

**Radical Light**  
**Small Gauge Diaries and Portraits**

**Thursday, March 3 at 7:30 pm — Artists' Television Access**  
**presented in association with Pacific Film Archive**  
**curated by Steve Anker**

**Keith Evans, Janis Crystal Lipzin, Jeff Warrin and Jacalyn White In Person**

In the middle decades of the twentieth century, the 8mm and Super-8mm film formats were introduced to the consumer markets as amateur mediums, “simpler” alternatives to the more unwieldy 16mm gauge. These small-scale tools attracted artists as well, as much for the spontaneity they afforded to filming as for the fragility of their images and for the air of low-key intimacy implied in their exhibition, contributing to a body of cinematic reveries and expressive “diary films” directly in dialog with the home-movie aesthetic. Technical qualities of these “lesser” gauges (such as synchronous sound-on-film recording) presented artists with unique formal challenges and expressive options, as did the corresponding mid-century market for home-distributed “short-subject” reels, whose concerns ranged from feature-film digest to newsreel to porn. This program features Bay Area artists using these traditions to make diaries and personal responses to political themes, including work by Scott Stark, Jacalyn White, silt, Julie Murray and Janis Crystal Lipzin. (Steve Anker)

***Expulsion*** (1989) by Julie Murray; Super-8mm, color, sound, 9 minutes, print from Canyon Cinema

“*Expulsion* is a combination of live and found footage centered around the rearrangement of an old standard 8mm film on Ireland, produced for the tourist trade as a kind of postcard or souvenir, by Castle Films, in the US.

“I reassemble the material in ways that attempt to disrupt or ruin this stereotypical image of the Irish individual and his or her surroundings and establish a possible aspect of his or her missing sexual identity, since Ireland’s position in this regard has always been under-addressed and remains a thing for which a passionate defense is not encouraged.

“By the rearrangement of these images and the juxtapositions of them and others from more disparate sources, including American popular films and low-budget pornography, I sought to alter their context in a manner that gave the characters an added dimension that made their actions and gestures more chaotic and unpredictable, and thus more plausible, while also referring to the blurring of distinctions that occurs when cultures are melded together as the corporate cannonball of global internationalism picks up speed.” (Julie Murray)

***In the Company of Women, part 1*** (1985) by Jacalyn White; Super-8mm, color, sound, 10 minutes, print from Canyon Cinema

“Five dynamic women have an intimate conversation. Shot in extreme close-up, the film gives insight into their world view and mine.” (Jacalyn White)

“It requires my ability to be honest with myself first and to be open to what emotions I might feel other than what I think I should feel, or plan to feel. I have to approach filming myself, my family and friends with openness and a willingness to show whatever comes up. People have described my work as being raw and honest, embarrassingly so, and I think that’s the reason for that, but it’s also my intention to have that kind of honesty. (Jacalyn White, cited by Kathy Geritz: “‘Smaller is Better’: Bay Area Artists and Small-gauge Films,” published in *Radical Light: Alternative Film in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000*)

**Acceleration** (1993) by Scott Stark; Super-8mm, color, sound, 10 minutes, print from Canyon Cinema

“A snapshot taken in a moment of human evolution, where the souls of the living are reflected in the windows of passing trains. The camera captures the reflections of passengers in the train windows as the trains enter and leave the station, and the movement creates a stroboscopic flickering effect that magically exploits the pure sensuality of the moving image.” (Scott Stark)

“With my work, I like to inhabit spaces and see what’s going on in them, and part of that involves being a little inconspicuous. Being able to capture the sound with the image—for me, that’s like magic. It really opens up the space you’re looking at to hear the image and sound together and know that it was not doctored.” (Scott Stark, cited by Kathy Geritz: “‘Smaller is Better’: Bay Area Artists and Small-gauge Films,” published in *Radical Light: Alternative Film in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000*)

**Bladderwort Document** (1978) by Janis Crystal Lipzin; Super-8mm, color, silent, 12 minutes, print from the maker

“A diary film made when I lived in southwestern Ohio at Bladderwort Farm, named for the only insectivorous plant native to North America. Here I play with light: pick it up and embrace it, throw it around, pierce it and wiggle it. Joyce Wieland, Carolee Schneemann, Beverly Conrad, Nancy Rexroth and Tony Dallas appear.” (Janis Crystal Lipzin)

“*Bladderwort Document* ...describes the delicacy of small gestures, the visual dance of camera movement and the chiaroscuro of generative light.... The viewer is challenged to act (react) in the present without reliance on social mannerisms or experiences from a previous context. As Gertrude Stein said, ‘The business of Art is to live in the actual present, that is the complete actual present, and to express that complete actual present.’” (Peggy Ahwesh, *Field of Vision* 1979)

**Kuch Nai** (1992) by silt; Super-8mm, color, sound, 38 minutes, from the makers

“The cinema trio silt is motivated by a fascination with the sculptural qualities of film as a material, the nature of cinema as a time-based event in space, and the unexpected paths that can be produced through collaboration. The three artists—Keith Evans, Christian Farrell, Jeff Warrin—began their work in 1990 [...]. Use of a once-ubiquitous medium, now eclipsed in the marketplace of popular culture presented an opportunity for artistic exploration. The individual identities of the three artists are completely submerged into the collaborative identity. No individual credit exists in any of the group’s films installations and performances, even when only one or two of the three participate.

“The creation of *Kuch Nai* began when one member traveled through India for nine months, shooting Super-8 film and shipping the exposed, undeveloped rolls back to the Bay Area. The other two artists, working alone and in tandem, hand-processed and roughly edited the rolls, but without any notes or script. Imagery was rephotographed with multiple projectors, and the trio later worked together in the final editing and addition of a soundtrack.

“*Kuch Nai* opens with one member’s narrative of his travels through India. After several minutes, as he suspects the camera is malfunctioning, his diaristic travelogue is interspersed with the personal narratives of the two who did not take the journey. During the [...] film, the narratives grapple with personal relationships, [...] take the viewer into a dreamy, otherworldly space and elicit the conceptual, collaborative space among the trio.

“The treatment of the film material itself to achieve unpredictable (and uncontrollable) effects is an ongoing part of silt’s working process. Different lengths of film are buried underground, exposed to bacteria and allowed to mold, to produce colors, patterns and actual dimensionality in or on the film’s emulsion.” (Mark Johnstone and Leslie Aboud Holzman, *Epicenter: San Francisco Bay Area Art Now*, published 2002 by Chronicle Books)