

**Los Angeles Filmforum presents
Narcisa Hirsch: *transgénico*
Sunday October 1, 2023, 7:30 pm
At 2220 Arts + Archives**

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest running organization dedicated to weekly screenings of experimental film, documentaries, video art, and experimental animation. 2023 is our 48th year. www.lafilmforum.org

**Five North American premieres!
In person, curator Erin Graff Zivin and Jesse Lerner**

Dedicated to Bérénice Reynaud

A pioneer of Argentinian experimental or “underground” cinema, Narcisa Hirsch (b. 1928) refers to herself as *una famosa cineasta desconocida* (a famous unknown filmmaker). Although she can be said to have been triply marginalized—as a Latin American, as a woman, and as an experimental artist who always moved outside of the traditional global and local art centers—Hirsch enjoyed radical freedom to experiment with the medium of film and to engage with a range of artists from filmmaker Michael Snow and composer Steve Reich to fiction writer Jorge Luis Borges and musician Nina Simone. This program features various genres, anti-genres, or trans-genres, of Hirsch's decades-long career (documented happenings, structural and lyrical films), as well as recently scanned films from her personal archive (workshop collaborations and *cine-cartas* or film-letters). The screening of these films, recently digitized thanks to a grant from the USC Research and Innovation to the USC Libraries, is related to an upcoming exhibition of Hirsch's work at the USC Fisher Museum of Art ([Narcisa Hirsch: In Relation](#)), curated by Erin Graff Zivin.

Following the digital projection, Erin Graff Zivin will be in conversation with Jesse Lerner. Special thanks to Tomas Rautenstrauch.

Program:

Taller/Workshop

1974, 16mm screening digitally, sound, 11 min.

One of Hirsch's best-known films, *Workshop* models itself formally after Michael Snow's *A Casing Shelved*, despite the fact that Hirsch had not viewed that film until after hers was made. Like Snow, the image portrayed is of a single image, here, one of the four walls of Hirsch's studio. In the Spanish-language version (*Taller*), Narcisa describes to Horacio Maira first what is seen on that wall, then what is outside the frame. In the English-language version (*Workshop*), the same image is seen while a variation on that conversation takes place between Hirsch and Leopoldo Maher.

Rafael, agosto de 1984

1984, Super 8 screening digitally, sound, 12 min. North American premiere.

On the occasion of Rafael Maino's birthday, Hirsch makes a film-letter using images they shot together in Patagonia and traveling in Chile and Brazil, as well as images of (mostly male) bodies she thought would appeal to him. The soundtrack features Hirsch reflecting upon their tumultuous relationship.

Pink Freud

1973, 16mm screening digitally, sound, 8 1/2 min. North American premiere.

A pregnant woman sleeps while a man obsessively examines a mountain of baby dolls. Related to the happening *Muñecos* (Dolls), in which Hirsch distributes the same plastic baby dolls to passersby in Buenos Aires, London, and New York, the film conveys an uncanny discomfort with maternity. The soundtrack features Pink Floyd.

Manzanas

1969, 16mm screening digitally, sound, 4 1/2 min. North American premiere.

A documentary of a happening, *Manzanas* features Hirsch and friends distributing apples to passersby at the corner of Florida and Diagonal Norte in the city of Buenos Aires, causing a stir. *Manzanas* is one of several collaborative documented happenings carried out with Marie Louise Alemann and Walther Mejía, in addition to *Marabunta* and *Muñecos*.

Orfeo ed Euridice

1976, Super 8 screening digitally, sound, 11 1/2 min. North American premiere.

Images of Rafael Maino and Narcisa Hirsch on their travels through Patagonia, set to the music of "Orfeo ed Euridice" by composer Christoph Willibald Gluck.

Mundial

1978, Super 8 screening digitally, sound, 20 min. North American premiere.

As part of a workshop directed by filmmaker Miguel Bejo at the Goethe Institute in Buenos Aires, this humorous, collaborative film was made in response to the controversial 1978 World Cup, which took place in Argentina during the military dictatorship. Featuring Hirsch together with collaborators Sergio Levin and Elias Cherniajovsky.

TRT: 67 1/2 min.

Erin Graff Zivin is Professor of Spanish and Portuguese and Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California, where she is Director of the USC Dornsife Experimental Humanities Lab and Acting Director of the Society of Fellows in the Humanities. She is the author of three books—*Anarchaeologies: Reading as Misreading* (Fordham UP, 2020), *Figurative Inquisitions: Conversion, Torture, and Truth in the Luso-Hispanic Atlantic*

(Northwestern UP, 2014), and *The Wandering Signifier: Rhetoric of Jewishness in the Latin American Imaginary* (Duke UP, 2008)—and is completing a fourth book on experimental transmedial aesthetics. Graff Zivin is the founder of the international “Women in Theory” collective, serves on the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association, and oversees the digitization of the entire work of experimental filmmaker Narcisa Hirsch (a collaboration between the USC Dornsife Experimental Humanities Lab, USC Digital Library, and the Filmoteca Narcisa Hirsch).

Jesse Lerner is a filmmaker, curator, and writer based in Los Angeles. His experimental documentary films have won numerous prizes at film festivals in the United States, Latin America, and Japan, and have screened at NYC’s Museum of Modern Art, Mexico’s National Anthropology Museum, the Guggenheim Museums in New York and Bilbao, and the Sundance, Rotterdam, and Los Angeles Film Festivals. His books include *The Maya of Modernism*, *F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth’s Undoing* (with Alex Juhasz), *Ism Ism Ism* (with Luciano Piazza), *The Catherwood Project* (with Leandro Katz), *L.A. Collects L.A.*, and *The Shock of Modernity*.

This program is supported by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles, and the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts. We also depend on our members, ticket buyers, and individual donors.

Coming soon:

Oct 8 – Janie Geiser: Double Vision and The Fourth Watch, at 2220 Arts
Oct 12/13 - A String of Pearls: The Films of Camille Billops and James Hatch, at UCLA Film & Television Archive
Oct 16 – L’Inferno (1911) with live music by Montopolis, at Secret Movie Club
Oct 22 – Films by and with Harry Smith, with live music, at 2220 Arts
Nov 5 - La Région Centrale, by Michael Snow, at UCLA Film & Television Archive

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