

founding member of the Austrian distributor of experimental films, SixPack Films. In the US his films are distributed by Canyon Cinema and the New York Film Coop.

Arnold has constructed, in his films, a cinema machine - not simply a custom optical printer or recycling system, but a kind of mnemographic machine, an apparatus that writes and rewrites memories on the surfaces of film. Arnold's cinema, however, is not a smooth machine. The breakdowns, short-circuits and gasps that define his cinema create a violently neurotic machine. Arnold's machine stutters and twitches from the moment it is turned on. This is due, in part, to the fact that Arnold's cinema barely holds together under the strain of a constant tension between its elements. It is a machine that thematizes even as it reproduces the scene of its own breakdown, obsessively and compulsively.
– Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Afterimage*

ADDITIONAL SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

O.T. - 1 (1985)

O.T. - 2 (1986)

Jesus Walking on Screen (trailer for a film series, 1993)

Kunstraum Remise (trailer for a film series, 1994)

Brain Again (trailer for a film series, 1994)

Don't - Der Österreichfilm (commissioned for the 100 years of Cinema celebrations in Vienna, 1996)

Viennale Spot 1997 (trailer for the Vienna Film Festival, 1997)

Forsaken (installation, 2002)

Dissociated (installation, 2002)

Jeanne Marie Renée (installation, 2003)

Silent Winds (installation, 2005)

Cloudy Insulin (installation, 2007)

Coverversion (installation, 2007)

REDCAT is located in downtown Los Angeles at the corner of W. 2nd St. and S. Hope St., inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex. Tickets may be purchased by calling 213.237.2800 or at www.redcat.org or in person at the REDCAT Box Office on the corner of 2nd and Hope Streets (30 minutes free parking with validation). Box Office Hours: Tue-Sat | noon–6 pm and two hours prior to curtain.

The Jack H. Skirball Screening Series is curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud

Funded in part with generous support from Wendy Keys and Donald Pels.

UPCOMING FILM/VIDEO EVENT

December 8: Joan Jonas: Reading Culture through Dante and Aby Warburg

MARTIN ARNOLD SOMETHING HIDDEN

December 1, 2008

8:30 pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CALARTS

REDCAT

MARTIN ARNOLD

SOMETHING HIDDEN

Monday, Dec. 1 | 8:30 pm
Jack H. Skirball Series

Austrian avant-garde filmmaker Martin Arnold has been known internationally for his scintillating explorations of the hidden and repressed side of Hollywood cinema—what he regards as “a cinema of exclusion, reduction and denial.” The main portion of the program this evening features a “trilogy of compulsive repetition,” as described by Dirk Schaefer—witty and obsessive reworkings of classic films and found footage. Through dizzying replay and interruption of the image, *pièce touchée* turns an innocuous scene into the fragment of a terrifying horror film. *passage à l’acte* distorts the all-American family of *To Kill a Mockingbird* into a surrealist nightmare. *Alone. Life Wastes Andy Hardy* humorously suggests the sexual repression that lies at the core of the Judy Garland/Mickey Rooney vehicles. Arnold will also present a one-channel version of *Deanimated*, an installation that digitally deconstructs a classical horror movie.

In person: Martin Arnold

“Arnold’s short black-and-white experimental films restore much of the novelty, terror, and surprisingly, humour, of early cinema. Using elaborate optical and aural manipulations, he turns scenes from old Hollywood movies into hilariously weird, black-comic nightmares.”
– *Bright Lights Film Journal*

PROGRAM

pièce touchée (1989, 16 min., 16mm, b/w)

An 18-second sequence originally from a fifties American "B" movie is reproduced frame by frame and altered as to its temporal and spatial progression. Given factors: her and him, the scenographic space and the time spent in that scenographic space. Arnold builds on this arid atmosphere of entrapment and incipient chaos to the point where a kind of vertigo sets in. In a literally dizzying sequence, Arnold introduces maniacal flash-cuts and repeatedly replays and interrupts a scene in which the camera pans across the woman rising and the man walking; this will have some viewers holding their chairs.
– Gary Morris

passage à l’acte (1993, 12 min., 16mm, b/w)

Given context: a Hollywood text from the early sixties; a family breakfast with husband, wife, son and daughter. Inscribed: a re-petition of what is diminished, set apart and alien; a symptom.

Arnold deconstructs this scenario of normality by destroying its original continuity. It catches on the tiny sounds and bizarre body movements of the subjects, which, in reaction, become snagged on the continuity. The message, which lies deep under the surface of the family idyll, suppressed or lost, is exposed - that message is war.

The first shock, the first flight, the fear at the beginning of the film: The son jumps up from the table and throws open the door, which sticks in an Arnoldian loop of hard, hammering rhythm. He is compelled to return to the table by a mechanically repeated paternal order, 'Sit down.' And at the end, when the two children spring up, finally released from their bondage, Arnold is again caught at the door; at the infernally hammering door, as if it were completely senseless to try to leave here - this location of childhood and two-faced cinema.

- Stefan Grisseemann

Deanimated (2002, 60 min, DVD)

Arnold subjects a legendary American horror movie (*The Invisible Ghost*, 1941, by Joseph H. Lewis) to radical cinematographic surgery. Actors disappear thanks to digital technology, leaving the cinematic space to become the lead performer in a precise and absurdly comical new interpretation. The original movie, in which a phantom figure kept in the basement hypnotizes her husband into committing murders, is transformed into a study of the uncanny; the camera wanders through sets devoid of human life where the lights seem to have gone out. Death becomes the fury of disappearance which gives witness to an "unbearable transition beyond existence" (Georges Bataille). The madness has been inscribed into the faces. The ecstasy of effacement, the annihilation of being, the hypostatization of the inorganic, the searching glance, which no longer meets with any species of recognition - those are the relays which prepare the transition to a catatonic rigidity. [adapted from a text by Thomas Miessgang]

Alone. Life Wastes Andy Hardy (1998, 15 min., 16mm, b/w)

In the third act of his “trilogy of compulsive repetition, Arnold's campaign of deconstruction of classic Hollywood film codes finally turns to film music. The process links in with the other two films. The family scenes, which in the original last only seconds and are not particularly notable, are surgically sectioned into single frames. Using repetition of these 'single cells' and a new rhythm - a kind of cloning procedure - Arnold then creates an inflated, monstrous doppelgänger of the original cuts lasting many minutes. The hidden message of sex and violence is turned inside out to the point where it simply crackles.”
- Dirk Schaefer

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Vienna, Austria, **Martin Arnold** studied psychology and art history at the University of Vienna. An independent filmmaker since 1988, he has taught filmmaking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, The San Francisco Art Institute, The Academy of Fine Arts in Frankfurt, The Kansas City Art Institute, Bard College and at SUNY Binghamton. He is a