

Cinema On Air

a project of
free103point9 and Electronic Arts Intermix,
in collaboration with Socrates Sculpture Park.

June 21, 2008, sunset
Socrates Sculpture Park
Broadway at Vernon Boulevard
Long Island City, NY

Live soundtracks performed by:

Damian Catera

Ben Owen

Ferrum Virgo

Matt Wellins

Tune-in on:

88.7-FM and 99.9-FM

Works screened by:

Vito Acconci

Barbara Buckner

Nam June Paik and Jud Yalkut

Dennis Oppenheim

Martha Rosler

Wolf Vostell

Jud Yalkut

Welcome to Cinema On Air

Cinema On Air is a summertime “drive-in,” leaving the car at home and incorporating audience participation. Tonight’s program features an evening of projected silent video works, selected from the EAI Collection, accompanied by two simultaneous sound performances heard through radio headphones. Take a seat in the park, tune-in to either of the two live soundtracks, watch the works in silence, or sample all three experiences.

“On discussing the relationship between sound, image, audience, and the poetic moment in cinema, Maya Deren describes a scenario in which a person looks out of a window onto the street while listening to the activity taking place in the room behind them. Here the observer gathers images happening in one direction and sounds happening in another. ‘...What relates these two moments is your position in relation to the two of them... you stand by the window and have a sense of afternoon, which is neither the children in the street, nor the women talking behind you, but a curious combination of both...’⁽¹⁾

Motion pictures are fundamentally a collage comprised of still images. These frames are often times accompanied by a sequence of sounds. The audience collects the images through eyesight and the sounds through hearing. In this sense, the audience is the locus of cinema. Tonight’s program develops within the audience, in the area where disparate components come together. The park is now an urban drive-in, abandoning the car and embracing the radio, where the edges of the screen are contrasted by the expanse of the night’s sky, suggesting the difference between framing and limitlessness. Images recorded years ago are projected onto a screen, with bodies and places recreated in a new location, flattened from three to two dimensions. Opposite the screen, the lights along the New York City skyline are glowing, the variations in luminance demonstrating the distance from building to building. Soundtracks are created live as the performers play to the silent films and videos. Each sound is happening for the first time, and is displaced from one location to another through the process of transmission. Tonight the park serves as the quintessential movie theater; the meeting place for disparate components, where the audience can ‘stand by the window and have a sense of afternoon’.”

-Sarah Margaret Halpern, concept and program selection.

1. *Poetry and the Film; A Symposium*, Willard Maas.

Program

Part I

Live soundtracks performed by **Damian Catera** and **Ben Owen**.

Backyard Economy I, Martha Rosler

1974, 3:26 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

Backyard Economy II (Diane Germain Mowing), Martha Rosler

1974, 6:32 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

Digging Piece, Vito Acconci

1970, 10 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

Two Stage Transfer Drawing (Returning to a Past State), Dennis Oppenheim

1971, 3 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

A Feedback Situation, Dennis Oppenheim

1971, 3:02 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

3 Stage Transfer Drawing, Dennis Oppenheim

1972, 3:07 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

Part II

Live soundtracks performed by **Matt Wellins** and **Ferrum Virgo**.

Sun in Your Head (Television Decollage), Wolf Vostell

1963, 7:10 min, b&w, silent, 16 mm film on video.

Hearts, Barbara Buckner

1979, 11:56 min, color, silent, video.

Some Manipulations, Jud Yalkut

1969, 3:10 min, color, silent, 16 mm film on video.

TV Cello Premiere, Nam June Paik and Jud Yalkut

1971, 7:25 min, color, silent, 16 mm film on video.

Performing Artists

Damian Catera

Damian Catera is an electro-acoustic composer/guitarist, sound installation creator, and media artist. Catera's work reflects interests in sound-based composition/ improvisation, transmission, and socio-political critique. Recently he's been performing improvised "deCompositions" for live electronics, radio, and guitar. Catera's "deCompositional" process consists of an expanded instrument system, which samples and probabilistically processes live sound with algorithms, which he wrote in the MAX/ MSP programming environment. The end product is a constantly evolving, machine-improvised soundscape that is distinct in each implementation. Catera's sound installations reflect his interest in site-specific sound manipulation and surveillance, which he achieves with software also written in the MAX/ MSP programming environment.

Catera has performed improvised solo guitar/ radio/ computer-based pieces abroad and in the U.S. including New York venues the Knitting Factory, The Kitchen, and The Cooler among many others. He has also performed in the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and Slovakia. In March of 2000 he performed in the "La Primavera en Habana" festival in Cuba. During the spring of 1999, Catera toured the United States with Japanese sound artist and Zeni Geva guitarist K.K. Null.

<http://www.free103point9.org/artists/11/>

<http://catera.net/>

Ferrum Virgo

Ferrum Virgo is an experimental music sextet based in Brooklyn, New York. Ferrum Virgo is Hannah Marcus: piano, violin; Chad Laird: guitar; Lee Azzarello: percussion; Tianna Kennedy: cello, fx; Lea Bertucci: bass clarinet, fx; and Ed Bear: tenor sax, fx.

<http://www.free103point9.org/artists/1341/>

Ben Owen

Ben Owen's current work includes improvised and graphic score-based performance, audio and video collaborations, and a weekly internet radio program. His early sound studies began with cassettes and live radio, in tandem with stone lithography printmaking and photographic slide projections. Owen's process of lithographic printing is balanced by the intended preservation and natural degradation of marks. He finds complimentary inherent similarities between the cycles of inking and surface reception of printmaking, mark making through drawing on printing stones, and audio marks amplified by contact mics and environmental recordings. Owen is interested in the relationship between the spacial aspects of existing sound fields, intervened environments, and the projection and reflection of light. Locations are an active and physical palette, much like an improvisational setting where control is relinquished. Through mark making, and an attention to instability he continues the practice of listening and response.

Owen has presented work with The Kitchen, free103point9 Wave Farm, Millennium Film Workshop, the White Box Gallery, 106BLDG30, Tonic, Engine 27, the 6 & B Community Garden, Issue Project Room, Diapason Gallery for Sound and Intermedia, and The Tank in New York; das kleine field recordings festival in Berlin, Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and the Kichijoji Museum in Tokyo; as well as various ongoing radio programs on stations Resonance FM in London, WKCR Columbia University New York, Radia Network, and free103point9 in New York.

Owen has released audio works on winds measure recordings, addenda, unframed recordings, free103point9 Dispatch Series, Autumn Records, Petite Sono, Throat, Phonography.org, con-v, Frozen Elephants Music, Asthmatic Kitty, and room40.

<http://www.free103point9.org/artists/13/>
<http://benowen.org>

Matt Wellins

Matt Wellins is an interdisciplinary artist who frequently works with music, video, installation, radio theater, and text. At the present time, his work is concentrated on designing and playing electronic devices.

<http://www.free103point9.org/artists/1340/>

Works Screened

***Backyard Economy I*, Martha Rosler**

1974, 3:26 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video. (Included on Super-8 Shorts)

***Backyard Economy II (Diane Germain Mowing)*, Martha Rosler**

1974, 6:32 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video. (Included on Super-8 Shorts)

Set in the arch-American “home movie” context of a sunny suburban backyard, these early Super 8 films document the mundane activities of a woman going about her domestic chores. Quietly depicting this figure in the tasks of mowing and watering the grass, hanging laundry to dry, and keeping her son company, Rosler points up the labor that allows leisure, and interrogates the ‘economy’ that creates her role.

***Digging Piece*, Vito Acconci**

1970, 10 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video.

Standing alone among beach dunes, Acconci begins to kick at the sand below him. Over the course of the film’s ten minutes, this repeated action displaces sand at a steady rate: as the artist sinks lower into the hole he creates, the mound of sand before him grows in correspondence.

***Two Stage Transfer Drawing (Returning to a Past State)*, Dennis Oppenheim**

1971, 3 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video. (Included on Program Six.)

A boy (the artist’s son) draws a shape on the artist’s back. The artist attempts to simultaneously draw the same shape onto the wall.

***A Feedback Situation*, Dennis Oppenheim**

1971, 3:02 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video. (Included on Program Six.)

Oppenheim writes: “As I run a marker along Erik’s back, he attempts to return the movement to my back. In feeding stimuli through my son, I make contact with my past, which is what is returned to me through his drawing.”

***3 Stage Transfer Drawing*, Dennis Oppenheim**

1972, 3:07 min, color, silent, Super 8 film on video. (Included on Program Six.)

The artist draws a shape on the back of a girl (his daughter) who simultaneously tries to draw the same shape on the back of a boy (his son), who in turn tries to transfer that shape onto the wall.

Sun in Your Head (Television Decollage), Wolf Vostell

1963, 7:10 min, b&w, silent, 16 mm film on video. (Included on *Fluxfilm Anthology*, published by Re:Voir.)

Compiled by George Maciunas (1931-1978, founder of Fluxus), *Fluxfilm Anthology* is a document consisting of 37 short films shown as part of the events and happenings of the New York avant-garde.

Hearts, Barbara Buckner

1979, 11:56 min, color, silent, video. (Included on *Barbara Buckner: Selected Works I.*)

Selected Works I exemplifies Buckner's use of image-processing techniques to create dynamic visual expressions that manifest heightened states of consciousness and transform the electronic into the organic. In *Hearts*, vibrant heart-like forms pulsate with intense color and rhythm over a hallucinatory, shifting landscape.

Some Manipulations, Jud Yalkut

1969, 3:10 min, color, silent, 16 mm film on video.

Some Manipulations depicts a series of 1969 performances at the Judson Church by Fluxus artists Jean Toche, Steve Young, Nam June Paik, and Al Hansen. However, it is no passive documentation: Yalkut's camera zooms into and out of discrete gestures and abstracted forms at high speed; he divides the screen into four quadrants, each holding a separate image. The juxtaposition creates a roiling, staccato mix of color, motion and shape.

TV Cello Premiere, Nam June Paik and Jud Yalkut

1971, 7:25 min, color, silent, 16 mm film on video. (Included on *Video Synthesizer and "TV Cello" Collectibles.*)

TV Cello Premiere is a silent film documentation of Charlotte Moorman in her first performance on Paik's eponymous TV Cello at the Bonino Gallery in New York in 1971.

About free103point9

free103point9 is a non-profit arts organization focused on establishing and cultivating the genre Transmission Arts. This genre encompasses a diversity of practices and media working with the idea of transmission or the physical properties of the electromagnetic spectrum. Transmission art is generally a participatory live-art or time-based art, and often manifests as radio art, video art, light sculpture, installation, and performance. With locations in upstate New York (Wave Farm) and Brooklyn; free103point9 activities support and promote artists exploring transmission mediums for creative expression. free103point9's programs include public performances and exhibitions, an online radio station, the free103point9 Transmission Artists, an artist residency program, a distribution label, an education initiative, a sculpture garden, a study center, and an online archive. www.free103point9.org

About Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI)

Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) is a nonprofit arts organization that is a leading international resource for video and media art. A pioneering advocate for media art and artists, EAI's core program is the distribution and preservation of a major collection of over 3,500 new and historical video works by artists. For over 37 years, EAI has fostered the creation, exhibition, distribution and preservation of video art, and more recently, digital art projects. www.eai.org

About Socrates Sculpture Park

Socrates Sculpture Park was an abandoned riverside landfill and illegal dump-site until 1986 when a coalition of artists and community members, under the leadership of artist Mark di Suvero, transformed it into an open studio and exhibition space for artists and a neighborhood park for local residents. Today it is an internationally renowned outdoor museum and artist residency program that also serves as a vital New York City park offering a wide variety of public services. www.socratessculpturepark.org

Cinema On Air is made possible, in part, with public funds through the Electronic Media and Film Program of the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Additional support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Meet The Composer's JPMorganChase Regrant Program for Small Ensembles.

