

# Week in Film: a Berliner Thriller and Rarely Seen Vids Shot By a Downtown 'Ethnographer'

BY NICOLE DISSER

**Michel Auder + Rebekah Rutkoff: *Sunsets and Other Stars***

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 7:30 pm at *Light Industry*: \$8 at the door

French artist, photographer, and filmmaker Michel Auder left France in the '70s for New York City, where he's resided ever since. He's maybe best known as Cindy Sherman's ex-husband (JK, but for real — how do you compete with Cindy Sherman?). Much of his video work (though **apparently** Auder “did not consider it fine art”) consists of ethnographic snapshots and sceney vignettes, the stuff of Auder's cool Downtown life amongst artists like Annie Sprinkle, Larry Rivers, Hannah Wilke, among others.

But another good chunk of his focus was deadly personal. Take *My Last Bag of Heroin (For Real)*, a 1993 piece which shows the filmmaker, who battled with heroin addiction for many years, breaking apart a glassine baggie of heroin onto a piece of aluminum foil and smoking the stuff. The video demonstrates the banality of drug use, often depicted as an explosively orgasmic experience, particularly in film.

For this event, Light Industry will screen some of his rarely-seen shorts including, *Polaroid Cocaine*, (a 1993 “meditation on photography, advertising, desire, and spectacle”); *Talking Head*, 1981 (Auder, obscured behind the leaves of a plant, films his kid as she recites a bizarre child-speak monologue); and *Multi-Screen 1967* (a collection of still images including ones of **Brigid Berlin** painting with her mammaries).

New York-based essayist/artist Rebekah Rutkoff will be reading from her new book, *The Irresponsible Magician*. In case you're unfamiliar, her publishers describe her as a Joan Didion-type writer whose work is “sharp, acerbic, and often humorous.” The book includes an essay on Michel Auder, one of many photographers and filmmakers who she spotlights among other cultural figures as diverse as Oprah Winfrey and the Kennedys.