



4.3.2023, 5–8 PM: MOTHERS AND PARENTS I
15.4.2023, 5–8 PM: MOTHERS AND PARENTS II

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MOTHERS AND PARENTS I & II SCREENING BY VALENTINA TRIET AND LUCIE PIA

The *Mothers and Parents* screening series presents films of various genres – documentaries, essays, and feature films – all of which address the dichotomy between intimacy and foreignness that manifests itself in the reciprocal relationship between a parent and his or her child. Parent-child relationships are both universal and deeply personal, oscillating between love and understanding and alienation and strangeness. The age difference between parent and child creates hierarchies and thus conflicts of dependency and autonomy that always mirror the changing cultural, socioeconomic, and political context of their respective generations. The compiled films negotiate the double-sided relationship of closeness and distance from the perspective of both children and parents, questioning forms of resistance that are not only negotiated on the scale of the personal relationship of the protagonists, but also emerge thematically when it comes to the realpolitical conditions under which family relationships are formed. The absence of a family member – be it the absence of the mother, the father or the child – recurs as a central motif in the selected films:

The screening series opens with the feature film *Taking Off* (1971) by Miloš Forman, which deals with the parents' reaction to the sudden disappearance of their teenager. The absence of the child is used to humorously renegotiate the family relationships between mother and child, father and child, and mother and father.

The second part of *Mothers and Parents* gathers films that show different forms of documentary approaches: Sable Elyse Smith's short film *How We Tell Stories to Children* (2015) tells the personal story of her father's absence due to incarceration. The film consists of found footage mounted with documentary footage and audio recordings transmitted by the father from his prison cell. However, the presence of the father in the images reveals little that is personal; instead, it testifies to the anonymity of life in prison and obscures the voyeuristic gaze. It is primarily the missing information that "tells" the story. The daughter herself does not appear in the image, but it is her "voice", predominantly in the form of image selection and montage, but also a fleeting audio recording, that conveys the gaps in her personal story, making it representative of a story of many Black families affected by the racist structures of the US Industrial Prison Complex.

Twilight City (1989) by the Black Audio Film Collective tells of a mother's absence. A young woman living in London receives a letter from her mother announcing that, after living in the Dominican Republic for ten years, she now wants to return to her daughter in London and join the Conservative Party. The narrative of the film is structured by the letter that the daughter writes in response to her mother. In it, she reflects on her negative emotions and relates them to London's current politics as well as its colonial history, which is reconstructed through various stages of displacement. The film is composed of found footage and interviews with Paul Gilroy, Gail Lewis, Homi Bhaba, Rosina Visram, and David Yallop, all of whom relate their personal stories of displacement to various urban developments in London and analyze their roots in racist and capitalist structures.

In Anette Kennerley's *Boys in the Backyard* (1998), on the other hand, two protagonists tell an unseen interviewer how they live their alternative couple relationship as a father-son relationship. As a substitute and counter-model to the biological, heteronormative family based on patriarchal structures, the model of the parent-child relationship with its associated hierarchies is reexamined and questioned here.





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VALENTINA TRIET (*1991, WINTERTHUR, CH)

Valentina Triet is a Swiss artist based between Zürich and Vienna who graduated at the Akademie der bildende Künste Wien and at the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste. Her practice moves between film, sculpture, installation, and photography as tools to inquire topics of labour, feminism, education, and pop culture. Her works are based on archives documenting her immediate surroundings and everyday life. Structurally, they often feature specific arrangements and repetition and are characterized by a preoccupation with rules, role models, and idols. Her work was exhibited at Felix Gauditz, Vienna (2021), Milieu, Bern (2019), and Longtang, Zurich (2018), and she was awarded a fellowship for artist in residence at the Neuer Essner Kunstverein in Essen (2022).

LUCIE PIA

Lucie Pia is an art historian and curator living and working in Vienna and Zurich. Recently realized exhibitions: „A Set-Up“ in collaboration with Sveta Mordovskaya, Alienze, Vienna (2021), „Capture Captures“ group exhibition at the University Gallery of Applied Arts in Heiligenkreuzerhof, Vienna (2022) and „Source Materials: Some Pamphlets, Numbers, Maps, Footnotes, Captions, Images, Books, Periodicals, and Magazines (related to the work) of Cameron Rowland“, University of Applied Arts, Vienna (2021). In 2023 she began working on the estate of the Viennese artist Linda Bilda

