

There's this moment when a crowd at a Christian rock show find themselves in an ambling, prolonged silence. This is the prescribed point to connect with the Lord. Sway, watch and wait. Jesse McLean's videos examine fixations, confound certainty and build a trajectory through the inconceivable. Inner life is synthesized with the screen, convincingly, right up until the moment when the pull-back occurs. Resonance coupled with essayistic layers of images and words; it's all coming through you. We sway with it. Transfixed and thoughtful, we tumble toward understanding until it is mere steps away. One foot in, one foot out, sometimes the understanding reached is not what is expected, it's disarming, leaving new questions in its wake. Other times our pre-existing questions — the big ones — are reframed and expanded into a form that can drive us forward. All this through the vessels of televangelists, geysers, ill-fated shuttle launches, reality TV anxiety, tears, trances, songs that cycle perpetually through re-performance on YouTube and collections of things left behind; all carefully selected, all with something to offer. "You can't see it, you can't feel it, and you can't taste it, but it's here, right now, all around us, it's going through you like an X-ray." (Pleasure Dome)

"Mass spectacle and shared experience always contain the promise of irony's antidote. Get a large group of people together, get them all paying attention to the same thing, grooving on the same vibe, raving to the same beat, and it's impossible not to find a flicker of hope for an experience larger and more unwieldy than irony and self-deprecation— something ecstatic, obliterating, something that takes you over by force, that brings you outside the self, roots you in the now, but simultaneously renders you unbound from the everyday world of objects and things and errands and routines. So we sneer, ridicule, disapprove, and make sport of our disapproval. But there's always a submerged longing for a deep communal outpouring of real feeling... It's this tension within contemporary culture that finds a voice in the movies of Jesse McLean. McLean works primarily with found footage, a natural outgrowth of her concern with irony and authenticity; to re-contextualize footage is to ask fundamental questions about its function within culture and automatically to cast aspersions on its original reception. McLean's films expertly and violently toggle between outrageous, air-quoted self-doubt and outpourings of urgent, unnerving emotion."

- from *Heaven and Earth and Television Magic: The Cinema of Jesse McLean*, by Tom McCormack

<http://cinema-scope.com/cinema-scope-online/heaven-and-earth-and-television-magic-the-cinema-of-jesse-mclean/>

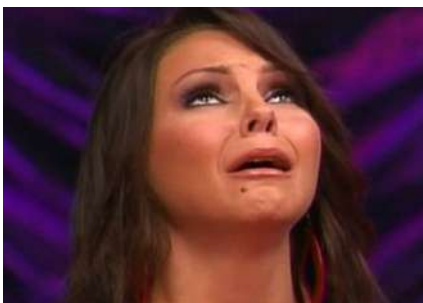
Program:



The Eternal Quarter Inch

2008, 9:00

Rising fundamentalism and a government that cites faith to defend war actions have helped grow a desperate society. Dipping between ecstasy and despair, transcendence and absurdity, this movie journeys to a hidden space where you can lose your way, lose yourself in the moment, lose your faith in a belief system. An exhausted and expectant crowd waits on this narrow span. It is not a wide stretch, but it can last forever.



Somewhere only we know

2009, 5:00

What can a face reveal? Balanced between composure and collapse, individuals anxiously await their fate.



The Burning Blue

2009, 9:15

The Burning Blue is a video that observes the thrill, terror and boredom found in watching mass spectacles and the unexpected loneliness when you miss them. Concerned with how we, as a culture, watch ourselves, especially in moments of great emotional significance, this video speaks of both the power and the failure of the televised experience to bind us to one another.

*The first three works in the program form a trilogy called *Bearing Witness*:

Bearing Witness is a trilogy concerned with how we, as a culture, watch ourselves, especially in moments of great emotional significance. With footage culled from mainstream media and television, the single-channel videos (*The Eternal Quarter Inch*, *Somewhere only we know*, *The Burning Blue*) distill moments of sincerity from perhaps insincere sources (televangelists, reality show contestants, screensavers, B-movies). The three single-channel videos each witness interstitial moments of imminence to challenge spectatorship in American televisual culture, continually shifting the role of the viewer between voyeur and participant.



Magic for Beginners

2010, 21:00

Magic for Beginners examines the mythologies found in fan culture, from longing to obsession to psychic connections. The need for such connections (whether real or imaginary) as well as the need for an emotional release that only fantasy can deliver are explored.



Remote

2011, 11:00

In the collage video *Remote*, dream logic invokes a presence that drifts through physical and temporal barriers. There is a presence lingering in the dark woods, just under the surface of a placid lake and at the end of dreary basement corridor. It's not easy to locate because it's outside but also inside. It doesn't just crawl in on your wires because it's not a thing. It's a shocking eruption of electrical energy.

*above video descriptions are from jessemclean.com

Join us for a **No Reading After the Internet** featuring excerpts from *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)* hosted by cheyanne turions, on Saturday, March 16, 2:00 pm @ Whippersnapper Gallery, 549B Dundas Street West.

In *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*—which, with the subtitle “(From A to B and Back Again),” is less a memoir than a collection of riffs and reflections—he talks about love, sex, food, beauty, fame, work, money, and success; about New York, America, and his childhood in McKeesport, Pennsylvania; about his good times and bad in New York, the explosion of his career in the sixties, and his life among celebrities.

No Reading After the Internet is a salon series dealing with cultural texts, which are read aloud by participants. The particular urgency of the project is in reforming publics and experimenting with the act of reading, as its own media form, in our moment. www.noreadingaftertheinternet.wordpress.com