

# Richard Artschwager: Shut up and Look

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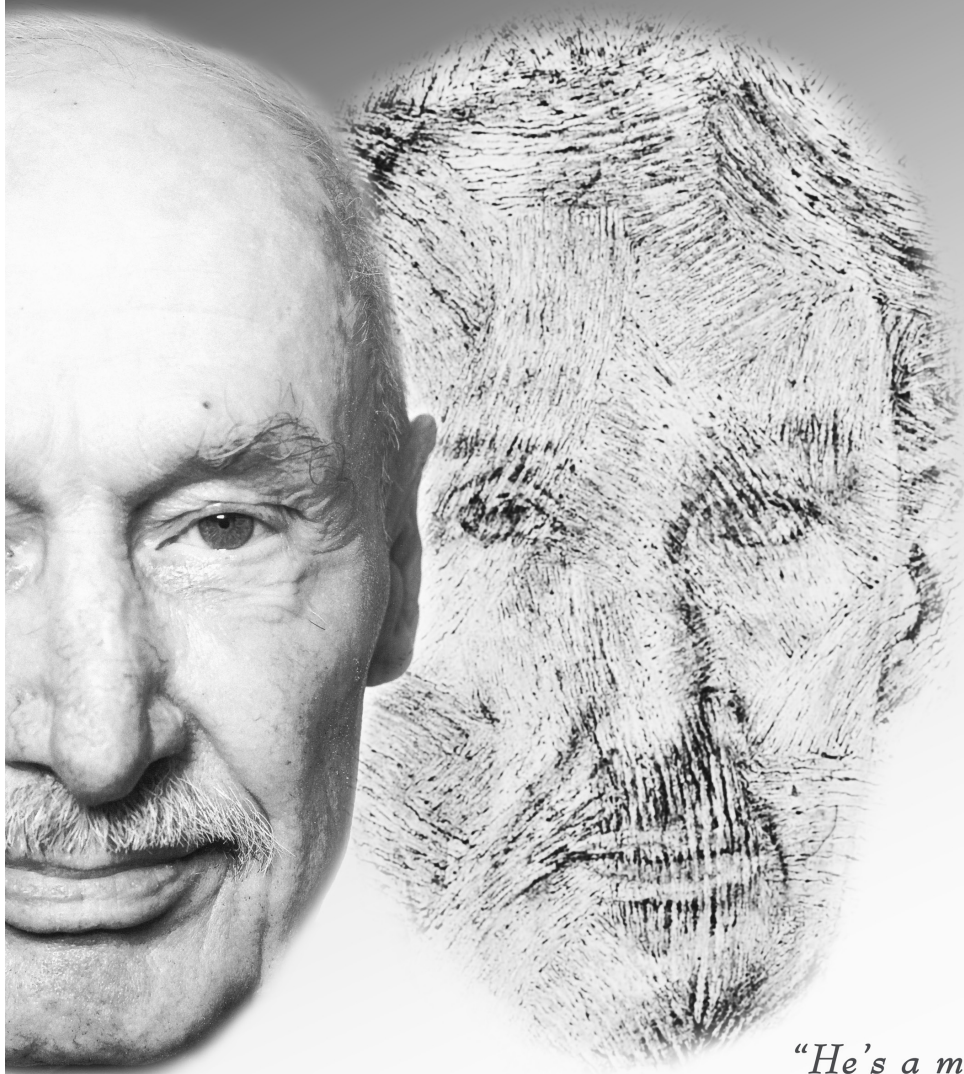
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### Long Tail Films

115 South Street 3R, NY NY 10038   Tel 212.242.2048   Cell 917.570.7444  
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# Richard Artschwager

## shut up and **LOOK**



*"He's a master of enigma"*

Directed by Maryte Kavaliauskas   Produced by Maryte Kavaliauskas and Morning Slayter  
Cinematography by Fred Murphy   Edited by Kate Taverna   Music Composed by Clare & Olivier Manchon   Music Edited by Suzana Peric

*Long Tail Films*

Credits from left: portrait photo (detail) by Ann Artschwager; painting (detail) Artschwager 1999, Courtesy Gagosian Gallery; quotation from Louise Neri; graphic design by Jennifer Kotter

# Richard Artschwager: Shut up and Look

Directed by MARYTE KAVALIAUSKAS

Produced by MARYTE KAVALIAUSKAS and MORNING SLAYTER

released 2012

57 Minutes

Long Tail Films, New York

starring Richard Artschwager with appearances by Agnes Gund, Richard Armstrong, Jennifer Gross, Bob Monk, John Torreano, Joe Zucker, Malcolm Morley, Arie Galles, Louise Neri, Bonnie Clearwater, Georg Kargl, Linda Norden, Ann Artschwager

Co-Producer Fred Murphy

Associate Producer Willard Morgan

Cinematographer Fred Murphy

Editor Kate Taverna

Composers Clare & Olivier Manchon

Additional Camera Joan Churchill, Nancy Schrieber, Sebastian Slayter

Sound Recordist Larry Loewinger

Additional Sound Maryte Kavaliauskas, Morning Slayter

Additional Editing Neil Murphy

Archival Research Morning Slayter

Re-Recording Engineer Paul Michael, Domicile

Online editor & colorist Don Wyllie, Frame:Runner Inc

Title treatment Richard Trammel

Music editor Suzana Perić

Assistant Editors Chananun Chotrungroj, Milica Zec

*(see page 12-13 for full credits)*

Audience Choice — Best Feature Documentary, SENE Film Festival, Providence, RI  
Newport Beach Film Festival, Newport Beach, CA  
Philadelphia Independent Film Festival, Philadelphia, PA

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*full synopsis*

**SHUT UP AND LOOK** is the story of Richard Artschwager, 88, a distinguished quirky American artist whose works command hundreds of thousands of dollars. His eclecticism has made Artschwager tough to categorize. He's been called a pop artist, a conceptual artist, a minimalist, but none of those schools fit the range of his work. The artist says himself *"If you are a school of you're dead. The only way to keep from drowning is to be original."*

The film provides an intimate look at this extraordinarily gifted artist as he abandoned a reclusive life style to allow our camera into his private world over the last 8 years. In that time, Richard, who has been known for his black and white work, turned to color for the first time. The camera catches him working in his studio, playing the piano at home, music which continues in the soundtrack, walking in the canyons of New Mexico, traveling around the world to install shows and revisiting his colorful past. At the heart of the film, Richard travels to Vienna to install a new series of sculptures. The visit to Vienna becomes a catalyst for Richard to journey through many of his memories of the years he spent in post war Vienna in Army intelligence in what he himself coins as *"The Third Man in real life."*

That film is interwoven with his arrival. Running throughout the film is Richard's love and appreciation of women. His friend John Torreano and he were each married at one time to the same woman. Joe Zucker, commenting on Richard's four marriages, says *"Maybe he likes to get married.. he looks good in a suit and dances like Fred Astaire."*

*(see page 11 for short synopsis)*

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*filmmaker bios*

**DIRECTOR: MARYTE KAVALIAUSKAS**

Maryte Kavaliauskas studied Art History at Barnard College and upon graduation started working in the film industry as a sound recordist, producer and director. She has directed films on many artists including James Rosenquist, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Roy Lichtenstein and the master print maker Ken Tyler. Her film on Herbie Hancock was shown on ARTE, the French Television Channel. She directed the award-winning 90-minute film, "David Hockney: The Colors Of Music" which premiered at Film Forum and was shown on PBS, as part of the American Masters Series.

**PRODUCER: MORNING SLAYTER**

Morning Slayter has worked as a producer, director and sound recordist on documentaries and features. She produced a documentary on the high wire walker Philippe Petit and directed political shorts at the United Nations and the White House for Danish and Swedish Television. She worked closely with artists in the making of films on Alexander Calder, Henry Moore, Willem de Kooning, Georgia O'Keefe, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenberg, Larry Rivers and Mark di Suvero. She is a private art dealer and appraiser with expertise in 20th and 21st century American and European art. She has lectured on art and documentary filmmaking at Drew University, New York University, Columbia University, Fashion Institute of Technology and is currently adjunct professor at Institute of Contemporary Photography.

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*remarks*

**about Richard Artschwager:**

*"He's a master of enigma."*

Louise Neri

*"I think he's a magician."*

Agnes Gund

*"People called him an enigma so often that the word stuck to him like a middle name."*

Holland Cotter

*"(he's) goddamn unique!"*

Richard Armstrong, Guggenheim Museum

**by Richard Artschwager:**

*"If you are a 'school of,' you're dead. The only way to keep from drowning is to be original."*

*"Is the Pope Catholic? I loved it and can't thank you enough for making a film about me."*

*"The hardest part of making a picture is seeing how long you can get someone to look at it."*

**by others about Shut up and Look:**

*"...entertaining and informative. One walks away with such a good feeling about Artschwager, his work, his thinking and his person...."*

Sonia Lopez, philanthropic advisor to Agnes Gund

*"It's one of the best documentaries I've seen about a working, living artist, with a relaxed intimacy that is extraordinary... It's so wonderful that you were able to film with Artschwager over so many years and reveal so many layers of a man who was, until I saw "Shut Up And Look," a kind of enigma to me. He richly deserves such a beautiful and loving portrait."*

Steven Lawrence, film director

*"...your movie was fascinating and revelatory, a rare and revealing look behind the curtain at a singular personality and artist."*

David Koepp, film director and screenwriter

*"What struck me was the feeling of Richard's integrity. His sense of sincerity is striking."*

Malcom Morely, artist

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## The Sag Harbor Express “Shut Up and Look: Artists Gather to Honor One of Their Own

*by Emily J. Weitz, 12 April 2013*

Richard Artschwager was an artist's artist, and from the scene in the Roy Lichtenstein auditorium at the Parrish Art Museum last Friday, that truth was evident. The open space was filled with renowned artists and figures in the art world looking to pay homage to a man that created because it was in his DNA to create. The event was a film screening featuring the film “Shut Up and Look,” which offered an intimate look at the man and his curious mind. “Shut Up and Look” was directed by Martye Kavaliauskas and produced by Morning Slayter, who were present and introduced the film.

“Richard luckily got to see the film last December,” said Kavaliasuskas, “before he passed away. The phrase “Shut Up and Look” may seem a bit harsh, but it was one of Richard's favorite phrases.” Because Artschwager only died this past February at the age of 89, the tone of the evening was bittersweet. To some, like his friend and fellow artist John Torreano, it felt “a little bit sad.” Familiar laughs and knowing sighs were peppered throughout the film, which was made over the course of eight years as the filmmakers followed Artschwager through his otherwise private life.

Artschwager studied math and science at Cornell University before he was drafted for World War II, and after he served, he returned to Cornell to finish his degree. After graduation, he went to New York to become an artist. He studied at the studio school of the painter Amédée Ozenfant, but then decided to go into a more reliable career of furniture making. The film flashed back to images of a young man at work in his studio.

When the furniture workshop was destroyed in a fire in 1958, Artschwager returned to art, and it was never the same. He drew on his experience as a furniture maker, creating works of art that appeared useful but were completely useless, like pianos that didn't play and chairs that you could never sit in. There was a sense of mischief to the way he worked, and that mischief was echoed in a flash of his eyes, caught on film.

Another of his most mischievous and famous pieces of art were the BLPs, monochromatic ovular shapes born in California in the late 1960s. They appeared not only in galleries, but on walls, the sides of trains, and throughout cities. The oblong shapes almost appeared like black holes, and Artschwager said he liked the fact that people could look at them for a long time. “The hardest part of making a picture,” he said, “is seeing how long you can get someone to look at it.” The BLPs came about around the same time that graffiti was born, and Artschwager compared them by calling his work “middle class defacement.”

At the end of the film, artists John Torreano and Malcolm Morley, who were friends of Artschwager's and were featured in the film, came up to the podium to share stories. “What struck me,” said Morley, “was the feeling of Richard's integrity. His sense of sincerity is striking.” Morley was clear that his friend's work wasn't always pleasing to him, but it was still important. “When you go to a doctor,” said Morley, “and he prescribes medicine that doesn't taste good at all, but is good for you, that's how I feel about Richard's work.”

Donald Sultan, one of the artists in the audience, raised his hand to recall a piece of Artschwager's that struck him. “It was called ‘Don't Fight City Hall,’” said Sultan. “It consisted of a bunch of globes of light that all said ‘exit’.” Torreano brought up another show, which was comprised of a bunch of art crates lying about, that was “classic Richard.” “You walk in to the show,” said Torreano, “and you think it hasn't been put up yet. And then you know, ‘Oh, it's Richard.’” The crowd laughed knowingly.

Morley, whose solo exhibition at the Parrish was part of the opening season of the new museum this year, credited Artschwager with inspiring much of his success. “A long time ago, he came to visit me to see a piece of work I had done,” said Morley. “It was a large painting with little panels underneath, and he said to get rid of the big painting and keep the panels. That was the beginning of Malcolm Morley.”

The film tracked the changes in Artschwager's life: the three wives, the war, the furniture business, and his art career. “I never got a sense that he was frustrated with the hills and valleys,” said Torreano. “I once had an exhibition called Torreano and Friends, and I invited Richard to come play the piano. He did it, and he told me he'd never been more scared, not even in war. He went into a Bach piece. He got lost, stopped, scratched his head, and went on. It was so Richard.”

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## Dans Paper

### “The Parrish Gets Personnal”

*by Stephane de Troy, July 5 2013*

*An artist documentary presents a sliver of the artists's life that will subsequently shape your perception of their work.*

In late March, the Parrish held a screening of *Shut Up and Look*, a new documentary on the artist Richard Artschwager. In it, the camera follows Artschwager from his studio to walking in his backyard to various museums and locales where his oblong “blps” were installed. During this time, we’re given an intimate look into the life of the artist, who, until the filming of the documentary, has been leading a reclusive lifestyle and keeping to a monochromatic palette. With the company of a camera crew, he began using color—a pivotal shift for any artist. *Shut Up and Look* was done in such a way that it’s easy for the viewer to forget he or she isn’t an old pal of Artschwager. One of the wonderful aspects of artist documentaries, in general, is that they present a sliver of the artist’s life that will forever shape the viewer’s perception and understanding of an artist’s work. An added advantage over reading a biography, is the visual aspect; the opportunity to watch a work of art move from conception to completion or to watch the artist simply go about his or her day. The documentary experience is then further enhanced by attending a screening, such as was the case at the Parrish, with the producer, director, the artist’s colleagues, museum curators and other patrons of the arts. Present in the theater for *Shut Up and Look* were director Maryte Kavaliauskas and producer Morning Slayter, who introduced the documentary, and artists Malcolm Morely and John Torreano (both friends of Artschwager), who spoke afterwards and answered a few questions from the audience.

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*short synopsis*

**SHUT UP AND LOOK** is the story of Richard Artschwager, the 88 year old American artist and reputed “enigma.” The film provides an intimate look at this gifted man who allowed the camera into his studio, personal life and colorful past. John Torreano and Malcolm Morley reveal the personal side of this quirky, irreverent man, whose work confounds the critics and influenced a generation of artists.

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# **RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER: SHUT UP AND LOOK**

*full credits*

**Directed by**  
**Maryte Kavaliauskas**

**Produced by**  
**Maryte Kavaliauskas and Morning Slayter**

**starring**  
**Richard Artschwager**

**with appearances by**  
**Agnes Gund**  
**Richard Armstrong**  
**Jennifer Gross**  
**Bob Monk**  
**John Torreano**  
**Joe Zucker**  
**Malcolm Morley**  
**Arie Galles**  
**Louise Neri**  
**Bonnie Clearwater**  
**Georg Kargl**  
**Linda Norden**  
**Ann Artschwager**

Fred Murphy Co-Producer  
Willard Morgan Associate Producer  
Fred Murphy Cinematographer  
Kate Taverna Editor  
Clare & Olivier Manchon Composers  
Joan Churchill, Nancy Schrieber, Sebastian Slayter Additional Camera  
Larry Loewinger Sound Recordist  
Maryte Kavaliauskas, Morning Slayter Additional Sound  
Neil Murphy Additional Editing  
Morning Slayter Archival Research  
Paul Michael, Domicile Re-Recording Engineer  
Don Wyllie, Frame:Runner Inc Online editor & colorist  
Richard Trammel Title treatment  
Suzana Perić Music editor  
Chananun Chotrunroj, Milica Zec Assistant Editors

## **Special Thanks to our generous supporters**

Broad Art Foundation  
Beth Rudin DeWoody  
Agnes Gund  
The Fine Foundation  
Larry Gagosian  
Marian Goodman  
Dorothy Lichtenstein  
Leonard & Susan Nimoy  
Wendy Keys  
Willard Morgan  
Adam Sender  
Jivan Wolf  
Mary Beth Yarrow

**With gratitude and many thanks to Richard and Anne Artschwager**

## **Archival Resources**

Albright Knox Museum, Buffalo, NY  
Art News Magazine, January 1988  
Austrian Broadcasting Corporation, ORF, Vienna  
Austrian Cultural Forum  
Creative Time  
Documenta 72, Kassel  
Gagosian, NY  
Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY  
Hans Namuth Archive  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago  
Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Nelson Atkins Museum, Kansas City  
New York University Fales Library  
Smithsonian Institution  
"The Third Man": Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL Films Ltd.

## **Photographs**

Anne Artschwager  
Richard Artschwager  
Ben Blackwell  
Ursula Bower  
Henri Dauman  
Sidney B. Felsen  
Christopher Gardner  
Thomas Hoepker  
Shunk Kender  
Christa Kujath  
Hans Namuth  
Courtesy Center for Creative Photograph  
1991 Hans Namuth Estate  
David Nolan Gallery  
New Mexico State University Library  
Jerry L. Thompson  
John Torreano  
Whitney Museum of American Art  
Yale Art Gallery

## **Very Special Thanks**

Richard Armstrong  
Leo Castelli Gallery, New York  
Bonnie Clearwater  
Gagosian Gallery, New York and Los Angeles  
Arie Galles  
Gemini Graphics Inc.  
Jennifer Gross  
Georg Kargl  
Georg Kargl Gallery, Vienna  
Thomas Kellein  
Ursula Krauss  
MAK Museum, Vienna  
Malcolm Morley  
Robert Monk  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
National Exempler Gallery, New York

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## RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER: SHUT UP AND LOOK

*full credits continued*

Louise Neri  
Peter Noever  
MAK Museum, Vienna  
David Nolan  
David Nolan Gallery  
Linda Norden  
Soka University of America  
Joe Zucker

### **Thank You**

Alan Adelson  
Ryan Aynes  
Mary Boone Gallery  
Susan Brownlee  
Amy Canonico  
Edmund Cardoni  
Kathryn Chan  
Rebecca Donelson  
Samuel Draxler  
Elizabeth Flores  
Gagosian Gallery, Rome  
Helyn Goldenberg  
Wendy Grogan  
Charlie Herzfeld  
Peter Johanson  
Robert Judge  
Cornelia Kiss  
Paul Klein  
Linda Klösel  
Jennifer Kotter  
Giedre Kumpikas  
William Lieberman  
Fiona Liewehr  
Sonia Lopez  
Chris Lundy  
Sheila Lynch  
Eugene McHugh  
Massimo Moretti  
Lida Morley  
Peter Namuth  
Herbert Oppeneiger  
Debora Ott  
Andrea Pemberton  
D.A. Pennebaker, Living Archives Inc.  
Heather Pesanti  
Jason Pew  
Kathryn Potts  
Richard Rutkowski

Matt Schneider  
Keith Shapiro, Frame:Runner, Inc.  
Sandi Sissel  
Ruth Stifter-Trummer  
Tony Tamberelli  
Ari Taub  
Carolyn Tennant  
Jan & Bill Van Straaten  
Natalie Van Straaten  
Doug Walla, Kent Gallery  
Linnea Wilson  
Ron Yoshida, Hello World

### **Transcription Services**

Pat Casteel Transcripts

### **Music performed by Richard Artschwager**

*Arabeske, Op. 18 No 56* by Robert Schumann

*Bach's Prelude in C Major*

*Prelude in D Minor, from The Well Tempered Clavier*

### **Music**

*Memoires*

by Olivier Manchon

Performed by Orchestre de Chambre Miniature  
Courtesy of Obliq Sound

*Come Back*

by Olivier Manchon

Performed by Orchestre de Chambre Miniature  
Courtesy of Obliq Sound

*Valse Triste*

by Jean Sibelius

Arranged by Olivier Manchon

Performed by Orchestre de Chambre Miniature  
Courtesy of Obliq Sound

*Pluto*

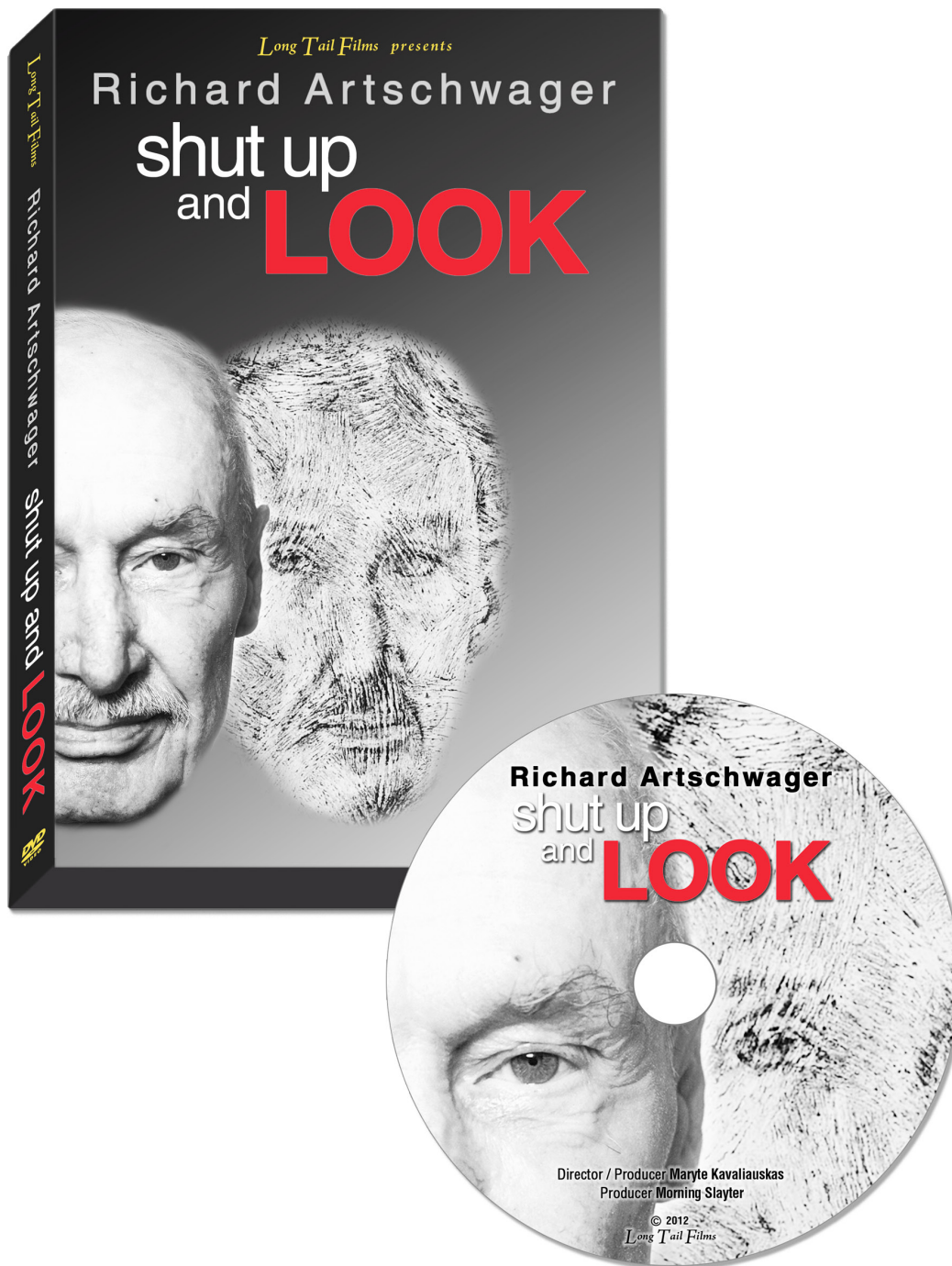
by Clare Manchon

Performed by Clare and the Reasons  
Courtesy of Frog Stand Records

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DVD



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