

# **Gravitational Lensing: Feminist Film Dialogues**

## **Program 9: Labor**

### **Shapeshifters Cinema, July 11, 2025**

#### ***Fake Fruit Factory* by Chick Strand, 1986, 16mm film, 22:00 mins**

An intimate documentary about young women who make papier mache fruit and vegetables in a small factory in Mexico. They have a gringo boss, but the factory is owned by his Mexican wife. The focus of the film is on the color, music and movement involved in their work, and the gossip which goes on constantly, revealing what the young women think about men.

#### ***Maternity* by Nataliya Ilchuk, 2019, DV, 17:00 mins**

*Maternity* is a film about a mother's fatigue. Her self-sacrifice and the physical and emotional exhaustion involved in looking after her two small children becomes a transcendental state close to spiritual ecstasy.

#### ***Hello, Whale* by Laura Ohio, 2023, DV, 14:00 mins**

*Hello, Whale* is a diaristic film that follows a sex worker and her encounters with three distinct versions of a whale that transform her definitions of love, death, and survival. She documents her personal and work life, observing the entanglement of her body and the systemic pressures of late capitalism.

\*\*\* INTERMISSION \*\*\*

#### ***Fannie's Film* by Fronza Woods, 1979, 16mm shown on DV, 14:30 mins**

A 65-year-old cleaning woman for a Pilates studio performs her job while telling us in voiceover about her life, hopes, goals, and feelings. A challenge to mainstream media's ongoing stereotypes of women of color who earn their living as domestic workers, this seemingly simple documentary achieves a quiet revolution: the expressive portrait of a fully realized individual.

#### ***A Movement Against the Transparency of the Stars* by Esy Casey, 2023, DV, 30:00 mins**

A contemplation on the meanings of movement in the migration experience: the grace and skill of a Filipina domestic worker are juxtaposed with devotional dances to the Santo Niño statue that Magellan brought to the islands in 1521. The ensuing galleon trade of silk and porcelain for New World silver initiated the global economy, and the cycle where female care labor is now the commodity in demand. Today, the global commodity is the labor of women. Each day, twelve 747 planes full of overseas workers leave the Philippines to work abroad for several years at a time, absent in their families' lives. The film's script was distilled from interviews with Filipina domestic workers around the world, identifying common situations and sensations while protecting the identities of those who have been trafficked and are in geographic limbo. The performers all bring their lived experience in this realm to the film. The sound design of the film splits the two worlds between right and left speakers, allowing viewers to shift between two worlds and languages, or feel positioned between both. This project was made possible by the invaluable perspectives and performances of several individuals in the Oakland-based organization Filipino Advocates for Justice.

***Fucked Like a Star* by Stefani Saintonge, 2018, DV, 8:00 mins**

A layered composition of Black women from Haiti and New Orleans doing skillful, mundane work – braiding hair, crushing spices, threading fabric – is superimposed onto the work of soldier ants to visually manifest through four stanzas the mythology of their queen. The repetition involved in their work becomes a tapestry of texture and movement allowing for an intense intimacy with these women through their otherwise invisible labor.

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**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

**Advisory Board:** Erina C Alejo, Bill Basquin, Miriam Campos-Quinn, Adrienne Finelli, Kristy Guevara-Flanagan, Irene Lusztig, Rocio Olivares, Elena Pardo, Rosario Sotelo, Anjali Sundaram, Ellie Vanderlip, Patricia Ledesma Villon, Leila Weefur

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