

*Free To Go (interlude)*

St. Ignatius Church Exposure: Lenten Light Conversions

Lynn Marie Kirby

2004

10 minutes ■ Colour/Digital Betacam

Free To Go (interlude)

Andrew Noren

2003

10 minutes ■ Colour and Black and White/Digital Betacam

Sources: See page 410

A pairing of digital works made by artists chiefly concerned with light, abstraction and form.

Combining elements of celluloid and digital media, *St. Ignatius Church Exposure: Lenten Light Conversions* is part of a "light tuning" series in which Lynn Marie Kirby exposes 16mm raw stock to the light of a particular site, without a camera. In this case, she captures the ambient light at San Francisco's St. Ignatius Church during the forty days of Lent. The developed film is used as source material that is further manipulated through a film-to-digital transfer machine. A work of complete abstraction, *St. Ignatius Church Exposure* displays delicate hues and pure colour digital fields as well as surface imperfections from the original film strip, forging a new hybrid media method.

Free To Go (interlude) is a meditation on life and mortality by Andrew Noren, an artist with an impressive body of experimental films to his credit who recently turned his attention to the digital medium. This film bears Noren's distinctive trademarks: an interest in light, speed and transformation from one reality into another. It works with everyday images – the filmmaker's shadow as he walks through the landscape, vehicular traffic on a bridge, pedestrians and their images reflected in store windows – and moves into kaleidoscopic abstraction, its stunningly graphic black-and-white movements bookending a central section that uses a brilliant colour palette.

Noren's films and videos are perhaps best understood as visual compositions and, like music, they concern themselves with duration, changing tempos and themes. There is also a strong painterly quality to his image-making. *Free To Go (interlude)* makes use of dazzling

liquid-like digital effects and solarization techniques which radically transform the images into waves of intense colour (almost a sense of solar heat) or complex geometric patterns.

Noren exploits the malleable image characteristics of the digital medium – extreme flatness, clarity, slow stroboscopic effects and hyper-speed animation – to create an otherworldly quality from everyday scenes. At times, the onscreen image almost appears to be opening at the centre point of the symmetrically designed composition, suggesting the beginning of another world.

— Susan Oxtoby

Lynn Marie Kirby resides in San Francisco, where she has been making films, videos and installations since 1980. Her works include: *Sharon and the Birds on the Way to the Wedding* (85-88), *Paris and Athens, June* (94), *St. Ignatius Church Exposure: Lenten Light Conversions* (04) and *Golden Gate Bridge Exposure: Poised for Parabolas* (04).

Andrew Noren lives in New Jersey and has been making films since the mid-sixties. His works between 1968 and 2001 are part of a cycle entitled the *Adventures of the Exquisite Corpse*, which includes *Huge Pupils* (67-68), *False Pretenses* (73-74), *The Phantom Enthusiast* (75), *Charmed Particles* (77-78), *The Lighted Field* (87), *Imaginary Light* (94) and *Time Being* (01). *Free To Go (interlude)* (03) is Noren's second digital work and part of a new series entitled *Magical Thinking*.

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*Le Fantôme de l'opératrice*

Terrace 49

Janie Geiser

USA, 2004

No Dialogue

6 minutes ■ Colour/16mm

The Observatory

Alexi Manis

CANADA, 2004

No Dialogue

5 minutes ■ Colour/16mm

Chateau/Poyet

Lawrence Jordan

USA, 2004

No dialogue

6 minutes ■ Colour/16mm

Le Fantôme de l'opératrice

The Phantom of the Operator

Caroline Martel

CANADA, 2004

French, English

66 minutes ■ Colour and Black and White/Digital Betacam

Print Sources: See page 410

Four works united by their sense of mystery and creative use of found footage and source materials.

Janie Geiser's *Terrace 49* combines images of impending disaster from adventure cartoons with filmed objects (graph paper, charts, calligraphy books), which are then animated and superimposed to create a sense of mystery. Geiser further divides the frame into shards, creating composite images as fractured as memory and as fragile as glass. The film's heroine has the ability to become invisible and represents a positive spirit in this curiously circular imaginary world.

An ambient track of evening sounds (crickets, cicadas and the occasional owl hoot) accompanies rephotographed sketches of the night sky by Jerry Spevak in *The Observatory*. Alexi Manis films the pencil drawings on an animation stand, bringing a delicate touch to this wonderfully abstract treatment of the stars in the galaxy.

Chateau/Poyet, by veteran experimental filmmaker Lawrence Jordan, is a cut-out animation of images from the early twentieth century which depict such activities as man's early attempts at flight, a tightrope walker and men jousting. Jordan's masterful yet subtle collage films are distinguished by their ability to make new meaning out of disparate images and create mysterious worlds in which the progression of movement is continually surprising.

Caroline Martel's *Le Fantôme de l'opératrice* is an inspired essay film which examines the history of the telephone operator: the rise of this occupation for women and the fate of the profession in the computer age. An entertaining exploration which mines the

wealth of corporate films produced by Bell Laboratories and Western Union, the film shows us the faces of these invisible female workers. Martel deviates from a strict linear historical approach in order to punctuate her argument with examples from more contemporary periods. *Le Fantôme de l'opératrice* reveals how women were trained to deliver efficient and courteous customer service, work the assembly lines during World War II and personify "the voice with a smile" for the phone company. — Liz Czach and Susan Oxtoby

Janie Geiser is an internationally recognized filmmaker and theatre artist based in Los Angeles. Her films include *The Red Book* (94), *Immer Zu* (97), *Last Motion* (00), *Ultras Thule* (02) and *Terrace 49* (04).

Alexi Manis is a Toronto-based filmmaker and projectionist. Her films include *Luminous* (01), *The Finto* (04) and *The Observatory* (04).

Lawrence Jordan lives in Petaluma, California and has made over sixty experimental and animated collage films and three feature-length dramatic films. His works include *Duo Concertantes* (64), *Our Lady of the Sphere* (65), *Concert* (1965) (78), *Sophie's Place* (86), *The Visible Compendium* (90), *Enid's Idyll* (04) and *Chateau/Poyet* (04).

Caroline Martel lives in Montreal, where she is a filmmaker, cinematographer, cinema operator and artistic programmer at Studio XX. *Le Fantôme de l'opératrice* (04) is her first feature-length film.

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