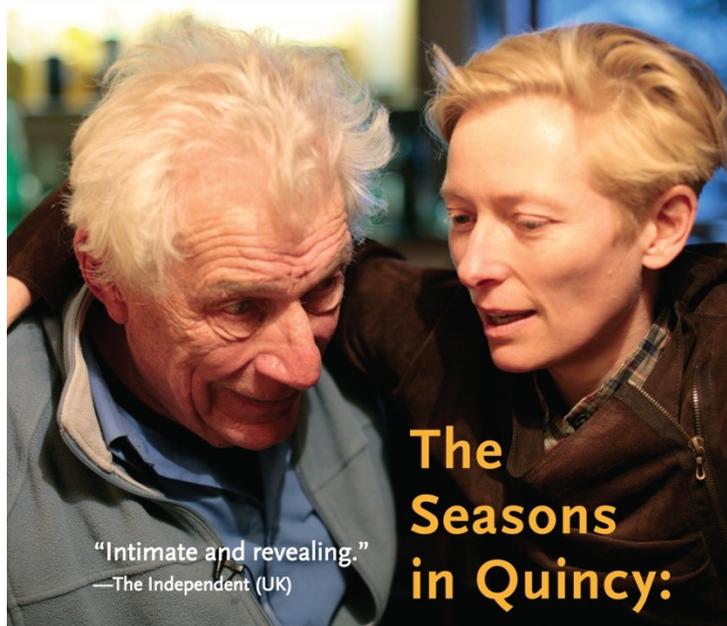




A visit with one of the world's most brilliant polymaths – novelist, painter, critic, political thinker



“Intimate and revealing.”
—The Independent (UK)

**The
Seasons
in Quincy:**

A film by
Bartek Dziadosz
Colin MacCabe
Christopher Roth
Tilda Swinton

**Four
Portraits of
John Berger**



THE SEASONS IN QUINCY: FOUR PORTRAITS OF JOHN BERGER

A film by Bartek Dziadosz, Colin MacCabe, Christopher Roth and Tilda Swinton
An Icarus Films Release

North American Theatrical Premiere at Film Forum, NYC
Opens August 28, 2016

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LOGLINE

The artist, intellectual and storyteller John Berger is the subject of four innovative and inspired essay films by Tilda Swinton and the Derek Jarman Lab.

SYNOPSIS

Prolific artist, philosopher, writer, storyteller and "radical humanist" John Berger is the focus of this vivid four-part cinematic portrait. In 1973, he moved from urban London to the tiny Alpine village of Quincy. *The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger* examines different aspects of Berger's life in this remote village in the Alps. In four seasonal chapters, the film combines ideas and motifs from his work with the texture and history of his mountain home.

In the film's opening chapter, "Ways of Listening," Berger's longtime friend and collaborator Tilda Swinton, joins him for a frank and revealing conversation.

Berger's seminal writing on animals is the focus of "Spring," a cinematic portrait illuminated by local farming practice and set alongside other philosophical approaches to animal consciousness.

The film's third act, "A Song for Politics" finds Berger is joined by writers Ben Lerner and Akshi Singh along with Colin MacCabe and Christopher Roth for a lively political discussion of our present moment and its relationship to the past.

In "Harvest," the final chapter of *The Seasons in Quincy*, Berger's son and Swinton's children join their parents for a visually rich journey to Quincy from the Scottish highlands, seeing the countryside anew.

United by their central vision and an original score by by Simon Fisher Turner, *The Seasons in Quincy* is an intimate and multi-faceted cinematic portrait of one of the 21st-century's great philosopher-artists.

PRESS ROOM

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SELECTED FESTIVALS

Berlin International Film Festival ('Special' category)
IF Istanbul Independent Film Festival
Seattle Film Festival
Sheffield Doc/Fest
Biografia Film Festival, Bologna
Jerusalem Film Festival
Maine Film Festival
Melbourne Film Festival
EDF Korea International Documentary Festival
Athens Film Festival
Message to Man Film Festival, St. Petersburg
Viennale Film Festival

IN THE PRESS

"An impressively high-minded documentary about writer John Berger... *The Seasons in Quincy* is an absolutely inspired way of approaching its subject."

—Andrew Pulver, *The Guardian*

"Where *Spring* and *A Song for Politics* wear their Godardian and Brechtian influences on their respective sleeves, *Harvest* displays the hallmarks of Swinton's two great collaborators, Derek Jarman and Mark Cousins. Yet, for all their stylistic incongruities, the films are united in approach, with their emphasis always on Berger the thinker and radical humanist, rather than Berger the public figure.

—Marc David Jacobs, *The Upcoming*

"Intimate and revealing: a portrait of its subject in which we get closer to him as a personality than a more conventional film could ever take us."

—Geoffrey Macnab, *The Independent*

"One of the most moving moments of the [Berlinale Film] Festival."

—Orestis Andreadakis, *CineMag*

More Information:

<http://www.icarusfilms.com/new2016/quin.html>

<http://seasonsinquincy.com/>

FILMMAKERS' NOTES ON JOHN BERGER

For me, as a student in the sixties and seventies, John Berger was the most important thinker in Britain. He was the only one who really tried to combine the analysis of economics and aesthetics, politics and ethics which was so much needed then and is needed even more now. He also wrote a great novel, *G*, and a trilogy of the Alpine peasant life which he encountered upon moving to Quincy forty years ago.

When Tilda and I started making these portraits of John in 2009, I was already a great admirer of his work. As I have re-read and read, and talked and talked over more than five years during the making of these four films, my estimation has grown for John as a man, a thinker and a storyteller. I hope these films, these four portraits, will make clear not only why so many look to Berger as a contemporary intellectual but also why so many love him so much.

Formally the films were composed in two different registers. Each film was made completely individually and without reference to the other films. They were envisaged as time based art that would find their audiences in museums and galleries. At the same time we hoped that when we put them together they would turn into movie, a film that could be shown in cinemas. Our emphasis in the individual films is on the seasons as an unending cycle but when we put them together we discovered that we had, unknowingly and completely against our intentions, recorded the final seasons of John's life in Quincy. And our four essays were transformed into a feature-length documentary.

—Colin MacCabe

Colin and I once made a film with Isaac Julien built around a long interview with Derek Jarman. It felt like a properly satisfying introduction to people who might otherwise not have known him - whether or not they knew his work - to meet that wonderful person in that way. We began to want to do the same with an introduction to an encounter with John Berger, and having John still with us meant that we could set ourselves the task of distilling what it was we most value about John's living, companionable, presence in our lives, knowing that anybody is able to buy his books, but few lucky enough to sit next to him and smoke and drink and laugh together.

We made *Ways of Listening* with John in the deep winter before Christmas 2010. Somehow, the most natural and authentic ground to start with seemed to be the initiating root of John and mine's friendship: and so a conversation between us two evolved as we grazed on the atmosphere and practical facts of his

home in Quincy. It was a familial visit. Stories were told. Drawing was done. Apples were peeled. A crumble was made and eaten and a car dug out of the snow. When we left, it felt, as usual with him, slim pickings: too short, and only a sliver of John. We imagined a series of check-ins. Once is not enough with John and one relationship, not sufficient, either. We made the decision there and then to reach for a series of gatherings over four distinct seasons, heading from the darkness towards the sun.

These four portraits are made by the same close group of colleagues in a series of different configurations. Colin directed and I wrote the first, Bobby edited them all and directed the second, Colin and Bartek directed the third and I directed the fourth.

It was always clear in my mind that I would make the final film in some kind of conversation—however distinctly different—with the first: summer after winter, harvest after hibernation, children after fathers. The idea of the cycle, renewal and generation is integral to the project as a whole.

When it became impossible for John to travel with us to Quincy that summer, I imagined completing this four-leafed portrait of the storyteller as a simple tale: the wise old man gives a task of remembrance to the young boy and girl: they travel into the mountains - his mountains - and into his world with open eyes and ears. There is an exchange of harvest gifts. And another family feast. And so the wheel turns, on and on.

We all love John very much. We feel blessed to have him in our lives and to call him comrade. We are extremely proud to offer these traces of our affection and esteem.

—Tilda Swinton

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Colin MacCabe is a literary critic and film producer. For more than 30 years he has taught at the University of Pittsburgh where he is Distinguished Professor of English and Film. He has produced films including *Derek*, *Young Soul Rebels* and *Distant Voices/Still Lives*. Before establishing the Derek Jarman Lab, a graduate filmmaking hub at Birkbeck, University of London, in 2012, he produced for the British Film Institute and Minerva Pictures. His new book, "Perpetual Carnival: Essays on Film and Literature," is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Christopher Roth is an artist and a film and theatre director. His film *Baader* won the Alfred Bauer prize in the 2002 Berlinale. Represented by Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin, he participated in the Venice, Berlin and Sao Paulo biennials. His 1982 novel "200 D" was re-printed in 2012 by Bloomsbury/Berlin publishers. "80*81" and "2081 What Happened?" were projects involving more than 40 worldwide theatre performances and generating 13 books. His latest feature film was *Hyperstition*. In 2016 Roth will make *Jeanne und Jean Und Otto*, a coming-of-age film on the Otto Muehl Commune.

Bartek Dziadosz is the director of the Derek Jarman Lab. He studied Law in Cracow and Contemporary Media Practice at the Westminster Film School. Dziadosz now combines his doctoral research on editing as cognitive and cultural practice with a busy career filming and editing. He recently edited a film about the heroes of Solidarity, *The (Un)finished Portrait of Lech Walesa*. His own feature-length documentary on the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, *The Trouble with Being Human These Days*, has screened at festivals around the world.

Tilda Swinton has been involved with filmmaking for thirty years. The first film she worked on, *Caravaggio*, won a Silver Bear at the Berlinale in 1985; it was the first of the seven films she made with Derek Jarman before his death in 1994. Other filmmaking collaborators include Sally Potter, Jim Jarmusch, David Fincher, Wes Anderson, Joel and Ethan Cohen, Lynne Ramsay, Lynn Hershman, Tony Gilroy, Luca Guadagnino and John Maybury. She keeps making cinema pretty much exclusively because of the source it proves to be for her of long-running and life-enhancing friendships and because she loves to go to the pictures. She is also a writer and a co-founder of both the 8 and a Half Foundation, which works to further the cine-passion of children globally, and Drumduan, a pioneering exam-free school in the Highlands of Scotland, where she lives with her twins, sweetheart, four dogs, 11 hens and a tortoise.

Simon Fisher Turner makes new sounds and music every day. He recently won an Ivor Novello award for his score for a BFI restoration, *The Epic of Everest*, made in 1924 by Sir John Noel, about the Mallory/Irving attempt on the summit of Everest. Simon makes music for films of all sizes and denominations. Many of his recordings can be found on Mute Records. He enjoys collaborations, he lives in London with his wife and two children, and wishes he was Spanish.

Lily Ford is Head of Production at the Derek Jarman Lab and producer of *The Seasons in Quincy*. Ford completed her Ph.D. on aerial views and the culture of flight in 1920s Britain in 2015. As a Cultural Engagement Fellow at Birkbeck, she is currently working on a film about Victorian 'fallen women' in art and archives. She also teaches and develops new productions at the Lab.

FILM CREDITS

Title: "The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger"
Produced by the Derek Jarman Lab and the University of Pittsburgh
Directed by: Colin MacCabe, Bartek Dziadosz, Christopher Roth, Tilda Swinton
Running time: 90 minutes
Production year: 2015
Release year: 2016
Music by: Simon Fisher Turner
Format: HD color with 5.1 sound

Featuring: John Berger, Melina Berger, Sandra Berger, Vincent Berger, Yves Berger, Ben Lerner, Jules Linglin Colin MacCabe, Christopher Roth, Akshi Singh, Tilda Swinton, Xavier Swinton Byrne, Honor Swinton Byrne

Edited by: Christopher Roth, Bartek Dziadosz
Written by: Christopher Roth, Tilda Swinton
Exec producers: Adam Bartos, Steven Connor, Tilda Swinton, Vijay Vaidyanathan
Producers: Lily Ford, Colin MacCabe
Photography: Bartek Dziadosz, Christopher Roth
Image: Filipa César
Camera: Edmund Bolger, Alistair Dunlop, Lenny Flohr, Bea Moyes, Jeanne Tremsal, Nick Ward
Sound: Lily Ford, Sally Mumby Croft, Walter Stabb
Assistant editor: Walter Stabb
Assistant producer: Bea Moyes
Post Production: Walter Stabb
Colorist: Mark Maltby, Vince Narduzzo
Titles: Ruth Wardell at The Look
Dubbing Mixer: Steve Chase, Steve Cookman, Alan Russell
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