

Wednesday, May 23

7 & 9:15

\$7

Roxie Film Center

3117 16th St.

San Francisco

**For the first time
in almost a decade,
Bay Area audiences
have the chance to see
the insane masterpiece
that started it all!**



14. RUE TROYON, ÉTO. 19-93

ACHARD
BARRAULT
BRUNDY
ENDRARS
OCTEAU
DELORME

Traité
de Bave
et d'Éternité

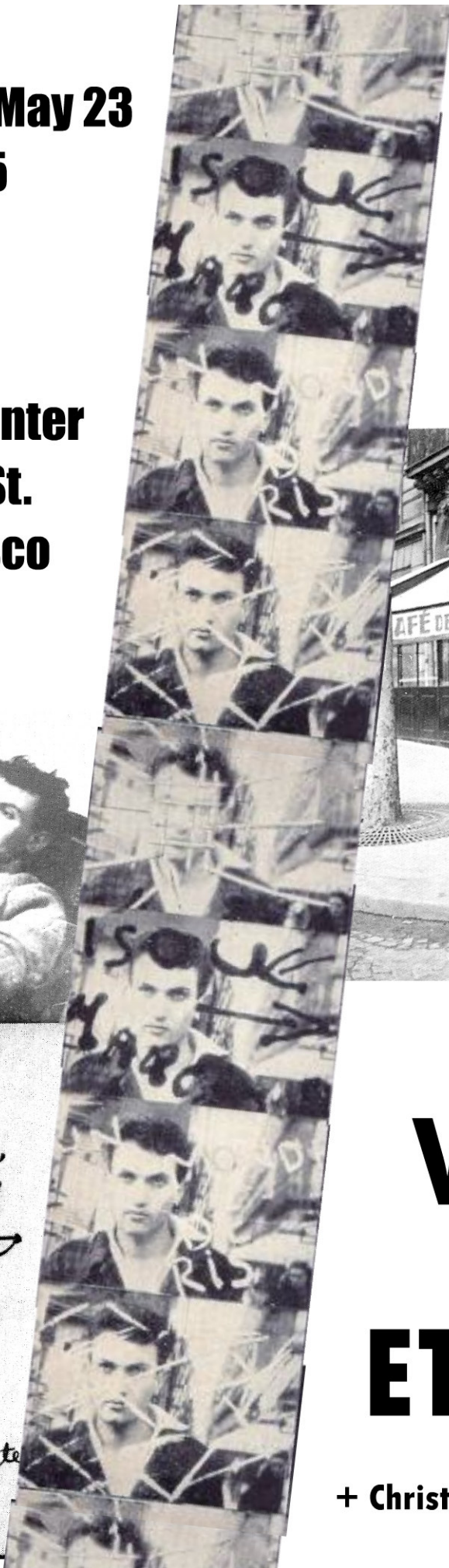
HERMITE
GÉLIN
AUROIS
ALACROU

marge
de Cannes
Spectateurs
de 1951

des Prés 1951

Isidore
sou

Jean Cocteau
*



Jean-Isidore Isou's

VENOM AND ETERNITY

+ Christopher Maclaine's "The End"

"I believe firstly that the cinema is too rich. It is obese. It's reached its limits, its maximum. With the first movement of widening which it will outline, the cinema will burst! Under the blow of a congestion, this pig filled with grease will tear into a thousand pieces. I announce the destruction of the cinema, the first apocalyptic sign of disjunction, rupture, of this corpulent and balloon organization which is called film." -Jean-Isidore Isou

Jean-Isidore Isou's Venom and Eternity

The Film on Film Foundation (www.filmonfilm.org), an organization dedicated to encouraging the exhibition of celluloid motion picture film in the manner it was meant to be screened, presents at the Roxie Cinema the first in its projected on-going series "Radical Strategies."

In 1951, **Jean-Isidore Isou** released his first film, "**Venom and Eternity**". Isou, who made his name as a poet, painter, and economic theorist, was founder of "**Lettrism**", the most radical art movement in history, committed to a complete remaking of aesthetics from the ground up. **Georges Bataille** lauded his poetry as "superb". Isou now unleashed his talents in his wildest work yet, and the incendiary results are with us to this day.

"Venom and Eternity" features the smoldering, searing presence of Isou himself, playing a young film aesthete who rewrites all conventions of filmmaking, morality, and propriety before our very eyes. Multiple fractured narratives are introduced, then discarded as they lose their charm. In an Oedipal revenge against the patriarchal image, Isou allows the soundtrack to dominate, assaulting the audience with haughty, ironic rants, and howled primal chants. Not satisfied by this means of attack, Isou introduces the most willfully disjointed cutting style up to this point in film history, then paints on, scratches, and gouges the filmstock itself.

"Venom and Eternity"'s premiere at Cannes was greeted by riots quelled only by the use of firehoses. **Jean Cocteau**, who appears in the film, nevertheless prevailed upon the authorities to invent a prize for a work so groundbreaking, the "Prix spectateurs d'avant garde 1951". Chaos ensued as "Venom" made its way around the world, including a riot at its San Francisco premiere!

Isou's activities spurred not only the aesthetic innovation of American filmmaker **Stan Brakhage** and the **French New Wave** (and hence the whole modern visual world), but the social and political radicalism of the international youth rebellion movement, and the pranksterism of the **Situationist International**, directly inspiring the fury spilling onto streets around the world starting in May '68!

*"Is 'Venom' a springboard or is it a void? In fifty years we'll know the answer. After all, remember how **Wagner** was received. Today, no one objects to his outbursts. The day will come, perhaps, when Isou's style will be the fashion. Who can tell?" -Jean Cocteau, 1951*

A "masterpiece... often breathtaking"! -Jonathan Rosenbaum, 2005

Not on video!

B+W 16mm 77 min.

Just added! Immediately following "Venom and Eternity," Christopher Maclaine's The End

While the French cultural response to the nuclear age was aesthetic and political, American Beats came at the problem from spiritual and sexual angles. In 1953, San Francisco's own **Christopher Maclaine** (the "**Antonin Artaud** of North Beach") created what has often been described as the ultimate expression of the Beat sensibility on film. "**The End**" offers us the chance for apocalyptic ruminations as we explore the twisted tales of five characters as they make their way through their last day on earth. No film could be more relevant to the insanity of the last five years. Like "Venom and Eternity," "The End" was greeted with a riot upon its San Francisco premiere! A blast!

Not on video!

Color/ B+W 16mm 34-3/4 min.

Two complete shows: 7:00 p.m. and 9:15 p.m.

