

# F R A G M E N T S



## PRESS CONTACTS:

JAMES SCOTT  
scottart@roadrunner.com  
323.229.3374

ASTRA PRICE  
jamescottassistant@gmail.com  
818.434.2720

## LOG LINE:

As Derek Boshier starts preparing for a new exhibition, he talks about the themes that unite his films, paintings and drawings, including his new works *Night and Snow* and *World News*. What are the connections? Nature and machinery, fashion, soccer, video games, rock music....

## **SYNOPSIS:**

*Fragments* covers the trajectory of Derek Boshier working between a giant drawing, *World News*, which is about 'the contrasts between nature and machinery', and a series of paintings titled *Night and Snow* which cover 'fashion, soccer, video games, rock music and mythologies'. The title *Fragments* also refers to Boshier's own film work, clips of which are integrated within this film.

Boshier is a British artist living in Los Angeles. Associated with the Pop art movement in London in the sixties, he studied at the Royal College of Art with the likes of David Hockney, RB Kitaj, Peter Blake and Pauline Boty. It is the landscape of America, and particularly Hollywood, that has long been such an influence on all of these artists.

The statement by the artist Richard Hamilton: 'I don't like art films' is perhaps the springboard for all of Scott's films on artists. Equally, David Lynch's comment, 'art films are boring', sums up a broad attitude to the genre. Positioning himself as both a passionate lover of both art and movies, Scott's films directly challenge the negative assumptions of what 'an art film' can be. They ignite a sense of excitement, mystery and wonder that resides within the making of both art and cinema.

While the film closely follows the making of a specific painting or drawing, Boshier tells off-hand stories commenting on and illuminating his practice. He remarks, 'it was Degas, of all people, who said, 'the making of a painting is like the perpetration of a crime - the artist never paints what he sees; he always paints what he wants other people to see'.

As with many of Scott's films, this documentary explores the nature of the creative process; the camera delving into the act, becomes almost an extension of the work, revealing the journey from first brushstroke or pencil mark to the finished canvas or drawing.

The film was started in the fall of 2018 when Boshier began working for an exhibition of paintings and drawings to open at Gazelli Art House in London, a year later. The music is composed, played and engineered by cellist Derek Stein.

## **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

James Scott is a California-based filmmaker who was born in England, into a family of artists. With a joint passion for film and painting and with no film school in England at the time, he entered the Slade School of Fine Art in London where he made his first film, *The Rocking Horse* (1962). Though still a painting student, this work catapulted James into a career in film.

At the end of the sixties, having had much success pioneering a new kind of art film and collaborating with artists such as Hockney, Kitaj, Hamilton and Oldenburg, James turned his attention to the political. As part of the Berwick Street Film Collective (with Marc Karlin, Humphry Trevelyan, Mary Kelly, Jon Sanders), Scott began work on the political documentaries

*Nightcleaners* (1974) and *'36 to '77* (1977). During the three years spent on these political projects, James also pursued his interest in narrative films, writing and directing *Adult Fun* (1972) and *Collin and Platonida* (1976).

In the early eighties, James returned to narrative filmmaking, adapting and directing the short story *A Shocking Accident* (1983) by Graham Greene, which won the Oscar for Best Live Action Short. He followed this with another Greene adaptation, *Loser Takes All* (1990), his last mainstream feature with Molly Ringwald, Robert Lindsay and John Gielgud. It was distributed by Miramax as *Strike it Rich*.

Upon moving to Los Angeles, Scott shifted his focus to painting, finding inspiration in the contrasting realities of Hollywood. His paintings have been included in exhibitions in New York, London and Los Angeles.

Between 2009 and 2016 James returned to filmmaking and began a 'diary' film, *Vanishing Point*, which is now being prepared to show as a three screen installation. In 2018, he began work on *Fragments*, a new film with the artist Derek Boshier in Los Angeles. The film has recently been completed and is scheduled to have its World Premiere at the Rotterdam IFF 2020.

## FILMOGRAPHY

*Fragments 2019* as Director  
Documentary / Short (45 mins)  
Music composed, played and engineered by Derek Stein

*Vanishing Point 2017* as Director  
Narrative Documentary in three parts: Red, Yellow, and Blue (339 mins)  
Music by Jim Howard

*The Last of England* as Director 2002  
Experimental Short (30 mins)  
Companion piece to art installation, Denise Bibro Gallery, NY.  
Music by Jim Howard

*Antoni Tàpies* as Director 1974/2019  
Documentary (Work in Progress)  
A film about the Spanish/Catalan artist Antoni Tàpies, consisting of footage shot in Barcelona and interviews between Sir Roland Penrose and the artist.

*Loser Takes All* (aka *Strike It Rich*) as Director/Writer 1990  
Feature based on the novel by Graham Greene  
Produced by Christine Oestreicher  
Miramax Films (84 mins)  
Starring Molly Ringwald, Robert Lindsay and John Gielgud for Miramax / HBO, USA

*Every Picture Tells a Story* as Director 1984  
Film on Four, Channel Four TV (80 mins)  
Produced by Christine Oestreicher, Written by Shane Connaughton  
Starring Alex Norton, Phyllis Logan and Natasha Richardson

*A Shocking Accident* as Director/Writer 1983

Academy Award Winner, Oscar for Best Live Action Short (25 mins)  
Produced by Christine Oestreicher  
Starring Rupert Everett and Jenny Seagrove - Flamingo Pictures

*Chance, History, Art...* as Director 1980  
Award winner, Melbourne Silver Boomerang  
Documentary (50 mins)  
Arts Council of Great Britain / Finestroke with the assistance of Hubert Bals

'36 to '77 (Nightcleaners part 2) as Co-Director 1978  
Documentary / Feature (85 mins)  
Directors Marc Karlin, Jon Sanders, James Scott, Humphry Trevelyan  
British Film Institute, Lux, Raven Row London

*Coilin and Platonida* as Director/Writer 1976  
Narrative Feature based on the short story 'Kotin and Platonida' by Nikolai Leskov (85 mins)  
ZDF German Television, Das kleine Fernsehspiel (Producer: Eckart Stein), Cologne, Germany

*Nightcleaners* (part 1) Collective Work 1974  
Filmmakers: Marc Karlin, Mary Kelly, James Scott, Humphry Trevelyan  
Documentary / Feature 90 mins - Berwick Street Film Collective

*Adult Fun* as Director/Writer 1972  
Narrative Independent Feature (102 mins)  
Starring Peter Marinker, Deborah Norton, Judy Liebert  
Maya Film Productions, London

*The Great Ice Cream Robbery* as Director 1971  
Documentary / Double Screen (40 mins)  
The artists Claes Oldenburg and Hannah Wilke - Arts Council of Great Britain

*Richard Hamilton* as Director 1969  
Documentary / Short (25 mins)  
The artist Richard Hamilton - Arts Council of Great Britain

*R.B. Kitaj* as Director 1967  
Documentary / Short (20 mins)  
The artist R.B. Kitaj - Arts Council of Great Britain

*Love's Presentation* as Director 1966  
Documentary / Short (27 mins)  
The artist David Hockney  
Etching project based on poems by C.P. Cavafy  
illustrated by David Hockney and made with the financial assistance of Alan Power.

*In Separation* as Director/Writer 1965  
Experimental short (5 mins)  
Written and directed by James Scott  
Starring Drewe Henley and Margot Curry,  
British Film Institute Experimental Film Fund, London

*Changes* as Producer/Writer 1964  
Short live action (35mm black & white)  
Starring Anthony Hopkins and Jacqueline Pearce  
made with the financial assistance of Karel Reisz

*The Rocking Horse* as Director/Writer 1962

Short live action (25 mins)

British Film Institute, Starring Drewe Henley, Jenny Lousada

Made with assistance from the BFI Experimental Film Fund, London

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

I made my first film while I was an art student at the Slade School of Art in London. In the next three decades as a filmmaker I crossed back and forth through many genres, art to documentary to political and narrative. I made shorts and features working sometimes with groups and sometimes alone. But conceptually my work always found its way back to people. People in the immediacy of the moment; whether they were actors playing parts, artists, cleaners, or just people being themselves.

As the son of artist parents, my original lens of understanding anything was through art. This led me to making a series of films about young contemporary painters and sculptors whose work derived from the mass media: 'pop' artists. My goal was to make films that would in some way become cinematic collaborations with these artists, showing where their ideas came from and how these ideas were transformed into art. The films were intended to open the hermetic world of art and artists to a wider public. To break down the misconceptions around the subject. To show how art comes out of the politics of the everyday as well as to see how cinema can become a central part of this practice.

In time, my filmmaking changed and slowed in pace of production. I found myself refocusing through my own drawing and painting; the immediacy of my mark-making becoming an end in itself. I began to rethink the value of art in terms of its uniqueness. The specificity and beauty of a single painting or sculpture or installation as compared to the furtiveness of fleeting images on a screen. I began to think about that one-on-one moment, where the viewer in reaching out to the artwork crosses both a void of space and a void of time; the power contained in that simple act. "*Only connect.*" - E.M Forster.



## ABOUT THE FILM PRODUCTION TEAM

### **DEREK BOSHIER - COLLABORATOR**

Springing from the British Pop Art movement while he was a painting student at the Royal College of Art in London, Derek Boshier has worked across arts disciplines for over 50 years. Alongside his peers, such as David Hockney, R.B. Kitaj, Allen Jones, and Pauline Boty, Boshier drew from popular culture to inform his work. Embracing the iconography of British and American mass culture, Boshier's paintings have earned him recognition as one of the pioneers of British Pop Art. In his early work, he favored topical subject-matter such as the space race, political events, and the Americanization of Europe. In 1962, he was featured with Peter Blake, Pauline Boty, and Peter Phillips in Ken Russell's BBC documentary "Pop Goes The Easel."

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In 1966, Boshier collaborated with artist Joe Tilson through a cultural exchange grant to travel to Czechoslovakia and Hungary to create a performance/event titled *The Smith-Novak Event*, which involved an exchange of postcards between residents with common last names Novak in Prague and British residents named Smith. This event took place during the Prague Spring under Dukchek, which came to an end with the Russian invasion of Prague.

During the 1970s Boshier experimented with different media, producing photographs, films, collages, constructions, books, posters, performance pieces, and record covers. The diversity of this output was unified by Boshier's response to and influence by contemporary events, his

involvement with the social context, his fascination with unmasking the sinister aspects of advertising, and his promotion of radical politics.

In the late 70s, Boshier began working with pop icons David Bowie and The Clash. He designed David Bowie's 1979 record cover *Lodger* as well as his stage set for his *Serious Moonlight* tour, the model of which is currently in The Victoria and Albert Museum Collection in London. He also painted several portraits of Bowie, most notably as The Elephant Man. Bowie subsequently became one of his best collectors. Boshier worked with punk group The Clash to design their 48-page songbook *Clash: Second Song Book*. Collaborations with high profile musicians enabled him to reach a wider audience outside of the art world.

Boshier first moved to the United States in 1980 at the invitation of the University of Houston, catalyzing his three-decades long engagement with American popular culture. After ten years in Houston, he relocated to Los Angeles to teach at CAL Arts, then subsequently UCLA, Art Center, and USC, and have lived there for 23 years. A stranger in a strange land, Boshier found a wealth of subject matter in Los Angeles for his paintings as he explored the sites and cultures of Southern California, and, in a larger sense, the United States.

Boshier has focused on iconic LA images from freeways to architecture to explore the ways in which images are embedded and create meaning in society. Currently, Leslie Jones, curator of Prints and Drawings at LACMA, is curating an exhibition of all his Los Angeles and California-related work, which will tour California museums.

Recently, Boshier has had solo exhibitions in London at Gazelli Art House in 2017 and 2019. Also in 2017, his solo exhibition "On The Road" showed at Night Gallery in Los Angeles. He has made six new short films in the last three years. In 2016, he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal College of Art, London. In 2017, he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. Boshier's work is part of permanent collections at the Tate (London), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Victoria and Albert Museum (London), Museum of Fine Art (Houston, TX), and Los Angeles County Art Museum, among others.

## **DEREK STEIN - COMPOSER**

Described by the *Los Angeles Times* as "compellingly, vehemently virtuosic," Derek Stein is a cellist whose active performance schedule knows virtually no bounds and is met with the same committed abandon he brings to his playing. Whether in the intimate intensity of a contemporary music concert, the rhythm section of an indie rock show, or in the cello section of an orchestra, his energetic and distinctive performing style can be heard in virtually any musical context and venue across Los Angeles and Southern California.

He can be heard on the GRAMMY-winning Bridge Records release *Harry Partch: Plectra and Percussion Dances* performing on the composer's unique invention, the Adapted Viola. His

recorded playing can also be heard on a number of releases from Bedroom Community, Cold Blue, Populist, New World, Bôtt, and The Industry record labels.

Derek is a founding member of the new music ensemble gnarwhallaby, as well as the easily recognizable cellist with the critically acclaimed wild Up Modern Music Collective. As a contemporary classical musician, he has premiered hundreds of new works collaborating with some of the finest composers of our time. His flair for rock and pop styles can be heard in his work as both cellist and arranger with the Vitamin String Quartet. Derek has earned degrees in music performance from Arizona State University (BM) and the California Institute of the Arts (MFA).

### **ASTRA PRICE - ASSISTANT EDITOR/ POST PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR**

Astra Price is a moving image specialist. Dedicated to the complex conversation between creation and preservation, she has worked with artists and institutions to find strategies for completion, display and preservation of new media work. She is currently working in the collections of Bill Viola and Janie Geiser, and has worked with artists such as Lewis Klahr and Sylvère Lotringer in the past. Her publications on preservation of time based media can be found in *Leonardo* and the *IIC Journal*. Astra's is also an educator in digital media, having taught for over a decade at California Institute of the Arts. In addition to working with other artists, Astra is also an artist and filmmaker with a focus in experimental documentaries, including an upcoming film about gender, representation and how history is written in a public sphere.



## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Title	Fragments
Year of Production	2019
Duration	44 Minutes
Country of Production	USA
Genre	Documentary
Shooting Format	Digital
Finish Format	DCP
Aspect Ratio	16:9
Sound Format	5.1 surround and stereo
Language	English

## WEBSITE

<http://www.james-scott.com/fragments>

## TRAILER

<https://vimeo.com/383406859>

