



HOMMAGE TO RAYMOND ROUSSEL

Terra incognita

A FILM BY PETER VOLKART

31. November

with PAUL AVONDET
SANDRA KÜNZI
narration VOLKER RISCH
BODO KRUMWIEDE
cinematography_HANSUELI SCHENKEL
compositing_VOLKART & VOLKART
PAUL AVONDET
sound design_VOCO FAUXPAS
sound mix CHRISTIAN BEUSCH
editing HARALD & HERBERT
producer_FRANZISKA RECK
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HERMANNSTADT → TARNOPOL → ZEROGRAD → MORPHOPOLIS → NOVOSUBURBIA → PORT OKAPI → KARFUNKEL - ARCHIPEL → SUBOTIKA → NANOPOL

HOMMAGE À RAYMOND ROUSSEL

Terra incognita

A FILM BY PETER VOLKART

35mm, 18 min, German, english subtitles, soutitres français, Switzerland 2005

He was in the headlines for a brief period in the late 1920s:

Igor Leschenko, the young physicist from Hermannstadt, whose bizarre experiments cast doubt upon the law of gravity. The debacle at the pataphysicist convention leads to a secret expedition to the point of zero gravity. Rare film footage of a hazardous journey beyond Zentropa through the Karfunkel archipelago. Will Leschenko ever find the Nanopol Island?

Igor Leschenko a brièvement fait les gros titres à la fin des années 20. Le jeune physicien d'Hermannstadt qui avait ébranlé la loi de la gravité avec ses expériences bizarres, c'est lui. La débâcle au congrès des pataphysiciens fut suivie d'une expédition secrète jusqu'au point d'anti-gravité. Des films documentaires rares retracent un voyage au-delà de Zentropa à travers l'archipel menaçant de Karfunkel. Igor Leschenko découvrira-t-il l'île Nanopol ?

Ende der 20er Jahre war er kurz in den Schlagzeilen:

Igor Leschenko, der junge Physiker aus Hermannstadt, der mit bizarren Experimenten das Gesetz der Schwerkraft ins Wanken bringt. Das Debakel am Kongress der Pataphysiker führt zu einer geheimen Expedition zum Antigravitätspunkt. Rare Filmdokumente einer Reise jenseits von Zentropa durch den bedrohlichen Karfunkel-Archipel. Wird Leschenko die Insel Nanopol je finden?

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www.reckfilm.ch

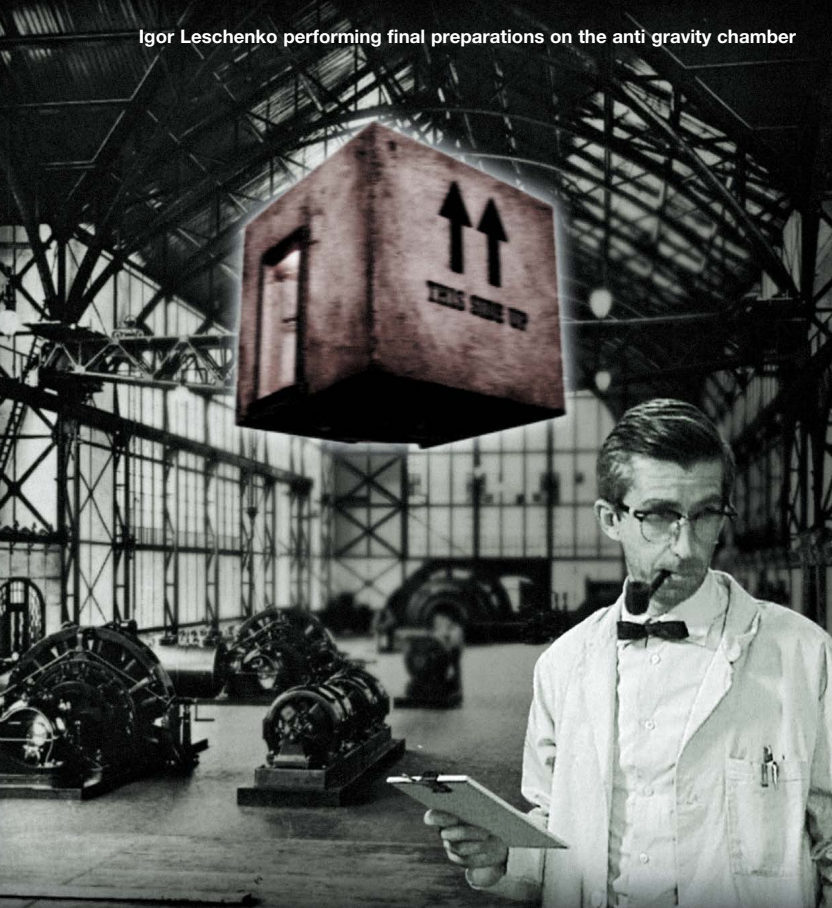
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Igor Leschenko performing final preparations on the anti gravity chamber



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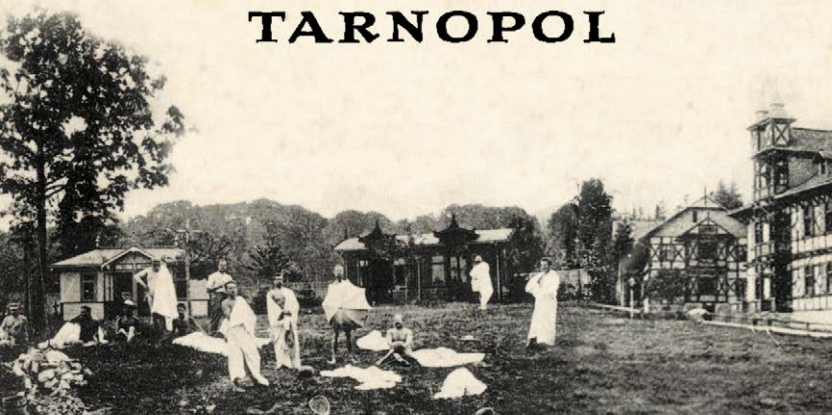
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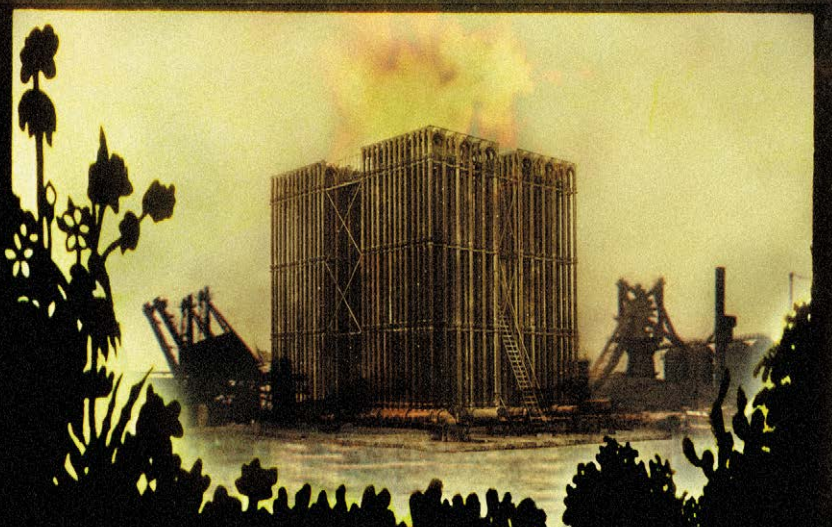
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SANATORIUM FÜR GEMÜTSKRANKHEITEN

**INSTITUT
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TARNOPOL**

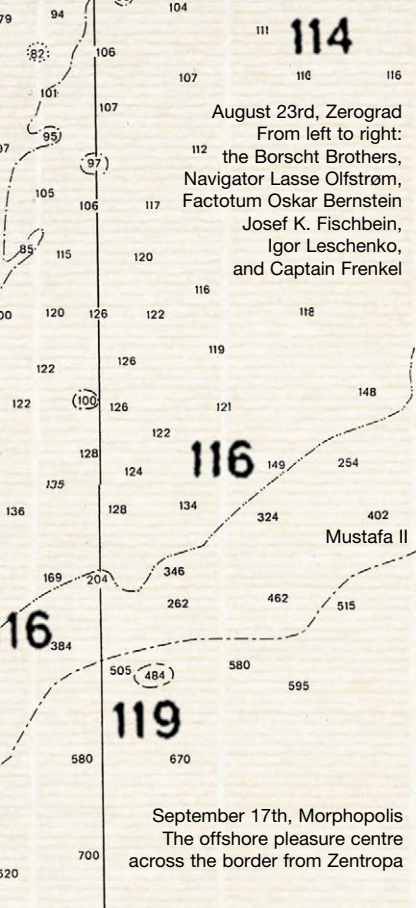




Hello from

ZEROGRAD

AUTHENTIC OLD WORLD CHARM FOR EVERYBODY!



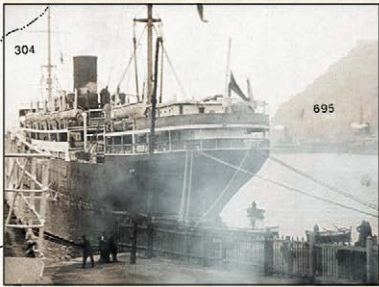
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August 23rd, Zerograd
 From left to right:
 the Borscht Brothers,
 Navigator Lasse Olfström,
 Factotum Oskar Bernstein
 Josef K. Fischbein,
 Igor Leschenko,
 and Captain Frenkel



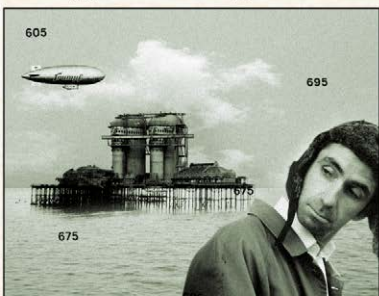
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Mustafa II

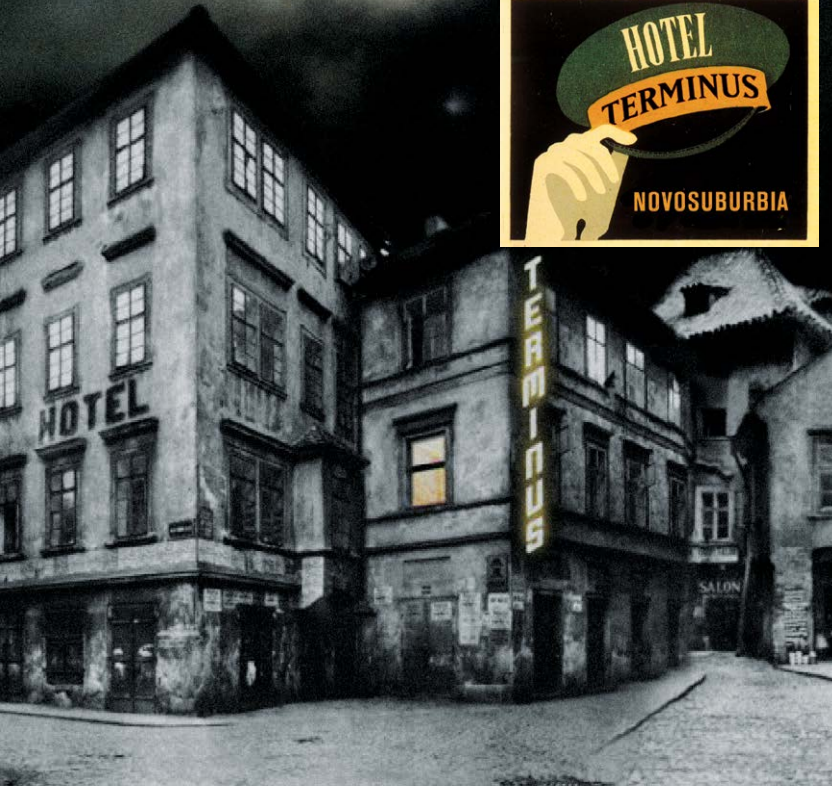


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September 17th, Morphopolis
 The offshore pleasure centre
 across the border from Zentropa



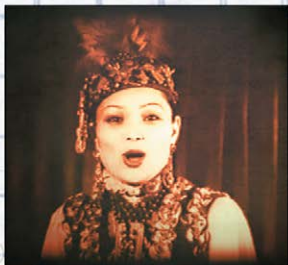
Hotel Terminus, Novosuburbia
"A place where strangers meet"



October 7th, Novosuburbia
Count Popov's dacha



October 12th, Novosuburbia
Miss Shangrila on
stage at the Cabaret Opera
"One Night Only"



Picturesque evening scene on the banks of the Suburbia Canal



TECHNICAL DATA



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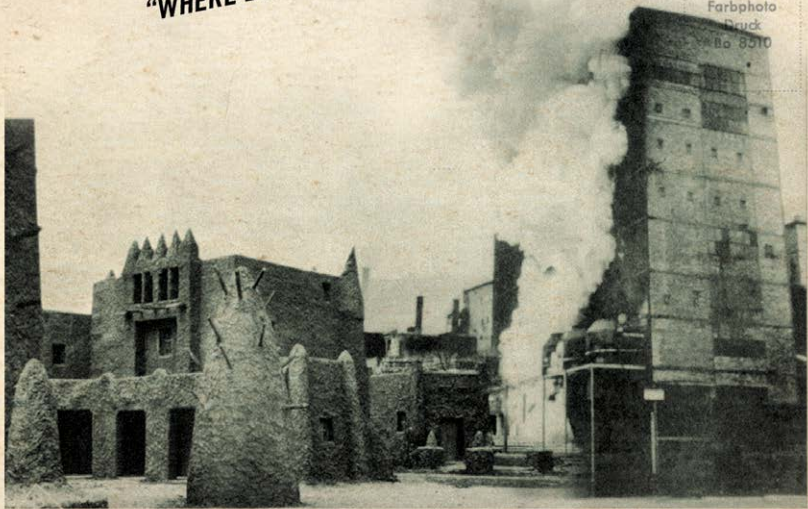


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Greetings from
PORT OKAPI
"WHERE EVERY DAY IS A GREAT DAY"

N
Farbphoto
Druck
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October 27th, Subotika

"There is absolutely nothing here for sightseers."



“Just a sort of mill in the hinterland.
But nobody actually knows what goes on there.”



RAYMOND ROUSSEL



Raymond Roussel:
writer, dandy, chess player,
pistol champion and millionaire



Raymond on the road...

Terra Incognita is an homage to Raymond Roussel. The references to him are never direct, however. The film is a web woven from almost invisible threads and finely constructed references which link Roussel's life and work with the film **Terra Incognita**.

"The president of the Republic of Dreams" _Louis Aragon

Only a small group of enthusiasts were aware of the "oeuvres" of the French writer Raymond Roussel during his lifetime (1877 - 1933). There is hardly any author who is so unrecognized, yet at the same time so legendary as Raymond Roussel. His influence on later writers is enormous. Some of his admirers include Raymond Queneau, Georges Perec, Boris Vian and Marcel Duchamp. André Breton called him "the greatest magnetizer of modern times".

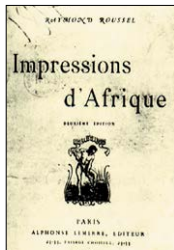
"For me, the power of imagination is everything" _Raymond Roussel

Raymond Roussel was a great dandy, chess player, pistol champion and millionaire, but also an extraordinary eccentric and a neurotic addicted to barbiturates. At the age of 19, he had a decisive experience: everything he wrote seemed to be surrounded by rays of light, so he closed the shutters to keep the light from shining out onto the street. His intention was to set all of humanity into a state of illuminated amazement – in one single blow. He was terribly disappointed when his book was published and this phenomenon did not occur.

"Le plus grand magnétiseur des temps modernes" _André Breton



Impressions d'Afrique at the Théâtre Fémina, Paris (1910)



Novels by Raymond Roussel:

La Vue (1902)

Impressions d'Afrique (1910)

Locus Solus (1914)

Poussière de Soleil (1926)

Nouvelles Impressions
d'Afrique (1915-26)

From that moment on he would try to chase down these radiant hours of happiness. In **"Impressions of Africa"** he creates his imaginary Africa and becomes the discoverer of new worlds. A narrative filled with meticulous details. In his novel **"Locus Solus"**, the history of a genius inventor, he becomes the builder of fantastic machines and a visionary architect. Raymond Roussel, this fanatic of imagination, has no intention of merging literature with vulgar reality. Together with Marcel Duchamp, Alfred Jarry and Franz Kafka, Roussel is one of the great **Pataphysicists**, a representative of the "science of imaginary solutions".

"It's true. Man is a microcosm – I am my world" _Ludwig Wittgenstein

In his search for peace and seclusion, he has the most luxurious "recreational vehicle" of his times built for him. In this peculiar vehicle, he crosses Europe, driving all the way to Asia Minor. But on the way he never leaves his living room on wheels. Exotic countries are not the least bit interesting to this poet with an exotic imagination all his own. He keeps his curtains closed and all he wants is to be able to work in peace. His inner world is perfectly enough for him. In 1933, Raymond Roussel's journey ends. Financially ruined, he dies from an overdose of barbiturates in a hotel in Palermo.



Nanôpol, 31st of November

The last picture.

"We will be back for afternoon tea."

