Lithuanian classic literature and his films can be found in leading museums around the world. He is largely credited for developing the diaristic forms of cinema. Mekas has also been active as an academic, teaching at the New School for Social Research, the International Center for Photography, Cooper Union, New York University, and MIT. Mekas' film *The Brig* was awarded the Grand Prize at the Venice Film Festival in 1963. Other films include *Walden* (1969), *Reminiscences of a Journey to Lithuania* (1972), *Lost Lost Lost* (1975), *Scenes from the Life of Andy Warhol* (1990), *Scenes from the Life of George Maciunas* (1992), *As I was Moving Ahead I saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty* (2000), *Letter from Greenpoint* (2005), *Sleepless Nights Stories* (2011) and *Out-takes from the Life of a Happy Man*. In 2007, he completed a series of 365 short films released on the internet -- one film every day -- and since then has continued to share new work on his website. Since 2000, Mekas has expanded his work into the area of film



installations, exhibiting at the Serpentine Gallery, the Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Moderna Museet Stockholm, PS1 Contemporary Art Center MoMA, Documenta of Kassel, the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, and the Venice Biennale.
jonasmekas.com

The **Italian Amateur Film Archive** was born in 2002 in Bologna to preserve and harness the amateur and family film, a still hidden and inaccessible audiovisual heritage. The Archive, founded and managed by Home Movies promotes and organizes the study, storage and upgrading of amateur and family film, and curates the festival Archivio Aperto and other events promoting its archive in collaboration with musicians.

Supported by Regione Emilia-Romagna, Comune di Bologna, Edizioni Zero. *I had nowhere to go. Omaggio a Jonas Mekas* is a project by Home Movies in collaboration with Istituto Parri, MAMbo, Xing, LightCone, RE:VOIR supported by Comune di Bologna, LCI - Lithuanian Culture Institute and Lithuanian Film Centre.

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