

ROSS LIPMAN: URBAN RUINS, FOUND MOMENTS

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California Institute of the Arts

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TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2010 | 8:30PM

Jack H. Skirball Series

Known as one of the world's leading restorationists of experimental and independent cinema, Ross Lipman is also an accomplished filmmaker, writer and performer whose oeuvre has taken on urban decay as a marker of modern consciousness. He visits REDCAT with a program of his own lyrical and speculative works, including the films *10-17-88* (1989, 11 min.) and *Rhythm 06* (1994/2008, 9 min.), selections from the video cycle *The Perfect Heart of Flux*, and the performance essay *The Cropping of the Spectacle*. "Everything that's built crumbles in time: buildings, cultures, fortunes, and lives," says Lipman. "The detritus of civilization tells us no less about our current epoch than an archeological dig speaks to history. The urban ruin is particularly compelling because it speaks of the recent past, and reminds us that our own lives and creations will also soon pass into dust. These film, video, and performance works explore decay in a myriad of forms—architectural, cultural, and personal."

In person: Ross Lipman

"Lipman's films are wonderful.... strong and delicate at the same time... unique. The rhythm and colors are so subtle, deep and soft." – Nicole Brenez, Cinémathèque Française

PROGRAM

10-17-88, 16mm, 11m, color/sd, USA, 1989

A film of optically printed collage of found and archival footage, with audio collage by John Shaw on themes from Debussy and Ellington. An investigation of one's self within the sociological theater of our cultural history, breaking out to speak to archetypal memory.

Self-Portrait in Mausoleum

DigiBeta, 1 min., 2009 (Los Angeles)

Refractions and reflections shot in the Hollywood Forever Cemetery: the half-life of death's advance. Stained glass invokes the sublime in its filtering of light energy, a pre-cinematic cipher announcing a crack between worlds. "All the stars in heaven" radiate before expiring..

Rhythm 06, 35mm, 9 min., color, sd. USA/UK, 2008/1994.

Filmed in a bitter winter in decaying housing project in Britain's bleak post-Thatcher years, RHYTHM 06 is a Pre-Raphaelite portrait of the visionary state as arising from nervous breakdown. Using only natural light, the camera's focus and exposure shift continually in a choreography of moving light. London-based performer Carolyn Roy's hyperrealist performance is echoed by Michael Whitmore's ethereal harmonic score.

selections from ***The Perfect Heart of Flux***

A wordless testimony to the chaos of urbanity: portraits of ruins and construction mingle with landscapes, skyscapes, and ghosts of the distant city. Shards, glimmers, fragments, and visions arise, coalesce and dissolve in the crucible of time. These short video works elide demarcations of cinema, and integrate poetic and essay forms in brief meditations on the nature of organic change.

Ocean Beach / Point Lobos I, II, III

DigiBeta, 10 min., 2007 (San Francisco / Los Angeles)

A short sketch in tide, wind, and spraypaint.

Afternoon In Bottle Village

DV, 3 min., color, sound. USA, 2007.

A requiem for a cathedral of light, built entirely of glass bottles, pencils, and industrial detritus by legendary California outsider artist Grandma Prisbrey from 1956 to 1981

Clean Mrf / Dirty Mrf

DigiBeta, 6 min., 2008 (Puente Hills / Los Angeles)

“Clean mrfing” is the recovery of refuse under controlled and sanitary working conditions. “Dirty mrfing” refers to the same process in an uncontrolled environment.

This video documents events of the Center for Land Use Interpretation and the Los Angeles subCacophony Society.

The Cropping Of The Spectacle

A 25 minute PowerPoint performance investigating the birth of the Television Spectacle in 1954 McCarthy’s America. Based on Lipman’s restoration work of the classic anarchist documentary *Point of Order* (Emile de Antonio/Dan Talbot, 1964), the performance integrates film and audio clips in chronicling the strange evolution of *Point of Order*, and demonstrating in its many revisions the odd continuation of a framing process begun with the original Army-McCarthy hearings. *The Cropping of the Spectacle* was initially presented at the Orphan Film Symposium in New York in 2008.

Keep Warm, Burn Britain!

20 minute prologue – (HD-Cam master transferred from 35mm and other media) of a feature-length experimental memoir (in-progress) of the mid-80’s squatting movement in East London, comprised entirely of still photographs. It chronicles the lives of the outcasts, drifters, and punks who inhabited an area known in the anarchist community as Squatter’s Paradise. *Keep Warm, Burn Britain!* moves freely from the chaotic lives of the squatters to the broad social canvas on which their tales unfold; buildings and lives swept up in the sea of change that swallows cities and time. Featuring a score by legendary NYC street musician and Academy Award-winning subject Thoth.

ABOUT ROSS LIPMAN

Ross Lipman is an independent filmmaker, photographer, and writer. His 16mm and 35mm experimental films and his videos have screened throughout the world at venues such as the London International Film Festival, the Oberhausen International Film Festival (Germany), Anthology Film Archives (NYC), the Los Angeles Film Forum, the San Francisco Cinematheque, Sixpackfilm/Top-Kino (Vienna), the Taipei Film Archive (Taiwan), and many others. He is a former member of Budapest’s Bela Balazs Studios and Chicago’s Theater Oobleck. His works have been collected by institutions and museums including the Sammlung Goetz in Munich. In recent years he has been designing film, video, and performance works exploring urban decay as a marker of modern consciousness.

Lipman is also one of the world’s leading authorities on the restoration of independent cinema, working at the UCLA Film and Television Archive. Among the films he has restored are works by John Cassavetes, Kenneth Anger, John Sayles, Emile de Antonio, Sid Laverents, Kent Mackenzie and Orson Welles. In 2007, the National Society of Film Critics gave Lipman their Film Heritage Award “for the restoration of Charles Burnett’s *Killer of Sheep* and other independent films.”

Curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud.

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

UPCOMING FILM/VIDEO PROGRAMS

April 5: Light Echoes Dark: The Films of Julie Murray

April 19: Sharon Lockhart: *Lunch Break with Exit*

April 26: Jennifer Reeves: *When It Was Blue*

May 3: Gregorio Rocha: *The Lost Reels of Pancho Villa* with Edmundo and Felix Padilla:
The Vengeance of Pancho Villa

May 6–8: CalArts Film/Video Showcase

May 10: Starting to Go Bad: New Narratives by Pat O’Neill

May 15: Teen Animation, Photography, Puppetry and Video Screening

May 16: Ring Festival LA: Considering Wagner featuring Villa Aurora Composers-in-Residence

June 2–3: Partch: Even Wild Horses

June 4–5: Dance Camera West

June 4: CAP/ArtsCOOL Program Screening

June 5: CAP/Sony Pictures Media Arts Program Screening

July 8–September 5: Chen Chieh-jen: *Empire’s Borders II*

For more information visit www.redcat.org.