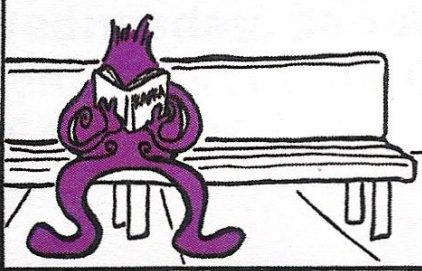


CHICAGO
FILMMAKERS
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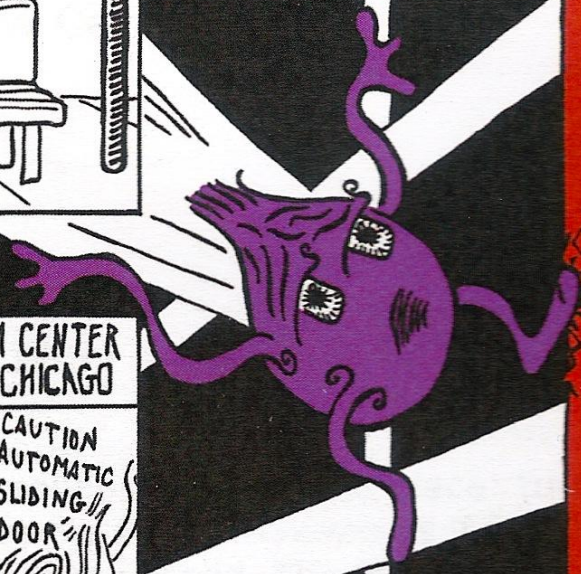
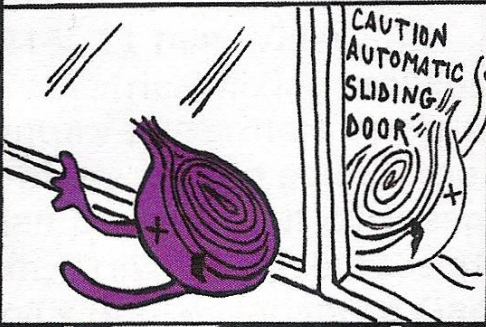
The 26th Onion City

EXPERIMENTAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

JANUARY 28-31



AT THE GENE SISKEL FILM CENTER
AND COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO



**The 26th Onion City Experimental Film and Video
Festival
January 28-31, 2015
A Production of Chicago Filmmakers**

**Wednesday, January 28
Gene Siskel Film Center
164 N. State St.**

**7:45pm
Opening Night Program**

The Hummingbird Wars

Janie Geiser

2014, 11 min, Video, US

"A theatrical fiction, collapsing time and place: turn-of-the-last-century performers apply stage makeup as if for war, to engage in battle for the soul of the world. The injuries are more emotional than physical, but cut deeply just the same. A visual/aural collage film, drawing on sources as seemingly disparate as Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Japanese Gagaku music, makeup illustrations for 19th-century actors, the biography of a Shakespearean performer, blooming and decaying flowers, and a World War I First Aid Book, *The Hummingbird Wars* suggests theater in a time of war, which is the theater of any time." (Janie Geiser)

Iterations

Gregg Biermann

2014, 5 min, Video, US

Jimmy Stewart sliced and phased as he sits and sleeps and stares out his *Rear Window*.

Broken Tongue

Mónica Savirón

2013, 3 min, Video, US

"*Broken Tongue* is an ode to the freedom of movement, association, and expression. It pays homage to the diaspora of

the different waves of migration, and challenges the way we represent our narratives. It is a search for a renewed consciousness, for reinvention, a 'what if,' the formal equivalent of asking a question expressed with a broken tongue—or not so broken after all. Mainly made with images from the January 1 issues of The New York Times since its beginning in 1851 to 2013, *Broken Tongue* is a heartfelt tribute to avant-garde sound performer Tracie Morris and to her poem 'Afrika.'" (Mónica Savirón)

The Innocents

Jean-Paul Kelly

2014, 13 min, Video, Canada

"Partially constructed around a shot-by-shot reenactment of segments from a 1966 Albert and David Maysles documentary, *The Innocents* features an image stream, an interview with Truman Capote's desire, and shapes that correspond to the former through the instructions of the latter." (Jean-Paul Kelly)

Wayward Fronds

Fern Silva

2014, 13 min, Video, US

"Mermaids flip a tale of twin detriments, domiciles cradle morph invaders, crocodile trails swallow two-legged twigs in a fecund mash of nature's outlaws... down in the Everglades." (Fern Silva)

Afar

Robert Todd

2014, 13 min, Video, US

Nighttime lighting illuminates an inky darkness. Landscape peeks through. 19th century Romanticism in a digital age.

Tribute to Busby

Eytan Ipeker

2014, 6 min, Video, Turkey

Busby, as in Berkeley. A kaleidoscopic homage to the great film choreographer and director.

It's not a prison if you never try the door

Joshua Gen Solondz

2013, 7 min, Video, US

A "glitch-filled revision of a monster classic. As pixels melt, stick and stutter, Godzilla arises and the world decays, a startling vision of mutation and destruction." (Chi-hui Yang)

Psalm IV: "Valley of the Shadow"

Phil Solomon

2013, 8 min, Video, US

A "nocturnal lamentation on love, loss, and the unknowable other..." (Phil Solomon)

Thursday, January 29

Columbia College (Ferguson Theater)

600 S. Michigan Ave.

7:30pm

Shorts Program One

A Knight's Walk (and other speculative events)

Clint Enns

2014, 12 min, Video, Canada

"A knight traverses the chessboard, as a bored radical traverses a Winnipeg supermarket by chance (played by Chance Taylor).

Consider Cameron Frye (played by Alan Ruck) from Ferris Bueller's Day Off stuck in the speculative space between point and pixel. Video art in the expanded field.

The Klein Bottle, a 4D object rendered in 3D reduced to 2D (4D->3D->2D). A spatial analysis of a non-orientable surface with no boundary, a space potentially like our own." (CE)

Lezuo

Giuseppe Boccassini

2013, 17 min, Video, Italy

"In 1843, Andrea Lezuo, a woodcarver born in Arabba, a town in the Dolomites, leaves for 'la Merica' onboard the ship Ehon. Through an anthological collage of heterogeneous audiovisual material, the film portrays the physicality of the voyage, as it traces an experience that is a sort of initiation." (GB)

Enduring Ornament

MM Serra and Josh Lewis

2015, 14 min, Video, US

"Sourced from five found 16mm filmstrips once used in coin-operated peepshow booths on New York's formerly seedy 42nd street, *Enduring Ornament* is a film that confronts the cinematic history of idealized patriarchal desire at its fundamental existence as celluloid. Making use of a salvaged industrial contact printer and chemical alterations applied directly to the subsequent photochemical prints, we have transformed these images from a privatized male experience into a primordial celebration of bodily spectacle. Threaded throughout the film is the exuberant compound word poetry of Baroness Elsa von Freytag Loringhoven, giving voice to an immediate and transgressive consciousness." (MMS + JL)

Kingdom Come: Rituals

Vika Kirchenbauer and Martin Sulzer

2014, 7 min, Video, Germany

"KINGDOM COME: RITUALS is a large projection of aerial footage that has been shot by pigeons equipped with lightweight digital cameras. With heavy wind and the nervous flapping of wings, the viewer gets only a fractured impression, though immediately identifiable, of a political demonstration. The signature elements of protest are captured only in glimpses: masses of people moving steadily in the same direction, banners, police, police cars, barriers, etc. The political motivations of the demonstration remain ambiguous as the images primarily highlight the mere shape of political protest. In RITUALS, political protest in public space is reduced, presented as a visually uniform and dramaturgically ritualized movement of bodies." (VK + MS)

The Somber Vault

John Powers

2014, 6 min, Video, US

"He achieved just the feeling I'm after -- he makes the viewers feel that they are trapped in a room where all the doors and windows are bricked up, so that all they can do is butt their heads forever against the wall."-- Mark Rothko

Three sets of windows: Florence, Italy (1534-71), New York, New York (1959-61), Fultonville, New York (2013).

Calgon

Stephanie Wuertz and Sasha Janerus

2014, 15 min, Video, US

"An autoerotic odyssey in three or more parts, starring Barbie Benton and a box of soap." (SW + SJ)

sound of a million insects, light of a thousand stars

Tomonari Nishikawa

2014, 2 min, Video, US

"I buried a 100-foot (about 30 meters) 35mm negative film under fallen leaves alongside a country road, which was about 25 km away from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, for about 6 hours, from the sunset of June 24, 2014, to the sunrise of the following day. The night was beautiful with a starry sky, and numerous summer insects were singing loud. The area was once an evacuation zone, but now people live there after the removal of the contaminated soil. This film was exposed to the possible remaining ... radioactive materials." (TN)

Catalogue

Dana Berman Duff

2014, 7 min, 16mm on Video, US

"*Catalogue* is a silent 16mm black-and-white film that considers the time it takes to look at desirable objects, in this case, the objects for sale in a mainstream furniture catalogue. The catalogue presents de-saturated photographs of staged rooms shot and printed to resemble sets for film-noir era movies, hypothetically increasing their desirability. In these photographs the designer furniture knock-offs are indistinguishable from the original pieces. The film gazes at page after page of objects, each one exquisite and exquisitely photographed, minding the time it takes for the rise of desire and its dissolution." (DBD)

Friday, January 30
Columbia College (Ferguson Theater)
600 S. Michigan Ave.

6:30pm
Shorts Program Two

Kriminalistik

Janie Geiser

2013, 4 min, Video, US

"Evidence is scientifically arranged and catalogued, suggesting a corridor to knowledge. Elusive. Crimson." (JG)

I'm in Pittsburgh and It's Raining

Jesse McLean

2015, 14 min, Video, US

"Experimental portrait of a famous Hollywood actress's stand-in and body double provides an exciting look at the glamorous world of film. What is real, what isn't? Music by The Velvet Underground." (JM)

A Symptom

Ben Balcom

2014, 6 min, 16mm, US

"A mirrored discourse. The object we see is the object wanting enumeration, but it is never said quite right. We are looking at speech from both sides of the mirror, listening to the wretch who elaborates upon the grid of desire." (BB)

California Picture Book

Zach Iannazzi

2013, 12 min, 16mm, US

45 7 Broadway

Tomonari Nishikawa

2013, 5 min, 16mm, US

"This is about Times Square, the noises and movements at this most well-known intersection. The film was shot on black and white film through color filters, red, green, and blue, then shots were optically printed onto color film through these filters. The layered images of shots by the handheld camera would agitated the scenes, and the advertisements on the digital billboards try to pull ahead of others." (TN)

Model Fifty-One Fifty-Six

Josh Weissbach

2014, 11 min, 16mm, US

"Model Fifty-One Fifty-Six chronicles the physical changes of the maker's heart, which display a movement from human to cyborg that connects personal vulnerability to 1980s science fiction." (JW)

Narcissi / Rose

Shiloh Cinquemani

2012, 3 min, 16mm, US / 2013, 8 min, 16mm, US

"A Berlin spring still life." / "An explosive portrait." (SC)

Vidée

Diane Kitchen

2014, 9 min, 16mm, US

"Consulting the text of the natural world." (DK)

Tender Feet

Fern Silva

2013, 10 min, 16mm, US

"*Tender Feet* was shot on the road in the southwest leading up to the not quite so cataclysmic and transformative events anticipated to take place around Dec. 21st 2012. As digits flipped on the odometer, so did the days in the Mayan calendar shedding light and darkness on charred forests, arid landscapes, falling stars, destructive vortexes, fortune telling traffic signs, and ticking time bombs..." (FS)

8:30pm

Shorts Program Three

Silicon Valley Rhapsody

Klaus Wyborny

2014, 14 min, Video, Germany

"A anarchisticly inclined young man enters a Polynesian Village, where he realizes, that it is not Polynesian anymore, because the Californian desert has expanded to the last reaches of the world. Adaptation of a scene from Melville's novel *Typee*. With 800 landscape shots shot 1988 in the Silicon Valley." (KW)

Asleep [Adormecido]

Paulo Abreu

2012, 12 min, Video, Portugal

"*Asleep* is an experimental and poetic documentary, shot in Super 8, about the Capelinhos volcano in the Azorean island of Faial. Also included is some footage of the successive eruptions during 1957 and 1958." (PA)

Prospector

Talena Sanders

2015, 13 min, 16mm on Video, US

"Experiments in 19th century acculturation of two groups living thousands of miles apart, but sharing the same name, depending on who you talk to and what language you say it in. Parallel histories of invasion, assimilation, aspirations, valuation, and re-evaluation, from the first colonization to the mid-century modern and today. Prospectors, colonists, and tourists seeking future sites of luxury, resources, and romance.

Text/audio drawn from Lord Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education (1835), Captain Richard H. Pratt's speech printed in "The Advantages of Mingling the Indians With Whites" (1892), G&E Show n' Tell PictureSound Record "Indian Pow Wow" (1965), "Christopher Columbus" Mel-O-Toons (1960) language lessons from the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, promotional materials from Jaypee Greens luxury homes." (TS)

The Age of Animals

Gregg Biermann

2014, 40 min, Video, US

"The Age of Animals (2014) is a somewhat different beast (pun intended) in that it features not found footage but rather contemporary video footage Biermann himself shot in the Museum of Natural History in Manhattan, the Vatican, and the Bronx Zoo. However, Biermann applies similar manipulations to this footage, producing a complex three-dimensional illusion in which foreground and background are forever trading places. Indeed, the visual experience of this film is akin to being trapped inside an M.C. Escher painting or riding a rollercoaster after taking a hallucinogen. Yet we can still see the documentary world though these disorienting distortions. In the Museum of Natural History, we see visitors looking at taxidermic animals lost to extinction along with the skeletons and footprints of dinosaurs and other bygone species. A sign reading "What makes the Earth habitable?" spins by, implying the fact that the Earth could very well become uninhabitable. In the Vatican, we see tourists videotaping and photographing the soaring ceilings dedicated to the Creator of animals according to Christian theology. The opposition between the spaces of the natural history museum and the church is emphasized through the soundtrack. This alternates between a repeated segment of sampled choral music, silence, and a recorded interview with paleontologist Peter Ward who laments the politics surrounding the discourse on global warming and evolution as well as the misguided notion that previous mass extinctions were caused only by asteroids and not by changing temperatures. The space of the Bronx Zoo, framed by the soundtrack and the other two spaces, reads not as a space of joyful childhood discovery, but rather as the last living relics of the coming mass extinction caused by human ingenuity and greed. Despite the visual distortions, we recognize tortoises, gorillas, giraffes, birds, and so on, but they, too, are barely recognizable in that they suddenly read as the last of their kind. Whether these animals are the product of supreme Creator or evolution becomes irrelevant if they are doomed to disappear. The very title of the film "Age of Animals" implies that the age can end, that there may soon be an age without animals. This film suggests that in the political opposition between science and religion, the casualties are entire species - perhaps all of them.

As a whole, Gregg Biermann's recent work suggests a sense of the overwhelming in a historical moment in which we are disoriented visually, sonically, socially, politically, and even biologically. It reflects and refracts the sense that, even as we attempt to make sense of the contemporary world, it continues to shift, becoming a foreign and unfamiliar territory. In Biermann's work, as in contemporary life, our landmarks are constantly shifting, forcing us to find new ways of locating ourselves in a spatial and temporal situation that is ever slipping beyond our mind's grasp." (Jaimie Baron)

Saturday, January 31
Columbia College (Ferguson Theater)
600 S. Michigan Ave.

3:00pm

Sauerbruch Hutton Architects

Harun Farocki

2013, 72 min, Video, Germany

"Three months in an architects' firm in Berlin. From the architecture down to the tiniest door handle, a questioning of matter and the verb." (Harun Farocki)

"Architects at work: a priori nothing lends itself better to cinema, nothing is more graphic than shots that alternate between the drawing and the built structure, between the two-dimensional plan and the three dimensional result. Yet this film, with its corporate-sounding title, shot over three months in a large Berlin-based firm abandons this clarity to instil a generalised doubt — not so much about the value of those it films as about its own critical viewpoint. Certainly, it is no trifling matter that in one of their on-going projects (a Virtual Reality Centre in Laval), the architects are trying to merge the building into the landscape: the invisibility justified by the end use of the building operates as a clue to the fact that, in architecture, during the design phase

there is nothing to see, and that actual construction is less a matter of a change in scale than a sudden, demiurgic leap where there is no going back. In this group portrait, the creators appear both as master rhetoricians and children playing with materials and colours. Through their changing opinions, what Farocki is questioning is nothing less than the relationships between word and matter — which inevitably finds a mirror of cinema in the renewed mystery of architectural art: producing form from discourse." (Charlotte Garson, Cinema du Reel)

5:00pm

Shorts Program Four

Heads Rest [ReposeTetes]

Pierre Yves Clouin

2013, 1 min, Video, France

"Heads rest." (PYC)

On the Evening

Olivia Ciummo

2014, 7 min, Video, US

"Dropped into darkness a bit of light shows a path to a geo-political zone in flux. Blazed by prismatic sheen the environment conflates a historic landscape with fear and unknown boundaries. A voice echoes a list of counties to hide, but the calls end up settling in as a dream." (OC)

The Golden Hour

Ross Meckfessel

2014, 7 min, Video, US

"The stink of seaweed permeates the streets. I've heard there's growing dissatisfaction among the youth. Do you feel content? How often do you dream? Are you better off alone?" (RM)

Good Neighbors

Jesse Malmed

2014, 3 min, Video, US

A one-joke film on a one-shot film.

They're not fava beans, they're scarlet runner beans

Tânia Dinis

2013, 10 min, Video, Portugal

"Intergenerational conflict between people who live on and for the countryside. My grandmother and I. The clash of the image with those it represented." (TD)

Aged

Philip Hoffman

2014, 45 min, Video, Canada

"AGED is a 45 minute experimental documentary about the relationship between aging and corporeal perception. From 2005-2011, along with my sisters, I was a caregiver for my father, during his swift movement into old age. Over this period I maintained a practice of diaristic sketching using film, video and sound, and through this process I collected a significant archive of intimate moments, at the summer cottage, where my father chose to die. This raw material has been worked and reworked through various modes of digital and filmic manipulation. Ultimately 'AGED' uncovers the common process of aging, the cinematic elements acting as a corollary for changes in human perception with a view to exceptional vision." (PH)

7:00pm

Shorts Program Five

The Flies (The Birds II)

Susann Maria Hempel

2010, 9 min, Video, Germany

"THE FLIES (The Birds II) offers an experimental sequel to Hitchcock's THE BIRDS; When the attack by THE BIRDS is over, "The End" continues: with insects attacking the abandoned houses and gardens that Hitchcock's Birds had conquered." (SMH)

Seven Times a Day We Bemoan Our Lot and at Night We Get Up to Avoid Dreaming

Susann Maria Hempel

2014, 18 min, Video, Germany

"The title ... is loosely based on a psalm, and Hempel accordingly designed her work as a kind of medieval prayer book, with animated miniatures, ornaments and text banners that wildly intertwine. The film recounts a man's traumatic life story using passages from interviews the director conducted with him—resulting in a work that is at once disturbing, comical and sensual, or, as the jury of the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen put it: 'Horror and cuteness are inseparably interlinked here.' It is once again a tale about people and things that are no longer needed, about the marginal elements in our society, which however experience unprecedented appreciation in the film." (Grit Krause, shortfilm.de)

Red Capriccio

Blake Williams

2014, 7 min, Video with anaglyph glasses, Canada

"Red Capriccio is an anaglyph found-footage film thematically inspired by the capriccio paintings of Giovanni Paolo Panini (viz. *Ancient Rome* [1757]), Thomas Cole (viz. *The Architect's Dream* [1840]), and Charles Robert Cockerell (viz. *The Professor's Dream* [1848])—which depicted fantastical, sublime, and dilapidated architectural landscapes—and is structured in the style of Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky's capriccio music compositions—freely formed from clashing staccatos and glissandos, and propelled by swift tonal shifts. The film's three movements depict a parked Chevy Caprice police vehicle, Montreal's grandiose and decomposing Turcot Interchange, and an empty basement-turned-rave room." (BW)

Fag

Scott Fitzpatrick

2014, 5 min, 16mm on Video, Canada

"Really, when it comes to gay rights, there's two wars going on. The first war is political. But the culture war is over." (Dan Savage) "How can you transgress in 2015? Don't bother. A personal venn diagram, a conceptual cobbling together of interests and identifiers, a sound and animation experiment rendered in all 260 fonts on my Macbook." (SF)

Bozuk

Burak Çevik
2014, 8 min, Video, Turkey
A broken public video screen, an iPhone 4, Final Cut Pro X.

+X

Simon Payne
2014, 7 min, Video, UK
"A simple repeating pattern re-filmed with a handheld camera a number of times and then superimposed. The instability of the camera, in counterpoint to a more co-ordinated rearrangement of the composition, makes for a shifting register of form, movement and colour." (SP)

NOT AND OR

Simon Payne
2014, 18 min, Video, UK
"NOT AND OR involves black and white quadrilaterals spinning in virtual space that alternate with the same static shapes re-filmed from a screen in real space. The second half of the piece is the same as the first, but flipped, reversed and re-filmed again, through successive generations - adding while taking away." (SP)

08.09.14

Yoel Meranda
2014, 1 min, Video, Turkey
"This is me playing with the video recording of a skype conversation." (YM)

That Dizzying Crest

Jeremy Moss
2014, 10 min, Video, US
"Direct manipulation acts as inciting catalyst as a dancing figure becomes ingrained and lost in the celluloid, creating an immersive new realm for the moving figure. She repeats short phrases of choreography on ambient loop; each repetition alters our perception of movement and space." (JM)

Festival Credits:

Festival Director and Programmer: Patrick Friel
Festival Coordinator/Chicago Filmmakers Program Director: Josh B. Mabe
Festival Judges: Christy LeMaster, Jesse Malmed, Erin Nixon
Program Book Cover and Poster Design: Alexandra Ensign
Chicago Filmmakers Executive Director: Brenda Webb
Chicago Filmmakers Marketing and Fundraising Manager: Sarah Rubin
Chicago Filmmakers Board of Directors: Jesse Ewing, Mary Fishman, Dirk Matthews, Christopher Peppey, Nina Puglia, Greg Salustro, Carol Schaffner, and Brenda Webb

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And, in particular, very special thanks to all of the artists showing in the festival!

Onion City Experimental Film and Video Festival
is a production of **Chicago Filmmakers**.

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