

DICK JEWELL

NOW & THEN

FRIDAY 17 JANUARY – SATURDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2019

Bonington Gallery is delighted to present *Now & Then*, Dick Jewell's most significant solo exhibition in recent years. This exhibition brings together a wide range of works produced over a 40-year period. Working across film, photography and photo-collage, Jewell has inhabited both gallery and commercial contexts. Exhibiting his work internationally at institutions including the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam) and Serpentine Gallery (London), as well as producing music videos and promos for musicians including Neneh Cherry and Massive Attack.

Now & Then chronicles progression: both from a technological perspective through the shifting media featured throughout Jewell's oeuvre, and also in regards to people, as demonstrated in Jewell's re-visiting of his seminal 1989 film *Headcases* shot on Super 8. Thirty years on Jewell has repeated the same set of questions to the same subjects to make the first episode of the new film - ***Head2Head, 2019*** which is projected on the end wall of the gallery. Subjects include Neneh Cherry, Mark Lebon and Scarlett Canon.

Dominating the left-hand wall as you enter is ***War & Peace, 2019***, a large scale photocollage assembled by Jewell in the months leading up to this exhibition. A somewhat pertinent piece in our current polarised social/political climate, visitors are encouraged to take 'selfies' of themselves standing in front of the work (at whatever end they decide) and to then post them online using the hashtag **#DJWARANDPEACE**, or email to **boningtongallery@ntu.ac.uk** (to be subsequently accumulated and re-posted online and on our blog). Jewell's favourite selfie will be awarded a signed copy of his 2015 book *4000 Threads*, the winner will be announced at the end of the exhibition.

Continuing along the same wall are 9 examples from Jewell's ***Found Photos, 1978-1980***. Here Jewell has collected discarded photobooth portraits, often found torn and strewn in the vicinity of the booths. These have then been re-collaged, scanned and printed to make new images. The series was first presented in the (now extremely rare) book *Found Photos* published in 1978.

On the opposite wall is ***The Box, 1980*** a mass of 198 photographs taken of TV screens across a 7-day period in 1980. The images capture only a moment in time, but encourage continuous comparison with the mediated world that we inhabit today.

In the centre of the gallery are two standalone monitors, one plays ***Dermot & Natasha, 2005***, a looped cycle of clips montaged from the non-speaking moments of two BBC newsreaders. Slowed down and set to music, the film suggests an air of tenderness between the subjects. On the second screen is ***Katherine Griffiths 1973-....***, a self-confessed 'photobooth fanatic' that Jewell met via correspondence regarding his *Found Photos* book. Here Jewell has time lapsed all photobooth images that Katherine continues to take of herself from an early teenager to her 50's.

The final two projections shown side by side are **4000 Threads, 2015**. A 'Chinese Whispers' approach to accumulating images, the contents found in one image informs the next and so on. This work was published as a book in 2015 and is available for purchase from the Art Shop in the building at a price of £30.

Jewell's re-purposing and representation of images is varied and impressive. In a world bombarding us with millions of images, *Now & Then* is just presenting a few thousand.

BONINGTON VITRINES #10: JEWELL

"In 1978, prompted by my interest in people's attitude to photography, from beyond the primitive notion of your soul being stolen when you have your photograph taken, to whatever was the contemporary notion, I mailed an image of myself to the 84 people who at that time shared my surname in the London Phone Directory, hoping that having this in common would serve as an introduction. I asked for a photograph in return, with their name on the back so that I would know who was responding, and a very large percentage complied, but most were also accompanied by incidental information. There were exceptions, a letter saying that there were no photographs in existence of Doris Jewell, an octogenarian living in Barnes, but I was welcome to go and take one.

This outcome led to me producing 'London Jewells', a poster size, four-colour lithographic letter containing a montage of all the photographs received and a précis of the written response. I mailed this poster out to my original list, but omitting the names that the Royal Mail had returned to sender as "unknown at this address". This secondary mail out solicited a mixed response, photographs and "wish I'd taken your original letter more seriously" from some of those who had not initially responded and "thanks" from those that had.

I then repeated the process but this time with a similar number of Jewells in the USA, utilising the Los Angeles and Miami phone directories. The response was markedly different, not in volume but by the amount of lithographically produced photographs in the form of Christmas and model agency cards etc., and also far more information on lineage with family trees going back to Bishop Jewell of Salisbury in the 16th Century.

I then framed and exhibited all this material at the 1983 Summer Show at the Serpentine Gallery in London.

*In 2009 a publisher enquired of me if I had any plans for another book. I was considering returning to the 'Jewell' concept but this time making contact via the internet rather than the postal service; with the development of the world wide web and digital photography, our personal attitudes to portraiture had moved on, the days of Doris Jewell living a long life without a single image of her existence seemed a thing of the past. However, instead I initially ran a Google search of 'Jewell' for images, this subsequently also led me to video and audio material baring my surname. The items collated in alphabetical order became **Jewell**, a Film By Dick Jewell April-August 2010 (133mins), rather than a book it imitates the aspect of multitasking on a computer screen.*

My iPhone flower portraits alongside the vitrines, seemed fitting, not only as a traditional subject for wallpaper but in our focus on genealogy when considering the juxtaposition of similar sized subject matter."

Dick Jewell, 2019.

PLEASE USE THE HASHTAG #DJWARANDPEACE WHEN POSTING
SELFIES AGAINST THE WAR & PEACE WORK.