



2005

FLEX FEST

FLORIDA EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL

November 11-13 Gainesville, Florida



**FLORIDA EXPERIMENTAL FILM
/VIDEO FESTIVAL
NOVEMBER 11-13 2005
GAINESVILLE, FL
FILM & VIDEO PROGRAMS
BY BILL BROWN DEBORAH
STRATMAN & SCOTT STARK**



FRIDAY NOV. 11, 2005

The Ark
22 NE 11th St.

BILL BROWN

Punk rock poetry of the open road

8 p.m. INFLUENCES SHOW

films by Peter Hutton, Peter Rose, Greta Snider, and Jem Cohen

10 p.m. FILMS BY BILL BROWN

Roswell, Confederation Park, Mountain State, and
Chicago/Detroit Split

SATURDAY NOV. 12, 2005

The Harn Museum of Art

DEBORAH STRATMAN

Pictures of the world; musings on what they all might mean

7 p.m. FILMS BY DEBORAH STRATMAN

How Among the Frozen Words, In Order Not To Be Here, Untied,
On the Various Nature of Things, Waking, and My Alchemy

9 p.m. INFLUENCES SHOW

films by Bruce Baillie, Peter Kubelka, Laila Pakalnina, Len Lye, Bill
Viola, Tony Conrad, Morgan Fisher, Paul & Marlene Kos, Sergei
Dvortsevov, and Robert Nelson. The last is one of the first
screenings of a newly restored print from the Academy of Motion
Picture Arts & Sciences.

SUNDAY NOV. 13, 2005

WARPHaus Gallery

818 NW 1st Ave.

SCOTT STARK

Formal Experiments that turn your eyes (and mind) inside out

7 p.m. FILMS BY SCOTT STARK

Air, SLOW, Shape Shift, NOEMA, Splitting You Splitting Me Still,
Angel Beach, and To Love or To Die

9 p.m. INFLUENCES SHOW

films by Ernie Gehr, Kerry Laitala, Robert Fox, Jun Jalbuena,
Katherin McGinnis, Konrad Steiner, Jeanne Liotta, and
Tomonari Nishikawa

Welcome to FLEX

Welcome (back) to the second annual Florida Experimental Film/Video Festival.

You've probably already noticed that we're trying something new this year. (Okay, you might not have noticed if you didn't see what we did last year, but trust me, it's different this time around.) The main difference is that we've invited three really amazing filmmakers to town and have them doing much of the programming work for us. I'm really excited about how this festival and the programs have shaped up, and it's especially exciting because this year there are actually films in the festival that I haven't yet seen, since they were curated by our guests. I have to offer my endless thanks to Bill Brown, Deborah Stratman, and Scott Stark for their incredible patience and their speedy replies to all of my string of 11th hour queries as we realized item after item that we'd need from them in order to make their shows happen. I knew they were all great filmmakers (and sometimes videomakers) whose work I've loved for years, but I didn't realize that they'd also be inspired collaborators (and, perhaps most importantly, speedy ones).

In addition to the new format (non-competitive invitational curated affair instead of the more familiar competitive festival routine), we've also tried something different in the way we're running the show. Last year, we divided up the chores & all had fancy-sounding titles that we could display as a masthead. This year, no one really has a title (although I still lay residual claim to "Artistic Director" which is why I'm the one to offer his musings on this first page of the program). As a consequence, there's no masthead, but there are lots and lots of people who've been instrumental in making this festival happen, so I wanted to use what space I have left here to recognize their contributions to FLEX over the past weeks and months as we geared up for the festival. Lisa Danker, Jodie Mack, and Mike Stoltz have been invaluable in helping get all the details worked out for each of our esteemed visitors and making sure that I had all the information that I needed in order to "artistically direct." Chrissie Lein continues to be a miracle worker as our design guru responsible for our website, our lovely posters, and—assuming you are in fact reading a program right now—our programs. She's done amazing work for us from

the start with no pay and completely unreasonable deadlines, all without even getting to be in Gainesville to enjoy the festival, so I tip my hat to her as far as I can make it tip. I also want to thank everyone else who is part of the FLEX collective. At the risk of forgetting some folks, I still feel compelled to name Aylon Ben-Ami, Alisson Bittiker, Michael Cinelli, Warren Cockerham, Diana Donnelly, Romeal Hogan, James Rees, Galit Seifan, Natalya Thomen, Austin Willis, and everyone else who has helped or will help in the future (or will have helped by the time these words are printed). Everyone's doing this just for the love of the game, so if you see them, it'd be nice if you'd tell them that you appreciate their efforts.

We also have had continued great support from any number of folks outside of the "collective," including Kymia Nawabi and the University Gallery (who are responsible for the nice folding chairs you're sitting on if you're reading this at the Ark or the WARPHaus) and Kerry Oliver-Smith who opened the Harn Museum's doors (and coffers) for Deborah's show. And speaking of open coffers, NONE of this would be possible without the generous support (really generous support) of the English Department at the University of Florida and specifically John Leavey who have stepped in as our major financial backer this year, unburdening us of the task of endless fundraising (and handringing when the funds weren't there).

And finally thanks to all of you for coming out on your Veterans Day Weekend and taking a chance on a handful of experimental films and filmmakers who you may not (yet) know when you could be off having a grand ol' time celebrating the end of World War I.

See you next year (too),

Roger Beebe

p.s. For those of you who live within striking distance of Gainesville, keep your eyes open for more FLEX events year-round. We won't be touring this off season, so we'll throw all of our energies into doing lots of programming between now and next November



BILL BROWN'S FILMS

Roswell (23min/1994/16mm)

A space kid borrows dad's UFO for a joyride, but winds up crashing near Roswell, New Mexico. An amnesiac filmmaker goes looking for answers.

Confederation Park (32min/1999/16mm)

A trip across the wide belly of Canada leads to thoughts about nations and what holds them together. Or: stories from the world's most polite civil war.

Mountain State (20min/2003/16mm)

A history of the westward expansion of the United States as told by 25 roadside historical markers in the state of West Virginia.

Chicago/Detroit Split (8min/2005/Unsplit regular-8mm)

(a collaboration with Thomas Comerford)
Two cities, two street grids, four frames.

BILL BROWN'S INFLUENCES

Peter Hutton, "Boston Fire" (8min/1979/16mm)

My first film teacher, Rob, told me that Peter Hutton made this film one day when he came across a warehouse fire while walking home from work. I remember feeling a little depressed about this. Maybe because it's not enough to be a good filmmaker. You've also got to be lucky.

Peter Rose, The Man who Could Not See Far Enough (33min/1981/16mm)

"If Einstein were an experimental filmmaker, maybe he'd make this movie. For Rose, space and time are the same damn thing. Plus, I love the Golden Gate bridge, too, but I'm not sure I love it enough to walk across it on the suspension cables."

Greta Snider, No Zone (18min/1993/16mm)

"Before I knew Greta Snider was a filmmaker, we were both doing zines and sort of became pen pals. I told her I was shooting some film out at White Sands in New Mexico, and she said she was, too. This is a film about scavengers, made by a person who sees filmmaking and storytelling as another kind of scavenging. It's also totally punk rock, in the mid-90's sense of the term."

Jem Cohen, This is a History of New York (23min/1988/film to video)

"I saw this movie back in the early-90's, and then it disappeared for me. I would ask people about it—describing the scene where bulldozers and earthmovers lurch around like dinosaurs. And how history itself ends at the World's Fair park. Years later, when I got my hands on a copy, it was even better than I remembered. Not quite fiction, not quite non-fiction."

DEBORAH STRATMAN'S FILMS

My Alchemy (1990, 16mm, 7 min.)

A reinterpretation of alchemical forces, or a summer holiday in Missouri at Karl's farm. This is the first film Deborah ever finished to a film print.

How Among The Frozen Words She Found Some Odd Ones (2005, Video, 32 seconds)

Inspired by a chapter in Francois Rabelais' 1653 epic novel "Gargantua & Pantagruel"* wherein Pantagruel finds that the explosions, cries and other sounds generated from a battle that had occurred the year before have been frozen into discernable shapes – and that the sounds can be released upon the breaking or melting of the frozen forms.

On the Various Nature of Things (1995, 16mm, 25 minutes)

A 24-figure exploration of the natural forces at work in the world, based on Scottish physicist Michael Faraday's 1859 Christmas lectures to the public. The film literally, metaphorically and whimsically reinterprets scientific convention to illustrate physical concepts.

Faraday felt people needed to be more aware of the everyday reality of physics and how its laws affected their simplest actions. So in the late 1850s,

he addressed the English public on the subject. He arranged for a series of lectures to be held, as a tradition, on Christmas day.

As Faraday put it, "We come into this world, we live, and depart from it, without our thoughts being called specifically to consider how all this takes place." The filmmaker takes up his challenge and considers the world around her with an infectiously playful, yet sometimes dark, curiosity.

The film is an homage to Faraday's enthusiasm and his tactile approach to science. He was also a filmic forefather, having invented and experimented with one of the first kinematographic devices. The film challenges the viewer to see beauty in the small details which surround us but go unnoticed or are taken for granted. "I say apparently," says the physicist, "for you must not imagine that, because you cannot perceive any action, none has taken place".

Waking 1994, video, 7 min.

A video in two parts about two states (being asleep and being awake) and the absurdity, or even impossibility, of bridging between them. The camera becomes a stethoscope examining light as if it were a state of mind.



Untied
(2001, 16mm, 3 minutes)

A very short film about breaking free from abusive cycles. Made in response to a year of collapsing relationships and violent accidents that left me broken, dislocated and stuck in my apartment. I wanted to make a small portrait of the volatility of intimacy.

In Order Not to Be Here
(2002, 16mm, 33 minutes)

An uncompromising look at the ways privacy, safety, convenience and surveillance determine our environment. Shot entirely at night, the film confronts the hermetic nature of white-collar communities, dissecting the fear behind contemporary suburban design. An isolation-based fear (protect us from people not like us). A fear of irregularity (eat at McDonalds, you know what to expect). A fear of thought (turn on the television). A fear of self (don't stop moving). By examining evacuated suburban and corporate landscapes, the film reveals a peculiarly 21st century hollowness... an emptiness born of our collective faith in safety and technology. This is a new genre of horror movie, attempting suburban locations as states of mind.

DEBORAH STRATMAN'S INFLUENCES

Bruce Baillie – “All My Life”
(1966/3min/16mm)

An evocatively simple one-song pan & tilt opened my eyes to the emotional force of economy.

Peter Kubelka – “Unsere Afrikareise”
 (“Our Trip to Africa”)
(1961-1966, 16mm, 12:30)

About 15 years ago, I took an editing class with Kubelka in Chicago. The entire semester-long class consisted of looking at this film every single week, examining it literally frame by frame. We watched it on a flatbed, projecting it up to the wall for 6 hours a day. It was the most exhaustive, informative lesson I've ever had about the language of the cut.

Laila Pakalnina – “Pasts” (“The Mail”)
(1995, 20 min., video)

I lived in Latvia for two years after I left Iceland. There is an incredible history of documentary film production there. The Rigas Kino Studija used to be the documentary production center for all of the USSR. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the studio dissolved with it. But the detritus of all that past work seeps into in the work of filmmaker Laila Pakalnina and many of her contemporaries. I'm particularly smitten by Pakalnina's measured gaze, and by her

eye for humble daily rhythms.

Len Lye – “Free Radicals”
(1958/1979, 4 min., 16mm)

A genius kinetic whip of a film where sound and image seem to generate and perpetuate each other equally. A testament to sound's potential energy.

Bill Viola – “The Space Between the Teeth” (1976, 9:34, video)

Viola's writing on sound, and this video in particular, got me very excited at one point about the ways in which sound interacts with and defines the space around us.

Tony Conrad – “Cycles of 3's and 7's”
(1976, 2:51, video)

Anyone who can make a great video with just a calculator gets my vote.

Morgan Fisher – “Projection Instructions” (1976, 4 min, 16mm)

As someone who worked as a projectionist for many, many years, and who probably learned more from watching all of those films than I ever did from school... I am very fond of Morgan's witty take on “meta” concepts of process and viewing. This one's for the projectionist.

Paul & Marlene Kos – “Lightning”
(1 min., 1976, video)

This video seems to me in some small way what the magic of filmmaking is all about.

Sergei Dvortsevoi – “Chastie”
 (“Paradise”) (1995, 23 min, video)

The languid unfolding of each of Dvortsevoi's hypnotic, absurd, minimalist meditations on life and landscape— “Chastie,” “Bread Day,” “Highway,” “In The Dark”--remain a huge influence on my own filmmaking. His deadpan humor restores my faith in the capacity for communication across cultures without words.

Robert Nelson – “Hot Leatherette” (1967, 5:30, 16mm)

Robert Nelson, Bruce Conner, Hollis Frampton and Ernie Gehr were the quartet responsible for my initial cinematic conversion. So you can blame them. There's just not time to cram any more films in... so Hot Leatherette serve as a final, sordid stand-in.



SCOTT STARK'S FILMS

To Love or To Die: new and old work
by Scott Stark

Air (1986, 16mm film, 7)

Shot in an airline terminal, Air studies the movements across and through the planes of the film's surface. An obsessive geometric structure is formed with camera angles and tracking shots.

SLOW (2001, digital video, 16)

SLOW uses a simple cinematic device -- the wipe -- to interweave human and mechanical movements through fixed spaces over time, revealing potent absences and reflected presences.

Shape Shift (2004, digital video, 10)

A simple technique with two and three opposing cameras reveals a body transposed upon itself, confounding the limits of its own physical space.

NOEMA

(1998, 16mm film from video, 10)

Pornographic videos are mined for the unerotic moments between moments, when the actors are engaging in an awkward change of position or when the camera pans meaningfully away from the urgent mechanisms of sex up to a cheap painting on the wall or the distant embers of a crackling fire. A piercing musical score loops endlessly

throughout, and the repetitive and curious iterations of movement become furtive searches for meaning within their own blandness.

Splitting You Splitting Me Still (1988, regular-8mm film, 5)

Made by running regular-8mm movie film through a 35mm still camera, Splitting You Splitting Me Still is a micro-view of physical intimacy that comes alive through its own stillness.

Angel Beach (2001, 16mm film, 24)

Anonymous 3D photographs of bikini-clad women from the early 1970s are compressed into a two-dimensional cinematic space, triggering an exuberant visual dance and revealing a troubling and elegiac voyeurism.

Incarnations: free spirits take physical form in young mortal bodies on northern California beaches. Their initial movements are mere flittering gestures and awkward extensions of elbows, knees and shoulders: these are innocents unused to the strictures of the human form, joyful in the wonderment of first physical sensation. Freshly sprung from the ethereal chrysalis, they set to work, busily burrowing and crafting three dimensional baffles, channels and passageways through a screenspace that is too shallow to contain their neophytic exuberance.

To Love or To Die (2003, digital video, 5)

Made with two parallel cameras, To Love or To Die is a brief binocular odyssey through a suburban wonderland of desire and fulfillment. TRT: 77

SCOTT STARK'S INFLUENCES

Ernie Gehr, Shift, 1972-74, 16mm film, 9 mins

Ernie Gehr is one of the great visual artists who has inspired me most in my life, and he continues to be a guiding force for his uncompromising vision and his ability to allow us a space to truly see what he's looking at. Shift, an early 16mm film of Ernie's, is thought to be his first to employ extensive montage, and shows his developing sense of wry humor through sound and image juxtapositions.

The Western Region: influential works from the San Francisco Bay Area

I am presenting this work of "influences" by San Francisco Bay Area film and video artists, with whom I have shared numerous film salons, screenings, collaborations and conversations over the last many years. Although there might little in common at first glance between their works and my own, these makers and their projects have continually inspired and revitalized me with their tenacity, vision, friendship,

constructive feedback, support and unrelenting passion for their work.

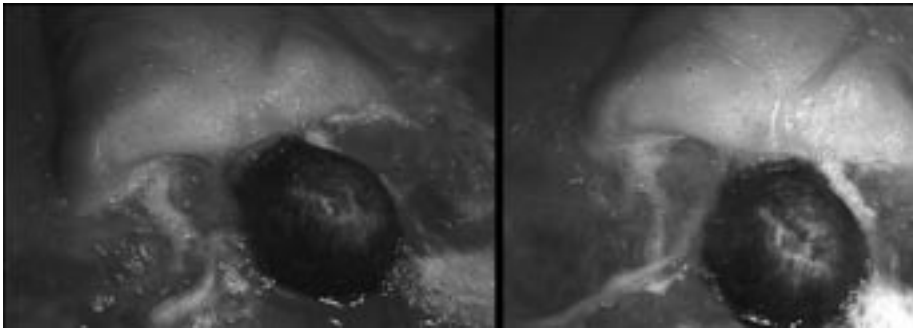
– Scott Stark, 2005

Kerry Laitala
Transfixed, 2005, digital video from 16mm film, 8 mins.

Kerry Laitala plumbs found and personally-recorded footage through playful and masterful reworking of the imagery to elicit unexpected meanings that resonate both personally and culturally. In Transfixed, bridges become connectors to elusive and near-forgotten memories, which come alive again with a hypnotic affirmation. Still working with celluloid, Kerry remains one of avant garde film's great purists.

Robert Fox
The Greater Vehicle, 2003, digital video, 7 mins.

Robert Fox's 16mm film work in the 1980s and early 90s often involved punching holes in film, taping other images into the holes, scratching and painting onto the surface, and finding inventive and rhythmic strategies for building a dense visual complexity. In his later work, such as The Greater Vehicle, Robert uses the limitless boundaries of digital tools to register multiple layers of complexity and movement. The title's reference to the Buddhist notion of group salvation takes worldly form in a cross-country train ride.



Jun Jalbuena

In the Pink, digital video, 16 mins.

Performance, film and video artist Jun Jalbuena has been making work in the Bay Area since the early 1980s. Although he works within known cinematic traditions and is an astute scholar of contemporary avant garde cinema, Jun's work remains resolutely unclassifiable and thoroughly original. Often addressing a mysterious "you," works such as *In the Pink* make the viewer an unwitting participant while simultaneously pulling him/her into increasingly abstracted and disturbing emotional territory.

Katherin McGinnis

Open, digital video, 4 mins.

Katherin McGinnis uses digital cinematography and systematic editing strategies to elicit lush, crystal-clear visual environments that resonate with historical and cultural referents. In *Open*, Katherin's camera plays across the subtle shiftings of light, shape and color outside a nighttime men's club in downtown San Francisco.

Konrad Steiner

Delay Series, 2004, digital video, 6 mins.

A long-time advocate of avant garde film, Konrad Steiner is also a curator, writer and accomplished film and video artist. *Delay Series* is the third in a trilogy made in collaboration with the poet Leslie Scalapino; it's a compelling example

illustrating Konrad's interest in finding matchpoints between often disparate art forms such as poetry, music and cinema.

Jeanne Liotta

Eclipse, 2005, 16mm film (from super-8mm original), 3 mins.

Although a New Yorker, Jeanne Liotta has spent a lot of time in San Francisco over the last couple of years and has become a vital part of the thriving film community. An artist of many means, she has of late been pointing her lenses skyward, including this lovely super-8, hand-processed camera roll (blown up to 16mm) mapping the trajectory of a lunar eclipse.

Tomonari Nishikawa

Market Street, 2005, 16mm film, 5 mins.

A relative newcomer to the San Francisco film scene, Tom Nishikawa has created a breathtaking micro-portrait of San Francisco's famed Market Street, using single-frame in-camera editing to form gently sloping geometric shapes amid the frenetic urban confusion.