

solas nua

a new light on irish arts

solas nua is the only organization in america dedicated exclusively to contemporary irish arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Solas Nua presents **Monster Truck: 1.7 Trillion Euro**
The Court of 1469 - 1469 Harvard Street NW REAR, Washington DC 20009
3 - 20 November 2011, public reception November 3 from 6.30 - 8.30pm



“At 31 March 2011, the gross external debt of all resident sectors (i.e. general government, the monetary authority, financial and non-financial corporations and households) amounted to €1,677bn.” Source, Central Statistics Office of Ireland

WASHINGTON, DC —The Republic of Ireland has a population of 4.5 million people. The economic and political events since 2008 have propelled Ireland onto the international stage and impacted both domestic and global perceptions of Irish identity. For the first time since the foundation of the Irish Republic, Ireland has lost its sovereignty. *1.7 Trillion Euro*—the number is the gross external debt of all resident sectors in Ireland (i.e. general government, the monetary authority, financial and non-financial corporations and households)—is an exhibition casting an eye over Ireland and some of the frustrations with the current social and political environment. In this exhibition by the Dublin based arts collective and gallery, Monster Truck, curator, Peter Prendergast, has brought together a group of visual artists who will engage with the ongoing narrative of “Irish” identity and who will reflect upon Ireland in a boom and bust economic state, featuring four separate snapshots of the Irish situation in disparate works dating from 2005-2011.

“Recent socio-political events have propelled Ireland onto the international stage and impacted both national and global perceptions of the Irish entity. The destabilization of our previous ‘truths’ has widely been articulated as a state of ‘crisis’ and uncertainty. Yet the dissolution of these discourses also frees us from domineering and prescriptive norms. This exhibition exposes previously obscured or ignored aspects of the nation. It opens the debate about what Ireland could become,” says Prendergast.

Monster Truck is exhibiting the work of four Irish contemporary Visual Artists: Sheila Rennick (painting), Alan Butler (drawings and video), John Byrne (video) and Francis John Luke Wasser and Declan Hurley (collaborative video). These artists have exhibited and worked consistently during the last number of years in Ireland and draw influence from contemporary culture during the boom years. The exhibition will consist of a number of new works by the featured artists. Sheila Rennick will include several A4 drawings and two large paintings. Alan Butler will work with both large drawing and vinyl/installation: one video work and one large drawing on paper. John Byrne will present one video piece running 12 minutes. There will also be a collaborative work by Francis Wasser and Declan Hurley as part of the exhibition.

Curator, Peter Prendergast, and artists, Sheila Rennick and Alan Butler, will be in residence with Solas Nua in Washington, DC, from October 28 – November 13 2011. For interviews and press requests please contact Faith Flanagan at faith@massey-media.com.

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Sheila Rennick

Born in Galway 1983, Sheila Rennick graduated from NCAD with a degree in Fine Art painting in 2004 and was co-recipient of the CAP foundation award. She went on to complete an MA in painting in St. Martins College, London in 2006.. She was one of thirty artists selected from across the UK for the notable Jerwood contemporary painting exhibition which was held in London in February 2007. She has a number of solo and group exhibitions under her belt, including High heels and bulldogs at Monstertruck Gallery and Studios and 'Dodgy Heaven' at the Ashford Gallery R.H.A. .She became the first graduate of the National College of Art and Design to exhibit at the colleges new gallery with a painting and drawing show entitled 'Hot Body Ugly Face Syndrome'. In 2010 She participated in a Group Painting show entitled 'The Fold' at VISUAL in Carlow alongside Diann Copperwhite and Mark Mc Creevey. She was recently awarded a studio at the Royal Hibernian Academy and was selected for the 2011 RHA Futures exhibition. Before than she will hold a solo exhibition of her work at Hillsboro Fine Art Gallery in Dublin. She is represented by Hillsboro Fine Art Parnell Square West Dublin.

Alan Butler

Born in Dublin in 1981, Alan Butler makes use of appropriation and remix cultural artefacts and icons by taking items that possess specific lineages and combining them with disparate elements in order to create works that possess other ideas and 'truths'. This results in works that criticise realities which are constructed through the semiotics and narratives created by our consumption of information. Butler's work has featured in projects and exhibitions at Cake Contemporary Arts, Kildare; 126, Galway and Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (all solo, 2010); The Institute of Contemporary Art, Singapore (2009); Hatje Cantz Con prefazione di Angela Vettese, Venice (2009); École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris (2010); Seven Art Fair, Miami (2010); The Mermaid Arts Centre, Wicklow, Ireland (2010), RUA RED, Dublin, E-Merge Art Fair, Washington D.C., The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin Contemporary 2011, Mina Dresden Gallery, San Francisco and Solas Nua, Washington D.C. (all 2011)
<http://alanbutler.info/site/cvresume/>

John Byrne

John was born in Belfast. He went to the Art College there before attending The Slade School of Art in London in the mid eighties. It was there that he began to practice as a performer, and has since performed at venues throughout Ireland, the UK, Denmark and Poland. Returning to Ireland in 1996 he performed 'A Border Worrier' for the 1997 Dublin Theatre Festival. This apparent obsession with the Irish Border culminated in his 'Border Interpretative Centre' (2000) a week long visitor centre project right on the border. It was subsequently documented in solo exhibitions at Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin, Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast and Gallerie Agregat in Mitte, Berlin within sight of the site of the old Berlin Wall. In 2004 he installed his 'Dublin's Last Supper' a large digitally manipulated photo-work in enamel, screen-printed and fired onto 9 adjoining panels. He is currently working on a major permanent sculptural work through Breaking Ground as part of the Ballymun regeneration. This will be a one and a half life size bronze horse and rider monument due to be mounted on a plinth. The horse is a copy of the 'Gough Memorial' originally sited in the Phoenix Park which was blown up in 1957. The rider is modelled on a local teenage girl. John has been the recipient of several Art's Council Awards. His work is in many private and public collections (including the OPW and UCC). He now lives and works in Dublin.

"Would you die for Ireland?" a 12min video shot by John in the Summer of 2003, involved him travelling the streets of Ireland (Dublin, Belfast, Cork) asking the above question to a wide range of people including Bertie Ahern and members of the Orange order.

<http://www.john-byrne.ie>

Francis Wasser

Francis Wasser (b.1988) Is a Dublin based artist currently studying an MFA at the National College of Art and Design. He has exhibited recently at The Joinery (Dublin), Occupy Space (Limerick), Basic Space (Dublin), SETUP NL (The Netherlands), Today Art Museum (China).

Declan Hurley

Declan Hurley (b.1986) is a young artist who lives and works in Berlin. His passport describes him as 'Irish'. He graduated with a BA in Fine Art from the National College of Art & Design in 2010. Recent shows include Basic Space (Dublin), Wilde Kunst (Berlin), F.Rankenstein (Berlin).

Monster Truck Gallery

Monster Truck is an organisation that supports artists, studios and a contemporary exhibition space in the center of Dublin City. MTG&S is a non-commercial platform with a focus on presenting exciting and innovative projects by artists working closely with our curatorial panel. From long-running exhibitions to one-off events, performances and screenings, Monster Truck aims to challenge and encourage artists and curators to engage and respond to its dynamic gallery space, to experiment and take risks, knowing that there is strong support structure behind them.

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The Court of 1469

The Court of 1469 is a newly constructed studio, designed and created with multi-disciplinary uses in mind. The space is both a blank slate and a ready to use opportunity for rehearsal, instruction, and creation. Gallery style lighting along with abundant natural light, combined with reinforced soundproof walls enables both choir or painter, ensemble or shutterbug to make things happen within this secluded yet wonderfully situated building. Over a century old, originally built as stables and storage for the neighborhood grocer, 1469 emerges again to serve the community, now via artists, thespians, and musicians within The District and beyond. The Court of 1469 is located just northeast of the intersection of 15th and Harvard Street NW, adjacent to the nexus of Adams Morgan, Mt. Pleasant and Columbia Heights, conveniently 2.5 blocks from the Green and Yellow line Columbia Heights Metro.

Solas Nua

Solas Nua is the only contemporary Irish arts organization in the United States dedicated exclusively to contemporary Irish Arts. Solas Nua produces the Capital Irish Film Festival, Irish Popcorn!, a critically acclaimed theatre season, Irish Book Day, the DC Irish Writers Festival, a book club, visual arts exhibitions, the Eist podcast, the Solas Nua Salon Series, Paisean Faisean!, and Irish language classes.

Important Press Dates

Artist Residency: October 28 - November 13, 2011

Exhibition: November 3-20, 2011

Public Reception: Thursday, November 3, 2011. 6:30-8:30 pm.

Artists' Talk: Tuesday, November 8, 2011. 6.30-7.30pm

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Friday, 12 – 6pm or by appointment.