

SARA MACKILLOP / MARY REDMOND
Similar Variance / *The Floating World*

21 August - 10 October 2010

Sara MacKillop and Mary Redmond present new works in a two person exhibition. *Similar Variance / The Floating World* was conceived through a series of conversations between the artists and the curator around the value of the creative process during moments of economic and political transition. Both artists use the language of Modernism to create works that have a precarious and ephemeral quality, in contrast to the solid architecture of the DCA galleries. Although the decision was made to present both artists concurrently, the work has been structured around two separate exhibitions. This enables the viewer to see each part of the exhibition as entirely independent and allows greater time to consider the similarities and distinct qualities of each artist's works, as well as the visual conversations that exist between them.

Both artists' practice evolves through observations of and curiosity in the everyday. One point of similarity is the way they transform and disrupt the original meaning of objects and experiences. This disruption also creates very strong references to the history of sculpture in the late 1960s / early 70s and to artists working with processes, concepts and situations.

Mary Redmond works in the medium of sculpture, using a mixture of found objects and raw materials which are altered, shaped, bent, bashed or painted and then meticulously placed together; making it difficult for the viewer to distinguish between the found object and the hand-made. These carefully placed pieces play with sculptural language: scale, balance, solidity and space. Her use of low-key materials links her to certain contemporaries, notably Camilla Löw, Cathy Wilkes and Sue Tompkins. Redmond's work has been described by writer Dr Sarah Lowndes as "*something*

ordinary made strange". She combines divergent materials – industrial fencing with delicate coloured fabrics into abstract works that refer to fleeting visual and physical experiences. The work produced for *The Floating World* has been created following travels in Asia and creates an enigmatic landscape of chance incidents and encounters.¹

Sara MacKillop finds her materials and objects through everyday life. The selection of often obsolete or end-of-line materials – including wallpaper, vinyl, second-hand books, frames and old stationery - creates a poignant reference to a cycle of redundancy: artefacts slipping from functional use. These subtle and often background objects are transformed by following a number of very simple rules that often involve minimal change to the specific items. In this way they resemble the working process of artists like Sol LeWitt or Daniel Buren. The origin of each piece is never wholly obscured. "*The objects I find are innately interesting and to a certain extent I'm just highlighting that quality, so in this way they find me. However, once you notice a quality in a particular object you inevitably look for further examples*". This quiet subversion consistently produces works with a wry humour that hints at the absurdity of bureaucratic systems and potential ways to transform and navigate everyday life.²

Mary Redmond studied in the Environmental Art Department at Glasgow School of Art and subsequently on the MFA course. She has participated in several group exhibitions in Scotland and abroad, including *Here and Now*, DCA, 2001. She recently completed a major public art commission at the Centre for Health and Science, Inverness. Solo exhibitions have included *Juno and the Stallion*, Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh

(2005), Galerie Christian Drantman, Brussels (2004) and Alona Kagan Gallery, New York (2003). Redmond is represented by Toby Webster/The Modern Institute, Glasgow. In 2009 she received the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Award. She will be exhibiting at the Kunsthalle Oslo in September this year.

Sara MacKillop graduated from the Royal College of Art, London, in 2001. Her work was first seen in Toronto in *Provisional Worlds* at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2002. MacKillop's work has been featured in numerous group shows in England, France, Sweden, Italy, New York and Brooklyn. She has had solo exhibitions at Addendum at the Salle de Bains, Lyon; *New Work*, Jessica Bradley Art and Projects, Toronto; *Certificates of Readership*, Poetry Library, Hayward Gallery, Royal Festival Hall London. Notable group exhibitions include: *The Page*, curated by Matthew Higgs and John Stezaker, Kimmerich Gallery, New York; *Poetry Marathon*, Serpentine Gallery, London. Recently she has been critically recognised with a new generation of British artists such as Iain Kiaer, for the subtle economy of her work. Forthcoming exhibitions include a solo show at White Columns, New York.

1 *Ukiyo (Floating World)* describes the urban lifestyle, especially the pleasure-seeking aspects, of Japan between the 17th and 19th Centuries (Kabuki, courtesans, geisha). The famous Japanese woodblock prints, featuring motifs of landscapes, tales from history, the Kabuki and pleasure quarters were known as *ukiyo-e*, or "*pictures of the Floating World*". The translation in English refers to a concept of impermanent, fleeting beauty and a realm of entertainments separated from the responsibilities of the mundane, everyday world.

2 Michel De Certeau *L'invention du quotidien. Vol. 1, Arts de faire* (1980) / *The Practice of Everyday Life* was translated by Steven Rendall. University of California Press. 1984. De Certeau is a French scholar. *The Practice of Everyday Life* is a key text in the study of popular culture. The book explores the distinction between the concepts of "strategy" and

"tactics". De Certeau connects the "strategies" with institutions and structures of power, while "tactics" are utilised by individuals to create space for themselves. The publication examines the ways in which people individualise and alter mass culture including utilitarian objects, street plans, rules, laws and language, in order to make them their own.

EDITIONS & PUBLICATIONS

Limited Edition Artwork

Together with DCA Print Studio, Sara MacKillop has created a limited-edition artwork titled *Remains*. This has been made from a found book which was itself a complete photocopy of an existing book. It is an attempt to make a book out of a copy. *Remains* depicts attempts to restore the Acropolis, as the artist writes: "*The idea is to take the book one step closer to being a published book by having it perfect bound according to current reprographic traditions and one step further away from a published book by having the pages fading to nothing as the work progresses*".

Similar Variance / The Floating World

A two-part conversation between the artists and Judith Winter, Depute Director/Arts, DCA, and Helen Legg, Director of Spike Island, will be published and available in September. This will be produced on demand by DCA Print Studio and priced at £5.

To receive further information on available editions and publications or to order either of the above, please contact: sandra.derycker@dca.org.uk or visit DCA Shop.

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

Artists in Conversation

Sat 21 August, 2pm-3pm

Join the artists in conversation with Judith Winter, DCA, and Helen Legg, Spike Island.

Gallery Tours

Thu 9 September, 7pm

Sun 25 September, 2pm

Join a DCA Gallery Assistant for an informal and informative tour of the exhibition.

RELATED CINEMA SCREENINGS

Finisterre

Thu 30 September, 6pm

Dir: Paul Kelly & Kieran Evans

Finisterre tries to identify the dreams that London holds for so many, and the reality of the city -- the spaces between the landmarks, the spaces Londoners inhabit.

Presented and scored by Saint Etienne, the film takes us on a journey from the suburbs into the heart of the city over an imaginary 24 hours. Selected by Sara MacKillop. 2003 / UK / 57m / Digital / PG

Ugetsu monogatari (Tales of the Rain and Moon)

Tue 5 October, 6pm

Dir: Kenji Mizoguchi

Famed for its meticulously orchestrated long takes and its subtle blending of realistic period reconstruction and lyrical supernaturalism, *Ugetsu Monogatari* is an intensely poetic tragedy that is a highly acclaimed masterwork of Japanese cinema. Selected by Mary Redmond. 1953 / Japan / 35mm / Japanese with English subtitles / PG

ACTIVITIES

Activity Room

Our creative space has been transformed for the current exhibition and is open every day (when not in use). Make something, play and explore. Activities and materials are provided and themed to link with the exhibition.

Art Cart

Sat 4 & Sun 5 September, Sat 18 & Sun 19 September, Sat 9 & Sun 10 October, 1pm-3pm

Look out for the Art Cart on Level 4, by the galleries. Our artists will help younger visitors to look and notice certain aspects of the show and demonstrate simple, fun activities.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions during your visit to DCA, please do not hesitate to ask the gallery assistants who will be happy to help. Please visit the information space and activity room to find out more about the exhibition and the artists.

For further details on related events, talks, activities and cinema screenings, visit www.dca.org.uk

Galleries open:

Tue - Sat, 10.30am-5.30pm

Sun, 12pm-5.30pm

Open late Thu until 8.30pm

Admission free

Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate, Dundee, DD1 4DY

Tel. 01382 909 900

Charity No. SCO26631