

THE FILMS OF LARRY JORDAN

Summer, 1984 - University of Colorado

First Person Cinema

1. Carabosse (1982)

Carabosse was the 13th fairy, too ugly to invite to the christening of the Princess. She came anyway and cast a spell, causing the princess, when she had grown into womanhood, to prick her finger and fall asleep for 100 years.

This might be one of her dreams during that long slumber.

The film was improvised from my own unconscious, without script or prevision of the events. One event led to another, and so on, until the dream was broken off. (But what caused it to break off I cannot say.)

The music is by Eric Satie.

2. Masquerade (1982)

In the aftermath of passion comes death: I had never tried to make an animation with mood, passion and story before, and this was the result.

Once the music was chosen, it dictated the final form, rejecting many a complicated figure for the simplest way through the tale.

I think of this film as a kind of "inevitable fiction", a fiction which cannot avoid being told, or at least one I could not avoid.

From the moment the background was chosen, it sprang upon me, like the teeth which appear upon the woman, and would not let go until this death-scene had released its secret.

Music by Vivaldi.

3. Magenta Geryon (1983)

Here the fiction ends and the documenting begins. Portraiture is one of these kinds of documenting.

The film is in three parts, the first being an imaginary love-portrait of two old friends.

The second is a portrait of my garden in 1982, a picture of my out-door sculpting with flowers, which could be captured no other way.

And the third is a portrait of another part of my environment, winter in Sonoma County, California.

I approached the second and third parts of the film exactly as an impressionist painter might have approached a beloved landscape; only I used a moving picture camera, instead of paint and canvas.

4. Orb (1974)

The orb, our sun, source of energy, our moon, goddess of our dreams; the orb, Jung's symbol of the Self.

The sphere has always intrigued me as a mystical sign--the most potent I know.

The creation emanates from it. It is inherently female. The creation ends in it. It transcends God and Man.

These are some of the fantastical figures I have chosen to weave in and around this great symbol.

5. Cornell, 1964 (shot 1965, edited 1979)

The narration of the film will explain itself.

It is a document, essentially, of a man important in my life.

A document, more than a portrait. I saw the man, Cornell, but saw very little. So much was hidden. So much revealed only in little flashes, and those most often in a word or a question, or a glimpse of a collage being put away in a large brown envelope.

So, I have written and re-written my recollections and attached them to three very carefully edited rolls of Kodachrome film, so that there might be some small document of this man in real motion next to the motion and emotion of his life's work.

6. Visions of a City (shot 1957, edited 1969)

Here vision and document combine.

Granted, the old premise: a man evolved, then swallowed upon the impersonal hard surface of the city still remains; but the real value of the film to me is that it shows how San Francisco really looked in 1957, and how poet Michael McClure looked in 1957.

I find an abiding satisfaction in these glimpses of life as it has actually existed in another time and place. I should feel impoverished without the documents left by the impressionist painters.

I do not think this response by the artist to his or her environment is ever a matter of date, or owned by any particular period of art.

Music by William Moraldo.

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We show these films in a theatre, on a screen, with the aid of a projector; but it is actually a series of moving paintings we are looking at.