

MAGIC LANTERN CINEMA PRESENTS THE INAPPROPRIATE COVERS SHOW

Wednesday April 8, 2009 9:30p.m.
Cable Car Cinema, 204 S. Main St, Providence, RI
Admission \$5 TRT: 80 minutes

There is a curious repertoire of cinematic engagements made possible by formal economies of finding and obscuring, discovering and covering. The films and videos of the Inappropriate Covers Show share no precise modus operandi, but there is a lurching energy which unites them as they variously splice, puncture, slice, morph, mangle, blur, clarify, invect, interrogate, inject, and otherwise inflect the images and sounds which they (in)appropriate. While popular rock-and-roll covers play on the surface of our recognition, these Inappropriate Covers disfigure the recognizable, transforming original (or stock) materials into regenerated appendages which grope new bodies of signification. The Inappropriate Covers Show is a roll of political negation, formal reconfiguration, and glimpses into the beautiful—all capable of re-ordinating the particles of thought as they fall. Its momentum is the stuff of scattering and accretion, just as its historical frame is asymmetrical (the dates are 1951, 1962, 1999, and beyond).

Excerpt from *Traité de bave et d'éternité*, Isidore Isou, 1951, b/w DVD (originally 35mm), sound, 2:00. This sequence from Isou's 78-minute film (*Treatise of Venom and Eternity*) is a recital of the Lettriste poem "J'interroge et j'invective" by François Dufrené. The result is historically unprecedented, a pure realization of hybrid film-poetry. Dufrené's recital is the exemplary peak of Isou's film: its syncopation of surging elements of the purely visceral visual and sonic is impeccably violent. Its aural and kinetic choreography is chaotic, unable to contain that which it brings into the world. Not only is this film's influence upon the work of Stan Brakhage under-acknowledged: the intensity of its poetic experimentation has gone largely unchallenged (or noticed) in the sixty-plus years since it first aired at the Cannes Film Festival in 1951.

"J'interroge et j'invective," Poem to scream (Sept. 49), In memory of Antonin Artaud, by François Dufrené (first published in *Ur* #1, Editor Maurice Lemaître, Paris: 1950):

Piètres pitres, / Totre botra botra titre ? /
Totre batri ! batri ! / Totre boutre (bis) / Totre
? butre / Vutre Katre voutre bôtre, bôtre... /
Tête, do : Tête-Kssète nat doussète, / Kssète
nat dongsète nat tête ? / Pouhkre (bis) / Empil
surjoux empalex, empalex / Hogorax pempre /
yogogrex ollüngb ? / Souble règre, Kssamble
Kssègre / Pohkre ! (bis) / Tègre empil jarssoux
humpâurux / Hugurix pimpre yigügrux ollüngb ? /
(comme en a parte) / Kssulve nimvolve parèveulve
/ Krilva sèsrilve nimvolve parèveulve / (à nouveau
hurlant) / Sèsrilve pulve ? / Pêhkre (bis) / Empil
surjoux omparix pampre yungégrix ollüngb ? /
Tête, do : tête-Kssète nat dongssète / Kssète
nat / dongssète nat tête ? / (comme en a
parte) / Peuyple pekpe, pekpe, pekpe ! virlokff /
Irtounx velch hetchle topelfe / Yoktre lyogembounx
/ Bilche rlô ptyuvènrîd pulche ! / (à nouveau
hurlant) / Ptyuvènrîd vetchle / Peuyple pekpe,
pekpe, pekpe / Gluvlovs grolve (bis) / Meuvilmve
! vrümvurlingue ! virlokff ! / Glohach ! (bis)
/ Glantche vampich !... / Hektre, vektre, vektre
bohrum, / Nektre cuhborm ! / Tektre jektre plektre
bôm, / Plektre borm ! / (comme en a parte) /
Mrohodohomigle miglimrov / Vrovigle vigle mogle,
mogle vigle (bis) / Bvrohonnbohonigle / Glohach
! (bis) / (très vite) / Glantche vampich tekchtazle
tropme / Kzinn tropme / Bogue vhabourwam bôh
/ Tropme, tropme hântôn dopme / Kzounssiz
ukssinn soum drik sih (bis) / Dzriv grid dribme
vivuld povribme / Hubme paflodgue, paflodgue /
Tropme, tropme hântôndopme / Ksounssiz ukzinn
soundruk suh / Tssérap rome tnadoum vigloskobre
/ Tnadoum vugloskobre ! / Tssrap nom / (comme
en a parte) / Vuouvouvilx / Viuvulk vuouvulk
églamve / (à nouveau hurlant) / Puhkre ! (bis) /
Glech ! Glamve ! pâhkre ! pahkre ! / Tnadoum
vaglyigukre ! / Glantche vampich tekchtazle /
Glohach !... (ter)

On Eye Rape, Takahiko limura, 1962, b/w 16mm, sound, 10:00. The story goes that limura found an American sexed film in the trash and decided to use it to protest the Japanese censorship of sexual acts on film, particularly the covering of pubic hair with black censoring bars. limura and the artist Natsuyuki Nakanishi poked holes into the film, creating negations of their own. The white circles thereby obscuring the footage are a figurative (and penetrating) opposition to the black bars of official governmental denial. Peppered throughout are frames of pornographic footage, acts of resistance spliced into the viewer's subliminal re-education.

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FUH2, Diane Nerwen, 2006, b/w video, sound, 0:40. Hummers, the bird, and extreme negation drive this off-road tribute to the participatory website fuh2.com ("Fuck You and Your H2"). Nerwen uses images submitted to the website and footage from official Hummer commercials to create her own anti-commercial, a "cathartic rant against the (sub)urban assault vehicle," as she puts it. In this short, "birds" flood a sky of sick consumption.

COCKED, Matthew Suib, 2003, color video, sound, 10:00. "Produced during the peak of international debate regarding the United States' initiative to invade Iraq, 'COCKED' is an anti-war statement in the guise of a minimalist Western, borrowing dozens of short segments from several cinema classics of the genre. 'COCKED' expands and sustains what is usually a brief, tense, cinematic moment—the showdown—and implodes the quintessential American mythology of the Western by denying the redemption of its protagonists through acts of violence." – Matthew Suib

Lossless #5, Rebecca Baron & Doug Goodwin, 2008, color video, sound, 3:00. In Baron and Goodwin's Lossless series the "materiality" of the digital becomes the source-code for experimental execution. The artists' renditions of appropriated films are certainly not "lossless" (i.e. a copy of the original in which nothing is lost), but rather gainful: through various techniques of digital disruption – compression, file-sharing, the removal of essential digital information – the artists reveal the gain of a "new" media, full of material forms ripe for aesthetic sleuthing. In "Lossless #5," a water ballet crafted by the famed Bubby Berkley is compressed into an organic mitosis, within which we detect the spirit of a "buggy" Brakhage ghosting about the integrated circuit.

Lossless #3, Rebecca Baron & Doug Goodwin, 2008, color video, sound, 10:20. Removing key frames from a digital version of John Ford's *The Searchers*, Baron and Goodwin attack the film's temporal structuring to render a kinetic "painted desert" of the West. The dust kicked up by the movement in the film is pure pixel, unanchored from the photographic realism that used to constrain it. "Truth, 24 frames a second!" is rewritten according to the odd clock-times of digital processing, splaying movement and transition into the void of machine temporality. In the Lossless series, the artists seek uncovered differences between the bitstream and the celluloid strip. These differences might be blurry at our historical juncture, but Baron and Goodwin's work leads us closer to the over-coded heart of the digital video image, dissecting its anatomy to expose its entrancing mechanisms.

The Cinema Works Again! Ponovo Radi Bioskop!, Christopher Robbins, 2008, color video, sound, 4:46. The setting is Vranje, Serbia; the public cinema is broken; the films are *Bring it on*, *Rocky IV*, and *Star Wars II*; the actors are Vranje's own silver screen hopefuls. Excerpts of the films are paired against their real-time Serbian reenactments, each denying the pure legibility of their counterpart. A cinema of relations (social and formal) is developed, of which this work is perhaps a preliminary demonstration. One is left wondering not only about the obscured social realities in which the actors are no doubt dramatically wrapped-up off-screen, but about the status, for instance, of the montage sequences newly derived as analogues of those in the originals. "The Cinema Works Again! Ponovo Radi Bioskop!" is a strange and pleasurable document, refreshingly crude and conceptually pure.

The Morphology of Desire, Robert Arnold, 1999, color video, sound, 5:45. "The Morphology of Desire" choreographs a winding passage through a veritable archive of romance novel covers. Emotive storms of longing, uncertainty, and passion are swept into a lazy tornado of color, which, as it morphs from cover to cover, even emits weird exclamations, the sounds deforming a basic sign of living pathos. Somewhere between the subtitles and the second, third, and fourth dimensions, each image is bequeathed a brief dynamism, mingling meta-fictive strangers in a vibrant plumage of narrative singularity.

RSG-Black-1 (Black Hawk Down), Radical Software Group, 2005, color video, sound, 22:04. What might it look like if the only people with guns in Mogadishu on 3 October 1993 were black? RSG-Black-1, using a Hollywood depiction of the US raid known as Operation Gothic Serpent, programmatically removes from the original film all sequences containing white people. A blockbuster rendition of what Somalians refer to as "The Day of the Rangers" becomes a day without Rangers, as the Battle of the Black Sea is transmuted into a visceral masterpiece of Machiavellian non-intervention.

This film & video program is curated by
Braxton Soderman & Justin Katko. The poster was
made by Adam Morosky. The Inappropriate Covers Show
complements an exhibition of the same name at Brown
University's Bell Gallery, opening 5:30pm Friday April 10
and running through Friday May 29, 2009.

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