

EVERYDAY SUBLIME

In the winter of Ute Aurand's OH! THE FOUR SEASONS (made together with Ulrike Pfeiffer), a young woman wearing a white summer dress runs in the snow. She is not running from anything or to anything. She pauses, sometimes walk backwards, but mainly she runs. Leaving marks. At the end she almost becomes monumental.

"A mark is the face of a fact. A letter is naked matter breaking from form from meaning. An anagram defies linear logic. Any letter of the alphabet may contain its particular in-dwelling spirit. A mark is a dynamic cut." Susan Howe, *SORTING FACTS*

There are new skies every day, says the astrophysicist who wants to map all the galaxies in the known universe. She does not mean it poetically or metaphorically. Stars are born and die every day. New skies every day. She has to map again and again.

Ozu Yasujiro made six "season" films. Three of them were each his last film: AN AUTUMN AFTERNOON, THE END OF SUMMER, LATE AUTUMN. Transience of life. *Mono no aware*.

Cycles and returns. Not repetition.

Spring returns every year but it is never the same spring.

My sister, a molecular biologist, said, "For now, I believe when the neurological activities in our brain cease, that is the end. All our loves, our feelings, everything will cease to exist. Nothing." That was three years ago. I haven't asked her about it again.

無 MU (nothing) is carved on Ozu's tombstone.

"...the seasons of memory are eternal. Because they are faithful to the colors of the first time..."
Gaston Bachelard, *POETICS OF REVERIE*

In summer we think of winter.

Silent conversation. Observation with a corner of your eye.

Fear. You know it is coming. The inevitable. *Abschied*. Wanting to refuse. Wanting to accept.

Everyday sublime. It is terrifying to see the beauty near you and think of losing it at the same time. The impossibility of holding onto this moment.

A book of haiku, each conjuring brief images. Together they are like stars in the night sky.

House cleaning after parents are gone. I recognize the task that I also had to do so recently. It is difficult to explain. In HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE BRANCHES, there is a woman, Aurand's

sister, who is sad. And the camera looks to the window. We are in a very green garden. Summer. Her father is licking a bowl of sugar. Suddenly I remember my father licking a bowl. Do all fathers like sweet things? He is so alive.

Vertical montage. But nothing collides. The only tension is time.

There is an astonishment that is unique to cinema. The wind in the leaves. In this parallel universe, the flowers are just as beautiful. Can they be more beautiful? Who can say? And children.

Joy. Spontaneous and necessary. You are not alone. Alive together.

Children are born with all the knowledge and then they forget. They gain some back as they grow. I think I heard Ute Aurand say this. In her films, children look wise.

QUIETLY ABSORBED IN SILENT CONVERSATION is Aurand's first film. We join in silent conversation. With the oceans of the world. With the sky. Here. And elsewhere. With trees, birds, flowers, with friends, loved ones, places. Between *sakura* (pattern in ornamental balls) and *sakura* (falling from the trees). Between her parents in front of the camera and their photos from 50 years ago. Between them (now gone) and the filmmaker. Between this world and the world of paintings. Across time. Through her camera. Something happens. Between them and me.

In Aurand's ZU HOUSE we see a silhouetted image, a woman in the kitchen cooking, drinking, dancing. Camera. Music. She is at home. And there are mysterious specks of gold at the end.

"We are in the midst of reality responding with joy. It is an absolutely satisfying experience but extremely elusive. It is elusive because we must recognize so many other things at the same time.

The memory of past moments of joy leads us on. The responses of happiness and joy are our first concern."

Agnes Martin, *WHAT IS REAL?*

Soon-Mi Yoo
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