

Writer-in-Residence

A Six Memos project curated by Mary Conlon

BANK Collective | Gerard Byrne | Stephen Sutcliffe

Critical Bastards | Fugitive Papers | Occupy Paper | Paper Visual Art | Seán O Sullivan

Preview: Thursday 12 July 2012, 6pm

Exhibition dates: 13 July – 11 August 2012

“BAD PRESS RELEASE Failed attempt to write in a no-nonsense, brainy-but-businesslike tone (...) 0.0001/10” (From The *Fax-Bak* series (1999), BANK Collective, London)

Let us begin with a quote. Then a short snappy sentence. Weave an invisible thread through the parallels and disjunctures of image-text relations. Our aim? Blah-di-blah to draw you, the reader, in – the who; the what; the when; the where – to that basic human faculty of *thinking* in terms of *images*.

In partnership with Limerick City Gallery of Art, Ormston House is pleased to present the fourth iteration of the Six Memos project: *Writer-in-Residence*. The project consists of an exhibition of works by BANK Collective, Gerard Byrne and Stephen Sutcliffe, and residencies for art writers and critics from Critical Bastards, Fugitive Papers, Occupy Paper, Paper Visual Art and independent writer, Seán O Sullivan.

Providing the context for the project is Italo Calvino’s Harvard lecture on *Visibility* in which he warns us against losing the power to bring forth forms and colours from a string of black letters on the white page. With influences ranging from Goethe and Beckett to Carpaccio (the painter) and Felix The Cat, he encourages the interplay between the visualisation and verbalisation of thought. For Calvino, there are always images at the source of his stories: a man cut in two halves; a boy who lives in the trees; an empty suit of armour that moves and speaks – and these he calls *Our Ancestors*. Through fiction, criticism and personal essays, he wrote about visibility his whole life – a career of visions, indecisions and revisions.

The title *Writer-in-Residence* is taken from a video work by **Stephen Sutcliffe** which fleshes out his “characteristic theme of (artistic) self-doubt” in this rather one-sided interview. In a second work, *Six Essential Books*, historic footage of Ezra Pound’s monologue is treated with (beware: spoiler) unexpected sound effects. **Gerard Byrne**’s photographs reference the opening stage instructions of *Waiting for Godot* in futile attempts to find Beckett’s site of inspiration and transforming areas where the playwright lived into dramatically lit, yet empty, theatrical sets. The **BANK Collective** meanwhile present from the archive their ‘corrected’ texts from galleries and institutions through the *Fax-Bak* series of, well, dodgy press releases.

The residency strand of the project highlights the renewed energy in art writing in Ireland now. Young writers are offered time and space to provoke, challenge and reflect upon the increased visibility of Limerick as city of culture and the strengthening arts infrastructure in spite of straitened conditions. A full programme of events including performances, discussions, launches and practical workshops will be available along with an artists’ information point at Ormston House.

The Six Memos project is curated by Mary Conlon.

Our sincere thanks to the artists and writers, Gil Leung of LUX London, Jerome O Drisceoil of Green On Red Gallery, Mike Fitzpatrick of Limerick School of Art and Design, Dr. Pippa Little, Matt Gidney, Woodrow Kernohan of eva International, Sheila Deegan of Limerick City Arts Office, Helen Carey and Siobhan O’Reilly of Limerick City Gallery of Art. Programme of events to follow.