



REDCAT

Bill Basquin

- From Inside of Here

Film/Video

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8 PM

REDCAT
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Bill Basquin

• From Inside of Here

From Inside of Here (2020, 83 min.) is a feature-length film meditation on vulnerability and interconnection through the lens of a natural forest and through the body of the filmmaker. Bill Basquin structured the filming of *From Inside of Here* around a series of camping trips to the Gila National Forest in New Mexico, which is the site for the reintroduction of the endangered Mexican Grey Wolf. The place itself is a character in the film, as are the filmmaker's methods. The film is composed of multiple digital and analog formats: 16mm film, HD video, infrared stills, inter-titles, and sound recordings.

From Inside of Here is preceded by *Tending the Orchard* (2023, 7 min.), a collaboration around an orchard initiated by Basquin with co-director Katherine Agard that brings up history, anger, colonial violence, and the chance to feel the closeness of relationship. This video is a part of an ongoing conversation around the legacies and forms of settler colonialism, including challenging the trope of the non-white person being the subject, rather than the person having the gaze, opinion and directorial input. This conversation is a longer conceptual work that challenges both directors.

The program includes a post-screening talk with Bill Basquin and Katherine Agard, moderated by Jheanelle Brown.

The Jack H. Skirball Series is organized by Jheanelle Brown.

A NOTE FROM KATHERINE AGARD

A timer ticks next to me. Outside men in hazard yellow jackets clear a fallen tree. I get up briefly to take a video and wish that I could remain watching them, present in their dramatic labor. I have an appointment at 11 am. My life is full of appointments. Appointments to make things, to do things, to be somewhere, to go elsewhere... to announce what time it is before it arrives, as though we are in a competition. In a crisis, mundane time dissolves, the passing of time heightened. The three men outside in their fluorescent gear tug at the tree, revving their chain saws. The idea of a future becomes, in crisis, one that is worked towards by action, the connection from moment to moment dependent on the last.

I visited the place in *From Inside of Here*, in June 2016. I remember the experience of time there: expansive and somewhat elastic, made of actions, colored by exertion and marked by the arrival of sunrise and sunset. I've seen this film so many times now that my memory of that visit blurs with the details in the film. Snow melting, water rushing in. The rising chorus of birds. The feeling

of the rough earth in the dry creek. I'm writing this in a year of atmospheric rivers, the sound of chainsaws comes into my hearing, what I want to call my Earline, like my sight line, and at first I think it is the low moaning of cows, then the wind calling, moving through the eucalyptus, gathering speed through matter before transforming into a gale.

An awareness of solitude, longing and fear strikes me in watching the film. I say this as I look at the trees in front of me, their arms bent. I'm hearing and feeling the drone of machines as the pain of that break, wondering for a moment if that break is me, if the sound I hear could be emerging from my own mouth, or if that sound, emitted in the past, now returns to me here in the present, a presence coming to visit or make its home again after having gone away. To say something about loneliness or solitude - in a film made before the pandemic watched post-pandemic, post indicating not that it is finished, but that an event occurred and we are experiencing its life and afterlives — is to point out the strangeness of experiencing an ecosystem from a human perspective.

Loneliness - the sensation of being without company or companions. This sensation of being without, apart, of longing, of deep longing, is not one that is particular to me or my body but part of the place I am in; a sensation of longing that I become attuned to, that I come to identify as particularly mine rather than an aspect of the nature before me. This aspect settles in my body, I attempt to give it language and expression. It is greater than me, I feel my limits in the face of it; this sensation of finitude in the face of infinity is closer to what I mean by loneliness.

It would be better, clearer, more precise to say that *From Inside of Here* struck me as the sensibility of a person aware of the boundaries of themselves, and looking out or looking from within sees and observes, choosing to respond or react. Appreciate. At the end of *Tending the Orchard* I whisper softly I am entangled with what I am observing. I am holding a sensation of longing alongside a feeling of anger, desire to escape and a gratitude for being held or witnessed. I survey the landscape, understanding myself as part of it. To know that my presence on any land that I live on is co-present with genocide, is to make my head spin. The nausea inflicted on the wolves - that I view as an observer - is not so dissimilar from my own. I expand the drawing of my predator kin.

A sickness lurks and lingers, the arsenic in the apple seeds has overtaken the orchard. Apples are a fruit that are associated with love, one's true desire. Arsenic springs soothe arthritis. The diversity of genetic material in the seeds means that a tree grown from seed will bear fruit different from its parents. The chemicals fed to the wolves has infused into the air. Dogs are the domesticated offspring of wolves, another way that humans cultivate others' relationships to fear. Being a visitor within this space, camping, opens a space for mourning. My experience of suspended time makes me long for time that moves with urgency, as a progression of responses to crisis, movement toward a future that I do not compete with or outsmart, but attempt to keep pace with.

I move back and forth between these types of time, between mourning and celebration, overwhelm and relief, between action and survey. The creek flows again as seasons change, as I do.

Nothing created is ever destroyed, only transformed. A composting practice comes into focus, a way of tending to the shifting of death and life. Seeing what cannot be composted alongside everything else - shards of plastic, bits of foil - causes one to imagine longer timescales, more creative methods of containment and more extravagant ways of accommodating that which refuses disintegration. The seeds growing within the compost and wreckage are from long lineages, though every generation of expression differs.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Bill Basquin was born in Indiana, United States and lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Basquin's films have shown at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah; Documenta in Kassel, Germany; the Museum of Modern Art in New York, New York; and the Lab in San Francisco, California. Basquin dry-farms a one acre apple orchard and is certified as a wildland firefighter in relation to his work with prescription fire.

Katherine Agard is the author of *Of Colour* (Essay Press, 2020). She writes within and across changing landscapes in whatever form careful and critical attention to place invites.

UPCOMING AT REDCAT

Vashti Harrison, Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi, Erica Sheu, and Sohil Vaidya: *Duppy Transience*

March 25

Duppy Transience is a program of four short films that provide space for spirits, ancestors, jumbies, duppy, and the memories of these to wander, roam, or exist in transit. Vashti Harrison, Thuy-Han Nguyen Chi, and Erica Sheu render deeply personal films about their families' pasts and cultural heritage, while Sohil Vaidya finds a way to thoughtfully engage with mythologies outside of his worldview. The films in this program use varying visual languages and techniques, from the beauty of grainy 16mm film to mediated images of digital avatars. Most importantly, they provide visual containers for the spiritual self and ancestrally-bestowed memories.



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