

## AMERICA'S MOST IMPORTANT FILM EXPERIMENTER IN MUSEUM RETROSPECTIVE

A complete retrospective of the work of Stan Brakhage, at 38 America's leading experimental filmmaker, will be held starting April 22 at The Museum of Modern Art. The 14 day retrospective, including 35 films, represents the first major film series the Museum has devoted to an experimental filmmaker. It has been organized by Donald Richie, Curator of Film, who is currently writing a book on Brakhage.

Beginning with Brakhage's first film, "Interim," made in 1952, the retrospective will include such landmark works as "Anticipation of the Night," "Window Water Baby Moving," "Dog Star Man," and the four hour "The Art of Vision." Lesser known Brakhage works on the program are "The Dead" and "The Wier-Falcon Saga." The series, showing the works in chronological order on successive days, will include his most recent film, "eyes."

Brakhage, born in 1933 in Kansas City, Missouri, is known for the personal character of his films. According to Mr. Richie, "He makes his pictures as lyric poets make their poems." Just as the poet tries to make one feel, so Brakhage wants to make the viewer see. He finds sight "dulled by the daily uses to which we must put it," and he attempts to recapture in his work the art of vision.

To many poets and filmmakers the work of Brakhage has been, with its new ideas of vision, a mother lode of expanded techniques and fresh approaches, according to Sheldon Renan, author of "The Underground Film," who also finds that Brakhage films "present a rippling reality in which the photographic raw material of the film-maker's actual life is repeatedly transformed and reseen in a continual turbulence of movement, of color, of light."

Brakhage considers the camera analagous to the eye, and film analagous to vision. His concept of vision "includes such things as the flashing abstract patterns the eye sees when shut, visual memories, imaginations, hallucinations, daydreams and night dreams," notes Renan. "With distorting lenses, scratching, painting, superimpositions, editing and other

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methods of manipulating light, he has tried to put this composite vision on film."

Considered the major figure in the break from traditional film to purely personal and visual preoccupations, Brakhage, who thinks "there is no place for an artist in the film studios," lives in Rollinsville, Colorado, in a ghost town 9000 feet high in the mountains.

When he lived in New York he stayed with Maya Deren, the avant-garde filmmaker, was a friend of Marie Menken, also an experimental filmmaker, and worked with Joseph Cornell, the artist who suggested a film moment of the Third Avenue El, made by Brakhage, and titled "The Wonder Ring." The body of his work includes "Desistfilm," the Denver-made account of a teen-age party; "In Between," a portrait of Jess Collins edited to John Cage music, which is described as a "nightmare film;" "The Way to the Shadow Garden," in which, once the hero blinds himself, everything is seen in negative; and the thirty 8mm "Songs."

Brakhage's application of the art of vision, according to Mr. Richie, has created many different kinds of film experience. The eye learns to see things outside of their common context, as in "Nightcats," in which Brakhage approximates the vision of cats, or in "Anticipation of the Night, where he shows us the world through the innocent eyes of a child.

For Brakhage, the camera-eye is capable of much more than realism. In fact, "The 'absolute realism' of the motion picture image is a human invention," he says, "a twentieth century Western illusion." He believes that the filmmaker can hand hold the camera and inherit worlds of space, that he can use filters, such as fog, rain, light, glass, that he can "deliberately spit on the lense or wreck its focal intentions." In sum, the reality of Brakhage is the reality of the "lost" art of vision itself. As he says, "To search for human visual realities man must as in all other homo motivation, transcend the original physical restrictions and inherit worlds of eyes."

The Brakhage program follows. All films courtesy of Film-Maker's Cooperative.

Thursday, April 22 (8:00) : INTERIM (1952). 25 min. EYES (1970). 35 min. Silent.

NOTE: Mr. Brakhage will be present to introduce the retrospective of his films at the Museum.

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Friday, April 23 (2:00) : DESISTFILM (1954). 7 min. IN BETWEEN (1955). 10 min.  
THE WAY TO SHADOW GARDEN (1954). 10 min. REFLECTIONS ON BLACK (1955).  
12 min. THE WONDER RING (1955). 4 min. Silent. THE FLESH OF MORNING (1956).  
25 min.

Friday, April 23 (5:30) : NIGHTCATS (1956). 8 min. Silent. DAYBREAK AND WHITE-  
EYE (1957). 8 min. LOVING (1957). 6 min. Silent. ANTICIPATION OF THE  
NIGHT (1958). 42 min. Silent.

Saturday, April 24 (3:00) : WEDLOCK HOUSE: AN INTERCOURSE (1959). 11 min. Silent.  
WINDOW WATER BABY MOVING (1959). 12 min. Silent. CAT'S CRADLE (1959).  
5 min. Silent. SIRIUS REMEMBERED (1959). 12 min. Silent. THE DEAD (1960).  
11 min. Silent.

Saturday, April 24 (5:30) : same program as Friday, April 23, 2:00.

Sunday, April 25 (2:00) : same program as Friday, April 23, 5:30.

Sunday, April 25 (5:30) : same program as Saturday, April 24, 3:00.

Monday, April 26 (12:30) : DOG STAR MAN (1961-64). ca. 78 min. Silent.

Tuesday, April 27 (5:30) : same program as Monday, April 26, 12:30.

Wednesday, April 28 (2:00) : THE ART OF VISION (1961-65). ca. 270 min. Silent.

Thursday, April 29 (1:00) : SONGS I through XXII (1964-69). 120 min. Silent.

Thursday, April 29 (5:00) : SONGS XXIII through XXX (1964-69). Silent. WINDOW SUITE OF  
CHILDREN'S SONGS (1969). Silent. SEXUAL MEDITATIONS: NO. 1 MOTEL (1970).  
Silent.

Friday, April 30 (2:00 and 5:30) : BLUE WHITE, BLOOD'S TONE, VEIN (1965). 10 min. Silent.  
FIRE OF WATERS (1965). 10 min. PASHT (1966). 5 min. Silent. TWO: CREELY/  
McCLURE (1966). 5 min. Silent. THE HORSEMAN, THE WOMAN, AND THE  
MOTH (1968). 19 min. Silent. LOVEMAKING (1968). 36 min. Silent.

Saturday, May 1 (3:00) : SCENES FROM UNDER CHILDHOOD (1967-70). 145 min. Silent.

Sunday, May 2 (2:00) : THE WIER-FALCON SAGA (1970). 30 min. Silent. THE MACHINE  
OF EDEN (1970). 12 min. Silent. THE ANIMALS OF EDEN AND AFTER. 35 min.  
Silent.

Sunday, May 2 (5:30) : same program as Saturday, May 1, 3:00.

Monday, May 3 (12:30) : same program as Sunday, May 2, 2:00.

Wednesday, May 5 (2:00) : same program as Wednesday, April 28, 2:00.

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