

DashnDem Imagine Being a World Leader

Exhibitions in partnership with **DISCOVERY FILM FESTIVAL**

8 September - 18 November 2012

Dundee Contemporary Arts

Staged to coincide with the run-up to the 2012 American Presidential election, *Imagine Being a World Leader* is an exhibition built from workshops and furnished with the typical paraphernalia of political events - podiums, TV screens, carpet, flags, banners, logos, badges and suits. *Imagine Being a World Leader* creates the framework for a role-play exercise that engages primary school children in leadership and public speaking skills. DashnDem give a voice to young people whilst exposing the mechanisms of rhetoric and political coaching.

First produced in 2008 with the pretext of a fictional Summit for World Change, the project incorporated a professional public speaking coach to lead workshops. For the exhibition at DCA, *Imagine Being a World Leader* has seen DashnDem work with local schoolchildren through DCA's Community & Education team and the results of these workshops have helped form this inspiring, funny and thought-provoking exhibition.

The exhibition sees the gallery become part classroom and part conference hall. The artists have incorporated a backdrop of a stately home with their Summit flags visible. This image is draped onto the gallery wall to suggest the illusions and artifice within political summits.

The workshop becomes a vehicle to analyse the methods used by politicians, public leaders and figures of authority to persuade and win over an audience, challenging the myth of the naturally gifted speaker by demonstrating how, in only a couple of school days, eight-year-old children can be transformed into competent public speakers. The children become the medium through which the viewer might re-examine these mechanisms of control, while at the same time bringing to the children an awareness of how the use of the spoken word can shape their lives.

The project hinges on complete faith in the openness and aptitude of young children.

Daniel Charny, independent curator, writing in the Danish publication *Taenker 001*

Dash Macdonald (b.1983, Wendover, England) and Demitrios Kargotis (b.1982, London) are emerging artists based in Birmingham. They have been working together collaboratively since graduating from the Royal College of Art. Through public performance, social experiment and intervention, their practice explores and exposes the effect of existing socio-political systems and institutional mechanisms. Their work has been exhibited internationally, most recently in Istanbul, Tokyo, Linz, Zurich, Zagreb, Gijon and London. DashnDem currently teach at Coventry University Industrial Design and Visual Art departments and at Birmingham City University Art and Design department.

DashnDem have just produced a film in Harlow, Essex which celebrates the roles of volunteers in a community yet resembles the popular TV show *The Only Way is Essex*. They are currently using the format of televised talent shows to explore what 'sisu' (Finnishness) has come to represent in contemporary Finnish culture, based on their interest in the representational politics of reality television. The resulting work, *Show Your Sisu*, is part of the Baltic Festival 2012.

The artists would like to thank Nicky Connor, Rob Page and Blackness Primary School P5 teachers, pupils and learning support staff.

DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts

Exhibition open: Tue-Sat 11:00-18:00, Sun 12:00-18:00, Open late Thu until 20:00.

Open daily during Discovery Film Festival, 20 October - 4 November 2012. Admission Free.

Discovery Film Festival

Sat 20 October - Sun 4 November 2012

www.discoveryfilmfestival.org.uk

Discovery Film Festival, Scotland's International Film Festival for Young Audiences, takes place annually at DCA and partner venues across Scotland, programmed and produced with the help of our Young Ambassadors. Throughout the year, family screenings, creative workshops and youth film projects bring the magic of cinema to young people in Dundee.

On Sun 28 October at 13:15, and Sun 4 November, we will be screening *I Am Eleven* as a companion piece to the exhibitions. The film is a life-affirming portrait of a group of eleven-year-olds from 15 countries, each speaking in their own words. Their thoughts are at once both fascinatingly similar and reflective of the rich variety of their cultural backgrounds.

Talks and Events

Book your place on 01382 909 900. For more information please visit www.dca.org.uk

Meet the Artists

Fri 7 September, 18:00-19:00

Free but please book in advance.

Join DashnDem, Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen and Graham Domke, Exhibitions Curator at DCA, for an introductory conversation and sneak preview of the exhibition before the official opening.

((echo))

Thu 27 September, 18:30-20:00

Free. Drop in.

Come along and contribute to this popular event designed to provoke discussions about the current exhibitions through a series of presentations by local artists.

Contemporary Art Encounters

Sat 10 November, 14:00-16:00

Free. Drop in.

Join us for Saturday afternoon art schooling with the DCA Gallery Assistants and explore how the current exhibitions relate to themes in contemporary art.

Workshops and Activities

Imagine Being a World Leader Workshop

Sat 15 September & Sat 17 November

14:00-15.30, £3.50

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

Can you change the world? Create and choreograph your own world leader-style speech, learn about how to use gesture and design a world summit badge. This workshop combines drama, performance and art & design, inspired by the work of artists DashnDem. Juice and snack provided.

Art Cart Adventures

Sun 16, Sat 29 & Sun 30 September;

Sat 13, Sun 14, Sun 21, Sat 27 & Sun 28 October;

Sat 10 & Sun 11 November, 13:00-15:00

Free. Drop in.

Drop in for free, fun activities in the gallery that explore our exhibitions. Learn how to use signs and symbols that help people around the world to communicate across language barriers.

Activity Room

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

Just Ask

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

Keep up to date by visiting our website, www.dca.org.uk, or by following us on Twitter or Facebook.

DCA

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**DISCOVERY
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