

Florida Experimental Film/Video Festival

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FEFFEST

January 25-27 Gainesville, Florida

# FLEX FEST 2008

## SCHEDULE

All events at:

WARPHaus Gallery  
818 NW 1st Ave.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

7 pm // Jim Trainor's Films

9 pm // Jim Trainor's Influences

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

1 pm // Helen Hill's Films

3 pm // Workshop

7 pm // Leighton Pierce's Films and Influences

9 pm // Leighton Pierce's Films and Influences

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 27

11 am // Filmmaker's Brunch\*

5 pm // Diane Bonder's Films

\* Venue to be announced

## WELCOME TO THE 4TH ANNUAL FLORIDA EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL.

I can't believe it's been only 4 years—I can't remember a time when I wasn't constantly working on FLEX. It seems like there've been enough (wo)man-hours poured into FLEX over these 4 years to pull off 100 festivals. It makes me appreciate what an incredible accomplishment it is for a festival like Ann Arbor to have made it to its 45th year (and counting). Many festivals don't make it that far—witness, for example, the recent demise of Cinematexas in Austin, which for a stretch of years was as good a festival as I've seen—so let's enjoy it while we can.

This year's festival was in many ways a tough affair to put together, and the toughest aspect was financial. With the University-wide budget crunch (a byproduct of the downturn in the housing market, I'm told, although I suspect that's just cover for the Republican legislature & Governor who'd rather turn higher education over to a bunch of robots who'd teach us how to work in some very efficient futuristic factory), just getting enough dough to continue to do our volunteer-run, cheapo fest was a real battle. (Our pals at Ann Arbor struggle to get it done with more than 30 times our budget; Cinematexas, while it lasted, was blessed with better than 15 times our operating budget.) While I won't claim we've emerged wholly unscathed from these battles, I'm really excited about what we've been able to do with what we have.

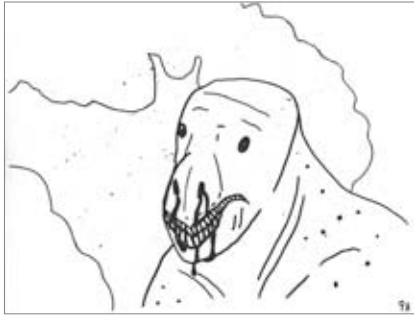
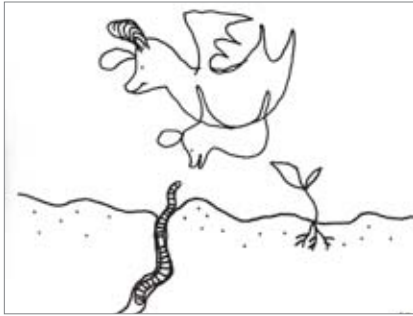
The films that we're screening are all real gems and the filmmakers being showcased here have made truly exciting work. There are few cities in the world (especially cities the size of Gainesville) where you'd have access to all these treats for the eyes & ears over a year, much less a single weekend.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention our huge debt (literal and figurative) to the English Department at the University of Florida, which is footing the bill for this entire festival. In the past, we've had support from a variety of sources (on campus & off), but when all those disappeared suddenly, the English Department came quickly to our rescue. I'd like especially to thank Pamela Gilbert, the Chair of the English Department, for recognizing the value of an event that falls well outside of her discipline (and even outside of the range of things English Departments have traditionally cared about) in making the funds available to us. I fear that in past years I failed to similarly recognize the unwavering support of the previous Department Chair, John Leavey, and I hope that these much overdue thanks can offer some degree of recompense for all the efforts he made on our behalf in the past. Thanks also to Sean Miller, Bethany Taylor, Kristin Schimik and the rest of the WARPHaus crew for opening their doors wide to us yet again. Thanks also to Amy Dickerson at the University Galleries for the chairs that you're currently sitting on (if, that is, you're reading this in the WARPHaus during the festival). Also, I'd like to thank my fellow travelers, the rest of the FLEX crew (past, present, and future)

without whom none of this would've ever come to pass. (These program guides don't make themselves! Neither do the posters. The projectors and PA don't set themselves up. Etc. You see how this works, I'm sure.) You'll see the FLEXies milling about during the festival, probably engaged with some thankless job like setting up folding chairs or racing in a sweat to find an extra extension cord, so if you catch one of them standing still for a moment let her or him know that you appreciate the effort. (That is, after all, all that they're asking for in payment.) And finally, I thank you all for coming out to take a chance on what must surely be an unknown quantity for most of you. I expect your gamble to be handsomely repaid when you see all of these amazing films.

Now, sit back and enjoy the show.

**ROGER BEEBE**  
Artistic Director



## JIM TRAINOR

### FILMS

#### THE BAT AND THE VIRGIN

//3 min/16mm/1996

The Virgin? You're looking at her.

#### THE BATS

//8 min/16mm/1998

A bat of no extant species recounts his carnal pleasures.

#### PLANTS

//3 min/16mm/1994

Primitive plants growing luxuriantly.

#### THE MOSCHOPS

//13 min/16mm/2000

Prehistoric mammal-like reptile bleeds to death in mud puddle.

#### TORN UP

//3 min/16mm/1994

Decaying layers.

#### THE MAGIC KINGDOM

//7 min/16mm/2002

In a blue-green jungle with humankind's closest kin. Mostly live-action, with animated diagrams.

#### BLOOD

//3 min/16mm/2004

Don't worry, it's milk bottle caps.

#### HARMONY

//12 min/16mm/2004

Animals and a handful of humans express guilt for their behavior.

#### LEAFY, LEAFY JUNGLE

//3 min/16mm/2007

Inspired by leaf-cutter ants.

#### THE ORDOVICIANS

co-directed by Lisa Barcy

//4 min/16mm/2002

Yves Tanguy meets Busby Berkeley in a nature documentary from Mars!

### INFLUENCES

#### FEED THE KITTY

CHUCK JONES//7 min/16mm/1952

A heartbreaker by Hollywood animation's greatest sentimentalist.

#### FLESH FLOWS

ADAM BECKETT//6:30/16mm/1974

AB made a half-dozen eccentric, complex, squishy animations in the 1970s. Died tragically at 30.

#### STUDY NO. 8

OSKAR FISCHINGER//4 min/16mm/1931

Charming, naive, utopian, Fischinger's abstract films move around like nobody else's.

#### GULLS AND BUOYS

ROBERT BREER//7:30/16mm/1972

Movement is endlessly dissected in this breezy day at the beach.

#### ALTAIR

LEWIS KLAHR//8 min/16mm/1994

Dreamy women descend into alcoholic bliss in a knockout work by an endlessly inventive collage animator.

#### BE HUMAN

FLEISCHER STUDIO//7 min/16mm/1936

Oh Betty—you're cute when you're angry!

#### EVEREADY

ANONYMOUS//16mm/1928

Cartoon pornography from the Mutt and Jeff days; a pansexual shocker!

#### LA JOIE DE VIVRE

HECTOR HOPPIN & ANTHONY GROSS

//9 min/16mm/1934

This one-of-a-kind art-deco confection - sexy, too! - will have you swooning.

#### VOICE OF THE NIGHTINGALE

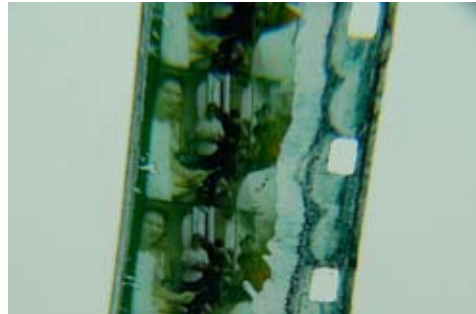
LADISLAS STAREWICZ//13 min/16mm/1923

A morality play with dead birds and insects, by animation's greatest eccentric.

#### TUSALAVA

LEN LYE//9 min/16mm/1929

We end on an austere note—a contemplative work by the otherwise zippy Lye.



## HELEN HILL

### MADAME WINGER MAKES A FILM: A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY //2001

This was part of a group of films the Canada Council for the Arts funded on the theme of filmmaking and the new millennium. In *Madame Winger*, Helen expressed her belief that the idea behind a film is more important than which technology is used. The film describes inexpensive ways to make films, including hand processing film and drawing directly onto the film. Helen wrote "It's fun to handle film as a celluloid canvas rather than as a fragile carrier of images only to be handled by lab technicians.... You can experiment and create the most beautiful images ever." The voice of Madame Winger is Helen's godmother, Meredith Pogue.

### MOUSEHOLES //1999

This film remembers Helen's beloved grandfather, Pop. She never had a baby-sitter as Pop was always around to care for her. He was in large part responsible for her graciousness and good manners based on the Golden Rule. Pop had kidney failure in February 1995. Helen was finishing up her MFA at CalArts but traveled to Columbia as often as possible to be with Pop and to sit with him during the nights when he was hospitalized.

He died in April and Helen memorialized him and herself with this film as she grapples with his death. In *Mouseholes*, Pop's mother and aunts lovingly greet him with a tea party in heaven. The wasps nest included in *Mouseholes* still hangs in the Medway Road house where Pop

left it. Helen's own funeral was modeled after Pop's funeral and included the same Biblical verse as read in the film, "No eye has seen nor ear has heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man, what God has prepared for those that love him" (I Corinthians 2:19). Helen was buried next to Pop.

### SCRATCH AND CROW //1995

Helen produced this film for her MFA degree. She had grown up going to her Cousin Annie's farm in Fairview, North Carolina. Helen's favorite job was to take care of the chickens. She would gather their eggs as well as carry them to find their water source. She even shoveled chicken manure to be sold as fertilizer. She later owned pet chickens in New Orleans and California. In *Scratch and Crow*, Helen remembers her chicken friends with gentle and poetic words, a rich color palette, and imaginative tropes. Cats hatch eggs; watermelons fall from the sky; chickens become angels and fly out of tombstones; coiled springs symbolize inner workings.

### FILM FOR ROSIE //2000

Daisy the potbellied pig died prematurely, and soon after Helen and Paul bought their second pet pig Rosie. This is Rosie's pigeology and features all her relatives.

### VESSEL //1992

This film was inspired by a poem Helen wrote that was first published in *The Rag* (Fall 1991). Helen's silhouette puppets reflect the influence of Helen's favorite filmmaker, Lotte Reiniger. A tea pot and sunflowers appear in this film. This film introduces her use of the bright colors

resonant of favorite artists: William Blake, the Pre-Raphaelites, and Vincent van Gogh.

### TUNNEL OF LOVE //1996

Quite early in her life, Helen decided that "love at first sight" was not a strong basis for a lasting relationship. She believed that the best romance was between best friends. Paul and Helen had been good friends living in Adams House. After Harvard, they went to New Orleans. However, an "accidental romance" brought the two good friends together in love. Elijah remained their best friend and collaborator in creative endeavors.

*Tunnel of Love* was made to illustrate Paul and Elijah's song "Accidental Romance". Helen called it a "romance activist" film, meant to give good advice about falling in love. It also captures the carnival atmosphere that Helen remembered and loved from the South Carolina State Fair. The film features a tea party with CalArts friends and the photo booth photos that Helen collected and loved.

### BOHEMIAN TOWN //2004

This film illustrates Paul's song "Bohemian Town" and their love of the North End of Halifax, after they had moved to New Orleans. Paul's Canadian band *Piggy* performs the song.

### YOUR NEW PIG IS DOWN THE ROAD //1999

This love letter to Paul was filmed during one summer in Ontario at Phil Hoffman's Film Farm (a filmmaking workshop where she learned to hand process her own films). Helen beckons Paul to follow her down the road where Paul's new pig waits.

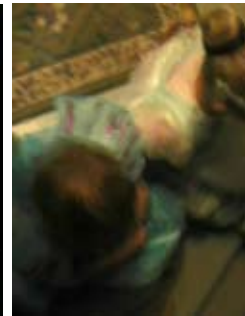
The film features their much loved daisies, their much respected St. Francis, and their baby pig Daisy with her little sister.

### THE WORLD'S SMALLEST FAIR //1995

Helen applied for a grant specifically to bring artists together. Helen had always dreamed of owning a cotton candy machine from Cromers Peanut Store (a huge party warehouse) in her home town. The grant gave her money to purchase a cotton candy machines and 12 cans of Flossine as well as to produce the film. The story revolves around artists (her fellow CalArts students) using cotton candy as their medium. Paul and Elijah also make appearances.

### RAIN DANCE //1990

Made at Harvard, restored by Bill Brand and his students in 2007. This film was dedicated to Elijah Aron who was writing a novel about rain during these years. The accompanying song was written by Elijah and Paul and was performed by Paul and Matthew Butterick.



## LEIGHTON PIERCE

### ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST

SERGIO LEONE//12 min/DVD/1968  
A great study in sound for the first 12 minutes of this spaghetti western.

### WATER SEEKING ITS LEVEL

LEIGHTON PIERCE//6 min/MiniDV/2002  
Synopsis: Dad and daughter at the water race of an abandoned monastery. The scene pivots on her words: "Look dad," she says. He IS looking while he waits for the resolution of the moment—water through her fingers.

### HATSU YUME (FIRST DREAM) EXCERPT

BILL VIOLA //12 min/DVD/1981  
An excerpt from one of Bill Viola's early meditative studies in light and sound.

### GLASS

LEIGHTON PIERCE//7 min/16mm/1998  
A not-so-still life in the backyard with children, water, fire and a few other basic elements. While the ultimate effect is poetic and transformative, it is simultaneously a study in the laws of optics—an exploration of refraction, diffraction, diffusion, reflection and absorption.

### 50 FEET OF STRING

LEIGHTON PIERCE//35 min/16mm/1995  
The slow and subtle repeated rhythms of daily life provide the material for this 12 part film. The pace is slow with the intention of inviting viewers into a more visceral and less verbally analytical state of mind. The "action," small events like the mail arriving, the storm coming, and the grass getting mowed, are secondary to the way of perceiving those events.

### COME OUT

STEVE REICH//12 min/audio CD/1966  
My life changed forever when I heard this composition. An ingenious disintegration of a simple sentence into hallucinatory soundscape.

### THE BACK STEPS

LEIGHTON PIERCE//6 min/mini DV  
A small moment from a children's Halloween party is taken as material for an exploration of folded time.

Essentially, this is a very simple piece. Two girls, dressed up for Halloween, sit on some steps then get up and run away. The action, originally shot at a slow frame rate then slowed again, is fragmented and looped, then time-slipped and layered. This originated on a digital video camera, and was digitally slowed and layered. No other digital processing was used. The delicate soundtrack was designed to serve as both a counterpoint to and an anchor for the image. The challenge, as always, was to create sounds that seemed to "come from" the image while maintaining a life of their own as compositional elements.

Time is, in fact, what I see as my main material. *The Back Steps* is a demonstration of that particular interests. The image loops but also progresses forward. That is fairly easy to see. However, the sound, while having looping elements, has a compositional structure that changes throughout the piece. I imagine most pieces as a series of overlain arcs, each of a different length and height and each representing a different durational element in the piece. Another way to imagine this is to think of a mechanical clock with many different internal

rhythms, all of which move the hands steadily forward.

### HYMNEN EXCERPT

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN//8 min/audio CD/1969  
Stockhausen's acoustic vision of post-cultural sound.

### PINK SOCKS

LEIGHTON PIERCE//5 min/mini DV/2002  
Another brief documentary on the Piazza San Marco in Venice.

### LILITH

STEINA & DORIS CROSS//9 min/DV Cam/1987  
A portrait using time and video as paint.

### 37TH & LEX

LEIGHTON PIERCE//4 min/mini DV/2002  
A brief impression triggers an emotion echoing with memories of the past and anticipations of the future. This quiet communication, a composition of image, sound, and text, reflects that feeling and invites its continuation. This "video letter," originally intended for an audience of one, resonates with associations that many can embrace.

### VISCERA

LEIGHTON PIERCE//11 min/mini DV/2004-05  
Evoking a small fraction of the emotional complexities of life, Pierce works with the question of absence and what of a person remains in the memory and imagination when that person is absent. Constructed in three parts, this flowing video explores absence and how absence transforms and influences perception, memory, and imagination.

Freed from the constraints of traditional narrative, it is that process of creating an image in the mind of the viewer—the

psychological filling-in of the imagined space, not the actual photograph of a space—that Pierce engages. Through the use of rich cascading imagery against the counterpoint of the soundtrack, Pierce disintegrates the film plane, allowing viewers to embody the perceptions of the video solidly within themselves. This video encourages a different kind of viewing and listening—one in which listening and looking inward matters as much as looking outward.

### NUMBER ONE

LEIGHTON PIERCE//10 min/mini DV/2007  
With water imagery as the foundation, *Number One* engages the experience of elasticity between varying states of mind. The contrasts in this multi-image piece—shifts between frenetic chaos and calm order, between an intense central focus and a diffuse periphery, between hard and soft, fixed and fluid, concrete and abstract—are all developed not in opposition to each other but rather, in an interwoven, multi-layered relation to each other. There is never one set of oppositions but rather a dance of relationships between contrasting states. This is one way to think about how a mind works: at any moment, there is never just one thing (or feeling, or perception) in life; there is always a magnetized and elastic push/pull among many things at once. The flow of our attention among these things is our mind. *Number One* is one way to map a few moments in such a mind.

### UNTITLED WORK-IN-PROGRESS

LEIGHTON PIERCE//5 min/mini DV/2007  
A fragment from an HD digital video work that derives from Pierce's increasing interest in still photography and motion.



## DIANE BONDER

### DEAR MOM

//13 min/16mm/1996

"*Dear Mom* is a story of the formation of a girl's identity in relation to her powerful mother, her matriarchal family, and domestic fantasies created by melodramas of the 40s and 50s. When the young girl's fantasy of matricide comes true with the untimely death of her Mother, she finds herself at a crossroads. She is left to reconstruct her own identity and find out that her Mother is more complex than she imagines." (Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Catalog)

### IF

//12 min/16mm/2000

"*If* is a story of longing and loss, taking place within the confines of a room whose objects represent the emotional perceptions of space, and the missing lovers presence. The reality of the outside world encroaches on the inner-space of daydreaming." (Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Catalog)

### IF YOU LIVED HERE, YOU'D BE HOME BY NOW

//15 min/16mm/2001

*If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now* is about the divisiveness over land, the relationship of public and private space in small-town America, and the concept of home. Using documentary strategies, landscape stills are juxtaposed to stories 'ripped from the headlines' of a small-town newspaper. The struggle over public space described in the stories reflects universal concepts of space, privacy and property ownership. (Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Catalog)

### CLOSER TO HEAVEN

//15 min/16mm/2003

"Urban Ghosts collide; abandoned umbrellas tumble down the streets, my father calls again and again to say good-bye." (Diane Bonder)

"Who can really distinguish between the sea and what's reflected in it, or tell the difference between falling rain and loneliness?" (Haruki Murakami)

### I REMEMBER NOW, WE NEVER DANCED, I MISS YOU, GOOD-BYE

//8min/16mm/2006

"Everyday movement, woven into a dance of memory and loss." (Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Catalog)

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## GOODBYE

[flexfest.org](http://flexfest.org)

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