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### Lithuanian Cinema Days at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)

From December 4 to December 14, 2009, The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York will present the American audience a retrospective overview of Lithuanian cinema from the restoration of the country's independence up to today.

MoMA will show 15 feature films, documentaries and shorts that have been created in Lithuania from 1990 to 2009. Today, Lithuania has gained a wonderful opportunity to introduce to the international and American cinema market its most excellent films made in the recent 20 years. Despite the fact that most of the American audience have more than superficial knowledge of East European cinema, there are some Lithuanian cinema directors – such as Arunas Matelis, Sarunas Bartas or Jonas Mekas – who have been making the name and the art of Lithuania famous in the United States.

America sometimes welcomes Lithuanian cinema at some yearly festivals, but still, except individual film screenings, this is the first event where a wider American audience can see the perspective of Lithuanian films, as well as meet and communicate with their authors.

The films in the Lithuanian program have been selected by Laurence Kardish, Senior Curator at the Department of Film and Media at The Museum of Modern Art, a celebrated film critic who has organized hundreds of cinema events and retrospective screenings.

„This first U.S. survey in nine programs of fiction and non-fiction feature and short films limns the various facets of filmmaking in Lithuania over the past twenty years. Lithuania, a Baltic republic, declared its independence from the Soviet Union in early 1990s. Its films had the reputation of being the truest-to-life within the systems of Soviet cinema. Since independence and despite a limited infrastructure, filmmakers, unconstrained by ideology, have made a number of distinguished works exploring themes of identity, personal and social, in original, passionate and provocative ways. Some Lithuanian filmmakers have earned international reputations such as Sarunas Bartas (*Three Days; The House*) whose works have been shown in major festivals, Arunas Matelis, who was awarded the Directors Guild of America Best Documentary Filmmaker award in 2007 for *Before Flying Back to Earth*, and native-born Jonas Mekas (*Lithuania and the Collapse of the USSR*) whose creative and organizational activity in the U.S. has been essential to American independent filmmaking. Other filmmakers like Raimundas Banionis (*Children from Hotel America*) and the team of Romas Lileikis and Stasys Motiejunas (*I Am*), whose films appeared early in the liberation of Lithuanian cinema, deserve to be better known abroad, as do the most recent films of Kristina Buozyte (*The Collectress*) and Gytis Luksas (*Vortex*) to be shown in their American premieres.“

*Laurence Kardish*

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Organizers:

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA, [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)  
Tinklai International Short Film festival, Lithuania, [www.tinklai.net](http://www.tinklai.net)  
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