

## Exhibition Information

# Kelly Richardson The Weather Makers

Sat 23 September – Sun 26 November 2017

**DCA**  
Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate  
Dundee, DD1 4DY  
01382 909900  
Scottish Charity No. SCO26631

Open daily 10:00-18:00  
Open late Thu 20:00  
Admission free  
[www.dca.org.uk](http://www.dca.org.uk)



## INTRODUCTION

Canadian artist Kelly Richardson creates hyper-real digital films of rich and complex landscapes that have been manipulated using CGI, animation and sound. For her first solo exhibition in Scotland, Richardson has transformed our galleries with vast audio-visual installations, creating futuristic dystopian worlds in which visitors can immerse themselves.

Richardson weaves together myth and metaphor with scientific research and new digital technologies to create epic works such as *Mariner 9* (2012). Spanning the length and breadth of an entire wall in Gallery 1, it presents a panoramic view of an imagined Martian landscape, set several centuries in the future.

In the foreground of this work we encounter the carcasses of previous missions to Mars, dating from the 1970s through to future, imagined spacecraft digitally created to appear aged and time-worn. As Richardson notes, “despite their suggested, abandoned state, several of the spacecraft continue to partially function, attempting to do their intended jobs, to ultimately find signs of life while possibly transmitting the data back to no one.” Has Earth become uninhabitable, leaving Mars as our only escape route? Is Mars the ‘new nature’ we have to look forward to? Is the future one in which technology can triumph over infinite adversities? Or one in which we face ruin on a sublime scale? This billion-dollar junkyard asks us to imagine who and what we may yet become.

*Mariner 9* was created using the scenery-generation software Terragen, used by the film and gaming industries, in combination with technical data from NASA’s missions to Mars to produce a faithful artist’s rendering of Martian terrain.

Further interplanetary imaginings are presented in Gallery 2, in the works *Orion Tide* (2013-14) and *Leviathan* (2011), offering up more earthly but no less cataclysmic worlds that hinge between reality and fantasy. Richardson describes her quietly desolate landscapes as hinting at an “apocalyptic sublime”; an updated, cinematic rendering of the idea of ‘the sublime’ that has endured throughout western culture and art history.

*Orion Tide* presents what appears to be a desert landscape at night, where unidentifiable projectiles – weapons? spacecraft? aliens? – are leaving all at once. The horizon glows and the vast clear sky above shows hundreds of stars. Is this space exploration on a grand scale or some kind of mass exodus? Is humanity leaving Earth once and for all or sending missions to another planet? After all, such mass rocket launches would only be seen in the event of a nuclear conflict, or if technology had advanced to such a stage that thousands could conduct interplanetary travel all at once. The hyper-real, filmic quality of the landscape evokes a sense of uneasy wonder. The starry sky suggests it is night-time and there is no sign that we should expect light pollution from a nearby city, yet we

can see the foreground of the landscape in great detail. What is the source of illumination here? What are we *not* seeing in this imagined landscape?

Moving into the murky depths of another earthly landscape, the triple-screen film work ***Leviathan*** throws up further mysterious questions and quandaries for us to think through. Are we looking at an ancient, forested, primordial world on the cusp of creating life? Or are we taking in a post-human landscape that has experienced cataclysmic floods of biblical proportions, wiping out human existence on our planet?

Richardson created this work using footage shot on Caddo Lake in Uncertain, Texas, portraying the region's unique bald cypress trees in their swamp environment. It is filmed from a single vantage point, like a painting set in motion, and Richardson has digitally enhanced this almost monochromatic setting with strange yellow tendrils of light, undulating and twisting beneath the water. Is this an undiscovered or mutated bioluminescent life-form, or the unknown aftermath of something altogether more disturbing? The artist deliberately leaves it up to us to decide, or to create our own imaginings and meanings.

Displayed alongside these installations, drawing on histories of landscape, wildlife cinematography, science fiction and apocalyptic cinema, are five works from Richardson's most recent dazzling series of C-prints, ***Pillars of Dawn*** (2015-2017). These works envisage desolate future landscapes where environmental conditions have crystallised every inch of a bleak and baleful terrain. As in so many of Richardson's artworks, the images in this series present a scenario in which we might have to look beyond our current planet for refuge and survival. These trees might be the last glimpses of flora on this earth after an epoch of acid rain, smog and ecological calamity.

These images once again not only look to an imagined future but also draw upon the rich historical traditions of Romantic painting, 20th century land art, and black and white photography. Richardson has also cited the influence of her own collection of antique geographic and astronomic prints when developing this series, as well as her longstanding interest in historic wood engravings and lithography.

The exhibition takes its title from the seminal book of the same name by Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers: The History and Future Impact of Climate Change* (2005), which charts the development of global warming across the 20th century. In different ways both Flannery and Richardson ask urgent questions about how we are changing our own climate and what this means for the world we live in. Moving far beyond the written word into the digital realm, Kelly Richardson's works ask us to consider what our future might be like if we continue on our current trajectory of planetary pillaging and consumption and why we have allowed ourselves to arrive at such a moment of global environmental crisis.

## **ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY**

Kelly Richardson (b. 1972, Burlington, Ontario) studied for her undergraduate degree at the Ontario College of Art and Design and her MFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. From 2003-2017 she lived in north east England where she was a Lecturer in Fine Arts at Newcastle University. She currently lives and works on Vancouver Island where she is Associate Professor in Visual Arts at the University of Victoria.

Recent solo exhibitions include SMOCA, CAG Vancouver, VOID Derry, Naturhistorisches Museum Wien and a major survey at the Albright-Knox. Her work has been selected for the Beijing, Busan, Canadian, Gwangju and Montréal biennales, as well as major moving image exhibitions internationally in recent years. Richardson's work has been acquired by significant museum collections across the UK, USA and Canada, from the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, SMOCA and Albright-Knox Art Gallery to the National Gallery of Canada, Art Gallery of Ontario, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Arts Council Collection England and Towner, Eastbourne.

## **NEoN 2017**

NEoN (North East of North) is Scotland's annual Digital Arts Festival - a hybrid mix of exhibitions, installation, performance and sound across the city of Dundee.

As part of this year's festival, Kelly Richardson has been invited to curate an exhibition which references both her own immersive landscapes and the festival theme of Media Archaeology. The exhibition, *Records and Wireframes*, will feature work by artists Paul Dolan and Paul Walde and will run in Centrespace, Visual Research Centre on the lower ground floor of DCA.

*Records and Wireframes* will be open from Sat 11 November - Sun 19 November, Mon - Sun 10:00 - 18:00, open late Thu until 20:00. For more details please visit [www.northeastofnorth.com](http://www.northeastofnorth.com)





*Pillars of Dawn (II)*, 2015 – 2017, C-print





*Pillars of Dawn (III)*, 2015 – 2017, C-print

## TALKS AND EVENTS

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

### Meet the Artist

Fri 22 September, 18:30 – 19:00  
Galleries  
Free, but please book in advance

Join Kelly Richardson and Eoin Dara, Head of Exhibitions at DCA, for an introduction to and discussion of the exhibition ahead of its official opening.

### Exhibition Tours

Daily at 11:00 and 14:00  
Gallery Entrance  
Free, drop-in

Interested in knowing more about the work on show? Join us for one of our twice-daily introductions to the exhibition, led by our friendly Visitor Assistants.

### Tour of University of Dundee Satellite Receiving Station

Sat 30 September, 11:30 – 13:00  
Free, but please book in advance  
Meet at DCA reception to walk up together

Join us for this opportunity to see and hear about the work of the University of Dundee's Satellite Receiving Station. If the timing is right, you may get the chance to see digital images sent by a satellite overhead in real time.

### Senior Citizen Kane Gallery Tour and Workshop

Tue 3 October, 10:30 – 12:30  
Galleries and Activity Room  
Free, but please book in advance

This free event is specially designed during the Luminate festival for our visitors aged 60 and over. Explore the exhibition with one of our friendly Visitor Assistants, then there's the chance to take part in a creative workshop making work inspired by the exhibition. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be on hand to fuel your creativity.

### Curator's Tour of *The Weather Makers*

Wed 18 October, 18:00 – 19:00  
Galleries  
Free, but please book in advance

Join Eoin Dara, Head of Exhibitions at DCA, for a guided tour through the gallery spaces where he'll be talking about the development of this project and drawing out some of the relevant questions that Kelly Richardson subtly asks us to think about when immersed in her expansive installations.

### Echo + Tom deMajo

Thu 9 November, 18:00 – 19:00  
Galleries  
Free, but please book in advance

*Echo* is an evening event of multidisciplinary presentations in response to *The Weather Makers*. Invited guest Tom deMajo, an artist who works with digital visual and audio technologies, will respond sonically to Richardson's vast landscapes in the galleries.



Before deMajo's performance there will be an opportunity for other voices to present ideas. If you would like to share your creative response to the work on show, please submit a short proposal (no more than 300 words) to [exhibitions@dca.org.uk](mailto:exhibitions@dca.org.uk) by Thu 26 October.

Presented in partnership with NEoN Digital Arts Festival.

### **Touching the Moon; Sensing an Asteroid**

Thu 16 November, 19:00 – 20:00  
Galleries

Free, but please book in advance

Landing on the surface of the moon, another planet, a comet or an asteroid is a journey of imagination, scientific discovery and above all engineering challenge. For the past two decades, the University of Dundee has been engaged in this engineering challenge, designing vision-based navigation systems able to safely guide robotic explorers to a safe landing on the surface of other planets. One of its main achievements is the development of PANGU, a software tool for testing these essential vision-based navigation systems.

Professor Steve Parkes, University of Dundee, will introduce PANGU and present a series of images and videos of real and imaginary planetary surfaces.

## **ARTIST'S CHOICE SCREENING**

For every exhibition in our galleries, we offer the artist the chance to choose a film to screen alongside their work. Kelly Richardson has chosen *The Crazies* to coincide with her exhibition.

### **The Crazies**

Fri 27 October, 20:45

Cinema

The late great George Romero's *The Crazies* has always existed in the shadow of his zombie movies, but this epidemic thriller is perhaps the horror maestro's most provocative exploration of his great theme: the collapse of social order.

A military plane crashes in Pennsylvania, releasing a mystery virus into the water supply and turning the nearby residents homicidally insane. The government goes into cover-up mode, soldiers clad in hazmat suits and gas masks sweep in and before long, the gun-owning citizens start to fight back.

Ambiguous to the end, *The Crazies* doesn't distinguish between the madness induced by infection and the mass hysteria caused by martial law and the military's shoot-to-kill measures. As in so many Romero movies, the most alarming thing here is the fine line between sanctioned and deviant behaviour, between Us and Them.

Dir: George Romero  
USA / 1973 / 1h43m / 18

## **FOR YOUNGER VISITORS AND FAMILIES**

### **Art Cart Adventures**

Sat 30 September, Sat 7 October,  
Sat 25 November, 13:00 – 15:00

Level 4

Free, drop in activity

Fun for all ages, Art Cart offers fun, active ways of connecting with themes in our exhibitions and methods used by the artists on show. Join our Art Cart artists to imagine future landscapes and thinking about planets, stars, satellites and space exploration.

### **Talking Art**

Thu 28 September, Thu 26 October,  
Thu 23 November, 18:00 – 20:00

Galleries and Activity Room

Suitable for ages 12-16

£5, please book in advance

Join our friendly Learning team to spend some quality time in our galleries looking at and talking about artworks in our exhibitions, sketching and making something creative in response. These sessions will help any youngsters who are interested in art to widen their experience, through our fun approach to encouraging young people to write and draw their own views and observations.

### **Family Art Lab: Amazing Surfaces**

Sat 18 November, 13:00 – 15:00

Activity Room

Suitable for ages 5+. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Free, but please book in advance

Time to get stuck in together as a family with some more in-depth creative activities led by our team of artists. Stay as long as you like or leave when you need to, these workshops are designed to be flexible. This session is inspired by Kelly Richardson's exhibition and will focus on planetary surfaces, terrain real and imagined; questioning what creates these different kinds of landscapes and making things might we expect to find there too.

### **Activity Room**

Open daily unless being used for a workshop. If you are making a special trip please phone ahead to make sure the Activity Room is open. Children must be accompanied at all times.

Free, drop in

DCA Activity Room is a wee gem; a comfortable and imaginative space right next to the gallery designed for younger visitors and family groups to pop in and enjoy on a visit. You can have a go at DIY art activities, browse our excellent children's art library and make connections with the artists and his work in the exhibition. Take your artwork home, leave it on display or photograph and share it online using #helloDCA or #DCAmakes

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

**Kate V Robertson**

***This Mess is Kept Afloat***

Sat 9 December – Sun 25 February

Gallery 2

Kate V Robertson's first solo exhibition in a UK institution will present a major installation of new sculptural work that draws our attention not only to the walls, but to the floor, ceiling and windows of our most expansive gallery space at DCA.

**Andrew Lacon**

***Fragments***

Sat 9 December – Sun 25 February

Gallery 1

Andrew Lacon's new commission for Gallery 1 is a bold, minimal installation across the whole gallery that challenges our expectations of how artworks are presented and asks questions about how certain raw materials are understood and valued in different contexts across space and time.

## JUST ASK

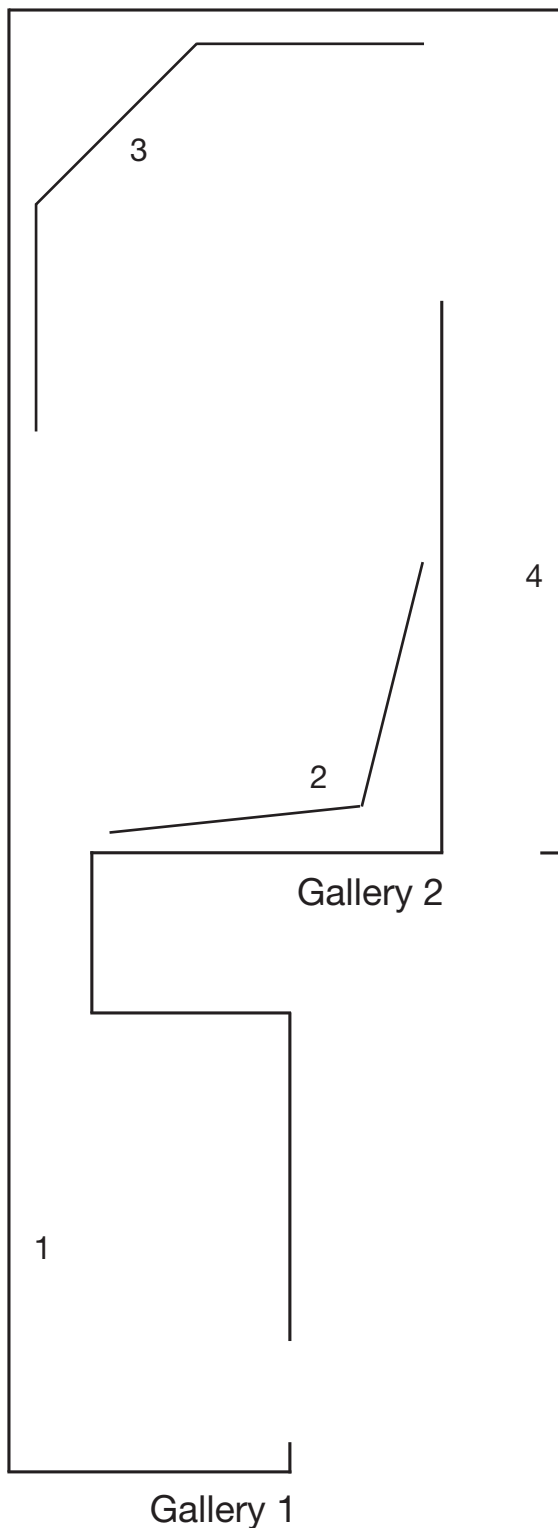
Our friendly Visitor Assistants are always happy to help with your questions.

## KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep up to date with the very latest from DCA by visiting [www.dca.org.uk](http://www.dca.org.uk) or by following us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Tweet us your thoughts on the exhibition using **#helloDCA**.

**Interested to know what's coming up in DCA Galleries? Pick up one of our new Exhibitions brochures to find out what's happening in our future programme.**

## WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION



### 1. *Mariner 9*

2012

3-channel HD video installation  
43' x 9' with 5.1 audio

Commissioned by Tyneside Cinema, UK.  
Supported by Arts Council England,  
Canada Council for the Arts.

### 2. *Orion Tide*

2013 – 2014

Dual channel HD video installation  
32' x 9' with 4.1 audio

Supported by Arts Council England,  
Canada Council for the Arts.

### 3. *Leviathan*

2011

3-channel HD video installation  
48' x 9' with 2.1 audio

Commissioned by Artpace, San Antonio.

### 4. *Pillars of Dawn (II, III, V, VIII, VIII)*

2015 – 2017

C-prints  
40' x 40'

Supported by Arts Council England, NICAP.

Discovery Film Festival is proudly supported by the Alliance Trust Foundation.

*Mariner 9* is presented in partnership with NEoN Digital Arts Festival.