

FILM FAME

THE OFFICIAL UNDERGROUND FILM STUDIO MAGAZINE

the Quest for the
CINE-REBIS

A MANIFESTO FOR A NEW ART CINEMA
BY

Daniel **FAWCETT** & *Clara* **PAIS**

APRIL 2016 - ISSUE TWO

WELCOME TO **FILM PANIC** #2

This issue contains just one article: 'The Quest For The Cine-Rebis', a manifesto that calls for new approaches to cinema and challenges the patriarchal, industrial approaches that have dominated for the last century. Our intention is to strive for a new art cinema that claims the medium back from the overly rational, conservative and commercial forms that have created a conformity of expression in a time when we should be seeing a myriad of possibilities.

All the ideas gathered here have grown directly from our own work and explorations and the great inspiration which we have received from studying the history of art and cinema, but also from the frustrations we have encountered when we hit up against the limited view of those screening, funding and writing about cinema and moving image in both the world of film and art. But even though this is an essay born in part from frustration we believe that what we have to say is positive. We see such great possibilities for the art of cinema which have not yet been realised, over the past 125 or so years of its existence we have only scratched the surface and we believe that it is time to dig deeper. We hope in our own way to be a part of this journey and look forward with great anticipation to what will be unearthed in the future.

This issue is accompanied by a 25-minute video essay, called *The Quest for the Cine-Rebis, A Mutant Film*, which can be viewed on our website:

www.theundergroundfilmstudio.co.uk

Thanks for reading,
Daniel Fawcett & Clara Pais

FILM PANIC
ISSUE 2 - APRIL 2016

FILM PANIC magazine is a publication of The Underground Film Studio
www.theundergroundfilmstudio.co.uk

Entire contents copyright Daniel Fawcett and Clara Pais.
All articles are by Daniel Fawcett and Clara Pais unless otherwise credited.

FILM PANIC title font 'Zoom' created by Dave Fabik.

Assistant Editor: James Marcus Tucker

Contact: info@theundergroundfilmstudio.co.uk

the Quest for the **CINE-REBIS** **A MANIFESTO FOR A NEW ART CINEMA**

PART 1
INTRODUCTION - ART IN EXILE

PART 2
TOWARDS RECLAIMING CINEMA AS ART

PART 3
A SCRIPT FOR A MUTANT FILM

PART 4
NOTES & REFLECTIONS

PART 5
WHAT IS THE CINE-REBIS?

PART 1

INTRODUCTION - ART IN EXILE

We are living in a cultural wasteland. Art has become a label stamped on anything with a vague bit of gloss, or framed by a gallery, or endorsed by a critic, and we are all scared to call their bluff, to call out against the poverty of art. The once liberating idea that anything can be art has lost value and taken the confidence out of those that feel in their hearts that what they are being given as art is nothing more than quick-fire gimmicks, an easily consumed, easily forgotten reinforcement of conservative values. We look briefly before moving on as quickly as possible so we don't have to face up to the fear of exposure that we no longer really know what art is.

So art is in crisis, and if art is in crisis it is only because we as a society are in crisis. If we have a genuine lack of confidence in the arts, it is because our footing as a society is so unsteady. We don't know who we are, where we are going or what our purpose is any more. We feel frustrated at the way life seems to be and we find easy targets for our frustrations such as foreigners or the government or some other unseen, ungraspable oppressor around which we can weave a conspiracy theory. Worst of all, we have turned the arts into a frivolous, luxury affair; a clean and safe atmosphere where only the politically correct and academically articulate can operate. Occasionally we pretend to be deeply moved or even offended by some limp gesture that ticks all the boxes of the controversial but in the end we remain in the safe zone of regurgitated opinions and shallow thought.

We may have forgotten what art is and what its purpose is but maybe that is OK for now because it hasn't gone away. It's still here and to bring it back to full consciousness we need not struggle to define it but to remember how to look at it, listen to it and experience it. An act of opening up to it is needed.

As viewers we need to slow down, meditate, contemplate, resist quick categorisations and submit to the work as an experience. If something repulses, offends or upsets us, then we should give it more attention. True art is not a rigid thing, it is not a statement, it is an expression, it is fluid, it always dances on the fringes of clarity.

The current state of art leans too far towards the masculine drives; it revels in hierarchies, material value, money, power, rationality and strict definitions. We need to engage more with the feminine to readjust this imbalance. More play and irrationality, less political statements and certainty. More exploration, more risk, more harmony between the body and creativity, more healing and more community. More poetry, less facts. More myth, metaphor and feeling, less news and information.

Art is not journalism, art is not propaganda, art is not product, art will not tell you what to think but it will open avenues to new ways of thinking. Art is an act of engaging with the world through creation; it is about participating in the mystery, beauty, horror and wonder of existence, it both creates a map of consciousness and aids us in reaching beyond our current limitations. Art is the greatest tool for transformation that we have, it is a gift, we need to believe in its power again. It is time to go in search of this exile and bring it home.

PART 2

TOWARDS RECLAIMING CINEMA AS ART

Much of what we have to say here is relevant to art in general but as our medium of choice is cinema we direct our investigation towards it. Cinema is a young medium but over its short history there has been a stiffening of movement and in some areas rigor mortis has set in. But there is hope because creativity prevails and that which dies becomes the breeding ground for new life.

Cinema is an artifice. To express truth through cinema one must indulge in the theatre of forms and not shy away from the truth in the illusion. We revolt against the popular belief that cinema is a tool for objectivity; for us all films that claim to be capturing reality without mediation are lies. To pretend that a film shot handheld with natural lighting and long uncut shots is any more truthful than the latest CGI blockbuster is not only a mistake, it is lazy and dangerous. Realism, believability and rationality - the favoured modes for conservatives - have become the tools to create a conformity of expression that numbs our senses and limits our imagination. Instead of being tools in the service of freedom and the betterment of humankind, they have now become the walls to imprison us from ourselves. Fortunately, imagination is still untamed and will eternally be subversive. True art is a flying carpet that can lift us above all limitations and release us from all restraints.

Over the last few years the tools of filmmaking have become available to all and we have now for the very first time reached a point where anyone and everyone is shooting movies; some for fun, some for work and industrial purposes and some for art. The first two categories are going great guns. Unfortunately, industrial language has permeated the home-movie and artist's film, and this infestation is a problem against which we need to take assertive action. If we were all to speak the same language, if we were all to define ourselves the same way and see the world the same way we would be living in a kind of hell. Everything would be centralised, the worst kind of conservatism would dominate; a kind of industrial fascism would dictate how we see ourselves and how we express ourselves. This is a hellish reality, already dangerously close. It is therefore imperative that we revolt, challenge and subvert the conservative, industrial cinema with a true, idiosyncratic and personal art cinema that is subversive not only in content but also in process and form.

Here, we have set out twelve "actions" that we are currently using in our own work. They are a set of tools - or even weapons - that we can use to help disintegrate and investigate conventions and hopefully open new avenues of expression and unearth new languages.

We do not see them as rules; simply the first steps towards realising cinema as an art form that can express more truth, be more personal and aid us in going beyond that which we are taught to think and feel, enabling us to find out what we *genuinely* think and feel. We seek to overcome the fraud of realism and believability. Reality is an irrational experience and it is high time we step outside this neat world of categories of right and wrong; to bring to realisation our true individual nature and participate fully in the great creative play of life.

ONE

Performers must rally forces against movement, speech and actions that seem natural. We must reach to extremes in order to expose the artifice of identity; all personality is a mask. Once we learn that we are all actors playing roles we can begin to transform these characters to be in line with our true self.

TWO

Dialogue should be either utter gibberish or exquisitely crafted poetry. The middle ground is a barren wasteland, nothing of value grows there.

THREE

Strive towards a cinema that reveals what is hidden. Seek not to show the world as it looks; cinema's power is not in capturing reality but in expressing the inner life. Whether you like it or not, you project your thoughts and feelings onto the world around you, cinema can be a tool for taking charge of these projections.

FOUR

The artist director is neither dictator, army general nor company boss. The director's purpose is not to control the film but to protect the film, to be a servant who guides the vision into the world. The time of overt masculine ideas of the artist must give way to more feminine attitudes, the artist as shaman, mother, medium and guardian of visions.

FIVE

When in doubt, consult your dreams. Take your fantasies seriously. When creating, switch rationality and reason down to low and let your inner voices speak.

SIX

Make a film first and foremost as an act of personal exploration. Open a door to some unknown place and enter. Leap into the void. Risk is a primary factor in creating a truthful work of art. The journey of the film should alternate between total confusion, unknowing and a sense of revelation. Only after the film is complete will you begin to unravel its purpose and mysteries. Learn to trust the creative spirit that speaks through you. Learn to love being lost and not knowing.

SEVEN

Play is the greatest weapon you have to fight against the tyranny of rationality.

EIGHT

Political statements are the lowest function of art; spiritual expression is the highest. However, be wary of religious art; it is more often than not political art dressed to look like spiritual art. True spiritual art is beyond religion.

NINE

We live in a world, we are a part of a society and a community. It is therefore true that all art has a political dimension but art is not a party political broadcast. Let your politics manifest through action, form and general intention; don't beat your audience with a sledge hammer message. Open doors to possibilities but do not push people through them. Trust each person to find their own path.

TEN

Form and content are one; ignore this at your own risk. To change one's consciousness one must expand the form. Seek ways for form to become content and content to be the key in the door of creativity.

ELEVEN

If you truly care about the audience, begin by making art for yourself. To think you know what the audience wants and needs is a crime against free will. Do not seek to manipulate and do not fall into the trap of thinking you know what is best for someone else.

TWELVE

Creativity is fluid. Identity is fluid. Gender is fluid. Nationality is fluid. All reality is an illusion, so to say yes to artifice is to say yes to truth. Participate fully in the play of life.

PART 3

A SCRIPT FOR A MUTANT FILM

ACT 1

HER There is a light, a light in the darkness, flickering across the emptiness.

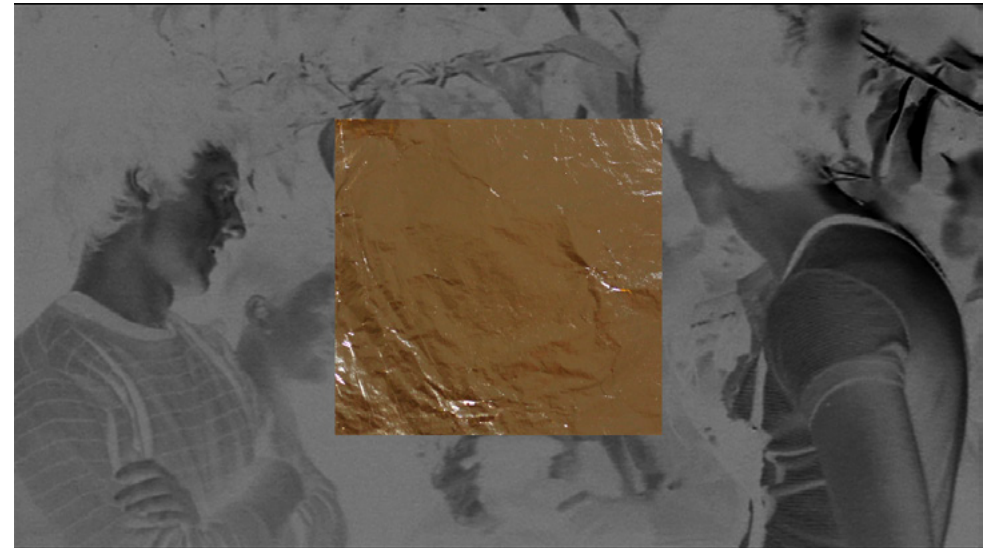
I peer into it. Life beams back at me, more vibrant, more sizzling, louder and more gripping than ever I've seen before. I am covered in thick heavy shrouds but they do not stop the brightness of its gaze reaching my skin. Each flicker of light turns each of them to gold and then gold turns to dust. I stand naked and I surrender.

The darkness that moves around me shines in obsidian glory and presents me with another gift – from the mud beneath my feet a frog jumps up into my hands and kisses them, turning them red and blue. The weight of my hands increases a thousand fold so that the mere movement of a finger causes a great wind which blows dozens of windows open. I remain in the dark but now even when I close my eyes I have vision, a cinema of dreams that plays on and on and on and on.

HIM In industrial cinema creators are forced to be dictators, they seek to control the film. If cinema is to be an art the director must be like a shaman, a servant of the creative spirit bringing visions to the screen. Cinema is but a new path in a journey that we have been on since a time before memory, the technology is new but the spirit is ancient.

HER I have something very important that I have to tell you but first I'm going to take my shoes off because this isn't something I can talk about with my shoes on.

HERZOG I was talking to a friend one night recently in New York. We went for a walk and he told me how worried he was about everything being taken over by video and television. I expect you'll soon be able to choose vegetables in the supermarket by video camera or by pressing buttons on your telephone or your computer, you can order your meal. It probably won't be long before you can draw money out of the bank via video or this medium here. I'm not so worried about camera or film





- I said to him - because whatever happens there, that's not where life happens. Life is going on somewhere else. Wherever life is dynamic, wherever life touches us most directly, that's where you'll find the cinema. And that's what will survive. Only that always survives.

HIM The songs of our ancestors sing on in the dark, their fire burns on in our hearts but we must not live in their shadow. Cinema is still young, many rocks are yet unturned, many islands unexplored, let us die and be reborn in each moment and dance out of the cinema to eternity.

HER But what is this thing?

HIM Cinema is the perfect marriage between the mind and the machine.

HER Oh!

HIM But cinema is not only the union of mind and machine, it also springs forth from the body, the friction of organs and the pumping of blood.

HER And what is it that I'm questing for?

HIM You seek to see how far you can go, to confront the limits of your own mind, your own body and your own creativity. Who do you think you are? You are a condition through which the creative spirit sings. Cinema is a looking glass through which we see into ourselves; the deeper we look the further we go.

HER And what of the machine? What are these tools?

HIM Each tool has their own purpose, each one reveals something new. Let us speak with two cameras, father Film and his son Digital.

What is it that merits you above the other?

FILM We are not at war, how can a father hate a son? When the world moves I do not resist.

DIGITAL My father has set the way that for many is the only path, but I shall go another way. I am certainly my father's son, but for sons to go their own way does not mean that fathers have to die. I have learnt much and we are alike in many ways but we are not one and the same. Please do not look on me with the same eyes with which you see my father.

HIM But what of your skills, are you not both alchemists of light?

FILM That we are but I transform light with chemicals and plastic whereas my son transforms light into something more mysterious.

DIGITAL It is not as complex as it may seem for the language of light speaks differently to me. I can transmute it into a new language, a language of ones and zeros. Zero the great potential and one the spark of creation itself; two polarities that I have mastered to represent all creation.

HER So, where do we go from here?

HIM You are a stepping stone for those that follow, a link in a bigger chain, a sentence in a vaster story. In order to move this story forward risk is needed. Leap into the void, go into the shadows, face the unknown and cast your net where uncertainty lays.

Be in the world as a child. Play and creativity are the only truly revolutionary acts. Through play one can expose their true feelings; when lost in play the unconscious expression can break through and new possibilities emerge. Creativity can help us shape our future. Let yourself go, seek and feel the joy of going into the unknown.

HER But how?





HIM Look, look and look again and repeat. Practice risk, practice play and keep going.

HER But when all the possibilities lay before me, how do I know which path to take?

HIM Look, look and look again. Practice risk, practice play. Practice work and keep going.

Cinema comes to us through divine intervention; it burns like a shooting star as it plummets to the ground. We must mine it from the earth with our hands and let its light illuminate the silver screen.



A Samsung television is positioned on a dark wooden stand with ornate legs. The TV screen is split horizontally: the top half shows a movie scene with a person's face, and the bottom half shows a person in a blue sweater. A white lace cloth is draped over the top right corner of the screen. A large red banner with the word "INTERMISSION" in white, outlined, capital letters is superimposed over the center of the image.

INTERMISSION

ACT 2

HIM Every film has its secrets.

HER I have been called by the names of many stars, but my true name has been forgotten. I have been given a thousand faces, but none is my own. Do you ever wonder what I am when you are not looking? What light can penetrate this darkness? How can we learn to see our true shapes in the dark?

Am I an owl? Or am I a table? Or am I a kitten? Or am I a bear?

HIM Maybe you are a spider spinning a web.

HER I am not poisonous, I am no black widow.

SPIDER She may have the power to create delicate forms but no she is not poisonous, she is not a spider. Her art is not a prison in which the viewer finds their death.

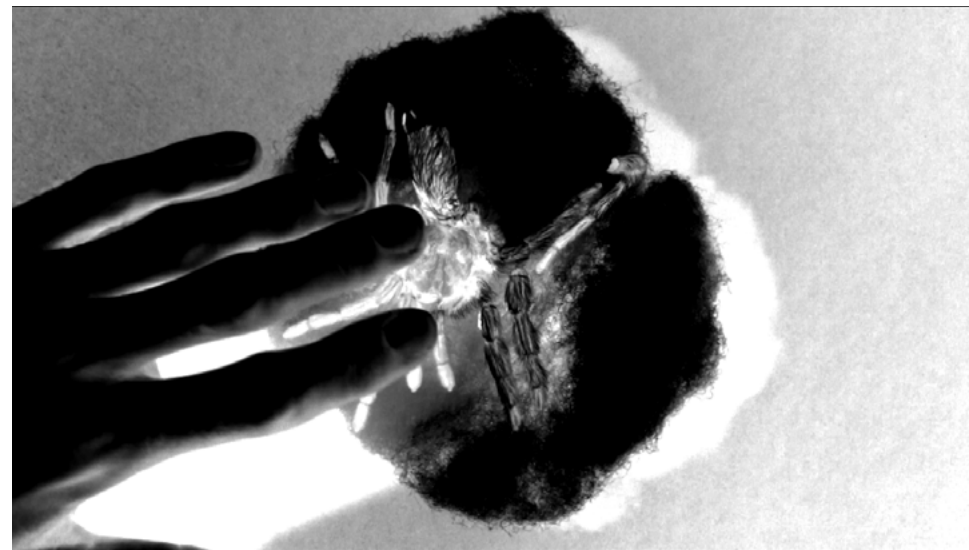
HER Then I am a door, through which those who wish to can enter.

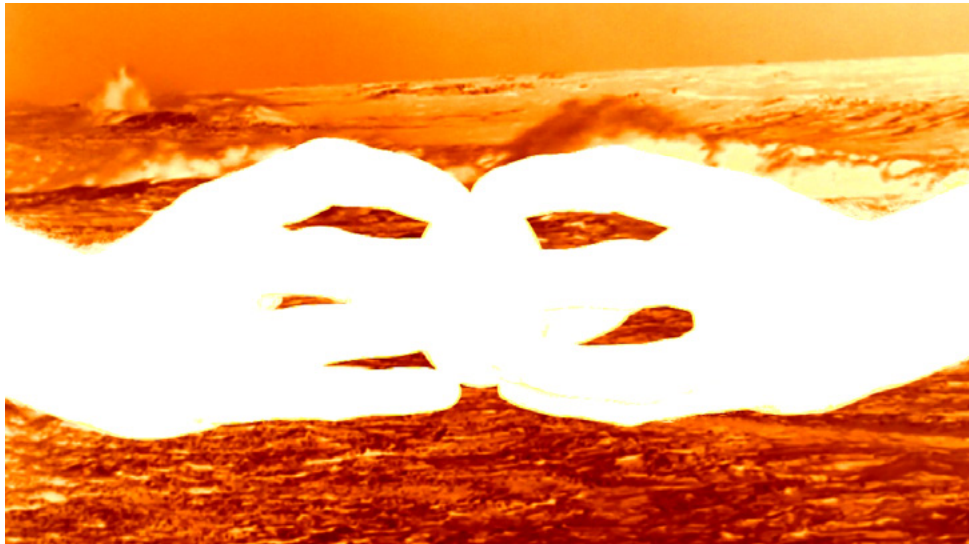
HIM Lumens Naturae.

HER I have heard old men tolling the bells for the death of cinema, they do not know it is their own passing they must mourn. In 125 years we have only scratched the surface, it is only the beginning. How deep is this consciousness cinematographic? Cinema is born from the eternal crashing of waves, the slow rise of mountains, the hunger of fire and the howling of wolves.

HIM Yes, but go deeper.

HER The shock of each moment of still being alive.





HIM Yes, but deeper still.

HER Shall I return to the gardens of the past?

HIM Start there but move on, go deeper.

HER Shall I look at myself face to face?

HIM Yes but go on, go deeper still.

HER Shall I look out and reflect the world?

HIM Yes, yes but go further, go deeper still.

HER Cinema is a return to paradise. In the cinema of dreams we can commune with the gods and in the faces of the gods we see ourselves reflected, but we must go on, we must bring these visions into the world.

HIM The cinema of our time is a mutant cinema; it is impure, it is a cinema created from contamination, but this mutation is not a monstrosity, it is a beautiful creature. We should submit to the will of creative wisdom and let this evolution unfold before us. Monstrosities are born from resistance. A mutant film accepts its deformities and knows that it is not a beginning and not an end but a link in an ever extending chain of human creativity.

HER Nothing is lost. Nothing is gained. Everything is transformed.

When that spark of inspiration lights in your sky, follow it. Travel to where it leads, disregard reason and logic, let the inspiration be your guiding star.

PART 4

NOTES & REFLECTIONS

For us cinema is not just the movie itself, it is the whole process and world around it. Everything from the script to the screenings - including how we work with performers or manipulate the images - must be questioned, experimented with and investigated in order to find out what they are, what they can be and what they can reveal to us. There are many things about cinema that go unquestioned, many things taken for granted which we believe need to be explored if the medium is to evolve. Here are a few thoughts on some of the different areas, all of which have been taken from our personal notebooks written over the past few years.

AMATEURS

There was a time when I thought that the future of cinema lay in the hands of the amateurs, that when the tools were cheap and readily available to all we would begin to see new approaches and new languages emerge. But I was wrong. It seems that we have been bombarded with a standardized language for so long that we have become brainwashed to the point that even the most amateur of shooters can produce something that resembles a conventional movie without much effort at all. I now see that the fantasy of a cinema naïveté is not possible. The only way to advance this medium is as artists.

AUTEURS

The celebration of the auteur is a celebration of the ego, it puts glory on the success and mastery of the individual but what we should celebrate is the artist whose ego can be quietened long enough to allow a greater wisdom to speak through them. Then any praise to the ego will seem silly and vain because they will know they are only a receptor and a condition for this vaster thing. What should be celebrated is the chance coming-together of events; that a particular psychology, physiology, environment, etc., all collide within a person at a particular moment to create a work of art that astonishes us. This truly is a wonder.

SCRIPTS, SCREENPLAYS AND SCENARIOS

For us, each of the stages of creating a movie should be exploratory; there is never an attempt to simply illustrate some preconceived idea. Throughout all stages - conception, script, casting, location scouting, costume and set design, shooting, editing, sound and music creation - our journey is one of excavation; constantly brushing away layers to reveal the film. We nearly always work with some form of script. Sometimes these resemble more conventional modes of screenplay with scene descriptions and dialogue, and other times they are simply lists, poetry, or booklets with images. No two scripts are ever alike; each movie requires a new form and the first step towards realising that for us is to create a new form of script. Of course, it isn't even necessary to have a script at all and we have made several films in this way, but generally speaking for us the script is a first stage of interrogation and discovery. This is then followed by the shoot, where we gather a team of people and from the starting point of the words or images on a page we begin a discussion either through conversations or action - usually both - to see where we can go. We feel no preciousness over the script, it most certainly isn't a blueprint for a product and it bears very little resemblance

to the function of a screenplay in industrial film production. Writing, filming and editing are approached in the same way, they call upon the use of different parts of our brains and bodies, but the essential process of unearthing, experimenting and exploring remains constant.

SOUND DESIGN

We currently shoot all our films without any sync sound, everything is created in post: the sound of footsteps, body movements, breathing, voices, general atmospheric sounds and the music. We love creating the sound, it is always the very last thing we do and it has the effect of being the breath of life entering the creature we have created. It is after this moment that we begin to really see what we have created and what this journey we have been on is all about. Spending a week or two just creating sound, recording minute movements and building up the layers is a way of activating a different engagement with the senses. We cultivate and focus in on the art of listening - which is usually in second place to the art of looking - and it awakens in us a different level of awareness and relatedness.

MUSIC

To make music is to call upon ancient forces. Music is one of the oldest forms of expression used by humans; to create music is to be in a dialogue with our ancestors. Cinema was never truly silent. Even before voices and sound effects were joined to moving images music was present. Even the earliest of screenings were accompanied by music, or failing that, the clattering rhythm of a film projector, unmistakably reminiscent of tribal drums. Music's effect on us is astounding. What is it about this marriage that has such power to affect us, to stir the emotions, to call us to action or to lull us into a dream? I am sure there is still much more to explore here beyond the standard use of music in films, which is primarily as a tool of manipulation.

ACTING

The craft of acting is in crisis and the cause of this is the celebrity. The greatest injustice that we have done to actors is to turn them into stars. Creative expression through performance has been turned into formulaic methods that take about as much skill to pull off as playing chopsticks on the piano.

A director must select and work with performers who are the living embodiment of the spirits they wish to evoke. It is not necessary for a performer to understand your film but they must be willing to give themselves to it and trust you to be their guide on this journey. In turn they must be respected, they must be cared for and looked after. Give them the appropriate conditions to perform their task. But don't misunderstand this as meaning you should treat them as stars and put them on pedestals. Treating someone with respect is realising what conditions are needed in order for them to be able to fulfil their role and doing your best to supply them. Never worship the ground they walk on, never be in fear of them, never look down on them; you must find a level on which you can communicate. In those moments together on set you must be as one; a sacred marriage in which their bodies and souls speak in the language that moves through you. Also don't forget that the director is an actor too, as are each of the crew members and everyone else. We are all playing roles!

LOCATIONS

The locations in which your film is made should be treated like sacred ground. You are performing a ritual in this space and it should be considered a character in your film on equal footing as your performers.

TITLES

A film's title should contain the entire world of the film compressed into a few words or short phrase that on first glance appears simple and clear but on further inspection becomes a window that looks into a world more vast than one could ever imagine. A good title is not only a work of poetry, it is also a magic spell, its words should act upon the viewer as an enchantment which draws them in and activates the type of engagement which the film calls for.

EXPERIMENTAL FILM

When I began making films I was working alone and completely unconnected with any kind of film school or other filmmakers. After some time of making films and beginning to study the history of cinema I felt that the kind of work I was making and intended to make would fit best in the circles of experimental film. I approached some groups working in this field and was shocked to find that "experimental film" as these people understood it was not a mode of working but a genre. In their view there were clear things an experimental film could and couldn't be. For example, one of the key interests for me is experimenting with narrative, pushing it to its limits, disintegrating and subverting it; yet it remains present. But to a lot of experimental filmmakers narrative is an enemy, it is something that has no place in experimental film. This is simplistic thinking that operates on the superficial idea that if one is against something then the answer is to do the opposite. They look at commercial film and see that it is primarily concerned with telling stories, so in order to make a non-commercial cinema they reject all aspects of the story, including narrative. A case of throwing the baby out with the bath water. There is no reason that narrative - or anything else for that matter - cannot be the subject for experimentation.

MONEY

What is money? Money is energy. Money does not make films, creativity does. Money just oils the cogs. It's nice to jingle a few coins in your pockets but better to let them roll, see who chases them and then keep well away from them. Paper money blows away too easily and I like to keep my windows open - a cool summer breeze does more for the soul than an air tight room stacked with cash.

Pitching, funding applications and the general search for cash to bring your visions to life is a battleground one must enter with a warrior's energy. If going down this road, make sure you have the armour and weapons to protect your film because I can say with certainty that those with money will seek to ransack and terrorise you so that the natural flow of your creativity is filled with doubt and fear. Be wary, be strong!

SUCCESS

What is your idea of success? Best to find out what that goal is that drives you and smash it apart nice and early; the longer you wait the more fossilised it becomes. The gold you seek will dictate the nature of your journey.

CRITICS

Critics and reviewers are on the whole cowardly, arrogant, closed-minded creatures who approach a movie as if they are superior to it. It is a shocking state of affairs to think that these self-proclaimed experts believe that their judgements and opinions are of such high value and what is even more shocking is that we believe it too. They glance over the surface of a film, categorising and rating it, concluding what is good and what is bad, and after usually only one viewing they profess to know its worth. Do they not know that as their fingers tap their keyboards, smearing their expert opinions on the computer screen, they are killing themselves and others in the process? Opinions are the nails in the coffin of their creative inner life but they cling to them and defend them as if they are the breath of life itself.

The true critic should be a searcher, a creative thinker in their own right. Their writing about a film should not be a simple evaluation but a part of their own journey, a hitting up against the limits of their own consciousness. Their words on the page should be the first cracks of light creeping through as they break down the walls that imprison them. A film is a mirror in which we can only ever see ourselves, but to enter it is to begin to widen the horizons of our being and to stride towards our greater potential.

I believe that when we watch a film, no matter where it comes from or what kind of a film it may be, we should approach it with a state of trust and submission. We should give ourselves to the film, believe that the creator of the film knows what they are doing and is the master of their creation. Most critics enter a film with preconceived notions, worn out theoretical frameworks and a belief that they already know the intentions and purpose of the film better than the makers. Meet the film as if it is a master and I promise you that you will learn something every time.

To those critics of courage I stand in support, but what should we do with those other fossilised critics? I say let us strap them to the mast of a ship and set them to sea in a storm and see how long it takes before their theoretical frameworks dissolve and we learn what is truly in their hearts. The pumping blood of terror will put forth fresh words from their pens and a new type of critic shall be born. Or maybe we should cast them out into a desert alone and without protection from the sun. Opinions will not quench their thirst but true creativity will flood even the driest of tongues.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

We have decided to reject the standard country of origin tag that one is required to put on their film. Previously our films have been made in the UK and we have recently shot some films in Portugal but we have come to the decision that these films are neither British nor Portuguese; they may have small amounts of each thing but they are more correctly labelled as European. Our films deal with the European psyche and have grown from a European arts tradition. It would be desirable to make "world" or "Earth" films but we don't yet feel that our films have fully accessed a creative dimension that could be called this; there are some strands that run through our work that have grown from simply being human and of this Earth but we still have some way to go before we can transcend the boundaries of the European psyche.

TECHNOLOGY

Orson Welles said that “a film is never really good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet”. I would go a step further and say that for cinema to be art, the camera should be an eye in the head of the poet and the head of the poet should be a receptor for the songs of the gods.

The camera is a mysterious tool. It is designed to operate as an extension of the body, held in the hand, rested on the shoulder and pressed against the eye, or as with new cameras, held out in front of the chest while we peer at a small screen. The particulars of the camera and the physicality of the operator will play heavily into the film you create. The operator needs to be many things: a technician, an artist and most importantly they are a character in your film. Whether you play the role yourself or use someone else, these things should be considered. Cast it well!

WHEN IT ALL SEEMS TO BE GOING WRONG

Absorb your obstacles, unravel the lessons of your failures. A disaster is a wind that will put you back on course.

THE WISDOM OF THE FILM

Each film has its own purpose; it will teach you if you learn to listen. If you are lost then ask your film for help. Speak with the characters, do it aloud, in your head or on paper but do it for real and you will receive an answer. Sometimes it is necessary to externalise an obstacle or creative block. Don't be embarrassed to have a conversation with your camera or a costume or some other part of the film, answers will come to those that ask for help.

FILM SCHOOL

Only when there is a total revolution of the education system and a complete re-evaluation of the role of the teacher, would we recommend going to film school or art school. For now you must go it alone, direct your own study, follow your nose, your heart and your desires. Seek out artists who inspire and excite you, study them, absorb them and interrogate their work. Do not follow them like gods but use them as guiding lights that lead back to yourself. Study history but be wary of “official history”, so much great art is swept through the cracks, try to seek out the rejected, forgotten, ignored and exiled. Never stop seeking, never stop learning.

CINEMA HISTORY - INDEPENDENCE, DEPENDENCE & SELF-SUFFICIENCY

None of us are independent from the history of the medium; mainstream and underground, art cinema and commercial, they are all parts of the bigger thing we call cinema. They have all fed in and shaped its current state. We don't reject this history, we embrace it all, we love it all but our concern is the future, we seek a new language. It is not possible or even desirable to be entirely independent, we are all connected and dependent on something but you should choose your dependencies well and seek a high level of self-sufficiency.

SOME PERSPECTIVE

Painting is at least 40,000 years old. Sculpture is at least 30,000 years old. The earliest works of literature date to the 3rd millennium BC. Cinema is only 125 years old! It is still a very young art form.

THE CINEMA SPACE

There is still a need for these darkened rooms, these spaces where friends and strangers gather for a ritual of submission to alien transmissions. We can watch films on a TV and on a computer and still get a lot from them, but nothing compares to fixing oneself in a chair beneath a large screen as the lights dim, the curtains open and the illumination begins. This ritual is still needed, it's not the end of the story yet.

THE LIFE OF THE ARTIST

The environment in which you live and the condition of your body are factors in the creation of a work of art that cannot be underestimated. The journey of the artist is very long, it is not about quick success, it takes time for one's life work to come to full realisation. It can be very hard and it requires a lot of energy, work and perseverance. Be kind to your body and find a place to be which stimulates good creation. Choose well your allies on this journey.

GENIUS

You have within you the potential for genius. We all have it, we are born with it but the society we live in does not support the journey one needs to go on in order to bring this genius into full realisation. Through schooling, parenting and the media, we are pushed to reject that which is unique in us in favour of traits that support and function within the industrial society. The outsiders, those exiled or unable to conform are the lucky ones. On the one hand they suffer but through their suffering they are able to find their genius. Where there is suffering in yourself there are clues; the wounds are the womb from which your new self will be born.

PART 5

WHAT IS THE CINE-REBIS?

In alchemy a Rebis is a figure that is part male and part female; it represents a stage in which these two polarities have formed a union and a balance and are existing simultaneously in one form. In a world so long dominated by masculine drives it is time for us to shift the balance and seek a new harmony. The Cine-Rebis is a movie and a creative process which attempts to readjust this balance. It is not the end, not the final stage, but a stage that as a society we believe needs to and is beginning to come to consciousness.

In the end, cinema is only a metaphor for a deeper process that is taking place in both the individual and collective psyche. It is in part a matter of personal conditions that makes it the chosen medium for expression, but this happens also because the many aspects of this medium are relevant to accessing and bringing into consciousness whatever it is they point to.

We don't think it is by chance that one of the central conflicts being addressed here is the tension between industrial production and the individual/artist's creation; this conflict played out within the individual is a microcosmic counterpart to what is and needs to be played out on a macrocosmic scale. We do not doubt that in time the human species will move past this limited and self-destructive phase that we are in, but we must stop thinking we have all the answers and feeding the illusion that we are in control. Whether we have reached a peak or a new low point in civilisation is a matter of perspective. The ultimate goal is to go beyond gender, beyond nationality and beyond either/or definitions. To become who one truly is and be in a creative relationship with the world. To think of society not as a system of functioning productive parts but as a community of creative beings. To think of humans not as the dominant species of the planet but as a conscious witness of life.

And let us not forget that life is still at work, ever changing and mysterious. There is still everything to discover and to experience and many unseen possibilities await. The artist has a role to play; the artist's work is to break down and transform old modes of being, to use imagination and creativity to explore and expand possibilities. To face their own limits at every moment and dissolve them. To go deeper and further to where words can't reach, and all the time to bring back the fruits of their experiences as gifts for all.



WHAT IS FILM PANIC?

The shock of each moment of still being alive.

The siren call from the self that says it is time to wake up.

FILM: Cinema, motion pictures, the images that play in the mind.

PANIC: The screams of the midwife when faced with creation,

And the songs of monsters that live in the woods.

FILM PANIC is as much dark as it is light,

Grasping at sensation with words and images,

It reaches towards the creator's limits

And it is a hand that beats against the walls that surround us.

PANIC is the fertile ground of creation,

FILM is that thin layer we call reality through which we seek to burst out
and be reborn.

PANIC is erotic, it seeks to create.

FILM is a coat we wear as we move towards the unknown,

A membrane to protect us as we face the beauty and horror of existence.

PANIC is not passive but it is receptive,

It is the moment of realisation that the earth beneath our feet has turned to
clouds.

FILM is that which flickers, the illusion of reality,

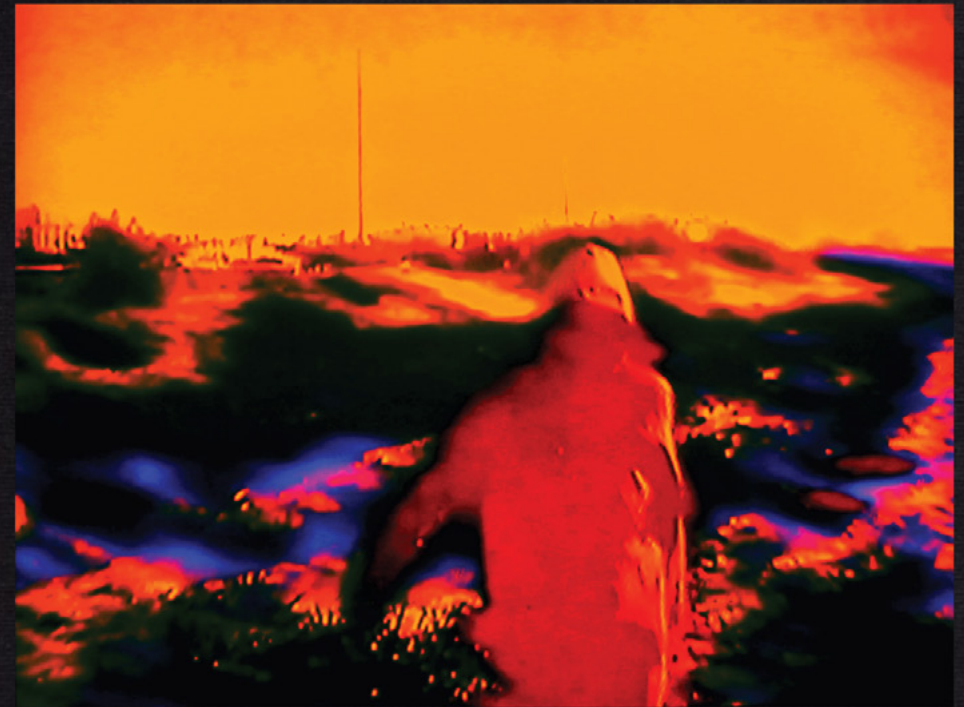
The mask we wear as we participate in this game of existence.

FILM PANIC is an echo that resonates through the history of humankind.

It is the voice that screams 'yes yes yes'.

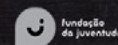
It is desire. The desire to create and the desire to know and the euphoric
acceptance that after all is said and done one cannot hold in their hands
that which is ungraspable.

THE
UNDERGROUND
FILM STUDIO



DANIEL FAWCETT & CLARA PAIS 29 ABRIL - 21 MAIO 2016
CINE-RITUALS PALÁCIO DAS ARTES, PORTO

AN EXHIBITION OF VIDEO INSTALLATIONS, FILMS & EXPANDED CINEMA PERFORMANCE
EXPOSIÇÃO DE INSTALAÇÕES-VÍDEO, FILMES & PERFORMANCE / CINEMA EXPANDIDO



THEUNDERGROUNDFILMSTUDIO.CO.UK

