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Hours for Jerome, part 1 & 2, Dorsky, Nathaniel, 1980

Nathaniel Dorsky:

PNEUMA (1976-83) 16mm, silent, color, 18FPS, 29 min.

In Stoic philosophy "pneuma" is the "soul" or fiery wind permeating the body, and at death survives the body but as impersonal energy. Similarly the "world pneuma" permeates the details of the world. The images in this film come from an extensive collection of out-dated raw stock that has been processed without being exposed, and sometimes rephotographed in closer format. Each pattern of grain takes on its own emotional life, an evocation of different aspects of our own being. A world is revealed that is alive with the organic deterioration of film itself, the essence of cinema in its before-image, preconceptual purity. With the twilight of reversal reality this collection has become a fond farewell to those short-lived but hardy emulsions.

-ND

17 REASONS WHY (1985-87) 16mm, silent, color, 18FPS, 20 min.

"17 Reasons Why" was photographed with a variety of semi-ancient regular 8 cameras and is projected unslit as 16mm. These pocket-sized relics enabled me to walk around virtually "unseen," exploring and improvising with the immediacy of a more spontaneous medium. The four image format has built-in contrapuntal resonances, ironies, and beauty, and in each case gives us an unpretentious look at the film frame itself... the simple and primordial delight of luminous Kodachrome and rich black and white chugging thru these time worn gates.

-ND

ALAYA (1976-87) 16mm, silent, color, 18FPS, 28 min.

Sand, wind, and light intermingle with the emulsions. The viewer is the star.

-ND

A film about light, a parade of forms as in "Riddle of Lumen", but the latter's curious wonder becomes more fully wonder for Dorsky. From "Pneuma" the particles are still there, and the light is still there, but now there is the distinct impression of watching air blowing sand yet the air is as transparent as the mind.

-Konrad Steiner

1965-1970

HOURS FOR JEROME by Nathaniel Dorsky (1982) *edited*

16mm- 50 minutes- silent- sound speed 24 fps.- color

"This footage was shot from 1966 to 1970 and edited over a two year period ending in July 1982. HOURS FOR JEROME (as in a Book of Hours) is an arrangement of images, energies, and illuminations from daily life. These fragments of light revolve around the four seasons. Part One is spring through summer; Part Two is fall and winter."

- Nathaniel Dorsky

"HOURS FOR JEROME is simply the most beautifully photographed film that I've ever seen; here we enter the realm of the compassionate and the full achievement of what film can do cinemagraphically is achieved. It is a privilege to experience the thoughtful unfolding of these images."

- Warren Sonbert

ALAYA Nathaniel Dorsky 1976-1987 16mm, silent, 18 FPS, 28 min.

Sand, wind, and light intermingle with the emulsions. The viewer is the star.

- Nathaniel Dorsky

"Alaya" manages a perfection of "musical" light across a space of time greater in length than would seem possible [consider how brief most such perfected works are, such as Peter Kubelka, say]... and with minimal means of line and tone... After about three minutes I began to be aware of the subtlety of rhythm, within each shot and shot-to-shot, which carried each cut, causing each new image to sit in-the-light of those several previous... a little short of a miracle. Bravo!

- Stan Brakhage

SONG AND SOLITUDE by Nathaniel Dorsky 21 minutes 2005/2006

16mm silent 18 frames per second color

"Song and Solitude" was conceived and photographed with the loving help and kindness of Susan Vigil during the last year of her life. Its balance is more toward an expression of inner landscape, or what it feels like to be, rather than an exploration of the external visual world as such.

- Nathaniel Dorsky

TRISTE Nathaniel Dorsky 1974-1996 16mm, silent, 18 FPS, 18½ min.

"Triste" is an indication of the level of cinema language that I have been working towards. By delicately shifting the weight and solidity of the images, and bringing together subject matter not ordinarily associated, a deeper sense of impermanence and mystery can open. The images are as much pure-energy objects as representation of verbal understanding and the screen itself is transformed into a "speaking" character. The "sadness" referred to in the title is more the struggle of the film itself to become a film as such, rather than some pervasive mood.

- Nathaniel Dorsky

VARIATIONS Nathaniel Dorsky 1992-1998 16mm, silent, 18 FPS, 24 min

"Variations" blossomed forth while shooting additional material for "Triste". What tender chaos, what current of luminous rhymes might cinema reveal unbridled from the daytime word? During the Bronze Age a variety of sanctuaries were built for curative purposes. One of the principal activities was transformative sleep. This montage speaks to that tradition.

- Nathaniel Dorsky

ARBOR VITAE Nathaniel Dorsky 1999/2000 28 min. 16mm. color
silent 18 FPS - silent speed

"Arbor Vitae" is a gesture towards a cinema of pure being. Its atmosphere is haunted by the period in which it was shot, the year of 1999. Although the cuts are open and numerous in their intent, the underlying motivation is the delicate reveal of the transparency of presence, our tender mystery midst the elaborate unfolding of the tree of life.

- Nathaniel Dorsky