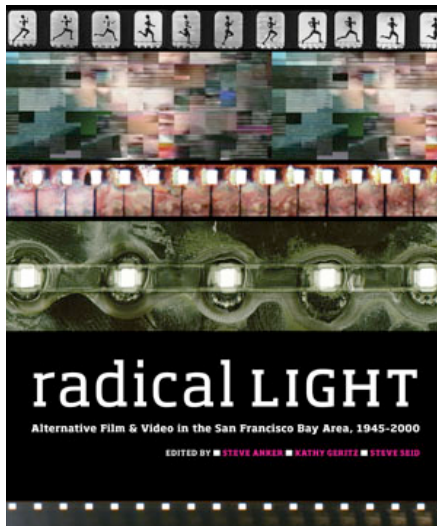


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University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive
Presents

Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000

BAM/PFA's Radical Light—book, film/video series, and gallery exhibition—places the San Francisco Bay Area as the epicenter of an explosion of avant-garde film and video in the second half of the twentieth century

Berkeley, CA, August 4, 2010—With its undulating topography, diverse population, legacy of technical innovation, and reputation for providing safe harbor for liberal attitudes toward political, religious, and sexual orientations, the San Francisco Bay Area is both a haven and an inspiration for a variety of artists, perhaps none more so than those experimenting with alternative film and video. In fact, since the mid-1940s, when Surrealist-influenced films were created in some of the country's earliest filmmaking classes at the San Francisco Art Institute, the Bay Area has been a global center for an extraordinary constellation

of artists who use film and video not for entertainment or documentation, but as an apparatus for the untethered pursuit of personal expression.

This vital but often overlooked artistic and regional history finally receives its critical due with the decade-in-the making *Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000*, a 352-page richly illustrated book published by the University of California Press and the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. BAM/PFA is celebrating the publication of *Radical Light* with an accompanying film series, gallery exhibition, and related **L@TE: Friday Nights @ BAM/PFA** events. Edited, curated, and programmed by BAM/PFA Film and Video Curators Kathy Geritz and Steve Seid, and CalArts Dean of the School of Film/Video Steve Anker, *Radical Light* offers audiences the first comprehensive overview of this sweeping endeavor to reinvent the moving image.

Though the book traces the history of alternative film and video in the Bay Area back to 1878 in Palo Alto, when Eadweard Muybridge began his pioneering experiments with the photographic image, *Radical Light* highlights the mid-1940s as the tipping point for the local development of a community of avant-garde filmmakers such as Sidney Peterson, Harry Smith, Frank Stauffacher, and James Broughton, who made the first Bay Area experimental films. During the 1950s, Jordan Belson, Patricia Marx, and Christopher Maclaine made their first films, and by the 1960s artists such as Bruce Conner, Bruce Baillie, and Chick Strand changed the shape of filmmaking by intertwining film and activism. *Radical Light* traces the arrival in the 1970s of the first openly gay film artists Barbara Hammer, Michael Wallin, Curt McDowell, and James Broughton and the first generation of video artists, including Paul Kos, Terry Fox, and Howard Fried. The next wave of mediamakers, including Peter d'Agostino, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, and Doug Hall, investigated gesture, language, and text as it is reproduced through the image, while artists such as Lynn Hershman, Max Almy, and Chris Robbins constantly tested the relationship of technology to culture.

Meanwhile, longtime Bay Area filmmakers such as Nathaniel Dorsky, Ernie Gehr, and Scott Stark explored the formal properties of the film medium; George Kuchar reinvented melodrama; and Craig Baldwin and Trinh T. Minh-ha subverted documentary. *Radical Light* culminates with the generation that rose in the 1980s and 1990s, such as Marlon Riggs, Greta Snider, Lynne Sachs, Steve Fagin, Anne McGuire, and Tony Discenza, which made its mark working across all media in a style as eclectic as the evolving image-scape.

With attention to contributions from nearly every corner of this disparate community of local alternative film and video artists, *Radical Light* and its accompanying film series, gallery exhibition, and L@TE events brings this neglected history into the light for audiences to rediscover.

ABOUT THE BOOK:

Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000

Steve Anker, Kathy Geritz, and Steve Seid, editors

Publication date: October 15, 2010

This kaleidoscopic collection of essays, interviews, photographs, and artist-designed pages chronicles the vibrant and influential history of experimental cinema in the San Francisco Bay Area. *Radical Light* features critical analyses of films and videos; reminiscences from artists; and interviews with pioneering filmmakers, curators, and archivists. Special sections of ephemera—posters, correspondence, photographs, newsletters, program notes, and more—punctuate the pages of *Radical Light*. Among the contributors are Rebecca Solnit and Ernie Gehr on Bay Area cinema's roots in the work of Eadweard Muybridge and others; Scott MacDonald on the Art in Cinema film series; P. Adams Sitney on films by James Broughton and Sidney Peterson; Stan Brakhage, Bruce Conner, Lawrence Jordan, and Yvonne Rainer on the Bay Area film scene in the 1950s; J. Hoberman on films by Christopher Maclaine, Bruce Conner, and Robert Nelson; Craig Baldwin on found footage film; George Kuchar on student-produced melodramas; Bérénice Reynaud on the films of Trinh T. Minh-ha and Leslie Thornton; Michael Wallin on queer film in the 1970s; V. Vale on punk cinema; Dale Hoyt and Cecilia Dougherty on video in the 1980s and 1990s; and Maggie Morse on new media as sculpture.

ISBN: 978-0-520-24911-0

Published by the University of California Press and Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive
352 pages, 9 x 11 in., 47 color illustrations, 219 black-and-white photographs
\$29.95 (paper)

Book credit: The publication of ***Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000*** was made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the William H. Donner Foundation, the Patty and Jack Wright Foundation, the Fleishhacker Foundation, and the continued support of the BAM/PFA Trustees.

ABOUT THE FILM SERIES:

Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area

September 19, 2010–March 2011

Co-sponsored by BAM/PFA and San Francisco Cinematheque

Many of the films covered in the book will be screened at the PFA Theater as part of the **Radical Light** film series, beginning on September 19, 2010 and concluding in March 2011. Organized by various themes and by chronological eras, these screenings will feature in-person appearances by many of the artists and contributors, archival prints and recent preservations, and the rediscovery of long-forgotten works. For the most up-to-date PFA Theater film listings visit <http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/filmseries/>.

The BAM/PFA film series will tour to a number of U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Houston, Portland, Chicago, and Austin, beginning in early 2011 and continuing through the end of 2012.

In association with BAM/PFA, San Francisco Cinematheque will co-present a concurrent series of **Radical Light** film programs at a handful of San Francisco venues, including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Victoria Theatre, and Artists' Television Access. For information about San Francisco Cinematheque visit: <http://www.sfcinematheque.org/>.

The **Radical Light** film series at the PFA Theater is curated by Steve Anker, Kathy Geritz, and Steve Seid; at San Francisco Cinematheque it is coordinated by Steve Polta.

Film series credit: **Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area** is made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the William H. Donner Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, Owsley Brown III, and the continued support of the BAM/PFA Trustees.

ABOUT THE GALLERY EXHIBITION:

Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000

The Timeline

October 6, 2010–April 3, 2011

Museum Theater Gallery

Over the course of its nearly forty-year history and especially through the research efforts for **Radical Light**, BAM/PFA has amassed a historic collection of rare “ephemeral” materials that often represent the remaining traces of the Bay Area alternative film and video community and its artists. These overlooked, often visually striking, archival materials, some loaned by the artists, collectors, or local institutions, come in the form of posters for bygone cinema screenings, newsletters from extant and now-defunct media organizations, production stills from seminal films that capture the time of their making, historical correspondence by renowned artists, and many other artifacts that encapsulate a half-century of film and video culture in the Bay Area. Organized as a loose timeline, hundreds of discrete paper relics evoke the graphical playfulness and diverse means that sustained a still-flourishing community of alternative media artists. The **Radical Light** gallery exhibition is curated by Steve Anker, Kathy Geritz, and Steve Seid. A sidebar on the microcinema movement is curated by Steve Polta, Artistic Director, San Francisco Cinematheque.

Gallery exhibition credit: **Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000** is made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the William H. Donner Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, Owsley Brown III, and the continued support of the BAM/PFA Trustees.

ABOUT THE RADICAL L@TE SERIES:

September 17, 2010–March 2011

BAM/PFA film and video curators Kathy Geritz and Steve Seid celebrate *Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000* with a series of related Expanded Cinema events as part of the **L@TE: Friday Nights @ BAM/PFA** program in the museum’s Gallery B. The opening **Radical L@TE** event on September 17 will celebrate local alternative filmmaking since 2000. The October 15 **Radical L@TE** event will be a book launch featuring light shows and performative screenings by a host of artists and contributors. For information about subsequent **Radical L@TE** events visit <http://bampfa.berkeleyedu/late>.

Friday, September 17, 7:30 p.m.

Radical L@TE: Advance to Full Fury—Sound and Image Performances

Programmed by Kathy Geritz, Steve Seid, and Christine Metropoulos

PFA’s book on alternative cinema in the Bay Area ends with the year 2000. To celebrate artists who have emerged since that millennial turn, we give you a

searing set of ever-morphing, optically insistent, and sonically frenzied sound and light performances by Andrew Benson and Joshua Churchill; Seth Horvitz; and Curtis Tamm and Michael Campos-Quinn.

Friday, October 15, 7:30 p.m.

Radical L@TE: Book Launch

Programmed by Kathy Geritz and Steve Seid

To celebrate the publication of the Pacific Film Archive's first book, *Radical Light: Alternative Film and Video in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945–2000*, we present an evening of light shows, multiple projection pieces, and film loops by Craig Baldwin, Gibbs Chapman, Peter Conheim, and Thad Povey and Alfonso Alvarez, as well as other cinema psychedelica. Film and videomakers discussed in the book, as well as writers who contributed to it, will join the festivities.

L@TE credit: L@TE is made possible in part by Bank of America, the Tin Man Fund, and the continued support of the BAM/PFA Trustees. Special thanks to our media sponsors, *East Bay Express* and *San Francisco Bay Guardian*.

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ABOUT BAM/PFA

The Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) is the visual arts center of the University of California, Berkeley, one of the nation's leading research universities. BAM/PFA aims to inspire the imagination and ignite critical dialogue through contemporary and historical art and film, engaging audiences from the campus, Bay Area community, and beyond. One of the largest university art museums in the United States in both size and attendance, BAM/PFA presents fifteen art exhibitions and 380 film programs each year. The museum's collection of more than 15,000 works, distinguished by artistic excellence and innovation, intellectual exploration, and social commentary, includes exceptional examples of mid-twentieth-century painting, including important works by Hans Hofmann, Jackson Pollock, Eva Hesse, and Mark Rothko, as well as historical and contemporary Asian art, early American painting, Conceptual and contemporary international art, and California and Bay Area art. The PFA film and video collection now includes the largest group of Japanese films outside of Japan, as well as impressive holdings of Soviet silents, West Coast avant-garde cinema, seminal video art, rare animation, Central Asian productions, Eastern European cinema, and international classics.

PFA Theater Information

Location: 2575 Bancroft Way (at Bowditch Street) on the UC Berkeley campus

Admission: Single general admission tickets are \$9.50; single admission tickets

for seniors, disabled persons, UC Berkeley faculty and staff, non-UC Berkeley students, and young adults (13-17) is \$6.50; single admission tickets for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students is \$5.50.

PFA Theater Ticket Sales: Daily from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Museum's Bancroft Lobby admissions desk, and one-hour before the first showtime of the day at the PFA Theater box office.

E-ticketing: bampfa.berkeley.edu

Charge-by-Phone: (510) 642-5249

Berkeley Art Museum Information

Location: 2626 Bancroft Way, just below College Avenue near the UC Berkeley campus.

Gallery and Museum Store Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Open **L@TE** Fridays until 9 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Admission: Beginning September 1, 2010, general admission is \$10; admission for seniors, disabled persons, non-UC Berkeley students, and young adults (13-17) is \$7; admission for BAM/PFA members, UC Berkeley students, staff, and faculty, and children under 12 is free. Reservations are required for group visits; for information, rates, and schedule, please e-mail sgvisits@berkeley.edu. Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month.

L@TE Admission: On **L@TE** Fridays beginning September 3, 2010, general admission to the BAM galleries is \$7 after 5 p.m. Show your ticket for a same-day PFA screening or gallery visit and get in to **L@TE** free. Admission is always free for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students, faculty, and staff. For updates on **L@TE** programs and to purchase tickets, visit bampfa.berkeley.edu/late.

Information: 24-hour recorded message (510) 642-0808; fax (510) 642-4889; TDD (510) 642-8734.

Website: bampfa.berkeley.edu

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