

## It's not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, but the Situation in Which He Lives (Nicht der Homosexuelle ist pervers, sondern die Situation, in der er lebt)

Rosa von Praunheim, West Germany 1970, (67mins)

9 July–6 August 2009

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Widely regarded as a founding work of the gay liberation movement in Germany, this season focuses on *It's not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, but the Situation in Which He Lives*, a film originally greeted with furore and scandal by liberal and conservative establishments alike.

Through a stunning series of tableau-like vignettes narrated by an archly camp voice-over this extraordinary film tells the story of Daniel, a young gay man who moves to Berlin and descends into its homosexual subcultures. Simultaneously a scathing indictment of a homogeneous gay lifestyle structured around perpetual sexual gratification and an attack on the pseudo-bourgeois values of a cultural elite, **von Praunheim's** analysis is as astute as it is complex. Its radical propositions and final utopian affirmations were as incisive and critically provocative forty years ago as they are astonishingly pertinent to the socio-cultural situation in which we live, today.

Several screenings of the film are accompanied by different yet equally seminal explorations of queer identities by **Isaac Julien** and the American artist **Sadie Benning**.



### *It's not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, but the Situation in Which He Lives & Round Table Discussion*

Thursday 9 July, 2009, 7pm

Following this first screening contemporary artists discuss representation and queer politics.

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### *It's not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, but the Situation in Which He Lives & Looking for Langston, Isaac Julien, UK 1989 (46mins)*

Thursday 23 July, 2009, 7pm

A meditation on the gay black American poet **Langston Hughes** this film is also a poetic essay on repression, race, sexuality and creativity, combining reconstructed situations with documentary material of a Harlem underworld from the 1920s to the 1950s.

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### *It's not the Homosexual Who Is Perverse, but the Situation in Which He Lives & three videos by Sadie Benning: A New Year, US 1989 (6mins), Girlpower, US 1992 (15mins) Welcome to Normal, US 1990 (20mins)*

Thursday 6 August, 2009, 7pm

Celebrated as teenage diary works shot with a Fisherprice pixelvision camera **Benning's** videos are astonishingly accomplished: candid, expressive and tentative illustrations of her nascent lesbian sexual identity and her relationship with the world at large.

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### **Open Screenings**

Thursday 16 July, 7pm, Study Studio

Thursday 17 September, 7pm,

Zilkha Auditorium

A free forum to present work and discuss it with your peers. Showcasing four films per month, the Open Screening is an unparalleled event for young, emerging and established artists. To participate contact the Gallery in advance:

film@whitechapelgallery.org

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### **Tickets**

All events take place in the Zilkha Auditorium.

(unless otherwise stated)

### **Film Programme**

(£6/£4 concs., booking essential)

### **Open Screenings**

(Free, booking essential)

The Film Programme is curated by Ian White.