

BROAD UNDERGROUND FILM SERIES



BEAUTY & THE GLITCH

7pm • Friday, March 23, 2018 • The Robin Theatre, REO Town
1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48910

Beauty and the Glitch celebrates contemporary digital animation's power to confound, provoke, and mesmerize. From the hypnotic neural landscapes of Munro Ferguson's *Minotaur* (2014) to the deeply personal low-poly anguish of David O'Reilly's *Please Say Something* (2009), this program seeks to unleash the beauty of the glitch in all its ever-morphing refractions. The pulsating poetry of *The Waves* (Marta di Francesco, 2016) meets the convulsive viscerality of *Ryan* (Chris Landreth, 2004) and the cacophonous dreamwork of *The Sun Like a Big Dark Animal* (Christina Felisgrau and Ronnie Rivera, 2014). Digital disruptions entwine, tangle, and branch off of each other in a latticework of stunning imperfection.

—Programmed by Mihaela Mihailova

Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum // Film Studies Program // Department of English
Michigan State University

Minotaur (Munro Ferguson, 2014), 7 min
Produced by the National Film Board of Canada, *Minotaur* is a hero's quest through a pulsating, ever-mutable neural network. Animated in three-dimensional space with the Sandde 3D drawing system, and featuring original music by Canadian artist and DJ Kid Koala, this short fuses the serene beauty and violent disruptions of the digital image into an abstract cosmic vortex.

Slow Wave (Andy Kennedy, 2016), 4 min
Described by the filmmaker as "sleep disturbances from the outside and within," *Slow Wave* captures the enigmatic vibrations of sleeplessness. As a dimly lit bedroom twists, turns, and warps, a restless sleeper's mind unravels into an exquisite storm of particles.

Ryan (Chris Landreth, 2004), 14 min
This Oscar-winning National Film Board short, considered a contemporary classic of animated documentary, presents a relentlessly unsettling, yet deeply moving portrait of Ryan Larkin, a successful Canadian animator whose career and personal life unraveled as a result of alcohol and drug addiction. Using a blend of constantly shifting animation techniques, including hand-drawn imagery, rotoscoping, and 3D rendering, *Ryan* delves into emotional trauma through a hallucinatory whirlwind of twitches, distortions, and mutilations.

Terra Nullius (Patxi Araujo, 2016), 10 min
Exploring "the geological activity of a software entity," Araujo's piece is a minimalist study of the excruciating, primordial slowness of formational processes. It is easy to get lost in nobody's digital land, and yet its indescribable vastness remains monochromatically intimate.

The Sun Like a Big Dark Animal (Christina Felisgrau & Ronnie Rivera, 2015), 5 min
Commissioned by the O, Miami poetry festival and inspired by the work of Argentinian poet Alejandra Pizarnik, this collaboration is a queer posthuman fantasy of techno-organic fusion. Gleefully unpolished, its blocky, dated three-dimensional aesthetic rhymes with its robotic voice over, culminating in a colorful cacophony of doomed digital affection.

Monarda (Walter Ungerer, 2010), 10 min
Captured on an ordinary cloudy day in Maine, this digitally-manipulated footage of grass, flowers, and a hummingbird meditates on the inscrutability of the natural world. At once sinister and alluring, Ungerer's film (named after the red flower also known as Bee Balm) is a visually arresting lesson in glitch gardening.

The Waves (Marta di Francesco, 2016), 3 min
Inspired by Virginia Woolf's 1931 novel *The Waves*, this piece uses digital bleed and time displacement to interrogate questions of female identity. The reader flickers in and out of existence, as lines from Woolf's work gently crash against the delicate, tremulous mesh of her digital ghost.

_grau (Robert Seidel, 2004), 11 min
Created as a personal recollection of memories glimpsed immediately after a car accident, this experimental work turns the cliché of life flashing before one's eyes into a *danse macabre* of digital morphing. Amidst its sculptural distortions, at once nightmarish and hypnotically beautiful, human memory itself becomes a series of glitches.

Please Say Something (David O'Reilly, 2009), 10 mins
Conceived as a provocative response to current trends in computer animation, particularly the quest for photorealistic representation, *Please Say Something* adopts a stripped-down, low-polygonal aesthetic. Rather than detract from the short's affecting narrative, this formal irreverence amplifies its power, turning O'Reilly's glitch art into a stuttering digital confession that is at once profoundly strange and strangely profound.