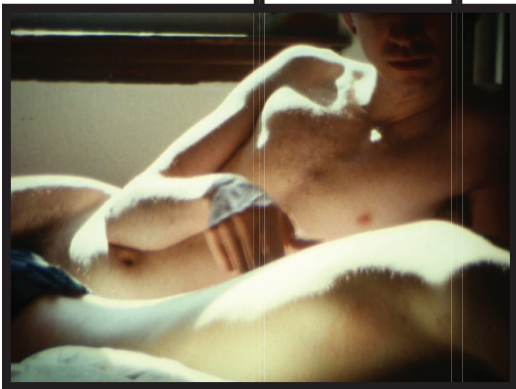
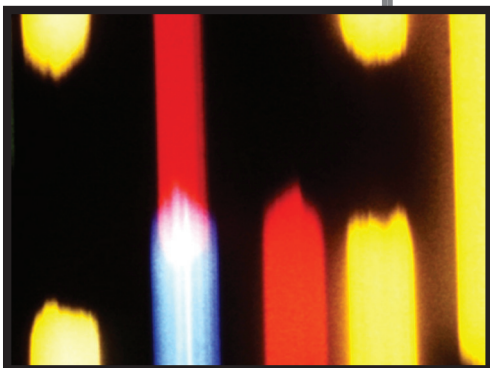


MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FIRST LOOK



Top to bottom: *Malaise*, by Don Levy, courtesy of The Don Levy Project, and Academy Film Archive; *Calypso* by Annalisa D. Quagliata, courtesy of the artist; *L'en-Dedans* by Philippe Cote, courtesy of Light Cone.



ON RESISTANCE: International Avant-Garde Films & Videos

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2017, 7:30 P.M.

Program notes by guest curator **Mónica Savirón**

“Sometimes the most beautiful flowers are hidden behind stones, you once told me.”

—Filmmaker and scholar John Gianvito remembering Don Levy

This program presents archival prints of essential but neglected films together with current, international works that have not been shown in New York. Avant-garde artists Don Levy, Philippe Cote, and Ute Aurand share the screen with a new and equally free generation of makers. They all test cinema as a medium capable of surviving conflicts, perceptions, and assaults by exposing the most extreme and vulnerable of behaviors. These poetically bold films and videos stand as time-sensitive transgressions. Many projected on celluloid, these works are both expressions and enactments of resistance.

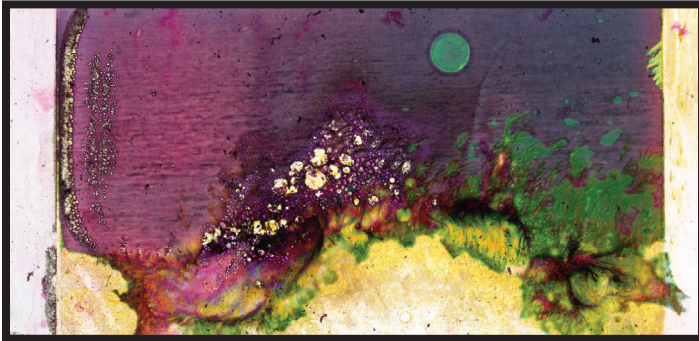
Total running time: 75 minutes.

Special thanks to Cullen Gallagher, Daniel A. Swarthnas, Andrea Franco, Emmanuel Lefrant, Eleni Gioti, Mariya Nikiforova, Victor Gresard, May Haduong, Mark Toscano, Amnon Buchbinder, John Gianvito, The Don Levy Project, Don Levy's family, Light Cone, Canyon Cinema, Experimental Film Society, National Film Board of Canada, Academy Film Archive, and all the participating artists.

Granular Film - Beirut by Charles-André Coderre

2016, Canada/Lebanon, 7 mins., 35mm, sound.

The capital of Lebanon burns through photo-chemical manipulation, specifically variations on Mordançage and Chromaflex film processing techniques. Still, the images from one of the oldest cities in the world remain recognizable. Originally shot with a 16mm Bolex camera, this is the first time that the film will be shown as a 35mm print. The footage is almost entirely edited in camera. The sound design includes field recordings, modular synthesizers, and Buzuk samples by Bob Lachapelle. Coderre is a member of the Montreal-based Double Negative Collective, and part of the music project *Jerusalem in My Heart* with Radwan Ghazi Moumneh.



Granular Film - Beirut, by Charles-André Coderre, courtesy of the artist

Malaise by Don Levy

1963-64, UK, 3 mins., 16mm, color, sound.



Malaise, by Don Levy, courtesy of the artist, The Don Levy Project, and Academy Film Archive

This is a rarely projected archival print of a conceptual film by the little-known but greatly influential artist, surrealist painter, researcher, and scientist Don Levy. It is part of a compilation titled *Five Film Poems*. Though originally this work was not intended to be shown publicly, it won a Special Jury Prize at the Cracow Film Festival in 1969. In the film, British writer and filmmaker Peter Whitehead recites, "... no one has been able to define exactly this strange malaise." His voice, altered by an echo effect, blurs the words amidst the rapid repetition and jazzy variation of images shot in Morocco. The narration is adapted from Nathalie Sarraute's anti-novel *Portrait d'un Inconnu*, much in the spirit of her exploration of phenomenological tropisms. The *Poems* were made at a key moment in Don's development as a filmmaker. Amnon Buchbinder, member of The Don Levy Project, explains: "The film looks back at the work Don has done to this point in that it is almost entirely assembled out of out-takes from his short films [...], and it looks towards the future in that he is specifically testing out the medium's formal elasticity in ways that he will

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Ñores (sin señalar) (Misters -Without Blame-) by Annalisa D. Quagliata

2016, Mexico, 3 mins., 16mm on HD, b/w, sound.

In history, music has been a universal weapon to express resistance, politically and otherwise. In this case, Quagliata manipulates Agustín Lara's song, "Veracruz," together with audio from interviews with activist, poet and film festival promoter Nadia Vera, and

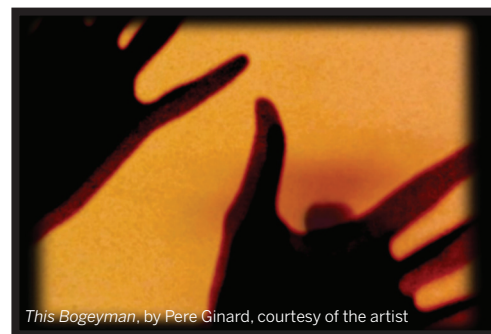


Ñores (sin señalar), by Annalisa D. Quagliata, courtesy of the artist

freelance photojournalist Rubén Espinosa, both of whom were assassinated. She also includes sound recordings of the young protestors in Xalapa denouncing governor Javier Duarte, and a genocide rarely echoed in the international media: the killing of 100,000 students in Mexico over eight years, their bodies disappeared. Quagliata juxtaposes this amalgam of soundtracks with re-photographed archival images of the drug war, physical violence, harassment and threats by police authorities and their allies, and the homicides of human right defenders and protectors of indigenous territories, as well as of Vera's friends, also killed with impunity: Yesenia Quiroz, Mile Virginia Martín, and Alejandra Negrete. Quagliata's inquisitive and factual montage expresses an openness to peaceful reparations and resolutions.

This Bogeyman by Pere Ginard

2016, Spain, 3 mins., Super-8 film on HD, color, sound.



This Bogeyman, by Pere Ginard, courtesy of the artist

Ginard recreates the myth of the villainous man who, in many cultures, is used by adults to frighten children and make them behave in a certain way. The monster does not have a distinct appearance, but simply is "a non-specific embodiment of terror," the artist clarifies. The film combines images shot on expired Super-8 film, found footage, a sound collage of male gibberish and digitally corrupted noise, and a square black framing that at times spills its outer edges over the center of the imagery.

Mirage by Atoosa Pour Hosseini

2015, Iran/Ireland, 4mins., Super-8 film on HD, color, sound.

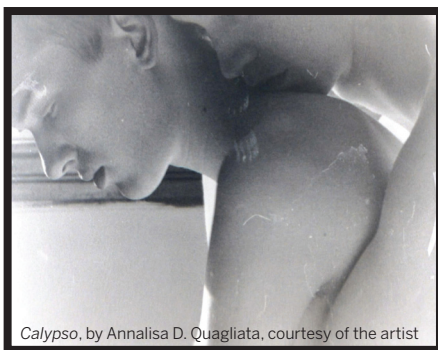


Mirage, by Atoosa Pour Hosseini, courtesy of the artist

The artist looks at scenes of a woman (Pour Hosseini) and a man at the Iranian Maranjab Desert through the texture of a film strip on top of it, and through its sprocket holes. Dirt, flare, and red ink printed on the celluloid add to the images of the landscape a patina of optical illusions, even though the original moving images were, by definition, tricking the eye in first place. Pour Hosseini's work focuses on the delivery of reality as deceptive apparition, and vice versa. She actively moves the position and angle of the filmstrip over footage that shows herself as part of the action. The sound of this film, a kind of malfunctioning mechanical timer, is from the telecine machine. It emphasizes the ephemerality of impressions with an acute sense of urgency. The sculpted layers of images provide a sense of cumulative, growing experience, and also a feeling of unspoken pain. This work has been shown as a performance at Art Box Dublin.

Calypso by Annalisa D. Quagliata

2016, Mexico, 5 mins., 16mm on HD, color & b/w, sound.



Calypso, by Annalisa D. Quagliata, courtesy of the artist

This hand-processed film starts with the image of a human figure reflected in water. Looking at and showing oneself to the camera becomes an act of rebellion. Alienated by the outside world, Calypso (Jamieson

Edson) and Odysseus (Cameron Stetz) lay naked in bed allowing their bodies to be warmed up by the light of day, and the realness of touch. Penelope (Quagliata) denudes herself behind and in front of the camera. The voice of the Greek nymph Calypso is expressed by silent intertitles adapted from Homer's *Odyssey*. In this intimate rendition, the epic hero struggles to decide between mind or heart: "... I'll watch you scudding over the sea's broad back; when you arrive home you will realize / you are still a prisoner".

Prospector by Talena Sanders

2015, India/USA, 14 mins., 16mm to DCP, color, sound, 14min.

Entirely shot on Ektachrome film stock, *Prospector* alternates images of American Indian territories and communities (Cherokee, NC, Sundance, and Antelope Island, UT) with those from the South Asian Republic of India (Dadri, Greater Noida, and Delhi). "This work grew out of my experiences as an educator in classrooms with Native students and learning more about the particular history of the dark role of education in the colonizing of indigenous peoples in Montana—a way of confronting my role as a white person living and teaching on stolen Native homelands," affirms artist Talena Sanders. The soundtrack includes language lessons from the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, a reading of historian Thomas Babington Macaulay's text, *Minute on Indian Education* (1835), as well as field recordings.



Prospector, by Talena Sanders, courtesy of the artist

De falso a legal en una toma (From False to Legal in One Take) by Diego Lama

2015, Peru, 4 mins., DCP, b/w, sound.

This video consists of a single take recorded with a camera attached to a drone. It captures the distance between Jirón Azangaro, one of the most dangerous streets in Lima, immersed in a deep economic crisis since the 1980s, and the nearby, and apparently impassable, building of the Palace of Justice. Lama selected La Monte Young's four-pitch musical piece *The Second Dream of the High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer* (1962) to accompany the images. This work received the Best Experimental Film/Video Award at the Lima International Film Festival.



De falso a legal en una toma, by Diego Lama, courtesy of the artist

River in Castle by Sandy Ding

2016, China/Croatia, 4 mins., 16mm, b/w, silent.

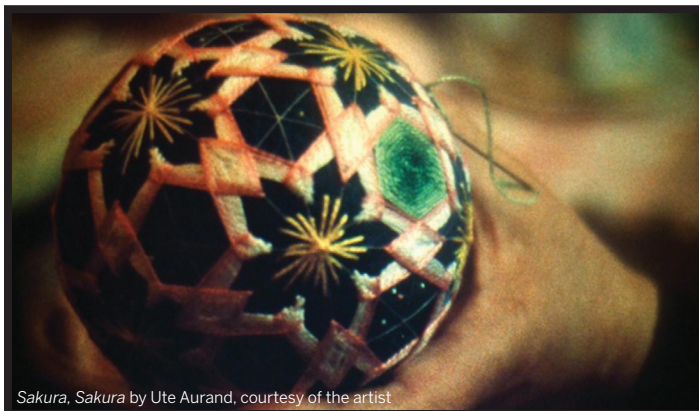
Artist Sandy Ding manually changes the light's angle, and twists and waves film strips of footage from the Klubvizija film laboratory in Croatia. He captures these visual contortions through contact printing, with a device created by himself made of foam core board, tape, and nails. Ding used what was the climax of the original fiction film to try and liberate the images from their primary intention. He does so with increased intensity, and in a way that feels anarchic and restless. As in a dark dream, textures get accentuated, and the result is a performance that searches for psychological and emotional change.



Sakura, Sakura by Ute Aurand

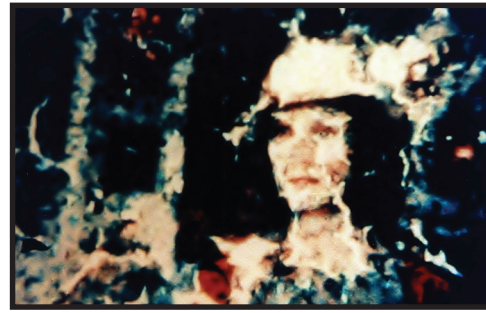
2015, Japan, 3 mins., 16mm, color & b/w, sound.

A film in two parts, the first section—in color—is of a woman making Temari thread balls at a small coffee shop in Nara, Japan. There, elderly women meet regularly and do handcraft work together. The pattern of the embroidery represents the Sakura, or cherry blossom flower, a symbol for time of renewal. The second section—in black-and-white—alternates images of a woman at an expensive department store in the district of Roppongi with footage of the artist shooting with a Bolex camera, as in dialog with her subject. Aurand filmed her when she was asking for free bread at a bakery. Despite seeming to be homeless, she denoted a high education, could speak fluent English, was making photographs of Folk Festivals all over Japan, and was a fan of filmmaker Naomi Kawase. Champion of a feminist resistance, Aurand focuses her lenses in brief moments of freedom.



Stadt in Flammen (City in Flames) by Schmelzdahin (Jürgen Reble, Jochen Müller & Jochen Lempert)

1984, Germany, 5 mins., 16mm, color, sound.



Stadt in Flammen by Schmelzdahin, courtesy of the artists and Light Cone

The artistic trio Schmelzdahin ("Melt Away") started in 1979 and made about twenty films over the course of ten years. *Stadt in Flammen* was created in Jürgen Reble's house and

garden in Bonn. The group buried footage from a French fiction feature film, and exposed the emulsion to leaves, humidity and bacteria. The result shows the still recognizable characters of the film in advanced deterioration. The added soundtrack is of a man's vocal percussion, as if he were not able to better describe destruction with words. The human relationships portrayed in the original film reveal their organic nature in the decay of their forms and colors. There is a tension in these images between the strength of disappearing and the resilience of staying. In a way, this work voices a fight against the market forces, and the political and artistic establishments; it is a boiling decomposition of images, as well as of ideals.

L'en-Dedans (Inside the Inside) by Philippe Cote

2002, France, 18 mins., Super-8 transferred to 16mm, color, silent.

This is a rarely seen cameraless film, made using the pinhole technique by applying light directly on the unexposed emulsion. Cote explores celluloid with color filters and different intensities of light as if expressing his most intimate and vital self. The flashes of luminosity seem to be signals of connection, maybe hope, inside one's inner darkness. His approach to filmmaking is as limitless as it is relentless. Cote's heart stopped beating on 2016's Thanksgiving Day. We are fortunate to be able to experience this 16mm print of *L'en-Dedans*, made at the Parisian artist-run film laboratory, L'Abominable. After his passing, it is as if the light in this film had taken on deeper and higher meanings.

