

SPECIAL EXHIBITION GALLERY

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Stories in the Dark

Artist statements



Adam Chodzko

Mask Filter Arc 2016

Magic Lantern Slides : “West Africa - A Christian reading to a pagan” (1940’s) and “The Explosion of a Shooting Star” (1934), welding mask, mannequin head, lights, and Venus Flower Basket deep ocean sponges.

60cm x 30cm x 25cm

In the ‘Materials and Masters’ gallery Adam Chodzko’s new work, *Mask Filter Arc*, 2016, is inspired by the Venus Flower Basket deep ocean sponge exhibited within a cabinet of glass objects as part of the Beaney’s permanent displays. Chodzko connects this beautiful, intricate, nano-structured glass form (the remains of a dead animal, capable, when alive, of focusing bio-luminescent light into its fibres to attract prey in the dark ocean depths) to two ‘found’ Magic Lantern Slides, one captioned “*West Africa - Christian reading to a pagan*”¹ (made in the 1940’s) and the other, “*The Explosion of a Shooting Star*”² (1934), both mounted as a dyptich³ in the visor of an arc welder’s protective mask.

This constellation of elements appears to create something – ‘a materialised thought’ - that is simultaneously a costume, mask, armour, lantern, and projector, all developed from the idea that flashes of light in the darkness are evidence, or symbol, of the processes of inspiration, expiration, combination, vision and blindness, ugliness and beauty.

Replacing a statue of *Luna*⁴ - the ancient Roman goddess of the Moon - (by Henry Weekes, 1866) that sat in the vitrine *Mask Filter Arc* now occupies, Chodzko’s sculpture, having ‘displaced the moon,’ now stares, transfixed, mesmerised, in awe, towards the source of its inspiration, the sponge, in the cabinet opposite.

Chodzko is interested in ideas of remoteness and proximity, and distance and intimacy both in our relationships with the world and each other. There is a physical gap between the “*Christian Reading*” and the “*Pagan*” in the magic lantern slide image. But there is also an emotional gap between these two figures, that we can read in their body language and expressions. A gap between story-teller and listener (just as there is in a magic lantern

performance) that can be closed or opened. Equally there is a gap of time between this 1940's image and our viewing of it in 2016 where our political, moral, and religious values have changed. There is an immense spatial gap between the two natural lights referenced in Mask Filter Arc; the sponge in the blackness of the bottom of the ocean and the exploding meteor in the blackness of outer space. Arc welding, joins two different pieces of metal together through an electrical discharge across a small gap. Electric arcs occur in nature in the form of lightning.

Exhibiting since 1991, working across media, from video installation to subtle interventions, and with a practice that is situated both within the gallery and the wider public realm, Chodzko's work explores our collective imagination by wondering how, through the visual, we might best engage with the existence of others. His art proposes new relationships between our value and belief systems, exploring their affect on our communal and private spaces and the documents and fictions that control, describe and guide them.

Chodzko lives and works in Whitstable. Past exhibitions include Tate Britain; Raven Row; Tate St Ives; MAMBo, Bologna; Athens, Istanbul and Venice Biennales; Royal Academy, London; PS1, NY; Ikon Gallery, Birmingham and the Sidney Cooper Gallery, Canterbury. He is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Kent.

Another of Chodzko's works, *Ask the Dust*, 2016, can be seen in the Explorers and Collectors gallery as part of *Stories in the Dark: Contemporary responses to the Magic Lantern*.

Chodzko's video work, *The Pickers*, 2009, can be seen in the *People and Places* gallery.

¹ This hand-coloured Magic Lantern slide, with the hand written caption in its margin "West Africa - Christian reading to a pagan 31" was possibly issued by the British & Foreign Bible Society.

² The date, 1934 August 12 is scratched onto the image of *The Explosion of a Shooting Star*. Wikipedia lists the following entry for the day before:

August 11, 1934

William Beebe and Otis Barton broke their own deep-sea diving record, attaining a depth of 2,510 feet in a bathysphere eight miles off Bermuda, Beebe reported seeing strange deep sea fish equipped with "headlights" that gave him an impression that "stars in a black sky twisting around crazily, had suddenly gone mad."

The caption under the image on the Magic Lantern slide reads : *The Explosion of a Shooting Star; With the formation of a luminous cloud: a remarkable photograph obtained in Czechoslovakia by Professor Sykora- Only his third record of a big meteor since 1901.*

Below this caption, in reverse and partially obscured is some very small text that reads: *For obvious reasons it is extremely difficult to observe shooting stars with... [text obscured] European time in the constellation of Perseus, its luminosity increasing, until it... [text obscured]*”

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This image shows the two magic lantern slides superimposed. Notice how the exploding star (with its apparently “screaming face”) coincides with the bible on the “Christian’s” lap.



Luna, by Henry Weekes, 1866
stone carving

Dryden Goodwin

‘13 X Christine’

Dryden Goodwin presents ‘13 X Christine’ for Stories in the Dark, a series of drawn head studies produced on traditional 3¼” Magic Lantern slides. Projected individually through an original 19th century Magic Lantern, the slides are also embedded amongst a display of historic slides in the Beaney’s collection. The images are of Goodwin’s mother, a sequence of separate portrait studies that depict single moments from a movement panning around her head. Each week a different slide from the set will be taken from the glass vitrine and switched with the one in the lantern, creating a slow-motion animation over the course of the exhibition.

By dissecting and slowing down this fluid movement into single drawn frame stills ‘13 X Christine’ suggests the latent cinematic potential of this early pre-cinema technology. Goodwin’s drawings themselves act as another metaphor for the nurturing of an image into being, with the thrill of revelation as the subject’s head turns to meet the gaze of the viewer.

Embracing the seductive qualities of the Magic Lantern, the soft lighting, and quality of intimacy evoked when revealing an image to a select audience, Goodwin’s delicate images of his mother, small in scale, projected to near life-size, draw the viewer in, expressing an innate desire to hold on to an image against the inevitability of the passing of time.

At anyone time, 12 of the slides will be displayed in the ‘Glass’ vitrine in the adjoining ‘Master and Material’ gallery (please see the Gallery floor plan).

‘Assembling the small Magic Lantern slides using the original 19th century glass and sealant tape was a tactile and delicate process and a way to connect with this earlier art form. For me, the powerful transformative quality of the lantern’s projection comes from the change in scale. Firstly directly viewing the collection of tiny fragile glass slides in the vitrine, then each one illuminated, enlarged and focused upon through the ‘magic’ of the lens.’

With special thanks to Dr Nicholas Hiley, Head of the British Cartoon Archive, Templeman Library, University of Kent, for his advice and loan of the Magic Lantern.

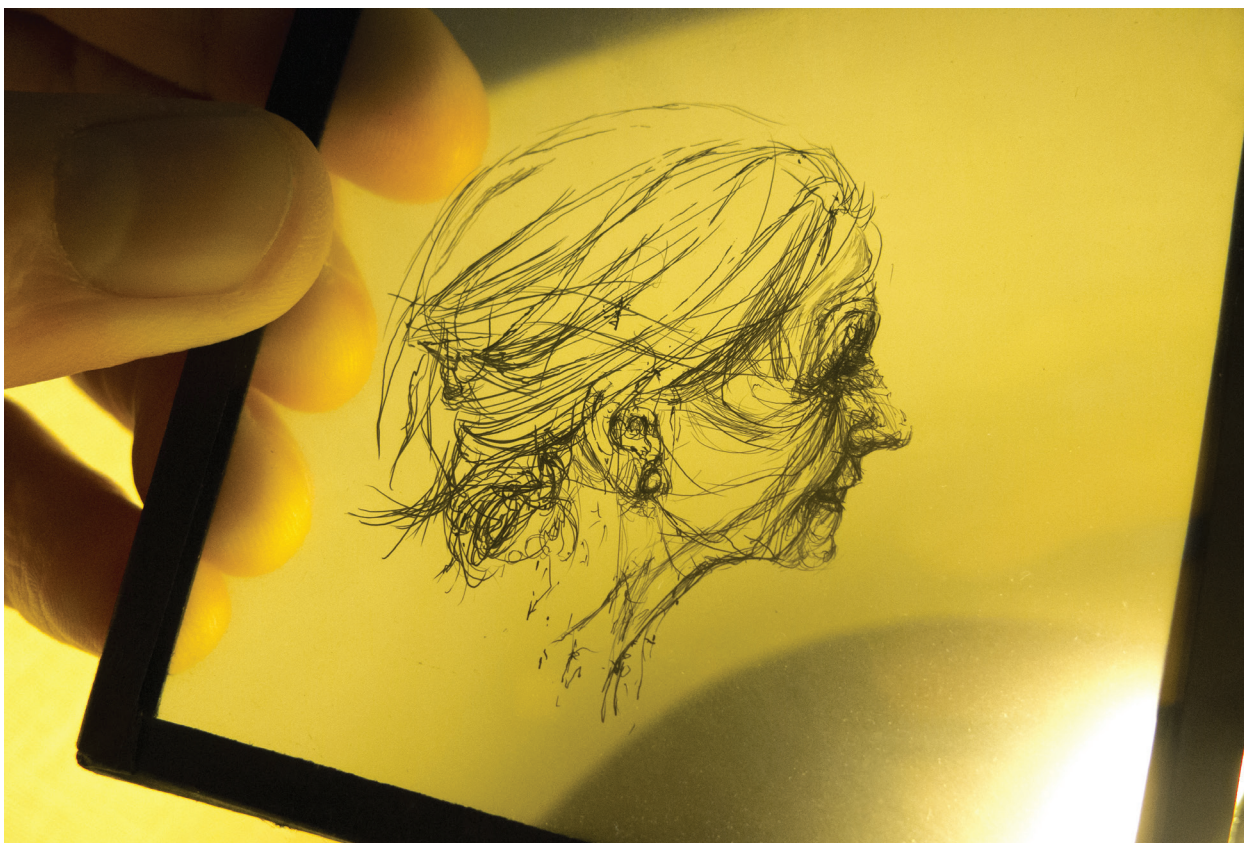


Biography

Dryden Goodwin's practice incorporates drawing, often in combination with photography and live action video; he creates gallery installations, films, projects in public space, etchings, works on-line and soundtracks. His work has been shown extensively nationally and internationally, including exhibitions at Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Tate Liverpool, The Photographers' Gallery, London, The National Portrait Gallery, London, the Venice Biennale and the Hasselblad Foundation in Gothenberg, Sweden. His work is in major collections including The Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Tate Collection and The National Portrait Gallery, London.

His first feature-length artist's essay film *'Unseen: The Lives of Looking'*, is currently being shown at international film festivals and was the subject of a solo exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, London, 2015. Other solo shows include *'Skill'*, MIMA, Middlesbrough, 2015; *'Poised'*, Ferens Art Gallery, Hull, 2014; *'Wander'*, Cambridge, 2014; *'Breathe'*, commissioned by Invisible Dust, 2012; *'Linear'* commissioned by Art on the Underground, 2010-2012; *'Cast'*, at the Hasselblad Foundation, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2009 and the Photographers' Gallery, London, 2008.

He is a Reader at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London.



Jordan Baseman

My work adopts some of the strategies (specifically the recorded interview) used by journalists, oral historians, anthropologists, criminologists and other social scientists and academics, and combines that approach with the literary device of creative non-fiction.

The conceptual core of all of the work is contained within voices, edited to operate as if the narrator is speaking directly to the audience. The timbre, pace, pauses and vocabulary of the narratives are constructed to emphasize and relate these personal accounts. The sources of these narratives are the result of hours of interviews that have been heavily edited, restructured and reduced to the length of a matter of minutes. The recorded interviews are edited, transcribed into text, and then re-edited textually to form a script. The final audio edit, follows the transcribed text-based script, creating narrative through a reversal of the conventional script-writing process.

The constructed narratives within the artworks are positioned from the perspective of lived experience: anecdotal first person narratives, academic expertise and speculative opinion are represented within the films/artworks and given equal weight in order to ask questions about the conditions and structures of both our religious and secular belief systems: our philosophical, social, political and academic foundations.

Ultimately, the works seeks to question how we determine, as individuals and as organized groups of people, what gives our lives and our culture meaning. My intention is to produce a hybrid form of expanded, experimental portraiture through combining various methods of creating and collecting narratives that are fused with both conceptual and physical experimental film-making practices and processes.



Haroon Mirza

Haroon Mirza has won international acclaim for installations that test the interplay and friction between sound and light waves and electric current. He combines a variety of readymade and time based material to create audio compositions, which are often realised as performances, site-specific installations and kinetic sculptures.

Mirza asks us to reconsider the perceptual distinctions between noise, sound and music, and draws into question the categorisation of cultural forms. “All music is organised sound or organised noise,” he says. “So as long as you’re organising acoustic material, it’s just the perception and the context that defines it as music or noise or sound or just a nuisance” (2013).

An advocate of interference (in the sense of electro-acoustic or radio disruption), he creates situations that purposefully cross wires. He describes his role as a composer, manipulating electricity, a live, invisible and volatile phenomenon, to make it dance to a different tune and calling on instruments as varied as household electronics, vinyl and turntables, LEDs, furniture, video footage and existing artworks to behave differently.

Haroon Mirza was born in London in 1977 where he lives and works. He has a BA in Painting from Winchester School of Art, an MA in Design Critical Practice and Theory from Goldsmiths College (2006) and an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design (2007). Solo exhibitions include *Circuits & Sequences*, Nam June Paik Art Center, Yongin, *Haroon Mirza/hrm199 Ltd.*, Museum Tinguely, Basel (2015) *The Light Hours*, Villa Savoye, Poissy, *Are Jee Be?*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2014), The Hepworth, Wakefield (2013) and The New Museum, New York (2012). His work was included in the Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka (2016), The 7th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale, China (2012) and the 54th Venice Biennale, Venice (2011), where he was awarded the Silver Lion. Among other awards he won the Calder Prize in 2015, Nam June Paik Art Center Prize and Zurich Art Prize in 2014, the DAIWA Foundation Art Prize in 2012 and Northern Art Prize in 2011. He is represented by Lisson Gallery, London.

Guy Sherwin

Moon LED Revolution (2016)

Installation for clock, tracing paper, slide projector, LED lamps, mirror.

About the work

I don't make static work and my first thought was how to keep a moving-image exhibit running for the thirteen weeks of the exhibition. An earlier work of mine *Clock Screen* incorporates a paper screen, suspended from the turning hand of a clock, onto which film of a shaft of sunlight is projected. Borrowing from that idea, but without the film projector, *Moon LED Revolution* uses a simple slide projector that I adapted by removing the original lamp and replacing it with an LED, a lamp that is cool, quiet, requires no fan, and hopefully no servicing. This light-emitting diode illuminates an image of the moon that reaches the revolving screen by way of a small mirror. How one might interpret this work is open to the viewer.

Guy Sherwin. March 2016.

About the artist

After studying painting during the 1960s Sherwin joined the London Film-Makers' Co-operative where he began his exploration of film as a material practice. He works with fundamental qualities of film: time, light, movement, sound. Each work investigates a specific formal idea that plays with film's material as well as illusional qualities.

Since 2005 he has been collaborating with Lynn Loo on live performances of film under the title *Live Cinema*. A typical example employs four 16mm projectors with a live mix of optical sound generated by the moving filmstrip. These projection events have been performed in Europe, North America, S.E. Asia and Australia/ New Zealand.

Based in London, Sherwin curated the exhibition of expanded cinema *Film in Space* at Camden Arts Centre in 2012/3. He had solo gallery exhibitions at Siobhan Davies Studios in 2011 and Christine Park Gallery in 2016.

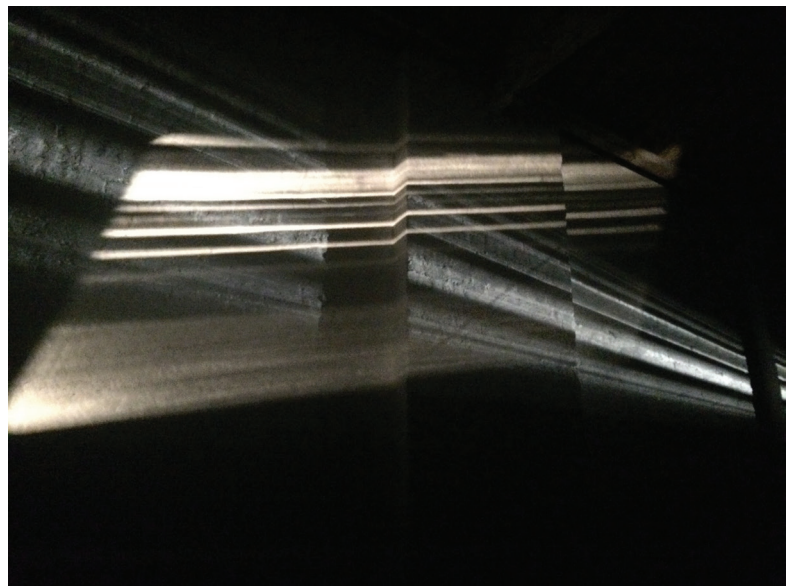
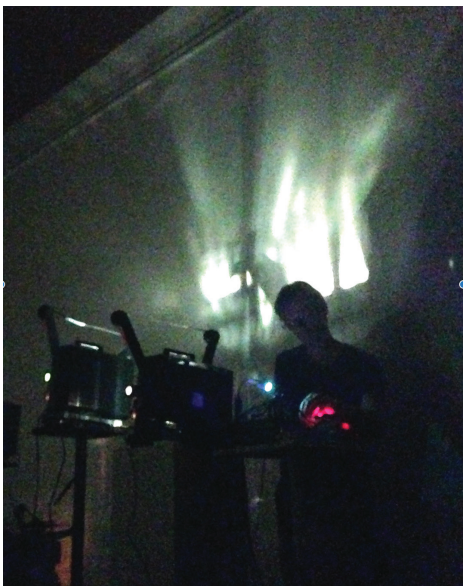
LUX has produced three DVDs of the films for single projector: *Optical Sound Films 1971-2007* (2007), *Messages* (2010), *Short Film Series 1975-2014* (2014). His films have been included in major surveys of U.K. artists' film such as *Film as Film* Hayward Gallery 1979 and *SHOOT SHOOT SHOOT* Tate Modern 2002.

Further information:

http://www.luxonline.org.uk/artists/guy_sherwin/

<http://adri.mdx.ac.uk/contentcurator.net/sherwin-guy>

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Lindsay Seers

‘We could never see it coming’

Anamorphosis is a way of embedding a hidden images in pictures or disguising an elicit, covert or politically dangerous picture by distorting it. In some ways one could think of anamorphosis as an encrypted message that needs to be decoded, much as the digital medium of today in encrypted and decoded, only in this case, it is a space and position that does the encoding. Often the anamorphosis is corrected by a curved silver mirror – a cylinder.

In her work ‘we could never see it coming’ Lindsay Seers uses anamorphosis, which becomes animated by film. She dreamt up this idea of anamorphic films in 1993. In her work for The Beaney Seers tells the story of Leo Kelly – a man she met in Australia who had an ephimany on Ocean Beach and in the King River where he was given stones by angels with images traced in them. One of them shows an outlined figure of the Virgin Mary and the other shows Christ’s face in profile. Living alone in an eccentric house of his own making, Leo painted and studied the cosmos alongside his intense religious practices.

We may think of objects as things as being without agency – it seems to be humans that act and create – yet objects can have powerful and magical properties that effect and seem to generate human behaviours.

In the spirit of Leo with his self made rooms and collection of objects Seers has made a space in which some objects seem to see things and embody a memory.

Before entering the room you need to put on the radio headphones, which play the soundtrack of the work. When you enter the tent (referencing a travelling side-show on the one hand and Leo’s chapel on the other) you can see reflective cups sitting on top of two of the televisions. If you look into these silver cups you will see the corrected distortion of the films that lay beneath them. The two films in the silver objects show symbols, signs and landscapes - these are more abstracted ideas that surround the story of Leo, hidden parts of the story. Another more standard film in the tent shows footage of Leo’s house.

Wrapped on the surface of the objects the images are replayed as if the object can recall – as if feelings and memories are in them. After all, we keep little mementoes to recall a person, a time, a place. When we touch them or see them we can return back to a moment in time. Symbols, signs and artifacts are often used as a means of protection and devotion. Leo may seem to have extraordinary beliefs – the stones he found had a profound effect on his life. Is he so unusual - so different?

Objects and images have extraordinary power to change things not only in individual's life but also on a wider cultural level. A society of the past is judged and understood by the objects that it leaves behind but ultimately the distorted and clouded mirrors that reflect history leave us guessing at the past but the presence of matter that contains human stories can be experienced as a momentary transportation into another time and place.





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