

# SPECTACLES OF LIGHT: FILMS AND VIDEOS BY PETER ROSE

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NOVEMBER 1, 2010 | 8:30 PM

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

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Monday, November 1 | 8:30 pm

Since 1968, Peter Rose has made more than 30 films, tapes, performances, and installations. Many early works raise intriguing questions about the nature of time, space, light, and perception, and draw upon his background in mathematics. His subsequent interest in language as subject, and video as a medium, has generated a substantial body of work that plays with the feel and form of sense, concrete texts, political satire, oddball performance, and a kind of intellectual comedy. Rose's recent installations return to an examination of landscape, time, and vision, and works on this program propose an annotated, nocturnal portrait of a vanished culture. Rose's work has been widely exhibited in venues such as The Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Biennial, the Centre Pompidou, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Film Society of Lincoln Center, and the Rotterdam International Film Festival.

**In person: Peter Rose**

"[*The Man Who Could Not See Far Enough* is] a powerfully formal, analytic inquiry into the very nature of vision and cinema... painfully beautiful images of mysterious events and things, images that split, multiply, migrate, and quiver with a hallucinatory vibrance... a rich fabric interlacing the metaphysical with the ironical." – Sally Banes, *The Village Voice*

Peter Rose's work asks very serious questions regarding the nature of thought and the meaning of language, while at the same time casting banana peels for unsuspecting minds. At his best Rose displays a virtuosic command of cinematic techniques and a visual and auditory sense bordering on the hallucinatory. " – Thomas Gartside, *New Art Examiner*

## PROGRAM

### ***The man who could not see far enough***

(1981) 33min, 16 mm film, color, sound

The film uses literary, structural, autobiographical, and performance metaphors to construct a series of tableaux that evoke the act of vision, the limits of perception, and the rapture of space. Spectacular moving multiple images; a physical, almost choreographic sense of camera movement; and massive, resonant sound have inspired critics to call it "stunning" and "hallucinatory." The film ranges in subject from a solar eclipse shot off the coast of Africa to a hand-held filmed ascent of the Golden Gate Bridge, and moves, in spirit, from the deeply personal to the mythic. The film has won major awards of distinction at numerous festivals, including the Oberhausen, Edinburgh, American, and Sydney Film Festivals, has been broadcast nationally, and is in collections at Centre Pompidou in Paris and at Image Forum in Tokyo.

### ***SpiritMatters***

(1984) 6min., 16 mm, silent

A silent monologue on the simultaneous perception of space and time, the film was constructed without a camera by writing directly on clear celluloid, and then “translated” by refilming the resulting strips on a light table so that they appear as “subtitles” beneath the original inscription. *SpiritMatters* functions as both process and object-an interactive experiment in reading, writing, and seeing. It has won prizes at the Baltimore, Ann Arbor, and Experimental Film Festivals.

### ***Metalogue***

(1996) 3min., digital video

The piece has been described as a cross between a “speech” and a “fireworks display.” Digital editing techniques have been used to reflect and refract a complex monolog about memory, time, and language. By embedding the corresponding gestures in a spectacular diachronic array, Rose creates a new form of poetry. *Metalogue* won a Bronze Award at the New York Short Film and Video Festival

### ***Pneumenon***

(2003) 5min., single channel documentation of two-channel video installation

Commissioned by the Fabric Workshop and Museum, this a two-channel video installation offers dramatic visible metaphors for ideas about appearance and reality, sign and referent, cause and effect. The heart of the piece is a video shot on the Rio Grande in southern Texas. A blue tarpaulin hangs from a line of rope and sways in an intermittent breeze. The shadows from the leaves on a tree in the distance are projected onto this surface by the sun, and they grow and decline in size as the tarp sways back and forth towards the camera. When the wind occasionally lifts the tarp, the entire landscape behind is revealed- a tree, some RV vehicles, a road. And then the curtain falls again, fluttering... This is a piece about phenomenon and noumenon, about air, wind, breath, and light, and it operates at an odd juncture between video art and a theatre of objects.

### ***Studies in Transfalumination***

(2008) 5:30min., video

The piece exploits modified flashlights and stripped down video projectors to explore the visual complexities of the ordinary world: a tunnel, a clump of grass, a discarded table, the underside of a bridge, fog, a piece of rock, and a tree. All images were shot in real time- there is no animation. The video is the third in a series of works that explore light and darkness.

### ***The Indeserian Tablets 1-12***

(2010), 15min. video.

These are first 12 parts of a prospective 32 part installation that presents an elegiac, annotated nocturnal portrait of a vanished culture- its language, technology, religious practice, art and poetry- told using transfaluminal strategies.

## ***The Pressures of the Text***

(1983), 17min. video

A parody of art/critspeak, educational instruction, gothic narrative, and pornography, *The Pressures of the Text* integrates direct address, invented languages, ideographic subtitles, sign language, and simultaneous translation to investigate the feel and form of sense, the shifting boundaries between meaning and meaninglessness. The piece was written, directed and delivered by Peter Rose; co-directed by Jessie Jane Lewis; with sign language and ideographic symbols by Jessie Jane Lewis; and with English simultran by Fred Curchack.

## **ABOUT PETER ROSE**

Since 1968 **Peter Rose** has made over thirty films, tapes, performances and installations. Many of the early works raise intriguing questions about the nature of time, space, light, and perception and draw upon Rose's background in mathematics and on the influence of structuralist filmmakers. He subsequently became interested in language as a subject and in video as a medium and generated a substantial body of work that played with the feel and form of sense, concrete texts, political satire, oddball performance, and a kind of intellectual comedy. Recent video installations have involved a return to an examination of landscape, time, and vision. Rose has been widely exhibited, both nationally and internationally, having been included in shows at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Biennial, the Centre Pompidou, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Film Society at Lincoln Center, and the Rotterdam International Film Festival. His work is included in several major international collections. He has been awarded fellowships by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Pew Foundation, the Independence Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and is fond of writing descriptions in the third person.

"Some of us work in a proximate relation with our intended audiences, speaking familiar languages so that the archetypes of our culture may be recognized; and some work out a self-creating interiority from which, if we are lucky, we bring back the shape of a newly imagined alphabet of feeling. I find myself oscillating between these two agendas and find the dialectic a productive one, a reflection of the complex, contradictory nature of our times." (PR)

For more information, visit <http://www.peterrosepicture.com/>

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**

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

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