

# Drawn Towards Danger: Animating Violence

Curated by Jon Davies



insideout  
TORONTO LESBIAN AND GAY  
FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL  
PROSPECTING QUEEN

Friday, April 21

7:00 PM

Workman Theatre (1001 Queen Street West at Ossington)

Admission: General \$10 / Students, Seniors, Members \$8

Animation, always an imaginative or personal interpretive vision, is capable of depicting events unrestrained by the laws of physical time and space that govern live-action films. Especially in the depiction of traumatic events, which often have the effect of shattering one's very experience of the world, animation is an incredibly rich expressive form precisely due to its innate dissociation from the real. Many animated works that confront war, genocide or interpersonal strife focus on children, or use animals as surrogates and metaphors. This adherence to an "immature" or "naive" visual or narrative style is an ideal way of loosening the conventions around the depiction of violence, especially those of the mainstream news media. Instead these films and videos bask in the glow of their own (deceptive) inauthenticity, playfulness and artificiality, suggesting that childish imagination might be a more humane and thoughtful lens for representing politics and pain. — Jon Davies



## The Little Bird of Disaster Nick Fox-Gieg

USA 3 min. video 2004

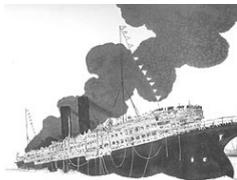
This recording of a live video performance tells the story of a bird who squawked of imminent catastrophes that always seemed to come true, until one day someone stood up to him.



## Of Lives Uprooted Pierre Marier

Canada 10 min. video 1988

Children from El Salvador and Honduras speak of the day when their lives were shattered by an invading army and they were forced to flee to refugee camps. The youngest victims of the bloody Central American conflicts of the 80's illustrated the film with their own gruesome drawings.



## Sinking of the Lusitania Winsor McCay

USA 12 min. 16mm 1918

This pioneering animator's masterpiece is a dramatization of the famed German torpedo attack on the passenger ship Lusitania. It is also a brazen bit of agit-prop that condemns the Huns for "the most violent cruelty that was ever perpetrated."



## Re: The Operation Paul Chan

USA 27 min. video 2002

"Dear Laura, I'm sorry I have not written you sooner. I miss you and the dogs. Love, George." In this scathing and hilarious hybrid of animation and Photoshopped images, members of the Bush Administration are presented as if they were the sexually and morally confused infantry fighting in Iraq.



## Peace on Earth Hugh Harman

USA 9 min. 16mm 1939

A strange MGM Christmas short featuring adorable woodland creatures living in the fallen helmets of murdered soldiers in a post-apocalyptic landscape. All of humanity has been killed off by the war, leading one little rodent to ask Grandpa what "men" are.



## His Mother's Voice Dennis Tupicoff

Australia 15 min. 35mm 1996

This unbearably moving film offers two completely different visual narratives to illustrate a radio interview with a mother describing the wrenching discovery of her son's death by a gun. A mesmerizing work that finds a new visual vocabulary for grief.



## It's Like That Southern Ladies' Animation Group (S.L.A.G.)

Australia 7 min. video 2000

Children — depicted as colourful caged birds — speak by phone from inside one of the mandatory detention centres for asylum seekers in Australia. They speak about being held prisoner and what it might be like outside.



## PSA .11 fallout Cynthia Madansky

USA 3 min. video 2005

Part of a "collaborative series of video art which speaks out against the American invasion of Iraq and the act of war." fallout makes brilliant use of newsreels and animated war-time propaganda films to poetically convey the anxiety and threat of the Bomb.