

Siobhán McDonald

Traces of Air

Gallery II

9 January to 20 February 2021

Siobhán McDonald's work draws attention to contemporary topics dealing with air, breath and atmospheric phenomena, weaving scientific knowledge into her art in a poetic and thoughtful manner. She works through the mediums of painting, drawing, film and sound to highlight how human action has an impact on the environment.

Traces of Air at Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre will include new and recent work with plants, roots and charcoal as well as paintings depicting the changing light recorded in forests made earlier this year. Some of these paintings seek to capture the innate environment-sensing capacity of plants, trees and underground networks as witnesses of history. They hold an embodied memory of time, reminding us of how time and memory shift.

This series is very much a work in progress and explores peatlands in Ireland and the idea that everything is connected, by substance, form and history. These ancient landscapes are sole custodians of varied and unique plants that have accumulated over many millions of years, as species evolved in these distinct environments.

Later in February, a new film *Dancing Spirits in the Sky*, will be launched at Uillinn as one of the sun series works to mark the Solar Orbiter mission into space this year. Commissioned by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS), this first phase of the work tells the story of continuity between the state of consciousness, from existence to non-existence, to the endless cycle of life and death. The film aims to capture the phenomenological act of looking and seeing solar storms such as the Aurora Borealis which occurs on the North and South Poles as a double virtual reflection. The next phase will be launched in late Spring at the Centre Culturel Irlandais and will explore our sun by looking back to past weather patterns recorded in the rich corpus of Irish records.

Siobhán McDonald is Artist in Residence at the School of Natural Sciences, Trinity College Dublin (2020-2023), working with world-leading research facilities such as The European Space Agency (ESA) and The JRC European Commission to explore ecological concerns. Across research labs, she pursues knowledge to ask questions about the structure and history of the earth, exploring the Anthropocene and the recent consequences of our treatment of nature.

In 2020 she was selected to work with European Cultural Institutions such as Bozar: Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels and Gluon: Platform for Art, Science and Technology on a new project about environmental change. The commissioned artworks will be presented at the Serpentine Gallery, London and Ars Electronica, Austria in 2022.

Recent awards include the Arts Council's Visual Arts Bursary 2020, Creative Ireland Award 2020 and Climate Whirl Arts Programme Helsinki 2020. Recent shows include Bozar, Brussels, 2020; Deutsches Hygiene-Museum DHMD, 2020; Volta, Basel 2019; Limerick City Art Gallery, 2019; Deutsches

Hygiene-Museum DHMD, 2019; The National Trust-Fox Talbot Museum, UK, 2018; Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, 2018 among others. Her work is represented in many collections, both public and private such as The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland, The Ulster Museum and Trinity College Dublin.