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| Markopoulos, Gregory J. (1928-1992) |
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| Gregory J. Markopoulos was an American experimental filmmaker and one of the key figures in the New American Cinema group of the 1960s. Born in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Greek immigrants, Markopoulos spoke only Greek until age six, made his first 8mm film at age twelve, and later studied at the University of Southern California, attending classes with Josef von Sternberg and observing the film productions of Fritz Lang and Alfred Hitchcock. Ancient mythology and his Greek heritage were life-long touchstones of his work, and symbolic colour, intensive montage and radical single frame operations mark many of his films. Insistent on the divine potential of cinema, he saw himself as a ‘filmmaker-physician.’ He drew on literary sources — Plato, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Jean Cocteau, Honoré de Balzac, and Elias Venezis — for many of his films. *Psyche* (1947) was inspired by Pierre Louÿs's unfinished novella of the same name and, with the addition of the subsequent *Lysis* and *Charmides*, formed the trilogy *Du sang, de la volupté et de la mort* (1947-48). *Twice a Man* (1963) is based on the story of Hippolytus; *The Illiac Passion* (1964-1967) is a retelling of Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* that stars Andy Warhol and Jack Smith. |
| Gregory J. Markopoulos was an American experimental filmmaker and one of the key figures in the New American Cinema group of the 1960s. Born in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Greek immigrants, Markopoulos spoke only Greek until age six, made his first 8mm film at age twelve, and later studied at the University of Southern California, attending classes with Josef von Sternberg and observing the film productions of Fritz Lang and Alfred Hitchcock. Ancient mythology and his Greek heritage were life-long touchstones of his work, and symbolic colour, intensive montage and radical single frame operations mark many of his films. Insistent on the divine potential of cinema, he saw himself as a ‘filmmaker-physician.’ He drew on literary sources — Plato, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Jean Cocteau, Honoré de Balzac, and Elias Venezis — for many of his films. *Psyche* (1947) was inspired by Pierre Louÿs's unfinished novella of the same name and, with the addition of the subsequent *Lysis* and *Charmides*, formed the trilogy *Du sang, de la volupté et de la mort* (1947-48). *Twice a Man* (1963) is based on the story of Hippolytus; *The Illiac Passion* (1964-1967) is a retelling of Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* that stars Andy Warhol and Jack Smith. In 1966 he began producing in-camera films — portraits of people and places — by running a single roll of film stock back and forth inside the camera, creating superimpositions and fades at predetermined points. *Ming Green* (1966), a portrait of Markopoulos’s New York City apartment, was the first of this type. *Bliss* (1967), a study of the interior of the Church of St. John on the island of Hydra, *Gammelion* (1968), a portrait of an Italian castello in Rieti that features fragments of Rilke’s poetry read by the filmmaker, and many others followed. He lectured extensively and frequently contributed to Jonas Mekas’ *Film Culture* magazine in the 1960s; he also was a poet.  Discontent with screening and distribution conditions, Markopoulos left the United States in 1967 with his long-time partner, the American filmmaker Robert Beavers, and lived in various European locations until his death, removing his films from distribution and refusing screenings.He edited his final film, the magnum opus *Eniaios* (Greek for ‘unity’ or ‘uniqueness’), a silent 80-hour reworking of his previous film output, during the last decade of his life. It was created for exclusive viewing near his ancestral home in Lyssaraia (in the Peloponnesus) at an event and site he called the Temenos (ancient Greek for ‘sacred space’ or ‘a place set apart’). He hoped to build a theatre and archive for his and Beavers’s work there. *Eniaios* was fully edited, but not yet printed, at the time of his death. It is composed of 22 cycles and contains 100 individual titles. Since Markopoulos’s death, Beavers has worked to preserve *Eniaios* and has overseen the printing of eight cycles. He has organised outdoor screenings at the Temenos location in 2004, 2008 and 2012 where portions of *Eniaios* have been presented. List of Works: *Du sang, de la volupté et de la mort* (1947-48)  *Twice a Man* (1963)  *The Illiac Passion* (1964-1967)  *Ming Green* (1966)  *Bliss* (1967)  *Gammelion* (1968)  *ENIAIOS* (1948-1990)  *A Christmas Carol* (1940)  *Christmas U.S.A.* (1949)  *The Dead Ones* (1949)  *L'Arbre aux champignons* (1950)  *Swain* (1950)  *Flowers of Asphalt* (1951)  *Serenity* (1961)  *Galaxie* (1966)  *Eros, O Basileus* (1967)  *Himself As Herself* (1967)  *Through a Lens Brightly: Mark Turbyfill* (1967)  *The Mysteries* (1968)  *Index - Hans Richter* (1969)  *The Olympian* (1969)  *Political Portraits* (1969)  *Sorrows* (1969)  *Genius* (1970)  *Hagiographia (first version)*(1970)  *Cimabue! Cimabue!* (1971)  *Heracles* (1973) |
| Further reading:  (Sitney)  (Temenos Archive)  (Webber) |