

One + One in situ at Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda, 2012

ONE + ONE
Wexford Arts Centre

Drogheda-born Brigid McLeer...aims high in her work for this, her first solo show in her hometown, referencing both James Joyce and iconoclastic French film-maker Jean Luc Godard. Aidan Dunne - Irish Times, 2012

Brigid McLeer

One + One

Highlanes Gallery Tour Partner

Friday 20th July – Saturday 25th August 2012

Wexford Arts Centre, in partnership with the Highlanes Gallery, is delighted to host One + One, a solo exhibition by UK based artist Brigid McLeer. The exhibition, which was commissioned by the Highlanes Gallery, is a video installation, performance, and drawing-based work in three parts.

For One + One, the artist uses a number of diverse sources as both reference points and inspiration. These include, among others, Jean Luc Godard's films - *Le Mepris* (1963) and *One + One* (1968), from which the exhibition takes its title; and James Joyce's modernist epic novel *Ulysses* (1922). Central to the whole work is the idea of naming, and the names of people and places feature consistently in all three parts. McLeer's practice works as both a homage to, and continuation of, the work of these acclaimed masters of experimental fiction and film.

One + One (The Film) is a single-screen video loop. This work consists of a 45min video sequence showing an extreme close-up tracking shot of the redbrick walls and blue velvet curtains of an unnamed and unidentified space. Occasionally, words appear on the screen: *The School, The Streets, The Tower, The Brothel, The Concert Hall*, etc. These are all place names given by James Joyce to certain episodes in his novel *Ulysses*. Overlaying the image is a violin piece by Heinrich Biber from his 17th century *Mystery Sonatas* cycle, played by Alice Pierot.



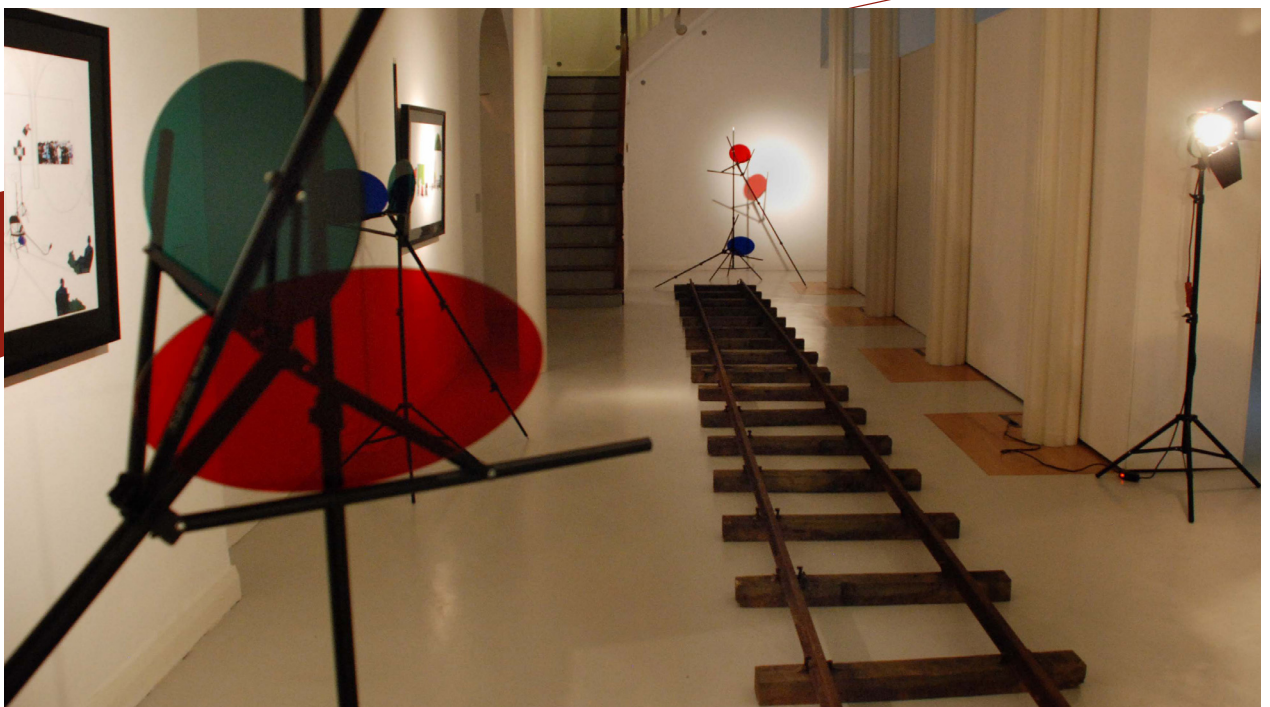
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One + One (The Reading) is a video installation and set of drawings onto Perspex. In this central section of the exhibition, McLeer mimics the structure of the single day over which Joyce's Ulysses unfolds in Dublin, reciting, over 7 hours, all the proper nouns in the novel in a durational performance. The performance took place in Birmingham, UK in June 2010 as part of an artist's residency at The Rea Garden, once an industrial site of small factories and warehouses employing Irish migrant labourers.

Using four separate HD video cameras, the principal camera runs along a specially commissioned miniature rail track which runs for 12.5m along the length of the Rea Garden site. This track and the filming of the camera running along it, is a direct reference to Godard's opening sequence from *Le Mepris*. In this typically reflexive Godard sequence, we see a scene from a film. In this work, the relentless backwards and forwards tracking of the camera means that no particular viewpoint is privileged; instead, everything seen is part of the same register, destabilising the idea of a central subject or a forward temporal momentum.

The final part of the work *One + One (The Song)* relates directly back to Godard's film, which shows the Rolling Stones recording their song *Sympathy for the Devil*. Again, using tracking shots, Godard shows the band gradually piecing together the song; devising, working on, and recording their separate parts, over and over, yet always moving towards the bringing together of these separate parts that the recorded song requires. McLeer's intention with this new work is to strip it back from the dynamic of a group composition, to a solo singing voice, and to then recombine the solo voice with itself in the final video work.

By resetting the Rolling Stones' anthem *Sympathy for the Devil* from Godard's film to a *séan nós* arrangement, McLeer turns it into a stark lament, which, in roving the globe and history, evokes aspects of the Irish diaspora. Here, naming recurs in a tongue-in-cheek way as the chorus resounds with the words: 'Pleased to meet you, hope you guessed my name'.



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Alongside the video-based installation, Brigid exhibits a series of drawings taken from stills of the video footage, which map out the changing relative positions of figures in the images. These drawings in part play with the narrative connotations of the audience figure, and at the same time explore relationships between the moving image and its freeze frame counterparts.

The green, red and blue, important in *Le Mépris*, also codify the images and create an allusive palette in the installation, from the blue curtains in *One + One*, (*The Film*) and (*The Song*) to the drawing/sculpture elements in the exhibition, which suggest lighting filters, with the coloured, oval drawings of the spectators on Perspex.

McLeer has also chosen to display the tracks used in the films. Their visible presence on the gallery floor makes apparent the artifice and technique of film-making, but could also be considered a nod to the railways built by Irish navvies that criss-cross Birmingham.

Brigid McLeer's work has been shown as gallery installations, single-screen video works, work for the page, site-based performances and also in the form of critical/creative writing. Recent solo exhibitions include *Isoli [cont.]*, Lanchester Gallery Projects, Coventry; *The Face of Another and the Other Side of Shouting Men*, Alsager Arts Centre, Crewe; and *Vexations*, Site Gallery Sheffield. Group exhibitions include *Beyond Fontana*, curated by Stephanie Moran, Studio 1.1, London; *Unspeakable Engagements*, curated by Steve Dutton and Brian Curtin, Chulalongkorn University Gallery, Bangkok and LGP Coventry; and *Drawing Breath*, Lugar Do Desenho, Foundation of Julio Resende, Porto, Portugal. Brigid is currently Course Director for BA Fine Art at Coventry School of Art & Design, and lives in London.

An accompanying publication is available and includes essays by Dr Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, lecturer in Theoretical and Historical Studies in Visual Art at the University of Ulster, Belfast, and poet, critic and curator Cherry Smyth.

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press release

Exhibitions

Solo Shows / Events

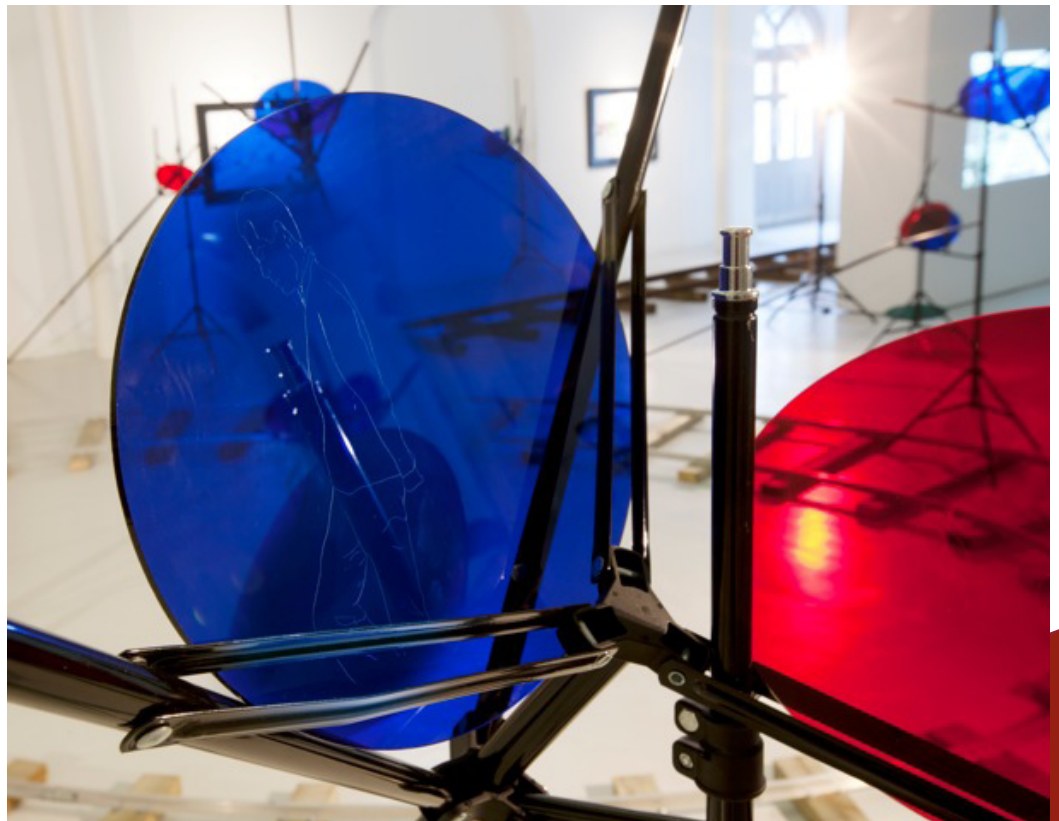
- 2012 'One + One' Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda and Wexford Arts Centre, Ireland
'Horizontal Ontologies' Art Currents Institute Gallery, New York
- 2010 'One + One (The Reading)' Rea Garden residency, Birmingham
- 2009 'Isoli [cont.]' Lanchester Gallery, Coventry University, Coventry (Jan. 09)
'The Face of Another', part of 'Curating Knowledge' Alsager Arts Centre, MMU, Cheshire
- 2007/8 'Vexations' part of Site Platform, Site Gallery, Sheffield
'In Place of the Page' (ongoing collaborative project) at:
- 2004 Standpoint Gallery, Coronet St. Hoxton, London
Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda, Ireland
- 2003 London Open House Weekend, Sugarhouse, ACME live-work space
Nottingham Central Library, Angel Row, Nottingham
'A Sense of Place' conference, The Old Library, Cardiff
- 2000 - 2002: 'Mobile Porch' Under the Westway, London
'Incubation, Writing and the Internet' conference, Nottingham
'Dartington Gallery' Dartington, Devon
- 2003: 'Habitat' (work in progress) at Unit 2 Gallery, Whitechapel, London
- 1996: 'Writing With A Thalamus' at Dartington Gallery, Devon



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Group Shows / Events

- 2012: 'Live Notation', AHRC research group day of performance/presentations, Arnolfini, Bristol
- 2011: 'A Game of Two Halves', two person show, Lewis Gallery, Rugby
'L'ultima cena', Refettorio di San Michele, Pescia, Italy
- 2010: 'Beyond Fontana' Studio 1.1, London, curated by Stephanie Moran
'A Site of No Special Interest', Solihull Gallery, Birmingham
- 2009: Creekside Open 09, selected by Mark Wallinger. APT gallery, Deptford, London
'Unspeakable Engagements', Chulalongkorn University Gallery, Bangkok -
Group show curated by Steve Dutton and Brian Curtin
'The Other Side of Waiting' Homerton Hospital, London
Group project of integrated artworks.
- 2008: 'Drawing Breath' Lugar Do Desenho, Foundation of Julio Resende. Porto, Portugal
'Re-Cognition' Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry, UK
'Art/Home Movies, High Rise Cinema' Park Gallery, Falkirk, Curated by Alex Hetherington
- 2007: 'L'Isola Di', San Servolo Servici, Venice, Italy
- 2006: 'Spatial Imagination' Domo Baal Gallery, London
- 2005: 'Starwatch' Poster work for '51N / 00W' at bookartbookshop, London -
Curated by Richard Makin
- 2004: 'Place/Displace' Group show and symposium at Unit 2 Gallery, Mile End Park Ecology
Centre and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London
'Para Sites' Bridport Arts Centre, Bridport, Dorset (curation commission and residency)



continued

- 2004: 'SPELT!' at, The Horse Hospital, London
'Watch This Space' Phoenix Gallery, Brighton
'tEXt 04' Phoenix Gallery, Exeter
Film screening at 'Snap' exhibition and screening, Diorama Gallery, London
- 2003: 'Writing Instructions, Reading Walls', The Poetry Society Cafe, London
- 2002: 'Tristero' Online artist in residence. Hosted by Film and Video Umbrella, London
'The Studio and After' symposium, Victoria & Albert Museum, London
'Creative Re-Use: The Body of Knowledge', Arnolfini & University of Bristol
'Taking Place 3' Sheffield University, School of Architecture
- 2001: 'Space Doubt' Studiothirtynine, Plymouth, Devon
'Verbal Inter Visual' Lethaby Galleries, Southampton Row, London
'Taking Place 2' University of North London, School of Architecture
- 1999: 'Image Defining Word Defining Image' The Gallery, Stoke Newington, London
- 1998: 'Dark Field' The Boiler House, Eastway Baths, Hackney, London
- 1994: 'Artist Book Fair' Represented by Greenwood Contemporary Books, London
- 1993: 'Slade School of Fine Art' Postgraduate Degree Show
'Two Thousand Square Feet' 52 Whitfield St. London
- 2002 - 2004: Curator of 'LLAW' (Public textworks) for 'bookartbookshop', Hoxton, London



curriculum vitae

continued

Residencies

- 2010 Rea Garden residency, (hosted by Behind Closed Doors) Birmingham, UK
2007/8 In-gallery residency and commission, Site Platform, Site Gallery, Sheffield, UK
2007 San Servolo Island residency, Venice, Italy
2006 British School at Rome residency funded by Irish Arts Council, Travel & Mobility Grant
2002: 'Labculture' artist's residency PVA, Bridport, Dorset
1997: 'Creative Arts Residency at Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada
1993: Artist's residency at Ny Alesund, Svalbard, Norway, funded by Duveen Travel Award for Artists.

Publications: Catalogues, Essays and Reviews

- 2009 I have drawn away, I have not left my place, Essay for Building Material journal (Issue on interdisciplinarity, Autumn 09) Published by Architects Association of Ireland.
Creekside Open 09 catalogue, APT gallery, London
Isoli [cont.] review by Cherry Smyth, CIRCA magazine, Issue 128, Summer 09
Isoli [cont.] catalogue, Lanchester Gallery Projects, Coventry, UK
Essay for Graham Chorlton exhibition 'Bristol Road' catalogue, Rotunda Gallery, Birmingham
- 2008 'Drawing Breath/Respirar Arte' catalogue, Lugar Do Desenho, Porto, Portugal
2008 Commissioned essay on 'Vexations' by Alex Hetherington, Published on Site Gallery website.
- 2007 'L'Isola Di' catalogue, published by San Servolo Servizi, Venice, Italy.
Catalogue Essay, The Blossoming of Perspective, a study by Penelope Haralambidou, Domo Baal Gallery, London
'Stray Sods, 8 Dispositions on the feminine, space and writing, illustrated essay in 'Altering Practices' edited by Doina Petrescu, Routledge, London
- 2006 Catalogue Essay, 'Urban Lighthouse', Coventry
'Spatial Imagination' Exhibition catalogue, Published by UCL.
- 2005 'Transmission:Speaking & Listening' Sheffield Hallam University / Site Gallery UK
2004 'Bartlett Works' Published by The Bartlett, UCL in association with August Projects
'Here Are My Instructions' from exhibition curated by Olsen & Johanknecht, Gefn Press, UK
'Para Sites' Exhibition catalogue. Bridport Arts Centre, Dorset UK
'Film and Video Umbrella Projects 2002 – 2004' London
- 2002 'Scroope 14' Architecture Journal, Cambridge, UK
1999: 'Visible Language 33.1' Rhode Island School of Design, USA
'Contemporary Visual Arts' UK
1998 'Circa 85' Irish and International Art

continued

Artist's Talks & Conference Presentations

- 2010 '–writing' Bartlett School of Architecture symposium, UCL, London
'International Association of Word & Image Studies' conference, UU, Belfast
Eastside Projects (ESP) in connection with Rea Garden residency
- 2008 'Translated Acts', ICFAR, Central St. Martins College of Art, UOA, London
'Writing Digital Media' presentation and network launch. Tate Modern, London
- 2006 'E and Eye; electronic poetry, visual art and writing'. Tate Modern, London
- 2005 'Dear Alaric..' with 'taking place' at Technologies of Place conference, Academic Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany
- 2004: 'Habitat' at 'Subvoicive Colloquium 2004' Camden People's Theatre, London
'In Place of the Page' at 'Partly Writing', Southampton University
'taking place' presentation at 'Becoming Space', The Living Art Museum, Reykjavik, Iceland
- 2003: 'In Place of the Page' at Birkbeck Poetry Forum, UCL, London
'Habitat' at 'Bodies of Evidence' symposium, Royal Holloway University, London
- 2002: 'In Place of the Page' at 'The Annex Gallery', New York
- 2000: 'Liminalities' Performance conference, Brunel University, London
- 1999: 'Perspectives: Irish Identity in the 20th C' Aberdeen University
'Alterities: feminism and architecture' Ecole De Beaux Arts, Paris
'Ephemerality of Writing' University of Utrecht, The Netherlands
'Visual Cultures' IAWIS Scripps College, Claremont, California, USA
- 1997: 'Mixed Messages; Image, Text, Technology' University of North Carolina, USA

Education

- 1991 - 1993 'Slade School of Fine Art, London : H.Dip in Fine Art (Media)
- 1988 - 1991 'University of Ulster' at Belfast : BA Hons in Fine Art
- 1987 - 1988 'National College of Art & Design', Dublin : Foundation Certificate Art & Design

Employment

Current: Course Director, Fine Art (BA) Coventry University School of Art & Design

Recent part-time 05 – 07 Royal Academy School of Art, Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, London, Goldsmiths College (MA Fine Art), Kingston University, Department of Art History, London.

1995 – 2000 Full time lecturer in BA and MA Performance Writing, Dartington College of Arts, Devon



One + One will run in the lower gallery of Wexford Arts Centre from Friday 20th July to Saturday 25th August, 2012.

For further information on the exhibition or artist please contact Catherine Bowe, Visual Art Manager of the Wexford Arts Centre on 053 9123764 or email catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie.

Wexford Arts Centre gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of Wexford County Council and the Arts Council. In 2011, the artist also received a bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland to develop the work for this exhibition.

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Wexford Arts Centre

Gallery opening hours:
Monday – Saturday: 10.00am – 5.30pm
Sundays: 11.00am – 4.00pm

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