



EYE Experimental

# Joost Rekveld Programs

The Motors of  
Invention &  
Light Matters

EYE Filmmuseum  
Amsterdam  
[international.eyefilm.nl](http://international.eyefilm.nl)

EYE presents two Joost Rekveld programs

## The Motors of Invention & Light Matters

In 2015 the works of internationally renowned Dutch multimedia artist Joost Rekveld were added to the EYE collection. This was the starting point of an elaborate restoration of his early works, undertaken in close collaboration with Rekveld himself, which has resulted in two curated programs of his abstract films. These are available for screening from January 2017. The films span Rekveld's whole career from his earliest film #2 (1993) to his most recent work #67. The two programs are centred around the four early works recently restored by EYE, which include #2 (1993), *VRFLM* (1994), #5 (1994) and #7 (1996). The two programs will world premiere at the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2017.

Joost Rekveld is an artist who is motivated by the question of what we can learn from a dialogue with machines. His films are a direct result of his deep fascination for the technological world which surrounds us, both analogue or digital. In his approach to creation he bridges art and science, and is often inspired by the forgotten corners of history in science and technology. His abstract films resonate internationally and have been shown worldwide at several festivals and venues.

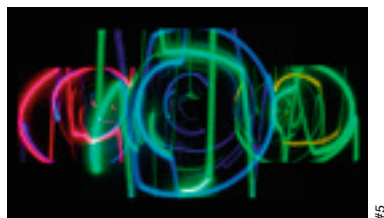


### Restoration work

(by Eye curator Simona Monizza)

'The EYE Filmmuseum's relationship with Joost dates back to 2004 when he was commissioned to curate a program and an installation called *A House in 4 Dimensions*.

In 2015 Rekveld's films were added to EYE's collection. This was a logical follow-up to our commitment to collect and preserve Dutch abstract films, which started with the films of Peter Struycken and continued with Bart Vegter and Maarten Visser. By mutual agreement we began the restoration of Rekveld's early works as those were the ones that had been neglected the most over the past 24 years, and needed specialist care. These included #2, *VRFLM*, #5 and #7.



From the beginning we decided on digital restoration of these films as well as produce digital projection copies. Two factors informed this choice. The first is that digital techniques offer a wider range of possibilities in removing damage and controlling color, so crucial in Joost work. The second reason was the wish to enhance the screening possibilities of these films in an era when 16mm projection is becoming more difficult or unreliable.

Of course the starting point was to remain as close as possible to the original intention of the artist but in the process of changing formats we encountered some challenges inherent within the medium. The solutions we opted for were always agreed upon with Joost who has been behind this process from the very beginning.

These restorations should not be considered a replacement of the existing analogue copies of Rekveld's work but more an updated reinterpretation of them, using the modern technology of today. We hope that making these films available again in the new versions will increase their visibility and enable them to reach out to a wider audience.'

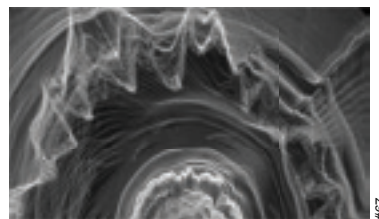
Program 1

## Joost Rekveld – The Motors of Invention

Many of the early films of Joost Rekveld find their inspiration in the fundamental characteristics of the film medium. This program gives an overview of the development of this strand in his work, with the films *VRFLM* and #7 as two very different explorations into how one can directly compose the material for the 16mm film strip. The films #3 (1994), #5 and finally #11, *Marey <-> Moiré* (1999) show the evolution in Rekveld's reflections on how the medium film deals with time; for these films he developed his own tools based on long exposures, scanning and chronophotography. His most recent work #67 addresses similar concerns from the world of analogue HD video.

#67 (digital file, 16 min., sound, 2016, 2017)

As an embodied homage to 'Reminiscence', and 'Telc' by Steina and Woody Vasulka, this analogue HD video work is guided by the concept of *reafférance*, a term that refers to the perceptual changes caused by moving our sensory organs.



*VRFLM* (DCP, 2 min., silent, color, 1994)

A short study for the optical printer, based on found footage of fire, coloured light from the printer and on the chemical manipulations of the emulsion. The film evolves from a traditionally centered image towards images that cover lengths of the filmstrip and originate from the material itself.

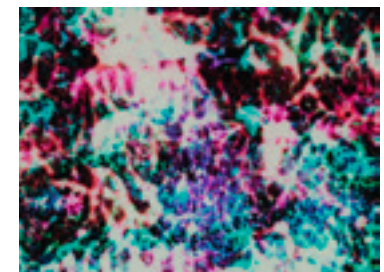
#3 (16mm/DCP, 4 min., silent, color, 1994)

The first film that Rekveld composed according to the methods that he still uses today in

structuring his films. The images were created by recording the movements of a tiny light source with extremely long exposures, so that it draws traces on the emulsion. The light is part of a simple mechanical system that exhibits chaotic behaviour.

#7 (DCP, 32 min., silent, 1996)

This film is essentially a slow evolution from black to white, as an articulation of the theory proposed by Aristotle, among others, that colours arise from the clash between light and dark. The colours of #7 are based on the opposition of pigment and light, and are all produced by stamping paint directly onto the negative.



#5 (DCP, 6 min., silent, color, 1994)

#5 explores the relationship between image and time on the film strip and modulates continuously between animations, with long exposures on the one hand, and snapshots that are enlarged across many film frames on the other. The images were made using non-virtual and simple reflective materials and can be regarded as a kind of action painting with light.

#11, *Marey <-> Moiré* (35mm cinemascope/DCP, 21 min., sound, color, 1999)

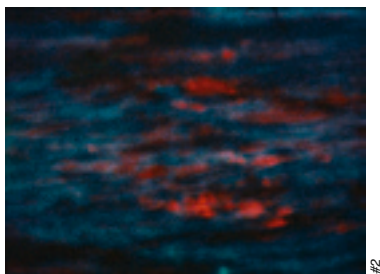
#11 is a film about the discontinuity that lies at the heart of the film medium. All images were generated by intermittently recording the movement of a line, revisiting the chronophotographic techniques of Etienne-Jules Marey.

Total length of program 1. Joost Rekveld – *The Motors of Invention*: 81 minutes

## Program 2

# Joost Rekveld – Light Matters

These four films show the evolution within Rekveld's focus on light, and deal in very different ways with the interaction between light and matter. *#2*, Rekveld's first film, is an homage to the changing colors of daylight, whereas *#23.2, Book of Mirrors* (2002) arose from an attempt to show the materiality of light itself. The last two films in the program are based on Rekveld's interest in the fine structure of matter and the patterns and processes in matter that light can reveal.



**#2** (DCP, 12 min., sound, color, 1993)

Joost Rekveld's first film is an homage to the way daylight changes color during the course of the day and links this to how film is a medium that captures and radiates light. Until 2013 this was the only film for which Rekveld also composed the soundtrack

**#23.2, Book of Mirrors** (35mm, 12 min., sound, color, 2002)

*#23.2* was inspired by concepts found in medieval and renaissance optics in which elementary optical principles are used to generate images. These patterned images are caused by the interplay of light waves directly onto the emulsion, without the use of lenses.

**#37** (35mm cinemascope/DCP, 31 min., sound, color, 2009)

'Andronicos says that in a certain place in Spain one finds small, scattered stones which are polygonal and grow spontaneously.

Some of them are white, others are like wax and pregnant with smaller stones similar to themselves. I kept one to verify this myself and it gave birth at my place, so the story is not a lie.' (Paradoxographus Palatinus', anonymous, 3rd century)

**#43.6** (digital file, 11 min., sound, 2013)

The composition of this film was influenced by the work of logician G. Spencer Brown, who wrote his 'Laws of Form' in 1969. The book is a wonderful account of a new kind of logic. The empty pages on which the book is written form the beginning and the end, as well as an integral part of the argument.

*Total length of program 2. Joost Rekveld – Light Matters: 66 minutes*

For more information about the programs:

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