

**Exhibition Guide**

# **INFINITE JEST**

**Cinthia Marcelle**

**Rob Pruitt**

**William Mackrell**

**23 June - 26 August 2012**

**DCA**

Dundee Contemporary Arts

*an infinite sense and finite means*  
Hans Arp, *Notes from a Dada Diary* (1932)

*the infinite must be translated in terms of the dominance of the circular*  
Lucien Dallenbach, *The Mirror in the Text* (1977)

Candles, choc-chip cookies and scrunched up pieces of paper are among the materials employed by the three artists in our summer exhibition, *Infinite Jest*. Cinthia Marcelle, Rob Pruitt and William Mackrell are connected by an interest in circular narration, infinite loops and möbius strips. This exhibition is an intricate braid of their work, the title of which has been taken from the complex and gargantuan novel by David Foster Wallace.

The exhibition is dominated by everyday objects employed by the artists to produce resonant artworks. *Infinite Jest* is dedicated to the artist David Weiss who died recently. Fischli and Weiss (who exhibited at DCA in 2000) have been an inspiration to successive generations of artists for their capturing of the 'everyday sublime.'

**Cinthia Marcelle** (b. 1974, Belo Horizonte, Brazil) uses video, collage, painting, sculpture and photography to document the effects of her interventions, which explore coincidences and connections in everyday situations. Her work was recently exhibited to considerable acclaim at both Tate Modern and the New Museum, New York; and she received the prestigious Future Generation Art Prize in 2010. Several key works from the last decade are exhibited at DCA. *Marcelle's endless, simple choreographies comment upon the absurdity of work and play while disrupting the usual order of things to enable new patterns and connections to unfold.*

- Sarah Stephenson, *The Ungovernables*, The New Museum Triennial (2012).

**Rob Pruitt** (b.1963, Washington DC) is one of the USA's best known contemporary artists and is admired for the ingenuity of his art ideas. *Infinite Jest* features a selection of some of his most playful works: *Esprit de Corps*, *Pop-Pop's Chocolate-Chip Cookies* and a new version of one of his signature mineral water fountains. Pruitt has recently had a solo exhibition at Dallas Contemporary, Dallas, Texas and in 2011 created the popular work *The Andy Monument* for the Public Art Fund, New York. He is currently exhibiting at Kunstverein Freiburg, Germany and has a forthcoming solo exhibition at Massimo de Carlo, Italy.

**William Mackrell** (b. 1983, London) is a young artist fascinated by the sublime and the absurd in art and the everyday. Each work is an experiment that he undertakes and the process becomes itself the content. *I like the idea of trying again and again and again and never being able to complete a task* - William Mackrell. Mackrell has had a solo exhibition at the Arts Gallery, London earlier this year and has just been awarded the Emerging Artist Bursary Award from the Royal British Society of Sculptors. Forthcoming exhibitions include The Royal British Society of Sculptors in association with Christie's in July and MOCA, London.

# List of works

## Gallery 1

Cinthia Marcelle

**Confronto (from the series Unus Mundus), 2005**

Video, 7min 50sec, looped

A zebra crossing is interrupted by fire jugglers who increase in numbers every time the lights go to red. This initially benign act becomes confrontational when the amassed group stay in front of the traffic at a green light and horns and tempers soar.

Cinthia Marcelle

**Volta ao Mondo (Round the World) (from the series Unus Mundus), 2004**

Video, 16min 29sec, looped

In which Marcelle carefully disrupts a tree-filled roundabout with an increasing number of white vans which form a circuit and then leave the scene.

*In the chaos of things I find many of my propositions; what becomes mandatory is that, at a certain point, I gain distance and try to reorganise this disorder formally. This happens, for instance, in the aerial views from the series Unus Mundus (2004-05), in which the distance lets us see, down there, a new dimension of things, new circuits. Ideas emanate then from within a turmoil of possibilities from everyday life, in the movement of the bodies, in the appeal of ordinary materials, in intriguing spaces, in accumulation, in the possible magic of the work's world. - Cinthia Marcelle interviewed by Jùlia Rebouças, Flash Art (May/June 2011)*

William Mackrell

**1000 Candles, 2010/2012**

Tea lights, photograph

With *1000 Candles*, Mackrell exhibits a full circle of tea light candles: showing them first unlit, as potential, then lit, as performative object and then left as a remnant. The work is also shown as a photograph and as a video.

*I was working with a torch that had the power of one thousand candles, and the idea was to light one thousand tea lights in a circle on the floor. It was virtually impossible to light all of them because one candle would starve another of its oxygen and because of the heat, I couldn't lean over to light them all. - William Mackrell, Take Two (2012)*

William Mackrell

**Deux Chevaux, 2011**

Video still

Two horses (deux chevaux) attempt to pull a car of the same horsepower through the countryside of Northumberland until they become tired or bored.

William Mackrell

**90 Minutes**, 2012

Cast concrete, photographs

A football squad made up of fourteen participants attempt to play a match with a concrete ball. It is inspired by Saddam Hussein's son Uday, who was reported to have inflicted this punishment on the Iraqi football team for failing to reach the 1994 World Cup Finals. *I wanted to create a rigorous framework using a real pitch with participants dressed in football kits to see how far this idea could be pushed. How would the dynamic change in relation to the weight of the ball? What would the ball become in the aftermath of being used as a performative tool? How would the players interact with each another?* - William Mackrell. DCA is the first venue to show components from *90 Minutes* - an alternative take on 'the beautiful game' of football. The teams in red and blue are exhibited next to the sofas in the foyer. The strips were worn by our Gallery Assistants on the opening night of the exhibition and the ball itself is displayed in the gallery.

Rob Pruitt

**Pop-Pop's Chocolate-Chip Cookies**, 2008

MDF, cookies and framed cookie recipe

Rob Pruitt expressly chose his *Pop-Pop's Chocolate-Chip Cookies* for *Infinite Jest*. Throughout the run of the exhibition DCA gallery staff will bake the recipe and visitors can take a cookie. The large MDF discs sufficiently resemble cookies that when cookies are placed into them they make an ideal example of the *mise en abyme* - *any aspect enclosed within a work that shows a similarity with the work that contains it.* - Lucien Dallenbach, *The Mirror in the Text* (1977). Rob Pruitt not only shares cookies with you, he shares the recipe which we encourage you to try. *I've always loved Rob's work. It's always been bright, fresh, engaging, and thoughtful.* - Jeff Koons, *Rob Pruitt: Pop Touched Me* (2010)

*If you give a mouse a cookie, he is going to ask for a glass of milk. When you give him the milk, he'll probably ask for a napkin...* - Laura Numeroff, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (1985)

## Gallery 2

Rob Pruitt

**Evian Fountain**, 2012

Boxes of Evian, electric pump, plastic sheeting, transformer

The everyday sublime of imported water forming an indoor water feature is emblematic of all the contradictions inherent in the best of Rob's work: *self-evident but enigmatic, banal but affirming, both eternal and of its time, a modest surface concealing a mysterious but above all determinedly seductive core.* - Kirsty Bell, *Rob Pruitt: Pop Touched Me* (2010)

Rob Pruitt

**Esprit de Corps: Cowboy / Mobius Strip, 2006**

Blue jeans, cement

**Esprit de Corps: Borromean Knot, 2006**

Blue jeans, cotton, kapok

Cement filled jeans are given the extra moniker of cowboy on the strength of their light blue, stonewashed appearance. The cotton filled Borromean knot takes its name and shape from a structure in Lacanian psychoanalytic theory - illustrating what Lacan called the real, the symbolic and the imaginary (RSI) orders, are rendered in darker denim. Borromean knots and möbius strips are mathematical symbols expressing infinite cycles - these sculptures also play with the idea of jeans being long-lasting.

Rob Pruitt

**Google Search: Sweetie Sunshine Edinburgh Pandas, 2012**

Screenprint on composit board

For over a decade Rob Pruitt has been well known for his Panda paintings; Edinburgh Zoo is now famous for importing two pandas from China. Working in DCA Print Studio to create this new screenprint, Pruitt uses the image of the Google result of his online search for information on the pandas. He is equally intrigued by the other things that came up too - the Fed Ex aeroplane which transported the pandas and images of other pandas in the wilderness. Pruitt highlights the analogies and contrasts between his process of digital investigation with that of an expedition searching for pandas in the jungle, and the dislocation of the pandas weighed against the preservation of an endangered species. Pruitt plays with the iconic and symbolic power of these creatures. Furthermore, the black and white print echoes both the black and white of the pandas and the potential extinction of printed journalism.

William Mackrell

**Old Kent Road & Hampstead Road, 2012**

C-type prints

Mackrell chronicles incidents where advertising imagery has become dysfunctional - a mass-produced image stumbles and falls, becoming an individual construction. Each photograph is named after the location where the artist has found and documented torn and damaged advertising displays. In a neat loop, the scale of the prints exactly match the actual size of the subject in the photograph.

Cinthia Marcelle

**Leitmotiv, 2011**

Video, 4min 16sec, looped

An empty area is covered, in an instant, by water currents coming from every side, suggesting the beginning of a flood. Little by little, the volume and the rhythm of the tidal waves become more aggressive in a movement that seems to sweep everything towards the centre of the area. Produced by KATÁSIA FILMES + 88, supported by centroequatro Centro Cultural, Belo Horizonte.

Cynthia Marcelle with Jean Meeran

**Capa Morada**, 2003

Photographs

*I mingled with the city, got lost and found myself again in the South African world, which is at the same time close to and distant from mine. No longer in my place of origin, I recognized another possible place. My work comes from the fusion with the world: at the origin of my creative process is the belief that art is not above anything, and the artist is not above anybody – everything mixes.* - Cynthia Marcelle interviewed by Jùlia Rebouças, *Flash Art*, May/June 2011

Cynthia Marcelle

**Cópia Fiel (True Copy)**, 2012

Tissue paper, glass and wood

Marcelle applies tissue paper to the glass inside a frame. She takes reference photographs of windows of shops that have covered up the glass with paper, symbolising transition or closure. These small scale equivalents capture the sense of loss of livelihoods.

Cynthia Marcelle

**com-contra-de-desde**, 2011

Acrylic on industrial fabric

Marcelle harnesses sections of industrially produced striped fabric and applies a meticulous, hand painted layer of acrylic paint both as an equivalent and as a contrast between manual labour and skill.

*The final enclosing isolation of obsession* - David Foster Wallace, *Infinite Jest* (1996)

Cynthia Marcelle

**O Fazedor (The Maker)**, 2007/2012

Crumpled paper and speakers

*The Maker* comprises of thousands of sheets of accumulated paper from the artist and the institution – letters, invoices, calculations, old loan requests, draft press releases, delivery notes etc. Within this mound of paper is the sound of paper being scrunched up, giving the suggestion that the maker is still inside and crumpling up his or her ideas. Exhibited for only the second time, this powerful work communicates creative neurosis that all viewers must at some time have shared. Marcelle was inspired by observing bins of popcorn at the cinema to create this work.

William Mackrell

**1000 Candles**, 2010

Blu-ray

With *1000 Candles*, Mackrell exhibits a full circle of tea light candles: showing them first unlit, as potential; then lit, as performative object; and then left as a remnant. The work is also shown as a photograph and as a video.



## Talks and Events

Book your place on 01382 909 900. For more information visit [www.dca.org.uk](http://www.dca.org.uk).

### John Calcutt Talk

Thu 12 July, 19:00–20:00.

Free but please book in advance.

Lecturer, curator and writer John Calcutt (Leader of the MFA at Glasgow School of Art) makes a welcome return to DCA to deliver a response to *Infinite Jest*. Calcutt will share his insights into the exhibition informed by his research into the cyclical Ouroboros symbol and Robert Smithson's iconic *Spiral Jetty* (1970).

### (((echo)))

Thu 26 July, 18:30–20:00. Free. Drop in.

Come along to this popular event designed to provoke discussions about our exhibitions. There will be a series of temporary interventions and presentations by local artists.

### 1000 Candles reprise

Fri 10 August, from 19:30.

Free but please book in advance.

As part of the Blue Skies Festival we are delighted to welcome William Mackrell back to DCA to relight his *1000 Candles* sculpture and give us another chance to enjoy an out-of-hours view of the exhibition.

## Related Film Screenings

The following films have been selected to accompany the exhibition.

### Dead Of Night

Tue 26 June, 18:00.

A group of men and women gather together in a remote country house and take turns telling horror stories. Each segment was filmed by a different director and they range from an M. R. James-style tale of a haunted mirror, to a comic story about golf-obsessed rivals and Alberto Cavalcanti's segment about a ventriloquist (brilliantly played by Michael Redgrave). Few films show so many of the Ealing team on such superlative form, and as a portmanteau horror movie it is still waiting to be bettered.

Dir: Alberto Cavalcanti, Charles Crichton, Basil Dearden, Robert Hamer / UK 1945 / 1h33m / PG

### After Hours

Tue 21 August, 20:30.

As *Hugo* recently demonstrated, there is a lot more to Martin Scorsese than ultra-violent gangster films. Take this undervalued gem in which a mild-mannered computer programmer goes heads to New York's Soho district for a blind date and finds himself plunged into a nightmare nocturnal odyssey. Griffin Dunne is note perfect as the paranoid, harassed programmer and the supporting cast bring a rogues gallery of cons, kooks and eccentrics vividly to life. Consummately shot, designed and edited this is one of Scorsese's very best films.

Dir: Martin Scorsese / USA 1985 / 1h37m / 15

# Workshops and Activities

## Art Cart

Sat 23 & Sun 24 June; Sat 7 & Sun 8 July; Sat 11 & Sun 12 August, 13:00–15:00. Free.

Drop in for free, fun family activities that explore the exhibition. Create your own DCA art-badge to take away!

## Infinity Factory

Sat 21 & Sat 28 July, 11:00–13:00.  
£3.50, juice and snack provided.  
Suitable for 8–12 year olds  
unaccompanied.

Get inspired by *Infinite Jest!* We'll explore shapes, circles, lines, materials and how some things go on forever. You can work with our artists to make your own print, sculpture, collage or text poem. Make something that you can take away and keep.

## It's Maths-tastic! Art & maths exhibition tour and workshop

Sat 4 August, 11:00–13:00 and repeated 14:00–16:00. £3.50, juice and snack provided.

Suitable for 8–12 year olds  
unaccompanied and family groups.

Join maths and art enthusiast Julia Collins (University of Edinburgh) and our artist team for these special sessions exploring the exhibition. Discover the many exciting mathematical ideas that the artists use; make a möbius sculpture, play with knots and create your own maths-tastic artwork.

## 11–16s Art & Design Summer School Ideas in Action: inspired by the exhibition *Infinite Jest*

Mon 23 July–Thu 26 July, 10:00–15:00.  
Bring packed lunch, juice provided.  
£10 per day / £40 course.  
Suitable for 10–16 year olds.

Join our team of artists to draw, print, make and display your own conceptual art inspired by the exhibition and other contemporary artists. Across the four days you will develop skills in printing, drawing and 3D working while letting your imagination take the lead. Supported by Dundee City Council Education Department.

## Activity Room

Play, learn and create with our free DIY activities inspired by the exhibition in the DCA Activity Room. Our Activity Room is open daily unless it is being used for a workshop.

## Just Ask

Our friendly Gallery Assistants are always happy to help with any exhibition related queries and questions.