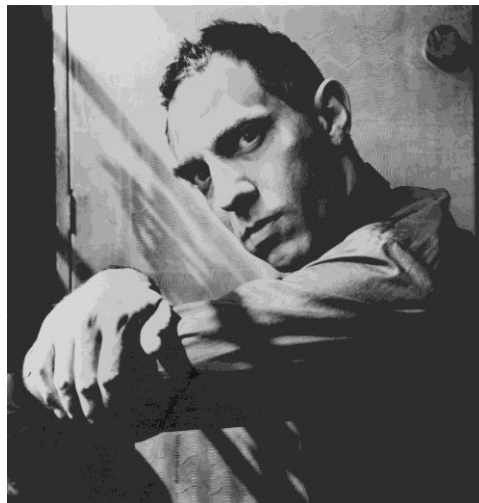


**QUEER PAGAN PUNK:  
Derek Jarman at BFI Southbank  
February & March 2014**



**London, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2013.** The BFI is pleased to announce **Queer Pagan Punk: Derek Jarman** a major two month film retrospective at BFI Southbank (February/March 2014). This will be the largest retrospective of Jarman's films ever mounted in the UK, celebrating the prolific, iconoclastic and hugely influential film-maker and marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. The season is programmed by William Fowler, curator, Artists' Moving Image, BFI National Archive and will feature many rare films and special guests and introductions alongside new digital restorations of two key films: ***Sebastiane*** (1976) and ***Caravaggio*** (1986). **Toyah Willcox, John Maybury, Jenny Runacre, Dexter Fletcher, Isaac Julien, Tariq Ali, James Mackay, Keith Collins** and **Don Boyd** and are among the invited guest speakers. The climax of the season will be a one-off screening of Jarman's ***Blue*** in the breath-taking vastness of the BFI IMAX cinema and a special presentation of key short works and videos in the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. The season is supported by media partner ***thequietus.com***

Among the season's highlights are archival re-discoveries such as Jarman's earliest known film, long thought lost, ***Electric Fairy*** (1971); a rarely seen documentary ***The Royal Ballet in Rehearsal: Jazz Calendar*** (1968) featuring a production designed by a young Jarman; and films by friends, collaborators and key influencers of his career such as Kenneth Anger - ***Invocation of My Demon Brother*** (1968) and Anthony Balch - ***The Cut-Ups*** (1967) giving a rich context to themes and subjects which would reappear in Jarman's own films.



The season is part of a wider celebration entitled Jarman 2014 which includes an exhibition at BFI Southbank showcasing part of the BFI's extensive Jarman collection and screenings and events with a wide range of partners including a major focus at King's College, **Derek Jarman: Pandemonium**.

Jarman was a talented artist, designer, writer, activist, showman, autobiographer and gardener whose career began as a student at King's and the Slade. He initially worked as a designer for opera and ballet and went on to design sets for Ken Russell's **Savage Messiah** and **The Devils**. He had a real gift for friendship and artistic collaborations and had a profound influence on the UK art scene and a generation of film-makers. He went on to become a polemical activist and a rare thing in public life at the time, someone whose homosexuality informed his art. His film-making initially developed out of a love of super8 film and the flexibility it afforded him in bringing his personal artistic vision to life. He was a passionate believer in the power of art to change lives and used his energies to create a unique and rich body of work. The range of his collaborators is testament to the breadth of his interests. He was happy to work with other artists, poets, photographers, musicians, costume designers and actors in a way that accentuated the spirit of collaboration but furthered his very specific vision.

He was pioneering in many ways. He made the world's first (and hitherto, only) feature film in Latin: the scandalously homoerotic **Sebastiane** (1976), the story of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD saint, re-cast as a lushly colourful hymn to the male physique. He synthesised the punk moment in **Jubilee** (1978) as a collision between the two Elizabethan eras, that of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century with iconic punk figures such as Jordan, Adam Ant, Lindsay Kemp and a bare-breasted Elizabeth I played by Jenny Runacre.

Jarman was fascinated by the occult and the character of the alchemist, in particular the figure of John Dee, Queen Elizabeth I's astrologer who appears in **Jubilee**, and whose influence is felt in **The Tempest** and **Angelic Conversation**. His films were like magic spells, rooted in landscape, visually charged and offering a view of history as a place which could still inform the present, playing with notions of time. His love of the English romantic tradition was informed by a deep love and respect for the work of the artists Paul Nash and John Piper and film-maker Michael Powell.

Painting, writing and pop videos (The Smiths, Pet Shop Boys and others) were the mainstay of Jarman's career in the early 1980s, although along the way he made some significant shorts such as **Imagining October**, a poetic meditation on state oppression and the role of the artist inspired by a visit to Eisenstein's home in Moscow, and **Angelic Conversation**

(1985) featuring the lyrical love poetry of Shakespeare's sonnets recited by Judi Dench as a backdrop to a love story played out between two young men.

His breakthrough film was ***Caravaggio*** (1986) which united many of his own interests in a biopic of the violent homosexual painter who lived life on the wild side in Renaissance Italy and included the debut film role for actress Tilda Swinton who became something of a muse.

While all of his films had a degree of international success at film festivals, commercial success was not always evident. He often struggled to raise finance for his projects but ***Caravaggio*** signalled the start of a newly productive relationship with the BFI's own production board, where Colin MacCabe was a noted champion.

Homosexual themes remain a constant in his films: ***War Requiem*** (1989), a film version of Benjamin Britten's musical treatment of Wilfred Owen's war poetry starring Laurence Olivier in his last film role. ***Edward II*** (1991), a bold and visually arresting version of Christopher Marlowe's Elizabethan drama, merging a pop video aesthetic with bravura story-telling revealing the doomed king as a homosexual martyr, bullied by Isabella (a magnificent portrayal by Tilda) and murdered by his courtiers.

This return to more narrative forms continued in Jarman's next *tour de force*, ***Wittgenstein*** (1993), a stylishly theatrical and provocative film based on the biography of gay Viennese philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein.

***The Last of England*** (1986) is a dreamily, downbeat mosaic of super8 footage (Jarman's own and that of his father, a former airforce pilot who fought in the Second World War) and a meditation on the state of the Thatcherite nation. ***The Garden*** (1989) also has an elegiac quality, reflecting Jarman's sense of his own mortality, and its despair leavened with an irrational hope.

***Blue*** (1993) is Jarman's last work, but it is as bold and daring as anything he ever made, a film made with one block of colour (inspired by Klein's blue paintings) with music and text from some of his most trusted collaborators, as he explores his own experience of living and dying with the Aids virus.

Media partner:

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Film notes by William Fowler.

## February 2014 - Part One: Jarman and the Occult

### Derek Jarman Season Introduction

We open our two month celebration of Derek Jarman's life and films with a special look at the artist's extraordinary capacity to collaborate and draw out the very best from friends and fellow creators. Films screening tonight include the lyrical yet thunderous *Imagining October*, the visionary pop film *The Queen is Dead* (made for The Smiths), an extended TV interview with Jarman, and *Electric Fairy*, his very first film - for many years thought lost.

We look forward to welcoming filmmakers James Mackay, John Maybury and Richard Heslop to discuss their collaborations with Derek Jarman, and his artistic legacy, in conversation with season curator William Fowler.

**Savage Messiah** UK 1972. Dir Ken Russell. 103min.

Although less well known than *The Devils*, the second Ken Russell movie for which Jarman provided art direction is no minor picture. Centring on Vorticist sculptor Henri Gaudier and his ill-fated, obsessive relationship with Sophie Brzeska, it smoulders with considerable intensity, with Russell generating intimacy despite a limited budget. Jarman's striking sets (which included a 1910s nightclub) reflect the creative politics of the era and provide an arch, rich, theatrical backdrop for the doomed affair.

Introduced by Sam Ashby of Little Joe Magazine, who will discuss Derek Jarman's collaborations with Ken Russell

**In the Shadow of the Sun** UK 1972/1980. Dir Derek Jarman. 50min.

+**The Judgement of Albion** UK 1968. Dir Robert Wynne-Simmons. 28min.

Pulsing fire, stunning landscapes and enigmatic stone circles are ritualistically interwoven in this intense, mythic, semi-psychedelic evocation of pre-Christian spirituality. Having fused several of his flickering, manipulated Super 8 films into one singular, grand vision - like an artist-chemist - Jarman later added an evocatively moody Throbbing Gristle soundtrack. The film is complemented by an exceedingly rare William Blake inspired cine-poem, by the scriptwriter of *Blood On Satan's Claw*.

**Sebastiane** UK 1976. Dir Derek Jarman & Paul Humfress. 82min.

Jarman and Paul Humfress's controversial, sensual, sexualised retelling of the story of the 4<sup>th</sup> century Praetorian Guard whose human goodness leads to humiliation and martyrdom. The heat of the Sardinian desert is powerfully captured on film - both cast and crew go through their paces, sweating it out Herzog-style - while Brian Eno's distinctly moving score beautifully complements the directors' superb framing and pacing, and some stunning slow-motion photography. Abstinence and indulgence, Christianity and Paganism: the oppositions stand in tension here. A glorious hymn to the toned yet very real, living, breathing, male body, this bold film is also a personal reclamation of gay history. Presented in a new 2K digital version, remastered from the original camera negative.

**Jubilee** UK 1978. Dir Derek Jarman. 102min.

Jarman's provocative account of the punk movement, both prophetic and apocalyptic. Queen Elizabeth I and her occult aide Dr John Dee travel into the future, encountering the megalomania of big business, as well as gangs of violent, marauding killers. Jarman - hitting his stride here - doesn't spare the shocks, while electrifying punk rock numbers are abrasively delivered by Jayne County and Adam Ant. The mythological past and a soon-to-be bleak future converge on the sparse, grey streets of London.

Followed by a Q&A with lead actress Jenny Runacre

**The Tempest** UK 1979. Dir Derek Jarman. 95min.

+**Invocation of My Demon Brother** USA 1969. Dir Kenneth Anger. 11mins.

Brooding and darkly laden with heavily symbolic imagery, Jarman's terrific third feature is considered by many to be the most evocative Shakespeare adaptation ever to reach the screen. Rich images of shining gold and dark water dominate; while furtive magus Prospero converses with - and attempts to manipulate - forceful Ariel, a spirit from the beyond. Superlative performances are delivered by a fine ensemble cast, but Elisabeth Welch and her utterly delicious rendition of 'Stormy Weather' steals the show! Screening with the Crowley-inspired *Invocation of My Demon Brother*.

Followed by a Q&A with lead actress Toyah Willcox

### **Occult Technology: Cinemas of Divination**

Bold, transgressive, hypnotic experimental films that, made in the tradition of magick, call out to our subconscious. These challenging works are the cinematic legacy of a very particular moment in the early 80s when four distinctly powerful, creative personalities - Genesis P-Orridge, William Burroughs, Brion Gysin and Derek Jarman – actively interrogated the limits of occult ritual and its expression through modern technology. Plus the stroboscopic, Scientology-inspired 1967 movie: *The Cut-Ups*.

**The Cut-Ups** UK 1967. Dir Antony Balch. 12min.

**TG: Psychic Rally in Heaven** UK 1981. Dir Derek Jarman. 9min.

**Psychic TV: Force the Hand of Chance** UK 1982. Dir ??????. 5min.

**Pirate Tape (W.S. Burroughs Film)** UK 1982. Dir Derek Jarman. 12min.

**Dream Machine** UK 1983. Dir Derek Jarman, Cerith Wynn Evans, Michael Kostiff. 38min.

Total: 76min.

**The Angelic Conversation** UK 1985. Dir Derek Jarman. 81min.

+ **The Royal Ballet in Rehearsal: Jazz Calendar** UK 1968. 35min.

Jarman's mystical transfiguration of the English landscape is also a beautifully poetic ode to gay love. Shakespeare's sonnets, gently read by Judi Dench, are set to a minimal score from queer industrialists Coil, while ritual actions that celebrate the body are simply and touchingly performed by men along the Dorset coastline. This very tender non-narrative piece was Jarman's personal favourite. Followed by *Jazz Calendar*, a rarely screened documentary record of the 1968 ballet for which the artist designed sets and costumes.

**Caravaggio** UK 1986. Dir Derek Jarman. 93min.

Hugely significant to Jarman, his biopic of the Italian Baroque painter with whom he strongly identified was developed over many years. Ultimately shot on 35mm film, it looks incredible: the tableaux and sets project rich painterly depth, brightness and colour. Sean Bean and Tilda Swinton deliver fine performances as the model and partner caught up in a complex – and fatally doomed – love triangle with the famous artist. Caravaggio struggles to reconcile the demands of authority (in the form of his church patrons) with his own artistic and sexual needs – a tension then very close to Jarman's heart. Presented in a new version, digitally remastered at 2K by the BFI National Archive.

Followed by a Q&A with Dexter Fletcher

**Aria** USA/UK 1987. Dir Robert Altman, Nicolas Roeg, Ken Russell, Julien Temple, Jean-Luc Godard, Franc Roddam, Derek Jarman, Charles Sturridge, Bruce Beresford, Bill Bryden. 89min.

By turns eccentric, playful and provocative, this journey through auteurist art cinema as it was in 1987 features original contributions from Godard, Ken Russell, Nic Roeg and many other giants of the field. Each one shot a sequence to accompany an Operatic aria. Tilda Swinton, Jarman's new muse, dominates his offering. Embodying the very essence of an aged songstress, she sways beautifully in hypnotic, lyrical Super 8. Jarman and the camera adore her.

Followed by a Q&A with producer Don Boyd

## **March 2014 - Part Two: New Queer Cinema focuses on Jarman's engagement with new ways of representing gay culture and the Aids crisis alongside perennial themes of Englishness and landscape**

### **The Last of England**

*UK 1987. Dir Derek Jarman. With Mark Adley, Gay Gaynor, Tilda Swinton. 87min*

Jarman reimagines London's yuppie Docklands as a ruined wasteland of desperation and terror, where prisoners are executed in cold blood and soldiers engage in brutal sex.

Made just shortly after he was diagnosed with HIV, Jarman's passionate fusion of Super8 material, riot footage and home movies is jagged and elegiac; an angry, powerful, Blake-like vision of England in turmoil. Culminating in Tilda Swinton's ecstatic revolt against injustice, it chimed with all those who felt abject dismay at Thatcher's divisive policies and the rise of big business. It seems that its time has come again.

+ **Kiss 25 Goodbye** UK 1991. Dir Steve Farrer. 7min

This film documents, in bold experimental fashion, the 1991 Outrage! 'kiss-in' protest at Bow Street police station. Jarman is one of many who can be seen actively participating in an illegal action designed to confront the homophobic Section 25/28 of the 1988 Local Government Act

### **War Requiem**

UK 1989. Dir Derek Jarman. With Nathaniel Parker, Sean Bean, Tilda Swinton, Laurence Olivier. 89min

An extraordinary visual evocation of Benjamin Britten's choral and orchestral masterpiece, composed to commemorate those who lost their lives in the First World War. Jarman draws together powerful, poetic images, and coaxes strong performances from Laurence Olivier (in his last ever role), Tilda Swinton and other familiar faces, which he intersperses with harrowing archival footage illustrating the true horrors of war. It's a haunting and shocking vision of a conflict that began a hundred years ago this year.

### **Silence = Death: Films About Aids and Queer Agitation**

Don't miss this special presentation of three bold films that illustrate the international gay community's fiery response to the dangers of the Aids virus, and the prejudice and homophobia that came with it. Artists Allen Ginsberg, Keith Haring, David Wojnarowicz and Derek Jarman speak candidly here, and the personal and the political merge with striking art performances and moments of great humour and warmth too.

+ **Silence = Death** (USA 1990. Dir Rosa Von Paunheim. 60min) + **Clause and**

**Effect** (UK 1988. Twentieth Century Vixen. 20min) + **Cling Film** (UK 1993. Dir Anna Thew. 20min).

**Presented by Dominic Johnson (Queen Mary, University of London) and filmmaker Anna Thew**

### **The Garden**

UK 1990. Dir Derek Jarman. 92min

Inside his modest, sparsely-furnished home on the barren, windswept Dungeness coastline, Derek Jarman dreams. This intimate insight into Jarman's inner world was beautifully shot on fragile Super8 with the help of friends and collaborators. Shifting from the personal to the political, it culminates in a near-mythic exploration of sexual repression at the end of twentieth century, movingly utilising a cast of iconic, religious figures that include Jesus, Judas and the Madonna. Increasingly ill by this point, Jarman faces his mortality with poetry and dignity.

+ **Gardener's World** BBC 1998. 9min

An item from *Gardener's World* in which the artist's unusual garden at Dungeness, plus his life long interest in horticulture, are fondly discussed and presented.

**Programme introduced by Keith Collins, collaborator and representative of the Jarman estate**

### **Edward II**

UK 1991. Dir Derek Jarman. With Steven Waddington, Kevin Collins, Andrew Tiernan, Tilda Swinton. 90min

Characters – adrift in a world of intrigue – live, love and bloodily pursue their shadowy vendettas in this adaptation of the Christopher Marlowe play. To tell the story of the persecuted gay English king, Jarman mixes modern and medieval props and costumes; directly evoking contemporary homophobia in a bold and finely-crafted production.

+ **The Media Show: Edward II** (Extract. ITV 1991). An on-set report in which Jarman and cast reflect on the filming of *Edward II*.

**Programme introduced by gay rights campaigner, Peter Tatchell**

### **Derek**

UK 2008. Dir Isaac Julien. 76min

Artist and director Isaac Julien celebrates Derek Jarman's life in this touching and informative documentary, which combines film extracts, a previously unseen interview and an open letter from Jarman's muse Tilda Swinton. Jarman emerges both as a much-missed, distinctive, creative force, and as a symbol of artistic resistance.

+ **This Is Not an AIDS Advertisement** (1987. Dir Isaac Julien. 14min).

This film rescues the notion of gay intimacy and love from the rhetoric of fear that surrounded homosexuality in the late 80s.

**We hope to welcome Isaac Julien for a Q&A after the screening**

### **Wittgenstein**

UK 1993. Dir Derek Jarman. With Clancy Chassay, Jill Balcon, Sally Dexter, Karl Johnson. 75min

Originally conceived as a television production, this biopic of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein was drastically revised by Jarman to introduce new striking aesthetics and playful absurdist elements – such as a furry alien character from outer space played with relish by Nabil Shaban. The delightful end result is a smart but good-natured film that works through the great Austrian thinker's questions regarding illusionism, reality and sex. Karl Johnson, in the leading role, provides a brilliantly quizzical performance

+ **Sick Serena and Dregs and Wreck and Wreck** UK 2007. Dir Emily Wardill. 12min

Artist Emily Wardill's film also explores philosophical questions around perception and the nature of being with dark, absurdist humour. **Programme introduced by producer Tariq Ali**

### **Glitterbug**

UK 1994. Dir Derek Jarman. With William S. Burroughs, Michael Clark, Derek Jarman. 54min

Derek Jarman's powerfully diverse creative life passes before our eyes in ghostly fast-forward via this moving collage of over 20 years' worth of Super8 film. Intimate moments from the 1970s underground gay art scene, and on-set footage from Jarman's features, unexpectedly collide with appearances from Genesis P-Orridge, William Burroughs, Michael Clark and many others. Originally compiled for BBC's *Arena* after Jarman's death, the film is complemented by Brian Eno's unique and moody score.

### **+ The Salvation Army**

USA 2002. Dir Scott Treleaven. 21min

We follow *Glitterbug* with Scott Treleaven's personal documentary about the Jarman inspired 'Queer Pagan Punk' publication that he produced from 1996-1999, and the unpredictable, devoted cult that it spawned.

### **Queer Art and Political Engagement: Jarman's legacy**

In this special discursive presentation we explore Jarman's political legacy and also debate the issues that frame struggle and resistance within today's mixed – and very diffuse – media landscape. We begin by screening powerful, politically charged works by Jarman (**Imagining October**, 1989) and his peer Ron Peck (**What Can I Do With a Male Nude**, 1985), presented alongside dynamic, exploratory pieces by young queer artists James Richards and Richard Jones. Following the screenings we look forward to welcoming filmmakers and experts for a roundtable discussion chaired by Brian Robinson (BFI).

### **Blue**

UK 1993. Dir Derek Jarman. With Derek Jarman, Tilda Swinton, John Quentin, Nigel Terry. 79min.

We close our two-month Derek Jarman retrospective with a very special presentation: Jarman's **Blue** projected at truly magnificent scale in the full majesty of the BFI Imax Cinema. Various musicians provide the highly textured soundscape in which the director and his close friends weave a rich vocal account of his life and loves. Close to his death, Jarman draws the viewer into his vision-impaired world; a vision rendered only in blue. Don't regret missing this truly one-off event presented in association with Little Joe Magazine.

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### **About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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