



Trout Descending a Staircase

Steve Hawley

1990

1 min

U-matic

Produced and funded by the Arts Council and BBC2's The Late Show.

The inspired decision by *The Late Show* - a nightly arts programme on BBC2 Television - and the Arts Council to commission ten 'one minute' films from 'experimental' film-makers opened up access to a new and wider audience.

Born 1952. Studied Fine Art at Brighton Polytechnic. Currently lectures in Fine Art, Video and Sound at Sheffield Polytechnic.

Videos include: *The Dictionary* (1983);

On and Off Maps (1984);

The Chemistry Set (1987);

Trout Descending a Staircase (1987).

Films include:

Another Look at Geography (1986).

Taking a characteristically tongue-in-cheek approach, Steve Hawley - one of the ironic humorists of the British avant-garde - decided to create a new version of his witty and inventive *Trout Descending A Staircase* (1987). Marcel Duchamp (whose 'Nude Descending a Staircase' was a reference point for Hawley's original video) would no doubt have admired this pragmatically opportunist 'reworking' of an old piece for a new context.

Using effects generated by a Paintbox, Hawley slides a variety of objects (a paintbrush; a banana; a flaming torch; a diving helmet; a trout) in front of a gilt edged frame, and the textures of the object's movements are repeated again and again within the painting's frame. For each different object there is a different musical tune. The video delightfully and gently teases the effort an artist has to expend whilst painting, by using the 'fast' technology of video to make a one-minute tactile work of art. (T.H.)