

# TATE FILM

## IAIN FORSYTH & JANE POLLARD TRANSFORM: ARTISTS' FILM, ARTISTS BEYOND FILM

Clore Auditorium, Tate Britain

Monday 3 November 2014

19.00–21.00



Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard *Anyone Else Isn't You* 2005, HD video still. Courtesy the artists and Kate MacGarry, London © Forsyth & Pollard





Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard *Walking After Acconci (Redirected Approaches)* 2005, HD video still. Courtesy the artists and Kate MacGarry, London © Forsyth & Pollard

### UPCOMING TRANSFORM SCREENINGS IN THE CLORE AUDITORIUM

**BLACK AUDIO FILM COLLECTIVE,  
HELEN CAMMOCK & ANDREA ARNOLD**  
19 January 2015, 19.00–21.00

Transform is curated by Zoe Whitley,  
Curator and Jenny Lund, Assistant Curator,  
Contemporary British Art at Tate Britain.  
With thanks to the artists.

[tate.org.uk/film](http://tate.org.uk/film)  
Thoughts, comments, reviews?  
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BRITAIN  
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Exploring the evolution of their collective oeuvre since the 1990s, Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard's unique practice fuses re-enactment, the seductiveness of music video aesthetics and the seemingly unvarnished immediacy of live documentary footage.

BRITAIN  
TATE



Autumn 2014 marks the launch of Tate Film’s monthly artists’ film programme at Tate Britain.

One Monday evening per month, Transform brings to the screen a selection of recent and rarely seen artists’ films to highlight the unparalleled ability of moving image to capture the immaterial and things unseen: the essence of sound, the passage of time and constructions of the self.

Celebrating the protean ability of film and video to conjure other forms, Transform looks at how artists push the medium into new narrative, sculptural and sensual realms. Each screening features the artists in conversation, allowing the audience the opportunity to engage more deeply and directly.



Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard *The First Kiss* 2010, HD video still. Courtesy the artists and Kate MacGarry, London © Forsyth & Pollard

PROGRAMME NOTES

Text source: <http://www.iainandjane.com>  
Total screening time 83 min

FIRST KISS  
Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, 2010  
16:9 HD video, 4 min

*First Kiss* is an impossible re-enactment. Asked to produce a short video work inspired by the themes of childhood and (loss of) innocence, Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard cast two young actors as themselves to reconstruct for the camera a moment that never happened – their first teenage kiss. In reality, they met at art school aged twenty.

The work takes as its starting point the first ever on-screen kiss, filmed by Thomas Edison in 1896. There is no script or dialogue, just the awkward hesitation of two young people giving themselves to a moment, real or imagined. The photography and grading is influenced by classic movies from the artists’ teenage years, such as *The Breakfast Club* (1985) and *St. Elmo’s Fire* (1985). The work also draws influence from Andy Warhol’s (born 1928) film *The Kiss* (1963), and continues the long line of on-screen kisses kicked off by Edison over 100 years ago. The soundtrack is written and performed by legendary Scottish musician Joe McAlinden.

WALKING AFTER ACCONCI  
(REDIRECTED APPROACHES)  
Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, 2005  
16:9 SD video, 24 min

*Walking After Acconci (Redirected Approaches)* references artist Vito Acconci’s (born 1940) performance video *Walk-Over (Indirect Approaches)* from 1973. Both works feature a young man approaching and walking away from a front-facing camera that has been

positioned where a letterbox may be found on the door of an apartment. The performer in Forsyth & Pollard’s piece is musician and actor Ben Drew, who paces the length of the corridor, talking as if to an ex-lover.

The artists worked closely with Drew to update Acconci’s script, while visually adopting the style and aesthetic of contemporary urban music videos. Shot in a single take with a static camera, to further enhance the look of the video the artists collaborated with Marcus Timpson, an award-winning colourist known for his work on music videos. Drew here makes his first appearance on screen. He has since gone on to great acclaim as a musician, under his recording name of Plan B (signed to 679 Recordings), and as an actor.

The resulting film is a combination of reconstruction and revision; a double-take; a superimposition paralleling two eras; two forms of cultural expression; and two dialogues – the dialogue with the Acconci piece and the dialogue with the viewer, you.

WALK WITH NAUMAN  
(RE-PERFORMANCE CORRIDOR)  
Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, 2006  
HD video, 5 min, silent

*Walk With Nauman (Re-Performance Corridor)* references artist Bruce Nauman’s (born 1941) *Performance Corridor* and his related video *Walk with Contrapposto* (both 1968). In the video, Nauman recorded himself self-consciously walking up and down his narrow corridor, attempting to mimic the contrapposto pose - twisting the figure on its own axis, weight balanced on one foot. Nauman subsequently exhibited the corridor as a distinct work that frames the viewer as performer.

Forsyth & Pollard re-worked the video casting one of Kylie Minogue’s dancers, Nikki Trow, in the role of Nauman. The dancer moves up and down the corridor emphasising contrapposto posture throughout her routine. Her performance was filmed inside a corridor constructed to the same dimensions as Nauman’s, twenty feet long, eight feet high and only twenty inches wide. This corridor is typically reconstructed alongside the video when the piece is shown.

ANYONE ELSE ISN’T YOU  
Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, 2005  
SD Video, 30 min  
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Included in Tate collection, *Anyone Else Isn’t You* is an unscripted portrait of fourteen young people talking directly to the camera about love and loss. Forsyth & Pollard use the premise of the homemade compilation music cassette, often known as a ‘mixtape’, as a trigger to spark each of their subjects into talking candidly. The artists’ dynamic pace of editing jumps back and forth between the subjects, mixing meanings and blurring narratives to heighten the oscillations between moments of brash self-confidence and crushing uneasiness. The participants share stories about their lives and lovers, sometimes unrequited and sometimes love lost. Many describe similar moments, and all emphasise their need to make connections to others through the music they love and share. The mixture acts as a powerful device, which the artists have described as “an intimate and personally curated mnemonic archive”. Each of these tiny collections of songs operates as a souvenir of a remembered person and time.

PERFORMER. AUDIENCE. FUCK OFF  
Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard, 2009  
16:9 HD video, 23 min

Forsyth & Pollard’s film *Performer. Audience. Fuck Off* documents a live performance work they presented at Site Gallery, Sheffield. The performance reinterprets through the trappings of stand-up comedy a piece by artist Dan Graham (born 1942) titled *Performer/ Audience/Mirror* from 1975. The resulting film captures the highly charged tension in the room and the often hilarious, but occasionally uncomfortable impact the comedian has on the audience.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Iain Forsyth (born 1973, Manchester)  
Jane Pollard (born 1972, Newcastle)  
Both live and work in London

Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard met and began working collaboratively at Goldsmiths College. They initially became known for their recreations of highly-charged cultural moments which pioneered the use of re-enactment within contemporary visual art over a series of major live art commissions at London’s ICA in the late nineties. This body of work culminated in their critically acclaimed *A Rock ‘N’ Roll Suicide* (1998), a painstakingly faithful live re-creation of David Bowie’s final performance as Ziggy Stardust, 25 years after the original event.

They have since continued to employ the mechanics of liveness and repetition while shifting focus to work predominantly with video and sound installation. In 2003 they

produced *File Under Sacred Music*, a remake of an infamous bootleg of The Cramps playing at Napa State Mental Institute, California in 1978. The artists meticulously re-staged this performance with an audience from local mental health arts organisations, in order to re-shoot each pan, tilt, zoom and jitter of the original document. Performance and music culture plays a significant role in their work, and has led to numerous collaborations with musicians. They have established an ongoing working relationship with Nick Cave, making a 3D audiobook of his recent novel *The Death of Bunny Munro* (1989), directing a series of 14 short films titled *Do You Love Me Like I Love You* (2009–2011), and most recently their first feature film *20,000 Days on Earth*, which premiered at Sundance in January 2014 and won the Directing and Editing Awards.

In 2009 the British Film Institute commissioned a major project, *Radio Mania*, their first stereoscopic work – a multi-screen 3D video installation with ambisonic 3D sound and a cast including Kevin Eldon, Caroline Catz and Fenella Fielding. Crossing the illusion of cinema with the presence of theatre the work conjures a psychological, conceptual and physical state between reality and hallucination. 2011 marked Forsyth & Pollard’s first public solo show, *Publicsfear*, presented at South London Gallery, the public commission *Soon* for the City of Toronto, as well as *Romeo Echo Delta*, a radio broadcast re-working H.G. Wells’ *War of the Worlds* for the BBC.

Forsyth and Pollard’s work is collected by museums and institutions worldwide including Tate.



Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard *Performer. Audience. Fuck Off* 2009, HD video still. Courtesy the artists and Kate MacGarry, London © Forsyth & Pollard