



8 Février - 7 Avril 2010
Jerome Kevin Everson, Films

In *North*, Kevin Jerome Everson stages a man at the edge of a cliff, his back to the sea. It is cold, wet, apparently it is a climate of the North and the old man has lost his way. He deploys a map but the wind prevents him from reading it. The situation is difficult and comic. It was played previously by Buster Keaton. Here, Everson asks a bemused relative to play the image of his own existence: there is a native land, somewhere towards South; it is a somewhere, a memory, an irreversible loss and previous to his birth. The immobile old man is disoriented. His back to the horizon, the end of the earth and other things beyond, he tries to read this map where his near future should logically be inscribed. But the future is no more readable on a map than in coffee grounds in the bottom of a cup, all the more so because the goal of the search cannot be drawn: the quest determines the identity.

Photographer and film-maker, Everson was born in 1965 in Mansfield, Ohio. Since the 80's he has realized more than seventy short films amongst which, four full-length films. If there is a pattern in his work it is the one of the Black figure, mostly coming from the working-class, filmed or shown in the most common environments, but their actions are filmed as postures of a *mise en scène*. He films and directs his family, his friends, his kids and reenacts his memories, thus intertwining images mimicking home-movies with those from the regional television archives which he re-uses and re-edits. Using historic personalities from his home region (ranging from the actor Sammy Davis Jr, the Reverend E. Randall T. Osborn (Martin Luther King's cousin) to Carl Stokes (the first Black mayor of Cleveland, Ohio) and incorporating newsreel coverage and current affairs which occurred there, Everson writes and rewrites the social and politic history of his natal city and his current home town of Charlottesville, Virginia. This local cinema borrows the aesthetic of fragment. Each of Everson's filmic works is like the scrap of something, extracted from a temporal linearity: in *Ninety-three*, the old man from *North* blows out ninety-three candles in the dark; in *Something Else*, Everson re-edits an interview that Miss Black Roanoke gave to a journalist on the occasion of her Beauty Pageant victory; *Ike* stages the regimented street fights in his district; in *Emergency needs* he asks a body double to reenact the speech given by Mayor Stokes during the press conference which followed the riots which pitted much of the Black population against local policemen in 1968.

From Pompeii to Xenia puts in echo times of innocence struck by disaster: the lightning tornado which had beaten down on the American city of Xénia in 1974 answers, at thousands of kilometers in distance and centuries apart, the mythical eruption of Vesuvius in 79. The extended panorama, derived through the crossing of history and from an intimate story and urban sociology, is the cinematic reconstruction of a personal history: of its historical and geographical conditions to its processing. To be here, make art, to be the political result of a wrench and to pursue this history in film and life. The fiction takes shape in the linking of fragments. The mythical takes shape in the sharing, the crossing and the redoubling of space and of time. For lack of finding on a map the origin of one's existence, Everson recovers it and writes it in a fragmentary and elective way through the reconstruction of

television's legacy to the American **Black** community to which he belongs, reiterating the labour gestures of his ancestry by the re-appropriation of its memories. The colour black, central pattern for his cinema is a figure of resurgence, the indelible stigmata of a lost origin. The film reacts like a twin motor: it recovers while deploying.

M. C.

Programme

Something Else

2007 / 16mm transferred on dvd / 2' / coul. / sound.

a film about the found footage as subject matter and Miss Black Roanoke, Virginia 1971 expressing her thoughts about the upcoming Miss Black Virginia 1971 Pageant.

North

2007/ 16mm transferred on dvd / 1'30 / col. / sound.

is about trying to find one's way.

Aquarius

2003 / 16mm transferred on dvd / 1'30 / col. / sound.

is a 16mm film about coping.

From Pompei to Xenia

2003 / 16mm transferred on dvd / 4'40 / col. / sound.

is a 16mm film about love and loss surrounded by two historical disasters.

The Corner of Fillmore and Cox

2010 / 16mm transferred on dvd / 4' / col. / sound.

is about an odd thing on the streets of Buffalo, New York.

Ring

2008 / 16mm transferred on dvd / 1'30 / black and white / silent

attempts to exhibit the "sweet science" in an elegant way.

Undefeated

2008 / 16mm transferred on dvd / black and white / sound.

is about mobility and immobility, or just trying to stay warm.

Ninety-Three

2008 / 16mm transferred on dvd / black and white / silent

is a wonderful age to celebrate.

The Chinagirl thanks K. J. Everson and Madeleine Molyneaux, still and again Nicky Zurlino.