



FILM FACT SHEET

- “Abscam” was an FBI codename for an undercover operation from 1978-1980.
- This particular video shows actual footage of a bribery taking place.
- One senator and six congressional representatives were convicted of bribery and conspiracy due to the investigation.
- Lord returned to the hotel room and set up cameras in the exact position as the FBI surveillance cameras.
- The film shows flashes of his own footage mixed in with the original surveillance which makes it hard to see what is real and what is fake.

Chip Lord, *Abscam (Framed)* (still), 1981

PROCESS IT ALL

- Is everything we see on the news true?
- How do we know what is real and what is fake when watching television?
- One news station may present the same story in a different way than another news station. Why do you think they do this?
- Why might a news program stretch the truth of a story?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Now it's your turn to be the filmmaker! Pretend you are a news anchor for two separate television stations. You are covering the same story for both but your audiences are different for each station. How would your story change?

Use your Smartphone to record your films.





FILM FACT SHEET

- Chip Lord parodies a late night talk show in *Celebrity Author*.
- Lord plays the role of a bestselling author appearing on “The Willie Walker Show,” where he talks about his interests in cars, sports, and swap meets.
- The film is crudely shot, edited, and acted out just like a typical talk show.

Chip Lord, *Celebrity Author* (still), 1979

PROCESS IT ALL

- What are some characteristics of talk shows today?
- What do you think makes a television show popular?
- Do you think that the role of contemporary talk shows has changed since this film was created?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Now it's your turn to be the filmmaker! Create your own parody of a current talk show (think: Ellen, Jimmy Kimmel, etc.) Use your Smartphone to record your films.

Or, using a photograph from a magazine and some collage materials, create a parody of a current celebrity.



FILM FACT SHEET

- Chip Lord films himself in San Francisco and New York City to create an infomercial about the benefits of living in both cities.
- Lord stands in front of the World Trade Center and the Transamerica Pyramid, two major architectural pieces during that time.
- Lord uses the architectural models to express our society's tendency to underscore art.

Chip Lord, *Bi-Coastal* (still), 1983

PROCESS IT ALL

- Why do you think the artist chose to stand in front of the World Trade Center and the Transamerica Pyramid
- How are these buildings similar? How are they different?
- Can you name other buildings in other cities that carry similar visual weight?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Think of different iconic buildings and structures found around the world. Skylines are in constant flux. The New York city skyline looks very different now than it did 20/30/50 years ago. Choose an iconic skyline and draw what it will look like in 100 years. Explain why you imagine these changes will occur.





FILM FACT SHEET

- This film shows footage of Reagan's inauguration parade layered with a poorly played solo trumpet performance of "My Country Tis of Thee."
- During Reagan's administration, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) budget was cut and funding was redirected towards military marching bands.
- During his presidency, the NEA budget saw its sharpest decline while funding to other programs caused the public debt to triple.

Chip Lord, *Get Ready to March!* (still), 1981

PROCESS IT ALL

- What meaning is behind the solo and badly performing trumpeter?
- Why did Lord choose to use this song for the piece?
- Would this film have the same meaning for the viewer without audio? Why or why not?
- How can using different sounds change meaning in a film?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Watch a television commercial or movie trailer with the sound on. Think of how the audio is aiding the visuals in telling the consumer. Watch it again, with the sound on mute and dub your own audio on top of it to change the meaning of the commercial. (See recut movie trailers on YouTube for examples.)





FILM FACT SHEET

- *Three Drugs* emphasizes the significance of coffee, cigarettes, and gasoline in contemporary American culture.
- Caffeine and cigarettes are overconsumed despite the amount of literature warning people of health risks associated with these items.
- Gasoline is overused despite warnings of fuel supplies running low.
- Lord films the objects very closely, making them look appealing as if they are in a television commercial.

Chip Lord, *Three Drugs* (still), 1983

PROCESS IT ALL

- Does this film remind you of an advertisement? Why or why not?
- How do advertisements make things seem desirable even if they are dangerous?
- Why did Lord choose to film the objects the way he did - up close and with dramatic sound effects?
- Can you think of an advertisement that does this?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Create an advertisement that makes the viewer want something that is bad for them or bad for the environment.

This can be done using collage materials, poster making materials, or paint.





FILM FACT SHEET

- This film shows a collection of commercial and news footage.
- Lord suggests that war, politics, and greed are all connected.
- The film makes the current world seem like a Dystopia, an imagined place where everything is bad.
- Chip shows clips of world leaders, men who work on Wall Street, and politicians and, in doing so, suggests that they all try to control one another through force and manipulation.

Chip Lord, *AUTO FIRE LIFE* (still), 1984

PROCESS IT ALL

- How does Lord make you feel about the world in this film?
- What scenes suggest that we are headed for a dystopian society?
- The opposite of a dystopia is a utopia - an imagined place where everything is perfect. What images might you see in a Lord film that would suggest we are becoming a utopian society?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Create several sketches of a utopian world and a dystopian world. Choose one of the sketches to create a sculpture inspired by your chosen world using cardboard, paper, and wire. What artistic choices can you make to create a certain mood?





FILM FACT SHEET

- In this film, Chip plays the role of an executive air traveler who spends many hours in and out of airports and visits different cities for his job.
- This is a comment on how the more privileged in society are able to move about freely.
- Those who lack money or citizenship do not have the ability to fly around the world as easily.
- There is a deeper metaphor of staying in a suspended state just like the underprivileged.

Chip Lord, *The Executive Air Traveler* (still), 1979

PROCESS IT ALL

- What is the overall feeling you get from watching the film? Is it positive or negative? Why?
- What specific parts of the film were positive or negative?
- Lord chose to make the executive air traveler a *white* male. Why?
- Does the role of the executive air traveler look different today than it did when the film was made? In what way?

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (REACTION)!

Create a mixed media dyptich (two-paneled artwork) that addresses the issues of the underprivileged. One panel should show the historical challenges the oppressed group (women, minorities, etc.) has faced and the other panel should show what progress has been made. Consider how you can illustrate the need for even more progress.

