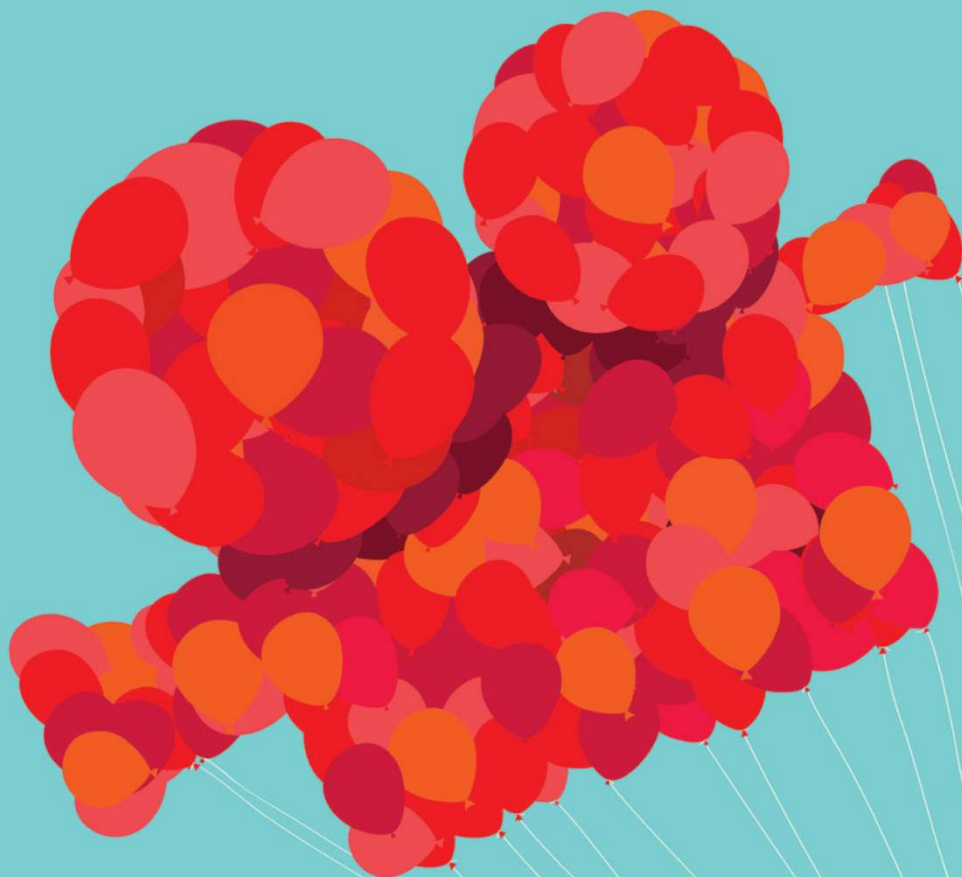




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# A STORY OF CHILDREN & FILM



**A Celebration of Childhood & Cinema**

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH FILM4 A BOFA PRODUCTION  
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MARK COUSINS PRODUCED BY MARY BELL AND ADAM DAWTREY EDITOR TIMO LANGER

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# A STORY OF CHILDREN & FILM

van Mark Cousins

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Release: 26 september 2013

[www.astoryofchildrenandfilm.com](http://www.astoryofchildrenandfilm.com)

101 minuten | 2013 | Groot Brittannië | meerder talen | Nederlands ondertiteld

Na de leukste filmgeschiedenisles ooit, THE STORY OF FILM, komt Mark Cousins met [A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM](#), waarin hij dwarsverbanden ontdekt tussen tientallen bekende en onbekende films waarin kinderen de hoofdrol spelen.

Opnieuw een unieke reis door de filmgeschiedenis waarin de rol van kinderen wordt belicht. Hoe beïnvloeden films het leven en de fantasiewereld van kinderen? En hoe beïnvloeden jeugtherinneringen het werk van regisseurs en acteurs?

Cousins brengt in zijn fascinerende project een ode aan de fantasiewereld van kinderen en is bestemd voor filmliefhebbers en (zoals het beroemde motto uit de The Wizard of Oz luidt) iedereen die jong van hart is.



[A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM](#) ging in première op het afgelopen filmfestival van Cannes en was een groot succes. De film kreeg wereldwijd lovende recensies, waaronder 5 sterren in The Guardian.

A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM wordt in Nederland gedistribueerd door ABC/Cinemien.

Beeldmateriaal kan gedownload worden vanaf: [www.cinemien.nl/pers](http://www.cinemien.nl/pers) of vanaf [www.filmdepot.nl](http://www.filmdepot.nl)

Voor meer informatie: ABC/ Cinemien | Anne Kervers | [anne.kervers@filminc.nl](mailto:anne.kervers@filminc.nl) | 0616274537 | 020-5776022 (Cinemien)



## Mark Cousins

Mark Cousins is filmmaker, schrijver, curator en zwervende reiziger. Hij regisseerde documentaires over onderwerpen variërend van Neonazisme tot aan Iraanse cinema en over kunstenaar Ian Hamilton Finlay. Zijn vier filmboeken verschenen over de hele wereld. Hij co-organiseerde vier innovatieve film evenementen en zette de *8½ Foundation* samen met Tilda Swinton op. Hij ontving een eredoctoraat van de Faculteit der Letteren aan de Universiteit van Edinburgh. Cousins was ook vijf jaar lang BBC-presentator, was directeur van het *Edinburgh International Film Festival* en van *Cinema China*. Hij is ook actief op het gebied van de liefdadigheid en is medeoprichter van het goede doel *Scottish Kids are Making Movies*.

### Filmografie:

**2013** Here Be Dragons  
**2013** A Story of Children and Film  
**2012** What Is This Film Called Love?  
**2011** The Story of Film: An Odyssey  
**2009** The First Movie (documentary)  
**2008** The New Ten Commandments  
**2008** First Impressions  
**2005** Cinema Iran  
**1999-2000** Scene by Scene (TV series)  
**1994** I Know Where I'm Going! Revisited  
**1993** The Psychology of Neo-Nazism: Another Journey by Train to Auschwitz





## Why Make this Film?

I've always been interested in kids in movies. They're often less controllable and controlled than adult actors. Many children in films are, of course, projections of adult concerns but, in some of the best films about kids, and the ones where children have a degree of agency, we can see glimpses of almost natural behaviour, or of ad-libbing for the camera which is playful, fine-grained, fresh.

I love such moments in a movie when the director cuts the kid a bit of slack to be themselves, show off, have fun, get upset. Such emotions come and go in kids really quickly, almost like a movie editor can cut in an instant between different situations. Movies seem alive in such moments, unpredictable, capricious. I hope we've incorporated some of this in *A Story of Children and Film*.

The movie is the latest in a string of things I've done about children. The first piece I ever directed for BBC Scotland TV was about kids. I co-founded the charity Scottish Kids are Making Movies to try to help kids from unprivileged backgrounds to discover the fun and creativity of film. The work I do with Tilda Swinton, especially the 8 ½ Foundation ([www.eightandahalf.org.uk](http://www.eightandahalf.org.uk)) is often child-like in, we hope, a good way. My first film for the big screen, *The First Movie*, was about kids in Kurdish Iraq, etc.

*A Story of Children and Film* takes these interests and marries them with some of the approaches we used in the 15 ½ hour film *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*: Lots of film

clips, a commentary by me, a boldly international range of films, and many by the great women directors. ASOCAF looks at 53 films, from 25 countries.


Unlike TSOF:AO, however, ASOCAF isn't a chronological history and certainly doesn't try to cover all the areas of children in film. It isn't really a history film at all. It's more a portrait of childhood as seen through the movies. The movie clips are like the palette of colours we use to paint the picture. As I started thinking about ASOCAF, I realised that I had to find a way of making it doable in just 100 mins or so. I had to find a point of view, a frame to contain what could have been an unwieldy subject. Then I remembered a 12 minute shot I'd done of my niece and nephew, Laura and Ben Moreton, playing in my flat. As I filmed, I noticed that they went from shy to grumpy to performative to destructive, all in a short time. I recognised such fleeting moods in my own life and in the Kurdish kids I'd filmed in Iraq. The 12 minute shot could, I realised, be my frame. My camera stayed wide during it, I didn't move it or give Laura and Ben any instructions whatsoever. I just watched.

This, then, would be the structure of ASOCAF: When Laura is shy, I do a mini-tour of shyness in kids in film. When Ben is destructive, I do a tour of destructiveness in kids in cinema. The order in which my niece and nephew showed their emotions is the order in which we see them in the film.

I know people will ask me who this film is for. My answer is that it is for anyone of about ten or over who likes films. I hope that they, young and old, will recognise themselves or kids they know in it. In the film I say that in little things (faces, a field, a rock pool, a 12 minute shot of kids) we can see a lot. I hope that in this little film, we can see a lot about childhood and about the movies.







# A Story of Children and Film

## The Essay Film

### A Manifesto

by Mark Cousins

In the last two years I have made three essay films - WHAT IS THIS FILM CALLED LOVE? , A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM, and HERE BE DRAGONS. In the next year, I will make two more - I AM BELFAST and STOCKHOLM MY LOVE.

In making these, and watching many more - by Anand Patwardhan and Agnes Varda, for example - and after reading Philip Lopate's book on the essay, I started to make mental list of the elements of, and the principles behind, essay films. This list is a kind of manifesto.

1

A fiction film is a bubble. An essay film bursts it.

2

An essay film takes an idea for a walk.

3

Essay films are visual thinking.

4

Essay films reverse film production: the images come first, the script, last.

5

Filming an essay is gathering, like a carpenter gathers wood.

6

A fiction film is a car, an essay film is a bike; it can nip up an alleyway, you can feel the wind in its hair.

7

A road movie has outer movement, an essay film has inner movement.

8

An essay film is the opposite of fly on the wall.

9

An essay film can go anywhere, and should.

10

Two essay films should be made every year. Why? Because, after F for Fake, Orson Welles said this to Henry Jaglom during lunch at Ma Maison: I could have made an essay film - two of 'em a year, you see. On different subjects. Various variations of that form.

11

Commentary is to the essay film, what dance is to the musical.

12

All essay films would be improved by a clip of Dietrich (see Marcel Ophuls).

13

An essay film cannot create the atmosphere of Wilder's Sunset Boulevard;  
A fiction film cannot explain that atmosphere.

14

Even Hollywood makes essay films - look at DW Griffith's Intolerance.

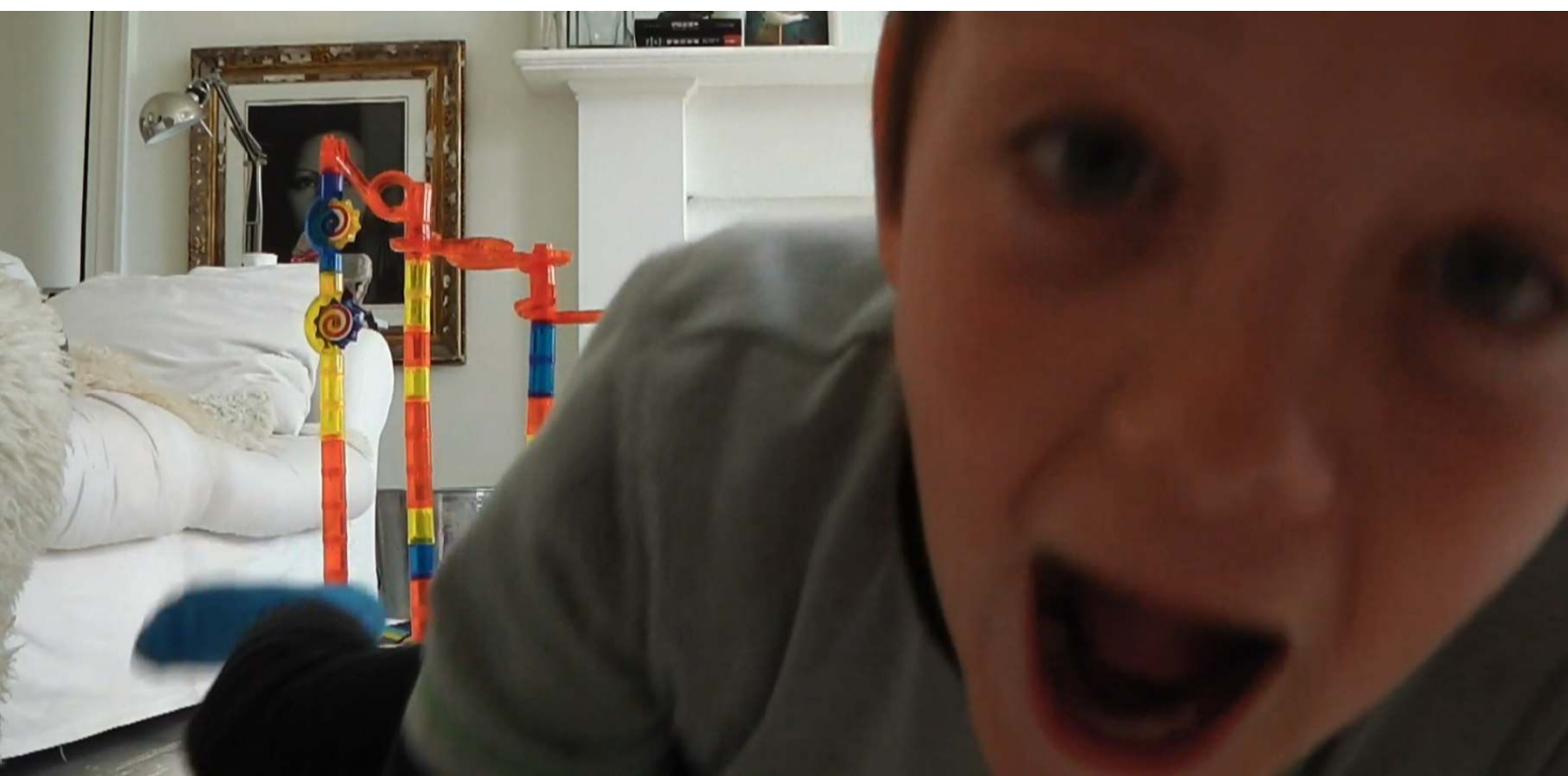
15

Essay films are what Astruc dreamt of.

16

Digital had made Astruc's dream come true.

\*



## Films in the story



### 400 Blows

François Truffaut, 1959, France



### Alyonka

Boris Barnet, 1961, Soviet Union



### An Angel at My Table

Jane Campion, 1990, Australia



### An Inn in Tokyo

Yasujiro Ozu, 1935, Japan



### Big Business

James W. Horne & Leo McCarey, 1929, US



### The Boot

Mohammad-Ali Talebi, 1992, Iran



### Children in the Wind

Hiroshi Shimizu, 1937, Japan



### Crows

Dorota Kedzierzawska, 1994, Poland





## Curly Top

Irving Cummings, 1935, US



## E.T. The Extra Terrestrial

Steven Spielberg, 1982, US



## Emil and the Detectives

Gerhard Lamprecht, 1931, Germany



## Fanny and Alexander

Ingmar Bergman, 1982, Sweden



## Finlandia

Erkki Karu, 1922, Finland



## The First Movie

Mark Cousins, 2009, UK



## Forbidden Games

René Clément, 1952, France



## Frankenstein

James Whale, 1931, US



## Freedom Is Paradise

Sergei Bodrov, 1989, Soviet Union



## Gasman

Lynne Ramsay, 1997, UK



## Great Expectations

David Lean, 1946, UK



## A Hometown in Heart

Yoon Yong-Kyu, 1949, South Korea



## Hugo and Josephine

Kjell Grede, 1967, Sweden



## I Wish

Hirokazu Koreeda, 2011, Japan



## Kauwboy

Boudewijn Koole, 2012, Netherlands



## Kes

Ken Loach, 1969, UK



## The Kid

Charles Chaplin, 1921, US



## The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun

Djibril Diop Mambèty, 1999, Senegal



## Long Live the Republic

Karel Kachyna, 1965, Czechoslovakia



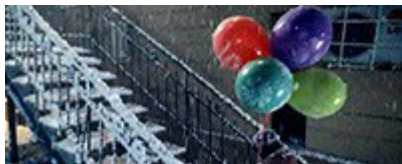
## Los Olvidados

Luis Buñuel, 1950, Mexico



## Meet Me in St Louis

Vincente Minnelli, 1944, US



## Melody for a Street Organ

Kira Muratova, 2009, Ukraine



## Mirror

Andrei Tarkovsky, 1975, Soviet Union



## Moonrise Kingdom

Wes Anderson, 2012, US



## A Mouse in the House

William Hanna & Joseph Barbera, 1947, US



## Moving

Shinji SŪmai, 1993, Japan



## My Childhood

Bill Douglas, 1972, UK





## The Newest City in the World

Xhanfize Keko, 1974, Albania



## The Night of the Hunter

Charles Laughton, 1955, US



## Nobody Knows

Hirokazu Koreeda, 2004, Japan



## Palle Alone in the World

Astrid Henning-Jensen, 1949, Denmark



## The Red Balloon

Albert Lamorisse, 1956, France



## The Ritual

Girish Kasaravalli, 1977, India



## The Spirit of the Beehive

Victor Erice, 1973, Spain



## The Steamroller and the Violin

Andrei Tarkovsky, 1961, Soviet Union



## Ten Minutes Older

Herz Frank, 1978, Soviet Union



## Tomka and his Friends

Xhanfise Keko, 1977, Albania



## Two Solutions for One Problem

Abbas Kiarostami, 1975, Iran



## The Unseen

Miroslav Janek, 1996, Czech Republic



## The White Balloon

Jafar Panahi, 1995, Iran



## Willow and Wind

Mohammad-Ali Talebi, 1999, Iran



## Yaaba

Idrissa Ouedraogo, 1989, Burkina Faso



## The Yellow Balloon

J. Lee Thompson, 1953, UK



## Yellow Earth

Chen Kaige, 1984, China



## Zéro de conduit

Jean Vigo, 1933, France

# Internationale pers



“Mark Cousins’ personal cine-essay about children on film is entirely distinctive, sometimes eccentric, always brilliant: a mosaic of clips, images and moments chosen with flair and grace, both from familiar sources and from the neglected riches of cinema around the world. Without condescension or cynicism, Cousins offers us his own humanist idealism, as refreshing as a glass of iced water.” - [The Guardian](#)

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“An idiosyncratically personal yet captivating 100-minute companion piece to 'The Story of Film,' focused entirely on the depiction of kids onscreen.” - [Variety](#)

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“An engaging, heartfelt, thoughtful and occasionally insightful delve into how childhood and children have influenced and inspired great cinema through the decades, Mark Cousins’ accessible and watchable documentary confirms what has long been suspected that the many aspects of childhood bring out the best in some of the world’s greatest film-makers.” - [Screen Daily](#)

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“A Story of Children and Film opens up so many different worlds and possibilities, new films to watch and new ways of looking at them. Having said that, Cousins does reach a definite conclusion: children are inherently cinematic. Having been enthralled by so many wonderful examples, it is hard to argue with that.” - [Sound on Sight](#)

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“Transcendent and essential, Mark Cousins’ A STORY OF CHILDREN AND FILM is a glorious celebration of children on celluloid. A documentary for people who love film, it encapsulates multiple aspects of childhood in an in-depth manner while always remaining accessible. An outstanding journey of storytelling within storytelling, this remarkable film perfectly emphasises how movies are like children, and children are like movies.” - [The Hollywood News](#)