Program

Empyre, Blaze Box (CND, 2019) 11:50 min

Sex Tapes: Lessons from a 7ft Penis & Friends, Tamara Scherbak (CND, 2019) 8:52 min

Rhapsody in Blueberry, Gaelle Denis (France, 2017) 3:50 min

Between Tin Men #1, Amy Ruhl (USA, 2019) 11:00 min

Witch's Work, Emily Pelstring (CND, 2018) 6:40 min

SuperNova, Rah Eleh (CND, 2019) 14:50 min

Sontag’s Ghost: The Future is Queer

Curated by Shahbaz Khayambashi, Co-Chair Pleasure Dome

In 1964, Susan Sontag published her influential work, Notes on “Camp.” The word camp was placed in parentheses, because camp was still an underdefined term. Of course, this lack of definition is only accurate in the sense that a term that isn’t known in the mainstream, a term that has not yet been commodified, is seen as undefined or underdefined. Sontag brought the term camp to the mainstream, when before it existed in the minds and hearts of queer communities across the world, people who worshipped at the alter of Dorothy of Oz in the church of Andy Warhol. Sontag existed in that world and saw fit to define the term for the outsider and that definition is still seen by some as absolute. However, while some of her points still stand—love of the unnatural, the esoteric and the artificial, an aversion to the ideas of “good taste,” ostentatious aesthetics—there are some points that became outdated within the decade. Chief among these is her ideation of “pure camp,” naïve camp, camp that is unaware that it is camp. To Sontag, camp was only genuine if it was unaware that it was campy. In a world that also contains John Waters, this is simply not true and that lack of truth has only expanded since, with the many children of Sontag inhabiting the world. Camp has bred so many new generations of beauty. In this program, we would like to exhibit some of the newest generation, videos that celebrate exaggerated queer sensibilities, witchy women, new takes on the mainstream and generally a big old fuck you to hegemonic norms. In times like this, we need some beauty and fun in our lives and we would like to provide that with this program, but as you watch, just remember one thing: a spectre is haunting this program—Sontag’s Ghost!
Q&A Moderator

Pearle Harbour

Sweet-as-pie and sharp-as-nails, Pearle Harbour is an award-winning drag sensation and Canada's premiere tragicomediene. Her original works have been presented at the CBC, the PuSh International Festival for Performing Arts, SummerWorks, the High Performance Rodeo, The Cultch, Theatre Passe Muraille, the Yukon Arts Centre, Rhubarb Festival, OUTstages, The Second City, Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival, Next Stage Theatre Festival, and countless other theatres, clubs, and cabarets across the nation. She is an artist-in-residence at Buddies In Bad Times Theatre. Accolades include Audience Choice Award (SummerWorks), Outstanding Solo Performance (My Entertainment World), Favourite Lead Performance (Hart House), and Dora Mavor-Moore Award nominations for Outstanding Performance and Outstanding Costume Design.
Empyre, Blaze Box (CND, 2019) 11:50 min

Blaze Box is viewable via flat screen or Full 360 Degree Immersive Virtual Reality. Journey through reality spirit and consciousness. Examines topics of Mental Health, Life, Death, and the Quantum Nature of Soul. Cast of 20+ Energy Healers, Intuitives, Gurus, Psychic Mediums, Yogi & Reiki Masters. “to The One in All I Bow” – Omphinitri

Blaze Box was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario. Performer, Director and 360 Degree VR Specialist.

Sex Tapes: Lessons from a 7ft Penis & Friends, Tamara Scherbak (CND, 2019) 8:52 min

"My big dick, my big vagina, my big asshole give me superpowers!"
– Norman Nawrocki

Told through a mixture of archives, animation and musical numbers, this film chronicles the 20+ year career of Canadian underground star activist/performer NormanNawrocki and his wide array of colourful characters such as a singing and dancing 7ft tall purple penis, giant orange butt plug and giant pink vagina. He and his characters have been combating sexism and homophobia while advocating for a healthy sex life through humorous and educational cabaret shows even in the face of danger.

Tamara Scherbak is a Canadian director and writer whose films across the genres of documentary, fiction and experimental work has screened at film festivals and art galleries around the world. She is also an alumna of multiple festival talent labs, including TIFF Filmmaker’s Lab, the Berlinale Short Film Station and the Netflix-Banff Diversity of Voices Initiative.
Rhapsody, a wild young woman, pushes the limits to find a deeper meaning in her life. She faces the bald reality of not being heard and seen for what she is. She learns how to cope with this struggle through the power of her imagination.

Gaëlle Denis is a French-English writer-director. Her short film "Fish Never Sleep", won the BAFTA for Best Animated Short and Cannes Cinéfondation selection. "City Paradise" collected more than 50 awards including Annecy Special Jury award and a BAFTA nomination. Moving to live action, her short "Crocodile" was funded by BFI and premiered at Cannes’ Critics Week where it won the Prix Canal+ for best short (2014). Her latest short "Rhapsody in Blueberry" was selected at Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival (2017). Gaëlle was spotted as one of the most promising emerging feature film directors by Cannes Critic’s Week’s Next Step programme.
Between Tin Men #1, Amy Ruhl (USA, 2019) 11:00 min

The first in a series of four episodic videos from Amy Ruhl’s multidisciplinary project, Between Tin Men. Occupying L. Frank Baum’s Land of Oz series, the project reanimates the uniquely American fairy tales with narratives of feminism, fetish, and leftist revolt. Manifesting variously as episodic videos, installation, live performance, and web project, Between Tin Men follows the ongoing story of Nimmie Amee — an aging Munchkin woman with a Tin Man fetish— and her political radicalization at the hands of other minor (but militant) women Ozians. This first installment introduces Nimmie Amee and her taboo attraction to metallic lovers.

Amy Ruhl is an interdisciplinary artist working across fields of performance, video, and installation. She has exhibited at galleries and venues such as Lubov, Essex Flowers, Storefront for Art and Architecture, Anthology Film Archives (New York), Vitrine Gallery (London), Public Fiction (Los Angeles), and Antimatter Film Festival (Vancouver, BC). She has performed at NYU Skirball Center, Roulette Intermedium and Irondale Theater (Brooklyn, NY), The Broad Museum and REDCAT (Los Angeles, CA) and the Live Arts Biennial at Bard Fisher Center (Red Hook, NY). She recently was an artist in residence at Banff Centre.

Witch’s Work, Emily Pelstring (CND, 2018) 6:40 min

Tales of birth and death brought to you by the divining eye of the Graeae.

Emily Pelstring is faculty in the Department of Film and Media at Queen’s University. Her creative work has been supported by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council. Her work uses surreal and idiosyncratic storytelling to explore links between technology, spirituality, and illusion. Her animations incorporate analog and digital effects processes, and her installations have employed holography, stereography, Pepper’s Ghosts, and projection-mapped video. Emily brings together interests in reclaimative myth-making, speculative futurisms, and camp aesthetics through collaboratively-produced bodies of work with Inflatable Deities and The Powers.
SuperNova, Rah Eleh (CND, 2019) 14:50 min

SuperNova examines the socio-political, temporal, linguistic and spatial factors that contribute to the formation of identity. SuperNova is a talent show parody that consists of seven characters in which the artist performs. The performers are Oreo, Fatimeh, and Coco and each of their acts explores issues of race and ethnic performance; Oreo performs a magic trick with a deck of white “race cards,” Fatimeh sings and performs a neo-orientalist ethnic identity and Coco performs a dance as a liminal and hybrid subject. The characters perform in the galaxy Messier 82 and present their talent in front of a panel of judges; Sirius, Mira and Bellatrix. Coco. The talent show sets an ideal stage to critically examine race and ethnic performance.

Rah is a video, net and performance artist. Her work has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally at spaces including: IMuseum London, Carleton University Art Gallery (Ottawa), Williams College Museum of Art (Williamstown, Massachusetts), Miami Art Basel, Nieuwe Vide (Haarlem, Netherlands), Pao Festival (Oslo, Norway), Kunst Am Spreeknie (Berlin, Germany), Kunsthaus Graz Museum (Graz, Austria), and Onassis Cultural Center (Athens, Greece). She has been the recipient of numerous awards including: Chalmers Arts Fellowship, CALQ Production grant for Digital Arts (2014) and Film (2015), and a SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship. Rah is represented by Vtape, Canada’s leading artist-run distributor for video art.
FREE TRAMPOLINE!
Yard sale Saturday, a collection of tragically ludicrous, ludicrously tragic stuff for sale!
Cat Found: If she’s yours, fuck you, I’m keeping her.
Pool Table for Sale: Leg missing, top badly damaged, otherwise fine. $1 or best offer.
Lightly Used Pleasure Dome for Sale $50 firm.

Announcement of Annual Meeting of Citizens Committee on Moral Hygiene,
January 9, 2021 @ 6 PM at the Franklin Horner Community Centre

Dear Auntie Sue,
I wrote to you a while ago about my husband who I suspected was cheating. I took your advice and confronted him. He is now out of my life. Thank you for helping me come to that decision. As for my question, do you know how to get blood out of carpet?
Newly Single in Scarborough

Auntie Sue’s Corner
Dear Auntie Sue,
I’m gonna be straightforward with you here. I have been stuck at home for eight months now. My last relationship ended a few months before the quarantine came about and, in the meantime, I have become isolated and weird. That’s fine, though. The real problem is this: I am extremely horny! My sex drive has gone way up during this quarantine and now I feel like I might explode. What can I do?
Horny in Hamilton

Dear Newly Single,
Mix one teaspoon of dishwashing detergent with two cups of cold water. Take a clean, white cloth and dip it in the detergent solution you just mixed. Blot directly on the bloodstain, repeatedly. Blot, don’t scrub.

That’s all for this week. Remember to stay safe, wear a mask and socially distance.