

Jordan Baseman: Deadness

Art

Film and video

Matt's Gallery

Until Sun Jul 21

FREE



From 'Deadness' by Jordan Baseman Courtesy the artist and Matt's Gallery, London.

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Fri Jun 7 2013

The relationship between portrait photography and embalming is the morbid yet enthralling subject of 'Deadness', Jordan Baseman's latest foray into what he calls 'creative nonfiction'. What you get is a relaxed, meditative documentary combined with a vaguely professorial slideshow. The voiceover is provided by a sociologist, the son of a mortician, who muses on the cultural history of funereal display – covering subjects including the desire to preserve a lifelike image of the deceased, the development of modern embalming techniques in the nineteenth century and the consequent demise of the tradition of postmortem photography.

Meanwhile, images of corpses in coffins are projected on a screen, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups. Preservations of preservations, these range from formal Victorian examples of sunken-faced souls to modern, full-colour snapshots depicting oddly plasticised features.

The whole thing feels like going to a fantastic lecture, at once brilliantly entertaining and edifying. A second image-and-voiceover piece, 'The Last Walk', is harder to classify. Here, British performance artist Stuart Brisley narrates a bizarre story involving an act of self-immolation he witnessed, while a projected video shows an ambiguous, tendrilly image of what turns out to be fairy-lit trees at night.

The visuals strobe and pulse softly, and occasionally disintegrate entirely. There's a similar sense of gaps and shortfalls as the storyteller tries to get to grips with the sheer strangeness of the event. The work addresses a subtle, abstract idea about the blurred borderline between perception and



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description. Yet, the way Baseman conveys it is utterly magical.

Gabriel Coxhead

Venue details

[MAP](#)

Name: [Matt's Gallery](#)

Address: 42-44 Copperfield Rd
E3 4RR

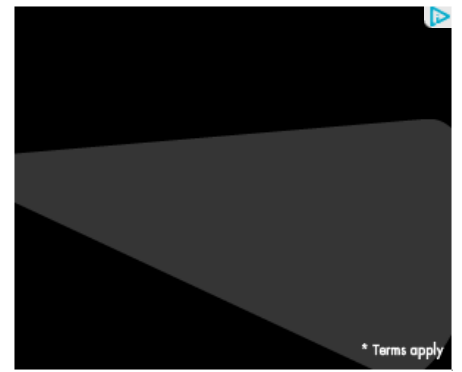
Opening hours: Noon-6pm Wed-Sun

Transport: Tube: Mile End

Event phone: 020 8983 1771

Event website: www.mattsgallery.org

Categories: Art. Photography. Film and video



Jordan Baseman: Deadness

2013

Date	Time	Price information
Wed Jun 12	12:00	
Thu Jun 13	12:00	
Fri Jun 14	12:00	
Sat Jun 15	12:00	
Sun Jun 16	12:00	
Wed Jun 19	12:00	
Thu Jun 20	12:00	
Fri Jun 21	12:00	
Sat Jun 22	12:00	
Sun Jun 23	12:00	
Wed Jun 26	12:00	
Thu Jun 27	12:00	
Fri Jun 28	12:00	

Sat Jun 29	12:00
Sun Jun 30	12:00
Wed Jul 3	12:00
Thu Jul 4	12:00
Fri Jul 5	12:00
Sat Jul 6	12:00
Sun Jul 7	12:00
Wed Jul 10	12:00
Thu Jul 11	12:00
Fri Jul 12	12:00
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