



## **Avanto Celebrates International Free Cinema** **A festival of experimental film and music in Helsinki, 16-18 November 2007**

The eighth edition of the Avanto Festival will focus on film under the title International Free Cinema. The programme features an extraordinary line-up of moving images that question traditional ways of making and watching films. Headlining the festival are two legendary pioneers of experimental filmmaking: the Canadian artist **Michael Snow** and the Austrian artist **Peter Kubelka**. Both filmmakers will personally present all their essential works. An exhaustive retrospective of these two masters in one event is a rare occasion indeed.

Avanto 2006 uncovered the forgotten history of Finnish experimental filmmaking with its popular *Sähkömetsä* (“*Electric Forest*”) programme. This year Avanto sheds light on some rarely seen gems of Swedish and Russian experimental cinema. *Nära ögat*, a series curated by researcher **John Sundholm**, features an impressive selection of Swedish experimental films from the 1950s and 1960s, while cutting edge Russian avant-garde films from the current millennium are introduced in *Steklianno pole*, a programme curated by filmmaker **Masha Godovannaya**. The annual Avantoscope programme features the very best of contemporary experimental filmmaking. The festival is also proud to host the world premiere of Esko Lönnberg’s *Ympyrä* (2007), a documentary fantasy focusing on **Circle**, the prolific collective of Finnish experimentalists whose self-coined genre, NWOFFHM (The New Wave of Finnish Heavy Metal), can include everything from fragile atonal piano improvisation to catatonic one-note walls of sound. The programme also features “the greatest film about football ever made”, **Douglas Gordon**’s and **Philippe Parreno**’s visually stunning cinemascope spectacle *Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait* (2006).

As a complement to the festival weekend’s boundary-pushing cinematic experiences, the Avanto clubs, this year arranged in cooperation with Äänen Lumo and Potlatch, will offer a wide scope of free music from Finland and abroad.

The Äänen Lumo club features the comeback gig of one of the pioneers of Finnish electronic music, the synthesiser pop band **Organ**, and one of the most esteemed names of ultra-energetic Japanese noise, **Pain Jerk**, whose music is a colourful storm of electricity guaranteed to mesmerise the audience. The noise experience is counterbalanced by the atmospheric “bonfire organ music” of the Swedish trio **Tape**. In addition, the night will feature the Finnish sound artist **Petri**

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**Kuljuntausta**, who will present his latest work, a composition featuring real-time sounds from outer space.

The Potlatch club will bring two British and two Finnish acts to the stage. The four acts all base their music on improvisation, but the results are wildly divergent.

**Eddie Prévost** and **Alan Wilkinson** take free jazz as the starting point for a journey into the core of heat. With their arsenal of instruments, **Volcano the Bear** creates a ritual out of absurd humour and free association. The Finnish collective **Avarus** confounds the audience with its concoction of spontaneous and energetic improvisation, while **Kuupuu** investigates rich textures of tone and timbre, representing the female power of the new Finnish underground.

Kiasma Mediatheque will be the venue for Michael Snow's video installation *SSHTOORRTY*. The festival will climax on Sunday at Kiasma Theatre with Peter Kubelka's lecture/performance *The Edible Metaphor: Cooking, the Mother of Religion, Art and Science*.

The Festival is organised by the non-profit Avanto association in cooperation with the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art and the Finnish Film Archive. The venues of this year's Avanto Festival are Kiasma Theatre, Kiasma Mediatheque, Cinema Orion, Kuudes linja and Gloria. Tickets will be available from Kiasma starting from 1 November.

The entire programme is available at [www.avantofestival.com](http://www.avantofestival.com)

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