



Avant-Garde Cinema

at the University of Colorado at Boulder

Fall '79

All screenings on Mondays at 8 pm in Fine Arts N-141. Admission \$1.00.



Jerome Hill and Steina Vasulka

1. October 1 Jerome Hill's Film Portrait and 4 Short Films

Film Portrait, 1971, 86 minutes, color, sound.

"Jerome Hill's Film Portrait is one of the key new works in the comparatively new genre of the diary film, the autobiographical film...By means of this footage he leads us into the period or the class from which he comes, or into his own ideas. In this particular case...Jerome Hill leads us into a social background that is not only very uniquely American but which also is about the least documented in cinema... the life, the feeling and the style of the well-to-do American class at the beginning of the century. Specifically, the film deals with the family of James J. Hill, the family that built the railroads of America and the development of Jerome Hill, himself, as a Young Man and an Artist. Since the period dealt with coincides with the development of Cinema as a young Art... Film Portrait becomes also a film about the liberation of an artist from the bonds of his family, his class, the fashionable art styles, and one thousand other bonds, a liberation through cinema." (Jonas Mekas)

4 Short Films, 1965-68, 12 minutes.

Jonas Mekas writes "...you look at the screen, you see the images, you see the colors--and you feel the paint and splash- es and strokes; you see both the effect and the medium itself, ...I find this may be the most unique aspect of Hill's painted animated sequences...As in Jerome Hill's paintings, so in his films...the color stands out...In Brakhage's work the color becomes integrated into the total abstract design. But in Hill's work what comes through most is the presence of the colors themselves..."

Jerome Hill died in November 1972 without seeing his work recognized for what it really is. These quotes by Jonas Mekas were written as a tribute "to all the unrecognized artists of cinema who work in silence and darkness--and leave us works of angelic light."

2. October 8 Woody and Steina Vasulka in Person - Video Artists

Moving Images in a Binary State -- covering work produced in the last three years.

"In the process of developing digital imaging tools, we have encountered new experiences, going well beyond aesthetic considerations. We have had to deal with a new generation of hardware, designed and constructed to our needs, and with a large body of knowledge, represented by the operational modes of the computer. At this stage, our main concern has been to communicate the structural level of the tools and images. We realize that this involvement generates its own area of information, has its own audience and its own developing genre."

"My interest is in the question of visual language, ambiguity of codes which are considered visual, and concept of image-score..." (Woody Vasulka)

"They are interested in the magic and the rituals of image making with the tools of video...In Steina's installation Machine Vision, space, which has become the major concern in her tapes, is explored using the viewers and monitors and cameras to generate the images and mix the composition..." (Linda Cathcart)

"...I recall my surprise then at the visual impact and sensitivity to mutating shape and color...I sensed that their commitment...with the video medium as visual expression transcended practically all other artists' work I had viewed in the medium...in their work they continue to demonstrate a deep knowledge and awareness of the older and more traditional artistic mediums, in particular, painting, sculpture and early photography..." (Robert Buck, Jr. Director, Albright-Knox Art Gallery)

5. October 29

Vincent Grenier in Person

Vincent Grenier is a French Canadian now living in New York. His work achieves a magic, a magic through careful articulation of space, shadow, movement and grain. His film Interieur Interiors (to A.K.) is a most accomplished work of subtle planes of movements, unpredictable relationships of these planes in space. This film reminds me of the paintings of Lyonel Feininger, without the color, in close up, with gliding movements across the frame.

Jonas Mekas writes "... I have always admired filmmakers who have the courage to abandon the representational reality and work with abstraction...There is a seriousness, consistency and persistency about his work that is more than impressive..."

The films in tonight's program are:

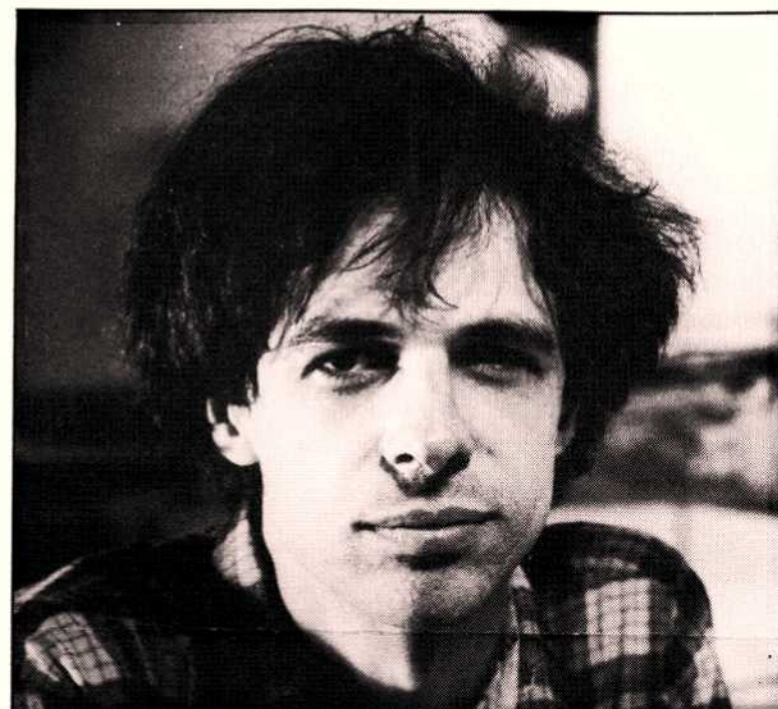
Mend, 1979, 5 1/2 minutes, B/W.

No description available.

World in Focus, 1976, 19 minutes, color, silent.

"...There is something to say about the qualities that books have in that they can be flipped and can create motion; in that, as for film, the image is supported by a textured surface. The film is an incantation of layers, the printed word, the dyeing color, the privateness of the minimum depth of field..." (V. Grenier)

X, 1976, 9 minutes, B/W, silent.



3. October 15

A Selection of New Films by Frampton, Barnett, Lee and Sherman

5 Films, 1978, Stewart Sherman, 20 minutes, color. Silent camerawork for the first and fourth film by Babette Mangolte; for the second and third film; Ken Ross, and for the fifth, Jacob Burckharat.

Performance artist Stuart Sherman here applies his "spectacle" vocabulary to the world-at-large by utilizing diverse elements in the natural environment. Each film demonstrates a complex idea through a precise sequence of images depicting common scenes and actions in unusual context. Sherman's work has been compared to the paintings of Rene Magritte and the films of Maya Deren and Buster Keaton.

1st Post Card From Happy Valley, 1978, Dan Barnett, 4 minutes.

"I think of this little poem as being about fidelity and duplicity. It is a preamble to a film called The Rest of the Postcards From Happy Valley, which I'm working on now... more or less about the years I spent as a film teacher in Binghamton, N.Y." (Dan Barnett)

Morning at Yangchow, 1978, Dan Barnett, 4 minutes.

"This has become one of my favorites of my own films quickly. It is the first of a series of about a dozen films called something like Sketches From China coming out of a quick trip there in July 1978..." (D.B.)

Sacramental Shadow, 1979, David Lee, 38 minutes, color, silent.

Jonas Mekas has written that David Lee's work is "...post-Brakhage, post-Snow, post-Frampton, which is to say...absorbed the leading directions in the Avant-Garde Film of the last two decades...uniquely gifted." Sacramental Shadow deals with the eroticism and anxiety of revealing the self.

Otherwise Unexplained Fires, 1977, Hollis Frampton, 14 min.

"Hollis Frampton's Otherwise Unexplained Fires begins and ends with old (perhaps from around 1910) footage of a street performer magically generating fire in a metal container... Otherwise Unexplained Fires may be the most beautiful and richest looking film Frampton has made. During the viewing, it generates an emotional resonance, rather than the more analytic structures that one is accustomed to in Frampton films...It is part of Frampton's projected 36-hour Straits of Magellan, but it stands very well on its own..." (Amy Taubin)

6. November 5

George Lando in Person

"...No one else makes films like George Lando(w), possibly because, although he utilizes the materials and possibilities of film what he makes are not exactly films. What he does make, more precisely, are various visual explorations..." (S. Renan)

"It is precisely such a gift for finding the apperceptive trope that distinguishes George Lando(w)'s films. His first film, Fleming Faloon (1963) is a precursor of the structural film...His remarkable faculty is as maker of images, for the simple found objects...he uses and the images he photographs are radical, super-real, and haunting...George Lando(w) and Hollis Frampton were the most significant film-makers to span the transition from structural to participatory modes..." (P. Adams Sitney in Visionary Film)

Films to be shown this evening are:

Diploteratology or Bardo Follies, 1967, 20 minutes.

He discovers, "There are two of them and they're round."

The Film That Rises to the Surface of Clarified Butter, 1968, 9 1/2 minutes. - "...as profoundly strange as its title."

October 22 Patchwork Glance Over 45 Years

ks, 1947, Kenneth Anger, 15 minutes, B/W, musical track.

works comes from the beautiful night from which emerge true works. It touches the quick of the soul, and very rare." (Jean Cocteau)

the Dakota Sioux, 1963-64, Bruce Baillie, 24 minutes, and.

the eye of the filmmaker quiets his mind with images of oscillation; the dialectics of cinematic thought beam in the filming of the privileged moment of recon- on." (P. Adams Sitney)

La Raison, 1923, Man Ray, 4 minutes, B/W, silent.

film was made overnight in order to insult and aggrate audience at the last great Dada soiree called "The of the Bearded Heart." Most of the film was made the camera by placing objects directly onto raw film using it to light.

ay, 1961, Bruce Conner, 8 minutes, B/W, sound.

A dancing girl--nude, half clothed or stripping-- to Ray Charles' "What'd I say." (Gene Youngblood) masterpiece, with sophistication of means, a control of various effects and expressive intent far removed from "ism." (Brian O'Doherty)

II, III, 1920's, Walter Ruttmann, 6 min, color, silent.

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etical shapes in relationship and conflict to each
Ruttmann tinted these short films, and the color is
reserved; the films are delightful as well as prophetic
ation styles and Germany's political climate.
929, Ralph Steiner, 14 minutes, B/W, silent.
s famous abstract film is about water and the interplay
hms of light and shade on its surface.
1, 1967, Jordan Belson, 10 min, color, sound.
certainly among the most powerful and haunting states
rdinary reality ever captured on film." (G. Youngblood)
a way it's a projection of what's going on inside,
ena thrown out by the consciousness, which we are then
o look at...It's as though I've come back from there
y camera in hand--I've been able to film it." (Belson)



Vincent Grenier

World in focus, 1976, 19 minutes, color, silent.
"...There is something to say about the qualities that
books have in that they can be flipped and can create motion;
in that, as for film, the image is supported by a textured
surface. The film is an incantation of layers, the printed
word, the dyeing color, the privateness of the minimum depth
of field..." (V. Grenier)
X, 1976, 9 minutes, B/W, silent.
"...I was very much engaged by the ambiguity of a move-
ment that can be perceived as crossing the frame at the same
time as going backward or forward in relation to the viewer..."
(V. Grenier)
Interior Interiors (to A.K.), 1978, 15 min, B/W, silent.
"...levels of ambiguity are instilled, which shake the
photographic image's authority as a principle of reality by
confronting it with its illusory nature..." (V.G.)
Against the Light, 1979, color, silent.
No description available.

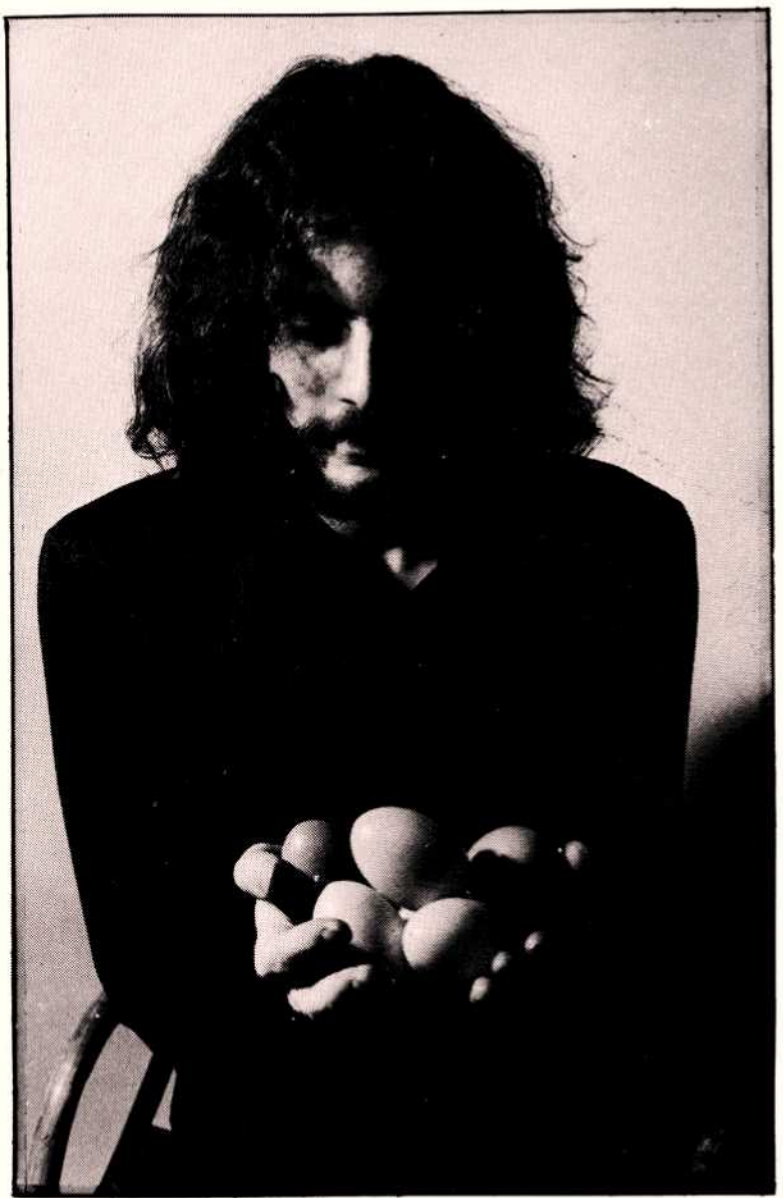
November 12 Maya Deren's Divine Horseman Ritual in Transfigured Time

in *Transfigured Time*, 1946, 15 minutes, B/W, silent.
ere are visual and auditory experiences which have noth-
do with the descriptive narrative...Cinema is a time-
art with a unique capacity for creating new temporal-
l relationships and projecting them with an incontrole-
le impact of reality...The external universe has been
ed as an active force. Cinema is especially equipped to
ith such experiences." (Maya Deren)
Horsemen: *The Living Gods of Haiti*, 1947-51, released
54 minutes, B/W, sound.
ine Horsemen...is a documentary on the Voodoo religion
ti. The film was shot by Maya Deren during 1947-1951,
ited posthumously by Teiji Ito and Chere Ito. The film--
had been initiated into the religion as a priestess in
which accounts for the intimate detail she was able to
e in film.
film deals with the rituals of the Rada, Petro, and
cults of Haiti, whose origins stem from Africa...We
e deities manifest in the human bodies--a phenomenon
as "Possession." The reference to the title, *Divine*
en--man is like a horse being mounted by a divine spirit.
.It is a film that conveys, perhaps for the first time,
wer and beauty of the Voodoo rites free of both the
fantasies of Hollywood and the desensitized distance
nographers. It is a picture of voodoo viewed by an ar-
as Deren herself was fond of emphasizing, one privileged
duct a study of emotional and psychological perceptions
subjective level--a route unavailable to intellectual
ologists." (B. Ruby Rich, *Reader*, Chicago, Sept. 15, '78)

8. November 26 Brakhage's Sincerity II, Duplicity I and II

Sincerity II, (Reel II), 1975, 37 minutes, color, silent.
Duplicity I, 1978, 21 minutes, color, silent.
Duplicity II, 1979, 15 minutes, color, silent.
Of *Sincerity II*, Brakhage wrote: "...It is of the Brakhage
family's coming into being. It is composed of the light of
those electrical traces we call 'memory'; and it is as true
to that 'thought process' as I was enabled to make it."

"The autobiographical *Sincerity* (Duplicity) series is per-
haps the major work in Brakhage's recent output...Reel Two
is something of a departure for Brakhage in that the comedy is
so pervasive and overt...Jane literally "frames *Reel II*, that
is, the film opens with images of her and closes with a moving
reference. In many ways the film is a tribute to Jane, for one
can surmise that she is the one whose strength has held the
family together through Brakhage's various difficulties, as an
independent and therefore far from rich film-maker...The
close of the film shows a rainbow--a vision of the hope,
light, and life which presumably Brakhage's family has meant
for him, despite the tribulations...If my first surmises are
correct about *Sincerity III* then the title for Part Four,
Duplicity, would make sense since it would imply a coming to
terms with this dual vision...Brakhage as artist/idealist
(Reel I); man of the world/father/husband (Reel II); and
the painful need and heroic venture to reconcile the two
Brakhages, in fact to deny the dichotomy (Reel III)...However,
throughout the first three reels there are many common images
(absent from *Duplicity* as far as I can tell) which serve as
leading motives (aspen trees, a bird pecking in the snow),
perhaps signifying for Brakhage a denial of time and change
altogether, that one's autobiography doesn't go anywhere in
any sort of teleological sense, that it is not so much a
narrative of one's periods of development, as it is simply a
manifestation at every moment of who one has been all along."
(John Pruitt, *The Downtown Review*)

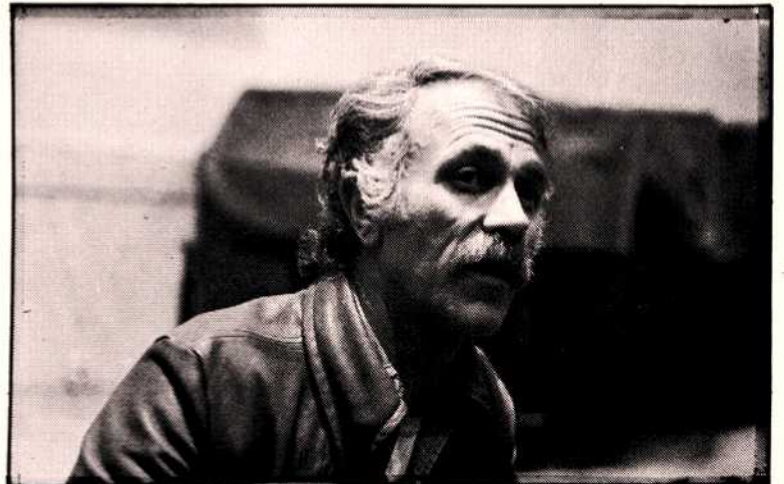


George Lando

the transition from structural to participatory modes..."
(P. Adams Sitney in *Visionary Film*)
Films to be shown this evening are:
Diploteratology or *Bardo Follies*, 1967, 20 minutes.
He discovers, "There are two of them and they're round."
The Film That Rises to the Surface of Clarified Butter, 1968,
9 1/2 minutes. - "...as profoundly strange as its title."
(James Stroller, *Village Voice*)
What's Wrong With This Picture?, 1971-72, 5 minutes.
He learns that "you can break a law thru ignorance, care-
lessness, a wickedness; it's all lawbreaking."
Thank You Jesus For The Eternal Present, 1973, 5 minutes.
He interviews an exhibitionistic propogandist, as three
people pray.
No Sir, Orison, Or *The Ultimate Solution To The Supermarket*
Problem, 1975, 3 minutes. He builds his story on a palindrom
Wide Angle Saxon, 1974-75, 22 minutes. - His conversion to
fundamental Christianity has nothing to do with his purely
coincidental resemblance to Jimmy Carter.
On The Marriage Broker Joke As Cited by Sigmund Freud In Wit
and It's Relation to the Unconscious, Or Can the Avant-Garde
Artist Be Wholed?, 1979, 30 minutes. - He imagines making lov
a woman who imagines making a film about Japanese marriage
broker jokes, "among other things."

9. December 3 Robert Nelson in Person

Robert Nelson began making films in the early 1960's in
San Francisco. Sheldon Renan says "Robert Nelson has...a
tendency toward the zany and humorously obscure."
In a chapter entitled "Apocalypses and Picaresques" from his
book *Visionary Cinema*, P. Adams Sitney writes "...A late
example of the type of film being discussed is Robert Nelson's
The Great Blondino. In it, the picaresque and the mythic
overlap, and irony, which is prevalent in many aspects of the
film, ceases to play a structural role..*Bleu Shut* is a prime
example of the participatory film, a form which emerged at
the end of the 1960's and of extensions of the structural
film...in order to more directly evoke states of conscious-
ness and reflexes of the imagination in the viewer. The par-
ticipatory films follow the direction established by the
structural cinema in finding corollaries for the conscious
mind...Nelson marks the end of that period. In his hand the
picaresque and the centerless film becomes a deliberate
strategy for making works which respond to the new cohesion
of the national avant-garde cinema of the 1960's."
Films to be shown this evening are:
How to Get Out of a Burning House, 1978, 20 minutes.
No description available.
King David, 1970, 16 minutes, color, sound.
"Henderson and I filmed *King David* in South Park in San
Francisco. The film is a documentary style record of *King*
David and of what took place before we found him." (R.N.)
Deep Westurn, late 70's, 6 minutes.
No description available.
The Great Blondino, 1967, 42 minutes, color, sound.
"This is a long film that uses no specific narrative de-
velopment. Its coherence depends upon deeper non-verbal
sensibilities. *The Great Blondino* is a figurative allusion
to the tightrope walker Blondino, who gained international
fame in the 19th Century by walking many times across Niagara
Falls on a tightrope. The film speaks about the level of risk
at which we live and of the foolishness and beauty of our
lives at the edge, where we confront that risk." (R. Nelson)



10. December 10 Open Screening

Local Filmmakers are invited to bring their work and share
it with an audience of their peers. Both students from the
University and filmmakers from the community are welcome.
Films can be in 16mm, Super 8, or Reg 8mm formats. No
admission charge, no entry fee.
We hope that this evening will give young filmmakers a
chance to see their films on a large screen in an auditorium
and allow you to show your films to an audience other than
friends, classmates and instructors. It is a chance to
meet other filmmakers, see possibilities and styles different
from your own, and to offer your images to filmmakers and
interested viewers.
Please come early if you have a film so that we can
arrange the order and determine the length of the program.



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This program is sponsored in
part by a grant from the
National Endowment for the
Arts.