

Most of us arrive at George and Mike Kuchar's videos through the screen, while others —call them lucky, blessed, or sanctified— do so from within. Cats, friends, dust, organic matter, lightning and students are some of the most likely entities to make such appearances, and they all will in the four films on view December 11, 2019 at Yale Union. Scripted or ad lib, aging or youthful, chatty or mute, they shall delight you.

In *The Inmate* (1997), George's stream of consciousness filming brings us hiking around Convict Lake, monitoring lightning from motel windows, and watching dust dance in the thin strip of light between his curtains. In *Going Nowhere* (1992), more glittering dust flies around George's cat, at times fully filling the frame, while George's friend Karen complains of how quickly dust builds up in her filming equipment, no matter her continuous cleaning. George immediately pulls out his "Dust Buster" [add Bronx accent], which he promptly demonstrates to suck in the cake crumbs around Karen's mouth.

In Mike's 2014 video *New Beginnings*, an angelic male youth —and Mike's former student and artist Reese Westhoff— basks bare chested in both moon and sun-lights emanating from the Bay windows behind him. Illuminated by sheer red curtains, he lies in bed, stands in deep thought, and sits at a desk writing down his deepest thoughts. In *Chasing Shadows* (2014), Mike's former student and my former classmate, Jim Hensen, portrays an artist pondering on loneliness, silence and distance, voicing both the sublimated worries of a lost early twenties art student and the wise words of a down-to-earth poet and filmmaker. "Time to chase my shadow back into sunlight..." says Jim.

"The flicker of a thought finding its way into life
Sometimes a poem is a dream, never reaching print
A flicker of light at the bottom of a well
The poem can be a healing finding its way to the page"

Says Reese.

Traces of Jon Rafman's dreamscapes, Jonas Mekas' archive fever and improvised serendipities, and Carl Sagan's vocal sense of wonder —with a touch of astrologer Rob Brezny's mythical tone— all permeate these four videos by George and Mike. The resulting encounters, when seen through light particles on a dusty screen, all tend toward moments of recognition and respite from the rest of the nonsensical world. They're amazing documents of our present, from on-set dust to on-screen dust. Whether accompanying their makers, like road companions, or channeling their subjects into their godliest, most radiant selves — the videos are all made of star stuff.

Reese puts it well in *New Beginnings*: "Arise, awake, son of man. Shake the leaves from Eden's tree. Know the requirements of wisdom. Enjoy deep questions. Even if they offer no answers. Have visions. Look hard enough at demons and watch them turn into sheep. Awake, son of man. Rise clean. Take it to the world." And George adds: "At least we're going nowhere together."