

# PONTUS HULTÉN AND MODERNA MUSEET

## THE FORMATIVE YEARS

MODERNA MUSEET

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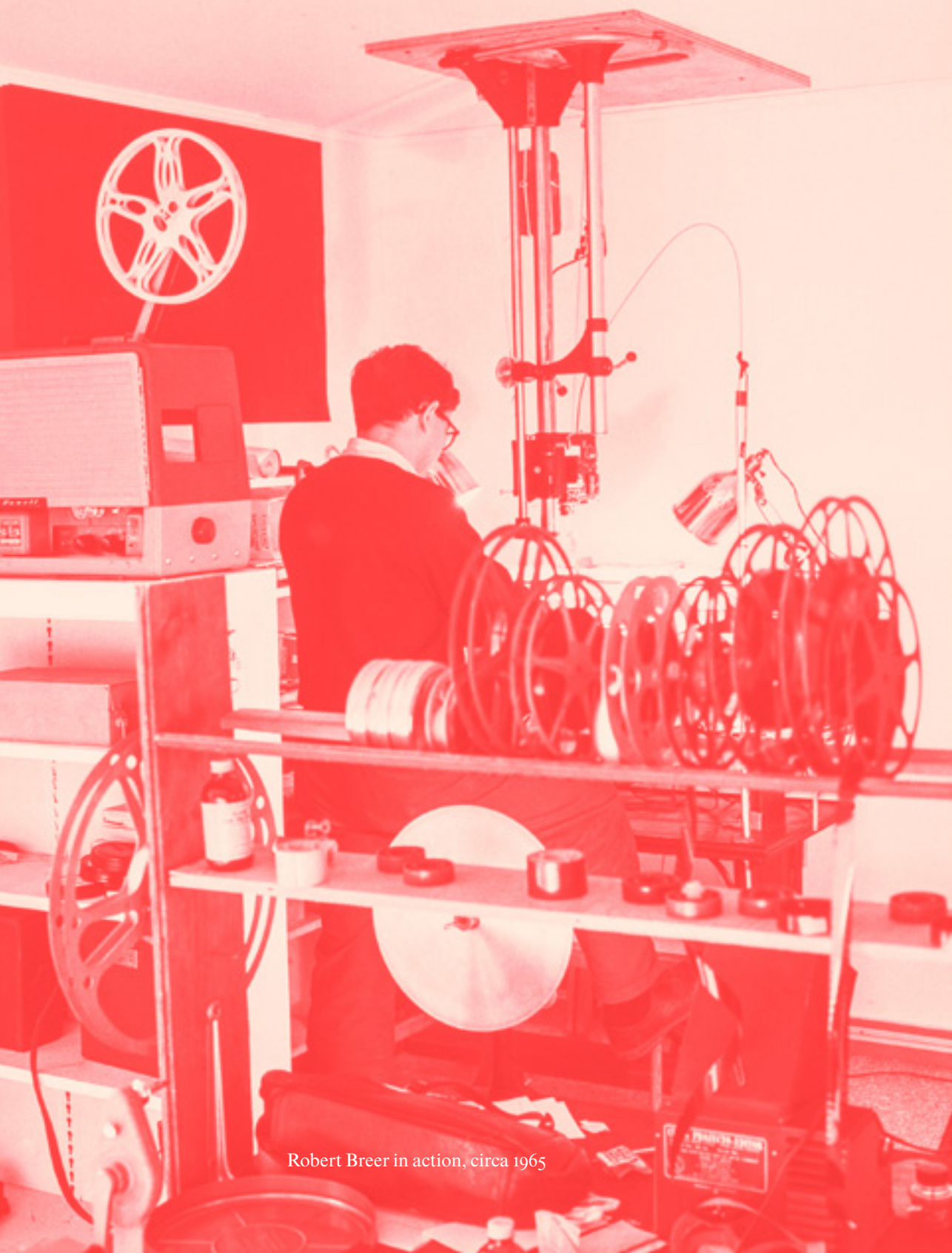
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# APROPOS FILM



Robert Breer in action, circa 1965

## Apropos Film.

### On moving images in a modern art museum

Jimmy Pettersson

The histories of Moderna Museet and Pontus Hultén are closely entwined with film. After the Museum opened on 9 May, 1958, the avant-garde film festival *Apropos Eggeling* was among the first event to take place in the new premises on Skeppsholmen. On four evenings between 13 and 21 May, 52 films relating to modern visual arts were screened, to illustrate the potential of film as an artistic medium.<sup>1</sup> The use of film at Moderna Museet as a means of attracting a broader public and a first step towards eventually making room for happenings and other open art forms at the Museum has been described previously.<sup>2</sup> This study will account primarily for the presence of film and Hultén's endeavours to highlight the historical and contemporary significance of film as an expressive medium in his first exhibitions in the 1950s.

### Showing film as art

Pontus Hultén's focus on film began with the exhibition *L'Art suédois 1913–1953. Exposition d'art suédois, cubiste, futuriste, constructiviste* at Galerie Denise René in Paris in 1953. It was organised by Hultén and Oscar Reutersvärd, together with the Swedish Institute in Paris and the Nationalmuseum, as a historic and contemporary presentation of Swedish abstract art. The exhibition presented early Swedish abstract art through artists such as Gösta Adrian-Nilsson (GAN), Siri Derkert, and Otte Sköld, and more contemporary works by, for instance Olle Bærtling, Lennart Rodhe, and Olle Bonnier.<sup>3</sup>

The artist who stands out in Hultén's and Reutersvärd's selection of Swedish abstract artists is Viking Eggeling, and the difficulties he presented when it came to integrating his film *Diagonal Symphony* (1924) and two of his image scrolls in the exhibition. *Diagonal Symphony* is an eight-minute animation that Eggeling made, assisted by the photographer Erna Niemeyer-Soupault, in autumn 1924.<sup>4</sup> In the film, a series of white abstract shapes appear and are repeated against a black background, metamorphosing constantly and moving mostly diagonally across the surface. The shapes in the film

originate in a collection of image scrolls. Eggeling's scrolls are up to five-metre long pencil drawings with clearly separated abstract figures presented serially.<sup>5</sup> Eggeling thus differs considerably from the other artists in the exhibition, whose practices were mainly in traditional media, such as painting and sculpture.

What made the inclusion of Viking Eggeling an even bolder decision was that his works, unlike those of the other featured artists, were not actually shown in the exhibition. The National Museum of Science and Technology's copy of his film *Diagonal Symphony* could not be screened in the daylight of the exhibition space, and most of his oeuvre was in the USA. Instead, visitors were given an impression of his works by slides with excerpts from *Diagonal Symphony* and one of his scrolls, hung in the gallery window, and photographs of another scroll hanging on the gallery wall.<sup>6</sup> Including Eggeling in the exhibition even though his works could not be shown in the gallery space demonstrates the importance that Hultén and Reutersvärd attributed to his practice; it was essential to show Eggeling and highlight film in the history of abstract art. This position is clearly expressed in the interviews given prior to the exhibition.<sup>7</sup> Eugen Wretholm's wrote the following in a review of the exhibition in *Svenska Dagbladet*:

Viking Eggeling, creator of the first abstract film, is famous among the youthful elite who frequent the ciné clubs in Paris, and is deservedly represented with a few dia positives and photographs from his films "Diagonal Symphony" and "Horizontal-Vertical Mass"; this as a reminder that the history of modern visual arts does not consist exclusively of painting and sculpture.<sup>8</sup>

This "reminder" of the significance of film as an art form in its own right, and its connection to modern visual arts would become a recurring theme in several of the film programmes organised by Hultén in the 1950s.

In autumn 1953, Hultén elaborated on his interest in film and Viking Eggeling's oeuvre in the Scandinavian special issue of the French magazine *Art d'aujourd'hui*.<sup>9</sup> This special edition referred specifically to the exhibition in Paris earlier that year, and contained, in addition to Hultén's article on Eggeling, a piece by Oscar Reutersvärd on the *art concret* artist Otto G. Carlsund, and one by the art historian Rolf Söderberg on the history of Swedish abstract art as the theme of *L'Art suédois 1913–1953*. Hultén's article on Eggeling further



Contact sheet with Pontus Hultén and  
Oscar Reutersvärd in connection with *L'Art suédois*  
1913–1953 at Galerie Denise René, Paris, 1953



explains his fascination for Eggeling's oeuvre and *Diagonal Symphony*. For Hultén Eggeling represented the first modern artist to relate image to time. Hultén particularly stressed how *Diagonal Symphony* replaced individual pictures by creating actual movement in a living form.<sup>10</sup> In other words, it was not merely the fact that Eggeling made film that Hultén found interesting, but that *Diagonal Symphony* related to the aspect that fascinated him at the time, movement in art, prompting him to view his oeuvre primarily as art in a wider concept of art focusing on movement.

In April 1955, two years after *L'Art suédois 1913–1953*, Hultén contributed to the exhibition *Le Mouvement* at Galerie Denise René in Paris.<sup>11</sup> In conjunction with the opening, a yellow booklet was published that became known as the *Manifeste jaune* (Yellow Manifesto). Although the works shown were predominantly paintings or sculptures, the main concern of the four texts in the booklet was another art form. In their essays, Hultén, the art critic Roger Bordier, and the artist Victor Vasarely identified film as a central point, towards which contemporary art should be aimed. Vasarely grandly declared in his “Notes for a manifesto” that “the CINEMATOGRAPHIC FIELD is systematically being taken over by abstract discipline. We are witnessing the dawn of a great epoch.”<sup>12</sup> And in “Film”, Bordier called on contemporary abstract artists to explore the potential of film as an artistic medium:

It is up to the abstract artists, each in his own sphere, to take part in this still timid and yet genuine effort to renovate the seventh art ... What I call the artist's film is entitled to be considered, on exactly the same grounds as a painting, as a work of art.<sup>13</sup>

For technical reasons, no film was shown in the gallery's exhibition space. Instead, a film screening was held at the Cinémathèque française on 21 April, 1955.<sup>14</sup> The film programme was arranged entirely by Hultén, and in chronological order, from historical abstract film to contemporary works.<sup>15</sup> The programme kicked off with Viking Eggeling's *Diagonal Symphony* (1924), and Henri Chomette's *Cinq minutes de cinéma pur* (1925). These were followed by *Hoppity Pop* (1942), and *Hen Hop* (1942) by Norman McLaren, one of the most established and famous avant-garde filmmakers at the time. To represent the younger generation of art film, however, Hultén also showed works such as Robert Breer's *Form Phases IV* (1955), and his



own piece, *X* (1954).<sup>16</sup> Hultén's inclusion of himself in the exhibition's film programme is not unexpected. He was active as an experimental filmmaker at the time, and had developed a close friendship with the more experienced American film maker Robert Breer in his Paris years.<sup>17</sup> Together with Breer, Hultén made the less than one-minute long film *Un miracle* (1954), and the exhibition *Le Mouvement* was also documented in a 15-minute film by Breer and Hultén.<sup>18</sup>

In hindsight, it may seem strange that it is the history and future potential of film as an artistic medium got the most attention, both in the exhibition catalogue and in the accompanying film screenings. Today, *Le Mouvement* is mainly remembered for its mobile sculptures, movable reliefs and pictures with optical effects. In the activities and texts around the exhibition, however, film was presented as a natural and important part of contemporary art.

Shortly after *Le Mouvement*, Hultén embarked on *A Day in the City* (1956), a film he co-authored and directed together with Hans Nordenström and Gösta Winberg. This film attracted a great deal of international attention when it was accepted for the *International Competition of Experimental Films*, organised by Cinémathèque de Belgique in 1957.<sup>19</sup> On Breer's recommendation, Hultén was also contacted by Amos Vogel about showing *A Day in the City* at the Cinema 16 film club in New York and distributing it in the USA.<sup>20</sup> The main reason why Vogel was denied the distribution rights for the film was that Hultén already had a contract with Europafilm.<sup>21</sup> But Hultén was not entirely happy with his contract, stating in a letter to Billy Klüver that Europafilm was burying the film instead of letting him distribute it.<sup>22</sup>

*A Day in the City* has aptly been described as an anarchic collage of society's rigid and conservative institutions, and organisations and bureaucracy in general.<sup>23</sup> One of the institutions identified as a culprit at the end of the film is the Nationalmuseum, which is shown to blow up and burn down. But maybe the bang from the explosion in the avant-garde film was the wake-up call the Nationalmuseum had been waiting for, because from 1956, it started showing more and more films through its new department Moderna Museet and Pontus Hultén.

#### Film at Moderna Museet

In an essay in the catalogue for the exhibition *Det moderna museet* (The Modern Museum, 1950), written before the existence of Moderna Museet, Otte Sköld, director of the Nationalmuseum, asks

Var kommer ni närmast ifrån?  
Varför kommer ni just till mig?

Goddag jag vill byta namn

Vad heter ni?

Karl

Man kan inte byta förnamn

Jaså. Jag vill byta familjenamn.

Varför det?

Jag kanske har fått fel namn.

Det kan ni kontrollera i kyrkoboken. Vad vill ni heter?

Ja jag tänkte byta varje år.

Det går inte. Det tar två år att byta namn.

Jag heter Nordlund-Berglöv.

Då får ni byta bara om ni har en bror som är mördare.

Jag har ingen bror.

Jaså.

Kan jag få heter som den här teckningen ser ut? Den föreställer  
inget annat.

Det går inte

Då vill jag heter som den här tabletten snakar.

Det gäller inte på posten.

Har ska jag göra då?

Det ska vara något med mycket K och S i.

Gullesch blå?

hemhäl (rörelsen)

Kan man heter Päränö?

Det är gammalt.

Då tar jag mig namnet Ööböööööööörp.

Nej har jag sagt.

Jag vill heter som rörelsen i svalornas flykt,  
som det ljud som uppstår när man knäpper rocken  
men helst vill jag heter som mitt fädernesland,  
Odengatan 6.

Ni kan ja föreslå. Fyll i det här. Vad heter er fra i sig själv?

Goddag. Och jag, jag har tre förnamn.

Det finns många som har. Vilket tillnamn söker ni?

Jag vill inte ha något namn alls, inte heter någonting. Jag vill  
sakna namn.

Det skulle bara ge upphov till pinsamma missförstånd. Ni är väl för  
far den samma som förr.

Ja vi skriver väl tisdag då.

himself what responsibilities a future modern museum should have, and concludes that “room should be given to film of artistically high quality”.<sup>24</sup> This was to have a huge impact on Moderna Museet’s early years. Sköld’s emphasis of the importance of film was also obvious in the exhibition *Viking Eggeling 1880–1925. Tecknare och filmkonstnär* (Viking Eggeling 1880–1925. Illustrator and film artist, 1950) and the accompanying film series *30 år experimentfilm* (30 Years of Experimental Film).<sup>25</sup> *Viking Eggeling 1880–1925* was the first exhibition at the Nationalmuseum that focused on film, and in the catalogue preface Sköld wrote optimistically about the qualities and potential of film as a visual art.<sup>26</sup>

Even before it opened, the exhibition had attracted great media attention. That the Nationalmuseum was screening a series of avant-garde films was noted in the press as highly interesting and exciting.<sup>27</sup> The film series consisted of three programmes on different evenings at the Nationalmuseum, in association with the collections of the National Museum of Science and Technology’s department of cinematic history. The first evening was on the theme of *Viking Eggeling and early avant-garde film*, and consisted mainly of abstract films from around 1920. This was followed by *From René Clair to Cocteau*, with a distinct focus on French film history; the third was advertised as *Modern American avant-garde film* and included the avant-garde pioneers Maya Deren and John and James Whitney. The three film shows began with an introductory lecture and ended with discussions on the theme of the evening.<sup>28</sup>

Sköld’s experiences from the successful film series *30 år experimentfilm*, together with his open attitude to film as art, was probably the reason why Pontus Hultén was able to organise two film series in conjunction with the exhibition of Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica* in Moderna Museet’s provisional premises in 1956.<sup>29</sup> Material in Moderna Museet’s archive shows that the two film series were organised at short notice, and that Hultén was in charge of them.<sup>30</sup> Initially, Hultén had planned to create a temporary cinema in the Skeppsholmen venue, but problems with fire safety regulations and projectionist certificates meant that the first film series had to be shown at the Terrassen cinema, and the second at the larger Palladium cinema in Stockholm.<sup>31</sup> The first show centred on documentary film and was intended to provide a historic backdrop to Picasso’s painting. The films shown during the two evenings included *Guernica* (1949) by Alain Resnais and Robert Hessens, along with Paul Haesaerts’ *Visit*

## MODERNA MUSEETS FILMSERIE

anordnad i samarbete med KURSVERKSAMHETEN VID STOCKHOLMS HÖGSKOLA  
med anledning av Picasso-utställningen "GUERNICA" i Moderna Museet:  
Filmer av den spanske regissören Luis Buñuel. Biografen PALLADIUM, Kungsg. 65.

### Lördagen den 24 nov. kl. 15

UN CHIEN ANDALOU (En andalusisk hund), Paris 1928, manus Buñuel och Salvador Dalí, regi Buñuel.

L'AGE D'OR (Guldåldern), Paris 1930, manus Buñuel och Salvador Dalí, regi Buñuel.

"Den som blir besviken därför att han inte kan finna ordning och mening i den filmen kommer att i egenstans finna ordning och mening; utom kanske bland blin och maskar ... Jag upprepar: L'Age l'Or är den enda film som jag vet som avslöjar filmens möjligheter." Henry Miller.

(Vid denna föreställning visas sist även Ivens, Hemmingways och Dos Passos' The Spanish Earth som vid visningen den 3 nov., i förra serien, ersattes av Coeur d'Espagne.)

### Lördagen den 1 dec. kl. 15

LOS OLVIDADOS (De Glömda, i svensk distribution Götons Desperados), Mexiko 1949. Manus Buñuel och Alcariza, regi Buñuel, foto Figueroa.

TERRE SANS PAIN, Spanien 1932. Manus Buñuel, Pierre Unik, Elie Lotar, regi Buñuel.

(Terre sans pain visas ännu en gång därför att vi nu disponerar en kopia som är tekniskt överlägsen den som visades den 3. nov.)

### Lördagen den 8 dec. kl. 15

EL (Han, i svensk distribution Den Nakna Sanningen), Mexiko 1954. Regi Buñuel, foto Figueroa.

Serie kort å 9: — säljas på Moderna Museet på Skeppsholmen, Kursverksamheten, Grevtureg. 9, och före första föreställningen, från kl. 14, på Palladium.



Buñuel i Un Chien Andalou

to *Picasso* (1949), and two short films about Francisco de Goya by Luciano Emmer.<sup>32</sup> While the first series stressed the pedagogical value of films in providing knowledge about Picasso and Spanish art, the second had a substantially more artistic ambition.<sup>33</sup>

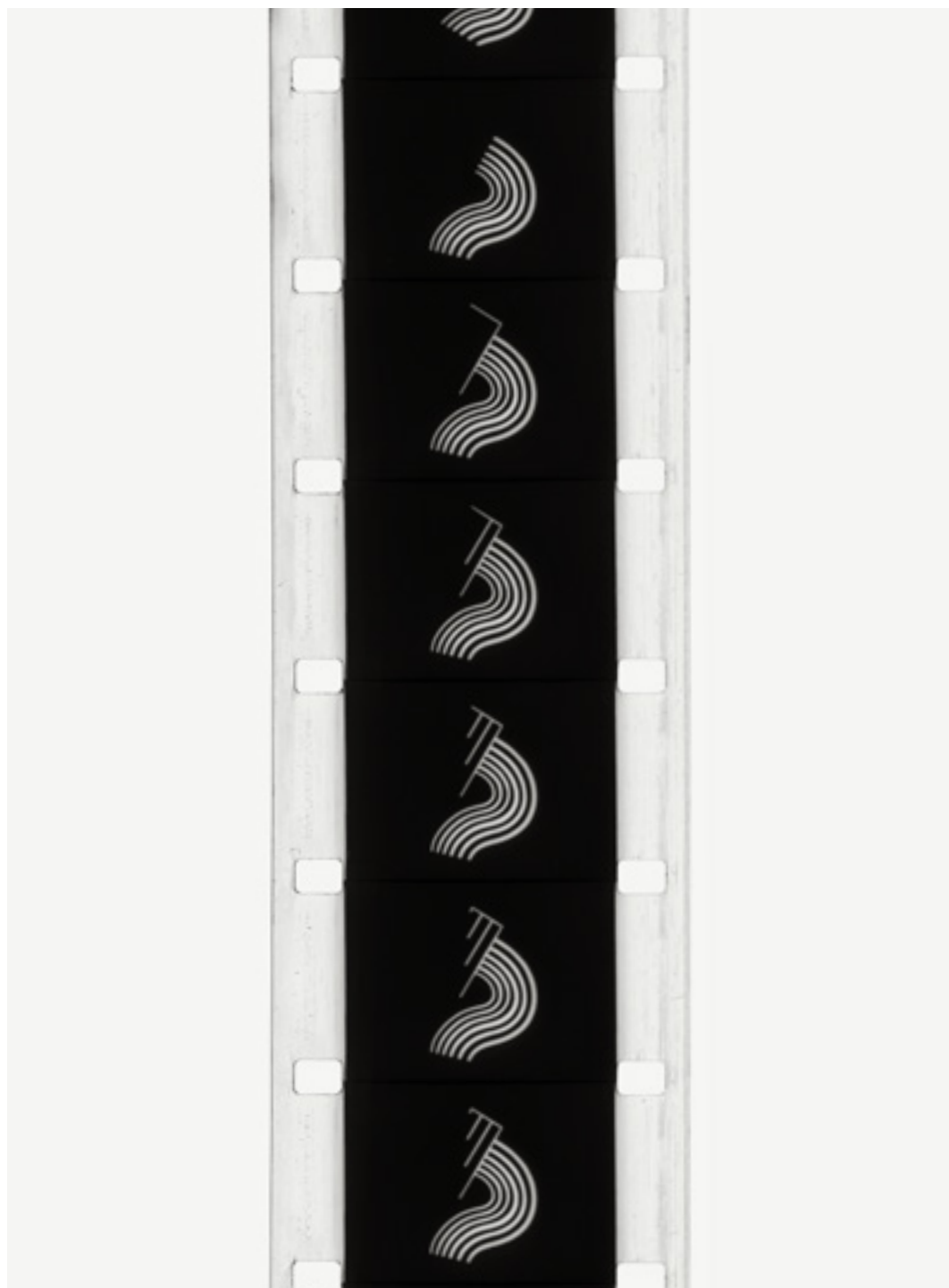
In a letter to Seth Karlsson asking to borrow Luis Buñuel's film *Los Olvidados* (1950) from Europafilm, Hultén describes the purpose of the film series:

The second series, comprising three screenings is exclusively devoted to the Spanish director Luis Buñuel, who, in many ways, is Picasso's equal. The intention of the screenings is to present the two greatest modern Spanish artists, Picasso and Buñuel, to the audience in one context, and to utilise the opportunity that this confrontation may provide for a deeper understanding of the oeuvres of both.<sup>34</sup>

Although a temporary cinema could not be built at such short notice, we get a clear picture of the value Hultén attributed to film as an artistic medium. Buñuel's art films should not be subordinated to Picasso's paintings, and they should not be shown outside the Museum; Buñuel's films should be in the Museum, to shed light on Picasso, just as Picasso should shed light on Buñuel. Hultén's desire to show moving images in the exhibition space clearly demonstrates his expanded notion of what a museum should display, and the status of film as art.

After the screening of Buñuel's films, Hultén was in charge of a further two series. In spring 1957, Jean Vigo's and Georges Franju's films were shown at the Palladium, and in the autumn Joris Iven's films were screened at Stockholms Borgarskola on Kungstensgatan 4. Since both series also attracted audiences with little or no experience of avant-garde film, Hultén wrote long articles in *Dagens Nyheter* with presentations of the film directors.<sup>35</sup> When Georges Franju's film *Blood of the Beasts* (1949) was censored prior to its planned screening, this triggered an even more intense debate about film at Moderna Museet in the daily press.<sup>36</sup>

The day after the censorship was announced, Erik Skoglund, director of the Film Board, explained in *Dagens Nyheter* why they had decided to censor *Blood of the Beasts*.<sup>37</sup> Skoglund said that the Board had come to its decision mainly because Moderna Museet's film series were comparable to public screenings, and that the film was not suitable due to its repulsive contents. *Blood of the Beasts* takes a





documentary approach and shows cows and horses being taken to an abattoir and slaughtered. The Board considered the slaughter to be highly abhorrent and that some of the brutal scenes could cause mental trauma to an unsuspecting audience at a public screening. Moderna Museet's film series was categorised as public partly because it was so easy to buy tickets, and partly because the films were being shown at one of Stockholm's largest cinemas. If membership in a film club had been required to buy tickets for the film series, Skoglund intimated that the screenings could have been regarded as private events at which the audience was more accustomed to alternative films. The censorship of Franju's film was one of the factors that prompted Moderna Museet to start a film studio; according to the statutes, its purpose was to "enable Moderna Museet to show films to its members that were prohibited from public screenings".<sup>38</sup> To show films that were not allowed to be screened publicly was also a contributing reason why Joris Iven's film series was transferred from Palladium to Stockholms Borgarskola. One of the terms in the rental agreement for Palladium, which was owned by Svensk Filmindustri, was that all films must be approved by the censors.<sup>39</sup>

It is worth noting that the Nationalmuseum's management showed strong support for the popular film series at Moderna Museet. When *Blood of the Beasts* was censored, Otte Sköld wrote to the head of Biografbyrån (the Film Board), Erik Skoglund, presenting his case for why the Nationalmuseum and its Moderna Museet department should be exempt from film censorship:

Since art film must be counted as one of the most active and, from a modern point of view, interesting artistic disciplines, screenings of art film will be included as a natural part of activities in the newly-established Moderna Museet department.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that film activities became a "natural part" of Moderna Museet's activities in the early years was largely due to the contacts that were made in connection with these four film series. Especially valuable support for the Museum's continued screenings of film was provided by Barbro Sylwan at the Swedish Institute's Office national du tourisme suédois, and Dominique Johansen at Académie du cinéma, also in Paris. In connection with the plans for the Vigo/Franju series, Hultén asked Sylwan and the Office national du tourisme

Stockholm den 27 juli 1959.

Begärande Ingmar Bergman

S F

Bildnada

För Falc nämnde i våras att Vi har i Er Ågo en samling klassiska snalfilmer. Det skulle intressera oss att visa den här. Genom herr Hjortberg hörde jag för ett par veckor sedan att projektet intresserar också Er. Vi håller nu på med att lägga upp programmet för höstens filmvisningar. Jag vill därför fråga: Här kan Vi tänka Er att ha denna serie visningar och har några kvällar räcker samlingen till? Vi skulle vilja försöka november som bästa tid.

Tackas för att höra från Er.

Högaktingsfullt

K. G. Hultén  
intendent

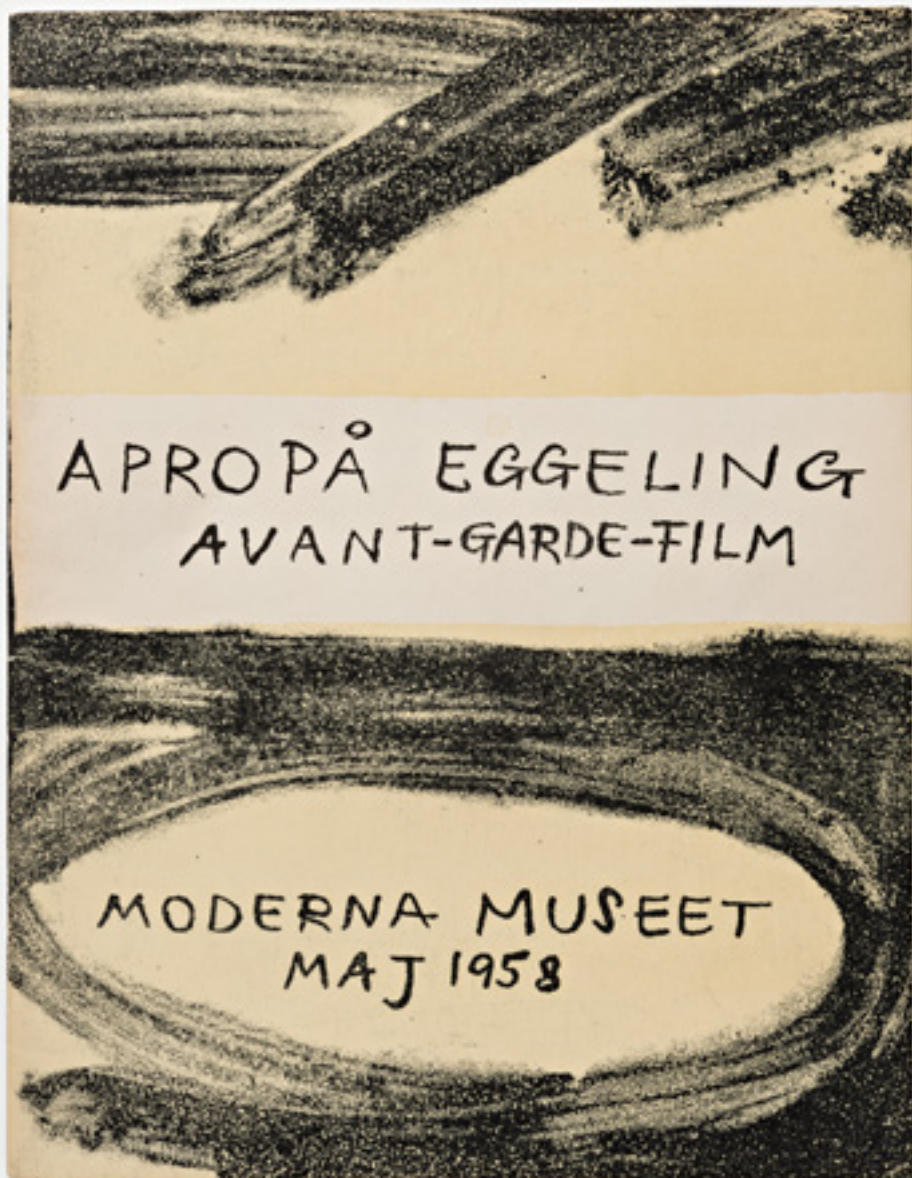
suédois to help him contact Franju.<sup>41</sup> Sylwan was also contacted by Johansen, since she represented several French filmmakers in the distribution of their films.<sup>42</sup> This was the start of a long collaboration, where Johansen and the Académie du cinéma provided the films and Sylwan and the Office national du tourisme suédois handled the forwarding to Sweden and Moderna Museet. The archives contain a massive correspondence between Johansen, Sylwan and Hultén, indicating clearly the crucial importance of their partnership on the Museum's early film activities in general and the *Apropos Eggeling* film festival in particular.<sup>43</sup>

### Apropos Eggeling

The *Apropos Eggeling* festival began four days after Moderna Museet opened its new premises on Skeppsholmen. It offered a rich programme of 52 films made from 1910 to 1958, including Émile Cohl's *Le Retapeur de cervelles* (1910), Viking Eggeling's *Diagonal Symphony* (1924), Len Lye's *Color Box* (1935), Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) and *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* (1945, and Per Olof Ultvedt's *Nära Ögat* (1958).<sup>44</sup> In addition to Académie du cinéma, a large number of the films shown on the four festival evenings came from the National Museum of Science and Technology's film history collection and Det Danske Filmmuseum.<sup>45</sup>

Today, film, video and other moving images are a natural part of the Museum's exhibitions and of contemporary art; in the late 1950s, however, the *Apropos Eggeling* film festival made a strong stand for film as art. Unlike the four previous screenings organised by Moderna Museet and Pontus Hultén, the films were now shown on the Museum's own premises, and the potential of film as an artistic medium was highlighted. In the planning phase of the exhibition, Hultén contacted several internationally prominent filmmakers and critics, along with other people more close at hand, requesting them to write in the festival catalogue.<sup>46</sup> His letters specify clearly that the purpose of the catalogue was to discuss the current situation of film and its relationship to visual arts:

In order to give this festival a sign of its importance and also in order to save the memory of it we are going to edit a booklet with some short articles on the situation of cinema, on avant-garde-film and experimental film, its relations to the plastic art etc.<sup>47</sup>



Catalogue for *Apropos Eggeling*.  
*Avant-Garde Film*, Moderna Museet, 1958

Among those who accepted Hultén's invitation were authors from his international and Swedish networks; Georges Franju, for instance, provided an essay on the multitude of styles in the field of avant-garde film.<sup>48</sup> An article by Nils-Hugo Geber, who was later to head Moderna Museet's film studio, links the ambitions of art film with the conditions of film production, in what could be termed an informative opinion piece on the situation of art film in Sweden.<sup>49</sup> The texts by John Halas and Roger Manvell focus on animated film and how its significance to static visual arts has been ignored too long.<sup>50</sup>

*Apropos Eggeling* was a mobilisation for the status of film as art, and in the preface of the catalogue Hultén summed up his views on film and the role of film in contemporary art: "A whole generation turns to film to satisfy its need for art ... film is the most powerful means of expression available in this day and age. It is an excellent artistic medium".<sup>51</sup> In the years after Moderna Museet opened, film continued to have a strong presence there. A follow-up of *Apropos Eggeling* was held already in autumn 1958, and in spring 1959 another two film series were organised by Moderna Museet's film studio.<sup>52</sup> The exhibitions *Movement in Art* (1961), *4 Americans* (1962), and *American Pop Art* (1964), were all accompanied by film programmes. The Museum's popular film studio for children opened on 14 March, 1959, and soon expanded from one show on Saturdays to two Saturday shows and one on Sundays.<sup>53</sup> Many people were involved in Moderna Museet's film activities in the early years, but the dual role of Pontus Hultén as museum director and experimental filmmaker was probably crucial to the position of the medium in the still young institution.

1. See appendix with programme in *Apropå Eggeling. En samling korta uppsatser om film utgiven med anledning av avantgardefilmserien i Moderna Museet Maj 1958* (exh. cat.), ed. Karl G. Hultén, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1958. The film evenings took place on 13, 16, 19 and 21 May at 8.00 pm.
2. See for example Pontus Hultén, “Moderna Museets tillkomst och första år”, *Moderna Museet 1958–1983*, eds. Olle Granath and Monica Nieckels, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1983, pp. 30–37; Lars Gustaf Andersson, John Sundholm and Astrid Söderbergh Widding, *A History of Swedish Experimental Film Culture. From Early Animation to Video Art*, Stockholm: Mediehistoriskt arkiv no. 17, 2010; Magnus af Petersens and Martin Sundberg, “Art on Stage: Happenings and Moving Images at Moderna Museet”, *The History Book. On Moderna Museet 1958–2008*, eds. Anna Tellgren and Martin Sundberg, Stockholm: Moderna Museet and Göttingen: Steidl, 2008, pp. 97–120; Leif Nyhlén, *Den öppna konsten. Happenings, instrumental teater, konkret poesi och andra gränsöverskridningar i det svenska 60-talet*, Stockholm: Sveriges Allmänna Konstförening no. 107, 1998.
3. The exhibition took place between 27 March and 20 April, 1953, and a total of 51 works by the following artists were shown: Siri Derkert (4 works), Gösta Adrian-Nilsson (5), Otte Sköld (2), Viking Eggeling (3), Otto G. Carlsund (5), Erik Olsson (5), Christian Berg (3), Lennart Rodhe (4), Olle Bonnier (4), Arne Jones (4), Karl-Axel Pehrson (3), Olle Bærtling (3), Lars Rolf (5), Ted Dyrssen (1). For a full list of works shown by each respective artist, see *L'Art suédois 1913–1953. Exposition d'art suédois, cubiste, futuriste, constructiviste* (exh. cat.), Paris: Galerie Denise René, 1953.
4. Louise O’Konor, *Viking Eggeling 1880–1925. Artist and Film-Maker, Life and Work* (diss.), Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971.
5. A shorter image scroll, *Étude pour Symphonie diagonale* (51 x 213 cm), the film *Diagonal Symphony*, and most of Eggeling’s sketches are included in the Moderna Museet collection.
6. On Eggeling being represented with slides and photographs, see “Viking Eggeling”, *L'Art suédois 1913–1953*, 1953. For information on how the works were hung in the exhibition space, see Rolf Söderberg, “Svensk konst i Paris”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 1 April, 1953.
7. “Svensk nutidskonst på utlandsturné”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 19 March, 1953, and “Svensk konst far jorden runt”, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 19 March, 1953.
8. Eugen Wretholm, “Svensk modernism i Paris”, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 9 April, 1953.
9. Karl G. Hultén, “Viking Eggeling”, *Art d'aujourd'hui*, no. 7, 1953, p. 3.
10. “Il semble que Viking Eggeling soit le premier représentant de l’art moderne qui, consciemment, ait mis ses images en relation directe avec le temps; c’est le premier artiste de l’image dans l’histoire du film ... Le film fit disparaître la beauté des images individuelles, qui fut remplacée par celle des mouvements réels sous une forme vivante.” Karl G. Hultén, “Viking Eggeling”, *Art d'aujourd'hui*, no. 7, 1953, p. 3.
11. *Le Mouvement* is one of the first steps towards what would later become Pontus Hultén’s, and one of Moderna Museet’s, major initiatives

in the 1960s, the exhibition *Movement in Art* (1961). According to Patrik Andersson, Hultén's article on Eggeling in *Art d'aujourd'hui* was one of the primary reasons why he came to be involved in the work on the exhibition *Le Mouvement*. Patrik Andersson, "Rörelse i konsten: The art of Re-assemblage", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, vol. 78, issue 4, 2009, pp. 178–192.

12. Victor Vasarely, "Le manifeste jaune", published as facsimile in *Le Mouvement/The Movement, Paris 1955. Agam, Bury, Calder, Duchamp, Jacobsen, Soto, Tinguely, Vasarely* (exh. cat.), Paris, New York, Düsseldorf: Edition Denise René, 1975.

13. Roger Bordier, "Film", facsimile in *Le Mouvement/The Movement, Paris 1955*, 1975.

14. In connection with the exhibition *Le Mouvement. Vom Kino zur Kinetik* at the Museum Tinguely in Basel in 2010, a lost copy of *Le Mouvement's* film programme was found in Robert Breer's private archive. Films by the following were shown: Viking Eggeling, Henri Chomette, Francis Lee, Norman McLaren, Richard Mortensen, K.G.P. Hultén, Edgard Pillet, Robert Jacobsen & Mogens Kruse, Robert Breer, Len Lye, and Oscar Fischinger. For a facsimile of the film programme, see *Le Mouvement. Vom Kino zur Kinetik* (exh. cat.), Basel: Museum Tinguely, 2010, p. 80.

15. On Pontus Hultén's influence on the film programme, see "Robert Breer. Interview on the occasion of the exhibition 'Le Mouvement. From Cinema to Kinetics'", *Le Mouvement. Vom Kino zur Kinetik*, 2010, p. 148.

16. Earlier research has shown that the exhibition practice of creating an active relationship between history and contemporaneity was a recurring theme in several of Pontus Hultén's exhibitions and texts in the 1950s and 60s. The film programme reflects this theme in so far as it also highlights historical pioneers, established contemporary artists and younger artists with a view to the future. See Hans Hayden, *Modernismen som institution. Om etableringen av ett estetiskt och historiografiskt paradigm*, Stockholm, Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 2006, pp. 190–191, footnote 25–26.

17. Pontus Hultén's archive includes a substantial number of letters from Robert Breer to Pontus Hultén, see primarily MMA PHA 5.1.3.

18. The documentary film without sound is included in Pontus Hultén's archive: Pontus Hultén and Robert Breer, *Le Mouvement* (1955). MMA PHA 5.5.98.

19. Letter from Jacques Ledoux at *La cinémathèque de Belgique* to Pontus Hultén, 5 April, 1958. MMA PHA 4.4.18.

20. There is a large collection of letters from Amos Vogel to Pontus Hultén. They are partly on the subject of the possibility of renting film from Cinema 16, partly on the distribution rights for *A Day in the City*. Hultén also visited Vogel when he was in New York, and in 1962 Vogel expressed a desire to go to Stockholm to see Hultén and to show films there. Letters from Amos Vogel to Pontus Hultén, 17 September, 1957, 8 February, 1960, 19 January, 1962. MMA PHA 4.4.18.

21. Contract with Europafilm. MMA PHA 4.4.18.



22. Letter from Pontus Hultén to Billy Klüver, 29 January, 1957. MMA PHA 5.1.21.
23. Lars Gustaf Andersson, John Sundholm, and Astrid Söderbergh Widding, *A History of Swedish Experimental Film Culture*, 2010, p. 96.
24. The exhibition was shown from 5 September to 9 October, 1950. *Det moderna museet. Vägledning över utställningen av modern konst ur Nationalmusei samlingar. Liljevalchs konsthall 1950* (exh. cat.), Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1950.
25. The exhibition of Viking Eggeling's art was on from 27 October to 19 November, 1950. There is no information on the film series in the exhibition catalogue, *Viking Eggeling 1880–1925. Tecknare och filmkonstnär* (exh. cat.), Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1950. For the programme for the film series, see "Föreläsningar hösten 1950", *Det moderna museet*, 1950, p. 51.
26. Otte Sköld, "Förord", *Viking Eggeling 1880–1925*, 1950, pp. 3–8.
27. See, for example, Casper (Lennart Ehrenborg), "Göra film av konst och film till konst", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 1 November, 1950; "Svensk filmpionjär räddas ur glömskan", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 August, 1950; Carl Nordenfalk, "Viking Eggeling, målare och filmpionjär", *Dagens Nyheter*, 13 August, 1950.
28. Gösta Werner lectured in connection with the first show, Bengt Idestam-Almquist in connection with the second, and Gerd Osten replaced Rune Waldekranz as the lecturer for the third. On Osten replacing Waldekranz, see "Amerikanskt avantgarde", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 15 November, 1950, and "Notis", *Dagens Nyheter*, 17 November, 1950.
29. Otte Sköld's position on film as art is clearly revealed in a review of a press preview of Moderna Museet's recently allocated premises: "Around a permanent core we will have moving visual art here at the Museum," the enthusiastic director notes during our tour of the spacious drill hall. No modern artist will, thus, need to feel omitted." Chevalier, "Museet för modern konst", *Dagens Nyheter*, 23 September, 1956. Back in 1946, Sköld also wrote the introduction to a book on film as art, see Otte Sköld, "Förord" in Bengt Idestam-Almquist, *Filmen som konst*, Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1946.
30. Letter from K.G. Hultén to Det Danske Filmmuseum, 9 October, 1956, and Ernest Lindgren at The British Filminstitute, 31 October, 1956, requesting to borrow films. MMA MA F2aa:3.
31. For the plans to build a provisional cinema, see letter from K.G. Hultén to Bo Kärre, 3 October, 1956. MMA MA F2aa:3.
32. Hultén also wanted Moderna Museet to show Henri-Georges Clouzot's then new film *Le mystère Picasso* (1956), but instead it was shown by Artfilm AB at the Sture cinema, opening on 15 October, 1956. Letter from Pontus Hultén to Ove Brusendorff (Det Danske Filmmuseum), 9 October, 1956. MMA MA F2aa:3.
33. For more on art film and how film was put to the service of art education in Sweden in the 1950s and 60s, see David Rynell Åhlén, *Samtida konst på bästa sändningstid. Konst i svensk television 1956–1969* (diss.), Mediehistoriskt arkiv no. 31, Lund: Mediehistoria, Lund University, 2016, p. 49, and Malin Wahlberg, "Från Rembrandt till Electronics. Konstfilmen

i tidig svensk television”, *Berättande i olika medier*, eds. Leif Dahlberg and Pelle Snickars, Stockholm: the Swedish National Archive of Recorded Sound and Moving Images, 2008, pp. 201–232.

34. Letter from Pontus Hultén to Seth Karlsson (Europafilm AB), 20 November, 1956. MMA MA F2aa:3.

35. K.G. Hultén, “Jean Vigos filmer”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 15 March, 1957, and K.G. Hultén, “Joris Ivens filmer”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 22 October, 1957.

36. The censorship decision was followed by a one-month debate in the Swedish press on censorship and art, where Pontus Hultén and other intellectuals, including the authors Peter Weiss and Olof Lagercrantz, showed no understanding for Biografbyråns (the Film Board’s) decision to censor Georges Franju’s film. K.G. Hultén, “Censuren – en smaksak?”, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 31 March, 1957; Peter Weiss, “Censorn ryggade inför ärlig vardagsrealism”, *Expressen*, 26 March, 1957; Olof Lagercrantz, “Olyckligt censurbeslut”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 27 March, 1957; Olof Lagercrantz, “Interiör från filmcensuren”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 29 March, 1957.

37. Erik Skoglund, “Filmcensuren. Hänsyn till publiken kräver totalförbud för Djurens blod”, *Dagens Nyheter*, 25 March, 1957.

38. Otte Sköld was the chairman of Moderna Museet’s film studio, and Pontus Hultén, Bo Wennberg, Kerstin Sandqvist, and Bengt Idestam-Almquist were on the board. See “Stadgar för Moderna Museets filmstudio”. MMA MA F2aa:3.

39. For the terms of Svensk Filmindustri, see K.G. Hultén and Lennart Westerberg, “En redogörelse för de hittillsvarande förbindelserna mellan oss och censurmyndigheterna”, 23 March, 1957. MMA PHA 5.1.14.

40. Letter from Otte Sköld to chefen för Statens Biografbyrå (the head of the Film Board, Erik Skoglund), 28 August, 1957. MMA MA F2aa:3.

41. Letter from Pontus Hultén to Barbro Sylwan, Office national du tourisme suédois in Paris, 2 February, 1957. MMA MA F2aa:3.

42. Letter from Barbro Sylwan to Licentiate of Ph. K.G. Hultén, 14 February, 1957. MMA MA F2aa:3.

43. For letters from Dominique Johansen and Barbro Sylwan to Hultén on organising film shows at Moderna Museet in the 1950s and 60s, see primarily in the archive under MMA MA F2aa:3 and MMA PHA 4.1.22 and 4.1.24.

44. For a complete list of the films that were shown, see appendix with programme in *Apropå Eggeling*, 1958.

45. For correspondence on available films, see letter from Pontus Hultén to Académie du cinéma and Det Danske Filmmuseum. MMA MA F2aa:3

46. Two authors who did not accept Pontus Hultén’s invitation to contribute to the catalogue were Lindsey Anderson and Amos Vogel. Letter from Pontus Hultén to Lindsey Anderson, 21 February, 1958, and Amos Vogel, 28 January, 1958. MMA MA F2aa:3. The following authors are included in the catalogue: Robert Breer, Eivor Burbeck, Georges Franju, Nils-Hugo Geber, John Halas and Roger Manvell, Norman McLaren, Hans Nordenström, Hans Richter, Walter C. Türeck, and Peter Weiss.

47. Letter from K.G. Hultén to Roger Manvell, requesting him to write for the catalogue, 12 February, 1958. MMA MA F2aa:3.
48. Georges Franju, "Avant-garde", *Apropå Eggeling*, 1958, pp. 19–21.
49. Nils-Hugo Geber, "Noteringar", *Apropå Eggeling*, 1958, pp. 23–24.
50. John Halas and Roger Manvell, "Experiment med tecknad film", *Apropå Eggeling*, 1958, pp. 35–36.
51. Karl G. Hultén, "Inledning", *Apropå Eggeling*, 1958, p. 7.
52. In connection with the first film series in 1959, Moderna Museet was also visited by the prominent Austrian avant-garde filmmaker Peter Kubelka, who presented and screened his films *Mosaik im Vertrauen* (1955), *Adebar* (1957), and *Schwechater* (1958). In the beginning, Hultén was looking for different genres of film and contacted, for example, the director Ingmar Bergman, see letter from K.G. Hultén to Ingmar Bergman, 27 July, 1959, and letter from Ingmar Bergman to K.G. Hultén, 31 August, 1959. "Film i Moderna Museet". MMA MA F2aa:4.
53. As early as autumn 1959, a further show was added on Saturdays, and during spring 1963, the activities were expanded with film screenings on Sundays. See the programmes and all other information on the film studio for children in MMA MA F2aa:5. Anna-Lena Wibom worked with and developed the film studio for children during these years.



## Images:

### Abbreviations

MMA The Moderna Museet archives

MA The Moderna Museet public archive (Myndighetsarkivet)

PHA The Pontus Hultén archive

p. 1–3: Lennart Olson. MMA PHA 5.4.1

p. 4–5: Anders Engman. MMA MA Ö7b:9

p. 6: MMA PHA 5.4.1

p. 7: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. From contact sheet. MMA MA Ö7a:1

p. 8: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12

p. 14, 16–17, 19: Albin Dahlström/Moderna Museet

p. 38: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 44: MMA PHA 2.22

p. 46: MMA MA B6

p. 49: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 52: MMA MA F1a:30

p. 55–56: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 66: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 69: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 72–73: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 76–77: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 80: Per Larsson. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 83: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 85: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 96: Frances Breer. MMA PHA 5.1.3

p. 99: Unknown photographer. MMA PHA 4.2.17

p. 102: MMA PHA 4.4.18

p. 104–105: MMA MA F2aa:1

p. 107: Albin Dahlström/Moderna Museet. Moderna Museets samling, MOMFi 81

p. 109: MMA MA F2aa:4

p. 111: The Pontus Hultén library,

Moderna Museet

p. 120: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12

p. 123: MMA MA F1a:9

p. 124: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:2

p. 127: MMA MA F1a:9

p. 130: The Pontus Hulténs library, Moderna Museet

p. 135: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12 (above).

Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:12 (below)

p. 148: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 152: Klipparkivet, The Art Library (Konstbiblioteket), Stockholm

p. 155: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:3

p. 157: MMA MA F1:12

p. 159: Unknown photographer. MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 162: Jan Gustavsson. MMA MA Ö7b:10 (above).

Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet MMA MA Ö7b:10 (below)

p. 176: MMA PHA 4.1.52

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