

For Immediate Release:

ROOFTOP FILMS presents
Theft is Property



Friday, August 19, 2005

8:30 - Live music by **Rob Erickson**

9:00 – **Short Films that Reclaim streets, bodies, and minds with graffiti, tattoos, and guts.**

With curatorial assistance by the **Video Data Bank** (www.vdb.org)

Outdoors on the lawn at Automotive High School
50 Bedford Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

In the event of rain the show is indoors at the same location.

Tickets: \$8.00 Available online at www.rooftopfilms.com or at the door.

Press: contact Dane Smith at press@rooftopfilms.com.

Preview DVD / Tape or other details: contact Dan Nuxoll at dan@rooftopfilms.com.

Rooftop Films: 718-417-7362.

PROGRAM NOTE: THEFT IS PROPERTY

An evening of amazing documentaries and video art presented by Rooftop Films with co-curatorial assistance by Dara Greenwald and the [Video Data Bank](http://www.vdb.org), presented outdoors in Williamsburg as part of the 2005 Rooftop Films Summer Series.

It is easy for a sensitive individual to become disheartened in these dark days of demagoguery, corporate mind-control schemes, eminent domain land-grabs and civil rights abuses. When boorish television commentators casually debate whether or not it is acceptable for our government to imprison an American citizen without trial and then intentionally drive him to the brink of insanity in order to get him to confess to some undisclosed "crime," it is tempting to merely lapse into a permanent state of despair.

But it is always easier to despair than to fight and on this evening we bring you **a collection of short films by and about brave artists who refuse to allow their bodies, streets and minds to be controlled by the ubiquitous homogenizing forces of the dominant culture.** We follow sophisticated and talented street artists as they pursue their clandestine mission to bring variety and beauty back to the streets of New York; we see the wildly varied work of body artists from all over the world reinterpreting the surface of the human form; we read the astute observations of a pop fanatic who is infuriated by the false packaging of the folk music of our day; we even see documentation of a man's seemingly inexplicable desire to tape his own head to public structures in Chicago. Like much of the best political art, **these films enthrall and entertain as they vividly represent the exhilaration of people performing, painting, welding, singing and dreaming freely, regardless of the consequences.**

THE FILMS:



Public Discourse (Brad Downey and Quenell Jones / 38:00)

An in-depth verite study of the passionate artisans producing various forms of illegal installation art—including the painting of street signs, advertising manipulation, metal welding, postering and guerrilla art. Downey and Jones present an in-depth study that follows the art-making from initial idea through to exhibition, and explores their use of subversive messages, mimicking of advertising methods and the presentation of three-dimensional sculptures to the public.

Ancient Marks (Ethan Boehme / 10:00)

A mesmerizing short based upon the photographs of Chris Rainier, which explore the amazing ancient traditions of body art, set to the music of Ravi Shankar's daughter, Anoushka Shankar.

Large Gourd (Justin Cooper / 6:00)

"Well, the whole thing actually started out as a formal exercise. I was very interested in the image of a man with his head taped to a pole, a light post for example, in the public sphere. When the police started to get involved, though, I realized that it was turning into more of an overtly political piece so I just went with that. All of the stuff I told the cops about being a freelance graphic designer or a new father, all that was improvised and totally bogus, of course...It did hurt and I lost some hair during the project."

--Justin Cooper

How to Fix the World (Jaqueline Goss / 29:30)

Adapted from psychologist A.R. Luria's research in the Islamic outskirts of the Soviet Union in the 1930s, How to Fix the World brings to life Luria's conversations with Central Asian farmers learning how to read and write under the unfamiliar principles of Socialism. Colorful digital animations based on Max Penson's photographs of collective farmers play against a backdrop of landscape images shot in Uzbekistan in 2004. At once humorous, conflicting, and revelatory, these conversations between Luria and his subjects illustrate a particular historical moment when one culture attempted to transform another in the name of education and modernization.

5% (Tony Cokes / 10:00)

5% is a ten-minute work that questions the cult of pop stardom, deconstructs music industry practices, considers the problematics of live performance, and suggests other, more anonymous working strategies.

Oh Dear (John Provost / 1:00)

A simple yet moving story of children and a baby deer set against the background of a go-kart track.

Wiper Sync (Jamie O'Neill / 3:47)

A bizarre rumination on coincidental synchronicity in which Jamie poses as a "Dale Carnegie type" named Kurt Weibers as part of his "Global Point Strategies" project, which we will venture to say is a satire of corporate motivational speakers who masquerade as philosophers, in this case by "presenting a non-human centered approach to creativity production."

© **Bosung Kim** (Bosung Kim / Edgewater, NJ / 0:42)

Dozens of nude Bosungs claim ownership of themselves.