



Photograph: Photo © Hugo Glendinning

Conceptual artist Ceal Foyer is celebrated for her deft manoeuvres in everyday situations, testing the slippage between function and implication, the literal and the imagined. Working in film and installation, she reconfigures familiar objects as sources of surprise and humour. *In Light* (1994), for example, a solitary unconnected bulb is lit up from four sides by slide projectors; in *Hammer and Nail* (2018), stock footage of a nail being hammered is edited so that the footage rises with each blow, the frame of the film and wood plank coming up to meet the hammer. Such adjustments in usage draw on an acute sense of the absurd, with an economy of language that makes a powerful argument for beauty in the detail. Viewers are nudged to double take, and on closer inspection, recognise a sparse kind of poetry. Foyer's clarity of thought and the elegantly concise presentation of her ideas resonate through all areas of her practice. The deceptive simplicity of the work is informed by Foyer's particular sense of humour and an awareness of the absurd. Using double-takes and shifting points of view, Foyer forces the viewer to renegotiate their perception of the world.

Ceal Foyer was born in 1968 and passed away in 2025. She lived and worked in Berlin, Germany. She completed a BFA at Goldsmiths College, London, UK (1994). Recent solo exhibitions include: Museum of Contemporary Art, Toronto, Canada (2024); Base / Progetti per l'arte, Florence, Italy (2022); Lisson Gallery, East Hampton, USA (2021), University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, USA (2019), Lisson Gallery, London, UK (2018), Aspen Art Museum, USA and Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland (both 2016), Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2015), Kolnischer Kunstverein, Germany (2013), DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art, Montreal, Canada (2011), Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, USA (2010), Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (both 2009), and Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina (MADRE), Naples, Italy (2008).

Among many group exhibitions, she has been featured in exhibitions at: Jüdisches Museum, Berlin, Germany (2024); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland (2023); Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, Paris, France (2022); Monash University Museum of Art, Caulfield East, Australia (2021), South London Gallery, London, UK and the Hammer Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA (both 2018), at the Broad Art Museum, Lansing, USA (2017) and at the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin and the Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg (Germany, both 2017). She participated in Aichi Triennale, Nagoya City and Toyota City, Aichi, Japan (2019), Guangzhou Triennial, Guangdong, China and documenta 13, Kassel, Germany (both 2012), and the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009). She won the Preis der Nationalgalerie Fur Junge Kunst, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany (2007) and the Nam June Paik Art Centre Prize, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany (2009).