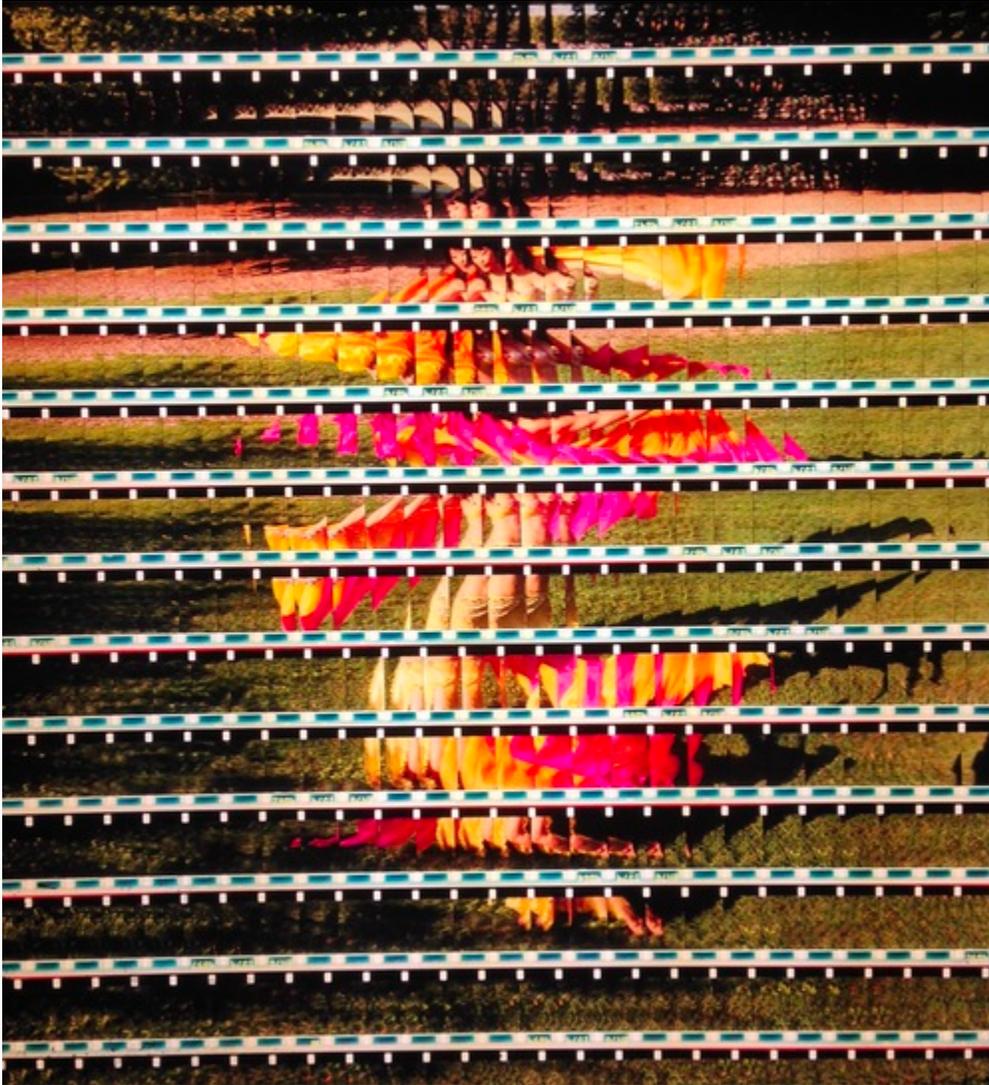


## [MONO NO AWARE: Essential Experimental Film](#)

*by Nicole Durbin*



*Camera Paintings by Joel Schlemowitz*

[MONO NO AWARE](#), the Brooklyn-based film organization, hosted their 7th annual cinematic exhibition this weekend. Held at [LightSpace Studios](#), the two-day celebration of film and related art included work from artists across the globe.

The difficulty (and joy!) in discussing this event is that there's so much to talk about. Saturday's closing show alone featured 5 installations and half a dozen short films, several of which could merit a few hundred words of their own. So apologies to the many excellent artists not featured here, and

heads up to film enthusiasts - *do not miss this event next year!*



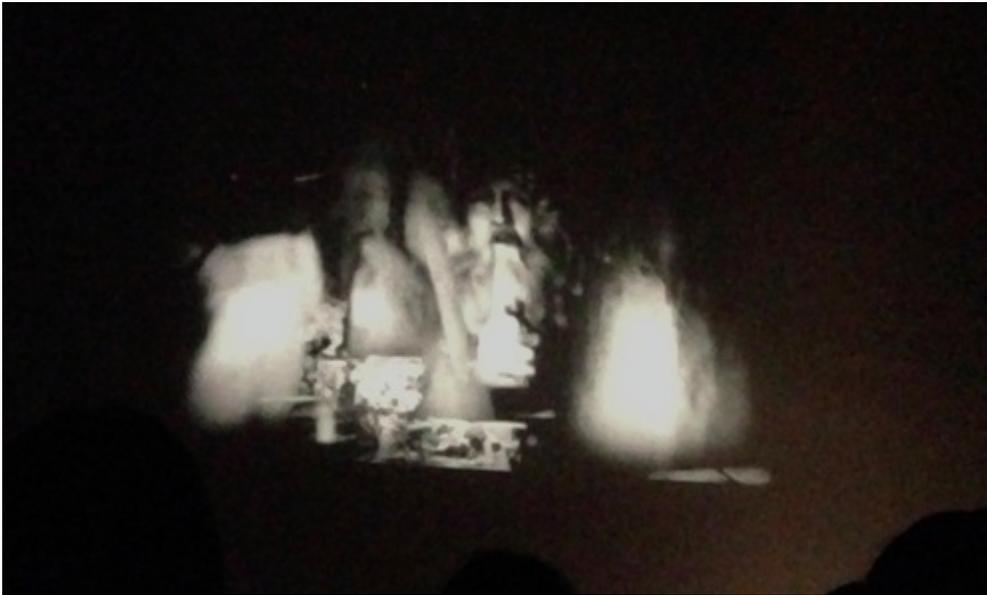
*Gravity's Veil by Mark Street*

Of the installations, *Skinner #3* by Jae Song earned the most attention ([video here](#)). Occupying approximately a 10-foot by 3-foot area, the work is a Rube Goldberg-esque contraption that plays a single loop of 16mm film through two projectors that each face the center of the space. In this center, a woman has a conversation with her past (and/or future) self ad infinitum, about what she wants and what matters.



It's easy to get distracted wondering "How'd he do that?!" with this installation, but deeper reflection shows this isn't some cheap trick. Song's artist statement explains how "The physical person becomes a projection of the thoughts, the thoughts are physical looming over and around looping through the projectors." This will ring true to anyone who's ever felt lost inside a personal existential spiral.

Another highlight was “Rediscovering German Futurism 1920-1929.” [Kurt Ralske](#) introduced the work with a fascinating lecture on German and Italian futurism, explaining how, “The Futurists realized they loved the power of machines, they loved speed, they loved inhuman force, they loved war, they loved fascism.” Ralske continued, with the help of PowerPoint, on how this influence can be spotted in the films of Weimar Germany and specifically in the work of Eugen Schüfftan.



Schüfftan, you see, was a special effects pioneer of his age, providing the effects for Fritz Lang’s “Metropolis.” Ralske and partner Miriam Atkin didn’t exactly deliver on the promise to explain these techniques in detail (in retrospect that promise seems like a bit of fun they were having with the audience), but instead Atkin delivered a harrowing spoken-word performance, followed by the screening of Schüfftan’s “Der Tod des Faust.” Accompanied by live trumpet and alto sax (Ralske and Daniel Carter), the film was surreal, disturbing, and intense. Schüfftan (who was Jewish) later left Germany to escape Nazism, implying that this early film may have been both a representation of war-like futurist ideals and an disturbed cry from inside a country beginning to incubate hate and violence against him.

Visit [mononoawarefilm.com](http://mononoawarefilm.com) for more information on these and other artists who contributed to the event.

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