

Film

Magiciens reconsidered 3: cults of possession

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium

Saturday 12 April 2014, 17.30 – 19.30

£5, concessions available

Programme duration: 84 minutes

Part of the series [Magiciens de la Terre: reconsidered](#)

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2 of 3



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- Geraldo Sarno, *Ião / Iawo: Initiation in a Gege-Nago Temple* 1976, film still
Courtesy of the artist and Centro Technico Audiovisual, Rio de Janeiro
- [Toggle Fullscreen](#)
- [Previous](#)
- [Next](#)

One of the many named themes for films screened at the Pompidou during *Magiciens de la Terre* was the programme called *Cults of possession*.

These two films reflect on ritual practices and forms of spirituality in South America, while allowing us to consider the rituals of cinema and the desire to possess as well as to become possessed.

Moonblood: A Yanomamo Creation Myth As Told By Dedeheiwa

Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon, USA/Brazil 1976, 16mm transferred to video, 14 min
In the late 1960s and into the 1970s, filmmaker Timothy Asch and anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon collaborated on a documentary project focused on Yanomamo Indians - a group of indigenous people who live in the Amazon rainforest on the border between Venezuela and Brazil.
In this film the shaman Dedeheiwa retells a Yanomamo creation myth that accounts for the creation of human beings and for human ferocity.

Ião / Iawo: Initiation in a Gege-Nago Temple

Geraldo Sarno, Brazil 1976, 16mm, 70 min
This rare film by Brazilian documentary filmmaker Geraldo Sarno examines the initiation rites into a Gege-Nago Temple of the Candomblé house of worship in Bahia, Brazil. The film traces the transformation of three young women into Iaios, or brides, of the spirit Orisha.
In exploring the Yoruba cult of Orisha brought to Brazil by enslaved Africans the film offers a reflection on the religion and culture, as well as its ideology and social meanings. Inspired by the influential 1972 text *The Nago and death* by the anthropologist Juana Elbein dos Santos. Together with her husband, the artist Mestre Didi (who participated in *Magiciens de la Terre* exhibition), Juana Elbein pioneered the study of African-Brazilian art and culture and the origins of Candomblé.