


# Fourth Wall



**Public Art Development Trust  
Royal National Theatre**



Rising from the National's Baylis Terrace to two hundred feet above the Thames, the concrete cube of the Lyttelton flytower is a powerful presence on the South Bank skyline. *Fourth Wall*, a new programme of film and video projections, will transform it into a vast outdoor screen above the river.

*Fourth Wall* presents works produced by contemporary artists and filmmakers born or working in Britain. Some works have been seen in galleries, museums, cinemas or on broadcast television, others have never been shown in the UK. Each is dramatically transformed by the scale and context of the National Theatre. The projections appear to dissolve the walls separating stage and city, bringing out the drama of an ordinary London night.

*Fourth Wall* unfolds over four weeks in four parts – *Waiting*, *Plotting*, *Believing* and *Ending*. Exploring the idea of an invisible wall lying between the stage and the audience, the programme tests the boundaries between film and theatre, performance and audience, viewer and viewed, inside and outside, and real and imaginary space.

*Behind the Wall* provides a platform for writers, theatre directors and participating artists to discuss the issues and ideas behind *Fourth Wall*.

## Waiting

9:30pm to approximately 10:30pm Thursday 6 May  
9:30pm to approximately 10:30pm Saturday 8 May

### Ceal Floyer

(b.1968, Karachi, Pakistan; lives in London)

*Five Minutes* 1999

35mm, colour 5'

Floyer's work operates in inconspicuous ways on the edge of perception. Here, anticipating the audience, a hand strums in the corner of the screen, marking the passage of time.

Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

### Tacita Dean

(b.1965, Canterbury, England; lives in London)

*Delft Hydraulics* 1996

16mm, b&w 3'

'A performance is a flow which has a rising and falling curve. To reach a moment of deep meaning, we need a chain of moments which start on a simple, natural level, lead us to intensity, then carry us away again' (Peter Brook, *There Are No Secrets*, 1993). Dean's film offers a poetic parallel to this through the visceral physics of a wave machine. Originally from the Ocean Laboratory in Delft, and now superseded by computers, the wave machine was used in the 1970s to predict the behaviour of tides.

Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Chasing 1000* 1994

S-VHS, colour 4'

Like a rehearsal that has become an end in itself, two men in a gym prepare to head a basketball back and forth 1000 times. The ball bounces between them beginning to build in rhythm as their sensitivity to each other's movement increases.

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### David Cunningham

(b.1954, Ireland; lives in London)

*This Moment* 1991

Video, b&w 1'

The familiar shape of the words, 'This moment', are broken down into phonetic fragments and distorted to the limit of recognition. The odd combination of strangeness and familiarity draws us in, suspending all other worlds.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### Ian Breakwell

(b.1943, Derby, England; lives in London)

*Repertory* 1973

16mm, colour 9'

We circle around the outside of a locked and empty theatre in one continuous tracking shot while a disembodied voice describes imaginary and bizarre things happening inside. Rather than within the locked theatre, our imaginations become the interior stage where the events take place.

Courtesy the artist and Anthony Reynolds Gallery

### Henry Bond

(b.1966, London, England; lives in London)

*O.T.B.* 1993

Video, b&w 7'15"

Filmed on the waterbuses of the Grand Canal in Venice, Bond's tense, moody photography and dramatic score leads

us into a sense of drama and mystery. Bond uses the 'structures of suspense' employed by conventional films but frustrates expected plot or narrative development. The atmosphere that builds around the shifting water connects us back to the ongoing drama of the mysterious Thames. Courtesy the artist and Emily Tsingou Gallery

### Ceal Floyer

(b.1968, Karachi, Pakistan; lives in London)

*Minute* 1996

35mm, colour 1'

During a lull in action, *Minute* resonates imperceptibly with a subtle edginess, all the more powerful for being in parentheses.

Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

### Mark Wallinger

(b.1959, Chigwell, England; lives in London)

*Angel* 1997

Beta, colour 7'30"

At the end of the twentieth century, what kind of angels might there be for us? Like Walter Benjamin's modern angel of history propelled backwards into the future, this angel is blind to what is ahead. His words are recognisable but distorted like the possessed in a B-movie. The artist learnt to pronounce backwards the familiar Old Testament opening passage ('In the beginning'...). The film is then played in reverse. So when this profane angel ascends, he also descends.

Courtesy the artist and Anthony Reynolds Gallery

### Melanie Counsell

(b.1964, Cardiff, Wales; lives in London)

*Coronet Cinema* 1993

16mm, b&w 30'

A feature-length still life changes imperceptibly, producing a 'concentrated experience of time' and sensitizing our perception to a microscopic aperture and minimal pace. As the scene progresses, a melancholy associated with emptiness, absence and loss gradually descends. This work, originally commissioned by Artangel, transformed the abandoned Coronet Cinema on the East End's Mile End Road.

Courtesy the artist and Matt's Gallery

### Stephen Murphy

(b.1962, London, England; lives in London)

*Sky* 1999

Digital Video (D1), colour 8'

*Sky* is a computer-generated *trompe-l'oeil* of a night sky. For Murphy, 'the computer allows me to dismantle phenomena so as to create a spectacle and a drama that unfolds without disruption, suggesting the more contemplative qualities of film stills or paintings'. This perfect yet unreal image is framed inside the real sky hanging above us like a curtain falling over the scene. Courtesy the artist

Programme may be subject to change

## Behind the Wall talk

*Waiting to Begin*

7:45pm to 8:45pm Thursday 6 May

While we wait for the first screening of *Fourth Wall* to start, this talk will explore the role of theatre and film as collective social ritual.

## Plotting

9:30pm to approximately 10:30pm Thursday 13 May  
9:30pm to approximately 10:30pm Saturday 15 May

### Tony Hill

(b.1946, London, England; lives in Derby)

*Holding the Viewer* 1993

Video, colour 1'

'Right, you're coming with me'. Up we go, swung over a shoulder on the end of a post and propelled roller-coaster along the edge of a roof, through a busy street and empty fields ... Hill's film pulls us out of our fixed positions, playfully messing up the neat lines marked out between stage and audience.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### William English

(b.1951, Leicester, England; lives in London)

*HAH* 1991

16mm, colour 1'

A slot-machine clown has rubbed its mitt over the pit of its colourful satin stomach until it has worn a gaping hole, but it's still laughing. This little figure from a former age is a sad symbol of cheer in the face of tragic dilapidation. Its laugh is uncomfortably infectious.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### Sean Dower

(b.1965, Walsall, England; lives in London)

*Zou Zou's Mime* 1991

U-Matic, colour 4'

While live guitar builds an uncanny atmosphere, we experience the textures, shapes, taste, noise, and emotion of an invisible other place. Zou Zou's mime suggests how real places are constantly being articulated and imagined. Dower's film is found footage, increasing the sense of its otherness.

Courtesy the artist and Matt's Gallery

### Mark Lewis

(b.1957, Hamilton, Canada; lives in London)

*A Sense of the End* 1996

Super 16mm, b&w/colour 12'

This work presents the ends of imaginary films made using the conventions of classic film genres whose beginnings and middles we can only imagine. The film splices together disjunctive segments all playing on themes of death and loss and all in the process of ending. But each time an ending is proclaimed, it is confounded. The narrative threads lead all ways but to resolution.

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Patrick Painter Inc.

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Chasing 1000* 1994

S-VHS, colour 5'

Two men in a gym are trying to head a basketball back and forth 1000 times. The rhythm builds and a jazz soundtrack keeps the pace and tempo of their tight improvisations along a line. An intense focus develops between the performers and between their game and us. Will they make 1000?

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### Monika Oechsler

(b. Munich, Germany; lives in London)

*Necking* 1997

Beta, colour 1'40"

A traditional playground game offers a study of the dynamics of group behaviour, investigating issues of adolescent identity and sexuality. In a game that teaches movement, a group of girls pass a ball from neck to neck in a strange courtly dance. Their movements are slow and gentle, yet the self-consciousness and charge of their exchange is palpable.

Courtesy the artist

### Pierre Bismuth

(b.1963, Paris, France; lives in London)

*Programmes No. 2* 1997

Beta, colour 11'

*Programmes No. 2* evokes the visual through sound, and non-visual, non-verbal worlds through music. In Bismuth's film, a blank white screen is disrupted by people coming into view to tune a radio. The radio is a means of breaking into another world, mood and atmosphere, reflecting the tuner's desires. When left to play, these random tunes are resonant of other times and places and sometimes act as uncannily poignant soundtracks to real-life situations.

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Chasing 1000* 1994

S-VHS, colour 6'

Last time they didn't reach half way. Can they do better tonight?

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### Ian Breakwell

(b.1943, Derby, England; lives in London)

*Auditorium* 1993

Beta, colour 32'

*Auditorium* turns the gaze away from the stage on to a theatre audience going through a range of emotions together in response to acts on stage that we don't see. The audience's responses suggest that the acts are becoming more and more horrific. *Auditorium* reflects on how as an audience we too are acting out a given role. Courtesy the artist and Anthony Reynolds Gallery

### Stephen Murphy

(b.1962, London, England; lives in London)

*Sky* 1999

Digital Video (D1), colour 8'

Night falls like a dream.

Courtesy the artist

Programme may be subject to change

## Behind the Wall talk

*Plotting Space and Surface*

7:45pm to 8:45pm Thursday 13 May

Traditionally, lines are drawn between audience and performer, theatre and film, fantasy and reality. How are these divisions articulated and transgressed?

## Believing

9:45pm to approximately 10:45pm Thursday 20 May

9:45pm to approximately 10:45pm Saturday 22 May

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Chasing 1000* 1994

S-VHS, colour 11'

Do they have the conviction to keep trying?

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### Phil Minton

(b.1940, Devon, England; lives in London)

*Cenotaph* 1994

Hi-8, colour 4'5"

Down in a subway tunnel a man squawks, roars, screeches, howls, rumbles and growls. Concerned with identity and voice, the extraordinary vocal texture and colour of Minton's performance reveals just how much we deliberately limit and control our behaviour in order to act human.

Courtesy the artist and Grey Suit Productions

### Alan Currall

(b.1964, Stoke on Trent, England; lives in Glasgow, Scotland)

*Lap* 1993

VHS, colour 1'3"

and

*Sit* 1993

VHS, colour 2'20"

Two works that try to enter the image and leave the 'real world' outside the frame. But, caught in a liminal space between reality and fantasy, they are unable to complete the transition.

Courtesy the artist

### John Wood &

(b.1969, Hong Kong; lives in London)

**Paul Harrison**

(b.1966, Wolverhampton, England; lives in London)

*Volunteer* 1998

Video, colour 6'

In a series of strange performances, Wood and Harrison use the human body as an object to articulate space and transgress the ways we conventionally restrict our relationship to objects and buildings, and to inside and outside. Courtesy the artists and LUX Distribution

### Sam Taylor-Wood

(b.1967, London, England; lives in London)

*Hysteria* 1997

Super 16mm, colour 8'

Reflecting on the conventions of theatre and film, *Hysteria* explores the range and depth of an emotional state much longer than we are prepared for. We are not sure whether the actor is laughing or crying as one emotional state turns into another. Nor are we even sure she's acting, giving us no easy release from the impact of her anxiety. The emotion progresses inexplicably, subverting shorthand narrative gestures that provide easy labelling, explanation and plot development.

Courtesy Jay Jopling/White Cube

### Derek Jarman (b.1942; d.1994)

*Aria* 1987

35mm, colour 4'5"

To the rise and fall of a classical aria, the blissful fantasy of an old woman is intercut with montages that build an anti-narrative of memory and mood engaging themes of love, death, and transcendence. Using different film, theatre and story-book idioms (fairy-tale, staged opera and documentary), Jarman's allegorical sequence merges past and present, splicing chips of time that in their gaps expose the ache of memory.

(Unconfirmed screening)

### Hannah Collins

(b.1956, London, England; lives in Barcelona, Spain)

*La Cantant (The Singer)* 1992

16mm, colour 7'

*La Cantant* features one complete aria about tragic love from Mascagni's opera, *La Cavalleria Rusticana*. The austere rock surface of a salt mountain and the interior of the now demolished Liceo Opera House in Barcelona provide the external and internal landscapes in which a woman plays out a personal journey. The piece collages references to different representations of love and tragedy. Courtesy the artist and Basilisk Communications

### João Penalva

(b.1949, Lisbon, Portugal; lives in London)

*Wallenda* 1998

Digital Video (D1), colour 30'7"

Penalva learnt to whistle note for note the whole score of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1912-13), often described as a 'titanic' work. The many different textures produced by a full orchestra are reduced here to one line whistled alone outside the grand performance. Like the shadow of a vast monument, the traces of Stravinsky's work seep into the realm of the everyday. On one level the tune is displaced and alien, on another it provokes a suspended state of belief and recognition. On screen the score is distilled and abstracted into vision as the fluctuating bars of a graphic equalizer.

Courtesy the artist

### Stephen Murphy

(b.1962, London, England; lives in London)

*Sky* 1999

Digital Video (D1), colour 8'

In a perfectly clear night sky, stars glimmer with unsettling clarity. Murphy explains that the 'hyper-pictorial quality' of the image is 'a consequence of a "scripted" list of instructions'.

Courtesy the artist

Programme may be subject to change

## Behind the Wall talk

*Telling Stories*

7:45pm to 8:45pm Thursday 20 May

How is belief engaged in different ways by narrative and fantasy? Does it matter how a story is told? Is it appropriate or even possible to present a story as having a straight path to a single conclusion?

## Ending

9:45pm to approximately 10:45pm Thursday 27 May  
9:45pm to approximately 10:45pm Saturday 29 May

### Angus Fairhurst

(b.1966, Pembury, England; lives in London)

*Revolver* 1998

Mini DV, colour 5'

Fairhurst discovers a poetic choreography in the most mundane. As shoppers enter and leave, the door of a shopping centre revolves with a rhythm and momentum of its own, continually turning inside outside.

Courtesy the artist and Sadie Coles HQ

### William Raban

(b. Fakenham, England; lives in London)

*Beating the Bridges* 1998

16mm, colour 8'

Floating down the Thames on the deck of a boat from Richmond to Westminster to the industrial East, Paul Burwell beats out the pulse of the river and the city. The architecture of each of the 30 bridges creates a different acoustic. The percussion is delicate and fast as he goes under the ribs of slender bridges, or deeper and slower to the rhythm of a rumbling train. The river acts as a shifting stage not boxed in by walls. The sound is dissipated by the wind and water.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Chasing 1000* 1994

S-VHS, colour 12'

They have to, don't they?

Excerpt. Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### Alan Currall

(b.1964, Stoke on Trent, England; lives in Glasgow, Scotland)

*Telephone Conversation* 1995

Video-8, colour 1'21"

How many ways can you rehearse telling someone it's over?

Courtesy the artist

### Cerith Wyn Evans

(b.1958, Llanelli, Wales; lives in London)

*London Bridge* 1987

Beta, colour 5'

This lyrical work brings us back to London and the day ahead. Shot on the morning of the 20th November 1987 looking South from the north side of London Bridge, the film frames a solemn march of commuters arriving to work in the City. '[A] tide of people twice a day traverse the bridge under which another tide does the same' (Wyn Evans).  
Courtesy the artist and Jay Jopling/White Cube

### Nick Stewart

(b. Belfast, Northern Ireland; lives in London)

*Surface Tension* 1994

Hi-8, b&w 10'

People appear and disappear behind curtains of steam, looking at something. The work occupies a strange interstitial space between the mundane and the other-worldly. For Stewart, it provides a metaphor for a state of endlessness.

*Surface Tension* also lets us look at how people act on the other side of the screen when they aren't performing.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### David Leister

(b. Wisconsin, USA; lives in London)

*Pointillist Dance* 1988

16mm, b&w 14'

The dance revolves around a single point confined to the limits of the screen. The image on screen is flattened to a two-dimensional pattern resembling a shifting painting or plan. The choreography of light is so diffuse that the form of a dancing body is only just contained. Unfolding in three musical movements, the dance ends as it begins.

Courtesy the artist and LUX Distribution

### Roddy Buchanan

(b.1965, Glasgow, Scotland; lives in Glasgow)

*Soda Stream* 1995

Beta, colour 1'30"

Like fireworks at a grand finale, the exquisite explosions in Buchanan's film resemble Jackson Pollock's action painting (pouring, dripping and flinging paint on to canvas), where the traces of an original movement are contained in intense fields of energy on a two-dimensional surface. With a liberating, jubilant and violent dynamism, the work slips between painting and film.

Courtesy the artist and Lotta Hammer

### Stephen Murphy

(b.1962, London, England; lives in London)

*Sky* 1999

Digital Video (D1), colour 8'

A self-enclosed, finite heaven gestures out to the infinite.

Courtesy the artist

Programme may be subject to change

## Behind the Wall talk

*Moving Still*

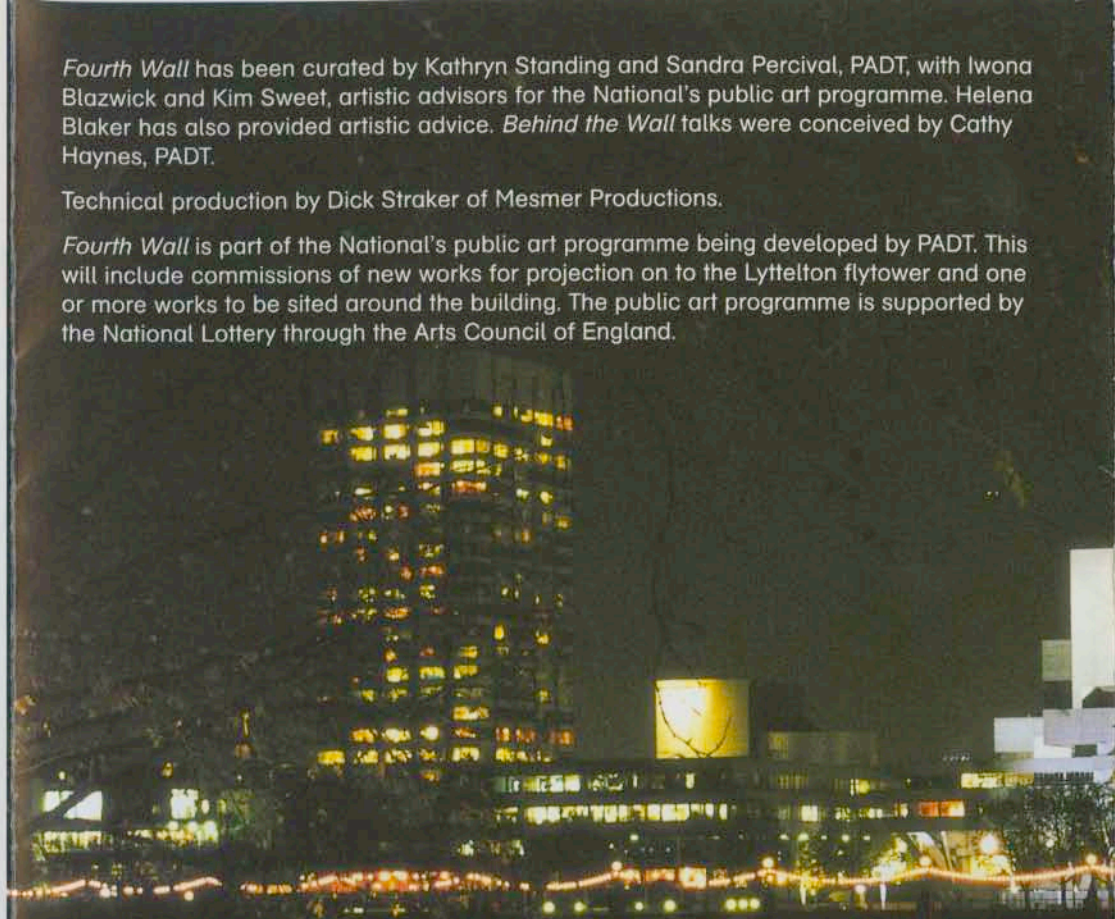
7:45pm to 8:45pm Thursday 27 May

In this post-industrial era, art seems to be experiencing a shift from the monumental to the ephemeral. Looking to the future, we ask whether media-based works and projections are the newest form of public sculpture.

*Fourth Wall* has been curated by Kathryn Standing and Sandra Percival, PADT, with Iwona Blazwick and Kim Sweet, artistic advisors for the National's public art programme. Helena Blaker has also provided artistic advice. *Behind the Wall* talks were conceived by Cathy Haynes, PADT.

Technical production by Dick Straker of Mesmer Productions.

*Fourth Wall* is part of the National's public art programme being developed by PADT. This will include commissions of new works for projection on to the Lyttelton flytower and one or more works to be sited around the building. The public art programme is supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of England.



## Acknowledgements

The National and PADT would like to thank all of the artists participating in *Fourth Wall*.

PADT would also like to thank the following for their assistance – Anthony Reynolds Gallery, Sadie Coles HQ, Frith Street Gallery, Lotta Hammer, Jay Jopling/White Cube, Lisson Gallery, Matt's Gallery, Emily Tsingou Gallery, Felicity Sparrow, and Ben Cook of LUX Distribution. PADT owes its gratitude to inIVA for its generous sharing of equipment.

Projection equipment was manufactured by Electrohome and purchased from Eclipse Presentations.

Public Art Development Trust, Kirkman House, 12–14 Whitfield Street, London W1P 5RD. Tel: 0171 580 9977  
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