|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Joshua | [Middle name] | Lam |
| [Enter your biography] | | | |
| SUNY Buffalo | | | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Your article** |
| **Burroughs, William S. (1914-1997)** |
| Burroughs, William Seward |
| Born in St. Louis, Missouri, William S. Burroughs was a major figure of the Beat Generation. He is known primarily for his controversial novel *Naked Lunch* (1959) — the subject of a U.S. obscenity trial — and for his use of the cut-up technique, developed by his friend, British-born artist Brion Gysin. |
| Born in St. Louis, Missouri, William S. Burroughs was a major figure of the Beat Generation. He is known primarily for his controversial novel *Naked Lunch* (1959) — the subject of a U.S. obscenity trial — and for his use of the cut-up technique, developed by his friend, British-born artist Brion Gysin. The technique involves cutting up and reassembling text or film in random order to produce non-linear anti-narratives; influences include Dadaist collage procedures and T.S. Eliot’s ‘The Waste Land’. Using this technique, Burroughs collaborated with Gysin and filmmaker Anthony Balch to produce short experimental films, including *Towers Open Fire* (1963), *The Cut Ups* (1967), and *Bill and Tony* (1972). The films juxtapose and overlay documentary footage of Burroughs and others with stock footage, as well as surreal, pornographic, and science-fiction imagery. Burroughs also narrated portions of the films, in part using text appropriated from Scientology manuals and film scripts — notably Tod Browning’s *Freaks* (1932). Fragments from *The Soft Machine* (1961), part of the science-fiction *Nova Trilogy*, appear in the narration of *Towers Open Fire*. Burroughs also appeared in numerous feature films. Selected List of Works: *Junkie* (Ace, 1953)  *Naked Lunch* (Grove, 1959)  *The Soft Machine* (Olympia, 1961)  *The Ticket that Exploded* (Olympia, 1962)  *Nova Express* (Grove, 1964)  *The Last Words of Dutch Schultz: A Fiction in the Form of a Film Script* (Cape Goliard, 1970)  *The Job: Interviews with William S. Burroughs* (Conducted with Daniel Odier; Grove, 1970)  *The Third Mind* (Co-authored with Brion Gysin; Viking, 1978) (Includes cut-up texts and essays on the cut-up technique) Selected Filmography: *Häxan* (1922)  (Swedish film directed by Benjamin Christensen; re-released by Balch in 1968 with the subtitle *Witchcraft Through the Ages*, with expanded narration by Burroughs)  Link: <https://archive.org/details/WitchcraftThroughTheAges-haxan-WilliamBurroughsNarration>  *Towers Open Fire* (1963)  Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjB--bgcBa0>  File: burroughs\_towers.jpg  1 From Towers Open Fire  *William Buys a Parrot* (1963)  Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME-t5lZ5r9U>  *The Cut Ups* (1967)  Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7_Y0NvLtH4>  *Bill and Tony* (1972)  Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFrTAJUQKq4>  *Ghosts at Number Nine* (1982)  (Consists of footage filmed by Balch between 1961-1965)  Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmeeNFRn7ys>  File: burroughs\_ghosts.jpg  2 From Ghosts at Number Nine  *Naked Lunch* (1991)  (Feature film directed by David Cronenberg, adapted from Burroughs’s 1959 novel and biographical materials)  *Ah Pook Is Here* (1994)  (Animated short directed by Phillip Hunt, written and narrated by Burroughs)  Burroughs reads from *Nova Express* in 1974  The entire reading (by John Giorno and Burroughs) is available via creative commons. Burroughs begins at 40:50, and that particular section ends at 43:52.  Audio link: https://archive.org/details/AM\_1974\_11\_07\_c1 |
| Further reading:  (Baldwin)  (Bridgett)  Link: <http://brightlightsfilm.com/39/cutups1.php>  (Burroughs)  (McLuhan)  (Murphy)  (Sargeant)  (Schneiderman and Walsh)  (Skerl and Lydenberg) |