



## FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

# Light Echoes Dark: The Films of Julie Murray

Los Angeles premieres

**Mon Apr 5 | 8:30 pm**

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

Jack H. Skirball Series

Irish-born, New York-based filmmaker Julie Murray combines found and original footage to conjure strange and paradoxical universes resonant with ambiguous meanings. Mystery and menace lurk equally amid the eloquence of her visual rhymes and word associations—whether in repeated images of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and the Heimlich maneuver (*Conscious*, 1993, 10 min.), shots of trees growing among crumbled brick ruins (*Orchard*, 2004, 9 min.), views from an aerial tram leaving Manhattan (*If You Stand With Your Back to the Slowing of the Speed of Light in Water*, 1997, 18 min.), or captioned excerpts from an instructional movie for the deaf (*I Began to Wish...*, 2003, 5 min.). Comprising all 16mm films, this program features Murray's latest work, *ELEMENTs* (2008, 7 min.)

### **In person: Julie Murray**

Julie Murray's increasingly sophisticated cutting style connects images using visual rhymes based on rhythm, gesture and morphology, until each person, animal or object becomes the dream or nightmare of another in a web of associations without beginning or end. Her films show an extraordinary sensitivity to the sensual, rhythmic and connotative qualities of image and sound, whether purloined or created, and establish her as a masterful editor and visionary filmmaker. — Chris Gehman, Cinematheque Ontario

"Yes, these pictures hurt to watch. Read them if you dare."

— Mike Hoolboom, *Millennium Film Journal*

### Program

*Conscious*, 16mm, color, silent, 10 mins., 1993



A melding of camera original and found material teetering on an edge of a dim realization which, in this flux reality, is evident only in the fissures of splintered associations.

Obscured among visceral absurdities and lightweight witticisms seeps a viscera, an acrid recollection, enmeshed in the intangibles and incongruities of aniline shadows. The residue of coming to. – JM

***Anathema***, 16mm, 7 mins., sound, 1995

Doubt, as a shadow cast upon the doctor and his assistants, who, through ritualized posturing, admit themselves to the arena of abject violence and inherit the disease they believe to be death.

Camera original and found footage combined and home spun reveal some points in this ceremony where through feeble act and over-wrought desire contamination mortifies catharsis. – JM

***If You Stand With Your Back To The Slowing Of The Speed Of Light In Water***, 16mm, sound, color, 18 mins, 1997.

Images from an aerial tram leaving Manhattan are followed by images of a nearly static bird, of bugs fighting, and of light bending as it passes through glass. Near the film's end the tram lands in Manhattan, as if it had reversed direction; as in all of Murray's films, the images and the editing can pull several ways at once. There are no absolutes, and even the light by which we see is altered by the material it passes through." – Fred Camper

"The film aims to illuminate a vital sense innate to perception where inversion is counterbalance and focal myopia the articulation of space". – Julie Murray

***Orchard***, 16mm, 8 mins, sound, 2004

Much of the footage that comprises *Orchard* is of a 19<sup>th</sup> century ruin that included a walled orchard in southwest Ireland. It is set deep in the woods and the crumbling brick and mortar of the broken walls has become the anchor for the roots of slender trees, so uninhibited for all this time that they reach twenty feet in height and have thick roots that follow like slow lazy trickles of water and in other places branch and wind over the brickwork in an apparently intelligent arterial



arrangement reminiscent of the human body. Some footage of Central Park is in there, as well as Niagara Falls, the main Dublin-to-Cork road and a thin smoking woods on the outskirts of Rosslare, Co. Waterford.

These are facts may be incidental to the film's eventual form, which winds the images into an arrangement of continuous wandering. All this is attended by environmental whispering sounds until a voice calls out toward the end, in dream-bound recognition, to a figure from the far, far past. – JM

***I Began to Wish.....***, 16mm, silent, 5 minutes, 2003

The sea sucks the seed back into the ocean, the flowers fold like umbrellas, shoots recoil into hiding, in seeds that shrink. The plants accelerate their tremble and wobble and glass unbreaks all around them. Strawberries blanch and tomatoes grow pale. The father, leering, holds forth a flower and suddenly his smile fades to awful seriousness. In an odd concentrated ritual the father and son carefully tip over all the flower pots, laying the plants to rest and it is in this end, around the time he figures the flowers are talking to him, that the son wishes his father had killed him. – JM

***Micromoth***, 16mm, color, sound, 6 minutes, 2000

A camera attached to the business end of a microscope facilitates the trawling of spaces shaped by small dead things among the tiny chambers somewhere between the naked eye and the mansions of molecules.

Infinitely devisable focal planes denote the topography and tilt of an insect limb, large and tortuous as a conifer, or a torso brown as maple syrup, which repeatedly emerge and dissolve through the lens as if composed of vapor. A crumpled wing here, a hind leg there contribute to the compendium that make up the whole as the edges of these things prick the air en route to invisibility.

***ELEMENTS***, 16mm, sound, 7.5 mins, 2008

This atmospheric landscape is largely un-peopled but nevertheless expresses the busy presence of ghosts that reside in the snowy fog-bound woods, the movement of the moon and in the hesitancy of the



clouds. It is an exploration of location/place both macro and micro, inhabited by a few incidental shadowy figures related through the rhythm of their gestures.

Dublin-born **Julie Murray** began her career in Ireland as a visual artist. She became involved in experimental filmmaking in San Francisco and New York after she moved to the USA in 1985. She has completed more than 20 short experimental films and has collaborated on numerous film installation/performance events with artists, musicians and other filmmakers.

Her work has been included in the New York Film Festival, Images Film Festival (Toronto, Canada), the Rotterdam International Film Festival and the Ann Arbor Film Festival, among others. Along with numerous screenings at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the San Francisco Cinematheque and the Pacific Film Archive, Murray has been invited to present her films at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), Anthology Film Archives (New York), Hallwalls (NY), the Los Angeles Filmforum, and at various universities. MOMA, and The Whitney Museum of American Art's Film Archives have acquired prints Murray's films.

Curated by Steve Anker and Betzy Bromberg

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