

## The Absent Presence



Atkin's most recent work has been the development of a 3 screen projection based on actual footage of his father. The film dates back to 1980 and is a project that Atkin has revisited on several occasions over the past two decades. The initial rationale behind shooting the film was to preserve an account of his own background and how key moments within this personal history could be used for other artworks. The film is shot in black & white using a Tri-X surveillance film that accentuates the grain of the image. The quality of the grain also amplifies the the strong tonal contrasts that characterise the triptych. These contrasts add to the menacing atmospheres generated in certain parts of the film. Living Room explores Atkin's own past through the everyday, repetitive actions of his father.



Three separate films that deal with the same core subject matter are projected simultaneously onto each wall within the installation. All three films are on a loop and are played continuously. Each film begins with a view of Atkin's father framed within a kitchen environment, (washing and shaving), and returns to this same image before being played again. Each film concentrates on one specific aspect of his fathers life.



Each projection is enlarged onto a large scale in order to allow the viewer to become increasingly aware of the swirling,agitated grain of the films surface that accentuates the tonal contrasts within the work as a whole. The three projected images are slowed down in order to synchronise with the view of Atkin's father within the kitchen, which both signals the beginning of the triptych and its end. The slowed down motor of the projector has also been digitally adapted in order to reinforce the sense of fragility that characterises the work as a whole. The installation works on many other levels examining the psychological tension generated within the Living Room. Loss, memory, isolation, place and time are explored closely through the contemplation of an ordinary everyday existence.



Living Room

John Atkin