

Serpentine Gallery

Teachers' Notes

Oliver Payne & Nick Relph

6 September – 2 October 2005

Teachers' Notes supported by



Serpentine Gallery supported by



INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

These notes are designed to support teachers in the planning, execution and following up of a visit to the Serpentine Gallery. They are suitable for all age groups, but include specific activities that relate to **Key Stages 3 and 4** and **GCSE** and **AQA**. They are not a definitive prescription of work that has to be done, but a collection of ideas and suggestions we hope will be helpful. Feel free to adapt them to suit your needs, or use them to inspire discussion or practical work.

General contents:

- **Planning a visit to the Serpentine Gallery**
Details about how to get to the Gallery, who to contact, and how to get involved in the Education Programme and special events
- ***Oliver Payne & Nick Relph: an introduction***
Information about the artists and the exhibition
- **Background information**
The context of the exhibition and the key references
- **Questions and points for discussion**
For use at the Gallery or in the classroom
- **Artistic links**
Links to related artists
- **Classroom activities**
Practical classroom activities connected with the exhibition
- **Curriculum map**
Tables referencing the National Curriculum 2000, QCA Schemes of Work for Art & Design, and Edexcel and AQA GCSE Art & Design
- **Further reading**
Books and articles relating to the exhibition
- **Questionnaire**
Please let us have your feedback

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

TRANSPORT

- Car** Parking is available near the Gallery
(£1.50 per hour)
- Tube** South Kensington (1.25 km walk)
Knightsbridge (1.25 km walk)
Lancaster Gate (1km walk)
- Buses** 9, 10, 52, 94, 148

CONTACT DETAILS


Sally Tallant, Head of Education and Public Programmes
Rachel Moss, Education Coordinator
Serpentine Gallery
Kensington Gardens
London W2 3XA
Tel 020 7298 1516 Fax 020 7402 4103
Email rachelm@serpentinegallery.org

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Among the regular free events and activities run by the Education Department are:

Gallery Talks Saturdays 3pm

Artists, writers and critics give public talks at 3pm every Saturday, with one talk relating to each exhibition being accompanied by a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

- 10 September **Edgar Schmitz**, artist, BSL Interpreted 
- 17 September **Ian White**, artist and curator
- 24 September **Stuart Comer**, curator
- 1 October **Richard Birkett**, artist and curator

Workshops for Schools and Community Groups

Workshops led by three practicing artists, aimed at **Key Stages 3 and 4, GCSE, AQA** and adult groups – a visit to the Serpentine Gallery with a discussion and practical activity relating to the current exhibition.



Gallery Talk: Ben Jones, writer, 21 May 2005
Photo © 2005 John Taylor

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

FAMILY PROGRAMME

Oliver Payne & Nick Relph
and Pavilion 2005 Art Packs
Available from the Gallery Lobby Desk at £1 for both

Two specially designed packs filled with ideas and suggestions for people of all ages to make their own art works in response to the exhibition and the Pavilion.

Family Day
Drawing Together: The Big Draw meets Carnival
Sunday 2 October, 11am – 5pm
Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2005 and Exhibition Road,
London SW7, Admission free

The Big Draw comes alive for this year's national launch in Exhibition Road and at the Serpentine Gallery.

At the Serpentine, artists and architects will work with participants inside the Pavilion 2005 to make drawings on paper and as 3-D models, creating a large collaborative artwork in the form of a cityscape. Artists, illustrators and cartoonists, led by Quentin Blake, will make drawings on a giant 'celebrity frame'.

All ages welcome. No booking required for this informal drop-in event. In collaboration with the National Campaign for Drawing www.drawingpower.org.uk

Children must be accompanied by an adult.
Information: Rachel Moss Tel 020 7298 1516
Email rachelm@serpentinegallery.org



Family Day: *Art in the Open*, Saturday 13 August 2005
Photo © 2005 David Bebbler

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

OLIVER PAYNE & NICK RELPH SPECIAL EVENTS

Sweatshop

Urban Tribes

Friday 9 September

6.30 – 8.30pm

The Sackler Centre of Arts Education
at the Serpentine Gallery

Admission free

Convened by Lisa Le Feuvre and Edgar Schmitz, Sweatshops are an opportunity for writers, artists, curators and theorists to explore and develop their current research interests and open them up for discussion.

This Sweatshop addresses key configurations of the 'urban', looking at the way youth and underground cultures have used and customised the idea of the city to make it one of the most contested areas of recent debate.

Information: Louise Coysh Tel 020 7298 1533

Email louisec@serpentinegallery.org

Film Screening

Voice Over

Saturday 1 October

4 – 6pm

The Sackler Centre of Arts Education,
at the Serpentine Gallery

Admission free, spaces limited
so available first-come first-served

To coincide with *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph*, work by four artists and film-makers will be screened at the Serpentine Gallery in association with Whitechapel Project Space.

The Wasteland, John Smith, 1999, 5 mins

Seeta and Lamberto, Charlotte Ginsborg, 2003, 10 mins

Polly II, Anja Kirschner, 2005, 20 mins

Olivier vs Bogarde, Theo Cowley, 2004, 10 mins

Information: Sally Tallant Tel 020 7298 1514

Email sallyt@serpentinegallery.org

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROJECTS

**Dyslexia and Visual Imagery
Research Project Weekend
17 and 18 September, 11am – 5pm daily
Participation free**

Participants are invited to join an ambitious research-based art project that will contribute to the field of dyslexia research and explore the relationship between language learning, ordering, visual appreciation and creativity.

We are looking for adults aged 18 years and over, and in particular those with dyslexia. Led by researchers from the Dyslexia Institute, those involved will take part in a series of short tasks and activities.

Artists Abigail Reynolds and Michaela Ross will be working directly with schools and adults to investigate the individual's approach to learning, and in particular the approach of those adults with dyslexia. The outcomes of the project will be presented in 2006.

**For further information or to take part in the project:
Louise Coysh Tel 020 7298 1533
Email education@serpentinegallery.org**

In collaboration with The Dyslexia Institute
Supported by The JJ Charitable Trust



***Sounding Architecture* launch event, 6 August 2005
Photo © 2005 David Bebbler**

OLIVER PAYNE & NICK RELPH: AN INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE EXHIBITION

British artists Oliver Payne and Nick Relph chronicle contemporary culture through their eclectic style of film-making, which is part documentary, part music video, part surveillance tape and part video diary.

Brought up in west London, they became friends as teenagers, and first came to critical attention with a trilogy of engaging and at times satirical films: *Driftwood*, 1999, *House & Garage*, 2000, and *Jungle*, 2001. The dynamic relationship between sound and images in their work is exemplified in *Mixtape*, 2002; multi-layered soundtracks such as those used in *Gentlemen*, 2003, are also integral to their practice.

Winners of the Golden Lion for Best Artist Under 35 at the 50th *Venice Biennale* in 2003, and nominated for the Beck's Futures award in 2002, Payne and Relph have collaborated since the late 1990s. This exhibition at the Serpentine, which is the first devoted to the artists in a UK public gallery, surveys their videos to date (including *Comma*, *Pregnant Pause*, 2004, created on the occasion of the 2004-05 *Carnegie International* exhibition in Pittsburgh), and includes a new work, *Sonic the Warhol*, created this year.

Due to the nature of the language in some of the videos shown in this exhibition, the Serpentine recommends Gallery visits for secondary schools and youth and adult community groups only.

These notes, organised into two sections, cover the seven films shown in the exhibition:

The Essential Selection

- *Driftwood* 1999
- *House & Garage* 2000
- *Jungle* 2001

Other Works

- *Mixtape* 2002
- *Gentlemen* 2003
- *Comma*, *Pregnant Pause* 2004
- *Sonic the Warhol* 2005

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE ESSENTIAL SELECTION

Oliver Payne and Nick Relph were inspired by watching BBC documentaries at a young age. Their film trilogy *The Essential Selection* (which includes *Driftwood*, 1999, *House & Garage*, 2000, and *Jungle*, 2001) blurs the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. These densely layered works follow the artists' personal line of enquiry as they explore contemporary Britain, moving from central London to the suburbs and the surrounding countryside with the aim of inventing a different style for each film.

The Essential Selection (90 minutes) – please note that these films are shown in sequence on one screen

***Driftwood*, 1999**

Filmed on hand-held digital video camera in a pseudo-documentary style, the first work, *Driftwood*, 1999, journeys through chaotic London streets, drawing attention to the collision between the behavioural rules that apply in public spaces, and the way people actually use them. The word 'driftwood' (defined as wood floating on moving water or washed ashore) relates to the static camera shots as well as the initial footage focusing on the South Bank area, on the river Thames, near Waterloo Bridge. Historical facts mingled with the artists' observations of London make up an insistent narration divided into three acts, with the first beginning:

'Nobody knows London. There is no "knowledge" which can understand it, no scientific measure to gauge its spell. The London map a meaningless set of lines, long since distorted – a handbook for the blind. You have to succumb. Become a tourist in your own city and get lost.'

and later:

'Skateboarding changed South Bank and South Bank changed skateboarding... Youth culture has been stolen – taken away and repackaged.'

As the imagery moves around the concrete jungle of the city, the streetwise narrator comments on a variety of topics:

- skateboarders appropriating the urban architecture of the South Bank
- drunks, yuppies, mad people and mobile phone hands-free-set users talking to themselves

- Le Corbusier's¹ view of London as a 'pack-donkey' city, a random mass of areas containing winding streets with no real purpose, in his book *Towards a New Architecture*, 1923
- Journalist and Soho habitué Jeffrey Bernard's perception of beauty in the rotting fruit and vegetables in Berwick Street market
- widespread traffic increases (over the image of an almost never-ending freight train carrying cars under a railway bridge)

Payne and Relph's theme is the everyday alienation of contemporary urban life, and the long, static images – including 'I love you' written on the side of a rubbish bin – are in the style of Patrick Keiller's² film *London*, 1994, in which the city is also seen through the eyes of a lone narrator. There are references as well to the writer and film-maker Iain Sinclair³ and his psychogeographical musings about London.

'*Driftwood* revels in the psychological potholes of a city struggling to embrace the future yet burdened by the legacy of its past.'

(Matthew Higgs. 'First Take: Matthew Higgs on Oliver Payne and Nick Relph'. *Artforum*, January 2001, p 125)

House & Garage, 2000

In *House & Garage*, 2000, the artists turn their attention to the outskirts of southwest London where they grew up and met, sharing interests in skateboarding, music and graffiti. The title refers not only to suburbia, but also to a type of dance music created by cutting and pasting, which references their juxtaposition of imagery in the film, shot in a mixture of video, 16mm and Super 8. The soundtrack combines found music (such as the faintly playing Sex Pistols' 'No Future UK?' 1989) with remixed sound; at times, there is even a monologue that includes a description of paint colours.

The work's glimpses of suburban leisure time and subcultures vary between the humorous and the melancholic:

- a young man tells a constantly interrupted story about when a dope-growing friend nearly got caught by the police
- line dancers practicing in a community centre reappear repeatedly
- a piano player entertains passers-by in a shopping centre
- a man preaches into a microphone on a street corner
- a group of children perform a cheerleading routine, watched by adoring parents
- two young men MC (compère) in their bedroom
- a suited business man plays an arcade game
- a toddler poses on a motorbike

¹ See pages 18 – 20 for artistic links

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

- a young man wanders aimlessly through the suburbs, turning up on a train, at a record shop, and on a wall (where he sits smoking)
 - a touching still image focuses on a public bench displaying a dedication to a friend who died at 18
- The video ends with slow-motion footage of a firework display, played backwards to invert its traditional links with the concept of celebration.

Jungle, 2001

The last film in the trilogy, *Jungle, 2001*, moves to rural Britain and explores the film-makers' own preconceptions about the countryside, with footage of the rural landscape shot mainly from a passing car or train. The word 'jungle' is defined as a land overgrown with tangled vegetation, or a place of bewildering complexity, confusion, or struggle. Like *House & Garage, 2000*, it is also a type of music. There is no narration for this video; instead, the imagery is interspersed with written texts, such as:

'The "countryside" *per se* only comes into existence with the beginning of the industrial age and urbanisation (obviously). The countryside is the city's bad conscience, and also its wet dream.'

and

'The French phrase for still life "nature morte": dead nature. All beauty has this deadly quality; this is its salvation power, because life understood simply is blind self assertion, a negative, destructive force.'

Payne and Relph conceived *Jungle, 2001*, as a dark, scary home video, reminiscent of the *The Blair Witch Project, 1999*: filmed mainly at night, it features a collage of imagery, including:

- a house decorated with hundreds of Christmas lights
- the strange tradition of 'Tar Barrels' held annually on 5 November in Ottery St. Mary
- a pro-hunting march surrounded by protesting saboteurs
- UFO sightings
- crop circles
- farm animals
- a re-enactment group
- the place where 16-year old Fred Barras met his death at the hands of Suffolk farmer Tony Martin, whose house he had burgled

'*Jungle* promises to be a sardonic lament of the fading of Britain's farming aristocracy, its subtext an exposition of the malignant sense of fear beneath the surface of the rural idyll.'

(Matthew Higgs. 'First Take: Matthew Higgs on Oliver Payne and Nick Relph'. *Artforum*, January 2001, p 125)

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

THE ESSENTIAL SELECTION

- Discuss the way Payne and Relph have represented central London, its suburbs and the surrounding countryside, and decide how their images compare with your own perceptions of these locations. Think about the titles of their works. If you made a video about your local environment, what would you feature and what would you call it?
- Voice-over and music play an important role in these films, unifying all the visual images. Think about how the artists layer narratives, images and sounds.
- Discuss Payne and Relph's influences, such as contemporary culture, and other artists, theorists and film-makers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OTHER WORKS

***Mixtape, 2002 (30 minutes)* – please note that strobe lighting is used in this art work**

'*Mixtape, 2002*, a video that evokes the energy of youth through the *carpe-diem* reappropriation of situations and objects by their protagonists.'

('Reviews: Relph and Payne: Gavin Brown's enterprise'. *Flash Art*, January/February 2003, p 111)

The title refers to an audio compilation of favourite music tracks; this work is a visual version. The dynamic relationship between sound and images in Payne and Relph's practice is exemplified in *Mixtape, 2002*, which is set to Terry Riley's remix of Harvey Auerne's 1968 single 'You're No Good'. The images are edited to fit the soundtrack and the two become impossible to separate, both pulsating throughout. The words 'you're no good' gradually become remixed so that they are repeated over and over and over. This work (the same length as one side of a 33rpm LP on vinyl) was created on 35mm film, which the artists used here for the first time. Much more staged than the previous trilogy, it overwhelms viewers and draws them into its sound and imagery; the way this is done is strongly reminiscent of television advertising, which they cite as one of their influences.

Mixtape, 2002, begins with a young man holding a sparkler in his mouth – the same young man who wandered through the suburban streets in *House & Garage, 2000*, and was last seen perching on a wall – then zooms out to reveal the words 'BESHT MATE' spelt out in flowers as if for a funeral. The video is an optimistic celebration of young people and their unique forms of self-expression; often perceived as dysfunctional drop-outs, they are shown here defying the soundtrack's repeated insult with an 'us against them' attitude.

The collage-style imagery includes:

- a teenage rock band rehearsing
- a young girl in a *Starbucks* uniform sporting blue hygiene plasters to cover her piercings
- an elderly black man crawling along the pavement and hammering it with his fists (a reference to reggae legend Lee Perry, who crawled through Kingston, Jamaica in an attempt to chase Satan from the ground)
- two scooter kids going nowhere on an exercise treadmill in *Lillywhites* sports shop (where customers once got a free scooter if they bought the machine)
- a luridly dressed skinhead walking a jewel-encrusted tortoise on a lead
- the ubiquitous smoking young man kissing a female statue on the lips
- a break-dancer performing on top of a pavement artist's chalked version of Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus, c1485*

- a graffiti artist
- a policeman waving madly in front of both Buckingham Palace and, later, New Scotland Yard
- a young woman tap dancing in a pedestrian tunnel watched by the smoker
- a couple kissing on a sofa surrounded by stuffed and mounted animals
- a television screen on which a blood-stained father and son are shown hunting deer
- a line-dancing couple (also featured in *House & Garage, 2000*) moving in perfect coordination with a young raver

Interspersed through the video are alternating images of a man and woman who are either sticking two fingers up at the corporate intervention into youth culture, or holding a mobile phone, a symbol of the time. Dancing is another recurring theme, since Payne and Relph are interested in both movement and different uses of space (Michael Wilson. 'A Thousand Words: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph talk about *Mixtape, 2002*'. *Artforum*, September 2002, pp 178-79). The video ends with a taxi pulling up to a cemetery and letting out an elderly looking woman wearing a bright curly wig and sunglasses and carrying a suitcase. This scene then flashes to a tombstone saying 'age 57...to die is gain...' The message seems to be that death can be better than life.

Gentlemen, 2003 (25 minutes)

'...*Gentlemen, 2003*, reprises many of the duo's signature motifs: an ambulatory survey of London, a euphoric overload of pulsing lights and propulsive rhythms, the fugitive presence of twenty-somethings.'
(Christopher Bollen, 'Critics Picks: Nick Relph and Oliver Payne/Rirkrit Tiravanija' *Artforum.com*, October 2003)

Multi-layered soundtracks are integral to the artists' work: *Gentlemen, 2003*, combines drums, Morse code and a poetic narrative about corporate appropriation of youth culture. This track is played against abstract images of lights and Christmas decorations filmed at night in London's Carnaby Street, a location increasingly homogenised by multinational chains. This work can be seen as a companion piece to *Driftwood, 1999*. Although it was filmed on hand-held digital video camera like the earlier trilogy, it has the look and feel of 1960s underground cinema. A 'gentleman' is a man of gentle or noble birth or superior social position, or a well-mannered and considerate man with high standards of behaviour. Part of the commentary reads:

'The only time I feel truly like an Englishman is when my brain or my lips say 'no'. Acting out an ancient ritual, passed down in a mess of manners and drizzle and silence... I will weather queue-jumpers no more. The next sarky grin gets its head done-in. If you can't hold doors open then you shan't have hands at all.'

Unlike previous works, the video features people only at the beginning and the end, when they blend anonymously with other unfocused, abstract images, creating a romantic impression of longing. The public toilets featured, with their pre-fabricated monochrome cubicle doors, serve as a metaphor for the underground, where private behaviour takes place in a public environment ('West End Boys: *frieze* talks to Oliver Payne and Nick Relph,' *frieze*, May 2003, pp 70-75). Other notable details are:

- shiny stars, silver streamers and neon strip lights reflected in puddles
- a newspaper advertising board announcing 'punk legend dies'
- a man playing violin for passers-by

Acting as a mysterious alternative script, pulsing Morse code highlights the failure of communication, and the voice-over monologue becomes increasingly difficult to understand. Watching this video is like listening to new music; you may get more from seeing it twice or three times, as the words are spoken fast, and in the almost sing-song style of a mantra. For example, 'Writing poetry in the window of Starbucks on Oxford Street is the most staggeringly modern thing you can do'.

Oliver Payne and Nick Relph do not have a studio, preferring to 'power doss'. For them, this involves spending hours wandering around places like Carnaby Street and Oxford Circus, observing and discussing things that will later influence their work. In *Driftwood*, 1999, the skateboarders could be seen as modern day 'power dossers' – 'I'm a repo man on wheels...' – as could the smoking wanderer who appears in both *House & Garage*, 2000, and *Mixtape*, 2002. In 19th-century France, they would all have been called *flâneurs*, a term popularised by the poet and critic Charles Baudelaire⁴, to describe pedestrians who find pleasure in ambling unhurriedly through city streets and shopping arcades with an artist's eye. To stroll without purpose is the highest ambition of the true *flâneur*, who considers walking in the city to be its own reward.

Nick Relph states: 'Well at least in London it feels like everything ... is getting flatter, and blander, and a little bit more insipid, and... and... this is something we kind of rejoice in. This is the point of *Gentlemen*. London is a city that, you know, is absolutely full of history and heritage, but also every high street looks exactly the same. And it's incredibly commercial, and... this is something we love, and we're just very realistic about it. It's something we really like about the city.'
(Andrea Kroksnes and Hans Ulrich Obrist. *Taschen: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph*. (The National Museum of Art, Oslo and Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris/ARC exhibitions). Germany: Kerber Verlag, 2004)

Comma , Pregnant Pause, 2004 (27 minutes)

A comma indicates a pause or break between parts of a sentence; in spoken communication, a pregnant pause is one that is full of meaning – significant – suggestive. This video features mobile phones, in whose text messages commas are seldom used. There are often, however, pregnant pauses during the wait for a reply. This work starts with the commentary:

'I want to be the best there ever was, to beat all the best that's my cause.'

The video is dominated by two seated people dressed as mobile phones. Their costumes are based on 'Mowbli', the ubiquitous mobile phone logo from Carphone Warehouse, and their faces are covered by scary-looking masks, taken from

⁴ *ibid*

the popular series of films *Scream*, 1996, 1997, 2000, and *Scary Movie*, 2000, 2001, 2003, but originating in Edward Munch's painting, *The Scream*, 1893. Their conversation is indicated by two different text alerts – '1,2,3,4' and a musical sound, like a guitar or harp – whilst each text message appears as a series of subtitles. The conversations are fractured, featuring messages such as, 'the newest thing is now wearing the word'. Young people are part of a texting culture in which messages sometimes go astray, so spoken conversation would often be more efficient.

The background imagery varies throughout:

- a CD spinning round and multiplying to form numerous CDs
- a rotating white plastic pizza divider from the centre of a take-away box
- sunsets appropriated from the Internet
- various digitised patterns
- text in dots zooming illegibly across the screen
- a *JJB Sports* shop
- a black-and-white William Morris⁵ print, which becomes more and more smudged.

At times, the phones disappear, to be replaced by the legs and bicycle wheels of passers-by, repeated as split-screen mirror images so the legs move in a comic way. Using the same split-screen effect, American football players are also featured.

Later on, a third person enters dressed in a black suit, white shirt and holey socks, wearing a Jar Jar Binks mask from *Star Wars: Episode I*, 1999. He sits on a tin and starts a rap-like monologue with:

'I'm knackered, I'm knackered
I'm fucking back-packered
smack-thwackered at the end of the shelf of the rack
of the aisle at the store where you don't go back
but all the while I could see, I could see
the crack at the back of the blister pack.'

On the whole, Payne and Relph reject the authoritative voice-overs apparent in many documentary films in favour of texts that take the form of email dialogues between them. These narratives are not conventional, and the narrators are always male.

⁵ *ibid*

Sonic the Warhol, 2005

On the occasion of their exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery, Payne and Relph have created a new film, *Sonic the Warhol*, 2005, that adopts the genre of nature documentaries to consider what the artists describe as 'random acts of violence and inactivity' of the natural world. The film was shot in London Zoo and features original music by American artist and musician Brian Degraw as well as animation. Their starting point is the fact that 'nature', as we know it – whether the landscape experienced in the countryside or the settings of nature documentaries – is a constructed and mediated experience. The title makes reference to the artist Andy Warhol and to the Sega Megadrive game *Sonic the Hedgehog*, 1991.

In addition to making videos, Payne and Relph also investigate contemporary culture in Britain through a number of diverse activities, including designing T-shirts and fanzine-style publications. For the Serpentine exhibition, they have created *Cows Grazing, Ravers Raving, We are a Planet Talker, It is You who is Mad*, 2005, in the South Gallery. This is a floor piece made out of carpet and containing a yin/yang symbol, which also represents the Chinese discipline of Tai Chi. Yin is dark and yang is light, and the circle symbolises the wholeness and infinity of chi, the life force. The curved line that divides the sectors represents a constant flow of yin into yang, and yang into yin, and within the largest area of each colour, there is a dot of the other one, indicating that there is both yin and yang in all things. The carpet itself is plain grey, while the central yin/yang symbol is made from two contrasting fabrics: a garish modern moquette usually found on the seats of London Underground trains; and a more traditional William Morris⁶ floral print upholstery fabric. The result is a union of past and present – a clash of visual signifiers and cultural references that characterise much of their joint artistic output.

'Whatever their interests in social critique, Payne and Relph are also profoundly interested in the way things look, and it is their unabashed aestheticism that raises their work above posture and precociousness.'

(Elizabeth Schambelan. 'Review: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph at Gavin Brown's enterprise'. *Art in America*, February 2002, pp 130-31)

⁶ *ibid*

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

OTHER WORKS

- Compare *Mixtape*, 2002, to a series of television advertisements.
- Think about the way the soundtrack, Terry Riley's remix of Harvey Auerne's 1968 single, 'You're No Good', changes during the video *Mixtape*, 2002. What does this sound add to the images? Compare *Mixtape*, 2002, with the multi-layered soundtrack of *Gentlemen*, 2003.
- Discuss the characters that appear in *Mixtape*, 2002. Why might they be viewed by some as dysfunctional drop-outs? What is their attitude towards society?
- Carnaby Street was once a fantastically fashionable area, but it has changed radically in recent years. Discuss the high-street chain takeover of this famous London street in relation to *Gentlemen*, 2003.
- Think about the concept of the *flâneur* in relation to the artists' work.
- Discuss the titles of the works and their significance.
- Compare the use of text in the different videos (both spoken commentary and text on screen). Which is easier to understand and how do they work when combined, as in *Comma*, *Pregnant Pause*, 2004?
- Using a mobile phone, write a txt poem to a friend in response to *Comma*, *Pregnant Pause*, 2004.

ARTISTIC LINKS

This section makes links to other artists, film-makers and theorists relevant to the *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph* exhibition.

- **Baudelaire, Charles (1821–1867)** 19th-century French poet, translator, and literary and art critic whose reputation rests primarily on *Les Fleurs du mal* (The Flowers of Evil), 1857, arguably the most important and influential poetry collection published in Europe during the century. Known for his highly controversial and often dark poetry, as well as for his translations of the work of his American near-contemporary, Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire had a life filled with drama and strife, from financial disaster to prosecution for obscenity and blasphemy. Long after his death, many perceive him as the embodiment of depravity and vice; others see him as a poet of modern civilisation who seems to speak directly to the 20th century. (Veinotte.com website <http://veinotte.com/ baudelaire/>)
- **Graham, Dan (born 1942)** American artist who, since the mid-1960s, has produced a body of art and theory that engages in analytical discourse on the historical, social and ideological functions of contemporary cultural systems. Architecture, popular music, video and television are among the focuses of his provocative investigations, which are articulated in essays, performances, installations, videotapes and architectural/sculptural designs. Graham began using film and video in the 1970s, creating installation and performance works that actively engage the viewer in a perceptual and psychological inquiry into public and private, audience and performer, objectivity and subjectivity. *Rock My Religion*, 1982-84, is a thesis on the relationship between religion and rock music in contemporary culture; the music and philosophies of American punk diva Patti Smith, who treated rock like a religion, are its focus. This complex collage of text, film footage and performance forms a compelling theoretical essay on the ideological codes and historical contexts that inform the cultural phenomenon of rock 'n' roll music. (Com Swiki website <http://swiki.hfbk-hamburg.de:8888/Lebensreform/19>)
- **Keiller, Patrick (born 1950)** Director, writer and cinematographer who studied at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London and the Royal College of Art. After exhibiting audio-visual installations at the Tate Gallery in 1982, he made a series of short films for the Arts Council that juxtaposed imagery of the urban landscapes of London suburbs, *Norwood* and *Stonebridge Park*, with fictional narration. His first feature film, *London*, made with backing from the British Film Institute, was released in 1994, followed by a sequel, *Robinson in Space*, in 1997. Both films extend the style developed in Keiller's short films, using a thoughtful, highly cultured narration combining an interest in architecture, film, literature, fine art, photography, geography, history, sociology and economics. The loosely associated images are centred on a specific location, and a suggested journey provides connections between picture and sound, but otherwise the structure of the films is better defined in literary than in conventional cinematic terms. (Screen online website <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/472615/>)

- **Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret) (1887–1965)** Swiss-born architect who originally trained as an artist. In Paris, he studied under Auguste Perret and absorbed the cultural and artistic life of the city, developing a keen interest in the synthesis of the various arts. He adopted the name 'Le Corbusier' in the early 1920s. For the most part, Le Corbusier's work was modernist in style, and one of his early triumphs was a basic building prototype for mass production, with free-standing pillars and rigid floors. In 1917 he settled in Paris, where he produced his influential book *Vers une architecture* (Towards a New Architecture). From 1922, Le Corbusier worked with his cousin Pierre Jeanneret. During this time, he began to explore the concept of the house, which he called 'a machine for living in'. During World War II, he produced little beyond theories about his utopian ideals and his modular building scale. Le Corbusier's post-war buildings rejected his earlier industrial forms and utilised vernacular materials, brute concrete and almost sculpturally articulated structures.

(The Great Buildings Collection website http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Le_Corbusier.html)

- **Morris, William (1834–1896)** English designer, craftsman, writer and social reformer, educated at Marlborough and Exeter College, Oxford. He originally intended to take holy orders, but his reading of the social criticism of Thomas Carlyle, Charles Kingsley and John Ruskin led him to reconsider, and devote his life to art. In the 1860s Morris decided that his creative future lay in the field of the decorative arts. His career as a designer began when he decorated the Red House, Bexleyheath, which had been built for him and his wife Jane by his friend, the architect Philip Webb. The success of this venture led to the formation of *Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co* in 1861. The 'Firm' (later renamed Morris & Co) was particularly well known for its stained glass, for which Morris produced some 150 designs, often characterised by delightful foliage patterns. In 1890 Morris founded the *Kelmscott Press* in premises near his last home, Kelmscott House, at Hammersmith, London. Inspired by 15th-century Italian and German typography, Morris designed three typefaces for the Press: Golden, Chaucer and Troy. 'Follow nature', he advised young designers, 'study antiquity, make your own art'. Morris was not content only to create; also worked to educate people about the importance of good design. 'Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.' This quotation from one of his lectures was Morris's golden rule, and it encapsulates the aims of the Arts and Crafts Movement, of which he was an early leader.

(The William Morris Society Website <http://www.morrisociety.org/bio.html#>; Eleanor Van Zandt. *The Life and Works of William Morris*. Bristol: Parragon Book Service Limited, 1995)

- **Sinclair, Iain (born 1943)** British writer and film-maker whose education includes studies at Trinity College, Dublin, the Courtauld Institute of Art and the London School of Film Technique. Much of his early work was in the form of poetry, followed by mostly fiction, then non-fiction. He is best known for the novel *Downriver*, 1991, which won the James Tait Memorial Prize and the 1992 Encore Prize. It envisages the UK under the rule of the Widow, a grotesque version of Margaret Thatcher as viewed by her harshest critics. In Sinclair's book, the Widow establishes a one-party

state in her fifth term. Among his most recent works are the non-fiction volume *London Orbital*, 2002, and a documentary film of the same name and subject (made with British film-maker Chris Petit); both describe a series of trips he took on foot, following the M25, London's outer-ring motorway. London is an ever-popular subject with British authors, but few have tackled it as obsessively as Iain Sinclair. Apparently familiar with every nook and cranny of the city, and given to wandering ceaselessly through its streets and backstreets, Sinclair is a superb guide to a London that most people don't know. In almost all his books, the city is the central character.
(Complete Review website <http://www.complete-review.com/authors/our>; Wikipedia - the free encyclopaedia website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iain_Sinclair)

- **Situationism** – A radical political and cultural movement, centred in France but international in scope, that flourished from 1957 to 1972. The Situationist International was formed in 1957 by the amalgamation of two cultural groups: the Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus and the Lettrist International. The chief spokesman of the Situationists was Guy Debord (1931–1994), editor of the journal *International situationniste*. The other main Situationist periodical was *Spur*, produced by a group of the same name in Munich. In addition to journals such as these, the Situationists created posters and films, and Debord promoted street events that he hoped would jolt passers-by out of their normal ways of looking and thinking. The Situationists disbanded in 1972.
(Ian Chilvers. *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

THE ESSENTIAL SELECTION AND OTHER WORKS

Cross-curricular links: English (writing, speaking and listening, drama) and ICT (research and making a video)

- Choose one of the videos and write a review.
- Using the Internet, research and compare the artists and film-makers that are relevant to Payne and Relph, such as Dan Graham, Patrick Keiller and Iain Sinclair.
- Find out more about the *flâneur*.
- Research film-making technology, such as video, 16mm and Super 8.
- In groups, create a documentary-style video around the area local to your school. Start with a walk in the locality looking for things that interest you. Think about whether your footage will be mainly documentation, like *Driftwood*, 1999, or more staged, like *Mixtape*, 2002. Within the group, take on different roles, such as filming, storyboarding, sound engineering and editing. Decide whether you will have natural sounds, a commentary over the top, music or digital sounds, or a combination of these. When the videos are finished, organise a screening so that everyone can watch them. (If you want to use any members of the public in your work, be sure to ask their permission first.)
- Payne and Relph always work together. Carry out a collaborative project with a friend, then evaluate the process in comparison with working individually.
- Choose a television programme or film. Turn down the sound and create your own voice-over.
- Create a mixtape of your favourite music, or a collage of your favourite images, and give it to a friend.

CURRICULUM MAP

This table shows relevant links to the National Curriculum (**Key Stage 3**). Cross-curricular opportunities include English, ICT, Music and Citizenship.

SUBJECT	THEME/FOCUS	NATIONAL CURRICULUM REFERENCE Key Stage 3
Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording and analysing first-hand observations (<i>in the Gallery</i>) • Discussing and questioning exhibits to help students develop ideas for independent work (<i>Students should be encouraged to discuss exhibits in groups or with tutors</i>) • Investigating, combining and manipulating materials, taking into account purpose and audience • Applying and extending experience of a range of materials and processes including drawing, refining techniques and controlling tools • Experimenting with different methods and approaches • Visual and tactile qualities of materials and processes • Exploring a range of starting points for practical work including themselves, their experiences, objects and the environment (<i>for example House & Garage, 2000, is based on growing up in the suburbs of London</i>) • Working on their own and collaborating with others on different scales (<i>like creating a video piece with people taking on different roles, such as filming and editing</i>) • Investigating art, craft and design from a range of historical, social and cultural contexts (<i>on Gallery visits</i>) 	1a 1b 2a 2b 2c 4a 5a 5b 5d

CURRICULUM MAP

SUBJECT	THEME/FOCUS	NATIONAL CURRICULUM REFERENCE Key Stage 3
English	<p>En1: Speaking and listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use images to enhance communication • Concentrate on and recall the main features of a talk (<i>Gallery talk</i>) • Ask questions and give relevant and helpful comments (<i>Gallery talk</i>) • Discuss and interact in a group, taking different views into account and modifying personal views in light of what has been said; sifting, summarising and using most important points • Listen to live talks and presentations (<i>Gallery talk</i>) • Group discussion: explore, hypothesise, debate and analyse <p>En3: Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing to analyse, review and comment; form individual views taking into account evidence and opinions (<i>by writing reviews or critiques of the exhibition</i>) • To imagine, explore and entertain (<i>by creating an annotated storyboard for a video work</i>) • To analyse, review and comment (<i>reviewing art work</i>) 	<p>1d 2a 2f 3b and c</p> <p>9a 10a</p> <p>1m</p> <p>9a</p> <p>9d</p>

CURRICULUM MAP

SUBJECT	THEME/FOCUS	NATIONAL CURRICULUM REFERENCE Key Stage 3
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using and refining search methods <i>(such as carrying out research on the artists and their influences using a search tool)</i> • To use a range of ICT tools efficiently to draft, bring together and refine information and create good-quality presentations in a form that is sensitive to the needs of particular audiences and suits the information content <i>(such as inputting and editing their own video)</i> 	<p>1b</p> <p>3b</p>
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to a range of musical and non-musical starting points <i>(such as the soundtracks in Payne and Relph's work)</i> • Using ICT to create, manipulate and refine sounds <i>(in creating a soundtrack for their own video)</i> 	<p>5a</p> <p>5d</p>
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in school and community-based activities <i>(in creating their own video)</i> • Reflect on the process of participating 	<p>3b</p> <p>3c</p>

CURRICULUM MAP

Related QCA Schemes of Work for Art and Design, Key Stage 3:

- **Unit 7C Recreating landscapes**

Pupils explore landscape as the starting point for work. They collect visual and other information by visiting a landscape and by studying the methods, approaches and intentions of artists who use the environment as inspiration. (*Payne and Relph's trilogy The Essential Selection – Driftwood, 1999, House & Garage, 2000, and Jungle, 2001 – are based on three different landscapes: central London, its suburbs and the surrounding countryside.*)

- **Unit 9A Life events**

Pupils explore ideas and feelings about an event in their own life as a starting point for image making. They make connections between 18th- and 19th-century paintings and contemporary visual culture. (*Payne and Relph's video work House & Garage, 2000, is based on growing up in the suburbs of London.*)

- **Unit 9C Personal places, public spaces**

Pupils explore examples of public art in their local area. They research the different ways in which ideas, beliefs and values are represented and shared in their local area, and in different times and cultures, including contemporary modern practice. They explore ways of representing their own ideas and then collaborate with others to make a mural or a three-dimensional form for a specific location. (*Payne and Relph's video work House & Garage, 2000, is based on growing up in the suburbs of London.*)

- **General Unit: Visiting a museum, gallery or site**

Pupils visit the *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph* exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery.

CURRICULUM MAP

EXAM BOARD and LEVEL	THEME/FOCUS	REFERENCE
Edexcel GCSE Art and Design and AQA GCSE Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record observations, experiences and ideas in forms that are appropriate to intentions (<i>Students can use information gathered from the exhibition to help inform their own work.</i>) • Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts showing understanding of context (<i>Payne and Relph's video work House & Garage, 2000, is based on growing up in the suburbs of London.</i>) • Develop and explore ideas using media, processes and resources, reviewing, modifying and refining work as it progresses (<i>Payne and Relph are film-makers, editing their work and creating narratives via email, as they review and refine their work.</i>) • Present a personal response, realising intentions and making informed connections with the work of others (<i>like Payne and Relph</i>) 	A01 A02 A03 A04
Edexcel Advanced GCE level Art and Design and AQA Advanced GCE level Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record observations, experiences, ideas, information and insights in visual and other forms appropriate to intentions (<i>Students can use information gathered from the exhibition to help inform their own work.</i>) Analyse and evaluate critically sources such as images, objects, artefacts and texts, showing understanding of purposes, meanings and contexts (<i>Payne and Relph's video work House & Garage, 2000, is based on growing up in the suburbs of London.</i>) • Develop ideas through sustained investigations and exploration, selecting and using materials, processes and resources, identifying relationships and analysing methods and outcomes (<i>Payne and Relph are film-makers, editing their work and creating narratives via email, as they review and refine their work.</i>) • Present a personal, coherent and informed response, realising intentions, and articulating and explaining connections with the work of others (<i>like Payne and Relph</i>) 	A01 A02 A03 A04

FURTHER READING

Selected books and catalogues:

- 1995 Eleanor Van Zandt. *The Life and Works of William Morris*. Bristol: Parragon Book Service Limited
- 1998 Ian Chilvers. *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- 2004 Andrea Kroksnes and Hans Ulrich Obrist. *Taschen: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph*. (The National Museum of Art, Oslo and Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris/ARC exhibitions). Germany: Kerber Verlag
- 2005 *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph*. London: Serpentine Gallery

Selected articles and reviews:

- 2001 Matthew Higgs. 'First Take: Matthew Higgs on Oliver Payne and Nick Relph'. *Artforum*, January, p 125
- 2002 Elizabeth Schambelan. 'Review: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph at Gavin Brown's enterprise'. *Art in America*, February, pp 130-31
Michael Wilson. 'A Thousand Words: Oliver Payne and Nick Relph talk about *Mixtape*, 2002'. *Artforum*, September, pp 178-79
- 2003 'Reviews: Relph and Payne: Gavin Brown's enterprise'. *Flash Art*, January/February, p 111
'West End Boys: *frieze* talks to Oliver Payne and Nick Relph,' *frieze*, May, pp 70-75
Christopher Bollen, 'Critics Picks: Nick Relph and Oliver Payne/Rirkrit Tiravanija' *Artforum.com*, October

Selected websites:

- Com Swiki website <http://swiki.hfbk-hamburg.de:8888/Lebensreform/19>
- Complete Review website <http://www.complete-review.com/authors/our>
- Screen online website <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/472615/>
- The Great Buildings Collection website http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Le_Corbusier.html
- The William Morris Society Website <http://www.morrissociety.org/bio.html#>
- Veinotte.com website <http://veinotte.com/ baudelaire/>
- Wikipedia - the free encyclopaedia website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iain_Sinclair

6. Please rate each section of the notes according to how useful they were:
(1 not useful/ 2 satisfactory/ 3 useful/ 4 very useful)

- Planning a visit to the Serpentine Gallery
- *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph*: an introduction
- Background information
- Questions and points for discussion
- Artistic links
- Classroom activities
- Curriculum maps
- Further reading

7. Did you use the teachers' notes to visit the exhibition?	YES	NO	(please circle)
Did you make a preparatory visit?	YES	NO	(please circle)
Did you come to the Education Private View?	YES	NO	(please circle)

8. Do you have any suggestions for future teachers' notes, or for any other resources?

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. Please send it to us with your name, address and telephone number. You will be entered into our prize draw for an *Oliver Payne & Nick Relph* catalogue, which will be held on 3 October 2005.