





kinema ikon : films

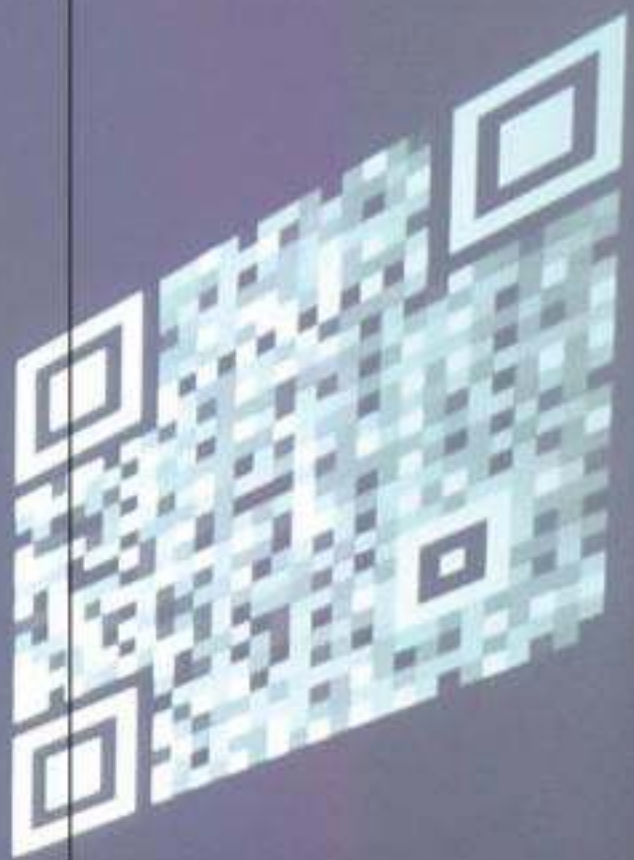
1970-2020



kinema ikon : films



1970 - 2020





1970-1989
experimental films on 16 mm

10

1970-1989
documentary films on 16 mm

68

1990-2020
films on digital suport and video

96

2013-2016
serial

140

1970-2020
jurnal

184

since 2014
Media Art Festival Arad

198

essays

206



1970-1989

George Sabau: *Ipostaze simultane* (03:00) 1970
P. Cetățean / A. Ostafi / G. Niedermeier: *Kruja* (05:04) 1970
Demian Șandru: *Open-flash* (07:53) 1975
Romulus Budi: *Singur cu zăpada* (08:03) 1975
Romulus Budi: *Ziua nimănui* (09:13) 1975
Florin Horno: *Navetiștii* (07:21) 1975
Ioan T. Morar: *Autopsia uitării* (05:21) 1977
Daniel Motz: *Kitsch, Kitsch, Ura!* (05:12) 1977
Ioan Plesh: *Poluare* (05:34) 1977
Ioan Plesh: *Feux follets* (03:24) 1977
Ioan Plesh: *Omagiu lui Dali* (06:32) 1977
Emanuel Țeț: *Poem dinamic* (04:30) 1978
Geo Crișan: *Fantezie burlescă* (05:38) 1978
Ioan Plesh: *Efecte de imprimăvărare* (04:43) 1978
Ioan Plesh: *Joc pe orizontală* (05:08) 1978
Ioan Plesh: *Simple coincidențe* (06:01) 1978
Valentin Constantin / Adrian Ostafi: *Studii [...]* (07:56) 1978
Valentin Constantin: *Visul între viu și vid* (07:28) 1978
Alexandru Pecican: *Exercițiu subliminal* (06:12) 1979
Ioan Plesh: *Panta Rhei* (05:30) 1979
kinema ikon: *Adagio* (05:42) 1979
kinema ikon: *Bopacul* (05:21) 1979
Monica Trifu: *Duet* (08:32) 1979
Ovidiu Pecican: *Semne* (07:50) 1979
Romulus Budi: *Motor* (02:29) 1979
Sergiu Onaga: *Alunecând spre alb* (06:44) 1979
Viorel Micota: *Absența* (13:06) 1979
Viorel Micota: *Întrebuințarea nopții* (09:07) 1979
Emanuel Țeț: *Vinătoarea de păsări* (06:55) 1980
Gelu Mureșan: *Concertul* (06:12) 1980
Cristi Jurca: *Stereomania* (07:31) 1980
Valentin Constantin: *Trei schițe pentru un film uitat* (05:33) 1980
Viorel Micota: *Amintiri dintr-un peisaj* (08:37) 1980
George Sabau: *Decupaje* (09:00) 1980-1985
Ioan Plesh: *Iluminări* (05:48) 1981
Valentin Constantin: *Început de coerență* (08:45) 1981
Ștefan Neamțu: *Ambient* (05:18) 1981
Emanuel Țeț: *Îmblinzitorul de șerpi* (07:03) 1981
Ioan Plesh: *Solarizare* (04:29) 1981
Ioan Plesh: *Emergență* (06:45) 1982
Marcela Muntean: *Pulsioni* (07:21) 1983
Iosif Stroia: *Autoportret* (05:46) 1984
Cristian Ostafi: *Convergență spre inutil* (06:06) 1984
Alexandru Pecican: *Fereastră deschisă spre* (06:38) 1984
Romulus Bucur: *Nu trageți în pianist* (03:31) 1984
Valentin Constantin: *Fără titlu* (05:18) 1984
Viorel Simulov: *Manuscript* (06:06) 1984
Calin Man: *Pleonasm în peisaj* (12:23) 1986
George Sabau: *Fragmentarium* (09:00) 1985-1990
Viorel Simulov: *Ocular* (05:36) 1985
Valentin Constantin: *Gros-plan de zi* (06:40) 1985
Ioan Galea: *Studiu 1 - Detalii* (04:55) 1986
Ioan Galea: *Studiu 2 - Fibonacci* (10:07) 1987
Viorel Simulov: *Peisaj lichid* (08:23) 1988
Roxana Cherecheș / Liliana Trandabur: *Mise-en-écran* (06:51) 1989

1970-1989 / ki.doc

Gheorghe Lupaș, George Sabau: *Ploaia nu cade din cer* (05:26) 1970
kinema ikon: *Aradul gospodariilor* (13:56) 1975
kinema ikon: *Cervencovici* (05:43) 1975
kinema ikon: *Inundații* (14:14) 1975
kinema ikon: *Studiu ergonomic* (05:50) 1975
kinema ikon: *Oameni, acțiuni în agricultură* (22:13) 1975
Teodor Uiuu, George Sabau, Demian Șandru: *Măști la Chereluș* (10:49) 1976
kinema ikon: *Căminul nostru* (10:25) 1977
Daniel Motz: *Nu ține de plasă că se rupe* (10:04) 1977
kinema ikon: *Povestea unui steag* (10:39) 1978
Ioan, Traian și Daniel Plesh: *Târg de cai* (10:29) 1978
kinema ikon: *Calitate și ritm în construcții* (12:19) 1979
kinema ikon: *Ceașhecu la Arad* (05:14) 1979
kinema ikon: *Flux tehnologic-Strungul* (13:27) 1979
kinema ikon: *Ion Niță Nicodim* (09:35) 1979
kinema ikon: *Propaganda vizuală* (07:56) 1979
Florin Birnețiu, Florin Horno, G. Sabau: *Experimentul Văsoaia* (13:48) 1980
kinema ikon: *Revalorificări* (07:59) 1980
George Sabau: *Itinerar francez* (14:04) 1982
kinema ikon: *Patrimoniul* (07:55) 1982
kinema ikon: *Ritm-calitate-eficiență* (17:17) 1982
kinema ikon: *Inteligența tehnică* (10:47) 1983
Florin Horno: *Trenul electric* (31:40) 1986
kinema ikon: *De la Preparandie la Marea Unire* (18:10) 1988
kinema ikon: *Arhitectura în județul Arad 1* (07:30) / *2* (10:45) 1988
George Sabau: *Transportul în comun* (12:32) 1988

1990-2020

Calin Man: *What's Happening* (01:01) 1986-1994
George Sabau: *Banca de imagini* (25:07) 1995
Ioan Ciorba: *RGB* (01:02) 1998
Ioan Ciorba: *dynamic spectrum* (cd.rom, 18 interactive films) 2001
Sandor Bărtha: *Savers* (01:14) 2001
Calin Man: *reVoltaire at Venietzsche* (surveillance cams, 02:25:24) 2003
Calin Man: *K_attack* (03:11) 2005
Mihai Păcurar: *Traktor* (01:45) 2005-2010
dslx: *dyslexonomikon v 1.2* (3:03) 2005
dslx: *V.I.T.R.I.O.L. 15* (06:27) 2006
mistik&01: *Digital Body* (04:24) 2006
Nita Mocanu, Marius Stoica: *Doar mâine* (29:44) 2006
Linda Barkasz: *Netscape* (08:47) 2006
Artur Ditu: *final 30 seconds* (00:35) 2008
Artur Ditu: *9:40 a.m.* (01:36) 2008
Artur Ditu: *011* (00:52) 2009
kf: *New Shooter Out Now* (1:56) 2010
Alexandru Man: *RG 1* (01:11) 2010
dslx: */* (13:03) 2010
reVoltaire: *The Malcom Tese* (10:00) 2013
Alex Man: *PvP* (10:00) 2013
reVoltaire: *5 ready media files by Vasile Carlova* (11:27) 2012
reVoltaire: *Unde e Muzeul de Artă* (03:38) 2014
Sergiu Sas: *Cautându-l pe Brâncuși* (04:51) 2014
V. Leac: *The Village Drones* (03:39) 2014
Mihai Salajan: *Epiphora V1.0* (04:55) 2015
Anamaria Tatu: *Quanta* (04:14) 2015
Mihai Pacurar: *Bench* (03:21) 2015
Marius Jurca: *C.P.-T.S.-3T. (M_2013)* (02:40) 2015
Livia Mateiaș: *Teledream* (03:13) 2015
Sandor Bartha: *Mantre vizuale* (01:57) 2015
Leac & Tiron: *Chat la Moinești* (01:17) 2016
Sergiu Sas: *Vanessa* (09:43) 2016
Tietzel Ticalos: *Only Humans Search For Meaning* (02:56) 2016
reVoltaire: *Uninvited.Rușine* (05:40) 2003-2016
Ileana Selejan: *aaaeiou* (13:50) 2017
Iulian Leonard: *Wireless* (12:58) 2017
Thea Lazar: *How to be yourself* (17:18) 2017
Diana Serghiuță: *Visual Residue* (02:30) 2017
Laurian Popa: *Dysfunctional Objects* (03:46) 2017
reVoltaire feat. Alexandra Stache, Cătălin Alb, David Indreica, Ioana Ionescu, Ilie Ciotir: *QFilm* (02:02)
ki49.1: Alex Halka: *Aural Skin* (03:03) 2019
ki49.2: Josépha Blanchet: *Fall Out* (16:13) 2019
ki49.3: reVoltaire: *Man On The Moon* (01:13) 2019

kinema ikon: *Vorspann* (26:01) 1970-1989
kinema ikon: *Jurnal de atelier* (19:30) 1970-1989
kinema ikon: *Jurnal 2* (18:10) 1990-2010
kinema ikon: *Ready Media* (media installation, cd.rom, VHS, 25:47) 1995
kinema ikon: *Cavalerul din Carpatzi* (digital animation, cable TV, 05:47) 1996
kinema ikon: *Skepsis* (01:50) 2011
kinema ikon: *ki:ss* (03:01) 2015
kinema ikon: *Long Story Short* (33:16) 2018
kinema ikon: *OST'n'ReST* (01:13:24) + app 2019

ki: MAFA1 - *R.A.M.* (23:59) 2014
ki: MAFA2 - *R.E.M.X* (02:35) 2015
ki: MAFA3 - *DADADA* (09:27) 2016
ki: MAFA4 - *CINEMA* (16:17) 2017
ki: MAFA5 - *De Rerum Natura* (14:29) 2018
ki: MAFA6 - *dig:it* (10:01) 2019

2013-2016 / kinema ikon: serial

s1 e1: reVoltaire: *Fifty Mississippi* (02:23)
s1 e2: Bogdan Tomşa: *Synthetic Space* (03:00)
s1 e3: A.L.K.M.Y., Iv Daqu, Golem, Neuro, Newclearfairy, Pnea, Lavinia Grama, Amalia Ignuța, Traian Selejan, Andrei Grec, Cătălin Indreica, Maria Tămășan: *CRACIUNIKON* (03:03)
s1 e4: gH.: *Ink & Blood* (01:27x2)
s1 e5: IC RC: *Miroase a pești de sticlă* (01:40)
s1 e6: Sergiu, Vulpilandia, Selfmademusic, Cosmin, Lavinia: *The Garden Of Freaky Delights* (03:01)
s1 e7: Nita Mocanu: *Jurnal evaziv* (02:54)
s1 e8: Mihai Pacurar: *Your Name Here* (03:00)
s1 e9: Salajan Mihai: *Tribology* (03:07)
s1 e10: Bogdanator: *Utopian (păstrătorul de limbi moarte)* (03:01)
s2 e1: geosab // kf: 46016'92"N 21031'57"E / ȘANTIER ARGHEOLOGIC / 4175 A.D. (04:59)
s2 e2: Judit Angel // Sandor Bartha: *Devices For A Better World* (02:33)
s2 e3: Adriana Oprea // gH.: *Black* (04:26)
s2 e4: Diana Marincu // Nita Mocanu (05:26) /
s2 e4: Levente Kozma (02:12): *Aproape că nu s-a întâmplat nimic*
s2 e5: Daria Ghiu // Maria Balabas / dslx: *[Limitele limbii mele sunt limitele lumii mele]* (01:24)
s2 e6: l'ene // l'ene / moncore: *SOUNDBOARD* (01:19)
s2 e7: megatron: *Morning Check* (04:54)
s2 e8: Horea Avram // kinema ikon: *Screen Savers* (02:00)
s2 e9: Ioana Calen // Ana Carlan [Modulab]: *S.T.E.L.A.* (02:46)
s2 e10: Ileana Selejan // reVoltaire: *Mașina Timpului* (03:43)
s3 e1. reVoltaire: *DADADA* (05:00)
s3 e2. Ioan Paul Colta: *intimacy* (03:02)
s3 e3. flo': *offline* (02:31)
s3 e4. Bogdanator: *worship RNG majik* (00:49)
s3 e5. Bogdan Tomşa: *Alien Armpit* (03:36)
s3 e6. Nita Mocanu, Marius Stoica: *Network Expressions* (04:04)
s3 e7. KF: *Jonny* (03:24)
s3 e8. L'Ene: *LeJam* (Alex Leric, Maria Tămășan, Traian Selejan, Anamaria Tatu, Darius Cheța, Sergiu Mureșan, Amalia Ignuța, Gelu Giricz, Robert Jianu, Crista Milici) (04:47)
s3 e9. Adela Muntean: *Snakes & Circles* (03:27)
s3 e10. Ioan Liviu Orlețchi: *Me, Myselfie & I* (01:57)
s3 e11. Adrian Sandu: *The Balcony* (02:27)
s3 e12. Oana Furdea / Mihnea Rareș Hanțiu / Teo Cociuba: *a relative human product* (01:46)
s3 e13. Sergiu Sas: *Păzind merele de aur* (04:28)
s3 e14. Adelina Laura, Mimi Salajan: *Catchfish* (03:19)
s3 e15. Mihai Păcurar: *Cutia albă* (17:54)
s3 e16. Mihai Zgondoiu: *Nu mai avem artă!* (00:57)
s3 e17. Anca Manga on Earth: *Am uitat tot* (02:36)
s3 e18. Vasile Leac / Cristina Bogdan: *testând planeta* (01:03)
s3 e19. Andrada Pecican / Alexandru Pecican: *1979 | 2009 | 2039* (01:12)
s3 e20. gH: *cheap kills (p.END.ing)* (00:52)
last episode. kinema ikon: *Time Capsule* (01:52)

kinema ikon: screening

2019 Europalia Arts Festival, Ost'nReST, Gent, Brussels
2019 Media Art Festival Arad / dig:it / Art Museum Arad, kinema ikon
2019 Ne Vedem Joi, monthly experimental projections at Cinema Arta Arad
2017 Media Art Festival Arad / CINEMA, Art Museum Arad, Cinema Arta Arad
2017 kinema ikon: screens, Art Museum Arad
2017 Notes on a Landscape, Art Safari Bucharest
2016 Media Art Festival Arad / DADADA, Art Museum Arad, kinema ikon
2015 laughter and forgetting, Bucharest Art Week, Biblioteca Nationala Bucuresti
2015 Epaminondas {...}, at Particles, TEBA factory Arad
2012 Observatory, New York
2010 kinema ikon 7010 project, Art Museum Arad and KF
2008 worx at send & receive exhibition CYNETart, Dresdens
2005 retrospect kinema ikon '70-'05, MNAC Bucharest
2004 ki@kf, off-screen.on-screen, cafeclub Arad
1996 Complexul Muzeal, Art Museum Arad
1996 Experiment 60-90, S.C.C.A. Artexpo Bucharest
1995 MEDiA CULPA, S.C.C.A. Bucharest
1995 22 experimental films by kinema ikon, Centre Georges Pompidou Paris
1993 Ex Oriente Lux, Soros Center for Contemporary Art Bucharest
1988 intermedia 2 symposium, the interval, City Theatre Arad
1986 mirror space, Architecture Institute Bucharest
1986 Experimental films at Forum Gallery Arad (at *Mime* - exhibition)
1985 Casa de cultură a studenților Cluj- 10 experimental films by kinema ikon
1984 intermedia 1 symposium, the image, City Theatre Arad
1984 Cenaclul din Tei - 10 experimental films by kinema ikon
1984 Casa de cultură a studenților din Iași - 10 experimental films by kinema ikon
1980 Cinecenaclul Contemporanul Cinemateca Bucharest
1977 International Festival: Abstract Animation, Cracovie
1973 International Festival: Fiction Short Films, Brno



1970-1989
experimental films on 16 mm





George Sabau
Ipostaze simultane (3:00)
1970



P. Cetățean / A. Ostafi / G. Niedermeier
Kruja (05:04)
1970



Demian Șandru
Open-flash (7:53)
1975



Florin Hornoiu
Navetiștii (7:21)
1975



Romulus Budiu
Singur cu zăpada (8:03)
1975



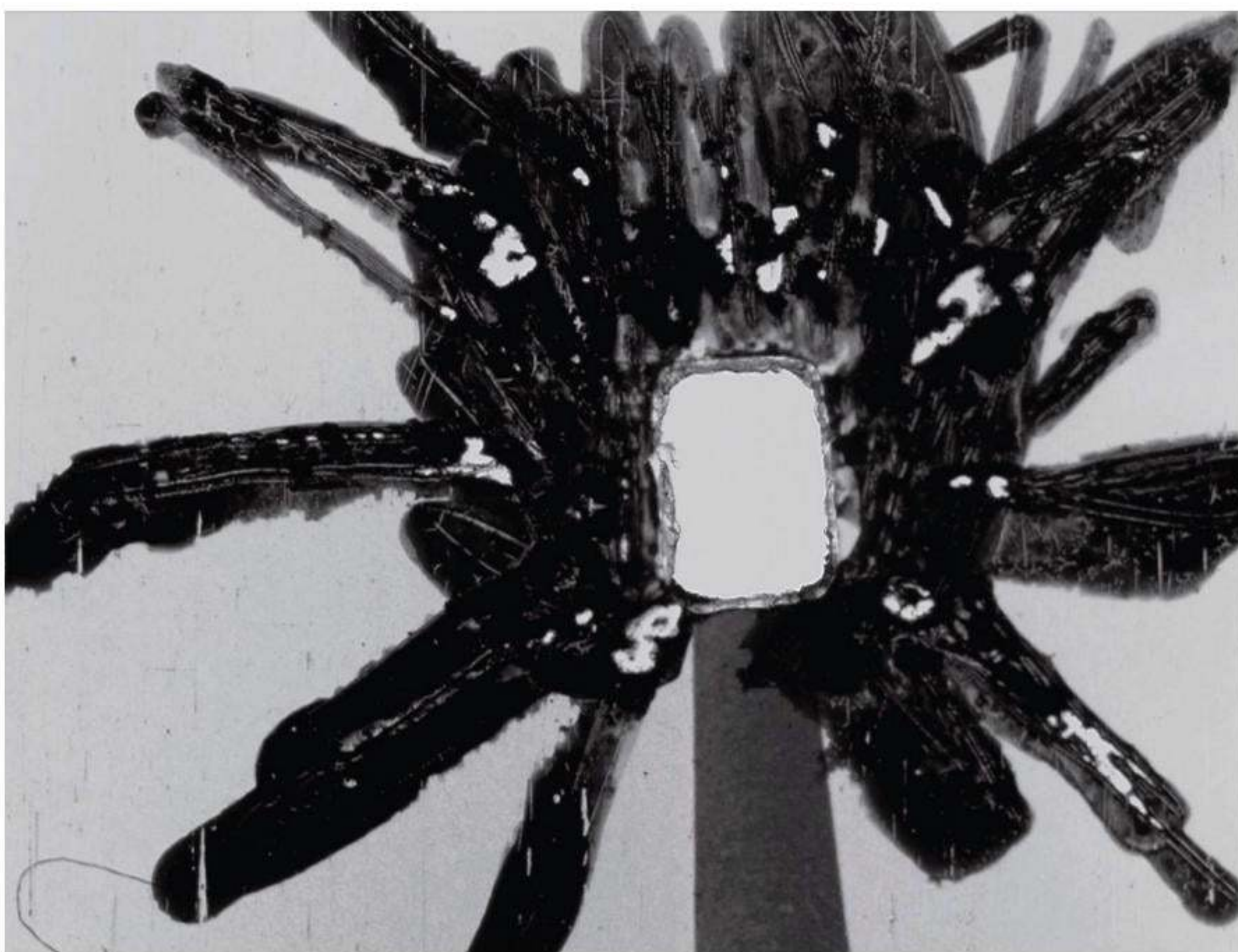
Romulus Budiu
Ziua nimănu (09:13)
1975



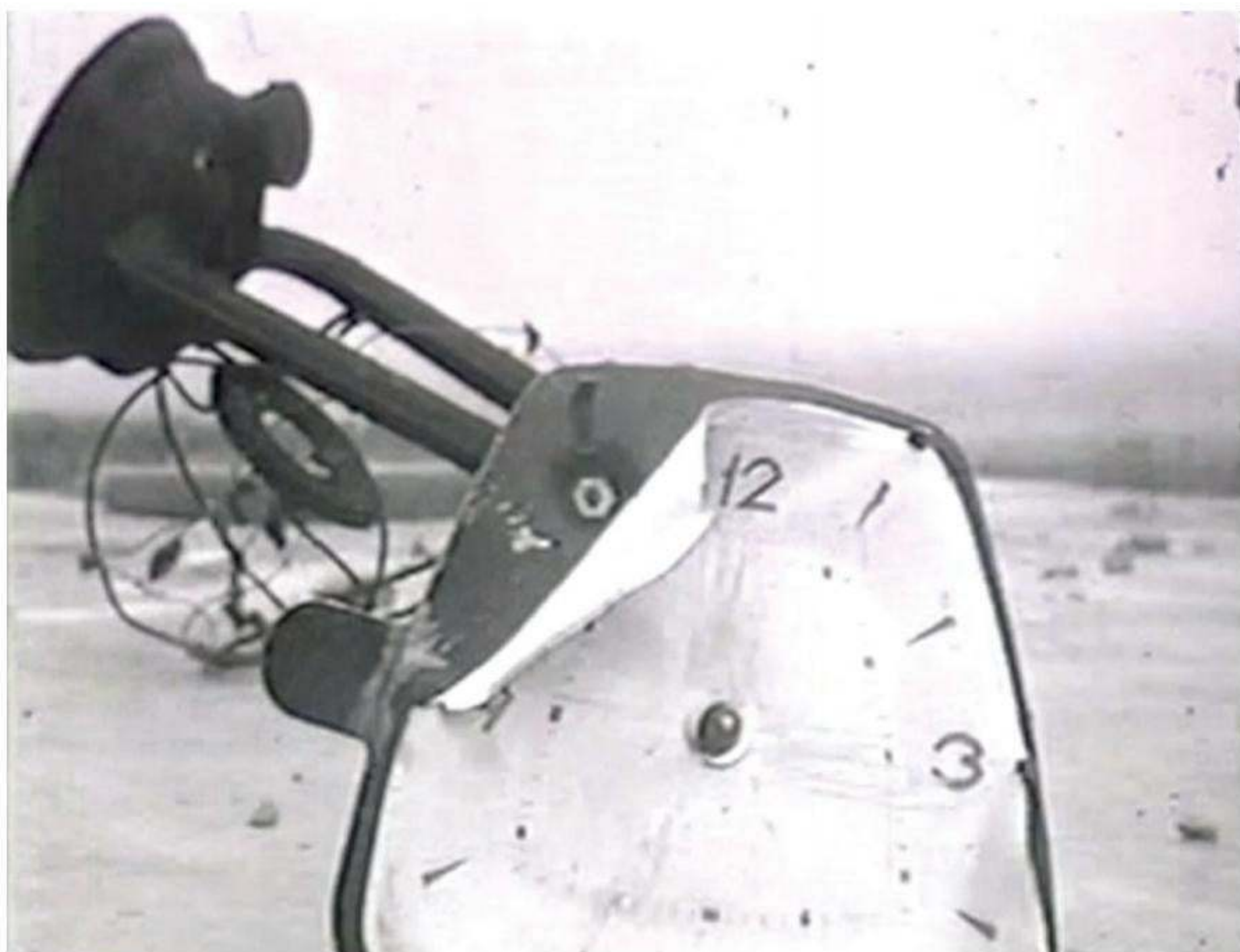
Ioan T. Morar
Autopsia uitării (5:21)
1977



Daniel Motz
Kitsch, Kitsch, Ura! (05:12)
1977



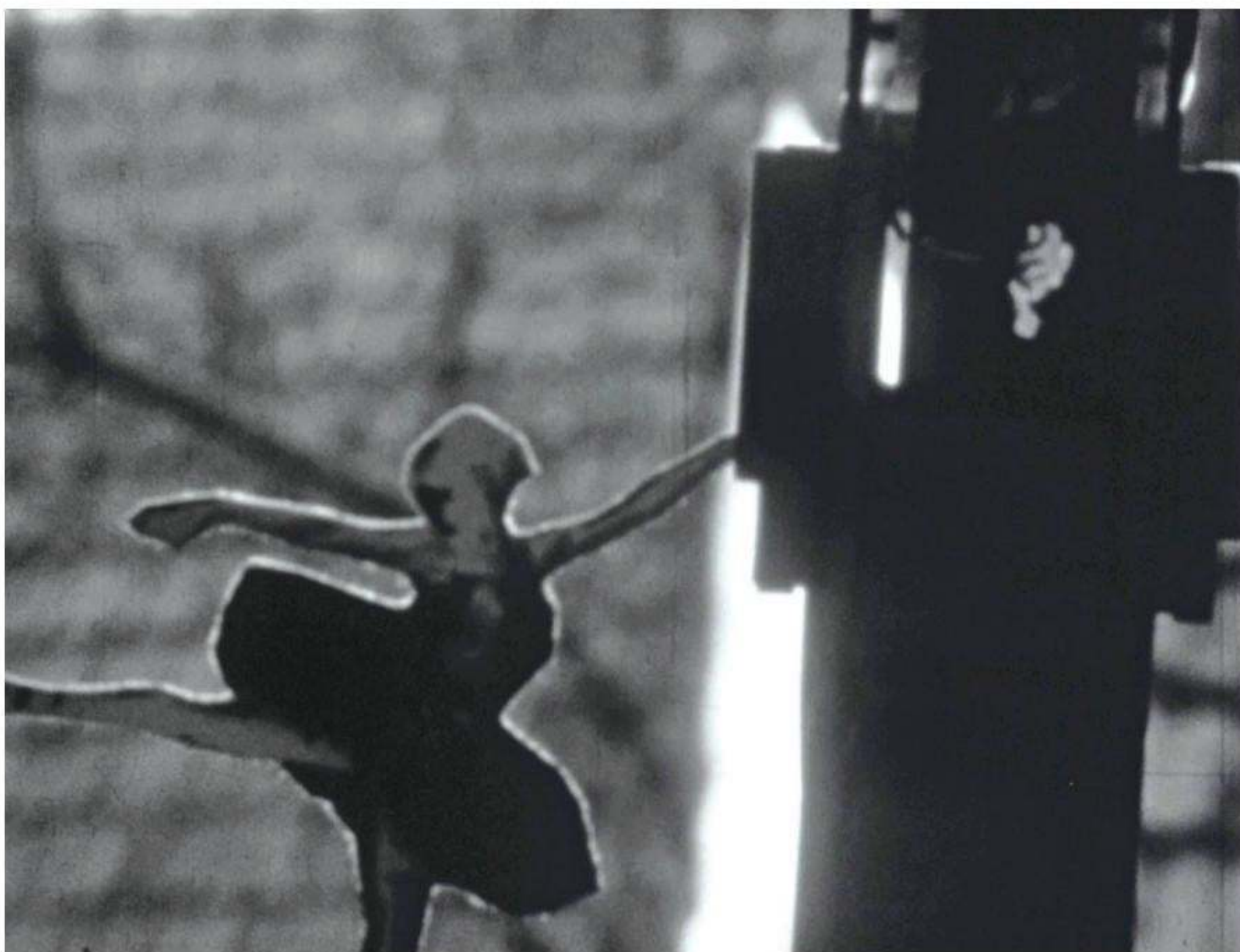
Ioan Plesh
Poluare (5:34)
1977



Ioan Plesh
Omagiu lui Dali (6:31)
1977



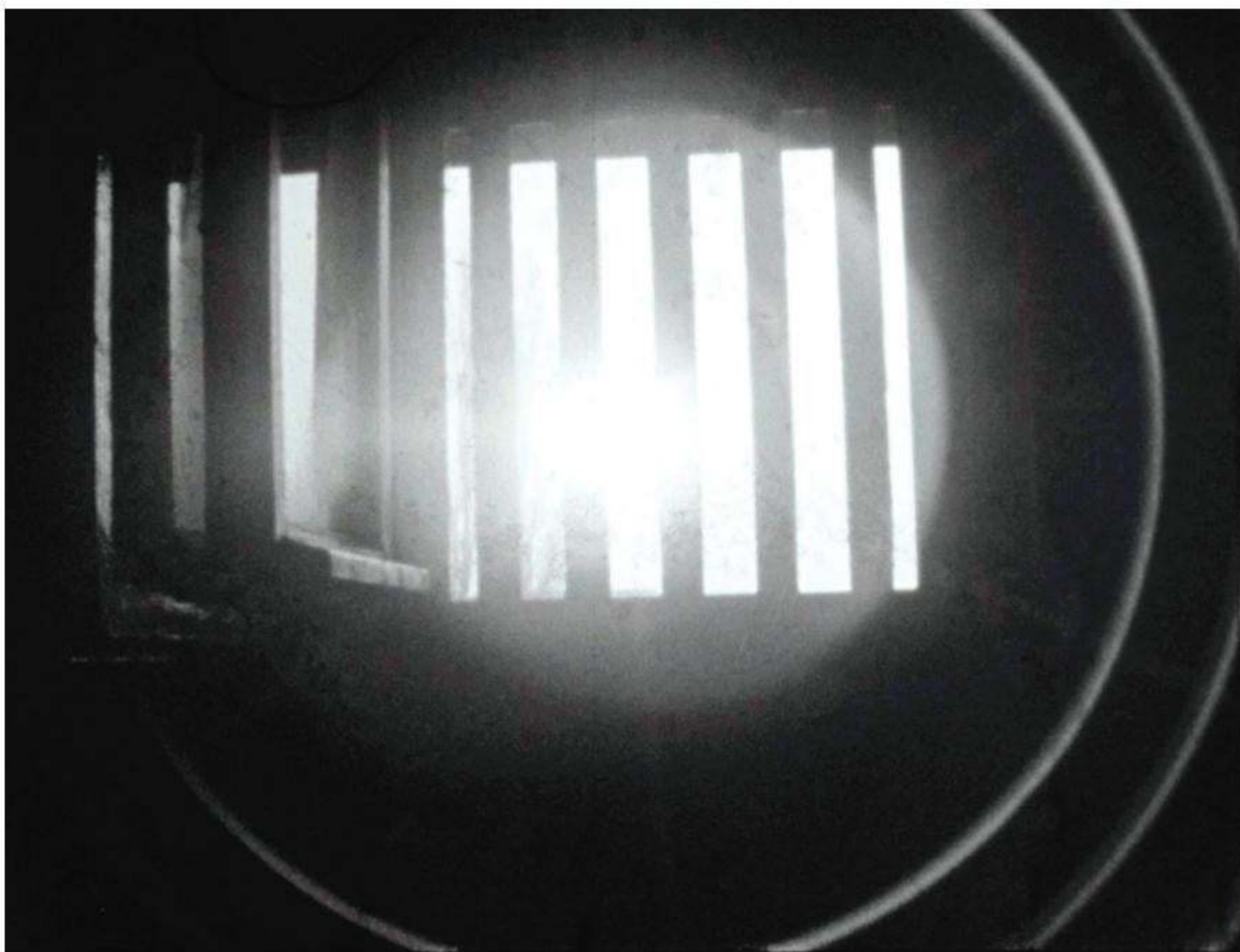
Ioan Plesh
Feux follets (3:24)
1977



Ioan Plesh
Efecte de imprimăvărare (4:43)
1978



Emanuel Tete
Poem dinamic (4:30)
1978



Alexandru Pecican
Exercițiu subliminal (6:12)
1979



Geo Crișan
Fantezie burlescă (05:38)
1978



Ioan Plesh
Joc pe orizontală (05:08)
1978



Valentin Constantin / Adrian Ostafi
Studii pentru un film de acțiune și pasiune (07:56)
1978



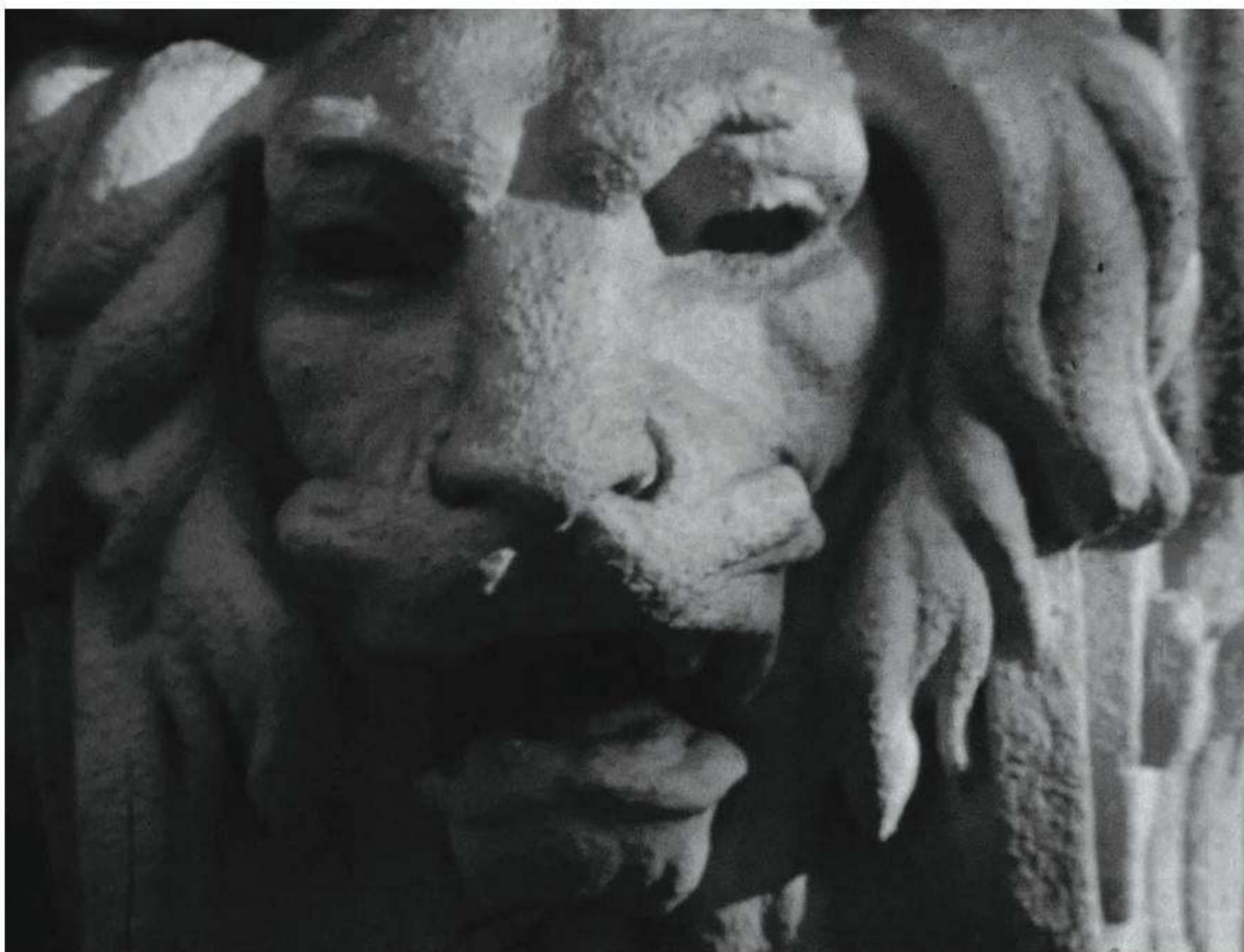
Valentin Constantin
Visul între viu și vid (07:28)
1978



Ioan Plesh
Simple coincidențe (06:01)
1978



Ioan Plesh
Panta Rhei (5:30)
1979



kinema ikon
Adagio (05:42)
1979



kinema ikon
Bopacul (05:21)
1979



Monica Trifu
Duet (08:32)
1979



Ovidiu Pecican
Semne (07:50)
1979



Romulus Budiu
Motor (02:29)
1979



Sergiu Onaga
Alunecând spre alb (06:44)
1979



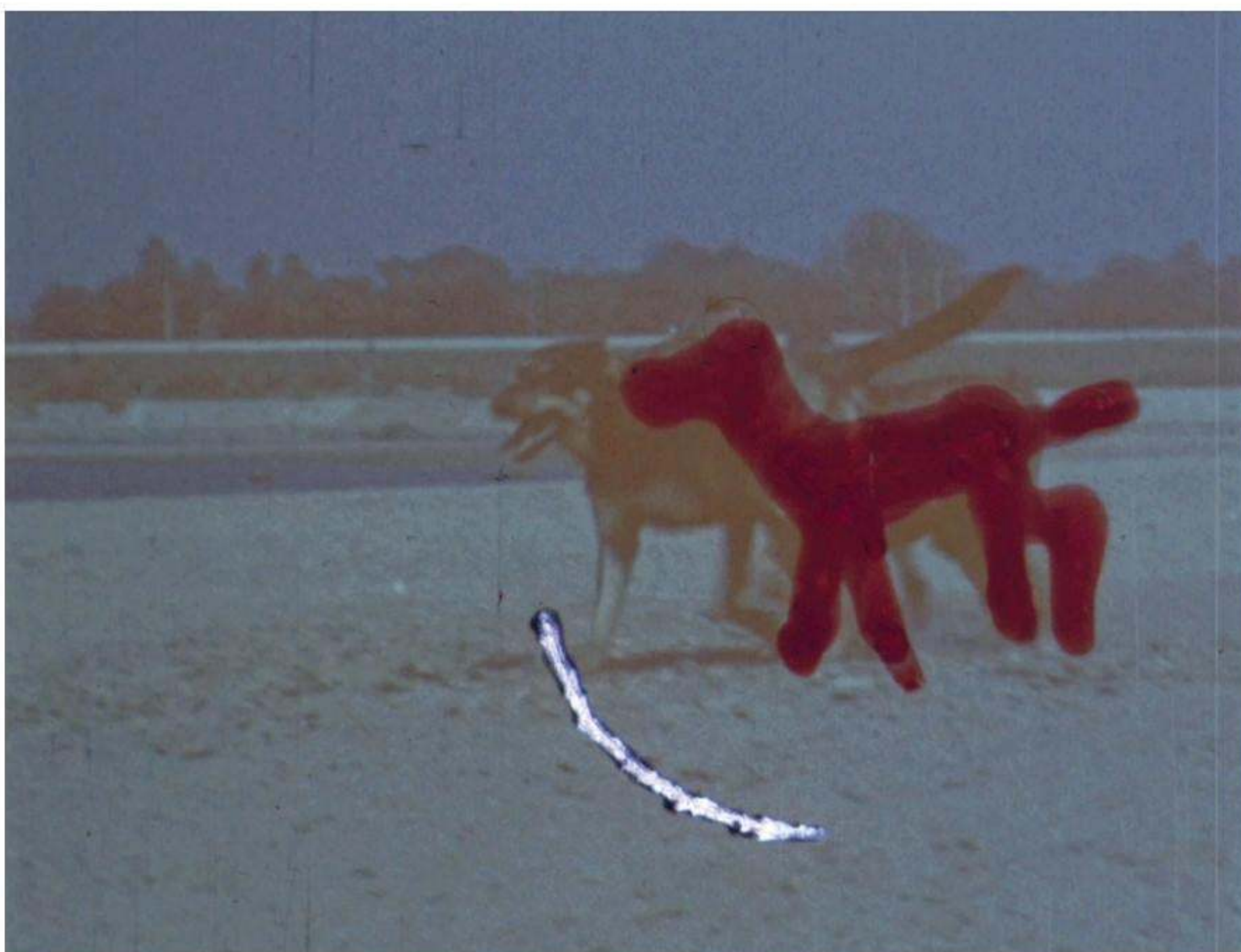
Viorel Micota
Absența (13:06)
1979



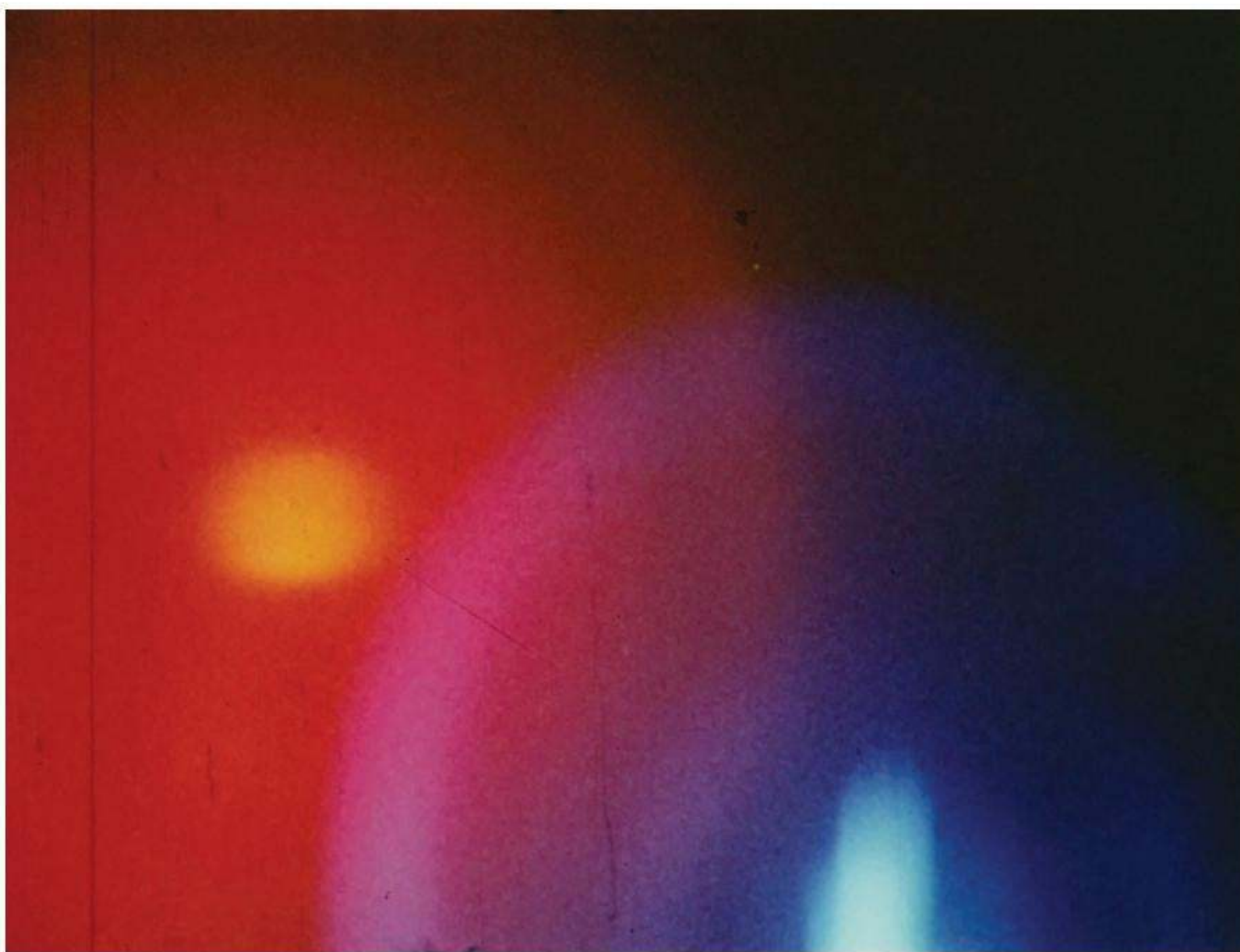
Viorel Micota
Întrebuințarea nopții (09:07)
1979



Viorel Micota
Amintiri dintr-un peisaj (08:37)
1980



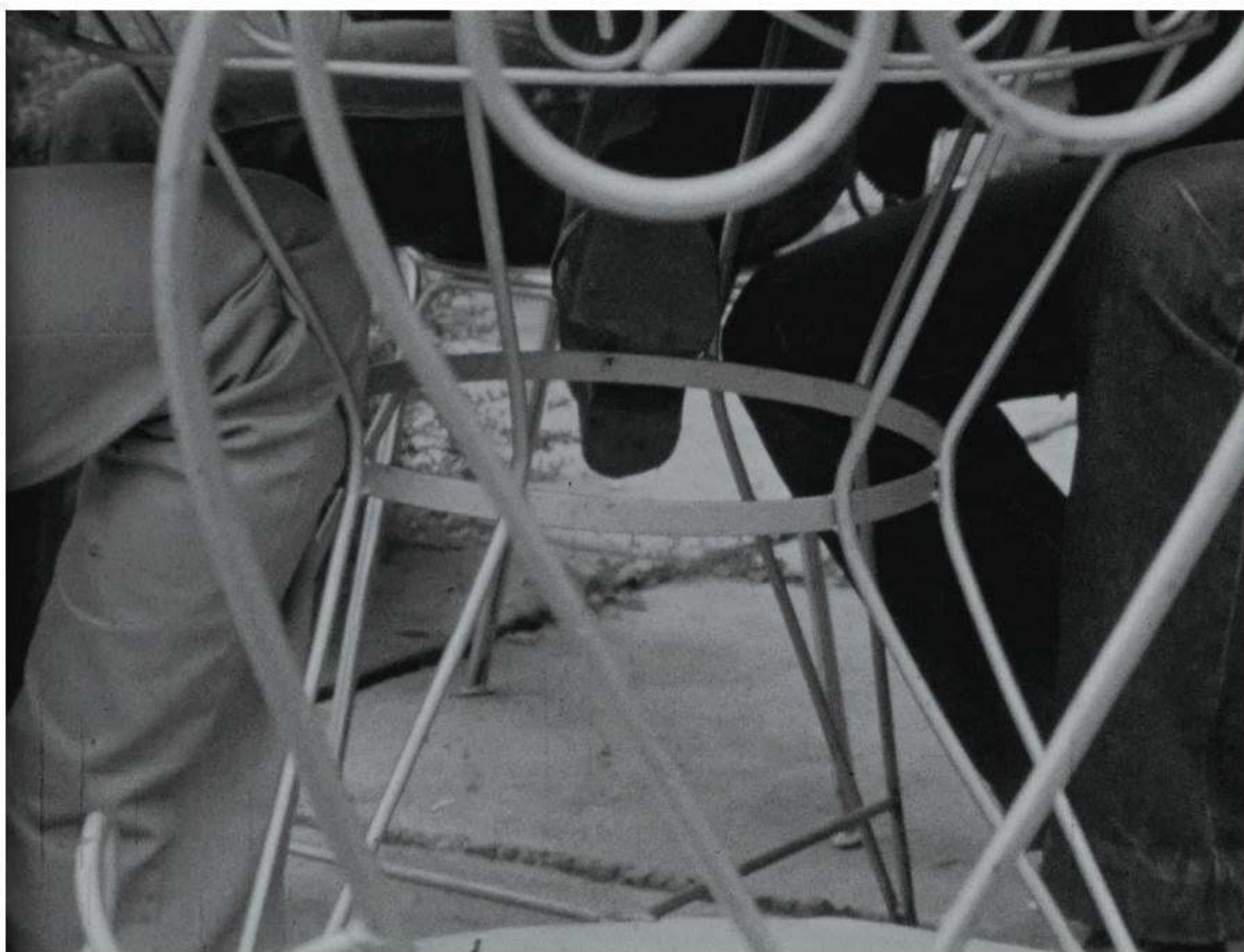
Emanuel Țeț
Vânătoarea de păsări (6:55)
1980



Cristi Jurca
Stereomania (07:31)
1980



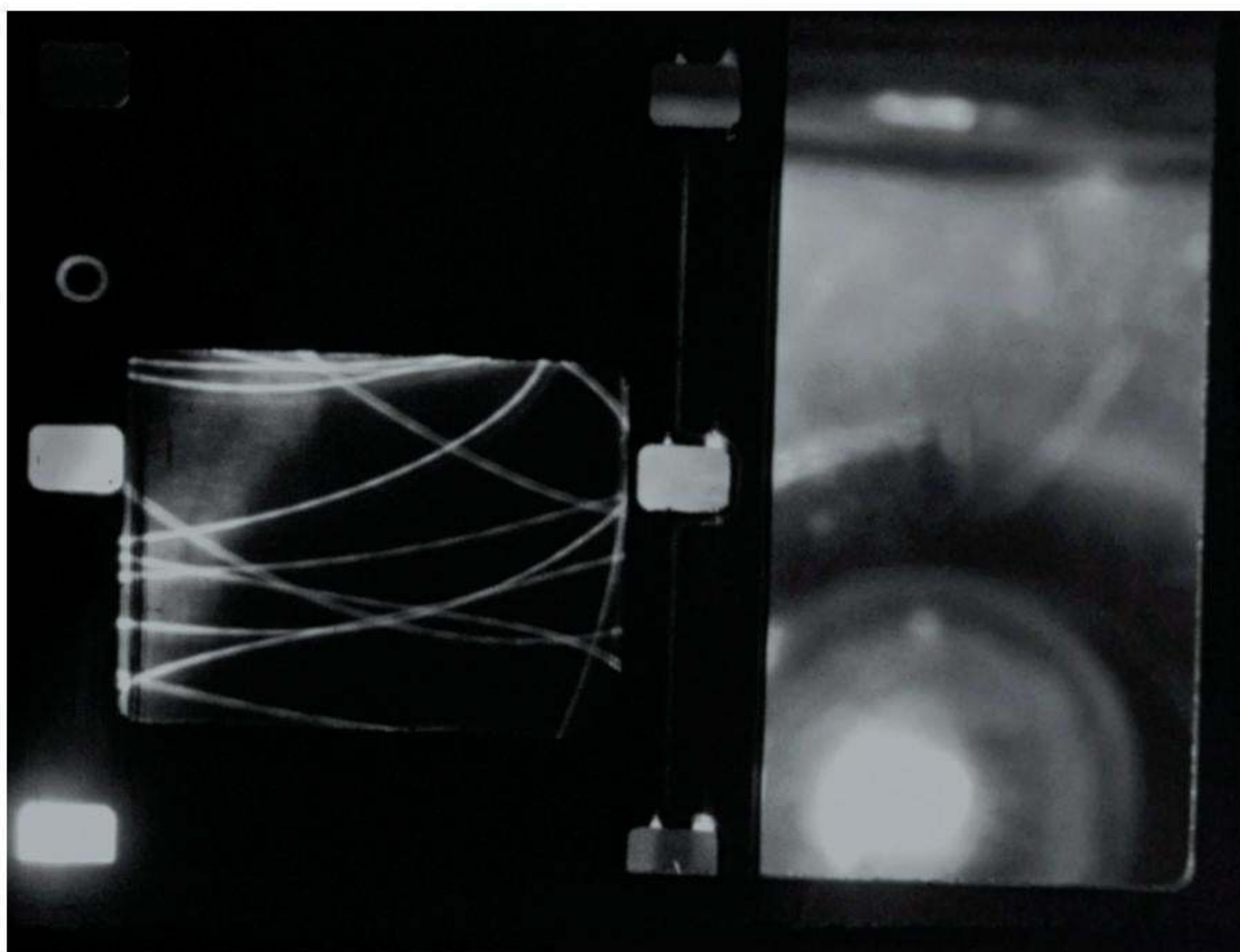
Gelu Mureșan
Concertul (6:12)
1980



Valentin Constantin
Trei schițe pentru un film uitat (05:33)
1980



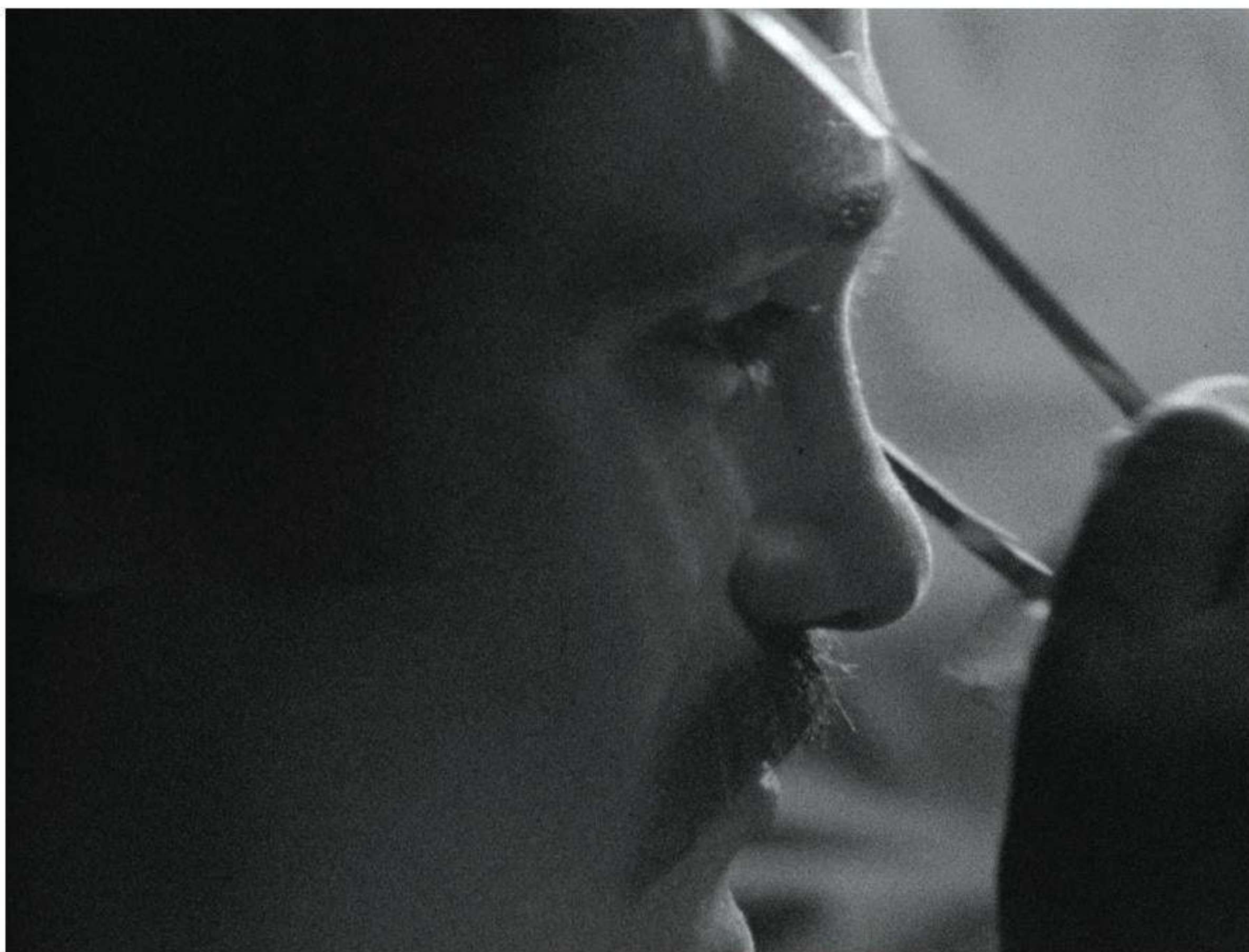
George Sabau
Decupaje (9:00)
1980-1985



Ioan Plesh
Iluminări (5:48)
1981



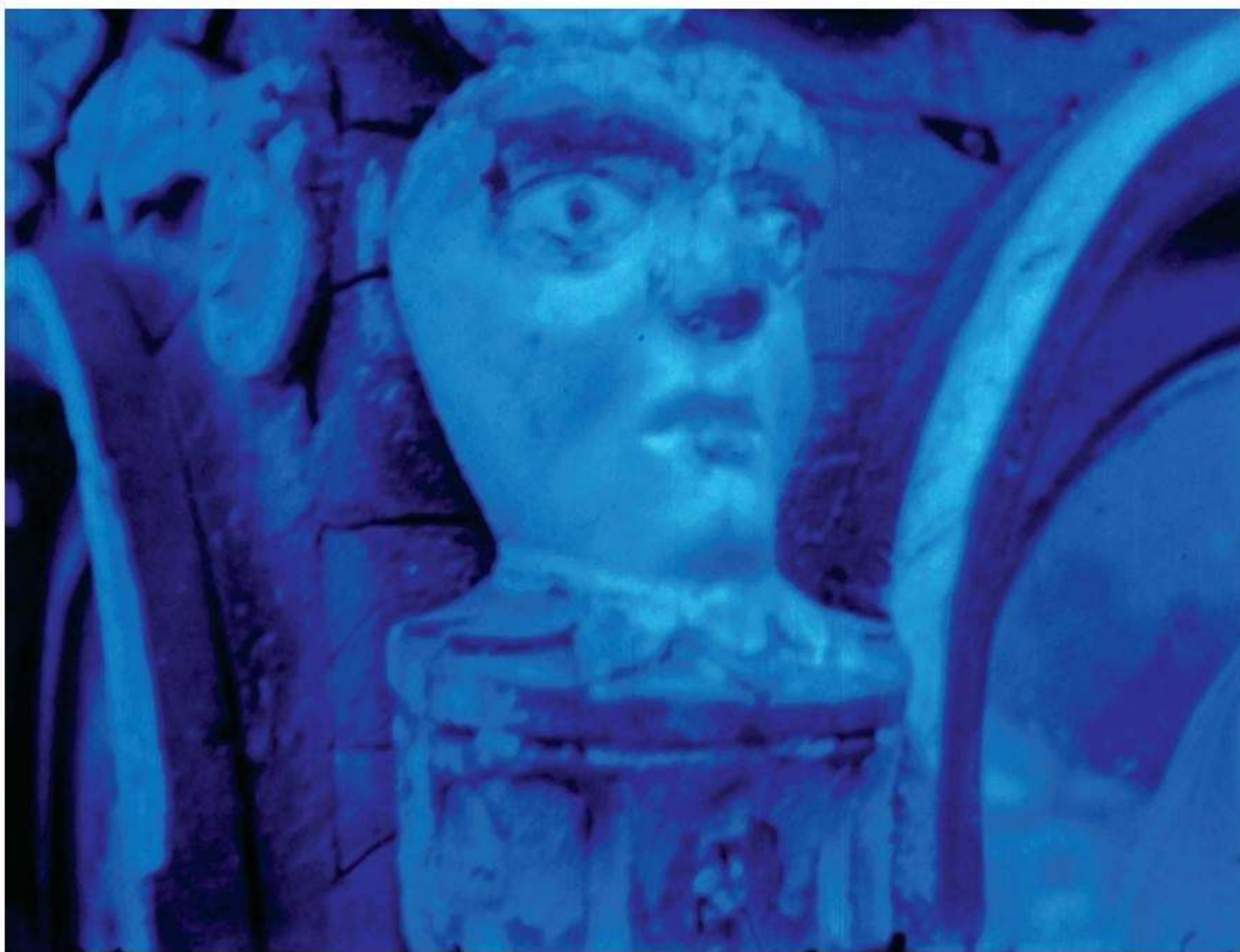
Valentin Constantin
Început de coerență (8:45)
1981



Ștefan Neamțu
Ambient (05:18)
1981



Emanuel Țeț
Îmblinzitorul de șerpi (7:03)
1981



Ioan Plesh
Solarizare (4:29)
1981



Ioan Plesh
Emergență (6:45)
1982



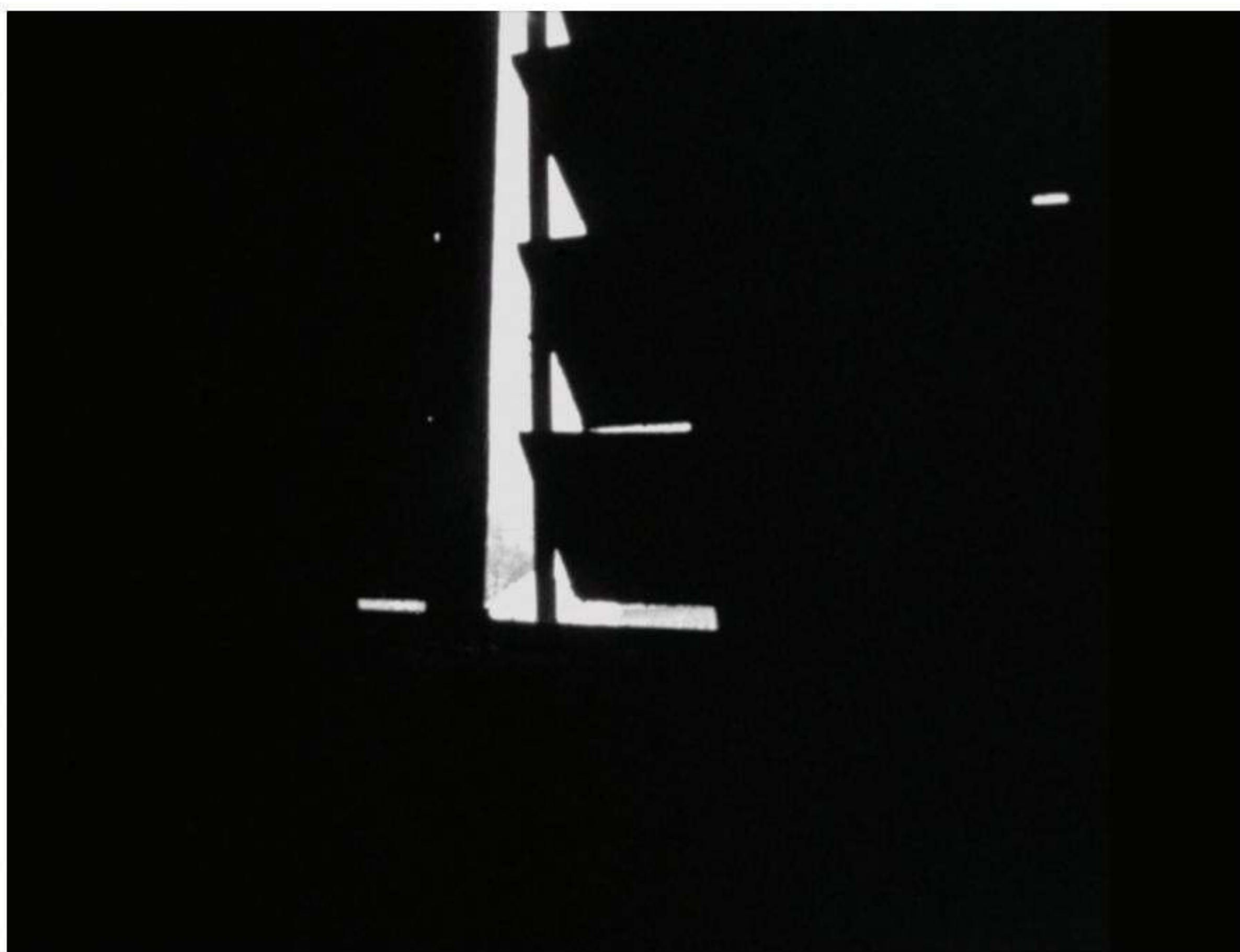
Marcela Muntean
Pulsiuni (7:21)
1983



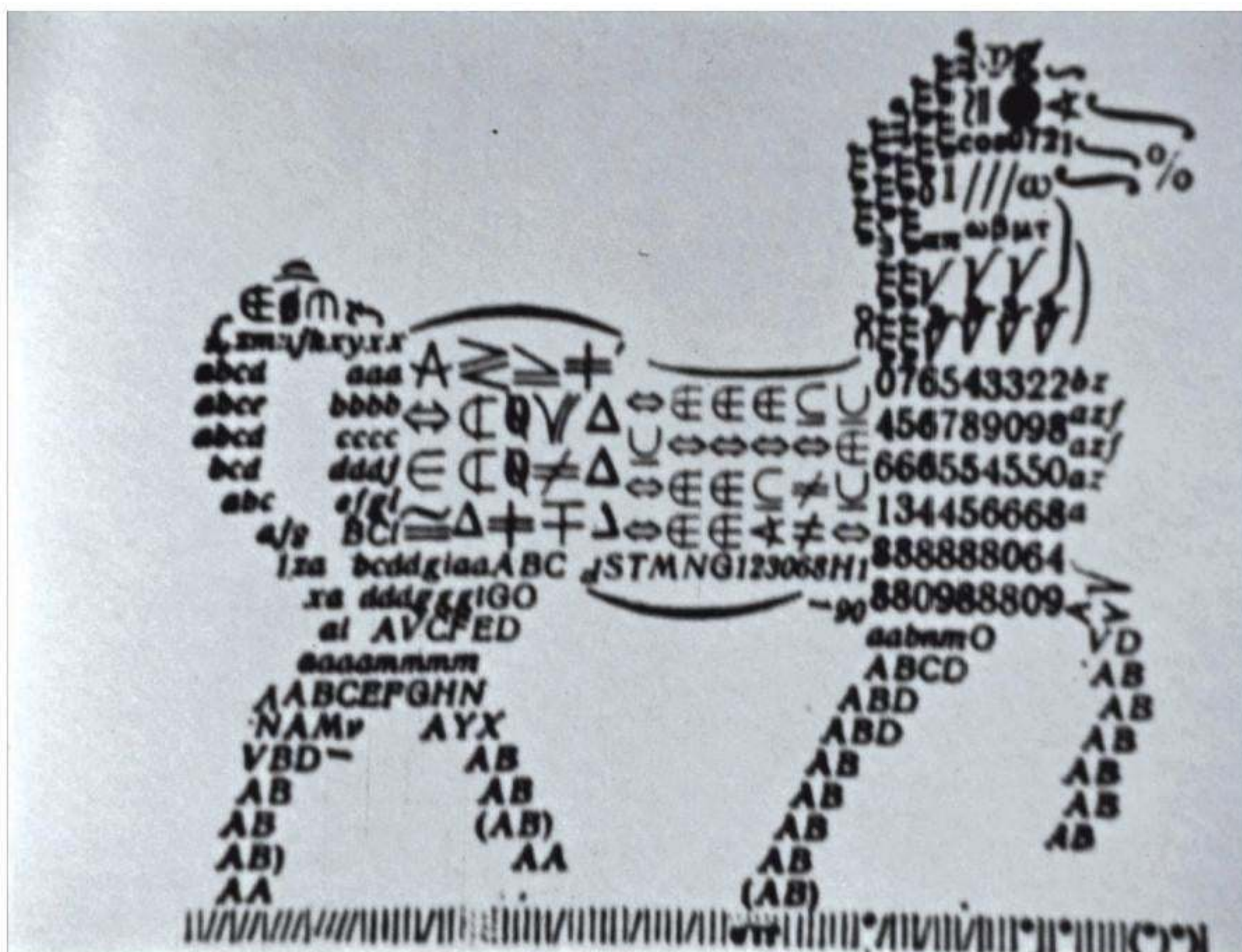
Iosif Stroia
Autoportret (5:46)
1984



Cristian Ostafi
Convergență spre inutil (6:06)
1984



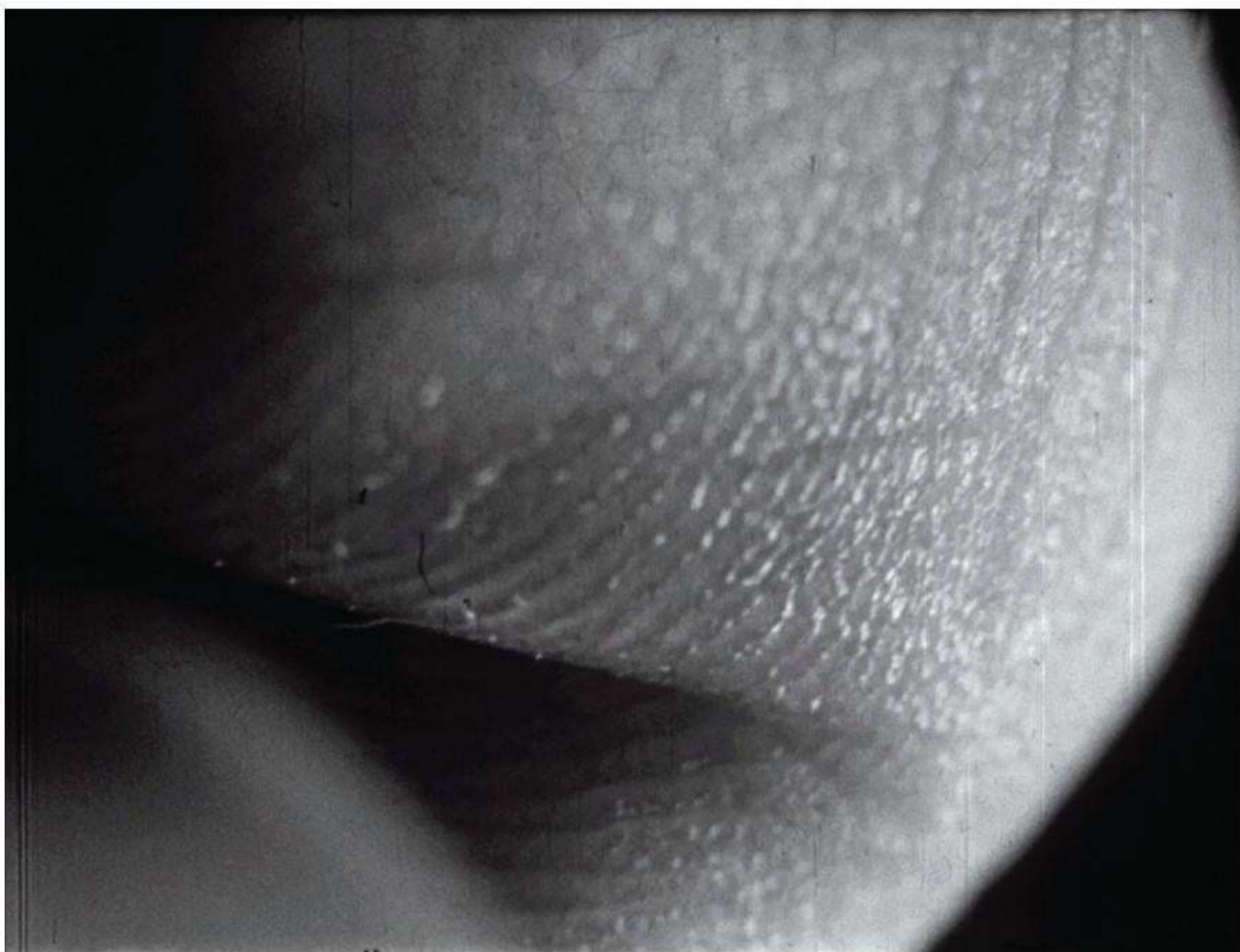
Alexandru Pecican
Fereastră deschisă spre (6:38)
1984



Romulus Bucur
Nu trageți în pianist (3:31)
 1984



Valentin Constantin
Fără titlu (05:18)
1984



Viorel Simulov
Manuscript (6:06)
1984



Calin Man
Pleonasm în peisaj (12:23)
1986



George Sabau
Fragmentarium (9:00)
1985-1990



Viorel Simulov
Ocular (5:36)
1985



Valentin Constantin
Gros-plan de zi (6:40)
1985



Ioan Galea
Stadiu 1 - Detalii (4:55)
1986



Ioan Galea
Studiu 2 - Fibonacci (10:07)
1987



Viorel Simulov
Peisaj lichid (8:23)
1988



Roxana Cherecheș, Liliana Trandabur
Mise-en-écran (6:51)
1989



kinema ikon
Vorspann (26:01)
1970-1989



1970-1989
documentary films on 16 mm







kinema ikon documentar
Gheorghe Lupaș, George Sabau
Ploaia nu cade din cer (05:26)
1970



kinema ikon documentar
Aradul gospodarilor (13:56)
1975



kinema ikon documentar
Cervencovici (05:43)
1975



kinema ikon documentar
Inundatii (14:14)
1975



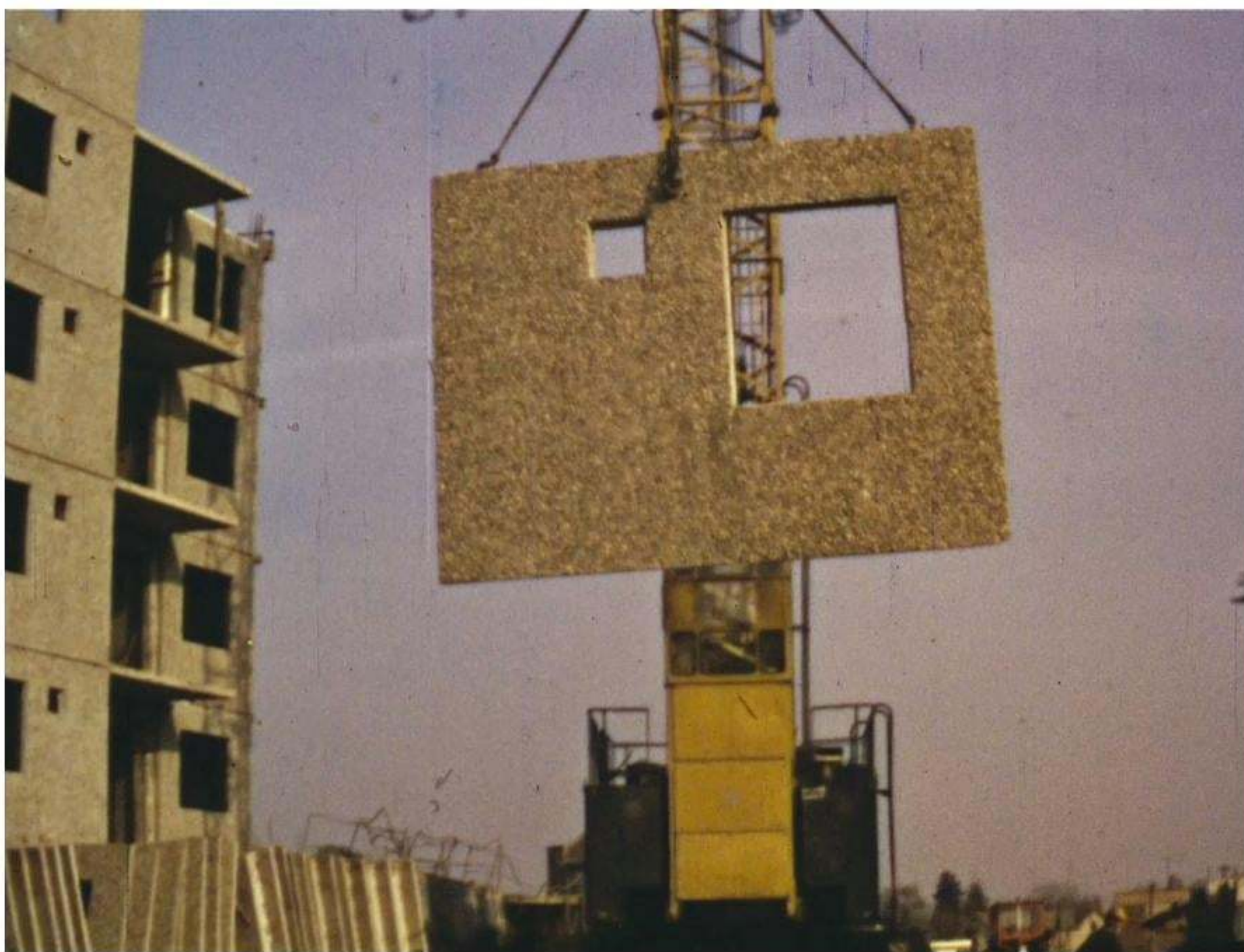
kinema ikon documentar
George Sabau
Studiu ergonomic (05:50)
1975



kinema ikon documentar
Oameni, acțiuni în agricultură (22:13)
1975



kinema ikon documentar
Teodor Uiuiu, George Sabau, Demian Șandru
Măști la Chereluș (10:49)
1976



kinema ikon documentar
Căminul nostru (10:25)
1977



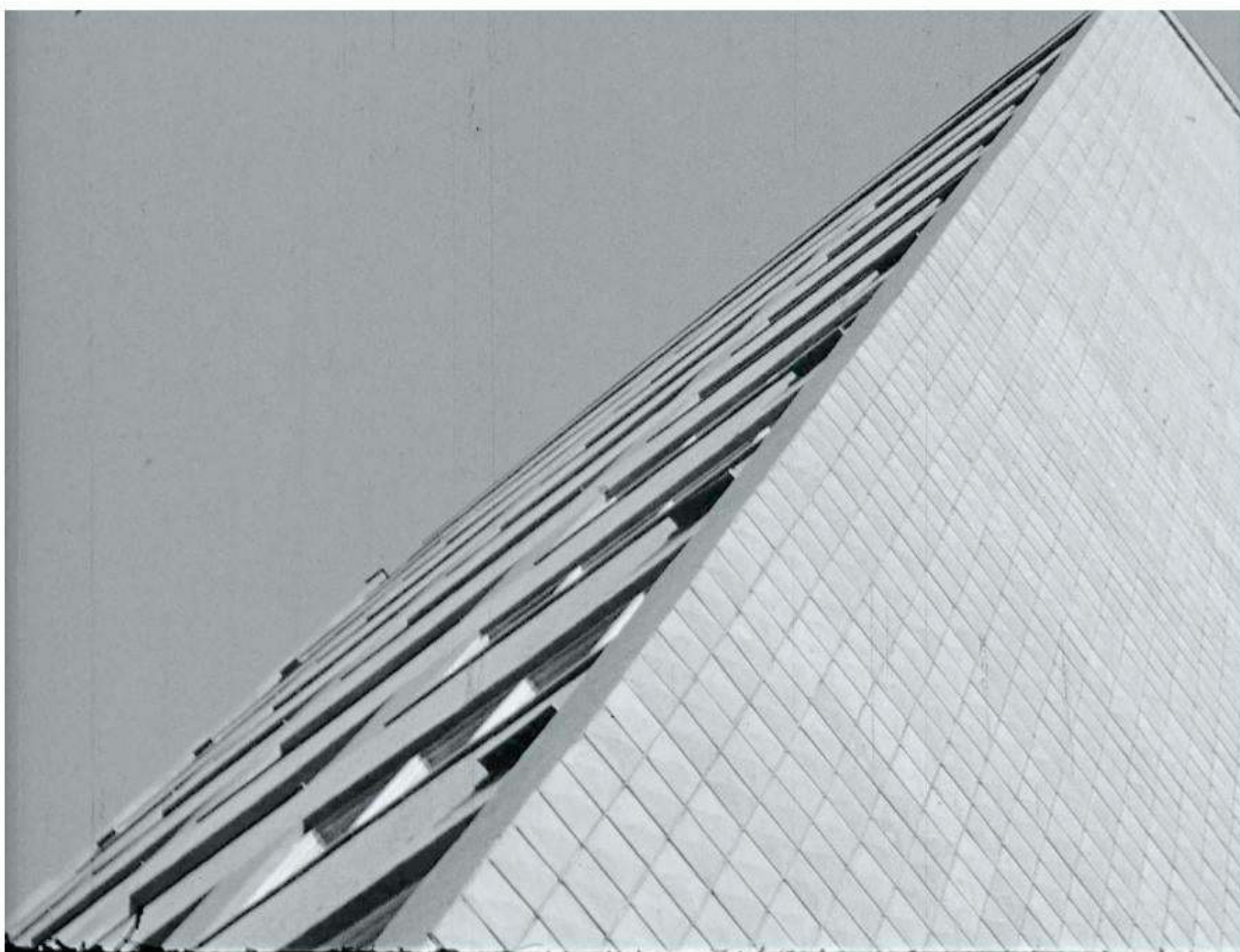
kinema ikon documentar
Daniel Motz
Nu ține de plasă că se rupe (10:04)
1977



kinema ikon documentar
Povestea unui steag (10:39)
1978



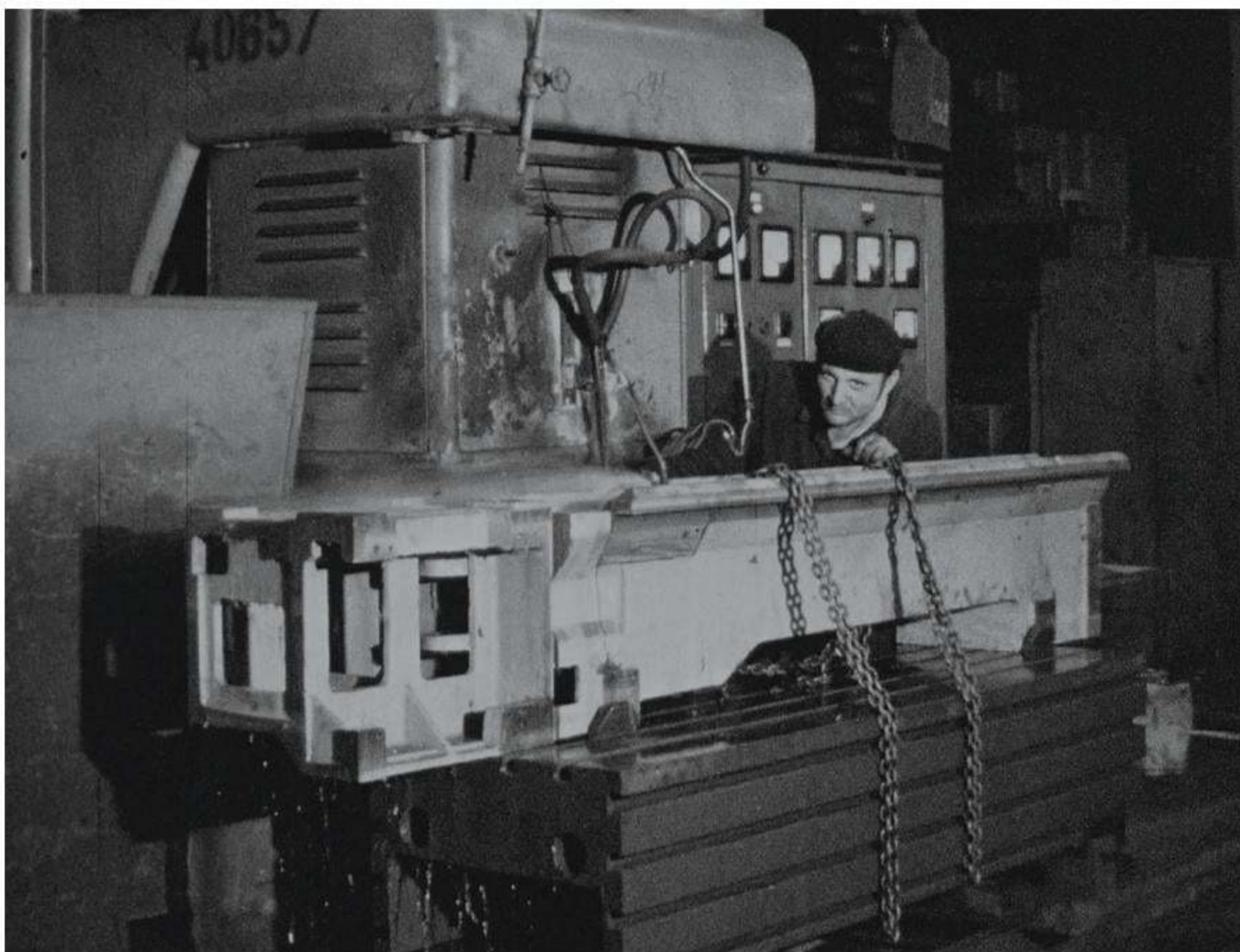
kinema ikon documentar
Ioan, Traian și Daniel Plesh
Târg de cai (10:29)
1978



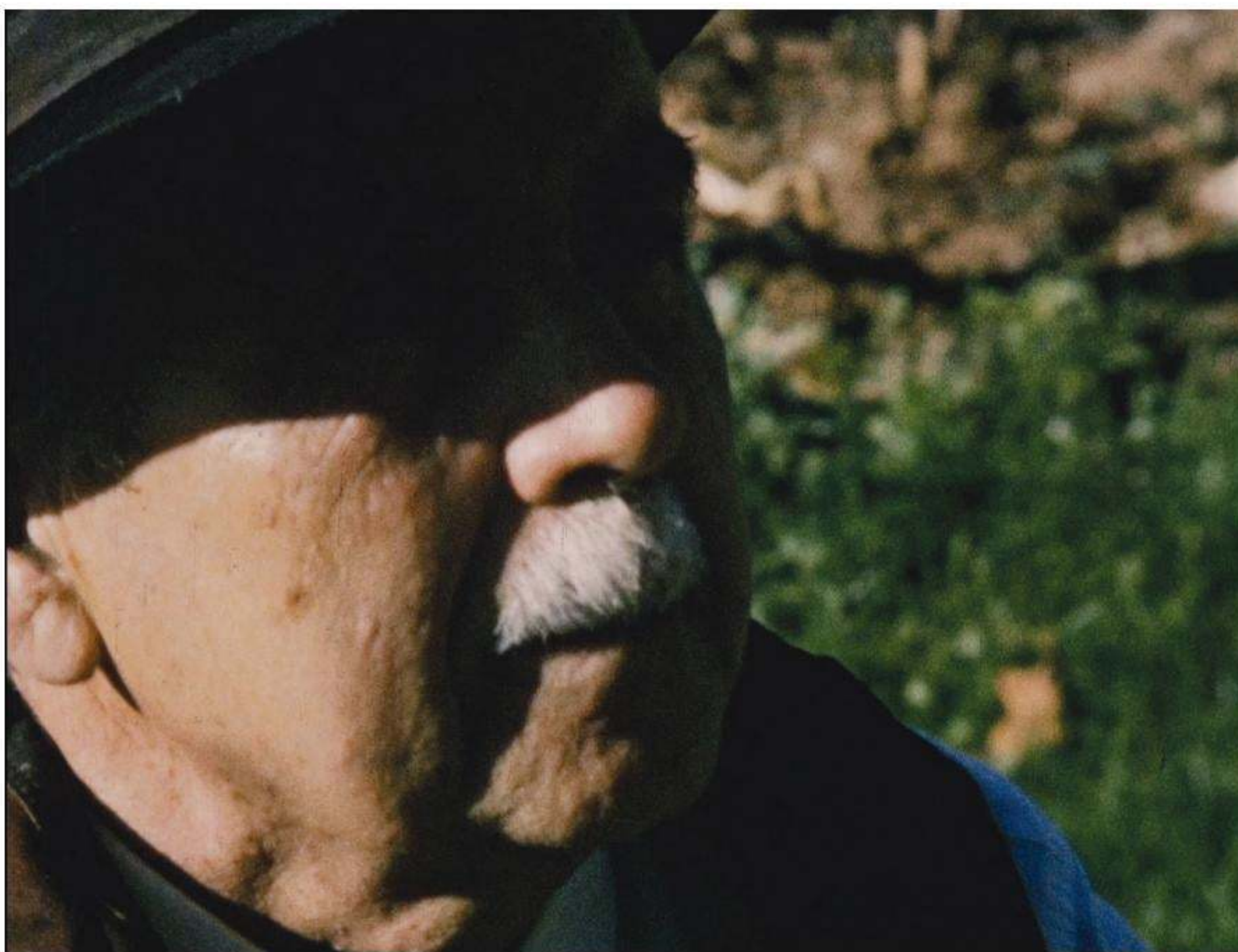
kinema ikon documentar
Calitate și ritm în construcții (12:19)
1979



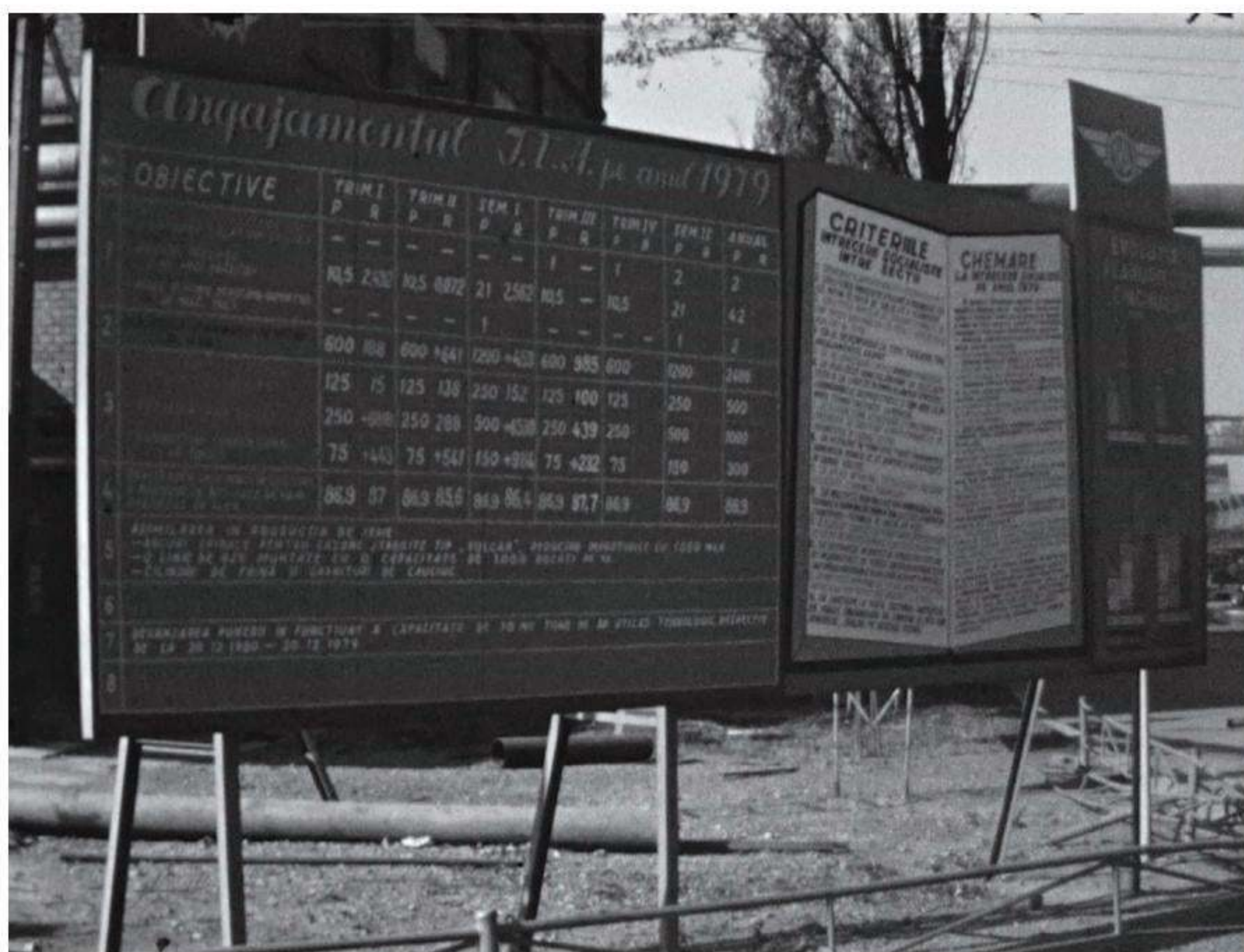
kinema ikon dokumentar
Ceaușescu la Arad (05:14)
1979



kinema ikon documentar
Flux tehnologic-Strungul (13:27)
1979



kinema ikon documentar
Ion Niță Nicodim (09:35)
1979



kinema ikon documentar
 Propaganda vizuală (07:56)
 1979



kinema ikon documentar
Florin Bîrnețiu, Florin Hornoiu, George Sabau
Experimentul Văsoaia (13:48)
1980



kinema ikon documentar
Revalorificări (07:59)
1980



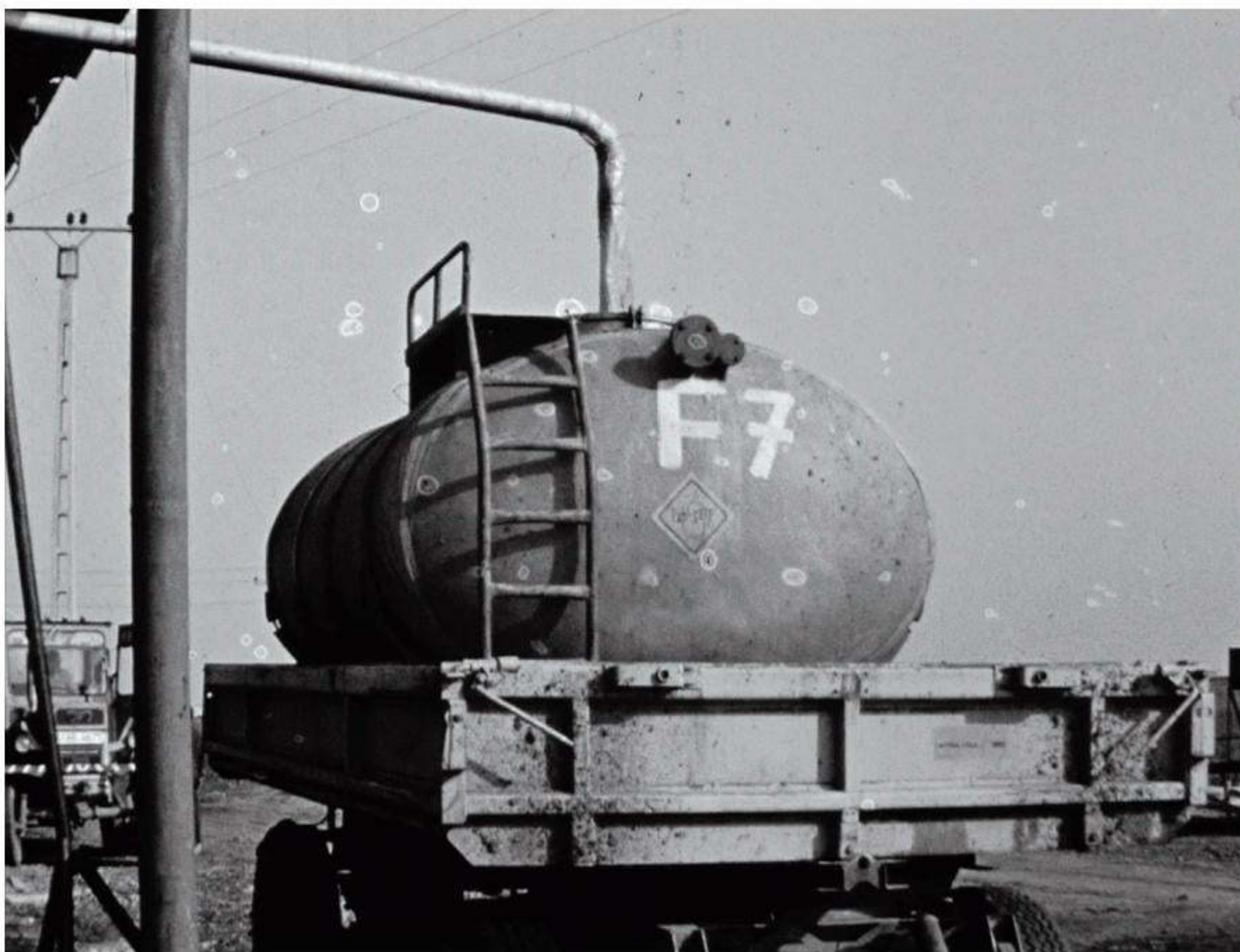
kinema ikon dokumentar
George Sabau
Itinerar francez (14:04)
1982



kinema ikon dokumentar
Patrimoniul (07:55)
1982



kinema ikon documentar
Ritm-calitate-eficiență (17:17)
1982



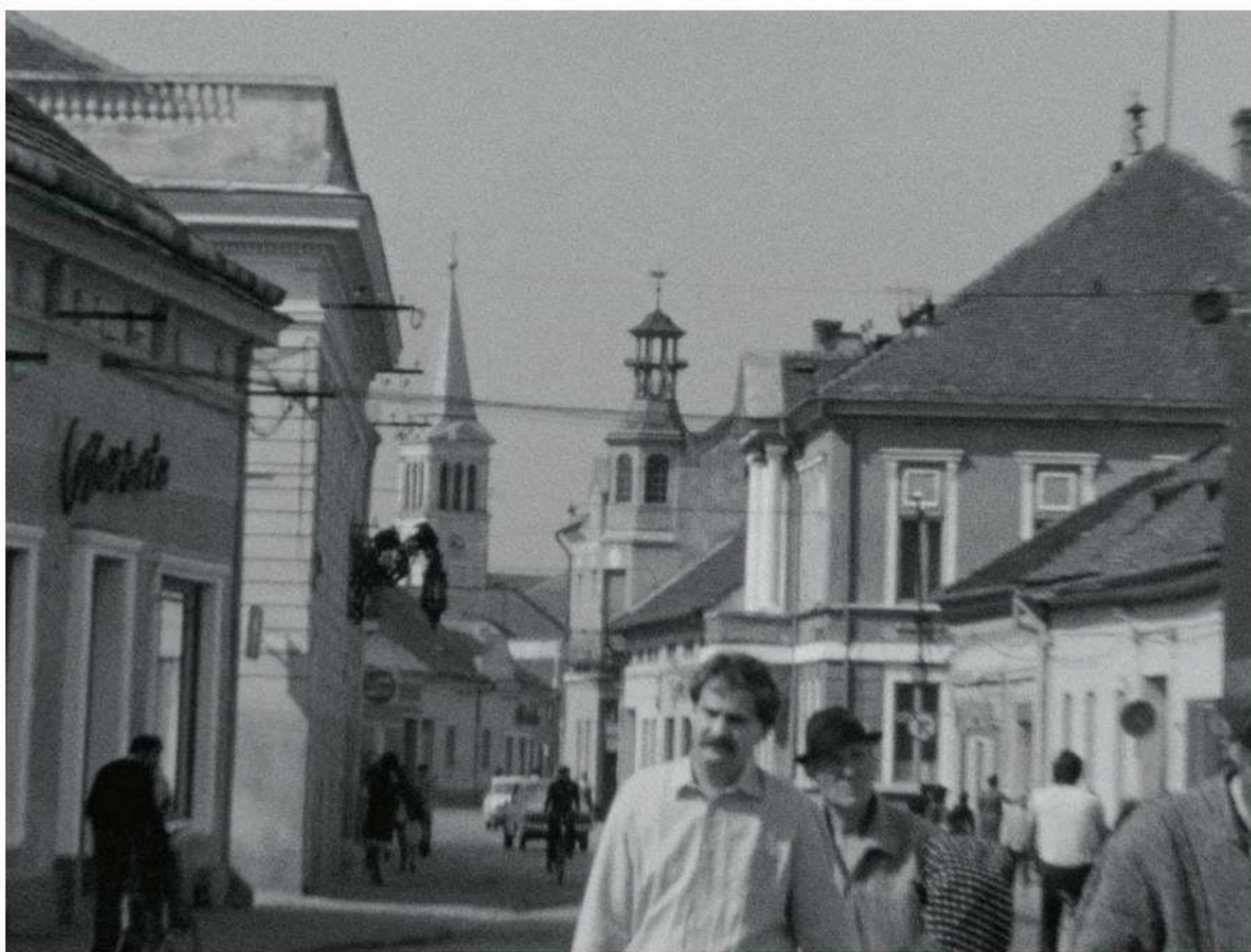
kinema ikon documentar
Inteligența tehnică (10:47)
1983



kinema ikon documentar
Florin Hornoiu
Trenul electric (31:40)
1986



kinema ikon documentar
Dan Demșea, Florin Hornoiu, George Sabau
De la Preparandie la Marea Unire (18:10)
1988



kinema ikon documentar
Arhitectura în județul Arad 1 (07:30) / 2 (10:45)
1988



kinema ikon documentar
George Sabau
Transportul în comun (12:32)
1988

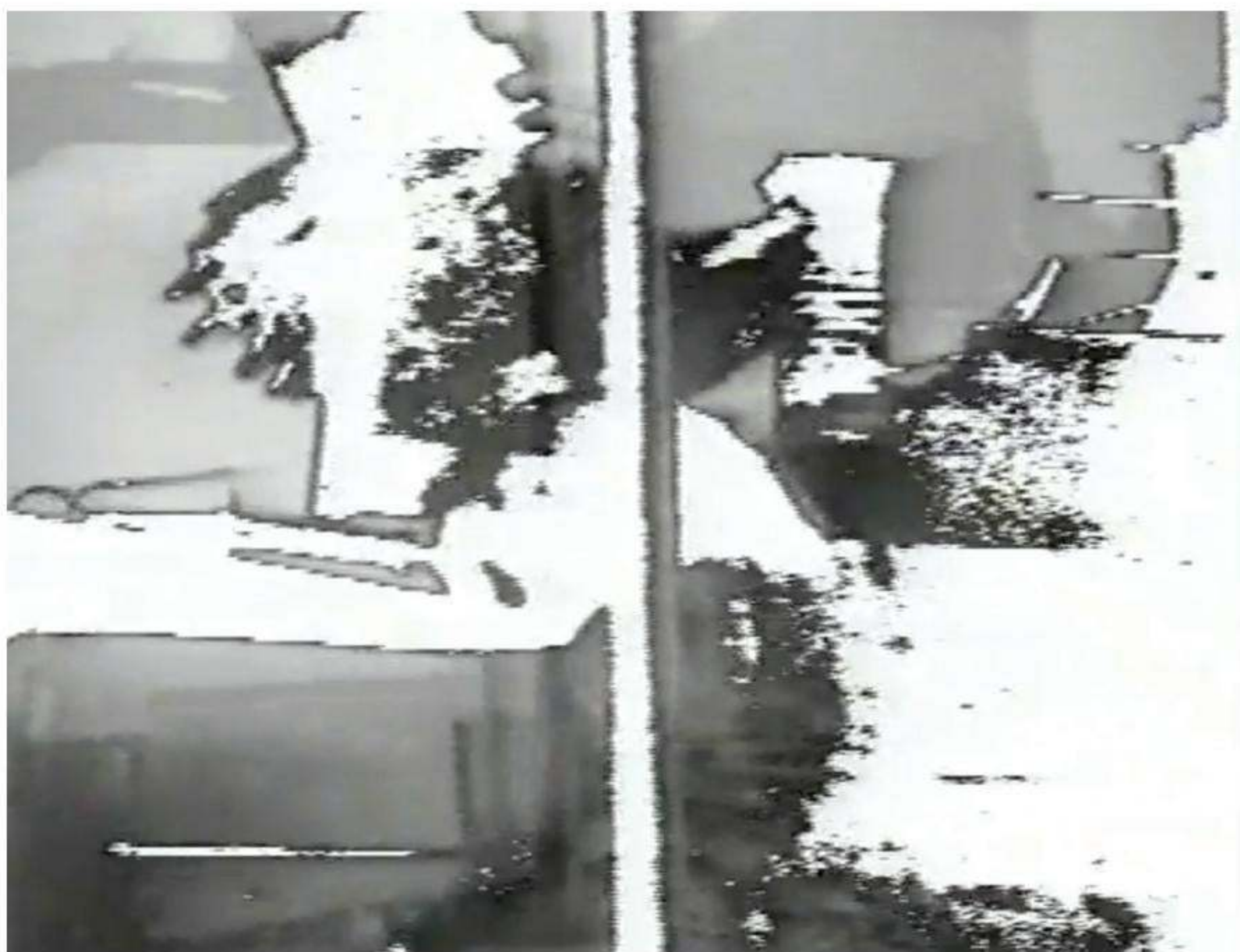


1990-2020
films on digital suport and video

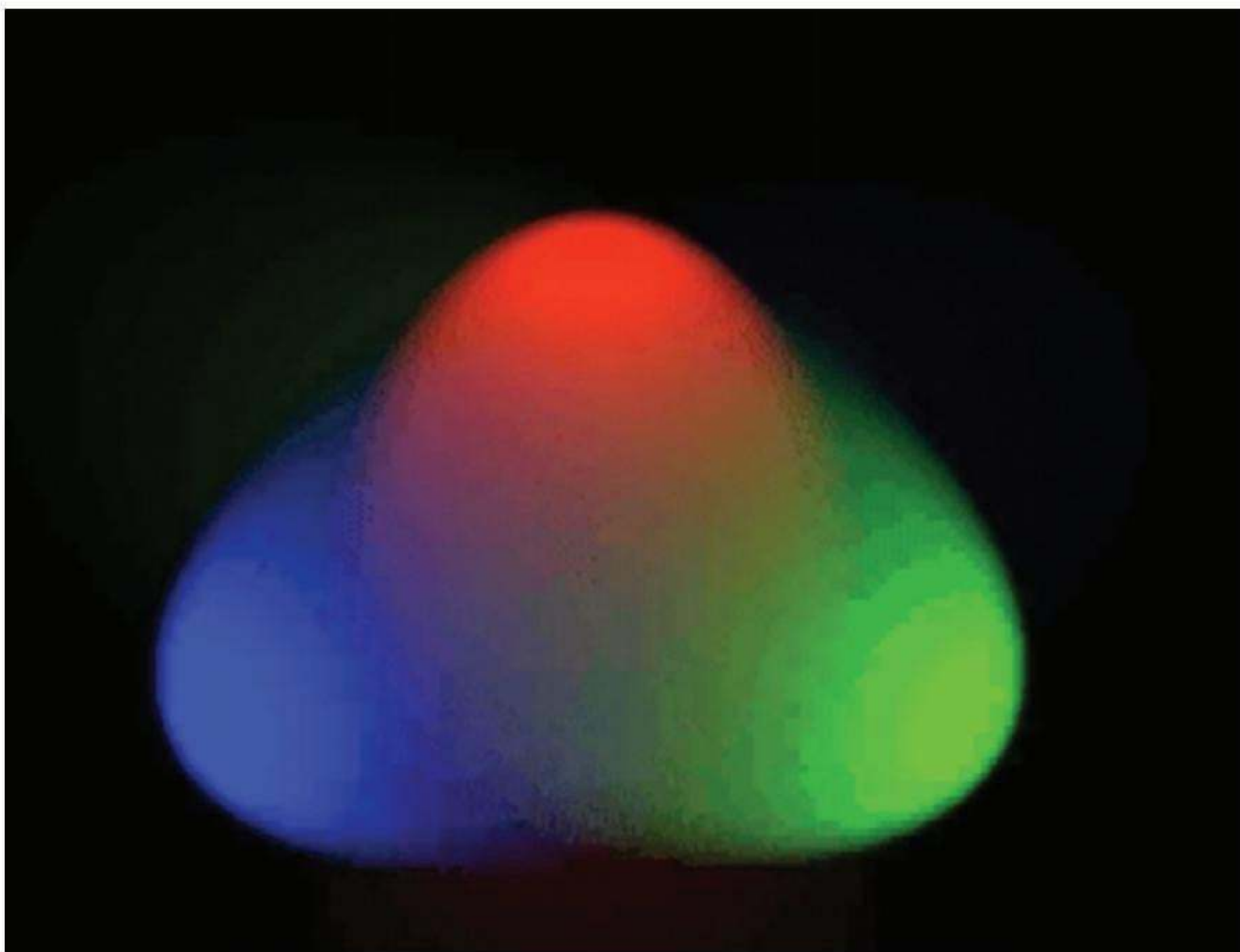




Calin Man
What's Happening (1:01)
1986-1994



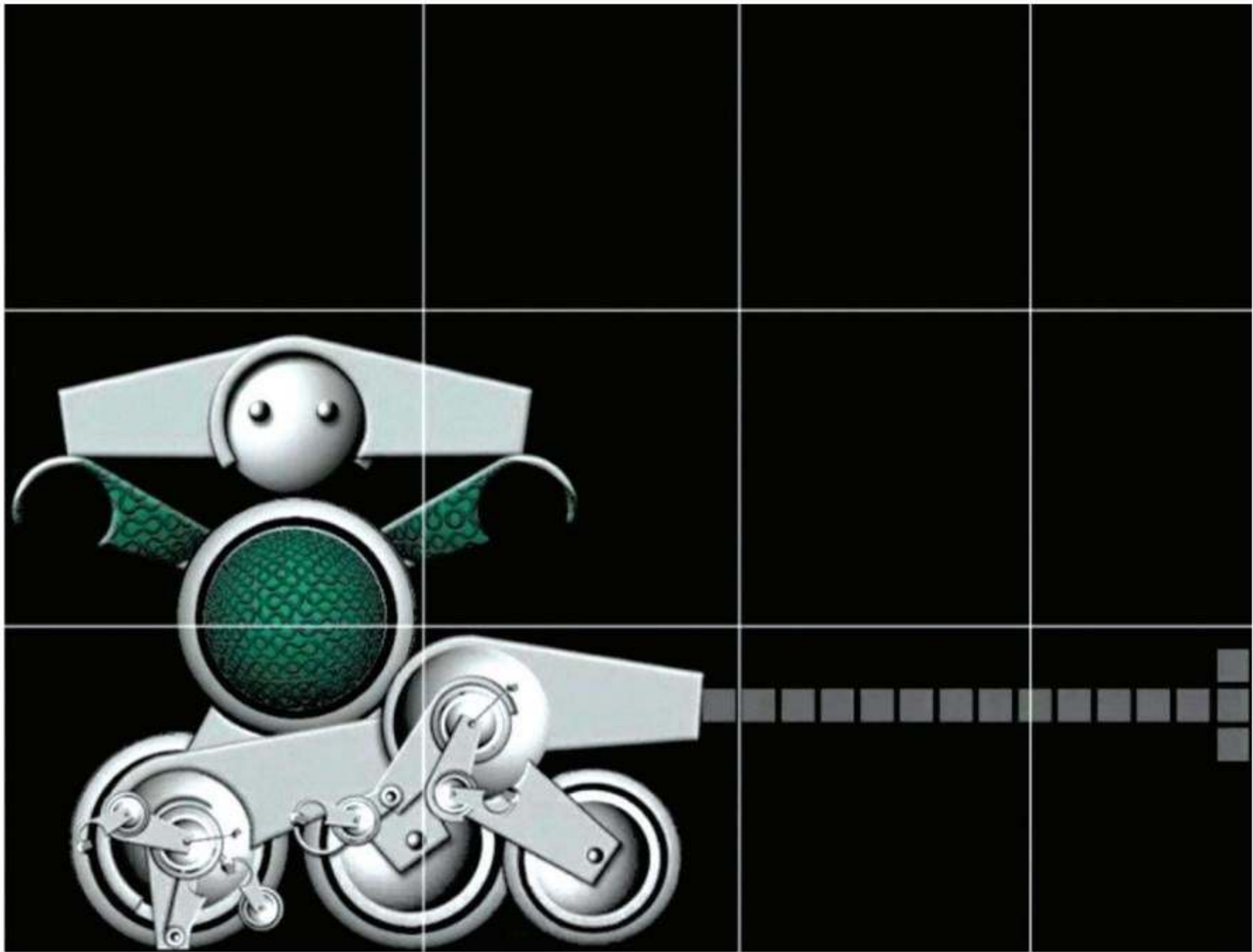
George Sabau
Banca de imagini (25:07)
1995



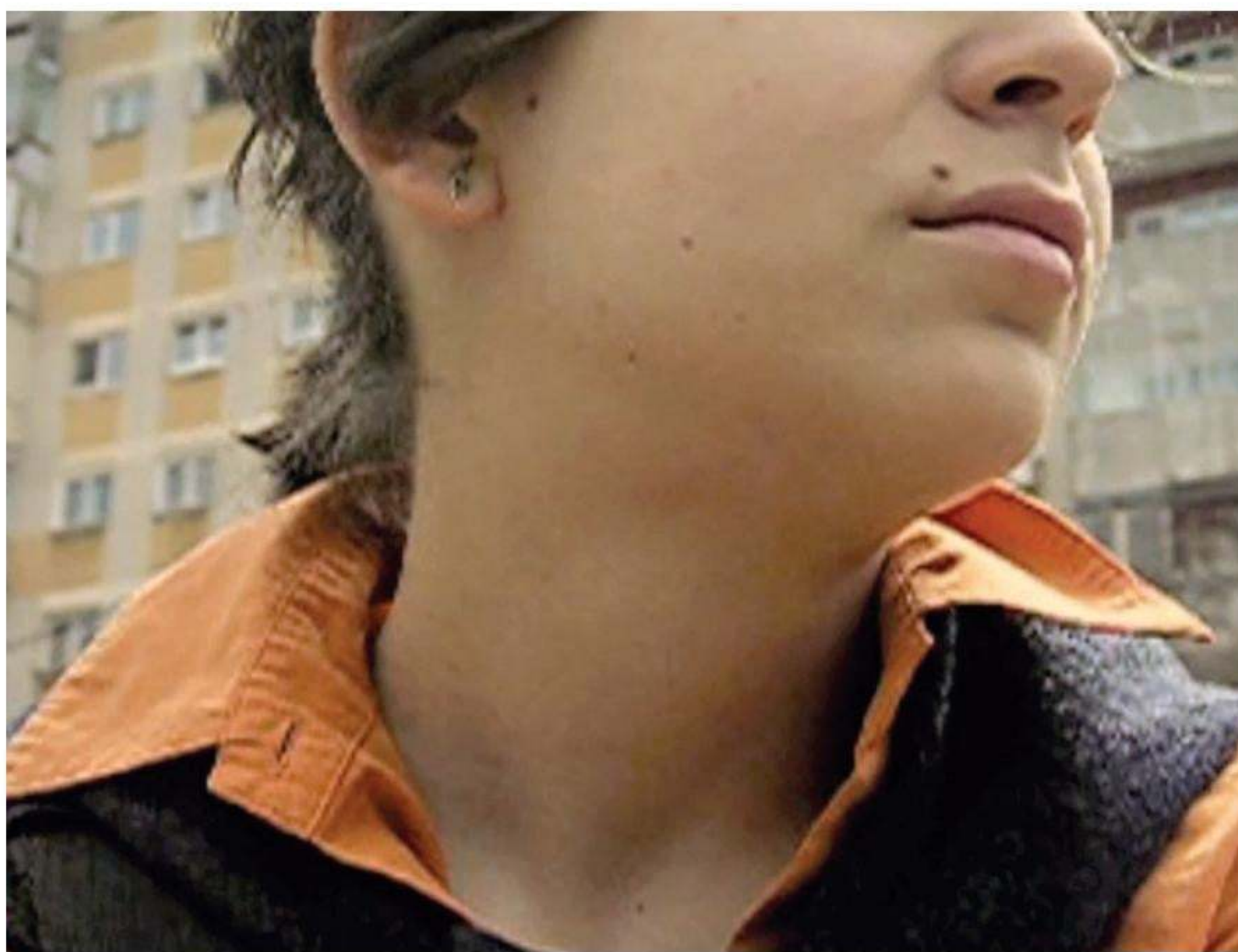
Ioan Ciorba
RGB (01:02)
1998



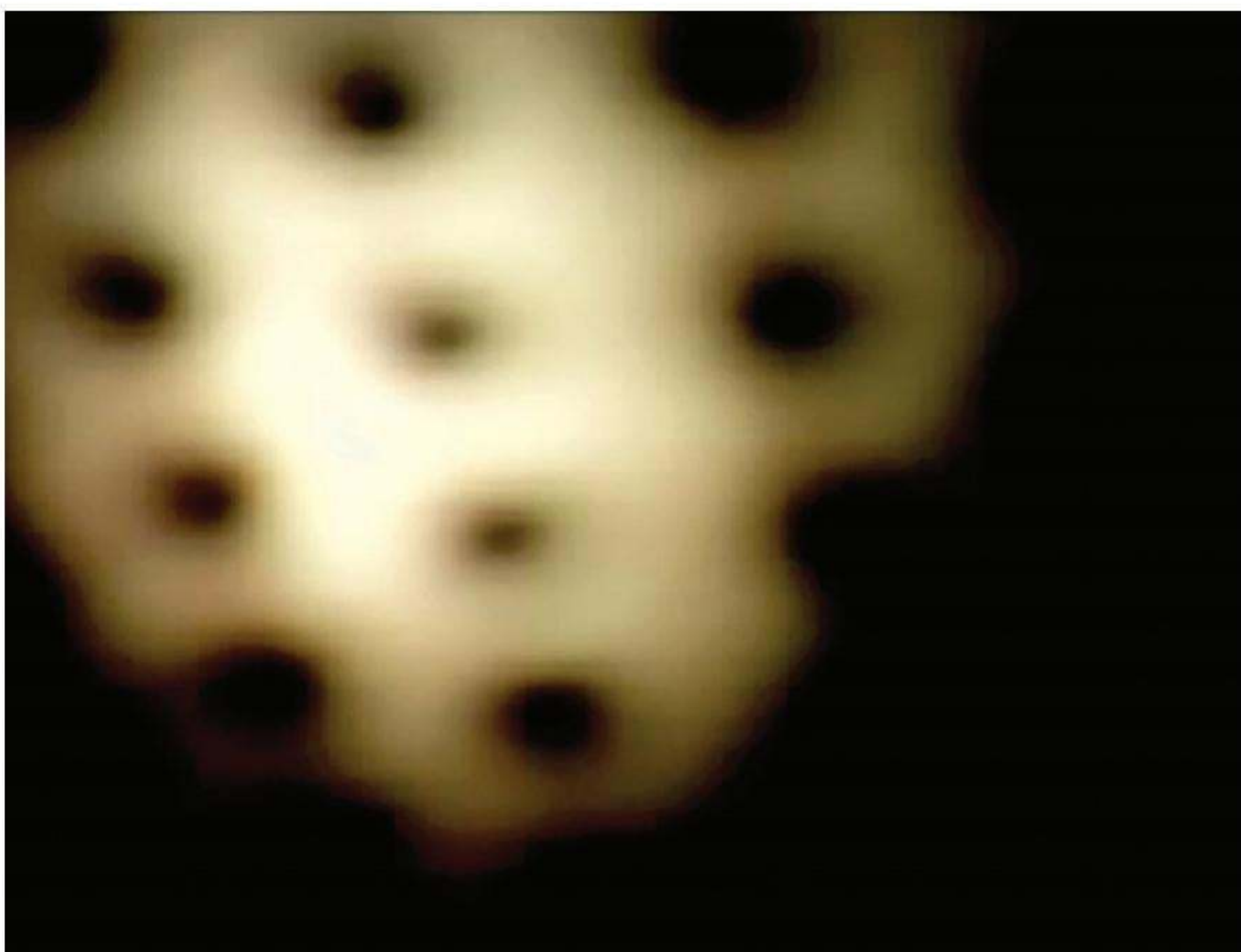
Sandor Bátha
Savers (01:14)
2001



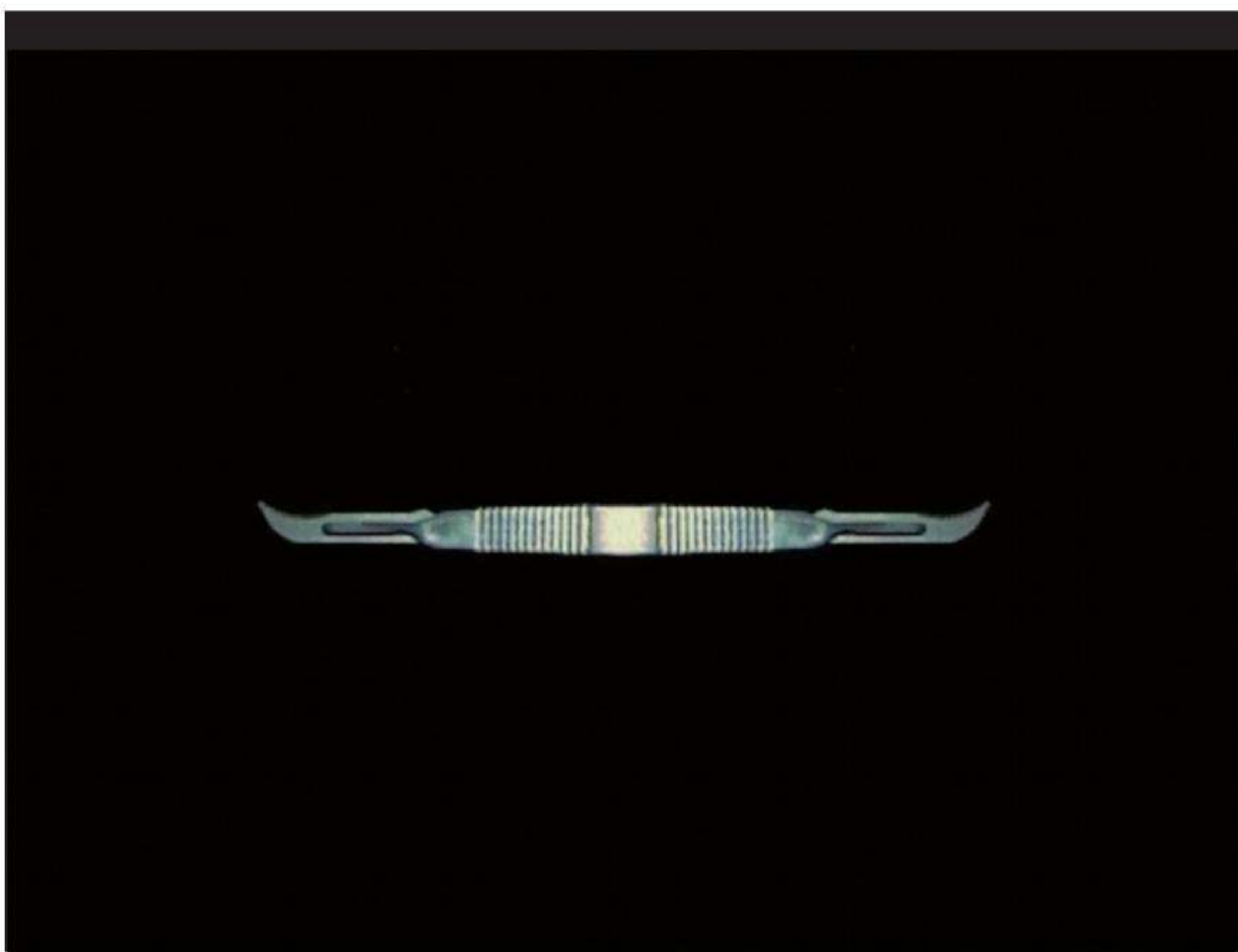
Calin Man
K_attack (3:11)
2005



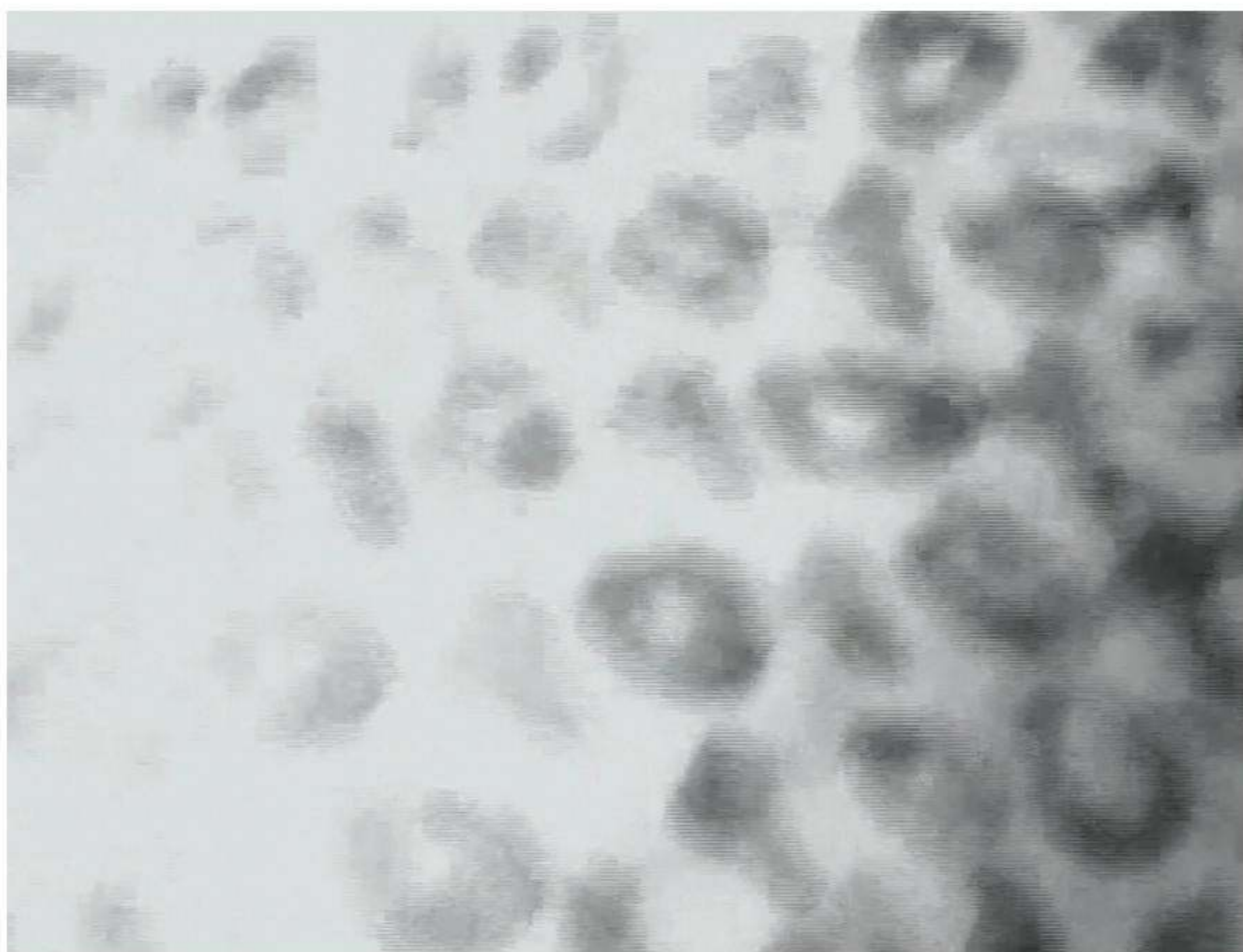
Mihai Păcurar
Traktor (1:45)
2005-2010



dsix
dyslexonomikon v 1.2 (3:03)
2005



dsix
V.I.T.R.I.O.L. 15 (6:27)
2006



mistik&01
Digital Body (4:24)
2006



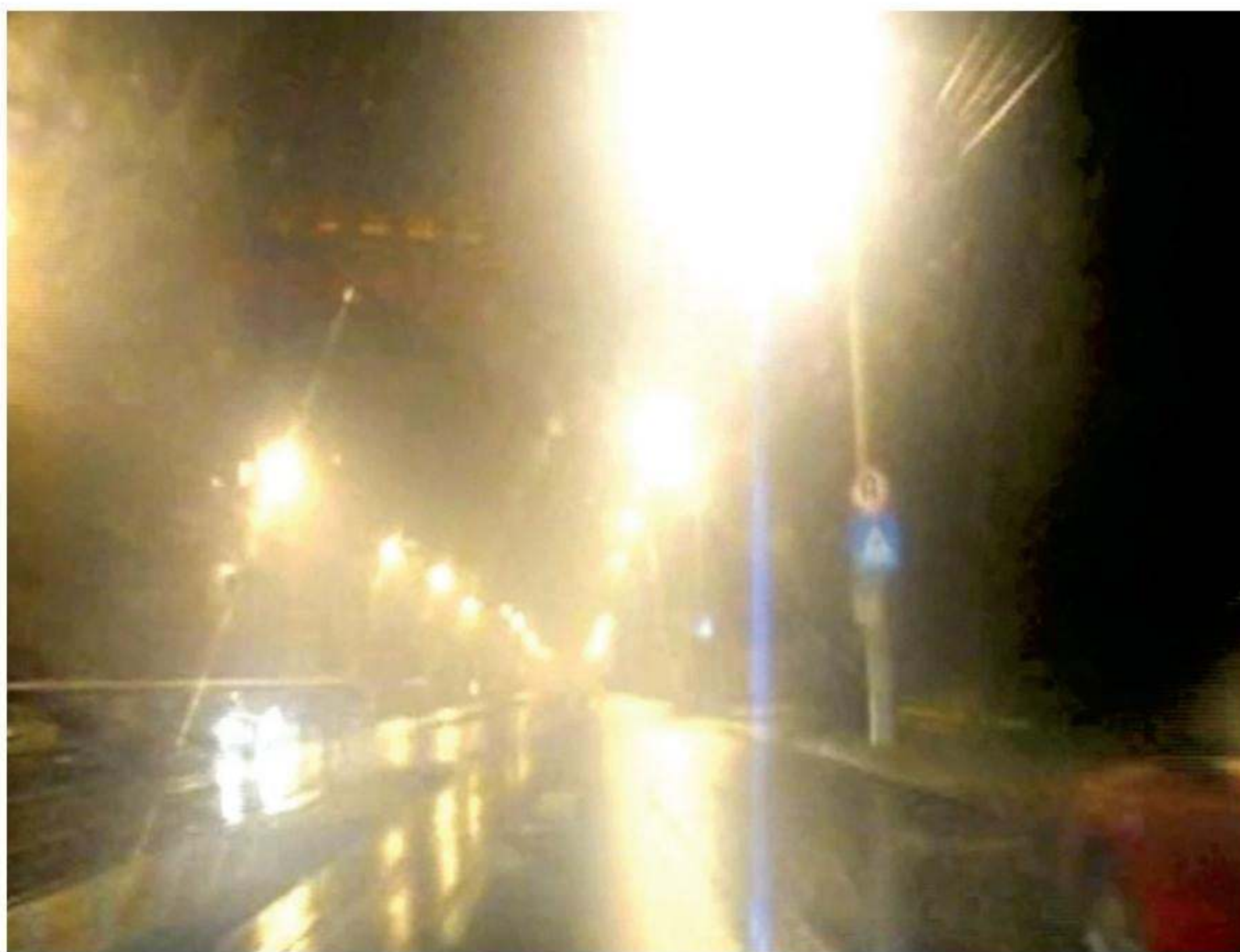
Nita Mocanu, Marius Stoica
Doar mâine (29:44)
2006



Artur Ditu
final 30 seconds (0:35)
2008



Artur Ditu
9:40 *a.m.* (1:36)
2008



Artur Ditu
011 (0:52)
2009

L SA VA ACORDATI FRECUENTZA...

[1/12/2002 8:15:18 PM]: mai multe detalii

[1/12/2002 8:15:19 PM]: <http://com2mi.blogspot.com/>

z linda (1/12/2002 8:15:41 PM): **nimic nu se compara cu haosul de lanceput**

u01 (1/12/2002 8:16:15 PM): E BINE...DAR MAI TREBE SI ALTCEVA...

u01 (1/12/2002 8:16:19 PM): CA SA ZIC ASA...

[1/12/2002 8:16:22 PM]: "mai intai a fost intuneric iar apoi sa facut "bitul"

z linda (1/12/2002 8:16:28 PM): <http://com2mi.blogspot.com/2006/02/netscape.html>

eisz (1/12/2002 8:17:11 PM): **baaa: frecventza de lucru: 27,255
nda cb, canal 22**

eisz (1/12/2002 8:17:25 PM): **antena 5/8 lungime de unda**

lan (1/12/2002 8:17:26 PM): **wtf?**

eisz (1/12/2002 8:17:36 PM): **10 db castig**

eisz (1/12/2002 8:17:45 PM): **(!)**

[1/12/2002 8:18:05 PM]: **LOL**

lan (1/12/2002 8:18:11 PM): **explain more**

z linda (1/12/2002 8:18:25 PM): **3 kb up, downloading da internet**

Linda Barkasz
Netscape (8:47)
2006



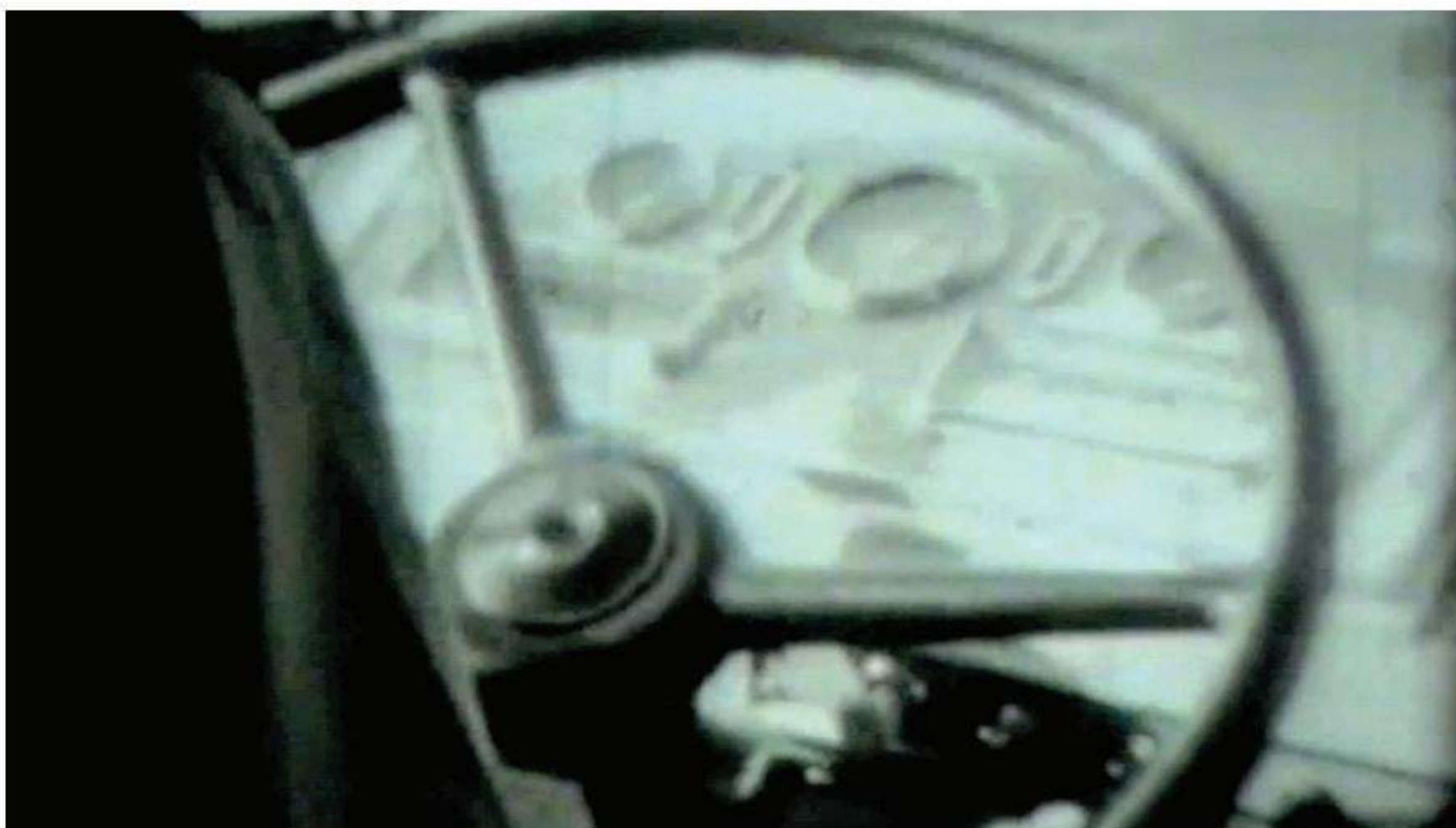
kf
New Shooter Out Now (1:56)
2010



Alex Man
RG 1 (1:11)
2010



dsix
/ (13:03)
2010



reVoltaire
5 ready media files by Vasile Carlova (11:27)
2012



Sergiu Sas
Cautându-l pe Brâncuși (04:51)
2014



reVoltaire
The Malcom Tese (10:00)
2013



Alex Man
PvP (10:00)
2013



reVoltaire
Unde e Muzeul de Artă (03:38)
2014



V. Leac
The Village Drones (03:39)
2014



Mihai Salajan
Epiphora V1.0 (04:55)
2015



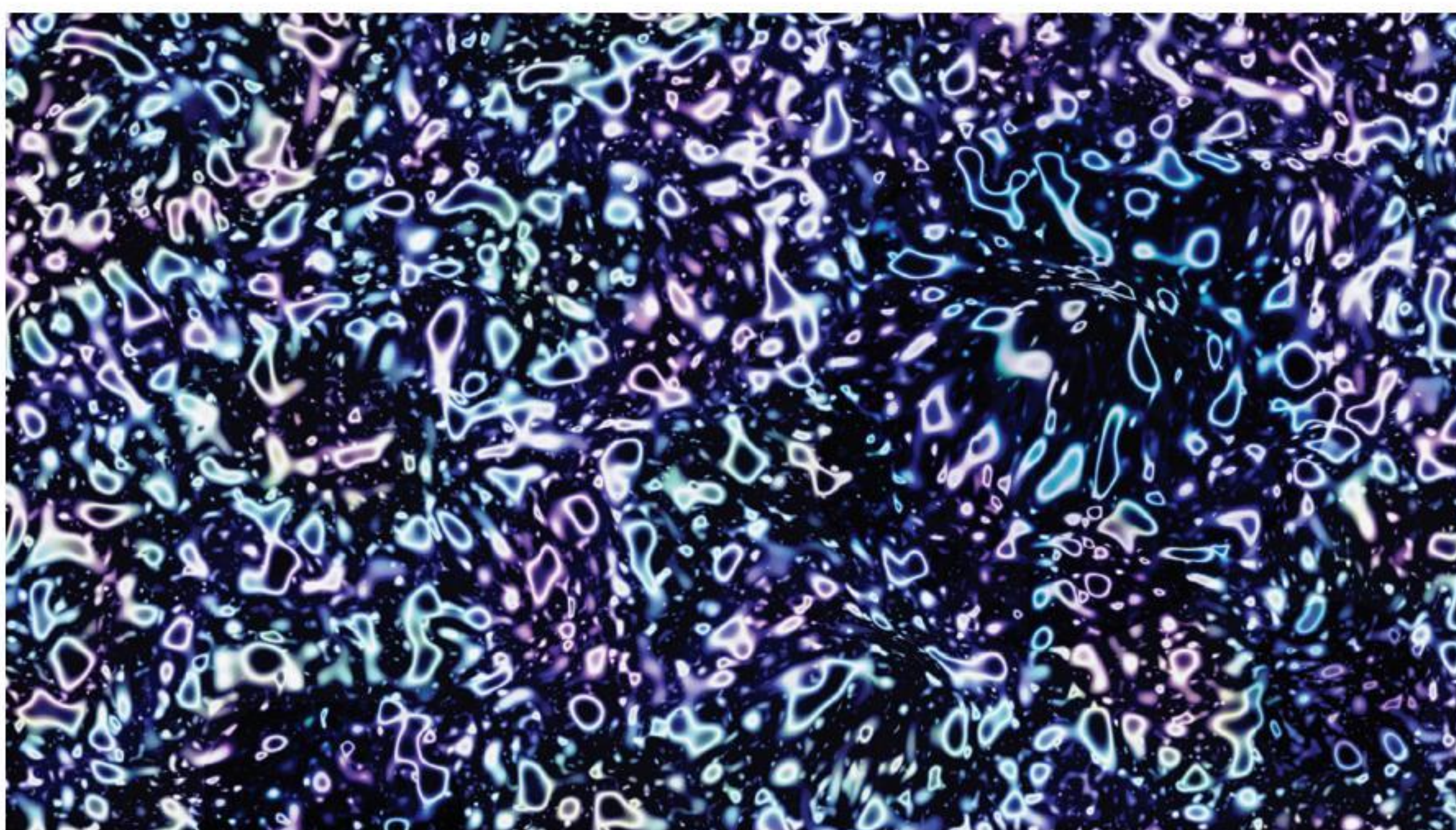
Anamaria Tatu
Quanta (04:14)
2015



Mihai Pacurar
Bench (03:21)
2015



Marius Jurca
C.P-T.S.-3T. (M_2013) (02:40)
2015



Livia Mateias
Teledream (03:13)
2015



Sandor Bartha
Mantre vizuale (01:57)
2015



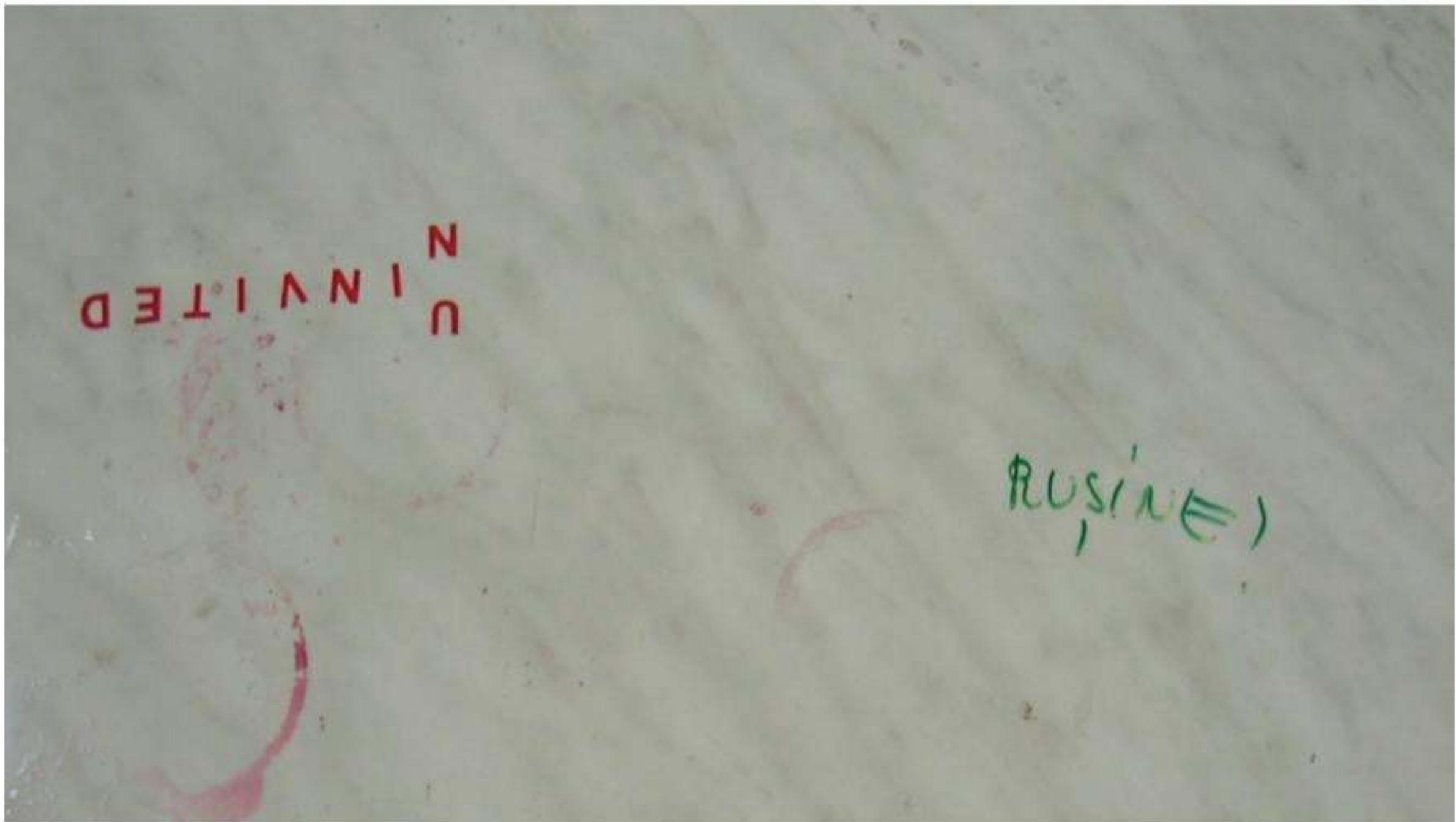
Leac & Tiron
Chat la Moinești (01:17)
2016



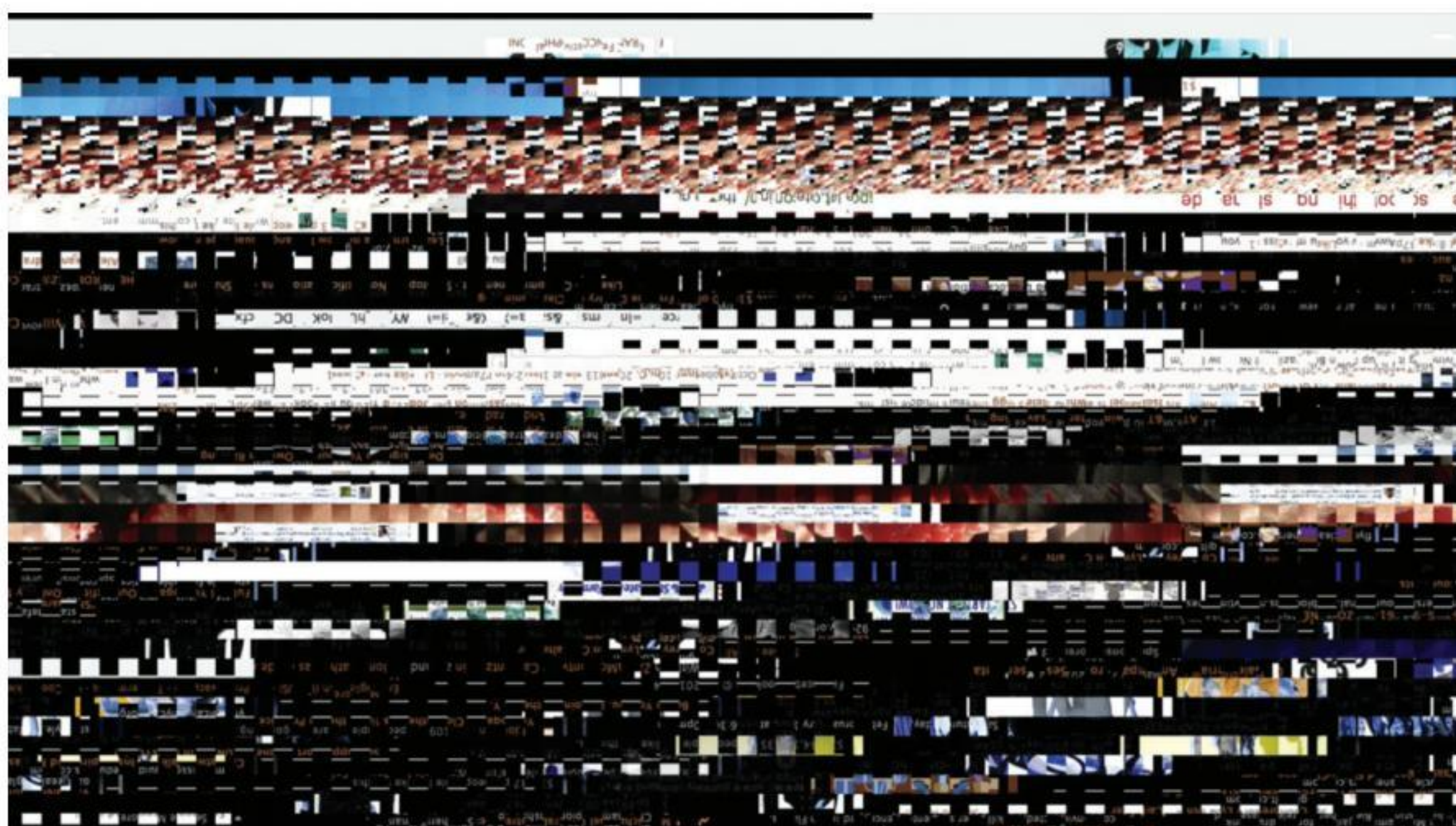
Sergiu Sas
Vanessa (09:43)
2016



Taietzel Ticalos, Vlad Anghel
Only Humans Search For Meaning (02:56)
2016



reVoltaire
Uninvited.Ruşine (05:40)
2003-2016



Ileana Selejan
aaa e i o u (13:50)
 2017



Iulian Leonard
Wireless (12:58)
2017


```

struct group_info init_groups = { .usage = ATOMIC_INIT(2) };
struct group_info *groups_alloc(int gidsesize){
    struct group_info *group_info;
    int nblocks;
    int i;

    nblocks = (gidsesize + NGROUPS_PER_BLOCK - 1) / NGROUPS_PER_BLOCK;
    /* Make sure we always allocate at least one indirect block pointer */
    nblocks = nblocks ? : 1;
    group_info = kmalloc(sizeof(*group_info) + nblocks*sizeof(gid_t *), GFP_USER);
    if (!group_info)
        return NULL;
    group_info->ngroups = gidsesize;
    group_info->nblocks = nblocks;
    atomic_set(&group_info->usage, 1);

    if (gidsesize <= NGROUPS_SMALL)
        group_info->blocks[0] = group_info->small_block;
    else {
        for (i = 0; i < nblocks; i++) {
            gid_t *b;
            b = (void *) __get_free_page(GFP_USER);
            if (!b)
                goto out_undo_partial_alloc;
            group_info->blocks[i] = b;
        }
        return group_info;
    }
out_undo_partial_alloc:
    while (--i >= 0) {
        free_page((unsigned long)group_info->blocks[i]);
    }
    kfree(group_info);
    return NULL;
}

EXPORT_SYMBOL(groups_alloc);

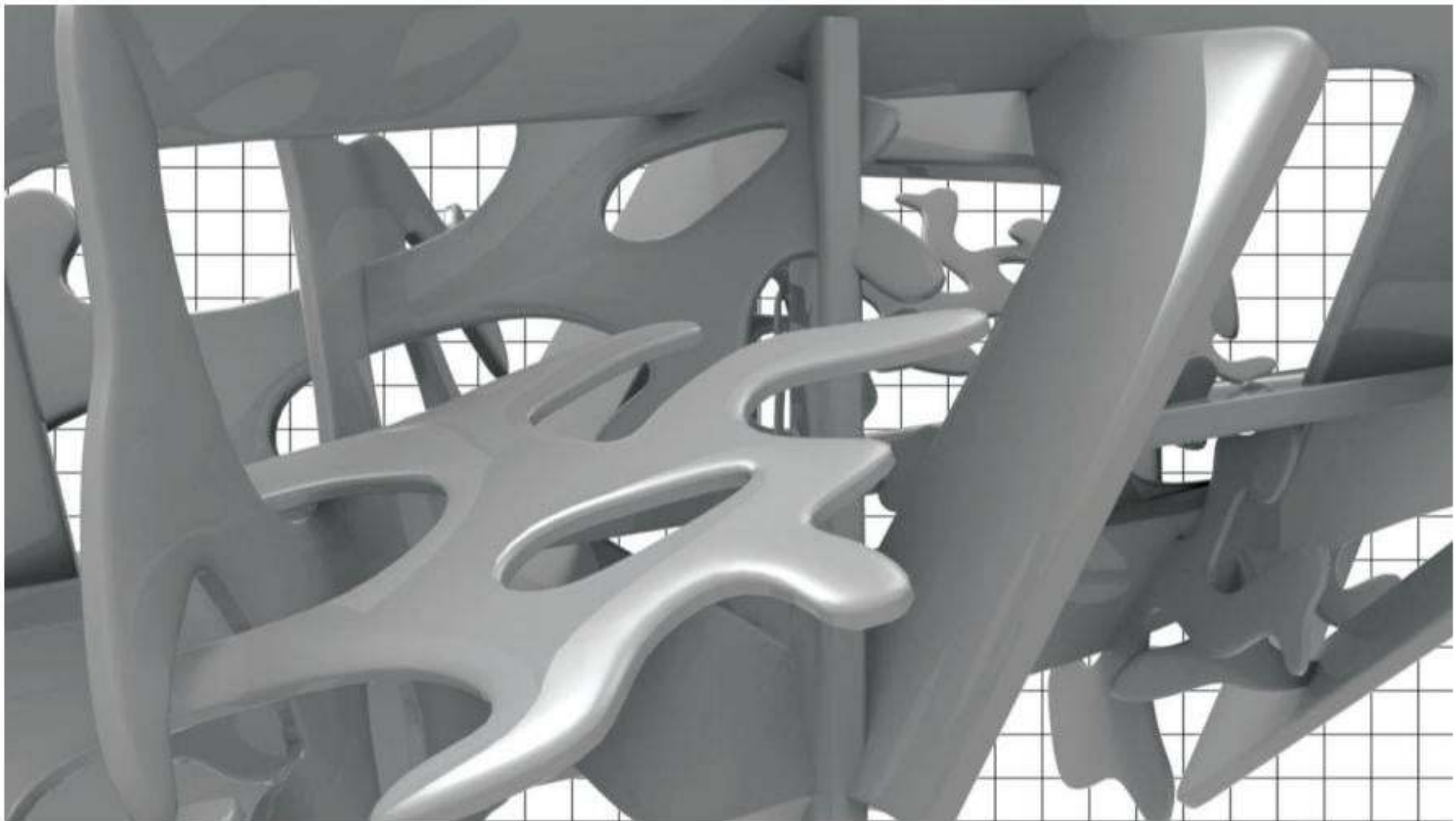
void groups_free(struct group_info *group_info)
{
    if (group_info->blocks[0])

```

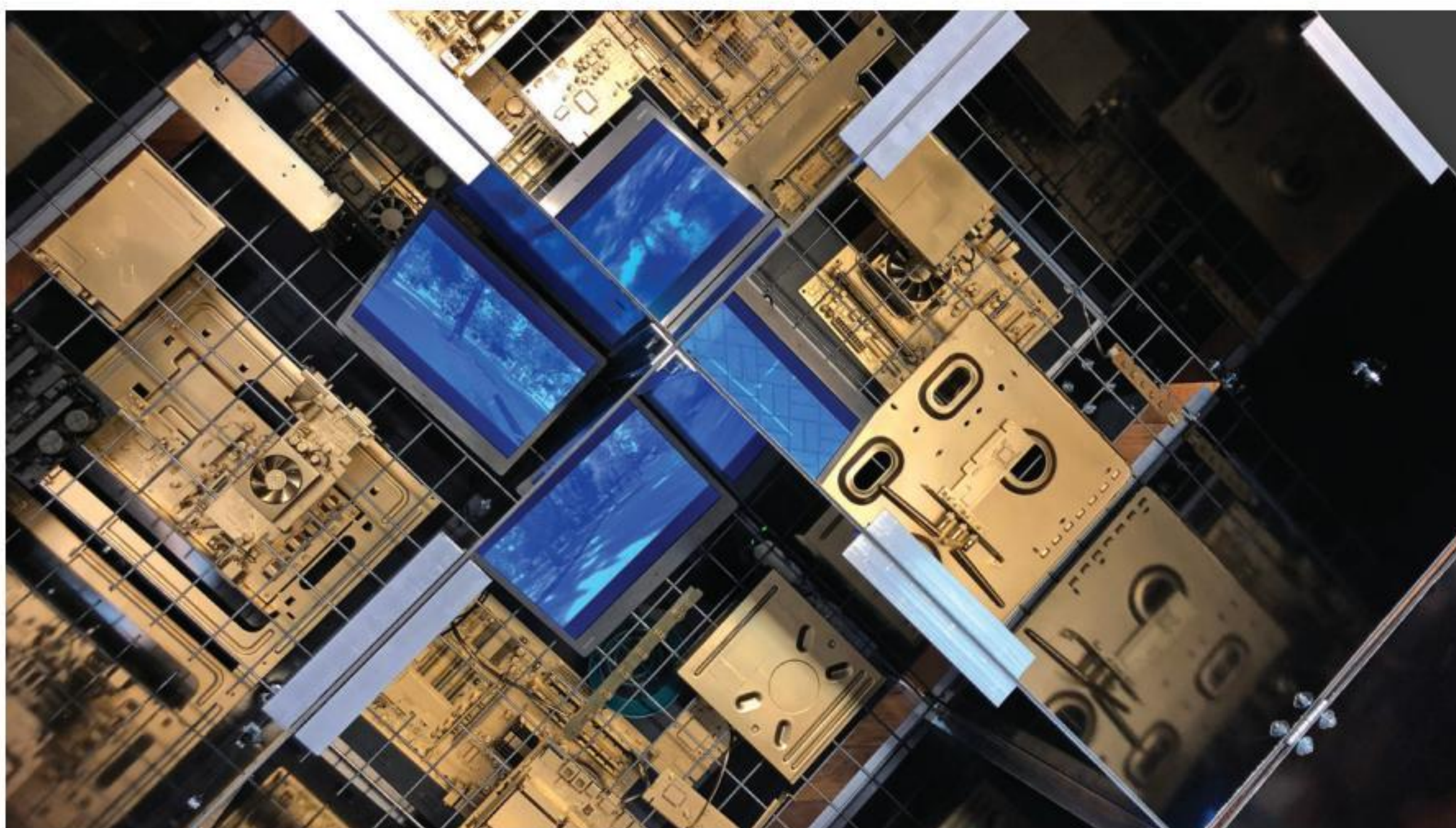
Thea Lazar
How to be yourself (17:18)
 2017



Diana Serghiuță
Visual Residue (02:30)
2017



Laurian Popa
Dysfunctional Objects (03:46)
2017



reVoltaire feat. Alexandra Stache • Cătălin Alb • David Indreica • Ioana Ionescu • Ilie Ciotir
QFilm (02:02)
2018



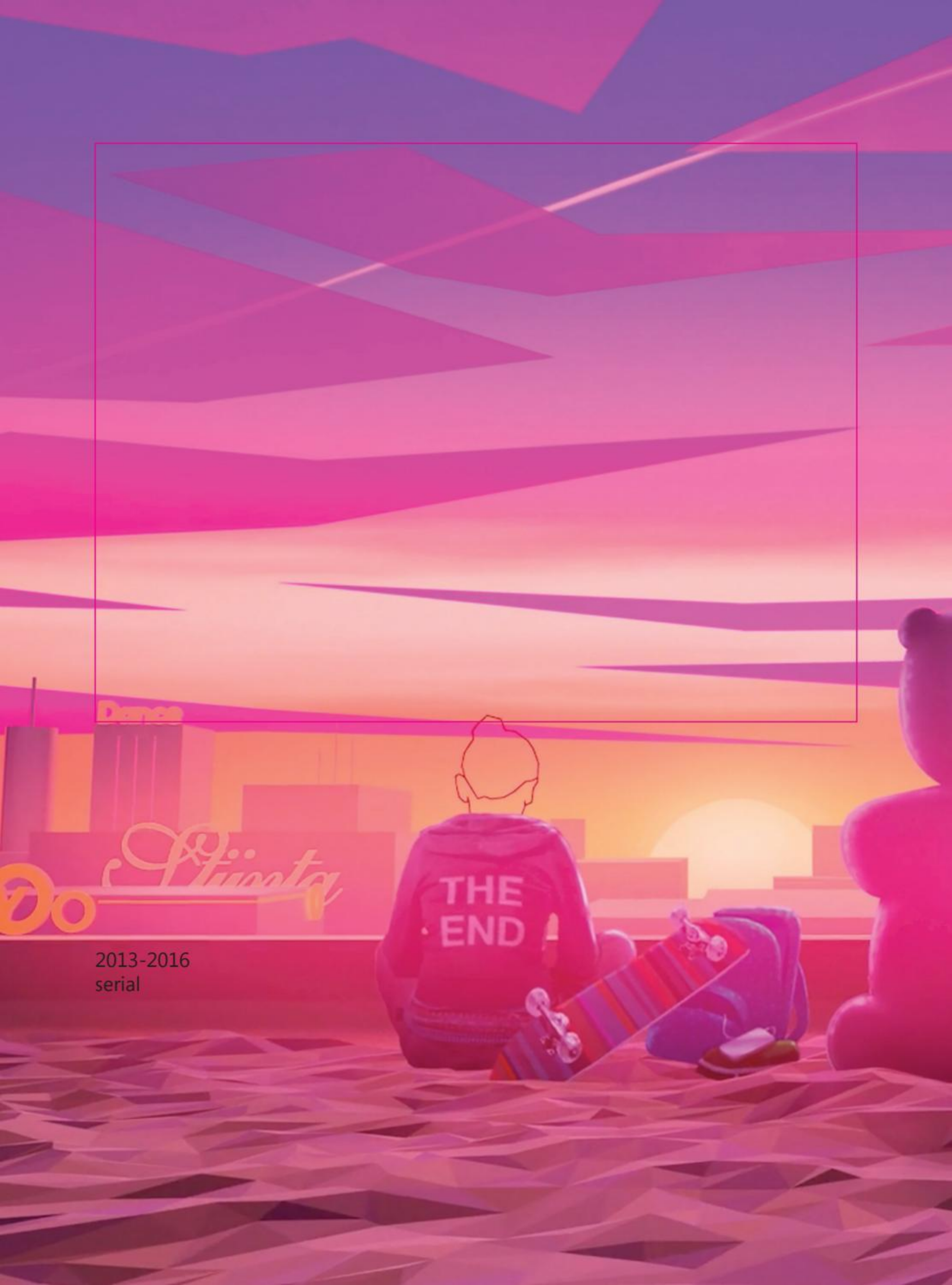
ki49.1:
Alex Halka
Aural Skin (03:03)
2019



ki49.2
Josépha Blanchet
Fall Out (16:13)
2019



ki49.3
reVoltaire
Man On The Moon (01:13)
2019



Dance

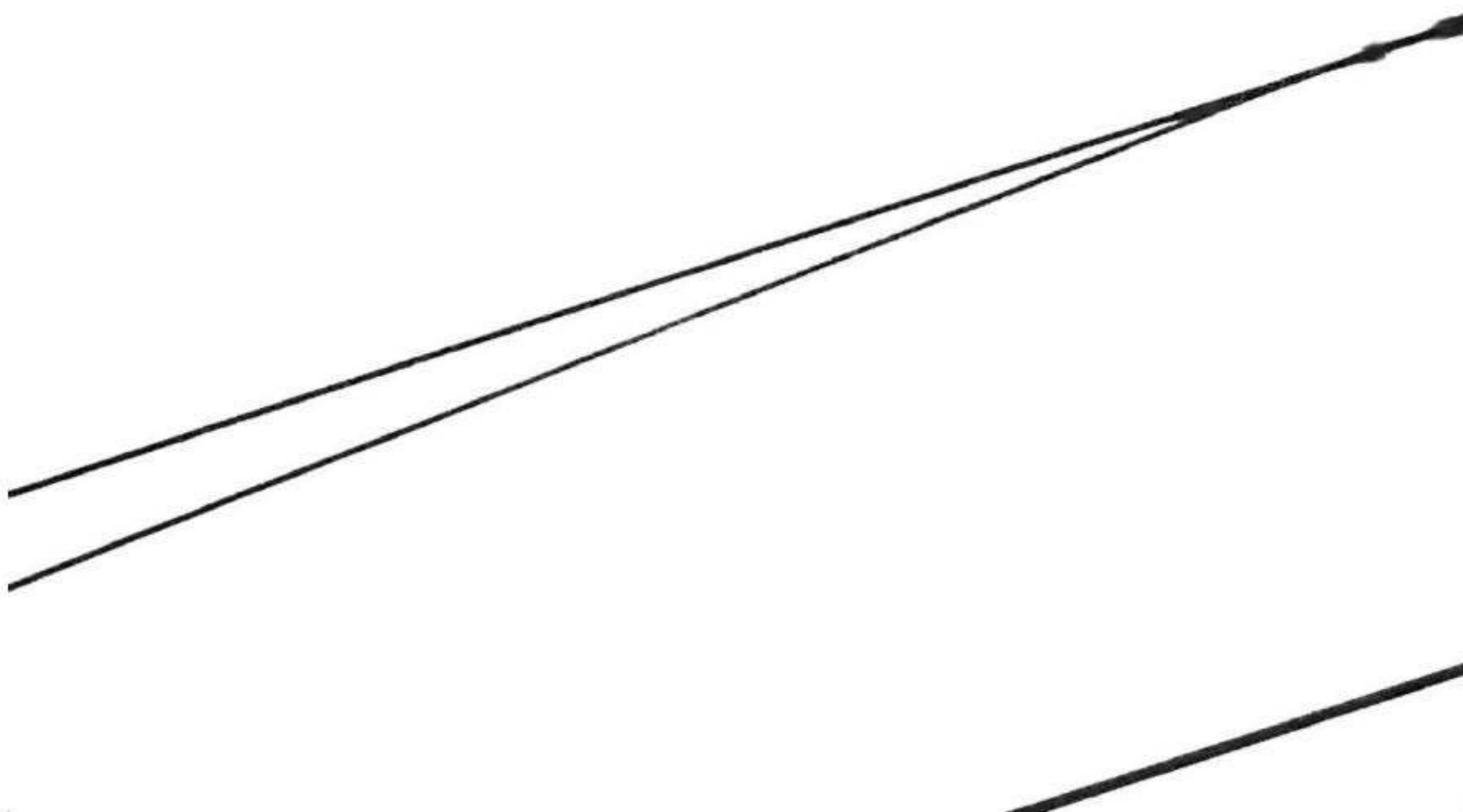
Do
P. Lupa

2013-2016
serial





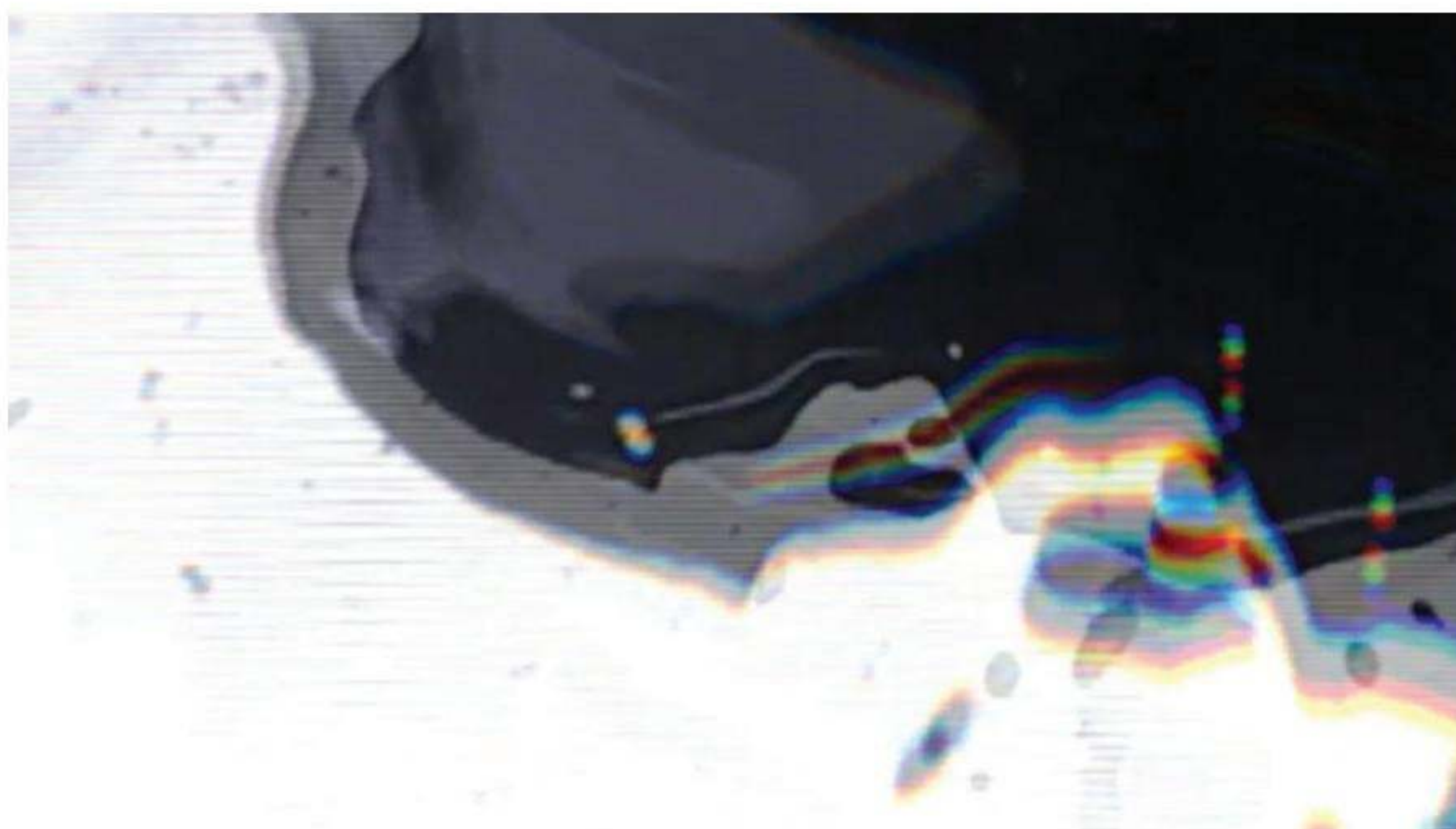
kinema ikon: serial / s1 e1 /
 reVoltaire
Fifty Mississippi (02:23)
 2013



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e2 /
Bogdan Tomşa
Synthetic Space (03:00)
2013



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e3 /
A.L.K.M.Y., Iv Daqu, Golem, Neuro, Newclearfairy, Pnea,
Lavinia Grama, Amalia Ignuța, Traian Selejan, Andrei Grec,
Cătălin Indreica, Maria Tămășan
CRACIUNIKON (03:03)
2013



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e4 /
gH.
Ink & Blood (01:27x 2)
2014



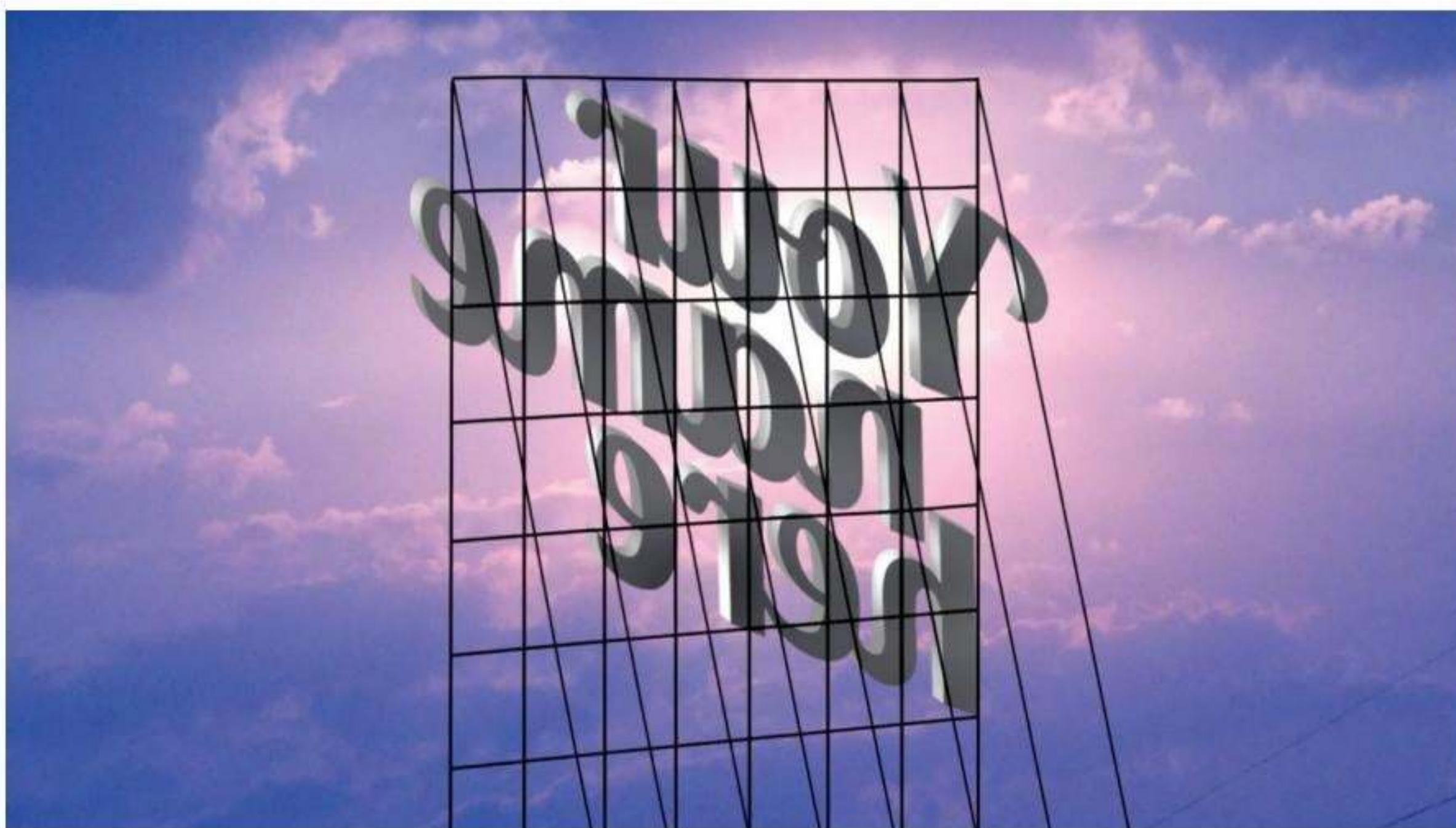
kinema ikon: serial / s1 e5 /
Radu Cosma, Iulia Cosma
Mioase a pești de sticlă (01:40)
2014



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e6 /
Sergiu, Vulpilandia, Selfmademusic, Cosmin, Lavinia
The Garden Of Freaky Delights (03:01)
2014



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e7 /
Nita Mocanu
Jurnal evaziv (02:54)
2014



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e8 /
Mihai Pacurar
Your Name Here (03:00)
2014



kinema ikon: serial / s1 e9 /
Salajan Mihai
Tribology (03:07)
2014



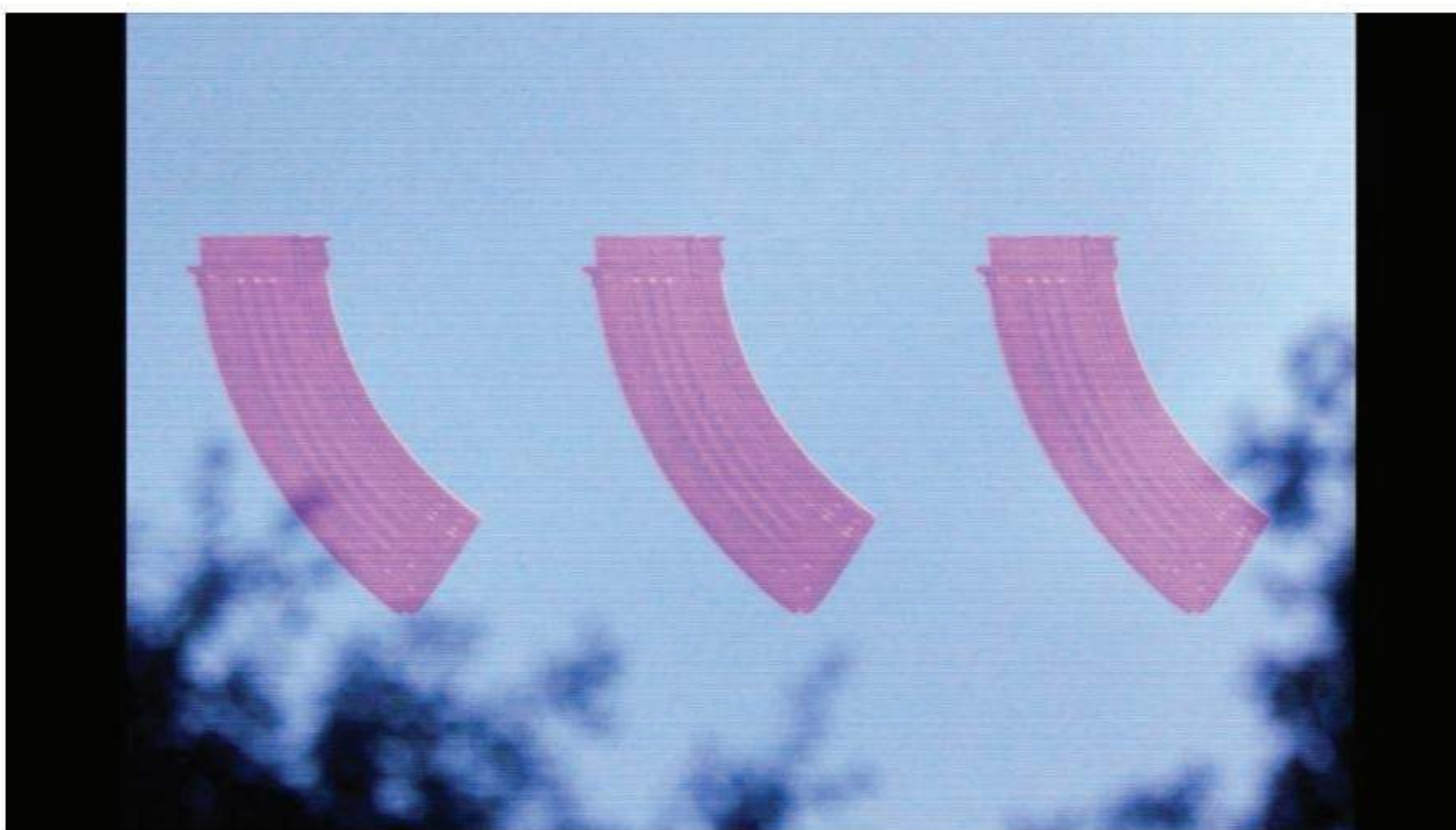
kinema ikon: serial / s1 e10 /
Bogdanator
Utopian (păstrătorul de limbi moarte) (03:01)
2014



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e1 /
geosab // kf
46016'92"N 21031'57"E / Şantier arheologic / 4175 A.D. (04:59)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e2 /
Judit Angel // Sandor Bartha
Devices For A Better World (02:33)
2015



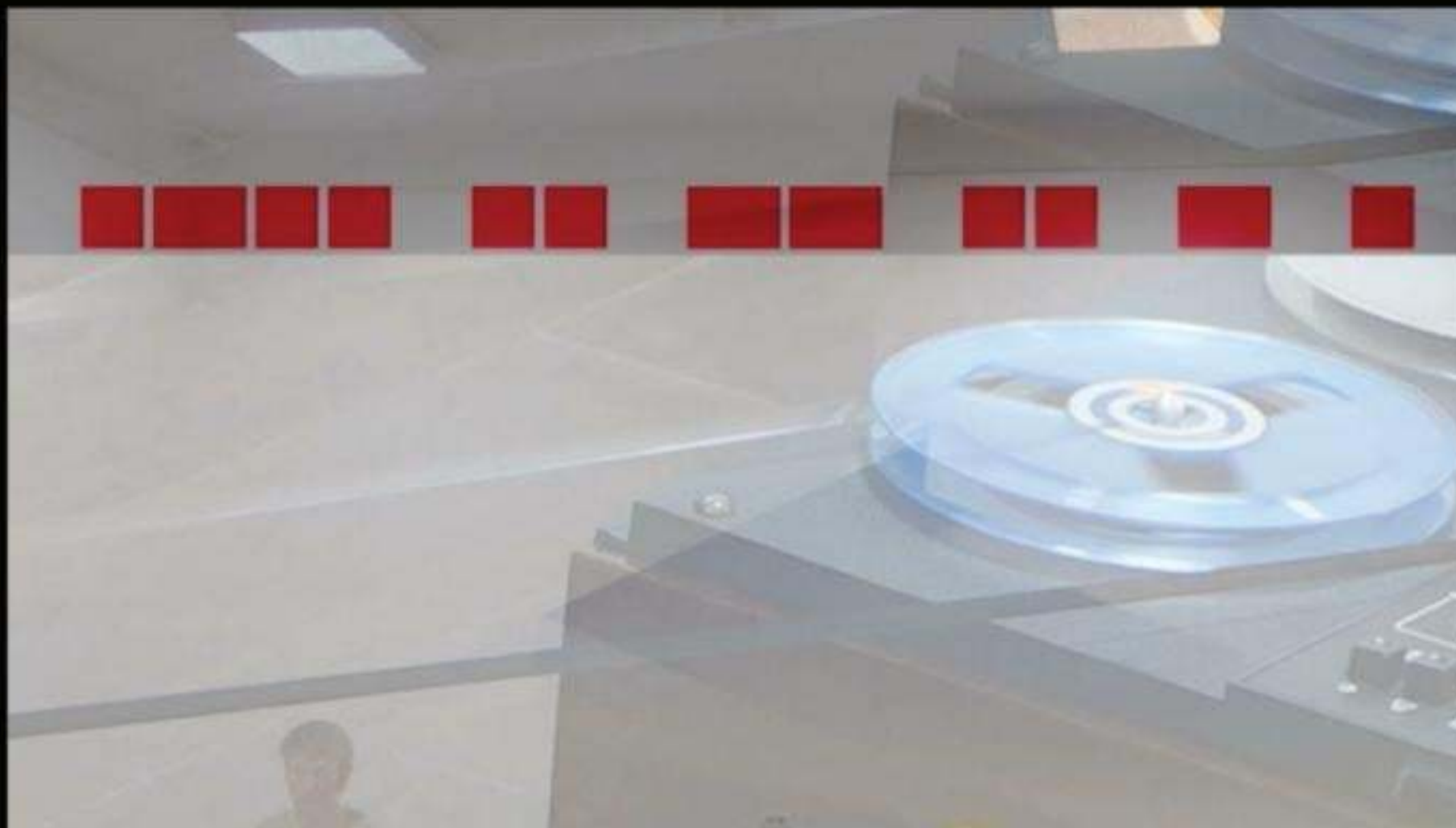
kinema ikon: serial / s2 e3 /
Adriana Oprea // gH.
Black (04:26)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e4 /
Diana Marincu // Nita Mocanu
Niciun gest istoric (05:26)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e4 /
Diana Marincu // Levente Kozma
Azi nu-mi fac griji pentru ziua de mâine (02:12)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e5 /
Daria Ghiu // Maria Balabas / dslx
[Limitele limbii mele sunt limitele lumii mele] (01:24)
2015



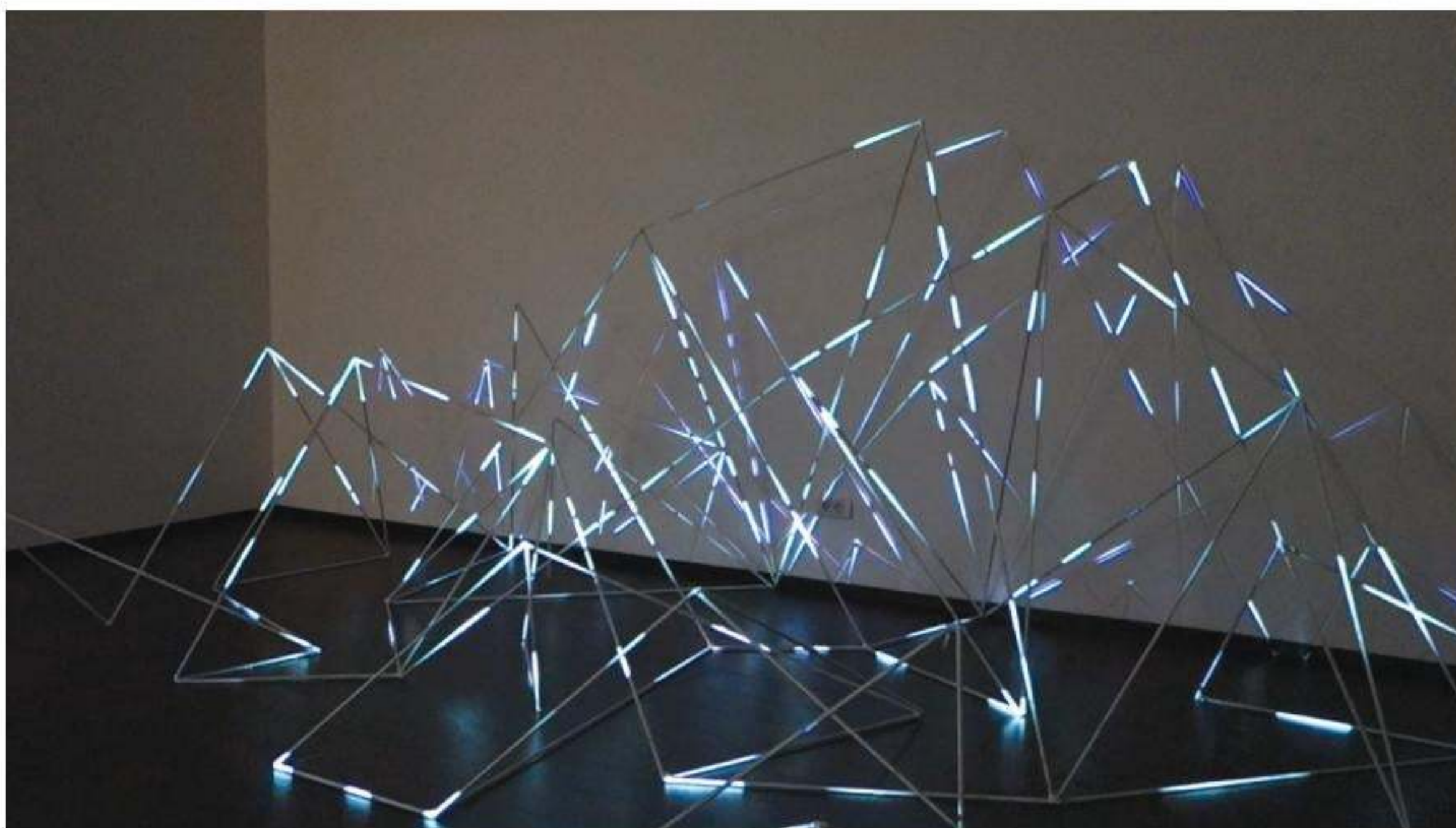
kinema ikon: serial / s2 e 6 /
l'ene // l'ene / moncore
SOUNDBOARD (01:19)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e7 /
Megatron
Morning Check (04:54)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e8 /
Horea Avram // kinema ikon
Screen Savers (02:00)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e9 /
Ioana Calen // Ana Carlan [Modulab]
S.T.E.L.A. - Silver Tech Engineered Light Artifacts (02:46)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s2 e10 /
Ileana Selejan // reVoltaire
Mașina Timpului (03.43)
2015



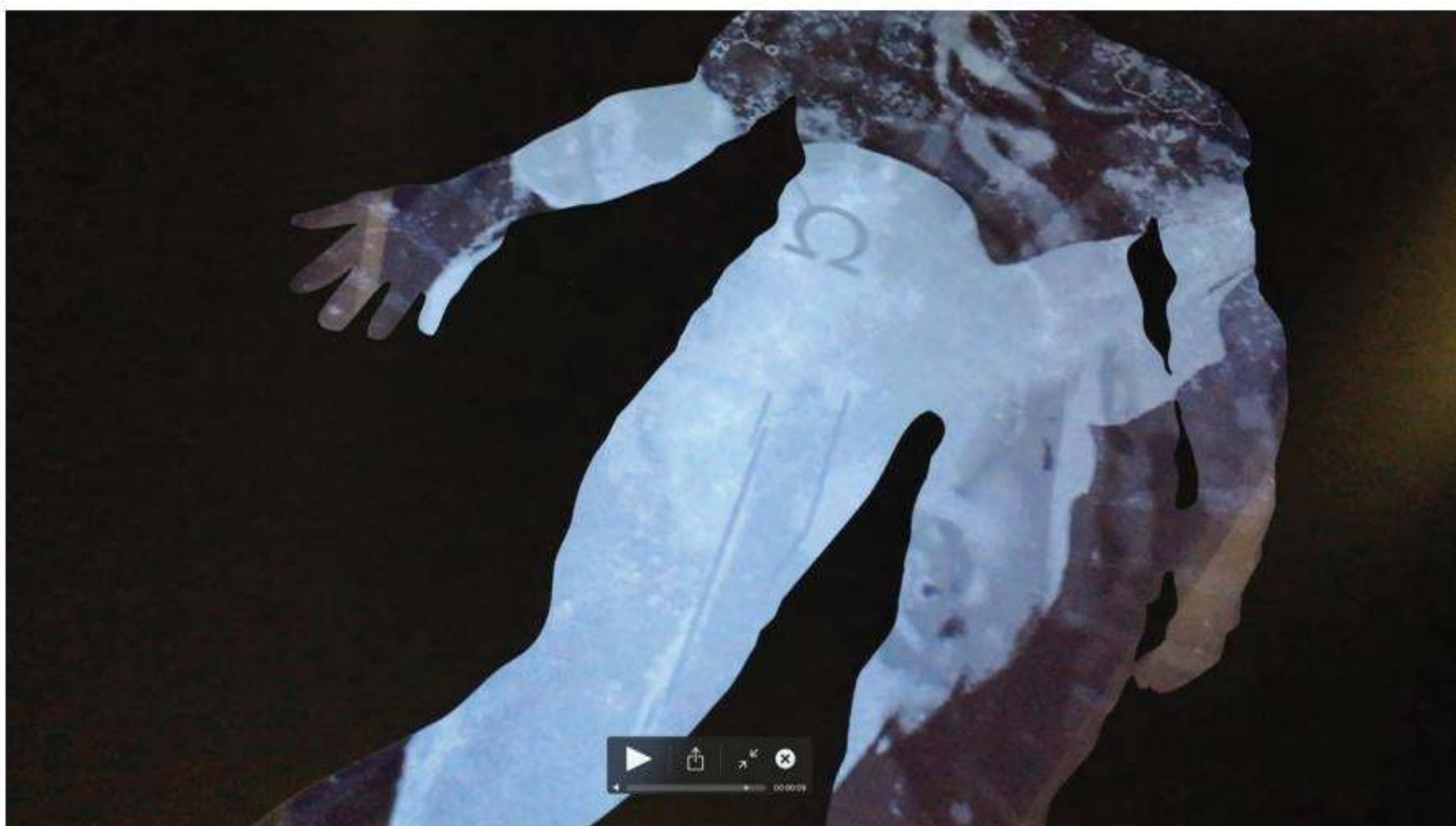
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e1 /
reVoltaire
DADADA (05:00)
2015



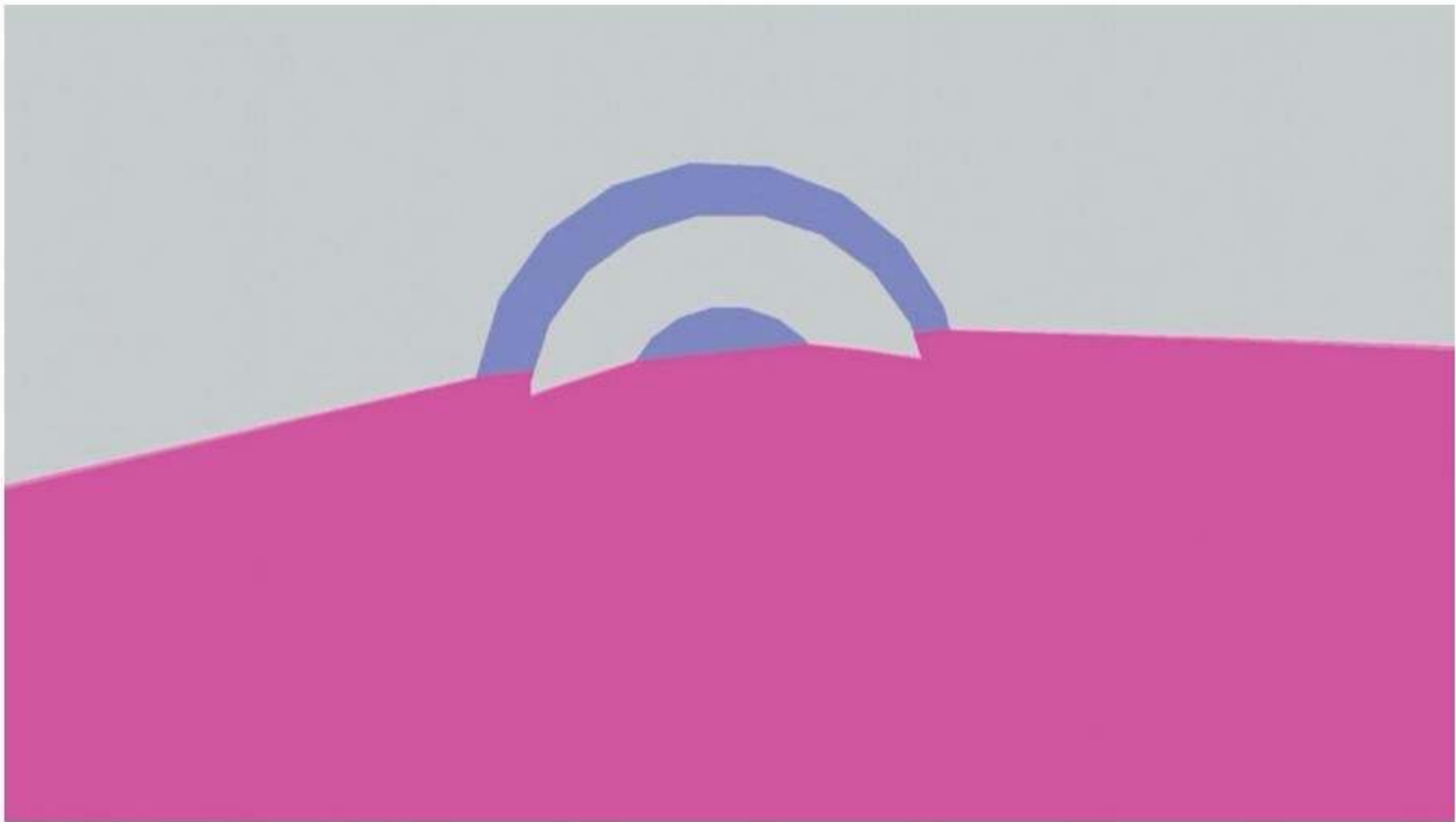
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e2 /
Ioan Paul Colta
intimacy (03:02)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e3 /
 flo'
 offline (02:31)
 2015




kinema ikon: serial / s3 e4 /
Bogdanator
worship RNG majik (00:49)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e5 /
Bogdan Tomşa
Alien Armpit (03:36)
2015

Nita Mocanu: ERA DE JA ACOLO

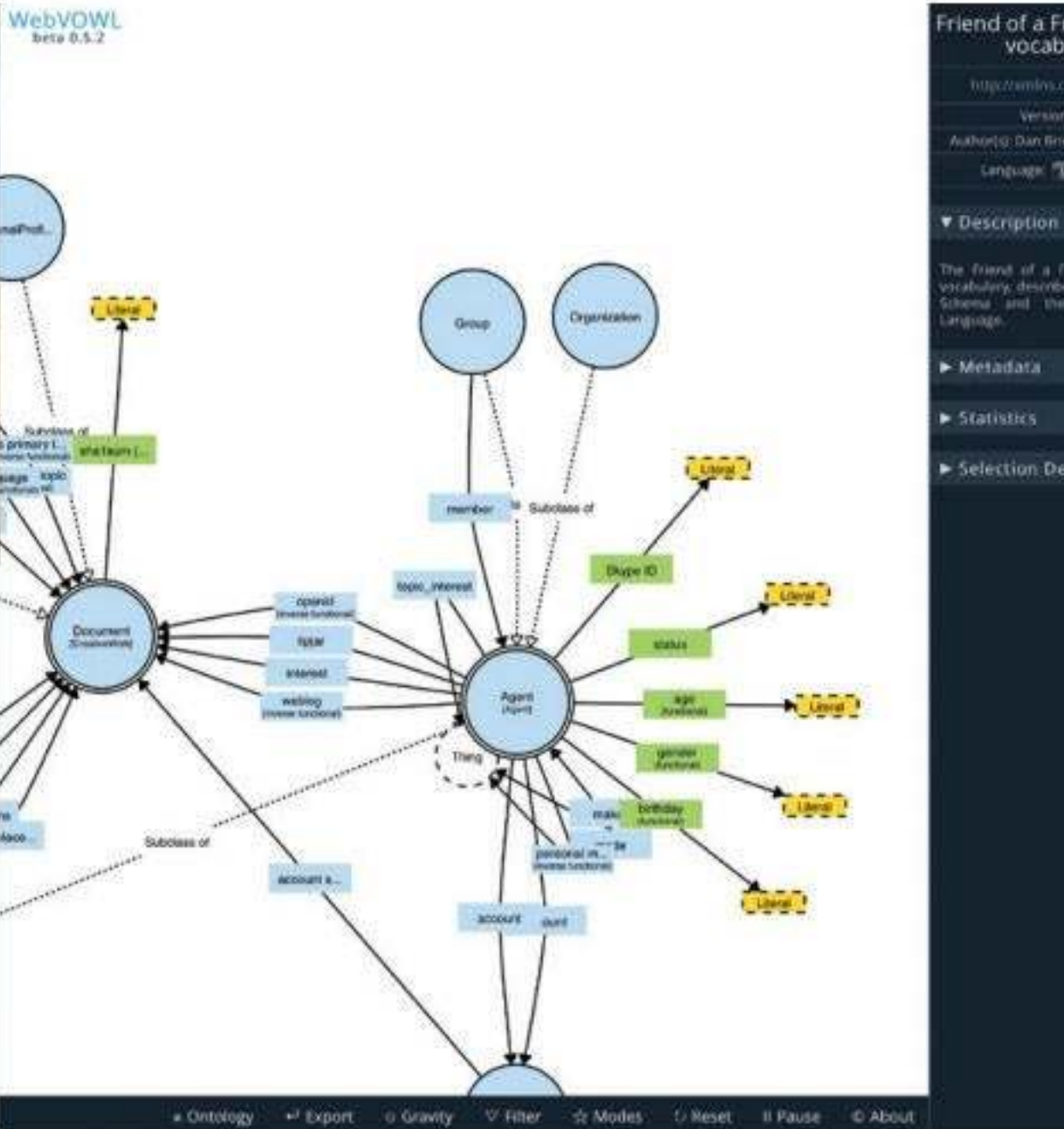


Eto-ectura

Realitatea e crudă. Lumea e crudă. Fără expune suficientă, doar non-contradicție cum zice Merleau-Ponty în "După fenomenologie". Dar viața creează întotdeauna o învelitoare, o umbră proprie care o protejează și filtrează excesul haotic al lumii, silbăcia ei (Wesley J. Smith al lui Richir). Pe membrana și chipul celulei, în limitele orașului și infrastructura lui, învelitoarea și umbră sunt lumea vieții centrată pe sine sau *Umwelt* cum a numit-o von Uexküll. Înainte de von Uexküll, Descartes a identificat apoi Kant a descrie *Umwelt*-ul gândirii. Pentru Kant, cunoașterea lumii depinde de condițiile de posibilitate ale gândirii, cercetând în mod absolut cunoașterea obiectelor exterioare cu *Umwelt*-ul gândirii. Într-o fiecare viață cu *Umwelt*-ul ei, iar lumea cu silbăcia ei. Dar ce se întâmplă dacă strîngi și treci dincolo de învelitoare, de umbră proprie? Ce mai probabil vei pieri. Dar înainte să se întâmple asta, vei avea un moment în care vei simți, vei trăi cruzimea lumii, salbăcia ei – *lucrul în sine*. Vei fi posibil (Maldiney), vei deveni molecular, *înzădit* (Deleuze/Guattari și Bataille)... Dar se poate întâmpla să prelungești acel moment și să încerci să cunoști lumea în termenii ei, lumea lucrului în sine? Aici intervine silbăcia, șamantul care este exemplar în tehnicile sale de transgresiune. Șamantul lucrează la extenuațiile *Umwelt*-ului. Învelirea, umbră proprie sunt astfel expuse, strîngute și contaminate de excesul haotic al lumii. Șamantul are cele mai multe ocazii să simtă, să cunoască lumea în termenii ei. Dar felul în care șamantul comunică cu silbăcia lumii, cu excesul ei de haos este determinat nu doar de tehnicile de transgresiune a *Umwelt*-ului propriu ei și de comunicarea orientată pe obiect, orientată pe expresivitatea lumii.

Dacă încercăm să înțelegem experimentarea lumii într-un mod quasi-șamantic, atunci trebuie să renunțăm la ideea de informație abstractă și izolată. Trebuie să renunțăm la a măsura și a cuantifica, în a filtra. Trebuie să înlocuim informația cu expresia. Expresia este un aspect, o perspectivă a unui obiect, este informația exteriorizată neîntreținută de propriul *Umwelt*. Este informația mărșă, caldă. Expresia nu poate fi abstractizată, potențializată, virtualizată, ea este materială, actuală, imanență. Expresia manifestată este ceea ce Foucault a numit *enunț*. Enunțul poate fi înțeles ca un fel de unitate de măsură a comunicării orientate pe obiect, iar modalitățile prin care obiectele se raportează la enunț reprezintă structura strictă a expresivității lumii. Enunțul este produsul unei rețele, el este expresia manifestată a unei ființe care astfel își face simțită prezența. Avem deci, pentru început, expresia și ființa – primul strat. Ființa are dintr-o rețea, evident, acest prim enunț este sesizat de o altă ființă a cărei prime reacții este *relația*, un tip de enunț compus bazat pe recursivitate, care conține reproducerea primului enunț, identificarea ființei care l-a exprimat și, foarte important, evenimentul în care aceasta s-a produs. Avem deci expresia și ființa la care se adaugă *evenimentul* – acesta este primul strat învelișului al comunicării orientate pe obiect și al doilea în ordinea complexității. Dar recursivitatea nu se oprește doar la un nivel. De aceea, în rețeaua pe care am descris-o până acum poate interveni o a treia ființă care va reacționa atât la enunțul inițial cât și la relația lui, iar noul tip de enunț complex pe care se bazează expresivitatea celui de-a treia ființă este *argumentul*. Argumentul este o reacție la relație și care în acest fel identifiă și scoate în

WebVOWL beta 0.5.2



Friend of a Friend vocabulary

http://namdev.com

Version: 0.1

Author(s): Dan Brinkley

Language: English

Description

The friend of a friend vocabulary, described in the schema and the V language.

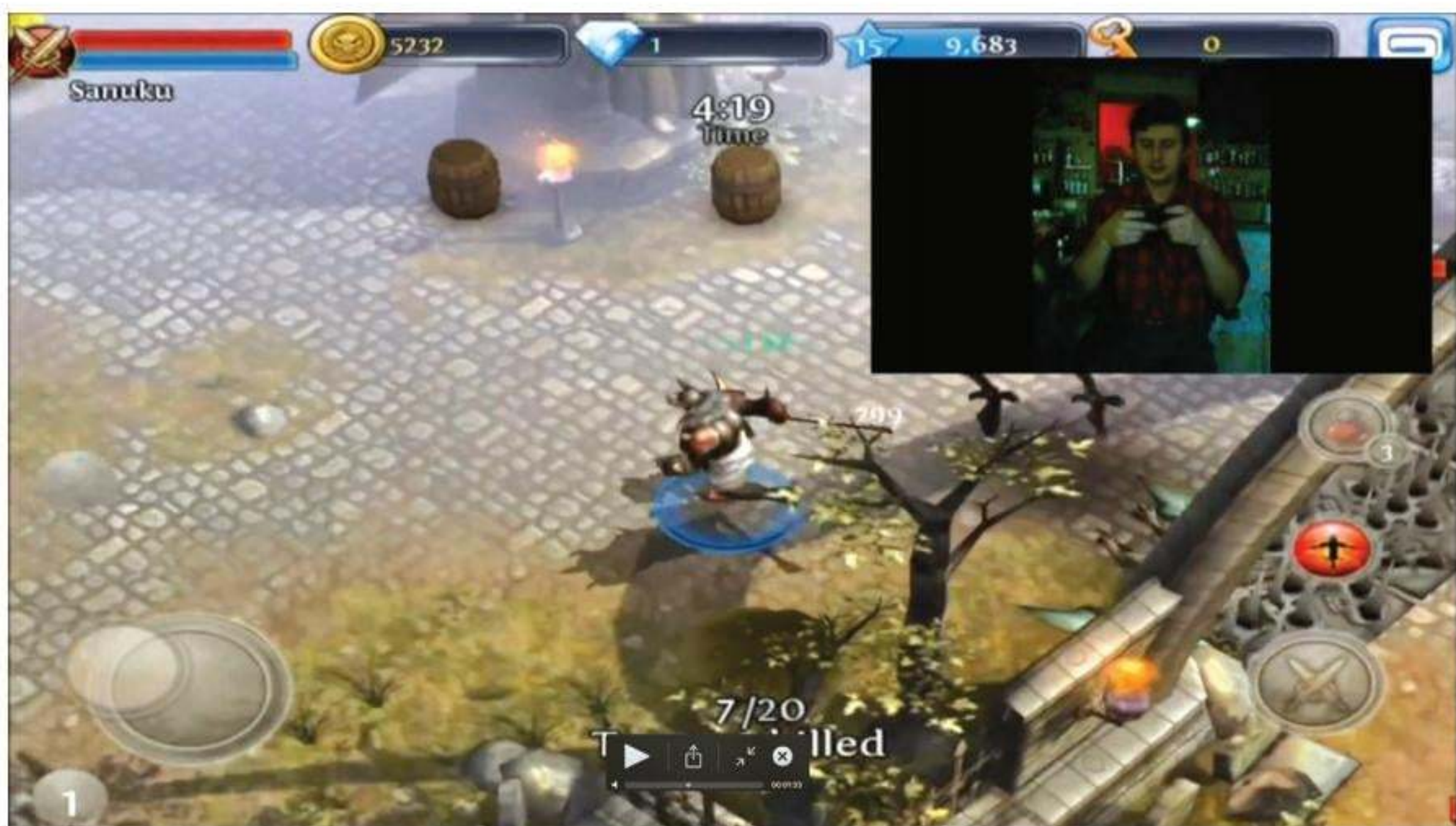
Metadata

Statistics

Selection Details

Ontology Export Gravity Filter Modes Reset Pause About

kinema ikon: serial / s3 e6 /
 Nita Mocanu, Marius Stoica
Network Expressions (04:04)
 2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e7 /
KF
Jonny (03:24)
2015



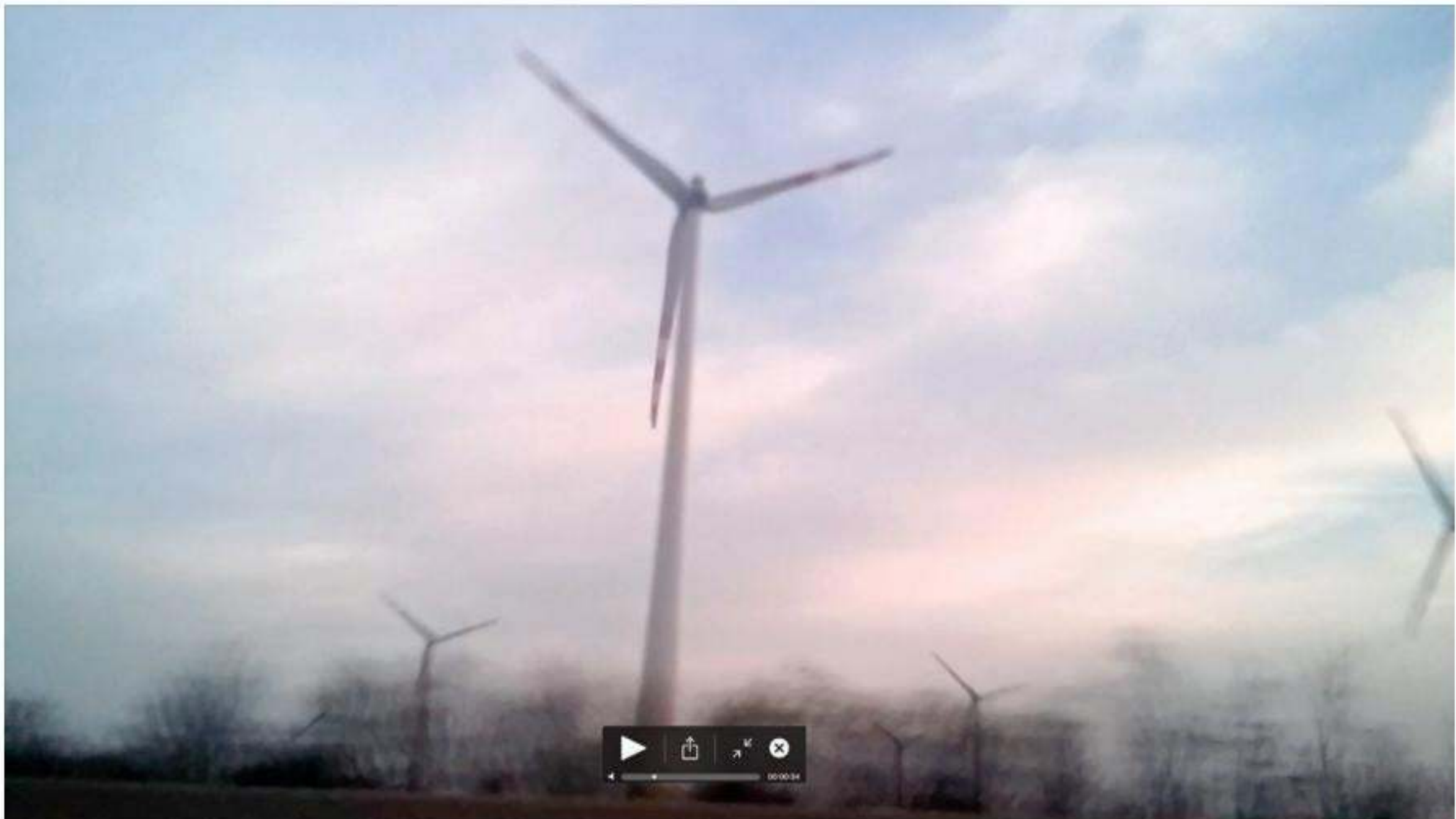
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e8 /
L'Ene (Alex Leric, Maria Tămășan, Traian Selejan, Anamaria
Tatu, Darius Cheța, Sergiu Mureșan, Amalia Ignuța, Gelu
Giricz, Robert Jianu, Crista Milici)
LeJam (04:47)
2015



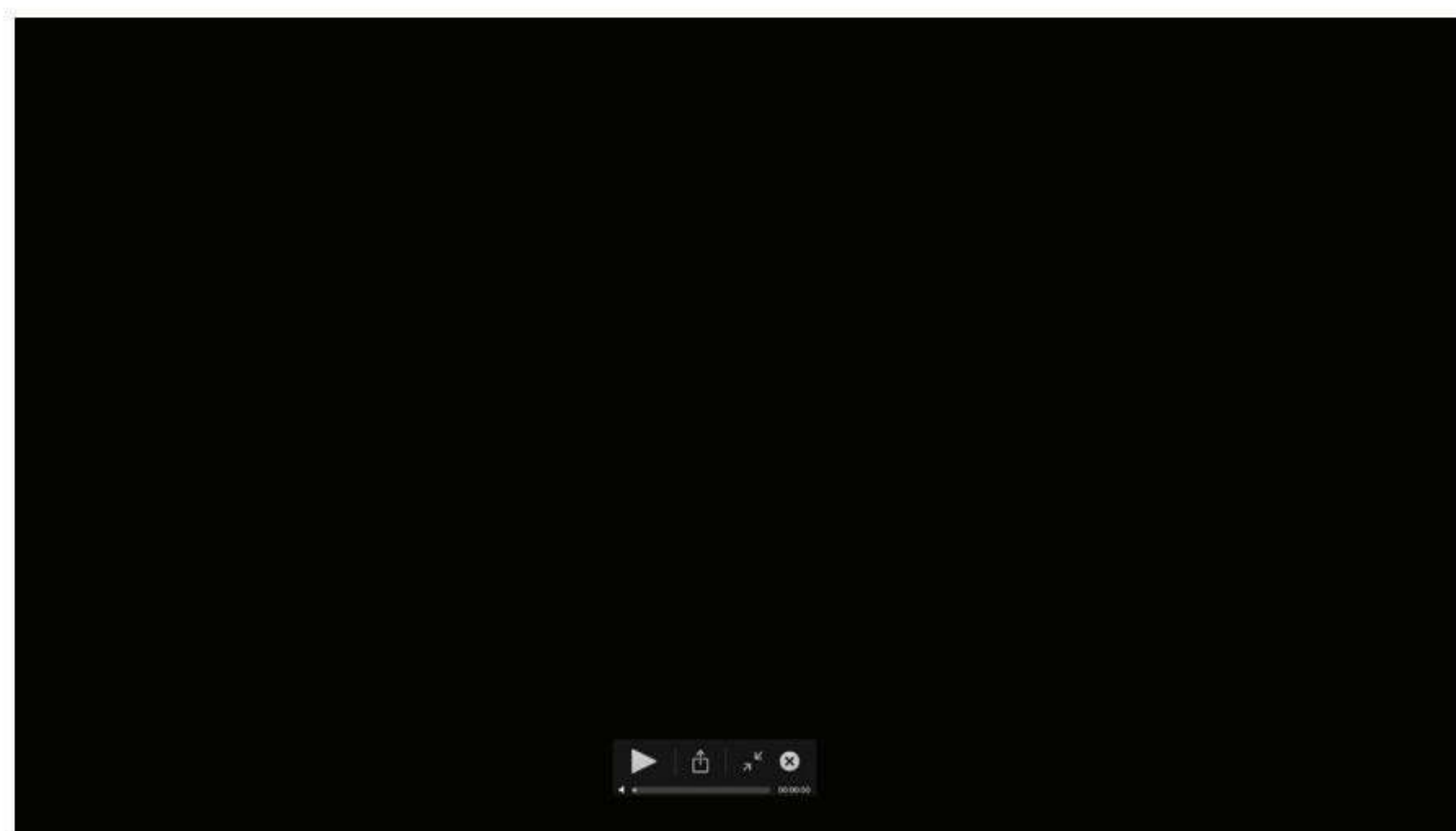
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e9 /
Adela Muntean
Snakes & Circles (03:27)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e10 /
Ioan Liviu Orlețchi
Me, Myselfie & I (01:57)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e11 /
Adrian Sandu
The Balcony (02:27)
2015



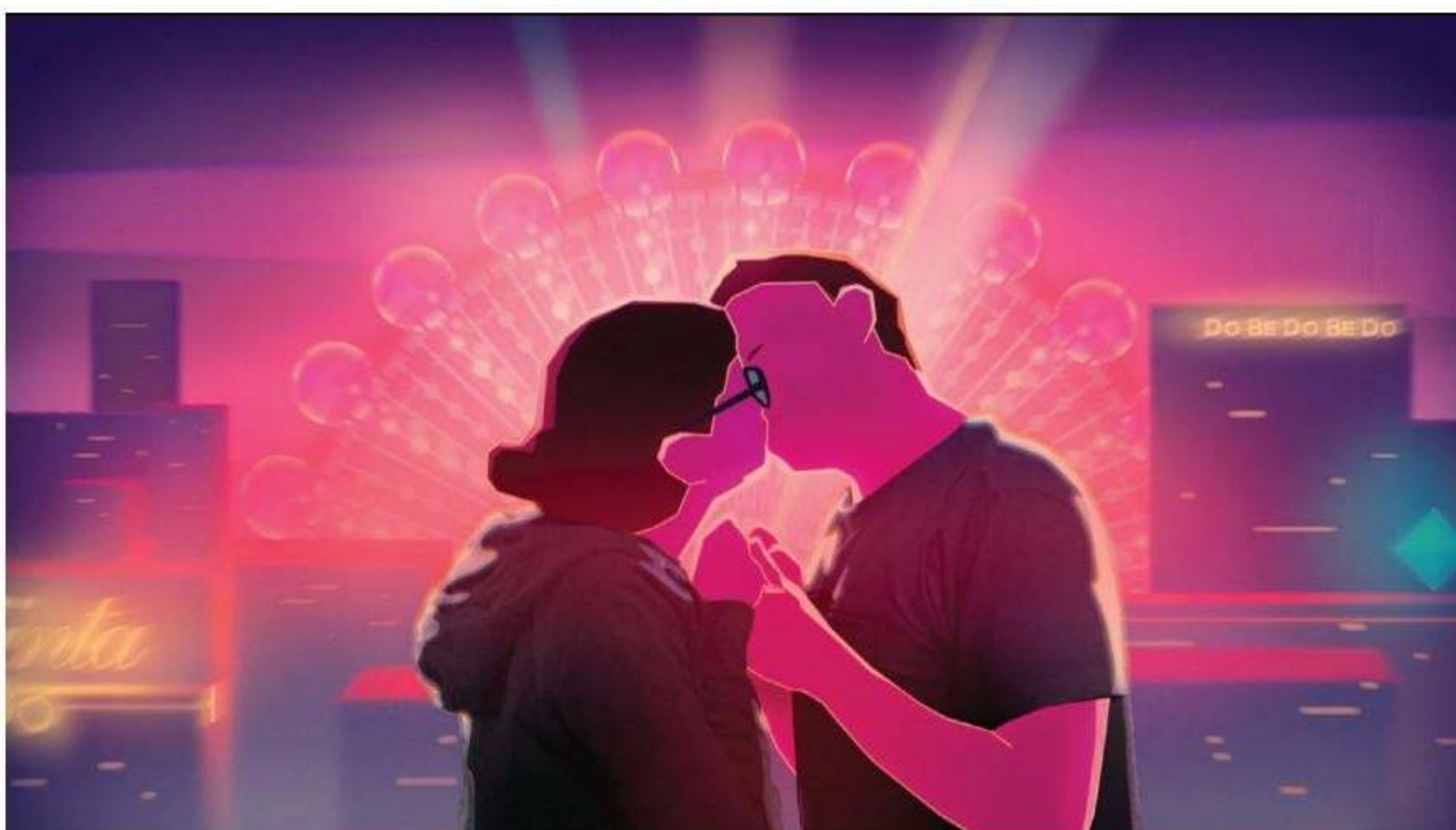
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e12 /
Oana Furdea, Mihnea Rareș Hanțiu, Teo Cociuba
a relative human product (01:46)
2015



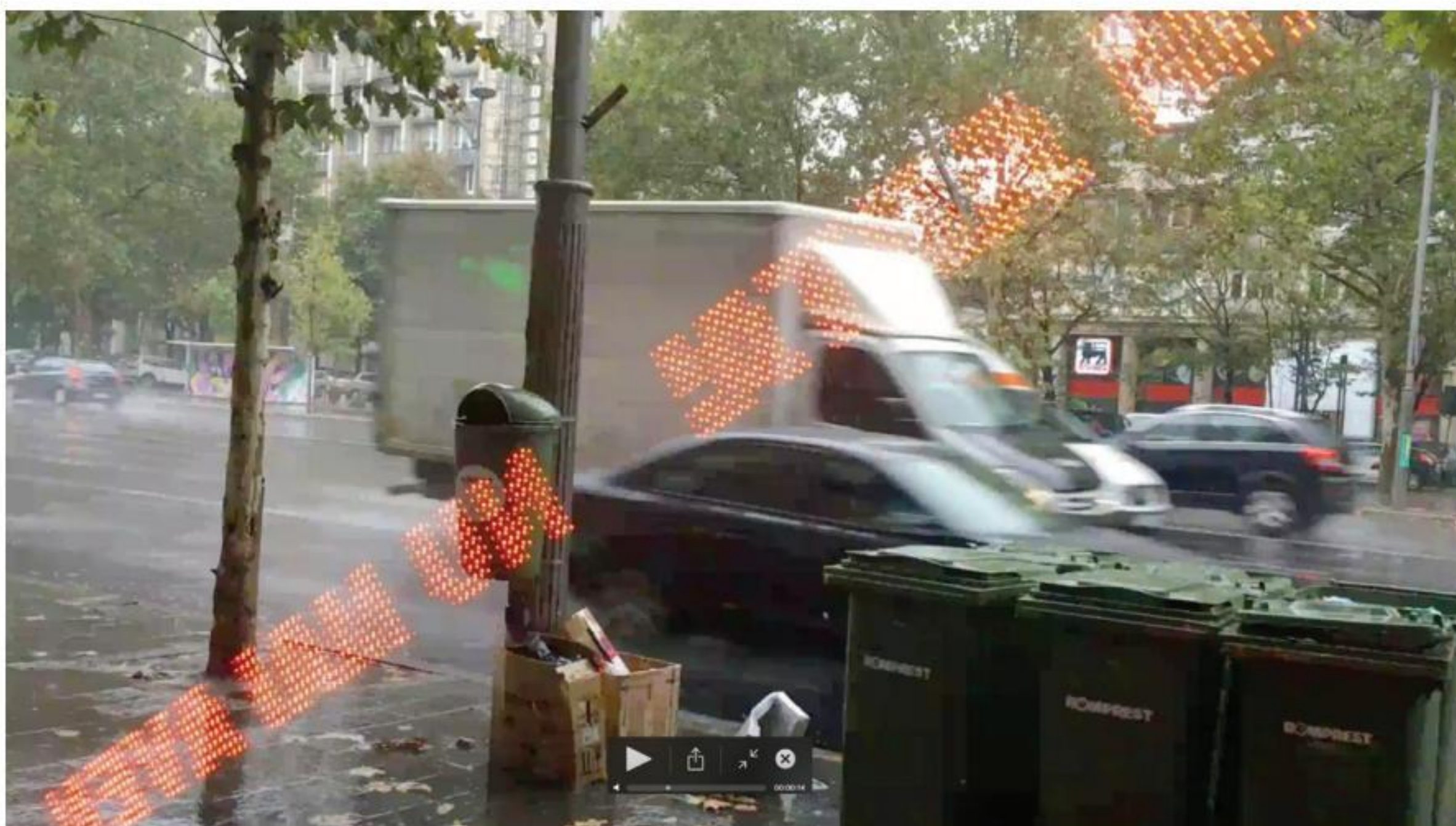
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e13 /
Sergiu Sas
Păzind merele de aur (04:28)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e14 /
Adelina Laura, Mimi Salajan
Catchfish (03:19)
2015



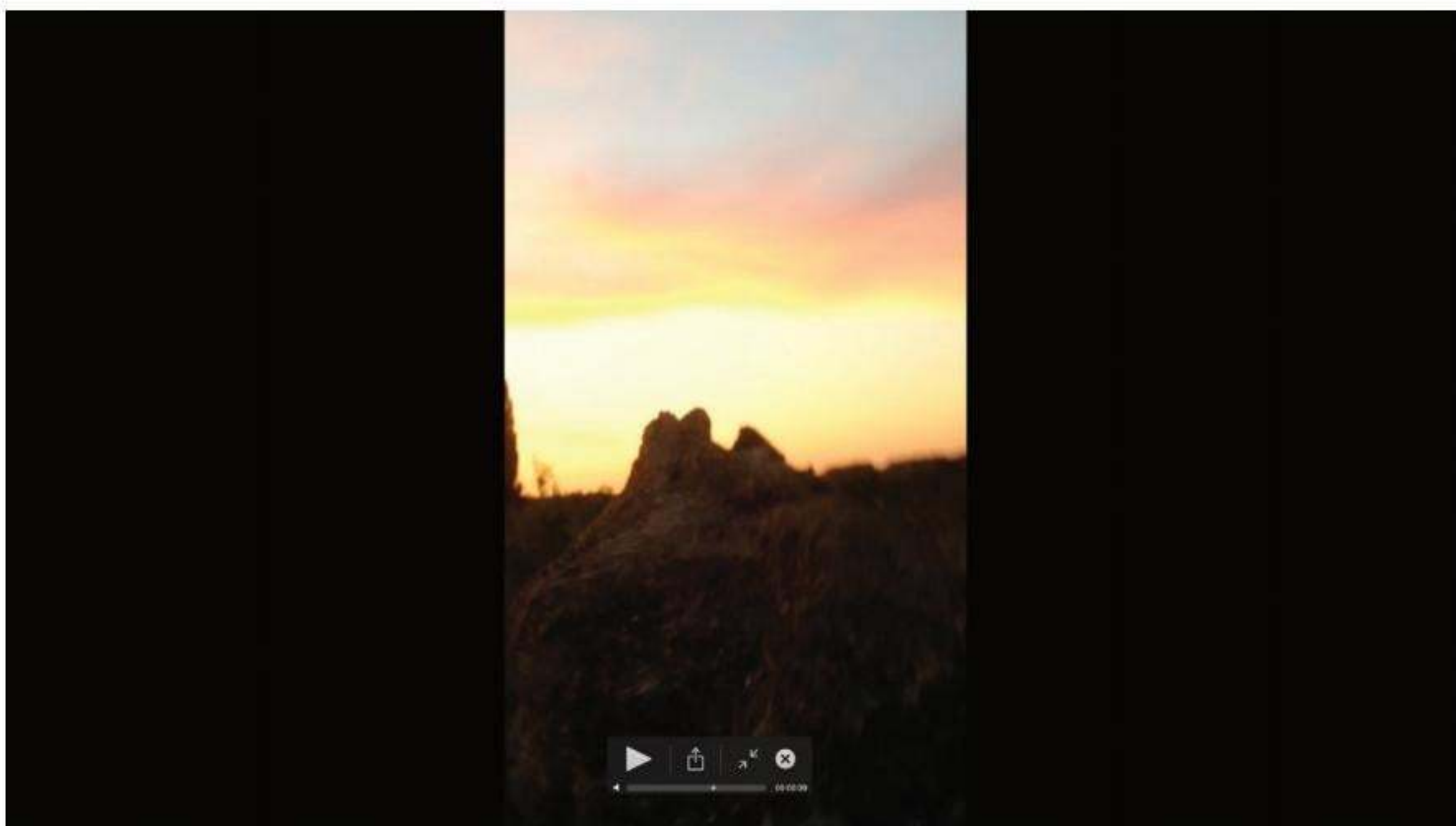
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e15 /
Mihai Păcurar
Cutia albă (17:54)
2015



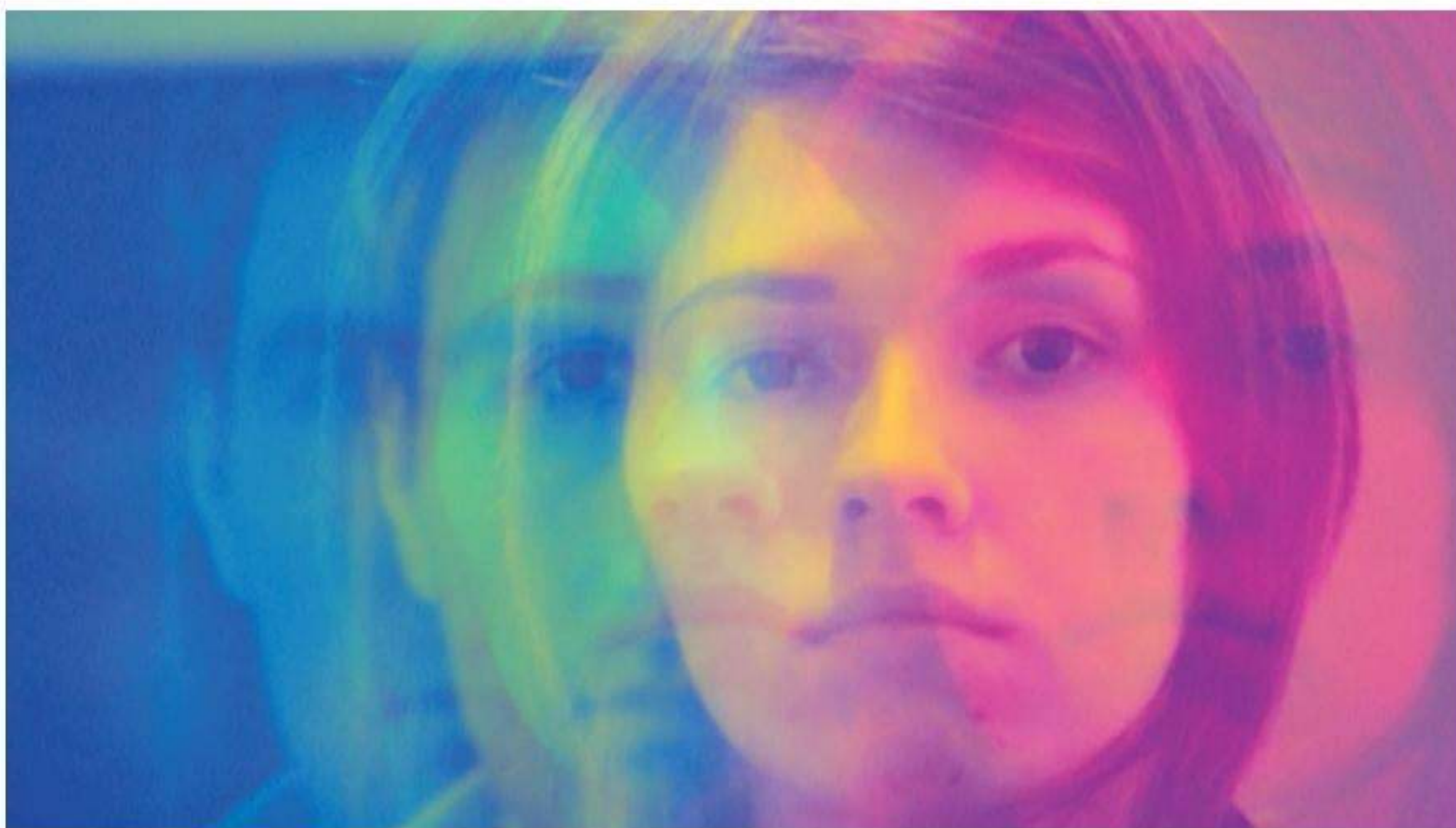
kinema ikon: serial / s3 e16 /
Mihai Zgondoiu
Nu mai avem artă! (00:57)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e17 /
Anca Manga on Earth
Am uitat tot (02:36)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e18 /
V. Leac, Cristina Bogdan
testând planeta (01:03)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e19 /
Andrada Pecican, Alexandru Pecican
1979 | 2009 | 2039 (01:12)
2015



kinema ikon: serial / s3 e20 /
gH
cheap kills (p.END.ing) (00:52)
2015



kinema ikon
Time Lapse /serial/ (12:54)
2016



1970-2020
jurnal





kinema ikon
Jurnal 1 (18:38)
1970-1989



kinema ikon
Jurnal 2 (25:23)
1990-2012



kinema ikon
Ready Media (25:47)
1995



kinema ikon
Cavalerul din Carpatzi (05:47)
1996



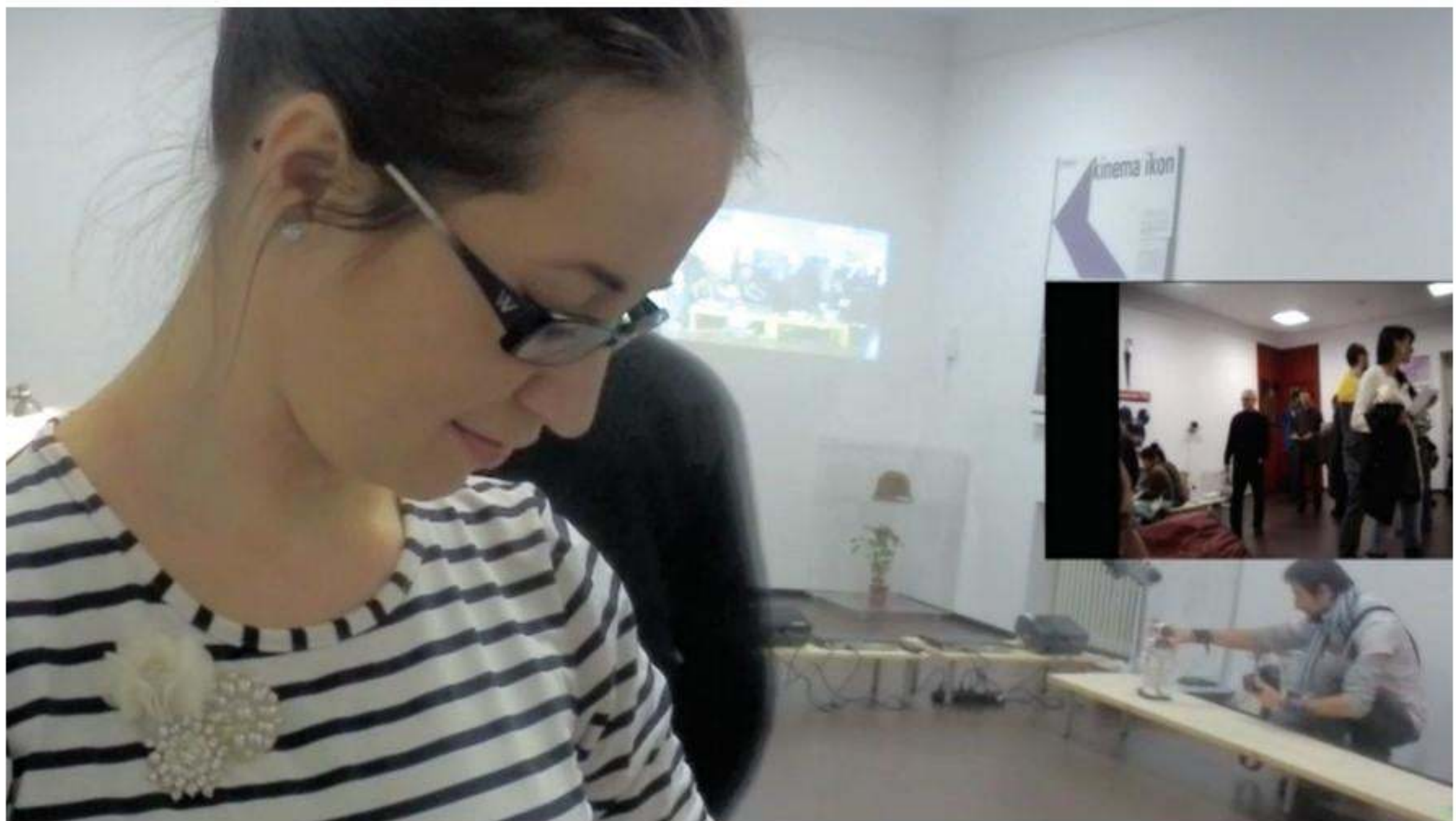
reVoltaire at Venietzsche (14:59)
2003



kinema ikon
retrospect (05:19)
2005



kinema ikon
Skepsis (01:50)
2011



kinema ikon
Wunderkammer (1:47)
2012



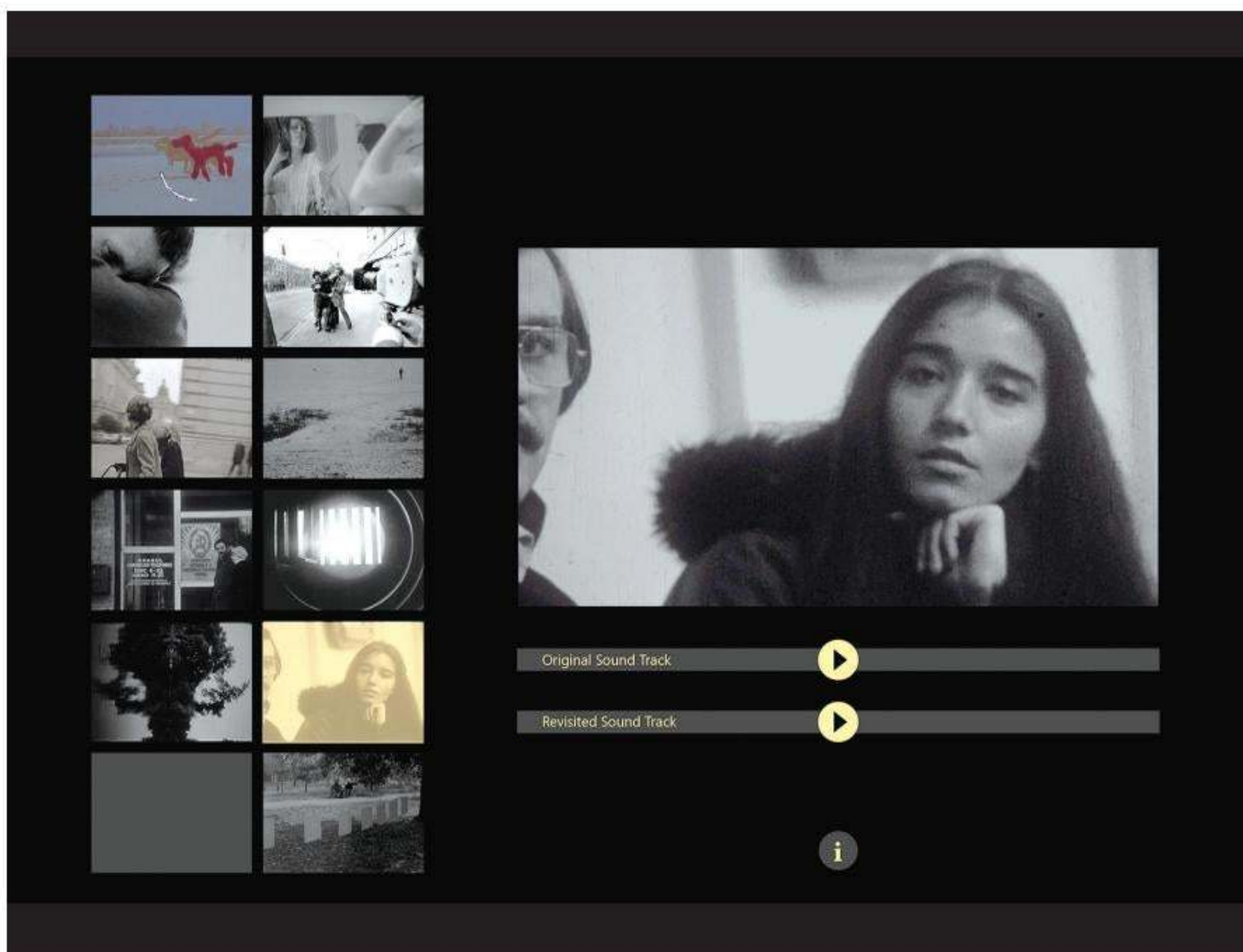
kinema ikon
ki:ss (03:01)
2015



kinema ikon
Ne Vedem Joi
monthly experimental projections at Cinema Arta Arad
2019



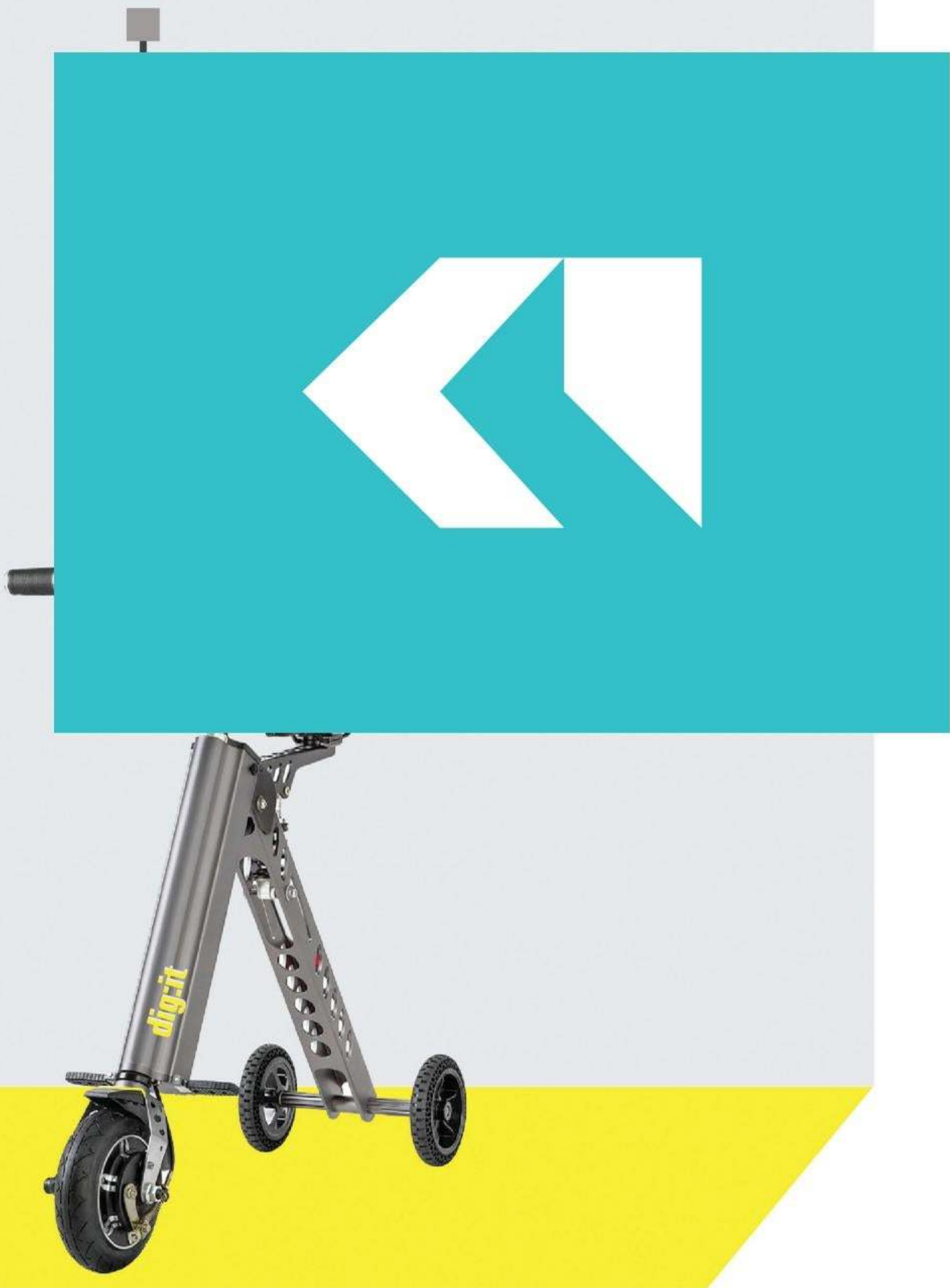
kinema ikon
Long Story Short (33:16)
2018



kinema ikon
 OST'n'ReST
Original & Revisited Sound Tracks of kinema ikon experimental films
 - projection (01:13:24)
 - application
 2019



since 2014
Media Art Festival Arad





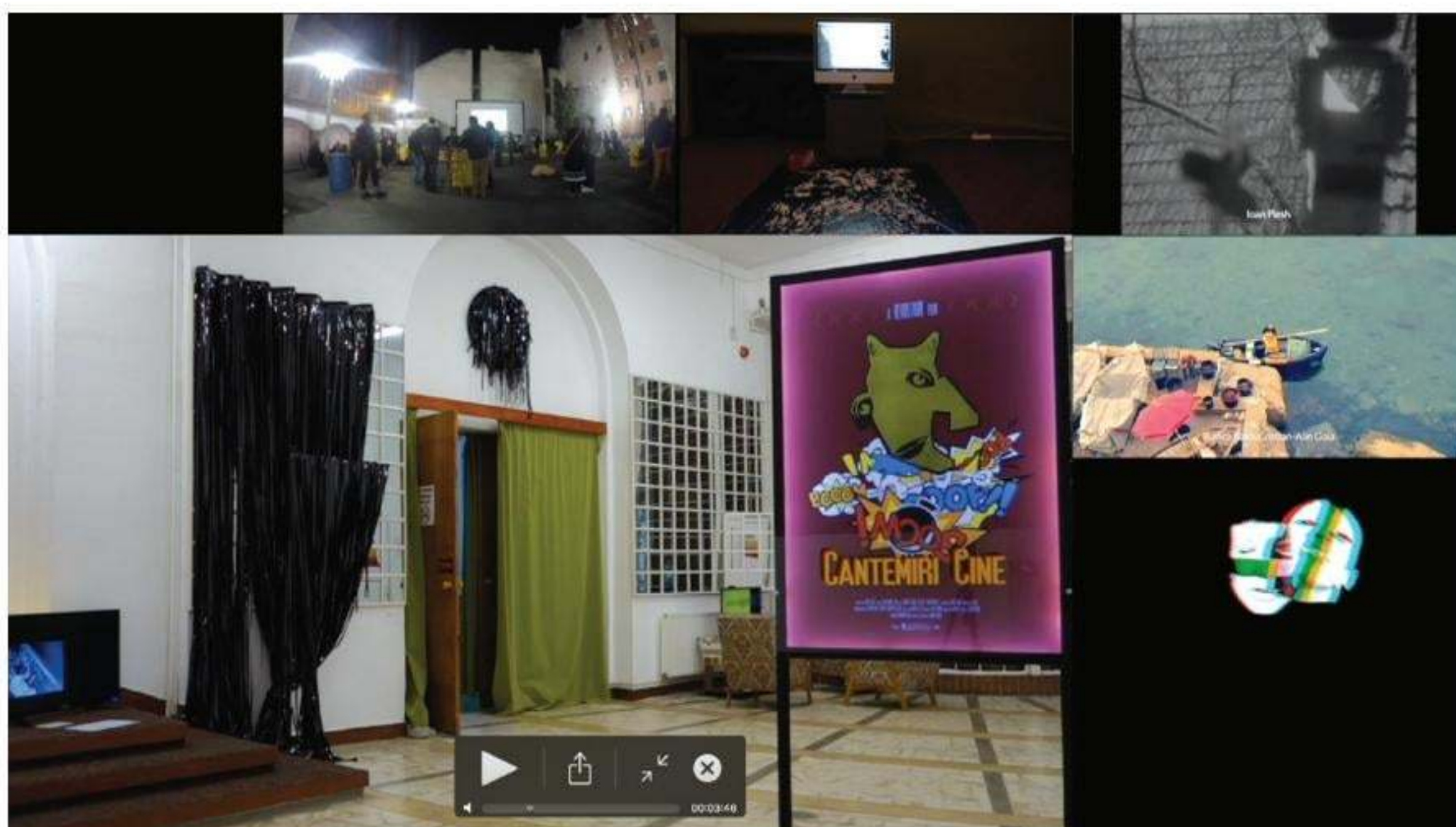
kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
R.A.M. (23:59)
2014



kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
R.E.M.X (02:35)
2015



kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
DADADA (09:27)
2016



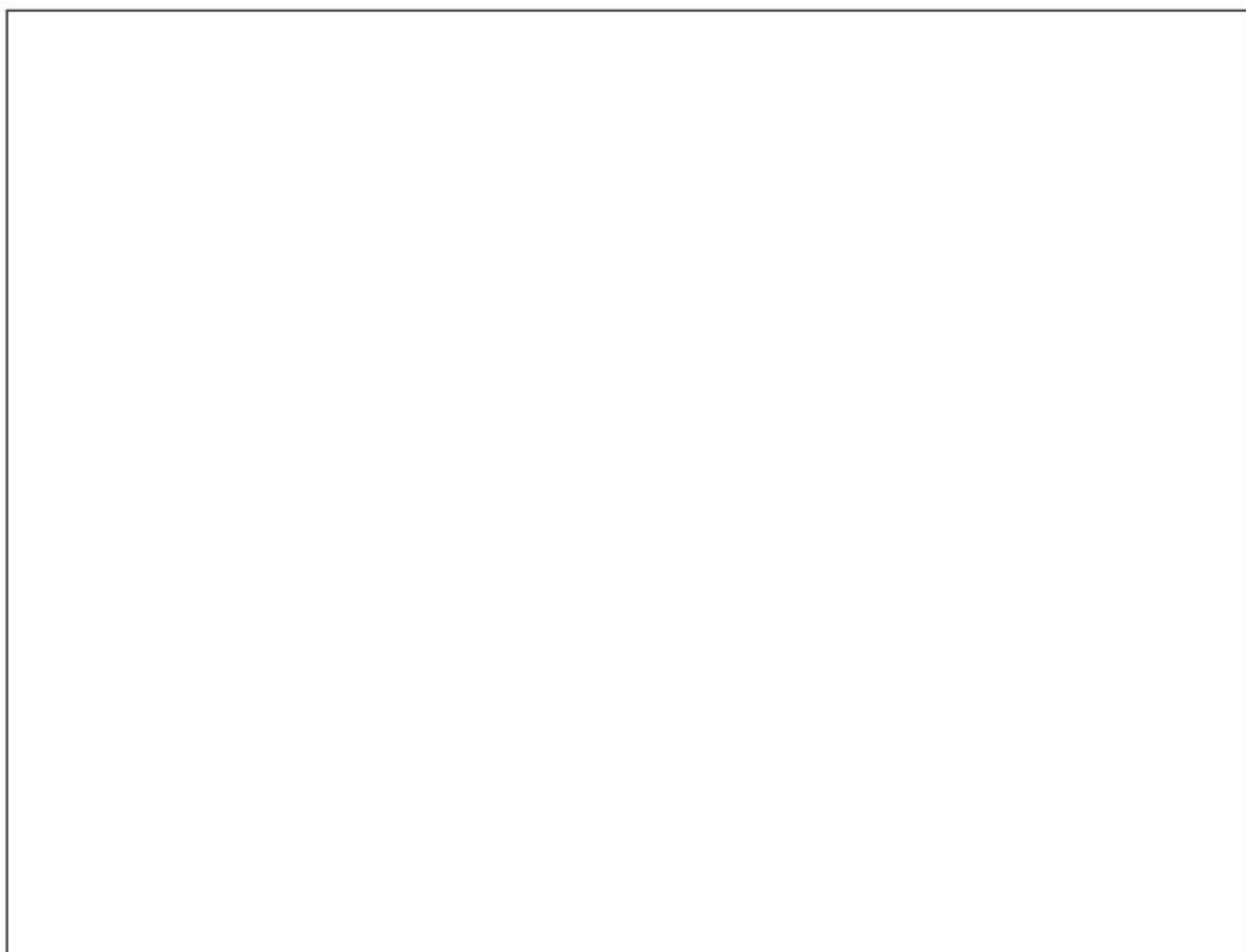
kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
CINEMA (16:17)
2017



kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
De rerum Natura (14:29)
2018



kinema ikon
Media Art Festival Arad
dig:it (10:01)
2019



essays

George Sabau
Ileana Selejan
Cristian Nae
Ion Indolean
Olga Ștefan
Sabin Borș
Adriana Oprea
Calin Man
Horea Avram





Kinema Ikon, Mildly Nostalgic Notes

It is with a certain amazement that I notice some members of the very young generation of aesthetic constructs creators being interested in finding out more or less provocative / savory details about the cultural climate during the communist regime. More specifically, they truly wish to understand how Romanian creators could, before 1989, produce aesthetically valid products in spite of the ideological pressure of a totalitarian system. This thematic area encompasses a few specific topics such as the quality of vocational education, its teaching personnel, workshop practical activities, creative summer-camps, graduating exams, postgraduate studies and scholarships, the graduates' social status, that is, working in a state-owned cultural institution, or as a freelancer, the art galleries system, exhibitions, be they individual, group, or thematic ones, taking part in international events; more controversial themes are those connected with relationships with political power, and, even more special, with the political police, the Securitate; another series of topics would cover what is usually termed *freedom of expression*, that is, respectively, opposition towards the canon of socialist realism, or the other way round, strategies of compromise, or, simply, obedience and submission to the system; further, there existed a Union of Visual Artists, which, among others, published an excellent review, *Arta* [Art], and, all the time, there existed small influence groups of artists and critics, which organized, along four decades, exhibitions, symposiums, events of a certain echo, among which a few of an alternative orientation, or even underground, manifesting a para-system direction.

Fortunately (or not), to the Kinema Ikon group the conditions / criteria above do not apply. Simply because we have an absolutely atypical group. There existed in the previous regime, as there exist today creators or groups of a classical-conventional orientation, together with those interested in modern expression, as well as artists / groups with an avant-garde / experimental behavior, and which were, and still are marginalized. Well, the Kinema Ikon group functioned as an extremely marginal such group, a situation still actual today, when it turned fifty...

Imagine what would happen if, during a communist regime, as a teacher (of Aesthetics) in two vocational educational institutions in Arad, the Arts school, and the Arts High school, I went to the local political-cultural 'organs' of the state, proposing them to open a research center for cinematographic language, studied from an interdisciplinary perspective, and through experimental films made by painters, graphic artists, photographers, architects, fiction writers, poets, musicians etc., I'd have been transferred to rural teaching, or 'interned' at the psychiatric institution in Gătaia, where doctor Ricman used to treat his patients through occupational therapy, organizing creative workshops where patients created and debated their own literary texts, visual creations, or acted in theater plays. After all, I could make there an experimental film workshop, and I'm positive it would have been a stunner... Because I happened to know pretty well the way the party and state authorities would have reacted to such a proposition, I was left with a single alternative, the one I call the 'minimal guaranteed compromise alternative'. This meant for me a permanent duplicitous conduct, generated by the oscillation between the strategies meant for eluding ideological injunctions, and those meant for masking the real aesthetic intentions. So that, in the autumn of 1970, I improvised, around the Arts school, a film society, called 'atelier 16', from the medium we used, 16 mm film.

In the beginning (1970 and a bit later), there was an unpaired embroilment, due to occupational eclecticism and to diverging interests. Most 'students' were, in their turn, teachers in various high schools and intensely wanted us to work as a cinematheque, after the French model of the cinéclub (art films projections, followed by critical debates). Former members of other groups wanted to make documentary films, after the Sahia Film model. Then, the few having graduated from arts institutions would have made art films, eventually, films on art. And so on. It was only me who knew that we will produce experimental films, a gender about which the others didn't even hear, and I also had no intention to explain it to them, so, all told, the beginning was a sublime failure. In the meantime, to speak about the context, in Timișoara took birth the 'Sigma' group, while, from *Cahiers du Cinéma*, I found out that in Brussels just had taken place the third edition of the International Experimental Film Festival. I felt depressed.

As a teacher, touring several high schools in city, I noticed, quite confusedly / diffusely, a sudden interest of student in final years for literature, theatre, visual arts and cinema, manifested in the

sudden apparition of all sorts of literary circles, musical circles, students' community theaters. It was a time during which ideological constraints were a bit more relaxed, ensuing a creative-cultural emulation quite difficult to explain. And then, to be honest, I had then no idea that those students represented, *in nuce*, the future generation of the eighties. In this favorable context, I was lucky that the youngest member of the group, student Adrian Ostafi, to attract to the club students Valeriu Câmpian, from the 'Moise Nicoară' high school, and Daniel Motz, from the Arts high school. Together, they became the most prolific recruiting agents we ever had. So that, in less than a year, the 'eighties' core numbered around twenty terminal year students, who, in their turn, continued their heart-to-heart recruiting activity, warranting for the newcomer's qualities, and so on, until December '89. Finally, those high school students changed their status to university students (letters, arts, architecture), then to graduates, remaining, all that time, active members. Anyway, I explicitly and firmly asked them to produce experimental films, using the materials and facilities of the group, which started to happen since 1974 on, but things were moving quite slowly, and I had the feeling that something was missing...

In such a group, formed of even-matched individuals, a spearhead was needed, to give a spur to the rest. And one day such a figure appeared, coming from the painting class, a student with an amusing mug, coming to tell my young colleagues – during my absence – that he was working for some time, in his attic (!), at a cartoon-collage movie, on 35 mm film, which he would like to present them, since on the door was the *Film Society* tag... after a moment of stupefaction, he was sent packing. When I came back, they told me the story, which seemed funny to them. Not funny for me, because the painting teacher told me about the loan Pleș 'case'. In the end, I looked for him, and we agreed next morning to meet just the two of us, with me bringing a blanket, because, having no 35 mm projector (we were working only with 16 mm film), we had to unreel the film by hand, one frame at a time, which we did. What was it all about? Ioan Pleș lived in the small town of Pâncota, where there was a cinema offering daily projections, and he had seen all movies several times, from the cabin of the projectionist, whom he had befriended. Actually, they made the following deal: for a few meters of film from each movie, the offer consisted in booze, cigarettes or coffee. This way he gathered in his parents' house attic hundreds of meters of film from he made a collage movie (in the attic he had acetone, a device for sticking parts etc.) which, let's admit is no big deal. What seemed amazing to me was that, after finishing the editing, he painted frame by frame various form, either figurative, or non figurative, according to the genre of the images in the original film (western, cartoons, drama, Keystone comedies etc.). For variation, he used to scratch with a needle various dynamic figures, articulated in a small coherent story, without knowing, at that time, of the work of Norman McLaren. Anyway, I understood I had before me an extremely gifted creator of experimental movies, and so the problem of the spearhead got solved by itself.

At the end of the seventies there were forty members of the group, and now is the time to mention that they fell into two categories: about fifteen of them were already authors of experimental films, while the rest constituted a critical background group, and it is mostly due to them that the stylistic tags of the Kinema Ikon group were established. So, we had among us graphical artists, painters, architects, writers and musicians, plus four men working in IT, and this under the circumstances that most of us had never seen, at that moment, a computer. A good few of the group's members had participated with works at group or thematic exhibitions, while the writers had manuscripts handed at various publishing houses. We moved into a more generous space, at the institution's ground floor, and we put above the door of the projection room a small banner with a text from a recent essay by C. Noica: «... *cinema* found quickly an extraordinary function, that of serving *as artistic experiment for the creators who could not limit themselves anymore to traditional arts*». The evidenced fragment is significant for what was taking place at the experimental film workshop in Arad. That is, my young colleagues were creating traditional aesthetic objects called drawings, paintings, photographs, fiction, poetry, music, a. s. o., which they exhibited or published under conventional conditions, *but could not limit themselves to just this...* Let us just say that, from of the core of their being, they felt the wish to experiment another creative medium too, to play with a different aesthetic form, under the circumstances of a total freedom of expression offered by the umbrella called film society, experimental film workshop, or kinema ikon.

Around 1980 a few uncommon events took place. We already had a portfolio of about thirty individual short films (between 3 and 15 minutes) which, I, with a certain embarrassment admit,

had not the courage to present in Arad, but only at festivals and exhibitions in Timișoara, Cluj and Bucharest, where they were more than favorably received by a series of critics from the *Contemporanul* and *Cinema* magazines: Eva Sîrbu, Valerian Sava, Florian Potra and Călin Căliman.

Within this context, and adding our tenth anniversary, in May 1980, we organized in the former reception hall of Baron Neumann a national symposium with experimental films projections, where all professional cinematographic institutions in the country, such as Anima Film, the Documentary Films Studio, and the Theatre and Film Institute in Bucharest were invited. Also, some graphic artists who made film too, important members of some film societies, as well as the critics mentioned above took part.

During its third day, the Arad group presented but a selection from its thirty experimental films, after the previous days we have seen about twenty films made by our guests (about all that was produced in this genre in the country), some of them of an exquisite aesthetic quality, such as those by Zoltán Szilágyi, Radu Igazsag, Cornel Dimitriu, Iosif Costinaș, Ovidiu Bose Paștina, Gelu Mureșan, and this is quite the final list. In fact, it took place a clarification of the actual state of things, from which it followed that the Kinema Ikon group really was constantly producing experimental movies, following a clear and simple theoretical project: experiment astraddle on ludic, and freely horsing around. From that anniversary moment on, the Kinema Ikon project became also the logo of the experimental film workshop, designed by graphic artist Iosif Stroia. And also from that moment on, relationships with the world of Romanian film diminished a lot, while new collaboration connections were directed towards the world of the visual media and that of the literature of the generation of the eighties, then in full emergence with exhibitions and books. From that moment on, invitations answered to were from student magazines, such as *Forum studentesc* (Timișoara), *Echinox* (Cluj), *Dialog* and *Opinia studentescă* (Iași), and *Amfiteatru / Viața studentescă* (Bucharest), in whose spaces we held film projections, followed by more than consistent debates. Also, the KI group took part in a good deal of significant arts exhibitions, such as *Studiu* (Study), *Medium*, *Spațiul Oglindă* (The Mirror Space).

In our turn, we organized in our hall a number of eighteen exhibitions of the visual artists members of the group – collage, drawing, object, painting, photography. At the Forum hall we staged a multimedia event, in its analogical acceptance, with photographs by Cristian Ostafi, projections of Gaumont movies from 1912, on a 28 mm (!) projector, personal property of the photographer and collector Mihai Frangopol, ambient sound by DJ Christi, and a puppets and pantomime performance by Kovács Ildikó (Cluj). It was a fulminatory event, with hundreds of participants which, having not found place within the gallery, were looking from the street, through the windows. I note also the exhibition of letters [mail-art ?], simultaneously with launching the only number of the *Juvățul* [The Noose] magazine, by Ioan T. Morar aka Biju, as well as the last event from this extra-filmic series, the 1986 outdoor exhibition by Calin Man, *A pleonasm in the Landscape*, which caused certain problems. During the same period, we invited a few students' theater reps, which offered shows in unconventional spaces, like *Ars Amatoria* (Cluj), with a show directed by Ion Vartic, *Studioul de Carageologie* [The Caragiale Lore Studio], coordinated by Radu Radoslav and *Thespis*, founded by Diogene Bihoi, both from Timișoara, a neighboring city which whose writers, visual artists and cinematographers we had excellent cooperation; I mention, among them, with due respect, Șerban Foartă, Livius Ciocârlie, Constantin Flondor, Daniel Vighi by Lipova, Viorel Marineasa, Marcel Tolcea, Iosif Costinaș, Mircea Pora, and any others.

Truly exceptional events are the two interdisciplinary symposiums, organized by the Kinema Ikon group in the Studio hall of the municipal theater of Arad. These were Intermedia 1 (1984), with the theme *Image in the Aesthetic Discourse*, and Intermedia 2 (1988), *Interval in the Aesthetic Discourse*. More than fifty participants from Bucharest, Iași, Cluj and Timișoara took place: fiction writers, poets, essayists, theater, film and arts critics, architects and musicians – among which the Contemporary Music *Archaeus*, founded and conducted by composer Liviu Dăncănu provoked an enthusiastic reception. Many of the guests were academics, but a special mention deserves the fact that most of the participants belonged to the generation of the eighties, plus a few personalities this generation respected, such as Alexandru Paleologu,

Professor Solomon Marcus, Andrei Pleșu, Livius Ciocârlie, Șerban Foartă and Luca Pițu. As regards the aforementioned generation, there are too many names to list them all, but anyway, there debated on the theme of interval Magda Cârneci, Ion Mureșan, Mircea Cărtărescu, Florin Iaru, Ioan Groșan, I.B. Lefter, Al. Mușina, Gheorghe Crăciun, Călin Dan, Sorin Antohi, Daniel Vighi, Adiana Babeți, Andrei Bodiu, Caius Dobrescu, Eugen Suciu, with an important role to play, as well as others for whose not mentioning I offer my apologies. From among the Kinema Ikon members, theoretical considerations were launched by Valentin Constantin, Mircea Mihăieș, Romulus Bucur, Ligia Holuță and the author of these lines.

A lot of people asked themselves how it was possible that the communist state and party institutions have agreed with organizing a symposium of such a scope, and with so many remarkable guests, under the circumstances that the political regime had reached a paranoiac paroxysm of intellectuals' surveillance.

Therefore, the time has come to tell the story of the Kinema Ikon group's relationships with political power, with cultural authorities and with the Securitate and this within the framework of the terms mentioned above, namely, *compromise, avoidance, masking and duplicity*. It is inside this context that I consider I have succeeded in mediating relationships with political and cultural power in a modality which can be considered as well simple and effective. That is, I produced, without 'problems' sixty experimental films 'piggybacking' the sixty documentaries asked for the local propaganda department of the communist party and the Arad culture committee. More exactly, in order to spare the sensitivity of the creators of aesthetic experiments, I made up a small team of outstanding technicians, whom I 'sacrificed' and with which I produced the annual quota of documentaries, making an extremely sparing usage of film, further distributed to authors of film experiments. Hence the equal amount of films produced by the workshop (60 documentaries, 60 experimental movies).

I also add that, for ten years, I was afraid of projecting experimental movies in Arad, and that I did it only after I felt secured with two essential results. On one hand, I have got loads of prizes for documentaries (movies inspired from local history, ethnography, and folklore) at the national festival *Cântarea României*, accompanied, of course, by encomiastic reception in the local and national press. On the other hand, it counted enormously that the film critics I mentioned above wrote enthusiastically about the 'cinematographic experiments of the Arad workshop'; it should be pointed out that the activists in the propaganda and culture departments *did* read the *Contemporanul* and *Cinema* magazines, so that we were exempted from interventions from the party-affiliated 'critics'...

Until 1980, relationships with the political police, the Securitate, were void, that is, of no kind. I knew from the writer members of the group (Mircea Mihăieș, Ligia Holuță, Ioan T. Morar, Valentin Constantin, Romulus Bucur) the fact that the detestable institution intervened repeatedly in the literary circles, especially in the science fiction milieu, represented by Alexandru and Ovidiu Pecican.

In the meantime, 18 (eighteen) members of the group ran away beyond the borders of our beloved country, most of them settling in the angels' town, in California, just round the corner of Hollywood... Some of the defectors were caught by border guards, becoming inmates of the Timișoara Popa Șapcă prison, as would be runaways. That they recidivated, and, using the experience gained in prison, they succeeded next time, such as were the cases of Emanuel Țeț and Ioan Pleș. Among the other defectors, I mention Sergiu Onaga, Cristian Ostafi, Ilie Truț. All this California new inhabitants settled in Los Angeles, including Daniel Moț, who emigrated lawfully together with his family, continued their university studies in various artistic fields at UCLA (graphics, painting, design, and of course, ... experimental film). And, to close the topic, I mention IT specialist Ghighi Țapoș, established in Detroit, Monica Crișan, in Montreal, cinematographer Valeriu Câmpan (BA in cinematography at the University of Theater and Cinema in Bucharest), now in Melbourne, where he established his own video and film studio, Athanor, and so on until eighteen.

So, after the series of defectors, after the visits to the club of a series of 'dubious' characters or of a series of foreign citizens, and after the already suspect Thursday evenings meetings, it

was quite normal that at a certain moment an encounter with the Securitate would happen. Therefore, in the summer of 1980, the director of our institution, a bit nervous, announced me that the next day, at 10 o'clock, I must be prepared to project some suspect (?) films to a commission composed of the commander of the Arad Securitate unit, colonel Coșeriu, officer Ilica, responsible for education and culture, some comrade from the local party organization, another one from the culture department, one specialist representing the Cinematographers' Union, and the director of the institution. It seemed I was in trouble... Professor Boșcaiu, a graduate in the history of music, as the director of the institution, introduced me to the commission, while Emil Cilan, from the Cinematographers' Union, was able to whisper me 'be careful, he graduated from the Faculty of Letters', with reference to the commander. After some amiable, still tense preliminary discussions, I was informed that the authorities were 'informed that there exists a film hostile towards the socialist regime...' Then, a number of five films from the inventory list were highlighted, films I was to project, without ever finding out which one was 'guilty'. After about an hour's projection, I was told it was just a 'false alarm', so that the first encounter with the Securitate ended, apparently, well. I said *apparently* because from that day on I entered in its cross-hairs of the redoubtable institution as a potential group with an anti-system penchant. Which was wrong, because, had we a dissident attitude, by films' themes included, we would have been smashed on the spot. Anyway, a prolonged projection had a quite strange reception effect; I'll return to it later. Finally, I understood that, from then on, we'd have certain problems, among which one had an almost devastating effect on the group's destiny. A short time after the encounter just evoked, Daniel Moț, one of the founding members, and a lawful emigrant to the US, having a status which allowed him to yearly return to Romania, had the funny idea to 'extract', without my knowledge, a film, with the intent of taking it illicitly across the border. Just that the border police was alert, found it, and sent it directly to the Securitate. And, one fine day, I received at the club the visit of a carefree young gentleman, carrying a film roll in his hand, who, after having handed it to me, drew my attention to the fact that I should be more careful with the inventory of films under my care. Anyway, something was not at all right with his attitude, so I asked advice from a party activist and former schoolmate. He confirmed that the officer didn't stick to the procedure, and, after having told his name (officer Pescaru), he asked me, astonished, what the hell had I done, because the man was working in counter-intelligence. And what's the problem, I asked? Well, the problem it's you, and you'll get me too in trouble.

In the meantime, Liliana Trandabur, a young graduate of the Letters Faculty of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj, (and former student of Doina Cornea), becomes a member of the group, travels to France, with the intention of trying a PhD program, and, one rainy Parisian day, enters the Pompidou Center, going directly to the experimental film department, and after a talk with Jean-Michel Bouhours, the department's coordinator, I got a punctual invitation from the Modern Art Museum in Paris, to project a few evenings in a row Kinema Ikon experimental films at Cinéma du Musée... Reading the invitation aloud at a full meeting ended in hilarity, followed by ironic comments, because, at the time, that invitation was regarded as a sort of impossible thing. Anyway, it was resented, year after year, so that I started to get ideas, so, why not? And I started a systematic approach, beginning with convincing the local cultural authorities to publish a Kinema Ikon Catalog in French, which it happened, with an inciting graphical design by Iosif Stroia. Then, I asked for the help of Florian Velicu, a high official in the Ministry of Culture, also in charge of cinema, who just sympathized us, being convinced both of the experimental films and the quality of the authors. In the end, he obtained the approval for my departing to Paris with the package of twenty films, signed by the then minister and countersigned by the propaganda secretary of the Party's central leadership. To no avail, because the Securitate, or, anyway, the counter-intelligence direction were more powerful than those who approved my leaving. I was issued a passport, and I was invited to take it, only that the officer in charge with passports communicated me that I had to go to the other entrance of the building, that is, to the Arad Inspectorate of the Securitate. I was just beginning to realize that something was not as it should have been. I was lead in a minimally furnished office, where I found the counter-intelligence officer, this time playing with a passport. He told me a stupendous tale, whose main character was writer Mircea Dinescu, who spends every summer holiday at the Black Sea seaside, together with a German writer / professor / publisher, who also publishes his books in Western Germany, books of virulent criticism against

Romanian socialist regime, and so on. I answered I didn't know personally Mr. Dinescu, and that being a bit more explicit would help. Well, told the officer, you do know very well your friend's sister, which, in her turn, is the German editor's girlfriend, accompanying him every year to the Romanian seaside, where they meet the Dinescu family; it is all very clear... shortly, our Securitate guy would have wanted me and my family to join the other two families at the seaside, and, after finding what the hell they were plotting, to tell him too, just so, while having a coffee at a terrace, without stuff like written reports, it was just a patriotic attitude etc., etc. With, finally, resorting to a metonymy (or synecdoche): Well, professor, would you go to Paris to project your films... Well, I don't think I want it anymore... after which I rose and left the room (it was on the ground floor), starting for the exit; he caught up with me and succeeded telling me that, as long we would be there, I wouldn't get out of the country, not even to Gyula... And he kept his word for ten years.

The story above was quite common stuff during the old regime, as regards personal life, just that, at the level of a creative group which could promote itself through specialized galleries, or international exhibitions, such interdictions had devastating effects in the long run. Thus, after 1990, we could answer the Pompidou Center, and project those twenty Kinema Ikon experimental movies at Cinéma du Musée. After the projections and the comments of the public, a young researcher specializing in the field of visual experiment, told me, sincerely regretting, that 'It is a pity you couldn't come at least ten years earlier, when experimental movie was on the crest of the wave. It would have been extraordinary...' Otherwise put, we have lost all favorable occasions because of an oppressive political regime, lead, at all levels, by an assortment of uncultivated guys. From a theoretical perspective, one can say that it's no use having produced experimental films fully synchronized with those made in the West, since we couldn't present them the moment we made them.

Thursday evening meetings were somehow compulsory, and created such a reflex that, even today, ex-members, residing in various countries, on various continents, when they happen to be in Romania for a few days, plan their trip so that they could necessarily catch a Thursday, with the hope or reliving a few moments of grace, which, unfortunately, cannot be repeated... What was actually happening those evenings: projections of either fragments from the films in progress, followed by brainstorming discussions, or of films already finished. Some other times, we were seeing some avant-garde film from the American Library, or the French Institute. Or talking, a lot, about the literature of the generation of the eighties, and, of course, about the philosophy of culture, the theory of art, recent exhibitions, scandals, gossip, football, and, of course, listening the music of the seventies and the eighties, that is, Beatles, Pink Floyd, AC / DC, Jimi Hendrix, Nirvana and a bit of techno, at the urging of DJ Christi; from the local bands, Phoenix only. Of course, vodka, Stolychnaia and Wiborowka, genuine coffee (without oats), and especially filterless cigarettes, such as Carpați and Lucky Strike, depending on the relationships with people working at the shops selling on currency for foreign tourists. And jokes, loads of jokes of all sorts. In this wonderful field of venting, there were four heavyweights, that is, Ioan T. Morar aka Biju, Ioan Pascal, Ady Pendulă and Doru Păcurar, the latter also a mime, probably contaminated by his job as a scenographer at the local theater. And, our feet, the kids were playing, among which a wonderful boy, Mitzu, who would address me, at four years 'hey, săbău guy, give me some film...'

Then, there was in Bucharest an admirable poet and friend, Eugen Suciu, who, at that time (of the famous writers' pub), was the most prolific trafficker of influence, succeeding, repeatedly, to attract a few young writers and critics at the club's meetings. He had also guests from Timișoara, Brașov, Cluj and Iași, such as the spectacular Luca Pițu. unfortunately, it didn't occur to us to record those admirable gatherings, except the concert of poet-singer Augustin Frățilă, at which took place Arad people having settled in Bucharest, such as Ioan Buduca, Radu Călin Cristea, Călin Dan, and others.

As already mentioned, every Thursday before Christmas, we were decorating a quite big fir tree, somewhere in a corner of the cinemascope screen, because in the other corner there was an out-of-tune piano, which could be handled only by Roxana Cherecheș, or poet Șerban Foarță, in social calls to the club. In a box under the tree there were the gifts for the club's

children (sic), while on the table there were tumblers of red dry wine (Cadarcă de Miniș, by its name), as well as plates with cakes, nuts and apples, brought either by the young ladies who were active members of the group, or by the members' wives, with the express mention, about both categories, that participants at the Kinema Ikon events unanimously admitted they looked great. If you don't believe me, then ask writer Ioan Groșan. Finally, the music to be heard was exclusively carols sung by the Madrigal choir.

The same way we prepared the club's Christmas to be celebrated Thursday, 21st December 1989, but, for the first time in the group's short history, the event didn't take place, because other events were rolling over us.

Since 16th and 17th December, we were hearing on Radio Free Europe saying that in Timișoara and Arad there were violent street manifestations against the communist regime. I do not know even today upon which information it was obstinately repeated '... and in Arad too', which led to the confusion and lack of confidence of the Arad people towards the credibility of the actions really taking place in Timișoara. Anyway, phone communications between the two cities were blocked, as well as travel by train or car.

In the evening of Wednesday, 20th of December 1989, after the final preparations for the next day's meeting, I left the club, in order to go home, and, through the window of the art gallery, I saw Ovidiu Tolan gesticulating towards me. A former student of mine, by then he was a sort of a custodian of the gallery, where there was an exhibition of painting by Constantin Flondor, a few days before presented by Anca Vasiliu. To me it was a memorable occurrence, because of the inexplicable tension felt during the event. Ovidiu was with, Radu Dragoș a true opponent of the regime, Țara Moților-style, and Felician Olos, a surrealist painter, one of the anti-regime opponents who, during official party visits was confined in his home, or held by the police until the visit was over. After a short discussion of the annoying phrasing '... and in Arad too', they asked me, nicely, but decidedly, to make a short walk to the railway station, and, if possible, till the industrial zone (the railway carriages works, the turning machines factory, the furniture factory, the textile works / UTA), because the, being known as undesirables, would have been immediately arrested. Until the Podgoria turnabout, nothing special. From there to the railway station, more and more, tens of party activists of the communist party, accompanied by 'civilians', that is, Securitate agents, policemen, soldiers and officers. From there on, I wasn't allowed to move further towards the industrial zone, so that I returned to the gallery and reported the situation to my friends. For them it was all clear – tonight... It happened at seven o'clock in the morning, when columns of protesters formed, arriving on the plateau in front of the city house around nine, with an estimate of sixty to eighty thousand participants. The rest, as it is usually said, is history. Participating with my family, in the area of the National Bank, I had the idea of going to the club to get a camera. Only that, getting there, I saw the entrance door blocked with iron bars and padlocks...

We reunited at the club only on the third Christmas day, as well enthusiastic as confuse. California ex-members called us to tell they have seen tens of minutes recorded from Arad, and that they will send us pictures from TV screens, with members of the club caught by cameras. We even got those pictures, but still didn't find out who had filmed in Arad. A bit later, a tireless Liliana Trandabur made a spectacular appearance, together with a French delegation from Nancy, led by Mr. Jean-Luc Rivière, who asked a dilemmatic question: what would you want? A printing shop, so that you could edit a publication, or cameras and logistics, so that you could set up a TV station in Arad? To my stupefaction, the young experimentators in film opted, without hesitation, for ... the printer's shop. What follows is another stage in the history of the Kinema Ikon group, therefore, a different story, to be continued from the emotional mark of a decorated fir tree, of an overwhelming sadness.

Translated by Romulus Bucur

George Sabau founding member of kinema ikon, media theorist, writer, experimental film and media works auteur.

Ileana Selejan

Beginning with The End or Every End is a New Beginning in Loop

kinema ikon _ (the onset of the age of treason)

Treason = trădare. Dacă secolul optsprezece a fost cel al luminilor, marcând începutul epocii rațiunii și în același timp zona de origine a modernității secolului nouăsprezece și douăzeci, revin pe scurt la istoria dezvoltării metodelor științifice moderne, a tehnologiilor raționale / obiective și în paralel subminarea acestora prin intermediul esteticii, al procedeelor artistice și experimentale de subiectivizare a logicii. Observăm prezența a două discursuri care aparent se exclud, dar pe care le regăsim într-un dialog perpetuu. Ma refer desigur la faimoasa pictură a lui René Magritte, *La trahison des images*, din 1928-29, care declara că nimic nu este ceea ce pare. Iar realitatea, cel puțin din punct de vedere semantic, ne scapă printre degete, sau mai bine zis printre gânduri, se evaporează în seducătorul parfum al tutunului de pipă. Jocurile de cuvinte și de imagini, fiind caracteristice grupului kinema ikon, cum alfel să încep această scurtă prezentare? Limba engleză, și pe alocuri franceza, devine un mod de a înscena – un *mise-en-scene* / *mise-en-abime* – trecutul, și prezentul unui grup care nu doar că nu se potrivește în peisaj, ci chiar caută, intenționat, cum să se nepotrivească mai bine. Veți regăsi în grămada de lucrări, aranjate frumos în arhive de către Călin Man aka *revoltaire* principalul curator al colecției grupului, suficiente exemple la fel de confuze: <http://kinema-ikon.net/>

siding with the outsider

The present catalogue provides a first comprehensive set of critical texts addressing kinema ikon's filmography in its entirety. Having reached this end of the labyrinth, inquisitive readers will surely be interested in perusing previous articles, books, catalogues, brochures, magazine issues and pages archived on and off line, to which end we invite them to contact us via email, or visit our office in Arad. In-between George Săbău's extensive writings on the subject, and the sum of all delectable critical exercises and inquisitive texts, a range of topics for further research will surely be found.

On my part, I merely wish to provide some concise, albeit random (as ever) thoughts on the matter, charting out some of the activities of the experimental arts collective from its founding in 1970 until 1989, the year of the Romanian revolution, when the group stopped producing experimental films and shifted towards the field of new media art. Undeniably, kinema ikon enthused poetic freedom amidst a context of great restrictions imposed by the governing regime. These limitations operated on a structural level, through administrative, bureaucratic measures and the state surveillance apparatus; ideologically, given the expectations placed upon cultural producers; and aesthetically, since cultural production was regulated by strict guidelines and conventions, which applied to form and content alike. ki thrived despite, or in spite of, such constraints.

A [Parenthetic] Short History¹

"kinema ikon, Atelier de Film Experimental" (Experimental Film Workshop) was founded in 1970 by George Săbău, professor of aesthetics and art theory at the Școala de Artă (Art School) in Arad. First named "Atelier 16," kinema ikon began as a cine-club, hosting weekly film screenings and discussion sessions in a studio at the Școala Populară de Artă (Popular School for the Arts). Săbău recalls that the program included feature films by prominent directors such as Andrzej Wajda, Andrei Tarkovsky, Michelangelo Antonioni, Alain Resnais, and Francis Ford Coppola, among others. The organizers would have eagerly shown other types of films, especially 1920s experimental shorts or contemporaneous "underground" examples from Europe and the U.S., but those films were most difficult to come by.² Enthusiasts could either travel to Bucharest on the rare occasions when films by the likes of Hans Richter, Luis Buñuel, and Fernand Léger

UN FILM
ESTE
CA O IMITATIE
INVOLUNTARA
A UNUI VIS
BUNUEL



were shown at the Cinemateca Română (Romanian Cinematheque, active since 1964), or try to catch Yugoslav TV broadcasts that reached the cities of Arad and Timișoara from nearby Novi Sad across the border. Other possible sources were the French, British and U.S. embassies, as well as the libraries of their cultural institutes, which would occasionally lend out materials. In the postwar period, the production and distribution of films was closely regulated by the regime, and despite great demand, supply was kept low. Later on, during the 1980s, this led to a proliferation of black market VHS copies of dubbed foreign feature films.³ From 1970 onwards, kinema ikon membership grew steadily, drawing on the informal networks of Art School students and their circles of friends and acquaintances. Over time, the focus shifted away from spectatorship into production, once Săbău started offering technical workshops at "Atelier 16." Since film stock was difficult to procure outside of formal settings, the cine-club provided the group with an appropriate alibi. Nationwide, students were encouraged to pursue extra-curricular activities as part of clubs and Popular Schools. Such venues also presented opportunities for post-graduate amateurs to further develop their interests in the arts. Operating as a cine-club ensured that the activity of kinema ikon could continue openly and uninterrupted, even after some members began their university studies—given the pervasiveness of the Securitate during this period, it would have been virtually impossible to make experimental film "underground." Choosing an easier path, the infrastructure for "cultural leisure" provided by the state was rerouted, subverted even, to less predictable ends. Under the guise of an extra-curricular, amateur pastime, kinema ikon veered towards experimentation, generating the first completed films circa 1975.

By the end of the seventies, kinema ikon produced about thirty experimental films, having "indoctrinated" about forty individuals: the core group consisted of fifteen filmmakers, artists, writers, musicians, architects, and four computer scientists, all of whom contributed to the making of the films, even if their roles were limited to those of actors, technicians, or critics. In addition to providing space, equipment, and materials, the workshop at the Popular School for the Arts became a gathering place and a venue for exhibitions of photography and "alternative" art—a category particular to the context at hand, loosely attached to anything that went beyond the conventional use of traditional media such as painting, drawing, and sculpture, most common in the official art circles of the time. As attested by former members and the occasional passers-by, the club was a refuge for students and art school graduates, but also for professionals working outside of the official status quo, where censorship and the regime's "ready media" ruled.⁴ The workshop's eclectic program centered on an interest in art theory and the philosophy of science and technology, and in their respective applications to new media—*intermedia* would become a preferred term.⁵ The work produced as a result of these interests ranged from film to photography, sound, theatre, printmaking, and early experiments with computer art and cybernetics. Film making remained however the focal point of their shared preoccupations until 1989.⁶

Given this brief history, I now turn to a discussion of filmic work produced during this early period, as a means of relating the theoretical and aesthetic interests of the group with its unique position within the field of culture in Communist Romania, navigating between regime restrictions and experimentation. The examples here included are not intended as representative of the group's entire output, neither are they presented in a chronological manner. Rather, they are meant to convey a sense of the film-makers' diverse approaches and ensuing outcomes. Inspired by *ki-logic* and, interchangeably, *ki... non-logic*, the proposed readings constitute subjective responses rather than descriptive narratives. I use my own memories, experiences, and reactions to the films as a means to explore their fragmentary nature. If there is one overarching *raison d'être* of *ki*, it is that there is no single grand narrative that can encompass the multiplicity of interpretations that these makers sought to provoke in their audiences. My approach seeks to highlight this condition, emphasizing synchronicity, relishing the pursuit of free-form.

Ioan Pleș' Pollution (Poluare, 1977) begins as a group of young men await the vertiginous release of industrial exhaust. Despite the build-up, the episode registers as uneventful, the men's attitude ostensibly blasé. Granted, the sight of smokestacks was exceedingly familiar



at the time.⁷ Unexpectedly, the smoke turns into paint, spelling out abstract geometries, methodical incisions carved directly into the material surface of the frame (0:21). Change of scene. To the tunes of The Beatles the men chase and are chased by the twisting shapes (2:36). *Tomorrow Never Knows* inspires accelerated speed onto the tracks, and as the train roars ahead, so do the peripatetic scratched-out squares, running along the city's streets in perspectival motion (2:50). These ecstatic gestures, suggestive of psychedelic states, are reminiscent of the 1967 version of Bruce Conner's *Looking For Mushrooms*, choreographed to the rhythms of the same song—although it is highly unlikely Pleș had any knowledge of the U.S. film. Interspersed throughout the 5:55 minutes of the film is a sub-plot of burned frames, unraveling their plastic chemistry as if exposed to an unsparing plague. Birds rise and fall, transform into dry paint, while the movements of a horse are broken down into elemental vectors—a nod, perhaps, to the motion studies of Eadweard Muybridge or Étienne-Jules Marey.

Between 1977 and 1982, Ioan Pleș (aka John Plesh) produced 12 experimental films, elegantly exploiting the full range of black-and-white tonality afforded by 16 mm technology. Pleș was one of the earliest members of the group. Enrolled in the painting class at the Art School in Arad, he spent much of his free time at the cinema in his hometown Pâncota, nearby. As the story goes, at some point during the early seventies, he “made a deal” with the projectionist, and negotiated a steady supply of film-stock in exchange for home-made moonshine, coffee, and cigarettes—the latter were high-end contraband at the time. He set up a studio in the attic of his house, where, by the time he crossed paths with the young film-makers from “Atelier 16,” he was already busily working on a 35mm animation film, painting over the frames and scratching the emulsion with needles. He even figured out how to insert noise within the soundtrack on the margins of strip. As Săbău elatedly recalls, Pleș made these discoveries without any familiarity with animation techniques or contemporary experimental film (Norman McLaren immediately comes to mind). The film is regrettably lost, although Săbău remembers it as a montage of “hundreds of films, action movies, Westerns [...] all of Hollywood was there.”⁸

Having joined the group, Pleș brought along his friend, Emanuel Țeț, also a painter, who was experimenting with similar DIY techniques in the city of Alba Iulia. Following his move to Arad, Țeț made six or seven films with kinema ikon. *Dynamic Poem* (Poem Dinamic) from 1978 builds its lyrical plot around an embracing couple on the jovial rhythms of Chick Corea's “Love Castle.” The film, alongside *Bird Hunt* (Vânătoarea de păsări) from 1980 is stunningly composed, with masterful sequences that integrate recorded footage and drawn on film animation in evocative color. Of all the members of ki, Pleș and Țeț experimented with abstractions and toyed with the idea of modifying the frame most extensively. A hybrid instance can be seen in Iosif Stroia's *Self-Portrait* (Autoportret) of 1984, where the author super-imposed geometric variations of his signature line onto the textures and happenings of real life by placing a glass sheet in-between the camera and the recorded scene.

***But I'm just a soul whose intentions are good
Oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood***

Film production in Romania was nationalized in 1948 along with all other industries, while private ownership of cinemas or studios was rescinded. Incorporated as informational material and entertainment in TV broadcasting, films (documentaries and features) were instrumentalized by the state propaganda apparatus and regimented through the activity of various institutions of control. Despite this tight grip, during the 1960s and 1970s, the Communist Party encouraged amateur film-making in the context of workers and student unions, and within formal cultural institutions (such as the Popular School of the Arts) by establishing local cine-clubs, and supplying them with equipment and materials. Cameras, film stock, and developers were hard to come by and prohibitively expensive otherwise, making this “hobby” inaccessible outside of state-managed production venues.⁹ For the state, amateur work was valuable as a means to generate new content aligned with its professed ideals of mass emancipation through culture.

Formally, “Atelier 16” / kinema ikon operated as a cine-club, and informally as an experimental film workshop. The group's activities unfolded within a closed circuit of friends and trusted associates, which ensured some independence, outside of state-sponsored networks of



circulation. Nonetheless, certain “concessions” had to be made. To secure its status as cine-club, kinema ikon had to prove its usefulness to the regime. An agreement was reached with the Propaganda division of the Communist Party and the local Cultural Committee in Arad to deliver a number of documentary films annually on topics ranging from local history and folklore to ethnography. A so-called “sacrifice team” which included Săbău, Florin Hornoiu, and Adrian Ostafi volunteered for the task.⁹ They worked with the 16-mm format, on some occasions in color. Filming economically, they saved sections of unused film from these projects for later experimentation. It was thus that an experimental aesthetic could appear on the margins of an accepted practice, and by 1989, an equal number of experimental films and documentaries were produced. The group was officially tolerated not least due to its visibility. Regular participation at film festivals and symposia, as well as professional connections with prominent institutions such as the national studios of Sahia Film and Anima Film, and the Film and Theatre Institute (Institutul de Artă Teatrală și Cinematografică “I.L.Caragiale”) in Bucharest further reassured the authorities. This was the subterfuge used by Săbău to bypass state-imposed limitations on “artistic creation” (via its prescriptive attitude towards what constituted correct approaches in art) and focus on experimentation without fearing reprisal in the intimacy of their studio.⁹

After 1980, as noted by Săbău, ki “withdrew from the cinematographic system—with the exception of its obligatory participation in a national festival that is remembered with embarrassment [“Cântarea României”]—and was integrated into a system of alternative art and literature, as practiced by artists and writers from *the 80s generation*.”⁹ The experimental work was known in film circles, or at least it was familiar to professionals in the field, cited in the cultural press of the time. However, until 1989, these films were never distributed (no copies were made) and only shown sporadically to a restricted professional audience. The work travelled abroad on very few occasions and exclusively within the Eastern Bloc.¹⁰ In 1984, during the annual national culture festival “Cântarea României,” kinema ikon was invited by the magazine “Contemporanul” for a screening in Bucharest.¹¹ Săbău remembers they projected some of the experimental films with the documentary work mixed-in, not to upset or worry the censors given the content may have been perceived as provocative—even if solely in formal terms.¹² Writing on that occasion, one critic exclaimed: “Once more I am convinced that there are authentic cinematographers amongst the amateurs. A shame their films are so little known!”¹³ The tone of most critics’ responses from this period ranged from positive to euphoric, praising the group’s investigations into the “essence” of cinematography and the formal language of film.¹⁴ In characterizing the work, reviewers used the terms “experiment” and “experimental” often, signaling a relaxed attitude towards editing bodies and censorship bureaus. Săbău believes that these responses were essential to strengthening the group’s legitimacy and in deflecting censorship.

For many years, ki’s completed documentary films, as well as additional documentary footage, lay forgotten in storage. They were well kept, but the group, nevertheless, displayed a reluctance to open the stiffened metal cases, and look at the contents once more. Perhaps it was the sense of compromise, however necessary, that bothered the film-makers. Recently, however, several of these films were dusted off as part of a major digitization effort. A time capsule was opened, and, from amongst the sequences of endless processions and public events, of choreographed marches and festivals, concerts and competitions, in between shots of work in the factories, of the city of Arad and its surroundings, cleaning and “revitalization” work in progress, and the (many) discarded bits of filler footage, some unexpected materials have come to light. The execution of the films, even the finished ones, is far from perfect. In watching them, one notices a certain randomness—the camera operator, often anonymous, might be working on his technique (the ridiculousness of a trashcan repeatedly shot at extreme, Rodchenko-like angles) or simply collecting “stuff.”

Undoubtedly, the greatest find was a recording of Nicolae Ceaușescu’s 1979 official visit to Arad and of the speech he gave from the grand balcony of the national theatre. A large crowd gathered below, cheering. It becomes immediately evident that the cameraman was offered a most unfortunate placement, large pieces of scaffolding from the TV crew obstructing his



view. The camera repeatedly switches from one section of the façade to the other, insistent on finding a better angle to shoot the president... The filmmaker is failing miserably at this job. His camera moves too much, too quickly, and when it stops, it fixates off-center and on a blocked view. He pans nauseatingly in and out of focus and zooms in on nothing, letting the protagonist fall out of the frame. The event becomes impossible to follow, nothing short of absurd. Even worse, it all starts looking like a parody, a farce, reminiscent of John Baldessari's 1967 series "Wrong" in which Baldessari stages a series of "failed" photographic compositions, if one is to follow convention. George Săbău, the uncredited creator of the footage, knew, of course, exactly what he was doing, although he has been cryptic about his recorded actions, and implied attitudes, in this specific case.

Documentary elements from ki's expanding "image bank," to quote Săbău once more, were incorporated into many of the experimental films produced between 1970 and 1989, although rarely without further manipulation. A viewer first acquainted with the experimental films, with undoubtedly recognize frames that were cut from the same sequences used to produce some of these short docs.¹⁵ Nonetheless, by contrast to the official documentaries, the integrity of the image and especially that of the narrative flow was insistently disrupted, "the end" of the motion picture constantly postponed. In addition to the completed documentary films, numerous fragments of recorded film were also found within this recently excavated archive. More often than not, these sequences have no clear beginning or end, and the scrambled actions they contain are generally stopped short of their conclusion—as if all came to pass outside of time. An uninitiated viewer might observe such sequences with bewilderment, as belonging to the "real" history of a place (Arad during the seventies and eighties) left unvisited for decades, except in memory. However, upon viewing their experimental counterparts, artifice is revealed once more. While state media sought to produce moving-images that reinforced official truth-claims, in the film-makers' workshop the only awareness possible was that of the maker/ fabricator. One might argue that an aesthetic salvaging of fragments took place, the moment sequences from the docs were inserted into the experimental films, and intervened upon or subverted.

1 The most comprehensive source on the history of the group is George Săbău, "Istoria contextuală a grupului kinema ikon," in *kinema ikon* (Bucharest: MNAC National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005), 4-66.

2 Email correspondence with the author, December 6, 2012.

3 See: *Chuck Norris vs. Communism*, directed by Ilinca Călugăreanu, Vernon Films, 2015.

4 The term "ready-media" was first used as the title for a kinema ikon installation from 1995. It refers to the type of raw TV footage that group members appropriated, with Duchamp-ian poise, as part of their video and multimedia installations during the nineties.

5 The use of the term was deliberate, and Săbău was familiar with its use and circulation. "Much of the best work being produced today seems to fall between media. This is no accident," Dick Higgins would claim in 1965. See Higgins, *Something Else Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (Something Else Press, 1966). Although marginally concerned with film, the statement, and the philosophy, resonated with the practice of the group.

6 All kinema ikon experimental films can be viewed on their official YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZNsDOmDHdjKZItViDziGFQ>

7 During the 1950s, Romania's production economy shifted from agriculture towards heavy industry, with extraction facilities greatly increased. The push for large-scale industrialization continued through to 1989, with disregard towards environmental harm. As a side-note, one might add that throughout this entire period fetishized images of industrial work and of workers / working bodies remained prevalent in socialist and Soviet visual culture.

8 Interview with George Săbău and Călin Man, Arad, April 11, 2016.

9 On the subject of non-professional film-making and cine-clubs in Romania see: *Camera Obscura*, directed by Gheorghe Preda (Scharf Film, 2016)

10 Interview with George Săbău and Călin Man, Arad, April 11, 2016.

11 "[it] was a strategy to elude a closed-off, oppressive system, one that had no interest in subsidizing aesthetic experiments, which were considered elitist" Forthcoming monograph by George Săbău,

LEFT WITHOUT A CONCLUSION



draft from 13, October, 2017, n.p.

12 Săbău, *Istoria contextuală*, 11. During the 1980s a significant number of artists, writers, and cultural producers came together in unofficial circles, seeking opportunities for exchange. "Generația '80" (the 80s generation) saw itself as resistant to the political regime, working in parallel to the ideologically prescriptive attitudes towards culture which were promoted by state agents and institutions. Similar to ki tactics, members often maintained a dual status in relation to official institutions, while striving for the liberalization of literature and the arts. See: Adrian Guță, *Generația '80 in artele vizuale* (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2008). A relatively recent source on this important decade in Romanian contemporary art is the special issue of *Revista Arta* 4-5 (2012), "The 1980s Generation in the Visual Arts Twenty Years Later."

13 George Săbău and Demian Sandru's film *The Chair* (Scaunul) from 1971 (16 mm cinemascope on multiple screens) received an award at the 1973 International Fiction Film Festival in Brno. A selection of films was shown at the 1977 International Festival for Abstract Animation in Krakow.

14 *Cântarea României* was a large-scale "national festival," an annual cultural event organized by the Council for Culture and Socialist Education (Consiliul Culturii și Educației Socialiste) starting in 1976. It was a part of Ceaușescu's push for a Romanian Cultural Revolution, with a stated goal to educate the masses and to reaffirm citizens' enthusiastic participation in the political-ideological program of the Party.

15 Interview with George Săbău and Călin Man, Arad, April 11, 2016.

16 Cristina Corciovescu, „Tentația experimentului; O dorința subiectivă și o necesitate obiectivă: filmele cineamatorilor să fie văzute!” [1984] 4.

17 One of the most important texts on kinema ikon from this period, is Calin Dan, "Filmul experimental, scriere și lectură," *Revista Arta* 6 (1985): 35-36.

18 I return to a previous comment regarding chronology. In evaluating the extant literature on kinema ikon, it becomes evident that past the pre-1989 moment, the experimental films were entirely disassociated from the documentaries, which were shelved in the archives, and subsequently forgotten. The decision is certainly justified, and should not be interpreted as deliberate concealment—the films belong to entirely different registers, despite overlaps. Any attempt to contextualize ki's work on film must keep this history in mind, and remain aware of its implications.

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Fragmented Visions. The Politics of Aesthetics in Kinema Ikon's Experimental Films.

Textul analizează filmele experimentale produse de *kinema ikon* în Arad, România între anii 1970 și 1989, argumentând faptul că membrii acestui grup erau interesați de noile medii și de practicile artistice intermedia ca instrumente pentru producerea unor reprezentări neconvenționale și a unor obiecte estetice autonome. Totodată, atelierul s-a focalizat pe încorporarea și expansiunea vocabularului filmului de avangardă operând o strategie fragmentare a percepției vizuale. Pe aceste considerente, susțin ideea potrivit căreia noțiunea de critică a ideologiei poate fi aplicată aici nu atât conținutului reprezentational al acestor filme, ci mai curând modurilor particulare de producție și formelor de vizualitate pe care le-au generat, în acord cu noțiunea de "politică a esteticului" susținută de Jacques Rancière.

Critical Montage

The importance of aesthetic autonomy as an apolitical attitude within the Eastern European neo-avant-gardes has been stressed on various occasions (Piotrowski 2012, 82-84; Nae 2011; Cârnelci 2014, 94-95; Serban 2013). Discussing the case of visual artist Geta Brătescu, Alina Serban (2013, 159-162) noted the importance of the artist's studio as a secluded place where the self is at the same time imaginatively reflected and constructed, mirrored and transformed. Similarly, *kinema ikon's* informal film studio established by Gheorghe Sabau in Arad, Romania during the last two decades of socialism may be regarded not only as a response to existing socio-political conditions, symptoms of an oppressive cultural climate, but also as a space for transforming this context by producing and securing an autonomous mental space, a heterotopic space of conflicting representations which first benefitted the studio's members and later their audience.

In exploring the visual and technological strategies of some of the 62 experimental films *kinema ikon* produced between 1970 and 1989, in line with other studies remarking that "the use of medium and the type of work [...] is a political statement in itself" (Selejan 2012), I propose to focus our attention on the group's embrace of visual fragmentation, which contribute to revealing the materiality and, hence, the opacity of the screen. Insisting on abstraction, but also highlighting the basic elements of cinema (framing, zooming, camera movement) and foregrounding the 'autonomous visual fragment,' I explore how early experimental films of *kinema ikon* may be associated with structural film (Sitney 2000, 326-348), which subordinated representation and narrative to the material and linguistic peculiarities of the medium itself (Leighton 2008, 21-22). In employing this formal strategy, they also creatively expanded the film practices of avant-garde film cultures interwar, most significantly through exploring montage and close-up and their corresponding theories. As Hal Foster (1994, 5-32) has noted, the repressed potentialities of the avant-gardes (Constructivism, Dada and Surrealism) may be witnessed to return in the visual art of the late 1960s in a disguised manner. In the context of Romanian art, the imposition of socialist realism between 1945 and 1965 and its resurgence after 1972 may be considered to play the part of the repressive agent in Foster's narrative. The aesthetic potential of montage and close-up, employed as disruptive, mass-transformative

visual techniques by international avant-garde cinema, acquire in this novel social context a renewed relevance.

Historical avant-garde film presented a series of expressive uses of technology often associated with "the modernist advocacy of fragmented and fractured ways of seeing and experiencing reality" (Cavendish 2013, 7). Among these techniques visual fragmentation through creative editing practices, producing seemingly disjointed montage sequences, was a foremost strategy. Alongside this, the frequent employment of close-ups, unsteady camera movements, and optical distortions combined in the 1920s avant-garde films to produce a shift from an objective to a subjective vision of a fractured self (Cavendish 2013, 7-8).

Kinema ikon's experimental films employ all these expressive strategies of visual fragmentation. Fractured and fragmented images and off-centred camera compositions often combine to create a sense of dislocation in the viewer. The frequent use of montage and editing, add to this effect of displacement. In *kinema ikon's* experimental films images are neither fully descriptive nor narrative, while contingency is assumed rather than evacuated through the metonymic accumulation of details. This effect is produced through several strategies: the triviality of the situations presented; the illegible relations between them created through montage; the presence of often out-of-focus close-ups, which obliterate the specificity of images, suggesting exercises in abstraction. The prevalent choice of abstraction may be explained as a painterly practice that was for a long time banished from the normative, figurative language of socialist realism in Romania. But it is, at the same time, a technique that exploits the contingency of reality, rejecting any attempt to rationalize it.


Equally important are the effects of these experimental processes on the viewer. Ovidiu Ghitta (1985, 2) has noted their destabilizing function, remarking on the anguished, meaningless, and depressive character of the autonomous fragment. Among the consequences of this assumed openness of structure, one may notice a focus on the very interval that holds together two shots - a disjunction that operates as a conjunction. These "constructive gaps" generate spaces for reflection for the viewers, whose thoughts are, thus, not predetermined, as in narrative (documentary or fictional) cinema, but rather prompted by the cinematic articulation – an effect originated with Soviet montage (Malitsky 2010, 359-361). Thus, one may notice an insistence on the autonomous fragment of reality, which is decontextualized until it reaches the state of a seemingly meaningless *grapheme*. Such procedures may be found in George Sabau's films such as *Fragmentarium* (1985-1990) (fig.2), which consists of a series of abstracted close-ups of hard to identify surfaces revealing various shapes and textures, and *Decupaje/Cut-offs* (1980-1985), where commonplace fragments of recorded reality (a turning bicycle wheel, a chain of wheels inside an engine, a gridded lid covering a draining ditch) are stripped of their symbolic function and reduced to elementary units of cinematic language. They become signifiers, which can be re-contextualized at will and inserted in a new chain of signs. Such an approach to fragmentation is common to many other films such as Alexandru Pecican's *Exercițiu subliminal/Subliminal exercise* (1979), where the camera roams and records bits and pieces of everyday life which defy any narrative articulation. The camera travels quickly inside a communal apartment, recording women lazing about in suggestive erotic poses, then jumps to record the bustle of a group gathered at a visual arts exhibition, only to travel again and record in high-speed casual passers-by in a park. The viewer is taken inside a world of fragments, which do not superimpose over or insert themselves into an existing symbolic system. These details of everyday life, often presented in close up, detached from their surroundings, construct their own possible associations. Intrusive montage often

exposes spatial and temporal differences and incongruences rather than hiding them. In Ioan Ples' *Emergență/Emergence* (1982), recorded reality is dismantled in frames which are then superimposed on each other, suggesting the fuzzy associations encountered in the symbolic work of dreams and memory: a group photograph which seems to be immersed in boiling water or in burning flames; a female portrait underneath which another female character dressed-up in nineteenth century clothes is projected.

It is important to highlight that in *kinema ikon*'s films, montage is used outside the dominant ideological framework of narrative cinema during socialism, which heavily relied on realist or metaphorical associations. The films produced by *kinema ikon* were meant to interrupt such meaningful associations, creating instead absurd, formally contingent, or trivial ones. Some artists were interested in constructing formal relations between disparate elements, often using and manipulating found footage. Others were embracing chance procedures, which allowed these iconographic elements to enter relationships of contiguity while obscuring any coherent narration. In certain films, movement is accelerated, like in Alexandru Pecican's *Exercițiu subliminal/Subliminal Exercise* (1979) or in Ioan Pleș's *Pantha Rhei* (1979) and *Iluminări/Illuminations* (1981), producing a shaky and distorted image. In the latter's films, accelerated movement is enhanced and sometimes doubled by means of graphic interventions (scratches, engravings of the contours of people executing simple and fast movements) on the filmstrip. In most instances, movements executed by anonymous people are either reduced to elementary (walking, running, talking) or absurd actions (such as the aforementioned attempt to fly in Ioan Pleș's 1981 *Iluminări/Illuminations* (fig.3), or the crucifixion of a book in Ioan T. Morar's 1977 *Autopsia uitării/ Autopsy of Oblivion*) (fig.4). In other instances, such as Gheorghe Sabau's *Fragmentarium*, movement is simply followed as it unfolds across different images, juxtaposing footage of moving machines with images of still objects shot in close-up.

Delirious visions

The experimental films of *kinema ikon* also contain a suggestion of a 'delirious vision' (Cavendish 2013, 7), obtained by unsteady camerawork and frequent changes of focus, as well as by the destabilization of vision by means of close-up. The shaky images produced by hand-held cameras displace the viewer and highlight the symbolic elements of confinement, such as a female mannequin having her face wrapped-up in a transparent sac in the narrow space of an attic and the violent bright light pouring in through a window partially sealed with wooden bars in Alexandru Pecican's *Fereastră deschisă spre.../Window open towards...* (1984). Recalling cine-verité aesthetics, short films like Florin Hornoiu's 1976 *Navetiștii/The Commuters*, unsteady camera work contests documentary truthfulness at the service of state sanctioned visual production, recording alienated workers sleeping and staring out the windows in a train in a dreamlike atmosphere. Handheld camerawork also enabled the use of close ups in order to deconstruct the alleged objectivity of the filmed material and foreground the materiality of the shots. These are often accompanied by "fixation," as defined in the Croatian theory of 'anti-film': 'fixation on the frame, on the camera movement, fixation on space-time, fixation on the face in the space and fixation onto itself, until self-destruction' (Vuković 2010, 55). For instance, in Ioan Galea's *Studiu/Study* (1984), one may notice a fixation on the filmmaker's portrait, subjected to a patient yet relentless deconstruction. The portrait is, first of all, enlarged by photographic means, and then the image thus obtained (or the photographic negative) is re-filmed in close-up. The action is repeated several times until the artist's self-portrait eventually



completely loses its identity. A similar procedure may be found in Viorel Simulov's *Manu-script* (1984) (fig.4), where the camera focuses on a hand recorded in extreme close-up from different angles. The constant shifting of the viewing angles produces the impression of movement without identifying the partial object that is presented to the viewer. On the contrary, it presents the hand as a mere surface of inscription for light and texture, as an exercise in the economy of shadows. The skin becomes a mere support for the restless gaze travelling on the surface of the body. In Simulov's 1985 film *Ocular*, a blinking eye is also recorded in slow motion at such a close range that it ends up obliterating the gaze of the represented subject. The patient recording of various surface textures is also present in Sabau's *Fragmentarium* (1985-1989), where a fixed camera reveals in close-up what can barely be identified as a piece of wrinkled human skin, a spider's web, a striated leaf, or a trace in the mud.

Ideology, Interpellation, and Fragmentation: A Politics of Aesthetics

The ideological effects of such fragmentation of visual language cannot be grasped immediately. In simplest terms, ideology may be defined as a coherent, inclusive worldview advancing a set of values pertaining to a dominant cultural group. If they have any, the ideological relevance of *kinema ikon's* films in the Romanian context lies not in the engagement with ideological content per se (that was subverted in mainstream narrative cinema), but rather with the forms and technologies through which such a world-view was reproduced.

The de-professionalized approach to the medium, due to the self-taught condition of experimental film authors with various visual backgrounds, also resulted in a high degree of ideological independence. It allowed the filmmakers to bypass the educational system of socialist realist cinema. Jean-Louis Comolli's analysis of technology and its relation to visual representation, is particularly relevant to analysing the opposition between amateur and professional cinema. In his opinion, what he terms 'normal' vision is the result of reproductive technologies that aim to present an undistorted reality (Comolli 1986, 425-436). In material terms, this perceived vision is largely confined to 35mm cameras used in professional filmmaking, and imposing aesthetic standards of technical representational accuracy, while the use of smaller, 16mm and 8mm equipment was standardized as amateur (Deren 1965). *Kinema ikon's* precarious conditions of production away from the official film industry undoubtedly informed the aesthetics of its films. By countering fundamental representational conventions such as depth of field through blurry, unfocused, shaky technical representations, *kinema ikon's* experimental films expose the inextricable relation between the film technology associated with professional filmmaking and the socially and ideologically constructed "normalized vision" discussed by Comolli, which was also placed at the service of official modes of film production under the Ceaușescu regime.

The deconstruction of cinematic language thus also turned against the carefully trained gaze provided by mainstream cinema. Precisely because *kinema ikon's* representational content was free of political symbols, it performed the two basic functions similar to that described by Piotr Piotrowski in relation to the experimental films produced in the renowned Polish Workshop of the Film Form in Łódź in the 1970s: the production of marginal films as an alternative to dominant filmography and the education of the viewer's gaze, subjected to manipulation and passive indoctrination by the official cinema (Piotrowski 2009, 339).

How would such an 'education of the gaze' occur within the context of socialist Romania specifically? Following Louis Althusser's notion of interpellation (2001, 110-127) key works in film theory have explored the relationship between dominant ideology and

classical cinematic form. Drawing on Althusser, theorist like Jean Louis Baudry (1986, 299-319) and Christian Metz (1986, 244-281) have famously explored how narrative cinematic form constitutes viewers as 'subjects of the ruling orthodoxy' (Gray 2010, 55). Narrative cinema under Ceaușescu retained key features of Hollywood mainstream cinema while propagating socialist ideology and national cohesion, and therefore the effect of interpellation remains a useful concept to describe their overall effect.

It is against these operations and results that *kinema ikon's* techniques of visual fragmentation, may be read. They generate partial and distorted visions and, as already remarked in relation to montage, may be considered to produce alienating reception effects, such as forcing the viewer to think across the shots. Accelerated movement, rapid shifts in focus and depth of field, close-up shooting and focus on details, the frustration of narrative, as well as other post-production procedures (solarisation, scratching, chromatic alteration) interrupt the chain of signifiers and frustrate the identification of the viewer with the imaginary reality projected on the screen. They expose the inherent opacity of the screen and make the viewer aware of the material means of representation. By objectifying the very operations, which construct the image (focus, framing, montage etc.) and foregrounding the materiality of the celluloid strip, used as a background for graphic incisions, or exposing the film grain, the cinematic image is ultimately exposed as an unstable set of representational conventions. Such technical interventions may be read as a kind of 'meta-media' exercises (Vuković 2010, 63), as subjective commentaries, realized with the application of not only graphic, but also cinematic techniques specific to the medium of film such as travelling shots, close-ups, speeding up of footage, and montage. Subjective marks are obvious in the graphic interventions on the film support explored by *kinema ikon* between 1970-1980. For instance, in *Pantha Rhei* (1979) and *Poluare/Pollution* (1977), Ioan Pleș doubles the images' narration with luminescent drawings (vertical or horizontal scratches, geometric signs, scattered small incisions and solarizations) that highlight certain details (a skull, an electric pole in a rural landscape). In *Poem Dinamic/Dynamic Poem* (1978), Emanuel Teț equally intervenes in the recorded images by means of chromatic alterations and light effects. The recorded images featuring a male and female character engaging in physical gestures that suggest a sexual tension, is violently altered and frustrated by post-production, through recurrent abstract animated figures appearing on the surface of the celluloid, lifting the live action into a visually more dynamic space, deemphasizing a potential narrative context.

In conclusion, by exploiting the resources of fragmented and distorted representations against the "normalized," "objective," and coherent vision of the world promoted by mainstream cinema, *kinema ikon's* films advanced an alternative view of (social) reality. Overall, they constructed an imaginary space where multiple, conflicting visions could coexist, disbelief was possible, and the autonomy of a fractured self could be claimed against its subject position designated by the cinematic apparatus. Such an analysis may be easily associated to what Jacques Rancière envisaged as the political effect of changes in the aesthetic regime, designating the simple but powerful idea that the formal alterations produced by artworks redefine the way reality is being experienced by the viewer (Rancière 2006). While their analysis of the language of cinema expanded the political potentialities of avant-garde film, in search of aesthetic autonomy, it also resulted in a subversion of the monological discourse of official socialist cinema.

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Ion Indolean

memory as experiment

Apropierea mea de KINEMA IKON a fost graduală și, așa cum se întâmplă cu lucrurile speciale dar neobișnuite, a necesitat timp. Vorbesc despre timpul pe care memoria îl înregistrează în așa fel încât, uitându-ne înapoi, conștientizăm că ce am trăit face parte din istorie. Și, de asemenea, timpul pe care Kİ-l-a înregistrat astfel încât acum putem înțelege de fapt parcursul și transformările sociale, culturale, survenite în România ultimilor 50 de ani. În textul de față, aș dori să vorbesc despre memorie ca experiment și să înțeleg în ce fel KINEMA IKON poate fi privit ca un păstrător al moștenirii culturale locale, respectiv prin ce s-a individualizat (stilistic și tematic) în spațiul internațional.

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It may be impossible to tell in the moment whether one is in fact living through a significant historical event... For several years, KINEMA IKON was just one name amongst many. I first heard about the group in lectures on experimental film and video art at the Film School in Cluj. Like many other defiant students, I was put off by the combination of terms used to describe them: 'old', 'communism', 'Romania', 'provincial'. Rather, I was interested in more recent work by award-winning directors from Cannes, Berlin, Venice. A few years passed and I accidentally found Kİ's website; the moment represented a second encounter and an opportunity to properly acquaint myself with the group from Arad. I accessed one of their experimental films, then another, and just like that, I spent an entire afternoon watching most of their works. They were breathtaking. What I avoided a few years ago now fascinated me. My connection to Kİ developed gradually since, as with all life-changing experiences, I was willing to give it time, the right amount of time.

Because experimental cinema was marginalized by the communist regime (the same happened to science-fiction literature), Romanian cultural production was somewhat disjointed from the western world as it was working in that direction, during the 60s-80s. KINEMA IKON shows continuity in the history of Romanian alternative art, otherwise interrupted between the inter-war period and post-communism. Free-spirited, its artisans found refuge under George Săbău's tutelage and formed a community they may never have thought of as big and important, but that was certainly vibrant and full of initiative. The strength of their example is overwhelming, and meanwhile they have become a part of history. Watching Kİ works we may come to understand the course of social and cultural transformations in Romania over the last 50 years. In what follows, I would like to discuss each of these issues, by relation to memory.

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Founded in 1970, KINEMA IKON dedicated themselves to the production of experimental films during the last two decades of the socialist era. In many countries, experimental films were shot on Super 8, but Kİ preferred 16mm. Preferred, as received from the communist authorities: back then film stock couldn't be purchased, and was only made available following a very well-motivated request from institutional authorities. So, the group shot all of its 62 experimental films (with lengths between 3 and 15 minutes) on this format, out of necessity. They made big sacrifices in their quest to create experimental cinema: for every one of their experimental works, they would produce an ethnographic piece or an essayistic portrait of local authorities; a worthwhile compromise. Despite all the difficulties and the lack of an official direction by relation to the national canon, they worked privately, while living with the permanent fear of being ostracized by the system's activists.¹ It is all the more fascinating then, that they have managed to produce a comprehensive body of work, where individual approaches intersect

and communicate, contributing to such a spectacular (non)genre.

Formally and stylistically, κ films were influenced by twentieth avant-garde movements and alternative European and American cinematography from the '60s and '70s. When I became acquainted with their work, it was not clear to me how much the authors had access to these films, because they could have worked just as well without knowing them at all; certain ideas can circulate, float through the air, without requiring direct contact. I was recently reading a study that spoke about this phenomenon, regarding cave paintings from thousands of years ago: people living at great distance left similar imprints, never having come into contact. Telepathy? It may be. I would summon the power of the sky, of inspiration floating through the air. Whatever the case, κ members managed to align their interests with those of their western colleagues, a process that was recognized internationally only after the fall of communism.

Technically speaking, the group intervened directly on film (scratching was a commonly used technique), preferred abstraction, allowing narrative to fall into the background. They colorized the images radically and unrealistically, preferred the essay as form, where a dreamlike atmosphere, special effects, and discontinuous storylines prevailed. At the same time, they set their subjects into permanent movement, used extremely alert editing, seemingly chaotic, heavy, powerful, often electronic music for the soundtrack, switching between different camera techniques (zooming, traveling, focus changes, all very sudden), over-impositions, and a constant play with lighting, where the light is either very powerful, or it almost doesn't appear at all. Another characteristic feature was the use of negative images.

Parallel to κ , other cine clubs were operating in Romania at the time, and performed similar formal exercises.² Nonetheless, the efforts of other semi-professional filmmakers in the country were more dispersed, and they did not join together to form such large creative groups. The 62 films made by κ in about two decades represent a complete body of work; they can be viewed either separately or together. The individual auteurs propose similar ideas and techniques, but each tries to distinguish himself, to personalize his film with his own concerns. It is difficult to narrate these films, being discontinuous, fragmented, manufactured from pieces that apparently do not fit into the logic of canonical cinema. They must be seen, experienced, felt, because otherwise they lose precisely their essential element: the distorted sensations they transmit.

Experimental films often raise a series of questions about the art of the film-maker, about his subject of interest. Being first and foremost a type of work that is foregrounded in aesthetics, we might be inclined to believe that instead of offering clues or narrative solutions, an experimental film will deepen the mystery of the world. It might cause some discomfort in the viewer, leading to further dilemmas. Likewise, experimental film is often encrypted through a type of hermetic language that allows multiple ways of viewing and understanding, which can nonetheless overwhelm an uninitiated or disinterested viewer. But an experimental film with lasting power also has an analytical side: it seeks to understand the society it observes, and is reflective of its author's own memory. Reviewing some of the 62 works in KINEMA IKON's filmography, I was pleased to find aspects that comment, albeit indirectly, on the present realities they reference: fashions, postures, daily activities, busy industrial spaces—the same that are nowadays seen as wrecks of a system that is to be forgotten. I did not experience most of the material evidence in these films directly, so that now I look at them with the thirsty eyes of someone who wants to understand his origins better. As if they were pieces of a puzzle, I seek to reorder the films according to my own experience and understanding.

I think they are all wonderful, but a truly remarkable film is Ioan Plesh's *Efecte de imprimăvărare* (*Spring Effects*, 1978), where the motif of a superimposed figurine appears over an almost apocalyptic background. It's a recurring motif within all of the 62 creations. The figurine (here a ballerina) appears to be captive. One can feel a strange sensation watching the handcuffed

man, an individual without escape. Along with the images, the film soundtrack intensifies feelings of restlessness, anxiety, even deep despair. This theme can be seen as running through most Kİ works. An expression of the desire to escape the system? It may be. It is interesting to think of these films as historical documents not only of symbolic or stylistic value, but also as commentaries regarding communist reality and, later, the transition to capitalism. In this respect, one can identify some fascinating aspects pertaining to communist realities as seen by Kİ's concerned members. *Poluare* (Pollution, 1977, Ioan Plesh) brings up issues related to the lack of environmental policies. The pollution referred to is not only of the type caused by major industrial plants, but also symbolic, the intrusion of state institutions into traditions preserved by many generations, into the ordinary life of people. The consequences of forced industrialization likewise become the subject of Florin Hornoiu's film *Navetiștii* (*The Commuters*, 1975). Here the focus is on people that are caught within a continuous movement towards their workplaces, i.e. factories: sleeping on the cramped trains, always exhausted. Their world is by no means ideal. People are reduced to a large mass of ants: they come and go, without respite to enjoy life. This exaggerated noise of life is also captured by George Săbău in *Ipostaze simultane* (*Simultaneous Instances*, 1970), where sequential over-impositions give the sensation of an endless series of assigned tasks, overwhelming the human figure. Everything is caught within permanent movement, impossible to temper with.

After 1989, KINEMA IKON expanded its area of interest, initiating performances, editing magazines, producing exhibitions, and various types of installations. Although technology was a secondary concern in a desolated Romania, the group quickly understood and adopted IT resources, creating interactive installations. But they also continued to work with more "classical" audiovisual equipment, if we can describe them as such. Concurrently, Kİ was finally able to present work abroad. Upon one such instance, at a viewing at the Pompidou Center in 1995, the group's leader, George Săbău, recounts that members of the public remarked upon the pronounced anti-communist spirit of the films, although, he insisted: the group's main interest remained within the realm of aesthetics. This defiant spirit, argues Săbău in the text describing Kİ history on their official website, is something that may have emerged involuntarily, more like a subtext born out of the suffocating circumstances that the authors were experiencing.³ It is likely that they were trying to overcome their own traumas and powerlessness by relation to the regime, using these films in a therapeutic way.

The idea that KINEMA IKON sought to preserve local history—even if only subconsciously at first—is reinforced by several works that capture instances of everyday life after the fall of communism. The documentary short entitled *kinema ikon: jurnal 1995* (2:01) offers a brief history of the group within two minutes, retaining some of specificity of the relationships it enabled between very different generations: elderly people appear reluctant to participate in a type of cultural event they do not understand, organized by younger generations, a so-called performance. Călin Man stands behind the counter of a grocery store and offers—alongside vegetables—art: the shopping bag he is trying to hand to the customers (on which is written 'Randevuul', a pun related to French word 'rendez-vous', meaning a meeting, in this case presumably a first, awkward encounter between Kİ members and regular people) is misunderstood by those on the other side of the counter. The conclusion reached at the end, as a testimonial, belongs to George Săbău, who underlines the demonstrative character of the action, organized on behalf of the group's INTERMEDIA magazine: "We could not develop any direct relationship between the buyer and a more or less advanced artistic program". The conclusion is nonetheless premeditated and ironic at the same time. During the 90s, people in Romania didn't have money for "normal" art, let alone experimental. Situated outside of the interests of a society in so-called transition, art—and not just any art, but alternative art—would have been the last concern of citizens who lived very modestly, and who could barely afford the means to ensure their survival. Although Romania had meanwhile emerged from totalitarianism, KINEMA IKON still operated, in a manner of speaking, clandestinely. Marginalization was no longer be

political, yet it was economic, something that Săbău and Man fully understood at the time. One of the customers even cracks a joke, an elderly lady, who is ridiculing the performance, when she says ironically that the bag is now more expensive than the product inside it—a negligible quantity of carrots. Despite her naiveté, she tells a great truth, but a truth she does not understand: due to what it represents, the bag is truly more valuable than the carrots, because it has cultural value and historic potential. Such a bag, given the temporal distance from the event, may have meanwhile become a unique item—or, in any case, only a few copies are left. Concerned about her most immediate needs, uninformed about contemporary art, the woman nevertheless perceived the symbolic power of the gesture made by KI. Not realizing that she was experiencing more than a banal, everyday event, she actually became its protagonist. Having the perspective of time, we now understand the value of this performance and can fully appreciate it.

Producing an experimental audiovisual history of the city Arad must have been one of KI's intentions. Other works, such as *Peter Hùgel: Arad - o cronologie* (*Peter Hùgel: Arad - a chronology*); *postcard / ARAD*; *Nunta la Arad 1913* (*Wedding in Arad 1913*), attempt to preserve Arad's past in an ironic yet candid way.⁴ The group's post-2000 "phase" is likewise caught on camera, via ready-made videos, material resembling home videos, and through miniature remakes of famous figures, for example Star Wars character R2D2 being ironically renamed 'artur ditu'. The group also keeps a yearly journal of important events organized by its members. All of these playful experiments and the ways in which they are ordered and archived, are demonstrative of the ways in which KI's work for almost half a century constitutes a treasure for Romanian cultural heritage, as well as internationally. KINEMA IKON remains a unique phenomenon within a global arena, having succeeded in reinventing itself throughout each generation, maintaining its inimitable energy.

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1 George Săbău has written about the ideological pressure he and his colleagues felt: "Cultural life in Romania underwent in the '80s the darkest period, because of the political and ideological [context], most of the times having a devastating effect. [...] It is worth mentioning that meetings of such scope were not approved of by what, at the time, were called Party & State organs. I got the favorable resolution by a straightaway both comical and pathetic trick – I must confess, using the benevolent suggestion of a high official having worked in the censorship system – that is, I got the signature of a deputy minister of the former national council of culture, who, in his huge ignorance, had no idea who were the invited persons on the list presented to him, so that our comrade understood it was about some members of some ciné-clubs in the country..." George Săbău, *contextual history of kinema ikon*, kinema ikon, accessed September 3, 2019, <https://kinema-ikon.net/>

2 More on this topic in the recently released documentary: *Camera obscura*, directed by Gheorghe Preda (2016, Sharf film).

3 Săbău, *Contextual History of kinema ikon*.

4 These works, amongst many others, are available on the group's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/kinemaikon>

Ion Indolean started as a film critic, collaborating with various Romanian magazines. Meanwhile, he started to be involved in filmmaking. In 2015, he co-directed the short experimental "Girl Eating Pizza." He then directed his first feature length film, "Discordia" (2016) which was awarded Best Romanian Feature Debut Award at Transilvania TIFF Festival. He has produced several experimental videos with Italian musician Attilio Novellino. Currently, Ion is working on his second feature film, "Toni & Friends."

Kinema Ikon, Experimental Film Workshop in Arad, Romania 1970 - now

Textul propune o privire comparativă între filmele experimentale produse de Kinema Ikon și cele produse în vest începând cu primele decenii ale secolului 20 și prezintă abordarea inerent subversivă a acestui mediu pe care autoritățile atât cele din vest cât și cele din est încercau să-l controleze.

„You cannot show films publicly without a seal of the censorship authority. We approve certain films, and disapprove other films.”

This statement might seem like something that would normally be uttered by the censorship committee in a communist country like Romania, where Kinema Ikon, the experimental film workshop founded by George Sabau, had been operating since 1970 in the Transylvanian city of Arad, first as a club called Atelier 16 (alluding to the 16mm film the authors used), then as a workshop under the brand Kinema Ikon. The phrase was in fact directed by a New York censorship board official in 1950 to Amos Vogel, the founder of Cinema 16, the first experimental film club in the United States, which, starting in 1947, introduced the U. S. public to avant-garde filmmakers. The official in question targeted Maya Deren's 1944 experimental film *The Private Life of Cats* with "obscenity" charges for showing kittens being born. The parallelism between the experience of Cinema 16 with the censorship authority in 1950s New York and that of Atelier 16/Kinema Ikon in 1980s Romania, nevermind the similarity in names, is striking and perhaps speaks to the subversive quality inherent in experimental film.

Film as a Subversive Art, Amos Vogel's 1976 exhaustive book on international experimental and auteur film, presents avant-garde cinema in opposition to the traditional, commercial and consumerist, entertainment-based model offered by Hollywood, and is through its antagonistic nature, inherently political. Vogel defines avant-garde cinema as one which disrupts traditional ways of seeing, defies convention, shows reality in unexpected ways, and builds new truths. Many narrative, auteur films fall into this vast category, particularly the European arthouse cinema he so loved. Likewise, experimental cinema or film, which has a slightly different lineage than narrative arthouse cinema. Experimental film is strictly non-linear, integrates the other arts, such as painting, sculpture, performance or dance. It is usually abstract and evokes emotions, sensations, and feelings rather than make overt statements, it is often poetic, dreamy, and subjective, and it communicates visually rather than through speech. Due to its non-traditional form, it is seen as disobedient. It can be understood as a rejection of the logical, reasonable ways of representing reality that were establishing themselves within the language of cinema starting with the 1910s, and searching for new ones instead.

The act of editing film itself is a means through which filmmakers can create new realities – it is in fact similar to the process of collage embraced by the Dadaists, of juxtaposing two disparate images to construct new meanings. Therefore it is little wonder that most of the first experimental films emerge out of Surrealism and Dadaism.

"Footage is ...edited together, usually with the goal of telling a coherent narrative. These techniques manipulate both the sequence of events and the sequence of visual transitions to help our brains break down the continuous stream of action into a series of episodes, each of which we process like a picture: we first explore, working out the framework of what is happening, and then we turn to filling in the details of that framework. By fiddling with shot layout and editing, filmmakers are continually manipulating the visual process in ways often experimental and new."¹

The public's perception and the orientation of its gaze is also guided differently among mainstream, auteur, and experimental cinema.

"In mainstream narrative cinema, camera operators usually try to keep the most important thing in the middle of the frame, especially at the beginning of a shot. As people grow up watching TV and movies, they come to expect this, and so after a cut they look to the middle of the screen because there is likely to be something important there. When a shot starts with the important stuff off to the side (a composition favoured by the Nouvelle Vague director Jean-Luc Godard), it is disorienting."²

This interest in disorienting the viewer, disrupting official narratives, disregarding tradition, is all part and parcel of experimental and auteur cinema's rejection of the status quo and the conventional reality promoted and reinforced by mainstream cinema.

The first films ever made may seem extremely experimental to our eyes, and actually were: *A Trip to the Moon*, Georges Méliès's 1902 auteur masterpiece emerged out of the theatre context in which Méliès worked, and it greatly influenced the development of the narrative film genre that we now hold as a cinematic standard. The film used sculptures and hand-painted sets – it drew tremendously from the modernist art that was starting to flourish at that time. In the next years, as cinematic forms and techniques instituted themselves, new experiments in representation, filming and editing pushed the medium further. For example, Vladimir Mayakovsky's 1918 *Lady and the Hooligan* used innovative editing techniques while representing a new world heralded by the October 1917 Revolution in Russia. Similarly, starting in the early 1920s, Surrealist and Dadaist experiments with form, montage, collage, film exposure and scratching, were thematised in such works as *Le Retour de la Raison* by Man Ray (1922) which consisted of animated Rayographs, *Ballet Mecanique* by Fernand Léger (1924) featuring animated paintings and a musical composition to add layers of meaning, *Entr'Acte* by René Clair (1924), *Ghosts Before Breakfast* by Hans Richter (1928), *The Seashell and the Clergyman* by Germaine Dulac and Antonin Artaud (1928), *Un Chien Andalou* by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí (1929), among many others. These films either featured just shapes, light and shadow in motion – some of the first attempts at abstract animation – or absurd juxtapositions of images that subverted traditional storylines, and poked fun at reason and logic so cherished by European society despite the devastating world war they were perceived to have led to. Many featured equally experimental music or sound to heighten mood and sensory experience.

After the first experiments in cinema during the 20s and 30s, avant-garde film continued to evolve while trailblazers like Maya Deren and Hans Richter worked with the medium until their deaths in 1961 and 1976 respectively. Other names that need mention are the 1950s Lettrists Isidore Isou with *A Treatise of Venom and Eternity* and Guy Debord with his *Hurlements en Faveur de Sade*, Stan Brakhage's *Window Water Baby Moving* which, like Maya Deren's work, was the subject of obscenity charges in 1958 for showing the live birth of his child, the first such representation in a non-scientific film, and in the 1960s and 1970s Jonas Mekas's diary films, Laura Mulvey, Chantal Ackerman and so many others.

With this background in mind, we can now turn to the work of Kinema Ikon of the 1970s and 80s, a time when in Europe and the United States experimental film became a political tool for emancipatory movements and practices, such as the civil rights movements and feminism, anti-colonialism, and anti-capitalism. Experimental films offered opportunities to disrupt official narratives and subvert accepted societal norms that reinforced authoritarian and oppressive visions of reality. Under the communist dictatorship of Romania, visual experimentation in the arts was thriving in the late 60s, as then-recently installed dictator Nicolae Ceausescu moved away from the close relationship with the Soviet Union towards a rapprochement with the West, allowing for a liberalization of the cultural field. Aesthetic and material experimentation, nonetheless, flourished within controlled environments, where any messages perceived as politically critical were still contained and censored. This phenomenon was seen, for instance, at Atelier 35, a section of the Union of Plastic Artists founded in 1969, which was intended for young artists (under 35) who had not necessarily joined the union, yet needed a space for self-expression. Branches of Atelier 35 existed throughout the country, and its artists experimented with forms in painting, performance, photography and seldom even film, that were not officially sanctioned by the authorities. This is also the case with Atelier 16, the former name of Kinema Ikon, which, according to George Sabau, its founder, was launched in 1970 with a movie he himself made, *Simultaneous Hypostases*. This experiment in technique, form

Demian Șandru: *Open-flash* (1975)



Georges Méliès: *Le Voyage dans la Lune* (1902)

and aesthetic featured sequences with a three-way split-screen, combined black and white footage with color, and superimposed diverse images of the urban space. Scenes of people engaging in various mysterious and foreboding actions were accompanied by a soundtrack of experimental sounds which heightened the suspense and carefully led the viewer to bleak expectations.

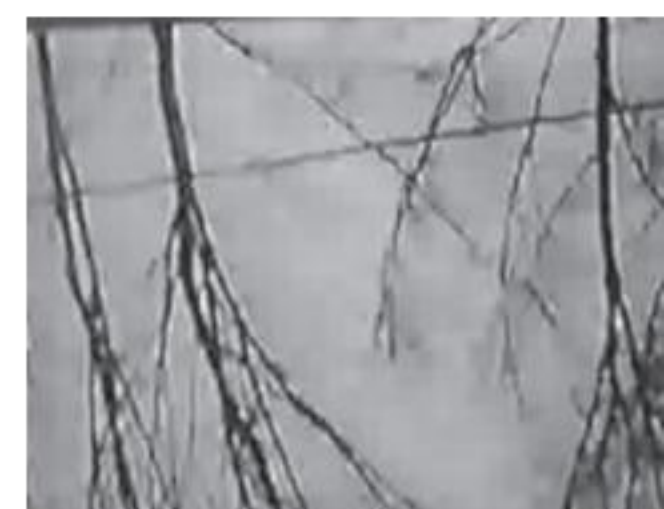
As Atelier 16 operated as a film club for the first few years, its activities were limited to screening the relatively few available avant-garde films in communist Romania, discussing them, and attempting to consolidate a clear vision and to form a team to produce its own experimental films. Only starting in 1974, with the arrival of Ioan Ples, did the group, which by then comprised painters, sculptors, philosophers, writers, scientists, and students of other disciplines, start focusing seriously on the production of this film genre. Ples's first work was made from meter-long strips of existing film reel that he illegally purchased (with cigarettes or coffee) from the projectionist in his small town, taking on a significant risk that could have led to a confrontation with the political police. On top of this strip, he painted abstract and figurative shapes, scratched the film, and animated the drawings and marks applied to each individual frame, creating a relationship between the existent filmed images and his new ones. Of course the scratched film technique is a throw-back to 1950s Canadian experimental animator Norman McLaren, as recognised by George Sabau,³ as well as to the earlier examples of direct animation by the Dadaists mentioned above. Ples's films from the late 70s and early 80s, such as *Illuminations* and *Panta Rhei*, displayed the same playful qualities, combining live action with scratched-film animation. In his 1977 5min short, *Pollution*, Ples treats the prospect of a nuclear disaster at the height of the Cold War by mixing live-action with self-immolating film and animation. The exaggerated suspenseful gazes of the protagonists, the melting film which brings to mind nuclear clouds, and animated rectangles hand-drawn directly on the film, ominously chasing frightened townspeople, create a comical -horror scenario. "Pollution" might not only refer to the aftereffects of a nuclear catastrophe, but also to the media hybridity utilized by the artist, or, as I can only surmise, serve as a metaphor of Romanian authorities' attitude toward this genre as one which subverted "socialist reality".⁴

Several other filmmakers from Kinema Ikon, among them Romulus Bucur, Ioan Galea, Cristian Ostafi, Gelu Muresan and Emanuel Tet, also experimented with animation, which in *Frame by Frame: A Materialist Aesthetics of Animated Cartoons*, Hannah Frank calls intrinsically avant-garde due to its early technical innovation with moving images, manipulation of perception and the creation of visual illusion. Most of their short films echo technical and abstract visual experiments previously explored by the likes of Paul Sharits and Liz Rhodes in the late 60s early 70s, for example Ioan Ples's *Solarization* (1981), or Emanuel Tet's *Dynamic Poem* (1978) which contain scratching, painting, and exposure of the film, along with flickering and rapid cuts.

A series of short experimental documentaries and fiction films hint to everyday life in communist Romania through the non-narrative juxtaposition of images of interior and exterior space, private and public activities, scenes of labor and leisure. These films, like Florin Hornoiu's *The Commuters* (1976), or Demian Sandru's *Open-Flash* (1975), Monica Trifu's *Duet*, Alexandru Pecican's *Subliminal Exercise*, and Romulus Budiu's *Alone with the Snow*, also underline the intentional deconstruction of traditional narrativity and a conscious construction of an alternative one. Daniel Motz's *Kitsch, Kitsch Uraaahh* (1977) is a more direct critique of the simplistic, populist and yes, kitsch, visual culture promoted by the communist authorities that was anathema to the avant-garde and art itself. Combining black and white with color footage, he juxtaposes the authenticity of the studio painter to the ridiculous visual reality of the cultural objects that permeated the public sphere at that time.

Some of the films made by members of the group, such as Ioan Galea's *Study 1* and *Study 2* (1986), Roxana Chereches and Liliana Trandbur's *Mise-En-Ecran* (1989), Cristian Ostafi's *Convergence to Uselessness* (1984), and Viorel Simulov's *Ocular* and *Manuscript* (1985), explore subjectivity, compromised individuality, fractured selves, and lack of completeness, utilising symbolic imagery such as mirrors and refracted reflections, meditations on the topography of the human body and its parts, as well as dismembered mannequins. Representations of sexuality and eroticism, also controlled and discouraged by the authorities especially after the passing of Decree 770 in 1966 prohibiting abortion, were also an important subtext in several films, like *Open-Flash* among others.

Ioan Ples: *Panta Rhei* (1979)



Paul Sharits: *Wintercourse* (1962)

Most of the films produced during this period are black and white, contributing significantly to the grim atmosphere they intended to convey, while several treat the duality of the film apparatus's function as both an instrument of oppression, which is constantly watching, and one of personal resistance by returning the gaze and offering transformative possibilities. Some filmmakers also played with texture through close-ups of rough surfaces, rapid cuts and camera movement over patterned objects, and the repetition of images, thus evoking the sensation of an unending cycle, a condition without exit. Although in the majority of these films the stifling ambience is only poetically and abstractly rendered and any overt criticism is averted, the Securitate still kept the group under surveillance in the second decade of its activities. Having gained the trust of the authorities by producing propaganda documentaries, George Sabau was able to provide the filmmakers with left-over reel to be turned into experimental works. Sabau thus managed to keep kinema ikon somewhat "insulated" against prying, although the subversive potential of experimental film led to a few, if not serious, incidents especially during the 80s.⁵ If until the late 70s the secret police's approach to culture was less systematized, enabling some veiled expressions of criticism to sneak past the censors, starting in the early 1980s even "inappropriate states of mind..." were on their radar.⁶ Therefore it is of no surprise that Kinema Ikon became a subject of interest for local agents. As a result of increased constraints on all aspects of expression and life, numerous members of the group emigrated illegally, some getting caught at the border and serving jail time, only to attempt again and succeed later on. Additionally, George Sabau reports that the group was blacklisted from receiving press coverage in the Arad region (although in the national specialty press it was written of admiringly), and that he was prohibited from traveling to Paris to present the filmmakers' work at the Centre Pompidou, an interdiction which cost the group the international recognition that it deserved at that time.⁷

While I do not consider the work of Kinema Ikon particularly innovative for the period when it was most prolific, having cited experimental innovators in the West, and even East, from earlier decades, it is nevertheless remarkable for the restrictive context and conditions in which the workshop was operating. Like in Western Europe and the United States starting in the 60s, the experimental films of Kinema Ikon produced in the 80s were exhibited in the context of large-scale visual art group exhibitions, like *The Mirror Space* (Spațiul Oglindă 1986), *Study* (Studiul II 1981), and *Medium* (1981), enabling yet a new and atypical mode of reception of moving images. They managed to transmit the dissatisfaction of a generation, suggesting forms of resistance to the oppressiveness of the social and political environment in Romania through individual and introspective artistic expression, while maintaining the inherently subversive universal language and form of experimental film, thus connecting to a long history of undermining tradition and convention the world over.

¹ Jeffrey M. Zacks, *Here's Looking at You*, <https://aeon.co/essays/how-filmmakers-push-your-eyes-around-the-screen-at-will>

² Ibid

³ George Sabau, *Kinema Ikon, nostalgii temperate*

⁴ 19 februarie, 1982. Tematica orientativă privind culegerea de informații în problema „artă-cultură”. (ACNSAS, fond Documentar, dosar nr. 8010)

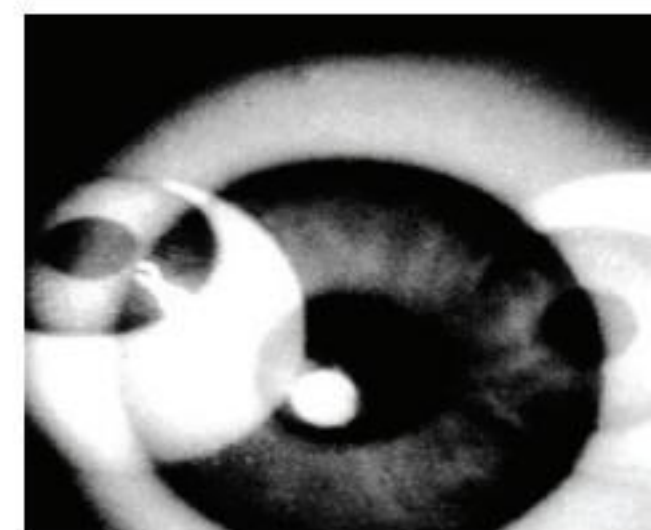
⁵ George Sabau, *Kinema Ikon, nostalgii temperate*

⁶ 19 februarie, 1982. Tematica orientativă privind culegerea de informații în problema „artă-cultură”. (ACNSAS, fond Documentar, dosar nr. 8010)

⁷ George Sabau, *Kinema Ikon, nostalgii temperate*

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A. Pecican: *Exercițiu subliminal* (1979)



Hans Richter: *Film Study* (1926)

Memorial Ergonomy

A Short Commentary on Labour, Autobiographic Media, and their Peculiar Socialities, to Propose Two Questions¹

Acest text nu caută să teoretizeze sau să „istoricizeze” practica artistică a grupului kinema ikon, ci propune două întrebări speculative revizioniste asupra unor momente particulare din istoria ki. Prima dintre ele se referă la documentarele ki și legătura dintre muncă și imaginea în mișcare; cea de-a doua se referă la posibilitatea unei revizuii a istoriei ki din perspectiva obiectelor tehnice avute la dispoziție—ambele ca modalități de studiere a ergonomiei memoriale și socialității caracteristice acestora în lucrările grupului ki.

In a history of artistic practice that spans over fifty years, it is difficult to articulate the »rhizomatic« condition of kinema ikon's works. It is not the purpose of this text to either theorise or historicise this practice further. But two rather marginal ergonomies outline different means to understand two memorial transitions and their peculiar socialities, inviting to future investigations and archaeologies—one has to do with the observation of labour in the collective's documentaries during 'the experimental movie stage' (1970–1989), the other with video as a 'transitional stage,' and condition of possibility, to what has after 1994 been labeled as the collective's 'hypermedia stage.'

The emergence of cinema is inseparable from the shifts in industrial organisation and time rationalisation that define capitalist modernities; the intricacies of movement, work, and production in film translate how energy and labour relate to the human body, highlighting the forces and the constraints that condition the gestures, paces, and rhythms of work. This has been evident ever since the Lumières' *Workers Leaving the Factory*, where the factory principle, with its assembly lines and disciplines of mechanised labour, superposes the technology of the cinematograph to reflect on the value of human productivity. It is the moment when human labour seems to disappear from history—and with it, a part of our visual sense.² In kinema ikon's documentaries, the filmmaker and the camera are observant of how urban living, technology, rationalised labour, and industrial-historical tropes unravel the demagogic utopias and progressive state aspirations. The camera itself is a meta-commentary on the division of labour and of the subject itself, requiring a different kind of visuality: a speculative gaze that is inscribed in the image, mechanised actions, and the ergonomics of bodily segments. Labour and social relations—economy and politics implicitly—take centre stage in a series of documentaries the titles of which, descriptive and ironic at the same time, make visible the ideological notions and programmatic condition of the era.³ Here, the human body, the building blocks, and the manual actions divide labour into calculable and measurable time units to express the socio-economic conditions that regulate subjectivity; and the camera functions as an apparatus that allows one to negotiate the conditions of experience and individuation.

What is thus given to see in kinema ikon's documentaries is an image of the past organisation of work and its social territories where industrial economies and collective mechanisms of cognition mark new stratifications of reality, from a »material« to an »aesthetic« model of production. The technology of the camera is inseparable from specific ways of seeing, knowing, and acting. The conditions of the industrial society define the technologies of image production, as 'the cinema apparatus brings the industrial revolution to the eye'⁴ and the subject's sensorial apparatus accommodates the production of value by engaging the structures of materiality. Camera angles, close-ups, and framings mirror mental imaginaries, rendering evident internal processes of perception and memorisation. What is thus remembered or forgotten participates to the historically defined discourse on memory—according to Jacques Rancière, the hierarchy pervasive in the division of labour parallels the hierarchy of thought over matter.⁵ On the other hand, it translates the specificity of the moving image in its connection to labour and time. As film takes part in the division of labour and offers representations of

the working class, it contributes to creating particular visibilities, modes of expression, and possibilities to experience time—which, in turn, define a specific sociality.

While the centrality of living labour and the mechanisms of observation within production could not create a starker contrast and anthropological reality today, when work is no longer depicted by the people observing it, kinema ikon's documentaries also allude to an autobiographical memory—of individuals and the medium itself—and, thus, to broader issues around the practices of remembrance, affective and residual histories, or the speculative potential of rememoration. They are not an illustration of the conditions, but a remediation that affords memorial ergonomics and critical engagement with the filmic trace and its specific manner of inscribing time. What may then be formulated as a first line of inquiry is how does this memorial ergonomics of labour and film—their sociality and autobiographical memory implicitly—relate to the experimental practice of kinema ikon?

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At the beginning of the 90s, a moment in kinema ikon's history marks a different form of sociality—one that may even have gone unnoticed. The brief yet intricate video period is defined by the changes brought with electronic communication and the significant changes in the social and political fabric of the times. This is not about the formal qualities of video as an artistic medium, though enough attention should be paid to how video editing has impacted the transfer of filmed images and post-production techniques—and it is not a social commentary at this point. Unlike film, video is not only about the camera but lies at the intersection of previously separate media. Curiously perhaps, video may well illustrate the symptomatic condition of the Romanian society after the »revolution« in 1989, like no other medium.⁶ That is partly because with video, artists attain a form of autonomy and *apparative ambiguity* that demands a new approach.

Critics have discussed the reflexive combination of media in kinema ikon's experimental films by stressing how various motifs and techniques pertaining to drawing, collage, photography, or cinema overlap to inform the collective's practice of representation. The expansion of the cinematic image by means of mixed media and pictorial, engraving, or cinematic techniques reflects on an established practice of visual fragmentation, distorted effects, and partial visions that defines the experimental films produced until the end of the 80s. From accelerated movements and rapid shifts in focus or depth of field, to close-up shooting and focus on detail, going through various post-production procedures that 'interrupt the chain of signifiers;' from objectifying operations that construct the image through focus, framing, or montage, to exposing the film grain, 'the cinematic image is ultimately exposed as an unstable set of representational conventions.' They are technical interventions, 'meta-media' exercises, and subjective commentaries realised with the application of graphic and cinematic techniques.⁷ While the analogue is often linked to experiment and positive aspects of instability—even arguing for the »reinvention« of mediums or the »revival« of old techniques, in contrast to how the digital seems to express various forms of monopoly and domination—we are yet to evaluate the (media) ontologies and politics at work. Film and video, in particular, are unstable ontologies by definition, profoundly historical and variable, that is, historically mutable. In this sense, history could be written from yet another perspective: not an artistic perspective per se, and not an art historical perspective for sure, but the perspective given by the history of signaletic speeds. It is without doubt that the aesthetic and critical modes of the televisual have impacted media practices ever since the beginning of the 60s. Most (art) historical narratives argue for the changes in the concept of the work of art when exposed to new media technologies. This has, in turn, redrawn the boundaries between art and »the social,« resulting in particular associations between art and media technologies that identify the work of art with the immediacy of signaletic technologies, from media events and performative operations, to interventionist strategies. It is, as Ina Blom has shown extensively in her research, an art-centric account that tends to a generalising approach to the technologies that inform new art production.⁸ An extensive tour of the argument is necessary.

Because society is memory, the significant changes in the dominant technologies of memory affect the definition of the social and the sociality of art forms. Blom aims to reverse the art-historical attribution of agency—rather than using the performative powers of artists and artworks as a point of departure, she traces the powers of effectuation of 'an

audiovisual technology that deployed artistic frameworks and art-related materials, personnel, and competences as part of its exploration of its own potential.' Video forges associations with other projects, perceptual systems, and subjectivities to explore and expand the temporalising powers. While video operations create new associations or social links, video also produces a *reflection* on the new forms of social memory the ramifications of which extend beyond the framework of machine memory. With video, we can no longer locate memory in a specific representation or practice, as it is ultimately a 'force of retention.' Blom stresses the limited lifespan of the agency of video—from the time when television producers could for the first time choose to record their transmissions on videotape, to when analogue video is made obsolete by the digital platforms that reduce the difference between film and video to questions of rhetorical formatting (in kinema ikon's history, this lifespan is even shorter, at times blurring the lines of practice).

Maurizio Lazzarato has shown that video and digital are time-technologies, not image-technologies; they contract and distribute temporal material, defining memory in purely temporal terms as a delay between action and reaction.⁹ According to Blom, a model of social memory informed by the new time technologies and their foregrounding of memory as a mechanism of retention obliterates the technical distinction between individual and collective memory, and ontologically repositions the concept of the social. The material reality of institutions, languages, and works of art is not limited to what can be felt and represented, as it resides as much in the differentiating aspect of all sensation and perception. This ultimately leads to the writing of the biography of a technological object—an operational dimension that traces the changes in objects and the changes effectuated by objects as they circulate through various networks, trajectories, cycles, or lives of production and reception; and an anthropological preoccupation with the peculiar relations between persons and things, 'where objects often appear as or function as persons.'¹⁰

Art provides video with a set of frameworks that enact particular kinds of reflection on its capacities as a technology of memory. Tracing the autobiography of (video) objects is to trace the way in which this act of self-memorising comes to figure as its key operational mode—and, at the same time, to move towards an autobiographical reflexivity where technical objects produce their own environments as a consequence of their specific ways of operating. It means to move away from a historical narrative towards a life of objects 'defined in terms of the speed of signalethic events.'¹¹ While the association between video and reflexivity is not new and spans decades of art criticism—from Rosalind Krauss's influential 1978 essay 'Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism' to recent accounts such as Yvonne Spielmann's—, it is often a limited perspective that reduces video to either states of narcissistic self-encapsulation (self-reflexivity in video as the effect of a technical-ideological apparatus vested in the production of subjectivity) or the preoccupation with the representational capacities of media images. As Blom comments, 'video reflexivity is then implicitly associated with a postmodernist discourse centred on the simulacrum as a problem for social description in art' and 'a mourning of the loss of a representational *connection* between art and social reality that one imagined existed before the ravages of a late capitalist media age.' Ultimately, while questions of subjectivity-production and modes of representation may be highly relevant for studies of art, technology, and social memory, such accounts remain primarily preoccupied with the crisis of images in general and of artistic images in particular. They pursue an essentially visualist investigation where the social serves as a general ground for art's various modes of reflexivity—but where the relation of video technology to time is ignored. What the properly technical agencies of video reflect on its temporalising powers through its association with other objects, is the emergence of new social topologies.¹² Briefly, to trace the autobiography of video is to rethink the concepts of collectivity and sociality at work in the art production of that period.

Such arguments shed a different light on kinema ikon's practice, for which technical objects indeed play a peculiar role, especially in relation to the transition from film to hypermedia. Video is a particularly short, transitional moment in the collective's history, yet fully expressive of the sociality of its practice—the articulating knot for the 'experimental film' and 'hypermedia' stages. Could it be that a revision of kinema ikon's history, taking video as its starting point and the technical objects as the focus of the investigation, reveal a dormant memorial ergonomics and specific socialities that have gone unnoticed? This may not be a question *about* video after all.

1. This text contains small fragments adapted by the author from Sabin Borș, 'Memorising Labour, or The Labour of the Camera,' in Sabin Borș (ed.), *Peripheral Histories* (Cluj: Xpose Art Collective, 2019): 36–45.

2. On the various relations between and theorisation of cinema, film, and labour, see Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, The Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Janet Harbord, *The Evolution of Film: Rethinking Film Studies* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007); Miriam Bratu Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); and Libby Saxton, 'Passion, Agamben and the Gestures of Work,' in Henrik Gustafsson and Asbjørn Grønstad (eds.), *Cinema and Agamben: Ethics, Biopolitics and the Moving Image* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014): 55–70.

3. kinema ikon documentary / George Săbău, *Studiu ergonomic (Ergonomic Study)* (1975, 5:50 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Oameni, acțiuni în agricultură (People, Actions in Agriculture)* (1975, 22:13 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Căminul nostru (Our Home)* (1977, 10:25 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Flux tehnologic: Strungul (Technological Flux: The Lathe)* (1979, 13:27 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Calitate și ritm în construcții (Quality and Rhythm in Constructions)* (1979, 12:19 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Revalorificări (Revalorifications)* (1980, 7:59 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Ritm-calitate-eficiență (Rhythm—Quality—Efficiency)* (1982, 17:17 min.); kinema ikon documentary, *Inteligența tehnică (The Technical Intelligence)* (1983, 10:47 min.). All documentaries are shot on 16mm film.

4. Jonathan Beller, 'The Cinematic Mode of Production: Towards a Political Economy of the Postmodern,' in *Culture, Theory & Critique* 44 (1) (Taylor and Francis Ltd., 2003): 91–106.

5. Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible*, translated by Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004).

6. I elaborate on this in '1993 / The Year We Made Video,' in Sabin Borș, *op. cit.*: 85–99.

7. See the elaborate analysis of kinema ikon's experimental films realised by Cristian Nae in 'Reality unbound. The politics of fragmentation in the experimental production of kinema ikon,' in *Studies in Eastern European Cinema* Vol. 7, No. 1 (2016): 25–38.

8. Ina Blom, 'The Autobiography of Video: Outline for a Revisionist Account of Early Video Art,' in *Critical Inquiry* 39 (Winter 2013): 277. At length in *The Autobiography of Video. The Life and Times of a Memory Technology* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016).

9. 'Video even seems to replicate Bergson's distinction between habit and conscious memory. On the one hand, the speedy electronic operations recall the automated memories of sensory motor reactions that move too fast for our conscious registration, and on the other hand the real-time manipulation of recorded material evokes the creation of conscious memories or images that continuously splits time itself into past and present, with a view to future action.'—Maurizio Lazzarato, 'Machines to Crystallize Time: Bergson,' in *Theory, Culture, and Society* 24 (November 2007): 93–122, apud. Ina Blom, *op. cit.*: 281.

10. Ina Blom, *op. cit.*: 282.

11. This perspective takes inspiration in Gilbert Simondon, *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Paris: Aubier, 1989). See Ina Blom, *op. cit.*: 285.

12. Rosalind Krauss, 'Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism,' in John G. Hanhardt (ed.), *Video Culture: A Critical Investigation* (New York: Visual Studies Workshop Press, 1986): 179–192; and Yvonne Spielmann, *Video: Das reflexive Medium* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2005)—as commented by Ina Blom, *op. cit.*: 285–287.

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Magie putredă

când văd kinema ikon, văd un film

*We are always already in
cinema, one way or another.*
Mark Nash*

One could say there are two great eras in the history of kinema ikon: before and after 1989, the cine-club and the museum, analog film and the projector during communism, computer art and the Internet in capitalism. Throughout this conversion, once abandoned in 1989, film nonetheless survived its own "death" within kinema ikon's activity, making a return as the guiding spirit of newer installation/ multi-media practices: the Serial of recent exhibitions is thus, *filmic*; *filmic* are also the catalogues and posters that accompanied all kinema ikon events from the last couple of years; *filmic* is Media Art Festival Arad.

În Kinema ikon aproape totul se leagă de film. Nu doar de cinema, nu doar de filmul cinematografic. Mulți știu exact la ce mă refer zicând că atunci când mă gândesc la Kinema ikon, văd un film. Atunci când spui că îți rulează prin fața ochilor "filmul Kinema-ikonic", nu e vorba de un film anume. Și nici de un ecran anume, de un *black box* anume, de o instalație multimedia anume sau de vreun *screening* anume, deși toate astea sunt componente inevitabile din recuzita de infrastructură a lumii filmice Kinema ikon. Ca să parafralez întrebări celebre, nu ce e filmul contează (din ce anume e făcut ca să-l recunoaștem), ci unde e filmul adică unde te duci atunci când intri în el, unde te transportă, în ce fel de spațiu plonjezi odată cu el și ce cauți acolo.

Mai exact. În cap, în spatele ochilor îți fug bucăți de imagini, *scraps*, detritus mental, fantasmе, vise cu ochi închiși sau deschiși, sinestezii, *expanded consciousness*, reverii, proiecții, copii ale altor copii de imagini, *corrupted images*, spectre vizuale în viteză. Multe din ele sunt *poor images* mentale, cum spune Hito Steyerl, resturi de imagini în interacțiune neîntreruptă unele cu altele, caleidoscop indescifrabil. Nu există doar un *digital no man's land*, ci și un *mental no man's land* pentru spectre de imagini aflate în mișcare încrucișată, disociate, rupte, încălecate, hibridizate iremediabil. Cu cât sunt mai rapide și instantanee aceste montaje și editări neuronale impermanente, tranzitorii și improvizate, cu atât sunt mai evanescente pseudo-imaginile care le compun. Transparența lor inefabilă e consecința intensității cu care apar și "trec" într-o continuă dispersie care dublează la nivel fizio-mental reformatarea, compresia, *share*-uirea, degradarea entropică a multitudinii infinite de imagini media atotînconjurătoare. Călin Man, lider Kinema ikon din 1990, îmi spunea că pentru el filmul e ceva de unică folosință, că vede filme o singură dată, iar dacă le revede e ca și cum le-ar vedea atunci pentru prima oară – singularizare paradoxală care nu auratizează deloc filmul, ci exact dimpotrivă, îl dezbracă de valoarea lui de cult și îl aruncă în fluxul universal de *poor images* în mișcare care ne populează viețile mentale. *Poor images* cu "magia lor putredă" (nu mai știu cine a folosit expresia) nu sunt nimic altceva, cred, decât *hymerele* lui George Săbău, fondator Kinema ikon, despre care el spunea, printr-o superbă caracterizare, în textele explicative de cronică istorică a grupării, că sunt imageria tipică produsă de experimentul filmic al Kinema ikon: "ființe inexistente constituite din fragmente de ființe existente prin mașini de produs imagini stupefiante".

Spațiul. Ore întregi petrecute în Auditoriumul MNAC în 2005 în fața unui ecran hipnotic care rula film experimental după film experimental. *Cinéma du musée, gallery film, cinéma d'exposition*, cum se spune (de altfel, una din ieșirile importante a filmelor Kinema ikon în occident, programată înainte de 1989 dar posibilă abia după schimbarea de regim, a fost la Centre Pompidou în 1995, la secțiunea numită *Cinéma du Musée*). Auditoriumul MNAC era în 2005 transformat într-o mini-sală de cinema adaptată, cu perne uriașe și moi în care puteai face orice și în care stăteam tolăniți privind din când în când în stânga și-n dreapta - nedumeriți de cât de bine ne simțeam. În pântecul întunecos al sălii, făceam ceea ce faci mereu în orice sală de film: cu ochii la ecran, îi poți urmări sub fasciculul de lumină al proiecției și pe alții care urmăresc același film, eternul filmic: "visul visat împreună de mai mulți oameni laolaltă". Eterna "magie putredă" a proiecțiilor de imagini (*la bête lumineuse*), primitivă și universală, veșnica peșteră a lui Platon reactualizată mereu de civilizații, aceeași teamă plus fascinație, aceeași anxietate plus imersie, aceeași veche șarlatanie plus optică, păcăleală plus știință.

La MNAC în Auditorium rulau filmele experimentale ale "vechilor kinema ikoni", membrii activi din anii '70 (*Analogul*), iar în afara lui, în "borcan" cum îi spun internii MNAC spațiului cu luminator de la etajul 4, baleiau producțiile multimedia ale "tinerilor neliniștiți", noile generații post '90 și post 2000 din grupare (*Digitalul*). Era clară sciziunea: ei și ei, unii și alții, vechii și noii, ce a fost și ce e acum, Kinema ikon în trecut și în viitor. În mod normal aseptice și farmaceutice ca un laborator cu neoane albe care face pielea lividă și atmosfera rece, Auditoriumul muzeal voia să acomodeze un spațiu de văzut cinema pe care eu îl știam (și simțeam) complet altfel: mediul acela plin de miros, de senzații tactile, plușurile scaunelor, zgomotele înfundate ale recuzitei de mobilier în contact cu corpurile umane, subsolurile și parterele de blocuri înalte, capitonajele, draperiile, lămpile de veghe, signalistica de neon chior pâlpâind, farmecul etern al decorului purtat de-o artă seculară iremediabil complexată că vine "din popor" și e "pentru popor" dar trebuie să se prezinte bine în haine scumpe împrumutate de la alții, dacă tot e o artă "de la țară" care vine "la oraș", de unde nemuritorul ei snobism de *high art* (sălile de cinema: movie theatres).

Ca o fanatică irecuperabilă a sălilor de cinematecă, mă întrebam atunci, la MNAC, cum văzuseră ei filmele rulate în cineclubul *Atelier 16* al kinema ikonilor din anii '70-'80; ei, tocmai autorii pe ale căror filme le mâncam noi pe pâine acum, după 35 de ani la MNAC. (Ce filme "se dădeau" la *Atelier 16*? Românești, străine? Vechi, noi? Oare aceiași *usual suspects* Antonioni, Tarkovschi, Welles sau Bergman și filmele lor "de colecție", cinematograful de artă pe care putea un iubitor de film să-l vadă într-o țară comunistă? Sau (și) altele?) Care era atmosfera la cineclub, dincolo de puținele fotografii care documentează spații strâmte cu proiectoare supradimensionate și fețe conviviale în jurul unor mese cu (parcă) pahare și prăjiturile. Târziu, în 2017, Kinema ikon a "revenit" la cinema, gest simbolic, în chiar sala cinematografului Arta din Arad, odată cu MAFA – Media Arta Festival Arad, ediția a 4-a. (Arta, una din acele săli mai mult sau mai puțin delabrate, părăsite sau devastate, ruine urbane pe care le au toate orașele României azi; acolo văzusem prima dată - prima din multe dăți – *Pulp Fiction* de Tarantino la un *date* romantic în liceu.)

Nu doar spațiile, ci și temporalitățile se adună, multiple, în Kinema ikon. Azi, nu vizualizezi instalațiile multimedia din sala Complexului Muzeal în maniera, ritmul, dinamica, pasul interior la care urmărești un film la cineclub sau cinematecă. Azi, consumatorul poate fi - și este - la fel de mobil și tranzitoriu ca și regimul imaginilor pe care le vede: ambele, și imaginea și consumatorul ei sunt distrase, fluide, "în trecere" una față de cealaltă. Temporalități diferite se bat pe spațiul proiecțiilor de imagini în flux; obiect, proiecție, ecran, instalație și "vizitator" se bat toate pe temporalitatea și spațialitatea atenției, care e adevărata miză a jocului: efectul de prezență pe care-l pot atinge niște entități mereu semi-absente, semi-reale (fluxul mare, neconținut de imagini multimedia kinema-ikonice care tot "vin"; fluxul mic, selectiv, de vizitatori Kinema ikon care tot "trec").

Muzeul de artă din Arad nu corespunde deloc portretului tipic al muzeului-spectacol, muzeul-*entertainment*, cu corpuri de clădire nou inaugurate și alura de magnific palat al plăcerilor marketizabile pentru consumatorii înfometați de senzații care suntem noi toți – adică clienții *cinéma du musée* din lumea globală a artei contemporane. Nu doar muzeul, nici Aradul nu corespunde deloc unui asemenea tablou. Trebuie să-l vezi pe Călin Man în biroul lui din Complexul Muzeal în clădirea Palatului Cultural din Arad, care din 1990 este *headquarters* al Kinema ikon, și să vezi apoi "Sala Maitec" și mai nou creată "Sală Kinema ikon" din clădirea Muzeului de Artă (parte și el din Complex), *ca să înțelegi*. Să înțelegi *lumea de imagini Kinema ikon*, un melanj unic de avangardă multimedia plus nostalgie central-europeană, de *state of the art* plus provincial istoric fermecător, de Macintosh plus Mitteleuropa, de *hypermedia* plus Vechiul Imperiu (austro-ungar).

Expunerea permanentă de artă vizuală din Complexul Muzeal Arad e o înșiruire-vagon de săli cu mobilier Biedermeyer și modernisme sculpt-picturale *fin de siècle*, în debutul căreia, din prima sală a *display*-ului istoric, intri în beznă. E ca o istorie a artei povestită invers, dinspre prezent spre trecut, cu o sincopă iremediabilă între cele două: intri mai întâi, tranșant, în *black box*-ul Kinema ikon-ului, și îți revii din primul șoc abia când treci mai departe parcurgând molcom epocile și stilurile unui *white cube* muzeal absolut obișnuit. Acest *setting* contextual este într-adevăr o ipostaziere a *multimedia moving image inside the white cube*, la scară muzeală. Pentru că ilustrează un *spatial turn* - trecerea Kinema ikon-ului de la producție și proiecție de film experimental (și documentar) în cadrul unui cineclub, la "atelier multimedia" și la *Wunderkammer* – ceea ce are a face crucial cu mutarea de la Școala Populară de Arte din Arad, fosta reședință Kinema ikon, într-un muzeu. Într-un fel, este vorba de trecerea de la proiecție la scenografie, de la film experimental la instalație, de la timp la spațiu, de la aderula/"viziona" la a arăta/"vizita", de la *black box* la *white cube* și de la cineclub la expoziție: o "spațializare"

instituțională și o muzeificare a Kinema ikon, cu tot plinul semantic al acestor termeni. Două epoci mari în istoria grupării: înainte și după 1989, cineclubul și muzeul, filmul cu peliculă și proiector în comunism, arta cu calculator și internet în capitalism (și oare să fie vreo relație de necesitate între termenii acestor perechi simetrice: socialismul și filmul / democrația și computerul?).

Doar două observații: ceva în receptare pare să se fi volatilizat pe tot acest parcurs, și anume sunetul filmelor. Deși Călin Man îmi spunea că sunetul i se pare partea vulnerabilă a filmului experimental Kinema ikon ante '89 (și puțin știu că sunetul era produs separat față de imagine și proiectat apoi concomitent cu banda peliculei pentru a crea împreună filmele văzute la cineclub), mie mi se pare că sunetul e dimpotrivă un punct forte. Și cred că percepția comună, împărtășită și de publicul francez de la Centre Pompidou în 1995, care simțea ceva traumatic, subversiv, "nasol", ceva recognoscibil "est-european" în filmul experimental Kinema ikon dinainte de '89, este deopotrivă legitimă ca probă a expectativei de receptare Est-Vest și corectă ca înregistrare a puterii sunetului, uneori peste puterea - nu calitativă, ci de impact "psihologic" - a imaginilor lui vizuale. Nu știu cum părea atunci, în epocă, dar astăzi coloana sonoră a majorității filmelor experimentale kinema-ikonice are pentru mulți o notă agoasantă, neospitalieră, și astfel "stranietatea" lor experimentală e resimțită negativ și chiar vag amenințător poate mai ales din cauza sunetului (și nu a imaginii). De aici "nasolul est-european" ca decodare clișeistă, automată, la prima mână, a impresiei pe care le-o lasă filmele privitorilor.

Prin tranziția de la cineclub la muzeu, imaginea și-a intrat mult mai mult în drepturi, subordonând într-o oarecare măsură, în ciuda multimedialității, sunetul și alte dimensiuni ale proiecției filmice. În fond, e vorba de o trecere de la o operă de artă totală, filmul, la o altă operă de artă totală, instalația multimedia și de aici pornind, o a doua observație: mă întrebam cum se face că imaginea video nu a avut o carieră mai apăsătoare în istoria acestei conversii mediale, de ce nu e un element mai marcat (decât este) în Kinema ikon. Deși simt o anume moștenire a TV-ului - televiziunea românească din anii '90, absolut unică în felul ei (vezi "Ready-media") - deci există o influență video sub această formă în producțiile ulterioare ale artiștilor Kinema ikon, ștafeta pare să treacă odată cu '89 de la proiectorul analog direct la calculatorul digital, fără să mai poposească prea mult și la practica video. Și atunci, odată abandonat prin decizia radicală luată în anii '90 de a nu mai produce film experimental în cadrul grupului, căci acesta ar fi arta unei epoci apuse și a unui context anume, deci o practică anacronică în noile vremuri, demodată și *out of place* (declasare a "cinema"-ului care se întâmpla și în context internațional), filmul și-ar fi supraviețuit propriei "mori" în Kinema ikon, revenind ca spirit al noilor lui practici instalaționist-multimediale, caleidoscopice: filmic în spirit este Serialul, filmice sunt cataloagele, filmic este MAFA, filmice sunt afișele (capitol larg ce merită expuneri de sine stătătoare la Kinema ikon), filmic e "visul Kinema ikon" pe care îl visează toți membrii lui de atâția ani, separat sau împreună.

Eu n-am avut de-a face din păcate decât cu "epoca muzeală", iar muzeul e o fiară bătrână, vinovată pentru multe, cum bine știm: când mușcă, se simte. Odată cu accentuarea componentei lui vizuale și a coordonatei expositive (*exhibitionary complex* a lui Tony Bennett), Kinema ikon parcă "iese la lumină" - deși asta nu înseamnă că activitatea grupării nu era "la lumină" deja dinainte de 1989, dimpotrivă. După 1989 însă, are loc "recuperarea" Kinema ikon-ului dinăuntru și dinafară, consacrarea absolută a grupului, reafirmarea lui de pe terenul deja istoricizat al continuității lui în timp indiferent de epoci politice, o canonizare sub efectul dinamicii Est-Vest. Doar că pe tot acest parcurs, în receptarea activității istorice a grupului, eludată (sau nu îndeajuns aprofundată) a fost mereu, pare-mi-se, ancorarea instituțională a Kinema ikon, și mai exact afilierea grupării și a membrilor ei, sau, dimpotrivă, disocierea lor față de instituțiile care le-au găzduit, facilitat, permis, sabotat sau ignorat activitatea, atât în comunism cât și după. Apartenența la Atelier 35, la Școala Populară de Arte, la Complexul Muzeal din Arad, asocierea cu Liceul de Artă arădean - pepinieră de mereu noi figuri artistice interesante bune de racolat -, relația cu Uniunea Artiștilor Plastici, cu Securitatea, cu prietenii de bine influenți, cu membrii benevolenți sau nu ai comunității culturale locale și ai forurilor oficiale din România, intră toate la acest capitol. După cum intră și strategia de seducție și recrutare de noi membri din rândurile vechi și noi ai culturii vizuale românești prin care Kinema ikon rămâne mereu sub reflectoare, structură poroasă care nu încetează să aglutineze oameni, energii, creativități, gânduri, relații, producții, expoziții. Nu doar un inepuizabil producător de imagini, creator de "film", e Kinema ikon, ci și un neobosit producător de "membri", de interacțiuni profesionale, de "vizitatori".

Timpu. E păcat că se gustă mai ales avangardismul Kinema ikon, ultra-contemporaneitatea medială și a grupului, componenta "progresistă" și prea puțin ceea ce tuturor, conștient sau nu, ne place ca fiind ingredientul lui implicit, atotînvăluitor și definitoriu:

aerul melancolic, regresiv, paseist, "retrogarda" spiritului Kinema ikon manifestă în ceea ce Călin Man numește, disociindu-se el însuși de ea ca de un alter-ego, "estetica frumusețului", anvelopa patriarhală de Art Deco și Secession care transpare în toată splendoarea ei în colecția de tot felul de (kineto)-scoape, animale tehnologice din trecut care au făcut obiectul unei ediții Wunderkammer și care acum te primesc în anticamera biroului Kinema ikon din Palatul Cultural. Fură hiper-modernitatea producției editoriale a Kinema ikon, revista Intermedia din anii '90, etalare programatică de spirit de avangardă în imagine tipărită. Și nu doar revista, ci și mai recente cataloage și albume Kinema ikon, on și off-line, toate gândite și regizate ca imagine de Călin Man (ca și Intermedia), sunt nimic altceva decât filme, *expanded cinema* prin excelență: *free stream of images*, montaj și colaj de fragmente iconice aparent aleatorii, caleidoscop inepuizabil de imagerie (mai puțin de citit și mai mult de văzut, căci imaginea, cum era de așteptat, primează, iar publicațiile Kinema ikon sunt splendide cărți cu poze). Nu întâmplător, aceste filme de hârtie documentează de fiecare dată nu evenimentul, realitatea faptică înregistrată cronologic de publicație (expoziția sau festivalul cutare), ci spiritul, mereu reafirmat, îmbogățit, al "culturii vizuale Kinema Ikon" ca furnizor aparent inepuizabil de imagini. Publicațiile Kinema ikon sunt doar un alt spațiu prin care trece un nestăvilit flux de reprezentări. Și asta constată toată lumea că face mereu recognoscibilă orice apariție vizuală publică a Kinema ikon: oricine ar face parte din grupare, oricine ar pleca și oricine ar intra în manifestările Kinema ikon, există un spirit colectiv, o imponderabilă neschimbată, un aer mereu același care, cum spun, mereu și mereu, toți cei cu care intră în contact, face marca fenomenului.

Tot așa cum sala Kinema ikon de la muzeu încununează paradoxal o expunere-vagon de istorie a artei moderne locale, peste toate (kinemato)-scoapele colecționate în Wunderkammer tronează, la fel de paradoxal, lucrarea "Mașina timpului" călinmaniană. Încă o curiozitate, de data asta contemporană, între toate artefactele de Wunderkammer (strămoșul muzeului) care pun în perspectivă istorică, într-un muzeu din Arad, referințele la imaginea în mișcare și la tehnologiile media. "Mașina timpului", de fapt, o capotă de mașină cu două ceasuri care se contrazic delicios mergând cu acele în sensuri opuse, încă un *gadget* cu *skepsis*, un "*philosophical object*", o glumiță metafizică care pune în scenă un latent conflict de ordin cosmic (sensul timpului) pe-un cer perfect senin. "Retrogarda" kinema-ikonice pare să se sprijine și pe evidența că, de fapt, alura lui tehnologică, deși pe alocuri *glamorous*, nu e totuși "ultimul răcnet" industrial: Kinema ikon păstrează mereu o oarecare modestie și temperanță tehnologică - nu super-producții tehnofile, nu etalări de mega-proiecții, ci codimensionare cu armonia lucrurilor, nimic ieșit extravagant din scară, un anumit *low brow* tehnologic care în general integrează lucrurile și oamenii, nu le face stridente.

Dar într-adevăr, cel mai adesea ochii ne sunt furați de neoanele magenta, plasticul lucios, ecranele luminoase, compușii hibridi, materialitățile noi, alunecoase, mutante, indicibile (spume, agregate, pigmenți sintetici, moliciuni și durități stranii, polimeri, irizații, cabluri, mouși, asamblaje metalice, netezimi, sclipiciuri) care compun chimia enigmatică a mai tuturor instalațiilor multimedia caleidoscopice dintr-un Kinema ikon aflat la vârsta expozițiilor Wunderkammer, Serial și MAFA. Captivați de NOUL lucios, de prezentul irizant al Kinema ikon, trecem ușor cu vederea *environment*-ul paseist, chiar sentimental pe alocuri, al unei anume regresii tehnologice cultivate de Kinema ikon, în ciuda relativei lui sincronii cu spiritul timpului (artă pe peliculă în anii '70, artă pe calculator în anii '90, *expanded cinema* în arta multimedia din anii 2000+). *Fin de siècle* al primelor mașinute de proiecție pseudo-cinematografică colecționate la muzeu - *fin de siècle* al unei "Mașini a timpului" produsă în plină eră digitală, post-cinematografică. Minuțiozitatea și fixomania multor instalații multimedia kinema-ikonice e și ea, la urma urmei, "frumusețică", nu-i așa? De ce n-ar fi la rândul ei o mostră de "estetica a frumusețului" *updated* pentru era digitală contemporană, după cum publicațiile cu imagini în flux pot fi noile cărți cu poze frumoase ale secolului XXI. *Fin de siècle - fin de siècle*.

Timpul. Puține lucruri din arta românească recentă au avut parte de o atât de atentă, fidelă și disciplinată auto-documentare precum Kinema ikon (datorată cronicarului și teoreticianului grupării, George Săbău), de unde s-ar putea spune că relația Kinema ikon cu timpul, cel puțin cu cel cronologic, nu stă rău. Dacă "marca Kinema ikon" este legată de o anume temporalitate a imageriei (simultaneitatea, prezența unui flux mereu îmbogățit de imagini, accentul pe momentul proiecției, pe contemporaneitatea ecranului), totuși la fel de caracteristică îi este contribuția *timeline*-urilor, a detaliatelor explicații istorice și cronologice, a genealogiilor și trimiterilor autoreferențiale continue la propria-i istorie. Stau mărturie expozițiile recente "epoci instalaționiste" din istoria kinema-ikonice în care filmele experimentale dinainte de '89 sunt puse alături de producții digitale actuale, ca petru a resorbi distanța-n timp; și o atestă și însuși conceptul de Wunderkammer ca metaforă a agregatorului de tempo-spatialități diferite, aflate deopotrivă în ruptură și continuitate unele cu altele). Mulți dintre membrii generației tinere de kinema-ikoni sunt foști elevi ai lui George Săbău la Liceul

de Artă din Arad, sau admiratori și cunoscători mai tineri pentru care relația cu Kinema ikon capătă alura unui mentorat generațional cultivat cu entuziasm de ambele părți într-un scenariu cu tați și fii, ambii la fel de neconvenționali.

O insidioasă dinamică a absenței mi se pare că se strecoară totuși și aici. Colaborând cu Kinema ikon și devenind astfel membră (*membră!*), m-am întrebat care putea fi ecoul, impactul, consecința, influența activității unei comunități de artiști non-cinematografici care fac film (căci asta a fost condiția de incluziune pusă de inițiatorul cineclubului, George Săbău, la sfârșitul anilor '70), asupra producției de film în context. Cine, altcineva decât cei care frecventau Kinema ikon, mai făcea film experimental în România comunistă și care putea fi relația acestor alți "posibili suspecti" cu activitatea cineclubului *Atelier 16*? Ce impact ar fi putut avea producția de film experimental al Kinema ikon asupra cinematografiei românești de atunci? Hrănită de participanți scriitori, oameni de artă sau arhitecți, ce impact a avut producția de film experimental al Kinema ikon asupra, bunăoară, literaturii contemporane ei? Prin analogie, ce impact are "lumea Kinema-ikonice" acum, asupra artei actuale românești. E drept că, din păcate, în discursul vehiculat în mod obișnuit în lumea artei locale, filmul experimental și istoria lui, complicată și interdisciplinară, nu figurează printre referințele obligatorii; din câte știu, profesioniștii de artă, cel puțin cei locali, nu folosesc și nu invocă neapărat filmul experimental (românesc sau internațional) printre termenii lor de referință curenți. Deși fără îndoială un reper consacrat de cultură vizuală, filmul experimental ca gen, cu toată complexitatea relației lui cu arta vizuală (sau cu filmul *mainstream*), nu este totuși un reper "viu", activ, pus la treabă și exploatat, pe scurt nu pare să fi ajuns un real fertilizator al lumii artei locale. (Poate că ceea ce lipsește pentru ca asta să se întâmple e un cineclub, și poate și un alt (fel de) comunism care să-l facă posibil și să-l "hrănească", acum ca și atunci, dar asta e o discuție pentru altădată). Poate că acesta e unul din motivele pentru care Kinema ikon îmi pare a fi tot ce poate fi mai consacrat și mai "de bine" în arta românească recentă, dar totodată și tot ce e mai puțin explorat: *mainstream* și marginal, clasic și inclasabil în același timp.

Farmecul discret și iremediabil misterios, necunoscut, al Kinema ikon mai vine, cred eu, și de la o particularitate a dinamicii lui de colectiv: cu excepția unor relații de prietenie și colegialitate premergătoare și deja decise în afara lui, mi se pare că membrii Kinema ikon sunt, de obicei, o absență unii pentru ceilalți. E adevărat că mulți au emigrat înainte sau după 1989, devenind absențe, nu de puține ori regretate, între mai vechea generație de autori. Pentru cineva ca mine, Emanuel Teț sau Ioan Pleș, doi minunați autori de film experimental kinema-ikonice, vor rămâne pentru totdeauna probabil o fascinantă non-prezență, o enigmă. Dar și printre mai noii recruți, pentru care problema plecării, a participării sau a detașării, a prezenței sau a îndepărtării, nu se mai pune la fel de acut ca înainte de '89, lucrurile s-au schimbat doar aparent. Ne vedem când suntem invitați la evenimentele Kinema ikon sau când le producem împreună, iar prezența umană în sine în "perpetuarea" Kinema ikon este ocazională, episodică, în salturi, intermitentă. Spiritul Kinema ikon, ca orice "spirit", e ceea ce rămâne când dărați realitatea materială; este reziduul inefabil, intervalul eteric, suflul construcției, nu cărămidile ei (apropo, pseudonimul unuia dintre membrii tinerei generații este Pneuma). Și atunci Kinema ikon e mai degrabă când noi nu suntem acolo. Ne suntem mai degrabă absenți (din varii și inombrabile motive contextuale, absolut legitime de altfel), legați de o aceeași apartenență și afinitate, dar nu de inter-relații efective. Asta să fie până la urmă "teribilul secret" al Kinema ikon?

* Mark Nash, "Art and cinema: some critical reflections", în Tanya Leighton Ed., *Art and the moving image. A critica reader*, Tate publishing, 2008, p.444.

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**kinema ikon: serial
povestit celor care nu au văzut niciun episod**

anul 2070. octombrie. marți. 28. ora 18.00: într-un cadru pe care nu mi-l pot imagina acum (decembrie. 2016), în depozitul de artă al muzeului din arad se deschide capsula timpului - o lucrare de artă de o estimabilă valoare produsă la atelierele kinema ikon în 2016. până să aflăm continuarea e mai bine să revin cu un insert despre serialul care a avut ca ultim episod această capsulă a timpului:

2013. sezonul 1: la muzeul de artă din arad, în sala de expoziții aflată la dispoziția kinema ikon are loc premiera primului episod al unui serial care se va proiecta timp de 3 ani. fiecare sezon are un skepsis în jurul căruia artiști din aria de acoperire ki demantelează cu grație un scenariu aproximativ impus de simpla dorința de a induce reflexe în rândul masei de vizitatori însetați de ceea ce numim azi artă contemporană. cum nu am experitza necesară mă abțin să explic sintagma artă contemporană. o transcriere terre-à-terre a conceptului primului sezon se rezumă la ilustrarea numelui grupului: mișcare+imagine = orice. *astfel, tinerii artiști ki produc rând pe rând zece episoade/instalații iar ca bonus un film (care în vremurile de glorie s-ar fi numit experimental).*

2015. sezonul 2: miza a fost ridicată. pentru fiecare episod a fost invitat un curator care a ales distribuția și a venit de acasă cu tot cu scenariu. *astfel, tinerii artiști ki produc rând pe rând zece episoade/instalații iar ca bonus un film (care în vremurile de glorie s-ar fi numit experimental).*
// copy/paste a paragrafului de la sezonul 1 care nu va mai fi folosit și la sezonul 3. se va vedea de ce. //

2016. în sezonul 3 lucrurile se complică. toate episoadele au ca punct de plecare un film (*care în vremurile de glorie s-ar fi numit experimental*) în jurul căruia se dezvoltă o instalație multimedia. fiecare episod "rulează" alături de cele de dinaintea lui. mai mult chiar designul spațial al tuturor episoadelor se modifică în funcție de cerințele episodului curent. așa se face că la încheierea sezonului în mica sală de expoziții sunt prezente 20+1 instalații. ca orice serial care se respectă, ultimul episod are un impact special și o audiență maximă. în cazul serialului kinema ikon ultimul episod constă în închiderea capsulei timpului al cărei conținut nu îl voi dezvalui aici. spre deosebire de rutina clasică, *această* capsula timpului nu va fi îngopată ci va fi depozitată și înregistrată în inventarul muzeului de artă arad. deschiderea capsulei va avea loc în 28 octombrie 2070, ora 18.00 cu ocazia centenarului kinema ikon.

text publicat în catalogul *kinema ikon: serial / sezonul 3 / 2016*.

The avant-garde unconscious: On kinema ikon's (filmic) practice

Fifty years of experimental film... A lot has changed politically, socially and artistically over this period of time. Kinema ikon has changed a lot, too. Their long and prodigious career includes experimental film during communist times, hypermedia in response to the Internet and CD-ROM boom of the nineties, and, since the mid-2000s, multimedia and extended collaborations. While browsing through this comprehensive and amazing body of work, one would notice a constant feature notwithstanding the numerous changes the group went through in what concerns people involved, artistic approaches and social environment. This feature is the omnipresent innovation and exploration, a sort of avant-gardist behavior that nurtures the critical imagination, the quest to expand the medium and the pursuit to find solutions for sabotaging reality. I call this attitude "the avant-garde unconscious."

While the expression is not an innocent one, I want to strip it bare from any useless theoretical burden, and propose to conceptualize it simply – with all the risks assumed – as the internalization of the *spirit* of the avant-garde by kinema ikon in their artistic practice (film or other media forms). Internalization meaning the (un)conscious absorption of certain cultural patterns and artistic values and, at the same time, the act of undermining and complicating them. That is, a combination between inductive reasoning based on experience and concept, and the instinctive need to take a step ahead while prospecting the openings, the non-obvious, the newness (or, as Rosalind Krauss put it in her meaningfully titled text, the „possibility for vision itself”).¹ In other words, it means to acknowledge avant-garde as an implicit condition, while operating an autonomization of the artistic act vis-à-vis the rationalization and historicization of the avant-garde (and here, one might identify a certain parallel with Fredric Jameson's political subject).² Certainly, kinema ikon's practice maps onto the avant-garde logic (one that is actually not historically circumscribed) in what concerns aesthetic radicalism and anti-establishment command, although the group has never adopted similar logistic or communicational strategies – such as publishing explicit "manifestos" or engaging in a programmatic scheme – preferring instead an intuitive artistic attitude and organic collaborative work. This is evident in the assumed underground and/or marginal status, one that – perhaps paradoxically – didn't prevent them from being synchronous with what was happening under the lights of the artistic international mainstage during these decades.

The historical avant-garde in Romania was quite radical, much of its scope and force being given by numerous publications and the influential personalities involved, most of them maintaining important links with their international peers. However, the Romanian avant-garde had no great appetite for filmmaking: written invective and rebel painting were preferred to any lens-based discourse. Given this absent legacy to which we should add the lack of any direct connection between the historical avant-garde, neo-avant-garde and what followed afterwards (due to the cultural hiatus imposed by communism), one would legitimately ask where kinema ikon took their drive and vision? Theorist George Săbău, the veteran leader of kinema ikon, provides an answer to this question when he mentions that the group was always in search for "something else – differently."³ Indeed, the group's working ethics focused on innovation and "difference" is what characterize (the avant-garde unconscious of) kinema ikon in the first place.

Interdisciplinary

The avant-garde unconscious has numerous manifestations and works in various ways and directions. One aspect that accounts for this status at kinema ikon is the assumed *diversity*. Firstly, the people involved. From the very beginning, those working within and around kinema

ikon came from an assortment of professions and artistic backgrounds, and this played a key role in the group's hybrid and ingenious production. Moreover, kinema ikon – as a cine-club or as a group – has always been involved in organizing/participating in intense exchanges and interdisciplinary meetings in smaller or larger, but always diverse circles, both before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Their organizational identity in the seventies and eighties was not unlike similar enterprises such as The London Film-makers' Co-op (LFMC), The Film-Makers' Cooperative founded in 1962 in New York City by Jonas Mekas, Shirley Clarke, Stan Brakhage, and others, or, in Eastern Europe, the Workshop of Film Form in Łódź, The Balázs Béla Studio in Budapest, Independent Videoart Prague, and the Cinema Clubs from several cities in former Yugoslavia. Equally important for the interdisciplinary ethos of the group is the Media Arts Festival organized in Arad by Călin Man and Ileana Selejan since 2014, a spin-off of kinema ikon project. All these organizational commitments helped shape kinema ikon's values, attitudes and forms. But, perhaps the most evident expression of the diversity affirmed by the group is the artistic production itself that spans five decades and cover many genres and mediums, analog and digital, online and offline, pluri-centric and ex-centric (to which I will shortly turn).

Political

The eclecticism embraced by kinema ikon has effect also on *political* grounds – another important aspect of the avant-garde unconscious. Falling between genres, mediums and categories, that is, rejecting a clear working typology and artistic profiling was in itself a critical gesture with political undertones during communist times. If this was not well regarded by politically-controlled institutions (also because censorship never really understood the experimental films), it nonetheless helped the group maintain a self-imposed marginal/underground status, a convenient situation since it left them room for meetings, creativity and intellectual exchanges. Moreover, the group's consistent documentary film production on officially accepted themes (history, ethnography, personalities) helped the group to maintain not only the needed legitimization, but also to obtain equipment necessary for producing experimental films (interestingly, there are 62 documentary films, paralleled by exactly the same number of experimental films, made between 1970 and 1990).

But there is yet another aspect of the political incidence of kinema ikon's avant-garde unconscious, especially before the Iron Curtain, and this is related to the East-West equation. The group's progressive vision and diversity, together with their sustained up-to-date-ness and consonance with the "grand" artistic narratives from the West, challenge the simplistic reading of the East-West cultural divide. More exactly, kinema ikon is very efficient in relativizing the opinion that sees the equation West-East as a rapport between center and periphery, between the dominant model and the weak term. While taking Western culture as *the* model to follow – like almost all Eastern European artists – kinema ikon developed somehow unconsciously a certain cultural "perspective that would emphasize the 'otherness' of their part of the continent," as Piotr Piotrowski has observed.⁴ This "otherness" is (or rather was) represented, on the one hand, by the "conviction in the power of art, something that has vanished long before in the West," and, on the other, by a certain state of exception or idiosyncrasy, a way to construct a different, most of the times subversive set of norms and codes, and, importantly for kinema ikon at least, a genuine appetite for humor.⁵ Although the latter's subversive power has certainly changed after 1990, it still plays a political function for kinema ikon today. George Săbău's statement is clear in this sense: "Between militant activism and experimental playfulness, the KI group opted, and still does, for the latter."⁶ Kudos, ki!

Humor

Indeed, *humor and irony* are other key manifestations of the avant-garde unconscious. They were efficient weapons for avant-garde artists of all generations, simply because they were destabilizing in and of themselves. Sarcasm and wit have the capacity to disrupt the public sphere, to engage in polemics and to shock the bourgeoisie and mainstream art. Moreover, it is important to note that humor and irony were effective survival strategies within the communist oppressive regime. However, if this avant-gardist arsenal is present at kinema ikon, it was not

used by the group to act out an open dissidence and direct power critique. Rather, kinema ikon, opted in a discreet manner for the play on words, intelligent irony and absurd content, all of them constant features in their artistic production over the years. This was, as George Săbău has emphasized, "an essential part in the act of instating an inciting, provocative, ludic, ironic, intellectual climate, also freed from cultural clichés, language stereotypes, 'idola theatri'; [kinema ikon members] have permanently promoted an unconventional attitude, which induced the experiment atmosphere a continuous 'facultas ludentes'".⁷ Many titles of their works are relevant in this sense (to name just a few from the group's filmic production): *Kitsch*, *Kitsch, Ura!* (Daniel Motz, 1977), *Bopacul* (kinema ikon, 1979), *Nu trageți în pianist / Don't shoot the piano player* (Romulus Bucur, 1984), *Mise-en-écran* (Roxana Cherecheș & Liliana Trandabur, 1989), *Ready Media* (kinema ikon, 1995), *Uninvited.Rușine* (reVoltaire, 2003-2016), *Skepsis* (kinema ikon, 2011) *46016'92"N 21031'57"E / ȘANTIER ARGHEOLOGIC / 4175 A.D.* (geosab & kf, 2015), *ki:ss* (kinema ikon, 2015), *DADADA* (reVoltaire, 2016), *aaaeiou* (Ileana Selezan, 2017), etc., etc.

Aesthetics

Another way in which the avant-garde unconscious resurfaces in kinema ikon's (filmic) practice, one that is symptomatic for their vision and mission, is *the unique combination between, on the one hand, a DIY philosophy, wit and improvisation and, on the other, a rigorous research, intense readings and careful construction of the visual vocabulary*. This crisscrossed approach led to a working conduct focused on the permanent investigation of various – read new – visual expressions, thought-provoking messages and conceptualizations, and on a methodology aimed at ever pushing the limits of the medium. Kinema ikon was interested, basically, in all the categories of the experimental film genre and, later, in exploring all the possibilities offered by digitality. Some of the works authored individually or as a group should be mentioned here as they illustrate these diverse interests and, in this sense, are instrumental in explaining the avant-garde unconscious of the group's working philosophy: in George Săbău's *Ipostaze simultane / Hypostases* (1970) one can identify the typical experimental film vocabulary that will later become the mark of most of the group's films: split screen, superimpositions, jump cuts, put at work to deliver a vague and bizarre narration. Emanuel Țeț's *Dynamic Poem* (1978) and Ioan Plesh's *Panta Rhei* (1979) employ a series of techniques – hand painting and scratching on the film strip – that turn the film into a gestural, intimate discourse, with a strong visual impact, projects which could easily compete with similar endeavors such as Lettrist experimental films of the fifties in France, and U.S. neo-avant-garde filmmaking of the sixties and seventies. Roxana Cherecheș & Liliana Trandabur's *Mise en écran* (1989) evokes Surrealist sensibilities, in a pseudo-narrative that reminds of Maya Deren's dreamlike images. And if we are to find other similarities, we should also note George Săbău's *Fragmentarium* (1985-1990) a film that, like Stan Brakhage's visual experiments, proposes a refined image that reveals a keen interest in textures and natural forms, employed not for their power of signification but rather for their optical function. Călin Man's *What's happening* (1994) is constructed according to a non-linear logic, with an incongruous relationship between image and sound, a solution that anticipates, somehow, the later hyper-textual constructions of the group's digital period. The same strategy is employed in Călin Man's *K_attack* (2005), although within a fully animated film that speculates the gadgetry and the effect, while borrowing elements from his previous work *Esoth Eric*, which was part of the larger project *alteridem.exe_2* presented at the Venice Biennale in 2003.⁸

Fragmentation

The fact that most of the films produced by kinema ikon, old and new, are based on abstraction, repetition and visual discontinuity, points to another aspect of the avant-garde unconscious: *the propensity for the fragment, i.e., the recourse to fragmentation as an artistic strategy*. Fragmentation is one of the avant-garde's dearest tactics – see its use in collage, photomontage, film montage, assemblage etc. – precisely for its efficiency in radically undermining the idea of the image as a homogeneous representation, fluid narrative and unitary surface. For example, the introduction of collage by the cubists and the dadaists was meant to break with the tradition of pictorial mimesis, leading, on the one hand, to the

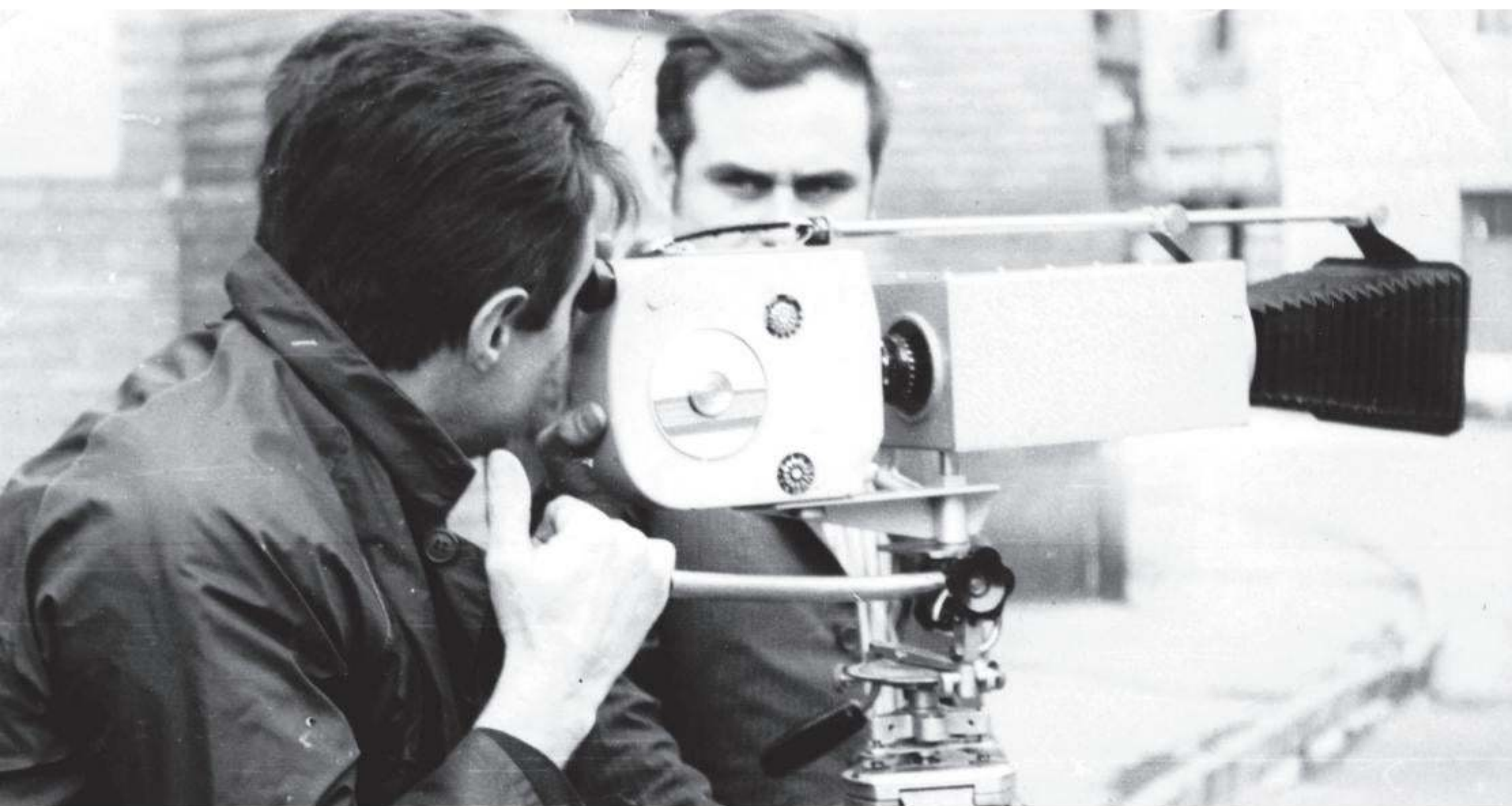
hybridization of painting and, on the other, to the creation of a concrete relationship with reality. In cinema, Dziga Vertov (among others) promoted the idea of the fragmentary image and montage as revolutionary tools "on the belief that the moving image can reorganize society and sight, reform vision, and liberate maker and viewer alike."⁹ The neo-avant-garde and the artistic movements that followed made full use of the fragment and its aesthetic potential, especially in installationist circumstances and performative situations, fueled as they were by the deconstructivist karma floating around. In installation, the metonymic cultivation of the fragment – of the object that contains and determines the whole – and the interplay between contiguous components are defining features for the genre. In the performative act, fragmentation works through decorporealization and by assigning a functional autonomy to the anatomical fragment by delegating functions and senses. New media and remix culture contributed in a radical manner to expand and complicate the visual and conceptual potential of the fragment proposing different forms of multi-perspectival narration, unstable visualization, temporal aggregation, collective production and plurality of reception. The result is a radical questioning of basic values in art, such as uniqueness, authorship, originality and copyright.

Kinema ikon has absorbed and employed all these potentialities of the fragment equally as a background (unconscious) expression of avant-gardism and as a solution to deal with the symptoms of the contemporary art condition. A few examples are relevant in this sense: Alexandru Pecican, *Exercițiu subliminal / Subliminal Exercise* (1979), a film that alternates between intimate and public scenes shot at various speeds with hallucinatory effects that match the psychedelic soundtrack; George Săbău's *Decupaje / Cutting ups* (1980-1985), a film with a programmatic title, which presents a sequence of random images taken with different framings, in different locations, their aleatory articulation effectively turning them into simple visual signs; Ioan Plesh's, *Emergență / Emergence* (1982), a poetic succession of images that acquire new meanings in the ensemble (plus the author's trademark motions: drawings on film, solarizations and superimpositions); kinema ikon's, *Ready-Media* (1995) a group video installation based on a series of images recorded from TV broadcast, mixed within an ample video collage, an absurd exercise of manipulation that actually points to the fragility of "truth" in mass media; mistik&01's, *Digital Body* (2006) an almost abstract, but poetic rendition of a body painted with digits; kinema ikon's, *Skepsis* (2011) a fast-forward, disruptive view of a virtual "wunderkammer."

Virtually all the films mentioned above demonstrate that through the manipulation of the fragment, audacious montage, and an unorthodox approach to apparatus, the work becomes an entity with its own visual and conceptual conditions, rather than a simple mimetic evidentiary trace of something else. Speaking about the aesthetic relevance of the fragment at kinema ikon, art theorist Cristian Nae rightly observed that these films demonstrate "an insistence on the autonomous fragment of reality, which is decontextualized until it reaches the state of a seemingly meaningless grapheme."¹⁰ Rightly so, since, we should remember that, at least in a certain historical moment, this was a strategy to emancipate artistic discourse from a politicized reality. Building and assuming aesthetic autonomy was – unlike in the West, where it was identified with medium purity, abstraction and alienation – a strategy of tacitly confronting official artistic norms. Nonetheless, the open-endedness and hybridization unfolding through fragmentation acquired a different, extended dimension during kinema ikon's later, digital phase, thus confirming its aesthetic meaningfulness, regardless of epoch or context.

Conclusion

So, it might become clear now that the phrase *avant-garde unconscious* is a theoretical tool that spans the various periods within the history of kinema ikon and, thus, might cut across any attempt to fix the group's activity within the divisive modern/post-modern framework. On the one hand, the avant-garde unconscious in kinema ikon's practice can be read in a modernist key as it activates autonomy, self-reflexivity, the structural exploration of the medium through image and montage, an artistic means that replicates (if not duplicates) avant-garde precepts. However, any such identification is problematic: the avant-garde unconscious is to avant-garde what, in Jacques Lacan's opinion, the unconscious is to reason: not something different, but something outside it. On the other hand, the avant-garde unconscious is not



a clear-cut post-modernist affair, either. The inclination towards hybridity, recycling images, post-mediality and ironic references would signal a post-modern sensibility. Nonetheless, while it defies rigid modernist values, it also demonstrates that kinema ikon's practice is and has always been genuinely new and, *horribile dictu*, original! A very effective way to suggest that – paraphrasing Bruno Latour – we have never been postmodern. Actually, George Săbău is clear in defying these cultural patterns and differences: “nothing can stop us [from] including digital experimental films in the same paradigm with the analogic ones, and both in the avant-garde movements.”¹¹ Or, I would say, within the same conceptual and functional paradigm, that is, the avant-garde unconscious.

1 Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*. Cambridge, Mass. and London, England: The MIT Press, 1993, p. 217.

2 Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981.

3 George Săbău, „A contextual history of the kinema ikon group”, *kinema ikon* catalogue, edited by kinema ikon. Bucharest: The National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2005, p. 8. The leader of the group is presently Călin Man/reVoltaire.

4 Piotr Piotrowski, *In the Shadow of Yalta. Art and the Avant-garde in Eastern Europe, 1945-1989*. Translated by Anna Brzyski. London: Reaktion Books, 2009, p. 12.

5 Hans Belting, *Art History after Modernism*. Translated by Caroline Saltzweid and Mitch Cohen, with Keneth Northcott. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003, p. 58.

6 George Săbău, „kinema ikon. Experimental films: analogic and digital”. In *kinema ikon. Experimental films: analogic and digital 1970-2010*, edited by kinema ikon, Arad: Art Museum Arad, 2010, unpaginated.

7 George Săbău, „A contextual history of the kinema ikon group”, *Ibid.* p. 16.

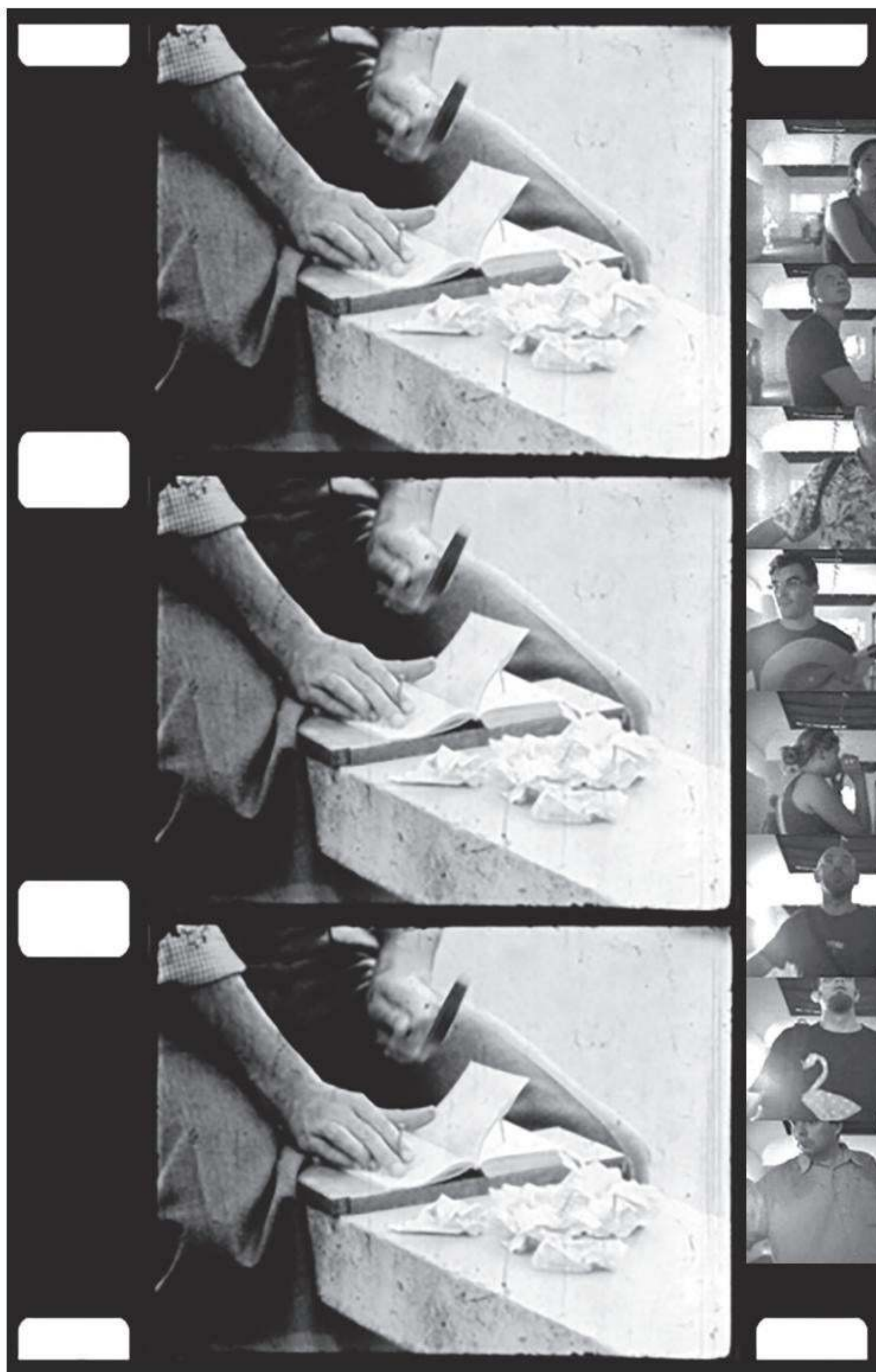
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kinema ikon 50 / film experimental (1979-2020)

Proiect coordonat de kinema ikon / Complexul Muzeal Arad,
co-finanțat de Administrația Fondului Cultural Național și Consiliul Județean Arad

Echipa proiectului:

Manager: dr. Constantin Ioan Inel

Coordonator: Calin Man

Membru: dr. Peter Hugel

Responsabil financiar: ec. Emanuela Bunde

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catalog:

concept, design: reVoltaire

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