

LEWIS KLAHR:DREAMING OVER THE FLUX OF THINGS PAST

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California Institute of the Arts

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LEWIS KLAHR:DREAMING OVER THE FLUX OF THINGS PAST

Monday, October 11 | 8:30 pm

Jack H. Skirball Series

Los Angeles premiere

Prolix Satori, USA, 2008-10, 77.5 minutes, digital video

Master collagist Lewis Klahr returns to REDCAT with a new series, **Prolix Satori**. A departure for him, the series is both open-ended and ongoing, with a variety of thematic focuses, and will include a combination of very short works (under a minute) and feature-length films. It will also function as an umbrella for various sub-series. This program offers seven digital films from *Prolix Satori*, including five pieces from “The Couplets”: **Wednesday Morning Two A.M.** (2009, 6:30 min.), **Sugar Slim Says** (2010, 7 min., with music by Mark Anthony Thompson performed by Chocolate Genius), **Nimbus Smile** (2009, 8:30 min.), **Nimbus Seeds** (2009, 8:30 min.), and **Cumulonimbus** (2010, 9:30 min.). “The Couplets” are generally structured around the pairing of pop melodies and the theme of romantic love as expressed in the songs’ lyrics. Also screening: **False Aging** (2008, 15 min.), **Lethe** (2009, 23 min.) and a brand new digital video, **A Thousand Julys** (2010, 6:30 min.)

In person: Lewis Klahr

“Above all, Klahr’s great subject is time, which certainly explains the exquisitely melancholy tone that pervades his work. He traffics in modes that are pitched just beyond the realm of reason. Somewhere between waking and sleeping, we can find that wavelength and achieve understanding—only to have it slip away as we enter one state or the other. Klahr’s films and videos provide a rare opportunity for us to engage with liminal state of consciousness with our alert mind and to reach those ‘infrathin’ moments that Proust describes as existing outside of time.” – Wexner Center for the Arts.

“Lewis Klahr is one of the most original and prolific artists of his generation. Intensely archeological in his approach to autobiography and cultural ephemera... he is a creator of atmospheres – ontological terrains where events and emotions register with archetypal power and dreamlike intensity.” – Mark McElhatten

“Lewis Klahr’s collage films have always mimed the processes of memory by pulling together the discards of contemporary life (images from ads, text books, or comic books, object such as game pieces, menus, playing cards) into scenarios that seem like Hollywood film dimly remembered after a night of serious drinking.” – Tom Gunning, University of Chicago

PROGRAM

PROLIX SATORI

7 Digital Collage Films From The Series 2009-2010

False Aging, 2008, 15min

"It's hard to believe that *False Aging* is less than 15 minutes long, given how powerfully it evokes passing decades punctuated by muffled explosions of longing and regret. A button revolves around a clock – and the world moves with it. Klahr shares Joseph Cornell's alchemical genius, but his collaged reveries cast deeper shadows and offer little magical protection from death and disappointment. The soundtrack draws on *The Valley of the Dolls*, Jefferson Airplane, and Lou Reed and John Cale's *Songs for Drella*. As Cale channels Warhol, recounting a nightmare involving a snowy park under the stairs and anxieties about troubles real and imagined, a blond man peers at cityscapes, a skeletal hand snatches a fortune, and no-longer-redeemable trading stamps flutter by." – *Film Comment*

A Thousand Julys, Digital Video, August 2010, 6:30 min

"This is a film that explores the two sided-ness of the comic book page. Although I'd been wanting to make this film for many years, I couldn't resolve the technical challenges with 16mm. However, Digital Video's sensitivity to low light allowed me to use a lightbox to harvest the superimpositions created when the two sides of a comic book page are backlit. Another "Couplet" from my ongoing *Prolix Satori* series."

– Lewis Klahr

The Nimbus Trilogy: ***Nimbus Smile***, 2009, 8.5min ***Nimbus Seeds***, 2009, 8.5min ***Cumulonimbus***, 2010, 9.5min

"Three romantic entanglements play out in the three "Nimbus" videos, which extend Klahr's interest in constructing almost legible narratives – but doing so in formalist terms that complicate and enhance the traditional pleasures of stories. The trilogy's closer, *Cumulonimbus*, is a movingly mature account of grief with a puckish sting in its tail." – Wexner Center for the Arts.

Sugar Slim Says, 2010, 7min

Music by Mark Anthony Thompson as performed by Chocolate Genius from the Album *Swansongs*.

Wednesday Morning Two A.M., 2009, 6.5min

Lethe, 2009, 23min

ABOUT LEWIS KLAHR

Called "the reigning proponent of cut and paste" by J. Hoberman of the *Village Voice*, and ranked fourth in *Film Comment's* recent poll of the top experimental filmmakers of the decade, master collagist **Lewis Klahr** has been making films since 1977. He is known for his uniquely idiosyncratic experimental films and

cutout animations which have screened extensively in the United States, Europe and Asia – in venues such as New York’s Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Biennial, the New York Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival, the Rotterdam International Film Festival, the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the London Film Festival and Los Angeles Filmforum. He received a Tiger Award (Best Short Film) for *Wednesday Morning Two A.M* at the latest Rotterdam International Film Festival, and, in May 2010, the Wexner Center for the Arts organized a retrospective of his work, as he was a Residency Award winner at the Center. He has also received commissions from European arts organizations such as the Grønnegård Theater in Copenhagen, Denmark (*Lulu*) and the Rotterdam International Film Festival (*Two Minutes to Zero*).

His work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Klahr is the recipient of multiple awards, including a Guggenheim fellowship and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the NY State Council of the Arts, Creative Capital and The Jerome Foundation.

Lewis Klahr teaches at the California Institute of the Arts.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Picture Books For Adults (8 films including *Enchantment; Pulls; The River Sieve* – 1983-85, super 8)

Her Fragrant Emulsion (1987, 16mm)

Tales of the Forgotten Future (12 films including *In The Month of Crickets; The Organ Grinder’s Monkey; Hi-Fi Cadets; Elevator Music; Station Drama; The Life of Naomi Lang* – 1987-1991, super 8)

City Film (1992, super 8)

The Pharaoh’s Belt (1994, 16mm)

Lulu (1996, 16mm)

Green ‘62 (1996, 16mm)

Marietta’s Lied (1998, 16mm)

Engram Sepals: Melodramas (7 films including *Altair; Pony Glass; Govinda* – 1994-2000, 16mm)

The Aperture of Ghostings (3 films including *Elsa Kirk*, 1999-2001, 16mm)

Daylight Moon (A Quartet) (including *Valise*, 2002–04, 16mm)

The Two Minutes to Zero Trilogy (2003-04, 16mm)

Antigenic Drift (2007, digital video)

Curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud.

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

UPCOMING FILM/VIDEO PROGRAMS AT REDCAT FALL 2010

October 23: Between Displacement and Nostalgia: Conflicted Memories of Cuba

October 25: Revelations of the Everyday: Films and Videos by Vincent Grenier

November 1: Spectacles of Light: Films and Videos by Peter Rose

November 22: Thom Andersen: Out of the Car and into the Music of the Street

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