ScheiblerMitte

Michel Auder: Camcorder as Canon

Nathan Lee

The Veteran Experimental Filmmaker Launches a Tripartite Retrospective in New York

"I never ask where I am going to go," says French-born, New York-based video artist Michel Auder of his creative process. "It's not a question I want to ask myself because it scares me. It has scared me for the last 46 years." Over that span, Auder's roman à clef home movies, characterized by an unsettling verisimilitude, have pioneered both the digital medium and video art as a respected form.

Auder strapped on the Sony Portapack, the first video camera, as soon as it became available, making films starring the protagonists in his own life—including his first wife, Warhol Superstar "Viva." In his early career, even as he was collaborating with luminaries such as Philip Glass and Eric Bogosian, not to mention Warhol himself, Auder found the outlets for his work severely limited. Not until the 80s when "experimental" (i.e., non-Hollywood) films were welcomed into galleries and museums did Auder's work go more public.

Forty years hence, as video diaries proliferate online and rugged camcorder footage equates to authenticity in film and television, Auder is being rightly recognized as a trailblazer. With his tripartite show *Keeping Busy: An Inaccurate Survey*, composed of separate elements playing at galleries around New York this month, visitors can finally take in Auder's prodigious output and see how he anticipated many of the forms of cinema and TV we now take for granted.

Zach Feuer Gallery will run a landmark work from the 80s, *The Games: Olympic Variations*, while Newman Popiashvili gallery screens newer works including 2009's *Heads of the Town*. Feature-length films like *Chelsea Girls With Andy Warhol* can be seen at Participant Inc, and Anthology Film Archives is currently screening *The Feature*, a part-fictional documentary about Auder's life and work, made in collaboration with Andrew Neel, the grandson of painter Alice Neel. As for what's next, Auder says: "It's not interesting for me to know where I go from here, but just to move on."