



**Tue Nov 1 | 8:30 pm**

Jack H. Skirball Series

\$10 [students \$8, CalArts \$5]

**FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS:**

## **Suzan Pitt and Jim Trainor: A Conversation in Light and Darkness**

Presented as part of **Pacific Standard Time** and co-presented with **Los Angeles Filmforum**.

Founded and directed by Jules Engel (1909–2003), the CalArts Film Graphics Program (later called “Experimental Animation”) sought to push the boundaries of animation. Through his teaching, and the example of his own work, Engel fostered the emergence of a new form of animation—freewheeling, transgressive, and imaginative. What happens when an animator follows a line, a patch of color, or a shape into the unconscious? What wild images would emerge; how could one image lead to another? What can we learn about art and the human condition from these brave forays into the unknown depths of the mind? Such were the questions posed by Engel’s own films—*Shapes and Gestures* (1976), *Wet Paint* (1977), *Hors d’oeuvres* (1978)—and by the students carrying his legacy: **Kathy Rose** (*Mirror People*, 1974), **Adam Beckett** (*Flesh Flows*, 1974), **Dennis Pies/Sky David** (*Aura-Corona*, 1974), **Henry Selick** (*Phases*, 1978), **Lisze Bechtold** (*Moon Breath Beat*, 1980), and others.

**In person: Christine Panushka, Sky David (Dennis Pies), Lisze Bechtold, Steve Socki.**

Presented as part of **Pacific Standard Time**. This unprecedented collaboration, initiated by the Getty, brings together more than 60 cultural institutions from across Southern California for six months beginning October 2011 to tell the story of the birth of the L.A. art scene.

Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty.  
The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.

“Jules Engel’s work speaks for itself. Direct and lucid, it requires no paraphrase. The language, which is universal... comes from the center of his being.” —Lucretia Cole

Curated by Christine Panushka. Part of the series *Alternative Projections: Experimental Film in Los Angeles, 1945-1980*, organized by **Los Angeles Filmforum**. [www.alternativeprojections.com](http://www.alternativeprojections.com)

### Program

#### ***California Institute of the Arts 1974/75***

Roberta Friedman & Grahame Weinbren, 1974, 16mm, color, sound, 3.5min.  
*Print courtesy of the Roberta Friedman collection at the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Shapes and Gestures***

Jules Engel, 1976, 16mm, color, sound, 7min.  
*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Wet Paint***

Jules Engel, 1977, 16mm, color, sound, 3min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Hors d'oeuvres***

Jules Engel, 1978, 16mm, color, sound, 4min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Dream of the Sphinx***

James Gore, ca. 1970-71, 16mm, color, silent 24fps, 4min.  
*and:*

#### ***The Letter***

James Gore & Adam Beckett, ca.1971, 16mm, color, silent 24fps, 2min.  
*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Flesh Flows***

Adam Beckett, 1974, 16mm, color, sound, 6.5min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

#### ***Mirror People***

Kathy Rose, 1974, 16mm, color, sound, 5min.

*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

**A Film for Log Hill Dogs**

Diana Wilson & David Wilson, 1974, 16mm, color, silent 24fps, 2min.  
*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

**Painting/Movie**

Barbara Stutting, 1973, 16mm, color, sound, 7.5min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

**Well Birds**

Howard Better, 1978, 16mm, b/w, sound, 3min.

**The Gameroom**

Dorne Huebler, 1978, 16mm, color, sound, 4min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

**Aura-Corona**

Sky David (aka Dennis Pies), 1974, 16mm, color, sound, 4min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

**Blue Star Mine**

Susan Elmore, 1977, 16mm, color, sound, 4min.  
*Print courtesy of the iotaCenter Collection at the Academy Film Archive*

**Phases**

Henry Selick, 1978, digital/35mm, color, sound, 5.5min.  
*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

**Animal Crackers**

Mark Kirkland, 1978, 16mm, color, sound, 2min.  
Restored version screening from HD DVD provided by Mark Kirkland

**Moon Breath Beat**

Lisze Bechtold, 1980, 35mm, color, sound, 5min.

**Water Cycle**

Steve Socki, 1981, 16mm, color, sound, 5min.

**Inside Out**

Howard Danelowitz, 1979, 16mm, color, sound, 10min.

**Pencil Booklings**

Kathy Rose, 1978, 35mm, color, sound, 13min.

*Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive*

### Artists and Curator's Biographies

**Lisze Bechtold** is an animator, author, and illustrator. She loves to create characters in every way – through writing, drawing, modeling, animating, and even voice over acting. Many of her characters were inspired by pets with big personalities. Others have arrived from Odd Juxtapositions, a town not far from here. Her books have won awards such as The Maryland Blue Crab Award and Oppenheim Gold Award. Her film credits include Disney's production of George Scribner's *The Prince and the Pauper* (1990) and Bill Kroyer's *FernGully* (1992).

**Adam Beckett** had a great influence on his fellow students in Jules Engel's then newly formed Experimental Animation program at CalArts. Both prolific and talented, Adam is still remembered with fondness by those who knew him and were part of the experimental film community of the 1970s. Between 1970 and 1975, Beckett completed seven groundbreaking films: *The Letter* (with James Gore), *Dear Janice*, *Evolution of the Red Star*, *Sausage City*, *Flesh Flows*, *Heavy-Light* and *Kitsch in Synch*. Two larger independent animations, *Life in the Atom* and *Knotte Grosse*, remain unfinished due to Beckett's work in the growing visual effects industry and his tragic and untimely death in 1979 at the age of 29.

Beckett's approach to animation was distinguished by his use of the optical printer in conjunction with the animation stand, which was not unlike the way a conductor would arrange the abstract but distinct parts of a symphonic composition. Beckett favored the complex use of animated loops: each successive iteration accreted additional images so that the loops did not merely repeat but evolved, appearing at once the same and different.

**Howard Better** is an artist living in uptown Manhattan. He is currently working on animated video installations and 3-D collages. He graduated from California Institute of the Arts with a BFA in film. Better has exhibited nationally and has shown work at P.S. 1 and The Anthology Film Archives. He received a grant from the Puffin Foundation and teaches Video and Animation in the NYC school system.

**Howard Danelowitz** studied animation at the California institute of the Arts from 1972-74 where he earned his BFA in film. His independent films have included *Inside Out* and *Lady Tree*. The former film garnered first place awards at the Filmex Exposition and the Big Muddy River Film Festival. *Lady*

*Tree* was exhibited in the New York Film Festival and the Ottawa International Animation Film Exposition. His films are distributed by the Museum of Modern Art. Mr. Danelowitz has turned his artistic pursuits over the years to painting. He lives in New York City where he is also a psychotherapist specializing in Imago couples therapy.

The creative vision of **Sky David** (aka Dennis Pies) brings Life Sciences and Animation into a single expression. He has an MFA in animation from California Institute of the Arts and a Masters in Physical Therapy with a track in Molecular Biology. He became one of the most advanced practitioners of Lymphatic Therapy during the 1990s, expanding his research into the area of bio-information technology with a specialty in photo biology in 2000. His main inventions are the ATP INDUCTOR (used to induce normal production of ATP in the mitochondria for healing and regeneration of tissue) and the HEMO-SONIC LYMPH-LIGHT that establishes balance in the human blood (circulatory system) and the lymph system. In 2006, Sky David began production of animation that is now being used in photo biology research. His film, *Field Of Green: A Soldier's Animated Sketchbook* (2000-2007) was awarded Best Short Animated Film In The 2008 Black Maria Film And Video Festival.

**Jules Engel** (11 March 1909 – 6 September 2003) was a filmmaker, painter, sculptor, graphic artist, set designer, animator, film director, and teacher. Born in Budapest, he emigrated to Chicago at age 13, and, in 1937, traveled to Los Angeles where he eventually studied at the Chouinard Art Institute. He was subsequently assigned by the Disney Studio to storyboard the Russian sprites and Chinese mushrooms dance sequences of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* for *Fantasia* (1940) and later to work on *Bambi* (1942). Leaving Disney, he joined several animators to found the United Productions of America (UPA) Studios (1944-1959). After some time in the 1960s in Paris, where his experimental live action film, *Coaraze* (1965) won the Prix Jean Vigo, he started to make personal experimental animation films in the late 1960s. In 1970, he founded the Film Graphics Program at CalArts.

“**James Gore**, a quiet eccentric, developed a style of straight-on animation - a form of surrealism with no pre-planning. Gore simply drew each image as a follow-up to the previous one, letting transformations occur at whim. The results in his first film, *Dream of the Sphinx*. are impressive for their vitality and imagination. The film was chosen for competition at the 1971 Annecy Festival, and although it did not receive a prize, it caused quite a controversy with the sphinx-like Gore looking on with bemusement.”

- William Moritz for *Absolut Panushka*

**Dorne Huebler** studied film and animation at California Institute of the Arts (BFA 1980, MFA 1983). As a student, he completed three animated short films: *The Gameroom* (1978), *Ichym* (1979) and *Corpus Callosum* (1984) which won several awards at film festivals in the USA and Europe. Dorne has worked both in visual effects and title design for feature films, television, commercials, and movie trailers. He won an Emmy Award in 1991 for his title design on *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* and three Key Art Awards for feature film trailers. In 1993, he joined Disney's Buena Vista Visual Effects digital department. In 1995/96 he was visual effects supervisor on over 240 shots in Henry Selick's *James and the Giant Peach* (1996). Since 1998 Dorne has been working at Industrial Light and Magic. In 2003 his work as compositing supervisor on Chris Columbus's *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) was nominated for best compositing in a motion picture by the Visual Effects Society.

**Mark Kirkland** is Supervising Director of *The Simpsons*. He has directed 69 episodes from 1990-present, more than any other person.

**Kathy Rose's** work has evolved from her early drawn animated films of the 1970's, through her pioneering performance work combining dance with film in the 1980-90s, to her current surreal performance video spectacles and installations, with influence from symbolist art and the Japanese Noh theater. Rose received a Guggenheim in Performance Art in 2003, and a New York State Council on the Arts grant in Video (Media & New Technology) in 2005.

Rose has toured extensively in live performance throughout the United States and Europe, giving performances in places such as New York's Museum of Modern Art, Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, the Walker Art Center, The Kitchen, Institute of Contemporary Art in London. Akademie die Kunst in Berlin, etc. as well as performances in Geneva, Helsinki, Amsterdam, Hiroshima, etc. Her video installation works have been exhibited at the Victoria & Albert Museum, Aldrich Museum, Cooper Union, etc.

**Henry Selick** continues to be one of the most imaginative and innovative directors working in the industry today. He made his feature debut in 1993 with the stop-motion classic *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, produced by Tim Burton. Besides an Academy Award nomination for Best Special Effects, *Nightmare* earned him an Annie Award from A.S.I.F.A. Hollywood for best individual directing achievement. Selick followed this three-year-plus production with a live-action and animation combo of Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* (1996), which won the top prize for best feature at the

1997 Annecy International Animation Festival. His latest feature, *Coraline* (2009), was nominated for an Academy Award, a BAFTA, and a Golden Globe.

**Steve Socki** received a BFA in Painting from the University of Illinois, and an MFA in Experimental Animation from CalArts. On request of his mentor Jules Engel, he continued as an associate professor at Cal Arts for 3 more years. During his 25+ years in the field Steve's expertise has spanned a wide range of animation applications and techniques. From movie and television special efx to character animation, Steve has been designer, developer, director, producer, and supervisor of show productions. A short list of Emmy Award nominations and wins include *The Simpsons*, *Duckman*, *The Critic*, *Dora the Explorer*, *Futurama*, and *Special Agent Oso*. He's also won an "Outstanding Achievement in Animation" Daytime Emmy Award for *Rugrats* and a nomination for the prestigious Humanitas Award. Socki is currently on the *Futurama* team at Rough Draft Studios as he continues to work on his personal art projects and collaborates on new animation story concepts.

**Diana Wilson** is co-founder of the Museum of Jurassic Technology.

**Christine Panushka** is an internationally known award-winning artist, filmmaker/ animator and educator. Panushka has curated animation programs, juried film festivals and served on the selection committees for the Hiroshima Animation Festival and the Ottawa International Animation Festival. Her films have won numerous awards including the Grand Prize at the Aspen Filmfest and a Golden Gate Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival. Named an Absolut Visionary in 1996, Panushka conceptualized, directed and curated *Absolut Panushka*, the second issue in a series of content based web sites sponsored by Absolut Vodka. Currently, Panushka is a Professor in the John Hench Division of Animation and Digital Arts, School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California.

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