

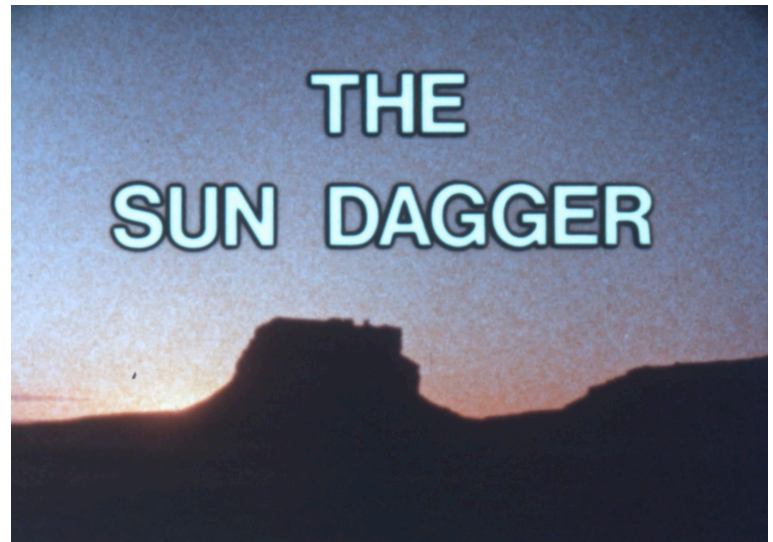
THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE PRESENTS
Treasures *Screenests*

CLASS PICTURES

AN EVENING OF 16MM FILMS PRESENTED BY STUDENT ARCHIVISTS



PRESENTED BY THE STUDENT ARCHIVISTS OF FILM & MEDIA STUDIES 604: "THE FILM ARCHIVE" SPRING 2022:
LILY DODD, ETHAN FOSTER, ADRIAN MARTINEZ,
JOSH PANOS, ADAM SILVERMAN, and ANNA TROPNIKOVA



Wednesday, May 4, 7pm • HQ L01, the Alice Cinema



DANNY BOY (A BOY AND HIS DOG)

(Official Films, 1946, U.S., 16mm, 10 min.)

DANNY BOY (A BOY AND HIS DOG) is a 1946 film like no other. Danny Boy (Ace the Wonder Dog)—hero, Marine, and German shepherd—has just finished a term of distinguished service in the Second World War. He returns the loving care of Jimmy Bailey, the plucky leader of a neighborhood scout troop. When Danny Boy is sentenced to death for a crime he committed in self-defense, it will take Jimmy's very big heart (and a not-insignificant amount of drama) to ensure that justice is served.

The DANNY BOY that you will see tonight is not the original 64-minute film, but an abridged version released a year later by Official Films. Founded by Leslie Winick in 1939, Official Films sold short movies, including radically abbreviated features like DANNY BOY. At just about ten minutes long, this short manages to relay the entire plot—but not without some major losses.

The original DANNY BOY delivers a heavy-handed, somewhat confused message about trauma, masculinity, and the way war fundamentally changes men. The shortened version is far more recognizable as a children's film: a brave dog, the boy who loves him, and the adventures they go on together.

DANNY BOY features the penultimate performance of Ace the Wonder Dog, a successor to Rin Tin Tin with 15 credits to his name. It also stars Robert "Buzz" Henry at the start of an incredibly prolific career as an actor, stuntman, and rodeo performer. Henry died at forty after 38 years of working in Hollywood.

Notes by Lily Dodd, a senior American Studies major in Silliman College



HISPANIC AMERICA

(CBS News, 1980, U.S., 16mm, 13 min.)

When Donald Trump first descended from the escalator at Trump Tower on June 16, 2015, to launch his campaign for president, he spouted off one of his signature, xenophobic streams of consciousness: "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best..." Immigration anxiety would come to define the 2016 presidential election, but it was not a new phenomenon in American public life.

HISPANIC AMERICA, produced by CBS News and distributed by Carousel Films, presents a snapshot of this very anxiety dating back to 1980. After beginning with a brief introduction from Walter Cronkite, the twelve-minute educational film follows reporter Ed Rabel as he describes the changing demographics of the United States, centered around the three distinct communities of Cuban Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans. While the film showcases statistics and fashion trends that are mostly out of date now, much of it feels like it could have come out in the past few years. In a post-Trump world, very little of the racism featured in the film feels very dated or shocking. It highlights many of the same fears and frustrations that inform anti-immigrant biases today, such as hostility toward multilingualism.

Likewise, the film presents its Latinx subjects as fighting some of the same political battles—workers' rights, citizenship and immigration, income and education inequality, voter registration and representation—at the center of the discourse in 2022. Despite its status as a melting pot, America has always been a site of immigration controversy. Indeed, the more things change, the more things stay the same.

Notes by Josh Panos, Master of Arts in Religion candidate at Yale Divinity School



LITTLE GRAY NECK

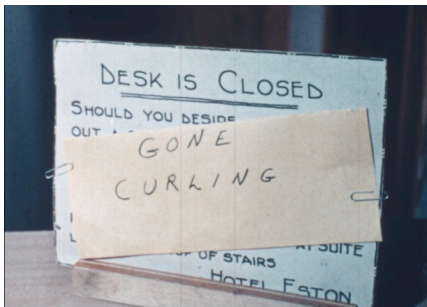
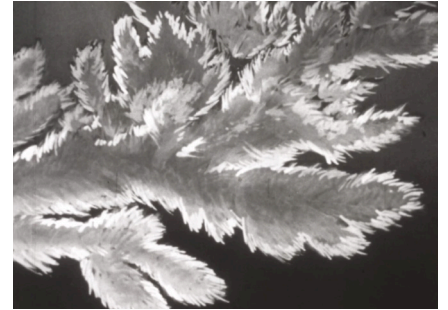
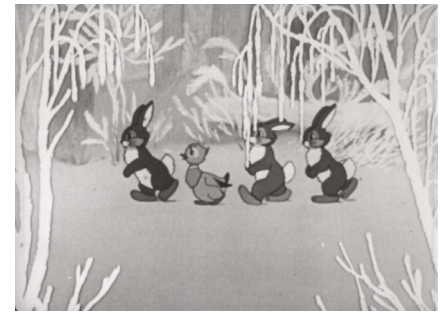
(Dir. Leonid Amalrik, 1948, USSR, 16mm, 19 min.)

Leonid Amalrik might be a little known-name in the United States, but he provided Soviet kids growing up in the 20th century some of their best childhood memories. Just as anime history's Seo Mitsuyo bartered his talent with the Japanese Imperial government in order to create astonishingly beautiful in form (but nationalistic) animated feature films like *Momotaro: Sacred Sailors* (1945), so did Amalrik have to bend the knee to Soviet aims, producing ethnically contentious pieces like *Black and White* (1932), a caricatured rendition of racism in the United States South.

But this little gem, animated short *LITTLE GRAY NECK* (1948), is blissfully free of the taint of national state agendas. A testament to Soyuzfilm's stunning animation techniques, it is English-dubbed for your enjoyment – observe gorgeously hand-painted stills that predate those hyper-realistic close-ups in *Spongebob Squarepants* by some fifty years, where the diegetic narrative suspends for the viewer to contemplate the inherent beauty in an at-first-glance-banal detail, like painstakingly detailed feathers that remain after our protagonist's scuffle with fox, or the still of crystalline shards of ice protruding from a pine branch, breathtaking in their splendor, covered with hoarfrost and evoking an abstract artist's masterpiece.

These moments of reprieve allow the viewer to mediate upon the beauty nature holds for us, a haiku hidden within midcentury's primacy of fluid motion, and Amalrik and Vladimir Polkonikov's foregrounding of this oil technique on gel slides points us to the presence of artists, here, still with us, painting this touching story of friendship and faith.

Notes by Anna Tropnikova, second year graduate student in Film & Media Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures



GONE CURLING

(Dir. John Howe, 1963, Canada, 16mm, 10 min.)

GONE CURLING (1963) is a short comedic docu-fiction recounting *The Stranger's* relations with the curling obsessed citizens of Eston, Saskatchewan. Wanting to connect with the locals, *The Stranger* learns the ins and outs of curling and that the sport has more to it than meets the eye.

Fitting with the subject material, *GONE CURLING* is a film that doesn't take itself too seriously. Its humor is delivered just as plainly as the fundamentals of curling. The film is directed by and stars Canadian filmmaker John Howe and was produced by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB).

Howe's other notable works include the 1974 feature *WHY ROCK THE BOAT?* and the 1977 short *STRANGERS AT THE DOOR*. With 36 other directorial credits, Howe was a prolific documentary filmmaker throughout the late 50's through the mid '70s. In the same year as *GONE CURLING* (1963), Howe directed 7 other documentary shorts.

GONE CURLING is one of the NFB's many sports documentaries highlighting popular Canadian sports. Interestingly, *GONE CURLING* is not the only NFB shot about curling, nor is it the first - those titles belong to 1955's *THE CURLER* (dir. William Davidson) - however it was the first film about curling shot in color.

Notes by Ethan Foster, a senior Film & Media Studies major in Pierson College

THE SUN DAGGER

(Dir. Anna Sofaer, 1977, U.S., 16mm, 59 min. [excerpt])

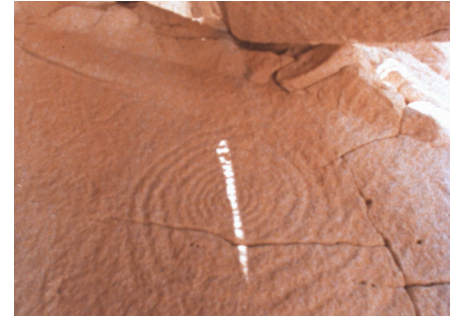
In 1977, Anna Sofaer, a researcher, artist, and educator of the archaeoastronomy of the Ancestral Puebloans of the American Southwest rediscovered a site known as The Sun Dagger. The “dagger” is currently the only known site in the world that marks the extreme positions of the sun and moon. This site in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico is the setting of Sofaer’s 1982 film, THE SUN DAGGER.

Directed, produced, and co-written by Anna Sofaer, and narrated by Robert Redford, this documentary film originally aired on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and tracks the naturally occurring dagger shaped markings of the solar and lunar cycles with light patterns on spiral petroglyphs. Through this film, Anna Sofaer was able to provide evidence that the celestial calendar was used by Ancestral Puebloan people of New Mexico over 1000 years ago. This evidence is seen throughout the film through long, static, and aerial views of the “dagger” in motion, the canyons and interviews with Joseph Campbell, an American writer and mythologist.

While THE SUN DAGGER takes a well-defined look at the rays of lights’ appearance on the earth, it is also concerned with larger units of linear time, historical time, time in terms of repeatable cycles and cosmic time. THE SUN DAGGER is the first film in Anna Sofaer’s exploration of Chaco Canyon. The second, THE MYSTERY OF CHACO CANYON was released in 1999, and the third and most recent, WRITTEN ON THE LANDSCAPE: MYSTERIES BEYOND CHACO CANYON is an in-progress series which will delve into the recent revelations about ancient Native Americans that built enormous and mysterious structures throughout the American southwest.

The three films in this series were produced by The Solstice Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to research of the Chaco people of New Mexico, and was founded by Anna Sofaer in 1978.

Notes by Adrian Martinez, a 2023 MFA Candidate in Photography at the Yale School of Art



THE HOLE

(Dir. John and Faith Hubley, 1962, U.S., 16mm, 15 min.)

The Hole is a 1962 Academy-Award winning short film by legendary American animator husband and wife and long-time Yale faculty members John and Faith Hubley. The film is a further development of the ‘limited animation’ style of film-making they pioneered at United Pictures of America. UPA, formed in the wake of the 1941 animators strike at Disney, embraced limited animation in opposition of the realism-obsessed ‘full animation’ of Disney.

Following John’s dismissal from UPA owing to pressure from the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Hubleys went independent and continued to push the boundaries of their style. In line much of the formal experimentation found in their post-UPA work, The Hole makes ample use of almost impressionistic visual strategies to jeopardize the overall delineated integrity between various visual elements. Semi-translucent cel work further obfuscates the interstices between character layers and background layers, helping to soften and obnubilate the overall composition. It also features improvised voicework by George Mathews and jazz legend Dizzy Gillespie as New York City construction workers meanderingly discussing their views on topics including nuclear fears while working down in the titular hole.

The Hubleys made frequent use of improvisational dialogue in their films, often of their daughters, which in this film creates a free-flowing and at times uneasy, frenetic pace that heightens the tension between our anxiety regarding the uncertain boundaries of the image and their anxiety regarding the uncertainties of the nuclear age.

Notes by Adam Silverman, first year graduate student in Film & Media Studies and East Asian Languages and Literatures