

Milestones of the Last Quarter Century

May 15 - June 2, 2026

CHRONOLOGICAL SCHEDULE

FRI, MAY 15

7:00PM WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

SAT, MAY 16

11:45AM MOONRISE KINGDOM

1:50PM I AM CUBA

9:45PM MOONRISE KINGDOM

SUN, MAY 17

12:00PM AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

2:10PM THE TREE OF LIFE

5:00PM AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

7:10PM THE TREE OF LIFE

MON, MAY 18

1:15PM WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

3:40PM ANVIL! THE STORY OF ANVIL

5:30PM WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

8:00PM ANVIL! THE STORY OF ANVIL

TUE, MAY 19

1:00PM MOONRISE KINGDOM

3:10PM I AM CUBA

6:05PM MOONRISE KINGDOM

8:10PM I AM CUBA

WED, MAY 20

1:55PM AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

4:00PM THE TREE OF LIFE

6:50PM AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

SAT, MAY 23

12:00PM THE WILD BUNCH (35mm)

3:10PM BOYHOOD

SUN, MAY 24

12:00PM THE WILD BUNCH (35mm)

3:00PM I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

7:45PM THE WILD BUNCH (35mm)

MON, MAY 25

2:30PM STOP MAKING SENSE

4:35PM BOYHOOD

8:00PM STOP MAKING SENSE

10:05PM STOP MAKING SENSE

TUE, MAY 26

3:30PM PARASITE

6:15PM I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

THU, MAY 28

7:20PM HOUSE (35mm)

FRI, MAY 29

9:10PM PARASITE

SAT, MAY 30

11:00AM Seminar: How The Belcourt Was Saved

12:00PM WILD RIVER

9:55PM HOUSE (35mm)

SUN, MAY 31

12:00PM SÁTÁNTANGÓ

MON, JUNE 1

1:00PM WILD RIVER

3:25PM FIRST COW

5:30PM WILD RIVER

8:00PM FIRST COW

TUE, JUNE 2

7:00PM CROUPIER (35mm)

FILM LISTING SCHEDULE

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This series made possible
with generous support from
the Manzlers and Webbs.



Milestones of the Last Quarter Century

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As we conclude a year of programs, seminars and special events dedicated Belcourt 100, our centennial as Nashville's oldest neighborhood cinema, it seemed appropriate to look back specifically at our last quarter century — a turning point (starting in 2000) when our building was saved, a new 501(c) was formed, and the Belcourt Theatre earned the moniker we hold today as Nashville's Nonprofit Film Center. To do so, we have gathered this unique collection of films, each its own kind of milestone in our last quarter century and tied to a particular moment. (*Synopses and context compiled by Toby Leonard*)

For the full synopses that help frame these selections as milestones, see belcourt.org/milestones

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Dir. Morgan Neville | USA | 2018 | 94 min. | PG-13 | DCP

As the Belcourt simultaneously wraps our 26th year as a nonprofit and the building's 100th, our look back at this past quarter-century kicks off with a beacon of sorts. Morgan Neville's inspiring portrait of Mister Rogers, America's favorite neighbor, took us beyond the zip-up cardigans and the land of make-believe. To date, **WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR** is our highest-attended run of the last 26 years — and turned a lot of heads that week when little old us turned up the highest gross in the country. Yes, it was and remains the most successful run of our tenure — but more importantly, it's an anecdote from the not-too-distant past to the weight of our current time.

MOONRISE KINGDOM

Dir. Wes Anderson | USA | 2012 | 94 min. | PG-13 | DCP

Set on an island off the coast of New England in the summer of 1965, **MOONRISE KINGDOM** tells the story of two 12-year-olds who fall in love, make a secret pact, and run away together into the wilderness. When the film arrived in Nashville, it was hot, humid — and like most late Junes in Middle Tennessee, what felt like an all-time roaster. Pre-renovation, our aged building struggled to keep up. Sold-out audiences were treated to a failing AC unit and a 1966 Hall (then our largest) whose curtains seemed to be producing sweat. Such were the conditions that one very pregnant locally-based musician — then part of a successful duo — whether (weather?) related or not, went into labor during the film.

I AM CUBA

Dir. Mikhail Kalatozov | Cuba/USSR | 1964 | 141 min. | NR | 4K DCP

In Spanish and Russian with English subtitles

Director Mikhail Kalatozov's delirious 1964 masterpiece unfolds in four stunning vignettes that paint a portrait of pre-revolutionary Cuba — its culture and the people who call the island home. Shot soon after the Cuban Missile Crisis, this wildly offbeat but influential work represents an early effort to keep abreast of the ongoing and crucial work of film preservation — even if our means of exhibition left much to be desired at the time.

In 2001, I AM CUBA had been restored and released with the support of Francis Ford Coppola and Martin Scorsese, and we wanted to show it — but we only had lenses for the two chief aspect ratio formats of the era: flat, a shape that's very close to today's television standard (16x9), and the much wider Cinemascope. Unfortunately, screening the boxier formats without the proper lenses — basically everything before the invention of widescreen — meant that the image would spill well below the boundaries of our screen. Our solution? Take the backup screen we had in a hallway and fold it over the lower frame of our screen, thereby adding an extension — albeit with a very clear dividing line along the lower third of the image. It was absolutely atrocious.

AU HASARD BALTHAZAR

Dir. Robert Bresson | France | 1966 | 95 min. | NR | DCP
In French with English subtitles

Widely considered to be Robert Bresson's masterpiece, AU HASARD BALTHAZAR charts the adverse lives of a donkey named Balthazar and Marie, the young girl who named him.

Screening in this series alongside I AM CUBA as an early representation of our long-standing dedication to repertory cinema, AU HASARD BALTHAZAR and similar efforts in the early Aughts were made possible by Nashville Premieres, an independently operating group of Belcourt Founders that underwrote original programming to build an audience for more challenging art-house cinema, alongside new prints of undiscovered classics — before the efforts of the Belcourt as a newly-formed nonprofit could fully support these works on its own.

THE TREE OF LIFE

Dir. Terrence Malick | UK/Ireland | 2011 | 138 min. | NR | 4K DCP

Sundays at the Belcourt can hold a special place, particularly for the spiritually minded whose approach to betterment might be more inclined toward touching the sublime through immersion of art. In the world of American cinema, one such filmmaker — though there are others — would find a home on the Lord's day.

As the *Nashville Scene's* dearly departed editor and film critic Jim Ridley (we'll come back to Jim) noted at the top of his review of THE TREE OF LIFE: "Nothing makes people hate Terrence Malick's movies more than someone describing Terrence Malick's movies, in the tone of a stranger trying to wedge a religious tract under your door." Jim goes on to say, "So if I were to say something about how THE TREE OF LIFE, Malick's fifth movie in a 38-year career, attempts nothing less than to fuse the individual and the universal while portraying the life force that binds man to the first cellular organisms on earth, what I really want to say is, 'Why am I sitting here crying at a shot of a bug fogger?'"

ANVIL: THE STORY OF ANVIL

Dir. Sasha Gervasi | Canada | 2008 | 80 min. | NR | DCP

Lifelong friends and Torontonians “Lips” Kudlow and Robb Reiner founded Anvil in 1978, bridging the era of ‘70s hard rock and ‘80s metal. In the ‘80s, they played huge international rock festivals alongside bands whom they’d influenced. Cut to the mid-Aughts: Lips and Robb are in their 50s and struggling to fill bars on a European tour. The struggle is being documented by former roadie Sasha Gervasi. The footage expands to back home, archival footage and context are added, a documentary is complete *and* gets into Sundance and other film festivals where the crowds of Spring 2009 devour the film whole, and a rebirth is born, and Anvil will tour screenings with the release of the movie.

It’s May 23, 2009, and the band pulls into the Belcourt parking lot looking a bit worn, but not without a spark. We raise the screen, load in gear, do a quick sound check, lower the screen again and open doors. Anticipation is high because word on the film is strong and everyone knows the band’s in the house. Without much fanfare on the front end, the screening begins and we listen in and watch from the wings. It’s going great. A few of us go outside and [REDACTED], but we’re back in place behind the screen when the credits roll. Explosive applause from behind the screen. Credits are still rolling as a tube amp pops on, sending a signal to the audience on the other side. Mid-credits, we start rolling up the screen, Lips takes a running start, slides out from underneath the screen like he’s stealing third base. Anvil talked to damn near everyone in the lobby, and we all closed the night out at...Where else? Robert’s. It was 2009. (*Don’t miss the YouTube links to footage of the band’s Belcourt performance in our online synopsis.*)

THE WILD BUNCH (35mm)

Dir. Sam Peckinpah | USA | 1969 | 144 min. | R | 35mm

Sometimes we’ll go deep into the classic genres. Contemporary too of course, but over the years three Film Noir fests, two Samurai and two Western series come to mind, among others. And yet especially with the recent passing of our dear H.G. Webb — a man who’s been with us from the very beginning in so many ways, and for whom no assemblage of a dozen or so words could possibly surmise — we cut a circle back to Westerns. An initial Westerns 101 series from 2009 included a solid 14 films that were mostly informed by our limitations at the time — we’d yet to install proper archival 35mm changeover projectors, and only had access to “platterable prints.” Westerns returned in a big way with 2018’s Essential Westerns series, a sauntering 26-film behemoth with the underwriting and participation of our beloved H.G., with whom a few of us introduced the opening film. We wore boots.

A master work of the Revisionist Western subgenre and a personal fave of H.G.’s, Sam Peckinpah’s classic THE WILD BUNCH tells the tale of a band of aging outlaws forced to contend with the inevitable death of their chosen lifestyle and the Old West as they once knew it.

BOYHOOD

Dir. Richard Linklater | USA | 2014 | 165 min. | R | DCP

Filmed over 12 years with the same cast, Richard Linklater's *BOYHOOD* is a groundbreaking story of growing up as seen through the eyes of a child named Mason (Ellar Coltrane), who literally grows up on screen before our eyes. Starring Ethan Hawke and Patricia Arquette as Mason's parents and newcomer Lorelei Linklater as his sister Samantha, *BOYHOOD* charts the rocky terrain of childhood like no other film has before — both a nostalgic time capsule of the recent past and an ode to growing up and parenting.

According to friend of the Belcourt and two-time visiting filmmaker Ethan Hawke, his long-term collaboration with Richard Linklater — including not only last year's *BLUE MOON*, but the *BEFORE* trilogy (itself a another discourse on time) — has “been preparation for what's to come,” and that “the tenth is going to be the best.” To further put *BOYHOOD* into context — and as it was filmed incrementally over 12 years — it's now been 12 years since most people have seen it.

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

Dir. Raoul Peck | USA | 2017 | 93 min. | PG-13 | DCP

To be fair, docs are way out-numbered in this assemblage of films, which isn't fair. Year to year, docs represent about 12% of our offerings. To the extent that moviegoers democratize their choices through the purchase of a movie ticket, we do find ourselves in a lull. But back in 2017-2018 — aka the “Movie Pass” years — y'all were banging down the doors and for good reason. Those were peak-doc times. While innovation in form and interest in the genre do have their respective peaks and valleys, at certain points these phases come together. In adding a third wave of societal reckoning, a documentary like *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO* might become part of its soundtrack.

Beyond its relevance as a great documentary in a time of change, *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO* unwittingly marked a crucial entry point into in a golden era of documentaries that *really* turned folks out — as much and even more than narrative features at the time. Consider what followed — Turkish cat doc *KEDI*, *LOVING VINCENT*, *RBG* and *WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR*, climbing doc *FREE SOLO*, and *THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS*. All of those films played for weeks and even months on end — something we've not seen here since before the pandemic.

STOP MAKING SENSE

Dir. Jonathan Demme | USA | 1984 | 88 min. | PG | 4K DCP

Whither 2016. Popular culture mourned the likes of Prince and David Bowie. Here at home on the 8th of March, we began mourning the loss of Jim Ridley, a process that continues today. To assess the editor and longtime senior film critic of the *Nashville Scene*, his impact on Nashville's film culture and the trajectory of our organization's last quarter-century would and indeed did require an entire book.

In commemoration, and in conjunction with the *Scene* and with the input of family and a few good friends, the Belcourt paid tribute that September with *Jewels and Jim: Ridley's Believe It or Not*, a weekend-long celebration of filmic fondness, Ridley faves and royal bangers. While many of us turn to

THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG as remembrance (Jim wrote exquisitely on that film, most notably in an essay for the Criterion Collection's Jacques Demy box set), we'll opt this time for one of the bangers in honor of a curly head seen bobbing at shows all over town.

Of the Talking Heads' 1984 concert film STOP MAKING SENSE, it's only right we share in full what Jim wrote in the *Scene*'s 2014 Fall Guide issue:

"The first concert I ever saw was the Talking Heads' "Speaking in Tongues" tour at Municipal Auditorium in 1983; it made me a concertgoer for life, but I'm not sure I got as much out of it live as I did reliving it through Jonathan Demme's peerless performance film, STOP MAKING SENSE. There's no dialogue or framing device — the conceptual arc of the show removed any need for that nonsense — but in some ways it's the perfect expression of Demme's career-long fascination with the building of communities and with performing troupes as families (and vice versa).

The director's love of people and performers radiates from the film, and he caught the band at its joyous peak, from frontman David Byrne's mesmerizing solo entrance to 'Psycho Killer' to his big-suit romp through 'Swamp' to a chill-raising 'Once in a Lifetime.' And the shared spotlight on Heads Jerry Harrison, Chris Frantz and Tina Weymouth (whose side project Tom Tom Club gets a sizable sidebar), as well as auxiliary members Bernie Worrell, Steven Scales, Alex Weir and Lynn Mabry, makes this a kind of anti-Last Waltz — a whole greater than the sum of its parts ... and if you feel like dancing, we'll allow it."

PARASITE

Dir. Bong Joon Ho | South Korea | 2019 | 132 min. | R | 4K DCP
In Korean with English subtitles

While WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR? takes the cake for the highest attended film of our last 26 years, PARASITE holds the honor of longest run — 20 weeks total, nearly 5 months. Bong Joon Ho's Palme d'Or winning black comedy opened at the Belcourt on Oct 25, 2019 and played continuously until March 8, 2020, a few weeks after winning the Oscar for Best Picture. Hey, had it made it seven more days, it would have gotten shut down by COVID! This began a chain of entries in the Palme d'Or-to-Oscar-winner pipeline for its U.S. distributor Neon, a run cut short only just this past year. The film itself is firmly part of the canon.

HOUSE (35mm)

Dir. Nobuhiko Obayashi | Japan | 1977 | 88 min. | NR | 35mm
In Japanese with English subtitles

The path of Nobuhiko Obayashi's journey from relative obscurity to a rediscovered candy-coated midnight classic ran right through the Belcourt. Let's see if we remember this right: To wit, a VHS tape rescued from Kim's Video and fan-subtitled to an underground website went above board, found one of its first legit screenings in 2010 as part of the Belcourt's Midnight Movies program — for which a hand-designed screenprint was printed and sold as a bonus, its design picked up by Janus Films/Criterion Collection for its ensuing theatrical and BluRay releases — and HOUSE was reborn, continuing to pack in audiences to this day.

Seminar: How the Belcourt Was Saved

Presented by T. Minton, Belcourt's public historian and archivist

The last seminar in our year-long centennial series, *How the Belcourt Was Saved* tells the story of how the Belcourt Theatre was rescued, rebuilt, and reimagined after 1999 as Nashville's nonprofit film center. At the center of this history are the local grassroots organizers, staff members, artists, promoters, and audiences who helped restore energy, rebuild attendance, and stabilize the theater in uncertain years. Their work not only preserved a historic building in Hillsboro Village but also shaped us to become one of the nation's leading arthouse cinemas.

WILD RIVER

Dir. Elia Kazan | USA | 1960 | 110 min. | NR | DCP

As the Aughts gave way to the 2010s, smaller more director or actor-centered repertory series — mostly with the frame of our ongoing Weekend Classics program — gave way to the mega-series, larger-scale film programs consisting of titles in the dozens. The first was *Visions of the South*, which spanned four weeks in the spring of 2011, and billed itself as: “A survey of 20th century film depicting life in the southeastern United States from the inside and out.” Beyond D.W. Griffith, Harper Lee and Scarlett O'Hara, the series brings together 22 films spanning 75 years shot in, around and about the region.” In hindsight and with exactly 15 years removed, there are a few things we might've done differently but overall...pretty darn good.

The series opened with *WILD RIVER*, Elia Kazan's masterful recreation of a unique period in Tennessee history is the first major studio film shot in its entirety in Tennessee. Belcourt education and engagement director Allison Inman, a few months shy of joining the Belcourt team in 2011, hosted the opening night Q&A for *WILD RIVER*. The conversation featured Judy Harris Spurgeon, a native of Cleveland, Tennessee, who was cast at age seven as Lee Remick's daughter, Barbara Ann Baldwin in *WILD RIVER*. At the time, Inman had just completed a one-hour documentary about the making of Kazan's film and the production's impact on the local people who brought the film to life.

SÁTÁNTANGÓ

Dir. Bela Tarr | Hungary | 1994 | 439 min. | NR | 4K DCP

In Hungarian with English subtitles

Screening in three parts with one 15-minute intermission and one 25-minute intermission.

“What's black and white, speaks Hungarian, and is 37,204 feet long? Don't look now, Nashville, but it will soon be in your midst. It is a phantom, a behemoth that only a comparative few have ever glimpsed. People have driven hours to see it and emerged half a day later from its company, *changed*. Some compare its effect to a drug. Others say it has the power to stop time. The harder it has been to see, the more its legend has grown. Spoken aloud, its name practically arrives in a clap of thunder: SÁTÁNTANGÓ!”

So wrote Jim Ridley in a 2006 hypepiece for Béla Tarr's 1994 magnum opus. The 37,204 feet refers to the length of 35mm film that comprises what was at the time the only circulating English-subtitled print of Béla Tarr's 7.5-hour magnum opus. He goes on: "There is no way to describe SÁTÁNTANGÓ that won't make it sound like arthouse flagellation — at first, anyway. So let's get the punishment out of the way. It is black-and-white (*ouch!*), subtitled (*oof!*), shot in glacial long takes (*hit me again!*) that might spend minutes on end surveying the movement of cows. Ooh, that smarts!"

FIRST COW

Dir. Kelly Reichardt | USA | 2020 | 122 min. | PG-13 | 4K DCP

The one that got away. Nearly. Kind of. On Sunday, March 15, 2020 — an otherwise gorgeous spring day as we recall — the emergence of a worldwide pandemic forced the long-term closure of the Belcourt (and pretty much everything else) for the foreseeable future. The rest, of course, is history. But during that period, we tried our level best to stay engaged: we held Zoom screenings, we started a streaming channel, and late in the summer of 2020 we resurrected the Belcourt Drive-In, a digital upgrade from our pre-renovation parking lot 16mm movie nights of yore (a story for another time). With this iteration, we acquired a blowup movie screen, dusted off the shortwave transmitter, designed a semi-circular drive-in for exactly 34 cars, and got to work programming it.

Back to March 15, 2020 for a moment, the film that we were scheduled to open on the following Friday was Kelly Reichardt's *FIRST COW*, notable not only for its director whose work we've followed (and screened) since *OLD JOY* (2006) — but also for the composer of its score, local guitarist and Belcourt regular William Tyler. Bummer! Once we had the Drive-In assembled and programmed, we made sure to include *FIRST COW* in our lineup. As we'd soon find out, inflatable screens and 22-mile-per-hour wind make for a wavy and pretty much unwatchable image. Bummer again! So, here's the "third time's a charm" — delayed as it might have been until now. Fingers crossed.

CROUPIER (35mm)

Dir. Mike Hodges | UK | 1998 | 94 min. | NR | 35mm

On June 3, 2000, the Belcourt after a year and a half of uncertainty as a nonprofit entity. On that day, tickets were sold for 25 cents. On screen that day was *THE MUPPET MOVIE*, Tom Tykwer's *WINTER SLEEPERS*, and this slick U.K. thriller *CROUPIER* starring a little-known Clive Owen, directed by Mike Hodges (known best for *GET CARTER*, another iconic thriller that's worth your time). Playing the Belcourt for the ensuing two-and-a-half months, it was indeed our organization's first big hit. And with this year's screening on the evening of June 2, *CROUPIER* finally returns to bookend our organization's first 26 years. Damn it, here's to another 26.