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Article Published: Thursday, December 09, 2004

## Top experimental films set at Starz

By [Lisa Kennedy](#)  
[Denver Post Film Critic](#)

What would Freud make of "Alone Life Wastes Andy Hardy"? This was one of many questions raised at a recent screening of an abridged version of The International Experimental Cinema Exposition's Fifth-Anniversary Tour.

"Alone Life" is one of 14 shorts (including the only known print of Jean Genet's "Un Chant d'Amour") set to screen in a blockbuster evening Friday at the Starz FilmCenter.

Austrian filmmaker Martin Arnold's 15-minute film takes footage of Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland and Fay Holden (who played Andy's mother), and creates an amusing and eerie dance of the oedipal.

"Ever since I was a little kid, I've been interested in independent and experimental film," said TIE founder-director Christopher May. When he moved to Argentina in 1996 that attraction found a robust underground film culture.

"I have this uncontrollable passion," said May, who now lives in Denver.

In 2000, that desire led him to gather the like-minded for a conference in Telluride. The next year they convened again. In 2002, the organization moved to its home in

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Colorado Springs. Friday's event kicks off the national tour.

The show is a vivid reminder that movies can be art.

"For people who spend a lot of time in galleries or festivals, it's

unique for them because there's so much video, video, video," said May. (Case in point: Jeremy Deller's video "Memory Bucket: A Film About Texas," was just awarded Britain's distinguished Turner Prize.)

"If you're willing to stare at a Van Gogh for 15 minutes, it's not a stretch to stare at a Stan Brakhage for 15 minutes," said the FilmCenter's Eric Beteille.

Brakhage hand-painted 1991's "Delicacies of Molten Horror Synapse." It's a puzzle of a title that feels spot-on once you've seen this vibrant, fluid 10-minute silent.

Taking it a step further, German filmmaker Thorsten Fleisch goes for, if not the jugular, at least a vein. He applied his blood to clear film leader to make the lovely, intriguing "Blutrausch (Bloodlust)."

Seeing afresh, being flummoxed, getting downright angry or nodding off are not unreasonable reactions to experimental works.

"People tell me that it makes you think about movies in the multiplex completely different after seeing a festival of experimental film," TIE's May said. "They pay attention to the edges of the screen or the way in which things are more conventionally framed. After they've seen experimental film, (people) pay attention to things other than the plot."

With an intermission, May said, the event will run almost four hours. The good news: These 14 films were culled from more than 500 TIE has shown the past five years.

"It's the cream of the crop," said Beteille. "This is like

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Jimi Hendrix's best guitar solos, without the basement demos no one wants to hear."

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