

## **BRUCE E. CHECEFSKY FILMOGRAPHY**

### **Béla/2009/35mm/black & white/sound/6:29 min**

An experimental film scenario written by Hungarian Dada artist and avant-garde filmmaker György Gerő, and first published in 1924 in the DaDaist review IS. The original scene-by-scene film script and complete scenario of the film consist of 3 pages currently housed in the Hungarian National Library. Gerő never completed the film.

Lajos Kassák's review of the *Dokumentum* (1924) includes a descriptive passage of Gerő's conceptual theory as well as several key filmmaking techniques.

György Gerő, born in 1905, was a poet, editor, and the first Hungarian independent filmmaker.

György Gerő was spared political prison, declared a neurotic and placed into a private hospital where all traces of him were lost.

Filmed on location in Cleveland, Ohio.

### **Kineportrait Andrzej Pawlowski/2008/Betacam/color/b&w//Polish with English subtitles/12:10 min**

Andrzej Pawlowski (1925-1986) was a painter, sculptor, photographer, experimental filmmaker, theoretician, and educator. He also designed industrial forms and exhibition arrangements. He was a professor and co-creator of the Industrial Forms Department at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow. He was co-founder of the KRAKOW GROUP and the Association of Designers of Industrial Forms.

*Kineportrait Andrzej Pawlowski* includes rarely seen interviews from an education television program first aired in Poland in the 1950's. Also included are film clips from *Kineformy*, his influential 1957 experimental color film. *Kineformy* catapulted Pawlowski to international fame, and influenced a new generation of experimental filmmakers. There are scenes from Pawlowski's 1967 film *Professor Morpheo Cracoviensis*, a satirical and often humorous look at university teaching and a film he collaborated with design historian Krzysztof Meissner. The documentary includes examples of Pawlowski's extensive industrial design products and expressive black & white photographs.

### **TUAREG/2008/16mm/b&w/sound/7:15 min/Cleveland, Ohio**

A stunning black and white abstract film, TUAREG is a melodious assemblage of Alençon, Venetian, and Point D'espirit lace; artificial silk flowers, plants and trees seen as shadows cast by pocket, tube, and LED flashlights. Beautifully photographed in black-and-white on outdated twenty-five year old direct positive film, the resulting dense grain images evoke a veil of secrecy and tension surrounding the film's meaning. The visible division of the screen in half, several simultaneous images, ruptures the illusion that the screen's frame is a seamless view of reality.

TUAREG was commissioned by Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Art in Buffalo, New York.

**MOMENT MUSICAL/2006/16 mm/b&w/photogram film/sound/5:43**

Stefan and Franciszka Themerson's first sound film, "Moment Musical" (1933), was a three-minute commercial in which photograms of light-pierced jewelry, porcelain and glass were animated to music by Ravel.

The Themersons' experimental techniques involved moving lights and shadows on objects. They evolved out of the Themersons' improvisations with the photogram. 1928-35. Most of the images were made on a "trick-table" improvised by Stefan Themerson. He placed various objects on a piece of translucent paper over a sheet of glass. The lights were above, and he photographed the images from below frame by frame.

In 1934, T.Toeplitz from Kurier Polski wrote: "*And finally I shall mention the Themersons, who shot a truly beautiful commercial – Moment Musical. This film moment is the only film that one cannot raise any objections to at all. The only positive point in the balance of Polish film production in 1933-34.*"

"Moment Musical" was lost or destroyed during the Nazi occupation of Warsaw during the Second World War.

**The First Abstract Animator: Leopold Survage's 'Colored Rhythm'/2005/Digital color animation/Silent/3:00 min**

In the early 1910's, painter, designer, and illustrator Leopold Survage sought to transcend the "immobility" of abstract painting by animating colorful forms through film. Survage, born Leopold Sturzwage, was a student at Moscow's School of Fine Arts when he discovered French modernism, inspiring his move to Paris in 1908. Survage joined the city's coterie of avant-garde artists, exhibited his work at the Salon des Independants, and attained the support of Guillaume Apollinaire. Contemporary developments in abstract painting propelled his experiments with rhythm-color "symphonies," resulting in a series of hand-drawn colored abstractions (produced between 1912 and 1913), which he intended to transform into pulsating rhythmic forms using a team of animators and a three-color camera. Survage considered his Rhythm colore series an autonomous art form analogous to music.

Survage considered his film analogous to music. Purely abstract colorful forms would kinetically interact creating in the viewers mind melodic and harmonic rhythm. His pioneering efforts to create the first abstract film were curtailed by the outbreak of World War I, and his color "plates" were never filmed. Survage continued to paint and produce designs and illustrations until his death

**IN NI (Others) 2005/Betacam/color/b&w/Polish with English subtitles/20:43**

In 1958, experimental filmmaker Andrzej Pawlowski wrote a script based on a 1941 diary written by a patient at a psychiatric hospital in Kobierzyn near Krakow. The original diary was found stashed in a wall, and in the early 1950's, the director of the asylum gave it to Pawlowski. The diary chronicles the daily atrocities committed by the Nazi under the operation "Ausmerzung Lebensunwerten Leben" during the occupation of Poland.

The diary survived the war but its author did not. Pawlowski submitted his script to the national film board in Warsaw but they failed to produce it before he died in 1986. Filmed entirely in Warsaw.

**A WOMAN AND CIRCLES/2003-2004/35mm/black & white and color/found film/sound/9:38**

In 1930 while living in Paris, Polish avant-garde poet Jan Brzekowski wrote a short non-narrative film script titled "A Woman and Circles" in the French magazine "Cercle et Carree" (The script was later translated into Polish and published in "Linia.").

This non-narrative film reveals a random succession of negative and positive images preceded by a glowing circle that overtakes the film frame then reduces to two smaller bouncing balls that later become minuet dancers. While using found footage from 1960's instructional films like "What is Rain?" AWAC is not considered a remake or reconstruction - Brzekowski never produced his film.

A WOMAN AND CIRCLES was filmed using a 1940's hand wound 35mm camera with black and white film stock from the period in which the script was originally published.

**PHARMACY/2001/35mm/black and white abstract photogram film/silent/4:36**

PHARMACY is based on Stefan and Francizsk Themersons influential 1930 abstract photogram film APTEKA. The Themerson's are considered the most influential filmmakers of the Polish avant-garde of pre-WWII Europe.

A stunning black and white abstract film, *Pharmacy* is a chaotic, anarchic assemblage of chemistry lab measuring cups and spoons, various size test tubes, tweezers, eyeglasses, and a cornucopia of transparent pharmaceutical equipment seen as shadows only.

Filmed in Budapest using a 1930s single frame camera, black and white film, and a reconstruction of the Themerson's trick table based on an original drawing made by Stefan Themerson in the 1970's.