

FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

Mon Oct 15 | 8:30 pm |

Jack H. Skirball Series

\$10 [members \$8]

Invisibilities:

Animated Films and Live Performance by Laura Heit

Using numerous animation techniques, puppetry and live-action video, Laura Heit's exquisitely crafted, subversively witty work makes visible hidden corners of the human psyche, where monsters, wolves and imaginary creatures tread. *Look for Me* (2005) employs 2D computer animation with monoprints, while *The Deep Dark* (2011) combines cutout stop-motion animation, live-action video and drawing to evoke elemental fears. *The Amazing, Mysterious, and True Story of Mary Anning and Her Monsters* (2003) calls on toy-theater puppetry and drawn animation to tell a fanciful tale. *Collapse* (2002), a reflection on a tragic moment, is a 2D computer animation with pastel drawings, and the allegorical *Parachute* (1997) a hand-painted and animated multiplane cutout. Heit's program concludes with a new version of the critically acclaimed *Matchbox Shows* in which she performs tiny puppet vignettes inside matchboxes.

In person: Laura Heit

"Laura Heit explores that symbol of wildness – the wolf – in the layered, animated *The Deep Dark*, revealing how a deep-seated fear of the woods affects our perception." – Serena Donadoni, *Indiewire*

"*The Matchbox Shows* deftly reveal the big emotions lurking within seemingly tiny details." – Joel Del Signore, *The Gothamist*

"With childlike simplicity and arresting nonchalance, in *The Matchbox Shows*, Heit offers 30-second vignettes that make Mr. Bill seem positively Rococo." – Justin Hayford, *Chicago Reader*

Films

The Deep Dark

(2011, 7:07 min., HD)

Cut-out stop-motion animation, live action video and drawing.

Live music performance by Emily Lacy.

An elliptical cinematic song cycle, *The Deep Dark* journeys into the psyche with animation, projected shadows, fleeting lights, and ethereal vocal incantations.

Look For Me

(2005, 3:35 min., Digibeta, 2D computer animation with monoprints)

Sound Design and Mix: Barnaby Templer

Voice: Sarah Anthony

Commissioned by Channel 4 TV UK

What would you do if you woke up one day and were invisible?

The Amazing, Mysterious, and True Story of Mary Anning and Her Monsters

(2003, 8 min., Digibeta, toy theater puppetry and drawn animation)

A toy theater show based on the life of Mary Anning (1799-1847) from Lyme Regis, England. When most children were afraid of monsters Mary sought them out. She had an eye for the inexplicable and in the end her discoveries would change more than she bargained for.

Parachute

(1997, 17:00 min., 16mm. multiplane cut-out animation)

A beautiful and disquieting allegory of a woman who leaves home and finds herself surrounded by strangers, this hand painted and animated mutiplane cut-out 16mm film examines the dichotomy between our desire for escape and our fear of the unknown.

Collapse

(2002, 4:08 min., Digibeta, 2D computer animation with pastel drawings)

Music composed by Charles Kim and performed by Sinister Luck Ensemble (Jason Adasieweiz, Andrew Bird, Kent Kessler, Charles Kim, Diana Parmeter) www.sinisterluck.com

A meditation on a single tragic moment; a visual response to the events of 9/11.

Performance

The Matchbox Shows

(about 20 min., live performance/puppetry)

Performer, writer and director: Laura Heit

Miniature raconteur, sequined pyromaniac Laura Heit performs teeny tiny puppet shows inside matchboxes. A dead boyfriend, a sausage fairy, a tiger whisperer, a perfectionist, a bath-loving ghost, and many others play their parts in these uncanny micro plays. The miniature stages come to life with crankles, fire, and pop-up paper engineering. The puppet shows are simultaneously projected on a screen behind the table making the little tiny details of this portable variety show larger than life.

Always evolving, *The Matchbox Shows* have been performed nationally and internationally since 1999, in a number of venues including: Great Small Works Toy Theater Festival at St. Ann's Warehouse Brooklyn, the Jim Henson International Festival of Puppetry, the Velaslavasay Panorama theater (LA), Casteliers Montreal Canada, Dordrecht Netherlands, and Puppetropolis (Chicago).

"It is a tired old analogy to compare the relationship between puppeteer and puppet to that between God and man, but when God shows up slightly tipsy and wearing red lipstick and a blue sequined tube top it is possible for the idea to seem fresh again."

- Susan Simpson, *Puppetry International Magazine*

Laura Heit employs stop-motion, live-action puppetry, hand drawing, and computer animation in her short films. Her work has screened nationally and internationally in museums and film festivals, including; The Walker Arts Center, New York MOMA, The Guggenheim Museum, The Anthology Film Archives, The Millennium Film Workshop, The Ancecy, Rotterdam, Taipei, Ann Arbor, and London International Film Festivals, The Black Maria Film Festival, among others, and has been broadcast on PBS. She also works in puppetry, experimental theater, and live performance. Her acclaimed puppet-show-in miniature, *The Matchbox Shows*, in which Heit plays ringmaster to a tiny cabaret, has been touring for over ten years.

Heit has been the recipient of awards and grants from Mac Dowell Colony, Channel Four Television London, British Film Council, Durfee Foundation, ARC grant, Jim Henson Foundation, Puppeteers of America, and MTV. She has a BFA in Film from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and a MFA from Royal College of Art, London.

From 2007 to 2011 She was co-director of the Experimental Animation Program at the California Institute of the Arts. She currently lives in Portland Oregon.

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Curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud