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Thursday 9:30 PM
October 11, 1973

Friday 6:15 PM
October 12, 1973

West Germany
Berlin Festival, 1972
119 minutes

Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant

The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant



Director

Rainer Werner Fassbinder

Executive Producer

Rainer Werner Fassbinder

Production Company

Tango-Film
(Filmverlag der Autoren)

Screenplay

Rainer Werner Fassbinder

From the play by

Rainer Werner Fassbinder

Photography

Michael Ballhaus

Music

Giuseppe Verdi,
The Platters,
Walker Brothers

Art Director

Kurt Raab

The Bitter Tears of Petra von

Kant is R. W. Fassbinder's newest film. Featuring an all woman cast, and set in a single room, it deals with some tortured lesbian relationships. But its exoticism is only superficial; the film's true subject is power relationships with universal application. Everything that the rich and beautiful Petra makes her slave Marlene go through, she herself suffers later at the hands of a younger bisexual woman: The Biter-Bit.

Cast:

Petra von Kant

Margit Carstensen

Karin Thimm

Hanna Schygulla

Marlene

Irm Hermann

Gabriele von Kant

Eva Mattes

Sidonie von Grasenabb

Katrin Schaake

Valerie von Kant

Gisela Fackelday

Short

The Artichoke

Belgium

Director: Michel Clarence

Running Time: 7 minutes

@ (1979) 16mm 6 min. color/silent (18fps) \$13 rental

The first film of mine which is so very much there where it's *at* THAT it deserves visual symbol as title and no further explanation from me at/et? all.

CREATION (1979) 16mm 17 min. color/silent \$37 rental

"... almost like the Earth itself—the green ice covered rocks, the slicing feeling, the compressive feeling of the glaciers. The whole time I was watching I kept thinking that you were a master of the North, the arctic landscape—the dark red flowers in the dusky light, the deep blue light, the tall trees with the running mists, and Jane looking ... the ice, the water, the moss, the golden light. A visual symphony ..."—Hollis Melton

THE ROMAN NUMERAL SERIES

"The Roman Numeral Series is dedicated to Don Yannacito."

I (1979) 16mm 6 min. color/silent \$13 rental

This begins a new series of films which would ordinarily be called "abstract," "non-objective," "non-representational," etc. I cannot tolerate any of those terms and, in fact, had to struggle against all such historical concepts to proceed with my work. Midst creative process, the sound "imagnostic" kept ringing in my ears. It seems to be an enjambment of Latin and Greek; but Charlton T. Lewis' "Elementary Latin Dictionary" gives me (via Guy Davenport) "image" ... Sanskrit=AIC="like," GNOSIS "knowledge," GNOTIC=AGNOSCO="to recognize/to know" and the happier IMAGINOUSUS "full of fancies"/"fantasies," illustrated by Catullus' singular use (perhaps creation of the term?) in the line "His mind solidly filled with fancies of a girl." Even though exhausted by this etymological pursuit, and despite my prejudice against taking on 'foreign airs' of tongue, "Imagnostic" keeps singing in my head and escaping my lips in conversation. I'm not sure if this work is titled "I" for "Imagnostic" or "I" as designating first person singular or "I"/Roman Numeral One.

II (1979) 16mm 9 min. color/silent (18fps) \$17 rental

Now that "II" has been completed, one would suppose that the above film "I" is "One" ... unless, of course, this film's spoken title is "aye-aye" or even, perhaps, slyly referring to the two "eyes" which made it, as distinct from the singularity of vision which flattened space in the making of its predecessor.

III (1980) 16mm 2 min. color/silent (18fps) \$10 rental

The third in this series of Imagnostic Films seems particularly magic to me in as much as I cannot even remember the photographic source of these images or, thus, of having taken them.

IV (1980) 16mm 2 min. color/silent (18fps) \$10 rental

It was while studying this film that I decided to group these 'romans' under the title ROMAN NUMERAL SERIES and to give up the term "Imagnostic" altogether. The term 'deja vu' comes to mind each time I view this film—this, then, somehow, the 'echoing' of the birth of imagery.

V (1980) 16mm 3 min. color/silent (18fps) \$12 rental

An imagery sharp as stars and hard as the thought-universe (turning back upon itself) absorbed in gentle patterns of contemplation.

VI (1980) 16mm 13 min. color/silent (18fps) \$19 rental

What shall one say?

MANIFEST (1980)

16mm 12 min. color/silent

rental

man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall
every man's work of what sort it is." 1 Corinthians 11:1-13

UNCONSCIOUS LONDON STRATA (1982)

16mm 22 min. color/silent

rental

"This film photographed London in 1979, finished in January of 1982, is an exploration into the depths of unconscious reactions. Having been in London with Stan when he photographed it, I find this a deeply accurate memory piece. Not 'That's how it looked to me,' but rather 'That's how it felt!' There are many new techniques in this film, new grammar. It is a very rich lode."—Jane Brakhage

While visiting London England (dream of my youth) and wishing to be simply camera-tourist (taking pics. of exotic architectural arrangements imagined since earliest Dickens, etc.) I found myself forced, yes forced!, to photograph, rather, the nearest equivalent to the NON-pictorial workings of my mind which these London scenes, before my eyes and camera lens, would afford—each scenic possibility distorted from any easily identifiable picture to some laborious reconstruction of the mind's eye at the borders of the unconscious. It was two years before I could even begin to edit; and then some visual-song of all of England's history began to move thru this material, fashioning it in some way 'kin to that music of Pierre Boulez which is at one with the poetry of Rene Char—this plus the English 'round', song and dance . . . only (as is true to my thought process then, in England, and now in memory) the rounds are within rounds, round and around, all (as many as 7 interspersed thoughts continuing the orders of shots) interwoven.

HELL SPIT FLEXION (1983)

16mm 1 min. color/silent

rental

My moving-visual response to William Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven & Hell," this hand-painted film, seems the most rhythmically exact of all my work: it was inspired by memories of an old man coughing in the night of a thin-walled ancient hotel . . . a triumph of rhythm thru to inspiration. Dedicated to Bill and Stella Pence.

All films also available from the Film-Makers' Cooperative, New York City.

NODES (1981)

16mm 3 min. color/silent

rental

"nodus knot, node—more at NET) . . . 4a: a point at which subsidiary parts originate or center . . . 5: a point, line, or surface of a vibrating body that is free or relatively free from vibratory motion." In the tradition of "Skein" (this hand-painted film is the equivalent of cathexis concepts given me by Sigmund Freud (in his "Interpretation of Dreams"), 30 years ago, finally realizing itself as vision) (Quote: Web. 7th)

***Please note those films designated by "18fps" may also be shown at "24fps": I am in all cases designating a preference, not an absolute; and some of the SONGS (such as 23RD PSALM BRANCH: PART I and PART II) are, I think, better at the faster speed—they were, after all, made in Regular 8mm to be shown on variable-speed projectors.—Stan Brakhage

THE GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS (1981)

16mm 2.5 min. color/silent (18fps)

rental

This film (related to MOTHLIGHT) is a collage composed entirely of montane zone vegetation. As the title suggests it is an homage to (but also argument with) Hieronymus Bosch. It pays tribute as well, and more naturally to "The Tangled Garden" of J. E. H. MacDonald and the flower paintings of Emil Nolde.









EGYPTIAN SERIES (1983)

16mm

17 min. color/silent

rental

A series of meditations on egyptian hieroglyphs--designations (as I finally saw them) of nurturing godheads.

- CATS (1956)** 16mm 8 min. color/silent  rental
 bold attempt, full of visual sensibility, to use living animals, unconscious of their roles, as abstract counters in a tone poem of color and chiaroscuro."—Parker Tyler
- DAYBREAK AND WHITEYE (1957)** 16mm 8 min. b&w/sound  rental
 Sound by Brakhage.
 These two films investigate frustrations in loving, DAYBREAK with a girl as object, WHITEYE with the camera as subject.
 "... a winter landscape transforms itself, through the magic of motion, temperament and light, into pure poetry of white."
 —Jonas Mekas
- LOVING (1957)** 16mm 6 min. color/silent  rental
 "The greens of the forest, the flesh tones of the lovers, the browns of earth, the sky and the sun evolve an expression of living in which the light consumes everything except the flesh of loving."—Cinema 16
- ANTICIPATION OF THE NIGHT (1958)** 16mm 42 min. color/silent  rental
 The daylight shadow of a man in its movement evokes lights in the night. A rose held in hand reflects both sun and moon like illumination. The opening of a doorway onto trees anticipates the twilight into the night. A child is born on the lawn, born of water with its promisory rainbow, and the wild rose. It becomes the moon and the source of all light. Lights of the night become young children playing a circular game. The moon moves over a pillared temple to which all lights return. There is seen the sleep of innocents in their animal dreams, becoming the amusement, their circular game, becoming the morning. The trees change color and lose their leaves for the morn, they become the complexity of branches in which the shadow man hangs himself.
 "... a film in the first person. The protagonist, like the members of the audience, is a voyeur, and his eventual suicide is a result of his inability to participate in the 'untutored' seeing experience of a child. ANTICIPATION consists of a flow of colors and shapes which constantly intrigues us by placing the unknown object next to the known in a significant relationship, by metamorphosing one visual statement into another. Whenever Brakhage shows a shot for a second time, it gains new meaning through its new context and in relation to the material that has passed during the interval."—P. Adams Sitney
- WINDOW WATER BABY MOVING (1959)** 16mm 12 min. color/silent  rental
 "... Brakhage's treatment of the birth of his daughter. Here he unleashes the full power of his technique, so apt to become abstractly unintelligible when left to his own devices, on a specific subject. The result is a picture so forthright, so full of primitive wonder and love, so far beyond civilization in its acceptance that it becomes an experience like few in the history of the movies."—Archer Winsten, *New York Post*
 Brussels International Film Festival, 1964
- SIRIUS REMEMBERED (1959)** 16mm 12 min. color/silent  rental
 "I was coming to terms with decay of a dead thing and the decay of the memories of a loved being that had died and it was undermining all abstract concepts of death. The form was being cast out by probably the same physical need that makes dogs dance and howl in rhythm around a corpse. I was taking song as my inspiration and for the rhythm structure, just as dogs dancing, prancing around a corpse, and howling in rhythm—structures or rhythm—intervals might be considered like the birth of some kind of son."—Stan Brakhage
- THE DEAD (1960)** 16mm 11 min. color/silent  rental
 "... a very sombre and intense visual poem, a black lyric, if you like, but full of an open dramatic energy which puts it well above a formal or rhetoric exercise on Time and Eternity. In the visual form of the monuments of the Pere-Lachaise cemetery in Paris, the persistent and impenetrable geometric masonry gets to be less a symbol of death than a death-like sensation."
 —Donald Sutherland
 "Europe, weighted down so much with that past, was THE DEAD. I was always Tourist there; I couldn't live in it. The graveyard could stand for all my view of Europe, for all the concerns with past art, for involvement with symbol. THE DEAD became my first work, in which things that might very easily be taken as symbols were so photographed as to destroy all their symbolic potential. The action of making THE DEAD kept me alive."—Stan Brakhage
 Brussels International Film Festival, 1964.
- THIGH LINE LYRE TRIANGULAR (1961)** 16mm 5 min. color/silent  rental
 "Only at a crisis do I see both the sense as I've been trained to see it (that is, with Renaissance perspective, three dimensional logic—colors as we've been trained to call a color a color, and so forth) and patterns that move straight out from the inside of the mind through the optic nerves—spots before my eyes, so to speak—and it's a very intensive, disturbing, but joyful experi-

ence. I've seen that every time a child was born . . . Now none of that was in WINDOW WATER BABY MOVING; and I wanted a childbirth film which expressed all of my seeing at such a time."—Stan Brakhage

Brussels International Film Festival, 1964

BLUE MOSES (1962) 16mm 11 min. b&w/sound \$ rental

"A *meat enigma* spoken in eternal language of director, con man, and magician. It's about the sham flesh that men create to dam the streaming of truth from their muscles and senses . . . a molecule of revelation in the shape of a drama thrown off by the artist between ANTICIPATION and DOG STAR MAN."—Michael McClure

OH LIFE, A WOE STORY, THE A-TEST NEWS (1963) 16mm 5 min. b&w/silent \$ rental

Three TV "concretes."

Other distribution: Filmmakers' Co-op, N.Y.

MOTHLIGHT (1963) 16mm 4 min. color/silent \$ rental

Essence of lepidoptera re-created between two strips of clear mylar tape: an anima animation.

"What a moth might see from birth to death if black were white and white were black."

"Brakhage made MOTHLIGHT without a camera. He just pasted mothwings and flowers on a clear strip of film and ran it through the printing machine."—Jonas Mekas

MOTHLIGHT is a paradoxical preservation of pieces of dead moths in the eternal medium of light (which is life and draws the moth to death); so it flutters through its very disintegration. This abstract of flight captures matter's struggle to assume its proper form; the death of the moth does not cancel its nature, which on the filmstrip asserts itself. MOTHLIGHT is on one level a parable of death and resurrection, but most really concerns the persistence of the essential form, image, and motion of being."—Ken Kelman

Brussels International Film Festival, 1964. Spoleto Film Festival, 1966.

DOG STAR MAN (1961-1964)

"DOG STAR MAN is the most self-sufficient and innocent film . . . in the sense that Chaplin is. No music is needed to watch Chaplin . . . because his dance is all the music that we need.

"DOG STAR MAN is silent in the sense that the greatest silent films are.

"In DOG STAR MAN the film itself becomes a dance of editing and moves as the best silent actors do with their physical movements with arm, leg, to tongue and face . . . The film breathes and is an organic and surging thing . . . it is a colossal lyrical adventure-dance of image in every variation of color."—Michael McClure, *Art Forum*

PRELUDE: DOG STAR MAN (1961) 16mm 25 min. color/silent \$ rental

The opening statement, complete in itself, of Brakhage's epic drama of the creation of the universe.

"In PRELUDE, Brakhage achieves a synthesis of all his techniques. In this film of exquisite beauty the images become like words: they come back again, in little bursts, and disappear, and come back again—like in sentences—creating visual and mental impressions, experiences."—Jonas Mekas

"PRELUDE is a declaration both of the unity of the world (and Brakhage's lyrical feeling of identification with it) and love for woman, expressed in transcendent, cosmic terms. His images here include both the microscopic and telescopic, and range from solar explosions to brief glimpses of the beloved's body . . . the degree of spiritual, cosmic feeling is remarkable. Brakhage has gone further than any of his fellows whose work I have seen."—Paul Beckley, *N.Y. Herald-Tribune*

"Four basic visual themes dominate PRELUDE: 1) the four elements, air, earth, fire and water; 2) the cosmos represented in stock footage of the sun, the moon, and the stars; 3) Brakhage's household—himself, his dog and cat, his baby and particularly his wife's nude body; and 4) artificial, yet purely filmic devices such as painting or scratching on film, distorting lenses, double exposure and clear leader."—P. Adams Sitney

DOG STAR MAN: PART I (1962) 16mm 30 min. color/silent \$ rental

"In the tradition of Ezra Pound's vorticism, PART I is a Noh drama, the exploration in minute detail of a single action and all its ramifications. The formal construction of the film, the interrelationships and significance of the images, has been woven on an extremely subtle level. Each shot appears only as an isolated piece . . . appreciated (as) it is understood within the context of the entire mosaic."—P. Adams Sitney

DOG STAR MAN: PART II (1963) 16mm 7 min. color/silent \$ rental

"The third movement of Brakhage's masterwork; the extension of the bardic art into living film . . . images of life, regeneration . . . spring and early morning."—P. Adams Sitney

. equivalent to Aztec ritual sacrifice . . . the lengths men go to to avoid so simple and straight a relationship with Death as Charles Olson managed on/in "Cole's Island."

THE ACT OF SEEING WITH ONE'S OWN EYES (1971) 16mm 32 min. color/silent ~~219~~ rental

In the Fall of 1971 I began photographing in the Allegheny Coroner's Office in downtown Pittsburgh. Thanks to the help of Sally Dixon, head of the Film Department of the Carnegie Museum, and the kind cooperation of Coroner Wecht, I was to be permitted to photograph Autopsy—a term which comes from the Greek meaning: "The act of seeing with one's own eyes." Within two weeks I had completed the photography; and I felt at that time that this film would be the third in a trilogy beginning with the film EYES and followed by DEUS EX. The filmmaker Hollis Frampton writes with the most objective clarity about the finished film:

" . . . Stan Brakhage, entering, *with his camera*, one of the forbidden, terrific locations of our culture, the autopsy room. It is place wherein, inversely, life is cherished, for it exists to affirm that no one of us may die without knowing exactly why. All of us, in the person of the coroner, must see that, for ourselves, with our own eyes. It is a room full of appalling particular intimacies, the last ditch of individuation. Here our vague nightmare of mortality acquires the names and faces of *others*.

"This last is a process that requires a witness; and what 'idea' may finally have inserted itself into the sensible world we can still scarcely guess, for the *camera* would seem the perfect Eidetic Witness, staring with perfect compassion where we can scarcely bear to glance.

"What was to be done in that room, Stan? and then, later, with the footage? I think it must have been mostly to *stand aside*: to 'clear out,' as much as possible, with the baggage of your own expectations, even, as to what a work of art must look like; and to see, with your own eyes, what coherence might arise within a universe for which you could decree only the boundaries." —written for the premiere of the film at The Millenium Film Workshop—these three pieces excerpted from a longer piece.

WESTERN HISTORY (1971) 16mm 8 min. color/silent ~~219~~ rental

A thumbnail History of the Western World, all centered around the basketball court.

SEXUAL MEDITATION: ROOM WITH VIEW (1972) 16mm 4 min. color/silent ~~349~~ rental

Directly in the tradition of SEXUAL MEDITATION # 1: Motel, this 'sequel' does explore further possibilities of nudes in a room.

SEXUAL MEDITATION: FAUN'S ROOM, YALE (1972) 16mm 3 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

This, the third of the Sexual Meditation Series, might also be seen as a triangular portrait of Julia and P. Adams Sitney and Jane Brakhage.

SEXUAL MEDITATION: OFFICE SUITE (1972) 16mm 4 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

This film evolves from several years' observation of the sexual energy which charges the world of business and the qualities of palatial environ which this energy often creates. It is one of the most perfect films it has been given to me to make.

SEXUAL MEDITATION: HOTEL (1972) 16mm 8 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

This film takes its cue from that ultimate situation of Sex/Med/masturbation—the loft-and-lonely hotel room. It is thus easily twice the length and complexity of any other in the series.

SEXUAL MEDITATION: OPEN FIELD (1972) 16mm 8 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

This film takes all the masturbatory themes of previous "Sexual Meditations" back to source in pre-adolescent dreams. "Open Field" is in the mind, of course, and exists as a weave of trees, grasses, waters and bodies poised and fleeting at childhood's end. The scene is lit as by sun and moon alike and haunted by the pursuant adult.

THE RIDDLE OF LUMEN (1972) 16mm 17 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

The classic riddle was meant to be heard of course. Its answers are contained in its questions; and on the smallest piece of itself this possibility depends upon SOUND—'utterly,' like they say . . . the pun is pivot. Therefore, my "Riddle of Lumen" depends upon qualities of LIGHT. All films do, of course. But with "The Riddle of Lumen" the "hero" of the film is light itself. It is the film I'd long wanted to make—inspired by the sense, and specific formal possibilities of the classical English Language riddle . . . only one appropriate to film and, thus, as distinct from language as I could make it.

THE SHORES OF PHOS: A FABLE (1972) 16mm 10 min. color/silent ~~399~~ rental

Phos equals light, but then I did also want that word within the title which would designate *p/ace*, as within the nationalities of 'the fabulous'—a specific country of the imagination with tangible shores, etc. The film adheres strictly to the ordinary form of the classic fable.

- THE PRESENCE (1972)** 16mm 3.5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
This is the rachety Japanese wood-block style—a short 'spook movie.'
- THE WOLD SHADOW (1972)** 16mm 2.5 min. color/silent ~~8.99~~ rental
'Wold' because the word refers to 'forests' which poets later made 'plains' and because the work also contains the rustic sense 'to kill'—this then my laboriously painted vision of the god of the forest.
- THE PROCESS (1972)** 16mm 13.5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
"LIGHT was primary in my consideration. All senses of 'process' are (to me) based primarily on 'thought-process'; and 'thought-process' is based primarily on 'memory re-call'; and that, as any memory process (all process finally) is electrical (firing of nerve connection) and expresses itself most clearly as a 'back-firing' of nerve endings in the eye which DO become visible to us (usually eyes closed) as 'brain movies'—as Michael McClure calls them. When we are not re-constructing 'a scene' (re-calling something once seen), then we are watching (on the 'screen' of closed eye-lids) the very PROCESS itself . . ."—S.B.
- SINCERITY I (1973)** 16mm 27 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
"This, the first completed reel of work-in-progress, draws on autobiographical energies and images which reflect the first 20 years of my living. I have three definitions of the word 'sincerity' to sustain my working along these lines of thought with this autobiographical material: (1) Ezra Pound's marvelous mistranslation of a Chinese ideogram—'Sincerity . . . the sun's lance coming to rest on the precise spot verbally' . . . (of which I would change, for my purposes, the last word to 'visually'), (2) Robert Creeley's trace-of-the-word for me on the back of a Buffalo restaurant menu—'Sym-keros . . . same-growth (Ceres) create . . . of the same growth,' and (3) Hollis Frampton's track-of-it to 'the greek,' viz—'a glazed pot (i.e. one which will hold water).' This film might best been seen, then, as a graph of light equivalent to autobiographical thought process."—S.B.
- SKEIN (1974)** 16mm 5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
A loosely coiled length of yarn (story) . . . wound on a reel—my parenthesis! This is a painted film (inspired by Nolde's 'un-painted pictures').
- AQUARIEN (1974)** 16mm 5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
"EN"?—as the dictionary has it: "made of, of, or belonging to" (then) Aquarius/an. This is my first conscious make of a 'tone poem' film.
- SOL (1974)** 16mm 4 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
"1: SUN 2 *not cap*: GOLD—used in alchemy 3: the sun-god of the ancient Romans"; but then also, as I understand it, a french word for earth, where-from we get our "sail"; and then (puns always intended, as I hear them): soul . . . This also, then, a tone poem film.
- FLIGHT (1974)** 16mm 5.5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
Pun on "light" intended—that short preceeding expellation of breath perhaps the 'subject matter' of this film which centers in consideration of death. It is the third tone poem film and did much surprise me by thus completing a trilogy of the '4 classical Elements.'
- DOMINION (1974)** 16mm 4 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
The "Dynamo theories" of Henry Adams portrayed first person/sexual vision: an American businessman as lord of all he surveys.
- HYMN TO HER (1974)** 16mm 2.5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
"HER" to me is always Jane, in the first place, but also Hera: "goddess of women and marriage," naturally enough. Then, too, as it is a hymn of light, and as he/me feels the self that way, it sings of and to itself.
- CLANCY (1974)** 16mm 4.5 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
This is a portrait of the man I choose to call "the greatest I've known": Clancy, whom the fates surnamed Sheehy, personifies for me that which is simply human beyond condition and all conditioning.
- STAR GARDEN (1974)** 16mm 22 min. color/silent ~~9.99~~ rental
The "STAR," as it is singular, is the sun; and it is metaphored, at the beginning of this film, by the projector anyone uses to show forth. Then the imaginary sun begins its course throughout whatever darkened room this film is seen within. At 'high noon' (of the narrative) it can be imagined as if in back of the screen, and then to shift its imagined light-source gradually