

Hans Richter and Susan Maris

Early Film Works

10 August – 14 September 2014

21 September – 26 October 2014

The exhibition *Hans Richter: Early Film Works* will open at the Highland Institute for Contemporary Art on Sunday 10 August, 2-5pm.

Hans Richter was a major figure in the avant-garde of the early Twentieth Century, his frequently collaborative practice helping to define modern art's focus and concerns: he worked with figures such as Duchamp, Malevich, Man Ray, Mies van Der Rohe and Theo van Doesburg. A founding member of Zürich Dada he was also significantly involved in Constructivism and De Stijl as well as Expressionism and Surrealism. Labelled a 'cultural Bolshevik' and included in the infamous *Degenerate Art* exhibition of 1937, he was forced out of Germany by the Nazis, finally settling in America where, alongside continued work in film and painting, he became an inspirational teacher and, later, Director of the Institute of Film Technique at City College in New York.

In the early 1920s Richter had founded the highly influential Constructivist magazine *G: Materials for Elemental Form-Creation*. *G*, standing for *Gestaltung* (form creation), considered the objects of everyday life as well as the processes through which they are made. **Alexander and Susan Maris' exhibition, *Still Life*, will open at the Highland Institute for Contemporary Art on Sunday 21 September, 2-5pm.** This flux a language of form, operating between Nature and the man-made world, which might then be employed in the more purposeful construction of our physical and cultural surroundings.

Rhythmus 21, one of the earliest 'abstract' films, made in 1921 and now regarded as a classic avant-garde film, demonstrates Richter's desire to explore the potential of total environments, particularly through film, and is a key inclusion in this HICA exhibition. Maintaining an almost scientific investigation of our experience of form, our attuning to its 'feel' and development through time, this work investigated film's ability to engage solely through an active play of elements, and sought to highlight through this our identification with the 'elemental' forms we perceive.

Still Life presents, in the two rooms of the HICA gallery, reconstructions of two moments that bracket what is presented in *Rhythmus 21*. Alongside *Rhythmus 21*, the exhibition *Early Film Works* presents Richter's most important films through the vital period of the 1920s, charting a development from 'abstract' and formal experiment, to the inclusion of photographic imagery and the beginnings of documentary styles. The works variously explore film's poetic and 'non-narrative' possibilities, to concentrate on the particular re-focussing Richter sought; the re-shaping of our 'space-time' consciousness.

Alexander and Susan Maris live in the Highlands, close to Rannoch Moor, a 'primeval' landscape that has HICA continues to reflect on the influence of artists such as Hans Richter on contemporary art, and presents this project in close connection with the next programmed exhibition in the gallery: Alexander and Susan Maris, opening in September 2014. This pairing of exhibitions presents historic and contemporary considerations of the 'elemental', questioning how a sense of the elemental may manifest in artworks; how it may relate to our everyday responses to form and a sense of a 'universal functionality of all life'. This consideration is given particular emphasis by HICA's hosting of these projects, through the nature and location of the gallery.

Hans Richter: Early Film Works has been supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland, Goethe-Institut Glasgow, and The Hope Scott Trust.

Alexander and Susan Maris' works are held in public and private collections in Europe and North America. The exhibition runs from 10 August – 14 September and will be open on Sundays 2-5pm, or by appointment.

Alexander and Susan Maris: *Still Life* has been supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland. For more information or images contact Geoff Lucas or Eilidh Crumlish at:

HICA, Dalcrombie, Loch Ruthven, Dores, Inverness-shire, IV2 6UA, UK
T: +44 (0)1808-521-306 info@h-i-c-a.org www.h-i-c-a.org