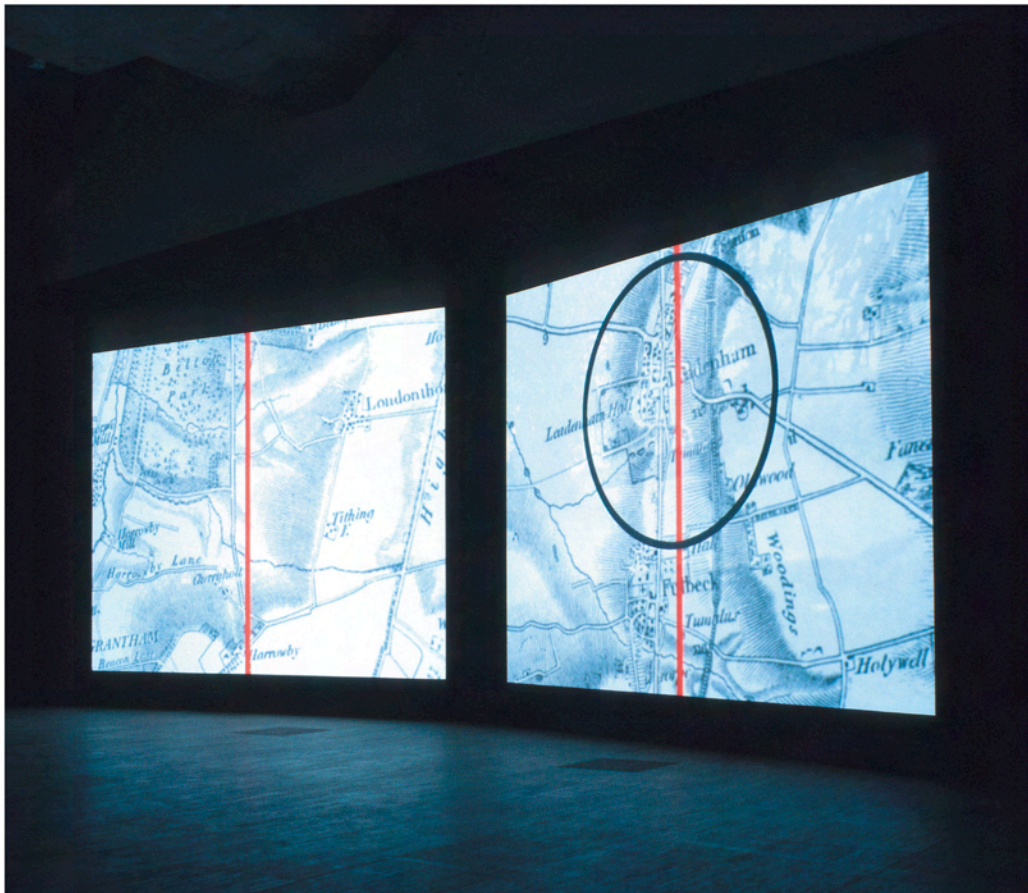


The Truth Was Always There

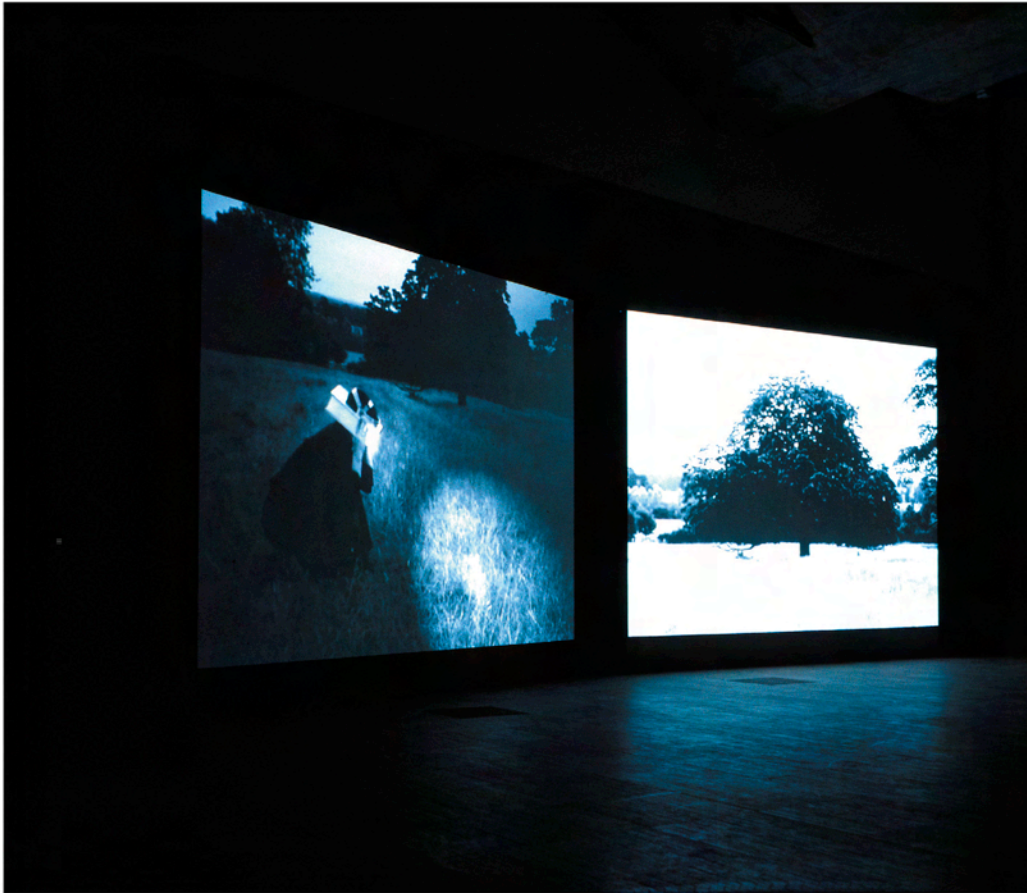
(DVD installation with 2 projections and 5.1 surround sound)



Excerpt from 'Human Camera', describing 'The Truth Was Always There'

The Truth Was Always There is Seers' most technically ambitious film. It is presented as a split screen narrative that traces the skein of connections between her family and the history of medieval philosophy and alchemy. It is also the most unnerving: tales of magic, cryptic symbols, secret society initiations and medieval charnel houses are offset by a sophisticated soundscape which rustles and rumbles like the upwelling of the unconscious. Somehow the most innocuous imagery - a solitary tree in a field, a nesting swift, a ruined tower in a landscape - take on an atmosphere of dread.

Science writer Philip Ball outlines the map of Lincolnshire's connection with alchemy and natural magic. Robert Grosseteste (1168-1253), Bishop of Lincoln, is credited with inventing many of the empirical concepts later developed by his protégé Roger Bacon (1214-1294), the medieval alchemist and proto-scientist. To the east of the line which connects Leadenham and Sleaford lie the ruins of Temple Bruer, a preceptory founded by the Knights Templar. John Dee (1527-1608), the Elizabethan mathematician and occultist, held a rectorship at the nearby town of Leadenham not far from Woolsthorpe, birthplace of Isaac Newton. Dee was engaged in the search for the Enochian language, believed to be the original tongue taught to Adam by his creator, which Dee claimed was being taught to him by 'good angels'. Dee visited Temple Bruer to study its layout in the hope that the design of the building would assist his understanding of coded knowledge encrypted in the plan of the Temple of Solomon.



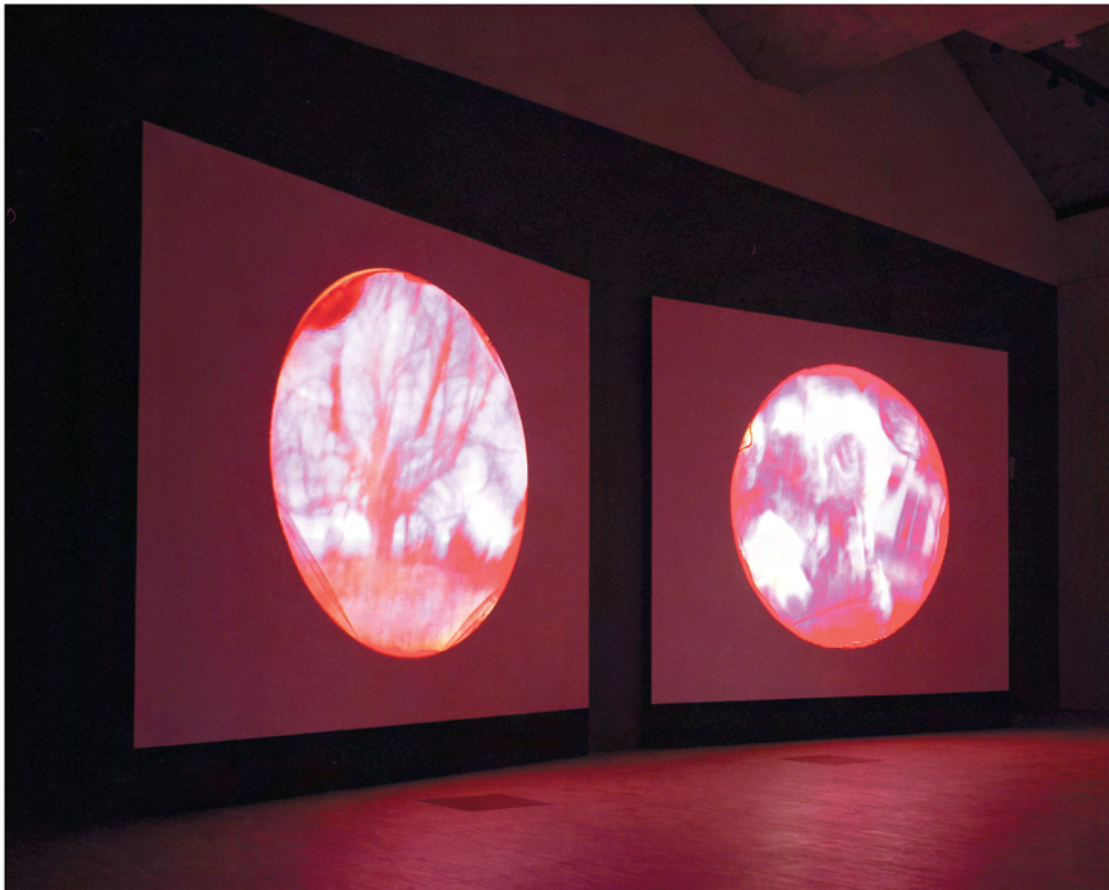
But the film begins with a recurring image: a road journey along one of the Roman routes near the towns of Leadenham and Sleaford, where Seers' mother settled after the return from Mauritius. The voice of Alicia Seers, the artist's mother, is heard describing the death of her father shortly before Lindsay was conceived and the profound sadness which his death caused. Voice wavering, she wonders if something of her melancholy was transmitted to the unborn child. This endless journey through the flat bucolic landscape, filmed in black and white, is like a repeated elegy for Seers' sorrowful quest into her own past.

The split screen technique is used to juxtapose curious geometric designs which adorn these historical sites with Seers' own cryptic drawings. The narrator speculates that Seers displays an adept's understanding of arcane knowledge. The various drawings filled with alchemical tree symbolism and geometric mysteries echo both John Dee's investigations and those of Robert Fludd (1574-1637), the Rosicrucian and follower of Paracelsus. One striking dual image is of an orrery, a mechanical model of the solar system, against a representation of an annular eclipse (in which the moon's silhouette does not completely obscure the sun's disc but leaves a bright halo or annulus). As Philip Ball explains Fludd's neo-Platonic notion that light was the primary substance, the sliver of light forming the annular eclipse divides and rotates until it forms the shape of an alchemical ideogram inscribed in the stones of Temple Bruer. These symbols were believed to be carriers of occult knowledge indecipherable to all but the initiated. This seems to be exactly how Seers regards her childhood drawings after the expulsion from her eidetic Eden: her family could never unlock the key which would decrypt her alternative modes of communication.

The narrator draws out the connection with Fludd's theory of light and Seers' later attempts to create objects out of light through becoming a projector. We witness this event in a field in Leadenham at twilight, as Seers crouches with her head enclosed in projection apparatus. What we see is a sequel to a reconstruction of a Newtonian experiment to create a tree using alchemical means, which the modern viewer will recognise as the chemical formation of a 'crystal tree' in a laboratory flask. In the climactic moving image, we witness the miraculous appearance of Seer's own alchemical tree.

The Truth Was Always There

(DVD installation with 2 projections and 5.1 surround sound)





Stills: 'The Truth Was Always There' DVD installation