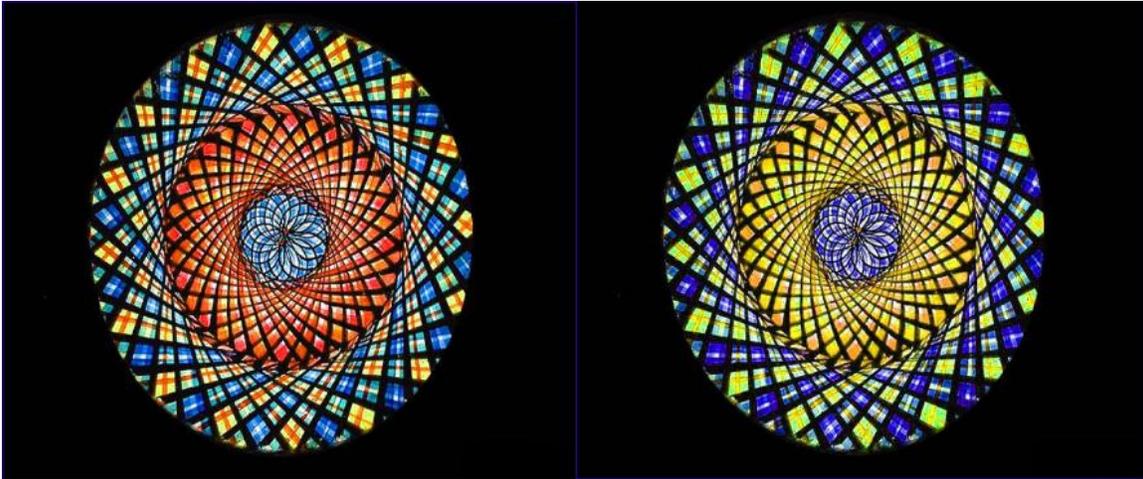


X (Unknown Quantity) Presents:  
**RADIANT MATTER**

**Experiments in Handmade Cinema  
With Kerry Laitala in Person**



Kerry Laitala, "Conjuror's Box," 2011, 35mm film, color, silent, 6 min

**Monday November 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm  
At Amherst Cinema  
28 Amity Street  
Amherst, MA**

The slow death of the celluloid film industry has provoked some lively attempts to reinvent photochemical filmmaking in a more artisanal form. "Radiant Matter" presents an array of such films, focusing on works that foreground the materiality of the filmic image through the manual intervention of the artist. Films featuring photographic imagery that has been treated, manipulated, or registered by hand are combined with more radical experiments that circumvent the operations of the camera altogether. The program centers on three works from Kerry Laitala's "Muse of Cinema" series, which utilize intensely laborious processes of collage, direct animation, rayography, and reprinting to conjure spectral energies from antique materials dating back to cinema's origins. Pairing these with hand-painted, hand-processed, and handmade shorts by Stan Brakhage, Louise Bourque, Tomonari Nishikawa, Peter Tscherkassky, Mark Street, and Robert Schaller, the screening highlights artists who work – in Laitala's words – to transform filmic matter into occasions for "perceptual reverie," rendering the space of the theater into a "template through which light travels... [to] bombard the screen and cast pure light across the faces of the audience."\*

All films on 35mm!

Featuring:

**Kerry Laitala, THE MUSE OF CINEMA**

*2006, color, sound, 20 min*

"THE MUSE OF CINEMA is a rowdy frolic through early moving picture technology and illuminates the atmosphere of the darkened theater." Kerry Laitala

**Louise Bourque, L'ECLAT DU MAL/THE BLEEDING HEART**

*2005, color, sound, 6 min*

"The house that bursts; the scene of the crime; the nucleus. A universe collapses on itself: all hell breaks loose." Louise Bourque

**Peter Tscherkassky, DREAM WORK (FOR MAN RAY)**

*2001, b&w, sound, 11 min*

"A woman goes to bed, falls asleep, and begins to dream. This dream takes her to a landscape of light and shadow, evoked in a form only possible through classic cinematography." Peter Tscherkassky

**Kerry Laitala, CONJUROR'S BOX**

*2011, color, silent, 6 min*

"Conjuror's Box, the latest work in the Muse of Cinema series, was made using several D.I.Y. collage techniques including: CINEGRAMMING, hand-painting, and the re-animation of magic lantern slides. Conjuror's Box takes the viewer through the looking glass, to immerse them in a fiery pane of hand-painted wonders." Kerry Laitala

**Stan Brakhage, DANTE QUARTET**

*1987, color, silent, 6 min*

"This hand-painted work six years in-the-making (37 in the studying of The Divine Comedy) demonstrates the earthly conditions of "Hell," "Purgatory" (or Transition) and "Heaven" (or "existence is song," which is the closest I'd presume upon heaven from my experience) as well as the mainspring of/from "Hell" (HELL SPIT FLEXION) in four parts which are inspired by the closed-eye or hypnagogic vision created by those emotional states." Stan Brakhage

**Tomonari Nishikawa, LUMPHINI 2552**

*2009, b&w, sound, 3 min*

"Images were shot entirely with Nikon F3, a still camera, at Lumpini Park in Bangkok, Thailand. The hand-processed visual shows the organic patterns found in the monumental park, constructing the systematic yet emotional rhythms and paces on the screen, accompanied by the sound from the visual information on the optical soundtrack." Tomonari Nishikawa

**Mark Street, FULTON FISH MARKET**

*2003, color, sound, 12 min*

"New York City's Fulton Fish Market explodes with movement, sound and color... This lyrical, visually vibrant documentary reveals a profoundly tactile material world tucked away in the shadow of the digital age. Hand made effects and a haunting, sparse soundtrack underline the chaos and beauty of this teeming market." Mark Street

**Kerry Laitala, TERRA FIRMA**

*2007, color, silent, 7 min*

"Terra Firma uses 35mm film material that have already laboriously mastered from a 1905 nitrate print of a "Trip Down Market Street", incorporated with other found images of San Francisco's built environment before the 1906 disaster. Other images have been gathered from archival photographic materials from numerous vantage points depicting the built space of early San Francisco." Kerry Laitala

**Robert Schaller, TRIPTYCH**

*1996, b&w, silent, 3 min*

An excursion into the world of hand-made film emulsion and an exposition of some formal possibilities of using three images side by side. A dancer's brief gesture is treated, repeated, and juxtaposed, becoming the fabric of visual construction that is less about representation than rhythm and time. Originally a work for three projectors, it is here composited onto a single strand of film.

TRT ca. 74 min

**Kerry Laitala** grew up on the Maine coast, while developing a chronic passion for old things. She attended Massachusetts College of Art studying Photography and Film and received her Masters degree from the San Francisco Art Institute in Film. She has been awarded the Princess Grace Award in 1996, and the Special Projects Grant from PGF in 2004 and 2007. Awards have also been received from the Black Maria Film Festival and Big Muddy Film Festival and the San Francisco International Film Festival as well as residency at the Academie Schloss Solitude near Stuttgart, Germany. Laitala is a media archeologist who investigates the past and retrieves cultural artifacts from the limbo of forgotten things. Her penchant for medical imagery and artifacts of decay springs from occupations in medical and dental institutions where she works during the day when she is not teaching film classes at the San Francisco Art Institute. Laitala is deeply invested in the process of working directly with the film medium, and is involved in all aspects of production: shooting, developing, editing and sound design as well as optically printing much of the material to transform it into celluloid gems of uncanny resonance.

Funded by the Amherst College Department of English with support from the Film and Media Studies Program. \*Quoted from Kerry Laitala, "Cinema as a Material Presence." Curated by Josh Guilford.