

**FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS****Mon Apr 4 | 8:30 pm**

Jack H. Skirball Series

\$9 [students \$7, CalArts \$5]

Betzy Bromberg's *Voluptuous Sleep Series**World premiere*

Betzy Bromberg returns to REDCAT with ***Voluptuous Sleep Series*** (2011), her first film in five years and a mesmerizing two-part 16mm meditation on the nuances of light, sound and feeling evoked through the poetic artifices of cinema. Bromberg's close-up lens becomes a tool of infinite discovery that reveals as much about our bodily sensations as it does the natural world. Paired with two intricately composed soundtracks created in collaboration with Dane A. Davis, Zack Settel, Jean-Pierre Bedoyan, Pam Aronoff, James Rees and Robert Allaire, *Voluptuous Sleep* is an emotional tour de force that serves as a rapturous antidote to the fragmentation of modern life and a new experience of cinematic time and memory. An active filmmaker since 1976, Bromberg has presented work at the Museum of Modern Art, Harvard Film Archives, Anthology Film Archives, London's National Film Theatre and the Centre Pompidou, as well as numerous international film festivals.

In person: Betzy Bromberg

"As with all of Bromberg's films, there are images that, once seen, will stay with you forever, and then there are the colors – rich, luscious hues to be savored slowly... The film is also a gift to us, a reminder of cinema's organic basis in chemistry and light, and of its ability to take us deep inside."

— Holly Willis, *LA Weekly*

Voluptuous Sleep Series, 2011, 95 min., 16mm**{1} Language is a Skin**

sound and music by Dane A. Davis, Zack Settel, Jean-Pierre Bedoyan, Pam Aronoff, James Rees, and Betzy Bromberg

{II} And the Night Illuminated the Night

sound and music by Robert Allaire
performed by the Formalist Quartet

"Forces of desire." (BB)

Betzy Bromberg's *Voluptuous Sleep* is like a subterranean river reemerging into the light, extending and expanding the flux of images and sounds that had enchanted us in her previous film, *a Darkness Swallowed*. Again, the filmmaker introduces a caesura between two parts of unequal length. In the first (*Language is a Skin*), tactility becomes a metaphor for vision (or vision for tactility?); as we surrender to a rich tapestry of shapes, motions and hues – pitch black with glittering particles of white or yellow light, rich blue overtones, pale grey/green, fleeting patches of violet – their shimmering liquidity and constant reconfiguration make it impossible to fully grasp them; so we are tempted with an equally fluid desire to seek meaning in the verbal constructions that make our consciousness. The only "naming" that takes place, however, is that of the dark undertones of the sound-track, multiple layers of "musical objects" that bring the experience, beyond language, to another level of sensorial *presence* – and another level of abstraction.

Graced with the almost liturgical chords of a string quartet (two violins, a viola, a cello), the second part, *And the Night Illuminated the Night* brings echoes of François Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres (Lessons of Darkness)* or the "night of the soul" experienced by the mystics – but also Nathaniel Dorsky's reflection on the stained glasses in the medieval cathedrals, that carried "a sense that the source of illumination wasn't outside ourselves, but that we were perhaps the source of that light, that our human experience might be compared to a luminous bubble suspended in darkness." (*Devotional Cinema*).

Bromberg delivers a true cinematic alchemy: her meticulous work on the physicality and tactile quality of the *texture* of the 16mm stock, its emulsion, layers and sensitivity to light, opens up toward a glimpse of the unknown, of the ineffable. The darkness is no longer "swallowed"; it is transmuted into radiant light. (BR)

Betzy Bromberg, Director of the Program in Film and Video at California Institute of the Arts, has been making experimental

films since 1976. Ms. Bromberg recently had a full retrospective of her films at the 9th Buenos Aires Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente. Her previous film, *a Darkness Swallowed* (2005), premiered at REDCAT and was presented in the New Frontier section of the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. It has screened at the Seoul Film Festival (South Korea), the Athens International Film Festival (Greece), the Bradford International Film Festival (England), the Seattle International Film Festival (Washington) and The Centro de Cultura Contemporanea de Barcelona (Spain).

Ms. Bromberg's films have shown extensively in museums, cultural venues and festivals within the United States and abroad – such as the Museum of Modern Art (New York City), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the San Francisco Cinemateque, the Harvard Film Archives (Cambridge), Anthology Film Archives (New York City), the National Film Theater (London), The Vootrum Centrum (Belgium) and the Centre Georges Pompidou (France). Previous films have shown at the Rotterdam, London, Edinburgh, Sundance and Vancouver Film Festivals. Ms. Bromberg has also had retrospectives of her films at the Los Angeles Film Forum and the Cinema Project in Portland.

Before becoming the Director of the Program in Film and Video at California Institute of the Arts, Ms. Bromberg worked in the Hollywood special effects industry for many years as a supervisor and camerawoman for the production of optical effects in major motion pictures (*The Terminator, Cat People, Bram Stoker's Dracula, Strange Days*, etc...)

Filmography

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| 2005 | <i>a DARKNESS SWALLOWED</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 78 min |
| 1996 | <i>DIVINITY GRATIS</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 59 min. |
| 1988 | <i>BODY POLITIC (god melts bad meat)</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 40 min. |
| 1987 | <i>TEMPTATION</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 4 min.
(Music Video for Tom Waits) |
| 1983 | <i>AZ IZ</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 37 min |
| 1981 | <i>MARASMUS</i> , (in collaboration with Laura Ewig)
16mm, color/sound, 24 min. |
| 1980 | <i>SOOTHING THE BRUISE</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 21 min. |
| 1979 | <i>CIAO BELLA</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 13 min. |
| 1978 | <i>PETIT MAL</i> , 16mm, color/sound, 18 min. |
| 1977 | <i>YOU CAN PRACTICALLY TASTE IT WITH YOUR EYES</i> |

(in collaboration with Lauren Abrams), Super-8,
color/sound, 45 min.

1977 **SCREAMING SUSAN**, Super-8, B/W animation, 3 min.

1977 **TACHYCARDIA**

Super-8, hand-processed, color/sound, 80 min.

Curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud.

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