

UPCOMING SCREENINGS

Gregory J. Markopoulos: Film as Film

Friday 31 October 2014
18.30–21.00

Markopoulos is a key figure in the history of independent film and was a pioneer of the New American Cinema of the 1960s. Including the early film *Psyche* 1947 and later lyrical works *Bliss* 1967 and *Gammalion* 1968. This special evening celebrates the publication of *Film as Film: The Collected Writings of Gregory J Markopoulos*, edited by Mark Webber, that gathers for the first time the writings of this important filmmaker.

Vlado Kristl: Death to the Audience

7–16 November 2014

The first in-depth survey in the UK of the legendary artist, poet and filmmaker Vlado Kristl (1923–2004) who produced pioneering animations, experimental films and radical features. This season provides a parallel to Sigmar Polke's work, introducing a similarly iconoclastic figure who explored the limits of art, film and politics in post-war Germany.

The Beautiful Sigmar: Films on Polke

Wednesday 14 January 2015
18.30–21.00

This second screening features films made about or with Sigmar Polke. Key films made by contemporaries reveal the artistic community in Düsseldorf in the 1960s and 1970s where Polke made his early work alongside Manfred Kuttner, Blinky Palermo, Gerhard Richter, Konrad Lueg (later known as Konrad Fischer) and Lutz Mommartz. Also included are works by a younger generation such as Britta Zoellner, Astrid Heibach and 2014 Turner Prize nominee Duncan Campbell.



Gregory J. Markopoulos, *Psyche* 1947, film still
Courtesy Temenos Archive, Zürich

Vlado Kristl *Tod Dem Zuschauer / Death To The Audience*,
1984 film still. Courtesy Filmmuseum München

Britta Zoellner, *The Rainbow Serpent: Entering a New Inner Space*,
a *New Inner Time* 1980-81/2013. Still from digital transfer of
8mm film © Britta Zoellner

TATE FILM

SIGMAR POLKE: FILMS

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium
Friday 10 October, 18.30–21.00



Sigmar Polke, *Deistler – Schmiede (Deistler – Forge)*, c.1976–79
Still taken from digital transfer of 16mm film,
Black and white, color, silent, 19:20 min
© The Estate of Sigmar Polke

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Thoughts, comments, reviews?

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SIGMAR POLKE: FILMS

In conjunction with the exhibition *Alibis: Sigmar Polke 1963–2010*, this unique evening brings together rarely seen films by Sigmar Polke and his collaborations with other filmmakers.

Polke's densely layered and open ended films reflect the flood of observations that shaped his life and work. Georg and Anna Polke, Sigmar's children, have restored over two decades worth of film material, much of which was never publicly screened during Polke's lifetime. The rare films in this screening span the artist's life and work providing an insight into his studio, his daily life and family as well as his international travel and interest in other cultures.

Polke produced an extensive body of film work between 1969 to 2010 comprising over 100 hours of 16mm film which are maintained and preserved by the Estate of Sigmar Polke. Despite showing several of his films in numerous exhibitions and in screenings, only a relatively small part of his film work is known and it is only now that the full extent of Polke's practice with film is being understood.

The films will be introduced by special guests from Polke's family who will discuss his relationship to film and Christof Kohlhöfer will also discuss his collaborations with Polke.

– George Clark, Assistant Curator,
Film, Tate Modern

Alibis: Sigmar Polke 1963—2010
9 October 2014 – 8 February 2015
Curated at Tate Modern by
Mark Godfrey, Curator, International Art,
with Kasia Redzisz, Assistant Curator,
Tate Modern.

FILM PROGRAMME

The Whole Body Feels Light and Wants to Fly... / Der ganze Körper fühlt sich leicht und möchte fliegen...

Christof Kohlhöfer and Sigmar Polke, West Germany 1969, 16mm film transferred to video, colour and black and white, sound, 33 min

Polke's first film, *The Whole Body Feels Light and Wants to Fly* seems to send up the seriousness of early performance art. It was a collaboration with the artist Christof Kohlhöfer, made for the 1969 exhibition *Konzeption-Conception* in Leverkusen. Polke performs with objects that function like prostheses. A long tube becomes a kind of extended snout for the artist and he scratches himself and waves around a flexible metallic strip like an insect's antenna, before interacting with a pendulum and a rubber poultry baster. In the most iconic scene, Polke has strings attached to his limbs; dramatically lit, he stretches out like Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man but at the centre of the pentagonal web he appears like a pathetic echo of Spiderman. As Polke reads an esoteric text that sends him into giggles, the film plays with the idea of the artist as a paranormal figure, with a privileged and charged relationship with his immediate surroundings.

Deistler - Forge / Deistler - Schmiede

Sigmar Polke, West Germany c.1976–79, digital transfer of 16mm film, black and white, colour, silent, 19 min

Sigmar Polke shot this film in Hamburg c. 1978–79 during his time as a professor at Hochschule für bildende Künste (HfbK). The performer Michael Deistler was his student from 1977–1979. The forge in the film belonged to the metal workshop at HfbK and the set was arranged in a studio near Polke's classroom. The artist Ernst Mitzka taped the performance of Michael Deistler with an open reel video system. Polke then filmed these images with his 16mm camera from the monitor screen. He experimented with the specific distortions of the video picture signal and the signal of the video tape recorder to create image noise, drop outs and push the images out of synch. Polke used black and white positive and negative film except for the multiple exposures of Deistler in his atelier and the pop-concerts of a broadcasting programme shot with colour reversal film. He finished the film at the editing table of the HfbK.

Zürich Kunsthaus

Sigmar Polke, West Germany c.1984, digital transfer of 16mm film, colour, silent, 17 min

In this film Sigmar Polke documents the private view of his second retrospective that took place on April 5, 1984 at Kunsthaus Zurich. Through double and multiple exposures he combines floating colours with images from programmes filmed from a television screen, the opening speech of the curator Harald Szeemann and the installation of the exhibition itself.

Untitled (Venice, empty pavilion et al.) / Untitled (Venedig, leerer Pavillon et al.)

Sigmar Polke, West Germany c.1986, digital transfer of 16mm film, colour, silent, 28 min

This film was made in 1986, when Polke participated in the 42nd Venice Biennale where he was the official representative of Germany. Britta Zoellner and Sigmar Polke drove to Venice by car after they had visited the exhibition Palazzo Regale by Joseph Beuys in the Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, in January. The film shows the inspection of the empty pavilion. Elements from Polke's work at the time and his experiments with colour, uranium glass and raster are added in several layers of exposures to the footage of the empty walls.

Programme duration: 97 mins

