

# HALES GALLERY

## Positions I

Bruce and Norman Yonemoto (in collaboration with Mike Kelley)  
*Kappa* (1986)

7 – 11 July 2015

Evening Screening and & Drinks Reception, Thursday 9 July, 6-8pm

For the first week of *Positions*—a series of five week-long, single channel video installations running through July and August 2015—Hales Gallery is delighted to present Bruce and Norman Yonemoto's 1986 film *Kappa*, made in collaboration with artist Mike Kelley.

Bruce and Norman Yonemoto are known for their pioneering body of work deconstructing and exploring mythologies created within mass media culture, as well as for their independent video and installation work produced in more recent years. Beginning in 1976, the artists would appropriate the styles of popular media forms (soap operas, Hollywood melodramas and television advertising) to create ironic, stylised fictions exposing the media's manipulation of reality, fantasy and identity. Underlying their critique of culture is the brothers' Japanese-American heritage and their upbringing in California's Silicon Valley, as well as their proximity to Hollywood and the entertainment industry.

The film *Kappa* combines the Greek myth of Oedipus with the figure of the 'Kappa' from Japanese folklore to explore the presence and relative positions of Eastern and Western mythologies in everyday life. The Kappa (a freshwater deity or sprite known for its sexual and violent behaviours, played by Mike Kelley) encounters an Oedipal scene reframed in a contemporary south-Californian setting, watching and commenting as Jocasta (Oedipus's mother, played by famous Warhol Factory member and B-movie actress Mary Woronov) and Eddie (a pun on 'Oedipus', played by Eddie Ruscha, son of artist Ed Ruscha) consummate their dangerous desire. This Oedipal narrative, shot in the style of a television soap opera from the 1980s, is preceded by a documentary-style montage of different representations of and folklore relating to the Kappa, spanning traditional Japanese culture and more contemporary 'low' forms of Japanese culture such as television advertising and cartoons, and accompanied by an informative voice-over. The 'art film' aesthetic of this montage sharply juxtaposes with the scenes that follow, underlining the cultural 'otherness' they represent.

Meanwhile, openly alluding to Freudian psychosexual theories are inserts from 1962 Hollywood biographical drama *Freud: The Secret Passion*, along with scenes from surrealist cinema and references to pop culture. The result is a satirical yet moving exploration of cultural archetypes and their affective power across different forms and contexts.

**Bruce Yonemoto** (1949) studied at UC Berkeley and Sokei Art Institute in Tokyo. He received his MFA from Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, CA. He has taught video and photography at universities in California and Japan, and has written for various catalogues including the Getty, LACE and Kanazawa University Art Museum. He is currently a Professor of Art, at University of California, Irvine, living and working in Los Angeles.

**Norman Yonemoto** (1946-2014) studied film at Santa Clara University, UC Berkeley, UCLA, and the American Film Institute. He was a contributing writer for *Artweek* magazine, and was the author of the commercial films *Chatterbox* (1976) and *Savage Streets* (1983).

The Yonemotos co-founded KYO-DAI Productions in 1976. In 1999 a mid-career retrospective of their collaborative work was held at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. Their work has been exhibited extensively around the world, including at the Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles; in *California Video* at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; the Long Beach Museum of Art, California; 11th Paris Biennale; Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE); Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; Image Forum, Tokyo; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; American Film Institute National Video Festival, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC, and the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

Among their awards are a Media Arts Fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation, a production grant and a Visual Arts Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Phelan Award for Video Art/Docu-Drama, and grants from the Rocky Mountain Institute of Film and Video and Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (German Television).

For press contact [press@halesgallery.com](mailto:press@halesgallery.com)  
For sales contact [sales@halesgallery.com](mailto:sales@halesgallery.com)  
Hales Gallery, Tea Building, 7 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA,

 @halesgallery  
 Hales Gallery  
 @halesgallery

+44 (0)207 0331938 [www.halesgallery.com](http://www.halesgallery.com)

# HALES GALLERY

## Positions II

Michael Smith and William Wegman  
*The World of Photography* (1986)

14 – 18 July 2015

For the second week of *Positions*—a series of five week-long, single channel video installations running through July and August 2015—Hales Gallery is delighted to present Michael Smith and William Wegman's *The World of Photography* (1986).

Smith and Wegman's witty and irreverent work, *The World of Photography*, was first shown on PBS show *Alive from Off Center* (1984-97), a series of works from a selection of international artists working on the frontiers of dance, performance and video art. *The World of Photography* is structured like an instructional guide on the subject of photography, following the journey of earnest would-be-photographer 'Mike' (Michael Smith's performance persona) under the tutelage of a professional photographer (played by William Wegman). The photographer, sporting a beret, false moustache and goatee and black turtleneck, delivers a series of somewhat mundane 'Rules of Photography' to his audience ("Rule Number One: Photography is Light. Keep your darkroom door locked"), preparing Mike before sending him off for his first shoot in the streets of New York.

The ironic tone and conceptual humour of the surreal scenes that unfold are used in this work as an art-making strategy, parodying the genre of educational 'how-to' videos and providing a commentary on the role of the photographic image as it crosses back and forth between 'high art' and everyday or mass media culture.

Michael Smith's videos, installations and performance works, produced both independently and in collaborations with other artists invoke the routines of popular comedy as a conceptual strategy to explore contemporary mass media culture and its effects on those who experience it. The majority of Smith's work chronicles the dreams and adventures of his extraordinarily prescient and sympathetic alter-ego, the naïve and somewhat inept Everyman 'Mike'. William Wegman's body of work, which includes photography, painting and drawing as well as his absurdist videotapes, shares with Smith a focus on humour as a strategy to comment on a wide range of situations and topics, from the everyday to conceptual strategies in contemporary art practices.

**Michael Smith** (b. Chicago, IL, USA, 1951) studied with the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program (1970-1973), and received a BA from Colorado College (1973).

Selected shows and performances include those at MOMA (USA), the Whitney Museum of American Art (USA), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (USA), the New Museum (USA), Greene Naftali Gallery (USA), Sculpture Center (USA), MOMA P.S.1 (USA), Palais de Tokyo (France), the Walker Art Center (USA), the Wattis Institute (USA), Caroline's Comedy Club (NYC), Dance Theatre Workshop, Cinemax (NYC), MOCA LA (USA) and the Pompidou Centre (France). Smith's work is represented in numerous international collections including MoMA (USA), Metropolitan Museum of Art (USA), Walker Art Center (USA), Pompidou Center (France), Museum of Television and Broadcasting, NYC (USA) and Centro de Arte Contemporânea Inhotim, Brazil.

Michael Smith is the recipient of numerous awards, including fellowships from the Alpert Award in the Arts, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, as well as four National Endowment for the Arts grants. Since 2001, he has taught at the University of Texas at Austin.

**William Wegman** (b. Holyoke, MA, USA, 1943) received a B.F.A. in painting from the Massachusetts College of Art and an M.F.A. in painting from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He has received numerous awards, including grants and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Creative Artists Public Service (CAPS). Wegman lives and works in New York, NY and Maine.

Selected shows include those at institutions including the Walker Art Center (USA); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (USA); Holly Solomon Gallery, (NYC); Kunstmuseum, Lucerne (Switzerland); Centre Georges Pompidou (France); Stedelijk Museum (The Netherlands); Kunstverein (Germany); and the Institute of Contemporary Art (UK); Kunsthalle Wien, (Austria); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (USA); The Museum of Modern Art (NYC); Institute of Contemporary Photography (NYC); the Victoria and Albert Museum (UK), and Creative Time's Video Art on the Times Square Astrovision in New York. Wegman's work can be found in collections including the Brooklyn Museum (USA) Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (France); Museum of Fine Art, Houston (USA); MoMA (SA); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (USA) and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Wegman is the recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships (1975, 1986); two national Endowment for the Arts grants (1976, 1985); and has been honoured by the New York Foundation for the Arts (1999).

For press contact [press@halesgallery.com](mailto:press@halesgallery.com)  
For sales contact [sales@halesgallery.com](mailto:sales@halesgallery.com)  
Hales Gallery, Tea Building, 7 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA,

 @halesgallery  
 Hales Gallery  
 @halesgallery

+44 (0)207 0331938 [www.halesgallery.com](http://www.halesgallery.com)

# HALES GALLERY

## Positions III

Peter Campus  
*R-G-B* (1974)

21 – 25 July 2015

Evening Screening and Drinks Reception: Thursday, 23 July, 6-8pm

#petercampus #rgb #halesgallery

For the third week of *Positions*—a series of five week-long, single channel video installations running through July and August 2015—Hales Gallery is delighted to present Peter Campus's *R-G-B* (1974).

Campus's single-channel videos and closed-circuit video installations of the early 70s highlight his position as one of the pioneering figures in the emergence of video as an art form. His early tapes explore the anatomy of the video signal in relation to human psychology setting new boundaries for the medium. In more recent years, the artist has transitioned to working with new media, extending his career-long exploration of technology and its relation to human perceptions of identity and self.

*R-G-B* (1974), Campus's early single-channel videotape, is titled after the three primary colours of video: red, green and blue. In this work, the artist, staring at the camera, experiments with video colour technology to create a series of visually striking and increasingly distorted self-portraits. Manipulating this technology physically, mechanically and electronically—placing multi-coloured gels on the lens, projecting monochromatic slides, and playing with the feedback on a monitor to create a chain reaction of multiplying images—Campus transforms video space as well as his own image. *R-G-B* culminates in a screen filled with pure saturated magenta, the artist's silhouette completely immersed in and rendered invisible by colour.

Campus has described the work as "(my) most dryly-stated tape, free of insinuation ... simply an exploration by a performer of the colour system in which he is trapped, much like a prisoner pacing off his cell". The result is an intense, stripped-back study in the phenomenology of colour within the world of video technology.

**Peter Campus** (b. New York City, 1937) received a Bachelor of Science in Experimental Psychology from Ohio State University in 1960 before studying at The City College Film Institute. He also participated in the experimental workshops at Boston's famous WGBH-TV. In 1976, Campus was awarded the National Endowment for the Art Fellowship.

His work has been exhibited extensively with solo shows at the University of Michigan Museum of Art (MI), The Power Plant (Toronto), Kunsthalle Bremen (Germany), Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso (Mexico City), Whitney Museum of American Art (NY), The High Museum (GA) and Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris).

Campus is represented in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art (NY), Whitney Museum of American Art (NY), Albright-Knox Art Gallery (NY), Parrish Art Museum (NY), Philadelphia Museum of Art (PA), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Museo Nacional de Arte Reina Sofia (Madrid), Walker Art Center (MN), Weatherspoon Art Museum (NC) and Tate Modern (London).

For press contact [press@halesgallery.com](mailto:press@halesgallery.com)  
For sales contact [sales@halesgallery.com](mailto:sales@halesgallery.com)  
Hales Gallery, Tea Building, 7 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA,

 @halesgallery  
 Hales Gallery  
 @halesgallery

+44 (0)207 0331938 [www.halesgallery.com](http://www.halesgallery.com)

# HALES GALLERY

## Positions IV

Carolee Schneemann

*Carl Ruggles Christmas Breakfast* (1963)

9:04 min, colour, sound, 16 mm film transferred to video (2007)

28 July – 1 August 2015

Evening Screening & Drinks Reception: Thursday 30 July, 6-8pm

**For the fourth week of *Positions*—a series of five week-long, single channel video installations running through July and August 2015—Hales Gallery is delighted to present Carolee Schneemann's *Carl Ruggles Christmas Breakfast* (1963).**

Schneemann began as a painter during the 1950s before moving New York with her partner, the composer James Tenney, in 1960. Here, they engaged and collaborated with a growing community of avant-garde artists, writers, musicians and filmmakers, from contemporaries such as Claes Oldenbourg, Jim Dine and Robert Whitman to older, more established figures including Stan Brakhage, Maya Deren and Carl Ruggles. While retaining her painterly concerns with form and structure, Schneemann began to experiment with new media and forms of art-making from film to performance. Since then, Schneemann's practice has continued to challenge perceptions within art, reshaping discourse on gender, sexuality and the body as well as engaging with international politics and issues of censorship.

Schneemann's first film, *Carl Ruggles Christmas Breakfast* (filmed in 1963 and transferred to video in 2007), marks the pivotal moment of the artist's arrival on the New York scene, and her expansion from canvas to new media. The film, shot in black-and-white with hand-painted colouring, is a portrait of Carl Ruggles, a radical modernist composer with whom in his old age Schneemann and Tenney became friends while still in college in Vermont. In the film, Ruggles is depicted having breakfast (pie a la mode) on his 87th birthday in Vermont in conversation with James Tenney, with Schneemann off-screen but participating through occasional dialogue. The young couple had become close to Ruggles, embracing his somewhat testy character, after deciding to help him with his vast, unsorted archive of scores, notes, letters and visual work. Schneemann describes how she and Tenney in turn 'were always learning about age, time, archives, from Carl'. She also discovered a strong affinity with the sensuous energy of Ruggles' own paintings in particular, and so they often showed each other their work.

Both the content and materiality of *Carl Ruggles Christmas Breakfast* highlight its significance in functioning as a prologue for Schneemann's important 'autobiographical trilogy' of films—*Fuses* (1965), *Plumb Line* (1968-71) and *Kitch's Last Meal* (1973-76)—and in laying the groundwork for her subsequent branching out into kinetic theatre, photography and sculptural works, which all explore the possibilities for a dispersed subjectivity and depiction of authentic experience in art. This piece is not just a portrait of its eponymous 'subject', but also of the close, creatively collaborative relationships between its participants in their 'real' lives. The domestic setting and imagery and the film's spontaneous, unscripted tone, as well as the very material presence of the artist stamped with painted colour onto the film stock, all contribute to the foregrounding of the artist's experience and perspective as portrait-painter and film-maker.

"Everything that I have developed has to do with extending visual principles off the canvas" (Schneemann). Underpinning her self-taught foray into the new medium of film is an adherence to Schneemann's identity as a painter, her commitment to form, structure and materiality, as she simultaneously pushed against the limits of the canvas and the principles of Abstract Expressionism by bringing it into space and time. The creation of her first film presents a moment of dialogue between the past and the future, between tradition and innovation, just as the work itself presents a conversation between an artist in old age reflecting on past work—his incomplete 1913 opera *The Sunken Bell*—and a visionary young artist experimenting and working out her own creative identity in a new medium. Reflecting more than half a century later on this early work now transferred to video, *Carl Ruggles Christmas Breakfast* remains a poignant exploration of the nature of age, time and art.

**Carolee Schneemann** (b. 1939, Illinois) received a B.A. from Bard College and an M.F.A. from the University of Illinois. She holds an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degrees from the California Institute of the Arts and the Maine College of Art.

Schneemann's work has been exhibited worldwide at institutions including the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (US), the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (US), the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (France), The Reina Sophia Museum, Madrid (Spain), and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (US). In 1997, a retrospective of her work entitled 'Carolee Schneemann, *Up To And Including Her Limits*', was held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Schneemann's work is included in many important collections such as Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (France); Hamburger Bahnhof Museum, Berlin (Germany); Hirschhorn Museum, Washington D.C (US); Institute of Contemporary Art, London (UK); Institute of Contemporary Art, Chicago (US); Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (US); Museum of Modern Art, New York (US); New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (US); Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Providence (US); The Whitney Museum of Art, New York (US) and many others. In autumn 2015, the Museum Der Moderne Salzburg will hold a retrospective of Schneemann's work, curated by Sabine Breitwieser.

For press contact [press@halesgallery.com](mailto:press@halesgallery.com)

For sales contact [sales@halesgallery.com](mailto:sales@halesgallery.com)

Hales Gallery, Tea Building, 7 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA,

 @halesgallery

 Hales Gallery

 @halesgallery

+44 (0)207 0331938 [www.halesgallery.com](http://www.halesgallery.com)

# HALES GALLERY

## Positions V

Jeff Keen  
*Mad Love* (1978)  
42:57 min

4 – 8 August 2015

Evening Screening & Drink Reception: Thursday 6 August, 6-8pm

#jeffkeen #madlove #halesgallery

For the fifth week of *Positions*—a series of five week-long, single channel video installations running through July and August 2015—Hales Gallery is delighted to present Jeff Keen's *Mad Love* (1978).

Jeff Keen was a poet, artist and film-maker best known for his pioneering experimental work with film and video, which he began making aged 37 in 1960. Over the next few years, Keen became an important contributor to the countercultural scene in Britain, participating in literary happenings and other events at Better Books on Charing Cross Road, as well as co-founding the London Film-makers Co-op. However, Keen's work remained on the fringes of the purely formalist avant-garde canon of experimental film. In Keen's films, innovative techniques of film construction and transmission – the incorporation of animation and live action with found visual and sound footage, the superimposition and hand-alteration of film stock, and multiple screen projections -- are explored within the context of often narrative, thematic and highly referential works. Diverse influences on Keen's subjects range from archetypal mythologies and art historical movements including surrealism and romanticism to popular culture, particularly comic books and Hollywood B-movies.

Keen's *Mad Love*, which he began in 1972 and completed in 1978, takes its title from a translation of French surrealist Andre Breton's photographically-illustrated novel *L'Amour Fou* (1937). This reference indexes the surrealist foundations on which the film is built. As the artist explains: "It was a surrealist film in the sense that before I made the film I had the music for it [...] I used to go every Saturday to Brighton Open Market [...] There was a whole pile of 78 [record]s there someone had left. And they were all Latin American music. Surrealist music."

Built around this soundtrack is an extended montage of jokes, trailers and photoplays, all featuring a range of characters performed by an ensemble of artists, writers, friends and family including his wife, Jackie, and his daughter Stella Starr, all "playing at being stars" (Keen) and transforming characters through costume and fancy dress. The scenes which unfold are an amalgamation of references to a wide web of cinematic history, from homages to silent movies to parodic recreations of exploitation movies or 'trash-flix'. Keen himself appears as B-movie-style alter ego and mad scientist Dr Gaz. The film stands as an iconic example of the artist's early DIY-style experiments with film and cultural influences, a joyful exploration of film media and history.

**This screening is dedicated to the memory of Gary Turner, a fellow artist and friend of Jeff Keen, and performer of 'The Artist' in *Mad Love*.**

**Jeff Keen (1923-2012)** was born in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. After studying for a short time on a Commercial Art course at Chelsea, he was drafted into National Service during WWII, after which he moved to Brighton where he lived and worked until his death.

Keen's work has recently been the subject of two retrospectives: *Shoot the Wrz, Artist and Filmmaker Jeff Keen* at Brighton Museum and Art Gallery (UK) and *Gazwrks: The Films of Jeff Keen* at the BFI, Southbank, London (UK). A major installation, *Gazapocalypse – Return to the Golden Age*, took place in the Tanks at Tate Modern in September 2012. Selected exhibitions, screenings and performances include those at the Trondheim Kunstmuseum (Norway), Tate Britain (UK), Fabrica (UK), Better Books (UK), the Serpentine Gallery (UK), Viper Festival for International Film and Video (Switzerland) and London Film Festival (UK).

For press contact [press@halesgallery.com](mailto:press@halesgallery.com)  
For sales contact [sales@halesgallery.com](mailto:sales@halesgallery.com)  
Hales Gallery, Tea Building, 7 Bethnal Green Road, London E1 6LA,

 @halesgallery  
 Hales Gallery  
 @halesgallery

+44 (0)207 0331938 [www.halesgallery.com](http://www.halesgallery.com)