

DISCOVERY EXHIBITION GUIDE

George Barber / The Long Commute Jaygo Bloom / Arcade

16 October - 14 November 2010

Admission free

Discovery, Scotland's International Film Festival for Young Audiences, extends into the DCA galleries, with exciting work by two of the UK's most innovative artists working in video and new media arts. Both George Barber (born 1958) and Jaygo Bloom (born 1972) share a 'desire to be immersed in the abstracting potential of technology, a dream of the shifting surface that suggests the ephemerality of both subject and signal.' - Gareth Evans, *George Barber*, 2005, p14.

Art often reflects and responds to society at large. 'The speed with which the twentieth century created an electronically linked planet is reflected in the swift expansion of art practices beyond traditional painting and sculpture to an almost frantic inclusion of everyday things into the arena of art.' - Michael Rush, *New Media in Art*, 2005, p7. New Media artists harness contemporary technology to produce artworks that challenge existing preconceptions. Associated with computer programming new media artworks still require the same amount of concept and technique. Works like *1001 Colours Andy Never Thought Of* by Barber and *Homage to a Homage* by Bloom involve techniques not so far removed from painting or screen painting. 'Digital technology, for which the computer is the basic tool, embraces all areas of contemporary, technologically involved art, from films, to photography, synthesized music, CD-Roms and much more. The new power that digital technology brings to the image renders it infinitely malleable.' - Ibid, p181.

Both artists share a playful, at times irreverent approach to the canon of art. Both artists have worked inside and outside of the conventional gallery space. They have worked with contemporary musicians: George working with Pascal Gabriel (Bomb the Bass, S'Express), the Art of Noise, The Who, U2 and Robert Plant. Jaygo has worked as a VJ and video director for, amongst others, the techno DJ and musician Luke Slater, Franz Ferdinand and Dananananaykroyd. George's work has been broadcast on television and Jaygo's in clubs demonstrating an open-minded approach to taking their work to as wide audiences as possible. Both artists also use their own websites as a place to view their artworks. Nonetheless, the gallery retains the most ideal means for artists to present their work to audiences.

Barber's *Automotive Action Painting* uses household paint, a van and some cars and an HD Camera but also uses the tradition of abstract expressionism and old fashioned silent comedy. It evokes the famous Hans Namuth film observing the artist Jackson Pollock. Pollock created a new technique of pouring paint onto a floor-based canvas and revelled in this artistic freedom which became known as Action Painting. Barber takes it one stage further.

Jaygo Bloom's work references artists from the same time period though a more formalist visual. Bloom manages to find a link between minimal and reductivist artworks and the designs of early computer games. Minimalism has been a strand of art since the late 1950s which challenged traditional ideas about art-making and the aura of the artwork. 'Almost any approximately geometric, vaguely austere, more-or-less monochromatic, and generally abstract-looking work has been or is likely to get labelled Minimal at one time or another.' - David Batchelor, *Minimalism*, 1997, p6.

Both George Barber and Jaygo Bloom use appropriation throughout their works. This involves borrowing something made by someone else and making something new from it. The 'original' remains visible in this creative act and can be intended as a complement or can be more subversive/critical. George's work initially (and very consciously) relied on other people's products – clips from films and advertising in order for him to create. The Marilyn Monroe image derived from Andy Warhol who took it from a promotional picture still from an earlier artwork - a publicity shot of Marilyn to promote her film *Niagara*. Warhol denied the sense of the uniqueness of the artist's personality that had been implicit in the gestural painting of the 1950s. He also used a commercial technique— silkscreening—that gives the picture a crisp, artificial look; even as Warhol canonizes Monroe, he reveals her public image as a carefully structured illusion. Warhol stated 'I just see Monroe as just another person. As for whether it's symbolic to paint Monroe in such violent colours: it's beauty, and she's beautiful and if something's beautiful it's pretty colours, that's all...' - *Andy Warhol*, Helsingfors Konsthall, Norway, 1997, p234.

Similarly, Jaygo's work is derived from the graphics of computer games such as *Pong* and *Pacman* or from archetypal artworks by the likes of Josef Albers (specifically his *Homage to the Square* series) and Alexander Calder (his sculptures are referenced in O:O:O:). Appropriation creates immediate recognition and in its own way is akin to the tradition within historical paintings evoking the style of earlier masters or classical subjects. George's early Scratch videos are often compared to sampling employed in music in the last three decades.

The Discovery Film Festival aims to introduce new audiences to artists working with moving images. Please visit the Information Space for more information on the exhibiting artists including interviews and books and essays related to their artworks.

Related Talks & Events

Talk by George Barber

DCA Cinema

Fri 15 October, 11am

Free but tickets must be booked in advance.

George Barber is one of the UK's most important ever video artists. DCA are delighted to present the artist in conversation with DCA Exhibitions Curator, Graham Domke. The artist will screen works that are not presented in the exhibition making it an unmissable event.

2010 Scottish Moving Image Education and Young Film Audiences Conference

Dundee Contemporary Arts

Tue 26 October, 9.30am – 5pm

Free to attend but booking is essential.

Presentations will include speakers from Channel 4's education team, as well as teachers working with film in the context of the Curriculum for Excellence. You'll also find out how to get involved in new youth initiatives such as Tilda Swinton's 8 1/2 Foundation and a new fund for young film programmers. If you work in education, arts education or youth work, and have an interest in film, you are warmly invited to attend this day of talks and discussion.

Talk by Jaygo Bloom

Dundee University, Dalhousie Building Lecture Room 3

Wed 27 October, 12pm

Free to attend.

A great opportunity to hear from the artist about how he has flourished since his art school days in Dundee. Organised by Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, Dundee as part of their academic programme of guest speakers, but open to all to attend.

(((echo)))

DCA Galleries

Thu 4 November, 6.30pm

Free to attend.

A new initiative with presentations from local artists responding to the exhibitions in DCA. Each participant will relate their own artistic practice and personal thoughts to the work on view and will show images and clips from across a wide variety of media sources. The intention is to increase debate and this pilot event will be undertaken by staff from across the DCA building but the intention is for this to develop into a wider community. Email louisa.preston@dca.org.uk for more details about this event and future Thursday night art activities.

Scratch Video Film Programme

DCA Cinema

Wed 10 November, 6pm

£3/£2

A rare screening of a series of videos from the highly influential 'Scratch Video' genre of which George Barber was one of the pivotal figures. Scratch was the first to use samples of video and mix them with sampled music and sound. The works that will be shown are some of the best examples of this work from British artists. With thanks to Adam Lockhart, Rewind and DJCAD Archivist.

Activities

Do, Make, Think, Chat

DCA Activity Room is open daily with a library of books and free DIY things to do and make, all linking to the Discovery Film Festival films and exhibition. Great for children of all ages. Just drop in and have a go.

Art CArT

Sun 17, Sat 23, Sun 24 & Sat 30 October

Sat 6, Sun 7, Sat 13 & Sun 14 November

Our Art CArT will be out and about on the following dates from 2-5pm with an activity sheet and badge-making to engage our younger visitors.

Green Screen Scream

Sun 31 October, 11am - 4pm

Free

Drop right into a moving image artwork! This Discovery Film Festival event is run by exhibiting artist Jaygo Bloom and is free for all ages.

Further Information

If you have any questions during your visit to DCA, please do not hesitate to ask the gallery assistants who will be happy to help. Please visit the information space and activity room to find out more about the exhibition and the artists.

For further details on related events, talks, activities and cinema screenings, visit www.dca.org.uk

Galleries open:

Tue - Sat, 10.30am-5.30pm

Sun, 12pm-5.30pm

Open late Thu until 8.30pm

Admission free

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