

MK Gallery

News Release

Gerard Byrne

Case Study: Loch Ness (Some possibilities and problems), 2001-2011

14 January – 3 April 2011

(Preview: Thursday 13 January 6-10pm)

In his first major solo exhibition in a UK public gallery, Gerard Byrne (born Dublin 1969) will present the culmination of ten years of research around the Loch Ness Monster. Laced with subtle humour and a degree of ambiguity, *Case Study: Loch Ness* appropriates the tropes of an archetypal conceptual art exhibition, including the iconic forms of Richard Long, Giuseppe Penone, Robert Smithson and Marcel Broodthaers.

In this project, Byrne blurs the lines between fiction and documentary to examine how images inform our understanding of myth and reality. The surface of the loch becomes a screen onto which fears and fantasies are projected or a murky lens which inflects reality with dark undertones. Intrinsic to any account of this subject, is a story of make-believe, fabrication and hoaxes – a famous historic photograph of the monster which turned out to be a toy submarine; others of drifting wood. Through his own footage and research, Byrne questions the ways in which images are constructed, transmitted and mediated and asks: is it possible to capture an image of something that does not exist?

Drawing on his accumulated archive of Loch Ness Monster related photographs, film and audio footage drawn from original sightings of the monster, excerpts from 'eyewitness' accounts and other texts, Byrne draws direct parallels between one of the world's most enduring modern myths and the rise of commercial mass media. Coinciding with the popularisation of psychoanalysis and the advance of Surrealism in the UK, intense media interest around the monster developed in the 1930s, with papers like the *Daily Mail* fuelling a frenzy of interest in order to sell papers.

In addition to eighty of Byrne's photographs, the exhibition comprises a new film, *Figures*, composed of material gathered around Loch Ness, played to the sound of eyewitness descriptions. This work provides documentary evidence of the fauna of Loch Ness and various examples of gestalt forms that evoke a persistently primeval presence in the region. Varying in scale, the photographs feature landscapes and landscape details, newspaper front covers, texts, and photographs of original material, all relating to the Loch Ness monster. Large-scale, gnarled tree sculptures will also be displayed, cut in cross section to show their growth rings, to provide a visual and textural contrast to the minimalist aesthetic in the other galleries.

In Conversation
Gerard Byrne and Maeve Connolly
Saturday 26 March, 3pm
Tickets £3 / £2 concessions

Gerard Byrne discusses his work and the current exhibition with Dublin-based writer, lecturer and researcher, Dr Maeve Connolly. Refreshments will be provided.

Places limited. Bookings on T: +44 (0)1908 676 900 (during advertised gallery opening hours) or email info@mkgallery.org.

Notes to Editors

Gerard Byrne

Born in Dublin in 1969, Byrne is regarded as amongst the most critically important artists of his generation. His work frequently reconstructs historically charged conversations about the future originally published in popular magazines from the 1960s-1980s in order to test their resonance in the present. He explores the historical locations of these moments and the spaces in which they are presented, blurring the lines between past and present, fiction and documentary. The artist lives and works in Dublin.

In 2007 Byrne represented Ireland in the Venice Biennale. Other major presentations of his work at international biennials include Gwangju and Sydney in 2008, Lyon in 2007, the Tate Triennial in 2006 and the Istanbul Biennale in 2003. Solo exhibitions of his work have been presented at the ICA Boston and the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (both 2008), Düsseldorf Kunstverein, the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver (2007), the Frankfurter Kunstverein (2003) and at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2002). In 2006 he was a recipient of the Paul Hamlyn award. A recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship (1994), Byrne was awarded the prestigious PS1 studio award in 1997-98 and graduated from the Whitney Independent Study Programme in 1999.

Gerard Byrne is represented by:
Green on Red Gallery, Dublin
Lisson Gallery, London
Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm

www.greenonredgallery.com
www.lissongallery.com
www.nordenhake.com

Dr Maeve Connolly

Dr Connolly is a Dublin-based writer, lecturer and researcher whose work centres on concepts of public space in contemporary art and culture, informed by histories of art, film and television since the late 1960s. She is currently Lecturer in the School of Creative Arts at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology in Dublin, Ireland where she teaches on the BA in Visual Arts Practice and on MAVis, MA Visual Arts Practices, where she leads a module on Visual Cultural Research. www.mavis.ie

MK Gallery

MK Gallery, 900 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3QA.
Situating in Theatre District, Milton Keynes, MK Gallery is one of the UK's leading public galleries, presenting a programme of international contemporary visual art.

Open: Tuesday–Friday 12–8pm, Saturday 11am–8pm, Sunday 11am–5pm.
Admission free. www.mkgallery.org.

Current exhibition

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14 January – 3 April 2011 / Admission free

MK Gallery Supporters

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Exhibition Supporters

Exhibition generously supported by Culture Ireland, Lisson Gallery, London, Green On Red Gallery, Dublin, John Jones, London and the Exhibition Circle of Friends.



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Further information

For press interviews, information or images please contact:

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