

COMPOUND EYE

Presskit

COMPOUND EYE

Reviews for “Compound Eye”:

“soon’s considerable talents come in handy – not the least of which are his editing skills. The film snaps along smartly . . . an intriguing pastiche of music, art and words.”

-- **James Wegg Review**

Reviews for yahn soon’s last feature, “Scared New World”:

“Solidly in the tradition of pioneer indie pics like Cassavetes' "Shadows" . . . fests looking to showcase new Amerindie talent should take note.” -- **Dennis Harvey, Variety**

“yahn soon . . . in cahoots with director and cinematographer Chris Brown have come up with a charming 82 minutes of insight . . . If you agree with me that movies depend on pictures to be a true art form, remember these names. Expanded, their funds will produce masterpieces.” -- **John Stackpole, audiencemag.com**

“A gem. Chris Brown directs this tale of three Oakland housemates with a sure touch for rhythms of life, silences, quiet spaces and the way in which humans cross paths . . . A turntable-fueled score adds just the perfect layer of kooky melancholy.”

— **San Jose Metro News**

“...Well made and enlightening entertainment . . . comes close to the improv and spontaneous filmmaking of Steven Soderbergh’s more independent work. . . a global family dynamic that at times may bewilder but never bore.” -- **Omaha City Weekly**

John Balquist Productions
Presents

COMPOUND EYE

Directed by
yahn soon

Starring
Jesse Reklaw
Fausto Caceres
Atosa Babaoff
Josh Millican
Jill Pixley
Jonathan Kaplan

Running Time: 75 Minutes

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Director's Statement

Upon setting out to make this film, I had no idea what it would be about. My good friend, Jesse Reklaw, was a cartoonist who lived in a very unique artist's co-op called "Compound Eye." I knew I wanted to shoot a film in this location using the real inhabitants, and was able to enlist Jesse as well as his roommate, Fausto Caceres. Fausto's underground radio station provided the soundscape, and on the first night of shooting, he showed me a photo album he had discovered in a second-hand store. The album contained photos, a birth and death certificate, and approximately thirty letters written by a man who was losing his mind.

This film was created without a script, its two main stars are not actors, and the lost letters of the schizophrenic are completely real. None of the letters or photos were manipulated (except to be re-sized for the screen). With no script or storyline to begin with, the movie took shape as filming progressed, one scene leading to another. No money was spent on the making of this film.

I believe "Compound Eye" is staking a path in the direction that has already been advanced by the advent of reality TV and our fascination with genuine people caked in outrageous situations. Deluged with inaccuracies and false claims from the media and our government, we've reached a breaking point where no one can be seen in a serious light, and the most honest might as well be liars.

Credits

CAST

Jesse Reklaw Jesse
Fausto Caceres Fausto
Atosa Babaoff Atosa
Josh Millican Josh
Jill Pixley Jill Hartwell
Jonathan Kaplan Evangelical Protestor

CREW

Director yahn soon
Production Company John Balquist Productions
Producer yahn soon
Un-Screenplay yahn soon, Fausto Caceres, Jesse
Reklaw, Atosa Babaoff, Josh Millican
Cinematographer yahn soon
Editor yahn soon
Music Fausto Caceres

SYNOPSIS

LOGLINE

A cartoonist, a pirate radio station, and the lost letters of a schizophrenic

50-WORD SYNOPSIS

The lost letters of a schizophrenic create an eerie soundscape for a pirate radio DJ while his cartoonist roommate enters a media tempest with his latest comic depicting the World Trade Center rebuilt as an IHOP with two stacks of pancakes rising high into the New York sky.

90-WORD SYNOPSIS

Dream cartoonist Jesse Reklaw (the syndicated "Slow Wave") finds himself within the eye of a tempest when his latest comic depicts the World Trade Center rebuilt as an IHOP staffed by Afghan refugees. Downstairs, his roommate Fausto keeps to himself by creating lush soundscapes for his weekly pirate radio show and immersing himself in a second-hand photo album containing the lost letters of a schizophrenic. But Fausto's quiet days are numbered as attention surrounding the cartoon threatens to bring his underground operation into the limelight.

Director's Biography for "Compound Eye"

yahn soon honed his filmmaking skills under the tutelage of improvisational filmmaker Rick Schmidt (*Morgan's Cake*, Sundance 1989), and his last film, *Scared New World*, premiered at the Mill Valley Film Festival and received top honors at the 2006 Pacific Edge Film Festival. *Variety* called it "Solidly in the tradition of pioneer indie pics like Cassavetes' *Shadows*." A California Bay Area native and Creative Writing graduate from UC-Santa Cruz, yahn soon has penned two features and acted in several others. *Compound Eye* is his feature directorial debut.

Selected Filmography

Scared New World (Color, 80 min., writer/producer) Three roommates in an Oakland apartment-- a pot-dealing single mother, a reclusive writer, and a bisexual French exchange student, all taking their lives in uncomfortable directions. *Winner, "Best Feature" at the 2006 Pacific Edge Film Festival*

Loneliness is Soul (Color, 94 min. writer/actor) An itinerant musician's presence in a Berkeley household brings everyone out of their shell. *Winner, "Best Screenplay" at the 1998 Figueroa De Foz Film Festival in Portugal.*

A Heart and Other Small Shapes (Color, 25 min., actor) A glimpse into the lives of two children and three adults who keep secrets and act out intimate wants, in a piece that examines the awkwardness and specificity of human desire. *World Premiere at the 2006 Rotterdam Film Festival*

About the Cast

Jesse Reklaw (JESSE) -- Jesse Reklaw was born in 1971 in Berkeley, California, where his hippie parents sold bread from a cart on Telegraph Avenue. He studied painting and digital art at UC Santa Cruz, and has a master's degree in computer science from Yale University. Since 1995 he has been drawing and self-syndicating the weekly comic strip "Slow Wave," which is currently printed by a dozen newspapers around the country. The first collection of "Slow Wave" strips, entitled *Dreamtoons*, was published by Shambhala in 2000. Jesse's other comics have appeared in a variety of anthologies and self-published mini-comics.

Fausto Caceres (Fausto) -- Former underground operator of Shirley and Spinoza Internet radio, Fausto now resides in Western China where he teaches and archives indigenous music.

Atosa Babaoff (ATOSA) -- Atosa is an actress, writer and yoga teacher and has performed in numerous plays and films in San Francisco, as well as theater in New York and a bit of T.V. (*Law and Order: Criminal Intent*). She has an MFA in acting from the American Conservatory Theater.

Josh Millican (JOSH) -- Josh Millican has appeared in all of yahn soon's previous productions, most recently as "Jones" in *Scared New World*. In addition to acting, Josh is a poet, writer and musician. His current band, Temple of Roots, gigs regularly throughout the Bay Area mixing elements of reggae and hip hop.

Jill Pixley (JILL HARTWELL) -- Jill's film credits include *Making Metamorphosis* (2001 MVFF), *Daughters* (1997 MVFF) and Rick Schmidts' *Maisy's Garden*. New York and regional theatre credits include *The Crucible*, *Blue Window*, *Sure Thing* and *Italian American Reconciliation*. Born in Denver, Jill received her BA in Drama from Stanford University and graduated from The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre in New York.