

TATE FILM

Lucile Desamory ABRACADABRA



LUCILE DESAMORY: ABRACADABRA

Saturday 29 June 2013

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium

£5 / £4 concessions

ABRACADABRA

Lucile Desamory, Belgium, Germany and France 2013, Blu-ray, 78 min, with subtitles

The films of Lucile Desamory (born 1977, Brussels) draw on cinematic conventions that evoke the early experiments of genre film, with images humorously juxtaposed and characters that appear slightly removed from reality.

ABRACADABRA 2013 is the filmmaker's first feature length film and brings together an array of characters set within a narrative suffused with mystery and intrigue. The film centres on a reporter named Damien, who after winning a scrabble game, is visited by a ghost. He follows her into the dark streets of Brussels until he reaches the closed gates of a big building. The next day, Damien returns to find out more about this location and meets the inhabitants: three mysterious women forming something between

a Christian commune and a secret society. They invite him in for supper but do not appear very attentive. Soon he finds himself drawn into the symbolic qualities of the building, only to find he may never escape.

The film is inspired in part, by the short story *The Open Window* 1911, by British writer Hector Hugh Munro a.k.a. Saki (1870–1916), where a fifteen year old girl frightens a nervous male visitor with a fabricated story based around the feature of an open French window that looks onto a lawn. This interest in reinterpreting the everyday, or the uncanny, is played out in *ABRACADABRA* and heightened by the series of *trompe l'œil* paintings by artist Lucy McKenzie, who also stars in the film as the ghost. The paintings were recently exhibited at Tate Modern in *A Bigger Splash: Painting after Performance* and depict a 1:1 scaled interior décor of a room, creating a set within the space of the so-called real. This deconstructed domestic space presents an intertwining of reality and dream that offers the lead character Damien, another passageway to explore.

Desamory began filmmaking in 1997 with the short slapstick movie *Crachat*. Since then her practice evolved from minimal horror (*Vandales et Vampires* 1999, *L'infirmière cannibale* 2000) to stop-motion animation (*À l'ombre de l'hyperboloïde* 2004, *Haut les Coeurs* 2007). Her films have been shown internationally in art and film institutions including the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Cinémathèque Française in Paris, the ICA, Barbican Art Centre, British Film Institute in London, and the Palais des Beaux Arts and Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique in Brussels. Desamory's collaborations with musicians and artists such as Kevin Blechdom, Nicholas Bussmann, Luke Fowler, Lucy McKenzie and Birgit Megerle, have become a prominent feature in her work. She also makes collages that often feature figures in domestic settings, using fabric for its 'psychic, historic and sexual resonance'.

This screening will be followed by a discussion between the director **Lucile Desamory**, artist **Lucy McKenzie** and Tate curators **Catherine Wood** (Contemporary Art and Performance) and **Stuart Comer** (Film).

Image:

Lucile Desamory *ABRACADABRA* 2013, film still
Courtesy the filmmaker

CAST AND CREW

Cast

Damien Desamory — Damien
Antonia Baehr — Woman with the pipe/Hunter
Lucile Desamory — First woman
Frédérique Franke — Second woman/Sister
Lucy McKenzie — Ghost/Woman in the castle
Aline Morocutti — Scrabble player
Graham Riach — Scrabble player
Adeline Rosenstein — Scrabble player
Christine Verdoodt — The Driver

Crew

Director — Lucile Desamory
Cinematographer — Artur Castro Freire
Camera operators — Isabell Spengler and Lucile Desamory
Sound recording — Sophie Watzlawick
Assistant to the director — Guillaume Cailleau
Set design and costumes — Lucy McKenzie and Lucile Desamory
Editing — Sophie Watzlawick
Sound Design, music composition and mix — Nicholas Bussmann
Musicians — Laura Torra, violin
Celli — Florina Speth / Nicholas Bussmann
Make up — Odile Desamory
Stunts — Xavier Vanderstraeten
Catering and props — Gilles Lechantre (Belgique),
Manuel Czech (France)

With the support of KünstlerInnenprogramm (Berlin) – Galerie Buchholz (Cologne) – Cabinet Gallery (London) – Lucy McKenzie – Rölf Partners (Düsseldorf) – AJC! – CERA partner in arts (Belgium) – PBC Pictures (Belgium)

Tate Film is supported by Maja Hoffmann / LUMA Foundation

TATE
MODERN