

Ivorypress Art + Books presents
John Gerrard



Sow Farm (near Libbey, Oklahoma), Realtime 3D, 2008
Courtesy of the artist and Simon Preston Gallery, New York/Thomas Dane Gallery, London

Exhibition: From 15 February to 2 April 2011

Venue: Ivorypress Art + Books Space I C/ Comandante Zorita, 48 (Madrid)

Opening: 15 February 2011, 19.30h

Ivorypress Art + Books Space I will be hosting an exhibition of John Gerrard (Dublin, 1974) from 15 February to the 2 April 2011. This multidisciplinary artist's work combines new technologies with photography and poetic language, while also reflecting on political and social issues.

His pieces portray architectural landscapes as 'isolated, enigmatic structures whose interiors remain hidden', as described in the catalogue edited by Ivorypress for this exhibition. His creations show real sites, whose 'surface [is] captured by Gerrard in thousands of digital photographs, which are then employed in a painstaking virtual reconstruction'.

Among the works that will be on display is *Cuban School (Sancti Spiritu)*, 2011, commissioned by Ivorypress, which addresses the current situation in Cuba from an artistic standpoint. Using photographs taken at a school on the outskirts of Havana, Gerrard builds a 3D model and employs the same software used in video games, allowing for the building to be seen from any angle and distance. As in video games, the landscape provides an escape from reality, bringing the viewer into a world where he or she can create freely.

The work, projected on an 18 square-metre screen, changes throughout the day and reflects the same light that would be shining in Cuba at the time the viewer is seeing it in Madrid. The decline of the building, which continues to serve as a school despite being almost in ruins, is a vehicle through which to speak about melancholy and the effects of ageing on structures, both architectural and human. They are objects and environments 'that appear as uncanny, alien presences', according to the philosopher.

Another major component of the exhibition is called *Dust Storm (Dalhart, Texas)*, created in 2007 from a series of photographs of sand and dust storms in the 1930's in the southern United States. Using his own photographs, some satellite images and topographic data, the artist virtually reconstructed 1.6 square kilometres of rural area in the Texan town of Dalhart. When activated, the 3D projection randomly recreates the effects of the storm on the reconstructed landscape.

Artboxes

The exhibition also includes several light boxes, frequent shapes in Gerrard's work. 'The physical presence and gravity of his artboxes' [...] prevent the work's being read as merely *virtual*', says Robin Mackay. 'At the same time, the on-screen virtual environment makes it inevitable that the hollowness of the white box is filled out with circuitries, hooked up to the grid, becoming a black box'. Pieces created in 2009, which are very representative of this part of his work, such as *Sentry (Kit Carson, Colorado)* and *Sow Farm (near Libbey, Oklahoma)*, can be viewed at Ivorypress Art + Books.

The light box, entitled *Lufkin (near Hugo, Colorado)*, 2009, is part of a series in which Gerrard portrayed several oil derricks in the middle of the landscape; it will also form part of the exhibition.

John Gerrard lives and works in Dublin and Vienna. He studied art at Oxford University, where he specialised in sculpture. As part of the 53rd Venice Biennale, he presented an exhibition entitled *Animated Scene*, with three large-scale projections, on display on one of the Venetian islands. His work has been exhibited in prominent international museums and galleries such as the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, the Thomas Dane Gallery (London) and the Simon Preston Gallery (New York City).

For further information, interviews and image requests:

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