



EMPAC

**CUBE 2:
HYPERCUBE**

WATERING THE FLOWERS :: FILM SERIES

**THURSDAY INTRODUCED BY
OCT 27 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE
7:00 PM CHARLES ATLAS**

Hypercube

Charles Atlas

Artist Charles Atlas introduces a program of films that were influential in the development of his work-in-progress 3D video and performance work, *Tesseract*, which will be premiered at EMPAC in January 2017 in collaboration with choreographers Rashaun Mitchell and Silas Riener.

Atlas' *Tesseract* is a six-chapter work of science fiction, shot in digital 3D, which traverses a series of hybrid and imagined worlds. Often filmed with a mobile camera that pierces into the dancers' choreography, the images reach out from the theatrical and cinematic realm and into otherworldly dimensions beyond the screen. Shifting back and forth between the live and the filmed, from stage to screen, the accompanying performance combines Mitchell and Riener's choreography with Atlas' live video via a series of active cameras on stage.

PROGRAM

The Midnight Party (1938)

Joseph Cornell and Lawrence Jordan

Jill and Freddy Dancing (1963)

Andy Warhol

Introduction by Charles Atlas

With a short screening of film/video excerpts that include dancing skeletons by the Lumiere Brothers and Disney, *Evil Dead II*, and German filmmaker Walter Ruttmann's abstract films from the 1920s.

Cube²: Hypercube (2002)

Andrzej Sekuła

WATERING THE FLOWERS

Watering the Flowers is a new year-long screening program. Each evening focuses on a recent film or video by an EMPAC-affiliated artist, and will be accompanied by a program of other shorts or features that were influential in the making of their work, whether fiction or documentary, experimental or commercial.

Watering the Flowers, or *L'Arroseur*, is the title of a lost film from 1896 by cinema pioneer Georges Méliès, based on Louis Lumière's film *L'Arroseur Arrosé*, which was released the previous year. *L'Arroseur Arrosé* is often credited as the first fiction film, and its 45 seconds comprise a single gag played on a gardener watering his plants. Highly influential to the development of both narrative cinema and on-screen comedy, it was endlessly copied, parodied, duplicated, and is appropriated even to this day. Its promotional poster was also a first: an audience watching the film—an image of cinema itself.

The title has also been referred to in distinct ways: *The Waterer Watered* or *The Sprinkler Sprinkled* or *The Tables Turned on the Gardener*. This act of differing translation points to the subjective relationship each of us has to language, whether textual, visual, or sonic. All artists are inspired by and learn from others, and this program seeks to “water the flowers,” so to speak, opening a space for collective watching through the artist's eyes. At a time when so many of our moving images are viewed from a computer or handheld device, and our selections are channeled algorithmically according to our narrow interests, this program provides the opportunity to see films that are “lost.” Not films lost in the sense of Méliès' work, but films that are potentially masked by the flood of daily data. *Watering the Flowers* pursues inspiration through the juxtaposition of the unusual, the banned, the overlooked, the old, the new, the personal, the counter-historical, the experimental, and the popular.

FILM NOTES

THE MIDNIGHT PARTY, JOSEPH CORNELL

Effects added by Larry Jordan, 1965-68

1938, 16mm, 4 min

Courtesy of Canyon Cinema

“With his eye for the bizarre and seemingly unobtrusive, Cornell arranges the material into a hilarious and touching tribute to the ecstasy of childhood and childlike make-believe, the different elements combining to form a raucous, yet innocent, bacchanal of silliness and delight.”

—Joshua Michael Rowin, *Token and Traces of Chance: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell* (1997)

The second film in Cornell's *Children's Trilogy*, this joyful silent short intercuts found footage of birds flying, weather vanes turning, and the unfurling of theatrical rigging, comets, and children with acrobats and dancers. Larry Jordan's 1960s post-production manipulations animate the on-screen action with lighting and special effects to heighten the dreamlike quality of Cornell's 1930s trilogy.

JILL AND FREDDY DANCING, ANDY WARHOL

1963, 16mm, 4 min

Courtesy of MoMA Circulating Film & Video Library

“Despite the everyday rooftop setting and [Jill] Johnston's free-flowing movement vocabulary, the duet harkens back to the *pas de deux* in classical ballet. The apotheosis of the love story, the *pas de deux* showcases technical bravura and formal elegance. However, unlike the classical format in which, adhering to strict gender roles, the danseur supports the ballerina in her turns and lifts, here Johnston and [Fred] Herko show their individual movement styles while also dancing together.”

—Paisid Aramphonghan, *Andy Warhol, Fred Herko, and Dance*, (Performing Arts Journal, Inc., 2015)

Jill and Freddy Dancing is one of several films Warhol made with and of queer performance icon Fred Herko in 1963. The film records Herko dancing on a New York rooftop with another Judson dancer Jill Johnston. Shot from above, the film looks down onto the rooftop, while the frame delineates the corner wall of the roof as a stage area. Initially a static theatrical shot with the dancers moving in and out of the frame, the edit soon inverts this relationship by quickening the speed and cutting to close-ups.

CUBE²: HYPERCUBE, ANDRZEJ SEKUŁA

2002, digital projection, 95 min

Courtesy of Swank

Cube²: Hypercube is a 2002 science fiction feature by Andrzej Sekuła that was filmed almost exclusively within the constrained space of a metal-framed “cube” of diffused light. Reliant on active camera work that renders identical rooms with variable timescales, gravity shifts, folding spaces, and deadly CG effects, the film portrays a group of increasingly disoriented protagonists as they attempt to puzzle their way out of a quantum maze. Circling Steadicam work and close-up shots alternate with split-screens and camera rotations to render claustrophobic parallel realities.

BIOGRAPHY

Charles Atlas was born in St. Louis, MO, in 1949, and he has lived and worked in New York City since the early 1970s. His work has been exhibited internationally in such institutions as Tate Modern, London; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include the New Museum, New York; the De Hallen, Haarlem; and Bloomberg SPACE, London; The Contemporary Austin, and the Gwangju Biennial.

WATERING THE FLOWERS
FILM SERIES

THE
UNRELIABLE
NARRATOR
MARTINE
SYMS

THURSDAY
NOV 10
7:00 PM

Los Angeles-based artist Martine Syms is in residence at EMPAC to develop scenarios for a new feature-length film project to be shot using a 360-degree camera rig. For this event, Syms will introduce several recent videos, alongside a discussion of moving images that have been influential to her work. An artist, performer, and designer, Syms also founded the imprint Dominica Publishing, which publishes artist books exploring blackness as a topic, reference, marker, and audience in visual culture. Her book *Implication* and *Distinctions: Format, Content and Context in Contemporary Race Film* considers performances of blackness in mainstream cinema from 1990 to the present. Other work includes *The Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto*, which calls for the culture of the African diaspora to focus its energy on Earth rather than toward transcendence in the cosmos.

STAFF

Geoff Abbas / Director for Stage Technologies
Eric Ameres / Senior Research Engineer
Argeo Ascani / Curator, Music
Eileen Baumgartner / Graphic Designer
David Bebb / Senior Network Administrator
Peter Bellamy / Senior Systems Administrator
Michael Bello / Video Engineer
Victoria Brooks / Curator, Time-Based Visual Arts
Eric Brucker / Lead Video Engineer
Michele Cassaro / Guest Services Coordinator
John Cook / Box Office Manager
David DeLaRosa / Desktop Support Analyst
Zhenelle Falk / Artist Services Administrator
Ashley Ferro-Murray / Associate Curator, Theater & Dance
Kimberly Gardner / Manager, Administrative Operations
Johannes Goebel / Director
Ian Hamelin / Project Manager
Ryan Jenkins / Senior Event Technician
Shannon Johnson / Design Director
Carl Lewandowski / Production Technician
Eric Chi-Yeh Lin / Lead Stage Technician
Stephen McLaughlin / Senior Event Technician
Josh Potter / Marketing and Communications Manager
Alena Samoray / Event Technician
Candice Sherman / Senior Business Administrator
Avery Stempel / Front of House Manager
Kim Strosahl / Production Coordinator
Jeffrey Svatek / Audio Engineer
Dan Swalec / Master Electrician
Todd Vos / Lead Audio Engineer
Michael Wells / Production Technician