

r e c e n t w o r k

project room: DECASIA

november 13, 2003 – january 10, 2004

Maya Stendhal Gallery is proud to present the first solo gallery exhibition of renowned filmmaker Bill Morrison. Morrison's most recent work deals with the filmic medium as subject, exploring the natural rhythms and patterns in decaying film stock. He furthers this exploration with newly shot footage, composing rhythmic montages with hypnotic energy. Installed in the Gallery so as to envelop the viewer, these new works captivate and enthrall, conjuring up buried associations and memories.

Morrison's latest sensations, *Light is Calling* (2003), *The Mesmerist* (2003), and *East River* (2003), will be projected along with their accompanying scores in the main exhibition space of the Gallery. *Light is Calling*, with music by composer Michael Gordon, addresses the transient nature of life and love through a visual symphony of roiling emulsion. Melting, burning images tear apart and coalesce, bringing the material medium into focus as a critical subject of the film. In *East River*, bubbling eddies and swirling vortices form natural patterns akin to those formed by decaying emulsion. As in Morrison's salvaged works, each frame is considered abstractly as an individual painting. The still images are then carefully assembled, creating a similarly hypnotic montage. *The Mesmerist* uses an entire silent film as its medium and subject. A revision of James Young's *The Bells* (1926), the film enthralls the audience with its decaying medium while emphasizing the aging film's spellbinding subject as the title suggests.

Morrison's critically acclaimed feature-length masterpiece, *Decasia: The State of Decay* (2002), will be shown in the intimate viewing environment of the project room, complete with its original soundtrack scored by Michael Gordon and recorded by the 55-piece Basel Sinfonietta. The film explores the links between the dual processes of decay and creation. Morrison complicates this binary by salvaging decaying filmstrips and recombining them to create a new form of documentary. The filmic medium and image intertwine and divide, reflecting the complex relationship between the physical and metaphysical. *Decasia* highlights Morrison's conceptual and compositional virtuosity, creating a movie with both avant-garde and universal appeal.

Morrison's award-winning films have been shown at such eminent institutions as The Museum of Modern Art, The Nederlands Filmmuseum, The Tate Modern, The Georges Pompidou Center, The Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum, and The Sundance Film Festival. His film work with the acclaimed performance ensemble Ridge Theater has been recognized with a Bessie award for excellence in theatrical design and a Village Voice Obie for collaborative design.

For further inquiries please contact Maya Stendhal Gallery.

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