

# Dreaming Awake

## How James Joyce Invented Experimental Cinema and Disguised It as a Book

Tuesday, October 13, 2009 — Delancey Street Screening Room

curated and presented by Gerry Fialka

introduced by Merle Kessler

presented in association with Litquake

Paramedia-ecologist Gerry Fialka's interactive workshop probes how Joyce's 1939 meta-narrative book/epic collage *Finnegans Wake* (and McLuhan's Menippean satirized translation) presaged experimental cinema. How did the Wake influence Frampton, Land, Cage and Greenaway? How and why does the Wake tell the history of everything that ever happened and will happen? Why did Joyce hang out with the Masons and reveal their secrets? Why did the British secret police study the Wake? How did the Wake invent MK-ULTRA? How does the Wake write a detailed history of the future? How and why did Joyce anticipate the Facebook-Google-Wiki-Twitter-YouTube-blogspheric swirl and whatever comes after the Internet? Harry Smith, who claimed Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno invented cinema, stated that the function of film viewing is to put people to sleep—dreaming awake. Presentation includes film clips from Mary Ellen Bute's *Passages from Finnegans Wake* and Hollis Frampton's *Gloria!* Re-Joyce interconnecting Finneganesse "funny funereels," "allnights newseryreel," "they leap loopy, loopy, as they link to light," "cellellenetautoslavzendlatinsoundsript" and a "riot of blots and blurs and bars and balls and hoops and wriggles and juxtaposed jottings linked by spurts of speed." Fun for all at *Finnegans Wake*. (Gerry Fialka)

**Introductory reading by Merle Kessler:** *This the way to the museyroom. Mind your hats goan in! Now yiz are in the Willingdone Museyroom. This is a Prooshious gunn. This is a ffrinch. Tip. This is the flag of the Prooshious, the Cap and Soracer. This is the bullet that byng the flag of the Prooshious. This is the ffrinch that fire on the Bull that bang the flag of the Prooshious. Saloos the Crossgunn! Up with your pike and fork! Tip. (Bullsfoot! Fine!) This is the triplewon hat of Lipoleum. Tip. Lipoleumhat. This is the Willingdone on his same white harse, the Cokenhape. This is the big Sraughter Willingdone, grand and magentic in his goldtin spurs and his ironed dux and his quarterbrass woodyshoes and his magnate's gharters and his bangkok's best and goliar's goloshes and his pulluponeasyan wartrews. This is his big wide harse. Tip. This is the three lipoleum boyne gouching down in the living detch. This is an inimyskilling inglis, this is a scotcher grey, this is a davy, stooping. This is the bog lipoleum mordering the lipoleum beg. A Gallawghurs argaumunt. This is the petty lipoleum boy that was nayther bag nor bug. Assaye, assaye! Touchole Fitz Tuomush. Dirty MacDyke. And Hairy O'Hurry. All of them arminus-varminus. This is Delian alps. This is Mont Tivel, this is Mont Tipsey, this is the Grand Mons Injun. This is the crimealine of the alps hooping to sheltershock the three lipoleums. This is the jinnies with their legahorns feinting to read in their handmade's book of strategy while making their war undisides the Willingdone. The jinnies is a cooin her hand and the jinnies is a ravin her hair and the Willingdone git the band up. This is big Willingdone mormorial tallowscoop Wounderworker obscides on the flanks of the jinnies. Sexcaliber hrosspower. Tip. This s me Belchum sneaking his phillippy out of his most Awful Grimmest Sunshat Cromwelly. Looted. This is the jinnies' hastings dispatch for to irrigate the Willingdone. Dispatch in thin red lines cross the shortfront of me Belchum. Yaw, yaw, yaw! Leaper Orthor. Fear siecken! Fieldgaze thy tiny frow. Hugacting. Nap. That was the tictacs of the jinnies for to fontannoy the Willingdone. Shee, shee, shee! The jinnies is jillous agincourting all the lipoleums. And the lipoleums is gonn boycottoncrezy onto the one Willingdone. And the Willingdone git the band up. This is bode Belchum, bonnet to busby, breaking his secred word with a ball up his ear to the Willingdone. Tis is the Willingdone's huold dispitchback. Dispitch deployed on the regions rare of me Belchum. Salamangra! Ayi, ayi, ayi! Cherry jinnies. Figtreeyou! Damn fairy ann, Voutre. Willingdone. That was the first joke of Willingdone, tic for tac. Hee, hee, hee! This is me Belchum in his*

*twelvemile cowhooks, weet, tweet and stampforth foremost, footing the camp for the jinnies. Drink a sip, drankasup, for he's as sooner buy a guinness than he'd stale store stout. This is Rooshious balls. This is a ttrinch. This is mistletropes. This is Canon Futter with the popynose. After his hundred days' indulgence. This is the blessed. Tarra's widdars! This is jinnies in the bonny bawn blooches. This is lipoleums in the rowdy howses. This is the Willingdone, by the splinters of Cork, order fire. Tonnerre! (Bullsear! Play!) This is camelry, this is floodens, this is the solphereens in action, this is their mobbily, this is panickburns. Almeidagad! Arthiz too loose! This is Willingdone cry. Brum! Brum! Cumbrum! This is jinnies cry. Underwetter! Goat strip Finnlambs! This is jinnies rinning away to their ousterlists dowan a bunkersheels. With a nip nippy nip and a trip trippy trip so airy. For their heart's right there. Tip. This is me Belchum's tinkyou tankyou silvoor plate for citchin the crapes in the cool of his canister. Poor the pay! This is the bissmark of the marathon merry of the jinnies they left behind them. This is the Willingdone branlish his same marmorial tallowscoop SophyKey-Po for his royal divorsion on the rinnaway jinnies. Gambariste della porca! Dalaveras fimmieras! This is the pettiest of the lipoleums, Toffeethief, that spy on the Willingdone from his big white harse, the Capeinhope. Stonewall Willingdone is an old maxy montrumeny. Lipoleums is nice hung bushellors. This is hiena hinnessy laughing aloud at the Willingdone. This is lipsyg dooley krieging the funk from the hinnessy. This is the hinndoo Shimar Shin between the dooley boy and the hinnessy. Tip. This is the wixy old Willingdone picket up the half of the threefoiled hat of lipoleums fromoud of the bluddle filth. This is the hinndoo waxing ranjymad for a bombshoob. This is the Willingdone hanking the half of the hat of lipoleums up the tail on the buckside of his big white harse. Tip. That was the last joke of Willingdone. Hit, hit, hit! This is the same white harse of the Willingdone, Culpenhelp, wagging his tailoscrupp with the half of a hat of lipoleums to insult on the hinndoo seeboy. Hney, hney, hney! (Bullrag! Foul!) This is the seeboy, madrashattaras, upjump and pumpim, cry to the Willingdone: Ap Pukkaru! Pukka Yurap! This is the Willingdone, bornstable ghentleman, tindere his maxbotch to the cursigan Shimar Shin. Basucker youstead! This is the dooforhim seeboy blow the whole of the half of the hat of lipoleums off of the top of the tail on the back of his big wide harse. Tip (Bullseye! Game!) How Copenhagen ended. This way the museyroom. Mind your boots goan out. (from Finnegans Wake)*

"I am really one of the greatest engineers... the initiating spark for a perpetual motion text machine." (*How Joyce Wrote Finnegans Wake*)

"Narrative is born among the 'animal necessities of the spirit' because we are 'waiting to die.'" (H. Frampton)

"I am boring through a mountain from 2 sides. The question is, how to meet in the middle." (Joyce=JJ).

"What is the novel about, and what—if anything—is it besides a novel?"...It is as certain as anything can be in the Wake that the passage beginning with 'A cry off' (558), which Edmund Wilson described as the only waking moment... is in fact the beginning of a part of H.C.E.'s dream in which he takes his wife to the cinema." (James Atherton: *The Books at the Wake*)

La Poste writer reacts to Lumiere Cinematographe film screening Dec 30, 1895: "When these gadgets are in the hands of the public, when anyone can photograph the ones who are dear to them, not just in their motionless form, but with movement, action, familiar gestures and the words out of their mouths, then death will no longer be absolute, final."

"Cinema is much too rich a medium to be left to storytellers." (Peter Greenaway)

"To define is to kill. To suggest is to create." (Mallarmé) "The crux of the biscuit is the apostrophe." (Zappa)

"Joyce realized that technologies were the analogical mirrors of our biological process. So, perceptually interlocking Joyce to Haeckel's insight, of ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny; microbiology recapitulates macrobiology. And he realized our human technology is re-created biology, like: the book is an extension of the eye, the radio is the ear, etc., and Joyce conceived the sensory analogues. Then, that technologies, which become environments, could be perceived as a symbolic map of the stages of that evolution; i.e., techni evolving. And the stages would have a biological reference point. For example, Joyce's great line on 52 of 'The Wake': "Television kills telephony in Brothers' broil". (You're naming 2 technologies). "Our eyes demand their turn." (Now the object is switched to biological forms: eyes). "Let them be seen"! (Then, the question is what and who was to do the seeing). So, Joyce was always playing between art and science (man's means for measuring her/himself and humanity, i.e., technological constructs), AND nature. But nature was still within the art and science constructs, as in the percepts of Bucky Fuller: That there was nature. So, Joyce showed: The ontogeny that was James Joyce's life replayed (recapitulated) the history of

the species; the technoid species! Thus, Joyce saw that he learned writing (in *The Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man*). Then, when he was older, he wanted to start a cinema, in Dublin. And he then got involved in radio. And, in all the technologies Joyce experienced in his 57 years—he saw, that the individuated cycle of techné he was involved in ontologically.” (Robert Dobbs=RD fivebodied.com—essential reading)

“Our wholemole millwheeling vicociclometer, a tetradomational gazebocticon (the “Mamma Lujah” known to every schoolboy scandaller, be he Matty, Marky, Lukey or John-aDonk), autokinatonetically preprovided with a clappercoupling” (*Finnegans Wake*=FW).

**McLuhan’s Tetrad: 1) What does it enhance or intensify? 2) What does it render obsolete or replace? 3) What does it bring back that was previously obsolesced? 4) What does it become when pressed to an extreme, what does it flip into?**

“Joyce had essentially discovered the tetrad once he had seen through the television form. He even organized the large-scale structure of the WAKE on the tetrad: Book One deals with the amplification of technology. Book Two is concerned with the obsolescence of technologies. Book Three deals with the retrieval of forms, and Book Four is modeled on its “flipping-into-its-opposite” feature of technologies.”—RD.

“in deesperation of deispiration at the diasporation of his diesparation...was found of the round of the sound of the loud of the”—Tetradic Finneganese.

“The basic fact to keep in mind about the movie camera and projector is their resemblance to the process of human cognition.”—Marshall McLuhan (=MM, “Meereschal MacMuhun, pg254 of FW).

“What McLuhan contributed were not ideas, arguments, theories or critiques, but intuitions, perceptions, wandering explorations of unexplored terrain, satiric responses and poetic reactions...His primary game: teasing people into believing his percepts to be theoretical concepts...” -Donald Theall, *The Virtual MM*.

“Artists are engaged in writing a detailed history of the future because they are the only people who live in the present.”—Wyndham Lewis.

“Joyce uses the pun as a way of seeing the paradoxical exuberance of being through language.”—MM.

“Objects are unobservable. Only relationships among objects are observable. So if you think that the question, “Will we ever learn?” implies a goal, a particular point and time we will arrive at, a particular object, we will never know that. Because objects like that do not exist, only relationships among objects exist. It is like asking, “Will there ever be silence?” It’s like, “Will you ever die?” Well, you’ll never know because to be dead is a specific experience that seems to imply isolation which could not be known. Because nothing exists in isolation, you will never experience death. You will only experience those things that involve relationships. The end point of time, death, cannot be experienced because it’s not a relationship among events.”—RD.

“The world of discontinuity came in most vividly with the telegraph and the newspaper. The stories in the newspaper are completely discontinuous because they are simultaneous. They’re all under one dateline, but there’s no story line to connect them. TV is like that. It’s an X-ray, mosaic screen with the light charging through the screen at the viewer. Joyce called it, “the charge of the light barricade.” In fact, FW is the greatest guide to the media ever devised on this planet, and is a tremendous study of the action of all media upon the human psyche and sensorium. It’s difficult to read, but it’s worth it.”—MM.

“In illuminating the night world, private and collective, Joyce in FW has only done what the electric light had done in abolishing the old divisions between night and day, and between inner and outer space, with respect to human work and play. As soon as the complementary dynamics of inner and outer, conscious and unconscious were displayed, it became easy to observe the operation of languages in shaping human assumptions, both sensuous and psychological. FW is an encyclopedia of lore concerning the origins and effects of words, of writing, of roads and bricks, of telegraph, radio, and television on the changing hues of the human spectrum.”—MM.

“FW is the history of technology and what it’s done to us. The electronic environment has swallowed visual space. The Wake preserves visual space and satirizes the information overload that bombards us daily. By studying the Wake. One can recognize the effects of visual space and acquire a passport to the global Esperanto. If you just take sips of it, the Wake is like the mechanical-tactile music of rock n’roll in print and must be read aloud.”—RD.

“American Indians would go from tent to tent looking for others to ask them questions concerning their dreams from the night before in effort to recall them. Then when the right question was asked, that person would be a co-creator of the dream, the co-dreamer.”—? LAUGHTEARS.com 310-306-7330

“Any movement of appetite within the labyrinth of cognition is a ‘minotaur’ which must be slain by the hero artist. Anything which interferes with cognition, whether concupiscence, pride, imprecision or vagueness is a minotaur ready to devour beauty. So that Joyce not only was the first to reveal the link between the stages of apprehension and the creative process, he was the first to understand how often the drama of cognition itself was the key archetype of all human ritual, myth and legend. And thus he was able to incorporate at every point in his work the body of the past in immediate relation to the slightest current of perception.” —MM.

“My role model in all this is James Joyce—the way he looked at the novel and tried to come up with a new form of telling a story in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.”—Owen Land. “Everything we do is music.”—John Cage. “(In Joyce) words come as close to turning into musical notes as words can.” Richard Ellman. “All art aspires to the condition of music”—Walter Pater. “When Irish Eyes are Smiling” = sense ratio shifting + CINEthesia =circling the square...

“You cannot complain that this stuff is not written in English. It is not written at all. It is not to be read. It is to be looked at and listened to. His writing is not about something. It is that something itself.”—S. Beckett.

Finneganesque: “what can’t be coded can be decoded if an ear eye seize what no eye ere grieved fore” (482), “verbivocovisual” (341), “sendence of sundance” (615), “plumbs and grumes and cheriffs and citherers and raiders and cinemen too” (6), “revealed by Oscur Camerad” (603), “Moviefigure on in scenic section” (603), “great things were expected in the fulmfilming department” (398), “Vouchsafe me more soundpicture! It gives furiously to think” (570), “allnights newseryreel” (489), “funny funereels” (414), “optophone...ontophanes” (13), “broodcast” (567), “roll away the reel world, reel world, reel world” (64), “thank Movies” (194), “confesses to all his tellavicious nieces” (349), “our moving pictures” (565), “Moviefigure on in scenic section” (602), “if you are looking for the bilder deep your ear on the movietone” (62).

“What is going to be made and seen in the next ten years would cause your grandfather to leap from the grave.”—Ron Rice’s ‘60s comment on experimental film from *Allegories of Cinema* by David James.

“A professor is a man who talks in other people’s sleep” —W.H. Auden.

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“If it works, its obsolete” —MM

Special Bonus: Excerpt from Bob Dobbs essay—McLuhan and Holeopathic Quadrophrenia: The Mouse-That-Roared Syndrome—I will now retrace what I have already said and define a few details and then elaborate on them. The first key to my understanding of McLuhan is grasping the emphasis he placed on the drama of cognition as an artifact, in contrast to Freud’s study of the dream as an artifact. This drama is based on the doubleness of consciousness, the folding back on itself—the complementary process of “making” and “matching” that is necessary to create the resonance of coherent consciousness. An example of the “making” aspect of perception is the reversal of the rays of light that occurs in the retina as part of the process of creating the experience of sight. Another example is the fact that when food is ingested, what comes out at the other end is not the same as what went in. This sensory alteration, or closure, occurs with all sensory input. McLuhan used the transforming power of the movie camera and projector as a model of this drama of cognition. When the camera rolls up the external world on a spool by rapid still shots, it uncannily resembles the process of “making”, or sensory closure. The movie projector unwinds this spool as a kind of magic carpet which conveys the enchanted spectator anywhere in the world in an instant—a resemblance of the human’s attempt to externalize or utter the result of making sense in a natural effort to connect or “match” with the external environment. The external environment responds and the person is then forced to reply in kind and “make” again. This systole-diastole interplay is McLuhan’s “drama of cognition” and it is parroted by the movie camera and projector. (Has it occurred to you yet of what the live pick-up in the television camera is a parrot?) This drama is the archetype for all creative activity produced by humanity, from ritual, myth, and legend to art, science, and technology. McLuhan understood that James Joyce was the first person to make explicit the fact that the cycle of Ritual, Art, Science, and Technology imitates, is an extension of, the stages of apprehension. And this is possible because the extensions have to approximate our faculties in order for us to pay attention to them. LAUGHTEARS.com 310-306-7330