

Sarah Pucill, *Magic Mirror* (2013)



Sarah Pucill, *Magic Mirror* © the artist

Part essay, part film poem, *Magic Mirror* (Tate Modern Première, 2013) translates the startling force of Claude Cahun's oeuvre into a choreographed series of *tableaux vivants*. Re-staging the French Surrealist's black and white photographs with selected extracts from her book *Aveux non avendus* (*Confessions Denied*), the film explores the links between Cahun's photographs and writings.

Cahun's multi-subjectivity, as expressed in both her photographs and book, set the scene for the film, where she dresses and makes her face up in many different ways, swapping identities between gender, age and the inanimate. Three women masquerade as Cahun's characters – often it is hard to tell them apart. The splitting of identity appears as a double which persists throughout; as literal double through super imposition, as shadow, imprints in sand, reflections in water, mirror or distorting glass. Likewise, the voice is split between differently dressed voices, which at times overlap, and at times are in conversation. The kaleidoscope aesthetic that runs through the film serves not only to weave between image and word but also between the work of Cahun and the films of Sarah Pucill, creating a dialogue between two artists who share similar iconography and concerns.

Sarah Pucill is an artist and Reader based at University of Westminster. Her films and photographs explore a sense of self which is transformative and fluid. At the core of her practice is a concern with mortality and the materiality of the filmmaking process. The majority of her films take place within the confinements of domestic space, where the grounded reality of the house itself becomes a portal to a complex and multi-layered psychical realm. In her explorations of the animate and inanimate, her work probes a journey between mirror and surface, in which questions of representation are negotiated via the feminine, the queer or the dead.