



The Frida Zinema
presents...

Directed by

David Lynch

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THE TRUST FALL : A HOW TO GUIDE

BY JERICO VILAR @TRILLUPONTAILLUPS
FOR THE FRIDA ZINERA DAVID LYNCH ISSUE



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"Silencio..."

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a poem for donna in fire walk with me

by: courtney taylor



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on Instagram



donna hayward will never know why a red light in a dim bar makes her shiver and shudder, queasy in a memory that's a dream inside a dream inside the moment her best friend let her chug-a-lug the roofied beer. and whether it's with james or in the aftermath of finding out that ben horne — disgusting, and old, and strange, and always lurking around and behind and over his odd daughter — is her father too, there'll always be an empty place behind the memory of laura palmer where her brain says no entrance. when a bed is too firm it feels like a table. she isn't able (or is she?) to remember the black jacket laura discarded that started the end of the night. looking at another woman to see what to do with a man still isn't being attracted to that man. donna and the blond guy — and the canadian — and james — but it all makes a composite of the same illegible picture. all she knows is laura palmer isn't a girl's girl. the singer in the red

light is the only thing donna does remember, the thing right at the edge of the before before

before, just before the nothingness. the world is created in the big bang and laura palmer sits

somber on the couch in a green turtleneck. there will never be an explanation, a prequel or series or insufferable reboot, detailing the scene by scene reasons why donna panics when she's

touched, why she cries for days on end, like a catholic saint from an old story, like an angel from a faded painting, like a rumor about a girl you knew from high school, but maybe that was all just a nauseous sticky tactile dream too.

what is a self but a series of locked doors that kick open at random and let out the wails of the world? but donna doesn't go see a trauma counselor, after all. she screams and screams in the living room while her dad beats her and then she leaves the earth like a long-fleeing shadow.



Lynch/OBAYASHI

Truth in the Unreality of Surrealist Cinema

by Brian Ly

Two directors who made their debut features in the same year have come to define surrealism in cinema in their own very different ways, making resounding statements with their films that very much redefined the paradigm of cinema in the way in which they deeply challenged the medium with their peculiar mode of filmmaking and unique way of viewing the world. Throughout their careers, these directors would be more defined by their particular style and language of filmmaking, even if they had clear thematic tendencies that are admittedly not the most obvious and are at times themselves hidden within their absolute puzzle boxes of films. Despite their obtuse means of communication and cryptic approach to storytelling, they were filmmakers that clearly put themselves entirely into their films, leaving behind within them evidence that they had lived with everything they needed to express as artists. Though they have similarly been unrecognized within the canon of cinema to the level that they certainly deserve, their admirers and acolytes would certainly never be short of words of praise for them. On two opposite sides of the world, you had David Lynch

fleshing out his student project at AFI into a self-financed feature film that would later become *Eraserhead*, a black and white surrealist body horror film that was initially critically panned and would later find its audience as a midnight movie, and you had Nobuhiko Obayashi who similarly worked on experimental films in his university days bring some of his sensibility to his work in television commercials until he was tasked to provide an answer to *Jaws*, to which he answered with *House*, a surrealist comedy horror which is nothing like the summer commercial blockbuster that has become something of a cult film itself for its creative use of just about every special effects technology available at the time and then some as well as its overall absurdist tone and distinct sense of style. They each finished their respective careers with a definitive statement of three-hour epics, albeit under different circumstances, with Lynch reaching his natural finishing point in the medium of film in the changing landscape and pivoting to other art forms and Obayashi directing his final film while battling cancer.

Despite his artistic flair having a large metropolitan appeal, David Lynch, as much as a segment of his career is so deeply entrenched with the city of Los Angeles, though to what extent his concerns are with its metropolitan aspects at all is admittedly rather limited compared to the more conceptual idea of the greater region and identity, would probably be a director who finds himself more sympathetic to the cause of the everyman and small-town American suburbia, having been raised in a transitory lifestyle throughout childhood. The juxtaposition of the picturesque American life with the hidden darkness in the realities of the failed American Dream intrigued him, where people ostensibly maintained a guise of a perfect family that belied the demons that plagued them beneath the surface. It's a consistent thread that has permeated his works, even as he shifted to his longer-term tenure in Los Angeles when he attended the American Film Institute and made the city his home, and in a way, his works reflected a sort of tessellation as he considered these same dichotomies in Hollywood aspirations. Similarly anchored to the circumstances of his upbringing, Nobuhiko Obayashi found himself revisiting his hometown of Onomichi, a port town made famous as a location in Yasujiro Ozu's *Tokyo Story*, having grown up through World War II and experiencing the horrors of war in nearby Hiroshima. Where Lynch may have seen

multiple instances across the country of the failed American experiment throughout his youth, Obayashi found a sort of nostalgic sense of melancholic sentimentality in the resilience of a people in spite of cataclysmic atrocities, the sort of innocence that is lost that should be so desperately shielded that he's assumed a strong anti-war stance that has defined his filmography.

As much as Quentin Tarantino would disagree, most filmmakers do not choose their filmographies, and certainly no great filmmaker is a perfect architect of their career (this isn't an invitation for debate) but merely works within the circumstances they're given. That isn't to say that directors are completely without agency, but it really is hard to make a film, and there's perhaps no great filmmaker that would echo that point more strongly than Lynch, who was constantly battling with the industry all throughout his career. Likewise, Obayashi also considered the commercial viability of his films, and while you certainly can find a clear auteurist trajectory in his works, he's certainly dabbled in many journeyman-like exploits while working within the Japanese studio system, such as an entry in the *Kosuke Kindaichi* detective film series, an adaptation of the *Black Jack* manga, a pop star vehicle, and his sole animated feature. That isn't to say that he had no agency when taking on these projects, and you'll certainly find some of his preoccupations between the spaces of these films, but they are admittedly a far cry from the deeply personal films that punctuate his filmography. While their filmographies may not be the pristine objects that everyone would like them to be, and even their so-called lesser works absolutely have their defenders and acolytes, they are ultimately reflective of the challenges they faced through their careers and the journeys they ended up on one way or another, and while not every step may have been on their own terms, they have certainly had plenty of space to put it all out there on film and say what they've needed to say as creatives.

We perhaps get David Lynch at his most raw and personal at the beginning of the journey with his debut feature, *Eraserhead*, where he directly confronts some of his deepest fears in parenthood and the entire idea of growing up. There's a certain nihilism that defines his worldview, as reflected in the sort of bleak overview by which Henry sees the world, a sort of numb and uncaring attitude that's almost essential to cope with the desolate reality. The film isn't purely the musings of an edgelord even if it can have shades of that, and we see the sort of existential crisis that comes with parenthood, how one irresponsible sexual encounter can produce a child, an individual living human being that you are forever inextricably tied to that you have brought into the world by no will of its own, and you are now responsible for. You are haunted when you see the child suffering, knowing that your actions have subjected it to that, and apathetic as you may have been to the religion of your upbringing that may have never meant all that much to you, you begin to question, should a higher power exist, how it could allow such a thing to happen, and how it could let the world turn to total shit. The world is a scary place for a young person just trying to figure it all out, and the film is a manifestation of all of that anxiety and pressure of not having your shit together.





In stark contrast, at least on the surface, *House* represents the fears of not Nobuhiko Obayashi but in fact that of his kid daughter, in which the film represents her own nightmare scenario and what she personally found to be scary. Though the film is still in essence a horror film, its genesis comes from a tender moment of connection between a father and daughter, marking a certain sentimentality that will come to define his works. Amidst its otherwise wacky and zany tone and the stimuli overload of a nonstop special effects reel, we see brief moments of respite where the solemnity of Obayashi shows through, notably the segment that recounts the aunt's longing as she awaited the return of her husband that would never come, paralleling Obayashi's own anxiety when his father was called to the battlefield. There's a bit of levity when one of the girls known for her insatiable appetite comments on the mushroom cloud resembling cotton candy, making for a chuckle-worthy moment of a fat joke, but what this really represents is the childlike innocence of the generation born after the war, living in a reality where the atomic bomb is merely a paragraph in a history book rather than a life-changing event that represents how evil humanity can truly be. It's not mocking her ignorance but rather a sigh of relief and hope for a better world for posterity. So begins Obayashi's anti-war stance, even in a little nugget.



There's a shared thematic through line between these films regarding nuclear disaster, despite the very different relationships each director has with it directly. The world of *Eraserhead* represents a post-apocalyptic wasteland, where the damage of radiation has permeated through to the very core of the planet and has fundamentally transformed our organic matter, from the food we consume to even birth defects and other lingering health impacts.

Though it may seem like Lynch has a bleaker approach to the topic, it's fair to consider the stage of his life he was in and the state of his career as a young, barely out-of-school independent filmmaker trying to carve it out in Hollywood compared to the established commercial director making his feature film debut just shy of a ripe forty years old with a family of his own. Just as Lynch was grappling with his own anxieties and fears, Obayashi has had plenty of time accepting the horror of the atomic bomb (if you can ever really say it's possible to do so) with the maturity of learning how to move on beyond disaster with the responsibility of creating a future for a child who has to live in a world that has been fundamentally changed by it.

Following his experience facing the true force of the Hollywood machine compromising his vision and production of *Dune*, Lynch strikes out on his own as he goes independent with *Blue Velvet*, with Kyle MacLachlan in tow, bringing back the ethos he had back in his Eraserhead era with the surrealist depiction of the small-town American experience. While the setting of the film initially feels like a fairly innocuous television sitcom, the mystery escalates deeper into the underbelly of society, personified through the sexual awakening of a young man exploring the various modes of eroticism in a personal journey of sexual transgression, crossing the boundary between the previously idealized, safe suburban life into the gritty reality of the real world and subsequently accidentally getting entangled into the criminal scene. The film isn't wholly dire on the way the world operates so much as it acknowledges that bad actors exist, and even if you find yourself in a bad situation, that doesn't necessarily mean that you can't escape it and resume a normal American life. Many do, and it's just the question of whether their past continues to define and haunt them or if they create a sort of peace and happiness in their own way.



Perhaps the most overt statement of the contrast between rural and city life is in *The Discarnates*, Obayashi's adaptation of the novel *Strangers* by Taichi Yamada that was also adapted recently by Andrew Haigh in the underrated art house darling *All of Us Strangers*, starring Andrew Scott and Paul Mescal, where the film illustrates the loneliness of city life, steeped with expectations of success in society where you can achieve everything that people may deem as necessary to live a prosperous life yet lack anything that truly brings you joy or fulfillment and are lost in your ways, wandering aimlessly without a sense of purpose or belonging. Escaping the countryside has always been the badge of honor showing that you made it, but it's only through reconnecting with your past and taking a reprieve from the artificiality of the structured life of facades and fake interactions that you can actually find something real, even if in fact that very thing that actually feels genuine, warm, and authentic might just be an illusion that you need to process your own grief and trauma, in this case quite literally a ghost story. There is more truth to be found in the vague, transient space that is the nostalgia of your past that may only be a visage of what it once was than there is in the cold, unfeeling concrete jungle that may quite literally occupy physical space yet leave you entirely disassociated.

If we want to argue that Los Angeles is not your typical metropolitan city, at least as far as the lived reality of most of its residents is concerned, we can see how the Los Angeles in his unofficial eponymous trilogy is a bit more provincial in nature, particularly in how they encapsulate a specific contained space rather than the experience of a bustling city. *Lost Highway* follows the natural trajectory of Lynch's genre interests in the surrealist small-town mysteries of *Blue Velvet* and *Twin Peaks* into the periphery neighborhoods within Los Angeles. While ostensibly a city, the film largely takes place in private residences, and oftentimes that's where the real life and soul of the city occur, checkered across town not unlike the inherent quietness of suburban life, both of which have their darkest secrets hidden behind closed doors. Not to say that most of Lynch's films aren't weird because they absolutely are, but this film does feel like a stark shift toward more experimental modes of storytelling, where this film plays with nonlinear time and narrative structure in the presentation of the murder mystery, ultimately revealing itself to be a manifestation of jealousy, inadequacy as a man, the expectations of masculinity, and the male insecurity that results from this.



In terms of the definitive film that best encapsulates the Hollywood experience and its particular energy since *Sunset Boulevard*, *Mulholland Drive* probably most accurately captures the propulsive spirit of the driving force to make it in Hollywood and how you completely lose yourself in the process, at the very least in the most philosophical sense, presented as a mystery that slowly reveals itself as the metaphorical representation of the incredibly grueling undertaking of audition after audition, watching as some succeed and others crash and burn, all the while you're trying to figure out how to survive on a day-to-day basis and perfect your craft while not losing your mind. Things aren't fair, and you're sort of driven to insanity because you feel like your shot is just around the corner and you can almost taste it, only for things to fall apart at the eleventh hour every single time. What ostensibly feels like female solidarity between women protecting each other within the predatory system is just as much their inherent competition between each other, and there is such a reality that both sides of the duality exist at the same time.

While not necessarily the death knell of his career, *Mulholland Drive* sort of represents the latest of Lynch's general challenges with the industry, particularly with all the intervention that came with television production. Though the actual technology itself was more of a bridge from film to digital, digital video brought about promise as a way to democratize filmmaking, and it really could have been the sort of indie revolution that never was, though this period

did give birth to quite a number of gems and curiosities that are both emblematic of the filmmaking ethos of the era yet manage to transcend the admittedly scant technology it was built upon. *Inland Empire* in form is kind of something that eventually came into being rather than something planned as a final film, with it honestly just being Lynch fucking around with a camcorder and shooting home videos of Laura Dern, yet in some ways that makes it all the more resounding of a statement in the way it really encapsulates everything Lynch wanted to say. Directors don't often choose their final films so much as that's what they ultimately arrive at in a process that involves many moving parts. The film is largely an assault on the senses, progressing through surrealist segments that ostensibly have nothing to do with one another, and at times, that's actually the case, as it's come together in an admittedly haphazard fashion, occupying the headspace of an actor in the sort of out-of-body experience of losing themselves within a role across disjointed scenes. While there is an actual *Inland Empire*, and the film certainly references it explicitly, it's more of a metaphorical representation of the space immediately outside of Los Angeles; not to say it's where dreams go to die, though certainly there may be some that would claim so, both in jest and with some degree of sincerity, as the final resting place of failed Hollywood aspirations yet just close enough in proximity that you can always dip your toes back in, continue to live in envy, and wither away in the heat of the desert. What Lynch manages to capture in Los Angeles is its inherent contradiction, where, as much as it's an exceedingly dazzling place of dreams and glamor, it's just as much defined by the desolate reality of unfulfilled dreams. Male insecurity is a rather large guiding force, where institutional power and influence over the industry are one of the only ways that truly abhorrent men can exert any sort of control over women, and this is the original sin of Hollywood that Lynch brings to light in his Los Angeles Trilogy, and not to say it's the reason that he's had difficulty finding work following it, but there's a bit of a poetic coincidence that it played out that way.



The late-period output of Obayashi is a rather peculiar one, since for a final act, it really feels like he was just getting started despite grappling with his own mortality. There's a certain urgency to all of his films during this time, where, despite championing the cause his entire career, he finds it more pressing than ever to bang the drums of his anti-war beliefs when the federal government of Japan is even flirting with the idea of remilitarization amidst the current nuclear standstill. The first film of Obayashi's informal Anti-War Trilogy is *Casting Blossoms to the Sky*, which is a mix between educational film and documentary-like drama centered around the experiences in Nagasaki, a smaller town that served as the trial run for the later atomic bombs, where a journalist interacts with residents who recount their direct experiences with the bombing and its impact on the history of the town since then and the complicated legacy of the local fireworks industry and its inherent similarity to the same type of technology used in explosives, culminating in a surrealist play that chronicles the atrocities of war yet transposes that into the hope, wonder, and inspiration in the beauty of fireworks. It's basically the war interlude in *House* stretched into a nearly three-hour epic that's just as wacky yet sincere, even if a bit didactic and sentimental at times. The scale is a bit reduced in the following film, *Seven Weeks*, which is a much more stripped-down traditional drama but not any less lacking in impact. The film ostensibly plays out like a straightforward family drama surrounding the funeral processions for the ailing patriarch, but what ultimately comes to light is the generational divide between him and the postwar generation, where much of his wartime trauma, postwar hardship, and personal sacrifice has enabled the level of comfort for the future generations out of a selfless desire to leave behind a better world than he came into yet cannot even leave it gracefully without everyone having to be essentially emotionally blackmailed to attend the rituals.

While never one to be known for subtlety, Obayashi perhaps never overtly confronts the war as directly as he does in *Hanagatami*, his final film in the Anti-War Trilogy, the film he had been wanting to make for over forty years since even before *House*, as what he likely presumed to be his final film following a Stage 4 cancer diagnosis. He portrays the sheer innocence of young men and women in the early stages of the war, where decorated war heroes are admired as people to aspire towards and the overall cause is seen as a noble endeavor. The naiveté of youth parallels the blind optimism towards the war, this belief that people are inherently honest, but then you wake up to the reality that most of the time people are lying to your face, everyone is fucking each other behind your back, and nobody actually wants to fight in the war; they just don't want to be called out for draft dodging. There's almost a contrived, performative nature to how everyone is interacting to maintain this facade because none of this is real, and then Pearl Harbor happens. This isn't a director at death's door drowning in his own nihilism, however, and despite the duplicity and inherently flawed human nature may indicate as such, it's about finding the truth in the unreality, that despite the fact that people do shitty things, they can be true friends and that there's a certain beauty to the simple ugly things that people do on a regular basis that could never compare to the absolute horror that is war. *Labyrinth of Cinema* serves as more of a coda to his career, more of a disorganized appendix than an epilogue of any sort, where a filmmaker is making the final use of his borrowed time to put everything on display on screen, and boy does he do so. The film is essentially a visual assault, taking place on the final night of a closing independent theater, as so often love letters to cinema do, where a marathon of war films is exhibited, and through this, Obayashi chronicles the many types of genres that he didn't quite get to explore throughout his career, from musicals to jidaigeki/period films to modern war films, with an overarching theme of his final plea against war as he closes his chapter on cinema.

It's clear that as a filmmaker, though Obayashi was able to make some of his final statements in his last two films, there was still always more to say to further reinforce the message that people aren't quite taking seriously enough when the possibility of a global conflict is always around the corner. He's had deep love for the medium of film from the very beginning, almost exclusively working in the medium while doing just as much to challenge the medium itself and the mode of representation. That isn't to say that Lynch doesn't do the same throughout his body of work or have a similar dedication to the medium, but he did make a resounding final statement more than twenty years before his death even if his retirement from film wasn't by his own choice, finding further opportunities for artistic expression in other art forms, as he's never been bound to just film as the only avenue for the explorations of ideas. Continuing to work against the system, he does get something of a chance by positing *Twin Peaks: The Return* as a television season-length film when Hollywood and even the alternative channels repeatedly spurned him on projects for the rest of his life. Though working in very different film industries, the two directors share a common propulsive force in their filmmaking philosophies, wherein the presentation of their unrealities, they inserted quite a bit of truth into them, putting on film everything that they needed to say.





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Blue Velvet

by Kay Jensen



I don't know what took me so long to watch *Blue Velvet*, but I regret not having seen it sooner. I could tell why it's one of Lynch's masterpieces, but like with so many movies it was more of a vibe I got than something tangible. In a way I was grateful this film wasn't my introduction to Lynch. I wanted to examine why I liked this movie so much, free from the restrictions of sentimentality and outside opinions.

Dennis Hopper's performance as Frank Booth stood out to me, but I was really asking myself, what separates a great actor and a loud actor? Sometimes those lines get blurred, especially during Oscars season. How do you keep a character like Frank from being over-the-top, and by extension, how do you make a movie like *Blue Velvet* transcend camp? It is a testament to Lynch's direction, he handles the reins so masterfully, you constantly feel like you're in good hands. Even in moments that would otherwise be absurd, the film is utterly serious.

While I loved Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellini and Laura Dern, their characters were admittedly a little flat, which made Dennis Hopper and Dean Stockwell's Ben more interesting. I wondered, why didn't it bother me that Jeffery, Dorothy and Sandy were a bit, and I mean this in the most affectionate way, boring? Then it hit me: *Blue Velvet* is using the noir genre as a template, therefore the characters are archetypes. They are predictable but still interesting, the audience recognizes them, the film doesn't need to tell us about them because we already know them. Sandy is the good girl, the angel sent to save Jeffery, while Dorothy is the bad girl with a heart of gold, the Lauren Bacall, the Rita Hayworth.

As a longtime *Twin Peaks* fan, I saw so many traces of the show in *Blue Velvet*, almost like Lynch was experimenting before he made the show, he was trying to find the voice he wanted, and knowing *Blue Velvet* came out in 1986 and *Twin Peaks* 1990 confirmed this to me. Jeffery is an investigator, an early Dale Cooper, and Lumberton and Twin Peaks bear a resemblance in the sense that both are sleepy towns filled with Americana charm, hiding a seedy underbelly, and Jeffery is drawn into that world the same way Cooper is. Lynch is satirizing American culture with both *Twin Peaks* and *Blue Velvet*, suggesting that beneath the wholesome exterior there is something twisted. Despite this, Lynch's worlds are fairy tales, they are about noble and honorable people battling against the forces of evil. They are hopeful, the darkness doesn't triumph. Ultimately Lynch is a romantic, and this movie proves it, his thesis is clear: good overcomes evil. In this way Frank is the personification of evil, just as Bob is in *Twin Peaks*. This might be a little on the nose, considering how obsessed Lynch is with the doppelganger, but they are two sides of the same coin. This is not to suggest that *Twin Peaks* and *Blue Velvet* are derivative of each other, but that certain themes return over and over again in Lynch's projects.

The romanticism of the movie is nowhere clearer than the scene where Jeffery asks Sandy why there are people like Frank. It is a very theological question, why are there bad people in the world? If God is omnipotent, why does he allow there to be evil?

However, Sandy's dream shows that darkness will never win out over light, that as long as there are monsters like Frank, there will be robins, and there will be good. It is no coincidence that Lynch uses the formula of the noir, when so much of the film is about the transition of darkness into light. Despite the happy ending, we are left with the feeling that the recovery has only just begun for the characters. Dorothy is deeply damaged by the events of the film, and we wonder if that was all Frank, or were her sadomasochistic traits always there, and will she ever confront those? But at least she is reunited with her son, and with the arrival of the robins, the healing can start.

Blue Velvet crafts a surrealist pseudo-fantasy world that the audience feels totally immersed in, and makes the characters feel believable and convincing. Lynch is sincere, something modern filmmakers have never heard of. In a world where we are hyper saturated with cynical, winking-at-the-camera, tongue-in-cheek humor, *Blue Velvet* continues to be a breath of fresh air.



It's a Strange World

by Finn Sullivan

I still remember exactly where I was the first time I heard the title "Twin Peaks". The fact that I still remember it vividly feels more than coincidental to me. It was in the backyard of my aunt and uncle's new house up in L.A. When they brought it up, I asked what it was and they told me that it was a show I'd like in a few years. I later learned that one (if not both) of them had never actually seen the series, but were probably just talking about it because of the at the time upcoming revival. The fact that they might not have ever even watched the series makes me question exactly how accurate my memory of this moment really is. Maybe I made the whole thing up in my head, or at least part of it, which (if true) would be pretty fitting when thinking about Lynch's work.

Anyway, the point is that I did watch *Twin Peaks* a few years later, and yes, I did like it very, very much.

It's strange just how much of an impact Lynch's work has had on a lot of us. I'm on my belated rewatch of TP, and it's clearer than ever just how much the series shaped who I am now, as dumb as that sounds. In particular, *Twin Peaks* had a large effect on the films I would seek out since my initial viewing. Peaks was my introduction to Lynch's work, as well as my introduction to "surrealism" as a whole, a word I still attribute to Lynch. Because of this, it's always what I suggest newcomers to his films seek out. It's not as raw or difficult as a lot of his film work, and it having to be edited for early 90s network TV (both in terms of content and general confusion) actually works in its favor when introducing someone to Lynch. Off the top of my head, anyone I can think of who told me they didn't "get" David Lynch, had only seen his films, and I can't help but think maybe they had it ruined for them by not starting with something more straightforward like *Twin Peaks* or *Blue Velvet*.

But at the same time - the idea that some people hate something someone else loves (and vice versa) is what's so cool about art. There are certainly some movies that are more highly regarded than others - obviously *Citizen Kane* is better than whatever the fuck the Minecraft movie is. But it's hard to be as objective when talking about a painting or a visual piece. To quote *Popstar*, "the Mona Lisa is an overrated piece of shit". But that's just my dumb opinion, and I'm sure tons of people (probably far more credible than me) will disagree. What I'm getting at here is that Lynch actually started his career as a painter, and oftentimes the polarized reactions people have to his films aren't all that different from when a group of completely different people look at the same painting and each one sees something else. When *Blue Velvet* released in 1986, Roger Ebert famously tore it apart. Others absolutely loved it.

I can go maybe, *maybe* 15 minutes into a conversation about films without bringing up Lynch, who has been such a big part of my life and interests despite the fact that I never even met the guy. During the pandemic, watching his weather reports became part of my daily routine, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who felt that way. When you think about someone every day, they become part of your life in a way that's very strange. The day before Lynch died, I had coincidentally talked to three separate people about him. When I woke up to the news the next morning, it almost felt coincidental. Had I killed David Lynch? Thankfully no, but once I got to thinking about it, I'm not sure I've gone a single day in the past five years where I *haven't* thought about David Lynch.

It's such a weird idea to me that we constantly think about people we don't even know. If I never heard the news of his passing, I'd probably be sitting here wondering what he was up to today, or at least wondering if we'd ever get to see another project from him. I don't know, maybe that just says something about me and my obsession with a 78 year old man's work.

Lynch was a character to say the least. And many of us, myself included, loved that about him. He was not afraid to express himself. He might not have elaborated, but he put himself out there and didn't care much if anyone judged him. He seemed to portray a certain honesty about himself and I think that's why a lot of people who never met him felt like they knew him in a way.

And on top of all that - I truly believe he was the most creative person in the world. Whether that be in his films or his artwork - or even his old comic strip about a neighborhood dog - he cared about everything he made. On January 16th, we lost someone very special. I don't think there will ever be another David Lynch, and I don't want to live to see anyone replace that role.

📷 @bobloblawlawbloglawbomb



Eraserhead: The Rebirth of Cinema

by: Travis Brunner

Instagram: @xbruno_sauce

Eraserhead is one of the most important films in the grand scheme of cinematic experimentalism. Its difficult to fathom what the climate of film would be like today if this was never made. Similar to The Holy Mountain, Eraserhead is a film that is so aggressively itself, that it divides the audience to a point of loving it or loathing it. The violent dichotomy of reactions after initial screenings was apparent immediately. This is one of the things that makes David Lynch a true pioneer to his craft. He played a huge role in turning film into cerebral art rather than just entertainment.

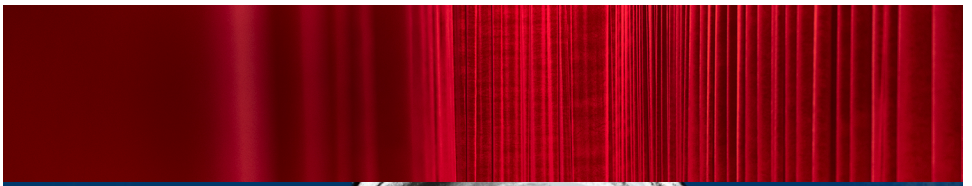
The world of this film is the one of the most fascinating things about it. It's completely littered with factories, filth, and overwhelming industrial noise. The way its presented so sparingly helps the viewer imagine parts of it that aren't shown in the film and what they entail. It makes me wonder what other strange things could possibly live in such a sparse, desolate place.

In regards to the story, it's very straightforward compared to the more abstract films in his catalog. I felt it had a very clear message about the fear of fatherhood. A basic tale of seeking a life that is just out of reach because of an insufferable partner and a screeching monster of a child. I suppose this is this could be considered somewhat autobiographical, because of Lynch's wife having an unexpected pregnancy in the early 1970s. The lady in the radiator represents "heaven" where Henry can be free of his family and indulge in the things he truly wants. He has a vision of her squishing exaggeratedly giant sperm cells to showcase that she's either unable or unwilling to have children, which is ideal for Henry.

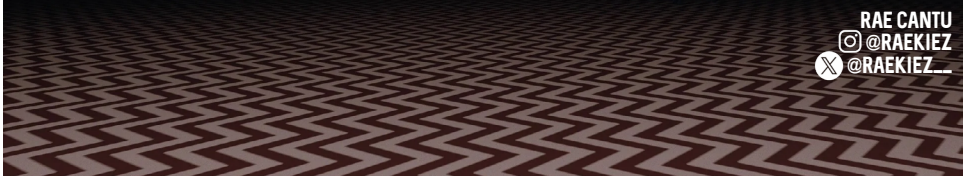
Before we move any further, I should make it clear that I interpret the beginning of this film as the birth of Henry. Henry's father failed to have any presence in his life after dumping him into the world, from a far away place using levers. This birth scene feels mechanical and even melancholic. There's a distance between him and Henry's fetus that makes him feel very detached. What he's doing here is treated as a painful, agonizing chore. The alleged subtext here is that the absence of his father is a significant reason why Henry is so afraid to be a father himself.

Later in the film, Henry enters the radiator and has a vision of his own head falling off of his body. His head is sporadically replaced by his child's head, and this is immediately superceded by a vision of his father. I believe this is the moment where he realizes that his child is doomed to the same fate as him. He is resentful, much like his father, and his child will inevitably fall into the same cycle of abandonment.

In another vision, we see Henry's disembodied head being discovered by factory workers and used to mass produce erasers in a pencil factory. To me, this symbolizes his lack of knowledge about the world and the realization that he can't possibly raise a child when he has so much to learn about himself. In other words, he views himself as having a head made out of erasers. This forces him to make an unspeakable decision. He decides to murder his child so he can finally act out his fantasy of being with the radiator lady, who can give him the life he always wanted. However, this wasn't his only motivation. He also wants to save his child from a life where its father wants nothing to do with it, much like his own father wanted nothing to do with him. This is simply an earnest attempt to end the cycle.

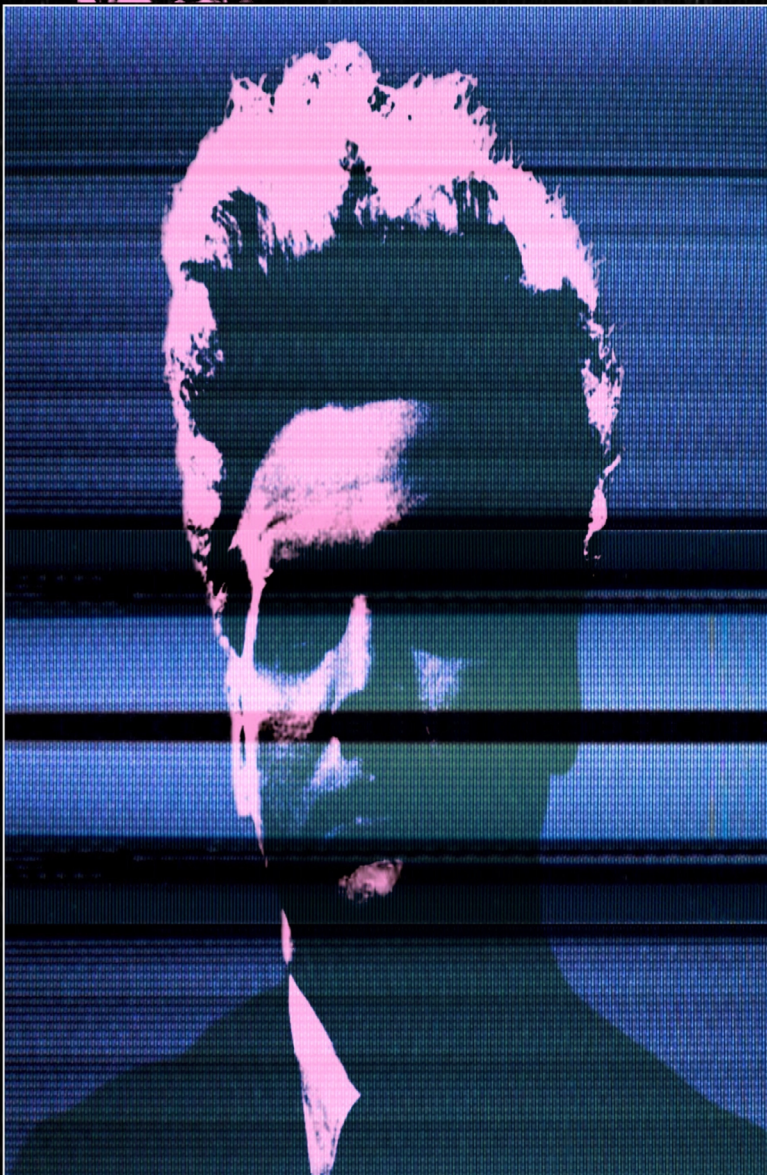


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@RAEKIEZ
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DAVID LYNCH'S

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IN HEAVEN EVERYTHING IS FINE

As a cultural worker and longtime David Lynch fan, my creative goal has been to find ways to weave these two worlds together. I am a Ryūkyūan (Okinawan) yonsei (fourth generation) who was born and raised in the U.S., which is to say that I was fairly disconnected from the culture, languages, and home islands of my issei (first generation) great-grandparents. The genealogical and emotional distances we experience make it easy to use abstractions to piece together the fragments – old grainy family photos and warped cassette tapes of traditional songs take on a ghostly quality; our ancestor’s homeland feels like a faraway dream place.

This is a simple poem in a traditional Ryūkyūan style called ruuka/ryuuka 琉歌, which uses an 8-8-8-6 mora pattern and is written in Uchinaaguchi, one of the endangered native languages of the Ryūkyū Islands. The primary instrument in the musical component is a traditional three-stringed lute called sanshin.

Click here to listen to the accompanying composition:

<http://tinyurl.com/yanaimi-lynch>

Instagram: @yanaimi.noise

Bandcamp: <https://yanaimi.bandcamp.com>

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@yana-imi>

“imi ru yataru”

by Joseph Yoshimasu Kamiya

kunu tuusaru tukuru

くぬ とぅーさる とぅくる

this faraway place,

chirinasaru tukuru

ちりなさる とぅくる

a cold/heartless place.

yunusachi ya miiran

ゆぬさち や みーらん

the future cannot be seen.

imi ru yataru

いみる やたる

it was just a dream.





by **Valentine Wollnik**

On January 16, 2025, I walked into my film class and heard the news. I had heard of Lynch vaguely but this was the very moment where I was immersed in his world. I went to see Eraserhead at a midnight screening at the Frida Cinema which led me to see Blue Velvet the very next week. I was in love with the cinematography, themes, and of course, Kyle MacLachlan. I've made a few other pieces by hand stitched shirts but none of this caliber. I scoured on Depop and found the perfect long sleeve with "blue velvet" material. Then I found a place to print out the exact scene to match the material.

With my canvas and the photo printed onto fabric all ready, the next step was to cut and hand stitch onto the shirt! This took me about two or three hours and just in time to wear it on my first date with my now boyfriend!

I've learned so much and gone on such a journey since getting introduced to David Lynch. I will continue to discover his filmography and other works in association!

Tiktok: [jazzenthusiast_](#)
Instagram: [valentine_andtheworld](#)
Depop: [jazzintotheneight](#) (May be selling handmade clothing soon!)



The Frida Cinema is a gathering place for movie lovers of all kinds. The lobby is a place of film discussion and friendly gathering, a venue of its own where perspectives from all backgrounds are welcomed and engaged with. We have started the Frida Zinema to replicate this experience in printed form. We welcome all who love film to submit their artwork, writings, and thoughts, and to connect to other artists in a space of creativity and understanding. We love films, and we love people who love films. Please, share your thoughts and artwork, and enjoy the ones within.

Find our digital Director's Cut at thefridacinema.com/zine

