

ANIMAL SHOW at Other Cinema
curated by Kornelia Boczkowska

Description

From Eadweard Muybridge's protocinematic studies of animal motion to nature videos, blue chip wildlife films and ZooCams, animals were central to the evolution of moving images. But have you ever wondered how experimental films represent animals? Experimental film in particular has a long tradition of celebrating animal singularity and animals' subjective point of view. Since the early days of avant-garde cinema, many iconic films, such as Maya Deren and Alexander Hammid's seminal *Private Life of a Cat* (1947), Stan Brakhage's *Mothlight* (1963) or Joyce Wieland's *Catfood* (1967), have abundantly featured animals, usually presented not as mere props or companions, but as central characters both closely interlinked and independent of humans. This program features a selection of films – including several award-winning films and two world premieres – that challenge the representation of animals in mainstream media, highlighting non-human and non-anthropocentric modes of seeing, being and movement. From found footage, animated, handmade and digital films to home movies, diaries and music videos, the works included in this program engage with animals, deepening our understanding of the complex relationship between humans, animals, media, environment and matter. Come and see films from all over the world – including Cuba, Mongolia and Sudan – in which animals are not only a subject or a metaphor, but a real object of the film.

LINEUP

PART I: Spectacles of life and death

***Becoming* by Jan van Ijken**

Netherlands | 2018 | HD video | color | 6 mins

A short film about the miraculous genesis of animal life seen in a great microscopic detail: the making of a salamander in its transparent egg from fertilization to hatching.

***Not (A) Part* by Vicky Smith**

UK | 2019 | 16mm | color-b&w | sound | 6 mins

Conceived in relation to both the rapid decline of flying insects and the high recurrence of animation, handmade or contact film that works with the subject and/or material of flying insects. Numerous dead bees found on walks were positioned directly onto negative film and contact printed. Occupying approximately 24 frames they run at a rate of 1 bee per second. The length of the film is determined by how many specimens are found over a specified period of time.

PART II: Struggles for survival

***Jamal [A Camel]* by Ibrahim Shaddad**

Sudan | 1981 | 16mm | color | sound | 13 mins

A report from the life of a camel, most of which plays out in a dreary, small room – a sesame mill.

***buffalo lifts* by Christina Battle**

Canada | 2004 | 16mm film | color | silent | 3 mins

A herd of buffalo desperately try to hold on as they cross the film frame.

PART III: Animal spirits

***a b movie* by Lindsay McIntyre**

Inuit/Canada | 2005 | S8 | b&w | sound | 4 mins

An in-camera S8 film about a dog named b.

***Laika* by Deborah Stratman**

USA | 2021 | HD video | color | sound | 5 mins

Some forms we can only know by their shadow. In homage to the spirits of space test dogs, or any being we use in the name of progress. The music video made by invitation of composer Olivia Block for the release of her album *Innocent Passage in the Territorial Sea* (Room40).

***Riding Day* by Michael Alexander Morris**

USA | 2023 | 16mm | color | sound | 3 mins

The music video for Black Taffy's *Riding Day* and a loving nod to British experimental filmmaker Malcom Le Grice's 1970 film *Berlin Horse*.

BREAK

PART IV: Animism and indigenous cultures

***PATTAKI* by Everlane Moraes**

Cuba | 2019 | DCP | color | sound | 21 mins

In the dense night, when the moon lifts the tide, beings trapped in the daily life of water scarcity are hypnotized by the powers of Yemaya, the goddess of the sea.

***The Fourfold* by Alisi Telengut**

Canada/Mongolia | 2020 | single-channel video | color | sound | 7 mins

Based on the ancient animistic beliefs and shamanic rituals in Mongolia and Siberia, an exploration of the indigenous worldview and wisdom. Against the backdrop of the modern existential crisis and the human-induced rapid environmental change, there is a necessity to reclaim the ideas of animism for planetary health and non-human materialities.

***HORANGI* by Lynn Kim**

USA/Korea | 2024 | video | color | sound | 7 mins

In 2018, I had a dream where I laid in a field of tigers. We existed in union, wrapping around each other. It was symbiosis, a moment of tenuous harmony. *HORANGI* is a series of works based on this dream and the myriad tactile feelings and emotions it has impressed on me since. Resultant works have so far included paintings, drawings, photographs, animations and video projections.

PART V: Animal films from the Bay Area (world premieres)

***Cuban iMAL* by Dominic Angerame**

USA | 2025 | digital | color | sound | 5 mins

World premiere

This film contains iphone footage shot by Angerame when he was in Cuba in 2024, late December. The safari footage was also shot on an iphone by Alanna Zrimsek when she was on a safari in Africa in 2024.

FRAGMENT 21: THE BIRDS AND THE BEASTS by Toney Merritt

USA | 2025 | digital | color | sound | 4 mins

World premiere

Another instalment of Toney Merritt's Fragment series, THE BIRDS AND THE BEASTS is a hypnotizing meditation on nature and sounds that combines timelapse footage of the bird feeder with the camera trap footage of the mountain lion shot in real time. Set to a self-composed piece drawn from Merritt's sound library, THE BIRDS AND THE BEASTS' unique rhythm and two-part structure captures what it means to live in the wilderness through juxtaposing the power and majesty of the cougar with the spirit and freedom of the birds. A fragment of the seemingly mundane reality, the birds and the mountain lion turn into something far more meaningful: a reflection on multispecies relations and our peaceful co-existence with animals. – Kornelia Boczkowska

Duration: 84 minutes