Cinema 2
9 Sep 2015 – 2pm

ICA

Girlhood

Educator's
Resource Pack

Contents

About this Pack

This resource pack has been developed to support teaching and learning both at the ICA and offsite.

It offers starting points and ideas for visiting educators to use with students. It was developed with GCSE and A-Level students in mind but is well suited for work with groups of all ages. A short synopsis and some suggested pre-visit activities are provided to introduce groups to each film.

Activities and discussion points are suggested for after viewing as well. with a view to develop students' skills in aesthetic understanding and critical judgement. Students will be guided towards an analysis and exploration of how the films reflect the social and cultural contexts in which they were made.

Girlhood, dir. Céline Sciamma, France 2014,
113 mins., French with English subtitles.

Please note

We will tailor programmes to respond to curriculum needs whenever possible. If you need alternative screening dates and times please contact us to make arrangements. Continue to check our website for upcoming films available for group screenings.

Contact learning@ica.org.uk for more information or to add your contact to our learning mailing list.

ICA Exhibitions

Eloise Hawser: *Lives on Wire*
        1 Jul 2015 – 6 Sep 2015

Isa Genzken: *Basic Research Paintings*
        1 Jul 2015 – 6 Sep 2015

Fig-2
        5 Jan 2015 – 20 Dec 2015

Everything is Architecture: Bau Magazine
from the 60s and 70s
        29 Jul 2015 – 27 Sep 2015

Prem Sahib
        24 Sep 2015 – 15 Nov 2015

Adam Linder: Choreographic Service No.3: Some Riding
        8 Sep 2015 – 13 Sep 2015

The ICA and K11 Art Foundation present
Zhang Ding: *Enter the Dragon*
        12 Oct 2015 – 25 Oct 2015

About the ICA

The ICA supports radical art and culture. Through a vibrant programme of exhibitions, films, events and talks, the ICA challenges perceived notions and stimulates debate, experimentation, creativity and exchange with visitors.

Founded in 1946 by a group of artists including Roland Penrose, Peter Watson and Herbert Read, the ICA continues to support living artists in showing and exploring their work, often as it emerges and before others. The ICA has been at the forefront of cultural experimentation since its formation and has presented important debut solo shows by artists including Damien Hirst, Steve McQueen, Richard Prince and Luc Tuymans. More recently Pablo Bronstein, Lis Rhodes, Bjarne Melgaard and Juergen Teller have all staged key solo exhibitions, whilst a new generation of artists, including Luke Fowler, Lucky PDF, Hannah Sawtell and Factory Floor have taken part in exhibitions and residencies.

The ICA was one of the first venues to present The Clash and The Smiths, as well as bands such as Throbbing Gristle. The inaugural ICA / LUX Biennial of Moving Images was launched in 2012, and the ICA Cinema continues to screen rare artists' film, support independent releases and partner with leading film festivals.

Media Partner:

Introduction to
Girlhood

Dropping out of school, teenager Marieme changes her name, her style and begins to steal in order to be accepted by a loose-knit gang of girls. Together they soon embark on a spree of minor theft, drug-dealing and spirited high jinks in and beyond the soulless Parisian suburb where they live. Seeking solace, Marieme soon becomes acquainted with an older man, who promises her money and protection. She soon realises, however that her new found lifestyle will never bring the independence and freedom she longs.

Writer and director Céline Sciamma's *Girlhood* focuses on the bond between girls and the roles they are assigned when working within a gang, as well as the search for identity, freedom and youth empowerment, issues that Sciamma has explored before with her 2007 feature debut *Water Lilies*.

Here, Sciamma handles the theme of girlhood with humour and understanding, and a welcome absence of schmaltz. The almost entirely non-professional cast delivers superbly naturalistic performances – with Karidja Touré proving a standout – and the editing and cinematography ensure that the film's narrative pace quickly picks up speed and never lets our involvement flag.

Part of: STOP PLAY RECORDS

Discussion Points

1 → What themes are explored in the film *Girlhood* by Céline Sciamma (Fig. 1)? What messages and values does the film convey? Do you think that the film explores issues of race and gender via the narrative of a gang of four black girls, Marieme, Lady, Adiatou and Fily (Fig. 2), who live in the Banlieues (suburbs) of Paris?

2 → How do you feel about the main character, Marieme (Fig. 3)? What drives her decisions? How do film techniques such as sound, camera shots and mise en scène encourage the viewer to identify with her character? Why did Sciamma choose to recruit the main actress, Karidja Touré from the street, in your opinion?

3 → How are figures of authority portrayed in *Girlhood*? Think about Marieme's mother and brother as well as Lady and Abou. How does Marieme's role as a figure of authority for her two sisters compare with the adult figures that look after her?

4 → Although this is a film that traces the lives of four female gang members, we see little hard violence, crime and drugs – what we might expect from a gang. Instead, small incidents of shop lifting and verbal confrontations are revealed in and amongst scenes of relaxing in hotel rooms (Fig. 4), playing crazy golf, dancing and laughing. What do these actions reveal about the characters and the subject matter of the film and about gang culture in general?
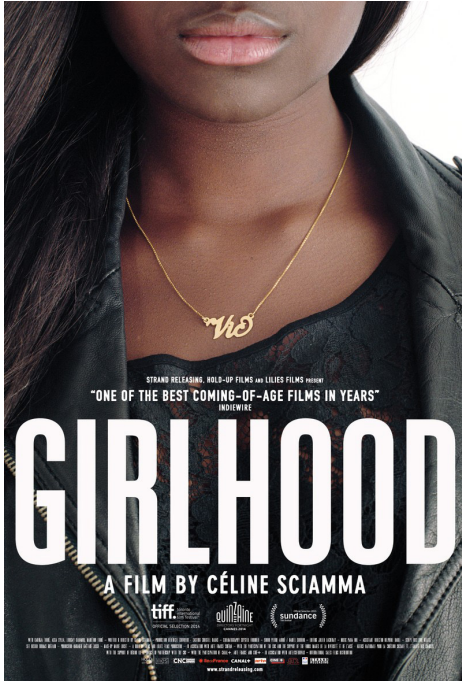
Fig. 1
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood,* 2014

Fig. 2
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Fily, Adiatou, Marieme and Lady)

Fig. 3
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Marieme)

Fig. 4
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (At the Hotel)

Discussion Points

5 → How are the harsh realities of life presented in *Girlhood*, for example gangs, abuse at home, neglect and lack of employment options? Why is it important for Marieme and the others to be part of the gang? Does Sciamma make a judgement on these aspects of the characters' daily lives?

6 → In your opinion, is the film successful in portraying the experience of girls growing up? How does *Girlhood* fit into the coming-of-age film genre?

7 → A sense of mirroring takes place in *Girlhood* where interchangeability between characters becomes apparent, for example, we see various girl gangs throughout the film that appear uncannily similar: they wear the same clothes, hairstyles and are almost identical in other ways. Furthermore, the girl who shares Marieme's flat at the end of the film is very similar to Lady in appearance and in the way she looks out for Marieme. There is a sense of repeated characters, behavioural patterns and scenarios throughout the film. What do you think this interchangeability and mirroring highlights?

8 → What is the importance of music in *Girlhood*? How does the scene where the girls sing and dance to Rihanna's 'Diamonds' (Fig. 5) encourage the viewer to think about the narrative and messages in the film? Would the film work as well without this scene? What additional understandings are offered through the song? Think about the social pressures on young girls to look good, to experiment sexually and to take drugs, as represented by the music and behaviour of young female artists in the media. You may wish to critically watch the following Youtube video of the 'Diamonds' song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lWA2pjMjpBs

9 → How are expectations of male and female behaviour explored in *Girlhood*? Consider the opening scene of a group of girls playing football (Fig. 6), or the remarks about women made by Ismael and Marieme's brother. Marieme herself dresses and acts like a boy towards the end of the film (Fig. 7) – why do you think this is? In your opinion is this a film that challenges gender differences?

10 → Sciamma utilises the gaze powerfully in *Girlhood*. In several scenes we see characters looking at each other for unusually long periods. For example, Marieme and her sister stare at each other on the train (Fig. 8) and later when slow dancing Marieme stares at Monica (Fig. 9). Do you think this gesture of looking is a way to emphasize the bonds between characters? What else might the gesture allude to? Why do you think Sciamma has made it a recurring feature in *Girlhood*?

Fig. 5
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Dancing to 'Diamonds')

Fig. 6
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (women's football team)

Fig. 7
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Marieme)

Fig. 8
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Marieme and her sister)

Fig. 9
Celine Sciamma – *Girlhood* (Marieme and Monica)

Activities

Write

Imagine what adulthood might be like for Marieme and write one of the following:

a. A short story set in the future about Marieme's life. How has it changed? What does she do for work and where does she live? Is she old or only a few years older than her sixteen years in *Girlhood*?

b. A script for an extra scene at the end of *Girlhood*, after we see Marieme's movement off screen. Where do you think she is headed? Is she going back home, back to Ismael's or back to a life of crime with Abou? Create a scene that imaginatively explores her next steps.

Harper Lee's novel, *Go Set a Watchman* (Fig. 10) was recently published as a sequel to the coming-of-age classic, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Fig. 11) about the character Scout. You may wish to read both of these books to analyse how your expectations of a character's development from child to adult can be challenged. Use this exploration to inspire and inform your own ideas for how Marieme's character evolves over the years.

Experiment

Sciamma chose to shoot *Girlhood* using a large number of close-up and panning shots where we see the camera go from right to left. Experiment with camera techniques and analyse the effect these have on the narrative and subject matter of the film by completing the following:

a. Film the scene you have created in 'Write', experimenting with different camera shots such as close ups and long shots. Which work best?

b. Write and create a storyboard for a short scene that you wish to add to *Gilrhood* that focuses on one of the other members of the gang – Lady, Fily or Adiatou. In groups try to recreate and film this scene, experimenting with different camera shots and identifying which are best and why.
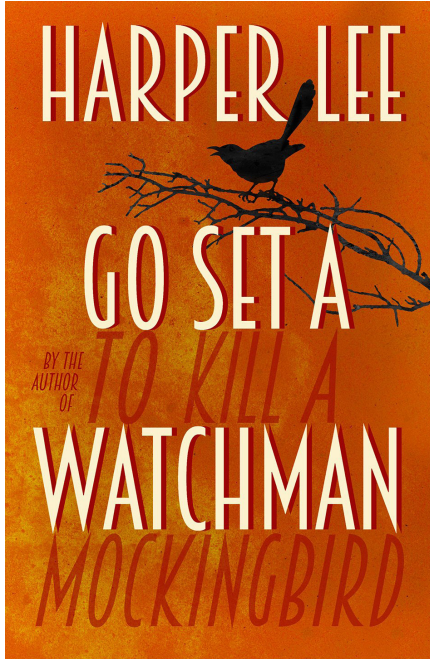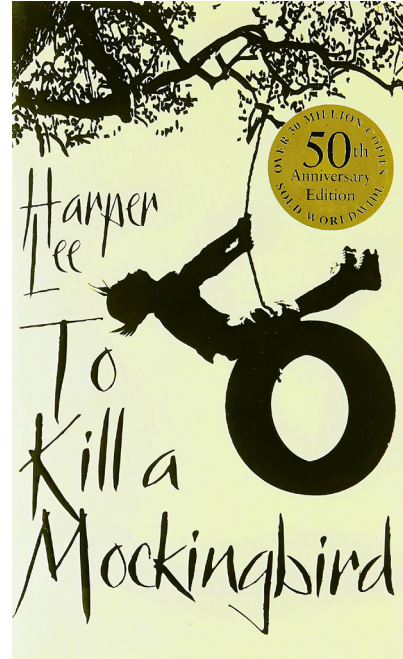
Fig. 10
Cover of 'Go Set a Watchman', Harper Lee

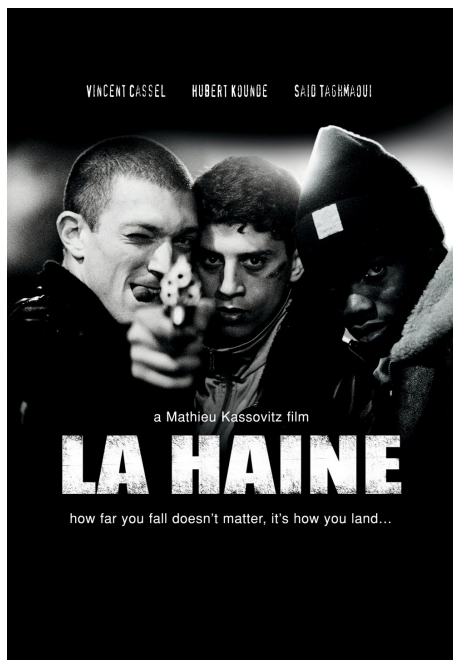
Fig. 11
Cover of 'To Kill a Mockingbird', Harper Lee

Fig. 12
Matthieu Kassovitz – *La Haine*, 1995

Activities

Research

Research the following types of camera shots to help you:

Establishing Shot
Aerial Shot
Close Up
Medium Shot
Long Shot
Deep Focus
Pan
Dolly Zoom
Tracking Shot
Dutch Tilt
Arc

Explore

Investigate the following films to inform and broaden your understanding of the coming-of-age film genre:

Kidulthood **(Menaj Huda, 2006)**
The Falling **(Carol Morley, 2015)**
We're the Best **(Lukas Moodysson, 2014)**
Thirteen **(Catherine Hardwicke, 2003)**
My Summer of Love **(Pawel Pawlikowski, 2004)**
La Haine **(Mathieu Kassovitz, 1995) (Fig. 12)**

Activities

Watch

Investigate the work of Céline Sciamma by analysing two films that were made by the director, *Water Lilies* (2007) (Fig. 13) and *Tomboy* (2011) (Fig. 14). Do you think the director explores similar themes in these two films as in *Girlhood*?

Listen

The music and sound used in *Girlhood* is highly emotive and works to consolidate the effect of the narrative on the viewer. Think about how other films employ music and sound and how this affects the viewers' perception of the work.
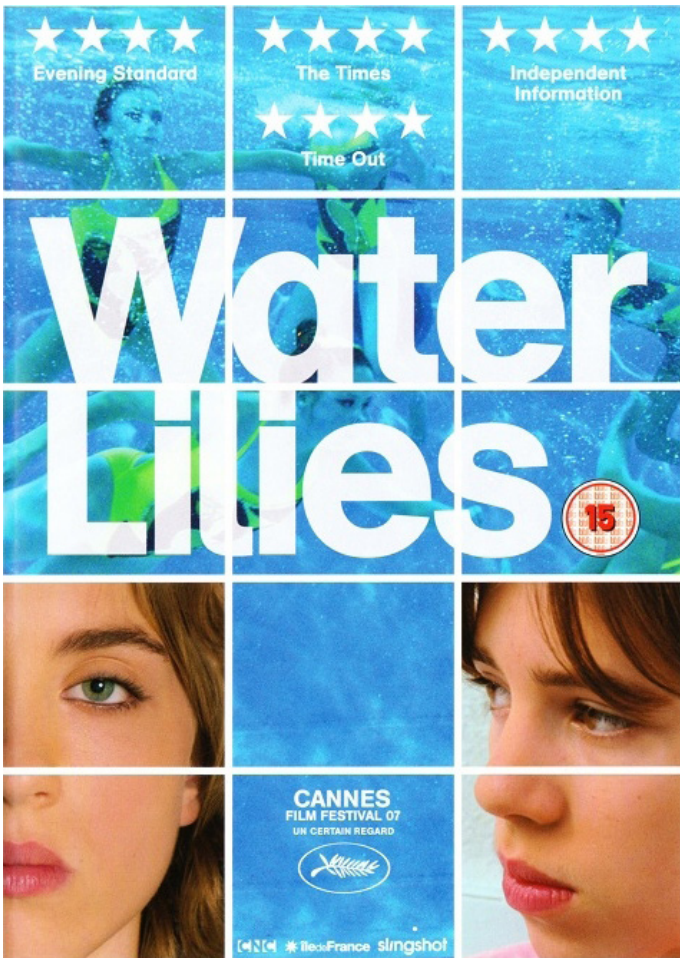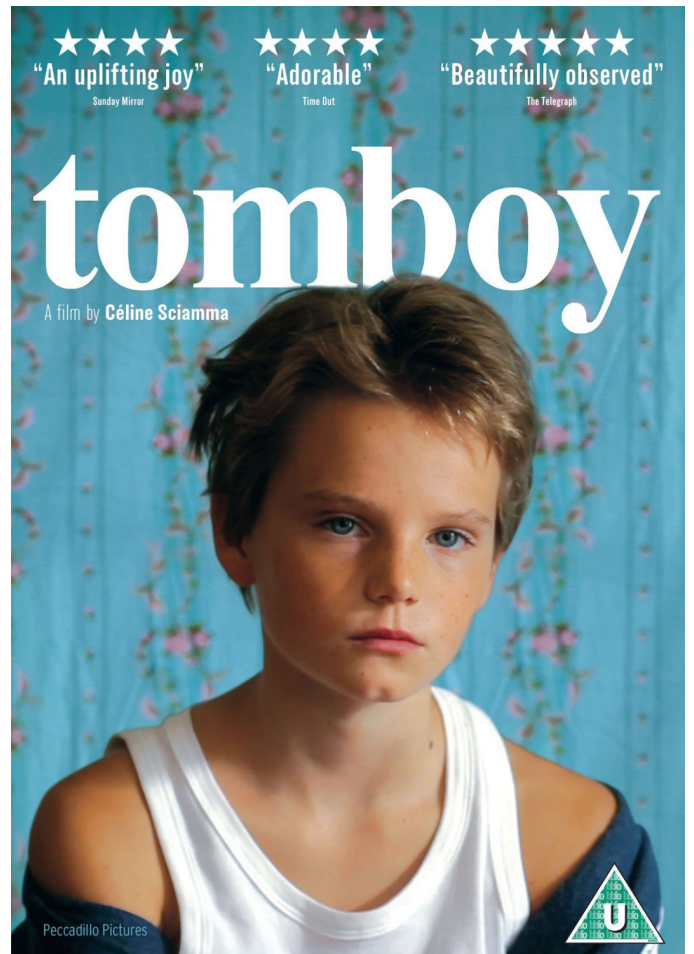
Fig. 13
Céline Sciamma – *Water Lilies*, 2007

Fig. 14
Céline Sciamma – *Tomboy*, 2011

ICA Learning

Our dynamic learning programme provides opportunities for creative exchange, investigation and discussion between practitioners and audiences. The ICA strives to build sustainable relationships with universities, students, schools and our wider audiences, nurturing interest and appreciation of the creative process, and broadening engagement with contemporary arts.

ICA Learning provides different opportunities to engage with the ICA programme through gallery tours, guided visits to our exhibitions, Friday Salons, online educational platforms and the ICA Student Forum, a dedicated student body that curates events and projects for the Public Programme.

Our University Partnerships exist to encourage the development of joint projects and research. In addition, ICA Academy provides career paths to Further Education, Higher Education and employment.

For further information or to make a booking, please email learning@ica.org.uk

ICA Learning is generously supported by The Ernest Cook Trust

STOP PLAY RECORD

STOP PLAY RECORD is a programme open to anyone interested in learning how to make experimental short films and being introduced to experts working across moving image sectors.

Throughout the year, an ongoing series of STOP PLAY RECORD events will take place across London. From screenings and talks, to workshops and practical sessions, emerging talent can access a range of expert-led opportunities to establish and develop their skills.

STOP PLAY RECORD forms part of a joint initiative between Arts Council England and Channel 4, which sees the Institute of Contemporary Arts lead a London Network in partnership with Bloomberg New Contemporaries, the Chisenhale Gallery, DAZED, Kingston University and SPACE to provide a range of activities across the capital.

https://www.ica.org.uk/whats-on/seasons/stop-play-record

ICA Learning Events

Gallery Tours
Join curators, artists and other cultural practitioners on Thursday tours that offer a unique perspective on ICA exhibitions. Free, booking required.

Educators' Tour *Prem Sahib*
Led by ICA Head of Programme Katharine Stout
   Wed 30 Sept, 5pm

Gallery Tour *Everything is Architecture*
Led by curator Jo Melvin
   Thurs 3 Sept, 6.30pm

Gallery Tour *Prem Sahib*
Led by Victor Buchli
   Thurs 12 Nov, 6.30pm

Gallery Tour *Smiler: Photographs of London by Mark Cawson*
Led by Gareth McConnell
   Thurs 29 Oct, 6.30pm

Friday Salons
This series of talks presents the latest research on current cultural phenomena.
   £5 / Free to ICA Members

What Makes an Artist an Artist?
   Fri 16 Oct, 3pm
A discussion open to 16-19 year olds on the role and value of an artist in contemporary practice.

ICA Student Forum
The ICA Student Forum offers students the opportunity to shape and develop a public programme of events in response to the ICA exhibitions, films and other events.

Open Call September 2016
We are looking for dynamic students to join our Student Forum and shape a public programme of events in response to the ICA exhibition programme, film screenings and performances.
   If you are interested in curating public events for the ICA programme and you are keen to engage with contemporary art practitioners, student peers and ICA staff, find out how to apply on our website.

Deadline – 28 September

For further information please visit the ICA website www.ica.org.uk/learning/ica-student-forum or contact learning@ica.org.uk

ICA Learning Events

STOP PLAY RECORD

Boiler Room Workshop
　Saturday 14 Nov, 2pm
Free, booking required
A workshop led by boiler Room for 16-19 year-olds, that experiments with grime and film. Participants will make experimental films geared towards live music events, and have the opportunity to be a part of a Boiler Room live event on sun 15 November at the ICA.
Part of STOP PLAY RECORD.

ICA Post-16
A programme of events developed specifically for ages 16+

Group and Matinees Screenings
A regular programme of films and talks for young audiences.
　£3 tickets / Educators go free

Upcoming Screenings:
Girlhood
　Wed 9 Sept, 2pm
Followed by a workshop led by Fully Focused

Wasteland
　Wed 7 Oct, 2pm

12 O'Clock Boys
　Wed 4 Nov, 2pm

ICA Learning
ica.org.uk/learning
learning@ica.org.uk

Educators' Previews
Join our teacher's previews for all of our exhibitions

Educator Resource Packs
Educator resource packs are available at the ICA Box
Office, or by emailing learning@ica.org.uk

MA in the Contemporary
Find out more about our unique, interdisciplinary
MA programme, in partnership with University of Kent.
   ica.org.uk/ma-contemporary

Cinema Matinee Screenings
Cinema group matinees are available for schools,
colleges and universities.
   ica.org.uk/learning/school-and-groupscreenings

ICA Student Forum
Join the ICA Student Forum to shape and develop a
public programme of events in response to the ICA
programme.
   ica.org.uk/student-forum

University Partnerships
Through our University partnerships we engage and
promote greater collaborative opportunities between
university students, teaching staff and the ICA's public
programme.
   ica.org.uk/university-partnerships

ICA Opening Hours
Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—11pm

Day Membership £1
Wednesday—Sunday, 11am-6pm
Until 9pm on Thursdays

Exhibitions
Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—6pm
Open late every Thursday until 9pm

ICA Box Office & Bookshop
Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—9pm

ICA Café Bar
Food served from 11.30—3.30pm / 5.30—9pm

Tuesday Cinema
All films, all day: £3 for ICA Members / £6 non-Members

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ica.org.uk/signup

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Cover image: Still from *Girlhood*, by Céline Sciamma

Resource pack developed by Rita Cottone
and Rania Elgarf