



Vashti Harrison, Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi, Erica Sheu, and Sohil Vaidya

- Duppy Transience

Film/Video

MAR 25, 2024
8 PM

REDCAT
Roy and Edna Disney
CalArts Theater
CaLARTS
California Institute of the Arts

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society.

Vashti Harrison, Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi, Erica Sheu, and Sohil Vaidya

• Duppy Transience

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.

Presented in English, German, Marathi, and Vietnamese with English subtitles.

The program includes a post-screening talk with Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi and Erica Sheu, moderated by Jheanelle Brown. Please note: Duppy Transience contains descriptions of sexual violence.

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

Field Notes (Vashti Harrison, 2014), 17 min.

Field Notes is an experimental portrait of the ghosts embedded in the culture of the island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. The film is structured as a visual and aural field guide to the ghosts, spirits, and jumbies throughout the island: from personal tales about shapeshifters and bloodsuckers, to the ghosts of Trinidad's past. The film focuses on the places where the natural and supernatural collide.

Murmurs of the Jungle (Sohil Vaidya, 2021), 20 min.

A grandmother tells a story to her grandson about the origins of their remote indigenous village in the Western Ghats of Maharashtra. As the mysterious morning slowly unfolds, spirits wander in the forest, and dark secrets buried in time slowly emerge. The trees whisper tales of the Gods and the ancestors. They say that you don't die. Your spirit assimilates into the jungle. And while civilization, its beliefs, and the cycle of life, death, and rebirth continue, the forest stands eternal. A bridge between the old and the new.

It follows It passes on (Erica Sheu), 5 min.

Incense yields a little light and leads the way for the islanders to hide from bombing. Broken dishes time travel. Imaginations of a post-war island, Kinmen, from familial anecdotes. Tracing the roots of cross-generational sentiments behind the glare of glasses, the display of a self-made museum. Lights reveal and conceal the stories.

Into the Violet Belly (Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi), 19 min.

Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi's film *Into The Violet Belly* is a striking work blending family lore, mythology, science fiction, and digital abstraction. The film captures the experimental collaboration between the artist and her mother, Thuyen Hoa, who survived a perilous sea journey while fleeing Vietnam after the end of the American War. The film oscillates seamlessly between multiple voices, visual registers, and timescales,—was it seven months or seven thousand years?—creating an image of multitudes: migrating bodies swimming in an infinite blue, depicted as both a massive digital swarm and tiny avatars.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Vashti Harrison is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling creator of *Little Leaders*, *Little Dreamers*, and *Little Legends* and the illustrator of Andrea Beaty's *I Love You Like Yellow*, Matthew Cherry's *Hair Love*, and Stephanie V.W. Lucianovic's *Hello, Star*, among others. She received a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor for Lupita Nyong'o's *Sulwe* and is also a two-time recipient of the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for Children.

Vashti received her BA from the University of Virginia and her MFA in Film and Video from Calarts. Her Experimental films and videos focus on her Caribbean Heritage and folklore. They have shown around the world at film festivals and venues including the New York Film Festival, Rotterdam International Film Festival and Edinburgh International Film Festival.

Thuy-Han Nguyen-Chi is a Milky Way-based artist whose practice mutates in and out of film, sculpture, installation, performance, and interdisciplinary research. In collaboration with cinematic characters in search of consciousness, language, and freedom, her recent body of work explores the epistemological, aesthetic, political possibilities of the moving image at the intersections of art and science, documentary and fiction, personal/prosthetic memory and individual/collective histories. Having studied Fine Arts at the Städelschule and Film at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, she is currently pursuing PhD research in Film at the University of Westminster.

Thuy-Han's work has been presented in both the art and cinema context, including Akademie der Künste, Berlin; Art Collider Lab, Seoul; Atletika, Vilnius; Belvedere 21, Vienna; Centro di Musica Contemporanea di Milano, Milan; De Appel, Amsterdam; Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; Kunsthall Trondheim, Trondheim; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, Manila; Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham; Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theater, Los Angeles; Sàn Art, Saigon; Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden; Villa Medici, Rome; Whitechapel Gallery, London; 12th Berlin Biennale; 20th Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival; 42nd Montréal International Festival of Films on Art; 60th New York Film Festival; Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin 2023/24; 20th Reykjavik International Film Festival; 33rd Singapore International Film Festival; 37th Stuttgarter Filmwinter; among other spaces. She has participated in performances at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin; and Portikus, Frankfurt. In 2023, she was included among the 20 New Talents in Art in America, nominated for the New:Vision Award¹, and awarded the Jury Grand Prix² and Golden Lola³ for *Into The Violet Belly*.

Erica Sheu/徐璐 makes short films, expanded cinema and installation with celluloid film. Her work is often about diary film, handmade film, screen and projections, cross-generational memories, Taiwanese identity politics. Her experimental short films have been shown at NYFF Currents, TIFF Wavelengths, IFFR Bright Future, (S8) Mostra de Cinema Periferico, EXiS, TIDF among other film festivals and venues. Sheu holds an MFA in Film/Video from CalArts. She works and lives in Los Angeles.

Sohil Vaidya is a Writer and Director based in Mumbai and Los Angeles. His films have been officially selected for more than 100 film festivals worldwide like Rotterdam, Melbourne, Chicago, Raindance, Indian Panorama at IFFI, Palm Springs, New York Indian Film Festival, etc. His USC thesis film *Difficult People* won him the prestigious Directors Guild of America's Award for Best Director. His recent short film *Murmurs of the Jungle* won him the Grand Prix Award at Melbourne International Film Festival, previously won by esteemed directors such as Denis Villeneuve, Louis Malle and Werner Herzog. It also won the Artistic Excellence Award at SCAD Savannah Film Festival and Best Short at NFDC Film Bazaar. Sohil's works have been distributed and screened on various channels such as SBS Australia, PBS Rhode Island, Omeleto, Vidsee and ShortTV US to name a few. He is a BAFTA Fellow for their newcomer's program in Los Angeles. He graduated from the University of Southern California (USC) Film School with an MFA in Film/TV Directing.

UPCOMING AT REDCAT

Christopher Harris: *Black Ecstatic Cinema*

April 8

Christopher Harris, 2023 recipient of The Herb Alpert Award in the Arts in Film/Video, interrogates and deconstructs the photographic image in motion and in stasis. The legacy of photography and the moving image are illuminated by Harris' incisive inquiries around the perverse representational weight of Black bodies in dominant visual culture, power dynamics embedded in the cinematic image, and the space between presence and absence. His work adds a deliberate and nuanced voice to the archival turn in film. Harris' *Black Ecstatic Cinema* occupies a critical place in contemporary experimental film and exists in a broader history of collage aesthetics across film, music, visual art, and literature. Harris' films trust viewers and demand open eyes and deliberate minds.



KCRW is the Official Media Sponsor of REDCAT

Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @calartsredcat

For more information, email redcat@calarts.edu or visit redcat.org