

he graphic basis for the into impressive textural forms and luminous prisms (2010) layers the letters of semicircles, lozenges, veins of vivid fluorescent all the sprayed fracture rinter down to its limy or spectrum. A thick, slash across the middle simultaneously commu- ced access, negation, division, cellular repro- sic fissure, and the cut- of all things slasher inforce the function of gnifying coded (though y legible) signification. postindustrial future- etic register that reigned e show, Lund evinced a ital and obliquely tech- ion of Albers's broken- ed type, superimposing ilitary stencils on the s with the digital world's y dots and dashes. aggression underwent ation through explosive ticky sexuality in Lund's ag, and swollen abject ich channel ProtoLogos erbolically haptic inter- generative principle of e body's seminal fluid. ultural by Lund as an niguously in the prime- kage, congealed slime, l masks, lunar craters, *Sombra*) is a teetering arm" holding a decapi- Alien Art Concept) that

## Terry Chatkupt

LAXART

How about "A guy walks into a diner . . ." or "A guy gets a phone call . . ."? Either mundane opener—which in a joke would set up a punch line, which would achieve humor by creating an unexpected turn in the narrative course—could have articulated an action in the script for Terry Chatkupt's new video short *Transferase*, 2010. Part psycho-drama, part nail-biting suspense flick, the nine-minute digital video is also a comedy, deriving its dramatic tension from the split perception of its lone, anonymous protagonist and the degree to which he alters the experiences of the people around him.

As the piece begins, we are shown a smog-filtered sunny afternoon in LA (just like any other in that city), but as shot by Chatkupt, the skyline appears vast, looming as if it were revealing some supernatural disturbance. On a street lined with backlit palm trees (another LA classic) and bathed in "magic hour" light, an anxious young man enters a sparsely populated diner and places an order. He has just received a call on his cell phone, the content of which no one else knows, except that it regards some imminent, indeterminate threat. The man becomes exasperated, and his behavior seems only to irritate bystanders, so he retreats to the restroom, where, relieving himself, he attempts to collect his thoughts. Before long, he returns to the counter, issuing requisite apologies, and receives his food from a fresh-faced young woman who offers him a smile and then uses a napkin to tend to a dribble of blood creeping from his nose. The next moment, our protagonist is out cold. When he eventually comes to on the diner floor, the place is deserted, a change in lighting suggesting that time has elapsed. His panic now downgraded to agitation, the man exits the coffeeshop and is again framed by the Californian cityscape. He scans his surroundings, suffers another nosebleed, and seconds later collapses again, this time on the pavement, and alone.

For anyone familiar with Steve De Jarnatt's 1988 cult thriller *Miracle Mile*, in which a young man, having answered a misdialed call to a pay phone, learns of pending nuclear apocalypse and then lives out his final moments with the late-night diner crowd that he has partially convinced the unthinkable is unfolding, Chatkupt's reference is unmistakable. However, the particulars of this scenario aside, it is the imbalance of meaning among multiple parties in the same situation that is



Terry Chatkupt, *Transferase*, 2010, still from a single-channel HD video, 9 minutes 17 seconds.

De Jarnatt's real content, and perhaps Chatkupt's too. Whereas the commercial film writer-director was obligated to tie up many of his B-movie drama's loose ends, Chatkupt gets to allow all the possible trajectories of his film to dangle. Such a construction is a staple in genre films from sci-fi and intrigue drama to farce and slapstick. By placing knowledge, access, insight, and perception into tension, filtering the various states through an undefined, though presumably game-changing event, Chatkupt replicates the conditions in which so many political and religious issues are contested. Here we see the protagonist navigate the blessing/curse of his revelation, or of the classified information he's just been given, and the trepidation of disclosure, interpretation, and call to evangelism that he feels. It's not an easy position. It appears profoundly painful. And yet the source of Chatkupt's protagonist's inner agony is also a punch line in itself, and a bitter one, given the complexity of our enduring and often unanswered quests—from Googling WikiLeaks to praying to an invisible god—to understand political machinations, cosmic clockwork, or the workings of the divine.

—Christopher Miles

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