

Shot in the East New York section of Brooklyn around the time of Hurricane Sandy, Ditch Plains (HDV, 29 mins) is a dystopian sci-fi street dance film featuring members of Ringmasters Crew.

Like avatars running the levels of an apocalyptic video game, Ringmasters Corey, Jay Donn and Marty McFly hallucinate the city and its networks as a space of terror, mutation and magic.

“Flexing,” “bone breaking,” “pausing” and “connecting” in nighttime streets, hotel hallways and a posh Park Avenue apartment, the dancers improvise dream-like scenes suggesting digital death matches, stop-and-frisk situations and catastrophic man-machine interfaces. Meanwhile, documentary shots of Far Rockaway show the city’s attempt to manage disaster in real life: police patrol the shattered flood zone as citizens line up with jerry cans. Scenes on iPhone screens play like Vine transmissions in a blacked-out world where no survivors or friends can receive them.

Referencing contemporary pop spectacles such as Step Up Revolution, as well as Jean Rouch’s The Mad Masters, Ditch Plains imagines a sort of End of Days street party while free-styling an abstract narrative about the fatal coupling of subjects and systems under conditions of permanent crisis.

With: Ringmasters Corey, Jay Donn, Marty McFly, Jim Fletcher, Vibez, Asha Flasha, Damian "Gucci-ino" Buchanan, Lil Buck, Spyda Da HatMan, Modesto Flako Jimenez, Princess Lockeroo, 8 Ball, Ace, Dez, DVS, Flizzo, Maze, Optimus, Problemz, Scorp, Lakela Brown, Marie Karlberg, Jackie Klempay, Michael Stynes, Vanessa Cintron, Prynce Ptah, Michael Sanchez

Cinematography: Till Megerle, Editing/Sound Design: Steffen Martin, Additional Camera: Loretta Fahrenholz, Connor Owens, Additional Editing: Lena Hatebur, Production Coordination: Inka Meissner, Text: John Kelsey, Color Grading: Ben Brix, Title Animation: Elisabeth Schulze, Interlude Animation: Steffen Martin, Titles/Graphic Design: Lina Grumm/HIT, Music: Dan Aran, Timo Ellis, Steffen Martin

Loretta Fahrenholz’s recent films include: Grand Openings Return of the Blogs (2012), Implosion (2011), Que Bárbara (2011) and Haust (2010).

Founded in 2007, Ringmasters Crew is a competitive street dance crew based in New York. Ringmasters Crew has appeared on MTV’s America’s Best Dance Crew, Entertainment Tonight and America’s Got Talent, as well as in music videos by Nicki Minaj and Black Eyed Peas.

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