

Cinenova Distribution in association with Electra are very excited to present the European premiere of...

Hers is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Towards a Queer Horizon **Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue**

In *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, José Esteban Muñoz writes, 'We must dream and enact new ways of being in the world.' *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon* responds to this injunction by bringing an everyday feminist utopia into being. This new world is not a remote planet twinkling in the distance. It is not only then and there—it is here and now, where we already live.



The future in *Dank Cave* is a mash-up of stereotype and utopia; it is not sanitized or sublimated. We won't live in the future without our macramé, our shag, our little animals. The female body will not be cleaned up in this queer future—it will arrive trailing its effluvia: bodily fluids, odours, patches of fur, cellulite, granny panties, that sucking sound. The lesbian feminist body, the fat body, the depressed body—it comes wrapped in context, swaddled in knitwear, and it requires a lot of rest. By remaining horizontal and low to the ground, this body serves as a queer horizon, the warm light of potentiality breaking just beyond it.

Deirdre Logue is a film and video artist who focuses on the self as subject. Using 'performance for the camera' as a primary mode of production, her compelling self-portrait video suites investigate what it means to be a queer body in the age of anxiety. Diving deep into the unconscious, Logue's recorded performances are a tangle of doubt, perversion, duration, sexuality, and psychic unrest. Uniquely located on the golden mean between excess and deficiency, self-liberation and self-annihilation, her works are at once unruly and uncanny.

Allyson Mitchell is a maximalist artist. Maximum politics. Maximum mediums. She works in sculpture, performance, installation, drawing, music and film. She is an associate professor of Gender and Women's Studies at York University in Toronto where she also coordinates the Sexuality Studies Program. Her ongoing *Deep Lez* project has resulted in a coven of lesbian feminist sasquatches, a menstrual hut cinema, a performance troupe called *Pretty Porky and Pissed Off* and several short animated autobiographical films and videos.

Most recently Mitchell and Logue presented *Killjoy's Kastle: A Lesbian Feminist Haunted House*. This project was conceived as a way to subvert hell houses built by radical evangelical groups that aim to frighten "morals" into its visitors. Using a 'deep lez' commitment to second wave community skill-sharing and political craft aesthetics blended with an inclusive consideration of current queer identity, Mitchell and Logue created a nightmarish and glorious vision of feminist terror where visitors are expected to form their own interpretations and are encouraged to engage in dialogue about contemporary queer politics. The *Kastle* has been represented in Toronto (2013) London (2014) and Los Angeles (2015).

They also co-founded FAG (Feminist Art Gallery) in 2010. FAG is based in Toronto and also spins in satellite spaces internationally. In order to build community to grow sustainable feminist/queer art, FAG has enabled art exhibitions and provided opportunities for emerging and invisible artists.

Both Mitchell and Logue have exhibited their extensive video and film work internationally. This special screening will include other works from the artists' practices, plus a Q&A led by Nazmia Jamal.

Nazmia Jamal is a London based teacher and feral curator. She screened the first retrospective of Allyson Mitchell's moving image work in 2009 at the London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival. In 2014 Nazmia worked with Allyson and Deirdre to bring a version of *Killjoy's Kastle* to BFI Flare and in 2015 performed as a *Demented Women's Studies Professor Tour Guide* at the most recent incarnation of the *Kastle* in LA.

Following the Q&A, DJs Rehana Zaman and Letitia Pleiades will keep us dancing. Due to the Bank Holiday we have a late licence until 1am!

Programme:

FAG Feminist Art Gallery VIDEO

Allyson Mitchell & Deirdre Logue, 2014, 4:48

A musical scrap book manifesto, the FAG video, recounts the first three years of the Feminist Art Gallery's radical happenings, activism and art, dirty dishes, pussy cats and all.



Dyke Pussy

Allyson Mitchell, 2008, 0:50

A miniature cat spins on a turntable to electronic music.



Beyond the Usual Limits: Part 1

Deirdre Logue, 2005, 2:55

There are things - stupid things - that I have always wanted to do, just to see if I could, just to see what it would feel like. This was one of those things. *Beyond the Usual Limits: Part 1* is part of *Why Always Instead of Just Sometimes*, a selection of 12 short works about aging, breaking down and reparation. They are works that describe our need for intimacy and our fears of exposure. They are always, when we really wish they were just sometimes.



If Anyone Should Happen To Get In My Way

Allyson Mitchell (with Christina Zeidler), 2003, 2:30

This animation was shot from hi-con coloured Lomo photographs of a girl in various animal states, licking her wounds. A meditation on female anger.



Worry

Deirdre Logue, 2005, 1:38

Since childhood worry has been both a preoccupation and a driving force. Now in adulthood, worry is a burden, unshakeable, relentless and likely fatal. Part of *Why Always Instead of Just Sometimes*.



Glitter

Allyson Mitchell (with Christina Zeidler), 2003, 1:00

As two twits dance their fears away at a road side farmers market. Via costumery and choreography, they bring lesbian glamour where it was not ever.



Sticker Lover

Allyson Mitchell, 2003, 0:30

An ode to collecting and sticking sticky stickers.



Scratch

Deirdre Logue, 1998, 3:00

This work is a study in understanding the entanglements of gender. Described as invading, difficult and repetitious, the artist struggles to break away from its confines. Part of *Enlightened Nonsense*, a series of 10 thematically related film works that were each shot, hand-processed and edited within a total of approximately one week. Each beginning with a specific gesture, the works express both the physical manifestation of different states of being and a desire to understand one's relationship to our physical and psychological limitations.



Cupcake

Allyson Mitchell, 1998, 2:30

Cupcake is Girl as chubby eye candy. She takes us on a quest for the perfect dessert. She is proof that eating is sexy. Cupcake talks without shame, about desserts that she loves.



Eclipse

Deirdre Logue, 2005, 4:38

In her studio, the artist fears the worst. Camera up close, we watch as she tries to determine the source of that strange internal cracking, all the while a sinister blackness descends upon her. Part of *Why Always Instead of Just Sometimes*.



Melty Kitty

Allyson Mitchell, 2006, 2:30

Suicide is painless, it brings on many changes, and I can take or leave it if I please.



Pond

Deirdre Logue, 2011, 4:30

Using bread and the fish in an overpopulated swimming hole, the artist tests her nerve with the act of reciprocation and the fear of the monsters that reside below the surface. Situating the body in initially reassuring environments, this work illustrates how navigating even the most pastoral landscapes can result in turmoil between animated forms. Part of *Id's Its*, a suite of 13 works that focuses on an expanded study of the exquisite tension between the interior self and the anticipations of the outside world. Leaning lightly on Freud's somewhat archaic concept of the id and heavily on her physical performances for the camera, *Id's Its* explores the richness of our malfunctions, psychic unrest, the power of the abject and our tendencies toward self-destruction.



Unca Trans

Allyson Mitchell (with Christina Zeidler), 2007, 5:50

Set in an agrarian future, *Unca Trans* is a short animated Super 8 film in which the title character pontificates about gender theory and activism back in the 2000s.



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Allyson Mitchell & Deirdre Logue, 2016, 24:58

** European Premiere**



With thanks: Allyson & Deirdre, Nazmia Jamal, Rehana Zaman, Letitia Pleiades, Wanda Vanderstoop and Brian Kent Gotro (and everyone at Vtape), and DIY Space for London.

Curators/Organizers: Charlotte Procter, Irene Revell, Erik Martinson and Nella Aarne.