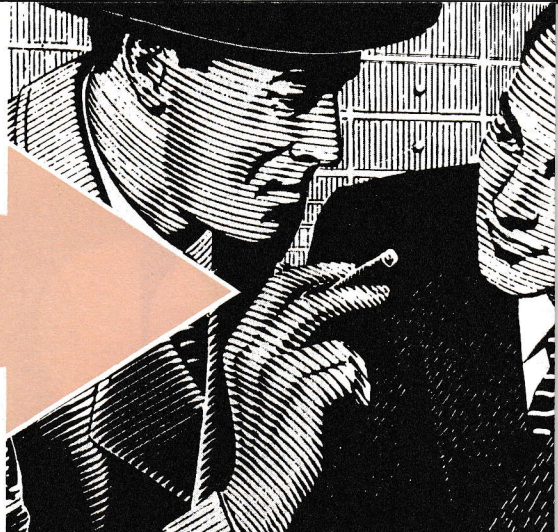


Talks



The Situationist International

QUE VIENNENT LES DIFFICULTÉS

ICA

moderne indiscutable

des années et des années d'





ULTÉS

The success of the Situationist International exhibition in Paris has prompted wide-spread interest and a reexamination of the vigorous wit and the substantive intelligence behind the movement. The Situationists proposed an ambitious subversion of political, aesthetic and philosophical categories and methods, focussing upon a number of issues that remain at the heart of critical cultural theories today. From 23 June to 3 July ICA Talks will bring together artists and critics to address some of the questions raised by the Situationist project and to provide a critical forum for assessing their works.

**Two-day conference**  
**Never mind the Bollocks, here's the Situationists**

**Saturday 24 – Sunday 25 June, 1.00 – 5.00**  
Tickets £12.00 two days/£7.00 one day

**Saturday 24 June**

**Aesthetics and Resistance**

1.00 Introduction by Ralph Rumney  
Mark Francis, exhibition co-curator, talks with Matt Collings of The Late Show about the cultural and historical influences that shaped the SI and this particular assemblage of their works. They are joined by artist Terry Atkinson, filmmaker Chris Rowlence, and critic Stewart Home, who consider the nature of resistance and assimilation in a commodity culture – in the 'society of the spectacle'. American critic, Edward Ball, chairs.

3.00 – 3.30 **Break**

3.30 **Détournement**

A central strand in the Situationist aesthetic philosophy, 'détournement' was at once a hijacking, a displacement, and a reinventing of pre-existing objects. The 'détourned' work becomes an unstable construction in which the meaning still discernable from its original form exists in tension with a 'guerrilla' visual intervention which overwrites and disrupts it. Italian artist Georgio Gallizio, practising theorists Mike Baldwin and Mel Ramsden talk to Elizabeth Sussman of the ICA Boston about visual art and the Situationists.

**Sunday 25 June**

Unitary Urbanism

1.00 The Situationist utopia took as its starting point the notion that "all space is already occupied by the enemy", and that the enemy was continually enforcing a spatial separation of human activities. Unitary Urbanism was a subversive dream in which architectural, scientific, social and aesthetic desires merged to produce revolutionary living spaces that could accommodate the "endless enrichment" of everyday life. Architect Brian Hatton, John Thackara, editor of Design after Modernism, and architect Robert Mull talk to ICA exhibitions director, Iwona Blazwick.

3.00 – 3.30 **Break**

3.30 **Pop Situationism**

Situationist International had a remarkable and lasting influence on punk and new-wave designers and musicians whose works have proved amenable to the process of popular commodification. Does a certain trace of resistance linger despite that process, or were the Situationists right to see all such commodification as recuperative and counter-revolutionary? Graphic designer Jamie Reid, contemporary cultural historian Greil Marcus and rock critic Jon Savage talk with journalist Cynthia Rose.

**Talks Friday 23 June, 7.30**

Tickets £2.60

**Lipstick Traces**

Greil Marcus' Lipstick Traces relates the 'coincidentally' shared concerns of artists, musicians and writers in the 20th Century and argues that the simultaneous concerns of these ostensibly unrelated projects form a 'secret history' of resistance traceable in the works of Dadaists, Situationists, and the Sex Pistols. Marcus talks to rock and culture critic Simon Frith.

**Monday 3 July, 7.30**

Tickets £1.60

**The Situationist Cinema**

For the Situationists the cinema provided one of the privileged sites for their radical acts of 'détournement'. Peter Wollen and Tom Levine discuss the Situationist cinema, its theory, practice and legacy.

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**On the passage of a few people through a brief period of time**

## The Situationist International 1957-72

23 June – 13 August

### Exhibition

'A new form of mental illness has swept the planet: banalisation. Young people everywhere have been allowed to choose between love and a garbage disposal unit. Everywhere they have chosen the garbage disposal unit.' Gilles Ivain, *Formula for a New City*, 1958

In 1957 and 1960 the ICA hosted two notorious events – the first was the screening of a completely blank film; the second was a conference whose chairman was stone deaf, whose main speaker spoke no English, and whose participants denied that the subject of the meeting existed. Both were manifestations of a group called the Situationist International.

Founded in 1957, this group of artists, architects and intellectuals from across Europe, advocated the breakdown of divisions between art, the city and technology.

At the root of the Situationist theory lay the idea that late capitalism has subsumed creative human activity by responding to human desires with commodities. SI

texts described a society that was in thrall to the market; passive before the spectacle of media, of merchandise, of expertise and technology. Situationist works aimed toward a subversion of that passivity and the creative transformation of everyday life.

To these ends they produced machine made paintings; extraordinary collages, posters, cartoons and cut ups that were to have a profound influence on punk and new wave designers; and 'psycho-geographic' maps which supplanted street plans with 'journeys of desire'. Ultimately, however, the group moved from an aesthetic to a political vanguard.

This exhibition is curated by Mark Francis and Peter Wollen, and designed by Branson Coates Architecture. It traces the origins, development and impact of the group on successive generations of cultural practitioners; from Daniel Buren and Mario Merz to Jamie Reid and Malcolm McLaren. It also examines in detail the work of key participants such as

theoretician and film maker, Guy Debord in France, Danish artist Asger Jorn, Dutch architect Constant and Italian artist, Pinot-Gallizio.

The exhibition is a co-production of the Musée National d'art Moderne Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

A book, co-published with Verso, with a sandpaper cover will be produced as tribute to Guy Debord's notorious book -destroying 'Memoires' and will feature texts by the curators, plus reprints of original documents from 1957 to 1988.

This project has been supported by the Association Francaise d'Action Artistique; Factory Records; the Ministry of Culture in Copenhagen; the Netherlands Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture, the Banco San Paulo of Turin, in co-operation with the Italian Institute; the Friends of The Situationist International; Visiting Arts; Assorted Images; Becks Bier; and English Abrasives.

**'It is in the realm of the cinema that détournement can attain its greatest efficacy and undoubtedly its greatest beauty'** Guy Debord, Gil J. Wolman

With stolen, scandalous and even non-existent images the Situationists sought to outrage and to undermine the smooth running of the Society of the Spectacle. For them cinema was a privileged means of attack. With a series of radical strategies – cutting up existing films, montaging incongruous images, adding new soundtracks – they transformed the cinema experience. Their ideas and their films have had enormous, if unacknowledged influence and impact. Their films are presented here with the key works of the Lettrists that shaped Situationist thinking and with recent examples of the cinema of 'détournement'.

### Monday 3 July – Wednesday 5 July

- 6.30 **The Situationist Life** Directed by Jens Jorgen Thorsen and Jorgen Nash Sweden 1963–66; **So Ein Ding Muss Ich Auch Haben** Directed by Spur Group (Metz/Nash) Sw 1961; **Stop For Bud** Sw 1962, **Do You Want Success?** Sw; **Porno Shop** Sw 1964. All directed by Jens Jorgen Thorsen. (Prog c. 75 mins).

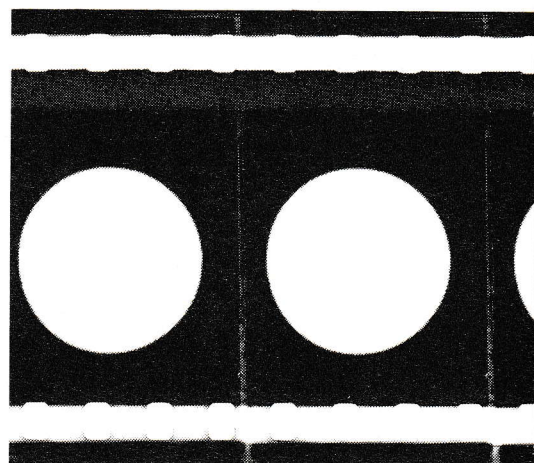
Very rarely screened films from the Swedish Situationists, represented by members of the important Spur group and by Thorsen, later known for his film version of Miller's Quiet Days in Clichy.

- 8.30 **Cut-Ups** Directed by Anthony Balch with William Burroughs GB 1967; **Speak** Directed by John Latham GB 1969; **La Verifica Incerta** Directed by Baruchello and Grifi Italy 1968 (Prog c. 85 mins)

Three key films that echo and extend Situationist principles. The Balch/Burroughs classic, Latham's brilliant example of animated abstraction, an attack on the cinema, plus Baruchello's delirious and hilarious cut-up of Hollywood action pics.

### Thursday 6 July – Friday 7 July

- 6.30, 8.30 **Kali Film**  
Directed by Wilhelm and Birgit Hein Ger 1988 (90 mins)  
Most scandalous most elaborate project by two of the great iconoclasts of the contemporary avant-garde. Old movies, cheap genre pictures and sex films cut-up in homage to the goddess. Birgit Hein will be present at the screenings.



### Saturday 8 July

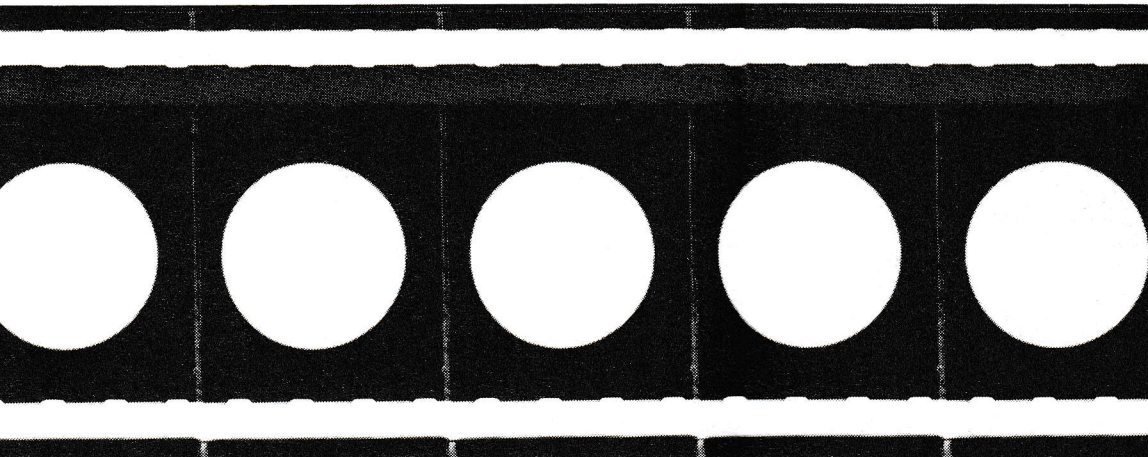
- 6.30 **Traité de Bave et d'Eternité**  
Directed by Isidore Isou Fr 1951 (120 mins).  
A very rare British screening of a landmark of the cinema of 'revoli' by the founder of the Lettrist movement. Isou's 'Treatise on Drivel and Eternity' restored the authentic Dada spirit to French cinema. It was awarded the Cannes Avant-Garde prize by Cocteau.

- 8.30 **The Films of Guy Debord** (Imaginary screening)

### Monday 10 July – Wednesday 12 July

- 6.30 **Le Film est Déjà Commencé** Directed by Maurice LeMaitre Fr 1952 (62 mins); **Une Histoire D'Amour**  
Directed by Maurice LeMaitre Fr 1980 (10 mins).  
LeMaitre is leader, theorist, major practitioner of the Lettrists, active in poetics and in cinema. His 'The Film Has Already Begun' is the movement's second major landmark radically deconstructing sound and image.

- 8.30 **Le Gai Savoir**  
Directed by Jean-Luc Godard Fr 1968 (91 mins)  
Repeatedly denounced by the Situationists, Godard was clearly greatly influenced by their ideas on cinema, culture and society. Le Gai Savoir was his struggle to re-invent cinema in the light of the events of May, 68.



### Thursday 13 July – Friday 14 July

6.30 **L'Anti-Concept**  
Directed by Gil J Wolman Fr 1951-52 (70 mins)  
Wolman was a key figure first in the Lettrist Movement, then in the Situationists. L'Anti-Concept is a classic anti-film usually projected on a balloon.

8.30 **A Movie** Directed by Bruce Conner USA 1956;  
**Fluxus Anthology** USA 1966 (Prog c. 65 mins)  
The Fluxus Movement in Europe and the US paralleled the utopian cultural attack of the Situationists with performances, artworks and film. This famous Anthology includes films by Yoko Ono (the 'bottoms' film), George Maciunas, John Cale, Paul Sharits and other artists.

### Saturday July 15

6.30, 8.30 **Die Reise/The Giant**  
Directed by Michael Klier Ger 1983 (84 mins) Video  
Continuing the poetic tradition of using 'found images' Klier's remarkable video takes images from surveillance cameras and creates a tape of strange and disturbing force.

### Monday 17 July – Wednesday 19 July

6.30 **Un Soir Au Cinema/Pour Faire Un Film**  
Directed by Maurice LeMaître 1962/63 Fr 40 mins  
**Le Soulèvement de la Jeunesse Mai 68**  
Directed by Maurice LeMaître 1969 Fr 41 mins  
A second programme of key works by the French Lettrist.

8.30 **Situationisme N'Est Pas Mort:**  
Videos by Factory records and others

### Thursday 20 July – Saturday 22 July

6.30 **Why Cars? Carnage**  
Directed by Tim Burns Aus 1978 (90 mins) Video

8.30 **The Great Rock and Roll Swindle**  
Directed by Julien Temple With the Sex Pistols and Malcolm McLaren. GB 1979 (100 mins)  
McLaren was reputedly a translator and publisher of Situationist texts, punk is one of the bearers of their legacy, cultural iconoclasm continued.



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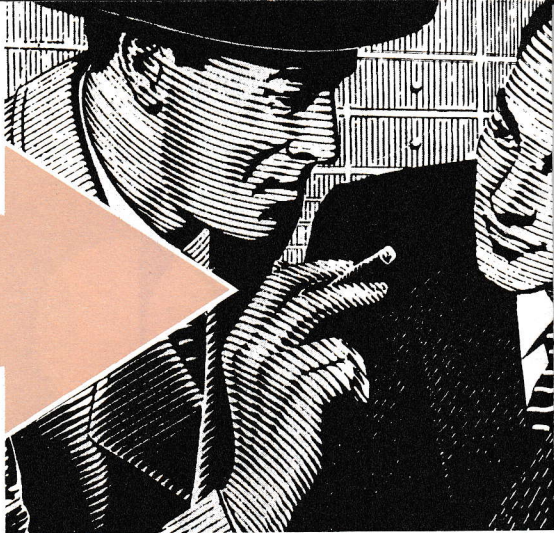
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