

In any case, the format consists of three elements - an about 1,000-word vignette on the topic of film projection; a short biography to give context to your piece; and a photo or photos, at least one picturing you next to your "tools of the trade" or in a booth, in front of a screen, in an auditorium.

### Projection Pleasures

Film projection, for me, has always been rewarding when I take control and move the projection off the static screen. I choose film because it moves, because it represents a life of change, i.e., my life. I never agreed with the makers of the Pathe film camera and projector that defined projection as rectangular. I played along with the game as I had a lot to say and so I produced, directed, shot and edited film after film. In between times I found a way to make myself happy adding movement to content. But I can imagine a camera/projector that takes in images and spills them out in a multiple of graphic configurations that could be manipulated by twisting a dial. There I'm projecting a moving CAT scan of a brain in a circle format and now I'm slicing through space with a sideways triangle much like a head of an arrow. Cezanne would be happy! Am I making myself clear? In this age of mechanical and digital wizardry we are not confined nor regulated to the set pattern of the historic rectangle for our creative projections.

In 1979 I made a revolving tabletop, which I immediately dubbed "Active Annie" in contrast to the kitchenware "Lazy Susan" that I had grown up with at 1950s dinner tables. On the Active Annie I put a 16mm projector. A hole cut in the middle of the boards allowed the projector power cord to go under the table helping to avoid the mishmash that could occur as I moved it. Yes! Not only did I want my projector to move independently, but also, I wanted the whole table to move. Thus I could swing the projector around while moving the table through space. Oh fine, but what's the image in this new project I called *Available Space*?

I've always felt a great need to communicate be it ideas, philosophies, ideologies as well as my love for the physical world in all its colorful abstractions. But I don't make effects for their own sake. In *Available Space* (1979) I project an image of a woman trying to push the frame into something beyond the rectangle that has enclosed her representation.

This is repeated in nine different scenarios and projected on nine different architectural spaces within the theater, gallery or museum. One scene shows a woman sitting in an abandoned house window frame strongly pushing against the top and bottom trying to move it. This might be projected onto the window of the projector booth itself as I did at the theater at Jeu de Paume, Paris during the final night of my retrospective in June 2012. There are other scenes projected on the ceiling, the floor, and on the backs of theater seats (the audience in the case of the Jeu de Paume screening was asked to not sit down but stand around the seats). The projections were on any available space and the audience is encouraged to move to see the image. At the Tate Modern in the Turbine Hall I performed *Changing the Shape of Film* in February 2012 where I slashed and jumped through a screen after projecting on nine available spaces.<sup>1</sup>

In May and July 2014 I made an installation with performance using multiple projections and projectors at The Marie Walsh Sharpe Space program in Brooklyn, New York, *What You Are Not Supposed To Look At*. The audience enters through a projector-illuminated 5' x 5' house I've constructed of x-rays into a room where I carry a portable projector around the room showing a woman measuring the space with her body. Two other projectors are mounted on rotary projection tables and all 3 are synced with the same image. I create the projection with my moving body and I can approach and project on photographs, sculpture, collage as well as architectural details. When I approach a large collage of cut out xrays on a mylar screen the light shatters and jumps and I start moving with the light until the projection experience is all encompassing (at least for me).

If we can move the audience from a passive to an empowered active position, we have supported the agency of the individual who will take more responsibility in and for the world we all inhabit. As crises of war continue, fracking challenges our water supplies, continual need for energy resources that disturb the natural environment threaten generations to come, we are in need of a collective body of folks who make their needs known and take responsibility to get their desires met.

Somebody needs to "light a fire" and get the audience moving. A cinema that moves people around the room can begin this activation. Move the audience out of their seats! Make an active cinema!

*Active cinema is a cinema where the audience is engaged physically, involved*

*with a sense of their bodies as they watch the screen. In passive cinema the audience is a spectator to the whims and fancies of the director. It's as if a dreamlike somnambulance takes over, and the spectator learns back and lets herself be carried away with the moving frames of a cinema storybook that enfolds, entraps the responsible viewer by drugging the sense of self.*

*... Active cinema is not trance cinema. Active cinema repeatedly points to itself as cinema not to a story, drama, or dream. Active cinema is not an escape. It is its own experience. 2*

Have I succeeded in my projection experiments? As with teaching, there is really no way to tell. I don't know how many art and cinema lovers, my audience, have become activists, but I they have told me that they leave the performance, the film, the projection energized, enervated, and in touch with their bodies in some new way.

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1, <http://barbarahammer.com/performances/>

2, "For An Active Cinema", pp. 128-32. *HAMMER! Making Movies Out of Sex and Life*, The Feminist Press, 2010.



The author performing Available Space for the first time at A Space, Toronto, 1979.



Barbara Hammer performing *Changing the Shape of Film* in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, London, 2012.