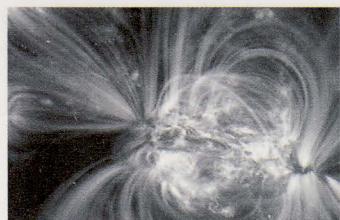


# SHELF

Texts: Klaus Neumann (kn), Alexander Scholz (as)

Translation: Estelle Raschka (er)



dvd

## JO JO IN THE STARS by studio aka

• DVD: #08

Produced and self-financed by one of the world's leading studios for animation and motion design, studio aka in London, *Jo Jo in the Stars* is a story of two unlikely lovers in an unlikely place. In a nightmarish black and white world where the only attraction are the strange and the misfits, one among many dares to follow his heart. When the nameless hero frees his long worshipped love Jo Jo, a winged silver-plated trapeze artist, the two make a desperate stand against the world they're bound to. But reaching for the stars eventually claims the ultimate sacrifice. Awarded Best Animated Short Film at BAFTA 2004, shown and honoured at many international animation festivals, *Jo Jo in the Stars* is now available on DVD directly from the studio.

Unfortunately, the DVD doesn't have much else to offer besides the film itself—no making of, no storyboards, no menu (which you don't need, of course, when bonus features are missing). Yet we wholeheartedly recommend this masterpiece to anyone with a soft spot for artistic 3D animation, leading visual design—and, of course, a touching story of tragic beauty. (as)

Jo Jo in the Stars © studio aka 2003 / [studioaka.co.uk/jojo](http://studioaka.co.uk/jojo)

dvd

## WORLDS IN FLUX by Semiconductor

• DVD: #10

Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt are comfortably sitting in their seats at the cinema at London's BFI (British Film Institute). With matter-of-fact excitement typical of artists who know exactly what they're doing, the two Semiconductor tell of their trip into the world of NASA's UC Berkeley Space Sciences Lab. For five months they had the privilege of peeking at the scientists' desktops and pumping information out of them about their work—they had access to data that would bring tears to any hobby astronomer's eyes. Then the lights go out and I get a clear view of the sun as I've never seen it before. It radiates in wonderful black and white colours and intensely erupts. Normally, NASA retouches and colours such images for PR use, but here you can see them in their raw form—making them even more impressive. The tone is just as direct, and has been integrated to coincide with the images' various colour fields. High-frequency rustling and clicking meet solar brilliance, enabling me to perceive both the emptiness and fullness of space at the same time. Like lying on your back and staring into the starry sky—times 100. And suddenly I knew how the two must have felt in Berkeley.

*Brilliant Noise* is the name of Semiconductor's latest work and it's also the focus of their video DVD *Worlds in Flux*. Since 1997, the British artist duo has worked in the fields of live animation, short films and music videos, and is a sought-after guest at festivals and exhibitions around the world. *Brilliant Noise* is not only a film, it's also a live performance, as well as a starting point for other artists. You'll find eleven interpretations by different musicians such as Antenna Farm, Disinformation or Max Richter on their DVD.

Above all, though, *Worlds in Flux* is also a comprehensive overview of Semiconductor's work over the past five years. Twelve current as well as older works show their remarkable oeuvre. *The Sound of Microclimates* draws your attention to urbane climate changes, only to condense to a symphony of electric lights over Paris at night. *200 Nanowebbers* is a music video set to a track by Double Adaptor, featuring a world infused with twitching roots and pumping origami constructions under the microscope. Just two examples of a compilation that couldn't be more versatile.

Semiconductor themselves refer to their films as 'sound films'. And that's exactly what they are. Guided by an obsessive interest in landscape, architecture, geography, chaos / systems theory and artificial life forms, as they say, Semiconductor seek to explore the computational methods of imagery that's controlled and generated by sounds—and vice versa. *Worlds in Flux* is an impressive documentation of the search for the unity of sound and image—and eventual proof that it exists. (kn/er)

Worlds In Flux © Semiconductor 2007

FatCat Records 2007 / [semiconductorfilms.com](http://semiconductorfilms.com)

dvd

## 458 NM by Jan Bitzer, Ilija Brunck and Tom Weber

• DVD: #09

Two bionic snails cross paths in the foggy depths of a forest. When their electric probes synchronise, intimacy gets initiated, that couldn't feel more real and emotional. Is it love? Or just a sub-routine? Before we have the chance to find out, coincidence takes over and reminds us of the unmistakable laws of nature—bionic imitation or not.

Inspired by a poem of the 19th century German poet Theodor Storm, *458nm* is the 2006 3D animated graduation short by former Filmakademie Ludwigsburg students Jan Bitzer, Ilija Brunck and Tom Weber. And it hit big: among many international awards and festival screenings, *458nm* received the "Special Jury Honour Award" and SIGGRAPH 2006 and the "Golden Nica" of last year's Prix Ars Electronica. A reputational echo that speaks for itself.

The filmmakers have recently founded the animation studio Polynoid. Their first action: making *458nm* available for download for free. Noble. The DVD, with some neat extras, is still available for you. The young filmmakers will surely appreciate the support and send your copy via, no surprise, snail mail. (as)

458nm © BitzerBrunckWeber 2006 / [458nm.de](http://458nm.de) / [polynoid.org](http://polynoid.org)