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CINE MEXPERIMENTAL CINEMA

CONCLUSIONS

The earliest practitioners discussed in this essay were in contact with an international avant-garde based in New York and Paris. It is striking how little the last four decades of Mexican experimental filmmakers have participated in those dialogues. There have been no shortage of missed opportunities for contact or common interests. Surveying the history of experimental film in the United States, one is struck by the number of artists who worked in Mexico, most notably Bruce Conner (*Looking for Mushrooms*, 1961-67), Bruce Baillie (*Valentin de las Sierras*, 1966), Chick Strand (*Anselmo*, 1967, and many other titles). Surprisingly few of these individuals sought out the company of their peers while south of the border or made public presentations of their work. For them, Mexico was a largely mythical space outside of time, an unlikely place for a cinematic vanguard. Chick Strand describes her short *Guacamole* (1976) as "poetic surrealism . . . a film about the loss of innocence and the search for the essence of the human spirit."⁵² It is not hard to imagine Corkidi or Kampffer expressing a similar sentiment. Such contact would be productive for the artists of both nations.

Conversely, if the *Mexperimental* cinema got little exposure in its place of origin, it remains virtually unknown outside of Mexico. Key films, such as the entire output of Alvarez Bravo and Emilio Amero, are lost, perhaps permanently. Reoperating and reevaluating is one step in more prolonged and much needed redefinition of Mexican film history. The films and videos must be restored and duplicated, either as new prints or in a video format, in preparation for national and international distribution. The incorporation of the films into cultural history texts and contemporary media criticism, as well as their addition to archives and collections of cultural centers, universities, and museums, would insure a

CATALOG ESSAY

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sustained reception and reappraisal of this
important facet of Mexican arts and
culture.

52. Canyon Cinema Catalogue #7 (San Francisco,
1992), p. 331.

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