

HANDJOB

A Project by Alan Phelan

15.03.12 - 31.04.12

Oonagh Young Gallery is pleased to present Alan Phelan's new project HANDJOB. The show, in keeping with much of Phelan's practice, provides a structure for a myriad of random connections – in this instance 'hands'. The concept has been further opened out to several other artists whose recent work has involved this prestidigitatorial subject.

The springboard for the project is an online archive of hand imagery which Phelan has accumulated over the past year. This eclectic mix of over 1,300 photos has been analysed, processed and purloined to develop several trains of thought. From this connections were made to generate over 30 new works which are clustered in groupings to blur authorship, source and intent.

All the works may be bonded by one common theme, but that is only the surface connector. It's the circulation not appropriation of images and ideas that is key to understanding the show with the gallery space being used in the same manner as an open notebook. This allows the likes of a text about Giovanni Moreilli, two papier-mâché ears, an artist statement by actress Lucy Liu and a divining rod to connect via Sherlock Holmes, as one example.

Collaborating and working with others is also an important part of Phelan's practice and here he has linked up with artists and writers who have all contributed generously to the proposition. Many of the works has been produced by Phelan on instruction by the others who include Douglas Rodrigo Rada from Cochabamba, Bolivia; Sascha Bolt from Frankfurt/Berlin; Cut Hands/Not Abel (William Bennett/Ian McInerney) from London and Cork; as well as those closer to home like Brenda Moore McCann, art historian; and artists Lee Welch, Sarah Pierce, and Roisin Lewis all living in Dublin.

With the opening of HANDJOB on 14th March Oonagh Young Gallery also celebrates five years in operation and is delighted to share this double celebration with the exhibition 'Exiles' which also opens next door at The LAB.

Born in Dublin in 1968, Alan Phelan studied at Dublin City University and Rochester Institute of Technology, New York. He has exhibited widely internationally including BOZAR, Brussels; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Chapter, Cardiff; SKUC, Ljubljana; Feinkost, Berlin; SKC, Belgrade; OK11, Helsinki; Eastlink Gallery, Shanghai; Galería Del Infinito Arte, Buenos Aires. In Ireland exhibitions include IMMA, mother's tankstation, Dublin; MCAC, Portadown; Limerick City Gallery of Art, and Solstice, Navan and The Black Mariah, Cork.

He was editor/curator for Printed Project, issue five and has curated exhibitions at the RHA, Farmleigh Gallery, Project Arts Centre, Dublin and in Rochester, New York. He has received several awards from The Arts Council, Ireland as well as a Fulbright Scholarship and a John F Kennedy Fund Graduate Scholarship. Phelan has written monograph essays on several artists, including Mike Fitzpatrick, Tom Molloy, Abigail O'Brian and Vanessa O'Reilly. He has also had texts published in A-N magazine, Circa, Contexts, Kunst.ee, Source, Mother's Annual and VAI VAN.