

Mixtape 2002, 25 minutes

In *Mixtape* we wanted to exhaust people – hurt their eyes and make them feel a little sick – but make the experience enjoyable. We used certain images from earlier works, like the line dancers from *House and Garage* (2000), to have fun with our aesthetic. *Mixtape* is a celebration of young people, but it also touches on the idea of what one critic called 'youth under seige by youth culture'. So, Starbucks is 'cool' because they'll employ you even if you have piercings, but they'll make you wear ludicrous hygienic blue bandages over them. Scooters are 'cool' because they're aimed at 'youngcles', twenty-somethings stuck in adolescence, but if you stick two kids on a scooter on a treadmill, they still ain't going nowhere. Our images are a 'fuck you' to corporate intervention in youth culture, whether it's hardcore, punk rock, skateboarding, graffiti, whatever. We wanted to celebrate the other to that: the pure, raw cane sugar.

After listening a lot to the Terry Riley song, we constructed a series of images and sequences that connected with these ideas and had a place within the music. Absurd or funny, poignant or romantic, we wrote them all down and assembled the best of them around the track. It's about fifty-five sound and vision. We tried to be aware of the music while we were editing. The strobe lights and the hunting scenes, for instance, begin just as the track goes mental. It would have been a drag to edit everything right on the beat. It's like a Krautrock record, a Neu! Or Can track, in which a single phrase is repeated until it begins to generate new rhythms. The economy of the cuts in *Mixtape* is critical. The editing is crass at points, but we were mindful of a disjunction between sound and vision, as well as a connection. *Mixtape* was shot on film so it looks different to our previous work. We wanted it to look like a cross between an insurance ad and Schindler's list: heavy and ugly and stupid. But at times it also has a brash, colourful *Carry On* appearance to it. We didn't want to make another shakey hand-held film. The more we see films shot through plastic bags, the more we want to make refined, 'straight' classics. There's a lot of dancing in *Mixtape*, for the simple reason that we love to see dancing on film. Dance is a primal celebration of life. In *House and Garage* we made the point that two kids playing bedroom DJs – what's called having a little rinse out – are participating in the same tradition as a suburban divorcée going line dancing. Watching a good skateboarding video is like watching ballet – we're interested in that kind of grace in movement and in different uses of space, whether it's dancing with a partner at a community centre or making backside boardslides on a park bench.

There's an explicit reference to Huysmans' *Against Nature* in *Mixtape* that surprisingly few people picked up on: a young flaneur looking amazing outside a chip shop with his jewel-encrusted tortoise on a leash. The old guy with a hammer is an homage to reggae legend Lee Perry, who crawled across Kingston, Jamaica on his hands and knees trying to chase Satan from the earth by banging on the ground with a hammer. We just transported his character to Chiswick. As for the kids riding scooters on a rolling treadmill, there's a shop in London called Lillywhites that had an offer: if you bought a treadmill, they'd throw in a free scooter. They had it displayed in the window, a treadmill with a scooter sitting on top of it. It looked so amazingly stupid – we sat outside the shop just crying with laughter. Even if you hate it, you have to admit that *Mixtape* is full to the fucking brim.

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