

FRIDAY, SEPT. 17, 2021 | 8-10pm

» Home Movies:  
Experiments in Dwelling  
**Broad Underground Film Series**

Broad Art Museum Sculpture Garden  
Free to the public  
Co-programmed by Justus Nieland and McKayla Sluga

As archives of private memories, home movies offer intimate glimpses into personal and family life. They provide a space of self-portraiture and nostalgia, but also opportunities for fantasy, play, and critique—for imagining different modes of dwelling. Many filmmakers have turned to the “amateur” genre of the home movie as a site of experimentation with the routines, normative roles, and restrictive politics of domestic life. Intersecting with themes in the 2021 AAHD *Faculty Triennial: Where We Dwell*, this program explores a series of innovative takes on the concept of the “home movie.” Ranging from canonical works of the avant-garde and contemporary essay films to amateur, educational, and sponsored films, our program features experiments in dwelling that open this “private” genre into a public, even ecological space for imagining community and building solidarity. Featured filmmakers include: Cheryl Dunye, Helen Hill, Sky Hopinka, Guy Maddin, Jan Oxenberg, Elisa Giardina Papa, and Andy Warhol.



Broad Underground is an ongoing collaboration between the MSU Broad, the Film Studies Program and the Department of English at MSU, and The Robin Theatre in REO Town, Lansing. Special thanks to the Lansing Public Media Center for their continued support.

# BROAD UNDERGROUND FILM SERIES

An exploration of Video Art and Experimental and Avant-Garde film from its earliest developments to the present day.

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# BROAD UNDERGROUND FILM SERIES



## HOME MOVIES

### EXPERIMENTS IN DWELLING

8:00pm • Friday, September 17 • Broad Art Museum Sculpture Garden  
Programmed by McKayla Sluga and Justus Nieland

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#### *One Week*

(Buster Keaton and Eddie Kline, 1920, excerpt, 5min)

Borrowing its plot from a Ford sponsored film about the dream of a prefabricated home, *One Week* spoofs the DIY ethos of domestic life in a universe where nothing goes as planned. Keaton’s slapstick elevates

the role of chance and dysfunction in home life to a philosophical principle. In Keaton's unsentimental world, homes can only be places where things go awry. At home, we are exposed to the basic precarity of dwelling, made vulnerable, and forced to improvise and relentlessly problem-solve. In this clip, Keaton's newlyweds celebrate their newly built home by hosting a party. But nature has made other plans.

***House of Dream***

**(British Pathé, 1931, 3 min)**

Serving up a class-based dream of modern living, this film—shot in Amersham, Buckinghamshire—extols the virtues of a modern home, “open to the sun and air, embodying everything that modern science can offer.” The home promises a fantastic union of beauty and function, technology and nature, efficient work and play. This happy art deco house is impervious to bad weather and bad living, or the “grumbling” of domestic laborers or housewives. The dreary days and clutter of the Victorian period—indeed, history itself—vanish in this modernist domestic utopia. A production of Pathetone, the newsreel producers' weekly series devoted to the “novel, amusing, and strange” aspects of national life.

***Manuel Reyes Home Movies***

**(Manuel Reyes, 1978-79, with commentary by**

**Verónica Reyes-Escudero and Jennifer Jenkins, 11.5 min)**

Recently screened publicly at Home Movie Day Tucson (part of the Center for Home Movies project), these films were shot by Manuel Reyes in a family ranch in Michoacán, Mexico; Yuma, Arizona; and Salinas California. Shown initially for the family at holiday gatherings, they offer intimate glimpses of the Reyes family at home and at work, including lettuce-picking in Yuma, where Reyes underscores the migrant workers' sense of community. Reyes also captures a workers' march, blessed by a priest, with laborers carrying United Farm Worker and Cesar Chavez flags. The audio commentary by Reyes's niece Verónica both reconstructs and contextualizes the past and acknowledges what is lost, unknown, or forgotten.

***Disintegration 93-96***

**(Miko Revereza, 2019, 6 min)**

Recontextualizing his family's home movies to explore themes of migration, familial separation, and the fantasy of America for the undocumented, Revereza searches for commonalities in the “unspoken private lives” he shared with his father. For Revereza, home movies project impossible dreams of belonging for the stateless while also documenting the meaningful, everyday details of lives beyond the gaze of the state. A video camera, Revereza's essayistic voice observes, “doesn't indicate our status.”

***Only Dream Things***

**(Guy Maddin, 2012, excerpt, 6 min)**

A deeply personal meditation on loss and mourning from Winnipeg's best-known cinematic surrealist, *Only Dream Things* was created for an installation at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The film reworks footage shot by Guy Maddin's brother Cameron, who died when Maddin was seven, leaving Maddin to inherit his room and his belongings—including his amateur home movie footage and audio recordings made by tapping his parents' phone. That bedroom was reconstructed for the centennial installation, with a screen to play *Only Dream Things*. A work of haunted media, the film's spectral images and layered soundtrack stage a kind of cinematic séance, reanimating lost voices beyond the limit of death.

***Evicted Family***

**(Universal Newspapers Newsreel, 1930s, 0.5 min)**

An evicted family in El Cerrito, California “laughs at [the] sheriff” while a widowed mother and children set up their house on the sidewalk. They get dressed, eat breakfast, shave, and sew as they prepare for their day. When the Great Depression ravaged families in the 1930s, many became homeless or were forced to relocate. At the same time, ordinary people increasingly became subjects of newsreels. This family chooses routine and satire in the face of devastating loss to remake their home on a public street, suggesting that home is a movable, malleable place not determined by fixed walls or private ownership.

***Home Movies of Heart Mountain***

**(Stanley T. Evans, 1945, 6 min)**

“Color amateur footage of activities at Heart Mountain concentration camp, Wyoming filmed by Reverend Stanley T. Evans who visited Rev. Donald Toriumi at Heart Mountain in 1945. Composed of home movie clips of the environment the Japanese Americans lived in during World War II in forced exclusion, including exterior views of the Community Christian Church Sunday School, Court house, Fire department, United States Postal Service, Hospital, barracks, guard house, trucks and tractors, and the U.S. flag. There is also footage of men in uniform, soldiers drilling, children reading books and people leaving barracks.”—Discovering Nikkei, Japanese American National Museum

***Felicia* (Bob Dickson, Alan Gorg, and Trevor Greenwood, 1965, 13 min)**

Bob Dickson, Alan Gorg, and Trevor Greenwood were UCLA film students involved in Civil Rights Movements when they filmed this short documentary of Felicia Bragg. Completed just before the August 1965 Watts riots, this film follows Felicia’s life at school and in her Los Angeles neighborhood. Her narration is layered upon images that offer intimate glimpses into family, home, and the aspirations of a teenage girl navigating segregation, racism, and her Mexican American and African American identities. *Felicia* was distributed on 16mm to American classrooms and community spaces in the late 1960s. Though public and private alienation center in Felicia’s experiences, her educational dreams and hopes to rebuild her community are equally potent.

***Home Movie* (Jan Oxenberg, 1973, 12.5 min)**

Lesbian feminist filmmaker Jan Oxenberg narrates her childhood home movies to explore the meaning of “home” in relation to femininity and queerness. Through her adult reflections on childhood, Oxenberg intermixes past realities with reimaginings of her emotional, physiological, and political responses. By now recognizing “home” in closeness with other women, she finds happiness in her home movies that previously elicited distance or difference. *Home Movies* screened at the “feminist mecca” Womanspace Gallery in Los Angeles, California in 1973 as “one of the first lesbian feminist films” and centers tensions between one’s “inner” and “outer” self.

***Dislocation Blues* (Sky Hopinka, 2017, 17 min)**

Ho-Chunk Nation filmmaker and visual artist Sky Hopinka’s experimental films center Indigenous home, language, and landscapes. Foregrounding environmental and anti-colonial messages, Hopinka combines documentary and activism in this “portrait” of Standing Rock protests. *Dislocation Blues* presents Cleo Keahna’s critical reflections on his time at the camp and the long history of Indigenous displacement by white, capitalist settler-colonists. It also includes Terry Running Wild’s on-the-ground experiences to oscillate between past, present, and future at the camp. Hopinka underscores film’s ability to capture movement—physically and politically—to protect land, water, and people.

***Buffalo Release* (Seneca Media and Jason Corwin, 2020, 1 min)**

Often filmed from an aerial view, buffalo roam on the Allegany Territory after release by Gakwi:yo:h Farms and Seneca Nation Agricultural Department. Nine buffalo join others previously released in 2018 to total 51, now with a 300-acre permanent home in Ohi:yo’ at the Sunfish flats. With a “Haudenosaunee approach to agricultural practices” centered on addressing “food security and food sovereignty,” Gakwi:yo:h Farms’s “goal is to reconnect to the philosophy of our ancestors and pledge to promote the relationship between our people, our lands and the foods we eat.” *Buffalo Release* screened at the 2021 Haudenosaunee Filmmakers Festival and highlights a history of buffalo and Indigenous people’s removal, but also efforts to return home by building community with humans, animals, and land.

***need ideas!?!PLZ!!* (Elisa Giardina Papa, 2011, 5.5 min)**

A video collage of crowd-sourced brainstorming, this work of visual artist Elisa Giardina Papa curates a collection of home videos of aspiring YouTubers. The kids’ pleas for creative inspiration are at once comic and unsettling, offering glimpses into the pathos of adolescent creative lives lived online—both in

their bedrooms and networked to the world. Exploring the saturation of neoliberal values in contemporary social media ecologies, Papa offers a bracing view the quantified self, on 24/7 and anxiously performing for likes and comments.

**A special thanks to the Center for Home Movies and the Japanese American National Museum for their support of this screening program. You can view their amazing home movie online collections here:**

<https://www.centerforhomemovies.org/>  
<https://www.janm.org/collections/moving-images>

**The orphan East Lansing film is part of the extensive home movies collection at archive.org:**  
[https://archive.org/details/home\\_movies](https://archive.org/details/home_movies)