SAFE
Sat 14 Nov 2015 – Sun 3 Jan 2016
Curated by Louise O’Hare and Sarah Perks
INTRODUCTION

This major new group exhibition takes Todd Haynes’ Safe (1995), as the inspirational starting point for a series of new commissions in moving image, installation, sculpture, print, writing and performance by Claire Makhlouf Carter, Chris Paul Daniels, Yoshua Okón, James Richards and Camilla Wills, which are displayed alongside existing work by Michael Dean, Sunil Gupta, Laura Morrison and Jala Wahid.

Safe is set in 1987 and stars Julianne Moore as Carol White, an affluent Californian housewife who becomes increasingly allergic to everyday domestic products and routine activities, eventually moving to an enclosed community in New Mexico. It can be read as a reflection on climate change, sexual politics, the AIDS epidemic and suburban disillusionment. At first her illness appears to empower her - to offer an escape from her stifling life. But eventually White is left frail and alone in a porcelain cabin in the desert, with the dubious promise of self-love to console her.

The ambiguity of Carol’s illness - the question of its cause, whether environmental or psychological - and the social relations acted out in the film, made it a potent starting point for artists thinking through structures of patriarchy and institutional control, social etiquettes and hierarchies, invisible labour, infection, contagion, symptom and cure, physical responses to mental stimuli, bodily awkwardness, effects and affects. The themes of Safe are as relevant now as they were twenty years ago.
LAURA MORRISON

Sir You Will Doubtless Be Astonished, 2015
Plasticine, wax, ink, chalk pastel, graphite, MDF, steel

Sir You Will Doubtless Be Astonished/We Need To Talk About Neil, 2015
Video, 4 mins, screening before selected movies in HOME cinemas until Jan 2016

After receiving an unsolicited message from an autograph collector, Laura began to document and unravel the exchanges that followed. She settled into the fluctuating roles of suspicious stalker, unhinged provocateur, and eventually someone who is vain and disturbingly needy.

Probing the ethics of social encounters, Laura questions personal accountability, the line between being friendly and solicitous, and what kind of motivation is acceptable for fleshing out her work.

CHRIS PAUL DANIELS

SAFE at HOME - An Audio Guide, 2015
Headphones and audio guide with display

YOU ARE A POWERHOUSE! 2015
Video, 5 mins 42 secs

SAFE at HOME - An Audio Guide explores the pressure on a new arts centre to engage with communities and deliver transformative experiences.

This new commission is presented as an interactive exhibition audio guide that quickly expands into the form of a self-help product. It claims to transform the listener through ‘regenerative thinking’ and ‘cultural redevelopment’ and features an original score composed by Manchester music icon Graham Massey (808 State). The work abandons the expectations of an explanatory resource or contextual aid and instead leads the visitor on an emotionally manipulated journey.

Taking the fictional retreat in Haynes’ film as its inspiration, and utilising the emotive affirmations and other mechanisms of New Age thinking, absurd images frequently surface to interrupt the audio guide.

YOU ARE A POWERHOUSE! is a viral campaign circulated via HOME’s digital channels using cliches associated with commercial advertising. Referencing the TV advertisement that lures Carol towards The Wrenwood Centre it references commercial self-help theory and the emphasis on the individual to independently solve complex situations within the current political environment.
Homeless people conduct daily activities - using the bathroom, bathing, or working - that make it impossible to remain in possession of their belongings at all times.

A homeless 'sweep' is a practice designed to remove homeless people and their belongings from a given area, often based on the rationale that doing so is necessary to protect public health. The United States National Law Center cites cases where wheelchairs, nebulizer machines, wedding photos, blankets and social security cards are destroyed. In many cases homeless people are given no notice that the sweep will occur, and they are given no opportunity to protect their belongings or retrieve them once the sweep has been completed.


The film Safe can be considered a study of the silence of illness – of the euphemisms and other etiquettes we use when confronted with the frailties of our body. As Carol White becomes sick we watch her physical response to a cause we cannot identify - her body becomes awkward and outlandish, communicating its agitation through shaking and sweating, yet refusing to explain itself.

Although made of industrial materials including concrete and unfinished MDF, an intimacy is evoked in Michael’s work – a sense of delicate bodily surfaces and domestic scale. Concrete might appear to be impervious, but it is porous, it stains and fades, and reflects its surroundings.

Courtesy of Herald St, London; Supportico Lopez, Berlin; and MendesWood DM, São Paulo.
JAMES RICHARDS

New commission

The Bottom Of The World, 2015
Looped digital video transferred from 16mm film

*The Bottom Of The World* experiments with ideas around film and painting, and explores the physical manifestations of trauma. The core of the film, produced in collaboration with cinematographer Smina Bluth and prosthetic SFX make-up artist Polly McKay, shows a series of carefully constructed 16mm studio screen tests of models with make-up and prosthetic skin conditions. These film portraits, close, intimate studies of friends of the artist with increasingly gruesome effects rendered on their body, create a sinister tension between what we see, and what we know.

The second part of the film likewise works in this uncanny space - the artist presents a digitally generated still life seeming to fade and wilt in timelapse. Here an entirely synthetic approach to image-making is perversely employed to render the appearance of stop-frame photography, a process traditionally used to animate natural processes that are too slow to be seen.

CAMILLA WILLS

New commission

Receivers, 2015
Printed wedding dresses, welded steel, leather garments, hay, chair, silkscreen prints on vinyl

This installation of new work responds to the shifting body of Carol White in *Safe* – focusing on the permeability of the skin, and the loss of identity until a functioning body becomes unimaginable.

In Camilla’s work, the act of printing is a space for interrogating the processes of burying, spread and diffusion. Numerous references come into play including the submerged women in the paintings of Édouard Vuillard, medical histories and David Wojnarowicz’s journals criticising the US government’s mismanagement of the AIDS epidemic.

Three female figures materialise through the clothes in which they are bound, including two upturned black wedding dresses which become fountains, receivers, or volcanoes. These dresses are printed with the surplus of marketing materials, including press releases and biographies, that surround the artist.

The act of buying a white dress to deface with black ink is not without irony. Camilla writes in a note, “you can’t randomly smash things up, deface things, there is a drive, it’s precise, and it carries you through the activity.”
"Pretended" Family Relationships, 1988
Photographic prints and text

From Here to Eternity, 1999
Photographic prints

"Pretended" Family Relationships is a response to Clause 28, the notorious discriminatory legislation instituted during the Thatcher years, which made it illegal for local government to promote homosexuality, including the representation of homosexual relationships as 'pretended family relationships'. Work across many art forms relied upon funding from local authorities, and the bill was met with vigorous opposition from gay and lesbian arts communities in particular, with many gathering to fight it. These works form part of a larger series, and include photographs taken at the various demonstrations against the clause. It was only finally taken off the statute books in 2003.

From Here to Eternity addresses the impact of HIV and immunity-related illness upon the artist's life. The series pairs snapshots of the artist in vulnerable and solitary profile with pictures of London gay clubs during daylight hours – communal, celebratory spaces now deserted and locked up.

Mallow, 2015
Photographic prints

These images are studies of sculptural materials that have been manipulated by the artist. Reminiscent of lifestyle magazine photography, Jala plays with the manner by which bodies are presented to us. Tears and spills are suggestive of physical wounds and are rendered both seductive and abject.

Jala's work often involves objects or materials related to the body, such as cosmetics and food stuffs, or reforming and recasting parts of herself. The luscious artificial colours of these substances at first offer her a shiny, glossy medium, until the edible bodies of these temporary sculptures rupture, melt, rot and decay.
New commission

**Fridge-Freezer, 2015**
*Looped two channel digital video, carpet, curtain, sofa*

This major new installation questions the artificial idea of safety in domestic space represented through the depiction of show homes as a sunny oasis of femininity. Why do people close themselves in superficial environments and how is this sold to people? Why do we aspire to shallow lifestyles and polluted environments?

The film *Safe* was made in 1995, set in 1987, and now we’re revisiting it in 2015, with its themes as relevant as ever as our own time harks back to the disenchantment of the eighties, with a rising fear of the other (in any form) and an ever-widening gap between have and have not.
EVENTS

• CURATOR & ARTIST GALLERY TOURS
Sat 14 Nov & Sat 12 Dec (BSL), 14:00
FREE, booking required
An in-depth look at the exhibition with some of the artists and curators asking the question “Are you allergic to the 21st century?”

WORKSHOP

• LET ME HEAR YOUR BODY TALK WITH BRIAN LOBEL
Sat 28 Nov
12:00 - 16:00 (18+)
£10 full price, £8 concession
Sun 29 Nov
14:00 - 18:00 (under 18s)
FREE, booking required
For the past ten years, Brian Lobel has been creating work about his body – when it works, when it doesn’t work, when it’s achy, when it’s breaky, when it’s lonely and when it needs a little extra love. Brian Lobel leads this workshop as participants explore their relationship with their own bodies and how this is informed by politics, culture, history and more. Through free-writing, list-making, individual reflection and group discussion, Let Me Hear Your Body Talk aims to remove the barriers that exist between our body and making work about it.

PUBLICATION

• TRANSACTIONS OF DESIRE (VOLUME TWO): ARE YOU ALLERGIC TO THE 21ST CENTURY?
Edited by Louise O’Hare and Sarah Perks
£12.99
A variety of artists and writers provide responses to the languages of self-help and the film Safe.

Contributors include: Hannah Black, Chris Paul Daniels, Michael Dean, Sarah M Harrison, Omar Kholeif, Peter Kingstone, Claire Makhlouf Carter, Laura Morrison, Louise O’Hare, Bridget Penney, Sarah Perks, Emma Jane Unsworth, John Walter, Camilla Willis and Jason Wood.

FILM

• TRANSACTIONS OF DESIRE + BOOK LAUNCH, PART OF THE HOME ARTIST FILM WEEKENDER
Fri 27 Nov, 18:20
Our first official HOME Artist Film Weekender presents our latest film productions alongside new works from the vibrant world of artist film. Highlights include a new compilation screening about desire, archive classics and another chance to see the ghost of Engels. Guests include artists Karen Mirza and Brad Butler, John Smith and Bill Butt, Declan Clarke and Chris Paul Daniels. See the full programme at homemcr.org/event/home-artist-film-weekender
Screening as part of the weekender, Transactions of Desire is a compilation of short films which look at what really motivates our intimate relationships and actions.
We also present two publications under the same title; one a collection of short romantic fiction, the other a self-help book, Are you allergic to the 21st century? that accompanies the exhibition Safe (see above). Live music is provided courtesy of our queen of heartbreak songs, singer-songwriter Najia Bagi.

ACCOMPANYING FILM PROGRAMME

• SAFE: ALIENATION, FEAR, PARANOIA AND FILM FORM
A series of films that focus on women and explore a variety of ways in which we find ourselves dislocated from the world around us; a complex world that perhaps too many of us are happy to simply accept as it is. The season is equally interested in how filmmakers have chosen to explore these ideas formally in terms of film style, and how they communicate their ideas about our relationships with the modern world.
Curated by Andy Willis, Reader in Film Studies at the University of Salford.

SAFE (15)
Wed 11 Nov, 17:40
Sun 15 Nov, 15:40
Wed 30 Dec, 18:00
Sun 3 Jan, 16:00
Dir. Todd Haynes, 1995
Julianne Moore, Peter Friedman, Xander Berkeley
Precise script and direction by Haynes, an amazing performance from Moore, and cool, plastic design combine to sublime effect. Transforming the tranquillity of Southern Californian bourgeois life into a quasi horror film, Safe tells the story of Carol White, an alienated housewife who develops a debilitating allergy to the 20th century.
The screening on Wed 11 Nov will be followed by a Q&A with artists participating in the accompanying exhibition.
The screening on Sun 15 Nov will be followed by an informal post-screening discussion led by Andrew Moor, Reader in Cinema History at Manchester Metropolitan University.

GRAVITY AND GRACE (CTBA)
Sat 14 Nov, 16:00
Dir. Chris Kraus, 1996
Gravity & Grace, named after Simone Weil’s posthumous book, tells the story of two young women in New Zealand. The film follows Grace as she finds a connection to a cult predicting doomsday and the arrival of a spaceship, and Gravity, who flees from New Zealand to try her luck as an artist in New York City.
PERSONA (15)
Mon 16 Nov 18:20
Dir. Ingmar Bergman, 1966

Championed by Susan Sontag on its release, Persona is widely regarded as one of the most striking films ever made and considered by many to be the quintessential 1960s work from Swedish director Ingmar Bergman. The film focuses on the relationship between a famous actress (Liv Ullman) who for undiagnosed reasons has stopped speaking, and the nurse (Bibi Anderson) charged with her care. Minimalist in construction and shot in a stark black and white by Sven Nykvist, Persona remains a mesmerising piece of cinema.

Introduced by Andy Willis, Reader in Film Studies at the University of Salford with Sarah Perks, Artistic Director: Visual Art, HOME.

MARTHA MARCY MAY MARLENE (15)
Tue 1 Dec 18:20
Dir. Sean Durkin, 2011

Martha is a damaged young woman attempting to re-connect with her sister and re-establish normality after fleeing from an isolated cult. Her years of life under the watchful eye of the commune’s predatory leader have left Martha haunted by paranoia and painful memories. Cutting between her present life and that from which she’s escaped, the film deftly explores Martha’s emotional and physical entrapment. Elizabeth Olsen gives a standout performance as the vulnerable Martha, and John Hawkes is equally powerful in his role as the manipulative cult leader.

RED DESERT (12A)
Sat 2 Jan 2016 16:00
Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, 1964
Monica Vitti, Richard Harris

Monica Vitti plays a psychologically scarred young woman who tries to navigate her way through a world that she increasingly feels removed from, finding solace with a visiting businessman (Richard Harris).
AL AND AL:

INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL IN THE MULTIVERSE
Curated by Bren O'Callaghan and Sarah Perks
SAT 6 FEB – SUN 10 APR 2016
PREVIEW FRI 5 FEB

A major new solo exhibition of film, drawing, installation, a live concert hall performance and publication, conceived from AL and AL's epic sci-fi odyssey.

HOME PROJECTS

ELLE BROTHERHOOD: MAN MADE VS. NATURE MADE / BRIAN TAYLOR: MOVIE POSTERS

GRANADA FOUNDATION GALLERY LEVEL 1 AND 2
FRI 13 NOV 2015 – SUN 10 JAN 2016

Two separate exhibitions feature in the third HOME Projects; Gallery 1 features Elle Brotherhood’s fusion of analogue and digital photography, while Gallery 2 displays Brian Taylor’s series of hyper-realistic and reimagined posters for classic action, horror and sci-fi movie titles.

FILM

JAMES BENNING: PEOPLE & PLACES
THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

A season of films celebrating this American independent filmmaker and essayist with an incredibly unique voice.