

## FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

**Mon Feb 2 | 8:30 pm |**

Jack H. Skirball Series

\$11 [members \$9]

### **Cinema is a Virus from Out of Space**

Program curated by Carole Ann Klonarides, Sylvère Lotringer and Michael Oblowitz.

Following a sold-out screening this fall in MoMA's annual film preservation festival, *To Save and Project*, REDCAT revisits "Cine Virus," a program organized in 1978 by filmmakers Kathryn Bigelow and Michael Oblowitz to coincide with the publication of the *Schizo-Culture* issue of the radical journal *Semiotext(e)*, founded by Sylvère Lotringer. This screening includes Antony Balch's dizzying William S. Burroughs collage *Cut Ups* (1967); Bruce Conner's 16mm film for DEVO's "Mongoloid" (1977); the MoMA restoration of Bigelow's *Set-Up* (1978), which "deconstructs" seductively shot images of two men in a brutal fight; Tina L'Hotsky's *Snake Woman* (1977), starring Patti Astor; films by Eric Mitchell and Michael Oblowitz; as well as a live reading by Zackary Drucker of Kathy Acker's "Blood and Guts in High School."

**In person: Patti Astor, Kathryn Bigelow, Gerald Casele, Zackary Drucker, Carole Ann Klonarides, Sylvère Lotringer, Michael Oblowitz and special guests to be announced.**

"*Set-Up* is Kathryn Bigelow's student film at Columbia about the exploration of 'why violence in cinematic form is so seductive'. It features two men beating each other to a pulp in a dark alley, while two professors analyze the philosophy of it all on the soundtrack."  
– *Letterboxd*

"Made in collaboration with DEVO, *Mongoloid* is a brilliant three and a half minute music video by the master of the 'found film'."  
– *Subversive Cinema*

"The idea behind *Cut Ups* was to cause a complete disorientation of the senses. This was aided by an audio track created by Burroughs, Brion Gysin and Ian Somerville, which consisted of mind-numbing permutations of just four phrases." – *Dangerous Minds*

*Presented as part of the Jack H. Skirball Series.*

Program

***Cut Ups***

1967. Great Britain. Directed by Antony Balch, 11 min.

"*Cut Ups* was originally intended as a documentary called *Guerilla Conditions*, and was filmed between 1961 and 1965 in Tangiers and Paris. It included some footage from Balch's aborted attempt to film the unfilmable *Naked Lunch*. The finished material was collated and then conventionally edited. Then Balch divided the finished film into four sections of equal length and then assembled into its final state by taking one-foot lengths from each of the four sections that were cut together with mathematical precision — 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4 etc. Variations to this structure occur randomly when a shot change occurs within one of the already edited one-foot lengths." – *Dangerous Minds*

***Car Crash/Mass Homicide/Suicide Attack***

1978/2014. USA. Directed by Eric Mitchell. Camera: Michael McClard. Digital projection. 6 min.

A super-8 pastiche of Warhol's "Car Crash" paintings and the films of Jean Luc Godard, the film serves as a reflection on the crisis of political radicalism in the late 70s. A subjective camera stumbles upon a crashed car with the bodies of dead victims splayed all over, and slides around the carnage in expressionistic delirium. The endless pans on the lifeless bodies, accompanied by a soundtrack of scanner police radio transmissions, create an ephemeral image that remains dislocated from space and time.

***Set-Up***

1978. USA. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Preserved by The Museum of Modern Art with support from the Celeste Bartos Fund for Film Preservation. 17 min.

Two semioticians—Lotringer and Marshall Blonsky—unpack, through voiceover commentary, seductively shot images of two men engaged in a brutal fight.

***Minus Zero-Circuits of Control***

1977–79. Written, directed and shot by Michael Oblowitz. Digital projection. 39 min.

"desire is the pure effect of lack"-Jacques Lacan.

Absence in search of a signifier-Hans, Dora, Schreiber and Signorelli, displaced from Freud's collective works, find themselves wandering through a post-apocalyptic paranoid New York City landscape in a self-referential deconstructed neo-New Wave film-noir. Echoing Godard, Robbe-Grillet and Wittgenstein, the film was first screened as a work in progress (*Circuits of Control*) at the original Cine Virus along with *The Is-Land* (an anti-apartheid/anti-documentary). The finished film, *Minus Zero*, premiered at the 1979 Edinburgh Film Festival in 1979. With Ron Vawter, Rosemary Hochschild, Will Patton and Eric Mitchell.

### ***Snake Woman***

1977. USA. Directed by Tina L'Hotsky. Cinematography by Michael Oblowitz. Digital projection. 15 min.

Directed by the late and fabulously great Tina L'Hotsky and starring the ingénue of the Downtown New York scene, Patti Astor, *Snake Woman* is a black and white pastiche of an exotic jungle film of the silent era, à la King Vidor/Hedy Lamarr, with 1977 New York's Central Park providing the jungle location. Originally filmed in Super 8 mm

### ***Alien Portrait***

1978. USA. Directed by Michael McClard. Music by Teenage Jesus and the Jerks. 11 min.

The original film was shot and exhibited in the super-8 format at six frames per second, with a Teenage Jesus And the Jerks single playing in the background. The subject focus is on the bass player Gordon Stevenson. The sound track is an asynchronous kludge of the band's first single with the image.

### ***Mongoloid***

1977. USA. Directed by Bruce Conner. Music by DEVO. 4 min.

"A documentary film exploring the manner in which a determined young man overcame a basic mental defect and became a useful member of society. Insightful editing techniques reveal the dreams, ideals and problems that face a large segment of the American male population." – DEVO

### ***Kathy Acker: "Blood and Guts in High School"***

1978/2014. Live reading by Zackary Drucker. 10 min.

A "metafictional text" about an American girl who has an incestuous relationship with her father, goes to school in NY where she joins a gang, sleeps around and ends up in a prostitution ring, finally traveling to Tangier where she meets Jean Genet.

***Burroughs on Bowery.***

1977. USA. Directed by Marc Olmsted. 5 min.

This experimental portrait of the author of *Naked Lunch*, was shot around William Burroughs' bunker in NYC in 1977 in Super 8 and then rephotographed in 16mm multiple times off the screen of a TV. Besides Burroughs' "cut-up" literary style, Olmsted was also influenced in 1977 by Bruce Conner and the emerging punk aesthetic of xerox poster art.

Curatorial Statement

The first iteration of Cine Virus was organized in 1978 by the filmmakers Kathryn Bigelow and Michael Oblowitz as a celebration of William Burroughs' 70<sup>th</sup> birthday and to coincide with the publication of *Schizo-Culture*, a widely influential special issue of the radical journal *Semiotext(e)*. Founded by Sylvère Lotringer and a group of Columbia University graduate students in 1974, *Semiotext(e)* was known both for introducing American readers to French poststructuralist theory and for bringing disparate elements of New York's downtown cultural scene together in the late 1970s and 1980s—"making profuse connections via a circuitry that seemed to exist between the cracks," as Jim Fletcher would observe.

While *Schizo-Culture* insisted on a violent break with the counterculture of the 1960s, its sister film program offered its own sinister directive: "Everyone wants to be infected/everyone wants to be infectious. Cine Virus programs cinema as a soft-machine of control bringing into proximity different strains of the disease. The virus is the pleasure and contamination: the infection."

Bios

Novelist, poet and performance artist **Kathy Acker** (1947-1997) published her first book (a collection of poems), *Politics*, in 1972, and her first novel, *The Childlike Life of the Black Tarantula: Some Lives of Murderesses* in 1973 (under the pseudonym Black Tarantula). She published a number of texts, catalogue essays etc... for *Semiotext(e)*, *RE/Search*, *Angel Exhaust*, *monochrom* and *Rapid Eye*. Copyrighted in

1978, *Blood and Guts in High School* was published in 1983 by Grove Press. Major works: *Kathy Goes to Haiti* (1978); *My Death My Life by Pier Paolo Pasolini* (1987); *In Memoriam to Identity* (1990); *Hannibal Lecter, My Father* (1994), *Pussy, King of the Pirates* (1996).

A graduate of the Lee Strasberg Institute, **Patti Astor** appeared in over a dozen 1970s experimental and low-budget films by Amos Poe, James Nares, Anders Grafstrom, Eric Mitchell, Tina L'Hotsky and Charles Ahearn. In 1981, she co-founded FUN Gallery in New York's East Village, showing the work of graffiti and street artists such as Fab 5 Freddy, LEE (Quinones), Zephyr, Dondi, Lady Pink, Futura 2000, Kenny Scharf, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring. After closing FUN in 1985, Astor moved to Hollywood where she produced, wrote and starred in *Assault of the Killer Bimbos* (1988).

**Anthony Balch** (1937-1980). The first distributor/exhibitor to embrace art, horror and exploitation films with equal enthusiasm, London-born Brach showed films by Todd Browning, Kenneth Anger, and Russ Meyer, while embarking on a collaboration with William Burroughs by directing *Tower Open Fire* (1962-63), *Cut Ups* (1967) and the unfinished film version of *Naked Lunch*. He later directed *Secrets of Sex* (1970) and the highly successful horror film, *Horror Hospital* (1973).

**Kathryn Bigelow** studied at the San Francisco Art Institute, The Whitney Program, and Columbia University's graduate's film program, where she directed *Set-Up* (1978). She completed her first feature film, *The Loveless*, with Willem Dafoe and Tina L'Hotsky, in 1982. Other films include: *Near Dark* (1987), *Blue Steel* (1989), *Point Break* (1991), *Strange Days* (1995), *The Weight of Water* (2000), *K-19: The Widowmaker* (2002), *The Hurt Locker* (2008, Academy Award winner) and *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012).

Born and raised in Kansas, **Bruce Conner** moved to San Francisco in 1957, where, among the local Beat community, he made his seminal A MOVIE (1958), employing the then unheard-of practice of found-footage filmmaking. Determined to avoid pigeonholing, he then diversified into drawing, photography and collage while continuing to innovate in film. After meeting Dennis Hopper in the early 1960s, he became an unofficial consultant for *Easy Rider* (1969). In the late 1970s, he began photographing early Punk shows at the Mabuhay Gardens in San Francisco, leading to film collaborations with Devo, David Byrne and Brian Eno.

<adapted from a text by Timoleon Wilkins>

Infusing elements of photography, video, text and performance, **Zackary Drucker** makes work that is rooted in cultivating and investigating under-recognized aspects of transgender history. Drucker earned an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in 2007 and a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in 2005. She has performed and exhibited her work internationally in numerous museums, galleries, and film festivals including Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, NL; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; the 2014 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial; 54th Venice Biennale; Swiss Off-Site Pavilion; Curtat Tunnel, Lausanne, Switzerland; L.U.C.C.A. Museum of Contemporary Art, Lucca, IT; Les Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin/Madrid; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA; MOMA PS1; Made in L.A., Los Angeles Biennial, Hammer Museum; Outfest and REDCAT.

**Carole Ann Klonarides** is an independent curator of contemporary art and media. In addition, she is a co-producer of collaborative videos on art and artists (MICA-TV) and a writer and visiting lecturer on contemporary art. From 2006 to 2007 she served as a consultant for the Getty Research Institute for the exhibition and publication "California Video." She was the Curator of Programming at the Santa Monica Museum of Art (1997-2000); and Media Arts Curator at the Long Beach Museum of Art (1991-95). Before moving to Los Angeles in 1991, she first came to New York City in 1972 to participate in the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, and later received her MA in Media Studies from the New School of Social Research.

**Tina L'Hotsky** (1951-2008). After attending the Cooper School of Art & Design in Cleveland, she enrolled in New School for Social Research in New York City. In the late 1970s and 1980s, she appeared at New York venues as an avant-garde performance artist and was known as Queen of the Mudd Club, where she hosted unforgettable parties. She appeared in Anders Grafstrom's *The Long Island Four* (1980) and Kathryn Bigelow's *The Loveless* (1980). She also directed the Super-8 films *Barbie* (1977) and *Snake Woman* (1977). At the time of her death, she had been a 20-year resident of Pasadena, where she was an activist, working on issues regarding mental illness and the justice system. <adapted from an obituary in *Cleveland.com*>

**Sylvère Lotringer** is the founder of *Semiotext(e)* and the editor of the "Schizo-Culture" issue. He is professor Emeritus at Columbia University and Jean Baudrillard Professor at the European Graduate School. He is the author of *The Miserables* (Semiotext(e), 2014) and *Mad Like Artaud* (Univocal, 2015).

**Michael McClard** arrived in New York in 1973 with a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. He was a founding member of the noted artists' support group Colab and its first president. During the 1970s he made films and staged provocative performances at the Kitchen, the Clocktower, PS 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, De Appel, Amsterdam and N.A.M.E Gallery, Chicago. In October 1981, his first large-scale one-man show of paintings and frescoes took place at Mary Boone. In the 90s McClard created original software with his brother Peter McClard through their enterprise, Hologramophone Research. The computer installation "DNA Characters" was exhibited in "A visage découvert," Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain, Jouy-en Josas, France. More recently, McClard's experimental short films *Alien Portrait* (1978) and *Contortions* (1978) were given their world premiere at "No Wave Cinema, 1978-87" at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

**Eric Mitchell** moved to New York City in the late 1970s, where he became one of the most significant proponents of No Wave Cinema. In 1978, he directed his first feature, *Kidnapped*, followed by *Red Italy* (1979), *Underground USA* (1980) and *The Way it Is or Eurydice in the Avenues* (1985). As an actor, he appeared in most of his films, as well as the work of Amos Poe (*Unmade Beds*, 1976 and *The Foreigner*, 1978), James Nares (*Rome 78*, 1978), Mark Rappaport (*The Scenic Route*, 1978), Michael Oblowitz (*Minus Zero*, 1979), John Lurie (*Men in Orbit*, 1979) Jim Jarmusch (*Permanent Vacation*, 1980), and Robert Frank (*Candy Mountain*, 1988), among others. As a performer he mounted several multi-media events at The Kitchen in New York and with fellow artist Martin Kippenberger put out the punk single Luxus in 1979. As a lifelong painter, draughtsman and illustrator he held a retrospective exhibition, "Call It Nothing" (2006) at Mitchell Alcus Gallery in Chelsea, NY and has had his work regularly featured in *The New Yorker* and *Bergdorf Goodman Magazine*.

**Michael Oblowitz** studied in Columbia University under Peter Wollen and Sylvère Lotringer. In the late 1970s, he completed the "No Wave" films *X-Terminator*, *Minus Zero* and *The Is-Land*, and collaborated on a series of fine art films with Lawrence Weiner, Vito Acconci, Richard Serra, Joan Jonas and Joseph Kosuth. He went on to make the Punk-Drama *King Blank* (1982) and the first rap music video on MTV for Kurtis Blow. He then directed music videos for Eric Clapton, David Bowie, John Lee Hooker, Carlos Santana, Dianna Ross, Buddy Guy, Jeff Beck as well as commercials. He returned to independent filmmaking with the Jim Thompson-inspired, *This World Then The Fireworks* (1996), shown at Sundance and Cannes) and directed a

number of genre films for Sony Pictures, Paramount and Goldcrest including *The Traveler* with Val Kilmer (2010.) The Hof Film Festival in Germany had a retrospective of his film and music video work in 2013.

Allen Ginsberg said that "**Marc Olmsted** inherited Burroughs' scientific nerve & Kerouac's movie-minded line nailed down with gold eyebeam in San Francisco." Olmsted's 25 year relationship with Ginsberg is chronicled in his new memoir *Don't Hesitate: Knowing Allen Ginsberg 1972-1997 - Letters and Recollections* (2014). He's been internationally anthologized and is the author of four collections of poetry, including *What Use Am I A Hungry Ghost?* (2001)

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