

## Spontaneous Artifacts (2021)

Directed by David Finkelstein  
Created and performed by David Finkelstein and Ian W. Hill  
Music: David Finkelstein  
Editing, sound mix and visual design: David Finkelstein  
Total running time: 77 minutes  
david@lakeivan.org  
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### Short description of the work:

A poetic examination of the way that we record and organize our experiences, and the dangers of creative expression.

### Description of work:

Two actors improvise an extended dialog, examining the way that we record and organize our experiences, and the dangers inherent in creative expression. Their words inspire a series of complex, unfolding landscapes, meticulously rendered in 3D animation, and a multi-layered musical score. Like archeologists of the unconscious, their explorations unearth images from their imaginations, as well as from our shared, cultural legacies, giving rise to vistas filled with clocks, flying pizza pies, pyramids, tarot cards, and myriad other artifacts. By turns ecstatic, reflective, illuminating and elegiac, these visually sumptuous explorations draw the viewer into an inner landscape.

DAVID FINKELSTEIN's video work has been featured in numerous film festivals around the world and has won awards at 25 of them. In 2013, he was an invited artist at the Traverse Vidéo Festival in Toulouse, France. His two feature films premiered at New Filmmakers in New York. He has had solo screenings of his films in Bilbao, London, Porto, New York, Chicago, Portland, Austin, North Carolina, Minnesota, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. His work has been funded by The Fund for Creative Communities, The Field, Movement Research, Meet the Composer, The Brooklyn Arts Exchange, BACA, and other sources.

His films have screened at festivals in Mexico, Croatia, Spain, Egypt, Serbia, Argentina, England, Slovakia, Malaysia, Canada, Germany, France, and the United States. In France, his work has screened at Videoformes, Traverse Vidéo, Instants Vidéo, Oodaq, Marseille Underground, Bandits Mage, and Les Inattendus. Awards for his films include the Audience Favorite Award from the Berkeley Video and Film Festival for *Recording Device* and "Best of Festival: Experimental" from the Brooklyn Arts Council Film Festival for *Earth and Moon in Love*. He has been commissioned three times to create videos for the Outmusic Awards, and these videos were subsequently shown on the PrideVision cable network and the PBS series "Under the Pink Carpet."

## DAVID FINKELSTEIN

### Brief Artist's Biography:

DAVID FINKELSTEIN's video work has been featured in numerous film festivals around the world and has won awards at 24 of them. In 2013, he was an invited artist at the Traverse Vidéo Festival in Toulouse, France. His two feature films premiered at New Filmmakers in New York. He has had solo screenings of his films in Bilbao, London, Porto, New York, Chicago, Portland, Austin, North Carolina, Minnesota, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. His work has been funded by The Fund for Creative Communities, The Field, Movement Research, Meet the Composer, The Brooklyn Arts Exchange, BACA, and other sources.

**DAVID FINKELSTEIN, david@lakeivan.org, www.lakeivan.org, (718) 858-7836**

## FILMOGRAPHY

Soap is an Illusion (Dirt: Part One) (2022) 20.5 minutes, video  
Spontaneous Artifacts (2021) 77 minutes, video  
A Collection of Eccentricities (2020) 17.5 minutes, video  
Spiral Garage (2019) 14 minutes, video  
Miraculous Aqueduct (2018) 15.5 minutes, video  
Recording Device (2017) 24.5 minutes, video  
The Linen Closet (2016) 22 minutes, video  
Privy (2015) 20 minutes, video  
Suggestive Gestures (2014) 75 minutes, video  
Invincible City (2012) 21 minutes, video  
The Two Fauns (2011) 18 minutes, video  
Epistolary Fusillades (2010) 18 minutes, video  
Marvelous Discourse (2009) 21 minutes, video  
Burning Arc (2009) 10 minutes, video  
Terrifying Blankness (2008) 30 minutes, video  
Reproductive Technology (2008) 25 minutes, video  
Wrested Variations (2007) 7.5 minutes, video  
Two Distinct Courses of Action (2006) 24 minutes, video  
Agnus Dei (2006) 9 minutes, video  
Electrical Fields (2006) 12 minutes, video  
Display Devices (2005) 25 minutes, video  
Lovely Academic Slaughter Houses (2005) 27 minutes, video  
All Love is Sweet (2005) 10 minutes, video  
Earth and Moon in Love (2004) 21 minutes, video  
Born in Mid-Flight (2004) 34 minutes, video  
Radiant Emanators (2003) 19 minutes, video  
Lake Ivan Exists. episode #30: The Artificial (2002) 29 minutes, video  
Lake Ivan Exists. episode #47: Mardi Gras (2002) 29 minutes, video  
Lake Ivan Exists. episode #37: Starfield (2001) 29 minutes, video  
Lake Ivan Exists. episode #21: The Bathroom (2000) 29 minutes, video

## Music Videos:

Saltwater Cassis  
Right to Surrender Yolanda and the Plastic Family  
The Sickness of Beauty Yolanda and the Plastic Family  
Honoring the Ancestors Steve Sandberg  
Armaan Steve Sandberg  
Island Song Romonovsky and Phillips  
Fucked by the Devil Jayne County

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## ARTIST STATEMENT

My video work is constructed in layers.

To begin a new piece, I first videotape a completely improvised text, typically using two actors. I have been developing my technique of improvising text since 1993. I am interested in improvisation as a way of generating language directly from an actor's intuitive discovery of what each performance is about, as it unfolds spontaneously. A subtle and intimately physical experience between two people is thus made into audible language.

For the next layer, I listen repeatedly to the text, clarifying for myself the emotional undercurrents and musical flow which formed the underlying structure of the original spontaneous performance. During this phase, I compose a musical score for the video, which clarifies this flow for the listener.

In the final phase, I listen to the text even more (now enhanced with a musical score), and gradually develop many layers of meticulously crafted digital imagery, to further clarify the emotional and musical threads which run through the improvisation. The carefully constructed nature of the images works as a counter-dynamic against the spontaneous, liquid flow of the original improvised material. Like a dream, an improvisation seems on the surface to be full of volatile, unpredictable changes, but it is actually a completely unified form of composition, in which often every line of text can be seen to be simply a new way of looking at a single, unified idea. The images and music thus help the viewer to perceive the tremendous thematic and emotional unity which underlies the seeming changeableness of the improvisation.

The full process of creating the video in three layers (text, music, images) typically takes from six to ten months.