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Cut Shorts - Short Films of Dave Markey 1974 - 2004

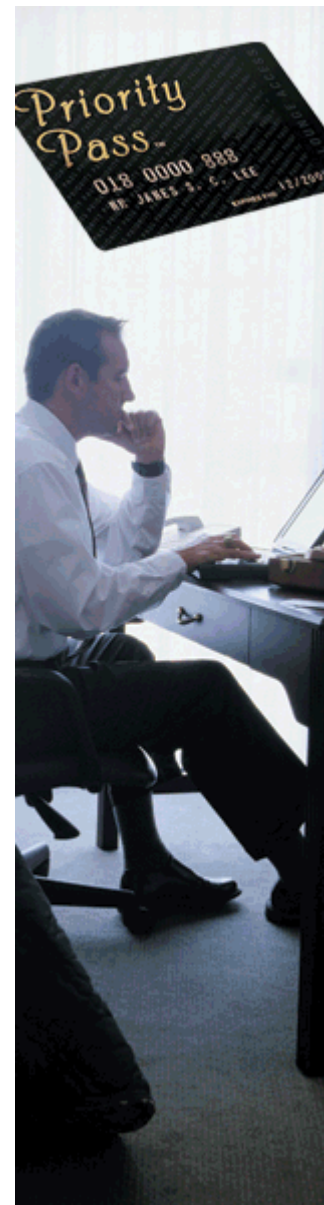


Oaks, PA- Eclectic DVD and **We Got Power Films** are pleased to announce the home viewing release of Cut Shorts: Short Films of Dave Markey 1974 - 2004 for worldwide distribution on DVD.

"Masks. More than anything else, these films are about masks. Cheap, hideous, gaudy, disposable Halloween Masks. Creepy clown masks, awful Adolf Hitler masks, frightening beyond belief Easter Bunny masks found in dime stores in the 1970's." Says David Markey. But more about masks later.



This collection documents 30 years in the life and work of



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independent filmmaker David Markey. The details of Markey's life are all here; his childhood friends, the apartment buildings and alleyways where he grew up and which he eventually turned into his own movie studio, complete with a stable of "actors," real-life props and street-bound extras. Much of Markey's work may seem surreal, but actually it's "all-too-real." His frenetic documentary style mixes with Punk Fiction on the dime (literally). Budget constraints did not deter Markey's creativity; in fact, they provide an aesthetic for his work.

David Markey was born December 3, 1963 in Burbank, CA. As a Southern California native, Markey made his first film in 1974 at the age of 11. Because of his age, his parents would not allow him to see "The Exorcist," so he nabbed his father's hand-wound 8mm Brownie camera and made his own version, "The Devil's Exorcist," the only horror film he would ever make (discounting the 1980 feature "The Omenous" which was a horror film parody). For this epic, Markey employed the racially mixed kids that lived in his working-class neighborhood on Stewart Street in Santa Monica as actors, casting the inherently compelling, bell-bottom-wearing, well-coiffed Peter Garcia in the lead. Markey appears several times in the film as the victim of his rampant teenage Satanic Homicide. The film could be written off as camp (i.e. typical kid-makes-home movie), however, Markey's film exudes a genuine unsettling nightmarish atmosphere that reflects the turmoil that was occurring in his home life as his parents were in the midst of an ugly Catholic "separation" resulting from his father's spousal abuse and alcoholism.

Markey continued to express himself via film feverishly producing homespun backyard productions, which he would screen in local garages or youth centers to the neighborhood kids and their parents. He saved his allowance and revenue made from said screenings to fund his future Super 8 millimeter cinematic endeavors. After the sudden death of his father Daniel in 1977, Markey moved in with his mother, Mary, to a nearby neighborhood in Santa Monica, on Broadway and 26th St. A similar sunny urban area once again populated by packs of wild kids; Dog Town skaters, surfers and stoners. It was here that he met siblings Jordan and Jennifer Schwartz, (both appearing here in several films including the very weird "Plasticland") who evolve into lifelong friends and artistic/musical collaborators.



As the '70s were winding down, the counter-current new wave movement was on the rise, which sparked Markey's interest and growing artistic style. The soundtrack of his endless summers and much of his work were provided by Devo, the Clash, Talking Heads, the Ramones, the Specials, the Buzzcocks, and the B-52's. This is best represented in the coming-of-age subtext of 1980's "Summer Has Been Over for a Long Time." The innocence of these times would segue into a more serious early '80s hardcore-punk fueled by the immediate energy and brilliance of local LA

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bands like X, the Germs, Black Flag, Red Cross, and countless others. The grit and darkness of this scene resonated as much as the wit and cynicism with a teenaged Dave. Inspired by the music, David began playing drums and formed Sin 34 with his other-side-of-the-tracks friends from Beverly Hills High School, Phil Newman and Julie Lanfeld. Soon after fellow Santa Monica High School student Mike "Geek" Glass would join the final line up of the band. Markey continued making films that increasingly reflected the music scene exploding around him, as seen in his documentary "The Slog Movie: LA Hardcore Archives 1981-82".

Much like the Do-It-Yourself attitude found in punk zines and bands, David was inspired to make films just as he always has, except with the idea of getting his work seen outside the neighborhood. In the early '80s VCRs became prevalent. It seems arcane now, but at the time it was revolutionary. Movies became readily available (unedited as they were on television) and you could actually watch what you wanted to, as opposed to network programming (or the then smalltime cable television). David used his contacts from We Got Power magazine to get his films out on video and in record shops. He had completed 1984's "Desperate Teenage Lovedolls" for \$250.00. Without even the meager bucks of even the most independent record label, distribution was limited to those in the know. One East Coast fan, Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth, was watching from afar.



In 1986, New York's Sonic Youth found themselves signed to the influential SST Records. Markey's then-band Painted Willie was also on the label, and a friendship would soon emerge between Thurston and David. You can see these alliances being forged (and Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore's

cinematic debuts) in 1987's "Astro Turf," a film based on a nonsensical fever dream of Markey's, 1989's Hollywood tourist nightmare "Lou Believers," and 1991's outrageous "Rap Damage," which could very well be the template for Markey's most seen work, "1991: The Year Punk Broke." They are solidified in the sour-faced sarcastic raspberry of 1992's "Grunge Pedal" featuring Pavement's Mark Ibold and Pussy Galore's Julie Kafritz.

Much of the shorts films and music videos contained within are cross-referential. Many of the same actors (friends turned actors, many from So Cal's punk scene such as Black Flag's Dez Cadena & Red Cross' Steve McDonald) take part in these works. Certain Halloween masks and wigs appear throughout these various pieces. A dark sense of humor could only produce the tri-image random synchronicity of "Adolph 1990," which was shot during Markey's brief residency in San Francisco. Ditto for the masturbating clown in "Popcorn" (which its never before seen sequel is also included here). There's a distinct sensibility throughout—askewed to the core; yet the concepts bind the stream of consciousness imagery together, however fractioned, frenetic or furious.

Many of the films here are "Instant Films"--films conceived and shot, usually

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all within the same day. Pure inspiration for what it's worth. In some cases, these were warm-ups for the feature films that were to follow. In retrospect, some of the early no-budget short films play not unlike the later-day feature film and music videos Markey would direct, and often shoot and edit himself. Included here are clips from Sonic Youth ("I Love You Golden Blue"- the complete version from 2004's Nurse LP), The Posies ("Ritchie Dagger's Crime" from 1996's "A Small Circle Of Friends" Germs Tribute LP), and Eyes Adrift "Alaska" (from 2002- Meat Puppet Curt Kirkwood, Nirvana's Krist Novoselic, and Sublime's Bud Gaugh's short lived band.)

In the 80's and 90's, Markey self-released two video compilations, first being the crudely titled "Some Shit", followed by "Rap Damage +4". Most of the content on those self-made VHS tapes appear on this DVD. Some of the films here have never been distributed or publicly screened. Markey is most excited about getting these out



there. The then yet to be filmmaker Sofia Coppola makes a starring appearance in "Burning Palms on Jennifer's Coffee Table," which is Markey's own "Apocalypse Now"—inspired paean to the 1992 Los Angeles Uprising. Another piece delves into the tragedy of a psychotic contemplative teenage girl in 1989's "Tina the Party Pooper." The inclusion of Markey's better-known shorts, such as the comedic "Stoner Park" and wonderful "Puppetears," should keep lovers of punk cinema glowing for years to come. Overall, this is a great, although far from complete, sampling of Mr. Markey's original body of work.

Titles:

- * The Devil's Exorcist
- * This Is The Space Age
- * Summer Has Been Over For A Long Time
- * America Is Waiting
- * Plasticland
- * Astro Turf
- * Popcorn
- * Stoner Park
- * Puppetears
- * Lou Believers
- * Tina The Party Pooper
- * Adolf 1990
- * Popcorn II
- * Burning Palms On Jennifer's Coffee Table
- * Rap Damage
- * Grunge Pedal
- * The Posies "Ritchie Dagger's Crime"
- * Eye's Adrift "Alaska"
- * Sonic Youth "I Love You Golden Blue"
- * The Boost II



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