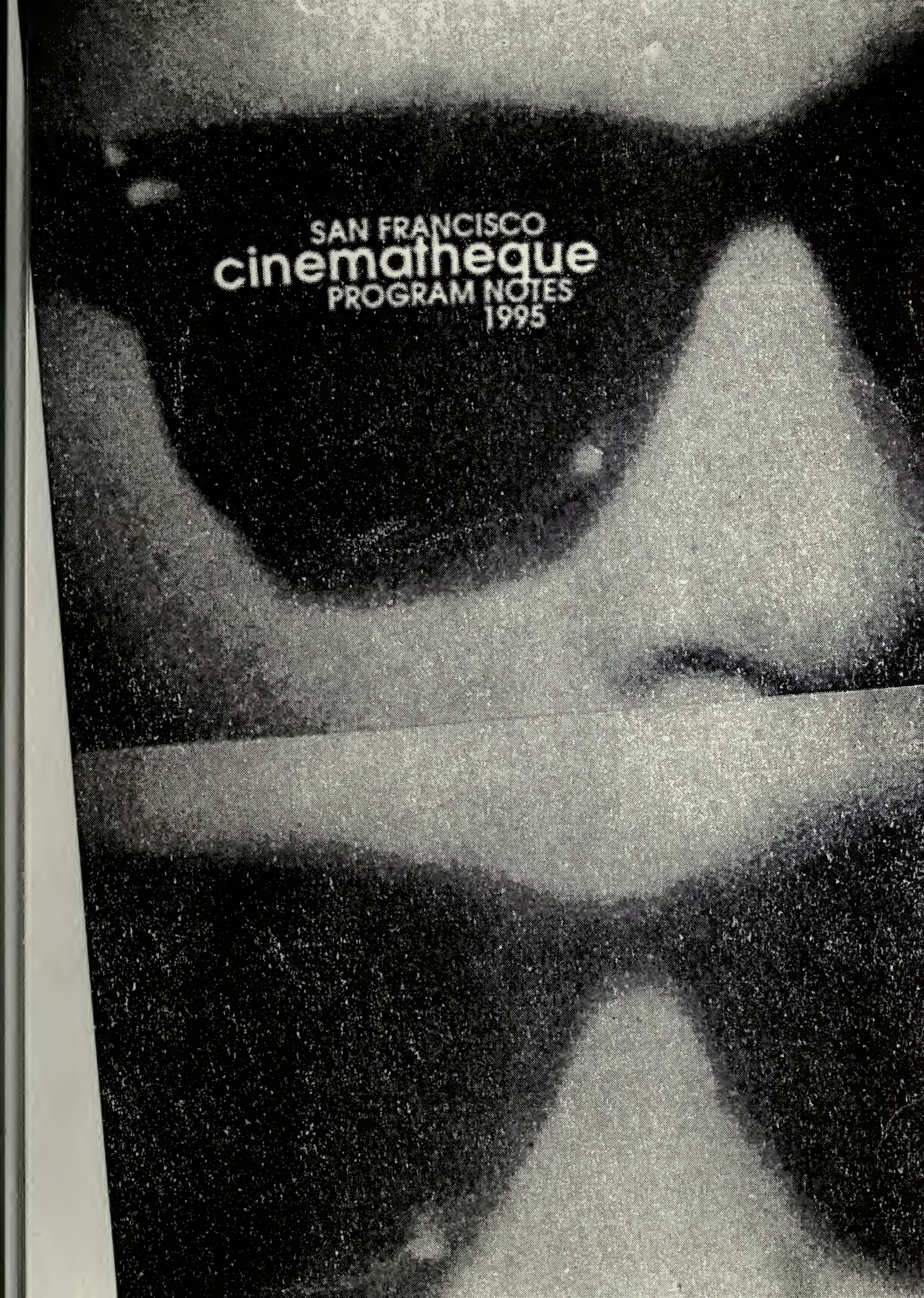
SAN FRANCISCO
cinematheque
PROGRAM NOTES
1995

San Francisco Cinematheque
1995 Program Notes

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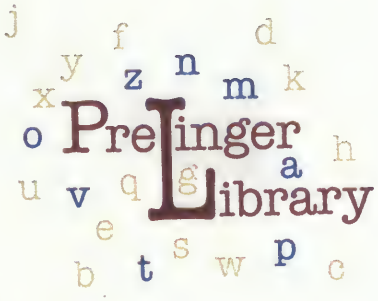

San Francisco, California
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AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 1: MATERIAL & SENSATION: AN OVERVIEW

Tuesday, January 17, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

This stunning overview introduces nine filmmakers whose other films appear in later programs. Beginning with Peter Kubleka's groundbreaking, beautiful first film, *Mosaik im Vertrauen* (1955), the program continues with local premieres of Valie Export's bold sexual manifesto *Man & Woman & Animal* (1973), Ernst Schmidt Jr.'s *Bodybuilding* (1966) (recorded during an Otto Muehl Materialaktion), and films by Martin Arnold, Mara Mattuschka, Kurt Kren, Dietmar Brehm, Hans Scheugl, and Peter Tscherkassky.

***Mosaik im Vertrauen** (Mosaic in Confidence)* (1955), by Peter Kubelka;
35mm, b/w+color, sound, 16 minutes

***2/60: 48 Köpfe aus dem Szondi-Test** (2/60 48 Heads from the Szondi Test)* (1960),
by Kurt Kren; 16mm, b/w, silent, 5 minutes

Bodybuilding (1965/66), by Ernst Schmidt Jr.; 16mm, color, sound, 9 minutes

Hernals (1967), by Hans Scheugl; 16mm, color, sound, 11 minutes

***Mann & Frau & Animal** (Man & Woman & Animal)* (1970-73), by Valie Export;
16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

***Manufraktur** (Manufracture)* (1985), by Peter Tscherkassky;
35mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

***Kugelkopt** (Ballhead)* (1985), by Mara Mattuschka; 16mm, b/w, sound, 6 minutes

Color de Luxe (1986), by Dietmar Brehm;
16mm (S-8mm blow up), b/w, sound 7 minutes

passage à l'acte (1993) by Martin Arnold; 16mm, b/w, sound, 12 minutes

•information about the films and filmmakers are excerpted from our catalogue,
Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993 on sale at the Cinematheque•

AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 2: THE FILMS OF PETER KUBELKA

Tuesday, January 24, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

"Peter Kubelka is the perfectionist of the film medium: and, as I honor that quality above all others at this time (finding such a lack of it now elsewhere), I would simply like to say: Peter Kubelka is the world's greatest film-maker —which is to say, simply: see his films!"

—Stan Brakhage

Pause! (1977); 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

"Arnulf Rainer himself is an artist of unique originality and intensity. His face art, which constitutes the source of imagery of *Pause!*, is a chapter of modern art in itself...both

Rainer and Art disintegrated and became molecules, frames of movements and expressions, material at the disposal of the Muse of Cinema."

—Jonas Mekas

***Mosaik im Vertrauen** (Mosaic in Confidence)* (1955);
35mm, b/w/color, sound, 16 minutes

"Kubelka's motive for making the film lie in his belief that commercial films do not fully exploit cinematic possibilities. He declares that the place of the plot and its ostensibly disparate scenes is the screen, and the time shall be any time at which the film is shown."

—Alfred Schmeller, 1958

Adebar (1957); 35mm, b/w, sound, 1.5 minutes
(*Adebar* will be shown twice)

"The film's images are extremely high contrast black-and-white shots of dancing figures; the images are stripped down to their black-and-white essentials so that they can be used in an almost terrifyingly precise construct of image, motion, and repeated sound."

—Fred Camper

Schwechater (1958); 35mm, color, sound, 1 minute
(*Schwechater* will be shown twice)

"In 1957, Peter Kubelka was hired to make a short commercial for Schwechater beer. The beer company undoubtedly thought they were commissioning a film that would help sell their beer; Kubelka had other ideas." —FC

Arnulf Rainer (1960); 35mm, b/w, sound, 6.5 minuets

"Arnulf Rainer's images are the most 'reduced' of all—this is a film composed entirely of frames of solid black and solid white...in reducing cinema to its essentials, Kubelka has not stripped it of meaning, but rather made an object which has qualities so general as to suggest a variety of possible meanings, each touching on some essential aspect of existence." —FC

***Unsere Afrikareise** (Our Trip to Africa)* (1966); 16mm, color, sound, 12.5 minutes

"...relatively conventional 'records' of a hunting trip in Africa. The shooting records multiple 'systems'—white hunters, natives, animals, natural objects, buildings—in a manner that preserves the individuality of each. At the same time, the editing of sound and image brings these systems into comparison and collision, producing a complex of multiple meanings, statements, ironies. [...]" —Fred Camper

•information about the films and filmmakers are excerpted from our catalogue, **Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993** on sale at the Cinematheque•

AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 3: CULTURE AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Tuesday, January 24, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

These five films tear at the placid fabric of Viennese domestic life. The beautifully photographed *Sonne halt!* by Ferry Radax, one of the most inventive and iconoclastic of the early filmmakers, is an unruly, fragmented narrative following the exploits of several rebellious young people. Redolent with languorous beat energy, it occupies a place oddly

reminiscent of our own *The End* (Christopher MacLaine). Schmidt, Jr.'s *P.R.A.T.E.R.* is an abrasive and witty documentary portrait of activities around Vienna's historic amusement park; *Subcutan* by Rosenberger is a sizzling montage portrait of Vienna in 1988, "a glance under the skin of everyday life, searching for the open sores in the soul of this would-be metropolis" (J.R.); and Scheirl/Schipecks's *The Abbotess and the Flying Bone* is an outrageous fantasy set in a psycho-sexual zone, complete with mythic and ritualistic mysteries.

—Steve Anker

5/62 Fenstergucker, Abfall, etc. *(5/62: People Looking Out the Window, Trash, etc.)* (1962), by Kurt Kren; 16mm, color, silent, 6 minutes

P.R.A.T.E.R. (1963-66), by Ernst Schmidt, Jr..; 16mm, b/w, sound, 21 minutes

Subcutan (1988), by Johannes Rosenberger; 16mm, color, sound, 20 minutes

The Abbotess and the Flying Bone (1989) by Angela Hans Scheirl & Dietmar Schipeck; 16mm, b/w, sound, 18 minutes

Sonne halt! *(Sun stop!)* (1959-1962), by Ferry Radax; 35mm, b/w, sound, 25 minutes

•information about the films and filmmakers are excerpted from our catalogue, **Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993** on sale at the Cinematheque•

AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 4: BODY AS MATERIAL

Sunday, January 29, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

10/65: Selbstverstümmelung *(10/65: Selfmutilation)* (1965), by Kurt Kren.; 16mm, b/w, silent, 6 minutes

"Kurt Kren's films possess an abstract, serial, musical, structural, and mathematical quality, showing an objectivisation, an almost documentary quality. In *Selbstverstümmelung,* Kren gives us a surrealistic drama of symbolic self-destruction, pacing out each gesture so that one gets a tense, iconoclastic revelation of a man covered in white plaster lying surrounded by razor blades and a range of instruments looking as if they have been taken from an operating theatre. The blades, scissors and scalpels are gradually inserted into him in a ritualistic self-operation."

—Stephen Dwoskin

Filmreste *(Film Scraps)* (1966), by Ernst Schmidt, Jr.; 16mm, b/w, sound, 10 minutes

Ernst Schmidt's relationship with the world is largely enacted via the medium of film; cosmos and film cosmos become identical, and moreover, the cosmos acquires a cinematic order.

Montage of left-over film material from film scraps, amateur films, film leaders, recordings of material happenings, etc. Edited according to an exact plan (60 blocks of 10 takes each), then largely drawn over. My most destructive film, the "model for a futuristic newsreel." (ES)

....Remote....Remote.... (1973), by Valie Export; 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

"...there is nothing dreadful about a woman trimming her body, especially in the places where she enhances the glamour imposed on her body by the civilizing influences of the world around her."

—Renate Lippert

16/67: 20. September *(16/67: September 20)* (1967), by Kurt Kren;
16mm, b/w, silent, 7 minutes

"..the camera work is so crass that even hard-baked observers do not react without embarrassment."

—Theodor Schroder

Der musikalische Affe *(The Musical Ape)* (1979), by Rudolf Polanszky;
16mm (S-8 blow up), b/w, sound, 5 minutes

In each new work I create a new field of action, I multiply the surroundings of my works, constantly adding new relations as functions of evolving reflexes and variable standpoints. (RP)

Die Geburt der Venus *(The Birth of Venus)* (1972), by Moucle Blackout;
16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes

As I have never worked with a usual script I stay flexible in filming scenes, which I often shoot out of a certain situation or emotion with a sensation for a special image in my mind. (MB)

Buntes Blut *(Colorful Blood)* (1985), by Renate Kordon;
16mm (shot on 35mm), color, sound, 8.5 minutes

"As an architecture student, Renate Kordon inclined more to two-dimensional renderings of her ideas than three-dimensional realizations...Moving, then, from the material permanence of the building medium to the substanceless ephemerality of projected light was a way to visualize the invisible, to reflect on the inner lives of things."

—Diane Shooman

Films by Mara Mattuschka:

NabelFabel *(NavelFable)* (1984); 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

Der Untergang der Titania *(The Sinking of Titania)* (1985);
16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

Parasympathica (1986); 16mm, b/w, sound, 5 minutes

Kaiserschnitt *(Ceasarean Section)* (1987); 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

Es hat mich sehr gefreut *(I Have Been Very Pleased)* (1987);
16mm, b/w, sound, 2 minutes

"Codes are rule systems which have one thing stand for another. But Mara Mattuschka wants to get to the things themselves, she wants to reverse the constitutive insufficiency of language, in order, via pleasure in art, to find pleasure in the body and thence pleasure in being. To this end, she rebels against the dictates of the world and the rules of cinematography and gives an exemplary demonstration of her clashes with the prescribed order of language."

—Peter Tscherkassky

The Murder Mystery (1992), by Dietmar Brehm; 16mm, b/w, sound, 18 minutes

"By frequently using pornographic films as his basic material, Dietmar Brehm reveals their regressive nature: he turns the desublimized gaze, with simultaneous denial of sexual satisfaction, into a tension which makes it possible to experience the human drama of denied satisfaction amid the barred or at least impeded gaze."

—Peter Tscherkassky

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AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 5: PLACE/REPLACEMENT

Tuesday, January 31, 1995—Pacific Film Archive

"The camera has always been used to document particular locations, but the result usually offers only a stylized and limited experience of the nuances and feeling of place. The films in this program conceive new formal strategies to express the character and perception of private and open spaces. Kren's *Asyl* takes a bucolic country scene and breaks the frame into several pieces, each recorded in different seasons but juxtaposed so that they appear to be happening simultaneously. The resulting composite creates a counterpoint that both reflects and departs from perceived reality. *Sunset Boulevard* by Korschil offers a view into the isolated world of commuters as observed through countless passing car cubicles; Ponger's *Semiotic Ghosts* knits a tapestry of symbolic images from sources found naturally in different locations of the world; *General Motors* by Hiebler/Ertl and *Motion Picture* by Tcherkassy both explore the intoxicating flavors of old movie images, one in terms of aesthetic renewal, the other as cultural critique. Scheugl's *The Place of Time* is a profound meditation on the deceptively controlling closed form of cinematic sound and image."

— Steve Anker

.i.t/***General Motors***; (1993), by Sabine Hiebler & Gerhard Ertl;
35mm, b/w, silent 15 minutes

Motion Picture (La Sortie des Ouvriers de l'Usine Lumiere a Lyon) (1984),
by Peter Tscherkassy; 16mm, b/w, silent, 3 minutes

31/75: Asyl(31/75: Asylum) (1975), by Kurt Kren; 16mm, color, silent, 9 minutes

Sunset Boulevard (1991), by Thomas Korschil; 16mm, color, silent, 8 minutes

Semiotic Ghosts (1990-91), by Lisl Ponger; 16mm, color, sound, 18 minutes

Der Ort der Zeit *(The Place of Time)* (1985), by Hans Scheugl;
16mm, color, sound, 40 minutes

•information about the films and filmmakers are excerpted from our catalogue, **Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993** on sale at the Cinematheque•

NIGHT OF LIVING COLOR

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY ALFONSO ALVAREZ

Thursday, February 2, 1995 — Center for the Arts

This program was developed from a list of films I put together when I taught a summer arts class in cameraless filmmaking. My desire was to show films with a wide variety of palettes and stylistic tendencies. Works by Craig Baldwin, Stan Brakhage, Glenda Egan and Len Lye were some of the examples I wished to inspire those young minds. From this list then, and my own leanings as a colorist, I began to consider works that are sophisticated in execution, unusually colored, have an ironic sense of humor, and are cameraless or hand made. The films below are works that have one or all of these elements, form found footage to lurid color saturation to texturing the film surface with shopping bag ink or newspaper ink. This is the kind of filmmaking we can do in the comfort of our own home.

Cha-Hit Frames (1986), by Dirk De Bruyn; 16mm, color, sound, 21 minutes

De Bruyn's meticulously edited film is a testament to hue saturation and color manipulation. Through the optical illusion of retinal memory, De Bruyn tricks the eye into seeing tertiary sets of colors from densely edited sequences of positive and negative frames. Rub-on images appear three dimensional; you won't believe your eyes!

Baglight (1994), by Rock Ross, Michael Rudnick & Friends;
16mm, color, sound, 2.5 minutes

This is the first of three films in tonight's program in which the emulsion is made by the filmmakers. Elegantly assembled through a sophisticated process that involves ironing plastic shopping bags to transfer the inky colors onto clear acetate, *Baglight* is the politically correct alternative to cutting the wings off moths.

Kaleidoscope (1935) and ***Color Flight*** (1938), by Len Lye; color, sound, 8 minutes

Sixty years after their making, Len Lye's unique hand painted films are still delightful reminders of cameraless cinema's potential.

Tree (1994), by Tim Wilkins; 16mm, color, sound, 4 minutes

As the educational film from Hell, *Tree* is suffused with sardonic humor that is at once cryptic and lyrical. In less than five minutes, *Tree* single-handedly undoes years of educational film codification and brings new meaning to the term truncated.

The End (1985-86), by Donna Cameron; 16mm, sound, color, 5 minutes

The third film in which the emulsion is made by the filmmaker, *End's* dancing Benday dots were created by burnishing double perf splicing tape onto newspaper, magazine photos and color photo-copies, then pulling away the tape to remove the pigment and paper fiber, then optical printing the results.

Walking the Tundra (1994), by Jeremy Coleman; 16mm, color, sound, 4.5 minutes

"Starting with footsteps, *Walking the Tundra* is a rich collage film that uses a variety of experimental techniques drawing upon the history of American Avant Garde. It captures a moment in thought, using modem methods of transportation (as) metaphor and ending with footsteps thus completing a circle."

—Jeremy Coleman

Epilogue (1986-87), by Matthias Müller; S-8mm, color, sound, 16 minutes

Müller is a master of low tech rephotography. The pulsing images filmed off a textured surface walk us through a portrait of lush blood reds and blacks that begs us to stay and play. As if never quite awaking from a dream. *Epilogue* is a microscopic look at the burning grain of emulsion that makes the memories of childhood games seem so dark.

CrossRoad (1988) and ***Midweekend*** (1985), by Caroline Avery;
16mm, color, sound, 9 minutes

CrossRoad is a one-minute polychromatic paint film that sets the stage for *Midweekend.* Painted, bleached and heavily edited, *Midweekend* is a cascade of colored leader and educational, documentary, travel and unsplit 8mm films chopped into one to three frame increments.

Rip (1989), by Joel Schlemowitz; 16mm, b/w, sound, 2 minutes

Rip is part of the school of hand-made films that remind us of the materiality of film itself and how easily it can be manipulated. It represents a witty look into a liminal realm where positive and negative imagery vie for frame space. The torn images bring us back to the tangibility of handcrafted filmmaking.

• program notes by Alfonso Alvarez •

AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 6: INTIMATE INVASIONS/SUBVERTING SEXUALITY

Sunday, February 5, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Super-8 Films By Angela Hans Scheirl And Ursula Pürrer

"Playing with monstrosity and taking pleasure in violating taboos are both evident in the work of Angela Hans Scheirl and Ursula Pürrer. Since the early 1980s, female desire and pleasure in power form their central themes. With humor and irony, they pursue a break with tradition and boldly deal with outlawed aspects of feminine identity."

—Elke Schüttelkopf, *Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993*, Tour Catalogue 1994

Super-8 Girl Games (1985); S-8mm, color, sound, 2 minutes

Intimate and playful, emotion gestures scratch through the celluloid.

Das Schwartz Herz Tropft (The Black Heart Leaks) (1979);
S-8mm, color, sound, 13 minutes

Two women engage in strange, abstracted rituals, punctuated by apparently symbolic objects, including a black "bleeding heart." These rituals seem obscure and rather comic, but with repetition each variation takes on significance, as with any ritual. With a sly tongue-in-cheek, each mask or angle of head might indicate a plot development. The combination of playfulness and austerity creates an odd intimacy. The audience is part of this ritual or parody.

Body-Building (1984); S-8mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

"With rude spontaneity...*Body-Building*...parodies and radically upends male dominated body ritual performance art."

—Steve Anker

Gezacktes Rinnsal schleicht sich schamlos schenkelnässend an
(Jagged Trickle Creeping Shamelessly, Wetting Thighs) (1985);
S-8mm, color, sound, 4 minutes

A taboo image, not coyly accessorized but ritualized for the camera with a note of mischief (I dare you to be shocked) — an efficient de-mystification. In exploring "monstrous femininity" Scheirl and Pürrer are framing the feminine mystique in new terms. Consider these rare images of socially unwelcome, volitional female sexuality — pleasure not in womanly receptivity, but in shameless, clearly proud catharsis. This can be exhilarating, strange or kinky. The key to monstrosity as power seems to lie in the film's unapologetic tone. The audience cannot escape the act of looking.

Valie Export's Feature Length *Unsichtbare Gegner*
(Invisible Adversaries)

"Export's *Invisible Adversaries* is an important 'crossover' film combining avant-garde and theatrical sensibilities, made during the mid-1970s. It chronicles the nightmarish breakdown of a fashion photographer as she confronts her waning identity and security as a career woman; blending narrative experimentation, fantasy, fact and theoretical critique, it has enormous impact on independent features which followed it."

—Steve Anker

Unsichtbare Gegner (Invisible Adversaries) (1977), by Valie Export ;
16mm, color, sound, 112 minutes

"Art-making is shown as one way to understand and overcome 'them': this unbearable disintegration. *Invisible Adversaries* affirms the act of representation."

—Amy Taubin, *Soho News* (May 7, 1980)

Invisible Adversaries bears some careful consideration. Each image and interaction has been given several readings by critics, partly due to the sheer surrealism and exaggerated metaphor which Valie Export uses to create the strange world of her protagonist's reality. "Anna, an artist, is obsessed with the invasion of alien doubles bent on total destruction—the Hyksos.' More sophisticated than '50s science fiction heroes, Anna questions whether the Hyksos exist or whether she is projecting an internal metaphor into a hallucination. She sets out with still and video cameras to gather evidence. The images she finds point to bad days ahead but a question remains -- does the evidence prove the existence of the Hyksos or rather the subjectivity of the 'objective' machine?"

—*Artforum* (November 1980)

"When the two characters videotape themselves talking, their video images and voices...gradually overtake them so that the video seems to be generating the 'original'—the people are the duplicates. With this scene and much else in the movie, Export suggests a rich set of variations on the meaning of the Hyksos invasion."

—Amy Taubin, *Soho News* (May 7, 1980)

This video-taping scene also points to the precarious relationship of the recorded image to the actual event, especially relevant if one needs to document an invasion. The irony of course is that the invaders are *invisible*, but the cameras begin to 'pick up' the Hyksos. The photographic image shifts between roles as Anna's proof of Hyksos, and the source of her mental breakdown, as they become more bizarre and malignant. The film is full of surrealistic metaphors for Anna's emotional state and/or for the Hyksos. The flesh, the photograph, and the Hyksos become inextricable. "Consciously or not, Export's film is pervaded by an ambivalent critique of representation—it might have been made to support Susan Sontag's darkest anxieties about the post-modern proliferation of the image" (J.

Terrifying because we've all had those dazed periods, overwhelmed at the horrific by the mundane in our world. And funny to see our absurd emotional tangles. When Anna fights with her lover Peter in an outdoor café, it is painful if silly, and leaves you relieved to be only watching. This scene has been called agonizing, but Amy Taubin found it "...a brilliant parody of a woman and a man at an outdoor-cafe table discussing their relationship: Anna's grotesquely nervous gestures distort her body...her lover is all masculine stolidity and annoying calm, with a few simple, punchy politician's hand movements...all the while the camera isolates each of them in turn...a terrific scene."

"Invisible Adversaries seems made in part to shock the bourgeoisie and, in fact, it did. Completed in 1976, the film was funded by the Austrian Ministry of Art and Education, and when newspapers attacked it as 'pornographic,' the ensuing parliamentary debate insured its *succes de scandale.* Nudity and sex-play aside, the film includes a truculent denunciation of its hometown, railing against every thing from the Austrian film industry and the hard lot of local artists to the pretentious hodgepodge of Viennese architecture and the hypocrisy of the City's burghers. 'Vienna's history is oblivion and treason,' Widl asserts. 'Paranoia surrounds me in the form of this city.'"

—J. Hoberman, *Village Voice* (March 1981)

"Invisible Adversaries is slightly over-long and the last reel loses focus and power, I don't really care. It makes you reconsider what you and everyone else is doing—in life and in art."

—Amy Taubin

•program Notes by Maya Allison •

EXQUISITE FRAGMENTS: NEW BY HENRY HILLS

FILMMAKER HENRY HILLS IN PERSON

Thursday, February 9, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Henry Hills has made 18 short 16mm films since 1975. His work has received support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and Hip's Road and is in the permanent collections of the New York Museum of Modern Art, the New York Public Library, the Archive du Film Experimental d'Avignon, and elsewhere.

Given the speed of contemporary life and an exponentially increasing mass of information moving at a constantly accelerating velocity, Hills composes films which present models of concentration, condensing masses of imagery to their essential moments and radically juxtaposing these to create pathways for thought. Rapid editing as generally employed in the mass media presents a mindless profusion of trivialities lulling the viewer into a semihypnotic state of receptivity. In contrast, Hills' work demands (and creates the conditions for) intensely directed attention. Rhythmically complex and varied, his films probe the depths of the topics at hand and expose new ways of seeing; educating the eye for a more critical viewing of the immense flow of images which assault us daily and suggesting fresh approaches to looking at the world at large. Closely allied to new developments in music, dance, and poetry, Hills' work remains fresh over the years. Films he made over a decade ago seem new today. Their ready accessibility belies their extreme density, which encourages and rewards multiple viewing.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1948, Hills received a B.A. in English from Washington and Lee University in 1970 and a M.F.A. in filmmaking from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1978. He was a conscientious objector during the Viet Nam war, working as an emergency room orderly for 2 years. He was President and founding board member of the Foundation for Art in Cinema in San Francisco (1976-1978) and a member of the board of the Film-Makers' Cooperative (1985-1988). He edited *The Cinemanews*, a West Coast avant-garde film quarterly, from 1976-1980. He developed the 303 East 8th Street H.D.F.C., the only successfully completed Manhattan artists housing project of the 80s, and founded the Segue Performance Space there. He was Director of the Segue Foundation, a non-profit literary organization, from 1985-1993, and President of Hip's Road, a non-profit new music foundation, from 1992-1993. He has edited numerous music videos and has been active as a curator throughout his career, running a periodic series through Segue since 1979. His book, *Making Money* (1985), is available from Roof Books. He is married to Carol Volk, the translator (*Renoir on Renoir, the New Ecological Order* by Luc Ferry, etc.). He is currently editing *Shakespeare's Richard III*, a documentary by Al Pacino.

George (1976, 1990); 16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes

A portrait of George Kuchar composed on a J-K optical printer with 4 scenes always running simultaneously through frame alteration (frame 1 = frame 1, scene 1; frame 2 = frame 2, scene 2; frame 3 = frame 3, scene 3; frame 4 = frame 4, scene 4; frame 5 = frame 5, scene 1; frame 6 = frame 6, scene 2; etc.).

Kino Da! (1981); 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

A portrait of North Beach communist cafe poet Jack Hirschman, cut after the manner of radical Russian Futurist poetry.

Heretic (1994); 16mm, color, sound, 22 minutes

Heretic, or *The Genius Preview*, is composed from outtakes from the 1992 Joe Gibbons/Emily Breer feature *The Genius*, starring Gibbons, Karen Finley, Adolphus Mekas, Henry Hills, Mark McElhatten, Tony Oursler, Keith Sanborn, and Jennifer Montgomery. Original music by Naked City (*Heretic, the original movie soundtrack*, available on AVANT Records, disk UNION R-250225). Original titles, some rephotography off the original videos, and original narration performed by Frank Snider. A study of editing and its relation to the mechanics of the brain, *Heretic* initially poses as a preview to the Gibbons' film which it then deconstructs and reforms into a satire on psychotherapy.

SSS (1988); 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes

Composed from footage of movement improvised on the streets of the East Village by Sally Silvers, Pooh Kaye, Henry Shepperd, Lee Katz, Kumiko Kimoto, David Zambrano, Ginger Gillespie, Mark Dendy, and others, painstakingly synched to music previously improvised for the project at Noise New York by Tom Cora (cello), Christian Marclay (turntables), and Zeena Parkins (harp).

Gotham (1990); video, color, sound, 3 minutes

A music video commissioned by Elektra Records to the Naked City song "Batman." Naked City is John Zorn (alto), Bill Frissell (guitar), Wayne Horvitz (keyboards), Fred Frith (bass), Joey Baron (drums), and Yamatsuka Eye (vocals). Taking the band's name and first album cover as a clue, I drew heavily on themes in WeeGee's photographs (his major collection, Naked City, inspired the title of Jules Dassin's great 1950s film noir classic which inspired the TV show of the same name, of which I employed a portion of an

episode). Recreating many of his pictures in their actual Lower East Side/Little Italy locations (a rare home movie shot of WeeGee—smoking a cigar—is also included) I shot much of the footage on grainy 4X and transferred off a workprint which I intentionally scratched up, to give an archival appearance. I also included archival footage (special thanks to Bill McCahey), Hollywood gangster movie outtakes and documentary excerpts (including actual morgue shots of John Dillinger—note the fly buzzing around his nose—and Baby-Face Nelson—with the police pointing out the fatal gunshot entry points).

Bali Mécanique (1992,1993); 16mm, color, sound, 17 minutes

Edited in two separate parts: a recreation of a Legong performance and a more airy, somewhat comical, music-video-style coupling of *National Geographic-is* landscape footage with the original Broadway production recording of "Bali-Hai" from *South Pacific.* The "Bali Hai" piece was made to counterbalance the almost academic precision of the Legong section—for myself in the long process of making, for an audience in the perhaps difficult process of viewing, for fun, and also to place myself in the picture. This song (the recording I used was the actual scratched-up LP that I had grown up with and recently found on the floor of a closet at my parent's house) with its dream of a paradise island away from all the cares and woes, and pictures of beautifully sculptured rice terraces that appeared at intervals over the years in *National Geographic*, were the material out of which my sustaining dreams of Bali sprouted. I combined the two sections at the very end of the editing. Originally I put the Legong first, assuming this would be the more difficult section for the viewer—work first, then play. Some viewers, however, took the second part as a commentary on the first section in a manner different than I intended, feeling that I was mocking or ridiculing the Balinese and their culture. This is absurd considering the hundreds of reverential hours I spent attempting to recreate the devastatingly lovely Legong for film. I have since reversed the order of the first and second sections, yielding more satisfactory results. The dance footage in the (now) opening section (briefly reprised at the end with its proper music) is from the "Oleg Tambulilingan" (or "erotic bumblebee").

The (now) second section presents a complete Legong dance, intercutting performances of three popular Peliatan dance companies with footage of sacred architecture and several Odalan temple celebrations. The casual documentary-style cinematography combines with an intricate jigsaw-puzzle-style of music-driven editing to create a sense of being in the center of the action. Perhaps the most popular dance in Bali, the Legong is always performed by three young girls, two dressed identically in green representing King Lasem and Princess Rankesari and the third dressed in red opening the dance as a servant, the Condong, and later reappearing as a Garuda. This is set to a precise accompaniment of a full gamelan orchestra. The dance is in four parts, each with substantially different (though internally repetitive) musical accompaniment: 1. the dance of the Condong; the longest section begins as an extended solo, changes in rhythm with the entry of the two legongs, and culminates in her handing them each a fan; 2. the Bapang: an angry fan dance, with the legongs moving "like twin breasts," ending with the Condong's exit; 3. the Penipoek: an increasingly erotic duo, abruptly terminated with Rankesari rebuffing Lasem and escaping; 4. the unheeded and unappreciated warning of the Garuda. In the 4th section imagery intercuts to emphasize and elucidate the structure of the music (and the manner in which rhythms of life and celebration in Bali inform rhythms of their music) building to an increasingly frenetic collage as the dance reaches its crescendo. The film ends with the famous Kris dance of Batubulan as it is performed today.

Little Lieutenant (1993); co-directed by Sally Silvers; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes

A look back at the late Weimar era with its struggles and celebrations leading up to the world war, a period piece. Scored to John Zorn's arrangement of the Kurt Weill song, "Little Lieutenant of the Loving God," and drawings its imagery from both the original

song and its somewhat idiosyncratic rearrangement. The film presents an internal reading of Silvers' solo scored to the same musical piece, "Along the Skid Mark of Recorded History." Closely following the Zorn arrangement, the film was storyboarded in 30 scenes (the arrangement changes approximately every 4 measures). Principally shot in a small studio employing rear screen projection, with foreground movement choreographed to interact with the projected imagery which reflects themes apparent in the song and its arrangement. Scenes range through a *Citizen Kane*-esque pan up a foreboding structure, idyllic lovers in both pastoral and industrial settings, labor marches, a lonely walk down a deserted alley, a bar brawl, a Motown-ish girl group, a dream sequence, and a giddy animation, up to the terrors of war and a bittersweet conclusion: an elaborate music video. Silvers and Cydney Wilkes portray dual aspects of the Salvation Army Lieutenant who sang the song in the Brecht/Weill play *Happy End*, with Kumiko Kimoto and Leonard Cruz as the lovers and Pilar Alamo and Toby Vann filling our the group.

HENRY HILLS FILMOGRAPHY:

Films: *Nobody Knows What's Going On In My Mind But Me* (w.i.p.); *Heretic (or the Genius Preview)* (1994); *Little Lieutenant* (1993); *Bali Mécanique* (1992, 1993); *Goa Lawah* (1990, 1992); *SSS* (1988); *Money* (1985); *Radio Adios* (1982); *Kino Da!* (1981); *Plagiarism* (1981); *North Beach 2* (1979); *North Beach* (1978); *Joel* (1977); *Porter Springs 3* (1977); *George* (1976, 1988); *Porter Springs 2* (1976); *Balieire* (1975); *Porter Springs* (1975). Videos: *Elektra 40 years* (1990); *Naked City Series: Osaka Bondage* (1992),*Gotham (1990),Igneous Ejaculatio*n (1990).

•program notes by Henry Hills•

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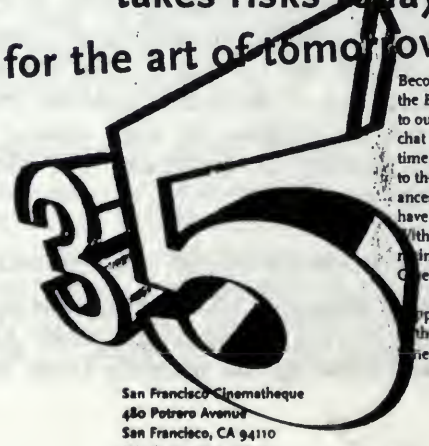

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FILMS BY (AND SELECTED BY) ROSS LIPMAN:

ROSS LIPMAN IN PERSON

Sunday, February 12, 1995 — SF Art Institute

FILMS BY ROSS LIPMAN plus selected other works

1. *MUNICH-BERLIN WALKING TRIP (MÜNCHEN-BERLIN WANDERUNG)*
1927.
4 min. B&W.

OSKAR FISCHINGER

Munich-Berlin Walking Trip was made in the summer of 1927 when, because of financial and legal difficulties, Fischinger moved to Berlin, where the film business was more profitable. He walked to Berlin from Munich and recorded his journey in a visual diary composed of single-frame images of people and scenes. The film is both comic and a fascinating document of pre-World War II rural Germany.

2. WATER MOTOR (1978) 7-1/2 min. B&W. Silent (24FPS).

Choreographed and performed by Trisha Brown. film by Babette Mangolte

"The image fades in. For two seconds Trisha is there standing motionless, and she starts to dance her solo 'Water Motor,' indeed moving as quickly as water. The movements are so fast and intricate that you feel you are missing half of it. When the dance is finished Trisha is standing as in the beginning, but closer to the camera and the image fades to black. The image fades in again on Trisha doing the same dance, but this time in slow motion (it was shot at 48FPS) and the movement takes on a luscious quality which gives you more than what you have missed before."--B.M.

3. Kino-I 16mm, B/W, experimental. 9 minutes.
Balazs Bela Studio, Budapest, 1991.

This is a cinematic self-portrait. In the film's first half, a transparent glass was placed between the camera and the subject. This served as a makeshift mirror at the camera's plane. The filmmaker looked in to see what he could see.

The second half depicts the filmmaker, under scrutiny of naked lens, in various states and degrees of self-consciousness and portentousness.

film by Ross Lipman

4. Dawn Andras Szirtes
1973 -1978 16mm
B/W, sound. 21 min.

The film was made during the course of five years, and it consists of three parts. In the first part we penetrate into the industrial suburb's material landscape, right down to its microscopic structure. The images are burning in pulsating solarization. The accompanying sound is the sound of the beating heart, and the sound of blood in the veins. The second part is a model of revolution, using the example of the physical transformation of a natural phenomenon, that of boiling water, recorded on film in micro and macro scales. The formation of bubbles on the surface is likened to the behavioral patterns of people participating in a revolutionary process. When the antigravitational force ceases, the agitation stops, giving way to a new evolutionary period. The music is a mixture of concrete sounds edited to accompany the images. The third part is one long shot, a 360-degree revolution of the camera, during which dawn arrives. The last image is the freeze frame of a worker on the way to work. The sounds accompanying this slow panoramic shot are those of blowing wind and of morse-code transmissions.

5. Lightplay, black-white-grey Laszlo Moholy-Nagy 1930
16mm B/W, silent apr. 6 min.

This simple film is composed of sequences of a Moholy-Nagy kinetic sculpture, shot in various degrees of close-up. The sculpture is conceived in terms of shadow and reflection on various rotating metal planes and discs, some of which are perforated allowing light to pass through. The film explores the visual experience of this work in a way which eliminates the disturbance of its material nature on the play of light, shade and rhythm.
-- Malcolm Le Grice

6 & 8: Rhythm 92 and Rhythm 93 films by Ross Lipman

These films explore two aspects of cinematic movement. They constitute the filmmaker's attempt to pare his material down to its essential elements. In so doing, they may hope to elucidate diverging paths through the film medium.

6. Rhythm 92 16mm, color, experimental. 2 minutes.
Independent.

"The square is the sign of a new humanity. It is something like the cross of the early Christians."
-- Theo van Doesburg, upon greeting Hans Richter and Viking Eggeling in Klein Kolzig, 1920.

7. Fragment Ellen Gaine 1985
Super-8 B/W, silent apr. 14 min.

8. Rhythm 91 16mm, color, experimental. 9 minutes.
In collaboration with performer Carolyn Roy.
Independent. London.

PARENTS

NIGHT CRIES AND *IN SEARCH OF OUR FATHERS*

Thursday, February 16, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Parental-filial bonds have become fertile ground for exploration in recent independent filmmaking. This evening's program includes two extremely different films—in approach, style, tone, and culture of origin—but both are unusual and provocative looks at the family. Defining and evaluating 'family' is an issue of vital political, cultural and economic importance today; one of things that Marco Williams' *In Search of Our Fathers* and Tracey Moffatt's *Night Cries: a rural tragedy* have in common is that they both question and challenge normative notions of what the family is. While Williams' film is a diaristic, documentary recording of both a personal and community-wide quest, Moffatt's piece is a hallucinatory re-creation of painful emotional experience. Both, however, are vivid and compelling portraits of the self and inquiries into the nature of identity with its sometimes troubled, sometimes empowering connection to "family" and to a larger community.

—Irina Leimbacher

Night Cries: a rural tragedy (1990), by Tracey Moffatt; 16mm, color, sound, 19 minutes
distributed by Women Make Movies

"A dazzling grand opera of silence and maternity, as opulent as Robert Wilson, as soulfully anguished as Fassbinder." —Manohla Dargis, Best of 1990 *Village Voice*

On an isolated, surreal Australian homestead, a middle-aged Aboriginal woman nurses her dying white mother. The adopted daughter's attentive gestures mask an almost palpable hostility. Their story alludes to the assimilation policy that forced Aboriginal children to be raised in white families. The stark, sensual drama unfolds without dialogue against vivid painted sets as the smooth crooning of an Aboriginal Christian singer provides ironic counterpoint. Moffatt's first 35mm film displays rare visual assurance and emotional power.

"*Night Cries: a rural tragedy* – is breathtaking. A highly-disciplined 'Alain Resnais'-type journey into the psyche and beyond. *Night Cries* is a 'dream film' reflecting Tracey Moffatt's reminiscences of her own childhood. It's also a hallucinatory anticipation of a world that represents the reality of the artist's inner life. In other words a true self-portrait."

—Paul Cox, *Art Monthly Australia* (August 1990)

Tracey Moffatt, an Australian filmmaker, has written and directed *Nice Colored girls* (1986), *Night Cries* (1990) and *Bedevil* (1993), her first feature. Moffatt studied Film and Video Production at Queensland College of Art. Based in Sydney, she has worked in many Aboriginal communities throughout Australia as an independent film and video maker and photographer

In Search of Our Fathers (1992), by Marco Williams; 16mm, color, sound, 70 minutes
distributed by Filmmaker's Library

"Emotionally and cinematically raw, Williams' film works as a meditation on his personal experience as well as a provocative social-science discourse."

—Carrie Rickey, *The Philadelphia Enquirer*

Personal odyssey intersects with social exposé in this 70-minute documentary of the 24 year old filmmaker's search for this father. The film follows Williams for over seven years, from the first phone call in his college dorm room to an emotional climax in the heartland of America; from Boston to Philadelphia to Paris to Springfield, Ohio, Williams travels into

the homes and memories of his extended family seeking to learn about his absent father and to understand the dynamic of single mothers in the African American community. As Williams peels away the layers of mystery that surround his father's absence, viewers will be moved and engaged by his single-minded determination. A riveting account of a son's search for identity and an affirmation of family ties in non-nuclear families, this film raises significant issues about relations between women and men, single-parent families in the African American community, and of course, fathers and sons.

Marco Williams received a B.A. in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard University. He received dual degrees from U.C.L.A.: an M.A. in Afro-American Studies and an M.F.A. in their Producer's Program. In September 1994, Williams joined the faculty of the North Carolina School of the Arts, School of Filmmaking. In addition to his documentary filmwork, Marco has also directed fiction film. His dramatic short *Without a Pass* (1992) was nominated for three CABLEACE Awards. His award winning documentary film credits include: co-producer/director *From Harlem to Harvard*, producer/director of *In Search of Our Fathers* (1992), and co-producer of *Uncommon Ground* (1994). Williams is currently working as writer-director on an ITVS funded project, *Making Peace*, a documentary about violence in America.

• program notes by Emily Golembiewski, C Whiteside, and Irina Leimbacher •

AUSTRIAN AVANT-GARDE CINEMA: 1955-1993

PROGRAM 7: INTERIOR SPACES

MARC ADRIAN IN PERSON

Sunday, February 19, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

Investigating the personal through a mechanical medium is a paradoxical challenge for an artist, but it is one which has appealed to independent filmmakers in this country for the last fifty years. The films in this program reflect upon, rather than construct the personal through objects, images, pre-existing footage, texts and various techniques of image distortion.

Eight of the films on this evening's program are by Marc Adrian. Born in Vienna in 1930, Adrian is best known as the first European filmmaker to use a computer for the random-generation of text-images (*Random,* 1964). Adrian was educated at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and at ITHEC Film College in Paris. From 1965 on he studied perception psychology at Vienna University and was a professor of Painting and Aesthetic Theory at the Academy on Fine Arts, Hamburg from 1970-73.

A painter and sculptor, Adrian turned to cinema in the mid-1950s in an attempt to crystallize his ideas on kineticism and op-art. His earliest film work can be seen as conceptualized acts of provocation. One of his first films was *Black Movie* (1958), made with Kurt Kren. *Black Movie*, a totally abstract film, consists of monochrome color frames, their length and sequence stipulated by a mathematically determined system. *Black Movie* contains in a nutshell the crux of Adrian's film work: based on strict calculation and invariant principles of construction, it employs a finite number of formal elements that are structured rhythmically over time to produce a non-mimetic, transcendent viewing experience. His longest film, *Der Regen* (*Rain,* 1983), is an investigative avant-garde film " that was on my mind for 25 years. I started working on it in 1957 with Kurt Kren, who did the camera

work and contributed a lot of ideas. The basic text is a play, which was more or less ready in 1957 and which I started filming at the same time. I tried to relate the texts and the rhythmic structures to an analogous structural scheme of visual design and to place the meaning of the pictures- where it could not be avoided- in a contrastive context with the spoken text...*Der Regen* is probably my most personal film to date."

—M. Adrian interviewed by C.C. Eisendraht

"Marc Adrian's films cogently lead to a confrontation with prevailing ideologies and the sense or meaning they construct. This confrontation is not only confined to Adrian's films but also necessarily embraces his writings, kinetic objects and glasscapes. Marc Adrian sees the task of art as being the visualization of problem-awareness, the articulation of taboos and the expression of myths. Language has for him an essential role in the conditioning of social awareness, which explains his passionate interest in semantic structures and their optical manifestation. What he aims at is to challenge this deterministic role, to question its validity and, where possible, to offer other options."

— Martin Prucha

Films By Marc Adrian:

Black Movie II(1959); 16mm, color, silent, 198 seconds

1. Mai 1958 (May 1, 1958) (1958); 16mm, b/w, silent, 165 seconds

Wo-da-vor-bei (1958); 16mm, b/w, silent, 70 seconds

Random (1963); 35mm, b/w, sound, 285 seconds

Text I (1963); 35mm, b/w, sound, 154 seconds

Orange (1962-64); 35mm, b/w, sound, 3 minutes

Der Regen (The Rain) (1983); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes

92 Avignon (1994); 16mm, color, sound, 7.5 minutes

Parallel Space: Inter-View (1992), by Peter Tscherkassky;
16mm, b/w, sound, 18 minutes

What always matters to me is an intensive visual quality. That's the doorway to a film, and everything else comes later. In *Parallel Space: Inter-View* too, I'm working on this dense, sensual level. And if anyone sees the drama of Oedipus represented in it, likewise forming a theme occupying these parallel spaces on a metaphorical level, then so much the better. (PT)

"Parallel Space: Inter-View was made using a still camera. The photograph produced by a 35mm camera corresponds exactly to the size of two film frames, and if the negative of a photograph is projected, two film frames are seen. With a photograph taken in a vertical frame position, first the upper and then the lower half of the image is projected."

—Gabriele Jutz

walk in (1969), by Moucle Blackout; 16mm, color and b/w, sound, 6 minutes

The primary film consists of a scene of 720 frames...This scene is divided consecutively into 6 parts, T1-T6. The addition of these parts follows the scheme mentioned below. A=T1, B=A+T2, C=A+B+T3, etc. A+B+C+D+E+F= total length of the film. (MB)

Zum Geburtstag *(For Your Birthday)* (1991), by Linda Christanell;
16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes

"Linda Christanell never uses the body to create direct reproductions of female physiognomy as a whole but relies on ersatz objects in such a way as to turn them into erotic signals of polymorphous origin. ... All these objects are in a functional relationship to the central narcissistic self-presentation of the artist, permitting her to project her own personality onto objects of a clearly libidinous character while at the same time avoiding the total exposure of her own body."

—Katharina Sykora

pièce touchée (1989), by Martin Arnold; 16mm, b/w, sound, 16 minutes

"For *pièce touchée* ...Arnold used a homemade optical printer to analyze the visual motion in an 18-second shot from *The Human Jungle* (1954, directed by Joseph M. Newman)...Arnold uses his optical printer to lay bare the gender-political implications of the husband's arrival and to transform this gesture, which has become nearly invisible to most viewers, into a phantasmagoria of visual effects that would make any trick film director proud."

—Scott MacDonald

After the show, the audience is invited to an informal gathering with the filmmaker.

•information about the films and filmmakers are excerpted from our catalogue, **Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema 1955-1993** on sale at the Cinematheque•

THE FILMS OF YOKO ONO

Thursday, February 23, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Yoko Ono's status as a popular figure tends to eclipse her achievements as an artist, especially with regard to her activities as a filmmaker. Especially prolific as a filmmaker between the years 1966 and 1971, Ono made her films in the context of the Fluxus movement under the auspices of George Maciunas. She also produced "film scripts", or descriptions of conceptual, viewer-specific "films", many of which could not exist as actual film works. Concerned with the formal qualities of the cinema and the experiential aspects of cinema spectatorship (especially time and movement), Ono played a significant role in the articulation of the Fluxus aesthetic, inflecting the terms by which filmmakers understand the structural material elements of the cinema.

Yoko Ono studied poetry and music at Sarah Lawrence College during the 1950s, after which she moved to New York City and became involved with a group of avant-garde musicians and performers, including John Cage, Merce Cunningham and LaMonte Young, who presented his "Chambers Street Series" at Ono's loft at 112 Chambers Street. Ono's early compositions include *A Grapefruit in the World of Park*, and *A Piece for Strawberries and Violins*, performed by Yvonne Rainer.

During the early 1960s, Ono became heavily involved with the Fluxus movement, participating in performances and creating installation/sculptural works. Ono's work tends to directly address its audience, foregrounding the dialectical relationship between work and subject and explicitly implicating the viewer in the act of aesthetic consumption. This quality is evident in both her films and those of the other Fluxus artists, which often function less as films than as meta-films, identifying the structural assumptions of institutional cinematic form and recontextualizing the relation between subject, image and film-object (material).

The Museum of Modern Art Show (1971); 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes

"In 1971 Yoko Ono placed advertisements in New York City newspapers announcing her upcoming one-woman retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art — a fabrication, much to the displeasure of the museum. But when people arrived to see the show, Ono had a cameraman waiting to interview them; their opinions, ranging from angry to amused, make up this film."

—Tom Smith, New York Museum of Modern Art

No. 4 (Bottoms) (1966); 16mm, b/w, sound, 80 minutes

"Take any film and bury it underground for fifty years. Its like wine., Any film, any cheap film, if you put it underground for fifty years becomes interesting [laughter]. You just take a shot of people walking, and that's enough: the weight of history is incredible."

—Yoko Ono, *Film Quarterly* interview (Fall 1989)

Produced by George Maciunas, and part of his FluxFilms series, this is the second version of her shorter (5 1/2 minute) silent film of the same title. *No. 4 (Bottoms)* encapsulates the gestalt of her filmmaking enterprise. Described by Ono as "an aimless petition, signed by people with their anuses," the film consists entirely of sequential images of human buttocks, close-cropped in order to fill the frame, shot with the aid of a special machine which enabled the camera to follow the subjects as they walked about a room. Unlike the earlier film, this version includes a soundtrack, comprised primarily of the reactions of the film's unwitting subjects to the nature of their "role" in the production and the premise of the work itself.

Often understood in terms of the structural cinema contemporaneous to it, this film nonetheless occupies a distinct point of tension between purely formal and representational imagery. Although exhibiting many of the hallmark characteristics of the structural cinema (serial images, an emphasis on formal and rhythmic qualities, and a radical schism with the narrative codes of institutional cinematic language), the specific referentiality of the image is never wholly subsumed within the project of the deconstruction of the cinematic signifier. Formally reminiscent of, albeit wildly politically divergent from, Anne Severson's *Near the Big Chakra*, the element of humor inherent to *No. 4 (Bottoms)* stems from the ridiculously unrepresentable nature of the profilmic. This sense of a subject both beyond film and yet unfilmable differentiates *No. 4 (Bottoms)* from the more purely formal structural cinema and imbues it with a brand of unassuming humor particular to the Fluxus movement.

YOKO ONO FILMOGRAPHY

Eyeblink (1966) (AKA One, One Blink, FluxFilm #15 and #19); *No. 1* (1966) (AKA Match, FluxFilm #14); *No. 4* (1966) (AKA FluxFilm #16); *No. 4 (Bottoms)* (1966); *Film No. 5 (Smile)* (1968); *Two Virgins* (1968) with John Lennon; *Bed-In* (1969) with John Lennon; *Rape* (1969) with John Lennon; *Apotheosis* (1970) with John Lennon; *Fly* (1970); *Freedom* (1970); *Up Your Legs Forever* (1970); *Erection* (1971) with John Lennon; *Imagine* (1971) with John Lennon; *The Museum of Modern Art Show* (1971); *Ten for Two: Sisters, O Sisters* (1972) with John Lennon; *Walking On Thin Ice* (1981); *Woman* (1981); *Goodbye Sadness* (1982).

• program notes by Brian Frye •

WHO IS DORIS WISHMAN

AND WHY ARE HER SEXPLOITATION FILMS SO ODD AND ORIGINAL?

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY PEGGY AHWESH

Friday, February 24, 1996—Roxie Cinema, 3117 16th St.

Nude on the Moon (1962)
Double Agent (1974)

Saturday, February 25, 1996—Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia

Bad Girls Go To Hell (1965)
A Taste of Flesh (1967)

"Doris Wishman made 25 films for the soft core porn circuit all of which are a rare blend of the prurient, the tacky, and the bizarre. Starting in 1960 with nudist camp pictures, Wishman proceeded with rough sex play an lots of lingerie, then in the 1970s used gimmicks such as killer breasts, penis transplants and transgender operations as vehicles for her films. The stories are wacky and weird with a seedy underlining of the true fear of and hostility towards women."

—Peggy Ahwesh

EASTERN EUROPE: OPPOSITIONAL MEDIA 1989-92

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY CHRIS HILL

Thursday, March 2, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Video news magazines produced with consumer camcorders by citizens' groups in Hungary (Black Box) and former Czechoslovakia (Original Video Journal) were part of vital underground news networks prior to government reforms in 1989-90. Black Box documented 60,000 people demonstrating in front of the Magyar TV building in Budapest in 1992 because the Media Law, a national telecommunications act establishing that TV and radio be free from government interference, was (and remains) threatened by conservative leadership. Citizens' camcorders documented citizens and soldiers battling for the control of television studios and radio transmitters in Romania in 1989 and in Lithuania in 1991. And government-controlled TV crews decided in 1989-91 to broadcast reports on strikes and mass demonstrations against censoring authorities in former Czechoslovakia, Romania and the former USSR, signaling to their fellow citizens that a democratic media would be an essential public stage for setting new political and cultural agendas in Eastern Europe.

In examining tapes produced during this period of dramatic reform in Eastern Europe, it is clear that camcorder documentation of public dialogue and active resistance, the timely copying and wide distribution of videotaped evidence of activism, and the control of TV and radio broadcast studios and transmitters were strategic challenges to centralized communications systems which controlled access to the means of production and distribution of information.

Independent work from 1989-91 not only testifies to a public's passionate desire for free speech and creation of open channels, it additionally challenged the often decades-long inability of most of the citizenry in eastern Europe to simply access duplication technologies- printing presses, xerox machines, tape dubbing, making prints of films. When speaking to people about media and information exchange before the reforms of 1989-90, most describe gossip and samizdat— illegal printed materials and most recently illegal video—as the primary channels of opposition.

Many Americans would find life without copiers virtually inconceivable and would voice solidarity with media activists in Eastern Europe, understanding that challenging their monolithic media apparatus would be fundamental to establishing new and democratic societies. Of course, our own self-congratulating democratic society reflects the deadly injustices of keeping certain communities virtually invisible within mainstream media, of reducing the articulation of important issues to sound bites, and of limiting the access of a diverse spectrum of speakers to a public stage.

During the past year I collaborated with Keiko Sei, a journalist working since 1987 with independent media makers in Budapest, Prague and Bucharest, to organize for U.S. audiences a program of video-tapes made by citizens' video collectives, independent TV producers and artists in Eastern Europe, most of them using camcorders and simple off-line editing such as is commonly available through public access centers.

Like public access producers here, citizens' groups in these countries were producing video documentation of unreported political and cultural events. Underground video news magazines by the Czech Original Video Journal (OVJ), for example, show East Germans in August 1989 (three months before the Berlin Wall fell and the Velvet Revolution resulted in major reforms in former Czechoslovakia), demanding temporary asylum in Prague and finally emigration to West Germany. These desperate asylum-seekers who occupied the city center for days provoked what was later described as the beginning of the dissolution

of existing governments. The OVJ tapes are fascinating because, as with a good pubic access show, the producers demonstrate a commitment to participate actively in a public dialogue enriched by independent points of view.

Without access to any legal public exhibitions or channels, however, these tapes—important evidence of active opposition to existing policies and governments—were screened in private apartments or storefronts and bicycled to other towns, often at great personal risk. The Hungarian Black Box collective began in 1987 to create an independent underground video archive and circulate news reports. Through the reform period of 1988-90 they documented landmark political meetings, late night shredding and dumping of official records, rallies of emerging nationalist groups, interviews with disenfranchised ethnic minority communities. Their illegal tapes became widely distributed public evidence that official authorities were being challenged by citizens in different parts of the country. Hungarian writer Marianna Padi remarks: "The force and potential danger the Black Boxes represent against power abusers in Hungary lies in the mere existence of their compilated material. The obese Black Box archives (the result of their indefatigable, constant presence virtually everywhere where the 'flow' is likely to become an 'event') form not just a collection of news items. They constitute a fragment of the hidden conscience of the country" (from "Black Box," in *Next 5 Minutes Zapbook*; 1992).

After the 1989-91 reforms, the reconstruction of national media resources became highly contested territory. Decisions around (de)centralization of resources and access to production and distribution directly impacted political, social, and cultural agendas in nation-building. Furthermore, media channels and viewers/consumers constituted an economic asset which could function as part of some government's construction of the public good or be exchanged for much needed cash in times of extreme economic hardship.

In Lithuania in 1992, one year after declaring independence from the former USSR, evening television offered hours of national debate on restructuring housing policies, modestly produced by local crews, as well as imported entertainment and the world news from satellite—music videos from Moscow, films from Poland, international news from Great Britain. In a recent interview, independent Hungarian TV producers Judit Kopper and Andras Solyom estimated that 40% of Hungarian television is imported, much of it from the U.S. While Americans become xenophobic over foreign investors buying up U.S. urban real estate, farms and businesses, there is little information presented to the public here about how the second largest net U.S. export, entertainment media, functions as part of the cultural diet and national economy in developing countries.

Produced for television from 1988-93, Kopper's encyclopedic series *Videoworld* addressed the enterprises of mass and personal media making in both Eastern and Western Europe...Their program *TV Boris and Video Misha* studied the struggle on Soviet television between what was described as Eastern word-dominated and Western image-based media cultures. Kopper remarked, "We are involved with Videoworld and still ask ourselves the question over and over again: what really is video?...an art which works like narcotics and is a drug to both young and old?...a weapon of politics?...a misused means of communication in international and national television?" Kopper and Solyom's incisive media analysis and sincere questioning of both media consumption and media making by amateurs, artists and television professionals is unlike any U.S. commercial television I am aware of. In its attention to heartfelt local cultural concerns and the development of public dialogue it is much more akin to public access programming. In December, 1993, *Videoworld* was canceled by the newly empowered conservative national leadership.

Other remarkable documents from this period include Gusztav Hamos' tape *1989—the Real Power of TV* featuring his grandmother shopping, making soup, watching television, news of demonstrations and government changes in Romania, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary in 1989. Hamos, who is visiting Budapest after a 10 year absence, analyzes archival television news footage from 1956-89, and interviews Hungarian news anchors and managers.

In recent years as political and economic instability continues throughout the region, much of what was originally claimed by demonstrative citizens as public space has been contested or taken back by ruling elites. We, too, have seen an erosion of public space in the U.S. in recent years, and democratic access to the expanding information superhighway will surely be an ongoing struggle. But an oppositional voice did emerge in Eastern Europe as Hungarians, Czechoslovaks and Romanians in 1989-90 were able to focus available media, the modest camcorder productions bicycled through the city as well as the cameras and microphones tethered to the broadcast towers, to disseminate information and establish new electronic forums, however fragile, where public agendas could be debated.

—Chris Hill, "Citizen Producers in Eastern Europe, 1989-1991,"
Community Media Review (April 1994)

1989—The Real Power of TV (1990) by Gusztav Hamos (Hungary);
video, color, sound, 58 minutes

TV Boris and Video Misha (1992) by Judit Kopper/Friz Productions with András Solyom (Hungary); video, color, sound, 45 minutes

Temetés (Funeral) (1992) by Judit Kopper/Friz Productions with András Solyom (Hungary); video, color, sound, 7 minutes

History condensed into seven minutes. The assembly of mythical documentary shots for the soviet funeral cult from 1924, from the burial of Lenin to the burial of the three general secretaries in the eighties in explosive rhythm. The film funeral of the failed system. The pictures are built on the spoken poetry of Ákos Szilágyi, with the mystical ritual quotation from Istvan Martha interchanged with dramatic music (performed by Amadinda) a recollection of the Soviet Union like a smash in the face. (—Friz Productions)

Perumos (***Bombs*** in Czech; ***Lightning*** in Romany) (1992) by Petr Vrana (Czech);
video, color, sound, 5 minutes.

Conception:
to be more intense and destructive in A/V than all nationalistic agitators;
a visualization of nationalism and racism in the CSFR.

Soundtrack:
slang/swearwords of all the ethnic groups (Slovaks, Moravians, Bohemians, gypsies) contesting for recognition in post-Communist governments

Music:
scratch version of Czech and Slovakian hymns. (PV)

Chris Hill has served on the Board of Directors of BCAM, Buffalo's public access operator, since 1990, and is video curator at Hallwalls, an artists-run center in Buffalo, New York. She currently teaches at SUNY Buffalo's Department of Media Studies and produces videotapes.

AN EVENING OF RELENTLESS FUN

SOME FILMS BY ALFONSO ALVAREZ AND THAD POVEY

Sunday, March 5, 1995– SF Art Institute

Indelible fixtures of the Bay Area film landscape, Thad Povey and Alfonso Alvarez tonight present a joint retrospective of their work. While Povey's wry use of found footage creates a landscape littered with strangely familiar faces that become silent images in the mirror held up to ourselves, Alvarez' brilliantly hued optical manipulations lead us back to some of our childhood dreams. Their work alternately delves into the psyche of identity, searches for spiritual redemption in a war-loving society, celebrates centennials, and discovers the Virgin Mary hidden within the optical printer.

Un Film Terrible (1985), by Alfonso Alvarez; S-8mm, color, sound, 2.5 minutes

A first film effort. My desire was to create a film that examines the end of the filmmaking spectrum as far from the "perfect narrative film" as possible. In it I've combined a set of elements that I can't seem to get away from: scratched leader, hand coloring and found footage.

Ahem (1994), by Thad Povey in collaboration with Susan Dory;
S-8mm from 16mm, color, sound, 2.5 minutes

Popcorn. Chase Sequence. Special effects. Two sex scenes. This film has got it all without the burden of a camera.

Memory Eye (1988), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 4.5 minutes

A look at the process of remembering: a flickering memory, images emerging from childhood, glimpses of place and the sounds of familiar voices. This is an exploration of the places memory is held.

I Smell the Blood of an Englishman (1995), Thad Povey;
16mm, color, sound, 17.5 minutes

A suite of four films dealing with two words: "human" and "being"— order of the two words is not important. The four films, following the sequence of FEE FI FO FUM, are as follows:

"Thine Inward-Looking Eyes"
Possibly a talk show for the telepathic. Relax. Take a deep breath.

"The Sweetest Sandwich"
Dry and crusty on the ends, full of chicken, tomatoes, honey, and corn in the middle. Music by Soul Coughing with lyrics inspired by an encounter with a drunk man at the corner or Second Avenue and Third Street in New York.

"Learning to Slump"
An info-tone-poem.

"On Any Given Thursday"
The things we do. In the words of Bokonon: "Tiger got to hunt, Bird got to fly; Man got to sit and wonder, 'Why, why, why?' Tiger got to sleep, Bird got to land; Man got to tell himself he understand."

Quixote Dreams (1990-91), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

We visit unresting Don Quixote, directed by God to right all wrongs and who has found himself in a landscape of broken dreams and useless wars. Spent and collapsing, the Don enters a dream world.

A Different Kind of Green (1989), by Thad Povey; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes
Gazing back at the child watching me I glimpse a sense of the nonsense that defines me currently.

motel six (1988), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 4.5 minutes
Coming back from a Dead show in Ventura, Ca., our '68 Volkswagen decides to opt for an early retirement. Stuck 30 miles north of Bakersfield, we embark on an adventure saturated with boredom, heat, and dust.

Media Darling (1991), by Thad Povey; 16mm from S-8, b/w, sound, 8 minutes
A macabre post-quake reflection on the American Media Machine as vampires in search of a bloody sound bite.

Film For... (1989), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes
A collection of found and original footage as well as dialogue and statements, documenting gender politics and the seeming lack of a substantial change in spite of our feeling to the contrary.

Duermete Niñita (1994), by Thad Povey; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes
A lullaby for a grandmother on the first birthday of her second century.

La Reina (1993), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes
Some cool optical printing of luridly saturated colors, matched with subtly layered audio tracks to create a cinematic experience not unlike being visited by the Virgen de Guadalupe.

Open for Business (Work-In-Progress, 1995), by Thad Povey;
16mm, color, silent, 2.5 minutes
A visit to the new museum for an opening... what was in that friendly Chablis?

Your Mom (Work-In-Progress, 1994-95), by Alfonso Alvarez;
16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes
Revisiting filmmaking elements I just can't seem to get enough of— groovy optical printing, hand colored leader, found footage and scratched black leader.

Thad Povey was born in Red Bluff in 1959, went to college in San Luis Obispo, and has lived primarily in San Francisco since 1982. In his early twenties he began to toy with Super-8 film and cameras, but was mostly involved with the guitar and musical composition. After catching the film bug while hanging around NYU in the mid-eighties, he came back to San Francisco in 1986 and has been working on short independent projects ever since.

Alfonso Alvarez: After seeing *Un Chien Andalou*, I realized you could only trust surrealists when it comes to all the formal aspects of filmmaking. So I thought I would try my hand at making film. After 10 years, I'm <u>still</u> trying. I completed my B.F.A. in 1990 at the California College of Arts and Crafts, under the direction of local filmmakers Lynn Kirby, Barbara Hammer and Donald Day. My M.A. was completed in 1994 at the Cinema Department at San Francisco State University... I can't tell yet if I learned anything in film school, except how to write checks to film labs. (AA)

please join the filmmakers for a reception after the show

N O T B E I R U T : Videos by Jalal Toufic & Jayce Salloum
Jalal Toufic In Person

Thursday, March 9, 1995 — Center for the Arts

In these two works about, yet not 'about', Beirut, video essayists Jalal Toufic and Jayce Salloum engage in provocative meditations on a problematized and constantly re-constructed Lebanon.

Credits Included : A Video in Red and Green (1995), by Jalal Toufic;
video, color, sound, 50 minutes

Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green registers the withdrawal of tradition past a surpassing disaster (the fifteen-year Lebanese civil war); produces completed crossword puzzles with subsisting blank spaces in a country of shattered shop signs; documents the rise in the 1992-Beirut of an anomalous and sublime architecture of bricks in a period where it seems Arabs are being driven to the Stone Age (Palestinians throwing stones at the Israeli army in the Occupied Territories, etc.); and uses fiction to *document* in an *aparté* the eruption outside mental hospitals of either diagrammatic or psychotic effects. (JT)

This Is Not Beirut : There was and there was not (1994), by Jayce Salloum;
video, color, sound, 48 minutes

This tape is at the most fundamental level, a personal project: i) examining the use of images/representations of Lebanon and Beirut both in the West and in Lebanon itself; ii) recording the interactions and experiences while working in Lebanon, focusing on the undertaking of this representational process as a Lebanese and a westernized, foreign born mediator with cultural connections and baggage of both the West and Lebanon and some of the disparities and disjunctions arising in each; and iii) situating the work between genres looking from the inside out at each and engaging critically... the assumptions imposed and thus broken. [I]n this site of complexity one's identity is found and constructed... (JS)

Jalal Toufic is a writer, film theorist, and video artist. He is the author of *Distracted* (Station Hill Press, 1991) and *(Vampires): An Uneasy Essay on the Undead in Film* (Station Hill Press, 1993), and the video maker of *Credits Included: A Video in Red and Green* (1995). He left (did he leave?) Beirut—a city where "nothing [is] left. Not even leaving"—to New York in 1984. He currently teaches cinema at San Francisco State University.

Jayce Salloum is a Canadian/Lebanese artist who has been working in video since 1984 and whose recent work includes *(Talaeen A Junuub)/ Up to the South* (1993, co-directed with Walid Ra'ad). An extension of his involvement in installation, photography and mixed media during the mid-seventies, Salloumn's video work deals with a variety of contexts, critically engaging questions of representation and cultural manifestation. Through collaboration with Lebanese filmmakers and extensive interviews with a broad cross-section of people affected by the Middle East crisis, Jayce continually questions media's construction of culture and its pervasive influence in the political and personal realms of one's life. Since completion of his last work, Jayce has been focusing on the establishment of a permanent media center in Beirut to increase the opportunity for the Lebanese people to tell their sides of the story.

• program notes by Todd Wagner •

NEW YORK SCUM:
NEW FILMS BY RICHARD KERN, BETH B., AND OTHERS
RICHARD KERN IN PERSON

Sunday, March 12, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Tonight we present a sampling of Bay Area premieres of new film and video from the slimy streets of New York City, including a rare appearance by legendary underground filmmaker Richard Kern. Beyond the NYC connection, there isn't really a theme to tonight's program, though if the works have one thing in common, it's obsession—all of tonight's films and tapes deal directly with the nature of obsession in varying degrees of intensity... Enjoy the show!

From Beijing to Brooklyn (1994), by Arlene Sandler and Anie Stanley;
video, color, sound, 15 minutes

One of the audience favorites of Mix '94 (New York Gay and Lesbian Experimental Film and Video Festival)...this fake movie preview sets up the story of Oriental sex goddess Fuk So Much and her battle with the evil forces of anti-porn feminism as embodied in the character of Bernice B. Good. Featuring the members of Thrust, NYC's preeminent dyke-slut-porn-punk-garage band. Lesbian smut was never this obnoxious!

High Heel Nights (1995), by Beth B; video, color, sound, 10 minutes

Beth B. (*Two Small Bodies*) shot this compassionate portrait of drag queens as part of "NYC Postcards", a series of 10-minutes glimpses of New York City commissioned for European television.

24 Hours a Day (1994), by Jocelyn Taylor; video, color, sound, 9 minutes

Two women eat some mangoes in this gender-bending lesbian erotic daydream with quietly blistering funk undertones. "The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice".

Dirty (1994), by Tessa Hughes-Freeland and Annabel Lee;
S-8mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

Tessa Hughes-Freeland was/is one of the most active (yet under-recognized) pioneers of the "Cinema of Transgression" movement. Co-directed with San Francisco-based artist Annabel Lee *(The Bitches, Red Spirit Lake), Dirty* is based on a short story by Georges Bataille.

-intermission-

New Films (And An Oldie) By Richard Kern

Richard Kern's films have been consistently offending people for the last decade. Kern is the most infamous filmmaker of New York's "Cinema of Transgression" movement; a mid-80's underground Super-8mm movement which turned it's back on the rigidly defined art school "avant-garde" in favor of a raw punk aesthetic. His earlier films featured a cavalcade of Lower East Side celebrities; Lydia Lunch, Nick Zedd, Sonic Youth, Karen Finley, etc...., and his notorious 1986 film *Fingered* defined the notion of "shock value" for the 80's. Lately, Kern has been concentrating his efforts on photography, and two monographs of his stunning S/M pin-up portraits will be released soon. Tonight's program focuses on Kern's most recent films, including a cherished oldie (*Manhattan Love Suicides*), and two Kern-directed music videos.

"Richard Kern is a pornographer by default. His intention is not to make porno movies so much as it is to make movies about what people do when unleashed and left to their own devices. People unbridled want sex, and they express that desire one way or another. Make a movie about what people want, and you've made a porno movie."

—George Petros, *Screw Magazine*

"The last narrative that totally interested me was a story in which G.G. Allin was going to play the father. He would've been this rock star dad who comes home and his wife fist fucks him at the dinner table, then he'd go into his daughters room and fuck her, then he'd go to the son's room and fuck his son and his friends in a big gay orgy scene...So I had this story worked out and then G.G. overdosed on the day we had set to start filming. To me, that would've been an interesting film because it would have had a lot of what I guess you'd consider shocking stuff."

—Richard Kern, 1994

Manhattan Love Suicides (1985); S-8mm, b/w, sound, 35 minutes
Featuring David Wojnarowicz, Bill Rice, Nick Zedd, and others. Music by JG Thirlwell and Dream Syndicate.

Horoscope (1991); S-8mm, color and b/w, sound, 5 minutes
Featuring Holly Adams, Bob Drywall and Squeak Wilentz. Music by Joe Budenholzer.

Nazi (1991); S-8mm, color, sound, 2 minutes
Featuring Annabelle Davies. Music Budenholzer.

The Sewing Circle (1992); S-8mm, color, sound, 7 minutes
Featuring Kembra Phfaler, Lisa Resurrection and Carrie.

My Nightmare (1993); S-8mm, color, sound, 5 minutes
Featuring Susan McNamara and R. Kern.

The Bitches (1992); S-8mm, b/w, sound, 10 minutes
Featuring Linda Serbu, Annabelle Davies and Charles Wing. Music by Budenholzer.

Body Bomb (1993); video, color, sound, 5 minutes
A rock video for UNSANE.

Lunchbox (1994); video, color, sound, 5 minutes
A rock video for Marilyn Manson.

PERSONAL WITNESS:
NEW FILMS BY CAITLIN MANNING
CAITLIN MANNING IN PERSON

Thursday, March 16, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Caitlin Manning has been making fiction films and documentary videos continually since she finished her first video, the award-winning *Stripped Bare*, in 1988. Before this she had been writing articles on sexuality, feminism and the sex industry, mostly for *Processed World* magazine which she had co-founded in 1981. One night a friend in the sex industry suggested they do a video on the subject. "I had no idea what I was getting

myself into, but two years and a video later I was completely enthralled by this form of expression, and I knew that I had somehow found my creative niche."

There is a striking contrast between Manning's formal style as a video-documentary maker and as an experimental or narrative filmmaker. The content clearly affects her choice of medium: "After *Stripped Bare* I turned to film. Because the medium is more sensual, immediate, dream-like, it seemed like the ideal form to explore those complicated, difficult psychic spaces in a more raw, intellectually unprocessed way." Her later documentaries take on a more overtly political tone, with Mexican and South American politics as the subject. These documentaries (*Brazilian Dreams* and *Noah's Ark*) were made in collaboration with Chris Carlsson, Manning's mate of 16 years. Manning feels that her work, documentary and fiction has a common context: "the global, patriarchal, capitalist culture... ties us all together in spite of ourselves, and creates similar situations in vastly different circumstances... The attempt at self-realization of a woman in the slums of Sao Paolo (recounted in the documentary *Brazilian Dreams*) resonates with similar attempts of a middle-class woman in the U.S. (*Prelude*)."

Prelude, Manning's most recent work which is being premiered tonight, is a half hour dramatic narrative which marks the completion of her M.F.A. in San Francisco State University's Cinema Department. Aside from making her own films, Caitlin has worked and continues to work as a cinematographer and director of photography on numerous Bay Area film and video projects including documentaries, experimental shorts, and feature length films.

When The Bough Breaks (1989); 16mm, color, sound, 2 minutes

My first 16mm film, *When the Bough Breaks* comes from a recurring dream. Many women who see this piece have recounted similar dreams they have had, so I think the film taps into a kind of archetypal female experience. (CM)

...Three, Four, Shut the Door (1991); 16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes

In a sequence reminiscent of Maya Deren's films, a woman encounters herself in many forms, and in each situation she is performing a role. Each role uncovers a different aspect of anxiety for approval which stretches from intimate, romantic expectations of a potential lover to those of an adoring audience. In putting the same woman in a range of stereotyped female positions, Manning makes us aware not only of the flexibility of the actress, but of the artifice involved in living each role. She describes this piece as "...a kind of trance film that reproduces psychological states (fear of exposure, fear of abandonment, need for love and admiration, sense of alienation, of being outside one's own body). In some way I think they represent almost archetypal female moments, which condense a whole psychological history."

Prelude (1995); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes

In Manning's most recent work she continues in the vein of investigating the internal paths of a woman's experience. Here she traces the conflicts and achievements of a woman attempting to actualize her creative potential, to solidify her individual identity in conjunction with her roles as a wife and mother. This conflict continues to create tension for many real-life women, and unlike a Hollywood ending, the first great creative achievement doesn't ensure one won't fall back into the same internal struggle, repeatedly. As in aspects of all of her work, Manning here addresses the need for women to act, to take responsibility for their happiness, for the possibilities for creative fulfillment.

***Sonhos Brasileiros** ('Brazilian Dreams')*: Visiting Points of Resistance (1990); video, color, sound, 16 minute excerpt of a 54 minute piece

When Manning and Carlsson pick up and go to Brazil with their camcorder, the resulting video gives us the sense that we are watching a strange hybrid between a documentary and a political home movie. They follow a path from the Carnivale to the depths of the rain forest, interviewing the individuals who make up the grassroots of South American culture. These are the people who, as Manning puts it, present "exemplary, but 'ordinary' individuals on the social margins whose lives embody resistance to the global capitalist culture. Their stories expose the values and priorities of the killing culture we live in, and call for social transformation."

Noah's Ark... a Neozapatista Delirium (1994); video, color, sound, 24 minutes

In this mini-documentary we find ourselves suddenly in the heart of the jungle, at an unusual Mexican democratic convention. There are crowds everywhere, and a man wearing a ski mask is speaking to an enthusiastic audience. From this single eloquent speech, a U.S. audience gets a glimpse of the complex politics in our neighboring nation, which is in an upheaval with enough intrigue, adventure, human drama and suspense to rival any sensationalist news about murderous football stars.

Stripped Bare (1988); video, color, sound, 30 minute version

An exploration of the subculture of erotic dancing via five women who work as strippers in San Francisco. "Without mythologizing the sex industry after the manner of some postmodern hipsters or concealing its squalid ruthlessness, these testimonials challenge one's preconceived notions of its female workers as victims."

—Andrew O'Hehir, *S.F. Sentinel* (June 17, 1988)

please join the filmmaker for a small reception after the show

• program notes by Maya Allison •

STAN BRAKHAGE: *SONGS* PROGRAM 2

SONG XII , FIFTEEN SONG TRAITS THROUGH SONG XXII

Sunday, March 19, 1995, 6:00 PM

Special Program — SF Art Institute

The running times of all Songs are necessarily approximate as the works are created for the medium of 8mm and therefore projected, for the most part, by machines with variable motors. They are intended to cohere rhythmically at speeds ranging from 8 frames to 24 frames per second. The approximate times indicated are based on an average speed midway between these two extremes. The running times listed in the catalogue for Songs 1-10 are perhaps more indicative of 12 frames per second than of 16 frames per second average given below, because at the time I submitted length approximates for the first ten Songs I was more interested, as viewer of my work in that slower speed.— *Stan Brakhage, from* Filmmakers' Cooperative Catalogue No. 4

Song XII (1965); 8mm, color, silent, 5 minutes

Verticals and shadows — reflections caught in glass traps.

Song XV : Fifteen Song Traits(1965); 8mm, color, silent, 38 minutes
A series of individual portraits of friends and family, all interrelated in what might be called a branch growing directly from the trunk 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, and the rest of our girls Myrrena & Neowyn, Angelo di Benedetto, Rarc, Ed Dorn and his family, Myrenna, 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.

Song XVI (1965); 8mm, color, silent, 8 minutes
A love song, a flowering of sex as in the mind's eye, a joy.

Songs XVII & XVIII (1965); 8mm, color, silent, 8 minutes
Cathedral and movie house—the ritual memories of religion—and then (in *Song XVIII*) a portrait of a singular room in the imagination.

Songs XIX & XX (1966); 8mm, color, silent, 8 minutes
A dancing song of women's rites, and then (*Song XX*) the ritual of light making shape/shaping picture.

Songs XXI & XXII (1965); 8mm, color, silent, 10 minutes
Transformation of the singular image was the guiding aesthetic light in the making of these two works. *Song XXI* works its spell through closed eye vision, whereas *Song XXII* was inspired by approximates of "the dot plane" or "grain field" of closed-eye vision in textured "reality," so to speak. You could say that *XXI* arises out of an inner- and *XXII* into an outer-reality. These two works are particularly exciting to me because I at last accomplished something in the making of them that I had written hopefully to Maya Deren about years ago: films which could run forwards and backwards with equal/integral authenticity—that is that the run from end to beginning would hold to the central concern of the film...rather than simply being some wind and/or unwinding of beginning-to-ending's continuum. *Song XXII*, additionally, can be run from its mid-point—the singular sun-star shape on water—in either direction to beginning or ending...thus film inherits the possibilities Gabrieli gave to music with his piece "My beginning is my ending and my ending is my beginning."

•*Film descriptions by Stan Brakhage,* Filmmakers' Cooperative Catalogue•

"Hypnagogic vision is what you see with your eyes closed—at first a field of grainy, shifting, multi-coloured sands that gradually assume various shapes... It's also called closed-eye vision. Moving visual thinking, on the other hand, occurs much deeper in the synapsing of the brain. It's a streaming of shapes that are not namable—a vast visual 'song' of the cells expressing their internal life."

—Stan Brakhage, "All that is Light Brakhage at 60," interview by Suranjan Ganguly, *Sight and Sound* (October 1993), 21

Stan Brakhage was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1933. His life journey crosses the country: from the outskirts of San Francisco's Beat Generation to New York's underground art scene, to the mountains of Boulder, Colorado. In 1958 he married Jane Collum. Their lives, love and the childhoods of their five children became the principal elements of Brakhage's films. During the years 1969 to 1981 Brakhage taught film history and aesthetics at the Art Institute of Chicago. Since 1981 he has been teaching film at the

University of Boulder. Brakhage now lives in Boulder with his second wife Marilyn and their two children.

"...the so called mundane, which people use as a word of contempt when they really mean 'earth'. What they don't see is the potential for glory, for envisionment that's inherent in even doing the dishes, in the soap suds...All they have to do is close their eyes and look."

—Stan Brakhage, *Sight & Sound* (1993)

At age 19 Brakhage made his first film *Interim* (1952). At age 62 Brakhage continues to add films to his extensive oeuvre of nearly 250 films. The films of Stan Brakhage are diverse: psychodrama, trance films, autobiographical films, birth films, cosmological epics, "song" cycles inspired by lyric poetry, and most recently, hand-painted films. Equally expansive is Brakhage's use of the cinematic medium: 8mm to 65mm Imax, standard chemical processing to unphotographed films — *Mothlight* (1963) was made by pasting flower petals and moth wings on film stock. In 1989 Brakhage, the first filmmaker thus honored, received the MacDowell Medal. This prestigious award is given annually to a writer, composer or visual artist who has made an "outstanding contribution to the nation's culture." In 1992 the U.S. Library of Congress selected *Dog Star Man* (1962-64) for inclusion in the National Film Registry.

"If you're writing a poem every single word counts. With filmmaking every 1-48th of a second counts."

—Stan Brakhage quoted in *Manchester Union Leader*, New Hampshire (August 21, 1989)

• program notes by C Whiteside •

TEENAGE TRASH BASH!

LINDA BLAIR AND BEYOND

Sunday, March 19,1995 — SF Art Institute

Tonight's program begins with a selection of extremely rare educational films made for teenagers in the 1970's, highlighted by *In a Quiet Place*, a short made for the church market starring David Cassidy. After a short intermission we'll roll into *Born Innocent*, the feature-length film starring Linda Blair. We hope you enjoy the show!

Getting Closer (1975);16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

"Greg, shy and self-conscious, wants to take Laura to the Autumn Daze dance at school, but he can't bring himself to ask her. His friend Louie, an outgoing self-styled "lover", doesn't help matters by kidding Greg. He finally makes up his mind to go to the dance. As he starts toward Laura to ask her to dance, Louie whisks her away to the floor. Greg is left alone amid the dancers, embarrassed and disappointed. This program is intended to help young people understand feelings of anxiety and concern about interacting with persons of the other sex and to stimulate learning experiences that will help them cope successfully with those feelings"

Decision: Alcohol (c. 197?); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

"This is the story of a high school student who is seriously injured in a car accident caused by a drunk driver. Whether to drink or not to drink is left up to the viewing audience"

Remember Eden (1971); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes
"Expresses the deep moral values of the interpersonal relationship between a man and a woman. Against the moods and colors of the changing seasons, young adults express a variety of viewpoints related to the man-woman relationship. Their stream of consciousness explores values which range from exploitation and conquest, to a meaningful relationship of life-long love and fidelity"

Janie (1977); 16mm, color, sound, 2 minutes
A teenage girl at a party is entranced by a beer can.

In a Quiet Place (1971); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes
"Gene's teenage pals needle him into making a play for Mary Ann. To them, sex is a game, and they talk big. Later, struggling with his guilt, he confesses to his father who then offers his son Christian guidelines for living and discusses with him the beauty of sex - but only within marriage" Starring David Cassidy.

Girls Beware (c.197?); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes
The safety of young girls is presented with several short vignettes, ranging in tone from kind of creepy to truly terrifying.

-intermission-

Born Innocent (1975), by Donald Wrye; 16mm, color, sound, 99 minutes
With Linda Blair, Joanna Miles.
When I was 9 years old, I was completely obsessed with actress Linda Blair. Consumed with the release of the film *The Exorcist*, I kept an *Exorcist*/Blair scrapbook, stuffed full with clippings from bad 70's movie magazines and Blair puff pieces from *Tiger Beat*. My obsession with *The Exorcist* got so heavy it began extending into darker realms, I truly wanted to be possessed. I scoured vanity press 'occult' paperbacks looking for rituals to raise the Devil. It never worked. I wasn't allowed to actually see the film until a year after it came out and then I had nightmares for 4 months.

Linda Blair's first release after *The Exorcist, Born Innocent* was made for television and broadcast in 1974. Marketed enthusiastically toward very young viewers, the barrage of previews promised a steamy, harsh teenage-girls-in-prison shocker and didn't disappoint. Then *Born Innocent* caused a sadly now familiar controversy, though I don't remember hearing about until long after the fact. In a depressing tragedy, three pre-teen girls allegedly acted out a rape scene depicted in *Born Innocent* on a 9 year old girl, on Baker Beach in San Francisco. The girl's mother sued NBC and SF affiliate KRON for 11 million but the suit was eventually thrown out of court... Blair's next release was another made-for-tv epic, the unforgettable (though not as sleazy) *Sarah T.: Portrait of Teenage Alcoholic.* In this one, Blair played a teen lush, drinking constantly, staggering around high school, singing a Carly Simon song and riding a horse onto the freeway. It must have made a big impression on me, as I later had to overcome my own raging problem with alcohol.

Blair went on to make a million pretty forgettable films, and she continues to do the same to this day. Unsurprisingly, she's had a bizarre, scandal-ridden career; several coke busts, *Chained Heat*, a tawdry, strange relationship with 80's funkster Rick James ('Superfreak'), the miserable *Exorcist* satire *Repossessed*...Recently she's been sighted as a "special guest celebrity" on the Halloween 'Haunted House' circuit, kind of like the guy with 3 arms and the screaming fat lady.

21 years later, here's the dusty and dated *Born Innocent* again, perhaps for the last time. Blair and I continue to collide in mysterious ways--my sister waited on her in a restaurant a few years ago I know there's a Linda Blair cult out there, waiting patiently, like me, for her inevitable, perfect shining comeback.

Tonight's program was co-curated and co-presented by San Francisco Cinematheque and David Naylor of Alpha Blue Archives.

•program notes by Joel Shepard •

CANYON CINEMA NIGHTS: MECHANIX OF NATURE

CURATED BY DIANE KITCHEN

Thursday, March 23, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Tonight's show is the second in our series of guest-curated programs selected from Canyon Cinema, the Bay Area's premiere distributor of alternative film. Diane Kitchen managed Canyon Cinema during a turbulent period in the late 1970s and helped guide and stabilize it into its position as a important artists' organization. A maker of experimental films and lyrical, ethnographic documentaries, Kitchen has screened several of her works—including *Basic Elements*, *Before We Knew Nothing*, and *Roots, Thorns*—at the San Francisco Cinematheque. Kitchen is now on the faculty at University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. She has selected eight films from Canyon's catalogue—favorites, unknowns and a wild card—which draw their images from natural settings.

Six Windows (1979), by Marjorie Keller; 16mm, color, silent, 7 minutes

A pan and a dissolve make a window of a wall on film. A portrait of the filmmaker in a luminous space, synthetically rendered via positive and negative overlays. (MK)

Windowmobile (1977), by James Broughton and Joel Singer;
16mm, color, sound, 8 minutes

The film is shot both through and at a window, superimposing and conjoining, thereby elaborating events on both sides of the glass. Broughton's accompanying poem sings the same song as the images, sounding from an Eden of the golden passing of days: "They were seeing the light every day then.../ They were looking and they were seeing/ They were living there in the light at that time."

—Robert Lipman

Fuji (1974), by Robert Breer; 16mm, color, sound, 8.5 minutes

"The classic outline of Mount Fuji, filmed by Breer from a train, then rotoscoped, becomes involved in an extended speculation on the boundaries between representation and abstraction. Is it a mountain, or just another of Breer's geometric obsessions?"

—David Curtis

Seven Days (1974), by Chris Welsby; 16mm, color, sound, 20 minutes

The location of this film is by a small stream on the northern slopes of Mount Carningly in south-west Wales. The seven days were shot consecutively and appear in that same order. Each day starts at the time of local sunrise and ends at the time of local sunset. One frame was taken every ten seconds throughout the film. The camera was mounted on an Equatorial Stand which is a piece of equipment used by astronomers to track the stars. In order to remain stationary in relation to the star field the mounting is aligned with the Earth's axis and rotates about its own axis approximately once every 24 hours. A rifle

microphone was used to sample sound every two hours. These samples were later cut to correspond, both in space and time, to the image on the screen. (CW)

The Red Mile (1973), by Le Ann Bartok; 16mm, color, sound, 9.5 minutes

Documentary of conceptual artist Le Ann Bartok Wilchusky's "Skyworks, The Red Mile," dropped from 7,500 ft altitude with skydivers, kinetically danced over the Pennsylvania countryside. This "Dropped Object" unrolled in free fall creating a line one mile long which altered the sky space dramatically. Shorter red pieces, held by the skydivers in free fall, spiral in and out as the skydiver as performer is held in G force. A visual symphony of falling lines. (LAB)

Fog Line (1970), by Larry Gottheim; 16mm, color, silent, 11 minutes

Fog Line is a wonderful piece of conceptual art, a stroke along the careful line between wit and wisdom. On a certain objective level it is a film made from one 400 foot magazine exposed from a fixed position as the fog lifts in a valley. But, of course, it is impossible to equate that "objective" description with the film. For the result is a melody in which literally every frame is different from every preceding frame (since the fog is always lifting) and the various elements of the composition—trees, animals, vegetation, sky, and, quite importantly, the emulsion, the grain of the film itself—continue to play off one another as do notes in a musical composition. The quality of the light—the tonality of the image itself—adds immeasurably to the mystery and excitement as the work unfolds, the fog lifting, the film running through the gate, the composition static yet the frame itself fluid, dynamic, magnificently kinetic.

—Raymond Foery

Still Life (1975), by Bette Gordon; 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

A meditation on the American rustic. Various objects within the composition are represented in unnatural colors and unusual spatial arrangements, emphasizing the illusion of movement while exploring film grain and graphic nature. The image of foreground and background becomes reversed, and through that process we lose sight of three-dimensional space representation. (BG)

Time and Places (1982), by Art Zipperer; 16mm, color, sound, 9 minutes

In an evocative, personal journey, images of the phenomenal world are woven with those gathered during the Vietnam War as the former triggers the latter. For many, there is a singular event or experience where one crosses the point of no return and the world is never quite the same. This film shares such an experience. (AZ)

• program notes by Rick Danielson •

STAN BRAKHAGE: SONGS PROGRAM 3

SONG XXIII (23RD PSALM BRANCH PART 1 & 2)

Sunday, March 26, 1995, 6:00 PM

Special Program — SF Art Institute

Song XXIII: 23rd Psalm Branch (1966-67); 8mm, color, silent, circa 100 minutes

"*Song, my song, raise grief to music*"
— Louis Zukofsky, "A"

"The mood throughout is alternately Invocation and Exorcism. The film has a strict, and as I see it, musical form. Only by the broadest possible stretch of definition can this 23rd Psalm be called a 'song'—but it assuredly can be likened to a symphony, or better still, an extended rhapsodic tone poem of epic proportions."

—Jerome Hill, "*23rd Psalm Branch*(Song XXIII): A Film by Stan Brakhage," *Film Culture* 46 (Autumn 1967), 14.

Part I

"A study of war, created in the imagination in the wake of newsreel death and destruction."

"...We had moved around a lot and we had settled down enough...so we got a TV. And that was something in the house that I could simply not photograph, simply could not deal with visually. It was pouring forth war guilt, primarily, into the household in a way that I wanted to relate to, if I was guilty, but I had feelings...of the qualities of guilt and I wanted to have it real for me and I wanted to deal with it."

"And I mean, it was happening on all the programs—on the ads as well as the drama and even in the comedies, and of course the news programs. And I had to deal with that. It finally became such a crisis that I knew I couldn't deal directly with TV but perhaps I could make or find out why war was all that unreal to me..."

— Stan Brakhage, *Filmmakers' Cooperative Catalogue*

"Images of a Colorado landscape are juxtaposed with views from Nazi Germany. "Take back Beethoven's 9th, then he said," is scratched on film stock. Images of a man blowing up a hill and Colorado landscape are juxtaposed with black-and-white leader. Shots of Jane are intercut with camera movement over a letter to Jane. Juxtaposed images of Nagasaki and New York are followed by a poem by Louis Zukofsky, visions of war from classical antiquity, and Brakhage near a poster of [a] gun pointed at the audience. After Zukofsky's face is juxtaposed with scenes from a concentration camp, he and his wife are seen in the present. "I can't go on," is written on the stock, interrupting images of war. Black leader. After a recapitulation of images, the camera follows Brakhage's hand as it writes: 'I must stop! the War is as these thoughts (IDEAS, IMAGES), patterns...(RHYTHM) are — as endless as...precise as eye's hell is!'"

— Synopsis by Gerald R. Barrett and Wendy Brabner, *Stan Brakhage: A Guide to References and Resources* (1983), 110-111.

Part II

"A searching into the 'sources' of Part I."

—Stan Brakhage

"Peter Kubelka's Vienna" is the title of the initial section of 'Part II to Source.' Scenes of modern Vienna are intercut with shots of filmmaker Kubelka playing the recorder. "My Vienna" juxtaposes views of Brakhage seated at a table with shots of activities back home. Walkers in Vienna are intercut with marching soldiers, as are art objects and prisoners in concentration camps. "A Tribute to Freud" features images of his home, while "Nietzsche's Lamb" combines a skinned lamb over high angle views of the city; "East Berlin" combines lights, a city street at night, and patterns of dots. In the 'coda,' a woman playing a harp in the woods is doubled-exposed with a man repairing an instrument; children hold sputtering fireworks.

—Synopsis by Gerald R. Barrett and Wendy Brabner.

"The 'coda' begins with a complete rupture from the images and techniques of the rest of the film and ends with a disquieting metaphor for the undefeatable impulse to war within the human spirit....Thus this film which has made an equation among parades, victory

celebrations, street fights, and rallies, culminates in a cyclic vision and a discovery of the seeds of war in the pastoral vision."

— P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film* (1974), 216.

"Brakhage brings the war home into the most literal sense imaginable, forging a geography of feeling that assigns every reference in this film a crystalline relation to the patterns, as he sees them, of the making and experiencing of war. As a disease that has entered the blood stream and is already a dynamic that one suffers, Brakhage's view of war "as a natural disease" finds resonance in a myriad of instances where through collective tools of montage, paint, and, in several instances, insertions of language..."

— Gail Camhi, "Notes on Brakhage's *23rd Psalm Branch*," *Film Culture* 67-68-69 (1979), 97.

"...one must assume that only very special pressure could have forced him to insert words into his 'war film,' *23rd Psalm Branch* [speaks in handwriting and in print; in ink on paper, in scratched emulsion and in engraved letters on a book cover; in a television news graphic and a fragment of Latin manuscript; in words from Thomas Mann, Louis Zukofsky, and Charles Olsen; and in the filmmaker's own words in a letter to his wife and diarylike notes to himself]...Brakhage's venture into the visual dimension of verbal texts was forced upon him by a personal and aesthetic crisis produced by public, political events. In the heat of his engagement with images of war, Brakhage had to give words to his film. He let them say things that the purely visual images could not say because as iconic representations, they were inseparable from the "thought/patterns" that the film was intended to be about; whereas words, as arbitrary verbal constructs, could communicate at a more abstract level where they could escape 'eye's hell.'"

—William C. Wees, "Words and Images in Stan Brakhage's *23rd Psalm Branch*," *Cinema Journal* (Winter 1988), 40-48.

• program notes by C Whiteside •

FILMS BY JEAN ROUCH:
LES MAÎTRES FOUS + *CHRONICLE OF A SUMMER*

Sunday, March 26, 1995, 8 p.m. — SF Art Institute

"The truth will not give its lifeto dead wood." — Songhay proverb
"Not to film life as it is, but life as it is provoked." —Jean Rouch, 1963 interview

Ethnographic film, ciné-trance, cinéma-vérité, participatory cinema, ethno-fiction, truant ethnology, contraband cinema—such are some of the labels that have been applied to the various films of Jean Rouch. In the words of Jean-André Fieschi (in Eaton, 1979), "What is exploded by Rouch's work (with the result that, rather as Boulez said of music after Debussy, the entire cinema now 'breathes' differently) is the whole system of statutory oppositions whereby starting from the original Lumière-Méliès axis, categories were conceived of as documentary/fiction; style/improvisation; natural/artificial; etc."

At seventy seven and with over a hundred films to his credit (ranging from several minutes to several hours in length), Rouch continues to make films and to play an active role at the Musée de l'Homme and the Cinemathèque Française in Paris. Only five of his films are distributed in North America. Tonight the Cinematheque presents two of these, probably

his best known in this country. Both *Les maîtres fous* (1955) and *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961), while clearly anchored in the domain of documentary, are seminal works in Rouch's oeuvre and development. In them one can see the seeds of several subsequent films where the lines between fiction and documentary, the imaginary and the factual, the self and the potential selves, are increasingly blurred (*Jaguar*, *Moi Un Noir*), or where the anthropological gaze is mockingly turned around (*Petit a Petit*).

Rouch began his career as an engineer, building and blowing up bridges in occupied France and then overseeing the construction of roads in the French Colonies in what is today Niger. It was there in his mid twenties that he first witnessed a Songhay possession ceremony and developed his lifelong interest in Songhay culture. After returning to France to fight in the war and study anthropology, Rouch went back to Africa on a nine month exploration of the Niger river with two friends and a Bell and Howell camera. During this trip he was asked by some Nigerien acquaintances to film a hippopotamus hunt. A silent version of this film premiered at an avant-garde club in Paris, and a few years later Rouch brought a subsequent version back to the village in Niger where he had filmed. The comments and criticisms of the Nigeriens led Rouch to change parts of the soundtrack and to be asked to make other films in collaboration with his Nigerien friends. Thus was born the 'participatory cinema' which to a greater or lesser degree characterizes most of Rouch's film work.

Rouch's fascination with trance (as in *Les maîtres fous* and other ethnographic pieces), with truth revealed through provocation and interaction (as in *Chronicle of a Summer* and *La Pyramide Humaine*), with the complex and revealing collaborative inventions of self and reality (*Jaguar*, *Moi Un Noir*, *Petit a Petit)* implies a multifaceted notion of reality "in which the part played by the imaginary is no longer merely ornamental or subordinate, but genuinely basic" (Fieschi, in Eaton, 1979). In this sense, Rouch's love of and dedication to the cinema—another imaginary—is not at all surprising. "For me, as an ethnographer and filmmaker, there is almost no boundary between documentary film and films of fiction. The cinema, the art of the double, is already a transition from the real world to the imaginary world, and ethnography, the science of the thought systems of others, is a permanent crossing point from one conceptual universe to another; acrobatic gymnastics where losing one's footing is the least of the risks."

—Rouch, 1989 interview, quoted in Stoller, 1992

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***Les maîtres fous** (The Crazy Masters; Mad Masters; Master Madmen)* (1955);
16mm, color, sound, 36 minutes

Les maîtres fous is Rouch's most controversial film. It has been accused of reinforcing racist myths and perpetuating a pernicious exoticism. In a discussion with Rouch, Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembene said of Rouch's purely ethnographic films, including *Les maîtres fous,* "...you dwell on reality without showing its evolution... you observe us like insects" (Stoller, 1992). Others have lauded the film for challenging viewers to confront their own ethnocentrism, their repressed racism, their latent primitivism. The unsettling images seek to transform the audience psychologically and politically without the imposition of any comforting or reductionist interpretative schema. In the words of Paul Stoller (1992), "The reason *Les maîtres fous* is one of Rouch's masterworks is that it ingeniously brings together the complex themes of colonization, decolonization, and the ontology of trance, in thirty-three minutes of extraordinary cinema. In a direct manner, Rouch thrusts the 'horrific comedy' of Songhay possession upon his viewers, challenging them to come to grips with what they are seeing on the screen... *Les*

maîtres fous, like Rouch's Songhay ethnographies and some of his other films [...] documents the existence of the incredible, the unthinkable. These unexplicated scenes challenge us to decolonize our thinking, to decolonize ourselves." Due to the controversy surrounding the film, Rouch decided to limit its distribution..

"This film, crucial to the development of Rouch's work and later ethnographic film practice, concerns the annual ceremonies of the Hauka cult which started in the late '20s in the Upper Niger region. Persecuted by the French colonial administration and denounced by orthodox Islam, many of its practitioners moved to Ghana in the thirties, working as migrant labourers throughout the Gold Coast region. The Hauka are 'the new Gods', spirits of power and of the winds. During the ceremonies the initiates become possessed by these powerful spirits which take the form of figures of authority in the Western colonial administration (the Governor-General, the Admiral, etc..). In a state of trance the possessed take on these roles and act like the white figures of authority. [...] The film is a record of a Hauka ceremony during which the participants become possessed, a dog is ritually sacrificed and eaten. The film also includes footage of the Western figures whose power the Hauka spirits personify. The thesis of the film advanced by Rouch in the commentary is that the ritual plays a therapeutic role in the lives of the marginalised and oppressed people, allowing them to accommodate to the psychological disjunctions caused by colonialism. At the end of the film we are shown the Hauka priests back at work on the roads or in the markets of Accra. The commentary is an attempt to provide an anthropological explanation/rationale for the 'bizarre' or 'exotic' nature of much of the footage, shifting the terms of emphasis so that it is the colonial administration which emerges as bizarre and irrational.

"Rouch was asked to make the film after he and his wife, Jane, had given a lecture at the British Council in Accra. In the audience there were several Hauka priests and initiates, many of whom originally came from the area of Upper Niger where the shorts shown by Rouch at that lecture had been filmed. He was approached by them and asked to make a film of their annual ceremony. The priests wanted a film not only a s a record of the ceremony but also so that it could be used in the ritual itself. Whilst in Accra, Rouch attended many of the smaller Hauka ceremonies and was cabled by the priests on 15 August, 1954, in Togo, where he was traveling, to return as the big ceremony was about to be held.

"The film was shot on a hand-cranked 16mm Bell and Howell camera which allowed for 25 sec. shots, but it was edited in the camera as much as possible and the eventual shooting ration was only about 8-10. The sound was recorded by Damouré Zika, one of the first Africans Rouch had got to know well on his first trip during the war, using a Scubitophone which is a portable though heavy tape-recorder with a clockwork motor that had to be wound up between takes.

"When shown in Paris, the film was widely criticised. Black students in the audience accused Rouch of reinforcing stereotypes of 'savagery', and the film was banned throughout Britain's African colonies because of its 'inflammatory' content. Jean Genet's play *The Blacks*—in which colonised people acted out the roles of the colonisers was heavily influenced by it and Peter Brook used it as a model for his actors during the rehearsals of *Marat/Sade*. Rouch has always defended the film, not only on the basis of its ethnographic veracity and his commitment to the use of film in 'describing' a ceremony (where there are ,many simultaneous events which are impossible to convey adequately through the medium of print) but also, and more significantly, in relation to his later film practice, because the content of the film is concerned specifically with the intermingling of cultures and the effects—particularly the psychological effects—of colonialism. Unlike the

vast majority of ethnographic films, including Rouch's early shorts, *Les maîtres fous* does not construct African culture as somehow occupying a sphere discrete in itself and unaffected by Western contact."

—Mick Eaton, "Chronicle", in M. Eaton, Ed. (1979),

***Chronique d'un été** (Chronicle of a summer)*(1961), in collaboration with Edgar Morin; 16mm, b/w, sound, 90 minutes

"Rouch was approached by the sociologist Edgar Morin to make a film about Paris. Morin had long been interested in the cinema (he wrote *Le Cinéma, ou l'homme imaginaire* and *Les Stars*) and had praised Rouch's work in an article *Pour un nouveau cinéma-vérité* in *France Ovservateur*, 14 January, 1960. Morin had been a member of the resistance during the war and was expelled from the Communist party in 1951 for his opposition to Stalinism. At this time he was also editor of the review *Arguments*. Morin's idea was to make a 'sociological fresco' (Rouch: '*je ne suis pas fresqueur.*') about Paris in the summer of 1960, when it was thought that the Algerian war was going to end. Rouch was interested but admitted to knowing very little about what was happening in Paris at that time...[M]ost of the people involved in *Chronique* were Morin's friends, many of them member s of a leftist group, *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, who had left the French Communist Party after the events in Hungary. Rouch has since talked of the difficulties of working with a collaborator: "Working with Morin was exciting during the planning, but annoying during the shooting.' Rouch and Morin were given an entirely free hand by the producer and worked with the participants over several months without interference. The film was subtitled 'une experience de *cinéma-vérité* ' (apparently in hommage to Dziga Vertov...) and whilst it was in no sense a 'psycho-drama' like La Pyramide Humaine, the founding ideas were very similar: the camera was to act as a 'catalyst', and 'accelerator' making people reveal themselves. However, it is worth mentioning that Rouch found the French much more camera shy than the Africans he had been filming for so many years.

"In many respects the importance of his film lies in the way it was made and the technological innovations that accompanied it. Shooting started with the standard Arriflex, which although reasonable light at 10 kgs, was noisy. Rouch's French camera man was not prepared to walk with it in the street sequences. [...] Rouch was in contact with André Coutant, who worked at the Eclair factory, and who [...] introduced him to a new camera which was being developed for use in a space satellite for purposed of military surveillance. This camera was light (6 kgs), dependable, and virtually silent, but it had only a magazine of 3 minutes worth of film. Coutant worked on the camera as the film progressed in an attempt to extend the capacity of the magazine[...]This camera was the prototype of the KMT Coutant-Mathot Eclair, the first light, silent portable 16 mm camera with sync-sound. [...] The development of the camera freed the crew to get out into the streets and move about holding the camera, and the new possibility of sync-sound had its effect on the film, making it much more a film 'about' people taking, rather than them acting out their lives in front of the camera.

"[...]The film again raises the questions of what happens to 'ordinary people' after Rouch has given them the possibility of being, for a few short months, movie stars. Marceline (Loridan) married Joris Ivens and has worked throughout the world with him; Jean-Pierre (Sergent) made movies in Algeria and Colombia; Regis (Debray) went to Cuba to make a film about Che Guevara. He subsequently went to Colombia, where he was arrested and imprisoned for revolutionary activity; he is the author of '*Revolution in the Revolution*' and other books about revolution. Mary-Lou became a stills photographer who worked with Bertolucci and Godard. There were more problems with Angelo, the worker in the Renault plant. He was fired because of his involvement in the film and got work at the Billancourt

Studios where he was fired for his political activity. Morin pulled strings to get him a job at the publishing firm, Editions du Seuil, but when he tried to organise a union there too, there was a certain amount of embarrassment caused, so 'we gave him money to buy a small workshop in Levallois where he worked as a mechanic'.

"There were 21 hours of rushes from which the finished film was edited. The immense difficulty of cutting led Rouch to consider making another film in Paris where the action would take place in a single day. Although the film was released around the world, and was well received critically, it was not a success commercially."

—Mick Eaton, "Chronicle"

• program notes by Irina Leimbacher •

OPEN SCREENING

HOSTED BY ERIN SAX & STEVE ANKER

March 30, 1996 — Center for the Arts

Mad Poets of Frisco, by Cine Lourdes; video, 10.5 minutes
Chaos, Chaos, by Ralph Ackerman; video, 4 minutes
I am a Mechanic, by Dan Janos; S-8mm, 5.6 minutes
gajol-gusal , by Judith Pfeifer; video, 5.5 minutes
TV I, by Duane Ackerman, video, 7 minutes
Second Persons, by Steve Packenham; video, 14.3 minutes
Brothers & Sisters, by Terry Hatfield; video, 7 minutes
Deep Peep & Love Controls Time, by Laura Klein; video, 10 minutes
2.95 Untitled (#1), by B. Frye, 16mm, 3 minutes
Kilometer 123.5, by R. Mader; video, 12 minutes

ERNIE GEHR: ADELINE KENT AWARD SCREENING

ERNIE GEHR IN PERSON

Sunday, April 2, 1995 — SF Art Institute

"In representational films sometimes the image affirms its own presence as image, graphic entity, but most often it serves as vehicle to a photo-recorded event. Traditional and established avant-garde film teaches film to be an image, a representing. But film is a real thing and as a real thing it is not imitation. It does not reflect on life, it embodies the life of the mind. It is not a vehicle for ideas or portrayals of emotion outside of its own existence as emoted idea. Film is a variable intensity of light, an internal balance of time, a movement within a given space."

—Ernie Gehr, January 1971

Ernie Gehr began making films in the regular 8mm format in the 1960s and has worked steadily since then, completing more than 24 films. A self-taught artist, Gehr has established himself as one of the true masters of film form, and his graceful sense of style and subtle, poetic sensibility have deeply affected the cinematic avant-garde. His films have

established himself as one of the true masters of film form, and his graceful sense of style and subtle, poetic sensibility have deeply affected the cinematic avant-garde. His films have screened internationally, including retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Musée du Cinéma in Brussels and at the San Francisco Cinematheque, and he has received awards and grants from numerous institutions, including the National Endowment for the Arts, a John Simon Guggenheim fellowship and the Maya Deren Award from the American Film Institute. Currently a faculty member at the San Francisco Art Institute, Gehr has also taught and lectured at the University of California at Berkeley, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Deutcher Akademischer Austauschdienst in Berlin. This screening is presented as a part of the 1995 Adeline Kent Award Exhibition, an award presented annually to a California artist. Ernie Gehr and Bruce Conner are the only two filmmakers to have received this prestigious award, which includes an honorarium and a solo exhibition in the San Francisco Art Institute's Walter/McBean Gallery.

Untitled: Part One (1981); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes

"The telephoto lens in *Untitled: Part One* (1981) provides an extraordinary sense of both observation and distance in perhaps Gehr's most subtle and moving city film. Whereas Gehr frequently records the more impersonal aspects of the city, here he focuses on the gestures and circulation of human figures. The magnification of the lens allows him to register the intimate details of the texture of skin or the uncertain tread of an elderly foot, while remaining somewhat outside the scene. In documenting the streetside acts of exchange and encounter in a neighborhood dominated by recent immigrants (largely Jews from Russia), Gehr captures a history of circulation and exile written in the bodies of the city's inhabitants."

—Tom Gunning, *Perspective and Retrospective: The Films of Ernie Gehr*

Signal—Germany on the Air(1982-85); 16mm, color, sound, 37 minutes

"The artifice of the film image stands in stark contrast to the 'reality' of the scene—one is highly conscious of the frame outlines—of what's in and what's out. The color is almost always 'unreal'—some artifact of photographic depiction. The spaces and sounds between, behind, and above the image comes through, we fill out the scene. The mind permeates the space and we become highly aware of the processes used for this inspection. While watching you become aware of your own space, your own patterns of movement. Common ground and individual experience are the poles here, and the active mind shuttles between them in the duration. The recalcitrant world, once it is depicted and articulated, can be peeled back like an onion, revealing constituent layers. In *Signal—Germany on the Air* it is history that's in the air, behind the mask of every face, every facade, every street sign."

—Daniel Eisenberg, "Some Notes on the Films of Ernie Gehr"

"A long sequence at the end of *Signal* was shot in the rain. This is almost comforting. The subdued colors of an overcast day seem more appropriate than the bright, saturated colors of the storefronts earlier in the film. It seems for a while as though the rain can wash away all traces of the past. But, when a bright orange flare-out signals both the end of a camera roll and the end of the film, the steady hiss of the rain reveals itself as the end of a conflagration."

—Harvey Nosowitz in *Film Quarterly*

Rear Window (1986/91);16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

"Images were recorded in 1985/86 from the rear window of what used to be our apartment in Brooklyn. The death of my father and an earlier work of mine, *Signal—Germany on the*

front of the camera lens and attempted to make tactile light, color and image. The work shifts from a play between the 'elements' to whipping up a 'storm' out of thin air."

—Ernie Gehr, January 1993

ERNIE GEHR FILMOGRAPHY

Morning (1968); *Wait* (1968); *Reverberation* (1969); *Transparency* (1969); *History* (1970); *Field* (1970); *Field* (short version) (1970); *Serene Velocity* (1970); *Three* (1970); *Still* (1969-71); *Eureka* (1974); *Shift* (1972-74); *Behind the Scenes* (1975); *Table* (1976); *Untitled* (1977); *Hotel* (1979); *Mirage* (1981); *Part One* (1981); *Signal—Germany on the Air* (1982-85); *Listen* (1986-91); *Rear Window* (1986-91);*This Side of Paradise* (1991); *Side/Walk/Shuttle* (1991); *Daniel Willi* (work in progress)

• program notes by Brian Frye•

San Francisco Cinematheque Publications

Cinematograph **Each @ $12 individual $25 institution\ foreign**

Volume 1 (out of print)
Volume 2
Volume 3 (Guest Editor: Christine Tamblyn)
Volume 4 (Guest Editor: Jeffrey Skoller)
Volume 5 (Guest Editor: Peter Herwitz)
Volume 6 (Special Small Format Film and Video Issue, to be published 1/96)

Program Note Booklets **Each @ $10 individual $20 institution\ foreign**

1984-1994 available

The San Francisco Cinematheque Program Note Booklets contain the collected program notes that accompanied the Cinematheque's film and video exhibition of that year. The notes include critical essays, historical background, and technical information about works ranging from turn-of-the-century films to the newest contemporary personal and experimental films and videotapes.

Monographs

Yvonne Rainer: Declaring Stakes	$5 domestic	$8 foreign
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Films of Ernie Gehr	$12 domestic	$15 foreign
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Bruce Baillie: Life and Work	$5 domestic	$8 foreign

NELSON & WILEY'S *BEFORE NEED REDRESSED*

GUNVOR NELSON AND DOROTHY WILEY IN PERSON

Thursday, April 13, 1995 — Center for the Arts

This evening's program is the first time the Cinematheque has screened Gunvor Nelson's films since the fall of 1992, when a full retrospective entitled *Gunvor Nelson: A life in film* was organized on the occasion of her return to Sweden. After thirty-two years of living, teaching (at the San Francisco Art Institute) and working in the Bay area, Nelson returned to her native country. The retrospective was a way of saying goodbye to a wonderful filmmaker and teacher and we are very pleased to welcome her back.

"For me, the intention is trying to dig deep and find those images, to find the essence of your feelings. I guess about a year ago it just struck me that the outside world for me, all things that are there, are symbols for what I feel. Trying to use film as a medium to express what's inside you, you have to use those symbols."

—*Film Quarterly*, Fall 1971 interview with Gunvor Nelson

The symbols Gunvor Nelson and Dorothy Wiley choose to express these interior states are as varied as the many writings about their films. Nelson and Wiley's work has been claimed as feminist while also being seen as formalist: working within the school of light and dark, shape, color, application, texture or line. Certainly these are all at issue in their work, but they are explored in such a complex manner and with such vivid emotion that the resulting cinema can equally be claimed as feminist, formalist and experimental. At screenings of Gunvor Nelson and Dorothy Wiley's work the audience's reaction, and the depth of response that is expressed is very striking. In one interview, when asked about the climate of her Swedish culture, Nelson said that she found it difficult to express some emotions and that perhaps these feelings came through her films. The films do speak to the viewer, whether through form, or content, or subject. This is truly a human cinema.

Before Need Redressed (1994)*;* 16mm, color, sound, 75 minutes

We think a lot of the film is absurd...It is on the brink of being too serious and too stupid. It's complex. There are all these unexpected things. Things are multi-layered. That's our point of view. The beauty the woman sees in the different roles she's taken in her life and looking back on those states of being is both beautiful, pathetic and absurd. (GN)

Light Years Expanding (1987); 16mm, color, 25 minutes

A collage film. Traversing stellar distances continues."(GN)

A further development of elements seen in *Light Years* (1987), *Light Years Expanding* extends the first film's themes and techniques..."All her recent films suggest that while the distance of time makes home further, the intensity of memory makes it richer."

—Parabola

Dorothy Wiley was trained as a High School English teacher, and as a wife and mother she brings a practical love of film, and an attention to life's details to their work. Her first film was made with Gunvor Nelson out of their homes after Wiley's husband gave a half-hour lesson on how to use a camera. Ernest Callenbach of *Film Quarterly* wrote of *Schmeerguntz* (1965), "A society which hides its animal functions beneath a shiny public surface deserves to have such films as Schmeerguntz shown everywhere— in every PTA, every Rotary Club, every club in the land." The film won prizes at the Ann Arbor, Kent State University and Chicago Art Institute Film Festivals of 1966, was discussed in

feminist contexts in the early seventies and is still widely seen. Wiley and Nelson made several other films together, and Wiley went on to do a series of short 8mm films best described as filmic prose poems, using domestic familiars (red cabbage, coffee grounds) as materials. When Wiley was asked why she turned to film, she talks of new creative frontiers, and reflects..."I find my interest in films peculiar because I'm not interested in machines, and there are an awful lot of machines involved in making films...But it was such a new medium. The possibilities that hadn't been explored were tremendous." (Independent Journal, 8-3-79). Wiley continues to work with film in these projects with Gunvor Nelson as well as experimenting with video, music and writing.

Gunvor Nelson was trained as a painter, receiving a BA from Humboldt and an MFA. from Mills College. Coming from painting she brings a refined sensibility of color, an amazing sense of form, an exposing of texture, and the possibilities of the medium. Working frequently with an animation stand, Nelson paints directly on to moving or still images, allowing the viewer to watch the frenetic paintbrush and the creation of the image. Her films often experiment with light and dark, playing a sort of hide and seek with the viewer or with the dimensions of possibility. The title *Frame Line* (1983) evokes ideas of the frame, the space within the frame, the flatness of the screen, the image that comes out to the viewer (Russian perspective) or the image beyond the frame (Bazin's frame as window to the world). *Red Shift* (1983), *Time Being*(1991) and many others are fascinated with the body, flesh and blood (whether material or familial), age, youth, decay and beauty. For Nelson, the attraction to the medium of fil was "a combination of the visual—within that the use of color and black and white— with the timing, the dance, the motion, plus whatever else there is—the story, sound. It's so multi-media it's almost too overwhelming." (Independent Journal 8-3-79)

DOROTHY WILEY FILMOGRAPHY
Schmeerguntz (1965), With Nelson; 15 Min.;*Fog Pumas* (1967), With Nelson; 25 Min.; *Five Artists Billbobbillbillbob*(1971), With Nelson; 70 Min.; *Cabbage* (1972); 9 Min.; *Letters* (1972); 11 Min.; *The Weenie Worm Or The Fat Innkeeper*(1972); 11 Min.; *Zane Forbidden* (1972); 10 Min.; *Miss Jesus Fries On Grill* (1973); 12 Min.; *The Birth Of Seth Andrew Kinmont* (1977); 27 Min.; *Before Need* (1979), With Nelson; 75 Min.; *Before Need Redressed* (1994), With Nelson; 75 Min.

GUNVOR NELSON FILMOGRAPHY
Schmeerguntz (1965), With Wiley; 15 Min.; *Fog Pumas* (1967), With Wiley; 25 Min.; *My Name Is Oona*(1969); 10 Min.; *Kirsa Nicholina*(1970); 16 Min.; *Five Artists Billbobbillbillbob* (1971), With Wiley; 70 Min.; *Muir Beach* (1970); 5 Min.; *One & The Same* (1973), With Freude; 4 Min.; *Take Off*(1972); 10 Min. • *Moons Pool* (1973); 15 Min.; *Trollstenen* (1976); 125 Min.; *Before Need* (1979), With Wiley; 75 Min.; *Frame Line* (1983); 22 Min.; *Red Shift* (1983); 50 Min.; *Light Years* (1987); 28 Min.; *Light Years Expanding* (1987); 25 Min.; *Field Study #2* (1988); 8 Min.; *Natural Features* (1990); 28 Min.; *Time Being* (1991); 8 Min.; *Kristina's Harbor And Old Digs* (1992); Part I, 50 Min.- Part Ii, 20 Min.; *Before Need Redressed* (1994), With Wiley; 75 Min.

•program notes by E. Golembiewski•

SIMPLE BEAUTIES: THE ART AND LIFE OF BRUCE BAILLIE

BRUCE BAILLIE IN PERSON

Monday, April 17, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Thursday, April 20, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Friday, April 21, 1995 — SF Art Institute

"I was only ever interested in making openings, not closings."—Bruce Baillie

"In my filmmakers' pantheon, Bruce Baillie takes a shining place. His work I can see again and again. There is in Bruce Baillie something that reminds us of the wide country, of the spaces of America...I remember Baillie for certain images that keep reappearing in my mind. Curiously enough, those images have always to do with travel, with cross country rides, with wide spaces, with the huge American continent being crossed...In the images of his films, he seems to be very stable and very sure and always going after some definite, and probably always the same, image. With each film one feels maybe he found it. But no, the image of the dream is not yet caught, still somewhere else—so he makes another film, trying to come closer to it, from some other angle."

—Jonas Mekas, *Movie Journal*

Canyon Cinema founder Bruce Baillie has remained true to his art, life and vision of community for over 30 years. A profoundly spiritual man, Baillie seeks beauty in simple, honest moments and truths behind calcified habits. The films he has made are cherished throughout the world for their sensual lyricism and social critique, and in the last several years he has expanded his artmaking to radio, video, and literature. The Cinematheque proudly presents a seek of Bruce Baillie events, his first public presentation in San Francisco since 1983, as a welcome antidote to this stuffy, fearful conservative time. Each evening Baillie will show films and videotapes (listed below), as well as play selections from his radio series *Dr. Bish's Remedies* and read from his fictional autobiography *Memoirs of an Angel.*

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Program 1: Monday, April 17, 1995—San Francisco Art Institute

Mr. Hayashi (1961); 16mm, b/w, sound, 3 minutes

"*[Mr. Hayashi]* was made as a newsreel advertisement to be shown at Baillie's film society, Canyon Cinema, in the second year of its existence. It shows a Japanese gardener, Mr. Hayashi, performing his daily tasks in a few black and white shots. The form is intentionally brief, minor, and occasional; although there is no metaphor or conflict of images, it reminds one of the aspiration first voiced by Maya Deren and later echoed by Brakhage to create a cinematic haiku."

— P. Adams Sitney, Montreux Exhibition Catalog, 1974

To Parsifal (1963); 16mm, color, sound, 16 minutes

"You're given a certain responsibility and a gift or grace, a certain unique capability, which can turn against you if it's not attended to properly. Even the king who possessed this emblem of purity or perfection, this divine weapon, was heir to temptation, and the weapon fell into the hands of his nemesis. The wound was ultimately mortal. Though he was still alive, still functioning, he was incapable of carrying on this essential divine mission to celebrate Universal Truth, embodied in the Holy Grail, so it was foretold that there would

be a successor who would come along, a "pure fool" as Wagner called him—whether the original name was Parsifal or Percivil, it really meant "pure fool." ...Parsifal was object and subject all at once, an objectified depiction *and* a reflection of my subjective pursuit of an identity, my recognition of myself. To try to make *my* own films against enormous resistance was perhaps Parsifal-ian: to be out there in the woods and on the ocean with a movie camera, unemployed, not doing the usual things—marrying, making children, setting up the pension plan, carrying the mail."

— Bruce Baillie, interview with Scott McDonald in *A Critical Cinema 2*

Mass For the Dakota Sioux (1963-4); 16mm, b/w, sound, 24 minutes

"A film Mass, dedicated to that which is vigorous, intelligent, lovely, the-best-in-man; that which work suggests is nearly dead.

"Synopsis: The film begins with a short introduction—'No chance for me to live, Mother, you might as well mourn.' Sitting Bull, Hunkpapa Sioux Chief. Applause for a lone figure dying on the street. INTROIT. A long, lightly exposed section composed in the camera. KYRIE. A motorcyclist crossing the San Francisco Bay Bridge accompanied by the sound of the Gregorian Chant, recorded at the Trappist Monastery in Vina, California. The sounds of the 'mass' rise and fall throughout. GLORIA. The sound of a siren and a short sequence of a '33 Cadillac proceeding over the Bay Bridge and disappearing into a tunnel. The final section of the Communion begins with the OFFERTORY in a procession of lights and figures to the second chant. The anonymous figure from the introduction is discovered again, dead on the pavement. The body is consecrated and taken away past an indifferent, isolated people, accompanied by the final chant. The Mass is traditionally a celebration of life; thus the contradiction between the form of the Mass and the theme of death. The dedication is to the religious people who were destroyed by the civilization which evolved the Mass."

— Bruce Baillie, Filmmaker's Cooperative Catalog # 7

All My Life (1966); 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

"...it was the quality of the light for three summer days in Casper, California, up the coast where Tulley lived. It looked like Cork, Ireland used to....It was inspired by the light (every day is unique as you know), and by the early Teddy Wilson/Ella Fitzgerald recording, which was always playing in Tulley's little cabin, with its condemnation sign on it."

— Bruce Baillie, interview with Scott McDonald in *A Critical Cinema 2*

Castro Street (1966); 16mm, color and b/w, sound, 10 minutes

"I liked the assignment in form that I gave myself. To use a street as a basic form rather than a narrative or any kind of storyline. And so I really did start the film out at the beginning of the street, and ended it on the red barn at the end. Then, in terms of discovering an idea, it came right in the middle of a severe period of my life, where I felt I was being born actually. Or becoming conscious is the way I put it at the time. And the whole film is the shape of being born or becoming conscious."

— Bruce Baillie, in *Film Culture*, 1969

Valentin de las Sierras (1968); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

"One of Baillie's very greatest works. The location: a Mexican village. Baillie's description: 'Skin, eyes, knees, horses, hair, sun earth.' The camera concentrates on individual details, but there are none of the abstracting techniques of *Castro Street*. The images are hard and clear, the cuts sharp and abrupt in both image and sound. More strongly than in any other

Baillie film, this work puts the viewer in a state which is very difficult to explain or account for in terms of the specifics of the film."

—Fred Camper, *Audio-Brandon Catalog*, 1978-79

"...it doesn't look at all like an Avant-Garde, Experimental, or even Art movie. [...] it does speak, to me at least, from the beginning in the language of film without feeling the need to speak for itself as film, if you know what I mean, and it exists very simply on many different levels of meaning."

—Stan Brakhage, *Cinema News* #78, 3 & 4

The P-38 Pilot (1990); video, color, sound, 15 minutes

"For the dispossessed, the excluded, the condemned...exiled by our own preferences."

A work from the darkness of winter, a kind of pre-*Paradiso* which parallels by chance, Dante's *Purgatorio*—my own confessions and clues to ascent, life and Light.

Abstract imagery from my home, winter rain, WW II paraphernalia, etc., along with an audio monologue recorded years ago and carried back and forth across the country, living out of my VW. Made with simple home equipment no budget, 6 - 7 months time and toil.

As all art is made from some particular sort of sticks and stones, this piece happens to be formed from the words of a war hero who suffers his own particular "habitante", as this P-38 pilot would have it. The (film) is not, however a documentary about—in this case—alcoholism.

Note from the conclusion: "Te lucis ante terminum" (Thy Light before the end—or, before the darkness), taken from the traditional *Compline* service at the end of the day, sung by Christian religious through the centuries. The image of beloved (my family) at the very end of the work is the final, perhaps essential clue, given also of course by Dante Alighieri in his 14th century classic, by way of Beatrice: i.e., the way beyond inevitable suffering, transcending individual intellect, is only through (pure) love and loving. (BB)

"A cohesive Baillie song of sound and sight, a flowing visual essay. Bruce has made the transition from the film to the video format without compromising the beauty of the image..."

—Kathleen Connor

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Program 2: Thursday, April 20, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Still Life (1966); 16mm, color, sound, 2 minutes

"Summer, 1966; coming out of the artist's period of life at Graton—a communal venture in the woods north of San Francisco. A film on efforts toward new American religion."

—Bruce Baillie, *Filmmaker's Cooperative Catalog # 7*

Tung (1966); 16mm, color and b/w, silent, 5 minutes

"Portrait of a friend named Tung, deriving directly from a momentary image on waking. Seeing her bright shadow I thought she was someone I you we had known."

—Bruce Baillie, *Filmmaker's Cooperative Catalog # 7*

Quixote (1964-1965); 16mm, color and b/w, sound, 45 minutes

Quixote is a kind of summary and conclusion of a number of themes, etc., especially that of the hero ...depicting Western orientation as essentially one of conquest. The film is conceived in a number of different styles and on a number of simultaneous levels. (BB)

"In *Quixote* Baillie uses the techniques of underground film to explore the inflections of a personal vision with a subtlety and precision equaled only by the work of his film correspondent, Stan Brakhage, but his explicitly political inflection of those techniques was radically innovative. His orchestration of a film vocabulary in which sensuous attention to minute local textures is combined with an overall rhythmic sweep, and his use of this method to register the world of public affairs, is on the one hand testament to the flexibility and resourcefulness of that underground cinema, its providing the individual with access to the arena of social commentary. It also marks, on the other hand, a limit noticeable initially in the very virtues of the 'poetic' method, for the obverse of its subtlety and indirection is its inability to speak explicitly about the role of Hollywood, of Wall Street, of Vietnam ...The significance of Baillie's style is thus double: it is a means of marshaling images to articulate a critique of a social degeneration, and its own formal properties represent values alternative to that degradation. The precision of his perception, the subtle analytic cues of his rhythms, and the virtuoso orchestration of an extended register of sensual tonalities of film not only stand *against* the commercial film and television and their political complicity, but also stand *with* the counterculture and its representative, here the American Indian. The aesthetic qualities of *Quixote* thus allegorize social values, mythic richness, ecological sensitivity, even technological primitiveness; its aesthetic is completely a politics and vice versa. Its method is that of the poet—of associational implications, of connotation, of the play of significance, sensitivity, and seriousness...'a cinema which...has been liberated by poetry'.

— David E. James, *Allegories of Cinema*

Roslyn Romance (Is It Really True?) (1974); 16mm, color, sound, 17 minutes

"My *Romance* is intended for something like 'broadcast' form, or like a correspondence...not so much for showing a big batch of it at one sitting. Eventually, it should be in both film and video tape form. The Introduction, *Intro. 1 & 2* , is finished now. I will send rolls from time to time and hope one of these days to put the rest of it in shape for you to see. Meanwhile, I'll be continuing to record the *Romance* wherever I am. The work seems to be a sort of manual, concerning all the stuff of the cycle of life, from the most detailed mundanery to...God knows."

—Bruce Baillie, *Filmmaker's Cooperative Catalog # 7*

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Program 3: Friday, April 21, 1995, — San Francisco Art Institute

Quick Billy (1967-70); 16mm, color and b/w, sound, 56 minutes

"A personal record of the author's psychic journey and physical recovery during a period of his life which might be described essentially as one of transformation...'the dark wood encountered in the middle of life's journey' (Dante)...As poetic cinema, its significance to the world is perhaps in its narration of a singular phenomena of our time, implicitly revealing those ancient 'rules' of transit evolved over the centuries; e.g., the *Bardo Thodol (The Tibetan book of the Dead)* , as well as Dante Alighieri's own discoveries in the time of the Fourteenth Century Europe, etc. The *Bardo Thodol,* from which parts I—III are adopted structurally, admonishes (the deceased)...' a time of uncertainty, undertaking nothing--fear not the terrifying forms of your own psyche...' Mankind deceased encountering a spectacular stream of images it once viewed as Reality. The film concludes with Part IV, a western one reeler, which dramatically summarizes the material of parts I, II

and III, in abstract form. All the film and tape was recorded in Fort Bragg, California, next to the Pacific Ocean. A final subtitle reads 'ever westward eternal rider'. Is it the image of Sisyphus or of Buddha? A beautifully incoherent work or art! A journey towards unity with this recent American film, both macroscopic and universal in its view."

—Hans Helmut Rudele, *Die Zeitung*, 1970

"This is Baillie's most complex, and probably his greatest, film. [...] The first part carries elements of *Tung* and *Castro Stree*t to a very pure extreme.. Images of nature, the sun and moon, of light, lead into one another with a smooth, but often disturbing, flow. One can readily see the connection to notions of life after death; even more than in *Tung*, these are not images presented in a manner that relates to ordinary, daily seeing. As the film progresses through its parts, a movement toward what seems to be a greater exteriority, a less subjective vision, seems apparent; the last part is a staged western-parody, photographed relatively conventionally. On closer examination, however, the film's progression becomes more ambiguous , and the final section can be seen as being more 'artificial' (it *is* staged) than the first. The film's various sections and various styles can be seen as extensions of the different modes of filmmaking of Baillie's earlier films; they also relate to the varieties of states of consciousness which we experience in our own lives."

—Fred Camper, *Audio-Brandon Catalog*, 1978-79

'***camera rolls***' (1968-69); 16mm, color and b/w, silent, 16 minutes

"'The rolls', silent 3 minute rolls of films that came after the film itself, like artifacts from the descending layers of an archeological dig...numbered 41, 43, 46, and 47. [...] 'The rolls' took the form of a correspondence, or theatre, between their author and Stan Brakhage, in the winter of 1968-69... —Bruce Baillie

"And you're doing it ART (and 'beyond art', if you like to put it prayerfully that way) all at once. I never saw a tighter knit bag of aesthetical tricks transcending their history—you got Baroque & its Coco balanced near perfectly...and you got the whole Netherlandishes and cups, including the entire Dutch kitchen, carrying your absolutely specific yearning into some new realm of feeling (that I suppose'll someday be called American): and you got the clear sense...and a blessing to all those enabled to see it—thank you."

—Stan Brakhage, letter of February 2, 1969

• program notes by Brian Frye, Rick Danielson, Irina Leimbacher•

IMAGINARY LIGHT

CURATED BY KATHY GERITZ AND STEVE ANKER

Sunday, April 23, 1995 — Kabuki Theatre

Wednesday, May 3, 1995 — Pacific Film Archive

This program of new films by American filmmakers exalts in the sensual qualities of cinema, mining the unconscious through lush explorations of created and uncovered images.

Premonition (1995), by Dominic Angerame; 16mm, b/w, sound, 10 minutes

"The concrete world of the American infra-structure and its demise are made strangely poetic in this expressionist documentary which shows the vacant San Francisco

Embarcadero freeway after it has outlived its usefulness, before its destruction. In an atmosphere of daylight mystery, Angerame sows inklings and reveals the past encircled by the future. Lyrical, ominous, comic, *Premonition* works on the attentive viewer like a remembrance of something that is yet to happen, silent, telling daydream."

—Barbara Jaspersen Voorhees

San Francisco filmmaker Dominic Angerame began making films in the 1970s and has studied and taught in Chicago and throughout the Bay Area. Many of his films are largely poetic studies of urban life. For the past several years he has been Director of Canyon Cinema, the Bay Area's internationally renowned distributor of independent and alternative film.

The Red Book (1994), by Janie Geiser; 16mm, color, sound, 11 minutes

Janie Geiser is a New York filmmaker/performance artist who specializes in puppetry in addition to filmmaking. Her previous *Babel Town* creates a bizarre dream-like world using puppets and collage techniques.

Figure/Ground (The Snowman) (1995), by Phil Solomon;
16mm, color, silent, 10 minutes

A meditation on memory, burial and decay...a belated *kaddish* for my father. (PS)

The Snow Man

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pinetrees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place
For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

—Wallace Stevens

Phil Solomon has worked as a filmmaker for almost twenty years, and as a teacher at many important universities. Since 1991, Solomon has taught film production at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

The Color of Love (1994), by Peggy Ahwesh; 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

"*The Color of Love* binds the fetishism of Joseph Cornell's *Rose Hobart* to the sexual transgressions of Barbara Rubin's *Christmas on Earth*, to name a couple of classics of

American avant-garde film. In 1964, whenever *Christmas on Earth* was screened, one expected the police to close the theater—and sometimes they did. I doubt the NYPD is going to invade the Whitney, but when I saw *The Color of Love* there at a press screening, I had the old familiar feeling—that I better watch my back."

—Amy Taubin, *The Village Voice* (April 18, 1995)

Peggy Ahwesh has over the last decade become one of America's most controversial and original personal filmmakers. Currently teaching filmmaking at Bard College in upstate New York, Ahwesh's films include *Martina's Playhouse*, *From Romance To Ritual* and *The Deadman* (with Keith Sanborn).

In Consideration of Pompeii (1995), by Stan Brakhage;
16mm, color, silent (18 fps), 4 minutes

Since age 17/18 I've been haunted by the catastrophe of Pompeii—beginning with photographs (sold as pornography in high school) of the mummified lovers caught in coitus preserved by the volcanic ash, revivified by many ghostly photographic books, but especially illuminated by Donald Sutherland's accounts are images from 1st-hand experiences of the ruins. Finally my homage in 3 parts: "The Lovers of Pompeii," "Ashen Snow," and "Angelus". (SB)

One of the most influential and prolific American avant-garde filmmakers, Stan Brakhage has made hundreds of films. Some of his most recent—*The Mammals of Victoria*, *Black Ice*, *Stellar*, *Cannot Not Exist*, and *Three Homerics*—will all premiere on May 7, 1995 at the San Francisco Cinematheque.

Imaginary Light (1994), by Andrew Noren; 16mm, b/w, sound, 31 minutes

"Scarcely half an hour long, as much object as it is movie, *Imaginary Light* is more stripped down and intensely focused than Noren's last piece, *The Lighted Field.* Simply described as a time-lapse recording of the filmmaker's house and garden (Noren calls it his "backyard Buddha-impersonation, watching 'it' flow), this new works looks a century old —and it could be. In the service of his dynamic contemplation, Noren maximizes two basic devices—high-contrast black-and-white film stock and time-lapse pixelation, laboriously clicking off one frame at a time as he documents the shifting patterns of light on his shady lawn or ivy covered fence...*Imaginary Light* is as pagan in its way as Noren's youthful, sexually explicit self-portraits. It's a hymn to the sun—simultaneously burning and bathing everything on the screen."

—J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice* (April 11, 1995)

This film is Part 6 of New York filmmaker Andrew Noren's cycle *The Adventures of the Exquisite Corpse*, which began in the 1960s with *Kodak Ghost Poems*, and now also includes *The Lighted Field* and *Charmed Particles.*

ACHTUNG BABY! — MEDIA SNATCHERS OF THE 90S

BALDWIN'S *SONIC OUTLAWS* AND NEGATIVLAND'S VIDEOS

CRAIG BALDWIN AND NEGATIVLAND IN PERSON

Sunday, April 30, 1995 — SF Art Institute

I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For (acapella video mix, w.i.p.)
by Mark Hosler; video, color, sound, 5:20 minutes

I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For (radio mix) by Mark Hosler;
video, color, sound

"Negativland mixing U2" by Mark Hosler; video, color, sound, 7:45 minutes

Sonic Outlaws (1995) by Craig Baldwin; 16mm, color, sound, 87 minutes
From the early-Modernist experiments of the Cubists in the first part of this Century to these final years of overwhelming mass-media influence over the Arts, the prototypical art-practice now recognized as most representative is collage. Legal provisions about copyright, about cultural property, even about authorship itself, mainly based on pre-technical 19th Century conceptions have hardly been able to keep up with revolutions in technology and art-making. These ever-sharpening aesthetic, cultural, and ethical contradictions have broken out into a fascination with real-life melodrama in the Negativland/U2 case, and my film *Sonic Outlaws* sets up an energized discursive platform where they may play themselves out. (CB)

"Negativland is a small, dedicated group of musicians who, since 1980, have released 5 albums, 4 cassette-only releases, 1 video, and now a single. This single, which is entitled 'U2', was created as a parody, satire, social commentary, and cultural criticism. As a work of art, it is consistent with, and a continuation of, the artistic viewpoint we have been espousing toward the world of media for the last ten years.

"Island Records and music publisher Warner-Chappell Music, presumably acting on behalf of their group U2, have instigated legal action against our single and have succeeded not only in removing it from circulation, but ensuring that it cannot ever be released again. It is clear that their preference is that the record never even be *heard* again. The terms of the settlement that was forced on us include:

- Everyone who received a copy of the record— record distributors and stores (6951 copies), and radio stations, writers, etc. (692 copies)— is being notified to return it, and that if they don't do so, or if they engage in 'distributing, selling, advertising, promoting, or otherwise exploiting' the record, they may be subject to penalties 'which may include imprisonment and fines.' Once returned, the records will be forwarded to Island for destruction.

- All of SST's on-hand stock of the record, in vinyl, cassette, and CD (5357 copies total), is to be delivered to Island, where it will be destroyed.

- All mechanical parts used to prepare and manufacture the record are to be delivered to Island, presumably also for destruction. This includes 'all tapes, stampers, molds, lacquers and other parts used in the manufacturing', and 'all artwork, labels, packaging, promotional, marketing, and advertising or similar material.'

•Our copyrights in the recordings themselves have been assigned to Island and Warner-Chappell. This means we no longer own two of our better works.

•Payment of $25,000 and half the wholesale proceeds from the copies of the record that were sold and not returned. We estimate the total cost to us, including legal fees and the cost of the destroyed records, cassettes, and CDs, at $70,000— more money than we've made in our twelve years of existence."

—Negativland Press Release (November 10, 1991)

"Artists have always approached the entire world around them as both inspiration to act and as raw material to mold and remold. Other art is just more raw material to us and to many, many others we could point to. When it comes to cultural influences, ownership is the point of fools. Copycats will shrink in the light of comparison. Bootlegging exact duplicates of another's product should be prosecuted, but we see no significant harm in anything else artists care to do with anything available to them in our 'free' marketplace. We claim the right to create with mirrors. This is our working philosphy."

—Negativland PR

"Plagiarism in late capitalist society articulates a unique contemporary cultural condition: namely, that there is 'nothing left to say,' a feeling made more potent by the theoretical possibility of access to all knowledge brought about by new technologies. The Tape-beatles understand the nature of 'participation' in the total reign of the commodity fetish wherein consumption is the prime sacrament. We attempt to counteract in some small way the apparent hegemony of this set of attitudes by staking a claim to all received culture as conundra to be teased apart and reintegrated into new contextual millieux. In doing so, our work wrings fresh content from works that are on the surface so beguilingly empty and yet somehow incredibly vital to our existence as participants in culture. In the end, the listener must judge, but these few words might serve as a guide."

—The Tape-beatles

In a 1992 *FilmMaker* interview with Beth Cataldo, Baldwin discusses some of the impetus behind the making of *Tribulation 99: Alien Anomalies in America*; "That's why I'm making revisionist histories. Power is the ability to attach meaning to an event. And history is written by the victors. The least I'm asking is that you are aware of the fact that history is written by people who have a vested interest." In a similar vein, much of *Sonic Outlaws* and the associated controversies are played across the body of history, and the art tradition which makes it into the history books, and in this sense who has access to the writing of history, the specific image, name, copyright.

In formal terms of style and technique, *Sonic Outlaws* is not only about appropriation and collage aesthetics, but is an illustration of these very methods. As with Baldwin's earlier work, the film is filled with priceless found footage and daft dialectics, but departs in Baldwin's use of on-camera interviews, whether in a straight style, low-angle hand held camera, or on Pixelvision. Baldwin also wrote that another organizing principle behind *Sonic Outlaws* was "a creative/nihilistic metamorphism of language itself. The epistemic displacement of received meanings that, beneath the topical, is the 'latent' project of the film finds playful expression through attacking/exploiting two linguistic features: Much of the 'found' footage is sub-titled (or inter-titled), so my recombinant experimentation may also intervene at the text/sound/image nexus. Likewise, the sampling of 'described' versions of motion pictures (i.e., narration added to track to codify the visual into words for the blind audiences) will re-double and complicate the word/image relation. From 'The Art of Noise' tracts to a noise-art explosion of written, verbal, and visual languages, *Sonic*

Outlaws reflects a sub-cultural quest for new creative forms and freedoms in the media-arts."

CRAIG BALDWIN FILMOGRAPHY
Wild Gunmen (1978); 16mm, color, sound, 20 minutes: *RacketKitKongoKit* (1986); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes: *Tribulation 99: Alien Anomalies Under America* (1991); 16mm, b/w/color, sound, 48 minutes: *¡O No Coronado!* (1992); 16mm, color, sound, 40 minutes: *Sonic Outlaws* (1995); 16mm, color, sound, 87 minutes

•program notes by E. Golembiewski•

LOVE AND DINGLEBERRIES: ALYCE WITTENSTEIN & GEORGE KUCHAR

CURATED BY JOEL SHEPARD / GEORGE KUCHAR IN PERSON

Thursday, May 4, 1995 — Center for the Arts

As a child bored with the New York public school curriculum, Alyce Wittenstein spent time accumulating drawings in her notebook, a habit discouraged by her teachers and parents alike. Alyce went on to attend Boston University with a double major in Film and Political Science. Returning to New York, Alyce began working on a documentary, later to become the narrative film *Betaville*, in response to the creeping gentrification of the city she loved. Exclaiming that "to provoke, films must also entertain!", she pursued film as a way to combine her interests in visual art and political activism. Alyce elaborates, "I became interested in Science Fiction, emulating how the medium was used in the fifties—as a way to imbed a serious message and stealth it through. Science Fiction at its best, is an exciting literature of speculation, but like other 'genres', such as horror, quite a bit of it is garbage." *The Deflowering* is Alyce's third film and the capstone to a project she began in 1985, *The Deflowering Trilogy*, which includes her earlier films *Betaville*, a takeoff on Godard's *Alphaville*, and *No Such Thing as Gravity* (1989), a black comedy about capitalist fascism in which all non-consumers and those charged with 'uselessness' are exiled to an artifical planet.

The Deflowering (1994); 16mm, color, sound, 43 minutes
Written and Directed by Alyce Wittenstein. Production design by Steve Ostringer. Produced by Alyce Wittenstein and Steven Olswang. Music by David Weinstein. With HollyAdams, Burkhard Kosminski, Emmanuelle Chaulet, Taylor Mead, Bill Rice, and Screamin' Rachel.

AIDS has mutated. Skin-to-skin contact is deadly. Fortunately, technology has come to the rescue. Genetically engineered "designer" children are delivered "out-of-body" and Victorian inspired full-body condoms are the rage. But, a flaw in the genetic engineers' attempts to boost immunity has had the side effect of escalating allergic reaction to pollen. Systematic attempts at mass defoliation are failing to control the rising death rate. People are itching for a solution! Despite a booming economy, funding for allergy research is scarce. A rogue genetic engineer solicits the aid of a disgruntled defoliator, and proposes a dangerous experiment ..

This film is dedicated to the idea that the future will not necessarily be better or worse than the present. As Ray Bradbury has said, 'I don't try to predict the future, I try to prevent it.'

Science Fiction serves the goal of extrapolating current events into the future, in the hope that we can learn from history and avoid the errors of the past. We must be humble enough to admit and recognize our mistakes because to neglect this responsibility leads to decline. (AW)

George Kuchar Videos

Total running time about 52 minutes

The Gifted Goon. 1994

A salute to an American painter who inspired me and whose world I share with a friend who drops by to recite performance prose. We both enter the reproductions of the painter's world and take different routes through the pages. Shot in regular 8mm and assembled at home on consumer model digital equipment (the same as all the other pieces in the program).

Portraiture in Black. 1995

A canvas of interactions and impressions gathered from visits to friends, art ventures and creative ~~capers~~ aspirations. The canvas is black and so is the mood but the participants proceed as usual (some of them) and try to add color to the aura of anemia.

Nirvana of the Nebbishites: 1994

A tape I made of my cat exploring the animated landscapes I had painted for a previous video (Route 666). Now they have been embellished with moving parts and a puppet population which spills out into the real world I inhabit.

—From the hand of George Kuchar

"For 30 years, working several economic rungs below low-budget, Mr. Kuchar has reached for the glamour of Hollywood and pulled it right down to street level, where ordinary mortals with weight problems and bad skin wage unequal battle with their tawdry surroundings...Mr. Kuchar produces, directs and edits his films. He does the sound and the lighting. He writes the scripts, quickly. 'I work best under terrible pressure,' he said. 'Usually, I write as the actors are getting ready for the scene.' In a Kuchar film, there is no such thing as a second take. Or rather, the second take is simply added on to the first take and becomes part of the film....In the last decade Mr. Kuchar has made video dramas with his students at the San Francisco Art Institute, where he has taught film and video since 1971, and a series of video diaries, which deal with various personal torments, his psychic development and his pet obsessions, especially weather."

—William Grimes, *NY Times* (August 10, 1993)

The Gifted Goon (1994), by George Kuchar; video

Portraiture in Black (1995), by George Kuchar; video

Nirvina of the Nebbishites (1994), by George Kuchar; video

THE MAMMALS OF VICTORIA

AND OTHER NEW FILMS BY BRAKHAGE

Sunday, May 7, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Last calendar we presented Program 2 and 3 of Stan Brakhage's 1960s 8mm *Songs* cycle. Tonight the Cinematheque premieres several of the newest films selected from a group of over a dozen released within the past year.

Stellar (1993); 16mm, color, silent, 2.5 minutes

"This is a hand-painted film which has been photographically step-printed to achieve various effects of brief fades and fluidity-of-motion, and makes partial use of painted frames in repetition (for 'close-up' of textures). The tone of the film is primarily dark blue, and the paint is composed (and rephotographed microscopically) to suggest galactic forms in a space of stars."

Black Ice (1994); 16mm, color, silent, 2.5 minutes

"I lost sight due to a blow on the head from slipping on black ice (leading to eye surgery, eventually); and now (because of artificially thinned blood) most steps I take outdoors all winter are made in frightful awareness of black ice.
These 'meditations' have finally produced this hand-painted, step-printed film."

Three Homerics (1993); 16mm, color, silent, 2.5 minutes

"This film is composed of three sections created to accompany a piece of music (by Barbara Feldman) on a Homeric poem: (1) 'Diana holds back the night...' is represented by dark shapes suppressing (almost angularly interfering with) orange-golden effusions of paint and the reflective paint-shapes of early morning greens (as if silhouettes or arm and bodily profile were shading the light), (2) Homer's '...rolling sea...' represented by hand-painted step-printed dissolves of blues in wave shapes, bubbles, and the soft browns and tender greens of seaweed, flotsam-jetsam, and (3) 'Ah, love again, the light' represented by

painted explosions of multiple hues and lines recurrently interrupted by the "blush" of soft suffusing reds."

Mammals of Victoria (1994); 16mm, color, silent, @24 fps, 30 minutes

"The film begins with a series of horizontally running ocean tide waves, sometimes with mountains in the background, hand-painted patters, sometimes step-printed hand-painting, abstractions composed of distorted (jammed) T.V. shapes in shades of blue with occasional red, refractions of light within the camera lens, sometimes mixed with reflections of water—this "weave" of imagery occasionally revealing recognizable shapes of birds and humans, humans as fleeting figures in the water, as distant shapes in a rowboat, as human shadows, so forth. Increasingly closer images of water, and of light reflected off water, as well as bursts of fire, intersperse the long shots, the seascapes and all the other interwoven imagery. Eventually a distant volley ball arcs across the sky filled with cumulus clouds; this is closely followed by, and interspersed with, silhouettes of a young man and woman in the sea, which leads to some extremely out-of-focus images from a front car window, an opening between soft-focus trees, a clearing. Carved wooden teeth suddenly sweep across the frame. Then the film ends on some soft-focus horizon lines, foregrounded by ocean, slowly rising and falling and rising again in the frame. This film is a companion piece to *A Child's Garden and the Serious Side.*"

Cannot Not Exist (1994); 16mm, color, silent, @ 24fps, 10 minutes

"In this non-orange negative of a hand-painted film, a series of luminously pastel shapes—often patches of color against a stark white background—are interspersed with nearly black intermittent smudges punctuating white. These visual themes develop gradually into a series of multi-colored vertical lines which weave contrapuntally in relation to the flickering (single-frame) point shapes. Twice, a solid (as if photographed) shape is seen receding from the amalgam of point. Masses of tiny dots and 'curlicue' shapes sometimes interrupt the thematic progression from irregular point-shapes flickering to fluidity of vertical lines: this theme eventually resolves itself through the intervention of globular shapes (most notably, brilliant orange-yellow 'globs') which append themselves over several frames and prompt the eventual amalgamation of all themes."

—film sysnopsis/descriptions by Stan Brakhage

•progam notes by C Whiteside•

THE FILMS OF YOKO ONO—PROGRAM 2

ERECTION AND *RAPE*

Thursday, May 11, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Violence is a sad wind that, if channeled carefully, could bring seeds, chairs and all things pleasant to us.
We are all would-be Presidents of the World, and kids kicking the sky that doesn't listen.
What would you do if you had only one penis and a one-way tube ticket when you wanted to fuck the whole nation in one come?
I know a professor of philosophy whose hobby is to quietly crush biscuit boxes in a supermarket.
Maybe you can send signed, plastic lighters to people in place of your penis. But then some people might take your lighter as a piece of sculpture and keep it up on their living-room shelf.

So we go on eating and feeding frustration every day, lick lollipops and stay being peeping-toms dreaming of becoming Jack-The-Ripper.
This film was shot by our cameraman, Nic, while we were in a hospital. Nic is a gentle-man, who prefers eating clouds and floating pies to shooting Rape.
Nevertheless it was shot.
And as John says: 'A is for parrot, which we can plainly see.'

— Yoko Ono on her film *Rape*, April 1969 in *Film Culture*, Winter/Spring 1970

This evening the San Francisco Cinematheque presents its second program in an ongoing retrospecive of Yoko Ono's films. Ono's status as a popular figure tends to eclipse her achievements as an artist, especially with regard to her activities in filmmaking. Particularly prolific as a filmmaker between the years 1966 and 1971, Ono made her films in the context of the Fluxus movement under the auspices of George Maciunas. She also produced "film scripts", or descriptions of conceptual, viewer-specific "films", many of which could not exist as actual film works. Concerned with the formal qualities of the cinema and the experiential aspects of cinema spectatorship (especially time and movement), Ono played a significant role in the articulation of the Fluxus aesthetic, inflecting the terms by which filmmakers understand the structural material elements of the cinema.

Yoko Ono studied poetry and music at Sarah Lawrence College during the 1950s, after which she moved to New York City and became involved with a group of avant-garde musicians and performers, including John Cage, Merce Cunningham and LaMonte Young, who presented his "Chambers Street Series" at Ono's loft at 112 Chambers Street. Ono's early compositions include *A Grapefruit in the World of Park*, and *A Piece for Strawberries and Violins*, performed by Yvonne Rainer.

During the 1960s, Ono became heavily involved with the Fluxus movement, participating in performances and creating installation/sculptural works. Ono's film work tends to directly address its audience, foregrounding the dialectical relationship between work and subject and explicitly implicating the viewer in the act of aesthetic consumption. *Rape* is one of Ono's most complex and engaging films and has provoked extensive critical commentary both when it was released and more recently at the Whitney Museum's retrospective of her films in 1989.

Erection (1971); 16mm, sound, 20 minutes
(Produced and directed in collaboration with John Lennon.)

"Erection was conceived by Lennon and produced over an 18-month period in 1970 and 1971. Still photographs of a construction site are dissolved into each other to document the gradual erection of the London International Hotel. Music by Ono and fellow Flusus member Joe Jones is combined with the sounds of heavy construction on the soundtrack."

— Tom Smith, in "The Films of Yoko Ono", produced by the American Federation of Arts

Rape (1969); 16mm, color, sound, 77 minutes
(Directed in collaboration with John Lennon)

Yoko Ono's script for *Rape*, 1968:

"Film No. 5

Rape (or Chase)

Rape with camera. 1 1/2 hr. color. Synchronized sound.

A cameraman will chase a girl on a street with a camera persistently until he corners her in an alley, and, if possible, until she is in a falling position.

The cameraman will be taking a risk of offending the girl as the girl is somebody he picks up arbitrarily on the street, but there is a way to get around this.

Depending on the budget, the chase could be made with girls of different ages, etc.

May chase boys and men as well.

As the film progresses, and as it goes towards the end, the chase and the running should become slower and slower like in a dream, using a highspeed camera.

I have a cameraman who's prepared to do this successfully."

"Shot by Ono's cameraman Nic Knowland in November, 1968, while she was in the hospital recuperating from a miscarriage, the film features 21-year-old Eva Majlath as the unfortunate victim of the camera's assault. Accosted in a cemetery in London and followed relentlessly for two days, the young woman, who does not speak English, becomes increasingly frantic in her efforts to communicate with—and then to escape—the filmmakers. As a statement about invasion of privacy and the media's incessant hounding of celebraties, the film seems, in retrospect, prophetic of events to follow in Lennon and Ono's public life."

—Tom Smith, in "The Films of Yoko Ono"

"Although Majlath never completely panics or appears to imagine herself in physical danger, she doen't seem complicit in her victimization—her anger and confusion are absolutely convincing. This, of course, is much of the fascination. In one sense, *Rape* is a particularly brutal dramatization of the Warholian discovery that the camera's implacable stare disrupts 'ordinary' behavior to enforce its own regime. In another, the film is a graphic metaphor for the ruthless surveillance that can theoretically attach itself to any citizen of the modern world...

"Basically, *Rape* presents a beautiful, extremely feminine woman in peril, her situation overtly sexualized by the very title. (The opening graveyard provides a suitably gothic location.) Although this scenario is a movie staple, arguably *the* movie staple, the absence of a narrative strongly invites the audience to identify with camera's (unmistakably male) look and recognize this controlling gaze as its own. In its realization, Ono's script becomes the purest illustration of Laura Mulvey's celebrated essay, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,' published eight years after *Rape* was made."

—J. Hoberman, *Village Voice* (March 1989)

• program notes by Brian Frye •

CANYON CINEMA NIGHTS: ECCENTRIC VISIONS

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY MICHAEL WALLIN

Thursday, May 18, 1995 — Center for the Arts

This program is the third in a series of guest-curated programs selected from Canyon Cinema, the Bay Area's premier distributor of alternative film. Tonight's curator, Michael

Wallin, has been a fixture in the Bay Area's avant-garde film community for over twenty years, including stints as a film instructor at California College of Arts and Crafts and manager of Canyon Cinema for most of the 80's. Up until last year, Wallin was a member of Canyon's Board of Directors. From his earliest days as a protégé to the legendary Bruce Baillie to his current efforts as a mature artist, Wallin's films have conveyed his direct and deeply felt involvement with the materials at hand. Tonight's films are some of Michael's favorites and are characterized by a wild diversity of styles and the single-minded peculiarity (if not dark perversity) of their vision.

New Improved Institutional Quality: In the Environment of Liquids and Nasals a Parasitic Vowel Sometimes Develops (1976), by Owen Land (a.k.a. George Landow);
16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

A reworking of an earlier film, *Institutional Quality*, in which the same test was given. In the earlier film the person taking the test was not seen, and the film viewer in effect became the test taker. The newer version concerns itself with the effects of the test on the test taker. An attempt is made to escape from the oppressive environment of the test—a test containing meaningless, contradictory, and impossible-to-follow directions—by entering into the imagination. In this case it is specifically the imagination of the filmmaker, in which the test taker encounters images from previous Land films...As he moves through the images in the filmmaker's mind, the test taker is in a trance-like state, and is carried along by some unseen force...At the end of the film the test taker is back at his desk, still following directions. (OL)

Cartoon le Mousse (1979), by Chick Strand; 16mm, b/w, sound, 15 minutes

"Chick Strand is a prolific and prodigiously gifted film artist who seems to break new ground with each new work. Her ..."found footage" works such as *Cartoon le Mousse*, are extraordinarily beautiful, moving, visionary pieces that push this genre into previously unexplored territory. If poetry is the art of making evocative connections between otherwise dissimilar phenomena, then Chick Strand is a great poet, for these films transcend their material to create a surreal and sublime universe beyond reason."

—Gene Youngblood, *Canyon Cinema Catalog 7*

The Off-Handed Jape (1967), by Robert Nelson; 16mm, color, sound, 9 minutes

I've always felt good about this film because it's beyond criticism. No one can say it's awful, no matter what elaborate reasons they construct, without talking about what's good in the film. If it's truly awful, then it's just right, because that's exactly what we had in mind. If you can't enjoy that kind of awfulness, that's another matter ...and I'd have to say "that's your problem because, after all, there are plenty of other kinds of awfulness that you really do enjoy, and YOU know it!" (RN)

The Mongreloid (1978), by George Kuchar; 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

Not really a poem to God spelled backwards, but more a limerick to a pee-pee licker, *The Mongreloid* will leave you with the question of whether the subject of the light verse walks in this film on four legs...or two. (GK)

Film Watchers (1974), by Herb deGrasse; 16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes

DeGrasse's tirade at an audience he'd rather not have. (Remember if you feel insulted those insults are for you.) (HD)

Breakfast (1972-1976), by Michael Snow; 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

Shot in 1972 and shelved until 1976, when sound and editing problems were solved. All the varied and unusual motions visible on the screen are the result of a single camera movement. (MS)

The Secret of Life (1971), by Victor Faccinto; 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

The characters populating Faccinto's films are nightmare figures, often with monstrously distorted bodies, some wearing ominous masks, others part animal, part human. The real horror results from the swiftness and relentlessness with which a violent fate overtakes these characters, who despite their grotesquery, display the ordinary human emotions, weaknesses and fears.

—Barbara Scharres, *Trickfilm-Chicago Catalog 1975*

Kindering (1987), by Stan Brakhage; 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

This film presents the voice of a child play-singing in relation to full orchestral 'takes' of The Times and visually juxtaposed with children-at-play (my grandchildren Iona and Quay Bartek) in Americana backyard. They are seen, as in dream, to be already caught-up-in yet absolutely distinct-from the rituals of adulthood. The visuals were photographed and edited to the music collage of Architect's Office performance A0124 by Trevor and Joel Haertling and Doug Stickler. (SB)

Ronnie (1972), by Curt McDowell; 16mm, b/w, sound, 7 minutes

A naked hustler tells his story nonstop. A real wonder-hunk. (CM)

Rabbit's Moon (1972), by Kenneth Anger; 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes

Rabbit's Moon seems to me your finest film, most perfect and, oh all together finest!, of the sharpest clarity. Beautiful, yet beauty balanced by dreadful necessity, so that it is an emblem of the soul's experience: signature...And I think my turn-of-mind here especially appropriate because I also saw this film as your autobiography, all the figures in it aspects of yourself, its magical progress a kind of "story of your life."

—Stan Brakhage, Canyon Cinema Catalog 7

program notes compiled by Rick Danielson

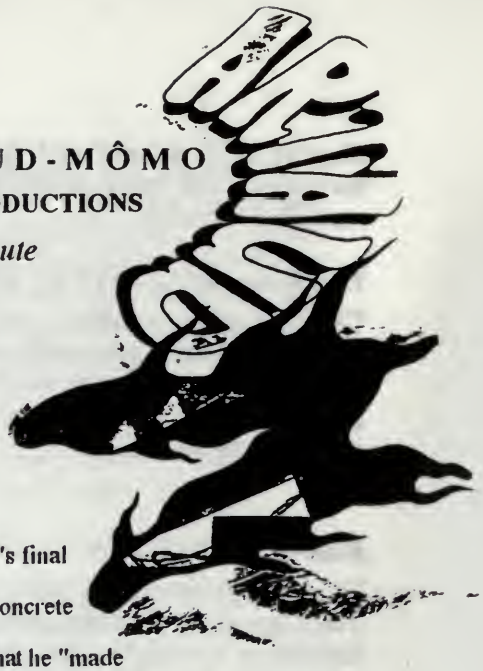
REGULAR 8MM: SAVED FROM EXTINCTION

PRESENTED BY FLIMMAKER AND 8MM FILM JUNKIE TOM CHURCH

Friday, May 19, 1995 — SF Art Institute

"In January, '93 Kodak 'discontinued' regular 8mm film, a much misunderstood medium, greatly loved by many, 'due to insufficient market demand...' (their words). That left a lot of folkd upset. Tonight's program exhibits the entire gamut made, from 'smokers' (c. 200 ft. porno reels thousands of which were made during the 60s and 70s) to trailers (*Trailer for the Masterbation Film Festival*), documentary (*Before Gentrification Hit*, soundtrack by Caroliner), home/travel/vacation movies, abridged versions of classics, and 'personal' work by auteur/pioneers from the 50s & 60s (Mike Kuchar). Roughly 1 hour with "talk". Plus, the unveiling of a new local magazine, *Marginal Film*. Bring down those 8mm films out of you closet to be shown as part of the program and get in free. Also, we're gonna be giving way film to the fist 50 customers."

—Tom Church



THE STORY LIVED BY ATRAUD-MÔMO

PERFORMED BY BECKETT PLUS ONE PRODUCTIONS

Sunday, May 21, 1995 — SF Art Institute

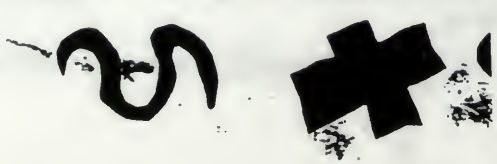
The Story Lived by Artaud-Mômo

"The Story lived by Artaud-Môme" takes its title from Antonin Artaud's final lecture on January 13th, 1947, which is said to have been one of his greatest concrete manifestations of the Theatre of Cruelty. Jean Louis Barrault said of Artaud that he "made himself into a theatre - a theatre that did not cheat." In other words, his greatest contribution to theatre was his life itself - the passion with which he lived it, the uncompromising nature of his commitment, and, tragically, the degree to which he failed.

It is our hope to invert Barrault's statement - to bring Artaud into the theatre, and make of him a mythic, theatrical figure. Inspired by his "No More Masterpieces" chapter from "The Theatre and its Double," it occurred to us that though many have failed in attempting to stage or understand Artaud, it was perhaps because he was tragically impaired by his lack of ability to make his ideas functional.

The script's structure consists of three parallel columns of text, the first of which represents live stage action. The second two columns represent an overlapping barrage of impressions, which will be played over the sound system. We are also using slides of fixed images, as well as of narrative text, film, puppets, and masks. As a whole, these images and sounds will hopefully circumvent, in their chaos, the intellect, and drive directly at the heart.

We have composed a script unique in that each word can be cited, from Artaud himself, and from all those artists whom he knew and influenced. We have cut and pasted his life and words into a show which we hope at once celebrates his passion, and refutes the above mentioned notion that he was a careless practitioner of violence for its own sake. In doing so, we hope to awaken in an audience the purity of his life and passion, while shutting away the accouterments of his failings. Using his methodology, his words, and his life, we hope to create a theatrical biography that is as chaotic, frenzied, and meaningful as the story he lived.



EXPLORING RACISMS:
THE KKK BOUTIQUE AIN'T JUST REDNECKS
PRECEDED BY ***MATZO BALLS AND BLACK-EYED PEAS***

CURATED BY IRINA LEIMBACHER
DANIEL ROBIN IN PERSON

Thursday, May 25, 1995 — Center for the Arts

This evening's films are challenging and innovative not only in their choice of subject matter but also in their original and ecclectic approach to film form. Neither are conventional documentaries nor even typical essay films; both are extremely personal, in very different ways, and address issues of social and political relevance. While in Daniel Robin's film he and his partner Rulette Mapp together explore their relationship and the impact race and notions of identity sometimes have on it, Camille Billops and James Hatch unabashedly examine the causes and consequences of racism in American culture and in their own and their friends' lives. Each of the films combines a rich variety of filmic styles and ways of telling to convey unique, forceful and thought provoking messages.

Matzo Balls and Black-eyed Peas (1994), by Daniel Robin; 16mm, color, sound, 25 minutes

An intensely personal look into a young couple's interracial relationship. Employing innovative interviews by close friends, scenes from daily life, personal reflections and evocative experimental images, this film explores issues of race, cultural identity and love in the filmmaker and his partner's life together.

Daniel Robin, the son of a Rabbi, grew up in rural Bakersfield, California. The isolation of being virtually the only Jewish family in town and the experience of anti-Semitism created an intense awareness of his own Jewish identity. Identity, its definitions and implication, are recurring themes in his work as a filmmaker. In 1992 Daniel graduated from San Francisco State University's Film Program where he completed his first two short films, *122 Webster* (1990) and *Chasing the Grail* (1992). He is now at work on a feature film.

The KKK Boutique Ain't Just Rednecks (1994), by Camille Billops and James V. Hatch; 16mm, color, sound, 75 minutes

The *KKK Boutique* —a docu/fantasy—intercuts surrealism with talking heads to reveal racism as a disease of the soul. The storyline models itself on Dante's Inferno—a journey through hell where punishment fits the crime, and confession is sometimes the only reward. The descent begins from a field of sunflowers. Our Virgil and guide, Camille, leads her friends through the underground KKK Boutique—some of its many levels are comic, some ugly. As the descent deepens, Camille warns her "Bouteekers" not to linger, because racism is attractive and communicable. Some souls deny ever having had any racism. Some—frozen by their hatred— are eternally damned to their pain. A few confess to their own racial madness, and these "Boutikeers" ascend back into the sunflowers.(CB/JH)

Camille Billops is an acclaimed printmaker, sculptor, muralist and photographer in addition to being an award-winning director. She grew up in Los Angeles, and learned creativity and artistic expression from her mother, a seamstress (as well as a maid and defense plant worker), her father, a chef and merchant seaman, and her stepfather, whose Bell and Howell camera recorded home movies for more than 20 years. Before becoming a director (she never went to film school), Billops created sculptures and prints that were

often about her family members. Thus it was no surprise that she also began her filmmaking career chronicling family stories, beginning with *Suzanne, Suzanne* (1982), about her niece's struggle with drug addiction, and leading to *Older Women and Love* (1987), exploring the erotic lives of her octogenarian aunt and other older women, and later *Finding Christa* (1991), about her own decision to give up her 4 year old daughter for adoption and their subsequent reunion 21 years later. **James Hatch**, her co-director and co-producer, is also a playwright, archivist, professor and scholar. Together they share a New York loft that is home, office, gallery and studio, and they are now working on and raising money for their next piece, *A String of Pearls.*

•program notes by Irina Leimbacher•

MARCIA BRADY AND MENSTRUATION:

CO-CURATED BY JOEL SHEPARD & DAVID NAYLOR

Sunday, May 28, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Tonight's program presents a selection of extremely rare, never-screened "girl's only" educational films made for the high school market during the 60s and 70s. Issues such as menstruation, personal safety, sex, and dating were explored with varying degrees of lyrical sensitivity and sledgehammer exploitation. Some of the films will bring back memories, some will create new nightmares...And for the very first time, boys will get to see just what the girls saw behind those locked gym doors. "Marcia Brady and Menstruation" is co-curated by Joel Shepard, Associate Director of the SF Cinematheque, and David Naylor of Alpha Blue Archives, a distributor of educational films. Enjoy the show! There will not be a test.

Changes (1975); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

Funny, shiny story of two evil brat boys who terrorize a young girl trying to buy tampons.

Self Protection for Women (1968); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

Various techniques to ward off male attackers are confusingly discussed in this low-budget epic from 1968. The information ranges from still-sensible to very odd. Remember how to hold those keys!

Rape Alert (1976); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes

An unnecessarily graphic, terrifying rape scare film, produced with the Los Angles Sheriff's Department.

When Jenny When (1978); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes

Starring Maureen McCormick ("Marcia Brady" from The Brady Bunch) who plays a slut who has difficulty liking herself, except when turning on boys.

All Women Have Periods (1979); 16mm, color, sound, 10 very long minutes

Produced as an educational film for young girls with Downs Syndrome, the unforgettable All Women Have Periods is unique in that it stars a young actress who actually has the disease. "Yes, dear, all women have periods" will ring through your head for weeks.

Pink Slip, a similar but different selection of "girl's only" educational films, is available on videocassette through Alpha Blue Archives, P.O. Box 16072, Oakland, CA 94610.

ALEXANDER KLUGE'S SHORT FILMS

Thursday, June 1, 1996 — Center for the Arts

"In a world in which everyone else conforms to rational reason, someone at least could be unreasonable. Since the totalizing quest for meaning has itself become irrational, literary language should be shifted to areas in which it is not totally subjected to the imperative of meaning, as it is in its proper field. Language in film may be blind."

—Alexander Kluge, "Word and Form," *October* 46 (Fall 1988)

Alexander Kluge is one of the most influential and important director/theorists of the German *Autorenfilm* or *das Neue Kino*, which is often referred to as the German New Wave. Heavily indebted to both the Marxism of Frankfurt school theorists like Horkheimer, Benjamin and Adorno and the self-reflexivity and dialectics of Brecht, Kluge is most concerned with the specificities of public experience, the act of differentiation between public and private spheres and the theorization of a proletarian public sphere on the foundation of the seeds of consciousness extant in the "classical: (bourgeois) public sphere.

One of the few theorists who consistently and effectively attempts the translation of theoretical ideas into cinematic praxis, Kluge was instrumental to the writing and implementations of the Oberhausen Manifesto, which outlined a program of critically aware cinematic practice in Germany. A lawyer by profession, Kluge played a key role in the democratization of German television instituting a program through which politically aware (and often Marxist) filmmakers were able to show short worked during prime-time hours on private television stations.

In his own work, Kluge has cultivated an oblique, pseudo-narrative style, utilizing many distancing elements (intertitles, unrelated voice-over, the fragmentation of continuity), cultivating a contingency and ambiguity that belies easy summation. Always concerned with the specificities of history and memory, of ideology mediated by experience and understanding, Kluge's films, as his stories and theoretical work, function as both document and catalyst, insisting upon critical involvement and resisting the drive to narrative and ideological closure.

"A rain puddle which no\one needs, which isn't terrorized so that it 'behaves,' may attain a classical form—the harmony of form and content. We human beings are distinguished by the fact that form and content wage war with another. If content is a moment in time (whose duration may be 160 years or one second), then form is all the rest, the gaps, precisely that which, at this moment, the story does not tell."

—Alexander Kluge, "selections from 'New Stories, Notebooks 1-18' in "The Uncanniness of Time," *October* 48 (Fall 1988)

Die Ewigkeit von Gestern (The Eternity of Yesterday) (1960/63);
16mm, b/w, sound, 11 minutes

An investigation of Germany's Nazi past through contemplation of the ideology expressed by fascist architecture, Kluge's first film, *The Eternity of Yesterday* (also known as *Brutalitat im Stein/Brutality Stone* in its earlier version), anticipated the dialectical, composite style of his later works. The formal tension generated though the discontinuity of sound and image and the overtonal meaning produced through their interaction demands a critical recollection of the historical materiality of fascism and National Socialism and the extent to which they inflected not only the political sphere, but also the experience of everyday German life. The stillness and reflective quality of the montage-like form and historical resonance of the sound work together to both affirm the physicality and all-too-

easily displaced past and also to expose the extent to which the inflated grandeur and mythos of that past still functions as the legacy of modern society. As Kluge so adroitly points out, we are speared from the past not by an abyss, but by the changed situation—the circumstances may have changed, but the ideologies that inform them remain the same; those institution responsible for the myth making of Nazism are not so far removed from those which mark the parameters of the culture industry today.

Frau Balckburn, geb. 5 Jan. 1872, wird gelfilmt *(Mrs. Balckburn, born January 5, 1872, is filmed)* (1967); 16mm, b/w, sound, 14 minutes

"A gently comic study of Kluge's grandmother"
—Stuart Liebman, Goethe Institut/Anthology Film Archives Program Notes

Feuerloscher E.A. Wittenstein *(Fireman E.A. Wittenstein)* (1968);
16mm, b/w, sound, 11 minutes

Lehrer im Wandel *(Teachers Through Change)* (1962/63);
16mm, b/w, sound, 11 minutes

"*Teachers Through Change* is a suite of four short portraits of teachers whose lives have been profoundly affected by historical events. Each laconic life story is told through a series of old photographs separated by titles. Some are progressive educators victimized by the Nazis; one is a vicious opportunist who benefited from the fascist takeover. Their lives are implicitly contrasted with those of the ordinary, bureaucratized teachers today, whom we see in cinema-verité footage taken at a teachers' convention, school meetings, and so on The interruptions in the biographies figure the larger interruptions history makes in the lives of human beings (this is also the theme of a book of stories, *Lebenslaufe/Curricula Vitae*, Kluge published in 1962)). The dispersed narrative focus and the formal discontinuities resist the homogenizing narrative strategies of the culture industry and presage the methos of 'antagonistic realism' Kluge later formulated in discursive terms."
—Stuart Liebman, "Why Kluge?" *October* 46 (Fall 1988)

Portrat einer Behwarung *(Proven Competence Portrayed)* (1964);
16mm, b/w, sound, 13 minutes

"...recounts the fictionalized life of a police officer who loyally served no less than five very different German political regimes during his years of active duty."
—Stuart Liebman, Goethe Institut/Anthology Film Archives Program Notes

Nachrichten von den Stauffern *(News from the Hohenstauffens)* (1977);
16mm, b/w and color, sound, 13 minutes

ALEXANDER KLUGE

THE BLIND DIRECTOR

Sunday, June 4, 1995 — SF Art Institute

"If you take the plot out of a conventional film the individual images become nonsense. If you take the narrative from my films, or from the films of Dovzhenko and many others, however, there will always be a beautiful garden of images. And just as in a beautiful garden, the images do not have to form a concept. You do not have to understand it; you only need to walk through it. The garden is not there to be encompassed. Narrated differences, that is our work."
—Alexander Kluge, interview by Stuart Liebman, *October* 46 (Fall 1988)

***Der Angriff der Gegenwart auf die ubrige Zeit** (The Blind Director)* (1985); 16mm, color, sound, 113 minutes

Composed of a series of fractured, discontinuous, semi-narrative sequences, unrelated in any literal sense, *The Blind Director* addresses the passage of time and the tyranny of the present, and the mark they leave on the synthetic collective consciousness that comprises the sphere of public experience of contemporary Germany. In Kluge's understanding, the resolutely ahistorical character of the bourgeois public sphere and its insistence on the primacy of the "eternal present" marks the effect of capital on the character of "publicity" (Offentlichkeit), by which he refers to the meaning-productive capacity of the socio-political institutions which mediate ideology and individual experience. In a fashion similar to that of other contemporary Marxist critics such as Jurgen Habermas and Fredric Jameson, Kluge argues that the anti-critical, atemporal function of this alienated bourgeois public sphere must be engaged through a critical, historically grounded discourse, a proletarian or plebeian public sphere which functions as a mode of counter-publicity. In this sense, then, *The Blind Director*, the German title of which translate literally as the *Assault of the Present on the Rest of Time*, should operate both as a metaphorical document of the experience of contemporary German life and as a sort of Brechtian critical text, demanding critical engagement on the part of its audience through the denial of the teleological narrative and false transparency critical to the ideological function of the bourgeois sphere of experience.

ALEXANDER KLUGE PARTIAL FILMOGRAPHY

Abshied von Gestern (Anita G.) (Yesterday Girl) (1965-66); *Die Artisten in der Zirkuskuppel: ratlos (Artists under the Big Top: Perplexed)* (1967); *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin (Part-Time Work of a Domestic Slave)* (1973); *Deutschland in Herbst (Germany in Autumn)* (a collective film) (1977-78); *Die Patriotin (The Female Patriot)* (1979); *Krieg und Frieden (War and Peace)* (a collective film) (1982-83); *Die Macht der Gefuhle (The Power of Emotion)* (1983); *Der Angriff der Gegenwart auf die ubrige Zeit (The Blind Director)* (1985); *Vermischte Nachrichten (Miscellaneous News)* (1986).

•program notes by Brian Frye•

WON'T YOU COME OUT AND PLAY,MY SEX BITCH GODDESS: NEW FILMS BY WOMEN

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY MICHELLE HANDELMAN
FILMMAKERS IN PERSON

Thursday, June 8, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Rocketlipsbabblon (1995), by Annabel Lee; video, color, sound, 6 minutes

A place where lava meets lips; gyrating and microscopic. *Rocketlipsbabblon* is a transcendental journey through that space between lust and fear.

Stellium in Capricorn (1994), by Georgia B. Wright; video, b/w, sound, 7 minutes

A hauntingly beautiful S/M scene between four women recorded when the star Stellium was in Capricorn. As knives dissolve into faces and needles dissolve into skin, the pulse beats and the breath quickens.

What Gets You Off? 1994), by Danielle Massingale & Grace Giorgio;
video, color, sound, 4 minutes

A collage of answers to a simple question. (DM / SG)

Engorge Gobble and Gulp (1994), by Lisa DiLillo; video, color, sound, 5 minutes

A humorous allegory which critiques societal control over the female body; preoccupations with obtaining unrealistic body weight and the double standard of promiscuity. The 'surprise narrator' discusses her favorite foods which is defy the low-fat diet suggested, in favor of more pleasurable foods...the subtext is clearly sex and guilt-free indulgence. (LD)

Nyphomania (1994), by Tessa Hughes-Freeland with Holly Adams;
S-8mm film (shown on video), b/w, sound, 8 minutes

Everything starts out carefree and beautiful in the land of nymphs; yet evil lurks within the lust of the beast. A fairy tale where the sprightly nymph meets her match.

Interior Scroll: the Cave (1995), by Carolee Schneemann & Maria Beatty;
video, color, sound, 7 minutes

A recreation of Carolee Schneemann's performance piece *Interior Scroll* in a very dark and moist contemporary world.

Straight for the money: Interviews with Queer Sex Workers (1994) by Hima B.;
video, color, sound, 59 minutes

It is estimated that nearly 10% of women in the US engage in some form of sex work at some point in their lives. Presented from an insider, pro-sex worker point of view, *Straight for the money: Interviews with Queer Sex Workers* is about the observations and experiences of eight lesbian and bisexual women who work as lap dancers, peepshow dancers, and prostitutes in San Francisco. Bold and articulate, these women discuss the impact of sex work on their personal lives, feminist politics regarding the sex industry, and the need for a broader understanding of a greatly stereotyped and stigmatized occupation. Also included are "Sexperts" writer Joan Nestle, performance artist Annie Sprinke, writer Carol Queen, and the prostitutes' rights advocate and videomaker Carol Leigh AKA Scarlot Harlot. This documentary has been internationally acclaimed and is included in the 1995 Whitney Biennial. (HB)

Michelle Handelman is an award winning film and videomaker whose work has screened worldwide. Her current feature length film *Blood Sisters*, an experimental documentary on the lesbian S/M community, will be premiering at this year's Frameline Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. Her other titles (*Homophobia is Known to Cause Nightmares, History of Pain, Catscan* (with Monte Cazazza), and *Sexual Techniques in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*) deal with the forbidden erotic and socio-political confines of our culture. A writer and photographer, as well as media artist, Handelman has curated and co-curated a number of programs at the San Francisco Cinematheque.

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE/BEAUTIFUL FRIENDS

LYNN HERSHMAN + FRIENDS IN PERSON

Sunday, June 11, 1995 — SF Art Institute

> *"Lynn Hershman-Leeson is regarded as the most influential female artist of new media. As early as the 1970s she worked with context, performance, public space and interactivity. Her video work incorporates surveillance, voyeurism and personal identity and her computer installations expand the possibilities of interactivity in art."*
>
> —Press Release from the Siemens/ZKM Media Arts Prize

Last month Lynn Hershman-Leeson received Germany's prestigious ZKM/Siemens International Media Award. This award is one of the most important in the field of Media Arts, and other 1995 recipients included British artist and filmmaker Peter Greenaway and French writer and philosopher Jean Baudrillard. Tonight the San Francisco Cinematheque is very happy to honor local artist Lynn Hershman-Leeson and to screen her most recent work, *Beautiful People/Beautiful Friends*, as well as short pieces by several of her recent collaborators and friends.

An overview of Hershman's artistic career would fall into a number of distinctively eclectic categories ranging from photography, site-specific public art (including *The Dante Hotel* and *25 Windows: A Portrait of Bonwit Teller*), interactive work and, in the last fifteen years, video. Her work ranges from physical concerns with context, performance, public space, and interactivity to political issues of surveillance, voyeurism, identity and "authenticity".

Hershman's early experimental videos included *Test Patterns* and *The Making of a Very Rough and (Very) Incomplete Pilot for Videodisc on the Life and Work of Marcel Duchamp*, both of which showcased a new, fresh perspective on a relatively new visual medium. "Video was just being invented. There wasn't a language for it yet, which meant that there was the opportunity to participate in creating the language for this new form." (LH) Throughout the '80s Hershman expanded the emerging video form, creating the first interactive art videodisc *LORNA* (1979-83) which allowed viewers to access Lorna's past and future by pressing buttons on a remote unit of the videodisc player. Holding that art is life and life is art, Hershman became the subject of her own work, recording several personal experiences in *The Electronic Diary* (1985-89) which includes *Confessions of a Chameleon*, *Binge*, and *First Person Plural*. This trilogy allowed her to obsessively analyze her life and provided a way of dealing with fragmented memory, bodily obsessions and repressed guilt. In her recent video pieces (including her 1989 faux documentary *Long Shot* and her 1993 feature-length *Virtual Love*), she has expanded her field of play to incorporate a variety of narrative and fictional elements along with her staples of personal confession and formal experimentation.

Lynn Hershman's body of work includes over 51 videotapes and 4 interactive installations which have garnered many international awards. Last year she was the first woman to receive a tribute and retrospective at the San Francisco International Film Festival. She also received the Annie Gerber Award, a $50,000 commission from the Seattle Art Museum given every two years to a contemporary artist. Hershman was a Professor and Acting Director of the Inter-Arts Department at San Francisco State University for several years. She is currently a Professor of Electronic Art at the University of California, Davis.

Preceding the screening of Beautiful People/Beautiful Friends, the Cinematheque will show a number of videos made by some of Lynn Hershman's friends and collaborators from the past fifteen years.

Case P-200 (1992), by Mia Lor Houlberg; video, color, sound, 11 minutes

Case P-200 highlights a few moments salvaged from footage originally recorded at a Veteran Hospital in the 70s.

Manifestoon (1994), by Jesse Drew; video, color, sound, 8 minutes

Manifestoon is the product of sleepless nights and too much time spent working on documentary video productions. It explains the subversiveness of children and why editing is a political act.

Mirror, Mirror (1987), by Paula Levine; video, color, sound 2 1/2 minutes

Shot in Venice, California, *Mirror, Mirror* is a short vignette about viewing and being viewed.

Love Between a Boy and a Girl (1995) a collaboration between RAP (Real Alternative Program) Youth, Dr. Francisco Gonzalez and Lisa Swenson; video, color, sound, 20 minutes

This short fictional narrative was designed as an HIV awareness educational video for youth. Following the lives of a group of Mission District teenagers, this collaborative piece addresses AIDS, gangs, substance abuse and violence.

Excerpts from works by students at U.C. Davis.

Beautiful People/Beautiful Friends (1994), by Lynn Hershman;
video, color, sound, 74 minutes
Starring Johanna Schmidt and Colin Hayle, with music by Michael Edo Keane

An idyllic scene of love and tranquillity transforms into a story of domestic violence and electronic surveillance.

Lynn Hershman's new electronic interactive piece *America's Finest* is currently on view at the Paula Anglim Gallery through early July.

•program notes by Geoffe Domenghini•

BAY AREA WOMEN AT WORK
NEW WORK BY LOCAL ARTISTS

CURATED AND PRESENTED BY IRINA LEIMBACHER
ARTISTS IN PERSON

Thursday, June 15, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Tonight's program of new works by emerging Bay Area women filmmakers is an up-to-the-minute eclectic mix of experimental, documentary and short narrative work all recently out of the lab and onto the screen. The Cinematheque is honored to premiere several of these films and videos, and to present work by and to our own diverse and creative community!

In Passing (1995), by Elizabeth Sale; 16mm, b/w, sound 7 1/2 minutes

What happens when we watch something closely for a long period of time? A static object seems to move. Something we don't ordinarily see, a very small and subtle movement can become significant and take on new meaning. (ES)

automatic writing (1995), by Elise Hurwitz; 16mm, b/w, silent, 8 minutes

Several of Freud's early case studies refused to speak under hypnosis. Freud would then ask then to write, believing this "automatic writing" from the unconscious would yield entry to his patients' psychological disturbances. The film *automatic writing* questions whether writing from the unconscious would take on forms of language that exist in speech, or whether other symbols would supersede language, creating a writing of visual memories. *Automatic writing* does not set up any code to decipher, just a path to follow. (EH)

Wanderlust (1994), by Kim Wood; 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

A black and white collage of found footage and self portraiture, *Wanderlust* follows a young woman's search for self outside the (self-)imposed archetypes of "Maiden" and "Madwoman". A woman dangles from a trapeze, dances in a Victorian peepshow, rows frantically away from or toward an unknown landscape where she finds the imagined precipice has already been crossed. The act of filmmaking is the catalyst of her transcendence. (KW)

Revision (1994), by Chana Pollack; 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

Revision is a filmic representation of my struggle to examine my memory of my grandmother and some of what she represented, against the grain of time. To do this I had to revise my vision and actively recreate this image of her, hence the title *Revision.* I had in mind the visual symbolism of a "yahrzeit" candle, the traditional Jewish lighting of a twenty-four hour candle to memorialize the death of a family member. I wanted to create something that would shed some light into the shadows of a faded life, to illuminate and ponder that existence and my own relationship to it. (CP)

Recollection (1995), by Mary Trunk; 16mm, b/w, sound, 20 minutes

Recollection is a search for childhood memories that are buried or are not often easy to recall. It is a film about re-collecting one's own memories from the fragments of others. The film explores the idea of a collective fabric of history from which we all extract our own stories and create our individual pasts. By incorporating home movie footage from my mother's childhood and juxtaposing it with contemporary footage and sound of two women reminiscing, I constructed a framework from which the viewer can spring. Each image, work or phrase has the possibility to spark a memory or past experience. And those individual histories can originate from the same source. (MT)

T.E.M.P.S. (1995), by Jessica Fulton; video, color, sound, 10 minutes

T.E.M.P.S. documents my community. It shows how people normally stereotyped as non-contributors or "bad" perform an acceptable societal role as the employee. It provides their reflections on that role within society while remaining apart from it. (JF)

Miss Somebody (1994), by Mary Scott; 16mm, color, sound, 11 minutes

Miss Somebody is a short, personal documentary film which presents children's views of their place in the quagmire of divorce and shared custody. All narration is by children who have experienced divorce in their families, and the film aims to illustrate the range of their feelings, from sadness to nostalgia to nonchalance. While wishing to make their voices

heard, my own voice is strongly present. The questions asked, the editing and use of found footage are my way of attempting to make some sense of this difficult subject. I believe that humor and irony are not only appropriate responses to such a painful subject but logical ones. (MS)

Mantra (1995), by Sheila Harrington; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes

Mantra explores the terrain where the psychological, spiritual, and political overlap. Its ultimate conclusion that contemporary pathological and political models are insufficient descriptive systems for addictive behaviors (which belie both basic human ritualistic needs and ecstatic spiritual impulses gone awry) contradicts current thinking about the ritual-fascism connection. (SH)

Crabbing (1995), by Rose B. Martillano; 16mm, b/w, sound, 8 minutes

The subtleties of territorial conflict and racial tension between an old Filipina woman and a young Caucasian man who simultaneously arrive at the Fort Mason Pier. (RM)

The Angel of Woolworth's (1994), by Julie X. Black; 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

The Angel of Woolworth's tells of the romantic friendship between two women. Playing in a dimestore photo booth, the two create a hopeful tale about a girl and an angle. (JB)

THE FILMMAKERS

Elizabeth Sale is a filmmaker and installation/performance artist working in the Bay Area since 1989. She recently received her MFA in filmmaking from the San Francisco Art Institute, and her work has shown throughout the Bay Area and Santa Cruz County. • **Elise Hurwitz** has been making films for six years. She often works directly on the film surface and reworks those images on an optical printer. When she's not making her own films she helps everyone else make theirs over at Film Arts Foundation. • **Kim Wood** is a recent graduate of CCAC;s MFA program in film and photography. She is currently completing her second film, an homage to a 1920s daredevil motorcyclist tentatively titled *Advice to Adventurous Girls*. • **Chana Pollack** is a Montreal born/ Israel reared/ S.F. based filmmaker presently studying in the MFA program at the San Francisco Art Institute. Her film *Revision* has been screened at several venues and film festivals. • **Mary Trunk** is the Artistic Director of Trunk Co. Movement Theatre, which is dedicated to the invention and exploration of movement as a language and the incorporation of an interdisciplinary approach to theatre. Her most recent works investigate the movements and gestural language that exist between people. • **Jessica Fulton** is a junior at UC Berkeley majoring in American Studies. *T.E.M.P.S.* is her first film, made as a final project for her documentary class. • **Mary Scott** is a single parent with a passionate interest in film who turned forty the semester that she started film school. She has finished two films on family issues and has taught several courses in film production and studies. Zoe, her daughter, is an immeasurable help, starring in Mom's films, assisting with graphics and credits, and giving insight into what the work looks like to an eleven year-old. • **Shelia Harrington** is currently an MFA student at SFSU and *Mantra* is her first film. • **Rose B. Martillano** recently completed a BA in Cinema at SFSU, with an emphasis in Writing and Directing. During this one year program, she developed, shot and completed her film *Crabbing*. She's now getting ready to relocate to Los Angeles to continue her film education at UCLA. • **Julie X. Black** makes films about her three favorite things—girls, kissing and kissin' girls.

TIME BOMB!

JOHN MUSE AND JEANNE C. FINLEY IN PERSON

Sunday, June 18, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Conversations Across The Bosphorous (1995) by Jeanne C. Finley;
video, color, sound, 42 minutes

Conversations Across The Bosphorous intertwines the narratives of two Muslim women from Istanbul: Gokeen, from an orthodox Islamic family, takes off the veil after years of struggle and Miné, from a secular family, discovers the roots of her faith living as an immigrant in San Francisco. Through poetic voices they demonstrate how their relationship to their faith shaped and determined their personal lives.

Set on the banks of the Bosphorous, the narrow waterway that divides the Asian and European continents, *Conversations Across The Bosphorous* suggests that the relation of personal faith to cultural and political structures is one of the most critical issues in both the Islamic and Christian worlds. Gokeen immigrated with her devout family to Istanbul from an Anatolian village and reveals how her personal life reflects the larger cultural dilemma of a city being torn apart in a struggle to maintain its secular government against the rapid growth of Islamic Fundamental power. Miné, from an established Istanbul family, left Turkey ten years ago and writes from San Francisco of her memories of growing up in a city that since her departure has gone through a radical transformation in political structure, unprecedented population growth and environmental destruction.

In conjunction with evocative visual imagery, sound and lively debate, these narratives question the possibility of continued peaceful coexistence between groups of opposing ideologies in a relentless urban landscape.

Time Bomb(1995) by John Muse and Jeanne C. Finley;
video, color, sound 9 1/2 minutes

Time Bomb tells the story of a young girl's experience at a Baptist retreat where she is called upon to accept Jesus into her life. This piece explores memory, the power of crowds and rituals of conversion. It is the first segment of a work in progress, *O night without objects*, being developed during an artist-in-residency at Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center. The last two segments, *I want to meet you, dear lady*, and *Blacky's Day* will follow.

WORK PRACTICE AND TECHNOLOGY GROUP

"*Time Bomb* will be followed by a brief presentation by Lucy Suchman, Randy Trigg, and Jeanette Blomberg, members of Xerox PARC's Work Practice and Technology (WPT) group. The Work Practice and Technology area at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center is composed of four anthropologists and two computer scientists. We combine studies of everyday work with experimentation in new approached to technology development. We take our inspiration from recent directions in science and technology studies and from participatory forms of system design.

Our presentation questions the relations between our own documentary practice as researchers interested in the social and material bases of how people work, and the working practices of Jeanne C. Finley and John Muse. In contract with familiar distinctions of analyst and subject, our encounter has marked by a reflexive interchange across the roles of

ethnographer and video artist. We illustrate those boundary crossings with a collection of video sequences drawn from our collaboration to date." (—WPT)

Jeanne C. Finley is an artist who works with photography and video. She is the Associate Dean of Media Studies at the California College of Arts and Crafts. Her work has been exhibited internationally including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the George Pompidou Center in Paris, and at the 1993 and 1995 Whitney Biennial. Jeanne's videotapes have been broadcast on PBS stations in the United States, as well as, on Open Sky Television throughout Europe, Canadian Television and Japan TV. She has been the recipient of several grants including a Guggenheim Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships and the Phelan Award in Video.

Jeanne's video credits include: *Common Mistakes* (1986); *At the Museum: A Pilgrimage of Vanquished Objects* (1989); *Involuntary Conversion* (1991); and *A.R.M. Around Moscow* (1993).. These tapes have won awards at international festivals and during 1990 Jeanne received a Fulbright Fellowship to Yugoslavia where she directed programs for Radio/TV Belgrade. in 1994 she was an artist-in-residence in Istanbul, Turkey through a grant from the Lila Wallace Readers Digest Foundation.

John Muse is an artist and writer. he has taught at California College of Arts and Crafts and San Francisco State University. His writings have appeared in *Cinemathograph*, *Artspace*, and the *City Lights Review*. He is currently an artist-in-residence at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center.

IN MEMORIAM: WARREN SONBERT

A TRIBUTE TO HIS LIFE AND WORK

Thursday, June 22, 1995 — Center for the Arts

> *"It's in time that the structure of Sonbert's 'looking at things' begins to appear. It's through time that the structure beings 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 and 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 films of Warren Sonbert; or by looking at a brown leaf falling from a tree."*
>
> —Jonas Mekas, *Movie Journal* (November 19, 1970)

On May 31, 1995 Warren Sonbert died from complications due to AIDS, tragically cutting short the life and work of one of the Bay Area's most widely celebrated independent film artists and film advocates. This evening the San Francisco Cinematheque pays tribute to Warren Sonbert with a screening of three of his rarely shown early films and a reception in honor of his memory.

For almost three decades, Warren Sonbert has been celebrated as one of the most innovative and prolific filmmakers of independent cinema. The subject of several Whitney retrospectives, a lauded educator and recipient of countless festival awards both in the United States and abroad, Warren Sonbert has fixed his permanent place in the history of cinema side by side with all the other great works of film art. Together with such artists as

Jonas Mekas, Andrew Noren and Stan Brakhage, Sonbert began his career in the mid-sixties, with films that reflected the social and cultural lifestyle that accompanied the artistic breakthroughs of the time. He crafted films that look at the worked with a sensitive, reflexive eye, films that gaze without flinching both at his own daily life and that of his friends, acquaintances and those who casually pass before his camera's lens. Throughout the seventies and early eighties, Sonbert continued to explore this new visual language and helped forge new relationships between place and time through the properties of the film medium. Sonbert's ever broadening interpretive vision and reflexive discourse of the diary has helped to both transform and disrupt our conditioned viewing patterns, creating an emotional urgency and a need to continually question the relationship of image and perception, sight and cognition. "As viewers we are carried silently around Sonbert's country and world, yet the recorded film image transcends the specificity of a moment in time and becomes part of an aesthetic whole, an interpretation and rendering of out world." (J.G. Hanhardt)

Introductory Remarks

Steve Anker, Director, San Francisco Cinematheque
Carla Harryman, Poet and Playwright
Danny Mangin, Critic and Film Historian

Hall of Mirrors (1996); 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes

Made when Sonbert was in his teens, *Hall of Mirrors* stems from the filmmaker's early experiences and involvement within the "Warhol scene". A documentary exploration of Warhol's famous mirrored room at the original factory, this work utilizes crude, underexposed, hand-held portraiture shots of two Warhol "superstars" and rivals them with various outtakes from a 1948 Hollywood melodrama.

"In the casual 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 distance 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."

—Amy Taubin, *Village Voice* (January 27, 1987)

Truth Serum (1967); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes

Another film from the beginning of his career, *Truth Serum* is in Warren's words " an early teenage weekend film....From the rock and roll period: 50s girl groups and 'the High & Mighty 'theme." (WS)

Carriage Trade (1971); 16mm, color, silent, 61 minutes

Often cited as one of the most original and beautiful films of the avant-garde, *Carriage Trade* is arranged musically with brilliantly framed compositions and swirling camera movements creating a visual symphony of Sonbert's travels and experiences. In a startling juxtaposition of familiar and exotic imagery, Sonbert compares the surfaces of his images and is able to establish a basic sympathy between them. His emphasis on color, light, texture and movement brings these images together and transcends their diary content, resulting in an uniquely cinematic forms.

"A 16mm 60 minute six year compilation of travels, home movies, and documents shown silent. Not strictly involved with plot or morality but rather the language of film as regards time, composition, cutting, light, distance, tension of backgrounds to foregrounds, what you see and what you don't, a jigsaw puzzle of post cards to produce varied displaced effects. Contrapuntal textures in using eight of so different stocks of film—color and b/w, negative and dyed shots. Film as music without music, each shot a cluster of notes striking a reaction in the view. Editing does not qualify positions of good or bad; it's all just there. Although there is both a flow and a contrast between shots, an image may not directly refer to the shot that has preceded it but rather perhaps to several shots before. Film takes in the changing relations of the movements of objects, the gestures of figures, familiar worldwide icons, rituals and reactions, rhythm, spacing and density of images. All to pull the carpet out from under you." (WS)

WARREN SONBERT FILMOGRAPHY

Amphetamine (1966); 16mm, b/w, sound, 10 minutes: *Where Did Our Love Go?* (1966); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes: *Hall of Mirrors* (1966); 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes: *The Tenth Legion* (1967); 16mm, color, sound, 30 minutes: *Truth Serum* (1967); 16mm, color, sound, 10 minutes: *The Bad and the Beautiful* (1967); 16mm, color sound, 35 minutes: *Connections* (1967); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes, *Ted & Jessica* (1967); 16mm, color, sound, 7 minutes: *Holiday* (1968); 16mm, color, sound, 15 minutes: *Carriage Trade* (1971); 16mm, color/b/w, silent, 61 minutes: *Rude Awakening* (1975); 16mm, color, silent, 36 minutes: *Divided Loyalties* (1978); 16mm, color, silent, 22 minutes: *Noblesse Oblige* (1981); 16mm, color, silent, 25 minutes: *A Woman's Touch* (1983); 16mm, color, silent, 22 minutes: *The Cup and the Lip* (1986); 16mm, color, silent, 20 minutes: *Honor and Obey* (1988); 16mm, color, silent, 21 minutes: *Friendly Witness* (1989) 16mm, color, silent, 32 minutes: *Short Fuse* (1991); 16mm, color, sound, 37 minutes.

•program notes by Todd Wagner•

FACING EDEN: BAY AREA LANDSCAPE IN FILM ART—1

SAN FRANCISCO'S UNDULATING SKYLINE

Wednesday July 5, 1995 — M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

In conjunction with the San Francisco Cinematheque, throughout the month of July the de Young museum presents a series of film programs reflecting the personal, poetic and adventurous ways in which film artists have incorporated characteristics of the Bay Area's landscape into their creative work over the last forty years.

Tonight's program focuses on the physical and the spatial nature of San Francisco's skyline. The hills and light of San Francisco create a continuous visual adventure in urban space; buildings and streets rove in height and depth as the open sky shifts from spot to spot. Nothing quite stays as it first appears.

Panorama (1982), by Michael Rudnick; 16mm, color, sound by Rick Ross, 13 minutes

"(A) joyous evocation of San Francisco in a 'cinepoetic' essay. Twelve months are distilled into twelve and one-half minutes through lapse time photography. Billowing clouds and arching suns are seen in leisurely sweeps of view as the days boil and cool before our eyes.

In speed time, the Goodyear blimp darts over the skyline like a fish buzzing a tropical reef. Lyrical strength and a sense of wonder lift *Panorama* above mere trickery."

—Anthony Reveaux, *ArtWeek*

Michael Rudnick is a San Francisco filmmaker and artist who has been making films and teaching since the 1970s. His multi-media installations have been on display in museums and galleries throughout the Bay Area and other parts of the U.S. Rudnick currently has a display on view at the Exploratorium.

Spring (1991), by Thomas Korschil; 16mm, color, silent, 3 minutes

To move the world (and thus the mind!) with one's eyes, to put (part of) it into a box (like we do) and shake it, gently, as to bring its (the world's, the mind's) particles to life (again), for the first time, to seek some sense out of it—"all."

A souvenir; capturing (in vain!) time (lost), passing us by like the shadow of a fast moving cloud. (Inertia!) Still, a "sweet film.'" (TK)

Thomas Korschil is a filmmaker who lives in Vienna, Austria and studied filmmaking at the San Francisco Art Institute. Korschil curates and lectures on film art at museums and universities throughout Austria.

Same Difference (1975), by Al Wong; 16mm, color, sound by Terry Fox, 17.5 minutes

"A film structured around two windows overlooking the changing San Francisco skyline, involves different kinds of time lapses and sophisticated juxtapositions of movements such as the uninterrupted action of drinking a glass of water over dramatically changing skies. At times the lapses occur in separate windows or even in different areas inside the windows."

—Vincent Grenier

Al Wong is Professor of film-making and inter-disciplinary art at the San Francisco Art Institute. He has exhibited films throughout Europe and Canada, and has experimented with environmental art and the borders between projected image, projection space, and the frame of the frame.

***The Man Who Could Not See Far Enough*, Part V** (1981) by Peter Rose;

The Man Who Could Not See Far Enough uses literary, structural, autobiographical, and performance metaphors to construct a series of tableaux that evoke the act of vision, the limits of perception, and the rapture of space. Spectacular moving multiple images; a physical almost choreographic sense of camera movement; and massive, resonant sound have inspired critics to call it "stunning" and "hallucinatory". The film ranges in subject from a solar eclipse to an ascent of the Golden Gate Bridge, and moves, in spirit, from the deeply personal to the mythic. (PR)

Peter Rose was trained in mathematics and is a professor at the Philadelphia College of Art. His installation, performance, film and video work has shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and is in the archives of the Australian National Film Library.

Side/Walk/Shuttle (1991) by Ernie Gehr; 16mm, color, sound, 40 minutes

Part of the initial inspiration for this film was an outdoor glass elevator and some of the visual, spatial and gravitational possibilities it presented me with. The work was also informed by an interest in panoramas and the urban landscape. In this latter respect Edward Muybridge's photographic panoramas of San Francisco from the 1870s as well as the overall topography of the city itself were sources of inspiration. Finally, the shape and character

of the work was tempered by reflections upon a lifetime of displacement, moving from place to place, and haunted by recurring memories of other places, other possibly yet unlikely "homes" I once passed through. (EG)

Ernie Gehr is Professor of filmmaking at the San Francisco Art Institute whose work examines playful borders of perception in the unique physical and psychological (s)pace of cinema. Gehr has shown at the George Pompidou Center in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art and others.

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On view in Trustees' Auditorium between 6:15 and 7:00 p.m.

Landscape No. 1: Outside the gold frame, Inside the car window (1995)
by Lynn M. Kirby; 16mm film installation with gilt frames, walls and sandbags.
Part of a series of landscape pieces shot over the last ten years

The following people and organizations have generously helped with this project: Stephen Rogers, Paul Bridenbaugh, Sarah Filley, Joe Reorda, David Rosburg, The Point and Monaco Lab.

Lynn Kirby is an installation, film and video artist who is Professor of film, video, and performance at the California College of Arts and Crafts. She has shown her work widely throughout Europe and North America. Kirby had a one-person retrospective of her films at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in February of 1995.

FACING EDEN: BAY AREA LANDSCAPE IN FILM ART—2

SCALES OF GRANDEUR: HUMAN AND NATURAL INTERFACES

Wednesday July 12, 1995 — M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

The visual beauty of the Bay Area's diverse natural landscape ranges from hills to streams, from cliffs to gentle horizons, and all are impacted by the region's singular light and atmospheric conditions. Tonight's four films reflect on this natural landscape through the people's interactions and responses to it.

Span (1968), By William Allan and Bruce Nauman; 16mm, color, silent, 10 minutes

Span is one in a series of several unedited camera-roll films from William Allan and Bruce Nauman made in 1968 which documented actions growing out of their friendship and shared concerns. They intended to give '"ugly things, things otherwise overlooked, importance." (WA)

Here they construct a simple device—made from wood and painted forest green—to measure air currents which can't be seen but which coarse over and coincide with running water.

Bruce Nauman is a widely celebrated American artist, whose many mediums include neon, sculpture, performance, film, video, and conceptual pieces. He recently had a one-man retrospective at the Whitney Museum of Art.

William Allan is a painter, assemblagist and filmmaker who has lived in the Bay Area most of his life, attending the San Francisco Art Institute in the late 1950s. His work has been

shown at most major museums of contemporary art in the United States, with a recent one-man show at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento in 1994.

Seasonal Forces - A Sonoma County Almanac (1995) by Janis Crystal Lipzin;
S-8mm, color, sound, 18 minutes

The first section of an ongoing work exploring the conjunction of human and natural forces being played out in rural areas everywhere, especially in Northern California. In this and future sections of *Seasonal Forces*, I allude to current land use controversies such as the dissonance between agricultural homesteads and tract developments; decades-old gardens destined to be abandoned to bulldozers, and the transmutation of orchards into vineyards. In Aldo Leopold's 1949 classic conservationist's memoir *A Sand County Almanac*, he posed:

We face the question whether a still higher standard of living
is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free.

His assertions precede and inform my work in which I attempt to understand what it means to cultivate a sense of place. (JCL)

Janis Crystal Lipzin is on the film faculty at the San Francisco Art Institute. She is currently working on a book documenting women pioneers of independent filmmaking. Lipzin's film screenings include the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Filmforum in Los Angeles, the Centre Georges Pompidou, and her installations have shown widely throughout the Bay Area.

Survival Run (1978), by Robert Charlton; 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

Survival Run is the story of two men and an ordeal. It's about Harry Cordellos, a blind man who runs over Mt. Tamalpas in the 8-mile Dipsea race. One of the most difficult cross-country courses in the world, the Dipsea weaves precariously up and down mountain trails and along the edges of cliffs, beginning at Mill Valley and ending at Stinson Beach.

"The Dipsea race is like life...you don't win it...you survive it."

—Harry Cordellos

"I shall not be overshooting my mark if I say that *Survival Run* has the deepest symbolic undertones. It is about humanity, about man's linking up with his fellow being, and it is about all those qualities which are noble and human."

—Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni, *The Economic Times*, Bombay

Robert Charlton is a filmmaker living in Berkeley. In addition to *Survival Run*, for which he received a Best Director Award at LA's Filmex , he has directed the cable television feature *No Big Deal* and numerous short films and documentaries, including *The Making of Jedi* and *Songs of a Distant Jungle*.

Running Fence (1978), by David Maysles, Albert Maysles and Charlotte Zwerin; 16mm,
color, sound, 58 minutes

A portrait of one man's persistence, *Running Fence* documents the Bulgarian-born artist's efforts to build a twenty-four-and-a-half-mile-long, eighteen-foot-high fence of white fabric across the hills of California. Since the late 1950's Christo's large-scale temporary works of art have helped change our perception of art and society. In 1962, when the Maysles brothers first met him in Paris, they immediately recognized a kindred spirit. As David Maysles said: "Christo comes up with an idea that at first seems impossible, then lets it

grow; so do we." Albert Maysles agrees: "Both Christo's projects and our films are Outrageous acts of faith."

"The Maysles first collaboration with Christo was *Valley Curtain* (1974), an Academy Award nominee. *Running Fence* followed in 1978. Both dramatic and poetic, this engrossing documentary tracks Christo's struggles with local ranchers, environmentalists and state bureaucrats. To some, it sounded absurd: a three-million dollar fence, made of nylon, designed to be in place for two weeks, then taken down? Despite Christo's perseverance, opposition seemed insurmountable—until at last the fence was unfurled, reuniting the community in celebration of beauty."

—Maysles Films (1978)

Christo's most recent work involved the wrapping of the Reichstag in Berlin, in a million square feet of polypropylene fabric. Steve Weisman remarked in the *New York Times* that "Like all of Christo's projects, it is transitory, rendering his vision both arrogant and modest. The landscape always returns to its original state."

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On view in Trustees' Auditorium between 6:15 and 7:00 p.m.

Landscape No. 2: Selection from 36 hours on 24th Street (1992/95), by Paula Levine; video, color, sound, 24 minutes

36 hours on 24th Street is one in a series of twenty-four hour video portraits of time in place. The subject here is the corner of 24th Street and Folsom, in San Francisco's Mission District; the view below Levine's studio. Time and place are sampled as the camera records one second, every minute for 36 hours.

Paula Levine is a Canadian-American photographer and videomaker. Her work has been seen in festivals and exhibitions in the United States, Europe, Japan, and Canada, including LA Freewaves, SECA Video Invitational at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the National Gallery of Canada. She will be a visiting artist this fall in Photography at the Art Institute of Chicago.

•program notes by Jeffrey Lambert•

FACING EDEN: BAY AREA LANDSCAPE IN FILM ART—3

LIGHT ENERGIES: LANDSCAPES OF THE MIND

Wednesday July 19, 1995 — M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

Tonight's program focuses on the relationship between the San Francisco landscape and the individual psyche. These films offer a timeline of fantasies and reveries inspired by the Bay Area as a place of discovery.

Four in the Afternoon (1951), by James Broughton; 16mm, b/w, sound, 15 minutes

"Four poetic variations on the search for love; four odd characters living out their daydreams: Game little Gladys, The Gardener's Son, Princess Printemps, and the Aging Balletomane. Based on Broughton's own poems, this film blends image, music and verse in moods from the farcical to the elegiac."

—*Canyon Cinema Catalog #7*

"Lovely and Delicious, true cinematic poetry."—Dylan Thomas

James Broughton was one of the key figures in the post-war San Francisco Renaissance as a poet, filmmaker and social force. Broughton has published several volumes of poetry and has made over 15 films in his 50 year career. His memoirs "Coming Unbound" were published in 1993.

Beat (1958), by Christopher MacLaine; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes

"MacLaine was known around town and had gained a reputation as San Francisco's Artaud. He worked with a kind of dedication to madness. How intrinsic this was to his behavior can be seen in his films...

As one looks at his film *Beat*, one sees more of the humor in his camera movements. People are made to walk fast and look jerky in his films, and this is intentional humor; he was not content to shoot at eight frames per second—he skips frames so that people skip ridiculously in a way that rhythmically captures their intrinsic self-centeredness...One can look at this as humorous or as unbearably horrible. If you can regard it as both delightful and horrifying, you are close to the balance that makes MacLaine an artist. To me *Beat* evokes that era to a T—beautifully precisely, wittily and terrifyingly."

—Stan Brakhage, *Film at Wit's End* (1989)

Christopher MacLaine was an influential poet, publisher, and filmmaker of San Francisco's underground Beat era. MacLaine left a legacy of four visionary films, though he dies in obscurity during the 1970s.

All My Life (1966), by Bruce Baillie; 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

"...it was the quality of the light for three summer days in Caspar, California, up the coast where Tulley lived. It looked like Cork, Ireland used to...It was inspired by the light (every day is unique as you know), and by the early Teddy Wilson/Ella Fitzgerald recording, which was always playing in Tulley's little cabin, with its condemnation sign on it."

—Bruce Baillie, interview with Scott McDonald in *A Critical Cinema 2* (1992)

In 1961 Bruce Baillie and Chick Strand founded Canyon Cinema, one of America's premier distributor/exhibitors of personal film. He has made some of the most widely admired films of independent cinema and *Castro Street* has been recognized by the American Film Institute as a Landmark of American Film History. Baillie continues to work in film and video.

Looking for Mushrooms (1961-67), by Bruce Conner; 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

"Looking for mushrooms in San Francisco and in Mexico and filmed and edited from hundreds of feet of film multiple-exposed and single-framed inside the camera. Finally cut to 100 foot length in 1965 to run perpetually in a never-ending cartridge projector. John Lennon made the music in 1967."

—*Canyon Cinema Catalog #7*

"Make no mistake, this is not simply a peyote documentary or a travelogue of Conner's Mexican sojourn; nor is this simply a 'trip' movie. He titles his film accurately, so don't forget the word 'looking' in the title. It is partly a word of instruction to the audience. We should be looking for mushrooms, mushroom shapes, references to mushrooms, peyote buttons, etc., throughout our experience of the film."

—Stan Brakhage, *Film at Wit's End* (1989)

Bruce Conner is one of the most respected and versatile living American visual artist working in collage, sculpture, photography, film, and more. Bruce Conner lives in San Francisco and has been a major influence on filmmakers for the last two generations.

The Great Blondino (1967), by Robert Nelson & William T. Wiley;
16mm, color, sound, 42 minutes

"On a formal level, *Blondino* is a long, never resolved dialogue between it's protagonist's inner and outer worlds, between film as a material and film as representation, between art and entertainment. Like a dream, it continually strives to embody two contradictory readings within the same composite structure. The recorded image is frequently effaced by distortive lenses, prisms, and superimpositions, just as narrative is often submerged by eruptive digressions or suggestions that each film is Blondino's dream."

—J. Hoberman, *Nelson/Wiley* (1979)

I was lucky, lived in S.F. during an exciting time...met some inspirational artists...had lots of help...was able to crank out a couple of films that I am very proud of. (RN)

Robert Nelson was one of San Francisco's most daring filmmakers of the 1960's who worked with artists ranging from William Wiley to composer Steve Reich. Nelson founded the filmmaking program at the San Francisco Art Institute in the late 1960's and continues to make films and videos in Milwaukee.

William T. Wiley is known primarily as a painter. Wiley was a long-term resident of San Francisco and made numerous films, mostly with Nelson in the 60s and early 70s.

I Change I Am the Same (1969), by Alice Ann Parker(a.k.a. Anne Severson);
16mm, b/w, sound, 40 seconds

"A short, hilarious film of a woman and a man in various states of undress—in their own and each other's clothing."

—*Canyon Cinema Catalog #7*

"As a filmmaker, Anne Severson was a product of the sixties, especially the sixties reaction to an earlier Puritanism about the body. For many sixties artists the body was a territory in need of liberation."

—Scott McDonald, *A Critical Cinema 2* (1992)

Alice Ann Parker had a brief filmmaking career in the late 60s to the mid 70s while living in San Francisco. Parker's work focused on the human body, especially as it relates to gender and sexuality. She continues to be active as an artist and shaman living in Hawaii.

Women's Rites or Truth is the Daughter of Time (1974), by Barbara Hammer;
16mm, color, sound

"An autumnal celebration of colorful fall leaves, brooks and bathing, chanting circles and tree goddess rites. Shot on witch's land in Northern California, it is a woman celebrating woman and nature with the poetry of Elsa Gidlow accompanying."

—*Canyon Cinema Catalog #7*

Barbara Hammer is one of the most prolific and versatile living independent film and video makers. Hammer is a long time resident of San Francisco who has completed over 40 works in both mediums, ranging from the experimental to essay. She is a tireless champion and teacher of personal, independent cinema.

On view in the Trustees' Auditorium between 6:15 and 7:00 p.m.

Landscape No. 3: C to C—Several Centuries After the Double Slit Experiment (1995), by Lynn Kirby, 16mm film installation with C stands, gobo arms, flags and sandbags.

The following people and organizations have generously helped with this project: Stephen Rogers; Cinematographic Consultant, Joplin Wu; Andy Black; Assistant Camera, Lorna Leslie; Installation crew, Morgan Barnard, Sarah Filley, Judith Pfeifer, and C Whiteside; sound, David Jaffe.

FACING EDEN: BAY AREA LANDSCAPES IN FILM ART—4

LIFE FLOWS IN THE MODERN WORLD

Wednesday July 26, 1995 — M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

The constant motion of human activity and changing forms creates a visual surface that bends and reshapes itself from moment to moment. The films in tonight's program expressively reveal the fluid quality of San Francisco time and space.

Delugion (1982), by Michael Rudnick; 16mm, color, sound, 4 minutes

"Modern day lemmings are unleashed across the screen in a 'stream of unconsciousness.'"

—Canyon Cinema Catalog #7

Michael Rudnick is a San Francisco filmmaker and artist who has been making films and teaching since the 1970s. His multi-media installations have been on display in museums and galleries throughout the Bay Area and other parts of the U.S. Rudnick currently has a display on view at the Exploratorium.

Last Gasp (1981), by Jacalyn L. White; super 8mm, color, sound, 18 minutes

A dusk-till-dawn document of the dying gasp of my beloved Kodak Supermatic 200. (JW)

Jacalyn White was on the staff of the San Francisco Art Institute Filmmaking Department for nearly ten years, and her body of fifteen films have been shown extensively throughout the United States. She has specialized in films which explore sync relationships between sound and picture, particularly as recorded on super-8mm and through landscape studies.

Visions of a City (1957-1978), by Larry Jordan; 16mm, sepia, sound, 8 minutes

"The protagonist, poet Michael McClure, emerges from the all-reflection imagery of glass shop and car windows, bottles, mirrors, etc. in scenes which are also accurate portraits of both McClure and the city of San Francisco in 1957. At the same time it is a lyric and mystical film, building to a crescendo of rhythmically intercut shots of McClure's face, seemingly trapped on the glazed surface of the city. Music by William Moraldo."

—Canyon Cinema Catalog #7

Larry Jordan was a central figure in San Francisco experimental cinema in the late fifties and throughout the sixties. He worked with Christopher MacLaine, Jordan Belson, and others in addition to programming films during these years. He has been on the faculty of the San Francisco Art Institute since the 1960s, and his own film work has contributed immeasurably to the art of cut-out animation.

By the Sea (1982), by Toney Merritt; 16mm, color, silent, 3 minutes
A film made from my old studio apartment on Telegraph Hill. A portrait of sorts. (TM)

Toney Merritt is a filmmaker, teacher, and script writer who has taught at Humboldt State, California College of Arts and Crafts, and who has programmed numerous series of films by independent black filmmakers for theaters throughout California.

Pacific Far East Lines (1979), by Abigail Child; 16mm, color, silent, 12 minutes
An urban landscape film constructed from material gathered over two years looking out at downtown San Francisco. The elements 'folded' and mixed, Time redefines Space: the erector and the helicopter appear as toys within a schizy motor-oil-ized ballet mechanique. (AC)

Abigail Child is a poet, composer, filmmaker and theorist whose writings and films have been represented throughout North America and Europe. Child specializes in new forms of sound and image editing/collaging, and her major cycle of seven films, *Is This What You Were Born For?* is a landmark in creative sound filmmaking.

Crossing the Bar (1992), by Andrew Black; 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes
Crossing the Bar is a portrait of longshoreman working on the docks of San Francisco. It is that rare film which blends information about people's lives and work with evocative images which enrich the meaning of what is being conveyed.

Andrew Black is a freelance professional working in the San Francisco film industry who also makes his own personal films.

Fearful Symmetry (1981), by Michael Wallin; 16mm, color, silent, 15 minutes
Uses precisely (mathematically) determined single-framing to give movement to static space, to give life and energy to solid objects, to duplicate/mimic the eye's true movement to forcefully bring to consciousness an inherent symmetry and balance in the visual field. Images: deadened railroad tracks, ice plant fields, Bethlehem Steel smokestack, Canyon Cinema office, back porch clouds and sky, PG&E plant at Moss Landing... (MW)

"Wallin imputes the foundation of an imagistic world through discontinuous static displacement pans, flash framing the blindness persistent in vision, emptying out the subject-as-limit into the subjectlessness of seeing."
—Robert Fulton, SFAI Film Festival Judge

Michael Wallin has been a fixture in the Bay Area's avant-garde film community for over twenty years, including stints as a film instructor at California College of Arts and Crafts and manager of Canyon Cinema for most of the 80s.

Cable Car Melody (1986), by Charles Wright; 16mm, color, sound, 26 minutes
You will look down Hyde Street and see San Francisco Bay in the background. In the foreground a cable car will move across the surface of the screen, while almost everything else will change, from shot to shot, to create a melody. (CW)

Charles Wright is a collage artist, graphic artist and filmmaker whose works have been exhibited in galleries in New York City as well as San Francisco. He has also collected 1000s of images taken from catalogues printed over the last 100 years, pictures postcards, and found images.

On view in Trustees' Auditorium from 6:15 to 7:00 p.m.

East/West (1993-94), by Paula Levine

East/West is a portrait of a hill in Woodside, California made with two cameras—one on the west side facing east and the other, on the east side facing west—each camera records one second every minute for 24 hours.

East/West is one in a series of 24 hour portraits of time in place.

FASCINATE ENGAGE STARTLE INTRIGUE CHALLENGE STIMULATE ENTHRALL

INTRIGUE

"The Cinematheque is a rare and vital showcase for a personal filmmaker like myself. It provides a unique exchange of ideas that is unmatched anywhere else in the United States."

Gunvor Nelson, Filmmaker
Schmeergurtz and *Red Shift*

WE BELIEVE THAT ART SHOULD BE A MEANINGFUL PART OF EVERYONE'S LIFE, AND THAT THE CREATIVE EXPERIENCES OFFERED BY FILM AND VIDEO FAR EXCEED THOSE AVAILABLE THROUGH COMMERCIAL CINEMA OR TELEVISION.

The Lighted Field by Andrew Noren

"The San Francisco Cinematheque is an invaluable link between America and the international experimental film and video community."

David Curtis
Film and Video Officer,
Arts Council of Great Britain

THE EXPERIMENTAL FILM AND VIDEO COMMUNITY IS INTERNATIONAL IN SCOPE, AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FIELD HAS GREATLY EXPANDED WE'RE SOUGHT OUT BY MEDIA PROFESSIONALS FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO HELP DEVELOP PROGRAMS OF AMERICAN FILMS AND TAPES FOR PRESENTATION ABROAD.

"One of the things I've always appreciated about the Cinematheque is the way that it's open to a wide variety of works from the margins, that it's more interested in negotiating boundaries and definitions than in hardening them, that it actively strives to be a home to the "free forms" of our heterogeneous society."

Trinh T. Minh-ha, Director,
Naked Spaces—Living Is Round and *Shoot for the Contents*

THERE ARE NO MONOPOLIES ON CREATIVITY OR PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE FORMS IT TAKES. DIVERSE FORMAL APPROACHES, CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS AND ARTISTIC VISIONS — ALL ARE WELCOME REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MANY VOICES THAT MAKE UP SAN FRANCISCO'S VIBRANT CULTURAL LIFE.

PROVOKE

TWO BY FREDERICK WISEMAN: *HIGH SCHOOL & PRIMATE*

FREDERICK WISEMAN IN PERSON

Sunday, October 1, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Co-sponsored by Film Arts Foundation and the San Francisco Art Institute

> *I personally have a horror of producing propaganda to fit any kind of ideology...I like the material to speak for itself. I think the films that I've done, documentaries, all have a very clear point of view, but it's a point of view that the audience has to work with...in a sense they have to say, 'What the hell's he trying to say with this?'*
> *—if indeed I'm saying anything.*
>
> —Frederick Wiseman, *The Film Journal*, Spring 1971

The San Francisco Cinematheque, Film Arts Foundation, and the San Francisco Art Institute Lecture Series present a rare opportunity to see two early works by acclaimed documentary director Frederick Wiseman. Since his first work *Titicut Follies* was made and then banned in 1967, lawyer-turned-filmmaker Wiseman has made 28 documentaries focusing on American institutions and the societal contradictions they embody.

Throughout his heralded and controversial career, Frederick Wiseman has consistently pushed the boundaries of film art, blurring the lines between reality and fiction, subjectivity and objectivity, while always managing to keep audiences on the edge of their seats. Wiseman has taken as his subject American institutions: a mental institution, a correctional facility, a high school, a police department, a hospital, an Army training center, a monastery, a primate research center, and a meat packing company among others. Wiseman illustrates the way that society at large is reflected in these institutions through stark examinations of power structures and the influence they have on behavior. One cannot simply watch a Wiseman film and expect to walk away with a little nugget of truth about the way the world works. Instead, one becomes involved in the process of exploration and navigation through a complex series of images untainted by voice-over narration, allowing viewers to recognize the interaction of their own values and belief structures with the events presented in the film.

Wiseman does not present a cinema of truth in his films. As he pointed out in a 1974 interview discussing *Primate*: "I filmed events that existed in so-called real life, but structured them in a way that has no relationship to the order or time in which they actually occurred—and created a form that is totally fictional. So from a structural point of view, my films are more related to fictional technique than to documentary technique." With a fluid camera and rigorous editing Wiseman creates narratives that are associative as opposed to linear. Throughout it all Wiseman is the one controlling the image flow; the one creating the complex webs of narrative that hinge on his ability to present scenes that are at once riveting and surprising, leading his audience through these institutions which seem at once familiar and foreign. It is in this paradoxical space that we discover the power of Wiseman's work: the revelation of the hidden tensions that exist behind the facade of acceptable society.

High School (1968); 16mm, b/w, sound, 75 minutes

A high school, like any institution, is a self-contained society and you have to hunt out the places where power is exercised. That's where you're going to find the real values of the institution expressed. In one way the film is organized around the contrasts between the formal values of openness, trust, sensitivity, democracy, and understanding, and the actual practice of the school which is quite authoritarian. (FW)

Primate (1974); 16mm, b/w, sound, 105 minutes

"Wiseman has called the film a 'science-fiction documentary,' for it is about man's use of technology to attempt to manipulate the present and project himself into the future...Thus, in this institution, what we are seeing is the hunting animal—the tool-carrying killer primate—experimenting on his relative, the knuckle-walking primate, in order to understand and control his own evolution. This is the exact reversal of the situation presented in *The Planet of the Apes*, and its implications are far more bizarre and chilling."

—Thomas R. Atkins, *Frederick Wiseman*, 1976

Besides his work as an independent filmmaker, Wiseman is a graduate of Yale Law School, and has directed numerous theater pieces including *Welfare: the Opera* which he also wrote the story for, at the 1992 American Music Theater Festival in Philadelphia.

WISEMAN FILMOGRAPHY

Titicut Follies (1967);*Seraphita's Diary* (1982); *High School* (1968);*The Store* (1983); *Law and Order* (1969); *Racetrack* (1985); *Hospital* (1970); *Blind* (1986); *Basic Training* (1971); *Deaf* (1986); *Essence* (1972); *Adjustment and Work* (1986); *Juvenile Court* (1973); *Multi-handicapped* (1986); *Primate* (1974); *Missile* (1987); *Welfare* (1975); *Near Death* (1989); *Meat* (1976); *Central Park* (1989); *Canal Zone* (1977); *Aspen* (1991); *Sinai Field Mission* (1978); *Zoo* (1993); *Maneuver* (1980); *High School II* (1994); *Model* (1980); *Ballet* (1995).

Wiseman will speak about and show various clips from his works
October 2, 1995 at 8:00 PM, at the Herbst Theater, 401 Van Ness Avenue.
This discussion, the first of FAF's Meet the Mavericks series, will be moderated by
Academy Award winner Irving Saraf.
For information call 552-8760; for tickets call 392-4400.

•program notes by Jeffery Lambert•

CINEMATHEQUE:
BEHIND THE SCENE ON SCREEN

Thursday, October 5, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Who are these people who hold the San Francisco Cinematheque together? As a struggling non-profit with a meager staff of two and a half, the Cinematheque could not subsist without the love and labor of innumerable friends who regularly emerge from the large and diverse San Francisco film community to help us out. There are those on whom we call when in need, and there are those who appear on our doorstep (often having heard about us at one of the local film schools or at the courthouse where parking tickets get transmuted into hours of work) from all over the city, country and world to offer a bit of their sweat and blood for a few weeks or months. They help us by answering phones, writing

program notes, licking stamps, selling tickets, making flyers, editing publications, distributing calendars, logging films, organizing our library, compiling publicity booklets, helping with projection, and just being there, so we know we can count on them in our moments of crisis. But who are these people, willing to do both menial tasks with no glory and challenging tasks that require feats of wild imagination, hours of organizational precision, and leaps of unbounded faith? Many are filmmakers in their own right, whose interest in seeing films and in making sure they continue to be seen at places like the Cinematheque is an integral part of their own creative development. This evening's screening is a look at the Cinematheque from the inside out, a way to get to know the some of the creative individuals who are its lifeblood, and an eclectic visual feast of some of the newest and hottest Bay Area short films.

—Irina Leimbacher

6.95: striptease(1995) by Brian Frye; 16mm, color, silent, 3.5 minutes

"The spectacle is a false revelation, the mechanism of substitution; it replaces knowledge with the promise of knowledge, language with the promise of communication, authenticity with the promise of truth. It is an exercise in recursive teleology, its object the reproduction of needs it cannot satisfy, the desire for alienation. It exists only as the materiel of consumption, the wasted husk of consciousness in presence. Its enlightenment is that of the pedagogue, a vicious obscurantism, translating the beauty of discontinuity into a simple science of empty maxims and valorized tautology. For its disciples speak its name in tongues that cannot be their own, and with the terror of the repentant suicide, they dance a fearful tarantella and scream with rabid glee the terrible praises of its own forsaken corpse."

—Jackson P. Broadway

The Creative Process? (1995), by Shawn Parrish; 16mm, b/w, sound, 6 minutes

I had been having writer's block for over a month and the idea came to me for a joke about making a film about a film student who is making a film but has no ideas. This idea turned into a short comedy about badly made, pretentious, over-symbolic student films. What does it mean, you ask? Well, I believe what I was trying to say was that no one should take filmmaking half-assed. The two characters at the table (Ralph and Egg man) are like two parts of me—one side wanting to make films that challenge their audience and the other always saying that the film will be too artsy. (SP)

Bodylyrics 1(1995), by Judith Pfeifer; 16mm, color, sound, 5 minutes

The shadows and appearances of two individuals emerge and evaporate in an inner and outer dialogue of approach and isolation. Alternating between a spherical, spatial orientation and a search for another body, they share their path by extending their balance beyond their axis into tentative partner related movements. (JP)

ALLMIXEDUP (1995), by Geoffe Domenghini; 16mm, color, sound, 20 minutes

A film in three parts about the 'irrational' relationships between three couples. I: *Despair.* II: *Ambient Sound.* III: *A Film about Soap.* (GD)

The Rope Factory (1995), by Kerri O'Kane and Megan Hayenga;
16mm, b/w, sound, 13 minutes

Two filmmakers explore the innards of an old rope factory built in the late 1800s. While inside they tap into the magic of those quiet moments shared by friends exploring dark old forbidden places. Most of the film has been hand-processed creating a unique and palpable space.

"Untitled" (1995), by Christian Bruno; 16mm, color, sound, 13 minutes
An artist asks himself, "Whose aesthetic is it anyway?" (CB)

Results from Test Case 79014F (1995), by Rick Danielson;
16mm, b/w, sound, 10 minutes
A man is experimented on with uncertain results. (RD)

Gay Pride 4 (1995), by Timoleon Wilkins; regular-8mm, color, silent, 4 minutes
A film comprised of four color variations on one roll of unslit regular-8. The four screens within a screen suggest a disturbing window through which particles and persons disperse in reversing and repeating rhythm. (TW)

Untitled work in progress (1995) by Elise Hurwitz; 16mm, color, silent, 2 minutes
She says chopping wood is more intellectual than physical (mentally searching for the line along which wood will split). I watch her, wondering. (EH)

My Good Eye (1995), by Alfonso Alvarez; 16mm, color, sound, 4 minutes
"Kinochestvo is the art of organizing the necessary movements of objects in space as a rhythmical artistic whole, in harmony with the properties of the material and the internal rhythm of each object."

—From *WE, Variant of a Manifesto*, Dziga Vertov, 1922

"Kinodelic is the art of organizing the necessary movements of color film stock through an optical printer in harmony with the internal rhythm in the music of Jimi Hendrix."

—From *US, Variant of a Variant*, Alva, 1995

3.95: untitled (1995) by Brian Frye; 16mm, color, silent, 3.5 minutes
"Records of a symbolic city in which the mark of historicity manifests itself despite the static continuity of alienated architecture, and the spectre of specificity blooms in the shadow of the careless machine. The true name of spaces is broken and their secret lives can be realized only in moments."

—Jackson P. Broadway

. . . And now, as a coda, two from the Cinematheque staff . . .

Subway (1972) by Steve Anker, Steve; 16mm, b/w, silent, 3 minutes
To think that he gave up a career in filmmaking to become the Director of the Cinematheque!

Let's Go to the Bad World (unfinished fake preview) (1990) by Joel Shepard;
16mm, color, silent, 3 minutes
And you thought Associate Directors don't have a dark side...?

...and then god became disoriented in the forest of higher animals...

J. G. CHAPMAN IN PERSON

Sunday, October 8, 1995 — Victoria Theatre

a co-presentation of the San Francisco Cinematheque and non productions

Tonight the Cinematheque and non productions are happy to co-present the premier of J.G. Chapman's first feature film, *...and then god became disoriented in the forest of higher animals...* J.G. Chapman has worked in and around audio/visuals in San Francisco since 1985. As recording engineer, he has been involved with hundreds of recordings ranging from Thinking Fellers to Joe Satriani, red house painters to Faith No More. With devotion and respect reserved for the non-commercial, otherwise obscure, or projects somehow placed under the vague guise of truer art, he has worked on composing, recording, and producing many music and sound pieces, as well as sound for film for *American Playhouse*. More recently, he has become active as a cameraman and/or visual collaborator for film and video. Since 1987 he has written, directed and resourcefully produced six short films. Mr. Chapman also works as a technician and consultant in recording studios, post-houses and performs myriad duties from negative cutting to lens repair in an effort to finance his personal projects. *...and then god became disoriented in the forest of higher animals...* will be preceded by two short works, Thad Povey's *Thine Inward-looking Eyes* and Danny Plotnick and Laura Rosow's *Pillow Talk.*

Thine Inward-looking Eyes (1993), by Thad Povey; 16mm, color, sound, 2 minutes

To paraphrase something Lao Tzu didn't say: This film's an empty cup—You fill it up. (TP)

Pillow Talk (1991), by Danny Plotnick and Laura Rosow;
Super-8mm, color, sound, 18 minutes

Extreme manipulation of filmic time and space combined with an impressionistic lighting scheme help create an urban spaces nightmare. They're fighting downstairs, they're fucking next door, they're stealing your clothes in the laundry room, and you're no better than the rest. Loquacious and lugubrious. Sorta like *Jeanne Dielman* meets *Laverne & Shirley.* (DP)

...and then god became disoriented in the forest of higher animals... (1994), by J.G. Chapman; 16mm, color, sound, 70 minutes

Doomed to be mysteriously connected to the essence of life, square peg Audrey Muse wrestles undauntedly with the future machine of western civilization. Squatting with a bumbling undesirable and an obsessive criminal handyman in the anarchistic zone outside the new world order, she naively launches illegal social commentary and, in a world without plants, animals or reliable oxygen, begins the inevitable journey into cynicism and disillusionment. (JGC)

J.G. CHAPMAN FILMOGRAPHY

Controlled Logic and Binary inc. (1988); *Exteriors* (1989); *Red Carpets* (1990); *Under* (1990) (Co-Director and Director of Photography); *Man of Unfoundedness* (1991); *Meet the Thinking Fellers* (1993); *...and then god became disoriented in the forest of higher animals...* (1994)

ELLEN BRUNO: PORTRAITS FROM THE EDGE

ELLEN BRUNO IN PERSON

Thursday, October 12, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Ellen Bruno's passionate involvement in the lives of the people she chooses to film provides a context for a humanistic understanding of her subjects' perspectives and prepares the viewer to analyze the political forces that shape their own, as well as other people's lives. In her documentaries, Bruno intends to show the audience "other possibilities of existence, other ways of being in the world" (—Ellen Bruno). She paints deeply personal portraits of people from different cultures, evoking awesome respect for people who persevere. Through her deliberate, reflective pacing and poetic feel for detail, Bruno explores themes of survival—how life miraculously persists and how philosophical idealism is retained in the presence of tragedy and oppression.

Bruno acknowledges the huge impact that her community work has upon her filmmaking. Before receiving her Master's Degree in documentary filmmaking from Stanford in 1990, she worked in refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border, as field coordinator for the International Rescue Committee's Family Reunification Program, and as Director of the Cambodian Women's Project for the American Friends Service Committee. Recently, her volunteer work with the Zen Center Hospice provided the inspiration for her latest project, *Blessed.*

Samsara (1990); 16mm, color, sound, 29 minutes

The Cambodian survivors in *Samsara* are tested to the limits of human endurance in a country disrupted with deep political turmoil. They are attempting to restructure their lives in the wake of destruction left by the Khmer Rouge. Using ancient prophecy, Buddhist teachings, folklore and dreams, Bruno documents a shattered society in a climate of war as they struggle to understand their past. Bruno reveals a new vision of reality, an elusive and difficult path of nonresistance.

Satya: A Prayer For The Enemy (1994); 16mm, color, sound, 28 minutes

Bruno structures yet another vision of reality in *Satya* as she seeks to understand the basis and inspiration for the nonviolent resistance of Tibetan nuns against the religious oppression and cultural genocide practiced by the Chinese government against the Tibetans. Bruno makes a profound visual, emotional and political statement through the intimacy and gentleness with which she handles the material.

"If more films were made with a conscience even remotely close to this one, the world would be a different place."

—National Educational Film Festival.

Blessed (1995); 3/4 inch video, color, sound, 12 minutes

In her newest work, Bruno brings her astute observations and deeply personal, lyrical style closer to home in a story about an inter-racial couple living in the Tenderloin. Bruno documents the wisdom and spirit of survival of this couple as they confront their demons and attempt to live out the American dream in an unconventional way. Ellen Bruno portrays yet another perspective on the human condition in this film as she attempts to confront vital social issues and challenge her audience's points of view.

•program notes by Chryss Terry•

BLACK SHEEP BOY
AND OTHER FILMS BY MICHAEL WALLIN
MICHAEL WALLIN IN PERSON

Sunday , October 15, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Michael Wallin's first one-person screening in seven years at the San Francisco Cinematheque highlights the completion of his long awaited new film *Black Sheep Boy*, a poetic rumination on desire, the construction of sexual fantasy, and the pursuit of the idealized other. Tonight's show is also an opportunity to revisit several of Wallin's earlier works, including the award-winning *Decodings*.

Michael Wallin has been making films in the Bay Area for 25 years. His involvement in the film community has included an eight-year stint as Manager of Canyon Cinema, the country's largest distributor of independently-produced experimental work, and eight years on its Board of Directors. He has taught film production and theory at California College of Arts and Crafts, and is currently President of the Board of the San Francisco Cinematheque. In 1988 Wallin received the James D. Phelan Art Award in Filmmaking for the body of his work, and his film *Decodings* was chosen for the Biennial Exhibition of the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1989. In order to make *Black Sheep Boy*, he received major production grants to artists from the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Film Institute as well as a grant from the Independent Television Service (ITVS). In addition to making films, Wallin also works as a psychotherapist at Fort Help Counseling Agency and has a private practice.

Sleepwalk (1973); 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

Sleepwalk, one of the first films Wallin finished while attending film school, grew out of an interest in the Russian mystic philosophers Gurdjieff and Ouspensky and their theories concerning the expression of personality through personal mannerisms, gesture and nuances of behavior. In his film Wallin deconstructs the physical expressions that characterize three of his friends, examining the process by which these idiosyncrasies delineate the specificity of personality.

Along the Way (1983); 16mm, color, sound, 20 minutes

The third film in a trilogy of related works that includes *Monitoring the Unstable Earth* and *Fearful Symmetry*, *Along the Way* addresses the function of topography as perceived through landscape and cityscape. However, while the previous films move toward abstraction, *Along the Way* centers itself on people, events and the experiential aspects of space. Taking the form of a travelogue or diary film, it chronicles the activities of leisure time, while focusing them through the analytic lens of formalist structure. Finished during the dissolution of a ten-year relationship, the film contains the emotional residue of that event, playing with a deliberate sentimentality or nostalgia for things past.

Decodings (1988); 16mm, b/w, sound, 15 minutes

> *The mystery of life is being here with you. The mystery is being with your absence. This is a story. There is isolation and brotherhood. Desperation and hope. A heart is laid bare. There is blood. A man leaps from an airplane. Danger. It is not a story for the timid.*
>
> — from the script of *Decodings*

While I was editing the film I began to realize that my choice of material reflected concerns that seemed almost 'autobiographical.' The film evolved into a sort of emotional/psychological/sexual self-portrait. I wrote a piece for the film as a narration, but it was too naked. I gave it to a writer friend with instructions to create vignettes and characters to carry the thematic material. He did, creating a series of anecdotes, parables and pseudo-scientific musings to accompany the images and the music of Shostakovich. The film deals with the issues of the kinds of relationships that can exist between males and the possibilities for and the barriers to intimacy. It is concerned with the struggle to break through family/cultural expectations and role-playing to express true individuality and experience true freedom. (MW)

"*Decodings* is a profoundly moving, allegorical search for identity from the documents of collective memory, in this case found footage from the 40s and 50s . The search for self ends in aching poignancy with stills of a boy and his mother at the kitchen table, catching the moment that marks the dawning of anguish and loss; desire becomes imprinted on that which was long ago."

— Manohla Dargis, *Village Voice*

Black Sheep Boy (1995); 16mm, color, sound, 37 minutes

Michael Wallin's most recent film, *Black Sheep Boy*, explicitly addresses his experience of his own sexuality and the way that it has structured and responded to desire, especially as expressed through voyeurism. Although the visual element of the film consists predominately of intimately photographed nude or partially clothed young men, as a text it maintains a studied distance from these men, allowing for their presence only as the objects of its gaze, which the spoken text implicitly identifies as that of the filmmaker. This position of identification with the gaze of the camera emphasizes its function as a probing tool, one which allows for examination and dissection but stymies the maturation of desire into identification with its object. However, while the visual object of desire remains external, the subject of examination and point of intimate revelation attaches itself to the voice of the text, that of the filmmaker, and the features that characterize the specificity of his desire. In this way, the true intimate subject of the film becomes explicitly located in the disembodied corpus of the text itself, and so not only functions as an exegesis of desire and its problematics as expressed in this one individual, but also implicates the spectator in that critical evaluation, its revelation demanding reciprocation.

"On the surface, *Black Sheep Boy* might appear to stereotype gay men as sex obsessed—and with youth at that. But Wallin accomplishes something deeper: he presents a thinking, feeling human being on a quest for self-knowledge. *Boy* has links to experimental classics such as Jean Genet's *Un Chant d'Amour* and Kenneth Anger's *Fireworks*, but addresses the philosophical and psychological implications of sexual yearning more directly."

—Daniel Mangin, *S.F. Weekly*

MICHAEL WALLIN FILMOGRAPHY

Black Sheep Boy (1995); *Greed, or Buffalo Baba* (1972/1980); *Decodings* (1988); *The Place Between Our Bodies* (1976); *Along the Way* (1983); *Sleepwalk* (1973); *Fearful Symmetry* (1981); *As the Wheel Turns* (1973); *Monitoring the Unstable Earth* (1980); *Kali's Revue* (1972); *Cool Runnings* (1980); *Mendocino* (1968); *Tall Grass* (1980); *Phoebe and Jan* (1968).

•program notes by Brian Frye•

TRINH T. MINH-HA'S *A TALE OF LOVE*

TRINH T. MINH-HA IN PERSON

Thursday, October 19, 1995 — Kabuki Theatre

The San Francisco Cinematheque, NAATA and FAF present a special sneak preview

The San Francisco Cinematheque, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association and Film Arts Foundation are honored to present a sneak preview of Trinh T. Minh-ha's eagerly awaited first narrative feature, *A Tale of Love*. A filmmaker, writer, composer and teacher, Trinh Minh-ha has been a vital and provocative presence in the Bay Area film community for several years. Her category-defying films, her poetic and uncompromising critical writing on cinema, feminism, and gender and cultural politics, as well as her soft-spoken yet rigorous classes at San Francisco State and U C Berkeley have inspired and challenged many of us working and thinking in the representational arena.

Born in Hanoi and educated at the University of Saigon and the National Conservatory of Music, Trinh Minh-ha left Vietnam at the age of seventeen and continued her studies in the Philippines and in Paris. She moved to the United States in 1970 where she received graduate degrees in Ethnomusicology and Music Composition, and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. Between 1977 and 1980 she taught at the National Conservatory of Music in Dakar, Senegal. Here in the United States she has taught at Cornell, Smith, Harvard and San Francisco State, and she is presently Professor of Women's Studies and Film at the University of California, Berkeley. While teaching, writing and making films, Trinh also travels and lectures extensively on art, film theory and practice, feminism, and cultural politics in the States as well as in Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. The recipient of several awards and grants (including the AFI National Independent Filmmaker Maya Deren Award, fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment of the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Film Institute, and the California Arts Council), Trinh's films have shown widely in the United States, in Canada, Senegal, Australia and New Zealand as well as in Europe and Asia, with retrospectives in the UK, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Hong Kong.

All of Trinh Minh-ha's works challenge and undermine the experience of film both as spectacle and as bearer of authoritative meaning. Her first film, *Reassemblage*, which was shot in Senegal with a hand-cranked Bolex, challenges traditional ethnographic style and embodies a reflection on the cinematographic language commonly used in ethno-documentary films. Her subsequent films, *Naked Spaces - Living is Round*, *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*, and *Shoot for the Contents* all continue to actively engage the audience in the process of meaning construction as they question and dismantle fixed notions of identity, culture, and the power to name, to speak about. As Trinh writes in her book *When the Moon Waxes Red*, there is a great need to make films politically, and "a politically made film must begin by first shaking the system of cinematic values on which its politics is entirely dependent." Her new film which we have the privilege of screening tonight will certainly continue to shake both the system and our expectations while at the same time marking a new departure for Trinh into the realm of 35mm "fiction" filmmaking.

A Tale of Love (1995); 35mm, color, sound, 108 minutes
Director, Producer, Writer, Editor: Trinh T. Minh-ha; *Co-Director, Co-Producer, Lighting & Production Designer:* Jean-Paul Bourdier; *Line Producer/ Production Manager:* Erica Marcus; *Director of Photography:* Kathleen Beeler; *Art Director:* Angela D. Chou; *Assistant Editor/Location Manager:* Corey Ohama; *Post-Production Consultant/Re-recording Mixer:* Jim Kallett; *Music:* The Construction

of Ruins; *Constructors:* Greg Goodman, J.A. Deane; *Sound Recordist:* Lauretta Molitor; *Cast:* Mai Huynh, Juliette Chen, Dominic Overstreet, Mai Le Ho, Kieu Loan.

Set in the framework of contemporary American life, ***A Tale of Love*** follows the quest of a woman in love with Love. The film is loosely inspired by ***The Tale of Kieu***, the Vietnamese national poem of love, written in the early 19th century. The poem tells of the misfortunes of Kieu, a martyred woman who sacrificed her "purity" and prostituted herself for the good of her family. Vietnamese people (both in Vietnam and in the diaspora) see the poem as a mythical biography of the "motherland," marked by internal turbulence and foreign domination; they recognize their country in the karma-cursed and passion-driven Kieu.

The film portrays the Vietnamese immigrant experience through Kieu, a free-lance writer who sends money to her family in Vietnam by working for a women's magazine and posing for a photographer. Yet, while caught between different cultural and emotional worlds, our modern day Kieu broadens the role of the nineteenth century woman of *The Tale of Kieu* by exposing the link between sex and the virtual decapitation of women in love stories.

Kieu struggles with her Aunt, a single mother and a social worker, over traditional values and the demands of modern life. In his studio, Alikan the artist photographs Kieu sheathed by transparent veils, shrouded in mystery. Idealizing the headless female body, he exposes the voyeurism of both the camera eye and the spectator's eye in the consumption of images of love. Kieu's relationship with Alikan is, however, based on mutual agreement and their dialogues hint at a larger conversation between cultures and genders. The two are playing a match of chess where desire drives the game.

Away from the photographer's studio, Kieu is working on an article about the legacy of *The Tale of Kieu* for a women's magazine. Kieu's mentor Juliet, the editor of the magazine, is a woman who loves through the sense of smell and believes only in a "great love," *à la* Romeo and Juliet. With Juliet, Kieu comes to understand how the poem resonates in her own personal life. In the end, overcoming the sorrows of love and exile is, for Kieu, to reinvent both herself and the 200-year old poem.

Voyeurism runs through the history of love narrative, and voyeurism is here one of the threads that structure the "narrative" of the film. Is the film about love? Is it a love story? As the title suggests, it is above all a "tale"; a tale about the fiction of love in love stories and the process of consumption; a tale that marginalizes traditional narrative conventions such as action, plot, unity of time and realistic characters. Opening up a space where reality, memory and dream constantly pass into one another, ***A Tale of Love*** unfolds in linear and non-linear time. It offers both a sensual and an intellectual experience of film and can be viewed as a symphony of colors, sounds and reflections. As a character in the film says, "Narrative is a track of scents passed on from lovers to lovers."

Kieu acts as a foil to a multiplicity of desires embodied in the other characters. With Alikan, Minh, Java and Juliet, she experiences love through sight, sound, smell and touch. Similarly, the film offers the spectator more than one way into it own "love stories." Rather than being homogenized, the relationship between the visuals and the verses remains layered and elliptical. Light, setting, camera movement, sound and text all have a presence, a logic and a language of their own. Although they reflect upon one another, they are not intended to just illustrate the meanings of the narrative. The film also works with a subtly "denaturalized" space of acting. In the way the shots and the dialogues are carried out, both spectators and actors share the discomfort of voyeurism: the unnaturalness of those who

"look without being looked at" (the makers, the spectators) versus the self-consciousness of those who "know they are being looked at while they are being watched" (the actors).

TRINH T. MINH-HA FILMOGRAPHY
Reassemblage (1982); *Naked Spaces—Living is Round* (1985); *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* (1989); *Shoot for the Contents* (1991); *A Tale of Love* (co-directed with Jean-Paul ; Bourdier, 1995).

BOOKS BY TRINH T. MINH-HA
Un Art sans oeuvre (1981); *African Spaces—Designs for Living in Upper Volta* (in collaboration with Jean-Paul Bourdier, 1985); *En minuscules* (1987); *Woman, Native, Other* (1989); *When the Moon Waxes Red* (1991); *Framer Framed* (1992).

"I am interested in making films that *further engage filmmaking*, and contribute to the body of existing works that inspire and generate other works. In this process of mutual learning, of constant modification in consciousness, the relation between filmmaker, film subject and film viewer becomes so tightly interdependent that the reading of the film can never be reduced to the filmmaker's intentional...Reading a film is a creative act and I will continue to make films whose reading I may provoke and initiate but do not control. A film is like a page of paper which I offer the viewer. I am responsible for what is within the boundary of the paper but I do not control and do not wish to control its folding. The viewer can fold it horizontally, obliquely, vertically, they can weave the elements to their liking and background. This interfolding and intervening situation is what I consider to be most exciting in making films."

—Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1988

•*notes on A Tale of Love provided by Trinh T. Minh-ha* •
•notes on the work of Trinh T. Minh-ha by Irina Leimbacher•

QUEER SHORTS BY FEATURE DIRECTORS

JENNIE LIVINGSTON IN PERSON

Sunday, October 22, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Hot Heads (1993), by Jennie Livingston; video, color, sound, 6 minutes

Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story (1987), by Todd Haynes; 16mm, color, sound, 40 minutes

Name Day (1993), by Maria Maggenti; 16mm, b/w, sound,

Intrepidissima (1992,) by Marta Balletbo-Coll; video, color, sound, 7 minutes

Fingers and Kisses (1995), by Shu Lea Cheang; video, color, sound, 5 minutes

Coming Home (1995), by Shu Lea Cheang; video, color, sound, 4 minutes

The Discipline of De (1978), by Gus Van Sant; 16mm, b/w, sound, 9 minutes

My Friend (1985), by Gus Van Sant; 16mm, b/w, sound, 3 minutes

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FILMS FROM PARIS' LIGHT CONE

LIGHT CONE FOUNDER YANN BEAUVAIS IN PERSON

Thursday, October 26, 1995 — Center for the Arts

This evening the San Francisco Cinematheque is honored to welcome Yann Beauvais with a program of films brought to us all the way from Paris. Beauvais is the co-founder, with Miles McKane, of Light Cone, France's most active distributor of alternative film which, like the Bay Area's own Canyon Cinema, accepts experimental films on deposit with the filmmakers retaining ownership and setting their own rental rates. He also founded and does the programming for Scratch Projection, a major venue for experimental films in France, as well as being the Film and Video Curator at the American Center in Paris.

***Uta Makura** (Pillow Poems): Of Gardens. Outings. Tokyotokids. On the Go* (1994-95), by Vivian Ostrovsky; 16mm, color, sound, 19 minutes

The filmmaker's reflections on traveling to Japan.

New York Long Distance (1994), by Yann Beauvais; 16mm, color, sound, 9 minutes

An evocation of Beauvais' relationship to New York since 1962 through a combination of postcard images and autobiographical fragments.

The film is concerned with the distance between a memory and the image of this memory, a distance one always tries to abolish. (YB)

***La Pêche miraculeuse** (The Miraculous Catch of Fish)* (1995), by Cécile Fontaine; 16mm, color, silent, 18 fps, 10 minutes

Using found footage, travel footage, mattes and superimpositions, Fontaine takes us on a lush and lyrical journey into the sea and the film medium.

Bouquets 1-10 (1994-95), by Rose Lowder; 16mm, color, silent, 12 minutes

An investigation into landscape, time and the act of seeing.

***Vagues à Collioure** (Waves at Collioure)* (1991), by Jean Michel Bouhours; 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes

In the summer of 1914, Collioure was a small and tranquil fishing village far from the convulsions of a Europe in flames. Matisse painted a curious canvas there, *French Window in Collioure*. Homage to Collioure, a wink to the cubists, a reference to Matisse; an offering to the wind and to the sea.

The furious north wind sends you its spasmodic grumblings in the crystalline air. The sea is unleashed by the wind, which suddenly deserts the various small boats; SOS for the imprudent. The huge breaking waves make the children on the beach happy. (JMB)

Trama (1987-80), by Christian Lebrat; 16mm, color, sound, 12 minutes

Trama succeeds in producing and multiplying perspectives, flights, depths and parallel worlds. Spatial rotations not inscribed in the ribbon appear, chasms open, points of escape multiply, the screen twists in all directions, thickens and collapses to this frantic rhythm. (YB)

Un Navet (A Flop) (1976), by Maurice Lemaître; 16mm, color, sound, 31 minutes

One can say that film lovers are going to be spoiled! The creator and his assistant René Charles have done everything to offer the screen-intoxicated a real hard punch of cinema. Of course, not everyone will be of this opinion, and there will always be the cinematic epicures who prefer to go to the boulevards or the Champs-Elysées to belch at their leisure...

It's true that one needn't be disgusted to view this film. Even the connoisseurs of the "underground", the "different", the "experimental", and *tutti quanti* (as well as, *a fortiori* , the art cinema clods...) will grumble in front of this screen!

But that's exactly what Lemaître wants, you clever ones! To make you completely sick of cinema! (ML)

TEXT FROM THE SOUNDTRACK OF MAURICE LEMAÎTRE'S *UN NAVET (A FLOP)*

(translated by Irina Leimbacher)

Yesterday at the movies, I saw a great film...
A film by Maurice Lemaître...
A flop, it was called...
Really a good film... A success!
But this one, well...

That film, on the other hand, is really bad...
Frankly disgusting
Really, not successful!
How can one make a film like that?
It has neither tail nor head!
Don't you agree?
Don't tell me you like the film!
I don't know what you could see in it!
You have to be sick to make things like that!
The filmmaker certainly isn't in his right mind.
I wonder what made him make this horror!
One shouldn't allow this type of thing!
What could have made him do that?
Don't you agree?
Why aren't you saying anything?
You are all really clods.
One can show you anything and you swallow it and say thank you!
There's no way to get a murmur out of you, some opinion!
You think this is good?
You like it, huh?
There's no reason not to be frank, if they
gave you shit to eat, you'd only ask for more?
No, really, look at this bunch of idiots, flopped down like cows,
chewing their cud!
Seriously, don't you think this guy is making fun of you?
You're not going to just sit there without moving, until the end of the film?
You have to do something, stop the projection, something, I don't know!
If at least there was a little music...
You're discouraging, one can't expect anything from people as spineless as you.
People who will pay to swallow any kind of trash!
Just put you in front of a screen and you're happy!

I mean, this isn't cinema!
You'd never make me say this film is worth a good Renoir, a good Eisenstein...
There's not an idea in it!
Empty, it's totally empty.
He's got nothing to say, this guy!
He's making fun of you.
And he's right, because you're letting him...
There's no reason not to be frank..
I don't know what else to say, even to insult you. You couldn't care less...
It's true that you're clods...
Isn't there even one among you, to react a little, to say something?
Ok, ok, it's me who's wrong!
Even so, you have to be masochistic...
Oh well, I don't care, if you like such things...
There are limits though!
That guy, if I had him, I'd stick my fist in his face!
It's not permitted to make fun of people like this!
What shit...
There it is, your little cinema, huh,
are you content, did you have a good belch?
Me, in any case, I won't be taken in, I won't fall for that stuff!
You can't take me for a half-wit!
I'm staying just to see how far that guy can take you, you bunch of suckers!
And I bet you'll even thank him, you imbeciles!
Thank you, Mr. Filmmaker, for mocking us!
No, you haven't seen yourselves, eyes round as marbles, watching this junk!
Ah, if you could only see yourselves!
You're not very bright...
There are some people who deserve a good kick in the ass...
Hitler was right, there really are inferior races... degenerates...
One can't do anything for those people...
Say something, for god's sake!...

• program notes by Irina Leimbacher and Emily Golembiewski•

TERMINAL USA — UNCENSORED! WITH *DER ELVIS* & *SLEAZY RIDER*

JON MORITSUGU IN PERSON

Sunday, October 29, 1995 — SF Art Institute

"These films are maximum fuck but with strange appeal."

—*Strange Noise Magazine* (Japan)

"Moritsugu's films are profoundly original yet utterly repulsive. He is most definitely the boil on the buttocks of the American independent film scene."

—Terry Van Horn, London Film Collective
(from Moritsugu's press kit; there is no London Film Collective)

Kazumi's been shot but needs more dope. The straight laced brother is hot for a local skinhead, sis is blowing the lawyer and mom just wants to order a pizza. A world of pill poppers, girl rockers, hippies, sausage trafficers, sluts, suckers and a garden of beef. You

have entered the world of filmmaker Jon Moritsugu, creator of a vast range of eye-popping, furiously paced punk-pop art comedies. Lawless but never careless, he is one our countries most talented young independents. He states, "I want an immediate response, which is either disgust or people liking it. I'm not trying to do anything lofty like change the world, I don't think that's possible through filmmaking."

With a group of films spanning ten years that have shown at film festivals around the world, Moritsugu has shown that you can make a sophisticated, genuinely subversive film with very little money, proving that creativity and desire are not always ruled by the dollar. Tonight Moritsugu will present the uncensored version of *Terminal USA*. The film was produced for television broadcast by the Independent Television Service. Until now, *Terminal USA* has only been available in a "self-censored" version, which obscured some of the raunchier visuals and language, and also contained a great deal of fake censorship of innocent material. Moritsugu will also present two hilarious, classic shorts, *Der Elvis* and *Sleazy Rider*.

Der Elvis (1987); 16mm, color, sound, 23 minutes

This devastating put-down is absolutely the last work on Elvis mania. Scuzzed to the max, *Der Elvis* takes on the man and the myth in the cruelest way imaginable, detailing his weird sex life, his obsession with laxatives and enemas, the dozen or so drugs found in his body, and his gun fetish. Of course, it's difficult to understand anyone's interest in Elvis, he was truly terrifying; a sweaty, brooding sow wrapped in polyester, yodeling cornball Vegas muzak. *Der Elvis* elegantly destroys the illusion with warped, elliptical editing, disorienting manipulation of sound, and general skull-bashing, sledgehammer approach. "I found him strangely fascinating...for everything bad I've said about him, I still have a certain amount for respect for Elvis."

Sleazy Rider (1988); 16mm, b/w, sound, 23 minutes

A shiny, dusted fairy tale of "girl hoods on an epic sum ride," *Sleazy Rider* is a sort of remake of *Easy Rider*, but instead of cocaine, these evil hippie chicks smuggle sausage and sniff spray paint, only stopping to terrorize retarded suburbanites. With clips from hard-core porn, mean gossip about Dennis Hopper's illegitimate daughter, and a stomping, ultra-distorted soundtrack. *Sleazy Rider* handily crams the whole biker "scene" into the garbage. "For all the nice things people said about *Easy Rider*, I thought it was a pretty lame movie...I just wanted to take this hippie manifesto and fuck with it." Music by Steppenpuke, Feedtime and, Sockabilly.

Terminal USA (1993); 16mm, color, sound, 57 minutes

Terminal USA is a relentlessly anarchic soap opera fever dream of the "model" minority family, starring Moritsugu himself in double role as Kazumi and Marvin, the good and bad Asian brothers. Moritsugu sees his characterization of the family as unique in television history, "You don't see Asian Americans on TV. I see this as a first, a very Americanized Asian American family...you never see that on television, which is really disconcerting." With a meticulously perverse attention to sets and costumes, *Terminal USA* examines the problems facing our troubled teens today: pregnancy tests, blowjobs, IV drug use, skinheads and, of course, gunshot wounds. Riddled with reckless, yet comedic violence, hilariously strange anti-acting, cross burning, and somersaulting blood spattered cheerleaders, *Terminal USA* may be more then you bargained for.

His biggest budget film so far, Moritsugu says that "it's the closest I'll ever come to making a Hollywood film...it was also the most disgusting, worst way to make a movie,

with that much money and that many people around." Regardless, *Terminal USA* is Moritsugu's most sophisticated work. crystallizing his obsessions (teenagers, racism, rebellion", punk rock) in a brilliant satire of the ultimate dysfunctional family. Also featuring a stellar performance by *Hippy Porn* co-director Jacques Boyreau as Tabitha the Skinhead, and sound by Monte Cazazza and Michelle Handelman.

It is a positive, constructive act to create your own world out of one that is not yours. It is often the only sane thing to do. Even though Moritsugu's films are bursting with bile, he is motivated by more than just a hatred of society. "I make films not only out of bitterness and anger...my films are the way I wish the world was...and it's an optimistic thing to do that."

MORITSUGU SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY
Der Elvis (1987); *Sleazy Rider* (1988); *My Degeneration* (1989); *Hippy Porn* (1991, Co-Directed with Jacques Boyreau); *Terminal USA* (1993); *Mod Fuck Explosion* (1994).

•program notes by Joel Shepard, Associate Director, SF Cinematheque•
(notes originally appeared in a different form in *Your Flesh* magazine)

LOOK AND LISTEN: A FILM/SOUND LABORATORY

CO-PRESENTED AS PART OF THE 11TH ANNUAL FILM ARTS FESTIVAL
DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF KEVIN DEAL
ORGANIZED BY STEVE DYE

Thursday, November 2, 1995 — Roxie Cinema, 3117-16th Street

LOOK & LISTEN
A FILM/SOUND LABORATORY

THERE IS AN AL-KHEMICAL SOUND AND IMAGE LABORATORY THAT EXISTS HERE ON ALL SIDES OF THE BAY. TONIGHT WE HAVE MANY EXPERIMENTERS WITH US TO CONJUR AND CREATE.

ALL OF THESE SOUNDS ARE EPHEMERAL, ALL THESE IMAGES FLEETING, TOGETHER THEY CAN BECOME GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THEIR PARTS, THEY CAN RESONATE, AND ALLOW US TO CARRY THAT FEELING FROM BEYOND THIS MOMENT.

WET GATE PRESENTED BY
THE ALL PROJECTOR ORCHESTRA

In the first decades of this century, before the advent of Magnetic Audio Tape. there existed Optical Film Sound. Early experimenters inscribed directly on the negative allowing light to make the final registration... sound... created without being uttered!

An Optical Track, interruptions in a focused beam of light to create sound, is essentially the same technology used in CDs. Unlike Digital Optical Sound, however, Optical FilmSound is a non-precision instrument which allows for analog anomalies..

WET GATE proudly celebrates
the 100th Anniversary of Machine Noise.
THE ALL PROJECTOR ORCHESTRA IS:
PETER CONHEIM, REED, OWEN O'TOOLE, STEVE DYE

START TALKING (COLOR 8 MIN. 1995)
BY DAVID MICHALAK
MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT NIK PHELPS

The first person I met when I arrived in S.F. in 1978 was Lowell Williams. He ran a super 8 showcase called OFF THE WALL CINEMA and offered to show my first feature length film at the now defunct ABOVE BOARD THEATRE. Lowell became a wine sleuth, drove a Greyhound bus and operated a mail-order record business called RADIOACTIVE RECORDS. We remained friends through the years and Lowell was unquestionably a true one.

The soundtrack is taken from Lowell's answering machine. The support in the voices of his friends and neighbors inspired me to finish this film. The title is Lowell's as well as the occasional spinning captions. Though absent, he still gets the last word.

Lowell's OFF THE WALL CINEMA had presented several shows at the ROXIE so it seemed only fitting that this film memento be shown here tonight.

"The grey fox! We're waiting for you."

EL FUEGO (COLOR 1 MIN.) BY CORY MCABEE
ACCOMPANIED BY CORY MCABEE AND BOBBIE LURIE

Experimental animation featuring hand manipulation by means of sun and magnifying glass, super glue, Ink, acetate, and fire.

BED BUG (VIDEO 7 MIN.)
VIDEO AND PERFORMANCE BY BONNIE KAPLAN.

Bonnie Kaplan is a performance artist who utilizes Video as an auxiliary self, as a tool for self exploration.

KING MIDAS (COLOR 10 MIN.) BY STEVE DYE

TRADITIONAL PHRYGIAN MUSIC BY THE DACTYLS,
who guide you on a journey to the gardens and laboratory of an ancient scientist. With an eye-witnesses account of what transpired there.

DACTYLS ARE;
ELIZABETH GRAY, MIIK DINKO,
FRAN HOLLAND, STEVE DYE

ORBITAL LOOP II
SOUND CONSTRUCTION WITH VIDEO (20 MIN.)

Donkey Boy is currently a four-legged but fluid entity straddling the trough of media piracy. Donkey Boy exploits the collision of moving images with the electro-accoustic sound scape.

D.B. IS DBA
LUTHER BRADFUTE AND DEAN SANTORMIERI

PAUL MCCARTHY WITH *HEIDI* AND *PAINTER*

PAUL MCCARTHY IN PERSON

Thursday, November 9, 1995 — Center for the Arts

When I was doing performances and paintings in the mid-1960s I was really interested in experimental filmmakers like Stan Brakhage, Stan Vanderbeek, and Andy Warhol. Their films corresponded to my interest in performance and happenings. I wasn't satisfied with art as just painting.

—Paul McCarthy, 1995

The San Francisco Cinematheque is pleased to present two videos by renowned performance artist Paul McCarthy including *Heidi,* a collaboration with Mike Kelley, and the West Coast premiere of Painter which was created as part of an installation for the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Throughout his career, McCarthy has continuously pushed the boundaries of aesthetic definitions, traditional artistic genres, and good taste. Disgusting some, delighting others, McCarthy uses humor and transgression to satirize and deconstruct traditional notions of what constitutes acceptability. McCarthy has been making films and videos since the late 1960s, and more recently, has been using actual sit-com sound stages and sets which give his videos a sense of familiarity and acceptability that is eerily undercut when characters sexual desires are violently demonstrated through the use of foodstuffs. Ketchup, especially, takes on a multitude of connotations in McCarthy's work: it is food, movie blood, real blood, and finally a bitterly comic representation of American excess. What once was an innocent condiment is transformed, smeared everywhere, rubbed on the body, and defiled. Our perception of ketchup is forever changed. This disconcerting effect, changing the way we perceive what once was familiar, is also produced by his brilliant installations that present distorted alternate worlds inhabited by Animatronic-like figures of twisted cartoon animals, men humping trees and generally behaving in manners that would shock and disgust their Pirate of the Caribbean counterparts over at Disneyland. McCarthy currently teaches at UCLA where he has been since 1984.

Heidi (1992), collaboration with Mike Kelley; video, color, sound, 63 minutes

It's not about the Austrian or German version of the story based on the novel by Joanna Spyri. It's a combination of American horror film, the story of Heidi, and Disney-esque props mixed with attitudes of modernism. That kind of overlapping structure is what interests me. The references I make to the media and to Disneyland/Hollywood is another subject. It has to do with virtual reality settings. It's a world that is quickly approaching, and I gravitate towards it. It's startling, how it's affecting humanity. I am not critiquing it, its destructiveness, in the sense that it is destroying nature. I am not making a judgment. You can't stop it. But it does put people in crisis. (PC)

Painter (1995); video, color, sound, 50 minutes

"In *Painter*, Mr. McCarthy plays the most romanticized of all artists, grossly exaggerated but with a ring of truth. His costume includes a hospital gown, enormous rubber hands and ears, and a bulbous nose that bobs up and down during tantrums. His props are out-sized paint brushes and rollers, and tubes of paint as big as occupied body bags...He plays up the onanistic, infantile side of masculine creativity while lampooning sundry artistic myths."

—Roberta Smith, The New York Times

The environment is like a television stage set and part of it is a mock TV set. It has to do with painting being an icon of western art and about the representation of the artist by Hollywood...Romantic, yes, but also a conception of the artist as stupid, as a pervert or clown—Batman and—Joker, Nick Nolte and Paul Newman as New York painters. (PC)

• program notes by Jeffery Lambert•

CULT RAPTURE!: AN EVENING WITH ADAM PARFREY

ADAM PARFREY IN PERSON

Sunday, November 12, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Nearly a decade after the debut of his incendiary anthology Apocalypse Culture, Adam Parfrey returns to the scene of the crime for another shattering exploration of millennial agony. Cult Rapture fixes its sigh on the grotesque, extreme, and little explored flashpoints of American culture, including the true story of David Koresh and the Branch Dividians, the burgeoning Patriot and Militia movements, the militarization of domestic police, sex cults for the handicapped, Elvis cults, serpent worship, the increasing popularity of electroshock therapy as "normal" treatment, the cult of Sai Baba, and the strange but epic story surrounding the inexplicably popular 1950s "Keane" paintings of big-eyed waifs. Parfrey will screen videotaped evidence of the strangest cults in America.

MEDIA FANTASIES AND REALITIES

FILMS BY LAURA POITRAS & DAVID AND JUDITH MACDOUGALL

LAURA POITRAS IN PERSON

Thursday, November 16, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Laura Poitras is an emerging independent filmmaker whose work explores a variety of social issues such as gender identity and media analysis. During her years in San Francisco, Poitras studied at the San Francisco Art Institute and at Mills College and worked as the San Francisco Cinematheque's Program Assistant and Technical Coordinator. She currently lives in New York City where she is doing graduate work at the New School for Social Research.

Exact Fantasy**: **a film about media correspondence and bringing the stars down to earth (1995), by Laura Poitras; 16mm, color, sound, 27 minutes

Exact Fantasy: a film about media correspondence and bringing the stars down to earth is a personal essay exploring how people forge identifications with media representations. The film is structured around five "found" fan letters (four written, one on audiotape) originally written to various public personalities. In response to these letters I have constructed a series of visual tableaus that build upon a tension between these letters as social 'objects' or 'facts,' and their mediated re-presentation within the film.

The primary theoretical questions I want to pose in the film are: what sorts of identifications do we, as audience members, forge around media representations and personalities?; how might such identifications collapse or redefine a split between public and private?; in what ways do we internalize and externalize our relationships to these representations?; and

finally, how do the fan letters presented within the film intersect with, or resist dominant ideologies? The concrete and ideological sites from which these questions are posed include: 'home,' family, storytelling, talk-radio, dreams, food, visual pleasure, social alienation, TV, and others. (LP)

Photo Wallahs (1992), by David & Judith MacDougall; 16mm, color, sound, 60 minutes

"Renowned ethnographic filmmakers David and Judith MacDougall explore the many meanings of photography in this profound and penetrating documentary. The film focuses on the local photographers of Mussoorie, in northern India. Through a rich mixture of scenes that include the photographers' work, their clients, and both old and new photographs, this extraordinary film examines photography as art and as social artifact—a medium of reality, fantasy, memory, and desire."

—University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning Film/Video Rental Catalog 1995-1998

A BRUCE CONNER CELEBRATION ! TELEVISION ASSASSINATION AND MORE

BRUCE CONNER IN PERSON

Sunday, November 19, 1995 — AMC Kabuki 8 Theatres

The San Francisco Cinematheque is proud to present a special evening celebrating the work of Bruce Conner, one of America's master filmmakers and artists, including the premiere of *Television Assassination* (1995). A pivotal artist of the last four decades, Conner's work ranges from assemblage, photography, and drawing to a body of films for which he was recognized with a Maya Deren Lifetime Achievement Award from the AFI in 1988. This November Conner not only has two one-person shows in New York but is also included in a major exhibition at the Whitney Museum, *Beat Culture and the New America.* Conner's pioneering use of found footage has inspired countless filmmakers since *A Movie* was released in 1958, and tonight's program includes that seminal work as well as *Cosmic Ray*, *Mongoloid*, *Report*, *The White Rose*, *America is Waiting*, *Television Assassination*, *Take the 5:10 to Dreamland*, and *Valse Triste*. The films were selected and ordered by Bruce Conner.

The films of Bruce Conner, found footage and otherwise, have had an immense impact in the film world. Combining and building upon a tradition of satire and irony that includes the Marx Brothers, Spike Jones and his City Slickers, and Marcel Duchamp, Conner has created a body of work that acutely satirizes the conditions of the "real" as well as the "reel" world. His films deal simultaneously with socio-political themes and the formality and playfulness of their own construction. Anthony Reveaux notes that Conner's films "are unique constructs composed of familiar imagery recombined into richly provocative puzzles that rhythmically prod the viewer to attempt reconciliations of ambiguity with the obvious and comic with the horrific, as irony unites anger and concern." The viewer is plunged into a world that is both familiar, due to the recognizable nature of the images, and unfamiliar, due to radical juxtapositions and recontextualization. It is the ability to combine elements as diverse as a car race and a famine in the "reel world" in a way that asks the viewer to try to come to some better understanding of the sometimes maddening fast-paced tone shifts that occur in the "real world" that gives Bruce Conner's films their power and excitement.

Cosmic Ray (1961); 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

"*Cosmic Ray* seems like a reckless collage of fast moving parts: Comic strips, dancing girls, flashing lights. It is the dancing girl—hardly dressed, stripping or nude—which provides the leitmotif for the film. Again and again she appears—sandwiched between soldiers, guns, and even death in the form of a skull positioned between her legs. And if the statement equates sex with destruction, the cataclysm is a brilliant one, like an exploding firecracker, and one which ends with a cosmic bang. Of course the title also refers to musician Ray Charles whose art Conner visually transcribes onto film as a potent reality, tough and penetrating in its ability to affect some pretty basic animal instincts."

—Carl I. Belz, *Film Culture*

Mongoloid (1978); 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

"The manipulation of found footage has recently become one of the clichés of rock-video production, albeit one usually marked by a withering literalness or ill-judged arbitrariness. Conner's early promo for Devo set a standard few have bothered to maintain, and exhibits a wholly characteristic rigor in both its formal and ironically 'illustrative' concerns. The mad montage of found footage astutely locates the 'brain disorder' of Devo's tasteful ditty in the American Psyche at large."

—Michael O'Pray & Paul Taylor, *Junk Aesthetics*

A Movie (1958); 16mm, b/w, sound, 12 minutes

Recalling the mad parody of Hollywood montage in *Duck Soup, A Movie* has a lot to tell us about the movies. With its car chases, Cowboys and Indians, plane crashes, and a woman removing her stockings, it reminds us of the direct, visceral thrill we get from these classic images. Slowly, however, the film transforms itself into a slower, contemplative mode that knowingly reveals the fragility and absurdity of human existence.

Report (1963-67); 16mm, b/w, sound, 13 minutes

"*Report* began as a full documentary about the Kennedy assassination but fell foul of reproduction rights—the collagiste's occupational hazard... It opens with repeated shots of the motorcade, the President and Jackie waving, the rifle carried aloft in a police station, an ambulance. These are reprinted to create a stretched or staggered effect...The shooting itself is not shown, but it is reported over a violent flicker pattern, a strobe-pulse which triggers subjective color sensations and depth-illusions on the screen. Later, as the last rites are given, cycles of academy count-down leader are shown..."

—A. L. Rees

The White Rose (1967); 16mm, b/w, sound, 7 minutes

"...a fine, brief, tongue-in-cheek 'documentary' of a huge painting being removed from an artist's studio, carried onto a Bekin's moving van with a combination of cold efficiency and all the lugubrious solemnity of a state funeral. It has remarkable timing and pace, and an 'artless' style which can only come from a deep sense of what the art is all about."

—Tom Albright

America is Waiting (1982); 16mm, b/w, sound, 4 minutes

Designed as a film to accompany a song by David Byrne and Brian Eno, *America is Waiting* uses the montage/collage technique to explore patriotism, modes of communication, war, and personal problems with an acute irony. America is shown to be waiting for something, some sort of message, and the "Hero" who shows up at the beginning of the film disappears leaving us in a maze of terror that includes the Bride of Frankenstein, Mount Rushmore, and "Larry's personal problems."

Television Assassination (1963-1995); 16mm, b/w, sound, 14 minutes
San Francisco Premiere

"*Television Assassination* is not only one of the best of Bruce Conner's film (thus one of the greatest pieces of poetic cinema ever made) but is the strongest exposé of TV yet made: adroit use of TV-to-film black bars testifies to the 1st person singularity of Bruce Conner's re photography of the televised assassination, but in such a way that the terrible content of this event seems acted, phony, soap opera; whereas the true subject of the film—TV itself, its dead light, its eradicating glitches, wipes, electrical phosphorescence—appears to be assassinating EVERYthing in its visual grasp. The extraordinary music by Patrick Gleeson not only supports this dreadful envisagement but seems to be flawlessly at one with it."

—Stan Brakhage

Take the 5:10 to Dreamland (1977); 16mm, sepia tone, sound, 5:10 minutes

"...the state produced by a film like *5:10 to Dreamland* is very similar to the feeling produced by a poem. The images, their mysterious relationships, the rhythm, and the connections impress themselves upon the unconscious. The film ends like a poem ends, almost like a puff, like nothing. And you sit there, in silence, letting it all sink deeper, and then you stand up and you know that it was very, very good."

—Jonas Mekas, *Soho Weekly News*

Valse Triste (1979); 16mm, sepia tone, sound, 4 minutes

"*Valse Triste* is an homage to surrealist cinema and the belated trance film... It also reworks the debased popular 'dream sequence', principally by imitating one of its cliché-prone situations—a boy's dream about steam engines, daily chores, home, travel, and girls. Shorn of context, ordinary images keep their typicality but gain uniqueness, mystery and the aura of memory... This material is renewed, or redeemed, by stripping it of its sentimentality and information."

—A. L. Rees, *Monthly Film Bulletin*

BRUCE CONNER FILMOGRAPHY
A Movie (1958); *Liberty Crown* (1967); *Cosmic Ray* (1961); *Permian Strata* (1969); *Leader* (1961); *Marilyn Times Five* (1968-73); *Vivian* (1964); *Crossroads* (1976); *Ten Second Film* (1965); *Take the 5:10 to Dreamland* (1977); *Breakaway* (1966); *Mongoloid* (1978); *Looking for Mushrooms* (1961-67); *Valse Triste* (1979); *Report* (1963-67); *America is Waiting* (1982); *The White Rose* (1967); *Television Assassination* (1963-1995).

Bruce Conner's Films On Tape Are Available For Sale Here This Evening Or From Canyon Cinema, 626-2255

•program notes by Jeffery Lambert•

ANDY WARHOL'S
VINYL AND *MY HUSTLER*

Sunday, November 26, 1995 — SF Art Institute

My Hustler (1965); 16mm, b/w, sound, 67 minutes

Conceived in collaboration with Chuck Wein, who is actually credited as the director, *My Hustler* employs formal strategies which differ quite significantly from those characteristic

of Warhol's work. Its more conventional scenario and the tighter quality that marks its narrative structure are likely the result of Wein's influence, as well as that of Paul Morrissey, who was responsible for the sound recording. This film was not scripted by Tavel, a fact which undoubtedly accounts for the more prosaic, less self-consciously perverse character of its narrative. The film features Paul America, Ed Hood, Ed MacDermott and Genevieve Charbon, with America playing the hustler to Hood's possessive queen, the passively virile object of desire who, while himself serenely unconcerned to the point of disinterest, serves as the locus of the sexual tension that drives the film. More closely related to the later "Warhol" films more properly attributed to Paul Morrissey than Warhol's other films of this period, *My Hustler* approximates, to some degree, the form of soft-core pornography, although the self-consciousness and distance which characterize Warhol's presence are by no means entirely absent. In addition, this film served as an early documentation and affirmation of gay lifestyles.

Vinyl (1965); 16mm, b/w, sound, 66 minutes

"It's an expose of sort of pseudo teddy boy delinquent New York speed heads. There's no moral pulled out of it, that's what I like, there's no morality involved, no pseudo moralizing. It's just there."

—Ondine (1977)

The first film adaptation of Anthony Burgess' novel *A Clockwork Orange*, *Vinyl* features Gerard Malanga in the role of Alex (although in *Vinyl* this character goes by the name of Victor) as well as J. MacDermott and Edie Sedgwick, and is accompanied by a soundtrack described by Steven Koch in his *Stargazer* as "alternating between cacophony and the hideous 'acid' maundering of the Velvet Underground's insufferable navel-gazing guitars." The rights to the book were acquired for a purported $3,000, and the film was scripted by Ronald Tavel, who wrote the scenarios for many of Warhol's films, during a three-day period in March of 1965. The film covers only the first half of Burgess' novel, a circumstance apparently due to Tavel's having managed to read only that far before writing his script. The film owes its exaggeratedly "stagey" (read flat) acting to the fact that all of the actors are simply reading their lines from cue cards held off-screen, as none had been given a chance to memorize their lines. The violent eroticism of Burgess' novel is refocused through a self-conscious, stilted sado-masochism, epitomized by Malanga's "whip dance", manifesting itself as a theatrical re-creation of a mode of exchange rooted in the theatre of personality. This eroticism, expressed in the form of homoerotic domination and display, finds its counterpoint in the person of Edie Sedgwick, the silent, passive observer to the drama of the film proper. The sole female figure in an implosive teleology of masculine self-annihilation, she marks the screen most conspicuously in the moments of her absence, displaying the fundamental distance of the non-participant, the disengaged presence that enables the hyperbole of drama.

•program notes by Brian Frye•

SEASONAL FORCES — A SONOMA COUNTY ALMANAC

JANIS CRYSTAL LIPZIN IN PERSON

Thursday, November 30, 1995 — Center for the Arts

"Her films are like a whole new religion! They are such a complete sensibility that they open up another world—what we used to call 'transcendental'"

—Joyce Wieland

Janis Crystal Lipzin, a distinguished member of the filmmaking faculty at the San Francisco Art Institute since 1978, is currently Director of the Undergraduate Studio Program. A filmmaker, photographer and intermedia artist, Lipzin has presented her work internationally, including installations and screenings of her films at Museum of Modern Art (New York), Musee Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Stadtkino (Vienna) and the Institute for Contemporary Art, London. Her many awards include three grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. She is currently completing for publication an anthology of critical writing by and about women filmmakers: ***An Editing Room of her Own: A New Lens for an Old Camera.***

"[Janis Crystal Lipzin]'s films are just what the doctor ordered!"

—Hollis Frampton

The Bladderwort Document (1978); S-8mm, color, silent, 12 minutes

A modest diary film made in 1978 when I spent six months living at a place called Bladderwort Farm in southwestern Ohio. This land was named after the only insectivorous plant native to North America. In this film and my color photographic work, I am concerned with gathering what Andre Bazin called "molds of light" (although I use the term somewhat differently). Here I play with light: pick it up and embrace it, throw it around, pierce it, and wiggle it. I used Super-8mm equipment to suggest the intimacy of an amateur home movie. (JCL)

"*The Bladderwort Document* is a visionary document of Bladderwort Farm, is a fleeting, silent documentary that tumbles out of your projector, builds suspense, twists, folds in on itself, glides, smiles, then flies back into the projector. A subjective study of implosions, explosions and reflections of light, it grabs you by the lapel and sings."

—Tony Dallas (*Cinemanews* #78-5)

"[Gertrude] Stein says in *Composition as Explanation* (1926), 'The business of Art is to live in the actual present, that is the complete actual present, and to express that complete actual present.' The imagery used in *The Bladderwort Document* has this same quality of fluid language: winter trees advancing and receding / the color spectra of natural light / shadows on a soft wood floor...The visuals move past in an additive fashion as in music: textures of animal fur/the quivering of light through leaves/an ambiguous space shown from a variety of angles."

— Margaret (Peggy) Ahwesh, *Field of Vision*

Seasonal Forces—A Sonoma County Almanac, Parts 1 and 2 (1995);
S-8 mm, color and b/w, sound, 46 minutes

Lipzin's most recent film, *Seasonal Forces*, reflects the terms and evolution of her engagement with the phenomena which shape the environment in which she lives and works.

Seasonal Forces explores the interplay between two facets of the stream of historical events, emphasizing their covalence and mutuality as they are inscribed upon the fabric of memory. One facet encompasses the atomic events of collective, social history which become critical points of the personal-historical narrative. The other highlights the cyclical, unfixed epiphanies which resonate within the moments of everyday life.

At times the filmmaker assumes the (not necessarily impartial) distance of the observer, documenting the fact of natural disaster or tracking the sun on its daily voyage from horizon to horizon. At other times, she immerses the viewer in the brilliant immediacy of experience, marveling at the new harvest or the clamor of machinery. In this way, the film identifies the tensions which bind author and text, speaker and spoken.

The histories of the spaces Lipzin identifies are, as always, written in the interval between event and recollection that constitutes the sum of experience. They blossom in the rarefaction of the social sphere, drawing in on themselves the remnants of the presence it mediates and making meaningful the events that constitute the markers of histories.

—Brian Frye

The first two sections of *Seasonal Forces* explore the conjunction of human and natural events unfolding in rural areas everywhere, especially Northern California. In constructing the film, I have drawn on footage shot over the past 22 years—some appropriated from commercial sources, some hand-processed, others processed in Toronto at the only lab in North America processing such obsolete film stock as I employed. The variety of types and ages of the film stock is reflected in the colors and textures which, in turn, illuminate the various events in the film. An arbor covered with wisteria blooms extravagantly, only to collapse under the weight of a late Spring rain. It is rebuilt and the cycle begins again. In between occur an arson, flood, earthquake, wildfire, planting and the harvest.

Part 2 reflects on the animals in our lives and their relation to us and to each other as providers of food, companionship, clothing and sport. Part 3 alludes to current land use controversies such as the dissonance between agricultural homesteads and tract developments; decades-old gardens destined to be abandoned to bulldozers, and the transformation of orchards into vineyards.

These events have been recorded on the skeletal remains of a material (the Super-8 film format) which had a life time of only 30 years. Utilizing a medium considered obsolete in the age of digital imaging, brought to mind Aldo Leopold's 1949 classic conservationist's memoir, *A Sand County Almanac*, in which he posed: 'We face the question of whether a still higher standard of living is worth its cost in things natural and free.' His assertion precedes and informs my work in which I observe the changes occurring around me as I attempt to understand what it means to cultivate a sense of place in time. (JCL)

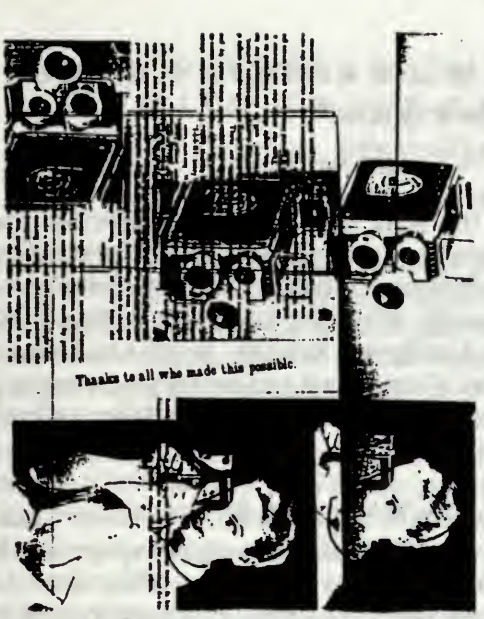
Home Entertainment Center for a Farmworker (1989); a film-sculpture
constructed from materials found on Lipzin's farm in western Sonoma county which incorporates a re-edited version of a commercial film, originally an advertisement for pesticide-distribution machinery. Dovetailing with the concerns addressed in *Seasonal Forces*, this sculpture recognizes the poisonous hazards endured by the people who work in the orchards and vineyards of Sonoma County, offsetting this continuing exploitation with a literal alternative: examples of produce grown by the artist using only the non-toxic diatomaceous earth with which they are dusted.

•program notes by Brian Frye•

FIRST FESTIVAL CELLULOIDALL

TIMOLEON WILKINS IN PERSON

Sunday, December 3, 1995 — SF Art Institute



FIRST FESTIVAL *CELLULOIDALL* December 3, 1995

Canada Dry Tumor by Michael Johnsen. Super 8, B&W/silent, 1 min 18 fps A prehistoric vision of animal life on the forest floor; a fossil-film disappearing in the wink of an eye. *Michael Johnsen is a co-founder of Pittsburg's Cryonic Cinema, one of a growing number of small film-projected exhibition programs which run on almost sheer on the currency of passion.*

Firepage (1991) by Bruce Cooper. 16mm, color/silent, 3 min., 24 fps. (AKA *Romance in Solitude*, Part IV). An elemental fire vision revealed in Dragon's breath; San Francisco Chinese New Year, 1991. (B.C.) *Bruce Cooper can be credited with single handedly bringing classic, independent, and avant-garde projected film to Denver, CO via The Bug Performance and Media Space. He lives in Denver with his wife Rebecc and daughter Elena. (See issues #3 and #4).*

Here I Am (1962) by Bruce Baillie. 16mm, B&W/sound, 10 min. Commissioned by the East Bay Activities Center for Emotionally Disturbed Children, this early Baillie film shows the clear beginnings of his mastery of cinematography and editing. The quiet intensity of the film moves the viewer into a state of involvement far beyond the basics of standard documentary, creating a heartfelt poem which questions the inner conflict between nurturing and exiling our lost children. *Bruce Baillie is the father and founder of Canyon Cinema Co-Op and San Francisco Cinematheque, and is affectionately known as "dad" to a number of us. His film Castro Street was declared a national treasure by the Library of Congress in 1993. He is currently at work on a book "Memoirs of an Angel", a mixture of fiction and autobiography. (See Issue #5).*

Sea/View Movie (1995) by Robert Schaller. 16mm, color/sound, 5 min. The sea for all its natural beauty does seem to represent in the first part of this film, civilization— activity and the outward reaching of the soul in a struggle to survive. This is finally resolved with a contrasting portrayal of the equally formidable, yet barren, foothills of Colorado. The mind's eye turns inward as in the last fluttering moments of wakefulness. *Robert Schaller lives in Boulder, Colorado.*

To Mom and Dad (1981) by David M. "Casey" Leugers. 16mm, B&W/sound, 3 min. The first 16mm edit movie I ever made—a home movie I made for my parents in secre to celebrate their 35th anniversary. I filmed the entire movie w my trusty 100 ft. Load Auricon Cine-Voice that I had just purchased from the original owner's son who had inherited it an didn't want it or the films that his dad had taken. Unbelievab this idiot just threw out the films and sold the camera to me fo song. (C.L.) *Casey Leugers lives in Fairfield, Ohio. (See letters, issue #5).*

Excerpt from Dog of Nazareth (1975) by Lewis Motisher. 16mm, color/sound, 3 min. A brand new print of the "climax" part of a much longer film. You never saw Jesus quite like this before. Starring Jef Schindler with music by Barbra Streisand. *Lewis Motisher deserves special mention tonight, not only because he is a damn good filmmaker, but he is the most responsible for all of the beautiful prints made at Palmer Film Lab where he has been employed for over 15 years. We should all be so lucky as to have someone as interested, caring and meticulous as Lewis working on our prints. (See also #5).*

INTERMISSION

Color Adjustment (1995) by Brian Frye. Super 8, color/silent, 3min., 18fps. Professor Frye gives a shadow box demonstration on the effects of color imposition on a roll of outdated Kodachrome. *Brian Frye is an SFAI Graduate Student and a fearless champion of film who volunteers much of his time to the Cinematheque and Pacific Film Archive.*

442 (1993) by Bruce Miller. Super 8, color/sound, min., 18 fps A straight- forward documentary from the backwoods of Tennessee. Terry "Doc" Paxton discusses and demonstrates the finer points of "your average family car", the Oldsmobile 442. *Bruce Miller lives in San Francisco.*

Bloodsucker's Delight (1995) by Michael McCoy. Super 8, color/silent, 2 min., 24 fps. George Kuchar meets Russ Meyer in a modest but lurid Kodachrome original. *(See Letters issue #5).*

Luke (1967) by Bruce Conner. 16mm, color/silent, 15 min., 24 fps The master of found-footage filmmaking turns his little camera on the men with the big cameras in this rare home-movie glimpse behind the scenes of the filming of *Cool Hand Luke*. We see, in a classic Conner mixture of poetry and dry wit, Paul Newman, Dennis Hopper, Harry Dean Stanton and the movie crew turning a quiet country road in central California into a Bacchanal of Hollywood expenditure. This is the only print outside of MOMA's archives, and is an optically step-printed blow-up from the original 8mm. *Bruce Conner is an entrepreneur advocate for the film medium and has lived in San Francisco for over 30 years. He recently returned from New York where his films and art work were housed at the Whitney Museum's "Beat Culture and the New America" retrospective. (His latest film, Television Assassination, was reviewed in Issue #5; one of Conner's Inkblot Drawings was featured on the back cover of Issue #3).*

The History of Texas City by Bill Daniel. 16mm, color/sound, 2 min An enigmatic amalgamation of the poetic, cynical and truthful, this "Public Service Announcement" gets its point across more effectively and in a fraction of the t of many found-footage collage films of recent years. *Bill Danie in Dallas, Texas where he has been engaged in an uphill battle to maintain a film series there. This summer he initiated the "Sex-Pis Drive-In" in which an a hundred drive-in was commandeered for film shows and now he is running the Oasis Film Society. (See also Issu #5).*

Slate Cleaner (1995) by Tena Scalph. Super 8, B&W-sound-on-cassette, 11 min., 18 fps. A short film exploiting the banal delights of sexual obsession in the context of the spooky realm of obscurity and neo-religious transgression. (T.S.) *Tena Scalph is a student at the San Francisco Art Institute.*

Very Important: A Bird Walked On It (1995) by Eric Waldemar. 16mm, B&W/silent, 5 min., 24 fps. There is a fairly obsessive musical structure here, but one gets into a kind of trance when painting film frame by frame and one makes large decisions without entirely understanding the reasons for them. The result in this case is a kind of whimsical terror. A bird did, in fact, walk on this film when I had it rolled out on the pavement to seal the paint with a fixative (E.W.) *Eric Waldemar lives [illegible]*

I Zupt, 49 (1995) by Jeremy Coleman. 16mm, color/silent, 3 min. 24 fps A hand-painted film inspired by Medieval stained glass and the paintings of Chagall. Enigmatic in form, *I Zupt, 49* is a spiritual journey through consciousness. (J.C.) *Jeremy Coleman lives in San Francisco.*

Blue Sun Western (1995) by Timoleon Wilkins 16mm, color/sound, 10 min. Combines a wide range of source material with some of the audio-visual trademarks of western mythology. Depicts the joy and terror of being alone in the wilderness. Portrays human beings dancing on the graves of th oppressors. Shows that history is met once and meet unfathomable at the end of the century.

Film descriptions by Timoleon Wilkins except by filmmakers where noted by their initials.

JAMES BENNING'S *DESERET*

JAMES BENNING IN PERSON

Thursday, December 7, 1995 — Center for the Arts

Currently teaching at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California, and a filmmaker for over twenty-five years, James Benning has made a significant contribution to American experimental cinema. His concern for American culture, in both its contemporary and historical guises, has consistently and eloquently informed his entire body of work, which includes *11x14*, *One-Way Boogie Woogie*, *Landscape Suicide*, *North On Evers* and many others. His remarkably successful integration of structural and narrative concerns is a testament to his versatility, and indicates possible directions of cinematic endeavor which as yet remain largely unplumbed.

Deseret (1995, San Francisco Premiere); 16mm, color/b/w, sound, 80 minutes

As a filmmaker, James Benning has consistently concerned himself with the space in which texts articulate the distinction between the structural elements which determine their form and the body of information contained by that formal structure. While examinations of both form and function are ubiquitous to experimental cinema, Benning has chosen to forego the polemicism that has often accompanied these efforts, working toward an equilibrium that engages the covalence and interdependence of narrative and structural elements. Occupying a familiarly idiosyncratic position on the point of intersection of these variant tropes, his new film, *Deseret*, juxtaposes radically discontinuous visual and textual information through the lens of an apparently arbitrary formal schema, engaging these disparate elements in an investigation of the relationship between history and the space in which it is written. Visually, the film consists of a series of tableau shots of the Utah landscape, unitary in their sense of brooding solitude and desolation, comprising a virtual summation of the significance of that space on its own terms. Two overarching structures determine the formal relationship between these images and the text that they parallel, both of which serve to situate the visual, metaphorical space contained by the images within the historical, literal space of the text. Each image occupies the space of time of one sentence of the text, emphasizing the passage of filmic time, while the shift from black and white to color follows the turn of the century, marking the passage of historical time. The text itself consists of a series of 93 condensations of newspaper articles which appeared in the *New York Times* over the course of the 96 years it has existed, all of which concern some aspect of the political entity now known as the State of Utah. Taking its title from the name that the Territory of Utah originally proposed for itself upon the occasion of its entry into the Union, *Deseret* in fact tracks the evolution of these two corporate entities, the *New York Times* and the Church of Mormon, from their historically contemporary births through the present, addressing the shifts in their relationship through historical space and the incommensurability of this history to the physical space in which it occurred. It is here that the explosive, uncontainable, irrational significance of the text is generated; in the irreconcilable collision of the image and the word, which negate each other in the assertion of their atomic singularity. The film situates itself in the context of that corpus of films which address this mutual atomism, one which includes such work as Hollis Frampton's *Nostalgia* and Straub/Huillet's *Too Early/Too Late* , although it does so through a particular concern for a space and sensibility specific to Benning's work, one which does not partake of the formal purity or polemical politics of these other works. Benning's stance is an equivocal one—he neither claims a necessary interpolation of ideological presence in spaces nor despairs of engaging with these terms outside of the realm of the individual, but rather allows the presence of ideology to make its presence known and felt in the spaces left unfilled by its authors.

•program notes by Brian Frye•

STEVE FAGIN'S *MEMORIAL DAY (OBSERVED)* WITH *SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS*

STEVE FAGIN IN PERSON

Sunday, December 10, 1995 — SF Art Institute

Steve Fagin targets the "major fantasies governing the history of the Western world" to present a re-reading of history that exposes the illusion and misrecognition that passes as historical fact. His work incorporates a mixture of appropriated and original footage, stage-play and real events to reveal a past in which the mythical, the surreal, and the fictional find free reign. Fagin's tapes focus on a variety of issues, from the evangelization of South America to orientalism in the writings of Flaubert and Roussel. His work consistently revolves around issues of history and representation, investigating new and old ways in which "the other" is seen in Western culture, how opinion is gathered and value secreted. The San Francisco Cinematheque is pleased to present tonight's screening of Mr. Fagin's latest video piece *Memorial Day (Observed)* which was commissioned by KCET public television as part of a creative project on notions of democracy. It will be followed by the film with which it was designed to be shown, Alexander MacKendrick's *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957).

Memorial Day (Observed) (1995), by Steve Fagin; video, color, sound, 12 minutes

"They can never attain as much as they desire. It perpetually retires from before them, yet without hiding itself from sight, and in retiring draws them on. At every moment, they think they are about to grasp it; it escapes at every moment from their hold. They are near enough to see its charms, but too far off to enjoy them; and before they have fully tasted its delights, they die." —Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1840)

This short piece observes the observance of Memorial Day 1995, in Columbus, Ohio. It is meant to be an updated 'acting out' of the above wisdom of de Tocqueville. Through a series of quotidian exchanges, a couple's frustrations are staged, shifting abruptly among soap opera, Brechtian distanciation, and psychoanalytic possession. These are the great grandchildren of the America that de Tocqueville observed over 150 years ago-an America that does not only suffer from the absence of democracy, but suffers at its heart and in its heartland from the expectations of democracy itself. (SF)

Sweet Smell of Success (1957), by Alexander MacKendick;
35mm, b/w, sound, 96 minutes

In British director Alexander MacKendrick's first Hollywood picture, Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis compete for the honor of most despicable man in a contest scripted by Clifford Odets from Ernest Lehman's novella "Tell Me About it Tomorrow." It's a jazzy, smoky film filled with bravura performances and dialogue that brilliantly teeters on the brink of incomprehensibility. Lancaster is J.J. Hunsecker, a megalomaniac newspaper columnist in what is possibly his best performance. Tony Curtis plays against type as well as a sleazy press agent: "the man with the ice cream face...who has the scruples of a guinea hen and the morals of a gangster." The story itself is an insider's view of the seamy underside of the New York entertainment industry, complete with cigarette girls, jazz clubs, the Chico Hamilton Quartet and tons of bitterness manifesting itself in Odets's blistering dialogue. Lines like "watch me run a fifty yard dash with my legs cut off" are perfectly matched by MacKendrick's kinetic film style. *Sweet Smell of Success* is the film that the Coen brothers have been trying to make for years.

•program notes by Jeffery Lambert•

MEMORY: COVERED DISCOVERED RECOVERED

CURATED BY IRINA LEIMBACHER

Thursday, December 14, 1995 — Center for the Arts

...memory offers film its ultimate problem: how to represent the mind's landscape, whose images and sequential logic are always hidden from view."
—David MacDougall, 'Films of Memory'

This evening the San Francisco Cinematheque presents four films —one award-winning documentary and three experimental shorts— that evoke the fleeting and elusive nature of human memory. Finnish filmmaker Kiti Luostarinen's *Tell Me What You Saw*, which won the 1995 Golden Gate Award for Best Sociology Documentary at the San Francisco International Film Festival yet is still not distributed in the United States, explores six siblings' and their mother's radically different reconstructions of the past in what seems to have been an abusive family. This film, which belies the nature of traditional documentary because ultimately absolutely nothing in it is certain, will be followed by Srinivas Krishna's *Tell Me What You Saw,* Barbara Hammer's *Optic Nerve,* and Phil Solomon's *Remains to be Seen* which each use the texture and material of film to mimic the exquisite transience of what may and may not be remembered, and which, dwelling as intently on absence as on presence, place memory solidly in the context of forgetting.

Tell Me What You Saw (1992), by Kiti Luostarinen; 16mm, color, sound, 52 minutes
"A journey into the mysterious world of memory and oblivion through the eyes of a family consisting of five sisters, one brother, and a mother suffering from dementia. The grown-up children's' memories of their common past differ radically, even to the point of being comically contrary in nature. And the mother fails to remember that she has any children at all. What is a human being when past events vanish into total oblivion? What is the logic and power of memory?"
—Finnish Film Foundation

Kiti Luostarinen has made fifteen short films and videos (many for Finnish television), and also works in photography and design. She studied philosophy at the University of Helinski.

Tell Me What You Saw (1994), by Srinivas Krishna; 16mm, b/w, silent, 7 minutes
"One weekend, I went to the farm of Philip Hoffman, a Toronto filmmaker, and there I met Kiti....I soon discovered Kiti's obsession with all the dead little creatures we found in the fields. Kiti began to film them. I began to film her. All the while, Kiti would tell me about her film, a beautiful sad film about memory, its loss, and the consequences. Our conversations about forgetfulness and the terrible silence it brings on still live with me. My film is silent. I called it *Tell Me What You Saw*. It is a portrait of Kiti during our weekend in the farm."
—Sirinivas Krishna

Srinivas Krishna lives in Canada and has made a feature film, *Masala*, as well as other experimental works.

Optic Nerve (1985), by Barbara Hammer; 16mm, color & b/w, sound, 16 minutes
"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..."

—John Hanhardt, *1987 Whitney Museum Biennial Exhibition Catalogue*

Barbara Hammer is one of the most prolific experimental filmmakers working today, with over 50 films to her credit. *Optic Nerve* was included in the 1987 Whitney Biennial; her most recent work is the autobiographical.

Remains to be Seen (1989), by Phil Solomon, S-8mm, color, sound, 17.5 minutes

"In the melancholic *Remains to be Seen*, dedicated to the memory of Solomon's mother, the scratchy rhythm of a respirator intones menace. The film, optically crisscrossed with tiny eggshell cracks, often seems on the verge of shattering...Solomon measures emotions with images that seem stolen from a family album of collective memory."

—Manohla Dargis, *Village Voice*

Phil Solomon has made over 20 films and recently has collaborated with Stan Brakhage on a number of works. *Remains to be Seen* won the First Prize at the 1990 Oberhausen Short Film Festival.

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homescreening

CURATED BY NATHANIEL DORSKY & CHRISTIAN FARRELL

Sunday, December 17, 1995 — SF Art Institute

San Francisco Cinematheque Presents

homescreening

- Throne, Begonia Room, Walk, TrainRide (1980's) by Michael Mideke; 8mm 18 fps, 3 min each., color
- Unnecessary Conversation (1988), by Jerome Hiler; 16 mm, 18 fps, color, silent, 13 min
- An Arrangement of Nineteen Scenes Relating to a Trip to Japan (working title) (1989-). by Konrad Steiner; 16 mm, 24 fps. Color, double projected, 19 min
- In the Breast of Nature part II (c 1930) by Benyamin Khachadoorian; 16 mm, 18 fps, B/W, silent. 5 min excerpt.
- Cliff House, (1940's?), maker unknown. 8mm, 18 fps. B/W, 2½ min. *
- Land's End Field Notes (1995) by silt (Evans, Farrell, Warrin), Super 8 mm and 16 mm, 6-18 fps, color, silent

curated by Nathaniel Dorsky and Christian Farrell

* courtesy of John Koch

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