PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release

Magic Mirror
Exhibition of works by Claude Cahun and Sarah Pucill
17 April 2015 - 14 June 2015 (Private View: Thursday, 16 April 6pm-9pm)

Nunnery Gallery presents Magic Mirror - a major exhibition of work by French Surrealist artist Claude Cahun and contemporary British artist filmmaker Sarah Pucill. Curated by Karen Le Roy Harris the exhibition runs from 17 April - 14 June 2015 and is part of the Nunnery Gallery’s 2015 In Dialogue season, a year-long exploration of partnerships, artistic inspirations and deeply involved relationships between the artist and the muse. Photographs by both artists will be shown in London, many for the first time. The exhibition coincides with Jersey Heritage’s landmark retrospective of Cahun and Marcel Moore.

Sharing an engagement with Surrealism, the layering of Pucill and Cahun’s work embraces the uncanny in relation to the inanimate. Their work explores the idea of a multiple ‘self’ and of looking, as both artists assert a queer gaze between mirror, camera and across two centuries.

Pucill’s film Magic Mirror combines a re-staging of Cahun’s photographs and visualisation of written text from her book Aveux non avenus (Disavowals), transforming Cahun’s work from still to moving image, whilst exploring the relationship between word, photography and sound in film.

Called ‘one of the most curious spirits of our time’ by André Breton, the exhibition will offer a
unique perspective on the work of Cahun, who used subversive avant-garde art practice as a form of resistance in Nazi occupied Jersey during WW2.

Pucill’s dialogue with Cahun repositions her within a post-modern context with gender, self and identity at the centre of discourse. Through text, photography and film, the exhibition mixes and questions authorship, medium and identity. The exhibition title Magic Mirror and title of Pucill’s film has come from Cahun’s words; ‘A portrait of one or the other. Our two narcissisms drowning in it. It was the impossible realised in a magic mirror.’

Cahun (born Lucy Schwob) continually challenged social conformities. Known for her writings she published articles in journals and in 1929 translated Havelock Ellis’ theories on the third gender, which forms part of the gender neutral position Cahun took. ‘Masculine? Feminine? But it depends on the situation. Neuter is the only gender that always suits me’ (Claude Cahun). She was part of the Théâtre Esoterique and this element of staging and masquerade are carried through to her work. Cahun’s history and many ‘selves’ will be explored throughout the show. Her performative play with gender, identity, surrealism, fashion photography and tableaux vivants were a precursor to the next wave of female artists and photographers such as Francesca Woodman and Cindy Sherman. Pucill develops Cahun's themes, taking inspiration by weaving in her relationship with a dead artist, and by bringing her words and images to life in film.

Sarah Pucill’s films, which span over two decades, have been screened at major international film festivals with her ambitious feature length 16mm b/w film Magic Mirror being premiered at the Tate Modern. 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 exhibition will feature both her feature film and unseen photographic work.

**Notes to editors:**

**Exhibition Facts**

**Title:** Magic Mirror: Claude Cahun and Sarah Pucill  
**Address:** Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts, 181 Bow Road, London E3 2SJ  
**Telephone:** +44 (0) 20 8980 7774  
**Website:** [http://www.bowarts.org/nunnery/magic-mirror](http://www.bowarts.org/nunnery/magic-mirror)  
**Dates:** 17 April 2015 - 14 June 2015  
**Private View:** Thursday 16 April 6pm - 9pm  
**Opening Hours:** Tues - Sun, 10am - 5pm  
**Admission:** Free  
**Travel:** Bow Road Tube Station, Bow Church DLR

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**Claude Cahun:**  
Born Lucy Schwob in October 1894 in Nantes, France. She came from a wealthy, Jewish family of intellectuals and authors. In 1918, she took on her androgynous forename Claude with her surname taken from her great uncle Léon Cahun. At age 15 Cahun met Suzanne Malherbe, later known as Marcel Moore and they embarked on a life-long intimate relationship. Cahun better known for her writings during her lifetime publishing articles and books such as Vues et Visions (1919) and Aveux non Avenus (1930) and contributed to surrealist publications. She only published one photograph during her lifetime. Cahun and Moore spent the 1920's and 30’s in Paris. In 1935, she co-founded Contre Attaque a group of Surrealists and friends protest-
ing against the fascism in France. In 1937, she moved to Jersey where she later became actively resistant under the Nazi occupation of Jersey producing propaganda anti-Nazi leaflets to demoralise German soldiers. She lived in Jersey with her lover Marcel Moore until Cahun’s death in December 1954.

Sarah Pucill:
Sarah Pucill has been making experimental 16mm films since completing her MA at the Slade in 1990. Since then her publicly funded films have been screened widely and won awards at major international film festivals as well as being staged in museums and galleries. Her retrospective screenings have included the Tate Britain, BFI Southbank, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Anthology Film Archives (NY), the Millennium, NY and LA FilmForum. Awards include: Marion McMahon Award at the Images Festival in Toronto, Directors Citation from the Black Maria Film Festival, Best Innovation, Atlanta and Best Experimental Film, Oberhausen. Her feature length film Magic Mirror premiered at Tate Modern in 2013 and has toured internationally with the LUX who published their second DVD of Pucill’s work Magic Mirror in 2014, which followed a compilation of her short films 'Selected Films 1990-2010'. She has received Arts Council funding for a second feature-length film that will embrace Cahun’s writing and images in colour. She lives and works in London and is a Reader at University of Westminster. www.sarahpucill.co.uk

Bow Arts
Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2015, Bow Arts Trust was established as an educational arts charity in 1995 and supports a community of over 400 artists with affordable, secure and creative workspaces. Bow Arts also runs the Nunnery Gallery, a contemporary art gallery which supports a diverse range of local, national and international exhibitions and events. www.bowarts.org

Jersey Heritage
Jersey Heritage was founded in 1981 and is a local charity within Jersey Channel Islands that protects and promotes the Island’s rich heritage and cultural environment. It is responsible for the island’s major historic sites, award-winning museums and public archives. The Jersey Heritage Trust collection represents the largest repository of the artistic work of Cahun.

Jersey Heritage’s exhibition Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore: A Life Defiant explores their lives, their defiance of convention and resistance of the Nazi occupation in Jersey. www.jerseyheritage.org.uk

Exhibition: Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore: A Life Defiant.
Venue: Jersey Museum and Art Gallery
Address: Jersey Museum, The Weighbridge, St Helier, Jersey, JE2 3NG

Supported by: