

CASE HISTORIES

Eamon O’Kane

The Place of Three Bridges
Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Rugby, UK

Panorama: I Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me
The Economist Plaza, London, UK

Meditations on an Ideal Home
Galerie Schuster, Berlin, Germany

The Architect’s House
RARE Gallery, New York, USA

Plans for The Past and The Future
Plan 9, Bristol, UK

Re-enactment
ArtSway, New Forest, UK

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Published on the occasion of the exhibitions:

The Place of Three Bridges, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Rugby, UK
8 July - 31 August, 2008

Panorama: I Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me, The Economist Plaza, London, UK
25 July - 5 September, 2008

Meditations on an Ideal Home, Galerie Schuster, Berlin, Germany
5 September - 25 October, 2008

The Architect's House, RARE Gallery, New York, USA
15 November - 20 December, 2008

Plans for The Past and The Future, Plan 9, Bristol, UK
9 January - 15 February, 2009

Re-enactment, ArtSway, New Forest, UK
27 June - 23 August, 2009

www.eamonokane.com

Published in 2009 by
ArtSway & Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

ArtSway
Station Road
Sway
Hampshire, SO41 6BA
www.artsway.org.uk

Rugby Art Gallery and Museum
Little Elborow Street
Rugby
CV21 3BZ
www.ragm.org.uk

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Page 44 - *I Like America and America Likes Me*, 1974, Joseph Beuys (1921 - 1986) © DACS, 2009

Page 98 - *The Hunt in the Forest (oil on panel)* by Uccello, Paolo (1397 - 1475) © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, UK / The Bridgeman Art Library.

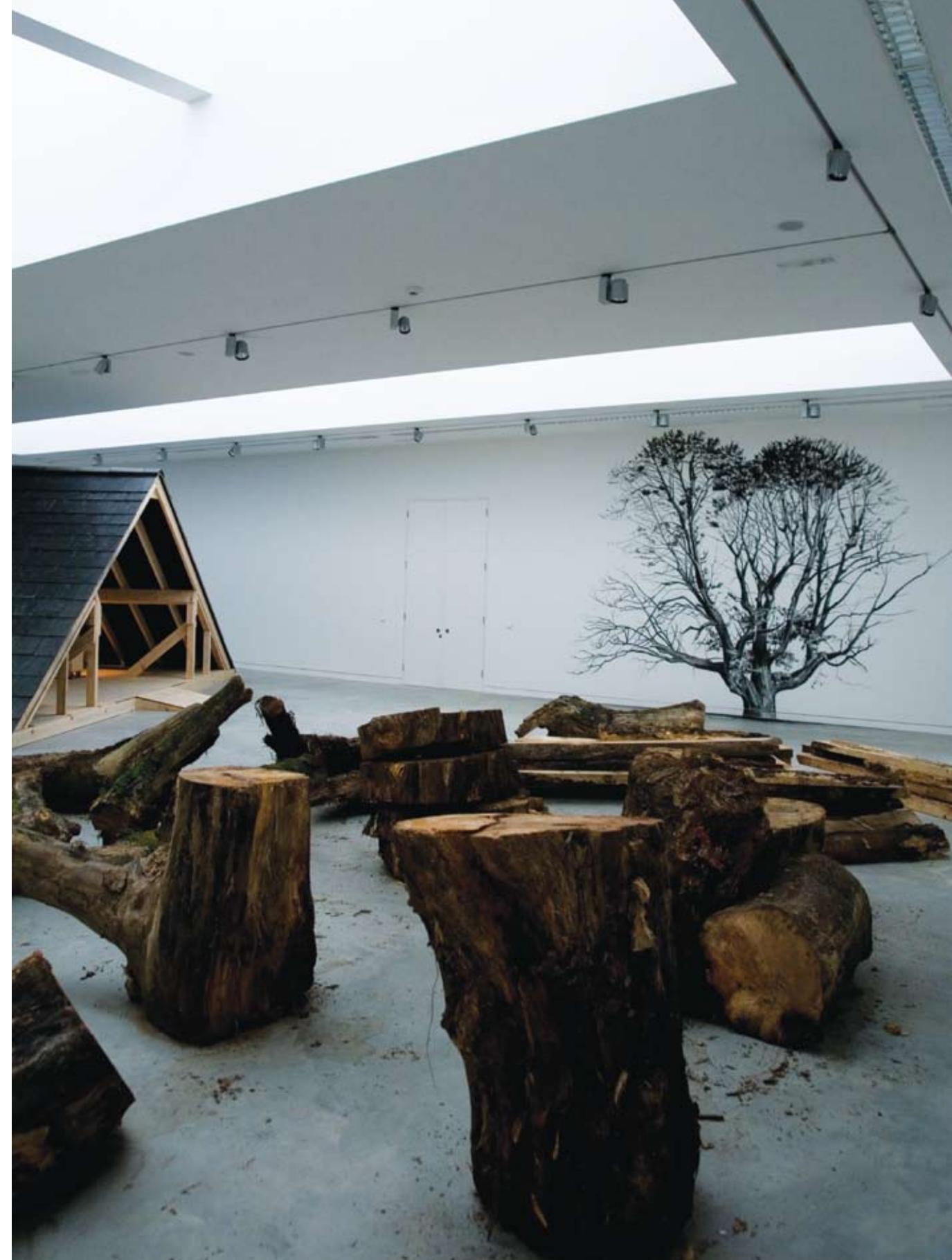
Edited by Jessica Morgan and Peter Bonnell
Design by Eamon O'Kane
Printed by Stephens and George, Merthyr Tydfil
Photography by Eamon O'Kane; Cary Whittier (pages 70-77); Eamonn O'Mahony (pages 62-65)

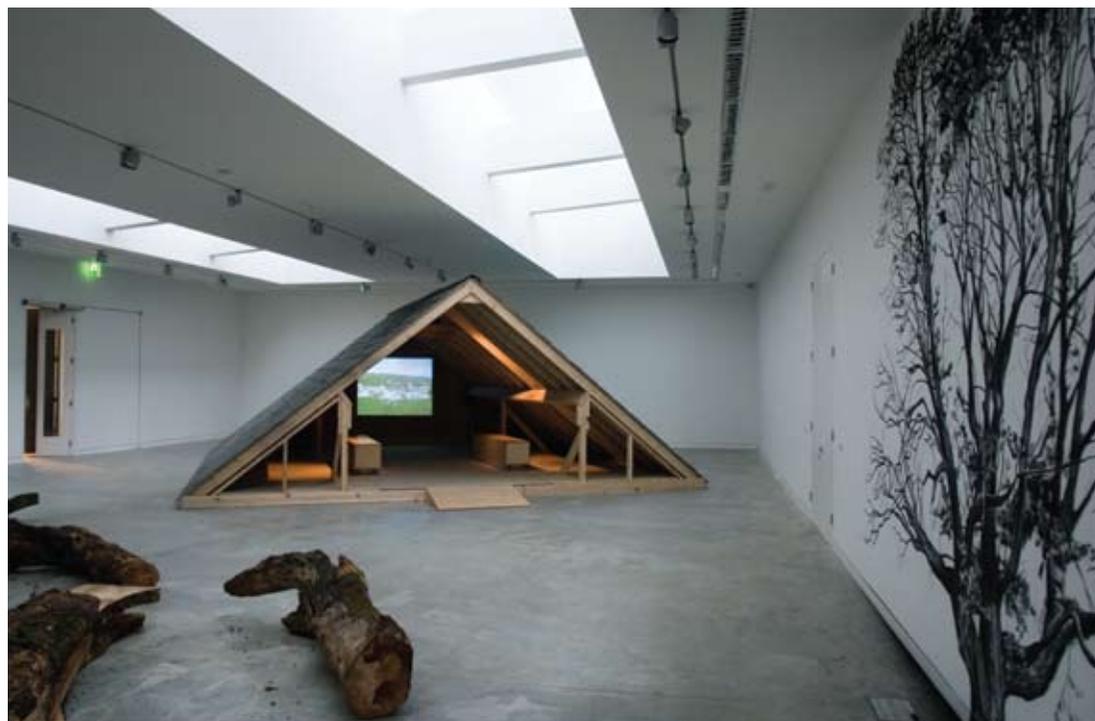
ISBN: 978-0-9558406-6-1 [ArtSway]
ISBN: 978-0-9550829-3-1 [Rugby Art Gallery and Museum]

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data. A catalogue record for the publication is available from the British Library.

Opposite and following page: *The House and the Tree*, installation views, slated roof structure with video and audio installation, sycamore tree, charcoal wall drawing, vinyl text, RCC, Letterkenny, 2008.





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Introduction

Peter Bonnell



King James II
Oil on board, 27.5 x 37 cm
2009

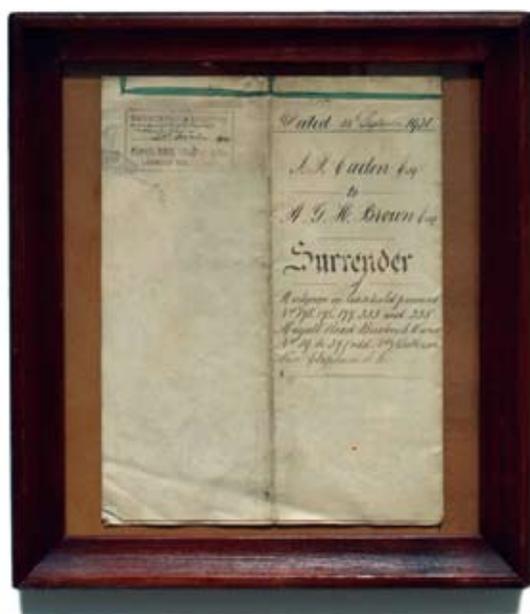
Eamon O’Kane is an artist who appears to be in perpetual motion. His conceiving and making of layered and intellectually rigorous work, and the machinations involved in getting that work exhibited, is almost Herculean in scale and scope. From his studio near Odense in Denmark O’Kane travels far and wide - particularly across Europe and North America - accepting invitations from numerous galleries to exhibit his work. There is a wonderfully delicate sense of irony in this prolific and at times heroic globetrotting: although not a unique conceit, O’Kane’s work is often highly personal and autobiographical, intimate even - but also wide-ranging and eclectic. There are no loose ends in O’Kane’s work, but many threads to follow.

Case Histories is a touring project in six parts, generously funded by Arts Council England Grants for the Arts, that has been in development for almost four years. The very first presentation in the tour, *The Place of Three Bridges* at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum took place in the summer of 2008 and was followed by presentations at The Economist Plaza / Contemporary Art Society in London; Galerie Schuster, Berlin; RARE Gallery, New York City; Plan 9, Bristol, and finally at ArtSway in the New Forest in the summer of 2009. *Case Histories* as a project showcases the many concerns that permeate O’Kane’s practice, such as architecture and architectural history;

historical and modern events; art history and the interpretive role of the artist.

The project has focussed on how history can be constructed and manipulated, particularly in terms of societal constructs in relation to the natural world. O’Kane’s interest in architectural practice and form is juxtaposed throughout the tour with elements of the natural world, and how manmade structures impose themselves on that world and vice-versa. O’Kane’s exhibition at Rugby, the beginning of the tour, examined the Tripontium Collection of Roman artefacts from the museum collection, commenting on Roman influence on ancient and modern Britain and the gradual appearance of non-indigenous trees to the British Isles - a comment on man shaping and changing the natural world. As the tour developed O’Kane’s interest in the panorama manifested itself in the work *Panorama: I Like Shopping Centers and Shopping Centers Like Me*. His free-standing wooden structure situated in the courtyard of The Economist Plaza featured within it work viewable only through small viewing lenses, that included representations of trees found in nearby Green Park, and echoing elements of the exhibition at Rugby.

O’Kane’s panorama was inspired by both Joseph Beuys’ seminal first action in America, *I Like America and America Likes Me* in 1974, and the



Probate & Surrender
Mixed media, 44.5 x 16 cm, 31 x 34 cm
2009

work of Victor Gruen, an architect credited with inventing the shopping mall as a utopian space where people could meet and shop, but who later became disenchanted with his creation as it spread across the world. Both these influences are deeply disenfranchised in a certain way, and evoke O’Kane’s interest in urban planning through architectural forms, and how these can at times blight and disturb the environments in which we live.

Both international exhibitions featured in the tour, *Meditations on an Ideal Home* at Galerie Schuster in Berlin and *The Architect’s House* at RARE Gallery in New York - explored further notions of utopia and utopian living environments in modern society, as propounded by ‘the architect.’ But in the case of the New York exhibition, O’Kane referenced literary and filmic ideals that are, in almost all instances, impossible to fulfil, thereby neatly expounding on the inherent failure of the panorama itself, and utopian ideals inherent in modern architecture, and modern living.

The two final exhibitions in the tour, *Plans for The Past and The Future* at Plan 9 in Bristol, and *Re-enactment* at ArtSway, appear to gather together a number of important threads within O’Kane’s *Case Histories* project, to ultimately lead back to that most personal of architectural icons: the family home, and specifically his parents’ home - a seventeenth century house situated in County Donegal in the north-west region of Ireland. O’Kane’s deliberate muddying of historical waters, in turns becoming a critique of how history can be at times highly mendacious, is intricately layered as with the other often eclectic elements to *Case Histories*. *Re-enactment* features two new films - one a ‘hunt’, the other a ‘meal’ - both set at once in the present-day New Forest, and also in late seventeenth century County Donegal. The meal film is a recreation of an actual event - a meal that King James II enjoyed at the house of John Keyes, as the ‘unfortunate monarch’ was on his way to

Derry to suppress an uprising against his rule. As he and his army retreated the King ordered everything on his route to be burnt, saving only Keyes’ house at Cavanacor, the very house bought by O’Kane’s parents in 1974, the year the artist was born.

The multi-layering of ideas, like peeling away the layers of an onion, is integral to O’Kane’s work. The furniture featured in the meal film, and used as props by authentic seventeenth century re-enactors from the Earl of Essex Regiment of Foote, was constructed and then exhibited during the presentation at Plan 9. That this furniture was constructed from wood from the very sycamore tree under which James II had his historic meal, wood shipped directly from O’Kane’s parents house, adds an aura of authenticity and pathos to his exhibition at ArtSway, and also to this very book. The house in which O’Kane grew up, that inspired him, and one that provided the basis for a thesis during his studies appears a catalyst for a body of work that is *Case Histories*.

There are many people to be thanked for making this publication possible - in particular, of course, Eamon O’Kane for producing such accessible, yet layered work, making *Case Histories* an important and richly realized project. Jessica Morgan’s co-management of the tour and co-editing this book has been exemplary. Mark Segal’s support of O’Kane’s design was essential. Grateful thanks go to both Paul O’Neill and Paul Hobson for insightful conversations with the artist, and very special thanks go to Dan Cameron for a thought-provoking and highly concise essay of O’Kane’s work, succinctly encapsulating the relevance of *Case Histories* to the artist’s practice as a whole.

Peter Bonnell is Curator of Exhibitions and Education at ArtSway.



The Place of Three Bridges II (Top) *The Place of Three Bridges I* (Bottom)
Both pencil on paper, 150 x 300 cm
2008



<
Hybrid Landscape
>
Building on Cloth Landscape II
Both charcoal on paper, 150 x 100 cm
2008



<
Building on Cloth Landscape I
>
Building on Rock Formation
Both charcoal on paper, 150 x 100 cm
2008





The Place of Three Bridges
Installation views, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum
2008





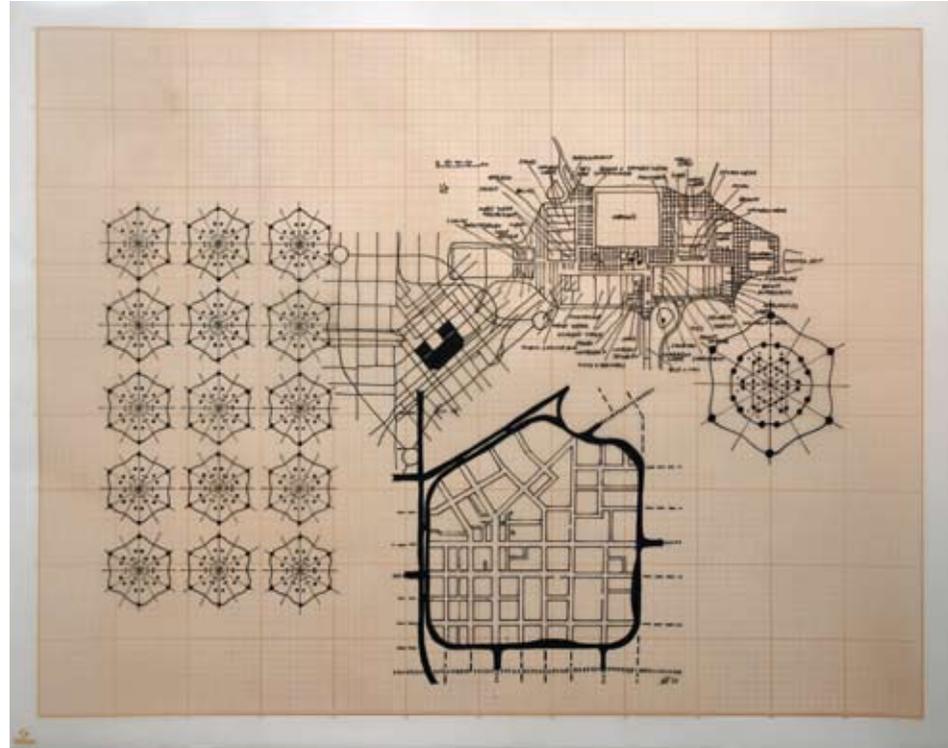
Hybrid Portraits
Oil on acrylic on paper, 150 x 300 cm
2008



The Place of Three Bridges
Installation view, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum
2008

Essay: Partial View

Dan Cameron



Gruen Plan Remix
Pen on paper, 42 x 60 cm
2008

Although nature and its range of possible representations provide his ostensible subjects, Eamon O’Kane’s artistic practice is deeply rooted in the artist’s enduring love-hate relationship with the institutional structures that contemporary art requires for its very survival. Museums, art galleries, libraries, cultural centers, public agencies, corporate headquarters, charitable foundations, and university faculties – among other manmade organizations – possess both a physical reality and an abstract identity as intellectual constructs, both of which we generally take for granted as providing a more or less invisible, or neutral, backdrop for the art object. For O’Kane, the relationship between an artwork and its socio-cultural context is anything but neutral, and his art’s attempted reconciliation with history far from resolved. On the contrary, every representation of nature in O’Kane’s work tends to be conditioned by – one could even say tangled up with – the terms of its location within the constructed world, including, as its base line, the artist’s home and studio.

It’s not hard to illustrate the means by which this built-in ambivalence toward art’s institutionalization becomes constituted. In the vast majority of cases, a painting hangs on a wall, which forms part of a building, which sits on a plot of land, that itself is situated within an urban complex, which has in turn been developed in counterpoint to the natural ecosystem that surrounds it. If we take as a starting place that this

painting hanging on the wall is a representation of nature, then on some level it is also a picture of the struggle to reconcile the distance – both literal and metaphorical – between the invented image and the reality it depicts, several layers away. One way of envisioning this struggle is as a series of concentric rings, in which the innermost and outermost rings are both recognizable iterations of nature, separated by several intermediate layers of a non-natural (but no less material) reality. Even the plot of land where the building is situated is more part of the constructed world than its natural counterpart, since its perimeter and borders have likely been determined by factors that are inherently non-environmental.

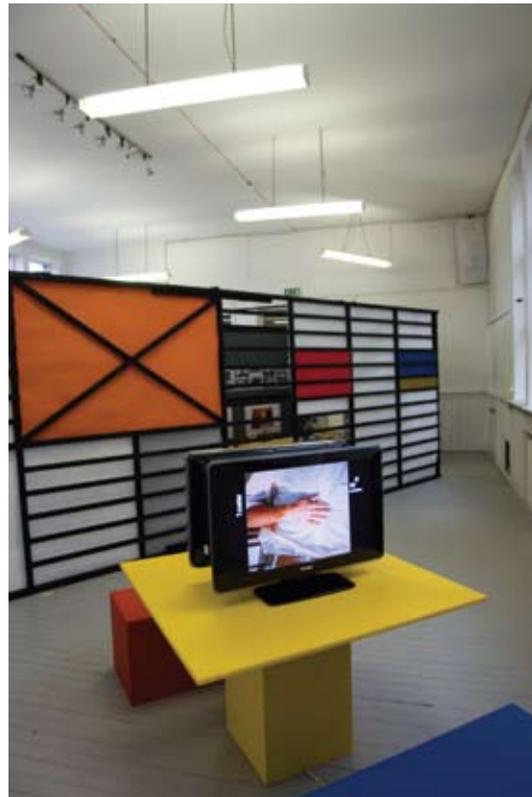


Ideal Home series, Pool South View Mid Afternoon, oil on canvas,
120 x 150 cm, 2008

Since at least 2005, which is when this writer first became acquainted with his work, O’Kane has used architecture as a jumping-off point for his meditations on nature by way of its mirror-opposite. One highly successful manifestation of this project is the *Ideal Homes* series, in which iconic houses and housing styles from Bauhaus through Brutalism are transposed into idyllic settings, surrounded by lush sylvan landscapes that are only partially visible, but nonetheless designed to instill a kind of envy in the viewer for their impossible mix of utopian fantasy and bucolic sublime. That such combinations of built and natural spaces are largely impossible to realize in actual life seems to be O’Kane’s point: somewhere along the way, once Modernism had shelved the Romantic attachment to nature as the ultimate point of reference, the very possibility of living in harmony with the natural order seemed irrelevant, except as a kind of anti-modern regression. Exceptions to this dichotomy do exist - many of Frank Lloyd Wright’s houses and studios are ideally sited within their landscape - but the elusive goal of a utopian lifestyle for the working classes, as envisioned by Le Corbusier, ended up drastically short-changing any aspirations toward balance on the part of its actual inhabitants.

O’Kane’s *Ideal Homes* series provides a kind of forlorn look backwards at the twentieth century’s dubious legacy of utopian ideals fused with standardized practices. That these re-contextualized structures are presented as a kind of perfection which does not actually exist generates a slight tug at our sense of the beautiful, as if suggesting that the ingredients for getting the formula correct were there all along, but we can only avail ourselves of them today through acts of creative revisionism. To reinforce this feeling of imaginary perfection, O’Kane imbues many of his images and structures with a palpably nostalgic sheen, as if to suggest that the search for a way forward begins with a more incisive, less doctrinaire, interpretation of the recent past. His impersonation of the role of architect functions in much the same way, deliberately confusing

the identities of artist and urban planner, while carefully omitting most of the cues necessary to let the viewer in on the deception. In this way, works like the *Architect’s Studio*, shown in 2008 at Galerie Schuster in Berlin, and the 2009 *Eames Studio Limerick*, do not invite the public to concern themselves with the purported authenticity of the situation, but instead lures them into an interactive exchange with aspects of the history of architecture that had previously been understood as fixed in time and place.



Eames Studio Limerick, mixed media installation, 2009

For his 2008 installation at The Economist Plaza in London, O’Kane built a freestanding circular panoramic structure whose interior could be viewed only through a row of viewing lenses placed along the outer wall. With its suggestion of construction sites where the passersby can follow the real-time progress of a building’s erection, O’Kane’s project, titled *Panorama: I*

Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me, makes ironic use of the title for Joseph Beuys’ watershed performance piece to further underscore the conditional nature of the artwork in its setting. Rather than offer slightly shifting views of a uniform subject, O’Kane’s lenses enable viewers to peer at renderings of cityscapes, architectural models and sculptures of plants that all subtly contradict one another in scale and perspective, along with occasional glimpses of the actual office building towering over the entire panorama. From some perspectives, plants appear to overwhelm buildings, while from others the vista is foreshortened by our gazing into an empty studio or office. As none of the lenses provides a synthesized view of the structure in its entirety, viewers are more or less forced to absorb the work piecemeal, accumulating a series of partial perspectives that, taken separately, offer conflicting perspectives on what’s actually inside.



Panorama: I Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me, mixed media installation, view through lens, 2008

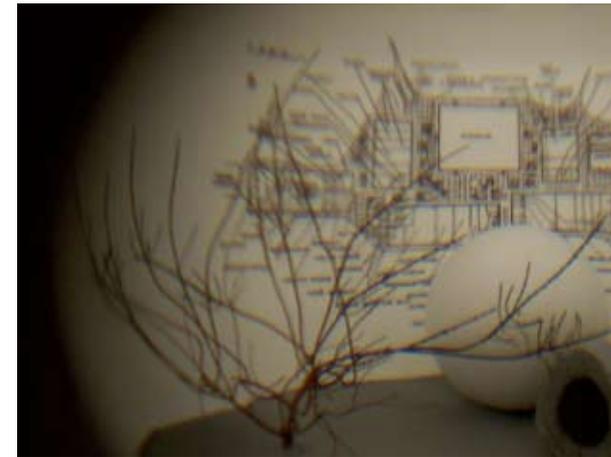
All of these works - along with a concurrent investigation into the botanical legacy of the Roman Empire in Britain, and an installation that addresses the overlapping histories of his parents’ home in Ireland and the siege of Derry by King James II in 1689 - have been assembled together under the collective title *Case Histories*. The title is revealing insofar as it further underscores the influential roles of psychology and memory in the interwoven histories of nature, country, family, art, and architecture that O’Kane deploys

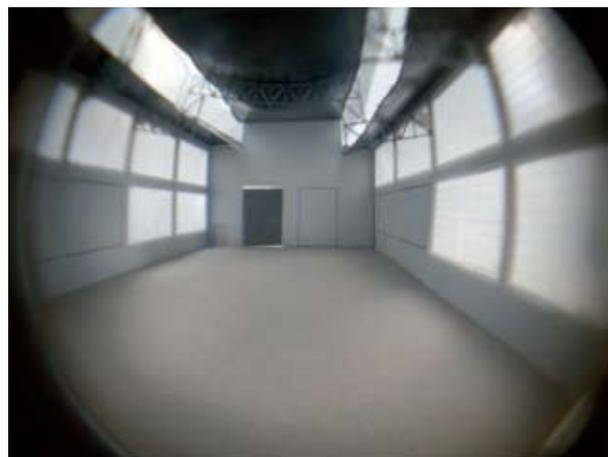
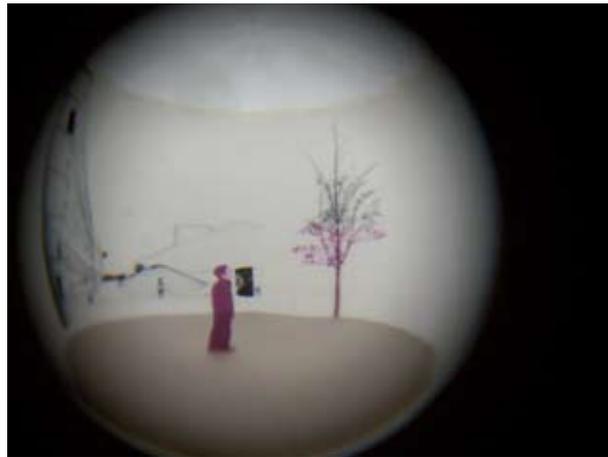
as his building blocks. In a sense, each installation describes one of several distinct typologies, within which a range of related issues can be understood using a changing set of variables. As employed by Freud, among others, to indicate an ongoing body of research, each separate narrative diagnosing a distinct pathology, O’Kane’s title also indicates that in his work the problem of history, and the artist’s relationship to it, is the question that most closely ties an artist to the fundamental uncertainties of his era. A collective anxiety regarding the collective future tends to be the ideal justification for coming to terms with the problematic world of the past, which none of us actually built, but all of us inhabit.

Panorama: I Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me
Wooden structure with 2.4 x 30 metre painting, models and lenses
Installation views, The Economist Plaza, London, 2008
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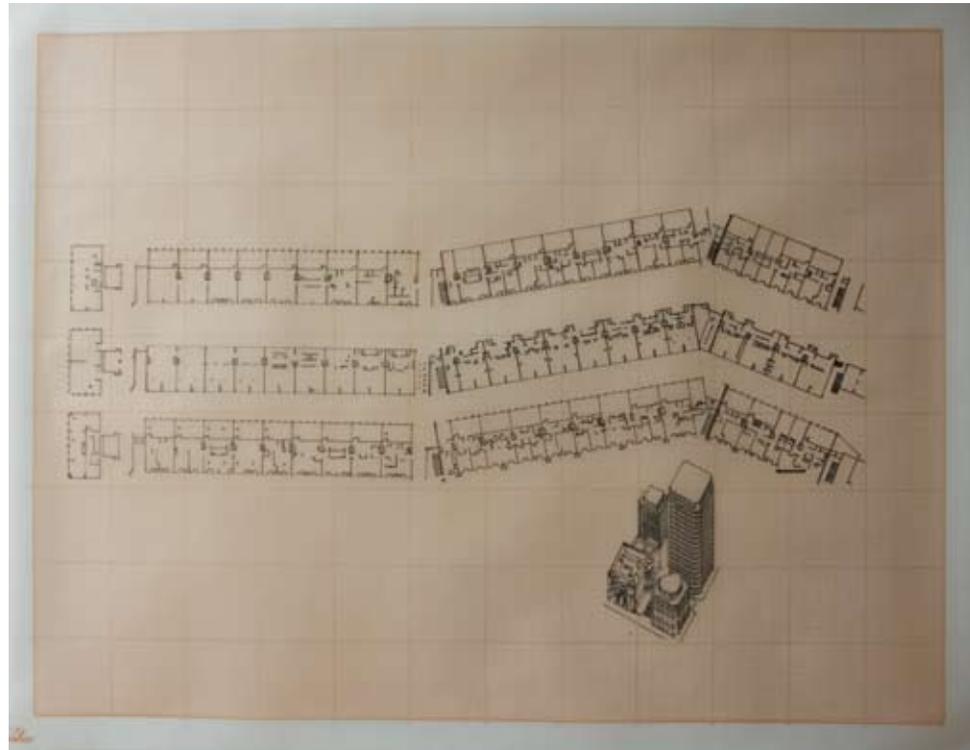




Panorama: I Like Shopping Centres and Shopping Centres Like Me
Wooden structure with 2.4 x 30 metre painting, models and lenses
Installation view, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, France, 2009

In Conversation: The Economist Plaza

Eamon O’Kane and Paul O’Neill



Smithson's Plan Remix
Pen on paper, 42 x 60 cm
2008

Paul O’Neill: I am very grateful for this opportunity as it has allowed me to think a little more deeply and a bit more circumspectively about your practice and I think that in some ways this formalized setting allows that to happen. I’m going to start with a quote, which is by William Wordsworth. It’s a description of the panorama found in the seventh book of the 1805 Prelude and I’ll read it out in its entirety because it is quite wonderful and relevant.

*‘At leisure let us view from day to day,
As they present themselves, the spectacles
Within doors: troops of wild beasts, bird and beasts
Of every nature from all climes convened,
And, next to these, those mimic sights that ape
The absolute presence of reality
Expressing as in mirror sea and land,
And what earth is, and what she hath to shew -
I do not here allude to subtlest craft,
By means refined attaining purest ends,
But imitations fondly made in plain
Confession of man’s weakness and his loves,
Whether the painter - fashioning a work
To Nature’s circumambient scenery’*

The thing that struck me about Wordsworth’s poem but also seeing your panorama outside was the line that says ‘I do not here allude to subtlest craft.’

I think that what Wordsworth’s actually implying in this expression is that panoramas in themselves,

since they emerged in the nineteenth century, were very much about this possibility that a certain form of reality could be constructed however falsely or however artificially and that artificial reality was a form of escape; of virtuality; a form of expectation that was imposed upon the viewer or the mobile-spectator, who by immersing themselves would somehow be transported elsewhere from the absolute presence of reality.

What Wordsworth is referring to in this idea of ‘subtlest craft’ is that there is a complete collapse or a complete failure of the panorama to actually bring the individual subject from here to somewhere else. We are going to start the conversation, in terms of this idea of a certain construct of reality, which is a failed reality or a failed possibility of immersing the viewer in somewhere else or travelling elsewhere beyond the place from which they are actually situated.

I suppose the question, put more simply, is as to why the panorama now and why situated next to the Economist building which is a late Modernist classic?

Eamon O’ Kane: It’s a weird thing to admit to but I’m a bit of a panorama nerd. I’ve been into panoramas since before studying at art college. I’ve produced different types of panoramas and I’ve worked collaboratively in teams on panorama workshops internationally, one in Athens where

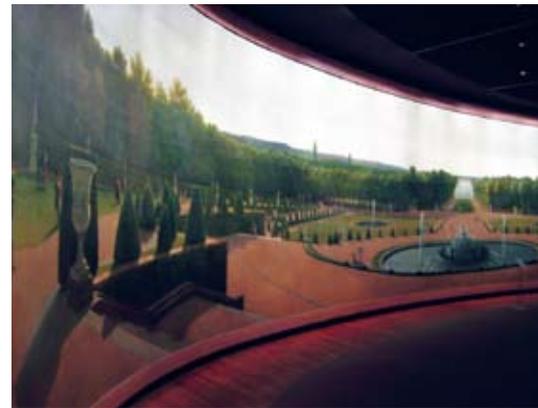
we constructed a typical panorama 4 metres high with a circumference of about 120 metres in order to give the right focal point and a platform in the centre. I also produced a panorama in Rotterdam.

On the first level I was into the romantic notions of being an artist and all that embodied, and panoramas had an appeal for some reason; as had the scale and physicality of the things. Just before I started at art college I was working on a building site and I got a tremendous sense of scale from having to approach huge walls with buckets of white paint or slating a roof with thousands of slates. The two things came together for me. There was this interest in the scale and the immersion in landscape and architecture, but also in something that was democratic in a way, and not only democratic in the way that maybe you are suggesting Paul, in terms of their inherent failure, and I'll talk about that in a moment, but democratic in terms of it being a mass medium. There were permanent panoramas in buildings built specifically to house panoramas like *Panorama Mesdag* in Holland and *The Bourbaki Panorama* which features in Jeff Wall's work *Restoration*. There were also travelling panoramas which were constructed in tents, like circus tents, where one paid their money and entered to view another time and place, visiting Versailles or transported to the battle of Waterloo.

As you say, it was a medium doomed to failure, as it tried to do something which is physically impossible - to see something in 360-degrees one needs eyes in the back of one's head. There is also this idea of a virtual space and the transporting of the individual and that's where there is another level of democracy about the medium as it is about travelling without moving

The phenomenon of the panorama was a precursor to cinema and was essentially killed off by the advent of cinema. Another aspect of it that interested me, and this really developed much further when I was studying design technology in New York, was the way the panorama and not cinema linked in seamlessly to virtual reality and the way that the

failure of the panorama is linked into the failure of the proposition of virtual reality; this idea that one can be immersed in another world or truly escape to another world. Virtual reality technologies have a lot in common with the structure of the panorama in that they are constructed on the basis of an illusion and are essentially a flat screen or projection that one pans across and moves into.



Detail from *Panorama Interface*, Eamon O'Kane, 2000, partly based on the Vanderlyn Panorama, Metropolitan Museum, New York

PO'N: What you are talking about is the failure of the apparatus itself, the failure of the panorama as a construct in itself, in terms of a transposition from a here to an elsewhere. But what surprised me when actually seeing the work on its outside was how certain elements or certain decisions made were made by you so as to make it 'your panorama', such as inviting the viewer to peep through the holes to see another false staging of a set, a made-up, falling apart environs within, one which was folding in and out of itself. There is an enforced sense of a false representation of yet another reality that was being depicted inside 'your panorama'. You could see through some of the lenses that the DIY materials, the buckets sitting in the corner, the wrapping tape, were all there to see as a stage-set, but you could also see the sky and the cityscape, which were folding in on top of this false representation made up of part London cityscape - part Blanchardstown, Dublin cityscape. And they are obviously decisions that you made to superimpose. There are these triggers to remind

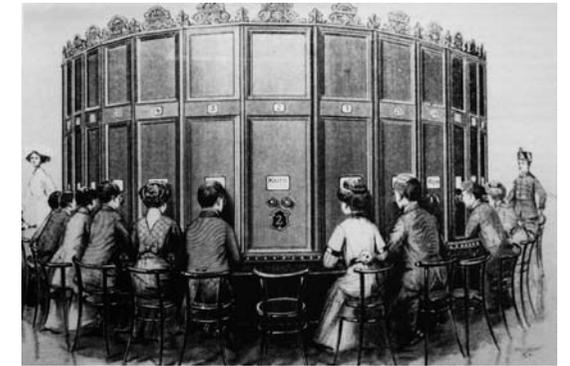
the viewer that something doesn't quite fit with their expectation, so the technological-devise, as such, doesn't actually succeed in providing that transportation - this transportation - to some other place, it reminds you of where you are: you are situated in The Economist Plaza.

So in terms of 'your panorama' why were those decisions made?

EO'K: I wanted the materials to reflect the content of the artwork and I wanted to buy all the stuff in hardware and home improvement stores in the UK and America. It's all stuff one can acquire quite easily in these places: piping insulation, door viewers, 2x2 timber, paint, buckets, sand, plywood, etc. I wanted to use materials that are used in the construction industry, whether the materials are actually used in the building process itself or to disguise the building during the process. I really wanted the work to echo the hoarding constructions that are used on building sites. So that's one level of the decision-making but I also wanted the work to have a reference to the domestic space and that's why the door viewers are quite particular. I wanted it to refer to something that was voyeuristic, but also connected to a domestic setting, to housing, to a home, but looking inside from the outside not the reverse. That's one of the reasons why the way you experience the work is connected to the uncanny or unheimlich in German; un-homely.

I started working on the idea back in 2004 during a residency on the artists work programme at the Irish Museum of Modern Art. It was conceived for Blanchardstown, for Draíocht Arts Centre. I wanted to make a series of artworks that were site specific to Blanchardstown and I chose the shopping centre as one of the venues as well as the arts centre. But because of numerous issues with the shopping centre itself it ended up being shown in the arts centre along with the rest of the exhibition. I wanted to take the situation of Blanchardstown that had been a greenfield site, which had grown into the second largest shopping centre in Ireland, as well as all the other buildings

including the arts centre and cinema. I wanted to construct a piece that was intimate in a way, but also had a tremendous sense of scale built into it.



Drawing of Kaiser Panorama, circa 1883

So, I chose to mix the phenomenon of the panorama with another nineteenth century construction, that of the *Kaiser Panorama*. One is about looking from the centre out and the other is from the circumference in. One is an experience of something very large scale and the other is viewing through lenses to something quite small scale. There is a paradox in hybridising the two. I wanted to present a panorama of the area or locale to the people from the area using the shopping centre and other buildings. I didn't want it to be an artwork that was preaching something or telling people how to live their lives. I wanted to conduct a research process about a specific place. So the panorama was a 360-degree vista right outside the arts centre and then I superimposed a forest on top of that image so one was looking through trees at the urban space beyond. The effect was as if there was a return to the original state of the landscape with the trees growing up out of the road and pavement.

Nature is often an afterthought in urban planning. Seeing a tree in tarmac one is transported somewhere, perhaps, but it has been put there to perform a perfunctory role. I wanted to transcribe the image of these trees so that they would mark the walls of the building and coexist as ghosts with their counterparts

outside viewed through the glass façade of the arts centre.

In the panorama I wanted to have the sense of something very big that looked very small, and something small that looks very large so that they meet somewhere in the middle, and this occurs because of the nature of the lenses. The viewing experience is intimate and becomes about the transportation from something or somewhere quite mundane to a place which is quite fantastical, and also a place which is about propositions or ideas rather than a reality or realization of those ideas.

PO’N: Blanchardstown is, or at least was, a predominantly working class suburb of Dublin; it’s a satellite town and it’s got an arts centre there where you showed the work previously. It’s ultimately most known because it has an incredibly large shopping centre, people go there to buy their Christmas shopping and they would prefer not to go there if they had an alternative option. So there are certainly some formal relations between the structure outside and the buildings that surround it that wasn’t apparent within its juxtaposition in its previous context.

To situate it here, in a location more connected to early Modernism, that is late nineteenth century - early twentieth century architectural history of London, with the various arcades that are still here. And offering another vision of the modern man, whereby the possibility of this apotheic vision for the future and the loss of an atomised individualised mode of living and dwelling is so representative of this historical and consumerist shift from that of the city arcade to suburban supermarket. Somehow with this shift of the work away from the suburb and into the city something else happens to your work by transposing it from suburb to city, and I’m wondering how comfortable you might be with how it effectively changes the work in a direction that you might not have thought about previously, or from the outset, when firstly making the initial work in Dublin?

EO’K: I’m definitely very comfortable with the change of location, but it has changed in a direction that I hadn’t thought about previously. The questions that I was engaging with in Blanchardstown were about a recently rendered canvas as the build up of the urban space was fairly recent. Ten years previously it all would have been farmland. Now with the work coming to London it is engaged with something that has been rendered for centuries, that is fully formed, but still changing and in transition.

The artwork is going to Paris next in 2009, to the Centre Culturel Irlandais in the centre of the city near the Pantheon. The panorama will be installed in the courtyard at the centre, and strangely this brings it almost full circle for me. It brings it back to the idea of a clean slate as a proposition through engaging with Le Corbusier and his ‘Plan Voisin’ for Paris, his propositions of vertical cities and his ideas for levelling parts of the centre of Paris in order to build these utopian environments.

The interest in The Economist Plaza developed out of the initial inspiration for the piece when I conceived it in Dublin and it evolved organically in many ways. I was interested in how Victor Gruen, who invented the shopping mall and who was an émigré who pre-war went to America via England, envisaged the shopping mall as a utopia, turning the arcade or the street inwards so one is surrounded by all the shops, and he wanted it to form communities. He ended up heading back to Austria totally disillusioned, his creation, his vision of a utopia, becoming a monster. The work also relates formally to The Economist Plaza and the buildings, the hexagonal shape. I like the idea that the piece looks like hoarding for a mini tower, another tower. The Smithson’s initial concept for The Economist Plaza involved a modular approach for the building, so although it has a totally different function, it is similar to Victor Gruen’s plan for the shopping mall in its modularity. Victor Gruen was the same generation as Mies van de Rohe, Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer and they all came across to America around the same time.

Victor Gruen is the least known of them in terms of the architectural canon but possibly the most pervasive in terms of dissemination of an idea as there are shopping malls and centres everywhere. I can relate to the Smithson’s visions of utopia and their belief in ideas and how they were propelled forward by these ideas. With projects such as *Robin Hood Gardens* and other social housing projects, they seemed to realize in hindsight that their dreams could turn into nightmares and that the form and function didn’t necessarily match each other or the context.

I recently had a conversation with my dad when he visited me in Paris whilst I was doing a residency there and we were talking about Le Corbusier. He talked about an experience he had around the time of the Divis Flats in Belfast being built, or a while after they were built. The Divis Tower was built in 1966 so it was probably the late sixties he was talking about. He was at a party in Belfast and was talking to some architects who were involved with the implementation of the project and they were saying how great the Divis Flats were and how they embodied Le Corbusier’s idea of the vertical city. He was quite upset with them and pointed out that being forced into an architecture, which was alienating and unsustainable, had destroyed whole communities. He grew up in a terraced Edwardian house, similar to the Victorian houses which were demolished to make way for the flats, and the way those communities worked were very social, where the grannies could sit out at the front of the house and watch the children playing and neighbours would look out for one another. And although the model of the terraced house is not perfect it was built for a purpose and fulfilled that purpose, the people grew with it and adapted it to suit their needs. It supported the idea of a community and was practical in its proximity to the workplace, which was often the factory they were built around. I think it’s dangerous to impose ideas onto fully formed communities without a dialogue with the people.

So maybe that’s why The Economist Plaza works

and *Robin Hood Gardens* didn’t work, because this is a functional building, which isn’t meant to be a home: it’s a machine for work whereas in the other buildings they were trying to make a machine for living which was too streamlined and too dependant on other factors in terms of the functionality of the thing. For example, if the lifts break down and doesn’t get repaired then the building becomes unworkable and falls into a vicious cycle of neglect and vandalism.

PO’N: You talk very positively about the shopping centre.

EO’K: Well I don’t mean to. (Laughs)

PO’N: Even in the title of the show there is connectivity, not only between the panorama and shopping but something very optimistic.

EO’K: It’s meant to be ironic. (Laughs)

PO’N: Yeah I get the irony. (Laughs) The panorama triggers this moment where, according to Jonathan Crary in *Techniques of the Observer*, there was a change between the sixteenth and eighteenth century in a belief that the real world could somehow be represented. In the emergence of various technologies right up to photography this presented the possibility that the world could be represented in its actual form. There was a real desire for that and I suppose the panorama arrives at this time when there’s a recognition that all those technologies are going to fail, where they are not going to be able to represent the thing which is actually real, so therefore you get this form of escape; this form of utopic escape.

Primarily, you mentioned this idea of the panorama as being akin to a democratic experience or for being very working class, being representative of a proletariat experience, but ultimately it was also really representative of a notion of the bourgeois public sphere. They primarily happened in cities; they were mediated to package an experience where you could live in the city but have some sort

of connectivity with the countryside. For example the success of the suburb in Britain was all about this idea that you could get to the countryside but you would still be able to have a city life. The shopping centre almost represents this enclosure or confinement of the viewer or the individual subject, it's the death of the flâneur, it's the death of the idea of being able to situate yourself outside and do some window shopping and not only do some window shopping in a passive way but to also go away and write about it. The panorama is representative of this shift away from the possibility of technology to actually represent an actual form. The socially real world and the shopping centre represent this early to late consumer space that ultimately disables the potentiality to think outside the space of consumption. You go in and you consume, that is your function of being there, you are not in there to be looked at or to look, you are there to actually consume.

I'm quite curious about that and your saying it's ironic, so lets expand on that irony.



I Like America and America Likes Me, Joseph Beuys, 1974

EO'K: The irony of the title starts with the Beuys work *I Like America and America Likes Me* and that attempt to reconcile man with the wild or man with nature and him living with a coyote, which is on the one hand ridiculous but at the same time noble in a way. We were talking about the panopticon earlier and I was thinking if you take the structure of the shopping centre and Victor Gruen's initial plans of taking the arcade

or the shop fronts and surrounding the consumer, it does force this structure of control, but it's the opposite structure of the panopticon as you enter the cells or shops of your own free will. You are now being viewed from the centre. In terms of how one buys into the fantasy promised by capitalist society, all these dreams are promised but they are unattainable or a bit like the panorama, they are prone to failure. Consumerism is exponential, it's all about the next thing, and it thrives on that. It's those dreams and fantasies, which are of the individual but then become collective.

We were talking about Habermas earlier and the idea that capitalism reaches a crisis point where the individual and even the state loses any sort of control by becoming part of a massive self-determining machine. I really worry about all of these things, it sounds clichéd but it has become more and more of an issue in my head, and not necessarily in the work as I don't feel the work communicates in that way, but having two small boys growing up and wondering what's at stake, and wondering if by being an artist there is anything I can do about it. It's complex, I feel very uncomfortable talking about it.

PO'N: Well don't talk about it publicly then. (Laughs)

Earlier we tried to figure out whether we had a similar understanding of what it means to use the term failure. Failure is now almost seen to be the new success; it follows this all-consuming Jamesonian notion of the impossibility, the impossibility of something not being co-opted or absorbed by the late capitalist social infrastructure. When we were talking earlier I was using the parallel of the idea of the sixteenth century memory man who actually stood up on stage and had an incredible memory and was able to answer all the questions he was asked in public, but people were actually there for that moment where he couldn't answer the question correctly. It was that moment where the question couldn't be answered correctly, which was the moment of rupture, but also the moment of

learning and the moment of becoming something else. Then of course the memory man would go away and find the answer to the question for the next time he would perform, and often for the same audience. But again and again they would come back, not for the incredible knowledge that he had, but actually for that moment when it would collapse into entertainment. By this moment of failure, his function would change from fully functional to dysfunctional: but it was this dysfunctionality, the failure of his knowledge, that would be its ultimate success - his reason to be an entertainer by becoming something else other than a memory bank.

Looking back at some of your catalogue essays on your work there is certainly an interest in failure, and in collapsed utopias, and there's also an interest in looking backwards. I'm wondering if, alongside that, you have just expressed a desire for something else, being a little bit disillusioned with the world or some sort of a desire to change it. I was wondering if, talking about your practice, there is some sort of functionality that your practice can achieve? If it's not just about looking at all this stuff going backwards and also acknowledging that they've failed and you have learnt from them through the process of praxis.

What positive message or what form of revolution is your work calling for?

EO'K: It's a very difficult one to answer as I'm often very caught up in process and I see failure as being very much part of being an artist. It's part of the ups and downs in the studio; you try 'this' and it screws up, then 'that' and it screws up and then maybe something eventually works. I'm becoming interested in the idea of portals and I've always seen myself as a type of filter that things pass through and something happens to them and they get processed in some way.

I guess for me the process is quite personal even though it isn't obvious that it's personal. It seems to always chart back to where I come from and

to my parents' home where I grew up and issues around architecture and the landscape. It's like looking through the viewers, after approaching something that is quite mundane and workaday like a construction site, and then being hit by these views that are about some form of fantastical transportation. They also remind me a little of pinhole cameras, and there is a voyeuristic aspect as well.

I don't feel capable of doing a very large thing within society, or even if I should or have a right to, but despite this I often make very large work. I don't even know where these portals are going; they are just points that may take somebody out of a context. That's why it's very important in terms of what you were talking about that the piece is grounded, you look in, you are maybe caught up with it for a fraction of a second in the fantasy, not necessarily believing in it but being transported by it like the panorama. Then you see that there are buckets and the models are being held inside buckets. So it's about proposing in very small ways different ideas and different ways of looking at things.

This conversation took place at The Contemporary Art Society at The Economist Plaza in London on 25th July, 2008.



Eames Le Corbusier Remix
Oil on canvas, 200 x 310 cm
2008



Meditations on an Ideal Home
Installation views, Galerie Schuster, Berlin, Germany, 2008
Opposite and following pages





<
Mies Van De Rohe Remix (painted whilst listening to Mahler's 5th Symphony)

>
Alvar Aalto Remix (painted whilst listening to Substance by Joy Division)

Both oil on canvas, 152 x 213 cm
2008





<
Ideal Studio Complex I (after Bates Maher)
>
House East View Early Evening (after Eames House)
Both oil on canvas, 120 x 120 cm, 100 x 100 cm
2008





<
Pool East View Midday
>
Museum West View Midday (after Burda Museum)
Both oil on canvas, 120 x 150 cm
2008



Architect's Studio
Wooden and paper structure with drawings,
posters, maps and photographs
Installation view, Galerie Schuster, Berlin
2008





Architect's Studio
Wooden and paper structure with drawings,
posters, maps and photographs
Installation view, Galerie Schuster, Berlin
2008



Eames Studio Limerick
Installation views, OPEN ev+a *Reading The City*, 2009
Curated by Angelika Nollert & Yilmaz Dziewior
Opposite and following pages









The Architect's House
Installation views, RARE Gallery, New York, USA, 2008
Opposite and following pages





>
Fallingwater Seasons Remix
(painted whilst listening to In Utero by Nirvana)
Oil on canvas, 223 x 274 cm
2008

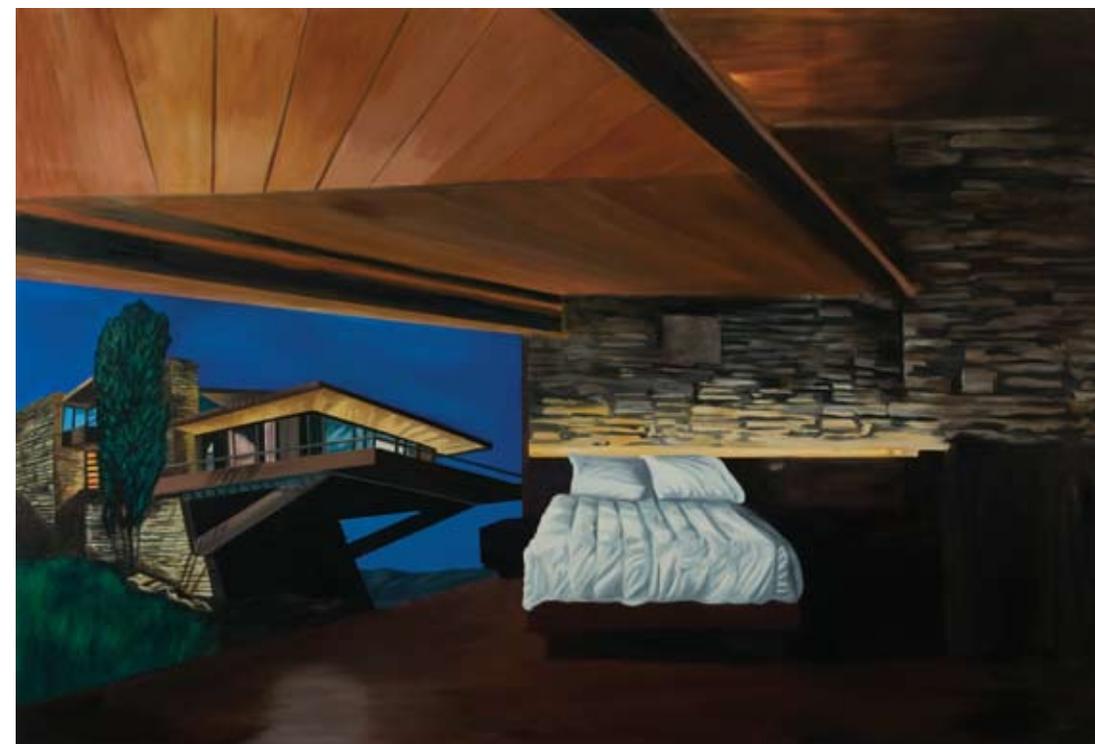


>
Eames Psychedelic Seasons Remix
(*Painted whilst listening to Forever Changes by Love*)
Oil on canvas, 231 x 264 cm
2008



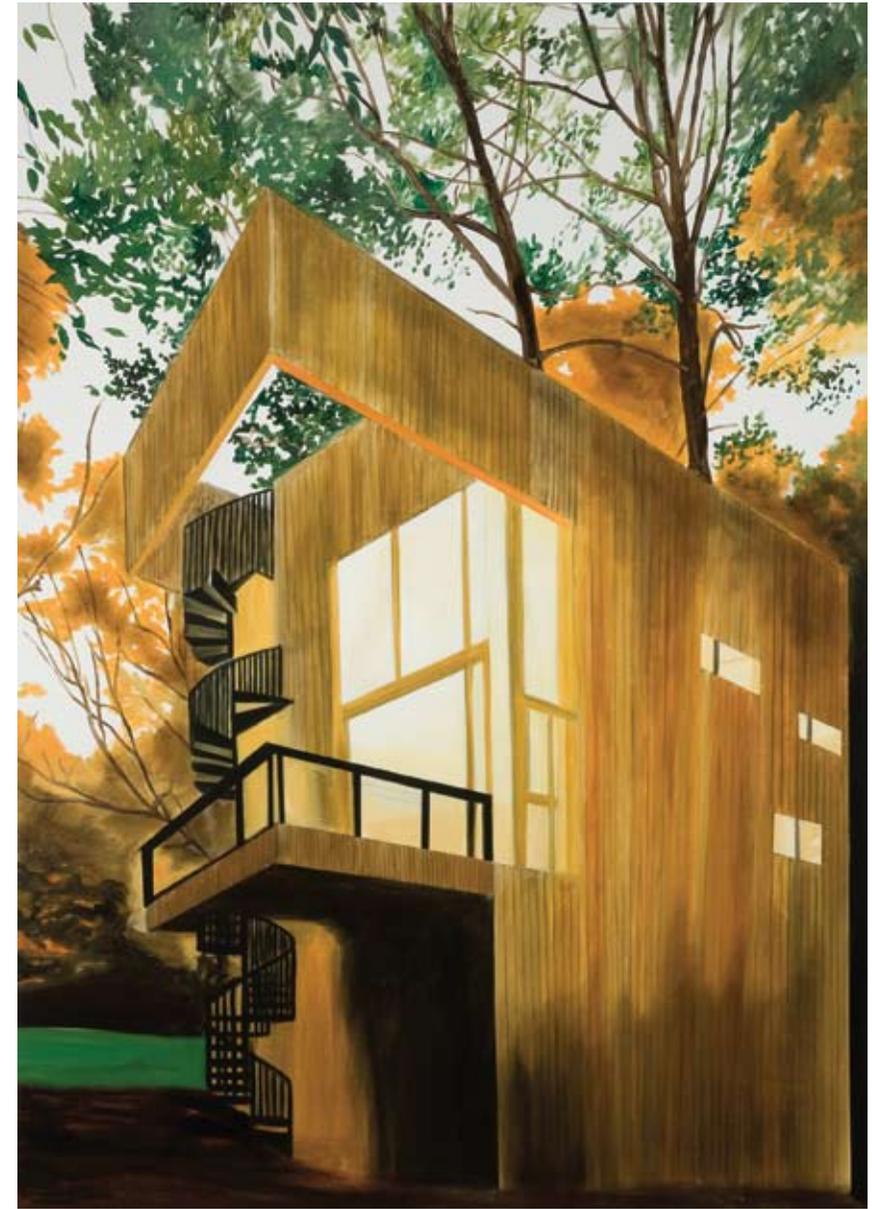
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Philip Johnson Night and Day Remix
(painted whilst listening to Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue)
Oil on canvas, 152 x 244 cm
2008
>

>
Lloyd Wright's Dream
(painted whilst listening to Nevermind by Nirvana)
Oil on canvas, 256 x 378 cm
2008



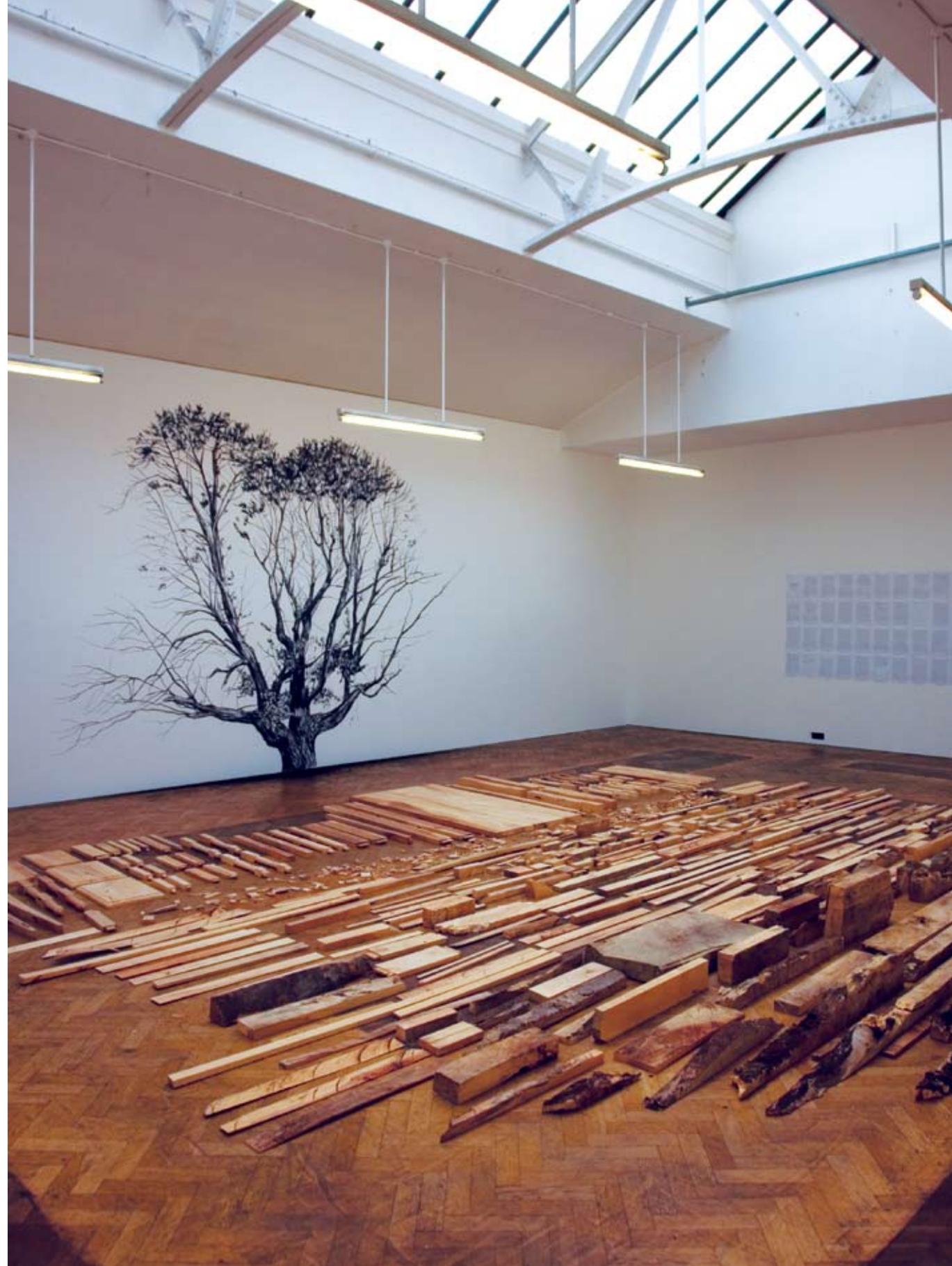


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Wright, Le Corbusier, Mondrian Mix with Plants from Edgar Allan Poe's Garden
Oil on canvas, 213 x 152 cm
2008
>



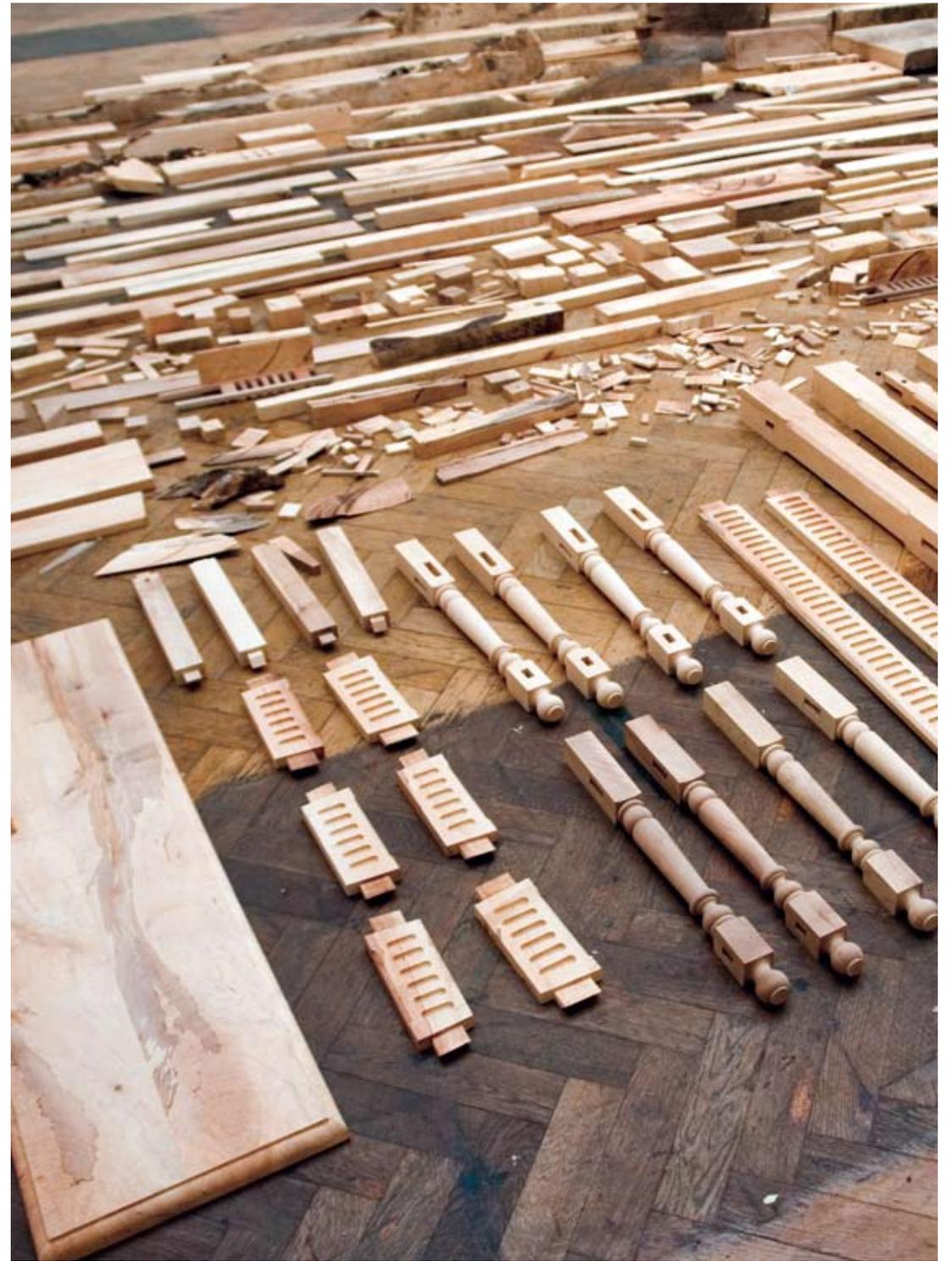
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Studio 1 Evening Southwest View
Oil on canvas, 213 x 152 cm
2008

Plans for The Past and The Future
Installation views, Plan 9, Bristol, UK, 2009
Opposite and following pages





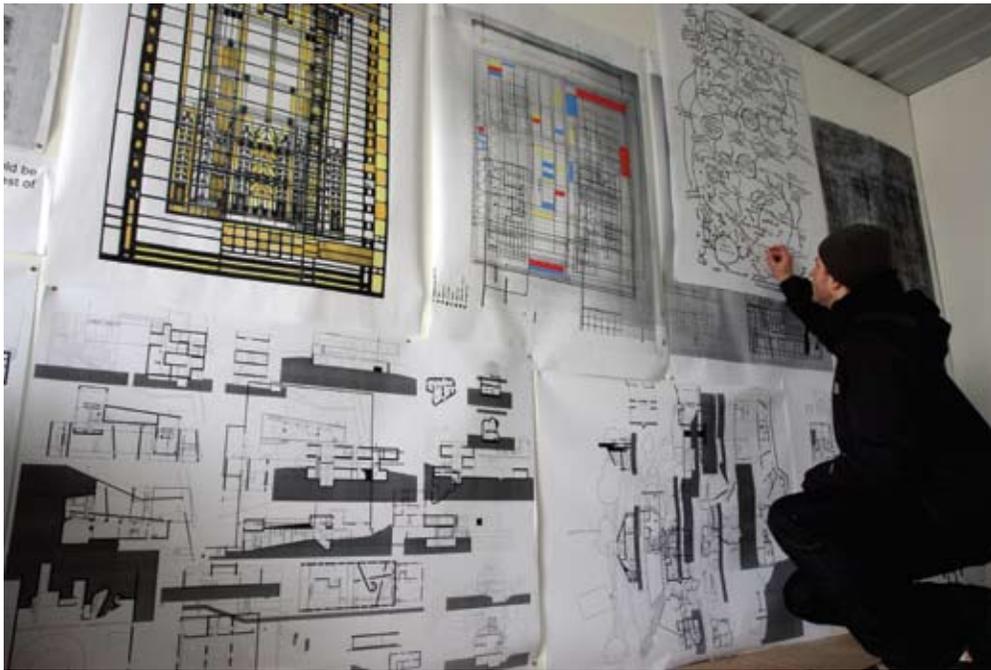








Container Studio
Installation views, Bristol, UK, 2009
Current and following pages



He found out that Cavanacor (which had been owned by the same Miss Clark) was for sale one day while he was at work teaching in Strabane many years later, and went to the auction after getting time off work and ended up buying it. So that was how myself and my parents ended up in County Donegal. The interest in architecture began through just living in the space of that house, simply being in that house, interacting with those spaces, exploring and constructing fantasies around the backdrop of this remarkable place. It is quite large and has a lot of out-buildings. Some parts were in a state of ruin with no roofs and with trees growing from within, and other parts were falling down or had been blocked off.

Given that the house had been a plantation house and then a house owned by the landed gentry, it still held those connotations as I was growing up and as a child. The difference was often apparent between the context that I lived in and that of my friends, who mainly lived in local housing estates. So the social and political background to that childhood may have been in the background when I was researching the history of the plantation of Ulster and the history of the house many years later. It was only then, and not during my second level education - as that period in Ireland's history wasn't covered very well as far as I remember, that I realised the full extent of the plantation of Ulster and the long-term consequences of it and also how architecture - whether fortified or not - tended to enforce these political demarcations. In some ways this is part of the starting point for this body of work, and I am using these works to draw out certain historical anomalies, which have had a lasting effect on the north of Ireland and elsewhere.

PH: One of the environmental features of your work is what might be characterised as transitional or contested spaces. I'm referring to your out-building with the tree growing through

it, for example; the idea of nature reclaiming other architectural occupations, which is a recurrent theme in your work. Can I ask you what your interest is in these marginal spaces, between the social and the commercial, the shopping mall for example, or especially between the urban and the rural, your hyper-modernist architectural interventions in rural retreats for example. What is being contested in these territories? They seem to reference and critique the utopian ideas within Modernist architecture and Modernism more widely.



Overlook, video still, Eamon O'Kane, 2002

EO'K: I'm interested in spaces which have, through time and through the development of their history, become redundant or have lost a function so that they have a residue of their former usage. Then there are the other kind of spaces, the in-between spaces I am interested in, for instance, like the project in London, *Panorama...*, which grew out of a project in Blanchardstown in Ireland. The idea of the shopping mall as a type of space that sums up a whole range of paradoxes; paradoxes about the notion of on one level desire, necessity and community, but it being very complicated in how it is resolved.

Gruen's vision of the shopping mall was intended as a good idea, but is subsequently turned into the architect's own worst nightmare. Utopia can turn

very quickly into a dystopia. I made a video piece a while back when I was artist in residence at the Art Academy in Tilburg, Holland. The video was inspired by Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, and pictured a block of flats mainly inhabited by elderly people. I found that there was an odd loop that I would get caught in by going up and down in the elevator to the washroom to do the laundry or to take out the trash. So I constructed a film called *Overlook*, which doubled up and folded in on itself. It was the trip down in the lift and the trip back up again repeated in on itself so that it was just a continual loop.

That idea of a space folding in on itself and becoming a trap is evidenced in some of my other works as well as more positive things. The work is never trying to be totally negative and pessimistic, there is always a presentation of something that is on the one hand positive but perhaps flawed with undercurrents, a bit like a fairytale where things often appear simple, but under the surface are quite dark.

PH: Can you talk about the communal, as opposed to the personal, nature of this work? You've signalled this by having both a fictional story, like a fairytale, and a more personal, documentary narrative. Can you talk about what you are exploring here?

EO'K: I'd like to try and talk about it in relation to the themes I was thinking about while I was constructing the work. Yes, its got a very personal starting point in some ways, but in other ways it's a bit like the duality of the two texts in the exhibition. One is presented as fact and one is presented as fiction and both are based on the same histories and same timeframe. There are the facts that I have uncovered from reading certain texts about the history of the locality and of Ireland, and then there are the facts of actually experiencing that tree, climbing in it as a child and seeing it being

blown down in twilight in 1999. These experiences come from a personal mythology and which has now become some sort of other strange mythology by becoming an artwork. I am also interested in how factual historical writing tends to be written at a distance so that it documents events in a way that is removed. So in factual writing it will say that this battle occurred here and such and such did this, whereas within fictional texts there is an opportunity for a space to be constructed which is more inhabitable in terms of the imagination. It's a bit like how one documents a performance. Does one document it mathematically by saying you know the performer moved their arm to the right hand side and rotated it through 40 degrees, or does one document it more poetically where it becomes some sort of reading between the lines?

I don't see this as a personal piece of work. It's engaging with quite specific histories and quite a specific timeframe, but to me it presents a universal set of problems that could be applied to a whole range of other scenarios. It does apply on one level to the relationship between man and nature and landscape, but it also relates directly to certain periods in Irish and English history, as well as referring to certain periods in American and European history - the colonization of America and the plantations there.

PH: But it also draws attention to the overtly political relationship between personal, individualistic perspectives and imaginings, and apparently factual, non-specific and communal scripts, which are always contestable as authoritative constructs from specific powerful positions. These perspectives are not easy to reconcile and you seem to be interested in what is at stake in these relationships. This has been explored in those works of yours which revisit forms of institutional critique which emerged in the 1970s, where you have been concerned to expose the power mechanisms of 'the white cube' for example, and how that space is a

highly political system, as all architecture is. Again it extends that idea within your work that meaning is always constructed in our lives, and that both our reality and our sense of self is a highly mediated and contingent fiction, as are our histories. I'm not supposing for a moment that you propose answers to that through your work, but would you say that this is territory you are interested in?



Mobile Museum Retrospective, video still, Eamon O'Kane, 2005

EO'K: I've been very aware that the work operates in a micro-macro way, zooming back and forth along the timeline of history, and I'm aware of the danger of the work being too self-referential and self-reflective and also too self-involved with the art world. I think it's been quite an organic process in terms of how I've approached a type of institutional critique, and that's why I guess it seems that there is a range of different things that are being critiqued.

I think there has been a personal development that has allowed me to backtrack and to re-examine things along that timeline. Maybe what I'm trying to draw out with the work is this kind of notion of moving forward by reflecting backwards. To look back at the recent and distant past to extract certain anomalies that could actually at the time have been things that were misdocumented or misrepresented or were mistakes or successes, but that can be reanalyzed with a kind of hindsight that

allows one to reflect on whether there is a truth to them, or whether they can be used productively or proactively today. I think this exhibition is coming full circle for me because these are themes I was dealing with many years ago and I didn't have the facilities to express the ideas in maybe as succinct a way as I would have liked to. The issues and concerns were there but they needed time to come up to the surface.

PH: Could I ask you about your interest in, or even your belief in, fictions and the relationship between the individual and the communal? Do you think that our sense of self, our idea of individuality, is entirely fictional? For example, I'm absolutely typical of my gender, class, education, sexuality, historical moment, nationality and so on; there's very little that's actually individual about me at all and yet we are sold the idea of ourselves as being highly individual beings, often to encourage us to behave communally, to identify with or act like, or look like, or aspire to be, other larger groupings. Is this a vision that you share - of our condition of possibility - now in the post-capitalist social space in the twenty-first century? Is that what you are concerned about?

EO'K: I guess we are all victims of a type of normative performativity in that we have been bombarded by things through our childhood, that have been encoded within ourselves. These social norms or constructions start from a very early age then accumulate over a lifetime.

I think it is part of the things I am concerned with, but it's broader than that. In terms of the kind of fictions that are constructed within a self, that is something which is quite important in this particular body of work. This is a work in which you get what you bring to it. There's a whole range of possibilities for interacting with the work, one doesn't necessarily need to read the text works; one can just look at the wood, the furniture, the

tree wall drawing. The actual construction of the story behind the work is a backdrop to something which is much more about material. Pretty much everything in this room is made from a tree and it is all very physically tangible.

I'm interested in going back through history to pull out points within the map of history. It's an impossible task in a way because there are so many multiplicities within history. But to draw attention to certain nodes in the timeline of history that relate to something quite specific, or personal or specific to another person in history or to an event in history, then to connect it with something or things that occur within an individual's experience. In the paintings it's the idea of representing Modernist buildings in natural utopias, to re-represent them as desirable things but to insert into them something, which allows a questioning of the glossy architectural photograph. So the painting becomes quite clumsy, tangible and of material, and this allows the viewer to question the reason why they desire that.

PH: Can I ask you about why more recently you have found yourself drawn to the territory of what you might rather broadly characterise as 'the gothic' and the somewhat heightened symbolic tropes that populate gothic stories and fairytales? These overtly communal, social and psychologically charged narratives that we can all relate to and that we feel somehow we are born knowing. Do you think that this is an extension of your exploration of the relationship between the individual versus powerful constructed communal projections?

EO'K: I think it's always been present in the work; it's just that it is maybe coming back to the surface now. My interest in fairytale has always been present and its relationship with childhood and early development of the mind. Fairytale and storytelling builds into society in ways that we aren't aware of because it is so long ago that

these structures have emerged and evolved. Like the whole notion of a Christmas tree, what that signifies today and what it signified centuries ago and what it will become. Also constructed within that is the notion of the natural world and fear of the natural world or fear of the unknown, fear of the other. I guess it boils down to some quite simple things in some ways, but simple things can be complex.

PH: As you said earlier, this work has a strong materiality and sense of transformation over time or throughout a passage of history; a living tree drawn from the charcoal sourced from its original wood. The ideas of residual traces and migrations through history are powerfully present within the installation. The charcoal drawing and the accumulated charcoal dust from making the drawing also introduces a performative residue, as does the labour of cutting the wood and of making the furniture.

Can you talk about the performative aspects of this work, including your re-enactments and layering of specific historical moments and what they mean?

EO'K: Yes, I'm very interested in the materiality of the work and what that material presence invokes in the viewers experience. The performative aspects present in the work displayed here is very important, as the process is very subtly encoded in all aspects of the works. I am interested in what gets left behind in the construction of various histories and also the things that are misinterpreted and misrepresented and the consequences of this on later generations. That is why I have chosen to show both the 'product' of the processes and the 'waste' from the processes. Equal emphasis is given to the wooden furniture and the off-cuts, or the wall drawing of the tree and the charcoal that falls into a pile on the floor. In a way the process involved in making the installation could be seen

to be a metaphor for the processes involved in writing history, but the work is also much broader than that one interpretation.

In terms of the migration of materials, I should maybe outline what's going to happen next. The furniture is going to be used in a re-enactment in the New Forest. I am working with several members of the English Civil War Society, which will result in two films, shot during one day of filming. One of the films is a re-enactment of a hunt involving King James II as he was the last king to hunt in the New Forest. The film will be of re-enactors dressed up as redcoats with muskets walking through the forest shooting, and the look and feel of this film will reference Uccello's hunts in the forest paintings.



The Hunt in the Forest (oil on panel), Uccello, Paolo (1397-1475)

At lunchtime there will be a re-enactment of King James' visit to my parents' house in Ireland in 1689 using the furniture from this installation under a tree in the New Forest, which will be 420 years to the day. The re-enactors will be doing what they enjoy doing, which is going back in time and reliving a moment in history.

PH: I think at this point we should open the floor up for any questions.

Sophie Mellor: Can you tell us a bit about *The Container Studio*?

EO'K: *The Container Studio* fits into this project on several levels. For people who don't know, I've lived here in Bristol for six years. Having lived and worked in Bristol and cycled and walked regularly

throughout the city, I have a good understanding of its structure and have considered it a home. *The Container Studio* is a space where I wanted to look at Bristol in relation to Le Corbusier's plans, for example for Paris, and also some of his other ideas about the city as a body and for the necessity for the body to have a lung or lungs.

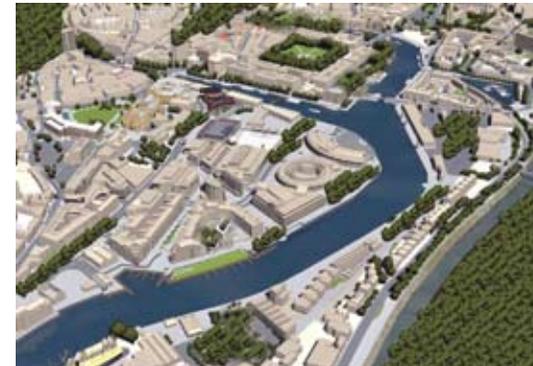


Mobile Studio, mixed media installation, Eamon O'Kane, 2004-2005

The piece consists of a shipping container, which has been converted into a studio. It's been set up with works in progress, maps and drawings constructed prior to coming to Bristol, and what I'm trying to do is unpick a range of concerns in terms of design and architecture, functionality, etc. but in quite an abstract open way, not imposing a structure on the investigation of these things. I'm actually not quite sure what is happening in the studio and it's an interesting experiment for me. It is almost the opposite of the process employed in this installation where the materials have literally told me how to proceed. In *The Container Studio* I haven't got a clue; I'm just probing things, exploring through drawing and reading. Using text and maps and making juxtapositions, trying to unpick myself in a way.

Jonathan Mosley: Could you just say something more about the relationship between *The Container Studio* and this exhibition? In some ways there's a

shift in regards to your consideration of context. Is it a critique on Modernism; is it sort of ironic in a way? Could you explain a bit more about the relationships?



Green City, Container studio, digital print, Eamon O'Kane, 2008

EO'K: I don't think it's necessarily intended to be ironic. I didn't want to construct a space as a place, which preached something. I'm using Le Corbusier - and it's not just Le Corbusier, it's a whole range of people - as a vehicle for understanding what the architecture of the city has become, what the reasons are for that architecture to be there and also, like I was saying, how these ideas or dreams or plans for things can have a series of consequences. I'm using specifically architectural history to discuss what's next and to raise questions.

So *The Container Studio* is very similar to this work in a way as it is looking at the past to ask questions about the future. Maybe the consequences of what's been dealt with in this particular installation and what's being questioned in *The Container Studio* are very different as the consequences of the development of architecture and urban planning that is dealt with in the studio may have a lot of far reaching significance for the future whereas on the surface this installation may seem not to have those issues.

However, there is a lot of geopolitical and historical subject matter embedded in this

particular work that could have resonance today and relevance for the future. There is a subtlety and an openness that I am quite keen to keep.

This conversation took place at Plan 9 in Bristol on 29th January, 2009.

Re-enactment
Hunt, HDV Film, 20 mins
Meal, HDV Film, 27 mins
Production stills, ArtSway, New Forest, UK, 2009
Opposite and following pages





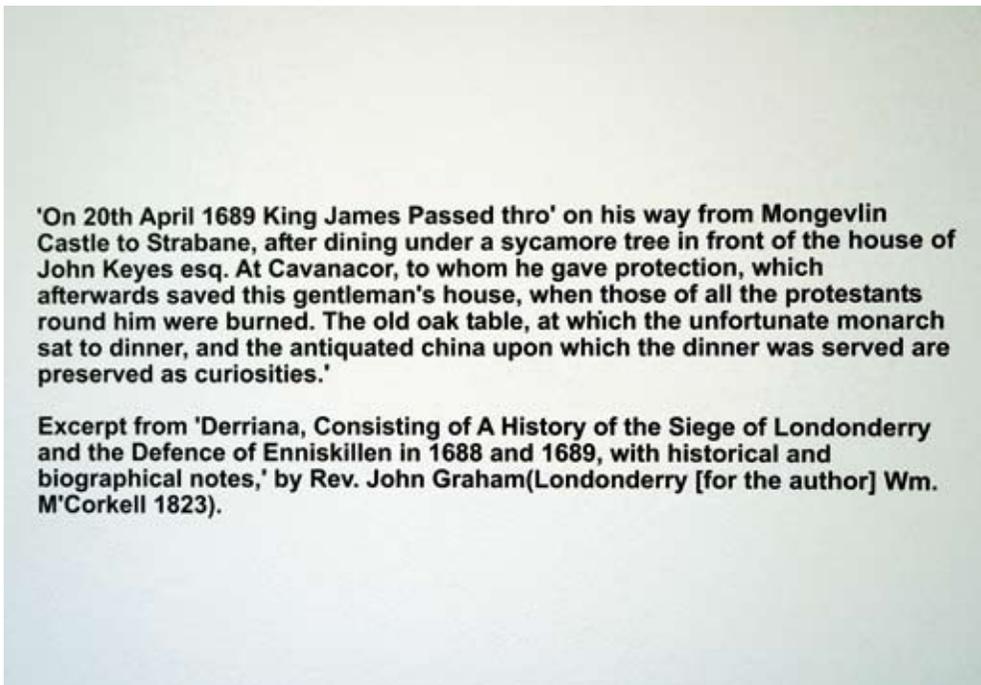






Re-enactment
Installation views, ArtSway, New Forest, UK, 2009
Opposite and following pages







<
Siege of Derry

>
City of Derry

Both mixed media on paper, 42 x 30 cm
2009



Biographies

EAMON O’KANE has exhibited widely and is the recipient of many awards and scholarships including the Taylor Art Award, The Tony O’Malley Award and a Fulbright Award. He has shown in exhibitions curated by Dan Cameron, Lynne Cooke, Klaus Ottman, Salah M. Hassan, Jeremy Millar, Mike Fitzpatrick, Sarah Pierce, Jeanne Greenberg-Rohatyn, Angelika Nollert, Yilmaz Dziewior and Apinan Poshyananda. He has taken part in EV+A, Limerick, Ireland seven times including 2005 when he received an EV+A open award from Dan Cameron. In 2006 he was short-listed for the AIB Prize and received a Pollock Krasner foundation grant. O’Kane has had over forty solo exhibitions including shows in Berlin, Frankfurt, Dublin, Zurich, New York, London and Copenhagen. He was short-listed for the Jerwood Drawing Prize in London in 2007. His artwork is in numerous public and private collections worldwide including Deutsche Bank; Burda Museum, Baden Baden, Germany; Sammlung Südhausbau, Munich; Limerick City Gallery; FORTIS; DUBLIN 98FM Radio Station; Microsoft; Bank of Ireland Collection; Irish Contemporary Arts Society; Country Bank, New York; Office of Public Works; P.M.P.A. and Guardian Insurance; Donegal County Library; UNIBANK, Denmark; NKT Denmark; HK, Denmark; Den Danske Bank, Denmark; Letterkenny Institute of Technology; University Of Ulster, Belfast; Aspen RE, London; Rugby Art Gallery and Museum Collection. Eamon completed a three month residency at Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris in 2008. O’Kane lives and works in Odense, Denmark and Co. Donegal, Ireland and is currently Visiting Research Fellow in Fine Art at UWE in Bristol, UK.

DAN CAMERON is Founding Director and Chief Curator of Prospect New Orleans, a new international biennial whose first edition opened in November 2008 at multiple sites around the city, and closed January 18 of this year. He also serves as Director of Visual Arts for the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans. Cameron was Senior Curator at the New Museum from 1995 to 2006, where his exhibitions included survey or new-work exhibitions by, among others, Eugenio Dittborn, Carroll Dunham, Teresita Fernandez, William Kentridge, Los Carpinteros, Nalini Malani, Paul McCarthy, Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Marcel Odenbach, Pierre et Gilles, Faith Ringgold, Doris Salcedo, Carolee Schneemann, Francesco Vezzoli, David Wojnarowicz, Martin Wong, and Xu Bing. In 2003 Cameron was Artistic Director for the 8th Istanbul Biennial, and in 2006 he co-organized the 10th Taipei Biennial. In 2006 he was the curator of *New York, Interrupted*, the inaugural exhibition for pkm Gallery Beijing. In 2008, as guest curator for the Orange County Museum of Art, he organized a retrospective of the American painter Peter Saul. Cameron currently serves as Senior Curator for Next Wave Visual Art at Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) and is a member of the graduate faculty of School of Visual Arts (SVA) in New York.

PAUL HOBSON has been the Director of the Contemporary Art Society since August 2007. Paul was the Interim Director of The Showroom gallery, London and for five years, the director of a private charitable foundation supporting new commissions by emerging artists. His previous positions include the Head of Strategy and Development for the Serpentine Gallery and the Head of the Royal Academy Trust. Paul Hobson read Modern History at Oxford University and has an MA in Aesthetics & Contemporary Visual Theory and an MA in Arts Management & Policy. In 2007, he co-produced with independent writer and curator Gilane Tawadros the publication, *Life Is More Important Than Art*, with contributions from Faisal Abdu’Allah, Wendy Anderson, Stuart Brisley, Simon Callery, Stuart Croft, Yara El-Sherbini, Raimi Gbadamosi, Susan Hiller, Gabriel Kuri, David Medalla, Stephen Nelson, Uriel Orlow, João Penalva, Zineb Sedira, John Seth, Yinka Shonibare, Terry Smith, Alia Syed, Anne Tallentire and Simon Tegala. Based on the quotation from James Baldwin ‘Life is more important than life, that’s why art is important’, the book comprises a series of interviews with artists and investigates the conditions for making and presenting contemporary art at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

DR. PAUL O’NEILL is a curator, artist, and writer, based in Bristol. He is the GWR Research Fellow in Commissioning Contemporary Art with Situations at the University of the West of England, Bristol, where he is leading the project *Locating the Producers*. He has written extensively on curatorial practice past and present and is commissioning editor of the curatorial anthology *Curating Subjects*, ed. Paul O’Neill (Amsterdam & London, de Appel and Open Editions, 2007). In 2007, he completed his PhD at Middlesex University on the development of contemporary curatorial discourses since the late 1980s. He has curated or co-curated over 50 exhibition projects including: *Coalesce: Happenstance*, SMART, Amsterdam (2009); *D.B.*, Four Gallery, Dublin (2008); *Tape Runs Out*, Text and Work Gallery, Bournemouth (2007); *Intermittent*, Gallery for One, Dublin (2007); *Making Do*, The Lab, Dublin (2007); *Our Day Will Come*, Zoo Art Fair, London (2006); *General Idea: Selected Retrospective*, Project, Dublin (2006); *Mingle-Mangled*, part of Cork Caucus, Cork (2005); *La La Land*, Project, Dublin (2005); *Coalesce: The Remix*, Redux, London (2005); *Tonight*, Studio Voltaire, London, (2004); *Coalesce: With All Due Intent* at Model and Niland Art Gallery, Sligo (2004); *Are We There Yet?* Glassbox, Paris (2000) and *Passports*, Zaçheta Gallery of Contemporary Art, Warsaw (1998). He was Artistic Director of MultiplesX from 1997-06; an organisation that commissions and supports curated exhibitions of artist’s editions, which he established in 1997 and has presented exhibitions at spaces such as the ICA, London; Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin; Ormeau Baths, Belfast; Glassbox, Paris and The Lowry, Manchester. As an artist, he has exhibited widely including at: Zaçheta Gallery of Contemporary Art, Warsaw; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; temporarycontemporary, London; Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York; Villa Arson, Nice; South London Gallery; Cell, London; the Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin; Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin and many others.



Re-enactment
Installation views, ArtSway, New Forest, UK
2009

Acknowledgements

The artist would like to thank Anja Musiat, Emil + Mikkel, Eddie + Joanna O’Kane, David O’Kane and the rest of the O’Kane family, Peter Bonnell, Jessica Morgan, Nikki Grange, Dan Cameron, Paul O’Neill, Paul Hobson, Fabienne Nicolas, Lara Wolfe, Peter Surace, Helmut Schuster, Kieran Brown, Pete Insole, Maggie Dunning, Jerry Baker, Aldo Rinaldi, Mark Segal, Jack Lewis, Phil Ashcroft, the invigilation teams at all venues, Sue Giles, Seamus Staunton, Richard Hames, Terry Smith, Toby Huddleston, Karen Di Franco, Sophie Mellor, Anton Goldenstein and all of the Plan 9 team, Bristol City Council, Arts Council England and Culture Ireland.

Re-enactment: Hunt & Meal Film Credits:

Eamon O’Kane: Director

Mike Latto: Camera

Natasha Latto: Assistant camera

Terry Smith: Film assistant and still photography

Simon Cochrane: Sound

Peter Bonnell: Producer

Clare Bonnell: Catering

The Earl of Essex Regiment of Foote:

Nigel Bruen (King James II)

James Addy (John Keyes)

Karen Ashby (Barbara Keyes)

Andrew Moss (Officer at table)

Nathan Down (Officer at table)

Douglas Moss (old retained Butler to table)

Tristan Ashby (young servant to table)

Mark Moss (Soldier)

Ben Moss (Soldier)

Adi Moss (Soldier)

Helen Down (Filming Liaison)

Vivienne Addy (Regiment catering and support)

Eamon O’Kane and ArtSway would like to thank James Addy and Helen Down and everyone at Earl of Essex Regiment of Foote, and all at Beaulieu Estates, particularly Peter Stagg and Chris Payne. Special thanks to Simon Courtenay-Taylor.

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