

# THE FILMS OF JOHN KORTY



Thursdays & Sundays, November 10 to December 4

SmithRafaelFilmCenter presents the first major retrospective celebrating the work of John Korty, a consummate American independent filmmaker. Korty turned 75 this year, and his 50-year career encompasses a wide range of genres, from comedy and social drama to animation and documentary, as well as significant accomplishments as writer, director, producer and cinematographer.

Based in Marin County and San Francisco since the early 1960s, John Korty was a pioneer in forging a filmmaking career in the Bay Area. His early studio in Stinson Beach inspired the arrival of Francis Ford Coppola and George Lucas. Film critic and historian Leonard Maltin has called

Korty "a principled filmmaker who has worked both outside and within the mainstream, attempting to find projects that support his humanistic beliefs."

This retrospective includes seminal films in the independent feature movement of the 1960s and 70s, as well as documentaries, animation and short films. He became one of the most successful directors of made-for-television movies. Winner of an Academy Award and multiple Emmys, John Korty has worked in every kind of film style to create stories of social significance and moral purpose. [www.johnkorty.com](http://www.johnkorty.com)

John Korty will attend these programs, and some special guests are anticipated.

## Miracle in a Box: A Piano Reborn

with **John Allair Digs In!** (Premiere)

Thursday, November 10, 7:00

Narrated by **John Lithgow**, *Miracle in a Box* (2009) is an inspiring film about the bequest of a grand piano, the student competition to win it, and the many months of work required to make it sing again. In its premiere screening, *John Allair Digs In!* (2011) is a lively portrait of Marin County's original rock 'n' roll piano player, who still pounds the keyboards when he's not working his day job, tuning pianos. Films 81 minutes plus discussion.

## Who Are the DeBolts? (And Where Did They Get 19 Kids?)

Sunday, November 13, 4:15

Winner of an Academy Award and an Emmy Award, this landmark documentary profiles an unconventional and extraordinary family: **Dorothy and Bob DeBolt** and their natural and adopted children, many of whom were disabled war orphans. (US 1977, 72 min.) Cameraman **Jon Else** will join **John Korty** for the discussion.

## The Crazy-Quilt with Imogen Cunningham, Photographer

Sunday, November 13, 7:00



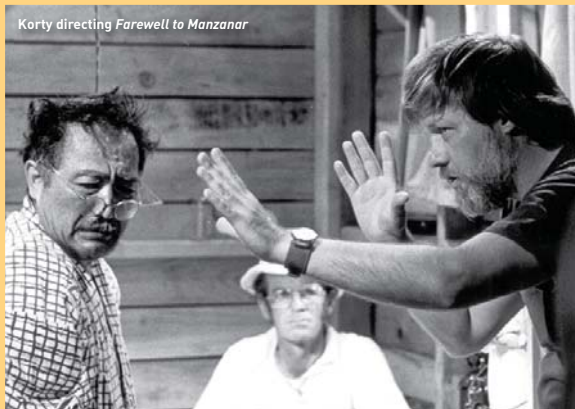
The Crazy-Quilt

*The Crazy Quilt* (1966) was **John Korty's** first independent feature, a quirky comedy based on a story by **Allen Wheelis** and filmed in the Bay Area. **Burgess Meredith** narrates the love story of Henry, a dour termite exterminator, and Lorabelle, an eternal optimist. Music by **Peter Schickele**. *Imogen Cunningham, Photographer* is Korty's beautiful portrait of the artist in her 80s. Films 90 minutes plus discussion.

## Funnyman

Sunday, November 20, 7:00

**John Korty's** rarely-seen second feature, made with the improvisational comedy troupe The Committee, stars **Peter Bonerz** (who co-wrote the screenplay with Korty) in a collage of color, black and white and animation (not to mention San Francisco and Bolinas locations) expressing the hopes and dreams of an ambitious young comedian. (US 1967) 87 minutes plus discussion.

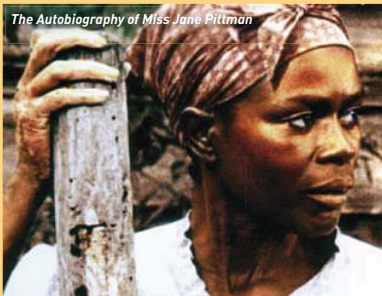


Korty directing *Farewell to Manzanar*

## The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman

Sunday, November 27, 1:00 FREE ADMISSION

Based on the novel by **Ernest J. Gaines** and one of the most honored movies made for television, it stars **Cicely Tyson** as a woman born into slavery in the 1850s, who lived to become part of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Winner of numerous Emmys, including **John Korty's** as director. (US 1974) 95 min.



The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman

## A Variety of Shorts

Sunday, November 27, 7:00

**John Korty** will personally guide us through this shorts program, including his first film, *The Language of Faces* (1961), about a Quaker peace vigil at the Pentagon, as well as *The Music School* (1974), adapted from a **John Updike** story for the "American Short Story" series on PBS. Others include his Oscar-nominated satire on smoking *Breaking the Habit* and several of his animations for *Sesame Street*, using his "Lumage" (luminous image) process. Program approximately 90 minutes.



Alex and the Gypsy

## Alex and the Gypsy

Thursday, December 1, 7:00

**Jack Lemmon** and **Genevieve Bujold** spar in **John Korty's** rarely-seen black comedy about a cynical bail-bondsman called in to rescue his former mistress, a beautiful and tempestuous gypsy. Filmed in Sonora with a scene-stealing performance by **James Woods** as Alex's jittery assistant. Music by **Henry Mancini**. Rated R. Archive print from Twentieth Century Fox. (US 1977) 100 minutes plus discussion.

## Farewell to Manzanar

Sunday, December 4, 1:00 FREE ADMISSION

Working with Japanese American actors, director **John Korty** masterfully brought to the screen **Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's** poignant memoir of lives forced into internment camps during World War II. Cinematographer **Hiro Narita** will join Korty in discussion. Co-presented with the Japanese American National Museum, which will sell newly released DVDs at the screening. (US 1976, 92 min.)

## Twice Upon a Time

Sunday, December 4, 7:00

With **George Lucas** as Executive Producer, **John Korty** directed his most ambitious animated film, a comic fantasy about the creatures who make good dreams and bad dreams and a devious plot to remove the Magic Mainspring from the Cosmic Clock. Korty's "Lumage" process involved intricate collage of luminescent fabric (US 1983) 75 minutes plus discussion.



Twice Upon a Time