

# Bay Area Roots

## Greg Sharits / Dean Snider

*Sunday, March 25, 2007 at 7:30 pm — Yerba Buena Center for the Arts*

In the history of San Francisco filmmaking, two filmmakers stand out as iconoclasts, creators of unique and innovative works reflective of passionate approaches to life and to film. Founding member of San Francisco's No Nothing Cinema, Dean Snider was a highly charismatic cinematic instigator, an extremely productive and influential filmmaker. His films are notable for their irreverent humor and no-nonsense approach to cinematic form, content and duration. Greg Sharits, brother of filmmaker Paul, lived a life of relative obscurity, haunting the streets of SOMA throughout the '70s, a skid row filmmaker flaneur. Using single-frame shooting, Sharits' films are pixilated city symphonies of neon sign and sidewalk life. (Steve Polta)

### FILMS BY DEAN SNIDER

*Eat Shit*, 16mm, b&w, sound

*Zebo*, 16mm, b&w, sound

*Stink*, 16mm, color, sound

*The Soft White Underbelly*, 16mm, b&w, sound

*Rock Falls / Mud Slides*, 16mm, color, sound

*Ish and Vinnie*, 16mm, color, sound

*Motel L.*, 16mm, color, sound

*We See*, 16mm, color, sound

### FILMS BY GREG SHARITS

*Untitled #6*; 8mm, color, silent, 12 minutes, print from Canyon Cinema

*Cipher*, Super-8mm screened as 16mm, color, silent, 10 minutes, print from Anthology Film Archives

*Transfer*, 8mm screened as 16mm, color, silent, print from Anthology Film Archives

*Transit* (1970s); 8mm screened as 16mm, color, silent, print from Anthology Film Archives

"The late Greg Sharits is another filmmaker whose work deserves to be more widely recognized than it has been. ... Those films of Sharits that I've seen fall into two categories. Some are home movies whose surfaces have been overlaid with all manner of stenciled patterns, creating jumbles of letters, crude wipes, and strobeflickers. *Transfer* is the most complex and varied of these, but Sharits' other genre—street films identified only by numbers—are even more impressive. Although hardly documentaries, these percussive, edited-in-camera compositions, superimposing the neon lights and illuminated storefronts of downtown San Francisco with uncanny geometric precision, could only have been shot off-the-cuff with an inconspicuous small-format camera. At once lyrical and rigorous, these meticulously crafted city symphonies are among the most ecstatic avant-garde films I've seen since I began covering the beat...." (J. Hoberman, "The Village Voice," cited from [www.paulsharits.com](http://www.paulsharits.com) and [www.canyoncinema.com](http://www.canyoncinema.com))

"This deceptively lyrical handheld Super-8 film treats abstraction as a kind of willed event, a deliberate use of the camera as an active tool for preventing objects from optically resolving into their familiar forms. Greg Sharits' film uses the camera as a kind of microscope, getting way too close to its intimate surroundings in order to break up our understanding of them. Many filmmakers use personal cinema to release the pure color and texture of the everyday world, but Sharits' *Untitled #9* somehow seems to dramatize this process as a kind of struggle, one we are a part of over the course of the ten-minute running time and not a predigested, aestheticist fait accompli." (Michael Sicinski, "New York Dispatch. 8." October, 11, 2006, cited from <http://daily.greencine.com/archives/002584.html>)

Copious gratitude is extended to Anthology Film Archives for loaning archival prints of Greg Sharits' films for this screening.