

ARTFORUM

Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer

DOGGERFISHER

11 Gayfield Square,

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Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer's film *Our Magnolia*, 2009, amalgamates what at first appears to be an arbitrary selection of footage into a four-and-a-half-minute 16-mm work. The piece functions as a game of associations with Paul Nash's 1944 painting *Flight of the Magnolia*, yet other, more complex narratives present in the work are left inconclusive by the artists. Although the film plays on a loop, triggered by a motion sensor, its narrative most logically seems to begin after a punctuation of black, with a static shot of Nash's surreal image, which depicts a magnolia flower hovering above the sea.

First documenting the painting as a whole and later returning to a close-up of Nash's signature, the film resonates throughout with the painted work's aesthetic presence. These echoes appear most explicitly in the footage of a coastal scene, an ear, and a magnolia flower, while more obscure segments reflect Nashashibi and Skaer's individual practices, linking them within the collaborative sequence.

The significance of this work is highlighted by its timing, antedate to Skaer's Turner Prize exhibition and Nashashibi's solo show at the London Institute of Contemporary Art. Skaer and Nashashibi's solo practices are at their most intense, and the film appears to define them as individual artists to an extent that their previous collaborative works have not. The more opaque aspects of the piece, such as the significance of war artist Nash's work or the repeated appearance of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, provoke a scattershot range of interpretative associations, insist on repeated viewings, and leave the work with an ambiguity that remains on contemplation.

— Steven Cairns



Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer, *Our Magnolia*, 2009, still from a 16-mm film, 4 minutes 30 seconds.