

Memory Marathon



On Saturday 7 November 2009, artist Simon Pope completed a 26-mile walk through London's five Olympic boroughs accompanied, on his 12-hour journey, by over a hundred local residents.

Memory Marathon is an 80-minute film of a large-scale participative event in which artist Simon Pope walked a specially planned 26-mile marathon route through the five London boroughs that will host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Continuing a series of trademark walking and memory projects by this innovative artist, *Memory Marathon* is a unique collective undertaking that celebrates the enduring importance of personal memories.

Starting out just after dawn from Thamesmead in South-East London, and arriving twelve hours later at the entrance to the Olympic Park in Stratford, Pope completed his marathon journey in the company of more than a hundred local residents of Greenwich, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Waltham Forest.

Moving forward in an unbroken relay, in which each participant walked a 400-metre section of the route alongside Pope, each individual was asked to contribute a recollection of what is, for them, a stand-out moment from Olympic history, before passing the 'baton' of the microphone to the next person in line. Recruited from the East London boroughs adjoining the Olympic Park site, and reflecting the diverse make-up of those communities and the inclusive, international spirit of the Games themselves, the participants' collective act of commemoration draws from a huge reservoir of sporting and cultural memory, encompassing both triumph and disaster, and highlighting both the intimate and the everyday.

The Artist

Simon Pope's interest in walking pervades much of his artistic output. Often describing an encounter with a particular landscape, his pieces also invite a dialogue with other people: either in the negotiation of the route itself, or in the exchange of other forms of shared experience. Acts of memory are a pivotal feature of this process, involving either the retracing of a journey or the recollection of an object or image that artist and participant have both seen previously.

This project is the second collaboration between Film and Video Umbrella and Pope, following 2007's 'The Memorial Walks'.

Pope (born in Exeter, UK, 1966) has exhibited internationally, including Laboral, Gijon, Asturias; Chapter, Cardiff; New Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Istanbul.

He represented Wales at the Venice Biennale in 2003. Recent shows include 'A Common Third' at Danielle Arnaud, London and 'Carved from Memory' at Spacex, Exeter.

Cinema Screenings and Artist Q&A

The film is being shown at three East London cinemas. Each screening will be followed by an in-conversation between the artist and a writer or critic.

Rio Cinema

Saturday 6 March, 1.30pm introduced by Chris Darke
107 Kingsland High Street, London E8 2PB
Nearest station: Dalston Kingsland

Stratford East Picturehouse

Sunday 7 March, 3pm introduced by Steven Bode
Nearest station: Stratford

Greenwich Picturehouse

Sunday 7 March, 7pm introduced by Tom McCarthy
Nearest station: Greenwich

MEMORY MARATHON is conceived and produced by Film and Video Umbrella.
Commissioned by the Olympic Delivery Authority and funded by the London Development Agency and Arts Council England.

Presented by Film and Video Umbrella.

Film and Video Umbrella commissions, curates and produces film, video and other moving-image works by artists which are presented in collaboration with galleries and other cultural partners across the UK.

www.memorymarathon.info

<http://twitter.com/MemoryMarathon>

www.fvu.co.uk



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