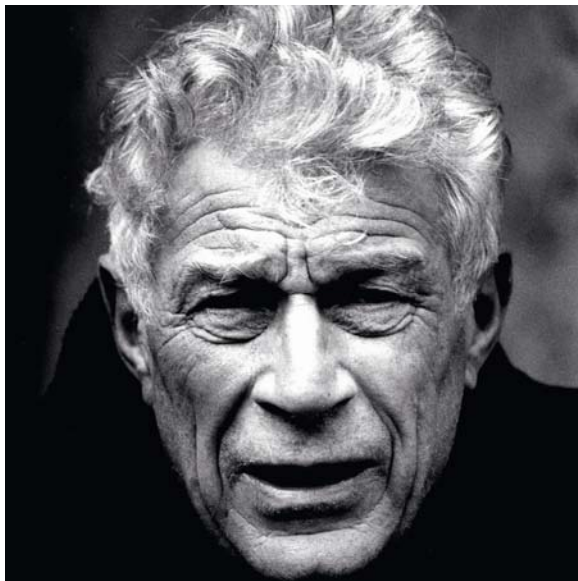




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New BFI Strand, Broadcasting the arts launches with Ways of Seeing: John Berger on the Small Screen At BFI Southbank in April



Broadcasting the Arts is a new and recurring strand that examines how television seeks to represent and explain the arts and launches in **April** with a season focusing on the work of broadcaster and novelist **John Berger**. 40 years on from the original airing of the seminal **Ways of Seeing** (BBC 1972), the series will be screened in its entirety (4 x 2) and will be followed by a Q&A with the programme's director and Berger collaborator, **Michael Dibb**. The season will also feature examples of Berger's early work for the **Monitor** (BBC 1960 – 1967)

and **Drawn from Life** (Granada 1962) programmes, his collaboration with photographer **Jean Mohr** on the poignant **A Fortunate Man** (UK 1972) and a more recent interview with Berger, **Face to Face** (1995).

Even before the title card appeared it was clear that **Ways of Seeing** was a different kind of art programme: a man walks into an art gallery and cuts up a Botticelli with a Stanley knife. Tackling questions of commerce, exploitation and sex with his trademark stare and tousled hair, the Marxist critic John Berger subjected the Old Masters and his viewers to a searching interrogation. Though its format was very different, **Ways of Seeing** was a counter-blast to Kenneth Clark's more stately series **Civilisation**. All subsequent art programmes, from Robert Hughes or Sister Wendy or Simon Schama, are to some extent continuations of a debate over value and meaning that Clark and Berger began.

Berger won the Booker Prize for his novel **G** the same year (1972) that **Ways of Seeing** first aired, and his television programmes are often overlooked in favour of his work as a novelist. Many know **Ways of Seeing** only from the tie-in book, which became a landmark text in visual and media studies. As this season shows, Berger's ongoing project of bringing painting and photography to the small screen is well worth revisiting. In addition to the original **Ways of Seeing**, we will be showing Berger's rarely-seen early

television work for Granada and BBC's **Monitor**, as well as his more meditative discussions addressing the medium of photography. Much of this work emerged from a collaboration with the director **Mike Dibb** that continues today. 'It is through the visible that I find meaning', Berger has said. Forty years on, he is still teaching us to see.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Season curated by Dr Jonathan Conlin, University of Southampton

Early Berger: Should Every Picture Tell A Story?

ATV 1958. Prod Laurence Quentin. 10min.

+ Drawn From Life

Granada 1962. Dir Mike Wooller. 28min

+ Three Films for Monitor

Picasso (BBC 1960. Dir David Jones. 11min); **Why Leger?** (BBC 1965. Dir Michael Gill. 29min); **Giacometti** (BBC 1967. Dir Michael Gill. 12min)

Berger's first TV appearance came in 1958, when he appeared as Kenneth Clark's guest on one of the latter's programmes. Berger subsequently persuaded Granada to commission *Drawn from Life*. The series features him as interviewer rather than talking head, encouraging members of the public to use masterpieces to illustrate their own lives. Three short *Monitor* films round off this selection of early Berger

Tue 3 Apr 18:20 NFT2

Ways of Seeing + Q&A

BBC 1972. Dir Michael Dibb. 4 x 28min.

Copyright restrictions surrounding the hundreds of paintings and advertising images quoted in *Ways of Seeing* have rendered it impossible to release the series on DVD. Though Berger would, perhaps, appreciate the irony, this has caused the original television series to be overshadowed by the tie-in book, with the former enjoyable only in grainy bootleg copies. Here we show all four episodes, back to back.

Followed by a Q&A with Michael Dibb, director of *Ways of Seeing*, and still collaborating with Berger

Wed 4 Apr 17:50 NFT3

A Fortunate Man

UK 1972. Dir Jeff Perks. 33min

+ Another Way of Telling: Views on Photography

Pt1, Pt3 & Pt4. BBC 1989. Dir John Christie. 3 x 30min

In *A Fortunate Man* Berger and the photographer Jean Mohr documented the daily life of a country doctor. The collaboration marked both men deeply, not least because of the suicide of their subject. 'He was a man so interested in trying to alleviate suffering', Berger notes, 'that he couldn't stand happiness'. Separated by two decades, these documentaries trace Berger's developing relationship with the photographic medium.

Wed 11 Apr 20:20 NFT2

About Time: Once Upon A Time

Channel Four-Third Eye Productions 1985. Dir Michael Dibb. 40min

+ A Telling Eye: The Work of John Berger

BBC-Hawkshead-Belbo Films 1994. Dir Michael Dibb. 60min

+ Face to Face

BBC 1995. Prod David Herman. 40min

In 1962 Berger left London to settle in a remote village in the French Alps. His relationship with the viewer became confiding, though no less intense. Directed by *Ways of Seeing's* Mike Dibb, *Once Upon A Time* and *A Telling Eye* combine discussion of drawings and photographs with autobiographical reflections. We finish with Jeremy Isaacs' 1995 interview, which comes closest to this increasingly reclusive figure.

Tue 17 Apr 18:00 NFT2

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

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £9.50, concs £6.75 Members pay £1.50 less on any ticket. Website www.bfi.org.uk/southbank

Tickets for FREE screenings and events must be booked in advance by calling the Box Office to avoid disappointment

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Eat, drink and be merry in panoramic daylight. benugo's décor is contemporary, brightly lit and playful with a lounge space, bar and dining area. The place to network, hang out, unpack a film, savour the best of Modern British or sip on a cocktail.

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archival collections, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / BFI Southbank /