



PLAYFUL PERVERSIONS:
SHORT FILMS BY GABRIEL ABRANTES

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presented by

REDCAT

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CaLARTS

PLAYFUL PERVERSIONS: SHORT FILMS BY GABRIEL ABRANTES

Co-presented by Acropolis Cinema
Guest Curated by Jordan Cronk

Since emerging in 2006, Gabriel Abrantes has carved a unique niche for himself at the vanguard of contemporary cinema. As *de facto* figurehead of a loose ensemble of collaborators with art school ties and a taste for the transgressive, the Lisbon-based artist (co-director of the acclaimed comedy *Diamantino*) brings a playfully perverse spirit to the tradition of experimental filmmaking. Shot on 16mm, Abrantes' absurdist allegories tackle issues of colonialism, gender, sexuality, and desire through a bold conflation of history, aesthetics, and politics-like pop art by way of Pasolini. Dizzily prolific, he continues to add to a shape shifting body of work whose pleasures and provocations are wholly indivisible.

Los Angeles premieres

In person: Gabriel Abrantes

"While completely different on paper, these shorts feel surprisingly complementary. Like the filmmakers, there seems to be an organic chemistry binding the works together - a personal joke, too good not to share."

- Kat Herriman, *The New York Times Magazine*

"With a penchant for genre subterfuge and a style that distinctly shuttles between a jerky (and somewhat quirky) amateurism and a stately Super 16mm grandeur, [Gabriel Abrantes] evokes, twists, and turns Hollywood's conventions into beguiling and breathtaking devices."

- Andréa Picard, *Cinema Scope*

"A body of work that intoxicates, titillates, tickles, and scandalizes. The films of Abrantes and co. challenge outmoded distinctions between 'art cinema' and artists' films, between work that travels the festival circuit and work that belongs in a gallery."

- Dan Sullivan, *Film Comment*

PROGRAM

Liberdade

(made in collaboration with Benjamin Crotty, 2011, 17 min)

Shot in Luanda, Angola, this visually ravishing tale of romance, crime, and erectile dysfunction chronicles the relationship between an Angolan boy and a Chinese girl as they attempt to forge a shared, transcultural identity.

Fratelli

(made in collaboration with Alexandre Melo, 2012, 17 min)

Gabriel Abrantes and Alexandre Melo deconstruct the first section of Shakespeare's 'Taming of the Shrew' as a playful, vibrant ode to bacchanalia, classicism, and homoeroticism.

Taprobana

(2014, 24 min)

A sensuous and debauched portrait of Portugal's national poet Luís Vaz de Camões teetering on the borderline between Paradise and Hell.

The Artificial Humors

(2016, 29 min)

Using a mix of Hollywood aesthetics with documentary strategies, the film follows a young indigenous girl from the Xingu National Park to São Paulo, where she falls in love with a robot that also happens to be a stand-up comedian. This strange story mixes the anthropology of humor, indigenous communities, and artificial intelligence.

The Extraordinary Misadventures of the Stone Lady

(2019, 18 min)

Tired of being a banal architectural ornamental, a sculpture runs from the Louvre to confront real life on the streets of Paris.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gabriel Abrantes was born in North Carolina, United States, in 1984. His films have premiered at the Semaine de la Critique - Cannes, Berlinale, Locarno Film Festival, the Venice Biennial, and the Toronto International Film Festival. They have been distinguished with a number of awards, including the Grand Prix at the Semaine de la Critique, the EFA prize at Berlinale, the Golden Leopard at Locarno Film Festival, and the EDP Young Artist Award. His work has been exhibited at the Whitechapel Gallery, the Palais de Tokyo, the MIT List Visual Arts Center, the Kunst-Werke and Serralves Museum. He participated in the 32nd São Paulo Biennial, the 2016 Bienal Tropical, and the 2014 Bienal d'Image Mouvement. His work has been shown in retrospective screening series at the Lincoln Center and BAFICI. He currently lives and works in Lisbon.

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Acropolis Cinema is a nonprofit screening series dedicated to bringing classic and contemporary experimental, international, and undistributed films to screens across Los Angeles. Visit acropoliscinema.com for more information.

UPCOMING FILM/VIDEO PROGRAMS FALL 2019

Dec 2 Happy Birthday CHICK STRAND!

Dec 9 Alexandra Cuesta: *Camera Notes (Part One)*

Dec 13 Reanimating Ancient Worlds: The Short Films of DAVID LEBRUN

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