# Thursday, October 22, 2020 / 4:00 PM with laggie Hennefeld (author of Specters of Slapstick and Silent Film Comediennes)

THE

# DICTATOR



Production on Charlie Chaplin's first feature-length talkie *The Great Dictator* (1940) began just six days after the outbreak of World War II. Playing dual roles as a kindhearted Jewish barber and a heartless dictator, Chaplin satirizes fascism and antisemitism long prior to the official involvement of the United States in the war, through a plot that takes aim at the escalating power of the Nazi party, Adolf Hitler, and Benito Mussolini. Banned in Occupied Europe and Latin America, *The Great Dictator* was controversial in its time and continues to invite debate over the effectiveness of its deployment of comedy to critique the cruelty of fascism.

Maggie Hennefeld (Cultural Studies, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, author of *Specters of Slapstick and Silent Film Comediennes*) will join moderator Miguel Penabella (Film and Media Studies, UCSB) for a Zoom discussion of *The Great Dictator*. Please note: this event will not include a film screening. The film is available for free streaming via Kanopy for qualified users. If you are a UCSB affiliate, you may use your credentials from the UCSB Library; if you have a library card from the Santa Barbara Public Library or the Goleta Library, you may use those credentials. The film is also available on Amazon Prime, the Criterion Collection, HBOMax, and iTunes.

This event is sponsored by the Carsey-Wolf Center.

### Guest Biographies: Maggie Hennefeld (University of Minnesota - Twin Cities)

Maggie Hennefeld is Associate Professor of Cultural Studies & Comparative Literature and McKnight Presidential Fellow at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Her research focuses on comedy, feminist theory, and silent film history. She is author of the award-winning book, *Specters of Slapstick and Silent Film Comediennes* (Columbia UP, 2018), co-editor of the journal *Cultural Critique*, and co-editor of two volumes: *Unwatchable* (Rutgers UP, 2019) and *Abjection Incorporated: Mediating the Politics of Pleasure and Violence* (Duke UP, 2020). She is currently co-curating a DVD/Blu-ray set on "Cinema's First Nasty Women" and writing a second monograph about the history of women who allegedly died from laughing too hard.



## Moderator Miguel Penabella (Film and Media Studies, UCSB)

Miguel Penabella is a PhD student in Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research deploys the specter as a theoretical framework for examining historical revisionism and questions of national cinema in the Philippines. He is also interested in theorizations of cinematic temporality with regards to national identity, memory, spectatorship, and slowness, focusing specifically on Southeast Asian filmmakers. He is a member of the *Media Fields Journal* editorial collective.





# UBJERSIVES FALL 2020 & Winter 2021

*Sorry to Bother You:* 10/13 *Parasite:* 10/15 *The Great Dictator:* 10/22 *Pee-wee's Playhouse:* 11/5 *Blood Quantum:* 11/12



tickets & info: ww.carseywolf.ucsb.edu



Throughout film history and across the globe, mediamakers have resisted social conventions and attracted the ire of governments and censorship boards. The Carsey-Wolf Center's fall 2020 and winter 2021 screening series will showcase films and TV shows considered politically, socially, culturally, and ideologically subversive. From mischievous caricatures to biting social critiques, the events in this series invite discussion of the efficacy of subversion and the historical contexts that have rendered these works subversive in the first place.

