



Saving Film & Television for Future Generations

*UCLA Film & Television Archive, in conjunction with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, presents an enchanted evening with the award-winning*  
*Nina Menkes, Cinematic Sorceress*  
*on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at the Billy Wilder Theater in the Hammer Museum in Westwood*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOS ANGELES, CA (May 23, 2019)** – The UCLA Film & Television Archive is thrilled to showcase the brand-new 35mm restoration of UCLA alumna Nina Menkes’ radical feature, *Queen of Diamonds* (1991), on a double bill with her nightmarish true-crime feature, *The Bloody Child* (1996). This program will include a Q&A session with award-winning filmmaker Menkes, on June 15, 2019 at the Billy Wilder Theater in the Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024.

First screened in 1991 at Sundance, *Queen of Diamonds* has since been proclaimed a feminist masterpiece. The independent film was shot on location in Las Vegas and follows the alienated life of a casino blackjack dealer played by Nina Menkes’ longtime collaborator and sister Tinka Menkes. The female protagonist, whose husband is missing, is surrounded by subtle layers of violence. “*Queen of Diamonds* is my very personal portrait of the U.S.: an over-enlarged, profit-motivated core surrounded by mute and arid alienation,” said Menkes. “The film polarized audiences when it came out in 1991. I’m thrilled about the new restoration and curious to hear reactions from a new generation of movie goers!”

Restored by the Academy Film Archive and The Film Foundation, with funding provided by the George Lucas Family Foundation, Arbelos and EOS World Fund.

*The Bloody Child* was inspired by a real event Menkes stumbled upon one morning in an unassuming article in the *Los Angeles Times*: a young Gulf War veteran is found in the middle of California’s Mojave Desert, digging a grave for his murdered wife. Menkes takes the moment of the man’s discovery and arrest through a chronologically-warped hallucination and meditation of real-time events, while the aftermath of violence sticks to the dry desert air. *The Bloody Child* features grounded performances again by Tinka Menkes, along with real-life Marines, among them Desert Storm veterans, who were allowed to improvise their dialogue. For Menkes, films are like dreams, and the fragmented and rhythmic moments that unfurl in this true crime nightmare amount to a haunting work, heralded by critic Jonathan Rosenbaum as “a must-see.”

More details, trailer, and tickets are available on the Archive [website](#).

**Doors open at 7 p.m. Program starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each online, \$9 in person, and \$8 discount for non-UCLA students, seniors and UCLA Alumni Association Members. UCLA students receive free admission with ID.**

### **About Nina Menkes**

Nina Menkes completed a Masters of Fine Arts from UCLA in 1989 and is the writer, director, and cinematographer of six feature films, including *Magdalena Viraga*. Considered one of America's most prominent independent filmmakers, Nina Menkes has been called "brilliant, one of the most provocative artists in film today" by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Her seven films, each of which resonates as a hypnotic meditation that insists on creating its own rules, have been featured in major international film festivals, as premieres or as part of retrospective screenings, including Sundance, Rotterdam, Locarno, London, Viennale, and Toronto; notably, Nina was also one of the first female filmmakers to present a feature in competition at the Sundance Film Festival. The Menkes sisters' film *The Bloody Child* was selected as one of the five top films of the past fifty years by the Viennale International Film Festival, Austria.

Traditionally controlling all aspects of production, including camera operation and picture and sound editing, Nina Menkes could not be more autonomous, though much of her inspiration comes from a long-standing collaboration with her principal actress and co-editor, her sister Tinka. Their creative partnership imbues in each film an outward expression of deeply personal interiority, of understanding beyond earthly expression.

**Nina Menkes will be available for select interviews. Please contact Marisa Soto at (310) 206-8588 or [msoto@cinema.ucla.edu](mailto:msoto@cinema.ucla.edu) with all press requests.**

### **About UCLA Film & Television Archive**

The mission of the UCLA Film & Television Archive is to save film and television for future generations.

The Archive is internationally renowned for rescuing, preserving and showcasing moving image media and is dedicated to ensuring that the visual achievements of our time are available for information, education and enjoyment. The sixth-largest moving image repository in the world, and the second largest in the U.S., behind only the Library of Congress, the Archive's more than 450,000 holdings are stored in a state-of-the-art facility that meets and exceeds all preservation standards, from nitrate film to digital.

A unit of UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television, the Archive's Research and Study Center provides free access to its holdings to researchers, writers and educators. Many of the Archive's projects are screened at prestigious film events around the globe, as well as locally at UCLA's Billy Wilder Theater.

**For more information, please contact Marisa Soto at (310) 206-8588 or [msoto@cinema.ucla.edu](mailto:msoto@cinema.ucla.edu)**