



DUBLIN CONTEMPORARY 2011

A Self-guided Visit

Kysa Johnson

Room S27

Blow Up 160 - Subatomic Decay Patterns: Picture of the Village of the Future

“Subatomic decay patterns are the fundamental marks of our physical reality. The maps of the universe show us the limits and vastness of what we know of our universe. Both of these patterns existing at the extremes of scale highlight the beauty that is inherent in the physical architecture of our universe. In rendering these forms in drawings and paintings the subject is removed from a purely scientific context and introduced into the arena of visual culture while illuminating the breadth and limits of our knowledge.”

Visitors are invited to look closely at the wall, where they can pick out mathematical symbols they may be familiar with. The artist has used a particular type of Japanese pencil to draw these patterns of subatomic decay onto the walls of this room. You will note that these patterns cover all available space in the room, including the fireplace, door, ceiling and skirting.

As one steps back, two larger forms which have been created with these patterns of subatomic decay become visible; on the left wall, a ghost estate, on the right, a Neolithic portal dolmen.

Patrick Hamilton

Room S35

Elements of violence and inequality are evident in this work.

The artist says it is almost like a wall drawing and he deliberately chose simple geometric forms, as we all learn about concepts of “inside” and “outside” using simple shapes when we are children. Here he uses these simple square forms as a visual interpretation of segregation. The material is very important here, as it is the actual material that people use to protect their property in Santiago, Chile.

The work on the floor is made from machetes. These have a number of significant meanings, as farm implements with a utilitarian function, but they also have a violent connotation. He references Duchamp here, emphasising the artists’ removal of the functionality of an object and using it for a different, aesthetic purpose. The shape which they are laid out is also important; circles often represent the spiritual, a mandala-like shape.

Kounellis /Adamo
Room: S36

1. Jannis Kounellis, *Senza Titolo*

Born in Greece, he studied in art college in Athens until 1956 and then went to Italy. Kounellis's work developed as a spectacular mixture of painting, collages and the staging of installations, 'environments', performances and theatrical shows, designed to express the tensions and alienation of contemporary society, and the multiplicity, obscurity and fragmentation of its language. From 1967 he became associated with Arte Povera and his work was characterised by the juxtaposition of objects, materials and actions that were both physically and culturally antithetical to one another. These included raw materials such as stone, cotton, wool and coal, and found objects such as bed-frames, doors and, since 1969, shelves. He also used fire, soot and smoke in his installations and in 1969 brought live horses into the Galleria L'Attico in Rome, stressing the fragmentation of modern society by also introducing elements of traditional culture. His experimentation with unorthodox combinations of materials continued into the 1980s.

This artwork juxtaposes workaday clothes with the brilliant splendour of gold leaf, suggesting the mundanity of an unsatisfying working life compared to the possibilities of personal freedom.

2. David Adamo

Born 1979 in Rochester, New York (USA)
Lives and works in Berlin (DEU)

David Adamo's works are mostly based on a web of cultural and art historical references that come together in minimal environments that are at once disorientating and self-consciously poetic. Adamo brings out the double meanings inherent in everyday objects, playing on the paradoxes of symbols and materials and setting up a tension between their usual associations and their position as part of another delicate, unwritten narrative.

David Adamo, in conversation about his wooden sculptures:

Wood is a complex material. I feel like a total beginner when I work with it. There's probably a lifetime's worth of learning to be done about the material and its behavior, particularities, varieties, and everything else. Maybe it's a kind of knowledge you develop over time.

People have called my sculptures violent, but I don't necessarily think about aggressive things when I'm in the studio . . . although I guess I do work myself into a sort of frenzy. I start out listening to some very soft music, usually some classical stuff, and as my thoughts progressively get going, I'll begin to listen to something harder. Lately, I've been trying to teach myself this style of dancing called hakken, to Gabber music; I jump around the studio at about 200 beats per minute. When I feel good and ready, I chop the wood. I usually work around it in a circle. As my sculptures have gotten bigger, the music has gotten harder. I mean, it's all very heavy—heavy material and heavy tools—so I can only do it for thirty minutes or so, and then have to regroup and relax and rest and do it again.

The new pieces are more abstract and definitely more physical. The past work always connected to some kind of figurative object—a hammer, a baseball bat, a cane. The latest sculptures are more like construction beams that have been whittled down. I suppose these bigger works are like putting a magnifying glass onto those smaller sculptures, or being able to walk inside a different environment with more material intensity, since the wood is much more dense in the room. The sculptures in this show will be made with the largest chunks of wood I've used so far. I went to a local mill and chose ten or so pieces. Some will reach to the ceiling. There'll be a variety of sizes and shapes. So there are always two parts to these

sculptures—the thing that’s there, in this case construction beams, and what’s lying on the ground. And for me, the stuff on the ground is evidence. I see my feelings and emotions when I look at those chips. And now that I’ve done so many of these sculptures, I have a large archive of them. When you look at the chips you can also see the other small things that were swept in, like cigarette butts or candy wrappers or whatever else was in my studio or the gallery. I can always tell where I was or where they were made from the garbage in the pile.

I tend to think about my sculptures being more like performances, and my performances being more like sculptures. In my latest series of performances, I stand and look at something for a long period of time. The most recent one was at MoMA in the design section, where I stared at an Italian-made flight board. It took me a while to find a place to stand and the right work to look at. The board seemed poetic in a sense, because it’s just flipping time. And so the installations are kind of like performances without the performer, and the performances I do are more like performances without the audience. I want to keep removing certain elements from both and see what happens.

— As told to Lauren O’Neill-Butler

Prieto **Room: S38**

Born 1978 in Sancti Spiritus (CUB)
Lives and works in Barcelona (ESP) and Havana (CUB)

Wilfredo Prieto’s work manages to combine a finely honed conceptual sensibility with an unusual immediacy and humour. He subtly manipulates objects and situations from daily life in ways that are both amusing and encourage the viewer to reassess the familiar. With a notable economy of means, and an almost surgical precision he alters our experience of the everyday.

Nebulosa, is a cloud which has been constructed of razor wire. This same type of razor wire is used to protect borders between countries. This extremely experiential piece impacts in very different ways on its audience. The audience are encouraged to think about how they react to this artwork and how they feel in its presence.

David Zink Yi **Room: S39**

“Untitled, *Architeuthis*”

Working in sculpture, film, and photography, David Zink-Yi is concerned with the concept of identity and its process of development, drawing a large part of its inspiration from his own life spanning several cultures. In his objects and installations, minimalist, reduced elements are fused with deliberately opulent ones to create an aesthetic language of form. In his filmic work the artist shows music and body language as isolated fragments, resulting in emotion and expression being made abstract. Sound and choice of picture motif reflect here the fragments of a personal, social and political situation.

The giant squid (genus: *Architeuthis*) is a deep-ocean dwelling squid in the family Architeuthidae, represented by as many as eight species. This creature is rarely seen when alive, as it lives so deep in the ocean – it is most often seen after it dies and floats to the surface of the water.

Extract from Observer Article regarding this work:

“This is not an illustration,” said artist David Zink Yi. “When you look at it, I want you to see an amazing sculpture.”

Indeed, what artist, after Magritte made his famous 1929 painting of a pipe—accompanied by the words “This is not a pipe”—would refer to artworks as anything other than artworks? The problem is that this sculpture is so eerily realistic. Walking into the gallery, you encounter the 16-foot-long, beached creature, its opalescent, slick-looking flesh seeming to putrefy, lying in a puddle of its own ink. You expect its tentacles to quiver in a final death-throe.

In late June, Mr. Zink Yi, a muscularly built man in his mid-30s, wore a tee shirt and shorts as he and an assistant lifted one section of the heavy ceramic squid—it weighs 660 pounds—and slid out from underneath it the lengths of fabric they’d used to move it.

Making the squid required Mr. Zink Yi, who is based in Berlin, to get a coveted four-month residency at a facility in Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands, which houses the world’s largest kiln. As he explained how he experimented with arbitrary combinations of colours to create an iridescent effect, he prepared the squid’s ink, a cocktail of corn syrup and Japanese ink that he mixed in a garbage pail, and gingerly dribbled around the sculpture.

The ink may make the sculpture all the more squid-like—Mr. Zink Yi prefers to think of it as a frame—but it also serves a practical purpose as a moat: it discourages people from stepping on the sculpture. And yet, Mr. Zink Yi’s assumption that no one would want to get near the viscous-looking substance is not always right: when he showed a similar squid at the Art Basel fair last month, a visitor left a trail of black footprints leading away from the sculpture.

Nedko Solakov

Room: S52

A Beauty #4

Solakov is a Bulgarian artist. A pioneering artist in his home country, Solakov helped introduce a new, experimental vein of art to the country. His work has addressed the state of his native country after 1989. In his artistic endeavours he has touched upon countless themes, and in Solakov’s works spectators do not simply see what he sees- there are various viewpoints, both internal and external and the chain of associations evoked by the works are also key features.

Particularly suitable for young children, children (and adults!) are encouraged to look inside A Beauty 4, where they will make a curious discovery.

Wang Du

First Floor: Music Chamber

Le Berceau / The Cradle

Born 1956 in Wuhan (CHN)

Lives and works Paris (FRA)

Wang Du, who worked as an artist under the Cultural Revolution government when he was 16 years of age producing propaganda art is now recognised as a master of manipulating images related to the mass media. He is an iconoclast who re-appropriates and deconstructs the spectacular images of our contemporary society, especially those related to the logic of creation, consumption and manipulation of information, both textual and visual. In his often large-scale sculptures and

installations, Wang Du turns some of the most spectacular moments propagated by the mass media into ironic and absurd forms. The artist has been quoted as saying “I organize my projects just like the media do with reality”. Wang Du has exhibited at Mori Art Museum in Tokyo 2011; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing 2009; BPS22 in Belgium 2008; Kestnergesellschaft in Hannover 2007; Musée National d’Art Moderne in Paris 2007; Vancourvert Art Gallery 2005; Yerba Buena Art Center in San Francisco 2005; Palais de Tokyo in Paris 2004; Kunsthalle Wien 2003 and the Venice Biennial in 1999.

Visitors are encouraged to climb up onto *The Cradle*, where they can experience its gentle rocking, and note the references to news media and live streaming 24hour news channels. Students are encouraged to discuss their opinions about how we receive this news-information, do we accept passively or question what we are told depending on the source?