



THE LIBERTINA PROJECT

VIEWER GUIDE

to the film

**EVIL REPEATS ITSELF
NO COMFORT HERE**

A CONFRONTIST ART MOVEMENT FILM

SPEAS

CONFRONTIST ART MOVEMENT™

FOUNDED BY SPEAS

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The film has no narrator. Nobody explains anything in it. It is fifty minutes of painting, machinery, type, and one human voice, cut frame by frame to a score written for the novel you are hopefully holding.

That is deliberate. But it means the film asks something of you, the way an opera does: it assumes you arrived knowing the story.

This guide is the program. It tells you what the novel is about in general terms, how the film is built, what its recurring signs mean, and what happens in each of its twelve movements. Read the first four sections before you watch. The movement notes can be read before, after, or between viewings – they contain no secrets from the novel, only descriptions of what is on the screen and what to listen for.

One warning. The film is a companion to the book, not a substitute for it, and it was cut in the belief that you would read first. If you have not read the novel yet, the film will still move you – but it will move you the way weather does, and not the way grief does.

THE STORY BEHIND THE FILM

Evil Repeats Itself: No Comfort Here is a work of alternate-history fiction. It begins at 10:42 in the morning, Pacific time, on the sixth of January, 2028, when every phone in America goes off at once with the same impossible sentence: President Trump is dead of a stroke.

In San Francisco, a group of people are sorting emergency contact cards in a place called The Changing Room – a room that exists so that people the state has decided are a problem can be helped by people who have decided they are not. Among them are a painter named Speas and a professor named Libertina W. Grace. Neither of

them mistakes the news for good news. One of them understands immediately what is coming.

What comes is not chaos. It is administration. The novel's argument – and the film's – is that the death of a man does not stop a machine that has already been built, and that the true horror of authoritarianism is not its violence but its paperwork: the form, the stamp, the concurrence of six offices, the word REMOVAL typed by someone who then goes to lunch.

The book moves in five parts. In the first, a nation goes into official mourning and discovers that mourning can be made law. In the second, a room is taken. In the third, art becomes evidence: paintings are seized, catalogued, and stored by a state that keeps beautiful things in the same building where it destroys them. In the fourth, the machine inherits the country and gives it an anthem. In the fifth, the machine is exported to the world, and the world begins to count down.

Against all of it stands Libertina – seen, named, marked, and unwilling to become smaller – and around her the ordinary, frightened, decent people who keep the room open anyway.

That is as much as this guide will say. The book has secrets, and they are worth arriving at yourself. What matters for watching the film is this: you are about to see the same story told with no dialogue at all, by a machine, a wall of words, seventeen paintings, and a voice.

THE GRAMMAR OF THE FILM

Six rules govern everything on screen. Knowing them turns the film from an experience into a reading.

THE STATE NEVER GETS A FACE. No actor plays a tyrant. There are no soldiers, no uniforms, no villain to hate comfortably. The

state appears only as its instruments: a wall of repeated words, a shutter, a form, a stamp, a plant running somewhere underneath. You are never given the relief of a person to blame.

THE PAINTINGS ARE THE PEOPLE. The characters do not appear as actors. They appear as Speas' paintings – hung, tagged, photographed, seized, catalogued, and eventually reflected back. When a painting vanishes from a wall in this film, a person has been taken.

THE MACHINE IS REAL. What sounds like industrial music is a synthesized factory with two shafts turning at 11.7 and 8.3 times a second – rates that do not divide into each other, so the machine never settles into a repeating bar and never resolves. Every rhythm in the film is generated by it. The state is not scored. The state is the score.

THE SCORE IS THE FILM'S ONLY VOICE. Everything in it is rooted on A. A is the human note. B-flat, a semitone above, is the antagonist, and the film's tension is the distance between them. In the movement where the state writes its anthem, the melody never touches A at all.

THE VOICE IS THE AUTHOR'S. The counting, the archivist's catalogue entries, the names, and the last line are Speas' own voice, recorded and placed on top of the music, never ducked, never blended. The Pledge – Duty. Order. Nothing to Fear. – is spoken by another.

SILENCE IS AN EVENT. The film opens with thirty-five seconds of it. The music stops dead, without warning, several times. When sound stops in this film, something has been taken. Do not adjust the volume.

THE TWO

This is the film's private sign, and the reason for this guide.

Again and again, in movement after movement, something arrives in a pair. Two bells. Two silences. Two dead stops. Two voices. Two holes in the sound. Two flags. The pair is never in the same place twice, and it is never made of the same material twice – sometimes you hear it, sometimes you see it, sometimes it is a thing that should be there and is not.

The two are Libertina and Spears.

They are the two absences the story is built around, and the film marks them everywhere without ever naming them. The key is handed to you openly in Movement VI, where two tubular bells sound, alone, minutes apart, in an otherwise unbroken piece: the first for her, the second for him. Once you have heard that pair, you will hear the rest.

They are never shown. That is the point. The state never gets a face in this film, and neither do the missing – because absence has no face, only a shape where something was. Watch for the shape.

Some of them are listed in the notes that follow. Not all of them are.

THE MOVEMENTS

Twelve movements, played without interruption. The score is continuous: each piece plays unmodified to its natural end while the next rises underneath it, so the film never once falls silent between movements. Times are approximate positions in the film.

FRONT MATTER — 0:00

Silence. The production line, the movement's mark, the book's own cover, three imprints. Nothing to hear. This is the last quiet you get.

I. THE DEATH OF A MAN — 0:35

Eleven seconds of five real French horns, alone in the dark announcing the death of the man. Nine-tenths of a second after the last horn, the machine starts – and does not slow down. That is the film's thesis, delivered in its first twenty seconds. Then the Pledge arrives: DUTY. ORDER. NOTHING TO FEAR. Three lines in the dark. Each time the words are recited, the wall of them grows – three rows, then more, then more, until the type is too small to read and the screen is a grey field of language. Behind it, faintly, a printing press. At the end the words NOTHING TO are erased, and what is left grows red and enormous: FEAR.

Listen for: two silences frame this movement – the one the horns leave behind, and the one at 7:42 when the machine finally stops dead and the Pledge is spoken three times over nothing at all.

II. NIGHT COPTERS — 8:19

The painting on the cover of your book, entered and moved through. The City at night; searchlights find fragments of it and leave the rest in darkness. You never see the helicopters. You see what they do to a street.

Listen for: two Shepard tones, rising continuously at different rates, so that they never agree with each other and never arrive.

III. REMOVAL EXECUTED — 12:14

The quietest movement, and the cruelest. Form R-11, file 1153-A. A document fills the screen and is completed while you watch: SUBJECT, OCCUPATION, STATUS – VISIBLE. FINDING: THE SUBJECT IS SEEN. RECOMMENDATION: REMOVAL. Six offices concur, one stamp at a time, each stamp closer and louder than the last. There is no violence in this movement. That is the point of it.

Listen for: two stoppings – the strings stop like a closed folder, and the office keeps typing four bars longer, oblivious, before it stops too.

Underneath both, the plant continues.

IV. THE PAINTINGS ARE SEIZED — 15:21

A gallery wall, hung and whole, holding seventeen paintings. The most beautiful music in the film plays – on purpose. Every few seconds a camera shutter fires, an EXHIBIT tag appears, and a painting is gone. The music revoices itself around each absence: sixteen players, then twelve, then eight, then one viola finishing the theme alone.

Watch for: the two that go last – the lone viola, and then the room itself. A final shutter takes the viola. Twenty seconds of empty wall follow, and inside them a single low note that the next movement will pick up.

V. THE ABSENCE OF SHADOWS — 18:20

Sunlight on a wall, and a woman's shadow on it. No woman. The shadow moves, works, waits, and is alone. Strings only – sixteen players, no other instrument, and no reverberation of any kind, so the sound has nowhere to hide. One melody lives through six ages of a life, and then a single note changes and it is no longer the same melody. This is the movement about absence itself, and it is the chapter the novel subtracts. Watch what is missing rather than what is there.

VI. THE HURT CARRIES ON — 21:57

The same film twice. A repetition that will not resolve: a descending four-note ground bass stated sixteen times, never once permitted to land, under a Shepard tone that falls forever instead of rising.

Listen for: THE TWO BELLS. Two tubular bell passages sound in an otherwise unbroken movement, minutes apart. The first is Libertina. The second is Speas. This is the key to the whole film; everything paired elsewhere refers back to this moment. Nothing stops in this piece. That is the title.

VII. THE ARCHIVE OF RUINED BEAUTY — 25:40

The state's storage. A music box and a broken celesta play damaged fragments of the film's own earlier music, each holding introduced by a flat archivist's voice reading a catalogue entry. Wow, flutter, dropouts, broken teeth. The barcarolle from the seizure jams mid-phrase: taken a second time.

Listen for: the two things the archive cannot damage. At 3:30 into the movement the piano enters clean – no filter, no decay, the one undamaged holding, read out as flatly as all the rest: “Holding one. Condition: intact.” And behind the archivist's voice, faintly, in another room, a baby is crying. That was not composed. It was recorded.

VIII. BIRTHRIGHT NATION — 30:24

The state writes an anthem, and it is almost good. In B-flat major – the antagonist's key – and the melody never touches A, so there is no true dominant and every arrival is hollow. A march at 96 beats accelerates to 128, the machine's tempo, while the snare subdivides until the drum is a gear whine and the crowd's cheering is quantized onto the grid until the people mesh like teeth. On screen: water, and faces surfacing in it.

Listen for: the Pledge spoken twice – once at the open, loud and alone, and once at the close, quiet, after the final chord has cut dead and the plant has kept running.

IX. THE RACE TO THE PRECIPICE — 33:46

Six surveillance panes, dark and hissing. One at a time they light, and each builds the same wall of words in a different language – Polish, Spanish, Russian, German, Mandarin, French. Each grows at its own rate, so the machines beat against each other. Then, one by one, every station slides into unison with the others. The beating stops. The calm is the horror. At the end the borders dissolve and six walls become one.

Listen for: two lines in the author's own voice – the list of the countries, and then, out of the silence at the very end, one last line alone with nothing under it.

X. THE LAST SECOND – 38:27

The final second, dilated. Fifty-nine clock ticks count down from sixty, and the gap after each number shrinks by a power law, so time itself collapses toward the cut. The author counts in his own voice. Between the numbers the film begins to strobe with images of everything you have already seen. In the last forty-five seconds the click-train accelerates past twenty ticks a second and the clicks fuse into a pitch: the countdown becomes the riser. For six ticks it passes through 128 beats per minute – one instant of agreement with the machine – and blows past it.

Listen for: two silences. At the instant the count would reach one, everything cuts. Then a pause. Then one word, dry, alone, unaccompanied: One. Then nothing at all. The count never finishes. The human finishes it. And then ten seconds of black, in silence, before the film resumes.

XI. EVIL REPEATS – 42:11

The wall from Movement I stands again, complete, in the dark. A clock ticks. On each tick a word falls off the wall like a brick, and through the hole behind it: color. The living world – a painted crosswalk, a street under a marquee, a couple's held hands, a woman in a red dress walking. The demolition accelerates with the theme until the words rain and whole rows avalanche and the world floods through. The camera never moves. It took seven minutes to build that wall in Movement I. It comes down in three.

Listen for: two dead stops. Twice the music halts for two beats and returns exactly where it left off. The clock ticks through both of them, and goes on ticking after the music has gone.

CREDITS — 44:58

The clean piano from the archive – the intact holding – plays alone. Afterward: the artist's real painted signature, in silver, trembling. His hands shake. He paints anyway. The tremor is never explained.

nil — 46:24

Unlisted. The Director insists that you will eventually understand this one in a dream.

THE PAINTINGS

NIGHT COPTERS (2026, acrylic on birch panel, 48 x 36 inches)

The City at night: red brick, searchlights, eyes watching from every darkened window, marquees still advertising a life that is being taken away. This is the world of the story, and the cover of your book. The helicopters never appear. You know they are there by the light.

LIBERTINA LEADING (2026, acrylic on birch panel, 36 x 48 inches)

Libertina, flag high, leading the march – the answer to Night Copters: the same world, and the person who refuses it. Every face behind her is one of us. The film withholds this painting in color until the wall has come down. It is the reward for staying.

Fifteen other Speas paintings appear in the film, hung, tagged, and taken.

THE MUSIC

Eleven original tracks, and a twelfth that is not on the sleeve, written for the novel before the film existed. For the film they were joined into one continuous forty-seven-minute mix – each track playing unmodified to its own natural end, the next rising underneath it before the last sound dies – and the film was then cut

to that mix, frame by frame.

Nothing you hear was chosen from a library. The horns are five real French horns. The counting, the archivist, the names and the last line are the author. The crying child is a real child. The camera shutter is his own camera.

The one exception is the final track, nil, lowercase, unlisted: a licensed recording used exactly as it was made – “California Dreamin’” performed by Chris Lorenzo & High Jinx, licensed from Lickd – because after everything the state took, somebody somewhere is still dancing. It is not only an ending. Listen to where it dreams of going.

THE BOOKS

EVIL UPON US — Book One of The Libertina Project

Where it begins: the arrival of the evil, and how a free country talks itself into the machine.

EVIL REPEATS ITSELF: NO COMFORT HERE — Book Two Published 19 August 2026. The novel this film was made from, and the one in your hands.

THE ORDER

If you have not yet done all three, do them in this order. The full effect depends on it.

FIRST, READ THE BOOK. All of it, without the score playing. The book must do its work on you alone – because the score and the film are built out of what the book makes you feel, and they spend that feeling without mercy.

THEN LISTEN TO THE SCORE. Alone, in the dark, straight through, past the last listed track. Every voice in it you will now recognize.

Every ruined fragment in the archive is something you have already mourned.

THEN WATCH THE FILM. Fifty minutes, one sitting, sound up, lights down, and stay in your seat past the credits. Taken in this order, the ending lands with everything the project has.

There is no comfort here. That is the point. And the movement carries on.

WHERE TO WATCH

The film is free. It is not behind a festival, a paywall, a login, or a waiting list, and it never will be.

THE FILM, THE SCORE, AND THIS GUIDE

speasfineart.com/the-film



Forty-nine minutes. One sitting. Sound up, lights down, and stay in your seat past the credits.

EVIL REPEATS ITSELF: NO COMFORT HERE — THE FILM (2026, 49 minutes)

Written, Painted, and Directed by Speas

Produced by Katherine London Davis

Realized in collaboration with Claude, an AI by Anthropic

A Confrontist Art Movement production

Speas — Founder of the Confrontist Art Movement (CAM)

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