

"Could you double-check the envelope?" - Martin Scorsese, 2007 Academy Awards

about | advertise | classifieds | legal | myspace



Submissions by February 28, 2007



FILM THREAT BACK TALK BLOGS DVD SHOP

- headlines reviews videos interviews features festivals

DESTROY ALL RATIONAL THOUGHT (DVD)

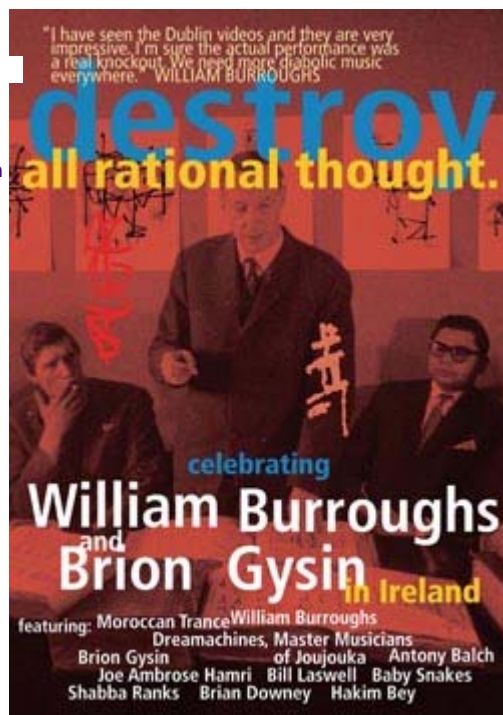
by Graham Rae (2007-02-23) 2006, Un-rated, 60 minutes, Screen Edge

'Destroy all rational thought.' You might think that the semi-evolved simian scum in the Bush madadministration, the lowest-common-denominator-bottom-feeding mainstream media or fun-damn-mentalist Christians in this country (amidst a million other idiotic uneducated-personal-agenda-waving factions) have a lock on those words and their meaning. But that saying is actually a William S Burroughs avant-garde axiom from his 60s cut-up cutting edge writing phrase-phase.

Burroughs understood implicitly how words can be used to say the opposite of what they appear to mean and be an insidious mind-control tool, trying to combat this in his own experimental wordwork. When a politician or newspaper uses some standard phrase or headline, we immediately follow existing mental neuronc and synaptic brainpaths to an already-established meaning for the words used, and subtle manipulation of this can be used to mold and manipulate people in varied myopic-worldview-establishing popaganda-puppetmaster ways.

Master of Sewers Burroughs used his innovative 'cut-up' technique to chop and change the order of words about on the page, thus serving to sever pre-established word-lines and word-locks and attempting to free the mind of his reader from Western mind and logic traps. The cut-up was thus an assault on tradition and erroneous thinking and media control, and as such was a very interesting idea and psychologically liberating ideal. Unfortunately practically nobody could make head nor tail of it and Burroughs himself would ultimately come back to more linear storytelling techniques in the 70s and 80s, noting sagely that if you didn't have a story to tell then nobody really cared.

Now. After that brief experimental litcrit history lesson bit, let me just say that this documentary has absolutely nothing to do with Burroughs's cut-up work; I suppose that 'Destroy All Rational Thought' was just a catchy title the filmmakers thought they could throw onto this documentary to lure people into buying it. What it is actually about is an art show called 'Here To Go' which took place in the Temple bar area of Dublin in Northern Ireland in 1992. This show included the work of William S Burroughs, influential-to-Burroughs artist Brion Gysin ('The only man I have ever respected' - WSB) and Morrocan national painter Hamri, who was artistically influential to both men.



FREE Weekly Newsletter

your email here

sign up / manage



THIS AD SUCKS!

Video



"WHY MUST I CRY" MUSIC V PRINCESS LEIA'S BIRTHDAY BEST BUY BOY

FilmThr

Now that the Academy / what are you going to do

- 1) Live my life. One day 2) Get ready for baseba 3) Nothing, just like befo Awards. 4) None of your busines

Box C

Weekend of Febru 1/1 Ghost Rider

2/0 The Number 23

3/2 Bridge to Terabithia

4/0 Reno 911!: Miami

5/3 Norbit

6/4 Music and Lyrics

7/6 Breach

8/5 Tyler Perry's Daddy's Li

9/0 The Astronaut Farmer

10/0 Amazing Grace

In The

RENO 911!: MIAMI THE NUMBER 23 INLAND EMPIRE

Ads by Google

Compare IP Phone Services

View Ratings And
Reviews Of Leading
Broadband Phone
Service Providers
www.ipphoneratings.com

Advertise on this site

These three artists had all worked together in Tangier in North Africa during the 1950s, and this show was a posthumous way of honoring the work of Gysin, who had introduced Burroughs to the aforementioned cut-up technique (which was lifted, in turn, from the Dadaists who, in 1929, invented it by cutting up a poem, putting the pieces in a hat, and reading them out at random to form a new poem), amidst other artistic techniques. After Gysin's death Burroughs thought he owed it to his deceased friend to have one last push to afford him the success in death he never had in life, so this show was set up.

[GHOST RIDER](#)
[CLOSE TO HOME](#)
[BREACH](#)
[BEHIND THE MASK: THE RISK](#)
[VERNON](#)
[MUSIC AND LYRICS](#)
[VENUS](#)
[HANNIBAL RISING](#)

Now. A party is always far more fun to be at than to look at later, and this one is no exception. 'Here To Go' was set up by artists/writers Joe Ambrose and Frank Rynne, and was filmed by their 'cutting-edge' Dublin artist scenester friends as it happened. As such the footage is pretty grainy and shaky in places, not particularly watchable, and is of real interest primarily only as an historical document and not as a piece of entertainment. The Master Musicians of Joujouka, a "4000-year-old [rock band](#)," according to Burroughs, are included playing at the opening of the show and recording a radio session. However, seeing as how their trance music's effect is lost when shown only in small snippets, not much satisfaction is derived from the segments documenting them playing.

 **NEW ON DVD**
[STRANGER THAN FICTION](#)
[TENACIOUS D IN THE PICK](#)
[WHY WE FIGHT](#)



Also somewhat lame is a performance by Baby Snakes, a poor man's Rolling Stones fronted by Rynne and who wouldn't have made it anywhere near the documentary otherwise. What a lot of the footage and subject matter here comes off as, actually, is Rynne and Ambrose documenting a great party they hosted and boasting about it and their 'cool' greasy-long-hair artist friends attending it. The cover, a picture which includes Burroughs and Alexander Trocchi, the only Scottish writer to hang out with the Beats (he wrote '[Young Adam](#)'), is totally misleading too.

This really is not a great piece of work. We only get, in the Extras section, a slideshow of a few of the paintings by the artists on display, which should have been of primary interest; instead during the actual main feature's running time we get endless shots of various nonentity hanger-on 'rebel poets' dribbling nonsense about 'poetry as terrorism' and whatnot. Which, considering that North Africa is now where the REAL terrorist suspects being apprehended in the UK are from, is pretty damned ironic and feeble and posherish.

What is watchable here is the small amount of new footage of Burroughs (who must not have attended the show), including one of his last recorded interviews and some footage of experimental films made with him as star during the 50s and 60s. But none of the latter stuff is contextualized, or labeled, or explained at all, so it just drifts in and out of the picture here and there like monochrome musings from some deranged pretentious cinepoet or other. Shrug.

Okay. So you may have gotten the idea that I didn't particularly like this by now. What else can I say? I'd rather attend a party than watch one on video, especially one as uninteresting, self-serving and self-indulgent as this one. Nobody's [home movies](#) are interesting to people not in them, and these are no exception. This DVD seems to exist only to cash in on the ongoing fascination with William S Burroughs and the Beats and their artifacts. But you won't learn anything particularly new about him or them here, so save your money. Or throw a party of your own, film it and then send it to the filmmakers. That'll teach the bastards not to waste our time. Guaranteed.

Ads by Google

Get Free Ar

[Read The Econ](#)
[Take On Gk](#)
[Economic Eve](#)
[Policies.](#)
[Economist.c](#)

Advertise on this si

digg

print

email

Read more reviews ...

- [2007-02-26 - MONSTER CAMP](#)
- [2007-02-26 - MR. PEEPERS \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-25 - GOLDEN AGE \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-25 - RENO 911!: MIAMI](#)
- [2007-02-24 - THE NUMBER 23](#)
- [2007-02-23 - DESTROY ALL RATIONAL THOUGHT \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-22 - GAMERS](#)
- [2007-02-22 - GLENN TILBROOK: ONE FOR THE ROAD \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-22 - THE MIND IS A LIAR AND A WHORE](#)
- [2007-02-21 - KING LEAR \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-21 - THUNDER HILL: LONG SHOTS ON A SHORT TRACK](#)
- [2007-02-21 - GAY BY DAWN](#)
- [2007-02-20 - LUPIN THE THIRD: STRANGE PSYCHOKINETIC STRATEGY \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-20 - DON'T BECOME A STATISTIC](#)
- [2007-02-19 - CHENEY'S TOMORROW NEVER COMES?](#)
- [2007-02-19 - S&MAN](#)

- [2007-02-19 - THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD OAKS](#)
- [2007-02-18 - EXHIBIT A](#)
- [2007-02-18 - MOJAVE PHONE BOOTH](#)
- [2007-02-18 - THE HORRIBLE FLOWERS](#)
- [2007-02-18 - MADNESS \(DVD\)](#)
- [2007-02-17 - GHOST RIDER](#)
- [2007-02-17 - INLAND EMPIRE](#)
- [2007-02-16 - BREACH](#)
- [2007-02-16 - BIG DREAMERS](#)

[archive](#)

Site Programming
DaFloppMeistah
Productions

Site Artwork



copyright © 1985-2007
Gore Group Publications

[about](#) | [advertise](#) | [classifieds](#) | [legal](#) | [myspace](#) | [staff](#) | [support](#)