



DVD press release

Borderline

A film by Kenneth Macpherson

With a new soundtrack composed and performed by Courtney Pine

A groundbreaking silent film for its explicit theme of racial prejudice and with an implicit homoerotic subtext, *Borderline* (1930) is a seething exploration of love, passion and betrayal, directed by Kenneth Macpherson, editor of the influential intellectual film journal *Close Up* (1927-33).

Last May, a presentation of *Borderline* with a new score written and performed live by British composer and saxophonist Courtney Pine at Tate Modern attracted 2,000 people. Now released on DVD, *Borderline's* formal experimentation finds a perfect match in the contemporary rhythms of Pine's heady modern jazz score. Packaged in a double disc set, this release also contains two films by Véronique Goël.

Prior to *Borderline*, Kenneth Macpherson had made three short films, but this was his first feature and by far his most ambitious effort, released a year after Dziga Vertov's pioneering *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929). *Borderline* features the iconic star Paul Robeson and his wife Eslanda, and other cast members from the *Close Up* collective (intellectuals from the editorial board who called themselves the Pool group) including Hilda Doolittle later known as H.D., Robert Herring and Winifred Bryher.

Highly influenced by the psychological realism of GW Pabst and Sergei Eisenstein's montage, the film is a lost classic of the British avant-garde. *Borderline* tells the story of a tense, inter-racial love triangle and its deadly consequences. Macpherson embellishes this story by portraying the extreme psychological states of the characters. The result is a unique and complex matrix of racial and sexual tension moving between the boundaries of black and white, male and female and the conscious and the unconscious.

Extras

- Filmed interview with Courtney Pine
- **Kenwin** (1996, 86mins) Documentary by Véronique Goël, including home movie footage, on the house that H.D., Bryher and Macpherson built at La Tour-de-Peilz
- **Close Up** – documentary on the film journal by Véronique Goël (13 mins)
- Trailers for **Dreams That Money Can Buy** (Hans Richter, 1948) co-produced by Kenneth Macpherson and **Pink Narcissus** (James Bidgood, 1971)
- 20-page illustrated booklet containing essays by Sukhdev Sandhu, Jamie Sexton and David Bailey

A BFI and Arts Council England release.

Release date: 21 May 2007

RRP £24.99 / cat. no. BFIVD735 / cert 12

UK / 1930 / black and white / silent with music / 71 mins / ratio 1.33:1

This disc includes optional subtitles for the hearing-impaired on all items

BFI DVDs are available from the Filmstore at BFI Southbank, all good retailers, by mail order from 0845 458 9910 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/video

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