

of her three young children at play by the river that adjoins their house. The children are usually pictured naked or semi-naked, splashing about in the river or on muddy banks: their play rituals have that hippy-kid completeness that's at once alienating and enticing. A sumptuous, scary view of childhood that's well at odds with the benign worldview of Dutch photographer Kors Van Bennekom. These are often three-generation studies of wife, daughter and granddaughter: at the beach, at the sauna, and otherwise ticking along nicely without any apparent tension or conflict. Bit like the Oil of Ulay advise-ments, really.

Public and Private was a collaboration between Stills Gallery and the French Institute in Edinburgh. Curated by Alain Reinaudo of the Centre St Vincent in Herblay near Paris, the work was spread over seven locations in the city. The project announced as its theme 'the fundamental dichotomy between what is 'public' and what is 'private', its intent to 'provide a space open to the subjective interpretation of the viewer'. In other words, hang loose chickies, and don't take the kids: this is a Blurred Photo Alert!

In the event, one of the best pieces was perfectly child-explicable. This, an installation by Louise Scullion and Matthew Dalziel, took a book as one starting point. Nothing unusual in that, except possibly their choice of Charles Sprawson's *Hauts of the Black Masseur*, a history of swimming and aqua-culture from the Romans to the present day. It's a curious book, with an eclectic range of characters: channel swimmers, 30s Aquacade stars like Eleanor Holm and Annette Kellerman, Randolph Hearst emerging from his pool to 'answer telephones hidden in plant boxes'.

The installation took the form of three cubicles built of rolled glass, each containing a cream painted wooden stool on wooden slats. Behind, three slide projectors whirred small pools of light onto the dimpled glass. It all felt very pure at first — one of those tasteful but pointless re-orderings of sympathetic materials that installation so often falls back on. Then, and only from front on, the pools of light revealed themselves as tiny images of sea and shore — a figure bobbing in the waves, waving dune grass, a cliff — and the work suddenly came to life, as evocative of old freedoms as sand in a shoe or worn down duckboards in a crummy old municipal lido.

Down at Bellevue Church, Jane Mullinger made a piece using fans, slide projectors and precarious stacks of braille texts. With the former blowing the pages of the books away — and the images superimposed on the pages —, the key word here seems to be *palimpsest*. Crossed wires, leaky meanings, ships that pass in the night, the frustration of interpretation. Bon, ben quoi alors, as we say in Tower Hamlets, Wichita Falls....

Up the altar Helen Chadwick does one of her backlit profane flower arrangements. Chadwick — like some kind of Elizabeth David of the artworld — is of course a Jolly Good Thing, with more feel for colour and composition in her little finger than all of Cork Street put together. But it's hard to keep on having the same thoughts about an artist, and something a bit different to look at wouldn't go a miss. Patrick Raynaud is a kind of male equivalent of Chadwick, and likewise pairs up fleshly, temperate, yielding things with hard, imperforable man-made-things. In real terms this means backlit images of a man's body arranged within a series of metal camera cases. And Dany Leriche, too, is still hanging in there with this business of secular icons: her snake-headed nudes taking their cue — and their ambiguous sexual charge — from Cranach's pately etiolated saint-seductresses.

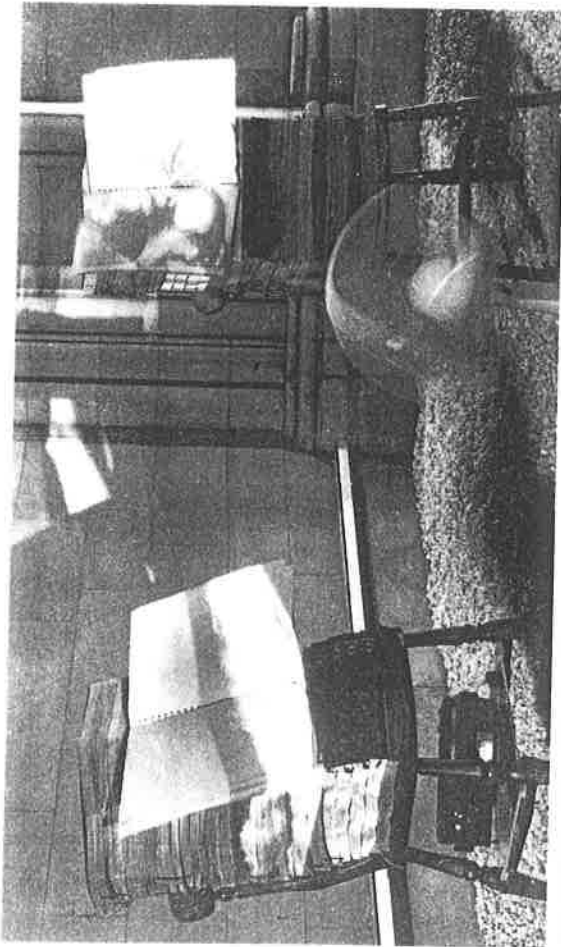
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Jane Mullinger. *Without Hindsight Within Earshot*, 1993 (mixed media installation: detail)

FOTOFEIS: 'INTIMATE LIVES' & 'PUBLIC & PRIVATE' Various venues, Edinburgh

Fotofeis, the Scottish International Festival of Photography, showed work in four different Scottish regions — Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and the Highlands. It took in over a hundred exhibitions and events, with many artists exhibiting for the first time in the UK. And all this without clamping down some big state-of-the-art rationale on the whole, which isn't to say that the organisers wholly eschewed structure. Each area got a theme, with a programme of talks and events moving from one area to the next within the four week period of the festival. But on the whole this was an inclusive affair, with some shows answering their brief, some not; shows that 'asked questions' ('celebrated German performance artist addresses the problem of Sundays') and sometimes answered them (photos from inside a Cistercian monastery); shows with only the most tangential relationship to photography as we know it, and shows by classically Real Practitioners (Ralph Meatyard meet Wynn and Edna Bullock)...

Edinburgh got 'The Family' as a theme, and the best show that answered the brief was at the City Arts Centre. This included a new series by Maud Sulter called 'Significant Others'. Here you have a series of hugely enlarged family snaps with dates scrawled in the margins, as if on slate. For example, two couples, circa 1946, stand a little stiffly for the camera in dresses and suits (very deep turn-ups on the men's trousers); or, 1955, a smiling, blobbily unclear group of women and children on a playground roundabout (the slatted wood kind that predated the racier, preformed plastic version); or 1965, *C'est Moi!*, with a young Sulter standing by wire netting at the zoo.

Sally Mann comes from Lexington, Virginia. Over several summers she took pictures