

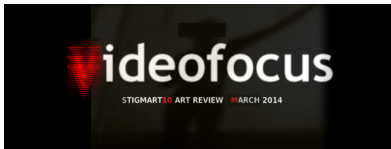


videofocus

STIGMART10 ART REVIEW FEBRUARY 2015

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CHUN-YU LIU
ROLAND WEGERER
MIKHAIL BASOV
RHAYANE VERMETTE
SARA DITTRICH
EVOND BLAKE
DAVID FINKELSTEIN
miriamsvideos
OLAIA SENDON
THEMBANI MDLULI
MINKUNG CHOI
ELENA TEJADA HERRERA
JULIUS RICHARD TAMAJO

**11th
Edition**



From experimental cinema to fashion videography, fourteen artists breaking the boundaries

Since its foundation, Stigmat10 has encouraged a conception of art based on a dynamic dialogue between artists and audience, reflecting the interactive nature of the creative act itself. A winning formula, according to the doubled number of submissions - more than 3000 applicants have submitted their video works and CV in 2014 - and the increasing popularity of our project.

We are glad to present this year's edition of Videofocus, our special Stigmat10 review focused on experimental cinema, original fashion videography and courageous documentary.

Stigmat10 Team

4 Sara Dittrich

"Trio for Solo Contrabass" depicts two musicians and myself working together to play a single pitch on the contrabass indefinitely using a two-meter long bow. The extended bow unifies the bodies into one being.

12 Mikhail Basov

Elm seeds, that cover the streets in the spring, perform their dance bending to the will of wind and randomness. But one seed does not want to be a guest at this ball and dances against all the physical laws.

22 Evond Blake

"An other worldly universe inhabited by decimals digits and strange creatures. The official 3D visualization/animation for DECIMALS REBUILT; a mulch-disciplinary art project that follows the story arch of decimals digits fighting each other for power and dominance. Heavily influenced by graffiti art, futurism and architecture DAXIM14 strives to capture and expand the imagination of its audience."

32 Thembani Mdluli

"A comment on the systematic and deeply-entrenched nature of colonial white supremacy; The Secret Keeper recreates, through a marginalised person's lens, racially privileged responses to the cognitive dissonance that results from confrontation with the effects of systematic oppression."

44 mirjamsvideos

Listen's 5 scenes together create an odd play between micro and macro worlds, at moments when everything is almost colourless, creating a strangeness and letting the question arise whether what is seen is something sinister, sad, or just utterly beautiful.

54 Chun-yu Liu

"My practice investigates into diaspora with a specific focus on the ethnic Chinese cultures. I am in particular interested in the displacement of people for political reasons. My work looks into the (re)construction of identity, imagination towards the homeland and personal understanding of historical events that are related to diaspora."

Olaia Sendón 62

*Michal describes in four different languages how his life runs between four different countries. But the intention of the short is to go beyond the anecdote of the languages to try to approach two fundamental subject matters: the construction of the memory and the identity. With regard to the memory, the idea is to move away from the frivolity that sub-
lies behind the citizen of the world concept.*

David Finkelstein 72

"Traveling along the path of a labyrinth, the viewer passes through a series of extremely diverse landscapes, which are created through lush animation, evocative orchestral music, and rich dialog, in which words are used as much for rhythm and texture as they are for meaning."

Roland Wegerer 82

"Roland Wegerer creates media artworks, photos, sculptures and performances. By questioning the concept of movement, Wegerer tries to grasp language. Transformed into art, language becomes an ornament. At that moment, lots of ambiguities and uncertainties, which are inherent to the phenomenon, rise to the surface."

Elena Tejada-Herrera 92

"Elena Tejada-Herrera's video and media artworks deal with sexual issues and the body from a feminist perspective. Elena is interested in post-pornography as a way of resistance and affirmation. Elena has received numerous international prizes and represented Peru in several international biennials."

Péter Lichter 104

„No Signal Detected“ shows „a rhythmical combat of digital and chemical decay“. Lichter again recycles old footage to contrast the decay of cellulose with the „malfunction“ of the digital moving image. While the decomposition of the film material results in varied, interesting alterations, the digital decay leaves only color squares and black&white parallel lines behind.

Minkyung Choi 116

"Love Letter for a Girl explores the relationship between girls and their desires within the spectatorship of blog culture. The camera views a reflective monitor while I scroll down collected images of girls from online apparel shops and blogs. The voice over of "the love letter" is recited and written by myself, also partly appropriated from Korean online clothing shop rhetorics."

Rhayne Vermette 131

"Time has not been kind to Kasimir Malevich's painting, Black Square. In 1915 when the work was first displayed the surface of the square was pristine and pure; now the black paint has cracked revealing the white ground like mortar in crazy paving." This film documents a tedious process of dismantling and reassembling 16 mm found footage. The film collage imitates functions of a curtain, while the recorded optical track describes the film's subsequent destruction during its first projection."

Julius Richard Tamayo 140

Triptych of Love Supreme (TDAS) is in fact a Pentaptych with two first chapters Julius never watch or show. Filmed between october 12 and march 13, TDAS is the narration of an End with is Two: End of Love and End of World. Escatological-apocatastatic triptych that follows a visionary discipline: to watch what you have to see.



conference

David Finkelstein

An artist's statement

Traveling along the path of a labyrinth, the viewer passes through a series of extremely diverse landscapes, which are created through lush animation, evocative orchestral music, and rich dialog, in which words are used as much for rhythm and texture as they are for meaning. A man and woman guide us on this trip, taking us past gently falling Mondrian paintings, violent car crashes and bombing raids, and a pair of dancing, multicolored

boxes, among many other settings. Based on an improvised performance, 'Suggestive Gestures' leads us gradually and indirectly towards a mysterious animal, hiding in the center of the maze.

Director David Finkelstein characterizes his film as a 'landscape.' Words, images, and music are all used to evoke a series of changing textures and an evolving inner landscape, which the viewer is free to enjoy in the same way one enjoys a captivating view: by savoring the spatial and color relationships, and



A still from **Suggestive Gestures**

becoming immersed in the mood and emotional flavor of each scene, without necessarily expecting the experience to make statements or tell a story. The words, all improvised by Finkelstein and actress Cassie Terman, become physical objects in the scene, where they literally create the landscape and generate the volatile, changing moods of the piece. 'Gertrude Stein was the first one to suggest that language could be used to create a landscape, rather than tell a story,' says Finkelstein, 'and her idea is

still proving to be a fruitful way to make performances and films.'

Despite the abstract nature of the film, many viewers will still see implicit meanings in the imagery. The image of the labyrinth and multiple references to the myth of the Minotaur call to mind the Jungian notion of the need we have to confront the monster within us, in order to embrace our whole nature and become free.

"Suggestive Gestures" is David Finkelstein's first feature film.

An interview with

David Finkelstein

David Finkelstein is known for his unique visionary imagery. His cinema is marked by a strong effort to destabilize traditional storytelling; David himself suggests the term film-landscape for his works. We are glad to present, for this Biennial Edition, *Suggestive Gestures*, David's first feature film, a labyrinthine work recently exhibited in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and several other cities in the United States.

David, how did you come up with the idea for *Suggestive Gestures*? Could you tell us a particular episode which gave birth to this project, or simply an epiphany?

Suggestive Gestures is the latest film in a series of works based on improvised dialogs which I have been making since 2000. The idea for this particular film was for the two improvising actors in the film, myself and Cassie Tunick, to use words to register different moods, rhythms and energy-states we experienced during the scene. Our voices and our words function in the film like weather in a landscape. They create a series of emotional and musical atmospheres and textures, rather than telling a story or expressing ideas. We use words in the film as much for their sound as for their meaning. The idea was to provide the viewer with a sequence of vivid and specific moods and textures which they can enjoy the way one enjoys the changing light and weather in a landscape. When we watch a beautiful landscape, we don't expect it to tell us a story, so hopefully the viewer will enjoy the words in my film in a similar way.

Defining your artistic vision, the topos of labyrinth is no doubt a starting point of your filmmaking, reminding us of J.L. Borges and Alain Robbe Grillet's ideas. Could you introduce our readers to this concept?

I wasn't thinking of Borges, Robbe-Grillet, or any literary references when I chose to give

my film the setting of a labyrinth. In the improvised dialog which forms the basis for the film, the last thing Cassie talks about is a woman who takes a walk among sleeping bears. When she said that, it reminded me of a story which a friend had told me. My friend went for a meditative walk in a ceremonial labyrinth space in a retreat center in the woods, and then he took a nap in the center. When he awoke there was a mother bear and her cubs looking at him, and he had to negotiate his way to safety. So the last two words I speak in the piece are "the labyrinth." This is the how I thought of the idea of setting the entire film in a labyrinth. The camera follows along the path of the labyrinth throughout the film, finally arriving at the center. I like the way that this structure parallels the structure of an improvised dialog, where the words lead the viewer very gradually into the center of the actors' experience. It creates a feeling of narrative, even though the words don't tell a story.

The Jungian idea of a labyrinth as a test where you go to confront your Shadow certainly becomes a kind of background context and flavor for the film. Images of the minotaur appear throughout the film. However, as a mostly abstract, textural film, these concepts merely form a setting for the film, which is more primarily concerned with creating a vivid sequence of distinct moods and textures for the viewer, in the same way that a piece of instrumental music does for a listener.

How did you get started in animation?

I made live performance works from 1983 to 1999, especially improvised performances. These improvised performances all had a very fluid, constantly mutating dynamic. I began to feel a need to create a counter-dynamic, which would work against the fluidity of the improvisation. I wanted to add another layer, a layer of meticulously constructed images, and I would use the images as a way of making a detailed analysis and commentary on the material which arises spontaneously in the improvisation, and helping the viewer to see the unity which underlies the seeming volatility of the improv. Video seemed the natural way to do this, and I began to work with video in 2000.



David Finkelstein

photo credit: Keith Gemerek Pictured: filmmaker David Finkelstein
Lake Ivan Performance Group www.lakeivan.org david@lakeivan.org



Since I can't draw or paint very well, computer animation was the natural way for me to make images to go with the text.

Animation is a long and hard process; realizing a feature film like *Suggestive Gestures* is an undoubtedly an incredible effort. How long does it usually take to finish a piece?

It took me a little over two years to make.

Could you take us through your creative process when starting a new project?

I begin by taping improvised dialogs with my actor/collaborators. I record these improvisations throughout the year, without having a specific project in mind. Looking at



the tapes, when I find one which seems particularly good, I will choose to make a finished film from it. Once I have chosen a particular improvised piece for a film, I will use all the dialog from that piece, in the same sequence it was performed in, for the final film. I never use dialog from different improv for a film, because I want to preserve the integrity of the improvisational process.

I listen to the dialog many times, trying to hear the underlying rhythms and emotional currents, and I compose a complete musical score to go with the words. I have a complete soundtrack for the film, consisting of dialog mixed with music, before making any images. The final phase is to listen once again to this soundtrack repeatedly to identify the



underlying themes which unify the work, and I create images which help the viewer to see the threads which connect all of this spontaneous language.

We were really stimulated by the soundscape of your work. In your statement "In Suggestive Gestures the words become physical objects in the scene, where they

literally create the landscape and generate the volatile, changing moods of the piece". Could you introduce our readers to this aspect of your feature film?

The reason I finish the full soundtrack before making any images is that, for me, the sound generates the images. In this "verbal landscape", I think of the actors as creating



*A still from **Suggestive Gestures***

the space around them with their words. I also make my living as a musician, playing for professional dancers, so I have been working as an improvisational musician for thirty years. I think of my work with improvised dialog as simply taking what I know about music and applying it to words.

Your art is full of references: Mondrian, Gertrude Stein, Jung. Can you tell us your biggest artistic influences and how they have affected your work?

I was a teenager in New York in the 1970s, which was an extraordinary time and place for experimental theater. I was very influenced by the work of Richard Foreman, Elizabeth



A still from ***Suggestive Gestures***

LeCompte, Robert Wilson, Meredith Monk, and others. A high school teacher had also taken me to the Museum of Modern Art to see classic avant-garde films by Brakhage, Maya Deren, and many others, so I knew about experimental film, but I first thought of myself

as a person who wanted to make performances.

Thanks for sharing your time and thoughts, David. What's next for David Finkelstein? Are there any film projects on the horizon?



I've completed a new short called "Privy." My newest work is still based on improvised dialog by two actors, but it's taken a very new direction. My newest two shorts are closer to narrative films, and instead of illustrating the dialog with animation, I am illustrating it by

having actors depict the scenes which are described in the dialog.

Thank you also for giving me this opportunity to share my artistic process with your readers.