Teachers’ Guide to:

Film in Space

15 December 2012 - 24 February 2013
Film in Space

is a group exhibition selected by artist-filmmaker Guy Sherwin. The exhibition focuses on expanded cinema, a film movement which came to prominence in Britain in the early 1970s. Key works from this period will be shown along with pieces by younger artists who are continuing to experiment with the versatility of analogue media, as well as others who have started to take on board the advent of digital technologies.

This exhibition includes several film works from the period that have been adapted from live performances to cyclical installations changing them in unpredictable ways and suggest new possibilities for the work. In order to emphasise this transformation Sherwin has selected a programme for two of the galleries which will be changing throughout the exhibition. Alongside this there will be live performances of expanded cinema on Wednesday evenings in the Artists’ Studio.

Film in Space highlights the unique qualities of film; the hand-made, tactile and physical awareness of the material; and many of the works evoke the transience of the natural world with the affects of light, space and movement on the environment.

Fact file

About Guy Sherwin

Guy Sherwin studied painting at Chelsea School of Art in the 1960s. His subsequent work with film, including expanded cinema and live performance, was influenced by the radical practice of the London Film-Makers’ Cooperative where he worked in the 1970s. He lives in London and teaches at Universities in Wolverhampton and Middlesex.

About Film in Space

Film in Space is a group exhibition selected by artist-filmmaker Guy Sherwin. The exhibition focuses on expanded cinema, a film movement which came to prominence in Britain in the early 1970s. Key works from this period will be shown along with pieces by younger artists who are continuing to experiment with the versatility of analogue media, as well as others who have started to take on board the advent of digital technologies.

This exhibition includes several film works from the period that have been adapted from live performances to cyclical installations changing them in unpredictable ways and suggest new possibilities for the work. In order to emphasise this transformation Sherwin has selected a programme for two of the galleries which will be changing throughout the exhibition. Alongside this there will be live performances of expanded cinema on Wednesday evenings in the Artists’ Studio.

Film in Space highlights the unique qualities of film; the hand-made, tactile and physical awareness of the material; and many of the works evoke the transience of the natural world with the affects of light, space and movement on the environment.
Prepare for your visit

This section offers some starting points for teachers to build on in preparation for an independently led school visit to the exhibition.

Have a read through the information points and questions below, and see how it fits in with your developing lesson plans.

**Idea 1**

This exhibition brings together artworks selected by artist Guy Sherwin around his interest in expanded cinema.

- Create a large collective spider diagram with ‘the cinema experience’ at school
- Using one colour of pen, invite your students to write down their associations with ‘the cinema experience’
- Encourage students to think about the equipment, the environment, the audience, the sound and the lighting
- Bring your spider diagram to Camden Arts Centre
- Using a different coloured pen, work with the students to add any new words to the spider diagram based on this ‘expanded’ cinema experience
- Discuss the similarities and differences between the traditional cinema experience, and the expanded cinema experience

**Idea 2**

Some of the works in this exhibition may challenge our expectations of film and video, and make us see moving image and sound in a new light.

- Gather your students round and watch this YouTube clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hAl8LnTbEc
- Divide the class up into groups of three
- Without using any words, ask your students to create a soundtrack to the silent movie
- They can use objects, noises, actions to create their sounds, but no words
- Using a dictaphone or sound recorder, record each group’s soundtrack
- Bring your sound recorders to the gallery and play the soundtracks in the gallery
- Discuss how it interacts with some of the works in the galleries
Idea 3

Some of the works in the exhibition are made using methods that encourage chance outcomes and visual experimentation.

- Before you set off for your gallery visit, give out a sheet of paper and a graphite stick.
- Ask students to make a rubbing on the floor somewhere between the classroom and the school gates.
- On your journey to Camden Arts Centre, ask your students to make a second rubbing on a floor surface, over the top of their first rubbing.
- When you arrive at the steps of Camden Arts Centre, make a third rubbing.
- Have a look around all the galleries.
- Can your students make any relationships between their rubbings and the works in the exhibition?
Activities for the Gallery & Classroom

This section is aimed at supporting teachers to develop practical responses to the exhibition, both in the gallery and at school.

Teachers can book the Drawing Studio at Camden Arts Centre free of charge. See the Book a Visit page for more details.

Key Stage 1 & 2: Chromatography Experiments

This activity explores the variety of chance images you can create through experimenting with chromatography and very simple materials.

Materials: Absorbent tissue such as kitchen or hand towels, felt tips pens, water, trays.

1. Fill a tray with water and place it in the centre of the table
2. Provide pupils with five tissues
3. Provide pupils with a range of coloured felt tip pens
4. Invite the pupils to draw a pattern, line, shape or sequence on the tissue
5. When the pupils have finished, invite them to dip the very end of their tissue in the tray of water
6. Observe how the drawing changes as the tissue absorbs the water
7. Observe how the colours change
8. Discuss with the children if they can imagine what is happening
9. Repeat drawings to see if the children can make different kinds of experimental patterns and drawing with their other tissues

Adapted from Ideas for Experiments, originally devised by Viyki Turnbull.
Key Stage 3 & 4: Acetate Movie

This activity creates a machine out of furniture and introduces analogue ways of creating moving images from still drawings. The activity takes some of the 16mm film projections in the galleries as a source of inspiration and supports the students in understanding how they work.

Materials: OHP, Acetate, OHP pens, drill (no drill bit required), clear sellotape, scissors, 2 chairs that have a hole in their backs, table, white wall

1. Cut an A4 sheet of acetate into three identical strips
2. Distribute at least one strip per student, depending on your group size
3. Ask students to make an abstract blind contour drawing (a drawing without looking at the page) on the acetate strips using the OHP pens
4. Using the clear sellotape, ask students to stick their strips together to make a very long, continuous drawing
5. Arrange the room so that the table sits in between the two chairs
6. Place the OHP on the table
7. Feed the long acetate drawing through hole in the back of the first chair, across the table, over the OHP, through the hole in the back of the second chair, under the table, and back to the beginning
8. Join the two ends together to make a giant loop
9. Use the drill as a motor to turn the acetate
10. Watch as the OHP projects the drawings onto the white wall as a continuous film

Adapted from How Can Art?, originally devised by artists Judith Brocklehurst and Georgie Manly.
SEN: Transformation

This activity looks at transformation and how you can change your experience of a familiar space.

Materials: Desk lamps x 4, overhead projector, large sheets of plain paper, clear acetate, coloured acetate, OHP pens, scissors, glue, biscuits and drinks in plastic cups.

Before the start of the session:
1. Make one giant table in the room for you group to sit around
2. Cover the table in a large sheet of plain paper

With the group:
1. Set out the biscuits and drinks on the table for your group to have a snack together
2. Leave the remains of your snack on the table once you have finished eating
3. Darken your classroom by closing the blinds
4. Place the desk lamps on the table and turn them on; turn off the main lights in the room
5. Using thick pens, trace the shadows created by the food items on the table
6. Turn the lights back on in the room
7. Using the clear acetate and OHP pens, get each person to trace their favourite bit of the table drawing
8. Place the OHP on the table as far back as possible so it is projected on the wall
9. Turn all the lights off in the room
10. Take turns to place the acetate drawings onto the projector
11. Look how you are transforming the room
12. Why not cut out coloured acetate shapes to stick onto the acetate drawings. Place these onto the OHP
13. Place the OHP at the far side of the room, so the projection is as big as possible covering the wall and floor
14. Get your group to stand in front of the projection
15. Get them to look at how they can disrupt the image with their own silhouettes

Adapted from Get the Message, originally devised by artists Judith Brocklehurst and Georgie Manly.
Photo © the artist

Cover image:
Malcolm Le Grice, *Castle 1*, 1966
Film installation at DESTA Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens. March 18 - 22, 2004 © the artist
Images

Emma Hart, Installation view of Blind, 2006
Courtesy of the artist and Matt's Gallery, London
Top: Guy Sherwin, A sketch for the installation Painted Screen © the artist
Bottom: Guy Sherwin, reel of 16mm newspaper-film used in Newsprint, 1972 © the artist
Introductory Resources

Teachers’ Guide: we create a purpose-made teachers’ guide with each exhibition, to provide information, support and suggested activities in visiting our exhibitions.

Teachers’ Event: Friday 30 November, 4.00 - 5.30pm
A special event aimed at teachers and educational professionals, including a guided tour, discussion and taster sessions modelling our artist led workshops outlined below.

Introductory Tour: groups are welcome to book an introductory 20 minute tour to the exhibitions with a member of our Education team.

Book the Drawing Studio: groups are welcome to book the Drawing Studio on Tuesdays and Fridays for activities such as those in this Teachers’ Guide. Materials are not provided and terms and conditions apply.

Introductory Resources are offered free of charge to schools.

Extended Resources

Artist-led workshops – groups are welcome to book a Half day (2 hour) or Full day (4 hour) artist-led workshop, with a gallery tour and practical activities designed specifically around the exhibitions. Materials are provided. Terms and conditions apply.

Dates for artist-led workshops:
January: Friday 11, Tuesday 22, Tuesday 29
February: Friday 1, Wednesday 6, Wednesday 13

Extended Resources prices:
Independent schools: £650 per full day; £325 per half day
State schools: £200 per full day; £100 per half day

For further information and to book please contact Nisha Matthew nisha.matthew@camdenartscentre.org