

**Thursday, January 10, 2013, 7:00 pm**

**Los Angeles Filmforum at MOCA presents:**

***Breaking the Plane***

**At MOCA Grand Avenue, 250 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles 90012**

Tickets: \$12, FREE for members of MOCA or Los Angeles Filmforum (present your membership card at the box office to claim tickets; no free tickets will be issued without membership card). For tickets, go to [moca.org](http://moca.org) and click on calendar.

In response to the exhibition *Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void, 1949-62*, Los Angeles Filmforum at MOCA presents an international program of radical films that puncture the image, three-dimensionalize the film surface, or otherwise challenge the traditional cinematic experience. Each work in the program unleashes an energy unseen in ordinary cinema by transforming the strip of film from an unbroken “window on the world” into a turbulent contest of individual frames.

Just as post-war painters challenged the continued legitimacy of the picture plane, artists working in film sought to push past the “realistic” representations of time and space typified by the hegemonic Hollywood studio productions. Breaking with accepted forms of cinematic representation—often by physically altering the film itself—these works appear to fulfill Lucio Fontana’s prescient call for the discovery of a “luminous malleable substance” that would allow for an art of speed to be created in four dimensions. Politically, sexually, and formally radical, these transgressive works from 1959-67 still retain their power to shock. The result is a visceral cinema, both literally and metaphorically full of holes.

Screening:

**Jane Conger Belson Shimane, *Odds and Ends* (1959, 16mm, color, 4 min.)**

Though frequently described as a parody because of its monotonous, rambling, bongo infused soundtrack, *Odds and Ends*, is also a beautifully dense compendium of moving image-making and -editing techniques. Sensitively painted and scratched film is rapidly intercut with other abstract animations and disparate imagery. The specificity of the visual rhymes—flitting from an animated mandala to dramatically lit foil to light reflecting off the sea, for instance—belies the seeming helter skelter of the montage. Upon repeated viewing, even the voiceover is more complex than it first appears, suggesting as it does a dissonance between two oft-paired métiers, a dissonance that it actually recreates in its contest with the film’s imagery. —Madison Brookshire

**Takahiko Iimura, *On Eye Rape* (1962, 16mm, color, 10 min)**

(Co-produced with Natsuyuki Nakanishi) A found educational film about the sex of plants and animals was punched with big holes in almost every frame throughout the film by myself and an artist friend Natsuyuki Nakanishi who found the film in a garbage. At several points there are inserts of a few frames of a pornographic photo (which would work on a subliminal sense) in which the sex part was covered by black. The film is an irony and at the same time a protest

against sex censorship in Japan at the time in which pornographic scenes had to be covered by black. At the end we even punched holes in these subliminal pictures, thereby “censoring” the censored image. –TI

**Stan Brakhage, *Thigh Line Lyre Triangular* (1961, 16mm, color, 9 min.)**

Only at a crisis do I see both the sense as I've been trained to see it (that is, with Renaissance perspective, three-dimensional logic, colors as we've been trained to call a color a color, and so forth) and patterns that move straight out from the inside of the mind through the optic nerves - spots before my eyes, so to speak - and it's a very intensive, disturbing, but joyful experience. I've seen that every time a child was born .... Now none of that was in *Window Water Baby Moving*; and I wanted a childbirth film which expressed all of my seeing at such a time. –SB

**Stan Brakhage, *Mothlight* (1963, 16mm, color, 4 min)**

Essence of lepidoptera re-created between two strips of clear mylar tape: an anima animation. What a moth might see from birth to death if black were white and white were black. –SB

There is no illusion of depth but a continuous emphasis on the explosive power of the individual frame. The movie is a rhythmic conflagration insisting on itself as truth twenty-four times per second, and the fragility and violence of cinema have never been more apparent. –J. Hoberman in “Direct Cinema,” *Artforum*, September 2012

**Carolee Schneemann, *Fuses* (1967, 16mm, color, 23 min.)**

“The red heat baked into the emulsion suffuses the film, a concrete emblem of erotic power.” –B. Ruby Rich, on *Fuses*

Rather than make metaphors that either obscure or romanticize physical love, in *Fuses* Schneemann depicts it graphically. Rejecting the temporal model that is based on the male orgasm, Schneemann flatly refuses to create a climax in her film, offering us instead a plateau of sustained activity. Our world may be oversaturated with images of sex, but very few of them are actually erotic. This film, however, celebrates bodies in general and these two people in particular, reclaiming sex from pornography and advertising for the profound yes, yes to life that it is. –Madison Brookshire

**Aldo Tambellini, *Black Trip* (1965, 16mm, black and white, 5 min.)**

Beginning in 1965 with *Black Is*, Tambellini launched a series of politically charged experimental films that explore the expressive possibilities of black as a dominant color and idea. For the most part Tambellini's seven “black films” are made without the use of a camera but rather by carefully manipulating the film itself by scorching, scratching, painting and treating the film stock as a type of sculptural and painterly medium. –Harvard Film Archive

**Kurt Kren, *3/60: Baume im Herbst (Trees in Autumn)* (1960, 16mm, black and white, 5 min.)**

“[Kurt Kren is a] filmmaker who knows how to think in images like few others in this trade, and who realized these images in films that are among the most beautiful and most important in cinematic history.” –Peter Tscherkassky

Largely cut within the camera, contrasting patterns of tree limbs combine across frames to produce a stark work with a staccato rhythm. For the soundtrack, Kren scratched directly onto the area of the film that the projector interprets as sound, creating a rough aural texture that both compliments and contrasts the imagery. –Madison Brookshire

**Kurt Kren, *6/64: Mama und Papa (Materialaktion Otto Muehl) [Mom and Dad (An Otto Muehl Happening)] (1964, 16mm, color, 4 min.)***

Based on Otto Muehl's *Mama und Papa*, Kren's film departs from straight documentation by using editing as both a constructive and destructive force. The actions depicted—Muehl putting pigment, liquid, flowers, feathers, and more on himself and a female nude whom he provocatively fondles—are broken into extremely short fragments, some no more than a few frames, and intercut in repetitive patterns. The splices, visible as jagged white lines across the frame, are so numerous at times as to become the dominant visual impression. Cutting between the fragments, moving forward and back in time, the film creates an incredible barrage of images that has the perverse effect of prolonging each action—a kind of violence on the temporal plane that brings to mind Muehl's tortured canvases even more than his happenings. –Madison Brookshire

**Ken Jacobs, *Blonde Cobra* (1963, 16mm, black and white, 33 min.)**

Featuring Jack Smith. Images gathered by Bob Fleischner, sound-film composed by Ken Jacobs. "[Jacobs'] work opens your ears and mind, and, simply put, has no like in the multiplex, the art house or even most festivals." –Manhola Dargas, *The New York Times*

"*Blonde Cobra* is an erratic narrative -- no, not really a narrative, it's only stretched out in time for convenience of delivery. It's a look in on an exploding life, on a man of imagination suffering pre-fashionable Lower East Side deprivation and consumed with American 1950's, 40's, 30's disgust. Silly, self-pitying, guilt-structured and yet triumphing--on one level--over the situation with style, because he's unapologetically gifted, has a genius for courage, knows that a state of indignity can serve to show his character in sharpest relief. He carries on, states his presence for what it is. Does all he can to draw out our condemnation, testing our love for limits, enticing us into an absurd moral posture the better to dismiss us with a regal 'screw-off.'" –KJ

Programmed by Madison Brookshire

This program is supported by a generous donation from Catherine Opie; the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission; the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, and the Metabolic Studio.

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest-running organization screening experimental and avant-garde film and video art, documentaries, and experimental animation. 2012 is our 37<sup>th</sup> year

Memberships available, \$70 single, \$105 dual, or \$50 single student

Contact us at [lafilmforum@yahoo.com](mailto:lafilmforum@yahoo.com). [www.lafilmforum.org](http://www.lafilmforum.org)

Become a fan on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter!

**Sunday, January 13, 2013, 7:30 pm**

**Los Angeles Filmforum presents:**

***Carolee Schneemann: New videos of the Performing Artist***

**At the Spielberg Theatre at the Egyptian, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90028**

Carolee Schneemann in person!

Tickets: \$10 general, \$6 students/seniors; free for Filmforum members. Available by credit card in advance from Brown Paper Tickets at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/315189> or by cash or check at the door.

Filmforum is delighted to start 2013 with a visit from the influential and fantastic artist Carolee Schneemann. Schneemann, multidisciplinary artist, has transformed the definition of art, especially discourse on the body, sexuality, and gender. The history of her work is characterized by research into archaic visual traditions, pleasure wrested from suppressive taboos, the body of the artist in dynamic relationship to the social body. Schneemann has never ceased to cross mediums and boundaries to make work that resonates with raw poetic power. From her collaged war or diary films and provocative performances to her photos, paintings and installations, Schneemann's varied creations deconstruct our ingrained preconceptions and everyday assumptions. In words, images and actions, her art is deeply personal, sharply critical, intensely expressive, and always innovative. Tonight we are primarily looking at recent video works that draw from or document some of her performances.

Her classic film *Fuses* will be included in the screening **Breaking the Plane**, presented by Los Angeles Filmforum at MOCA, on Thursday January 10 at 7:00 pm. For more information and tickets, see [www.moca.org](http://www.moca.org)

Currently in Los Angeles, her early painting/constructions are exhibited in a group show at THE BOX, "Painting" (how painting became performance). <http://www.theboxla.com/>

Screening:

***Plumb Line*** (1968-71, color, sound, Super 8mm film on video, 14:58)

The dissolution of a relationship unravels through visual and aural equivalences. Schneemann splits and recomposes actions of the lovers in a streaming montage of disruptive permutations: 8 mm is printed as 16mm, moving images freeze, frames recur and dissolve until the film bursts into flames, consuming its own substance. Sound: Carolee Schneemann

***Ask the Goddess*** (1991, color, sound, 7 min.)

Unedited document of performative lecture, videotaped by Tim Howe at Owen Sound, Ontario Canada.

*Ask the Goddess* is a provocative performance in which Schneemann interacts with the audience by responding to sexual and psychic dilemmas read from cards they have submitted.

A continuous relay of randomly projected slides comprises an iconography of Goddess symbols, taboo and sacred, as Schneemann reacts spontaneously to the questions. She channels cogent answers triggered by the unpredictable images and finds herself physically activated, turning into a howling wolf or crawling across the projection area, meowing like a cat.

***Snows*** (1967-2011, color and b&w, silent, 16 mm film on video, 20:30 min.)

*Los Angeles premiere!*

This is a newly restored version of documentation of the 1967 group performance "Snows" "... [Snows] was build out of my anger, outrage, fury and sorrow for the Vietnamese. The performance contained five films whose related content triggered juxtaposition of a winter environment and Vietnam atrocity images."

***Pinea Silva*** (2011, color, sound, 10 min.)

*Los Angeles premiere!*

Hidden and suppressed origins of the iconic Christmas tree are here analyzed as Schneemann reconstructs the archaic gender attributes of the winter tree. A normative hetero Christmas card is juxtaposed with a gay Santa squeezing down a chimney, a Palestinian Santa Claus presenting one skinny tree in Jerusalem, the ancient nordic Goddess affiliation with the tree as vulvic fecundity, and of course including a domestic Cat dressed as Santa Claus. *Pinea Silva* is a lecture which deconventionalizes all aspects of The Christian Christmas tree - - its archaic and sacred aspects invite appreciations by all.

***Americana I-Ching Apple Pie*** (2007, 16:37 min, color, sound, 16:37)

"The 'Americana I-Ching Apple Pie' recipe was first enacted in my Belsize, London kitchen in 1972. Unfortunately, the original footage disappeared with the man doing the documentation who may have been working for the CIA. The next presentation was May '77, as a cooking event for the Heresies Magazine performance and jumble sale benefit. With the exception of a dozen apples, flour, maple syrup, and eggs, which I brought, all the cooking 'material,' utensils, and props were discovered in the jumble. Objects that functionally approximated actual cooking utensils were used: nails, hammers, an arrow, a flower pot, ball bearings, rags, a watering can. The cook's apron was a ripped mini skirt with which I covered my hair. As I state in the performance, 'traditionally you need an apron, but it doesn't matter where you put it.'" - CS

***Devour*** (2003-04, color, sound, 8:40)

Devour is a single-channel version of the artist's multi-channel video projection installation of the same name. Schneemann writes that this work features "a range of images edited to contrast evanescent, fragile elements with violent, concussive, speeding fragments... political disasters, domestic intimacy, and ambiguous menace." In this dense montage, the title comes to stand for both the voraciously synthetic head-on rush of contemporary media, and the corresponding near-addictive impulse of its consumers.

### **More on Carolee Schneemann:**

Carolee Schneemann's pioneering work ranges across disciplines, encompassing painting, performance, film and video. Her early and prescient investigations into themes of gender and sexuality, identity and subjectivity, as well as the cultural biases of art history, laid the groundwork for much work of the 1980s and '90s. Her bold challenges to taboo and tradition can be seen as inspiring and influencing artists as varied as Paul McCarthy, Valie Export, the Guerrilla Girls, Tracy Emin and Karen Finley.

While she is often described as a performance artist, Schneemann first studied painting, and that training informed the course of all her subsequent work. It can be seen in her continuing

identification as a painter and a formalist, in her attention to art-historical figures such as Cézanne, and in the hand-coloring and mark-making to which she subjected the surface of some of her films. However, the effect of her early experience with painting was also reactive and negative; she recognized, as a woman in the early 1960s working in a male-dominated medium, that "the brush belonged to abstract expressionist male endeavor. The brush was phallic." This realization coincided with an explosion of new artistic forms, and while Schneemann would never give up painting, she turned her attention to the downtown New York avant-garde's locus of film, dance, theater, and performance. – more at [eai.org](http://eai.org)

*The Millennium Film Journal* Number 54 Fall 2011 was devoted to the film works of Schneemann, with special essays by Bruce Elder, David James, Sarah Paulson, and Kenneth White. It includes unpublished notes and sketches for *Kitch's Last Meal*. Paule Anglim Gallery in San Francisco has just presented a solo exhibit of her video and photography works;

The Museum of Modern Art in NYC recently featured her installation *Up To And Including Her Limits* in the exhibit "On Line: Drawing Through the Twentieth Century". Her multidisciplinary work has been shown at innumerable venues around the world. A retrospective including film, video installations, kinetic sculptures has recently traveled from the Dorsky Museum of Art, NY to the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle to the Krannert Museum, Champaign-Urbana (February – April 2012). Her letters are the subject of *Correspondence Course: An Epistolary History of Carolee Schneemann and Her Circle*, edited by Kristine Stiles (Duke University Press, 2010). Additional publications include *Imaging Her Erotics – Essays, Interviews, Projects* (MIT Press 2003, 2004) and *More Than Meat Joy: Complete Performance Work and Selected Writing* (McPherson & Co. 1979, 1997). More at <http://www.caroleeschneemann.com/>

-----  
This program is supported by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission; the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, and the Metabolic Studio.

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest-running organization screening experimental and avant-garde film and video art, documentaries, and experimental animation. 2012 is our 37<sup>th</sup> year  
Memberships available, \$70 single, \$105 dual, or \$50 single student  
Contact us at [lafilmforum@yahoo.com](mailto:lafilmforum@yahoo.com). [www.lafilmforum.org](http://www.lafilmforum.org)  
Become a fan on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter!