

# Before it stirs the surface

## Caoimhe Kilfeather

22.03.14 - 25.04.14

**“If the nature of architecture is the grounded, the fixed, the permanent, then textiles are its very antithesis.”**

Oonagh Young Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Caoimhe Kilfeather, who continues her scrutiny of materiality in the built environment and of our relationship with the spatial, formal and emotional qualities of architecture. Demonstrating sensitivity to the intrinsic qualities of raw matter, Kilfeather's manipulation of materials, scale and weight of objects obscures their basic properties and any identifiable purpose.

The processes of building and weaving share similarities according to Anni Albers - both invested in constructing something whole from materials that retain their original attributes though the outcomes usually differ vastly in scale. 'Quarter', a large woven veneer structure monopolises the gallery space, with everything else forced to the periphery. The viewer is compelled to look for access inside the 'dwelling', but the continuous, uninterrupted façade contains no opening or aperture on the surface of the structure. Our relationship with this large, unyielding object is manifold; not least because of what it may or may not contain, but the denial of full visibility combined with the intimacy in which we experience the textured surface inside the gallery, creates a tension and sense of intrigue, frustration and exclusion.

Two heavy, small cast iron objects, 'thin swells' (2014), are included in the exhibition. Patinated to a saturated deep black with a single rectangular aperture, they look like vessels but their function remains undefined. Also, two photographic works, 'Scenes (I) & (II)' (2014), provide the only source of colour yet retain an integrity to the investigation of 'surface'.

As Bachelard suggests, a poetic image can trigger a linguistic response through novelty, connecting us immediately to the origin of language. We experience resonances and sentimental reminders after this initial reverberation. In much the same way, Kilfeather's work seeks to confront us with an object where "the image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface".<sup>2</sup>

Caoimhe Kilfeather studied at NCAD, Dublin (BA) and the Slade School of Fine Art, London (MA). Recent exhibitions include Futures 2012, RHA; **None Went Mad None Ran Away**, Rubicon Gallery (2012); **Space of the Present**, Leipzig Kunstverein, Germany (2011); **After Dark** (with Mark Swords) Mermaid Arts Centre (2011); **Items of kind**, Leitrim Sculpture Centre (solo) (2011); **Swimming in the field**, Goethe Institute (solo) (2011); **Holding Together**, Douglas Hyde Gallery (2011); **Spilth**, 126, Galway, ev+a, Limerick (all 2010); **What lies Beneath**, Green on Red Gallery (2013). Caoimhe is represented by the Green on Red Gallery, Dublin.

1. 'Habitation is a Habit', Anni Albers, 'Interiors', edited by Johanna Burton, Lynne Cooke, Josiah McElheny (Eds.) Published by Sternberg Press, 2012, p24
2. 'The Poetics of Space', Gaston Bachelard, Beacon Press. Boston, MA, 1994, p xxiii