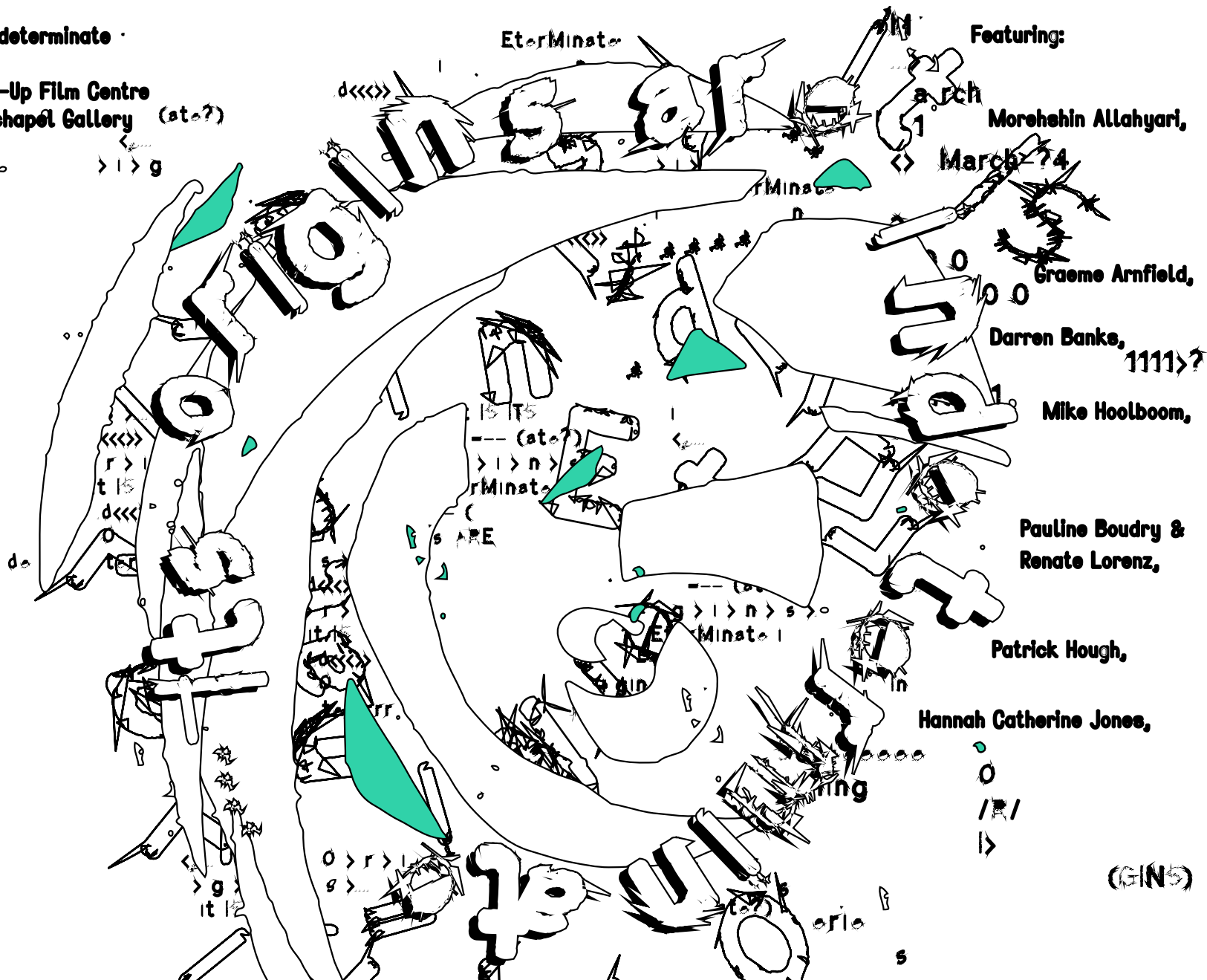


Its origins are indeterminate

March 14, Close-Up Film Centre
March 17, Whitechapel Gallery (at?)

London



Featuring:

Morehshin Allahyari,

March 74

Graeme Arnfield,

Darren Banks,

1111>?

Mike Hoolboom,

Pauline Boudry &
Renate Lorenz,

Patrick Hough,

Hannah Catherine Jones,

(GINO)

March 14, 2018:
Close-Up Film Centre

07:30pm 'Strain Andromeda The'

March 17, 2018:
Whitechapel Gallery (Zilkha Auditorium)

11:00am Gallery opens
11:15am Doors open Zilkha Auditorium
11:30am Welcoming remarks

11:35am Programme 1: Introduction
11:40am Programme 1: 'Making a hunter's bluff out of a word' screens
01:00pm Programme 1: Respondent: Jessa Mockridge, artists' Q&A

01:20pm Lunch break

02:20pm Programme 2: Introduction
02:25pm Programme 2: 'The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut' screens
03:35pm Programme 2: Respondent: Uma Breakdown, artists' Q&A

04:00pm Break

04:20pm Programme 3: Introduction
04:25pm Programme 3: 'We want superior forms of corruption' screens
05:35pm Programme 3: Respondent: Tamar Clarke-Brown, artists' Q&A

05:55pm Close



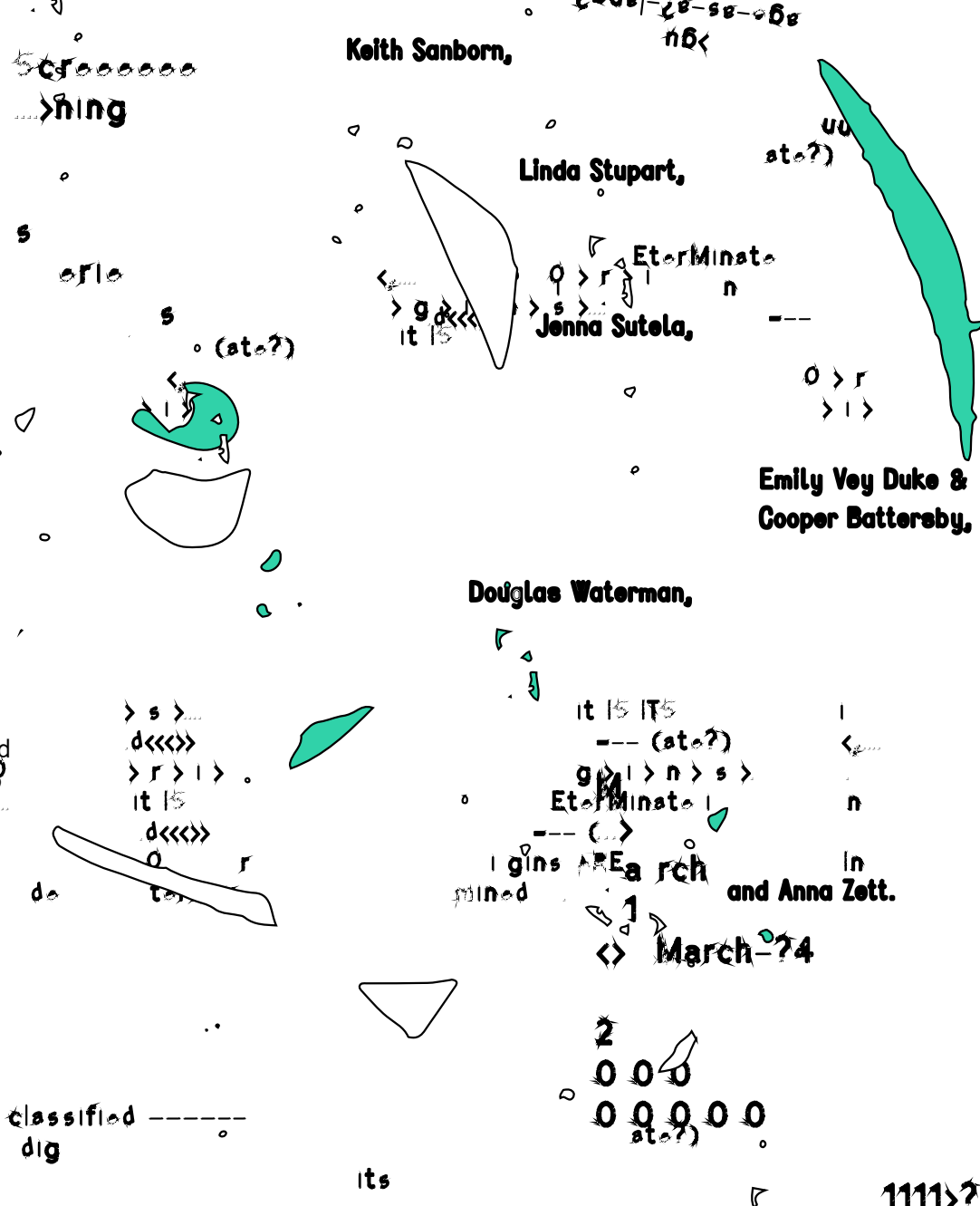
About the series:

The title for this screening series comes from Robert Barry's *Untitled (Its Origins are Indeterminate)* from 1970. On a single sheet of paper type-written statements cascade down the page. The text reads as follows:

'Its origin is indeterminate / Sometimes it is alone / It can cause things to happen / It is affected by other things / Some of it is unknown / It may appear to be something it is not'

The screening series *Its origins are indeterminate* examines the concept of 'language-as-a-virus.' As carriers of meaning, words and images are vulnerable to intervention and corruption. The works presented test and bend the limits of language, send out new versions of media to spread, and breakdown systems of controlling grammar.

Its origins are indeterminate features an array of international artists in four programmes. Three of the programmes are premiering at Whitechapel Gallery, and the fourth, a feature length work, screens at Close-Up Film Centre.



Featuring: Morehshin Allahyari, Graeme Arnfield, Darren Banks, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, Jenny Brady, Terence Broad, Karen Cunningham, Katie Hare, Saskia Holmkvist, Mike Hoolboom, Sky Hopinka, Patrick Hough, Hannah Catherine Jones, Christine Sun Kim & Thomas Mader, Ieva Kraule, Oliver Laric, Liz Magic Laser, Serena Lee, Ghislaine Leung, Deirdre Logue, Sara Magenheimer, Evan Meaney, Anne McGuire, Sondra Perry, Laure Prouvost, Gabrielle de la Puente & Zarina Muhammad, Steve Reinke, Miko Reverezza, Manuel Saiz, Keith Sanborn, Linda Stupart, Jenna Sutela, Emily Vey Duke & Cooper Battersby, Douglas Waterman, and Anna Zett.

Respondents:

Uma Breakdown, Tamar Clarke-Brown, and Jessa Mockridge.

Text (online) by Nina Trivedi.

Its origins are indeterminate (essay) by Erik Martinson.

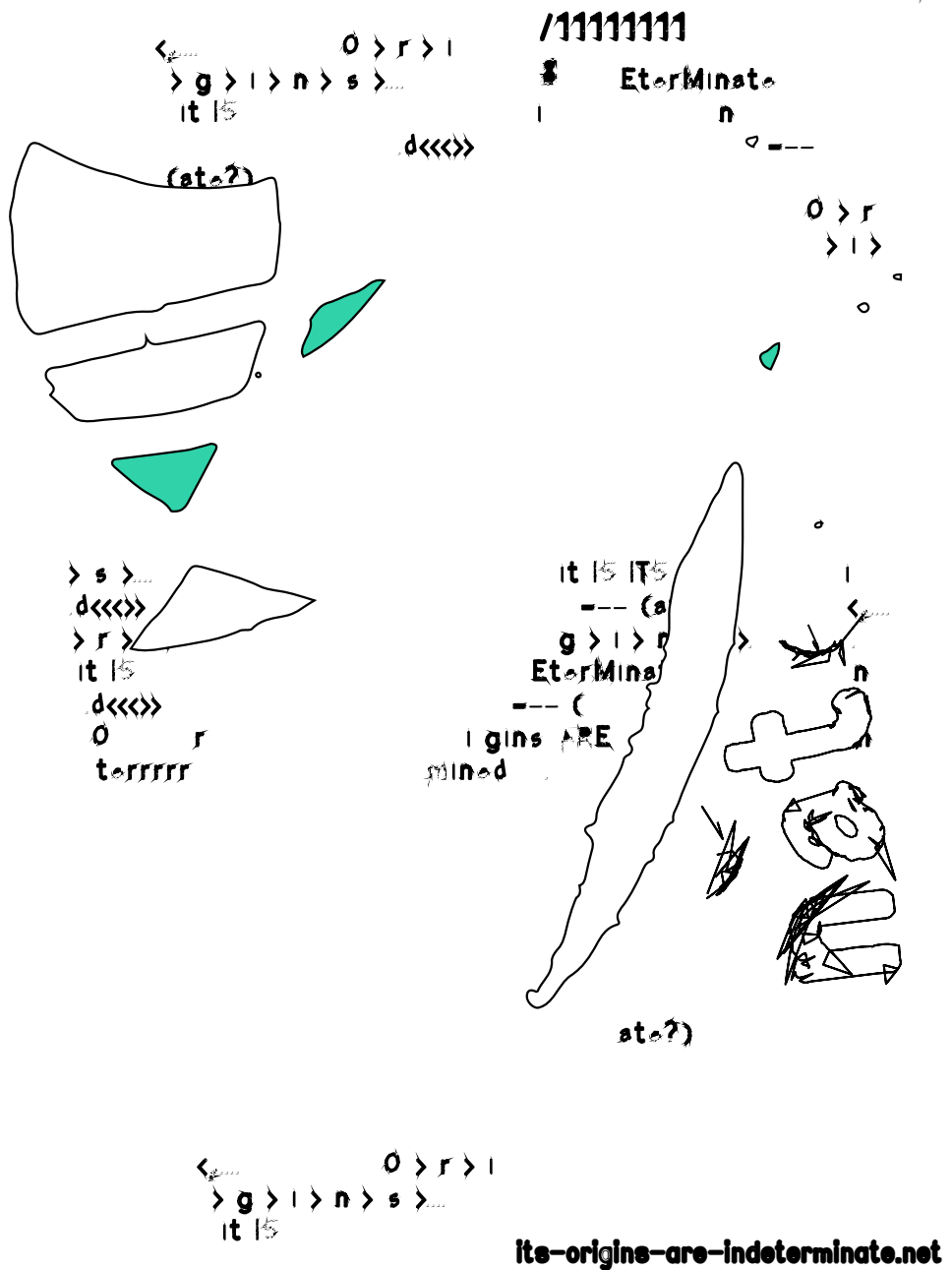
Enclosed print by Linda Stupart.

Design by Gaile Prancunaite.

The series is curated by Erik Martinson and is supported by the inaugural Stuart Croft Foundation Special Projects Award.

With support from: Electronic Arts Intermix, LIMA, LUX, Video Data Bank, and Vtape.

Acknowledgements and thanks: to all of the artists and respondents; Stuart Croft Foundation (Mike Croft, Steven Eastwood, Harriet Fleuriot, Keira Greene, Anna Lucas); Whitechapel Gallery (Gareth Evans, Andy Jenkins, Jessica Roper, Sam Williams); Close-Up Film Centre (Oliver Dickens); Goldsmiths, University of London (Ele Carpenter, Kirsty Ogg, Helena Reckitt, Simon Sheikh, Gilda Williams); Rachel McRae; Gaile Prancunaite; Arcadia Missa (Rozsa Farkas, Ruth Pilston); Electronic Arts Intermix (Rebecca Cleman, Karl McCool); LIMA (Theus Zwakhals); LUX (Matt Carter, Alice Lea, Maria Palacios Cruz, Moira Salt); Video Data Bank (Tom Colley, Emily Eddy); and Vtape (Natalie Dunlop, Dustin Lawrence, Wanda Vanderstoop).



PROGRAMME NOTES

March 14, 2018:
Close-Up Film Centre

Strain Andromeda The, Anne McGuire, 1992,
126:00. Courtesy of VDB.

'With *Strain Andromeda The*, video artist Anne McGuire has created an awesome and spellbinding film that throws everything from story structure to character motivation into question. Put simply, McGuire has taken Robert Wise's entire 1971 virus from outer space classic *The Andromeda Strain* and re-edited it shot-by-shot precisely in reverse, so that the last shot appears first and the first last, though nothing is actually running backwards. As the film unfolds (or reverts?), more and more information about how the characters and their surroundings came about is revealed to us. While initially confusing, the film quickly takes on an ominous and mesmerising quality that defies description. The original film plot is one filled with tension in a 'race against time' which only adds to this effect.'
- Michael Sippings, Brighton Cinematheque (vdb.org)

March 17, 2018:
Whitechapel Gallery (Zilkha Auditorium)

* Programme One: >>>1 'Making a hunter's bluff out of a word'

In the Cinema No One Speaks Unless They Have Something to Say While in Real Life It's Just the Opposite, Mike Hoolboom, 1992, 0:40. Courtesy of the Artist.

The main character is the title. Featuring Andrew Scorer. (MH)

Nothing Comes from Talking (But Sound), Sara Magenheimer, 2012, 1:43. Courtesy of VDB.

An absurdist demonstration of how the alphabet works. (vdb.org)

Loneliness will be my greatest treasure, Ieva Kraule, 2014, 3:01 (silent). Courtesy of the Artist.

We are separated by an advertising column, placed exactly between the stops "there" and "back". I always go "back", while the others go "there". You are always afraid to repeat your mistakes, but in the course of eight years I have observed the 324 centimetres of past event layers between us. They never repeat themselves, just like the dull pink tint of the school building's Western

façade, which has not let any of the 16 attempts to mimic it. Moving around the school counterclockwise, contrary to the set rules of time, I go in the direction of the entrance. A pine rises on a nasty pink background and 32 first graders stand in front of it. They are looking towards a bright future. I am not one of them. Flashlights dazzle, I want to smile, but I close my eyes, letting rosy waves sweep away the sense of awkwardness. (IK)

Wawa, Sky Hopinka, 2014, 6:00. Courtesy of VDB.

Wawa peeks at the anxieties and difficulties of communication through the interactions between speakers of an endangered Indigenous language, each from differing cultural backgrounds and generations. By transforming the chronology of the language, it weaves the past and present into a single entity and confronts various modes of conversation, translation, identity, and history. (vdb.org)

Classified Digits, Christine Sun Kim & Thomas Mader, 2016, 5:28 (silent). Courtesy of the Artists.

In American Sign Language the index finger is a classifier for "person". This single finger is enough to identify every possible individual and for us to identify with it. It is a placeholder that can be manipulated at will.

For *Classified Digits* this finger will be hurled into a series of awkward yet commonly experienced social situations by Christine Sun Kim, a native ASL speaker, and Thomas Mader, an ASL learner. (CSK & TM)

Per Se, Deirdre Logue, 2005, 4:12. Courtesy of Vtape.

This short work dedicated to the moment of hesitation that precedes actually saying something meaningful and to the difficulties of personal expression. *Per Se* is part of *Why Always Instead of Just Sometimes*, a selection of 12 short works about aging, breaking down and reparation. They are works that describe our need for intimacy and our fears of exposure. They are always, when we really wish they were just sometimes.

Writing Culture, Karen Cunningham, 2013, 1:50. Courtesy of the Artist.

Writing Culture was made as a reflection on the often contentious practice within Ethnography of describing, distilling and “writing” another culture. The video considers the privilege afforded to the “word” (written or spoken) over the image. The title contextualises the video in regards to anthropology’s self-reflective critique of ethnographic texts as the primary means by which to record the results of fieldwork and the inherent problems of “writing” an others “culture”. It also directly references the influential

book *Writing Culture: the Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986) by James Clifford & George Marcus, which is largely charged with signalling the so-called ‘crisis of representation’. Although entirely made in-computer (the voice is recorded directly into the computer microphone and the texts, synonyms of the spoken word are generated by a software programme) the work is a simple and somewhat “primitive” use of the medium. (KC)

Blind Understanding, Saskia Holmkvist, 2009, 11:55. Courtesy of the Artist.

The image in the film *Blind Understanding* is of one long slow shot sliding down a river. It has clear ties to the cinematic way of portraying an inner process of change, inspired from *The Heart of Darkness*. Along with the imagery a voice over is heard narrated by the artist. Loosely linked stories are told. First about black birds moving into cities adapting their patterns, then about work songs, how a people can change their mother tongue and how a drivers license is thought to make you behave differently. The text concentrates on different aspects of language and change and the situations are forced or counter processes of change. (SH)

My Mind is My Own, Liz Magic Laser, 2015, 8:05. Courtesy of the Artist.

For *My Mind is My Own Laser* asked professional vocal coach, Kate Wilson, to

teach her own daughter, eleven-year-old actor Ella Maré, to perform the role of a trainer in an instructional video. Laser worked with the mother-daughter duo to corrupt the instructions and analogies used for their vocal exercises.

Stretto, Serena Lee, 2016, 6:45. Courtesy of Vtape.

This is a letter to the mouse that lives with me. It is a one-sided conversation speculating on: interspecies cohabitation, gentrification, pluralism, civilization, negotiation, culture, inoperative communities (after Nancy), Hospitality (after Derrida), integration, communication, difference, care, intent, and empathy. The term stretto appears in music, particularly Baroque fugues. Deriving from Italian, it finds synonyms in narrow, tight, close. When played, it sounds like a succession of overlapping voices with on independent scales of time. Sometimes the voices come together. The unspoken question: what if there is no shared language? (vtape.org)

Text-to-Speech, Anna Zett, 2015, 9:38 (Audio Work). Courtesy of the Artist.

The sound piece *Text-to-Speech* addresses political, religious and formal troubles accompanying the digitally generated voice-over. A female voice of human origin reflects about the physicality of language in digital capitalism, while employing various forms of

physical and digital voice altering. Based on a text initially written for a Skype reading, the artist uses this intimate monologue to question sonic and rhythmic norms inherent in imperial, text-based languages such as disembodied international English. (AZ)

Wow and Flutter, Jenny Brady, 2013, 13:03. Courtesy of the Artist.

A portrait of a magnificent bird draws on the 30-year relationship between animal cognition scientist Irene Pepperberg and the African grey parrot she trained in elements of human language. This depiction of the animal attempts to give voice to the creature, only to reveal a troubling figure of mis-translation, while raising questions about what creates and limits language. *Wow and Flutter* features a score made in collaboration with musician Andrew Fogarty, using a mixture of field recordings, electronics and found material to conjure a unique sound world. (JB)

We Know We Are Just Pixels, Laure Prouvost, 2015, 4:44. Courtesy of LUX.

Attributing human characteristics to inanimate objects, this video work finds Laure Prouvost's images forming a conversation amongst themselves. Discussing their existence and vulnerabilities, in relation to the viewer looking at them, the images want to be more than just pixels; they want to explore and exist outside of the machine upon

which they are being played. Comments and moving images are juxtaposed; they come and go in a dazzling rhythm. As often in Prouvost's films, the speed of images and text challenges the limits of perception, for it seems almost impossible for the human eye to catch every piece of visual information in the film. Eventually, the viewer becomes used to the rhythm and finally gives the images the attention they "deserve". (lux.org.uk)

* Programme Two: 'The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut'

The Artwork in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility by Walter Benjamin as told to Keith Sanborn, Keith Sanborn, 1996, 3:38. Courtesy of Vtape.

An attempt to problematize ownership and authorship in the age of digital reproduction. Inspired by the Walter Benjamin essay of the same name and the activities of the Situationists. If it could be authenticated that it were produced in 1936, this would make it the oldest known digital video work. (vtape.org)

Versions, Oliver Laric, 2010, 9:06. Courtesy of LIMA.

'It takes two to make a thing go right. With famous books, the first time is already the second, since we approach them already knowing them. The cautious comments saying rereading the classic turns out to be an

innocent voracity. We are always somehow rereading a classic, because we have encountered some previous incarnation of it, a refraction, in other stories, texts, or versions. What are the many versions if not diverse perspectives of a moveable event, if not a long, experimental assortment of omissions and emphases?' (li-ma.nl)

HELLO OLIVER LARIC :O, Gabrielle de La Puente & Zarina Muhammad, 2016, 1:58. Courtesy of the Artists.

The White Pube is the collaborative identity of Gabrielle de la Puente and Zarina Muhammad. They filmed this on Photo Booth whilst Fine Art students at Central Saint Martins, trying and failing to figure out how Oliver Laric had made his *Aircondition* video. (GdLP & ZM)

Wrong then, wrong today, Katie Hare, 2016, 7:17. Courtesy of the Artist.

Using footage from an old cartoon featuring the downcast dog Droopy, *Wrong then, wrong today* examines how an artefact from the past can exist in a drastically altered present. Taking as its starting point the disclaimer that now prefaces all reissued Warner Bros cartoons, which informs viewers that while the cartoons contain problematic depictions, they are shown 'as they were originally created' in order to recognize that these attitudes once existed, the video seeks to consider the truth of this statement. Highlighting points where modern

re-mastering processes have degraded the image, the video questions what is actually at stake when viewing these cartoons in the present. (KH)

Object Interviews (Part III), Patrick Hough, 2015, 5:32. Courtesy of the Artist.

Object Interviews, a series of three films in which specialists from various fields interpret and discuss a range of film props. Part I features a keeper of Egyptian Artefacts from the British Museum deconstructing their historical significance while Part II features a cultural theorist uncovering the unconscious impact of a prop on the viewer through the framework of psychoanalysis. Part III considers the perspective of two prop makers, discussing the objects in relation craft, construction and the continuous overlap between the objects represented history and its own history as an object, used and reused in multiple productions. Within these films the prop takes center stage as an object in some ways more powerful and significant than the “original” historical artifact, opening up a space for fiction to become part of our understanding of history. (PH)

Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar, Manuel Saiz, 2005, 1:47. Courtesy of Vtape.

Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar is a video in which Luis Porcar, a well known Spanish dubbing actor, speaks for one minute about his work when dubbing the voice of the American actor John Malkovich. The video is presented dubbed into English by John Malkovich himself, thus closing the conceptual loop of the work with his collaboration. (vtape.org)

Shuffle, Douglas Waterman, 1971, 4:00 (excerpt). Courtesy of Vtape.

‘A classic exposition of and intervention within, the structural interrelationship of camera, monitor, deck and tape. The camera frames both the performer and its own recording mechanism; Waterman creates static electricity by shuffling his feet on a carpet; he then reaches over and touches the tape just after it passes the recording head, repeating the action until the tape runs out; on replay, the portions of tape demagnetized by his touch are viewed as a band of screen interference before he has begun the action.’
– Renee Baert (vtape.org)

🍷 *Amethyst*, Linda Stupart, 2016, 0:56 (silent). Courtesy of the Artist.

Amethyst is one of three videos first displayed, looping, at Stupart’s solo show at Arcadia Missa *a dead writer exists in words and language is a type of virus*. The video asserts an entwining relationship between healing (amethyst crystal) and anger (“evil” Willow Rosenberg), as well as proposing embodied, queer, magical accumulations of knowledge, power, and language. (LS)

🍷 *Colossal Cave*, Graeme Arnfield, 2016, 11:12. Courtesy of the Artist.

🍷
‘Somewhere nearby is Colossal Cave. Magic is said to work in the cave. I will be your eyes and hands.’ Excavated from the world’s largest cave system *Colossal Cave* is a love letter from the prehistory of the Internet. Retracing the production of a pioneering video game the film finds in its debris the blueprints of our contemporary digital network and the emotional remapping of the world. Compiled from amateur caving videos found online, these sources are relocated inside a history of geological representation, adaptation and redistribution. (GA)

Ceibas: Shannon's Entropy, Evan Meany, 2008, 5:54. Courtesy of the Artist.

Claude Shannon was the father of modern data compression. His legacy is one of sending, saving and retrieving – reminding us that all things which survive this process are of the utmost importance. To him, information was a series of signals, marginalized in their presence and lamented in their absence; being the electronic values which carry what we know away from us, in the hopes that it will, one day, return unscathed. (EM)

Owed to (C)ode, Hannah Catherine Jones, 2014, 4:39. Courtesy of the Artist.

Owed to (C)ode originates from documentation of my performance *High Art* (iPhone Serenade) in the Apple Store, Rome, (August 2014) in which I serenade the iProp I constructed; – a piece of glass cut to the exact dimensions of an iPhone 5 covered in black and silver mirror film (dressed in an iPhone 5 case). I sang to the device in Italian. I transfigure a still image of the performance documentation from the file format .png (image) to .txt (text). I “translate” the images underlying code into phonetic Italian in a Microsoft Word document. I sing this code-libretto as a soundtrack to the video. I then drop this translation back into the .txt file and change the fusion of texts back into an image (.jpeg).

The interference of the libretto causes the image to split apart, to dismember. (HCJ)

Ask the Insects, Steve Reinke, 2005, 7:19. Courtesy of Vtape.

‘Part home-made science (before it became doctrine and law), part animated video reverie, Reinke’s brief and episodic compression is an incendiary release which opens by announcing the death of the reader, of any audience capable of pulling its fragments together, or better, of dissolving into its issues, of allowing the body to change shape, to identify, for instance, with an insect. Or a stone. It begins with the death of the reader and ends with the death of the author, and between he stops along the way to muse on rain falling up, the “useless bio-diversity” of insects (meaning life is mostly decoration), signal deconstruction and beautiful noise, and burning books. His style is abrupt and associative; he jumps and jumps again, producing these small beautiful abysses which no one can see. He has produced something invisible to treasure, an impossible movie, which refuses to adhere to memory’s sound-byte continuums. It is waiting for a new body to store or restore it. And while it is waiting it speaks, like a lover on the phone.’ – Mike Hoolboom (vtape.org)

Object Cinema, Darren Banks, 2016, 5:26. Courtesy of the Artist.

In *Object Cinema*, the content of the story becomes a ‘Thing’ itself, morphing from one format to another, linking media from the original films. The work, a reflection on the multiple platforms that the contemporary filmic experience occupies, traces how film evolves from the written page, is captured on celluloid or video and translated into digital code, the work explores these material shifts. A reflection on film’s shifting entity, stored and accessed through different formats, like a liquid poured between different vessels, *Object Cinema* reveals Banks’ interest in how physical words vanish, and later resurface as immaterial data-flow. Moving from the written page, then captured in celluloid, tape and digital code, and ultimately circulated globally online, ideas continuously morph. (DB)

***Programme Three: ‘We want superior forms of corruption’**

Blade Runner – Autoencoded (Side by side comparison of the opening 5 minutes), Terence Broad, 2016, 4:46. Courtesy of the Artist.

A reinterpretation of the film *Blade Runner* from the memories of an artificial neural network. As this is the first film of its kind, the work raises questions about artificial subjectivity and authorship. This is done

by 'getting artificial neural networks to reconstruct films—by training them to reconstruct individual frames from films, and then getting them to reconstruct every frame in a given film and resequencing it. The type of neural network used is an autoencoder.' (TB)

Seven Signs That Mean Silence, Sara Magenheimer, 2013, 10:48. Courtesy of VDB.

Paul and Veena, two disembodied computer voices, wonder what things mean and what means things. We travel with them to various imagined places in this visually spare video, meditating on the in-between places and negative space where meaning hides out. Their discourse is interrupted by non-verbal utterances and coughs, out of which Magenheimer's voice sings *Everybody's Talkin'* by Fred Neil, then disappears again, sinking back into the digital sonic depths. (vdb.org)

This is Living, Ghislaine Leung, 2011, 4:01. Courtesy of the Artist.

On method acting, marriage counselling and policing. The position of the mediator as self-effacing, attempting to disappear in order to better represent another while at the same time appearing in order to do so. (GL)

My Twilight Zone Thing, Sondra Perry, 2014, 1:04 (Work in progress). Courtesy of EAI.

My Twilight Zone Thing uses appropriated footage from episodes of *The Twilight Zone* as reenactments in Sondra's studio. (SP) *My Twilight Zone Thing* builds upon the artist's belief that the original show dismantles whiteness through the lens of science fiction. Although each episode of *The Twilight Zone* opens with the narrator (series creator Rod Serling) describing the mostly male, primarily white characters, these individuals go on to enter an alternate plane—a move that complicates the viewer's ingrained ways of seeing and coding the characters' physical realities. Perry posits that the way in which the show scrambles assumptions around the characters' bodies gives rise to multiple new possibilities for seeing and understanding their personhood. — Recess (recessart.org)

Toxic, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, 2012, 13:00. Courtesy of the Artists.

The film *Toxic* shows two protagonists in an undated time, a punk figure in glitter (Ginger Brooks Takahashi) and a drag queen (Werner Hirsch), both of unclear gender and origin. They linger in an environment of glossy remains, of toxic plants and transformed ethnographic and police photography. While the punk gives a speech on toxicity and a performance referencing early feminist art works, the drag queen reenacts an interview

of Jean Genet from the '80s and blames the filmmakers for exposing her to the police-like scenario of being filmed. The camera turns and depicts the space-off, the space outside the frame. (PB & RL)

Quantum Identity Politics, Miko Revereza, 2017, 8:48. Courtesy of the Artist.

Quantum Identity Politics begins as a personal statement about immigration (via text on screen) then moves into abstract forms, physical gestures painted with electronic light, a proof self-documentation. Revereza's frustrations are performed, his experience and his family's reduced to the wavering visibility of flickering light. *Quantum Identity Politics* as part of Echo Park Film Center's *A Day in the Sun* is made possible by the Mike Kelley Foundation. (MR)

She Who Sees The Unknown: Huma, Morghshin Allahyari, 2016, 6:04. Courtesy of the Artist.

Huma is a jinn known in various Middle-Eastern tales and myths who 'brings heat to the human body and is responsible for the common fever.' The text for this video sits between fact and fiction as a way to reappropriate her power (bringing heat) to the contemporary horror of our time; in this case global warming but specifically the unjust conversation around it which makes it a very Western-centric and colonized dialogue. ... Through poetic and metaphoric narrations *She Who Sees The Unknown: Huma* explores

this injustice by connecting it to heat/high temperature, madness, hallucination and the “taking over” of this colonized power. (MA)

Attention Public, Emily Vey Duke & Cooper Battersby, 2004, 10:00. Courtesy of Vtape.

Attention Public is a 10 minute experimental narrative which tells the story of Karen Annasdaughter, a young woman who was raised by a group of radicals in the woods of Nova Scotia. With this project, we aim to clear a psycho-spiritual space for the viewer which was not cleared before. We want this space to contain empathy (identification) and joy. We want to achieve, in the making of the works, a sensation of ecstatic transformation, because it is our conviction that if such a sensation is present in the making of the works, that sensation will become available to the viewer. In order to clear this new space, we must not default to familiar tropes. The work must seem mostly unfamiliar, even uncanny. It cannot, however, be so unfamiliar as to repel the viewer. Offering the viewer a place to sit between convention or cliché and confusion, boredom or repulsion is our project with *The New Freedom Founders*. We know we are destined to mostly fail, but we believe that by simply representing our attempt, we will in some measure reach our goal. *Attention Public* is one segment of a musical video-art science-fiction trilogy entitled *The New Freedom Founders*. (vtape.org)

Noise Tribe Speaking-Out-Of-Control, Jenna Sutela, 2015, 7:00 (Audio work)
Documentation of performance, courtesy of the Artist.

Exploring artificial intelligence, Jenna Sutela’s speech-performance *Noise Tribe Speaking-Out-of-Control* treats language as a virus and encryption as poetry. It includes audio CAPTCHA, which is a type of challenge-response test used in computing to determine whether or not the user is human. Sutela also modifies her voice to match that of machines. This audio documentation was recorded at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin on March 20, 2015. (JS)

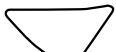


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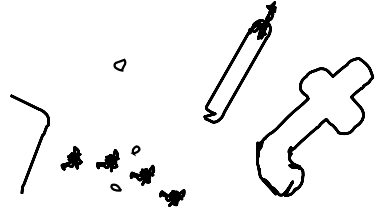
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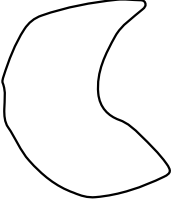
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PROGRAMME DETAILS

March 14, 2018:
Close-Up Film Centre

Strain Andromeda The, Anne McGuire, 1992, 126:00

March 17, 2018:
Whitechapel Gallery (Zilkha Auditorium)

Programme One: 'Making a hunter's bluff out of a word'

The first programme is titled 'Making a hunter's bluff out of a word' after a line from *Pontypool* by Tony Burgess. Between speaking agents, some things catch, hold on, despite the distance various translations create. The works presented begin to unravel language as a faulty carrier of meaning, vulnerable to semiotic stowaways.

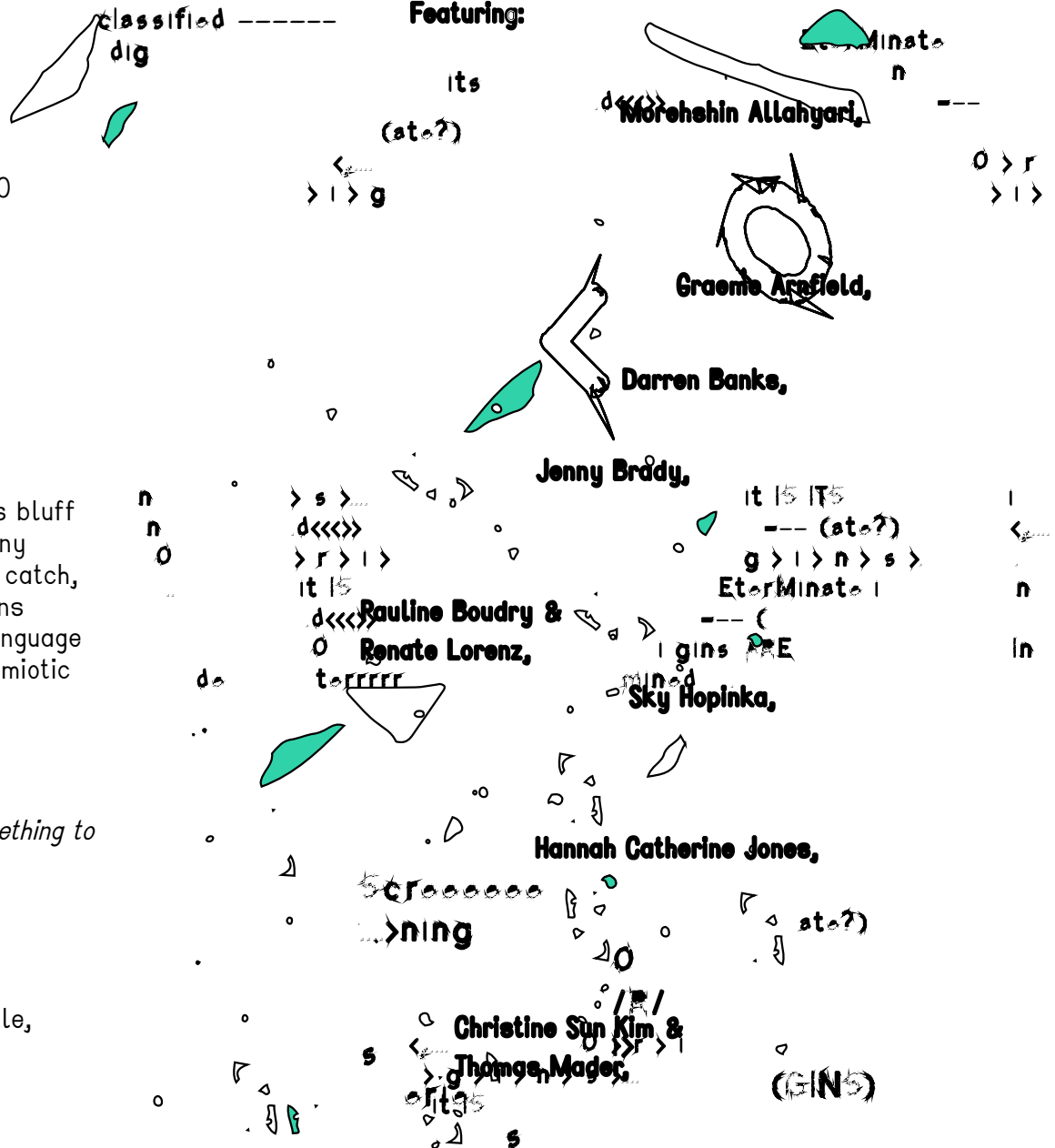
Programme List:

In the Cinema No One Speaks Unless They Have Something to Say While in Real Life It's Just the Opposite, Mike Hoolboom, 1992, 0:40

Nothing Comes from Talking (But Sound), Sara Magenheimer, 2012, 1:43

Loneliness will be my greatest treasure, Ieva Kraule, 2014, 3:01 (silent)

Wawa, Sky Hopinka, 2014, 6:00



Classified Digits, Christine Suh Kim & Thomas Mader, 2016, 5:28 (silent)

Per Se, Deirdre Logue, 2005, 4:12

Writing Culture, Karen Cunningham, 2013, 1:50

Blind Understanding, Saskia Holmkvist, 2009, 11:55

My Mind is My Own, Liz Magic Laser, 2015, 8:05

Stretto, Serena Lee, 2016, 6:45

Text-to-Speech, Anna Zett, 2015, 9:38 (Audio work)

Wow and Flutter, Jenny Brady, 2013, 13:03

We Know We Are Just Pixels, Laure Prouvost, 2015, 4:44

Programme Two:

'The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut'

The second programme 'The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut' looks at strategies of appropriation as spell-craft and conjuration. Circulation and versioning of texts and images from various sources becomes a form of viral spread. The programme's title is extracted from *King* by Koji Suzuki.

Programme List:

The Artwork in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility by Walter Benjamin as told to Keith Sanborn, Keith Sanborn, 1996, 3:38

Versions, Oliver Laric, 2010, 9:06

HELLO OLIVER LARIC :O), Gabrielle de la Puente & Zarina Muhammad, 2016, 1:58

Wrong then, wrong today, Katie Hare, 2016, 7:17

Mike Hoolboom,

Katie Hare,

Oliver Laric,

Liz Magic Laser,

Deirdre Logue,

Anne McGuire,

Gabrielle de la Puente & Zarina Muhammad,

Manuel Saiz,

It can cause things to

Terence Broad,

Patrick Hough,

Ieva Kraule,

Karen Cunningham,

Serena Lee,

Sara Magenheimer,

Sondra Perry,

Steve Reinko,

Ghielaine Leung,

Laure Prouvost,

Saskia Holmkvist,

ALONE????

happppppon

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Object Interviews (Part III), Patrick Hough, 2015, 5:32

Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar, Manuel Saiz, 2005, 1:47

Shuffle, Douglas Waterman, 1971, 4:00 (excerpt)

Amethyst, Linda Stupart, 2016, 0:56 (silent)

Colossal Cave, Graeme Arnfield, 2016, 1:12

Ceibas: Shannon's Entropy, Evan Meaney, 2008, 5:54

Owed to (Code), Hannah Catherine Jones, 2014, 4:39

Ask the Insects, Steve Reinke, 2005, 7:19

Object Cinema, Darren Banks, 2016, 5:26

Programme Three:

'We want superior forms of corruption'

The third programme 'We want superior forms of corruption' looks to fissures in language and communication as material to manifest and re-interpret for acts of resistance. Against the forced rigour of grammar and control, a space opens up for re-assertion and defiant existence. The programme's title comes from Laboria Cuboniks' *Xenofeminism: A politics for Alienation*.

Programme List:

Blade Runner – Autoencoded (Side by side comparison of the opening 5 minutes), Terence Broad, 2016, 4:46

Seven Signs That Mean Silence, Sara Magenheimer, 2013, 10:48

This is Living, Ghislaine Leung, 2011, 4:01



My Twilight Zone Thing, Sandra Perry, 2014, 1:04
(Work in progress)

Toxic, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, 2012, 13:00

Quantum Identity Politics, Miko Revereza, 2017, 8:48

She Who Sees The Unknown: Huma,
Morehshin Allahyari, 2016, 6:04

Attention Public, Emily Vey Duke & Cooper Battersby,
2004, 10:00

Noise Tribe Speaking-Out-Of-Control,
Jenna Sutela, 2015, 7:00
(Audio work: documentation of performance at Lunch
Bytes Conference 20-21 March 2015, HKW, Berlin).



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Its origins are indeterminate

Introduction

The title for this screening series comes from Robert Barry's *Untitled (Its Origins are Indeterminate)*. On a single page, a series of type-written statements, all capitals with no punctuation, cascade down the page, followed after some space by the artist's name and year of completion, 1976. The text reads as follows:

*Its origin is indeterminate
Sometimes it is alone
It can cause things to happen
It is affected by other things
Some of it is unknown
It may appear to be something it is not*

This breezy, relatively open text appears vulnerably to the reader glancing at it in a gallery, book, or a Google image search. There is no extra foliage in the sentences, nothing to stop the blowing of thought through the few branches of words arranged on the page. Even the moorings of periods have fallen away. This slight of hand on typewriter allows for the airy lift of words, received and floating in the reader's mind, there combined with unnecessary poetics and theories as to what "it" is and what "it" does. Perhaps even what "it" means. This page with arrangements of pressed ink letters is

a virus; "it" needs this process, thrives there. Through this circuit of hypothetical comprehension, "it" mutates, building a defence to any one solitary meaning. The process allows another potentiality. These mutations can be put back on the page. Not the very same page, but a copy. The ambiguous and foreboding words can be cut and pasted, sutured with other text, appropriated and re-distributed. What infects is infected back.

Its origin is indeterminate

Seeping up through syntax, meaning coagulates

Sometimes it is alone

Sometimes it is not...some 'thing' else may have come through with it

It can cause things to happen

Hiding between letters and frames, it lurks, ready

It is affected by other things

Mutations bring momentum, and a somewhat compliant host

Some of it is unknown

Transmission to other hosts begins with little notice

It may appear to be something it is not

The skin of an image and word are permeable surfaces, only thinly covering intended and unintended meaning underneath. As carriers, they appear to allow space for semiotic stowaways and mutinous mutations. The four programmes

of this screening series see that William S. Burroughs' statement in *The Electronic Revolution* is thoroughly considered: 'I have frequently spoken of word and image as viruses or as acting as viruses, and this is not an allegorical comparison' (Burroughs, 35). The presented films and videos prod and poke this sentence, teasing out both possibilities, that of the unwanted 'allegorical comparison', which lies in wait, and the more insidious option that lies beneath it, an empty vessel, lack of metaphor, working parts that are solid virus without meaning, that have existed from the moment the first words and images came into being.

Making a hunter's bluff out of a word

It's in words. Not all words. Not all speaking. But in some. Some words are infected. And it spreads out when the contaminated word is spoken, like a sneeze.

— *Pontypool*, Tony Burgess, p 49.

In Tony Burgess' *Pontypool*, a sleepy small town radio host and his production crew helplessly report on a rapidly emerging epidemic. From the safety of their sound booth they broadcast eyewitness accounts, coming to realize their involvement in re-transmission is spreading the linguistically based virus.

When the infected words are understood, their relative safety inside the station disappears.

The spread of the virus in *Pontypool* is through verbal language and its comprehension. The virus adapts to its host of letters, and through an arsenal of their various arrangements, emerges in different orders, forming words its host of flesh notices and repeats. It 'copies itself in... understanding' (Burgess, 50). With every repetition, the word-virus stretches out beyond the hold of any syntax, breaking it down, till only that word remains. Calcified, the word is no longer language, its a door stop for an urge to eat the words of others, to climb into their bodies, through their mouths. Then the human host becomes hollowed out: 'a crude radio signal...seeking...transmitting' (Burgess, 45). As Eugene Thacker states: 'There is something about the literalness of horror that forces our language and our thought to stop dead in its tracks, a kind of tautology of "it is what it is" and yet the "it" remains indefinable, unmentionable, a thick and viscous and vaguely menacing "thing on the doorstep"' (Thacker, 16). The viral process of *Pontypool* makes words concrete bunkers for unintended meaning, hijacked by another agenda. Equally a possibility, the hijacker only fills in the bunker with more concrete, making words literal, clunky, and nothing but the sum of

their semiotic parts. Letters and spaces and more letters, the mounting fear of meaninglessness. Either way, the virus can't help 'making a little hunter's bluff out of a word' (Burgess, 59).

Given that words are containers, their contents shift: inscribed, emptied and re-inscribed with meanings over time. Words often receive additive layers, perform contextual cross-overs, compounding their usage. Virus is one such word. From the work of Jussi Parikka, its etymology moves from 'an unknown cause' through elaboration in biology and medicine, to these traits being metaphorically mapped onto disruptive and often destructive computer code (Parikka, 120). Following this line, the hardware of a computer becomes a body, its inner workings are vulnerable like organs, code circulating internally and keeping the system operative. Threats from outside have a counterpart, the immune system as anti-virus software. From this context, another splintering of the metaphor takes place. According to Roberta Buiani, the viral becomes a "'dump"' wherein one can just throw anything pertaining to viruses' (Buiani, 82). For example, in the context of memetic culture online, "going viral" connotes a circulation through the web and social media of any particular meme. With each resulting iteration using the base template of that meme, it is amplified, spreading its reach. Copies become

legions, and the base line becomes indistinguishable. As Buiani suggests, 'it is inevitable to reinterpret viruses as potential producers of creative outcomes, rather than just threats' (Buiani, 84). The viral is assuredly un-contained.

The potential instability of words within a language creates a multitude of possibilities for understanding and misunderstanding; the conveyance of intended and unintended meanings alike. If exchanges and comprehension within the context of shared alphabets and grammar can become fraught, crossing over to another language accentuates this and adds its own barriers. Translation is a cautious task, a fragile conduit between equally fragile structures of language. Questions open up around the translator's subjectivity: are they outside looking in, perhaps from a position of cultural imperialism, or are they inside the source language, sharing from their own context, possibly from post-colonial circumstances. As Gayatri Spivak states, language can be 'a vital clue to where the self loses its boundaries' (Spivak, 180). There is 'the possibility of random contingency, beside language, around language. ...in translation, where meaning hops into the spacey emptiness between two named historical languages, we get perilously close to it' (Spivak, 180). Perhaps displaced meaning collects in this gap, waiting to seep into understanding,

making its way into the translated text. The source-language wears the end-language's ill-fitting words as approximations; something comes with them in the transition, subtly lurking in the orbits of their new textual frames. What has been made redundant or lost hangs suspended, veiling its inadequate transformation. From this boundary-less space, a rally point can form against power imbalances in the cultures whose languages are connecting, be they imbalances of gender, race, class, sexuality, colonial power, etc. In this gap, insider mistranslation can regroup as subterfuge and stalwart un-translatable words can cause rippling havoc in the receiving language.

The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut

He couldn't shake the feeling that something had climbed into his body. This video hadn't been recorded by a machine. A human being's eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin—all five senses had been used to make this video. These chills, this shivering, were from somebody's shadow sneaking into him through his sense organs. Asakawa had been watching the video from the same perspective as this thing within him.

— *Ring*, Koji Suzuki, p 146.

There's something almost redundant about describing the plot of Koji Suzuki's *Ring*, even in brief expository terms. It's like describing the symptoms of the common cold, likely the reader has encountered it before. Its multitude of versions and sub-strains have an extended reach through format-changes, sequels and re-makes alike. *Ring* is likely already in us, seeing itself through our eyes, re-watching and re-reading itself from a point of prior understanding.

Like revisiting a dog-eared page, a well-worn tape, "it" falls into step, "it" comes back. A reporter called Asakawa links a mysterious videotape to the death of four seemingly unconnected teenagers. After viewing it himself, he is to suffer the same fate after seven days, unless he can figure out the charm to undue the curse that the teens inexplicably erased from the end of the tape. To protect his family, an ethical dilemma arises: whether or not to copy the tape and knowingly pass the curse on, sparing his loved ones but directly furthering the epidemic as a result.

A close reading of the quote from the originating novel above reveals a description of a fairly canonical type of shot in filmmaking: the point-of-view (POV) shot. What makes the use of this technique on the cursed VHS tape different? Some—"thing" has climbed into

the body of the protagonist Asakawa, made his eyes "its" eyes. The filmic technique's metaphor becomes literal. Typically the biological function of the eye extends to the camera lens; now this metaphor has returned back into the body, spectral camera to Asakawa's eye. This is possible through the written language expressed in the novel, not in the power of a compelling camera shot itself, unaided by words. The description of the images on the tape, and their affect on Asakawa brings with it an uneasy, creeping dread. This is far beyond the impact the visual representation of these images have, depicted in the actual medium of video in one of the franchise's filmic versions. Instead, in early filmic adaptations, *Ringu* (1998) and *The Ring* (2002), the dread of seeing the images on the cursed video tape is a meta-fear, one that plays upon the pre-online streaming circulation of images on distributable formats, of seeing the tape in full within its intended medium. For this transaction the content doesn't matter, only that it happened, was seen. Aside from terror ascribed to viewers of the films through being passively complicit in a meta-technological cycle of spread, the corrupting influence of the tape itself is best described in words. The unnerving apprehensiveness Asakawa feels is the result of the shift of metaphor to the literal: the POV shot from the cursed tape imposed on his vision, his notice of the

blinks on the tape and correlating them to the spectre that saw what he is seeing now (Suzuki, 144–146). ‘The black curtain is the instant when the eyes shut’ (Suzuki, 146). It’s an instant of realization for Asakawa. It’s the instant of recognition for the rest of us; we’ve been here before, and the symptoms are starting to come back.

Circulation ensures the spread and emergence of symptomatic images and words through temporalities and contexts. Ghislaine Leung looks to Roland Barthes’ differentiation between a ‘work’ and a ‘text’ to begin a consideration of how ‘things’ move. ‘Text here has a primary status as productive, a perpetual site of practice where things move around, circulate, before they ossify in works’ (Leung, 109). A work is to be consumed and a text is to be participated in discursively, though complications arise when the maker turns ‘prosumer’ and consumption becomes a productive act (Leung, 110). As a result, the discussion shifts from one being in opposition to the other, to ‘the intimate relation between the two, between present objects and future actions’ (Leung, 111). Making reference to Chris Kraus and a medium specific example, production and distribution are collapsed, ‘video’s form is not in circulation, it is circulation’ (Leung, 110). Reception is key in this equation as well; the reader/viewer/consumer is moving ‘with and against’ what is being read/seen/consumed (Leung, 111). It is

through the position of the receptor that the ossified object can begin to move again. Beginning in 2012, a weathered VHS copy of *Hellraiser* appeared on the roof of a bus shelter on Old Kent Road in South London (Borton). Visible from the upper level of double-decker buses, a newly formed urban legend emerged, along with copy-cat tapes appearing on other stops. Not just any tape, in the minds of curious commuters, the 1987 film played back as if the narratively crucial puzzle box, the Lament Configuration, had been given to them to solve. Though *Hellraiser* never left popular consciousness or contemporary formats, it’s as if this tape was psychically returned to a bygone rental shop: the tape itself was back in circulation, part of a new narrative.

As tactical interruptions into status-quo circulation, modes of appropriation hi-jack images, words and things from their contextual and temporal flow. According to Bas Medik one such method for art to do this is through ‘appropriating conditions’ where ‘displacement rather than representation’ is paramount for the production of meaning (Medik, 4). Siphoning representation alone abstracts the source, whereas ‘displacement... keeps the charge of things, either intact or rewired’ (Medik, 4). As Medik states, ‘there are three types of contexts at stake... the context that something comes from and brings with it, the context that

something is placed in, and the context in which something acquires meaning’ (Medik, 4). This reasoning is why a *Hellraiser* tape on a bus stop roof sparks palpably; mundane elements combine and their prior contexts cause friction forming a new pathway in an unexpected context. Medik also points to an approach from Jan Verwoert, appropriation as invocation. Given the context of ‘reality constituted by a multiplicity of spatialized temporalities’ Verwoert problematizes re-claiming or possessing the object of appropriation (Verwoert, 2). ‘How would you clarify the status of ownership of something that inhabits different times, that travels through time and repeats itself in unpredictable intervals.... Who owns ...a collective symbol or a haunted house’ (Verwoert, 3)? This leads Verwoert to consider appropriation as invocation, the act of calling upon objects/images/words instead of seizing them (Verwoert, 3). Respect for sources and their contexts emerges as a by-product, which in turn confronts exploitative tendencies and cultural appropriation. As a cautionary tale for misuse, ‘the abstract space of pure analysis is no longer enough.... You cannot test a spell. To utter it is to put it into effect’ (Verwoert, 6). The black curtain closes over your eyes and opens again. In that instant and you feel something else seeing along with you, a palimpsest of vision. ‘Appropriation then is about performing the unresolved by

staging object, images or allegories that invoke the ghosts of unclosed histories in a way that allows them to appear as ghosts and reveal the nature of the ambiguous presence' (Verwoert, 7). Copy the tape for someone else, pass it on. Into the slipstream of time, another version added.

We want superior forms of corruption

This is bad magic, they said.
I think this might be the moment when men tried to separate language from the body and the body from things.
When the word is unmade flesh.

They held up the framed pieces of paper and said, it's a list of words, of action words, but it must be very powerful.
It's a list of words, but it also seems like a threat.
It's a list of verbs, actions to relate to oneself...
It's a list of verbs, and it's making its writer's body disappear...
This is bad magic, they said.

— *Virus*, Linda Stupart, p 50.

'In the future there is a body and they are sitting on a rock covered with moss and they are telling the story...' (Stupart, 49). From our future, their past, the body

recounts the interventions, dismantling, and epidemic revenge undertaken by *Virus*, the titular embodiment of reckoning in Linda Stupart's novel. It spreads, combating the many forms of oppression established through patriarchy, racism, classism, heteronormativity, canons of knowledge and art, 'men's ability to make objects of the world'—the many forms of *Virus* 'oozing up through' and infecting these and other assumed privileges (Stupart, 23). In one account the future body tells of a 'fore-viscera' absconding with Richard Serra's *Verb List* (1967–68) from a gallery 'made to hold in the past' reifying it with 'higher walls' to protect the privilege of white-male canon-hood (Stupart, 49). Serra's work, his hand written list of verbs on two sheets of paper, is 'bad magic' (Stupart, 50). Prefaced with prepositions "to" or "of" the list both "surround(s)" and "collect(s)" words with an air of control, including both of these verbs held in quotes. It's clear 'that this is a list about mastery and that mastery is what tried to cause the end of the world until the virus saved us' (Stupart, 55). The list acts as a quarantine, an attempt to garrison and sterilize the words contained from the embodied, from all of our 'fore-viscera' who do not recognize themselves in it or the white-walled galleries that enshrine it. This kind of 'mastery' brings with it a 'singular history' and 'invisible bodies' (Stupart, 55). The 'fore-viscera'

and the body 'want to bind Richard Serra from acting on other objects with such authority... so they encircled the verb list and started to chant, started to block the dark magic Serra let loose in 1968. So eyewe wrote spells, to protect ourselves' (Stupart, 55).

Let's consider manifestos as a form of spell-craft. They are ritualized spaces of page and screen for the words of one or a community to set forth energies of influence, a spread of critical engagement with society and lived worlds, an expression of a multiplicity of desires to be with-in or with-out. Grounded in future thinking or thoughtful excavation, the texts seek to catch on, to be catching. Though meticulous, they are not precious. In their spread they seek to evolve, appropriate, version... adapt when and if there is a need. To manifest in understanding and action.

Initiated by collective/pseudonym/anagram Laboria Cuboniks, *Xenofeminism: A politics for Alienation* is a manifesto that proposes 'a transformation of seeping, directed subsumption rather than rapid overgrowth' (Cuboniks, 10). Despite capitalist patriarchy and market driven dominance in fields of science and technology, and the ensuing geo-political power imbalances at the source of production, 'XF seizes alienation as an impetus to generate new worlds' (Cuboniks, 10). XF

is not only analytic but synthetic; it is rational, anti-naturalist, gender/race/class abolitionist, it is intersectional. Both the material and virtual worlds share instances of 'power and powerlessness' and as such struggles need connection and 'intervention' across both (Cuboniks, 8). 'XF seeks to construct a coalitional politics, a politics without the infection of purity' (Cuboniks, 6). Among other things, purity can be read here as solo-authored, establishing a primary subjectivity. Crucially, 'XF seeks to be a mutable architecture that, like open source software, remains available for perpetual modification and enhancement...' (Cuboniks, 7). Freely circulated online, the manifesto makes itself available for augmentation, to become an infection of impurity recirculated. At the time of writing, Laboria Cuboniks themselves released a new version of their own text, work-shopped at The New Centre of Research & Practice (Salemy). It's unknown how long the version referenced here will be available on Laboria Cuboniks' website, when it will be replaced, though it and their new version, along with countless others, will share the space of the web indefinitely. 'We want neither clean hands nor beautiful souls, neither virtue nor terror. We want superior forms of corruption' (Cuboniks, 5).

There is something in indeterminacy. It's unruly and knowing. It circumnavigates

control, articulates its own grammar, and circulates just below the surface, erupting tactically. Control thinks its erratic, but control doesn't know. Control still can't understand that words and ideas it deems useless have a use. After introducing what James C. Scott termed 'the weapons of the weak' Jack Halberstam writes 'failure recognizes that alternatives are embedded already in the dominant and that power is never total or consistent; indeed failure can exploit the unpredictability of ideology and its indeterminate qualities' (Halberstam, 88). Indeterminacy is opportunity, a rally point; it has a lot of room. Failure is a tactic. Consider the mantra of Feminist Art Gallery (FAG): 'We Can't Compete; We Won't Compete; We Can't Keep Up; We Won't Keep Down' (Logue & Mitchell). A unified resistance to dominate art and social systems that asks 'Why would you want to compete' under these conditions that seek to marginalize (Logue & Mitchell)? Instead, defiantly drop-out of this system, and when invited back, retain your autonomy and infect them with your terms (Logue & Mitchell). As a challenge to determinacy, Stefano Harney and Fred Moten discuss Michael Parenti's 'anti-imperial analysis' of *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1939) and *Shaka Zulu* (1987). In these Hollywood/industry productions colonial forces are seen as under attack, 'the settler is portrayed as surrounded by "natives," inverting, in Parenti's view, the role of

aggressor so that colonialism is made to look like self-defense' (Harney & Moten, 17). Crucially, Harney and Moten point out that though this is "'upside down'" agreeing with Parenti that 'aggression and self-defense are reversed in these movies' they maintain that 'the image of a surrounded fort is not false' (Harney & Moten, 17). What was there, is there, still 'surrounds,' that is it cannot be contained by colonialism, that despite those attempts, there is still an outside, another space to surround from (Harney & Moten, 17). Indeterminacy knows its counter part well, swarms through the fort's defences by way of gaps in the floorboards, cracks in the ceiling and walls. 'We are disruption and consent to disruption' (Harney & Moten, 20). Determinacy is surrounded. Control cannot be maintained. 'We owe each other the indeterminate. We owe each other everything' (Harney & Moten, 20).

Un-containment: Anne McGuire's *Strain Andromeda The*

'Disengage. End Program. Stop.' After a brief credit roll, this text displays line after line on a computer monitor, a halting first shot. It's like it's over before it starts. It keeps going, with a magnified view of the throbbing green and yellow Andromeda molecule multiplying and after that the bureaucratic questioning of its containment and what else might be out there.

As a project of complete appropriation, Anne McGuire's *Strain Andromeda The* (1992) exacts a methodology at home with the many processes and tests conducted by the scientists and physicians depicted within its source. Her version of *The Andromeda Strain*, Robert Wise's adaptation (1971) of Michael Crichton's novel (1969), reverses the film, every shot recut so that the last becomes the first, and the first becomes the last. The shots themselves play in forward moving time; their ordering does not. With the bindings of montage loosened, new threads emerge with unexpected connections as well as disorientations. In the unravelling of standardized narrative cohesion, the effect can be seen to emerge before the cause. McGuire's version opens up the gaps in filmic syntax, releasing strains of narrative possibility.

As a sci-fi thriller *The Andromeda Strain* plays like a report: each time a lab test reveals results, the tension in the plot increases. There is an excessive focus given to the details of facilities and equipment and those who operate them; procedures are followed with a fetishistic acuity by characters and camera alike. Knowledge production as dramatic action. It begins with a downed satellite in a small community in Arizona. All inhabitants are found dead save two: an infant and an adult. The satellite brought something back with it. The survivors and the evidence are taken to a secret

government containment facility and three scientists and a doctor work around the clock to identify and understand the alien contagion and why their two patients survived. The backdrop for their time-sensitive task is the threat of nuclear cleansing as ultimate solution and Cold War intrigue surrounding the purpose of finding and collecting the extraterrestrial specimen in the first place. In the lab, human error and time are the antagonists, while the true protagonist is the scientific method.

Beyond the usual unspoken flow and causality of cinematic time, both the narrative and structure of *The Andromeda Strain* are clearly articulated in steps plodding forward. The overall rubric is one of outbreak to containment, with threat of ruptures along the way. The specifics of the plot are delivered as overdetermined exposition punctuated by step by step procedurals. As the research team descends floor by floor in the facility, each subaltern level they encounter brings increasingly intense sanitizing procedures. To get from level one to five takes them sixteen hours, with the disinfecting stages passed through making each level 'bionetically cleaner than the one above it.' When they finally reach level five where the lab, patients, and alien sample are, their bodies are as sterile as humanly possible. From this controlled environment, the testing can begin, pushing against all of Andromeda's unknowns. Their approach

is governed by stages as well. One, detection: 'confirm that an organism is present'. Two, characterization: 'how is it structured, how does it work.' Three, control: 'how to contain and exterminate it.'

As an experiment itself, McGuire's *Strain Andromeda The* tests a hypothesis of uncontainment, reversing the stages and steps observed in the source material. The narrative arc moves backwards shot-by-shot: avoiding crisis of further spread, auto-destruct count-down counting up, ascertaining the make-up of Andromeda and treatment for those exposed through testing and human errors, the characters moving up the levels of the subterranean facility—becoming less immunized as they go, finding the survivors in a town wiped-out, the aftermath of an outbreak and the knowledge of the capsule returning from outer-space that caused it. With each re-ordered shot it is not always a clear trajectory back through these stages and steps. Additional fissures occur as the re-arranged grammar of the entirety of the source film clashes with the grammar contained within its individual shots. The experiment's results won't always play as five, four, three, two, one... sometimes they come out as three, one, two. In this way the research team's methodology becomes skewed. Three, control: 'how to contain and exterminate it.' One, detection: 'confirm that an organism is present'. Two,

characterization: 'how is it structured, how does it work.'

McGuire's methodology reveals schisms in logic, containing something before knowing it exists and if it exists, what properties it has. As an experiment, *Strain Andromeda The* concludes with a village of citizens dead and top-secret and restricted files partially visible in the opening credits of Wise's source film: pointing to a context of paranoia and fear of the unknown, the fallacy of an ever-ready preparedness against "the other." As Ben Woodard notes, referencing Reza Negarestani: 'radical openness to other forms of life (viral or otherwise) can begin not with an attitude of openness but with radical closure, that one can be radically open by making oneself a target from the outside paradoxically through isolation' (Woodard, 37). Little comfort can come from the pre-opening credits acknowledgement that the files surrounding *Andromeda* will be made public and the officious re-assurance that the story told is with accuracy and detail.

Citations:

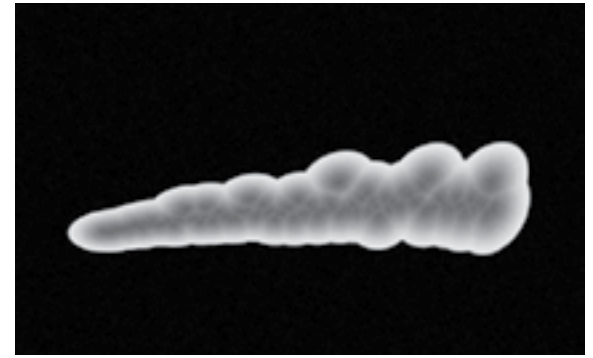
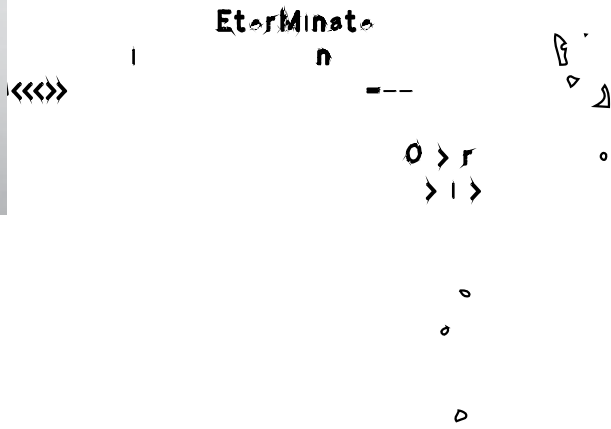
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Classified Digits, Christine Sun Kim & Thomas Mader, 2016, 5:28 (silent).



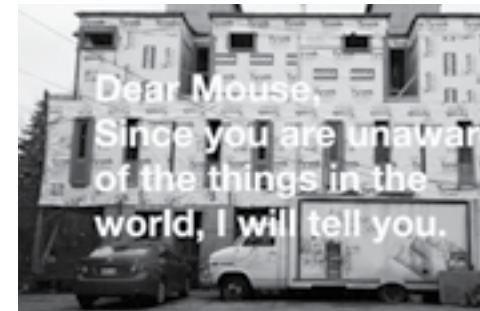
Ask the Insects, Steve Reinke, 2005, 7:19.



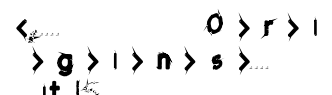
Blind Understanding, Saskia Holmkvist, 2009, 11:55.



Object Cinema, Darren Banks, 2016, 5:26.



Stretto, Serena Lee, 2016, 6:45.



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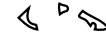


Amethyst, Linda Stupart, 2016, 0:56 (silent).



Object Interviews (Part III), Patrick Hough, 2015, 5:32.

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Wrong then, wrong today, Katie Hare, 2016, 7:17.



The Artwork in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility by Walter Benjamin as told to Keith Sanborn, Keith Sanborn, 1996, 3:38.



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Seven Signs That Mean Silence, Sara Magenheimer, 2013, 10:48.



Owed to (C)ode, Hannah Catherine Jones, 2014, 4:39.

awáwa fásga wí'k. wíkyatq' i muḡkk' f'labai.>
 íha fáswáwayáxga. qá'da'áḡgintsáiga.>
 (2)/ <lí'hi áldawáxt fáswáwa yáxga.>
 íxwa wáxt maťá'dwa gí'gwli. maťá'dwanánitc.>
 awáwa áha. naťádwa.>
 ldayaťádwa gí'gwli. yaq'ú' gí'gwli.>
 ldayawáwa. yawáwayáxga nátcagu'ísgam yáxga. :
 (3)/ <yawáwa ók'íkda wí'k. xáuḡať [.]' nabáťatc k'í
 rwáwa kába'uklámíyai xáuḡaťyawáwa.>
 ildas yáhayuhí'hi hà hà hà há há há [19] kábitgá'g
 ' <áldayaťá'dwa íáxn. yaq'ú' sá'xli.>
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 íxtci nawáwa kába'uklámívai. xáuḡať yawáwa >

Wawa, Sky Hopinka, 2014, 6:00.



Attention Public, Emily Vey Duke & Cooper Battersby, 2004, 10:00.

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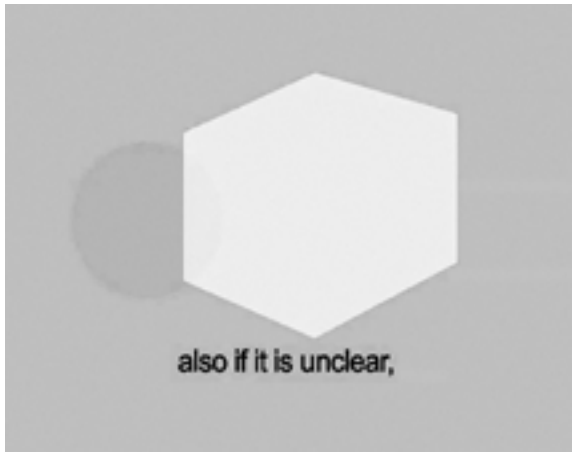
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Writing Culture, Karen Cunningham, 2013, 1:50.



In the Cinema No One Speaks Unless They Have Something to Say While in Real Life It's Just the Opposite, Mike Hoolboom, 1992, 0:40.



Per Se, Deirdre Logue, 2005, 4:12.



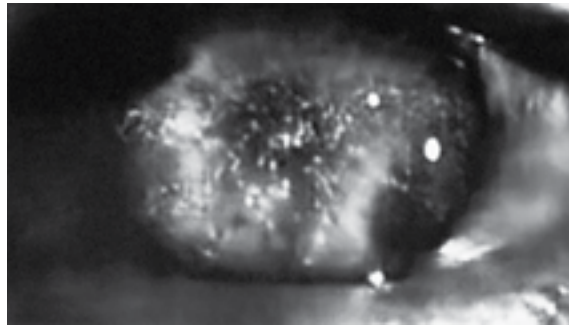
This is Living, Ghislaine Leung, 2011, 4:01.



We Know We Are Just Pixels, Laure Prouvost, 2015, 4:44.



Colossal Cave, Graeme Arnfield, 2016, 11:12.



Blade Runner – Autoencoded (Side by side comparison of the opening 5 minutes), Terence Broad, 2016, 4:46.



Toxic, Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz, 2012, 13:00.



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Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar, Manuel Saiz, 2005, 1:47.

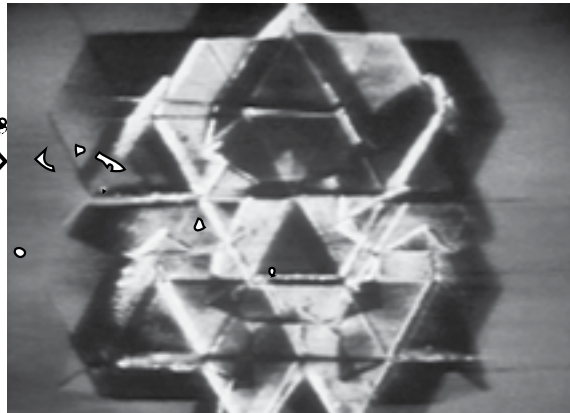


Loneliness will be my greatest treasure, Ieva Kraule, 2014, 3:01 (silent).

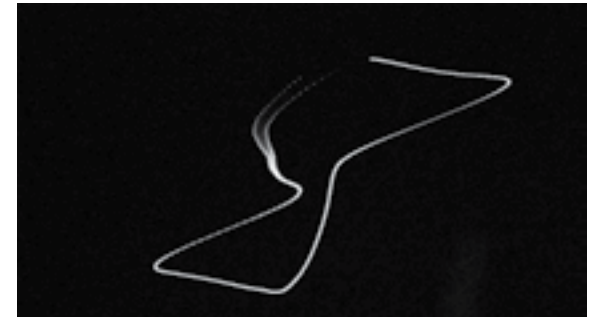
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Strain Andromeda The, Anne McGuire, 1992, 126:00.



Quantum Identity Politics, Miko Revereza, 2017, 8:48.

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She Who Sees The Unknown: Huma,
Morehshin Allahyari, 2016, 6:04.

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Wow and Flutter, Jenny Brady, 2013, 13:03.

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Shuffle, Douglas Waterman, 1971, 4:00 (excerpt).

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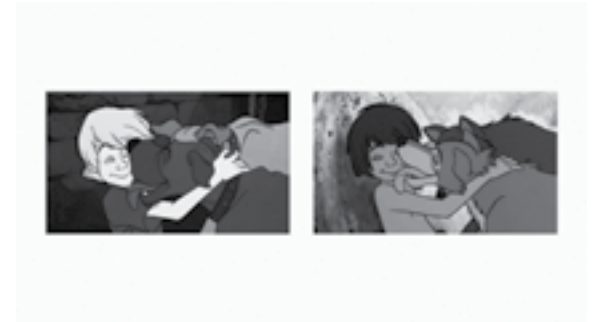
My Mind is My Own, Liz Magic Laser, 2015, 8:05.



Ceibas: Shannon's Entropy, Evan Meany, 2008, 5:54.



Nothing Comes from Talking (But Sound), Sara Magenheimer, 2012, 1:43.



Versions, Oliver Laric, 2010, 9:06.



HELLO OLIVER LARIC :O, Gabrielle de la Puente & Zarina Muhammad, 2016, 1:58.



My Twilight Zone Thing, Sondra Perry, 2014, 1:04 (Work in progress).