



Future forecast

The second stream in the Futures series offers a new generation of emerging artists the opportunity to exploit the galleries of the RHA, writes **Ruth Carroll**

This exhibition is the second phase in the Futures series, a sequence of exhibitions that endeavours to document and contextualize the work of emerging artists, around whom exists a growing critical and curatorial consensus.

Futures first took place between 2001 and 2005 as Eurojet Futures and exhibited the work of twenty-seven young Irish artists, based both in Ireland and abroad. Of these artists, many have become leading practitioners and have gone on to realise success and ambition in their practices. In the years between 2005 and 2009, Patrick T Murphy, the RHA's Director and myself, made the decision to rest the format to allow a new surge of young talent to

emerge. By 2009, a new generation of artists had become apparent and there existed again a need to revitalize the Futures concept. The artists in Futures 2010 have been selected from a number of

sources – from various artist-led initiatives and independent group shows, to a developing peer consensus that attempts an objective view of different artistic practices that have emerged in recent years. The



artists chosen for 'Futures 10' are Oisín Byrne, Rhona Byrne, Fiona Chambers, Niall de Buttlear, Damien Flood, Magnhild Opdøl and Ailbhe Ní Bhriain.

The foundation of Oisín Byrne's practice has been paper in various guises, from large-scale origami installations to astrological maps pierced into cardboard, as well as large-scale painting and performative and collaborative projects. Recent projects include a major collaborative work in Princeton University in association with the head of astrophysics. Fiona Chambers' practice is concerned with societal trends, mass culture and communication. Visual imagery from television, the Internet, magazine and newspapers forms the basis for various interrogations, with the medium employed dictated by the subject. Niall de Buttlear's work is primarily an exploration of form and materiality through accumulative processes. He works with materials that possess a prior function or association and his work is suggestive of pre-existing structures, the structure developing in form and content over time and in an unpredictable, yet systematic and intuitive manner.

Rhona Byrne will present a series of works examining the amusement park industry and in particular, wooden roller coasters, the physical experience of the thrill of the escapade and the people who delight in it (Fig 2). Continuing her investigation

FUTURES ENDEAVOURS TO DOCUMENT AND CONTEXTUALIZE THE WORK OF EMERGING ARTISTS, AROUND WHOM EXISTS A GROWING CRITICAL AND CURATORIAL CONSENSUS

into the evolution of these coasters, she makes work that layers their function and associated emotion, questioning the complex associations that link these man-made structures with emotional experience. Byrne lives and works in Dublin and has recently exhibited in Australia, USA, UK and Ireland. She has recently completed residencies in IMMA and the Mattress Factory in Pittsburgh.

Damen Flood's painting creates landscapes that reference the history of painting



with an underlying, otherworldly element. Appearing paradoxical in nature, the works move from landscape to near complete abstraction (Fig 4). He employs elements of landscape, such as trees and mountains, as signifiers in planes of abstraction. His work poses questions, often depicting complex views of the incomplete, allowing for various readings of the work. The artist will exhibit a new series of large works made in recent months. Flood is a graduate of both IADT and NCAD, completing his MA in

3 MAGNHILD OPDØL, *BEGINNINGS WITH THE END OF THE TALE* 2009 pencil on paper 40x60cm Courtesy of the artist

4 DAMEN FLOOD, *RED LINE* 2009 oil on canvas 130x100cm Image Courtesy of the Artist and Green on Red Gallery, Dublin Photo © Damien Flood

2008. He has exhibited extensively both in the UK and Ireland since 2005 and has been selected for the John Moores Contemporary Painting Prize that takes place this year.

Magnhild Opdøl was born in Norway and studied at NCAD, graduating in 2004. Her recent work is a detailed investigation into the nature of death, or more specifically, the remains after life. She documents these remains using various methods, working around the ideas of 'the end as the beginning', creating a new history from the remnants of the past. She works primarily in drawing (Fig 3), creating intrinsic studies in pencil of animal carcasses and remains, which express a silent beauty in their deathliness. She has recently employed taxidermy to create sculptural works that are of personal relevance to the artist, being made from remains of once loved pets, re-formed and re-appropriated to create a new synergy. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at the Lab, Monster Truck and various venues in Norway. She has recently completed residencies in Temple Bar Gallery and Studios and the Red Stables.

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain (Fig 1) creates complex video works using landscape as a starting point, and through intervention with the pictorial space, creates a new world in which place and time are out of sync. She focuses on constructed and composite digital imagery, producing an intersection of varying and otherworldly realities, revealing both the work's fabrication and our tentative relationship with the truth associated with digital imaging. She conjures a 'displaced-presence', a meditation on the origin of the image and our relationship to it. Ailbhe Ní Bhriain holds a PhD in Fine Art Practice and has recently exhibited in Shanghai, Domobaa Gallery London and New York. Solo exhibitions include the Galway Arts Centre and the Butler Gallery in Kilkenny. ■

Futures 10: Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin 3 September – 24 October 2010

A catalogue will be published by the RHA to document both Futures 09 and Futures 10.

Ruth Carroll is Exhibitions Curator at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin.