

## PROGRAM NOTES

1988

**San Francisco Cinematheque**  
480 Potrero Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 558-8129

**A Project of the  
Foundation for Art in Cinema**

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**The Foundation for Art in Cinema  
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San Francisco, California  
2007

NEW VOICES, NEW FILMS

September 22, 1988

I Can Never Be You, You Can Never Be Me by Cindy Greenhalgh, 1988, 8½ min., 16mm, sound.

"A collage (patchwork) film which considers subject/object duality, the politics of speech and gesture, and the redefinition of the space which sits between us. The film was made by carving out individual frames of film with an exacto knife, and rephotographing 2 lacy strips of positive/negative (foreground/background) together." - Cindy Greenhalgh

Turner by Mary Serra, 1987, 3 min., 16mm, sound.

"The film Turner was shot in Los Angeles and uses that city's urbanscape to emphasize the timelessness, fluidity and ethereal qualities of a sensual dreamscape." - Mary Serra

Chromesthetic Response by Scott Stark, 1988, 9 min., 16mm, sound.

"The film was created by putting 16mm movie film into a still camera and shot as if 35mm still photographs. When projected, portions of each image flicker by in a rapid, mesmerizing rhythm. The sound is created by the nuances of visual imagery: due to the unusual technique, the picture also overlaps the optical soundtrack area of the film, so that as the images pass through the projector they actually generate their own peculiar sound.

" 'Chromesthesia' is a condition whereby a person sees a color and imagines he or she hears a sound associated with the image. The technique described above is a metaphor for that condition, and is an exploration of a sensory response that is beyond the realm of human intellect and emotion." - Scott Stark

The Poet's Veil by Peter Herwitz, 1987-88, 13 min., 16mm blown up from Super-8, silent.

"I'm fascinated by veils, surfaces, anything that obstructs a clear view. These veils, of color, distance, detached symbols, are both painterly in form and related to the acts of reading and writing seen throughout the film. The obscuring of the word represents my struggle to create an unnameable world of poetic mystery and nuance." - Peter Herwitz

-INTERMISSION-

End Over End by Konrad Steiner, 1988, 12 min., 16mm, silent.

"End Over End is a tumbling, falling, ecstatic movement you might experience as delight on a ride at an amusement park or as terror during an earthquake. Some of the kinetic effects were produced by rapid montage and low quality home-processing of the film. The film is basically a sequence of shots, like any other film, and is motivated, like many other films, by a desire to fly

-OVER-

## SECOND SIGHTS - Highlights of the Year III

Sunday, June 19, 1988

- 1) Field Study by Gunvor Nelson, 1988, 16mm, 10 min.
- 2) Slant or Slumber by Chika Ogura, 1987, 16mm, 8 min.
- 3) Untoward Ends (Observing Religion), Parts 1 & 2 by Daniel Barnett, 1970-73, 16mm, 20 min.
- 4) The Mysterious Barricades by Peter Herwitz, 1987, Super-8mm, 8 min.
- 5) 17 Reasons Why by Nathaniel Dorsky, 1985-87, 16mm, 20 min.

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- 3) Medical Research/Special Report. (1987) by Robert Fox. 16mm/color/sound/30min.

Thrown into the milieu, "starving, hysterical, naked." Illness as metaphor, reflections on life /death and the creative process. Sound and image stitched together to form a Promethean vision.

Robert Fox

- 4) The Secret Garden by Phil Solomon, Color/Silent, 23 minutes. 1986 - 87.

"a. When I was young, my older sister invented games of imagination in order to assert and enforce her sibling authority. One of these was a trance game in which she would induce me to stare into the textured window in our bathroom and move my head slowly from side to side so as to create moving patterns from the light refractions. She would call this space the entrance to the 'Magical World of Palooa'.

b. I used to have a recurring nightmare of running on a beach as a tidal wave was about to overwhelm me as it blackened the sky.

c. I always thought the WIZARD OF OZ was a terrifying expose revealing God the Father to be a phony from Kansas.

The Secret Garden is an attempt at a child's fever dream, within the dark walls of a radiating 'nuclear' family. Its theme: Trouble in Paradise."

SECOND SIGHTS - Highlights of the Year

II - Eye Gallery, June 18, 1988

- 1) Coming Up For Air (1986) by Chick Strand, 26½ min., color, sound.

One year I had a show in New York and a friend in Vermont who suggested that I visit her as long as I was coming East. I had wanted to make a film with her for years because she had been part of my Mexican life before her move to Vermont. So, I brought along my camera with no idea of what I wanted to do except that I had seen a film called "THE SON OF AMIR IS DEAD," a French/Algerian feature which I liked a lot. I really couldn't figure out much about avant garde film, or even if I wanted to go on pretending that that's what I did, so I was thinking about some sort of narrative thing back there in 1976 when I started shooting it. Well, the show was in Rochester and I was beginning to think that I was having some flashbadcks from the days in the 60's when you could order pure LSD from the Light Company in England, because there was something wrong with the trees. By the time I got to Vermont in my rented car, I felt that maybe I was really on a trip to Disneyland, because the trees all looked fake... the fall color was absolutely staggering. Well, I could hardly think very much about this narrative thing... the only thing I wanted to do was to get all of that color onto film.... Meanwhile, for years I'd been collecting bits and pieces of prose and poetry that I like.... a sentence or two from a novel, maybe, and stuff that I'd written. So, I patched it all together and made some kind of a narrative.... For a long time, I'd been interested in having a prose track, which might or might not relate to the visuals, so I played with that idea, too. I haven't the least idea what this film is about except perhaps it has to do with loss of identity, horror, and dreams, or maybe it has to do with some sort of giant memory bank and we are all clients. We deposit and withdraw, maybe at random, but with some sort of feeling of deja vu. I'm sure that by the time you see this film, my ideas about what it is will have changed, or maybe I won't have thought about it at all. -- Chick Strand

- 2) MAYHEM (1987) by Abigail Child, 20 min., b&w, sound.

Perversely and equally inspired by de Sade's Justine and Vertov's sentences about the satirical detective advertisement, MAYHEM is my attempt to create a film in which Sound is the Character and to do so focussing on sexuality and the erotic. Not so much to undo the entrapment (we fear what we desire; we desire what we fear), but to frame fate, show up the rotation, upset the common, and incline our contradictions towards satisfaction, albeit conscious. -- Abigail Child

INTERMISSION

(over)

life by depicting higher orders of experience. We find such an archaically ordained healing process lodged in the viewing of this film as well. This is an age which is starved for imaginations, which can be realized now only in the fenced-off world of art, a realm quite separate from the one we customarily inhabit. "THE LIGHTED FIELD" shows us to what extent it is critical to allow one's verbal left brain to go into retirement so that the imaginative right brain might seek and help us to experience ecstasies that can be savored and shared, here brought to fulfillment in a chosen medium. That this medium is cinema reminds us that we far too rarely encounter true embodiments of light and shadow dramas. We need bring to every viewing situation a willingness to forego demands for slick products and instead reflect on whether a genuine poetic case is being generated for life-sustaining, faith-sustaining resolutions. Our need for new sustaining myths has never been more acute.

At the forefront of dualities and even new triplicities of living, the artist has lived postmodernly and has brought back from our fractured-seeming world a cloth describing brand-new transmutative dreams for us to gratefully inhabit. "THE LIGHTED FIELD" is the human retina, the screen, a chosen state of mind.

\* \* \* \*

Other boundlessly energetic declarations in this film move fast or slow, describing light and shadow dramas in humming fractured recollections of various events which join each other in non-linear, non-"sensical" turns. We find that our perceptual entrapments become shattered in this viewing and we are cleansed, at least for this brief time, of world-weariness and ennui.

Pixilated definitions of "realistic" passages continue to inhabit our film watching, and when this work begins to turn a corner towards completion-resolution/character resurrection, we come to meet again, along with other now-familiar borrowed characters, the image of the man formerly placed inside a coffin of ice, now being withdrawn from his cold encumbrance gleefully alive. Other images descending toward this film's end include views of the film-maker's own projected shadow-shapes traversing the exterior of his house, spiralling, it is felt, in wide returning movements down toward physical "reality." Noted also in this wind-down of inspired moving pictures are several outdoor laundry-lined white towels, fine metaphors for the process of viewing shadow dramas on the screen -- pictures within pictures -- encapsulating the sub-theme "THE LIGHTED FIELD" contains on how nearly everything occupying physical existence is eligible actor as walking, moving screen for light and shadow plays. In this soliloquy concerning true home-coming, matter lyrically vibrates and declares the "atomic" energies that make for physical existence.

One is led to reflect on the original healing purposes of art. Most art-making efforts have evolved down from church-ordained imaginings originally designed to heal the viewer in body, mind and spirit, wresting attention from trials of everyday



Now rushing round, light beams dance off mundane wicker chairs in what seems to be a sitting room, as the sun pours in. Divine light energy suffuses a kaleidoscopic havoc with a furied dynamism evoked previously elsewhere during ancient mysteries of worship of the sun. Shattering, resounding, mincing of the element of time occur in these electrifying moments of veritable fire-frenzy. The levels of mastery of the hand-held camera revealed here and in this entire work surpass any expectations of the most demanding critics. Life-notations pause to offer inventories and worshipful encounters, often with vibratory passages that infuse wonder in the viewer and breathe life into even the tawdriest corners of existence. Wine drinking glasses resting in a dishdrain now become, through inspired rhapsodic pixilations, a stage for silent symphonies in shades of greys that wax profoundly sounding, sweeping in Baroque and then Rococco lines of light-rays to the audience's eyes.

Interspersed with the artist's notations on the seasons and the persons in the life as shared, are a number of stunningly slow passages that wax refreshing in that although they picture daily duties of the multitudes, they impart renewed life to dreary frames of passage. Approximately one-fourth through the film we find a truly therapeutic dissertation on subways and commutership. A velvet train pulls into an outdoor platform station and passengers alight. Resilient film greys promise heaven as passengers approach and then slowly pass the camera, each imbued with a personalized lightness that renders walking nearly weightless. The sun's light falling on each passenger is met and matched with celestial inner peace and mildest sparkle of individuated personality as each commuter manifests a special quality of grace.

at home. Now the camera immediately annexes another season, that of winter with its snow-covered roofs as a direct joining to this brief summer fare. Increasingly, geographic and domestic loci are enunciated, but these evolve for the viewer more by way of accrued image associations than a direct filmmaking address of the question. This section, as with this entire film, enjoys highly varied paces ranging from frenetic pixilations to events slowly taking place in "normal" sense-bound time.

Noren's wife Rise is seen while seated at a desk, alighting from a bed, in a host of close-up interactions, and at home hanging curtains against a double window where a formal multiplicity of layers reveal the sun as that great plasticizing light-source in the sky. The sun here is a veritable shining being who hones in on the realms of human shapes and shadows in spaces that form the geometric matrix of a room.

Framing this work's pattern-forming observations, Noren includes images of himself as cameraman also in frequent shadow-language, pixilating into a kaleidoscopic bounty of reverberating shapes his own projected shadows as they traverse a variety of surfaces: indoor walls, areas of grassy land, floors, pavement, stoops, doorways, even gravestones. A walking itinerary is rendered via this logo-image as it repeatedly weaves its ways elliptically into the work's very fiber, rarely overstaying its visual welcome. These self-portraits, as well as several not filmed by the filmmaker, offer themselves into an ongoing dialogue with all environmental-interpersonal encounters and impart a reciprocity to other observation modes.

Other introductory borrowed images introduce themselves and hint at limitless story possibilities inherent in a life of dream and in the medium of film. An affectionate and somewhat Dadaesque montage prevails when we view a man blindfolded prior to being hanged in a naval military episode, followed by an ascending answer of two German shepherds shown in reverse motion leaping upwards from the sea, to a woman in her 1940s bedroom sadly allowing her sick dog to listen to the telephone receiver, and finally to a solar-mirror man who tests objects against the sun's channeled rays of light. This man is an empowered wizard beaming at us furied sparks and flames, and then peacefully, as a microcosmic paean, Noren cuts to an image of a human eye lit on a diagonal by an ophthalmic laser beam. This beam of light reveals the illuminative structure of the eye, expressing slow and careful worship of its findings. From here we go to sight of a bespectacled man being laterally placed into a cube of ice by a team of laboratory men. These playful narrative borrowings wax enigmatic and discursive, and we come to meet a number of them for a second time towards the film's end as farewell markers in this dream of magically-permeated thrashings in the possibilities of everyday.

A brief transition image of a light-transmitting, pixilated window highlighting smoke appearing as a fractured substance, fuses these initial borrowed images with Noren's own photography. We traverse into a time-lapse view of the sun coursing over a landscape viewed from a window, and then slower episodes unfold with use of a more restrained mode of camera work. From a rear-view angle we regard a woman walking down a pleasant tree-lined street with a boy around age 10, in summer. Later we will meet these two full-face in more intimate situations photographed

ness, including life and death. As a note suggesting his own beginnings in this life and in this filmic dream, Noren also places near the work's inception a posed still photo portrait image of himself as a small child together with his mother.

What soon follows is inspired appropriation that transfigures "here and now" into eternity. After an abbreviated sequence picturing a man dressed in clinical attire who adjusts some arcane dials and pulls levers on a scientific-looking apparatus, we observe a closeup of a woman donning lipstick. This woman is instantly transformed into an x-ray image of herself, so that what we see is no less than a suddenly-delivered human skull with manifest neck vertebrae supporting it, as she-it goes through further mundane motions of lipstick application. The viewer is siezed with naked awe by this invasion of the moment with the forms of the eternal. As now the moments pass, we observe further, in like x-ray form, a hand picking up a telephone receiver. This woman, or another person, is observed skeletally, also, holding <sup>a telephone</sup> conversation in everyday reality as we simultaneously view her skeletal "remains." Then two skulls are speaking to each other in an x-ray double portrait. Reactive viewer awe joins with instant gratitude for this unexpected cleansing of our ordinary perceptions. The magically pried opening in time continues, giving way to momentary sadness with a sequential image of an academic classroom, revealing that these joinings of eternity with passing forms of matter have been our privilege only courtesy a "science film." --No time for reflection, though, as we are instantly shuttled onto NYC streets with images of hurried crowds of people finding breathless pixilation with their flat-form pavement shadows. For several moments we watch shadow-beings brought to life.

Lights on the Path: Andrew Noren's "THE LIGHTED FIELD"

by Gail Camhi

Andrew Noren continues to mine light and wonder where previously these could not be seen, stirred from the modalities surrounding his biography and his environment. There is now an added chapter to the ongoing silent epic work, "ADVENTURES OF THE EXQUISITE CORPSE," Part V, "THE LIGHTED FIELD."

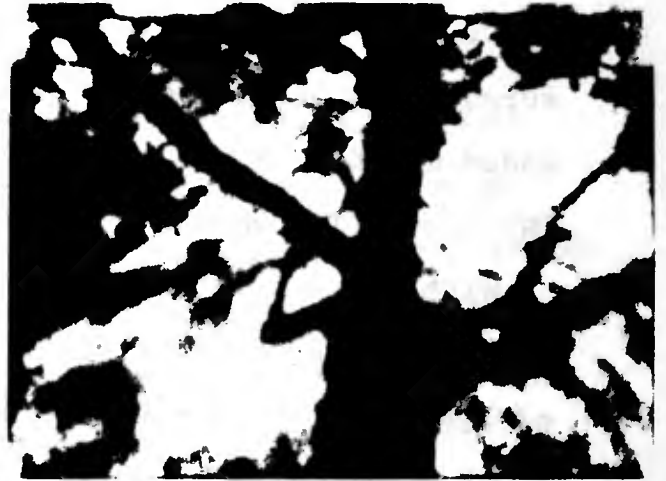
With the making of Part IV, "CHARMED PARTICLES," Noren had abandoned use of color film, opting for a hard-edged universe of black and white with use of extremely high-contrast camera stock. This newest chapter, also speaking black and white, fathoms and explores as well the in-between worlds of greys. Noren follows through with pixilated light and shadow happenings that illuminate and often compress in time his visually demonstrable ability to extract poetry as working truth from familiar situations.

In this film the viewer is initiated with an image of a pool of water seen in closeup, catching heavy downpour of more rain. We next see feather-textured dueling shafts of light, followed by the artist's first self-portrait reference, here a view of the film-maker asleep in high-key contrast tones. One surmises as the thread that binds an ongoing dream motif, given the body of non-linear joinings and purposefully placed images that articulate spatially, each joined image eluding "common" sense.

As in at least one prior chapter in "THE EXQUISITE CORPSE" series, there are various beginning images that use found or "rescued" film scenes to delineate many beginning/ending points, affirming for us understandings of different forms of conscious-

# ARTFORUM

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



Andrew Noren, *The Lighted Field*, 1987, stills from black-and-white film in 16 mm, 61 mins.

## SAN FRANCISCO

### Andrew Noren, *The Lighted Field*

SAN FRANCISCO CINEMATHEQUE

For all of its intoxicated virtuosity, or maybe because of it, Andrew Noren's *The Lighted Field*, 1987, strikes the eye as a latter-day "early" film. Its surface energies are sparked from a retrenchment in cinematic self-consciousness; it has the novelty of a

quasi-primal proposition about film's transforming capabilities and reflexivity. Since transformation is Noren's theme, to watch him fire up those capabilities and mobilize them is to be transfixed by a magic-lantern display of recorded light and shadow outstripping solid matter in a rapture of shared deliquescence.

*The Lighted Field* is a silent, tightly built, 61-minute crescendo arrangement of accumulated black-and-white footage, some of it personal, some retrieved from the newsreel archive where Noren works. Although there is no plot (and no titles or credits either), the elements of a story line—an improvised parable or thesis—are strung together and suspended in a choppy succession of frame-to-frame phenomena.

The film begins with a close-up play of light on water. From there, it charges through variations on ephemeral motifs: a gauze curtain shunting daylight at diverse angles around an open window, a sleeping man and colie on a bed, train shadows across an elevated transit platform, an incandescent array of glassware stacked in a dish drainer, a pair of vintage 1940s fluoroscopic skeletons in motion, a woman whispering a secret in a boy's ear. One cut goes from a military execution by hanging to a couple of diving German shepherds in reverse motion above a stream, and another from a graveyard to a vegetable patch.

Diagrammatically, the succession is symmetrical and centrifugal: the rush of mostly single-frame images and spondaic cuts pivots on an episode of

silhouetted self-portraiture in an angular double mirror, a black-hole-cum-"Rorschach" scheme that divides both the film loop and its main character, the filmmaker's shadow, in two. That shadow self is also the film's regulating conceit; it's cast at other times on walls and gravestones, and in the final shot it melds with the dark side of a tree, one arm raised in triumph. Like much of what goes before, the upbeat ending has a chill factor.

The film's sluicelike dispersal grid abstracts, even as it triggers, the viewer's wonder. In this collision course of sights, the montage catches every image just ahead of, or behind, meaning. It leans stressfully on the metaphorical proclivity of film to become a memento mori—each frame closer to the last. The image world is a still life paradoxically animated by the shutter's brief click and then again kineticized by discrete frames falling against a beam of light. The ultimate agent of Noren's "field" is the projection screen from which high-contrast lights and darks rebound with intermittent slices, flares, and thuds. Thus, everything reflects its own existence as a haunted celluloid fiction, by turns melancholic and clinical: the drawer opening and closing with a cat in it is a kind of camera; people mounting the train platform are forms of footage; the entire film is a grave/garden. Noren himself says that *The Lighted Field* is "an alchemical fable," which rings true enough, given that alchemy's long-range goal is to memorize the cosmos while finalizing in spirit its present tense.

Reviewed by Bill Berkson.

June 16, 1988

SECOND SIGHTS:I

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR'S PREMIERES

PROGRAM

diary of an autistic child/part III/hard core holy family by Edwin Cariati  
16mm/silent/9 minutes.

"A devolutionary trek from the scintillation of single-frame to the rote recording of a pedestrian event." Edwin Cariati

Dante Quartet by Stan Brakhage. 1987. 16mm/silent/7 minutes.

"This hand-painted work, 6 years in the making (37 years in the studying of the Divine Comedy), demonstrates the earthly conditions of 'Hell', 'Purgatory', (or Transition) and 'Heaven' (or 'existence is song' which is the closest I presume a Heaven from my experience) as well as the mainspring of/from 'Hell' ('Hell spit flexion') in 4 parts which are inspired by the closed eye or hypnogogic vision created by those emotional states. Originally painted IMAX and Cinemascope, 70mm and 35mm. The paint-laden rolls have been carefully rephotographed and translated to 35mm and 16mm compilations by Dan Yanosky of Western Cine." Stan Brakhage

The Lighted Field: The Adventures of the Exquisite Corpse, Part V by Andrew Noren. 1987. 16mm/silent/61 minutes.

See attached articles by Bill Berkson and Gail Camhi. Camhi's article will be published in the forthcoming Cinematograph III.

"From Romance to Ritual, the title, was lifted from an anthropological text called From Ritual to Romance. Both anthropology and film are notorious for creating categories, or genres if you will, by which to represent human behavior, and the two together have created their own particular monster, ethnographic film. Peggy's films refer constantly to the traditions, or rituals you could say, of field research in anthropology, documentary and Super-8 as home movie.

"Like the premises of ethnographic film, Peggy goes out into the field to study (as opposed to staying home and recreating) the behavior patterns of the Other. She (and the ethnographer) do this by planting themselves in the midst of the field, engaging with the individual members of the culture they are studying, instead of maintaining a voyeuristic distance. Peggy's films are also referent to the rituals of Super-8 as home movie, rituals so codified that even now it is slightly mutinous and titillating to make or see a Super-8 film that exists for purposes other than the archives of the nuclear family..." - Jennifer Montgomery, Cinematograph Vol. 3 (in production)



## Film in the Arena of Art

June 13, 1988

### Film Presentation:

- 1) Dante Quartet by Stan Brakhage, 1987, 7 minutes, 16mm.  
"This hand-painted work, 6 years in the making (37 years in the studying of the Divine Comedy), demonstrates the earthly conditions of 'Hell', 'Purgatory', (or Transition) and 'Heaven' (or 'existence is song' which is the closest I presume a Heaven from my experience) as well as the mainspring of/from 'Hell' ('Hell spit flexion') in 4 parts which are inspired by the closed eye or hypnogogic vision created by those emotional states. Originally painted IMAX and Cinemascope, 70mm and 35mm. The paint-laden rolls have been carefully rephotographed and translated to 35mm and 16mm compilations by Dan Yanosky of Western Cine." - Stan Brakhage
  
- 2) Department of the Interior by Nina Fonoroff, 1986, 9 minutes, 16mm.  
"As a working principle, I had been thinking about the nature of 'echo', both as an acoustical and visual phenomenon. I had shot a small amount of footage in the suburban environment of upstate New York, and generated twice the amount on the optical printer. The soundtrack consists primarily of a recording of the opera by Gian Carlo Menotti, 'Amahl and the Night Visitors,' frequently recorded backwards. I hoped to rupture the attack/sustain/decay configuration of most sounds as we hear them; to defamiliarize material which seemed to adhere tenaciously to the demand for wholeness. My aim was not to 'represent' or 'express' a particular state of mind or emotion, but to endeavor (with no guarantee of success) to generate a set of possibilities for new connections between sensory experience and the experience of meaning." - Nina Fonoroff  
  
"Department of the Interior is full of repetitions, reinterpretations of the same shot of a building, a parking lot, a female mannequin -- sometimes a realistic black and white positive image and sometimes a stark, artificial negative. The film reflects that all too human tendency to re-evaluate a moment, a place or a person from the past with a different point of view each time it is remembered." - Lyme Sachs, Cinematograph Vol. 3 (in production)
  
- 3) From Romance to Ritual by Peggy Ahwesh, 1985, 21 minutes (10 minute excerpt), Super-8 mm.  
"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 storytelling and how they are at odds with the dominant history. Through my camera style I hope to maintain the privileged intimacy of home movies but with me behind the camera instead of 'daddy'." - Peggy Ahwesh.

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BAY AREA CONSORTIUM FOR THE VISUAL ARTS  
presents

ARTIST TO ARTIST SEMINAR #4  
**"FILM IN THE ARENA OF ART"**

a symposium to examine the role & prospects  
of personally made, non-commercial film  
in the contemporary art world

with

**Edith Kramer**, Director, Pacific Film Archive  
**Bob Riley**, Curator, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
**Mark Durant**, artist and critic  
**Michele Ellis**, Director, ProArts  
moderated by  
**Steve Anker**, Program Director, San Francisco Cinematheque

Audience participation encouraged

The symposium will be prefaced by a brief screening of  
significant films of the 1980's

**Monday, June 13, 1988**

**8:00 PM**

**ADMISSION FREE**

**[seating is limited]**

**Eye Gallery**  
**1151 Mission St. (between 7th & 8th Streets)**  
**San Francisco**

For further information call BACVA: 415/981-3980

HOLLYWOOD'S GREAT ROMANTIC: 2 BY FRANK BORZAGE

June 12, 1988

A Man's Castle (1933) Direction: Frank Borzage. Script: Jo Swerling. Photography: Joseph August. Editing: Viola Lawrence. Music: Frank Harling and Bakaleinikoff. With Spencer Tracy (Bill), Loretta Young (Trina), Glenda Farrell (Fay la Rue), Walter Connolly (Ira), Arthur Hohl (Bragg), Marjorie Rambeau (Flossie, Dickie Moore (Crippled boy)). 75 min.

Moonrise (1949) Direction: Frank Borzage. Script: Charle Haas (from the novel by Theodore Straus). Photography: John L. Russel. Art direction: John McCarthy Jr. and George Sawley. Editing: Harry Keller. Music: William Lava ("The Moonrise Song" by Harry Tobias and William Lava. With Dane Clark (Danny Hawkins), Gail Russel (Gilly Johnson), Ethel Barrymore (Grandma), Allyn Joslyn (Clem Otis), Rex Ingram (Mose), Henry Morgan (Billy Scripture), David Street (Ken Williams), Selena Royle (Aunt Jessie). 90 min.

"One imagines that Frank Borzage has earned the title of "romantic" because so many of his best films (A Man's Castle; Little Man What New; History is Made at Night; I've Always Loved You) are about the triumph of a specific love relationship over a hostile world, or the apparent indifference of one of the individuals, or physical separation. At the end of His Butler's Sister, his heroine seems able to cross the separating space with such ease that it would appear that her love has compressed that separation into nothing. But in many of Borzage's other, and equally great films (Green Light, Strange Cargo, Moonrise, and Disputed Passage) the love relationship is not as necessary. The salvation of the characters in Green Light, Moonrise, or Disputed Passage is not specifically through love, but rather through the characters' conversion to, and belief in, an entire spiritual system... If, despite the inexactness of the distinction, we were to compare Borzage's "love" films with his "religious films", we might say that the religious films reveal that for him love, if it is a totally committed love, is implicitly, itself, a representation of spiritual transcendence.... In A Man's Castle Borzage develops many of the themes that occupy him in his other films--- individual pride and ego, its inherent limitations, and the necessity for the individual to go beyond it, often in order to enter into a love relationship."

(excerpts from 2 articles on Borzage by Fred Camper)

"Moonrise is probably Borzage's best known and most universally admired sound film. In many ways it is unlike any of his earlier works. Its plot, dealing with murder and guilt, departs dramatically from the simple love stories the director usually tells, and its heavily psychological approach to action and characterization seems unusual for a director who concerns himself more with the soul and heart than with the mind. Stylistically, Moonrise marks a visual revolution of sorts for Borzage, with its tremendously dynamic compositions, tight framing, and low key lighting.. Yet even though Moonrise looks different from Borzage's other work, it reveals as deep a commitment as ever to the concerns that occupy his other films.... in its movement from self imposed isolation to a timeless, weightless romantic union."

(from Hawks, Borzage, Ulmer by John Belton)

Films by Andre Zdravic

Sunhopsoon. 1976. color/sound/8min.

"Sunhopsoon was shot by the side of a railroad track. The light from a setting sun lurks between the cars of moving trains and hits the surrounding ground and vegetation as countless time-lapse rays. An incredible inventory of light sweeps take place. The light searching its way through panes of intertwined twigs, jumps and contorts itself into many unsuspected areas of the screen; successive lines of light ride on the ground toward the camera, or else it is a furtive image: a branch takes on the aspect of lightning. The rhythms and movements of the light.... are mesmerizing."

Vincent Grenier, Idiolects

Vesuvio. 1981. color/silent/10min.

"...quietly steaming, one feels the awesome underground forces within this slumbering giant." Carmen Vigil

New York Studies. 1977.(Parts II&V). silent/7min.

Phenix. 1975. color/sound on cassette/14min.

"Andre Zdravic brings to his work in film a rare sensitivity to visual and aural phenomena. Phenix, a film which graphically depicts the process of plastic surgery...is a disquietening work which places both the filmmaker and viewer face to face with the limits of physical existence... But, as the title suggests, Phenix expresses a commitment to life, to a reborn physicality. Zdravic engages the viewer of Phenix in a transcendent journey from the physical to the metaphysical, from the horrific to the sublime."

Bruce Jenkins, Beau Fleuve Journal

Kres. 1987. color/sound/5min.

"What is most striking about Zdravic's work ...is a vivid sense of how the frame of the screen traps- and thus compresses and heightens- the energy of movement. And there's a converse awareness of the ephemerality of his image-subjects which are destroyed and remade in movement."

Amy Taubin, Soho Weekly News

DANA PLAYS/ANDRE ZDRAVIC

June 9, 1988

Films by Dana Plays

Arrow Creek 1978 16mm color/sound 6 minutes

Filmed on the Crow Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana, during the annual Crow Fair, Arrow Creek leaves the smell of fry bread and temperatures of 105 in the shade to your imagination. -DP

Across the Border 1982 16mm color/sound 8 minutes

In Across the Border, filmmaker Dana Plays expresses her commitment to the culture of Latin America. More specifically, her film offers the viewer an unusual insight into the complex relationship between the people of El Salvador and the United States government. Completed in 1982, during a period in which many American artists were trying to convey their anger with their own country's politics, Across the Border transcends the conventions of social documentary as we have come to know it through public television. Instead, Plays manipulates visual elements that compose the image through coloring and fragmentation. She uses this process of deconstruction to lead to a greater understanding of those "man-made" constructs that are responsible for the oppression she has witnessed. But Plays' message is hardly dogmatic. The subtlety of her collage-like style suggests a very open message, giving the viewer the opportunity to enter the work as a thinking human being rather than a receptacle for one person's point of view. Dana Plays follows in the tradition of a cross cultural awareness expressed by other women filmmakers such as Maya Deren (Haiti), Margaret Mead (Bali, New Guinea) and Chick Strand (Mexico). - Lynn Sachs

Don't Means Do 1983 16mm color/sound 9 minutes

Part dramatic narrative, part improvisation, Don't Means Do explores the personalities and relationships of two young girls (Niessa Ferriolo and Brettaunia Park) and someone they meet while out walking. It is a picture of a simple and genuine encounter, in the light of a gentle summer afternoon, between the moods of child and adult. - David Heintz

Via Rio 1985 16mm color/sound 7 minutes

Via Rio is an ode to our human desire for relationship. The film tumbles through a series of relationships woven around one woman's narration of her parents' marriage. This woman (played by Lilian Mafra) is a fresh and fecund personality who relates the story of her mother's infidelities while sitting naked and pregnant in a garden.

Interspersed around this narrative are a number of other scenes which feed the complex nature of human interaction. Interaction that is sometimes comic, sometimes lonely, but as the very pregnant Mafra indicates - inevitably part of life.

Dana Plays' film seems to stem from contemporary feminist philosophy. This point of view theorizes that while men may experience relationships as a tension between unification and/or annihilation of the self with others - women, by virtue of their ability to bear children, experience relationships as an outgrowth of being connected with others from the onset. Yet Via Rio is far from didactic. Like the garden itself, relationships are seen as both full of flowers and weeds. -Frances De Vuono

Shards 1988 16mm color/sound 5 minutes

Exploring formal concepts of filmmaking by examining the film frame, broken sequences and excerpts of filmed realities, Shards questions ideas of wholeness and reconstruction in the film form. -DP

(over)

June 4, 1988

COLD EYE AND A HARD LOOK

Super 8 from Boston

Tonight's program features mostly new super 8 films selected by Boston filmmaker Saul Levine, whose influence has helped make that city one of the most productive arenas for super 8 filmmaking in the country. "Current in screening rooms, lofts and cellars, these works turn a cold eye at super 8 and a hard look at the representation of intimacy, sexuality, and privacy in a world of escalating surveillance management. Though presenting bleak vistas, these films are filled with wit, laughter, and music."

Saul Levine

PROGRAM

Red Rooster by Tom Rhoads. 18fps, sound, 6 min.

Going to the Dogs by Joe Gibbons. 18fps, sound, 19 min.

Scrape by Saul Levine. 18fps, sound, 3 min.

Schmateh IV by Saul Levine. 18fps, sound, 3 min.

Elvis Unchained by Grace by Dana Moser. 24fps, sound, 4 min.

Crime Home Movie by Dana Moser. 18fps, sound, 7 min.

Spying by Joe Gibbons. 18fps, sound, 25 min.

,nor by Pelle Lowe. 18fps, sound, 7 min.

Rah Rah Rah by Tom Rhoads. 18fps, silent, 20 min.

Talking To Myself by Anne Robertson. 18fps, sound, 5 min.

The Original Sin/Reproduction by Silvia Gruner. 18fps, silent, 3 min.

Nancy and Baby Al by Ann Steurnagle. 18fps, silent, 2½ min.

May 29, 1988

SEXISM, COLONIALISM, MISREPRESENTATION II

Curated by Berenice Reynaud and Yvonne Rainer

The series, "Sexism, Colonialism, Misrepresentation," curated by filmmaker Yvonne Rainer and critic Berenice Reynaud, took place at the Collective for Living Cinema from April 25 to May 8, 1988. It was designed to present "the voices of those - women, people of color, Third World filmmakers - who have been constructed as 'the Other' in mainstream culture. This second adaptation of that program presents two films which "depict how social practices construct women as 'foreigners' in a patriarchal world "(Berenice Reynaud) and was selected by Reynaud.

PROGRAM

A Girl's Own Story by Jane Campion. (Australia, 1984, 27min.)

This is a unique impressionistic rendering of the life of an Australian teenager: Beatles, convent school, and incest.

Jane Campion was born in New Zealand. She first studied anthropology in Wellington, then Fine-Arts in London and Sydney, before enrolling in the Australian School of Film and Television from 1981 to 1984. During that time, she directed a video piece, Peel(1981) and three shorts: Passionless Moments(1983-84), A Girl's Own Story(1983-84) and Mishaps of Seduction and Conquest(1984). In 1985, she directed a documentary, After Hours and one episode of a T.V. series, Dancing Daze. In 1986, she directed her first feature, Two Friends.

Sea of Roses by Ana Carolina. (Brazil, 1977, 90min.)

Starring famous Brazilian actress and filmmaker Norma Benguel.

"A major new talent in Latin America cinema. Her films combine the wild extravagant exuberance of Brazilian cinema with questions surrounding the feminine in her culture." Piers Handling

"Sea of Roses is the funniest movie ever directed by a woman."

Paula Jacques

Ana Carolina Teixeira first studied medicine, then began her directing career in documentaries. She later realized five feature-length fiction films, including: Getulio Vargas(1975), Nelson Pereira dos Santos pede Passagem(1976), Mar de Roses (Sea of Roses, 1977), Das Tripas Coracao(Heart and Guts, 1981) and Sonho de Valsa (Dream Waltz, 1987.)

FIRST EXPOSURES: NEW FILMS & VIDEOTAPES

May 28, 1988

-- Curated by Jeanne Finley & Lynn Kirby

PROGRAM

O Magnum Mysterium by Dewayne Lumpkin, mixed-media installation.

Last Saturday Night by Dewayne Lumpkin, mixed-media installation.

Night for Night by Dewayne Lumpkin, mixed-media installation.

An I for an I by Larry Andrews, videotape, 18 min.

Mirror, Mirror by Paula Levine, videotape, 3 min.

She Was Looking for the Perfect Relationship by Victoria Beardon, videotape, 9 min.

Coming Soon by Jason Simon, videotape, 5 min.

My Old Friend by Phil Elie, videotape, 4 min.

Laundromatte by Paul McLeod, videotape, 5 min.

When I Was Twelve by Lily Hotchkiss, 16mm film, 7 min.

The Not-Self on Easy Street by Laurie Bernard, 16mm, 3 min.

Heart Like a Little Fist by Ted White, 16mm, 6 min.

Soft Chains by Leslie Alperin, 16mm, 5 min.

Untitled by Zoe Vivino & Hrafnhildur Gunnarsdattir, 16mm, 10 min.

There will be a wine reception for the artists following  
the program.



Pauline by Sharon Couzin. (1985, 16mm, b&w, sound, 22min.)

"Pauline is a film which explores the friendship of two artists, obliquely, through the exploration of a house, a garden and a painting. The qualities of light and time are used to heighten the properties simple acts and objects may take on, when mediated by these two elements. The primary subject of the film, then, is not an event, nor a story, but a sense of an artist's process and her relation to the world. The film was shot in black and white and altered rhythmically through simple optical printing. The sound includes excerpts from George Crumb's The Voices of Ancient Children and Morton Subotnick's Prelude No.4 for Piano and Electronic Tape.

Sharon Couzin

May 26, 1988

PORTRAITS AND REMINISCENCES

BY LARRY GOTTHEIM, SHARON COUZIN, VINCENT GRENIER & PHIL WEISMAN

PROGRAM

t. and the small picture frame by Phil Weisman. (1986, 16mm, b&w, sound, 12min.)

"This film is similar to a slide 'home movie picture show', it being more in the tradition of amateur portrait presentation than anything else. It is, of course, a loving portrait of my family, however tinged beneath a veil of youthful ambivalence." Phil Weisman

I.D. Part 3 (Milton) by Vincent Grenier. (1988, 16mm, b&w, sound, 17min.)

I.D. was filmed in Binghamton, N.Y. and is composed of 4 parts. Part 3 was produced with the help of the Canada Council and features Milton Kessler.

"In I.D. I tried to find a symbiosis to many different ideas and concerns I have been entertaining for a number of years. A driving interest in this film has been the raw material of conflicts between persona and the individual qualities of a person. Also an interest in superimposition partly as a disruptive device equally metaphorical of conflicts between interior and exterior spaces. The use of synch-sound 'reality' with an eye on tension between offscreen and screen spaces. Lip-synch is used in counterpoint mostly. The procedure for the film involved interviewing people with relatively uninhibited and expressive personalities. I asked them about events which made them feel estranged and alienated from things or people around them. Most talked about traumatic events although it was not necessarily what I was seeking. From these conversations, physical contexts were sought for their interactive possibilities. The participants were exposed to situations that were partly uncomfortable. The camera does not simply prod but is also an active participant; not so much to render meaning full but to appreciate and transpose."

Vincent Grenier

The Red Thread by Larry Gottheim. (1987, 16mm, color, sound, 17min.)

"Mostly shot in San Francisco and Northern California, material filmed (using the camera almost as a p(r/a)inter, a means of shaping the visual world as film, but without reflection) in response to what that world was opening in me. 'Material'!.... analogies between weaving and spinning thread and images already a pattern within film history (e.g. in Deren) is here carried into further ramifications of unravelling and patterning in fabric - and cinema-making, as well as in personal and mythic dimensions. The open unfolding structure, which pulls away from the balanced design of much of my work, gives equal weight to the sound composition. Involves 'opening' with its perils and ambiguities."

Larry Gottheim

A Song of Ceylon by Laleen Jayamanne. (Australia, 1986, 51min.)

Laleen Jayamanne is a Sri-Lanka born academic and filmmaker living in Sidney, Australia. She is currently at work on a new film, Rehearsing, conceived as a sequel to A Song of Ceylon.

About A Song of Ceylon: "This process is also that of conjuring up the Other. Male artists and philosophers have gained much mileage through the fabulation of Women as Other. Women working in processes of symbolization can learn a thing or two from this, not however by simply reversing that very same logic of opposition. Rather, what is sought after is something partial, fragmented, in order to arouse interest. It may not be such a bad idea to try and make man strange and unfamiliar (defamiliarise) in much the same way that Russian Formalists conceived of the poetic function of language. Those women who may have various complicated investments in male sexuality may profitably redirect their energies from only parodying sexist behaviour in men to something that produces male bodies and voices in surprising configuration. Not all filmmakers would be interested in this kind of work; nor is this a plea against parody. It is more a question of preference, for it is a pity not to use the possibilities of cinema for producing ambivalent representations of bodies."

Nami Schor

in The Female Body in Western Culture, Susan Suleiman, ed.

Quoted by Laleen Jayamanne, Screen

May 22, 1988

SEXISM, COLONIALISM MISREPRESENTATION I

Guest curators: Berenice Reynaud and Yvonne Rainer

This series, curated by Berenice Reynaud and Yvonne Rainer, took place at the Collective for Living Cinema in New York from April 25 to May 8, 1988. It was designed to present "the voices of those - women, people of color, Third World filmmakers - who have been constructed as 'the Other' in mainstream culture. Tonight's program is the first of two adapted from this series (the second will be screened on May 29) and focusses on the cinematic gaze as a tool of sexist and colonialist oppression." Berenice Reynaud

PROGRAM

Nice Colored Girls by Tracy Moffatt. (Australia, 1986. 13min.)

Tracy Moffatt is an Aboriginal photographer and filmmaker. She studied Visual Communication at Queensland College of the Arts, majoring in Film and Video Production. Based in Sydney for the last 4 years, she has worked in many Aboriginal communities around Australia as an independent film and video maker and photographer. Arrested for taking part in a demonstration protesting the "celebration" of the Australian Bicentenary in Portsmouth, England, she said "Why should we Aboriginals be there to celebrate the arrival of backward Englishmen into our traditional land 200 years ago?...The settlers wiped out whole races of Aborigines, yet here in Portsmouth it is being glorified. It makes me particularly angry when at home my people are struggling for just compensation in the form of land rights for the theft of their land; when our infant mortality rate is the highest in the world; when currently, according to the police, Black youths are mysteriously hanging themselves in the jails of the red-neck territories of North Queensland."

Nice Colored Girls "explores attitudes between European men and Aboriginal women in an historical and contemporary context, in doing so attempts to question the seemingly established structures of previous Aboriginal films."

Similola Coker

Special thanks to Barbara Edols, Lisa Taylor and Victoria Treole.

\* \* \* \* \*

Phoelix by Anna Ambrose. (England, 1979, 47min.)

An elegant fantasy from director Anna Ambrose, who tragically died at the age of 40, Phoelix is an inventive and intricate drama exploring the relationship between a young actress and an elderly neighbour. An adult fairy tale, carefully weaving daydream and reality in and out of each other.

Director/Writer .....Anna Ambrose  
Production.....Margaret Williams  
Photography.....Peter Harvey, Steve Dwoskin  
Sound.....Mick Audsley  
Editing.....Charles Rees, Anna Ambrose

Special Thanks to Nigel Algar.

May 19, 1988

THE MAGIC AND ALCHEMY OF

HARRY SMITH

"His works to date form an even more complete paradigm than Maya Deren's for the historical evolution of the American avant-garde film...Smith's earliest films (made throughout the 1940's) arise from the Bauhaus tradition of formal composition and illusory depth through color and shape. Smith's work is vitalized by a serious commitment to the textural surface of the film material itself (he paints, glues, scratches the raw material) for which his ability to invent and master graphic techniques distinguish him.

Between 1950 and 1960, Smith worked on a long animated film, literally a surrealist cartoon of epic proportions. He has given us in this film a twentieth century inflection of "The Immortal Journey" - in the tradition of Dante, Milton, and Blake. By the time he finished the film, which is sometimes called Heaven and Earth Magic or The Magic Feature, the New American Cinema had entered into its mythopoeic stage. His latest film, Late Superimpositions(1964), an autobiographical fragment, brings us to the diary form which has been a major development of the late 60's." Jonas Mekas

"My cinematic excreta is of four varieties: - batiked abstractions made directly on film between 1939 and 1946; optically printed non-objective studies composed around 1950; semi-realistic animated collages made as part of my alchemical labors of 1957 to 1962; and chronologically superimposed photographs of actualities formed since the latter year. All these works have been organized in specific patterns derived from the interlocking beats of the respiration, the heart and the EEG Alpha component and should be observed together in order ..for they are valuable works, works that will live forever - they made me gray."

comments by Harry Smith

PROGRAM

Early Abstractions (23min/silent)

Late Superimpositions (31min.)

Heaven and Earth Magic (66min.)

## BETZY BROMBERG

Saturday, May 14, 1988

### Ciao Bella, 1978, 13 min.

A personal film about love and mortality. (B.B.) "Ciao Bella is a summer-in-the-city travelogue that mixes verite of Lower East Side bikers, Times Square topless dancers, and Coney Island crowds to achieve a highly charged atmosphere of manic exhibitionism and sexual raunch." - J. Hoberman, American Film.

### Marasmus, 1981, 24 min.; made in collaboration with Laura Ewig.

A woman's response to technology/the jet-lag of birth. (B.B.) "Although the title refers to a condition of acute malnutrition in which a child is unable to assimilate food, the film is a robust and sumptuous offering. This is no rough-edged, craft-resistant effort. Rather it is infused with a seductive glamour." - Janis Crystal Lipzin, Artweek.

### Body Politic (god melts bad meat), 1988, 39 min.

Body Politic (god melts bad meat) travels through a realm of modern moral dilemma as it examines the relationship between high-technology medicine, religion, politics and the American family. (B.B.) "With her typical serious-humor, Bromberg explores both the claims of science (we can improve human life) and the claims of religion (God made perfect beings) and implicitly asks the question, 'How do we know when we've gone too far?'...There's no voice-over and the argument is made by an athletic juxtaposition of imagery and testimony." - Helen Knode, L.A. Weekly

A wine reception for the artist will follow the screening.

**'UNSPOKEN' □ *Michael Maziere* 1987**

"An intimate portrait of looks and moments, a diary of gestures." The image as the example for the obsessive is the thing itself. The lover is thus an artist; and his world is in fact a world reversed, since each image is its own end (nothing beyond the image). Fragments of 'Lovers Discourse', *Roland Barthes*

**'THE DESCENT OF THE SEDUCTRICE' □ *Jean Mathee* 1987**

The films of *Jean Mathee* address particularly the notion of identification, the impossibility of fantasy and the failure of the image. In her work she uses images of 'femme fatale' or 'seductress' from Hollywood cinema, manipulates them and transforms them to emphasize "the word and law which relies on the predominantly masculine structure of the look."

**'SWIMMER' □ *Michael Maziere* 1987**

"A beautiful photographic quality characterised *Michael Maziere's* 'SWIMMER' which used freeze frame and repeat shots of a swimmer in what could be described as Mediterranean sea and light. With a fractured 'found' soundtrack, what it lacked in depth it made up for in its surface tension. *Art Monthly*

**'MYTHS AND LEGENDS' □ *Pier Wilkie* 1987**

"Two images: one from the past, creating a nostalgia which affects our present, the other a modern image reclaiming a hidden perspective on the same past and present...." The film does not resolve the political and historical situation, but instead places us in a difficult and unreconciled position as both images confront each other with their own mythologies.

**'SERMON' □ *Nik Gordon Smith* 1987**

The scent of apples-the laden vines-the flowing milk-the brimming honey-the Yucca forest filled with predators-saturated in colour.

**programme notes written and compiled by MICHAEL MAZIERE**

# NEW UNDERGROUND FILMS FROM L O N D O N



Introduced and selected by **MICHAEL MAZIERE**

A programme of new British avant-garde film which focuses on contemporary concerns with image, aesthetics and questions of identity. The films use a number of experimental techniques manipulating the images through colouring, degradation, video effects and lighting to create a rich and intense visual event. From exploration into narrative and allegory, subjectivity and fantasy the films represent the imagist tendency in British avant garde film.



'OM' □ *John Smith* 1986

A new piece by leading humorist of the British avant-garde with a surprise ending.

'BEHIND CLOSED DOORS' □ *Anna Thew* 1986

In 'Behind Closed Doors' the subject of death is dealt with in a personal and metaphorical way mixing images inspired by Dante's 'Inferno' with recollections and dreams to provide an abstract collage of associations. The voice over reads from a number of texts (Dante, the film-maker's note books and others), whilst the sound creates a disturbing vocabulary of nostalgia alluding to a variety of spaces and moments which remain fleeting, tentative and uncohesive.

'MESSAGE FROM BUDAPEST' □ *Michael Maziere & Moira Sweeney* 1987

A poetic and ironic tribute to the city of Budapest, using footage filmed on the Mayday workers festival and archival photographs from the turn of the century. A celebration of the city akin to the 'City Symphonies' of the '20's and 30's with the iconography of Eastern Europe, it's architecture, trams, and people; set in a series of fleeting glimpses and rhythmical paces. The fragmented voice track was written and spoken by *Nick Thorpe*, friend and foreign correspondent in Budapest.





## George Kuchar: Cinematheque

## THE WINTER TAPES

8mm video diaries of  
George KucharRainy Season (about 25 minutes)

This is part of my holiday series as Thanksgiving is embedded in this production which is sort of bleak in outlook. There's shots of food and hints of sex ~~and~~ <sup>but</sup> the dampness aggravates the rotting tendencies of both pleasures so the joy is short-lived in this tape.

Mecca of the Frigid (15 <sup>about</sup> minutes)

Winter is in full swing in Milwaukee as I visit the University of Wisconsin and drop in on Bob Nelson to see what he's up to. There is life beneath the frozen exteriors.

Return to the House of Pain (about 25 minutes)

Snow coats the "big apple" as we descend into the halls of the Millennium and then surface back in the "golden state" which is tarnished with gastric distress.

Xmas - New Years (about 15 minutes)

Happiness returns ~~to~~ to the season of merriment as a fireplace burns, Christmas lights bubble and living things chomp on things that once lived also.

## RECENT HUNGARIAN FILMS

--Antal István in person

- 1) Finger Wave (1986) by Gyula Nagy, 6 min., 16mm, color, sound.
- 2) Ethnogenesis (1987) by Third Line Manu Factory, 3 min., 16mm, b&w, sound.
- 3) Inauguration of Young Pioneers (1987) by György Árvay, 15 min., super-8, color, sound.
- 4) Piramidas (1984) by Ivan Ladislav Galeta, 12 min., 16mm, color, sound.
- 5) Clay (1972-87) by Ági Háý, 2 min., 16mm, b&w, sound.
- 6) Tweedle (1987) by László Révész and János Sugár, 5 min., 16mm, b&w, sound.
- 7) Bolsevita (1988) by Dr. P. Horváth, 5 min., 16mm, b&w sound.
- 8) The Black Cat (1987) by Antal István, 11 min., 16mm, b&w, sound.

**San Francisco Cinematheque**  
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# FIRST EXPOSURES

April. 23

- "1/1" 3min Silent 16mm  
HIROMI MATSUOKA
- "Portrait mit Huhn" 4min Sound 16mm  
INES SOMMER
- "URBAN PRAYER" 7min Silent 16mm  
PETER MAKEPEACE
- "ANAMORPHOSIS" 9:40 VIDEO TAPE  
REX REY
- "CLAUDIA" 7:50min VIDEO TAPE  
CELILLIA DOUGHERTY
- "DOSSIER" 12min SOUND 16mm  
WILLIAM DALL
- "WA/RAN" 5min VIDEO TAPE  
PAULA LEVINE
- "EVOLUTION" 2min. VIDEO TAPE  
"Untitled" 1 min  
"Untitled" 1 min TOSHI ONUKI
- "REDS & BLUES" 6 1/2 min Silent 16mm  
HIROMI MATSUOKA.
- "LITTLE PIECES" 1 1/2 min Sound 16mm  
PETER MAKEPEACE

## BEFORE WE KNEW NOTHING

By Diane Kitchen

Thursday, April 21, 1988

Before We Knew Nothing by Diane Kitchen, 1988, 62 minutes; World Premiere.

"In filming Before We Knew Nothing Diane Kitchen spent 7 months in the jungles of Peru sharing in the life of the Ashaninka Indians. The film has an obvious interest for the anthropologist, however it is important to grasp that this is not an anthropological film but rather a film that uses the medium to raise questions about the nature of anthropological understanding. The anthropologist who makes use of film and a filmmaker like Diane Kitchen approach their tasks in ways that are necessarily different. As used by the anthropologist, the camera is an instrument for recording data which then becomes processed and ordered and then fed back into an anthropological discourse that has its own separate order of priorities. By contrast, a filmmaker like Ms. Kitchen uses the camera to present and introduce images; moreover, images which have their own order of understanding and which she does not presume to have completely understood. In her film, the presence of the camera is neither hidden nor flaunted; rather the camera is placed in such a way that its field of vision does not become hegemonic. This gives her images a very distinctive quality: they give us not a clinical visual 'record' of the life of the Ashaninka but an involved interrogation of that life. Thus, on the one hand her images have a speculative fugitive feel to them: the stills of faces that stare out at us, the shots of immobile forests or fast-flowing streams, the scenes of daily activity or of childbirth: all these images which produce in the viewer alternating responses of insight or puzzlement, or both at the same time; how much of the meaning of these images has the viewer actually absorbed? On the other hand her images are scrupulously matter-of-fact, devoid of 'poeticisms'. They make us see what is in front of us as if for the first time. In this way, the filmic images become, for the filmmaker and the viewer, the means by which a non-reductive and non-ethnocentric understanding of others may be constructed."

--Ackbar Abbas

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of a world twisting to see itself in so many deceiving mirrors, so Lewis is an  
adman's man, a robot degenerate over-programmed by the conflicting gods of  
Americana, made schizoid by the clash of material luxuries and abstract ideals."

- David Thomson.

"I don't want to sound pontifical, but I guess I talk about the nonsense of  
what we call civilization. This utter nonsense about leisure. I think we're  
the only country that takes good wheat and refines it down into white flour,  
taking all the nourishment out of it, and then adds Vitamin B to make it good  
for you." - Frank Tashlin, interviewed by Peter Bogdanovich.

Idiot Savants programmed and program notes provided by Peter Herwitz.

## IDIOT SAVANTS: PASOLINI'S HAWKS AND SPARROWS &

### TASHLIN'S WHO'S MINDING THE STORE?

Hawks and Sparrows (Uccellacci e Uccellini), 1966, written and directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, photographed by Mario Bernardo and Tonino Delli Colli, edited by Nino Baragli, music by Ennio Morricone, costumes by Danilo Donati, 86 min. Featuring Toto (Innocenti Toto and Brother Ciccillo), Ninetto Davoli (Innocenti Ninetto and Brother Ninetto), Femi Benussi (luna), Rossana Di Rocco (friend of Ninetto), Lena Lin Solaro (Uganda La Sconosciuta).

"In 1965 Pasolini had the idea for a film which he described as being 'in prose': Hawks and Sparrows. The comic spirit transmuted the prose into poetry...The theme of the film is classical, among the most classical in literature - the theme of the quest. Toto and Ninetto set out on the highroads of the world and of history in search of material and moral nourishment. They are Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, but of course, since this is a film, they are also Charlie Chaplin...The two characters travel through 'the crisis of ideologies' seeking through the words of their author a possible continuity with the world of fine hopes of the Resistance.

"Is the journey therefore 'elegaic' and 'nostalgic'? Yes, in the sense that this elegy was the measure of Pasolini's smile. In the fable the rawness of Pasolini's despair found a moment of repose, if not of resolution." - Enzo Siciliano, Pasolini.

"The poignant expression of an author who good-naturedly peers at the vast ranges of an horizon stretching above and beyond incidental, shifting, and transitory events, in the hopes of finding, as a man, intelligent bearings in the immensity of time and history." - Roberto Rossellini.

Who's Minding the Store?, 1963, directed by Frank Tashlin, written by Tashlin and Harry Tugend, photographed by Wallace Kelly, music by Joseph J. Lilley, 90 min. Featuring Jerry Lewis (Norman Phiffier and T.V. Doctor), Jill St. John (Barbara Tuttle alias Fullero), Agnes Moorehead (Phoebe Tuttle), John McGiver (Mr. Tuttle), Ray Walston (Mr. Quimby).

"Jerry Lewis has maintained the American comic preoccupation with the little man beset by an incomprehensible, heartless or intractable world. Keaton responds with disdain, Harry Langdon day-dreams, Stan Laurel muddles through while Chaplin practices all the guile and simpering of a waiter who plans to whip away the fat man's chair. Jerry Lewis's response is as novel as it is alarming: he becomes demented...no other performer has gone so far in suggesting a man animated by machinery or by the processing of human instincts implicit in advertising. Lewis' period with Tashlin was instrumental in drawing out this gibbering, spastic automaton...Just as Tashlin's movies are cartoon distortions

### -OVER-

San Francisco Cinematheque  
480 Potrero Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 558-8129

A Project of the  
Foundation for Art in Cinema

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who might one day steal them away. On a night in 1981, the "enemy" struck in a blaze of white light and the Guardians were defeated...Only two of them survived in their hilltop hut, thinking back to their training, their graduation, and the night the "enemy" struck.

Seeming (Mistula), 1987, 15 mins., 16mm.

"The Story is about an artist in search of his audience..." - Raymond Red. The film is about a young violinist who tries to reach out of his private world by playing spontaneous, improvisational music. But his father is irritated by the "noise" he creates all day and nags him to stop. Driven out of his home by his father's incessant scolding, the young violinist walks through the busy and noisy city to a dense forest of towering trees. In the calmness of a small clearing, his violin playing leads him into a private world. At the end he is ambiguously left standing in a theatre to the sound of applause created by the rain.

Raymond Red was born in Manila, Philippines, in 1965. He attended the National Art Center on Mount Makiling from 1978 to 1982, and majored in Visual Arts. He went on to study film at the University of the Philippines Film Center from 1982 to 1983. He continued studying film at workshops organized by the independent Mowelfund Film Institute where he has also worked as a film production instructor.

His films have been shown and praised extensively in numerous Short Film and Independent Film Festivals in Manila; Hong Kong International Film Festival; Berlin, Hawaii and Edinburgh International Film Festivals; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; Torino Film Festival, Torino, Italy; Bruxelles Super-8 Film Festival; Pia Film Festival, Tokyo; and on tour in West Germany.

Red is currently working on two new films - a feature film in Super-8mm set in contemporary Manila, and The Skies (Ang Himpawid), a 16mm feature film about flying in turn-of-the-century Philippines.

Raymond Red will also present his films at the Pacific Film Archive on Tuesday, March 29th at 7:30 p.m.

## RAYMOND RED - SUPER-8 FILMS

Sunday, March 27, 1988

A Special Collaboration of the San Francisco International Film Festival and the San Francisco Cinematheque.

Filmmaker Raymond Red from The Philippines in Person.

"Raymond Red, a 23 year-old Filipino, works in Super-8, and achieves a level of technical sophistication that you would not have believed possible. The Enemy (Kabaka, 1983, 23 mins.) is something like an autobiography transmuted into elegiac science-fiction. The Yawn (Ang Hikab, 1984, 15 mins.) is a vignette about sleep, dreams, and insomnia that would make Beckett proud. Kind (Kamada, 1984, 25 mins.) is a naturalistic drama about a student, a sick man, and a rented room, with disturbing and seemingly boundless undertones. There is something rare and wonderful about Raymond Red's movies, all the more piercing because it is so unexpected. The sheer beauty of these films moves me to tears." - Tony Rayns, Edinburgh Film Festival.

Sketches, 1987, 12 mins., Super-8mm.

A film in three short parts that takes a humorous look at the filmmaker's experience of Filipino life. "Sardinas" is a sketch on the unique mode of transport found throughout the Philippines, the Jeepney; "Paper" tells of one man's extraordinary encounter with a sheet of paper; "Balot" is a satirical account of one evening in the life of a vendor of a Filipino street delicacy, the Balot - a duck egg that is eaten whole.

Kind (Kamada), 1984, 25 mins., Super-8mm.

A seemingly naturalistic drama set in a magically conjured 1950s that takes on increasingly disturbing undertones as it moves to its climax. Music student Julian, in search of a quiet lodging where he can write and practice the violin, rents a room from Mrs. Silling. But the room already has an occupant: a man whose name may be Pedro, who never speaks, but has an ominous cough...

The Yawn (Ang Hikab), 1984, 15 mins., Super-8mm.

An astonishing vignette about a sleeper and an insomniac, which manages to evoke both Beckett and Borges in the space of only 15 minutes. In a research study done by psychologists, a number of subjects disclosed that they spend more time asleep than awake, simply because they seem to live happier lives in their dreams...

The Enemy (Kabaka), 1983, 23 mins., Super-8mm

An elegiac science-fiction fable: Years ago, a school was established atop a mountain to train dedicated young men to become Guardians of the Stars of the Eastern Skies. The Stars were believed to be in danger from an unknown "enemy",



Gutman notes (cont.)

Clarke. It's hard to put a tag on it--in a scholarly moment it might be called in the tradition of the Picaresque; maybe it's somewhat punk; Whitehall wrote: "The only way I can convey something of the film's quality is to say that it is a 'Finnegan's Wake' of the movies." (LA Free Press) "Its improbable humor will probably establish it as an underground classic...The illustrated stream-of consciousness narrative with Gutman droning on, rumbling off into 180-degree tangents is often soporific, but more often very funny, both intentionally and unintentionally, and surprisingly philosophic and perceptive." (Variety) Finally, Vincent Canby in the NY Times: "The climactic scene of the film is a grape-filled orgy in which Gutman and his leading lady strip (she completely, he at first only to his blue cotton Bloomingdale's boxer shorts) and rub grapes over their bodies. The movie, funny in a mock-horrible way, is another example of the underground movie-as-exorciser of reality."

Notes by Michael Wallin



Walter Gutman in NYC in 1983 with blow-up from film of woman friend.

Program Notes: March 24, 1988

## FILMS BY WALTER GUTMAN

Tonight's program of films is dedicated to the memory of Walter Gutman, who was 83 when he died last April in New York City. Before he turned filmmaker at age 65, he had already had careers as an art critic (for *The Nation* and *New Republic*), Wall Street commentator (*The Gutman Letter* combined tips on the market with philosophical, witty commentary on the arts, history, women, poetry, politics), philanthropist, art collector, and film producer (Robert Frank's *PULL MY DAISY* and *SIN OF JESUS*, George Kuchar's *UNSTRAP ME*, in which he also acted). As a filmmaker, Gutman made eighteen 16mm films, eight of them feature-length, between 1968 and 1981. He was director, producer, sometime actor, always soundtrack commentator. Gutman dealt with his favorite personal obsessions in his work. Historical figures (Martha Washington, Benedict Arnold, Sappho) and events (the American Revolution, WWI); female bodybuilders, acrobats, and circus performers. But these are not objective documentaries. They are glimpses into the private world of a very singular individual--a very warm, honest, and witty man.

### HANDS DOWN (1983), 6 min./silent

The heroine in Mary Lou Harmel who is the dominatrix in *CLOTHED IN MUSCLE*...Also featured is a rag doll and my forearm which Mary Lou in a hand wrestling match puts down...Everyone is amused by it. It's quite erotic--but also quiet. ---WG

### IT HAPPENED IN SARASOTA (1980), 18 min./sound

...Filmed about six or seven years ago but edited and given a narration and music in 1979. As the voice over explains it is a film showing friends of mine practicing some acts at their home in Sarasota. The Chapmans--Sarah and Danny were with the Ringling show when I met them--Danny's daughter by his first wife, also a circus acrobat--was a glowering sub-teenager but developed in that startling way that women do, from a rat to a gorgeous, mysterious female. I guess that's what happened in Sarasota. ---WG

### THE GRAPE DEALER'S DAUGHTER (1968), 72 min./sound

Gutman wrote the story at the suggestion of the late Louis Brigante. Gutman and Brigante shared the filming; Brigante edited. Gutman narrated. Originally over 90 minutes, it was re-edited by Shirley

--over--

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The Children's Party. 1940's. Finished by Larry Jordan in 1968. Silent.

One of trilogy of films edited in different ways but drawn from the same material. Central to the film is the image of a girl with long hair riding a horse. The image is both erotic and innocent.

Jack's Dream. 1940's. Finished by Larry Jordan. Silent.

Puppet animation into which Cornell has inserted a few shots - just enough to throw it into the sphere of artful fantasy. - Larry Jordan.

Rose Hobart. 1936. Sound. Re-editing of George Melford's 1931 film, East of Borneo.

Cornell thought that Melford's sound film contained "passages to remind one....of the suggestive power of the silent film to evoke an ideal world of beauty." Cornell produced a startlingly original montage not unlike a labyrinth. He described the film as conspiring "to produce an effect such as seizes one with disturbing emotions." He juxtaposed the mismatched shots, the suddenly shifting locations, the eerily tinted material to two themes from Holiday in Brazil, played by Nestor Amaral and his Orchestra. The film is a remarkable foreshadowing of films made by avant-garde filmmakers in the years after 1936.

1. From an essay by P. Adams Sitney in Joseph Cornell, published by M.O.M.A, 1980

March 19, 1988  
San Francisco Art Institute

## JOSEPH CORNELL'S FOUND FOOTAGE FILMS

In the 1930's, Joseph Cornell (1903-1972) began making his found footage films. He was a maker of enigmatic and eccentric shadow boxes and a lover of cinema. As he collected artifacts and images for his boxes so he collected films for his cinematic endeavors. From these films, he fashioned a remarkable collection of films that are still being restored. Several films, viewed as broken and fragmentary pieces, were discovered to be clearly albeit crudely constructed montages and have been restored according to Cornell's instructions. The films from that collection shown tonight reveal Cornell's "passion for cinema that stubbornly persists in undermining our expectations and challenges our certitudes, by hinting that the very experience of cinema might have a dimension we would rather overlook." 1

### PROGRAM

Vaudeville De Luxe. 12 min. Restored in 1978. Silent.

Animal and acrobatic acts with a jolting insert from East of Borneo and steel refinery images from By Night With Torch and Spear.

Bookstalls. 11 min. Restored in 1978. Silent.

One of Cornell's most elegant and meticulously constructed films. A young boy in Paris in the 20's leafs through a book which takes him on a series of imaginary journeys around the world to return to the book-stall still holding the book. He wanders off, presumably to find another book at another bookstall.

By Night With Torch and Spear. 9 min. Restored in 1979. Silent.

Composed by intercutting tinted film stocks, upsidedown and backward images, negative shots, normal shots, and flashing titles. Ends with the words of the title preceding a shot of aborigines night fishing. The film can be projected again without rewinding to create a wonderful palindrome.

Thimble-Theater. 1940's. Finished by Larry Jordan. Silent.

Cornell pays homage to the 19th century film illusion machine, the praxinoscope. The viewer peeks through slots in a drum at images reflected in a circle of tiny mirrors, in this case - thimbles on needles.

## THE CONFESSIONS OF WINIFRED WAGNER

by HANS JURGEN SYBERBERG

San Francisco Art Institute

Thursday, March 17, 1988

Hans Jurgen Syberberg, known for his searing and unusual portraits of German culture in the films Our Hitler, Parsifal, The Night, Ludwig, Karl May, has made a film that records the 60 year recollections of Winifred Wagner, Richard Wagner's daughter-in-law. These are not simply revelations and reminiscences about German-European culture between 1914-1974 but contain Wagner's own account of her relationship with Adolf Hitler who shared her admiration and love of Richard Wagner. Hitler was (in her words) "the shining champion of Bayreuth..", still the most important festival devoted to Richard Wagner's works. She also states, "I shall always remember him with gratitude because he literally prepared the ground for me in Bayreuth..(and) if Hitler walked through that door today, I should be just as pleased and happy to see him here as ever I was. As for his darker side,... I know it exists but not for me because it is beyond my understanding."

This remarkable film(on videotape) is presented in complete and chronological order of camera takes with virtually no editing and contains almost all medium close-up and head shots. Wagner confronts Syberberg and the camera directly and unselfconsciously, needing few prompts to recount her life story.

### PROGRAM

The Confessions of Winifred Wagner. 1975. Film on videotape.

Director: Hans Jurgen Syberberg  
Producer: Hans Jurgen Syberberg  
Photography: Dietrich Lohmann  
Editing: Agape Dorstewitz  
Cast: Herself - Winifred Wagner

Part I: 2 hours and 24 minutes

Break

Part II: 2 hours and 15 minutes: we will run this as long as viewers stay in attendance; otherwise it will be available for individuals as follows:

The Goethe Institute has kindly agreed to make the entire 5½ hours of Confessions available to individual public viewing during normal Goethe Library hours, M-W 12-6, Th.12-7:30, and Fri.12-5.  
Phone 391-0370 to assure space availability.

BARBARA HAMMER - NEW FILMS AND OLD

6) Parisian Blinds. 1984. 16mm/Color & B&W/Silent/6min.

"Parisian Blinds and Tourist investigate the nature of spectator perception in an unfamiliar environment. Manipulating the movement of the film direction on the screen much like a camera shutter and the motion of venetian blinds that open and close, Hammer questions the perceptual experience of mass tourism as the Bateau Mouche endlessly circles the Ille de la Cite. The content is the perpetual forestalling of experience embedded in the form of the abbreviated glance the film editing allows."

Kathleen Hulsen, Centre Pompidou Brochure, 1985.

7) Optic Nerve. 1985. 16mm/Color 7 B&W/Sound/16min. Sound score by Helen Thorington.

"Barbara Hammer's Optic Nerve is a powerful personal reflection on family and aging. Hammer employs filmed footage which, through optical printing and editing, is layered and manipulated to create a compelling meditation on her visit to her grandmother in a nursing home. The sense of sight becomes a constantly evolving process of reseeing images retrieved from the past and fused into the eternal present of the projected image. Hammer has lent a new voice to the long tradition of personal meditation in the avant-garde of the American independent cinema...."

John Hanhardt, Biennial Exhibition Catalog, Whitney Museum of American Art, N.Y. 1987.

8) Snow Job - The Media Hysteria of AIDS. 1986-87. Film and Video.

Deconstructs the representation of Aids in the popular press where distortion and misrepresentation amount to a "snow job" promoting increased homophobia, sexual discrimination and repression of gays. - B.H.

There will be a wine reception following the show.

BARBARA HAMMER - NEW FILMS AND OLD

San Francisco Art Institute

March 13, 1988

PROGRAM

1) I Was/I Am. 1973. 16mm/B&W/Sound/7.5min.

A first film, (said by some to contain all the seeds of all films that follow), about the filmmaker who faces her imaginary death after really being shot by a sniper. The sniper is bagged and rolled away. - B.H.

2) Psychosynthesis. 1975. 16mm/Color/Sound/8min.

The subpersonalities of me, my baby, athlete, witch and artist are synthesized in this film of unpositions, intensities and color layers coming quietly together through the healing powers of natural touchstone. - B.H.

"I would gladly go out of my way to see it again and would travel some distance to see a retrospective of its author's work." Tom Dowling, Washington Star.

3) Double Strength. 1978. 16mm/Color/Sound/20min.

A poetic study of the stages of a lesbian relationship by two women performance artists from honeymoon, through struggle, to break-up, to enduring friendship. Starring Terry Sendgraff on trapeze. - B.H.

4) Pond and Waterfall. 1982. 16mm/Color/Silent. Production assistance by Dorothy Weicker.

Rephotography of all underwater footage of a spring pond and waterfall, provoking an experimental film of exploration of the verdant pond growth as well as the dynamic light and water reflections before the camera floats into the sea. - B.H.

5) Doll House. 1984. 16mm/Color & B&W/Sound/3min.

"Rapid montage shows a plethora of objects all arranged in, or reference to, the central prop of a dollhouse. We see whimsical references to domesticity (kitchen implements, clothing, shoes), the housing situation (want ads), feminist film (Annette Kuhn's book Women's Pictures), relationships, claustrophobia. The final shots show the dollhouse outside, up in the branches of a tree...by the effort of cinema, the dollhouse has become a treehouse. This thematic movement mirrors the movement of Barbara Hammer's films in the last few years: from preoccupation with inside/the body, to a claiming of outside/the landscape..."

Claudia Gorbman, "Body Displaced, Places Discovered,"  
Jump Cut. No.32, 1987.

and more.....

DUSAN MAKEVEJEV'S INNOCENCE UNPROTECTED PLUS 5 FILMS BY HEATHER McADAMS

February 28, 1988

Innocence Unprotected. 1968. Black & white and color, 75 minutes.

"Innocence Unprotected was a film made by and starring a Serbian acrobat named Dragoljub Aleksic. That film has been re-prepared, ornamented, annotated, and lengthened by Makevejev, creating a peculiar cinematic time machine." 4th Chicago International Film Festival Notes

"Makevejev's method is to take big sections of the old film, variously tint them (and hand color some details), and intercut them with newsreels of the German occupation, Nazi propaganda films, and interviews with the crew, the cast and especially with Aleksic still triumphant.

"The original... was the first Serbian talking picture, filmed in Belgrade in 1942, under the noses of the Nazis, and for the absolutely non-political purpose of making money. After the war, the film suffered a certain eclipse, at least partly because it pushed the Yugoslav talkie back into a pre-history when nothing like that was supposed to have happened." Howard Thompson

With a nod to Eisenstein, Makevejev calls his film "an amusing montage of attractions," and describes the work as "the art of a metropolitan half-world... on the margins of an industrial culture and morality, somewhere between cafes and circus entertainment, cheap literature, and melodramatic trash."

- Holiday Magic 7 minutes
- Black Coffee 3½ minutes
- Fake Previews 5¼ minutes
- Better Be Careful 4½ minutes
- Pinball Laffs 6 minutes

Black & white and color, 1985-86.

"The films of Heather McAdams... combine the collage finesse of a Bruce Conner with the crude campiness of the Kuchar brothers."

Ruby Rich, Chicago Reader



LYNN KIRBY: FILMS & INSTALLATIONS

--Eye Gallery, Saturday, Feb. 27, 1988

PROGRAM

- 1) July 25th: Ode to Ms. Bradix and Ms. Brooks -- Multi-media installation.

With the generous help of:

Paula Alexander  
Leslie Alperin  
Laurie Bernard  
Kimberely Disney  
Barney Haynes  
Karen Holmes  
Kimberely Jennings  
Toney Merritt  
Stephen Rogers  
Glenn Spearman  
Dawn Yamada

- 2) Three Voices (1983), 16mm, 4.5 minutes, 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." (L.K.)
- 3) Across the Street (1982), 16mm, 3 min., color/sound--"I witness shocking events which remain unresolved. This film was made for therapeutic reasons; it is a story which takes place in an empty apartment across from my bedroom window."
- 4) Sharon and the Birds on the Way to the Wedding (1987), 16mm, 28 min., color/sound--"A film about conflicting perceptions of love, romance and marriage: the romantic and the pragmatic, the subjective experience and the cultural description, the fictional and the real. The character, Sharon, is narrator and the character of her own dramas."

There will be a wine and cheese reception following the screening.

"For Filippo, it is the newsreel and black and white's fetishizing allure that can make for real-life bad habits. No one else has dealt with the powerful mimicry that comes out of watching too many old movies."

Katherine Dieckmann, The Village Voice

Medical Research/Special Report. 1987 by Robert Fox. 16mm/color/sound/30min.

Thrown into the milieu, "starving, hysterical, naked." Illness as metaphor, reflections on life /death and the creative process. Sound and image stitched together to form a Promethean vision.

Robert Fox

PROGRAM NOTES

February 25, 1988

INTROSPECTION: THE OBJECTIVE SELF

Films by Danny Lyon, Mary Filippo, Robert Fox and Ricardo Block

In tonight's, program, we present 4 self-portraits by 4 filmmakers. Although the genre is the same, the approaches are distinctive to each artist and we see work using a wide range of material, from early home-movies to found footage.

Persistence of Memory. 1984 by Ricardo Block. 16mm/color/sound/17min.

This is an autobiographical film in collage form about a childhood lived in different cultures and languages. Block was born and raised in Mexico by French-Jewish parents and has re-collected visual fragments - found footage and home movies - to create a personal mythology.

"He evokes in the viewer the universal desire to examine one's own place in a particular family, place and time."

Melinda Ward, Executive Producer, Alive From Off Center

Born To Film. 1982 by Danny Lyon. 16mm/b&w/sound/33min.

A young boy emerges from the filmic history of his past. Made from family photo album, footage from the 1940's and the present.

"The decade of the 1960's had values that redeemed and have survived it, and these are summarized perhaps most eloquently in the art of Danny Lyon...Indeed the most recent film, Born to Film, is among other things, intimately autobiographical, interspersing footage of Lyon's own young son with film shot in the 1930's by Lyon's father, doctor who immigrated from Germany, of Lyon when he was the same age...Lyon's passionate vision has deepened and grown in resonance and the film is not just family or even social history, is about human continuity, the power of instinct to survive, the grace that love and play bring to it, the wonder of being alive."

Thomas Albright, S.F. Chronicle

Who Do You Think You Are? 1983 by Mary Filippo. 16mm/b&w/sound/10min.

In Who Do You Think You Are?, I talk about wanting to be a hero and show myself passive and inactive. I've use cigarette smoking and the "heroes" presented in cigarette commercials to suggest that advertising has transformed my desire to act heroically in to cigarette consumption. That this particular consumption is self-destructive and addictive is important since I want to suggest a link between self-destructive behavior and my inability to "be a hero." The film is a collage of my own footage, "found" cigarette commercials and images filmed from television.

(over)

PROGRAM III - 9:15 P.M.

Wait by Ernie Gehr, 1968, 7 minutes.

"...we are following completely something else, something that cannot be told in words but can be revealed only through certain rhythms of light-emphases, and events of light..." - Jonas Mekas, Village Voice, 8/2/68.

Window by Ken Jacobs, 1964, 12 minutes.

"About 4 years of studying the window-complex preceded the afternoon of actual shooting (a true instance of cinematic action-painting). The film exists as it came out of the camera barring one mechanically necessary mid-reel splice." - Ken Jacobs

Water Sark by Joyce Wieland, 1964-65, 14 minutes.

"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...a film sculpture, drawing being made while you wait." - Joyce Wieland

Standard Time by Michael Snow, 1967, 8 minutes.

"This is my home, wife, camera, radio, turtle movie. Circular and arc saccades and glances. Spacial, parallel sound." - Michael Snow.

Ornamentals by Abigail Child, 1979, 10 minutes.

"NOT TO HOLD ON TO THE IMAGE. As one might exist on a line edging chaos + this without dissolution. What might be the most distant possible pattern, understood unity oversold. And is resistance to such then engagement?" - Abigail Child

Gulls and Buoys by Robert Breer, 1972, 7½ minutes.

"A large number of Breer's ideas are compressed and crystallized into a short statement of great richness. It could function excellently as an introduction to the remarkable range of pleasures available from the films of Robert Breer." - Scott Hammen, Afterimage

To Die Dreaming by Steve Weisberg, 1983, 7 minutes.

"Nicaragua, besieged by the CIA, finds equanimity in everyday life. A North American view." - Steve Weisberg. Snapshots of a country on the third anniversary of its revolution against oligarchy.

## FILM-MAKERS' COOPERATIVE BENEFIT

PROGRAMS II & III - Saturday, February 20, 1988

### PROGRAM II - 7:30 P.M.

Cassis by Jonas Mekas, 1966, 4½ minutes.

"'Portrait' of the port of Cassis (South France)... Seurat and Churchill used to come and paint here...One day shooting, single frame, from just before sunrise until just after the sunset." - Jonas Mekas

Arabesque for Kenneth Anger by Marie Menken, 1961, 4 minutes, score by Teiji Ito.

"These animated observations of tiles and Moorish architecture were made as a thank-you to Kenneth for helping me shoot on another film in Spain" - Marie Menken

Ritual in Transfigured Time by Maya Deren, 1946, 15 minutes.

A poetic psychological study relating of unrelated gestures, repetition of complex patterns unrealizable in actuality.

The Man Who Invented Gold by Christopher MacLaine, 1953, 14 minutes.

Five episodes dealing with five different people, all seen on the last day of their existence, linked by the sound-only sections and capped by a lyrical coda. An extraordinary film from the pre-Beat era that was years ahead of its time.

But No One by Su Friedrich, 1982, 9 minutes.

"In the dream, I was unable to act according to my good conscience...On a walk through the city, I saw the men tearing down and building up the world. Meanwhile fish were being killed for my evening meal." - Su Friedrich

Surface Tension by Hollis Frampton, 1968, 10 minutes.

"The film itself has 3 parts: a comic static shot emphasizing the passage of time; a fast motion tour through a city with fractured German commentary; and a slow seascape with fish floating in mid-screen." - P. Adams Sitney

8/64: ANA-Action Gunther Brus by Kurt Kren, 1964, 2½ minutes.

"...und sind dort am besten, wo sie bis zur Unkenntlichkeit rasch montiert sind. Ubrigens sind sie schon so aufgenommen, die Montage fand gewissermaßen in der Kamera statt." - Ernst Schmidt in film, 12/66

Schwechater by Peter Kubekla, 1957-58, 1 minute (with repeat).

The perfect film as beer commercial. 1,440 frames arranged in a precise spiral into the eternal red zone.

Kino Da! by Henry Hills, 1981, 4 minutes.

"Portrait of North Beach Communist cafe poet & gentle comrade, Jack Hirschman. Shot in sync with wind-up Bolex. Sound recording: Mark McGowan." - Henry Hills.

Over for Program III

my partner filmed by myself. There was no additional cameraperson. The cat. Fugal structure: gesture, color sequences, collage, montage, superimposition, painting frame-by-frame, breaking the frame." - Carolee Schneemann

Spiral by Emily Breer, 1987, 12 minutes.

"The earlier films Chicken, Stork and Fluke play with a wonderful wacky abandon and hearty sense of humor that permeate much of Breer's film, painting and sculpture...Spiral continues this powerful but easy sense of collage, the layering of ambient sound vs. image...but hits one with a more introspective and personal projection. Engaging on a more visceral level, it results in a film that is, in fact, a 'spiralling in,' a microscopic view, a peering inside." - Robin Dickie, from Canyon Cinema catalog No. 6, 1988

Big Brother by Caroline Avery, 1983, 7 minutes.

"An avalanche of images that cascade at the viewer, Big Brother never falters in its compulsive energy. Avery physically attacks the frame, inserting a collage of images into the photographed surface. The result is a complex swirl of pictorial verbiage that conjugates her rage against the paternalism of American culture." - David Gerstein, 2/18/88

Descriptions are from the Film-Makers' Cooperative Catalogue No. 6, 1975, unless otherwise noted.

## FILM-MAKERS' COOPERATIVE BENEFIT

PROGRAM I - February 18, 1988

Ghosts Before Breakfast by Hans Richter, 1927-28, 6.25 minutes.

Photography by Reimar Kuntze, Music by Paul Hindemith, with Darius Milaud, Jean Oser, Walter Gronostay, Werner Graeff, Paul Hindemith and Hans Richter. "Pure vintage Dada. A humorous, delightful grotesque in which ordinary objects rebel against their daily routine and, for a brief period of liberation, follow their own laws...Ghosts Before Breakfast represents one of the earliest collaborations between avant-garde film-maker and composer: Paul Hindemith's score accompanied the film when it was first shown at an avant-garde music festival in Baden-Baden in 1928." - Standish D. Lawder

Adventures of Jimmy by James Broughton, 1950, 11 minutes.

"A satiric vision of the Hero Quest, about a naive country boy's search for his ideal love in the big city (San Francisco), with crazy frustrations at every turn. Broughton himself enacts bewildered Jimmy. Jazz score by Weldon Kees; photography by Frank Stauffacher." - James Broughton

Mosholu Holiday by George Kuchar, 1966, 9½ minutes.

A documentary-like movie about the Bronx and its hell spawn filmed in hot weather and on location. Edited during the hot weather. A funny film that was commissioned by a big industry for a lot of money. The film reveals the senselessness of filming in hot weather for a lot of money. Big people are manipulated like aimless puppets on a merry-go-round of hilarious idleness. A special guest appearance by Canadian TV star Bill Roland along with the massive presence of 'Mrs. Bronx' herself, Frances Leibowitz, and her girlfriend Iris." - George Kuchar

Centuries of June by Joseph Cornell, photography by Stan Brakhage, 1955, 10 minutes.

### INTERMISSION

The Web by Marjorie Keller, 1977, 10 minutes, 8mm.

"One of three early 8mm films in which women and children appear. In The Web I delved for the first and only time into film as mischief-making; wicked, like a child." - Marjorie Keller, program notes at S.F. Cinematheque, 12/8/85

Fuses by Carolee Schneemann, 1964-67, 23 minutes.

"Integral and whole - imagery compounded in emotion. We are equally, interchangeably subject and object. As woman (image) and as image-maker I reclaim, establish and free my image and my will. Using borrowed Bolex's (wind-up by hand), natural light, the seasons over three years. Movement of myself and

FILMS BY NATHANIEL DORSKY

--Saturday, February 13, 1988,  
at the EYE Gallery.

PROGRAM:

- 1) HOURS FOR JEROME (1965-70/82), Part **Two**, 28 min, silent, 24 f.p.s., color--  
"This footage was shot from 1966 to 1970 and edited over a two year period ending in July 1982. HOURS FOR JEROME (as in a Book of Hours) is an arrangement of images, energies, and illuminations from daily life. These fragments of light revolve around the four seasons. Part One is spring through summer; Part Two is fall and winter." (N.D.)
  
- 2) 17 REASONS WHY (1985-87), 20 min., silent, 18 f.p.s., color--  
"17 REASONS WHY was photographed with a variety of semi-ancient regular 8mm cameras and is projected unslit as 16mm. These pocket-sized relics enabled me to walk around virtually "unseen", exploring and improvising with the immediacy of a more spontaneous medium. The four image format has built-in contrapuntal resonances, ironies, and beauty, and in each case gives us an unpretentious look at the film frame itself...the simple and primordial delight of luminous Kodachrome and rich black and white chugging thru these time worn gates." (N.D.)
  
- 3) ALAYA (1976-87), 28 min., silent, 18 f.p.s., color--  
"A film about light, a parade of forms as in RIDDLE OF LUMEN, but the latter's curious wonder becomes more fully wonder for Dorsky. From PNEUMA the particles are still there, and the light is still there, but now there is the distinct impression of watching air blowing sand yet the air is as transparent as the mind." (Konrad Steiner)

There will be a wine and cheese reception following the screening.



Waterfall (1984, 18 mins., 3-color separation) Waterfall begins with the notion that in certain 19th c. landscape photography -- particularly that of Muybridge -- images of waterfalls were studies in time. The slow shutter speed ensured that the photograph did not record the water, but its passage in time, or more accurately, the volume of space it occupied during the exposure.

In this 3-color separation film the 3 superimposed images of the moving water combined into a solid, white, undifferentiated volume, surrounded by color activity caused by variations in the flow patterns. To enhance the effect, we slowed the shutter speed to about 1 second exposure per frame; the water became a vaguely delineated rush of material which appeared to be rising as much as falling. The references to photographic tradition continue in the color of the surrounding landscape: it is suffused with washes of color caused by cloud shadows moving variously on the separations, evoking early attempts at color photography and the results of tinting and toning. Color expands and contracts round the masses of water as the focus is adjusted separately on the three layers of film.

The soundtrack is a mix of three different waterfall effects, variously modified by a graphic equalizer, with slow changes in the frequency spectrum, anticipating changes in the image. It was composed in one take, in real time, to the film. Filming was done at MacKenzie's Waterfall, in The Grampians, Western Victoria.

Floterian - Hand Printing from a Film History (1981, 35mm & 16mm, 14 mins., color, silent) An overview of 20 years of our film work; not systematic, the selection of material was done rather arbitrarily. Four-ft. lengths of 16mm, standard 8mm and Super-8 film were hand-contact-printed onto 35mm Eastmancolor negative, using a home-made printing rig of cardboard, velvet and glass, in a dark-room. The light source was a low-level flood of light and also a beam from a pencil torch, moved along the film... A fluttering effect was caused by the printed frames relocating differently on alternate 35mm frames... The fluttering was accepted as a metaphor for the ephemerality of memory...

Two Women [Part of Grain of the Voice series] (1980, 32 mins., b&w and color) Three older Pitjantjatjara songwomen sing a legendary story about the travels of 2 ancestral women through the Macdonnell Ranges from East to West. The shape of this film of the Central Australian landscape has been determined by the recording we made of the songwomen at Areyonga... As we did not know the meanings of the words, no literal interpretation of them was possible, ..

...in the manner of the travels of the Aboriginal mythical ancestors, who effortlessly travelled great distances, stopping and resting, as recounted in the great myths of creation... Can we understand something of the Society through the pitch of the voice, the nature of the inflections, the softness or harshness of tone, the flowingness or the precision of speech, the selection of certain predominant sounds and patterns, and the lack of others?

The absence of a translation of the song cycles enables closer concentration on the music and voice qualities.

This program was assisted by the Australian Film Commission.

International Filmmakers: Australia

Sunday, February 7, 1988

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LANDFORMS/FILMFORMS: THE WORK OF ARTHUR & CORINNE CANTRILL

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"Trompe-l'oeil is a basic fact and effect of film, and as descendants and exponents of the early film avant-garde's legacy, the Cantrills enjoy it and have employed it variously. The Cantrills' films are the issue of a freedom incarnate as film, that is, film as the freedom to transform and metamorphose, to dissect and reconstruct conventional appearances; film as the body of given and graven form..."

--from the essay, "Landforms/Filmforms:  
The Work of Arthur & Corinne Cantrill"  
by Kris Hemensley

Interior/Exterior (1978, 3 mins., color, 2-screen, silent)  
Subtitled "...to explore a difference between camera and human vision..."

Studies in Image De/Generation (1975, 10 mins., B&W, 2-screen, silent) Fragments of 1901 film images by pioneer anthropologist Walder Baldwin Spencer are repeated and reprinted through several generations on high-contrast film. The two screens compare the second and fourth generations of the film.

Corporeal (1983, 18 mins., color, 2-screen, stereo sound)  
The aim was to use the camera as an extension of the body, responding to the rhythm of the breath - the camera rising and falling with the in- and out-take of the breath. Lenses of different focal lengths were used to modify the extent and pace of the movements. Sequences in the film were done by the body itself: lying down with the camera moving on the belly, others holding the camera in the hands, but still allowing the breathing movement to control the camera (as against the usual practice of suppressing body movement while hand-holding a cine camera). Part of the material filmed is of reflection on a rock pool and part of it is of an overhanging Angophora trunk and limbs. It was filmed at the same location as Warrah.

Camerawork was by Corinne Cantrill and sound, a stereo recording of the bush insects at daybreak, also rising and falling in counterpoint with the image by Arthur Cantrill.

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FIRST EXPOSURES: NEW WORK IN

MULTIPLE MEDIA

--February 6, 1988

PROGRAM:

SUPER-8 - Binh by Melissa Bertolino, 3 min., silent.  
Happy Birthday by Olivia Harding, 4 min., silent.  
Un Film Terrible by Al Alvarez, 4 min., silent.  
St. Vincent de Paul by Alvaro Munoz, 7 min., sound.

16 MM - Fragments by Diana Lobdell, 3 min., silent.  
June July August by Kenny Krause, 5 min., sound.  
Chingando Jets by Rick Humphrey, 5 min., sound.  
In This Picture by Heather Jansen, 15 min., sound.

INTERMISSION

VIDEO - Offspin, High Fidelity, & Brentaske by Ivar Smedstad, 15 min. total, all sound.

PERFORMANCE - Thought Crimes in the Satiation Pool by Barry Schwartz and Barney Haynes,  
length varies, sound with video imagery.

A wine reception will follow the program.

FILMS BY CARL DREYER & DANIEL BARNETTJANUARY 31, 1988

GERTRUD. 1964. Script and Direction: Carl Dreyer. Based on the play by Hjalmar Soderberg. Photography: Henning Bendtsen. Art Director: Kai Rasch. Music: Jorgen Jersild. Editor: Edith Schussel. Players: Nina Pens Rode (Gertrud), Bendt Rothe (Gustav Kanning), Ebbe Rode (Gabriel Lidman), Baard Owe (Erland Janson), Axel Strobye (Axel Nygren).

"Dreyer's work is always based on the beauty of the image, which in turn is a record of the luminous conviction and independence of human beings....All his works are passions in the sense of being like musical celebrations of feelings...Gertrud is the story of a forty year old woman unhappy with her husband, who loves a younger man but is loved insufficiently in return, and who decides to go to Paris and live alone. The conclusion of insistent independence is kept within a frame of calm beauty. And yet beneath the order of the film there is, stronger than ever, the exultant sense of passion. When it was made, the reserve and slowness of GERTRUD were so out of fashion that its emotion was missed. But it awaits the world's discovery, Dreyer's finest film and the vindication of his method: 'What interests me and this comes before technique- is reproducing the feelings of the characters in my films...The important thing...is not only to catch hold of the words they say, but also the thoughts behind the words. What I seek in my films, what I want to obtain, is a penetration to my actors' profound thoughts by means of their most subtle expressions. For these are the expressions...that lie in the depths of the soul. This is what interests me above all, not the technique of cinema. GERTRUD is a film that I made with my heart.' " (David Thomson)

"Like THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS, GERTRUD becomes a film of memory, whose plot forces characters to spend most of their time recalling and reinterpreting story events. In harmony with the intimacy of the conversations, GERTRUD constructs the closed world of the chamber piece (kammerspiel)... The film returns more explicitly to the tableau style reminiscent of Hammershoi, the Danish painter of the interior as still life... The sets were built as closed rooms and echo Strindberg's justification of the chamber theater as a place in which one can hear a whisper... all the music in GERTRUD is literally chamber music, for solo violin, string quartet or piano." David Bordwell

UNTOWARD ENDS (OBSERVING RELIGION) by Daniel Barnett. 1970-73. Silent/24fps. In three parts. With Ellen Saslaw, Paul Balmuth and Leah Siegel.

SOUND AND IMAGE WORKS

January 30, 1988 EYE Gallery

8 p.m.

FROGS, FIREWORKS AND FROZEN CREAM Roy Ramsing & Jacalyn(Jac)White  
V8mm, 8 minutes, 1987.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN; PART 1, THE DAUGHTERS Jac White  
S8mm, 10 minutes, 1985.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN; PART 2, THE MOTHERS Jac White  
S8mm, 15 minutes, 1986.

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break

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SISTER PAT Jeff Rosenstock V8mm, 4 minutes, 1988.

REPEATS Jac White V8mm, 6 minutes, 1987.

STORY BY FX Roy Ramsing 6.3mm, 10 minutes, 1988.

IF A TREE FALLS...SECTION I, 24x360 Roy Ramsing 24 hours, 1987.

An environmental sound station at the front of the room before and after the program.

Please join us for a celebration of the Cinematheque's new site at the EYE Gallery following the program.

## GOLDEN SILENCE: NEW FILMS

January 28, 1988

### PROGRAM:

- 1) How Have You Been by Chika Ogura. Color/Silent, 5 minutes. 1987.
- 2) The Age of Consent by Carmen Vigil. B&W/Silent, 20 minutes. 1987.  
"A work exploring my Catholic shadow world. It began with my obsession with two drawbridges at China Basin here in San Francisco during the time when the relationship with my life partner was most hopeless. A dark romance with three women and two bridges."
- 3) Dante Quartet by Stan Brakhage. Color/Silent 10.5 minutes. 1987.  
"This hand-painted work, 6 years in the making (37 years in the studying of the Divine Comedy), demonstrates the earthly conditions of "Hell", "Purgatory" (or Transition) and "Heaven" (or 'existence is song' which is the closest I presume a Heaven from my experience) as well as the mainspring of/from "Hell" ('Hell spit flexion') in 4 parts which are inspired by the closed eye or hypnogogic vision created by those emotional states. Originally painted IMAX and Cinemascope, 70mm and 35mm. The paint-laden rolls have been carefully rephotographed and translated to 35mm and 16mm compilations by Dan Yanosky of Western Cine."
- 4) Landscape(For Manon) by Peter Hutton. B&W/Silent, 14 minutes. 1986-87.  
"Part one of a series of Landscape portraits from the region of the Hudson River Valley near the filmmakers' home in Annandale, N.Y."
- 5) The Secret Garden by Phil Solomon. Color/Silent, 23 minutes. 1986 - 87.  
"a. When I was young, my older sister invented games of imagination in order to assert and enforce her sibling authority. One of these was a trance game in which she would induce me to stare into the textured window in our bathroom and move my head slowly from side to side so as to create moving patterns from the light refractions. She would call this space the entrance to the 'Magical World of Paloopa'.  
b. I used to have a recurring nightmare of running on a beach as a tidal wave was about to overwhelm me as it blackened the sky.  
c. I always thought the WIZARD OF OZ was a terrifying expose revealing God the Father to be a phony from Kansas.  
The Secret Garden is an attempt at a child's fever dream, within the dark walls of a radiating 'nuclear' family. Its theme: Trouble in Paradise."

All quotes are by the filmmakers.

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away to a better situation. If this can happen, however temporarily, some slight magic has been performed." - Konrad Steiner

Boy Town by Jeff Preiss, 1987, 13 min., 16mm, silent.

"Day after day being drawn to the same corner in Chinatown. Erotic movie posters, red newsstand, vegetable market, bank, buildings and boy." - Jeff Preiss. Shot in Regular-8mm and rephotographed in 16mm.

Lived in Quotes by Laurie Dunphy, 1987, 21 min., 16mm, sound

"Shot in South Africa during the 1986 state of emergency. The film attempts to construct an artistic vision of 'everyday apartheid;' of blacks in South Africa as neither simply victims nor simply revolutionaries, but as members of a distinct culture who survive the demands of a society not their own. Lived in Quotes rejects the methods of touristic, home movie propaganda, which uses anecdotal representations of South Africa to verify experience and 'last-word' the political, social and economic life there. Language reconsidered and conventional editing strategies shelved, the film thinks itself poetic ethnography." - Laurie Dunphy.

Laurie Dunphy will appear at the Cinematheque on October 20th showing Lived in Quotes and A Western, as part of a two-person show with Toney Merritt.

MEDIA MIGRATION: VIDEOTAPES BY FILMMAKERS

--Eye Gallery, Sept. 24, 1988

- 1) PROTECTIVE COLORATION (1979) by Morgan Fisher, 3/4" video, 13 min.

"Protective Coloration offers a critique of sensitivity, a faculty even less useful today than when the tape was made. The tape proposes some crude remedies at the level of the material to help break the habit. The tape's resemblance to a medical or psychological experiment is no less important than its readily available implements and its sometimes cheerful colors." (M.F.)

- 2) RAPTURE (1987) by Paul Sharits, 3/4" video, 13 min.

- 3) REDRESSING DOWN (1988) by Tony Conrad, NTSC, sound on "Mix", 18 min.

"The sexual economy of television space. In the body of television, the audience is objectified as furnishings for architectural and social spaces of the protagonist. The commodification of television space inverts the sexual distance between the violated (consumed) body of the subject and the (nonpresent) viewer." (T.C.)

-- INTERMISSION --

- 4) PEGGY AND FRED IN KANSAS (1988) by Leslie Thornton, filmed in 16mm, edited and released on videotape, 11 min.

- 5) MIAMI MAN IN LANDSCAPE LOOP (1983) by Ken Kobland with The Wooster Group, starring Ron Vawter, filmed in super-8mm, edited and released on videotape, 17 min. "I shot in Miami Beach for a few days with actor Ron Vawter, using Super-8mm film and then transferring, through Brodsky and Treadway in Boston, to 3/4" in which the piece was mastered. The idea was to play around with various typical 'icons', cliches, whatever, of 'secret agent', detective, the sense of the covert, of waiting around, of 'clues', of routines, repetitions, and little 'breaks', variations. The piece was intended to serve as well within a performance context, and it appears in the 3rd section of LSD: Just the High Points created and performed by the New York experimental theater company, The Wooster Group. As always with my stuff, the soundtrack is a critical player here, the wind bumps and crankiness

(over)



of super-8 sound, the faint 'music' from somewhere, a bit sinister, a bit over-heated." (K.K.)

- 6) TWO BAD DAUGHTERS (1988) by Barbara Hammer & Paula Levine, 3/4" videotape, 8 min. "Two Bad Daughters posits play as subversive activity, a sabotage of the patriarchal institutions of psychoanalysis and sado-masochism through video image processing, changing the subject/object relationship in psychoanalysis, and interrupting and reconstructing the paraphernalia of S/M practice. Two Bad Daughters takes post-modernism and challenges it through an anti-narrative, non-dramatic collage of equally important text and image fragments. Ultimately, the tape reconstructs possibilities for meaning read between the lines, without hierarchical construction and through layering, density and intensity." (B.H. & P.L.)

STAN BRAKHAGE

Sunday, September 25, 1988

MY MOUNTAIN, SONG XXVII (1968/1988); 26 minutes. Color. 8mm blown up to 16mm. A study of Arapahoe Peak in all the seasons of two years' photography...the clouds and weathers that shape its place in landscape -- much of the photography a-frame-at-a-time.

RIVERS (1968/1988); 36 minutes. Color. 8mm blown up to 16mm. A series of eight films intended to echo the themes of MY MOUNTAIN, SONG XXVII.

The entire series of SONGS was originally shot on standard 8mm film. Tonight's screening of MY MOUNTAIN and RIVERS is the artist's own "translation." "After much technical difficulty and elaborate color RE-creation, I've managed to enlarge the REGULAR 8mm...into 16mm films, which saves them from extinction... AND permits them a larger public life...'Go little naked and impudent songs'... into the auditoriums of the world and live...awhile longer." -- S.B., 1980

Since the 1950's, Stan Brakhage has been one of the most original, authentic, and influential film artists of the American independent cinema. His genius lies in his consistently developed, yet ultimately impossible, struggle to rediscover, through film, the lost innocent vision of childhood:

Imagine an eye unruled by man-made rules of perspective, an eye unprejudiced by compositional logic, an eye which does not respond to the name of everything but which must know each object encountered in life through an adventure of perception.... Imagine a world alive with incomprehensible objects and shimmering with an endless variety of movement and innumerable gradations of color. Imagine a world before the "beginning was the word."

From Metaphors on Vision by Stan Brakhage

On film this concern manifests itself in three areas: his explicitly personal approach and subject matter, his adherence to the pure film art form, and his exploration of the medium of film itself. The resulting aesthetic is a modified revival of the old Romantic opposition between sight and imagination, the physical world and the poetic consciousness:

The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which and through which, and into which ideas are constantly rushing.

From Gaudier-Brzeska. A Memoir by Ezra Pound

"The entire act of motion picture making can be considered as an EXTERIORIZATION of the process of MEMORY." -- S.B., 1966

One of the most interesting and, for young filmmakers, encouraging, aspects of SONGS is that they were shot on 8mm film. Brakhage explains how this came about:

Just before we left New York, some of my 16mm equipment had been stolen.... I went into town and found that I could buy...all the 8mm equipment that I needed....

The poetic idea that meant something to me was the word "song." It really rang to me and made association. But it really bothered me that the art of film was always leaning to some extent on these previous arts; so I needed a base, a source of inspiration, a form that had run through film from its very beginning, that was clear of these other older arts. That's where the home movie is an inspiring thing, because a man...when he's working with his 8mm movie camera is usually trying to make a record of what he cares about....

So these things, home movies and song, involve me very much with 8mm, and I knew that through them I could restore the film form to what it was at source.

From Newsletter of 8mm Education. S.B., Spring 1966

The result of this restoration is the thirty part SONGS cycle from which this evening's screenings are taken.

I want to minimize thought,  
concentrate on it  
till I shrink,  
dematerialise  
and am drawn into it.

From Tribute to the Angels by H.D.

Original 8mm projections:

SONG IV (1964); 4 minutes. Color. A round-about three girls playing with a ball...handpainted over photo image.

SONG XIII (1965); 6 minutes. Color. A travel song of scenes and horizontals.

SONG XIV (1965); 3 minutes. Color. A "closed-eye" vision song composed of molds, paints, and crystals.

SUBSTITUTION

September 25, 1988: BRAKHAGE SONGS

Due to shipping miscalculations on the part of My Mountain and Rivers' only current distributors (Filmmakers Cooperative), these prints are not available for tonight's screening.

Instead, we have substituted the Bay Area premiere showing of an earlier work from the Song cycle, Fifteen Song Traits (Song # XV), in its recently blown-up ("translated") 16mm version.

An early note Brakhage wrote upon the film's release (1965):

"A series of individual portraits of friends and family, all interrelated in what might be called a branch growing directly from the trunks of Songs I-XIV. In order of appearance: Robert Kelly, Jane and our dog Durin, our boys Bearthm and Rarc, daughter Crystal and the canary Cheep Donkey, Robert Creeley and Michael McClure, the rest of our girls Myrrena & Neowyn, Angelo di Benedetto, Rarc, Ed Dorn and his family, Myrrena, Neowyn, and Jonas Mekas (to whom the whole of the XVth Song is dedicated), as well as some few strangers, were the source of these TRAITS coming into being--my thanks to all...and to all who see them clearly." (S.B.)

Fifteen Song Traits (Song #XV) (1967-1986) by Stan Brakhage, 16mm from original regular 8mm, color/silent, 47 minutes.

OF HISTORY AND IDENTITY:  
THE FILMS OF DAN EISENBERG - FILMMAKER IN PERSON

Thursday, September 29, 1988

Our eyes see very poorly and very little - and so man conceived of the microscope in order to see invisible phenomena; and they discovered the telescope in order to see and explore distant, unknown worlds. The movie camera was invented in order to penetrate deeper into the visible world, to explore and record visual phenomena, so that we do not forget what happens and what the future must take into account.

Dziga Vertov. 1926

COOPERATION OF PARTS (1987); 42 minutes. Color and B/W. 16mm.

The film is a journey through the landscapes of France, Germany and Poland; through the lagers of Dachau and Auschwitz; and also a journey through the language and possibilities of film. -- Dan Eisenberg., 1987

I sometimes stop on the road to the sorces and question the signs, the world of my ancestors.

From The Book of Questions by Edmond Jabes.

Using lists, descriptions of photographs, a catalogue of proverbs, images of streets and trains, ruins and riots, the film explores the territory of the recent past with a second generation perspective, distanced through time and reflection.

The images to the film were shot with a hand cranked 16mm silent camera and collected on a trip to Europe in the spring of 1983. Without any prescribed plan for shooting, I tried to use the camera not only to record what I was seeing but also to register my physical response to what was being seen. The camera is truly a medium here -- a giving back takes place; automatic, unrehearsed, irregular, a hyper-verite so to speak.

In contrast to this image layer is a highly articulated sound track complete with written text, musical fragments and sound effects.

"Listen, just listen to yourself. This is not what you want to be hearing." Quoted from the film.

The text that is spoken by myself developed out of written materials generated on an almost daily basis from the spring of 1984 through though the winter of 1985. Aside from my own words are those of Edmond Jabes, Roland Barthes, Theodor Adorno, Franz Kafka, and paraphrases of material from John Ashbury and Paul Valery.

The proverbs in the film have numerous sources: most are researched from Champion's Racial Proverbs. Others I made up myself using the general form of the proverb as a guide. Still others are from my memory or from Poor Richard's Almanac by Ben Franklin, and aphorisms from as far afield as the gates of Dachau and Bergen-Belsen. -- D.E., 1987

"If I left to invent myself I could wind up with a clear case of mistaken identity." Quoted from the film.

With the visual field as a touchstone for a complex set of narrative associations, the film spins a tight web of memory, history, and experience. And it is in this web that the film finds it's wider significance: as a model for how daily life, history, first hand and second hand experience bind, through purpose or chance, to form identity itself. -- D.E., 1987

DISPLACED PERSON (1981); 11 minutes., B/W, 16mm.

An examination of "...issues around the Holocaust through historical information and cultural artifacts that are available and given to all of us as readers of history. Circling from the exterior in a highly individualistic way, Displaced Person works with a carefully chosen set of particular elements in order to explore the larger questions within the historical field.

Mark McElhatten in Visions Fall, 1987.

BREAKING APPLES (Jacob's Ladder) (1981); 3 minutes., B/W. 16mm.

A study investigating the exploration of all the biological rhythms of camera movement.

JIKKEN EIGA  
NEW JAPANESE SUPER-8 MM FILMS  
CURATED BY TATSU AOKI

Saturday, October 1, 1988

Cinema has been put to diverse uses over the years. But something has been happening in Japan that seems so fundamentally different from (previous) possibilities as to call them into question. Each year a Chicago based group called Innocent Eyes and Lenses presents group shows of recent Japanese work. This year's program offers an excellent introduction to the unique direction some Japanese filmmakers are taking. For most of them, film is first of all a machine. One makes a film much as one would construct a mechanical apparatus. In the best of films, technique becomes a series of metaphors within metaphors for both the film medium and, more generally, our machine age. In the Japanese films, the notion of autonomous self, which in one way or another haunts virtually every American avant-garde film, hardly ever arises. One is born inside a grand mechanism, and one's existence consists of the variety of smaller mechanisms found along life's journey. While the dialectic between man and nature and machine and nature provides much of the content of American avant-garde film, nature is rarely an autonomous entity in these Japanese films.

-- Fred Camper, excerpted from an article in The Chicago Reader, 5/6/88

TRANSFORMATION PIECE NO. 3 -- MIX JUICE (1985); Keita Kurosaka, 16 minutes.

HE WAS HERE, AND YOU ARE HERE (1985); Haruka Doi, 8 minutes.

OHME FRONT (1984); Kazuko Kinoshita, 13 minutes.

AGA (1986); Kazuhiro Sekiguchi, 3 minutes.

CONTINUOUS QUADRILATERAL (1987); Ippei Harada, 13 minutes.

PERPETUAL LINE (1984); Yukio Hiruma, 20 minutes.

## RADICAL BLACK CINEMA:

### FILMS OF SANKOFA & BLACK AUDIO FILM COLLECTIVES

Sunday, October 2, 1988

The existence of these two Black British workshops and the nature of their production are due to the 1981 Brixton race riots and the institutional responses that gave the filmmakers access to funding. The newly established workshops provided the infrastructure that, combined with racially sensitive cultural policies, created conditions for them to explore and question related theoretical issues.

Sankofa and Black Audio's intervention in British media institutions seems to have touched several raw nerves. Their insistence on shifting the terms of avant-garde film theory and practice to include an ongoing engagement with politics of race sets them apart from the longstanding traditions of documentary realism in British and Black film cultures.

As filmmakers and media activists, Sankofa and Black Audio question the representation of Blacks in British media, from mainstream television to such bastions of liberal enlightenment as the British Film Institute and academic film journals like Screen and Framework. They are interrogating "radical" film theory's cursory treatment of race related issues and subverting the all-too-familiar division of independent film labor between first-world avant-garde and third-world activism.

From A Black Avant-Garde? by Coco Fusco. 1988

DREAMING RIVERS (1988); Martina Attile, director. 35 minutes. 16mm. Color. From the Sankofa Film/Video Collective.

The work is about Miss T., a black, dark-skinned woman from the Caribbean, a colonial subject relocated physically, but physically connected to that past homeland. She is caught between both directions really, leaving the Caribbean to come to England -- for dreams, for hope, for love. And then not realizing some of those ambitions, she is caught in the stormy sea, in the Atlantic, on the way back to a place of security, past happiness of youth. Miss T. is a subject in the process of migration, in the midst of the journey. And the imagery for that is like death, which promises new life. The journey hasn't ended -- it's represented by her children who have to lay her down. They represent differences -- one person split in three -- which fractures into even more again. I wanted to deal with the postcolonial situation and the experience of migration. I would date one point of our modernity from the stage of migration, and the complex processes by which we constantly interact with and change our environment with our histories.

-- Martina Attile



HANDSWORTH SONGS (1986); John Afromfrah, director. 60 minutes. 16mm. Color. From the Black Audio Film Collective.

Handsworth Songs has been described by its makers as a "film essay," and its structure is lyrical rather than didactic. It weaves intricately and poetically between different places and times, re-working old newsreel and recent television images with vox-pop interviews, family photographs, a street mural and a number of powerful and moving "moments." Against this, the intermittent voice-over warns against easy analyses which treat either the dominant media's version of events or the testimonies of the Black communities as "truth" or "evidence."

-- Alison Butler, International Documentary, Winter/Spring, 1988

The question of paternity and transgression was very important. One of the things people would say to us was, "Isn't Handsworth Songs too avant-garde?" Quite simply, the problems we faced in making Handsworth were very practical ones -- to do with melodrama -- orchestrating means of identification, rather than distancing people and dazzling them with techniques. The editing might be considered unconventional, but the techniques are very straightforward. So it's not avant-garde in that sense. My mistake was in assuming people wouldn't see it as a transgressive text.

-- John Afromfrah

GODARD AND MIEVILLE'S

France/tour/d'etour/deux/enfants

Monday, October 3, 1988

Program 1: Tapes 1-4

France/tour/d'etour/deux/enfants is the second long series of programmes made for television by Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville exploring the process of communication and understanding. Production took place in the south of France, in Genoble, under the banner of Sonimage, the filmmakers' newly formed workshop for the making of television:

Principles of reflection

- A. in a cinema  
people are many (together)  
to be alone in front of the screen.
  
- B. in an apartment linked to a TV aerial  
people are alone to be many (together)  
in front of the screen

that's to say:

set A: many to be (become) alone (cinema)

set B: alone to be (become) many (TV)

Godard quoted by Colin MacCabe in GODARD: Images, Sounds, Politics.

TV is not communication. There is not communication until there is a disturbance. This is why Godard rejects a communications model that has a sender conveying a message along a channel to a receiver. Communication is what appears around this model, or when the model is upset. It is when one of the parties does not know what she is saying or hearing. A subject does not exist until there is some resistance, some doubt, a question.

-- David Levi Strauss, "Oh, Socrates" 1986

I need to talk and to show me talking, to show and to show me showing. And when I've done that I need to talk about it technically and philosophically. I need to have a philosophical talk on the technical aspect and a technical talk on the philosophical aspect. It's like Socrates, who was just trying to talk to people...He was just trying to say 'Are you sure?' - which was his way. They should have talked to him for a bit instead of doing what they did. But it was too strong. I don't know why. All he was saying to people was 'Are you sure you're right?' 'Is your hair well-cut?' 'Do you think that's the right way to cut it?' And they said 'Oh Socrates. What are you doing? What are you driving at?' And he said 'I'm not driving at anything

but are you sure your hair is right?'

Godard quoted by Colin MacCabe in GODARD: Images, Sounds, Politics.

I dream sometimes of the kind of society in which people, meeting a television reporter, would question him. They would go into details. It would take time...they would dare to take time and the reporter would answer quickly, I mean without delay. Because in this society television would already have done it's homework. Instead of questioning the workers, they would have worked on the questions, as they say. So - to come to the point - the little girl, to whom no one says hello, except when her mother says goodbye, this little girl wouldn't take up too much time - any more than she does now.

From France/tour/d'etour/deux/enfants 1

In France/tour/d'etour/deux/enfants, Godard is the quotidian inquisitor, appearing to the children every time they turn round. Sometimes they are tired, sometimes out of breath. Godard is always off-camera, in our place. His questions are always academic but never rhetorical...Godard is relentless, the questions keep coming, one after another, more often decomposing already rigid assumptions (linguistic, perceptual, social), than building up to make a point. There is a certain pedagogical intent, but it is more accurate to say that Godard is enacting an inquiry. Though the children are not exactly young Socratics, neither are they blank slates. Godard does not control them. They respond to his questions with curiosity, confusion, disinterest, laughter, boredom, occasionally embarrassment, very seldom surprise. But it is not to their answers that drive the inquiry, it is the questions themselves.

-- David Levi Strauss, "Oh, Socrates" 1986

TWO BY JOYCE WIELAND

Thursday, October 6, 1988

Between 1966 and 1973, during a time when the esthetic boundaries of film were being expanded in a number of directions, Joyce Wieland established a distinctive style and voice through her wit, intelligence and well developed sense of craft. Coming to film from a background of painting, drawing, construction and textiles, Wieland used images to create a moving tapestry of landscape, color and texture.

I was on my way to becoming an artist's-wife type artist...until I got into looking around in history for female lines of influence. I read the lives and works of many many women; salonists, diarists, revolutionaries, etc. I started to invent myself as an artist...Eventually women's concerns, and my own femininity became my artist's territory...I think of Canada as female. All the work I've been doing or will be doing is about Canada.

-- Joyce Wieland, Take One, Vol.3, no.2

HAND-TINTING (1967); 4 minutes. b/w stock, hand-tinted. 16mm.

The film came about as the result of a documentary Wieland shot with another Canadian, Sylvia Davern, at a retraining centre in West Virginia. Wieland took some of her own "outs" from the film and began to make Hand Tinting. The warmth generated by the repeated images partly arises from the artist's close involvement with her subject:

I hardly know whether to laugh or cry about those girls. The centre was about 80% black kids who had come from everywhere. They were lonely, rebellious, funny, restless and hopelessly poor. Most of them wanted to make movies when they met us. It was a corporate pacification programme. I wanted to do my own film about them.

When I first did it, I thought it might not be useful to anyone. It was a poem. There's nothing out of the way in it, it has mystery and rhythm and some repetitive portraits of some beautiful faces. The editing and the girls are the subject of Hand Tinting. The editing and the so-called subject matter are equal. You can look at the editing or you can look at the girls. Just as in La Raison Avant La Passion you can look at the permutations, the images, listen to the beeps, or count on the flag inserts-or, just let it happen.

-- Joyce Wieland, Take One, Vol.3, no.2

LA RAISON AVANT LA PASSION (1968-69); 90 minutes. Color. 16mm.

The film takes as its subject the entire geography of Canada, accepting the impossibility of ever truly capturing such a concept as an entire country, yet placing the images of the artist's homeland under the scrutiny of her own conceptual rigor. La Raison Avant La Passion is the film in which Wieland gives unbridled rein to her love for her native land.

...in making this film and particularly while editing I had the fantasy that I was a government propagandist, churning out the government line. But I put Trudeau in the middle of my film almost as an exercise...similar in a way to male artists always having had their odalisque, throughout the history of art and in their films, as stars.

I guess what I'm doing to Trudeau is putting him on for his statement "Reason over passion-that is the theme of all my writings". Taking the words "Reason Over Passion" in the beginning of the film, treating them as propaganda slogan, and through permutation, turning them into visual poetry, into a new language.

In La Raison Avant La Passion the self-portrait says I predict, I make the film, I am a character in the film. The whole film is a bit of a primer on Canada and my singing lends a quality of a dutiful school child flogging the anthem. And as I carefully sing the words, my camera is beneath my chin photographing, mostly the lower part of my face and especially my lips. This soundless singing is the overture to the film. Almost announcing the death of the country, which is what this film is partly about-a last look at Canada.

-- Joyce Wieland, Take One, Vol.3, no.2

MADNESS AS PSYCHODRAMA

Sunday, October 9, 1988

Initially drawing on the work of Buñuel, Watson, Weber and Cocteau, psychodrama emerged as an underground genre in the 1940s and '50s dealing directly with the unconscious state in which filmmakers explored the emotional and psychological turmoil involved in the quest for sexual identity. Tonight's films are a small selection of the "closet dramas" that challenged and outraged American audiences.

MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON (1943) by Maya Deren and Alexandra Hammid; 13 minutes. B/W. 16mm.

Maya Deren, one of the earliest prophetic voices in cinema, in 1943 made Meshes Of The Afternoon, a landmark work marking the beginning of a personal emotional approach to inner and outer experience; the making of art as a ritual and a movement towards self-discovery, Deren's films have left an indelible influence on artists in the United States and Europe.

Pacific Film Archive Film Notes, 5/14/82

This film is concerned with the exterior experiences of an individual. It does not record an event which could be witnessed by other persons. Rather, it reproduces the way in which the sub-conscious of an individual will develop, interpret and elaborate an apparently simple and causal incident into a critical emotional experience.

Maya Deren in Film Culture, Winter 1965

FRAGMENT OF SEEKING (1946) by Curtis Harrington; 15 minutes. B/W. 16mm.

This film presents a climactic, revolutionary episode in the existence of an adolescent Narcissus, in which he discovers the true nature of his desire. The world of the mind and that of the exterior reality are combined so that they become indistinguishable from each other: the result is a film which presents the psychological essence of a moving personal experience.

Lewis Jacobs in The Rise of the American Film

THE LEAD SHOES (1949) by Sidney Peterson; 16 minutes. B/W. 16mm.

The narration, such as it is, suggests eternally fixed cycles of behavior; it is aligned with ritual and myth. The vital clues to the visual action are buried in the soundtrack; Peterson put together a jazz band, made up of the faculty of the art school where he taught. His students sing, howl, and chant with the repetitiousness of a broken phonograph, phrases from two ballads.

P. Adams Sitney in The American Avant-Garde 1943-1978

...the best introduction to the extravagances of experimental cinema are not the works of Ford, Eisenstein or de Mille. They are those silent comedies, first French, then American, in which people used to experience, until their ribs ached,

the ferocity and heartiness of the farcical view of things.

Sidney Peterson in A Note On Comedy in the Experimental Film

DESISTFILM (1954) by Stan Brakhage; 7 minutes. B/W. 16mm.

Internationally acclaimed as the classic of its genre. The camera joins in a drunken adolescent party and participates in the expression of desire and frustration.

Canyon Cinema Catalog.

...a biting satire on what we used jokingly to call "desistentialism" Long before the Beats, this film prophesied the whole concept of the Beat generation. I used jokingly to say "We've got beyond the stage of existentialism, we've got to the stage of desistentialism." So I made this satire on that form of life which is destructive to the self.

Stan Brakhage in Collected Writings

IMAGE IN THE SNOW (1950's) by Willard Maas; 30 minutes. B/W. 16mm.

The action of Maas' heroes are searches; quests for Truth and Beauty which end in Death. The search is conducted quite at random. The hero wanders the streets finding whatever symbolic objects Maas places in his path. The rather obvious nature of the symbols themselves is compounded by the schematic method in which they are introduced.

Crucial in the film is the value of streets. The street of classic German "street films," and of Italian neorealism, is the great arena and analogy for what Kracauer calls "the flow of life." It is this traditionally cluttered and pedestrian entity which Maas employs, treated with naturalistic detail, as a contrast to his protagonists' dream lives. So he uses neighborhoods in worst shape than Rome after the bombs fell as an environment in which "real" existence may seem as sordid and dingy as possible. Such is the filmmaker's view of life, as most unbeautiful, and absolutely distinct from the "ideal." And the dream of perfection, of sculpture as opposed to the tawdry architecture of life, that dream is only achieved in death. In death, the hero hardens to a statue. The ideal is rigor mortis.

Ken Kelman in Film Wise 5-6.

GODARD AND MIEVILLE'S

FRANCE/TOUR/D'ETOUR/DEUX/ENFANTS

Program 2: Tapes 5-8

Monday, October 10, 1988

In 1971 Michael Shamberg published Guerilla Television, a manifesto which called for the decentralization of commercial television. According to Shamberg, alternative video produced by and for the people should take the place of one-way broadcasts. With TVTV, a collective that he helped to found, Shamberg covered the Republican Convention in 1972, using inexpensive equipment and an improvisational shooting style.

Although Godard and Mieville also polemicize about the need for decentralizing television and providing the public with access to the airwaves, their experimental methods for achieving these aims provide an interesting contrast to the American models.

Christine Tamblyn in Video Networks, March 1986

In a way, it's all about stuttering: not the literal speech impediment, but that halting use of language itself. Generally speaking, you can only be a foreigner in a language other than your own. Here it's a case of being a foreigner in your own language. Proust once said that all fine books were necessarily written in a kind of foreign language. The same goes for Godard's television programmes

Gilles Deleuze in Afterimage, 1978

Caption: TRUTH  
NARRATOR (female) Silence. There's never silence on television. It's never live anymore. Management and the unions have banned live TV. Everything is pre-recorded: happiness, unhappiness, problems. Because life is put off like this, people come to see it as different. Different from what they dreamed.

INTERVIEWER Well, I think I'll hand over to you. WE can't do very much more.

Caption: TELEVISION  
NARRATOR (male) It's no reason for moving all the time. Haven't we got anyone for the camera today? There are dozens of cameramen out of work in the cinema just now. He could have focused on this problem.

NARRATOR (female) Well? If he talked to someone, had a relationship with the images you film, the hands with the eyes ...

Quoted from FRANCE/TOUR/D'ETOUR/DEUX/ENFANTS 5

(over)



France/Tour/D'etour/Deux/Enfants grants a new primacy to the image. What we see is that in our accorded places we are not visible. Unable to follow visually the conversational logic that her family is engaging in, we are forced to concentrate on Camille, on her invisibility within the family, on the fact that nobody but us is looking at her. If we see Camille reacting to the conversation - to her father's questions about school or her parent's laughter at her younger brother's pronouncement that he doesn't want to sleep with the ladies (dames) but only with fathers - we are also aware that these reactions are not registered by the family, caught up in the routine of a family supper.

Colin MacCabe in Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics, 1980

...we are presented with language as essentially informative and information as essentially an exchange. Information, too, is measured in abstract units. But it is doubtful whether the schoolmistress, explaining some operation or teaching children to write, is really transmitting information. What she is doing is issuing orders, establishing a set of cues. Children are provided with syntax in the way that workers are provided with tools, in order to produce utterances which conform to dominant meanings. Godard should be taken quite seriously when he says that children are political prisoners. Language is a system of commands, not of information. And television gives us: "Now a little entertainment...followed shortly by the news."

Gilles Deleuze in Afterimage, 1978

## DECODINGS and Other Films by MICHAEL WALLIN

Thursday, October 13, 1988

[filmmaker in person]

TALL GRASS (1968/80) 12 min. color/silent

The material for this film was shot in regular-8mm in 1968, during a summer spent in Mendocino, and blown up and edited in 16mm in 1980. It consists of fragments I was always fond of that never made it into my two first films, shot that summer. There are two reasons I am beginning the program with TALL GRASS. First, it represents some of my first, tentative forays into motion picture making, some twenty years ago, and evolved out of a great deal of excitement with the possibilities of the medium. Second, much of the impetus for this collection of vignettes came from my association with Bruce Baillie, who I studied with and became a kind of apprentice to that summer. Bruce was a terrific teacher (mostly by example) and I still feel that he has been my primary influence and source of inspiration.

SLEEPWALK (1973) 12 min. color/sound

At the time I made this film, I was very interested in the ideas of G.I. Gurdjieff, a Russian mystic/philosopher, and P.D. Ouspensky, his student, both of whom were fascinated by the juncture between spirituality and psychology. The notion of "personality", and its expression in characteristic gestures and speech patterns, fascinated me, as did the degree of unconsciousness displayed by most people regarding the expression of their own identities. Using three good friends as subject matter, and through manipulation of both image and sound, I attempted to bring to consciousness these idiosyncratic traits, and break the cycle of waking sleep.

MONITORING THE UNSTABLE EARTH (1980) 20 min. color/sound

Landscape (and cityscape) have always exerted a compelling attraction for me as a collector of images. Powerfully evocative in a way that can generate a profound feeling of peace, a disturbing sense of unease, a tug of nostalgia, or whatever, these sorts of primal images fascinate me. In MONITORING... (shot primarily in California, Nevada, and Colorado), my interest was in presenting a sort of "topological revue" which could possibly generate a sort of visual de-attachment, suppress habitual response patterns (naming, judging, etc.), and enable the viewer to really SEE. Human beings appear in this film as a sort of counterpoint (as expressed in their art, work, and rituals), yet really are just part of the landscape.

ALONG THE WAY (1983) 20 min. color/sound

This film is a visual journal, a personal travelogue, a filmic diary. Formal camera and editing strategies that I had been developing and perfecting for several years are brought to bear

on people and events. Nonetheless, the overriding interest in landscape persists, so the result is an interesting tension between the formal and the personal, the offhand gesture and the deliberate visual tactic. Friends who populate the images provide personal anecdotes for the soundtrack. ALONG THE WAY is both a reminiscence and an on-going investigation into the nature of "place". Powerful (and painful) events in my life during the period of the film's completion certainly influenced its final emotional tone; it seems at times an elegy to my relationship with a lover.

DECODINGS (1988) 15 min. b&w/sound

Human behavior, rituals and customs, and learning processes are encoded in it's media records, film among them. Isolating images from their original context, then re-combining them in new relationships intrigued me as a way of stripping the images of their rigidly processed messages, of decoding them. This "collage" or "found footage" film draws from educational and scientific films, newsreels and documentaries primarily from the late forties through the early sixties. Guided by certain thematic and formal strategies as the film was being constructed, very personal concerns clearly began to emerge, of a nearly "autobiographical" nature. My choice of imagery seemed to be motivated by an unconscious search for elements that related to my own past, for clues to a self-discovery. I enlisted the collaboration of a life-long friend (a doctor and writer) who I presented with a written piece, autobiographical in nature, that was simply too naked and clinical to be used for the film. I suggested he develop a text for a spoken narration, including characters and vignettes, that would incorporate the ideas I had given him. My concerns had to do with, for example, the kind of relationships possible between men, the possibilities for and barriers to intimacy, control and release, the ability to love and be loved. DECODINGS is an emotional, psycho-sexual self-portrait told in the third person and filtered through anecdote and parable.

VIDEO REFUSÉS FESTIVAL AT THE CINEMATHEQUE

-- Saturday, October 15, 1988, 8:00 P.M.  
-- Eye Gallery, 1151 Mission Street.

PROGRAM

- 1) Values In A Near Perfect World by M.J. Wilson, 5:00.
- 2) Dear Cassandra by Aline Mare & Bradley Eros, 6:00.
- 3) Too Far Gone by J. Garellick, 3:00.
- 4) Kathy by Cecilia Dougherty, 11:50.
- 5) Cocksplatter Blues by Leslie Singer, 12:00.

INTERMISSION

- 6) Two by Graham Dent & Thea Other: 2:40.  
Dressing for Success  
Dickie's Dead (Age of Consent)
- 7) Second SsIiGtHeT by Michael J. Collins, 9:00.
- 8) The Gift by Maggie Sherman, 16:00.
- 9) Come Home Now by Susan Kuchinskas, 11:00.
- 10) This Town Will Tear You Apart by W. Reynolds & B. Levy, 24:30.

Total running time is 101 minutes.

Coffee and wine will be available free of charge.

## BIOGRAPH NIGHT AT THE NICKELODEON -- FILMS FROM CA. 1910

--Film Historian Tom Gunning in person.  
--Sunday, October 16, 1988; S.F. Art Institute.

### PROGRAM:

Those Awful Hats shot, Jan. 11,12, 1909 14th St. Studio with Flora Finch, Arthur Johnson, Mack Sennett. (version restored by Eileen Bowser) Available from MOMA

Down the Hudson Biograph, 1903 Scene from the Elevator Ascending the Eiffel Tower Edison, 1900 Paper print collection Library of Congress

Little Nemo Vitagraph 1911 drawn and animated by Windsor McCay, Live action directed by J. Stuart Blackton (with McCay and John Bunny) Available from MOMA

The Lady and the Mouse March, 1913 California, Script: D.W. Griffith with Lillian Gish, Lionel Barrymore, Dorothy Gish, Harry Hyde, Kate Toncray, Bobby Harron, Adolph Lestina. Available from MOMA

Almost a Wild Man directed by Dell Henderson, script by William Beaudine finished April 10, 1913 California with Charles Murray, Eddie Dillon, Gus Pixley, Dorothy Gish.

Death's Marathon (finished April 5, 1913) California with Blanche Sweet, Henry B. Walthall, Walter Miller, Lionel Barrymore, Kate Bruce, Bobby Harron script: William E. Wing Available from MoMa

Amor Pedestre Ambrosio Company (Italy) 1914 directed by Marcel Fabre with Tootsie and Futschen

The Red Spectre (France) Pathe , 1906 Dir: Gaston Velle Also known as L'antre Infernal, Infernal Cave, Magic Bottles

The films selected for this program are designed to demonstrate something of the variety of genres and experiences offered as an evening's entertainment at a typical film theater circa 1912. The short format of the one reel (or occasionally split reel) length allowed exhibitors to follow the "variety format" derived from contemporary vaudeville programs, which intentionally moved the audience thorough a number of moods with changing expectations, from the educational to the farcical, the thrilling to the touching. Even when featuring the work of one company (and a "Biograph Night" such as this one was not infrequent in film theaters) a program could include comedies, melodramas, scenics, westerns, sentimental love stories and trick films as well as "Illustrated songs" which combined a live singer with magic lantern projections.

Tonight's program stretches the years a bit and goes beyond Biograph in order to include a few genres not exploited by Biograph, such as the trick film and the emerging animated cartoon. The Red Specter is a Pathe film from a slightly earlier period when the trick film was at its height of inventiveness, particularly at Pathe, where Gaston Velle and Segundo de Chomon produced a number of films which go beyond Melies' repertoire of tricks. The scenic film shown here, Down the Hudson is also from a period before Griffith when a large part of Biograph's output

was still actuality films of sites of interest or newsworthy events. However, the line between actuality and trick films should not be drawn too firmly. A Manichaeian division between Lumiere and Melies distorts the nature of early films as this film demonstrates. Although documentary in subject, the cameraman varies the speed of his cranking so that sections of this Hudson voyage zip past the viewer at magical speed. Scene from the Elevator Ascending the Eiffel Tower is even earlier, dating from the 1900 Paris Exposition, but also presents a "documentary" subject as a startling and transforming experience of space, as the vista of a 19th Century city seen through the motion of 20th Century technology. Little Nemo, an animation of Windsor McCay's famous comic strip is an early example of a genre just appearing. Its fascination with movement itself and the stretching and transformation of images shows how the cartoon first evolved from the trick film, rather than becoming simply another way to make a comedy.

Soon after Griffith established himself at Biograph he relegated the production of comic films to the studio's second unit. Griffith had never shown a real talent for broad comedy (as the "comic" sequences in his later features often show) although comedy of manners and character is often beautifully created in such films as The Lady and the Mouse. Those Awful Hats is a rare exception in Griffith's oeuvre, a truly absurd comic moment worthy of Mack Sennett (who is visible as one of the nickelodeon patrons in the film). Although Griffith seems to have overseen the later productions he assigned them to others to direct, first Sennett and then, Dell Henderson who directed Almost a Wild Man, which pays tribute to both the vaudeville theater and the sideshow dime museum. I have also included an Italian film here, the latest film in the program (although essentially similar to Ambrosio's 1909 The Tale of Lulu as told by her Feet), to show the formal inventiveness of early Italian comedy and to include another important filmmaking country of the nickelodeon era.

The dramas which make up the bulk of this program, and the mainstay of Biograph production during these years, were all directed by D.W. Griffith and shot by Billy Bitzer. Coming mainly from the later Biograph years, they show Griffith at full control of performance, composition and editing. They also show the range of Griffith's narratives from intimate and gentle family films like The Lady and the Mouse to last minute rescue melodramas like Death's Marathon. The stark endings of this last films should contradict the view of Griffith as a simple-minded sentimentalist, while the delicate sentimentality of films like The Lady and the Mouse show how freshly Griffith worked within this tradition. The performances of the Gish sisters, the late Blanche Sweet, Lionel Barrymore, Henry B. Walthall show the spontaneity of Griffith's actors, but his editing schemes dominate the films. Again a variety abounds. The 112 shots of Death's Marathon show the rhythmic control of time and space typical of Griffith melodramas, while the cutting between closeups in the central scene of The Lady and the Mouse shows editing's role in the development of character. I believe it is time to rediscover how extraordinary the output of the Biograph company was, not simply for innovations in film language, but for delicacy of performance, lyricism in composition and suspense in storytelling.

Tom Gunning

GODARD AND MIEVILLE'S

FRANCE/TOUR/D'ETOUR/DEUX/ENFANTS

Monday, October 17, 1988

Program 3: Tapes 9-12

AMERICANS.

We like straight talk.  
We want hard facts.  
We demand the truth.  
We know who we are.  
And when it comes to news,  
we know who we trust.

Dan Rather on the CBS Evening News  
Weeknights on the CBS Television Network.  
Quoted from Oh, Socrates, David Levi Strauss

Based on their original intentions, Godard and Miéville failed with Six Fois deux and France/tour/detour/deux/enfants, because the series was never programmed as intended, in the context of regular television. France/tour/detour/deux/enfants was not given the regular half-hour spot for which it was intended. Instead, it was scheduled into the late Friday night "art cinema" spot, with three programs shown each Friday night.

In cinema, Godard was able to seize the means of production and enter the conversation with a tremendously subversive force. Sonimage was unable to get their counter-TV into the midst of broadcast television. Since it is off the side, marginalized, it is not as subversive as it could have been.

From Oh, Socrates by David Levi Strauss

NARRATOR (male) Thank you, Robert Linard. And I think ... I think it's time for a story. Not her story, not a story coming from her. But her coming from a story. And both. And both of them before. Her before and the story after. The story before and her after. Or superimposed. The story of ... my pen.

A stylus: style, not decoration. Down with the style Louis XVIth, XIVth, XIth etc. Not decoration. A decor.

Quoted from France/tour/detour/deux/enfants

Programs 9-12: Camille listens to Mozart and discusses music, images knowledge and power. Arnaud watches a James Bond movie on television and talks about television, spectacle, boredom and solitude. The celebrated penultimate episode finds Camille at the dinner table quietly eating while her parents (off-screen) converse, and the final program has Arnaud preparing for bed and being questioned about sleep, dreaming, existence, life and death.

I'm not trying to convince people. But people believe that when you use a certain way of thinking that you are trying to convince them and it's hard to explain that you're not. In France/tour/detour/deux/enfants what I say is that if you look you can see that it's not good but how can you escape it? And it looks as though we're trying to have the last word. But we're trying to have the first word.

Godard quoted by Colin MacCabe in Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics.



LAURIE DUNPHY AND TONEY MERRITT

FILMMAKERS IN PERSON

Thursday, October 20, 1988

Laurie Dunphy

LIVED IN QUOTES (1987); 21 minutes. Color. 16mm

Rejecting the apparent naturalness of both language and politics, the film, shot in South Africa during the 1986 state of emergency, uses repetition of footage of "everyday apartheid" to produce a poetic rendition of a distinct culture in an alien society.

How fortunate we were  
not to have been exposed  
to rhetoric

- it would have falsified  
a simple experience;  
living grimly,  
grimly enduring

Oh, there was the occasional heroic posturing  
mainly from the immature  
- and a dash of demagogic bloodthirstiness

But generally  
we were simply prisoners  
of a system we had fought  
and still opposed.

From LETTERS TO MARTHA by the South African poet Dennis Brutus

WEST GERMANY. U.S.A. (1988); 19 minutes. Color/B&W. 16mm

With help from the U.S. Army's radio station, "Armed Forces Network," the film attempts to show what Frankfurt means to three American G.I.s stationed there. Criteria for the relationship of picture to sound are not treated in military fashion. - Laurie Dunphy

A WESTERN (1987); 9 minutes. Color. 16mm

Connects the ideology of Hollywood westerns and the U.S. treatment of Puerto Rico, emphasizing the sterilization programs designed to help reduce the Puerto Rico population sufficiently that the island can be overrun by industrial complexes and military bases by the year 2020. Deconstructs found footage from family-planning trainers, game shows, and other sources. - Laurie Dunphy

Toney Merritt

I'm a filmmaker who's Black but my being a Black filmmaker, to me, has never been that important. I notice that in doing grant applications and in seeing the results of grant applications, grants that are given to Black filmmakers are always the same old crap. It's always "whitey did us wrong and give me \$20,000 to make a film about it." My viewpoint is that the past is past and why fund the past and not stimulate things that are changing. If I made a film along those lines I'd probably be in fat city but I can't because of my own personal politics. People are people and you like them or you don't. If you don't, you don't deal with them.

It's gotten too serious. Too serious on the narrative side, too serious on the experimental side. Everybody is too serious and nobody is having any fun. There's nothing spontaneous, everything is too rigid.

-- Toney Merritt interviewed in Cinematograph Volume 2

GAME (1973); 4 minutes. 16mm

A KISS OF DEATH (1974); 9 minutes. B&W. 16mm

LONESOME COWBOY (1979); 27 seconds. 16mm

ASIAM (1982); 6 minutes. B&W. 16mm

CONQUEST PIECE (1981-1982); 5.5 minutes. B&W. 16mm

THE SHADOW LINE (1985); 13.5 minutes. B&W. 16mm

NOT A MUSIC VIDEO (1987); 7 minutes. B&W. 16mm

## Merritt, Toney

These films are representative of work completed over the past 23 years. I only wish to say that they contain a measure of angst, irony, and humor. Without the latter, it would all be bullshit. I hesitate to offer descriptive notes on my films, as I have always felt that they only reflected my feelings about the films at the moment of writing. Most of the films are short, and I mistrust films where the descriptions have been longer than the films themselves. Some brief notes, however, have been provided.

### **Just A Thought**

1978, 16mm, b&w/so,  
1m, --

### **A Kiss Of Death**

1974, 16mm, b&w/so,  
9m,

### **Aslam**

A look at how I perceive people sometimes see me, and I them.

Award: Ann Arbor Film Festival, 1984.

1982, 16mm, b&w/si,  
6m,

### **The Shadow Line**

A film adaptation of a chapter from a novel by Polish science fiction writer, Stanislaw Lem (Solars). A story of genius and frustration.

1985, 16mm, b&w/so,  
13.5m,

### **Conquest Piece**

I can only say that I set up the situation for this, what I believe is a very humorous film; but it is Nancy that made this film.

"...plays alongside Toney Merritt's arch and elliptical humor, (CONQUEST PIECE and ASIAM, moving from enigma to impishness to silent farce)."—Calvin Ahlgren, *San Francisco Examiner*

1981-1982, 16mm, b&w/so,  
5.5m, ^

### **Not A Music Video**

A very playful, spontaneous film made with and for people for whom I have high regard.

1987, 16mm, b&w/so,  
7m,

### **EF**

1979, 16mm, color/si,  
4m,

RE-VISIONARY FILM: Fantasy Scenarios

A Panel Discussion

Sunday, October 23, 1988

Tonight's panel discussion will celebrate the publication of Cinematograph, Vol.3. Like this volume, the panel's theme will be an examination of the positive aspects of marginality as applicable to experimental filmmaking. The panel will be moderated by Christine Tamblyn, Volume 3's editor and the panelists will include: filmmakers Peggy Ahwesh and Barbara Hammer, poet and critic David Levi Strauss, and Jonathan Rosenbaum, film critic for the Chicago Reader. "Will the future of experimental filmmaking be politically factionalized, sensually decadent, commercially compromised or narcissistically onanistic?" The panelists will address these questions, unleashing their imaginations to visualize future utopias in experimental filmmaking.

**San Francisco Cinematheque**  
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## Experimental Film in the Year 2000: Four Fantasy Scenarios

1. The revolution occurs; the government is overthrown and the pig dog lackies of the ruling class are demoted to assembling semi-conductors. There are great ceremonial pageants and celebrations in the streets, all documented by Peter Wollen and Jon Jost, who are appointed to the Cabinet for Aestheticized Agit-Prop by the newly elected President, Annette Michelson. Michelson understandably views experimental film as a high priority budget item; all filmmakers receive abundant lifetime pensions and unlimited access to materials, equipment and lab services. Unfortunately, there is a palace coup and Ti-Grace Atkinson takes over, vowing to exterminate all men and establish a parthogenetic lesbian utopia with Su Friedrich as the Ministress of the Interior. However, a black messiah named Lizzie Borden proclaims her divinity just in time to reconcile all the warring factions and silence the proliferation of dialectical babel. A coalition government of rainbow-hued androgynes is formed, who sponsor the production of blockbuster historical epics by Keith Sanborn and Amy Taubin.

2. The Feelies described in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World are instituted: environments of total sensory stimulation based on previous experimental films. The dilemma of the audience's role is resolved, because every audience member experiences complete participatory involvement. The Feelies render the concept of intermedia obsolete by extending it ad infinitum. Thus, audience members are bathed in flickering washes of color from Paul Sharits films until their bodies jerk into perfectly calibrated epileptic fits. The long zoom that structures Michael Snow's Wavelength is viscerally felt by audiences sequestered in cabinets capable of rotations of any conceivable direction, duration and speed, in a conflation of every type of amusement park ride. Designer drugs are also available to enhance the

post-filmic illusions. Bruce Conner's collage films are augmented by a refined amphetamine; William Burroughs serves as a consultant in the synthesis of a perfect opiate to supplement the viewing of Cocteau's Orpheus. A newly discovered organic tropical hallucinogen adds nice flourishes to the films of both Pat O'Neill and Robert Nelson.

3. The fusion of high art and popular culture is finally consummated when Stan Brakhage signs a contract with Warner Brothers to make 35 millimeter narrative films. Not to be outdone, Paramount Pictures promptly signs Kenneth Anger, while Disney Productions employs the cryogenic techniques they developed to resuscitate freeze-dried Walt to bring Hollis Frampton back from the grave. Brakhage is persuaded to let Sylvester Stallone replace himself in the title role of a remake of Dog Star Man. Kenneth Anger is permitted to shoot and insert gay love interests and ritual magic subplots into any classics of the Hollywood cinema that he wishes. Frampton is given access to all of the film that has ever been exposed in the history of the world, a gargantuan image bank that he can spend all of eternity fathoming the meta-structure of in preparation for constructing his magnum opus, a bead game (in Herman Hesse's sense) for the amalgamation of all culture.

4. A new type of film is invented that replicates subjective experience with flawless fidelity. On this film, any person can record any moment of their life by a simple act of will. The technology is so lightweight that it's invisible, and so inexpensive that it costs nothing. When these stored personal histories are played back for another viewer, they simulate the effect of ESP, only with a time delay. An underground movement of young filmmakers led by Joe Gibbons and Scott and Beth B springs up to exploit this new device. They obsessively document their perverted Warholian lifestyles in order to implement a new order of intersubjectivity that relegates individual interiority and the burden of uniqueness to cultural obsolescence.

WARREN SONBERT:

FILMS OF THREE DECADES - FILMMAKER IN PERSON

Thursday, October 27, 1988

These films are accumulations of evidence. The images must be read: not only what narrative connotations are given off by representational imagery as regards both language and figure-engaged activity, but also the constructive signposts of point of view, exposure, composition, color, directional pulls and the textual overlay. But in film the solo image is akin to an isolated chord; the kinetic thrust emerges with montage. That process expands, deflates, contradicts, reinforces or qualifies. It is this specific and directed placement that provides film with both its structure and its freedom.

Film can do flips, is acrobatic. A highly charged shot, though still potentially balanced by a multitude of suggestibles, may in turn, by replacement by a more neutral image, shift into objectivity the initial heightened response. This play with expectations, both frustrated and enhanced, constitutes a reason to look at the screen. The variables of the image, its visual qualities being punctuation, swell to a series of statements, whose provocative strains demand a measured vigilance of the viewer, when editing can either underline, comment upon or upset the fluctuating continuities. This is not to say that the possible pleasure produced refuses rigor, but rather that cerebral sleight-of-hand implies control. -- Warren Sonbert, 1983.

DIVIDED LOYALTIES (1978); 22 minutes. Color. 16mm.

What was once a minimal narrative has been replaced by visual puns, metaphors, and associations of both form and content. The films are so dense it's impossible to apprehend them at a single viewing. One may come away as from a dream, aware of having seen much but remembering nothing. Yet Sonbert's detailed rational imagery is in no way oneiric. The title Divided Loyalties refers literally to the stuff above and below the editing splice as well as to its subject matter-which pulls between East and West coast, between America and Europe, art and industry, sex and friendship. The link runs fore and aft so that the connections are almost never dualistic.

-- Amy Taubin in Village Voice 1/27/87.

HALL OF MIRRORS (1966); 7 minutes. Color. 16mm.

In the causal juxtaposition of three distinct sequences Sonbert nails the psychological and historical connection between the solipsistic narcissism of his own generation and the hysteria and despair of its parents at their dawning recognition of the trap of the nuclear family.

The underpinnings of Sonbert's vocabulary as a filmmaker are all here. Combining dated with contemporary footage reflects his sense of film as a historic artifact. The hall of mirrors suggests the regression of time - how the immediacy of the recording process is distanced first by editing and subsequently through successively removed screenings so that today Hall of Mirrors

is all of a piece, both prophecy and ancient history. -- *ibid.*

HONOR AND OBEY (1988); 22 minutes. Color. Silent. 16mm.

"Whose authority will you obey?" the film seems to ask, as it deftly avoids simple-minded juxtapositions. Instead, we see a *mélange* of images so full of geography that the work mocks the idea of any specific setting. Sooner or later, social and natural laws clash, Mr. Sonbert suggests, but in this scenario of discrete images all is apparent harmony.

-- Carlyn James in The New York Times 10/1/88.

It's in time that the structure of Sonbert's "looking at things" begins to appear. It's through time that the structure begins to work on our body, mind, blood, heart, lungs. And then I walk the streets happy, smog or no smog. A good movie, good art cleans out the smog of our minds. All the talk today against art is nothing but a social smog, I don't want any part of it. You can liberate your pot, if you wish; I get high on music; or on the clear, unpretentious movies of Warren Sonbert; or by looking at a brown leaf falling from a tree.

-- Jonas Mekas in Movie Journal November 19, 1970.



RIDDLES AND CONUNDRUMS

Saturday, October 29, 1988

Tonight's program presents several films and tapes formed as puzzles, playing with narration, memory, and sound/word/image relationships.

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was "Why is a raven like a writing desk?"  
"Come we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles. - I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

COUPLED ENTRIES (1988) by Michael Guccione; 32 minutes, B&W, 16mm.  
A story, if one could only get the clues in the proper order.  
Nosferatu, n: not dead, splashed with milk; also necurata: the devil, unclean; also nosferat: plague carrier.  
Coupled Entry, n: a two for one entry in horse racing.

Coupled Entries is a re-interpretation of the horror novel, Dracula, by Lyceum stage manager Bram Stoker. In my treatment previously unrendered passages from Dracula are presented verbatim in the form of voice over in the midst of a graphic which serves as a cue or mapping for the ensuing scene... fangs, solar phobia, etc. are replaced with crackers, tea bag and more, un- respectively. - Michael Guccione.

"Do you mean that you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

SENSIBLE SHOES (1983) by John Adams; 11 minutes, Color, Video.

At the tone the time will be five twenty exactly.

The Weather. Bright but rather cold.

Flys, where do they come from and where do they go to, Steve Davis' bum, Dynasty, 8 out of ten owners, Esso, the central heating, Everest (a tourist trap with no toilets), Robert, chat shows - images, sound and words provide an apparently unstraightforward straightforward narrative with more clues than Columbo.

EQUAL TIME (1987) by Bill Chayes; 13 minutes, Color and B&W, Video.

TV adheres to an aesthetic that issues a reassuring world of unmodulated texture. This world heightens its authority through seamless craft and a hygienic approach to visual culture. To combat this authority, video artists often assemble motley narratives, intentionally stressing defects and difference in their imagery. This anti-aesthetic then becomes the matrix for other strategies and thematic explorations.

Bill Chayes' Equal Time employs highly saturated color and low resolution Black and White footage to question its own veracity. A mock "how to" tape, this work delivers a payload of irony, declaring that control is the meaning beneath emptied images. - Steve Seid, 1988.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least - at least I mean what I say - that's the same thing, you know."  
"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter.

SYNTAX (1974) by Martha Haslanger; 13 minutes, Color, 16mm.

- One of the possible ways of taking it down and holding it there until you are ready to let it go.
- A basic retainer-wall approach.
- A narration of the process of retaining a narration.
- "More about writing than what's written." - Martha Haslanger

"You might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'!"

NEW IMPROVED INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY (1976) by Owen Land; 11 minutes, Color, 16mm.

Land uses the stuff of education, including the arbitrary pleasures of language's puns and sounds, to martial his attack on the lunacy of disciplines. The pleasure and play of language place us within a joking mesh of word and image. Sometimes we are the third person auditor of Freud's joking process. Or we are the second person object. In either complex of the jokework, we are part and parcel of the film's process. For Land, after meticulous artistry, the joke is everything. - Patricia Mellencamp in Cinematograph Vol.1.

"Have you guessed the riddle yet?" the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

"No, I give it up," Alice replied: "what's the answer?"  
"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Hatter.

Extracts from Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

November 10 1988

THE LIFE AND WORK OF JAMES BROUGHTON  
AND JOEL SINGER

Tonight the Cinematheque honors the 75th birthday of poet filmmaker James Broughton and the 40th birthday of his partner Joel Singer. The program will be a selection from their collaborations of the past twelve years, beginning with TOGETHER from 1976 and concluding with SCATTERED REMAINS of 1988. Singer will also premiere part one of his solo work-in-progress, EXPOSURES.

Herewith are some tributes to this occasion.

\* \* \*

LIGHT UP THE CANDLES

When James Broughton was still a teen preening the tragic comedians anointed his pate with myrrh and rosemary when he asked for pedicure and foot massage. He grew up to organize sand castle seminars, to come under suspicion, to wriggle, and move east looking for the true entrance to unused silence. Now for this guy who squints and laughs, light 'em up!

Edward Mycue

James Broughton does everything from beyond wit's end, turning all his difficulties into The Delightful. He has hoisted a god's-eye-view of the world of human follies and has developed a rhythmic complexity to sustain it. He is the only filmmaker I know who has been equally true to Poetry, Theater and Film, transforming all three into an act of lifelong montage.

Stan Brakhage

It was always nice to know that James Broughton was around to make movies and the year was not complete unless there was something going on that James popped up in. Special fun were his birthday celebrations. The world seemed okay when James was up there trying to agitate the audience with his visual contributions with Joel Singer. I hope he just keeps on having birthdays and we can go and everything will seem all right.

George Kuchar

DOUBLOONS

for James Broughton

THERE'S A PIRATE'S CHEST THAT'S FILLED  
WITH WINGS OF MOTHS  
and pink-green moss and eagle's thoughts  
with knobby, dripping candles on the lid  
in thickest darkness  
just before the dawn.  
The panther and the fawn  
that gnaw and kiss  
its cracking leather straps  
and fumble at the clasp

will

spread

THE  
THINGS

within

like golden coins

before the morning sun.

-- Michael McClure

**POEM FOR JAMES BROUGHTON**  
**On the Occasion of His 75th Birthday**

Arise and celebrate the Day of the Broughton!  
Bogeys high on champagne, crimson gods  
brooding in opal,  
the tiger's dream, the dwarf in love  
all hail this Shaman Psalmer,  
beloved James to the Broughton born.

If a ghost, sit him in good light.  
If a ram, let him run like an omen.  
And if some nights  
are too damn dark,  
set a candle burning for the myth.  
Hooplas for the Day of the Broughton!

We extol this three-score-fifteen years  
of Human Folly, this Hermes Bird  
who carols The Singer,  
who spawns Divine Madness,  
who gallops across the spider's web  
upon the True/False Unicorn.

Back to pivot, back to weaving words,  
he grins and spins Ecstasies  
of A Long Undressing. Creating hymns  
and rhymes and schemes of joy,  
swaying to mnemonic tangoes,  
he arrows Life Lines to Orion's brain.

He is here, there, everywhere, nowhere,  
now and then,  
a waterbug skimming the surface of attention,  
a black dot on a secret scoreboard.  
He is caught in the act, the ultimate Androgyne  
at one with stump and tree.

As prayers and flairs salute him,  
he watches final rushes of an age  
focused and defined,  
completing Water Circles, Seeing the Light  
beyond the mink-soft hills,  
Godbody of the Song.

Ruth Costello  
10 November 1988

FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW

James Broughton, the Godbody Godfather  
less macho than Marlon Brando  
and much nicer (kinder, gentler)  
than all the bloodshed patriarchs  
of history,  
Oberon of all the Good (yet naughty) Fairies,  
Fairy Godfather who waves away War  
& all such nasty foolishness  
with a phallic magic wand.  
Pater Ecstaticus of non-prudish Paradisos.  
Elder yet still cherubic cupid.  
Broughton proves ecstasy can belong  
to old age as much as youth, that  
age can be a blessing not a curse  
(as in Whitman's "Youth, Day, Old Age,  
and Night"), that our last years can  
be ravished by joys rather than  
ravaged by decrepitude.  
Geronto Terrible as terrible as any enfant  
terrible. Punster-Funster-Bunster  
terrible.  
Broughton's Ecstasies are invincible inspiring  
testament to the rejuvenating powers  
of Love, that the sincere devoted love  
of a younger friend who believes in one  
is medicine any aging person needs  
more than any Geritol.  
James Broughton and Joel Singer are cross-  
generational astronaut explorers of  
the universe of Love--immortal camerados  
in the tradition of all the immortal  
camerados of male-to-male fame: noble  
exemplars of the beauty and dignity  
of male-to-male affection.  
Androgyne Journal is a Walden of androgeny.  
Hail the headfirst-heartfirst courage  
of Broughton's fearless beaming of  
his unabashed being Who Him Am. "My  
kundalini runneth over," indeed!  
Pulling our daisies and legs.  
Making love spurt ecstasy through our hardon-  
softon-hardon-softon hearts, thrilling  
to the thrill of living-dying-living-dying  
thrilling through our living-dying bods.  
Hail the high priest of peter pantheism  
--hail James Broughton full of grace!  
Pater Ecstaticus in Aeternam. Amen.

--Antler and  
Jeff Poniewaz,  
July 1987

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DANCE?

James Broughton is a scary poet. Behind the word play, high spirits, and doodles lurks an inescapable challenge from the professor of pleasure. After all, "he offers you nothing less than the risk of everything." Walt Whitman confronted anyone who picked up Leaves of Grass in like manner:

The whole past theory of your life and all conformity to  
the lives around you would have to be abandon'd,  
Therefore release me now before troubling  
yourself any further...

Consider what appears to be a mild invitation in "The Gardener of Eden":

Every day I grow a dream in my garden  
where the beds are laid out for love  
When will you come to embrace it  
and join in the joy of the dance?

When the poem is experienced as the film The Gardener of Eden, the "joy of the dance" is revealed as nothing less than the pulse of the cosmos. A narcotic slow dance it is not. Images of lotus, leaf, and lord time lapse, zoom out and in, flash from positive to negative and back again. All that we are not will be consumed in this intensity. As we are usually quite attached to that preponderous baggage, to join in this searing joy is terrifying.

Yet what are the options?

Honor one another  
or lose

Abandon your rivalries  
or mourn

Value one another  
or fall

Ripen one another  
or rot

Love one another  
or die

Where the stakes are high, the death/debt is great, as Heraclitus would have it. Paralysis in the face of such a choice is a peril but Broughton uses every means he can to propel the reader across the threshold before he knows it. Metrical miracles renew a childhood innocence out of adult malaise. Like William Blake, Broughton makes his poems songs, then he sings them. Or we do as the uncanny rhythms built into the poems emerge. Like Blake would have if he could have, Broughton uses film to create his visions. All for sweet liberty's sake.

*James Bogan*

THE WORK OF VITO ACCONCI

Saturday, November 12, 1988

Since his earliest works as a visual artist during the late 1960's, Vito Acconci has become one of the most influential artists of his generation. Acconci's work in performance, sculpture, body work, film and video have defied taboos about institutional improprieties and sexuality. For tonight's program a selection of super-8mm films and videotapes made in the early 1970's will be presented. In all the works Acconci acts as the principal performer in physical actions which confront the viewer.

IF ART IS A SIGN OF, OR COVER FOR, THE PERSON DOING IT, THEN I CAN CONCENTRATE ON "INSTRUMENT" RATHER THAN "GROUND." I CAN MOVE MY MYSELF AS A INSTRUMENT ONTO A GROUND BY TYING INTO IT, RECEIVING, A SITUATION OUTSIDE ME. (BUT, THEN, IF I BECOME A VIEWER AND FOCUS ON A WORLD OUTSIDE, I MAKE MYSELF PASSIVE, SEEN FROM A DISTANCE...). -- V.A.

Language is Vito Acconci's ubiquitous partner. Originally a poet, he then became a body, conceptual, video, performance and installation artist. His early works tested his physical, sexual and political limits, and repetitious soliloquies, later transferred to tapes, seduced and assaulted the viewer. Most of the earlier works needed few props; Acconci captured his audience by confrontation or varieties of self-abuse. As the sets became more elaborate, Acconci himself receded, and enticed the spectators to rake over his role. -- Janet Kardon, 1981

IF AN ART-WORK IS SEEN AS A TARGET FOR VIEWERS EXPERIENCING ART, ENTERING AN EXHIBITION SPACE AND AIMING IN, THEN I CAN, BEFOREHAND, DOING ART, USE MYSELF AS TARGET WITH THE TARGET-MAKING ACTIVITY MADE AVAILABLE TO THE VIEWERS. (BUT, THEN, IF I FOCUS IN ON MYSELF, I CLOSE MYSELF UP IN MYSELF, PRESENTING MYSELF NOT AS "PERSON" BUT AS "OBJECT"...). --V.A.

IF ART IS THE PRESENTATION OF THE SELF BEHIND IT, AND A SELF BECOMES PERSONALIZED BY INTERACTING WITH ANOTHER PERSON, THEN I CAN BRING IN ANOTHER AGENT: WE MOVE TOWARD EACH OTHER, WORK OURSELVES INTO A WHOLE, IN FRONT OF THE VIEWERS. (BUT, THEN, IF WE CONCENTRATE SO HARD THAT WE ONLY FOCUS ON EACH OTHER, THEN WE BUILD A WALL AROUND US THAT SHUTS THE VIEWER OUT...). --V.A.

IF AN ART-PLACE IS A PLACE FOR VIEWERS, AND IF ART IS A GIFT FROM ARTIST TO VIEWER, THEN I CAN JOIN MY SPACE WITH THE VIEWERS' SPACE, I CAN MEET A VIEWER FACE TO FACE. (BUT, THEN, AS LONG AS I'M THERE IN PERSON, I PRESENT A PERSONALITY



TO BE FOCUSED ON, BY MYSELF AND BY VIEWERS, WE MAKE AN INTIMATE SPACE THAT ESCAPES FROM THE WORLD OF CAUSES OUTSIDE...). --V.A.

IF ART MAKES AN ARCHITECTURAL SPACE, A MODEL-SPACE, THEN I CAN WITHDRAW MY PRESENCE, LEAVING VIEWERS ROOM TO MOVE: THE VIEWERS BECOME PERFORMER, THE VIEWERS TAKE MY PLACE. (BUT, THEN, IF THE SPACE IS A PROJECTION OF ME, THE VIEWERS HAVE NO PLACE OF THEIR OWN, THEY INHABIT A NO-MAN'S LAND, WHILE I FLOAT AWAY BEFORE-THE-FACT IN A SPACE NEITHER MINE NOR THEIRS...). --V.A.

In the summer of 1979 Acconci converted a flat-bed truck into a People-mobile, which toured Amsterdam broadcasting a message that alternately seemed to advocate terrorism and antagonize terrorists. Acconci's machine, then, became an agent provocateur, though on which political side, no one could tell. As a mobile self, it intruded itself into the political arena much as any sophisticated demagogue might. One is never quite sure whether or not Acconci in his own mind is advocating violence, but clearly his central aim is to act as if his work were propaganda. He avoids a clear statement of position in order to stress the propositional tone of his art. -- Kay Larson, Machineworks

IF ART CAN APPEAR IN DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS, THEN A PIECE CAN DERIVE FROM THE PLACE WHERE IT'S DONE; IF A PHYSICAL PLACE IS PART OF A CULTURAL SPACE, THEN VIEWERS COME TO AN ART-PLACE WITH A HISTORY, IN THE NEWS; IF I DO ART FROM PLACE TO PLACE, THEN I BRING MY OWN PLACE WHEREVER I GO; IF AN ART-PLACE IS A PUBLIC PLACE, WE CAN HOLD A PUBLIC MEETING...). -- V.A.

(Vito Acconci quotes from Catalogue of Headlines and Image, 1978)

## THE MYTH OF THE MALE PROJECT:

### HOLLYWOOD AND THE ATOM BOMB

Sunday, November 13, 1988

Tonight's feature length Hollywood films from the Cold War era's hey-day depicting the development of the first atomic weapon, will be the focus of visiting artist Ken Jacobs' lecture this Wednesday at the San Francisco Art Institute at 7:30 pm. The following extracts come from reviews contemporary to the film, and from written material from Jacobs' lecture.

#### THE BEGINNING OR THE END (1947)

From the brashly deceptive introduction, which pretends to be a newsreel report showing a group of atomic scientists burying film records--and this film--in a time capsule, it would seem that the Metro people actually think that they have made history. And the commentary throughout supports this notion.

For the most part, the re-enactments are commendably graphic and tense, and they are competently strung together in an impressive dramatic line. Brian Donlevy makes a pretty snappy spark-plug out of dynamic General Groves, and Godfrey Tearle puts authority and compassion into three brief scenes as President Roosevelt.

Wisely the people at Metro have taken no sides in the current atomic contentions. They've simply said that the development of the bomb and its use were a necessary evil to finish a far more destructive war. And they've said that this new and vast potential of atomic energy must be put to the betterment of life for all peoples. To that we can say "Amen."

Bosley Crowther, New York Times, 2/21/1947

#### ABOVE AND BEYOND (1952)

For the purpose of strong dramatic interest, Metro has taken the tale of Colonel Tibbetts' historic adventure and built it up as a poignant tale of the physical and mental burdens imposed upon the man. Above and beyond the pressures of the military responsibilities involved the studio has put particular emphasis upon the grave domestic tensions that are said to have occurred when the colonel had to conceal his assignment from his wife. And with Robert Taylor and Eleanor Parker cast in the husband-wife roles, it has made its chief tug upon the heart-strings with a detailed enactment of this strife.

This is one of those situations in which all the husband would have to explain is "this thing is bigger than the both of us", and the air would be cleared. However, the two carry on fuming until the wife blows up.

Bosley Crowther, New York Times, 1/31/1953

Two instruments of social engineering, deep scoops, designed to turn minds around (our entertainers know more about us than we do). Soggy sagas of male birth; no mean and mundane female begetting but boundless fantasy of cosmic convulsion: the sky is not the limit! And what do men deliver? Atom bombs for starters. Pity the poor Japs, of course, but atombombing our prostrate enemy (read Gar Alperowitz) was merely incidental to the release of energy itself. That was the event, the rest was all in the game, in the necessary contesting that elicits sublime accomplishment. Sublime, because a divine manifestation was invoked by an exclusively male, techno-military, hierachial priesthood releasing into our world a quality of energy unknown to it (America had made it into the big time, had been chosen to fulfill history). A visitation from The Beyond seemingly destructive (to those without vision) but, in fact, transformative, giving rise out of the collapsing womb of this world to a new and better, less compromised, maler phase of existence. Mission accomplished. The male group e-mission which women play into, although not without a lot of movies and religion to confound their realism (I'll also be referring to 2001 and the abominable Apocalypse Now).

Ken Jacobs

THE SKY SOCIALIST

Regular 8mm. Kodachrome II, 1964-65;  
16mm. blow-up 1986, with help from N.E.A.  
and D.A.A.D.; about 90 minutes

The film is in sections to be shown separately; this is the central, longest "panel", within which the story can be said to be complete.

Characters in order of appearance:

Julie Motz as The Muse Of Cinema. The impossible is what she does best.

Florence Jacobs plays a miraculously spared Anne Frank.

Joyce Weiland, as Love's Labor, keeps The Roebblings' Bridge in tip-top shape.

Dave Leveson stands in for the obscure thirties author Isadore Lhevinne.

Bob Cowan: Maurice, a downer and a tricky fellow, weighs facts on us in the midst of our golden movie. He is forever moving Isadore to despair with reminders of history.

Mel Garfinkel plays Nazi Mentality.

Titles of some sequences are:

Love's Labor

Bestowal Of The Material Goods

The Muse Of Cinema Flies To The Rescue

Nazi Mentality Stabs At Microbes In The Air

Divine Retribution Sequence

Isadore's Transmogrification

The Wedding (Witnessed By Bleeding Humanity)

Shutting Up Maurice With A Myth Of His Own

Brooklyn Connects With Manhattan

Books I am grateful for:  
Brooklyn Bridge, Fact and Symbol  
Alan Trachtenberg, Univ. of  
Chicago Press  
The Great Bridge, David McCullough,  
Simon and Schuster

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JERRY TAKES A BACK SEAT, THEN STEPS OUT OF THE PICTURE, filmed 1975  
16mm. blow-up 1987. With Nisi and Aza Jacobs, and Jerry Sims. 11 min.

In an earlier film, "Star Spangled To Death", I demonstrated how the cosmos turns on the fact of Jerry Sims. I'd been attending his school-of-scuffed-shoes majoring in Simsism. One day, scuffing mid-town (or were we strolling on the capsizing Titanic?), the master was pulling choice items from pockets stuffed with obituary pages when we met his father. Popeye doesn't chance upon Pappy and let things pass. Jerry began to flail and spit, disassociatively screaming small talk at the old man, who, turning to politely aghast me, said, "Look at him. He had the brains of an Einstein. He could draw all the funnies. What happened?"

Olive Oyl might've replied, "If we knew the answer to that, we'd know the answer to everything!"

Later I'd veer off just as the answer was coming to me. It'd taken on the shape of The Black Hole. A Black Hole approaches in a curious way, edges dropping away until it gets to you. I got the idea and I graduated.

JE, TU, IL, ELLE by Chantal Akerman

with NEAR THE BIG CHAKRA by Anne Severson

Sunday, November 20, 1988

Born in Brussels in 1950, Chantal Akerman discovered that film could be more than just a "feeble minded art" on viewing Godard's Pierrot le Fou for the first time. Traveling across to the United States she describes as the "most determining factor on my cinematography", being impressed, rather than influenced, by Stan Brakhage and, most importantly, Michael Snow. His work proved to her that in film anything had become possible. Yet she is consistently labeled by critics as a feminist filmmaker:

...I'm not making women's films, I'm making Chantal Akerman's films. I didn't decide to make films with feminist points or to change social structures; I decide to make films, to work in that medium, with that art...My film is an art work, not a pamphlet. It gets to you, I think, and that's not a bad thing.

Chantal Akerman, Edinburgh Film Festival, 1979.

JE, TU, IL, ELLE (1974); 90 minutes. 16mm.

Made in little more than a week on a very low budget, the film, infused with the filmmaker's comic yet tender sensibility, follows a young alienated woman, played by Akerman, through solitary, casual, and finally, tender encounters recorded with a dignified, stationary camera that avoids being either voyeuristic, pornographic or lyrical.

I made a film in which one part, IL, was dedicated to a man. Men thought I was making fun of the hero. Actually, I treated him with a great deal of tenderness, but I did not adopt the cinematographic language used by men for showing men.

Chantal Akerman, Le Monde, August 4, 1975.

JE, TU, IL, ELLE deals with the last throes of adolescence, the impossibilities of communication, the difficulties everyone experiences in fitting the mold that makes adults of us.

Chantal Akerman is not attached to telling a story, even though a sketch of one can be found in JE, TU, IL, ELLE. But she excels in translating states of being. - Francois Maupin, Revue du Cinema.

NEAR THE BIG CHAKRA (1972); 17 minutes. 16mm. Color.

Neither clinical nor leering, a straight-forward presentation of thirty-seven vaginas, ranging in age from three months to fifty-six years, a curiously neutral depiction of sexuality that shows the universality of all women.

## THE MACABRE VISION OF TOD BROWNING

Sunday, November 27, 1988

As a young man Tod Browning ran away from school to join a circus, swiftly moving on to tour the world with various vaudeville acts. In 1913 he became an actor with Biograph until Lon Chaney, in 1925, persuaded MGM to let Browning direct him. Their obsessions dovetailed and the two worked together as director and actor up until DRACULA in which Chaney was to have starred. Tonight's three films belong to that silent era in which the two men's partnership fused vaudeville humor and bodily contortion with dark imagination and soulful intensity. The films exemplify Lon Chaney's remark that "there's nothing funny about a clown in the moonlight."

THE UNKNOWN (1927); 50 minutes. B&W. 16 mm.

...anything but a pleasant story. It is a gruesome and at times shocking film and the principal character deteriorates from a more or less sympathetic character into an arch fiend. A sort of mixture of Balzac and Guy de Maupassant with a faint suggestion of O. Henry plus Mr. Browning's colorful side-show background. - Mordaunt Hall, New York Times, June 13, 1927.

Of the ten films that Chaney did with Tod Browning, The Unknown is probably the definitive for it's absolutely captivating story, and for the bizarre mood sustained throughout the entire picture.

The story is full of weight and fascinating touches, reminiscent of Browning's Freaks that would come five years later. Chaney gives a magnificent, tortured performance as the disturbed lover who will go through anything for the woman he loves. - J.C.M., Mill Valley Film Festival, 1983.

THE BLACKBIRD (1926); 71 minutes. B&W. 16 mm.

...a production which possesses a streak of Jekyll and Hyde, glimpses of Limehouse Nights and incidents of Hornung's Raffles. - Mordaunt Hall, NYT, 1926.

...an unusual little Tod Browning crime drama in which Chaney stars as "The Bishop", the crippled keeper of a rescue mission and his brother, "The Blackbird", a Limehouse thief. The story is pretty inconsequential as The Blackbird and his rival both go after a diamond owned by an aristocrat in an attempt to win the love of a French girl...like his other gangland pictures, Browning throws an endless barrage of bizarre and fascinating Limehouse characters at us. Although this is less ambitious than some of the other Browning/Chaney films, it is an entertaining and unpretentious little picture with a few fine performances and a weird twist ending.

- Jon Mirsalis, P.F.A. Program Notes, 1983.

WEST OF ZANZIBAR (1928); 60 minutes. B&W. 16 mm.

...a drama of pagan superstition, heat and ivory. - Mordaunt Hall, NYT, 1928.

...a powerful tale of murder and revenge with Chaney as a witch-doctor who sets up a jungle empire after Lionel Barrymore steals his wife and cripples him. He keeps the natives under control with his voodoo while having his ex-wife's daughter despoiled in a sleazy brothel and while plotting the murder of ivory-trader Barrymore. The story is one of the weirdest of all the Browning/Chaney films, and one of the best. Warner Baxter is particularly seedy as the drunk doctor who Chaney holds power over and Mary Nolan is a fine fallen woman who gets caught in the middle of it all. - Jon Mirsalis, P.F.A. Program Notes, 1983.

I ♥ \$

by

JOHAN VAN DER KEUKEN

Thursday, December 1, 1988

Born in Amsterdam in 1938, Van Der Keuken began his career as a photographer back in high school, with the publication of We Are 17, a book of photographs which met with instant acclaim. From 1956-1958, he studied film-making at the IDHEC in Paris, and in 1960 his first short film, A Sunday, appeared. For a while he wrote movie reviews, and in 1962, made 4 short movies for VPRO broadcasting company about 4 Dutch artists. His real career began in 1964 with the film Blind Child - a sharp and perceptive registration of the way blind children in an institution build up their own relation to reality with the help of the adults who care and teach them. His films take a radical esthetic perspective while retaining a lyricism that comes from his personal commitment to his subjects and resonate with social and emotional power.

In the tradition of Jean Vigo, Flaherty, Joris Ivens and Chris Marker, his documentaries have "less to do with objective reportage on faraway realities than with the invention of an esthetics of diversity, that is: the desire of an 'elsewhere' that is purely interior, and to which geographical travel would always and necessarily be disappointing." (Dominique Paini, Cahiers du Cinéma, 1986.) In an interview with Cahiers' in 1978, Van Der Keuken outlined one aspect of his approach to the genre:

I try to stress the ambivalence of documentary: the material that has been shot is always documentation of what happened on location. Not only the physical description of the location, but also what happened between us. My physical reaction to what was happening, people's reaction to our presence etc. So there are certain things that no longer fit within my esthetics of straight lines - lateral lines, lines in depth, or vertical lines. There are things that occur instantly and generate confusion...So, there are movements that do not fit into my scheme, but I have to admit them because they are the true expressions of what happened and must be kept in the film. - Van Der Keuken.

Tonight's film was first shown at the 1986 Rotterdam Film Festival where it was chosen by critics as one of the festival's seven best films. After screenings in Paris, Florence and New York, it received the 1986 Josef Von Sternberg prize at the Mannheim Filmfestival for the most original film.

I ♥ \$ (1986); 147 minutes. Color. 16mm.

The value of the film lies as much in the visual fascination that comes out of the places in the world he has visited as in the mixture of linguistic sonorities that are woven together without transition.

The many personages that are being encountered, filmed, interviewed generate the elements of a fiction that's all fit for a certain type of international and

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americanized cinema that is aiming today at eliminating frontiers.

- Dominique Paini, Cahiers du Cinéma, 1986.

When you are talking about money, you tend to think in terms of secrets and their disclosure. But you also realize that the idea of the disclosure of secrets is a deceptive one, for the speed at which the financial game travels over the world creates a thousand new secrets for every one that is being unveiled. So in the long run you can only aim for insight, for instance into the relationship that exists between state deficit, interest rates, currency rates, menace of war, flight of capital and the somewhat archaic spirit that welds these abstract notions into very tangible weapons for the few in their struggle to stay ahead of the many.

- Johan van der Keuken, Skrien filmmagazine, 1986.

Saturday, December 3, 1988  
SCOTT STARK: Films & Multiple Projections

## 8/35 FILMS

This series of films explores what would happen if still photographs moved. Looking at still photographs as "stills" is only one way to view them, just as putting movie film in a movie projector is only one way to look at a movie. These first films were made by putting regular-8mm movie film into a 35mm still camera and shooting it as if it were a roll of slide film. When projected in an 8mm movie projector, minute portions of each "slide" flicker by -- the entire picture is never seen as a whole. Films include:

The Politics of Identification, (Female) and (Male), 1988, 5-8 mins. Shot in the San Francisco Financial District, the film refers to the point at which sexual differentiation begins. In the business world, women are allowed to wear color and pattern anywhere on their bodies, whereas in men's clothing expressions of color and pattern are confined to a slender wedge below the chin. This codification reinforces a perception of women as emotional and volatile, and of men as more controlled and organized. These basic differences effect the structure and progression of the film.

Corners, 1988, 4-6 mins. The camera assumes points of convergence of lines of sight, above, below and upon the urban landscape. It is an investigation of a traditional cinematic device which causes an abrupt change in viewer perspective.

## 16/35 FILMS

Made exactly the same way as the 8/35 films, using the larger format 16mm film. The chief difference is that in 16mm, the picture actually covers the area on the film normally reserved for the soundtrack; therefore the images actually generate their own peculiar sounds. You hear what you see, after a one second delay. Films include:

Chromesthetic Response, 1987, 5 mins. A collage of human-created worldly surfaces. "Chromesthesia" is a condition whereby one sees a color or shape and experiences a sensation of taste, smell or hearing. You hear what you see.

The Sound of His Face, 1988, 5 mins. A filmed biography of Kirk Douglas -- literally. Pages of a book -- images and text -- are used to generate a musical structure. It is an examination of the fabric of the superficial, with Hollywood iconography as a metaphor for the superficial.

Satrapy, 1988, 13 mins. Simple musical tones are generated "visually" by photographing different sized-black parallel lines. A 5-beat rhythm is slowly intruded upon by the intervention of pornographic playing cards,

injecting a note of "negative sound" every third beat against the 5-beat background. Eventually the rhythms change, developing contrapuntal variations of 3, 4, 5 and 7 beat structures. The tone interruptions caused by the toneless (but not noiseless) playing cards create more and more complex rhythms.

As the rhythms reach an almost indiscernible complexity, the lined background finally ruptures, physically tearing apart, and the sounds and visuals become scattered and disordered. The pornographic playing cards break out onto saturated color fields and eventually find their way into the real world, flickering by against backgrounds of earth, concrete and other surfaces.

The general intention is to create a rigid formal structure and have it disrupted and torn apart both by a physical, sensual intrusion and random, accidental forces acting upon it in the production of the film. The formal and the abstract are ultimately connected to the real world. The film could be seen as a metaphor for a strictly regimented environment, such as the business world (straight, even lines and rhythms), which fosters a kind of repressed sexuality (pornography) that eventually erupts, intruding upon and tearing apart the formal structure.

#### SUPER-8, 3 PROJECTORS

W, 3 super-8 projectors, 25 mins. This work was made by shooting three super-8 rolls of film concurrently in the same camera -- that is, shooting one roll for 10 seconds or so; removing it from the camera and shooting a second roll for 10 seconds; removing the second roll and shooting the third roll for 10 seconds; then going back to the first. Each time the film cartridge is removed from the camera a portion of it becomes "fogged" or exposed to light, which registers as a white "flash" on the film.

Linear events (such as a piece of music, the reading of a story, etc.) can be traced through all three rolls in a circular fashion. For example, sentence 1 of a story might appear on roll 1, sentence 2 on roll 2, sentence 3 on 3, and then sentence 4 on roll 1 again (after sentence 1). A map might look like this:

<u>Roll #1</u>	<u>Roll #2</u>	<u>Roll #3</u>
Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3
" 4	" 5	" 6
" 7	" 8	" 9
etc.	etc.	etc.

When all three rolls are projected side by side, however, this spiral mapping is disrupted as the three successive sequences appear simultaneously, suggesting a concurrent progression of past, present and future.

Imaging strategies attempt to create shapes and sounds that could not exist in the physical world, but are formed by their proximity to the adjacent frame, such as the letter "W" that appears both accidentally and intentionally throughout the piece. A vocabulary of everyday objects and environments is used to develop a visual language.

Assistance: K. Tyner / Voice: J. Jalbuena

WERNER SCHROETER

and

ROGER JACOBY

Sunday, December 4, 1988

FLORIA (1974) by Roger Jacoby; 15 minutes. Color. 16mm.

Tosca as never before seen on the big screen. Features Ondine as the villain, Madeline La Roux as the tortured heroine. In the Jacoby style, the hand-processing produces unique and unforgettable effects as sound and color, image and actor become one. - Canyon Cinema Catalog.

Roger Jacoby's films are a breathtaking stream of seeming contradictions; humor and melodrama, the homemade crudity yet beauty of his images; abstraction and narrative, filmic illusion and the concrete presence of the film material, the operatic and the mundane. These diverse threads, however, are woven together into a cohesive personal vision. - Bill Judson, Field of Vision No.2

EIKA KATAPPA (1969) by Werner Schroeter; 144 minutes. Color & B/W. 16mm.

Born in Thuringia in 1945, after studying psychology for three terms in Mannheim, Schroeter passed the entrance examinations to the Highschool for Television and Film in Munich but left the school after only a few weeks. To date, he has produced a dozen plays and two operas. His earliest films, - he possessed a camera at the age of twelve, - are of a private nature; but he did travel to the experimental-film festival in Knokke in 1968 with a number of 8mm films. The coming together of experimental, avant-garde and alternative filmmakers in Knokke, at which the impact of the "New American Cinema" of Anger, Makropoulos, Pennemaker, etc. was felt for the first time in Europe, had a detonating effect on many European filmmakers, including Schroeter, who stood outside the film establishment.

Schroeter drew attention to himself as an avant-garde filmmaker with Neurasia and Argilia, finally achieving a breakthrough at the Mannheim Film Week in 1969 with Eika Katappa. The film-political situation, which did not support newcomers and experimental author-directors, the crisis in German commercial cinema, in which alternative films such as Schroeter's non-narrative and, at least in the conventional sense plotless works scarcely had any chance at all of reaching the cinema, forced Schroeter to turn to television. There in ZDF, (the Second German Television network), he was given the opportunity, in a late evening experimental film series, to continue his work over the next few years.

What Schroeter has found painfully lacking in German high art or culture and in German literature is that identity of emotion and expression, of the absoluteness of the ego and its freedom from restraint that manifests itself in the language of the body, in music, and above all in the realm that lies beyond conceptual language. He regards it as a lack of life.

Eika Katappa unfolds its enigmatic, cryptically associative attractions with the powerful fascination of the early films of Luis Buñuel. The relationships are, however, far more complex than Buñuel's surrealism. Schroeter embraces with equal emphasis the Nibelung myth and Rigoletto, a dramatic story of prostitution, or a

legend of the saints, a syrupy song sung by Caterina Valente from his youth, as well as a passionate aria of Maria Callas from a Verdi opera. Thus woven together into a musical tapestry of most heterogeneous sources, with balletic or highly pathetic dramatic imitations, with ritual and dramatic gestures, with picture-postcard images and documentary flashes, he creates a pandemonium of western culture, its forced emotions, its transcending utopias and fears, its myth and their reflection in kitsch.

- Wolfram Schutte, Goethe-Institute, Munchen, 1988.

Eika Katappa consists of 7 parts, which altogether confirm what each individual part already represents independently by itself. With the alienation of Christian eschatology, various opera reductions, a theatrical-dilletantish section and the infusion of modernistic stereotypes of experience which can become transparent through the extreme slowdown, an erotic relationship in exaggerated purism remains as the center of things. The extreme static quality of this section dissolves the outwardly dramatic value of the rest of the film, as well as the lack of imagination of the specific text, and reshapes it to the exaggerated framework of the primitive yet absolutely tragic torpidity of this human-aesthetic evolutionary tale. The following final section of the film documents this with the assistance of a selected concrete possibility as human failure in the face of a challenge of total purity.

- Werner Schroeter.

# Werner Schroeter

## Retrospective



Goethe-Institut San Francisco

## EIKA KATAPPA

1969, 144 minutes, no subtitles necessary  
cast: Rosy-Rosy, Magdalena Montezuma

Proof of Schroeter's famous statement that "There are only high points in my films," is this opus of nine parts and fifty-six scenes teeming with images of enigmatic beauty, which catapulted Schroeter into the pantheon of underground cinema at the 1970 Cannes festival. Moving from the Nordic myths of the Nibelung saga to the Rigoletto story set in a sky-blue Capri, the actors, in unlikely locales and dress, mouth their lines with calculated clumsiness while canned vocalists of world-repute declaim Verdi, Puccini and Beethoven on the sound track. Schroeter's accompanying program notes, in English, are typical: "Mario slings on top of a mountain of his comfortless agony." "Only Mozart can express the pains of the now sonless father." "Thinking of her sinful, unnatural life, the fragile pop star must die on a lonesome and dirty road, sighing helplessly: 'Life is very precious, even now,' while her younger brother comes to close her broken eyes forever."



**THE DEATH OF MARIA MALIBRAN**  
(DER TOD DER MARIA MALIBRAN)

1972, 104 minutes, no subtitles necessary  
cast: Candy Darling, Magdalena Montezuma

Widely considered Schroeter's masterpiece, this legendary film embodies the "non plus ultra" of his aesthetics. Warhol's superstar Candy Darling and Schroeter's own diva Magdalena Montezuma join a cast of mock lesbians and transvestites in a high-kitsch biography of Maria Malibrán, a 19th century opera star who literally sang herself to death in an attempt to please her audience. Schroeter's stunning tableaux of surging passions and lurid sunsets are matched by a soundtrack that combines Tex-Mex, arias from German operas, Tin Pan Alley and the classic "The love of a boy can change a girl into a woman." As Amos Vogel says: "... a creative perversity that bespeaks the presence of genius."

The Pacific Film Archive, Frame Line/ Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, the Cinematheque, and the Goethe-Institut are presenting a series of films by the German director Werner Schroeter.

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**At the Pacific Film Archive**  
2625 Durant Ave, Berkeley

Tuesday, Nov. 29, 7:00 pm -Kingdom of Naples  
Thursday, Dec. 1, 7:30 pm -The Rose King  
Thursday, Dec. 1, 9:30 pm -Lovers Council  
Tuesday, Dec. 6, 9:00 pm -Day of the Idiots  
Thursday, Dec. 8, 7:30 pm -Palermo or Wolfsburg  
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 9:00 pm -The Death of Maria Malibrán  
Thursday, Dec. 15, 8:45 pm -Eika Katappa

\*\*\*

**At the San Francisco Art Institute**  
800 Chestnut Street

Sunday, Dec. 4, 8:00 pm -Eika Katappa  
Sunday, Dec. 11, 7:30 pm -Palermo or Wolfsburg

\*\*\*

**At the Roxie Theater**  
3117 - 16th Street (at Valencia), San Francisco

Monday, Dec. 12, 6:00 pm -The Death of Maria Malibrán  
8:00 pm -The Rose King  
9:45 pm -Dress Rehearsal

Tuesday, Dec. 13, 6:15 pm -Dress Rehearsal  
8:00 pm -The Rose King  
9:45 pm -Kingdom of Naples

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**At the Goethe-Institut**  
530 Bush Street, San Francisco

Thursday, Dec. 1, 6:30 pm -The Day of the Idiots  
Thursday, Dec. 8, 6:30 pm -Lovers Council  
Thursday, Dec. 15, 6:30 pm -Willow Springs

## WILLOW SPRINGS

1973, 78 minutes, German and English with subtitles  
cast: Magdalena Montezuma, Christine Kaufmann

Schroeter set out to make a film about Marilyn Monroe ten years after her death as a meditation on the new feminism in America. The result was this bizarre chamber melodrama about three women who turn an abandoned shack in the Mojave Desert into a kind of Charles Manson commune. The three lure men to their lair, force them to have sex, then rob and murder them. With a music track that includes Bizet, Yugoslavian folk tunes, the Andrew Sisters and the Blue Ridge Rangers, Schroeter fashions a spectacle of female power which critics have compared to Fassbinder's *The bitter tears of Petra von Kant* and Altmann's *Three Women*.

## THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES (IL REGNO DI NAPOLI)

1978, 125 minutes, multilingual with English subtitles  
cast: Romeo Glro, Antonio Orlando

Often compared to Bertolucci's epic *1900* and Visconti's *La Terra Trema*, **THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES** has been hailed as "a new beginning for Schroeter - his best film to date" (*Variety*). Filtering classic Italian neorealism through his operatic sensibility, Schroeter charts the contrasting fates of a brother and his sister from 1944 to 1976 as they struggle to survive in, and then escape from, Naples' underground of black marketeers, prostitutes and homosexuals.

## PALERMO OR WOLFSBURG

1980, 175 minutes, Italian and German w/ English subtitles  
cast: Nicolo Zarbo, Magdalena Montezuma

Winner of the top prize (The Golden Bear) at the Berlin Film Festival, **PALERMO OR WOLFSBURG** ironically provoked criticism from some of Schroeter's fans, who found it too linear, and praise from some of his detractors, who found it extraordinarily stylish and engrossing. The film tells the story of a young Italian immigrant in three acts, each with a different setting and distinct visual style: his impoverished life in Sicily; his alienated existence in Germany, where he works in the Volkswagen factory; and his surreal trial for the murder of two men.

## DRESS REHEARSAL (DIE GENERALPROBE)

1980, 90 minutes, French and German w/ English subtitles

One of the most daring and original documentaries ever made, Schroeter's account of the 1980 experimental theater festival in Nancy is "less straight documentary than a personal, weirdly sweet vision of the human comedy" (J. Hoberman, *Village Voice*). Incorporating a strange meditation on Hitler and General Motors with acts by the creme of the international performance circuit - the Pina Bausch Ensemble, Sankai Juko, Japanese mime and female impersonator Kazuo Ohno, New York wild woman Pat O'Leary and bad boys The Kipper Kids - Schroeter overlays his extreme images with a music score that alternates between French ballads and Maria Callas singing Puccini. "The most important, the most beautiful and the most inspired film by a German director in 1980." (Eckhart Schmidt)



## THE DAY OF THE IDIOTS (TAG DER IDIOTEN)

1982, 105 minutes, German with English subtitles  
cast: Carole Bouquet, Ingrid Caven

Schroeter's most extreme film stars Carole Bouquet (before her stints in James Bond films and as the "new Chanel girl") as a schizophrenic from a wealthy family who ends up in an asylum where the doctors are as mad as the patients. The film scandalized the Cannes festival where it replaced Fassbinder's *Querelle*, and sharply divided critical opinion. David Overbey called it "One of the ten best of 1982... stylish and uncompromising." *Variety* sniffed: "Practically all the taboos of erotic moviegoing are broken... at best this is probing avant-garde theatre - at worst a thinly disguised exploitation film."



**LOVERS COUNCIL  
(LIEBESKONZIL)**

1981, 91 minutes, German with English subtitles  
cast: Magdalena Montezuma, Kurt Raab

This wildly funny and inventive cautionary tale about censorship, sex, religion, repression and disease, features key members of both Fassbinder's and Schroeter's troupes. Focusing on the trial of poet Oskar Panizza, the film recreates his infamous play, *Lovers Council*, which is set in heaven in the 16th century. An ailing God, upset about the sexual depravity of mankind, sets up a council with Mary (a designing old lady) and Jesus (a sickly youth with homosexual tendencies), to develop a strategy to punish all fornicators. They commission the devil to create a plague (syphilis) that will spread across earth, a disease which emanates from the Papal court. Ostensibly a satire on the viciousness of moralists, **LOVERS COUNCIL** offers prescient parallels with the religious hysteria surrounding AIDS.

**THE ROSE KING  
(DER ROSENKÖNIG)**

1986, 103 minutes, multilingual with English subtitles  
cast: Magdalena Montezuma, Antonio Orlando

Chosen as one of the ten best films of 1987 by the *Village Voice* **THE ROSE KING** is the astonishing culmination of a great career. An intoxicating Gothic tale of homosexual and Oedipal fixation, the film features Magdalena Montezuma, Schroeter's unforgettably striking superstar diva, in her last performance before her death as Anna, the widowed owner of a seaside resort where her beloved son nurtures his twin obsessions: a rose garden and a stunning young Italian who is kept tied up in a barn.



**A BRIEF PORTRAIT**

Werner Schroeter was born in Thuringia in 1945. After having studied psychology in Mannheim he passed the entrance examinations for the Academy of Film and Television in Munich but left this school only a few weeks later because what he really wanted was to direct operas.

At the age of 12 Schroeter already possessed a camera. In 1968 he travelled with a number of 8 mm films to the festival of experimental films in Knokke where he made the acquaintance of Holger Mischwitzky, who, under the pseudonym of Rosa von Praunheim, worked together with Schroeter in 1968 and 1969. What the two filmmakers had in common was an emphatic love for triviality, for imitating the exalted things, and for the pathos of emotions. Von Praunheim, however, derived his material more and more unequivocally from the homosexual scene and eventually became its most resolute public protagonist. Werner Schroeter, on the other hand, was strongly influenced by musical melodrama, by the great Italian operas of the 19th century, the religious music of German and French Romantic composers, and by popular hits.

In 1968 at the Mannheimer Film Week Werner Schroeter achieved a breakthrough with his film *Eike Katappa*, a two-and-half-hour-long tapestry of myth and melos. However, as non-narrative and plotless works scarcely had any chance in reaching the cinemas, Schroeter turned to television. The ZDF (Second German Television network) gave him an opportunity to show his work in a late evening series of experimental films.

Schroeter's works remained beyond the German domestic film and cinema discussion partly because of his use of bizarre subjects, exotic locations, and foreign languages, partly because of his aesthetics. In contrast to the separation of high and low cultural forms, of art and kitsch, of the artificial and the trivial, Werner Schroeter takes all signs of emotions seriously, however distorted, diminished, "degenerate" they may be. The underlying principle of his films is a radical unseriousness towards the communicative forms of art.

On the other hand, Werner Schroeter takes seriously, indeed "literally" what is often subject to ridicule: the contents of operas, individual moments in them, the transcendental, the absolute in melodrama, and the promise of happiness, the experience of suffering to be found in everyday popular songs and in folk culture.

## Filmography

- 1967 *Zwei Katzen*, n-8 mm; running time unknown; copy lost.
- 1968 *Maria Callas singt 1957 Rezitativ und Arie der Elvira aus Ernani 1844 von Giuseppe Verdi*; n-8 mm; 15 mins  
*Mona Lisa*, n-8 mm, 35 mins  
*Maria Callas Porträt*, n-8 mm, 3 mins  
*Callas Walking Lucia*, n-8 mm, 3 mins  
*La Morte d'Isotta*, n-8 mm, 50 mins  
*Paula - "Je reviens"*, n-8 mm, 35 mins (revised 1970)  
*Grotesk - burlesk - pittoresk*, n-8 mm, approx. 40 mins; copy lost; (in collaboration with Rosa von Praunheim)  
*Himmel hoch*, n-8 mm, 12 mins  
*Argila*, 16 mm, 41 mins
- 1969 *Neurasia*, 16 mm, 41 mins  
*Eika Katappa*, 16 mm, 144 mins  
*Nicaragua*, 16 mm, approx. 80 mins
- 1970 *Der Bomberpilot*, 16 mm, 65 mins  
*Anglia*, 16 mm, (not released)
- 1971 *Salome*, 16 mm, 81 mins  
*Macbeth*, MAZ / video, 60 mins  
*Funkausstellung 1971 - Hitparade*, MAZ / video, (not aired)  
*The Death of Maria Malibran*, 16 mm, 104 mins
- 1972/73 *Willow Springs*, 16 mm, 78 mins
- 1973/74 *Black Angel*, 16 mm, 71 mins
- 1975/76 *Flocons d'Or / Goldflocken*, 16 mm, 163 mins
- 1978 *The Kingdom of Naples*, 125 mins
- 1979 *Palermo or Wolfsburg*, 35 mm, 177 mins, "Goldener Bär" at the Berlinale 1980
- 1980 *Dress Rehearsal*, 16 mm, 88 mins
- 1982 *Lovers Council*, 35 mm, 95 mins  
*The Day of the Idiots*, 35 mm, 110 mins
- 1983 *The Laughing Star*, 35 mm, 110 mins
- 1986 *Argentina, for ex.*, 16 + 35 mm, 91 mins  
*The Rose King*, 35 mm, 100 mins

## RECENT FILMS BY VINCENT GRENIER

### FILMMAKER IN PERSON

Thursday, December 8, 1988

I think of Grenier as a ... (watch out, here it comes, lacerated by misuse, a limping hump of a word) ... as a 'poet.' By that I mean someone who is not interested in 'poetic' outcry, but in selection, composition, and silence. Perhaps even a romantic poet in that, instead of letting us pass through his images unscathed as a documentarian might, enabling us to proceed directly to the object photographed, Grenier keeps us protectively imprisoned in his images ... After giving assurance, after lulling us, he plops us down.

Repeatedly, Grenier's legerdemian brings us not to illusion, but out of it to its objects ... And so arises the difficulty in writing about Grenier's work: there are no anecdotal justifications. In mid-sentence you realize your words have become descriptions of themselves and of other imagined words. - Martha Haslanger, The Downtown Review, Winter 1979/80

TIME'S WAKE (once removed) (1977-87); 12 minutes. B&W. 16mm.

This film, while containing some images from an earlier version, is a completely new work. It is a collection of 'windows' on a personal past; the first and intimate effort at dwelling on various paradoxes as offered by the pretence of the double image. - Vincent Grenier.

I.D. (1988); 60 minutes. B&W. 16mm.

- Part 1, Prologue 11 minutes.
- Part 2, (Joanne) 10 minutes.
- Part 3, (Milton) 17 minutes.
- Part 4, (Steve & Nadra) 22 minutes.

In I.D. I tried to find a symbiosis to so many different ideas and concerns I have been entertaining for a number of years. A driving interest in this film has been the driving conflicts between the persona and the individual qualities of a person. Also an interest in superimposition partly as a disruptive device equally metaphorical of conflicts between interior and exterior spaces. The use of synch-sound 'reality' with an eye on tension between offscreen and onscreen spaces. Lip synch is used in counterpoint mostly. The procedure for the film involved interviewing relatively uninhibited people with expressive personalities. I asked them about events which made them feel estranged and alienated from things or people around them. From these conversations, physical contexts were sought for their interactive possibilities. The participants were exposed to situations that were partly uncomfortable. The camera does not simply prod but also is an active participant; not so much to render meaningful but to appreciate and transpose. - Vincent Grenier.

SQUEAKY WHEEL- VIDEO FROM BUFFALO

Julie Zando in person

Saturday, December 10, 1988

Buffalo has had a rich history of experimentation in experimental filmmaking. Lead by such recognized figures as Hollis Frampton, Paul Sharits, Tony Conrad and Steina and Woody Vasulka, the city was strong in minimalist and image-processing traditions. Recently, there has been a resurgence of experimental activity, most notably in the media arts. The locus of activity has been at Squeaky Wheel Film and Media Resource Center, a small, funky storefront that collectively works to support media and film productions. All of the work selected tonight are from members of this support group.

'Bella Donna Poisoning...Masculization of the Clitoris and other complaints,' Chris Hill/Barbara Lattanzi: This is the first tape made collaboratively by these artists, both are video curators at Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center. It deals with medical terminology and how medicine has historically defined female genitalia as symptomatic.

'Soma,' Barbara Lattanzi: This work-in-progress is a tongue and cheek exploration of text and its role in joke-telling.

'Life,' Heather Connor/Armin Heurich: A humorous view of fundamental Christian ideology.

'Human Beat Box,' Armin Heurich: This tape was made from appropriated television imagery of a mercenary training camp in the United States.

'Last Rites,' Armin Heurich: A compelling, expressionistic portrait of a son's relationship to his father.

'Tan Can,' Cheryl Jackson: This tape was shot with a Fisher Price Pixelvision camera- a children's toy. It is the first, to our knowledge, video art tape made with this simple and inexpensive tool. The work is an ironic critique of the pursuit of the 'perfect' tan.

'The Heimlich Maneuver(an excerpt)' & 'You are understood,' Kevin Fix/Richard Wicka: These two works featuring performances by Kevin Fix operate as extraordinary critiques of authority and consumerism.

'How to Get Rich While Sleeping' & 'The Lion and the Lips,' Brian Springer: Springer has been actively involved in mass communications technologies- satellite piracy, public access television, surveillance, phone communications. His 'How to Get Rich' features a shockingly authentic audio tape recording from a real estate sales department. 'The Lion and the Lips' is a 30 sec. excerpt from a ½ hr. program. (The 30 secs. were looped 45 times) The people of Buffalo have struggled for years to set up a successful public access channel. The franchised cable operator, TCI of Buffalo, had stymied developments on the channel, and tried to create public fears over the type of programming that would be made available. The director of TCI

publicly announced that he would never allow homosexual content on public access- a clear violation of the F.C.C. code regulating free expression for the channel. 'The Lion and the Lips' refers to the animalistic businessmen who would prevent 'the lips' from meeting...it was submitted to the station as a challenge- Springer assumed that it would be censored, and a possible law suit would be initiated to resolve the issue. To his surprise, TCI agreed to cablecast the program. They had extensive publicity, the most ever for a public access program, prior to the show. They hoped to 'prove' to the public that public access would bring sexual and irresponsible programming. A live call-in response program directly followed its cablecast, with the TCI director personally handling the calls. Of 42 call-ins, 2 said that they were offended, and 40 said that they thought that it was too boring and repetitive. The director was replaced 4 month after 'The Lion and the Lips' cablecast.

'A History of Capitalism and Religion' & 'ACT UP at the FDA,' Ellen Spiro: Spiro has had a large influence on her peers- her energy and skill for organizing has helped to define the Buffalo media community as 'family.' A photographer as well as a video artist, these two selections exhibit her varied interests and styles. 'A History' is a short, humorous tape on capitalism. 'ACT UP' is a moving documentary of the recent ACT UP demonstration at the FDA headquarters in Washington D.C.

These tapes can be obtained from:

Squeaky Wheel  
P.O. Box 251  
Ellicott Square Station  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14205

## JULIE ZANDO

### Program Notes

The A Ha! Experience, 1988, color, stereo, 4 minutes 32 seconds

The "Aha-erlebnis (experience)" is the moment when a child first recognizes his own image in a mirror. It is an experience critical to the development of intelligence and identity. It is also a moment when the 'self' is surrendered to the control of an external influence. (Described by Lacan as the "assumption of the armour of an alienating identity.")

I interpret this broadly to suggest that the Mother acts as the reflecting surface from which the child develops his/her sense of self. Desire for the mother's body, and later for the lover's, mediates the child/female's subjectivity. This is accomplished by controlling love. The child accepts the power of the mother to confer or withhold love; it is the mother's power to fulfill desire that shapes a child's sense of identity. Similarly, a camera controls love by directing, or not directing its attention to the desiring subject.

The narration describes a scene in which a young woman, on the brink of sexual awakening, is shocked by the presence of her mother in her bed. This image haunts her, and the imagined presence of the mother's body provides the backdrop for all further sexual encounters. All desire is subsequently understood as a derivative of this experience. It is the mother's desire (her presence in the bed) that directs and controls the scene of passion - she is the ultimate subject whose love confers sexual and psychological identity. Likewise, the camera acts as a tool that directs and controls desire. Its frame forever enslaves the 'self' in a game of passion.

Let's Play Prisoners, 1988, b&w (color signal), stereo, 22 minutes

"Let's Play Prisoners" is about how power is exchanged between females. It is based on a short story, in which a young girl is manipulative and cruel towards her girlfriend. The girlfriend takes it - she loves absolutely and indiscriminately because for her masochism is a source of love.

The short story is read in three parts. Additionally, there are two scenarios in which the story is reconstructed. In one, the author of the story, Jo Anstey, and the videomaker replace the roles of the young girls. While Jo rereads the story of victimization, the director controls the scene.

In the other scenario, a young girl retells the story, this time with prompting from her mother. In this scene, the girl's search for love and approval is transferred from her friend to her mother. So then, the short story operates as a model for power relations between mothers and lovers.

The tape examines the relationship between power and love. Power is a substitute for love, or love is feigned when a subject feels that she has lost power. Conversely, powerlessness is a strategy for attracting love (in so far as love is defined as having control over another.)

"Let's Play Prisoners" suggests that any struggle over love is modeled after the Mother/Child relationship. Their relations create a paradigm of need and dependency versus power and control. The tape suggests that this same power dynamic established between mother and child is transferred onto friends and lovers.

**Hey Bud, 1987, color, b&w, stereo, 10 minutes, 36 seconds**

"Hey Bud" revolves around the suicide of Bud Dwyer, a government official who killed himself before a television audience. I view the suicide as pornographic. The suicide, exposed to a wide television audience, becomes a kind of sex act that plays upon the tension created between exhibitionist and voyeur. It forces viewers to take either an empathetic position vis a vis the exhibitionist, or to act as voyeurs (who release their repressed desire to see the forbidden face of Death).

My interest is to understand the power seated in the position of the exhibitionist, and to explore that source of power for my own personal drama. Bud Dwyer gained power by authoring his own death, but his power is fatal: the instant power is taken via exhibitionism, it is lost through death. This is the traditional power for women who must seek power via exhibitionism and exploitation - they gain power only through death-of-self.

**I Like Girls For Friends, 1987, color, b&w, stereo, 2 minutes 26 seconds**

The tape is about seduction. The audience is seduced by the female narrator, while at the same time repelled by the seductress' desperate need for love and approval. The title is ironic - although the narrator "likes girls for friends better than boys," the attraction is masochistic and destructive.

PALERMO ODER WOLFSBURG by WERNER SCHROETER

Sunday, December 11, 1988

What seems to be new in Schroeter's films is the discovery-exploration which the camera makes of the body. It is a matter of a meeting, at the same time calculated and aleatory, between the body and the camera, discovering something, changing an angle, a volume, a curve, following a trace, a line, eventually a wrinkle. And then the body is abruptly dis-organized becoming a landscape, a tempest, etc. What Schroeter's camera does is not cut up the body for the purposes of desire. It treats the body like dough, making it rise and creating images out of it for and of pleasure. From this always unforeseeable meeting point of the camera (and its pleasure) with the body (and the pulsations of its own pleasure) are born these images, these pleasures with multiple entries. - Michel Foucault, Cinématographe, January 1975.

PALERMO ODER WOLFSBURG (1979); 175 minutes. Color. 16mm.

In the context of P.P.Pasolini's Scritta corsare, this is a film about the 'internal colonization of Europe', the destruction of a homogeneously evolved living culture that, even in its native environment, is already in a state of decay.

The first part, which is set in Nicola's village at home, has a semi-documentary character about it and is dominated by the performances of the lay actors, their dialect and folklore. The middle section alternates between realistic and stylized behavior. The film becomes bilingual. Its final part, the court scenes, is satirically strident and grotesquely drawn. Here, Schroeter's anti-realistic style takes over not merely the action, the composition of the pictures, montage and editing, but sound as well, interwoven, like a melodic arch in the ensembles at the climaxes of the great Verdi operas. Nicola's path is continually interrupted by scenes from a Sicilian Passion he recalls. This systematic paralleling of Christus and Nicola would seem to be related to Pasolini's Accattone, where the 'living out of life to death' of the title part, a suburban pimp, is commented on by quotations from Bach's St. Matthew's Passion. Schroeter's method is more organically developed. Through foreign eyes and through alien sensibilities and experiences, with which he identifies himself decidedly and in partisan fashion, Schroeter attempts in Palermo oder Wolfsburg to take a look at the Germany of today.

- Wolfram Schutte, Goethe-Institut, Munchen, 1988.

In juxtaposing and uniting myth and kitsch postcards, quotations, references, travesties, rituals and gestures syncretically in his own aesthetic cosmos, the 'scandal' thus created does not exist in any reciprocal 'criticism' or 'irony' between 'irreconcilable' elements; no, the outrage of Schroeterian poesy is the passion, the empathy with which he dissolves, dithyrambically through all ages, cultures and tastes, the separate and encapsulated witnesses of the dense layers of life and sensibility. One might almost say he liberates and delivers them from the petrification to which culture has subjected them and restores them to the realm of sensory experience. - *ibid.*



# EROTIC PSYCHE

*Excess & Ecstasy*



TRANSMEDIA



As technologists of the body focused on desire and its discontents, Erotic Psyche, working in film, video, slides, performance, sound, and text, separated after 5 1/2 years of intense collaboration (1983-88), going east and west coast. This is a re-perspective of their modern mythic transmedia works, incorporating industrial majestic music (SPK, Test Dept., Psychic TV) with live vocals and performance in the mix. "Erotic Psyche's richly layered tapestries of hallucinatory images are riddled with provocative rituals, from sex to science to surgery, that are guaranteed to produce frissons of pleasure." —Wooster, Village Voice. "They fuse the dynamics of dream, blood, fire & flesh." —K.K. Wanglung, Berlin.

## BRADLEY EROS AND ALINE MARE

Mutable Fire (1984 7 min)

Totems of destruction & desire. Combustible urges in a junk black mass.

Psyche Psychosis (1984 7 min.)

Subversive blood languages

Cassandra: Seething at the Mouth (1985, 7 min.)

Revenge of the dirty words. Visions of the visionary denied.

Madness of the Day (1986-7, 9 min.)

A labyrinth of pure war: the city is a box full of speed

Collaboration with the Alchemical Theatre, texts by Blanchot & Virillio\*

EEG of the REM (1988 performance)

These live wires form a vortex

Pyrotechnics (1986, 10 min.)

The ecstasy of transmissions,

el-e-mental -body (1988 performance)

The pregnant Androgyne fires the birth

Electra-Morphic (1987 13 min.)

or I'd rather be a Lightning Rod than a Seismograph

A science-friction of pyro-electric energy.

Promethea's homage to Reich & Tesla & the Orgone of alternating current

Total time: Approximately 1 hour

All tech & text ( except \*) by Erotic Psyche

Musics used include Psychic Tv, SPK, Test Dept., Diamanda Galas,  
Tuxedo Moon, Klaus Nomi, Steve Jones, Nurse with Wound

Videotapes of all works to be released by Mystic Fire Video in 1989

This show is dedicated to Heidi House

Special thanks to Mia Houlberg, Michele Handleman, & Mark Durant



## EROTIC PSYCHE: EXCESS and ECSTASY

Thursday, December 15, 1988

Erotic Psyche, composed of Aline Mare and Bradley Eros, were one of the most provocative performance duos on New York's Downtown scene. During the pair's five and a half years of intense collaboration between 1983 and 1988 they used film, video, slides, performance, sound and text to create spectacles of the body. Mare and Eros work in this multi-media form, more akin to Happenings than anything that has happened since, as they fill the space with an imagistic stream of slides, music, movies and live action in an eloquent portrayal of the primal self that exists beneath the civilized veneer of our culture.

In their 8mm footage, the use of superimposition and strategic over-painting suggests this is a relic from some lost, decadent pre-Raphaelite, avant-garde. They experiment with advanced technologies and ideas such as psycho-generation, 'perceptual speed', and infrared as a means of penetrating beyond visual light, in an effort to coax new imagery from unconscious sources.

In the work of Eros and Mare the movements of a personalized psychic/aesthetic symbology is shown as indissociable from a larger cultural context over-determined by media, politics, art history and the necessities of street-level survival. The basic color and texture of the photo image is used to create photomasaics with a painter's subtlety and command of composition; the approach is poetic and the effect is immediate and vivid. - Michael Carter, Exhibition in Japan and N.Y. 1987.

- a kind of alchemical crucible, whose total effect was a dark but lucid primordial trance, where thinking and dreaming intersect. Their images juxtapose an active realm of prehistory with a careful skimming of the flotsam and jetsam of modern culture. - VanVliet, Abrasion, Amsterdam, 1986.

Using a myriad of original realizations from the unconscious, Erotic Psyche interprets images of sex and violence in search of the utopian hermaphrodite. Only when you understand what you want to destroy, can the image become reality and the control process be short-circuited.

- Fotografie Kutur Jeetzt, Berlin, 1985.

Erotic Psyche has presented their psycho-sexual maelstrom throughout the United States and Europe, including stops in Berlin, Amsterdam, Turin, Buffalo and Chicago as well as their native New York City. This will be their only presentation in the Bay Area, where Mare is currently in residence.

LATE AUTUMN by YASUJIRO OZU

Sunday, December 18, 1988

I portray what should not be possible as if it should be possible, but Ozu portrays what should be possible as if it were possible, and that is much more difficult.  
Kenji Mizoguchi, Kikan Film, 1969.

Yasujiro Ozu was born in 1903. At the age of twenty he joined Shochiku where, four years later, he directed his first film. "If you really want to know the truth, I didn't want to be a director as quickly as all that. If I were an assistant I could spend my evenings drinking. A director has to spend his time working on continuity." During his thirty-six years in the industry, Ozu produced fifty-four films, but through 1935 he never experimented with sound. Most of his silent films disappeared during the war. Many of his sound films, especially the ones made during the war, were never released abroad. Unmarried, he lived with his mother the simple life celebrated in his films. He was awarded the Purple Ribbon Award, and the Art Academy Award, the first member of the Japanese motion picture industry to be so honoured. He died in 1963 on the evening of his sixtieth birthday.

LATE AUTUMN (1960); 127 minutes. Color. 16mm.

... the struggles of self-definition, of individual freedom, of disappointed expectations, of impossible communications, of separation and loss brought about by the inevitable passages of marriage and death.

Just as the situations and the people themselves became archetypes, the cinematic technique became a redirection to present, linear time, to sequences based on a 'primitive cinema' format of long shot, medium shot, close-up and back again, to camera and editing work that rejects movement and all that smacks of virtuosity. What remains after all the pruning is an anti-dramatic, slow paced and deeply moving revelation of direction that fulfills the Miles van der Rohe maxim that less is more.

...Ozu's films are not for those seeking utopian solutions. He never made claims for the possibility of romantic love, worldly success, or even human communication. Only acceptance, never happiness, was open to his characters, no matter what social class they belonged to ... he went straight into the irrationality of character and that terrible truth: Life is disappointing, isn't it? - Audie Bock, Japanese Film Directors, 1978.

People sometimes complicate the simplest things. Life, which seems complex, suddenly reveals itself as very simple - and I wanted to show that in this film. It is easy to show drama on film; the actors laugh or cry, but this is only explanation. A director can really show what he wants without resorting to an appeal to the emotions. I want to make people feel without resorting to drama. Here I think I was fairly successful, but still the results are far from perfect. - Yasujiro Ozu writing on Late Autumn.





