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Galleries: Suib and Hironaka's dizzying video half-dozen

By Edith Newhall, For The Inquirer
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"The Continuous Moment" is one of the videos being shown at Locks Gallery.

Rather than presenting one dramatically large video installation, as they did for their last show at Locks Gallery, in 2012, the filmmaking team of Matthew Suib and Nadia Hironaka now have taken the opposite approach. Their current show at Locks, "Mirrors, Marks & Loops," is a cineaste's dream and my idea of the perfect visual torment: six videos, all running continuously in the ground-floor gallery.

But Suib and Hironaka have become so good at what they do - making ambitious, witty films that play on the history of the moving image, among other things - that I soon found myself sitting in the dark on various cubes distributed throughout the gallery, watching each video from beginning to end. I think I may have seen the largest of them, *Ascension (With Cat)*, several times, but I have no way of knowing, it being something akin to an abstract painting in flux.

The *Continuous Moment* imagines that the endless, world-engulfing superstructure called "Continuous Monument," proposed in 1969 by the radical Italian architecture firm Superstudio, has in fact been constructed; it is the cleverest of these latest collaborations.

Borrowing its look from the tongue-in-cheek photo-collages that Superstudio unveiled that year showing the superstructure enveloping parts of major cities, the video displays the superstructure in similarly improbable sites. But it also interjects it into found film footage incorporated in the video, in this case replacing the Queensborough Bridge in the famous nighttime scene from Woody Allen's 1979 film *Manhattan*. In Suib and Hironaka's version of events, Allen and Diane Keaton look out over the Hudson River toward Long Island City with the decidedly unromantic Continuous Monument looming to their left. To their credit, Suib and Hironaka are not above wanting to get a laugh - and besides, who could possibly resist pairing these images?

Two of the smaller videos, which they call "video portraits" - *Post-Perceptual Exercise #1* and *Post-Perceptual Exercise #2* - muse on the creative process, the former showing a male artist alone in his

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studio making a work, the latter a female artist in her studio doing the same, both solitarily reciting passages from Umberto Eco as they work. Seeing the pieces they produce, in which parts of paintings and drawings fly into the air and magically land in new compositions, would seem to be a reference to Suib and Hironaka's own working processes.

Their most recent work, a film installation titled Exploded View that comprises two films, struck me as a send-up of westerns, film noir, and early sci-fi. The film projected (yes, by a projector) on the gallery's west wall shows a piece of pyrite - fool's gold - mysteriously spinning above the ground in a green, wooded landscape. Behind that wall, in a former elevator shaft turned temporary makeshift theater, a black-and-white film of a piece of pyrite (also projected) gives the illusion that the rock is suspended in this dark, claustrophobia-inducing space. It's accompanied by a rambling narrative of greed and regret read by Nabil Kashyap in a voice reminiscent of William Holden. Exploded View is a modest, wonderfully strange work that augurs well for the future.