
HIVE GALLERY PRESS RELEASE

HIVE GALLERY
Elsecar Heritage Centre
Wath Road, Elsecar, Barnsley,
S74 8HJ, South Yorkshire,
United Kingdom

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ART IN MOTION - LEN LYE

With contributions by **AIRSIDE,**
MARIO CAVALLI, TAKAFUMI TSUCHIYA
UNIVERSAL EVERYTHING

6 June - 19 July 2009 Private View 11 June 7 - 9pm

A pioneer of direct-animation, **Len Lye** (1901-1980) was also a highly innovative painter, photographer and poet, as well as an important figure in kinetic sculpture. In 1938, Time Magazine proclaimed filmmaker, sculptor and writer Len Lye to be the English Walt Disney. Lye despite being a huge influence on the animators of Disney's Fantasia (1940), Lye (originally from New Zealand) remained an experimental and seminal abstract artist/filmmaker.

This exhibition shows 3 of Lyes films **Colour Box (1935)**, **Rainbow Dance (1936)** and **Trade Tattoo (1937)**. These films illustrate Lyes pioneering vision in abstract filmmaking, the films were commissioned by the GPO (General Post Office) to be screened as adverts in cinemas.

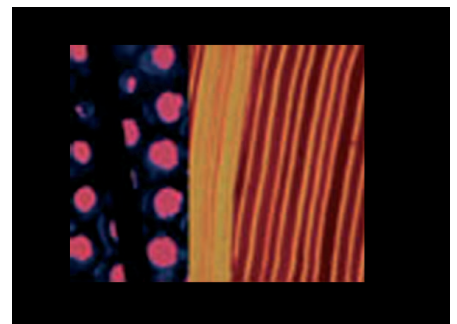
To counterpoint Lye's work we feature the work of contemporary artists/designers **Airside, Mario Cavalli, Takafumi Tsuchiya** and **Universal Everything**. Each have their own unique multi award winning style but all have a common shared vision of pioneering film work that continues to push the boundaries of film technology. In contrast to Lye's working methods these films have all been created using the computer as the main tool of production, but all show a commitment to abstract imagery in the vein of Len Lye.

The show opens on 6 June 2009 and a preview evening will be held on Thursday 11 June 2009 7-9pm – all welcome, please RSVP to <mailto:rsvp@hivegallery.co.uk>. The exhibition will be opened by leading South Yorkshire filmmaker and head of South Yorkshire Filmmakers Network, **Dr Rob Speranza**.

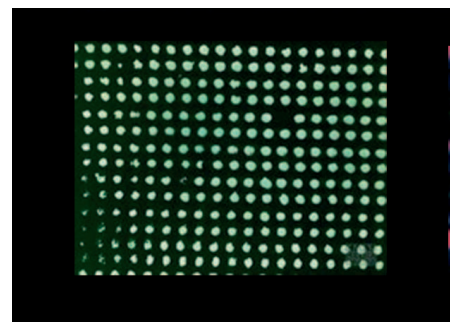
Hive Gallery is a contemporary gallery situated within Elsecar Heritage Centre in South Yorkshire. It features a diverse rolling programme of contemporary visual art. HIVE curates eight contemporary art exhibitions per year at the gallery. The HIVE programme ranges from supporting emerging contemporary artists to exhibiting the work of nationally and internationally known artists.



Rainbow Dance
Len Lye
1936
3 minutes 58 secs



Colour Box
Len Lye
1935
3 minutes



Trade Tattoo
Len Lye
1937
5 minutes 20 secs

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES LEN LYE

Biography

Len Lye was one of the few filmmakers working in inter-war Britain to have established an international reputation in experimental filmmaking. Though his British oeuvre was by no means limited to the making of abstract films, this was the area that most interested Lye and he has sometimes been viewed as the only genuine avant-garde filmmaker of this period.

Born in Christchurch, New Zealand in 1901, Lye began to develop a style of art based on 'doodling' from an early age, which stirred his interest in the 'pre-rational'. He was deeply interested in movement and wanted to portray kinetic energy within artistic works; he also drew on aboriginal art, which for Lye again represented a 'pre-rational' artistic tradition. He moved to London in 1926 and soon joined the Seven and Five Society, a modernist group of British artists. Before long, he was exhibiting with this group, but he was dissatisfied with the static visual medium and began to make experiments in animated film, which more closely fitted his interest in movement.

Lye found it difficult to attract sponsors for his filmmaking, and only made one more film before joining the GPO Film Unit, Experimental Animation (aka Peanut Vendor, 1933), a three-minute puppet film sponsored by exhibitor Sidney Bernstein. He then began to experiment with painting directly onto celluloid, a technique that he pioneered. In order to satisfy sponsorship requirements he had to include advertising slogans in his first GPO film, **Colour Box** (1935), but managed to do so without relinquishing his abstract objectives. Rather than following one line of movement, Lye presented a mass of complex and jumbled movements through painting directly onto celluloid. This had the added effect of creating a greater sense of off-screen space, as if the patterns are streaming in and out of the frame. Furthermore, the dynamic shapes seem to dance to the popular Cuban music making up the soundtrack.

In contrast to Tusalava, **Colour Box** was reportedly popular with audiences and gained significant critical acclaim.

Perhaps due to the pressures of working within a documentary environment, Lye increasingly began to incorporate more 'concrete' symbols within his films, yet did so in a rather idiosyncratic manner, continuing to formally experiment with music, colour and movement. After making a puppet film with Humphrey Jennings, Kaleidoscope (1936), he experimented with the Gasparcolour process in **Rainbow Dance** (1936). Lye used a recurring silhouetted figure in the film, enacted by dancer Rupert Doone, and transformed the surrounding mise-en-scène into a colourful, shifting landscape, aided by the use of stencil patterns and deregistration effects. Lye continued to incorporate more realistic material in his next film, **Trade Tattoo** (1937), which used found documentary footage and overlaid it with a number of colour abstractions (this time using Technicolor).

In *N or N.W.* (1937), Lye began to work with more conventionally 'dramatic' material. This was his last film made for the GPO Film Unit; afterwards he contributed to newsreel production and created two fantasy sequences for the feature film Stardust (d. Melville Brown, 1938). He completed an abstract short Colour Flight (1939) for Imperial Airways, and then came a musical, animated film, Swinging the Lambeth Walk (1940). During the war, he made a number of propaganda films for the Ministry of Information as well as filming British material for the American series March of Time.

In 1944, Lye moved to New York, where he co-directed four educational one-reel films with I.A. Richards. This marked a new stage in his career, and in the post-war period, he continued experiments in abstract filmmaking, as well as making a number of kinetic sculptures. Lye remained in America until 1968 before returning to New Zealand. During this period, he managed to secure his reputation as an important non-representational artist. Many noted modernist artists have made films in Britain - William Coldstream, Francis Bruguière and László Moholy-Nagy - however, their contributions to the medium were minor compared to Lye, who adopted filmmaking as his primary medium of expression.

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To support the experimental work of Len Lye we are also screening the work of 3 contemporary artists/design studios. Each have their own unique multi award winning style but all have a common shared vision of pioneering film work that continues to push the boundaries of film technology. In contrast to Lye's working methods these films have all been created using the computer as the main tool of production.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Universal Everything

With commissions ranging from packaging to stadium events, for clients from Apple to London 2012 Olympics. Universal Everything's work has been shown in galleries from Museum of Modern Art, New York to Colette, Paris.

Motivated by the pursuit of the new, creative research and development are central, leading to self-initiated pieces and unique projects for brands, galleries, collectors and consumers. Founded by creative director Matt Pyke, they operate as an evergrowing global network of designers, artists, musicians, producers and programmers.

For more information: www.universaleverything.com

Airside

Airside is a creative agency working across the disciplines of graphic design, illustration, digital, interactive and moving image.

Founded in 1998 by Alex Maclean, Fred Deakin and Nat Hunter, Airside's unique approach has won many awards including recognition from D&AD, Bafta and Design Week.

For more information: www.airside.co.uk



Nokia E71 / Art Film
Universal Everything
2009
1 minute 49 secs



Nice Weather for Ducks
Airside
2006
3 minutes 53 secs

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Mario Cavalli

Mario's technically innovative short films, such as SOHO SQUARE, CARMEN, BOLERO, CASK OF AMONTILLADO have won major awards throughout the world and the Lemon Jelly music video SPACEWALK was also exhibited at the 2003 Venice Biennale.

Mario has also explored the creative and commercial potential of new media, with multiple award winning interactive projects, including COMPAQ Bird Game and IdN CAFFEINE SOCIETY, winners of coveted D&AD 'yellow pencils' in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

While heading up an international roster of directing talent through Colony, including Dave McKean (UK), Ranko Andjelic (UK / Bosnia Croatia) and Rosto A.D (Holland), Mario continues to work across a range of forms and genres.

For more information: www.colonymedia.co.uk

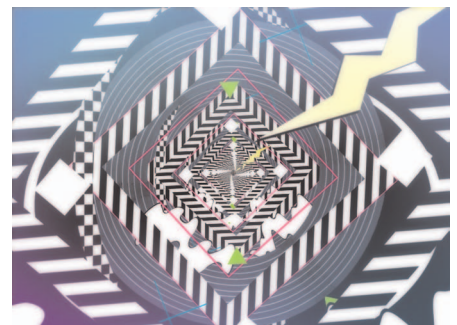
Takafumi Tsuchiya

Born in Tokyo, Japan, 1979. Takafumi lives and works in Tokyo. His concentrates on making single channel video art, Live Video Performances, Collaborate A/V Performances and prints. Takafumi uses various sources of material mixing recorded sources and handmade animation.

Takafumi is interested in mixing boundaries between the future and past and makes reference to classical Japanese compositions and constructs with his films visual language. He is also highly praised by legendary Japanese abstract film maker Toshio Matsumoto. His works have been screened at international festivals and galleries in Europe, US and Asia including Onedotzero, Futuresonic, EMAF and DOTMOV.



Long Build Loop
Mario Cavalli
1 minute 32 seconds
2009



Spem za nite wiz dis sit _2008
Takafumi Tsuchiya
4 minutes 28 secs
2008

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