

### *Crop Over* by Sonia Boyce, 2007

"Sonia Boyce's two-screen video *Crop Over* (2007) visually samples the many traditions, histories and cultural practices that inform this Barbadian festival, culminating with the carnivalesque parade known as Kadooment. Presenting a wide range of related performances, some real and some staged by the artist, Boyce constructs a pseudo-documentary, pseudo-pantomime collage of events that subtly reveals the multiple dimensions of this creolized spectacle, deliberately building up layers of interpretation and presentation that seek to identify, historicize and problematize these cultural icons. Unlike many of the pre-lenten carnivals in the region, *Crop Over* celebrates the end of the sugar cane season, and directly ties the subversive elements and inversions of traditional carnival to the sugar economy of the Caribbean, with its relationship to families like the Lascelles of Harewood House in the UK, and their historical dependence on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. While traditional representations of Carnival by artists such as Belisario are marked, according to Stuart Hall, by what is not said, Boyce's *Crop Over* is motivated by what remains unexplained." (Allison Thompson, *Small Axe* (Vol 13, No 2) June 2009.)

*Crop Over* (2007), is a project by Sonia Boyce and was commissioned by Harewood House Trust and the National Art Gallery Committee, Barbados, with financial support from the Arts Council of England and the Prime Minister's Office, Barbados.

Sheena Rose: *Town*



### Afterimage: Engagements with the Cinematic

#### Screenings

Friday, 18 November

#### *Playing Against Time* by Mike Dibb, 2011

A powerful and moving 'medical/musical' exploration of Parkinson's Disease, featuring the virtuoso UK jazz saxophonist/composer Barbara Thompson and her husband, the jazz-rock drummer Jon Hiseman.

For over forty years the saxophonist/composer Barbara Thompson has been Britain's most brilliant and best-known woman jazz musician. Her original compositions and soaring improvisations have attracted large and enthusiastic audiences beyond the confines of contemporary jazz. She's released many albums and toured regularly throughout Europe, mainly with her own band Paraphernalia.

Then, tragically, in 1997 Barbara was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and by 2001 had to stop playing in public. Since 2003 various new drugs have restored intermittent mobility in her fingers, miraculously allowing her to play again - but for how long?

*Playing against Time* is a 75 minute documentary about Barbara's inspiring struggle with this degenerative disease of the central nervous system that has increasingly affected her life and work. Written and directed by the award-winning arts documentary film maker Mike Dibb, it has been made across a period of five years with the support of The Wellcome Trust and now been acquired by the BBC for UK TV transmission on dates to be confirmed.

Interweaving musical and medical sequences, *Playing against Time* follows Barbara and Jon as they try to pursue their lives as musicians while struggling with uncertainties over Barbara's worsening condition and the side-effects of her medication. The film features a remarkably intimate look at their daily life as well as following the couple through their consultations at London's King's College Hospital with Professor Ray Chaudhuri and with Oxford Professor Tipu Aziz, the UK's leading authority on deep brain stimulation by implanted electrodes.

Saturday 19 November

#### *Five Thousand Feet Is Best* by Omer Fast, 2011

Omer Fast's film *Five Thousand Feet Is Best* takes its name from an excerpt of an interview between Fast and a Predator Drone aerial vehicle operator now based in Las Vegas and working as a casino security guard. The operator recalls his jobs in Afghanistan and Pakistan, activating the unmanned plane to fire at civilians and militia from the optimum height of five thousand feet.

As well as discussing his job, the operator talks of his current life. We learn that he has trouble sleeping – he plays video games for hours at night to unwind; yet the games

have been the same ones, at the same level, for four years now. Like the video games that recur, forever the same, the film's structure contains almost identical sequences and statements, suggesting an inability to process trauma on the part of the operator. We see only the blurred form of the operator, and his voice is sometimes indistinct too (indeed, subtitles would have been of help in these parts of the film). For the large part *Fast* shows us reconstructions of the interview and memories, using actors and a more cinematic aesthetic. The re-enacted interview takes place inside a Las Vegas hotel room, the operator awkwardly propped-up on the bed, as if ambushed there by Diane Arbus for his portrait. There is no daylight or windows, and when the operator returns from gasping at a cigarette in the equally claustrophobic corridor, he becomes disorientated and knocks at the wrong door. The camera has been turned to point in the other direction so that we feel confused too; the space is identical to the left and the right.

Back in the room, we hear a painful beeping that is clearly experienced by the operator and not the interviewer. At each beep, the operator winces, and the interviewer asks him, 'you alright?' This question is just one of the recurring ones that structure the film. The actor operator is defensive, while the genuine one is more confessional: 'there was such a loss of life as a direct result of me', he says. Despite his frankness, we know that the operator broke off the interview with *Fast*, and often diverted the discussion to anecdotes from his current life policing the casino. His excuse was that 'we tell these stories to make life a little less boring', but it is clear that the stories offer an escape from memories and guilt rooted far from Las Vegas. This evasion technique becomes integral to *Fast*'s reconstructed footage, the interview constantly digressing into vignettes of casino fraud and robbery. Even in these episodes we encounter inconsistency, for example, in the story of a train robbery, we follow a black man up until the moment he gets caught. There is a jump cut back to the interview hotel room and the operator snaps 'I didn't say he was black. Who brought race into it?' Then we jump back to the re-enactment, but the man acting the robber is now white. *Fast* is constantly provoking the audience's certainty and empathy.

In addition to a constant undermining of what has been said, the film contains much ambiguity. As the operator describes a roadside bombing mission, we see an American family pack into a car and embark on a road trip. Leaving suburbia, they soon drive through terrain that might, it suddenly seems, be Middle Eastern. The voiceover offers no clarification; 'In these parts of the country, it's hard to get lost ...' Likewise, *Fast* interweaves aerial views from Las Vegas (including its version of Venice's St Mark's and Rialto, a disorientating experience in itself for those watching the film at the Biennale in Venice, Italy) with military aerial surveillance footage from the Middle East. This juxtaposition of pleasure and military flights only becomes more uncomfortable as we realise the American car trip narrative is about to collide with the Drone operation one. Thus the family's car is caught in the fire from five thousand feet, and as the smoke clears, we see that its occupants are motionless and bloody. Then, in a characteristic twist, *Fast* has the family get up from their slumped positions, clamber out of the wrecked car, and walk off set, exposing themselves as actors in the story. We watch, feeling duped and insecure – by now completely unable to trust what is shown us, and yet equally unable to feel nothing.

## CARIBBEAN CINEMA CLUB SCREENINGS

### *Breathe* by Holly Parotti, 2011

"Take a deep breath, you'll feel better" is often advised when someone is under emotional duress. Breathing exercises are recommended to manage anxiety and bring relaxation. Drawing oxygen into the body followed by expelling carbon dioxide can be almost involuntary although it is inherent. *Breathe* looks at the physical mechanics of the body while in the process of trying to calm a body during hyperventilation. The use of x-ray imagery and the awkward movement of a starkly contrasted body under stress attempts to illustrate the fragility of the human body performing such a basic yet vital routine.

### *Ragga Gyal D'Bout!* by Campbell, 1993

Dancehall music is often portrayed as sexist and homophobic, yet many Black women are ardent fans. *Ragga Gyal D'Bout!* explores the complexity and layering of music, identity, desire culture and politics. The women in this short film surprise us with their responses as they show there are no easy answers or solutions to loving a music genre villified by LGBT activists and feminists.

### *Town and Cape Town* by Sheena Rose, 2009

The primary focus of my animation is something that I can arguably say everyone struggles with, and that is constantly thinking about our daily problems. There are not very many times during the day when our minds are at rest. We are always dwelling on something that we need to do; a broken relationship, how we are going to manage paying the electricity bill. I am interested in the daily lives of Barbadian people, especially with what is going on in their minds. *Cape Town* is an animation that is about the busy urban life style and experience of Cape Town. The animation is not a narrative, it is more abstracted. It is focusing on the shopping stores, signs and shopping windows. It would let the viewers realize that our mind collects information subconsciously and it creates a very abstract story.

### *Diable Rouge* by Christian Bertin, 2010

A documented live performance in Paris by the Martinique artist Christian Bertin. The work of Christian Bertin revolves around the ideas of Aimé Césaire. It was Aimé Césaire who not only inspired Bertin but also supported his sponsorship to art school. In Bertin performance the artist carried a large red drum container (which he calls the devil) which has in its container small quotes from Aimé Césaire writings which is printed on small sheets of paper. Bertin then hands out the Césaire quotes to the audience. In this interactive performance Bertin takes on the form/persona of a carnival performer using the red container as a mask and the Aimé Césaire quotes as the vocal performative discourse.

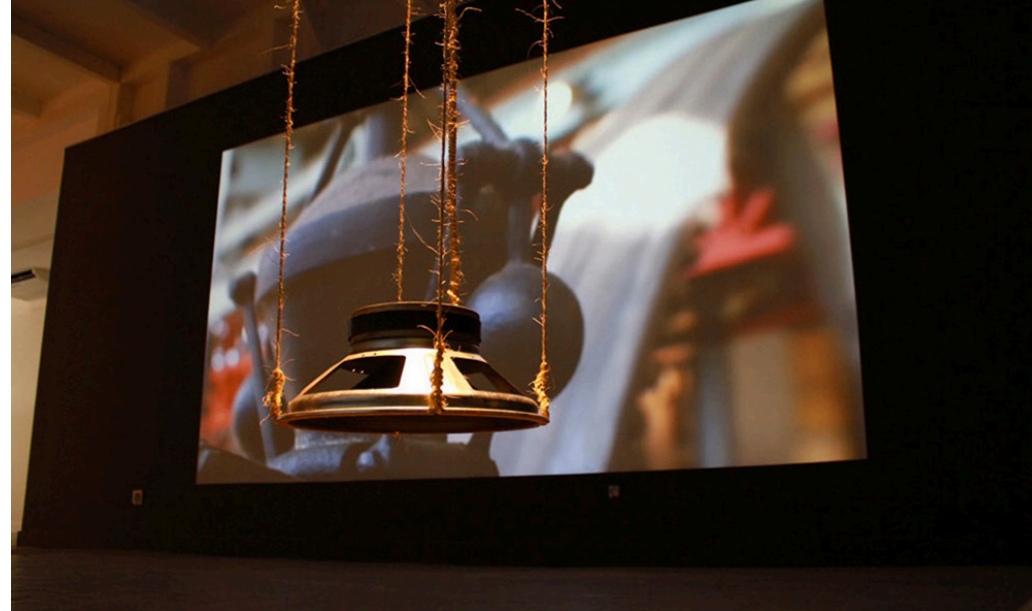
Filmmaker **John Sealey** began his career making short films and specialising in video documentation for artists and galleries. He studied film practice at the University of Wales Newport and went on to do an MA in European Cinema and PhD in Film Practice at the University of Exeter. His practice is grounded in cultural identity and his films interrogate and create new ways of reception within the formulaic structure of classical narrative cinema. He currently teaches film studies in the School of Art and Media at Plymouth University. John's latest project is a re-imagining of Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rope* on a 360° panoramic screen.

Working with electronic media as an artist, designer, producer and curator over the last twenty years, **Gary Stewart** has been involved in pioneering initiatives and projects that explore social and political issues through interrogating the relationship between culture, technology and creativity. In particular his work and collaborations with other artists and institutions has sought to find different ways of engaging audiences in the process of exploring what we mean by authorship through the unique opportunities afforded by interactive digital media.

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Gary Stewart: installation view

18 / 19 November 2011  
Arnolfini, Bristol

### Afterimage: Engagements with the Cinematic

#### *List of Participants*

The work of Martinique artist **Christian Bertin** revolves around two concerns: the eruption of Mont Pelé and the slave trade. For Bertin, these two events, tied for the first to violence of natural elements and the second to the violence of people around the triangular trade, are significant dramas that have deeply marked the life and imagination of Martinique and whose traces are still visible today, in the expression of the 'hurt' that inhabits much of Martinique.

**Sonia Boyce** came to prominence in the early 1980s as a key figure in the burgeoning black British art-scene of that time, with drawings that spoke about racial identity and gender in Britain. Her current practice is based on working with other people in improvised and performative situations. The outcomes of many of the works are often concerned with sound, social space and incorporating the spectator. Since 1983, Boyce has exhibited extensively throughout the UK and internationally, she has just completed an AHRC Research Fellowship at the University of the Arts London, and holds a Visiting Professorship at Middlesex University, in the Department of Fine Art.



**Campbell** is an award-winning filmmaker/curator and has written/produced and directed *Stud Life* an urban queer feature film which is currently in post-production. Campbell's films include the award-winning *BD Women* (1994), *Viva Tabatha* (1996) and *Paradise Lost* (2003). She made *Broken Chain* (2008) a BBC/Film collaboration. Other titles include the award-winning *Legacy* (2006) which explores the lasting impact of slavery on Black families and *Fem* (2007), a butch homage to queer femininity. Campbell's body of work was honoured by the Queer Black Cinema festival in New York in March 2009. Image, Memory and Representation was a retrospective of her work which was programmed at the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival 2007. She has published extensively on film, sexuality and gender.

**Mike Dibb** is an award-winning documentary producer/director, who for many years has been making films for television on subjects ranging from cinema and music to art, sport, literature and popular culture. These include the hugely influential BBC series (and subsequent book) *Ways of Seeing* - with *John Berger*, two films on Spain's great cultural archetypes *In Pursuit of Don Juan* and *The Further Adventures of Don Quixote* and 3 multi-part themed series on 'Play', 'Time' and 'Latin-American Culture'. He has recently made feature length music documentaries on Miles Davis, Keith Jarrett and Astor Piazzolla and just completed *Playing against Time*, about Parkinson's disease, featuring the virtuoso UK jazz saxophonist/composer Barbara Thompson.

In his works which are strongly influenced by the history and politics of the current day, **Omer Fast** scrutinizes the value of experience in society. He often takes actual events or incidents as his starting point, reconstructing them with the aid of research, interviews or found material. In his intensive film installations, mostly all multi-channel works, history is rendered as ultimately being an intangible fusion of memory and fiction, facts and imagination.

**Anthony Gross** is an artist film maker primarily engaging with the digital experience. This has led Gross to construct virtual environments and digital objects and to combine those in recent live action film projects that address this specific condition. A process of film making (or rather, digital video making) has been created by a interpreting an internet condition of free sampling, downloads, swaps and customising. This has led to complex soundtracks being created from sound effect libraries, a multilayering of amateur video editing filters available on-line, and a use of film characters as if they were game avatars - opening up questions around authorship, authenticity and the culturally nomadic.

**Gil Leung** is a writer and curator based in London. She is Distribution Manager at LUX, London and Editor of *Versuch* journal. She previously worked as

Assistant Curator for Tate Film and Live Programmes and writes for *Afterall* and various independent publications. // **LUX** is an international arts agency for the support and promotion of artists' moving image practice and the ideas that surround it. LUX exists to provide access to, and develop audiences for, artists' moving image work; to provide professional development support for artists working with the moving image; and to contribute to and develop discourse around practice.

**Eleanor Nairne** is Collection Coordinator at Artangel. A regular writer for Frieze and a co-curator of 'Making a Scene' at Southampton City Art Gallery, she has also worked recently at the Barbican Art Gallery, where she was Exhibitions Assistant on 'Watch Me Move' (June 2011), about the history of animation, and Curatorial Researcher for 'The Surreal House' (June 2010). She was awarded a distinction in her Masters at the Courtauld Institute of Art and has previously worked for the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Sadie Coles HQ. // **Artangel** is an organization renowned for commissioning some of the most controversial contemporary art of recent years, which recently launched their collection in collaboration with Tate.

**Holly Parotti** received her Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Painting and Printmaking from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia in 1997. Printmaking is a foundational aspect of her work and in 2002 she held a joint exhibition with her sister Lynn at The Central Bank of the Bahamas entitled 'Parotti Views' showing their prints and paintings. From 2004, she held a series of exhibitions including a solo show at Post House Gallery entitled 'process; ink. pressure, paper.' In 2005 she started work as the Curatorial Assistant and Collections Manager at the National Art Gallery of the Bahamas. In 2011 she joined the DAF as the Assistant Director & Curator.

**Judy Price** is an artist working with moving image whose practice intertwines documentary, the cinematic, fiction and testimony. Price is concerned with how art can reveal the explicit and hidden dynamics of geopolitical forces in specific geographical places. A focus of her practice for many years has been Israel and Palestine. She is interested in how art can create new perceptions of the experiences of individuals and cultures and how the artist becomes embedded in a place or culture in the production of work, and, whereby art might become transformative in the role of the artist as political activist.

**Sheena Rose** is an artist from Barbados who graduated in 2008 with a bachelors degree in Fine Arts from Barbados Community College. She is well known for her hand drawn animations and has exhibited her work across the Caribbean and in South America, in South Africa and in the USA.



Sonia Boyce: *Crop Over*

18. / 19. November 2011

Arnolfini, Bristol

### Afterimage: Engagements with the Cinematic

**Afterimage: Engagements with the Cinematic** is a two-day intervention at the Arnolfini in Bristol, threading together responses to the multiplicity of issues that impact on the production, distribution and critical reflection of the moving image in an era of mass and intimate media.

Inspirational, internationally acclaimed artists, curators and agencies will be working with, discussing and reflecting on the historical and contemporary impact of cinema as both an industry and scene of cultural production. There will also be a special launch presentation of Omer Fast's publication *In Memory* by The Green Box publishers which examines the mechanisms of personal experience, memory and history.

Judy Price: *White Oil*



## Programme

### FRIDAY, 18 NOVEMBER

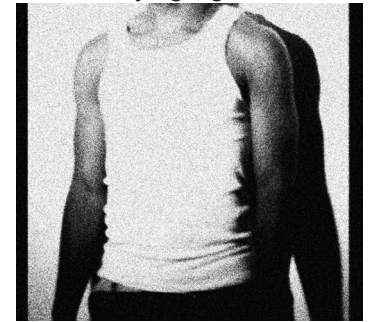
4:30 – 19:00

#### Masterclass: David A Bailey in conversation with Mike Dibb.

This session is an opportunity to gain an intimate yet detailed experience of Dibb's work. Mike Dibb has been making films for television and mainstream cinema for nearly 50 years. During that time he has defined and re-defined not only the televisual art documentary genre but has been able to make moving image pieces as a form of self portraiture. The masterclass will be followed by a premier screening of Mike Dibb's 75min film *Playing Against Time*.



Mike Dibb: : *Playing Against Time*



Holly Oarotti: *Breathe*

### SATURDAY, 19 NOVEMBER

10:30 – 12:30

#### Panel discussion The spectacle of the performer

This session will provide a unique insight into the imaginations of the performer/artists - what she/he feels, sees, imagines and re-imagines rather than a dialectic relationship between spectator/voyeur and audience. This idea of performance, the art object, the artists and the subject has been an important theme in contemporary art for a number of artists.

The panellist are: Mike Dibb, Gary Stewart, Judy Price and Sonia Boyce.

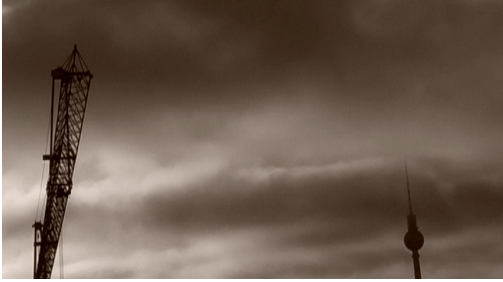
13:30 – 15:00

#### Panel discussion: Narrative

How moving image works deploy elements of storytelling, myths and legends has been closely linked with the notion of how artists have dealt with this theme through their exploration of how these so called narrative tales are re-worked within the machinery of popular culture.

The panellist are John Sealy, Anthony Gross and Campbell X.





John Sealy: *Berlin*



Anthony Gross: *Silver Cube and Professor*

15:30 – 17:00.

**Presentations: Moving image commissions & collections.**

At the beginning of the 21st century there has been a massive shift in relation to moving image art commissions. Established visual art organisations have now developed moving image projects as a major element in their organisation mission to the point where over the last 20 years significant art organisations and moving image agencies have dramatically change the parameters in relation to moving image commissions and how that work is archive and collected. This session will focus on 2 moving image art institutions and collections – the Lux presented by Gil Leung and Artangel presented by and Eleanor Nairne.

Following on this presentation there will be a special screening of Omer Fast's Venice 2011 project the launch of his book *In Memory*.

17:30 – 18:30.

**Caribbean cinema club screenings.**

Working in Trinidad with Chris Ofili and several local artists, Peter Doig established the StudioFilmClub at CCA, the Centre For Contemporary Arts, which was essentially a way to show to a mass audience classic films by Caribbean artists such as Horace Ove, as well as work by up and coming emerging artists. It is our intention as a homage to present: The Cinema Club, a screening of rarely seen but influential films that reflect the Caribbean and might define the genealogy of the moving image as an art form.

19:00 – 20:00

**Moving image and sound performance.**

Gary Stewart presents a moving image and sound based new work.

To book tickets please visit [www.arnolfini.org.uk/whatson/films/details/1131](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk/whatson/films/details/1131)



Ed Atkins: *Death Mask II*



Campbell: *Stud Life*

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