

crowd scenes from Soviet silent classics by Eisenstein and Pudovkin. With Carmen Ejogo, as Coretta Scott King; Colman Domingo, as the Reverend Ralph Abernathy; Tim Roth, as Governor George Wallace; and Oprah Winfrey, as the civil-rights activist Annie Lee Cooper. The script was written by Paul Webb and DuVernay (who is uncredited).—*D.D.* (12/22 & 29/14) (In wide release.)

Still Alice

Julianne Moore stars as Alice Howland, a professor of linguistics at Columbia, who is stricken with early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Hitherto, life with her husband (Alec Baldwin) and three children (Kate Bosworth, Hunter Parrish, and Kristen Stewart) has run with enviable smoothness; now it hits a wall. What takes her and her loved ones aback is the force of that impact, and the rate at which she goes from forgetting a word, in passing, to not recognizing her own daughter. The intentions of the movie, which was written and directed by Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland, are noble to a fault, and guaranteed to spur fellow-feeling in anyone familiar with Alice's condition; yet the outcome errs toward dullness, and the ironies are the size of billboards. (So what if she was an expert on language use? Would the loss be any less grievous if she were a waitress?) The film, as

tasteful as the trimmings of her life, shies from the horror of seeing them torn away. People behave sadly, but not badly; would that it were always the case. And would that the actors, too, especially Moore and Stewart, had been let off the leash, as they strive toward harder and wilder truths.—*A.L.* (1/19/15) (In limited release.)

Timbuktu

Abderrahmane Sissako has not made a full-length film since "Bamako" (2006), but his new movie is worth the wait. It takes place in Mali, in the city of the title: a place of renown and legend, reduced here to a fearful labyrinth of narrow, dusty passageways. Islamic forces have come to town (as they did in 2012-13), imposing Sharia law and wreaking stern punishments—flaying and stoning—on the most serious offenders. Sissako, however, is no less concerned with the petty, at times laughable, strictures that come into force—what is so enticing about the hands of hard-working women that gloves should be made compulsory? A number of stories are in play, the most touching of which is that of Kidane (Ibrahim Ahmed), an easygoing fellow who gets into a feud over cattle and ends up, under the new regime, at the mercy of the merciless. The film could scarcely be more timely, and its response to the violence and grinding moral scorn

of the militants could not be more instructive; in place of outrage and panic, Sissako offers irony, quick wit, a taste for the oblique, and even a measure of tranquillity. In Arabic, Tamasheq, and French.—*A.L.* (2/2/15) (In limited release.)

The Virgin Suicides

For her first feature, from 1999, Sofia Coppola adapted Jeffrey Eugenides's novel, about the desperate escape of five teen-age girls from their repressive family, as a surprisingly intricate struggle with absence, grief, and memory. The story (set in suburban Michigan in 1974 and told mainly in flashbacks) is anchored by the charismatic Lux (Kirsten Dunst), the most daring of the Lisbon sisters, whose golden dreams appear fleetingly onscreen. But she, like the other girls, remains alluringly elusive as Coppola evokes, with poised and precise images, the dream-like frustration of the boys—now men—who are still trying to read the pages that were torn from their lives. Coppola joins a deliciously evocative batch of period Top Forty tunes to flashes of backlit cinematography to summon the characters' lost world, with its stifled experience and receding fantasies. What remains tantalizingly out of reach for the girls—as for the boys who have lost them—is ordinary life. Already, with her first film, Coppola was a master at

rendering inner depths startlingly, straightforwardly visual. With James Woods and Kathleen Turner, as the parents.—*R.B.* (MOMA; Feb. 8.)

The Young Lovers

For her first film as director, from 1949, Ida Lupino chose the harsh—and true—story of a young dancer (Sally Forrest) who, just as she and her partner and boyfriend (Keefe Brasselle) begin to catch a break, gets polio, is paralyzed, and faces a long and difficult rehabilitation. Filming on location in California, Lupino turns the potentially maudlin material into a searing, deep, trenchantly mature study in the dissolution of a personality. She gets raging, stunningly modern performances from pedestrian actors, burrowing deep into her characters' psyches; the script, which she co-wrote with Collier Young, conveys a surprisingly authentic and novelistic range of troubles, including divorce, postwar trauma, money matters, office politics, and extracurricular romantic entanglements. With a relentless directness and a simple yet daring technique, Lupino pushes situations past the point of comfort and, avoiding easy sentiment, uses the conventions of melodrama to express extreme emotion without losing sight of the workaday burdens of ordinary life; she films like a woman who balances her own checkbook.—*R.B.* (MOMA; Feb. 7.)

ABOVE & BEYOND

"East Ville des Folies"

It sometimes feels as though you can't take two steps in this town without hearing about the latest speakeasy or being offered absinthe from a man dressed like Puck, which can beg the question: Had alcohol not been illegal for thirteen years, almost a century ago, how would we theme our parties? But the forbidden fruit is always tastier, especially when fermented. So brush up on the Charleston, and enjoy feigned lawlessness at Webster Hall, the former site of a speakeasy reportedly owned by Al Capone during Prohibition. For the third annual "East Ville des Folies," all four floors of the music venue become a Prohibition-themed classroom for beer-and-whiskey education. But tastings are only part of the historical picture. Michael Arenella and his Dreamland Orchestra play Jazz Age music, as does the Queen Esther Trio, and Miss Ida Blue sings the blues. There's also a burlesque showcase, with the tap-dancing Gin Minsky,

the six-foot-five circus performer Mr. Gorgeous, and the scintillating dancer Cassandra Rosebeetle, among others. Proceeds go to the Third Street Music School Settlement, a nonprofit organization that offers music and dance instruction. (125 E. 11th St. 212-353-1600. websterhall.com. Feb. 7.)

"Second Sundays"

Pioneer Works, an artistic oasis in Red Hook, Brooklyn, is a museum, an educational facility, an artist residency, a magazine publisher, and an event space housed in what was once a nineteenth-century machine-manufacturing building. On the second Sunday of each month, the museum's exhibitions and artist-in-residence studios open for perusal in a party setting, with food, drinks, performances, and live music curated in collaboration with Olivier Conan, the proprietor of Park Slope's internationally themed music club Barbès. The Feb. 8 installment brings M.A.K.U. Soundsystem, Colombian

New York transplants who play an energetic mix of Afro-Colombian rhythms and psychedelic rock, and Tongues

in Trees, who specialize in indie music with Indian influences. (159 Pioneer Street, Brooklyn. 718-596-3001.)

READINGS AND TALKS

Greenlight Bookstore

The journalist Nelson George discusses his new novel, "The Lost Treasures of R&B." (686 Fulton St., at S. Portland Ave., Brooklyn. 718-246-0200. Feb. 4 at 7:30.)

"Muldoon's Picnic"

Paul Muldoon, the poetry editor for this magazine, organizes a monthly gathering of writers and musicians at Irish Arts Center. On Feb. 7 at 7:30, he's joined by Robert Sullivan, Colm Tóibín, Aoife O'Donovan, and Sam and Louise Sullivan. (553 W. 51st St. irishartscenter.org.)

"@Macaulay Author Series"

The novelist Allen Kurzweil discusses his memoir, "Whipping Boy: The Forty-Year Search for My Twelve-Year-Old Bully," with Susan Morrison, an editor at this magazine. (Macaulay Honors College at CUNY, 35 W. 67th St. 347-460-4292. Feb. 9 at 7.)

92nd Street Y

Erica Jong, Alice McDermott, Paul Muldoon, and Roger Rosenblatt gather for a pre-Valentine's Day discussion, titled "What We Write About When We Write About Love." (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5693. Feb. 10 at 8:15.)