

# Creative Capital

## 2012 Film/Video Grantees

23 projects, representing 27 artists

### **Cam Archer**

Santa Cruz, CA

Project title: *Strange Waves*

Non-traditional Narrative

*Strange Waves* is a non-traditional narrative feature film, centered around a middle-aged woman, Carolyn, as she searches for her son, who disappeared during a family camping trip on the Big Island of Hawaii. Her son, Mark, and his wife invite Carolyn on a camping trip to celebrate their son's first birthday. The family hikes into a remote area of the Hawaiian wilderness. While everyone swims, Carolyn indulges in her newfound passion for field recordings. The next morning, Mark is gone, leaving the family uncertain of his whereabouts. Unwilling to assume the worst, Carolyn searches with her microphone desperately listening for some sign of life.

Cam Archer has written, edited, produced and directed numerous award-winning shorts, music videos and two feature films. His first feature film, *Wild Tigers I Have Known*, was an official participant at the Sundance Screenwriter's Lab in 2005. The film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2006 and was distributed theatrically nationwide by IFC Films in 2007. That same year, *Wild Tigers I Have Known* was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award and secured additional distribution around the world. Archer's second feature film, *Shit Year*, premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2010 as part of their Director's Fortnight Program. The film had a limited theatrical release last summer. Archer is also an avid still photographer.

### **Robert Bahar & Almudena Carracedo**

Brooklyn, NY

Project title: *Before I Was*

Non-traditional documentary

Reinventing oneself is a classic American paradigm. The experimental documentary *Before I Was* is an account of people who make—or are forced to make—the radical decision to disappear and fully disconnect from their pasts. Through their stories, the film offers a poetic meditation on privacy, identity and the power of memory.

Robert Bahar is the Emmy-award winning Producer/Writer of the documentary *Made in L.A.*, which premiered on PBS' P.O.V. series and screened at 85 film festivals and more than 600 community and faith-based screening events. *Made in L.A.* received an Emmy, the Hillman Prize for Broadcast Journalism, the Henry Hampton Award and nominations for the Pare Lorentz, Alma and Imagen awards. Bahar previously produced and directed the documentary *Laid to Waste*, about a community's fight against environmental racism. He has line-produced and production managed independent films including *Diary of a City Priest*, which premiered at Sundance, and *Pittsburgh*, starring Jeff Goldblum, which premiered at Tribeca. In addition, he is Director/Co-Founder of Doculink, an online community of over 3,500 documentary-makers and has served on the Board of the International Documentary Association. He holds an MFA from The Peter Stark Producing Program at USC, which he attended on a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship.

Born in Madrid, Spain, Almudena Carracedo is the Emmy-award winning Director/Producer of *Made in L.A.*, a feature documentary about the transformation of three Latina immigrants as they struggle for their rights. Praised by the *New York Times* as “an excellent documentary...about basic human dignity,” the film premiered on PBS’ P.O.V. series and received numerous awards including an Emmy, the Henry Hampton Award and the Hillman Prize for Broadcast Journalism. Previously she directed the short documentary *Welcome, A Docu-Journey of Impressions*, a film essay on Tijuana as a border town, which won the Sterling Award at Silverdocs. Carracedo is a 2010 United States Artists Fellow and the recipient of the ESTELA Award from the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP). In 2011 she received an honorary doctoral degree from Illinois Wesleyan University in recognition of her work. She serves on IFP’s Advisory Board, has served as a juror at numerous film festivals, and has lectured and served as a panelist at universities and conferences across the country.

### **Amy Belk & Matt Porterfield**

Baltimore, MD

Project title: *Take These Broken Wings*

Non-traditional Narrative

The third in a trilogy of feature films set in the northeast Baltimore neighborhood where Matt Porterfield was raised, *Take These Broken Wings* examines the daily life of a 35-year-old man who is under house arrest for drug charges and living with his father. The lines between fiction and nonfiction are heightened through the formal techniques of documentary and narrative realism, the use of existing locations and a largely non-professional supporting cast.

Amy Belk received her MFA in fiction writing in 2007 from the Iowa Writer’s Workshop, where she was awarded the Richard Yates Prize for Fiction. Her short stories have appeared in literary journals such as *Fiction*, *Eyeshot* and *Epoch*. In addition to the screenplay for *Take These Broken Wings*, she co-wrote the feature *I Used To Be Darker* with Matt Porterfield and is developing a television pilot based on her experience in the odd world of corporate blogging. She teaches English and creative writing at the Community College of Baltimore County and the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Matt Porterfield studied film at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts and teaches screenwriting, theory and production at Johns Hopkins University. His first feature, *Hamilton*, was released theatrically in 2006. Named “one of the finest American independent films ever made” by *The New Yorker*’s Richard Brody, it continues to tour festivals, museums and art-house theatres around the world. *Metal Gods*, his second feature script, was included in the 2008 Emerging Narrative Program at IFP’s Independent Film Week, where the screenplay won the Panasonic Digital Filmmaking Grand Prize. In 2010, Porterfield was selected as one of *Filmmaker* magazine’s 25 New Faces of Independent Film. His most recent feature, *Putty Hill*, premiered in the Berlinale’s International Forum of New Cinema and was released theatrically in 2011. He is currently in post-production on *I Used To Be Darker*, his first collaboration with screenwriter Amy Belk.

### **Brad Butler**

London, UK

Project title: *Direct Speech Acts*

Experimental

*Direct Speech Acts* is a film made in collaboration with non-actors, dancers, theorists and activists performing contemporary and urgent forms of fearless speech. This is a new work within *The Museum of Non Participation*, a conceptual (geo)political construct of gesture, image and language. *Direct Speech Acts* moves across articulations of political voice and gesture through contrasting attitudes to the authority of images in drama, documentary, performance, reportage, public interventions and a series of direct speech acts mediated for the camera. This art experience takes as its subject the contemporary desire to create new languages for resistance.

Over the last 13 years, Brad Butler has participated in many exhibitions in leading art institutions around the world, including shows at the Tate Modern, Tate Britain and Serpentine Gallery in London; the New York Film Festival; and Art Dubai. With collaborator Karen Mirza, Butler was recently awarded the 2008–09 production grant from the Museum of Contemporary Cinema Foundation Madrid and a residency with Vasl in Karachi. Butler and Mirza received a nomination for the 2010 Transmediale Award Berlin. Their new film, *The Exception and the Rule*, was the First Prize Award winner at The 22nd Chicago Experimental Film and Video Festival. Karen Mirza and Brad Butler's current body of work, *The Museum of Non Participation*, was commissioned by Artangel, one of the UK's leading arts organizations. Since 1998, Mirza and Butler have created a body of work that moves between the documentary form and artists' film.

### **Lucien Castaing-Taylor & Véréna Paravel**

Cambridge, MA

Project title: *Leviathan*

Non-traditional documentary

*Leviathan* is a multi-media project about men at sea and fish on boats. It offers an appreciation for the sensory experience, labor and ecological stakes of one of the oldest endeavors that has been an important part of human history since the Paleolithic. Shot off the coast of the mythic city of Moby Dick, with eleven cameras swapping hands between the filmmakers and fishermen in an effort to create a form of aesthetic experimentation that gives free reign to the perspectives of both fishermen and their catch, the film seeks to capture how human, animal, and machine; beauty and horror; and life and death all merge in uncanny ways in the world of contemporary commercial fishing.

Lucien Castaing-Taylor recently recorded *Sweetgrass* (with Ilisa Barbash, 2009), an unsentimental elegy at once to the American West and to the 10,000 years of uneasy accommodation between post-Paleolithic humans and animals. He is currently completing a series of video installations and photographic Westerns that variously evoke the allure and ambivalence of the pastoral, including *Hell Roaring Creek* (2010) and *The High Trail* (2010). Previous works include *In and Out of Africa* (with Ilisa Barbash, 1992) and *Made in USA* (with Ilisa Barbash, 1990). Castaing-Taylor's work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, has been exhibited at the Berlin Kunsthalle, the London Institute of Contemporary Arts, Marian Goodman Gallery and the X-Initiative, and has formed the subject of symposia at the British Museum, the Musée du Quai Branly and the Smithsonian Institution. His films and videos have screened at the AFI, Berlin, Locarno, New York, Toronto and other film festivals, as well as at the Viennale, Punto de Vista and the Flaherty seminar.

Véréna Paravel is a filmmaker and anthropologist working at the Sensory Ethnography Lab and Film Study Center at Harvard University. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New

York, and explores evanescent forms of intimacy, mediation and space in a variety of media. Her films include *Foreign Parts* (with J.P. Sniadecki, 2010), *Interface Series* (2009-10) and *7 Queens* (2008). *Foreign Parts* won seven international awards, including Best First Feature Award and Special Jury Award at the Locarno Film Festival (2010), and the Grand Prize at Punto de Vista (2011). A *New York Times* Critics' Pick, it was also an official selection of the New York Film Festival (2010) and the Viennale (2010).

### **Eric Dyer**

Valencia, CA

Project title: *Short Ride in a Phat Machine*

Other

*Short Ride* is an animated film and installation project that utilizes the zoetrope, a pre-cinema device that creates the appearance of motion from static pictures. The zoetrope features a perforated cylinder through which images are visible. Dyer employs his own version of this mechanism to explore a visual language of loops and spirals. When spun, the complex sculptures, dubbed cinetropes, are a blur to the eye but come to animated life when viewed through shutter-glasses or fast-shutter video cameras. This process allows for projects that manifest themselves as both films and installations.

Eric Dyer is an artist, filmmaker, experimental animator and educator. His award-winning films have screened internationally at numerous festivals including the Chicago International Film Festival, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, South by Southwest, and the Ottawa, Annecy, Melbourne and London International Animation Festivals. His work has also been exhibited at the Exploratorium, the Hirshhorn Museum, the Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Ars Electronica, and the Cairo and Venice Biennales. He received an MFA in 2004 from the Mount Royal School of Art at MICA. Dyer has received commissions from Animasivo, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Ammerman Center for Art and Technology. As a member of the visual arts faculty at UMBC in Baltimore, he teaches animation and brings students and symphony orchestras together to create music visualizations and animation performances. Dyer was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in filmmaking for travel to Denmark in 2005, was a New Frontier Artist at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and is currently a visiting artist at the CalArts Program in Experimental Animation.

### **Daniel Eisenberg**

Chicago, IL

Project title: *The Unstable Object*

Non-traditional documentary

*The Unstable Object* is a film that investigates the relationships—both sensual and political—between factory workers and the objects they produce. Shot on several continents, the film reveals the conditions of labor in a world of extreme change. The factories include a luxury automobile factory in Dresden, a factory in Chicago where blind workers produce wall clocks for federal office buildings and a cymbal factory in Istanbul utilizing 500-year-old technology, among other locations. The sequences reveal the connections these workers have to the workplace, their fellow workers and the objects that they produce. It is a portrait of both healthy and alienated labor.

Daniel Eisenberg is a documentary and experimental filmmaker with 30 years experience in the field. His work has been written about extensively and shown throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas. Solo

exhibitions include The Museum of Modern Art, the Centre Pompidou, the Hirshhorn Museum, Pacific Film Archive and Museum of the Moving Image, among many others. Eisenberg's films have also been shown at the Berlin, Sydney, London and Jerusalem Film Festivals. Awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm Fellowship and an NEA Media Fellowship. Eisenberg was a visiting artist in the department of Radio, Television and Film at Northwestern University from 2006 to 2008. Eisenberg lives in Chicago and is a professor in the departments of Film, Video, New Media and Animation, and Visual and Critical Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a position he has held since 1994.

### **Yance Ford**

Jackson Heights, NY

Project title: *Strong Island*

Non-traditional Documentary

Set in the suburbs of the black middle class, *Strong Island* chronicles the director's investigation into her brother's violent death twenty years ago. Through interviews with characters, each with a unique perspective on his death, the details of the shooting and its aftermath emerge; providing insight into the complexities of fear, guilt, violence, criminal justice and betrayal; revealing the human dimension of tragedy; revealing how easily things fall apart.

Yance Ford is Series Producer of *POV* and has been instrumental in curating the acclaimed documentary film series on PBS since 2002. Yance has served on juries and panels at Full Frame, Silverdocs, Sheffield Doc/Fest, ITVS, Independent Film Week, the Edinburgh Pitch, True/False, the Stranger than Fiction screening series and is a mentor at the NALIP Producers Academy and serves on the IFP Advisory Committee. Ford is a graduate of Hamilton College and the Production Workshop at Third World Newsreel. *Strong Island* is Ford's first documentary film.

### **Brian L. Frye & Penny Lane**

Claryville, NY

Project title: *The Rules of Evidence*

Non-traditional Documentary

*The Rules of Evidence* is a feature-length documentary that investigates how courts interpret motion pictures presented as evidence. It explores the history of evidentiary films and shows that courts have developed a unique set of rules to determine when and how particular films can be admitted as evidence—a “forensic film theory.” The result can be surprising. For example, many people saw the Rodney King video as indisputable proof of police brutality. It showed four police officers mercilessly beating an unarmed and incapacitated man. But the court allowed the lawyers defending the police officers to present an alternative explanation. The video established certain facts, but those facts permitted more than one conclusion. By explaining how courts evaluate films, *The Rules of Evidence* yields important insights into the theory of documentary cinema and the representation of reality.

Brian L. Frye is a filmmaker, writer and law professor. His films explore relationships between history, society and cinema through archival and amateur images. Since 1995, his films have appeared in many museums and festivals, including The Whitney Museum, New York Film Festival's Views from the Avant-Garde, Pacific Film Archive, New York Underground Film Festival, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Warhol

Museum and other venues. His films are in the permanent collection of the Whitney Museum and are distributed by the Filmmaker's Coop and Peripheral Produce. He was awarded a Jerome Foundation grant for *Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Show*, which premiered at the 2002 Whitney Biennial. His writing on film has appeared in numerous publications, including *October*, *The New Republic*, *Film Comment* and the *Village Voice*. His legal scholarship concerns interactions between the law and the arts, focusing on issues relating to nonprofit organizations and intellectual property. He is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Law at Hofstra University School of Law.

Penny Lane's documentaries and video essays focus on lesser-known histories as a means of reconsidering the important issues of today. Her films have screened at festivals including Rotterdam, AFI FEST, Images Festival, Rooftop Films, Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival, Oberhausen, European Media Arts Festival and MOMA's Documentary Fortnight. *The Voyagers* (2010), a video essay about the secret love story at the heart of NASA's Golden Record, won awards at FLEX, New Orleans Film Festival and AFI FEST. *The Abortion Diaries* (2005) has become an important advocacy tool for reproductive rights activists, continuing to screen widely after over 250 public screenings worldwide. Lane has been awarded grants from the Jerome Foundation, Cinereach, New York State Council on the Arts, IFP, Experimental Television Center, LEF Foundation and the Puffin Foundation. Since 2010, she has been collaborating with her husband Brian L. Frye on feature documentaries, including *The Rules of Evidence* and *Our Nixon*. She is an occasional writer and film programmer, and teaches film, video and new media at Hampshire College, Williams College and Bard College.

### **Sonali Gulati**

Richmond, VA

Project title: *Indian Patient*

Non-traditional Documentary

*Indian Patient* is a nontraditional documentary that uncovers the growing underground medical industry of "curing" homosexuality in India. The film creates a dialogue between factions with differing points of view by exploring the story of one individual in-depth: the gay patient, his family, gay and lesbian activists, and reactions by medical professionals. The process of making the film will address the subjects of authorship, spectatorship and representation.

Sonali Gulati is an experimental documentary filmmaker, activist and educator. Her films have screened at venues such as the Hirshhorn Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and at film festivals such as the Margaret Mead Film Festival, the Black Maria Film Festival and the Slamdance Film Festival. Gulati's award-winning documentary, *Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night*, was broadcast on television in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, The Middle East, South Asia and North Africa. She has won numerous awards and grants for her work, including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship and the Theresa Pollak Prize for Excellence in the Arts. Gulati is an Associate Professor in the Department of Photography and Film at Virginia Commonwealth University's School of the Arts.

### **Kenneth Jacobs**

New York, NY

Project title: *Cyclone*

## Experimental

In Kenneth Jacob's work *Cyclone*, digital still photographs—featuring extreme close-ups of flowers and fruits, for example—are made from a succession of close camera positions. Each series of exposures is repeated several times on the computer comprising a movie of sorts. In the resultant film, close observation of movement is visible without 3-D viewing aids, using a standard monitor or projection presentation. In *Cyclone*, the rhythmic shutter interruptions are softened and the depth illusion enhanced by replacement of the black intervals (flicker) with repeats of the same sequence of photographs in their complimentary colors.

Kenneth Jacobs was born in Brooklyn, NY, in 1933. His films, videos and performances have been presented at venues such as the Berlin, London, Hong Kong, Tribeca and New York Film Festivals; the American Museum of the Moving Image, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany; and the Louvre in Paris. Jacob has received numerous awards, including the Maya Deren Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a DAAD Fellowship, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation and the New York State Council on the Arts. In 2007, his film *Tom, Tom, The Piper's Son* was named to the National Film Registry. In 2011, Anthology Film Archives featured his work in the series *Ken Jacobs in 3 Dimensions*. Jacobs is Distinguished Professor of Cinema Emeritus, State University of New York, Binghamton.

### **Nina Menkes**

Venice, CA

Project title: *Heatstroke*

Non-traditional Narrative

Set in Los Angeles and Cairo during the searing heat of a contemporary summer, *Heatstroke* is an existential murder mystery about two sisters: an American movie star and a diplomat's wife stationed in Egypt. The two women are deeply estranged not only from themselves, but also from each other, and the film's central drama is Nikki's attempt to reconnect with her sister. The film's core is a violent, possibly sexual, early trauma that sits in these women's psychic closet and this event's rippling, mirroring effects against two very different cultural landscapes.

Nina Menkes lives and works in Los Angeles. Her films include *Dissolution* (2010), *Phantom Love* (2007), *Massaker* (2005) and *Magdalena Viraga* (1986), among others. Her work has screened in major international film festivals, such as Sundance, Rotterdam, Locarno, Viennale, Berlin, Cairo and Toronto, as well as at La Cinémathèque Française, the ICA in London, the Beijing Film Academy in China, The Whitney Museum of American Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and MOCA and LACMA in Los Angeles. Special honors include a Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, two Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, an Annenberg Foundation Independent Media Grant, an American Film Institute Independent Filmmaker Award, three Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowships and two Fulbright Senior Scholar Awards. Menkes has had retrospectives of her work in Los Angeles, Israel and several European capitals.

### **Akosua Adoma Owusu**

Alexandria, VA

Project title: *Black Sunshine*

## Non-traditional Narrative

Set in a village in Agogo, Ghana, *Black Sunshine* is a feature-length experimental film about a promiscuous Ghanaian hairdresser, Effie, and her albino daughter, Asabea. Born albino, everything about Asabea sets her apart. Her days are spent caring for her ailing mother and dreaming of escaping with her mysterious friend, Shebere. When she tries to balance her life between Effie and Shebere, she finds herself pulled down two separate paths—and the places they lead her are darker than she could ever imagine. The film weaves together scripted and nontraditional documentary forms, and examines albino Africans as tropes for cross-cultural identity. Albinos have been chastised, ridiculed and killed in many parts of Africa because of their skin color. The film explores conventional beauty, emotional violence, the social stigma of albinism in Africa and its impact on family dynamics.

Akosua Adoma Owusu is an American filmmaker and artist of Ghanaian descent. She received an MFA in the Schools of Film/Video and Fine Art from CalArts in 2008. Owusu's films are informed by traditions in experimental filmmaking, ethnography and cultural representation. She has exhibited worldwide, including at The Museum of Modern Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Centre Pompidou, The Smithsonian Institute, Rotterdam Film Festival, Viennale and London Film Festival, among others. Owusu's work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *SF Weekly*, *Film Threat* and *ArtForum*. Her films include *Intermittent Delight*, *Drexciya* and *Me Broni Ba (My White Baby)*—all of which won several Best Documentary awards, including a Golden Gate Award Nomination at the San Francisco International Festival in 2009. *My White Baby* is being distributed by The Cinema Guild. Owusu was a featured artist at the 56th Robert Flaherty Seminar and recipient of Focus Features Africa First.

### **Brian Pera**

Memphis, TN

Project title: *Woman's Picture*

Non-traditional Narrative

*Woman's Picture* is a cinematic gallery of short films inspired by the classic women's films of the '30s, '40s, and '50s, with a focus on the subjective experience of female characters whose stories are told in relation to a group of iconic perfumes. The films in this ongoing series are the centerpiece of the website Evelyn Avenue, which features a blog, related video content, fiction, interviews and a collaborative fragrance line with Zurich perfumer Andy Tauer called Tableau de Parfums. *Woman's Picture* attempts to initiate a dialogue about gender, identity and memory. The creation of perfumes inspired by female subjects encourages engagement with their stories in a new way, as each fragrance takes its inspiration from a different character presented in the Portrait gallery.

Brian Pera grew up in Omaha and Houston, and for the past 20 years has lived and worked in Memphis, TN. Pera has written, directed and produced two feature films and several short films. Pera's first feature film, *The Way I See Things*, received an Award for First-Time Achievement in Filmmaking at the Milano Mix Film Festival, premiered at the Los Angeles Outfest Festival in 2008 as part of the festival's Four in Focus Spotlight, and was a centerpiece of the Thessaloniki International Film Focus section in Greece. The film also played festivals in Seattle and Chicago and won the Hometown Audience Award for Best Feature Film at the Indie Memphis Film Festival. Pera's first novel, *Troublemaker*, was published by St. Martin's Press in 2000. *Life As We Show It*, an anthology of film writing that Pera co-edited with Masha Tupitsyn, was released in 2010 by City Lights.



**Rick Prelinger**

San Francisco, CA

Project title: *No More Road Trips?*

Non-traditional Documentary

The documentary film *No More Road Trips?* investigates the artist's lifelong fascination with travel: the highway, the sensation of movement, and the landscape as a space that combines nature and culture with social relations. Movement and nomadism are deeply ingrained in North American culture and are experienced as a fundamental entitlement: the right to freedom of motion. Historical trends contribute to that collective perception; a majority of Americans and their ancestors are immigrants. However, it is increasingly clear that this entitlement is rubbing up against inflexible limitations. As energy costs rise, fuel supplies are disrupted and economies gyrate, one might question whether the world is approaching peak travel.

Rick Prelinger is an archivist, writer, filmmaker and outsider librarian. In 1982, he founded Prelinger Archives, a collection of industrial, advertising, educational and amateur films that was acquired by the Library of Congress in 2002. Prelinger has partnered with the Internet Archive (of which he is a board member) to make 2,100 films available online for free viewing, downloading and reuse. His archival feature *Panorama Ephemera* (2004) played in venues around the world. Prelinger has recently made several film programs that he categorizes as "historical interventions," called *Lost Landscapes of San Francisco* (five annual parts) and *Lost Landscapes of Detroit*. With Megan Prelinger, he is the co-founder of Prelinger Library, an appropriation-friendly private research library open to the public in downtown San Francisco. His archival work currently focuses on collecting, recontextualizing, and exhibiting home movies and amateur films.

**Michael Robinson**

Spencer, NY

Project title: *Circle in the Sand*

Experimental

Exploring ideas of transformative exile and supernatural intervention, *Circle in the Sand* is a pair of experimental films set in the near future, during a second American civil war. The first film follows a band of exiled political prisoners and their supervising soldiers, living in the ruins of a seaside military fort. The second film focuses on a family living in self-imposed exile during the same unstable future, operating a boarding house for deserters and expatriates on a remote tropical island. Despite their separate narratives and settings, these films share overlapping characters and references.

In his recent films, videos and photography, Michael Robinson explores the joys and dangers of mediated experience. His work has screened in both solo and group shows at venues including the International Film Festival Rotterdam, The New York Film Festival, The London Film Festival, Sundance, The Walker Art Center, Anthology Film Archives, MoMA PS1, The Wexner Center for the Arts, Tate Modern, Media City, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, REDCAT, Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen and the San Francisco, Vienna, Melbourne, Leeds, Singapore and Hong Kong International Film Festivals. *Film Comment* magazine listed Robinson as one of the top ten avant-garde filmmakers of the 2000s. Robinson holds a BFA from Ithaca College and an MFA from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has been awarded residencies from the Headlands Center for

the Arts and the Wexner Center Film/Video Studio Program, and was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Cinema at Binghamton University.

**Mark Elijah Rosenberg**

Brooklyn, NY

Project title: *Ad Inexplorata*

Interdisciplinary

*Ad Inexplorata* is a multimedia fictional story of an astronaut heading to Mars alone on a one-way mission. The piece exists in multiple forms: first as endurance-based performance art, then as live-action theater and finally as a film with an accompanying website. The project includes audience interaction at all stages. Almost entirely set within the grumbling hull of a spaceship traveling 60 million miles from Earth, *Ad Inexplorata* (“Toward the Unknown”) also includes the astronaut’s journals, scientific research, mission explication and Rosenberg’s own discourse of the narrative symbolism. *Ad Inexplorata* is an introspective story about one man and his mission seeking the wonders of the universe.

Mark Elijah Rosenberg is best known as the Founder and Artistic Director of Rooftop Films. Born and raised in New York City, Rosenberg received his BA from Vassar College and began showing movies on his roof in 1997. Rosenberg has published articles on filmmaking and programming, lectured at schools and conferences, programmed film screenings across the world, and served on juries for festivals and grant panels. Rosenberg has shot, directed and edited dozens of films and was a producer-editor on the WNYE television show *IMNY*. Mark recently co-created and directed a segment of *Orbit(Film)*, an omnibus movie about our solar system.

**Norbert Shieh**

Walnut, CA

Project title: *Preserves*

Experimental

*Preserves* is a feature-length experimental film that takes place in Southern Taiwan. It begins as a documentary following the agricultural, manufacturing, and distribution process of making and selling *suen cai*, a pickled mustard green that is a popular ingredient in many Taiwanese culinary dishes. The film then develops into a narrative that follows Lin, an owner of a noodle cart struggling to find a new supplier for *suen cai* after his old supplier closes due to the rising number of chain convenience stores. Kao, the owner of the general store next door, suggests using a manufactured brand. Lin refuses and the conflict between the two reflects how lives have changed with the country’s modernization.

Norbert Shieh is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker/cinematographer. His work includes experimental films that focus on perception and delicate observational narratives. His recent film, *Washes* (2010), premiered at the New York Film Festival and won a Jury’s Citation Selection at the Black Maria Film & Video Festival. Shieh’s latest film, *Huan Dao* (2010), premiered at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival. In addition, he has shot more than twenty short films as a cinematographer; these films have screened in venues such as the Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art and the Centre Pompidou, Paris. Shieh received a BA in Visual Arts from University of California, San Diego, and recently completed an MFA in Film and Video at California Institute of the Arts.

**Stacey Steers**

Boulder, CO

Project title: *Random Forces*

Animation

*Random Forces* is a short animated film constructed from meticulously handcrafted collages. Its characters seek transformational powers through a journey of exploration and investigation, in which the intersection of forces play out in dream-like moments. Science and the magic of discovery, alongside longing, loss, hope and despair, provide the narrative undercurrent. Researchers, observers and specimens of hybrid invention animate a series of whimsical yet disquieting scenes in an allegorical laboratory and the world beyond. Characters are drawn from a variety of early cinematic sources and placed within collage environments where their actions are re-contextualized.

Stacey Steers lives in Boulder, CO, and teaches for the Film Studies Program at the University of Colorado. Her labor-intensive animated films, composed of thousands of individual, handmade works on paper, have screened at the Sundance Film Festival, New Directors/New Films, AFI Film Festival, Telluride Film Festival and many other festivals, winning national and international awards. Her work has been installed at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, DC, the Denver Art Museum and the Hamburger Kunsthalle in Germany, among other venues. Her film *Night Hunter* is included in the 2012 Sundance Film Festival. Steers is a recipient of an AFI Independent Filmmaker's Grant and has been an artist fellow at Harvard University, the MacDowell Colony, the Sacatar Foundation, Ucross Foundation, the Liguria Study Center and Yaddo.

**Deborah Stratman**

Chicago, IL

Project title: *The Illinois Parables*

Other

*The Illinois Parables* is an experimental documentary combining a series of regional narratives questioning the roles that doubt and mysticism play in social ideology. Mythic histories of violence, atomic breakthrough, utopias and vigilante justice comprise a suite of Midwestern parables. This film gathers sites and events that evoke the spiritual vis-à-vis the political. The locations under investigation are those where the boundaries between the rational world and the supernatural becomes tenuous. Throughout the film, trajectories of faith and technology intermingle, suggesting linkages between scientific and religious abstraction.

Deborah Stratman is a Chicago-based artist and filmmaker who explores landscapes and systems. Much of her work points to the relationship between physical environments and human struggles for power and control that play out on the land. Her recent projects question elemental historical narratives about freedom, expansionism, sonic warfare and paranormal occurrences in the information age. Stratman works in multiple media, including public sculpture, photography, drawing and audio. Her work was featured in the 2004 Whitney Biennial and shown at The Museum of Modern Art, the Centre Pompidou, the Hammer Museum and many international film festivals, including Sundance, the Viennale, Ann Arbor, Oberhausen and Rotterdam. She is the recipient of Fulbright and Guggenheim fellowships and currently teaches at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

**Jesse Sugarmann**

Eugene, OR

Project title: *We Build Excitement*

Non-traditional Documentary

The American auto industry is a manufacturer of personal and cultural identity. The failure of the American auto industry was therefore a failure of self, and the closure of several longstanding automotive marquees equated a loss of cultural identity. Shot at a decommissioned Pontiac dealership in Northern Michigan, *We Build Excitement* is an experimental documentary featuring an environmental study of a shuttered car dealership, punctuated by sculptural car wrecks and interpretive works performed by car salesmen. *We Build Excitement* isolates and categorizes the portion of identity that has been lost by the auto industry's degeneration, documenting the emotional scars left by its breakdown.

Born in Danbury, CT, Jesse Sugarmann is an interdisciplinary artist working in video, sculpture, fiber and performance. His work has been shown nationally and internationally in venues such as the Getty Center, Museo Tamayo, the PICA TBA festival and the 2010 Portland Biennial. His work has been written about in publications including *ArtForum*, *Art Papers*, *ART LTD* and the *New York Times*. Jesse lives in Bakersfield, CA, where he is assistant professor of New Genres at Cal State University.

**Christopher Sullivan**

Chicago, IL

Project title: *The Orbit of Minor Satellites*

Animation

*The Orbit of Minor Satellites* is an animated feature film comprised of hand-drawn, 2-D animations with painted backgrounds. It tells the story of two different worlds in which characters are interconnected by the most unlikely threads. The first environment is a psychiatrist's office where a teenage girl is in session with her therapist. The other environment is a cavernous space station on the subarctic desolation of Mimas, one of the moons of Saturn. A core idea in the film is that the pivotal moments of most people's lives take place in rooms, bedrooms, kitchens and classrooms where conversations, actions and touch shape future events.

Christopher Sullivan is an animator, filmmaker and performance artist whose experimental film and theater work spans 30 years. His work has been shown in festivals, theaters and museums worldwide, including the Zagreb Animation Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival, New York Short Film Festival, Black Maria Film + Video Festival and Pacific Film Archives. Sullivan recently completed a feature-length animated film called *Consumed Spirits*, for which he received Guggenheim and Rockefeller Media Arts Fellowships. Earlier iterations of *Consumed Spirits* were screened at the 2000 Whitney Biennial, The Museum of Modern Art, California Institute of Arts, Wisconsin Film Festival, Milwaukee Museum of Art and Gene Siskel Film Center. Since 2008 Sullivan also has created three evening-length performances, *The Outer Giants and Their Moon*, *Aggression Therapy* and *Mark The Encounter*.

**Jake Yuzna**

Brooklyn, NY

Project title: *Werewolves in the Mall of America*

Non-traditional Narrative

A coming-of-age story of a first-generation Somali immigrant high-school girl living in Minneapolis, the experimental narrative film *Werewolves in the Mall of America* presents a poetic, emotional portrait of the new face of American culture emerging at the dawn of the 21st century. Minneapolis claims the largest Somali population outside of Africa. Aided by local clergy, 25,000 Somali immigrants fled their war-torn homeland and relocated to the Twin Cities in 1990. The resulting merging of cultures has not been defined by strife or intolerance, but instead has created a new generation of young people who shatter traditional notions of race and teen subculture in America.

Born in Minneapolis in 1982, Jake Yuzna attended the Perpich Center for Arts Education before receiving a BFA in filmmaking at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. For his short film work, Yuzna was awarded fellowships in film/video by the Jerome Foundation, Philanthrofund Foundation, Frameline Foundation, Creative Time, State Arts Board of Minnesota, IFP Minnesota and the National Endowment for the Arts. His debut feature film, *Open*, premiered at the Berlin Film Festival where it won a Teddy Jury Prize. *Open* was awarded Best Narrative Feature at the Tel Aviv Film Festival and Best Performance at NewFest. Yuzna's work has screened at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the British Film Institute, Oberhausen Film Festival, as well as more than 70 international film festivals. In 2010, Yuzna founded the first cinema program at the Museum of Arts and Design.