

Patrick Jolley and Reynold Reynolds

By Leslie McCleave

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In *Burn* – the latest collaboration from Patrick Jolley and Reynold Reynolds – a man douses his lover's bed with gasoline and sets it and himself ablaze. Crashing through a hallway, he trips over a bicycle before collapsing in front of an older couple who sit on a couch barely registering his presence. A domestic drama of deep denial and destruction.

In an earlier work, the *Drowning Room*, a family goes about their business in a submerged suburban house. There's a fight, a kiss, a strained dinner in which no one speaks. It's the awkward painful stuff of life, and it's all underwater, the familial tension grown so great that it's become an element.

Jolley whose background is in photography and fine art, and Reynolds, a filmmaker, met in the MFA program at the School of Visual Arts in New York. Together they've created a series of haunting, disturbing, sometimes bleakly funny worlds that manifest as short films, multi-channel video installations, loops and photographs. Jolley envisions the films as "still images made kinetic". He says that he's "taking the story in the image and adding the element of time to complete the action that's implied".

Jolley and Reynolds have a DIY aesthetic and their decidedly low tech approach is incredibly labor intensive, seeming to invite logistical intrigue. For *The Drowning Room*, the pair used a shipping container filled with water with windows cut into the side to allow for natural light. They weighted their actors who had to use hidden breathing tubes. One of their unexpected discoveries is that New York City tap water is too opaque to shoot through.

Jolley and Reynolds work in Super 8 or 16mm, edit digitally, blow up to 35mm for film projection (for the superior sound quality – their tracks are meticulous and minimal) or finish on video for installations. As Reynolds notes, "One of the greatest impacts of all the new technology is that it's made the old technology it replaced, which works just fine, much cheaper. What's exciting is using what you want, mixing the old and the new."

All three of their collaborations have been exhibited both as installations – in galleries in New York, Dublin, London (the Tate Modern), Vienna, Havana – and films screening at Sundance, SXSW, and the New York Underground. Recently *Burn* played at the Rotterdam Film Festival, and the filmmakers participated in a discussion about where, in an expanding audiovisual culture, cinema ends and the gallery begins. How do Jolley and Reynolds decide what form a film or installation will take?. Part of their success can be attributed to remaining fluid in their approach. "There's a lack of definition in what we're doing", says Reynolds, "I think that's good. You can look at what works as a still or a loop or a film and it gets you thinking about all these things in different ways".

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