

A Sudden Glimpse to Deeper Things

2024 | 88m | 12A | English

Director: Mark Cousins

Starring: Tilda Swinton

“This is the story of the brain of a forgotten visionary, a feisty, undervalued, driven, obsessive, 20th Century artist, painter, drawer, abstractor and traveller” is how the narration begins for the new documentary film *A Sudden Glimpse to Deeper Things*. The voice is the director's own - Mark Cousins - a journalist, writer, director and documentarian, and above all he is a storyteller.

The film is the story of Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, an abstract artist, who, like so many female artists, was treated as being of lesser importance during her lifetime, her own voice diminished - and has now only subsequently been re-appraised and appreciated after her death.

Putting right this wrong, Cousins fully utilises his own captivating lyrical talent, as he narrates, curates and creates this beautifully cinematic film celebrating the art and life of Barns-Graham. She was synaesthetic – associating letters, names and people with particular colours, and in this documentary Cousins explores how her neurodivergence shaped her vision of the world. Tracking Barns-Graham’s life from birth in St Andrews, to the epiphany she had on the Grindelwald glacier in 1949, which acted as an inflection point in her art, to pivot into this deeper sense of the meaning of things, and inspiring her glacier paintings for which she is best known. Her journey is brought to life with excerpts from her personal journals read by Tilda Swinton (Cousins’ longtime friend and collaborator).

Mark Cousins’ voice is the epitome of earnest and compelling. He is undoubtedly one of the great film personalities. In the UK he came to prominence in the late 90’s with his BBC show *Scene by Scene*, with in-depth and engaging interviews with prominent actors and directors; concerning their careers, techniques, styles and motivations. Impressively the likes of Lauren Bacall, Bernardo Bertolucci, Jack Lemmon and notably David Lynch (in one of his most detailed interviews ever as “a great favour” to Cousins).

At the same time he took over helming the show *MovieDrome* from fellow filmmaker Alex Cox (Repo Man 1984). A show that introduced viewers to late night sights of mainly American films, underseen, under-marketed or forgotten to the British public (films like *Society*, *The Conversation*, *Leon*, *Mommie Dearest*, *The Underneath* to name a few). His diction and style of presenting quickly became his signature - idiosyncratic, intimate and seductive. Comedians of the day even imitated his delivery - a sure sign of his renown.

“The life and work of Wilhelmina Barns-Graham — a figure arguably underestimated by the artistic establishment — gets its due in Mark Cousins' stirring, singular Karlovy Vary winner.”

Variety

Excellent

Fair

Poor



What did you think of the film? Please mark or tear the number.

Please add any further comments here

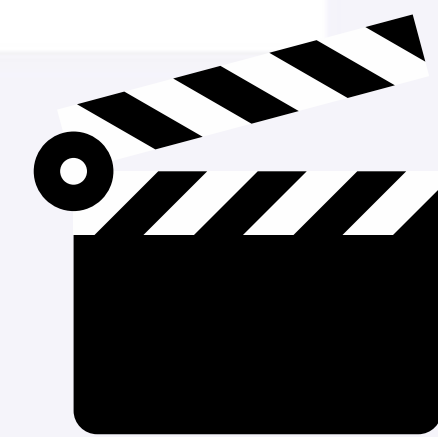
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Did You Know?

- The film's title comes from a line in Wilhelmina Barns-Graham's diary about her experience on the Grindelwald glacier in 1949.
- The film's director, Mark Cousins, says he sees parallels between his own documentaries and Barns-Graham's work.
- The film is a reassessment of Barns-Graham's life and work, and her place in 20th century art.

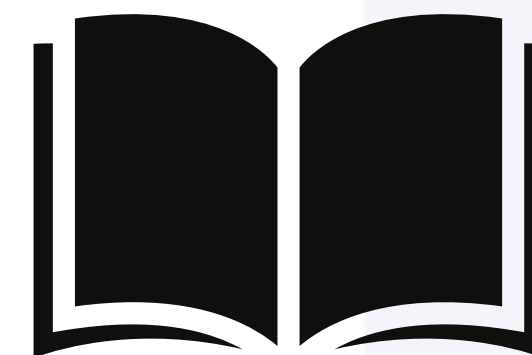
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Beyond The Visible - Hilma af Klint (2019)

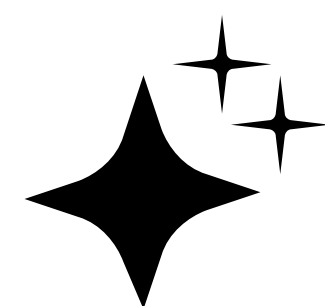
In her Stockholm studio, Hilma af Klint created 193 breathtaking abstract paintings long before Kandinsky (the supposed pioneer of abstract art) ever dreamed of it.



Of Women and Salt by Gabriela Garcia

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