

Gravitational Lensing: Feminist Film Dialogues
Program 4: Metaphysics & Magic
Shapeshifters Cinema, October 25, 2024

***Smudge Series: Indabaabasaan, Soda Lake and Boozhoo Jiibayag* by Eve-Lauryn LaFountain, 2023, 16mm film, 7:13 mins**

This trilogy of 16mm films explores living indigenous histories in Southern California. In *Indabaabasaan (I Smudge It, I Cleanse It)*, the artist cleanses the city and sets the tone. *Soda Lake* bends the sky, earth and air. *Boozhoo Jiibayag (Hello Ghosts)* shows the spirits that come out to play when darkness settles over the desert. The Ojibwe titles come from the artist's traditional tribal language, which she uses her art practice to explore, reclaim, and relearn.

***Tectum Argenti* by Joanna Byrne, 2022, 16mm shown on DV, 8:30 mins**

"Tectum argenti" is the alchemists' ancient name for bismuth (Bi in the periodic table), meaning literally, 'silver being made'. In this film Byrne evokes a difficult (but at times euphoric) personal journey of coming out and healing from the past. Internal and external landscapes intertwine in an assemblage of fractured but interconnected poetic gestures, multiple exposures, textural images, and abstract marks made onto the surface of silver-rich 16mm Fomapan reversal film. Hand-dyed with turmeric, washed in tea, wine and blackberry juice, tumble dried, painted, cut into, scratched and spliced, dust and hair cling to the skin of the celluloid.

***Emmett Street: A Video Poem* by Krista Leigh Steinke, 2021, Super-8 shown on DV, 4:00 mins**

Emmett Street is based on a poem about a female ghost that lives in an old house with two women. The ghost becomes a metaphor for the fading analog film medium and an homage to the women who worked in the film industry in the early 20th century.

***Pwdre Ser the rot of stars* by Charlotte Pryce, 2018, 16mm shown on DV, 6:00 mins**

Pwdre Ser is the Welsh name for a mythical substance that has been observed by many since the 1400's. The film depicts an encounter with this mysterious, luminous, electrical substance. Inspired equally by medieval accounts of visionary experiences and by 19th century photography of the invisible, *Pwdre Ser* joins Kirlian photography with hand-processed images.

***Second Sun* by Leslie Supnet, 2014, Super-8 shown on DV, 3:10 mins**

The rising sound of drums emphasizes flashes of lights, images of the solar system and a post-apocalyptic imagining of the birth of our Second Sun.

***Moon Moth Bed* by Virginia L. Montgomery, 2023, DV, 6:20 mins**

Moon Moth Bed is a surreal, symbolic, and experimental short film about destruction, rebirth, and collective consciousness. Inspired by Dr. Donna Haraway's ecofeminist writings and pan-psyche philosophy, this live-action film collages imagery of real Luna moths hatching from their cocoons. This ethereal video dreamworld is invaded by a deus-ex-machina device that is ultimately overpowered by flows of honey in order to restore peace.

***Somewhere Between Right and Wrong There is a Garden* by Yin-Ju Chen, 2023, DV, 16:00 mins**

Taking for inspiration a line by the thirteenth-century Persian poet Rumi, "Somewhere Beyond Right and Wrong..." is the account of a healing process and a meditation on human suffering. Combining found footage, documentation from the artist's own travels, and animations of the mythological centaur Chiron (renowned as a healer and prophet), the film asks how spiritual practice can help us to move beyond individual subjectivity to perceive life and death from a cosmic perspective.

***Them Oracles* by Alee Peoples, 2012, 16mm film, 7:30 mins**

A skeptic investigation of what an oracle can be and what it would sound like. Human desire and blind faith allow, maybe even will, these mystic soothsayers to exist.

*** INTERMISSION ***

Flor Serpiente by Rosario Sotelo, 2014, 16mm film, 4:45 mins

An observation of time through passing shadows and ritual movement.

Onikuma by Alessia Lupo Cecchet, 2016, DV, 12:00 mins

Onikuma is Japanese yokai, a demon bear known for chasing horses. Surrounded by a foreign landscape, two women will understand that demons can come in different forms.

Cycladic Thermometer by Kate Dollenmayer, 2017/2023, 16mm shown on DV, 7:30 mins

A found text from a darkroom thermometer package provides instructions for healing the wounds of this world, with help from a foosball player posing as a Cycladic figure. Spanning time and space from Bronze-Age Ano Syros to present-day Los Angeles, "...everything that we see in life is something of a shadow cast by that which we do not see. Plato was right." (quotation from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.)

EPOS (Chapter 5) by Lovage Sharrock, 2022, DV, 3:27 mins

EPOS is both an experiment in multidisciplinary filmmaking and an enigmatic opus that spins a mythopoeic yarn for the creative process. Chapter 5 is the resolution of this 5-part tale about a spell that escapes from its spell caster to go exploring.

Golden Dragon Temple by Lingyun Zheng, 2013, DV, 15:00 mins

"Golden Dragon Temple is the place where my deceased family members were laid to rest. Through my visits to Golden Dragon Temple, I have felt a deep connection between the spirits of the dead and the physical world. I first heard stories about this place during my childhood, and now, as I reflect on the memories of my family members who have passed away, I feel that I can reunite with them through the stories they shared with me. This project was made after the death of the main characters, but I bring them back to life with animations, family albums and home videos. However, my work goes beyond the mere pixels on the screen - I believe that the spirits of the dead can be felt and experienced in many ways, and that they continue to live on beyond their physical bodies." (Lingyun Zheng)

...These Blazing Stars! by Deborah Stratman, 2011, 16mm film, 15:00 mins

Since comets have been recorded, they've augured disaster: catastrophe, messiahs, upheaval and end times. ...*These Blazing Stars!* Is a short film about these meteoric ice-cored fireballs and their historic ties to divination that combines imagery of 15th-18th century European broadsides with NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory footage, juxtaposing the modern empirical desire to probe and measure against older, more intuitive methods of gleaning information.



Gravitational Lensing: Feminist Film Dialogues is dedicated to exploring the visions, voices, concerns and lineage of women, non-binary, genderqueer and trans filmmakers through public film screenings, workshops, conversations and presentations.

Curators: Amy Reid and Kathleen Quillian

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