

## When We Were Very Young Early Films From the Queer Avant-Garde

Curated by Scott Miller Berry & Chris Kennedy



"Andy Warhol used to ask me, on observing my close friendship with P. Adams Sitney, 'When are you two going to come out of the closet?' But we were completely someplace else. When I first came to New York, I did not even know there were gays and lesbians. Of course, it did not take me long to get to know many people who are gay or lesbian, many who are artists, and to respect and admire them. I'd go so far as to say there virtually would not be an avant-garde cinema in America without such sensibilities." -Jonas Mekas, intro to Gordon Ball's '66 Frames

A look back at early films from the queer avant-garde. The films in this program (which date from 1947 — 1981) are budding expressions of a community of North American filmmakers. Often made in the vacuum of youth, these films stand outside of any movement, whether film or identity-based, and serve as original testaments to the filmmakers' own early creative desires. All of these filmmakers continued to make groundbreaking works, but these films introduced their fresh perspectives on the possibilities of personal filmmaking.

*When We Were Very Young* explores the range of what experimental film and queer cinema have become, from campy fun to youthful psychodrama to beautiful explorations of aesthetics. The makers themselves have become the touchstones of queer cinema (James Broughton, Barbara Hammer, Su Friedrich), the experimental avant-garde (Jack Smith, Nathaniel Dorsky, Kenneth Anger, Tom Chomont) or the Canadian fringe film movement (Midi Onodera), but this program affords a chance to see them through younger eyes, from a time before such categories existed for their work.

### **PROGRAMME:**

Jack Smith "Scotch Tape" USA/1959-62/16mm/3 min  
Su Friedrich "Gently Down the Stream" USA/1981/16mm/14 min. silent  
Midi Onodera, "The Bird That Chirped on Bathurst", Canada/1981/16mm/3.5 min  
James Broughton "Mother's Day" USA/1949/16mm/15 min  
Tom Chomont, "Oblivion", USA/ 1969/16mm/6 min  
Barbara Hammer "Schizy" USA/1967/Super 8/10 min  
Nathaniel Dorsky "Ingreen" USA/1964/16mm/12 min  
Kenneth Anger "Fireworks" USA/1947/16mm/15 min