

# 59TH ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL



## TEXT-ONLY PROGRAM GUIDE

# CONTENTS

## OVERVIEW

- 3 [CALENDAR](#)
- 4 [LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR](#)
- 6 [JURORS](#)
- 7 [FILMMAKER AWARDS](#)
- 10 [ACADEMY SUPPORT](#)
- 11 [AWARD DONORS](#)
- 12 [MEMBERS & DONORS](#)
- 17 [STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS](#)
- 19 [SPONSORS](#)
- 20 [TOUR & DVD](#)

## IN THE SCREEN

- 21 [VIRTUAL GALLERY](#)
- 24 [STOREFRONT INSTALLATIONS](#)
- 26 [PERFORMANCES & AFTER PARTIES](#)
- 30 [SALONS](#)

## FILM PROGRAMS

- 32 [TUESDAY](#)
- 35 [WEDNESDAY](#)
- 39 [THURSDAY](#)
- 44 [FRIDAY](#)
- 49 [SATURDAY](#)
- 53 [SUNDAY](#)
- 54 [FEATURES IN COMPETITION](#)
- 56 [SPECIAL PROGRAMS](#)

- 63 [FILMMAKER INDEX](#)
- 65 [TITLE INDEX](#)

# CALENDAR

**ALL TIMES IN EDT**

The following programs launch with an initial live screening with audience-participatory Q&As following each program. These will then be available on-demand through midnight Wednesday March 31 (EDT): **Films in Competition 1-15. Jurors, Awards**

**Salons** take place via videoconference, on schedule, with pre-registration required.

**Feature Films in Competition** and **Special Programs** are available throughout festival week, to be viewed at any time, with pre-recorded filmmaker discussions.

ANN ARBOR FILM FEST STREAMING GUIDE									
	Tuesday, 3/23	Wednesday, 3/24	Thursday, 3/25	Friday, 3/26	FRIDAY SPEAKERS	Saturday, 3/27	SATURDAY SALONS	Sunday, 3/28	SUNDAY SALONS
TIME ALL TIMES EDT									
10:00 AM									
10:30 AM									
11:00 AM									
11:30 AM									
12:00 PM									
12:30 PM									
1:00 PM									
1:30 PM									
2:00 PM		JUROR PRESENTATION: SHERI WILLS - WHAT DOES LIGHT REMEMBER?	JUROR PRESENTATION: LYNN LOO - CONVERSATIONS, LIGHT, COLOR, MOVEMENT	JUROR PRESENTATION: THORSTEN FLEISCH - SENSUAL DESTRUCTION: DISINTEGRATING THE FRANTIC SILENCE OF THE UNIVERSE					
2:30 PM									
3:00 PM									
3:30 PM	IN THE SCREEN! SALON: FILMART FORUM								
4:00 PM		FILMS IN COMPETITION 3	FILMS IN COMPETITION 6	FILMS IN COMPETITION 9					
4:30 PM									
5:00 PM									
5:30 PM									
6:00 PM	FILMS IN COMPETITION 1	FILMS IN COMPETITION 4	FILMS IN COMPETITION 7	FILMS IN COMPETITION 10					
6:30 PM									
7:00 PM									
7:30 PM									
8:00 PM	FILMS IN COMPETITION 2	FILMS IN COMPETITION 5	FILMS IN COMPETITION 8: OUT NIGHT	FILMS IN COMPETITION 11: ANIMATION					
8:30 PM									
9:00 PM									
9:30 PM									
10:00 PM	IN THE SCREEN! PERFORMANCE 1 - IT'S NORMAL FOR SOME THINGS TO COME TO YOUR ATTENTION BY NEGATIVLAND AND SUE-C	IN THE SCREEN! PERFORMANCE 2 - SCOTT KIERNAN	IN THE SCREEN! PERFORMANCE 3 - SONIC ESCAPE ROUTES: SHALL WE FLY? OR SHALL WE RESIST? RENA ANAKWE & AKEEMA-ZANE	IN THE SCREEN! PERFORMANCE 4 - OPERATION JANE WALK ROBIN KLENGEL & LEONHARD MÜLLNER	PENNY STAMPS DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES - PRESENTS: PIPILOTTI RIST - KIND (OF A) TALK				
10:30 PM									
11:00 PM									
11:30 PM									
12:00 AM									

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

From the land of the Chippewa, Huron, Ottawa, and Potawatomi, the banks of the Huron River: What a year. When we concocted new methods to reach you all last March online, we never imagined being here again, one year later. Did you?

Thanks to National Endowment for the Arts CARES funding, a forgiven PPP loan, and the generosity of our donors, members, sponsors and grantors we made it through. Your dedication to the festival makes it possible for the best experimental film art to reach your screen, and also supports our work towards a more equal and just society.

## 2020

In my festival introduction last year, as the lockdown unfolded, I asked: What is important? What is meaningful? And how do we wish to be in the world? The weight of the pandemic motivated us to reaffirm the festival's dedication to underrepresented voices, to supporting artists, and to nurturing dialogue about the art.

We offered BIPOC artists a submission reduction on par with our alumni filmmakers. We are paying all films-in-competition screening fees for the first time. We quadrupled the number of screening groups led by university professors, increasing rigor in our review process as we welcome new viewers to watch, assess, discuss, and learn about experimental film.

Thanks to the generosity of three supporters (all filmmakers!), we are jubilant to announce three new endowed AAFF awards: the Best Experimental Animation Award, the Barbara Hammer Feminist Film Award, and the third will be made public later this year. We hope that the timing of the announcement of the mystery award, in advance of the July call for entries, will draw more participation from Africa.

Springtime and the AAFF go hand-in-hand. As sunny, warmer weather portends the Michigan thaw, the prospect of more snow is possible through festival week. From our winter caves, we are poised to meet the filmmakers at the screen. The films can unfurl, wave upon wave, directly into our living spaces.

## What You'll See at the 59th AAFF

116 films in competition from 30 countries comprise 15 shorts programs and 11 feature films. Five special programs highlight animation by BIPOC artists, trans-made films, Native American experimental work, Swiss contemporary video artist Pipiolotti Rist, and French feminist artist Sylvanie Tendron. There are three juror presentations, two winners shows, and a profusion of In the Screen! salons, performances, and after parties, as well as an online gallery and physical storefront installations.

This year's online festival offers many options for experiencing the work. Feature films and special programs are available throughout festival week, to be viewed at any time, with pre-recorded filmmaker discussions. Short films in competition and juror programs will have an initial live screening, with audience-participatory Q&As following each program. These will then be available on-demand for the remainder of the festival.

It was a sweet surprise to see an abundance of film and hand-processing in the work submitted this year. Artists have stayed in tune with the utter beauty of the celluloid aesthetic. And beyond 8mm, S-8mm, 16mm, and 35mm, you will witness an embrace of antiquated video such as VHS, miniDV, Wobulator, and Sony Portapak.

At the 59th AAFF, you will encounter films constructed from footage unearthed in archives both personal and corporate, private and from the commons. You will see movies animated using video game engines and other digital architectures. You will witness portraits of people, situations and settings; stories about isolation and singularity, and also some that celebrate being together. And then there are a handful of rituals and conjurings; laughs, heartaches, bravery and beauty.

See you there.

-Leslie

PS: Meet up in the [lobby](#)!

# JURORS

## Lynn Loo

Lynn Loo composes films in structural and narrative forms. Her pieces explore the raw and tactile aspects of moving images and sound, both in 16mm and digital formats. In 2004 she began a collaboration with Guy Sherwin, creating film performance works and touring with their programs to international venues like Punto de Vista International Documentary Film Festival of Navarra, Performa 13 (New York), and L'Âge d'Or (Brussels, Belgium.) She curates programs of artist films, most recently for Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions (Tokyo). She makes a living as a film conservationist and is currently working with artist and archivist Louise Curham on the preservation of film performances.

## Thorsten Fleisch

Thorsten Fleisch was born in 1972 in Koblenz, Germany. He made his first film experiments with his dad's Super 8 camera while still in school. He studied experimental film with Peter Kubelka at the Städelschule in Frankfurt and works with digital and analog film. With materials such as the body, crystals, fire, and electricity, he has worked directly on 16mm filmstrips. Crystals are grown on the film and 30,000 volts burn through photo paper. The results are poetic and abstract visual systems with references to catharsis, the cosmos, and the universe. In 2003 Fleisch received an Honorary Mention at Prix Ars Electronica in Linz (Austria) for his computer-animated film *Gestalt*. High voltage is the center of his work *Energie!*, for which he has won international acclaim. He created commissioned work for Gaspar Noé, Red Bull, and Basement Jaxx, among others. His films have received several awards, showing at festivals worldwide including New York Film Festival, Ars Electronica, Transmediale, Ottawa International Animation Festival, Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, Annecy International Animation Film Festival, and San Francisco International Film Festival. He lives and works in Berlin.

## Sheri Wills

Sheri Wills is an artist whose work is based in film, video performance, and installation. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including one-person shows at the Director's Lounge in Berlin, the Robert Beck Memorial Cinema in New York City, and The International Experimental Cinema Exposition. Her films have been screened at venues such as the London Film Festival, the Alchemy Film and Moving Image Festival, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Experiments in Cinema (Albuquerque, New Mexico), and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Her collaborations include live video projects with music composed by Jan Jirásek, Charles Norman Mason, Bright Sheng, and Ofer Ben-Amots, and video performances with music ensembles including the NYC choral group Khorikos, the Providence String Quartet, Luna Nova New Music Ensemble, and Ensemble QAT in Montreal. Wills has presented at venues including both Roulette and the Firehouse Space in Brooklyn and the Czech Center in New York City. Her film-based installations have been exhibited in galleries and museums including the Islip Art Museum; Hobusepea Gallery in Tallinn, Estonia; and At Home Gallery in Šamorín, Slovakia. She is a professor in the department of Film/Animation/Video at the Rhode Island School of Design. She lives in New York City.

# FILMMAKER AWARDS

The Ann Arbor Film Festival provides direct support to filmmakers. Our 2021 awards competition presents \$23,000 to filmmakers through cash and in-kind awards that include film stock, film processing, and camera rental. An award from the AAFF not only confers prestige and financial support, but also can qualify filmmakers for an Oscar® nomination by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the short film category. Qualifying awards include the Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival, the Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film, and the Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film.

## **Ken Burns for Best of the Festival**

\$3,000

Presented to the film of any genre or length that best represents the artistic standards of excellence for the festival, this award is generously provided by influential documentary filmmaker Ken Burns, a graduate of Ann Arbor Pioneer High School.

## **Tom Berman Award for Most Promising Filmmaker**

\$2,000

Tom Berman was a student of AAFF founder George Manupelli at the University of Michigan, as well as an early festival supporter and close friend to many in the festival community. To honor his memory, this award—contributed by the Berman family—supports an emerging filmmaker who the jury believes will make a significant contribution to the art of film.

## **Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film**

\$2,000

Hollywood film producer and writer Lawrence Kasdan came to know Ann Arbor well during his years as a student at the University of Michigan. He keeps his connection to the town's film culture alive in part through his support of this festival award. The distinction goes to the narrative film that makes the best use of film's unique ability to convey striking and original stories.

## **Best Experimental Film**

\$1,500

Supported by Ann Arbor residents Ron and Robin Sober, this award celebrates the film that most successfully showcases the use of experimental processes, forms, and topics.

## **Kodak Cinematic Vision Award**

\$1,500 in film stock

This award goes to the film that demonstrates the highest excellence and creativity in cinematography. The recipient will receive \$1,500 in film stock from Kodak (This includes complimentary processing should the recipient select 16mm or 35mm color negative film stock).

## **Best Documentary Film**

\$1,000

This award recognizes the best nonfiction film in the festival program.

## **Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film**

\$1,000

Chris Frayne was a key participant in the festival's early years whose approach to life called to mind his colorful cartoon characters. This award honors the spirit of Chris by recognizing the animated film that delivers the best style, creativity, and content.

Support for the award comes from several dedicated AAFF enthusiasts.

**Gil Omenn Art & Science Award**

\$1,000

Provided by Gil Omenn, who seeks to encourage a positive exchange between the arts and sciences, this award honors the filmmaker whose work best uses the art of film and video to explore scientific concepts, research natural phenomena, or embrace real-world experimentation.

**Prix DeVarti for Funniest Film**

\$1,000

Supported by an endowment fund established by the DeVarti Family, this award goes to the film likely to create the most laughs in the festival. The prize recognizes the 57-year friendship between Dominick's pub and the AAFF and honors the memory of Dominick and Alice DeVarti.

**The Barbara Aronofsky Latham Award for an Emerging Experimental Video Artist**

\$1,000

This award provides support to the year's most promising early-career video artist. The award was conceived by the Aronofsky family to honor the late Barbara Aronofsky Latham, a Chicago-based experimental video artist who passed away in 1984 and whose work is distributed by the Video Data Bank.

**The Eileen Maitland Award**

\$750

Supported by several local AAFF fans, this award is given to the film that best addresses women's issues and elevates female voices. It was created to honor the spirit and memory of Eileen Maitland, who was a dear friend and longtime supporter of

the festival, as well as a patron and practitioner of the arts.

**George Manupelli Founder's Spirit Award**

\$700

With lead support from brothers Dave and Rich DeVarti, this award recognizes the filmmaker who best captures the bold and iconoclastic spirit of the Ann Arbor Film Festival founder, the late George Manupelli, whose vision for the festival continues to this day.

**The No Violence Award**

\$512

In a culture that relies on images of violence to entertain, this prize is awarded to the film that best engages or informs audiences and explores or celebrates life while also rising to the narrative challenge of "No Violence Depicted." The award is provided by Ann Arbor residents Matthew Graff and Leslie Lawther.

**Barbara Hammer Feminist Film Award**

\$500

Barbara Hammer was a filmmaker with a profound commitment to expressing a feminist point-of-view in her work. In 2020, filmmaker Lynne Sachs received the Oberhausen Film Festival Grand Prize for a film she made with and for Hammer. With funds from the prize, Lynne created this Ann Arbor Film Festival award for a work that best conveys Hammer's passion for celebrating and examining the experiences of women. Qualifying work by artists of any gender will be considered.

**Best Experimental Animation Award**

\$500

This award recognizes the best experimental animated film that most successfully showcases

the use of experimental processes, forms, and topics. Established by Deanna Morse, the award is in memory of Erik Alexander, an aficionado of the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

**Leon Speakers Award for Best Sound Design**

\$500

This award for excellence and originality in sound design is provided by Leon Speakers, which has been installing custom-built high-fidelity speakers in home theaters throughout Ann Arbor since 1995.

**Martin Contreras and Keith Orr \aut\ FILM Award for Best LGBTQ Film**

\$500

This award honors the film that best addresses and gives voice to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer issues. Longtime festival supporters Martin Contreras and Keith Orr, former owners of the locally known and loved \aut\ BAR, contribute this award to highlight the diversity of voices that achieve excellence in filmmaking. An \aut\ FILM Award Endowment Fund initiative is currently underway. Please contact [leslie@aafilmfest.org](mailto:leslie@aafilmfest.org) should you wish to help ensure that Keith and Martin's legacy of support lives on forever.

**Peter Wilde Award for Most Technically Innovative Film**

\$500

Peter Wilde was a long-time projectionist for the festival and a master of special effects. This award honors his creativity and pursuit of new techniques by recognizing the film that displays the most pioneering technical innovations. Generous donors to the Peter Wilde Award Endowment Fund include Bernard Coakley, Constance Crump and Jay Simrod, Bill Davis,

IATSE Local 395, the LaBour Foundation for Non-Institutional Living, John Nelson and Deb Gaydos, Glenda Pittman, Woody Sempliner, Kevin Smith, and Robert Ziebell and Elizabeth Ward. Additional support was provided by Peter Wilde's sister and brother-in-law, Susan and Jim Warner, in loving memory of Peter and Susan's brother, the late Alan C. Wilde.

**Tíos Award for Best International Film**

\$500

Granted to the film produced outside of the United States that most strongly wins over the jury, this award is provided by Tíos Mexican Café, serving Ann Arbor since 1986.

**UMCU Audience Award**

\$500

Sponsored by the University of Michigan Credit Union, this award—affectionately dubbed the Vox Populi Award – goes to the year's most highly rated audience-selected film in competition.

**Best Michigan Filmmaker Award**

\$350 in kind

This award recognizes top Michigan talent. The winner will receive a one week rental, valued at \$350, including one camera body and two lenses of any brand desired from CameraMall, Ann Arbor's camera store & photo lab, dedicated to supporting the Great Lakes photo community in learning, renting gear, and printing their work.

**Jurors' Awards**

\$2,188

Provided by friends of the festival and distributed at the discretion of the jurors, the remaining prize monies confer special recognition for films of distinction and artistic accomplishment.

# ACADEMY SUPPORT

The Ann Arbor Film Festival (AAFF) is recognized as a qualifying film festival for the short film category of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. A short film that receives one of the following awards at the AAFF is eligible: the Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival, the Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film, and the Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film.

The AAFF is one of two dozen festivals in the United States that can qualify a film for consideration by the Academy Awards. A short film of not more than 40 minutes' running time (including all credits) that falls into the film category of either live-action or animated (including, for example: cel animation, computer animation, stop-motion, clay animation, puppets, pixilation, cutouts, pins, camera multiple-pass imagery, kaleidoscopic effects, and drawing on the film frame itself) is eligible to qualify in one of two ways:

1. The film must have been publicly exhibited for paid admission in a commercial motion picture theater in Los Angeles County for a run of at least three consecutive days, with at least two screenings a day, prior to public exhibition or distribution by any non-theatrical means

or

2. The film must have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival, as specified in the Short Film Qualifying Festival List, regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by non-theatrical means

All eligible motion pictures must be publicly exhibited using 35mm or 70mm film—or in a 24- or 48-frame progressive scan Digital Cinema format—in English or with English subtitles. Television or Internet exhibition anywhere does not disqualify a film, provided such an exhibition occurs after its Los Angeles theatrical release or after receiving its festival award. Documentaries, previews, trailers, or advertising films are excluded.

Please see [www.oscars.org](http://www.oscars.org) for a complete outline of rules and eligibility.

# AWARD DONORS

These valued donors make it possible for the Ann Arbor Film Festival to present awards to deserving filmmakers each year. Their generosity creates a positive impact on experimental film by providing support and recognition for talented artists.

Huge thanks to all of you!

## **\$5,000 and above**

Deanna Morse

Mma Pula Wahoo Charities Fund

## **\$3,000 – \$4,999**

Ken Burns

Lynne Sachs & Mark Street

## **\$1000 – \$2,999**

The Aronofsky Family

Richard & Elizabeth Berman

Oscar Cardenas & John Seymour

Martin Contreras & Keith Orr

Martha Darling & Gil Omenn

David DeVarti & Ellen Rabinowitz

Lawrence & Meg Kasdan

The James and Helen McCaffery Charitable  
Foundation

## **\$500 – \$999**

George Fisher & Kari Magill

Matthew Graff & Leslie Lawther

Leon Speakers

Tíos Restaurant

University of Michigan Credit Union

Jim & Susan Warner

## **\$250 – \$499**

Lars Bjorn & Susan Wineberg

Rick Cronn & Myrna Rugg

Richard & Mei DeVarti

Vicki Engel & Dan Gunning

Dennis Hayes & Mary Ellen Rounsifer

Kohlitz Animation and Video Production

Bob Moustakas & Katharine Burnett

Deanna Relyea & Piotr Michalowski

Barbara Twist

## **\$100 – \$249**

John Nelson & Deb Gaydos

Claywood Sempliner

## **\$20 – \$99**

Dana Sink

Kirk Westphal

## **IN-KIND**

CameraMall

Kodak

# DONORS

Many thanks to our donors for helping us get through such a challenging year.  
Thanks to you, we are able to bring the best film art to the screen again!

## **\$15,000 and above**

Amy J. Moore  
Deanna Morse

## **\$10,000 – \$14,999**

The James and Helen  
McCaffery Charitable  
Foundation

## **\$5,000 – \$9,999**

630 Club  
Tom Bray & Jeri Hollister  
Ken Burns  
David DeVarti & Ellen  
Rabinowitz

## **\$3,000 – \$4,999**

Martha Darling & Gil Omenn  
Susan Dise  
Cecily E. Horton  
Lawrence & Meg Kasdan  
Cynthia Nicely  
Rick Cronn & Myrna Rugg  
Lynne Sachs & Mark Street

## **\$1,000 – \$2,999**

Ruth Bardenstein & Jim Roll  
Richard & Elizabeth Berman  
Gary Boren  
Oscar Cardenas & John  
Seymour  
Constance Crump & Jay Simrod  
Martin Contreras & Keith Orr  
Jackie & John Farah

David Gilbertson & Anne  
Cutsinger  
Matthew Graff & Leslie Lawther  
Deborah S. Greer  
Donald Harrison  
John Johnson & Mary Cronin  
Noah & Ethan Kaplan  
Heidi Kumao  
Susan & Michael Landauer  
Wendy Lawson  
Morgan McCormick & Justin  
Bonfiglio  
Thomas & Lisa McKarns  
AJ Saulsberry  
Paul Schutt  
Barbara Twist  
Jonathan Tyman & Deborah  
Bayer

## **\$500 – \$999**

Alec & Judy Allen  
James Bennett  
F. Ross Birkhill and Laura Jean  
Birkhill Family Foundation  
Martha Bloom  
Patricia & John Carver  
Richard & Mei DeVarti  
Stephen & Angeline Fisher  
Vicki Engel & Dan Gunning  
Darcy Ann Hall  
Barbara Kessler & Dick Soble  
Kari Magill & George Fisher  
Markus Nornes

Damani Partridge & Sunita  
Bose-Partridge  
Chris Peters  
Veerendra Prasad  
Daniel Rivkin & Jennifer Conlin  
Krissa & Jim Rumsey  
Jeremy Seaver  
Robin & Ron Sober  
Francyne Stacey  
Jim & Susan Warner

## **\$250 – \$499**

Lars Bjorn & Susan Wineberg  
Thomas Chivens & Katherine  
Jenckes  
Zachary Damon  
Mark Hardin & Pilarita Cortez  
Dennis Hayes & Mary Ellen  
Rounsifer  
Shannon Kohlitz  
Jean Baderschneider & Pat  
MacArevey  
Bob Moustakas & Katharine  
Burnett  
Tadd & Nayiri Mullinix  
Mark Murrell  
Arthur Nusbaum  
Deanna Relyea & Piotr  
Michalowski  
James Salame  
Claywood Sempliner  
Jonathan Skidmore  
Francyne Stacey

Leslie Rayamond & Jason  
Stevens  
Robin Wolgast  
Harvey Levine & Marie Woo  
Steve Wood

**\$100 – \$249**

Trevor John Adams  
Phoebe Adams  
Francheska Alers  
Mark Anzicek  
Joan Binkow  
Anthony Buba & Janice  
McMannis  
Julia Caroff  
Dennis J. Carter  
Diane Cheklich  
Bernard Coakley  
Hubert & Ellen Cohen  
Cecelia Condit  
Darren Floyd  
Steven Haines  
Peter Heydon  
Cynthia Kennedy  
John Kerr  
James Kreul  
Lance Lawlor  
Leland Lew  
Joan Lowenstein & Jonathan  
Trobe  
Greg Merriman & Jill  
McDonough  
Rashmi Menon  
Peter and Carolyn Mertz  
Hafsah Mijinyawa  
Simona Monizza  
Keith Moorman  
David Olson  
Greg Powell  
Kathleen Quillian  
Brian Roberson  
Herbert Rossi  
Gail Altenburg & Nicholas  
Roumel

Jay & Susan Sandweiss  
Terri Sarris  
Erich Schifter  
Peter Sparling  
Dey Summer  
Danielle & Dave Susser  
Mary Thiefels  
Joseph Walters  
Sasha Waters Freyer  
Justin Wong

**\$20 – \$99**

Lindsey Arturo  
Bella Babot  
Sandra Berman  
Andra Birkerts  
Jean & Frederick Birkhill  
Hillary Bliss  
William Bolcom & Joan Morris  
Susan Badger Booth  
Betzy Bromberg  
Howard White & Barbara Brown  
Alan Brown  
David Brown  
Nancy Brucken  
Caitlyn Buchanan  
Catherine Butler  
Sofia Caetano  
Judith Calhoun  
Madison Carter  
Sara Chapman  
Jon and Corinne Childs  
Hui Hua Chua  
Sean Clute  
Diane Conde  
Cathy Cook  
Brent Coughenour  
Nancy Cripe  
Sean Cronin  
Jack Cronin  
Reates Curry  
Rebecca Davenport  
Jenna Didier  
Sean Donovan

Jeannette Duane & Douglas  
Shapiro  
Jerry Duba  
Roberta Duda  
John Engelbrecht  
David Zachary Evans  
Mike Everleth  
Derek Felten  
Rich Field & Kathie Hepler  
Rebecca J Filbey  
Zachary Finkelstein  
Phil Fisher  
Lee Flynn  
John Francisco  
Maura Fulton  
Eric Furlong  
Ian Gailer  
Cheri Gaulke  
Aaron Gerow  
Anna Gersh  
Deborah Geye  
Lloyd Goldsmith  
Mark Gordon  
Marcie Greenfield  
Travis Gresham  
Maggie Haag  
Timothy Hamann  
Lavinia Hanachiuc  
Carrie Hawks  
Jean Henry  
Stephanie Henyard  
Dan Herbert & Anna Sampson  
David Howell  
Christopher Huth  
Radek Hylmar  
Kathleen Ignatoski  
Wayne Indyk  
Andrew Inman  
Howard Israel  
Jim Jacob  
Matt Jacobs  
Katherine Johnson  
Richard Johnson  
Jessica Johnson

Crystal Kemter  
Nancy Keough  
Robert & Brenda Kerr  
Edward Kimball  
Dale Knorr  
Ken Kobland  
Patricia Kowalski  
Harriet Kozyn  
Dustin Krcatovich & Micah  
Vanderhoof  
Kamila Kuc  
Nancy LaTendresse  
Alexandre Lechasseur-Dubé  
Carl Lee  
Jennifer Levonian  
Alan Levy & Susan Pollans  
Fung Li  
Wood Lin  
Michael Long  
Ted Lyman  
Charles Lyman  
Linda Lyman  
Gary Mangrum  
Sophie Manning  
Charles Marcus  
Páraic Mc Gloughlin  
Ryan McGavock  
Kathleen McGowan  
Joanna McNamara  
Chris McNamara & Margaret  
Fong  
Maureen Michael  
James Middleton  
Alexandra Milani  
Floyd Miller  
Catherine Mizgerd  
Daniel E. Moerman  
Maral Mohammadian  
Bob Moir & Candice Gates  
Allison Morris  
Paul Morris  
Kathleen Mortensen  
Will Nediger  
John Nelson & Deb Gaydos

Tiffany Ng  
Willie Northway  
Emily Olenzek  
Maureen OMalley  
Michael Osmond  
Kirk Page  
Carson Parish  
Cynthia Penter  
Mike Perini  
Robert Pertuso  
Christopher W. A. Peters  
Melissa Phruksachart  
Paul Pierantozzi  
Lisa Powers  
Greg Pratt  
Astra Price  
Jennifer Proctor & Aaron Valdez  
Amel Puric  
Edward Rankus  
Julia Reardin  
Anne Rebull  
David Reed  
Katharine Relth  
Andrew Remdenok  
David Richman  
Lindsay Robillard  
Peter Rose  
David Rosenboom  
Jules Roskam  
Kathleen Rugh  
Raquel Salvatella de Prada  
Veronica Sanitate  
Heinz & Martha Schmidt  
Elizabeth Schneider  
Steve Seeger  
Kristen Shaeffer  
Russell Sheaffer  
Christopher Sheklian  
Ingrid & Clifford Sheldon  
Kate Shults  
Paul Simpson  
Dana Sink  
Michael & Pamela Smith  
James Snazell

Lynn & John Spencer  
Ellen Spiller  
Shel & Rita Stark  
Stacey Steers  
Amanda Sterling  
Ellen Stross  
YANCHUN SU  
Helder Sun  
Paul Sutherland  
Christina Tabaczka  
Dicle Taskin  
Bjorn Thoresen  
Brian Tomsic  
Natalie Tsui  
Silvia Turchin  
Mary Underwood  
Marcia Valenstein  
Angel Vasquez  
Gretchen Vinnedge  
Allida Warn  
Grahame Weinbren  
Kirk Westphal  
Susan Wolf  
Leon Wyszewianski  
Tzu Hsuan Yang  
Julia Yezbick & Ben Gaydos

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# TOUR

The 58th Ann Arbor Film Festival traveling tour made 3 stops to show award-winning and select short films from the 2020 festival. This was the first year that AAFF made the touring programs available for rental online, with 25 individual rentals.

The 58th AAFF tour visited:

Madison Museum of Contemporary Art  
August 28, 2020

Grand Rapids Library  
January 28, 2021

Ann Arbor District Library  
Feb 26, 2021

Half of the touring program revenue goes directly to the filmmakers whose work is featured.

To learn more about the AAFF traveling tour, visit [aafilmfest.org/tour](http://aafilmfest.org/tour).

# DVD

DVD Volumes 2-12 can be purchased individually.

Volumes 1-10 may be purchased in the collection-quality 10-pack

[aafilmfest.org/store](http://aafilmfest.org/store)

# VIRTUAL GALLERY

<https://www.aafilmfest.org/virtualgallery>

The virtual gallery is an immersive digital experience designed exclusively for the 59th AAFF. The space hosts six new media digital installations, and has added a new dimension to the ongoing *Off The Screen!* intermedia series.

## *Alice Inside*

Claudia Hart  
United States  
2020

**Description:** *Alice Inside* is a work created for Mozilla Hubs, a nonprofit site for “social” VR, and a platform that I have been working on over the pandemic year. *Alice Inside* emerges from an earlier work, produced in 2018, *Alice Unchained*, one of four pieces I made over the last decade loosely inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*. In *Alice Unchained* I combined the digitized movements of a man and a woman to create a cyborg choreography. *Alice Unchained* was a multichannel animation featuring a live performance by a real ballerina (Kristina Isabelle) and another by a professional wrestler (Isaias Valesquez), digitally captured and then embodied by one androgenous avatar, dancing inside of a fantastical world. The musician Edmund Campion, who is also director of the Center For New Music and Audio Technology at UC Berkeley, was my collaborator for all of the *Alices*. Campion, and with the support of CNMAT, created software to compose its soundtrack. *Alice Inside*, my current Alice interpretation, remixes its original layered realities in a more complex way. For *Alice Inside*, I’ve installed *Alice Unchained* on the Mozilla Hubs platform, but framed inside of the surrealist model that I used previously in 2019 to produce it. *Alice Inside* therefore combines different perceptual models mixed together in a single virtual exhibition space. The first is a “flat” four-channel movie

projection, the cinematic animation *Alice Unchained*. The second takes place inside of the *Flower Matrix*—the 3D computer world used to make it. This permits a viewer to stand inside of the *Flower Matrix* and feel that they are enveloped in it at the same time as viewing the movie. The impression is of being inside of a spherical dome, which is the geometric construction used to present the illusion of immersion in all VR.

Inside *Alice*, these two kinds of representational systems coexist simultaneously, each emerging from a different technology in an impossible way—cinematic animation and the post-cinematic virtual. Hence *Alice Inside*, an uncanny recursive system—a Borgesian simulation of a simulation in a simulation and a halfway space—one that is truly liminal. And also, truly in the spirit of the first *Alice in Wonderland*, this Alice is also a world of inverted logic, capable of confounding both the mind and its perceptions.

**Bio:** I emerged as part of that generation of '90s intermedia artists from what is now known as the “identity art” niche. I still am, but updated through the scrim of technology. My art is about issues of the body, perception, nature collapsing into technology and then back again. Everything in it is fluid, including gender. I consider it Cyborg-ish. I create liminal spaces, an overused word I know, but I’m in love with the interface between real and unreal because it is a space of contemplation and transformation.

## *Bamboocene: Memories of Synchronicity Part 3: WebGL*

Monika Czyżyk, Gabriel de la Cruz  
Finland  
2021

**Description:** *Bamboocene: Memories of Synchronicity Part 3: WebGL* is a virtual experience consisting of a multi-year film project that completes the circle of collaborative space exploration, featuring communities from Wanjian and Shangcun village in Anhui province China and the Astronautical Society in Finland. On GJ504b planet Melt, the Bamboonaut has curated a show that explores several themes: community revitalization, ecological fiction, synchronicity, bamboo, international space programs, and women protests. Energy accumulates from community performances

including the launching of a bamboo rocket, the editing process of the film *I Want to Build a Rocket*, the creation of *The Bamboonaut Clusters* (a graphic novel by Torsten Zenas Burns) and exhibitions in Beijing, Helsinki, and Warsaw. This energy materializes into the representation of the *Bamboocene: Memories of Synchronicity Part 3* in space. Explore the planet Melt experience by using your keyboard and mouse.

**Bio:** Monika Czyżyk is a visual artist primarily working with the moving image in the context of experimental documentaries and socially engaged projects. She lives and works in Helsinki, Finland. She is a graduate of the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts and the Helsinki University of the Arts. Gabriel de la Cruz is a Spanish artist based in Helsinki. He has over 15 years of teaching experience at the University of the Arts Helsinki. He works in the fields of computer graphics, animation, and audio.

## **bot,**

aaajiao (Xu Wenkai)  
Berlin, Germany / Shanghai, China  
2018

**Description:** In *bot*, the artist presents a portrait of memory built on a machine's assumptions of how people would think a machine interprets the mind. He borrows aesthetics from existing role-playing action games such as *Mother3*, *Adventureland*, *Undertale*, and *ROM*, to create awareness of our world in 2018—a perhaps slightly dystopian impression—and to introduce a conception of memory that sets itself apart from present understandings. He also displays the WeChat circle which could be a Chinese version of Instagram feeds. This work expresses his concerns about continuous partial attention. By adopting an always-on, anywhere, anytime, any place behavior, we exist in a state of excitement and alertness and we can no longer concentrate fully on anything. Constant access to media has turned us into compulsive snackers and triggered a cycle of shorter attention bursts, shorter media portions, increased tempo, quicker payoff, and algorithmic optimization. As bots, spiders, or web crawlers are heavily used by search engines to figure out how to rank websites in search results, aaajiao links their basic function with modern users' illusions and dilemmas about truth. In this age of accelerated planetary computation, there is no doubt

that we humans struggle to “remember” and to “think in more memorable ways” as we become unable to rely solely on regions in our brains devoted to spatial memory.

**Bio:** Active online as a media artist, blogger, activist and programmer, aaajiao is the virtual persona of Shanghai and Berlin artist Xu Wenkai. Born in 1984 in Xi'an, one of China's oldest cities, aaajiao marks his art with a strong dystopian awareness, literati spirits, and sophistication. Many of aaajiao's works speak to new thinkings, controversies and phenomena around the internet, with specific projects focusing on the processing of data, the blogosphere, and China's Great FireWall. aaajiao's recent projects extend his practice to various disciplines (among them architecture, topography, and design) to capture the pulse of the young generation consuming cybertechnology and living in social media.

## ***Darling, Work 1 and Darling, Work 2***

Michele Monseau  
San Antonio, Texas  
2020

**Runtime:** 4 & 2

**Description:** This video series was recently started on Instagram and is meant to work in the sphere of social media, online viewing, and in the context of exhibition. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, I have utilized Instagram as my exhibition space to communicate directly in real time with my audience. Each video adopts a character who makes short sharp statements very quickly. This series aims to comment succinctly on social issues, tech, relationships, gender equity, deconstruction/reconstruction of identity, fragmentation, and the worldwide insanity we're all experiencing today. External insanities can insidiously worm their way into us, which is where I place this work—in a place of attempting to deal with grief, incredulousness, disbelief, frustration, and anxiety. These videos also utilize humor as a social sanction against inflexibility. They are very short vignettes that utilize the face of the artist, always altered so as to make the person in the video irrelevant and the character she is portraying relevant—subverting the

idea of the selfie and attempting to subvert facial recognition.

**Bio:** Michele Monseau was born and raised in Youngstown, Ohio and is a professional artist, musician, and vocalist exhibiting nationally and internationally. She is also an educator and founder/director of Three Walls Gallery in San Antonio, Texas, where she now lives. Her work was recently exhibited at the Venice International Film Festival and Luis Leu Gallery in Karlsruhe, Germany, and she was selected for a summer 2020 residency at the Totaldobre Residency, Tallinas ielas kvartals in Riga, Latvia. In 2019, she was a finalist for the Tobin Prize, granted by the Artist Foundation of San Antonio. She completed an artist residency through the Latvian Center for Contemporary Art in Cesis, Latvia, and in recent years received an Idea Fund Grant (a re-granting program through Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.)

## ***Flipped Books***

Marie Paccou  
France

**Description:** For more than three years, I have been drawing films inside my books. The online viewer will be able to watch these very short mute films, automatically looped, scrolling through them as if wandering in a gallery. The films always have a relation to the books: in their very condensed way, they may be considered adaptations. While working on this project, I realised printed books were no longer the mass media my parents craved (while none of my grandparents were readers), and that my collection of pocket books won't have much value for my own kids. This is how I decided to turn my bookshelves into viral videos.

**Bio:** Born in 1974 in Dakar from french parents, Marie Paccou graduated from the RCA in 2000, shortly after her graduation film from ENSAD, "One Day", gained multiple awards. Back in France, she directed several short films, worked on the opening of an animation school, and supervised workshops for various audiences. Since 2015, she has focused on animated objects she promotes through social media.

## ***On a clear day you can see forever***

Ian Haig  
Melbourne, Australia  
2019

**Runtime:** 3

**Description:** 24 hour fake news coverage, no news presenters, no breaking news stories, no information, no in-studio interviews, all content is reduced to meat, and the visceral human body. There remains an implicit link between the media landscape and our bodies, as we merge more and more with the electronic world. Everything now exists in a heightened state of simulation, from fake TV news broadcasts to fake human bodies; nothing is real, everything is constructed.

**Bio:** Exhibitions and screenings include the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne; the Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide; Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museum Villa Rot, Burgrieden-Rot, Germany; China Millennium Monument Art Museum, Beijing.

# INSTALLATIONS

**U-M Institute For Humanities**

## ***For Your Eyes Only***

Yasmine Nassir Diaz  
Los Angeles, California  
2021

**Description:** *For Your Eyes Only* is the latest iteration of multidisciplinary artist Yasmine Nasser Diaz's bedroom installation. At first glance, the constructed space is a shimmering homage to the bedroom disco—a sanctuary for uninhibited dance and self-expression. It has also become the setting from which many personal videos are made and shared widely on social media, where platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have blurred the boundary between public and private. Projected into the space is a montage of casual videos shared by female-identifying and non-binary persons of SWANA (Southwest Asian/North African) origin dancing solo in their rooms. To some, the videos may seem innocent and innocuous, but they can also be seen as acts of defiance that assert the autonomy of bodies that have been surveilled, scrutinized, and censored throughout history. Alongside these intimate moments is a separate reel showing political figures and protest movements from the SWANA region. The images demonstrate the fluctuating attitudes and regulations impacting human rights and freedoms based on gender, and exemplify how—whether we are physically at a protest or sharing our physicality in virtual spaces—our bodies are engaged in some level of risk.

**Bio:** Yasmine Nasser Diaz is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice weaves between culture, class, gender, religion, and family. She uses mixed media collage, immersive installation, fiber etching, and video to juxtapose discordant cultural references and to explore the connections between personal experience and larger social and political structures. Born and raised in Chicago to parents who immigrated from the rural highlands of southern Yemen, Diaz is interested in

complicated narratives of third-culture identity and their precarious invisibility/hyper-visibility. Diaz is a recipient of the Harpo Visual Artists Grant and the California Community Foundation Visual Artist Fellowship and has works included in the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The University of California Los Angeles, and the Arab American National Museum. Her work has been featured in *HyperAllergic*, *Artillery Magazine*, and *Kolaj Magazine*. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

**111 South 4th Ave.**

## ***One Man's War***

Li Binyuan  
Beijing, China  
2021

**Description:** In performance art terms, *man breaks 301 hammers* seems to be a straightforward enough concept. But Li Binyuan's *One Man's War* transcends the form. A man does what he has to do, which seems impossible to accomplish. So much so that he is showing fatal fatigue after performing repetitive actions; but at the same time, those invisible rules and regulations wrapped outside of the body are forced to appear. It eventually turns into a historical fable that concerns the individual's life.

**Bio:** Li Binyuan was born in 1985 in Yongzhou, China. He graduated from the Sculpture Department at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2011. Currently living in Beijing, Li is an active contemporary artist, as well as a documentary and experimental filmmaker. His work has exhibited throughout the US, Europe, and Asia, and is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art.

## ***An Undue Burden***

Jex Blackmore  
Michigan  
2019

**Runtime:** 24 hours

**Description:** *An Undue Burden* is an endurance work that follows the experience of a pregnant woman as

she awaits her abortion procedure in a hotel room over the course of twenty-four hours. Striking a balance between the public and private domain, the film draws parallels between a political discussion involving a woman's intimate, personal life and the public square. Veiled by the private room, we see the female body as a contested site, as her isolation transforms the mundane into a living taboo. With minimal spoken dialogue, her gaze and actions function as a narrative driver, allowing the story to unfold of a woman in negotiation between her independence and confinement. We are reminded of what is sacrificed in putting one's life on hold for twenty-four hours (or more) and see ourselves in nuanced familiarities—a call to reconsider the burden of mandated abortion waiting periods in a political climate which dismisses the lived experiences of those directly impacted by these regulations.

**Bio:** Jex Blackmore is an artist whose work addresses the relationship between moral religious rhetoric, sexuality, and political policy. She has been featured in numerous publications such as *Time*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Salon*. Her work is featured in the Magnolia Pictures documentary *Hail Satan?*, which was an official selection at Sundance 2019.

## **Ann Arbor Art Center**

### ***The Well***

Deb Todd Wheeler  
Massachusetts  
2020

**Runtime:** 9 (loop)

**Description:** Following the sudden deaths of her vibrant and beautiful son Lucas and her brother, the lyrical filmmaker Rob Todd, Deb Todd Wheeler fell into a state of deep mourning that involved hunting for grief rituals across the country. Situated in the running waters of Southern Vermont, *The Well* invites the camera into a grief ritual between flowers and friends. Each of these women is grieving, filming, collaborating. This is Deb Todd Wheeler's edit of the communal footage. It's a conversation with Rob, a cry for Lucas, and an out-of-body experience of surrender.

**Bio:** Deb Todd Wheeler generates discreetly intimate experiences through interactive installations, objects, and participatory gatherings. Raised by musicians, and trained as a material craftsman, she has an interest in both antiquated and new technologies, and an attitudinal nimbleness that spawns collaboration across disciplines. Her projects act as a vehicle for processing both material and emotion.

# PERFORMANCES & AFTERPARTIES

**TU: 9:30pm**

## ***IT'S NORMAL FOR SOME THINGS TO COME TO YOUR ATTENTION***

Negativland and SUE-C  
United States  
2021

**Runtime:** 60

**Description:** Live collage cinema and live collage sound! Legendary sound collage group Negativland teams up with legendary live cinema artist SUE-C to bring you a streaming audiovisual performance about our nervous systems, our realities, and the evolving forms of media and technology that inevitably insert themselves between them. Original music, found sounds, uniquely organic visuals, manipulated media, Boopers, and a few surprises are normal to come to your attention.

**Bio:** Since 1980, the 4 or 5 or 6 (or more) Floptops known as Negativland, a multimedia collective originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, have been creating records, CDs, video, fine art, books, radio and live performance using appropriated sounds, images, objects, and text. Mixing original materials and original music with things taken from corporately owned mass culture and the world around them, Negativland surreally re-arrange these found bits and pieces to make them say and suggest things that they never intended to. In doing this kind of cultural archaeology and "culture jamming" (a term they coined way back in 1984), Negativland have been sued twice for copyright infringement.

While it is true that, after being sued, Negativland became more publicly involved in advocating significant reforms of our nation's copyright laws (even

finding themselves being brought to Washington DC and Capitol Hill as citizen lobbyists for copyright and art issues), Negativland are artists first and activists second. All of their art and media interventions have intended to pose both serious and silly questions about the nature of sound, media, control, ownership, propaganda, power, and perception in the United States of America.

Sue Slagle (stage name SUE-C) is a video and light artist working at the intersection of creative coding and live performance. For the past 18 years she has created handmade videos and live media performances, traveling extensively in the USA and internationally. Her works challenge the norms of photography, video, and technology by blending them all into an organic and improvisational live performance setting. Employing a variety of digital tools to create an experimental animation "instrument," she synthesizes cinema from photographs, drawings, watercolors, hand-made papers, fabrics and lighting effects.

SUE-C has performed and exhibited at a multitude of national and international venues and festivals including the Library of Congress, San Francisco International Film Festival, Oberhausen Short Film Festival, SFMoMA, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, REDCAT, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Arts, Pacific Film Archive, EMPAC, Ars Electronica, MUTEK, SONAR, Sonic Light, Transmediale, Marco Museum, ICA London and Laboral.

Current and past collaborators include Negativland, Dynasty Handbag, Laetitia Sonami, Morton Subotnick, Luc Ferrari, Antye Greie (AGF), Golan Levin, Joshua Kit Clayton, Wobbly, Sutekh, Matmos and Vladislav Delay. Slagle has taught courses and workshops at California College of the Arts, San Francisco Art Institute, Portland Community College, Pacific Northwest College of Art, UCLA, Open Signal and La Casa Encendida.

This program has been made possible with support from Arts Midwest

**WE: 9:30pm**

## ***The Room Presumed***

Scott Kiernan  
New York City, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** Variable

**Description:** *The Room Presumed* utilizes machine learning and real-time video processing to reveal the

paradoxes inherent in the ways we speak about “immersive” media. The work is inspired, and the software partially trained on, an early 1980s thought-experiment at Atari in which a group of computer scientists envision “virtual reality” without any of the needed tools to do so. Through this exercise, the subjects become improvisational actors, speaking the roles of “user” and “interface.” Trained on these accounts, *The Room Presumed* distends and completes their unfinished acts—revealing the strings that support an illusory veneer of a so-called “technological immersion.”

**Bio:** Scott Kiernan is a multidisciplinary artist living and working in New York City. He is founder and co-director of E.S.P. TV, a nomadic TV studio that explores televisual language through collaborations for broadcast. He also produces audiovisual editions and recordings by artists working across diverse media through his imprint Various/Artists. He has exhibited and performed internationally in venues such as the Museum of Modern Art, New Museum, Museum of Arts and Design, Swiss Institute/Contemporary Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Anthology Film Archives, and CICA Rome.

**TH: 9:30pm**

## ***Sonic Escape Routes: Shall We Fly? or Shall We Resist?***

Akeema-Zane, Rena Anakwe  
New York City, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 44

**Description:** Akeema-Zane and Rena Anakwe come together to map a fictive sonic architecture of the ongoing debates among Weeksville residents during the height of the community’s cultivation and, ultimately, its demise. *Sonic Escape Routes* seeks to explore the following: what is the spiritual core, and where is the liminal space, for a people whose freedom to thrive remains in question? And what are the varying routes that anchor us toward flight or resistance? Through a collaborative sound and visual performance, the artists aim to assert and embed their own personal narratives and histories, in order to traverse the archives of Weeksville, and in doing so answer these questions.

**Bio:** Akeema-Zane is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher who centers the literary, cinematic, and performance traditions. She has been an artist-in-residence, student, fellow, and performer at Groundation Grenada, Cave Canem, The Maysles Documentary Center, Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism, and the School of Making Thinking.

Rena Anakwe is an interdisciplinary artist and performer working primarily with sound, visuals, and scent. Exploring intersections between traditional healing practices, spirituality, and performance, she creates works focused on sensory-based, experiential interactions using creative technology. She is based in Brooklyn, New York by way of Nigeria and Canada.

**FR: 10pm**

## ***Operation Jane Walk***

Total Refusal (Leonhard Müllner, Robin Klengel)  
Austria  
2019

**Runtime:** 60

**Description:** In *Operation Jane Walk*, the digital war zone of a video game is appropriated with the help of an artistic intervention. The urban flâneurs avoid combat and become peaceful tourists of a digital world, which is a detailed replica of New York City. Accompanied by two guests, the audience watches the performers promenading in the digital battleground, exploring the possibilities (and impossibilities) of new media technologies. While walking through the post-apocalyptic city, issues such as architecture, history, and urbanism are being discussed. This program is possible thanks to support from the Austrian Cultural Forum New York.

**Bio:** TOTAL REFUSAL Digital Disarmament Movement: The vast majority of contemporary video games is characterized by combative gameplay. This seems especially remarkable now that video games have long arrived in the entertainment mainstream and have managed to drop the boy’s room stigmata. With gaming becoming both commercially and culturally more and more relevant, the question arises how artists can modify and make use of this media for their own purposes. In “Total Refusal”, artists Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner and Michael Stumpf aim to peacefully appropriate the existing mechanics of digital

gaming media in order to find new use for their virtual combat zones. As such, "Total Refusal" is a pacifistic statement, realized in digital space.

**SA: 9pm**

## **AFTER-DINNER LOOPS**

Pickle Fort Film Collective

Michigan

2020

**Runtime:** 90

**Description:** Please join us for a multimedia performance by the Pickle Fort Film Collective. Headnotic beats and handmade 16mm film loops are on the menu. After a big meal of wonderfully curated experimental films, we invite you to get up, stretch, imbibe, and DANCE to our concoction of sight and sound designed specifically for an experimental set.

**Bio:** The Pickle Fort Film Collective has been creating live cinema with handmade film loops since 2012.

**SU: 8pm**

## **TERRIBLE TUESDAY**

DJ GIRL x GUTTER

Chicago, Illinois / Detroit, Michigan

2021

**Runtime:** 2 hours

**Description:** *Terrible Tuesday* is a weekly audiovisual beatdown that airs on its home base datafruits.fm—and we're bringing it to the AAFF for the first time. Based in Chicago (by way of Detroit), DJ and producer DJ GIRL spins fast-tempo musical madness, while Detroit visual artist GUTTER provides experimental brain-bending live visuals. Let us bring the club to your living room on the most "terrible" day of the week...

**Bio:** DJ GIRL is the baddest b\*\*\*\* in techno bass, serving hard techno and electro beats since 2016. GUTTER is a VJ/visualist from Detroit, Michigan, specializing in experimental video and live performance. Together they run the independent record label EAT DIS.

**Live Cinema Performance during FIC 5 Wed 7:30pm**

## **Pluriverse-Conjunction**

Kit Young, Allen Moore

California

2021

**Runtime:** 15

**Description:** How can we reinforce the circular, pluralistic, feedback-driven nature of environmental symbiotic relationships and oppose the linear, anthropocentric modes espoused by neoliberal capitalism? What does joy look like in a time of environmental, economic, and social collapse? What light do academic theories like enactivism, posthumanism, actor-network theory, and decolonial theory shed on what it feels like to live in the world? Given our collective history, how might expressions of national grief manifest?

**Bio:** Allen Moore is a Black American interdisciplinary artist, educator, and curator born and raised in the small South Side Village of Robbins, Illinois. Allen holds a BA from Chicago State University, an MA from Governors State University, and an MFA from Northern Illinois University. His work converses with the signifiers of African-American and popular culture, bringing to view the underlying themes of racial, emotional, and socioeconomic conditions. His work examines both visual and experimental music, emphasizing the importance of nurturing the Black Imagination with social activism and representation. His educational and curatorial practices focus on building spaces for advocacy, creative representation, and healing. Working and volunteering with organizations such as Comfort Station in Logan Square and ACRE in Pilsen. Moore implements the maker mindset while working as a STEAM mentor and instructor for Youth Opportunity United in Evanston, and a teaching artist at Marwen in Chicago. Kit Young is a multimedia artist who builds complex feedback environments to study our interdependence.

Live Cinema Performance during FIC 7 Thur 5:30pm

## ***Hecate's Palladio***

Jessica Mensch

Quebec

2021

**Runtime:** 10

**Description:** Hecate, the three-headed Greek goddess of sorcery, magic, and the keeper of the threshold that separates the living from the dead, emerges from her watery passageways to dance. Slowly, the stage comes to life and joins Hecate in this humorous and ritualistic performance. Set to an original score, *Hecate's Palladio* experiments with live video, green-screen compositing, video projection mapping, and dance in this new work.

**Bio:** Jessica Mensch's work straddles multiple media: painting, video, performance, and installation. She received her MFA from Hunter College in 2019 and has exhibited internationally. She has been awarded grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and has participated in residencies at Dirt Palace, Extrapool, and The Banff Centre.

manipulated in space and time. All these elements combine to form an ambient, evolving audiovisual environment.

**Bio:** Paloma Kop is a video and sound artist using feedback, electronic hardware, and hybrid media processes to produce compositions, installations, and performances. She deconstructs the boundaries between material space and electronic space, and is interested in the universalities between natural phenomena, computing, and chaos. She holds an MFA in electronic arts from Alfred University and has performed at venues such as Ibrida\*Pluri Festival, Transient Visions Film Festival, and Ambient Church.

Live Cinema Performance during FIC 14 Sat 5:00pm

## ***Electromagnetic***

## ***Environments: Sound Image Performance***

Paloma Kop

New York

2021

**Runtime:** 30

**Description:** *Electromagnetic Environments* is a solo performance by artist Paloma Kop, who works with expanded media processes to produce generative time-based work, combining electronic and digital systems with analog and material processes. This experimental performance will combine live video and audio synthesis, transmissions and interference, and echoing synesthetic landscapes, adapted to the medium of online streaming. Patterns and behaviors produced through video feedback systems can resemble natural phenomena such as fractals and fluid dynamics, while radio signals which pervade the space we inhabit are collected, made audible, and

# SALONS

Tues 3pm

## ***Film Art Forum***

**Runtime:** 60

**Description:** In this Pecha Kucha-style event, ten filmmakers and other festival guests present 20 slides for 20 seconds each, resulting in a series of six-minute talks by film artists. The subject matter varies, with all presentations aiming to promote an in-depth exploration of cinema as an art form and to encourage further discussion that nurtures the AAFF community.

Sat 12:45pm

## ***Zoomation Workshop: Animating Connections Across Social Distances***

Christine Veras, Stephan Leeper  
Texas / Michigan  
2020

**Runtime:** 90

**Description:** This workshop offers a playful opportunity for participants to exercise social distancing while interacting in a safe collaborative virtual space. This pandemic has forced us all into a new form of digital gathering. As artists and animators, we can break the rules of everyday interactions, creating a virtual animated territory. Join us to create an original piece of experimental animation using pixilation to animate both humans and objects. Pixilation is an animation technique pioneered by Norman McLaren utilizing human animation puppets, giving them fairy-like movements similar to pixies. In this workshop, we will combine pixelation, stop-motion, and time-lapse photography across a Zoom interface to create a truly unique animation experience.

**Bio:** Christine Veras teaches at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her research practice integrates physical and digital technologies to explore the multimedia possibilities of animation.

Stephan Leeper teaches animation, story, and filmmaking at Central Michigan University. His research includes stop-motion, pixilation, and hand-drawn animation.

Sun 12pm

## ***What the Hell Was That?***

Moderated by Daniel Herbert

**Runtime:** 60

**Description:** This panel discussion has been an Ann Arbor Film Festival favorite for more than a decade. It began when a filmmaker overheard an audience member declare, "What the hell was that?" after viewing his film. An enlightening discussion ensued, and the idea for the panel was born. Join visiting filmmakers and other special guests for an opportunity to watch and discuss three short experimental films selected from this year's festival lineup. Daniel Herbert is a media scholar and associate professor of the Department of Film, Television, and Media Arts in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts at the University of Michigan.

Panelists are AAFF tech "Eyes and Ears," Jacob Barerras, Tish Stringer, and Camilo Gonzalez. They attend the in person festival as program spotters who communicate with the theater projectionists. They are trained projectionists who hold teaching and tech positions at UC Boulder, Rice U, and Aurora Picture Show, respectively.

Sun 2pm

## ***Maybe You're a Peach Tree Maybe***

Sholeh Asgary, Heather Kapplow  
California / Massachusetts  
2021

**Runtime:** 45

**Description:** An ongoing, audience-participatory exploration using prompts, and immersion in sense and process within the context of video-telephonic

gatherings to disambiguate image from experience, making space for the unresolved. Lived social experience is indeterminate and has stuff—a sense of timing, nuances of body language, cultural norms—that doesn't encode into technologically mediated interactions. What's perceived as noise in digispace is often important information in physical life. Using strategies that bypass conventional communication so gesture, sound, and movement can transmit as it emerges from intuition, our exercises resist their interfaces of transmission, subverting technology's capacity to contain us. Modeling possibilities and buying time for things beyond current imagination to emerge, we remind ourselves that interfaces can be adapted, broken down, changed if their limitations are made visible.

**Bio:** Sholeh Asgary is an Iranian-born interdisciplinary sound artist who is based in California. Heather Kapplow is a self-trained conceptual artist based in Massachusetts. Asgary and Kapplow work together from opposite sides of the US through the very technologies that they taunt and tease with their work. It's downright cruel.

Sun 3pm

## ***Behind The Scenes with Negativland and SUE-C***

Jennifer Bennett, Mark Hosler, Jon Leidecker, Buddy Runyan, Kevin Slagle, Sue Slagle (SUE-C)

**Runtime:** 60

**Description:** Join legendary sound collage group **Negativland** and legendary live cinema artist **SUE-C** for a unique behind the scenes look at how they are able to join forces and create performances such as *IT'S NORMAL FOR SOME THINGS TO COME TO YOUR ATTENTION*, that will be streaming during opening night of the Festival. The group will walk participants through different aspects of their own unique processes.

This program has been made possible with support from Arts Midwest

# TUESDAY 3/23

## Films in Competition 1 5:30pm

### ***The Long Fall***

Cade Mirabitor  
Detroit, Michigan  
2021

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Bodies and objects chaotically collide in a small house as it plummets down a deep hole. Created using Valve's 2004 Machinima game Garry's Mod during COVID-19 self-isolation.

### ***Teatro Principal***

Bryan Konefsky  
Camagüey, Cuba  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A portrait of the Teatro Principal in Camagüey, Cuba. In making this film I thought about Conchita (the house manager of the theatre) and how maternal and nurturing her chair-folding gesture was. Thinking now, I hope there is a thread of empathy embedded in the film—empathy for all the many, many theaters around the globe that are now closed due to COVID-19.

### ***Usambara Violet***

Aman Wadhan  
Budapest, Hungary  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

#### **World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Some potted plants, odd hours of wakefulness, and the view from my window. A heliotropic film from the lockdown in Budapest.

### ***In the Hands of Puppets***

Sarah & Charles  
Brussels, Belgium

2020

**Runtime:** 10

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A hand puppet has a conversation with several artificial identities about their feelings. This short animation by artist duo Sarah & Charles is based on interviews with patients and care providers at a psychosocial hospital.

### **Kim Gordon: *Earthquake***

Loretta Fahrenholz, TRLLM (Jak Ritger, K8 Howl)  
Los Angeles, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** *Earthquake* contemplates mass surveillance in the modern age with legendary musician Kim Gordon in a music video for her debut solo album *No Home Record*. *Earthquake* was shot from the eye of a surveillance camera, which gradually devours the exterior world and ejects a pixelated palette of digital shapes, graphical measurements, and heat signatures onto the screen.

### ***Lumen***

Sarah Seené  
Montreal, Quebec  
2019

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** *Lumen* (meaning "light" in Latin) is a sensorial film shot in Super 8 that paints a portrait of an adolescent with albinism. The hypersensitivity that this genetic condition engenders and the lack of pigmentation in her skin and eyes lend her an extraordinary aura. This film echoes a series of photographs entitled *Fovea*, which takes as its subject visually impaired young people.

### ***Encounters in Light***

Devin Jie Allen  
San Francisco & Petaluma, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 21

**Synopsis:** Lawrence Jordan and Joanna McClure have extensive bodies of work between them. The film interweaves McClure's poetry, Jordan's films, personal interviews, and emotive imagery to produce a sensory engagement with a long-lasting friendship and artistic practice. An understanding of mortality is ever-present and the film lets that feeling permeate throughout.

**Queen of Dots**

Michael Lyons  
Kyoto, Japan  
2020

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** *The Queen of Dots* is also a queen of Instagram and Tumblr. Completed 02022020. Two minutes and two seconds. Love forever.

**Valpi**

Richard Tuohy, Dianna Barrie  
Valparaiso, Chile / Victoria & Daylesford, Australia  
2019

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** A city of brick, tin, and board, rent by internal tectonics and sliding into the sea. (Note: this film can be viewed in 3D with the Pulfrich effect by tilting a pair of sunglasses so they only cover one eye)

**Stunting Cunts**

Gina Kamentsky  
Somerville, Massachusetts  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Go ahead and torture yourself, if that's what you want.

## Films in Competition 2

### 7:30pm

**Ser Feliz No Vão / Happy In The Gap**

Lucas H. Rossi dos Santos  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
2020

**Runtime:** 12

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A Black essay on trains, beaches, and occupying spaces.

**Psychic Meat**

Stephen Wardell  
Iowa City, Iowa  
2020

**Runtime:** 10

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** This is a handmade diary film about surgery, my dad's heart, and how a past conflict between him and me is embedded in a media network of industrial

agriculture. Salt crystals dried on film, coupon dye transfers, and digital video try to approximate the psychically connected nature of violence. In turn, these formal elements question the nature of digital tangibility and preservation.

**Mercury's Retrograde**

Zohar Dvir  
London, England  
2020

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** A millennial is looking for her Magic 8 Ball inside her unconsciousness.

**Another Horizon**

Stephanie M. Barber  
Baltimore, Maryland  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** The horizon, where the sky and the earth meet, is always elsewhere, is a promised place where these two elements come together. A metaphor, an orienting, a promise of transition, change, transcendence. A place where the corporeal and spiritual meet, or are cleaved apart. Here, the space between narrative and documentary, fact and fiction, is literally scratched between two voices.

**-force-**

Jennie MaryTai Liu, Simon Liu  
Hong Kong / United States  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** "Placid views of Hong Kong merge with dizzying, semi-abstract digital animations: avatars in a parable about control. A mesmerizing, menacing voice-over—part body politic regulator, part cyberpunk travel guide—promises order, accountability, and satisfaction, and threatens trouble, polarization, and tears. A fire has been started, movement has reached multiple points of no return." –NYFF

**I'm Free Now, You Are Free**

Ash Goh Hua  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
2020

**Runtime:** 15

**Synopsis:** When Mike Africa, Jr. was born in prison, he spent just three days with his mother Debbie Africa, a formerly incarcerated political prisoner of the MOVE 9, before prison guards wrenched him away. They spent

the next 40 years struggling for freedom and for each other. *I'm Free Now, You Are Free* reflects on their reunion and meditates on Black family preservation as resistance against state violence.

***Eidolon***

Mike Rollo

Regina, Saskatchewan / Mount Forest, Ontario

2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** The seer passes beneath branches, crosses fields, observes the quiet corners of creation. Bright and dark take turns showing their faces, a two-sided phantasm, one energy shape-shifting through time. The seer makes note, gleans eidolons.

***BUTTERFLY BIRTH BED***

Virginia Lee Montgomery

Houston, Texas

2020

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** *BUTTERFLY BIRTH BED* is a metaphysical art film about hope. Inspired by the butterfly effect—the philosophical idea that small change can manifest big change, the film shows the ethereal emergence of live butterflies over an image of a sleeping storm. Via symbolism and an elemental soundscape, the film is a surreal incantation for hope.

# WEDNESDAY

## 3/24

### Juror Presentation: Sheri Wills *What Does Light Remember?* 1:30pm | Free

As a small child, looking at the stars, Sheri Wills wondered: if light from a star takes so long to get here, what does it remember of its journey? How is it changed by its travel? Where does light go, after it can no longer be seen? Questions about the material nature of captured light, in terms of its capacity to hold memories and illuminate small experiences, are central to Wills's experimental film work. In this program, the physical characteristics of time-based media become a framework for understanding human experience. Wills works with the material qualities of analog film, audio, and digital media. This is combined with historic and contemporary research about how the human visual and auditory systems operate, to examine the gaps between what is measurable in the physical world and what we perceive as experience. Just as peripheral vision is essential to survival, it is by paying attention to the gaps, the margins, and the in-between personal moments that we might gain a fuller understanding of others and of our relationship to what lies outside our immediate perception.

**Box Series** is a series of single-channel videos with sound, comprised of a series of chapters that explore the peripheries of perception, space, and time. While *Scene Box* investigates the idea of the landscape in a box, *Abound Box* tests the film frame as a box for the margins of experience. *Nostos (Nostalgia)* conflates the gap between time and place, while *Camera Obscura* shifts where one should look for meaning—from center to edges. Sounds seep from one piece to another, drawing connections between the works. Like print-through, which happens when magnetic audiotape is wound too tightly, thoughts, memories,

feelings, and ideas transfer from one layer of time to another.

Films included:

#### **Scene Box**

New York City, New York  
2011

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** *Scene Box* explores the landscape in a box: dioramas, view-masters, and scenes from the car window, all contained within the box of the film frame.

#### **Abound Box**

New York City, New York  
2015

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** Shot on Super 8 and combined with photograms, this abstract piece explores the film frame as a box for things that live within the margins of experience. Small moments, soon to be placed on a crowded shelf, impossible to find again. The sound is adapted from recordings from the University of California, Santa Barbara Cylinder Audio Archive.

#### **Nostos (Nostalgia) (excerpt)**

New York City, New York  
1996

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** With special thanks to Lia Alexopoulos, Alex Papadopoulos, and Daniel Taylor. "O Caritas" by Cat Stevens.

#### **Camera Obscura**

New York City, New York  
2019

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** This short experimental film explores improbable chances, the direction of time, a fragility of feeling, and the nature of the universe—as understood within and outside the confines of the Super 8 film frame. Recorded voices are taken from vintage answering machines from Richman films and Leonard Susskind from "Boltzmann and the Arrow of Time."

**Photogram Films** For the past twenty years, I have been making photogram films, by laying objects on unexposed film and flashing it with light. I am primarily interested in the relationship between the directness of the object—the trace it leaves on film—and the resulting image, which is barely recognizable. These

works speak to a conflation of memory and the present, the physicality of the object and its seemingly abstract imprint. Light is physical material, while the play of light and shadows creates an illusion of reality—you can pass your hand right through it. Special thanks to Joel Schlemowitz.

Films Included:

***Fever***

New York City, New York  
2000

**Runtime:** 3

***Anodyne***

New York City, New York  
2002

**Runtime:** 4

***Acetylene***

New York City, New York  
2002

**Runtime:** 4

***Aviary***

New York City, New York  
2006

**Runtime:** 4

***Assembly***

New York City, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** Featuring photo collages and drawings by John Schettino, this four-channel piece combines layers of light into a layered panorama—a landscape of glimpsed scenes and inscribed traces. The unfolding imagery is fugitive but insistent and suggests moments that have been lost, erased, or buried, and also suggests the urgency of memory in the face of disappearance. The imagery is constantly in play; as soon as the bigger picture becomes visible it seems to slip away. In the soundtrack, (inspired by Alvin Lucier's *I Am Sitting in a Room*), the generational decay becomes stronger than the original melody. This piece is as much about what gets lost through re-telling as it is about the ever-lingering echo of past voices that constantly surrounds us in what may sound like white noise.

***H'un (Lacerations)***

New York City, New York  
2004

**Runtime:** 23

**Synopsis:** Based on Bright Sheng's modern orchestral composition of the same name, *H'un (Lacerations)* finds Wills incorporating representational elements, combined with her signature photograms and abstract images. In Sheng's 23-minute piece, which is far more extroverted than the sound in Wills's previous films, she found an opportunity to break out of her typical styles, using everyday objects like a shoe or a cracker to illustrate the film noir-ish score with a touch of humor. Music composed by Bright Sheng, performed by the New York Chamber Orchestra, Gerard Schwarz, conducting.

## Films in Competition 3

### 3:30pm

***One Image, Two Acts***

Sanaz Sohrabi  
Montreal, Quebec / Berlin, Germany / Chicago, Illinois / Tehran, Iran  
2020

**Runtime:** 45

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *One Image, Two Acts* examines the photographic archives of British Petroleum during its operations in Iran, unraveling BP's widespread construction of cinemas in the oil towns of Iran. The film is a coalescence of infrastructures, images, and archives of oil wherein cinematic time and geological time mobilize different sites, temporalities, and numerous material modalities in the colonial episteme.

***ROTOR / Sonic Body***

NO1 (Peter Kutin, Patrik Lechner, Mathias Lenz)  
Vienna, Austria  
2020

**Runtime:** 13

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *ROTOR | Sonic Body* by artist collective NO1 is a physically intense perception cinema and phenomenological study. At visual and acoustic levels, the video confronts the fundamental categories of movement, time, and space.

**Schroon Lake**

Eryka Dellenbach  
Schroon Lake, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 14

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *Schroon Lake* adapts performance artists Matty Davis and Ben Gould's work *Carriage* to the nine-mile-long frozen lake in the Adirondacks. Shot on expired 16mm film over ice, the film offers a gritty intimacy and sightline of the unstable space between masculinities refracted through the winter and mutually activated syndromes, perceived and rearranged through a queer, female gaze.

**Circular**

Páraic Mc Gloughlin  
Sligo, Ireland  
2019

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** A story about obsession and yearning for the infinite.

## Films in Competition 4

### 5:30pm

**Armour**

Sandro Aguilar  
Rimouski, Quebec / Lisbon, Portugal  
2020

**Runtime:** 30

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Hector's father was sick and died. His girlfriend left him for an older guy and went back to her parents' house taking their eleven-year-old son to meet his new dad. Hector was drunk-stiff. He happened to be wearing light-cavalry armor he borrowed from a paramedic he knew. There was a medieval party going on and the town was on fire.

**People Meeting in a Room**

Adam Lewis Jacob  
Glasgow, Scotland / Birmingham, England  
2019

**Runtime:** 18

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *People Meeting in a Room* reflects on collective filmmaking and workers' activism in the UK,

connecting the histories of activists and filmmakers associated with the Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre in the 1980s with a group of contemporary collaborators. The contributors interpret archival films and collective actions through animation, performance, and conversation.

**Expo Film (this film is my memory)**

Penny McCann  
Ottawa, Ontario  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Using anonymous home movie footage of Expo 67 in Montreal, the artist sets out to recreate a memory that perhaps never existed. Celluloid manipulation and sound decay techniques coalesce to transform a mythic landscape into a sublime expanse of disintegrated memory.

**So Many Ideas Impossible To Do All**

Mark Street, Barbara Hammer  
San Francisco, California / New York, New York  
2019

**Runtime:** 11

**Synopsis:** A year before her death, Barbara Hammer asked me to work on a project she'd envisioned based on her correspondence (1973–85) with Jane Brakhage. She also gave me outtakes from her 1974 film *Jane Brakhage* and told me to let the project take me wherever it led. What emerges is both a portrait of Barbara as a brave and vibrant artist and a complex and nuanced long-distance friendship.

**My Favorite Object**

Meredith Moore  
Baltimore, Maryland  
2019

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** "Any object, intensely regarded, may be a gate of access to the incorruptible eon of the gods." – James Joyce

## Films in Competition 5

### 7:30pm

#### ***Piz Regolith***

Yannick Mosimann  
Bern, Switzerland  
2020

**Runtime:** 20

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A postmodern Swiss-Tyrolean ensemble ventures into remote mountainous regions, embracing the sonorous variety of local vernaculars. A poetic road movie with stunning shots and an emphatic approach to a new alpine aesthetics.

#### ***Heat Wave Hallucination***

Jil Guyon  
New York City, New York  
2018

**Runtime:** 1

**Synopsis:** *Heat Wave Hallucination* is a kaleidoscopic self-portrait that transports the viewer into a psychedelic world of vibrant colors and hypnotic sound.

#### ***Displacement***

Maxime Corbeil-Perron  
Montreal, Quebec  
2019

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** An expressionist composition exploring illusion, fear, and wonder, through flickering stop-motion animation, electroacoustic music, and analogue video synthesis.

#### ***Reminiscences of 15 musicians in Beirut attempting a re-imagination of the Egyptian classic Ya Garat Al Wadi***

Charles-André Coderre  
Beirut, Lebanon / Montreal, Quebec  
2021

**Runtime:** 13

#### **World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** “Ya Garat Al Wadi” is a popular piece of Egyptian music composed by the legendary Mohammad Abdel Wahab and written by the poet Ahmad Shawqi in 1928. More than 90 years later, this film documents an orchestra of 15 musicians, formed by the initiative of Radwan Ghazi Moumneh (of

Jerusalem In My Heart), over the period of five days in Beirut to once again reinterpret this great classic of Arab music.

#### ***Venus Rising***

Colleen Keough  
Amherst, Massachusetts  
2020

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** A chant to the moon, ritualizing the crumbling effigies of patriarchy, opens the first scene of *Venus Rising*. A woman is seen summoning new life as she dances in a cloud of microbes. What is hidden becomes visible as her rhythmic and undulating body conjures natural forces. Electromagnetic phenomena cut through the atmosphere; a planetary awakening is taking place and now must be followed through.

#### ***The Pluriverse-Conjunction***

Kit Young, Allen Moore  
*live cinema performance*  
California  
2021

**Runtime:** 15

**Description:** How can we reinforce the circular, pluralistic, feedback-driven nature of environmental symbiotic relationships and oppose the linear, anthropocentric modes espoused by neoliberal capitalism? What does joy look like in a time of environmental, economic, and social collapse? What light do academic theories like enactivism, posthumanism, actor-network theory, and decolonial theory shed on what it feels like to live in the world? Given our collective history, how might expressions of national grief manifest?

# THURSDAY 3/25

## Juror Presentation: Lynn Loo *Conversations: Light, Color, Movement* 1:30pm | Free

This selected program of my work focuses on light and color through the medium of film and performance. Using a variety of processes, light, and color have been captured, manipulated, and projected. Each work originated on 16mm film and was performed live using two or more 16mm projectors. The performances have since been reworked into the digital forms that we will see here. I have also included some documentary material in the program to demonstrate the analog processes used. *Conversations*, a new single-screen digital video, has its world premiere at the 59th AAFF.

### **Lynn Loo: A Filmmaker at Work**

Ben Dowden  
Bristol, England  
2015

**Runtime:** 12

**Synopsis:** An invitation to exhibit in China led me to create a digital installation: *Fine Art Cinema*. One part of this installation was the documentary *A Filmmaker at Work*, directed and edited by videomaker Ben Dowden. It shows some of my working techniques used in making the film performances and was shot mostly in my London home.

### **End Rolls #2**

London, England  
2014

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** The original work *End Rolls* is a performance for three 16mm projectors. A color negative film was exposed directly to different sources of light (candlelight, stove, fire) with the intention of creating fluctuations of color throughout the reel. Three copies were made, each printed at a different level of light. In the performance, sounds are extracted through the lens of each projector using light-sensor microphones. Since mechanical film projectors don't

run entirely in sync, the three films play together in a dance—echoes of movements and sounds—to which I make further changes in performance by working with the projector controls. *End Rolls #2* is a digital adaptation, for two fixed screens, that was made for a program at Arnolfini, Bristol.

### **Autumn Fog**

London, England  
2010

**Runtime:** 12

**Synopsis:** Changes in the autumn colors in my garden were filmed on a day of gentle breezes. I captured close-ups of the dramatic reds, oranges, and greens of the foliage with their shadows moving in this environment of light wind. The original piece is presented as a two-projector performance, one showing negative film and the other a positive print of the same film. The two images are superimposed. Working with filters and hands as masks, I perform a color play between the two worlds of positive and negative color. In this documentation version by Ben screened here, made with two cameras, one half of the screen shows the film performance while the other half shows me performing with the projectors. In 2019, the live performance of *Autumn Fog* was used as the focus of a study in the documentation and transmission of ephemeral artworks as part of a gallery exhibition *The Stand-In Project* with film artist and archivist Louise Curham of Canberra, Australia. This reenactment archival project is ongoing.

### **Washi MM**

London, England  
2017

**Runtime:** 15

**Synopsis:** A video documentation of a live performance at LUX in London, 2017. In 2003, I saw *Drawings for Expanding Permutation* (1969) by the UK artist Mary Martin at a gallery in London. Paul Martin, Mary Martin's son, kindly gave me a book with pictures of her drawings that I constantly refer to for my *Washi* Series. This is a set of films and performances, made in response to Martin's work, that uses the patterned colors of adhesive Japanese washi tape applied directly to clear 16mm film. These patterns are also responsible for the optical soundtracks of the films. In *Washi MM* three 16mm projectors are used as live instruments of performance to explore rhythmic patterns of color and sound created by the overlays of washi tape.

**Conversations**

London, England  
2021–

**Runtime:** 20

**Synopsis:** *Conversations* explores the colors of the landscape through the palette of digital color, and is a reconnection with my past narrative films. A mix of home videos, captured sounds, and unpublished films are assembled here to make a digital mural. As the date suggests, I have no plan yet to end the work.

## Films in Competition 6

### 3:30pm

***A deal with god***

Katharine Fry  
London, England  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *A deal with god* traces the progress and retreat of illness across Fry's frail body, shot weeks after her discharge from hospital with COVID-19. She manifests the unseen progress of infection through a sequence of flowers and a soundtrack of deteriorating breaths, while a morphing blue hospital background simultaneously reflects her weakening lungs and the hallucinatory effects of isolation.

***Anonymous***

Steven Subotnick  
Providence, Rhode Island  
2020

**Runtime:** 5

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** No one knew him.

***Mt Albban the attrition of time***

Ebrahim Mirmalek  
Imider, Morocco / Tingher, Iran  
2020

**Runtime:** 30

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** In 2011, villagers of Imider took over and shut down a water pipeline exploited by a major silver mine on top of Mt. Albban, in order to protect their underground water. For eight years, they have been residing there, with faces ravaged by time and wounds

still intact, resisting the passage of time, where time furrows like the eroding mountain and where the attrition of time is inevitable.

***Push This Button if You Begin to Panic***

Gabriel Böhmer  
Winchester, England  
2020

**Runtime:** 13

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Bartholomew Whisper went to the doctor today. There he met administrators keen on experimental surgery, and lonely MRI machines. At least the growing hole in his head was becoming quite beautiful.

***Alternative Facts / Hechos Alternativos***

Marina Santana De la Torre  
Mexico City, Mexico / Santa Clarita, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 1

**Synopsis:** A reflection on the phrase "alternative facts" used during a press conference on January 22, 2017.

***Electric Eye***

Steve Wood  
Chicago, Illinois  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Dry-transfer lettering and patterns, along with stickers, paint, and marker, were applied to clear 16mm film, extending into the optical audio area of the picture. The footage was transferred three ways and edited into musical arrangements with each frame of a picture accompanied by the sound it produced in the projector. The result is a synchronous collage of visual music and its lo-fi audio soundtrack.

***Dream of Emma and Tony***

Natalia Rocafuerte  
Ann Arbor, Michigan  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** What if we watched our dreams the way we watched TV? Natalia Rocafuerte guides you through her dream from September 2020 through found footage, home movies, and lo-fi video. Inspired by the flippant way we surf television, Rocafuerte engages

media aesthetics to entrance a viewer into the surreal world of dreams.

**Material Bodies**

Dorothy Allen-Pickard

London, England

2020

**Runtime:** 4

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Through interweaving dance and dialogue, *Material Bodies* is a sensual and cinematic look at the relationship between amputees and their limbs. This visceral and colorful short film explores how a prosthetic leg can be more like a piece of jewelry, a dance companion, or a part of you.

## Films in Competition 7

### 5:30pm

**Cloud Forest**

Eliane Esther Bots

The Hague, Netherlands

2019

**Runtime:** 18

**Synopsis:** A fairytale-like film in which five girls take us on a journey through their parents' experiences of the war in the former Yugoslavia. A war which the girls haven't physically experienced themselves. The narratives are a combination of facts and imaginations, memories and impressions, transferred from the parents to their daughters. It is in the shadows where these narratives can unfold.

**The Initiation Well**

Chris Kennedy

Toronto, Ontario

2020

**Runtime:** 4

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** The Quinta da Regaleira in Sintra, Portugal is a huge estate that has two wells for performing initiation ceremonies built into the ground. This film takes us into one of them. Sound design by Samuel La France.

**Dialectic**

Jason F Bernagozzi

Clarence, Missouri

2019

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** In a space between past and present, nostalgia and jargon, signal and image, *Dialectic* is an experimental single-channel video that explores an old 1950s gas station museum in rural Missouri. The vintage automobiles and faded mannequins are imbued with the myth of American exceptionalism and cannot stand against the condition of their encoded contradiction.

**Cause of Death**

Jyoti Mistry

South Africa / Austria

2020

**Runtime:** 20

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** The file card of an anonymous autopsy report documents violent attacks as the "cause of death." Jyoti Mistry constructs five miniature vignettes to the rhythm of evocative spoken word poetry by Napo Masheane, accompanied by a collection of archival bits and pieces from the Eye Filmmuseum — ethnographic film footage, chorus-line films, and physical culture films. Femicide, witch hunts, stonings.

**I've Been Afraid**

Cecelia Condit

San Miguel, Mexico / Milwaukee, Wisconsin

2020

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** *I've Been Afraid* is about the fear of aggression and those paralyzing forces that allow the body to accept violence. Music by Isaac Sherman.

**uchronia, no.1**

Kamila Kuc

London, England

2020

**Runtime:** 4

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Past time, suspended time. Macro vision serves as a tool to experience what has long been known. At once disturbing and nostalgic, the soundtrack lures the viewer into a claustrophobic and apocalyptic space as we have to find new ways of being with the world. Filmed and recorded during the COVID-19 lockdown in Waterlow Park, London, and Guilden Morden, Cambridgeshire.

***Hecate's Palladio***

Jessica Mensch

live cinema performance

Quebec

2021

**Runtime:** 10

**Description:** Hecate, the three-headed Greek goddess of sorcery, magic, and the keeper of the threshold that separates the living from the dead, emerges from her watery passageways to dance. Slowly, the stage comes to life and joins Hecate in this humorous and ritualistic performance. Set to an original score, *Hecate's Palladio* experiments with live video, green-screen compositing, video projection mapping, and dance in this new work.

## Films in Competition 8: Out Night

### 7:30pm

***Silver Femme***

Nico Reano, Jimena Lucero

New York City, New York

2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** *Silver Femme* is a digital ode to the moon; a poetic film that envisions a future and space where trans people are safe. The eponymous figure's shifting femininity serves as a visual focal point for the narrator's lamentations on love and the possibilities trans women and femmes hold.

***Astonishing Horizon!***

Mar Sudac

Los Angeles, California

2020

**Runtime:** 11

**Synopsis:** Bikers protest for more optimism in a tilted Los Angeles.

***Tamou***

Tom Prezman, Tzor Edery

Jerusalem, Israel

2019

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** Tamou is a Jewish housewife in mid-twentieth century Morocco, and a closeted trans

man. The film explores gender and sexuality inside a patriarchal society from a personal perspective and follows Tamou as he chases the specter of whom he longs to be.

***Mother Bunker***

George Metaxas

Los Angeles, California / Sydney, Australia

2020

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** Set during the robot-human war, a military robot—Mother—begins to self-express by dressing in human drag and performing to a robot army. The short film follows Mother, stationed in an underground bunker, as she prepares, performs, and reflects on her individuality.

***Breath Control***

Carson Parish

New York City, New York

2020

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** Heartbreak, shibari, and the ghost of a lover form a queer tale of redemption set in the woods.

***Danni the Champion***

Laura Cameron-Lewis

Stornoway, Scotland

2020

**Runtime:** 10

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Young Danni isn't like the other girls in town. She'd rather be watching drag races down at the airport or tearing about behind the wheel of her brother's car, Lynyrd Skynyrd tunes blasting on the stereo. Showing the audience her life on the island and how stifled she feels by her passive-aggressive parents, she dreams of hitting the road and showing everyone what she can do.

***Safe Among Stars***

Jess X. Snow

New York City, New York

2019

**Runtime:** 10

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** After surviving sexual trauma, a queer Chinese-American woman struggles to tell her immigrant mother why she left school. As she disassociates, she develops the ability to teleport and must learn how to control her powers.

***Blue Lips (Lèvres bleues)***

Philippe Hamelin  
Montreal, Quebec  
2020

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** In making *Blue Lips*, Philippe Hamelin was interested in using computer-generated imagery as a reconstructive tool—in this case using it to reconstruct a lover's memory. The story comes from a collection of accounts told by strangers who the artist met on dating sites in 2008.

# FRIDAY 3/26

## Juror Presentation: Thorsten Fleisch

### *Sensual Destruction: Disintegrating the Frantic Silence of the Universe*

1:30pm | Free

A cinematic journey and investigation into materials, surfaces, perception, and higher states of consciousness. With childlike curiosity and wonder, source materials like high voltage, skin, blood, crystals, and the camera itself are picked apart and recontextualized. Thorsten Fleisch creates hypnotic films that comfortably walk a fine line between pure abstraction, destruction, suggestion, and observation.

#### ***Super 8 Self Portrait***

Frankfurt, Germany  
1998

**Runtime:** 1

**Synopsis:** Me in my room in Frankfurt, ca. 1997. I used to throw knives at the painting in the background.

#### ***Blutrausch (Bloodlust)***

Frankfurt, Germany  
1998

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** An attempt to constitute a human/machine dialogue. It shows the filmmaker's blood as seen/heard with the eyes/ears of the machine, which is a film projector with optical sound.

#### ***Hautnah (Skinflick)***

Bonn, Germany  
2002

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** Three different levels of skin working with film/film working with skin: fingerprints on clear leader, carefully arranged successive skin prints, snapshots of light-painted skin becoming leather. The images are accompanied by soundscapes using aural skin scans performed by the cartridge of a record player.

#### ***Superbitmapping***

Frankfurt, Germany  
2000

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** A projected text is going through two transformations in terms of presenting information. At first one is able to understand its meaning. However, in the second stage, the text has been transformed into digital language which can only be read by a computer. Finally, with the third level, the digital code has been used to convey a flicker effect. The text is now a mere physical sensation, devoid of intelligible contents.

#### ***Gestalt***

Bonn, Germany  
2003

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** Four-dimensional quaternions (fractals) are visualized by projecting them into three-dimensional space.

#### ***Dromosphere***

Berlin, Germany  
2010

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** A meditation on speed. The ephemeral phenomenon becomes palpable as a speed sculpture begins a relativity drive along space-time avenues.

#### ***Kamerazerfetzter (Camera Annihilator)***

Marburg, Germany  
1997

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** I destroy an old Super 8 camera for science's sake.

#### ***Wound Footage***

Berlin, Germany  
2009

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** The source material is a found footage Super 8 film. The visual carrier was attacked in a multitude of ways.

#### ***Womb Envy: All is Full of Blood***

Berlin, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** A musical excerpt from the feature film *Flesh City*.

**Picture Particles**

Berlin, Germany  
2014

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** Individual elements from a carrier of visual information have been isolated to construct alternative visual reagents.

**Kosmos**

Berlin, Germany  
2004

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** Through growing crystals directly on film, their mystical qualities shine straight to the screen. Unfiltered—only aided by light which gracefully breaks its rays into rich visual textures.

**Kampfschall: Nuklear Fanboy**

Berlin, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** A musical excerpt from the feature film *Flesh City*.

**Flexcam**

Frankfurt, Germany  
1998

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** Another investigation in camera destruction. This one is more meditative, as it was shot at 64 frames per second.

**X-Ray Camera**

Berlin, Germany  
2013

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** A commissioned piece for the project 100x100=900 (100 video artists to tell a century).

**Energie!**

Berlin, Germany  
2007

**Runtime:** 5

**Synopsis:** For *Energie!*, an uncontrolled high voltage discharge of 30,000 volts exposes multiple sheets of photographic paper, which are then arranged in time to create new visual systems of electron organization.

**Malende: Lightning For Life**

Berlin, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** A musical excerpt from the feature film *Flesh City*.

**Food Fight Berlin**

Berlin, Germany  
2007

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** A few impressions of the annual Berlin food fight, either in 2007 or 2008.

**Flex Action**

Frankfurt, Germany  
1998

**Runtime:** 1

**Synopsis:** Super 8 destruction orgy. Different information carriers are attacked

**Mustererkennung (Pattern Cognition)**

Berlin, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** "When you stare at a screen for long, the screen stares back at you."

## Films in Competition 9 3:30pm

**Honest Money**

Hannah Hummel  
Paris, France  
2020

**Runtime:** 19

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Koly, a textile worker from Mali, confuses his search for identity with his desire to marry a European woman. The film documents migrant housing estates in the Northeastern suburbs of Paris. They have been constructed since the late 1960s and recently underwent vast transformations in the course of the urban planning project, Grand Paris.

**Bad Mood**

Loris Giuseppe Nese  
Bologna, Italy / Salerno, Italy  
2020

**Runtime:** 12

**Synopsis:** The mother cares for seniors in their homes, where the ticking clock counts down the working day, between the frightening sounds of the heavy breathing that increase the fear of emptiness ...

***Night Reflection (IV)***

Benjamín Ellenberger  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
2020

**Runtime:** 5

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** "Light has no tongue but it is all eye." – John Donne. A series of short films about how the night immerses us in a world where the deepest thoughts emerge. Shot frame-by-frame with long exposure times and developed by hand before dawn.

***Sometimes a little Sin is good for the Soul***

Alex Beriault  
Toronto, Ontario  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** The film takes place within an architectural, painterly world. Interior structures, shapes, and colors form the unusual spaces within which three women are suspended. Their mobility remains bound to their surroundings, and time moves slower than the speed of life. A glowing red exit sign teases and perturbs its cold, taciturn surroundings, never pointing to a clear way out.

**(((((/\*)))))) aka *Echoes of the Volcano***

Charles Fairbanks, Saúl Kak  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
2019

**Runtime:** 18

**Synopsis:** This ethnographic excursion is a feast for the eyes paced by the quotidian chorus of sounds in a Chiapan village. Gradually, political themes arise. As it relates to the legacy of co-director Saúl Kak's refugeeed forebears, ((((((/\*)))))) aka *Echoes of the Volcano* gives voice to the Zoque struggle for Indigenous sovereignty, against the neoliberal state.

**13**

Shinya Isobe  
Yokohama, Japan  
2020

**Runtime:** 10

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** This film was shot using continued interval shooting and multiple exposures of the setting sun from the same position and same angle on 16mm film. The shooting period extends to five years. No digital copy-paste was used—the sun that appears was shot on film. This is both a record of the days and a creative act of personal image, neither of which can be determined. It is just like painting a picture.

## Films in Competition 10

### 5:30pm

***Hit and Run***

Hannah Brewerton  
London, England  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** Things get surreal when the Brits play baseball. A satirical film about modern British politics and tactics of distraction.

***World (Աշխարհ)***

Christine Haroutounian  
Vardenis, Armenia / United States  
2020

**Runtime:** 22

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** In the Armenian countryside, a young woman, Claudette, faces her mother's final days. As she navigates through grief, shame, and isolation, Claudette's existence blurs the material limits and spiritual possibilities of life.

***The Truth About Hastings***

Dan S  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
2021

**Runtime:** 10

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A hybrid documentary exposé about the dark side of Hastings, Nebraska. Watch Marjorie's 93rd birthday descend into an intergalactic psychedelic nightmare.

***Spontaneous***

Lori Felker  
Chicago, Illinois  
2020

**Runtime:** 14

**Synopsis:** You never know when someone is miscarrying; it could be happening right next to you.

***Sun Dog***

Dorian Jaspers  
Brussels, Belgium  
2020

**Runtime:** 20

**Synopsis:** Fedor is a young locksmith in Murmansk, a frozen city in the obscurity of the Russian Arctic. Client after client, he roams through the alleys of concrete, animated by a fantasy that isolates him from the city and its population. His dreams corrode his relation to reality and open the door to a phantasmagoric universe; a second sun is rising above the Russian Arctic.

## Films in Competition 11: Animation 7:30pm

***Summer Summer***

Ruihong Tang  
Hangzhou, China  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** This is a secret diary of summer. The entire film is directly animated on time-stamped film, and the improvised painting traces are infinitely magnified through projection and scanning. *Summertime* collects the emotions that belong to each person's unique taste and ferments them into small universes, and will eventually disappear with the touch of greenness at the last moment of summer.

***Just a Guy***

Shoko Hara  
Stuttgart, Germany  
2020

**Runtime:** 15

**Synopsis:** *Just a Guy* is an animated documentary film about love. Three women share glimpses of their affection, attraction, and relationship with Richard Ramirez—a serial killer and rapist they contacted after his conviction in the 1980s. Through their perspective,

we revisit exchanged letters and emotions that are as obsessive as they are hauntingly familiar.

***Lessons From My Nightmares***

Kira Bursky  
Asheville, North Carolina  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** *Lessons From My Nightmares* is a machine-learned film that follows the story of a girl dealing with insomnia due to compartmentalized thoughts and feelings. When she does sleep, she is haunted by nightmares.

***The Wind***

Miranda Javid  
Los Angeles, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** The rigidity of a historical fact rolls by like clouds, or maybe like cloud computing. Digital landscapes like desktops, trash cans, and cursors flatten the sensation of what tangibly remains: the invisible pleasure of wind on skin.

***Naked***

Kirill Khachaturov  
Korolev, Russia  
2019

**Runtime:** 15

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Somewhere in Eastern Europe due to an accident in a laboratory, the hero gains superpowers that he does not want. The hero does not want to be a superhero, to save the world from villains. He wants to live as before without changing anything. The situation is complicated by the fact that while he gains awareness of his power, it causes problems in his everyday life.

***Thank you***

Julian Gallese  
London, England  
2020

**Runtime:** 7

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A highly anticipated birthday is the talk of the town.

***Revolvykus***

Victor Orozco Ramirez

Mettlach, Germany / Mexico

2020

**Runtime:** 12

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Several years ago I immigrated to Germany. Here, I live in a small old house, which urgently needs modernization and that theoretically protects me from wind, rain, and cold.

***Dog's Field***

Michalina Musialik

Warsaw, Poland

2020

**Runtime:** 12

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Animals closed in a flat with a decomposing corpse of their owner try to survive. In this difficult situation, one of the dogs finds out that love for its owner is stronger than animal instinct.

***Eyes and Horns***

Chaerin Im

Hamburg, Germany / Los Angeles, California / South

Korea

2021

**Runtime:** 6

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Exploration of masculinity begins with the Minotaur, a mythical creature Picasso used to portray himself in his etching print series. The Minotaur goes through a violent struggle between being male and female. Finally, lines blur and boundaries of sexes disappear.

***Primavera***

Adrian Garcia Gomez

Brooklyn, New York

2020

**Runtime:** 5

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *Primavera* is a frenetic experimental animation that documents the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests as they intersect in springtime Brooklyn. Shot during isolation on a phone, the video explores the effects of imposed distance on touch and intimacy, the proximity of an invisible virus and invisible deaths, and the revolt against the racist, corrupt systems that commodify, exploit and render their most vulnerable citizens disposable

# SATURDAY 3/27

## Films in Competition 12: Almost All Ages (Ages 6+) 11am

### ***Cohabitat***

Kara Blake  
Montreal, Quebec  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** A fever dream interpretation of urban rewilding that imagines the home as host to a growing number of organisms, whether we're aware of it or not.

### ***First Light***

Amy Lee Ketchum, Ellen Boscov  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
2020

**Runtime:** 8

### **World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Rising from the sea monster of death, a young woman's ghost leads her grieving sister through the heart of darkness in search of light. Directed and animated by Amy Lee Ketchum; written and composed by Ellen Boscov.

### ***Things Floating in the Hudson***

Ellen Sampson  
New York City, New York  
2019

**Runtime:** 2

### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *Things Floating in the Hudson* follows the director's morning walk, pausing to look at the traces others have left behind.

### ***Beyond Noh***

Patrick Smith  
New York City, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** *Beyond Noh* rhythmically animates 3,475 individual masks from all over the world, beginning with the distinctive masks of the Japanese Noh theater and

continuing on a cultural journey through ritual, utility, deviance, and politics.

### ***Hitting My Head on the World***

Anna Vasof  
Vienna, Austria  
2019

**Runtime:** 13

### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Time and again physical gestures play a crucial role when traveling when our personal language is incapable of overcoming communication barriers and desires cannot be put into words. It is about reaching an understanding, how to identify with the world.

### ***Ka tatishtipatakanit (Ethereal)***

Isabelle Kanapé  
Pessamit, Quebec  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** A man spreads rumors about a local elder. To be forgiven, he will be put to the test. *Ka tatishtipatakanit (Ethereal)* is a poetic lesson about respect.

### ***TIE***

Alexandra Ramires (Xá)  
Portugal / France  
2020

**Runtime:** 11

### **None Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Under a gloomy sun, two characters look for adaptation.

### ***3 Sons***

Ed Sayers  
London, England  
2019

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** A documentary comedy exploration of my dad, me, and my son, through golf and Super 8. Filmed on one roll of Super 8 with only in-camera edits.

### ***Gelbart: March of the Thinking Machines***

Adi Gelbart  
Berlin, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** By train, by car, by bike, or by sharks, the cats are coming!

## Films in Competition 13

### 3pm

#### ***The Last Name of John Cage***

Margaux Guillemard  
Zwolle, Netherlands  
2020

**Runtime:** 4

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** How much can one imagine, feel, and how many times can one gain trust and lose trust, within only four minutes and thirty-three seconds? Using as a starting point her desire to represent a certain kind of silence, the director plays with the spectator's need for reliability. "The Last Name of John Cage" acts as a still dialogue between a loud inner tension and the silent one all around.

#### ***Junkerhaus***

Karen Russo  
London, England / Lemgo, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 8

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *Junkerhaus* is shot in the residence of Karl Junker (1850–1912), who dedicated his life to building his house in Lemgo, Germany. Reflections, projections, and changes in light form abstract shapes which animate surfaces and structures, producing a psychological portrait that offers a new appreciation of architecture as mystical and visionary experience.

#### ***Collapsing Mies***

Claudia Larcher  
Vienna, Austria  
2020

**Runtime:** 7

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Artist Claudia Larcher animates photographs of works by the influential architect in her *Collapsing Mies* and thus renders a complex, multi-perspectival spatial structure while at the same time creating a minimalist abstract motion.

#### ***About A Home***

Daniel Chein, Elizabeth Lo  
Antioch, California  
2021

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** Precious Sarria and her family experienced housing insecurity for over two years. After transitioning into housing, they documented their lives to raise awareness for the rising homelessness in regions surrounding Silicon Valley.

#### ***...l'admirable profondeur, du jour à la folie;***

Jean-Baptiste Decavèle  
Paris, France / Oslo, Norway / Sicily & Florence, Italy  
2020

**Runtime:** 50

#### **United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Michael wakes up, his body is extremely painful; two years later, the injuries are still there. He is leafing through his sketchbooks and engravings. The time of this metempsychosis makes familiar faces reappear to him. Who is this woman reading a letter in a foreign language that echoes in his head? Who is this man in the mirror who sings of his memories in the distance?

## Films in Competition 14

### 5pm

#### ***retreat***

Joeri Verbesselt  
Brussels, Belgium  
2020

**Runtime:** 16

#### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A futuristic vision of a world on the brink of environmental meltdown, where a violent confrontation between the police and demonstrators, pollution and nature, is performed in a parallel reality.

#### ***Nothing to See Here***

David Opdyke  
New York City, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 6

#### **United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** An oops moment, some destruction, a conflicted mass of indecision, protest, and commentary. And, in the end, a loss.

***Daily Life Of Human***

Siavash Naghshbandi  
Tehran, Iran  
2019

**Runtime:** 7

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** The changing definition of human—AI becoming human, humans turning into AI, and capitalism and its role in the development and use of these technologies. Telecommunication technologies as an example of how technology can become part of who we are as humans and the future visual and virtual representations of us.

***Self Portrait With Bag***

Dianna Barrie  
Daylesford, Australia  
2020

**Runtime:** 6

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A cameraless portrait of the artist. Super 8 cartridges placed inside a black cotton bag, the film advanced via a hand crank. The tiny gaps in the fabric weave make for dozens (hundreds? thousands?) of tiny pinholes.

***ici / here***

Sylvie Denet  
Aubervilliers, France  
2019

**Runtime:** 10

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Reflections of clouds in the water, a woman emerges from a puddle, a man waits, hesitates on the edge of a vacant lot. Characters appear and seem to search their way. Do they seek to recognize a place they have already crossed? At the mercy of a camera that turns on itself, the landscape changes with each passage.

***King of Sanwi***

Akosua Adoma Owusu  
The Bronx, New York  
2020

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** A spiritual sequel to Owusu's work *Pelourinho, They Don't Really Care About Us* (2019), exploring Michael Jackson's long affinity with the continent of Africa.

## Films in Competition 15 7pm

***#21xoxo***

Sine Özbilge, Imge Özbilge  
Belgium  
2019

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** A girl and her online search for love in times of social media, speed dating, cyberlove, hipster culture, and post-net attitudes.

***FragMANts***

NEOZOOM  
Dresden, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 6

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** In *FragMANts*, people worship their consumer goods like religious cult objects. The religion venerated here is that of capitalism, which reveals itself to be superficial and meaningless. The believers of this religion are only uprooted fragments of themselves.

***Mad Mieter***

M+M (Marc Weis, Martin de Mattia)  
Munich, Germany  
2019

**Runtime:** 6

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** In the 3D animated film *Mad Mieter*, the protagonist is a lonely praying mantis living in a bourgeois furnished apartment, where it comes to a cruel end after an initially delicate approach. The work is freely inspired by *Repulsion* by Roman Polanski.

***The Legend of Bryngolau***

Amy Daniel  
Aberystwyth, Wales  
2020

**Runtime:** 16

**Synopsis:** Rick is a wandering birdwatcher in search of a falcon, crossing the wilds of Wales and living off the land. As night falls over his camp, his search takes a strange turn.

***NSFW (angry yellow meat)***

Woohee Cho  
Los Angeles, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 3

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** *NSFW (angry yellow meat)* is a research-based art project where I took screenshots of dick pictures on Grindr and Jack'd, two gay dating apps, from 2018 to 2020. I collected them only if they sent pictures without asking or if there had not been any conversation between us. In this video piece, I opened their penises to speak and sing my words along with trap music. Unsolicited moments are turned into my art materials.

***A Watched Cunt Never Cums***

Emily Van Loan  
Boulder, Colorado, USA  
2019

**Runtime:** 3

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** An extended metaphor that likens the visual qualities of a pot of water coming to a boil to the experiential qualities of a woman coming to orgasm.

***KKUM***

Kang Min Kim  
Glendale, California  
2020

**Runtime:** 9

**Synopsis:** My mother's dreams have always been strong premonitions for important moments in my life. I rely on her dreams more than any religion.

***Times a God Zillion***

Natasha Beste  
Oxford, Michigan  
2020

**Runtime:** 10

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A short film surrounding messages from my mom from the afterlife, heroic-dosage psychedelic medicine rituals, and clearing spaces of shame, guilt, pain, and grief. What do you really want to keep in your house? Only keep what you really, really want. Clear the rest out.

***Broth of Vigour***

Daniel McIntyre  
Newmarket, Ontario  
2020

**Runtime:** 6

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** A different kind of bone broth. A boiling broth stewed from science fiction, competitive cooking shows, and the erotic recesses of the imagination, *Broth of Vigour* is a tonic for the body and mind.

***Dissolution Prologue (Extended Version)***

Siegfried A. Fruhauf  
Vienna, Austria  
2020

**Runtime:** 6

**United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** The central leitmotif investigated by Siegfried A. Fruhauf in his artistic works concerns the nature of film, its very essence. Here, this guiding principle leads to associated questions in terms of the medium's limitations and their dissolution; metaphorically, this concerns the idea of the curtain as emblematic of the cinematic and its veil of illusion that never conclusively closes...

# **SUNDAY 3/28**

## **Winners Programs**

The 59th Ann Arbor Film Festival closing events offer two screenings of films selected by festival jurors for recognition with awards this year.

### **Awards 1**

**4:30pm**

Announcement of the 58th AAFF awards, followed by a screening of awarded films.

### **Awards 2**

**6:30pm**

Additional awarded films from this year's festival.

# FEATURES IN COMPETITION

## ***Al Largo***

Anna Marziano  
Padoua, Italy / Berlin, Germany  
2020

**Runtime:** 61

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** Immersing us in a sea of words and images, *Al Largo* brings us into contact with the experience of suffering. Dissolving the polarity between egoism and altruism, taking care becomes a gesture which alone seems to resist in front of the excessive power of life.

## ***The Annotated Field Guide of Ulysses S. Grant***

Jim Finn  
United States  
2020

**Runtime:** 61

**Synopsis:** For four years in the 1860s, half of the United States was held hostage by an unrecognized white supremacist republic. Shot on 16mm in national military parks, swamps, forests, and the suburban sprawl across the former battlefields, the film follows General Grant's path liberating the southern United States. Part travelogue, part essay film, part landscape documentary, it moves from the Texas-Louisiana border to a prison island off the coast of New England. But instead of relying on actors, vintage photos, and the sounds of bullets and explosions, the battles are illustrated with the paper reenactments of hex-and-counter wargames and bubblegum cards from the hobbyist gamer subcultures that have sprung up around the Civil War. The sound and music are inspired by 1970s crime films to celebrate the destruction of the Confederacy with the synth jams they deserve.

## ***Instructions for Survival***

Yana Ugrehelidze  
North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany  
2021

**Runtime:** 72

**World Premiere**

**Synopsis:**

Alexandre is a transgender person who has lived with his girlfriend Marie for more than seven years. Because of the mark "female" in his passport and his trans identity, Alexandre cannot find a job and has to lead a secret life. The violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity brings the couple to the decision to leave their homeland. To afford this exodus, Marie signs a contract to be a surrogate mother.

## ***The Inheritance***

Ephraim Asili  
Troy, New York / Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
2020

**Runtime:** 100

**Synopsis:** Ephraim Asili's *The Inheritance* weaves histories of the West Philadelphia-based MOVE Organization, the Black Arts Movement, and dramatizations of the life of the filmmaker when he was a member of a Black activist collective. Centering on what Asili describes as a "speculative reenactment" of his time in a West Philadelphia collective, the actors' scripted lives on set are entwined with cameos by MOVE members Debbie Africa, Mike Africa Sr., and Mike Africa Jr., as well as poet-activists Sonia Sanchez and Ursula Rucker.

## ***Iwianch, el Diablo Venado***

José Cardoso  
Taisha, Ecuador  
2020

**Runtime:** 91

**North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** An enigmatic presence haunts the depths of the Amazon rainforest, where an indigenous Achuar teenager has disappeared. During the search for the young man, secrets of the rainforest and Amazonian visions of life after death are touched, vanishing the documentary filmmaker's concepts of reality.

## ***Just a Movement***

Vincent Meessen  
Brussels, Belgium / France  
2021

**Runtime:** 110

### **North American Premiere**

**Synopsis:** In Senegal, the name Omar Blondin Diop evokes an unpunished state crime. In France, this name is associated with the Marxist militant featured in *La Chinoise*, a political futuristic movie by Jean-Luc Godard. Today in Dakar, Diop's brothers and close friends remember him while the local youth plays with its own destiny under the imperfect present of the China-Africa connection.

## ***A Machine to Live In***

Yoni Goldstein, Meredith Zielke, Sebastian Alvarez,  
Andrew Benz  
Brasilia, Brazil  
2020

**Runtime:** 120

**Synopsis:** A hive-like consciousness scans a space-age metropolis: an unstable landscape of mystical architecture and oneiric technology emerges. From this cosmic dream, the specter of totalitarianism takes form. *A Machine to Live In* is a sci-fi documentary about the utopian imaginary, set in the Brazilian hinterlands.

## ***małni—towards the ocean, towards the shore***

Sky Hopinka  
Washington / Oregon  
2020

**Runtime:** 80

**Synopsis:** This film follows Sweetwater Sahme and Jordan Mercier's wanderings through each of their worlds as they wonder through and contemplate the afterlife, rebirth, and the place in-between. Spoken mostly in Chinuk Wawa, their stories are departures from the Chinookan origin of death myth, with its distant beginning and circular shape.

## ***Purple Sea***

Amel Alzakout, Khaled Abdulwahed  
Berlin, Germany  
2020

**Runtime:** 67

**Synopsis:** "I see everything," she says as if it was a curse. Brilliant sunshine, clear blue skies. The sea is calm, framed by a piece of railing. A peaceful moment, if it weren't for the fact that the sea is standing upright, vertical, like a waterfall. A rush of images, twirling, upside down, jolting. People in the boat, in the water, screams, life jackets, emergency whistles. There's no horizon anymore, no sky, no up or down, only deepness and nothing to hold on to. Even time's flow comes to a halt, contracting into the brutal present. She is filming and speaking. To beat being tired, being cold, the fact that help isn't coming. To beat dying, just for something to remain.

## ***The Quoddy Fold***

Paulette Phillips  
West Quoddy, Nova Scotia  
2019

**Runtime:** 56

### **United States Premiere**

**Synopsis:** An abandoned settler-house, perched on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, is the subject of *The Quoddy Fold*. For the period of a year, Phillips engaged in an ontological dialogue with the disintegrating house. Progressing to a dramatic and inevitable conclusion, *The Quoddy Fold* contemplates dwelling, human detritus, and the nature of impermanence.

## ***THE VIEWING BOOTH***

Ra'anana Alexandrowicz  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
2019

**Runtime:** 71

### **None Premiere**

**Synopsis:** What are we actually seeing when we look at documentary images? To what degree do we believe our eyes, and what extrasensorial factors define our doubts and investment in what is visible? Minimalist in approach yet far-reaching in its application and consequence, *The Viewing Booth* forms a one-of-a-kind cinematic testimony to the psychology of the viewer in the digital era.

# SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## *Object (im)Permanence*

Mainstream media representations of trans people tend to rely on narrative and documentary forms that often tirelessly depict one-dimensional medical and social transition stories. Challenging this myopic vision, this program features an eclectic mix of experimental films made by trans, Two-Spirit, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming artists that offer aesthetically innovative meditations on intersections between art, politics, and embodiment. Curated by Andrew Robbins and Kai Tillman.

**Curator:** Andrew Robbins, Kai Tillman

**Bio:** Andrew Robbins (he/him) is based in Portland, Oregon. He is a film festival programmer, a guest curator with the Transgender Media Portal, and currently finishing a PhD in Media Studies at the University of Oregon. Writing a social history of the San Francisco Transgender Film Festival (SFTFF), which debuted in 1997, he considers in his research how punk and queer sensibilities have informed SFTFF's exhibition culture and investments in queer and trans liberation. Inspired by SFTFF's do-it-yourself approach to film exhibition, Andrew co-founded Rewire Film Festival in Oregon in 2019.

**Bio:** Kai Tillman (he/they) is a trans/genderqueer cinematographer, director, and audio engineer. They have used filmmaking to combine their love of storytelling, photography, and the acoustical world. Kai's films are often used to create awareness about specific issues and to promote respect for difference. They have been honored to be a selected participant in the Filmando en Cuba workshops with Abbas Kiarostami in 2016 and Werner Herzog in 2017. Their short films have been screened in over 30 film festivals internationally, including Locarno Film Festival, Outfest LA, Fringe Film Festival, and Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal.

### **Sight**

Thirza Cuthand (she/her)  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
2012

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Super 8 footage layered with Sharpie-marked lines and circles obscuring the image illustrates the story of the filmmaker's experience with temporary episodes of migraine-related blindness and her cousin's self-induced blindness later in life. Paralleling the experience of Blindness with Mental Illness, Cuthand deftly elucidates that any of us could lose any of our abilities at any time.

### **Pool Boy**

Lyle Kash (he/him)  
Los Angeles, California  
2016

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Two four-dimensional boys get hired to clean a pool. They take drugs instead.

### **HOLE**

Gil Goletski (they/them)  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
2018

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** Mo is an adult with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Mo spends a lot of time in their brain. Today, a hole started following them.

### **Making an Experimental Film with Lorin Murphy**

Christopher Carroll (he/him), Lorin Murphy (he/him)  
San Francisco, California  
2011

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** A studio visit with trans masculine experimental filmmaker Lorin Murphy at the Big Gay Warehouse in 2011. Lorin shows how he alters found film to create his multimedia collage work, including *Disaster Movie Trilogy*.

### **A Trans with a Movie Camera**

Frances Damian Arapia (she/her)  
Brooklyn, New York  
2018

**Runtime:** 14

**Synopsis:** A non-narrative cine-essay that collaboratively explores the potentials for trans feminine representation in film.

**Road Rash**

Chris Vargas (he/him)  
Los Angeles, California  
2003

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** *Road Rash* is a Super 8, bike vs. motorcycle, nerds vs. badasses showdown set in a desolate, post-apocalyptic downtown Los Angeles.

**All These Moments Will Be Lost in Time**

E Daley (they/them)  
Oakland, California  
2018

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** A found-footage collage dedicated to the late David Wojnarowicz, the artist who narrated my first year of hormonal, or “medical” transition. Wojnarowicz has been the voice most relevantly accompanying my own personal grief, my reckoning with queerness/queer-phobia, and my development as an artist exploring identity in my work.

**Soless**

Carman Spoto (she/her)  
Los Angeles, California  
2016

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** A transgender woman’s confused state of mind is being translated in a light/dark atmosphere. Almost no dialogue is needed to tell the story of how being on hormones can be an alien experience.

**RUN!**

Malic Amalya (he/him)  
Oakland, California  
2019

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** Shot at sites of nuclear development, detonation, industry, tourism, and activism, *RUN!* examines the ways that ideologies of war structure landscapes, community rituals, cinematic technology, entomology, pandemic management, and notions of LGBTQ liberation.

## BIPOC Experimental Animation

Carrie Hawks believes in the magic of animation. There are stories that cannot be filmed in real-time with the

camera, stories we don’t understand until days, years after they happen and are passed through generations. The artists in this program peer into layers of consciousness, create portraits without faces, detail the ways white supremacy attempts to oppress internally and externally, celebrate resistance to colonial forces, and present the tenderness of a personal archive (aka the voicemail). An escape from terror encapsulated via stop-motion puppetry. You’re invited to enjoy this experimental animation program of films crafted by people of the global majority, BIPOC folks. Curated by Carrie Hawks.

**Curator:** Carrie Hawks

**Bio:** Carrie Hawks confronts self-imposed and external assumptions about identity in order to promote healing, particularly in relation to Blackness, gender, and queer sexuality. They work in animation, drawing, collage, sculpture, and performance, often incorporating humor. Their film *black enuf\** was nominated for a New York Emmy, won Best Documentary Short at Trans Stellar Film Festival, was broadcast on American Public Television’s World Channel in 2019, and screened at over 40 festivals including Ann Arbor and BlackStar.

**World Within**

Sakshi Jain  
New York City, New York  
2019

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** *World Within* is a hand-drawn experimental short. A visual interpretation tying a thread between introspective poems by the artist’s late grandfather, father, and herself. The sparse and fragile movements explore the conflicts between society and inner self. It revolves around the chaos that comes with expectations and the attempts to bend and manipulate reality. How it interferes with the mind and affects the way we think. As the poems lead from ignorance to storm and settle on a path to peace, the narrow window expands, leaving space to grow.

**Yellow Fever**

Ng'endo Mukii  
Nairobi, Kenya  
2012

**Runtime:** 7

**Synopsis:** The idea of beauty has become globalized, creating homogenous aspirations, and distorting people’s self-image across the planet. In my film, I

focus on African women's self-image, through memories and interviews; using mixed media to describe this almost schizophrenic self-visualization that I and many others have grown up with.

**Day of Nose**

Atsushi Wada  
Japan  
2005

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** A haptic animation with comfortable noses. I wish every day was a day of nose.

**Rainbow Body**

Chitra Ganesh  
Brooklyn, New York  
2018

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** The title of this work refers to an elevated state of, or metaphor for, the consciousness transformation known as a rainbow body. Buddhist master Padmasambhava achieved this state in his union with Mandarava, a Tantric Buddhist spirit (dakini) and princess. Through study and physical connection, each played a key role in the other's enlightenment. The cave structure is elaborated upon and extensively built out, introducing an interior depth where the ultimate transformation happens. I wanted to work with a narrative structure of dreamlike density, moving the viewer through a succession of physical and psychic spaces. The animation begins with Mandarava's dream following her journey through the bardo, passageway between death and rebirth. The camera movement reconfigures the bardo in paintings adding greater space and depth. The work also combines line drawings, watercolors, and paintings with pictorial elements from archival sources. Developed and animated with The Studio NYC.

**Mom's Clothes**

Jordan Wong  
San Francisco, California  
2018

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** A nonfiction reflection on being out of the closet. As a queer person of color, it's taken me a long time to be as comfortable as I am through navigating forms of intimacy, gender, and self-worth. It doesn't always get better, but you're beautiful however you decide to present, including the choice of garments you decide to wear.

**Yene Fikir, Ethiopia (My Love, Ethiopia)**

Gabrielle Tesfaye  
Ethiopia / United States  
2019

**Runtime:** 15

**Synopsis:** During the time of the Red Terror war in 1970s Ethiopia, the country's political tyranny created a huge population of refugees searching for an escape. Based on a true story, *Yene Fikir, Ethiopia* (meaning "My Love, Ethiopia") follows the turbulent and mystical journey of a young girl searching for freedom after being separated from her family. As she embarks on a painful migration through the scorching desert, magical guardian angels are sent to aid her by a mysterious and ancient Goddess in the skies, holding the secret to heal her homeland. With the presence of her angels and the power of her magical krar, she discovers hidden powers within herself that she was unaware of before.

**How you Doin', Boy? Voicemails from Gran'pa**

William Caballero  
Los Angeles, California  
2015

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** My Puerto Rican grandfather has left me a ton of hilariously unanswered voicemails on my cell phone. I combined these authentic calls with 3D modeled/printed/hand-painted miniatures of him, in this short film that inspired the web-series, *Gran'pa Knows Best!*

**Four Faces of the Moon**

Amanda Strong  
Canada  
2016

**Runtime:** 13

**Synopsis:** *Four Faces of the Moon* is an animated short told in four chapters, exploring the reclamation of language and Nationhood and peeling back the layers of Canada's colonial history. This is a personal story told through the eyes of the director and writer Amanda Strong, as she connects the oral and written history of her family as well as the history of the Métis, Cree, and Anishinaabe People and their cultural link to the buffalo. Canada's extermination agenda on the buffalo isn't recorded as fervently as it was in the United States, yet the same tactics were used north of the border to control the original inhabitants of the land. This story seeks to uncover some of that history and establish the importance of cultural practice,

resistance, and language revival from a personal perspective. The moon is used as a symbol to mark the passage of each chapter. The moon holds great importance in Cree and Anishinaabe culture as a seasonal guide and a marker of change.

## ***Sylvanie Tendron: Everyday Obstacles***

In 2018, French videomaker Sylvanie Tendron was the first artist to undertake Vidéographe's research residency for Deaf artists, curators, and researchers. Vidéographe is an artist-run moving image center based in Montreal. During the course of her residency, the focus of Tendron's video research and performative actions was the relationship between audism and feminism. Tendron explores behaviors associated with language and communication. Drawing on her own daily experiences, she exposes, with humor and derision, the misunderstandings, obstacles, and absurd situations that can arise through encounters of difference. In her performance videos she tries to overcome almost farcical difficulties that lead to isolation or confinement, and in so doing illustrates numerous examples of situations in which we try to connect with others by adapting to their language.

**Curator:** Julie Tremble

**Bio:** Julie Tremble is an artist and cultural worker. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at galleries and festivals including Ludwig Museum, Fonderie Darling, Dazibao, VU, Galerie Joyce Yahouda, Mirage, Mapping, Festival du nouveau cinéma, Images Festival, and Le Festival International du Film sur l'Art. In 2013 Tremble was the recipient of the Conseil des arts et des Lettres du Québec (CALQ) award for best work in art and experimentation presented as part of the 31st Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois. Tremble has been involved within various Quebec and Canadian arts organizations. She is co-founder of HB magazine and has been Vidéographe's director since 2015.

### ***Entraves quotidiennes***

France 2006

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** This identity portrait shows through these little papers (obstructions): the deficiency of senses.

The thing that we do not see in a portrait of a physical identity. To that end, I staged myself, translated, tested, represented the photo booth on videotape. From this, several little montages are born, showing different situations for each, burlesque daily metaphors. I named this ensemble "entraves quotidiennes" (daily obstructions).

### ***Apertura***

France

2006

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Apertura in Spanish means "opening." This is an opening towards a foreign tongue, a corporal door, of words. We receive, we learn, we accumulate, we try, we do, we say, we get it wrong, we gorge, we regurgitate... The mouth is a passage of words, of sentences, of thoughts. But those words are said wrong, vomited by an overfull mouth, they are not my words, but your words that I try to claim as my own.

### ***Il n'y a pas plus de peuple digne que de culture digne***

France

2012

**Runtime:** 2

**Synopsis:** Sticking to the norm is stuffy and makes us lose our identity. The image darkens, the person darkens as well, then finally becomes "ugly" and victim of her artifices. Metaphoric work on norms and dictates that society is imposing on us.

### ***...Répète?!***

France

2014

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** Referencing the figure of the double, I attempt to demonstrate the misunderstandings in oral language that Deaf people can experience while trying very hard to lip-read when the mouth is obstructed, and wearing a hearing aid; I abandoned mine two years later. The idea of this work is to show just how distorted and misunderstood words can become. Words taken out of context, i.e. spoken on their own, are difficult for someone who cannot hear to guess; when they are spoken in a sentence, this frame of reference makes it easier. There is always some irritation when the word that hasn't been understood is repeated several times. It's annoying, and all the more so when it is repeated relentlessly. When a word is not understood, it is because certain syllables have not

been perceived. There is no need to shout—other solutions might help: writing or signing, for example. This is reminiscent of the speech therapy sessions that I attended for a large part of my childhood and adolescence—a laborious attempt to adapt to the world of the hearing around me. In a playful exercise at my own expense, I offer the viewer a humorous glimpse into the daily experience of Deaf people in the world of the hearing and the misunderstandings that take place.

***Le phonocentrisme, vous dite??***

Canada / France

2017

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** This work was done during the Deaf artists residency in Est-Nord-Est in Saint-Jean Port-Joli in Quebec set up by the collective SPiLL.Propagation. The theme of this residency was, “deconstruct of phonocentrism,” a concept developed and presented by Jolenta Lapiak, a Canadian Deaf artist. She aims at deconstructing to reconstruct it differently and more accurately as a Deaf person.

***vampire domestique***

Canada / France

2018

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** Welcome to the patriarchal society, where the woman hindered by her male demons lives her daily life without flinching.

***DrEAD***

France

2018

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** I’ve been wearing these dreads for 20 years. They carry the marks of the time passed during these 20 years, of what I lived, some joyful things and some less, like having been under someone’s influence, without me being aware of it at first until I choked and lost my confidence, my dignity. I wasn’t myself anymore like I was depossessed of my own self.

***Hommage à V. DESPENTES***

France

2018

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** The text states everything a woman must be and do according to a patriarchal society, which is quite contradictory. This text is to encourage and/or go

towards a certain emancipation of women. It followed the formation of French Sign Language translation, which is a new profession resulting from the recent emancipation of Deaf people in France (after the interdiction of signing for 100 years). I play with the codes of fidelity but not at all with the neutrality required by this job.

***Youhouuu...!!***

France

2019

**Runtime:** 4

**Synopsis:** A person arrives facing the camera, therefore facing the viewer. She says hello and tries in vain to talk, converse, communicate with her interlocutor, who mirrors the viewer. Although the viewer is passive, through this video performance, she can challenge herself and eventually relive moments when there was no opportunity to listen or speak to a person facing her. Why can’t this person finish her sentences? Does the difficulty of communication have to do with sex, given that this person is a woman? Is it to do with hierarchy (professional, domestic ...)? Is it down to individual character? Individual power? I ask myself these questions as an artist and refer them back to the viewer. On the other hand, to what extent will the character who plays the artist react? What is the artist’s role and what is the viewer’s? The viewer, who looks passively on, would have liked to interact with the artist. We want to hear her finish what she had begun to say, but it is impossible for her to express herself; she is interrupted, she ends up feeling shy about this impasse, flustered by the situation and finds a way to escape this monologue from which she is excluded. The situation that I have tried to convey here is universal. With my camera and this new form of performance video, I try to meet and connect with the other. This video can be watched without sound so that the viewer can focus on facial expressions.

***Est-ce que ça te dit ... ?***

France

2020

**Runtime:** 3

**Synopsis:** It is not always easy to say no. First, it’s about listening to ourselves, knowing what we want, and then affirming our choice, our position. Even when there is doubt when we don’t say yes, it’s no! Even when the no isn’t articulated. We should not have to negotiate. This performance video is a nuance of “no,” through the body, expressions, looks, emotions,

postures. In taking a number of different experiences, positive as well as negative, as a starting point, I put forward the idea that communication happens through language but also through small revealing gestures often made unconsciously. We transmit more than half of our messages through our actions, our expressions, and not our words. But are we listened to? Are we heard? Are we respected? Particularly, when we are a woman in a patriarchal society or a Deaf person in the world of the hearing. The type of communication that takes place first and foremost before the eyes, and through body language in general, can be seen as a weak way of communicating when there is a power dynamic. This brings to mind the abuse of power and consent. The artist looking at the camera, therefore, looks at the viewer and communicates directly with him. The passive viewer can only challenge himself with regards to his relationship with the other, or ignore this observation.

## CYCLE 0

The collective COUSIN was founded in 2018 by Alexandra Lazarowich, Adam Piron, Sky Hopinka, and Adam Khalil to provide support for Indigenous artists who expand traditional definitions and understanding of the moving image by experimenting with form and genre. To celebrate and impart their mission, the collective launched CYCLE 0, a curated program of select, previously non-commissioned films by COUSIN artists, sharing a survey of their aesthetic vision with diverse audiences. These works embody COUSIN's ethos and represent a robust and provocative array of films by Indigenous artists involved in experimental and avant-garde cinema.

**Curator:** COUSIN Collective

**Bio:** COUSIN is a collective supporting Indigenous artists expanding the form of film. We are building an Indigenous-led film movement. We create work that is personal, proudly provocative and driven by strong, artistic voices. We celebrate this work and get it made, seen and shared. Founded in 2018 by Adam Khalil, Alexandra Lazarowich, Sky Hopinka, and Adam Piron, COUSIN was created to provide support for Indigenous artists expanding traditional definitions and understandings of the moving image by experimenting with form and genre.

### ***Coyolxauhqui***

Colectivo Los Ingrávidos  
2017

**Runtime:** 10

**Synopsis:** *Coyolxauhqui* recasts the mythical dismemberment of the Aztec moon goddess Coyolxauhqui by her brother Huitzilopochtli, the deity of war, the sun, and human sacrifice. The film is a poem of perception, one that unveils how contemporary Mexican femicide is linked to a patriarchal history with roots in deeper cultural constructs.

### ***A Song Often Played On The Radio***

Raven Chacon, Cristoóbal Martinez  
2019

**Runtime:** 23

**Synopsis:** In a search for the mythological Cities of Cibola, a horseman finds himself in a race against another rogue seeking the valuable metals of the New Mexican desert. Spurred by the justification of moralistic "dichos," the rival explorers come to learn about what truly brought them to this land, understanding their true identities, and finding that they were only stealing from themselves.

### ***Pahá kin lená wakhán***

Kite

2017

**Runtime:** 8

**Synopsis:** A light cone is the path that a flash of light, From a single event, Traveling in all directions, Takes through spacetime. On a two-dimensional plane, The light from the flash Spreads out in a circle. These are all the points I ever reach All points which are the speed of light away from me at birth.

### ***Giizis Mooka'am Giawe***

Eve-Lauryn LaFountain

Los Angeles, California / Santa Fe, California  
2016

**Runtime:** 13

**Synopsis:** This film is a meditation. Using a 16mm intervalometer camera that takes a few frames every few minutes, the artist spent several years tracing the cycles of our sky, collapsing time so hours go by in minutes. This view shows all the cycles of the city, the weather, clouds, planets, planes, and stars. In Ojibwe “giizis” means sun, moon, and month, “Mooka’am” rise, “Giiwe” s/he goes home.

***We Only Answer Our Land Line***

Olivia Camfield & Woodrow Hunt

2019

**Runtime:** 6

**Synopsis:** An experimental essay film that explores the character of the alien, non-linear Indigenous experience and the material specificity of digital video to resist the violence of Settler Colonialism. By layering video clips we bring attention to the material specificity of digital video and we ask the audience to keep in mind the layout of the cut and uncut clips within the Premiere Pro and Photoshop timelines.

# FILMMAKER INDEX

Khaled Abdulwahed	55	E Daley	57	Miranda Javid	47
Sandro Aguilar	37	Amy Daniel	51	Dorian Jespers	47
Ra'anan Alexandrowicz	55	Jean-Baptiste Decavèle	50	Saúl Kak	46
Devin Jie Allen	32	Eryka Dellenbach	37	Gina Kamentsky	33
Dorothy Allen-Pickard	41	Martin de Mattia	51	Isabelle Kanapé	49
Amel Alzakout	55	Sylvie Denet	51	Lyle Kash	56
Malic Amalya	57	Ben Dowden	39	Chris Kennedy	41
Frances Damian Arapia	56	aZohar Dvir	33	Colleen Keough	38
Ephraim Asili	54	Tzor Ederly	42	Amy Lee Ketchum	49
Stephanie M. Barber	33	Benjamin Ellenberger	46	Kirill Khachaturov	47
Dianna Barrie	33, 51	Loretta Fahrenholz	32	Kang Min Kim	52
Alex Beriault	46	Charles Fairbanks	46	Kite	61
Jason F. Bernagozzi	41	Lori Felker	46	Bryan Konefsky	32
Natasha Beste	52	Jim Finn	54	Kamila Kuc	41
Kara Blake	49	Thorsten Fleisch	44-45	Peter Kutin	36
Gabriel Böhmer	40	Siegfried A. Fruhauf	52	Eve-Laurn LaFountain	62
Ellen Boscov	49	Katharine Fry	40	Claudia Larcher	50
Eliane Esther Bots	41	Julian Gallese	47	Patrik Lechner	36
Hannah Brewerton	46	Chitra Ganesh	58	Mathias Lenz	36
Kira Bursky	47	Adi Gelbart	49	Jennie Mary Tai Liu	33
William Caballero	58	Yoni Goldstein	55	Simon Liu	33
Laura Cameron-Lewis	42	Gil Goletski	56	Elizabeth Lo	50
Olivia Camfield	62	Adrian Garcia Gomez	48	Lynn Loo	39-40
José Cardoso	54	Margaux Guillemard	50	Jimena Lucero	42
Christopher Carroll	56	Jil Guyon	38	Michael Lyons	33
Raven Chacon	61	Philippe Hamelin	43	Cristoóbal Martinez	61
Daniel Chein	50	Barbara Hammer	37	Anna Marziano	54
Woohee Cho	52	Shoko Hara	47	Páraic Mc Gloughlin	37
Charles-André Coderre	38	Christine Haroutounian	46	Penny McCann	37
Colectivo Los Ingrávidos	61	Sky Hopinka	55	Daniel McIntyre	52
Cecelia Condit	41	K8 Howl	32	Vincent Meessen	55
Maxime Corbeil-Perron	38	Ash Goh Hua	33	George Metaxas	42
Thirza Cuthand	56	Hannah Hummel	45	Cade Mirabitor	32
		Woodrow Hunt	62	Ebrahim Mirmalek	40
		Chaerin Im	48	Jyoti Mistry	41
		Shinya Isobe	46	Virginia Lee Montgomery	34
		Adam Lewis Jacob	37	Meredith Moore	37
		Sakshi Jain	57	Yannick Mosimann	38

Ng'endo Mukii	57	Sylvanie Tendron	59-60
Lorin Murphy	56	Gabrielle Tesfaye	58
Michalina Musialik	48	Richard Tuohy	33
Siavash Naghshbandi	51	Yana Ugrekhelidze	54
NEOZOON	51	Emily Van Loan	52
Loris Giuseppe Nese	45	Chris Vargas	57
David Opdyke	50	Anna Vasof	49
Akosua Adoma Owusu	51	Joeri Verbesselt	50
Imge Özbilge	51	Atsushi Wada	58
Sine Özbilge	51	Aman Wadhan	32
Carson Parish	42	Stephen Wardell	33
Paulette Phillips	55	Marc Weis	51
Tom Prezman	42	Sheri Wills	35-36
Alexandra Ramires (Xá)	49	Jordan Wong	58
Victor Orozco Ramirez	47	Steve Wood	40
Nico Reano	42	Meredith Zielke	55
Jak Ritger	32	Khaled Abdulwahed	55
Natalia Rocafuerte	40	Sandro Aguilar	37
Mike Rollo	34	Ra'anan Alexandrowicz	55
Lucas H. Rossi dos Santos	33	Devin Jie Allen	32
Karen Russo	50	Dorothy Allen-Pickard	41
Dan S	46		
Ellen Sampson	49		
Marina Santana De la Torre	40		
Sarah & Charles	32		
Ed Sayers	49		
Sarah Seené	32		
Patrick Smith	49		
Jess X. Snow	42		
Sanaz Sohrabi	36		
Carman Spoto	57		
Mark Street	37		
Amanda Strong	58		
Steven Subotnick	40		
Mar Sudac	42		
Ruihong Tang	47		

# TITLE INDEX

13	46	Cause of Death	41
-force-	33	Circular	37
...l'admirable profondeur, du jour à la folie	50	Cloud Forest,	41
...Répète?! 59		Cohabitat	49
(((((/*\)))))) aka Echoes of the Volcano	46	Collapsing Mies	50
#21xoxo	51	Conversations	40
3 Sons	49	Coyolxauhqui	61
About Box	35	Daily Life Of Human	51
About A Home	50	Danni the Champion	42
Acetylene	36	Day of Nose	58
Al Largo	54	A deal with god	40
All These Moments Will Be Lost in Time	57	Dialectic	41
Alternative Facts	40	Displacement	38
The Annotated Field Guide of Ulysses S. Grant	54	Dissolution Prologue (Extended Version)	52
Anodyne	36	Dog's Field	48
Anonymous	40	DrEAD	60
Another Horizon	33	Dream of Emma and Tony	40
Apertura	59	Dromosphere	44
Armour	37	Eidolon	34
Assembly	36	Electric Eye	40
Astonishing Horizon!	42	Encounters in Light	32
Autumn Fog	39	End Rolls #2	39
Aviary	36	Energie!	45
Bad Mood	45	Entraves quotidiennes	59
Beyond Noh	49	Est-ce que ça te dit ... ?	60
Blue Lips (Lèvres bleues)	43	Expo Film (this film is my memory)	37
Blutausch (Bloodlust)	44	Eyes and Horns	48
Breath Control	42	Fever	36
Broth of Vigour	52	First Light	49
BUTTERFLY BIRTH BED	34	Flex Action	45
Camera Obscura	35	Flexcam	45
		Food Fight Berlin	45
		Four Faces of the Moon	58
		FragMANts	51
		Gelbart: March of the Thinking Machines	49

Gestalt	44	Lessons From My Nightmares	47
Giizis Mooka'am Giiwe	62	The Long Fall	32
H'un (Lacerations)	36	Lumen	32
Hautnah (Skinflick)	44	Lynn Loo: A Filmmaker at Work	39
Heat Wave Hallucination	38	A Machine to Live In	55
Hit and Run	46	Mad Mieter	51
Hitting My Head on the World	49	Making an Experimental Film with Lorin Murphy	56
HOLE	56	Malende: Lightning For Life	45
Hommage à V. DESPENTES	60	maini—towards the ocean, towards the shore	55
Honest Money	45	Material Bodies	41
How you Doin', Boy? Voicemails from Gran'pa	58	Mercury's Retrograde	33
I've Been Afraid	41	Mom's Clothes	58
I'm Free Now, You Are Free	33	Mother Bunker	42
ici / here	51	Mt Albban the attrition of time	40
Il n'y a pas plus de peuple digne que de culture		Mustererkenntnis (Pattern Cognition)	45
digne	59	My Favorite Object	37
The Inheritance	54	Naked	47
The Initiation Well	41	Night Reflection (IV)	46
In the Hands of Puppets	32	Nostos (Nostalgia) (excerpt)	35
Instructions for Survival	54	Nothing to See Here	50
Iwianch, el Diablo Venado	54	NSFW (angry yellow meat)	52
Junkerhaus	50	One Image, Two Acts	36
Just a Guy	47	Pahá kinj lená wakhánj	61
Just a Movement	55	People Meeting in a Room	37
Ka tatishtipatakanit (Ethereal)	49	Picture Particles	45
Kamerazerfetzter (Camera Annihilator)	44	Piz Regolith	38
Kampfschall: Nuklear Fanboy	45	Pool Boy	56
Kim Gordon: Earthquake	32	Primavera	48
King of Sanwi	51	Psychic Meat	33
KKUM	52	Purple Sea	55
Kosmos	45	Push This Button if You Begin to Panic	40
The Last Name of John Cage	50	Queen of Dots	33
The Legend of Bryngolau	51	The Quoddy Fold	55
Le phonocentrisme, vous dite??	60	Rainbow Body	58

Reminiscences of 15 musicians in Beirut	Valpi	33
attempting a re-imagination of the Egyptian classic	vampire domestique	60
Ya Garat Al Wadi	Venus Rising	38
retreat	THE VIEWING BOOTH	55
Revolykus	Washi MM	39
Road Rash	A Watched Cunt Never Cums	52
ROTOR   Sonic Body	We Only Answer Our Land Line	62
RUN!	The Wind	47
Safe Among Stars	Womb Envy: All is Full of Blood	44
Scene Box	World (ዐጋክሠጥፍ)	46
Schroon Lake	World Within	57
Self Portrait With Bag	Wound Footage	44
Ser Feliz No Vão / Happy In The Gap	X-Rayed Camera	45
Sight	Yellow Fever	57
Silver Femme	Yene Fikir, Ethiopia (My Love, Ethiopia)	58
Soless	Youhouuu...!!	60
So Many Ideas Impossible To Do All		
Sometimes a little Sin is good for the Soul		
A Song Often Played On The Radio		
Spontaneous		
Stunting Cunts		
Summer Summer		
Sun Dog		
Super 8 Self Portrait		
Superbitmapping		
Tamou		
Teatro Principal		
Thank you		
Things Floating in the Hudson		
TIE		
Times a God Zillion		
A Trans with a Movie Camera		
The Truth About Hastings		
uchronia, no.1		
Usambara Violet		