

P R O T E U S

A NINETEENTH CENTURY VISION

BIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY OF THE DIRECTOR

Director David Lebrun was born in Los Angeles in 1944. He attended Reed College in Portland, Oregon and the UCLA Film School. He came to film from a background in philosophy and anthropology, and most of his films have been attempts to get inside the way of seeing and thinking of specific cultures. He has served as producer, director, writer or editor of more than sixty films, among them films on the Mazatec Indians of Oaxaca, the Hopi and Navajo of the American Southwest, Mexican folk artists, a 1960s traveling commune, Tibetan mythology and a year in the life of a Maya village in Yucatan. He edited the Academy-award winning feature documentary *Broken Rainbow*. He is currently producing a film on the history of the decipherment of the ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing system, *Breaking the Maya Code*, under a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Lebrun combines the structures and techniques of the documentary, experimental and animated genres to create a style appropriate to the culture and era of each film. In *Sanctus* (1966) he intercut three Mexican rituals (the Catholic mass, the bullfight and the Mazatec sacred mushroom ceremony), using parallel gestures, symbols and structures to create a meta-ritual on film. In *The Hog Farm Movie* he used wide angle lenses, a constantly moving hand-held camera, optical printer layering and jagged, looping editing to capture a commune's acid-fueled bus journey across 1968 America. In *Tanka* (1976) he programmed details from Tibetan sacred scroll paintings into an optical printer to create an illusion of animation, bringing to life the hallucinatory after-death experience described in the Tibetan Book of the Dead. Several films of the late 1970s and early 1980s (*Luminous Bodies*, *Wind Over Water*, *Sidereal Time* and *The Crystal Ship*) were designed for live performance using multiple, variable speed projectors.

Proteus has been in the making for more than twenty years; the first version of the script was written in 1981, and major shooting was done in Jena, East Germany in 1986, well before the fall of the Berlin Wall. *Proteus* is Mr. Lebrun's first feature-length film.

Select Filmography (as director)

Sanctus (1966)

The Hog Farm Movie (1970)

Tanka (1976)

Luminous Bodies (1979)

Sidereal Time (1981)

Wind Over Water (1983)

Proteus (2003)

Breaking the Maya Code (in progress)

Metamorphosis (in progress)

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Select Festivals, Awards and Fellowships:

Awards for *Proteus*:

Outstanding Creative Achievement, Santa Barbara International Film Festival

Awards for *Tanka*:

Bronze Hugo, Chicago International Film Festival

Director's Choice Film, Sinking Creek Film Celebration

As well as:

Gold Medal, Virgin Islands International Film Festival

Cash Award, Ann Arbor Film Festival

Honorable Mention, Bellevue Film Festival

Select Festival Screenings (as Director):

Sundance Film Festival

Santa Barbara International Film Festival

Philadelphia Film Festival

Atlanta Film Festival

Newport Beach Film Festival

Woods Hole Film Festival

Filmex (Los Angeles International Film Festival)

Filmex Special Retrospective, *Animation, the Illusion of Motion*

Athens Film Festival

Sorrento Film Festival

Wellington Film Festival (New Zealand)

Conference on Visual Anthropology

The Margaret Mead Film Festival

The Flaherty Seminar.

Fellowships and Grants:

National Endowment for the Humanities Production Grant, 2001

National Endowment for the Humanities Scripting Grant, 1998

Dorland Mountain Colony Fellowship, 1981.

Reed College Creative Artist Grant, 1966