

THIS IS NOW

Film and Video After Punk N/C 18+

This Is Now: Film and Video After Punk is a major new touring project that looks at artists' film and video from the post-punk era (1978–85). The project comprises seven screening programmes and is developed in partnership with the BFI National Archive.

The early 1980s saw an explosion in alternative and independent moving image production. Clubbers, art students, new romantics and members of the post-punk scene used cheap domestic technologies to subvert the mainstream media and to find new modes of expression. Independent VHS tapes were released, stridently bypassing censorship, and Super 8 film was embraced as a cheap yet lyrical new medium. The DIY approach of punk was powerfully reborn.

Artists defied conventional ideas about how film should be made and who should make them. Female, gay and black filmmakers pushed forward; squatting flats, clubbing and developing new styles and techniques together. Derek Jarman collaborators, John Maybury and Cerith Wyn Evans experimented with Super 8, casting friends Leigh Bowery and Siouxsie Sioux in fragmented, dreamlike scenarios. Isaac Julien and Grayson Perry explored the politics of cultural and personal representation, and major pop video director Sophie Muller (Beyoncé, Rihanna, The Strokes) printed and layered images on 16mm.

This Is Now celebrates the diversity of independent moving image production from the UK in the 1980s, a unique moment when cheap new technologies enabled new voices to be heard. A new aesthetic developed that would shape the look of film, television, fashion and music for many years to come. The BFI National Archive has restored twenty Super 8 and 16mm films from this period and the majority of titles are presented for the first time in over three decades. Developed over several years, these programmes revisit a key period in the cultural life of the UK and reflect on the currency that this work has with internet video and artist filmmaking today.

William Fowler, Curator of Artists' Moving Image, BFI National Archive
Distributed by LUX

Friday 26 February

Please note that all times are subject to change. These programme contain explicit and potentially sensitive material that may not be suitable for young audiences

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY (12.00 – 13.20)

Provocative filmmakers in the early 1980s pursued occult interests, treating the moving image like a mirror or a crystal ball; a surface of divination to remap perception and question distinctions between what is and what might be, the objective and the subjective, the body and the mind. The programme includes challenging, transgressive work originally connected to the industrial scene.

Jill Westwood, *The Wound*, 1984, 18 min
Cordelia Swann, *Winter Journey in the Hartz Mountains*, 1983, 12 min
Michael Kostiff, *Liquid Video*, 1983, 10 min
Akiko Hada, *The Branks*, 1982, 7 min
Holly Warburton, *All Veneer and No Backbone*, 1980-84, 5 min
Richard Heslop, *23 Skidoo: F.U.G.I.*, 1983, 5 min
Jennifer Binnie, *Grayson/Flowers/Jewels*, 1985, 3 min
Judith Goddard, *Lyrical Doubt*, 1984, 16 min

VIDEO KILLED THE RADIO STAR (13.20 – 14.35)

Early independent video releases were the revolutionary, DIY antidote to a television system that was only just gearing up to a fourth channel. They bypassed censorship and provided a platform to the marginalised and unsanctioned. This eclectic selection includes a very rare John Smith title and punchy, stuttering Scratch Video works by The Duvet Brothers, Kim Flitcroft & Sandra Goldbacher, Gorilla Tapes and George Barber.

John Smith, *Echo and the Bunnymen: Shine So Hard*, 1981, 32 min
The Miners' Campaign Tapes: The Lie Machine, 1984, 16 min
The Greatest Hits of Scratch Video Volume 2, 1984, 28 min

ENTERING THE DREAM SPACE (14.35 – 16.00)

Weaving together film and video, often utilising religious imagery and introducing colour effects and surface texture, filmmakers generated a new, vividly transcendental style by the end of the post-punk era. Key examples of this sensual, visually mature work are presented alongside other dynamic, hallucinogenic pieces that explore the dreamlike state.

John Maybury, *The Technology of Souls*, 1981, 11 min
 Sophie Muller, *In Excelsis Deo*, 1983, 26 min
 Cerith Wyn Evans, *The Miracle of the Rose*, 1984, 25 min
 John Maybury, *The Union Jacking Up*, 1985, 18 min

PERFORMING THE SELF (16.00 – 17.15)

New ways of thinking about identity, the self and the body were all part of punk's powerful legacy. This unlikely cocktail of visionary experimental films and bright, brash pop videos shows how visual culture changed radically at the start of the 1980s. Genre boundaries became blurred and the use of masks and make-up challenged the conventions of identity construction and representation – often to the sound of a catchy electronic melody.

Cerith Wyn Evans, *Still Life With Phrenology Head*, 1979, 14 min
 Steve Barron, *Human League: Don't You Want Me*, 1981, 4 min

John Scarlett-Davis, *Chat Rap*, 1983, 15 min
 Mike Mansfield & Adam Ant, *Adam Ant: Stand and Deliver*, 1981, 3 min
 Mike Mansfield & Adam Ant, *Adam Ant: Prince Charming*, 1981, 3 min
 John Maybury, *The Modern Image*, 1978, 13 min
 John Maybury, *Solitude*, 1981, 13 min
 Grayson Perry & Jennifer Binnie, *Bungalow Depression*, 1981, 4 min
 The Neo-Naturists, *The Private View*, 1981, 7 min

HOME TAPING (17.15 – 18.00)

The mainstream media was treated like a giant library to be plundered for provocative play and subversion in the early 1980s. Whether filming their TV screen with a Super 8 camera or deftly copying tape-to-tape, artists grabbed and juxtaposed disparate material to disrupt the dominant ideologies of the age and create new visual music. The programme includes notable examples of the Scratch Video phenomenon.

Cerith Wyn Evans, *The Attitude Assumed: Still Life With Still Born*, 1980, 19 min
 Jill Westwood, *Skinheads and Roses*, 1983, 7 min
 Jeffrey Hinton, *Pop Dolphin*, c.1983, 23 min

This programme will continue on Saturday 27 February.

Don't miss: Crime Calls For Night and Music from Groan Vessel

Saturday 27 February (19.00 – 20.45)

FREE EVENT

Author David Keenan will be presenting Crime Calls For Night – a talk based around the new introductory chapter to his seminal study of the industrial underground *England's Hidden Reverse*. This book traces and analyses the transgressive urge that animated much of post-punk art, music and cinema while taking detours into Paleolithic art, Throbbing Gristle and Whitehouse, The Sex Pistols, Bob Dylan and Lou Reed. Keenan asks if the use of atrocious images of genocide, serial murder and sexual violence that dominated much of Industrial culture can have any kind of initiatory or redemptive function.

There will also be music from Groan Vessel – a specially commissioned 6-person strong supergroup of musicians from Green Door Studios featuring members Whilst, MR TC, Pussy Mothers and Leatherette playing a special one-off set influenced by the work in the This Is Now exhibition.

The UK tour of *This Is Now* has been developed with the support of the BFI, awarding funds from the National Lottery.