

Watershed, 1 Canon's Road, Harbourside, Bristol BS1 5TX

Box Office: 0117 927 6444

## **Watershed May 2012 Podcast**

Last month we hosted a special event on **The Story of Film, Mark Cousins'** 15-hour documentary looking at cinema and its development from an inspiring and richer perspective than most conventional approaches. The conventional approaches tend to emphasise Hollywood over any other type of cinema – the result being that what we understand by the history of film is narrowly defined. Mark's starting point is a more expansive de-Hollywood centred approach which focuses in on the developments of the art of film from say Japan and Egypt - and in those places find the true richness of film culture. It importantly exposes us to titles like Souleymane Cissé's **Yeelen** that you immediately want to track down and watch.

And in this time of being one click away from anything you can type Yeelen into the search engine click and start watching. I asked Mark is that a good thing or a bad thing and his response was "I really don't know but at least it is available". He talked about his own experience as a youngster in Belfast in the 70s where he heard about this amazing film **Citizen Kane** from the time he heard about it to the time he could actually see it (i.e. on the TV or cinema) took nine years. What impact would that have had and how would that be compared to being able to click and access it immediately? Does it change the response, meaning, or impact?

Another couple of thoughts in response to The Story of Film - in the epilogue Mark begins to speculate on the future of cinema in the post digital, post modern world. My reflection is - is this moment the end of the beginning of cinema or the beginning of the end of cinema? Now that may sound a tad pretentious, like a quote from a lesser Godard film, but think about it. Cinema has just recently marked its 100th year it is a relatively young art form. 35mm will no longer be the primary tool that films are made, it's arguable and increasingly evident that cinemas will no longer be the primary way films are watched. What will that mean for this artform called film?

The interview with Mark has just been published on DShed at <http://www.watershed.co.uk/dshed/mark-cousins-story-film>  
The Story of Film is out now on DVD.

A recent edition of Sight and Sound Magazine highlighted the honourable history of **manifestos in the film world** and indeed the wider art world in general: think futurists, dadaists and dogme. As I write I am just about to head off to the Oberhausen Short Film Festival, which is celebrating 60 years of the Oberhausen Manifesto. This manifesto was instrumental in shaping the New German Cinema of the 70s which in turn launched the careers of directors such as Wenders, Herzog and Fassbender. The festival is hosting events to mark the occasion and I will be tweeting/reporting from Oberhausen at @msc45 and blogging at the Encounters Film Festival site: <http://www.encounters-festival.org.uk/>

Also on the festival front there is that little event in the South of France which will focus all film/cinema discussion for twelve days in May. The **Cannes Film Festival** line up has been announced and much anticipation mounts especially with new films from David Cronenberg - working from a Don DeLillo novel, Ken Loach's *The Angel's Share*, which we will be screening in June, and Austrians Michael Haneke and Ulrich Seidl. I am particularly looking forward to the Seidl as he talked about the project when he was at Watershed with his previous film *Import Export*. What was then a single feature about sex tourism in Africa has now apparently evolved into three films, the first of which will be premiered in Cannes. Again I will be reporting (well, tweeting really) about discoveries, impressions, thoughts and generally on all things cinematic via DShed.

FBI on Ulrich Seidl visit: <http://www.watershed.co.uk/dshed/ulrich-seidl>