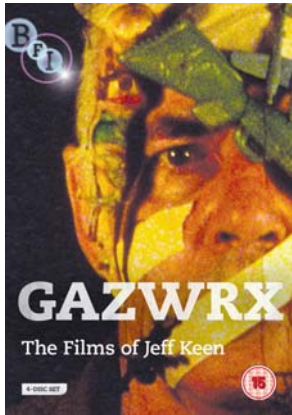


Press release



GAZWRX
The Films of Jeff Keen

Explore the explosive cinematic world of visionary filmmaker Jeff Keen, on BFI DVD and Blu-ray, and on the big screen at BFI Southbank and around the UK.

“It went right over my head and seemed a little threatening, but I’m all for it.” Ken Russell on the trilogy *Cineblatz*, *Marvo Movie* and *White Lite*

Born in 1923 and a soldier in World War Two, artist **Jeff Keen** – now aged 85 – began making films at the age of 37 when his local art school film society needed things to show. And so began over forty years of unique, imaginative, irrepressible filmmaking that has outlived the various scenes in which it has thrived: the 60s counter-culture, punk and beyond.

On **23 February**, the BFI releases **GAZWRX: The Films of Jeff Keen**; an audacious 9 hours of restored and re-mastered titles by this visionary filmmaker on a 4-disc DVD and 3-disc Blu-ray. On **17, 19, 25 and 27 February**, BFI Southbank presents four special screening events including *Early Jeff Keen Films* and *Dr G’s Home Movies* and a touring programme will be shown at cinemas around the UK from 1 March.

Films like *Marvo Movie*, *Mad Love* and others look like post-apocalyptic home movies and point to the sublime subversion of Jack Smith and Kenneth Anger, to Keen’s experiences in WW2 and to the trashy pop culture of B movies and comics.

Presented within a series of punchy programmes on DVD and Blu-ray are 45 films which reveal an astonishingly tireless talent and a unique individual not afraid to grapple with sex and war and to experiment with multiple screens, visceral noise soundtracks and animation. Massively inspiring, characters Silverhead and The Cat Woman and films like *Blatzom* and *Victory Thru Film Power* have been kept from view for far too long.

Progressing through various film stocks, though always preferring 8mm – more oppositional, more disposable, less of a sell-out – this self taught artist and pioneer of independent film impresses his very personal and highly individual stamp upon all his work.

This major BFI project, curated by William Fowler of the BFI National Archive, offers a new and criminally overdue opportunity to explore the alternative cinematic world of Brighton’s very own, Dr. Gaz.

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Notes to editors

GAZWRX: The Films of Jeff Keen Cert 15
BFI DVD and Blu-ray release date: 23 February 2009
DVD Cat no BFIVD775 (4-disc set) RRP £34.25
Blu-ray Cat no BFIB1008 (1 Blu-ray & 2 DVD disc set) RRP £34.25

Special features

- Brand new interview with Jeff Keen
- *Art Flies Free* (2000) – experimental documentary by Ian Helliwell
- Jeff Keen Films (1983) – documentary with interview
- 96-page booklet featuring paintings, drawings and collages by Jeff Keen plus articles by Tony Rayns, Ray Durnat and Jack Sargeant

Jeff Keen films at BFI Southbank in February 2009:

- ***Early Jeff Keen Films: Tue 17 February 20.40 Introduced by William Fowler and AL Rees***
Wail (1960); Like the Time is Now (1961); Cineblatz (1967); White Lite (1968); Marvo Movie (1967); Meatdaze (1968); Jeff Keen Films (1983; Dir Margaret Williams); Day of the Arcane Light (1969); Rayday Film (1970). Total 83mins
Keen was way ahead of the game with these highly pleasurable, inventive collages of animation and strident costumed character play. From the beatnik happenings of Wail to the revolutionary transformation of local tip into theatrical stage in Rayday Film, these glimpses of what it was to be Jeff Keen and co in the 60s – connected to the swinging London scene but not wholly signed up – are an absolute joy. Plus an insightful documentary from 1983.
- ***Dr G's Home Movies: Thu 19 February 20.40 Introduced by Royal College of Art Senior Research Fellow, AL Rees***
White Dust (1972; 33mins); Mad Love (1978; 42mins)
Using family and friends as his cast, Keen's provocative experiments with narrative transformed the possibilities of what home movies could be. White Dust (originally called White Trash) sees friends play at making a grand feature film – by whatever means necessary – while the hugely inventive Mad Love presents imaginary scenes from Hollywood movies-that-never-were to wonderful and mythic effect.
- ***Joy Thru Film: Wed 25 February 20.40 Introduced by underground cultural historian and writer, Stewart Home***
El Pistolera Blatzo (1990s); Victory Thru Film Power (1990s); Omozap (1991); Omozap 2 (1991); Plasticator (1990s); Plazmatic Blatz (1990s); Joy Thru Film (1990s); The Dreams and Past Crimes of the Archduke (1979-84); Blatzom (1986). Total 75mins
Costumes and characters take a back seat as Keen turns attention to paper props, colour play and montage. Foregrounding Keen's skill as an editor, plus some great noise tracks, this selection highlights some of his greatest works, from the assault on newsreel that is Victory Thru Film Power, through to the sublime apocalyptic beauty of Plazmatic Blatz and the simply extraordinary Blatzom.
- ***Artwar: Fri 27 February 18.20 With special pre-recorded introduction by Jeff Keen***
Omozap Terribelis + Afterblatz 2 (twin-screen); Omozap in Artwar (1990s); Artwar (1994; 6min); Artwar Fallout (1993); Artwar 3 (1995); Artwar: the Last Frontier (1990s). Total 58mins
With footage of the first Iraq war jarringly intercut with shots of the artist painting at the local tip, the Artwar series is a potent political reminder of Keen's seemingly inexhaustible imaginative powers. Drawing upon pivotal moments in his own life, these compellingly explosive films are arguably the greatest distillation of his career-long themes and concerns, staging a frenetic attack on our sense of modern culture. Full-on.

www.bfi.org.uk/jeffkeen

Where to buy BFI DVDs

BFI DVDs are available from the Filmstore at BFI Southbank, London SE1 and by mail order Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore; and from all good DVD retailers.
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BFI Southbank booking information

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office Tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £8.60, concs. £6.25. Members pay £1 less on any ticket. Website www.bfi.org.uk/southbank

About the BFI

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archive, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you. For further information visit www.bfi.org.uk