

Marijke van Warmerdam  
(Nieuwer Amstel, The Netherlands, 1959)

Some drops of milk are poured into a glass containing water. The different consistency of the two liquids causes the formation of small white arabesques. Their presence is like abstract writing occupying three dimensions. And in addition to height, width, and depth, the dissolution of the milk in the water also occupies the fourth dimension, since time is the fundamental element in the process of the encounter between the two fluids. Slowly, the mixture contained in the glass assumes an opaque consistency and a movement of the movie camera focuses on it for a few moments as the only image visible on the screen. A subsequent frame reveals another change: the gray background against which the glass is initially shot becomes colored. Marijke van Warmerdam's film, *Dream Machine*, 2006, conveys the magic of a minor event, the apparently non-logical implications of which are likened to the abrupt changes that can occur in dreams. Shown in a continuous loop, the film gradually captures the eye, functioning as a sort of device able to stimulate the imagination. Dwelling on concentrated and straightforward situations, van Warmerdam's art succeeds in turning the natural into something sublime. The artist's eye settles on details of life and isolates them, with a lighthearted touch. Often based on brief sequences and characterized by a wealth of suggestions that viewers can grasp and complete, the artist's films bring to mind the incisive power of haikus, the Japanese poems known for their extreme concision of idea and image. (MB)