

# VICTORY OVER THE SUN: FILMS AND VIDEOS BY MICHAEL ROBINSON

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MARCH 28, 2011 | 8:30 PM

presented by

REDCAT

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California Institute of the Arts

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Monday, March 28 | 8:30 pm

Jack H. Skirball Series

*West Coast premiere and Los Angeles premiere*

Over the past decade, Michael Robinson has created a singular body of work in film and video that explores the poetics of loss and the dangers of mediated experience. His idea of “narrative” and “experimental” film often includes among its strange and beautiful effects the emotive power of a pop ballad or the crusty images yielded by thrift store VHS tapes. Robinson was recently listed as one of the top ten avant-garde filmmakers of the 2000s by *Film Comment*, and his work has been screened in venues such as the International Film Festival Rotterdam, The New York Film Festival, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Anthology Film Archives and the Tate Modern, among others. He is currently a Visiting Professor of Cinema at Binghamton University. The program includes the Los Angeles premiere of *Hold Me Now* and the West Coast premiere of Robinson’s newest film *These Hammers Don’t Hurt Us*.

## In person: Michael Robinson

“Robinson’s collaged films do double duty: while pointing to the mechanisms of mediation and manufactured sentiment, he unlocks the power popular images exercise over our psychological and emotional makeup, reconfiguring them in a way that is funny but not ironic, sincere but not naïve, heartfelt but not sentimental.”

–Henriette Huldish, *Aurora 2008: The Infinite Measure*

“Robinson parses familiarity down to its component parts then summarily turns them inside out, using the leftover pieces to launch viewers into unfamiliar—albeit uncanny—new media landscapes.” –Jessica Loudis, *Idiom*

## PROGRAM

### ***And We All Shine On***

(2006, 7 minutes, 16 mm color film with optical sound)

An ill wind is transmitting through the lonely night, spreading deception and myth along its murky path, singing the dangers of the mediated spirit. (MR)

### ***These Hammers Don’t Hurt Us***

(2010, 13 minutes, digital video)

*West Coast premiere*

The rebirth of Ancient Egypt, enchanting but with a critical note. With Cleopatra, naturally, but also The King of Pop. Tired of underworld and overworld alike, Isis escorts her favourite son on their final curtain call down the Nile, leaving a neon wake of shattered tombs and sparkling sarcophagi. (MR)

### ***The General Returns From One Place To Another***

(2006, 11 minutes, 16mm color film transferred to digital video)

Shaping a concurrently indulgent and skeptical experience of the beautiful, the film draws an uneasy balance between the romantic and the horrid. A Frank O'Hara monologue (from a play of the same title) attempts to undercut the sincerity of the landscape, but there are stronger forces surfacing. *(MR)*

### ***All Through The Night***

(2008, 4 minutes, 16mm color film transferred to digital video)

A charred visitation with an icy language of control: "there is no room for love". Splinters of Nordic fairy tales and ecological disaster films are ground down into a prism of contradictions in this hopeful container for hopelessness. *(MR)*

### ***Hold Me Now***

(2008, 5 minutes, digital video)

*Los Angeles Premiere*

Plagued by blindness, sloth, and devotion, a troubled scene from *Little House On The Prairie* offers itself up to karaoke exorcism. *(MR)*

### ***If There Be Thorns***

(2009, 13 minutes, 16mm color film transferred to digital video)

A dark wave of exile, incest, and magic burns across the tropics, forging a knotted trail into the black hole. Three star-crossed siblings wander in search of one another as a storm of purple prose and easy listening slowly engulfs them. *(MR)*

### ***You Don't Bring Me Flowers***

(2005, 8 minutes, 16mm color film with optical sound)

Viewed at its seams, a National Geographic slideshow from the 1960's and 70's deforms into a bright white distress signal. *(MR)*

### ***Victory Over The Sun***

(2007, 13 minutes, 16mm color film with optical sound)

Dormant sites of past World's Fairs breed an eruptive struggle between spirit and matter, ego and industry, futurism and failure. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory; nothing lasts forever, even cold November rain. *(MR)*

## **ABOUT MICHAEL ROBINSON**

Originally from upstate NY, **Michael Robinson** holds a BFA from Ithaca College, a MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago and was an artist in residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts for Fall 2009. His work has screened in both solo and group shows at a variety of festivals, cinematheques and galleries including the International Film Festival Rotterdam, The New York Film Festival, The London Film Festival, Sundance, Media City, Anthology Film Archives, Viennale, Cinematexas, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Tate Modern, MoMA P.S.1, Impakt, Courtisane, The Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Chicago Filmmakers, PDX, Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, and the San Francisco, Melbourne, Leeds, and Hong Kong International Film Festivals. His film *You Don't Bring Me Flowers* was awarded "Best International Film" at the 2006 Images Festival in Toronto, "Best of Festival" at the 2006 Milwaukee Underground Film Festival, and Robinson was awarded "Most Promising Filmmaker" at the 2007 Ann Arbor Film Festival. His work has

been discussed in publications such as *Cinema Scope*, *Art Papers*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Village Voice*, *Time Out New York*, and he was listed as one of the top ten avant-garde filmmakers of the 2000's by *Film Comment* magazine. Michael has independently curated programs for San Francisco Cinematheque, Cornell Cinema, and The State Contemporary Art Center in Moscow.

Further information at <http://www.poisonberries.net/about>

Curated by Adam R. Levine.

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**REDCAT** is located at 631 West 2nd St., Los Angeles, CA 90012 – in downtown Los Angeles at the corner of 2nd and Hope Streets, inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex. Parking is available in the Walt Disney Concert Hall parking structure and in adjacent lots.

Tickets are \$9 for the general public, \$7 for students with valid ID. Tickets may be purchased by calling **213.237.2800**, at [www.redcat.org](http://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.

## **UPCOMING FILM/VIDEO PROGRAMS AT REDCAT WINTER/SPRING 2011**

**Mon March 28: Victory Over The Sun: Films and Videos by Michael Robinson**

**Mon Apr 4: Betzy Bromberg's Voluptuous Sleep Series**

**Wed-Sat Apr 6-9: Between Disorder and Unexpected Pleasures: Tales from the New Chinese Cinema**

**Mon Apr 18: Eija-Liisa Ahtila: *Where is Where?***

**Mon May 2: Specks of Existence: Hartmut Bitomsky's *Dust***

**Wed-Sat May 4-7: CalArts Film/Video Showcase**

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