

COLOPHON

Gavin Murphy

21.09.12 - 28.10.12

The Royal Hibernian Academy and Oonagh Young present a two-venue solo exhibition of new work by Irish artist Gavin Murphy, On Seeing Only Totally New Things, which includes the film Something New Under the Sun and Colophon, consisting of sculptural and wall-based works.

Colophon contains a distilled series of 'integral objects': a text sculpture, a suite of photographs, and other wall-mounted works. A large-scale text piece is based on a section of dialogue from Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1968 film *Teorema*, and delivers a monologue on the importance of *the new* in art. Wavering between confidence, doubt, and despair, it speaks of the burden on the artist in constantly bringing new images and objects into being – suggesting the necessity of responsibility inherent in the creative act.

The work features a specially commissioned typeface – Personal (stencil) – based on *Proposal for a Universal Typeface*, created by Herbert Beyer between 1925–1930, while director of printing and advertising at the Bauhaus. Designed along reductive-utopian lines, and consisting of only one combined upper and lower case, the geometric, sans-serif Universal existed only as a design and was never actually cast into real type. The new typeface retains Bayer's reductivist-geometric design principles, yet recasts these into a specific and singular use.

A suite of photographs enlist the words of Pascal, Milan Kundera, and Lewis Mumford to set up a new conversation between texts, while accompanying coloured discs refer once more to the decisions of the artists' hand. A notebook is presented as a path away from previous forms, relying on the gallery's lights to quietly convey new possibilities.

A substantial publication in collaboration with Atelier David Smith is to follow, containing documentation of artworks, new essays, and sections documenting the IMCO building and the work of Oliver P. Bernard.

Gavin Murphy's work involves the assemblage of unique fabricated elements, sourced and found objects, video-film, audio and photographic images. Using cultural matter as material-medium, it references various art-forms, histories and theory to form a spatial and temporal narrative arc made up of intercommunicating texts, combined with an interest in the sculptural possibilities of cinematic structures and *mise en scène*.

The works in On Seeing Only Totally New Things look to create a dialectic between the contemporary and the anachronistic, intertextuality and necessity of form. By refuting absolutes, the works attempt to oscillate between the wonder and futility of investigation. They involve much that is pre-existing, selecting and re-presenting various aspects of culture, not as museological artefacts but as vital contemporary components.