

# Slow Fireworks: The Films of Amy Halpern

*Interview with Amy Halpern by Arindam Sen, published in Senses of Cinema Issue 104, January, 2023.*

Over a career that spanned nearly five decades, Amy Halpern made non-narrative films of all kinds – formal, poetic, playful, joyous, political and personal. The films can be identified as first person cinema, as she herself goes on to confirm in our conversation. They emanate, mostly, from her responsiveness to the surroundings. Perceptual concerns are key to her films which are a sensorial articulation of a certain reality transformed through the medium, seeking to establish a direct, non-mediated relation with the audience. All her films are initiated by a jouissance felt either towards humans, animals, trees, places or events. Then follows a formal quest of trying to render these profilmic realities by subjectively employing the vast arsenal of cinematic possibilities that film puts at one's disposal.

Her politics, non-anthropocentric and anti-racist, underlie a formidable body of work that is marked by personal curiosity, delicacy and tenderness. During the course of her career, apart from being a filmmaker, she worked as a cinematographer, (uncontracted) educator, typist for a woman's magazine and film curator. She co-founded the Collective for Living Cinema in New York City in 1972, and later, in Los Angeles, *Independent Film Oasis* in 1975. Though she appeared in iconic avant-garde films like *Soft Fiction* (1979) by Chick Strand and *Water and Power* (1989) by Pat O'Neill, the status of her own films have remained criminally marginal.

A small yet very significant correction to the sporadic visibility of her work was undertaken by S8 Mostra de Cinema Periférico in A Coruña, Spain, when they devoted two programs to the 16mm films along with a separate masterclass by Halpern in early June. 13 new short films premiered at the festival and her feature length film *Falling Lessons* (1992) was shown in Europe for the first time. The conversation that follows focuses largely on her as a filmmaker. It was initiated in Spain, but the major part of it was recorded in the subsequent weeks in Arcadia, Greece, where both of us assembled for *The Temenos* screenings devoted to the *Eniaios* (1948-1990) cycle of films by Gregory Markopoulos.

Amy Halpern passed away on August 15, 2022 in Los Angeles.

– A.S.

**I was reading an old essay by you where you mention a phrase, “Cinema of dream images”, I wonder if that resonates with you now.**

It's interesting and slightly alien to me. Because maybe over time I have become more aggressive, philosophically, in a sense that dream is not sufficient to depart from where you are. It probably transforms reality and makes it a little different. Dreams are fantastic but you have less control unless you are a conscious dreamer, I am not. Instead what I want is alert dreaming.

## **Would you say then that a cinema of conscious perception is what interests you?**

Yes absolutely. I am totally not interested in any interpretation I have. Yes, they are cut subjectively, in a way that each individual has their subjective reaction to it, that's more interesting to me. And that's what the audience of my work is entitled to, more than anything that I presume. I put impressions there maybe with the title only, but the perception of each individual is more valid than anything else. That's one reason why I think of the transformative potential of film, as a kind of pure manipulation. If you are a skeptical mind, then you are still making critiques, and are able to distantiate yourself. And that's why I made that movie *Palm Down* (2012) because I had an emotive reaction to see the destruction of the tree in reverse. The first part of the film when I was shooting, of course I thought of Kubelka and could hear that music of *Unsere Afrikareise* (1966), when the giraffe is loaded on top of the jeep and the increasing tempo of the accompanying music. The head of the palm is being lowered and it jerks. I was enjoying looking at it, that tree was something I was thinking of filming, and one morning I was awakened to be told that tree was being taken out. I jumped out in this sleepy state and had my camera loaded, went out to the balcony, set the shot up just in time. But when I played it backwards, just to look at it again on a flatbed, it resurrected and I jumped out of my seat. It was an immediate response and I thought that the power of film is so latent in the actual material, you must be very wary. I made the decision of using the optical to shoot in both directions. But for me it was not sufficient. Two palindromes, no happy ending. It was not sufficient because I wanted to make a cautionary film about the power of the medium. I decided what I wanted to say was best demonstrated by what's irreversible. Well, bloodshed is irreversible, so I bought some movie blood and made that shot, it's not perfect, the drops were clearly bogus. *Palm Down*

## **Until that point I was reminded of *Wonder Ring/Gnir Rednow* (1955) by Stan Brakhage/Joseph Cornell.**

It's also palindromic, isn't it? I didn't hold that in my mind but I do think of Hollis Frampton (*Palindrome* (1969)). He is closer to me in my thoughts.

## **About using hand gestures, in *Filament (The Hands)* (1975), with Mikis Theodorakis, as well as in *Invocation* (1982), they seem integral to explore the poetics and rhythms of movement autonomously. How did such attention to gestural politics germinate in your work?**

They are entirely endemic to my makeup. Watching people's movements has been an endless fascination. In some ways people's eyes are completely compelling but people are sometimes guarded with their expression while their hands are naked. And sometimes more expressive than their face. I have always been fascinated by what the hands do, they speak to me all the time. That was my primary nature, and then, in terms of my training, I was a dancer from a young age, never interested in ballet and its movements. I was compelled to the training by Lynda Gudde, the choreographer I worked with. I was in a company and the classes were modern, but at some point she insisted that we acquire the technique, so we studied very classically with Meredith Baylis who has been I think in American Ballet theatre. She was the classic teacher/wounded ballerina, walking with a stick, and the classes were in Joffrey ballet. It was an environment to which I felt hostile – these young girls coming in and this sassy feminization which was of extreme distaste to me. But the simple training, that's pretty fantastic in terms of what it does for

a body. I have none of them built in. We were in a strict lineage from Martha Graham, Lynda was a dancer in the company of Anna Sokolow who had been a dancer for Graham. She was very orthodox, in terms of modern dance.

**Has your training in dance got anything to do with the rather controversial anti-war anti-Vietnam blood orgy performance by Hermann Nitsch in 1970 that you performed in?**

Yes, exactly. I didn't know who he was. He showed up at Binghamton and Peter Kubelka was there. I was already hook, line and sinker for Kubelka, although the first time I saw *Anrulf Rainer* (1960), I felt so assaulted by the black and white and the severe rhythms of it, that when the screening was over, I was ready to find the man who made it and punch him in the face [laughs]. But later on I got to know him. And so there was Nitsch, a friend of Kubelka. Ken Jacobs said to me that he was doing a performance, his stuff is good and he needs people for work. I had just left a dance company and I knew how hard it was to find someone who was focussed. I agreed to do it, but I didn't know what it was.

**Can you recall that experience in any detail?**

I had never screamed in my life but the instructions were, blood will be poured on cue and at a certain point I will be dragged across the hall followed by a blood curdling scream. I never believed what came out of my mouth, I never heard it before, it had an extraordinary dramatic effect. We just had a rehearsal or two, I was the female of the male and female body under the crucified lamb, I think it was *Aktion no. 38*, but I can't be certain of it now. And then dragged across the floor and lying in a pool of blood, then everyone gathers in a circle to hoist the animal, swing it over to the crowd, chant and then, catharsis. The uniform was jeans and a white T-shirt. Then after the performance was completed, I went to wash and Binghamton had this very modern and screamingly white fluorescent lit bathroom, no windows. I was trying to wash the blood off my hands, and I felt like Lady Macbeth, it was an endless amount of blood and I was drenched in it. And I couldn't get it off. It was raining, as it so often does there and I went and stood under an overpass on campus where the rain was pouring down. I tried to wash some of it off and I began to shiver. I let myself go in this experience because the job is to do that, to make it real for yourself and then for whoever is watching. And then we went up the hill to Larry Gottheim's house to cook the lamb. As you probably know, Kubelka is a Cordon bleu chef.

**One thing that struck me about your films is a certain kind of perceptual playfulness by the use of variable lighting and colour that exist in them even when they are formally concrete. One prime example of that would be *Peach Landscape* (1973).**

Emotionally I am trying to react to the idea that *Peach Landscape* is playful because to me it is extremely formal, extremely sober and conscious. But yeah, hopefully you are carnal with it and reacting to what you are seeing. But for me it is extremely formal.

**That's not in opposition necessarily. There is a certain playfulness of perception and imagination in Hollis Frampton's *Lemon* (1969) for example.**

Right and that's also so formal. One hopes to be limber and responsive as opposed to being stuck with a formal intention. *Peach Landscape* was the first thing that I ever shot out of spontaneous glee, I was moved. I was working for *Woman's Day* magazine, typing for a living and it was a

certain privileged food in New York city. I was honoured with a gift of special canned peaches, it has always been a passion of mine anyway. These are special peaches from a special farm and somehow I was given one. We were a small department where I was the wild element. So I ended up with this fantastic can of sliced peaches to take home, and when I opened it, the slices were exquisite. I was beyond myself and I set up the shot.

**Is *Cigarette Burn* (1978) the first film you made after moving to L.A.?**

That was the first formal film but I was already shooting things that became *Self-Portrait As a City* (1977). Larry (Gottheim) shot half of it.

**That does feel like a transitional film in many ways, laced with a sense of nostalgia, trying to bridge the then and now.**

In L.A., I was shooting out of the window, I still felt like an animal looking at a moving car which is always exotic, but became less so while living in L.A. And that dog was named Pucci, and it belonged to Elfriede Fischinger and the painting itself is completely an organic fragment of Oscar Fischinger. At some point Elfriede went with William Morritz on a long trip to Germany and she asked if I would housesit. Up until then I had not driven much and that house was up in the Hollywood hills. The dog was of singular interest. And I was desperately missing my island [New York City] and those buildings and the gravity of the filth, its darkness and sombreness. I grew up on the West Side, I had always been west oriented, to a degree that I think it's visceral. Traveling back then was a bit of a non-concept, the idea that I would go there and shoot the second part did not exist. I drew the shot and asked Larry to make it for me which he did. I told him the time of day, I wanted it uptown on 6th Avenue, to be shot from a car and not a bus, so the necessary height, what the frame should be, where he should focus and he executed it.

**Who were your first associations in the West Coast when you moved to L.A.?**

Bill Moritz. And his partner Bob Opel. I am horrified that people don't know Bill's films. He was a great gay crusader, a movie saint and he made two gorgeous movies, *Rumanian Dance Rushes* (1976) and *Slow Morning Rain* (1970-1978).

**In your film *Cigarette Burn*, dialogue has a curious presence. Did you intend it that way?**

There I wanted the melisma of smoking and listening to police occupation. The dialogue there I find stupid and maddening, it was intended to mimic a foreign film that you can't understand, I really didn't want anyone to concentrate on the words.

**I liked the way in which you structured your masterclass at the S8 festival in A Coruña, which was an illustration of the relationship between sound and image and how sound has the capability of determining the perception of the images by conjuring an automatic sense of appropriateness. The juxtaposition between sound and images in your films are alert to such dangers without following any rigid rule.**

I don't work with rules, it's continuous with my not making plans or structures in advance. I like them to arise from the material. In the case of *Cigarette Burn* I knew that I wanted to have a heavy sound element. I had the idée fixe for years that I would set up the rhythm of *Newt*

*Pauses* (2016) with a jazz bass-line, stop at the beginning of the film, and then have it only at the titles. I was prepared for the radical expense of doing that, making an optical for the entirety of the silent eleven minute movie just to have head and tail. Then I had the weird experience of realizing that the sound didn't work when I tried to put it in, twice. That is when I understood that it was a silent film, it was an expensive experiment. My decision or plan was different from how it ended up, but it seemed wrong.

**I assess that you do not use sound for interpretative purpose in relation to the image and you do not let sound assume an entirely servile position either. *I Tremble/8:46* (2022), the film on George Floyd, is one such.**

One veers away from the image there, working on it was excruciating. You can't stand it. There I let the sound lead the image in some way. Under no circumstance did I intend to pimp on the power of it, but I thought that bringing the attention of more and more people to it was very important. And also, because of the sound, because he was radically dramatic, all I could think of was St Matthew passion and the elevated Christ speaking. As soon as the police have him, he knows that he is a dead man, and his conversation hasn't got to do with anyone present but it's like the last words of a man remembering his close ones knowing that the end is near.

**In spite of the circulation of the footage in mass and social media, what we haven't really paid attention to are the conversations that were happening around this. In your film, by withholding the image, you in some way activate a form of deep listening on the part of the viewer.**

Yes, absolutely. You're actually hearing the drama unfold, for example he says things like, "My neck hurts", "My stomach hurts", "My face, my face" and the malefactor whose knee is on his neck follows these utterances with an almost gleeful, half mocking "Ah ha!".

**Here is exactly opposite of what you're doing in *Filament (The Hands)*, where one sees the movements of the hands without the sound, and the music is still present almost like a John Cage gesture [4'33]**

I saw Theodorakis perform at the Lincoln Center. I was in the middle, dead centre, of the house. Like Bach, he would take the lyrics and you're hearing them illustrated abstractly in the music. Without knowing the lyrics, without knowing the language, you would know what was being said. I am in the audience and I am knocked out.

**In *Falling Lessons* (1992), there are various interesting things and one of them is how it mimics the way in which a film would run through a projector. There is obviously portraiture there, but the presentation of it is somewhat distinguished in terms of how (experimental) film-portraits are made.**

That is because I am a New Yorker and it comes straight out of being a child in New York city, where you see, intimately, people's faces, in particular their eyes, all the time, but they don't give you a direct look. And there is a sense of people flowing by you on streets, passing you like a stream, and I like streams in vertical, in a sense that when you are living on the planet, facing east, the planet is turning in that direction and all of us are falling in that direction. The exquisite mechanics of film, which is that everything is upside down and flipped by the lens, that's really

weird and amazing. But it is also beautifully synchronous with what time and flow are. I wanted these faces as a vocabulary of mood and vocabulary of colour, the range between fear and ecstasy and arranging them in that manner. Even though I knew I was doing structurally this continuous flow, you are lingering on the beauty, you can't stand to leave it. They are all at a different pace of falling.

**In the film there is a mix of people who are famous and immediately recognisable, and others perhaps not so. I presume you were portraying friends and acquaintances?**

Not exclusively. Some of them were strangers because I was looking for certain things, the guy with the fan blowing in his hair, posturing John the Baptist, he was someone I saw on the beach in Venice. His name was Marty Rubin. He looked much like what I was looking for, so I approached him as a stranger. Another stranger was the kid who got shot in the film. I discovered him while I was shooting for *Grey Area* (1982) by Monona Wali. On a slight sidenote, I have not expressed this opinion very much, but I consider *Falling Lessons* to be part of the L.A. Rebellion, it was certainly made contiguous with those films even though Barbara McCullough and Ben Caldwell were the only ones making experimental films there.

Anyway, while shooting for *Grey Area*, there was a scene in the film where people come out of their house and little kids are washing their cars without permission but expecting to be paid. And she asked a bunch of kids in the neighbourhood to do it, and there was this one kid who was particularly photogenic and also very relaxed in front of the camera, he was finding his way to it. And I was looking to paraphrase two events that had happened across the street from my house in Venice, and happen all the time, which is that black manly children, boys with beautiful posture who stand like men but are 10-12 years old, are subjected to police brutality. It's almost impossible to raise a black child in the United States and protect them from this bullshit.

The other total stranger who I needed to find and cast was the little boy who was told to sit down and shut up in the film. I wanted a child between 6 and 8, who was articulate, had a dignified demeanour. And I couldn't find this kid anywhere and then one day I was driving to San Fernando Valley, stopping at a gas station and there was this little boy talking to the gas station attendant with aplomb and on his feet and I just said to myself, he is the kid. I then called his mother and arranged for it.

**When you were conceptualizing the film, did you already have the idea of including this narrative episode where the kid is shot? It seems to build up in parallel to the preceding portrait shots, intensifying as the film progresses. This episode may strike one as an interception of the usual grammar of the film.**

The interruption is part of the point. I am happy to just go there and remain abstract in my life, for my pleasures and the interruptions are incessant. I tried to cut it out of the movie, so much I loathed this, but I realized that I can't do that, it's inherent to the picture. I wanted to make this beautiful human fabric, and have it ripped periodically. I tried to remove it and found that it was impossible.

**Has the rather sedate reception of *Falling Lessons* at the time and subsequently bothered you? How did you deal with it? I believe we saw the film's European premiere only a couple of weeks ago at S8.**

I was profoundly demoralized. I spent fifteen years making that film with every cent I owned and all the time I had when I was looking for money.

My sister and her husband were living in Damascus, I was there and somehow ended up being guests of the American Cultural Attaché, this may have been 1994 or 1996. We were scheduled to make a screening of our experimental work for the filmmakers of Damascus. It was already a fascist state and there was no experimental film scene, they were making either commercials or narratives. And we had this screening where everybody was attentive, there was a very polite reception afterwards. It seemed like no one had a clue what they had just seen [laughs] except for a friend of my brother-in-law who is a poet. He was so excited that on the way back to my sister's house, he ran to the last open florist and bought everything for us. It flooded my heart when he said, "Comrades, in the fight against the narrative!" I have held onto that as a talisman my whole life. But the screening that saved my life was at the Akbal School, they were mixed, mostly non-English speaking kids between maybe six or seven and thirteen. I showed them *Falling Lessons* and I sat by the side and watched them parse every single shot. They didn't waste the first fifteen minutes as adults did wondering what genre the film was, they were there from the first moment. They became quiet when it was tense, they laughed when it was funny, which is even harder for an adult audience, and they watched the final scene, which I felt okay with because it was nothing different from what they see on TV. When the film was over, they were all very exhilarated. And I thought, I am not insane, I did make this film, it is there and it is real, I haven't been jacking off for fifteen years doing this, they get it without instruction, that's what saved my life.

So, I survived the lack of reception somehow. It had historical precedence, the only one I can immediately cite is *Antonio das Mortes* (1969) by Glauber Rocha. There was no MTV at the time, no one was making films with music like that in which music erupts spontaneously in a dramatic situation.

**One of the other films that stood out for me in its poignancy and how it allows for a rumination on nature is *Slow Fireworks* (2019). It tunes the observer to the rhythms of nature, it is an expression of pure visual poetry in a landscape.**

It was a phenomenon I perceived with the wind coming through the papyrus trees that I am deeply attached to, not least of all because they are the scribes' plant, they are the original source of paper from the Egyptians and they are very beautiful. They do look like explosions as you look at them. This place with miniature ones and the garden that I built, when the wind was blowing and mottling the whole area, it was almost like a hallucinogenic throbbing at the place. I was just knocked out. What often motivates me is seeing something I am blown away by. It's not a decision, it's a hope to capture something that I perceive, one doesn't know if it's going to show up on the film or not.

**What about *Three Minute Hells* (2012)? We only saw the last two segments out of seven at S8.**

It's totally in keeping with the occupational aspects of *Cigarette Burn* and my basic mentality. And that directly relates to the occupation of the Greeks by the army and all the other occupations I was involved with or known of.

**It does have a strong narrative inclination, one senses a psychodramatic dimension in it. Could you briefly talk about how the initial segments build up to the last two?**

The first section was called *Detention* and I hope you get to see this one. It shows a pair of feet in sneakers, and the first thing you hear is "Sit down and don't move" and then you see this foot dangling and the same person dropping a metal object, you have seen the feet and you have seen the floor, and the sound there is slightly a-rhythmic with the gestures of dropping and picking up, for a long time. And then it doesn't drop again, that's where it ends. The next one is *Hollywood Hills* which is a fire burning with the lights of the Hollywood and L.A. below it. You hear the sirens at a distance and crackling, which jives nicely with the fact that it's a trash piece of film. It was shot on reversal using a lot of white artifacts in the darkness. The next one is called *Reptile*, in which you are seeing a closeup of a seagull and I am interested in the closeness between reptiles and birds. Then there is the one called *Bestiary*, which is a whole bunch of animals, in close up, and their sounds in a state of alarm. You're hearing the hysterical sounds of the Samyang monkeys.

The other one is *Abstract and Concrete* where you see a piece of fabric which has a black and white pattern, abstract, in diagonal and you see a little movement, but you are basically looking at this pattern and then there is a second shot of the same piece of fabric. There you see the movement of the fabric and there is a person in it, breathing.

And then you arrive at *Doorway Occupation*. That's when it becomes narrative, before that it's just suggestive, with the sirens, the alarm of the animals, someone running away from something. Doorway occupation is kind of unequivocal, it leaves you wondering, there is no mystery about what's happening. You wonder who the person is in the doorway.

**I thought it was an allusion to an incident of domestic violence, where the child witnesses something from the doorway too scared to enter into the scene.**

If it were as you perceived it, then it was a terrible fight, with breaking objects, there's nothing you can do in that scene. I like that. I was thinking, because I grew up in an apartment building, that you were hearing from different apartments rather than one house. It works perfectly well, because you are hearing a television in one place, a radio in another, you're hearing a dinner going on, people talking and it's not until later that it's interrupted.

**How did *Jane, Looking* (2020) happen? Is that a chance encounter resulting in a film?**

Yes and also, no. The chance was that she was coming to town to make a screening at the Film Forum, showing films by Stan Brakhage and Barbara Hammer, and also reading from her books. I had never met her before but I had an affinity with her because I had seen the films by Brakhage and had already read the *Wolf Dictionary* (2016) which fascinated me because it showed a really deep understanding of animal mentality. She hated cities, didn't drive and I was asked to put her up. I had a guest bedroom, so I said absolutely. She had a form of caressing behaviour with the biological surroundings and that was very dear to me. My desire was to film



her walking around my plants and touching them. Not that I would direct her, but that's what I wanted to film. At some point I asked her if she would be okay if I made a shot of her but by then she had already been to my garden and was acclimated and I changed my mind about how I wanted the film to be. I am hung up on the eyes of people and how they look, you never know how they perceive but you can see some things. But in her case, I really wanted her looking back at the camera in a non-charming, non-looked-at manner. I only directed her to write something that she wanted to write and to look up, I didn't ask her for very much. I think the first time she smiled broadly, which she does so scrumptiously, I said "Sober up!" [laughs]. During the course of making this film and later, she confirmed for me everything I had doubted about Stan. He was an uptight city guy while she was the real mountain man.

**What were your impressions of Stan Brakhage? Did you meet him at Binghamton?**

Yes, the first time. Early on, I saw *Anticipation of the Night* (1958) and I thought, this guy is not okay. I was very young but I could sense these things. I adored a lot of his other films. But that's the one where he reveals, more than he perhaps should, the public persona that he was constructing.

At Binghamton, the first experience was negative in terms of my judgment of his character. We met in the hallway there that you know from *Serene Velocity* (1970), it's a hallway of nothingness with fluorescent lights, I adore that. It was a sparsely populated school. Ken (Jacobs) and I were walking down the hallway, talking, and there we encountered Stan. There's just the three of us and it's true that I had not made anything worth note yet, but I did exist, I was not inconsequential to Ken, and Brakhage disappeared me, he talked through me, he looked through me, like I was not present and I thought to myself, this guy is screwed up with women. That was the only explanation I could come up with. And I thought, he may make great work but he is a mess. I ran into him a couple of times in the context of different screenings, I could see that he had grown up a little, that must have been 30 years from then. But I always had this sneaking feeling, perceiving his personal frigidity. I must add, I have endless admiration for his intellect, the lectures that he did on Georges Méliès and D.W. Griffith for which I was present, were revelatory, his comprehension of and relationship with poets and his filmmaking, much of which deeply moving. But I still find that he was a frigid mess at some level.

I told Jane the story about meeting Stan in the hallway, she said that he must have done it on purpose, he really liked to bother people and he probably perceived that it would harm you.

**The other portrait you made, *Ma Sewing* (2021), was actually made 30 years ago.**

And I showed it to her on her birthday, sometime after that.

**Would you hark back to some of the context? How was your relationship with your mother?**

I set the film up. I said I want you to wear this, I want you to sit here, I want this light. I didn't use any artificial light, that was completely premeditated and particular. My mother was an incandescent beauty of the kind who looks like she is an italics in reality. And I would watch as an invisible child in stores where she would be treated like royalty. It wasn't that treatment that was so shocking, it was that I was also in thrall of her beauty, one could not take her eyes off her,

not because she was my mother, but because she was unbelievably good looking. To say that she had movie star quality doesn't even begin to cut it. But she was a shy person, not somebody who was performative and I was told as a teenager that I would make a handsome guy. Well, I already knew that, it was to my agony. I do look more like my father, which has been a bane of my existence. And then when she was not nice to me, it was destructive because it was incomprehensible how somebody so beautiful could be that mean.

**To cap our conversation off on a slightly generic note, I find the closest way of describing your films is first person cinema that is very responsive to the surroundings, to friends, to communities and to the environment. They expand the limits of regular perception, but it's not diaristic, there is a strong social and political base.**

It's definitely first person and not diaristic. To me first person cinema is the opposite of being narrative or third person. It is an experience for the person looking, it is for the person looking, to be as intimate as possible. There is no story, there is no other pretext to be there except to experience in first person. But yes of course, having a very judgemental and analytical mind, I can't help but feel the need to intervene and manipulate the events. I like diary films for what they are. *Falling Lessons* was once shown as a documentary which I don't think it is, except that maybe it's a compendious view of eye contact, it makes no attempt at being objective, it's entirely subjective. And it is completely fabricated.

*Thanks to Amy Halpern and S8 Mostra de Cinema Periférico*