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PROGRAM NOTES

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PROGRAM NOTES

1985



The Foundation for Art in Cinema
CINEMATHEQUE

The regular Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde film.

THE FILMS OF PETER KUBELKA

"I feel a very great need to communicate. I work hundreds and hundreds of hours for one particular minute in my films and I could never produce such a minute by talking. The real statement which I want to make in the world is my films. Everything else is irrelevant." --Peter Kubelka, 1966

To date, six short but exquisitely realized films form the basis of Peter Kubelka's reputation as a master of personal cinema. Personal, for this Austrian filmmaker, involves an exploration of the medium to express his particular sense of reality. Kubelka began working with film in 1952 and MOSAIK IM VERTRAUEN was completed three years later. But it was with ADEBAR (1957), SCHWECHATER (1958) and ARNULF RAINER (1960) that Kubelka seized upon the fascinations that have absorbed him ever since. The striking quality of these works, what Kubelka calls his "metric films", is the play of light and its absence, sound and its silence and the rhythms that reside therein and between. (Knowing how difficult it is to discern a rhythm in just one viewing, Kubelka intended these films to be screened over and over again; tonight each will be seen twice.) With UNSERS AFRIKAREISE (1965), (whose 12 minutes absorbed five years of Kubelka's life), he achieves a sublime synchronization of image and sound that is as intricate as the most complex musical composition. It also marked the first time that Kubelka ventured away from his standard 35mm format to 16mm. PAUSE! completes tonight's program as the filmmaker's most recent exploration of the plastics of film, as architecture for the eye and ear.

Kubelka's comments on:

ADEBAR

"ADEBAR was my second film, Until then I had only seen, outside my own personal vision, the normal, commercial cinema, low-key cinema; and I had a very deep dissatisfaction with what cinema was about. I was lacking a satisfactory form. At that time I already had the feeling that cinema could give me the qualities and beauties which the other arts had been able to achieve. I saw how beautiful classic buildings were...I had studied music and I knew about the rhythmic structures in music and I knew about the fantastic enjoyment of time with which music grips you. But in cinema there was nothing! When you regard the time in which films take place (a normal, storytelling film, good or bad) it is a time which has no form; it's very very amorphous. So I wished to create a thing which would establish for my eyes a harmonic time as music establishes a harmonic, rhythmic, a measured time for the ears... I had never seen anything like that. I just had the wish to create something which would have a rhythmic harmony for the eyes, distill out of the amorphous, visual, outside world something harmonic."

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CINEMATOGRAPH

1914

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CINEMATOGRAPH
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CINEMATOGRAPH
1914

SCHWECHATER "the first film that worked with the event of the frame."

"This film was for me, the real discovery of the fact that cinema is not movies, which means, the discovery of the strong side of the medium, which lies in the fact that you can use these light impulses one by one. SCHWECHATER lasts one minute. The content is practically zero. Or it is a negative content. There are elements of people drinking beer. That content came out of the outward pressure. I was forced to film that. [The film was originally commissioned as a publicity campaign for Schwechater beer.] The content is not at all a source of energy in this film. Yet there is an incredible visual energy. In fact there's more visual energy in this minute than in any other filmic minute I have ever seen. Where does it come from? It comes from the fact that here I broke the old aesthetic, the old laws of cinema, which say that cinema is movement. Cinema is nothing but a rapid slide projection which goes in a steady rhythm: twenty-four slides per second, you could call it."

ARNULF RAINER

"Every painter tries to discover objective reality. But what is for me, objective, may not be for you. My ARNULF RAINER is a documentary; it is an objective film; it is a world where there is lightning and thunder twenty-four times a second, let's say...."

"I looked at the footage I had made of Arnulf Rainer [a painter friend of Kubelka's]...and...about the same time in Brussels I had seen Brakhage's ANTICIPATION OF THE NIGHT and noticed the similarities...I was very impressed with what Stan did with his camera...so the movie I subsequently made of Rainer was inspired by Stan's handling of the camera."

"[Ecstasy] means being situated outside of it, and it's a means to beat the laws of nature, not to be slaves of nature...This cycle of life, being born, youth, age which is so idealized by so many civilizations and philosophers, is rejected by some, and I am one of them. I don't want to die, but I have to. I don't want to age either, but I must serve under it. There is a possibility to get out of all of it, even if it is just for my interior reality...I want out, I want other laws, I want ecstasy. There have been many ways to achieve ecstasy; subtle ways, not so subtle ways; consequential, not so consequential. The dance ecstasy, the drinking ecstasies, the drug ecstasies, the art ecstasies; then of course the cooler ecstasies--the philosophical, the religious, and the sport ecstasies. There are innumerable ones. With this film I was after the cinematographic ecstasy...Now how will one get ecstasy in the cinema? Well, what I can do in the cinema is to make a rhythmic building between light and sound which is complex, exact, fast and has a certain strength. Also, it must have exact measure, harmony and beat. That is one of the possibilities of cinema."

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UNTERS AFRIKAREISE

"But what I wanted in AFRIKAREISE was to create a world that had the greatest fascination on the spectator possible. This world had to be very naturalistic, so that you could really identify and enter it. It's, therefore, that I want a big screen for it, so you can see the blood and the elephants and the women and the Negro flesh and the landscapes. This was one thing. And the other thing was that I wanted to have it so controlled as if I had painted it or made up myself and I achieved that through this immense, immense long work of thousands of hours cataloging the whole material practically frame by frame. So there is this continuous correspondence between sound and image. After you see the film twelve or twenty times, then you notice that practically every optical event corresponds to the acoustic event...I never want to make a funny scene, or a sad scene--I always...I want them very complex, never one single feeling but many many feelings always...In my films, there are moments where everything stands still. This is a very important thing for me. This is in all of my films. Some films as a whole are like that. These are moments of escape, from the burden of existence, so to say--moments where you are not human, nor something else--not an angel or something, but just Out, out of it, and when nothing happens, and nothing leads to this, and this leads to nothing, and there is no tension, and so on. This is the scene...where the Negroes just walk."

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The following information is provided
 for your reference and use.
 It is intended to assist you in
 understanding the details of the
 project and the various components
 involved. Please refer to the
 attached documents for further
 information and details.

The Foundation for Art in Cinema
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THE SHORT FILMS OF PETER GREENAWAY

WATER WRACKETS (1975, 12 min.)

"...a sober sound track describes a specific period perhaps in the Arthurian past when ceremony counted for as much as deeds- of the tortured history of a bellicose but religiously observant waterside community. A wrack is wreckage or a ruin or even some vegetation cast ashore. All meanings are appropriate to the appreciation of WATER WRACKETS, in whose text unfamiliar words abound and whose narration sounds as much like science fiction as historical surmise. Indeed the whole strange and haunting work may be seen as a meditation on conjecture..."

WINDOWS (1975, 4 min)

"...it is about people who leave a room by its window, or at least about the large number of people who do so in a small but particular English country parish. While dogs bark and a clavicord is played, while daylight comes and goes through a window, statistics are read about who fell from windows in summer, how many fell into the snow, and so on... As the filmmaker notes... statistics leave as much out as in, and WINDOW watchers are certainly tempted to imaginatively fill in the unspoken connecting links of this brief but illuminating report."

DEAR PHONE (1977, 17 min.)

"Telephones exert a tyranny in our everyday lives; although this cannot be denied, their power is certainly subverted, as in the progress of the fourteen stories in this wicked comedy that the filmmaker says masquerades as 'an oblique consideration of narrative'... A voiceover persuasively reads these stories, but makes significant alterations to them. The phone kiosks begin as illustrations but soon become anthropomorphized as eccentric characters in their own right."

H IS FOR HOUSE (1978, 9 min.)

"...the idyllic outdoors and various voices rhyming phrases like 'half past four' that begin with H. You must understand of course that this has to do with the world turning counter-clockwise, and that H IS FOR HOUSE is about as sensible and entertaining as other Dadaistic works."

A WALK THROUGH H (1978, 42min.)

"Alternately titled THE REINCARNATION OF AN ORNITHOLOGIST, this eccentric film is based on an ornithological treatise by Tulse Luper that describes a mythical journey through the land of H... a cross between a vintage Borges fiction and a Disney True Life Adventure... a narrative without characters. The disjunction and accidental meanings that are created are the real pleasure of the film."

Notes excerpted from the article "Contemporary British Independent Film: Voyage of Discovery" by John Ellis, published by The Museum of Modern Art

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December 19, 1985

SUPER-8 NEW YORK

Monster by Deborah Clarkin, 1982, 12 minutes, sound.

A figure in an overcoat and gloves is seen from behind, lurching toward a door, as if to open it, only to be stopped by a splice in mid-lurch, followed by a repetition of the same action again and again. Superimposed titles tell the story of Monster coming to the door and interrupting a quiet domestic scene. We notice that the characters' names are Mother, Father, Baby, Brother and Monster. This implies the Monster is a member of the family. A chain of bizarre events results in the curtains catching fire and Father fleeing out the window. At one point Monster turns its head slightly - it is a young woman. Monster is a quietly forceful statement of alienation.

Clarkin's films frequently tackle their subjects in a manner appropriate to a feminist reading. Housework, sexual interaction, and family relations are taken apart, reassembled, and revealed and exposed, frequently with a twist of ironic humor.

The Scissor That Has Found Its Own Pair by Rirkrit Tiravanija, 1985, 8 minutes, silent.

A film about the feeling which one sometimes gets--objects, people, things are always around (in the way) when you don't need them, but can't be found when you do. - R.T.

Rirkrit Tiravanija is a native of Bangkok, Thailand, but has lived in Argentina, Canada, England and Chicago before settling in New York City in 1982. Primarily an artist whose work has dealt mostly with sculptural and installation concerns, Rirkrit has made several Super-8 films over the past few years while at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Banff School of Art in Alberta. He is presently a member of the Whitney Independent Studio Program. He has exhibited work at Gallery Oboro, Montreal; the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Big on Brazil Gallery, Alberta; and the Collective for Living Cinema in New York.

The Manhattan Love Suicides, produced and directed by Richard Kern. Soundtrack by J.H. Thirlwell, with Nick Zedd, Bill Rice, Adrienne Altenhaus, David Wojnarowicz, Tom Turner and Amy Turner. 1985, 35 minutes, sound.

New York City 1985 - A churning world where the realities of poverty and sex among the desperate musicians, artists and scene makers dictates a mutated parody of normal lifestyles. Consumed with bitterness and hatred, the characters of M.L.S. stalk their objects of attention through the depths of the Lower East Side. They are obsessive and selfish but sometimes they fall in love. The results are sometimes funny, sometimes sad, but always violent.

INTERMISSION

CHEMISTRY

The following table shows the results of the experiments conducted on the reaction of hydrogen gas with oxygen gas. The volume of hydrogen gas was measured in milliliters (ml) and the volume of oxygen gas was measured in milliliters (ml). The volume of water vapor produced was also measured in milliliters (ml).

| Volume of H ₂ (ml) | Volume of O ₂ (ml) | Volume of H ₂ O (ml) |
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| 20 | 10 | 30 |
| 30 | 15 | 45 |
| 40 | 20 | 60 |
| 50 | 25 | 75 |
| 60 | 30 | 90 |
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Revenge of the Dearest by Anthony Chase, 1985, 15 minutes, sound. Starring John Kelly and Stacy Grabert.

A sequel to The Dagmar Onassis Story (1984). Dagmar discards her baby to pursue her singing career. After years of success, her filial choice begins to haunt her.

Anthony Chase is a native South African but has lived in New York since 1983. His Super-8mm films are often screened in collaborative performances with performance artists John Kelly and Marleen Menard and painter Huck Snyder. He has shown films at the Limbo Lounge, the Collective for Living Cinema and the Pyramid Club in New York. - A.C.

From Romance to Ritual by Peggy Ahwesh, 1985, 21 minutes, sound. With Margie Strossner, Mandy Ahwesh, Renate Walker and Nataalka Voslakov.

An ordering of documentary style footage that I have shot over the past year with family and friends. The film is organized around the interlocking themes of women's sexuality, memory, growing up and personal story telling and how they are at odds with the dominant history. Through my camera style, I hope to maintain the priveledged intimacy of home movies but with me behind the camera instead of 'daddy'. - P.A.

Super-8 New York was guest curated by Robin Dickie, Program Director of the Collective for Living Cinema, New York.

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CINEMATHEQUE

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BRIDGING THE GAP: FAVORITE FILMS

FROM THE EARLY 70's

Thursday, January 17, 1985

This is the third in a series of programs based on the films available from Canyon Cinema, one of the largest distributors of independent films in the United States. Each program is guest-curated by a different filmmaker, critic or scholar. Tonight's selection was made by Charles Wright, filmmaker and, from 1975 to 1977, co-director of the Cinematheque. These films represent the range of style and taste in filmmaking that was current in the Bay Area during the late sixties and early seventies. "Somewhat less recent films that are sometimes different from each other." - Charles Wright

STANDUP & BE COUNTED by Freude and Scott Bartlett, 1969, 3 min. A continuous dissolve into a series of happy nude couples in various configurations: female/male, female/female, male/male, as the Rolling Stones sing "We Love You."

THE DIVINE MIRACLE by Daina Krumins, 1973, 5½ min. "The Divine Miracle treads a delicate line between reverence and spoof as it briefly portrays the agony, death, and ascension of Christ in the vividly colored and heavily outlined style of Catholic devotional postcards." - Edgar Daniels, Filmmakers' Newsletter

LIGHT TRAPS by Louis Hock, 1975, 10 min. A dance metered between the tempo of 60 cycles per second of electrified gas and camera shutter, further wrought by the manual, etched harmonics.

REGITAL TRAINING AT BULLOCK'S by Roger Darbonne, 1971, 15 min. "The Regitel is an electronic point-of-sale cash register...I had two goals for the film: to show (in self-teaching fashion) how to work the wonder machine, and to develop a comfortable intimacy for warding off any fear of 2001 gadgetry." - Roger Darbonne

BEING by William Farley, 1974-75, 10 min. The film is a comment on contemporary culture, relationships between public information and private consciousness and the nature of reality.

CATCHING THE ASIAN CARP by Bill Allan and Bruce Nauman, 1971, 3 min. Narration by William Allan and Robert Nelson. Both Bill Allan and Bruce Nauman are Funk Artists.

A VISIT TO INDIANA by Curt McDowell, 1970, 10 min. "A powerful, controversial film for discussion in senior high school language arts and social studies classes and college courses in sociology and psychology. Ages 16 to adult." - The Booklist, American Library Association

KILLMAN by Herb de Grasse, 1966, 16 min. The adventures of an insidious fiend, whose chief occupation is going around and killing people. His activities are so perverse, that he even gets scared.

SUBPOENA FOR SABINA by Ed Jones, 1976, 3 min. A filmed love letter made public.

PASTEUR³ by Will Hindle, 1977, 22 min. "This film seemed to me the ultimate portrait of an immigrant, or the Displaced Person-displaced in nature, displaced on the continent. With this pun or metaphor that he makes, and despite all the artifice, it seems quite natural, it comes across as both funny and sad...How odd it is to walk through this world and find there are things that poison you." - Stan Brakhage

Program notes from Canyon Cinema catalog # 5

The Foundation for Art in Cinema
CINEMATHEQUE

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Sunday, Feb. 3, 1985

"10 X 10: RECENT FILMS FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY"

EATING MANGOES (1984) by Ethan Van der Ryn [8 min., color/sound]

"EATING MANGOES is the story of an American boy coming of age in Western Somoa. It is a film of dislocation and of the tensions that arise therefrom. 'Tropic: turning, changing, or tending to turn or change in a (specified) manner or in response to a (specified) stimulus.--Webster's Dictionary'"

THREE VOICES (1983) by Lynn Kirby [4½ min., color/sound]

Part of a series of films shot from my apartment windows. As the windows are washed and people return from work, three facets of the same personality explore daily life and the threat of war.

diary of an autistic child/part two/the ragged edges of the hollow (1984) by Edwin Cariati [6 min., color/silent]

master and slave lose sight of roles and embrace in copulative ecstasy. the edges of the hollow yearn to become the matter from which they have been released....the autistic child views multiple realities, as interchange is manifested in the hollow where light and darkness unfold.

GORILLA GRIP (1985) by Michael Rudnick and Mike Henderson [5 min., black & white/sound]

GORILLA GRIP is our attempt to get to the quintessence of a meaningless idea. What do all opposite things have in common that can't be explained?

TRUMPET GARDEN (1983) by Barbara Klutinis [10½ min., color/sound]

An environmental portrait--a magic garden in which a woman in black performs rituals with nature and with death.

PLEASE DON'T STOP (work-in-progress, with slides) [6 min., color/sound] by Stephanie Maxwell

Test footage of new cameraless animation techniques; original sound-soundtrack...[about the slides]: These are hand-made slides demonstrating techniques I am using in the completion of my film. [about the film]: It's about time and cars...

---INTERMISSION---

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1. The first part of the paper discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. This is essential for the proper management of the business and for the preparation of financial statements.

2. The second part of the paper discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all assets and liabilities. This is essential for the proper management of the business and for the preparation of financial statements.

3. The third part of the paper discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all income and expenses. This is essential for the proper management of the business and for the preparation of financial statements.

4. The fourth part of the paper discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all taxes paid and taxes owed. This is essential for the proper management of the business and for the preparation of financial statements.

5. The fifth part of the paper discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all other financial information. This is essential for the proper management of the business and for the preparation of financial statements.

THE BIG RED AUK (1984) by James Irwin [3 min., color/silent]

Experimental non-camera animation. Frenetic colors and restless images form a back-drop for a child's cautionary fable...Words written directly on the emulsion "speak" silently to the viewer metaphorically about power, manipulation and the complicity of all of us.

LAGOON SALON (1984) by Mark Sterne [6 min., color/sound]

LYRIC AUGER (1984) by Conrad Steiner [3 min., color/silent]

About the fragile state following the premonition of a grave error. Sin is not involved, only that zeal of an incautious moment. Imagine if with one word from you, one glance, the leaves would fall from the trees.

ALONG THE WAY (1983) by Michael Wallin [20 min., color/sound]

A visual journal or diary, an experimental "travelogue", where the signposts of interest are equally elements of architecture and plant life as people and events. The intent is to communicate the essential quality of "place", which is always an amalgam of the visual and the emotional..."Things are as they are--they are not like anything."--Robert Creeley..."No ideas but in things."
---William Carlos Williams

[all descriptions provided by the filmmakers]

Wine and cheese will be served after the screening.

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The Foundation for Art in Cinema
CINEMATHEQUE

The Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde film

The Films of Joyce Wieland

Thursday, February 7th, 1986, 8 PM
Ms. Wieland in Person

Peggy's Blue Skylight (1965; released in 1984)

This film was shot as part of a series of regular-8 mm films including the following titles: Larry's Recent Behavior (1963); Patriotism Parts 1 and 2 (1964); Watersark (1964-65.)

Water Sark (1964-65)

"I decided to make a film at my kitchen table, there is nothing like knowing my table. The high art of the housewife. You take prisms, glass, lights and myself to it. 'The Housewife is High'. Water Sark is a film sculpture, drawing being made while you wait." --Joyce Wieland

A and B in Ontario (1967; completed in 1984)

Made in collaboration with Hollis Frampton.

Sailboat (1967)

From a period of short films of a more formal nature--1933 (1967), Dripping Water(1969), Hand Tinting (1967)--Sailboat is the earliest of these. In a series of shots a salboat is seen moving across the screen from left to right. The title is superimposed on the screen for the duration of the film. Its sound consists of waves mixed with an airplane engine and occasional voices. None of the shots are repeated, but the same boats recur because Wieland carefully anticipated them with her camera by moving down the shore to await their reentry into the frame. A number of the shots are animated, as when a boat appears to pop back from the right to the center and off right again. Several other small things occur to disrupt expectancies and make the viewer attend to the images more carefully. As the last two boats begin to fade into the horizon, they seem, at the same time, to be absorbed by the more pronounced film grain in these very light shots. This and other instances in Sailboat stress film's dual nature, on the one hand, presenting images, while at the same time breaking through illusions to expose the film material itself. And, as a further example, even while attending to the image, one is forced to note the "presence" of the boats somewhere off-frame, and thus also to note the frame itself, delimiting the image. And the flat letters of the title contrast sharply with the illusory images over which they are superimposed. (excerpt from "True Patriot Love": The Films of Joyce Wieland. By Regina Cornwell. Art Forum. Vol. X, #1. Sept. 1971.

"This little Sailboat film will sail right through your gate and into your heart." --Joyce Wieland

Wieland commented that one day after shooting she returned home with about thirty feet of film remaining in her camera and proceeded to empty it by filming the street scene below. She explains in notes: "When editing then what I considered the real footage I kept coming across the small piece of film of the street. Finally I junked the real film for the accidental footage of the street...It was a beautiful piece of blue street...So I made the right number of prints of it plus fogged ends." The street scene with the white streaked end is loop-printed ten times, and 1933 appears systematically on the street scene for only the first, fourth, seventh, and tenth loops. Wieland says of her choice of the name: "...a title that causes more questions than the film has answers." And later, that it "makes you think of a film's beginning. But, this is the film." While the meaning of the title, 1933, is enigmatic and has no real and ostensible relationship to the film's street scene and white streaked section, in its systematic use as sub-title, it becomes an image incorporated into the film. It is not the title of a longer work, but an integral part of the work. An while the title remains unexplained, so does the brief loop action of the street in fast motion, slowing down for a moment and then resuming its speed. It is merely a fragment of incomplete action, moving in and out of and around the frame. Each time something else is perceived. Not only is the street footage seen over and over, but it is seen in unreal time. And its illusory three-dimensionality is sharply contrasted with the flatness of the white section. All of these factors become, to use film maker Ken Jacobs' term, "illusion-defeating devices," which call attention to the strip of film as film. And the white dominated sections incorporated into the film assert themselves as valid images, equal to the street scenes. --Regina Cornwell

"1933. The year?The number?The title? Was it (the film) made then?It's a memory! (ie. a Film).No, it's many memories.It's so sad and funny: the departed, departing people,cars,street!It hurries,it's gone,it's back!It's the only glimpse we have but we can have it again.The film (of 1933?) was made in 1967. You find out,if you didn't already know,how naming tints pure vision." --Michael Snow

Rat Life and Diet in North America (1968)

Less concerned with film's dual potential for producing tactile illusions and at the same time breaking through these illusions and pointing to the materials of film, both Rat Life... and Catfood concentrate on the images, highlighted through color and texture. In notes for Rat life..., Wieland writes: "I shot the gerbils for six months, putting different things in their cages: food, flowers, cherries, grass, etc...When I put them in the sink in an inch of water I began to see what the film was about...a story of revolution and escape." It is a beast fable with gerbils as the oppressed and the cats as the oppressors. Once again titles are used,...here sometimes they are flashed on the screen over the action, at other times they serve to introduce subsequent episodes. The allegory relates the escape of the gerbils from an

Films of Joyce Wieland, cont

American political prison in 1968 to freedom in Canada, and how they take up organic gardening in the absence of DDT, occupy a millionaire's table, and enjoy a cherry festival and flower ceremony. However, it ends on a less humorous note: an American invasion. The film is very meticulously shot and controlled, and ... the color and delicacy of Wieland's approach to the animals and their surroundings create sensuously textured images and relationships. --Regina Cornwell

Catfood (1967-68)

"A cat eats its methodical way through a polymorphous fish. The projector devours the ribbon of film at the same rate, methodically. The Lay of Grimnir mentions a wild boar whose magical flesh was nightly devoured by the heroes in Valhalla, and miraculously regenerated next morning in the kitchen. The fish in Wieland's film, and the miraculous flesh of film itself, are resurrected on the rewinds, to be devoured again. Here is a dionysian metaphor, old as the West, of immense strength. Once we see that the fish is the protagonist of the action, this metaphor reverberates to the incandescence in the mind." -- Hollis Frampton

Solidarity (1973)

Joyce Wieland describes this film as one "about a strike in which women are involved, but told in a very different way..." "500 PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED IN KITTCHENER, ONTARIO, IN SUPPORT OF THE STRIKING WORKERS OF THE DARE COOKIE FACTORY, APRIL 1973" This opening statement of the film is followed by the title SOLIDARITY appearing over the imagery and sustaining its position on the center of the frame for the length of the film. The word "solidarity" itself thus becomes a spatial element and gives structure to the visual impact. Although the political message exists on the soundtrack and a few readable placards, the film captures the essence of human anxiety and toil by revealing one portion only of the demonstrators' bodies: their feet. We are lead into powerful compositions in strong colors; walking shots focusing on the texture of the grass, the gravel of the road, patterns and pathways made by rain, a discarded paperbag, the stark white of a cup, but, most important of all--the shoes. Women's feet in high-heeled shoes, walking together in unison, not in goosetstep but as individuals will, clearly belonging to the same class, yet each bearing its individual stamp, carry layers and layers of meaning. The film makers' power of observation, isolating one single aspect of the whole, magnifies the enormous strength of the subject, and of the film. (excerpt from Art & Cinema. Vol. 1, #3. 1974.)

LILLIAN GISH

Kevin Brownlow

If you read in a Victorian novel that an actress who began her career in the early 1800s was still going strong in 1884, you would dismiss it as absurd. But transfer the century to our own, and the dates correspond to the career of Lillian Gish. She made her first appearance on the stage in 1901 at the age of five—as Baby Lillian—acted in her first film in 1912, and recently finished a picture that will be released this year. Lillian Gish is no ordinary actress; by common consent, she is one of the greatest of this century.

You can safely say that about stage players, for their performances survive only in the memory. But Lillian Gish's performances exist in films that have been subjected to scrutiny again and again. The verdict is always the same: Lillian Gish is astonishing.

Meeting her is an exhilarating experience, for her enthusiasm is undimmed. She has the ability to convey her memories as though relating them for the first time. To see that face—the most celebrated of the entire silent era, and so little changed—and to hear references to “Mr. Griffith” and “Mary Pickford” is to know you are at the heart of film history.

She was discovered, if that is the right word, by D.W. Griffith. She credits him with giving her the finest education in the craft of film that anyone could receive. He created much of that craft himself, making up the rules as he went along. She calls him “the Father of Film.” And the pictures they made together read like a roll call of the classics of the cinema: *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), *Intolerance* (1916), *Hearts of the World* (1918), *Broken Blossoms* (1919), *Way Down East* (1920), *Orphans of the Storm* (1921).

The films she made immediately after she left Griffith, when she had her choice of director, story, and cast, include more classics, such as *La Bohème* (1926), *The Scarlet Letter* (1926), and *The Wind* (1928). In a later chapter of her career, she played in *Duel in the Sun* (1946), *The Night of the Hunter* (1955), *Orders to Kill* (1958), and *A Wedding* (1978).

“We used to laugh about films in the early days,” she says. “We used to call them flickers. Mr. Griffith said, ‘Don’t you ever let me hear you use that word again. The film and its power are predicted in the Bible. There’s to be a universal language making all men understand each other. We

are taking the first baby steps in a power that could bring about the millennium. Remember *that* when you stand in front of the camera.”

It was this ideal, this integrity, that made compromise so difficult for both of them. The seriousness with which Lillian Gish took her work was undermined at MGM in 1927 when it was suggested that a scandal might improve her performance at the box office. “You are way up there on a pedestal and nobody cares,” said the producers. “If you were knocked off the pedestal, everyone *would* care.”

Lillian Gish realized she would be expected to give a performance offscreen as well as on. “I’m sorry,” she said, “I just don’t have that much vitality.” Shortly afterward, she returned to her first love, the theater, and the cinema lost her for the better part of a decade.

What the film producers failed to comprehend was how much value for the money she gave them, for she was part of an older tradition. Griffith had imbued his players with the discipline and dedication of the nineteenth-century theater, and Lillian Gish carried these qualities to unprecedented lengths.

A celebration of this year's Life Achievement Award winner.

In the film, *Hearts of the World* (1918), she gives a heartrending performance as a shell-shocked girl who wanders the battlefield, in search of her lover, carrying her wedding dress. The film established her uncanny ability to portray terror and hyste-



ria, and it established, too, the warmth and poignancy she could bring to love scenes.

But *Hearts of the World* paled by comparison with the next major production of the partnership. *Broken Blossoms* (1919) had none of the usual Griffith trademarks—no cast of thousands, no epic sets. It was based on a story by Thomas Burke about the love of a Chinese man for a twelve-year-old girl. At first, Lillian Gish fought against playing the role. She offered to work with a child of the right age, but felt she couldn't possibly play the part herself. Griffith insisted that only she could handle the emotional scenes.

How right he was. Lillian Gish played the child (changed to a fifteen-year-old) with conviction. She invested the role with a quality so powerful and disturbing that a journalist—watching the filming of the scene where the girl hides in a closet as her father smashes the door with an ax—was overwhelmed:

She pressed her body closer to the wall—hugged it, threw her arms high above her head, threw her fingers into the plaster. A trickle of dust fell from beneath her nails. She screamed, a high-pitched, terrifying sound, a cry of fear and anguish. Then she turned

Broken Blossoms: Gish played this scene so convincingly that a visitor to the set was horrified; The Night of the Hunter: older—and tougher.



Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills

and faced the camera.

It was the real thing. Lillian Gish was there, not ten feet from the camera, but her mind was somewhere else—somewhere in a dark closet. Tears were streaming from her eyes. Her face twitched and worked in fear. . . . I have always considered myself hard-boiled, but I sat there with my eyes popping out.

It is hard for most filmgoers these days to see silent films. But in London last year, we staged a tribute to Lillian Gish as part of the "Thames Silents" film program. "Thames Silents" is an outgrowth of the "Hollywood" television series that David Gill and I produced a few years ago for Thames Television.

David Gill and composer Carl Davis were determined to present a silent film in a West End theater with a live orchestra, just as it would have been shown in the twenties. In November 1980, they presented Abel Gance's *Napoleon*, and its success led to "Thames Silents" becoming an annual event. In 1981 they showed King Vidor's *The Crowd* and in 1982 Clarence Brown's *Flesh and the Devil*, with Garbo and Gilbert, and later that year Vidor's *Show People*, with Marion Davies—all with new scores by Carl Davis. (Each film is being prepared for television. MGM/UA will distribute the MGM productions on video.)

Last year's event was highly appropriate, for no one has championed the cause of silent film with orchestral accompaniment more energetically than Lillian Gish. We were very anxious that she should make a personal appearance at the event, but, aware of her hectic schedule, we were doubtful whether she would have the energy to travel to London. We underestimated her. Above all, Lillian Gish is a trouper. She said she would come, and come she did.

There was a ripple of anticipation at the airport when her plane arrived. An off-duty immigration officer asked who we were waiting for, and when he heard the name, he produced a camera from his shoulder bag and joined us by the railings. Our spirits soared when we caught our first glimpse of that exquisite face. Miss Gish may technically be an old woman, but she is still astonishingly beautiful.

We broke the news to her and her manager, James Frasher, that a newspaper strike had wiped out our publicity, and that now everything depended on her. "We'll do a lot of radio," she said, "that'll help."

Given one day in which to rest, she then

myself: How can you survive such an ordeal without pneumonia? But an article by cameraman Lee Smith in the December 1921 issue of *American Cinematographer*, a technical journal that has never resorted to press agentry, described how the ice-floe sequence was shot:

We had doubles for both Miss Gish and Mr. Richard Barthelmess, but never used them. . . . Miss Gish was the gamest little woman in the world. It was really pathetic to see the forlorn little creature huddled on a block of ice and the men pushing it off into the stream, but she never complained nor seemed to fear. But the cold was bitter and Miss Gish was bareheaded and without a heavy outer coat, so that it was necessary at intervals to bring her in and get her warm. Sometimes when the ice wouldn't behave she was almost helpless from cold, but she immediately reacted and never seemed to suffer any great distress.

Lillian Gish came into pictures by accident. In 1912, she and her sister, Dorothy, visited the Biograph Studios in New York because they heard that their friend Gladys Smith was working there. (Gladys Smith had changed her name to Mary Pickford.) In the lobby, the sisters met a hawk-faced young man who asked them if they could act. "I thought his name was Mr. Biograph. He seemed to be the owner of the place. Dorothy said, 'Sir, we are of the legitimate theater.'"

"'Well,' he said, 'I don't mean reading lines. I mean, can you act?' We didn't know what he meant. He said, 'Come upstairs.' We went up there where all the actors were waiting and he rehearsed a story about two girls who are trapped by burglars, and the burglars are shooting at them. We watched the other actors to see what they were doing and we were smart enough to take our cues from them. Finally, at the climax, the man took a .22 revolver out of his pocket and started shooting at the ceiling and chasing us around the studio. We thought we were in a madhouse."

The young director was D.W. Griffith, and the film became *An Unseen Enemy*, the first of many one- and two-reelers to feature Lillian Gish. Thus her career began before the advent of the feature film. It was Griffith who helped to pioneer the feature film in the United States—and it was his epic *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) that ensured its survival. "I saw the rushes," she said. "Even at that early age, I was terribly interested in film, how it was

made, what happened to it. I was in with the developing and printing of the film, the cutting of it, so I'd seen 'The Clansman,' as it was then called. The others hadn't, and I was there that night the rest of the cast saw it for the first time. I remember Henry B. Walthall, who played the Little Colonel: He just sat there, stunned by the effect of it. He and his sisters were from the South. Eventually they said, 'It's unlike anything we've ever seen or ever imagined.'"

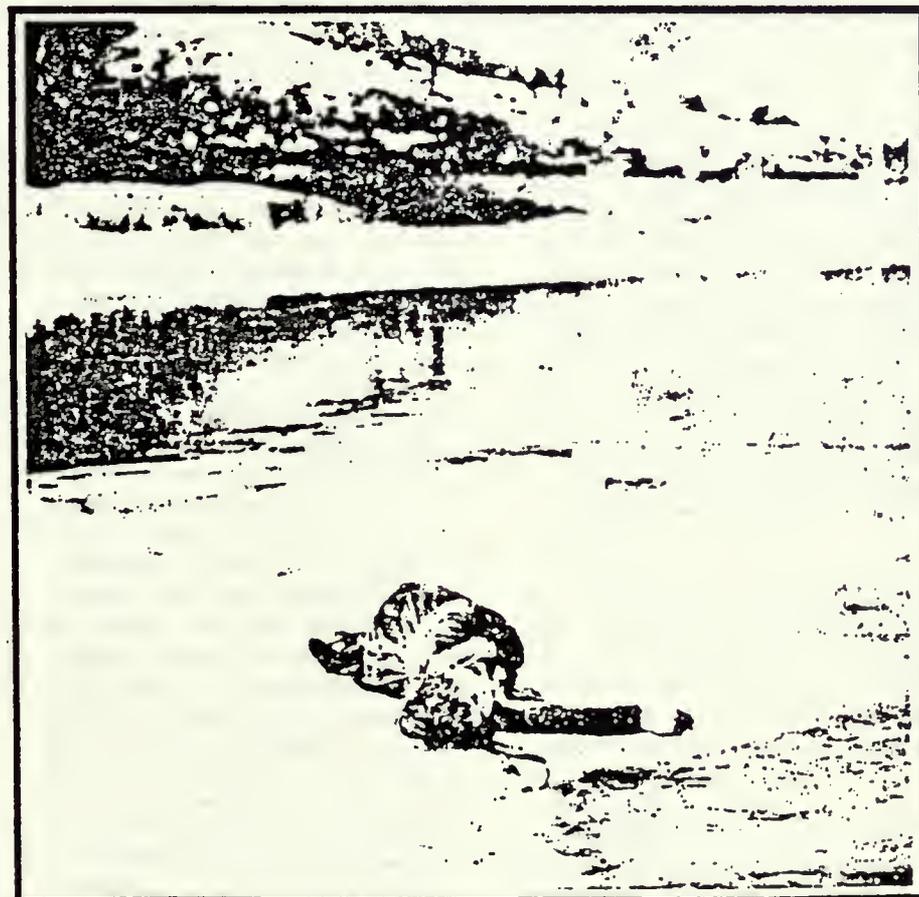
When Griffith visited England during the First World War, ostensibly to arrange for the premiere of his 1916 epic, *Intolerance*, he began to prepare for a huge propaganda film to support the Allied cause. He brought over Lillian and Dorothy Gish, traveling in the company of their mother, to play the leads. The journey across the Atlantic was dangerous enough, with constant peril from U-boats, and their stay at the Savoy Hotel in London was enlivened by German bombing raids. But Griffith decided to take them to France, and there they saw the devastation of war at first hand.

"In one of the villages on the way up front from Senlis," said Lillian Gish, "we

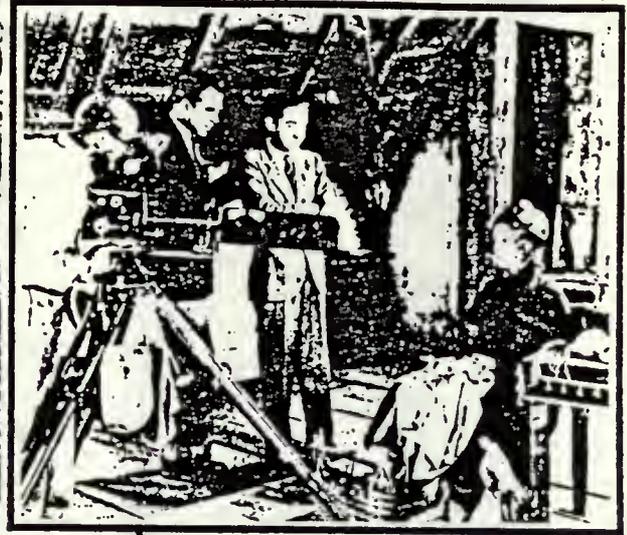
She arrived on the set with sunken eyes and hollow cheeks; she had stopped drinking liquids for three days to give her lips the necessary dryness.

saw a house that had been destroyed: bits and pieces of furniture and an old coffee-pot on its side. What pictures it brought up, because everyone there had been killed. As we drove up in this car to places where they wouldn't send trained nurses—they were valuable, actresses were a dime a dozen—we saw the astonished look on the faces of all the soldiers. They couldn't believe that these people in civilian clothes—we were dressed as we were in the film—would be up there. And we were within range of the long-distance guns."

Way Down East: She refused a double for this harrowing sequence.



The Gishes in *Way Down East*



La Bohème: Gish's death scene with John Gilbert; director King Vidor and producer Irving Thalberg on the set.

When she worked with the young King Vidor on *La Bohème*, she astonished him with her dedication. He was not accustomed to actresses who prepared themselves so thoroughly for their parts. She felt that research was part of the job. As Mimi, she had to die of tuberculosis, so she asked a priest to take her to a hospital to talk to those who were really dying of the disease.

She arrived on the set with sunken eyes and hollow cheeks, and Vidor asked what she had done to herself. She replied that she had stopped drinking liquids for three days to give her lips the necessary dryness. When he shot the death scene, he decided to call "cut" only when he saw her gasp after holding her breath to simulate death. But nothing happened. She did not take a breath.

"I began to be convinced that she was dying," said Vidor. "I began to see the headlines in my mind: 'Actress Plays Scene So Well She Actually Dies.' I was afraid to cut the camera for a few moments. Finally, I did and I waited. Still no movement from Lillian. John Gilbert bent over and whispered her name. Her eyes slowly opened. At last she took a deep breath, and I knew everything was all right. She had somehow managed to find a way to get along without breathing... visible breathing, anyway. We were all astounded and there was no one on the set whose eyes were dry."

Small wonder that Vidor said, "The movies have never known a more dedicated artist than Lillian Gish."

The qualities for which Lillian Gish is famous were exemplified in D.W. Griffith's production of *Way Down East*. The picture was based on an old theatrical melodrama so lurid that when she read the play, she could hardly keep from laughing. It tells of Anna Moore, a country girl who visits the city and is seduced by a wealthy playboy by means of a mock marriage. Abandoned and destitute, she gives birth to a baby that dies soon afterward. She wanders the countryside and finds a haven at a farm. But when her secret is discovered, she is turned out of the house. Staggering through a snowstorm, she collapses on the ice as it starts to break up, and is carried toward certain death over the falls. The farmer's son, who loves her, races to the rescue, leaping from floe to floe and grasping her a split second before disaster.

Griffith transformed this material into superb entertainment, and by her presence Lillian Gish gave the story a conviction and a poignancy no other actress could have provided. "We filmed the baptism of Anna's child at night," she wrote in her autobiography, recently reissued, "in a corner of the studio, with the baby's real father looking on. Anna is alone; the doctor has given up hope for her child. She resolves to baptize the infant herself. The baby was asleep, and, as we didn't want to wake him, I barely whispered the words, 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost...' as I touched the tiny temples.

"There was only the sound of the turning camera. Then I heard a thud. The baby's father had slumped to the floor in a faint. D.W. Griffith was crying. He waved his hand in front of his face to signify that he couldn't talk. When he regained control of himself, he took me in his arms and said simply, 'Thank you.'"

The film was made in and around Griffith's Mamaroneck studio, on a peninsula jutting out into Long Island Sound. The winter was so severe that the Sound reportedly froze over. For one scene, shot during a blizzard, three men lay on the ground, gripping the legs of the tripod while Billy Bitzer ground the camera and Lillian Gish staggered into the teeth of the storm. "My face was caked with a crust of snow," she said, "and icicles like little spikes formed on my eyelashes, making it difficult to keep my eyes open. Above the howling storm Mr. Griffith shouted, 'Billy, move in! Get that face.'"

On top of this, she had to shoot the ice-floe scenes. One of her ideas for this sequence was to allow her hand and hair to trail in the water as she lay on the floe. "I was always having bright ideas and suffering for them," she wrote. "After a while, my hair froze, and I felt as if my hand were in a flame. To this day, it aches if I am out in the cold for very long."

Motion picture history is compounded of generous helpings of legend, and some historians have wondered if Lillian Gish has exaggerated her feat. I have wondered that

plunged into a schedule that exhausted everyone but her. When she arrived for a lecture at the National Film Theatre, she was mobbed. Cameramen, professional and amateur, crowded round, and it was all James Frasher could do to get her to the reception room. The theater was packed and she delighted the audience with her enthusiastic recall and her humor.

"Is there any part you wished you'd played?" asked a member of the audience.

"A vamp," she replied. "Oh, I'd love to have played a vamp. Seventy-five percent of your work is done for you. When you play those innocent little virgins, that's when you have to work hard. They're all right for five minutes, but after that you have to work to hold the interest. I always called them 'ga-ga babies.'"

During the next few days, she embarked on a nonstop series of interviews for radio, television, and the newspapers, which gradually returned from the strike. She was interviewed by Carol Thatcher, the prime minister's daughter, for the *Daily Telegraph* and by John Gielgud, an old friend, who talked with her about the theater for the *Guardian*. Ticket sales showed a marked improvement.

The films, *Broken Blossoms* and *The Wind*, were shown in a West End theater called the Dominion, built in 1929. Chaplin premiered *City Lights* there. The twenties decor is still intact, and, more important, there's still a pit for the orchestra.

I was very pessimistic about the size of the audience; I recalled seeing *The Wind* many years ago at the National Film Theatre with seven people. But our tribute averaged more than a thousand people at each of the four performances. As anyone who has tried to program silent films will agree, that is an astonishing turnout.

It was also gratifying to see Lillian Gish's name in huge letters on a marquee again, and to see the crowds gathering before each show with autograph books. The first night, *Broken Blossoms* was attended by some of the most famous names in the English theater, not only John Gielgud, but also Emlyn Williams, who played Richard Barthelmess's part in the remake of *Broken Blossoms*. Silent star Bessie Love came to see her old friend; they had both been in *Intolerance*. They posed for pictures with Dame Anna Neagle, whose husband Herbert Wilcox directed Dorothy Gish in the silent era.

Lillian Gish introduced the film and supplied some of the background. She also explained the importance of the music. Carl Davis had arranged the original Louis Gottschalk score of 1919 (the Gish charac-

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"When you play virgins, you have to work hard. They're all right for five minutes; after that you have to work to hold the interest."

ter's theme, "White Blossom," was composed by D.W. Griffith himself). The audience watched the beautiful tinted print with rapt attention. The occasion was unmarred by those titters that so often wreck showings of silent films. One could feel the emotion, and the applause afterward was tremendous. "I have been going to the cinema for fifty years," said one man, "but this was my greatest evening."

I hope he was there the following evening, for it was even more impressive. In her introduction, Lillian Gish left no doubt that *The Wind* was physically the most uncomfortable picture she had ever made—even worse than *Way Down East*. "I can stand cold," she explained, "but not heat." The exteriors were photographed in the Mojave Desert, near Bakersfield, where it was seldom under 120 degrees. "I remember having to fix my makeup and I went to the car and I left part of the skin of my hand on the door handle. It was like picking up a red-hot poker. To create the windstorm, they used eight airplane engines blowing sand, smoke, and sawdust at me."

MGM/UA allowed us to provide a new score for *The Wind* (which will also replace the 1928 Movietone recording in the television version). Carl Davis and arrangers Colin and David Matthews created a storm sequence of earsplitting volume. As one critic said, it was as though they had brought the hurricane into the theater. The effect of the film and the music pulverized the audience. Lillian Gish said it was the most exciting presentation of *The Wind* she had seen in years. Some people compared the experience to seeing *Napoleon*, and several found it even more powerful. The critic of the *Daily Telegraph* compared Gish to Sarah Bernhardt and that of the *Guardian* thought the director of *The Wind*, Victor Seastrom, was now on a level with D.W. Griffith.

Lillian Gish received a standing ovation, and days later people were still talking of



The Wind: a physically demanding role, with stunning results.

her astonishing performance in the film. "It was the film event of the year," said George Perry of the *Sunday Times*. "Carl Davis's music was incredible. It felt as though the theater was collapsing. It made Sensurround seem a crude gimmick. Lillian Gish's performance was absolutely wonderful."

We said farewell to Miss Gish at her hotel while she was busy packing. Her hair was down, and I have seldom seen her look so beautiful. All of us connected with the event were exhausted, but Lillian Gish was as full of vitality as ever. "When I get back to New York," she joked, "I shall go to bed and I won't get up until 1984. When you think of me, think of me horizontal."

When we think of her, we will think of her striding onto the stage of the Dominion to receive the acclamation of an audience that, thanks to her, has rediscovered its faith in the cinema. ■

Kevin Brownlow is a filmmaker and film historian. His books include *The Parade's Gone By* and *"Napoleon": Abel Gance's Silent Classic*.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for the company's financial health and for providing reliable information to stakeholders.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific procedures for recording transactions. It details the steps from identifying a transaction to entering it into the accounting system, ensuring that all necessary information is captured and verified.

3. The third part of the document addresses the role of the accounting department in monitoring and controlling the company's financial performance. It discusses how regular reviews and audits can help identify areas for improvement and prevent potential issues.

4. The fourth part of the document concludes by summarizing the key points discussed and reiterating the commitment to transparency and accuracy in all financial reporting. It expresses confidence in the company's ability to meet its financial obligations and achieve its long-term goals.

5. The fifth part of the document provides a detailed overview of the company's financial strategy for the upcoming year. It includes a breakdown of expected revenues, expenses, and profit margins, along with a discussion of the risks and opportunities associated with the current market environment.

CINEMATHEQUE

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TWO FILMS BY DOUGLAS SIRK

WRITTEN ON THE WIND (1956)

"The fetid taste of intrinsic imperfection, of behavioral mistakes endlessly repeated from generation to generation, find expression in the staggeringly demonic visual motifs recurring throughout Sirk's films of the merry-go-round, the amusement park ride, the circular treadmill, the vehicle that really goes nowhere, insulated hopeless activity, the Western frame of mind, people struggling to get outside cages of their own building yet encased by their own unique palpable qualities. Mirrors and surfaces as distancing agents (revealing yet qualifying and placing). A flight of stairs - stages of grace? No image or icon has a simplistic easily solvable frame of reference. An immediate appreciative laugh shouldn't obscure the double puns and triple meanings to be found in Sirk's 'outrageous' moments. A lot of them happen in WRITTEN ON THE WIND, probably Sirk's richest work. One will suffice. Bob Stack after being told by his doctor he's impotent immediately comes upon a young boy jiggling furiously atop a stationary (natch) penny machine rocking horse (like Berg's 'Wozzeck'). He's straddled around an enormous horse's head with a gleeful climactic smile (this in 1956 remember) totally oblivious to Stack's woes. How many ironic meanings can you count? Here's the son Stack will never have, performing a function Stack isn't up to, on a machine that isn't going anywhere anyway, but enjoying himself nevertheless." -- Warren Sonbert, Notes by Film-makers on Sirk, Pacific Film Archives series DOUGLAS SIRK AND THE MELODRAMA, 1975

THE TARNISHED ANGELS (1958)

"...Nothing but defeats. This film is nothing but an accumulation of defeats. Dorothy is in love with Robert, Robert is in love with flying, Jiggs is in love with Robert too, or is it Dorothy and Rock? Rock is not in love with Dorothy and Dorothy is not in love with Rock. When the film makes one believe for a moment that they are, it's a lie at best, just as the two of them think for a couple of seconds, maybe...? Then towards the end Robert tells Dorothy that after this race he'll give up flying. Of course that's exactly when he is killed. It would be inconceivable that Robert could really be involved with Dorothy rather than with death.

The camera is always on the move in the film; just like the people it moves round, it pretends that something is actually happening. In fact everything is so completely finished that everyone might as well give up and get themselves buried. The tracking shots in the film, the crane shots, the pans. Douglas Sirk looks at these corpses with such tenderness and radiance that we start to think that something must be at fault if these people are so screwed up and, nevertheless, so nice. The fault lies with fear and loneliness. I have rarely felt fear and loneliness so much as in this film. The audience sits in the cinema like the Shumann' son in the roundabout: we can see what's happening, we want to rush forward and help, but, thinking it over, what can a small boy do against a crashing aeroplane? They are all to blame for Robert's death. This is why Dorothy Malone is so hysterical afterwards. Because she knew.

And Rock Hudson, who wanted a scoop. As soon as he gets it he starts shouting at his colleagues. And Jiggs, who shouldn't have repaired the plane, sits asking 'Where is everybody?' Too bad he never noticed before that there never really was anybody. What these movies are about is the way people kid themselves. And why you have to kid yourself. Dorothy first saw Robert in a picture, a poster of him as a daring pilot, and she fell in love with him. Of course Robert was nothing like his picture. What can you do? Kid yourself. There you are. We tell ourselves, and we want to tell her, that she's under no compulsion to carry on, that her love for Robert isn't really love. What would be the point? Loneliness is easier to bear if you keep your illusions.

There you are. I think the film shows that this isn't so. Sirk has made a film in which there is continuous action, in which something is always happening, and the camera is in motion all the time, and we understand a lot about loneliness and how it makes us lie. And how wrong it is that we should lie, and how dumb."-- R.W. Fassbinder, Notes by Film-makers on Sirk, Pacific Film Archives series DOUGLAS SIRK AND THE MELODRAMA, 1975

Recommended reading:

SIRK ON SIRK by Jon Halliday (A Cinema One Paperback)

DOUGLAS SIRK: THE COMPLETE AMERICAN PERIOD (Published by the University of Connecticut Film Society)



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CINEMATHEQUE

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March 30, 1985

DIRECT ANIMATION

A 'hands-on' approach to filmmaking

Curated by Stephanie Maxwell

Program:

Hand-Coloured Films (15 mins, silent) by Pathé Freres. Circa 1904-1910.

A collection of rare early Pathé Freres historical trick films all hand painted.

Retour à la Raison (Return to Reason) -- (4 mins, silent) by Man Ray. 1923.

Man Ray was one of the leaders of the American Dada movement in the early 1900's. Retour à la Raison, an ironic title for a film whose intention was the direct opposite in the Dadaist style of 'conscious attack on public sensibility', combines both photography and the techniques of the 'rayogram'. This technique involves the laying of objects (nails, springs, dust, etc.) onto film and exposing it to light. This film is one of the earliest examples of film which draws attention to the material nature of the film itself and the images on it as a photochemical reality.

Rainbow Dance (6 mins, sound) by Len Lye. 1936.

Len Lye is a key figure in the development of 'direct' filmmaking because he made his own separate discovery of the process and developed it with so much imagination and thoroughness that once and for all he opened this area of filmmaking for others to follow. Lye's first direct film Colour Box (1935) was made entirely of inscribed (scratched, painted, drawn...) designs done directly on the film itself. Rainbow Dance follows in this tradition, but this time Lye experiments with live action material by manipulating the three color matrices of the Gasparcolor and Technicolor processes in color film production.

Lines Horizontal (5 mins, sound) by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambert. 1962.

Lines Horizontal was made by optically turning each frame of their earlier film Lines Vertical by 90 degrees. In Lines Vertical, lines are graphed or engraved directly onto the film lengthwise with needles and knives and then colored with various dyes.

The Canaries (4 mins, sound) by Jerome Hill. 1968.

"A lesson in love-making. Hand-painted animation on film."

Intermission

Uncle Sugar's Flying Circus (3 mins, sound) by Warren Bass. 1970.

This film (except for the titles) was made without a camera: using aircraft press-type, hole punches, felt pens, film leader, and thirteen images from Picasso's Guernica punched out of 35mm slides and punched into film. Inspiration for the film derived from the 1970 U.S. bombing of Cambodia.

Variations on a 7 Second Loop-Painting (6 mins, silent) by Barry Spinello. 1970.

This film combines handmade images on film and sten-printing and optical manipulation processes. A seven second loop-painting of film is repeated several times and then varied in texture and form through an optical printer.

Memories of War (16 mins, sound) by Pierre Hebert. 1982.

Working at the National Film Board of Canada, Hebert created this richly complex animation that graphically reveals the intolerable dilemmas of politics and war. A multiplex of animation techniques are used, including free-hand scratching of images onto film, cut-out and cel animation, as well as the incorporation of live action footage into animated scenes through the use of optical printing.

Burnt Offering (8 mins, sound) by David Gerstein. 1976.

Recipe: Rolls of 16mm and regular 8mm color and black&white unexposed film.
Bake in oven for 45 minutes at 350 degrees.
Add loops, freeze frames and blurred images with an optical printer.
Add sound to taste.

Circuit VII (8 mins, sound) by Gil Frishman. 1983.

One in a series of eight films dealing with states of consciousness. This film is symbolized by the inevitability of immortality and interspecific symbiosis. -GF
Live-action footage is reworked by scratching directly into the photographed imagery frame-by-frame.

Bloodlines (4 mins, 1984) by Mark Yellen. 1984.

In another example of 'direct' filmmaking techniques. Mark's use of adhesive tape and markers gives a wild organic quality to lines drawn on film. The soundtrack is composed of Haitian street music and original sound effects.

Thanks to Mark Yellen for his contribution in formulating this program.

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NEW PERSONAL VISIONS IV

BOSTON

CECILE FONTAINE

Untitled (or Golf Film), 1984, 16mm, 1½ min. Live action using Found Footage manipulated by tape or "ammonia base detergent" affecting both image and sound.

Untitled (contact print), 1984, 16mm, 40 sec. "Hand contact print" of a Found Footage manipulated beforehand and exposed several times to a projector bulb.

Correspondance, 1984, 16mm, 2 min. "Hand optical print" combined with emulsion transfer and of super-8 segments of home movie and of 35mm slides.

A Color Movie, 1983, super-8mm, 5 min. Direct animation and collage intercut with live action (self portrait).

Untitled (or painting studio), 1984, super-8mm, 2½ min. Live action combine with manipulation of the Film by bleaching or displacing the emulsion side and with collage of acetate or 35mm slides.

Untitled (or Church), 1984, super-8mm, 1½ min. Live action manipulated with "ammonia base detergent."

A Color Sound Picture, 1984, super-8mm, 1½ min. 16mm Found Footage recut into S-8mm and edited on the academy leader structure. (All notes by Cecile Fontaine.)

JENNY BOSSHARD

Reader, 16mm, 17 min. A true love story about an idealistic love which goes pragmatic in the end. One of film's recurring symbols bears explanation: the Origami swan is a reference to an old Japanese ritual. A woman who had lost her husband at sea might make 1,000 Origami swans as a prayer for his safe return. Also, keep in mind that the girl balancing the plate on her head is initially striving for the love of the man on the roof. (Jenny Bosshard.)

DENISE O'MALLEY

Jestering; Candle for Liza, both 16mm, 8 min. total. Two personal films, powerful in the quality of their images and simplicity of intent.

GREG PAXTON

You Go to My; Fishnets; Andy; Henna; Can't Help It; Lizzard; Beat 85; Restaurant, all super-8mm, 17 min. total. "Precious images separated by black leader" - Greg Paxton.

(OVER)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of the project: [Illegible]

2. Location: [Illegible]

3. Date of completion: [Illegible]

4. Budget: [Illegible]

5. Status: [Illegible]

6. Contact person: [Illegible]

7. Phone: [Illegible]

8. Email: [Illegible]

CINDY GREENHALGH

Ruby's Riches, 16mm, 3 min.; Plastic Primer, 1984, 16mm, 5½ min.; Life Is Even Bigger Now, 16mm, 2½ min. "I treat film as a non-precious material, as something to handle, to collage upon, to paint over and/or to cut up and tape back together. In my work I deal with edges, juxtapositions, confrontations, layers. I tackle the painting/film polarity with scissors, braiding the two media together with tape.

I look for reasons to rejoice, then I assemble the reasons, layering strips of film, cutting tiny single frames, cooking up new majesty. My films are fashioned distinctly by hand, I squeeze energy into 16 millimeters, making the connections as I go. My work assumes a delight in the misaligned, the mathematics and the plastic in art.

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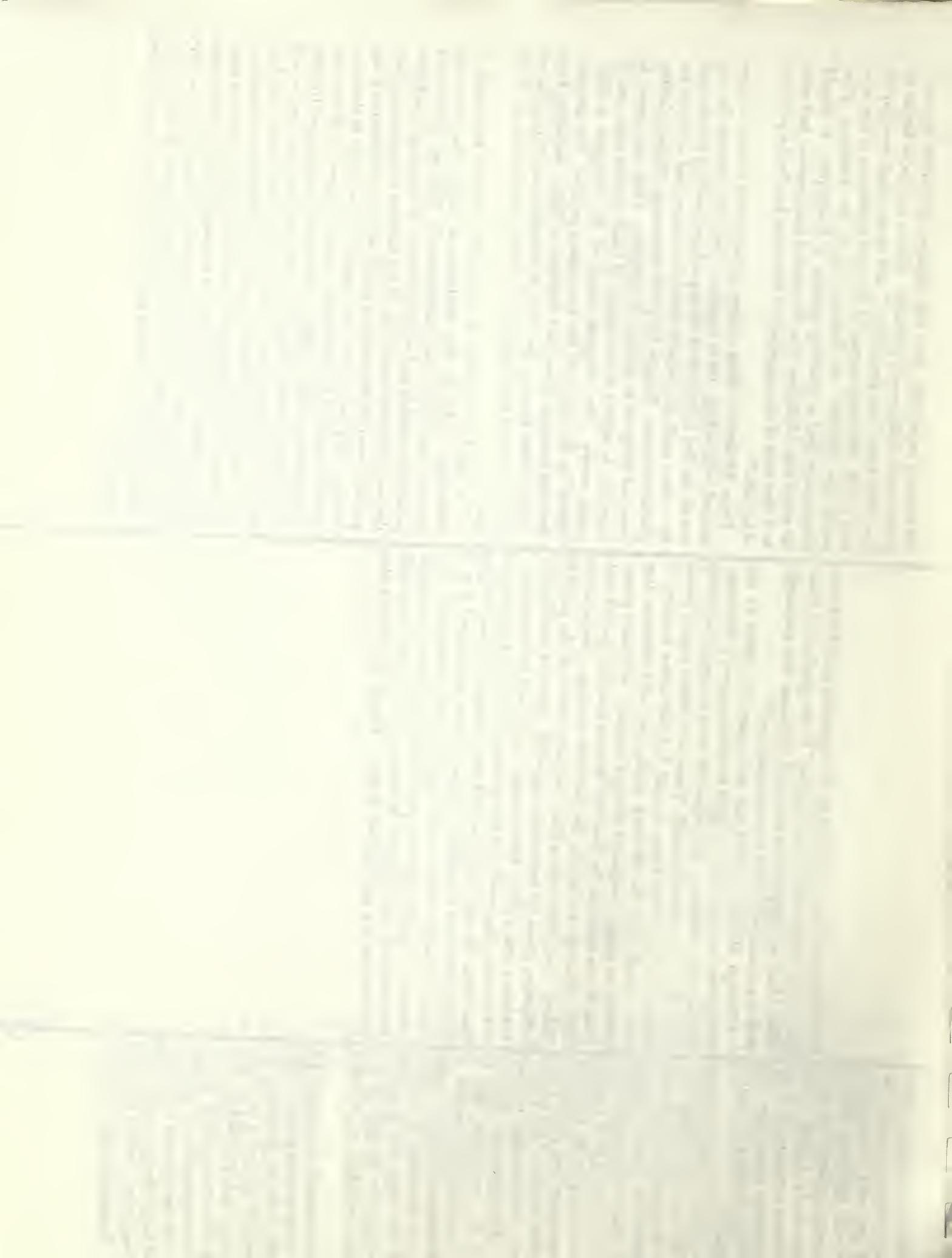
FILMS BY MORGAN FISHER - April 11, 1985

- 1) PRODUCTION STILLS (1970), 11 min. --"A documentary about nothing but itself; technicians become actors, equipment is transformed into props; the reality that the film records is congruent only with the duration of the film." (M.F.)
- 2) THE WILKINSON HOUSEHOLD FIRE ALARM (1973), 1½ min. --"Anaemic cinema."
- 3) PROJECTION INSTRUCTIONS (1976), 4 min. --"A score to be performed; a film that elevates the projectionist from passive mechanic to interpretive artist. A film that promotes redundancy from a dubious possibility to an absolute strategic necessity, and is shown correctly only when by conventional standards it is mis-carried. Nothing but text; a long overdue exaltation of the verbal."
- 4) STANDARD GAUGE (1984), 35 min. --"A frame of frames, a piece of pieces, a length of lengths. Standard gauge on substandard; narrower, yes, but longer. An ECU that's an ELS. Disjecta membra; Hollywood anthologized. A kind of autobiography of its maker, a kind of history of the institution of whose shards it is composed, the commercial motion picture industry. A mutual interrogation between 35mm and 16mm, the gauge of Hollywood and the gauge of the amateur and independent."

* * * * *

"My films tend to be about the making of films. I didn't programmatically set out to do this, it's just something that I can't seem to resist. The more deeply I delve into it the more inexhaustibly rich the subject becomes. The process by which motion pictures are produced is distressingly complex, and every aspect of it is to me fraught with suggestion, though of a seemingly bathetic sort. So my films incline to the literal and the matter-of-fact. In a sense they are educational in that they explain procedures or apparatus underlying film production that an audience might not be familiar with. My feeling is that it is important for an audience to understand how it is that a film comes into being, where it comes from, so to speak, and what it must have undergone (in the material sense) before it appears before their eyes as shadows on the screen. People should know that these phantasms are the upshot of a ponderous and refractory art, If they are not aware of it they are denied the chance to understand film as such.

Actually, it has always puzzled me that my films weren't done long ago. Once one starts to reflect on film they are for the most part obvious ideas, though none the less elegant. From the beginning there has been a reflexive strain in cinema, but it has always struck me as half-hearted, Vertov and Hellzapoppin' notwithstanding. Film should have taken the plunge at the outset and begun by looking at itself, a pursuit as worthy as the treatment of 'subjects'. Hence my films represent an effort to catch up, to redress an oversight committed by history." -- Morgan Fisher, 1976



TEXT TRANSLATIONS FOR SEVEN PORTRAITS

BY EDVARD LIEBER

2. LEONARD BERNSTEIN - German: Discarded out-take from Ich bin ein Anti-Star, of Evelyn Künneke reciting a funeral eulogy.
3. ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG - English: There were countless fallings then, nothing remaining but possible and continuous... 'who are you?' they kept asking me... gradually their real intentions became a solution; for example, darkness... suddenly there was nothing to signify! each impossibility was already another subject... I succeeded in doubting the absence of suggestion; everything vanished, drifting beneath silence in one conversation; then there were precautions... they asked me where we had been; the highways were unfamiliar and false... a different message withdrew our return, motionless, without response, vast, empty; in the corridor I heard nights in the same place... he could have denied it from moment to moment without me... in mountains something aimed an instant of against, drawing back the exception: to mention the alleged obstacle: why should I? different reasons assumed an unknown succession, for it helped neither here nor in the poor substance of their recurrence. I stayed still, in spite of my being no longer there... 'don't do it' he said... it would have been difficult seeking a way, at all... unspoken... there was one degree of probability they left far behind... falling, perhaps.

6. JOHN CAGE - Spanish: Synopsis of a soap opera scene from a television turned on by Merce Cunningham during the filming: He locks the door, goes to the window and looks out... people are being shot; he gazes up at her, outside the moon is shining- he tries another door- light comes near... he turns and he is outside; he attempts to scream, she looks at him; he climbs up the wall to the castle; figures emerge from the shadow of the trees; her gaze is cold and distant... the girl is calling the other girl.

Spanish: List of colors in John Cage's kitchen: Tokyo yellow, Nile green, Dutch grey, Aztec brown, Chinese blue, Miami pink.

Latvian: Parody of a talk show interview from a television turned on by Merce Cunningham during the filming.

German: Re-assembled fragments of the telephone conversation between John Cage and a friend as seen in the film: Thank you; are you cold? there are the fireworks; next time; whatever made you conduct in Munich? open this door. still unconscious. nothing tonight; I'm not you anymore; where? no. did she ask you? continue; I don't stay there; at me too; what do you leave? I began with permission; as many as you like; then it must be true; why not rent the house? silence; well, go then. good evening. i should lock the door. there she is.

English: Text composed and spoken by John Cage for this film.

Spanish: Cross-reference to the speaker in Robert Rauschenberg: Part 'G' - the sudden manifestation of Diana's fatigue.

Spanish: Statement about John Cage: He abandoned imitation and description for statement, defiantly pulling the external into its boldness; his inner world never vanished; he pursued his individuality to unforeseen ends... the only inevitable aspect of his life was negation.

Spanish: Commentary on the film, in the form of a coda:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| interspersed | probable |
| departure | exchange |
| particular | vertical |
| memory | capacity |
| implacable | separate |
| remoteness | incomplete |

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BRAKHAGE IN PERSPECTIVE:

SELECTED EARLY FILMS

THE WAY TO THE SHADOW GARDEN (1955) 16mm. 10 min. Experimental sound by Brakhage

"Binding himself, a young man escapes his frightening room to enter the even more terrifying beauty of Shadow Garden." - Cinema 16

"...creates a tormented, claustrophobic world...this wild study of a tortured youth has astonishing moments of brilliance." - Film No.12.

CAT'S CRADLE (1959) 16mm. 5 min. Color. Silent.

"Sexual witchcraft involving two couples and a medium cat." - Cinema 16.

PASHT (1965) 16mm. 5 min. Color. Silent.

"In honor of the cat, so named, and the goddess of all cats which she was named after (that taking shape in the Egyptian mind of the spirit of cats), and of birth (as she was then giving kittens when the pictures were taken), of sex as source, and finally of death (as this making was the slavage therefrom and in memoriam)."- S.B.

THREE FILMS (1965) 16mm. 10 min. Color. Silent.

'Includes three short films: BLUE WHITE, "an intonation of child birth"; BLOOD'S TONE, "a golden nursing film"; VEIN, "a film of baby Buddha masturbation".' - S.B.

THE DEAD (1960) 16mm. 11 min. Color. Silent.

"Europe, weighted down so much with that past, was The Dead. I was always Tourist there; I couldn't live in it. The graveyard could stand for all my view of Europe, for all the concerns with past art, for involvement with the symbol. THE DEAD became my first work in which things that might very easily be taken as symbols were so photographed as to destroy all their symbolic potential. The action of making THE DEAD kept me alive." - S.B

INTERMISSION

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ANTICIPATION OF THE NIGHT (1958) 16mm. 40 min. Color. Silent.

"The daylight shadow of a man in its movement evokes lights in the night. A rose bowl held in hand reflects both sun and moon like illumination. The opening of a doorway onto trees anticipates the twilight into the night. A child is born on the lawn, born of water with its promissory rainbow, and the wild rose. It becomes the moon and the source of all light. Lights of the night become young children playing a circular game. The moon moves over a pillared temple to which all lights return. There is seen the sleep of innocents in their animal dreams, becoming the amusement, their circular game, becoming the morning. The trees change color and lose their leaves for the morn, they become the complexity of branches in which the shadow man hangs himself." - S.B

"...a film in the first person. The protagonist, like the members of the audience, is a voyeur, and his eventual suicide is a result of his inability to participate in the 'untutored' seeing experience of a child. ANTICIPATION consists of a flow of colors and shapes which constantly intrigues us by placing the unknown object next to the known in a significant relationship, by metamorphising one visual statement into another. Whenever Brakhage shows a shot for a second time, it gains new meaning through its new context and in relation to the material that has passed during the interval." - P. Adams Sitney.

San Francisco Cinematheque, May 30, 1985.

American Landscapes:

The Wold Shadow, Stan Brakhage, 2½ min. color silent.

Pilotone Study #1, Tom Brener, 12 min. color sound.

Haste, Konrad Steiner, 25 min, color silent.

Intermission

Eclipse, Linda Klosky, 3 min. color

Fearful Symmetry, Michael Wallin, 15 min. color silent.

Wild Night in El Reno, George Kuchar, 6 min, color sound.

Density Ramp, Jeff Rosenstock, 17 min. color sound.

The films presented tonight are landscape/cityscape films in the surface-aspect of being composed of outdoor views. This alone is not the essence of a landscape film. Conversely, these films are not exclusively landscape films. They were chosen under this rubric not to categorize them, but to enhance our ability to enjoy them by providing a reinforcing context that highlights certain strengths which run parallel in all the films. These strengths involve a sensitivity to (outdoor) environments which serves various purposes of characterization, namely the characterization of events, places and persons. A landscape/cityscape film is predominantly made up of VIEWS, and the 'action' (which can be subtle or spectacular) is the ambient image and sound of a given view; that is, what is the background of a dramatically staged scene (in another type of film) is elevated to the subject of a shot. The action is 'found' as a result of pictorial composition. The action is 'found' in the conspiracy of camera placement and shutter release timing.

In Eclipse and Wild Night in El Reno the emphasis is on a single natural event. In the spectacle of the thunderstorm and the total eclipse attention (and intention) is diverted from the presence of the filmmaker at the site of filming: he is reduced to the role of witness, whose subjectivity is indexed only by the singular vantage point and the limiting frame. The event takes place, literally takes over the place. The physical space and proximate objects are transformed by the will of occurrence, the place assumes a mood, which is not an essence of the place, but an episode in its existence which will pass (the darkness ebbs, the storms abates). The Wold Shadow comes closest of the films collected here to the methods of landscape painting in its non-temporality. Nothing takes place, it is our vision that is dynamic. Place is no longer site; sight here is unseen but the spirit is given a shadow in the movement away from the specific. In contrast, Haste and Pilotone Study #1 are not timeless, in fact they rely on the conventionalized representations of duration, punctuated by micro-events, in eliciting the hidden (invisible, inaudible, non-cinema-recordable) spirit of Place. Here the

accumulation of many otherwise inconsequential events conjures the characters of a rural midwestern neighborhood and a bygone freight-train district. The presence of the individual in the place with the world is reflected back by the sight in the highly edited films Fearful Symmetry and Density Ramp. The present individual takes over the images (views) from themselves and the manipulated view of a consciousness imprinted on the scene is an agitated or ominous or otherwise stylized and anthropomorphized vision. We see a mind doing the seeing in these films, actively interpreting the cityscape.

-- Konrad Steiner

San Francisco Cinematheque, June 2, 1985

The Early Soviet Cinema: Kuleshov's Workshop

The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks
(NEOBYCHAINIYE PRIKLUCHENIYA MISTERA VESTA V STRANYE BOLSHEVIKOV)

1924. U.S.S.R.

Goskino. Directed by Lev Kuleshov. Script by Vsevolod I. Pudovkin and Nikolai Aseyev. Photographed by Alexander Levitsky. Production design by Pudovkin. With Porfiri Podobed, Boris Barnet, V.I. Pudovkin. 90 min. B&W. Silent 18 f.p.s

This film was the first success of Lev Kuleshov's famed workshop, which was influenced by Meyerhold's theories. Kuleshov was himself a major film theorist and this film demonstrates the early use of his anti-Stanislawkian, anti-psychological acting style, emphasizing instead the actors appearance and movements.

Sergei Eisenstein studied film direction in Kuleshov's Workshop, and this amusing comedy was made with the help of two other major Soviet Directors who also appear in it: V.I. Pudovkin and Boris Barnet.

' The artist in the cinema paints with objects, walls and light....It is almost unimportant what is in the shot, and it is really important to dispose these objects and combine them for the purpose of their final, single plane'.

from ' The Task of the Artist in the Cinema '
(Vestnik Kinematografiya 1917)

The basic technical contribution of Kuleshov, the artistic legacy that he handed over to Pudovkin and Eisenstein for further investment, was the discovery that there were, inherent in a single piece of unedited film, two strengths: its own, and the strength of its relation to other pieces of film. In his text book Pudovkin quotes Kuleshov as saying, ' in every art there must firstly be a material, and secondly a method of composing this material specially adapted to this art,' and Pudovkin goes on to explain:

' Kuleshov maintained that the material in film-work consists of pieces of film, and that the method of their composing is their joining together in a particular creatively conceived order. He maintained that film-art does not begin when the artists act and the various scenes are shot-this is only the preparation of the material. Film art begins from the moment when the director begins to combine and join together the various pieces of film. By joining them in various combinations, in different orders, he obtains differing results.'

continued.



Salt for Svanetia
(SOL SVANETII)

1930 U.S.S.R.

Goskinprom (Georgia). Written and directed by Mikhail Kalatozov, from an idea by Sergei Tretyakov. Photographed by Kalatozov and M. Gegelashvili. 54 min. B&W. Silent

The Soviet Georgian Mikhail Kalatozov was trained as a cameraman in the Kuleshov group and brought an eye for strong formal imagery to his films. His best known film is the 1957 fiction feature THE CRANES ARE FLYING, but his earlier SALT FOR SVANETIA is more important. It reports on the life of Svanetia, an isolated section of the Caucasus between the Black and Caspian Seas that was cut off from the world by mountains and glaciers except for one narrow foot path through the mountains. At the time of the Russian Revolution, its inhabitants were still living in the most primitive conditions, intensified by ignorance and superstition. Typifying the plight of the region was its lack of salt, without which the herds could not produce milk. The salt thus had to be hand-carried up the footpath from the lowlands.

While incorporating much of Eisenstein's angular compositions and some of Dovzhenko's themes and lyricism, the film often imbues its images with a biting clarity akin to Surrealism. As a result, it resembles in power as well as subject Bunuels later LAND WITHOUT BREAD (1933). Despite its champions, among them the perceptive American critic Harry Alan Potamkin, this unusual masterwork has just recently become generally available outside the Soviet Union.



FILMS BY CAROLINE AVERY
AND PHIL SOLOMON

Films by Caroline Avery

MIDWEEKEND

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

FIRST OF MAY

BIG BROTHER

Caroline Avery will introduce her films tonight.

Films by Phil Solomon

THE PASSAGE OF THE BRIDE (1979-80)

When I left New York for Boston, a friend of mine gave me a 16mm home movie (from the late twenties/early thirties, which he found in a pawnshop) as a going away gift. I spent the next year analyzing every frame of this wedding and honeymoon roll, becoming more and more obsessed with every social gesture found in all parts of any given frame. By adding overlays and isolating gestures into discreet rhythms, I began (through a reversed excavation) to discover the hidden narrative. The Brides and the Bachelors transubstantiating into their various guises of male and female, light and dark, compression and rarefaction; a Gothic horror tale of bonding and freedom.

WHAT'S OUT TONIGHT IS LOST (1983)

With material culled from various home movies (mine and others), I began to make a film as a note in a bottle about an evaporating friendship. The film gradually began to veer off into other disappearances surrounding me at the time. Images of (different) women tempered and shaped by using the film's surface texture as a kind of emotional weather (inspired by Wallace Stevens' use of the metaphor of weather). An attempt to repair the darkened lighthouse under adverse conditions.

THE SECRET GARDEN (1985)

A long time ago, my sister introduced me to the patterns of refracted light that formed in the textured window of our bathroom; she called this the Magic World of Paloopa. I spent many hours in that bathroom moving my head around and watching these beings arise and disappear into melting landscapes. I credit these adventures with sparking my interest in film.

The Secret Garden is a Griffith-style children's story, which takes place inside a young boy's fever dream (after his birthday party) on one Easter Sunday, in the middle of the night....



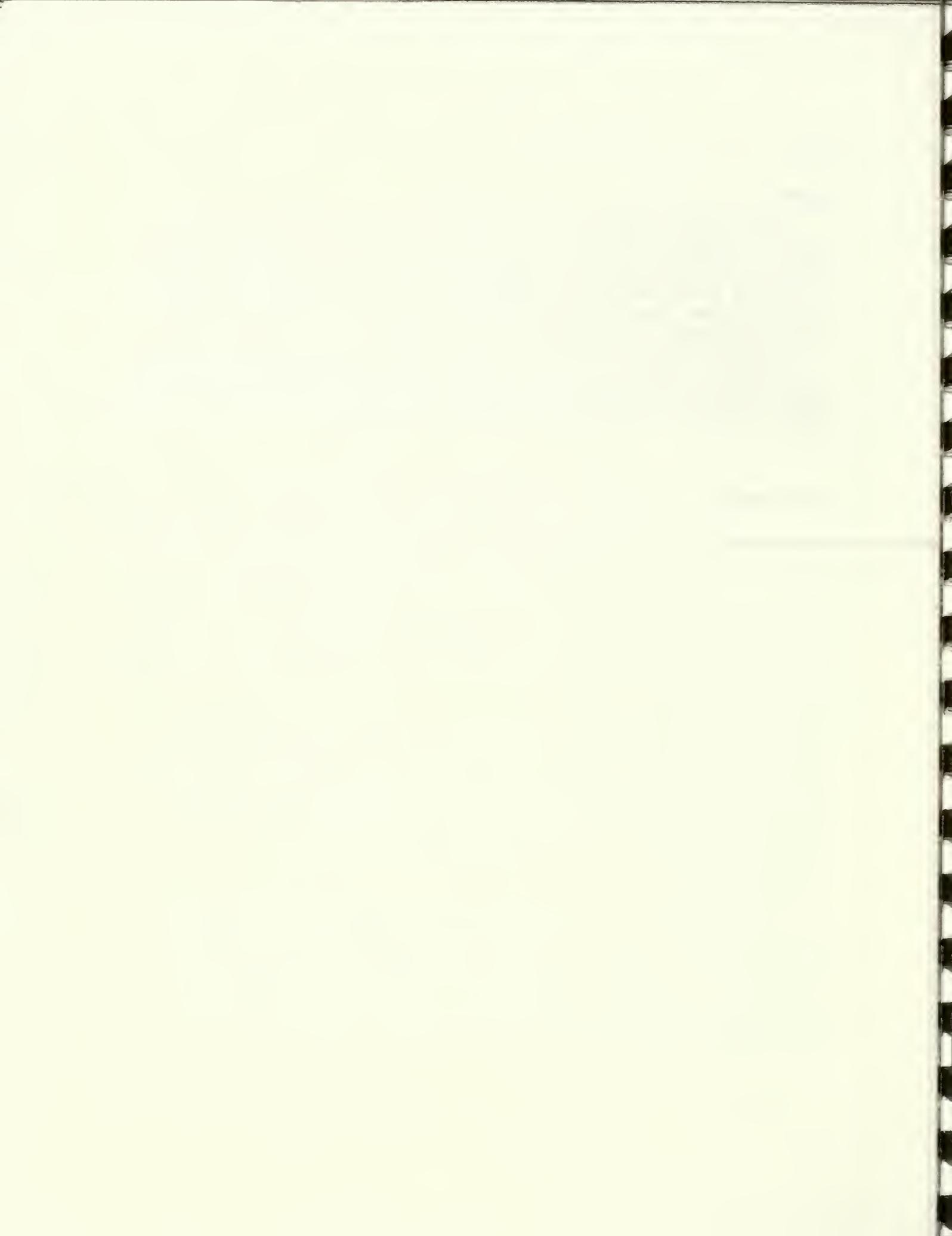
Films by Phil Solomon (continued)

WINTERSKIN (A sketch for a Work in Progress)

I have been thinking about and trying to make a film portrait of my parents for many years. For the past three years, I have been watching my mother slowly disappear inside herself, as her illness has radically changed the lives of both of my parents. WINTERSKIN is an urgent attempt for me to confront my own feelings of helplessness and distance (geo and emotional) in the tones and movement of the photographed moment, rather than through the various formal 'treatments' of my other work.

I am presenting a brief silent sketch of this film tonight (I expect the finished film to be much longer, with sound) as it is the most current expression of my needs in filmmaking. The brief landscape shots which bridge certain sequences were photographed during the various trips to see my family- and were usually the only moments when I could be alone .

Audio tapes played tonight during intermission by Phil Solomon.



Knowledge is as red as a raspberry

Chika Ogura

In this film, I wanted to represent women's temperature changes and the stream of time.

I am interested in women's temperature as it changes by cycles. When I think about such a delicate constitution of women's body, I cannot help thinking about the wonder of nature. The relationship between women's body and the stream of time is interesting to me. I made this film using this idea.

A wandering story

There were 2 things which made me start to make this film. The first is Japanese traditional story pattern that we can find in many myth or novels. A man of noble birth is exiled and is wandering, but he is always helped by a woman who is connected to water somehow. Many stories use the same pattern of events. It was interesting to me that many Japanese stories have traditionally shared this kind of idea about the relationship between a man and a woman.

The second one is my uncle's death. He died of a heart attack while he was wandering and walking on an upward slope. I always felt that he was somehow relate to the men in those stories and I wanted to imagine what he saw before he died.

It is difficult to explain how these 2 things are connected to each other. However I tried to represent my feelings with my film.

On the sound track, I was reading notes which I took at a lecture about Japanese mythology I went to in Japan.

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CINEMATOGRAPH PARTY AND SCREENING

September 22, 1985

PROGRAM

- * 30 Turns III by Roy Ramsing and Jacalyn White, 1985, mixed-media installation
- * People Who Dream by Scott Stark, 1985, mixed-media installation

- 1) Asiam, As I Am by Toney Merritt, 1982, 6 min., silent
- 2) Eucalyptus by Gary Adkins, 1977, 7 min., silent
- 3) Basic Elements by Diane Kitchen, 1984, 5½ min., silent
- 4) Let's Be Pals by James Irwin, 1985, 7½ min., silent
- 5) Non Legato by Michael Rudnick, 1984, 6 min., sound
- 6) Agriculture, Part 1 by Medora Ebersole, 1981-84, 8½ min., sound
- 7) Story Of The Pig by James Oseland, 1984, 7 min.

INTERMISSION

- 8) Passing Through by Willie Varela, 1985, super-8mm, 7 min., silent
- 9) Fireside by Konrad Steiner, 1983, 11 min., silent
- 10) Right Eye/Left Eye by Janis Crystal Lipzin, 1983, 6 min., sound
- 11) As The Sun Goes Down, A Hole Appears In The Sky by David Gerstein, 1976, 11 min., sound
- 12) Honeymoon In Reno by Dominic Angerame, 1983, 4 min., sound
- 13) Masquerade by Larry Jordan, 1981, 5 min., sound
- 14) The Mongreloid by George Kuchar, 1978, 10 min., sound
- 15) Strong Willed Women Subdue and Subjugate Reptiles by C Larry Roberts, 1982, 11 min.,
sound

The Cinematheque would like to thank all of the filmmakers involved in tonight's screening for the generous donation of their work. The next issue of Cinematograph will be on sale in early May of 1986.

CHINESE

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STAN BRAKHAGE -- SELECTED RECENT FILMS

September 28, 1985

- 1) The Garden Of Earthly Delights (1981), 2½ min., color, silent, 18 f.p.s.
"This film (related to Mothlight) is a collage composed entirely of montage zone vegetation. As the title suggests it is an homage to (but also argument with) Hieronymous Bosch. It pays tribute as well, and more naturally to "The Tangled Garden" of J.E.H. MacDonald and the flower paintings of Emil Nolde." (S.B.)
- 2) Nodes (1981), 3min., color, silent, 24 f.p.s.
"'nodus knot,node--more at NET)...4a: a point at which subsidiary parts originate or center...5: a point, line, or surface of a vibrating body that is free or relatively free from vibratory motion.' In the tradition of Skein this hand-painted film is the equivalent of cathexis concepts given me by Sigmund Freud (in his "Interpretation of Dreams"), 30 years ago, finally realizing itself as vision. (Quote:Web. 7th)" (S.B.)
- 3) RR (1981), 8 min., color, silent, 24 f.p.s.
"This film is a mix of landscape images seen from train windows and the patterned shapes and shifting tones of moving- visual- thought thus prompted; it was inspired by Robert Breer's Fuji." (S.B.)
- 4) Unconscious London Strata (1982), 22 min., color, silent, 24 f.p.s.
"This film photographed London in 1979, finished in January of 1982, is an exploration into the depths of unconscious reactions. Having been in London with Stan when he photographed it, I find this a deeply accurate memory-piece. Not 'That's how it looked to me,' but rather 'That's how it felt!' There are many new techniques in this film, new grammar. It is a very rich lode."-- Jane Brakhage
"While visiting London England (dream of my youth) and wishing to be simply camera-tourist (taking pics. of exotic architectural arrangements imagined since earliest Dickens, etc.) I found myself forced, yes forced!, to photograph, rather, the nearest equivalent to the NON-pictorial workings of my mind which these London scenes, before my eyes and camera lens, would afford-- each scenic possibility distorted from any easily identifiable picture to some laborious reconstruction of the mind's eye at the borders of the unconscious. It was two years before I could even begin to edit; and then some visual-song of all of England's history began to move thru this material, fashioning it in some way'kin to that music of Pierre Boulez which is at one with the poetry of Rene Char--this plus the English 'round', song and dance... only (as is true to my thought process then, in England, and now in memory) the rounds are within rounds, round and around, all (as many as 7 interspersed thoughts continuing the orders of shots) interwoven." (S.B.)
- 5) Creation (1979), 17 min., color, silent, 24 f.p.s.
"...almost like the Earth itself--the green ice covered rocks, the slicing feeling, the compressive feeling of the glaciers. The whole time I was watching I kept thinking that you were a master of the North, the arctic landscape--the dark red flowers in the dusky light, the deep blue light, the tall trees with the running mists, and Jane looking...the ice, the water, the moss, the golden light. A visual symphony..."--Hollis Melton
- 6) Egyptian Series (1984), 20 min., color, silent, 24 f.p.s.
Notes currently unavailable.

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September 29, 1985

THE MAGIC OF MÉLIÈS -- Selected films by Georges Méliès

- 1) The Conjuror, 1896, 4 min.
- 2) The Eclipse, 1907, 8 min.
- 3) The Melomaniac, 1903, 4 min.
- 4) The Monster, 1903, 4 min.
- 5) The Terrible Turkish Executioner, 1904, 6 min.
- 6) The Inn Where No Man Rests, 1903, 5 min.
- 7) An Astronomer's Dream, 1898, color, 9 min.
- 8) The Kingdom Of The Fairies, 1903, 12 min.

INTERMISSION

- 9) The Apparition, or Mr. Jones' Comical Experience With a Ghost, 1903, 4 min.
- 10) The Palace Of The Arabian Nights, 1905, 10 min., color
- 11) Baron Munchausen's Dream, 1911, 12 min.
- 12) The Conquest Of The Pole, 1912, 12 min.

"Georges Méliès has long suffered the indignity of being considered the cinema's venerable grandpa, kindly, amusing, but largely irrelevant. The young men of today have preferred to come to grips with the 'fathers' of the medium. The reactionary philosophy (masquerading as 'humanism')...makes them natural candidates for all that oedipal curiosity. Meanwhile, Méliès is known as the mechanic who invented all those clever tricks but who wasn't bright enough to move the camera about, or as the clown whose theatrical narratives, though picturesque, are childish and largely insignificant. His greatest claim to their attention has been that he influenced Edwin S. Porter.

Rather, we have shown that Méliès' 'weaknesses' are his great strengths; that his relentless style, unbroken by montage but enlivened by spectacular camera tricks, is admirably effective in inducing a condition of absent- and open-mindedness propitious for the reception of his poetic imagery, because it is childish, is bursting with vitality, operating in that dynamic area of tension and release, of dislocation and relocation that we call the marvellous.

The inclination that Méliès felt to make detail the focus of his work is not a limitation. Instead it suggests a way of looking at cinema as a medium only as valuable as its occasional revelatory image. The wider framework of narrative structure we discard without reservation or guilt in favour of the metamorphic, the erotic and the humorous image." --Paul Hammond, Marvellous Méliès

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NEW FILMS FROM CANYON CINEMA - October 3, 1985

- 1) NOH TIGER (1982) by Wendy Blair, super 8mm, 4 min., b&w, silent.
"A tiger, once in motion, is now stilled and fragmented. An incomplete record of time. Serene with age, a Noh mask offers a history of rural and illusion as time's voice. In the shadows, in the movement, there is time--observant and elusive." (W.B.)
- 2) BUDAPEST PORTRAIT (1984) and LENIN PORTRAIT (1981-82) by Peter Hutton, 20 min. and 10 min., b&w and color, silent.
Hutton was brought to Budapest by the Hungarian government to make a personal portrait of Hungarian life and culture, a move unprecedented since its Communist alliance. Prints of both films shown tonight are final work-prints, which the filmmaker has consented to show since final release remains unclear.
- 3) TRACY'S FAMILY FOLK FESTIVAL (1983) by Bill Brand, 10 min., color, sound.
"The film is an impression of the 1982 folk festival at the Tracy and Eloise Schwarz farm in Central Pennsylvania. The festival, which was dedicated to Elizabeth Cotton (author of "Freight Train"), includes Bluegrass, Old Timey, Cajun, Country, and Gospel music." (B.B.)

INTERMISSION

- 4) AREA PREDICTOR (1983) by Bill Baldewicz, regular 8mm, 6 min., color, silent.
"This film, shot with the aid of a 5-cent item from an army surplus store, subtly illustrates the areal extent of contamination by radioactive materials expected from small nuclear weapons--up to 1 megaton (1 MT) bombs. Before it became surplus, the 5-cent "area predictor" was intended for use as an overlay on military maps. The film, too, uses maps along with camera-leak "blasts" to suggest nuclear warfare.
The film alludes to the often overlooked fact that the greatest damage likely to result from nuclear-power industrial accidents is not direct destruction of life and property, but rather, extensive land and water contamination by low, but unsafe, levels of radioactivity. The same statement may also be true for nuclear weapons exploded in areas of low population." (B.B.)
- 5) KALEIDOSCOPE (1935) and COLOUR FLIGHT (1938) by Len Lye, 8 min., colour, sound.
These are "direct" films--that is, films made without a camera. Lye painted colorful designs onto celluloid, matching them to dance music. Music: "Biguine d'Amour" (Don Baretto and his Cuban Orchestra, Kaleidoscope); "Honolulu Blues" (Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, Colour Flight).
- 6) BRANCUSI'S SCULPTURE GARDEN ENSEMBLE AT TIRGU JIU (1977-84) by Paul Sharits, 23 min., colour, sound.
"This film is a chronicle of a visit I made in 1977 to Romania to experience three of Brancusi's most famous sculptures: "The Endless Column"; "The Gate Of The Kiss"; "The Table of Silence". These works are in the small, rural town of Tirgu Jiu, not far from the village of Hobitza (where Brancusi was born and spent his childhood). These works are shown in photographs and discussed as totally autonomous "abstract" sculptures simply placed conveniently around the town; but, in fact, they are also parts of a larger and very specific environmental (and symbolic) motif. Their placement suggests a metaphysical continuum; they span the boundaries of the town and while aligned in a (virtual) straight line, a-1 three cannot be seen from any single point of view, so there is a temporal unfolding as one moves through the town to experience the relationship.

(over)

The works were commissioned to commemorate the persons from the area who had died in World War I, and the peace and the flow of life were to be suggested. Brancusi placed the "Endless Column" on the outskirts of the town and "The Table Of Silence" on the opposite end of town in the park, very near the River Jiu. "The Gate of the Kiss" is the entry to the park. In the middle of the town there is a church; all the sculptures are aligned through this center. The very arrangement of the pieces suggest themes of sexuality, the dance of life and the circularity of existence.

"The Table of Silence" I see in part as a spacial-circular embodiment of the endless temporal-linear flowing of the river it is placed next to. Stephen Georgescu-Gorgon, who worked with Brancusi erecting the works, recalls that Brancusi ... "once explained to me that it was intended for the 'hungry ones', who came back from their daily work in the fields and sat round it 'in silence' to have their only meal. Hence the "Table of Silence"." (P.S.)

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CINEMATIC RECOLLECTIONS

Saturday, Nov.16

Karen Holmes: RETURNING THE SHADOW , 22 min. (1985) world premiere

"Examines the tension between the image that is recorded in a photograph and what is remembered. The film creates its own internal memory as it achieves a reconciliation of past and present.

The film is based on and around 5 photographs, taken sometime in the early 1940s. In trying to find an identity for these people, elements of the photographs are isolated and extended in visual associations: a crumpled quilt on the bed in one photograph resembles rippling water. The film is constructed in a way that allows the viewer to contribute his/her experience during the film in an effort to find the identity of the characters and possibly, to reflect on one's own identity." (K.H.)

Stephanie Beroes: VALLEY FEVER , 20 min. (1979)

Inspired by Merleau-Ponty's statement, "there is a perpetual uneasiness in the state of being conscious", this film has to do with questions of perception, the way we see things. In an experimental, non-narrative context, the film presents a man and a woman who carry on a disjunctive conversation, superficially about the effects of illness on perception, actually about their mutual inability to perceive the world from any other than a personal viewpoint. They set up a projector and show each other footage of their respective hallucinations under the influence of fever- images of the desert, palms, swimming pools, and the American suburban landscape. The hallucination sequences make a lyrical counterpoint to the formal, structured lipsync sequences." (S.B)

Janice Lipzin: TREPANATIONS , super-8mm, 20 min. (1983)

"A film made up of various kinds of correspondece-pictorial, written, and audio tape "letters" sent to the filmmaker by friends. The soundtrack is the dominant element and was constructed from excerpts from the tape correspondence of a contemporary woman photographer. She describes the madness of her daily life in moods vacillating between delight and despair. Her experiences, while uniquely

CINEMA

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her own, function as a magnifier through which we all
can see our own situations and strongly identify with
hers. The title describes a delicate cranial operation
performed in prehistoric cultures." (J.L.)



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November 17, 1985

THE FILMS AND VIDEOTAPES OF OWEN LAND

"The most impressive avant-garde filmmaker of the 1970's was George Landow (a.k.a. Owen Land). Since 1969, when he released Institutional Quality and thereby found a place for his astonishing verbal wit in his cinema, he has produced a coherent body of aggressively original films and has asserted, through those films, a unique position in opposition to the very genre in which he works. Many of his most exciting films contain an elaborate network of allusions and quotations. Primary among the references are earlier Landow films. When he mocks and criticizes dimensions of his own artistic aspirations, the film-maker cautiously offers us sly hints about his earlier intentions and their pitfalls."

P. Adams Sitney

FILMS

Diploteratology or Bardo Follies, 1967, 7 min.

"His remarkable faculty is as maker of images...the images he photographs are among the most radical, super-real, and haunting images the cinema has ever given us." - P. Adams Sitney

The Film That Rises to the Surface of Clarified Butter, 1968, 9½ min.

A breakthrough film in the American cinema, one of the first that calls attention to the conditions of its own making and existence.

Remedial Reading Comprehension, 1970, 5 min.

"One of the ways that Remedial Reading Comprehension works is in the degree of filmic distance which each image has in the film. Distance here refers to the degree of awareness on the part of the viewer that the image he is watching is a film image rather than 'reality'. Landow's film does not try to build up an illusion of reality...It works rather toward the opposite end, to make one aware of the unreality, the created and mechanical nature, of film." - Fred Camper

What's Wrong with This Picture?: I/II, 1972, 10½ min.

"An exercise in combining a documented segment of a real occurrence with structural elements. The film becomes a study of speech patterns. There is, on several levels, a play on the difference between film mechanics and video electronics." - Owen Land

Thank You Jesus for the Eternal Present I, 1973, 6 min.

A Film of Their 1973 Spring Tour Commissioned by Christian World Liberation Front of Berkeley, California (a.k.a. Thank You Jesus for the Eternal Present, Part 2), 1974, 11 min.

Wide Angle Saxon, 1975, 22 min.

"...Earl's memory is so full of images that he confuses the face of the young woman from the shoe repair shop with the images in the experimental

film that he saw at the Walker Art Center, and imagines red paint being poured on her face." - Owen Land

"This is the truth about Wide Angle Saxon; when it is most ridiculous, when it gets its biggest laughs, is when it is most in earnest." - P. Adams Sitney

No Sir, Orison, 1975, 3 min.

"Orison means prayer. The title of the film is a palindrome, that is, it reads the same backward or forward. The film grew out of an attempt to create a structure around my first original palindrome, 'no sir, orison', written while working on Wide Angle Saxon." - Owen Land

New Improved Institutional Quality: In the Environment of Liquids and Nasals a Parasitic Vowel Sometimes Develops, 1976, 10 min.

"A reworking of an earlier film, Institutional Quality, in which the same test was given. In the earlier film the person taking the test was not seen, and the film viewer in effect became the test taker. The newer version concerns itself with the effects of the test on the test taker."

On the Marriage Broker Joke as Cited by Sigmund Freud in Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious or Can the Avant-Garde Artist be Wholed, 1980, 20 min.

"Two Pandas, who exist only because of textual error, run a shell game for the viewer in an environment with false perspectives. They posit the existence of various films and characters, one of which is interpreted by an academic as containing religious symbolism. Sigmund Freud's own explanation is given by a sleeper awakened by an alarm clock." - P. Adams Sitney

VIDEO

Noli Me Tangere, 1983, 6 min.

"In this first videotape by Landow, an important avant-garde filmmaker, sexual and technological anxieties converge in a single obsessive image." - Amy Taubin

The Box Theory, 1984

CINEMATHEQUE



NEW FILMS '85

PROGRAM NO. 1, 7:30 p.m.

Film Performance by D & S and the Real Time Art Show

Violent by Sal Giammona

Denizens of the See by Michael Rudnick and Mike Henderson

The Dyed Again by Mark Sterne

Go Like This by Rock Ross

Hotel Capri by George Kuchar

Fuckin' Hawaii by Dean Snider

Return to Infancy by Dean Snider

5 minute intermission

Fear Is What You Find by James Irwin

Goblin Valley by Andrej Zdravic

Black Heat by Chuck Hudina

Poor Young People by Medora Ebersole

Phone Film Portraits by Dominic Angerame

In the Company of Women by Jacalyn White

In Progress by Willie Varela

Evil Comes to Eden by James Oseland

An Installation for Ellen Zweig by Janis Lipzin (film installation)

CINEMATHEQUE



NEW FILMS '85

PROGRAM NO. 2, 9:30 p.m.

Film Watchers by Herb de Grasse, hand signing by Eve Silverman

Aquation by Marian Wallace

Tone Poem by Mike Kuchar

Foot'Age Shoot-Out by Kurt Kren

Untitled by Margaret White

Shot Reverse Shot: An Intercourse with Film by Barbara Coley

11/9/85/Las Vegas/Envy by Scott Stark

Fragment by Ellen Gaine

Spleen Part 1 Artifices by Peter Herwitz

Via Rio by Dana Plays

The Illusion Machine Experienced by Jan Novello

Document Unearthed in the Northwest Territory by Jack Walsh

5 minute intermission

The Doll & the Buffaloes by Mike Henderson & Michael Rudnick

Jeaneret's House by Scott Fränkel

To the Spirit in the Sky by Mark Sterne

Light at the End of the Tunnel by Jerome Carolfi

The Night Could Last Forever by Dean Snider

Projection Piece by Bruce Conner

UNIT 10



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Section 11

Section 12

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December 5, 1985

THE SKY ON LOCATION

Babette Mangolte in Person

The Sky on Location (1982), 78 minutes.

Script, photography, editing: Babette Mangolte. Music: Ann Hankinson. Voices: Bruce Boston, Honora Ferguson, Babette Mangolte. Camera Assistant: Ralph Chaney, Mark Daniels, Neil Harvey. Editing Assistant: Maureen Judge. Location Sound: Ralph Chaney. A co-production between Babette Mangolte and ZDF Television, West Germany.

The Sky on Location is a 78 minute color exploration of, rumination on landscape, produced for German television. It presents visual records of a series of trips through various parts of the far West: from the Colorado Rockies to Glacier Park, across the Great Sandy Plain to Death Valley, across the Great Divide Basin to the Green River, through the Cascades -- Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, to the rain forests of the Olympic Peninsula; back to the Southwest and Yosemite. No people are seen in the film except, implicitly, those travelling in a train seen in one image, in the giant trucks exploiting the lumber felled by the explosion at Mount St. Helens, and those mentioned on the soundtrack. The soundtrack includes environmental sound and some music, and three voices which regularly add bits of personal, historical and aesthetic context. The obviously directed and scripted formality of the three voices is so detached from the imagery (we do not feel we're travelling with these people, or even that we're eavesdropping on their excursions) that we are forced to do more than "get into" the beauty and awesomeness of the places Mangolte films: we must also focus on the (past and present) meanings and implications of imagining such spaces in painting (Mangolte specifically thanks Barbara Novak's Nature and Culture, a study of 19th century American landscape painting) photography, and film.

BM: From the beginning the film was meant to be without any people at all. But after I saw the footage from the summer, I said, "That's unbearable; I need to have once or twice an element of scale." Because everything appeared to be at the same distance. Whether you use a telephoto shot of a mountain or a wide angle shot, you're always very far away from the mountain, if you see it at all. If you are on it or near it, you see only a section of the mountain. The space is so open that there is never any foreground to give you perspective. That's what fascinated me in the subject matter. I thought about it in 1975 when I went on a bus tour to visit the West. The other thing the film was about from the beginning was the difference in color from north to south -- geography made visual through color and light. I discovered that the light shifts so radically that a certain element of drama was possible. The Sky is not about nature as backdrop, but more about the idea of wilderness, which I've discovered is so ingrained in American culture, but totally bewildering to Europeans. I don't even know a French word you could use to translate the idea. I am Americanized enough now to identify with it. Travelling alone, or with one assistant, through those places helped me understand. But Europe lost the sense of wilderness centuries ago. It's so much more crowded. There is no area which is not put to some use, and which is not crossed by roads. Even the tops of the mountains are not really secluded. And you don't have that sense of space..." (From an interview with Scott MacDonald, AFTERIMAGE, Summer 1984.)

"The film attempts to construct a geography of land from North to South, East and West and seasons to seasons through colors instead of maps." - Babette Mangolte

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Sunday, December 8, 1985

- FILMS BY MARJORIE KELLER

- 1) She/Va (1973), 8mm, 3 min.
- 2) By 2's and 3's: Women (1974), 8mm, 7 min.
- 3) The Web (1977), 8mm, 10 min.

Three early 8mm films in which women and children appear. I learned how to edit in the making of She/Va. It's the first film of mine that I considered finished. By 2's and 3's: Women still strikes me as an angry film. You may not see that in it because it looks like a travel diary, a landscape film. I remember thinking that if I could have edited it with a hatchet, I would have. And in The Web I delved for the first and only time into film as mischief-making; wicked, like a child.

- 4) The Answering Furrow (1985), 16mm, 27 min.

Owing to Virgil's Georgics, translated by Thomas Carlyle. With assistance from Hollis Melton and Helene Kaplan. Music: Charles Ives, Sonata for Violin and Piano #4 ("Children's Day at the Camp Meeting") and Ambrosian Chant (Cappella Musicale del Duomo di Milano). Filmed in Yorktown Heights, New York; St. Remy en Provence, France; Mantua, Rome and Brindisi, Italy; and in Arcadia and the island of Kea in Greece. I would like to thank Saul Levine for making this screening possible.

Georgic I

In which the filmmaker depicts the annual produce first seen in spring - The furrowed earth ready for planting - The distribution, support and protection of young plants - The implements of the garden.

Georgic II

In which the life of Virgil is recapitulated in summer, with a digression on the sacred - The sheep of Arcadia - The handling of bees - The pagan Lion of Kea.

Georgic III

In which the filmmaker presents the skill and industry of the old man in autumn - Ancient custom and modern method - The use of the implements of the garden.

Georgic IV

In which the compost is prepared at season's end - The filmmaker completes The Answering Furrow with the inclusion of her own image.

A note on the music:

The music works with the image to parallel the trace of history. Ives recalls Protestant hymns, they recall the origin of the hymn in Milanese music of the 12th century, which allows for that music closest (in my experience of recording and making this film) to the hum of bees and the hum of amplifiers, the Orthodox Greek chant.

-- Notes by Marjorie Keller

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Cinematheque and Intersection present:

POLYPHONIX (SIF)

WEDNESDAY, November 7

9 p.m.

Jean-Francois Bory
Victor Hernandez Cruz
Esmerelda
Andrei Codrescu
Andrea Dace
Charles Amirkhanian
Gherasim Luca
Lyn Hejinian
Jim Pomeroy
Barbara Smith
Idris Ackamoor/Rhodessa Jones

THURSDAY, November 8

9 p.m.

Arnaud Labelle-Rojoux
Amy Elliott
Eleanor Antin
Michael Sumner
Mark Scown/Harald Dunnebier
Al Wong
Marsha Vdovin
Carolee Schneemann
Chuck Z
Monica Gazzo
Joel Hubaut

FRIDAY, November 9

9 p.m.

Michael Shay/Stephen Perkins
Slick Ric Salinas
Guilia Niccolai
Scott MacLeod/Jeanne Gallo
Michael Peppe
Bernard Heidsieck
Larry Wendt
Jerome Rothenberg/Bertram Turetzky
Tim Badger/Clifford Hunt
Armand Schwerner

SATURDAY, November 10

9 p.m.

Jacqueline Cahen
Jim Petrillo/Betsy Davids
John Marron
Nanos Valaoritis
Opal Palmer/Deborah Majors
Anne Tardos
Michael McClure
Jackson Mac Low
Stephen Vincent/Steve Wilson/Ann Hankinson
Greg Goodman
Ellen Zweig
Terry Allen

Funded in part by The National Endowment for the Arts, The San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, The Zellerbach Family Fund, The Italian Institute of Culture of San Francisco and The French Government.

POLYPHONIX 8: Director, Ellen Zweig; Assistant Director, Scott MacLeod; Public Relations Director, Marsha Vdovin; Production Coordinator, Andrea Dace; Reception/Fundraising, Amy Elliott

Sound Engineers: David Mighell, Roxanne Merryfield

Photos by Michael Shay

Special Thanks to: Jean-Jacques Lebel, Jacqueline Cahen, Lita and Morton Hornick (Kulchur Foundation), The French Cultural Service of The French Consulate of San Francisco and the Center for Experimental and Interdisciplinary Arts at San Francisco State University, Steve Anker, Maryse Berniau, Kathy Brew, Robert White, Beau Takahara, Lilian Gendler (Stowaway Travel), Russ Jennings and Susan Stone (KPFA), CO-LAB Theatre and Gallery, Tomasina, John McBride, Jurek and Beata Zahorska, Janis Crystal Lipzin, Carmen Vigil, George Lakoff, Jim Hartz, Lise Swenson, Bruce Ackley, Wanda Hansen, William Davenport, Greg McKenna, David Gerstein, Catherine Spurr, Roberto Bedoya, Francesca Valente, Calvin Ahlgren, Mark Scown and Vivian Dent.

The Foundation for Art in Cinema
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Saturday, April 7, 1985

"MAGIC AND THE OCCULT"

"INVOCATION OF MY DEMON BROTHER" by Kenneth Anger (1969) 16mm 11 min.
(hand-tinted color)

"Kenneth Anger, more than any other avant-garde film-maker, is the conscious artificer of his own myth... For him more than for any other avant-garde film-maker Hollywood is both his matrix and the adversary... Invocation of My Demon Brother... marks a stylistic change and a refinement of Anger's Romanticism... The early films of Anger observe for the most part the classical unities of time and space and tend to have clearly defined beginnings, middles, and ends... In Invocation (he) still utilizes the off-screen look as a formal fixture; one can distinguish an introduction and a conclusion. But nevertheless the film marks a radical step for him in the direction of open form, where montage does not depend on the illusion or the suggestion of spatial and temporal relationship between shots... In Invocation of My Demon Brother, Anger continues to glorify the creative imagination as he does in all of his films, but he extends the rhetoric of metamorphoses and universal analogy beyond the transformations of Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome and the dialectical metaphors of Scorpio Rising into a "web of correspondences, a rhetoric of metamorphoses in which everything reflects everything else," ...

"In Invocation Anger combines material from the original Lucifer Rising, a document of the Equinox of the Gods ritual he performed the night the film was stolen, a helicopter landing in Vietnam, footage of the Rolling Stones, alchemical tattoos. For the first time he uses anamorphic photography...

"The film moves among levels of reality, suggesting that one image is the signature of another. It is Anger's most metaphysical film; here he eschews literal connections, makes the images jar against one another, and does not create a center of gravity through which the collage is to be interpreted... Thus deprived of a center of gravity, every image has equal weight in the film; and more than ever before in an Anger film, the burden of synthesis falls upon the viewer.

"...It is very much a part of the aspiration of Invocation of My Demon Brother to get beyond the limitations of cinema and directly into the head. ...Invocation is... an investigation of the aesthetic quest through occult rhetoric. What makes this film... difficult ... is the film-maker's new use of his art as an instrument of discovery. The film is about the concentration of the imagination and indirectly about the power of art to achieve it... Watching the film, one feels that the film-maker did not know what the film was to be until it was finished..." *

* P. Adams Sitney, Visionary Film, New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, pp. 128-135.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The following instructions are intended to guide the user in the proper use of the equipment. It is the user's responsibility to read these instructions carefully before operating the equipment. Failure to follow these instructions may result in damage to the equipment or personal injury.

1. Before using the equipment, read the instructions carefully. 2. The equipment should be used only by trained personnel. 3. The equipment should be used in a well-ventilated area. 4. The equipment should be used in a dry area. 5. The equipment should be used in a clean area. 6. The equipment should be used in a safe area. 7. The equipment should be used in a secure area. 8. The equipment should be used in a controlled area. 9. The equipment should be used in a supervised area. 10. The equipment should be used in a restricted area. 11. The equipment should be used in a limited area. 12. The equipment should be used in a designated area. 13. The equipment should be used in a specified area. 14. The equipment should be used in a defined area. 15. The equipment should be used in a marked area. 16. The equipment should be used in a signposted area. 17. The equipment should be used in a signalled area. 18. The equipment should be used in a signposted and signalled area. 19. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled and supervised area. 20. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised and restricted area. 21. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted and limited area. 22. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited and designated area. 23. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated and specified area. 24. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified and defined area. 25. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined and marked area. 26. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined, marked and signposted area. 27. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined, marked and signposted area. 28. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined, marked and signposted area. 29. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined, marked and signposted area. 30. The equipment should be used in a signposted, signalled, supervised, restricted, limited, designated, specified, defined, marked and signposted area.

"HEAVEN AND EARTH MAGIC FEATURE" by Harry Smith (1950s) 16mm
66 min.

"I must say that I'm amazed, after having seen the black-and-white film (#12) last night, at the labor that went into it. It is incredible that I had enough energy to do it. Most of my mind was pushed aside into some sort of theoretical sorting of the pieces, mainly on the basis that I have described: First, I collected the pieces out of old catalogues and books and whatever; then I made up file cards of all possible combinations of them; then, I spent maybe a few months trying to sort the cards into logical order. A script was made for that. All the script and the pieces were made for a film at least four times as long. There were wonderful masks and things cut out. Like when the dog pushes the scene away at the end of the film, instead of the title "end" what is really there is a transparent screen that has a candle burning behind it on which a cat fight begins - shadow forms of cats begin fighting. Then, all sorts of complicated effects; I had held these off. The radiations were to begin at this point. Then Noah's Ark appears. There were beautiful scratch-board drawings, probably the finest drawings I ever made - really pretty. Maybe 200 were made for that one scene. Then there's a graveyard scene, when the dead are all raised again. What actually happens at the end of the film is everybody's put in a teacup, because all kinds of horrible monsters came out of the graveyard, like animals that folded into one another. Then everyone gets thrown in a teacup, which is made out of a head, and stirred up. This is the Trip to Heaven and the Return, then the Noah's Ark, then The Raising of the Dead, and finally the Stirring of Everyone in a Teacup. It was to be in four parts. The script was made up for the whole works on the basis of sorting pieces. It was exhaustingly long in its original form. When I say that it was cut, mainly what was cut out was, say, instead of the little man bowing and then standing up, he would stay bowed down much longer in the original. The cutting that was done was really a correction of timing. It's better in its original form." *

"Smith's use of chance coincides with his idea of the mantic function of the artist. He has said, 'My movies are made by God; I was just the medium for them.' The chance variations on the basic imagistic vocabulary of the film provides yet another metaphor between his film and the Great Work of the alchemists... The viewer of No. 12 (Heaven and Earth Magic Feature) finds himself confronted with repetitive scenes of preparation - an egg hatches a hammer, which changes a machine, which will produce a liquid, etc. - toward a telos that brings us back to the beginning. The characters of the film end up precisely as they were at the beginning. Everything returns to its place of origin." **

LSO: "EL ESPECTO ROJO" (1929-30) 22 min. ("The Red Specter")

Produced by the Pathé Brothers (possibly by Méliés), this hand-tinted fantasy depicts the incarnation of the devil, who colorfully performs miraculous transformations.

* P. Adams Sitney, "Harry Smith Interview," Film Culture #37, (Summer 1965), p. 5

** P. Adams Sitney, Visionary Film, op. cit.

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The Foundation for Art in Cinema
CINEMATHEQUE

The regular Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde film.

CHANCES IN TIME

Random Operations in Film

Though we like to think there is sense and order in the world it often appears that there is none. In July, 1984, in a suburb of San Diego, a man walked into a McDonald's restaurant armed with a small arsenal and motivelessly murdered twenty people whom he had never met. Two weeks later a retired carpenter from the Bronx won twenty million dollars in a lottery. We talk of the role of chance in these things, but the word "chance" is actually a convenient way to describe the complex interactions of events, emotions and the lumbering momentum of time that bring things together in a way not quite random, not quite predestined.

The use of random operations in the creation of art can be seen as an attempt to tap into the energy of this universal chance/destiny compost heap. Artists who use chance are, whether consciously or not, trying to divest themselves of the notion of duality in their existence, the sense of "self" being separate from "everything else". This has much to do with several Asian philosophies, and some of the works in this exhibition have obvious ties to Oriental thought. But it also has to do with modern science, particularly physics; the implications of the Einstein/Podolsky/Rosen thought experiment of 1935 are far more bizarre than anything in a Zen koan. We are all unquestionably integral parts of the same Thing, by whatever theosophical or philosophical yardstick you use to determine what that "Thing" is. Our artworks are part of it as well.

The artists in this exhibition are working at the edge of the invisible, elusive border of cause and effect. Chance as a process is crucial to 20th century art, but its role in cinema has been under-appreciated. The purposeful uses of chance lay bare the construction of a medium most people prefer when it is seamlessly illusionistic. This three-part series examines random operations in the creation of film, video, music, performance, slide projection, poetry, and installation. It is the first of its kind. Dice-throwing, performance-games, found objects, randomly-determined structure, uncontrollable events, and indeterminat consequences are the tools that construct these works many of which are having their public or San Francisco premieres.

Because most of the implementations of chance in time-based media occur during one or more of the production stages, its use is not always clear in the final product, and is often invisible. The works in this exhibition fall roughly into six categories:

1. Chance in Subject. At the time of the original photography or recording, the subject is more or less out of the control of the artist. The end result is often a revelation, giving something the artist could not possibly have devised on his/her own.

CINEMA

The cinema is a powerful medium of communication and entertainment. It has the ability to transport audiences to different worlds and times. The history of cinema is a long and fascinating one, starting from the early experiments with photography and moving through the silent era to the sound era and now to digital technology. The cinema has become an integral part of our lives, providing us with a means of escape and a way to connect with others. It is a medium that has the power to change lives and to shape our culture. The cinema is a reflection of our society and a mirror to our souls. It is a medium that has the power to inspire, to educate, and to entertain. The cinema is a medium that has the power to change the world.

Chances in Time

2. Chance in Camera/Subject Relationship. This concerns not only what occurs in front of the camera, but the actions of the camera as well. These are works in which the camera was an unusually active participant with the subject.
3. Chance in Physical Manipulation. These are works in which the physical medium is manipulated and altered in ways not entirely under the artist's control. In film, this could involve painting, gluing objects and other forms of destruction to the emulsion.
4. Chance in Editing. Given a set of written or visual modules, their chance selection and reorganization can result in something extraordinary. This can involve a variety of preparations before the editing process begins.
5. Chance in Presentation. This is the most visible use of chance, in that it occurs at the time of public presentation. Each performance is purposefully and sometimes wildly different from all others, or involves several key elements developed completely in isolation from each other.
6. Chance in the Device. It often happens in media which depend on technology that an artist will adapt a machine, or create a new one, which operates on chance principles, usually within parameters of the artist's choosing.

Though each evening's program was designed to include a mixture of works - a variety of mediums, lengths, dates, and placement in the above six categories - each program does have a particular concept. The first evening, June 1st, looks at two historical precedents, Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp. The second evening, June 8th, concentrates on the uses of chance during the various stages of film production and presentation. The third evening, June 15th, highlights expanded cinema or film-like work in other mediums.

The diversity and scope of these works attests both to the unlimited uses of chance in the creation of film and related arts, and that it is now one tool among many that contemporary artists use to achieve their ends.

- James Irwin, Guest Curator

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JUNE 1, 1985

RETOUR A LA RAISON (1923, 5 min.) by Man Ray.

Man Ray was one of the original experimenters in film, and his work is a fertile ground of ideas that would be fully taken up by later generations. This film's experiments include the application of his "rayogram" technique of placing objects on the film and exposing it to light. "There was no separation into successive frames as in movie film," Ray has said about the work. "I had no idea what this would give on the screen."

THE MAKING OF THE ROUGH AND (VERY) INCOMPLETE PILOT FOR THE PROPOSED VIDEODISC ON MARCEL DUCHAMP (ACCORDING TO MURPHY'S LAW) (1981-84, 15 min., video) by Lynn Herschman.

This started as a reasonably straight biography on Duchamp featuring a performance of Relache by the Joffrey Ballet, and interviews with John Cage, Calvin Tomkins, Nam June Paik and others. Then a series of chance disasters occurred, including a cardiogram of Duchamp's heart being stolen and held for ransom! "The process of making it became like the Large Glass: things breaking and being damaged," says Herschman. She found herself asking, "What would Duchamp do?"

ANIMATED SOUNDTRACK (1974, 6 min., film) by Mario Castillo.

Created by layering the results of optical printing, video and sound synthesizing, all of it generated from a complex combination of graphic design and photography. One of the primary reasons for the film, says Castillo, was to produce sounds from the film's graphics on his home-built optical-reader synthesizer. Many of the film's images are the source material for the dense track. The entire work was chance-oriented, using much random selection and arbitrary combinations.

ICE (1972, 7½ min., film) by J. J. Murphy.

A film by another filmmaker is projected through a 50-pound block of ice and re-photographed from the other side. What is interesting is that Murphy has taken one of the most inviolably fixed, precision features of the film process - the optical lens - and mutated it, so that the image is lets pass is in constant flux.

BREAKFAST (1972-76, 15 min., film) by Michael Snow.

A camera dollies toward a table set as if for a breakfast cereal commercial. There is a clear shield in front of the camera, and it makes contact with food and simply keeps going. The resulting mess, obviously, was of a random nature. A hilarious comment on the cliches of moving cameras in theatrical films.

HONEST (1980, 6 min., film) by Craig Schlattman.

A performance that includes the cameras documenting the performance. An artist's version of a tavern strength contest, it records the filmmaker holding two running cameras, at arm's length, shoulder high, for the duration of the 100' rolls of film (about 3 minutes, which must have felt like an eternity). All footage is included, everything is in the order of occurrence, but because neither of the cameras nor the tape recorder were in synch with each other, extensive displacement occurs in the final print.

CODEX (1984, approx. 20 min., poetry) by Aaron Shurin.

Created by a method evocative of film editing strategies, this piece was inspired partly by The Epic of Gilgamesh, an ancient Sumerian poem. Phrases and sentences from that epic seemed to demand Shurin's attention. He wrote 62 of them on slips of paper, and would draw them out of an envelope at intervals as Codex was being written. As Shurin points out, it is not just the process of working with the quotations that was a chance process in his work, but also the fact that the cuneiform tablets on which the early epic was inscribed were chanced upon, so to speak, in the 1880's.

- Notes by James Irwin

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Program 2: June 8, 1985

HIGH KUKUS (1973, 3 min., sound film) by James Broughton.

A single shot of the surface of a pond in a field. It sounds simple, and it is. But what an array of activity occurs in this three-minute take. This is a classic example of the filmmaker giving himself over to external events, for Broughton had no control over the film except for when to turn the camera on. An illustration of the virtues of Zen patience, it also features Broughton on the soundtrack reading fourteen of his humorous haikus (thus the title). As he writes in the print version of High Kukus, "Wherever you make your home, said the Louse, is the center of the world."

MOTHLIGHT (1963, 4 min., silent film) by Stan Brakhage.

Created by securing moth wings and plants between two strips of clear tape, all of which were thin enough to allow light to pass yet still show intricate texture. The projected film, presenting as it does segments and abstractions of what is recognizable as remnants of once-living beings, has a poetic beauty somewhat mitigated by the constant reminder of death. The wings and leaves are all "found objects" employed by Brakhage as is. He also had no specific control over what the film would look like, frame by frame, when projected.

KU (1981, 13 min., film & performance) by James Irwin. Performance by Ellen Ezorsky.

A combination of random operations in both the creation of the film and in the final presentation. A film of obscure images is projected behind a performer who speaks of everyday occurrences of psychic phenomena and tales from the gray area between causality and coincidence. The projected film is itself a sort of pictorial oracle, reminding us that, as Jung suggested, individual translation of random operations can often serve as a psychological inkblot test. "Ku" is the 18th hexagram of the I Ching, translated in the Wilhelm/Baynes version as "Work on What Has Been Spoiled".

CHANCE FILM (1969, 12 min., sound film) by David Heintz.

Several methods of chance were used: coin tosses, cards, and dice. These operations determined most important choices in the planning and editing of the film, including type of image, camera technique, subject, and the soundtrack. There are a number of moments where segues or double-exposures give remarkable combinations. Heintz says such moments were truly a matter of chance: "We were quite astounded to see the finished film and how well many aspects worked together and in sequence."

RANDOM (1983, 8 min., sound videotape) by Mark Vail.

One of the most sophisticated machines artists are using for personal work is the small computer. It can be a storehouse for all the random variables used in the other works in this series, endlessly recombined in laborious calculations that would take the human hand virtually forever to accomplish. Vail used a computer to create the music and graphics for this tape through random-number generating. The music was performed on the keyboard employing a seven-notes-per-octave scale. There are two "characters" in the piece, one spewing out graphics, the other ingesting them.

SOUND CAMERA ROTATIONS (1976-79, 33 min., sound film) by Robert Attanasio. Made in collaboration with Mildred Iatrou.

Made in three installments over four years, each session comprised of Attanasio and Iatrou photographing and sound-recording each other in front of the Guggenheim Museum in New York, then attempting to hail a cab willing to drive them twice around the block and back in front of the museum before the roll of film runs out. As Attanasio puts it, "Object: Beat The Clock!" Their actions mimic the spiraling architecture of the museum. There are many chance elements: the possible entertainment value of random passers-by, the weather conditions, the length of time needed to hail a cab (holding out as long as possible for a roomy Checker), even (as becomes dramatically clear) the changing fashions of year to year.

INSTALLATION at Eye Gallery, 758 Valencia Street:

The Installation by Michael Shemchuk is in its entirety a simple camera, a machine for gathering light and capturing it on a surface. A storefront window is made light-safe, covered with red filter material, and backed with light sensitive paper. By virtue of incisions made in the acetate, it becomes a huge box camera with a photographic image in flux visible at all times to people walking by, day or night. Camera obscura projections are once removed from reality but with a clarity of detail our eye can not capture alone, two qualities well-suited to the Renaissance where it was born. The comparative murkiness of Shemchuk's installation is, perhaps, a more apt metaphor for our own historical period.

- Program Notes by James Irwin

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Program 3: June 15, 1985

O O-A (1982, projected slides) by Charles Lovell.

"In this series of photographs," writes Lovell, "I went over ten years of old negatives and made prints of the most interesting frames which were before the first exposure on the roll of film. These images were shot haphazardly, while advancing the film toward the first exposure, and are uncomposed and unplanned." The photographs are being presented as projected slides, their order determined at random, and provide an interesting film-like work in comparison to actual projected films.

MOLD FX (1980, 2 min., sound film) by Michael Rudnick.

Processed home-movie footage lay exposed to moisture for ten years before Rudnick stumbled across it (by chance). During that time extensive mold had grown on the film, producing an almost profound commentary on the typical home movie that peeks out from behind the shifting ugly/beautiful mold. It is a "found object" in the Duchamp tradition since Rudnick's main contribution was printing the film for preservation, titling and then signing it.

LEARNING TO BREATHE ABOVE GROUND (1982-84, approx. 20 min., film & performance)
by Scott Stark.

Layers several chance operations. It turns the film process on its head by using the two basic technological tools of film - camera and tape recorder - in a way that places the human performer virtually at their mercy rather than the other way around. Stark requested that three quotes be included in these notes:

"The onset of capitalism can be traced to the onset of agriculture." - Malcolm Anderson, from The 20th Century Petroglyph

"Lilacs and daisies, hornets and bees,
telephone poles and color TVs.
The long search has ended, the answer is found,
we all are now learning to breathe above ground."
- Judith Wicks, from "Vertical Shift"

"The Lord be with you.
(And also with you.)"
- Roman Catholic Ritual

COLLECTION (1982, 11 min., double-projection sound film) by Kathleen Laughlin.

A two-projector piece, indeterminate in that the projectors are not synchronized, allowing chance interactions between the images. The work concerns a popular

chance operation, collecting things. Successful collections depend on being at the right flea market, beach or auction at the right time. One must recognize a chance/opportunity, and seize it, for it may never come again. The form of collecting here is seashells. As we see them pass by, either on an invisible conveyer belt or between fingers, people on the soundtrack discuss other forms of collecting ("I collect ideas", "I collect acquaintances").

DRAGON VORTEX (1984, 9 min., music recording and projected slides) by Larry Price.

Comprised of two separate elements, both of which use overt chance operations. The taped soundtrack is a musical work, Merope (The Lost Chord), created on an instrument constructed by Price and his brother. It is an aeolian or wind harp with twelve tunable strings. "It's fascinating," says Price, "how various themes are developed and repeated, arranged only by the vagueries of the wind." The slides are richly colored gels projected from multiple projectors overlapping on the screen. As they fade in and out, various permutations of color mixing occur.

REPORT (1963-67, 13 min., sound film) by Bruce Conner.

Photographers have won Pulitzer Prizes for images that are extraordinary only in that someone actually had a camera pointed in the right direction and the shutter released at a fortuitous moment. An artist can employ such material at a later time in a work that both consolidates and transcends the information in that material. This is the case in Report. By the use of fragmentation, repetition and variation Conner peels back the layers and shows us that while the Kennedy assassination was a tragedy, the media circus surrounding it was a sordid travesty.

FISTFIGHT (1964, 11 min., sound film) by Robert Breer.

Originally part of Karlheinz Stockhausen's concert/happening Originale. The film is a deluge of images presented in short bursts separated by black leader, the screen's content changing radically even from frame to frame. Breer was interested in chance early, and says that for this film he "tried random couplings frame by frame and scene by scene, sometimes shuffling my card/images like playing cards." The soundtrack is edited from the five performances of Originale and was added later. "If you listen closely," says Breer, "you can hear on my track one of the actors complaining that the piece was too episodic - 'not enough was left to chance'."

