



INNER SPACE: MINIATURE EPICS

MAY 9, 2022

8:30pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CaLARTS

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society..

INNER SPACE: MINIATURE EPICS

Program curated by Mara Fortes

Featuring an array of techniques—including collage, animation, time-lapse, and meticulous sound design—attuned to the rustle of motile life forms, this selection of short works navigates the vast expanse of inner worlds untethered from a human scale. Embedded in each thrilling endoscopic exploration lies the artists' distinct awareness of how scientific conventions, myth, film, and genre mediate our "natural" habitats: from sentient architectures of mineral and plant forms, operatic dramas of bodily processes, and remote murmurs of interstellar traffic to mental emanations that bloom into surreal creations. Transmuted by sensibilities ranging from the gothic to the comedic, the program will evoke fables of ecological distress, extra-terrestrial intelligence, and parasitic attachment. This is sci-fi beyond the reach of the eye.

In person: Mara Fortes, Rachel Mayeri

PROGRAM

Stacey Steers: *Edge of Alchemy* (2017) 19 min

Mary Pickford and Janet Gaynor, seamlessly appropriated from their early silent films, are cast into a surreal epic with an upending of the Frankenstein story and a contemporary undercurrent of hive collapse. In this handmade film, Stacey Steers selects sequences from early cinematic sources, prints the frames and re-contextualizes the action, allowing the "story" assembled from appropriated images to evolve over time. She inserts her actors into newly imagined collage environments, built by hand from fragments of 19th century engravings and illustrations. *Edge of Alchemy* is the third film in a trilogy examining women's inner worlds.

Music by Lech Jankowski

Momoko Seto: *PLANET Z* (2011) 10 min

Somewhere in the Universe, the PLANET Z.

A miracle happens. A water jet springs up and gives birth to a new life: plants. A desert planet becomes a green planet...

Different species cohabit: liquid and sticky mushrooms. But, little by little, they invade the green land and destroy the idyllic life. The toxic spores kill the plants and transform the planet into a moldy land... But after destroying all the vegetation, the future of the mold seems to be endangered. A species cannot live alone ...

Saskia Olde Wolbers: *Trailer* (2005) 10 min

In *Trailer* an anecdote is transformed into fiction. The anecdote: Clark Gable had an illegitimate daughter who did not know the identity of her father until after his death. She knew him only through the roles he played out on the silver screen. The fiction: Alfgar Dalio, in voice over, describes wandering into a dilapidated movie house in Ohio, known as the Kinorama Playhouse. Only films from a long-faded Hollywood studio are shown here. He watches a trailer and is caught off-guard when it mentions an extinct Amazonian moth that shares his unusual name. The moth's life was dependent upon a certain tree and a fly-trap plant named after two actors who used to work for the film studio years ago but had disappeared while on location in the jungle.

Dalio realizes that the trailer is addressing him directly by broadcasting the secret of his own existence and that the actors are in fact his unacknowledged parents. The revelations bring back memories of his life in the jungle. The video's imagery switches from a vivid red empty theater to a translucent green plant life. The green and red are a reference to Kinema Color, a pre-color process based on alternating green and red filters, an obscure format outdated almost as soon as it was invented.

Voice Over by John Wynne

Soundtrack by Daniel Pemberton

Catherine Chalmers: *The Chosen* (2012) 6 min

Carrying a cornucopia of flowers, leafcutter ants parade across the forest floor, descend into their subterranean colony, and lay their special offerings at the feet of a golden idol.

Rachel Mayeri: *Orfeo Nel Canale Alimentare (Orpheus in the Alimentary Canal)* (2018) 9 min

Orfeo Nel Canale Alimentare is an animated opera about the digestive tract. It was commissioned by Imagine Science Films, and it is part of a compilation of ten films on the theme of chimeras. In the film, Orpheus attempts to rescue Eurydice from a bout of indigestion by crossing the river of her inner-under-world. But in the alimentary canal there are no heroes, only multitudes. The river that runs through us, the alimentary canal, is suggestive as a boundary object between self and other, the internal and the external, the human and the nonhuman environment. The film explores the dissolution of individuality through the realization that our bodies are teeming with nonhuman life. Musically and narratively, in this ecological opera, individual heroes are superseded by the chorus, who represent a symbiotic view of life.

Nicolas Brault: *Squame* (2015) 4 min

Squame explores the body's sensitive envelope, the skin. The ephemeral animated desquamations, created with the help of sugar casts, evoke fragile landscapes in a world at the edge of abstraction. Somewhere between archeological artifacts and macroscopic observations, the friable frontiers of these human bodies elude our gaze.

Seán Vicary: *The Nose* (2016) 4 min

An old woman lies in a care home at the end of her life, and the fragrance of flowers momentarily unlocks forgotten childhood memories.

The animation takes a journey through a landscape evoked by the physiological process of olfaction; fusing the scientific and the lyrical while suggesting an autobiographical subtext drawn from the artist's personal experience of coping with his mother's dementia.

The Nose is the result of an arts-science collaboration between artist-animator Seán Vicary, research scientist Dr Darren Logan, folk singer Sam Lee and composer Llywelyn ap Myrddin. Produced for the Body of Songs project and supported by Wellcome Trust and Arts Council England. Music by Sam Lee & Llywelyn ap Myrddin.

Momoko Seto: *PLANET Σ* (2014) 12 min

In *PLANET Σ*, giant creatures are trapped inside the ice. Submarine explosions provoke a global warming, and a new life begins for animals.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Stacey Steers is known for her process-driven, labor-intensive animated films composed of thousands of handmade works on paper. Her recent work employs images appropriated from early cinematic sources, from which she constructs original, experimental narratives. Steers' animated short films have screened widely throughout the U.S. and abroad, and have received numerous awards. Her films have been included in the Sundance FF, Telluride FF, New Directors/New Films (New York), Rotterdam IFF, Locarno IFF and screened at the National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.), and MoMA. Recently Steers has expanded her work to include collaborative installations that join invented, three-dimensional production elements with film loops, creating a new context for experiencing her films. Steers' installation work has been exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery, (Washington, D.C.), the Denver Art Museum, and

the Hamburger Kunsthalle in Hamburg, Germany, among other venues, and has been collected widely. Stacey Steers is a recipient of major grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, Creative Capital, and the American Film Institute. She was the focus of a major retrospective at the 2015 Annecy Festival of Animation in Annecy, France and received the Brakhage Vision Award at the 2012 Denver IFF. Steers is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She lives and works in Boulder, Colorado.

Momoko Seto was born in Tokyo in 1980. She studied Art at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Marseille, then at the Le Fresnoy National Studio of Contemporary Art. She's currently working as a film director at the CNRS (National Centre of Scientific Research) in Paris where she makes documentaries with researchers. She has made several short films and documentaries that have been selected and acclaimed in various international festivals (Cannes, Locarno, Rotterdam...) Her short film *PLANET Σ* received the Audi Short Film Award at the Berlinale (2015), a prize for "avant-garde and artistically strong" films.

Saskia Olde Wolbers (Dutch) lives and works in London. Since the mid-1990s Saskia Olde Wolbers has been working with video and has shown extensively in UK and international museums, galleries, and public spaces. Olde Wolbers's short narrative videos combine carefully crafted fictional scripts with visuals that reveal other-worldly environments. Off-screen narrators address the fluidity of fact through biographies relating to notions of translation, neurosis and *verisimilitude* with an eye for wit and the absurd. Referencing computer-generated imagery, her liquid visuals are entirely analogue, shot in real-time in model sets. Skeletal objects, architecture, and living forms are given a "skin" when dipped in paint and submerged underwater. Materials are animated through this unpredictable confrontation of oil and water and become dripping, oozing, and undulating matter oscillating between representation and abstraction. These recordings of sculptural and chemical lo-fi processes subvert the truth-telling qualities of filming reality. Her videos incorporate soundtracks composed by Daniel Pemberton, who is well known for creating an inventive hybrid of musical media—from electronic to orchestral—throughout his work in film and television. In the process of editing the music, scripts, and visuals together, and by presenting the finished works on a loop, Olde Wolbers creates a circular time structure that utilizes an unfamiliar and new cinematic space.

Olde Wolbers has received numerous awards throughout her career, including the London Artists' Film and Video Award, 2007; the Beck's Futures Award, 2004; the Baloise Prize, 2003; the Charlotte Kohler Award, 2002; the Prix de Rome Film and Video, 2001. Her work is held in numerous private and public collections such as the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington DC; the Goetz Collection, Munich; the South London Gallery and the Museum of New and Old Art, Tasmania.

Catherine Chalmers holds a B.S. in Engineering from Stanford University and an M.F.A. in Painting from the Royal College of Art in London. She has exhibited her artwork around the world, including MoMA P.S.1, New York; MassMoca, North Adams; Kunsthalle Vienna; The Today Art Museum, Beijing; among others. Her work has been featured in the New York Times, Washington Post, Time Out New York, ArtNews, Artforum and on PBS, CNN, NPR, and the BBC. Two books have been published on her work: "Food Chain" (Aperture 2000) and "American Cockroach" (Aperture 2004). Her video *Safari* won Best Experimental Short at SXSW Film Festival in 2008. In 2010 Chalmers received a Guggenheim Fellowship and in 2015 she was awarded a Rauschenberg Residency. From 2016-2018 she was a Fellow at the Center for Art & Environment at the Nevada Museum of Art. In 2018 she created a course called Art & Environmental Engagement and taught it spring quarter at Stanford University. Her video *Leafcutters* won Best Environmental Short at the 2018 Natourale Film Festival in Wiesbaden, Germany and in 2019 it won the Gil Omenn Art & Science Award at the Ann Arbor Film Festival. She lives in New York City.

Rachel Mayeri is an LA-based artist working at the intersection of art and science. Her videos, installations, and writing projects explore topics ranging from the history of special effects to the human animal. Commissioned by Arts Catalyst and receiving a major award from The Wellcome Trust, she created a film expressly for chimpanzees—*Primate Cinema: Apes as Family* which subsequently showed at Sundance, Berlinale, and Ars Electronica. Currently she is at work on a project about the R/V FLIP, a Cold War research vessel built to rotate 90 degrees to study waves and sonar, as part of Getty's Pacific Standard Time Art x Science x LA. A Guest Curator of the Museum of Jurassic Technology and professor at Harvey Mudd College, she teaches courses such as Animal Media Studies, Art & Biology, and Stories from the Anthropocene.

Nicolas Brault is a multi-award winning filmmaker and Professor teaching the art and science of animation at Université Laval. In 2000, he won the National Film Board of Canada's Cinéaste recherché(e) contest, allowing him to direct the film *Antagonia* (2002), which was screened at the Clermont Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and won an award at the Cinanima International Animated Film Festival. He then explored Inuit culture with his short film *Islet* (2003) and African traditions with *Hungu* (2008). His film *The Circus* (2011) was nominated for Best Animated Film at the 37th César Awards. In 2012, he embarked on a series of projects as an independent artist, developing short non-narrative films and immersive projections around the human body. Of this series, *Foreign Bodies* (2013) won the Off-Limits Award at the prestigious Annecy International Animated Film Festival, and *Squame* (2015) received several awards and distinctions around the world. Nicolas is currently working at the National Film Board of Canada on a brain-computer interface, which allows the user to interact with a kinetic sculpture. Nicolas has a master's degree in film studies from Université de Montréal.

Wales-based artist **Seán Vicary** works across moving image, animation, and digital media. His work has been broadcast in the UK and exhibited internationally. Seán's practice explores ideas at the heart of our relationship with the "natural" world, place, and landscape (internal and external); investigating links between the subjective, scientific, and historical aspects, especially those that are obscure or concealed. Active research is integral to his creative process, frequently working with primary sources to shape his understanding and inform explorations of contemporary mythos. Also central is a hybrid process of haptic and digital crafting, the temporal manipulation inherent in stop-motion animation is used to examine the agency of materials and our entanglement with more than human processes and timescales.

Seán often works place-sensitively; observing and collecting found objects and fragments of detritus, then manipulating these elements in a virtual space to create animated assemblages. These act as triggers for the viewer, sometimes suggestive of a wider narrative or hidden processes at play behind the visible.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Mara Fortes is a film and media researcher and a curator. She currently curates for the Telluride Film Festival, the Ambulante Documentary Film Festival, and the CUORUM Independent Festival of Gender and Sexual Diversity. She was previously the head curator at the audiovisual department of the Center for Digital Culture in Mexico, where she redesigned the center's film and media program under the concept "Cine más allá" (Cinema Beyond). She has authored and edited several film-related publications, including the books *Historias de la Noche* (co-authored with visual artist Fabiola Torres-Alzaga), *Chris Marker Inmemoria*, and the first Spanish translation of Amos Vogel's seminal book, *El cine como arte subversivo [Film As a Subversive Art]* (both co-edited with Lorena Gómez Mostajo). Special thanks to Eduardo Thomas, Otilia Portillo Padua.



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UPCOMING AT REDCAT

The Kalampag Tracking Agency: 30 Years of Experimental Film and Video from the Philippines

May 23, 2022

Overcoming institutional and personal lapses to give attention to little-seen works—some more recent, some surviving loss and decomposition—this program collects loose parts in motion, a series of bangs, or kalampag in Tagalog, assembled by individual strengths and how they might resonate off each other and a contemporary audience. Featuring some of the most striking films and videos from the Philippines and its diaspora, this is an initiative that continues to navigate the uncharted topographies of Filipino alternative and experimental moving image practice.

Coming for the first time to the city of Los Angeles, The Kalampag Tracking Agency will feature works by Raya Martin, Roxlee, Miko Revereza, John Torres, Tito & Tita, and more.

Dana Berman Duff: Short Films

June 6, 2022

Dana Berman Duff has long been a vital force in Los Angeles' media arts. Astonishing in her versatility, Duff moves fluidly between Super 8mm and 16mm film, video, multi-channel installation, photography, drawing, and sculpture. Regardless of the medium, Duff's work is infused with her subtle wit, tactile delight, and deeply reflective conceptual structure. This program includes selections from the Catalogue Series, in which fantasy tableaux and objects from the pages of a designer furniture knock-off catalogue are reworked into contemplations on the control and selling of desire. Duff's art is in collections of The Museum of Modern Art and New Museum of Contemporary Art, and her films have shown in the Toronto, Rotterdam, Edinburgh, and other international film festivals.

In person: Dana Berman Duff



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