

FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

Mon Mar 26 | 8:30 pm |

Jack H. Skirball Screening Series

\$12 [members \$9]

Steven Arnold's *Luminous Procuress*

(1971, 74 min, 16mm)

A gender-obliterating funfest unleashed by the cantankerous cross-dressing Cockettes, the legendary *Luminous Procuress* is now restored in an immaculate new print that brazenly recounts the mystical passage of two lissome hippie lads who enter a strange mansion where a magic potion promises glimpses of a transformational realm. Led by the mystical "Procuress" (the ever-sculptural Pandora), the two naïfs are privy to a delirious vision of consciousness unbounded by gender or desire. Created in San Francisco's Mission District by Steven Arnold, an art outlier of prophetic leanings, *Luminous Procuress*, an exotic amalgam of outrageous wearable art, oneiric imagery, and erotically charged tableaux, gloriously drags on." (Steve Seid)

Event presented in collaboration with Dirty Looks.

In person: Steve Seid and Bradford Nordeen

Luminous Procuress (1971, 74 min, 16mm)

Score by Warner Jepson.

Restored 16mm Print courtesy of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive

"The film's power is in its creation of an alternative world, a new way of seeing and living that alters experience itself, including the film viewing experience." — Bill Nichols, *The Staff*, Los Angeles

Luminous Procuress is "An underground extravaganza.... populated by a collection of depraved-looking baby dolls, costumed love goddesses, Egyptian mummies, men with deep red lipstick and glitter-encrusted beards (members of the Cockettes (an anarchic troupe of acid-head drag queens), and mainly lots of entangled naked bodies... the movie is as remarkable for its mise-en-scène as for its druggie, orgiastic content. Where *Flaming Creatures* - an alternately frenzied and languorous home-movie of a transsexual bacchanal - was distinguished by a radical absence of production values, *Luminous Procuress* can boast professional lighting, glorious Kodachrome color and elaborate sets. The copious credits include one for 'hair creation.'"

- J. Hoberman - *The New York Times*

FILMMAKER

Steven Arnold was an American artist and protégé of Salvador Dali, who worked as a filmmaker, photographer, painter, illustrator, set and costume designer, and assemblage artist. Arnold received his BFA and MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute, and was influential in shaping the countercultural psychedelic scene of the city in the 1960's. In March 1968, the creation of Arnold's weekly midnight movie showcases called Nocturnal Dream Shows in San Francisco helped launch **The Cockettes**, a psychedelic drag troupe, into fame. Arnold created some of the first rock posters for the famed Matrix nightclub, an early purveyor of the "San Francisco sound" of the psychedelic '60s.

From 1982-89, Steven Arnold found his niche in Los Angeles, designing and shooting tableau-vivants for four books, leaving thousands of living tableau photographs and negatives unpublished. Deeply influenced by Jungian archetypes, Eastern philosophy, and ancient ritual, Arnold understood visual production as a key to the spiritual and subconscious, depicting alternative worlds with dramatic style and sly humor across numerous mediums. Arnold spoke about his practice of drawing as a means of making visible his dreams and compared his photography to religious meditation. Steven Arnold died in 1994.

GUEST SPEAKER

Bradford Nordeen is a curator and writer based in Los Angeles and the founder of Dirty Looks, a bi-coastal platform for queer film, video and performance, as well as the 31-day series, **Dirty Looks: On Location**. His publications include *Check Your Vernacular* (2014), *Dirty Looks at MoMA* (2013), *Fever Pitch* (2008), as well as editing the annual *Dirty Looks*

Volume series. He has written for publications like *Art in America*, *Afterimage*, *Huffington Post*, *Lambda Literary*, *Little Joe*, *Animal Shelter*, *indieWIRE* and *Butt Magazine*.

Nordeen served as the Platinum Programmer for Outfest Los Angeles from 2013 - 2017 and guest curator for The Broad Museum's inaugural public programs (2015 - 2017). He has organized exhibitions for Participant Inc, ONE Gay and Lesbian National Archives, Rhode Island School of Design, Atelie397 (Sao Paulo), House of Vans, and the ICA Los Angeles, in addition to curating series and screenings for The Museum of Modern Art, The Kitchen, SFMOMA, The Hammer Museum, ICA Boston, the Film Society at Lincoln Center, Kurimanzutto, Judson Memorial Church and New York Live Arts.

GUEST SPEAKER

For twenty five years, **Steve Seid** was a Film and Video Curator at the Pacific Film Archive, a department of the University of California, Berkeley. He organized over 1,000 programs of video art, film, and new media for the PFA's public programs. Seid also oversaw an on-going video preservation project. He has taught video aesthetics at the University of California, Berkeley, San Francisco State University, the California College of Arts, and the San Francisco Art Institute.

Following on the preservation of videotapes from the National Center for Experiments in Television (1967-1975), Seid curated **Videospace** (2000), a gallery exhibition dedicated to the first TV Lab. He co-curated the first museum retrospective of Ant Farm, the '60s/'70s art collective and creators of *Cadillac Ranch* and *Media Burn*, which toured internationally. Seid also curated the 52nd Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, 2006, and the Stan Brakhage Symposium, 2009. **Radical Light**, a fifty-year history of moving image art from the San Francisco Bay Area, made its appearance in 2010 as both a co-edited book (UCPress) and a film/video exhibition that travelled to New York, Chicago, Houston, Portland, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis. In 2013, Seid worked with the Menil Museum to co-curate **Silence**, a gallery exhibition honoring John Cage's 100th birthday.

Since leaving the PFA in December 2014, Seid has completed the manuscript for a small book on Ant Farm's *Media Burn* that is now searching for a publishing home.

The event will also occasion the launch of the third installment in Dirty Looks' publication series:

Dirty Looks Volume III | 160 pages, 70 illustrations | ISBN: 978-0-692-09103-6

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