

TINTYPE

ESSEX ROAD 6

AYO AKINGBADE • ADAM CHODZKO • PATRICK GODDARD • LUCY HARRIS
• REBECCA LENNON • MARYAM MOHAJER • MELANIE SMITH • WEBB-ELLIS •

10 January – 9 February 2020

Films screened 5 – 11pm daily

Opening event: Thursday 9 January, 6.30 – 8.30pm



"In the particular is contained the universal."

— James Joyce

Tintype announces the sixth edition of its annual Essex Road programme. Eight artists are invited to make a short film in response to the mile-long North London thoroughfare that snakes from Angel, Islington to Balls Pond Road.

The annual commission is recognised for its significance within the ecology of moving image arts in the UK. Since its inception six years ago Tintype has commissioned 48 artists' films which are back-projected onto the gallery's window and viewed from the street as a form of public art.

Whilst the brief is very simple – to make a short film that responds to one London street – the results have been astonishingly diverse. Turning a prism onto a very specific locale has, counter-intuitively, generated a magnificently universal response.

For ESSEX ROAD 6, Tintype's large window, situated on a busy corner in Essex Road, becomes a public screen for five weeks with the eight films screened on a loop every evening from 5pm to 11pm.

TINTYPE

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ARTISTS & FILMS

AYO AKINGBADE's **Hella Trees** was filmed in the Colebrooke Row and Duncan Terrace Gardens, south of the Angel. It follows a young obsessive, Rafiki, whose artistic practice focuses on trees, their individuality and presence. The film segues into a laconic conversation about identity, wanting to confound stereotypes; inviting people to look closer and go beyond the obvious.

Ayo Akingbade is a young artist based in London. Her work to date has emerged from and mediates the urban environment, which she distils into highly personal, idiosyncratic narratives. She recently completed a social housing trilogy entitled *No News Today*. She is a recipient of the 2018 Sundance Ignite Fellowship and last year her work was selected for New Contemporaries.

ADAM CHODZKO's film is entitled **Fluid Dynamics; The Quail is Rising**. Under Essex Road flows the remains of the New River, a project from the early 17th century to bring fresh water to London. From its traces a dream flows. A ship, TS Quail (a secluded purpose-built space for Islington Sea Cadets, soon to be relaunched) has become stuck in a glitch in the present whilst its crew try to navigate it along the New River's subterranean channels. This crew simultaneously haunts the TS Quail's sister ship, the destroyer HMS Quail (adopted by the people of Islington in 1942) the wreck of which lies on the seabed in the Gulf of Taranto. Their actions restore a state of liquidity and in the future the New River resurfaces in a completely rewilded Islington.

Adam Chodzko works across media, exploring our conscious and unconscious behaviour, social relations and collective imaginations through artworks that are propositions for alternative forms of 'social media.' His work speculates how, through the visual, we might best connect with others. Since 1991 Chodzko has exhibited extensively in international, solo and group exhibitions. In 2002 he received awards from the Hamlyn Foundation and the Foundation for Contemporary Art, New York, and in 2007 was awarded an AHRC Research Fellowship in the Film Department at the University of Kent, Canterbury. In 2015 Chodzko was shortlisted for the Jarman Awards. In 2016 he received a DACS Art360 Award.

In PATRICK GODDARD's film **Black Valuation**, Halloween and the ghouls come out. Patrick Goddard, impersonating the supposed recent inheritor of the Tintype gallery building, has the property valued by an unsuspecting estate agent. Having convinced the agent earlier in the day that he would have to dash off to a Halloween party straight after their meeting, Goddard conducts the consultation in full 'corpse paint.' During the course of the conversation Goddard reveals he intends to evict Teresa, the gallery director, gain planning permission to convert the building into flats and sell the property for the maximum profit as soon as possible. Covertly filmed using only the gallery's CCTV cameras, the estate agent unwittingly leads a conversation of the Essex Road area: local real-estate values, gentrification, planning permissions and contemporary art.

Patrick Goddard's politically loaded and narrative-based works operate as black comedy. Shot in his subversive, low-fi mockumentary style, his films chart the artist's fumbled attempts to create a personal and political integrity. The films are by turns awkward, astute, cringe-inducing and laugh-out-loud funny. They all share an underlying dissection of authority, often turning the focus of subject onto the artist himself, to question, as Goddard himself says, 'the presumption that you are somehow outside of the situation in which you are talking, discussing, viewing or observing.' Goddard has had recent solo exhibitions at Seventeen, Matt's Gallery, Outpost, and Almanac Projects. His forthcoming show **Trip to the Eclipse** opens at Matt's Gallery in early February. Patrick Goddard is represented by Seventeen Gallery.

LUCY HARRIS's 16mm film **Reading Room** explores the surface and texture of the physical space, materials and architecture of Islington South Library in Essex Road. Features of the library's grand marble foyer, doors and windows are visually paired with images of books, their pages a portal to multiple experiences and landscapes of the imagination. The film also references the library's architect Mervyn E Macartney, whose engaged commitment to the project was evident in his correspondence with the local council. **Reading Room** is both evocation of a specific library, and a timely reminder of the importance of continued communal access to libraries, archives, books, and the act of reading.

Lucy Harris works with 16mm film to investigate sites, objects and sourced images – postcards, photographs, archive film – creating interweaving visual narratives that explore film as a site of illusion and allusion. A continuing concern in her practice is a consideration of what exists outside the offered frame of reference through processes that reveal the filmed image as constructed – altered via illusion, framing and exposure. She is completing a series of works that examine visual representations of the environment, asking how these very representations contribute to the construction of notions of national identity and border control. Her work has been exhibited in galleries, cinemas and film festivals in the UK and internationally, including the Whitechapel, BFI and ICA cinemas. In 2016/17 she was the recipient of the Rita Harris ACME studio award, and in 2016 she was the winner of the Jules Wright 2016 Prize.

REBECCA LENNON presents *House of Wolf*, a film that collages words from the names of shops and pubs in Essex Road and nearby Upper Street, with shots of surface cracks, statues, letting agency signs, hoardings and Christmas trees. Through poetic composition the film explores the way our streets and their architecture, our social fabric and rituals, attempt to own and contain the wild – with varied success.

Rebecca Lennon works across media including video, text, performance, sound and music to think about and play with the non-linear shapes and rhythms of the voice, memory and the speaking body. She brings weight to words, to the power of speech, to the power of repetition – abstracting, making surreal – bringing us back to the concrete and physical. Rebecca Lennon recently had a solo show at Matt's Gallery and is currently preparing an exhibition at Dilston Grove for Southwark Park Gallery, and a second exhibition at Primary in Nottingham.

Artist-animator MARYAM MOHAJER has been making a series of drawings in some of the cafés in Essex Road. The resulting film, *Ni*, links animated sketches and text that play on observed relationships – how people can be in both conflict and collaboration at the same time – and textures gleaned from local shops such as Steve Hatt fishmongers, and the popular haberdashery shop Ray Stitch.

Maryam Mohajer's wry, keenly observed, animated films focus on ordinary lives under pressure. Mohajer was born in Tehran, Iran, then lived through revolution, war and immigration. With a background in painting, she discovered animation after moving to the UK in 2000. Her works are strongly narrative; she is interested in the relationship between subjects, objects and the stories behind them. Textures are a large part of the hand-drawn and handmade feel of her works. Maryam Mohajer's films have been shown in numerous international film festivals and she has won eight Best Animation Awards. Her film *Grandad was a Romantic* has just won BAFTA's Award for Best Short Animation.

MELANIE SMITH's film *5 MINS* queries whereabouts and locality within cities by focusing on the abstracted orange dots, dashes and signs that appear on the computer-generated bus timetables in Essex Road found at most bus-stops. Signals and signs in this short film are interpreted as repeated frequencies and unintelligible blips, numbers and letters that jumble any rational logic or coordination of our bearings. Passersby and commuters are fleetingly caught on film, much as we all are much of the time by street surveillance cameras.

Melanie Smith's work relates to an expanded vision of the notion of modernity and forms critiques on its aesthetic-political structure. She is interested in revealing tensions implicit within industrial society between the economy, forms of violence and chaos. Her eye is attuned to surreal events in everyday life, the intensity of the street and finding potential in 'messed up' situations. Says Smith, 'I never work with formal scripts, but instead build up visual sequences structured in a circular way, so that certain motifs appear repeatedly. It is always a question of following various lines of research that for me coincide at my sites of interest and result in these layers of associations and visual encounters.' Smith's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at numerous institutions, including: PSI, New York; MoMA, New York; UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; ICA Boston, Tate Liverpool; Tate Modern; South London Gallery, London; Tamayo Contemporary Art Museum, Mexico City. She represented Mexico at the 2011 Venice Biennale.

A future being could tell a lot about the current human condition by hearing things that make life worth living day-by-day. What are the small but important rituals that give us solace? Do they unite us in a time

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of division? WEBB-ELLIS's film *For One Who is Exhausted* is structured as a list of everyday pleasures, collected from people on Essex Road. Shot near the Angel, a symbolic angel appears to hover above the action, an overseer of this intersection of human life, memory and the everyday.

Webb-Ellis (Caitlin and Andrew Webb-Ellis) are a British/Canadian artist duo. Their films often reveal the story of their own making in which coincidence and fiction play a significant role. They interlace images, encounters, stories and sounds of their personal experiences into work that seeks to address what it is to be human in these strange times. They regularly involve young people in their projects, as willing participants and active collaborators. Webb-Ellis' recent two-screen work, *For The First Baby Born in Space*, was commissioned for the Jerwood/FVU Awards. Shot in the long, hot summer of 2018 in Whitby with a group of teenagers, the film records how their coming of age coincides with a time when so much else is in flux. Webb-Ellis are currently working on a project for Whitstable Biennial, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

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