

**Los Angeles Filmforum presents:  
Underground Movies, Program 1: A Hollow Earth  
Sunday November 7, 4:00 pm  
followed by Q&A with Guest Programmers Leo Goldsmith and Jenny Perlin and  
filmmakers Michael Gitlin and Tomonari Nishikawa**

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest-running organization dedicated to weekly screenings of experimental film, documentaries, video art, and experimental animation. 2021 is our 46th year. [www.lafilmforum.org](http://www.lafilmforum.org)

Caves, sewers, subways, mines, bunkers, crypts—the planet's real and mythic subterranean spaces have served a capacious array of functions, as sources of fossil fuels and imaginative speculation alike. This series of programs explores how moving-image artists have tackled these hidden worlds—through documentary observation into their murky depths, performative bodily engagement, abstraction, archival montage, and computer graphics. Drawing together films from a historically and geographically diverse field—from early cinema to contemporary artists' moving image; from the Americas, Asia, and Europe—"Underground Movies" charts a unique aesthetic terrain through which to explore larger questions of human's material and psychological relation to the planet's substructure—as a space to be reshaped and exploited, but also as one in which to imagine ourselves anew. —LG & JP

**Program 1: A Hollow Earth**

Deep within the planet's innermost spaces, remnants of human civilization lie preserved: a crypt, a menagerie, a lightshow, a cinema.

**Screening:**

***Interior New York Subway, 14th Street to 42nd Street,***

By Billy Bitzer

USA, 1905, film to paper positive, screened as a digital file, black and white, silent, 5 min.

This early cinematic document takes us on a tour of the newly constructed New York City subway system.

**Gottfried Wilhelm "Billy" Bitzer** (1872 –1944) was an American cinematographer and filmmaker. A pioneering developer of early cinema technologies, Bitzer worked for the American Mutoscope Company (later the Biograph Company) under the direction of the inventor of the Kinetoscope W. K. L. Dickson, and in 1908 began working with D. W. Griffith, a collaboration that would last the rest of his career.

***Nine Guided Tours***

By Michael Gitlin

USA, 2000, Video, color, sound, 19 min.

*Nine Guided Tours* is an essay on some aspects of the language and technology deployed in turning natural space into commercialized space. Shot in nine different commercialized caverns, the tape is loosely divided into thematic sections organized around lighting strategies, the

particular syntax of tour guides, the invented history of caverns, and an underground psychotopography in which the cave walls and formations function as a kind of transmitting medium. Like anything else, a cave is an empty space waiting to be filled with ideology. *Nine Guided Tours* drifts underground and closely inspects some passages. (MG)

**Michael Gitlin** makes work about the intricate conceptual and ideological systems that we use to organize our ways of knowing the world. His work has been screened at numerous venues, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Toronto International Film Festival, the Full Frame Documentary Festival, the London Film Festival and the Whitney Biennial Exhibition. Gitlin's most recent feature project, *That Which Is Possible*, screened at The Museum of the Moving Image in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and at the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley, among other venues. His short film project, *A Disaster Forever*, was in the 2015 New York Film Festival. His 16mm film, *The Birdpeople*, is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Gitlin was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2006. His work has also been supported by the Jerome Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. Gitlin received an M.F.A. from Bard College. He teaches at Hunter College in New York City.

### ***Into All That Is Here***

By Laure Prouvost

UK, 2015, HD video, color, sound, 10 min.

*Into All That Is Here* explores the notion of lust after times of darkness. Within her film, the artist continues the exploration of themes addressed in *Wantee* (2013), a story linked to her grandfather. This time, she focuses on digging into the subconscious of this character, deep into his fantasies, as an insect or bird is attracted to the pollen of a flower and when there by the flower indulge its with pleasure. (LUX)

**Laure Prouvost** was born in Lille, France and is currently based in Antwerp. In 2002, she received her BFA from Central St Martins, London and studied towards her MFA at Goldsmiths College, London. She also took part in the LUX Associate Programme. Solo exhibitions have been held at venues including 'AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON', M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium (2019) Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2018); BASS Museum, Miami (2018); They Are Waiting for You, Performance for stage at the McGuire Theatre, Minneapolis (2018); SALT Galata, Istanbul (2017); Kunstmuseum Luzern (2016); Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan (2016); Museum Für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2016); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing (2016); Haus Der Kunst, Munich (2015); New Museum, New York (2014); Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City (2014); Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Whitechapel Gallery, London and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2013); and The Hepworth Wakefield (2012). In 2011, Prouvost won the MaxMara Art Prize for Women and was the recipient of the Turner Prize in 2013. Prouvost was selected to represent France at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019.

### ***Esculturas Rupestres (Rupestrian Sculptures)***

By Ana Mendieta

1981, Super-8mm film transferred to high-definition digital media, black and white, silent, 9:17  
Ana Mendieta Filmworks No. 98 (GP1935)

Courtesy of the Estate of Ana Mendieta and Galerie Lelong & Co.

Made in Jaruco Park outside of Havana, this film documents low relief sculptures that resembled petroglyphs, which were influenced by Mendieta's interest in the indigenous Taíno people of Cuba.

In a brief yet prolific career, the Cuban-born artist **Ana Mendieta** created groundbreaking work in photography, film, video, drawing, sculpture, and site-specific installations. The major themes in her work are exile, displacement, and a return to the landscape, which remain profoundly relevant today. Her unique hybrid of form and documentation, works that she titled "siluetas," are fugitive and potent traces of the artist's inscription of her body in the landscape, often transformed by natural elements such as fire and water.

***Substrait (Underground Dailies)***

By Gordon Matta-Clark

USA, 1976, 16mm, color and black and white, sound, screened as a digital file, 30 min.

Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York.

In this film, Matta-Clark explored and documented the underground spaces of New York City. The artist chose a range of sites (New York Central railroad tracks, Grand Central Station, 13th Street, Croton Aqueduct in Highgate, etc.) to show the variety and complexity of the underground spaces and tunnels in the metropolitan area. (EAI)

**Gordon Matta-Clark's** thoroughly unique artistic project was a radical investigation of architecture, deconstruction, space, and urban environments. Dating from 1971 to 1977, his most prolific and vital period, his film and video works include documents of major pieces in New York, Paris and Antwerp, and are focused on three areas: performances and recycling pieces; space and texture works; and his building cuts.

***sound of a million insects, light of a thousand stars***

By Tomonari Nishikawa

Japan, 2014, 35mm, 1.37:1, sound, color, screened as a digital file, 2 min.

"I buried a 100-foot (about 30 meters) 35mm negative film under fallen leaves alongside a country road, which was about 25 km away from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, for about 6 hours, from the sunset of June 24, 2014, to the sunrise of the following day. The night was beautiful with a starry sky, and numerous summer insects were singing loud. The area was once an evacuation zone, but now people live there after the removal of the contaminated soil. This film was exposed to the possible remaining of the radioactive materials. This is a video copy (positive image) from the negative film." (TN)

**Tomonari Nishikawa's** films explore the idea of documenting situations/phenomena through a chosen medium and technique, often focusing on process itself. His films have been screened at numerous film festivals and art venues, including Berlinale, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Hong Kong International Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, London Film Festival, Media City Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Singapore International Film

Festival, and Toronto International Film Festival. In 2010, he presented a series of 8mm and 16mm films at MoMA P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, and his film installation, *Building 945*, received the 2008 Grant Award from the Museum of Contemporary Cinema in Spain. He served as a juror for the 2010 Ann Arbor Film Festival, the 2012 Big Muddy Film Festival, and the 2013 dresdner schmalfilmstage. He is one of the co-founders of KLEX: Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film and Video Festival and Transient Visions: Festival of the Moving Image. He lives in Japan/USA, currently teaching in Cinema Department at Binghamton University.

### **Guest Programmers:**

**Leo Goldsmith** is Visiting Assistant Professor of Culture and Media at Eugene Lang College, The New School. He is a co-author of Robert Stam's *Keywords in Subversive Film/Media Aesthetics* (Wiley, 2015) and the author of a book on the British filmmaker Peter Watkins (Verso, forthcoming). He is a frequent contributor to *4Columns*, *Reverse Shot*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*, whose film section he co-edited from 2011 to 2017. A curator and film programmer, he currently serves as an advisor to the programming team of the New York Film Festival.

**Jenny Perlin** makes 16mm films, videos, and animations. Her films work with and against the documentary tradition, incorporating innovative stylistic techniques to emphasize issues of truth, misunderstanding, and personal history. Her projects look closely at ways in which social machinations are reflected in the fragments of daily life. Perlin's work has been shown in numerous exhibitions and film festivals, including at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the New York Film Festival, the Berlin Film Festival, the Rotterdam Film Festival, and others.

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