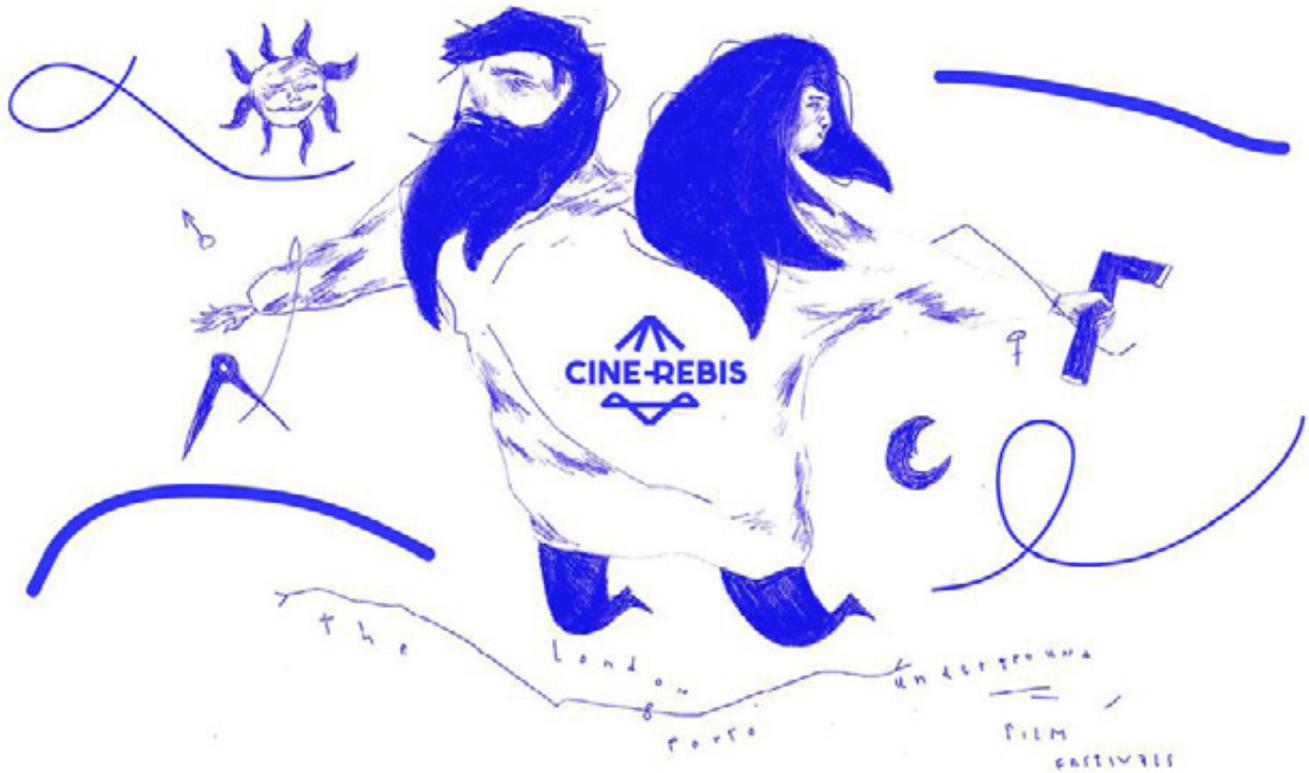


CELEBRATING CREATIVITY

CINE-REBIS - THE LONDON & PORTO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVALS



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This year, the London Underground film festival is reborn as Cine-Rebis. Under the guidance of Daniel Fawcett and Clara Pais, Cine-Rebis will be showing underground, experimental and outsider works of cinema at the Horse Hospital in Bloomsbury. Film editor Kit Harwood spoke its current organisers about the upcoming season.

First of all, what is Cine-Rebis - The London & Porto Underground Film Festivals?

Cine-Rebis celebrates the art of cinema, films made outside of the restrictions of the film industry, we celebrate true creativity. We are filmmakers ourselves and are curious about what other filmmakers all over the world are doing. We were sure there must be many people who are on the fringes of the so called film world making very exciting work, finding in themselves the seeds of new forms and new ideas. It is hard to get your film shown if there is something truly unique about it, a lot of festivals shy away from showing anything that doesn't fit into their rigid idea of what a film is, but this is exactly what makes these works worth seeing!

This is our first year running the festival and, as well as expanding it from London to include Porto, we have changed the name to Cine-Rebis, Rebis is a term used by alchemists for the end result of their great work. In art the Rebis is often portrayed as a two headed hermaphrodite, embodying both masculine and feminine principles. This felt like a good analogy for our ideas about the creative process.

Tell us a bit about your background, what lead to running the festival?

We have been working together now since the end of 2010. Within weeks of meeting we got started on our first feature film together, *Savage Witches*, a film that for us was a way of questioning and breaking free from the conventions of filmmaking and coming to a deeper understanding of the purpose of cinema and the role it plays in our lives. It was also a celebration of all that we love about cinema - the artifice, the playfulness, the theatricality and magical quality of the medium. For us the making of a film is a transformative experience, a form of ritual or therapy that we use for deep exploration and engagement with ourselves and the world around us.

As well as making films, we also write about them and have our own publication, *FILM PANIC*, which features interviews and articles about underground, experimental, arthouse, trash, queer, amateur and cult cinema.

The festival, like all events in our life, came about by chance. We'd been at the festival over the last couple of years and James Lowry, who started the whole thing, was going to shut it down as he had other projects that he wanted to focus on so he asked us if we'd take it over. Simple as that and suddenly we are running a festival. Who knows what will happen next, life is full of surprises!

It seems that current 'independent' films are stuffed full of a-listers and equipped with (relatively) enormous budgets. What's different about the films you programme?

The truth is that none of that stuff matters to us, the world of celebrities, the size of the budgets and even the terms independent and underground. What really matters to us is that the films we show are made by living, breathing human creatures who fully participate in life in the best way they can. People who can see through the bullshit of the film world, or the art world, or any of that stuff. Cinema is still attached by the umbilical cord to mother-money, some people are even trying to climb back into the womb. But it is time to slap the baby, cut the cord and start crawling. There is a wonderful journey ahead, oh boy!

What are your thoughts on London as a city? Is it a good place for underground films to flourish?

Anywhere is a good place for underground films to flourish, and when we talk about underground films, what we're really talking about is art. And where there are people there has to be art. And where there is lots of people we desperately need art. But not just objects and paid for experiences, we need to find a way to bring art into every part of our lives because art brings transformation and is an expression of being human. Humans constantly feel that their lives are full of restrictions and suffering, art is our way of turning things on their heads, it brings both lightness and depth to our experiences and helps us to join in the dance of life with a spring in our step!

On top of running the festival you both make your own films and run a fanzine. Does it ever get too much?

Sometimes we need to slow down and take a big breath but we love everything we do, there is not much that is more exciting than making a movie, it's such a thrilling experience! Never easy but so incredible! Because there are two of us creating the projects, it is a constant exchange and a continuous shared experience. It helps us maintain the energy, we keep each other going.

Finally, events like this are a great way to introduce people to a different type of cinema. How do you hope people will come away feeling?

If they come away with only one thing in their mind, we hope that they see that the art of cinema is alive and it is an evolving, mysterious creature that is still quite young, and even though it might appear that the medium exists under the domination of modern Hollywood and the money men, its future lays in the hands of the amateurs and the artists. The variety of explorations taking place in the films we're presenting should demonstrate that there are many stones unturned and many lands unconquered. There are no dead ends, just ever expanding possibilities, it's incredible!

For more articles and information about the projects of The Underground Film Studio, visit: <http://theundergroundfilmstudio.co.uk>