

EMPAC



ON SCREEN/SOUND: ^{NO.} 10

THU / FEB 18, 7:00 PM

Pierre Vallières
Joyce Wieland

The Arbor
Clio Barnard



ON SCREEN/SOUND

This year-long film series takes a close look at—and listen to—the way filmmakers have employed the sonic dimension of their form to complement, challenge, and reconsider our experience of the moving image.

Presenting cinematic performance, artists' moving image, and Hollywood feature films, each *On Screen/Sound* program delves into the relationship between movie sound and image tracks, highlighting some radical examples of the aesthetic power and technical potential of sound in cinema. From musical theater to the music video, experimental shorts to industrially produced features, the series explores the affective and technical relationship between sound and image through the art of Foley, experimental music, found footage, soundtrack imaging, synched, multi-channel, and non-diegetic sound.

ON SCREEN/SOUND IS CO-CURATED BY EMPAC'S VICTORIA BROOKS, CURATOR OF TIME BASED VISUAL ART, AND ARCEO ASCANI, CURATOR OF MUSIC.

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FEB 18, 7:00 PM

This two-part screening presents two seminal films made 30 years apart that explore the act of vocalization—both embodied in an on-screen speaker and as sound and images disembodied from the actor.

Pierre Vallières (1972)

Joyce Wieland

BRIEF INTERMISSION

The Arbor (2010)

Clio Barnard

Approximate runtime: 125 minutes

FILM NOTES:

Pierre Vallières

Joyce Wieland

1972, 16mm, sound, 32:30 mins

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Center (CFMDC)

"In the winter of 1972, Joyce Wieland drove north of Montreal to the small town of Mont-Laurier in order to make a film about the Québécois activist and journalist, Pierre Vallières. With a small crew consisting of herself and two other women—Judy Steed recording sound and Danielle Corbeil acting as translator—Wieland shot what was to be one of the last films she made during her artistic career. Pierre Vallières (1972) lasts as an articulate distillation of both her radical sensibility as a filmmaker within the context of structuralist film, as well as a piece of experimental evidence of a key moment within Canadian political and social history."

—ANNE LOW, 2011

Canadian artist-filmmaker Joyce Wieland's *Pierre Vallières* frames the mouth of Québécois separatist (and leader of the Front de libération du Québec) Pierre Vallières while he presents three corresponding speeches on Mont-Laurier, Quebec History and Race, and Women's Liberatio. Referred to by Wieland as a "mouthscape," it's an intense film that uses an extreme close-up of Vallières' mustachioed lips, teeth, and tongue to connect voice and language with colonialism and national struggle.

Wieland's artistic approach was established in the "structural cinema" practices of 1960s New York artist-filmmakers. The term was coined by P. Adams Sitney for artists (including Anthology Film Archives founder Jonas Mekas, and her husband Michael Snow) who made films with content and structure specific to the technical and material processes of photography and projection. Wieland shot *Pierre Vallières* in 1972 after returning to Canada to make direct political films, a move that explicitly rejected the climate of experimental film in New York, where she felt she "was made to feel in no uncertain terms by a few male filmmakers that I had overstepped my place, that in New York my place was making *little films*."

However, Wieland retained her structural approach in *Pierre Vallières*, with the length of each of the three speeches by Vallières prescribed by the length of a single reel of 16mm film. We not only hear the voice of the activist, but the sound recording retains the voice of the artist and her collaborators, Steed and Corbeil, as Wieland directs the shoot. Wieland uses what we could describe as a “gendered camera,” one that attends to the small details and care of bodies rather than the spectacular flag-waving images of protest presented by the majority of filmmakers at the time.

Joyce Wieland (1930-1999) is regarded as Canada’s foremost woman artist. A self-described “cultural activist,” she is well-known for celebrating Canadian national identity, ecology, and bringing forward feminist issues within the predominantly male art culture of the time. Initially a painter and filmmaker, she also used traditional women’s media such as quilts and sewn collages. Concern with the protection of Canadian confederation and gender issues repeatedly surfaced in her quilts, films, and assemblages. Her retrospective at the National Gallery of Canada in 1971 was the first afforded to a living Canadian woman artist.

The Arbor

Clio Barnard

2010, digital projection, sound, 94 mins

Courtesy of Strand Releasing

Clio Barnard’s 2010 documentary *The Arbor* was filmed with actors who precisely lip-synched the words of British playwright Angela Dunbar’s family and friends to tell the story of her short life and her daughter’s corresponding spiral into addiction. Barnard is an artist-filmmaker who has specialized for many years in “verbatim theater,” in which audio-recorded documentary testimony is lip-synched by performers. Creating an uneasy and at times dislocating effect, the technique enhances the slippery relationship between image and sound. This, in turn, unsettles the documentary reading of Dunbar’s story and gestures towards the blurring of fiction and reality inherent in dramatization.

The Arbor was made in response to Alan Clarke’s 1982 British fiction film *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, which was written by Angela Dunbar. Although that film reached cult status, Barnard reacted against the film as a comedic and derogatory version of working-class authenticity, which created a distance between the film and its author (Dunbar) and the actual social and economic conditions of the British working class, from which Dunbar came.

Barnard conducted intimate interviews with Dunbar’s friends, family, and neighbors over many years, and it was these audio recordings that became the overarching structure of the film. Lip-synched by actors as a formal critique of the representations presented in films such as *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, *The Arbor* attempts to both explode and resolve this distance between reality and fiction, and between notions of authenticity that we experience in everyday life as well as on screen. Taking the structural approach of the previous generation of New York and London-based artist-filmmakers as a starting point, Barnard developed a complex on-screen language that explores the dislocation of embodied sound and image to create a hybrid movie of documentary and fiction.

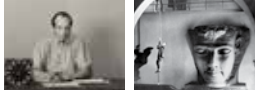
Clio Barnard is a British director of documentary and feature films. *The Arbor* was commissioned by UK arts organization Art Angel and won multiple awards at film festivals such as London Film Festival and Tribeca Film Festival, as well as a Bafta nomination. In 2013 she premiered her second feature, *The Selfish Giant*, at Cannes Film Festival, and her third feature, based on Rose Tremain’s novel *Trespass*, is currently in production. Prior to *The Arbor*, Barnard was an artist-filmmaker whose short videos and installations were presented at museums, festivals, and art institutions in the UK and internationally, such as Tate Modern, London, and MoMA, New York.

ON SCREEN/SOUND

THU / FEB 04, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #9

Picture and Sound Rushes / Morgan Fisher

Blackmail / Alfred Hitchcock



THU / FEB 18, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #10

Pierre Vallières / Joyce Wieland

The Arbor / Clio Barnard



THU / FEB 25, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #11

It Heat Hit / Laure Prouvost

3# Manifesto A Track #1 / Tony Cokes

Slow Zoom Long Pause / Sara Magenheimer

Der Grosse Verhau (The Big Mess) / Alexander Kluge



THU / MAR 03, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #12

Koyaanisqatsi: Life Out of Balance

Godfrey Reggio / Music: Philip Glass

What does unstable time even mean?

Charles Atlas / Music: Eric Holm

Many Thousands Gone / Ephraim Asili / Music: Joe McPhee

The Deccan Trap / Lucy Raven / Music: Paul Corley

Fade to Slide / Christian Marclay / Music: Bang on a Can All-Stars



THU / MAR 24, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #13

Thriller / John Landis and Michael Jackson

Berberian Sound Studio / Peter Strickland / Music: Will Slater



THU / APR 08, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #14

Ornament Sound Experiments / Oskar Fischinger

Study No. 7

Oskar Fischinger / Music: *Brahms' Hungarian Dance No. 5*

Polka Graph

Mary Ellen Bute / Music: Shostakovich's Polka
from *The Age of Gold*

Tarantella

Mary Ellen Bute / Music: Edwin Gershefski

Sirens / Ryoichi Kurokawa / Music: Novi_sad



THU / MAY 12, 7:00 ON SCREEN/SOUND #15

Untitled (The Ghost of Modernity)

Miguel Angel Rios

La Région Centrale / Michael Snow



STAFF

Geoff Abbas / Director for Stage Technologies
Eric Ameres / Senior Research Engineer
Argeo Ascani / Curator, Music
Eileen Baumgartner / Graphic Designer
David Bebb / Senior Systems Administrator
Peter Bellamy / Senior Systems Programmer
Michael Bello / Video Engineer
Victoria Brooks / Curator, Time-Based Visual Arts
Eric Brucker / Lead Video Engineer
Michele Cassaro / Guest Services Coordinator
John Cook / Box Office Manager
David DeLaRosa / Production Technician
Zhenelle Falk / Artist Services Administrator
Kimberly Gardner / Manager, Administrative Operations
Johannes Goebel / Director
Ian Hamelin / Project Manager
Katie Hammon / Administrative Specialist
Ryan Jenkins / Senior Event Technician
Shannon Johnson / Design Director
Carl Lewandowski / Production Technician
Eric Chi-Yeh Lin / Lead Stage Technician
Stephen McLaughlin / Senior Event Technician
Josh Potter / Marketing and Communications Manager
Alena Samoray / Event Technician
Candice Sherman / Business Coordinator
Avery Stempel / Front of House Manager
Kim Strosahl / Production Coordinator
Jeffrey Svatek / Audio Engineer
Dan Swalec / Master Electrician
Todd Vos / Lead Audio Engineer
Michael Wells / Production Technician